Layered landscape

An exploration of contemporary architecture on
Ramsvikslandet through small scale interventions

Kajsa Carlsson

Master Thesis 2026

Chalmers School of Architecture
Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering

Examiner | Naima Callenberg
Supervisor | Peter Christensson

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CHALMERS
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Abstract

This thesis addresses the relationship between architecture and place, exploring how contemporary architecture can be grounded in its context. As contemporary building practices becomes increasingly standardized, architecture today risks losing sensitivity towards local conditions that shape identity. By departing from the view of place as a layered phenomenon, the thesis investigates how these layers can inform a design process and how contemporary architecture can emerge from and contribute to the narrative of place while responding to contemporary needs.

The project is situated on the island Ramsvikslandet, southwest of Hunnebostrand, in northern Bohuslän, a coastal landscape is shaped by geological processes and extensive land use. Informed by theories of contextualism, critical regionalism and place identity, the design process is grounded in in-depth studies of the site and its wider context. Through a multifaceted approach, the project establishes a comprehensive understanding of the site´s spatial, cultural and environmental conditions. Literature studies, site visits and tools of sketching, mapping, photography and writing are used to both analyze and inform the design process.

The result proposes a collection of architectural structures, situated at four locations across the island. Rather than concentrating functions within a singular destination building, the proposal explores a dispersed architectural strategy where movement through the landscape becomes part of the experience. Together the interventions aim to resonate with the landscape, providing spaces for orientation, shelter and overnight stays while remaining secondary to the experience. Drawing upon local building traditions and material heritage, the interventions reinterpret regional architectural principles through a contemporary language emphasizing craftsmanship, materiality, and the relation between architecture and landscape.

Ultimately, the thesis reflects on the potential of a contextual design approach that responds to the layered nature of place. It explores how architecture can mediate between landscape and human activity, as well as between tradition and contemporary needs, positioning architectural practice within a continuous negotiation between site-specific conditions and present-day use. The project contributes to a broader discussion on how contemporary architecture may engage with sensitive environments while remaining grounded in local identities and the specificity of landscape.

Contextual design | Place identity | Building traditions

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Glossary

Context

The relation between a building´s or a site´s broader situation that is of importance to its identity. This includes aspects such as culture, history and traditions and therefore extends beyond its specific geographical location.

Place identity

The unique characteristics and attributes that define a particular environment, reflecting and communicating its cultural, historical, social, and environmental context.

Narrative

A story or a description of a series of events/ a particular way of explaining or understanding events.

Building condition (byggnadsskick)

Refers to the practical aspects in a building tradition such as choice of material, foundation and construction techniques.

Building tradition

Culturally and historically shaped ways of constructing and designing buildings over time where knowledge has often been passed down through generations.

Cultural heritage

All material and immaterial expressions (traces, remains, objects, constructions, environments, systems, structures, activities, traditions, knowledge, etc.) of human impact.

Cliff formations meeting the sea at Ramsvikslandet.

Som blågrå dyning bohusbergen rullar
i ödsligt majestät mot havets rand.
Men mellan dess kala urtidskullar
är bördig jord och gammalt bondeland.
Dit tränger Skagerack med blåa kilar,
och strida strömmar klara som kristall.
Och lummig lövlund står med björk och pilar
och ask och ek vid ladugård och stall.

Evert Taube, (1943).

Like blue-grey swells the Bohus mountains roll
in desolate majesty toward the edge of the sea.
But between their barren hills of ancient stone
lie fertile earth and old farmlands.
There the Skagerrak cuts inland with blue wedges,
and mighty currents run clear as crystal.
And leafy groves stand with birch and willow,
with ash and oak beside barn and stable.

Intention

This thesis investigates the intersection of landscape, culture and built form through an architectural proposal situated on Ramsvikslandet in northern Bohuslän.

The purpose is to explore how architects can respond to a place by a deep investigation of different contextual values informing the design process. The aim is to put forward a proposal that strengthen and communicates knowledge and care for local traditions and values linked to Bohuslän's coastal landscape and context. Furthermore, the thesis intends to extend local building traditions and craftsmanship by drawing inspiration from the regions building condition.

It doesn't seek to find a general answer to the questions asked but to contribute to a broader dialogue concerning how contemporary architecture can relate to its context and link to history without becoming a pastiche of the past.

Focus is put upon studying the architectural heritage and building traditions in Bohuslän along with the prerequisites of the landscape and nature on Ramsvikslandet.

Delimitations

The project will not tell the whole story of Bohuslän and Ramsvikslandet but it is rather gathering layers of information, where some layers are more investigated than others.

The nature reserve is mostly accessible by hiking in the rocky landscape, meaning that people with certain functional variations may not be able to reach all the interventions.

The project is speculative, meaning that eventual building or shoreline regulations or coastal laws is not taken into account. Nor does it take into account whether these interventions on Ramsvikslandet are economically viable.

Thesis question

How can contemporary architecture be contextually grounded on Ramsvikslandet and placed in a sensitive way concerning both local architectural heritage and the natural qualities of the landscape?

Questions leading the process

What can be considered characteristic within the architecture in Bohuslän?

How can contemporary architecture be designed that feels in sync with the existing and historical architectural topography and prerequisite of the landscape?

What type of foundation can be used to build with minimal impact on the terrain?

How can timber framing and log timber constructions be used in contemporary architecture?

How and what architectural interventions and functions can support ecotoursim that encourage care and interest in local culture and nature?

Method

The thesis progresses through four key phases, Gathering, Investigation, Implementation and Discussion. The phases focus on different tasks but overlap and informs each other.

Gathering

This phase focuses on getting familiar with the site, its context and history and presents theory related to discourse. This is conducted through historical and cultural literature studies, an initial site visit along with literature studies on contextualism, critical regionalism and place identity which forms the theoretical framework on which the thesis is based.

Investigation

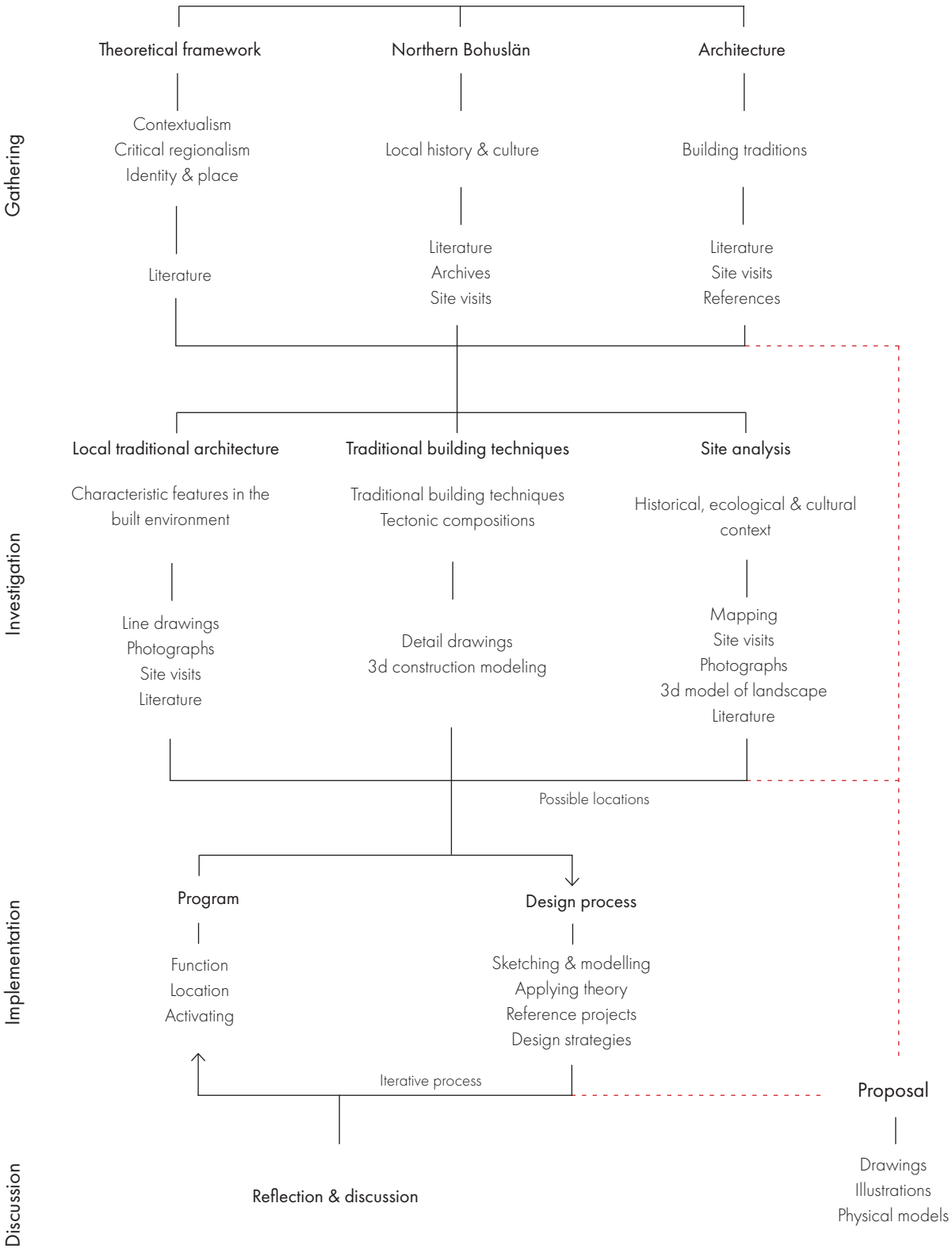
The second phase is where a deeper understanding of the chosen site and context is being investigated from different perspectives and sources, stretching from local traditional architecture, building traditions and local values to the site itself. This is being carried out through a combination of readings and site visits, supported by tools of mapping, note taking, drawings, writing and photography. During the site visits, informal conversations with local residents and visitors provided additional information and perspectives on the site beyond direct observations

Implementation

The implementation phase consists of an iterative design process based on the steps taken in the previous phases where theoretical, practical and personal insights are combined. The design proposal includes a collection of small-scale buildings on different locations on the island and is presented through drawings, diagrams, models and illustrations.

Discussion

The final phase opens for a reflection and discussion, focusing on the method and design process and how thesis contributes to the discourse.


Gathering
Investigation
Implementation
Discussion
Theoretical framework
Northern Bohuslän
Architecture
Contextualism
Critical regionalism
Identity & place
Local history & culture
Building traditions
Literature
Literature
Archives
Site visits
Literature
Site visits
References
Local traditional architecture
Traditional building techniques
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Characteristic features in the built environment
Traditional building techniques
Tectonic compositions
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Line drawings
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Detail drawings
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Mapping
Site visits
Photographs
3d model of landscape
Literature
Possible locations
Program
Design process
Function
Location
Activating
Sketching & modelling
Applying theory
Reference projects
Design strategies
Iterative process
Proposal
Reflection & discussion
Drawings
Illustrations
Physical models

Gathering

Discourse

The framework guiding this project is informed by the belief that architecture never exists by itself in an isolated context. The relationship between architecture, its surroundings and time is a broad discourse and has been widely discussed and tried to be defined and redefined across various architectural theories and practices. During the modernist development in architecture, the individual building became the central object of architectural production. As a result, local characteristics and cultural differences, including climate, materials and local ways of living were of little interest to the global construction industry. This tendency is still present today, not at least due to an industry that is increasingly driven by economic gain and efficiency (Buras et al., 2025). Consequently, one could argue that contemporary architecture tends to feel placeless and resembles more and more a consumer product. The creation of placelessness is described by Edward Relph as "the casual eradication of distinctive places and the making of standardized landscapes that results from an insensitivity to the significance of place" (Relph 1976, preface). Furthermore, The knowledge of the people who has built and lived in certain environmental conditions is being lost when replaced with one-fits all solutions and gradually erasing its history in our collective memory.

This thesis addresses that there is a need for a new architectural ethos and seeks to investigate other ways to design architecture that embrace the locality, considers the context and reflect the site´s traditions. Principles of contextualism, critical regionalism and place identity provide a framework that recognizes the importance of local context, including history, climate, traditions and other site-specific conditions, while still promoting influences from contemporary building practices and global ideas.

A contextual design approach

Contextual theory in architecture concerns the relationship between the existing surroundings and new buildings with a focus on achieving coherence and continuity which in turn requires a deep understanding of the site´s context (Lamre & Dongre, 2019). Context is usually defined in various scales depending on the extent of a design. It can for example include vegetation, topography, building density, streets and arrangements of materials (AlFadalat & Al-Azhari, 2022). To create a meaningful connection between architecture and its surroundings one must also acknowledge that architecture is part of a much larger social and cultural system (Asgaard Andersen & Rank Schelde, 2012) where buildings can be seen as an expression of society, shaped by a particular moment in time and created for a specific place and people. Different structures, built during different stages of time, are therefore physical manifestations of people and give identity to a place. Although, grasping the fundamental character of a place and designing in a way that responds thoughtfully and respectfully to it, lies at the crux of contextual design (Lamre & Dongre, 2019).

Critical regionalism

Critical regionalism is a sub-theory to contextualism. The term was first coined by Liane Lefaivre and Alaxander Tzonis when identifying the globalization´s threat towards the character and identity of a place. Shortly after, the concept was further developed by Kenneth Frampton (1983), aiming to give a framework and theoretical guidelines for architects. There is a distinction between regionalism and critical regionalism, where the former tends to copy the past. Regionalism focuses on the context within a

specific region and takes strong influences from elements, materials and building techniques mostly because of the availability of materials that have been tested and adapted to places over time. The latter, critical regionalism, rose as a development from this but with an allowance of combining local and global and rooted and influenced, a balance between historical grounding and innovation. Frampton emphasizes the importance of local identity and argues that architects must find balance between valuing history and remaining receptive to external influences and change. The identity of a place, he suggests, is shaped through this dual movement: reinforcing regional and traditional qualities while simultaneously evolving through dialogue with other cultures and traditions (Frampton, 1983). For example, this can mean drawing inspiration from the topography and trying to enhance it rather than dominate it or change it. Working with the local climate and optimizing the natural light are also key aspects as well as the tectonic and tactile aspects which has the ability to connect the place through local materials and sensory experiences connected to it.

In this sense, the theory is understood as proposing a framework for sustaining a collective cultural identity. It emphasizes the importance of responding carefully to existing site conditions, calling for a heightened sensitivity to context. By linking new design with local traditions and knowledge, it proposes an alternative perspective that values the specific qualities of a place while still acknowledging broader global forces. Through this balance, it suggests an approach capable of generating architecture that is both contextually grounded and resilient.

Learning from the past and existing

Learning and taking inspiration from the existing is not a new act. Local historical buildings can be great examples of how people previously have adapted to the conditions given. The Austrian American architect Bernad Rudolfsky writes

> There is much to learn from architecture before it became an experts art. The untutored builders in space and time [...] demonstrate an admirable talent for fitting their buildings into the natural surroundings. Instead of "conquering" nature, as we do, they welcome the vagaries of climate and the challenge of topography.
>
> (Rudolfsky, 1964, p 4).

Most of the dwellings, barns (magasin) and boathouses in Bohuslän is a vernacular typology. According to Charles Holland, the term "vernacular architecture" describes a local tradition of building, that is usually constructed by practical rather than aesthetic qualities (Holland, 2019). However, the usage of vernacular architecture has expanded to include all buildings that somehow reference to traditional elements. He further states that once the vernacular is taken out of its original context, it inevitably transforms into something different. Based on this perspective, this thesis uses "local traditional architecture" when referring to the architecture studied, as not all of it is vernacular but where some of it rather has similarities to it. Nevertheless, the design implementation of this thesis seeks to utilize the knowledge of and qualities within the traditional buildings to translate into a contemporary design language.

Architecture and identity of place

To approach critical regionalism and a wider understanding of place is crucial. Identity is a multi faced term that can be understood as both personal and relational, shaping how individuals relate to others and to places. It accumulates through constant adding of experiences, including traditions, social relationships, geography and history that together influence how people understand and define themselves both in present times and is relating to both the past and future (Selander & Aamotsbakken, 2012).

An influential concept regarding the relationship between architecture, place and identity was introduced by the Norwegian architect and theorist Christian Norberg-Schulz in 1979 with his book "Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture". This theory was a critical approach against modernist architecture that instead turned the focus to place and its significance for architecture, emphasizing that places carry meaning that architecture can reveal, strengthen and respond to. The term genius loci is a Latin word translated into "the spirit of a place" which he describes as the unique the essence that gives a place character and means it this goes beyond physical form, encompassing the sensory, emotional, and cultural dimensions that shape how people experience and connect to their surroundings. According to him, human identity is rooted in place, meaning that we are the world around us, our space and it is the architect's job to acknowledge a space's qualities, and let architecture grow out of the spirit of a place when developing contemporary designs (Norberg-Schultz, 1979).

Another perspective of architecture and identity is found in Peter Zumthor´s approach to place in the book "A feeling of history", which is rooted in a site´s history and the memories embedded in it (2018). He means that history is everywhere and it can serve as a source of inspiration that is contextual grounded. However, he states that the point is not to copy historical influences but rather reinterpret and adapt to the present which offers a more conceptual grounding. This may for example include considerations of materials that age well, creating a patina that doesn´t deny the passing of time but rather ground it in time.

Furthermore, the study of place and identity is a complex subject, and the experience of a place differs between individuals. As James Corner describes, place can be understood as layers of values and information, including both physical and visual elements as well as cultural and social narratives (Corner, 1999). Combined, all of these approaches provide different perspectives on the notion of place, creating a base of what it can mean in architecture. In addition to being a physical and geographical location, place is understood through a phenomenological, historical and cultural lens, highlighting its more intangible properties. It also acknowledges the importance of broadening our perspectives regarding place, while addressing the complexity of contextual design. Moreover, the identity of a place is never static or complete but is constantly changing, being forgotten, reinterpreted and added to over time and this thesis utilized the term layered landscapes as way to summarize these different lenses and finally adding another layer to it.

Photograph of buildings in Hunnebostrand with boathouses along the shoreline, dwellings behind and the rock landscape in the background.

Roofscape in Smögen.

A story about Bohuslän

The landscape in Bohuslän is shaped by its location between sea and land. When the inland ice sheet melted, large parts of the land were covered by the sea. Gradually, the land rose and the water withdrew, forming the landscape we see today. Bare rock outcrops and islands emerged from the water, and what had previously been seabed became either arable and pastureland or wetlands (Werne & Östnäs, 1983).

People began to settle along the water and lived from fishing, hunting and by cultivating the land. Along the edges of the valleys, farmers built their houses on dry and solid ground to avoid rot and gain shelter from the mountains. A similar approach was used along the coast. Between the mountains, small natural and sheltered bays had formed and where the houses were protected from the wind.

The coastal communities have developed and been shaped over a long period of time, with farmers, masons and fishermen adapting and reshaping the land for their livelihoods over centuries. This interaction with the environment has had a strong influence in creating the architectural and cultural landscape, linked to a way of life connected to the closeness of the sea.

During the great herring periods, that occurred in intervals of 50 – 60 years at a time between the mid-1500s and early 1900s, the region experienced times of great expansion and welfare. The houses and their placement within the landscape from this period reflect this maritime heritage and what can be considered characteristic of coastal communities (Werne & Östnäs, 1983).

In the northern part of Bohuslän between Lysekil and the border of Norway, where the granite bedrock exists, a new industry began to take shape during the mid 19th century that marked a shift in the economic and social landscape of Bohuslän. The stone cutting industry established along the coast as it was heavily dependent on the maritime transport and some of the former fishing villages developed to be dominated by this industry (Östlund et.al, 2008).

During the 1960s and 70s, the amount of summer guests, tourists and seasonal households rose in Bohuslän's archipelago (Werne & Östnäs, 1983), and has since then expanded and developed to become one of the key drivers of the local economy (Sotenäs kommun, 2022). Although this can be seen as positive for the municipalities, the seasonal phenomenon has also inflated property prices and created challenges for permanent residents to afford a home. Today, approximately 50 % of the houses in Sotenäs municipality are part-time houses, (Sotenäs kommun, 2022), and is together with Åre and Gotland three municipalities that can´t cover municipal service coast because of the lack of enough permanent residents (Loberg, 2024).

Bohuslän´s building traditions

Bohuslän's traditional buildings could be seen as a reflection of a long and gradually evolved adaption to the coastal environment and is showing different solutions to ever-changing problems and needs.

Living by the sea and being dependent on it providing food, meant a harsh and unforgivable life. The sea can be inviting, glittering on a light breeze summer day, but it can also be brutal and persistent and has never considered people, even in the past when survival was at stake. The stories of fishermen heading out to sea highlights not only how exposed they were to the elements, but also how vulnerable humans are when faced with the power of nature.

The shifts in weather and seasons where the prerequisites for both the way of life as well as how the houses were built. The small natural harbors provided a semi protected location for settlements but the natural forces where constantly present. Daily contact with, and view over the sea was crucial for understanding the changes in the weather. The movement of the clouds, the character of the sky and sounds of the wind became indications of these shifts, and in extension lifesaving information if the conditions were favorable to head out to sea (Werne & Östnäs, 1983).

The houses where built in a rational way with the materials and techniques available at the time. The lack of wood in the coastal landscape made trading with forest farmers from the inland the most common way to find materials for the construction. The farmer, in turn, asked one or several lumbermen to construct all parts of the structure, assembly it and later disassembly it and ship it to the coming house owner.

Together with modernism and the development of the construction industry, new possibilities was introduced and the building condition evolved in parallel. The houses were expanded and new improvements such as indoor bathrooms and central heating change the appearance and forms. Today one can observe how new developments are built with standardized methods and insensitivity towards the ground. This often includes blasting the topography to make room for catalogue houses with the goal of maximized views or by trying to copy the past, creating pastiches of the "originals" which usually lack any connection to the context (Petterson, 2013).

Where people have lived by the sea
life has been shaped by the fact
that men have been home so little.

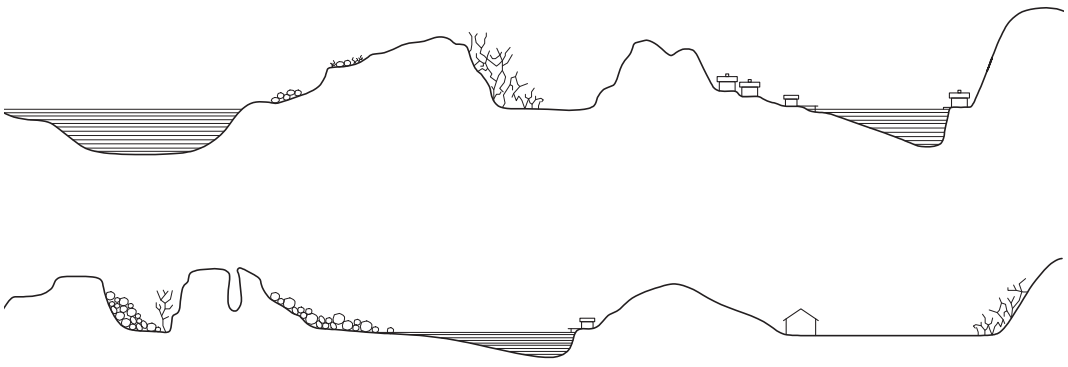
The sea separated people
and in love and affection
they had to endure waiting,
longing and dreaming.

How many days are left until we meet?
Because we will meet, right?
How long will we be together then?

Body and soul are impatient.
The time until the nest meeting is hardly worth
anything,
what if it could just disappear!

(Unknown author, n.d).

Fig 1. Bohuslän. Old fisherman in Smögen. (Reisz, A. & Reisz, I., n.d). CC BY-NC-ND



Traditional placement of buildings in Bohuslän

T L, Closly place buildings in Bovallstrand.
T R, Hunnebostrand.
B L, Boathouse in Bovallstrand.
B R, Privatization with fence in Hunnebostrand.

INVESTIGATION

Characteristics in the local traditional architecture

The buildings in the villages along the coast of Bohuslän are not designed by architects or planners but still built with great contentiousness where the topography, availability of materials and climate created a framework for buildings adapted to the life of the fishermen (Werne & Östnäs, 1983).

At first glance, the buildings seems to be randomly placed but there is a clear order leading the arrangement and consists of four components: the boat, the pier, the boathouses and one street up, the dwelling. Initially, the houses were built on leased land and didn´t belong to the owner of the house which made all land considered to belong to everyone in the community and it was free to move in the narrow alleys with exception from some arable land and enclosures for animals. The densely built houses created protection from the wind and rainfalls for both people and their houses. The pathways between the houses could then also be used for social activities as well as labor, and gears could be stored and dried between the times out on the sea. However, the social values were just as important in the communities and in extension the creation of the architecture and its spatial configuration. In general, building was a social process including approval from neighbors, solving conflicts and compromises along with unspoken building norms and traditions (Werne & Östnäs, 1983). The process of building a house usually started with the house owner placing wooden sticks on the intended land of the building. If the sticks were allowed to remain after a certain time, it was considered "approved" by the neighbors to build. Werne and Östnäs further describes the importance of being excepted within the village as a matter of survival and all work, including fishing, the raising of children and building, was done together, often in teams. If someone tried to raise above the others by stating material status or didn´t help with the work, the person could be excluded from the collective and therefore left to fend for themselves. The need for acceptance and sense of belonging is manifested in the uniform appearance since inspiration for different solutions, details, woodwork, facade colors etc was found in the neighboring house or within the village (Werne & Östnäs, 1983).

Building typologies

Two types of houses dominates within the housing typologies, "enkelstugan" which were the first to come, and "dubbelhuset" developed shortly after. The former is divided into two rooms with the fireplace in between and the latter is divided into four rooms, two larger and two smaller ones, organized around the fireplace. They were 1 to 1,5 stories high with the gable usually facing the water to enable at least one window with view of the water. Perhaps the most distinctive feature in Bohuslän is the boat houses, standing side by side with their front gable sticking out in the water. Various variations is found, both in terms of size and shapes but in general quite small. At first, they were one level, but as the gear increased in size and new types were needed, along the development of the fishing methods, larger storage spaces were also needed (Bohusläns museum, n.d).

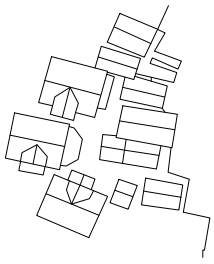
The barns (magasin) have varying backgrounds with some being connected to the export of oats during the early 19th century while other were connected to the fishing industry (bohusläns museum, n.d). They have similarities with the boathouses, with their gables facing the water and placed by the shoreline but are typically larger in size.

In general, all different typologies are timber constructions placed on stone foundations, although the earliest houses were built with stone, soil, seaweed and other materials found on site. Before the stone cutting industry, natural stones were used for the foundations, and the purpose was primarily to even the level for the timber to land on top. As the stonemasons brought the knowledge of stone masonry, it enabled the possibilities for building higher foundation walls and furnished basements (Werne & Östnäs, 1983).

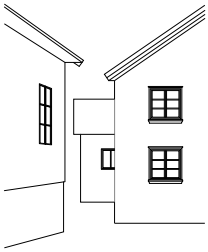
Common features found among all buildings are their red tiled gable roof. Many boathouses also have an extended gable overhang on the side towards the water which provides a semi-protected space and transition between indoor and outdoor. The facades are usually vertical wooden planks with batten panel, and the colors are in light shades, varying from white to yellow, blue, green or pink in the dwellings while the barns and boathouses are often painted in "falu rödfärg" as they originally were, or left untreated.

