ROOM FOR CREATIVITY

An Exploration of a new Timber Cultural Centre in central Gothenburg

Agnes Lindblom / Master Thesis 2026
Chalmers School of Architecture / Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering
Examiner: Mikael Ekegren / Supervisor: Björn Gross

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Figure 01. Cover Page: Visualisation of the Cultural Centre seen from across the canal.

ABSTRACT

The thesis explores the design of a new cultural centre at Pustervikskplatsen in central Gothenburg, envisioned as an inclusive urban meeting place that promotes creativity, participation and cultural exchange. The proposal responds to the city's ambition to strengthen its cultural infrastructure and integrate art and culture into urban development. The project proposal is a three-storey cultural centre with an exposed timber load-bearing construction and an open spatial organisation intended to encourage movement, encounters, and interaction throughout the building. The architectural expression consists of three inner cores made of cross-laminated timber with rounded corners, contrasting the more strict and orthogonal facade. The programme includes a 420-seat multipurpose hall, a library, exhibition spaces, and creative studios for music, art, ceramics and other forms of creative practices, bringing together public events and everyday creative practice within the same building.

How an expressive timber construction can inform architectural form, atmosphere and spaces to foster social interaction and engagement is explored in the thesis. A central theme is the use of contrasts both in form and material expression; between soft interior forms and the strict exterior expression, as well as between open and enclosed spaces.

The theoretical framework draws on Peter Zumthor's concept of atmospheres and contemporary research on engineered timber structures such as glulam and cross-laminated timber (CLT), as well as Ernst Neufert's principles for the design of multipurpose halls, particularly in relation to flexibility, acoustics, and spatial form. The methodology is based on research by design and combines literature review, case study analysis, and iterative prototyping to explore how materiality, light, and exposed construction shape spatial experience. Reference projects, including *Sara Kulturhus*, *World of Volvo*, *Wisdome*, and *Nodi*, serve as reference points for sustainable and expressive timber architecture. The thesis results in an architectural proposal that examines how a cultural centre can combine social and environmental sustainability with structural logic and architectural expression, while contributing with a new civic space in central Gothenburg.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE & AIM

Purpose

There is a lack of Cultural Centres close to the city centre in Gothenburg while most cultural venues in central Gothenburg are commercially operated, making them accessible primarily to those with financial means. A new cultural centre at Pustervіksplatsen would therefore strengthen the cultural presence in the city centre while providing an accessible and inclusive meeting place for all.

Aim

The aim is to create a well designed cultural centre at Pustervіksplatsen with focus on an exposed timber construction and the creation of an aesthetically engaging space that enhances human activity.

THESIS QUESTIONS & OBJECTIVE

Questions

How can an expressive timber construction inform the design of a new cultural centre in Gothenburg with atmospheres that encourage creativity and cultural participation?

How can the contrast between a stereotomic and filigree construction be used to create an engaging space in a public building?

Objective

The objective is to create an architecture design proposal for a new cultural centre in central Gothenburg expressed in drawings, 3D visualisations and physical models supported by a booklet.

METHODS

Research by design is the primary method employed in the thesis, a widely used approach in architecture. This method integrates the processes of designing and investigating, allowing the exploration of ideas, strategies and spatial solutions through iterative design work. By engaging directly with the design process as a form of research, it provides both practical and conceptual insights, supporting informed decision-making and the development of innovative architectural solutions.

Case studies involve the analysis of existing built projects and are an essential part of the design process. They provide insights into construction techniques, spatial organisation, materiality and contextual responses, offering inspiration and informing design decisions. The case studies selected for this project focus primarily on timber construction, reflecting an interest in structural expression and materiality.

Site visits are another method employed in the thesis. These primarily focus on the chosen site. Regular visits have been crucial to observe how the project evolves in its context and to generate new ideas and gather input from direct engagement with the environment. Experiencing the site under different lighting conditions and across seasons provides further insight into its qualities. Additionally, visits to the chosen built references has been conducted to enable a thorough analysis and deepen the understanding of their design strategies.

Literature studies form a necessary foundation for every design project as they provide a structured understanding of existing research, theories and factual knowledge relevant to the project. Conducting literature studies involves systematically reviewing academic sources, publications and other credible materials to establish a solid theoretical and contextual basis for the work. The focus has been on studying topics related to atmospheres, multipurpose halls and timber constructions to develop a conceptual and material framework for the thesis. As the project progresses, the literature studies will be revisited to explore more detailed technical aspects and specific design considerations, ensuring that the work remains both informed and grounded in current research.

Prototyping can take many forms and serves as a valuable tool in the design process. Quick sketches do for example allow rapid exploration of different ideas and design approaches, a technique used extensively. Prototyping can also include 3D modeling, which not only serves as a means of presentation but also enables experimentation with spatial concepts. Additionally, physical sketch models have been made to better understand atmospheres, light conditions and the experiential qualities of the spaces.

DELIMITATIONS

The thesis does not focus on economical sustainability or the cost of construction or materials but has instead been placed on creating engaging atmospheres that will enhance the civic life of Gothenburg.

The thesis takes into account the planning of the new Haga Station of Västlänken to the extent of being a well placed building in relation to the increasing human activity and public transport on the site. It does not however concern the fact that the site is currently used as a construction site for Västlänken and is based on the proposal for the finished station.

READING INSTRUCTIONS

The booklet consists of five parts. Part one introduces the projects and outlines how the work has been carried out. Part two provides a more thorough background and problem description. Part three presents the theoretical framework on which the design proposal is based. In part four the main material of the booklet is presented, including a site analysis, drawings and visualisations. Finally, part five contains a discussion that evaluates the finished result.

A Glimpse of the Spiral Staircase & Library

BACKGROUND

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

Gothenburg has a rich and diverse cultural life, but to meet the growing demands of its residents, Göteborgs Stad has identified the need to expand the city's cultural infrastructure. The municipality aims to create an appealing urban environment where cultural planning integrates artistic and cultural perspectives into urban development. Art and culture are intended to play a central role in shaping the city's growth (Göteborgs Stad, 2013).

Cultural centres are an important part of Gothenburg's cultural life and there are currently eight official cultural centres owned by the municipality: *Kulturhuset Blå Stället, Kulturhuset Bergsjön, Kulturhuset Kåken, Axelhuset, Kulturrummet Gårdsten, Selma Lagerlöfs Cente*r and *Frölunda Kulturhus.* In addition, several venues with similar functions exist, such as *Kulturhuset Oceanen, Kultur Ungdom* and *Backa Folkets Hus*, which are association-owned cultural spaces. However, these are all located in the suburban areas of Gothenburg, creating both a geographical and social distance from the city centre.

In contrast, most cultural venues in central Gothenburg are commercially operated, making them accessible primarily to those with financial means. They often function mainly as venues for experiencing culture, lacking the unique integration of both experiencing and creating culture under the same roof that characterises cultural centres. A new cultural centre at Pustervikskplatsen would therefore strengthen the cultural presence in the city centre while providing an accessible and inclusive meeting place for all.

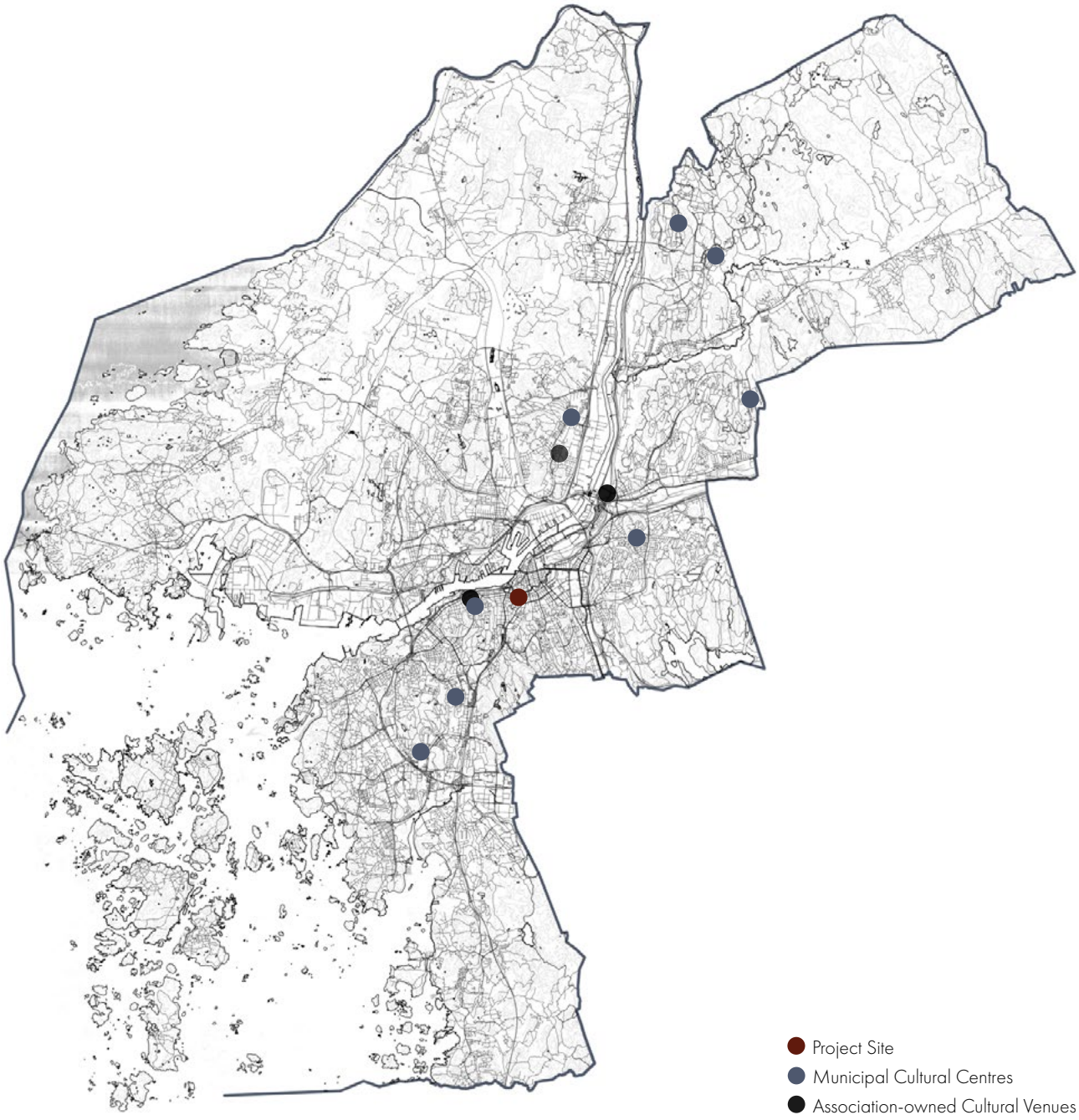


Figure 02. Contextual Map of Cultural Centres in Gothenburg Municipality. Author's own image

WHAT IS A CULTURAL CENTRE?

A cultural centre, or "Kulturhus" in Swedish, is a public building, usually with municipal or communal ownership, that hosts multiple cultural activities and facilities. These buildings commonly include libraries, exhibition halls, performance spaces, workshops and meeting rooms. A cultural centre is open to everyone, providing access to shared culture and encouraging participation regardless of background or income, thereby embodying democratic values. It acts as more than just a venue: it is a meeting place, a "community home" or "municipal living room" meant to be welcoming and accessible to a broad audience. It is a place where citizens can meet, exchange ideas and participate in civic life. This makes them not only cultural but social infrastructures, supporting inclusion and belonging (Kulturanalys, 2025).

THE CLOSURE OF FRILAGRET

Frilagret was a cultural centre for young people aged 13–30, located in Lagerhuset by Järntorget in Gothenburg. For many years it served as a popular hub where young people could explore and organise various cultural activities. However, in December 2024 most of the operations were shut down to make room for Linnéstadens Library, a public library focusing on works of poetry, prose, drama, storytelling, and writing. The municipality decided to close Frilagret, reasoning that the premises in Lagerhuset were well suited for library activities and that the move was economically sustainable. As a result, there is now no longer a space in central Gothenburg where young people can create and participate in cultural initiatives. The municipality proposed that those who had previously spent time at Frilagret should instead turn to the other municipal cultural centers across the city which would adapt their programs to better suit a young audience (Göteborgs Stad, 2024). However, as previously mentioned, these centers are located far from the city center. Designing a new cultural centre in central Gothenburg, especially one in close proximity to the old Lagerhuset location, would therefore be a far better solution for supporting young people's engagement in culture.

THEORY

Figure 03. Therme Vals, Switzerland. (Brutarchitekt, 2021). CC BY-SA 4.0

ATMOSPHERES

In the book *Atmospheres* by Peter Zumthor he explores how architects can create atmospheres and experiences that affect people on a deep, emotional level. He argues that buildings are not only about form and function, but also about how materials, light, sound and proportions interact to evoke feelings and experiences. A central aspect of Zumthor's argument is the significance of materials. Materials are not merely structural or decorative elements, they possess an inherent quality that shapes how we perceive a space. By preserving the natural character of materials and carefully selecting combinations, architects can create atmospheres that engage occupants both physically and emotionally. Zumthor also emphasizes the interplay between materials, light and sound. For example, the texture and composition of a wall can influence a room's acoustics, which in turn alters our perception of the space's character. Through conscious material choices and an understanding of their properties, architects can create environments that stimulate the senses, evoke emotions and leave lasting impressions. His work provides a valuable perspective on how materials can be used to craft rich, inviting and atmospherically charged spaces (Zumthor, 2006).

Figure 04. World of Volvo entrance. Author's own image.

EXPRESSIVE TIMBER CONSTRUCTION

Engineered wood products such as glulam, cross-laminated timber (CLT) and laminated veneer lumber (LVL) have revolutionized modern timber construction. These materials enable the realization of structures with larger spans, increased heights and more complex geometries than traditional timber methods allow. Glulam offers high strength and stiffness and the lamination process minimizes the impact of defects by sorting lamellas according to strength, thereby enhancing their average mechanical properties (Swedish Wood, 2025). When combined with CLT and LVL, glulam allows timber to compete with steel and concrete in large-scale constructions, often serving as load-bearing beams beneath CLT panels to achieve extended spans. Moreover, the use of these engineered wood products contributes to sustainable construction practices by sequestering carbon dioxide throughout their service life and promoting the use of renewable materials in building design (Swedish Wood, 2018).

SPATIAL AND ACOUSTIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR MULTIPURPOSE HALLS

In Architects' Data, Ernst Neufert describes different types of concert halls and how their form and function influence both acoustics and use. One of the most established types of concert halls is the shoebox, characterised by a rectangular plan, resembling a shoebox, with the stage placed at one short end and the audience seated in a long, narrow room. This type is often considered highly successful acoustically, particularly for classical music as the parallel side walls create early lateral reflections that contribute to a rich, enveloping sound. In addition, architectural elements such as balconies and ornaments can help diffuse sound and reduce unwanted echoes (Neufert, 2023).

Neufert also writes about multipurpose halls, which are designed to accommodate different activities such as concerts, theatre, lectures and conferences. Since these functions require different acoustic conditions, their design involves particular challenges in the planning of the space. Classical music, for example, usually requires a longer reverberation to achieve a rich sound, whereas a lecture or conference requires a shorter reverberation to increase clarity. To handle these conflicting requirements, multi-purpose halls often rely on variable acoustics systems such as movable panels, reflectors and curtains to alter the acoustic properties depending on the requirements for each event.

According to Neufert, a multi-purpose hall should therefore have a relatively neutral and flexible form rather than a highly specialised geometry. A broader rectangular or slightly fan-shaped plan is often advantageous as it can provide both improved sightlines and allow for a variety of seating arrangements. In addition, flexibility in both furnishing and acoustics is essential in order to support different types of events and performances, allowing the space to be used for music, speech, theatre and concerts. Adjustable acoustic elements and seating can therefore enable the hall to respond to different requirements (Neufert, 2023).

