

# ISLANDS OF REFUGE

Context

Problem Statement

Ambitions & Research

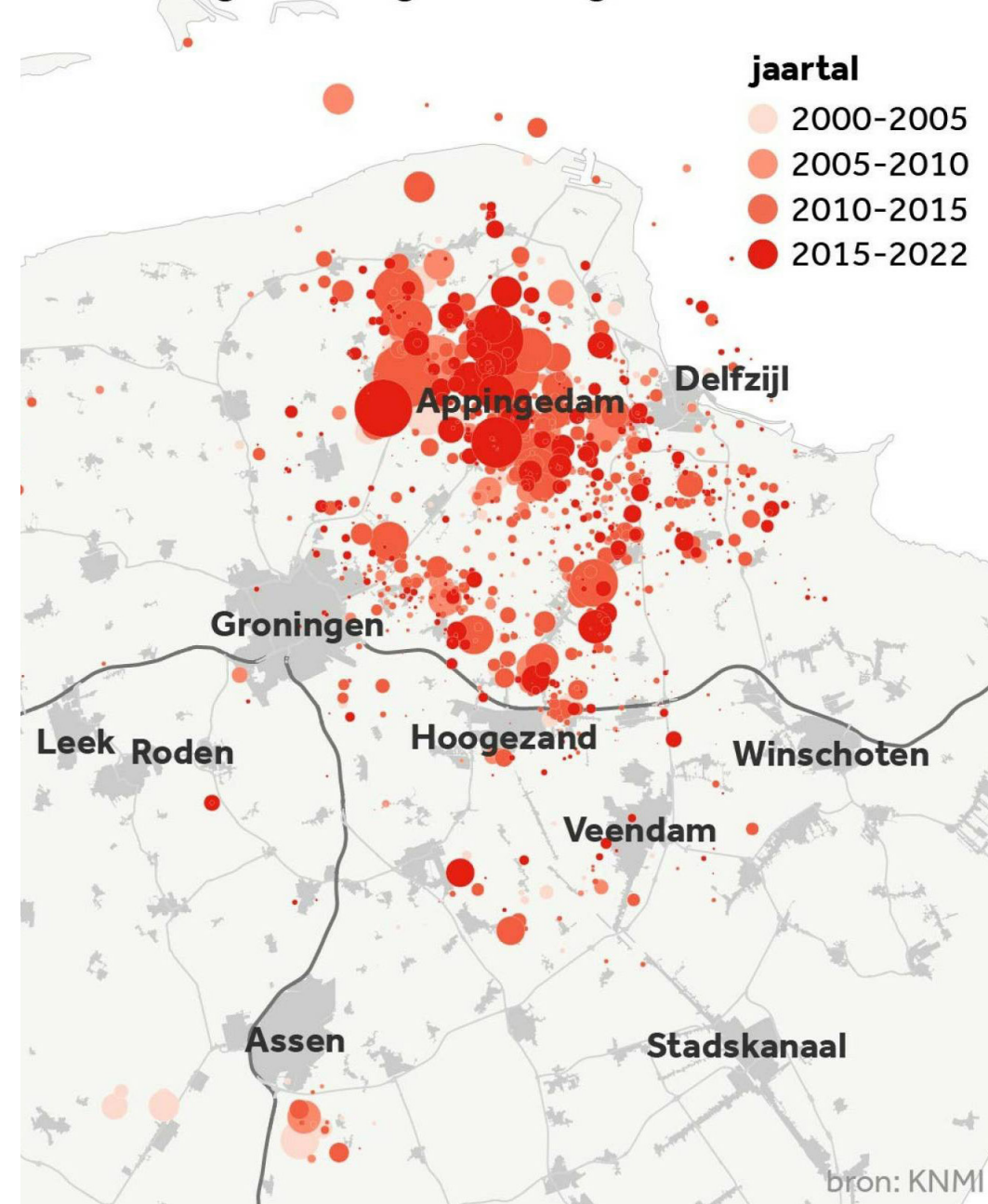
Results



Source: RTV Noord

### Meer dan duizend aardbevingen

Aardbevingen door gaswinning sinds 2000



Earthquakes affecting the area since 2000.

Source: KNMI

### Damage claims and reinforcement

The physical and social effects for the residents of the gas extraction area, status at 31/12/2022



**267,466** claims for damage  
due to earthquakes

↳ **approximately 85,000** addresses  
suffered damage more than 1x



**11,880** addresses  
are not yet safe

for **7,289** addresses  
it is not clear whether they are safe



Many Groningen residents suffer from  
**stress and have health problems**



**1,615**  
earthquakes in Groningen

Earthquakes' damage claims and reinforcements.

Source: Parliamentary committee of inquiry into natural gas extraction



Economic Agenda



→ **“Attract 1,5 million more visitors to the region annually compared to 2025”** ←

Source: Nij Begun



Social Agenda

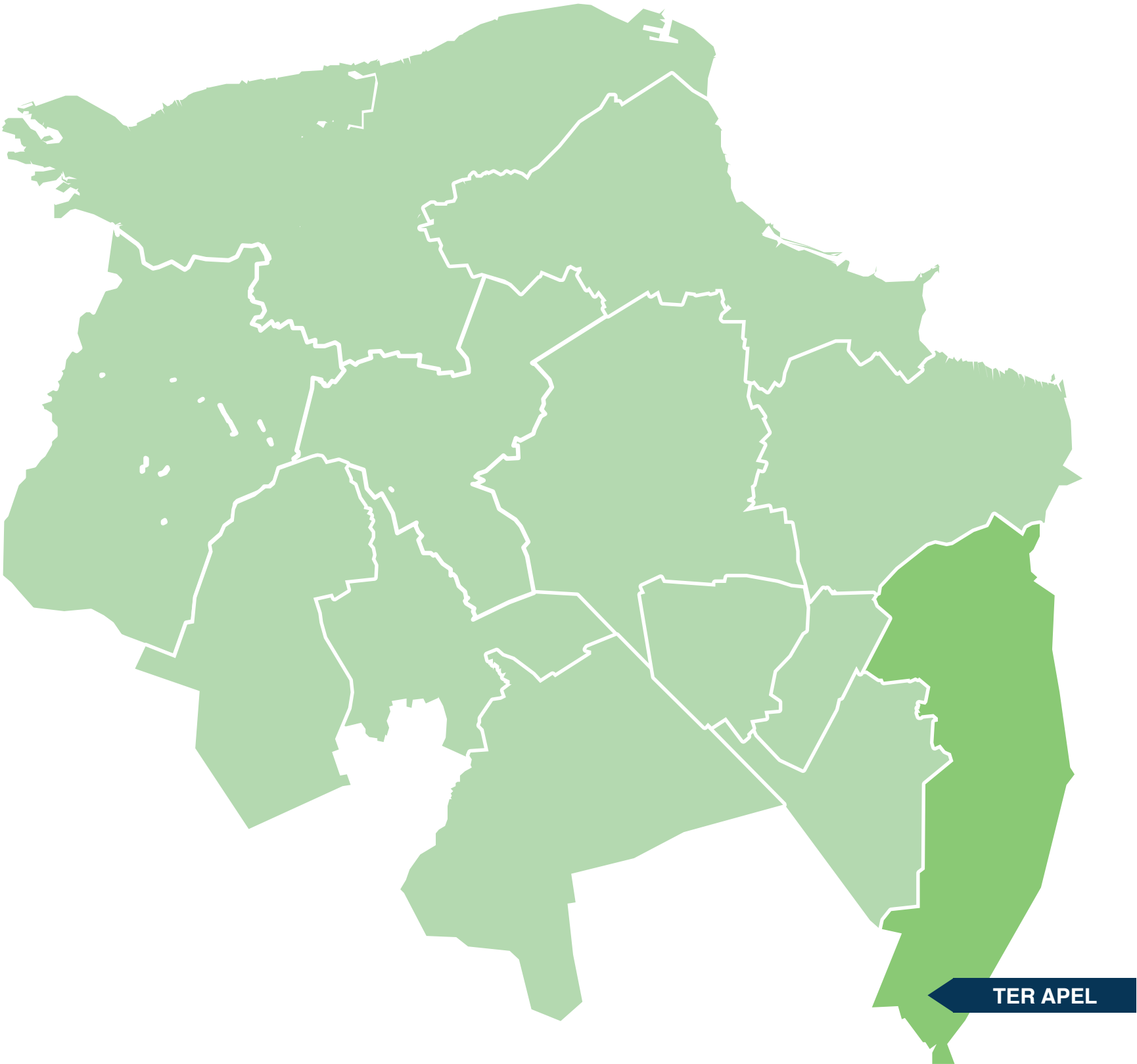
*“Only 1,3% of all overnight stays in NL  
take place in Groningen”*

Source: Nij Begun Economic Agenda

*“By percentage, Groningen saw the  
largest increase in tourists in 2024”*

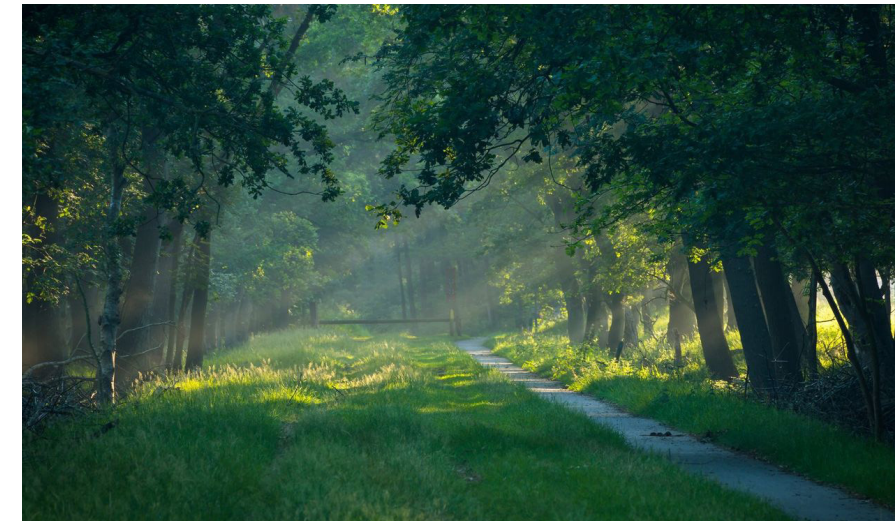
Source: CBS







Source: Google Earth



Sources: RTV Noord, NOS & Visit Groningen



Source: Radboud Hafkenscheid

# House of the New Light

*Domus Novae Lucis*

*“The last surviving medieval, rural  
monastery of northwestern Europe”*

Source: De Verhalen Van Groningen

*The monastery embodies an ancient  
tradition of hospitality; a historical  
‘refuge’ that once provided sanctuary,  
contemplation and community.*

