

INTERIORS  
BUILDINGS  
CITIES

*Project Journal*

/ Ries Schouten,

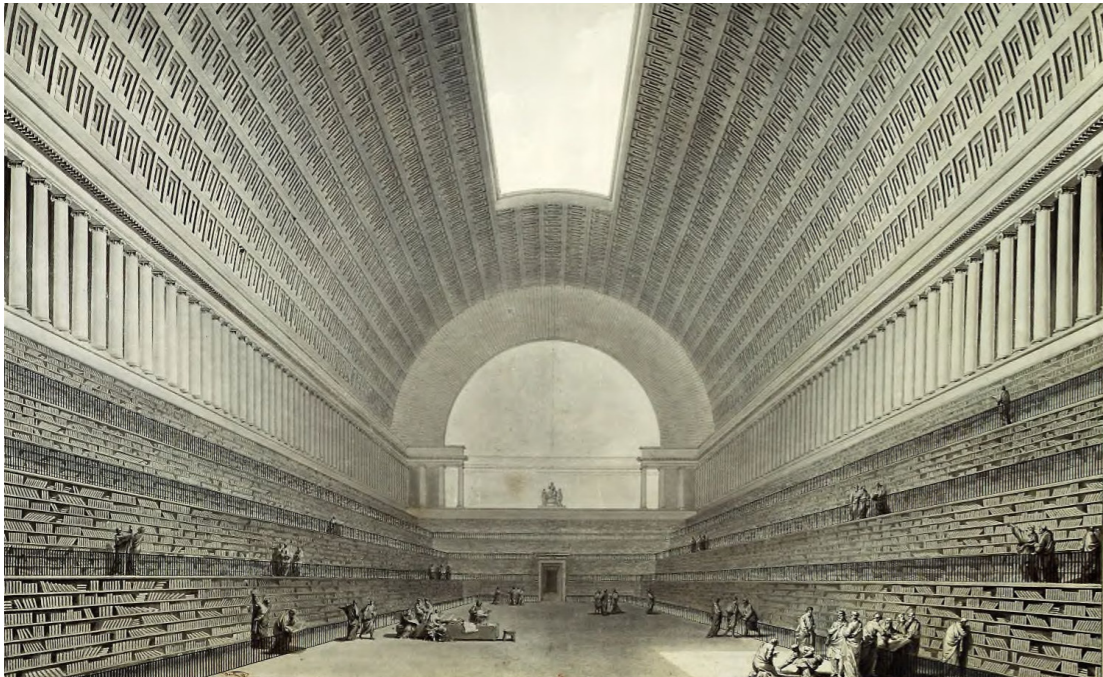
MSc4 2023-2024

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# Stockholm City Library

2023-24 MSc3 AR3AI100



Interior view of the new room planned for the extension of the King's library. Étienne-Louis Boullée. (1785).

## Introduction

As an idea, the library's history is synonymous with the development of culture and society. Ancient libraries were centres of learning that sought to embody the sum of human knowledge and to encompass and represent the known world, often through their own geometries. Privileged places for scholarly pursuit, they jealously guarded collections of books and manuscripts that were handmade, precious and often unique. The idea of the public library as a tool for broader social advancement arrived with the French Revolution at the end of the 17th Century, building upon the opportunities presented by the innovation of the printing press. The unrealised yet hugely influential designs of Étienne-Louis Boullée envisioned the vast, monumental interiors of a French National Library as the representative space for a new Republic, where the state would take responsibility for the collation and dissemination of all available knowledge to its emancipated citizens. This moment of political revolution prefaced an industrial one, during which the notion of the public library became a key component in the infrastructure of the emerging modern metropolis. Libraries changed that world, becoming spaces where scientific, cultural and political ideas were fermented and exchanged. As cradles of the emerging social democratic changes that swept through those industrialised societies during the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, they transformed again into places of education and social betterment for the masses.

This year, as part of its ongoing investigation into modern, public building types, the graduation studio of Interiors Buildings Cities will address the public library through a project that engages one of its most celebrated and influential manifestations: the Stockholm Library, which opened in 1928 and was designed by the notable Swedish architect, Erik Gunnar Asplund. Influenced by ideas formed on a tour of the United States, where he was introduced to North America's own strand of revolutionary architecture, Asplund's building was the catalyst for innovations which, by the 1950s, had led to the libraries of Sweden and Denmark being considered as the amongst the most advanced in the modern world.

Interiors  
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Palace

# Stockholm City Library

2023-24 MSc3 AR3AI100



Interior view of the Stockholm Library. Andreas Gursky. (1999).

In an echo of Boullée, the stripped, neo-classical geometries of Asplund's design presented the books on tiers of shelves ringing the monumental circular room within the drum at the centre of the plan, although the void above them, perhaps acknowledges that, unlike its forebears, the library's collection could only ever be considered a fragment of humanities knowledge. For the first time, its shelves were freely accessible to its users. This, alongside the remarkable offer of a dedicated children's library, were just two outcomes of a broader commitment to creating an educated populace, understood as a vital and fundamental component of the more enlightened social construct that emerged across Scandinavia during the Twentieth Century.

By the end of that Century, the public library as a type had found a new social and political purpose. Confronting neoliberalism's privatisation of public space, alongside questions of its own role, in the face of the increasing digitisation of information, public libraries transformed from places devoted to the lending of books and quiet study into open and largely expectation-free environments, embracing issues of equality and multiculturalism. In Sweden, this paralleled prevailing attitudes in society at the time. In 2008, Stockholm Library launched an architectural competition that sought to significantly extend it as part of an embrasure of such an expanded role. However, the failure of that competition to elicit change was the beginning of a long and frustrating period of stasis. In 2015, the British architects, Caruso St John were commissioned

to undertake a more limited exercise of adjustment and expansion within existing spaces immediately adjoining the main building. This project was also halted, and this year, in 2023, a new call was launched to simply restore the building as it stands, recognising the deterioration that is one consequence of this extended period of uncertainty. Next year, the building plans to close its doors to facilitate this and is due to re-open twenty years after the launch of the original expansion project.

This is our starting point as a studio. Following careful study of the existing building, undertaken as part of a process of design research that will also collectively examine the oeuvre of an architect, the society in which he built it and the history of the public library as a type, you will each develop a proposal for Stockholm Library. Your designs will explore how the remarkable legacy offered by its architecture and urban situation might be best developed in ways that can address contemporary society and future change: accommodating the possibilities and dilemmas inherent in the dissemination of knowledge within an increasingly digital environment, acknowledging the ongoing importance of the book; creating an open, welcoming and accessible environment for both learning and pleasure and, critically, doing this in a deeply sustainable way, that acknowledges the challenges we all face.

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## 01 Looking carefully

Introduction to Gunnar Asplund & Stockholm City Library

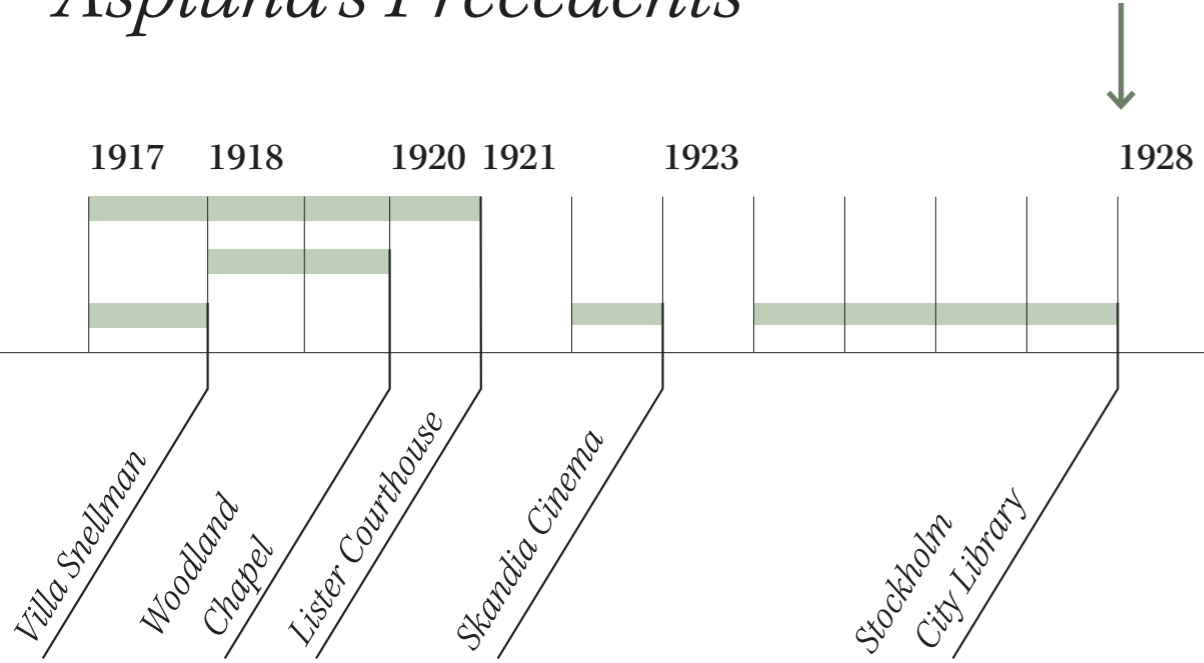
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*We started of with exploring the existing literature and drawings of the Stockholm City library designed by Gunnar Asplund, resulted in 1 to 25 interior models of some particular rooms. At the same time an analysation of Asplund's previous buildings has been conducted for the research seseminar. Finally, after visiting Stockholm, I tried to locate the library in it's social and historical context.*

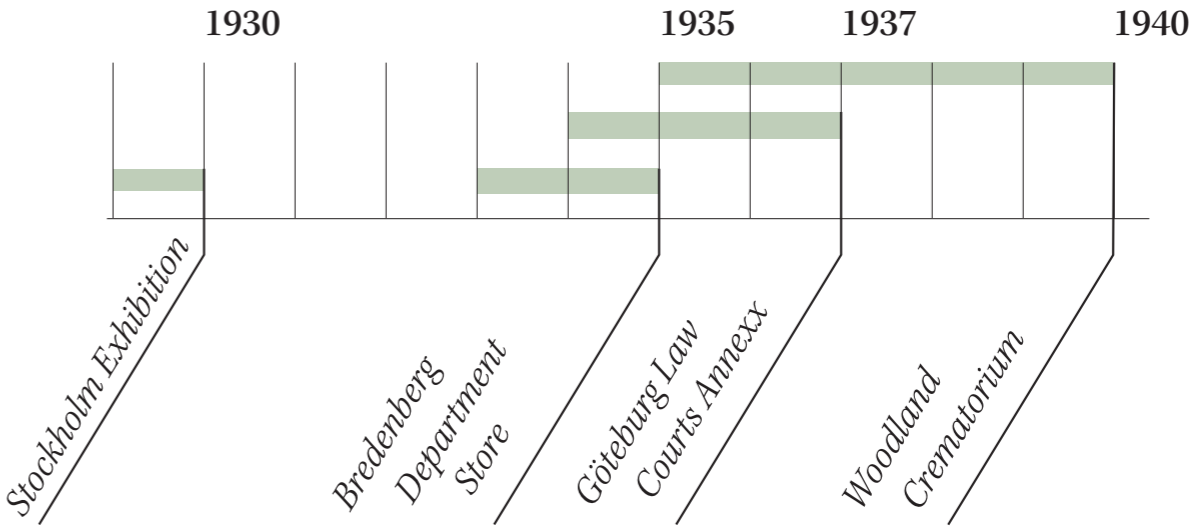
**Erik Gunnar Asplund** was one of the most influential Scandinavian architects of the first half of the 20th century. His early work transitioned from National Romanticism to Nordic classicism, and by 1930, he embraced the modernism style. By the time of his death in 1940, Asplund's work had taken a more personal direction, influenced by traditional architecture and a desire for symbolic content rather than contemporary design trends. Asplund had a unique ability to create a sense of place in his architecture, skilfully integrating landscape elements with architectural forms. Asplund continued to use vernacular imagery while incorporating classical motifs into his work. The following pages will explore the design of Villa Snellman in detail, highlighting the early stages of Asplund's career and showcasing his characteristic architectural features. Interestingly, Stockholm City Library represents the peak of Asplund's career, beautifully combining various architectural influences with his unique style. Finally, this all culminates in the Woodland Cemetery, completed just before his death.

# TIME LINE

## *Asplund's Precedents*



Archival photo  
*Stockholm City Library*



01



*Image / view from the first floor hallway  
in Villa Snellman.*

# VILLA SNELLMAN

**Villa snellman**, designed by Gunnar Asplund, has been the main focus for the start of the Research Seminar. The villa was designed for Bank Director Emil Snellman in 1917-1918. The Villa Snellman is situated in Djursholm, a suburb of Stockholm. Villa Snellman maintains an overall formal and classical appearance but also shows some interesting elements that break with the traditional architecture in Sweden around that time. Traditional Swedish architecture typically favoured rich detailing and outstanding ornamentation, while the design of Villa Snellman embraces simplicity, geometric shapes, and has a focus on the practical use of space while departing from excessive ornamentation. Later work of Asplund elaborates even more on these aspects. (Wrede, 1983, p.83)

02



*Image / view from the courtyard towards  
the entrance of Villa Snellman.*

03



*Drawing 1 / imagined view when  
approaching the building, by Gunnar  
Asplund*

04

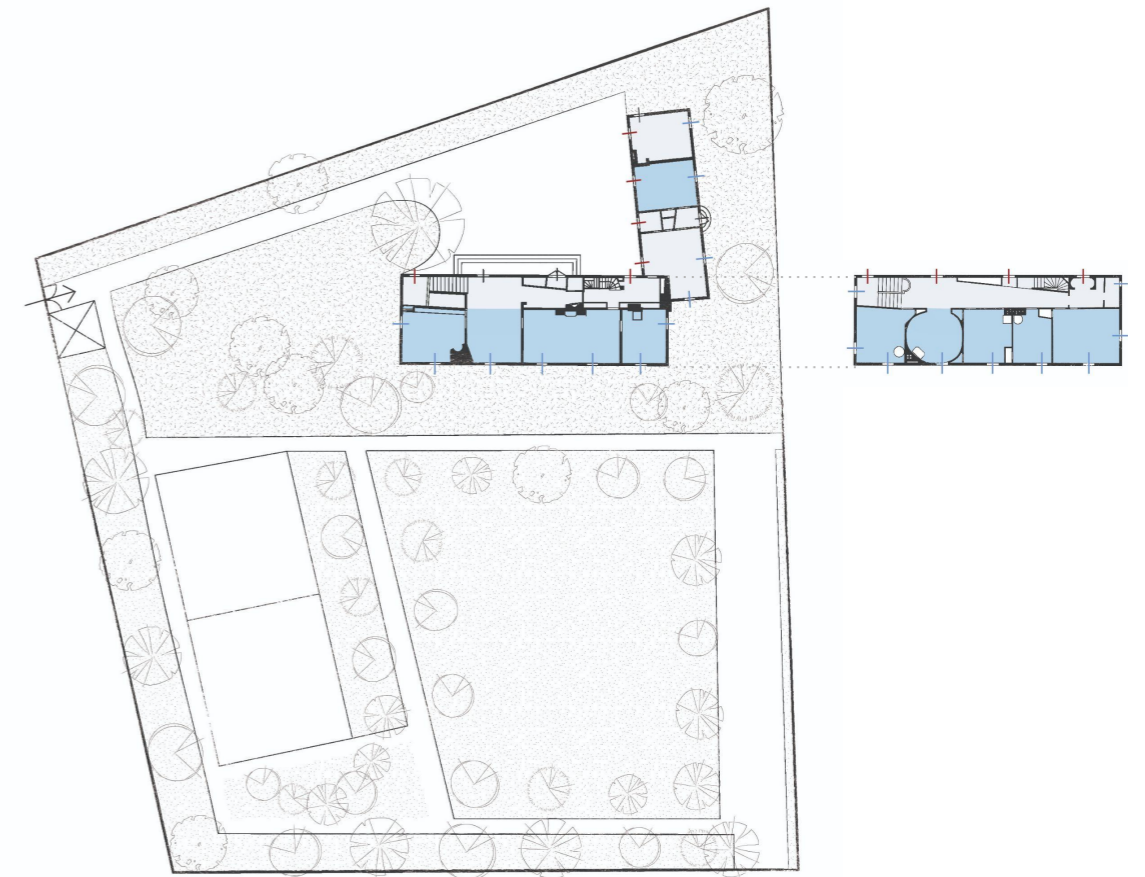


*Image / View towards the face-like  
facade from the entrance.*

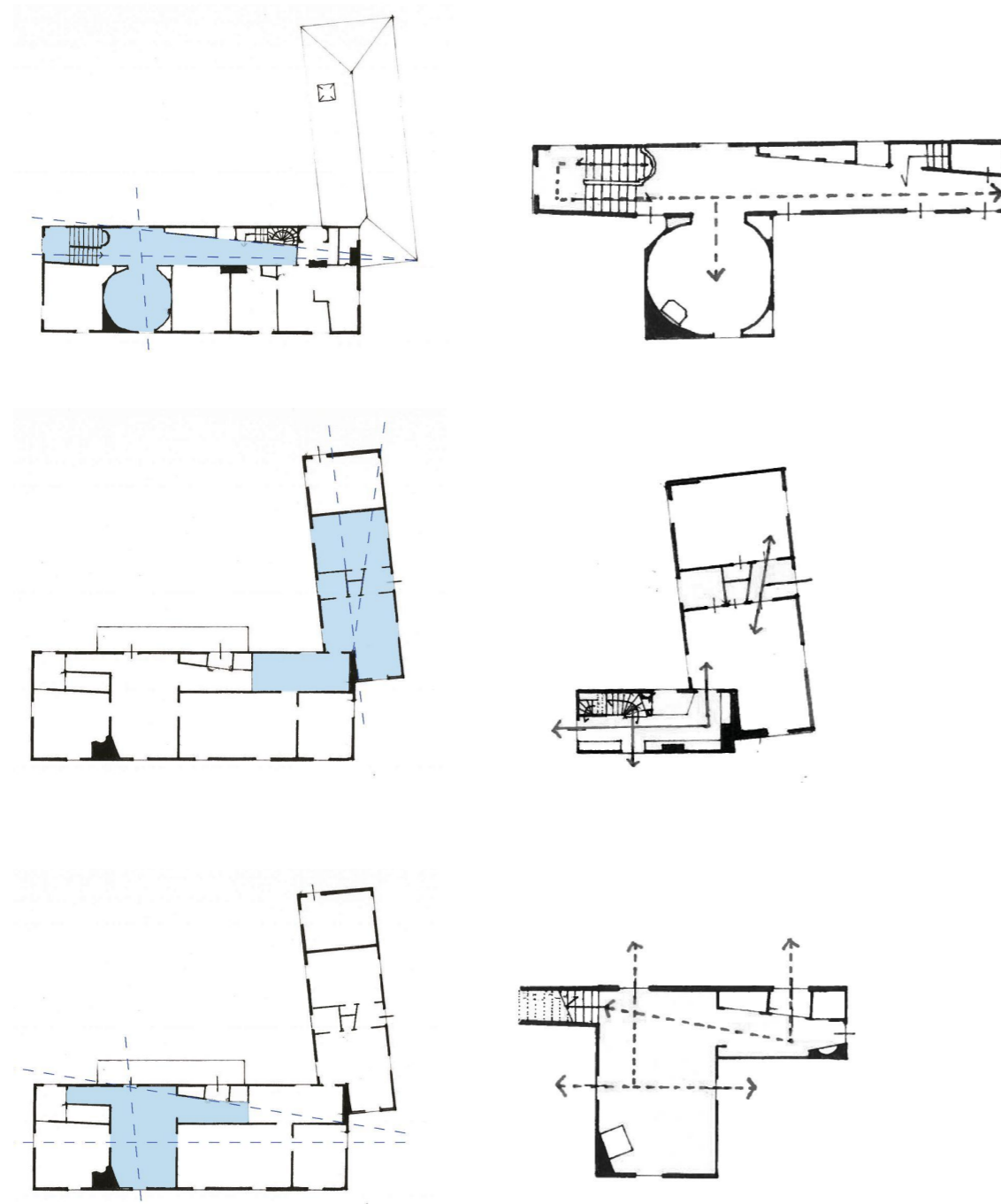
### Arrival

A visitor arriving at the site of Villa Snellman initially encounters the narrow side of the building with the face-like facade (03, 04). As visitors walk further down a narrow pathway, they are welcomed by an inviting and intimate inner courtyard. The placement of the two building masses is at a smaller angle than usual, resulting in the creation of a partially enclosed courtyard. The circulation passages and functional rooms of the villa are oriented towards

this inner courtyard. The design allowed the people inside the building to observe the activities taking place in the courtyard and notice incoming visitors. All the areas designated for leisure and relaxation were oriented towards the garden, providing a quiet, peaceful, and natural view. This arrangement emphasises the connection between the indoor spaces and the surrounding. (Asplund, 1950, p.114)

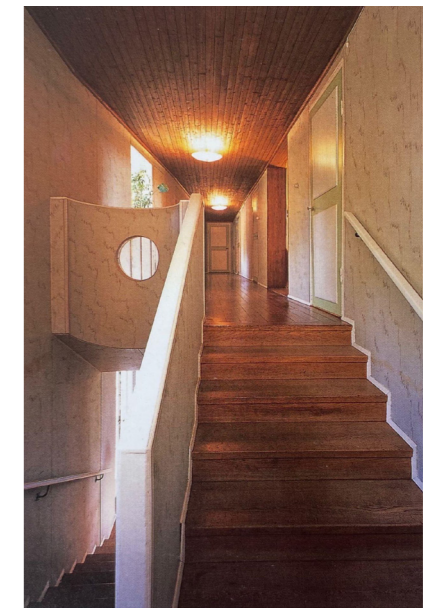
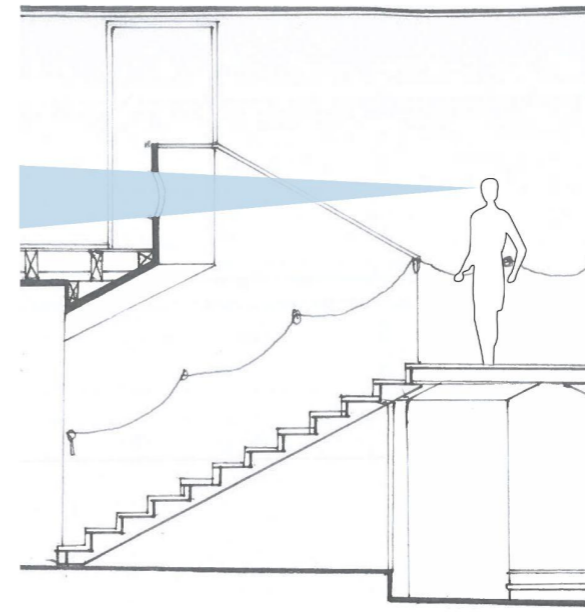


*Drawing by Lenore/ situation and floorplans*

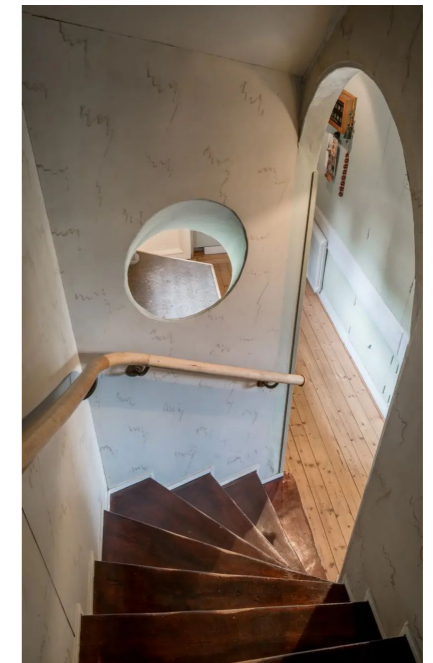
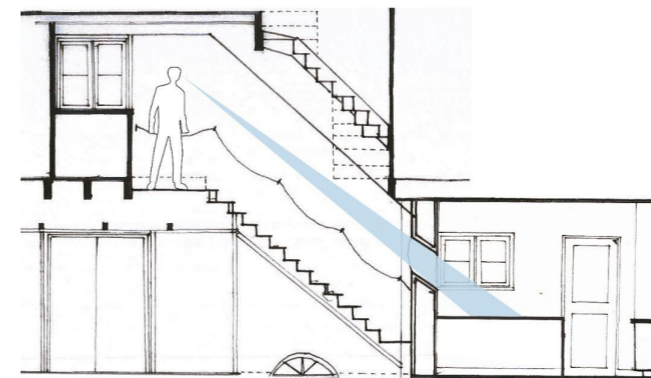


### Schematic drawings

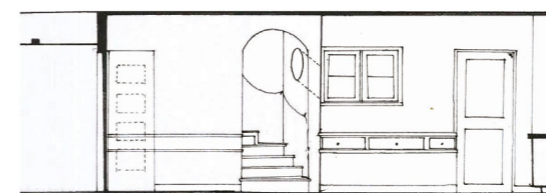
These drawings show the spatial layout of Villa Snellman and the configuration of the rooms. Asplund's attention to the sensory experience of spaces is evident in Villa Snellman. The use of skewed walls and carefully planned routes guides people through the building. These skewed walls not only create the illusion of perspective but also provide directions to various spaces. They lead to interesting areas like the round living room, the entrance hall, and the enfilade.



05



06



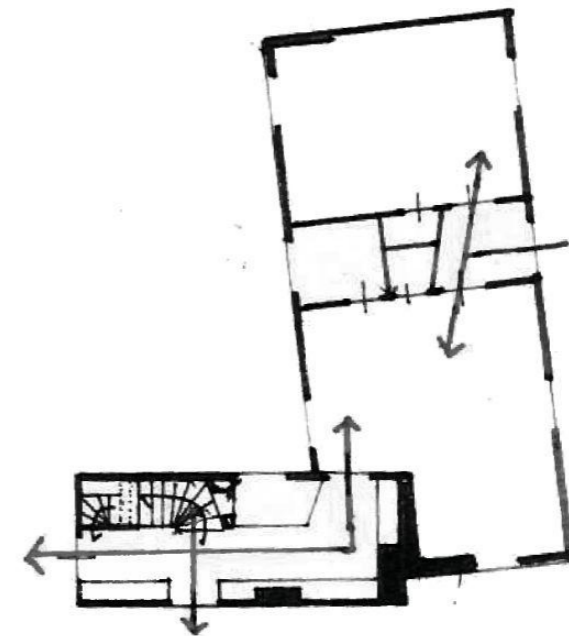
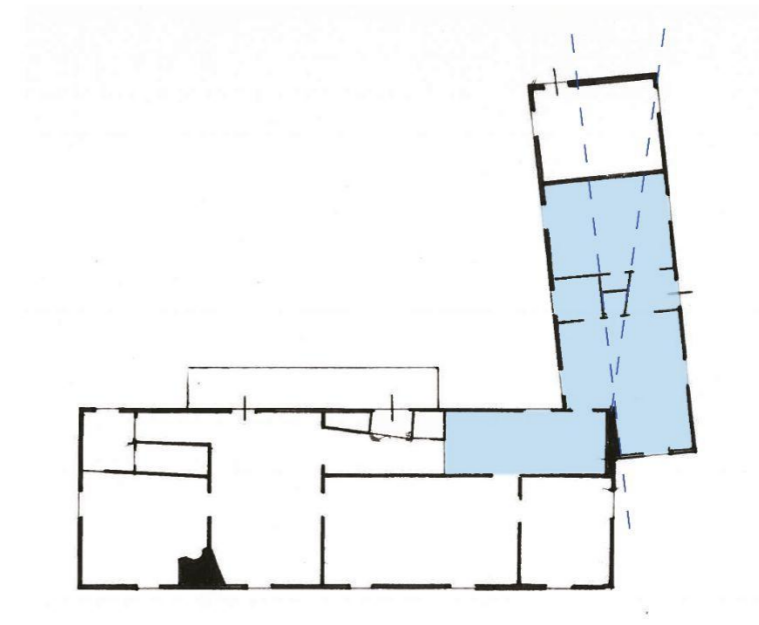
### Section 2 & 3

Villa Snellman was designed to accommodate the Snellman family, visitors, and domestic workers. It features special routing and spaces designed to the needs of each user group. The building includes vertically look-through spaces, a separate staircase for domestic workers, a room dedicated to serving guests, and a big amount of storage space. (Wrede, 1983, p.43-53)

07



Photo  
*Servingspace of the  
Domestic Workers*

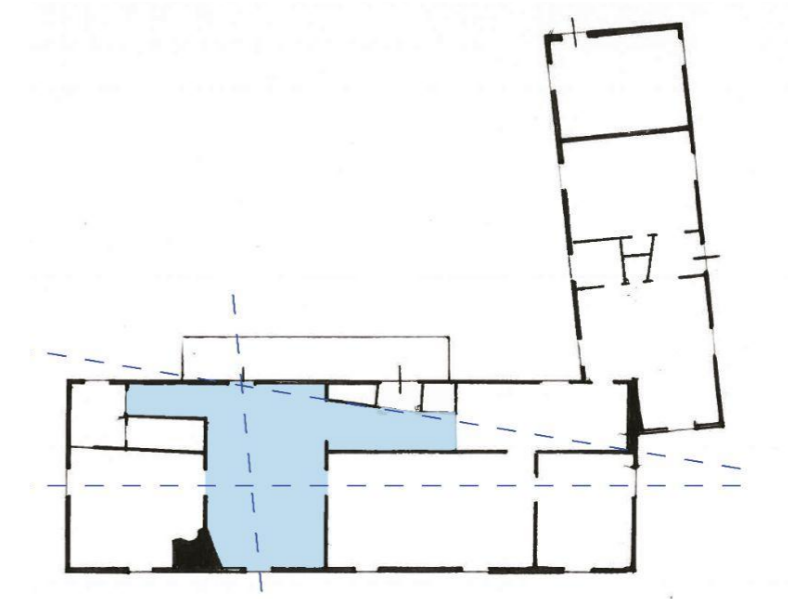


*Spatial organization of  
the domestic workers hall and configuration  
of rooms on ground floor*



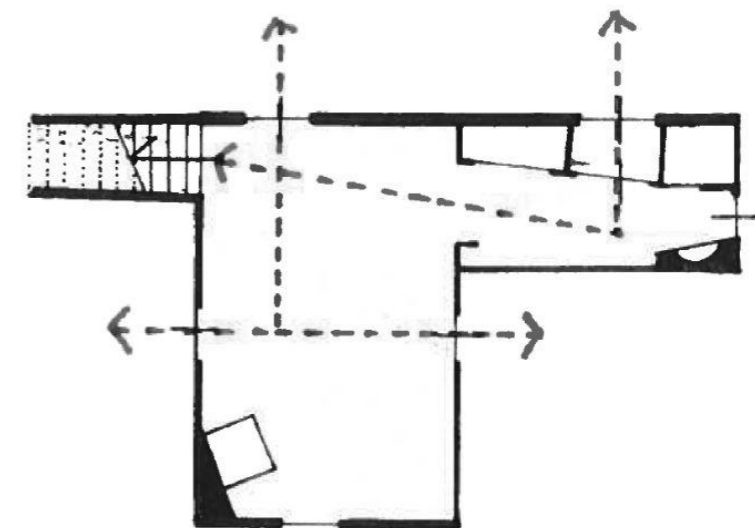
08

*Villa Snellman,  
entry facade,  
detail*



09

*Ground floor hall with  
summer terrace door*



### Two doors

Villa Snellman features a distinctive entrance facade with two doors, raising the question: what is the main entrance? The left door, ornately decorated, serves as the formal entryway. Examining the floorplan reveals its function as the traditional entrance, complete with a wind/ climate break and hall. The second door provides a

more casual connection to the outdoors and can open directly to the courtyard in summer, showcasing Asplund's design to blend indoor and outdoor spaces seamlessly. His approach highlights a deep understanding of practical building use, employing clever strategies to enhance connections with the surrounding environment.

*Spatial organization of  
the entrance hall and configuration  
of rooms on ground floor*



10

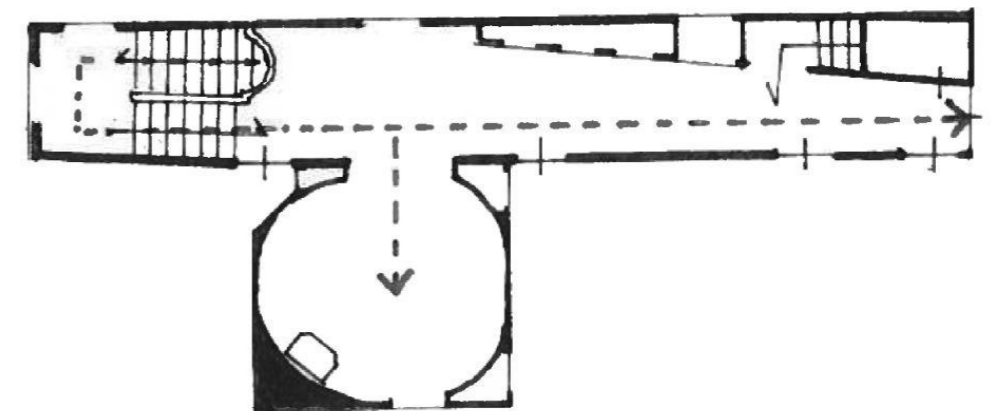
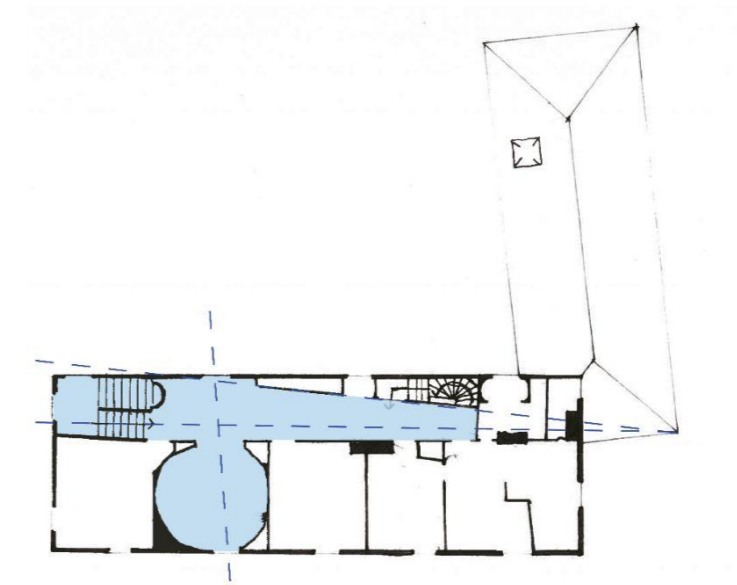
*Round room interior*

11

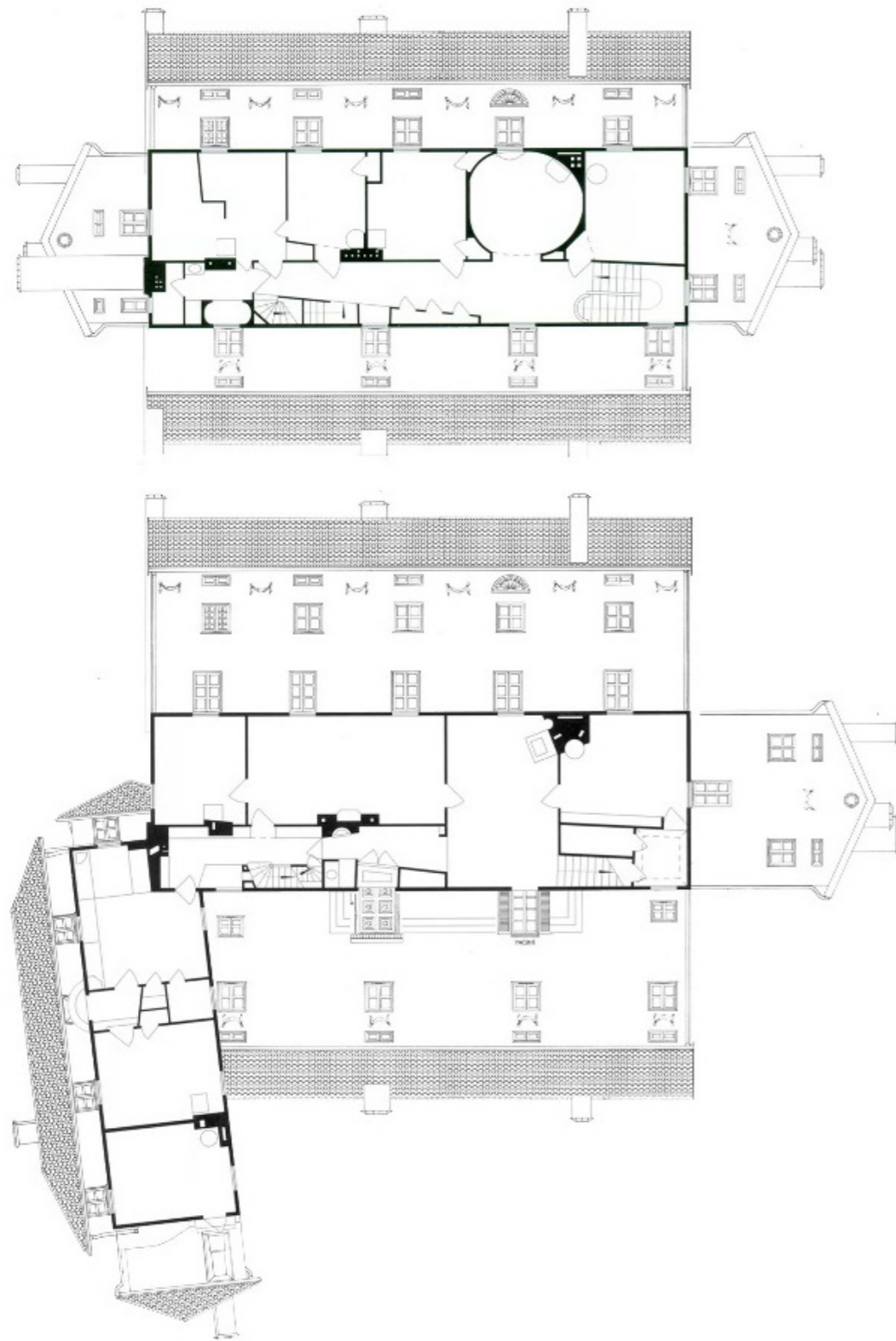
*garden facade.***Round Room**

One of the remarkable features is how Asplund experimented with the arrangement of openings, windows, and ornamentation on the facade. Notably, he added a small, half-circle window in the facade, which cleverly refers to the living room inside. This room has a different specialty and materialization than the other rooms. It has a round floorplan, a higher ceiling and uses wooden claddings

for its surfaces. The round window highlights the different status of the room and makes the building readable from the outside. (Asplund, 1950, p.126) To avoid a monotonous facade, he intentionally placed the first-floor windows off-center from the taut second-floor windows. These playful facade compositions and the use of off-center windows is typical in Asplund's designs, and evident in his other buildings. (Asplund, 1950, p.114)



*Spatial organization of  
the entrance hall and configuration  
of rooms on first floor*



Analysis  
 floorplan ground floor  
 combined with facade elevations

## Villa Snellman

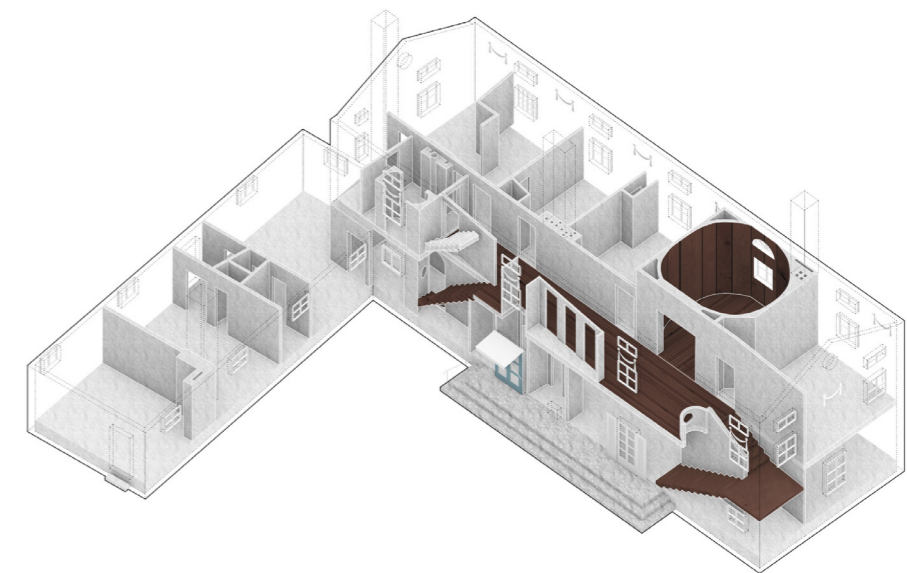
### Conclusion & Reflection

One of the remarkable features of Asplund's work is his experimentation with the arrangement of openings, windows, decorations, and skewed walls. Initially, we sought explanations for all these displacements and slightly off-centered elements in his designs. However, at some point, we realized that understanding every design decision might not be crucial. Instead, it is the overall playfulness of his designs that creates a spatial and sensory experience.

For example, we could speculate about various reasons behind the specific angle of the skewed wall on the first floor of Villa Snellman. But what's more intriguing is the result of this design choice. This skewed wall creates space for storage between the wall and the façade. Furthermore, as it narrows the hallway towards the end, it creates

a perspective illusion that makes the hallway appear longer. Many similar design features can be found in Asplund's work. It's likely that he was experimenting with these sometimes random displacements to create an engaging experience for users. In all of Asplund's buildings, he places a special focus on how people enter a building and experience its spaces. The routing, combined with the configuration of spaces and the use of materials, is always a crucial aspect of his designs.

In conclusion, Villa Snellman shows aspects of traditional Swedish architecture but also showcases Asplund's experimentation with the use of ornamentation and the sensory experienced of spaces. Its playful facade and innovative interior, along with its carefully planned layout, exemplify Asplund's commitment to both form and function.



Analysis  
 summary drawing  
 Villa Snellman

# Stockholm City Library

*model making & archive research*

The primary objective was to draw the building and create a three-dimensional digital model. Additionally, extensive research, study, and modeling of key spatial moments within the library were undertaken collaboratively in groups. These efforts were focused on four essential spatial themes:

The rotunda,  
The poche, encompassing stairs and the entrance,  
The children's library,  
The perimeter halls

The models are consistently constructed on a large scale of 1:25, depicting the rooms in their original design and opening state. They encompass the original furnishings, color schemes, and representations of any decorative artworks. Consequently, they serve as a record of both the library as initially conceived and, speculatively, how it might feel once restored.

For my research I focused on the Poche rooms, as those are the models I worked on. Also they are a good example of the architectural style of the Stockholm City Library. I will navigate through these spaces via a collection of photographs that vividly capture the library's environments and atmospheres. The images for each space, captured during the visit, seamlessly correspond with archival images and photographs of the model. In a culminating moment, the models found its place in an exhibition hosted at the Faculty of Architecture in December 2023 and are documented in the research book: '03 Scenes from a Public Library'.



Photo  
*Exterior of the  
final Model*

## The poche

### Entrance hall & Reading room

We started on the 1 to 25 models of the Reading Room and the Entrance hall. Which can be seen on this archival photographs. We were remaking the rooms in the original state. In the first week we mainly did some research to the rooms, looking for drawings and photographs. Moreover we created an schedule and a structure to organise the model making exercise with all the other groups.

contributors:

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*James Flaus*  
*Jan Yke van den Bogert*  
*Joanna Pilecka*  
*Leonore Liu*  
*Natalia Simonarson*  
*Ries Schouten*  
*Tijana Culum*



Archival photo  
*Staircase in the entrance  
 hall*



Archival photo  
*Reading Room in  
 Stockholm City Library*



Photo  
While assembling the model, we carefully examined how all the elements come together.

## Entrance Hall

### *Making process*

The structure of the Entrance Hall relied heavily on the structure of the Rotonda, with particular emphasis on aligning the staircases to the angle of the Rotonda. To achieve this precision, collaboration with the Rotonda group was essential, involving the use of a shared 3D model. The staircases required a precise rotation angle and good stability to serve as the structural foundation for the model. Due to the unique shape of the room, we couldn't initially create the spaces and then apply the cladding afterward. Each element, including door frames, staircases, windows, lamps, and cladding, had to be crafted separately. Given the narrow and angular nature of the rooms, the assembly of all these components was done at the end to avoid difficulties in changing them afterward. We put a lot of attention into the making of the lamps, door frames, the reliefs on the walls, and door portals. For the lamps we used foam and for all other cladding, we used paper. In order to capture high-quality photographs of the model, we designed it in a way that certain elements could be detached.

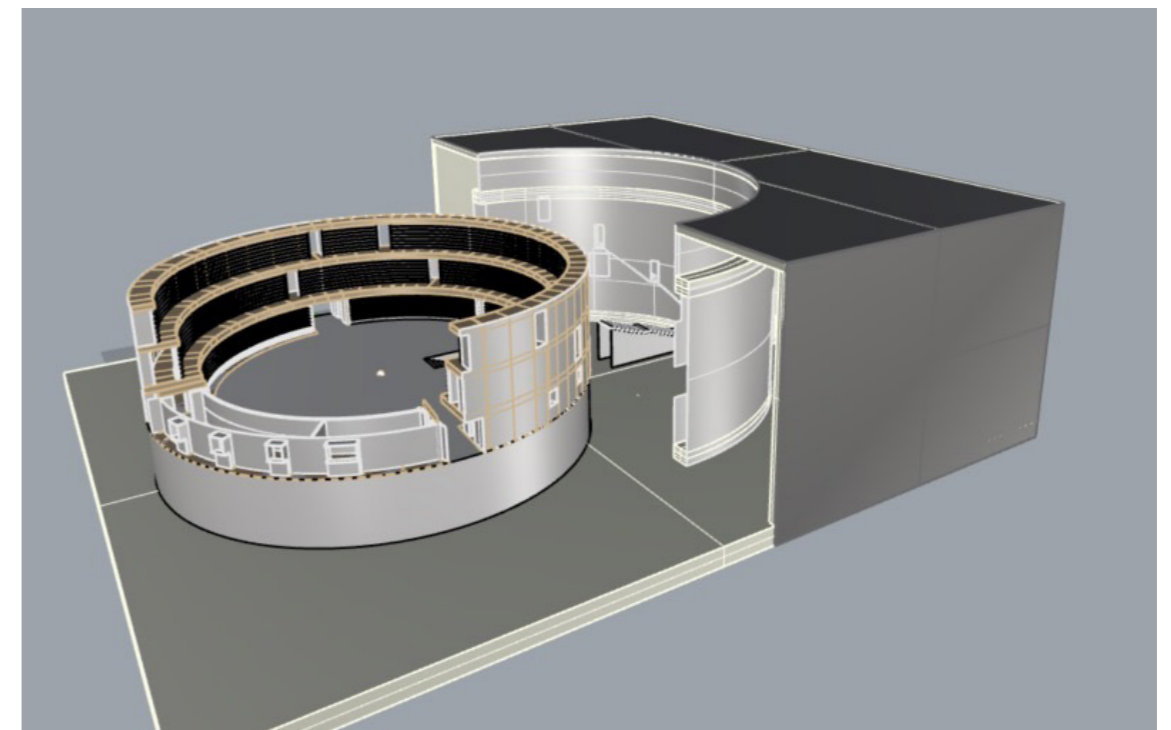


Photo  
The 3D-model we used while working on the physical model. Making sure our model fits around the Rotonda.

## Entrance Hall

### *description of the space*

Asplund's carefully designed entrance hall is a captivating space meant to guide visitors through a curated set of experiences. Upon entering through a large doorway adorned with ancient Greek engravings, a slim glass front, complemented by beautifully detailed door handles, invites visitors further into the building. This glass front fills the spacious entrance hall with plenty of natural light, creating a bright atmosphere. The hall's surfaces, featuring a reflective black finish, not only enhance the penetration of light but also create a visual connection between the inside and outside. As daylight streams in, the sunny sky reflects onto the walls, forming a horizontal link.

