Public Familiarity

Architectural Strategies for Social Inclusion in Assisted Living

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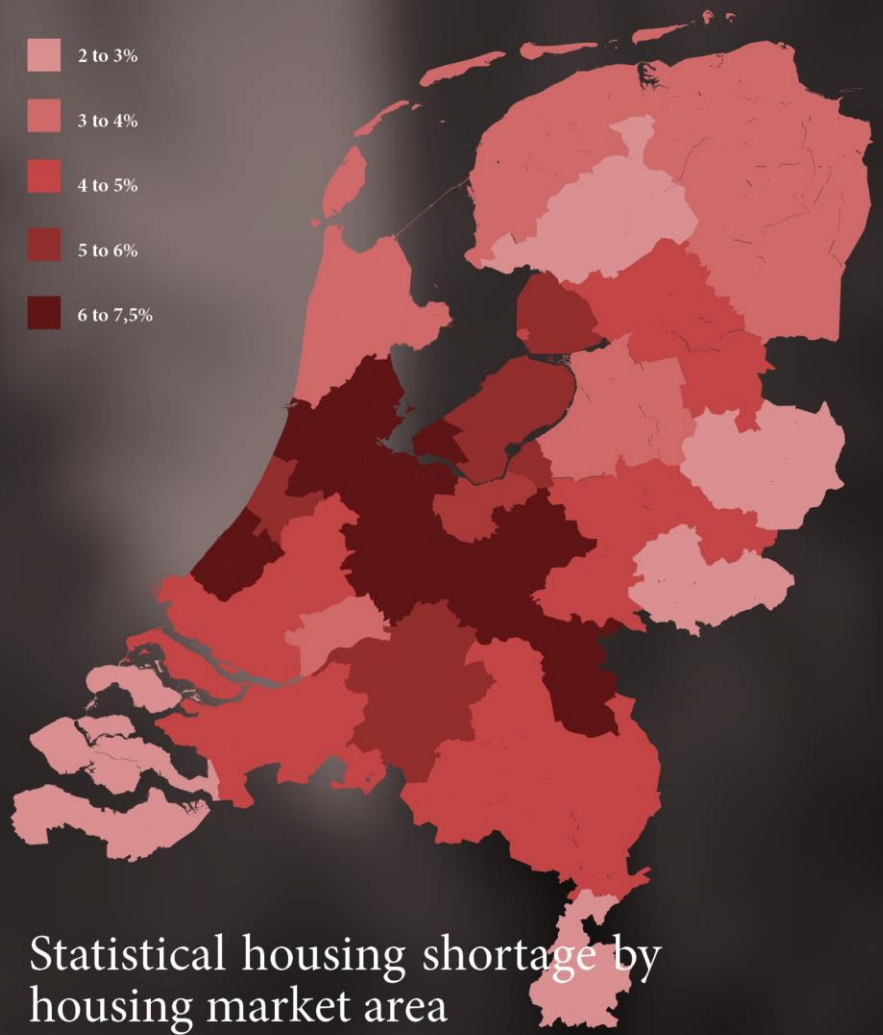
Date	19/06/2026
Course	Advanced Housing Design Graduation Studio
Code	AR4AD150
Mentors	Robert Guis
	Deepti Adlakha

Problem statement



Statistical housing shortage by housing market area

Ministerie van VRO / DGVB, 2025

Problem statement

Shortage = more demand than supply = increasing housing prices €€€

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Ministerie van VRO / DGVB, 2025

people who can afford these prices
Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, Mark Zuckerberg, etc.

people who can't afford these prices
Starters, students, middle-income earners, etc.

"Low-income households, older singles, migrants, and disabled residents are still doubly disadvantaged: housing affordability remains tight, while social infrastructure is often lacking."

Czischke et al., 2025

247.000 houses must be built in Zuid-Holland before 2030

Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, 2023

50% of the population of the Netherlands suffers from loneliness

Eenzaamheid | Leeftijd En Geslacht, n.d.

"People with disabilities experience significantly increased levels of loneliness"

Vereniging Gehandicaptenzorg Nederland, 2024

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Overmars-Marx (2018)

Term

The "Barrier-Experience"

Definition

The way physical structures and environments unintentionally cause exclusion, disorientation, and a loss of autonomy for vulnerable users.

"People with disabilities experience significantly increased levels of loneliness"

Vereniging Gehandicaptenzorg Nederland, 2024

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Klinenberg (2018)

Term

Social Infrastructure

Definition

The physical places and organizations that shape our interactions, facilitating "**public familiarity**" through casual, low-pressure social encounters.

Building a sense of security through mutual recognition and 'weak ties' in shared spaces, without the pressure of intensive social interaction.

Location

Figure 1. Map of the Netherlands
source: author

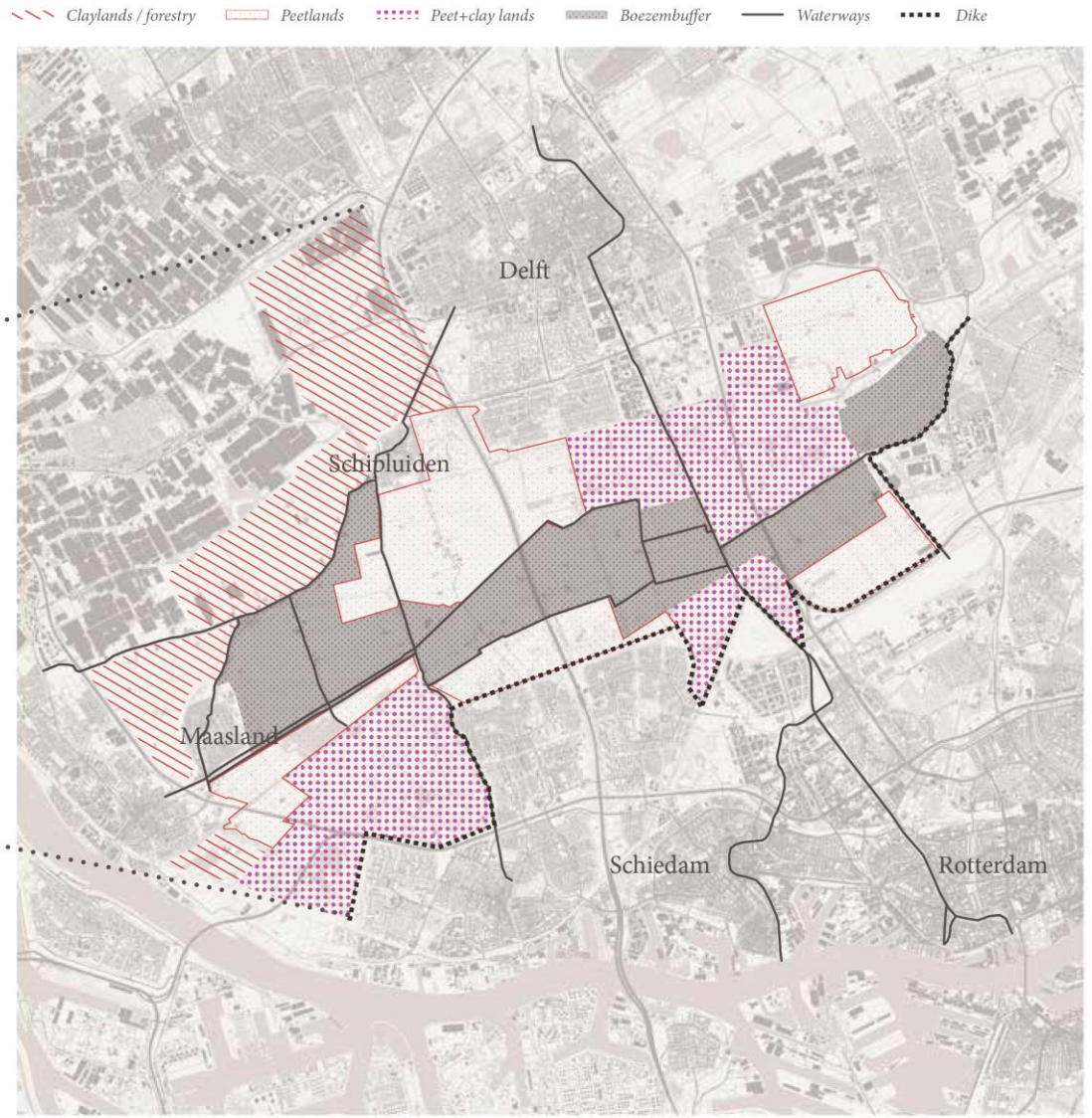


Figure 2. Regional context and infrastructure of the masterplan of ZUS in Midden-Delfland
source: author, groupwork

Location

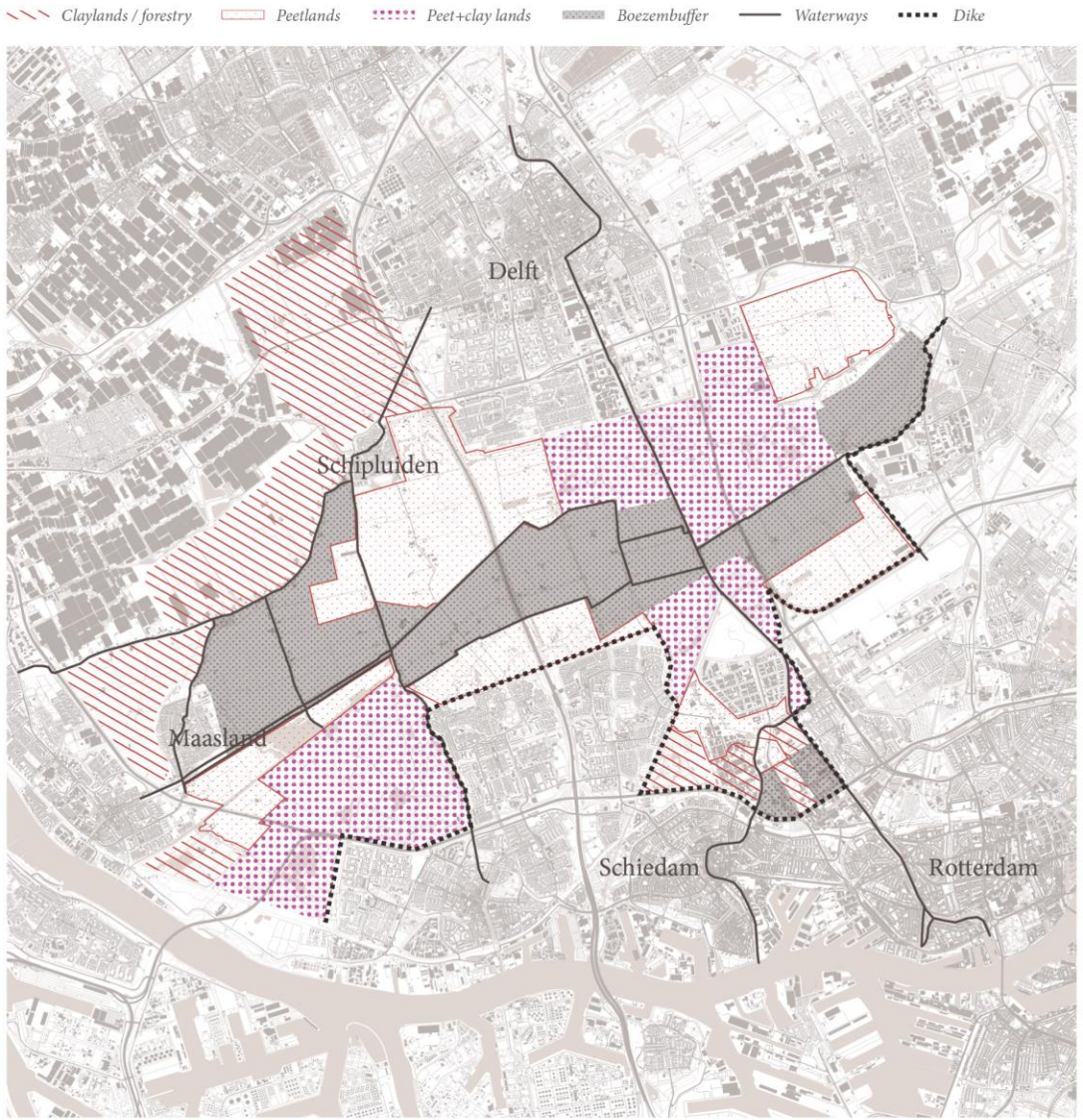


Figure 5. Regional context and infrastructure of the revised masterplan of ZUS in Midden-Delfland
source: author, groupwork