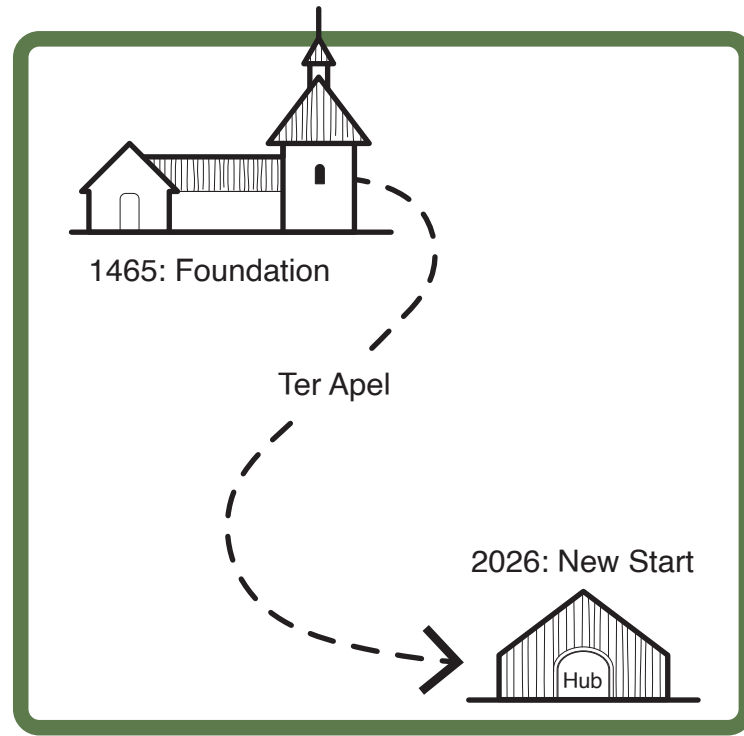


Source: Monumentenportaal

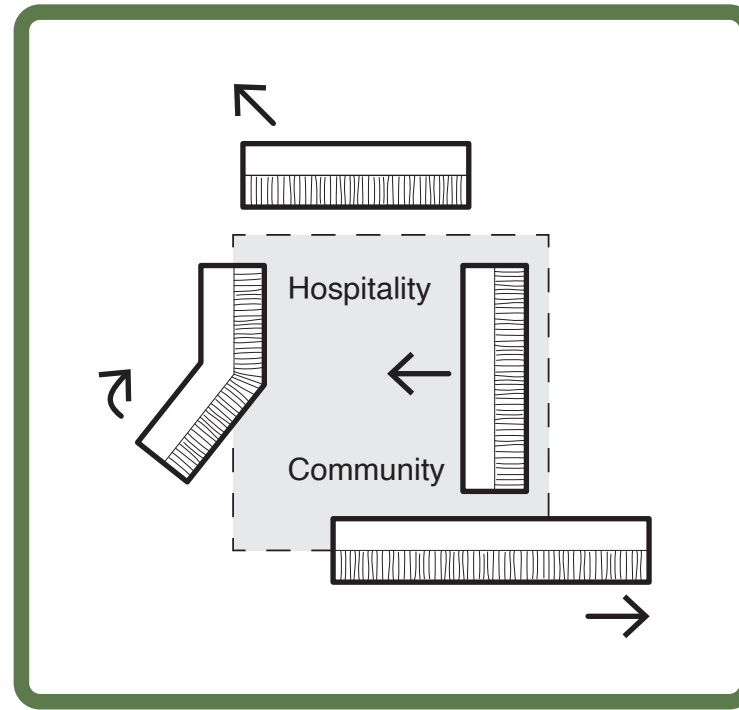
“Ter Apel faces an identity crisis, both in its urban and architectural context, as well as in its national image and identity.

How can the concept of refuge be reimagined as a constructive, unifying force rather than a source of social- and spatial division?”

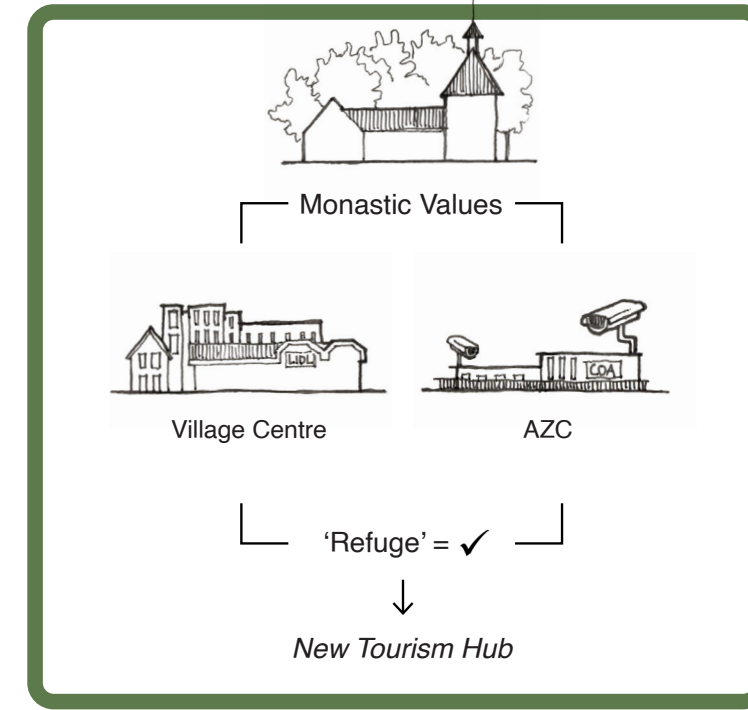
Herald for Change



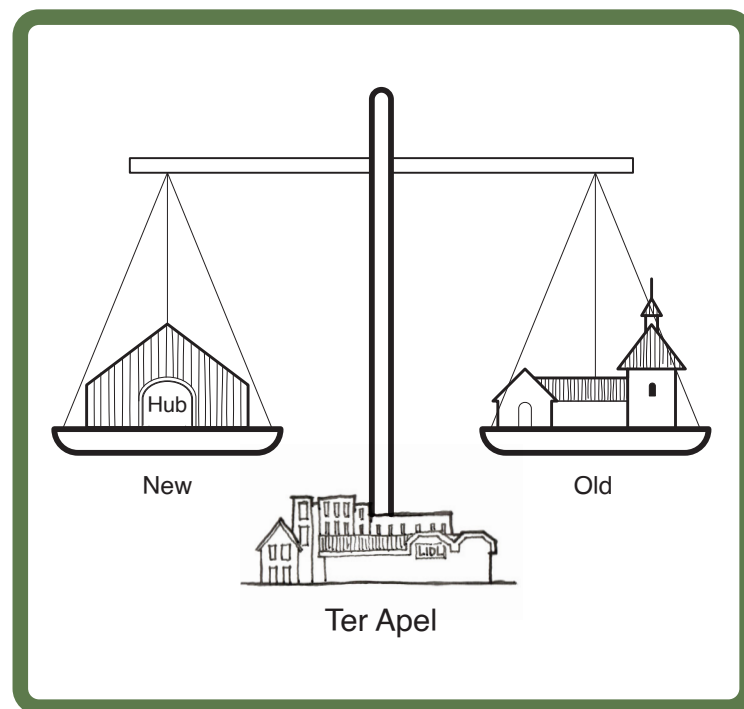
Re-activate & Re-invent Monastery



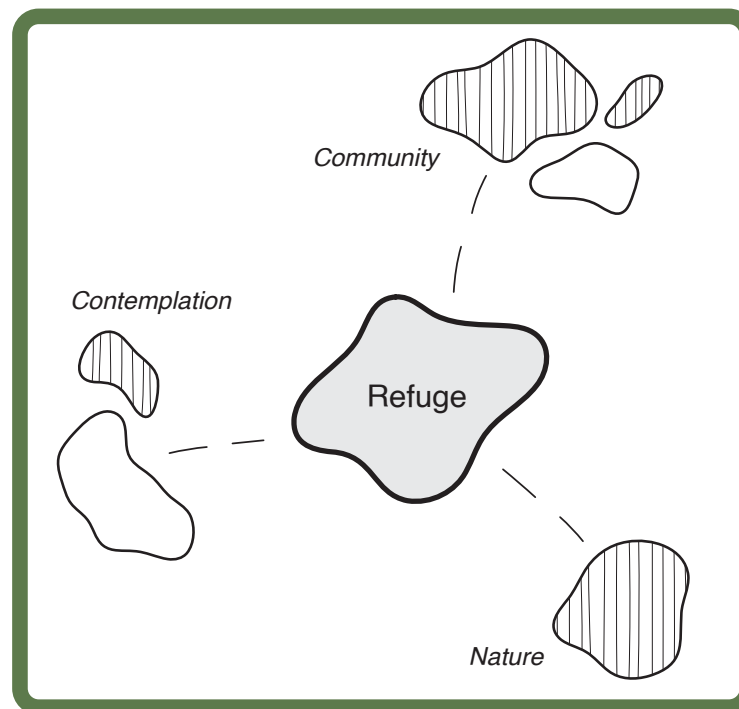
Change the Narrative around 'Refuge'



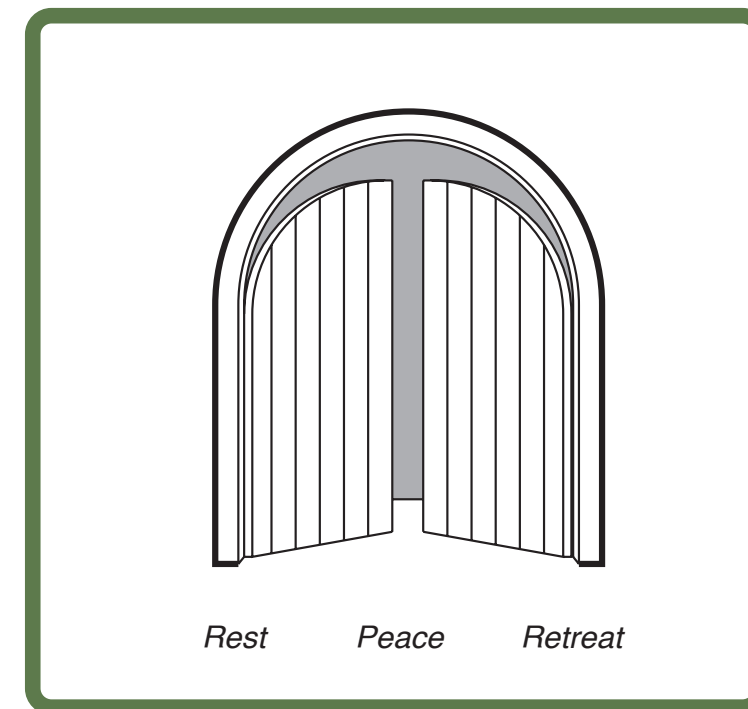
Dialogue 'Old' and 'New' Monastery



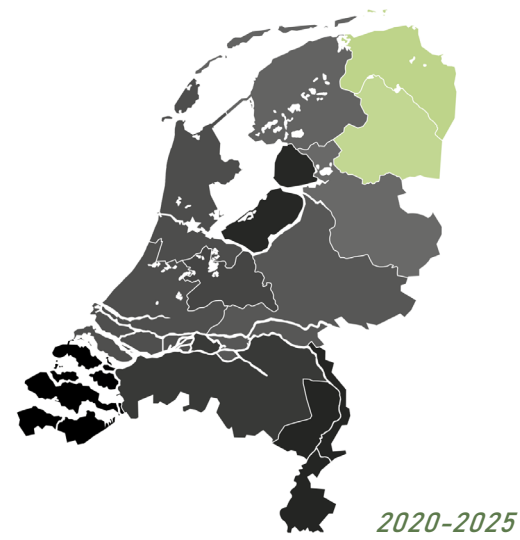
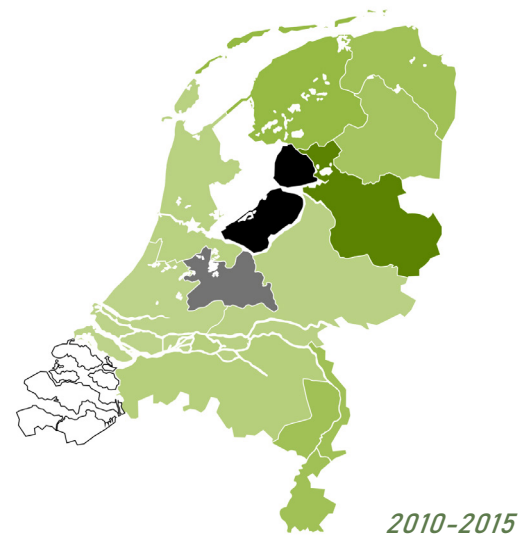
Network of Self-Sufficient Islands