Archival photo  
*entrance hall view towards  
the main entrance.*



Model 1:25  
*entrance hall view towards  
the main entrance.*





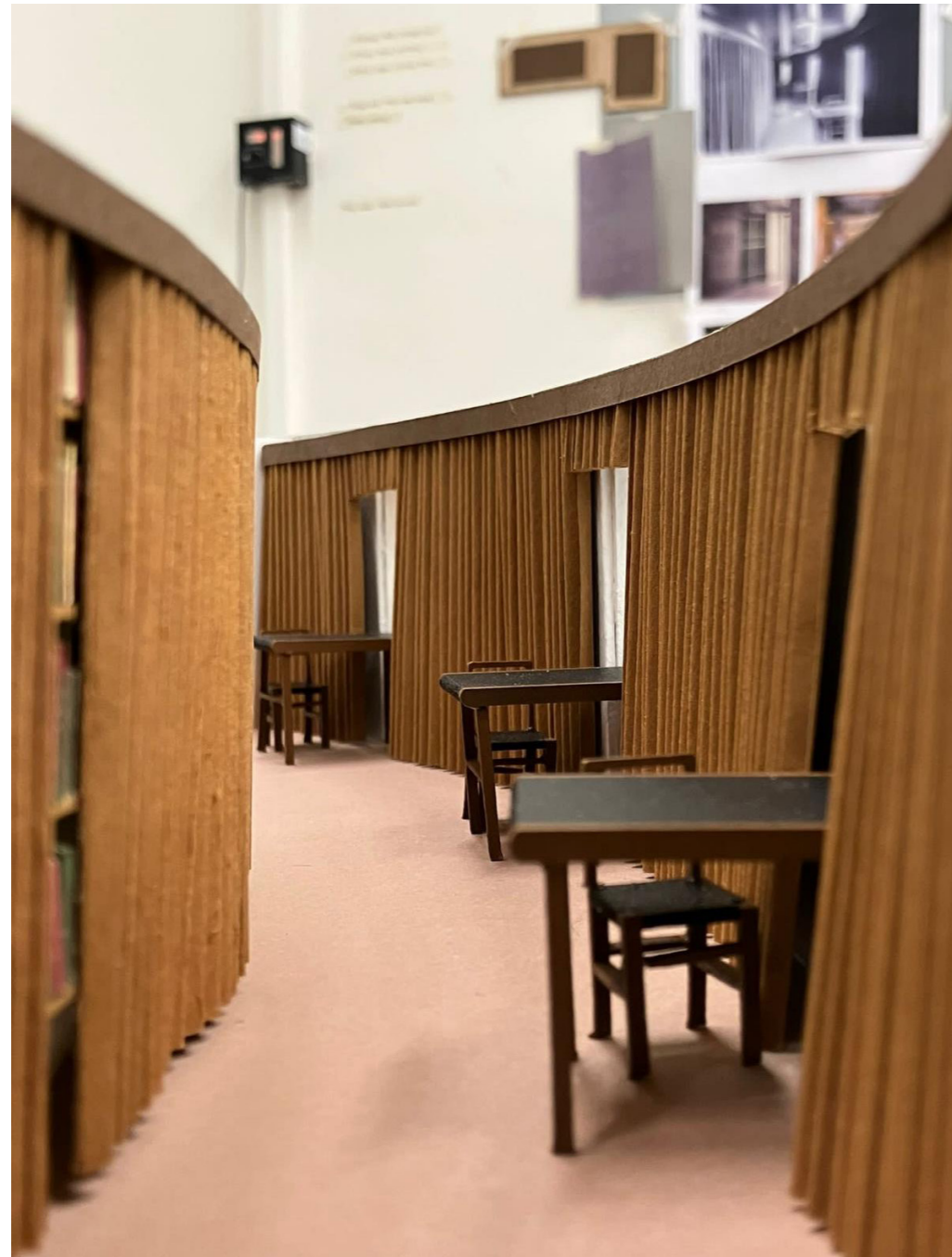
Archival photo  
*staircase*

## Entrance Hall *staircase*



1:25 model  
*staircase*

One identical staircase spirals in the opposite direction to this narrow one, which follows the Rotonda's curve. The dim, tight area is made brighter by beautiful detailed lamps. In this space, squeezed between two curved walls, it gives the sensation of being within the framework of the Rotonda, almost like being inside the poche.



Model 1:25  
*The beautiful crafted curtains,  
 The relective ceiling is not yet added.*

## Reading Room

### *Making process*

The Reading room's design heavily leaned on the Rotonda's structure, specifically focusing on aligning the room's angle with that of the Rotonda. Achieving this precision required close collaboration with the Rotonda group, utilizing a shared 3D model. The room is intricately constructed to fit inside the rotonda's structure, and it can be removed if needed. Special attention was given to crafting the curtains, considering their significance in the room's spatial dynamics. Introducing a reflective ceiling went against the no-texture rule for

our models. However, since the quality of the Poche relied heavily on daylight reflecting off the ceiling, an exception was made. The making of the model, made us realise the attention of detail Asplund put in this room and showed us how materialisation can have an huge impact on the spatial experience of a space. Crafting the model helped us understand Asplund's dedication to detail in this room, revealing how the choice of materials can profoundly affect the spatial experience of a space.



Photo  
*Constructing the Poche reading room*

Archival photo  
*Poche reading room*



## Reading Room

### *description of the space*

The Poche Reading Room can only be understood in relation to the whole building, as it follows the form of the rotunda. The room feels like you are inside the rotunda's wall, as you are cramped in between two angled walls. Even Though the room is actually quite low, the reflection of daylight in the wooden ceiling creates this illusion of height. Also the verticality of the curtain curves highlight the verticality in this room. Moreover the curtains give the space a warm and intimate feeling, one could quietly read a book there. The room housed sensitive literature and this is translated in the arrangement of chair and table.

1:25 model  
*Poche reading room*





Image / by Ries Schouten / View along the Drottninggatan street in the City Centre of Stockholm

# VISITING STOCKHOLM

**24/ 09/2023 15.48 - first impression**  
Arriving in Stockholm was truly delightful. The atmosphere is serene, the surroundings are tidy and efficiently arranged. It's not just the cleanliness; there's an evident touch of design in everything. Whether it's furniture, lamps, streets, floors, or windows, it all appears as though someone paid careful attention. Materials like wood, natural stones, and plasters are frequently employed in a beautiful manner. The city exudes the same tranquility in terms of the number of people and the overall atmosphere. A positive first impression!



drawing / by Ries Schouten / Building in Gamla Stan (Stockholm Old City Centre)

03



Image / by Ries Schouten / View from the park towards the south facade of The Stockholm City library.

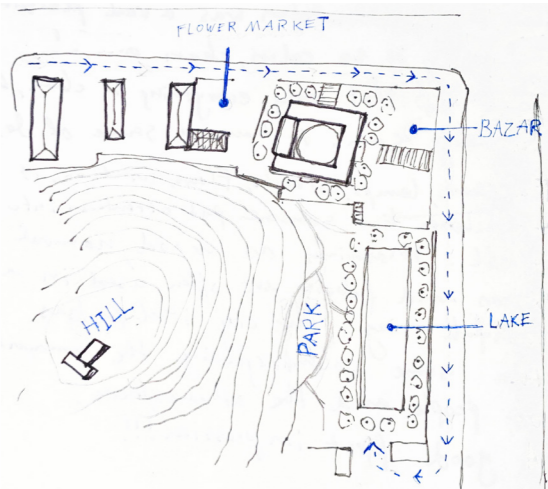
04



Image / by Ries Schouten / View towards the west facade of the Stockholm City Library

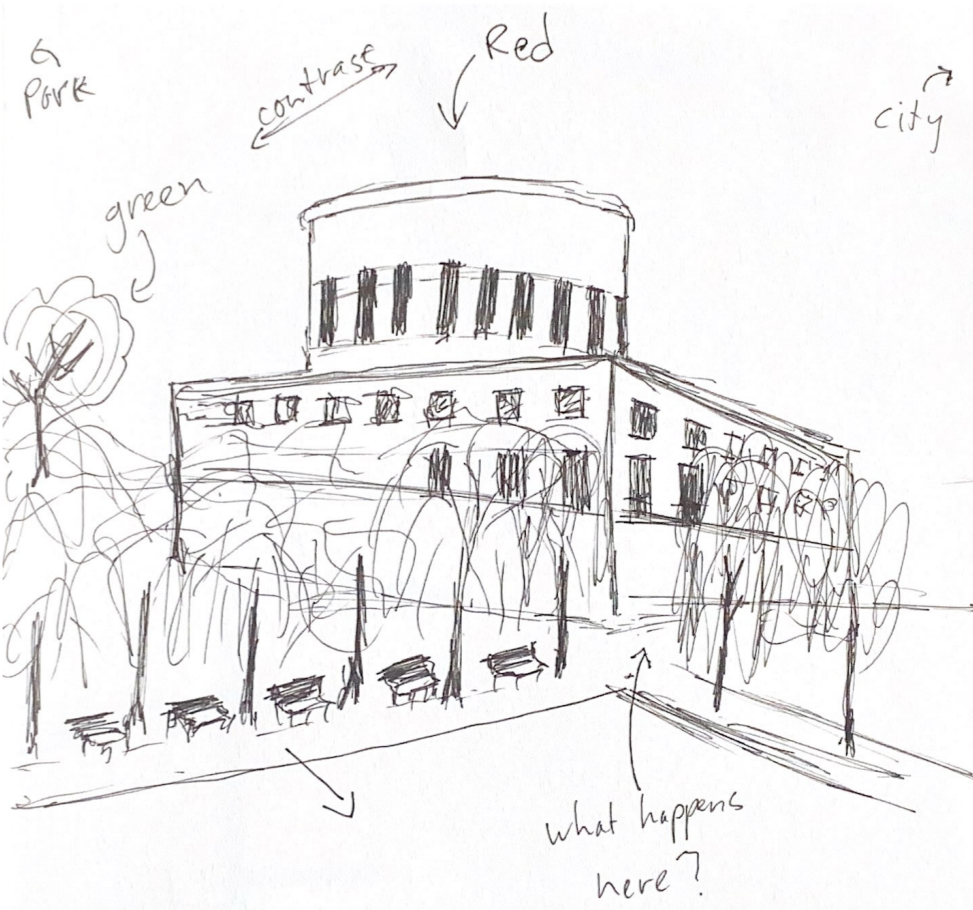
03

**25/ 09/2023 morning**  
**Situating Stockholm City library**  
The red color of the library sets of with his green surrounding. The contrast is highlighting the buildings monumentality. The view towards the west facade (04) of the Stockholm City library was the first view we saw when arriving at the site. A beautiful flower marked was placed in a small square in fornt of the building.



drawing / by Ries Schouten / This map shows the way I arrived at the Library and the things I first noticed.

03



drawing / by Ries Schouten / This map shows the way I arrived at the Library and the things I first noticed.

04



**25/ 09/2023 morning - looking close**  
High, tapering portals inspired by Ancient Egyptian architecture decorate the entrance. Their upward tapering shape and the use of light marble from Gropptorp in Katrineholm make them appear significantly taller. Externally, all three portals—facing Sveavägen, Odengatan, and the park—are the same size. The inner walls of the gateways are embellished with a stone pattern. The original entrance, consisting of side-hung doors and thin glass partitions, has been replaced by a contemporary revolving door at the main entrance.

*Image / by Ries Schouten / View towards the west facade of the Stockholm City Library*

04



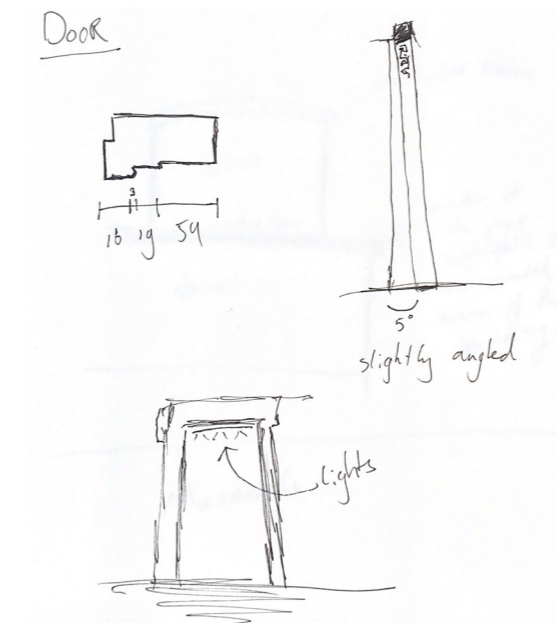
*Image / by Ries Schouten / View towards the west facade of the Stockholm City Library*

04



*Image / by Ries Schouten / View towards the west facade of the*

04



*Image / by Ries Schouten / View towards the west facade of the*

Gunnar Asplund designed the Stockholm Public Library, which opened in the spring of 1928. It represents the peak of the neoclassical architectural era, based on the geometric combination of a cube enclosing a cylinder. The central rotunda, which is around 24 meters tall, is encircled by four smaller, interconnected rectangular buildings known as “rows”, “perimeter halls” or “wings.”

The library’s imposing, plain facade exemplifies Nordic architecture of the 1920s, drawing inspiration from both neoclassical and classical forms. The external walls are lime-plastered brick, topped by a figurative stucco border with 294 hieroglyphic-like figures reflecting various things found within. The main entrance portal, above the steps leading up from Sveavägen, is tall and slightly angled (04), with proportions similar to the entrances from the park and Odengatan.

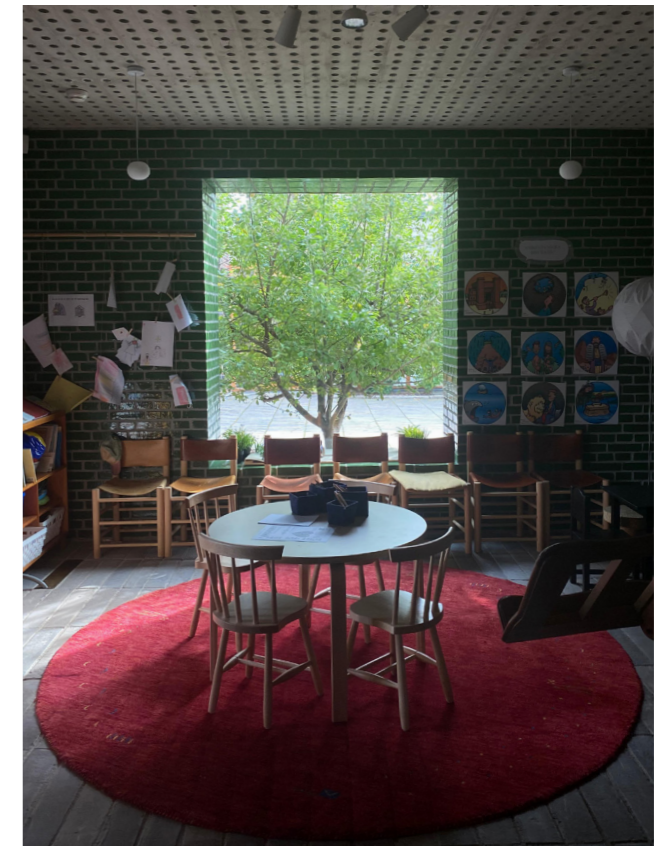
**25/ 09/2023 10.29 h - scenery**

In front of the library, along Sveavägen, there is a base (bazaar) housing restaurants and shops. To the south lies a park, also designed by Gunnar Asplund. His landscaping, which includes ponds, streams, waterfalls, and walkways, was the winning entry in an architectural competition in the mid-1920s. The placement of trees is an integral part of the park and the library's design. The place of the trees and the type of the trees is a well thought- design decision by Asplund.

Steps cutting through the arcade lead up to the Public Library from Sveavägen. This "equestrian staircase" has long and deep treads, creating the impression of a wide ramp rather than a traditional flight of steps. Climbing these steps is meant to evoke a sense of ascending to 'heaven' or approaching a temple—specifically, a temple of knowledge.

**25/ 09/2023 13.45 h****Arsta Kyrka**

On the same day, we visited the Årsta Kyrka, a stunning example of contemporary Swedish architecture. The importance of light is evident in this building, as it provides a perception of time within the church. Unique to this church are the low windows at ground level, which also create a perception of space.



25/ 09/2023 16.00 h

**Woodland Cemetry**

The woodland crematorium and the cemetery were designed and built during a period of transformation in Sweden. It had recently undergone the end of the union between Norway and Sweden, so their national goals started changing. They wanted to embrace the Swedish heritage in the form of National Romanticism and modernity following the Democratic Party. In the cemetery, the main aspect of Swedish heritage, which Asplund and Lewerentz wanted to embrace is the local pine forest, which builds the context of the crematorium. At that time, in Sweden emerged an important political concept, called 'Folkhemmet', which is about society helping one another and looking after each other. It indicates, that the

government wanted to be more inclusive. It is reflected in the Crematorium's multireligious and rather symbolic, not Christian expression.

The most important aspect of the building is its connection to the magnificent landscape. It opens up through courtyards to the pond and surrounding scenery. A stone path guides mourners past the cross and along the main chapel's façade. The design features an ordered and functional composition, harmonizing the building with the monumental landscape. This integration between the structure and its surroundings influenced my own design approach.



photo / Landscape of the woodland Cremetorium



*Note: The Woodland Cemetery and the Resurrection Chapel (Lewerentz, 1921-25) have profoundly influenced my design approach. The unique feature of the colonnades not touching the buildings inspired me to incorporate a similar element in my own work. I also adopted the use of colonnades to frame the landscape, drawing from the cemetery's design principles. The Woodland Cemetery has been a crucial inspiration, demonstrating how architecture and nature can seamlessly work together.*

Photo / Collonade of the Woodland crematorium, Asplund, 1940



Photo / Resurrection Chapel Lewerentz, 1921-25,

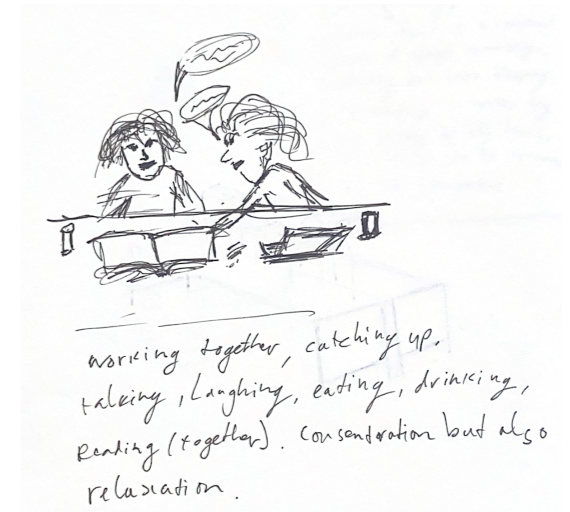
26/ 09/2023

**Stockholm City library, interior**

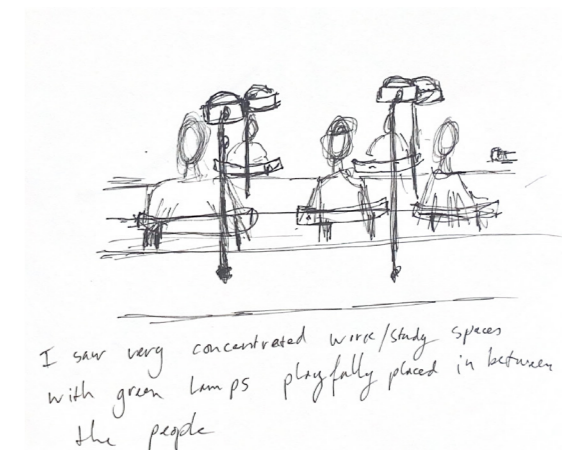
Finally, it was time to explore the library and its spatiality. We spent the entire day inside, immersing ourselves in its ambiance. Throughout the day, I made notes and drawings of the things I observed, paying close attention to the materialization and spatiality of the rooms. This thorough examination allowed me to fully experience and understand the unique atmosphere of the library. In the following pages, I will summarize my findings.



photo / Stockholm public library,  
people reading together

**Observations from the reading rooms**

Working together, catching up,  
talking, laughing, eating, drinking,  
reading (together). concentration but also  
relaxation. ►



I saw people very concentrated at work/ study  
spaces, with green lamps playfully placed  
within the people. ►



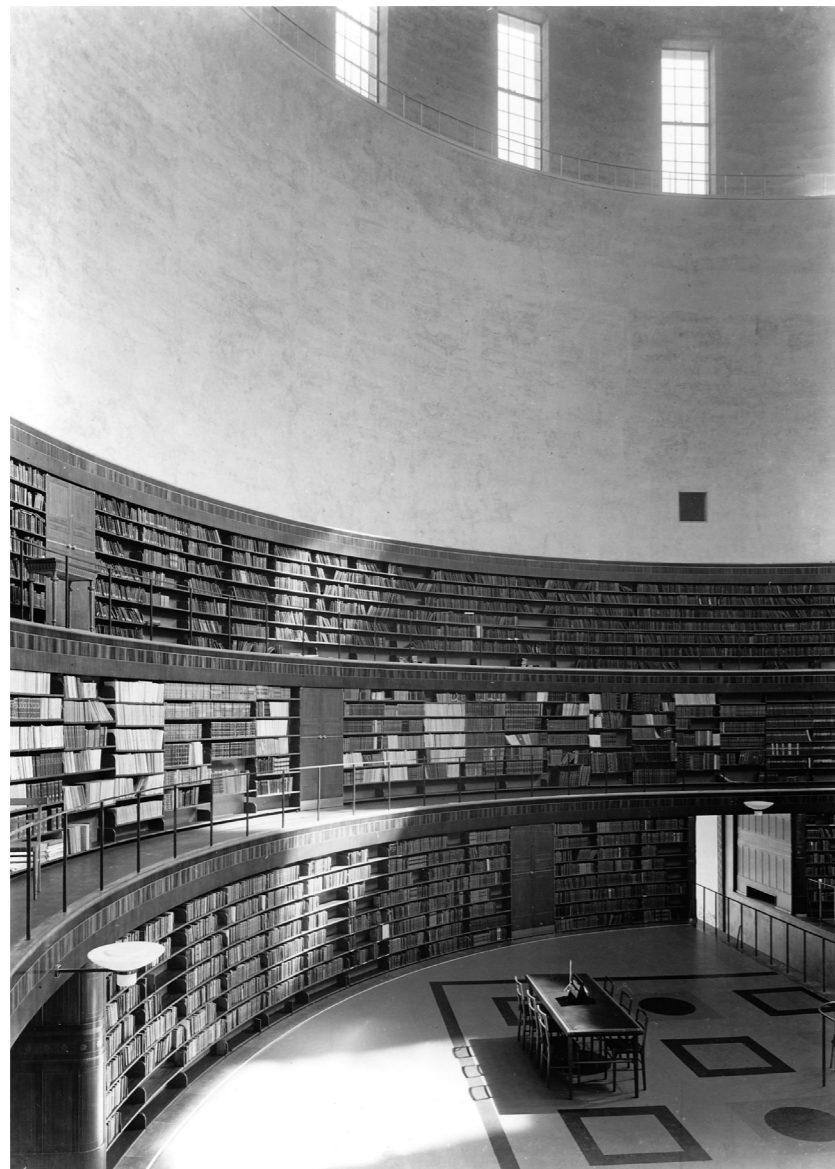
People reading, talking, studying, drawing,  
laughing, on their phone, computer and laptop. ►

## Preceived Space

### *The Rotonda*

The rotunda is the centerpiece in the organisation and routing of the Stockholm City Library. Here is where you can ask the librarian for any information and borrow books. The rotunda distributes the user to the various reading rooms. Book cases in the room are the lining along the wall and

invite the user to walk up along the drum. The natural light, changing throughout the day and giving a sense of time, emphasizes the textured white walls. These bumps on the wall could be interpreted as the clouds in the sky, making it harder to perceive the scale and height of the room.



Archival picture of the entrance

### NOTE

*In the rotunda, a symphony of murmurs and whispers fills the air, punctuated by the occasional bleeping of book rental machines scanning their treasures. This constant hum of activity creates a living, breathing atmosphere. I also noticed a difference from archival photos: a staircase now ascends to the rotunda's wall of books..*



Recreated picture

**Preceived Space**  
*The Rotonda*

The original design of the Stockholm city library by Gunnar Asplund focuses on the collecting and storing of Knowledge. The knowledge, in the form of books, is displayed by walls of books in the reading halls and the Rotunda. The bookshelves in the Rotunda were only accessible to the librarian. Later on, an additional staircase was added, to make the books accessible for every visitor of the library. The library was not only a place where knowledge was collected and stored, but became a place of sharing knowledge. People could take books themselves and use the knowledge for their own practice. My proposal for the Stockholm City Library elaborating even more on the aspect of sharing knowledge.

Spaces for discussion, lecturing, and informal reading places should be added to the library and enhance the sharing of knowledge between people.

The staircase exemplifies the tension between Asplund's monumental design, which reflects the library as an institution of knowledge, and the library's modern role in facilitating knowledge sharing and social interaction. The image below shows that the Rotunda, the largest room in the building, is now used for events. Despite this, it was not originally designed to accommodate such functions, both spatially and acoustically.



Photo  
*Performance in the  
Rotunda.*

*Collecting  
of  
knowlegde*



*Sharing  
of  
knowlegde*



Archival photo  
*Woman poses on newly added  
staircase in the rotunda  
1965*

## Preceived Space

### *The Perimeter Halls*

Moving on to the perimeter halls, which are directly connected to the Rotunda. The typology of a reading room is very clear in most cases. The tables to work on are in the middle and the book shelves at the sides, like a wall of books. The visitors are surrounded by books and could freely get a book to read from the shelves. However, people bring there own devices

nowadays . they have their laptop and their own books and the room is mainly used for working and studying. The books in the wall are mainly decoration.

Noticable are the high placed windows, which seperates the visitors from the outside world. This can be good when you are studying and you need the full focus, but the library is more than that.



Archival photo  
*Perimeter hall South wing.*

*The reading room in the South Perimeter Hall of the Stockholm City Library is mainly used for studying and reading. Most people bring their own books or laptop.*



Photo  
*Perimeter hall South wing.*

## Preceived Space

### *The Perimeter Halls*



Photo  
*Window in North Wing of  
Stockholm City Library, 2023*

The building minimally interacts with its surroundings. Only two sections have windows offering outside views, creating a valued connection with the environment. The rest of the building features high windows that disconnect it from the external world. These few connections to the outside world are highly valued by visitors.



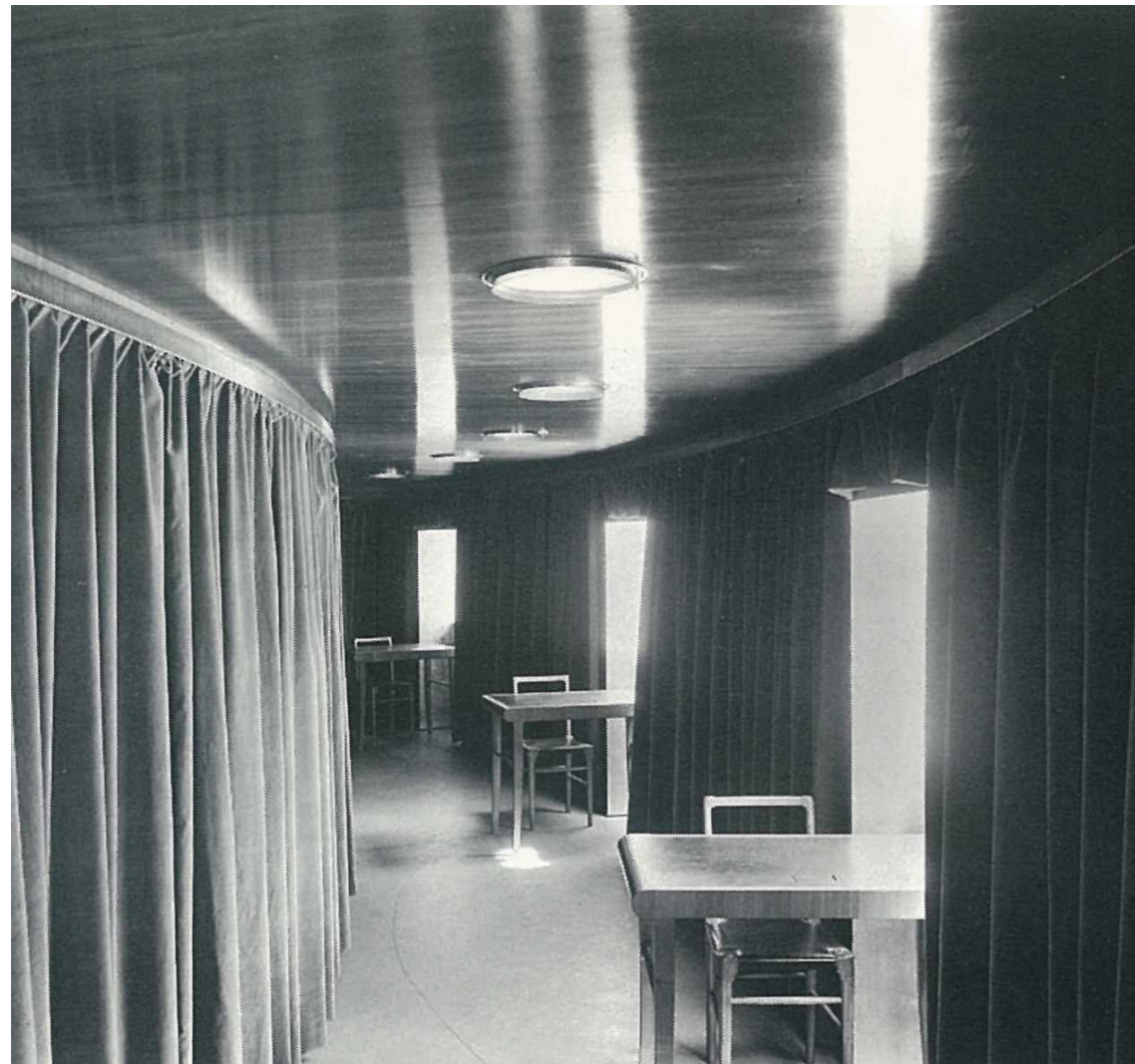
Photo  
*Window in South Wing of  
Stockholm City Library, 2023*

## Preceived Space

### *The Poche reading room*

Then there is the space between the rotunda and the perimeter halls. This room feels squeezed between the two, as if you are inside the rotunda's wall or nestled among the bookshelves. Recreating this room revealed the clever techniques Asplund used in the materialization of his spaces. The

reflective ceiling and curtains make the room appear taller than it actually is. However, the picture on page 55 shows how the room has lost much of its aesthetic quality over the years. The lack of light and curtains now makes it feel more horizontal and smaller.



Archival picture of the reading room

Note:

*Despite losing much of its aesthetic quality, the room still holds unique features uncommon in the Stockholm City Library. The library's monumental design poses challenges for individuals trying to personalize and appropriate the spaces. It falls short in providing intimate areas for reading, socializing, and relaxation. Such activities can comfortably occur only in poche spaces like this one, but these are limited in number.*



Recreated picture

# Situating Stockholm City Library

## *Historical & geographical Location*

Let's consider the Stockholm City Library's position within Stockholm's spatial and historical context, as this is a crucial aspect of my design proposal. In this picture, you can see how the monumental library is situated next to a park on a hill. This placement is an informed and significant part of the design.

A critical and extensive part of my design involved researching the historical background of the location and its buildings. Many discoveries from this research influenced my design. By conducting this research, I was able to address how to respond to the existing situation. In the following chapter, I will present the findings of my research that led to my design proposal.

The photograph on the left is a good starting point to explain my research. The building cannot be understood without considering its location. Asplund designed the building within its context. The pond, the park, and the bazaar are integral parts of his design. This drawing illustrates all these elements, with the red monumental library situated in a green environment. But this also raised questions such as: Why did he build the bazaar? Did he construct the hill, or was it already there? How does it fit into the historical background of the site?

Drawing  
Asplund, 1931,  
*Bird eye perspective of  
the library in its context*



Note:

*Gamla Stan, the old city center of Stockholm, is famous for its typical Swedish plaster buildings with vibrant colors. The city center is a mix of pastel shades, with reds, oranges, and yellows being the most common. These colors and materials are typical of the Nordic style, similar to the red color of the Stockholm City Library. The choice of these reddish colors is rooted in Nordic tradition. Historically, these colors came from natural pigments found in the region, like iron oxide, which is abundant in Sweden. Using red and its variations helped buildings stand out against the often gray and subdued landscape, providing a warm and inviting look even during the long, dark winters.*



04 IMAGE  
Gamla Stan, 2022

Historical location

Stockholm began in Gamla Stan, still its central area, and expanded north and south. Situated on the edge of a glacier, Stockholm features an esker that forms an axis through the city, named the Brunkenbergsasen. Gamla stan is the old city center, recognizebla by these colorfull houses in this very dense part of the city. The new city centre developed mainly on the north part of Gamla Stan, Following the direction of the Brunkenbergsasen, as visible in this archival plan.



ARCHIVAL PLAN  
Stockholm, 1637.



IMAGE  
Observatorielunden

### 1. Observatorielunden

*Observatorielunden is a park in Stockholm, Sweden, located in the Vasastan district. It surrounds the Stockholm Observatory, a historical astronomical observatory built in the 18th century. The park is elevated, offering scenic views of the city and is bordered by the Sveavägen and Odengatan streets. It's a popular spot for relaxation and picnics, featuring winding paths, lush greenery, and several statues. Nearby, you'll find the Stockholm Public Library and a range of cafes and shops. The park's combination of natural beauty and historical significance makes it a cherished urban location.*



IMAGE  
Drottninggatan, 2015

### 2. Drottninggatan

*Drottninggatan is one of Stockholm's main pedestrian streets, stretching from the Observatorielunden to Gamla Stan, the old town. It's a bustling shopping street lined with a mix of stores, boutiques, cafes, and restaurants. The northern end is quieter, while the southern part, especially near Sergels Torg, is vibrant and crowded. Drottninggatan is also known for its cultural landmarks, including the Stockholm Concert Hall. The street offers a lively atmosphere and is a central artery of commercial activity in Stockholm, attracting both locals and tourists for shopping, dining, and entertainment.*



IMAGE  
Gamla Stan, 2022

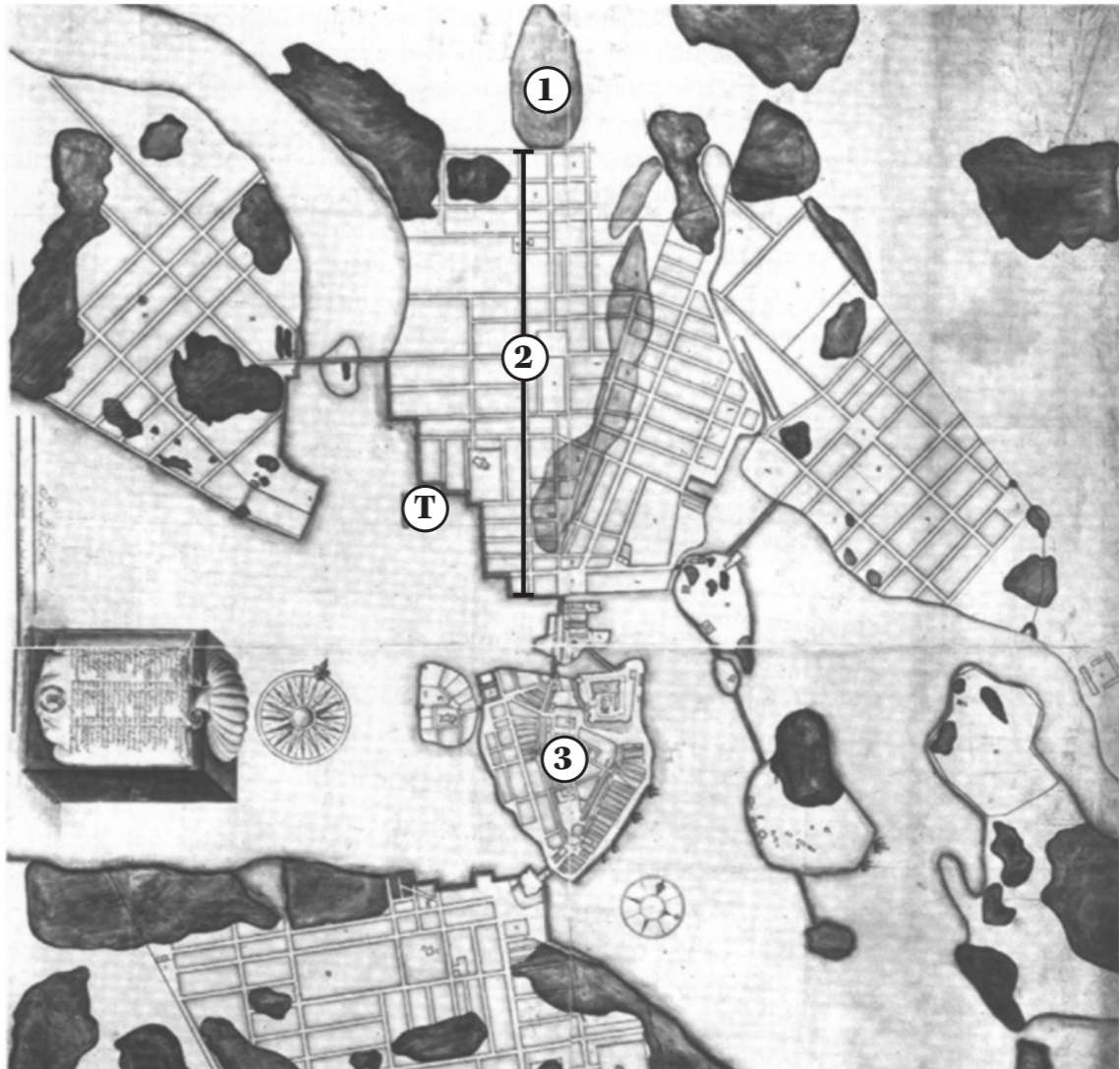
### 3. Gamla Stan

*Gamla Stan is Stockholm's old town, located on Stadsholmen island in Lake Mälaren. It was founded in the 13th century and has narrow, cobblestone streets and colorful old buildings. Important places here include the Royal Palace, Stockholm Cathedral, and Stortorget, the main square with pretty buildings and a Christmas market. Gamla Stan is popular with tourists for its shops, restaurants, museums, and historic sites. Its well-preserved buildings and charming streets show off Stockholm's rich history and culture.*

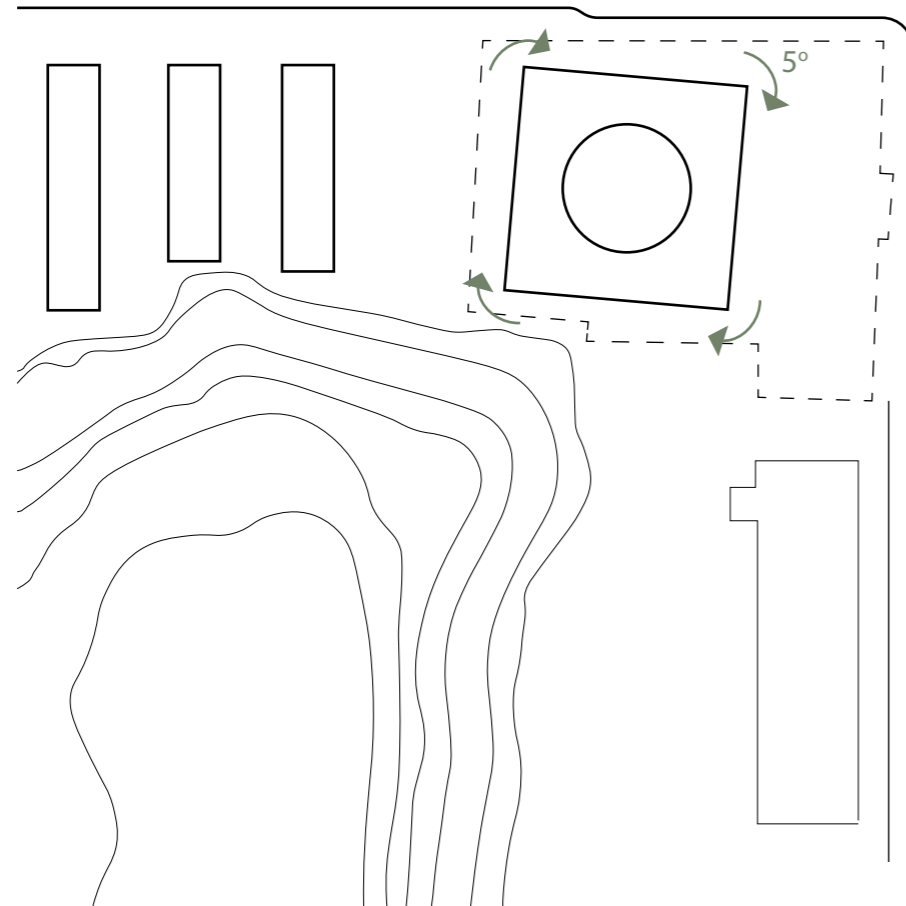
## Stockholmsasen

Although much of Stockholmsåsen has been removed or developed, traces of it still remain. The ridge exists as the Observatorielunden. The well-drained sandy soil has proven suitable for burial grounds, including the Woodland Cemetery. The location of our library on this well-drained sandy soil will be a significant aspect of my design.

Drottninggatan, stretching from Gamla Stan to Observatorielunden, is Stockholm's main fully pedestrian street, serving as the backbone of the new city center. Numerous significant buildings line its path. For instance, the iconic Stockholm Concert Hall is situated along Drottninggatan.



ARCHIVAL PLAN  
Stockholm, 1640.



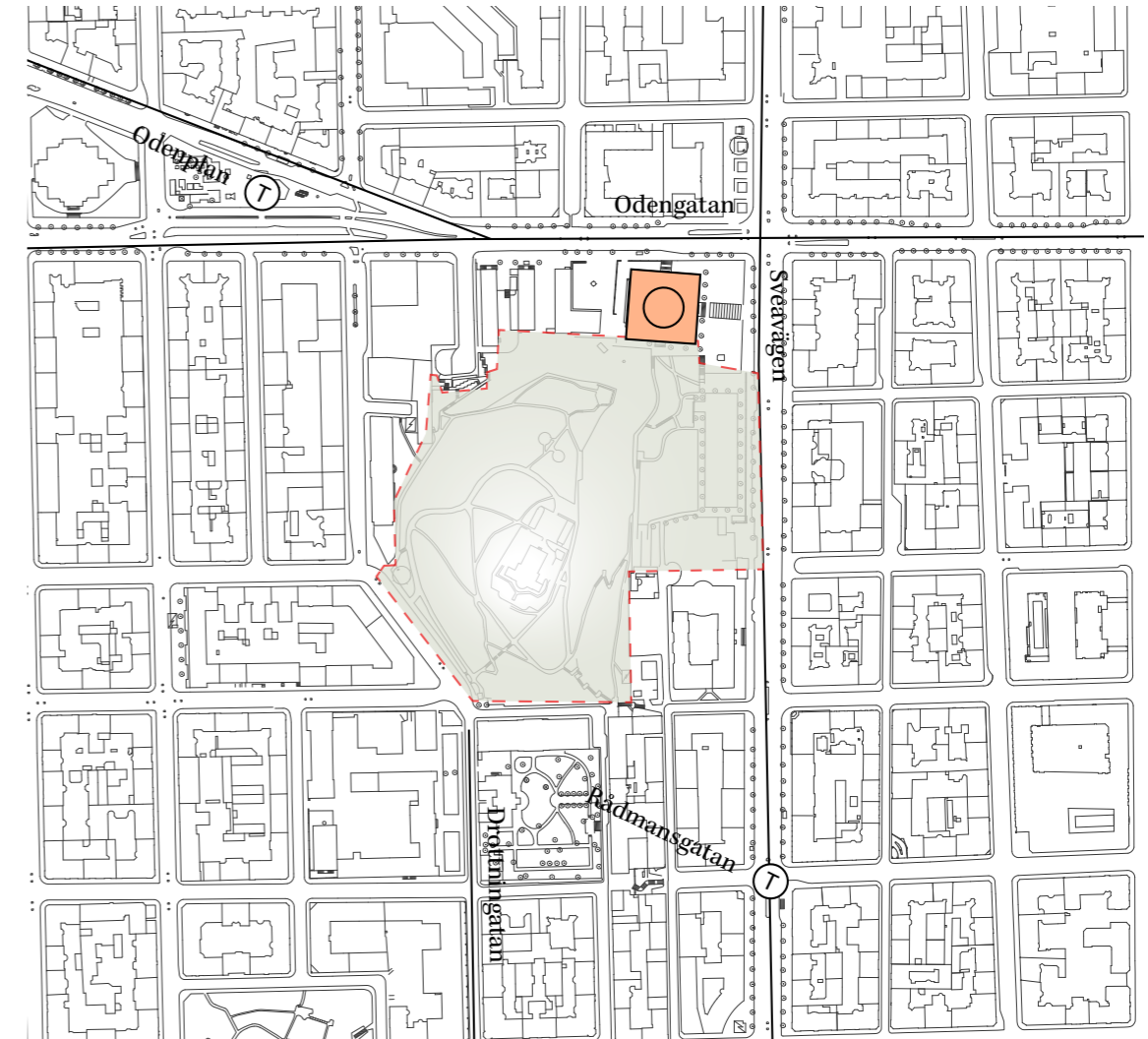
## Drawing

*Stockholm City library is slightly rotated from the street, while the other buildings and the pond follow the direction of the street.*



## Situating the library

*position in the urban context*



## LOCATION

*Stockholm City library situated*

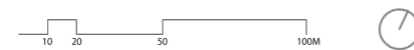
The Stockholm City Library, designed by Erik Gunnar Asplund and completed around 1928, sits just outside the bustling center of Stockholm. The building is nestled between a park and the city in a slight angle from the street. During our visit we explored the area and already made some important notions on the site. Such as its location next to the park, the hill, its monumental character and the flowermarked next to the building. The following pages will zoom in into the park, the bazaar, the west wing and the annex buildings and explain their historical background.

# Situating the library

## The Park



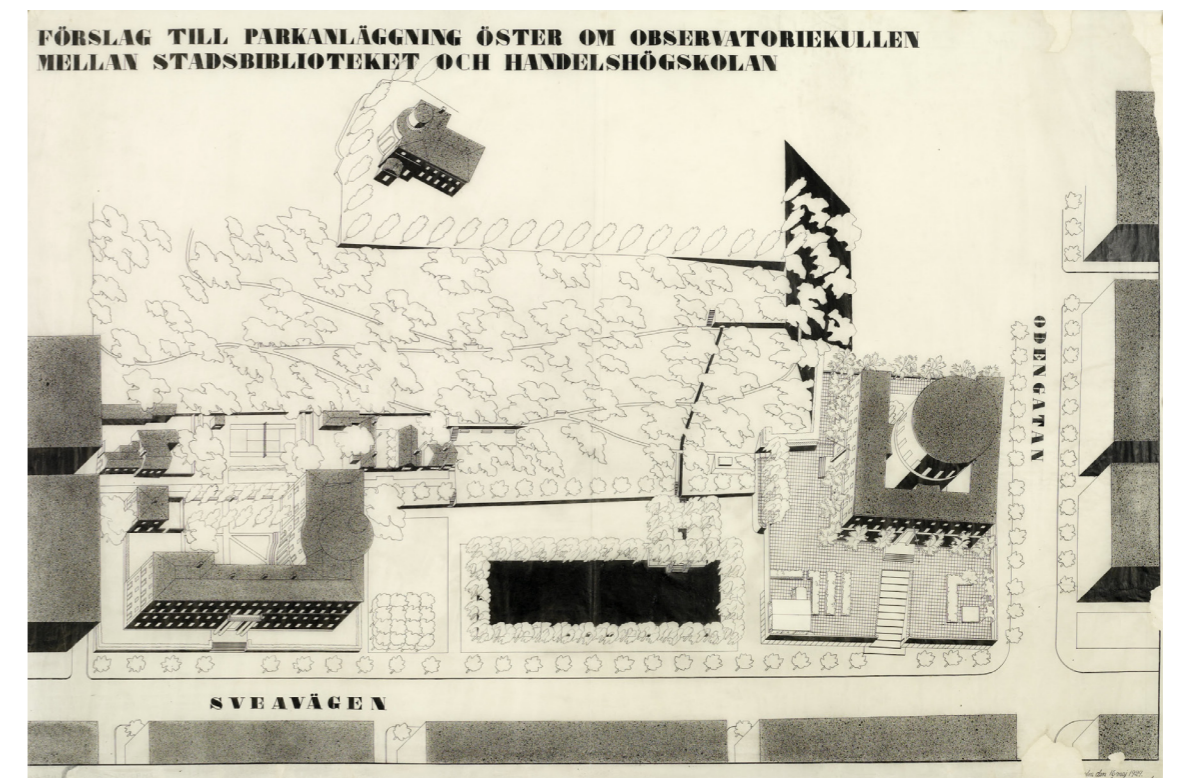
LOCATION  
*Stockholm City library situated*



Asplund utilized the large L-shaped plot by positioning the building on the corner, creating a natural area around the library on three sides. This strategic placement enhanced the library's visibility from central Stockholm, making a connection with the environment. Erik Gunnar Asplund, known for his attention to scenery and approach, also designed the pond and park to the south of the library. In many of his projects, he considered the routing and configuration of spaces. The library, with its rectangular pond, exemplifies Asplund's thoughtful design, creating the specific first impression for those approaching from the city center.