BUILT REFERENCES

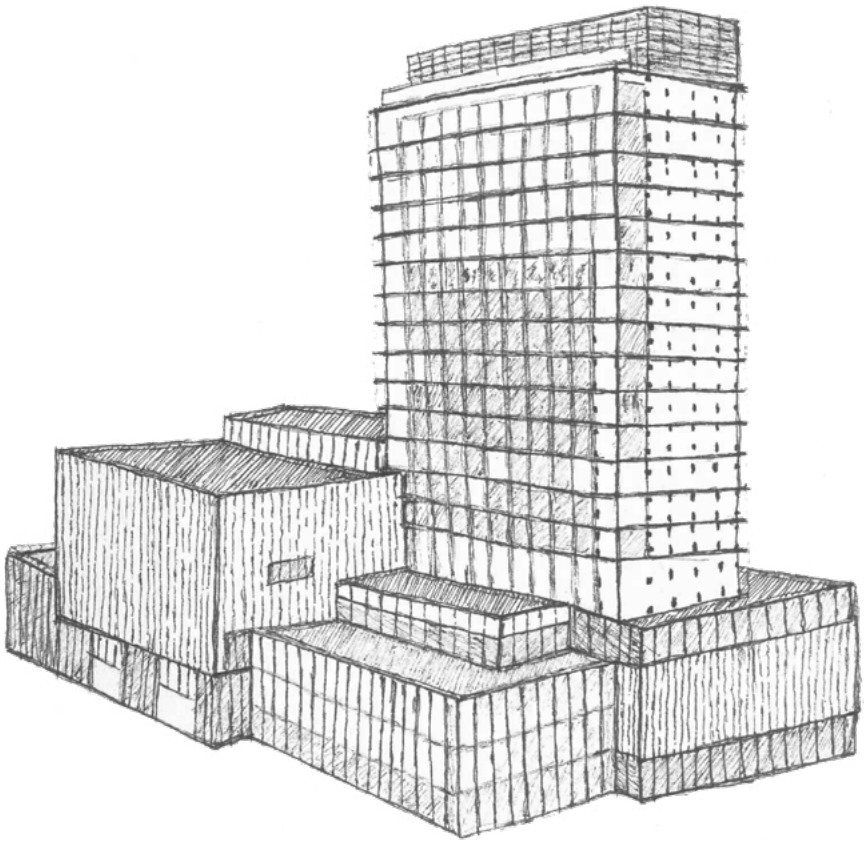


Figure 05. Sketch of Sara Kulturhus. Author's own image.

SARA KULTURHUS / WHITE ARKITEKTER

Sara Kulturhus is a large-scale cultural centre located in Skellefteå, Sweden, that combines multiple functions such as a library, exhibition halls, theatre and hotel within a 20-storey wooden structure. Designed by White Arkitekter and completed in 2021, the building was conceived as an integrated meeting place for culture, art and community.

The choice of materials and structural design are central to the project's identity and technical ambition. The structure consists almost entirely of timber elements, including glulam, solid wood and cross-laminated timber (CLT). The load-bearing system of the cultural centre is made of glulam and CLT, while the concert halls and roof trusses are constructed in solid wood. This combination contributes to both architectural expression and complex technical challenges concerning span, sound and acoustics. The facade combines wood with extensive glazing, allowing light and reflections to flow through the building and giving it a sense of visual lightness (Steinvall, 2024).

The innovative approach to large-scale timber construction in Sara Kulturhus is truly inspiring, particularly the way the architects have addressed long spans, acoustic performance and the aesthetics of exposed wood. The interplay between wood and glass, combined with the refined detailing of black steel elements, forms an important aspect of the design. The building's program and spatial qualities serve as a strong source of inspiration for the master thesis, adapted to a smaller scale.

Figure 06. Sara Kulturhus: Wooden roof and black steel details. (Palmqvist, 2020). Published with permission.

Figure 07. Sara Kulturhus: Wooden acoustic wall in concert hall. (Palmqvist, 2020). Published with permission.

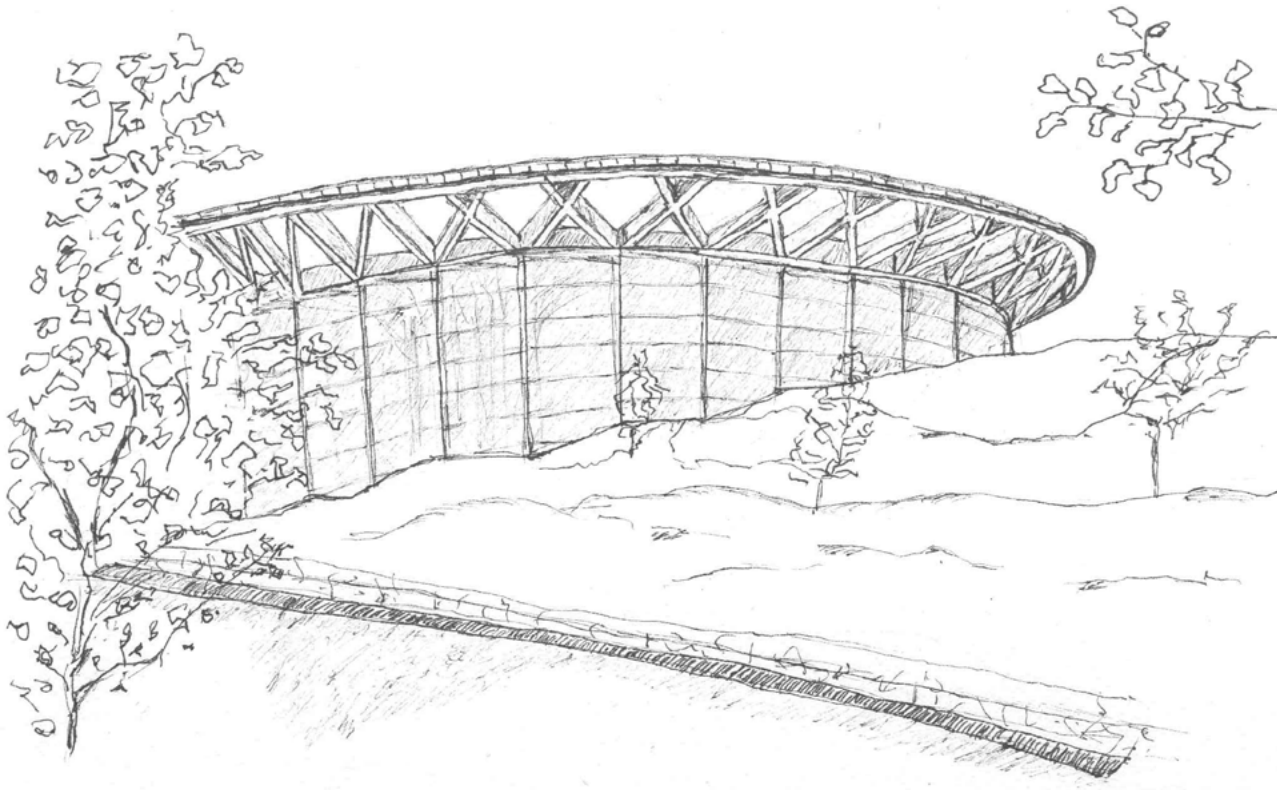


Figure 08. Sketch of World of Volvo. Author's own image.

WORLD OF VOLVO / HENNING LARSEN ARCHITECTS

World of Volvo is an experience centre located in Gothenburg, designed by Henning Larsen Architects and completed in 2024. It is a contemporary example of how wooden hybrid architecture can integrate modern construction techniques, form and identity. The building's circular form conveys openness and community and its design is inspired by the Swedish concept of Allemansrätten, which holds that nature should be accessible to everyone (Henning Larsen, 2022).

The load-bearing wooden structure, composed of glulam and CLT, creates a warm and tactile spatial experience, while glass, steel and concrete provide transparency and structural stability. Large wooden columns, designed to resemble trees, support the roof like branches, contributing to an almost landscape-like interior space.

By combining digital construction techniques with nature-inspired forms, the project demonstrates how wood can function as a high-performance material in complex, large-scale buildings. The architecture successfully unites sustainability and symbolism, creating a space where nature, technology and humans coexist harmoniously, reflecting Volvo's values of responsibility and trust (Henning Larsen, 2022).

Figure 09-11. 09. Wooden roof structure. 10. Wooden staircase and black steel and glass elevators. 11. Wooden columns and ground connectors. Author's own images.

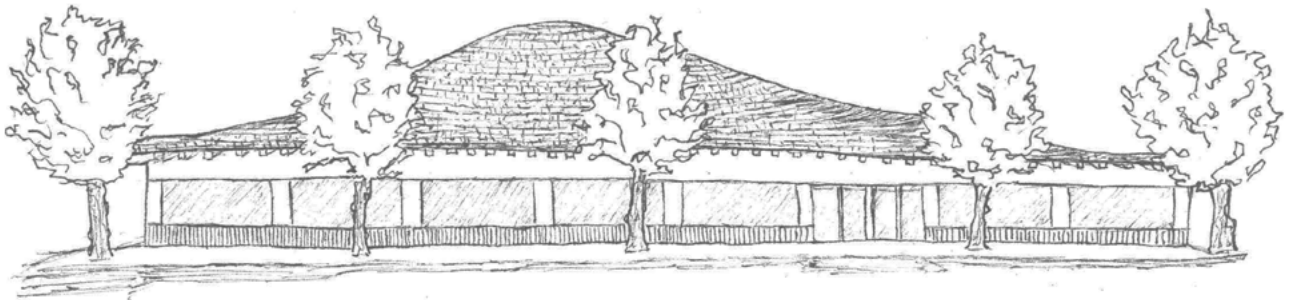


Figure 12. Exterior sketch of Wisdome. Author's own image.

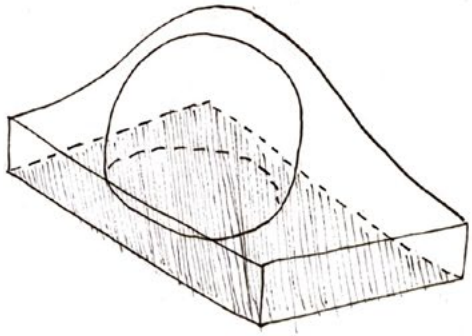


Figure 13. Sketch of the conceptual design . Author's own image.

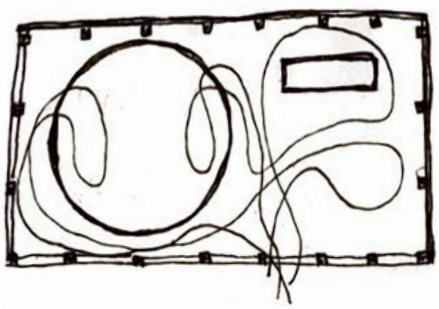


Figure 14. Conceptual sketch of the movement within the building. Author's own image.

WISDOME / ELDING OSCARSON

Wisdome is a part of the technical museum in Stockholm, designed by Elding Oscarson. It is a dynamic architectural addition to Stockholm that blends innovative timber construction with immersive media experiences. The project features a distinctive dome structure, which functions as an immersive audiovisual environment, forming the centerpiece of the building.
The exterior is defined by a sweeping timber roof that spans the entire structure without internal columns, creating an open and flexible interior (Elding Oscarson, 2023).

Constructed with laminated veneer lumber (LVL) and cross-laminated timber (CLT), the roof showcases Elding Oscarson's commitment to exploring sustainable materials and advanced timber engineering (Elding Oscarson, 2023).

Inside, the dome hosts interactive exhibitions and multimedia presentations, while the surrounding spaces accommodate a cafe and public areas, integrating both cultural and social functions within the design. The contrast between the enclosed shell and the surrounding open plan public spaces serves as a primary source of inspiration for the thesis project.

What makes this project truly inspiring is its seamless integration of architectural innovation and experiential design by creating the gridshell like structure resulting in a landmark that is visually striking yet highly functional.

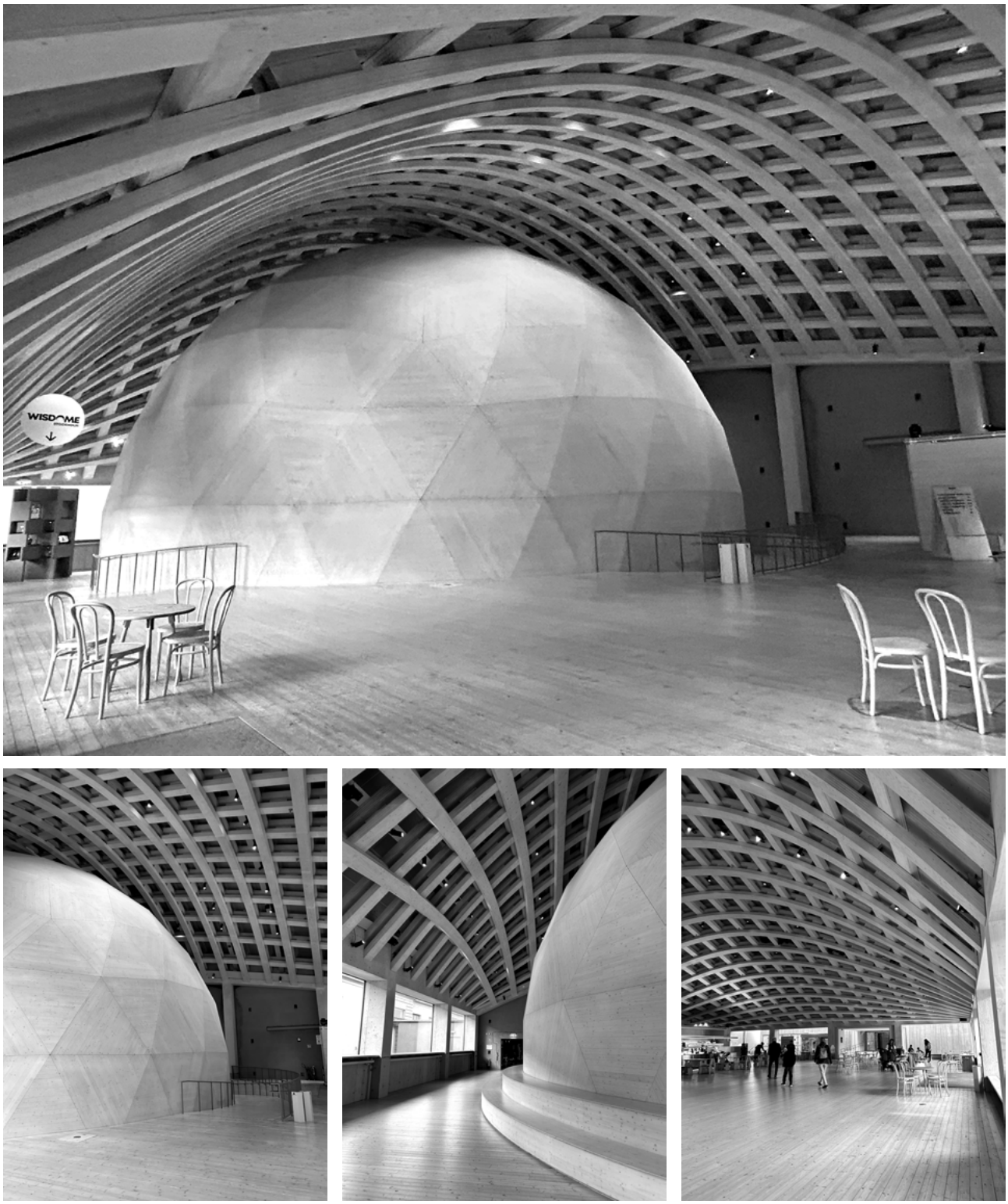


Figure 15-18. Interior views of Wisdome, Stockholm. Author's own images.