1:100.000

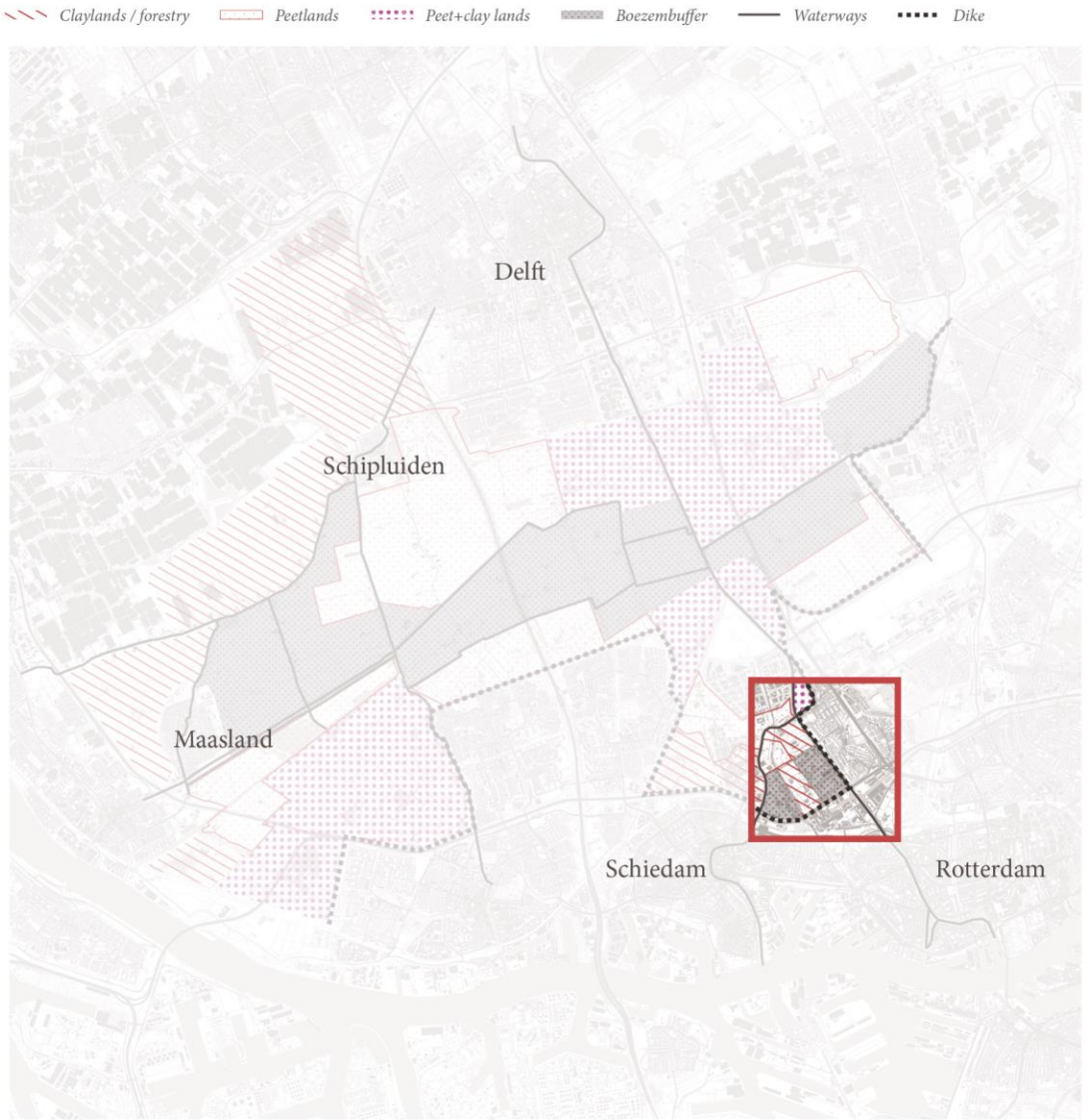


Figure 6. Regional context and infrastructure of the revised masterplan of ZUS in Midden-Delfland
source: author, groupwork

1:100.000

Figure 7. Current context of the Spaanse Polder
source: author

1:10.000

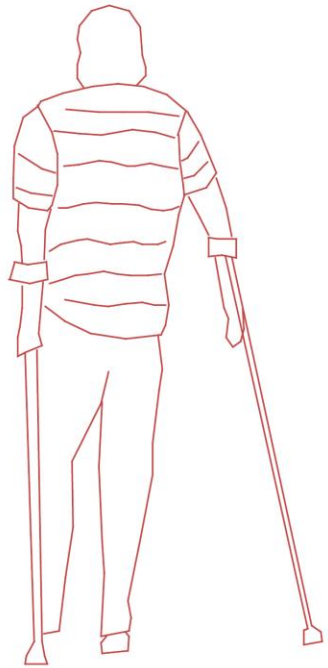
Figure 8. Proposed plan for the Spaanse Polder
source: author, groupwork

Figure 10. Phase 1 neighbourhood layout
source: author, groupwork

Location

(single) Starters
(small) Families

Elderly



(intellectually) Disabled

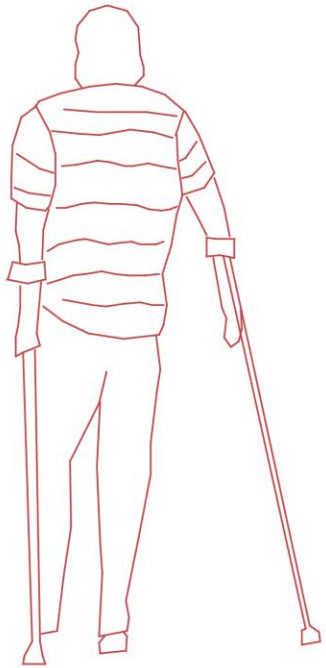
Post-crisis individuals & families
Migrants

Creative makers

Location

(single) Starters
(small) Families

Elderly



(intellectually) Disabled

Post-crisis individuals & families
Migrants

Creative makers

Personal motivation

Personal motivation

Main Question

How can the architectural design of an assisted living facility in the Spaanse Polder foster social inclusion and support the emancipation of residents with an intellectual disability?

Sub-questions

Which socio-spatial needs of the residents must the design focus on to help them feel at home and more independent?

In what ways can the internal spatial organization and floor plan facilitate low-threshold encounters and visibility between residents and the neighborhood?

Which types of public programming are most effective in attracting the local community and creating a shared social infrastructure?

How can the architectural expression and visibility of the building promote the recognition and status of residents with an intellectual disability within the urban fabric?

Which architectural strategies for transition zones can best balance the need for resident privacy and safety with social openness toward the public realm?

Target group

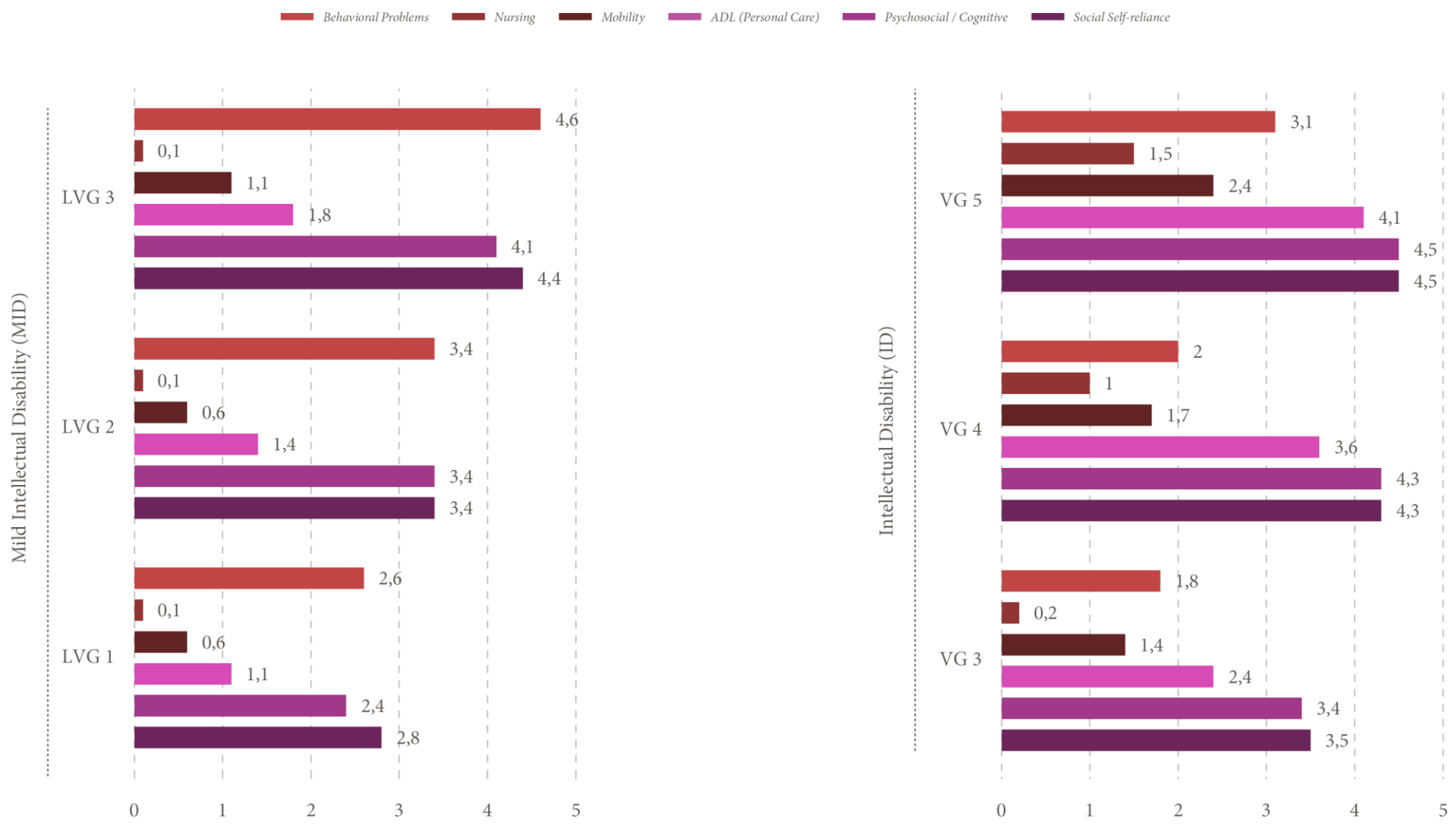


Figure 17. Overview of disability scores for VG and LVG care profiles
source: author, (CIZ & Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport (VWS), n.d.)

Target group

Figure 19. Comparison of disability scores for selected VG and LVG care profiles
source: author, (CIZ & Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport (VWS), n.d.)