Connect with Tourists



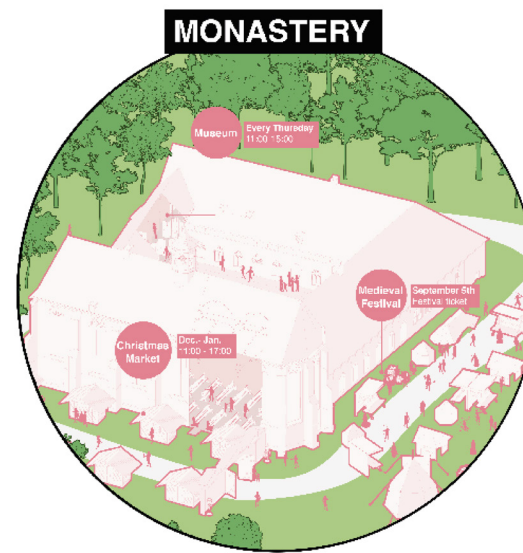
1. Changing the narrative of Refuge



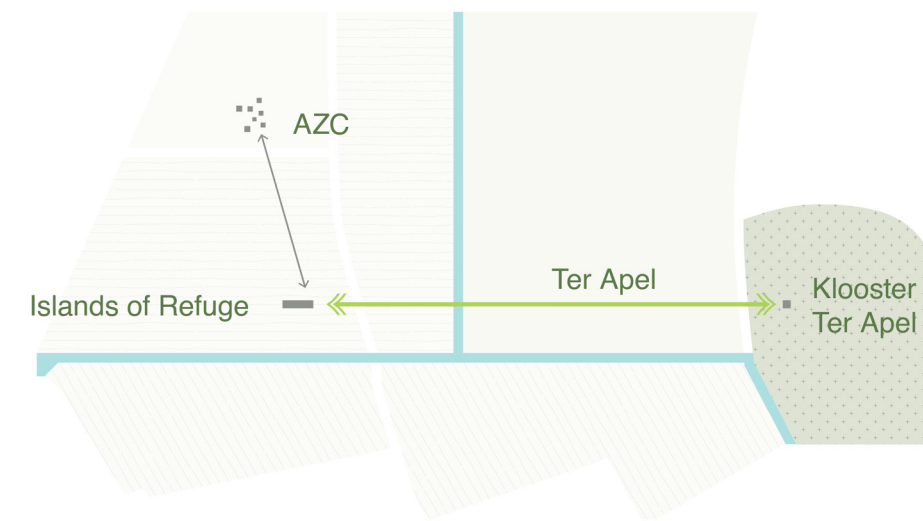
Google Searches



2. Ter Apel's Monastic Heritage

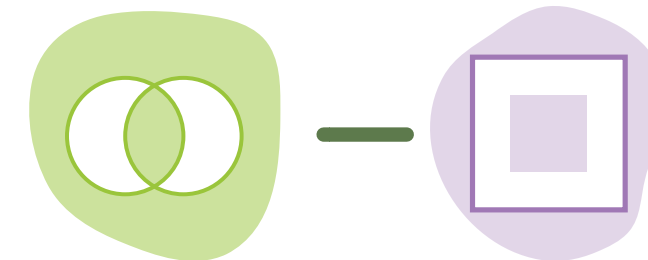


3. Integration Architecture, Landscape & Tourism



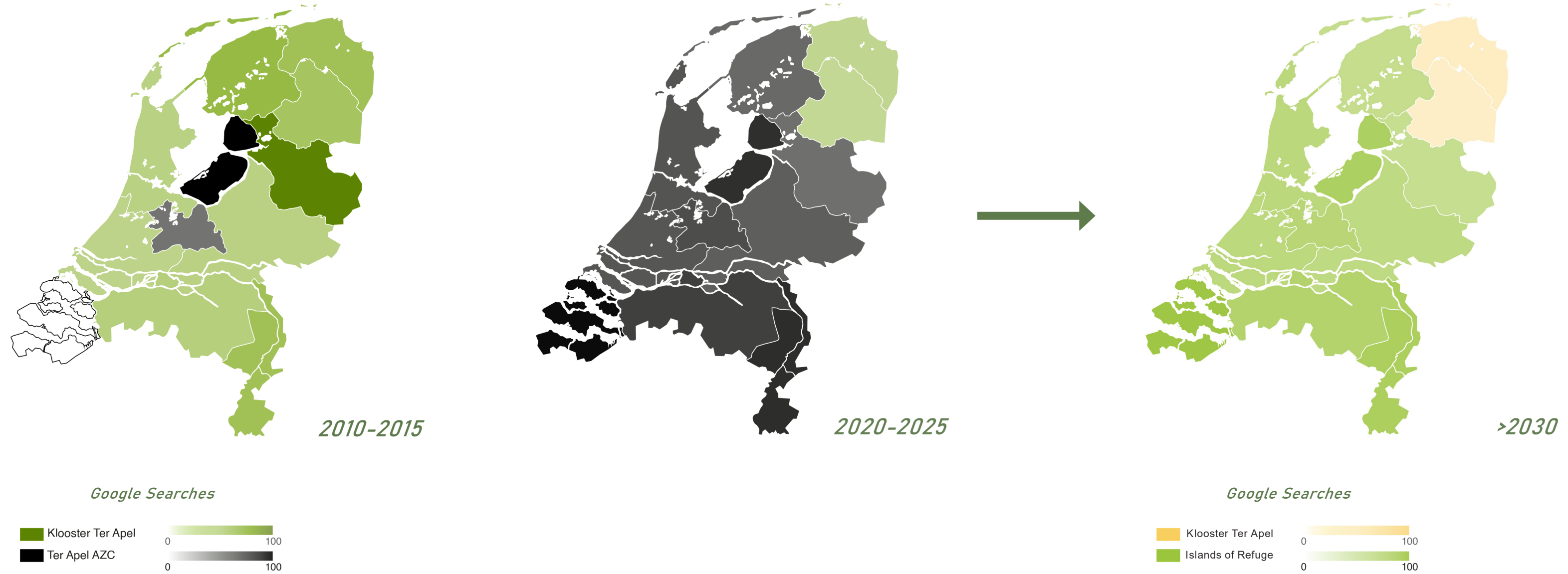
Station

Threshold