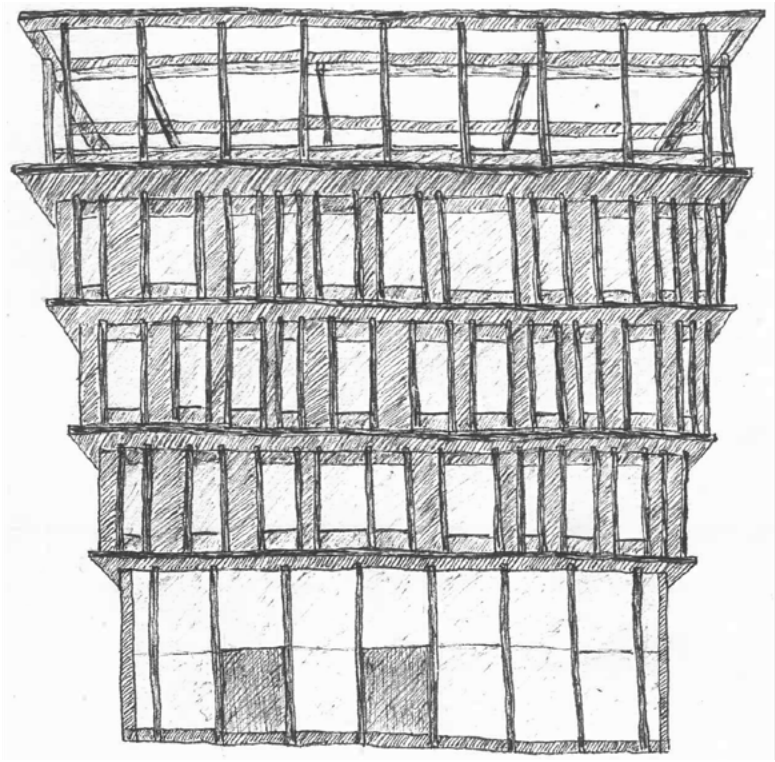


Figure 19. Sketch of Nodi. Author's own image.

NODI / WHITE ARKITEKTER

Nodi is a five-storey office building designed by White Arkitekter in which timber construction is a defining element both aesthetically and functionally. Located in Nya Hovås in the southwest of Gothenburg, the building was completed in 2021 and is the first office building in Sweden to be constructed entirely in wood (White Arkitekter, 2021).

The structure is made of glulam and partially clad in wooden panels treated to give a darker finish, which adds warmth and a natural character both inside and out. The exposed wooden framework defines the interior and contributes to a comfortable indoor environment with stable humidity and temperature. Nodi's design features each floor expanding slightly in size as it rises, creating a light, open and inviting atmosphere, amplified by the large windows (White Arkitekter, 2021).

The ground floor houses commercial spaces, while the upper floors accommodate offices. A shared rooftop terrace encourages social interaction, making the building more than just a workplace.

Figure 20. The expanding facade. Author's own image.

Figure 21. Interior columns. Author's own image.

MAIN MATERIAL

EXPLORING THE SITE

The chosen site is located at Pustervіksplatsen opposite Feskekörka across Rosenlundskanalen. The views towards the canal in the north are highly valuable and provides visual openness and a strong connection to the waterfront environment. This relationship to the water enhances the spatial qualites of the site and offers opportunities for attractive views from the cultural centre. Järntorget is a historic square situated to the west in Figure 22 that today functions as a major transport and cultural hub. The proximity to Järntorget makes the site a vivid place and the new Haga station of Västlänken (see Figure 22) will further increase the human activity of the site.

To the west, the nearest property is a residential building dating from the early twentieth century. Across Rosenlundskanalen lies the heritage-listed Feskekörka distinguished by its unique architectural expression and adjacent to it is a facility housing the city's residential agency.

The plot is framed by a line of trees to the south which gives the site a park-like character while also functioning as a sound barrier, protecting the site from noise from the surrounding roads and tram lines.

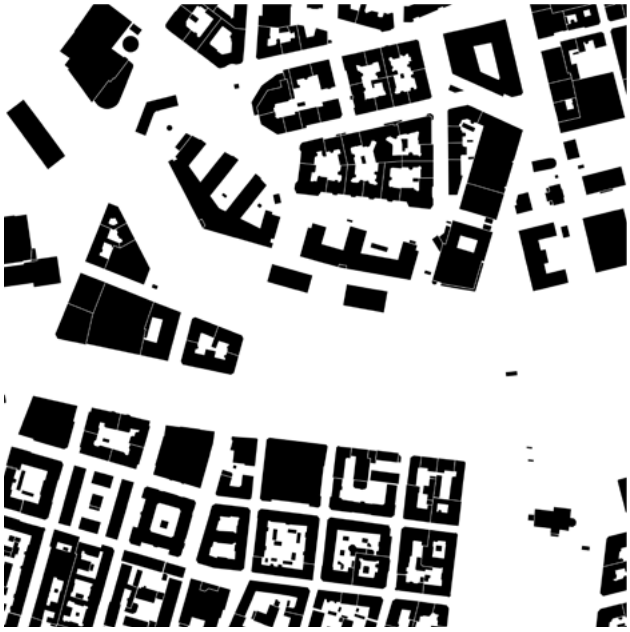


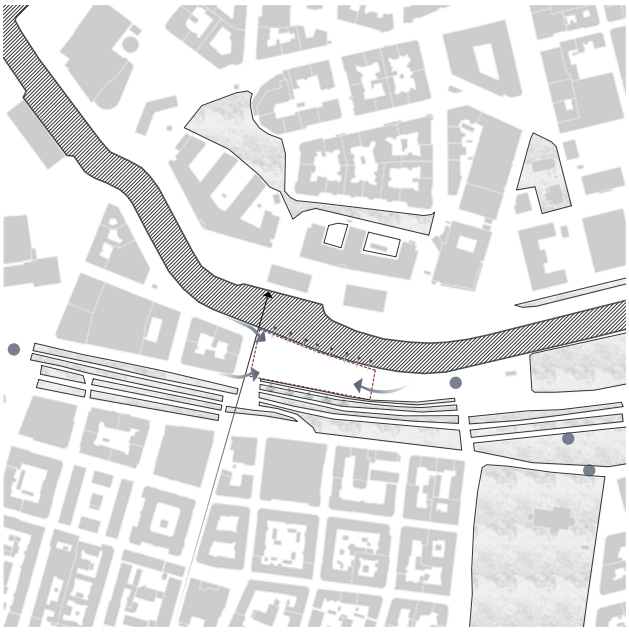
Figure Ground

Water Greenary

Green-Blue Infrastructure

Transportation Network

Driveway Bike Lane



Plot Water Views

Noise *Sight Line*

Public Transport *Access Routes*

Opportunities and Constraints

Figure 22. Site Analysis. Author's own image.

Figure 23. The construction site today. Author's own image.

Figure 24. The site seen from across Rosenlundskanalen. Author's own image

PUSTERVIKSPLATSEN

The site is at present occupied by construction work for the Västlänken project. However, the actual Haga Station will be located further east and no new detailed development plan has yet been established for the selected area. Despite its temporary condition, the site holds great potential, with the waterfront to the north and traffic partly screened by an avenue of trees to the south. By situating a cultural centre between the new public transport hub in Haga and Järntorget, the design aims to revive the waterfront promenade, bringing renewed attention and life to the area.

Figure 25. Pusterviksgatan. Author's own image.

PUSTERVIKSGATAN

The building closest to the chosen plot located at Pusterviksgatan is a typical residential building from the beginning of the twentieth century. The facade is designed in a classical style, with plastered surfaces, granite detailing and tall pilasters. The roof is pitched and metal-clad, which was typical for buildings in Gothenburg at that time. The windows are tall and narrow, often with profiled arches, contributing to a vertical emphasis and a sense of elegance and natural light. The corners of the building are cut, providing a smooth transition between the streets, a characteristic feature of buildings from this era. The facade is symmetrical and balanced, with a clear horizontal division through pronounced cornices and a base floor that marks the building's foundation.

The building is an excellent example of Gothenburg's turn-of-the-century architecture, where classical elements are combined with functional solutions to create a timeless and refined aesthetic. This architecture contributes to the character of Pustervik and is an important part of the city's cultural heritage.

Figure 26. Feskekörka. Author's own image.

FESKEKÖRKA

Feskekörka, originally constructed in 1874, is a seafood market hall and has become one of Gothenburg's most recognisable landmarks. Designed by the city architect Victor von Gegerfelt, the building draws inspiration from Old Norse stave churches, a reference that also informed its popular nickname the "*Fish Church*." Its architectural expression is characterised by a steeply pitched roof, pointed arches and large Gothic-style windows that admit generous natural light. The light brick facade contrasts strikingly with the tall metal roof, reinforcing the building's distinctive silhouette along Rosenlundskanalen. In 2024, White Arkitekter completed a comprehensive restoration with the aim of reinstating the building's original architectural values, many of which had been obscured by earlier interventions. The restoration revealed and preserved the integrity of the original timber roof structure, whose trusses and beams are supported along the walls, allowing for an open, column-free interior space. These timber elements rest on granite plinths, reflecting the building's hybrid construction of masonry and wood, a key characteristic derived from stave church architecture (White Arkitekter, 2024).

Figure 27. Boplats Office. Author's own image.

BOPLATS

The building at Rosenlundsplatsen 1 houses the offices of the residential rental agency Boplats and is distinguished by its functionalist architectural style. Its design is vertical and unornamented which is a characteristic well-suited for office buildings in Gothenburg from the latter half of the twentieth century and remains relevant today.

The facade is clad in stone, giving the building a monolithic and timeless presence. Regularly spaced windows create a rhythmic pattern, while the entrance, highlighted with glass and stainless steel, conveys a modern and inviting character. Its straight, functional lines stand in contrast to the older, more ornate neighboring structures, fostering a compelling dialogue between historic and contemporary architecture. The open, accessible entrance and expansive glass surfaces further contribute to a welcoming atmosphere.

Boplats' office exemplifies modernist office architecture, combining functional efficiency with a clean, refined aesthetic. The material choices and overall design reflect a timeless quality that resonates with both the city's development and the surrounding architectural context.

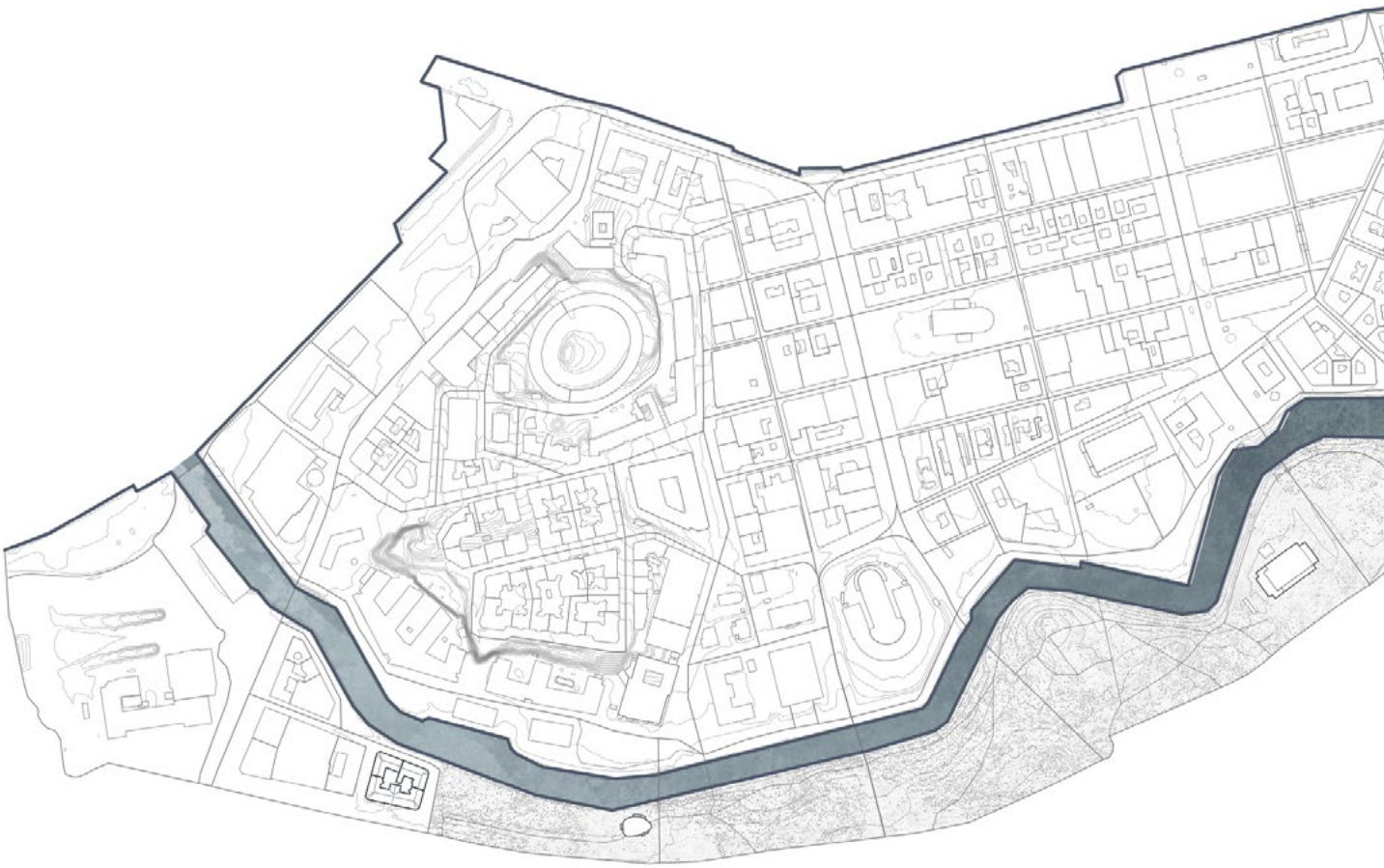
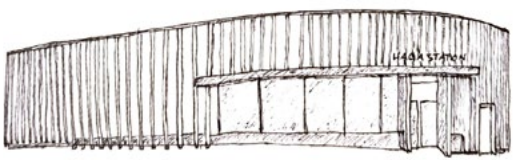


Figure 28. Map of Rosenlundskanalen highlighting the buildings in a park setting. Authour's own image.

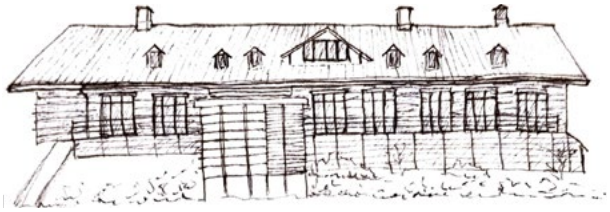
BUILDING IN A PARK SETTING

Between Nya Allén and Rosenlundskanalen, from Rosenlundsbron to Drottningtorget, a well-connected park landscape extends through Kungsparken, Bältespännarparken and Trädgårdsföreningen. Forming a green corridor that comprises an important part of the urban structure of Gothenburg by linking a series of public buildings and establishing an environment where landscape, water and movement are intertwined.

On this basis, the analysis for the project suggests that the existing park structure could be extended westward towards the cultural centre and *Pusterviksgatan*, where the dense stone city resumes. Such an extension would strengthen the continuity of the green strip and create a more coherent transition between park and city. The analysis of existing buildings along this sequence shows that they relate to the landscape in different, but comparable ways. While some appear as freestanding objects within the greenery, such as *Palmhuset* and *Direktörsvillan*, others position themselves along the edges or by the water, such as *Alfons Åberg Kulturhus*. Together, these examples suggest that architecture in this area should extend the openness, scale and spatial character of the landscape while supporting public life and activity. These observations and analyses form the basis of the project's architectural approach, in which the cultural centre is understood not as an isolated object, but rather as an expansion of a broader park condition that should be reinforced.