Archival Photograph  
*The pond next to Stockholm City Library*

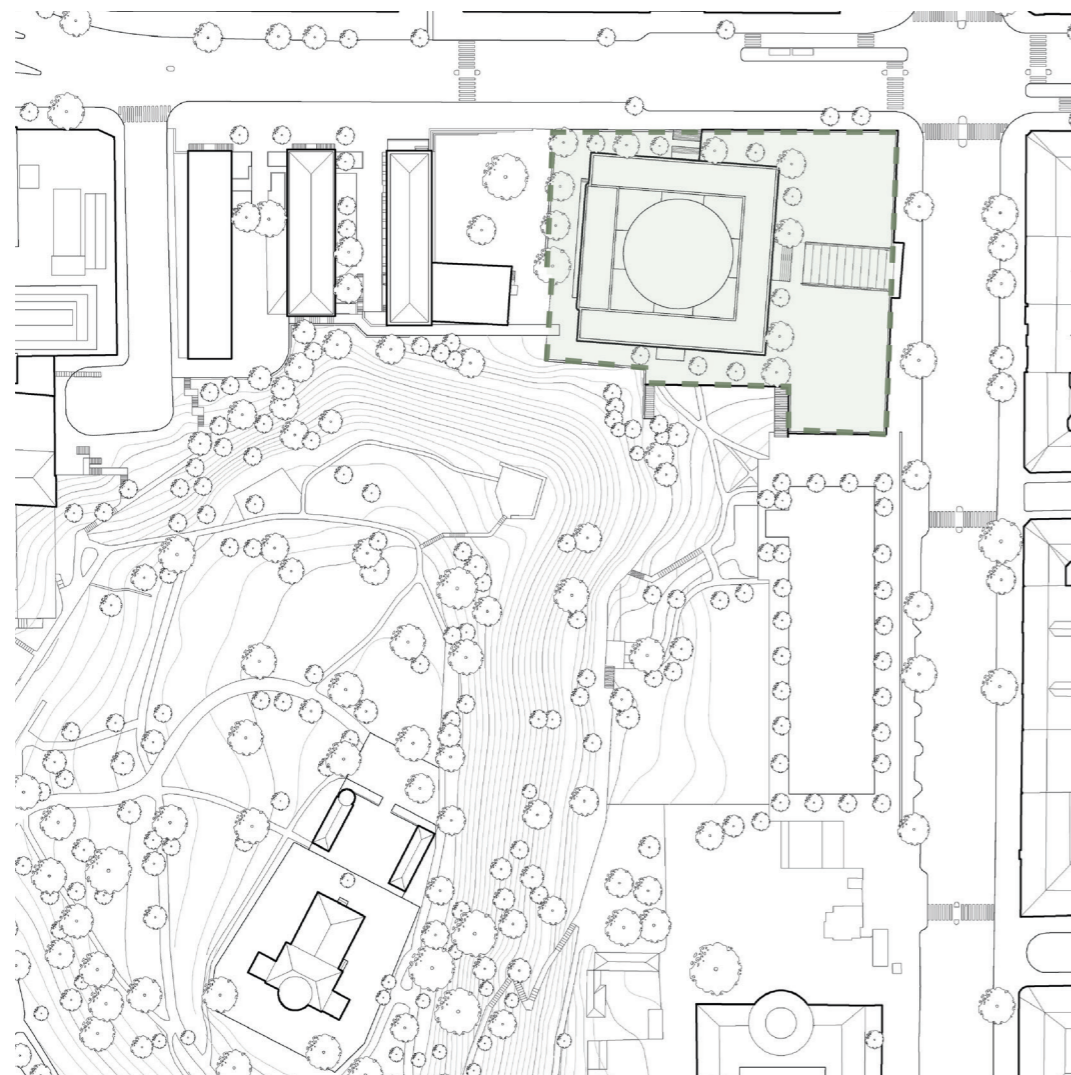


Archival plan  
*Asplund, 1929, Observatorielunden*

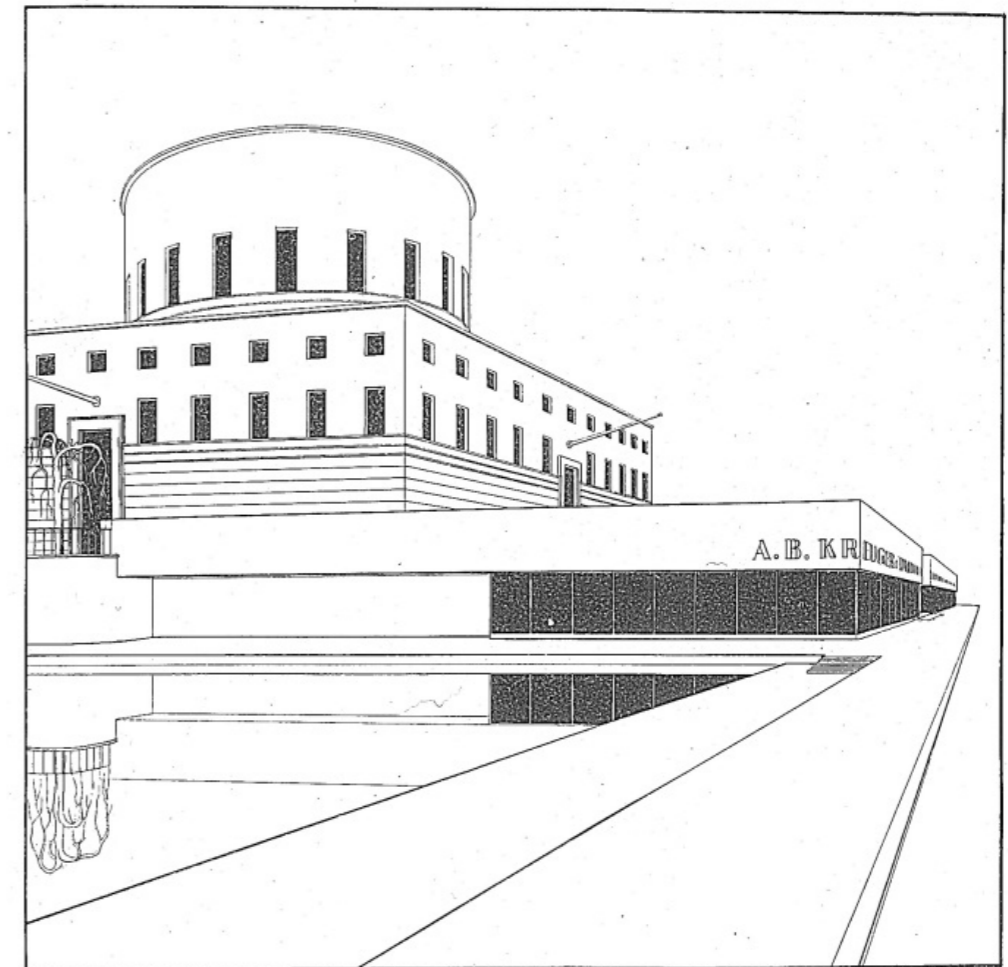
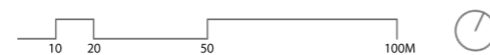
## Situating the library

### *The Bazaar*

After passing the pond, you'll notice that the library is situated on a commercial base. This design decision by Asplund creates a barrier between the street and the library. The monumental form of the library—a cylinder within a square—is highlighted, as is the building's red color.



LOCATION  
*Stockholm City library situated*



Archival Drawing  
*The pond next to Stockholm City Library*



Archival Image  
main entrance,  
stockholm city  
library, before  
construction  
bazaar.



Archival Image  
main entrance,  
stockholm city  
library, After  
construction  
bazaar.

## staircase main entrance

Once u passed the bazaar, you will notice that it opens up to the city by this big staircase penetrating the plinth. guiding you towards a big monumental portal, functionating as the main entrance of the library. Again, you can see how Asplund tried to position his building

within the urban context and guiding its visitors. The commercial plinth is a smart design decision by asplund, as it actually creates this openness to the city that the monumental Asplund building with his high windows never could have done.



Archival Image  
main entrance, stockholm city library



Archival Photograph  
*View towards East Facade,  
Stockholm City Library, 1928*

*Approaching from the west  
you could now see the cilinder  
totally exposed and a big  
square in front of it, which  
housed a big marked space.*



Photo  
*The flowermarked next to  
Stockholm City Library.*

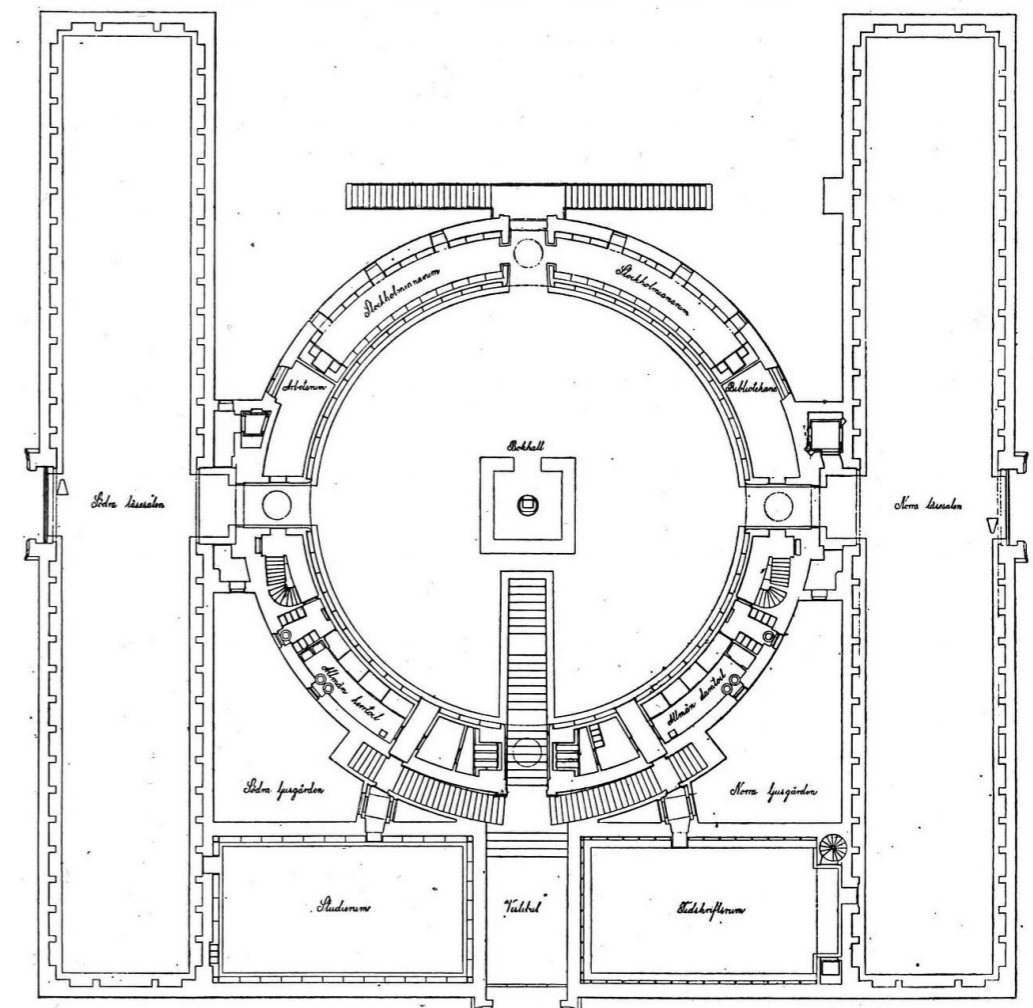
*Interestingly this square, even though much smaller now, still functionates as a marked space. In this picture you also see that the wing was eventually built. But more on that later. The historic function of this spot as a marked space, became an imporant aspect of my design*

## Situating the library

*The west wing*

In contrast to the approach from the south of the city, which is almost totally built as asplund designed it. The West side of the Stockholm City library has a very long and interesting history. Not only where the

3 annex buildings not built in 1928 when the Stockholm library opened its door, also the west wing of the building was totally missing due to financial reasons. proposal. Instead, a staircase was added.



Archival Drawing  
*Plan of Stockholm City Library  
around 1928*



Archival Photograph  
1928  
*West Entrance*

The library opened its door in 1928 without the west wing. The cylinder opened up to that direction, featured by a staircase and a portal.

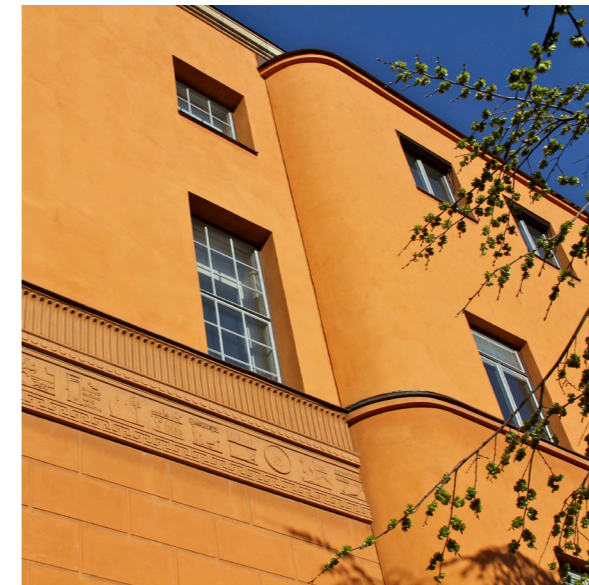


Archival Photograph  
*Construction of the West Wing,*  
1931

## Architectural shift

In 1932, the west wing was built, but Asplund decided to redesign it. He introduced rounded corners and broke away from the rigid window scheme of the other facades, opting for minimal to no ornamentation.

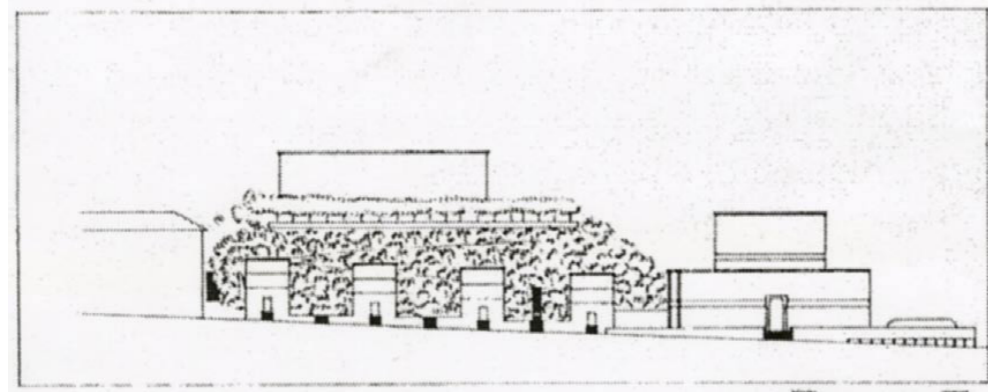
Despite being constructed four years later, this wing showcases the architectural shift Asplund was making from Swedish classicism to a more modernist style.



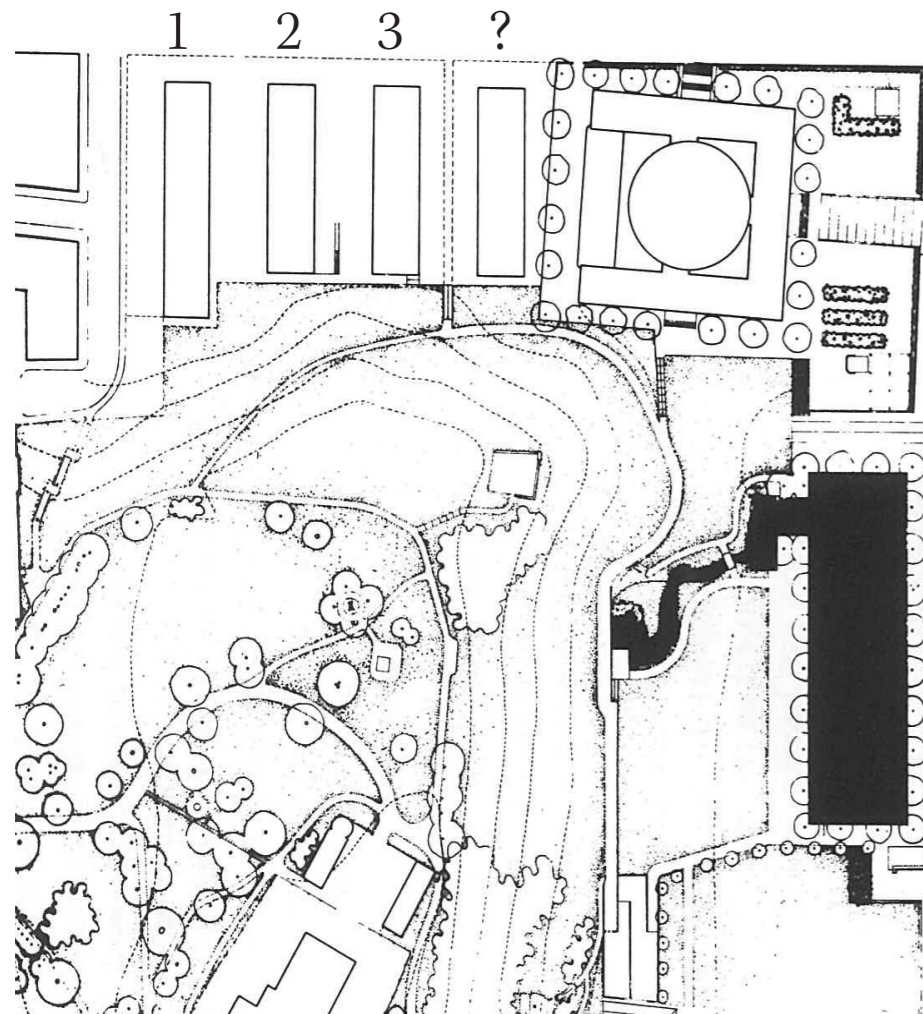
Photograph  
*The west wing Facade*

Archival Photograph  
*The west wing Facade*  
By David Grandorge





Archival Drawing  
*Elevation, 1928*

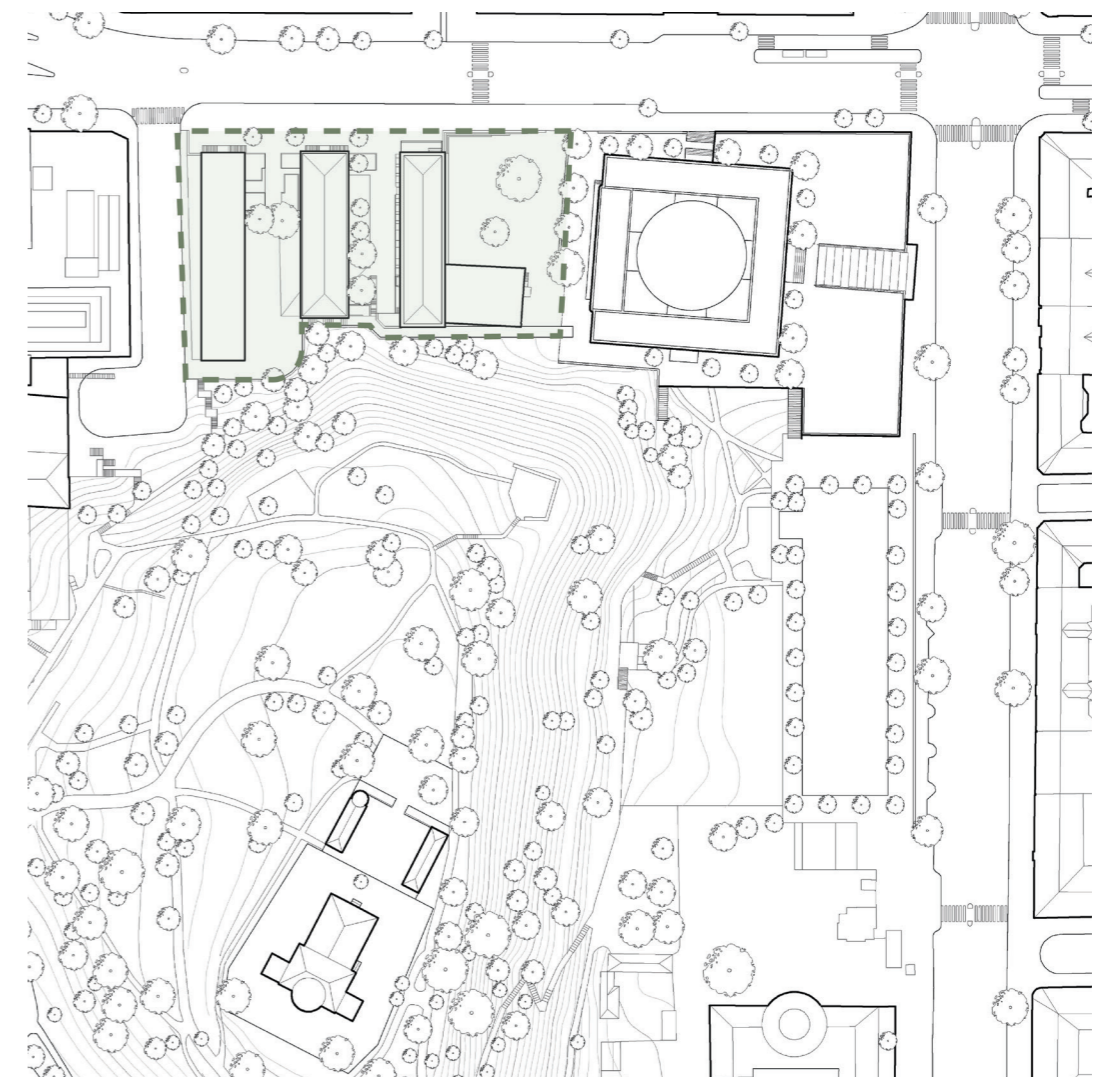


Archival Drawing  
*Asplund Final Siteplan*

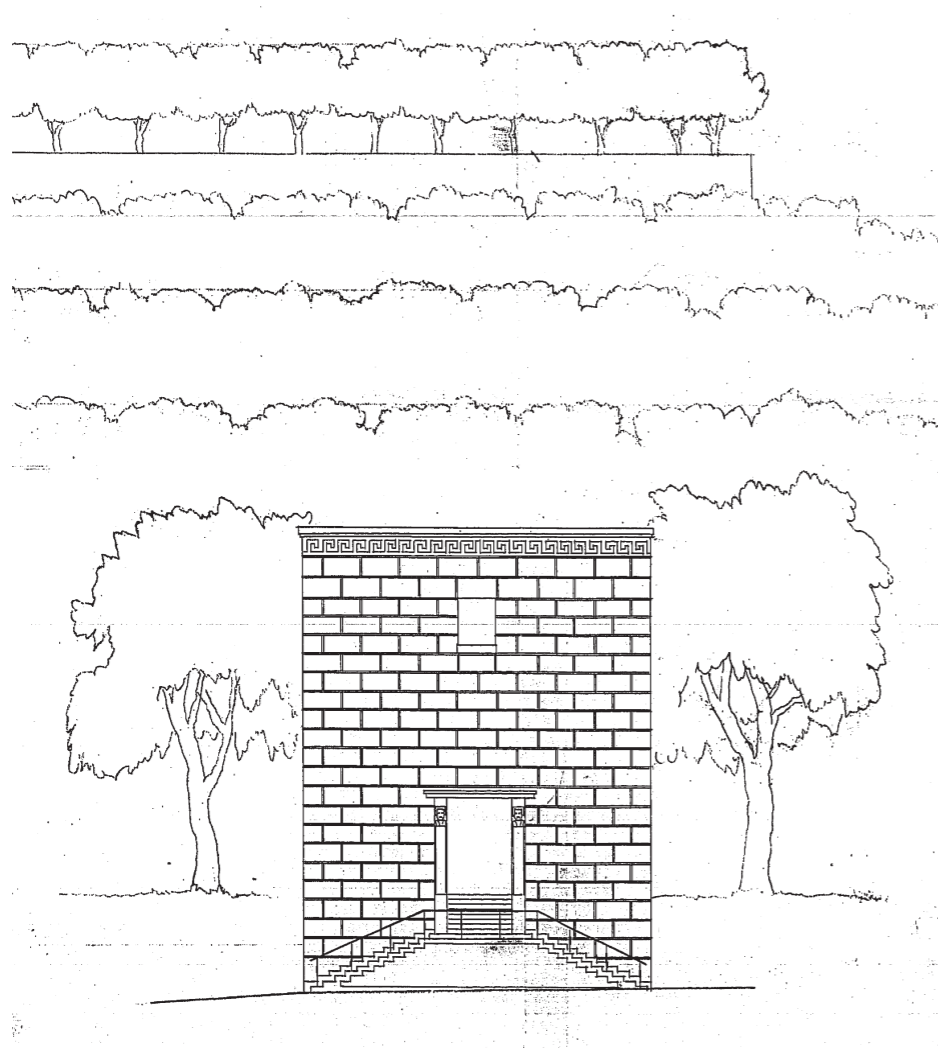
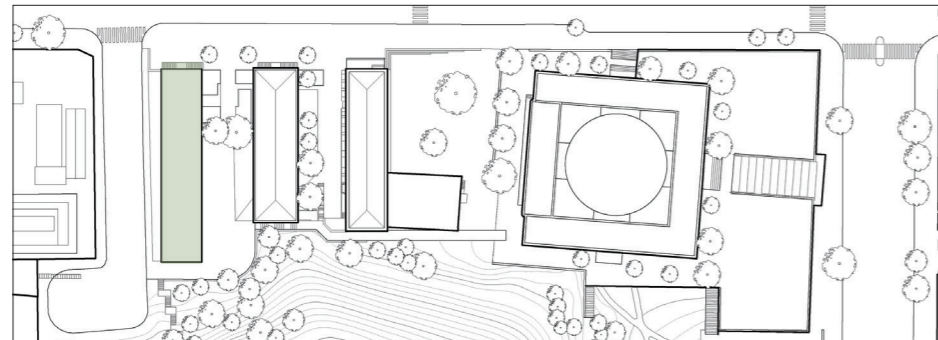
## Situating the library

### *The Anex Buildings*

If you look to Asplunds Final Siteplan and elevation you can see that it mainly is developed as he intended to. Except for the 4th anex building which was never built. The north part of the design has a long history which I will explain a bit more the following pages.



LOCATION  
*Stockholm City library situated*



Archival Drawing  
by Erik Lallerstedt  
1928

## The First Anex

In 1928, around the same time as the Stockholm City Library, the first anex building was built and designed by Erik Lallerstedt. Interestingly he used similar ornaments and materials as Asplund used for the Stockholm City Library. With the Greece relief, the plaster and the playful ornamentations.

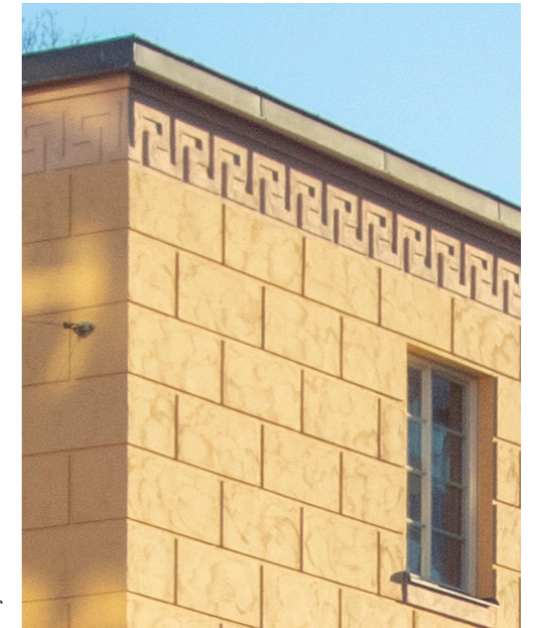
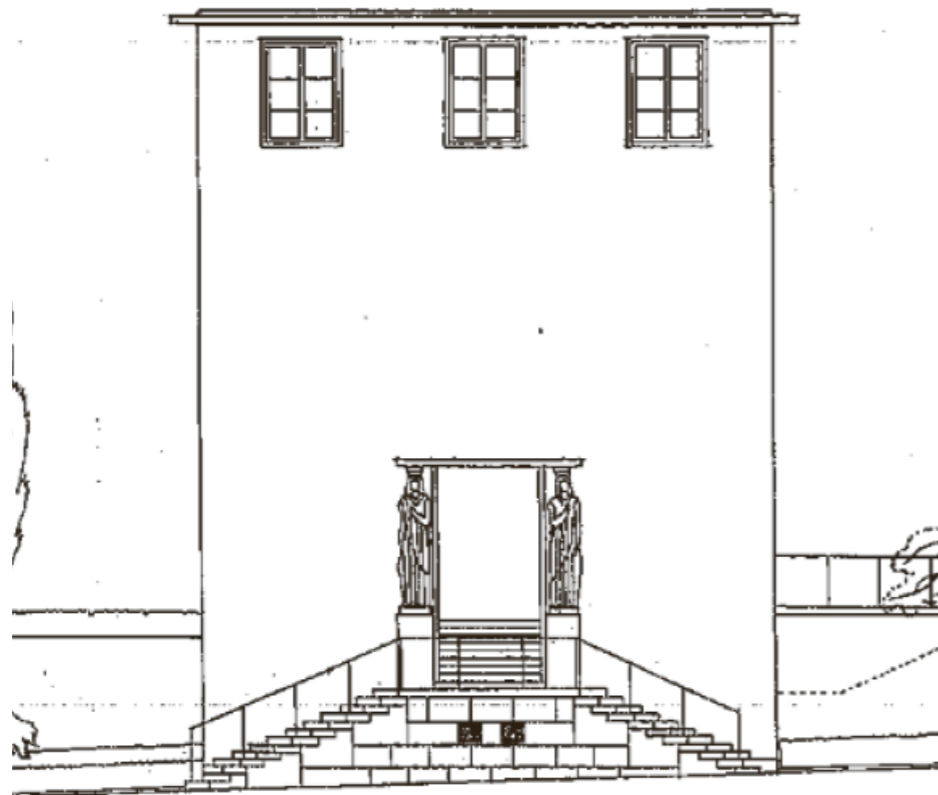
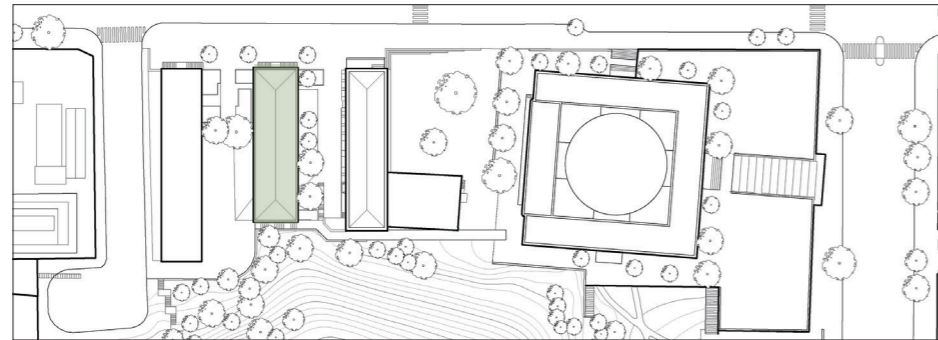


Photo  
*First Anex*  
*Greece Relief*



Archival Photograph  
view from Odengatan towards the library  
1928



Archival Drawing  
By Erik Lallerstedt,  
1931

## The Second Anex

In 1932, the same year the west wing was built, the second annex building was constructed and designed by Erik Lallerstedt. Interestingly, a similar development is evident here. The building features less ornamentation and a more flexible window scheme, where the windows are designed to align with the functions behind the walls.



Photo  
second Anex  
Construction, 1932



Archival Photograph  
View to the library from Odengatan,  
1948

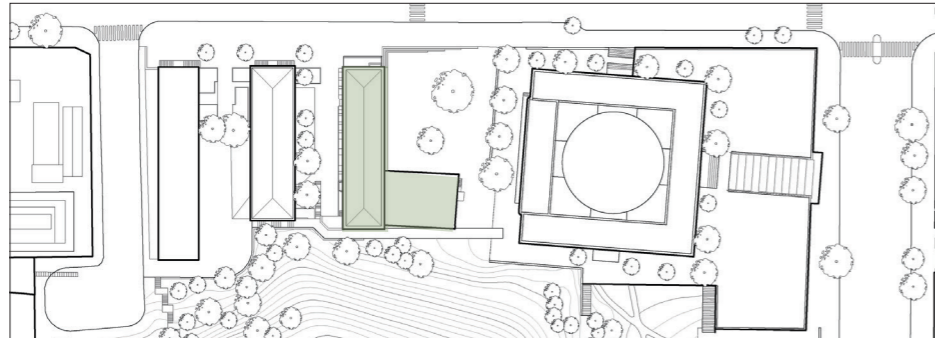


Photo  
*Bird eye perspective on the Stockholm city library, with the 3 annex buildings.*

## The Third Anex

Finally, 20 years later, the third annex was designed by Paul Hedqvist and constructed. The entrance was lowered to the ground floor, creating a direct connection with the street. This building, erected during the height of functionalist architecture in Sweden, exemplifies a more functionalist style within a traditional context. As seen in this picture, the three time layers are evident through the appearance of the annex buildings.

Photo  
*entrance of the 3th Anex*



Archival Photograph  
*View to the library from Odengatan, 1956*



Archival Photograph  
*Marked,  
Stockholm City Library, 1928*

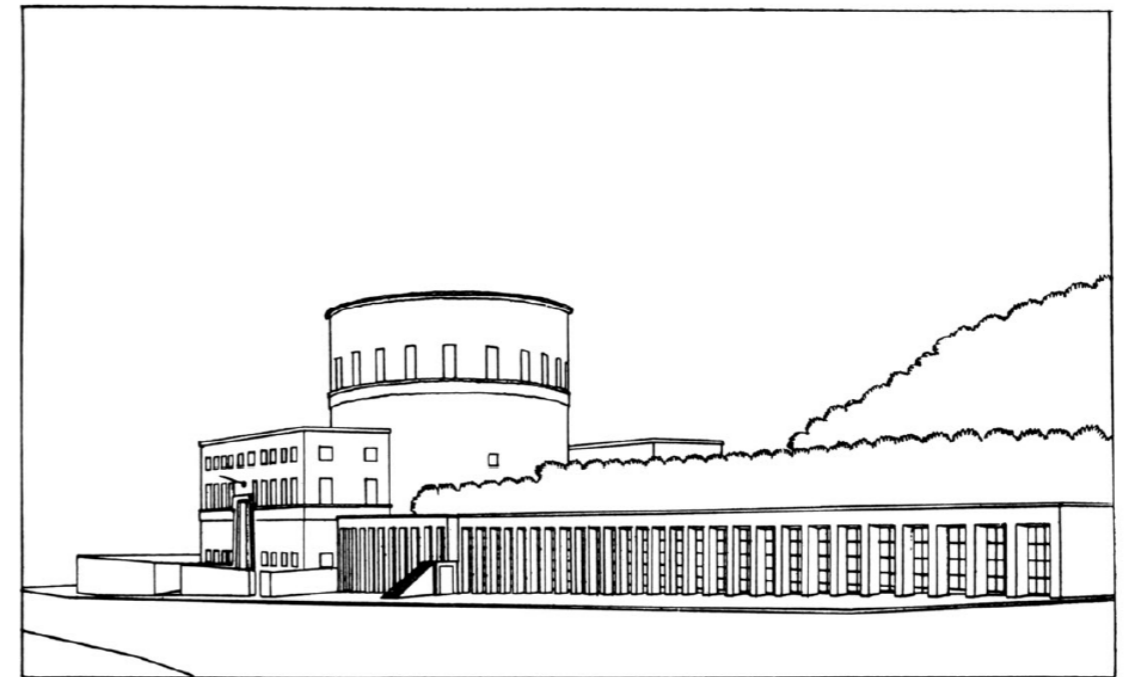


Archival Photograph  
*marked next to the 3th anex building  
1956*

## The marked

During my archive research, I came across an important image that captivated me. The image showcases a design by Asplund for the northern part of the area adjacent to Odengatan. His proposal featured a long, low building intended to house a market. Although no further images or drawings of this proposal exist, this particular image made a strong impression on me. The design is both bold and grand, yet it respectfully defers to the monumental Stockholm City Library. I was particularly struck by the inclusion of market spaces in Asplund's design, recognizing it as a vital part of the area's heritage. The spot has historically been, and continues to be, used for market activities.

Inspired by this idea, I thought about incorporating similar market spaces into my own design. It would be a wonderful way to honor the area's history and maintain its traditional use.



Drawing by Asplund  
*Stockholm, Public Library,  
perspective of back of library with  
proposed Odenhallen (market),  
1926*



13 photo / Landscape of the woodland Cremetorium

## Conclusions

### Looking carefully

Guiding the perception of Time and Space

*In all of Asplund's buildings, he places a special focus on how people enter a building and experience its spaces. The routing, combined with the configuration of spaces and the use of materials, is always a crucial aspect of his designs. His designs are designed like a sequence of spaces guiding the visitors perception of time and space. Many of these defining characteristics of Asplund's work are visible in the design of Stockholm city library. The connection with the city, as well as the park is evident. This iconic building embodies a sense of permanence and historical significance, showcasing Asplund's talent in creating spaces that are both visually striking and deeply meaningful. The building is part of a well-thought-through composition, including the bazaar, the pond, the hill and the annex buildings. It's crucial to understand that the location has historically served as a marked space. Asplund had two different proposals for the northern part of the site. The initial proposal featured a large market hall called Odenhallen. The latter proposal included four additional buildings known as Lamellen, intended as annexes to the library; three of these were eventually constructed. These two design proposals serve as important inspiration for my design.*



Photo  
model 1:25  
*A room For a library*

## 02 First Thoughts

### Unpacking the library

---

*After delving into Asplund's work, we examined eight modern libraries, with a focus on Louis Kahn's Exeter Library. The analysis of these libraries, together with the P1 project 'a room for a library' and individual research has led to initial thoughts about the idea of a library, in its modern and public form.*

01



*Image /* The reading room in the West Perimeter Hall of the Stockholm City Library is mainly used for studying and reading. Most people bring their own books or laptop. The bookshelves on the sides of the room are mainly decoration.

# UNPACKING THE LIBRARY

**The idea of a library**, in its modern and public form, is going to be explored for this exercise. For me, this task of making a room for a library resulted in a set of first thoughts relating to some essential questions: Who uses the modern library? why are they using it? What do they need? How does the modern library relate to its traditional typology? How public/ private should a library be?

To explore these questions I looked at libraries I know, such as Stockholm City Library (01), Phillips Exeter Academy and Rotterdam Central Library (02).

02



*Image /* Rotterdam Central Library. With over 2.4 million visitors per year, the Central Library Rotterdam is the most visited cultural institution in Rotterdam. In facilitating the large audience, several facilities have been made. But with all this facilities, is it still a library?



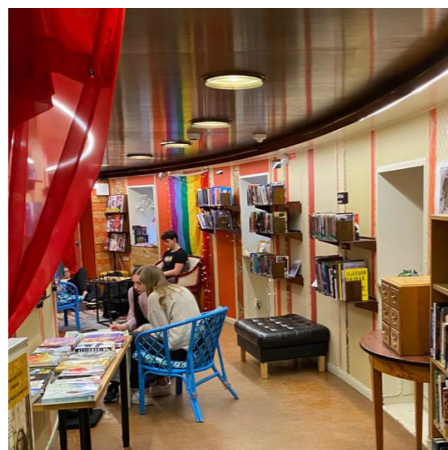
A social space ( for elderly)



A study/ working space



A reading room



*The poche as  
a reading room*

## Unpacking the library

### *A Place of refuge*

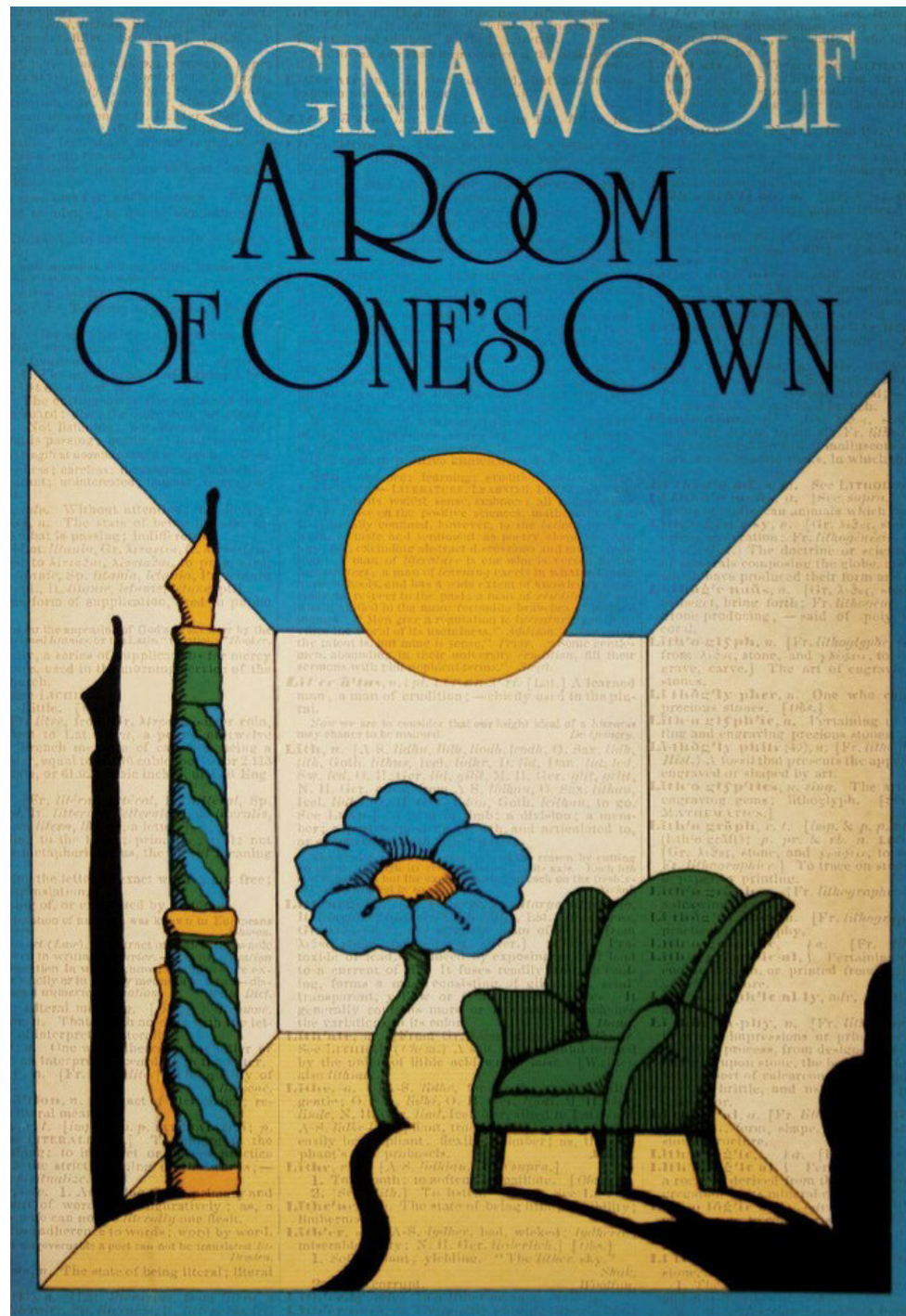
Why would someone go to a library? For a lot of people it is to find something they are deprived from. This might be a quiet space for concentration, free internet, access to digital devices, or it could be a place for discussions, social contact, and access to non-digital materials (books). For example, the students who can't find a quiet non-distracted study place. The lonely elderly who is searching for social interaction. Or the low-income families who don't have the space and the facilities to read or study in a comfortable room.

For the design Seminar I'm going to focus on this last group. For them the library is a place of refuge from their often stressful lives. The public library can be a 'home' for those who are deprived from essential spaces and facilities due to their financial and social status. Especially for children reading is an essential part of their educational development. Good language and reading skills will help one move up the social ladder.

02



Book Cover  
*A room for one's own*  
 Virginia Woolf



## Unpacking the library

### *A room of one's own*

In my research, I link the scarcity of space for minorities to Virginia Woolf's insights in "A Room of One's Own." Woolf vividly illustrates the repercussions of lacking private space, particularly for women, who historically faced barriers to accessing libraries and universities or having a room for contemplation. This extends to low-income families today, who often lack space at home. Libraries become vital refuges, but they should also offer spaces for solitude and reflection, essential for personal development.

For the project "A Room for a Library," where we were asked to design a room within a library, I decided to focus on the idea of a personal space within the library, akin to Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own." I observed that while such rooms are common in libraries, they often face difficulties in finding the right design. This is because public libraries are meant to be open and accessible to everyone. Introducing a private room conflicts with this quality, as you still need some control over what happens inside these rooms.

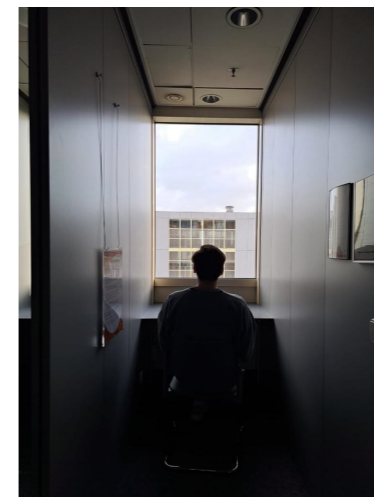


Photo  
 Public Library  
 Rotterdam

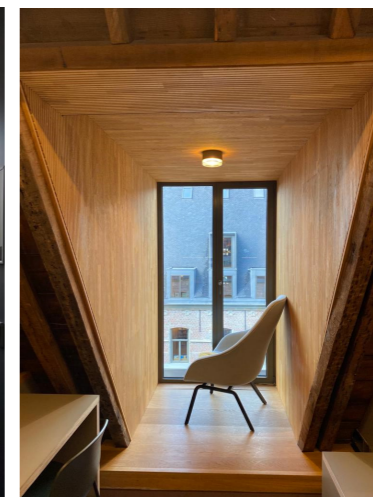
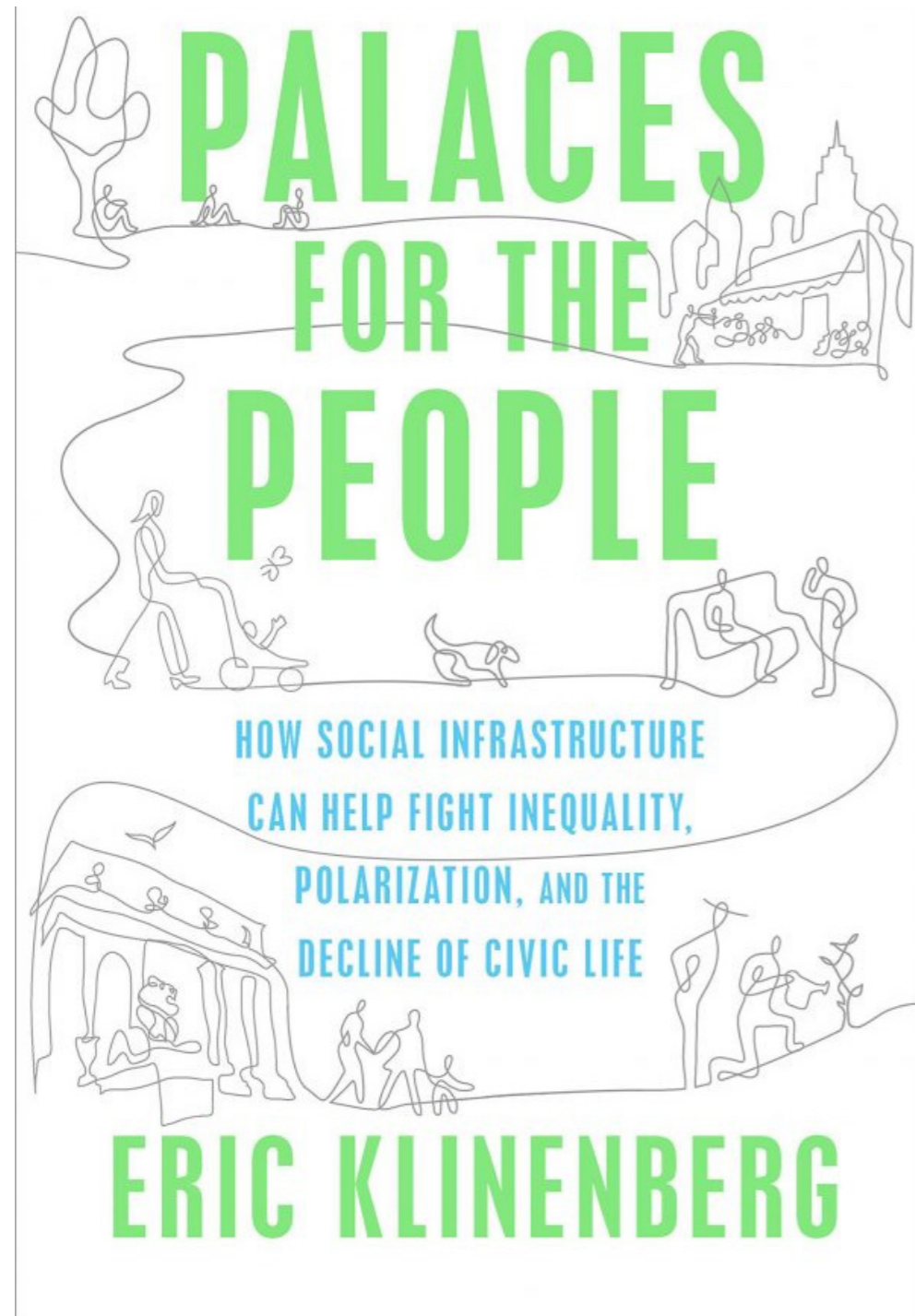


Photo  
 City library Het  
 Predikheren, Mechelen



Photo  
 Public library Lochal,  
 Tilburg

Book Cover  
*Palaces for the people*  
 Eric Klinenberg



## Unpacking the library

### *Palaces for the people*

I read the book “Palaces for the People” by Eric Klinenberg. The book talks about how places like libraries, parks, and community centers help people connect with each other and build strong communities. These places, are part of the social infrastructure. They are important because they bring people together, make neighborhoods safer, and improve everyone’s lives. The book gives examples from different parts of the world showing how these community spaces can help reduce loneliness, inequality, and even deal with problems like climate change. Klinenberg argues that we should invest more in these public spaces to create better, more supportive, and resilient communities.