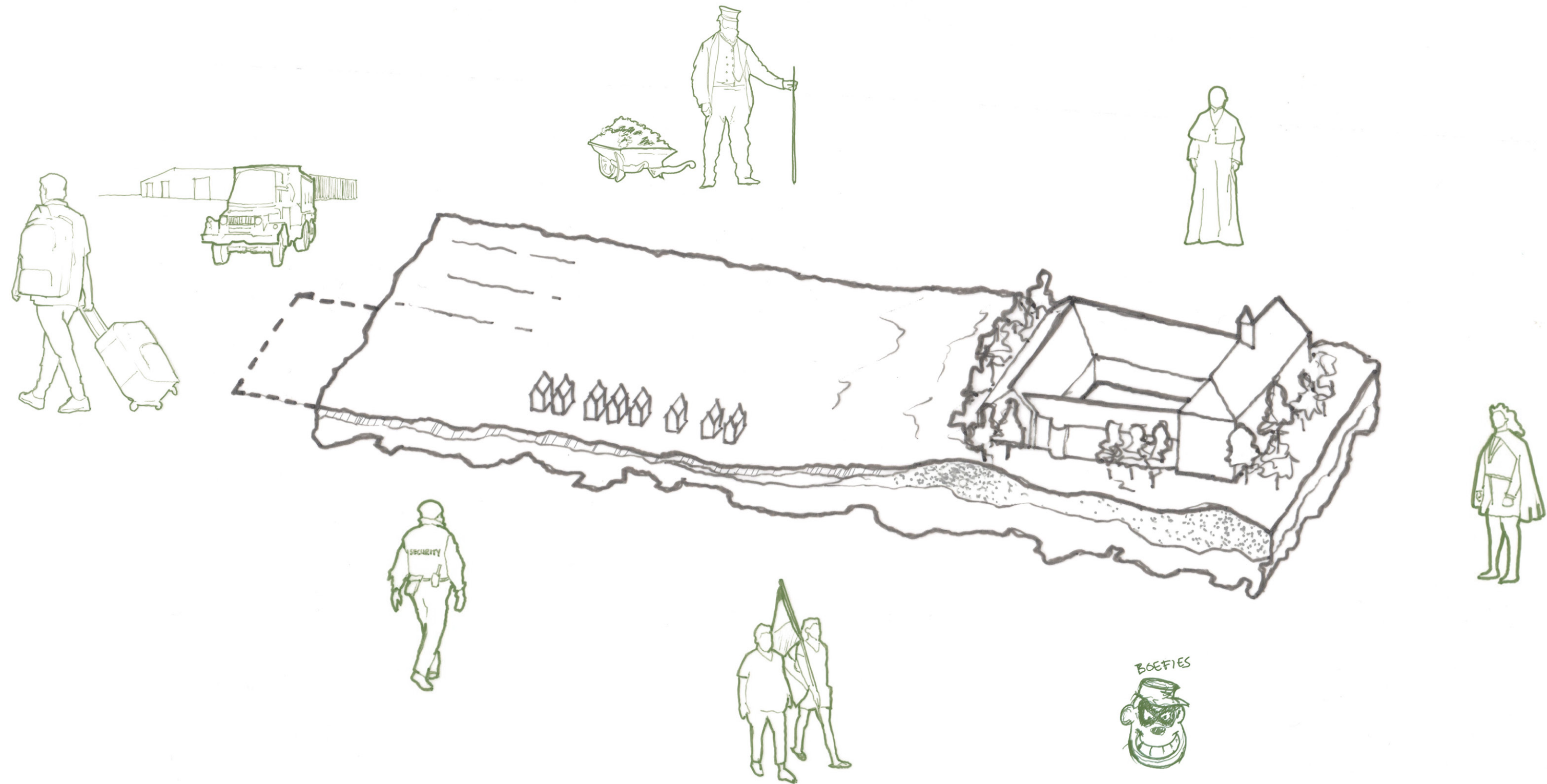
Encounter

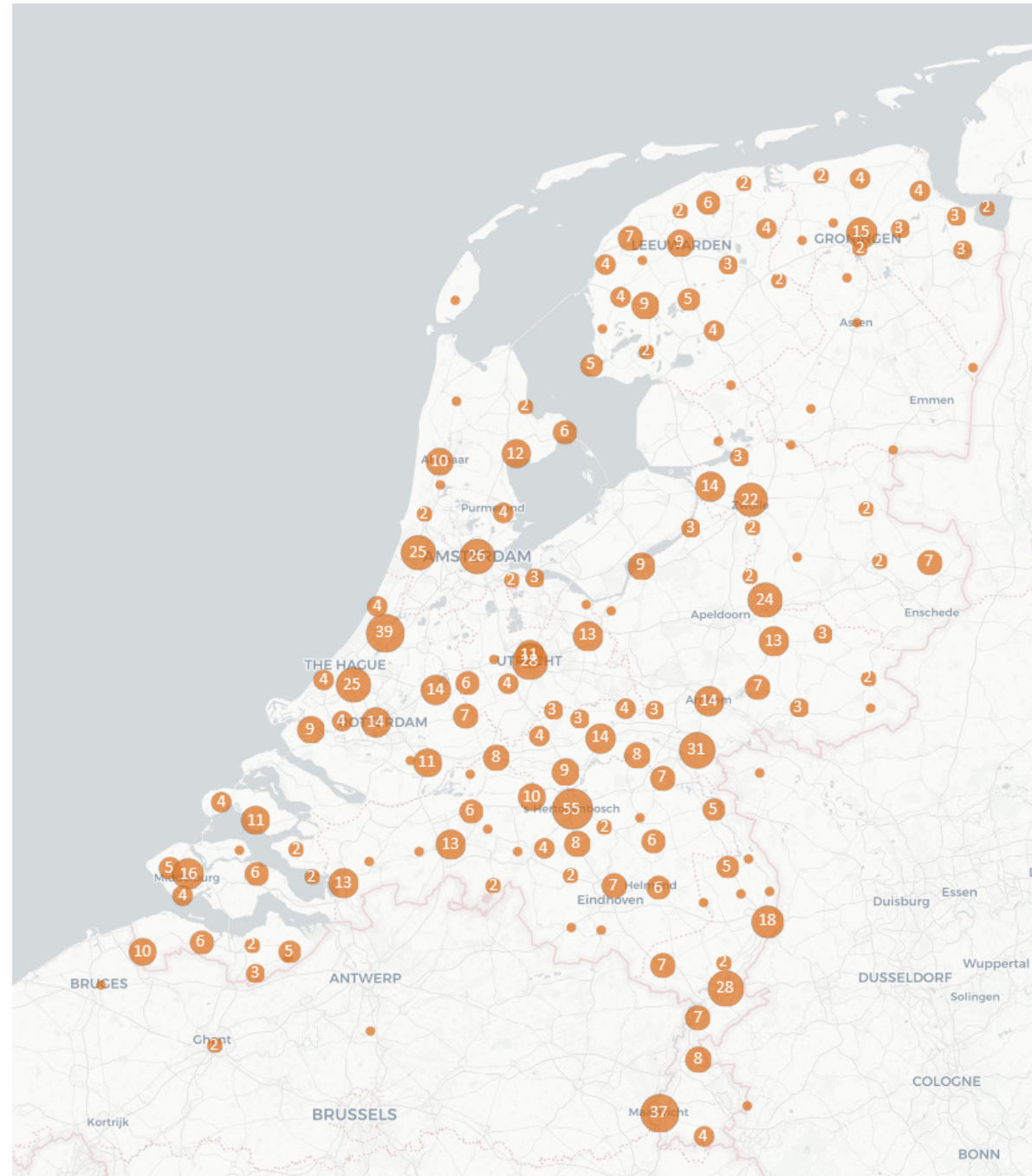
Sanctuary



# Ter Apel as an 'Island'

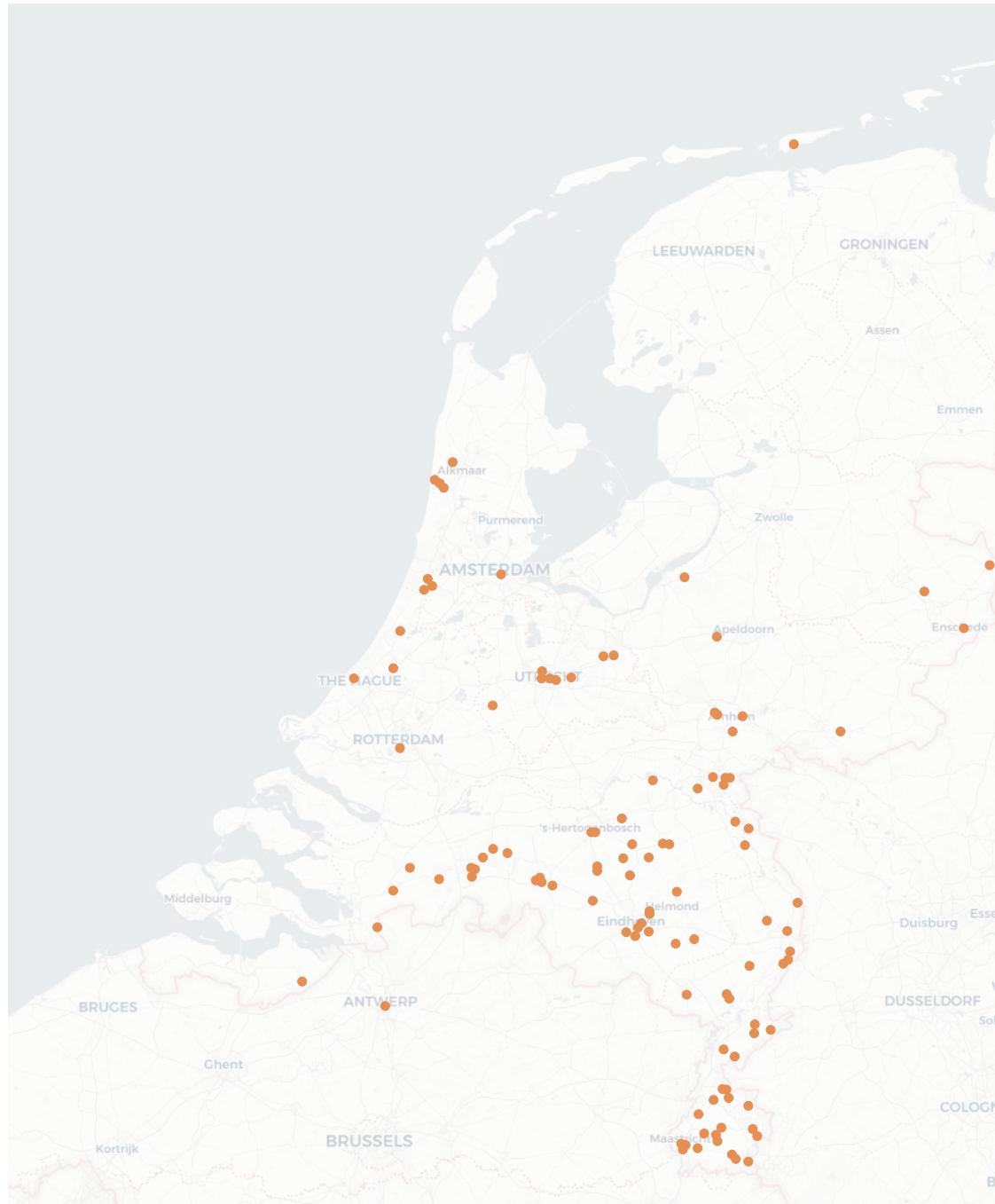
AZC, NATO, Monastery, Ter Apel Canal, Boefies





All Monasteries & Abbeys ever built  
in the Netherlands (until 1800)

Source: Goudriaan, K. (2021). *Kloosterkaart en Kloosterlijst* [Data set].