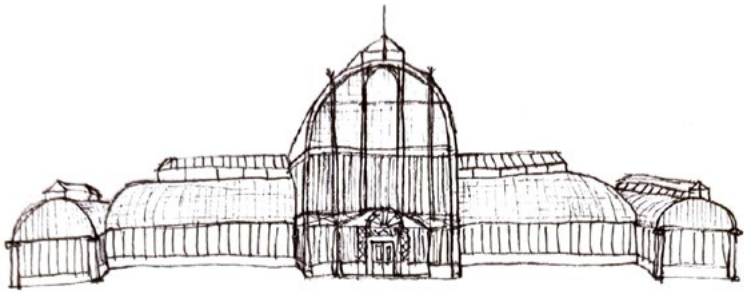


Sketch of the upcoming Haga Station, Västlänken

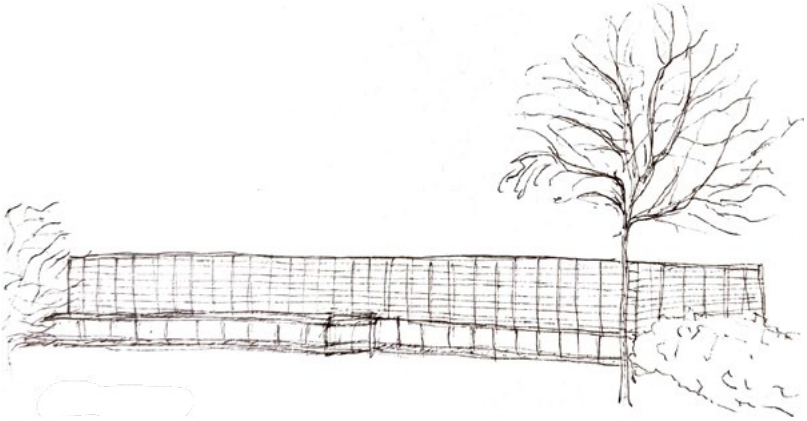


Sketch of Alfons Åbergs Kulturhus, Trädgårdsföreningen

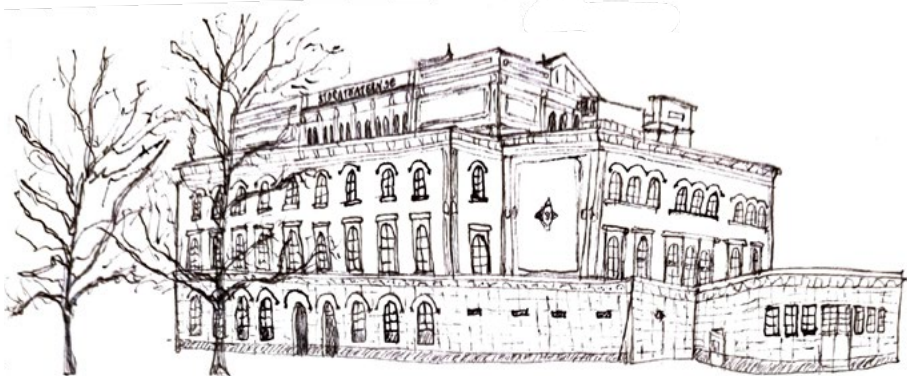
Sketch of Direktörsvillan, Trädgårdsföreningen



Sketch of Palmhuset, Trädgårdsföreningen



Sketch of Trädgår'n, Trädgårdsföreningen



Sketch of Stora Teatern, Göteborg

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

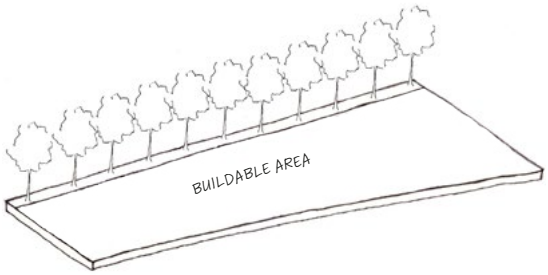
The project proposal is a three-storey cultural centre with a timber load-bearing construction. The building is characterised by its three inner cores, rectangular wooden volumes with rounded corners, which contrast with the more strict and orthogonal facade. An open floor plan has been utilised to facilitate free movement and encourage encounters and interaction within the building.

The cultural centre promotes cultural diversity through its program which includes a 420-seat multipurpose event hall, a library, exhibition space and creative facilities such as a dance/theatre studio, music studios, art studios and a ceramics studio. By offering spaces for both cultural events and creative practice under the same roof, the centre aims to integrate culture into everyday life and thereby strengthen social cohesion.

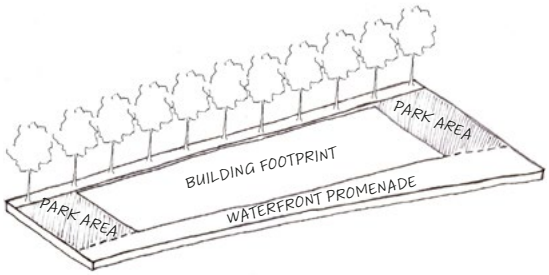
Contrasts are a central concept in the project. The proposal explores contrasts between the more stereotomic wooden inner cores and the filigree glass facade, between the soft interior forms and the strict exterior expression as well as between open and enclosed spaces.

The vertical load-bearing construction consists of Laminated Veneer Lumber (LVL) columns with a centre-to-centre spacing of 4400 mm. The inner cores are constructed from Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) and clad with wooden panels. For acoustic performance, the walls of the multipurpose hall consist of double, separated CLT walls.

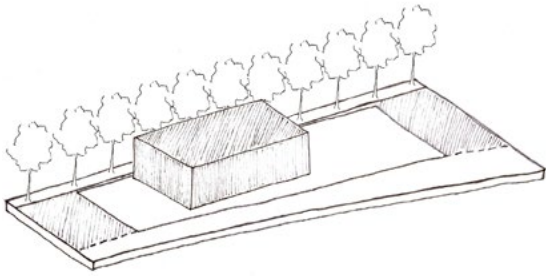
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN



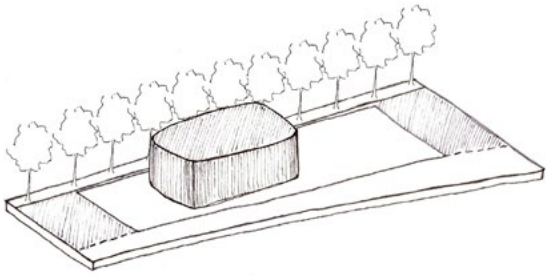
1. The existing site with preserved trees.



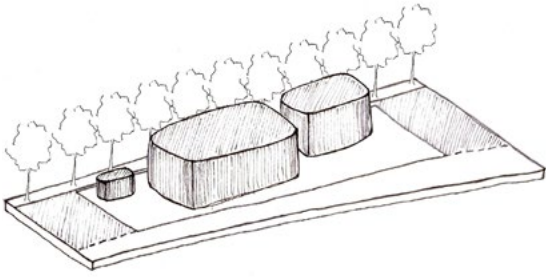
2. A public waterfront is introduced, with park areas framing the building on both sides.



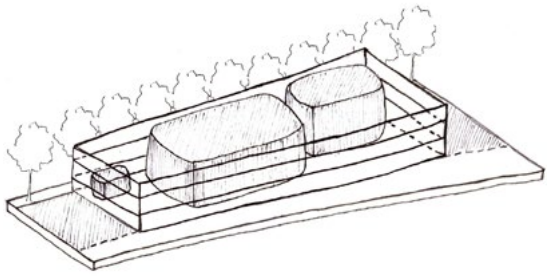
3. A shoebox-shaped multipurpose hall is introduced as a closed, primary volume.



4. The corners are rounded to soften the internal space and create a more fluid spatial experience.



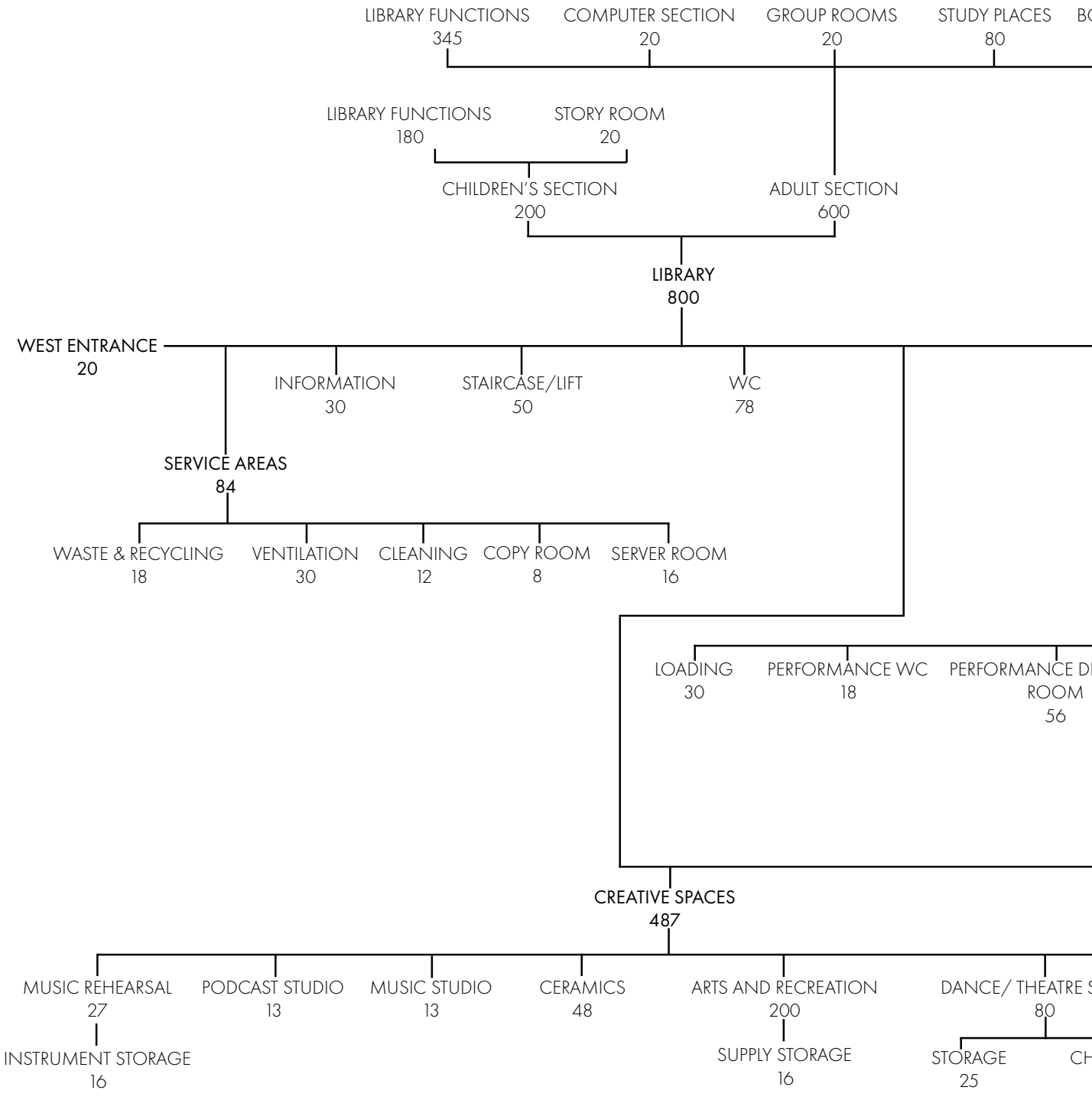
5. Non daylit functions are organized into smaller inner cores.

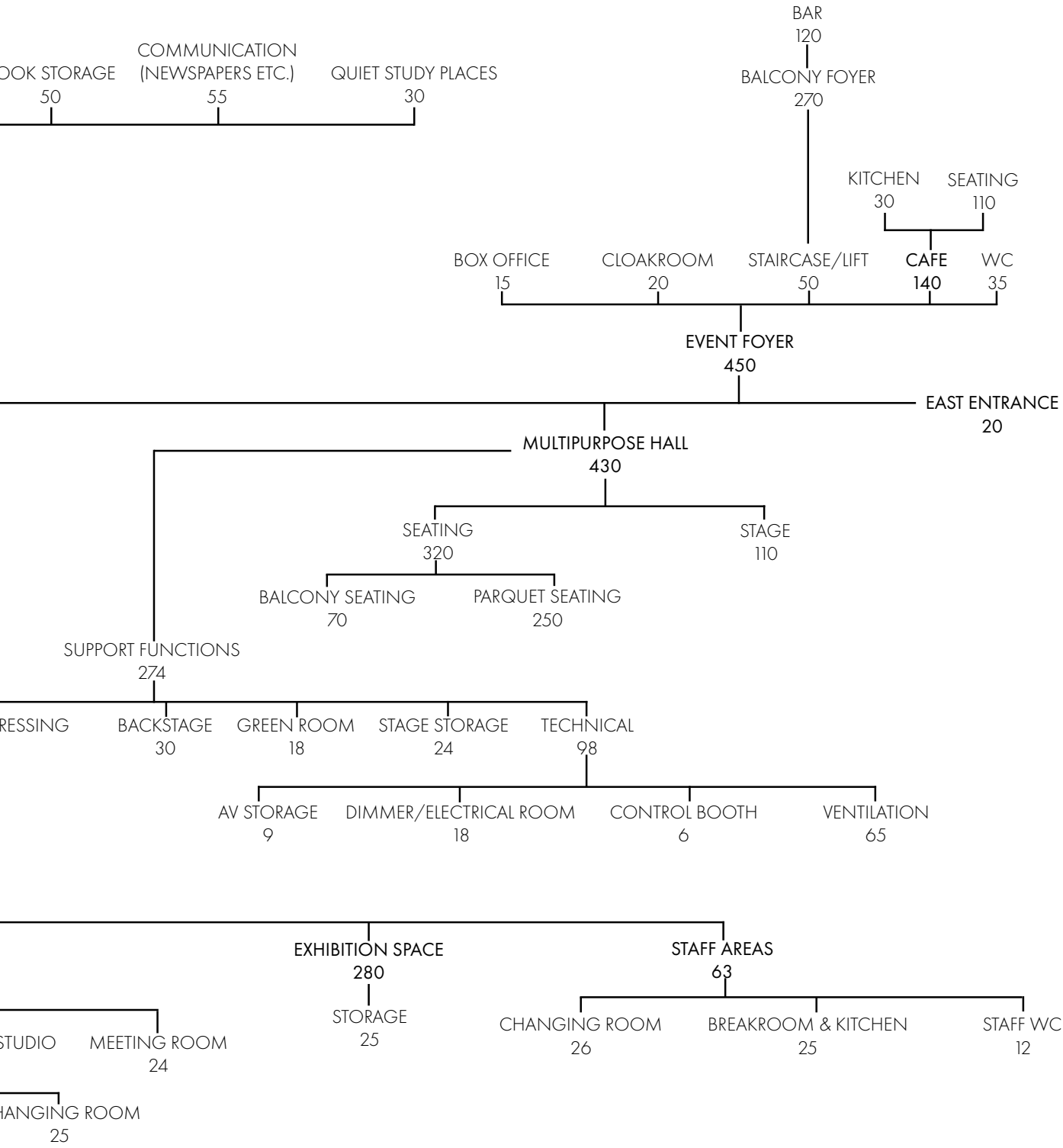


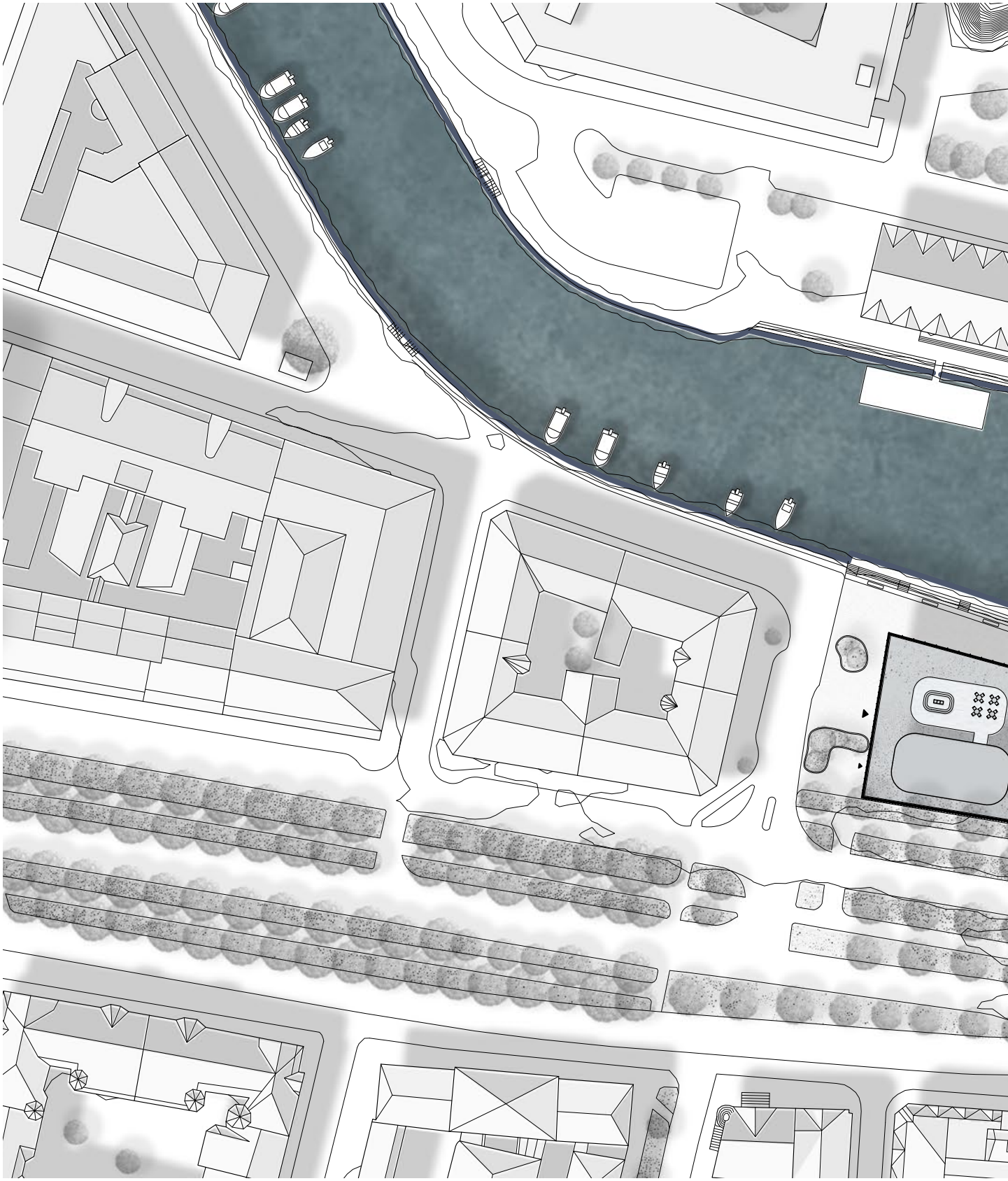
6. A transparent outer shell is added, emphasizing the three floors within.