Cluster typology | Orderly irregular |Protection

Landscape silhouette | Buildings subordinated to the landscape

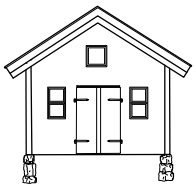


Shelterd entrances | Spatial qualities between buildings

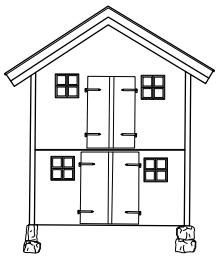


Corners | Alleys | Anticipac

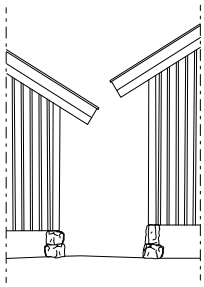
Dwellings | Typology



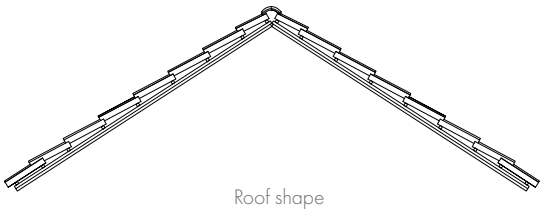
Boathouses | Typology



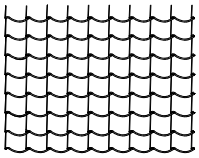
Warehouses | Typology



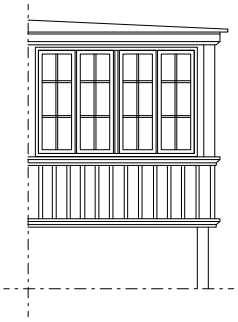
Placement | In between spaces



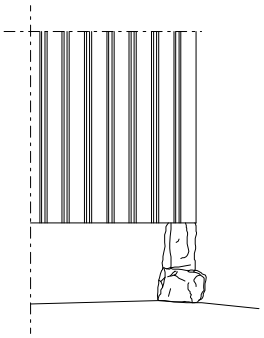
Roof shape



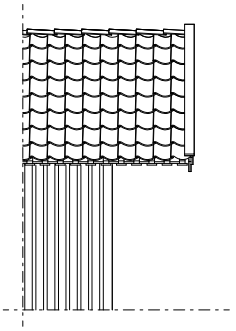
Roof material | Protect structure



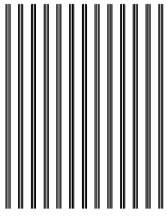
Porches | Indoor/outdoor spaces



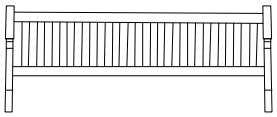
Stone foundation | Meeting with the ground



Extened gable | protection



Wooden facade | Protect structure



Benches |Outdoor socialization

Characteristics of local traditional architecture.

Traditional timber constructions

Practically, this thesis aims highlight traditional timber techniques and how it can be used in small scale structures and the following part further investigates the two primary timber constructions techniques used within the region.

Log timber construction

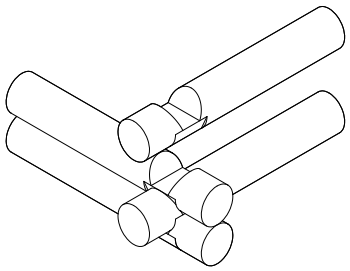
Log timber construction was until the 19th century the most common type of construction in the countryside in Sweden. These houses allow moisture to move naturally through the material, and they can both absorb and release moisture depending on the climate. This is one reason why log houses often are considered healthy and comfortable to live in.

The timber used in the constructions are in their natural dimensions. The thickness of the logs contributes to their ability to store heat, which affects the overall energy balance. When using this technique, it´s important to be aware that the construction shrinks when the wood dries and that needs to be calculated before.

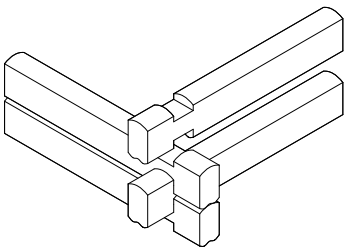
Prominent eaves and high foundations is beneficial to reduce the risk of rot as well as the quality of the heartwood. Different types of wood can be used but pine is most common. while spruce is also used, as it is lighter and has good insulating properties but can be more difficult to work with.

There are variations of different corner joints that historically have been used in different regions and for different types of houses. The oldest type is the Single-notch knot (rännknut), which was developed into the Straight double-notch knot (rak dubbelskårig knut). The dovetail knot (laxknut) became common the houses with intention of cladding the constructions, such as the dwellings in Bohuslän. The dovetail knot is locked in placed by angled surfaces in the corners (Håkansson, 2002).

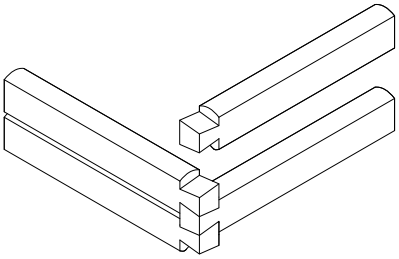
Joinery



Single-notch knot

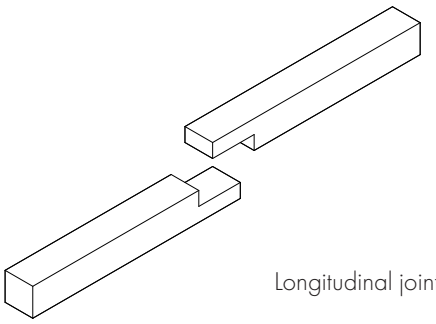


Straight double-notch knot

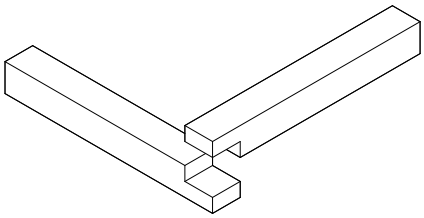


Dovetail joint

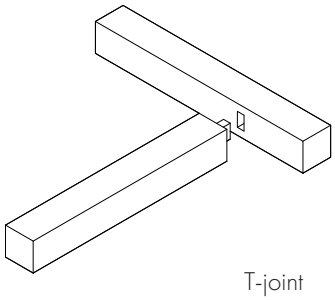
Joinery



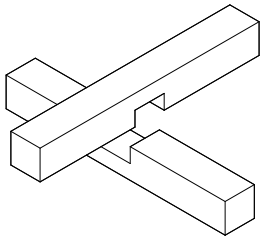
Longitudinal joint



Corner joint



T-joint



Cross joint

Timber frame construction

Timber framing has commonly been used in Sweden since the mid 19th century. The shift from previously only using log timber was to reduce the amount of material required and was faster to build.

Like the different types of knots in the log timber, there have been different types of timber framing techniques, half-timbering (korsvirke), post-and-plank (skiftesverk), and post-frame constructions (stavverk). Common for all the variations is that the load-bearing frame consists of either square, two-sided squared log or round timber and the internal and external forces are carried down to the foundation through the combined co-operation of vertical, horizontal, and/or diagonal structural elements. The dimensions is 4x4 inches (4 inches = 10,16 cm) or larger (Lassen, 2021).

Solid and minimally processed timber with large core is preferable and affects both the experience of, and the lifespan. This traditional construction type can be a relevant technique in contemporary practice aw well, as it allows for a flexibility of the interior without affecting the load bearing structure.

Significant with timber framing constructions is that they are built solely with wood, although it needs to be combined with insulating layers and claddings. This however offers an opportunity to combine the traditional techniques with modern materials.

The are a rich number of different joints but the main categories are longitudinal joints and transverse joints. The latter are divided into corner joints, T-joints and cross joints (Lassen, 2021).

Detail section | Log timber and stone wall foundation

1:10

Detail section | Timber frame construction and stacked corner stones 1:10

Reflection

By the investigation of the local traditional architecture, some conclusions that summarizes the impressions can be made that informs further development of the design work.

The first one is the subordinated relation to the landscape where each building is adapted to the terrain and the in the larger scale keeps the landscape silhouette intact. This became especially evident when comparing older and new architecture, where the last mentioned is often positioned higher in the landscape, disrupting the silhouette between rock and sky. Furthermore, the materials used are sustainable and long lasting where the stone foundation leaves non to minimal traces on the terrain and limited material palette express a kind of simplicity in the architecture with clear shapes and tectonic compositions. Lastly, a feature that is carried forward into the design work is the spatial qualities that the architecture possesses. The dense arrangements of buildings creates surprises around each corner and offers both private and social weather protected spaces in different dirictions and frames different sight lines.

Photograph from Hunnebostrand.

Site | Ramvikslandet

Method of mapping

With the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of the site, Ramsvikslandet, an extensive site analysis is carried out. This investigation has been inspired by Tim Robinson's approach and his work on the Aran Islands and in Connemara where he explored the landscape through walking, mapping, writing and documenting what he encountered, developing a way of reading the landscape gradually accumulating over time (Quirke, 2021; Smith, 2015).

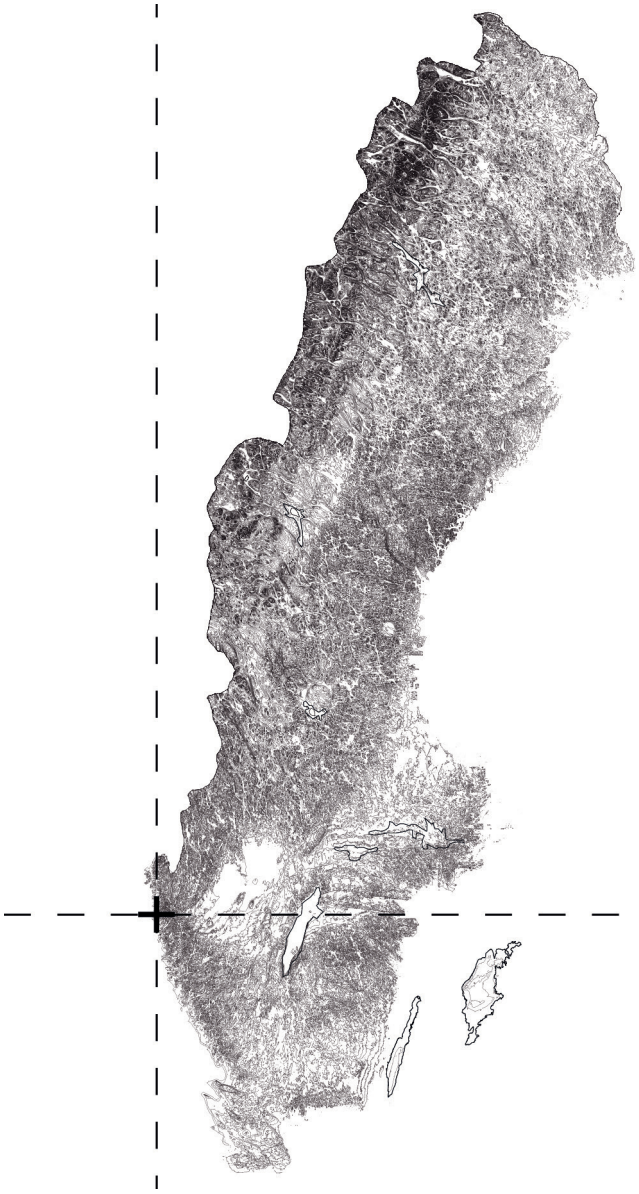
The process of mapping is here to be seen as an open ended activity where the observations are gathered simultaneously and blends different forms of information where physical features including topography, traces of humans and geology overlaps with history, folklore and personal experiences of moving through the landscape, creating a layered reading of the site. These investigations are collected in an detailed map with different layers, combined with writings, diagrams and photographs to create an overlapping understanding of the layered character, including traces of both past and present conditions and more hidden or fragmented histories.

Introduction to Ramsvikslandet

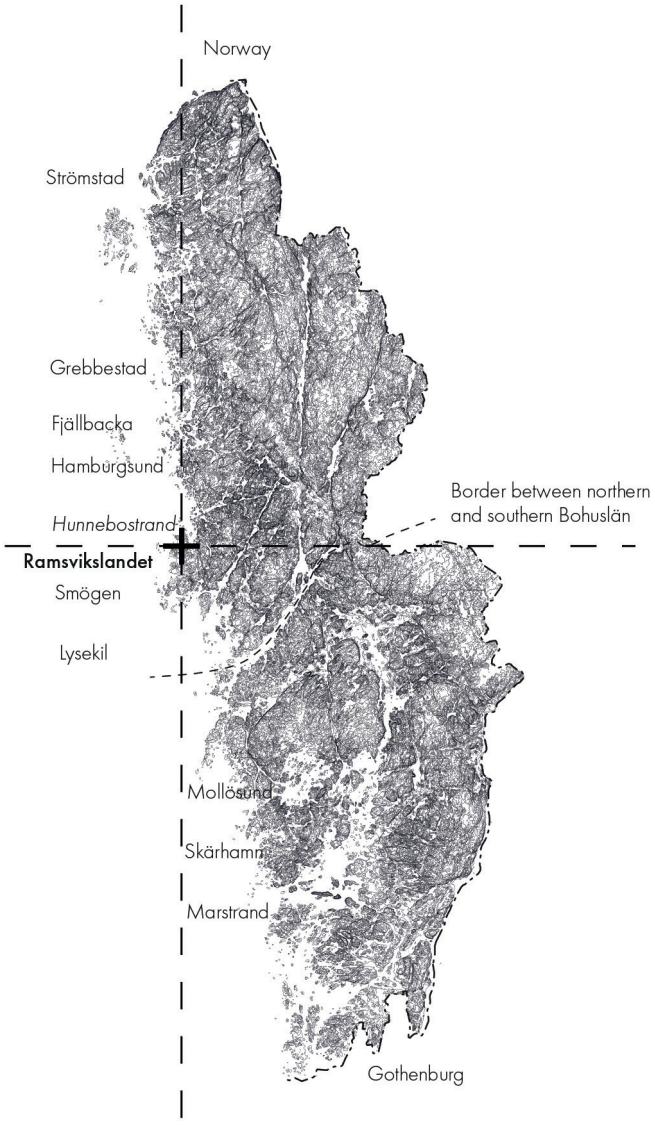
Ramsvikslandet is located southwest of Hunnebostrand and is characterized by the undulating granite cliff landscape. The area is most easily reached by car or bicycle but there are also public transport within walking distance to the bridge that connects the mainland and island. Additionally, it can also be reached by boat or kayak.

Around 100 000 people visit Ramvikslandet each year (Sotenäs kommun, 2022), primarily for day hikes, bathing and climbing. There is an existing network of trails, including one section of "Bohusleden", starting from multiple locations. The varied coastal ecology, favorable for a rich bird life, also makes the area popular among birdwatchers.

There is today an investigation for a future visitor center (naturrum) where different locations have been proposed. Althoung this process is at hold at the moment and are therefore uncertainties of what it will lead to (Sotenäs kommun, 2022).



Site location in Sweden



Site location within Bohuslän

Site location within Sotenäs municipality and relation to closest towns

Walking the landscape

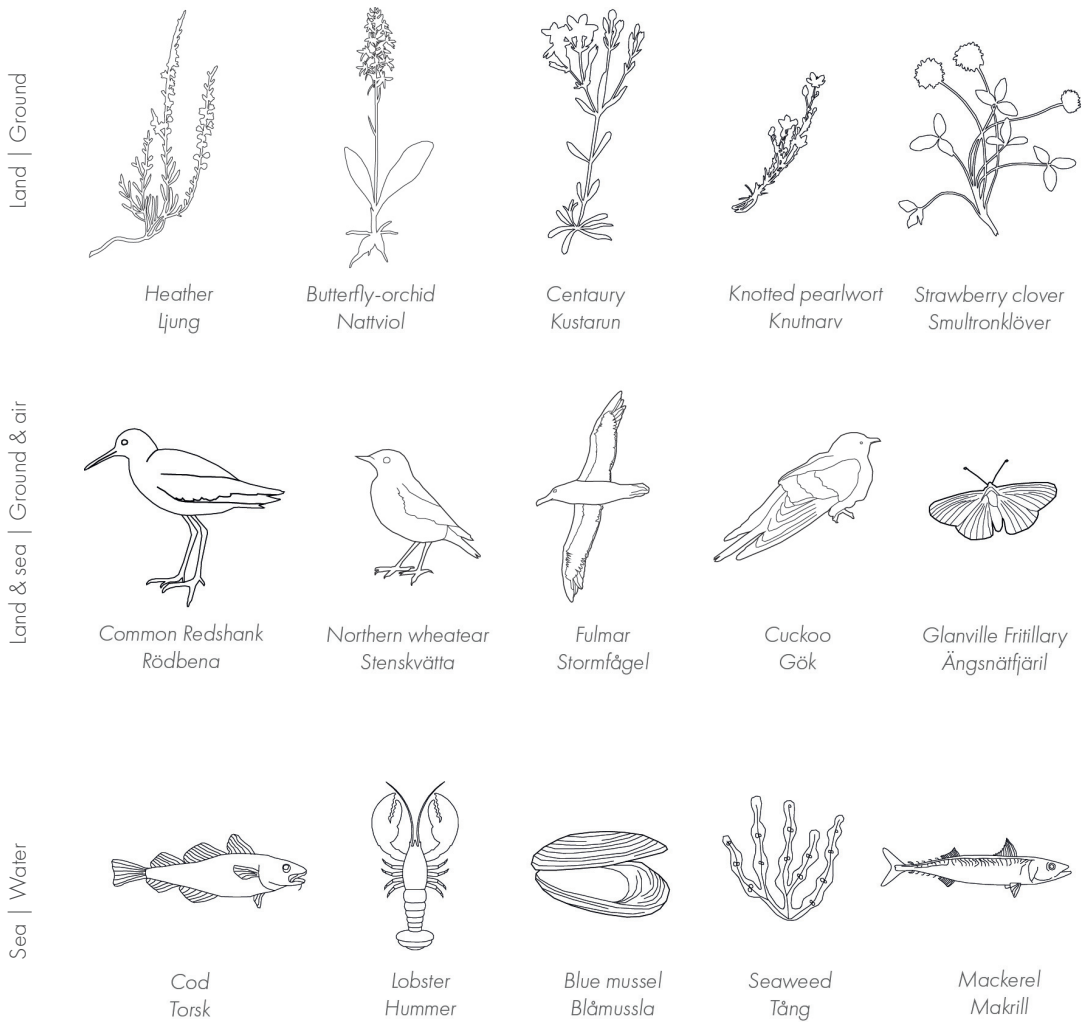
During five days at different occasions and in various weather conditions I have been walking the island, aiming to explore both the established trails and my spontaneous movements , while tracking my routes. The first of the visits took place in February, a gray day when the snow still lay like a blanket over the landscape. The second visit occurred at the end of March, and I was met by another experience where the sun was shining, and the snow had melted which meant that much of the meadows and open fields were soaked with meltwater. During the third visit I stayed three days at the island in the end of April with mixed weather conditions, from fog and rain to moments of the sun peeking through.

Generally, the landscape is relatively easy to move through but there are also areas that require more careful considerations, where it´s not at all clear where and how to continue forward which slows down the pace. As one moves across the island you experience a mix of flat, open and windy rock landscapes, enclosed forest areas to smooth and rounded red granite cliffs suddenly shifting to a crevice or cobble field that demands your attention. Certain sections therefore include climbing and jumping over the rock or even returning to find another way. The sudden shifts in the ground is especially evident when walking in times of snow when the small cracks and pits can´t be seen until you notice that your foot disappears.

The cliffs and the sea usually drew my attention, creating a feeling of being both free and exposed, small within an almost never-ending cliff landscape. At times, the sound of waves crashing against the shore and the wind are all that can be heard, while as soon as you turn inland, only a distant roaring remains. However, the windswept trees and bushes testify to the presence of the wind there as well. The shrubs appear crooked at the top, and the taller trees sway even when the wind is barely felt on the ground.

The site visits provided numerous impressions and also allowed for informal conversations with other visitors, offering a broader perspective and insights into both past and present conditions. The strongest impressions came from the meeting between the sea and the cliffs, the feeling of solitude, and the variety of environments that continually lead to new surprises, regardless of where on the island you go.

Myren, Ramsvikslandet.



Some species on and around Ramsvikslandet.

Ecology

In 2006, Länsstyrelsen decided to protect most of the island as a nature reserve to preserve and protect the unique coastal landscape with the area´s rich biodiversity, rare plants, traces of the ice sheet and to secure the area for outdoor recreation.

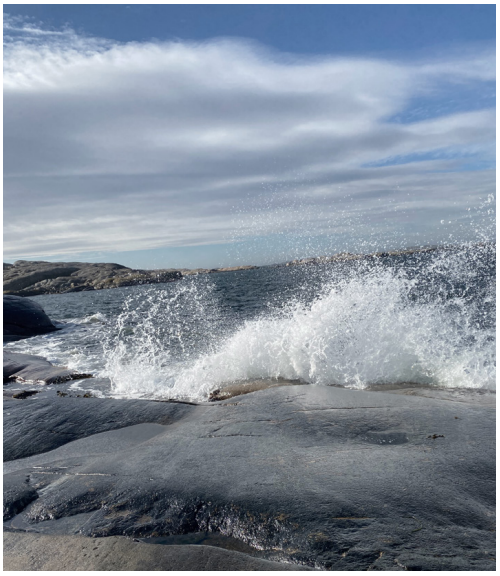
Flora and fauna

There is diverse set of biotopes where barren red granite and other bedrocks transitions to heathland, wet heath, wetland, open meadows and scattered shrubs, to areas of dense deciduous thickets in protected valleys creates a mosaic pattern with different ecological zones and micro habitats inhabited by a large number of species. Many of them are in other places uncommon but survives due to the continuation of the rough grazing by cows. Between the cliff grows different bulbous and fat-leafed plants and plants like beach poppy, coastal rune and beach thrift thrives on the beach meadows.

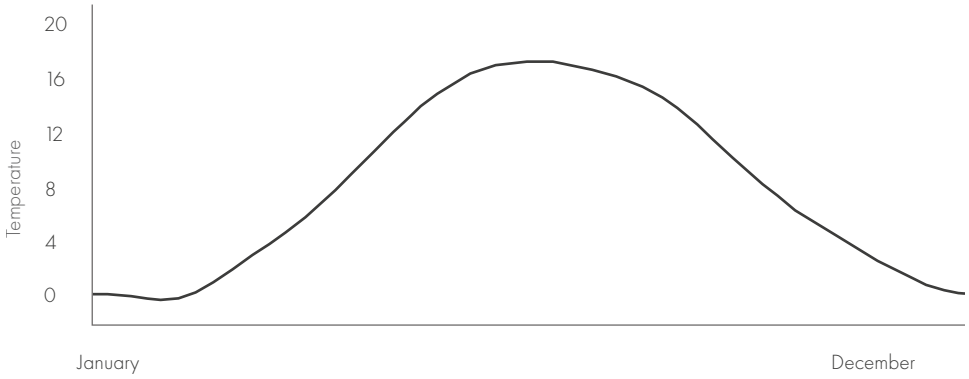
The island has also a rich bird life, with many species nesting in the open terrain, sheltered vegetation, and wetlands. The area becomes especially active during migration periods, when changing winds and weather conditions brings seabirds closer to land creating constant movement in the sky. The shallow bays and lagoons provide important feeding and resting grounds while dabbling ducks can be seen in the small lakes and open wetlands. In the warmer months, smaller flying insects adds another layer of activity to the environment. Overall, Ramsvikslandet offers a constantly shifting ecological rhythm, where seasonal changes influence the presence and behavior of its wildlife (Västkuststiftelsen, 2020).

Weather and climate

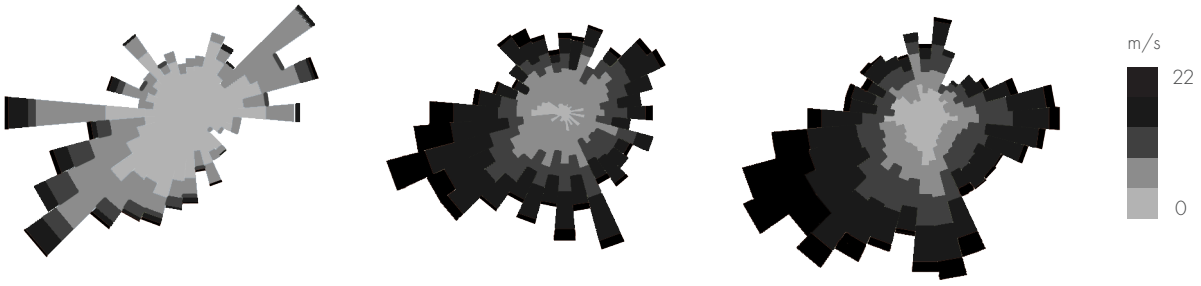
Located at one of the most western parts of Bohuslän, the climate is affected by the presence of Skagerrak and shaped by the North Atlantic westerly wind belt. The sea acts as a moderating force, softening the winters and prevents excessive heat in the summer. The day temperature are usually around 20°C during summer and around + 2 to +4 °C during winter, while during the night it is around 14 °C and -2 °C respectively. (vackertvader, 2026). However, as the landscape is constantly exposed to the weather systems of the sea and winds moving from the southwest, making the experience of the climate is less about temperature and more about the interaction between wind, salty air and the terrain. This makes it an appreciated area to visit throughout the year where the character of the place shifts with the seasons and weather. During autumn and winter, when low pressure passes, the wind generates large waves and rapid changes in the weather can occur (SMHI, n.d).



Waves crashing against the rock, continuing to polish the stone.



Normal day temperature throughout the year, based on data from Hunnebostrand.



Windroses showing direction and intensity based on data from Svarteborg (left), Måseskär fyr (middle) and Väderöarna (right).

Crevice with wave-washed moraine.

T, Cliff formation, Koholmen.
B, Giant's kettle, Öberg Tånge.

Klippornas rike

The island, also called "Kingdom of rocks" (Klippornas rike), has a distinct geological character shaped by the bedrock and the powerful forces of nature. During the last ice age, Weichselian glaciation, the area was covered by a thick ice sheet that both eroded and sculpted the Bohus granite landscape. As the ice retreated, it left behind clear traces such as glacial striations (isräfflor), rounded sheep backs (rundhäll), sickle troughs (skärtråg) and wave-washed moraine (svallad morän) that later has been shaped by the sea waves (Länsstyrelsen Västra Götaland, n.d.; Västkuststiftelsen, n.d.). In places, melt water from the ice also carved out giant's kettles (jättegrytor) in the bedrock, where stones and sediment rotated and gradually drilled deep, circular cavities (Västkuststiftelsen, n.d.).

The smoothed rock surfaces and exposed bedrock create long sight lines, making the topography readable even at a distance. At the same time, the variation between bare rock, moraine-filled depressions, and coastal lowlands creates a subtle rhythm that shapes movement through the area. Rather than following straight paths, movement tends to adapt to natural contours, rock formations, and shoreline edges, resulting in a slower and responsive way of navigating the terrain.

"I Sote bonde
Där bor den Onde.
I Hällingedalen
där sprang han galen.
I Kaste kleven
där bröt han sleven.
I Sote skog
där sådde han råg.
På Sote hällen
där malde han mälden".

"In Sote Bode
The Evil One lives
In Hällinge Valley
there he ran madly.
In Kaste cleft
there he broke his spoon.
In Sote Skog
there he sowed rye.
On the Sote rock
there he ground the grain."

(Alexandersson & Nyrén, 2019.)

Folklore

Ramsvikslandet is a landscape where physical form and cultural imagination have long been intertwined. The dramatic coastal terrain was historically not read as scenic, but as powerful and unpredictable. Nature was experienced as something resisting human control, where storms, changing fish stocks, and harsh living conditions were often interpreted through myth and superstition (Alexandersson & Nyrén, 2019).