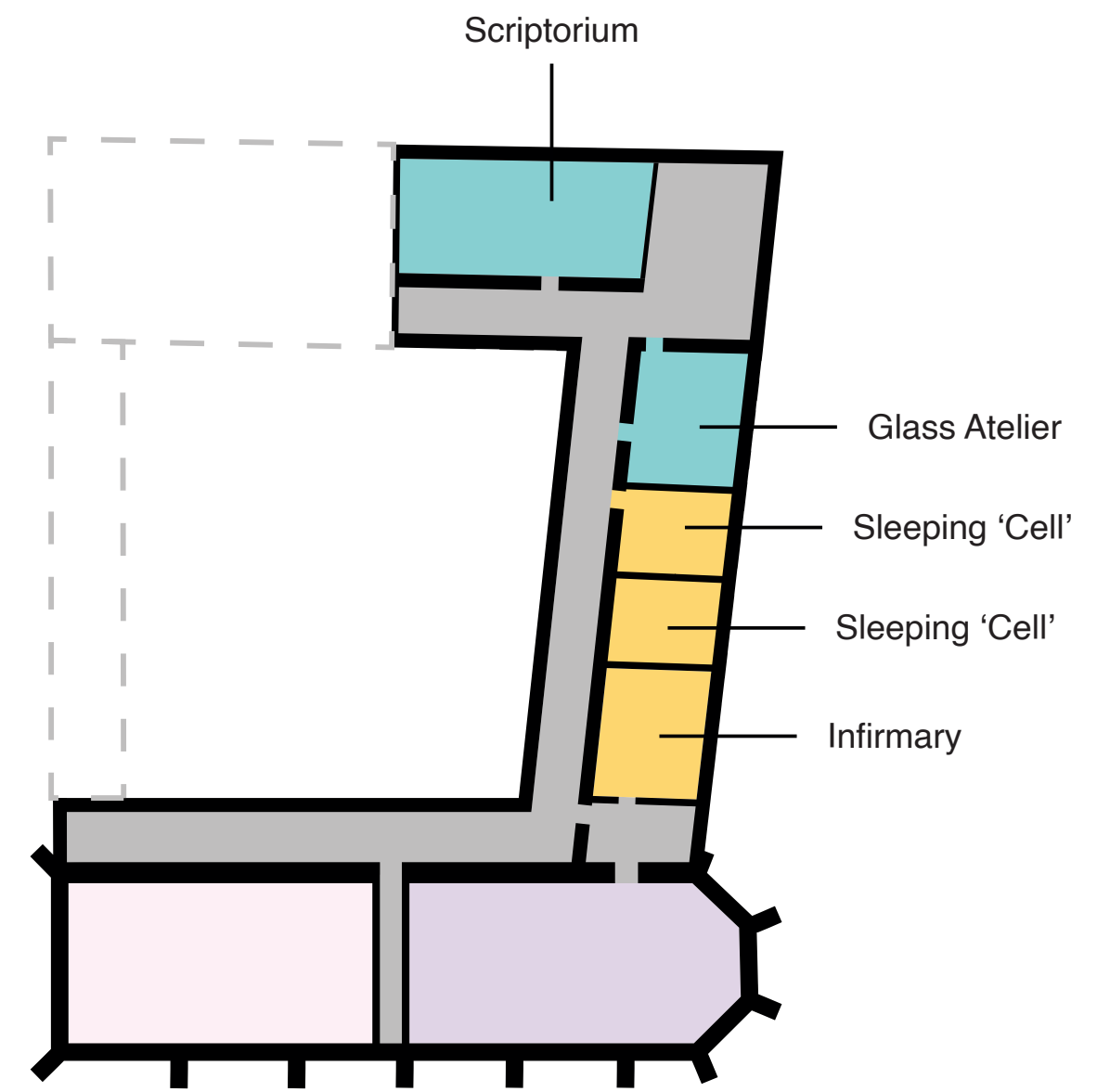
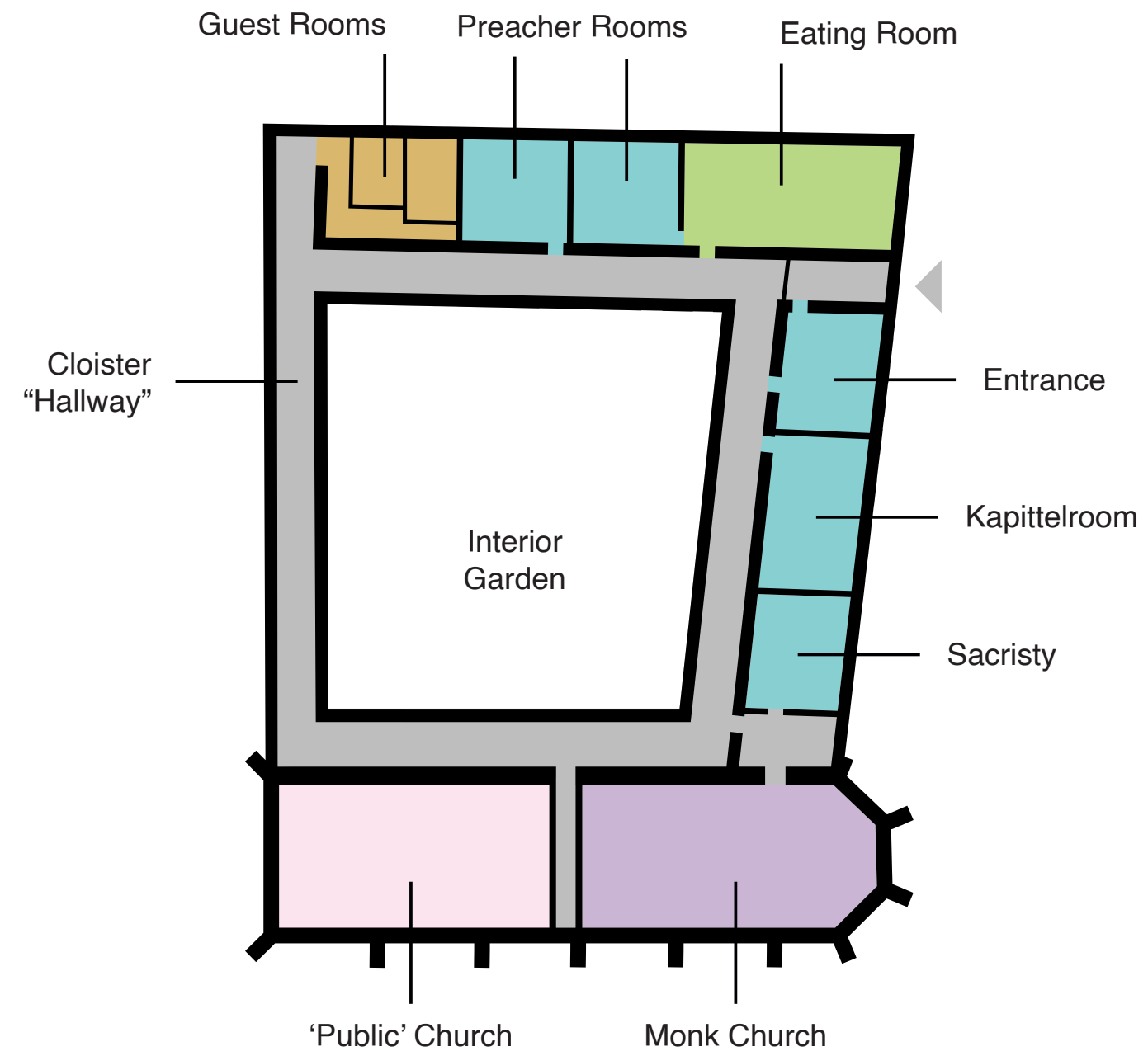
Active and Registered Monasteries & Abbeys  
in the Netherlands (2026)

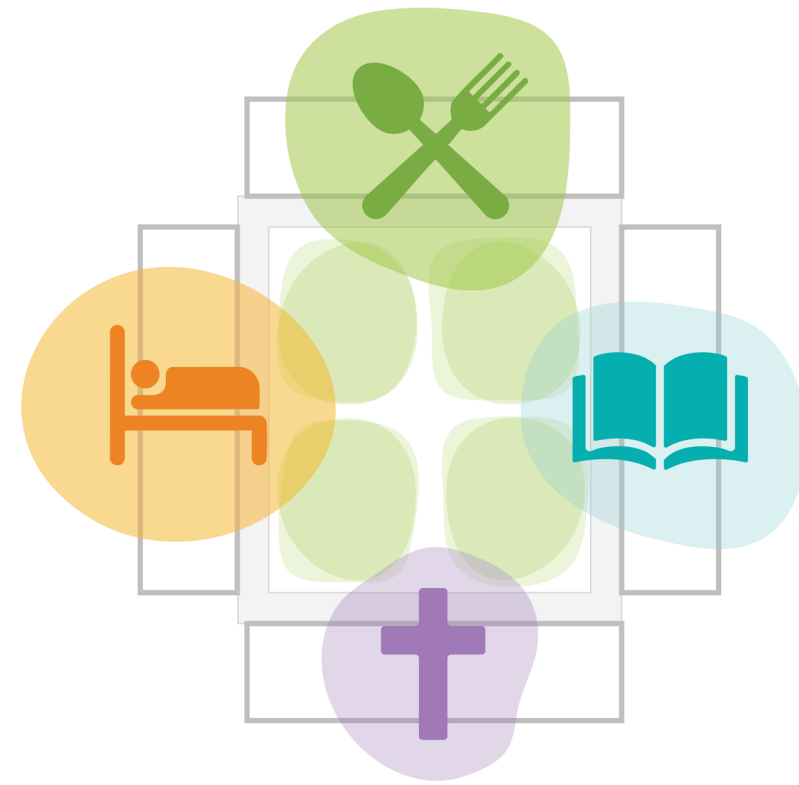
Source: KNR (2026). *Leden*.



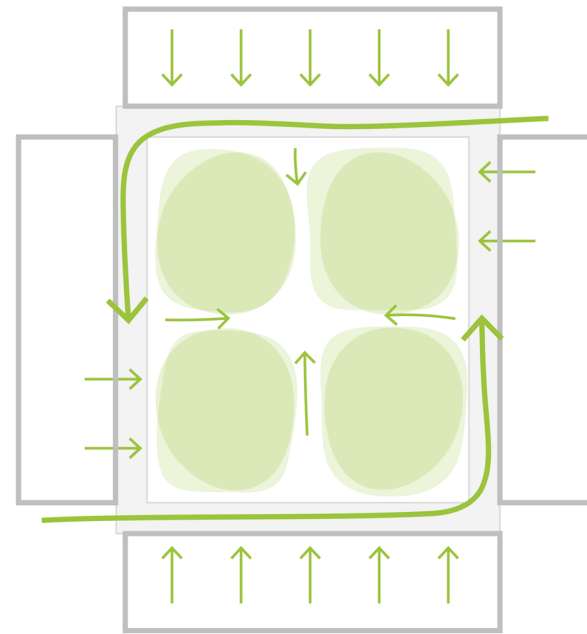
(Former) Monasteries & Abbeys  
with option for Retreat & Stay