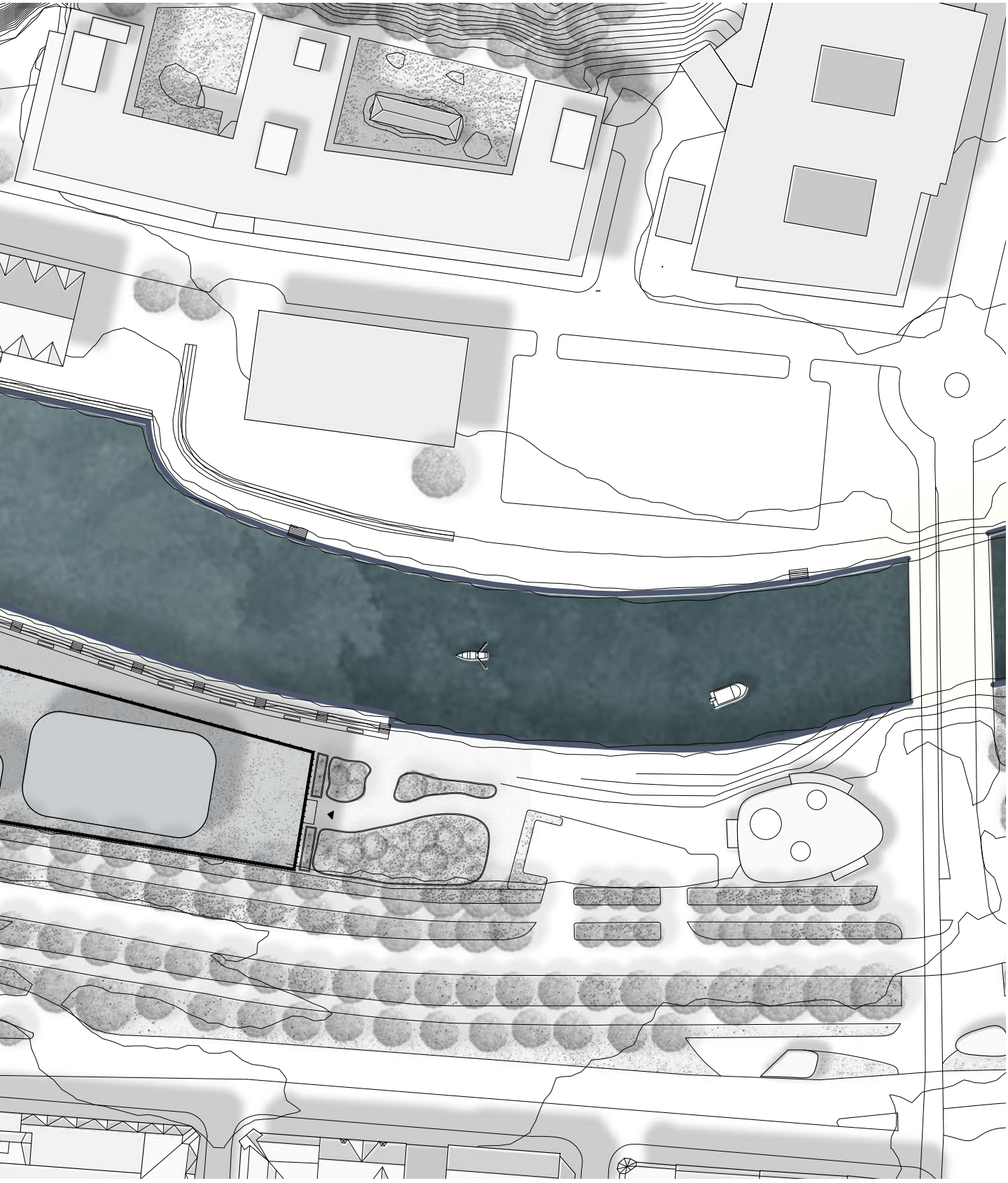
Figure 29. Concept diagram. Authour's own image.

SPACE PROGRAMME

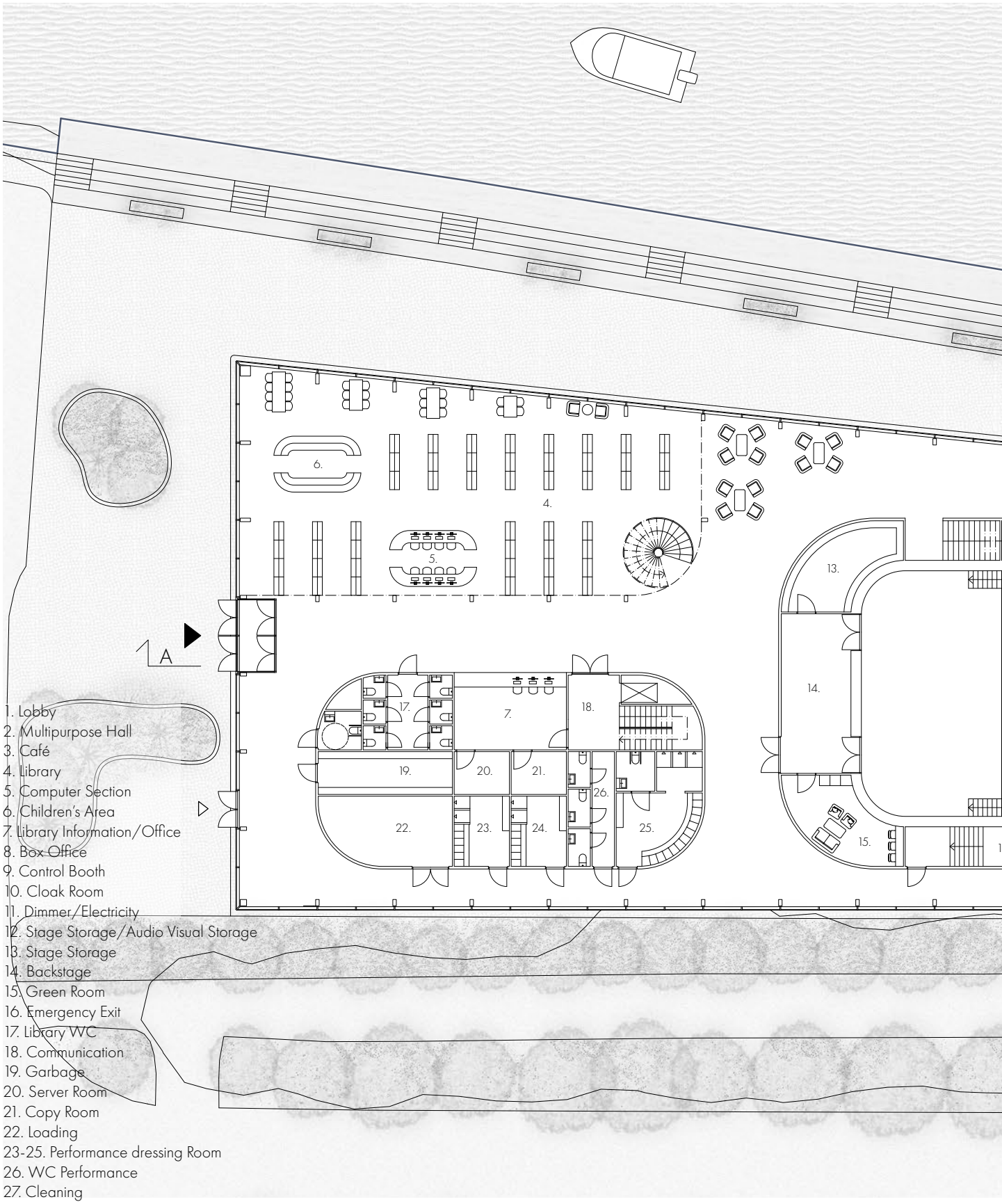



OOK STORAGE
50
COMMUNICATION
(NEWSPAPERS ETC.)
55
QUIET STUDY PLACES
30
BAR
120
BALCONY FOYER
270
KITCHEN
30
SEATING
110
BOX OFFICE
15
CLOAKROOM
20
STAIRCASE/LIFT
50
CAFE
140
WC
35
EVENT FOYER
450
EAST ENTRANCE
20
MULTIPURPOSE HALL
430
SEATING
320
STAGE
110
BALCONY SEATING
70
PARQUET SEATING
250
SUPPORT FUNCTIONS
274
RESSING
BACKSTAGE
30
GREEN ROOM
18
STAGE STORAGE
24
TECHNICAL
98
AV STORAGE
9
DIMMER/ELECTRICAL ROOM
18
CONTROL BOOTH
6
VENTILATION
65
EXHIBITION SPACE
280
STORAGE
25
STAFF AREAS
63
STUDIO
MEETING ROOM
24
CHANGING ROOM
26
BREAKROOM & KITCHEN
25
STAFF WC
12
HANGING ROOM
25

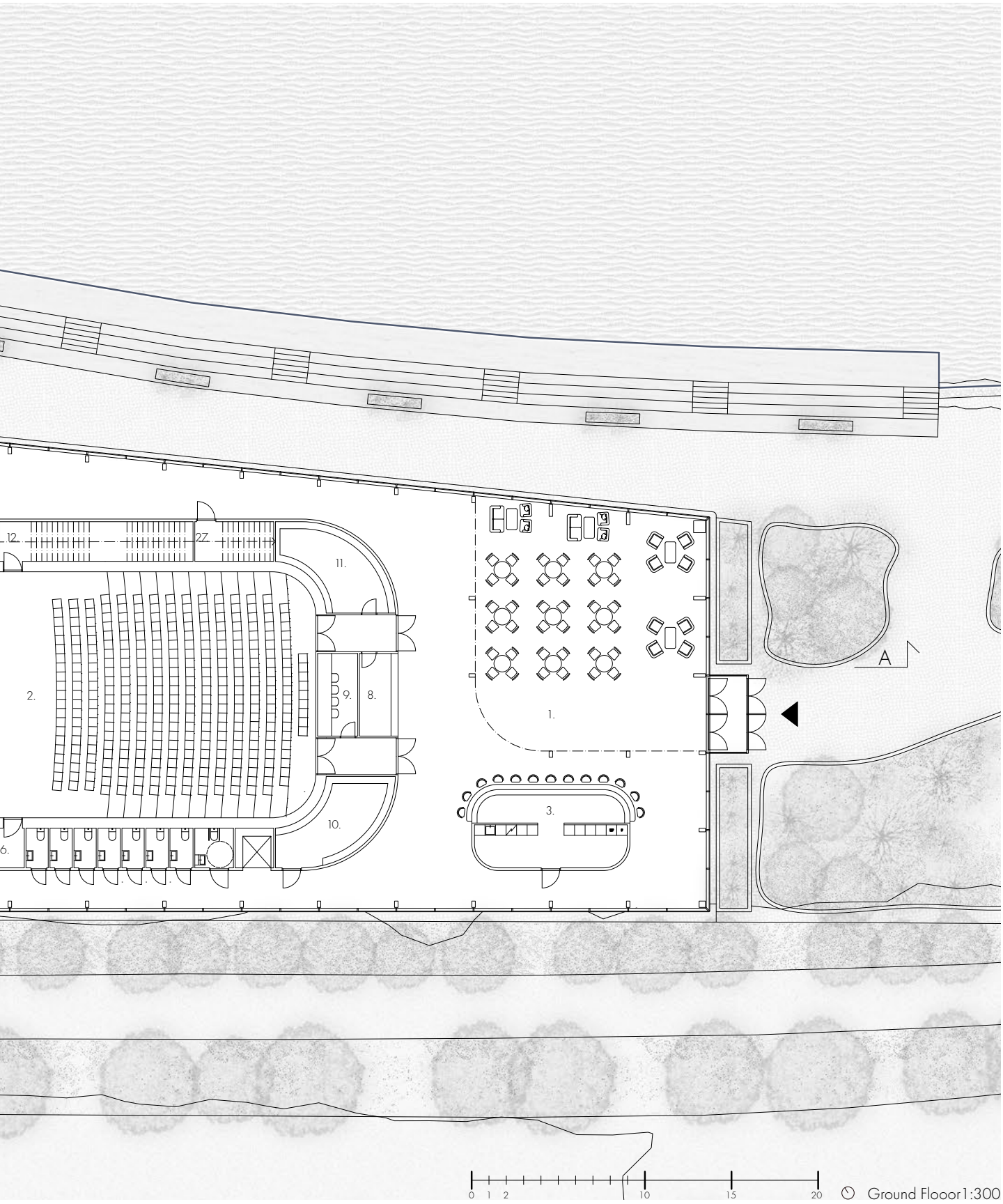




Siteplan 1:1000



1. Lobby
2. Multipurpose Hall
3. Café
4. Library
5. Computer Section
6. Children's Area
7. Library Information/Office
8. Box Office
9. Control Booth
10. Cloak Room
11. Dimmer/Electricity
12. Stage Storage/Audio Visual Storage
13. Stage Storage
14. Backstage
15. Green Room
16. Emergency Exit
17. Library WC
18. Communication
19. Garbage
20. Server Room
21. Copy Room
22. Loading
23-25. Performance dressing Room
26. WC Performance
27. Cleaning