The distinctive rock formations around Ramsvikslandet, particularly Sote Bonde and Sote Huvud, are embedded in local folklore involving giants and supernatural forces. Sote Bonde is both part of mythic narratives and as a guardian of the surrounding waters. Even smaller places were given names and meaning. The skerry between Klövskär and Öbergs Tånge is called "Ängeln" (the Angel) or Brännwinsskäret (the Brandy Skerry) a name that contrasts the harsh coastal environment with an idea of protection or calm after passing the skerry that was celebrated by taking a drink (Holmberg as cited in Alexandersson & Nyrén, 2019).

The sea was equally central to folklore. Unpredictable herring migrations were explained through figures such as a "herring king," or through beliefs that magical objects placed in the sea could alter fish stocks. In this way, both land and sea became part of a broader interpretative landscape, where environmental change was understood through culturally constructed meanings (Alexandersson & Nyrén, 2019).

Today, these narratives remain as a cultural layer in the understanding of Ramsvikslandet. They reinforce the perception of a landscape where the dramatic cliffs are not only geological formations shaped by ice and sea, but also carriers of historical imagination, belief, and local storytelling. And the contrasts of the landscape, clear summer vistas versus fog and storm, continue to support a sense of the place identity, both visually and historically.

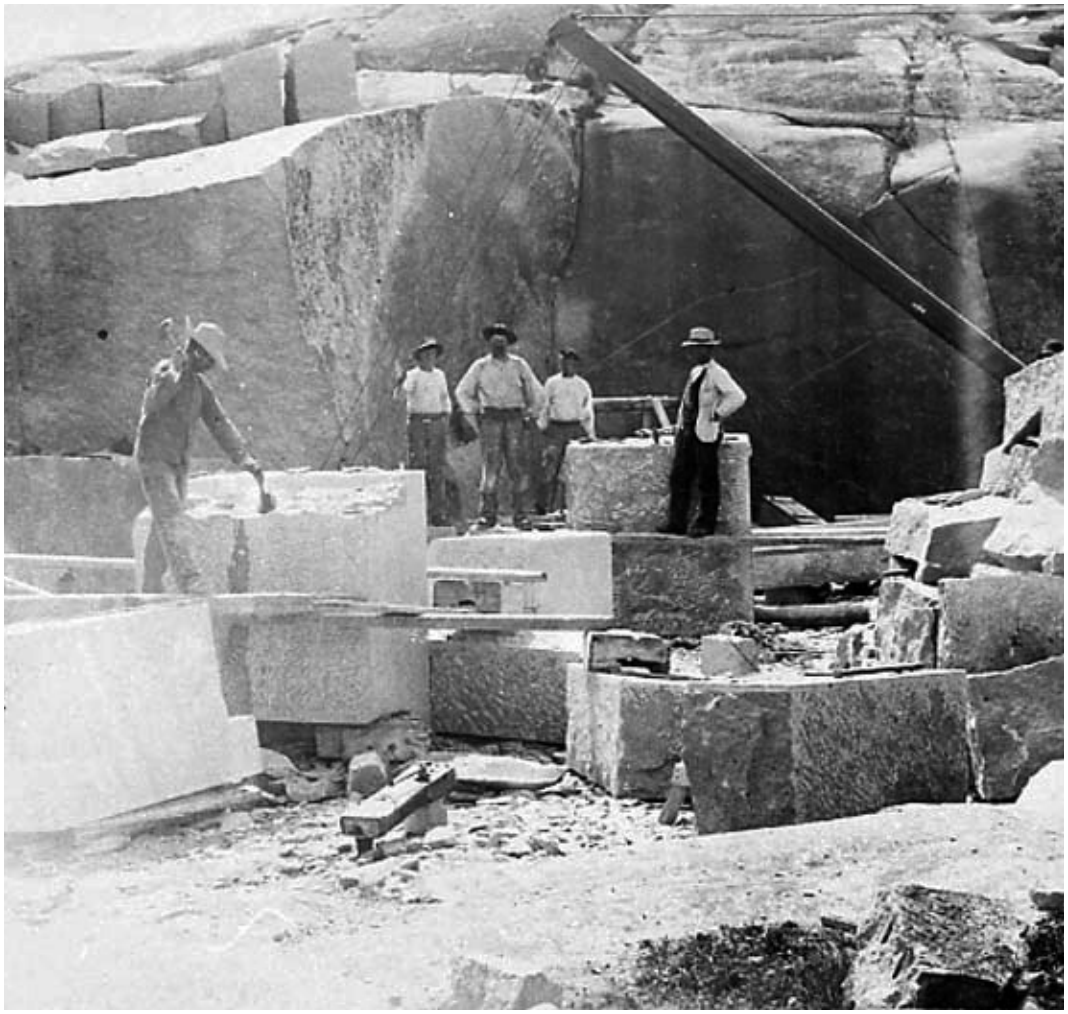


Fig 2. "Quarry", Ramsvik Askum. "The quarry called Klonducke".

Human inhabitation and traces

There is a long history of human inhabitation on Ramsvikslandet, the oldest one dating back to the stone age when much of the land present today was still under water. Traces of old settlements, tools and carvings in the rock have been found at multiple locations and many high stone walls scattered on the island testifies to that humans have been cultivating the land (Nordell & Rydbom, 2009).

On the west side, in Fykan, are a few buildings present from late 1800 consisting of three dwellings, 3 boathouses, one barn and some storage buildings. This was originally a small fishing village, where the site offered good conditions with closeness to the sea, spring water nearby as well as pastures and arable land. These houses are today only used during summer after the last permanents left in 1980. There is also an old fishermen´s house in Grosshamn, and the area around it was occupied by the military under the second world war and barracks and sheds were added gradually around the area (Alexandersson & Nyrén, 2019). In 1992 the training ground was closed and three of the buildings are today used by Bohuslän Ornithological Society and a bunker plus concrete foundations remains.

In the northern part around Tångevik, previously called Ramsvik Askum, a Norwegian company leased parts of the land and started a quarrying operation in the 1890´s. A small stonecutters' community developed in direct connection to the quarry (Östlund et.al., 2008). Scars in the landscape as well as piles of stones and scattered boulders from when after the quarrying stopped is still present and lie in piles.

As the water outside Ramsvikslandet is known for being challenging due to their shallow reefs and harsh weather conditions, the canal was constructed to facilitate seafaring in the 30s, making the land an island once again. The work was carried out through AK Arbeten (the work commission) as major crises in the stonemasonry industry during the 1920s and 30s led to many unemployed stonemasons (Östlund et.al., 2008).

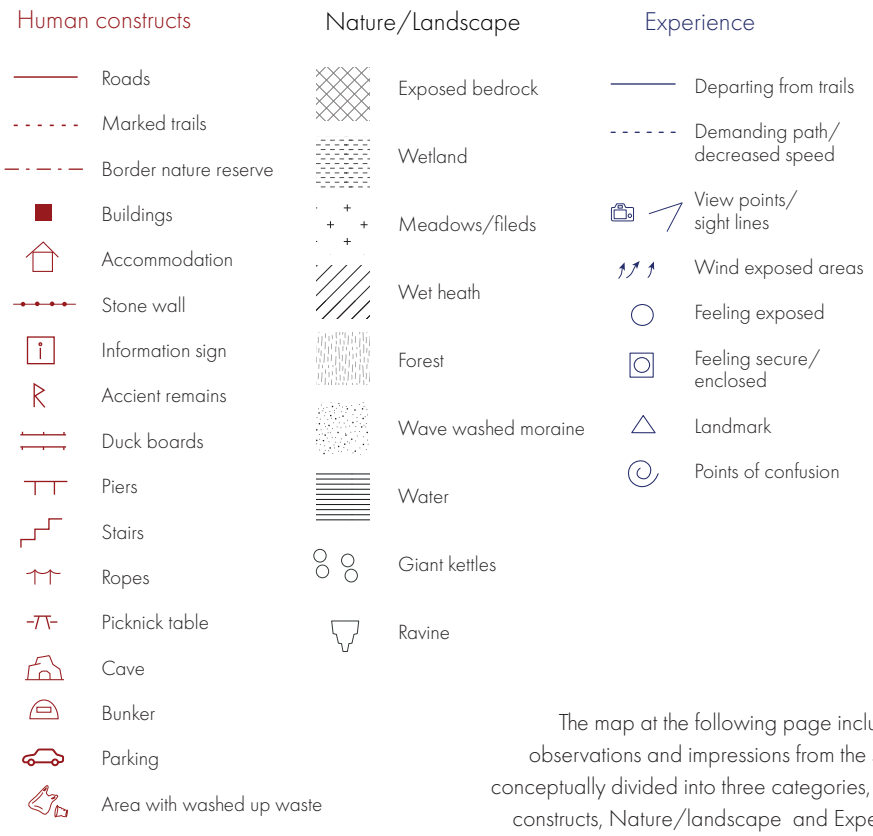
The presence of humans can also be seen in installed artifacts such as duck boards, staircases and ropes to support accessibility. There are also less intentional traces in forms of trash and drift waste mostly seen along the shoreline and in bays. According to two other visitors, the amount of trash is significantly less now compared to the 80s, likely to people being more aware of the issue but also because of the different organizations engaging in beach cleaning which has made big difference. However, a lot of different types of trash were found over the island, fishing nets, glass, plastic containers and bottles etc.

Examples of ocean waste found along the shoreline.

Reflection

The process of making the site analysis and spending time on the island has revealed that Ramvikslandet is a complex landscape shaped by both natural processes and the long presence of humans. It shows a variety of environments layered on top of a cultural and historical landscape creating an endless experience of surprises. Exposed rock formations and open, windswept terrains contrast with more sheltered valleys and at some places denser vegetation and changes in terrain and elevation alter the movement, orientation, vistas and focus.

The landscape is never static but understood as constantly shifting along with the seasons, weather and time of the day as well as it is affected along with new or changed regulations and human settlements and actions in and for the nature that in return shape the experience of the site. It exposes the history and process of the last ice age forming the undulating rock formations that withstand weather and time and can in many ways be seen as a robust landscape. At the same time, it´s ecologically fragile, with unique spices and habitats dependent on grazing and are sensitive to disturbance. The adding of new structures in this landscape therefore needs to be done with a sensitive approach where the interventions balance between preservation and accessibility. The main experience of the island should be continued to evolve around the unique nature and landscape and rather than dominating the existing, the design should in return heighten awareness and foster a sense of care of it and its historic environment, allowing the layered landscape to continue exist but also develop.



The map at the following page includes the observations and impressions from the site and conceptually divided into three categories, Human constructs, Nature/landscape and Experiences Each layer of the map can be found in appendix 2.

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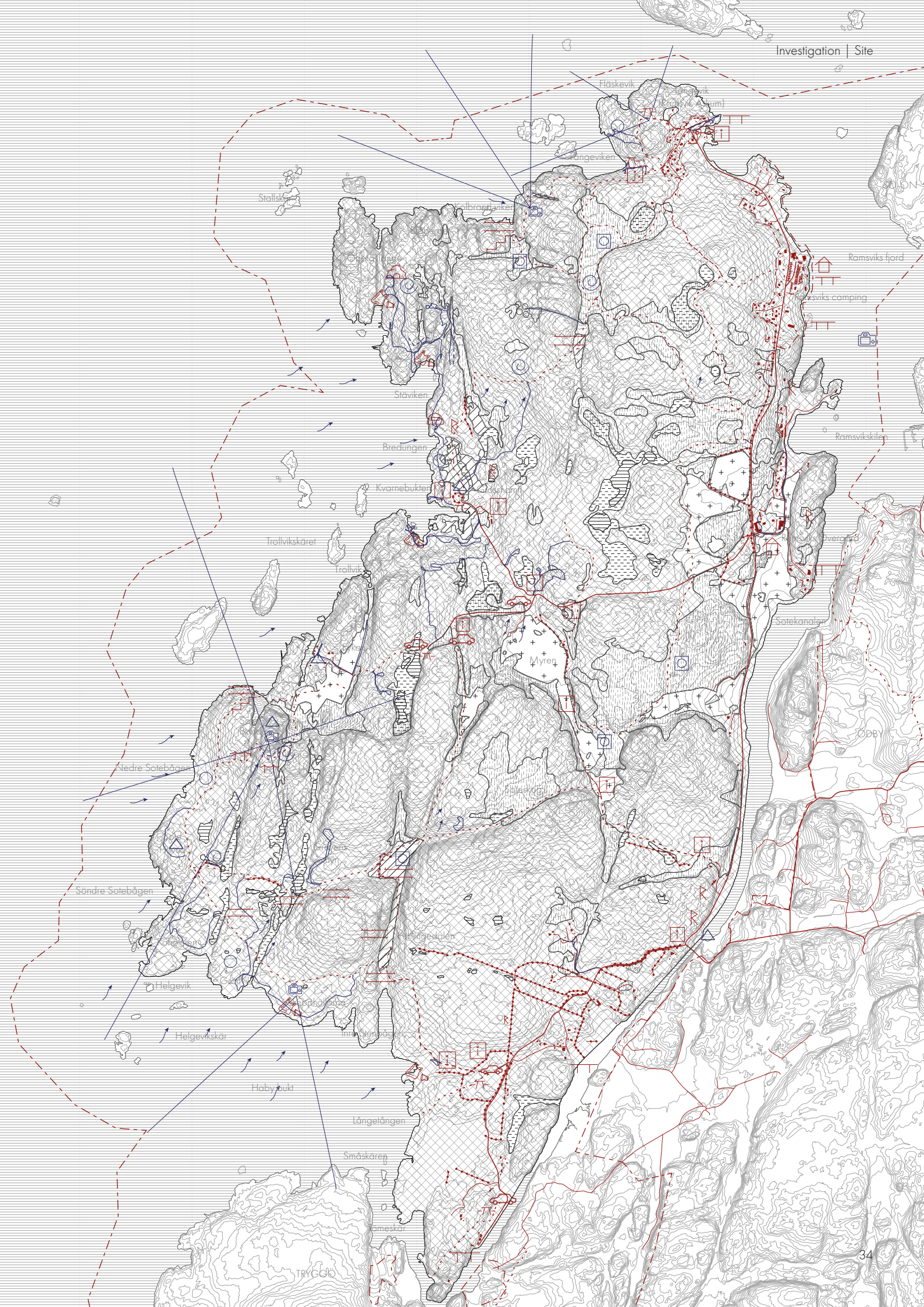

Fläskevik
Ramsvik (Ramsvik, Åkum)
Långeviken
Stallskär
Kallbrandsviken
Ramsviks fjord
Ramsviks camping
Stäviken
Bredungen
Ramsvikskilen
Kvarnebukten
Trollvikskäret
Trollvik
Övergård
Sotekanalen
Myren
Nedre Sotebågen
Södra Sotebågen
Helgevik
Helgevikskär
Haby bukt
Långetången
Småskären
TRYGGÖ

Implementation

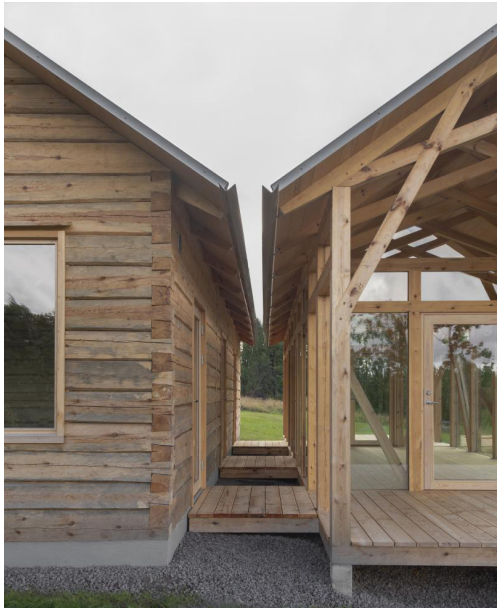
The implementation chapter summarizes the previous phases through the final design proposal. It begins with a presentation of built references that have guided and informed the design development throughout the process. This is followed by a description of the design process and tools used to explore, test, and refine the proposal along with the program and purpose with the interventions. The chapter concludes with the final presented design.

Fig 3. Log timber construction and timber frame construction. Photograph by Mikael Olsson, (n.d), from FABEL Arkitektur.

Fig 4. The Nordic watercolor museum. Photograph by Nick Sieger, (2009), from Flickr. CC BY-SA 2.0

Fig 5. Mining galley. Photograph by Astrid Westwang, (2017), from Flickr. CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Built references



Höghult | Fabel Arkitektur | Sweden | 2020

The project is of few where log timer and timber framing are brought together into once design. It it of relevance to the thesis serving as an inspiration of contemporary timber constructions and techniques, reinterpretation of a historical typology while still preserving its similarities to original. The choice of construction is based on its intented functions and levels of privacy. It´s an example where contemporary materials like corrugated steel and large glass windows together with different proportions usually not seen in that type of construction is introduced and contrasting with the familiar.

Studios at the Nordic Watercolour Museum | Niels Bruun & Henrik Corfitsen | Sweden | 2000

Opposite the main building of the watercolor museum in Skärhamn, are five guest studios primary for artists and researches located. The studios are individual volumes, connected by a wooden deck forming framed views and spaces between the buildings. The project is an inspiration of how they are adapted to the surrounding, not dominating the landscape through placement and material choices as well as separating the volumes rather than a large volume and introduces a more modernistic, strict design based on todays material and technical conditions.

Allmannaljuvet | Peter Zumthor | Norway | 2016

The project aims to use architecture as a way for people to experience both nature and culture with a focus on letting visitors take part of the memories of the mining industry and workers that took place at the site in the 19th century. Three volumes with different functions, a cafe, a service building and a museum is placed scattered at the plot. It is a reference project based on how Zumthor design in relation to a deep understanding of the site´s history, culture and materials. The theory concerning place identity is here expressed for example through materiality and the use of zinc as well as how the black facade and interior reflects of the working conditions in the mine and the small scattered volumes has similarities with the old sheds and simple structures which was previously on the site (Slessor, 2017).

Process

The design work is based on the previous steps taken where tactics and strategies from the local traditional architecture combined with the investigation of Ramvikslandet are tested, evaluated and developed into a proposal. Applying the presented theories, the design strives to be connected to its context, meaning its physical location as well as cultural, historical and sensory experience and is therefore a two-way process.

The material palette has been limited to hewn granite, timber, zinc and glass to create a restrained and cohesive architecture that can withstand the coastal climate and age and create a patina over time. Inspiration is found in the studios at the water color museum where the material palette is influence by the barren landscape, a subdued expression while still relating to the material heritage.

Hewn granite is used as foundation material as the material itself durable, resistant to salt, wind and moister and requires a minimal intervention on the bedrock. Additionally, as the former stone cutting area around Tångevik has piles of granite blocks the stone could be brought locally from the island and reused in the construction reflecting a material, cultural and historical layer of the island´s context. The proposal would mean transporting the stones by boat to different locations and further moved to the sites inland.

The design also develops with the intension of creating different types of outdoor spaces. To minimize the visual impact on the landscape the volumes are kept low and indoor spaces limited, making the outdoor spaces transition between indoor and outdoor, valuable as one is constantly exposed to the weather.

Furthermore, the usage of the two timber construction principles, timber framing and log timber, is used in relation to their spatial and atmospheric qualities. Log timber that is perceived as heavier and a more protective, creates inward oriented spaces while the timber framing, appears lighter and more open that allows for simpler occupations.

Zinc, wood and bohus granite as main material along with glass

Behind/against wall

Trellis wall

Inverted spaces

Corners

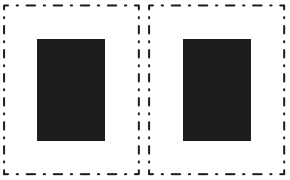
Inverted spaces with roof

Arcade

Between buildings

Roof overhang

Between buildings with roof



Between buildings with roof overhang

Strategies considered to create protected outdoor spaces

Program | Activating visitors and structures

Ecotourism is a growing field of interest and is defined as environmentally, socially, and culturally responsible travel that aims to preserve ecosystems while supporting the well-being of local communities (Clarkin & Kähler, 2023). As the natural environment of northern Bohuslän is highly valued by both residents and visitors (Hultengren & Bohman, 2013), the program is here used as a tool to activate both the structures and visitors. The proposal seeks to foster a greater interest in, appreciation of, and engagement with the nature while also highlighting its historical and cultural heritage.

At the same time, the project aims to reduce concentrated pressure on sensitive areas of the landscape by distributing activities across a wider territory. To support this approach, the program proposes a series of small-scale interventions arranged in a dispersed composition rather than a compact layout, allowing the landscape to remain the primary focus to a greater extent. The collection consists of a service facility, three cabins, and two shelters.

Service facility

A central information point with a small exhibition space and gathering area that also provides basic services of toilets, water station and a waste disposal by the parking area.

Cabins

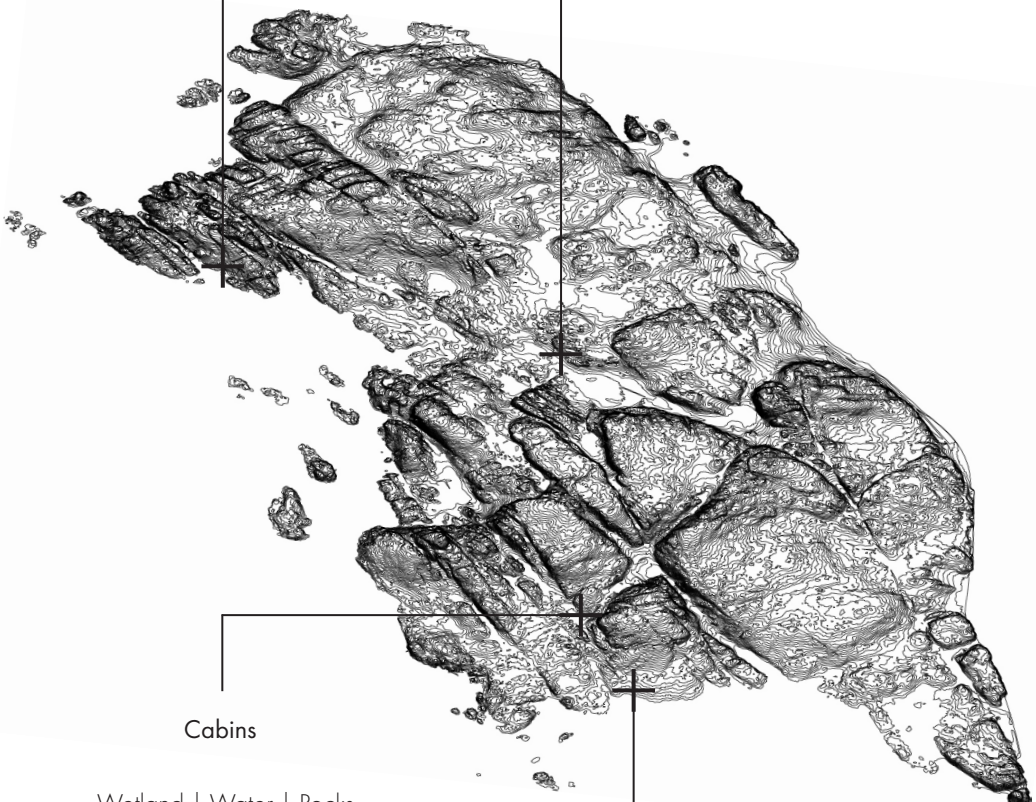
A set of three cabins that offers temporary overnight stays. It is a primitive program without running water and is equipped with fireplaces and spaces to sleep, sit and prepare simple food.

Shelter I

A sheltered space providing protection from the wind and is a place for smaller groups to gather. It supports the established engagement of beach cleaning and provides an temporary ocean waste disposal area.

Shelter II

A combined space for rest and pause. It can be used as a simple shelter for overnight stays but is also equipped and designed to function as a sauna.



Shelter II

Ocean | Cliffs

Private
Moderate/Difficult

Service facility

Rocks | Wetland | low vegetation | Shrubs

Public
Esay acess

Cabins

Wetland | Water | Rocks | Low vegetation | Shrubs

Semi-private
Moderate

Shelter I

Rocks | Sparse low vegetation

Public
Moderate

Proposal

Service facility

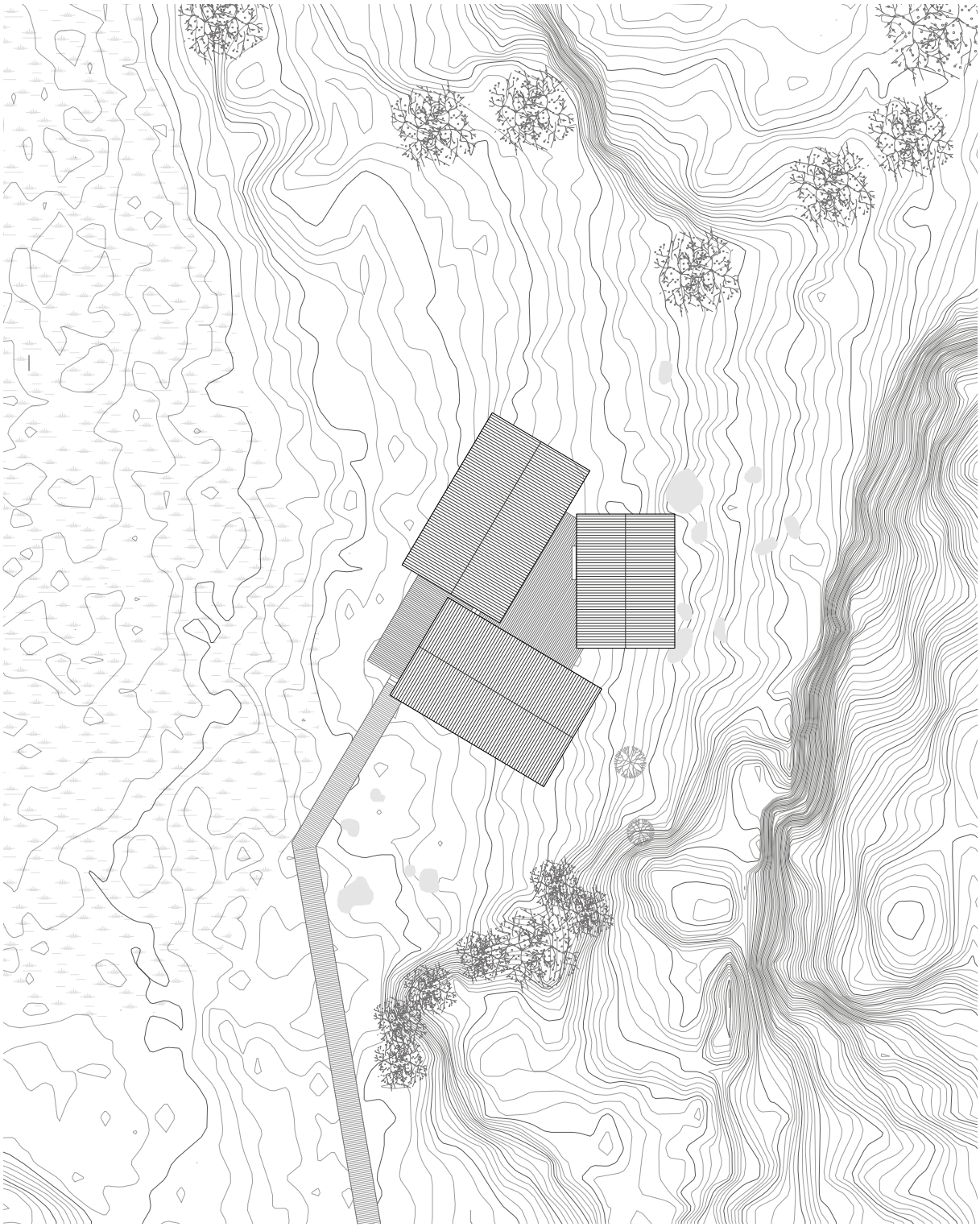
The service facility is located central on the island, accessible by car, bicycle and by foot. Positioned where several trails intersect, the site connects the northern and southern parts of the reserve, making it both an orientation node and entry point. The idea with this intervention is to provide essential information about the landscape, its ecology and ongoing nature management through an exhibition space and create a space to gather as well as providing basic functions of toilets, water access and waste management by the parking lot.