Source: Beziinningsvakanties.nl (2023). *Alle kloosters in Nederland op een rij*

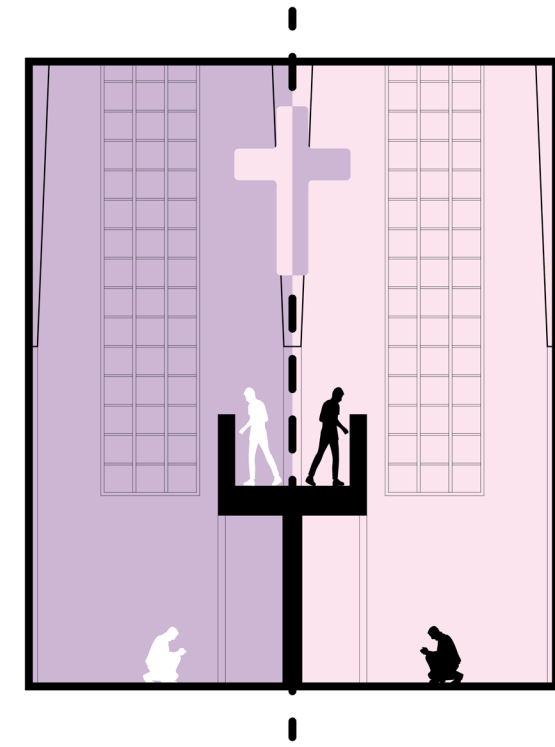




Grouping & Orientation

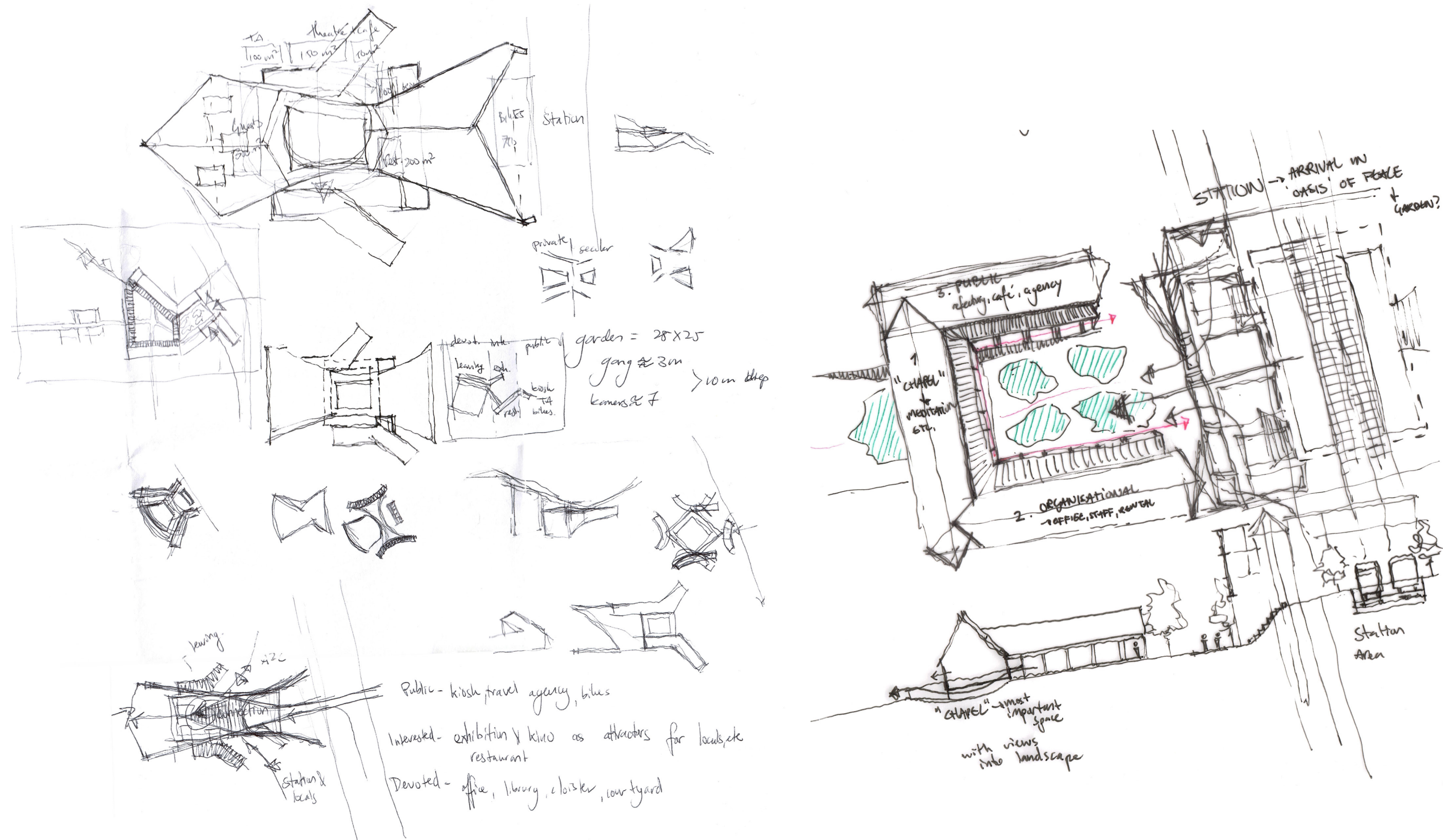


Movement & Rhythm

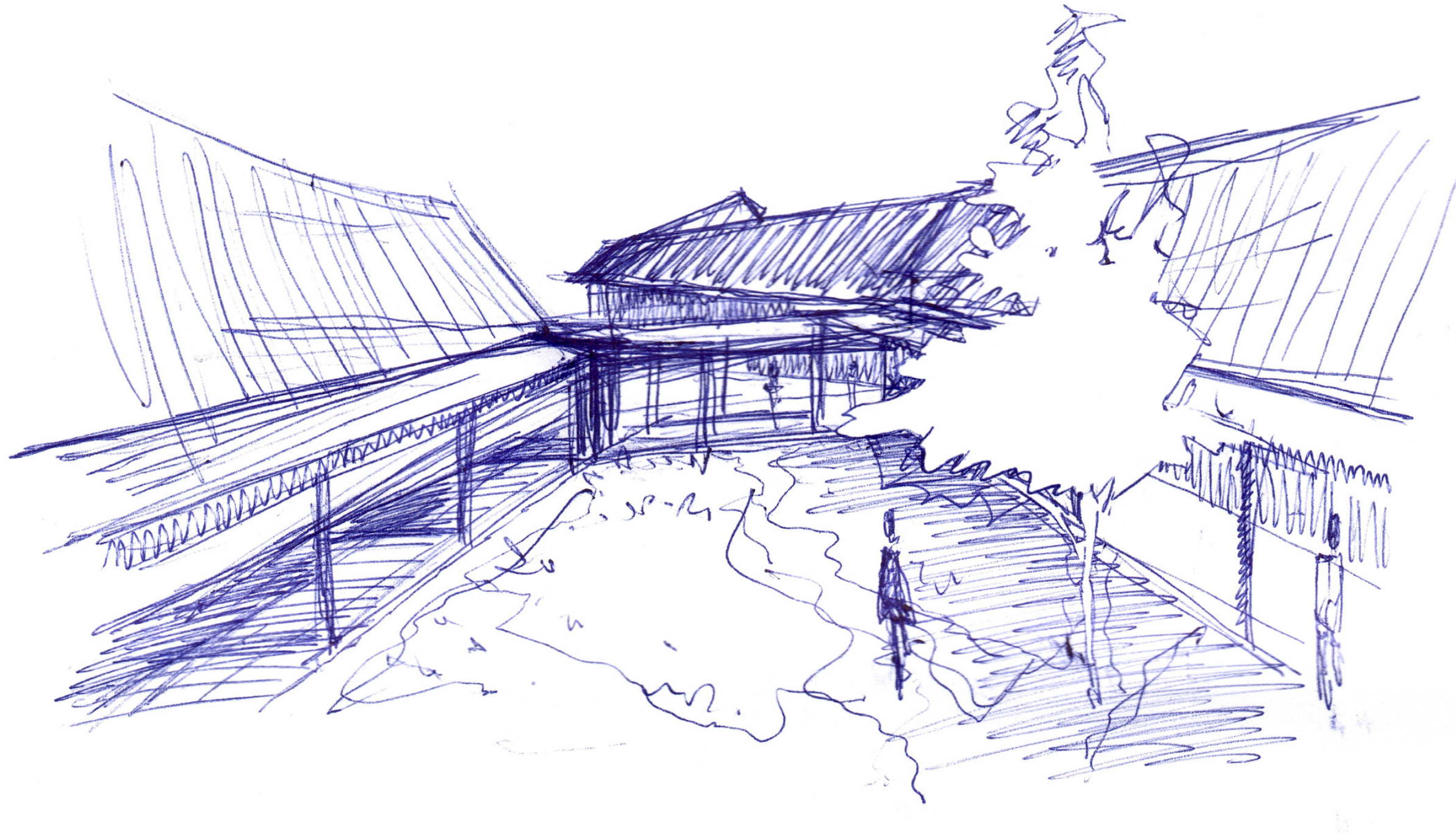


Sacred & Secular

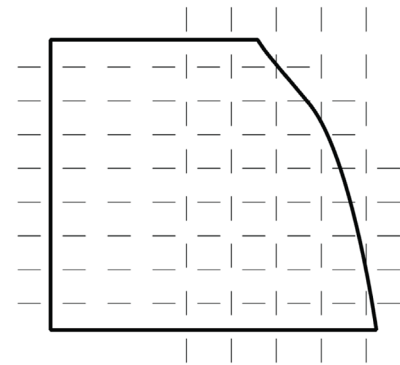
Program and layout



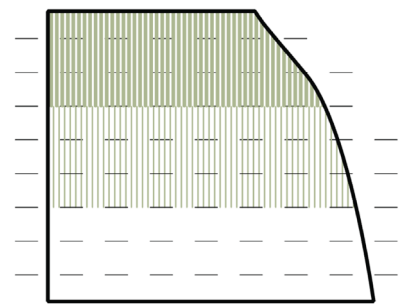
*Atmosphere*



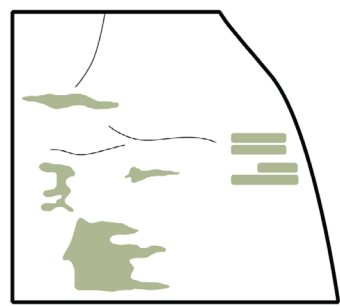




*Different Directionalities*

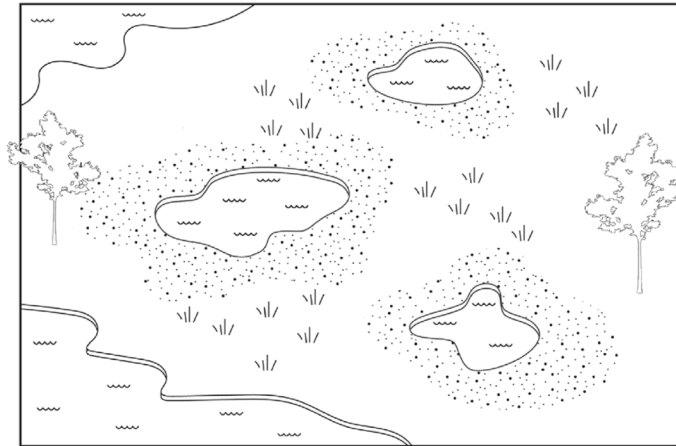


*Cyclical Rhythm of Growth*



*'Anomalies'*

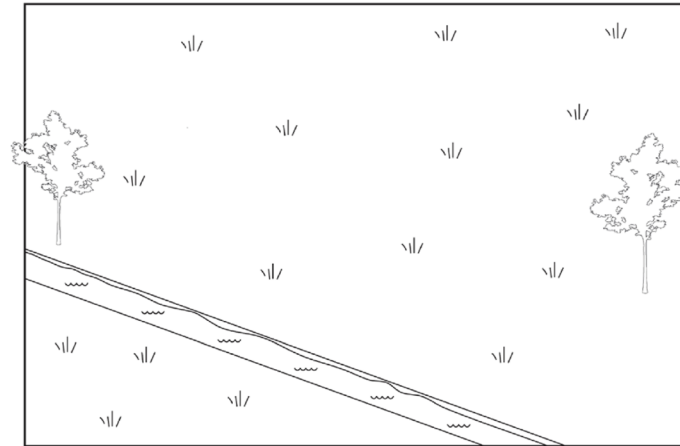
	Jan - Feb	Mar - Apr	May - Jun	July - Aug	Sep - Oct	Nov - Dec	
							2025
<i>Satellite Imagery</i>  <i>source:</i> <i>Satellietdataportaal</i>							2024
<i>Site Public Building</i>  <i>Ter Apel, Groningen</i>							2023



**“Natural” Landscape**

Buck Wheat

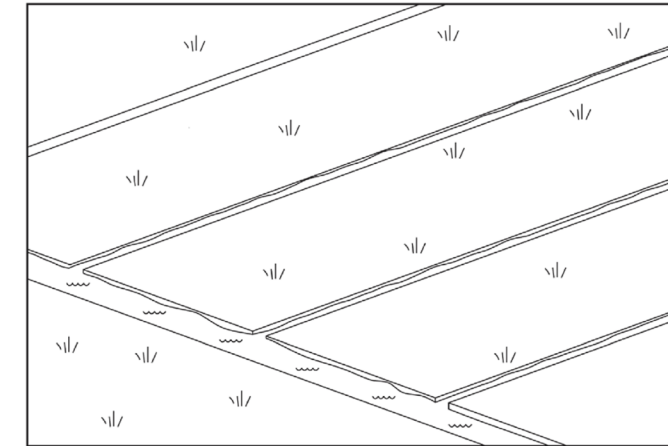
The landscape before the peat extraction period began largely consisted of acres where Buck-Wheat was being grown. Hidden below this sat the 'rauwveen' (raw peat).