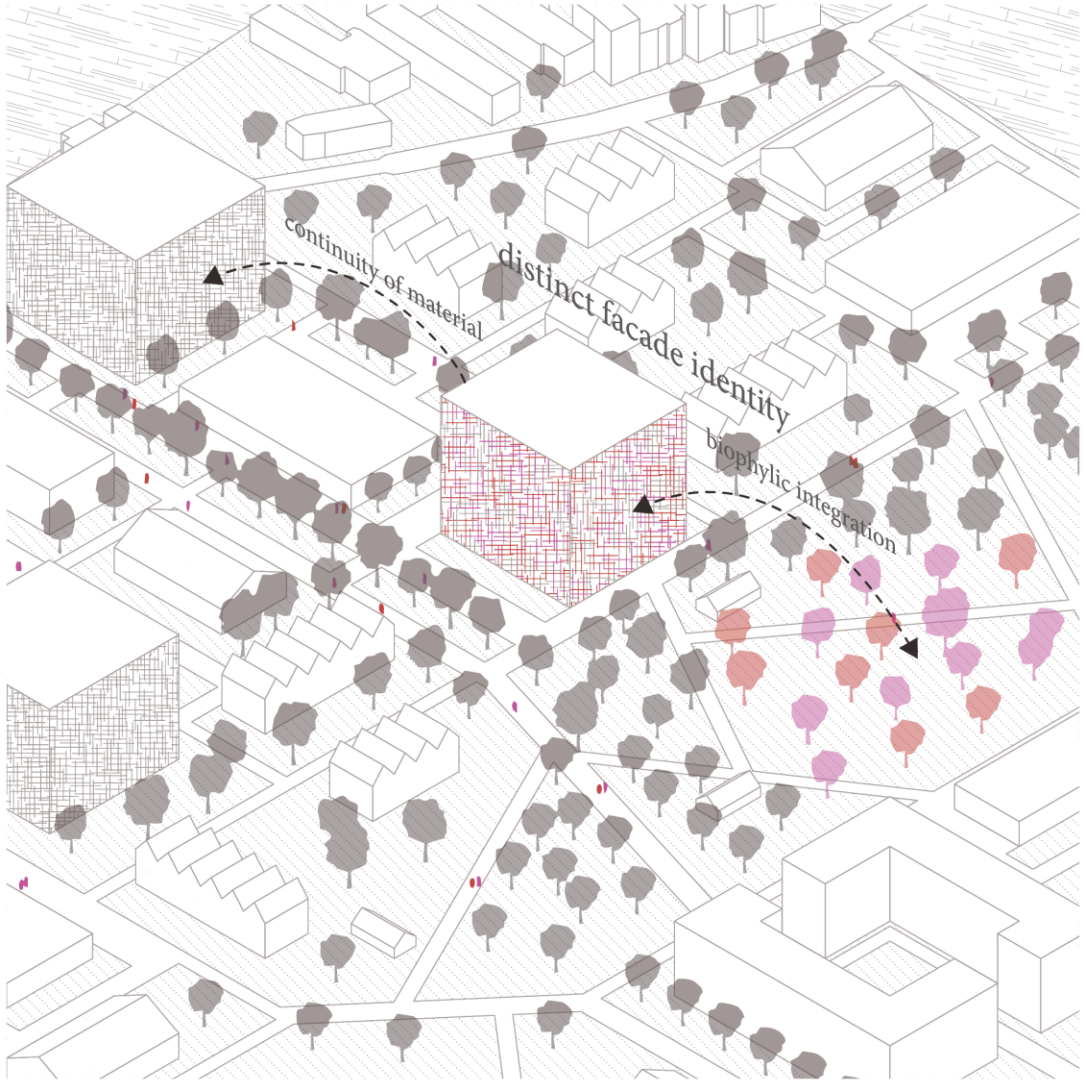
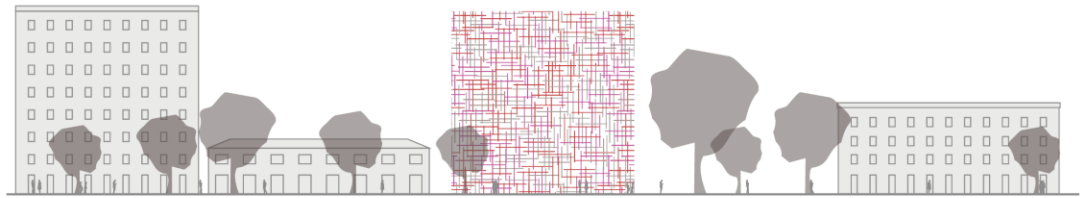


Figure 22. Contextual architectural expression
source: author

Landmark

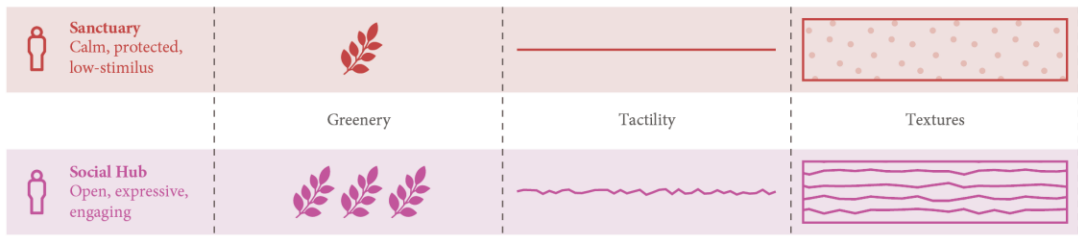


The building is a recognisable landmark with a unqiue design, supporting orientation, pride and emancipation.

Visible at night

At night, the building remains visible as a point of orientation and as a billboard for the neighbourhood.

Adjusted biophilic implementation

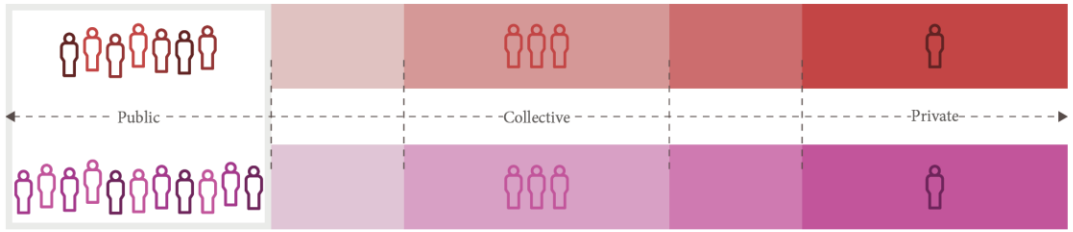


Biophilic elements are implemented according to sensory sensitivity.

Figure 23. Architectural design principles
source: author

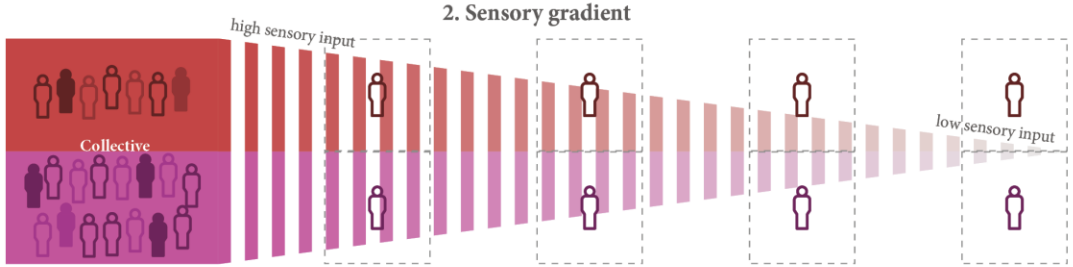
Interior principles

1. Public to private gradient



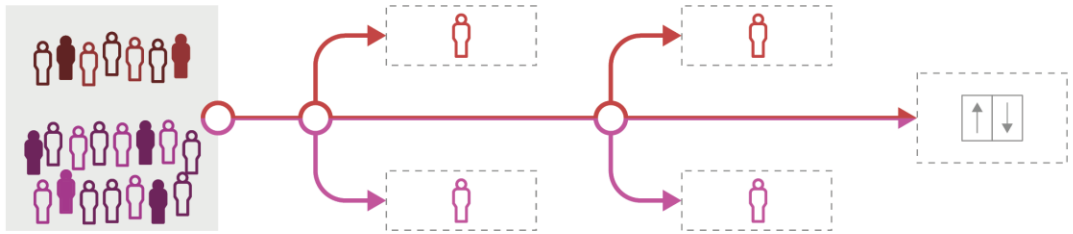
The plan creates a gradual transistion from public areas to collective spaces and private apartments

2. Sensory gradient



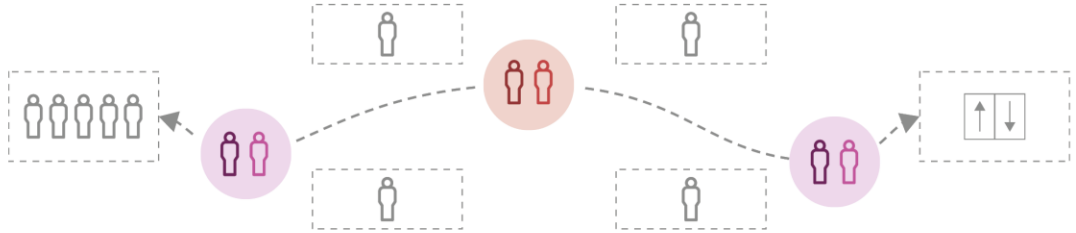
Stimulating spaces are placed closer to active zones, while quiet rooms are more protected.

3. Clear routing



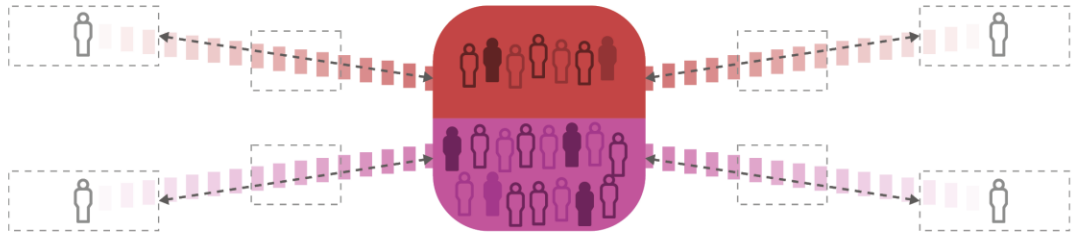
Simple and legible circulation supports independence and reduces confusion.

4. Low treshold encounters



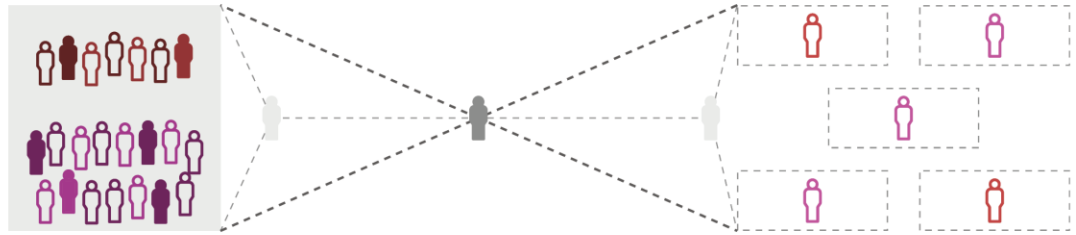
Shared spaces are placed along daily routes to support informal encounters.

5. Retreat and protection



Buffer spaces and retreat rooms allow residents to withdraw when needed.

6. Staff visibility and safety

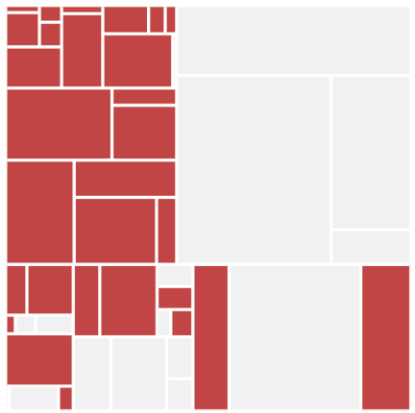


Staff positions allow discreet overview of common areas while keeping a domestic atmosphere.

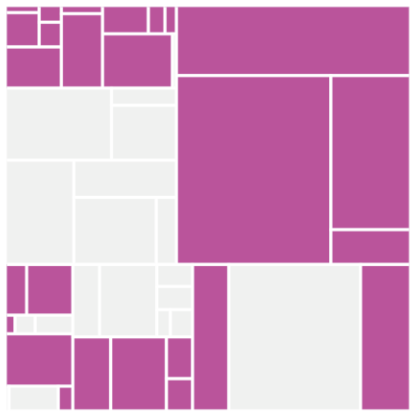
Figure 24. Interior design principles
source: author

Figure 26. Comparison of sizes of different zones located in the building
source: author