The facility is placed alongside a rock formation, hidden when approaching the site from the west and gradually appears when continuing the road towards Grosshamn and the parking area. When arriving from the east, the facility slowly appears as one move up the sloping terrain. It is divided into three smaller volumes placed closely together inspired by the cluster typology, creating semi protected outdoor spaces and by its placement, providing outdoor spaces in different directions and framing different views of the landscape. As the landscape consists of scattered stones and heathland, transitioning in to wetland in the east, the facility links to the parking by a foot bridge.

Constructively, the intervention combines both timber framing and log timber construction. The toilet- and social building are designed with a timber framing system while the exhibition that is more inward oriented, is designed in log timber which makes it naturally insulated with addition of insulation in the roof and floor structure. The three volumes are visually held together by roof shape, angle, materiality and proportions.

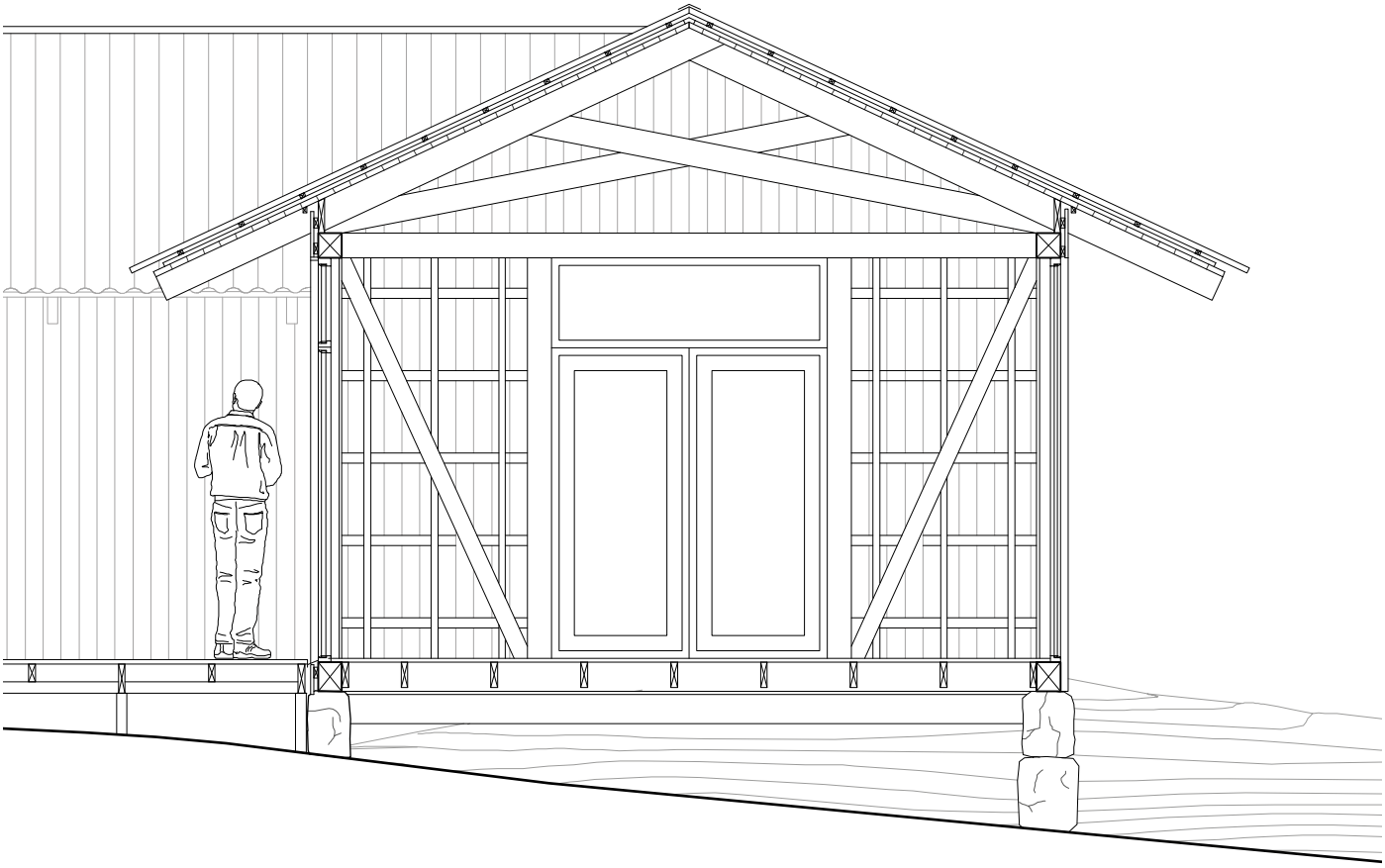
Photographs from the site.

Site plan 1:1000

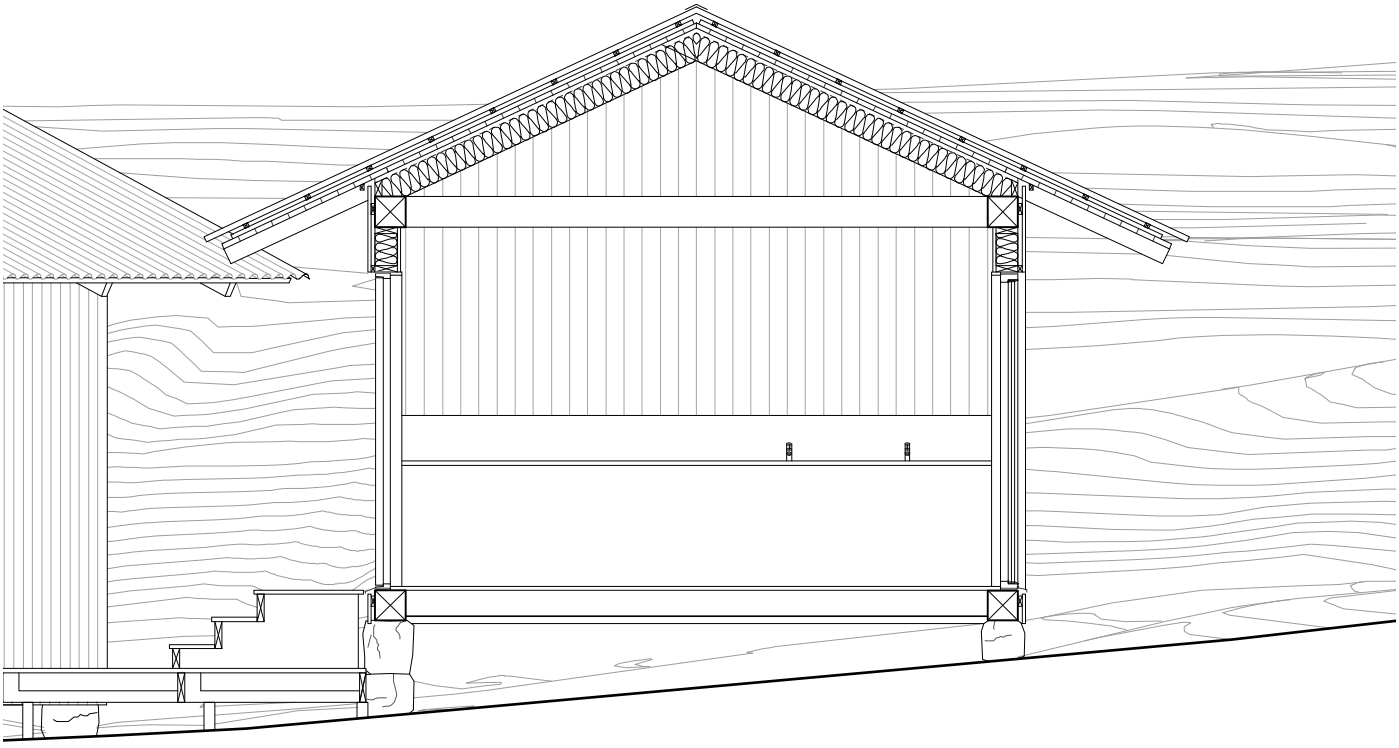


Site plan 1:400

View of service facility from the southeast.

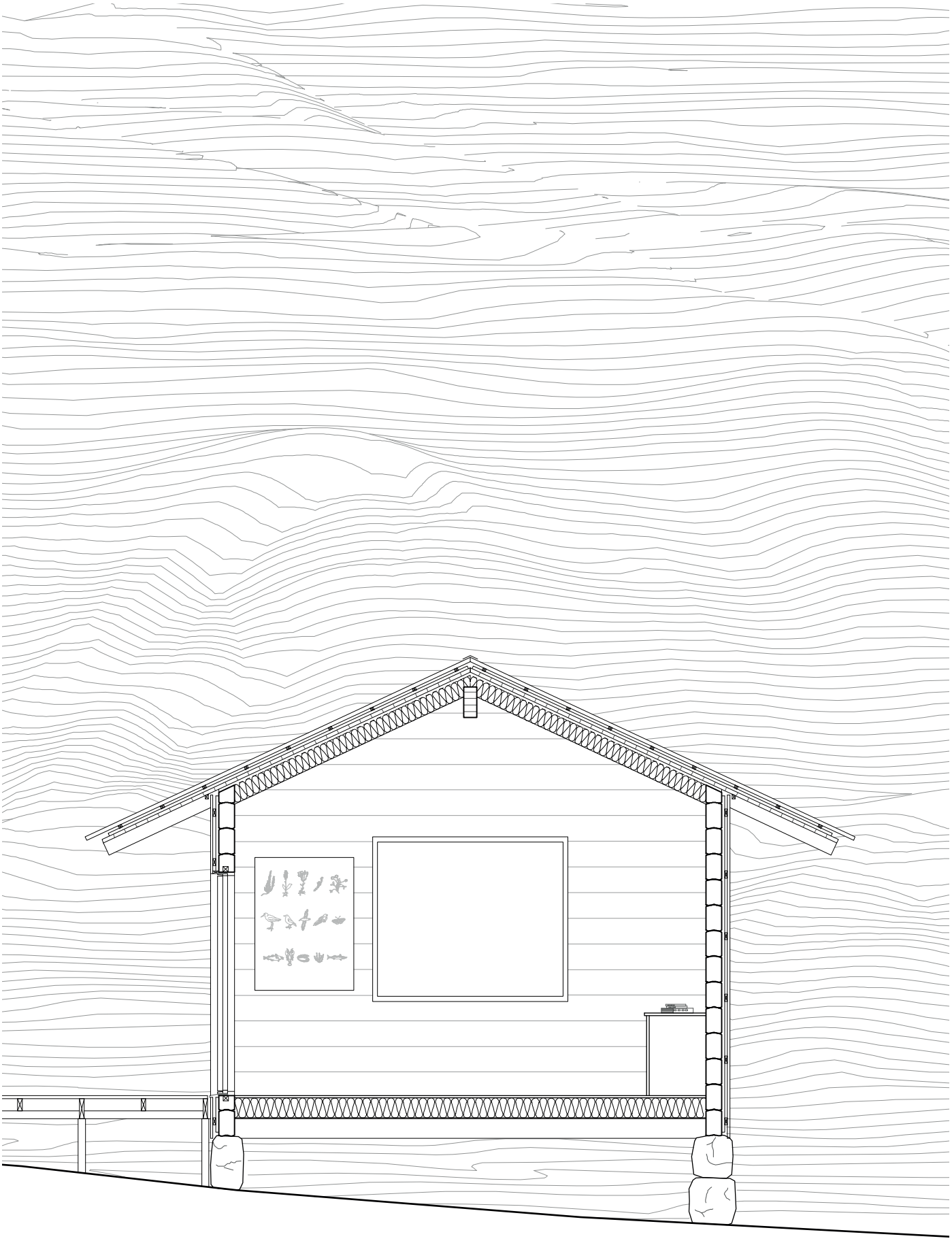


Section A-A



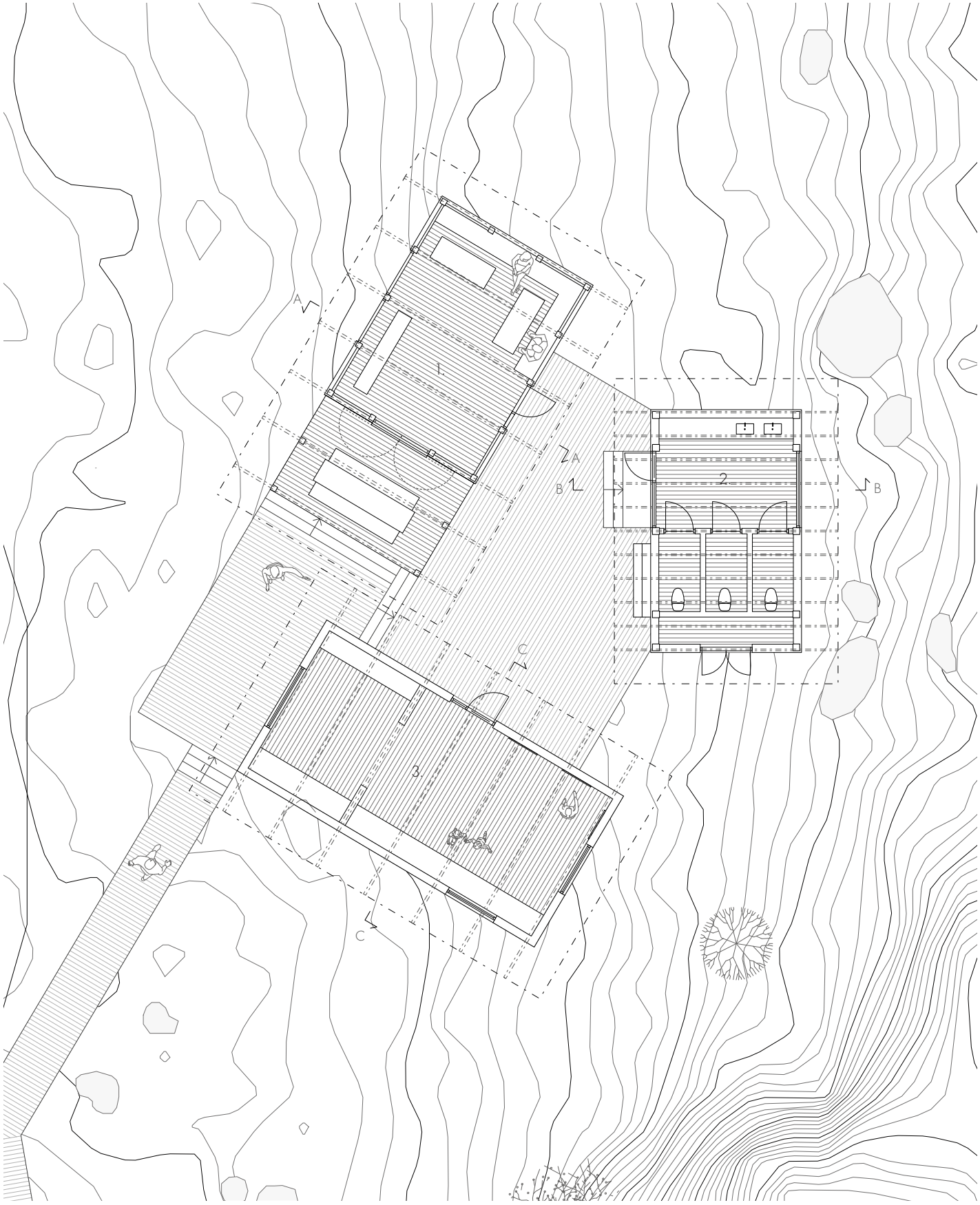
Section B-B

1:100



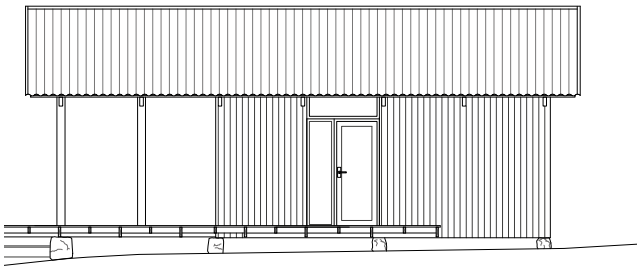
0 1 4m

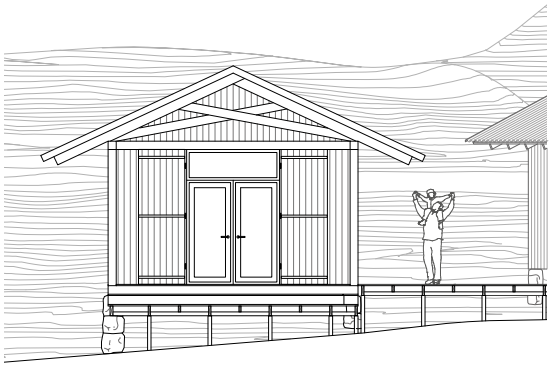
Section C-C



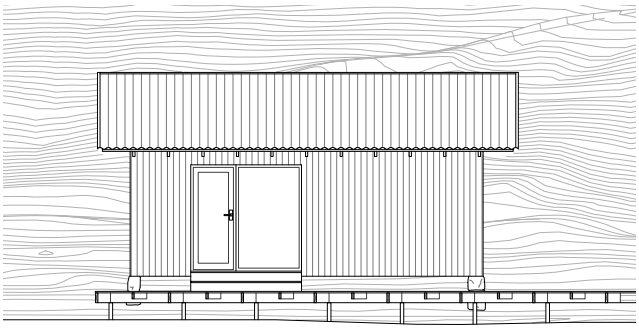
1. Rest/social area, 2. Toilets, 3. Exhibition

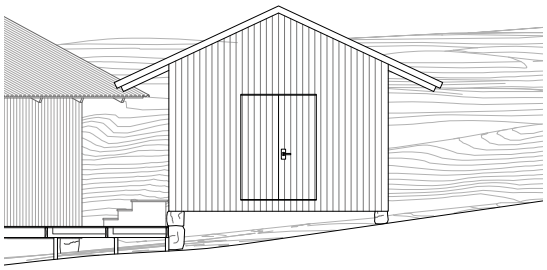
Plan 1:150



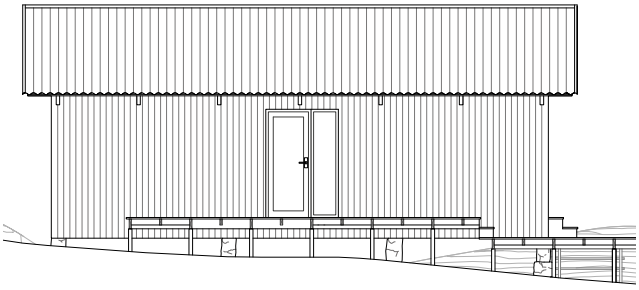


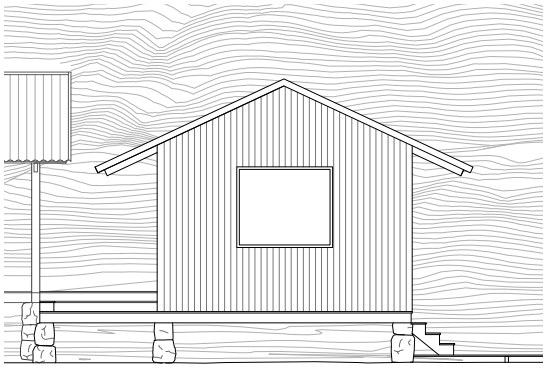
1.





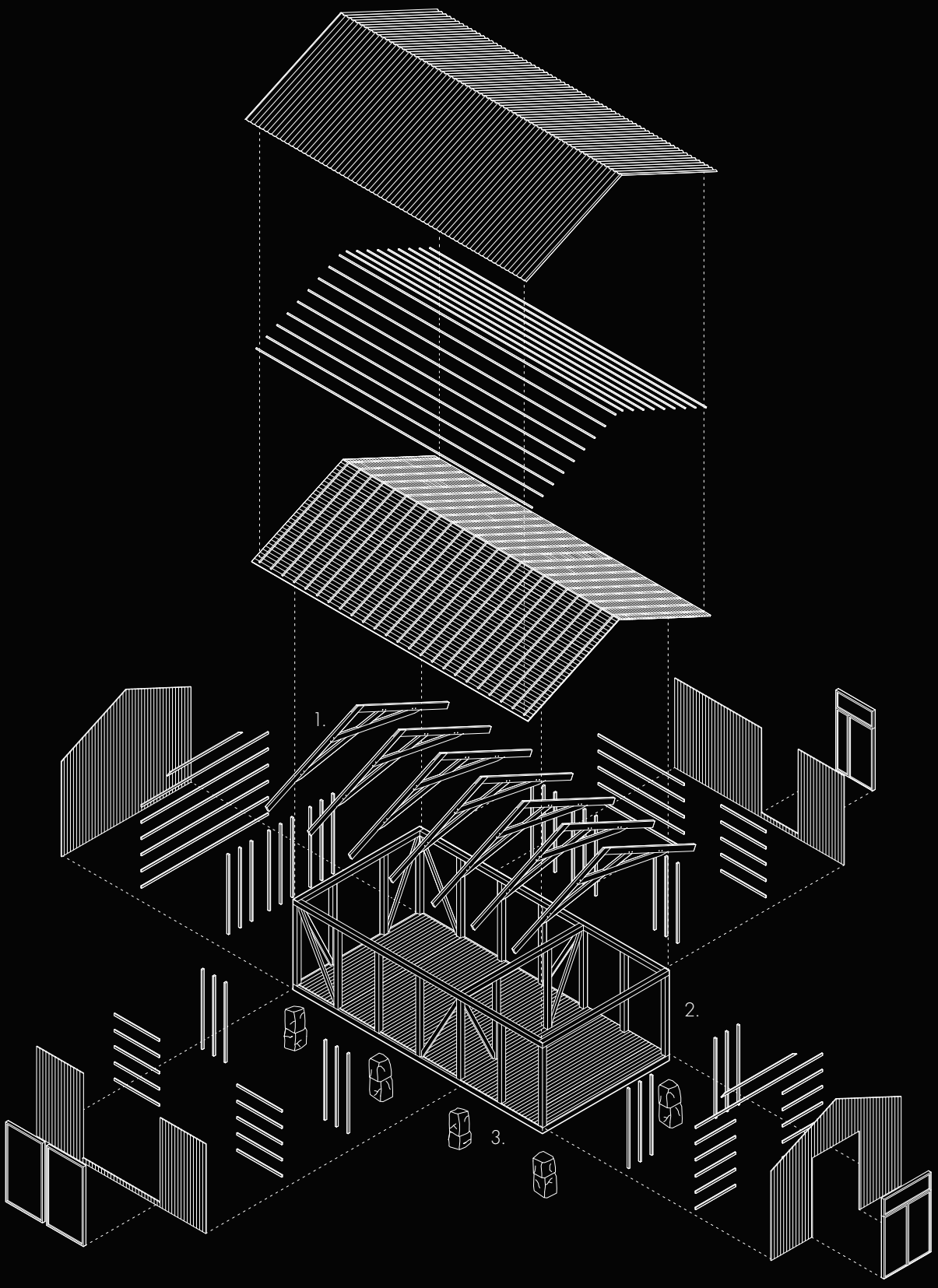
2.



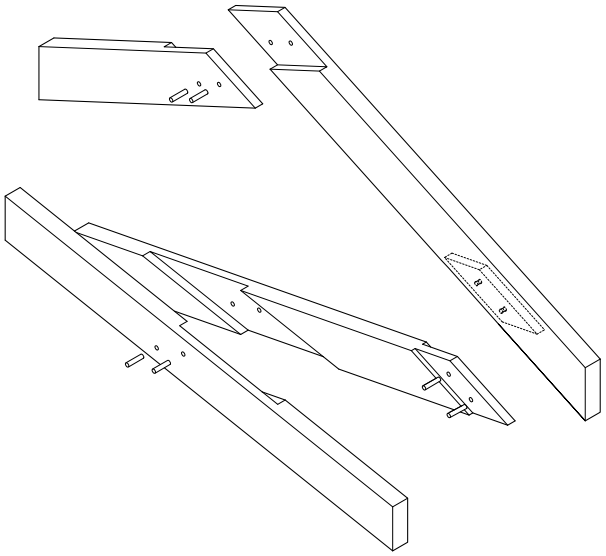


3.