**Preparing the Landscape**

Drainage, “Raaien”

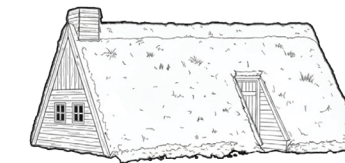
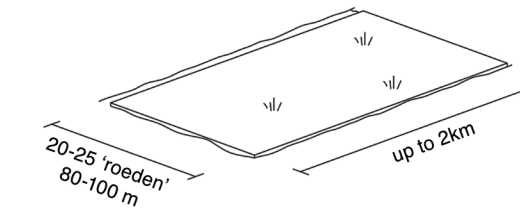
The first step in preparing the landscape for peat extraction was the 'Raaien' or 'Gruppen'. This consisted of digging main water channels and ditches to allow the land to drain.



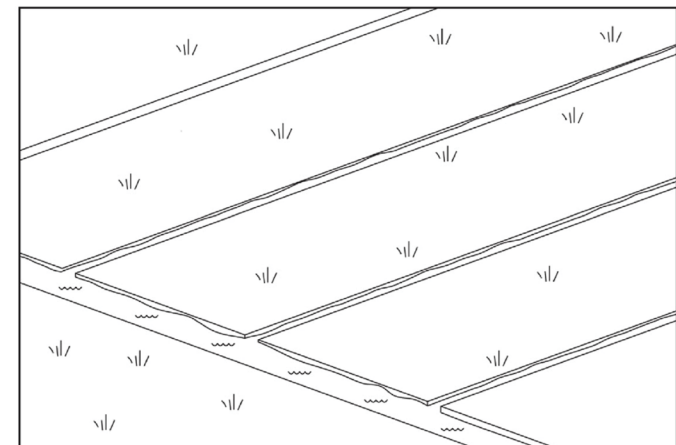
**Dividing Plots**

Dividing into “Plaatsen”, “Opsplitting”

The next step consisted of digging smaller ditches of around 3 'veenvoeten' (peat feet) wide; 60cm. These ditches divided the landscape into 'plaatsen' (plots) of 20-25 'roeden' wide; 80-100m.



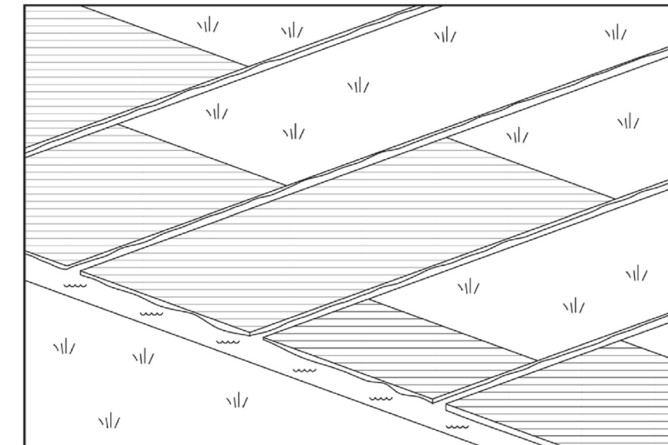
“Plaggenhut”  
Small house constructed of wood and grass patches. Residence of peat workers



**Drying Phase**

2 - 10 years

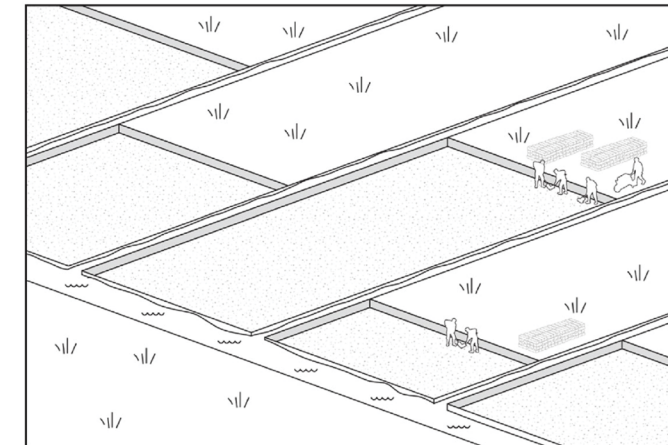
Depending on the water levels, the peat 'plaatsen' had to fully drain and dry up. During this process, others fields were prepared and peat was extracted.



**Taking off Top Layer**

“Bonkaarde”

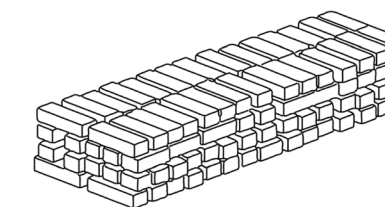
The first 50cm of 'bonkaarde' (unusable soil), was removed and spread on top of the yet to be extracted fields. This served as a good base for the extracted peat to dry on.



**Extracting Peat**

“Turfgraven”

The final phase consisted of actually extracting the peat. This was often done in teams of 6 (max 9). With a special device the peat was extracted into the rectangular shape. It was then stored on the nearby field and left to dry.

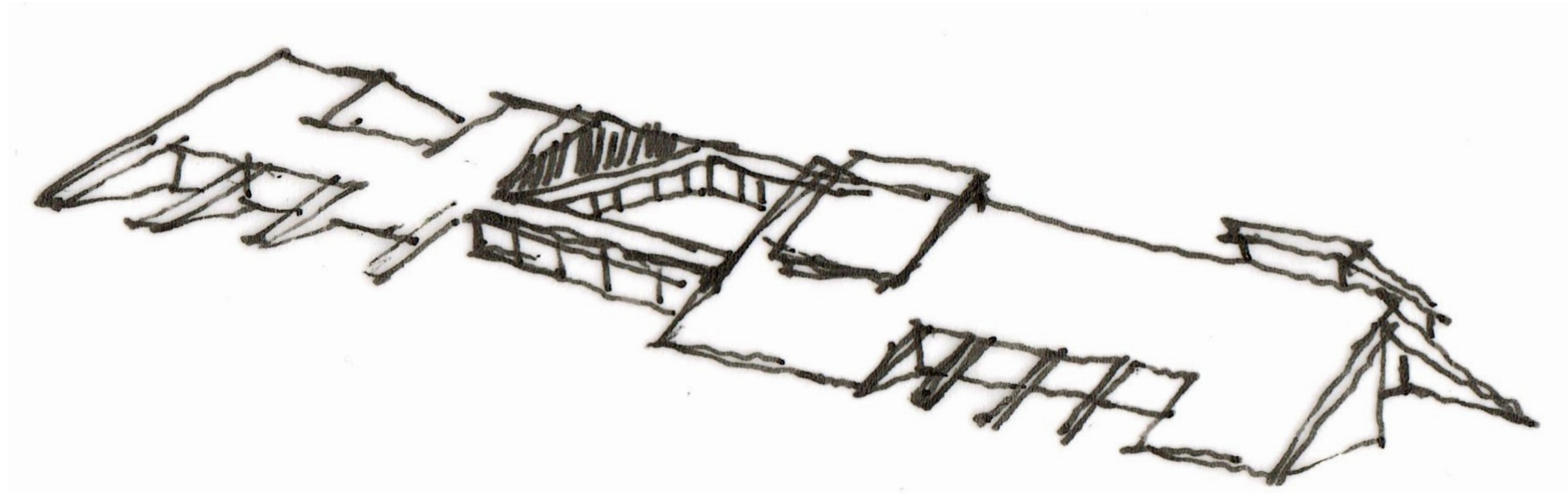


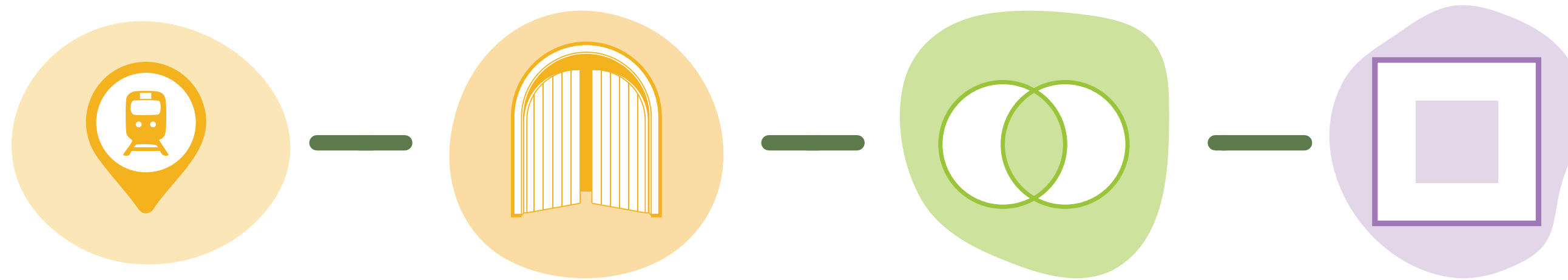
Stacking of the extracted peat. This was done in low, rectangular streaks. The peat was stacked loosely to allow air to pass through and dry them quicker.