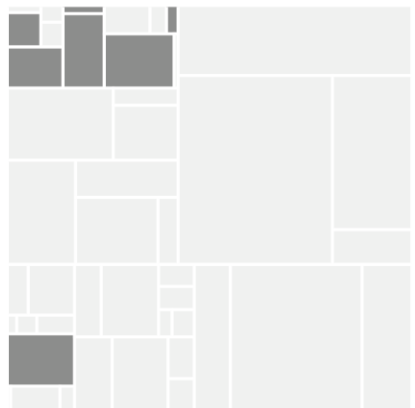
Program



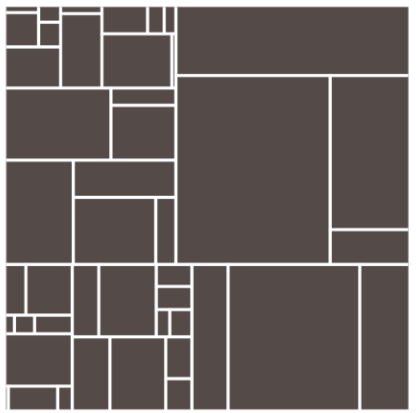
Social hub residents access



Sanctuary residents access



Visitors access



Staff access

Figure 27. Access to rooms per type of person
source: author

Layout

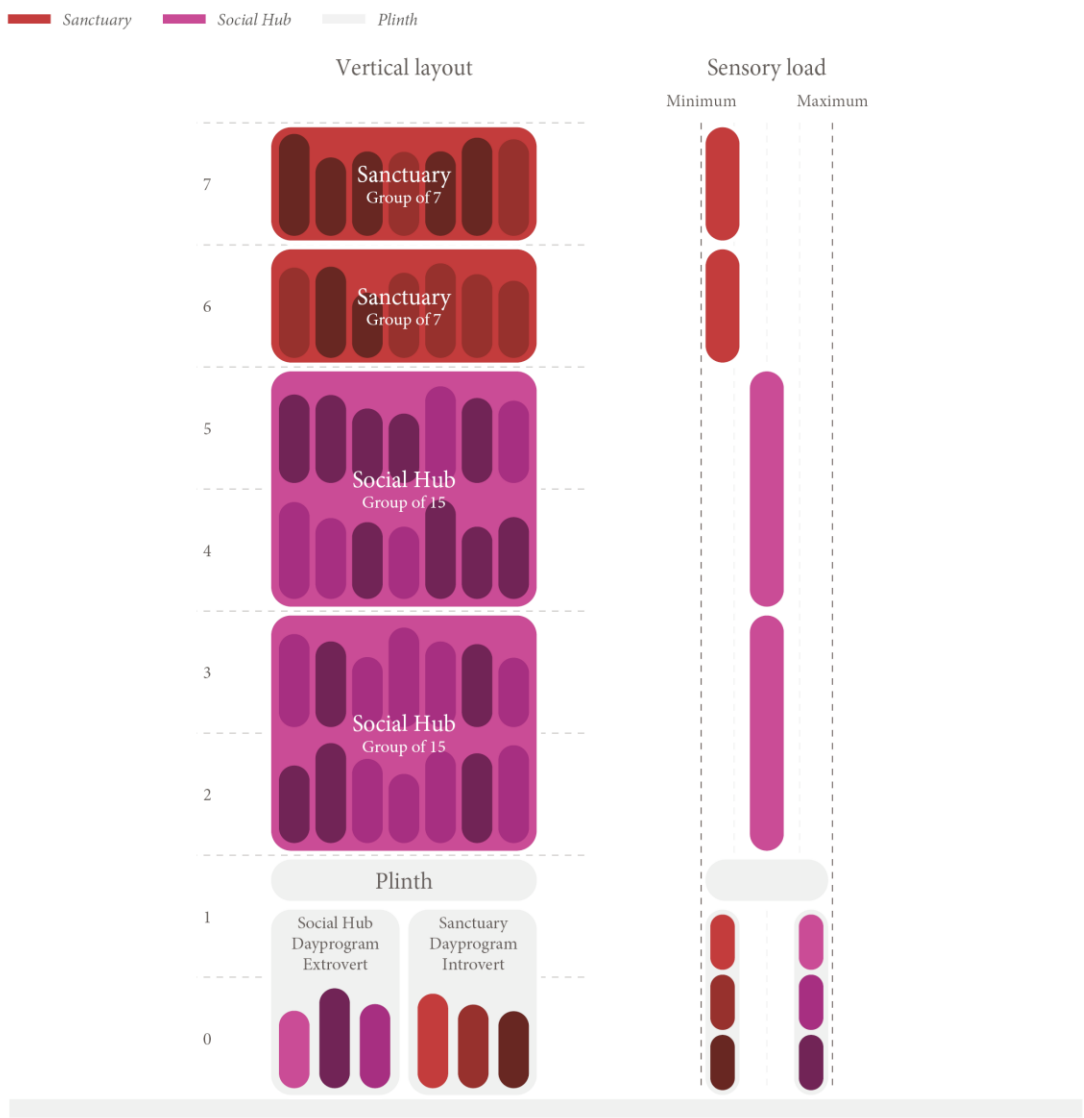


Figure 28. Spatial distribution of Sanctuary and Social Hub profiles across building levels
source: author

Vertical routing

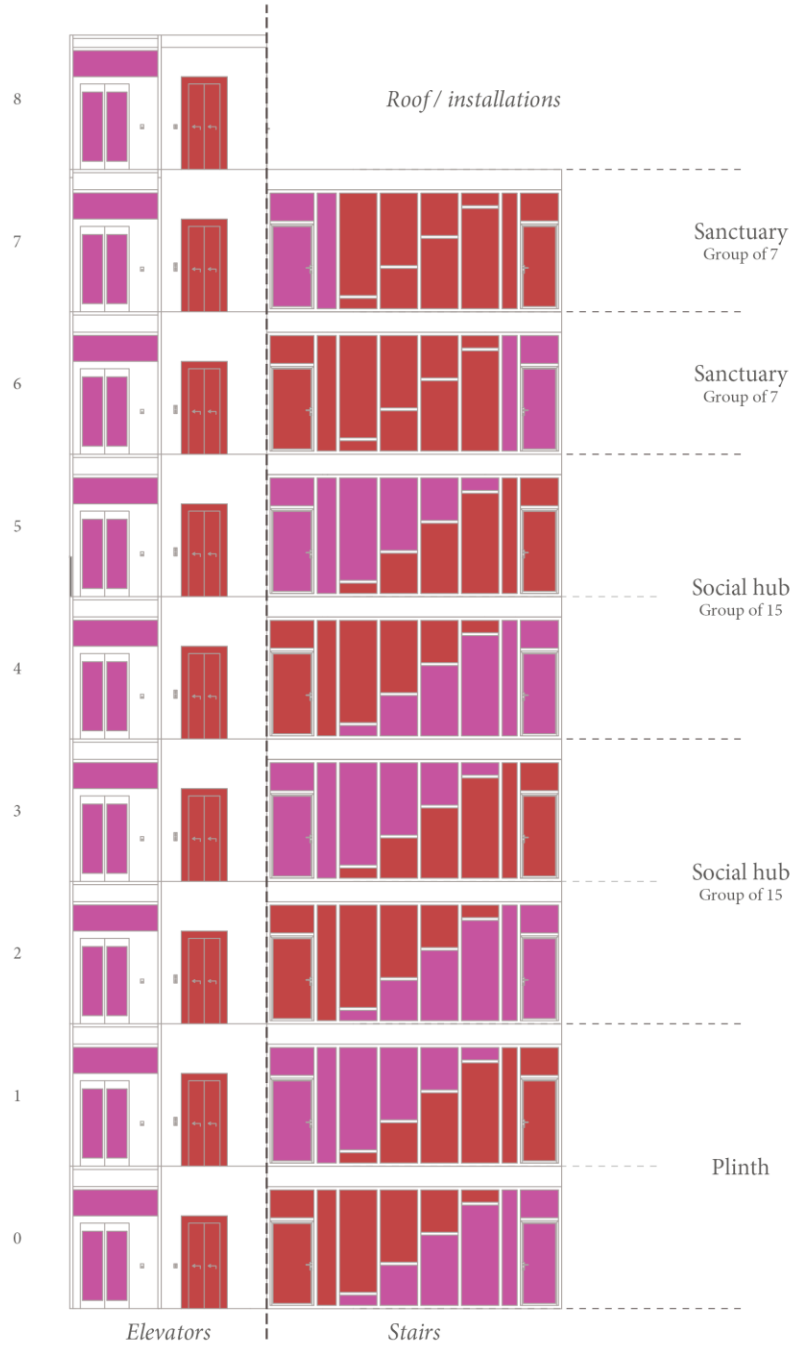


Figure 30. Vertical circulation by resident group (1:150)
source: author

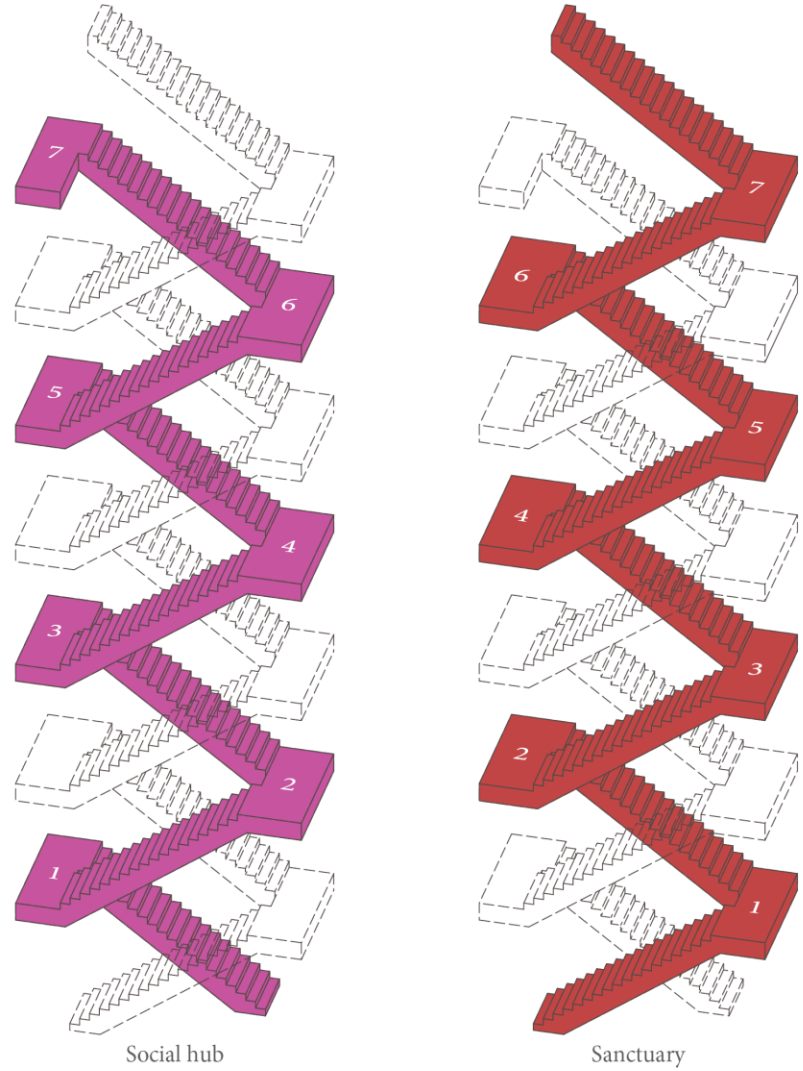
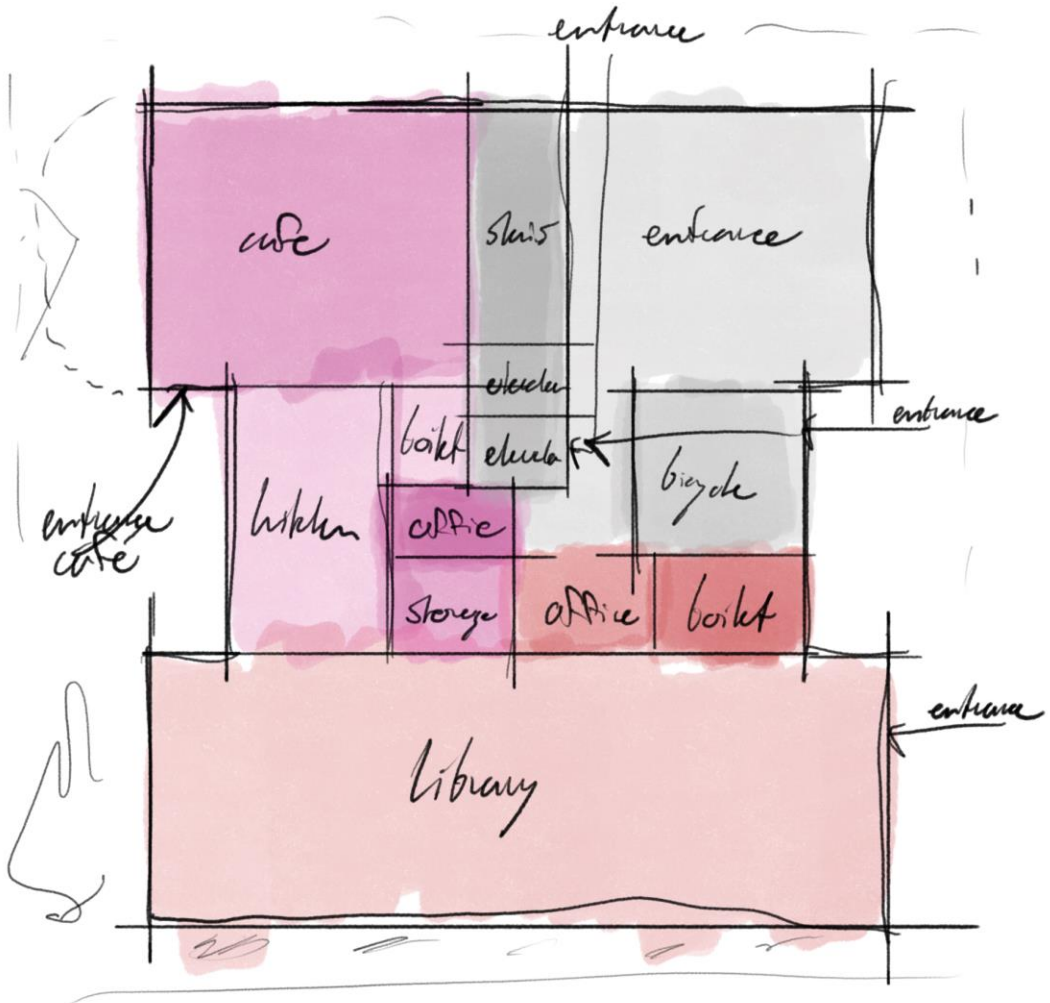