12.
2Z.
11.
2.
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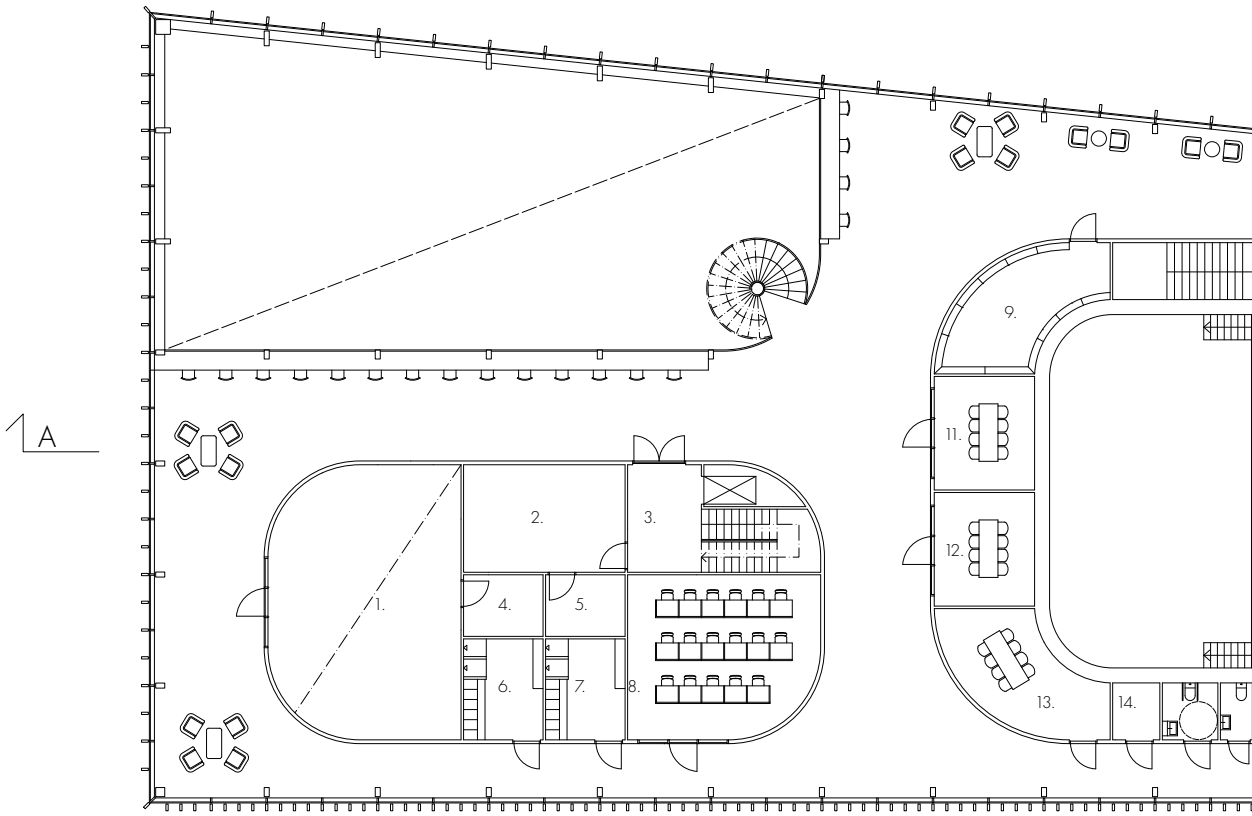
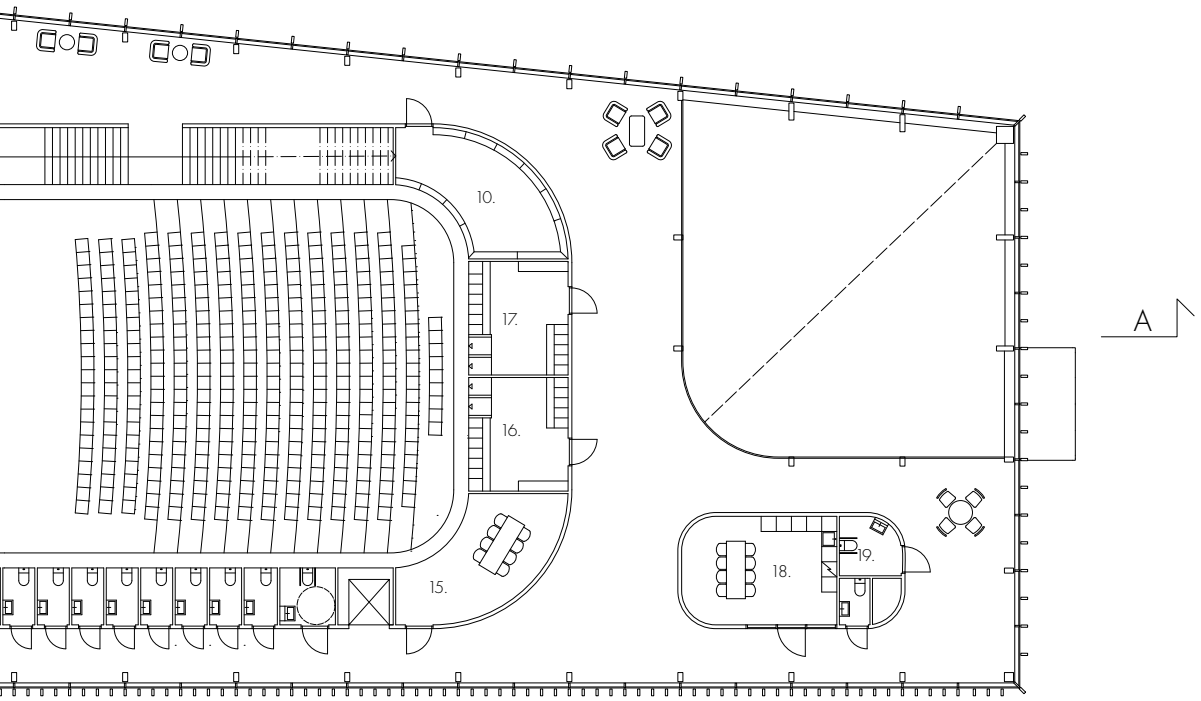
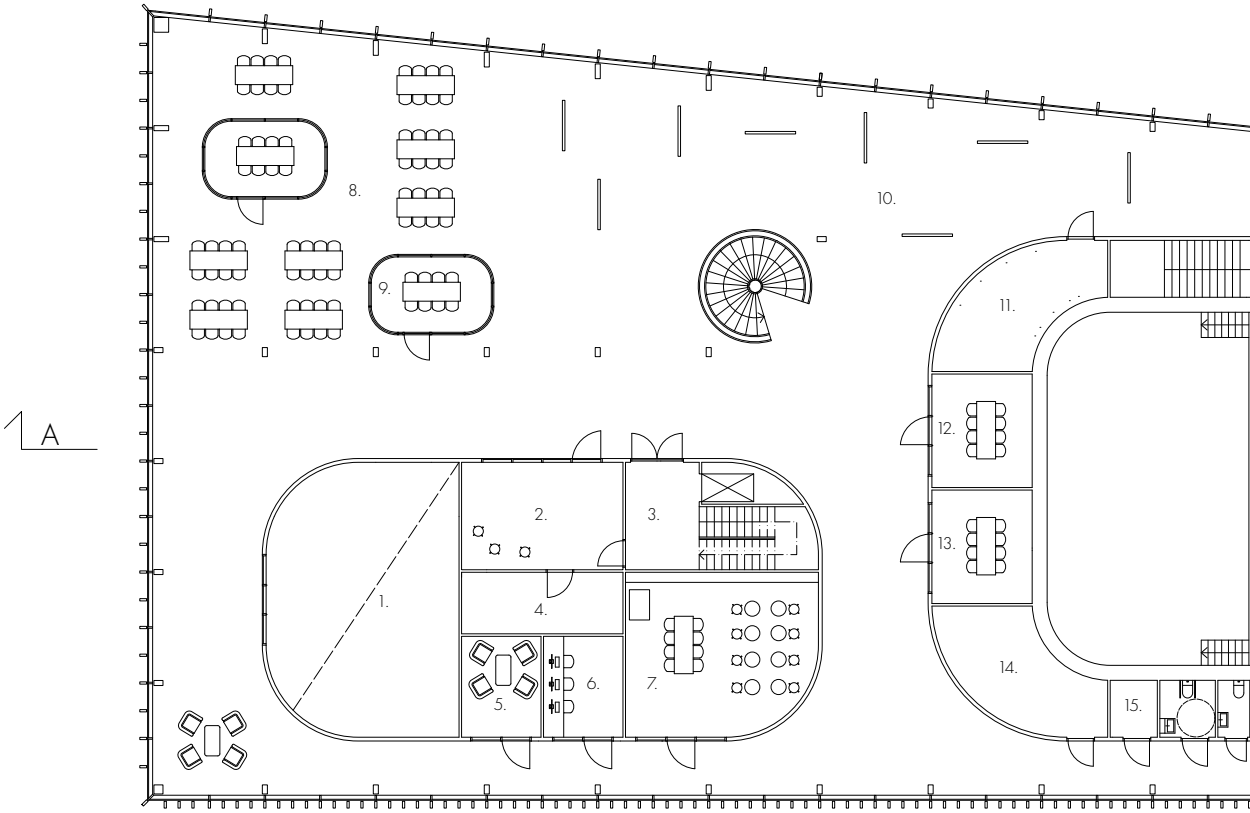
1.
A
3.
10.
6.
0 1 2 10 15 20
Ground Flooor1:300



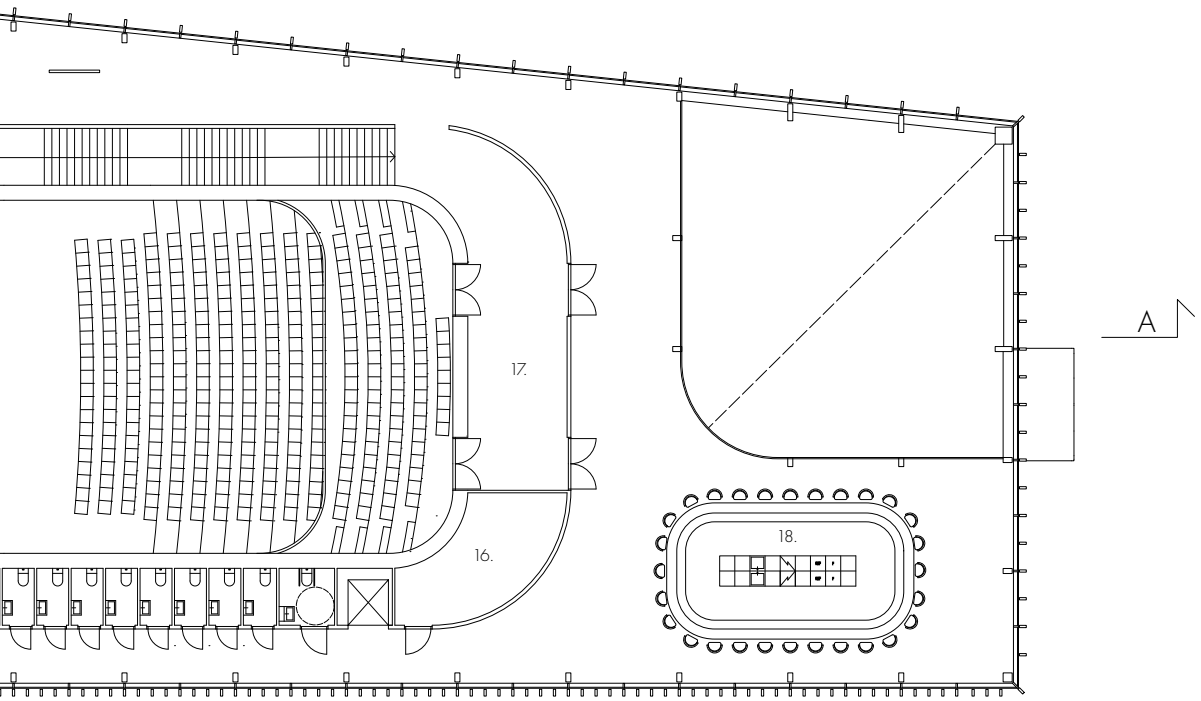
1. Dance/Theatre Studio
2. Furniture Storage
3. Communication
4. Dance/Theatre Studio Storage
5. Server Room
6-7. Dance/Theatre Studio Changing Room
8. Quiet Study Room
9-10. Book Storage
11-13. Group Room
14. Cleaning
15. Staff Meating Room
16-17. Staff Changing Room
18. Staff Lunch Room
19. Staff WC



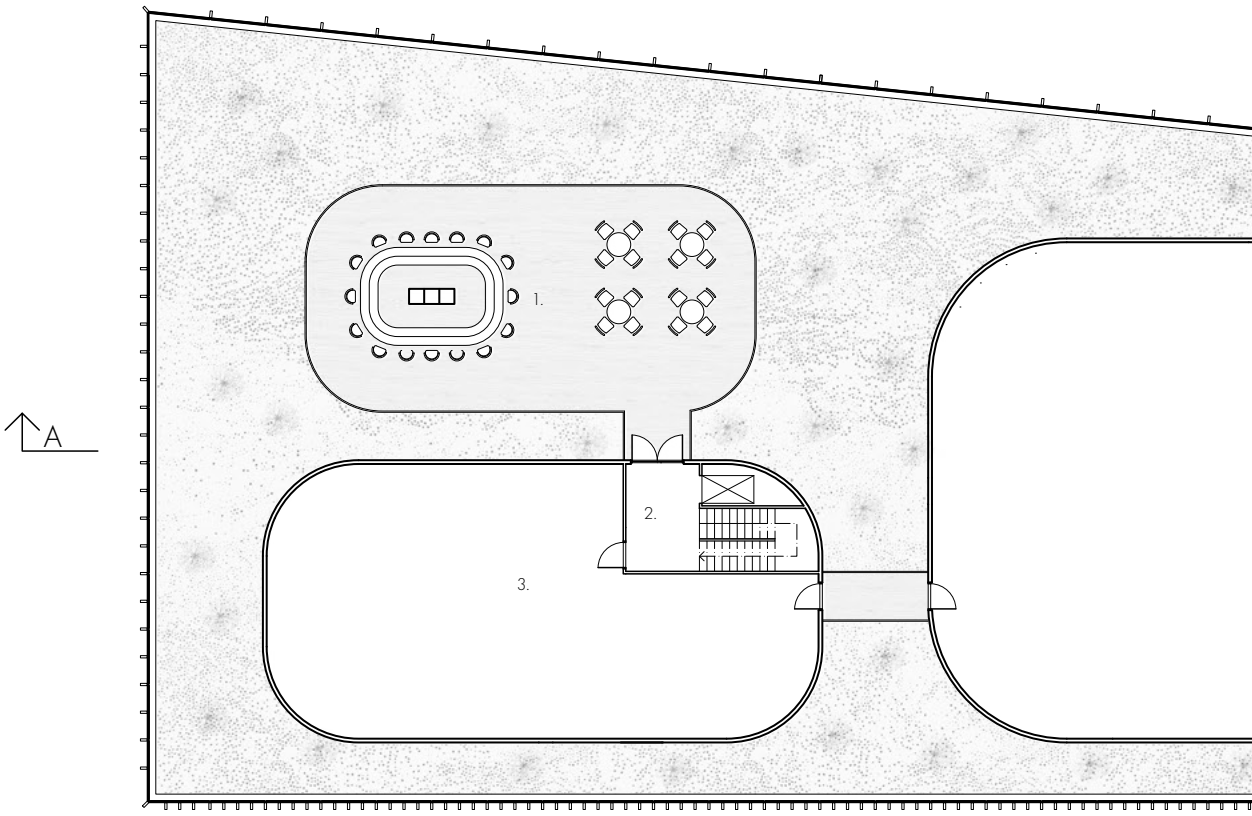
0 1 2 10 15 20 1st Floor1:300



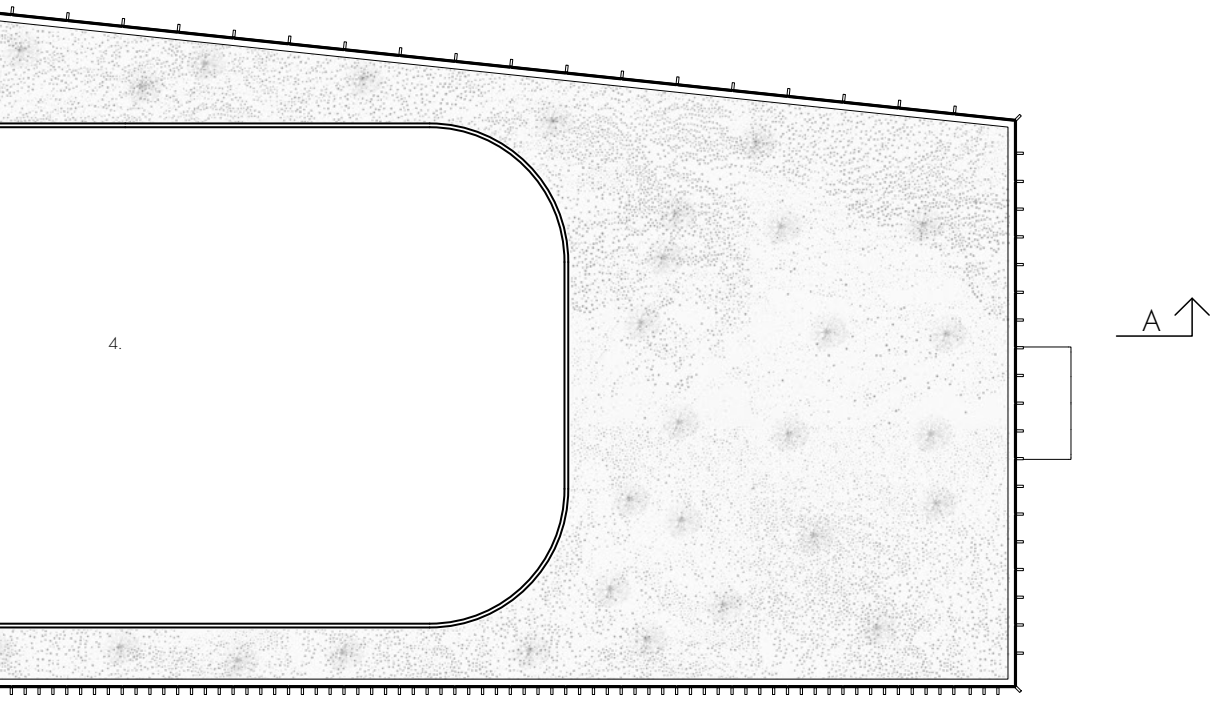
1. Dance/Theatre Studio
2. Music Rehearsal Room
3. Communication
4. Instrument Storage
5. Podcast Studio
6. Music Studio
7. Ceramics Studio
8. Arts and Recreation Area
9. Group Room
10. Exhibition
11. Exhibition Storage
12-13. Meeting Room
14. Art Supply Storage
15. Cleaning
16. Storage
17. Balcony Foyer
18. Bar