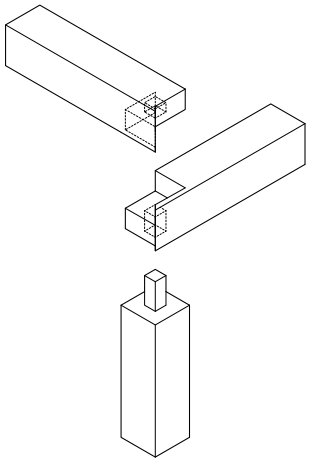
Elevations 1:150



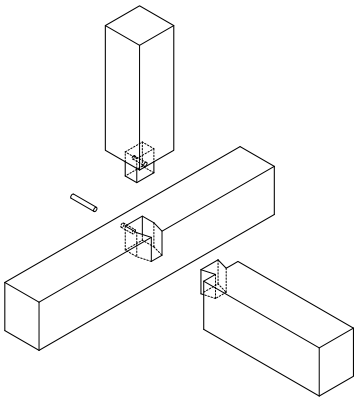
Axonometric Timber Framing



1. Roof truss

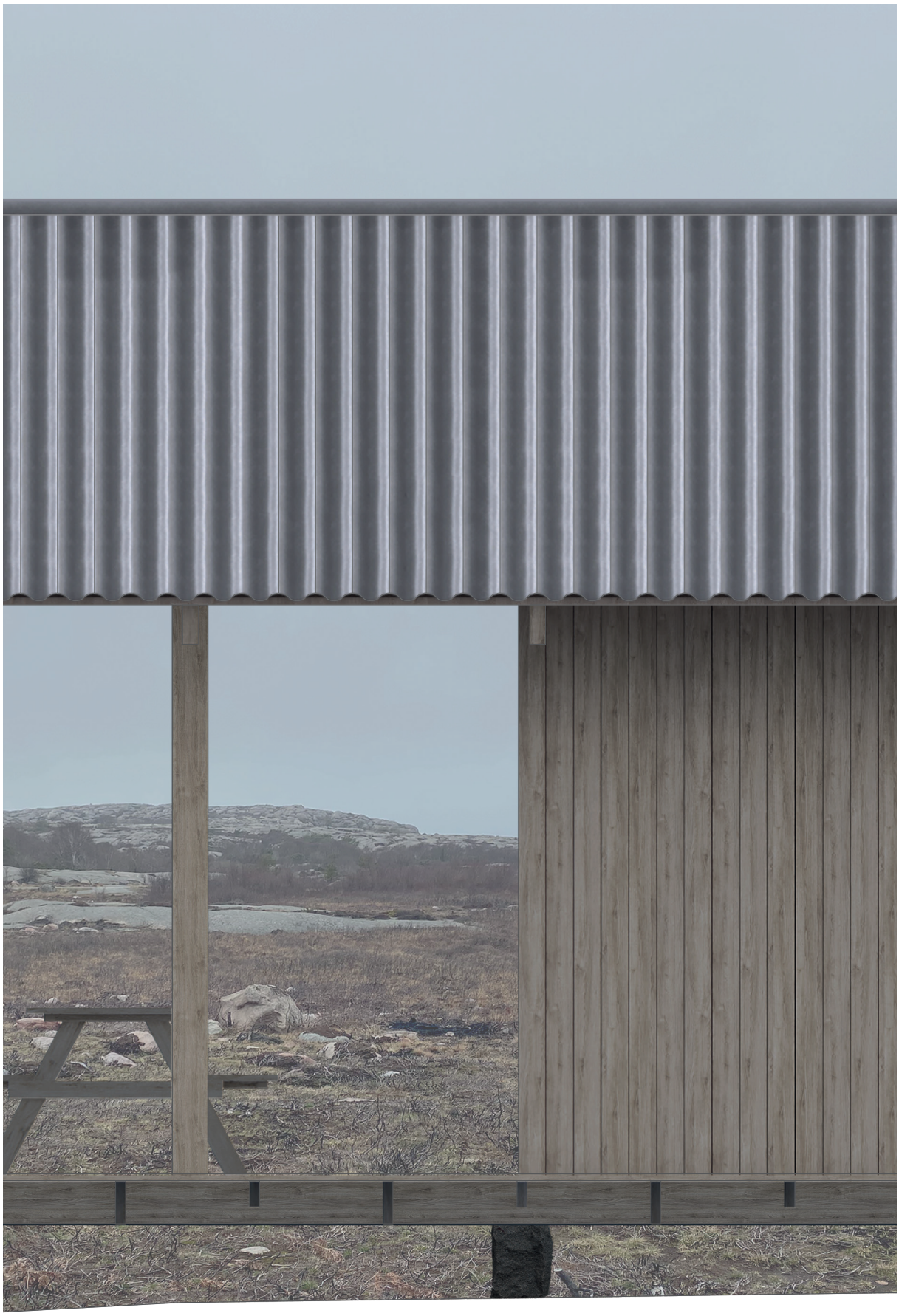


2. Corner



3. Floor joist and wall studs

Selection of timber framing joints in building 1



Facade elevation 1:25

Roof

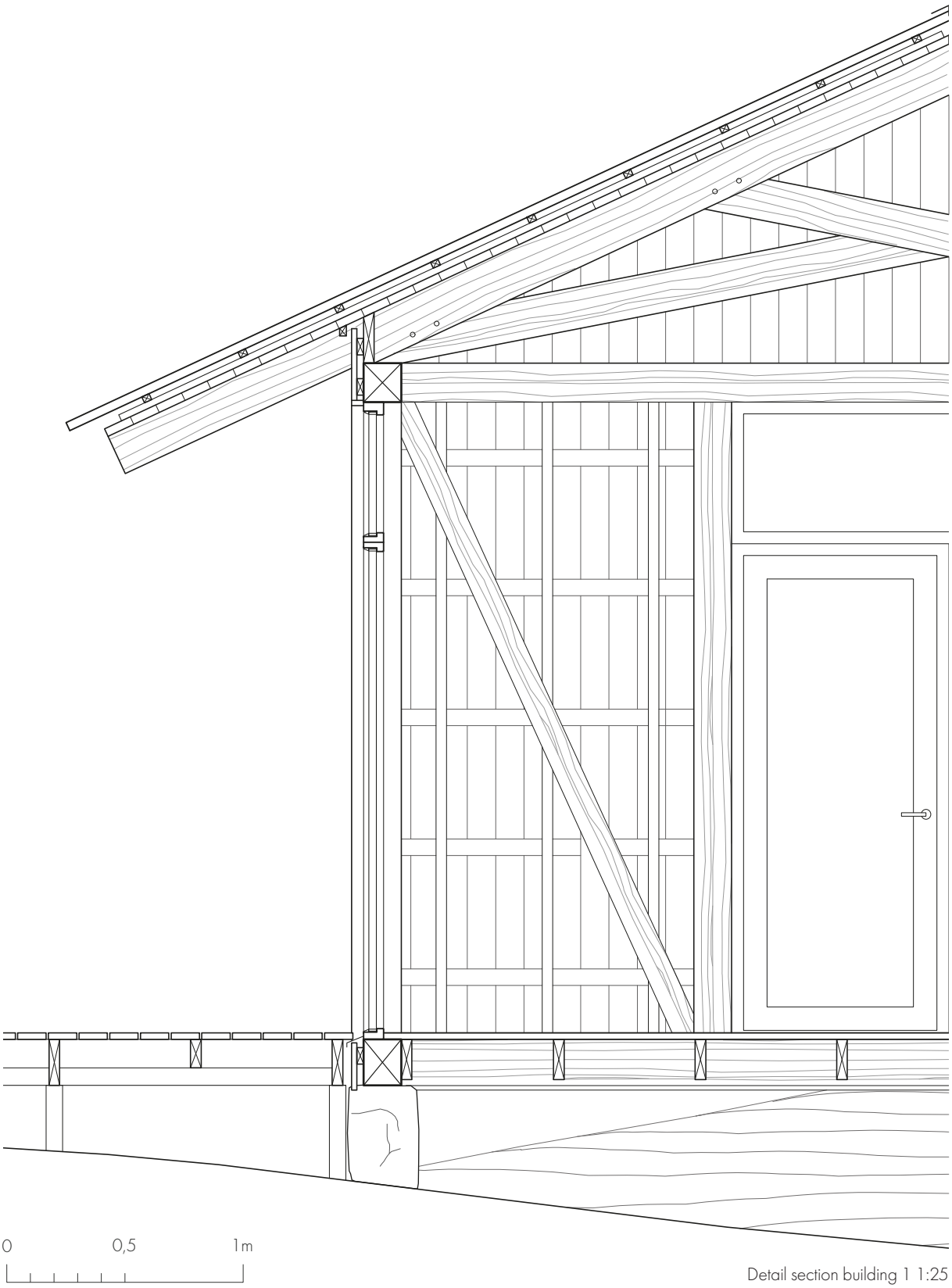
Sinus corrugated zinc-magnesium sheet
28 x 34 batten
28 x 34 batten
Roofing felt
34 x 120 wooden planks
195 x 70 roof truss

Wall

22 x120 pine wood panel
28x 70 horizontal batten
70 x 45 studs

Floor

170 joists
28 wooden planks



Detail section building 1 1:25

Shelter I

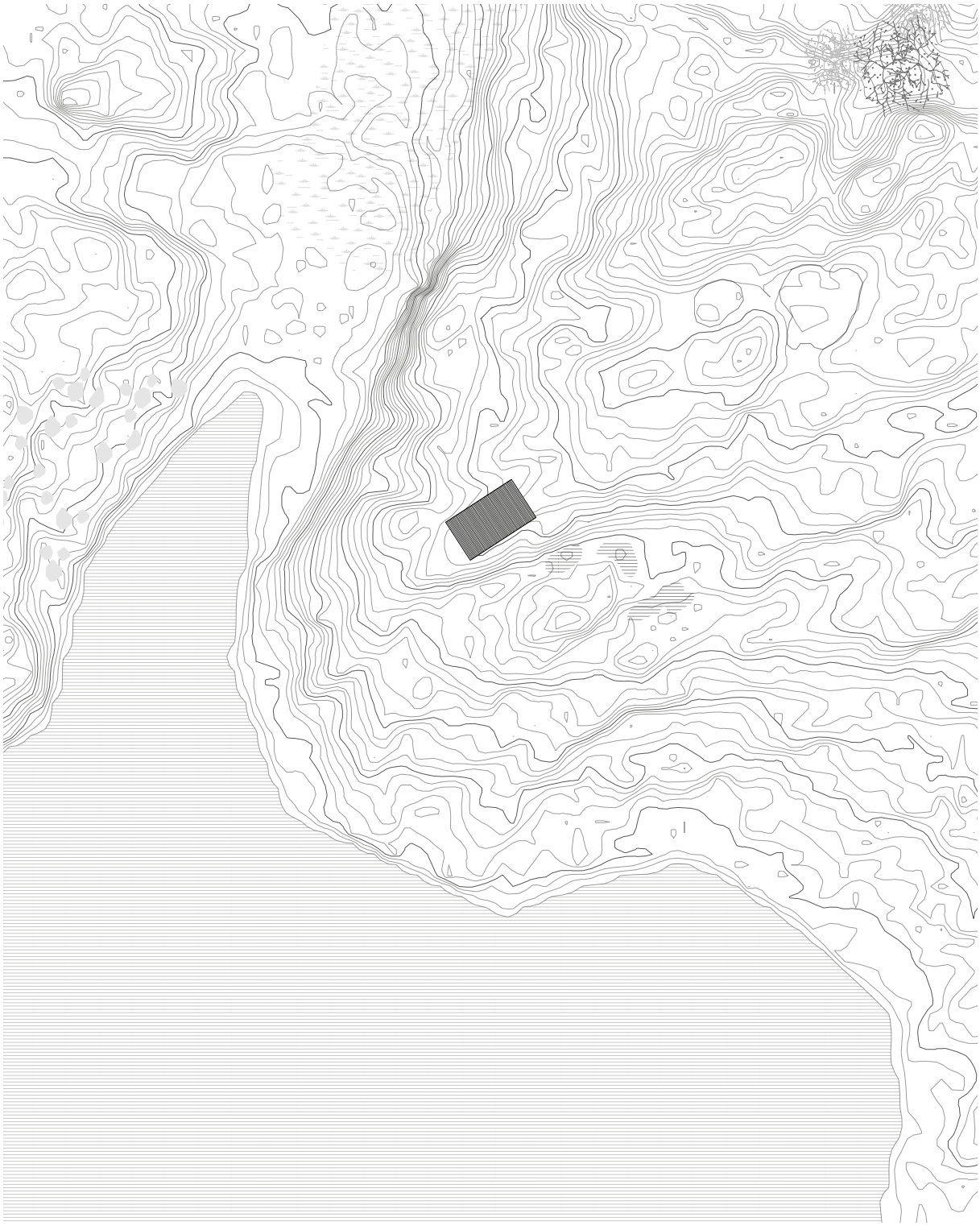
In the southern part, a flat and open stone landscape meets the sea, in contrast to the more dramatic rock formations that is found elsewhere on the island. It is defined by horizontality and long vistas and is one of the most exposed areas along the coastline. Here is one of the two shelters placed, offering a place for rest in a weather protected space with seating both inside and around all sides of the structure.

Beside the function of protection, it has a designated area for temporary storage of collected ocean waste. The shelter lies in proximity to one of the five reference beaches for ocean waste in Bohuslän, where the amount of waste is measured annually and also provides information about the efforts that is made to clean the beaches and environmental impact of marine pollution and trash that floats ashore along the coastline every year. The shelter is intended to be an extension of that infromation point, acting as a node for people to gather and pick up bags to collect waste in, making the participaction in beach cleaning more accessible and immediate.

The shelter is designed with an exposed timber frame structure with wooden planks placed in between the posts highlighting the craftsmanship both exterior and interior and takes inspiration in the simpler barns and boathouses. The structure is reinforced with diagonal braces in the corners which increase rigidity. The single pitched roof is extruded over all sides, sloping towards the shoreline.

Photographs from the site.

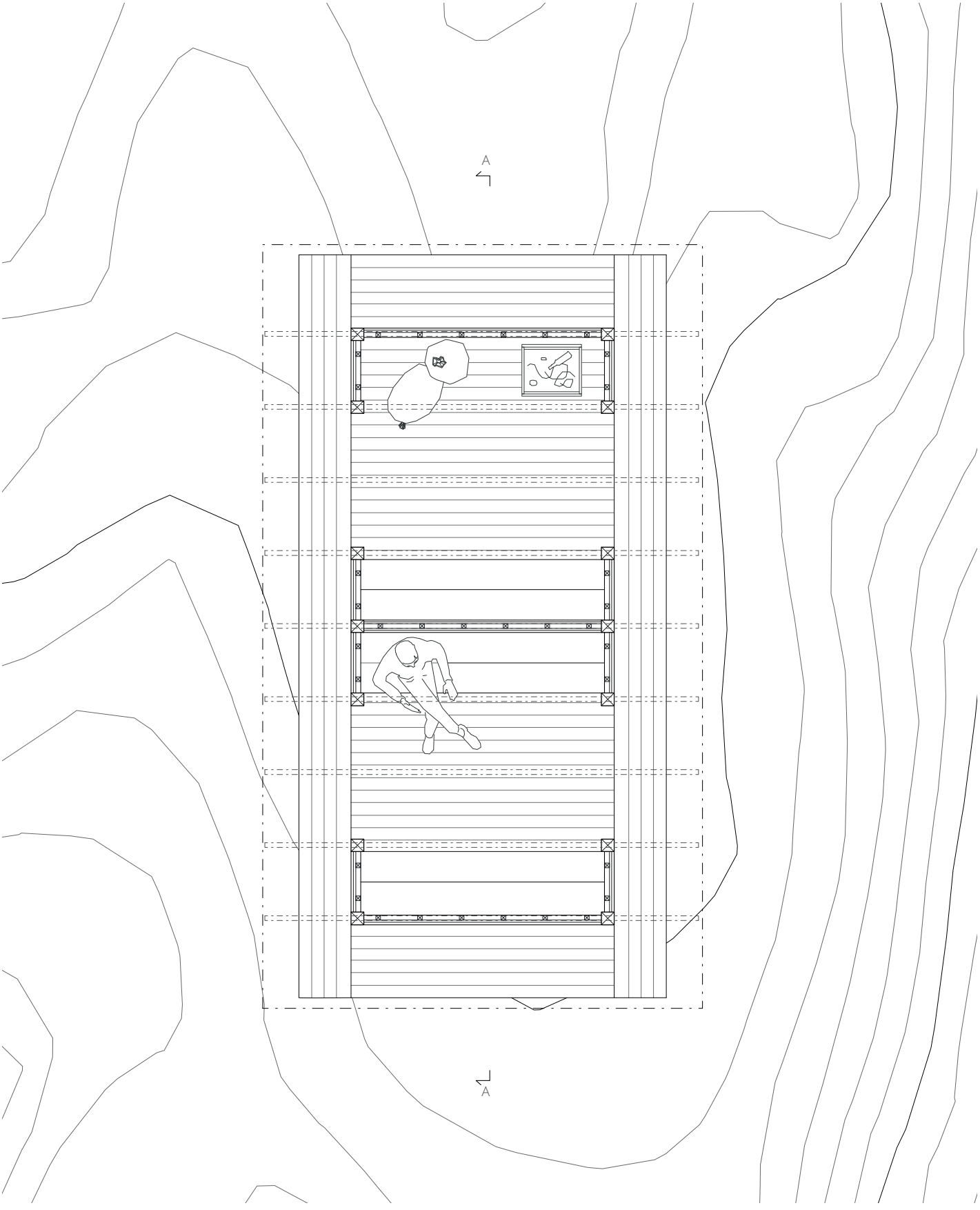
Marked trail
HABY BUKT
0
10
50m
Site plan 1:1000



Site plan 1:400

0 5 20m

View of shelter I from the east.



Plan 1:50

Roof

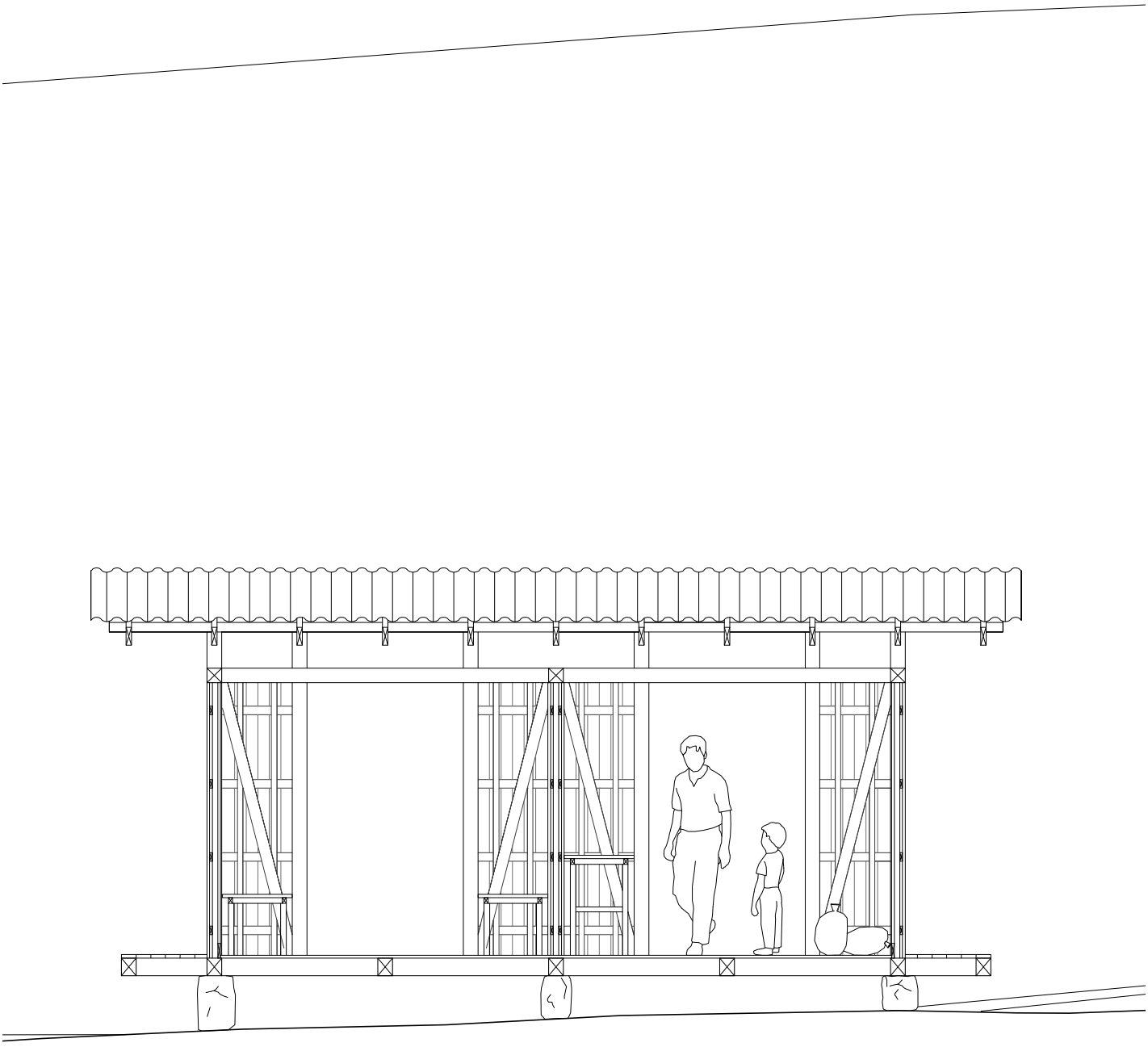
Sinus corrugated zinc-magnesium sheet
28 x 34 batten
28 x 34 batten
170 x 45 rafters

Wall

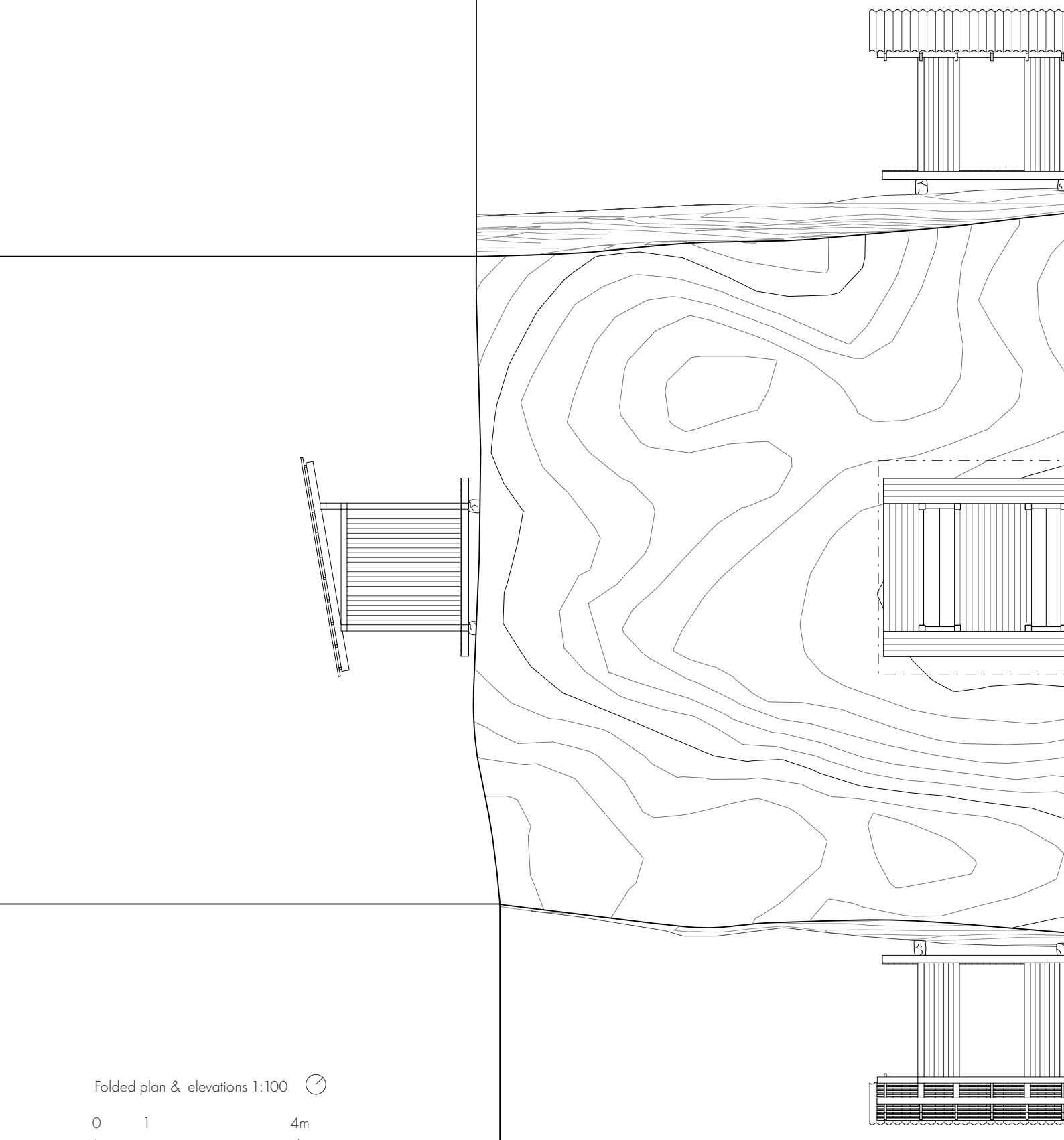
22 x 120 pine wood panel
28 x 70 horizontal batten
120 x 120/45 x45 studs
28 x 95 braces

Floor

140 x 120/140 x 45 joists
28 x 120 wooden planks

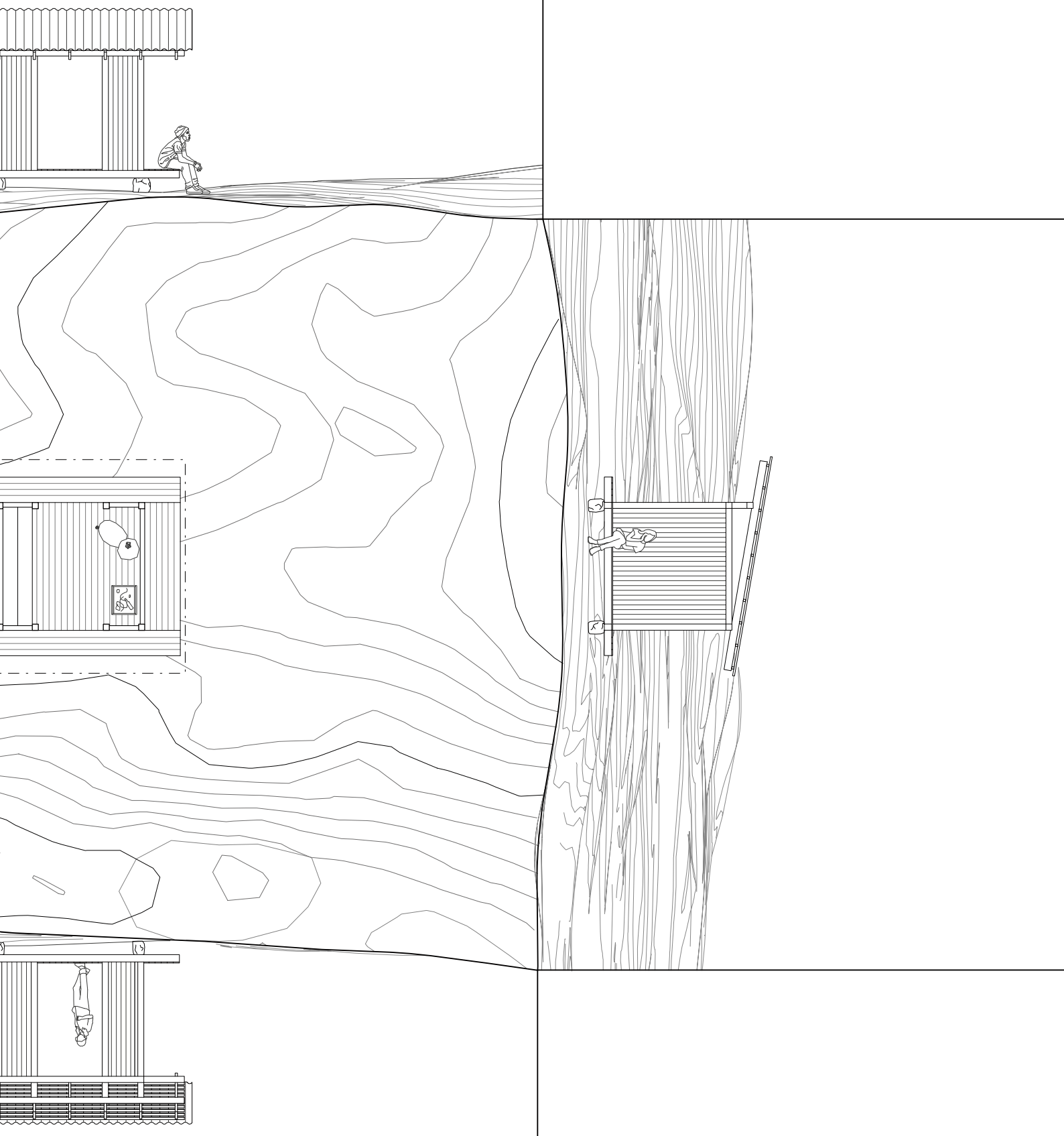


Section A-A 1:50



Folded plan & elevations 1:100

0 1 4m



Cabins

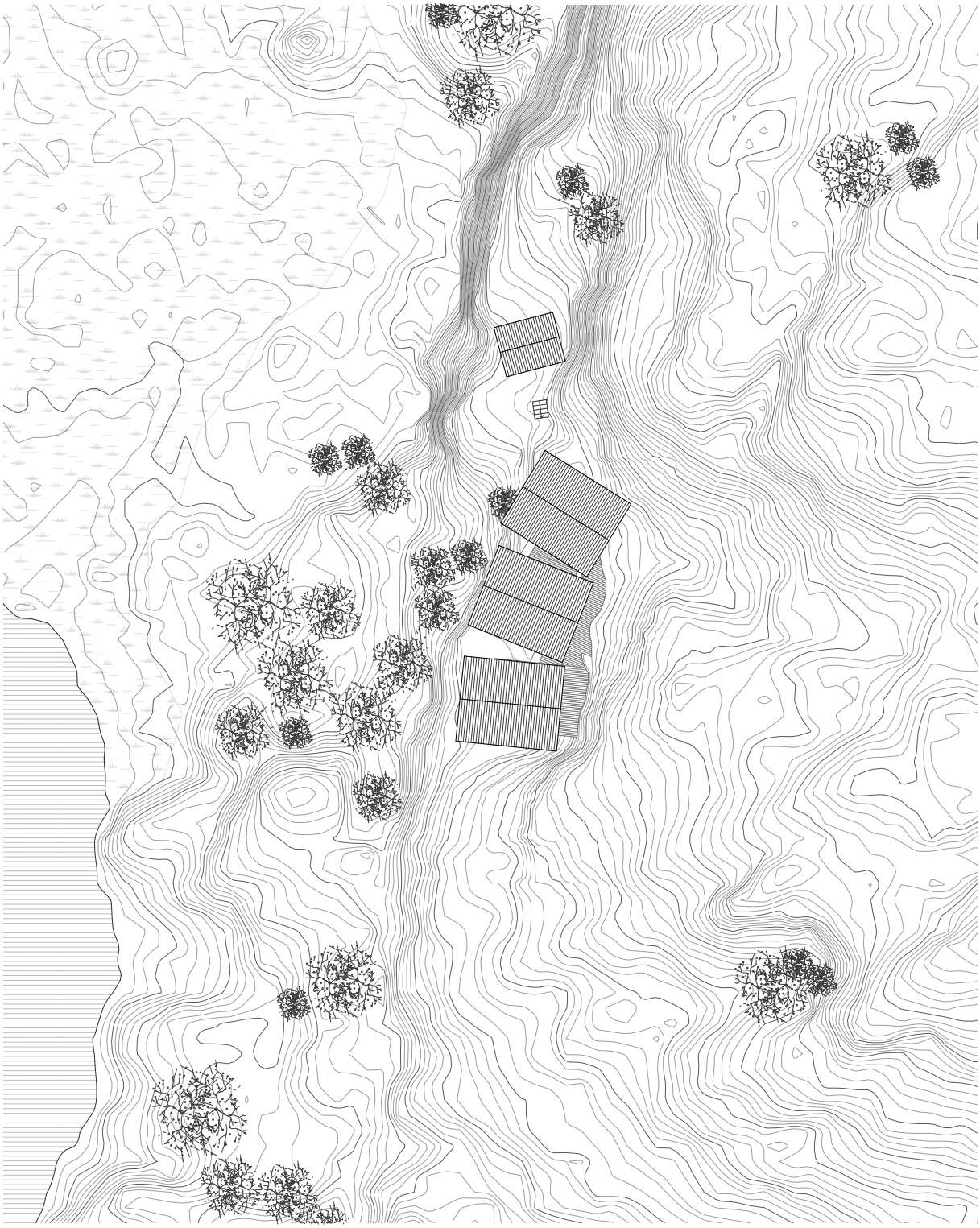
In a valley beside a wetland turning into a small lake is three cabins placed which can be reached either by walking inland through forest areas, over meadows and openings between rock formations or by departing from the coastline walking east over an open flat rock landscape. With a distance from the ocean and by surrounding rock formations, this place is calmer and more private. Each cabin have space to accommodate up to four people and they are placed at the ridge of the wetland where the rocks locally sinks, almost creating an embrace for the structures.