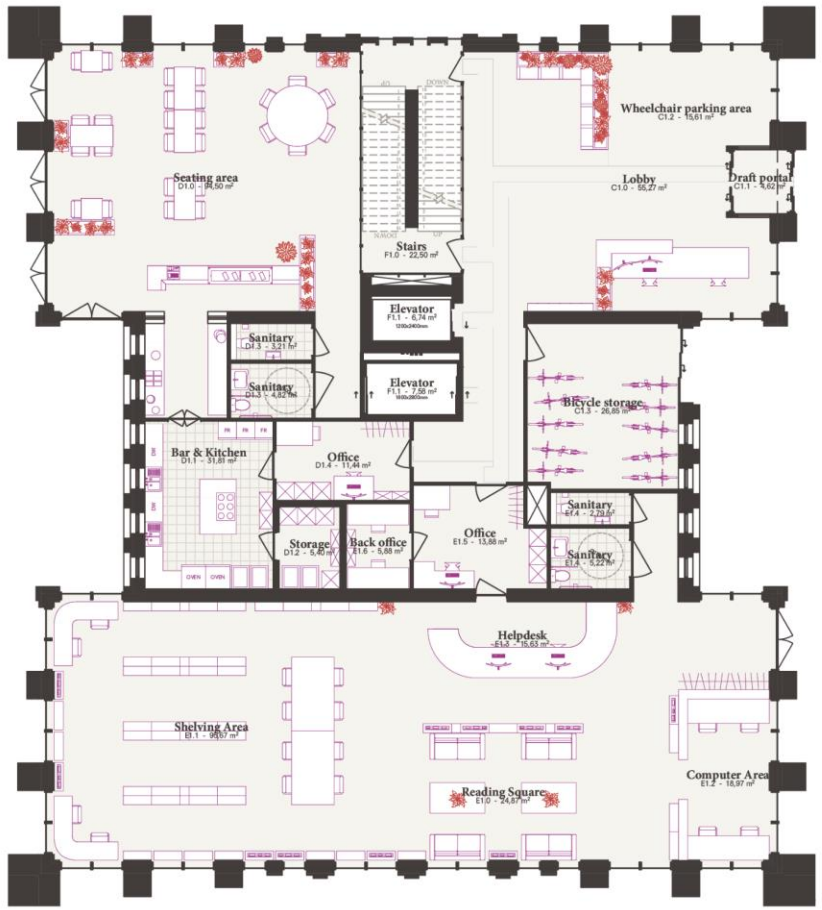
Figure 31. Stair connections for Social Hub and Sanctuary (1:150)
source: author

Ground floor

Concept



Floorplan



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Figure 32. Layout of the ground floor (1:150)
source: author

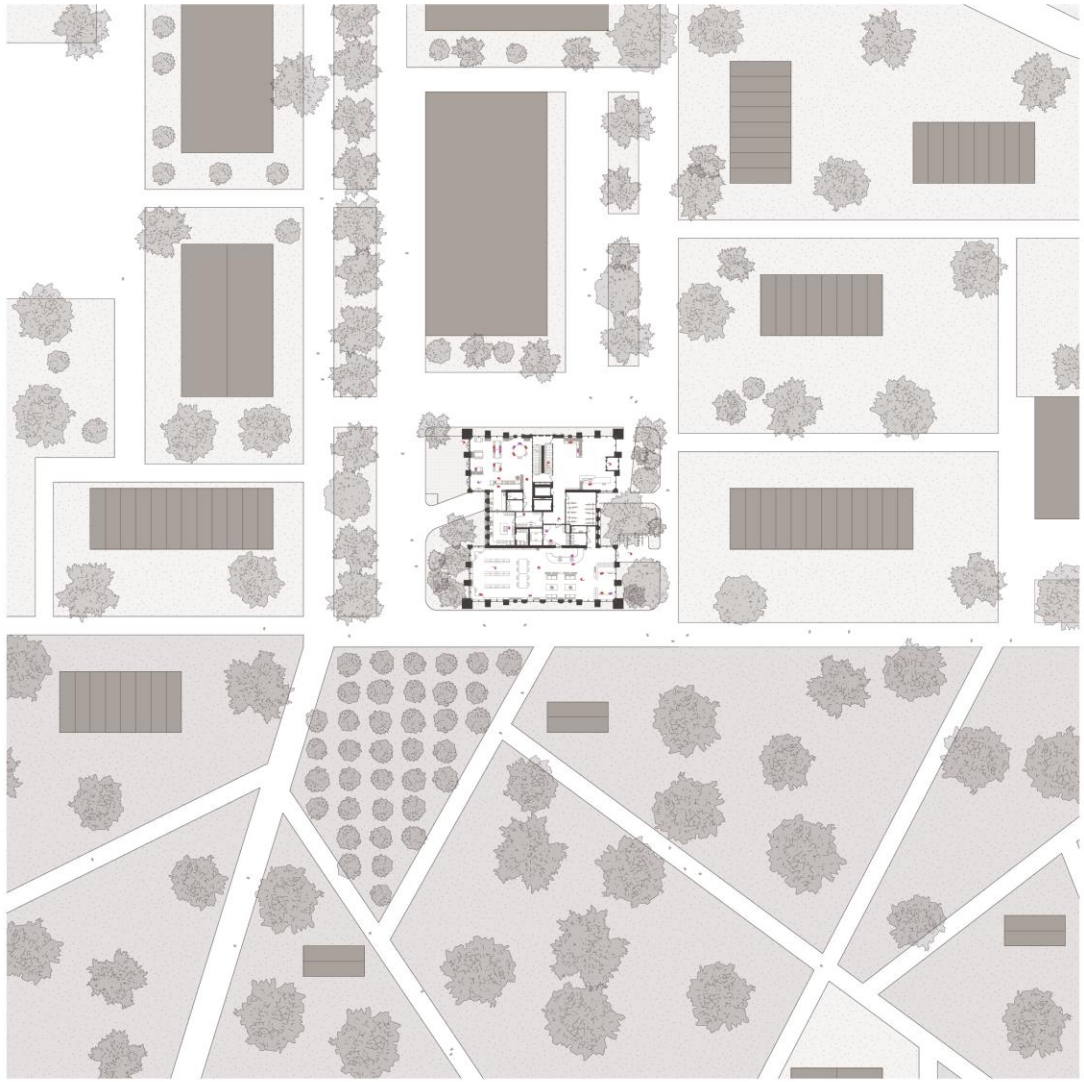


Figure 33. Context around the building (1:1000)
source: author

1:1.000

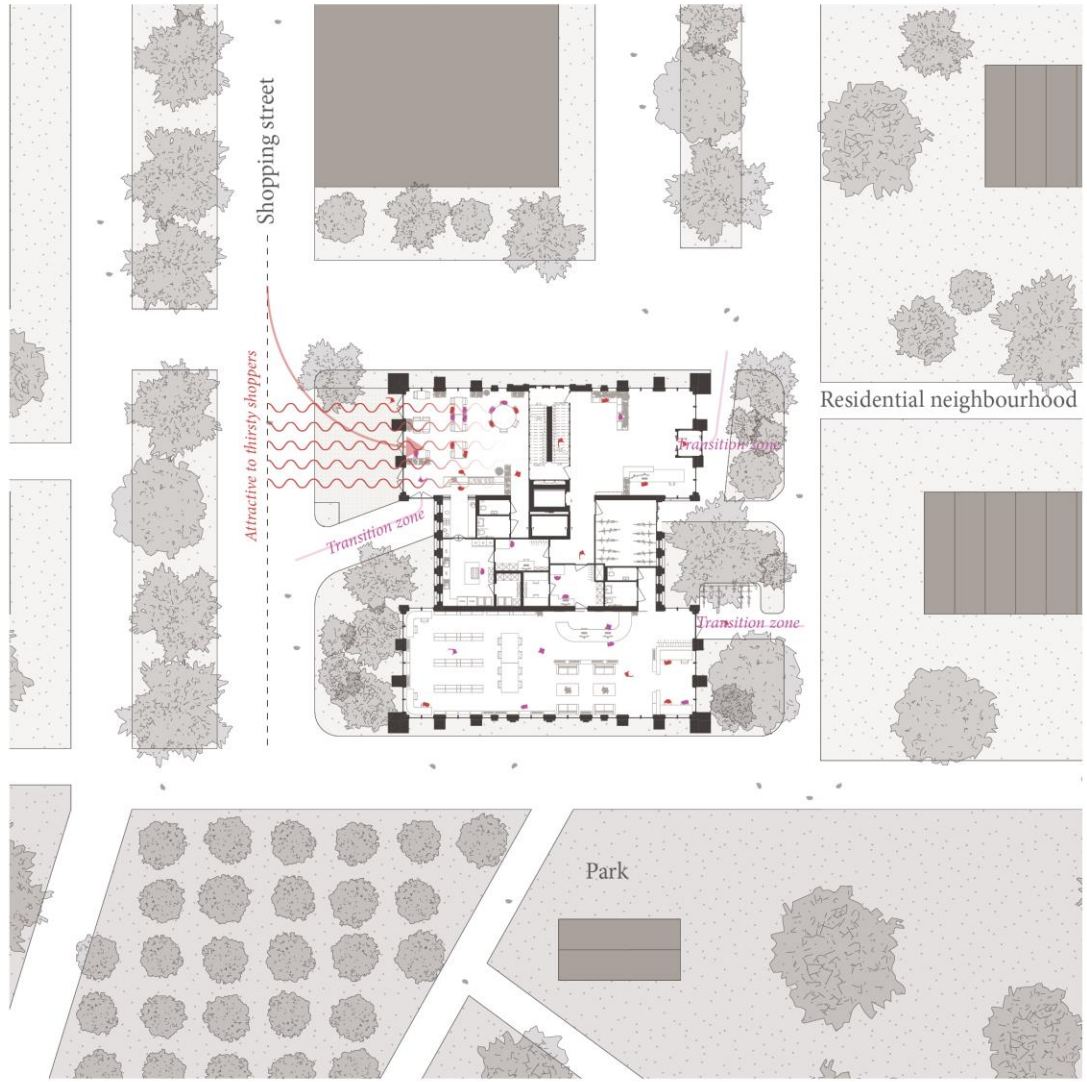
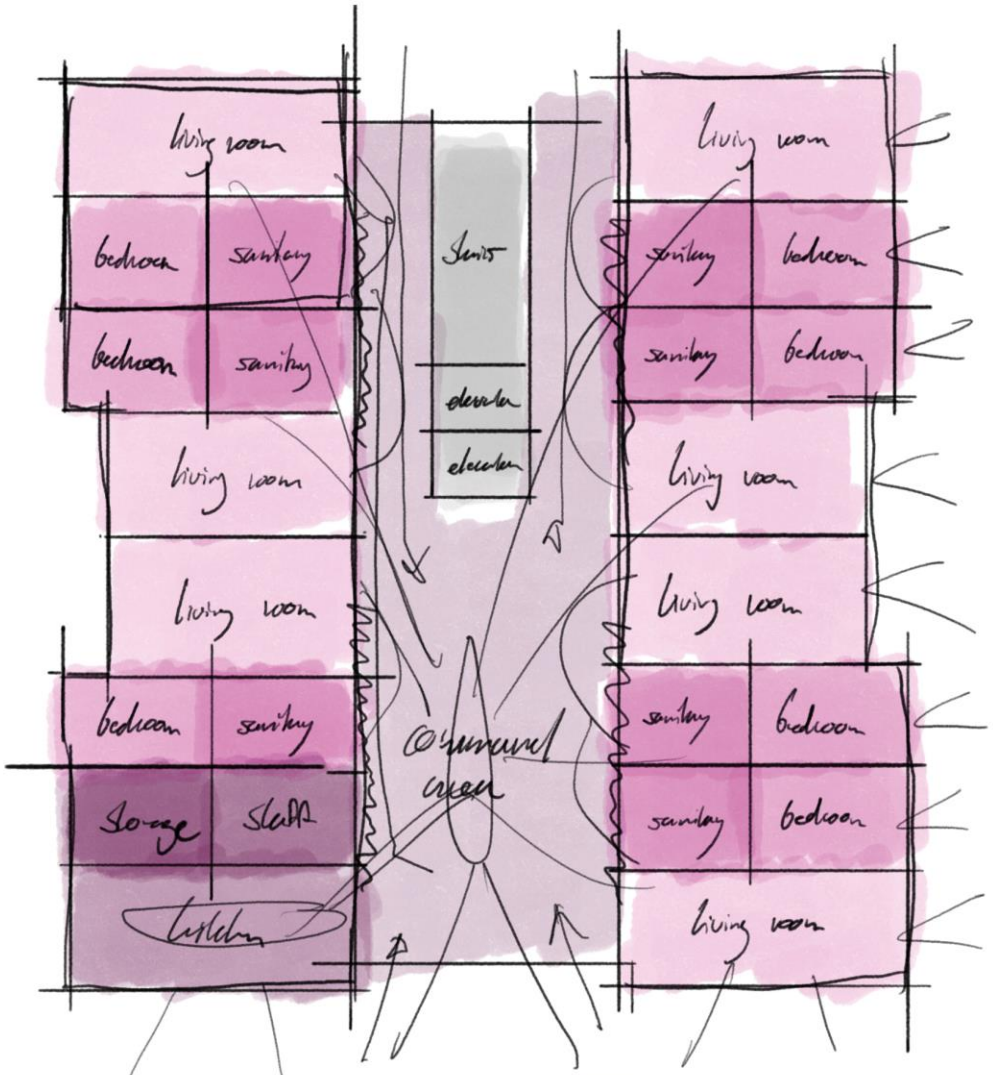