#### **Inspiration from the Wijkpaleis, Rotterdam**

Libraries are very important in cities, often serving a similar roles as community centers. They are not just places to store books and information but are also where people can share ideas and interact socially. A great example is the Wijkpaleis in Rotterdam. This community center allows locals to run workshops in woodworking, sewing, metalwork, and knitting, teaching each other new skills. They also have a community kitchen where local women cook dinners three times a week, providing affordable meals for neighbors. This helps people learn, share, and connect with each other. Libraries could benefit from adopting this approach. By adding workshops, makerspaces, and community kitchens, libraries can become places where knowledge is both shared and applied, helping to build stronger and more connected communities.



Photo  
 wijkpaleis Rotterdam  
 The wood workshop



Photo  
 wijkpaleis Rotterdam  
 The community kitchen



Archive Photo  
*Rotterdam, public library, 2000*  
*Library with the market nearby the Hoogstraat*  
*by: A. de Helder*



Photo  
*Rotterdam, public library, 2024*  
*Entrance hall 'city plaza'*

## Unpacking the library

### *The public interior*

Libraries, as public interiors, naturally need to connect with the city around them. For instance, in designing the Stockholm City Library, Asplund aimed to create a boundary that separated the library from the city, guiding visitors into a new world. However, some libraries take the opposite approach, such as the Rotterdam Public Library.

The Rotterdam Public Library seamlessly integrates with the city. Its grand entrance opens towards a large square in Rotterdam, where a market takes place twice a week. Upon entering the library, visitors find themselves in a vast open space that serves multiple functions: a public meeting area, exhibition space and information desk. This hall acts as an extension of the city, a flexible space used by the community for various events like exhibitions and openings. The library is easily accessible, attracting people who come just to meet each other. A large chessboard in the hall is particularly popular among the elderly, drawing a diverse crowd. This space functions like an indoor city plaza, extending the public sphere into the library. It exemplifies how a library can be more than just a place for books; it can be a vibrant, integral part of the city's social fabric.



Photo  
*Rotterdam, public library, 2024*  
*people gathering around a large chessboard.*



Image

*The reading room in the South Perimeter Hall of the Stockholm City Library is mainly used for studying and reading. Most people bring their own books or laptop. bookshelves on the sides of the room are mainly decoration.*

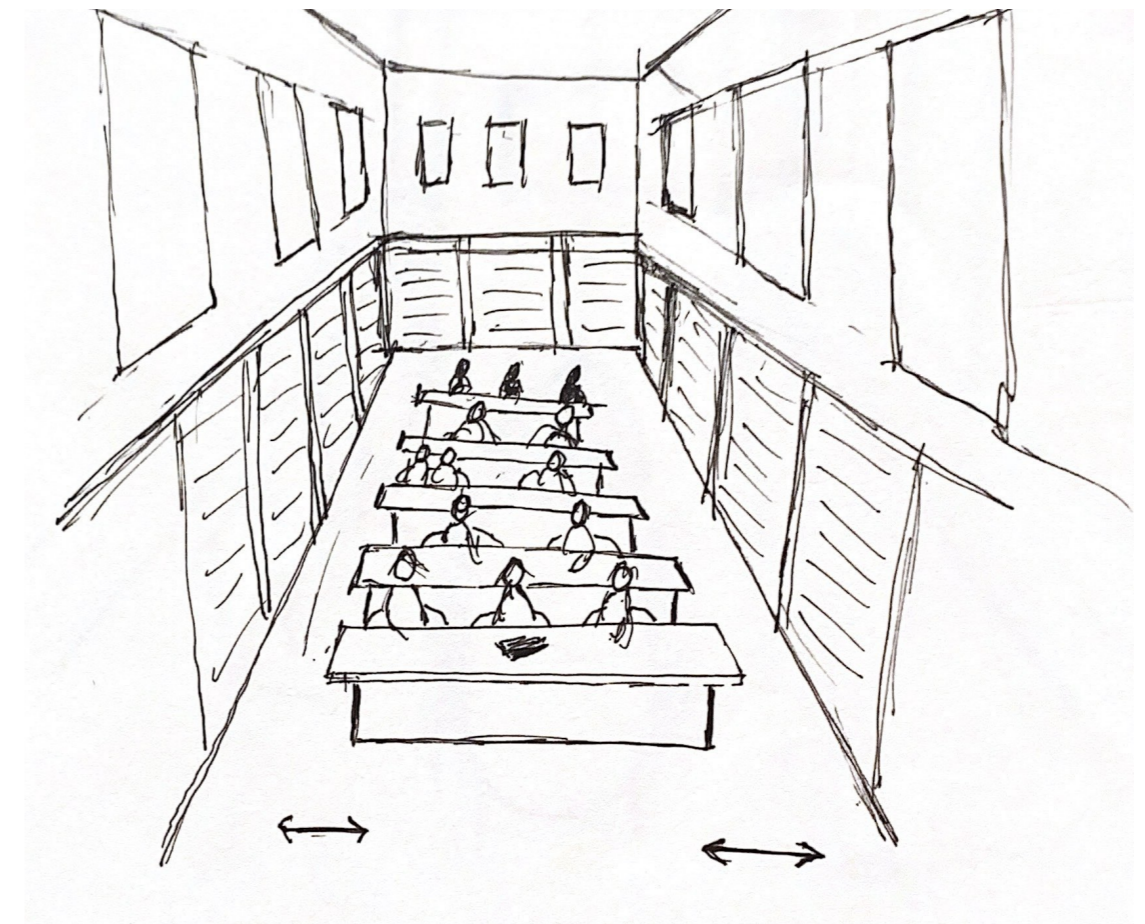
## Unpacking the library

### *The typology of a reading room*

The typology of a reading room is very clear in most cases. The tables to work on are in the middle and the book shelves at the sides, like a wall of books. The visitors are surrounded by books and could freely get a book to read from the shelves.

However, people bring their own devices nowadays. they have their laptop and their own books and the room is mainly used for working and studying. The books in the wall are mainly decoration.

noticeable are the high placed windows, which separates the visitors from the outside world. This can be good when you are studying and you need the full focus, but the library is more than that.



Drawing

*South hall, Stockholm city library  
People studying, working surrounded by walls of books  
and the high windows, separates them from the city.*

Drawing  
*Laurentian library. Seating and window. The angle of the reading surface catches light from behind*



Photo  
*seats in the laurentian library*

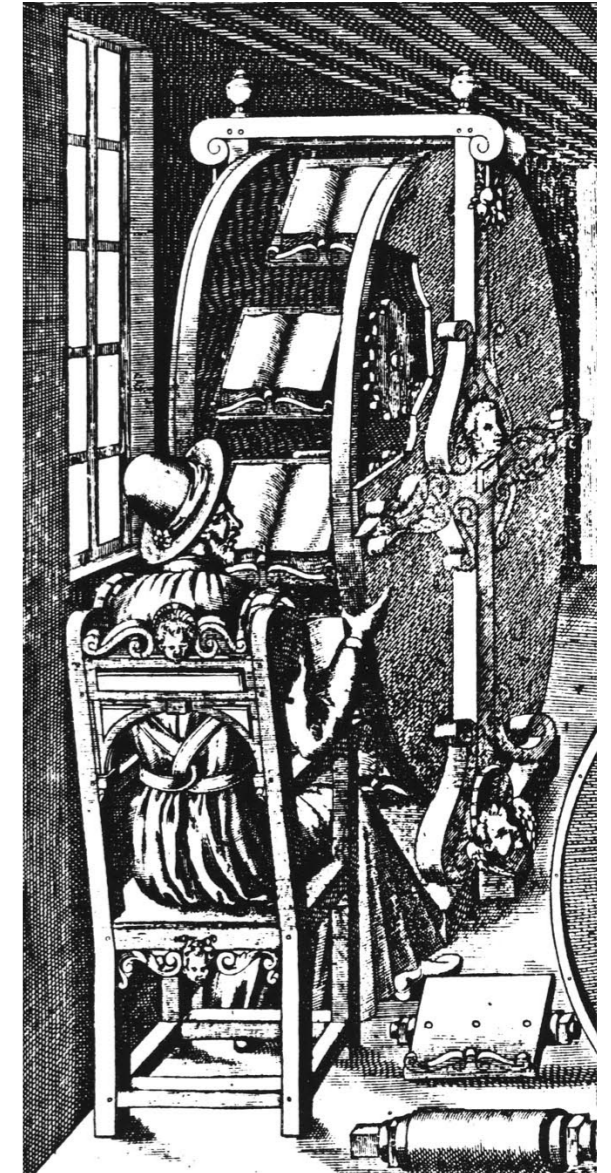


## Unpacking the library

*The significance of Light.*

Drawing

*Ramelli, a scholar with his book wheel, could spin the rack to light up only the book he was reading. This clever idea solved the problem of needing good light in libraries in a fun and creative way.*



Lighting plays a critical role in libraries throughout history. The Laurentian Library, for instance, designed its furnishings and windows to ensure optimal reading conditions. Ramelli's drawings underscored the importance of natural light in an era before artificial illumination. However, creating the perfect reading environment involves more than just adequate lighting; it also reflects the library's underlying philosophy. Stockholm City Library, for example, channels light through high windows to protect books from excessive

exposure and provide visitors with a sense of time, though it limits views outside. In contrast, libraries like Rotterdam and Exeter welcome abundant natural light through large windows, creating a connection with the surroundings. Yet, entering a big amount of light requires innovative solutions to create good study and work environments. The next chapter will explore various libraries and their approaches to lighting, offering insights into how these choices shape the library and its core principles.

# The Modern Public Library

*Exploring other libraries.*

Over the last year, I've visited a number of libraries to gain inspiration and a better understanding of library design. At the same time, in our studio, Interiors Buildings Cities, we conducted a thorough analysis of eight library precedents to explore their typology.

This chapter discusses libraries that had a significant impact on me or changed my perspective on contemporary library design. Expanding on ideas discussed in the last chapter, "Unpacking the Library," I will look deeper into these libraries. I'll look at how they address themes like:

Importance of Light  
Designing Reading Rooms  
Creating an inviting public interior  
Providing a place of refuge.

Each library has shaped my understanding of what a library can and should be. These experiences have been helpful in shaping my vision for designing the library.

Photo  
*Seattle Library,  
reading room 2*





Photo  
Interior, Rotterdam  
Public Library  
2023

note:

*Spaces flow seamlessly into one another in this library, creating a sense of fluidity and openness. Nothing seems to have a fixed place. Cabinets on wheels hover above the floor, detached from the ceiling. Chairs and tables of various shapes and sizes add to the dynamic atmosphere. The suspended ceiling appears only where necessary, contributing to the open, flexible design. Large ceiling lamps seem randomly placed, floating on an illusory surface between the system ceilings. Everything seems to want to float between the ceiling and floor, avoiding fixed positions. Only the color and material of the floor and ceiling define the different areas. Columns stand freely in the space, serving as directional signs, newspaper kiosks, information points, and bulletin boards.*

*As the spaces flow into each other, so do the people. Parents read to their children in the children's corner, the elderly read newspapers, young people gather with their laptops at large tables, and students study in designated areas. People play chess, read, and learn, all within one space. The movie room is shielded only by a curtain, and the quiet room by a glass wall. While everything appears temporary, as if it could change at any moment, in practice, each element maintains its function, creating a unique yet static environment.*

## Rotterdam Public Library

*A 'flexible' design.*

I often visited the Rotterdam public library for studying. When a librarian friend invited me for a private tour before opening hours, I saw it in a new light. The library boasts a flexible design concept, where everything can be rearranged as needed over time. However, in practice, this adaptability has led to spaces that don't always meet the library's functional needs. Despite this, the library excels

in its integration with the city, featuring modern amenities (around that time) like escalators that make it a bustling public hub. It's immensely popular among diverse groups, yet could benefit from more thoughtfully designed spaces to enhance its functionality and appeal. On the previous page you can read the text I wrote when I experienced the library for a whole day.



Archival Photo  
escalators in Rotterdam  
Public Library  
1983



Photo  
*Het Predikheren,  
Mechelen,  
2023*

*individual reading  
nook*



Photo  
*Het Predikheren,  
Mechelen,  
2023*

## City library Het Predikheren, Mechelen

### *Library in an old monastery*

In November 2023, we visited the City Library 'Het Predikheren' in Mechelen, which is housed in an old monastery. This serene environment is perfectly suited for a library. All the rooms are situated around a central courtyard, offering visitors a view while they study, read, or work. The design encourages contemplation, allowing visitors to gaze outside and wonder. The library is an excellent example of how existing buildings can

be repurposed to serve a new function. The materialization was beautifully executed, blending the historic charm of the monastery with modern library needs. The reading nooks on the upper floor were particularly inspiring for my design task, 'A Room for a Library.' These nooks are visually appealing but lack privacy and adaptability, which are essential for a personalized reading experience.

Photo  
*Het Predikheren,  
Mechelen,  
2023*

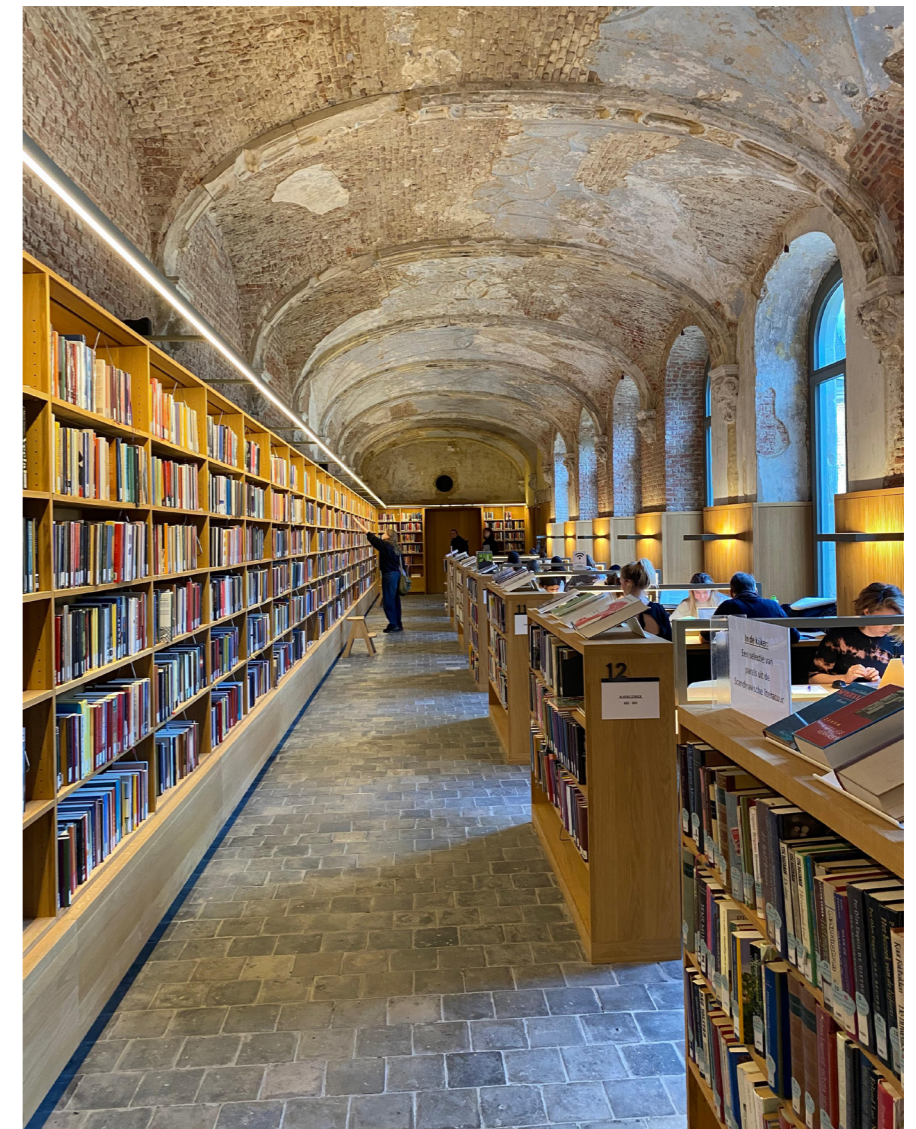




Photo  
*LocHal, Tilburg*  
*Writing Room*

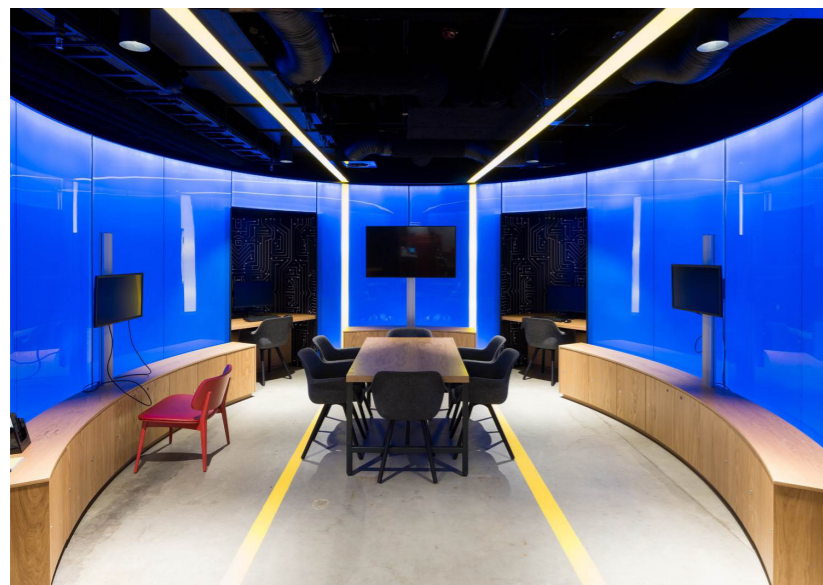


Photo  
*LocHal, Tilburg*  
*GameLab*



Photo  
*LocHal, Tilburg*  
*DialogueLab*

## LocHal, Tilburg

### *Library in an old monastery*

he LocHal in Tilburg shows the evolving role of libraries by offering diverse functions and labs for modern community needs. This former locomotive hall includes various “labs”: the FoodLab provides culinary workshops and nutrition classes, the DigiLab offers advanced digital tools and training, the GameLab supports gaming and game development, and the FutureLab helps

users explore emerging technologies. These spaces promote healthy living, digital literacy, creativity, and innovation. The LocHal goes beyond traditional library services, encouraging lifelong learning and community engagement. Its adaptable design and varied offerings make it a dynamic, relevant public space for today’s digital age.

Photo  
*LocHal, Tilburg*  
*Central Hall*



note:

*The beautifully designed furniture elements in the facade served as my inspiration for creating 'a room for a library.' The individual workspaces with small windows, creating a connection with the outside world. Combined with the large windows above, which flooded the room with natural light. These elements formed the basis of my design.*

Photo  
*Exeter library*



## Exeter library

### *The role of light*

Louis Kahn designed the Exeter Library to house the readers who use the books, not just the books themselves. The library emphasizes the reader's journey and experience, using light to guide visitors, organize spaces, and create comfortable reading areas. Kahn's design includes facade spaces where people can work and reflect, making them aware of both time and space. The simplicity of the plans,

combined with the monumental atrium and use of materials, creates a unique experience. Light creates a hierarchy of spaces, with the most important reading areas highlighted by daylight. Unlike the internally focused Stockholm City Library, Exeter connects its interior with the campus outside. This approach underscores the importance of readers over books.

Photo  
*Exeter library*



Photo  
facade Exeter Library



*Louis Kahn once noted that the Exeter Library houses the readers who use the books, not just the books themselves.*

22 Photo  
*Exeter Library*



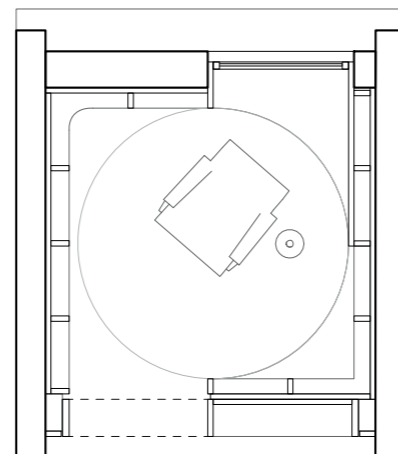
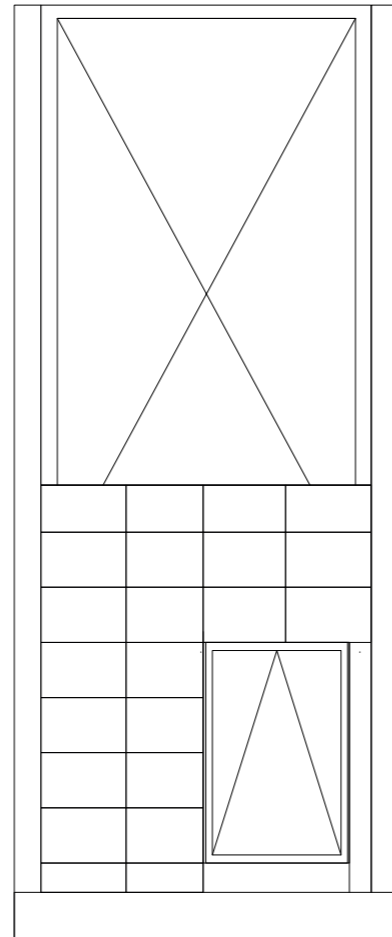
23 Photo  
*Exeter Library*



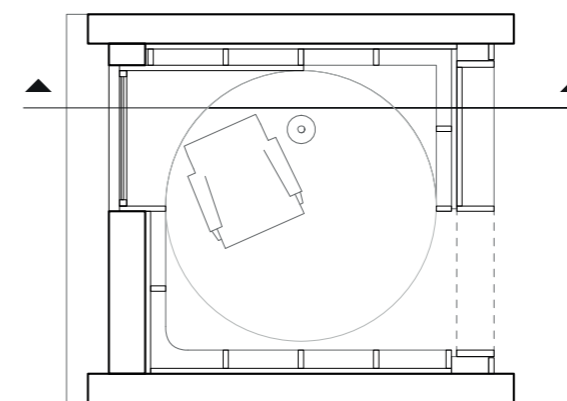
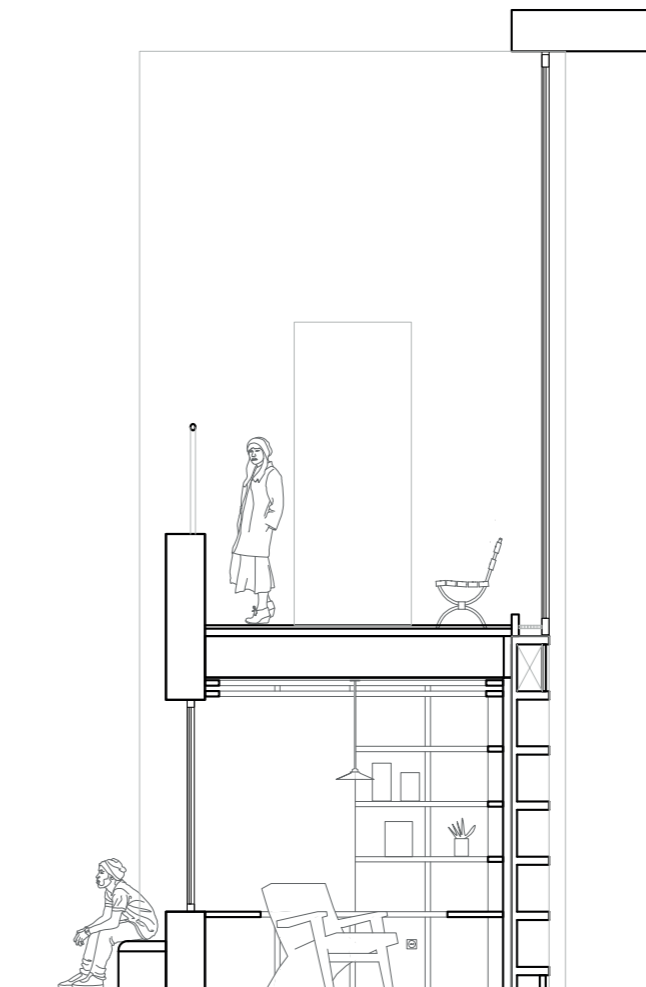
# A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

*Functioning as a space for one person, this room smoothly links the internal and external realms of a library. The design seeks an optimal balance of seclusion and openness, considering light, scale, and materialisation. The bookshelves' material and dimensions extend into the room, defining an intimate space and forming a wall feature with integrated tables. Dark-brown cork extends from the facade to the interior, creating an acoustically pleasing ambiance. A strategically placed window(frame) reflects diffused light, shaping a well-lit reading corner. The movable chair accommodates various activities, enabling users to personalise their seating. The artificial light and the opening window allow the user to customise the ambiance even more.*

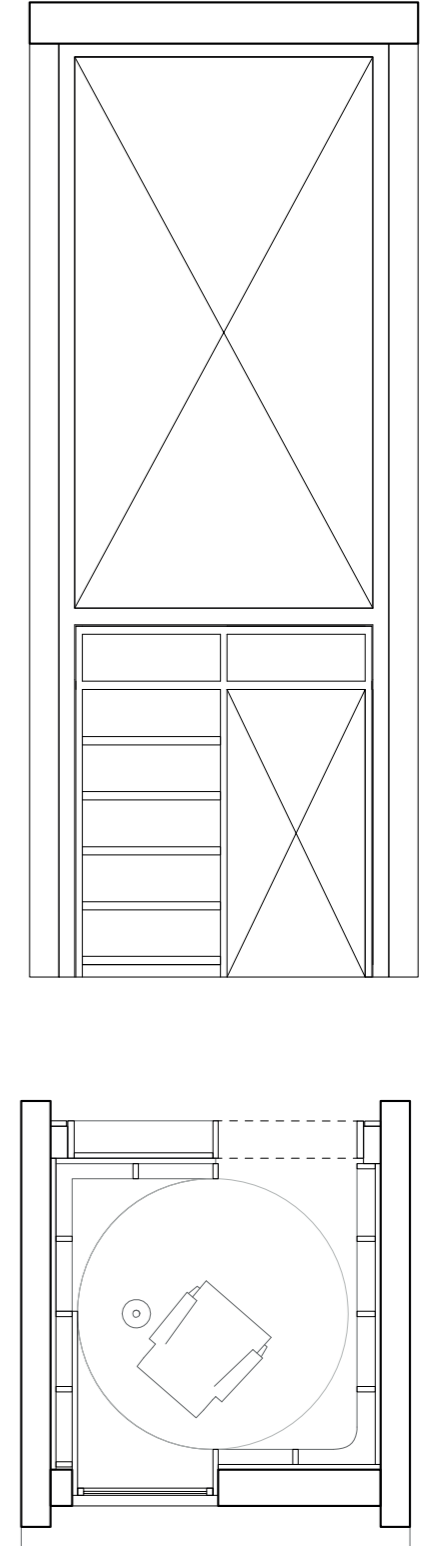
*facade*

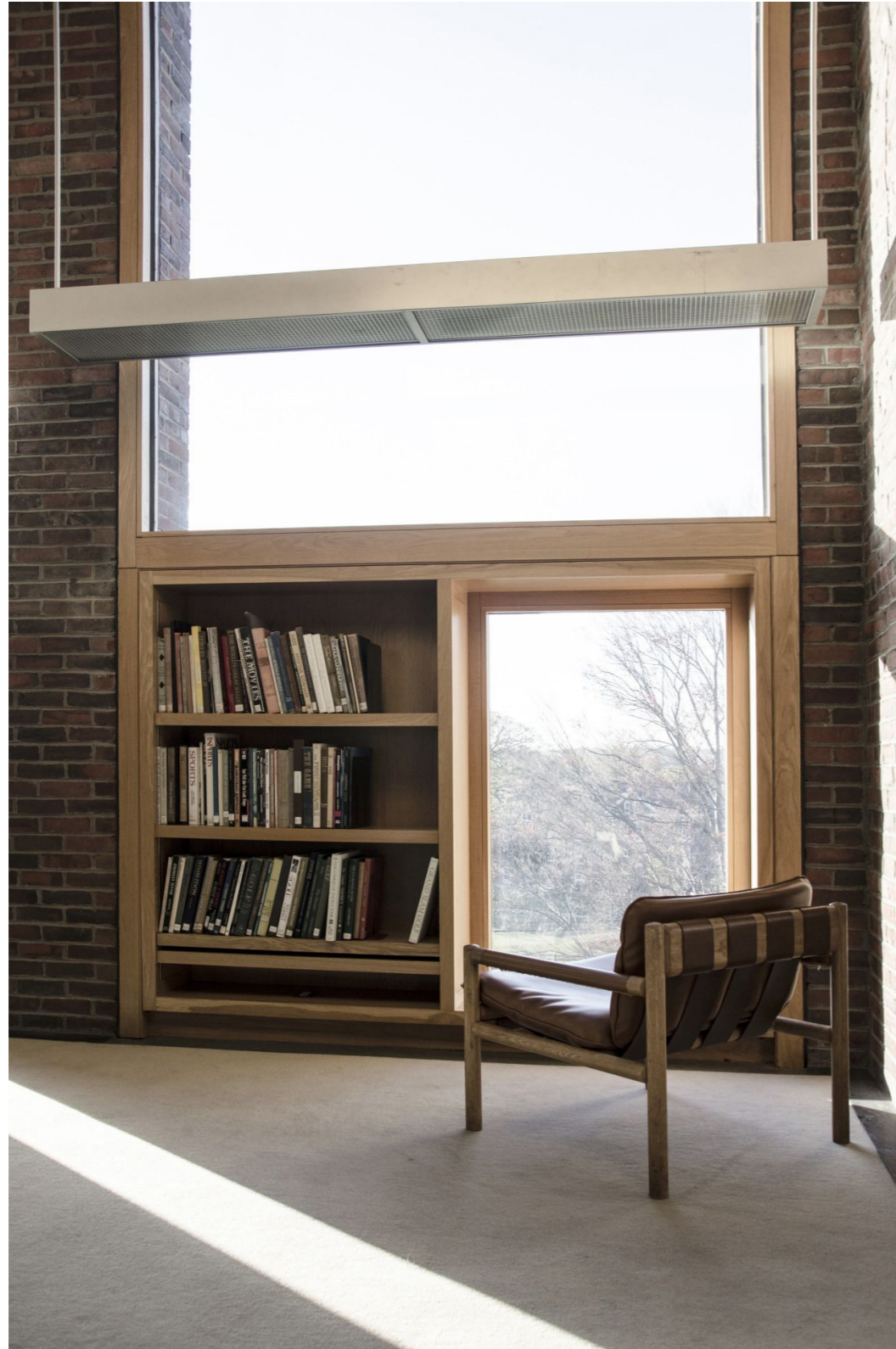


*Section*



*Interior*





note:

*This facade element from the exeter library has been an literal inspiration for the dimensions of my design 'A Room for one's own.'*

Photo  
*Exeter Library*



Render

*Design 'A Room For a library'*

note:

*The dimensions are similar to the Exeter library facade. However, this design is a more three dimensional version of that facade, as it houses a full room: A room of one's own.*





## A room of one's own

*Comparison to other libraries*



*Photo*  
Public Library  
Rotterdam



*Photo*  
City library Het  
Predikheren, Mechelen



*Photo*  
Public library Lochal,  
Tilburg



*Model*  
A room of one's own

These images show the 'private rooms' in various libraries I have visited. The first, in the Rotterdam Public Library, lacks the cozy ambiance one desires, and the materialization feels awkward. The room in the Predikheren City Library, though very cozy and a pleasant nook, offers little privacy, exposing you to both the inner and outer library spheres.

The third photo, from the Lochal, combines both problems: harsh materialization and no privacy. In my design, I aimed to create a cozy room that, while never fully private, offers opportunities to hide a bit. You feel embraced by the round form, warm materials, and colors, achieving a perfect balance of coziness and semi-privacy.

# Conclusions

## First Thoughts

### Unpacking the Library

*The modern public library should be a place where knowledge is not only theoretical but becomes practical too. Libraries are evolving from spaces primarily centered on **knowledge consumption** to becoming spaces for **knowledge creation**. It can be a place of applied and making knowledge. The so-called makerspaces can house initiatives from the (local) society. The incorporating of **makerspaces** in public libraries, facilitates the creation and transformation of **cultural values**. But can the current Stockholm City library house all of these functions? Or should there be an addition? And How will this addition relate to the existing monumental building?*

*I argue that the public libraries should enhance the connection with the outside world, while also embracing the private sphere to evoke **a sense of home and belonging** for individuals. How this could result in a physical design will be addressed further in this graduation project.*



Archival photo  
Woman poses on newly added  
staircase in the rotunda  
1965

# PERSONAL REFLECTION

## *RIES SCHOUTEN*

One of the remarkable features of Asplund's work is his experimentation with the arrangement of openings, windows, decorations, and skewed walls. Initially, we sought explanations for all these displacements and slightly off-centered elements in his designs. However, at some point, we realized that understanding every design decision might not be crucial. Instead, it is the overall playfulness of his designs that creates a spatial and sensory experience.

For example, we could speculate about various reasons behind the specific angle of the skewed wall on the first floor of Villa Snellman. But what's more intriguing is the result of this design choice. This skewed wall creates space for storage between the wall and the façade. Furthermore, as it narrows the hallway towards the end, it creates a perspective illusion that makes the hallway appear longer. Many similar design features can be found in Asplund's work. It's likely that he was experimenting with these sometimes random displacements to create an engaging experience for users. In all of Asplund's buildings, he places a special focus on how people enter a building and experience its spaces. The routing, combined with the configuration of spaces and the use of materials, is always a crucial aspect of his designs.

After delving into Asplund's work, we examined eight modern libraries, with a focus on Louis Kahn's Exeter Library. The importance of light is evident in every of those libraries, but interpreted differently in each.

Exeter Library emphasizes the reader's journey and experience, using light to guide visitors, organize spaces, and create comfortable reading areas. Seattle Public Library by OMA bathes in light for an open, public character. Stockholm City Library and Salle de Lecture Bibliothèque Nationale de France have high windows to enhance the formal setting and emphasize books' significance. When surrounded by a wall of books in these libraries, it underscores the library's role as a knowledge institution.

The Stockholm City Library isolates itself from the city with its high windows and internally focused design. In contrast, the Exeter Library strives to connect interior spaces with the campus's life outside. Additionally, the hierarchy between books and people varies in each library. Louis Kahn once noted that the Exeter Library houses the readers who use the books, not just the books themselves. On the other hand, in the Beinecke Library in New Haven designed by SOM, books hold a central position in the building but are not accessible to most people as they are very rare.

The analysis of these libraries, together with the P1 project, has led to initial thoughts about the idea of a library, in its modern and public form. It has raised questions such as: Who uses the libraries? Why do they utilize them? What types of spaces do they require? How does a modern library relate to its traditional form? What should be the balance between public and private aspects of a library? What is the role and significance of books in a modern library?

In my view, these questions relate strongly with architecture of spaces. As Asplund delves into how the sensory experiences and routing impact the utilization, hierarchy, and perception of spaces. I argue that the public libraries should enhance the connection with the outside world, while also embracing the private sphere to evoke a sense of home and belonging for individuals. How this could result in a physical design will be addressed further in this graduation project.

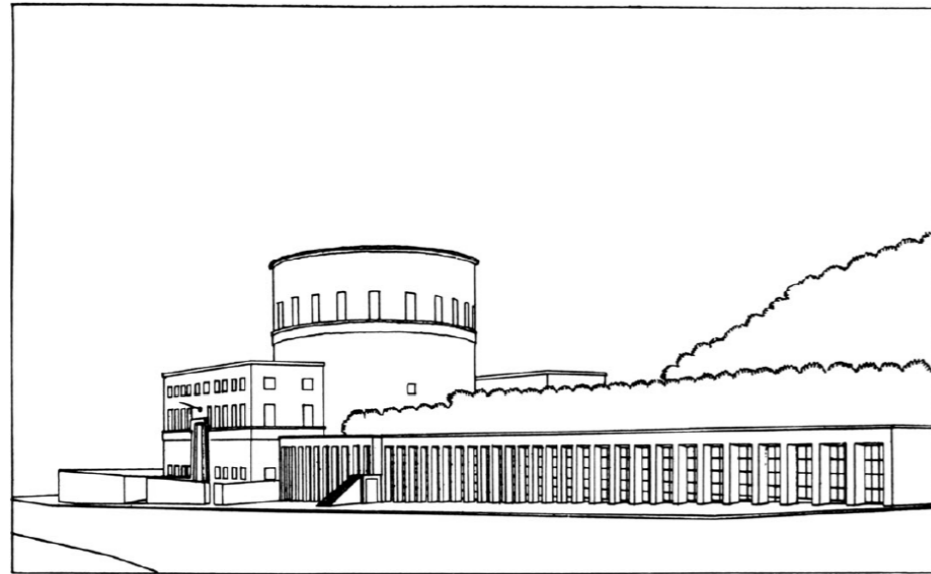


Archival photo  
Anex buildings seen  
from Odengatan  
1956

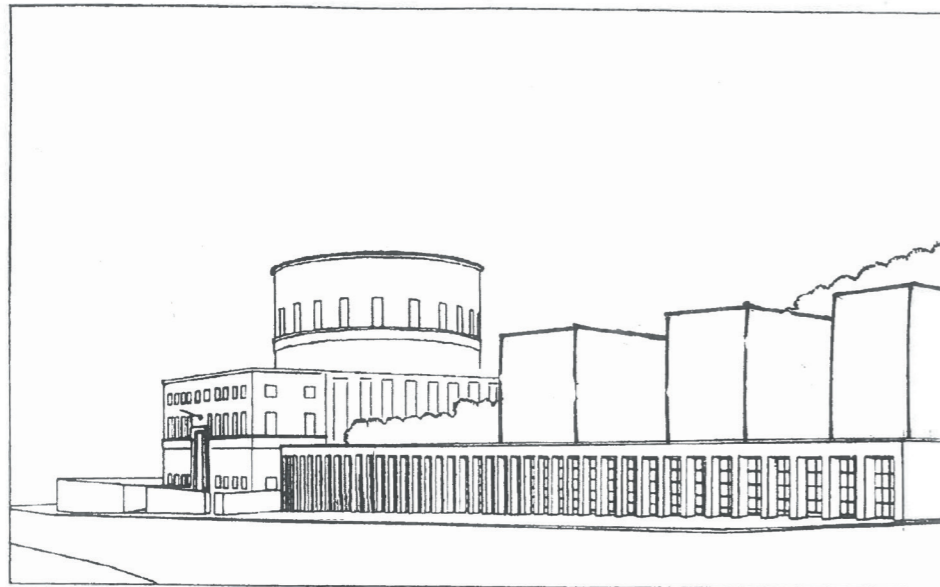
## 03 Designing the library

### First Concepts & A Difficult Whole

*My approach to the library is a careful investigation of what is already there, what works already, and what should be adapted. The current building has a high historic value and has a very static appearance. To house the functions discussed in the previous chapters, such as the maker spaces, I think an addition to the library is needed. This addition allows a more free and flexible design for the modern library. The building should be less monumental and have a strong connection with the city and its environment. Making it a easy accesible building for the whoho comunnity. However, it should also respect the current buildings, such as the annex buildings and the bazaar, and their historic and architectural value. My addition makes a connection between the institution of knowledge (current Asplund building) and the sharing and creation of knowledge (new building). The addition should enhance the connection with the outside world, while also embracing the private sphere to evoke a sense of home and belonging for individuals.*



01



02

## POSITIONING & PROPOSAL

The Stockholm City Library, designed by Erik Gunnar Asplund and completed around 1928, sits just outside the bustling center of Stockholm. The design task was to adapt or add to the existing building, in a way that it's to meet the needs of a modern public library in Sweden. My design proposal emphasizes the relationship with the surroundings, as the building is nestled between a park and the city. I carefully consider what's already there, what works well, and what needs adaptation. While the current building holds significant historical value, it presents a somewhat monumental, static appearance.

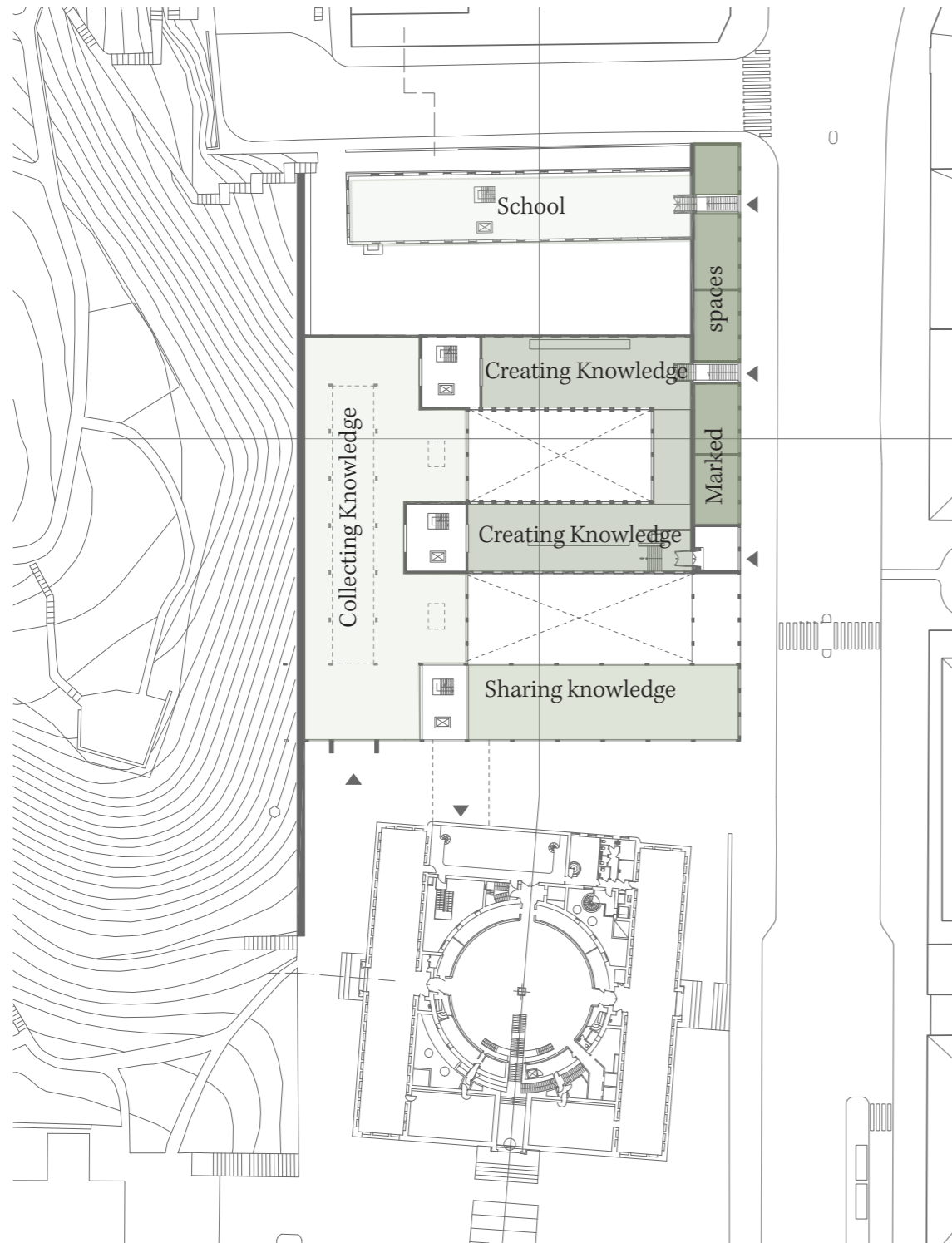
To accommodate modern library functions, such as maker spaces and lecture spaces, I propose an additional building next to the Stockholm City Library. This addition would allow for a more flexible and modern design while respecting the historical and architectural significance of existing buildings on the site, such as the three annex buildings and the bazaar. The new design functions primarily as a separate building, contrasting with the existing Stockholm City Library. While the current library, with its high-placed

windows and monumental appearance, creates a separation from its surroundings, my building aims to be open and welcoming. It sees the library as an integral part of the city and local community, blurring the boundary between where the library starts and ends. These contrasting buildings will complement each other, with one representing the traditional library, and the other emphasizing the role and needs of the modern library.

I drew inspiration from Asplund's earlier design proposals and the existing bazaar which connects the library with the city. I also borrowed some features from the existing library. In my design, I repeated the visual motif of the Stockholm City Library's base (bazaar). However, my building is intended to be less imposing than the monumentality of the original Stockholm City Library. Hereby, the monumentality of the existing building is kept or even strengthened, while it keeps functioning as an institute of knowledge for the city. The new addition enhances the connection between the park and the city, while also providing a sense of belonging, focusing on the importance of the library for the local community.

<sup>01</sup> Drawing by Asplund: Stockholm, Public Library, perspective of back of library with proposed Odenhallen (market), 1926'

<sup>02</sup> Adjusted Drawing: Stockholm, Public Library, proposed Odenhallen and the exiting annex buildings combined



Drawing  
Floorplan version 1

## First Concept

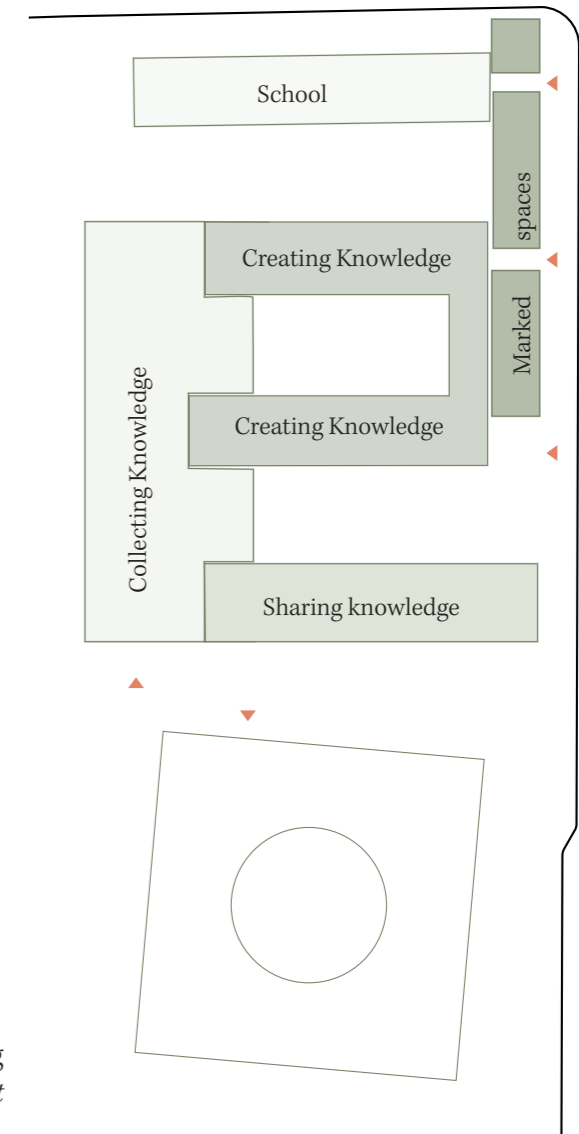
### Programm

Because of the monumentality of the Stockholm City Library, I decided to build my extension next to it, utilizing the existing annex buildings. This new structure will house functions missing in the original library. The Stockholm City Library mainly consists of book storage and study/working spaces and struggles to accommodate activities like performances, lectures, and events. Additionally, the traditional library's high-placed windows

separate it from the environment. My design aims to do the opposite, integrating with the surroundings. It will also house louder activities, like makerspaces, since the original library requires silence. The market should also find a place in the design. This diagram shows my initial thoughts on how this could work programmatically, adding a fourth annex and using the three existing buildings to create three courtyards simultaneously.