It is a primitive layout and the cabins are equipped with the essentials for shorter visits including a sleeping area, a wood stove for heating and simple cooking and a seating area with a foldable table to prepare food along with a shared toilet in a separate volume. Like the studied built environment are the cabins place close together defining small outdoor spaces in between the volumes combined with the protruding roof. The placement is meant to function as barrier for the wind creating outdoor spaces towards the east where a common counter top along the middle cabin can be used for outdoor cooking. To preserve the landscape's silhouette to the greatest extent, the volumes are kept low with a low-sloping gable roof.

The load-bearing structure is made of log timber on top of the foundation of corner stones with a hybrid roof constrution where gluelam ridge beam and trusses rests upon the walls and the gable overhang supported by outlooks.

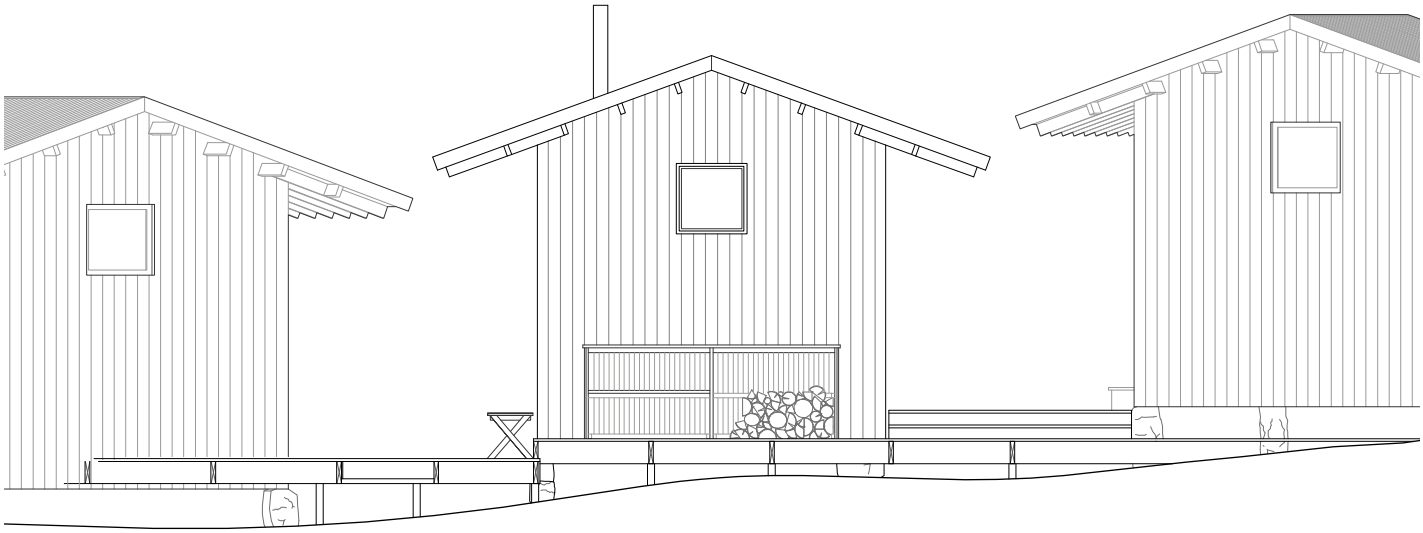
Photographs from the site.

Site plan 1:1000

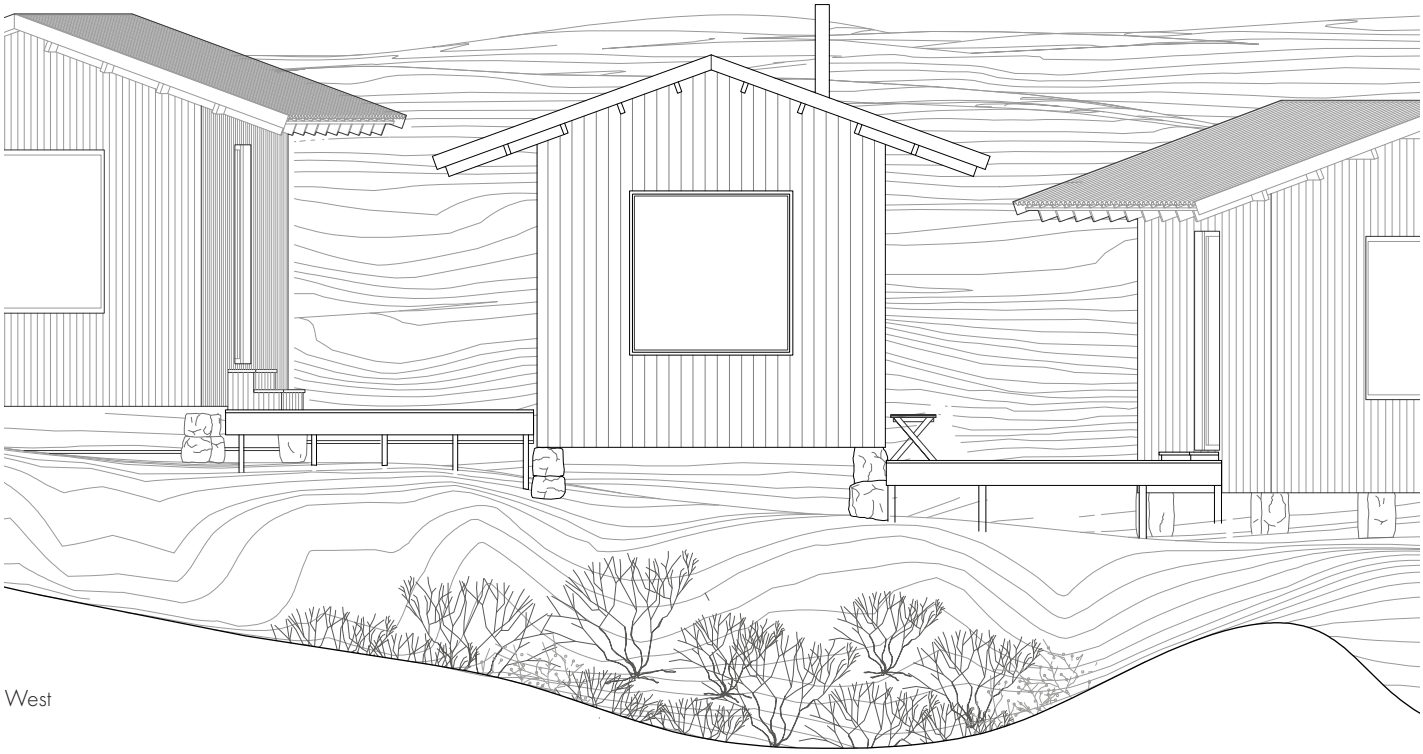


Site plan 1:400

View of cabins from the west.