Figure 34. Context around the building (1:500)
source: author

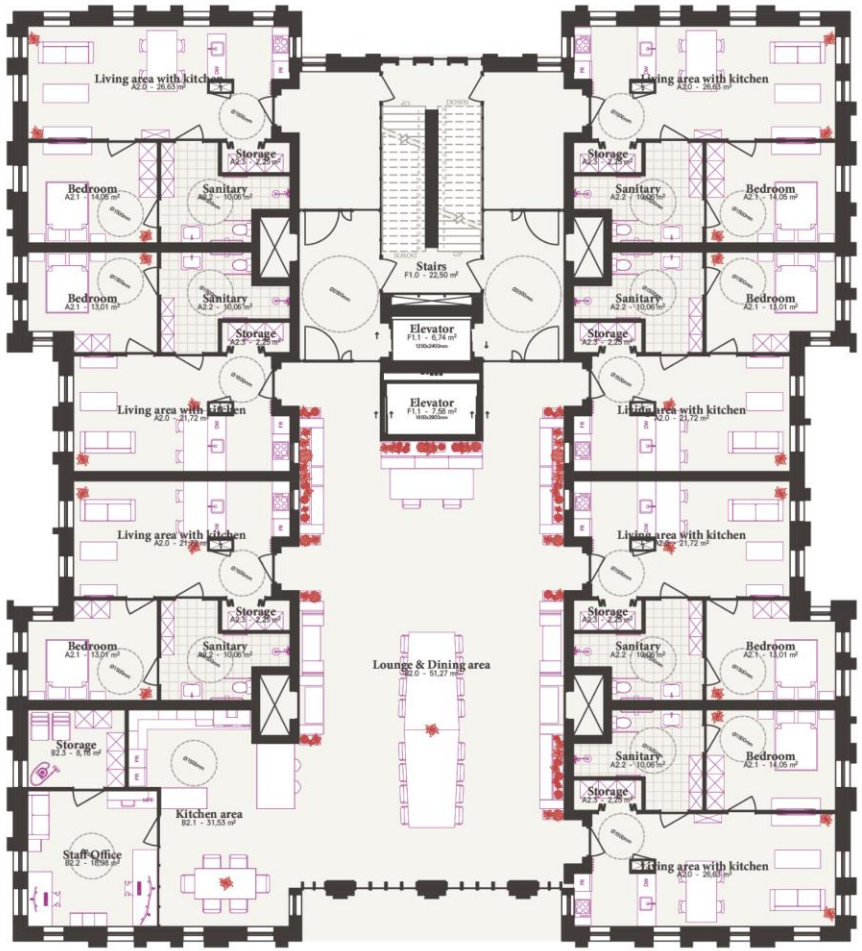
1:3.00

Social hub residential floor

Concept



Floorplan

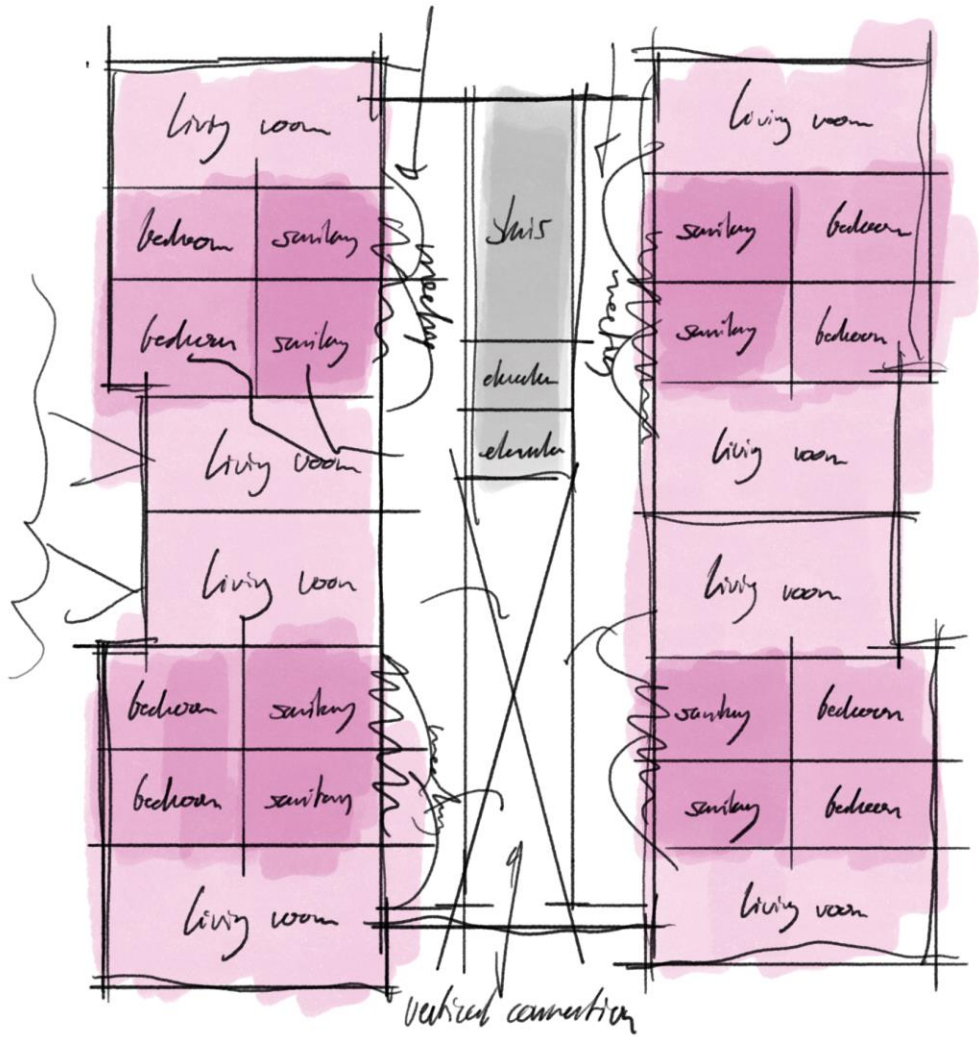


0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

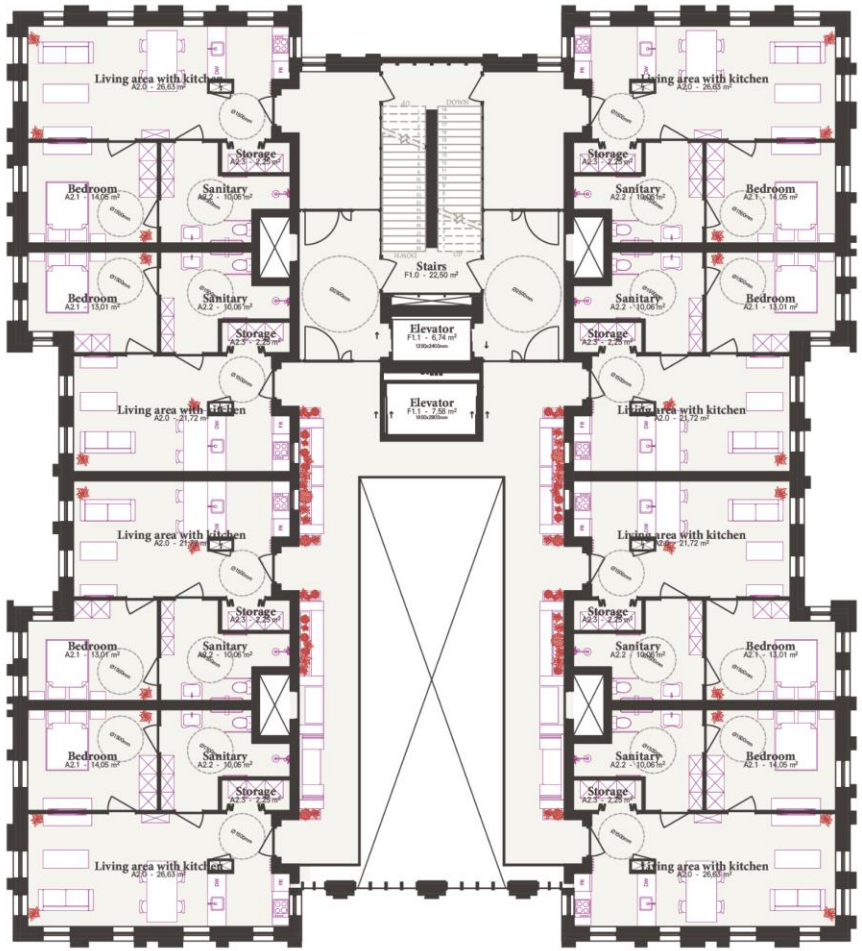
Figure 36. Layout of the 2nd and 4th floor (1:150)
source: author