#### Program:

- **School:**  
*sharing and applied knowlege*
- **Creating Knowledge**  
*Maker spaces/ co-working*
- **Sharing Knowledge**  
*social, discusion & lecture spaces*
- **Collecting Knowledge**  
*flexible, changing Collections*
- **Marked Spaces**  
*Connecting library & City*

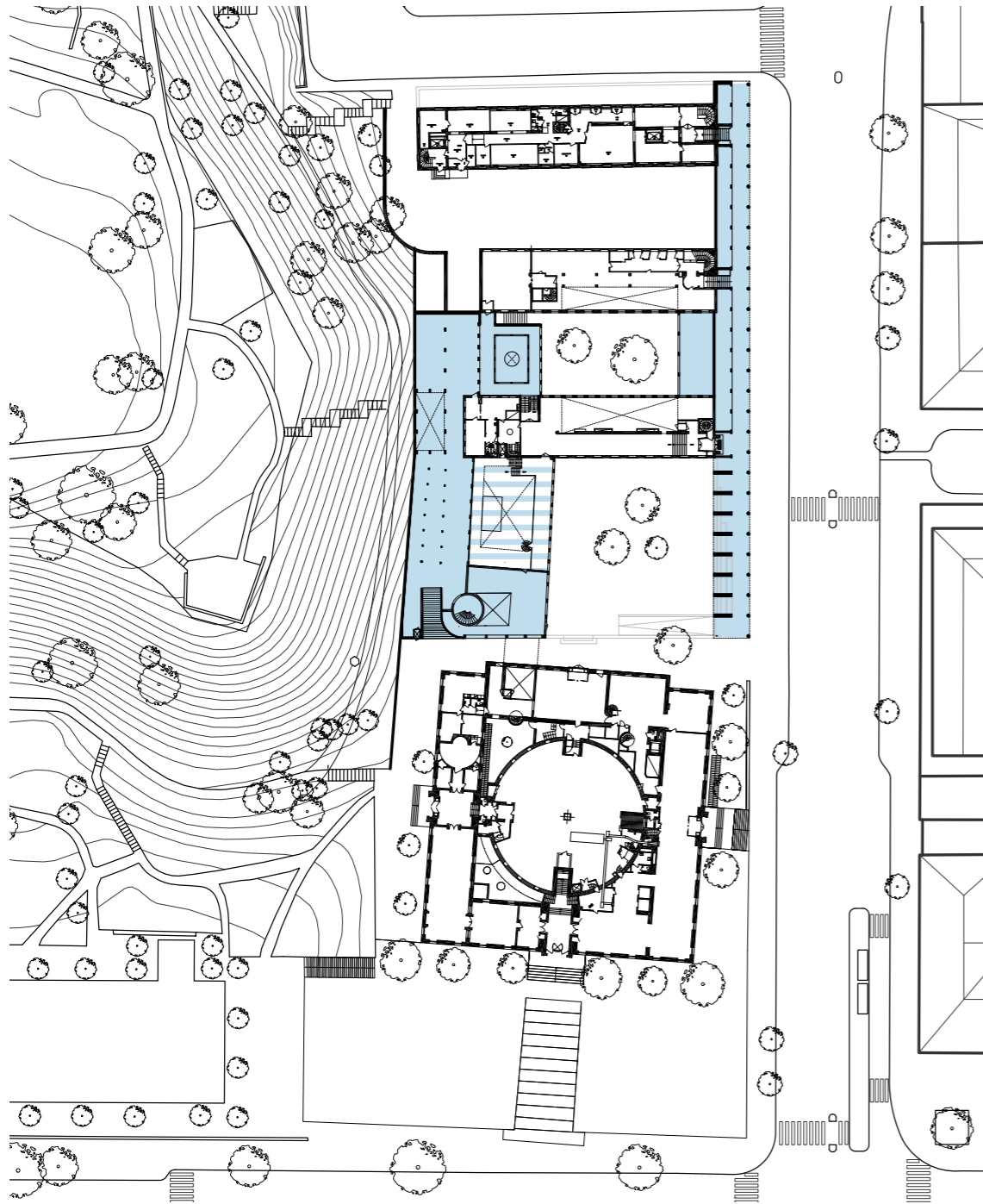


Drawing  
Diagram of first concept

## First Concept

### *Ground Floor*

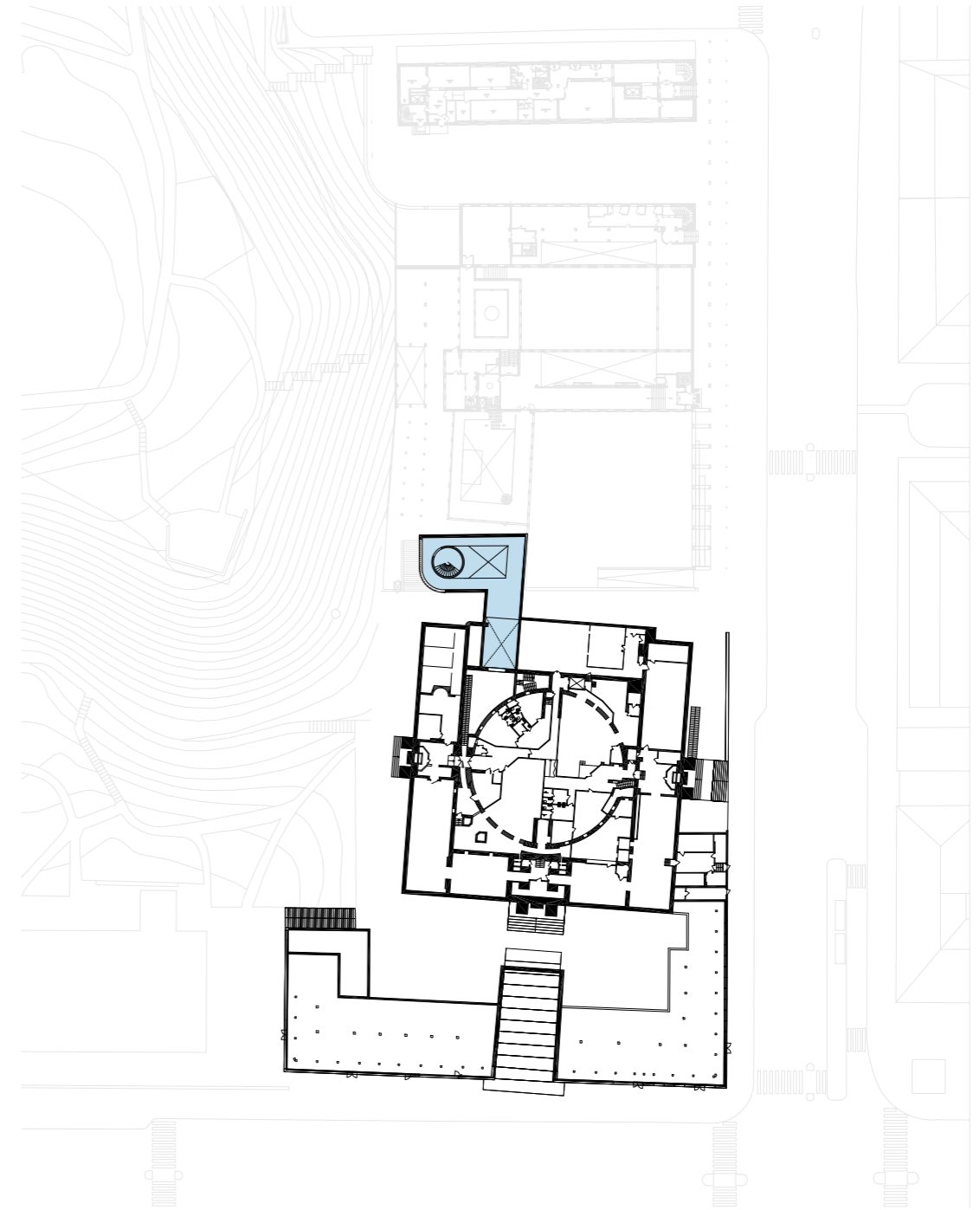
In this concept, I highlighted the parts I added in blue. Notably, I aimed to preserve as much of the existing buildings as possible. In this version, I did not include the fourth annex, but I later realized that I need this building to house essential functions.



## First Concept

### *Basement*

In this version of the basement, I am making minimal changes, except for adding an underground connection to the Stockholm City Library. This version is fully accessible to library visitors. However, in later versions of my design, I decided to make the basement accessible only to library staff, functioning as a back-of-house connection.



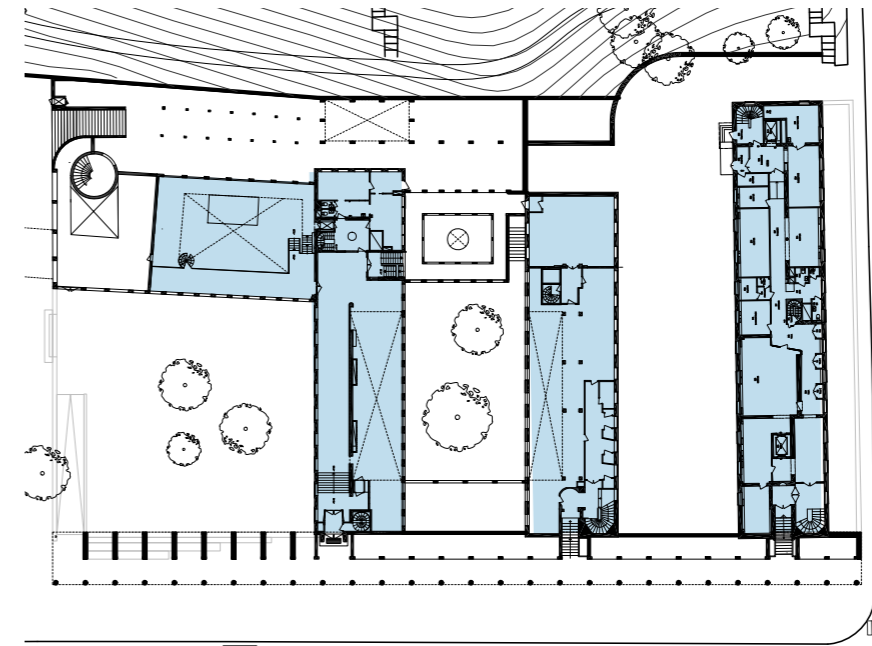


Photograph  
one of the staircases  
in the 2th anex  
building

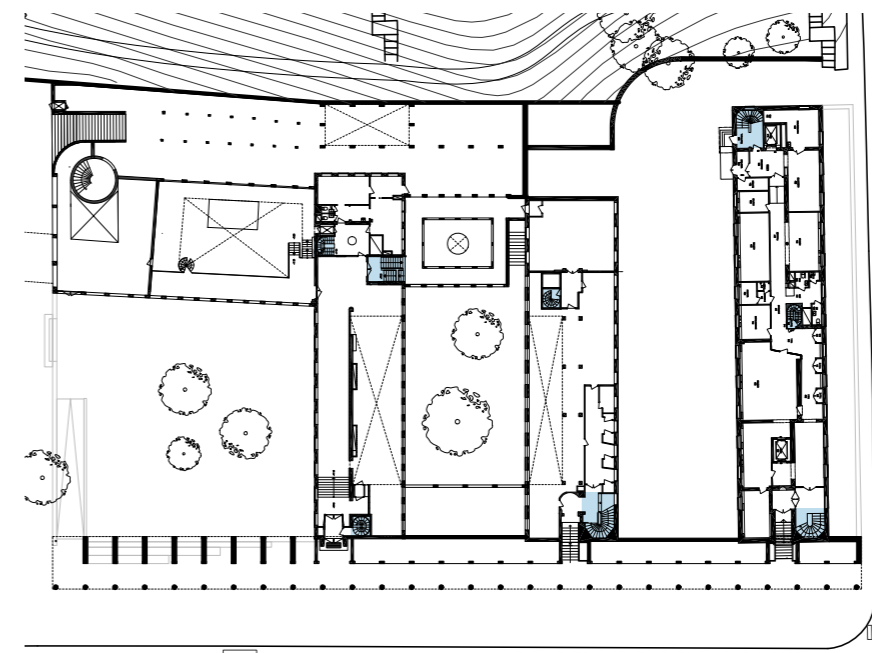
## First Concept

*Heritage: Respect the existing buildings*

In these drawings, you can see my effort to preserve as much as possible of the existing annex buildings, recognizing their historical value. These structures reveal layers of time, showcasing the evolution of architectural styles. Inside, there are stunning staircases with significant architectural value that I am determined to retain.



Drawing  
floorplan,  
Highlighting  
existing



Drawing  
floorplan,  
Highlighting  
Staircases

note:

*Somehow, the location clings to its function as a market space, despite its current unsuitability. The three annex buildings don't offer enough room to accommodate a large market, yet the historical essence of a marketplace endures. Small market spaces have emerged between the buildings, each with its unique material, scale, color, and construction. Some are temporary, others more permanent, but all seem awkwardly situated. I believe the location deserves thoughtfully designed spots where the market can thrive, restoring the historical value of a marketplace to this site.*

#### Photo Collage

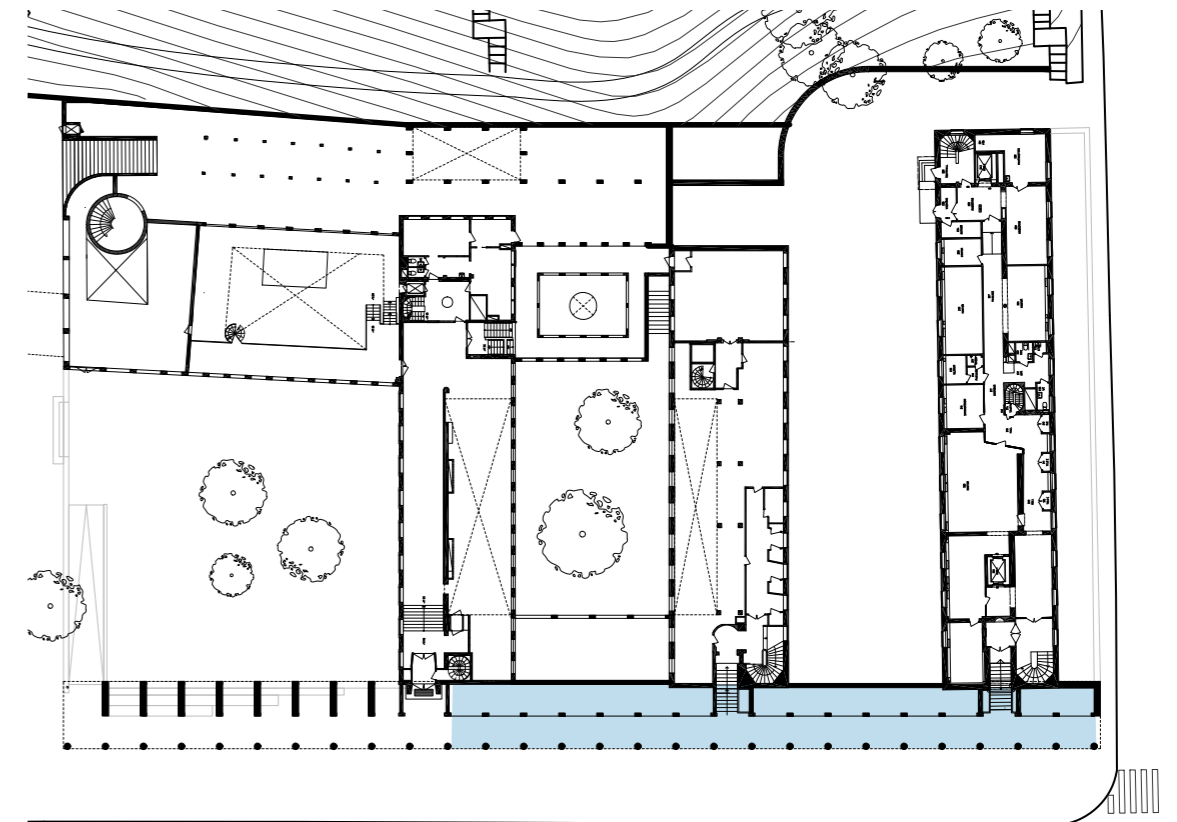
*Screenshots from google maps showing the small marked stands inbetween the annex buildings*



## First Concept

### *Heritage: The Marked spaces*

In my research, I discovered that the marketplace holds historical significance for the site, having always been a central feature. I believe the market is a vibrant social space, fostering meaningful interactions within the community, and it would be a valuable addition to the library. I envision giving it a thoughtfully designed space, as it is currently awkwardly situated among secondary structures between the annex buildings.

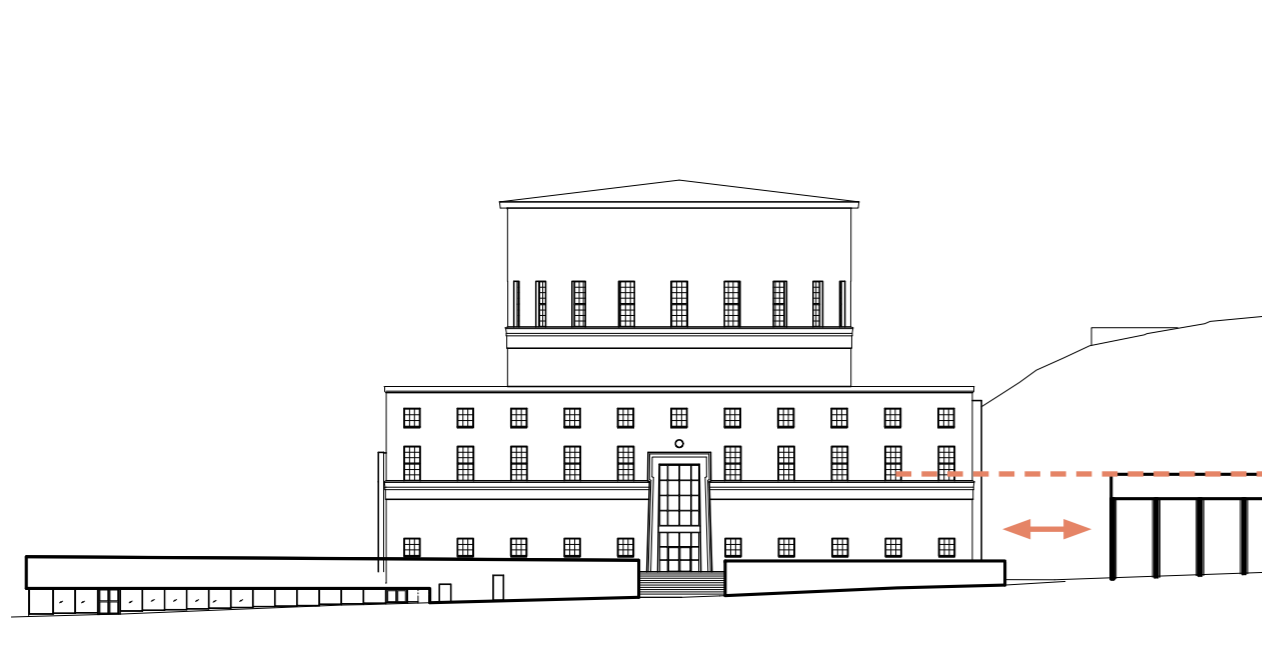


*Drawing  
floorplan,  
Highlighting  
marked Spaces*

## First Concept

### North Elevation

This initial concept of the North elevation illustrates how the colonnade I added in front of the annex buildings connects visually to the bazaar of the Stockholm City Library. They share the same width, creating a cohesive visual link. Both structures serve a similar purpose, surrounding the library and housing more commercial functions. In red, I highlighted some of the feedback I received on this drawing, which helped me refine the design of the colonnade.



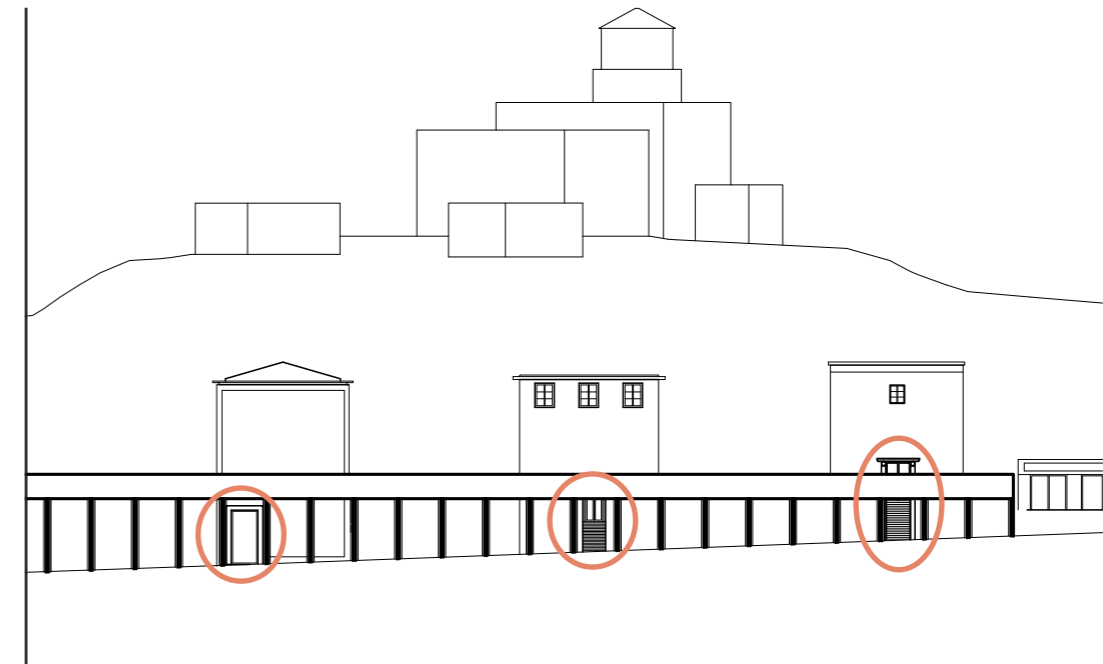
#### FEEDBACK FROM THE TUTORS

*“Why is the colonnade higher than the ornamental plinth of the Stockholm City Library?”*

To make your design less monumental than the Stockholm City Library, the building should be lower than the ornamental border. This approach will make the building less imposing and show that it is subordinate to the main library.

*“How do the two facades of the libraries face each other?”*

Consider creating a visual or physical connection between the libraries. How do they relate in terms of color, material, and scale?



#### FEEDBACK FROM THE TUTORS

*“How do the entrances of the annex buildings connect with the colonnade?”*

The colonnade in front of the annex buildings currently obstructs their entrances. How can you visually and functionally integrate the two?

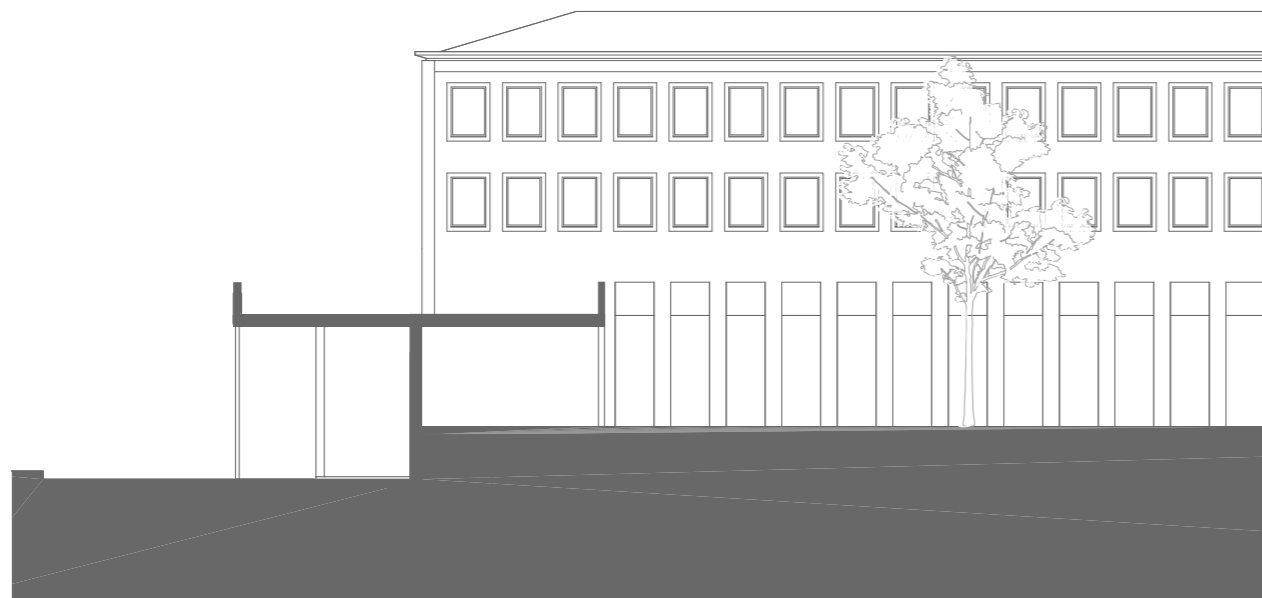
*“How do you open up the colonnade, but keep the marked spaces?”*

Adding the colonnade has closed off the library from the city, blocking its connection with the hill and park. Can you design the colonnade to invite access to the courtyards, hill, and park, while preserving the market spaces?

## FEEDBACK:

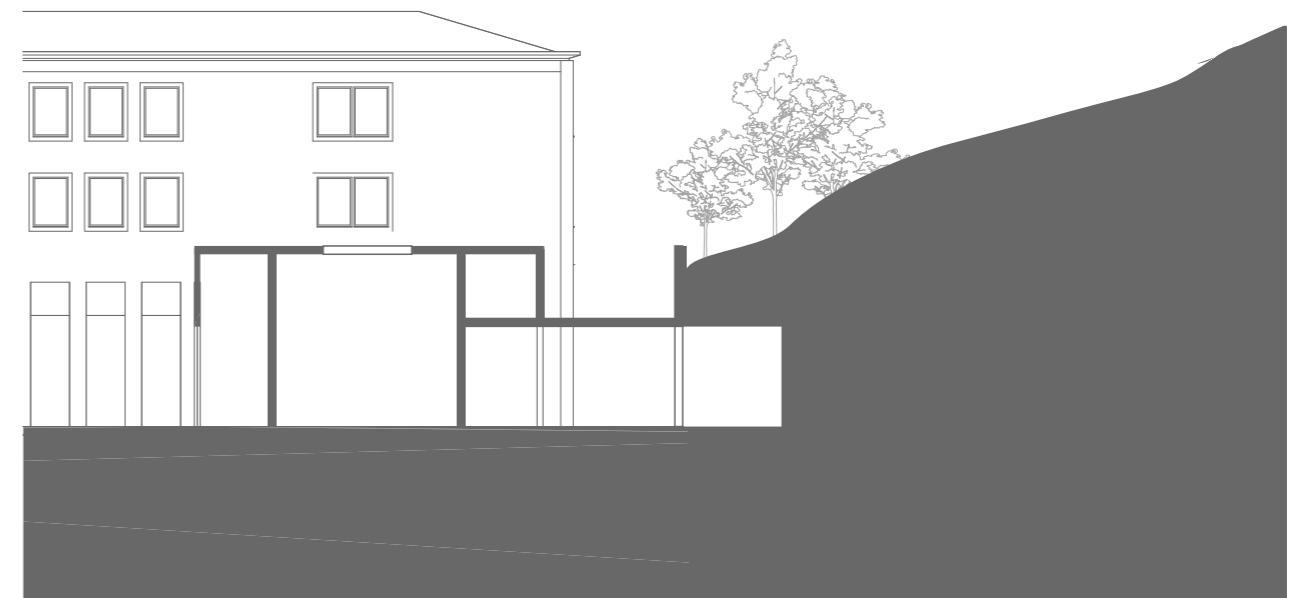
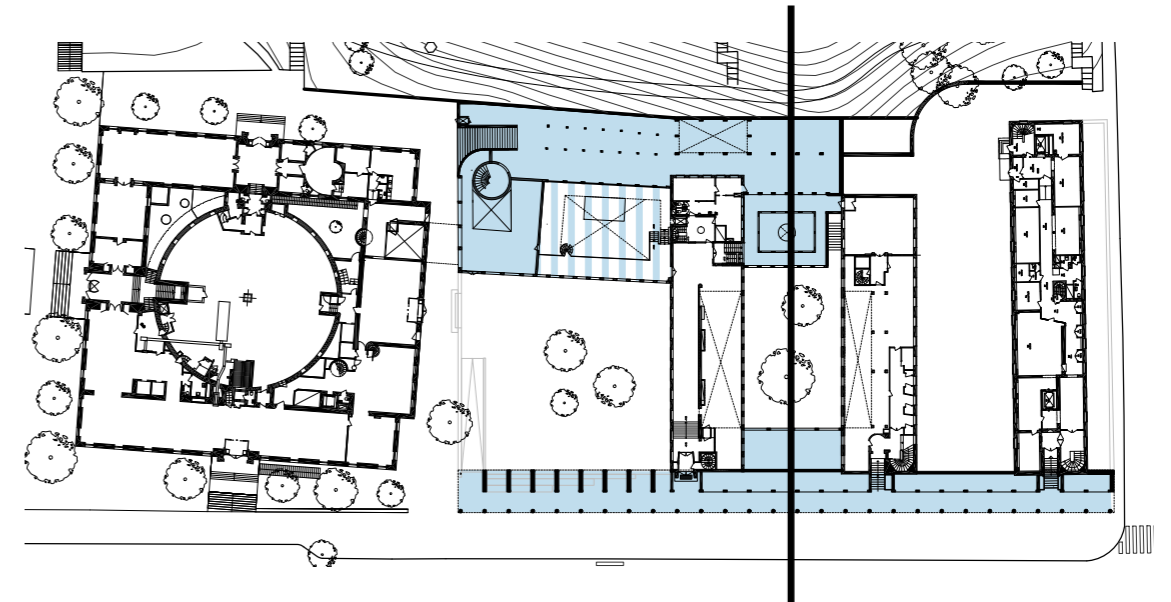
*The colonnade in front of the annexes has created a courtyard between them. This space could be green and relaxing, connecting people with nature. But the building also needs to connect with the hill behind it. The hill comes down onto the building in this area. We need to decide how the hill should interact with the courtyards. Should it continue into them? Should it become the roof of the new library? Or should we block it with a wall?*

*We also need to think about how the street and the colonnade relate. Right now, the colonnade blocks the courtyards from the city. But could these areas be made public? Could they connect with the street somehow? These are important questions as we plan how the library and its surroundings will develop.*



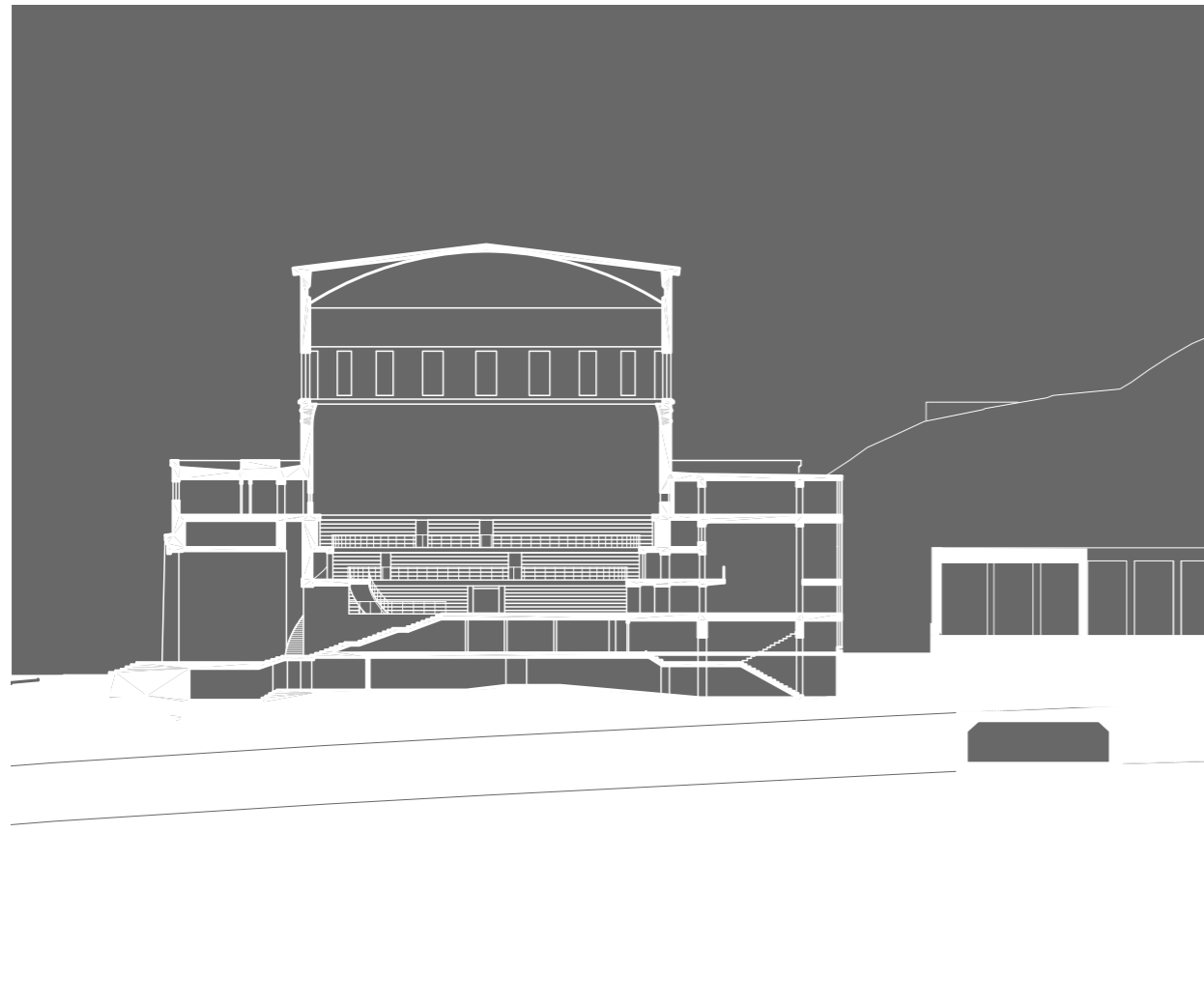
## First Concept

### Sections



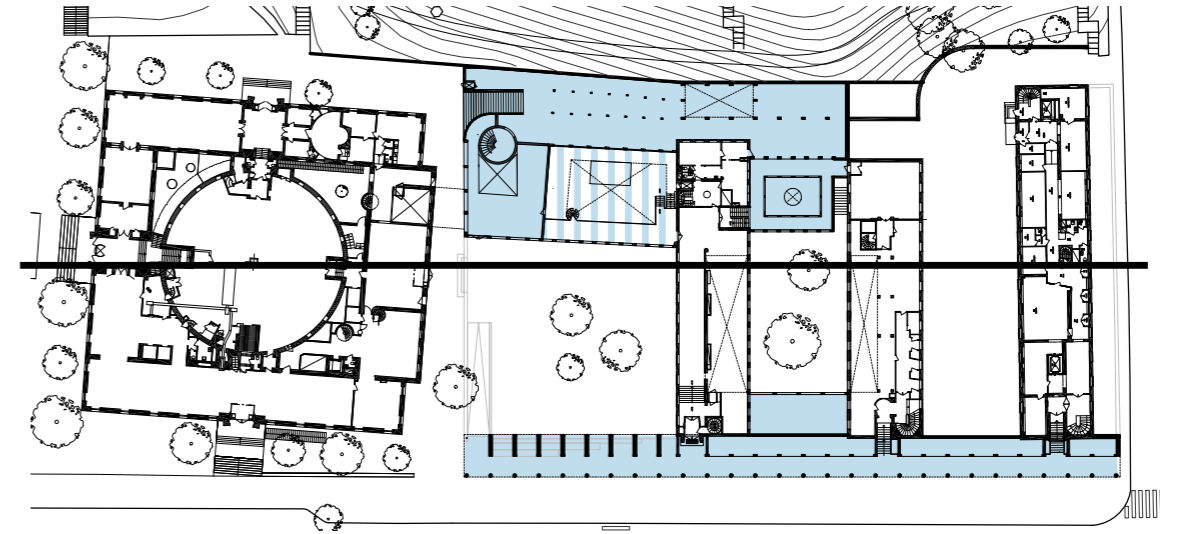
## FEEDBACK:

*All the annexes have varying floor heights, and the entire site is sloped. Connecting all four annex buildings under these conditions is a challenging task. To address this, I am adjusting the ground levels in each courtyard, creating a unified ground floor that links all the buildings together. Future designs need to explore these connections further—where the buildings are interconnected and how people can move freely from one building to another.*



## First Concept

### Sections

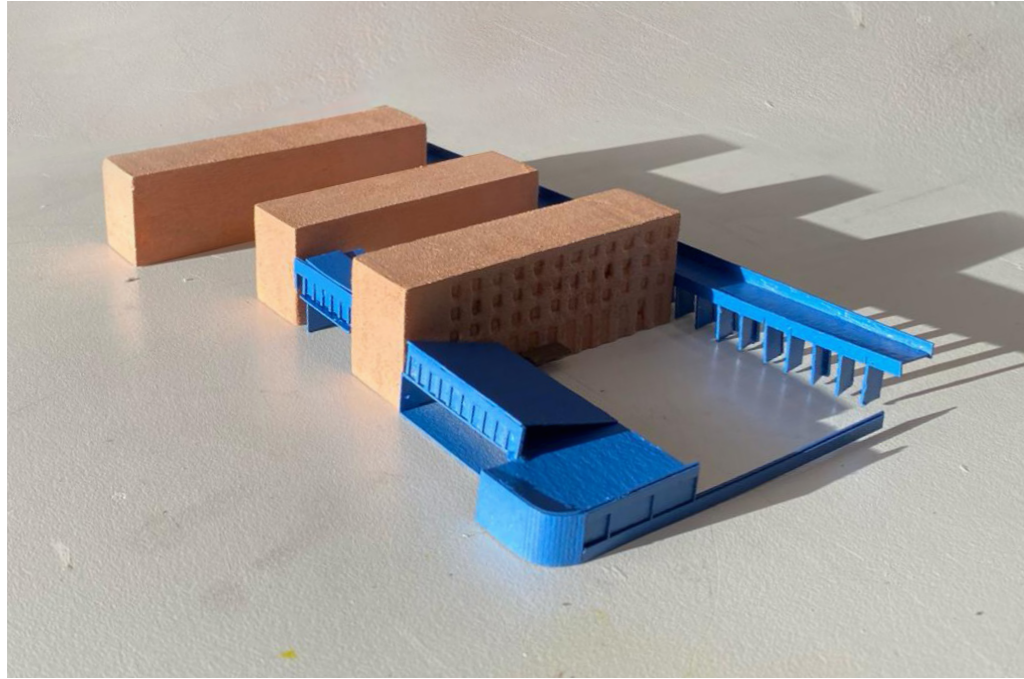


## First Concept

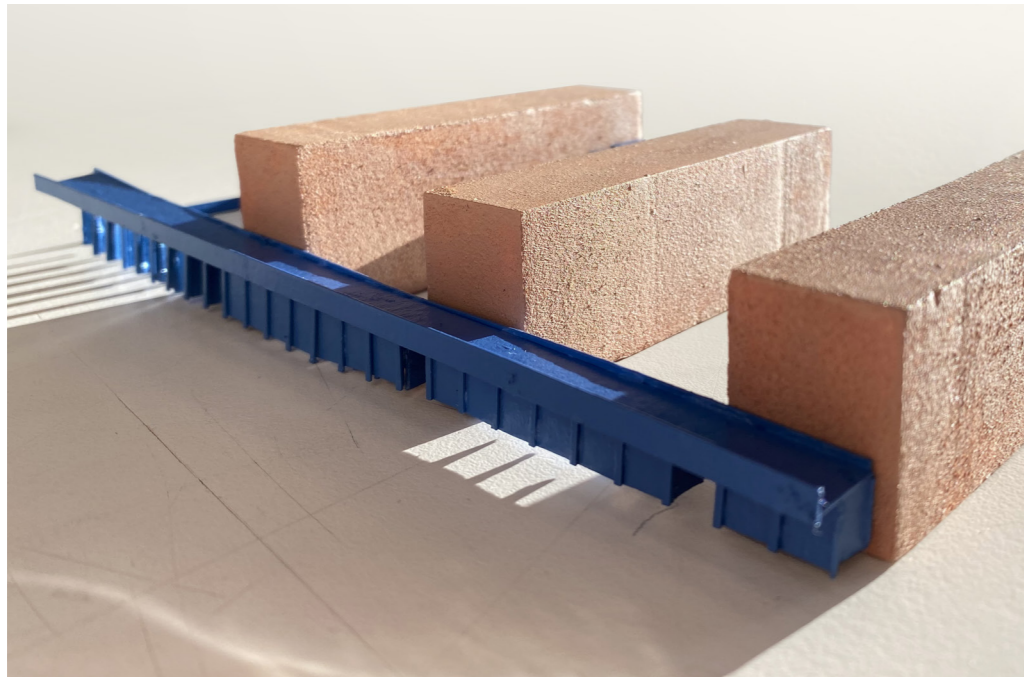
### *Schematic Model*

This model shows the three existing annex buildings in red and my proposed addition in blue. An essential feature is the colonnade at the front, which houses the marked spaces and entrances to the buildings. At the back, the building connects the second and third annex. Although my design has evolved significantly, this initial model served as a valuable starting point for spatial investigation, helping to identify what works and what doesn't.

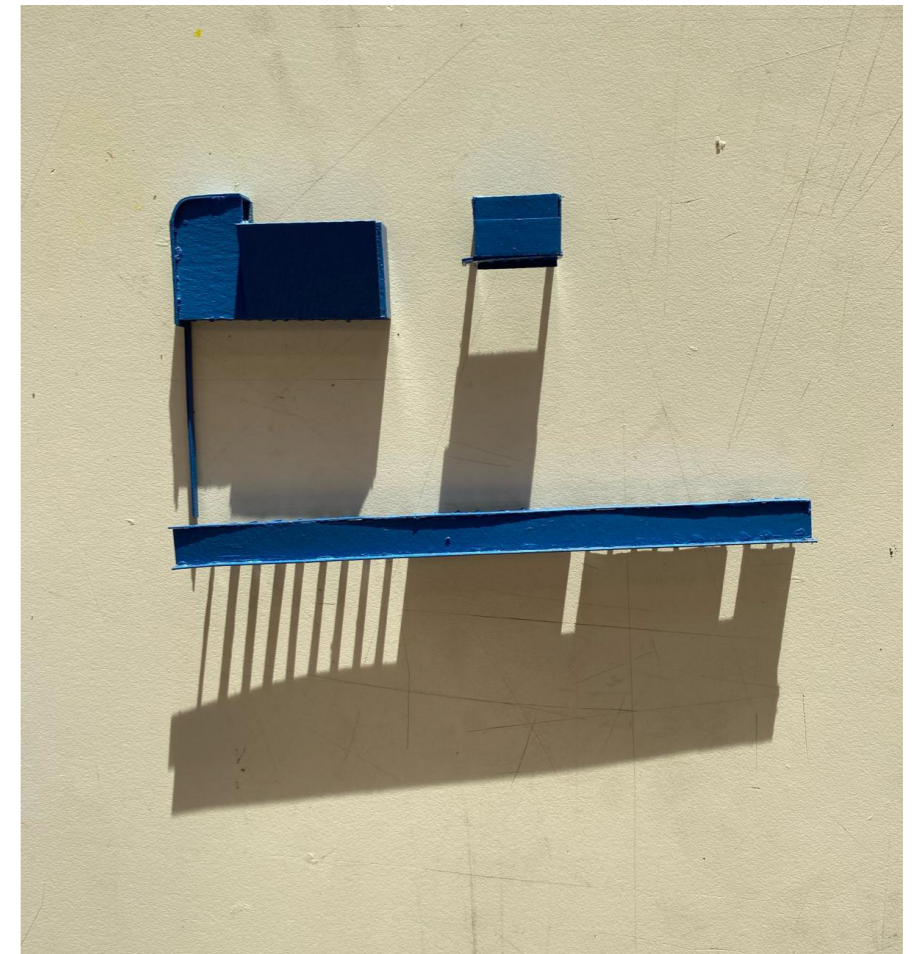
One critical issue noticed in this model is the problematic door heights of the annex buildings, along with the design's closure of the courtyards. Addressing these challenges, my subsequent models explored various solutions to improve the integration and functionality of the spaces. By refining these elements, I aim to enhance the coherence and accessibility of the addition, ensuring it respects the heritage.



Model  
1:500



Model  
1:500



Model  
1:500  
*Addition to the  
existing*



photo  
*Street Colonnade,  
 Stockholm, Jacobsgatan  
 2024*

## First Concept

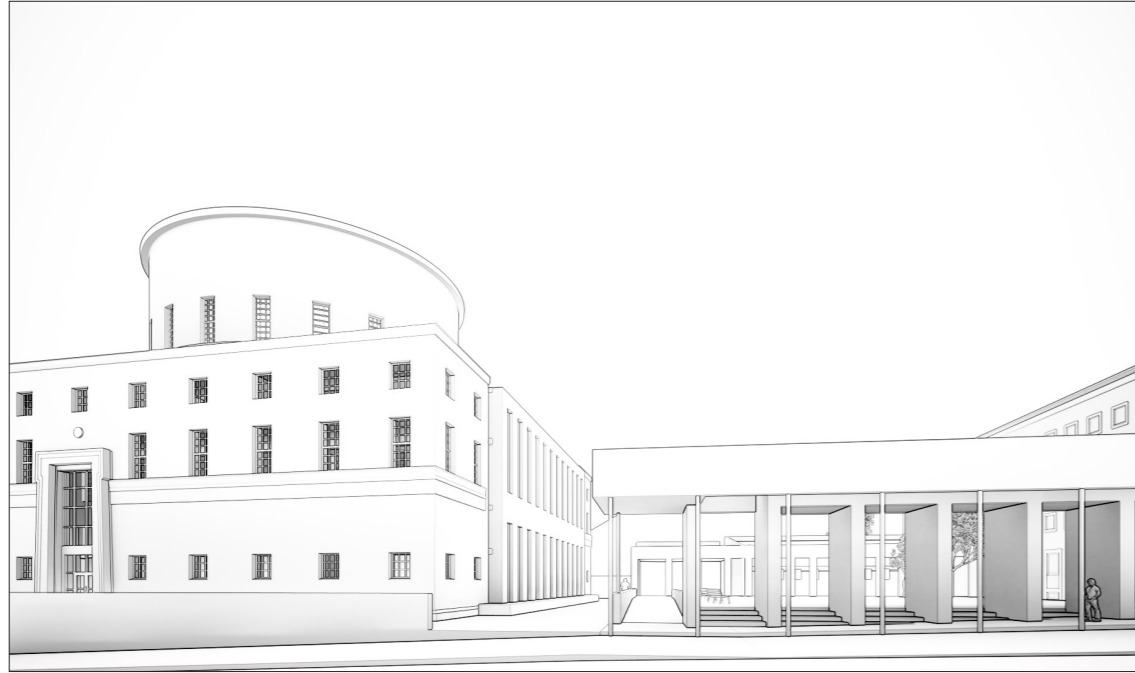
### *The Colonnade*

In this initial version of the colonnade, it effectively blocks the annex buildings, except for staircases that provide access at the entrances. These openings maintain connectivity to the annexes, while the remainder of the structure incorporates market spaces into its facade. However, a major drawback is that this design obscures the visibility of the annex buildings, diminishing their historical significance. Furthermore, there is a lack of connection

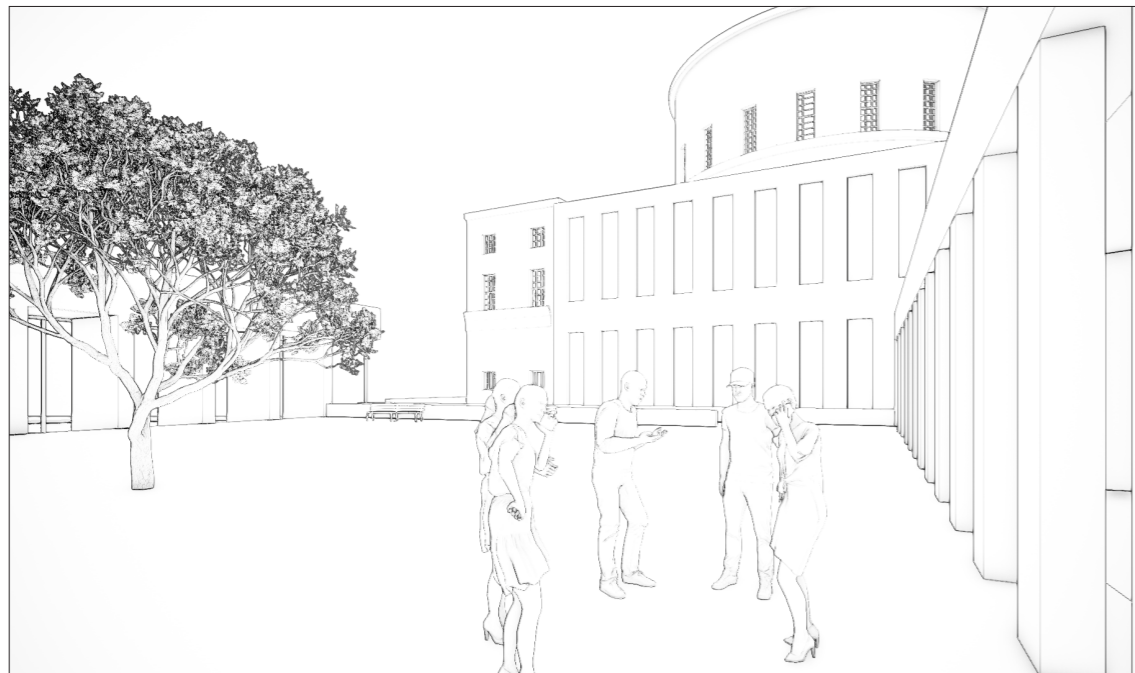
with the courtyard and the adjacent hill. The inspiration for this colonnade design came from observing similar structures in Stockholm, such as the one on Jacobsgatan. Colonnades are a common architectural feature in Sweden, known for shielding pedestrians from inclement weather. Typically, the street-facing facade of such colonnades features shop windows, offering glimpses into the interior of the building.



Drawing  
*Entrance to the school in the 1th annex  
 The colonnade in front of the Annex and the  
 staircase leading to the entrance.*



Drawing  
*The first Courtyard,  
 the colonnade opens up to the street,  
 inviting people into the public courtyard.*



Drawing  
*The first Courtyard,  
 the redesigned west-wing of the Stockholm  
 city library closes off the courtyard.*

## First Concept

### *The Courtyards*

As shown on the left page, the fourth annex building has not yet been included in my initial concept. The first courtyard is defined by the west facade of the Stockholm City Library, redesigned in this concept, the third annex building and the colonnade structure. This courtyard accommodates social functions such as events, markets, and performances. The colonnade on the left page is open, serving as an entrance to the public courtyard.