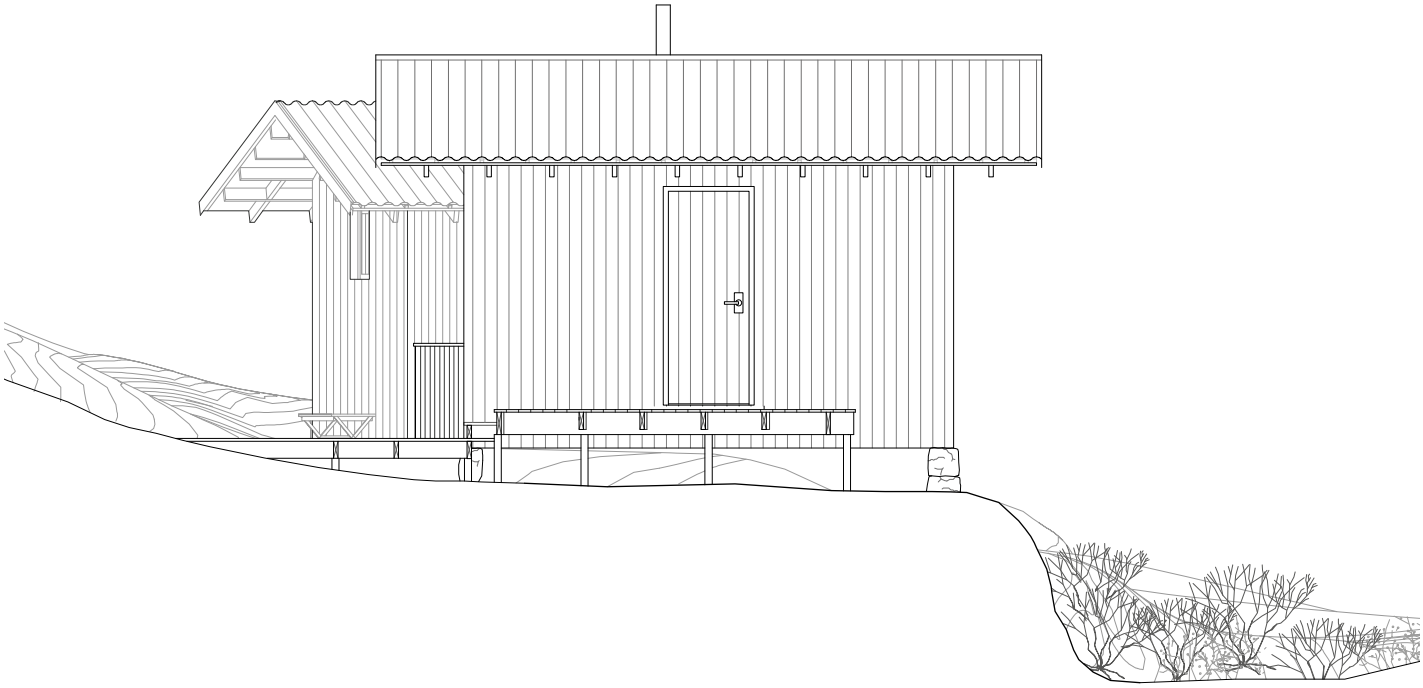
East



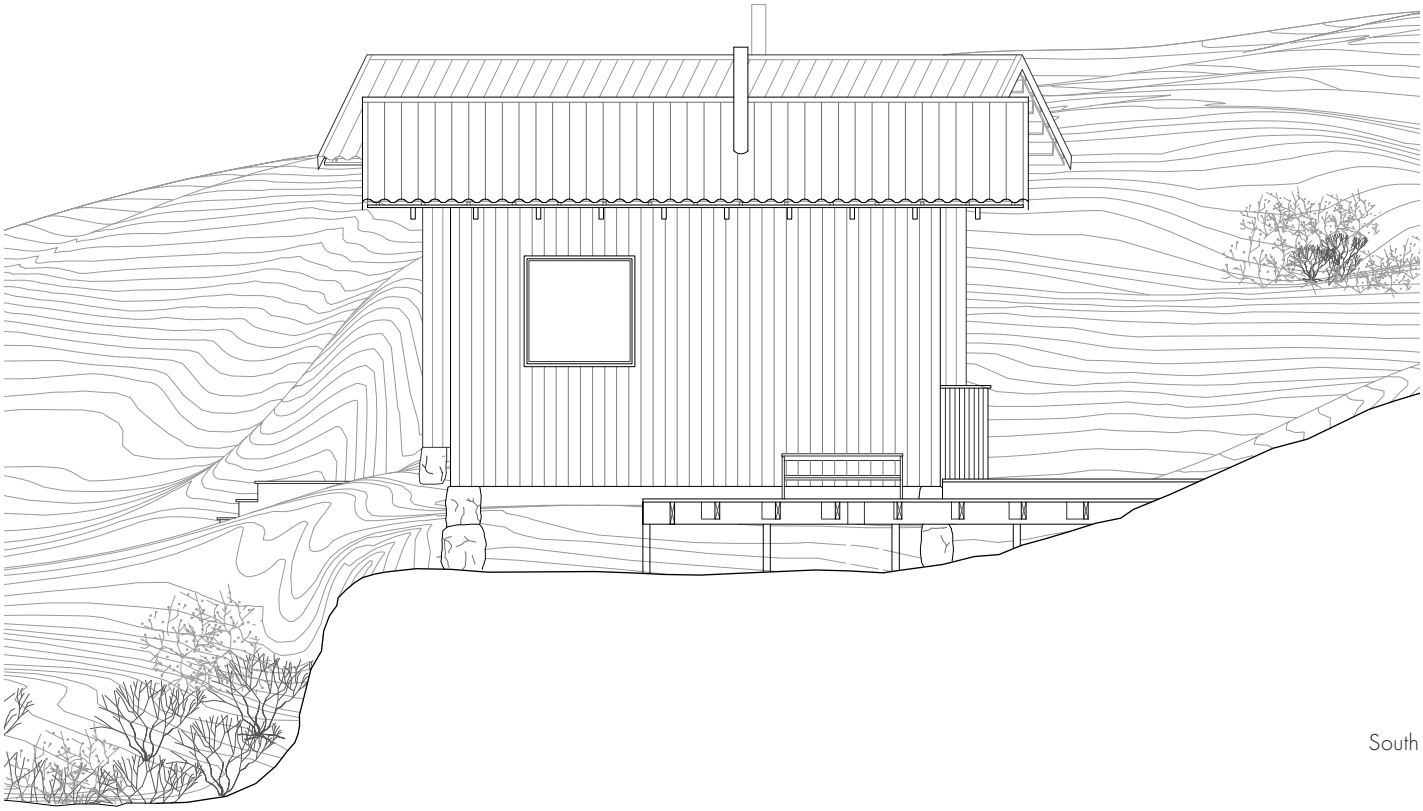
West

0 1 3m

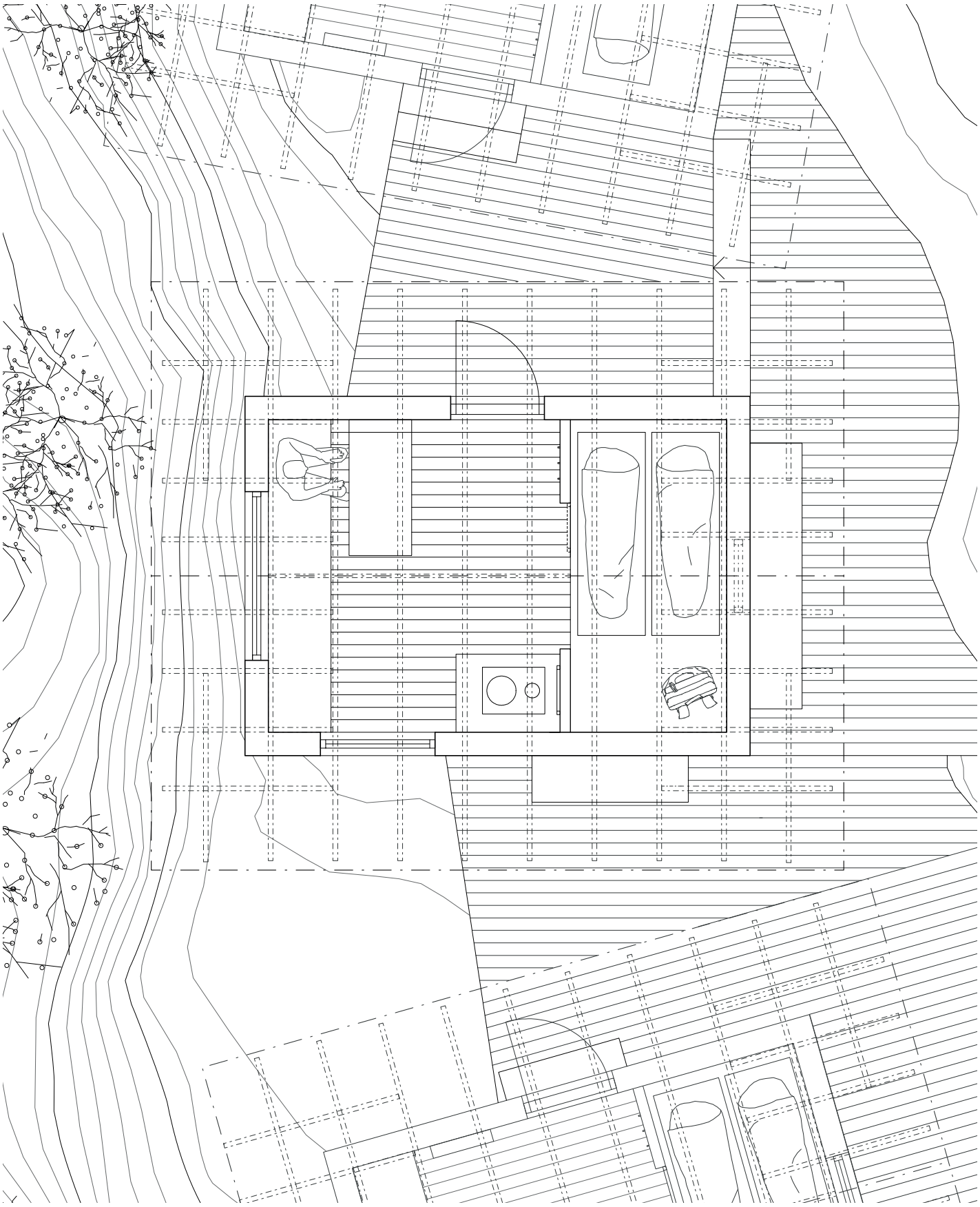
Elevations 1:75



North

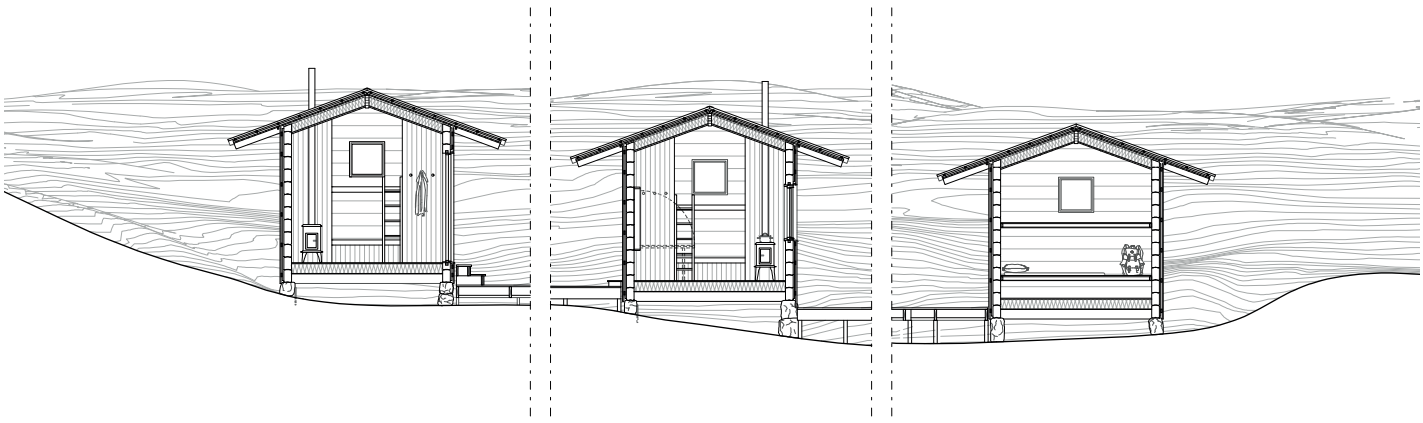


South



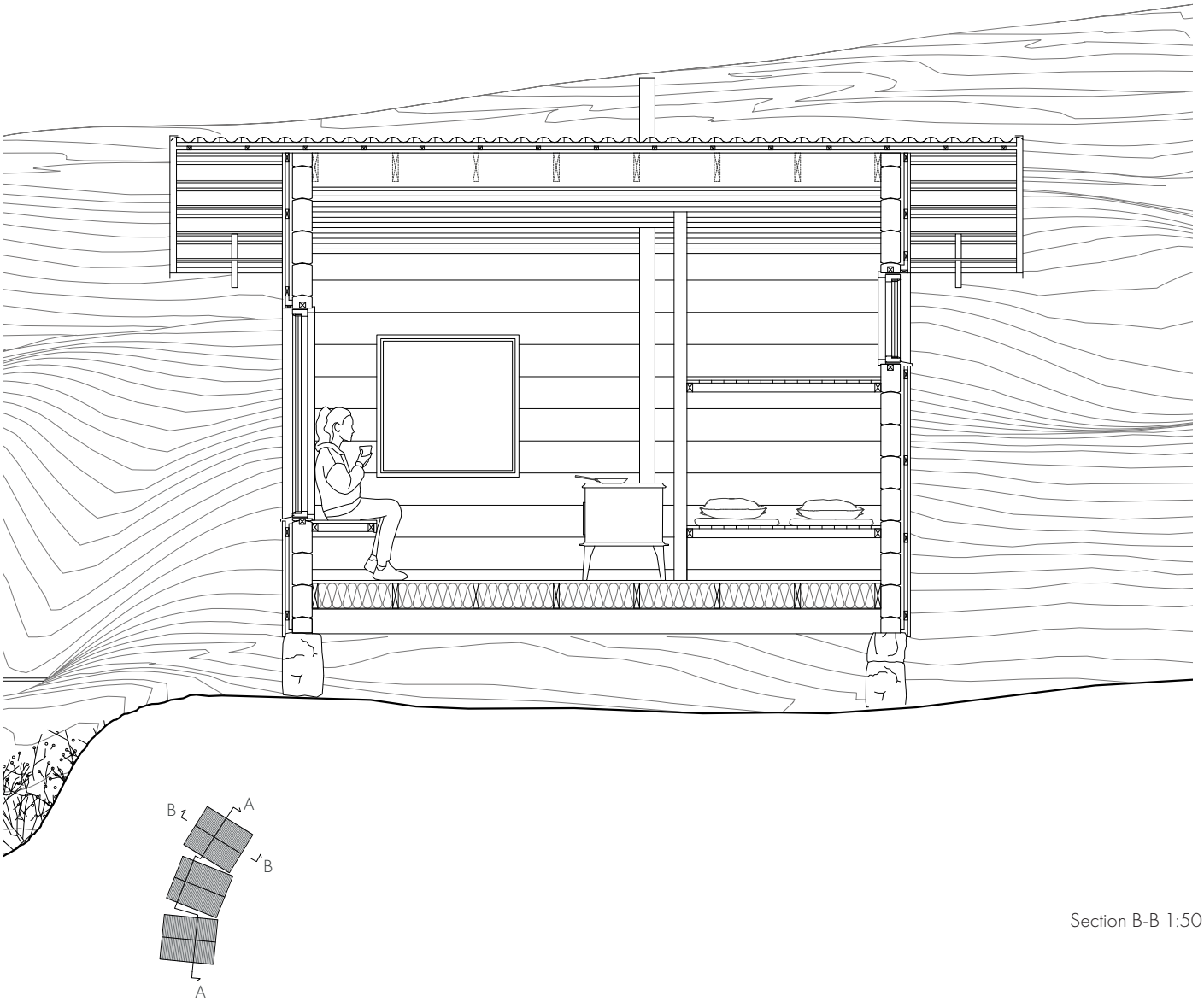
Plan 1:50

0 1 2m

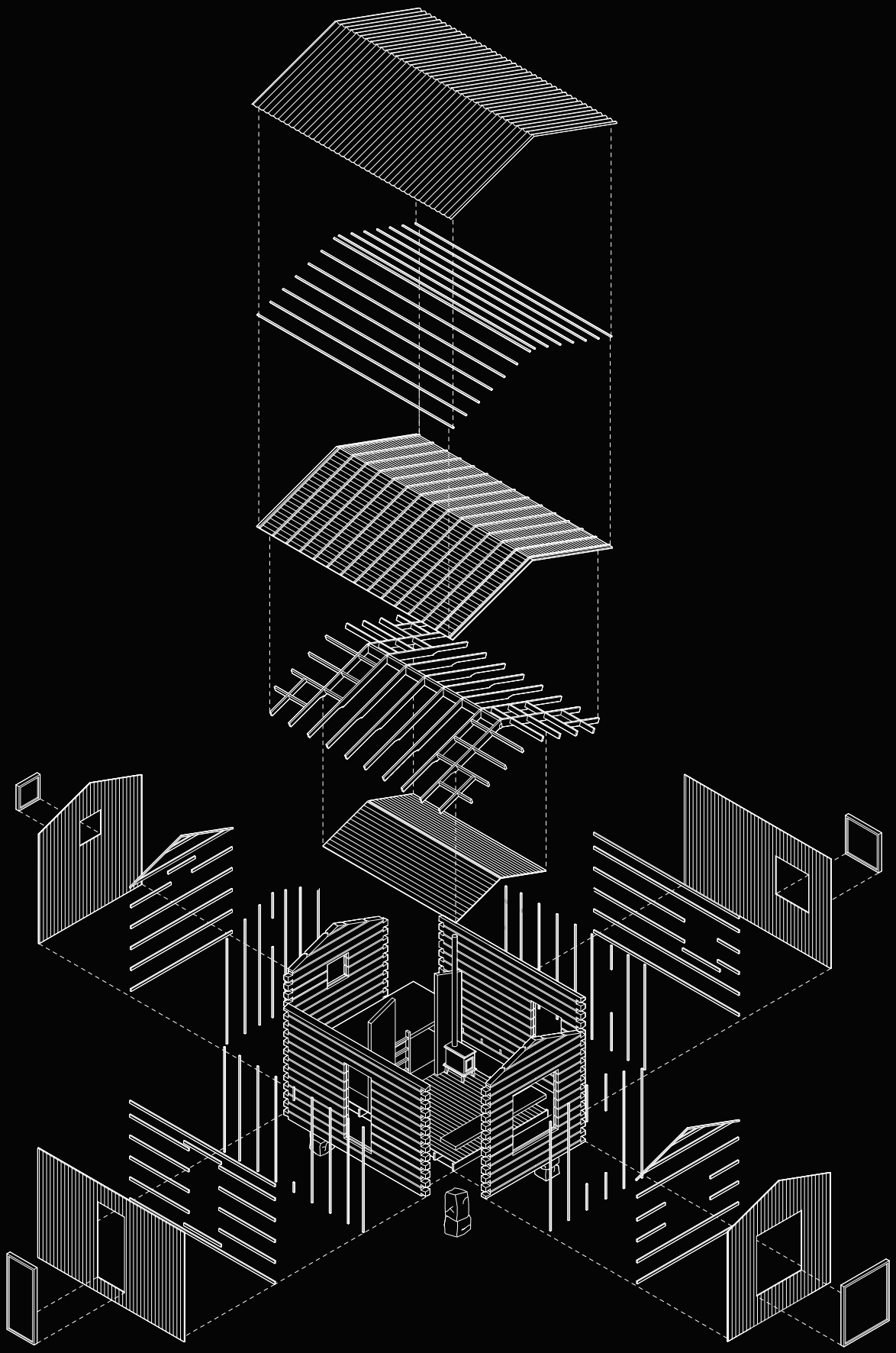


0 1 5m

Section A-A 1:150



Section B-B 1:50



Axonometric Log Timber

Roof

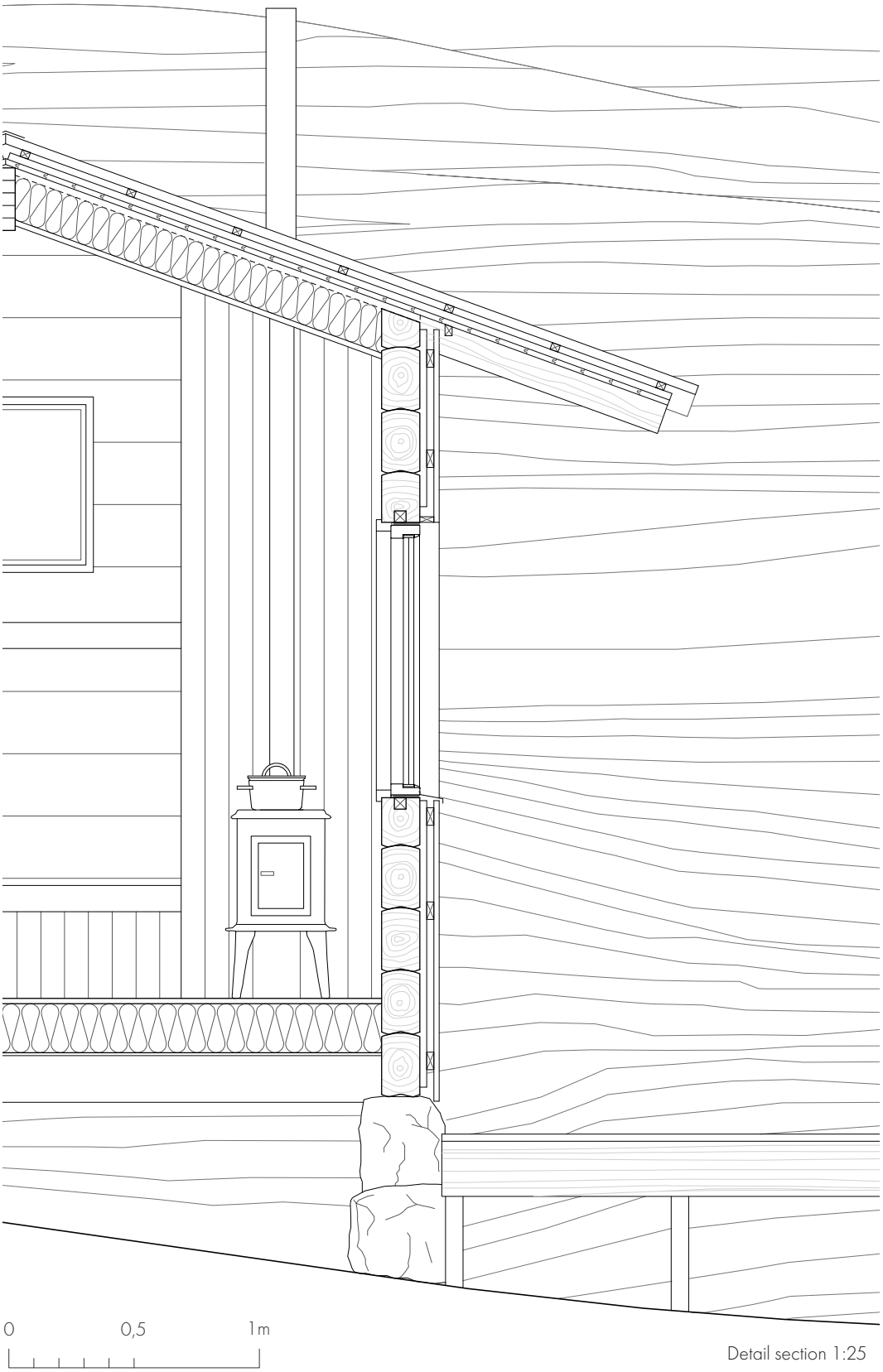
Sinus corrugated zinc-magnesium sheet
28 x 34 batten
28 x 34 batten
Roofing felt
22 x 95 tongue and groove board
195 x 45 roof truss/insulation, 22 x 45 batten/airgap
Vapour control membrane
22 wooden panel

Wall

22 x 120 pine wood panel
28 x 70 horizontal batten
28 x 70 sliding batten
152 (6 inches) heartwood timber

Floor

6 mm subfloor board
195 x 45 joists/insulation
22 x 120 wooden planks



Detail section 1:25

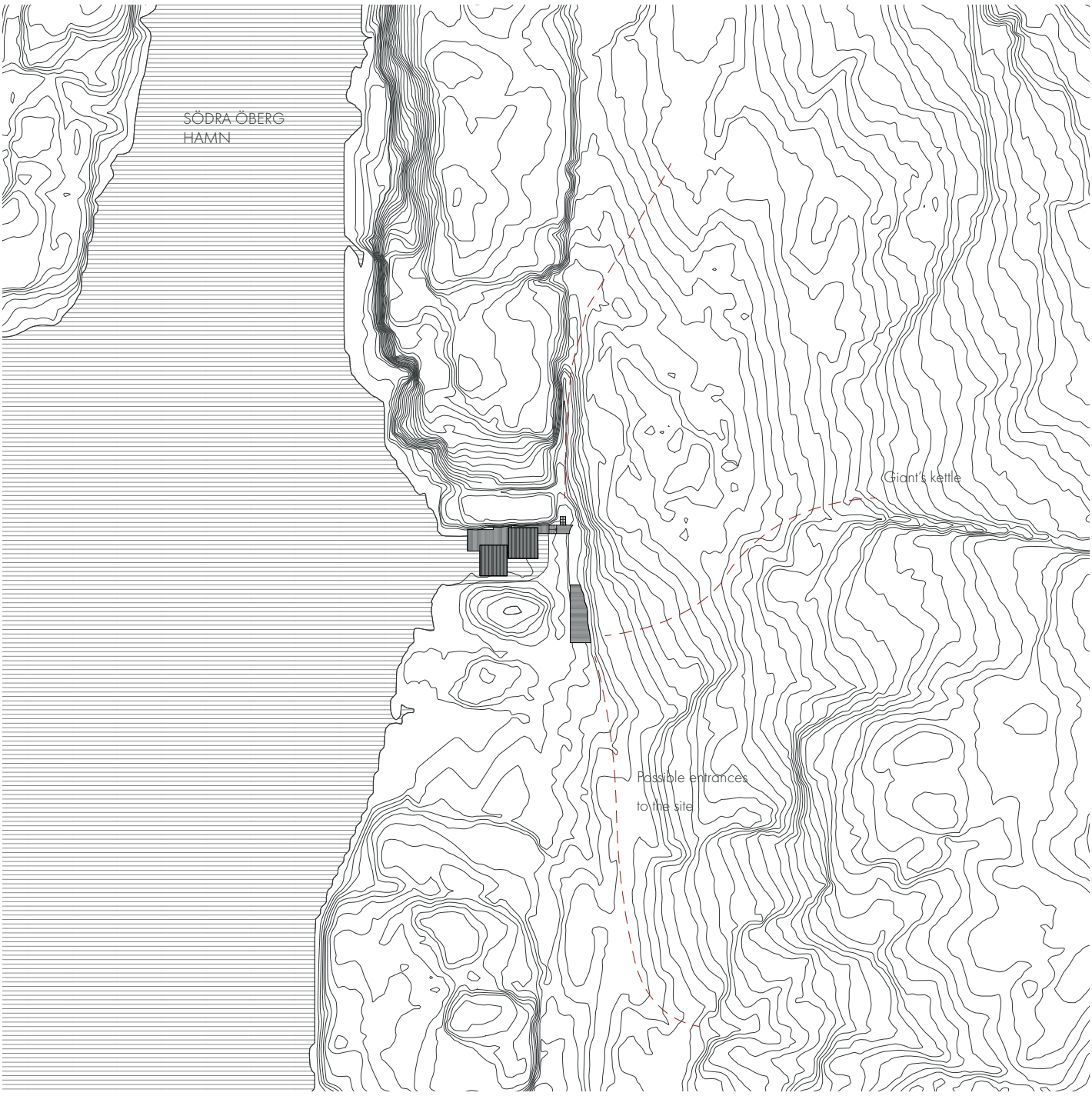
Shelter II

On the northwest part of Ramsvikslandet is no exiting trails and the landscape is explored by intuition, and for the ones departing the networks of trails is an adventure ahead. The site of shelter II is probably reached by most visitor from the south side, walking over the smooth barren granite cliffs but it can also be reached by walking through the narrow crack between the cliffs north of the shelter. It is also accessible from the water by boat or kayak. This location is the most private, visually hidden until the cliffs lowers towards the sea making it a place where a feeling of almost complete isolation appears.

The program is flexible and meant to work both as a simple shelter to stay the night where the benches could be used to sleep on. However, one of the two volumes is equipped with a wood stove and can function as a sauna. To enter you walk on a wooden jetty, that lowers closer to the shelter. The first volume is placed close to the cliff next to it, interpreting the experience of walking through the cracks in the cliff landscape and the roof continue the sloping of the rock. After passing the first volume a wooden deck connects to the second volume and continues down to the water.

The load bering structure is an exposed timber framing system like shelter I where the western one is insulated and therefore has an additional roof construction.

Photographs from the site.



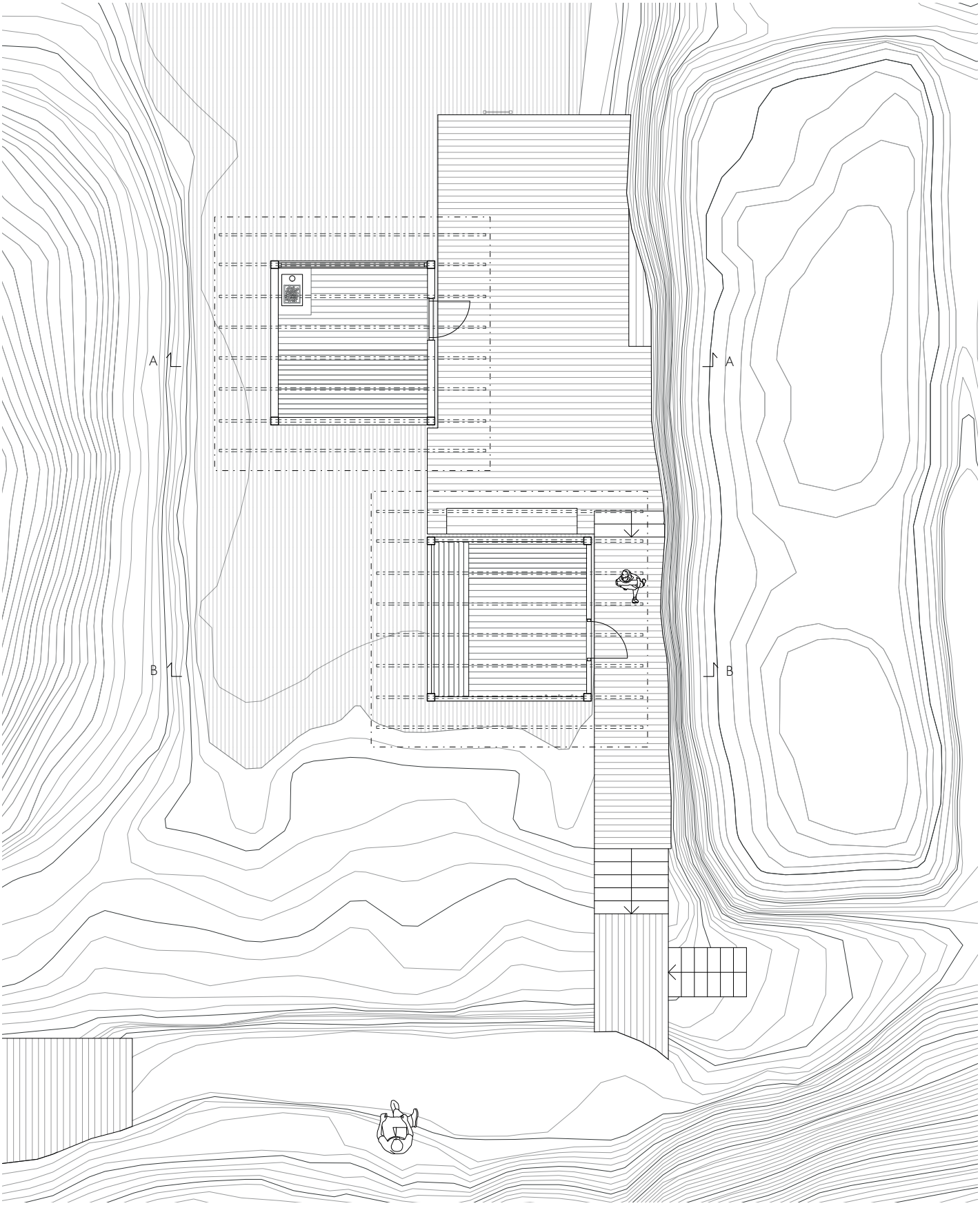
0 10 50m

Site plan 1:1000

Site plan 1:400

0 5 20m

Perspective of shelter II from the south.



Plan 1:100

0 1 4m

Roof

Sinus corrugated zinc-magnesium sheet
28 x 34 batten
28 x 34 batten
170 x 45 rafters

Inslutated roof
two-ply paper
22 tongue and groove board
Tapered batten/airgap
Roofing felt
70 x 45 roof joists/insulation
22 wood panel

Wall

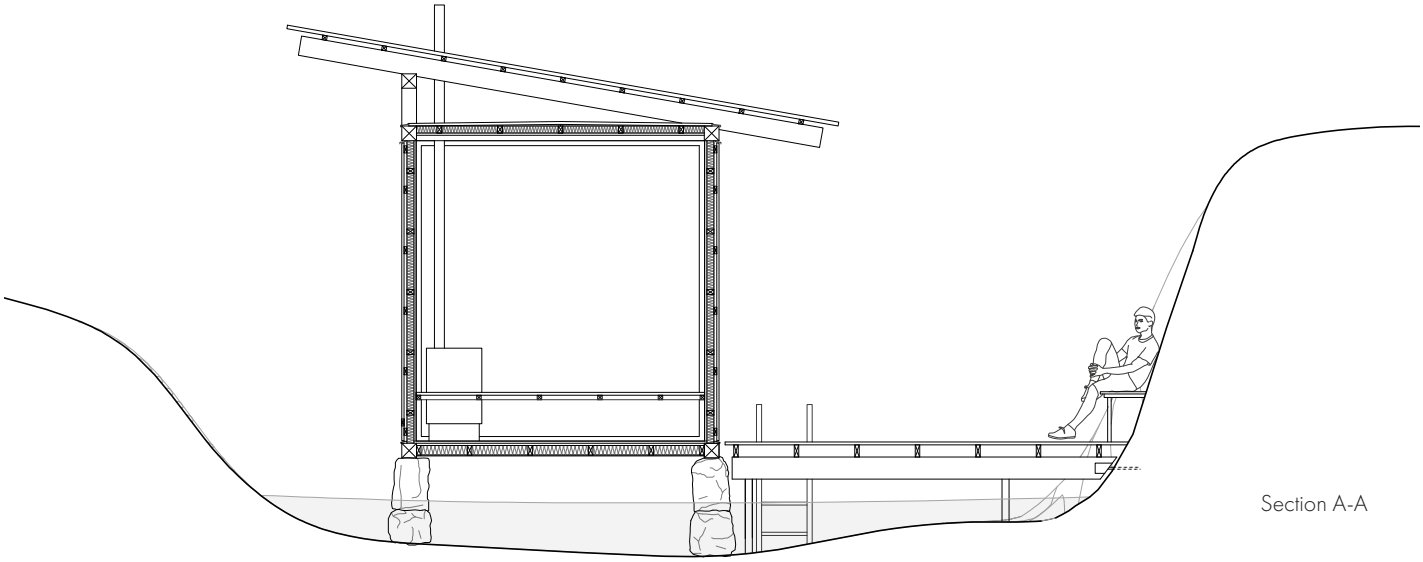
22 x 120 wood panel
28 x 70 horizontal batten
120x120/45 x 45 studs
28 x 95 braces

Insultated wall
22 x 120 wood panel
28 x 70 horizontal batten
160x160/70 x 70 studs/insulation
22 x 120 wood panel

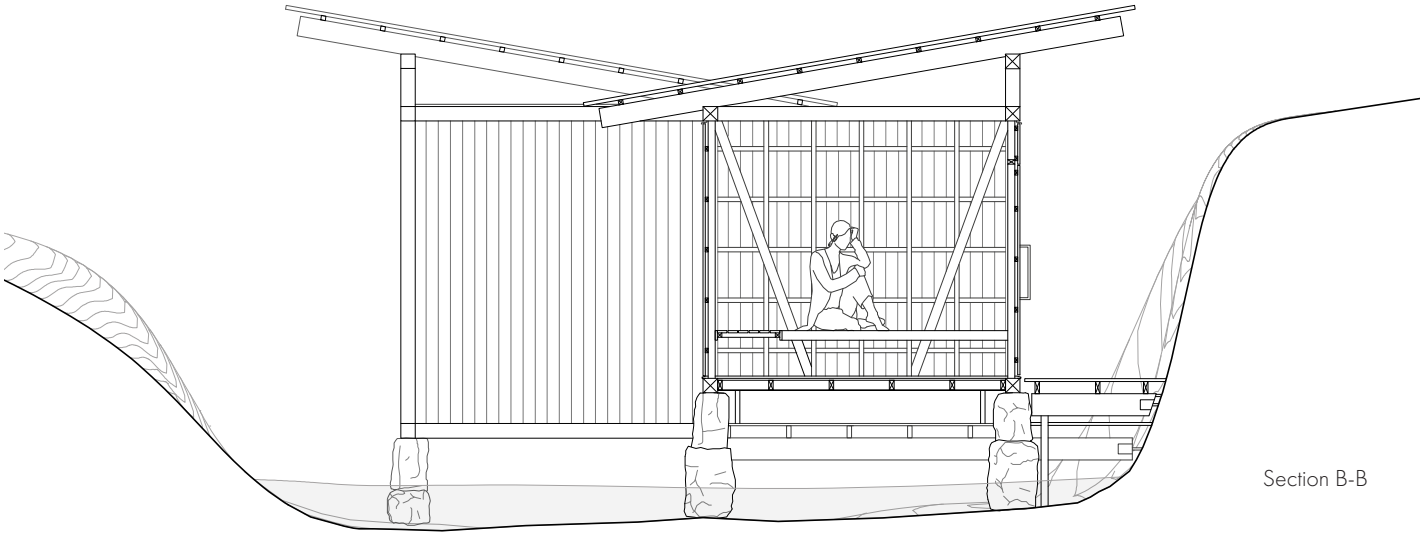
Floor

6 mm subfloor board
195 x 45 joists
22 x 120 wooden planks

Insulated floor
6 mm subfloor board
140 x 140/95x 45 joists/insulation
22 x 120 wooden planks