Social hub upper floor

Concept



Floorplan

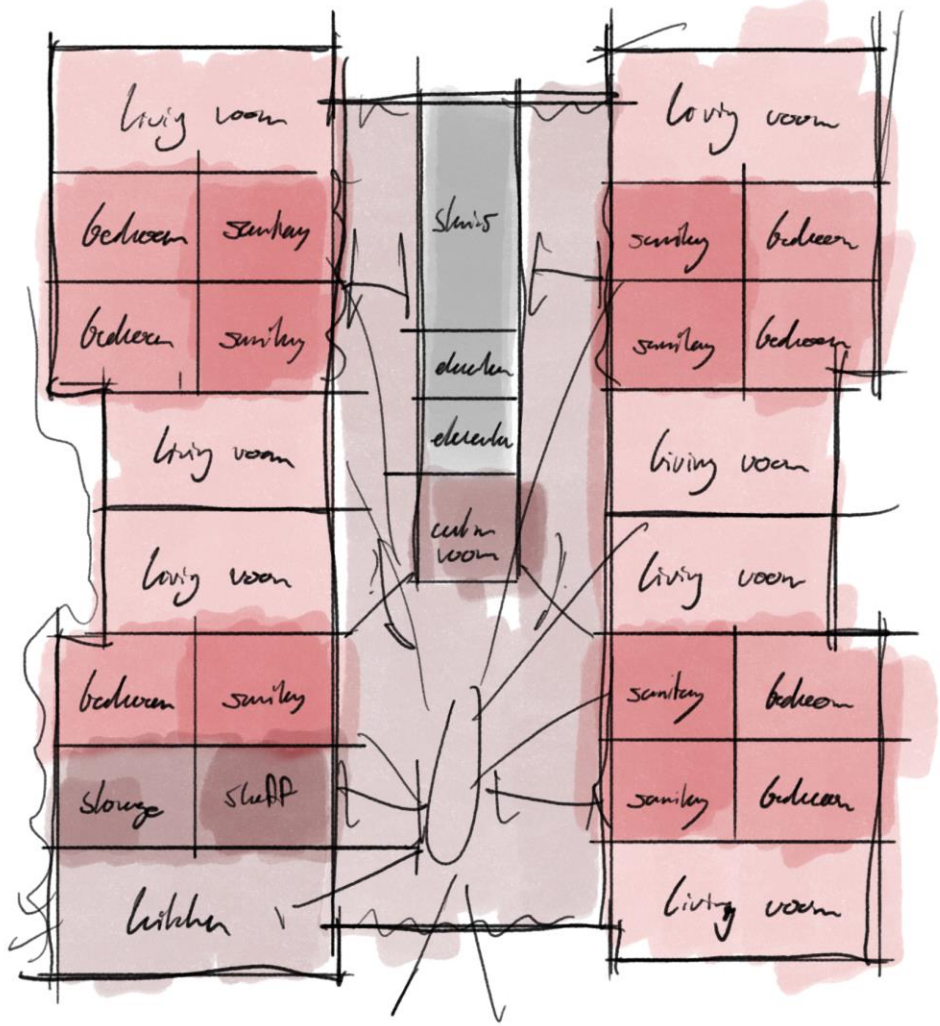


0 1 2 **3** 4 **5** 6 7 8

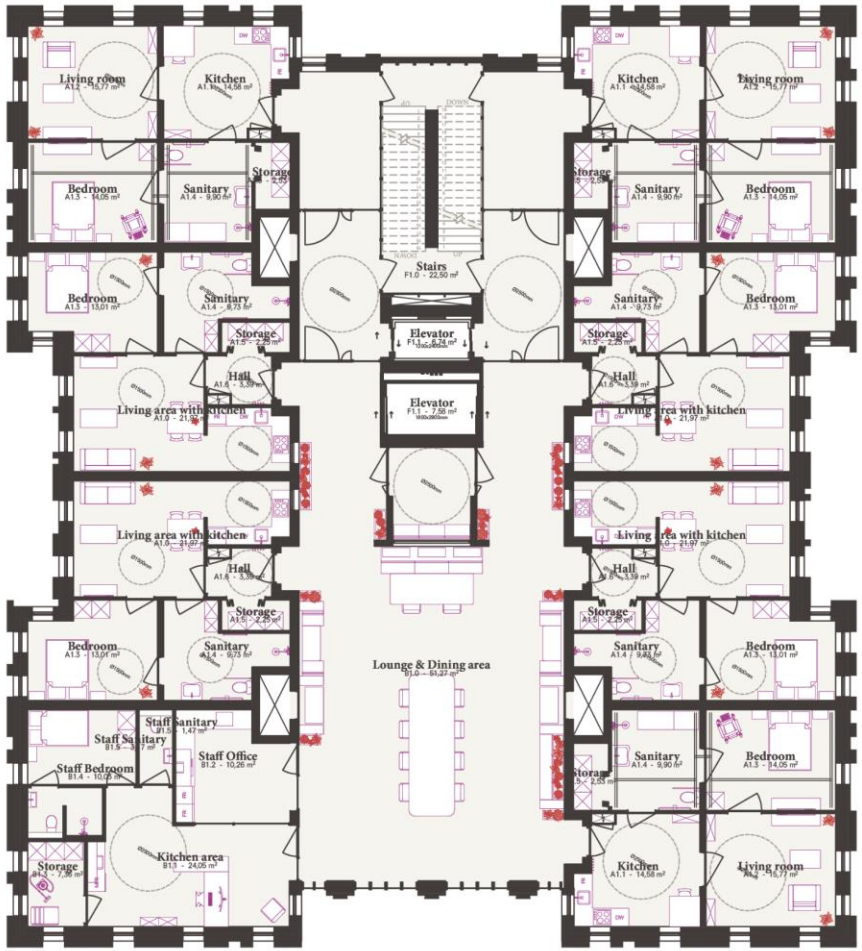
Figure 37. Layout of the 3rd and 5th floor (1:150)
source: author

Sanctuary residential floor

Concept



Floorplan

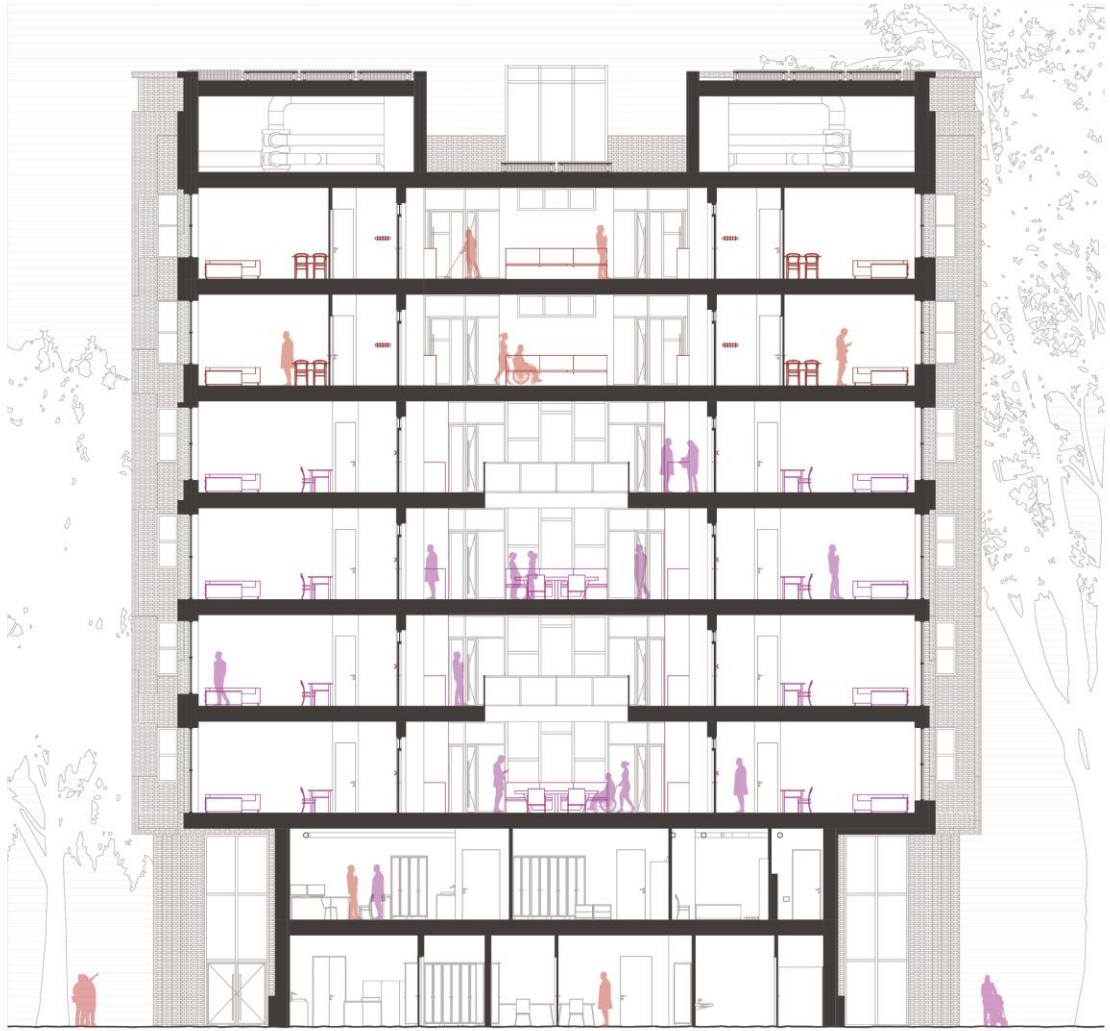


0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Figure 38. Layout of the 6th and 7th floor (1:150)
source: author

Sections

A-A



B-B

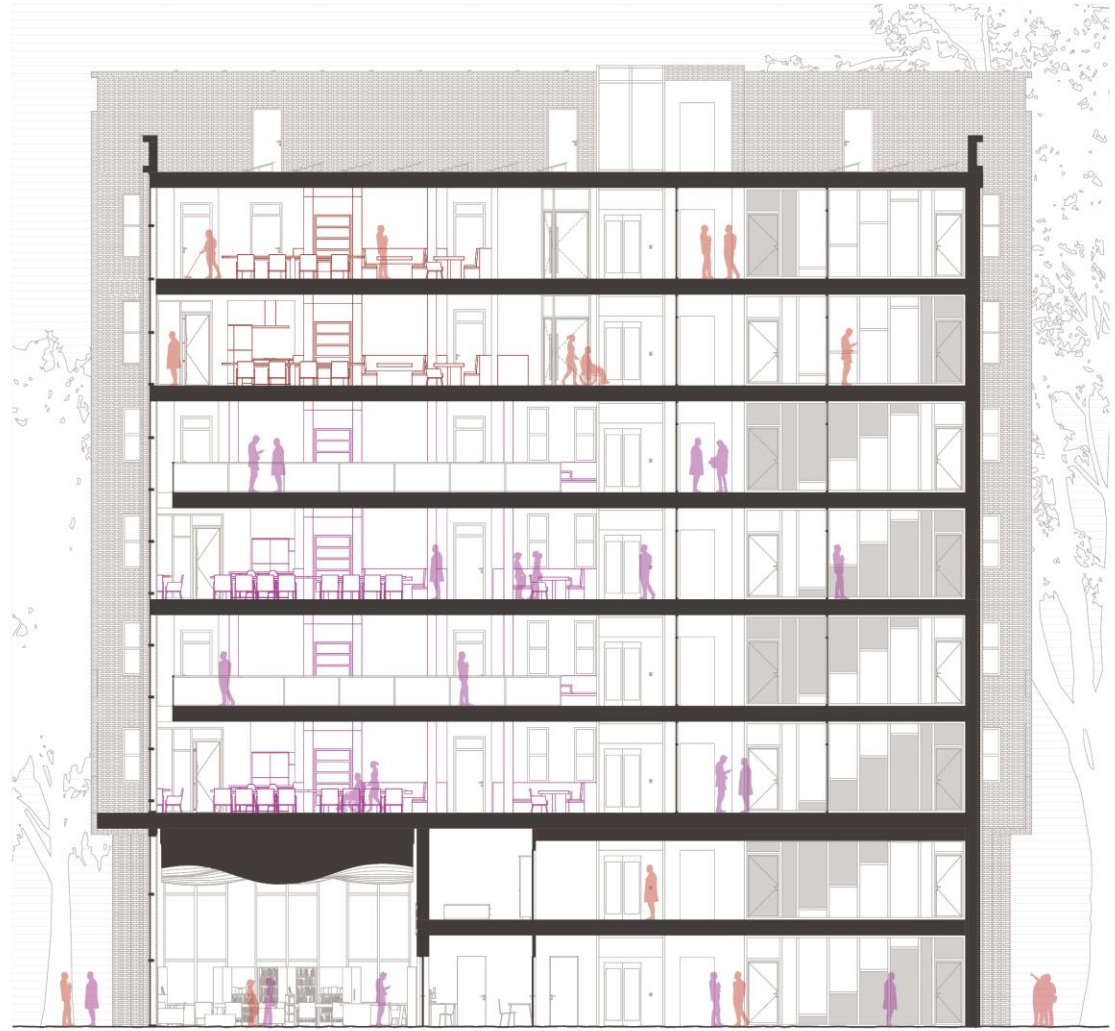


Figure 47. Section A-A and B-B (1:200)
source: author

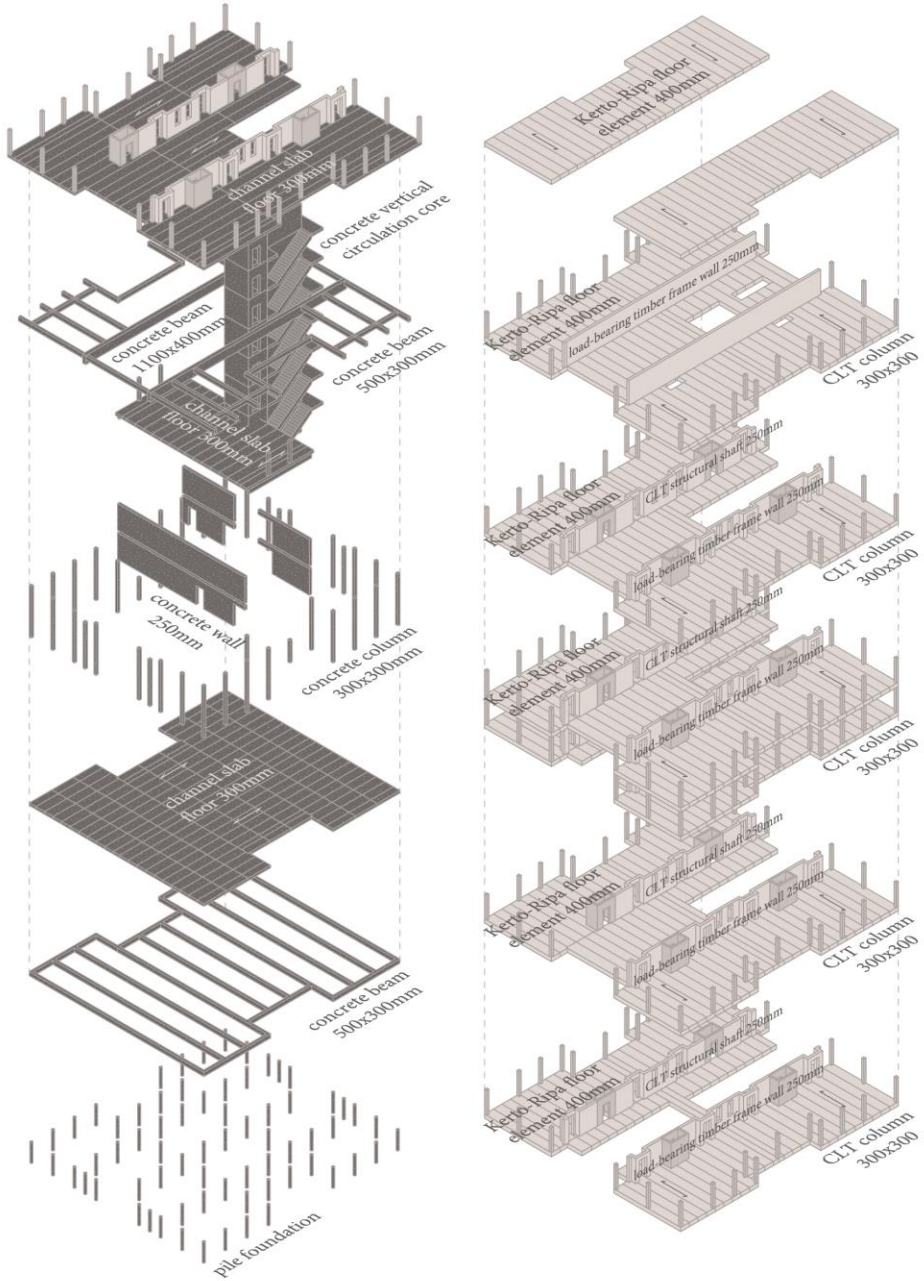


Figure 48. Exploded axo of the main load bearing construction (1:600)
source: author