The second courtyard, depicted in the image below, is situated between the second and third annex buildings. In this design, it is envisioned as a more private space suitable for users of the makerspaces. Here, individuals can take breaks outdoors in the green courtyard, engage in leisure activities, or work outside. Additionally, a staircase leads up to the hill, providing an opportunity for contemplation during a walk uphill.



Drawing  
*The second courtyard  
 in between the 2th and  
 the 3th Annex buildings*

## A Difficult Whole

Looking close (again)

*After we looked closely at the existing Asplund library for P1 and then zoomed out for P2's design, it's time to zoom back in. Now, we're going to focus on the details of our own design compared to what's already there. We'll carefully think about things like size, shape, and materials to make sure our new additions blend well with the old ones. We'll make a detailed model and drawings to show how everything fits together. This will help us understand why we made certain decisions and will highlight important parts of our design. Through this iterative process, we develop a deeper understanding of the relationship of our design with the existing context.*



photo  
P3 model  
1:33

## Digital Model

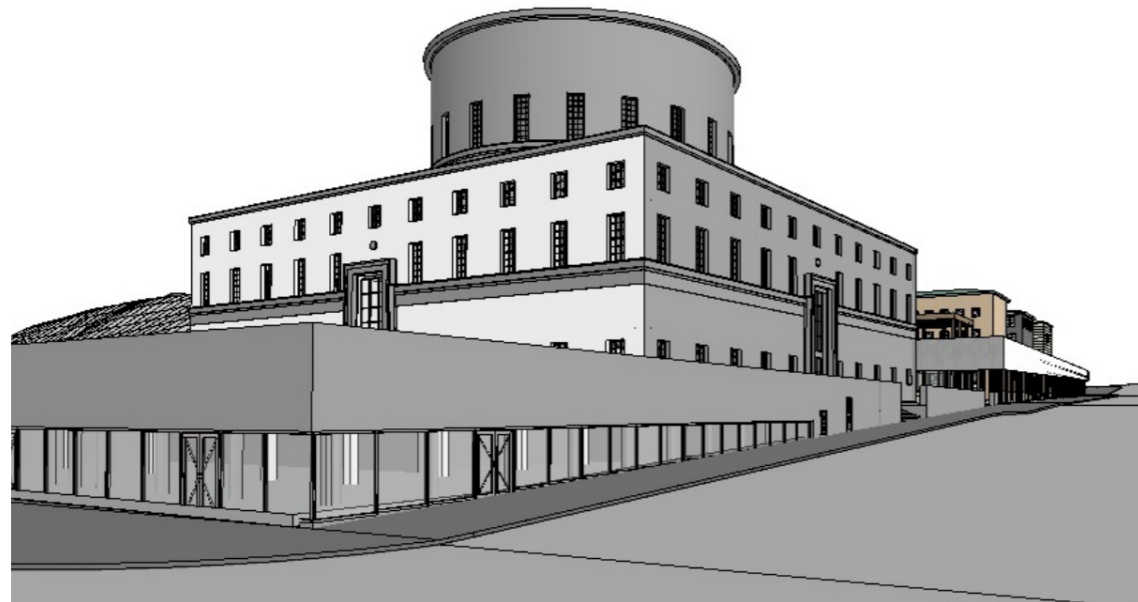
*working precise*

To further develop the project, transitioning from 2D to 3D was essential. I began by creating numerous models, both physical and digital. Drawing the existing situation in Archicad required careful examination of the archival drawings of the annex buildings. This process allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of every detail of these structures.

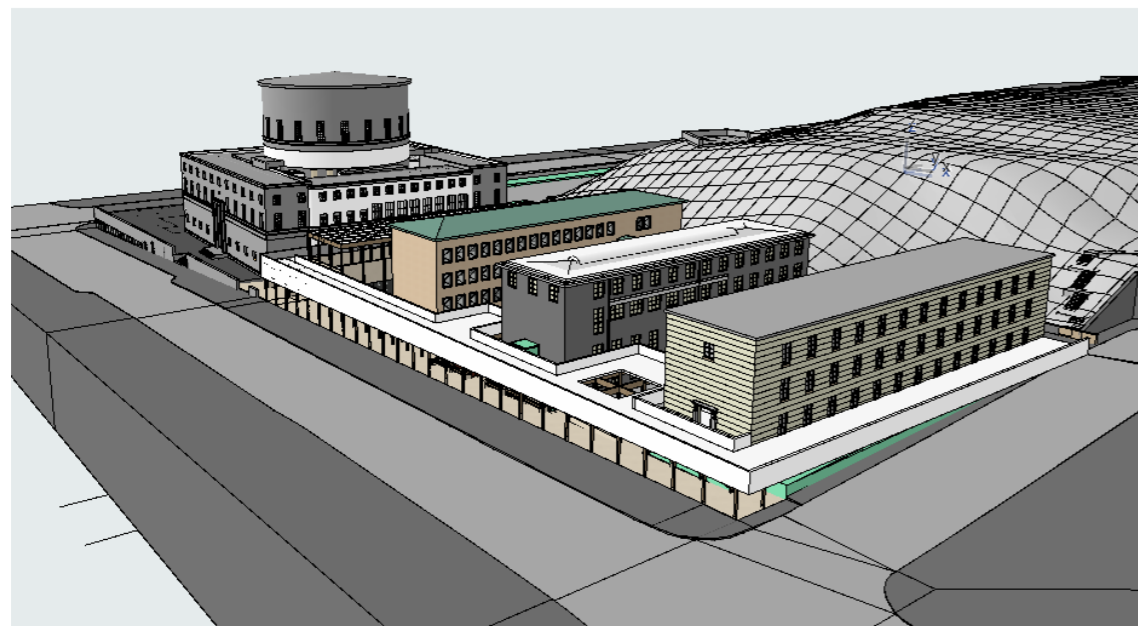
The digital model became the foundation for my design. In Archicad, I could quickly test ideas in 3D, switching between elevation, section, plan, and perspective views with just a few clicks. This flexibility was crucial for designing a building that interacts with three different structures, each with varying floor heights, and a site that slopes with a hill pushing at the back.

Additionally, I could easily explore how the new building would connect with the Stockholm Public Library, both visually and physically.

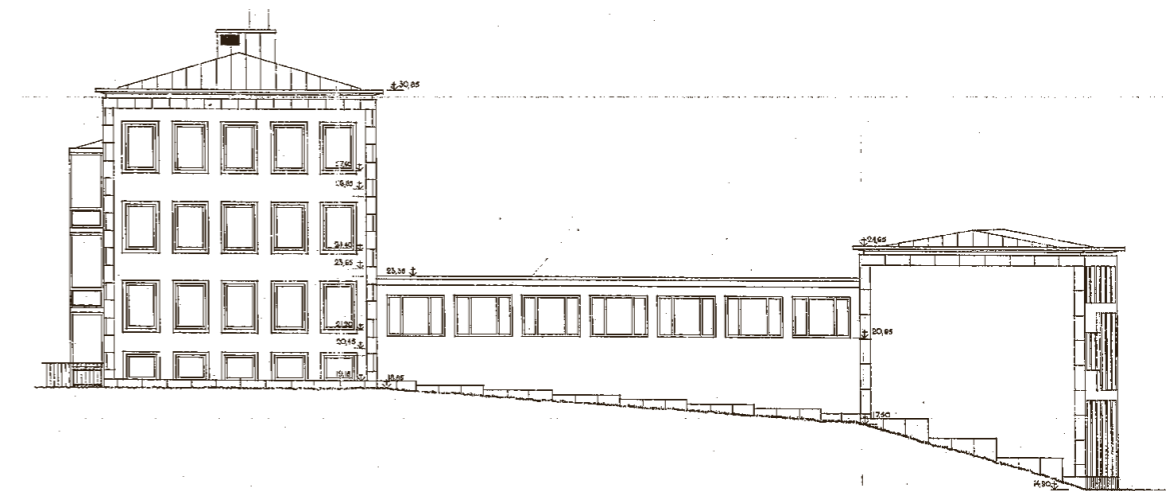
Archival Drawing  
*South facade,  
3th Annex building*

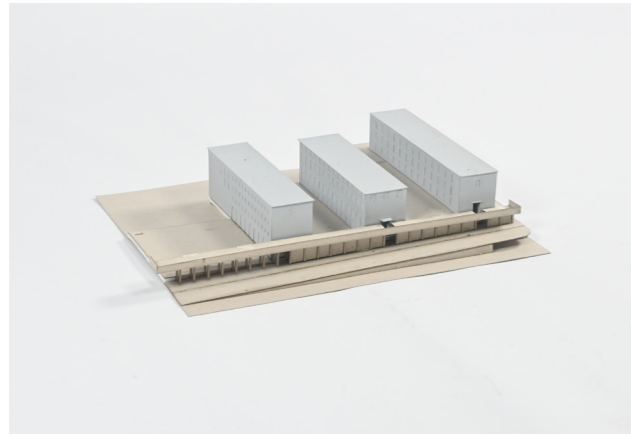


Digital model  
*3D view towards the libraries*



Digital model  
*Bird-eye perspective on the libraries*





03



04



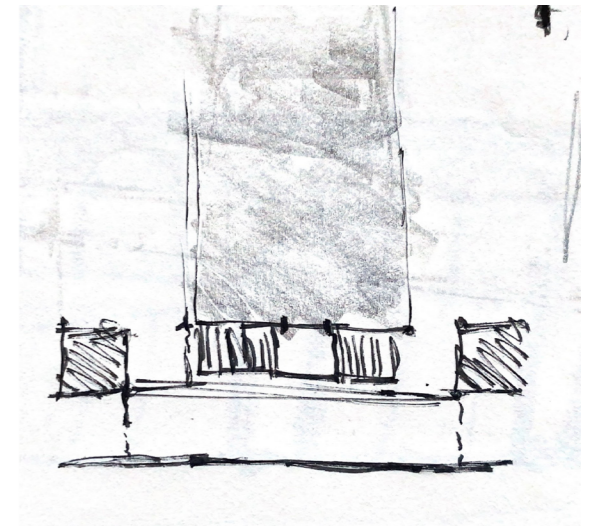
05

## The Colonnade

### *Exploring the possibilities and challenges*

I've been investigating the research questions by making models (see examples on previous page), analyzing other projects, and reading relevant literature. I've continuously switched between these research methods, documenting the entire process in my Project Journal. This approach allowed me to share my progress and thoughts with my tutors while also reflecting on my design and decision-making process.

In addition to model-making, I filled four whole notebooks with hand drawings, quickly transferring ideas from my head to paper. This practice helped me remember concepts and review past ideas. The iterative nature of this process has been crucial for my project's development. By engaging in this cycle of creation, analysis, and reflection, I've been able to refine my design and ensure it aligns with my goals and research findings.



*This drawing is very sketch but was exactly what I eventually designed. If you look good you can see the staircase in front of an anex with the collonade in front of it. The collonade is not touching the building.*

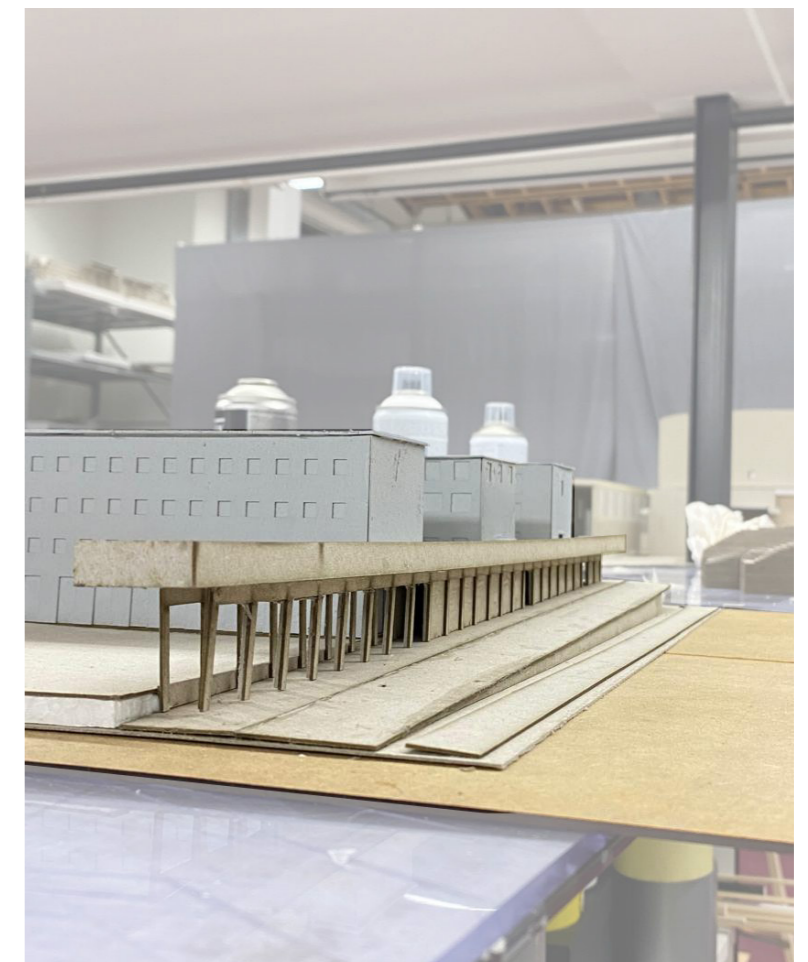
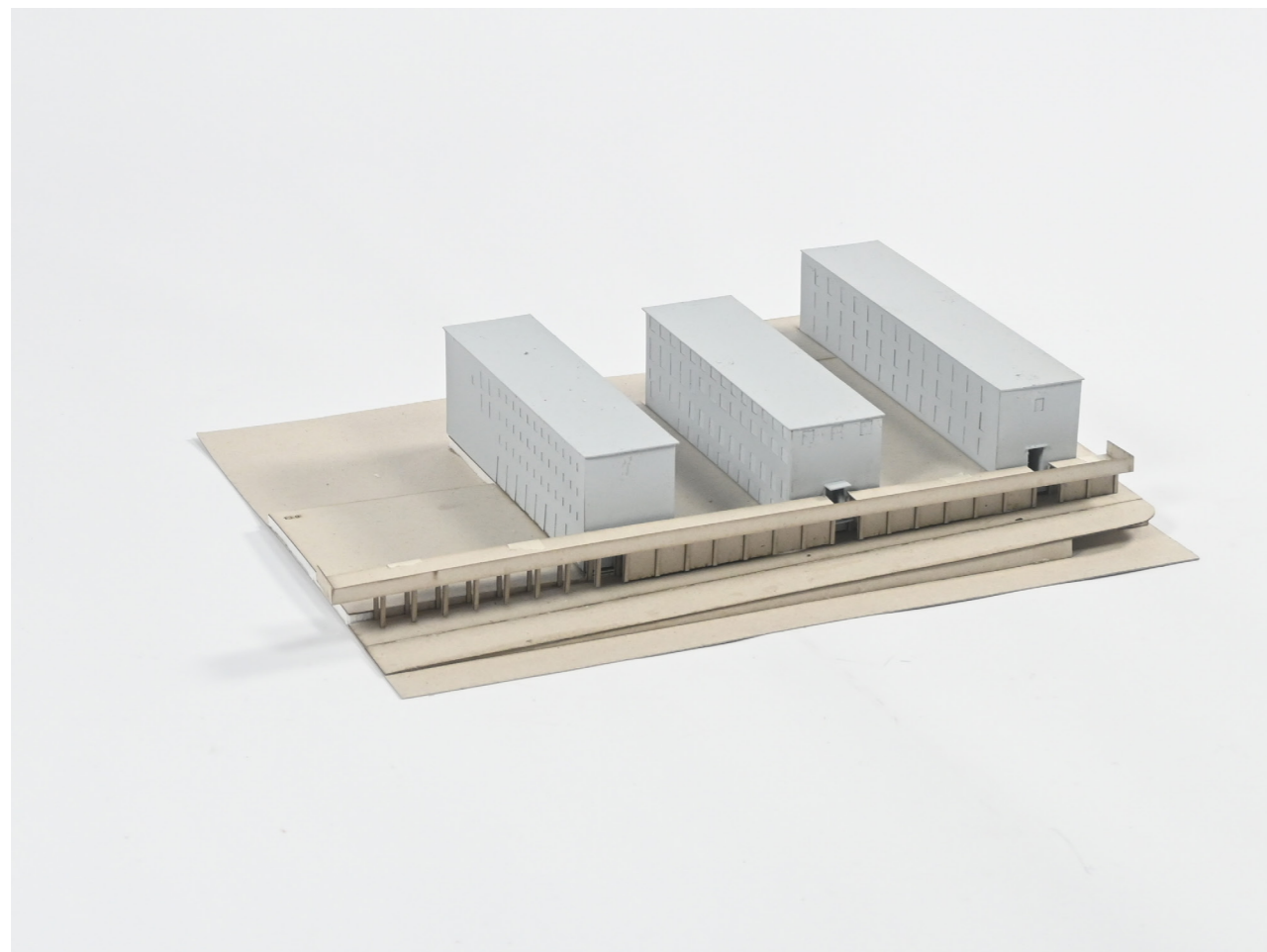
<sup>03</sup> Image of a 1:200 model

<sup>04</sup> Image of a 1:50 model

<sup>05</sup> Image of a 1:33 model

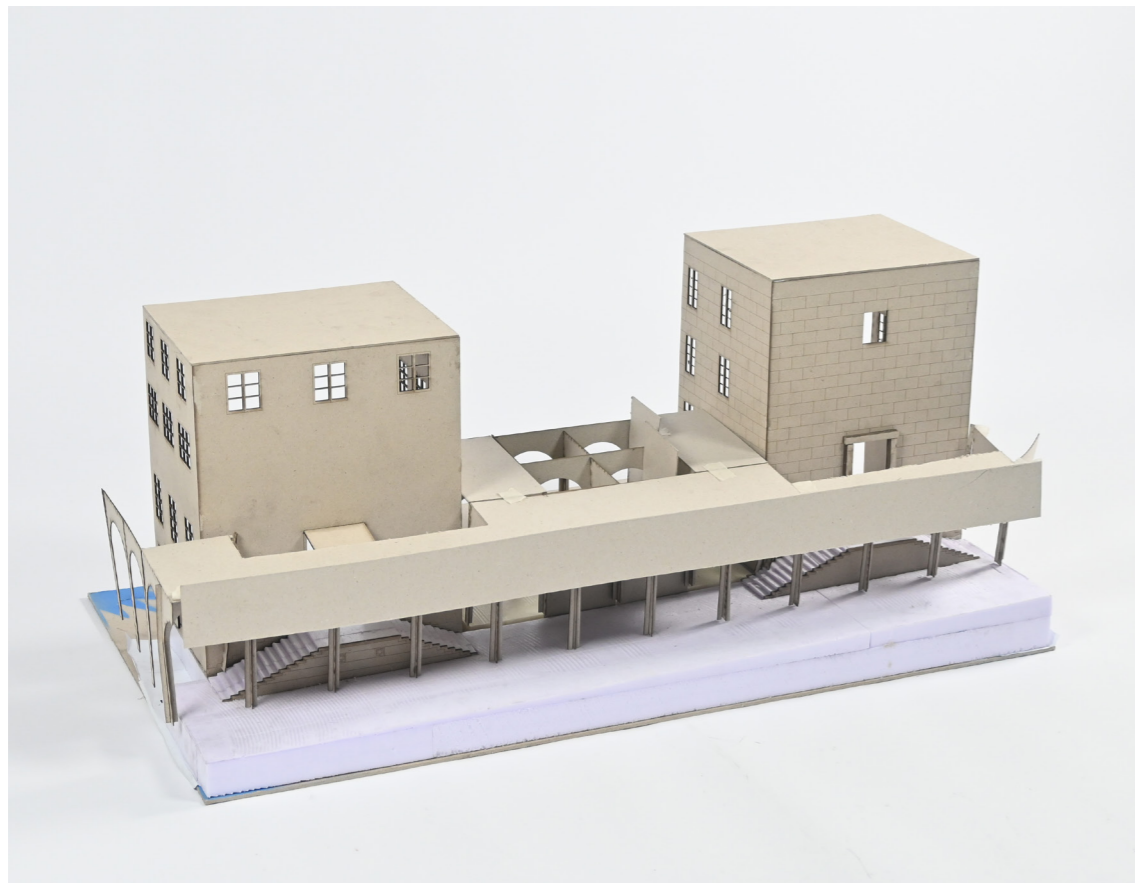
**Model 1:200***The Colonnade in front of the Annex Buildings*

In this initial exploration, the colonnade is a separate element positioned in front of the annex buildings. It is open only on the left side, leading to a public courtyard. The other courtyards are blocked off and designed to be more private. The images illustrate how this design choice results in the colonnade obstructing the view of the annex buildings from the street.



**Model 1:50***The Colonnade in front of the Annex Buildings*

In this initial exploration, the colonnade is significantly more open, creating a light structure that spans in front and between the annex buildings. This design allows the buildings to remain beautifully visible. However, questions arise about how the colonnade structure will connect with the annex buildings and what the appropriate materialization should be.



**Model 1:33**

*The Colonnade in front of the Annex Buildings*



In this model, I focused closely on a section of the design to determine how elements should or shouldn't connect and what the materialization should be. The colonnade consists of wooden columns resting on a concrete base, giving the impression that this structure has landed between the annex buildings. The choice of green color contrasts with the beige and reddish tones of the annex buildings and the library. The market

spaces are slightly darker green to signify their protection from the weather and their integration into this later-added structure. Importantly, the colonnade does not touch the annex buildings, allowing daylight to emphasize their architectural features. The red-toned plaster and staircases of the annex buildings stand out more prominently in this design.





## The Color Green

### *Why is my building Green?*

In Nordic architecture, green has traditionally been used for interiors, because it creates a peaceful atmosphere and reminds people of nature, which is especially appreciated during the long winters. Meanwhile, in Sweden, they often paint the outsides of their buildings red. This tradition started because Sweden has a lot of iron ore that contains copper, making red paint both affordable and long-lasting. Even though modern technology allows for any color, Swedish buildings, still tend to use soft pastel colors on their plastered exteriors. Therefore, while architects now have more

choices, Swedish buildings maintain their unique character with these gentle colors on plastered walls. It's a way to respect their heritage and create buildings that blend harmoniously with the environment.

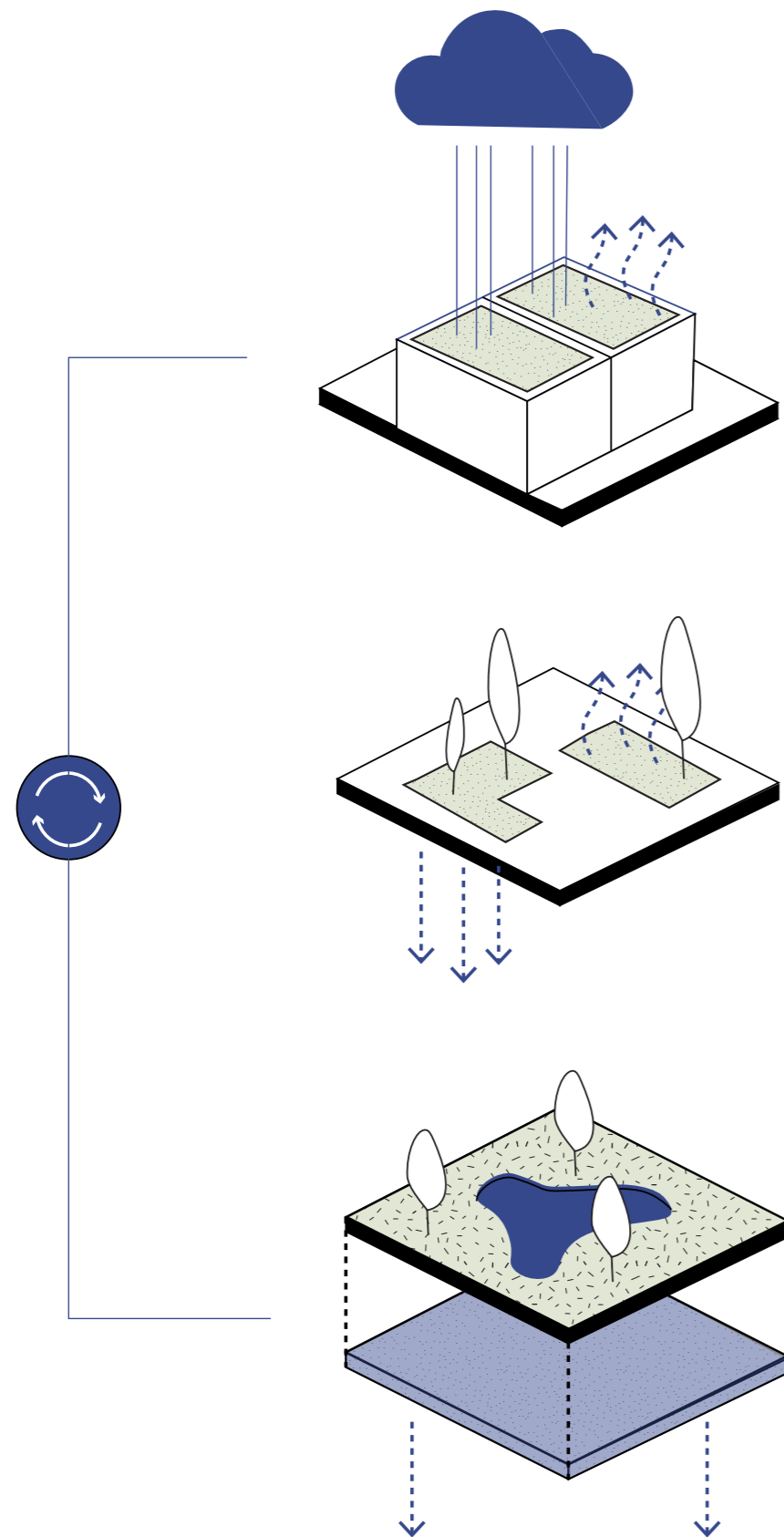
Choosing green for my design reflects my intention to blur the boundaries between inside and outside spaces. Using a color typically associated with interiors helps integrate the colonnade and outdoor public spaces into the indoor library environment seamlessly. This approach makes the entire area feel like a welcoming public space



Photo  
interior Freelandsmuseet, Denmark  
photo by: Kim Holtermann



Photo  
Gamla Stan,  
old city centre of Stockholm



Schematic Drawing  
Rainwater system

## Rainwater System

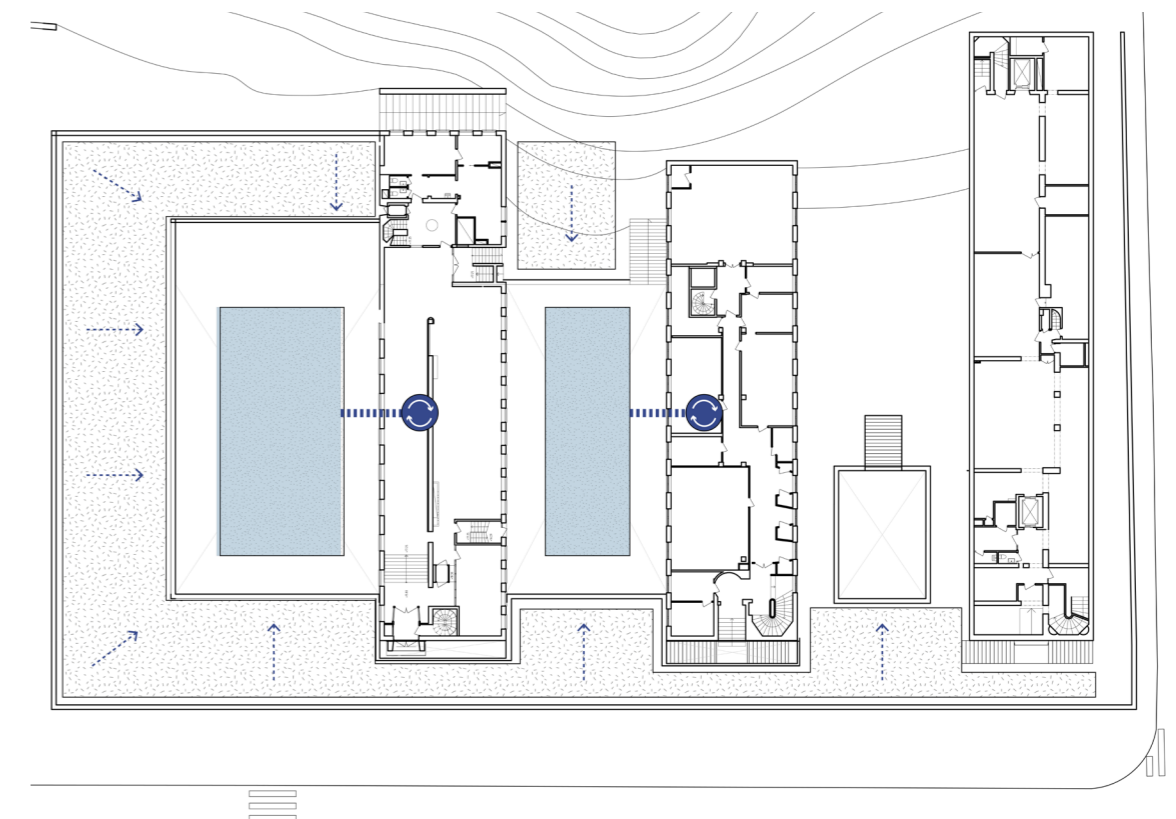
*The storage and use of rainwater in the graywater system and in case of drought.*

My building has a large roof surface and plenty of greenery, including plants and trees, which work well together. The big roof collects rainwater that is stored in basins in the courtyards. This stored water can be used during dry periods to water the plants and for the building's graywater system.

This design is very sustainable. It uses rainwater efficiently, reducing the need for external water sources and easing the pressure on city water supplies, especially during droughts. With climate change causing more extreme weather

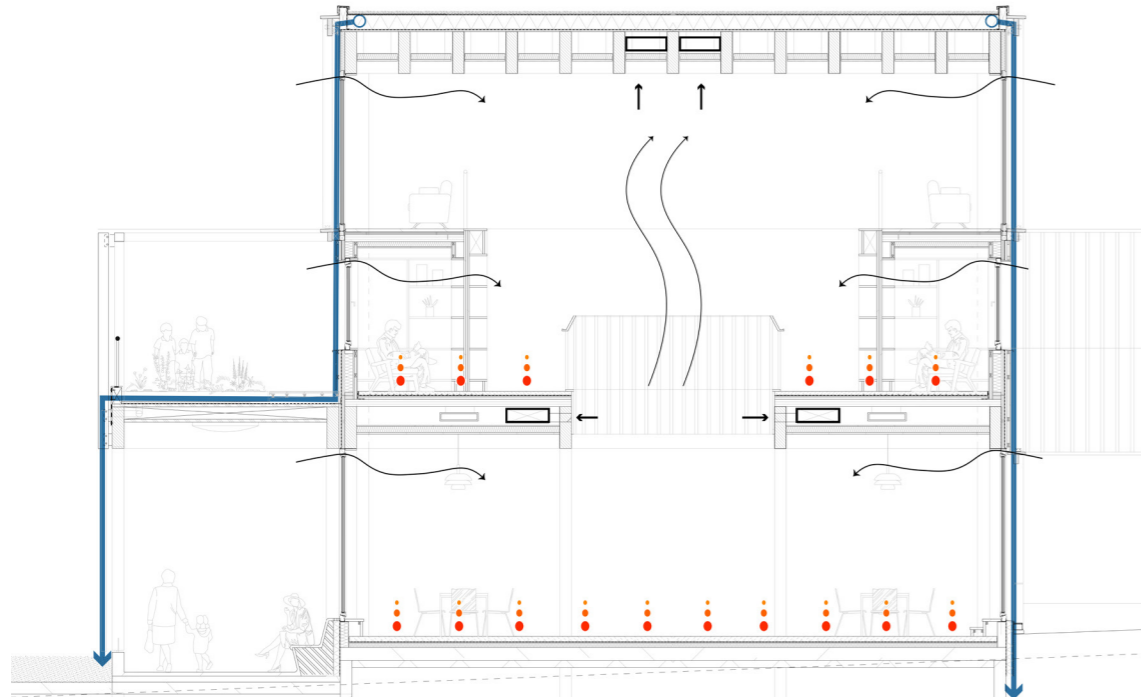
in Sweden, like heavy rain and long dry spells, this system is very helpful. It acts like a sponge during heavy rain, soaking up excess water and preventing floods. During dry periods, the stored rainwater can be used to keep the plants hydrated and support other water needs in the building.

By collecting and storing rainwater, the building not only saves water but also adapts well to different weather conditions. This approach shows a commitment to sustainability and resilience against climate change.



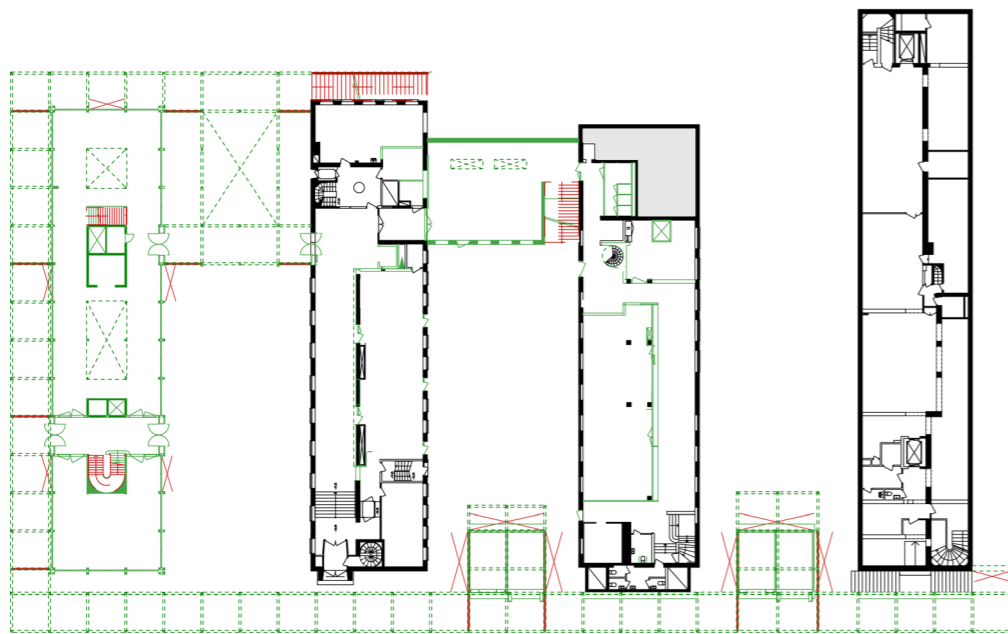
## Climate Diagram

*Floorheating and natural ventilation*



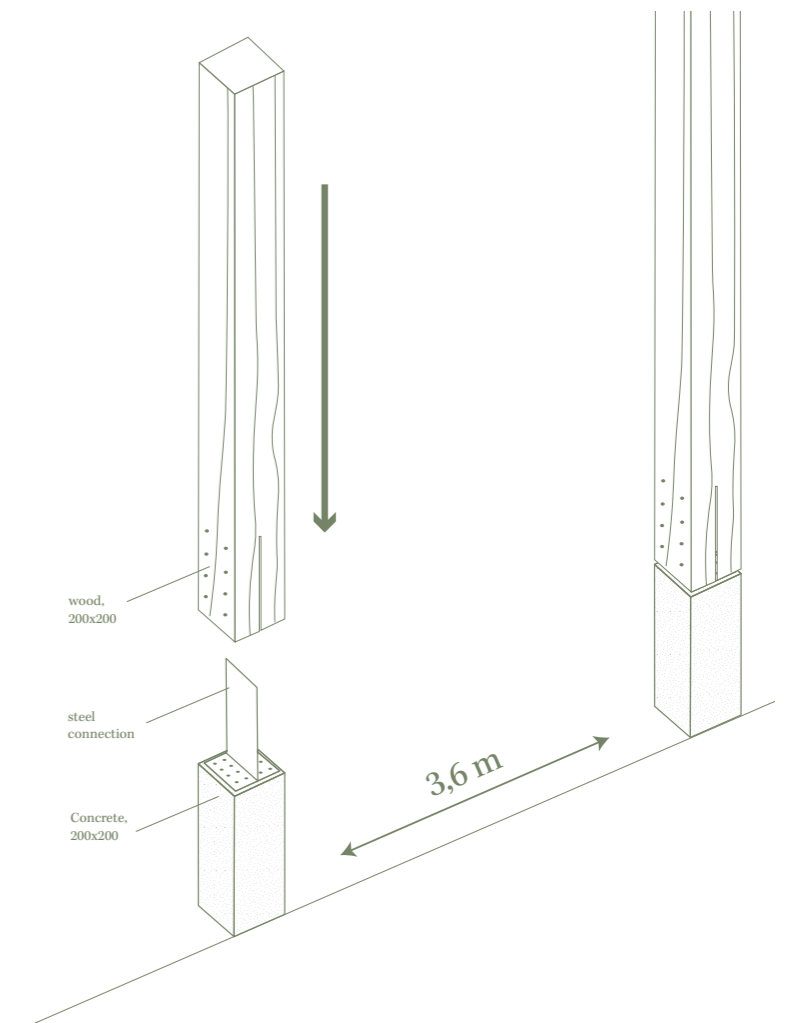
## Bearing structure

*marked spaces create stability*



## Materialisation Columns

*concrete base & wooden columns*



# Conclusions

## Designing the Library

### Concepts & A difficult whole

*By imagining an expansion for the Stockholm City library, my research provides valuable insights into the broader framework of architectural and urban development. It goes beyond just the physical appearance of the building; it explores the essential considerations and potential changes needed for a modern public library. While tackling the challenges of the current situation, my work challenges the usual role of a library in today's society. The significance lies in exploring what the future of a modern public library should involve, particularly when dealing with an existing monumental building. The research aims to show how to adjust and improve an already important monument while preserving and respecting its significant value. In doing so, my work not only adds to discussions about architecture with existing buildings, but also joins broader talks about the changing role of libraries nowadays.*



Photo 1:33 model  
The model presented at the  
P3 presentation



Render  
inside the 4th Annex Building

## 05 The Final Design

### Story telling

*For this last part of the desing process, its important to have a coherent story. Not only do I need the essential products, such as floorplan, section and so forth. But The design needs to make sense and meaning. In order to do so I started to look again at the location. Where are we situated? What did I use from the environment? how was I inspired? By doing this I rediscoverd the area and situated my design better in the social, spatial and historical background of its context. This last part of the project is mostly about connecting lose ends and making the design presentable.*

# Odensamhälle

Oden • Samhälle  
[Ód:en:²sam:hel:e]

Oden

1. **Oden • hallen** | design of asplund for the marked next to the stockholm City Library in 1926
2. **Oden • gatan** | Streetname of the location of the Stockholm City Library

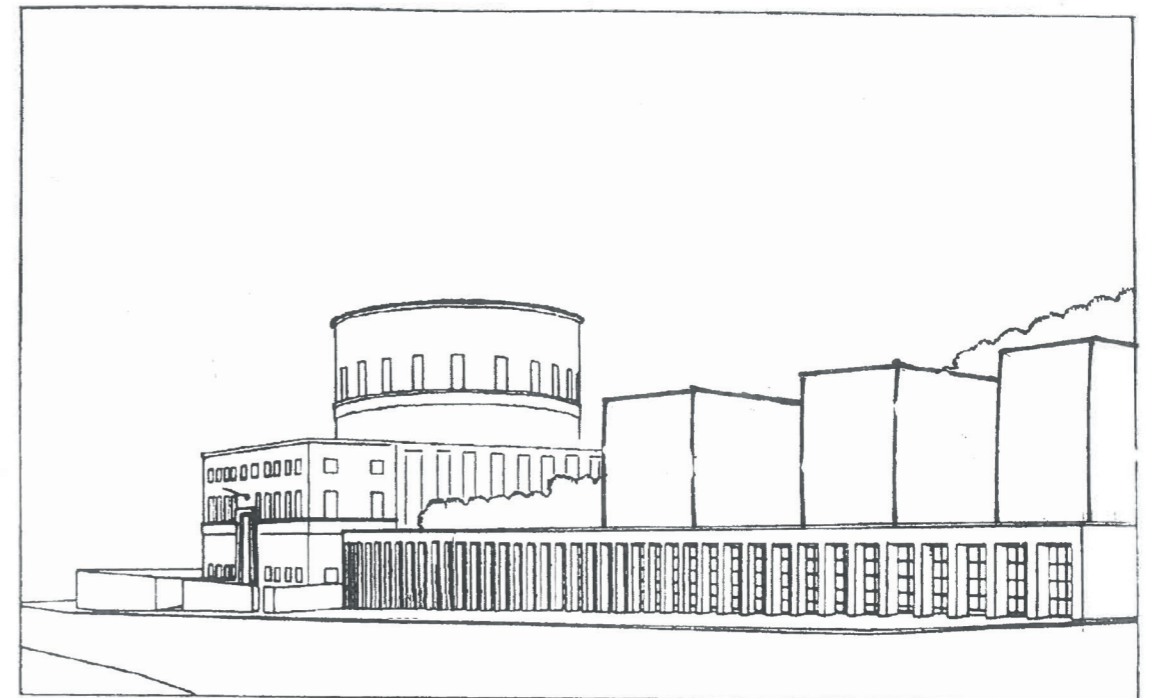
Samhälle

1. **community, society** | a group of people sharing culture

## Odensamhälle

### *Reimagining the Stockholm City Library*

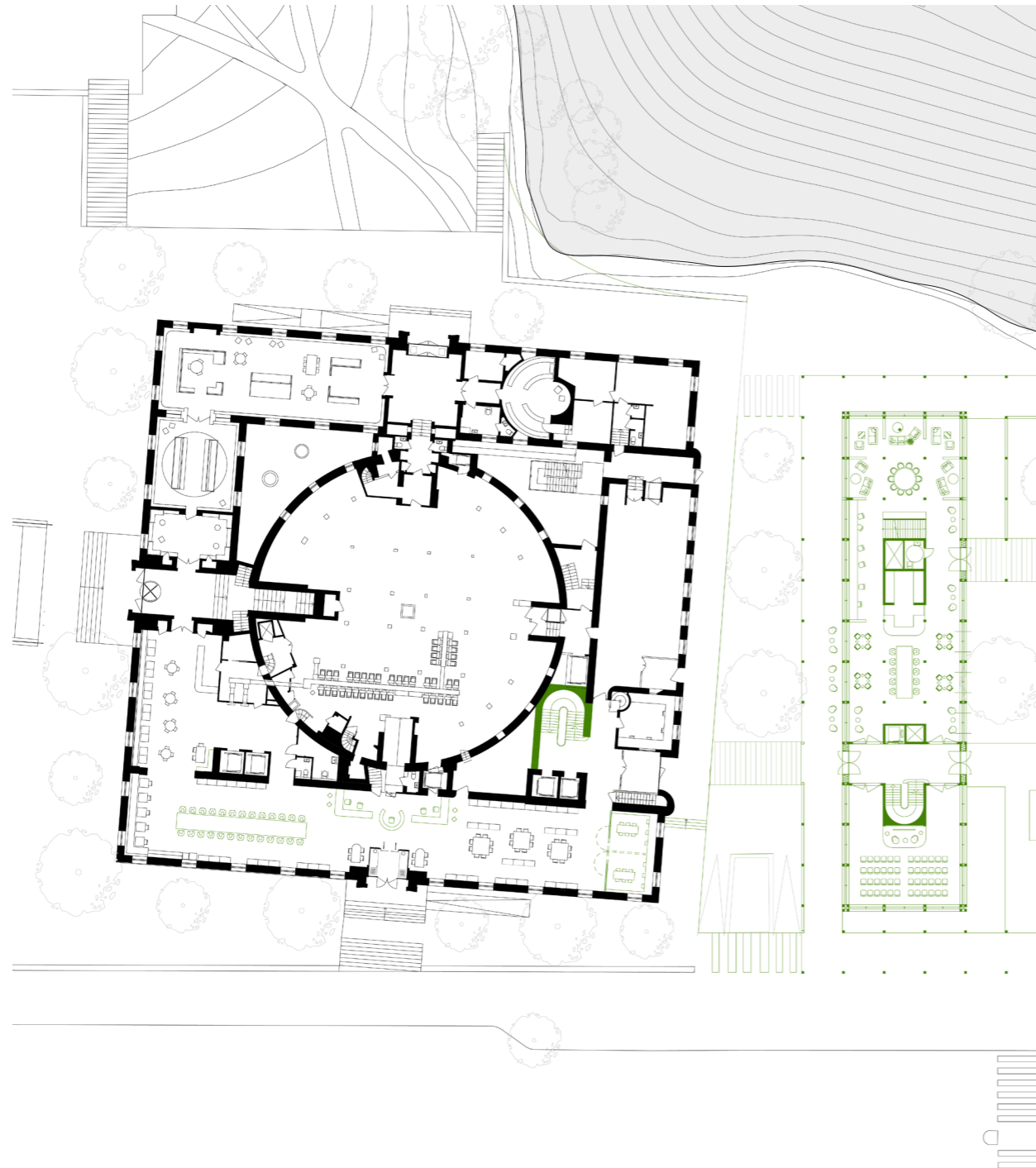
I named my project “Odensamhälle,” inspired by Erik Gunnar Asplund’s 1926 design for the plot where the annex buildings now stand. His “Odenhallen” was a market space by Odengatan street. “Hallen” means market in Swedish. In my design, these market spaces return, but with a broader purpose. My library aims to integrate with the city, serving and representing the local community. “Samhälle” means community in Swedish. So, my project’s name, “Odensamhälle,” honors its location, history, and design goal, while humorously connecting with Asplund’s proposal.



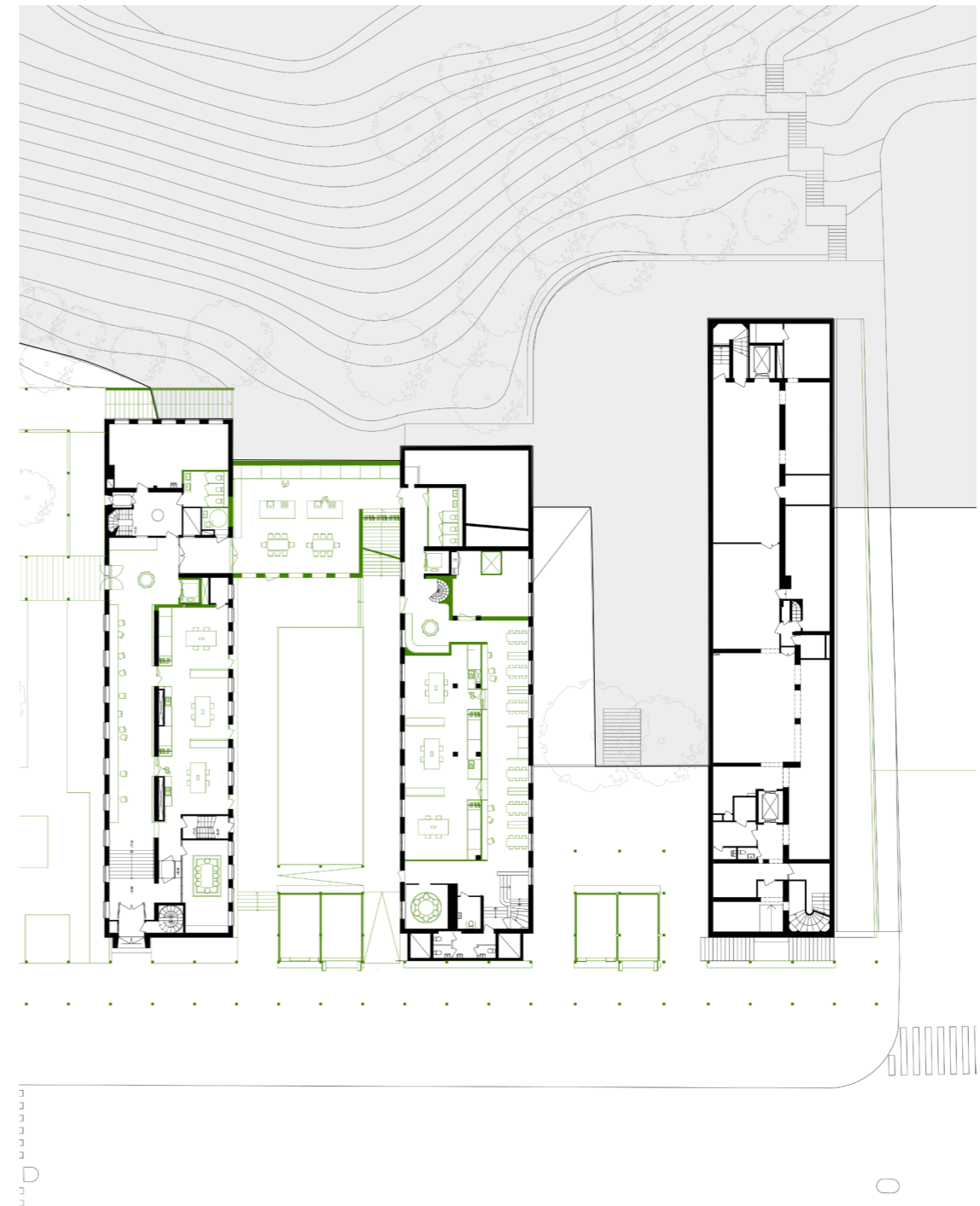
Adjusted drawing of Asplund  
*Stockholm, Public Library,*  
*perspective of back of library with*  
*proposed Odenhallen (market),*  
1926

## Heritage

*Existing and Addition intertwined*



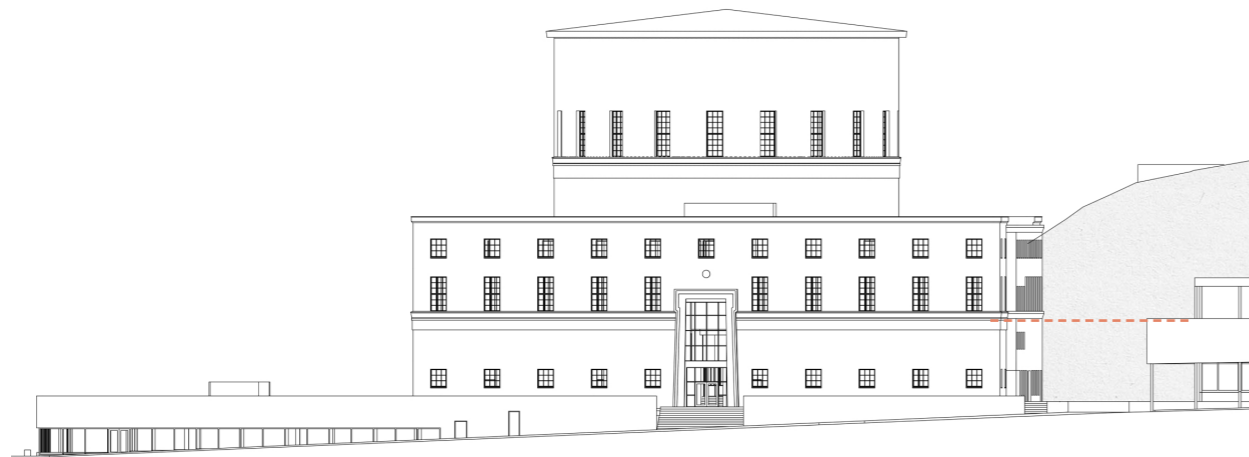
In this floorplan, you can clearly see what I have added and what is already existing. My interventions are within the existing Stockholm City Library and the Annex buildings. The largest addition outside the existing structures is the 4th Annex building. This new building is located where Asplund originally planned the 4th Annex to be. It includes an underground connection to the Stockholm City Library, accessible only to staff members.