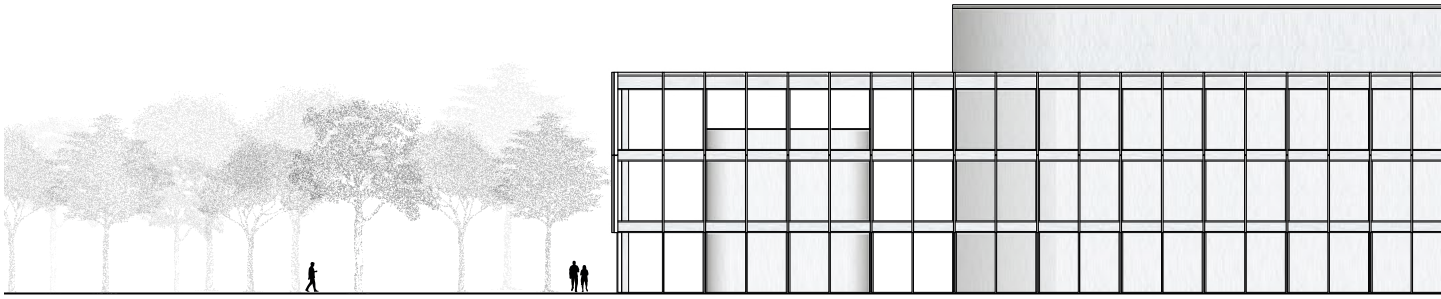
2nd Floor1:300

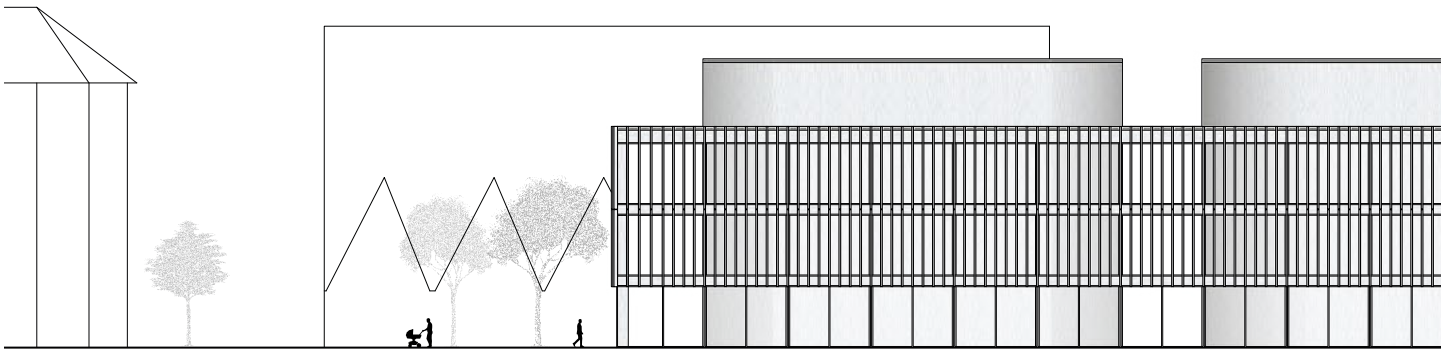


1. Rooftop Terrace & Bar
2. Communication
3-4. HVAC/Technical

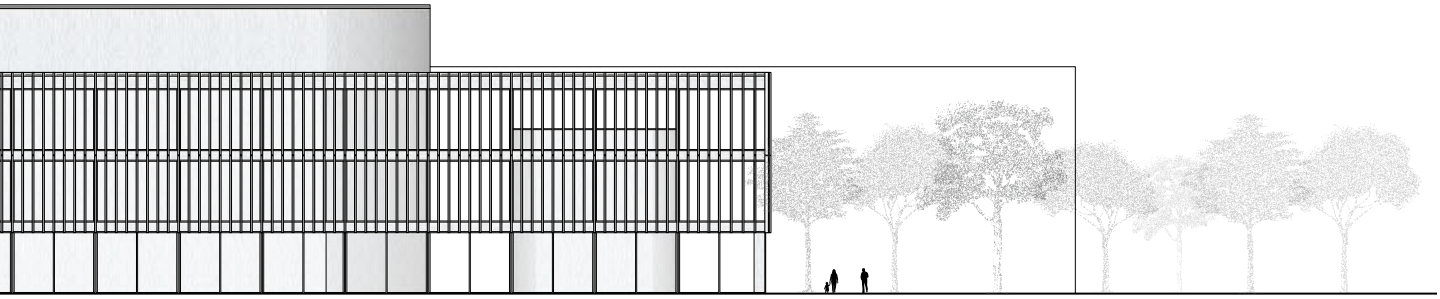


0 1 2 10 15 20 3d Floor1:300

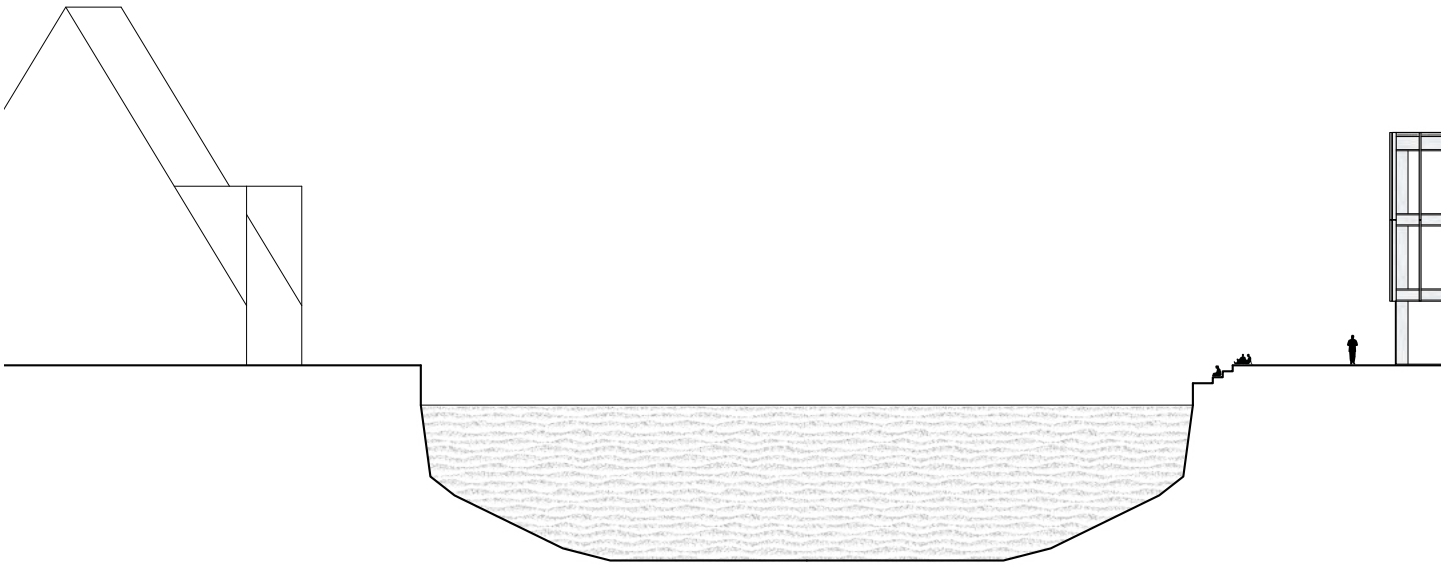


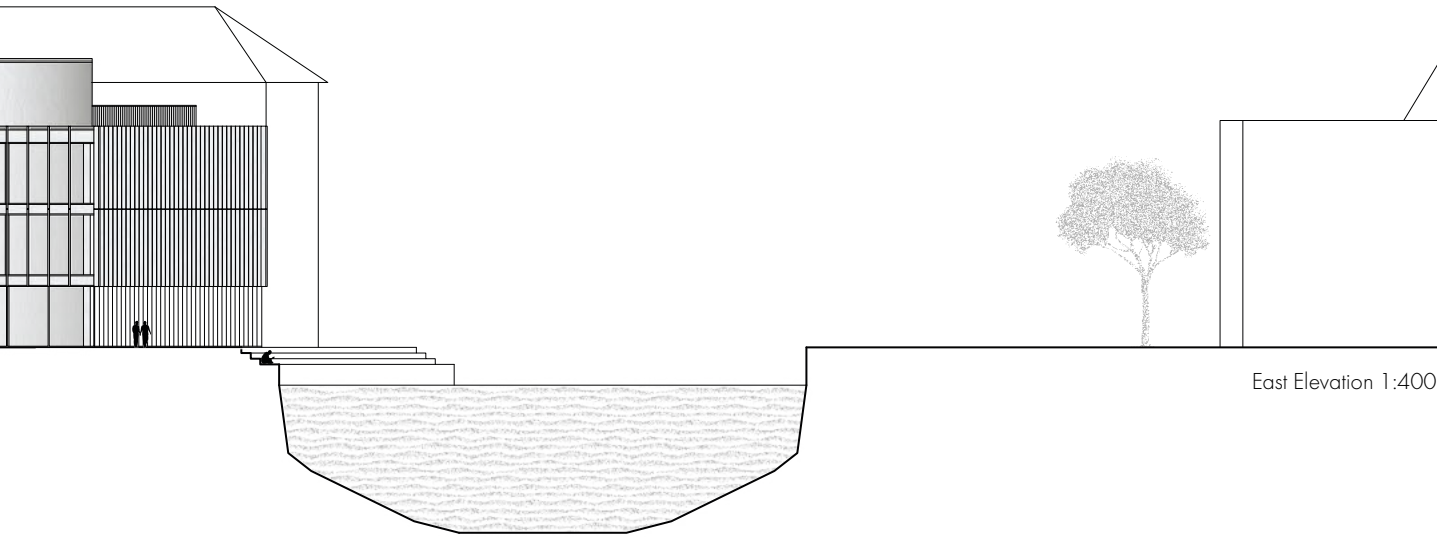


North Elevation 1:400



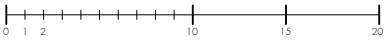
South Elevation 1:400

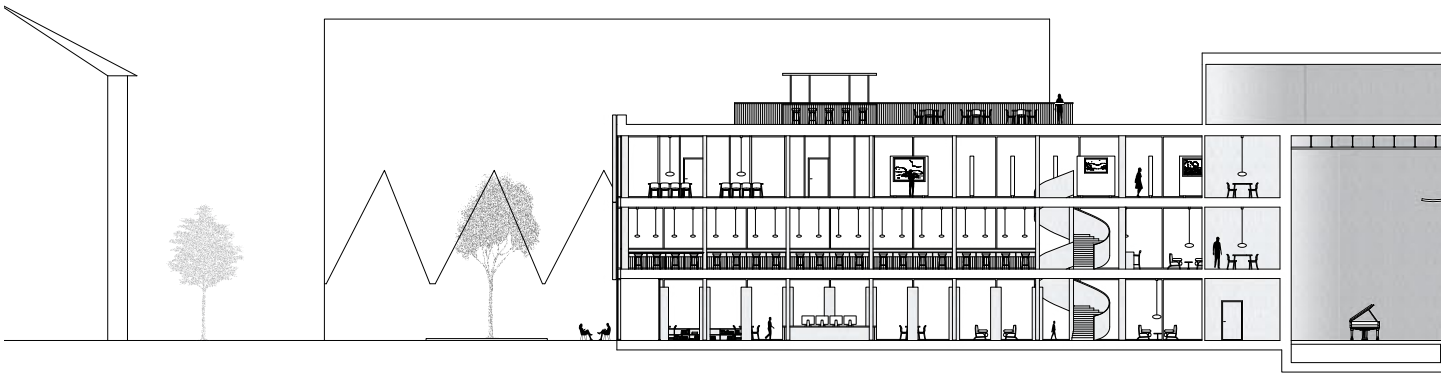


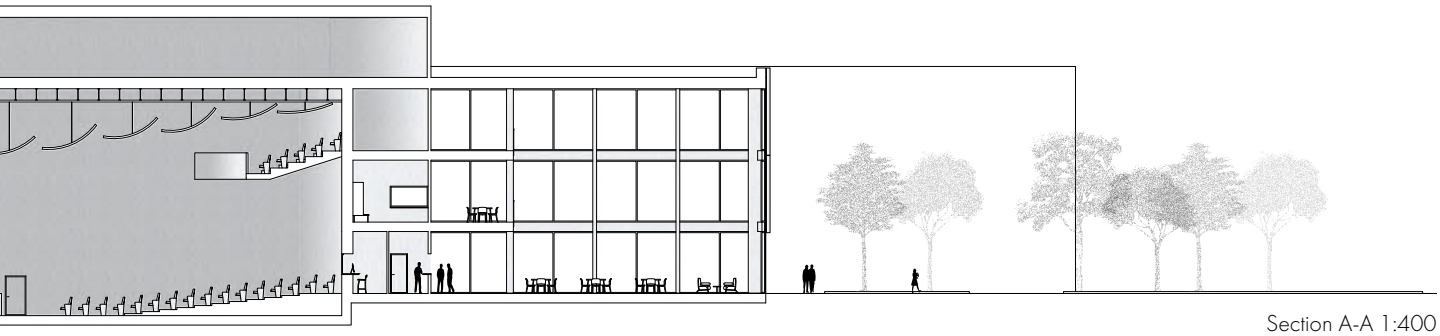


East Elevation 1:400

West Elevation 1:400







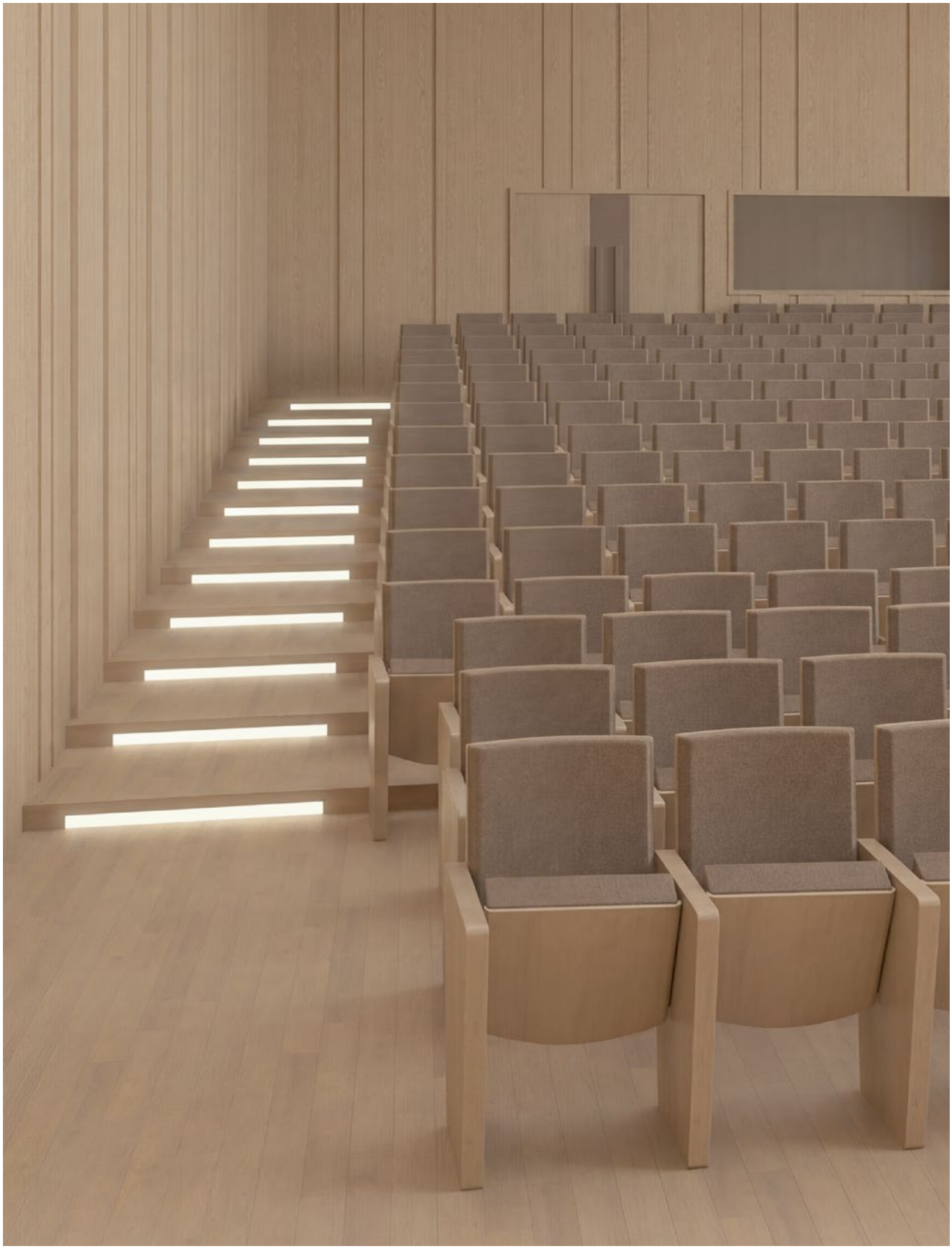
Section A-A 1:400


KULTURHUSET HAGA

The Main Entrance

Lobby

Balcony Staircase



Multipurpose Hall Chairs

Multipurpose Hall

Library

Computer Section

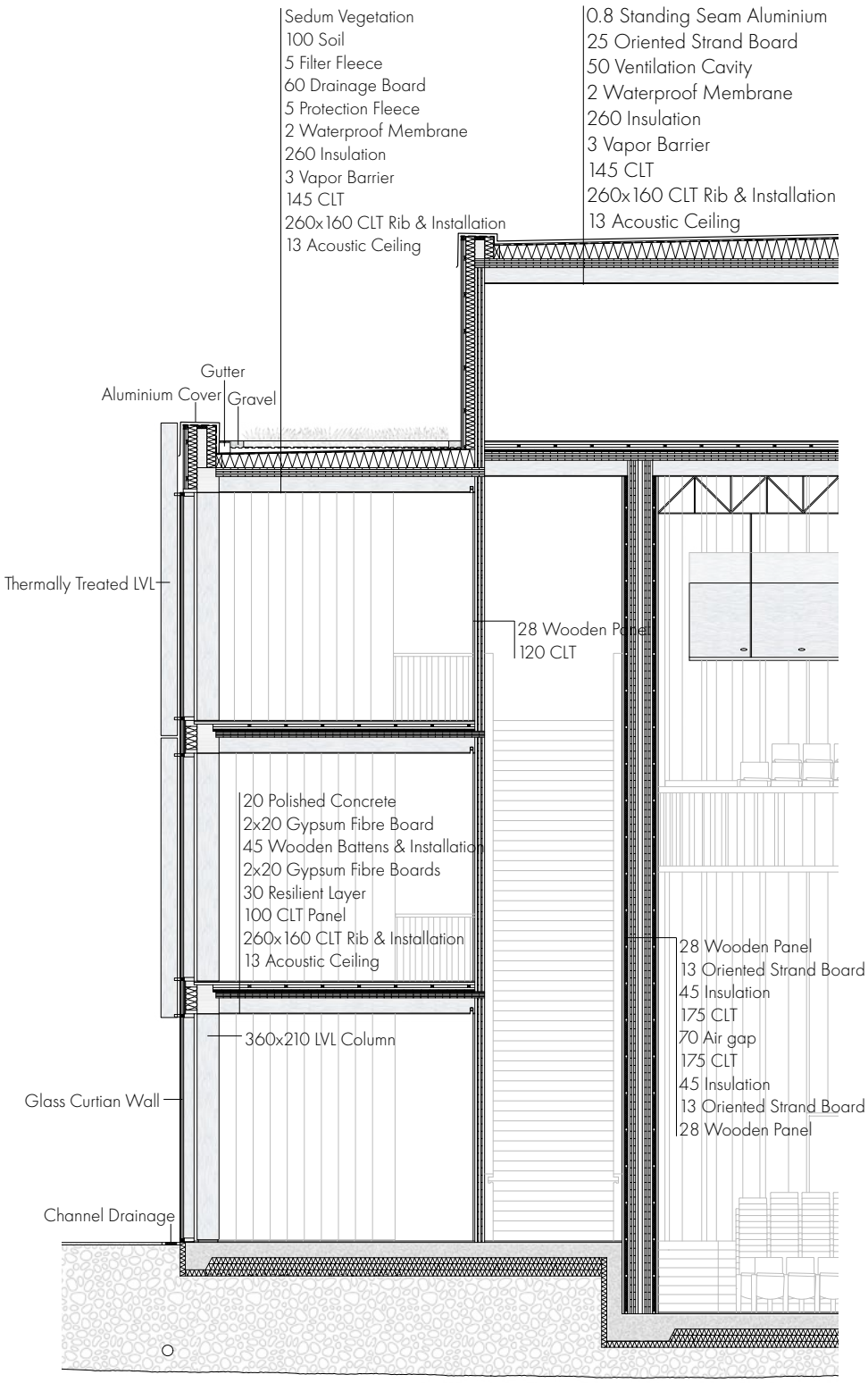
Group Rooms

Library Study Space

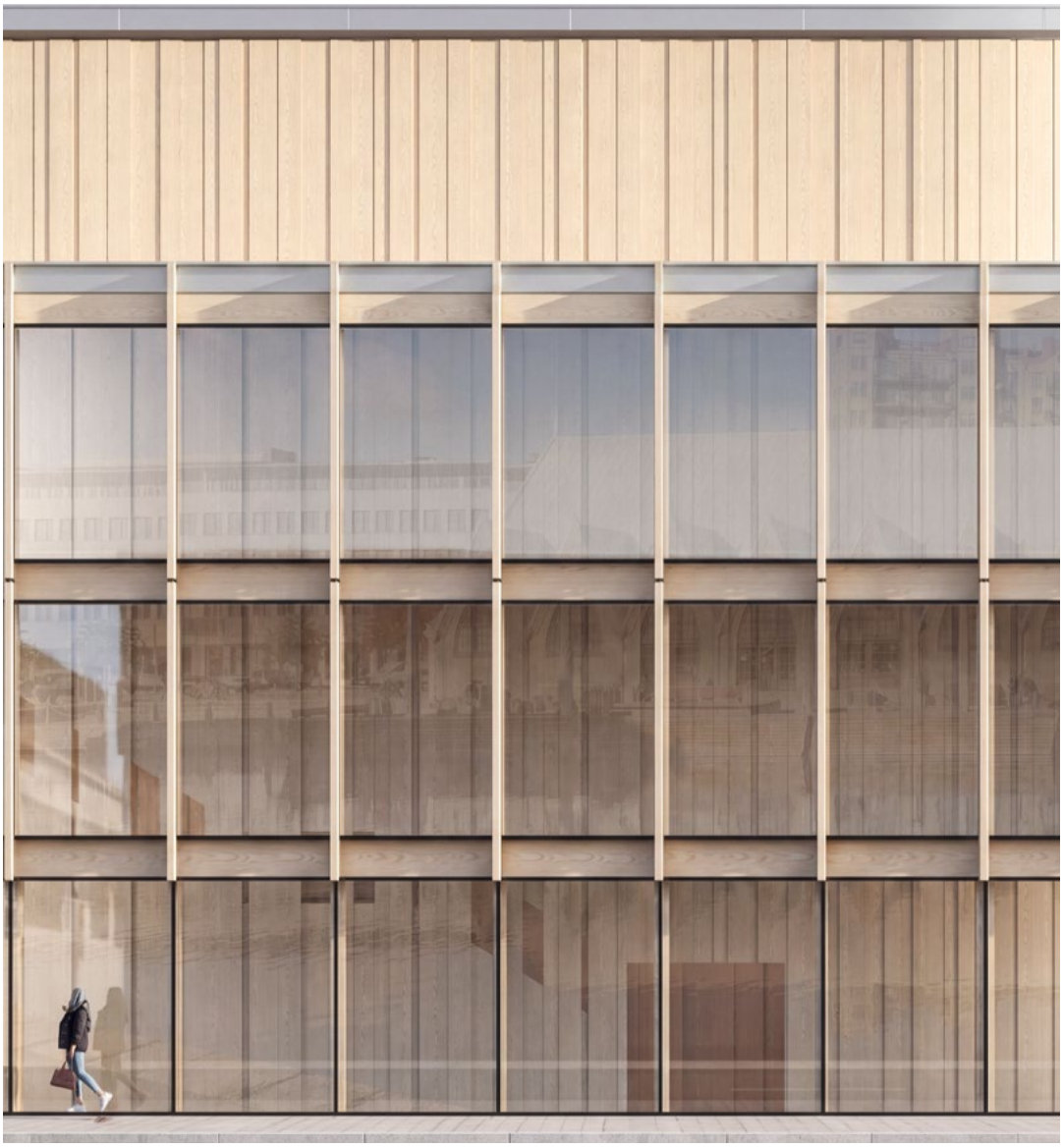
Dance Studio

Exhibition Area

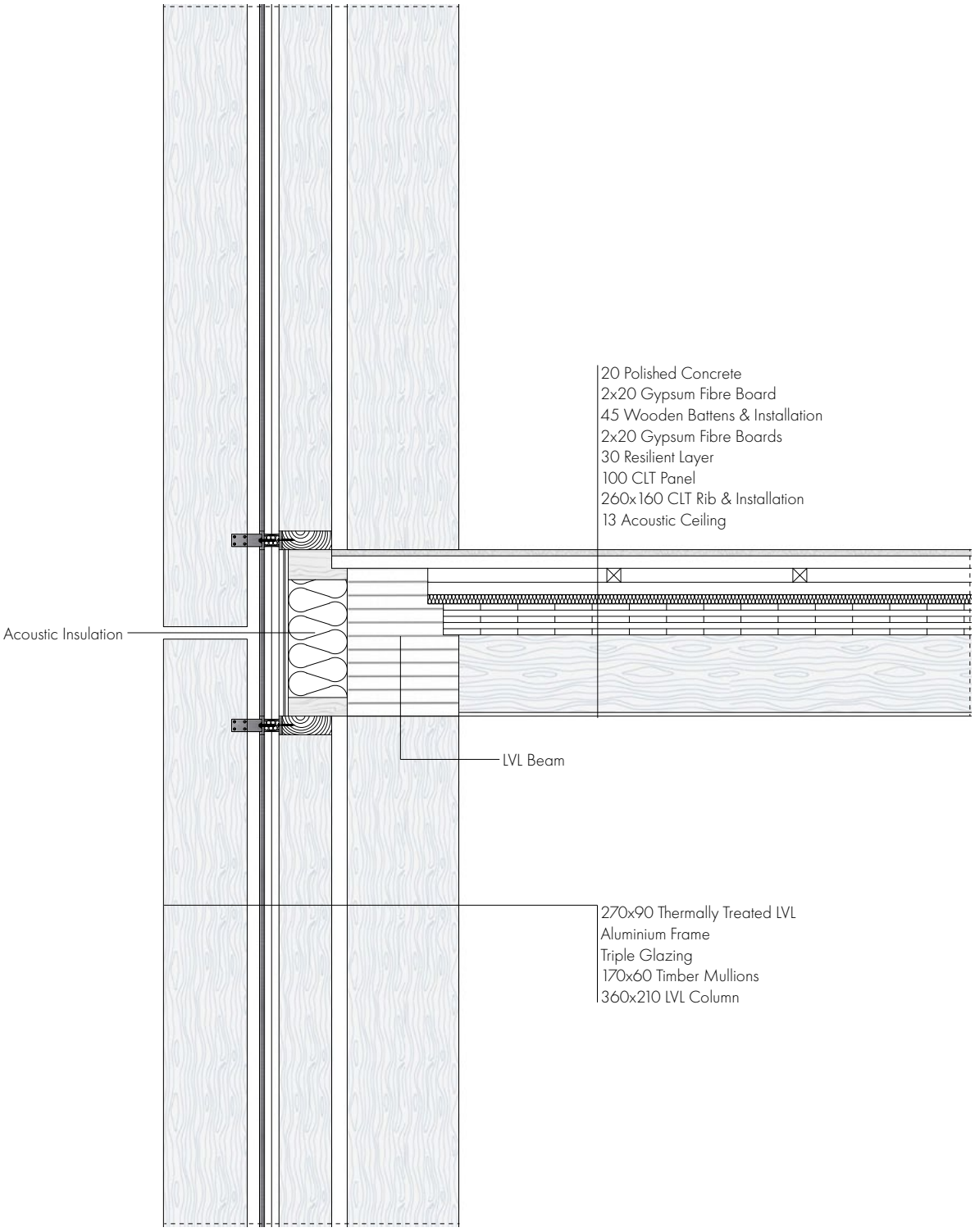
Art & Recreation Area



Detail Section 1:100



Detail Elevation 1:100



Detail Curtain Wall 1:20

Visualisation of Curtain Wall

DISCUSSION

The aim of this thesis has been to explore how an expressive timber construction can inform the design of a new cultural centre in Gothenburg and how the contrast between stereotomic and filigree construction can be used to create an engaging public building. These questions are closely related as they both concern how material, building tectonics and atmospheres influence the architectural experience and public use.

In the thesis, timber has been explored not only as a structural and sustainable material but also as an architectural medium to shape an engaging atmosphere. The exposed timber construction, together with the building's organisation, suggests a way of creating spaces that feel warm, accessible, and open to the public and how it may affect people's willingness to enter, stay and participate. Rather than seeing structure and material as separate issues the thesis proposes that they are closely interlinked in the formation of an engaging, public architectural environment.