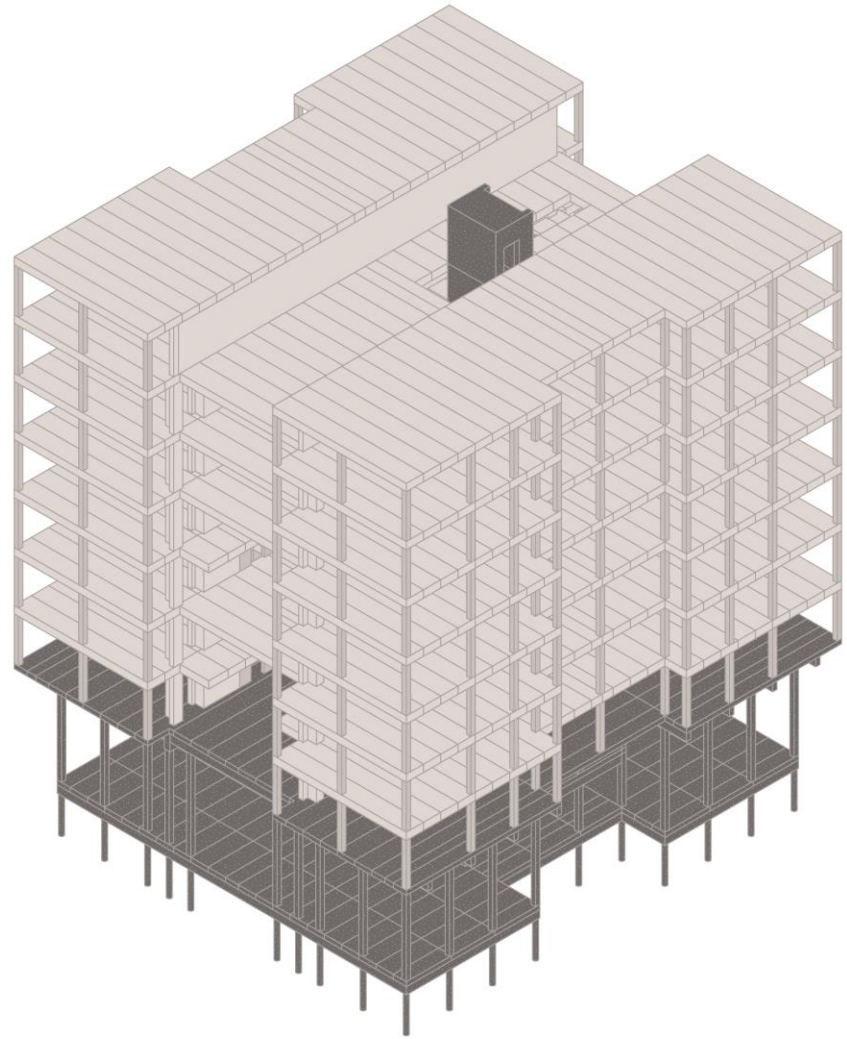


Figure 49. Axo of the main load bearing construction (1:300)
source: author

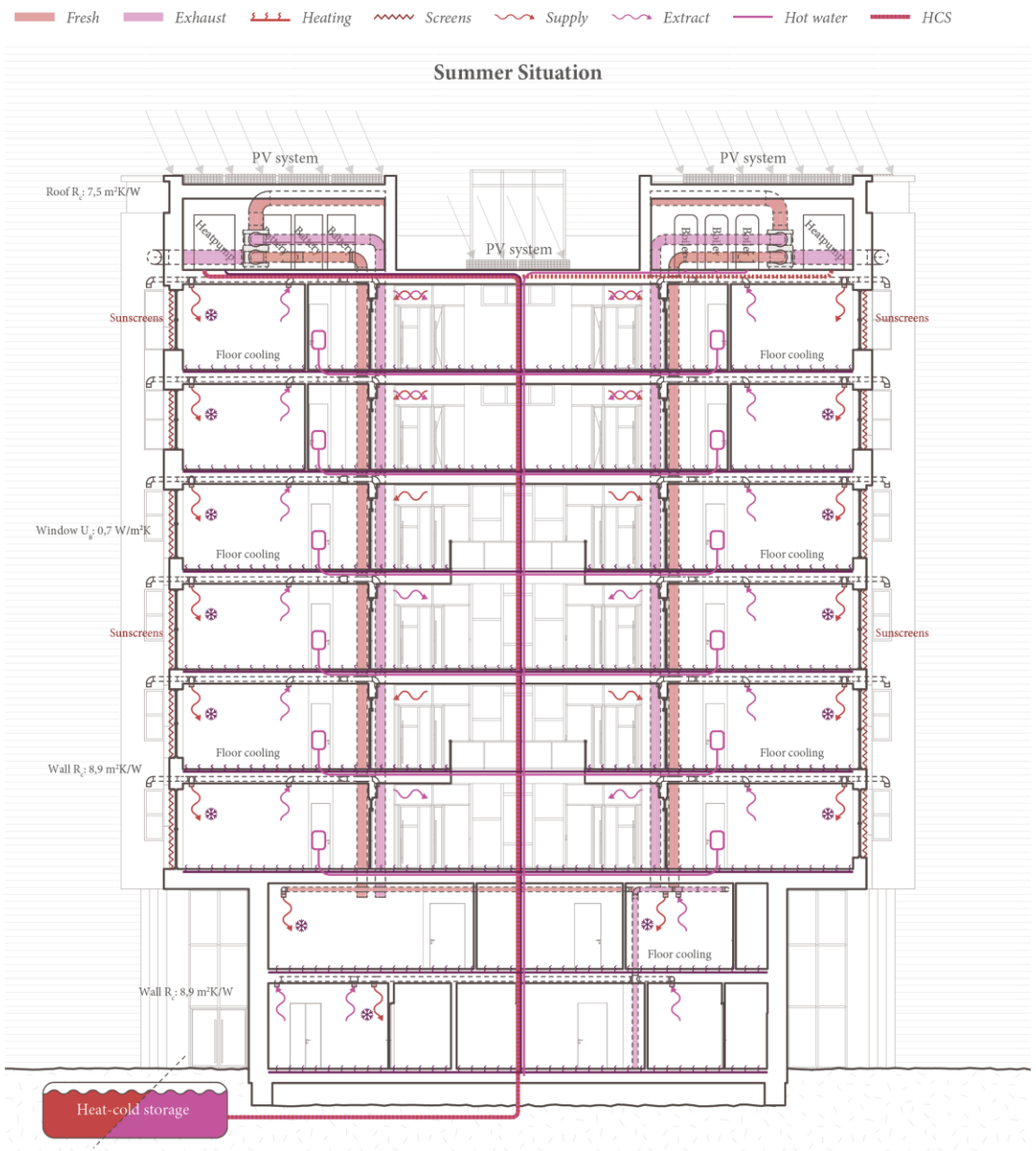


Figure 51. Summer climate scheme section (1:200)
source: author

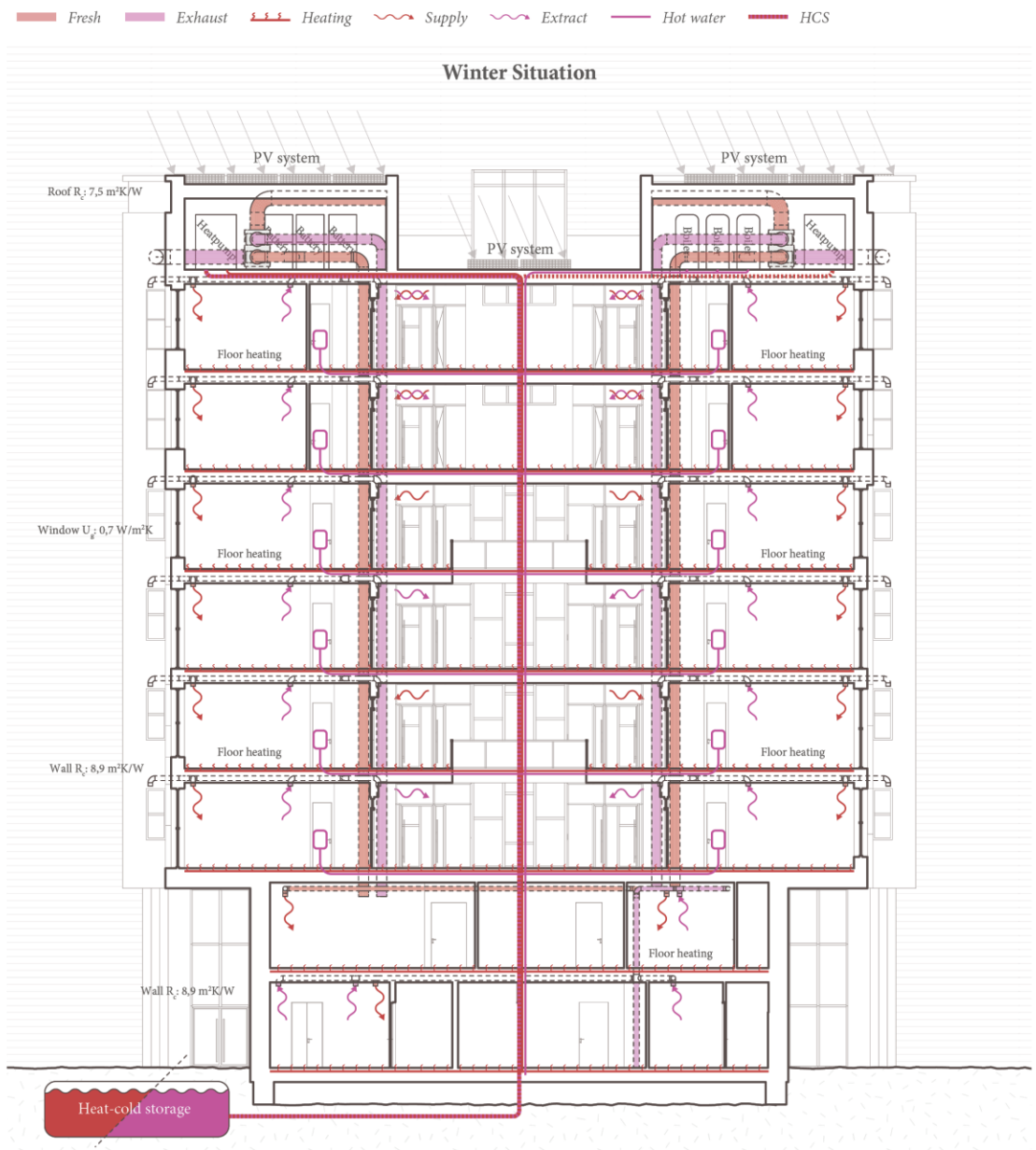


Figure 52. Winter climate scheme section (1:200)
source: author

Impressions

Short video

Public Familiarity

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