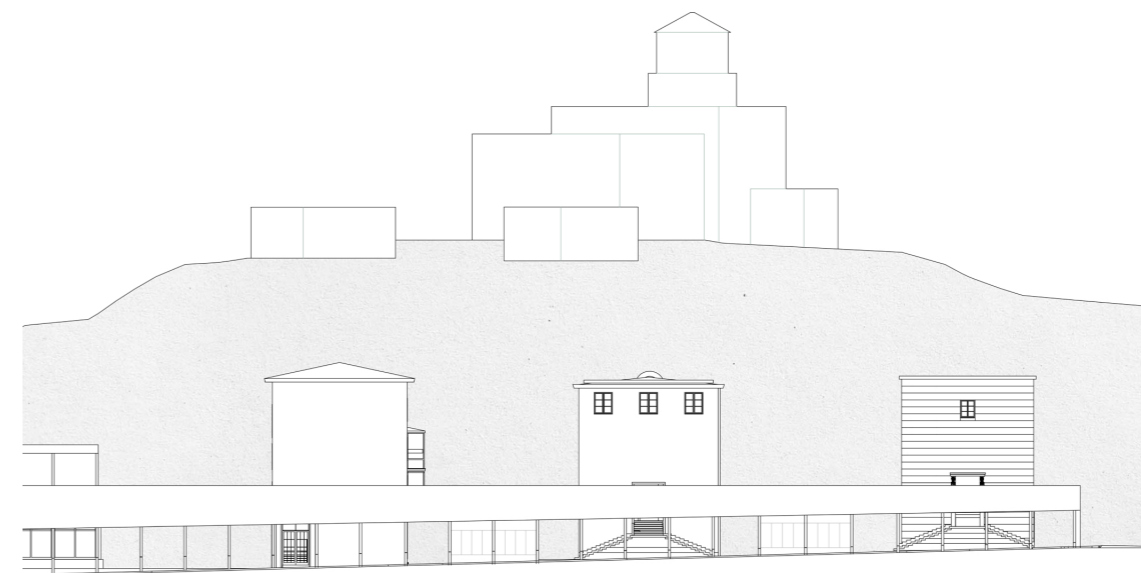
## North Elevation

*Connecting layers of time*

This North Elevation highlights the key aspects of my design. The Colonnade is designed to accentuate the Annex buildings without touching them, allowing light to illuminate their facades and emphasize their presence, as shown on the next page. The green color of the Colonnade contrasts with the beige Annex buildings, enhancing their visibility. The entire structure is framed by a large wooden border, matching the height of the Bazaar of the Stockholm City Library, creating a visual link between the two. The new construction does not exceed the height of the library's plinth, as illustrated in the drawing below. The spaces between the Annex buildings are marked, with openings on both sides leading to the courtyards. This design creates an open and inviting facade, guiding people from the city to the library, mirroring Asplund's vision of how visitors should approach and be welcomed into the building.



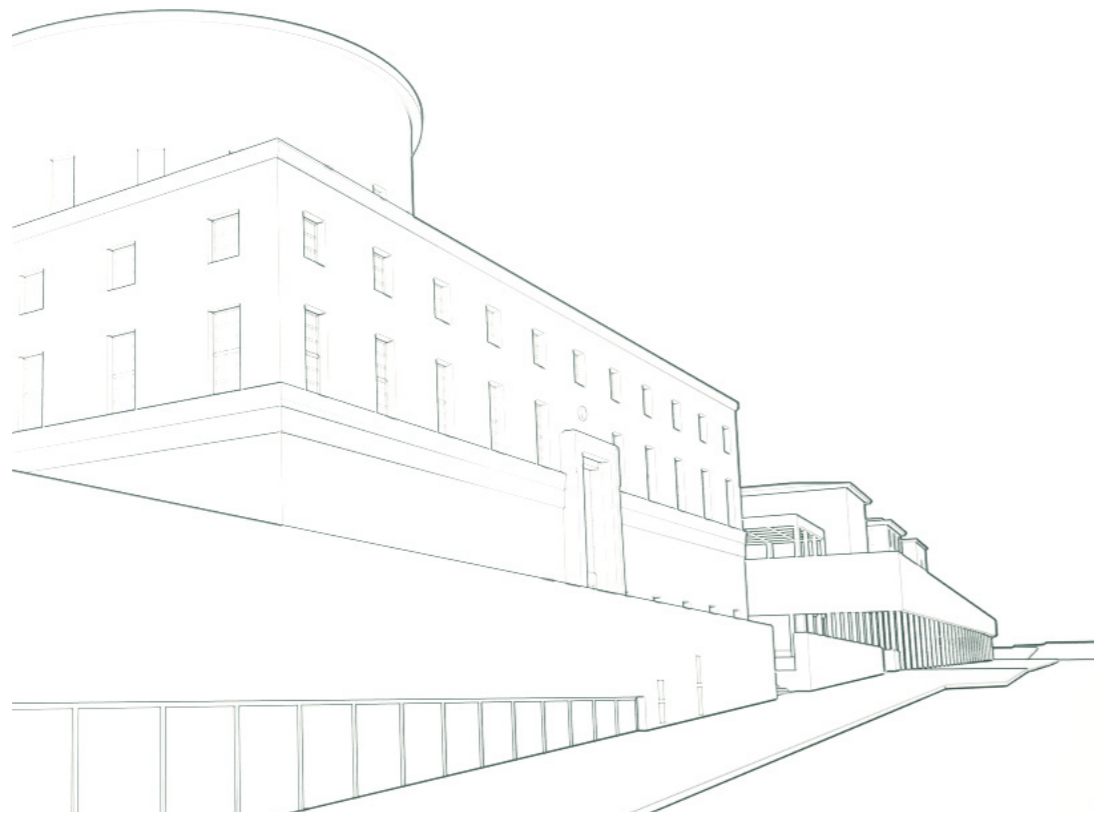
Perspective  
*underneath the Colonnade you can peak into the  
Courtyards and the Annex buildings are highlighted.*



North Elevation  
*The colonnade and the annex buildings*

## The Plinth

*The bazaar as a connecting element*



Drawing  
*perspective of the Stockholm City Library, With my desing  
in the back. In this image you can clearly see how the  
bazaar of the stockholm city library relates visually with  
the colonnade of my building.*

## The Colonnade

*Open, light and inviting*



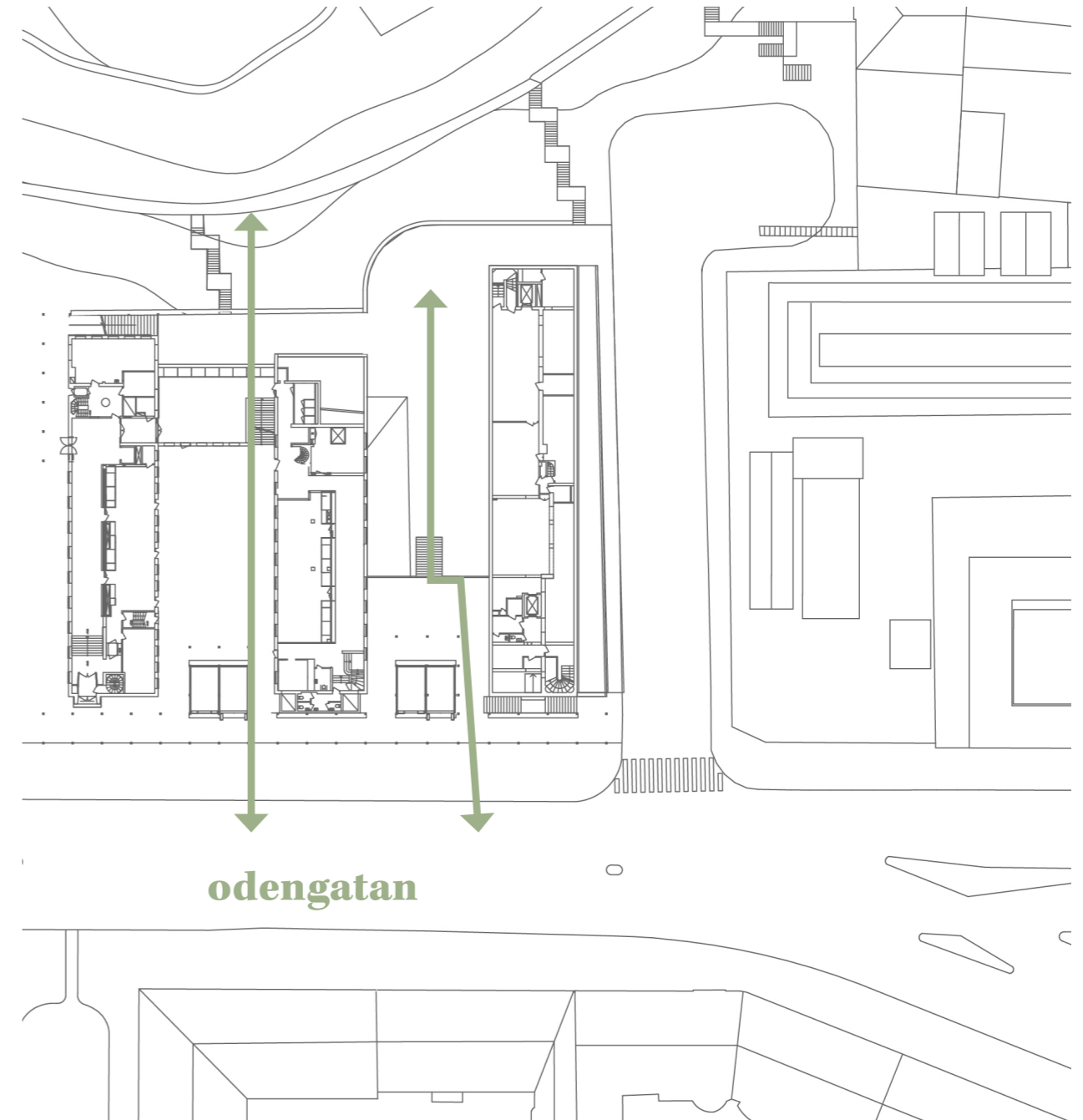
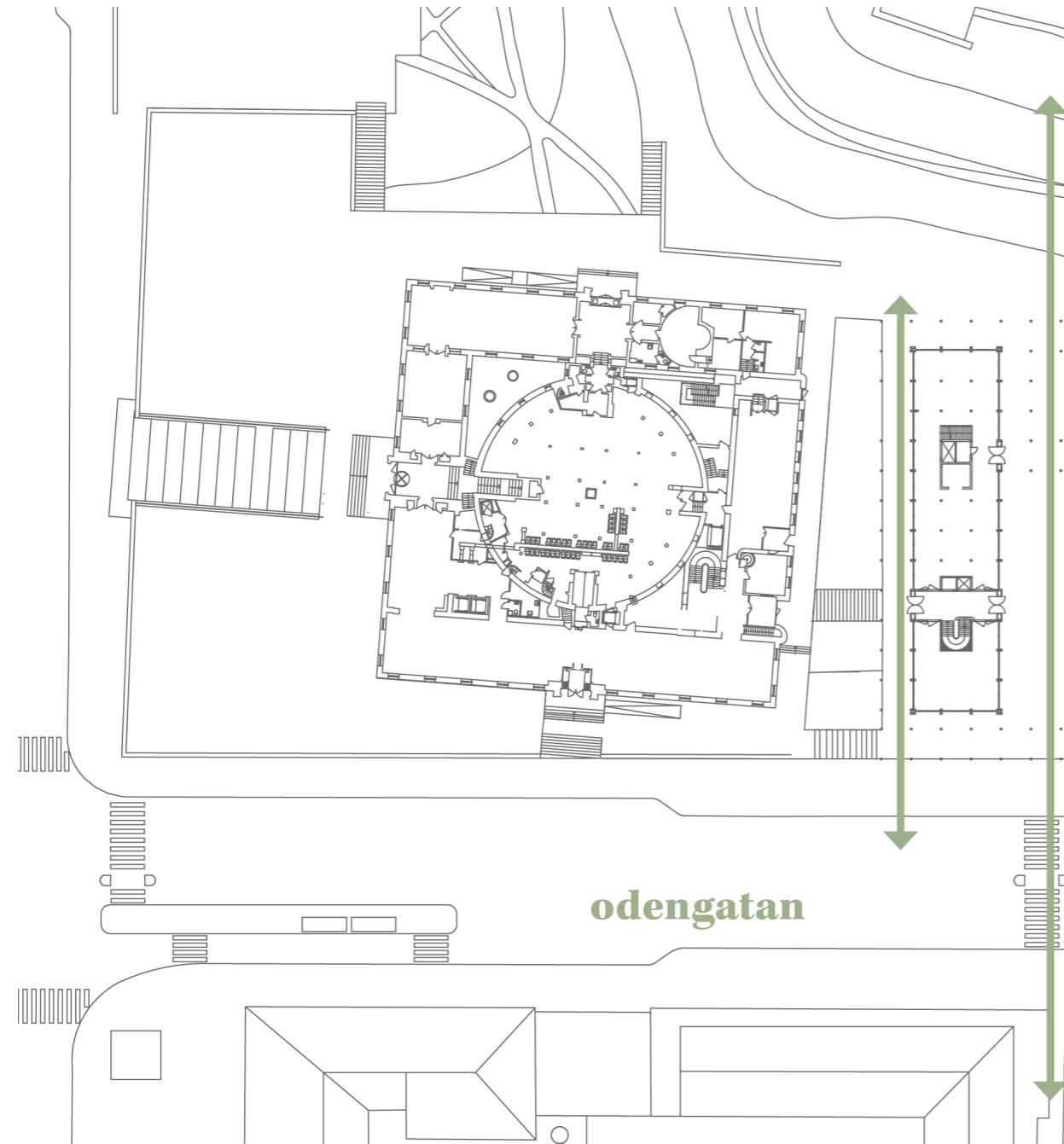
Model 1:33  
*Colonnade, marked and 2th Anex building*

*note:*

*This image shows clearly how a light construction lands inbetween the anex buildings. This structure houses the marked spaces and invites people to walk underneath the colonnade. It opens up the courtyards and it highlights the annex buildings.*

## Routing

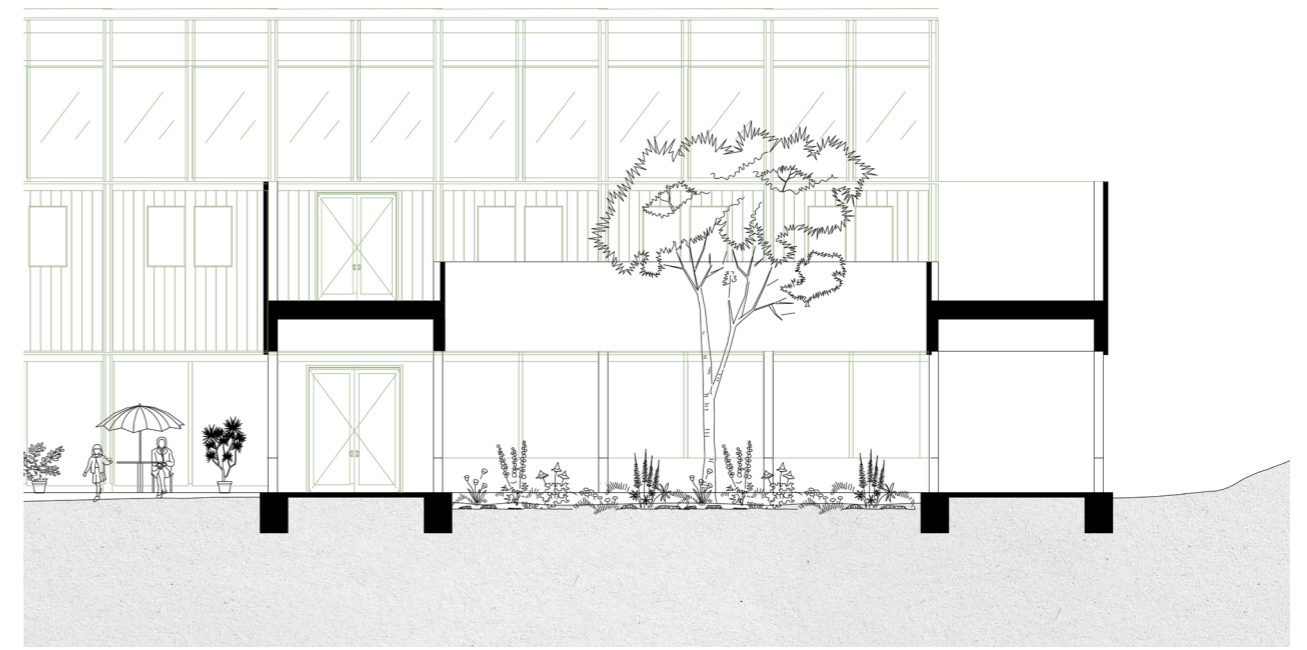
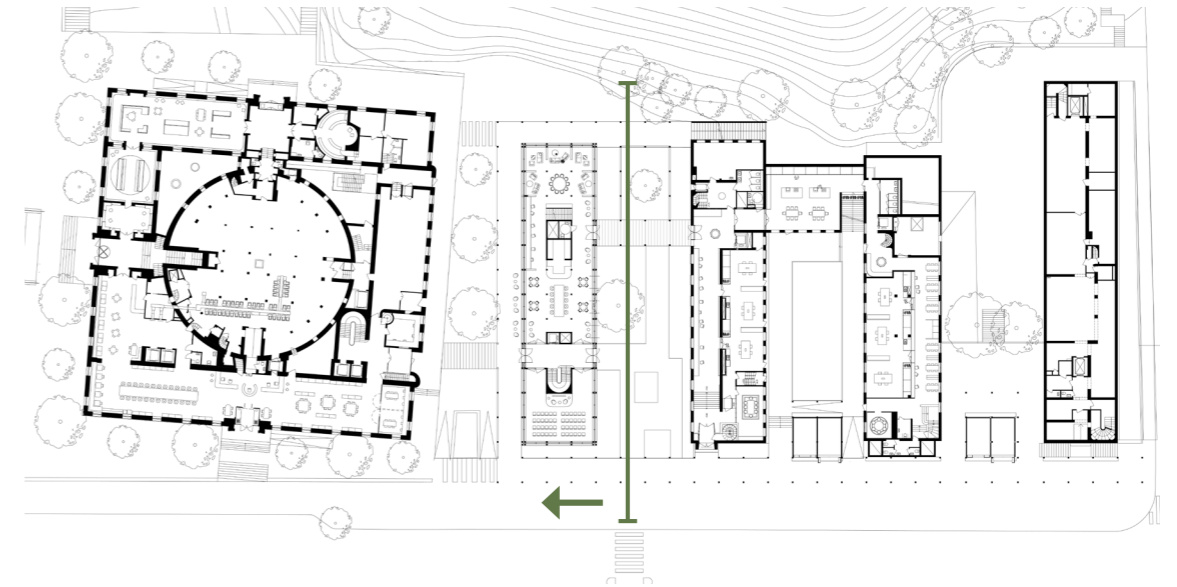
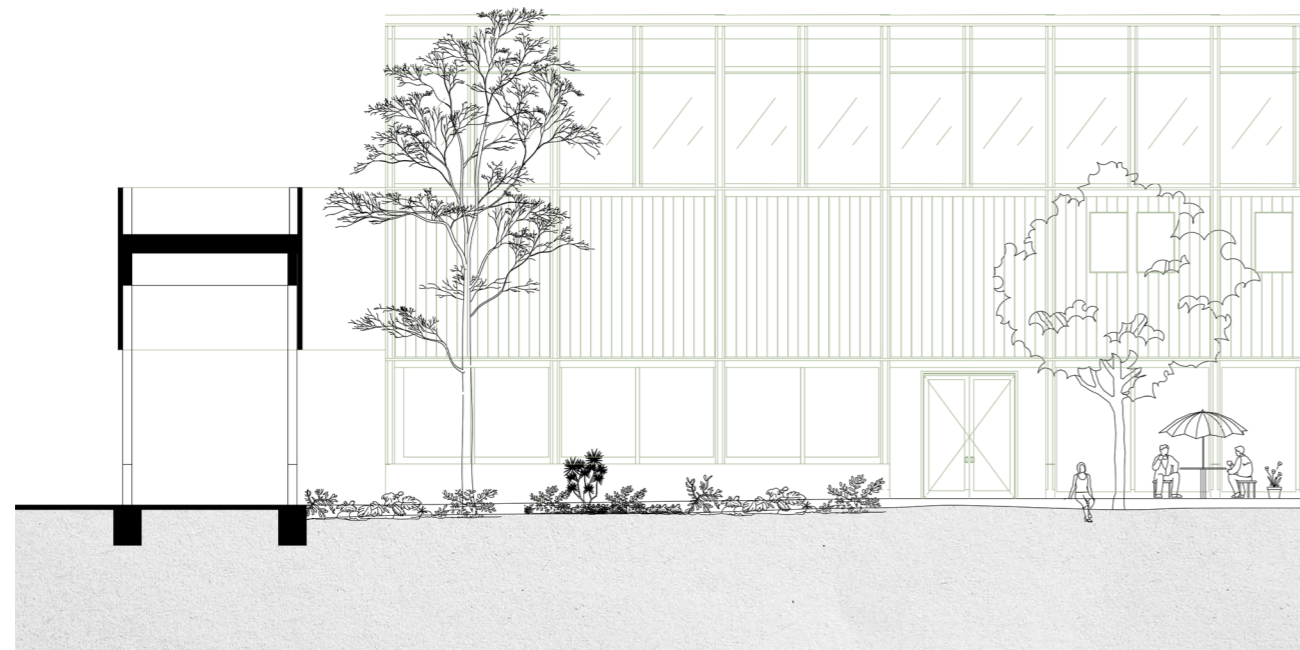
### Permeable Connections



In this drawing you can see how my building relates to the hill. perpendicular to the street Odengatan, multiple connections to the park are made. Penetrating through the colonnade into the courtyards, into the hill.

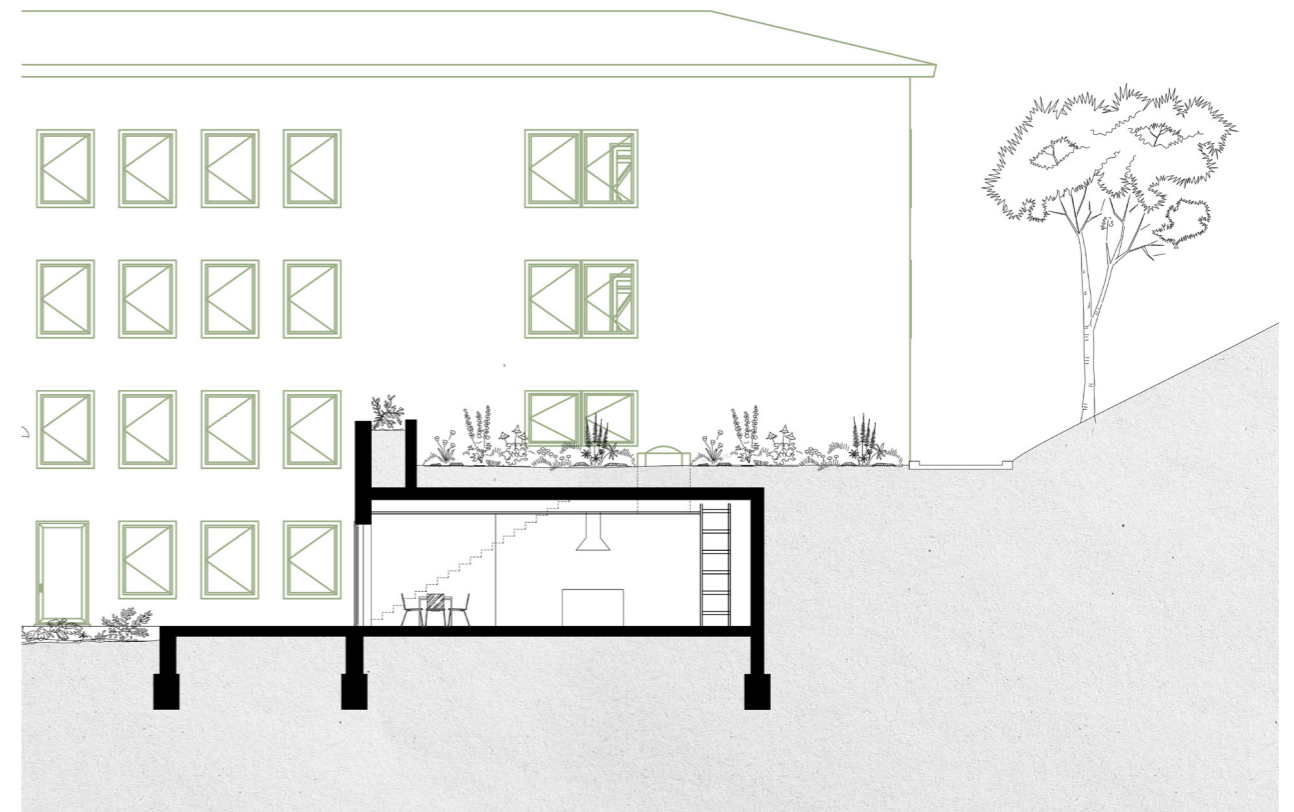
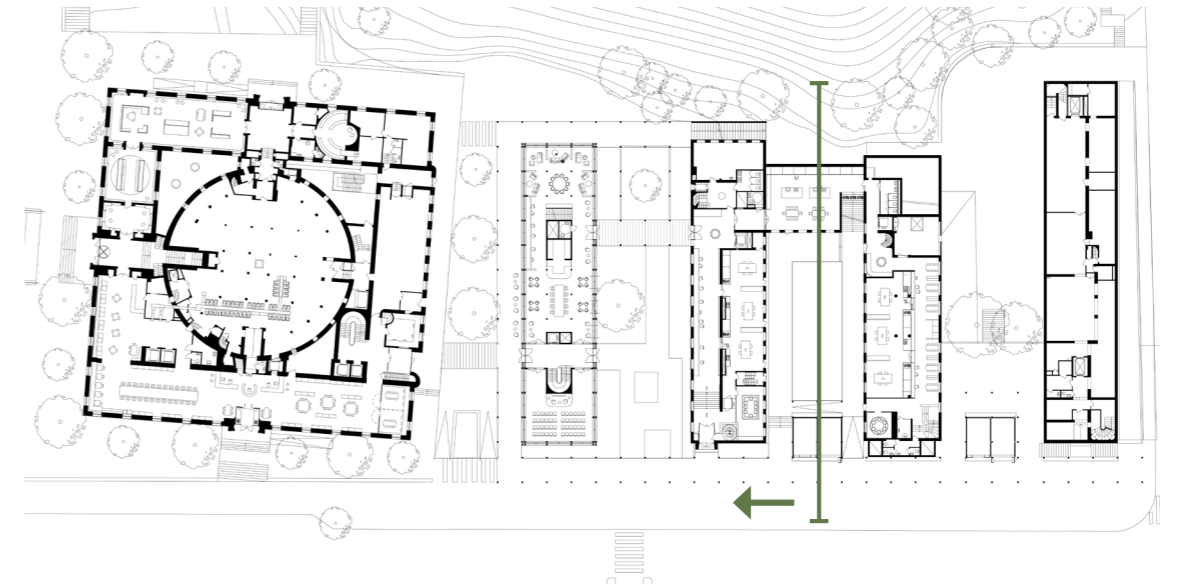
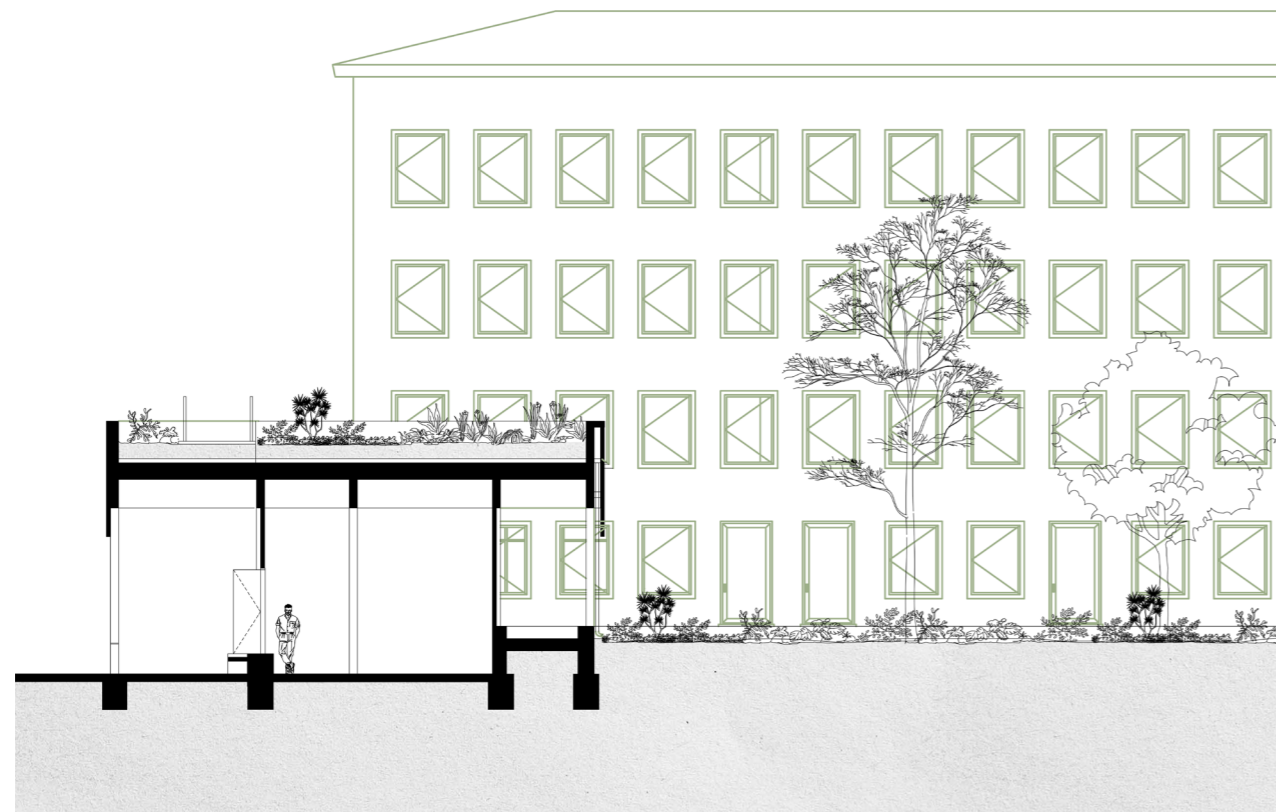
## Section 1

*First Courtyard*



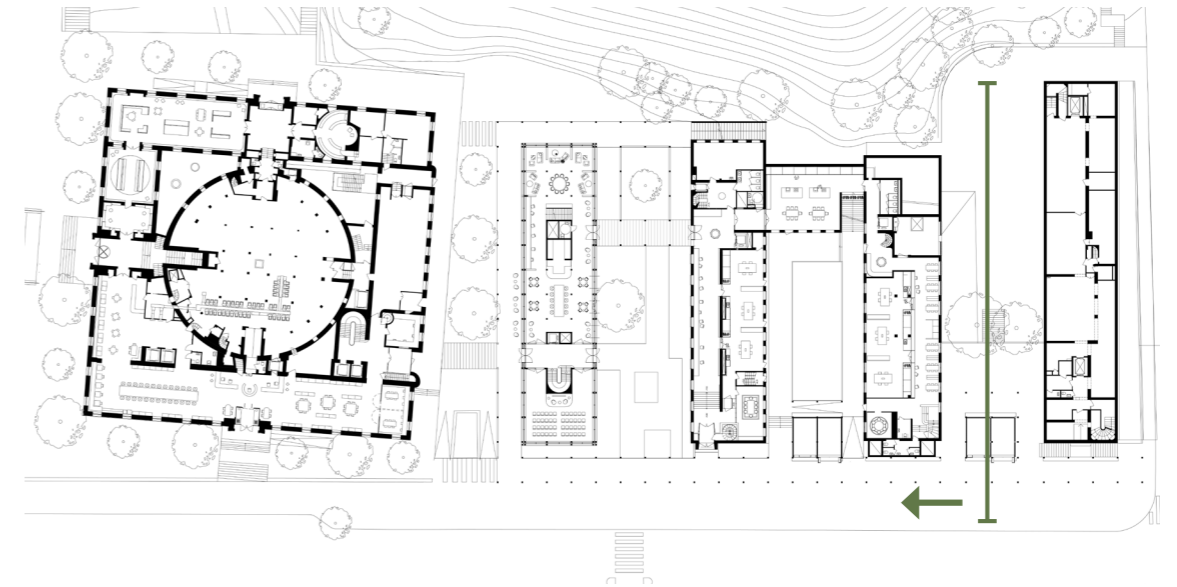
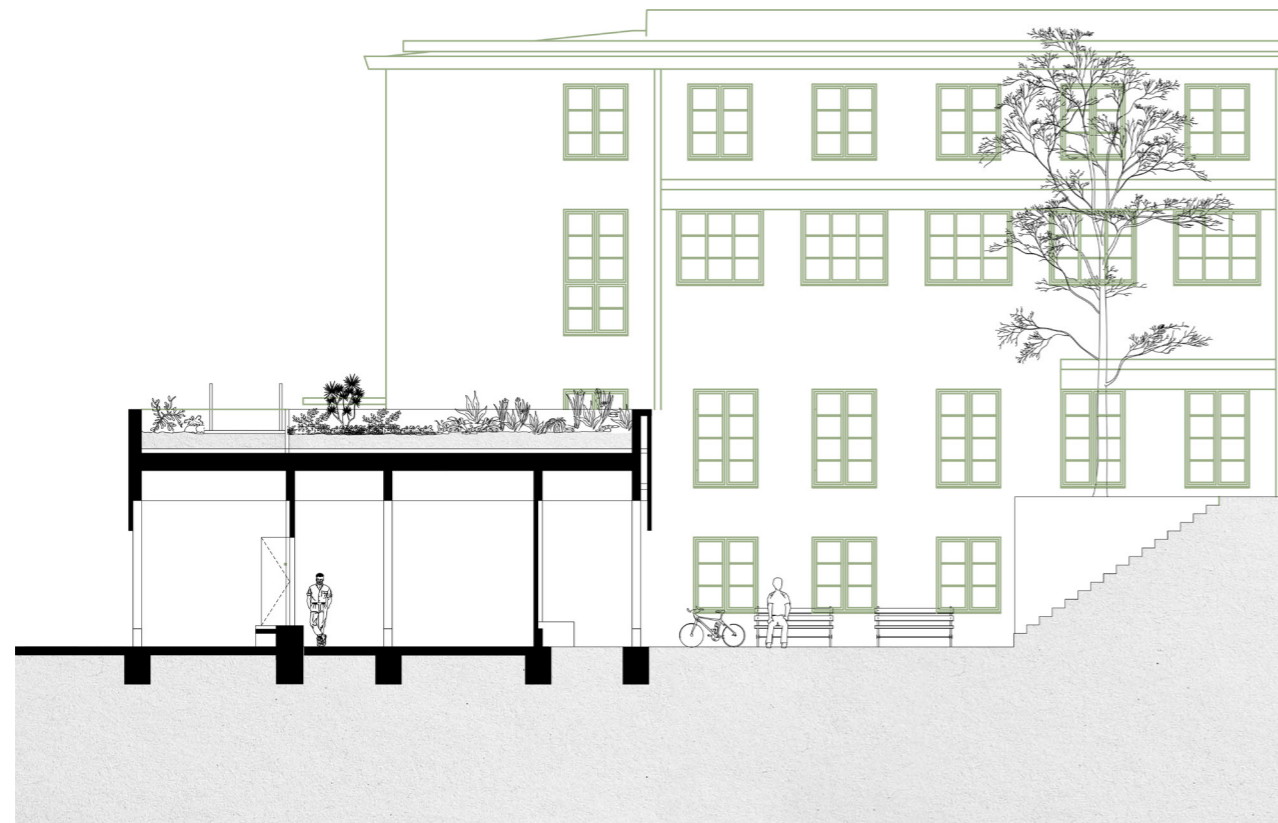
## Section 2

### Second Courtyard



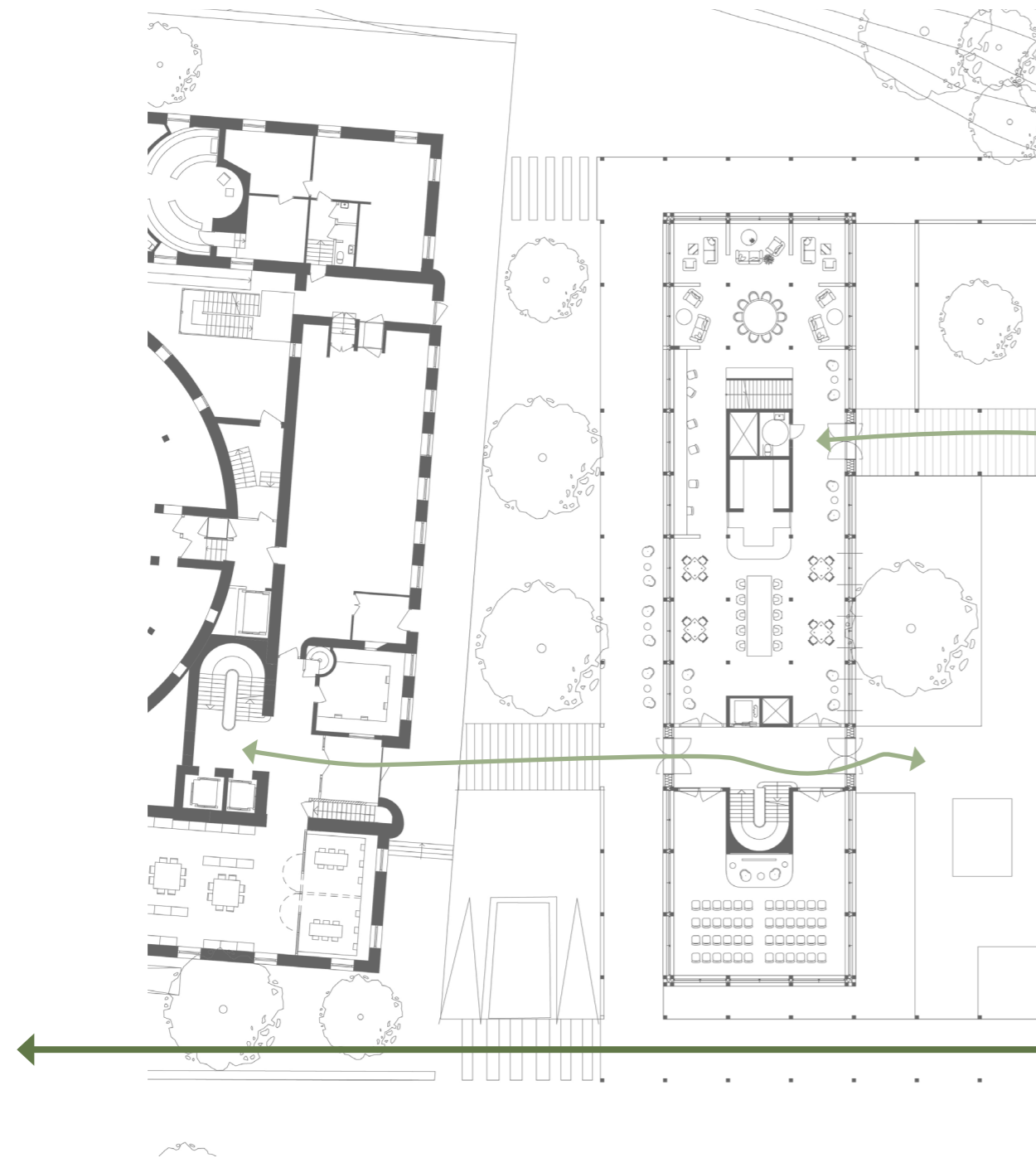
### Section 3

*Third Courtyard*

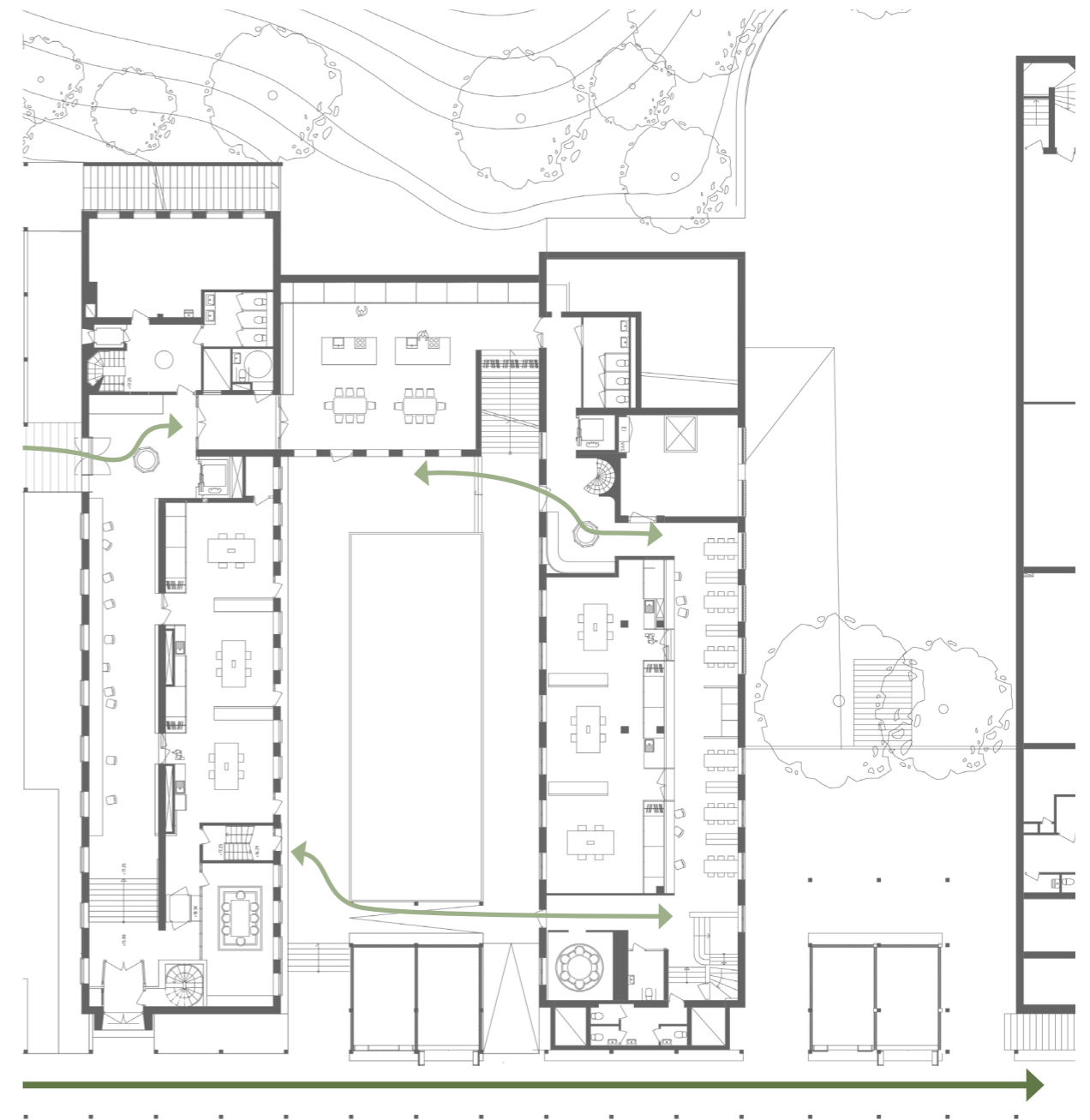


## Routing

### Connecting Functions



Parallel to the street the collonade functions as a welcoming to the library. More informal parallel concetions are possible between the anex buildings and the library.