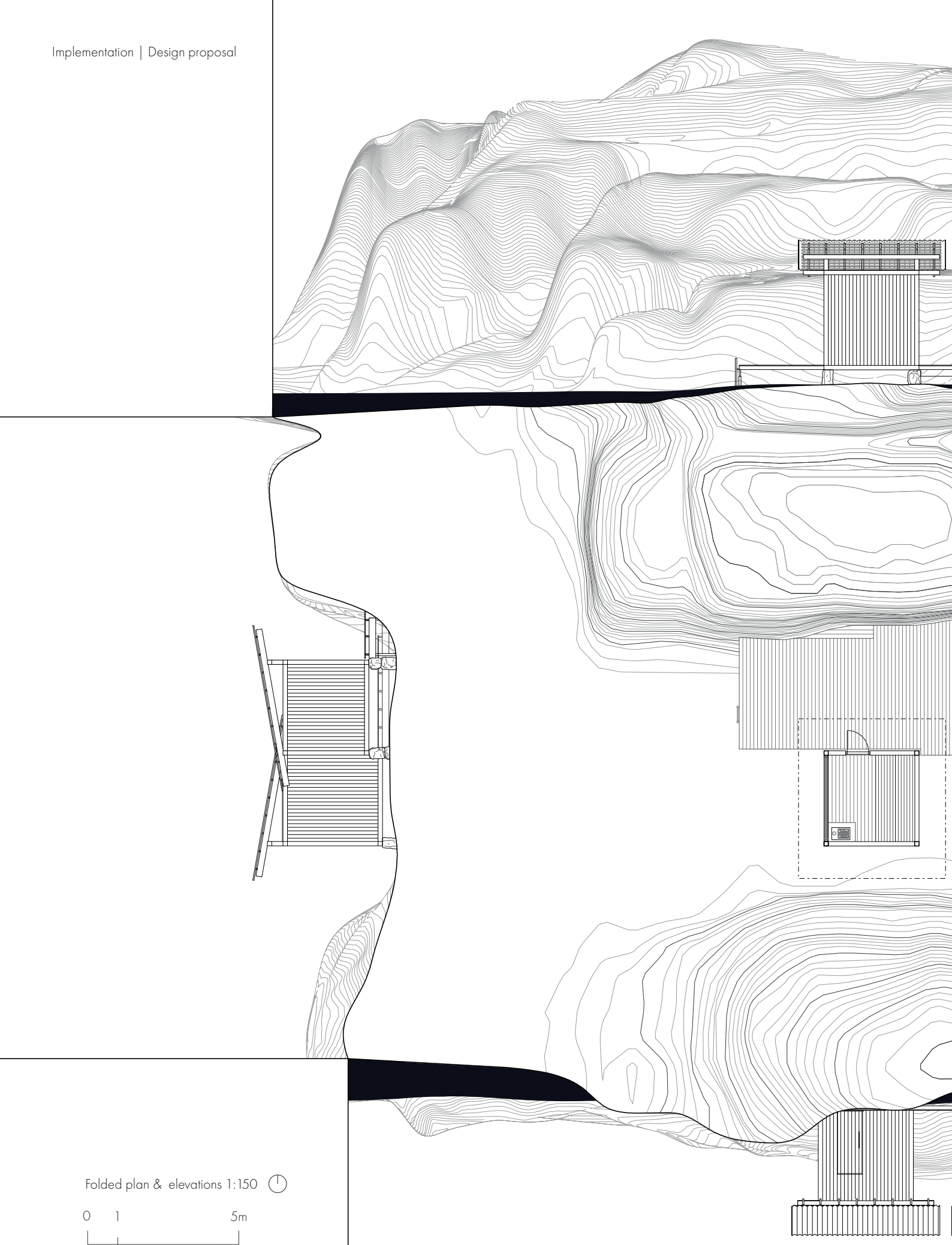
Section A-A



Section B-B

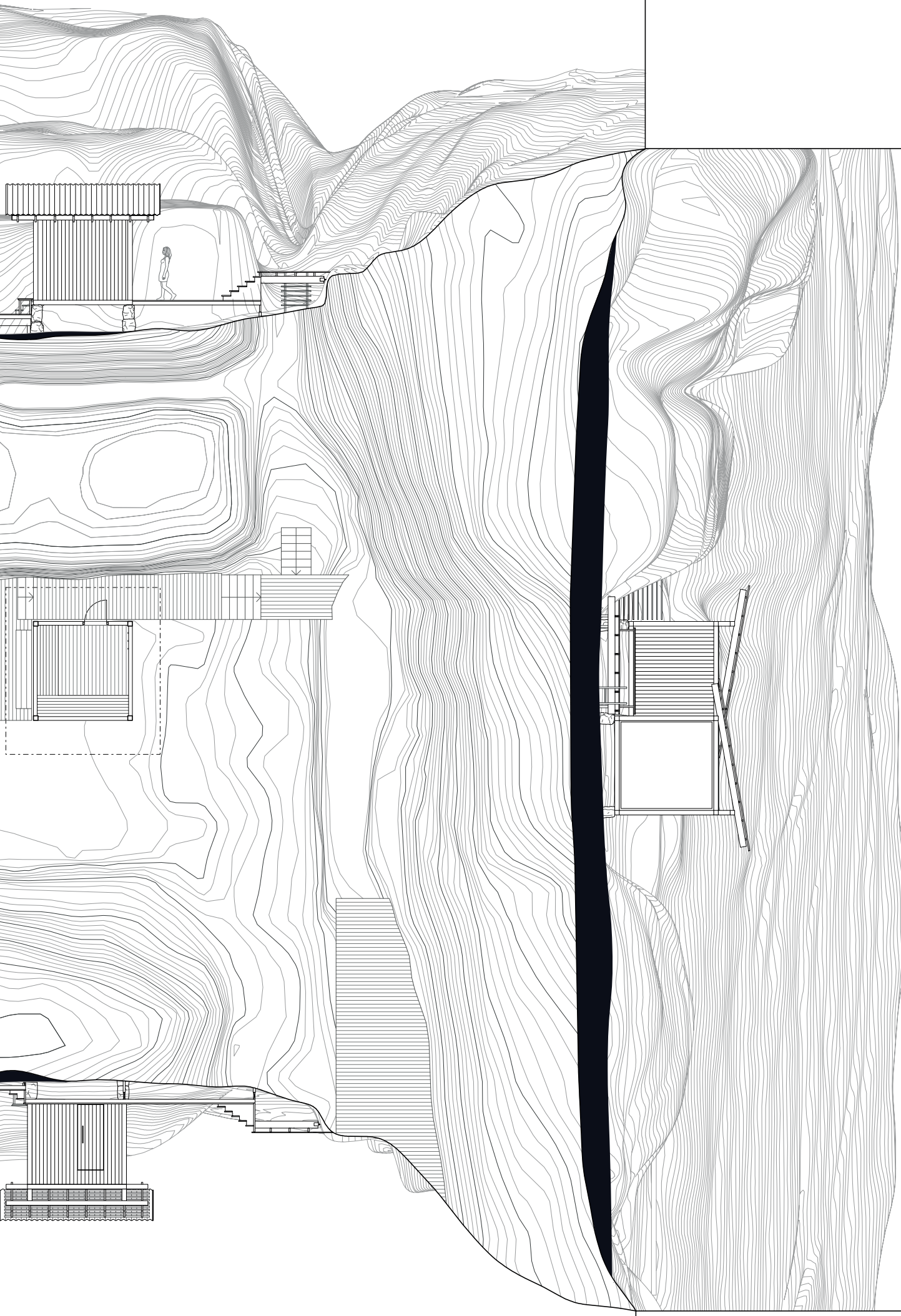
0 1 3m

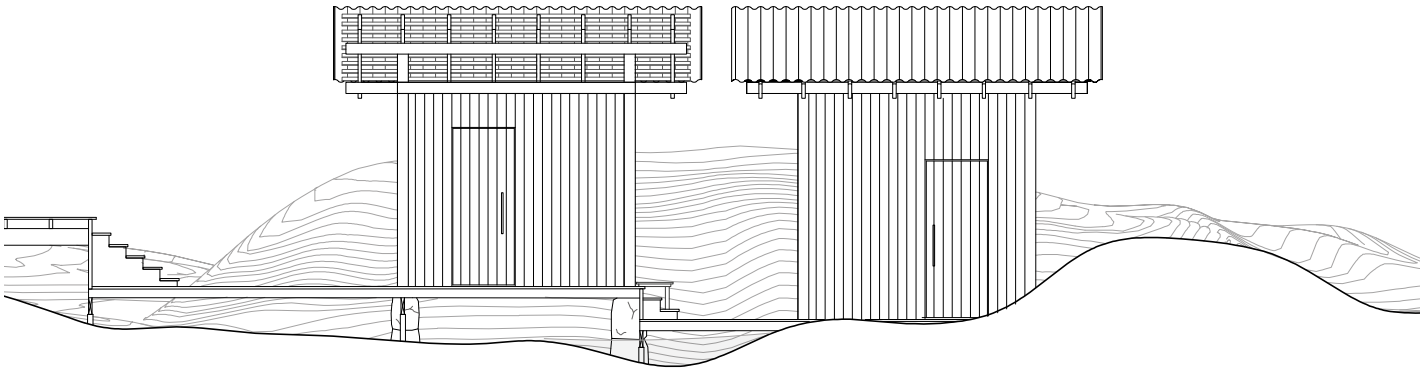
1:75



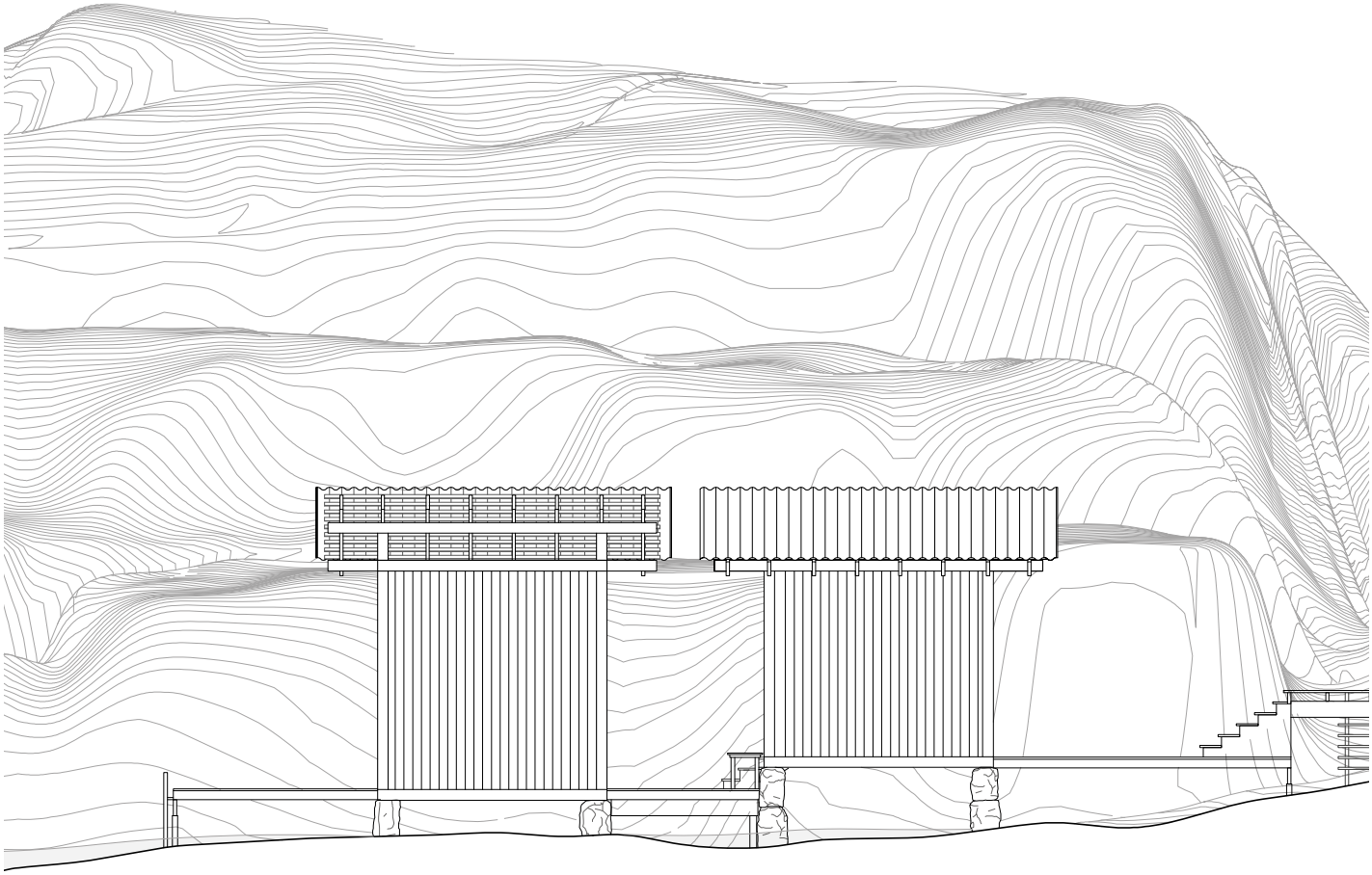
Folded plan & elevations 1:150

0 1 5m





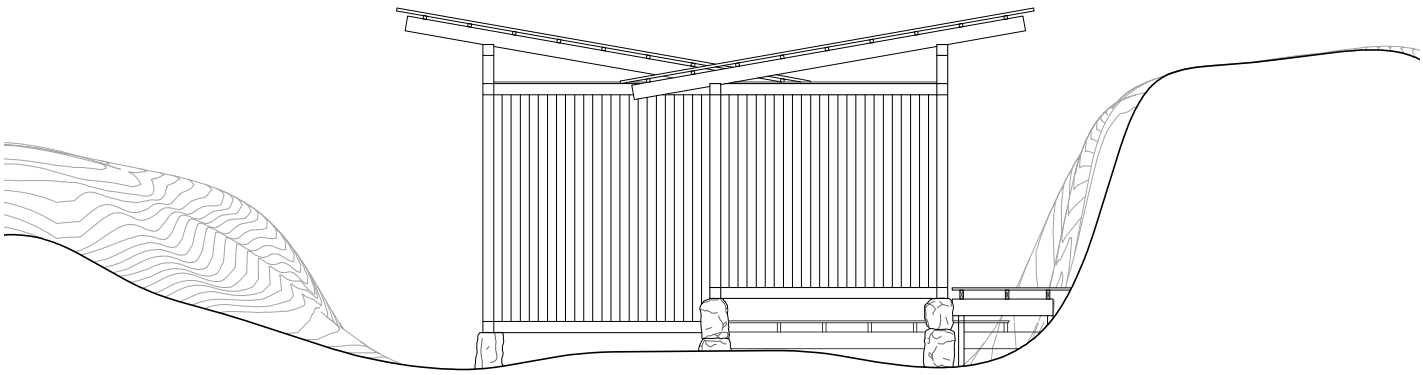
North



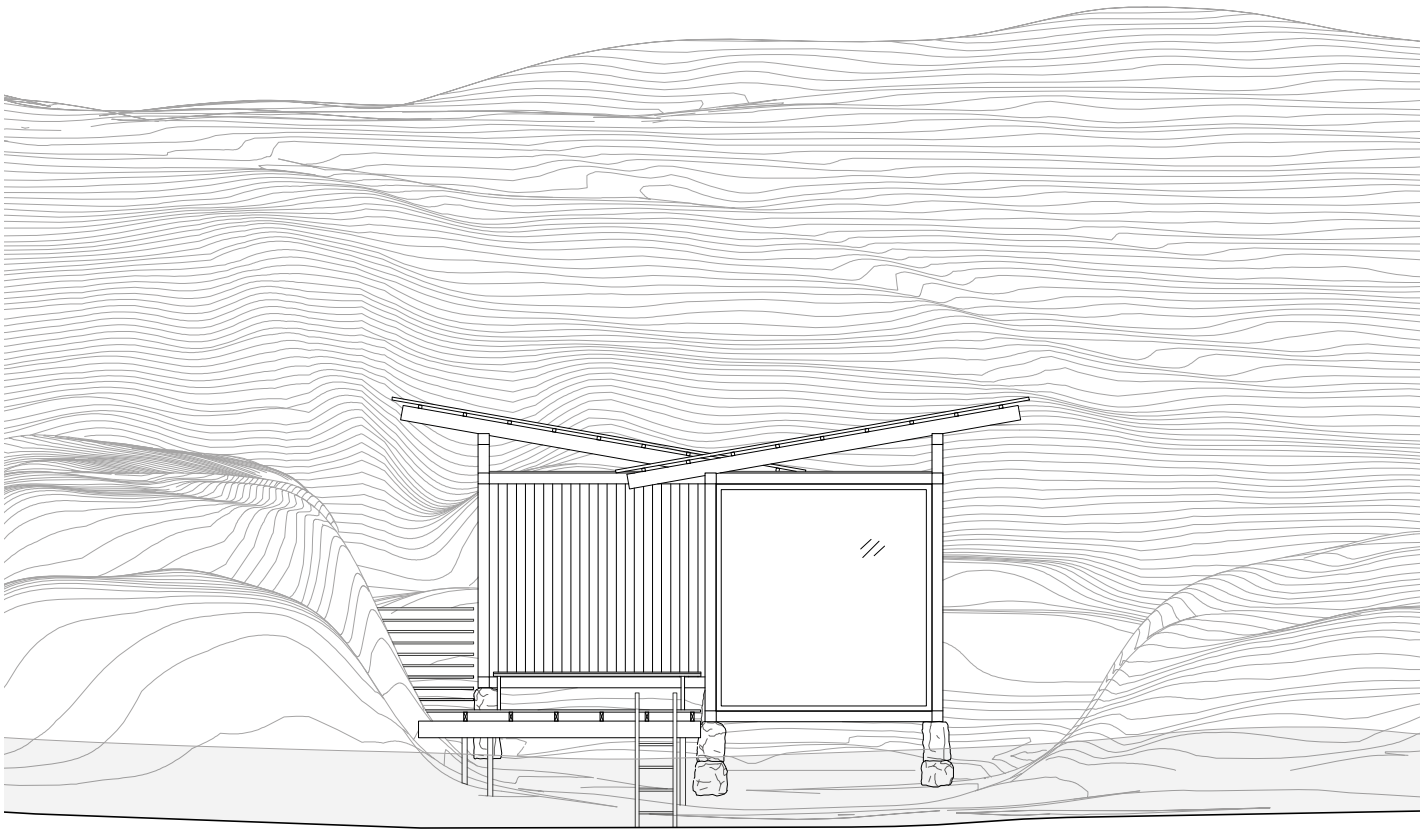
South

0 1 4m

Elevations 1:100



East



West

Discussion

Summary

This thesis has addressed the relationship between architecture, place and culture and attempt to answer the question

How can contemporary architecture be contextually grounded on Ramsvikslandet and placed in a sensitive way concerning both local architectural heritage and the natural qualities of the landscape?

This has been explored through a combination of literature studies and architectural research along with architectural references, site visits, sketching and mapping that developed into a design proposal summarizing and testing the scope of the thesis. The design strategy builds upon the previous steps taken in the process, guided by theories of contextualism, critical regionalism and place identity along with reference projects. The proposal is presented through drawings, diagrams, illustrations and models.

Reflection

Throughout this master thesis process, the complexity of contextual design has become increasingly apparent, as well as the range of interpretations it allows. Different contextual aspects may conflict with each other, while personal perceptions of value and experience influence how place is understood. This raises questions not only about how architecture relates to context, but also about who decides whether a design is considered to be appropriate, rooted, or belonging within a specific site which could be further discussed.

The design process reflected this complexity. Both the investigation and design included many decisions along the way as new information and insights were gathered, for example shifting locations for the interventions which also led to rethinking and redesigning. Gradually, the project shifted from a more design-driven approach, towards a more open-ended exploration of how architecture can emerge from site-specific conditions rather than being primarily driven by predefined design intentions. The mapping became central to this process and remained open-ended throughout the thesis. It was continuously developed through collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and conceptualizing, which made it one of the more time-consuming components of the work. Combined, this resulted in a non linear process with recurring periods of uncertainty regarding both direction and outcome.

Making the layered map was the most valuable tool that allowed me to gather impressions, observations and experiences and was returned to when choosing sites for implementation and the attributes of each site and has been a way to situate myself in the context. However, the translation and synthesis with the investigation of local building traditions and architecture was carried out through a more intuitive process and could potentially been developed into a more clearly defined conceptual framework.

Relating back to the concept of critical regionalism, it is not a straightforward task to balance past and present. There is a broad spectrum between embeddedness and contemporaneity, and the design process moved back and forth along this axis. The identification of characteristic features informed the design, where the aim was to acknowledge the logic embedded in the local building tradition. A sense of recognition and belonging was sought through materiality, construction, and spatial principles, while still allowing for external influences such as variations in roof construction, proportions of openings, roof angles, and extended roof overhangs. This also connects to the understanding that place identity and architectural identity are never fixed. The long history of changing land use at Ramsvikslandet raises questions about how its identity will continue to evolve, and more broadly how architectural traditions adapt when meeting new needs.

Moving forward from this, the cultural, historical, and ecological values required a sensitive approach, where accessibility and preservation needed to be balanced against the risk of disruption. As a result, the interventions were kept low and small in scale and the locations and placement variated from more public to private. However, the question of whether anything should be built at all in this area remains open. The thesis may nonetheless contribute to ongoing discussions regarding future development plans at Ramsvikslandet, including the previously proposed visitor center (naturrum), which is currently on hold. In addition, an extended mapping could also be developed in collaboration with visitors throughout the year and potentially integrated as part of the program.

Furthermore, this thesis could benefit from a more in-depth investigation of how the program would function in practice. Overall, the program relies on a greater level of responsibility from visitors, such as handling waste and carrying firewood and water, which is difficult to evaluate in terms of how it would work in the long term.

To summarize, I believe the proposal is an example of how contemporary architecture can be contextually grounded, acknowledging the ongoing negotiation between continuity and change, preservation and accessibility, and between architecture and landscape and with the potential of contributing to the future plans of Ramsvikslandet.

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Images

Fig 1. Reisz, A. & Reisz, I. (n.d). *Old fisherman in Smögen* [Photograph]. Digitalt museum. https://digitaltmuseum.se/0210113526927/bohuslan-gammal-fiskare-i-smogen

Fig 2. "Quarry", Ramsvik Askum. "The quarry called Klonducke" (n.d). [Photograph]. https://digitaltmuseum.se/0210115229029/medfoljande-text-stenbrott-ramsvik-askum-sn-brottet-kallas-klonducke-omkring

Fig 3. Olsson, Mikael. (n.d). Log timber construction and timber frame construction. [Photograph]. Taken from Fabel arkitekter with permission. https://fabelarkitektur.se/

Fig 4. Sieger, Nick. (2009). The Nordic watercolor museum. [Photograph]. Flickr. https://www.flickr.com/photos/58602851@N00/3891083759.

Fig 5. Westwang, Astrid. (2017). Mining galley. [Photograph]. Flickr. https://www.flickr.com/photos/astrid/36169975581/in/photostream/

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APPENDICES

AI appendix

This appendix outlines the use of AI in the development of this master thesis. AI, Chat gtp (open AI) has been used to support language refinement, structuring of text and translation into English for linguistic purposes. All text was reviewed and edited by the author before inclusion in the thesis. Initially it has been used to find alternative references and literature. All provided literature and references has been cross-checked against academic sources, reviewed and verified to ensure accuracy and relevance.

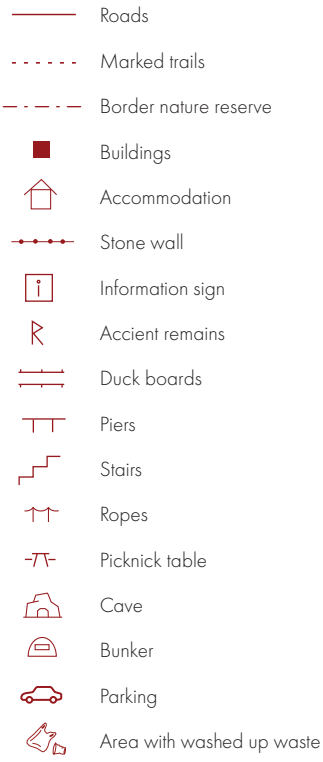
Mapping appendix

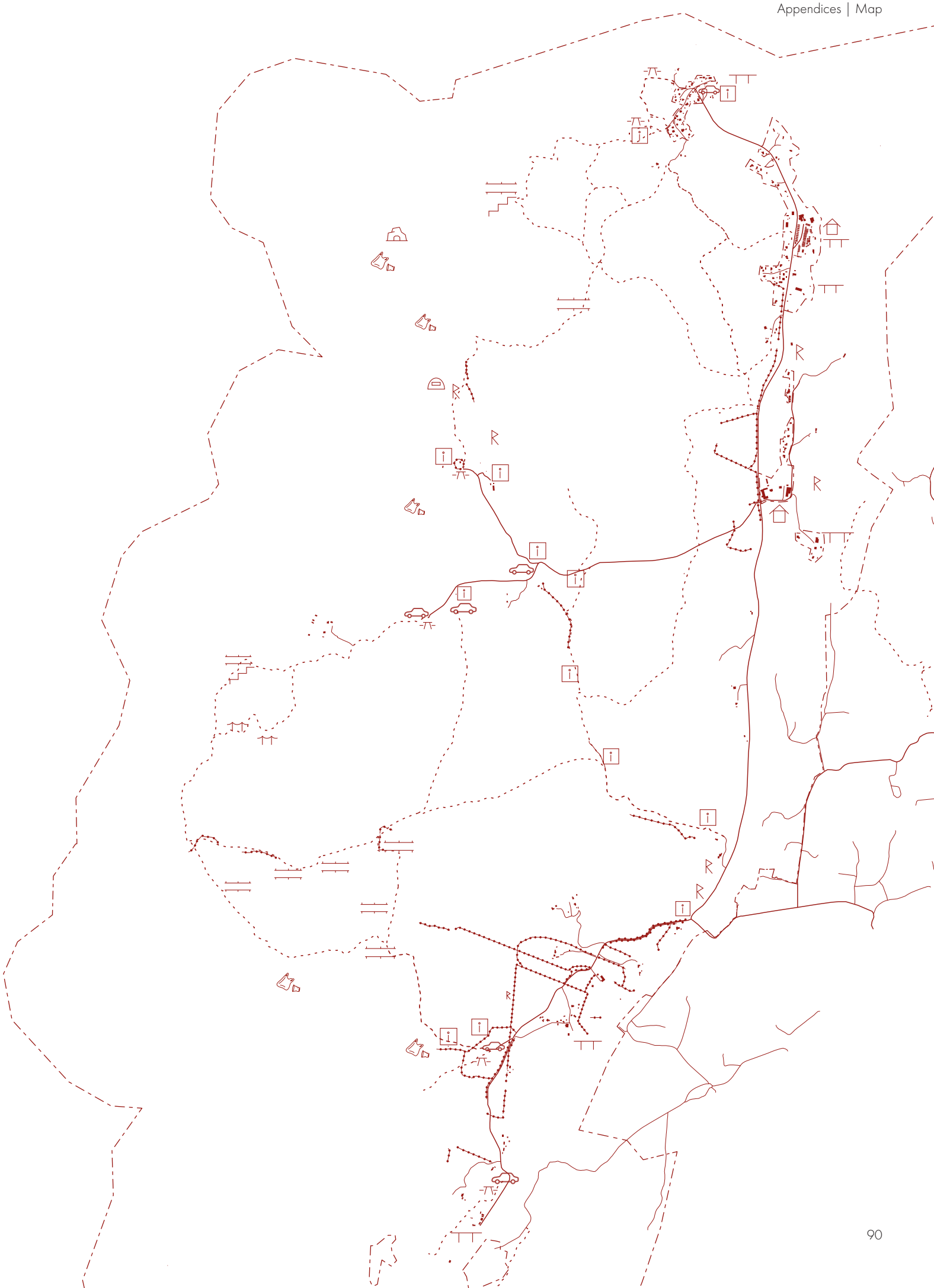
The following appendix provides a presentation of the layers the included in the site analysis map.

Base mape

Fläskevik
Tångevik
(Ramsvik Åkrum)
Tångeviken
Stallskär
Kolbrandviken
Ramsviks fjord
Ramsviks camping
Stäviken
Ramsvikskilen
Bredungen
Kvarnebukten
Grässkamn
Trollvikskäret
Trollvik
Ramsvik Övergård
Sotekanalen
Myren
ÖDBY
Nedre Sotebågen
Soteskog
Grevens myr
Söndre Sotebågen
Kohällen
Helgevik
Grönvik
Skeppshällarna
Helgevikskär
Inre Stenbågen
Haby bukt
Långetången
Småskären
Tåmeskär
TRYGGO

Human constructs





Nature/Landscape

Exposed bedrock

Wetland

Meadows/fileds

Wet heath

Forest

Wave washed moraine

Water

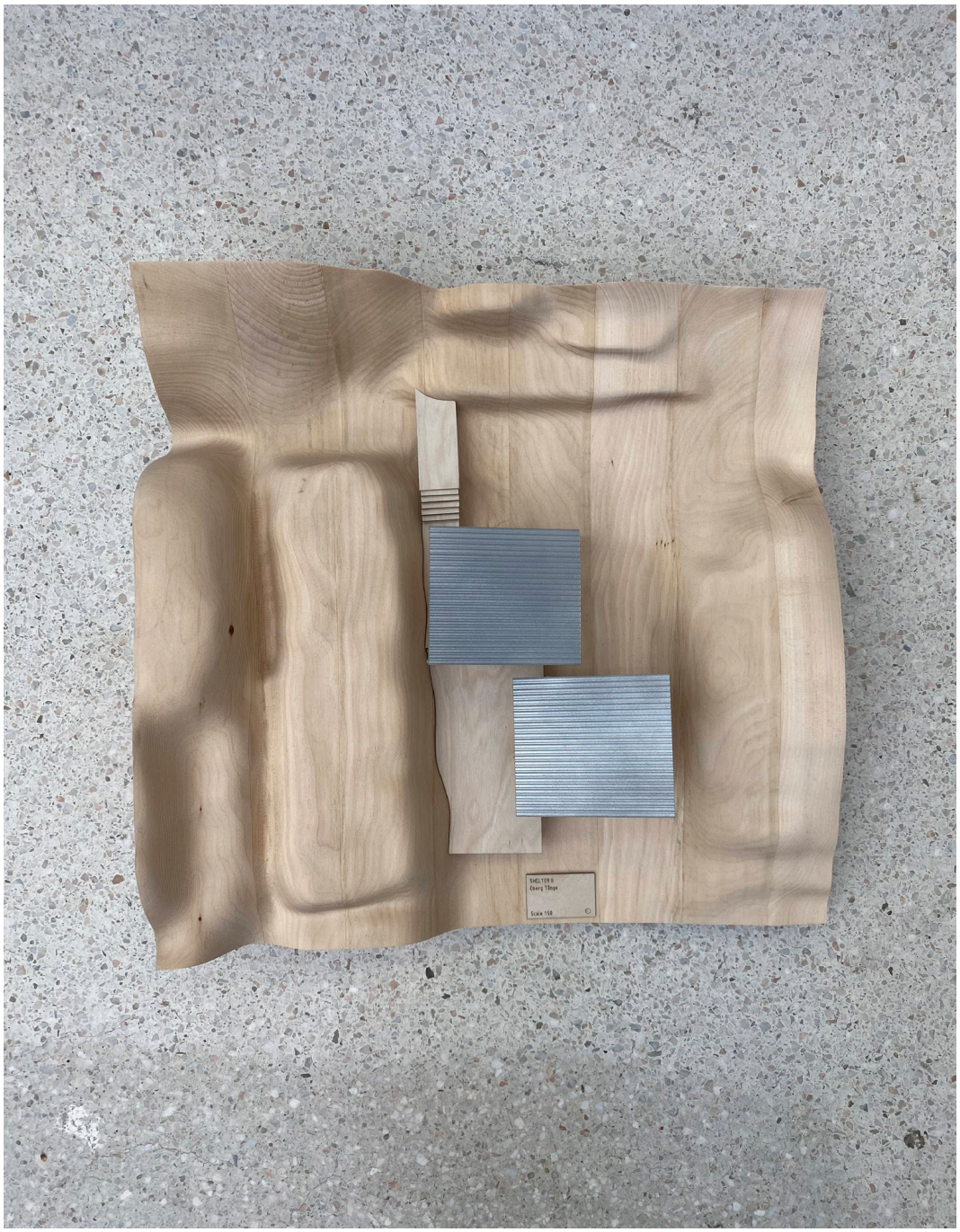
Giant kettles

Ravine

Experience

- Departing from trails
- Demanding path/ decreased speed
- View points/ sight lines
- Wind exposed areas
- Feeling exposed
- Feeling secure/ enclosed
- Landmark
- Points of confusion

Model photos



Model of shelter II 1:50

Model of cabins 1:50

Model of service facility 1:200

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