The project raises questions that could be developed further. For example, the acoustic performance of the multipurpose hall in relation to its flexible use with varying audience sizes and different types of events, such as concerts or lectures. As well as the everyday operation of an open public cultural centre and how the building can remain open and welcoming while still functioning practically over time.

Due to time constraints, the atmospheric qualities of the project have not been explored in as much detail as intended. The interplay between materials, textures, light and surface treatments could have been developed further to strengthen the spatial experience of the building. While timber has been established as the main material, the relationship between timber and glass, acoustic surfaces, flooring and furniture has only been partially investigated and could be further explored.

The level of detailing has also been limited by the scope of the project. Several aspects such as material transitions, joints, facade details and acoustic solutions would benefit from further development. The design has therefore remained more conceptual than detailed in certain areas.

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FIGURES

Figure 03. Brutarchitekt (2021). *Therme Vals, Switzerland* [fotografi]. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brutarchitekt_Therme_Vals.jpg

Figure 06. Palmqvist, K. (2020). *Sara Kulturhus: Wooden roof and black steel details.*

Figure 07. Palmqvist, K. (2020). *Sara Kulturhus: Wooden acoustic wall in concert hall.*

AI APPENDIX

For the written material, Artificial intelligence's (AI) primary use has been to suggest synonyms, support in translation between English and Swedish and to explain texts or concepts to improve the author's understanding of the subject matter. AI has however not been used to generate text itself, but has instead been used as a supporting tool during the writing process.

For visual material, the fundamental architectural model and original renderings were produced by the author. AI has only been used as a tool to refine and enhance some of the author's own renderings. This has included adjustments such as improving lighting conditions, atmospheres and the reflectiveness of surfaces.

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Agnes Lindblom / Master Thesis 2026