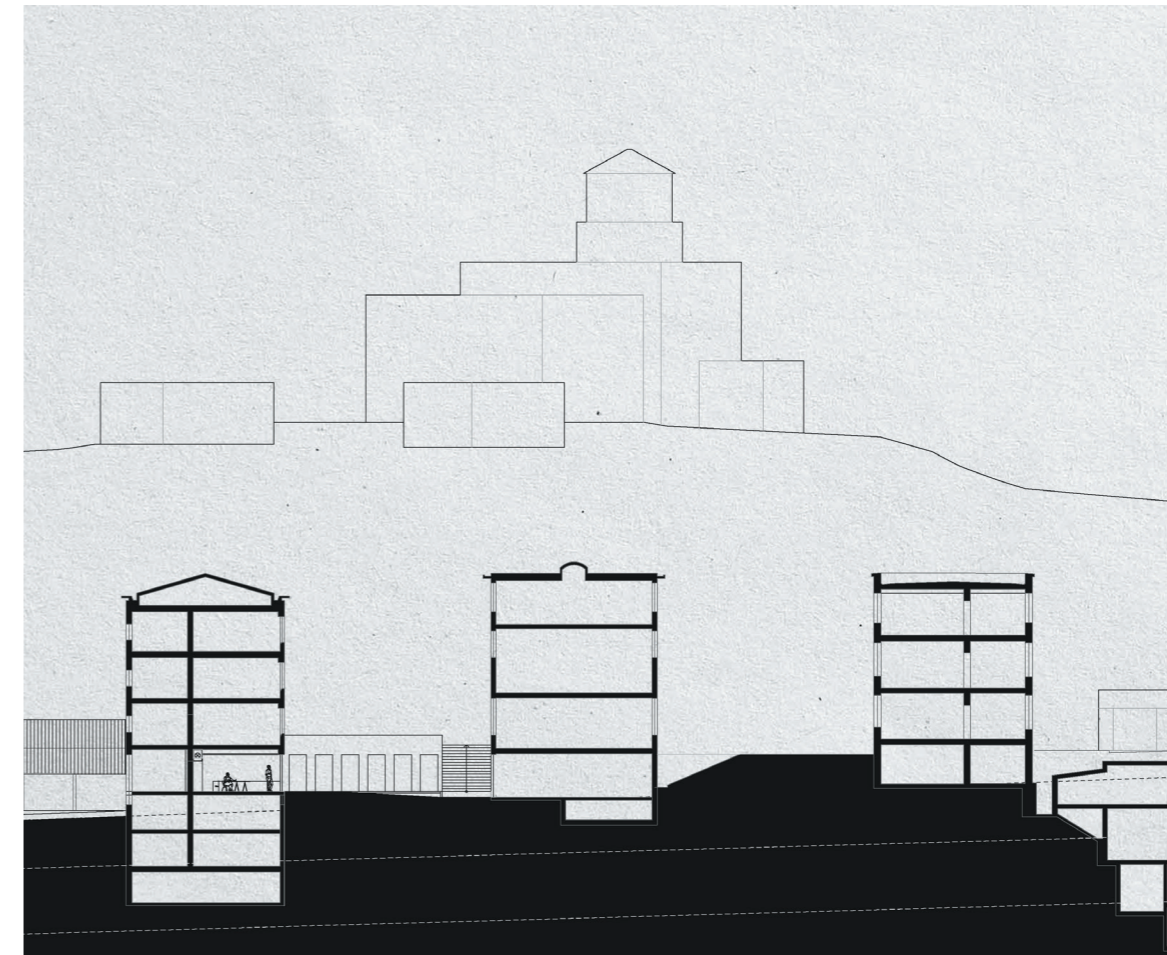
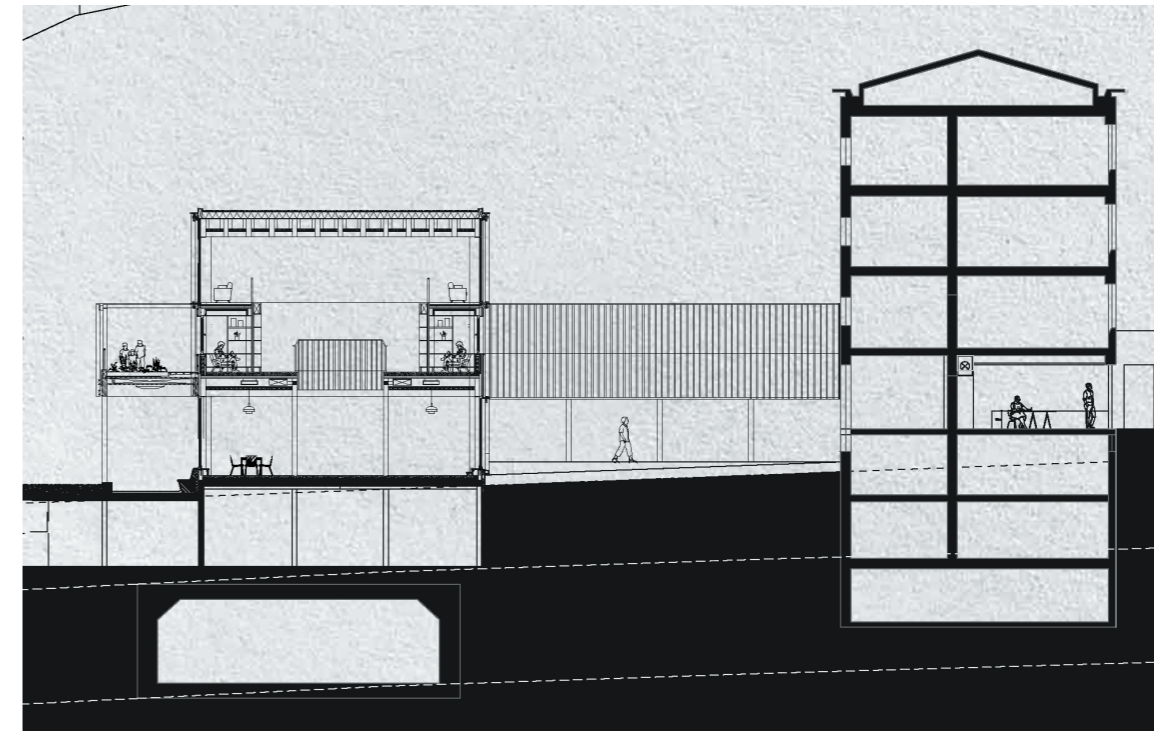
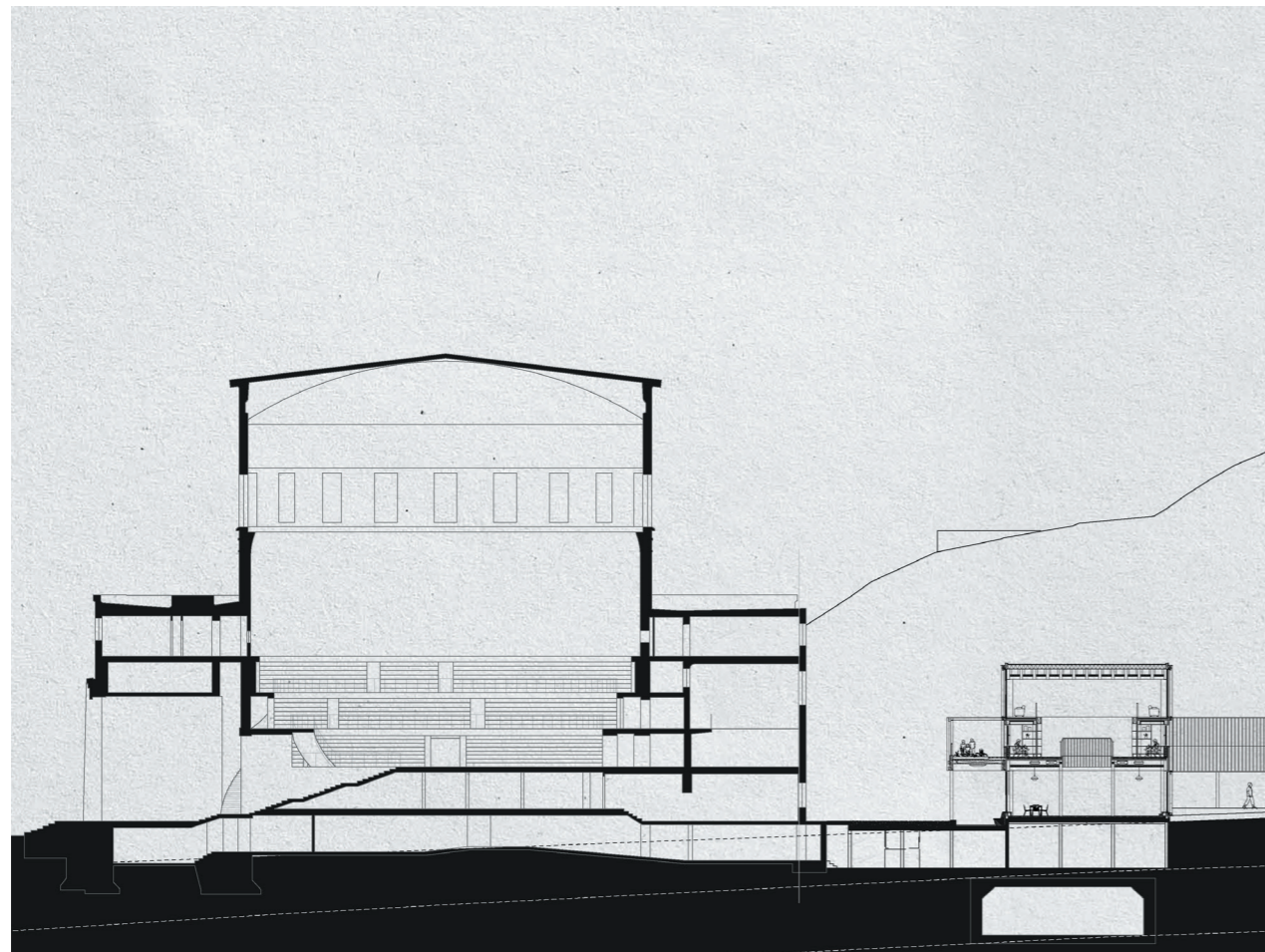


## Long section

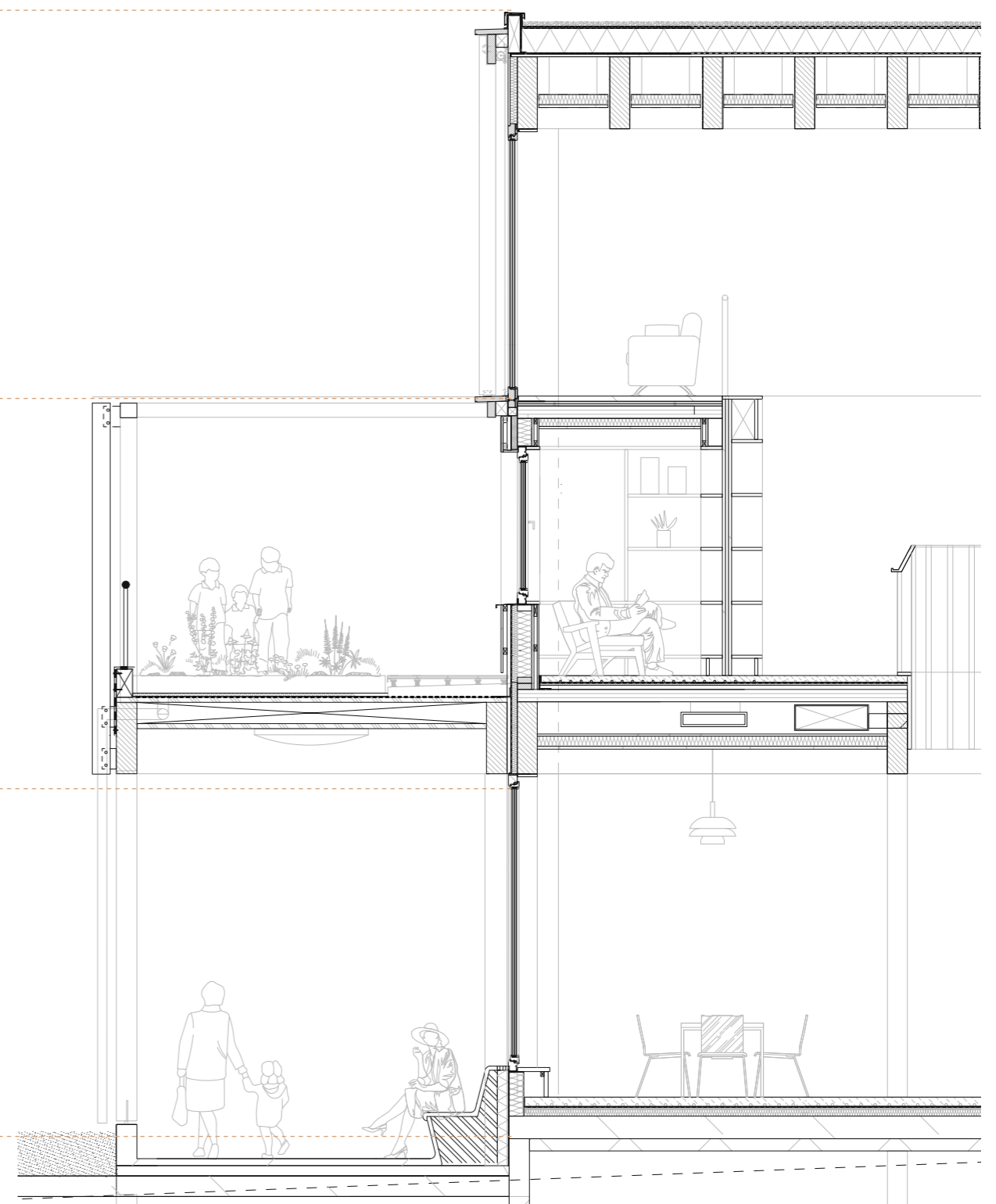
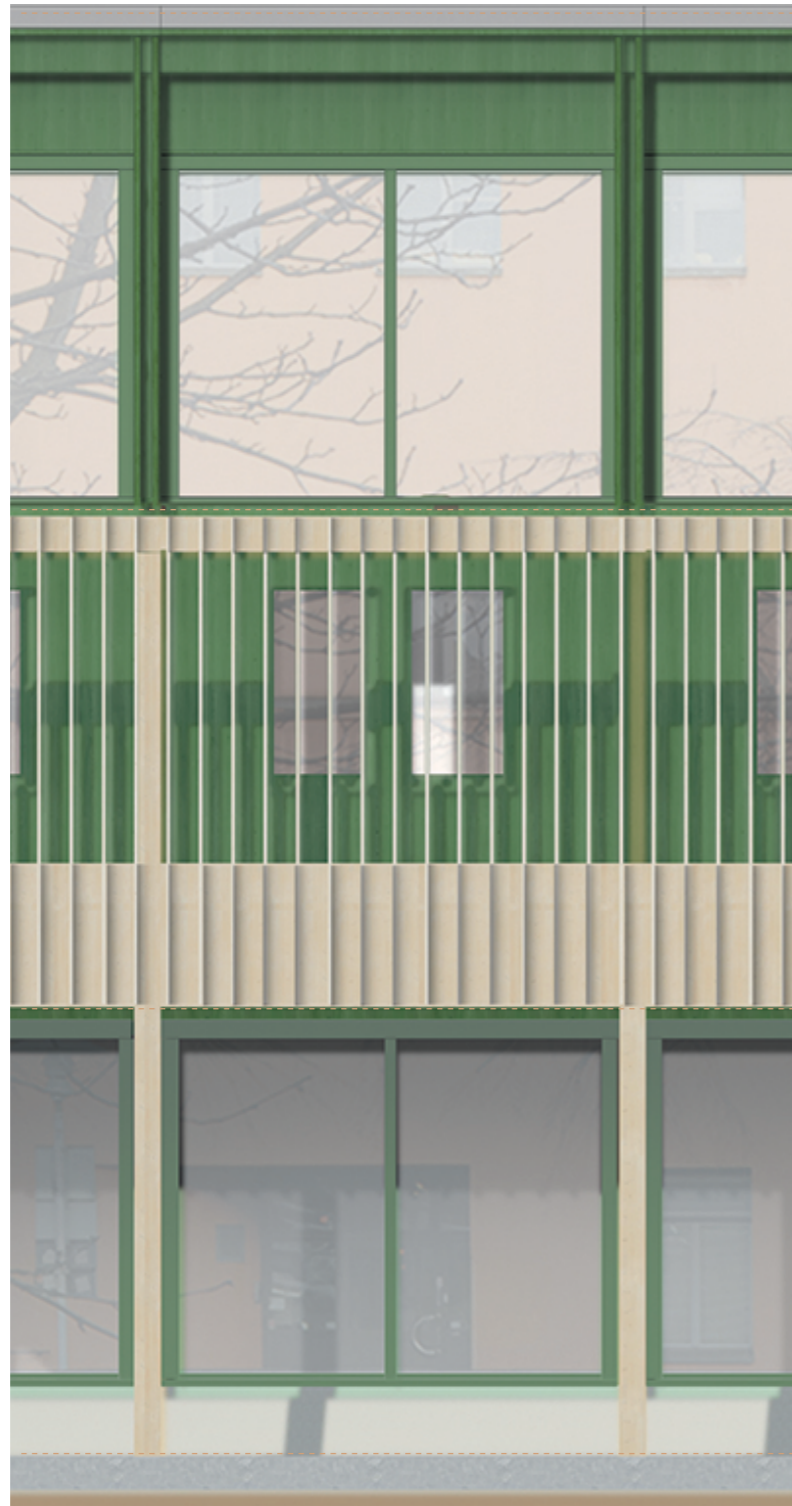
### *Connecting levels*

The new library must bridge the various floor heights of all the Annex Buildings. Additionally, the site is sloped, and the building is located next to a hill. This long section shows how the courtyards function as a landscape that bridges the height differences between the buildings. By doing this, a continuous ground floor level is created, connecting all buildings. Visitors can walk freely from one building to another without having to climb staircases, making the entire building wheelchair accessible.

Furthermore, the building connects underground with the Stockholm City Library. This connection is only accessible to library staff and serves as a back-of-house entrance. Books can be transported between buildings without going outside. This basement is also accessible by cars and small trucks, serving as a supply area for goods.

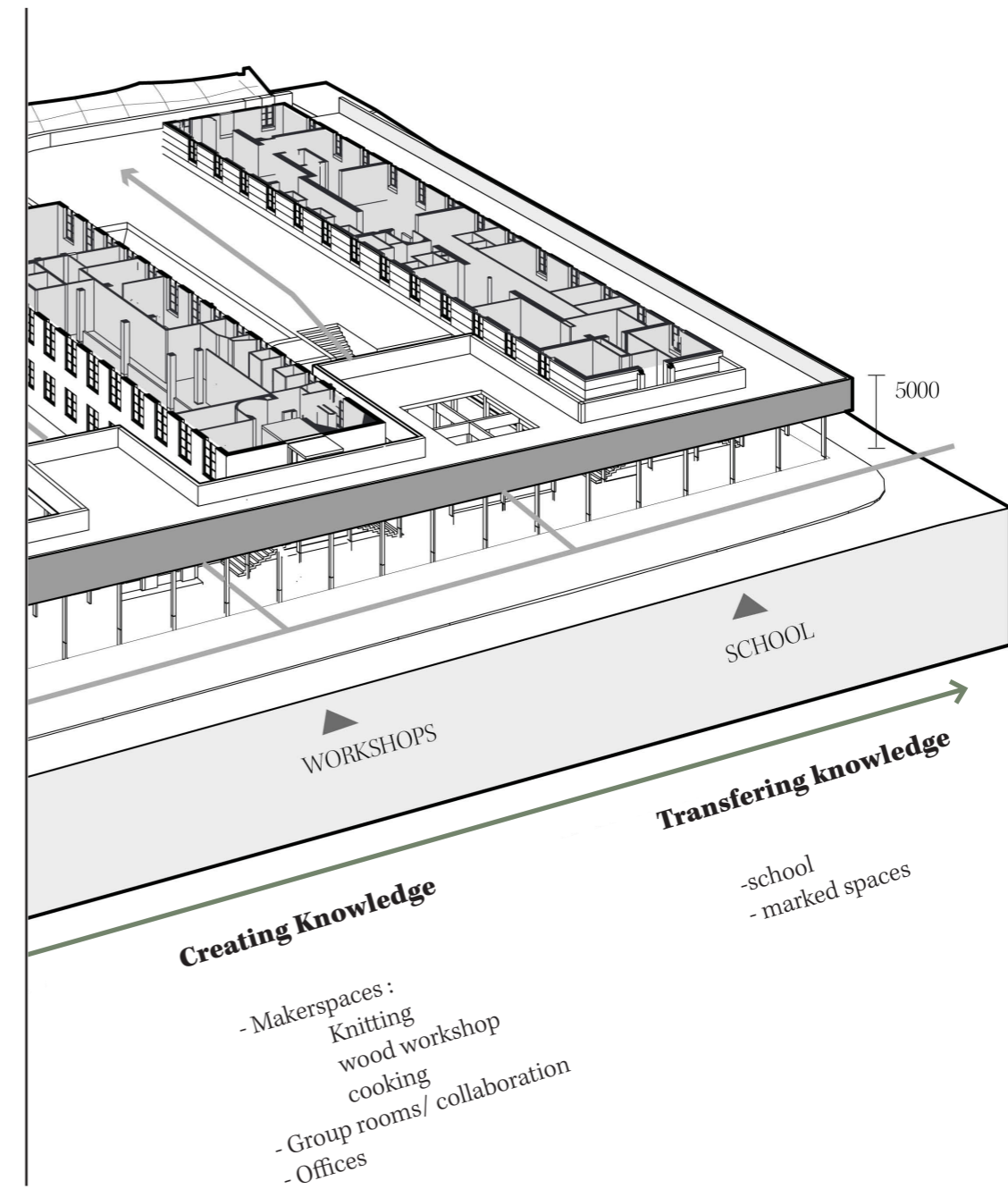
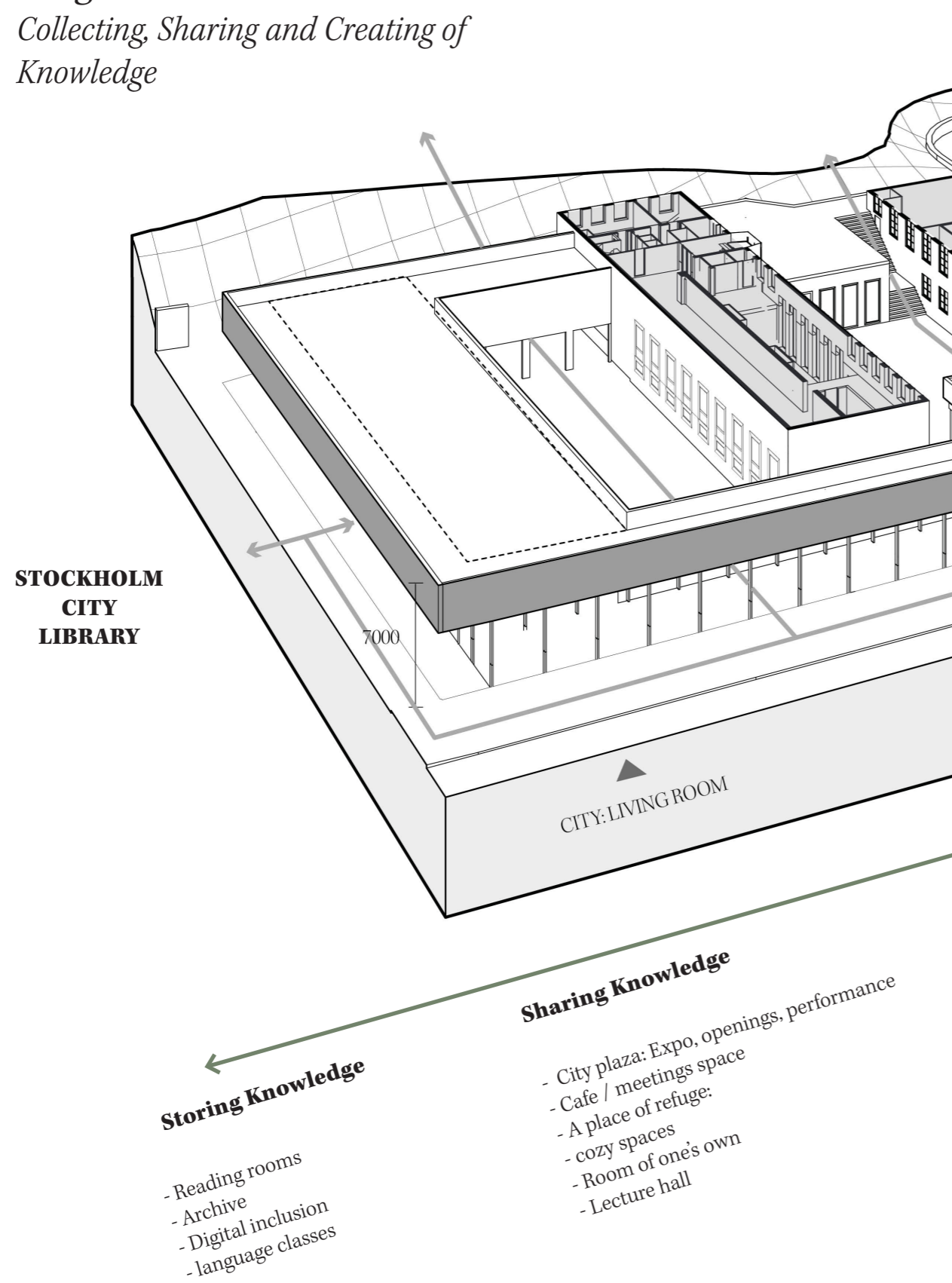


# **Facade Fragment** *the 4th Annex*



## Program

*Collecting, Sharing and Creating of Knowledge*

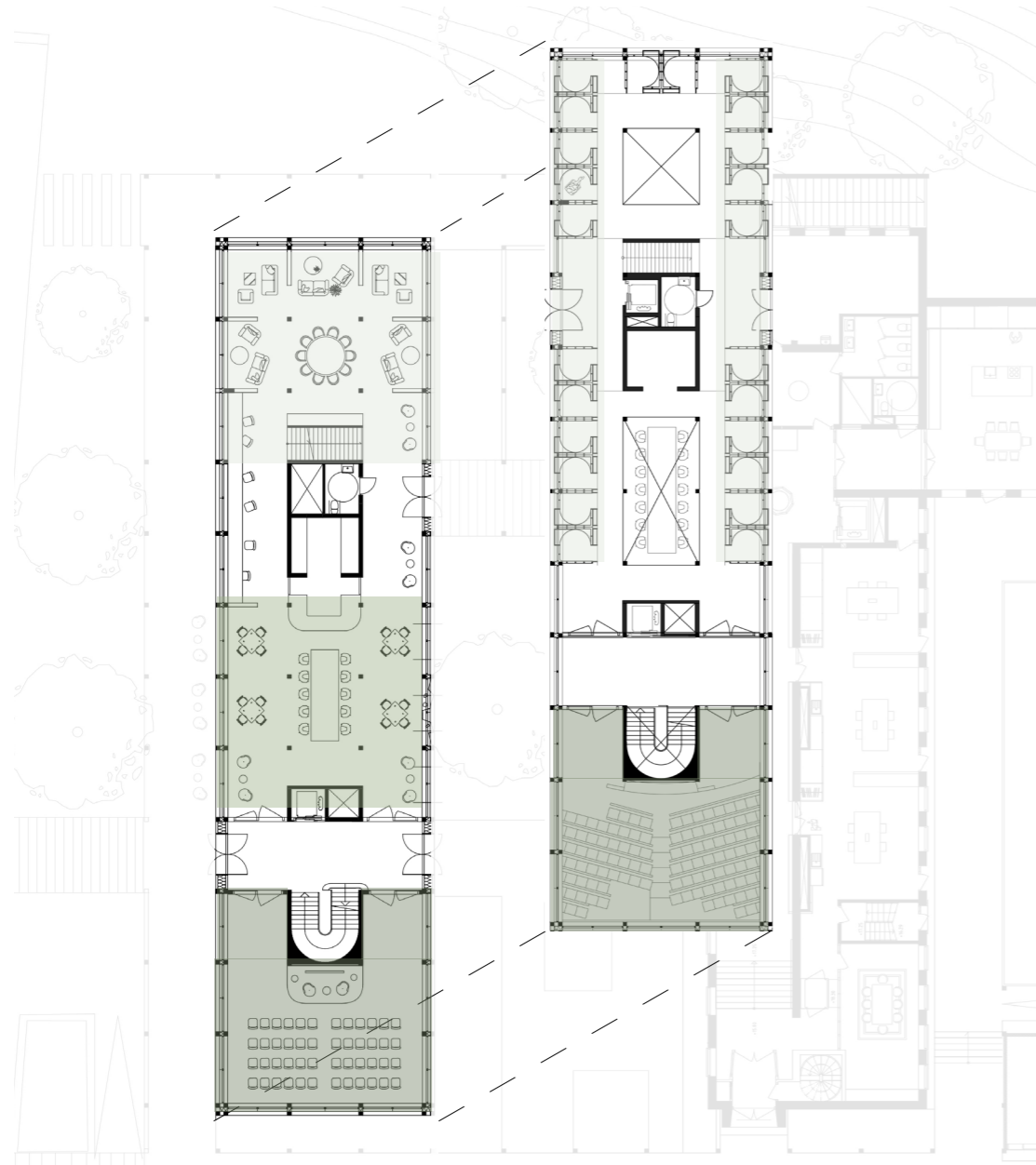


Axometric Drawing

*This drawing illustrates how the Annex buildings are adapted to accommodate different functions. It focuses on the 4th Annex building, which will serve as the City Living Room, hosting social activities. The drawing outlines the programmatic functions, categorized into four areas: storing, sharing, creating, and transferring knowledge.*

## Program

### *The 4th Annex*

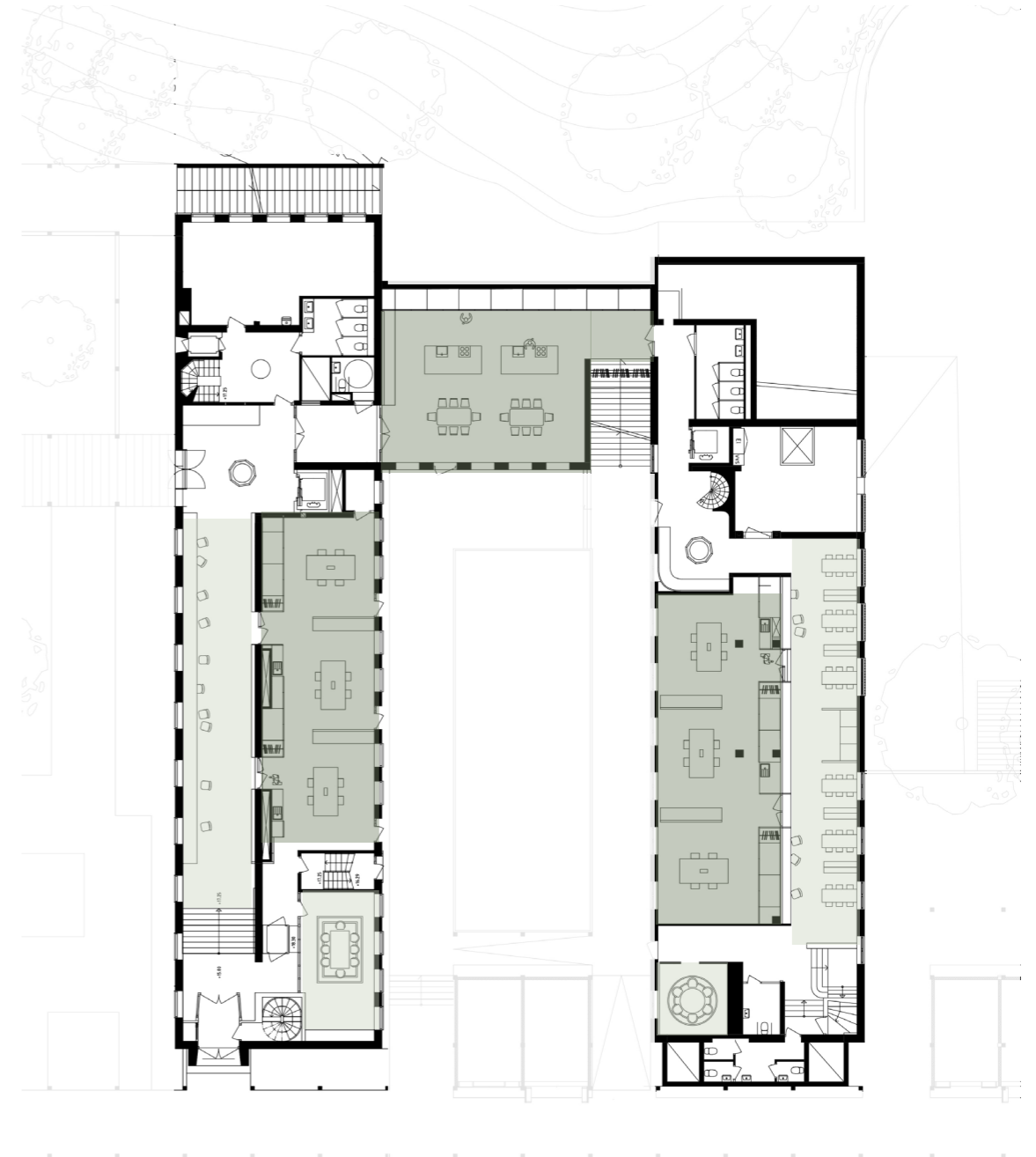


#### **The City Livingroom**

- City plaza: Expo, openings, performance
- Cafe: meetings space , social interaction
- A place of refuge: cozy spaces, Room of one's own
  - Events: lecture hall

## Program

### *The 2th and 3th Annex*

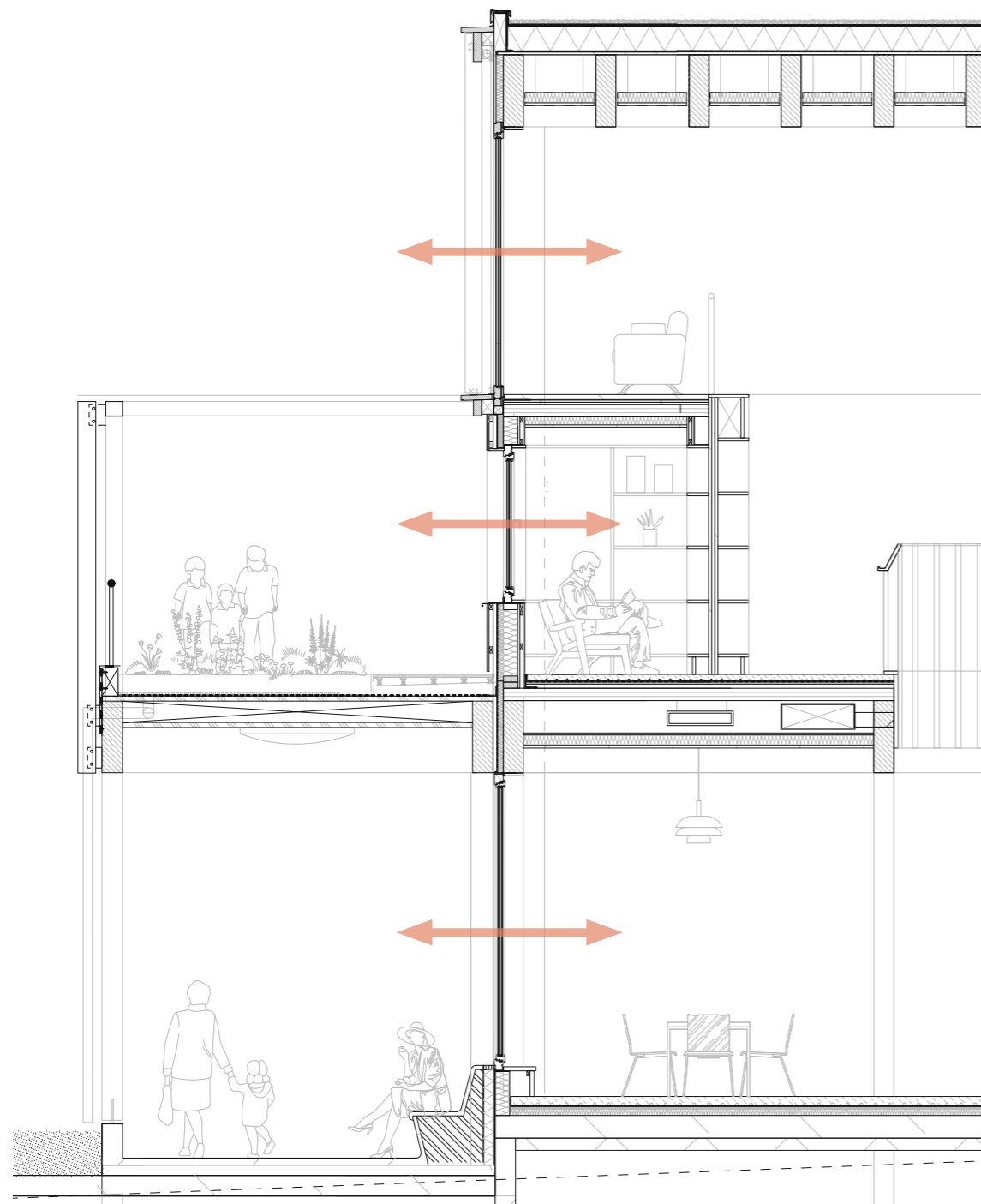


#### **Creating Knowledge**

- Makerspaces
- Group rooms/ collaboration
- Offices

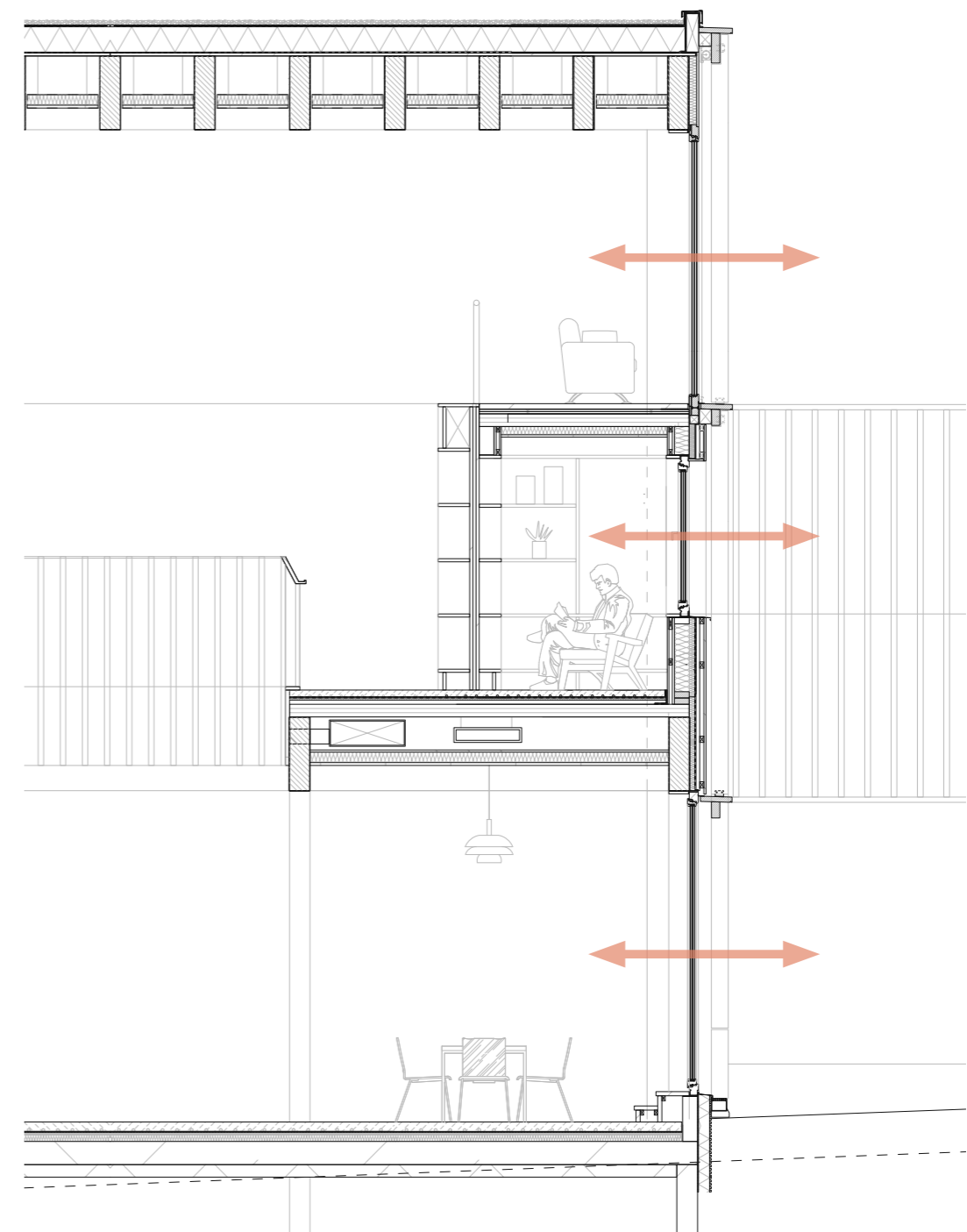
## Connection interior - exterior

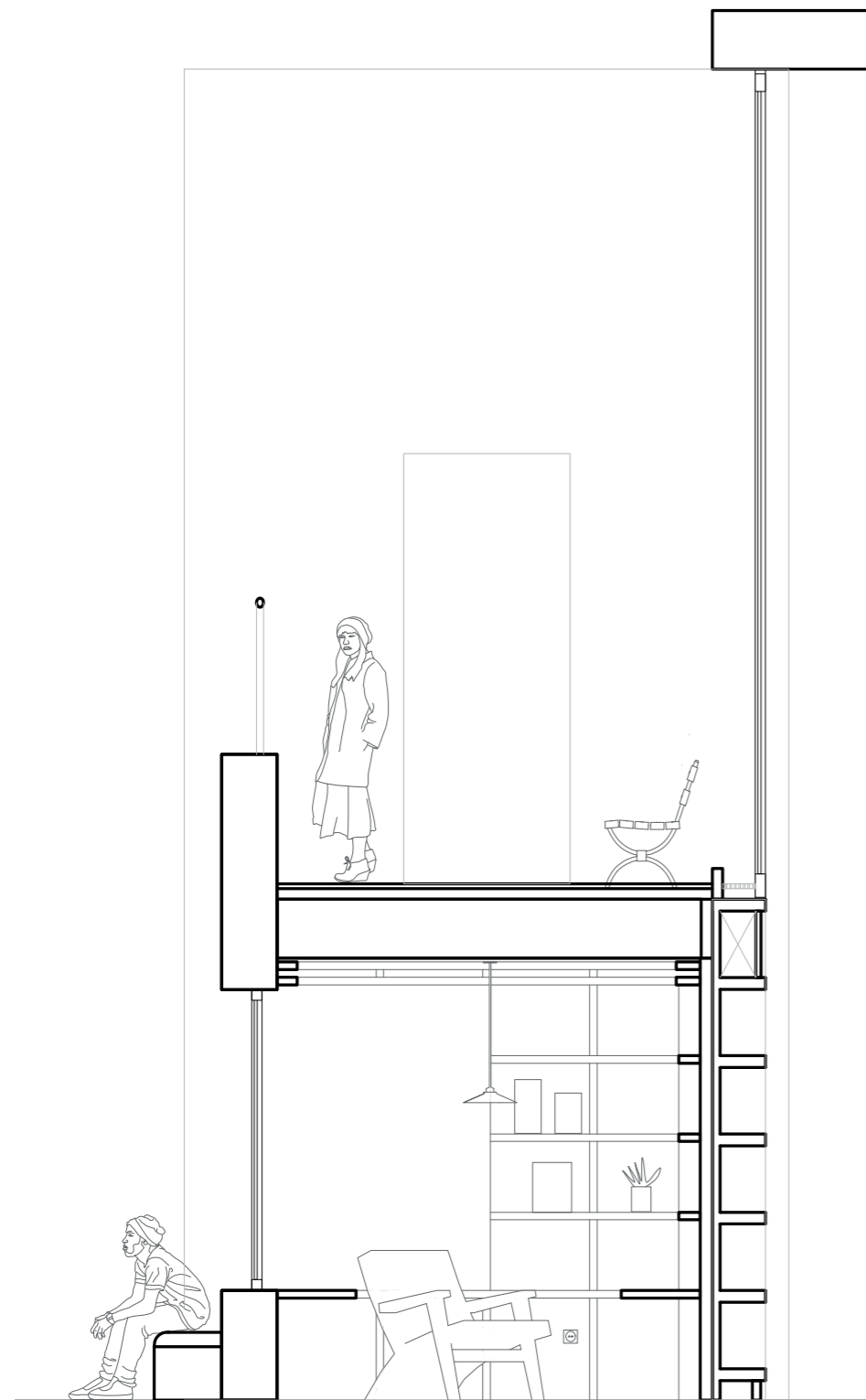
section of the 4th Annex



note:

*This section through the 4th Annex building illustrates how the space is utilized on different floors. The first floor houses the “Room of One’s Own,” providing a quiet, private area. On the ground floor, there is a café and relaxation spaces, inviting visitors to unwind and socialize. The second floor features cozy spots next to the windows, offering views over the courtyard, the hill, and the library. Each level has a connection to the outdoors, highlighting a key difference from the Stockholm City Library, which is more enclosed and separate from the outside world. This design choice ensures that the new building remains open and inviting, fostering a strong connection between the indoor spaces and the surrounding environment.*



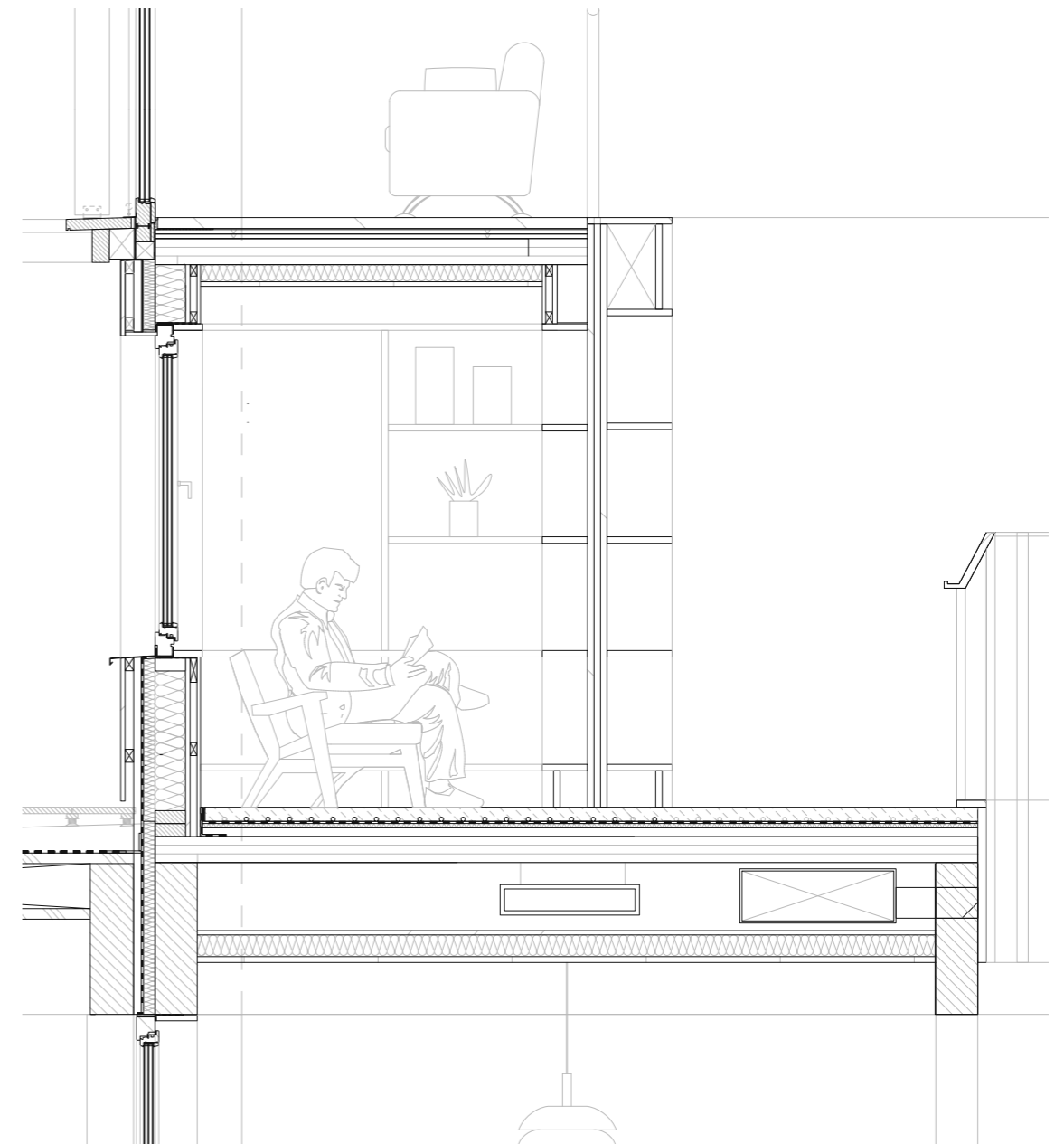


A Room of one's own  
*P1, section*

## A Room of one's own section of the 4th Annex

note:

*I adapted my design for P1, 'A Room of One's Own,' to fit seamlessly into the 4th Annex. I aimed to use the same level of detail as in my P1 project, illustrating how the indoor spaces flow effortlessly into the private room. This design creates a feeling of being nestled within the book shelves (poche), blending the private and communal spaces harmoniously.*



## A Room of one's own

*Interior of the 4th Annex*



*In this rendering, you can see how 'A Room of One's Own' is integrated into the 4th Annex building. While it resembles a classic library, it offers a unique experience. The render, created on the first floor, reveals a connection through a void to the ground floor, where the library's 'living room' is located. The individual rooms on the first floor serve as private sanctuaries, akin to bedrooms in a family house, where one can retreat for personal development, contemplation, and wonder. A large wooden roof covers the entire space, offering a panoramic view of the area, inviting you to sit and gaze out at the surroundings. Although these rooms of one's own offer privacy, they never completely isolate you, maintaining an overall openness to the environment. This design fosters a sense of connection and openness, blending the private and communal in a harmonious embrace.*



## Final Reflection

The act of making models, forced me to think about the essential parts of my design. I had to consider how various elements would be supported and how materials would come together. This consideration influenced my design decisions.

As I spent more time creating physical models, I learned to observe buildings closely. I realized that by looking carefully at existing structures, I could learn a lot about the intentions of the architect. This observation influenced my design choices and inspired creative solutions to challenges I encountered.

From the beginning of the project, our tutors stressed the non-linear nature of architectural design, often requiring us to backtrack and rethink our approach to reach a successful outcome. This was especially evident in my own process.

I spent a significant amount of time exploring various solutions using a variety of techniques: models, hand drawings, and digital modeling. It was a constant balancing act between technical considerations such as structural requirements, exterior expression interior qualities and flow, as well as the institution's identity and its relationship with the neighborhood. Each aspect demanded research, seeking references,

and understanding the essence of my building.

Maintaining a project journal to document all iterations of my design and the thoughts behind them proved to be valuable. Although it was sometimes frustrating, this method greatly increased productivity. Reflecting on the different versions and documented ideas, supported by a collective body of knowledge (the research books), allowed me to deepen my design decision and led to my final design.

In the past period, I focused on finalizing the design, including plans, elevations, sections, and details. This culminated in my P4 presentation, where I covered various topics like research, architecture, building technology.

For the upcoming period, I'll be adapting my design based on the feedback from my P4 presentation. I'll be refining my drawings and previous models to enhance the overall design. Additionally, in these final months of my graduation year, I plan to create a 1:200 scale model of my entire design. This model will be showcased during my P5 presentation, helping others understand the functionality of my design. Finally, I'll dedicate the last period to creating renders of significant elements of my building, such as the colonnade, 4th Anex and the courtyards.