Source: Gerding, M.A.W., (1995). *Vier eeuwen turfwinning: de verveningen in Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe en Overijssel tussen 1550 en 1950.*



Source: Drenths Archief





Station

Threshold

Encounter

Sanctuary

Bikes 350m<sup>2</sup>

Kiosk 100m<sup>2</sup>  
 Travel Agency 100m<sup>2</sup>  
 Bikes 350m<sup>2</sup>

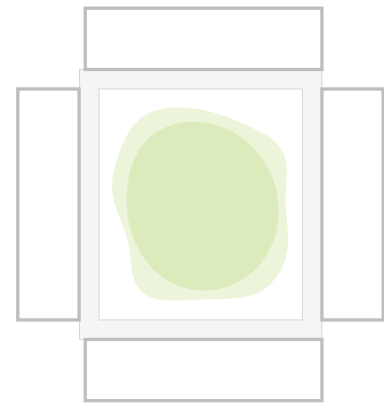
Exhibition/Museum 100m<sup>2</sup>  
 Theatre 100m<sup>2</sup>  
 Restaurant 250m<sup>2</sup>  
 Office 100m<sup>2</sup>

Guest Islands 300m<sup>2</sup>  
 Library 100m<sup>2</sup>

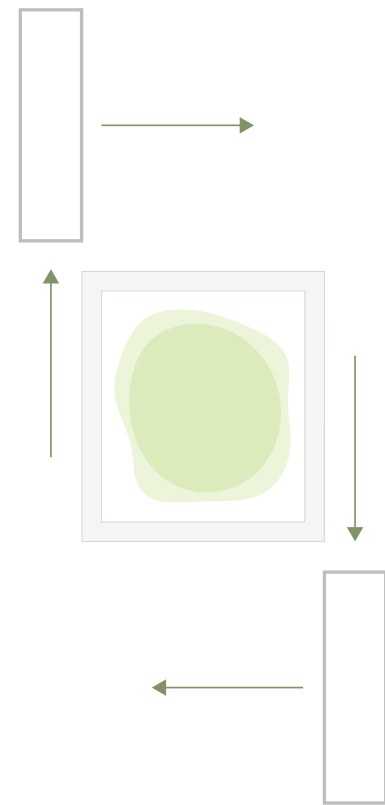
*Station Area*

*Public Space*

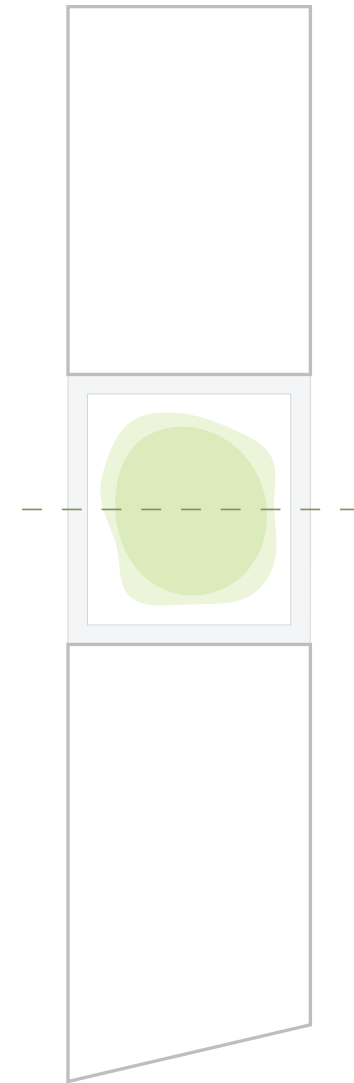
*Courtyard  
 Landscape*



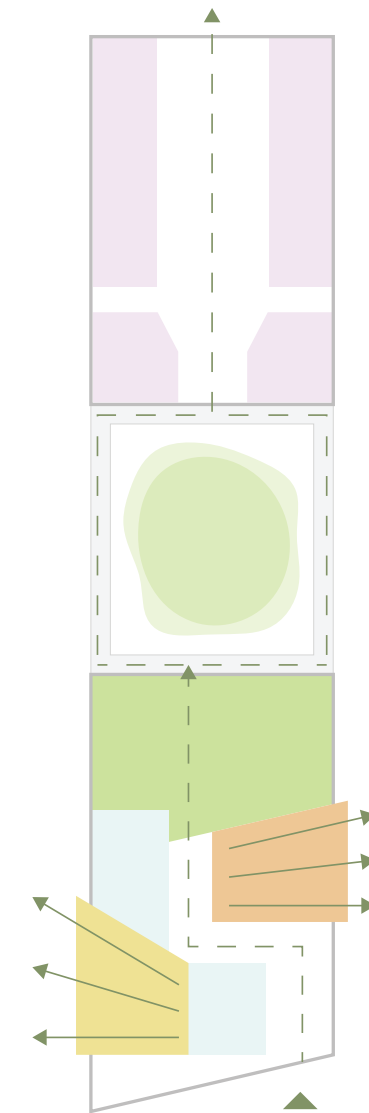
The Monastery as a Starting Point



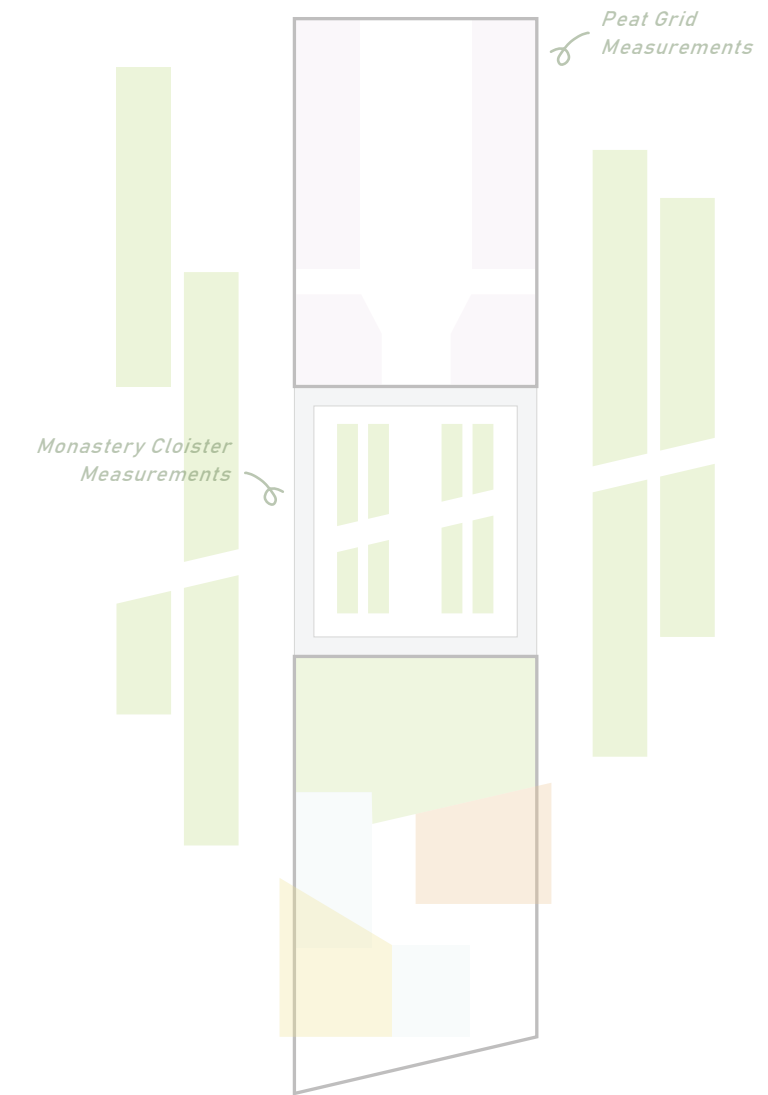
Pulling Apart & Re-arranging



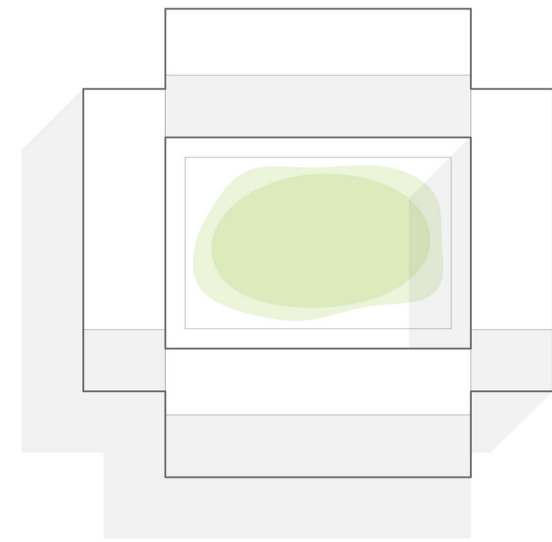
Separation "Sacred" & "Secular"



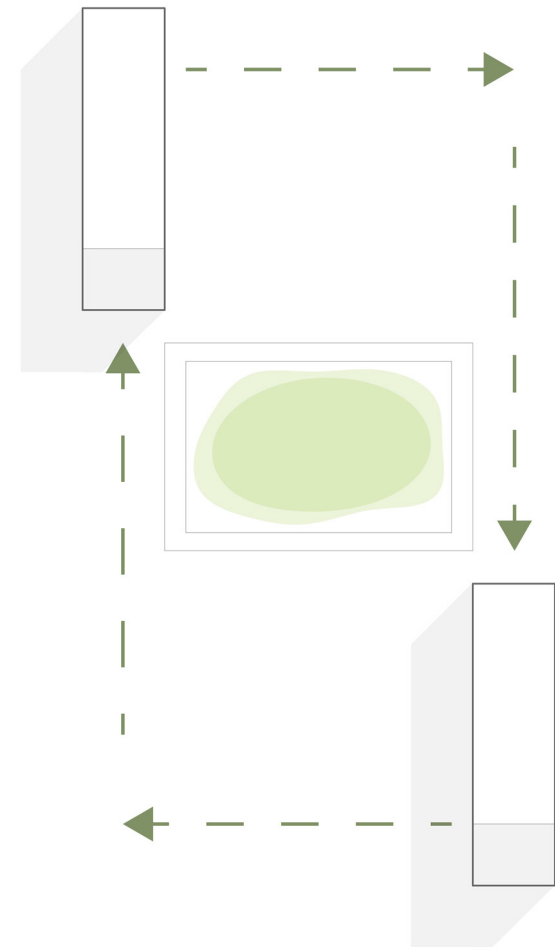
Spaces & Views



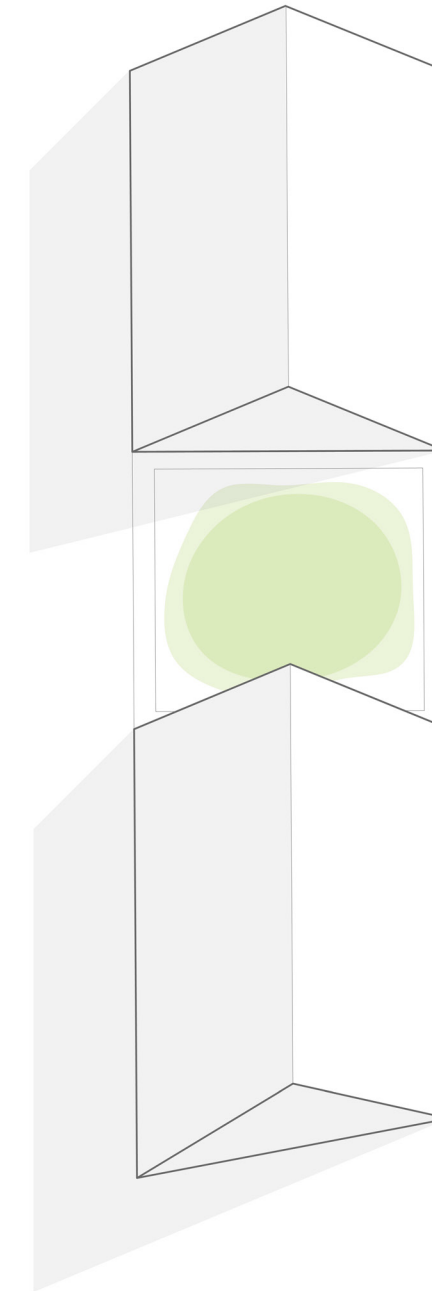
Integration into Landscape



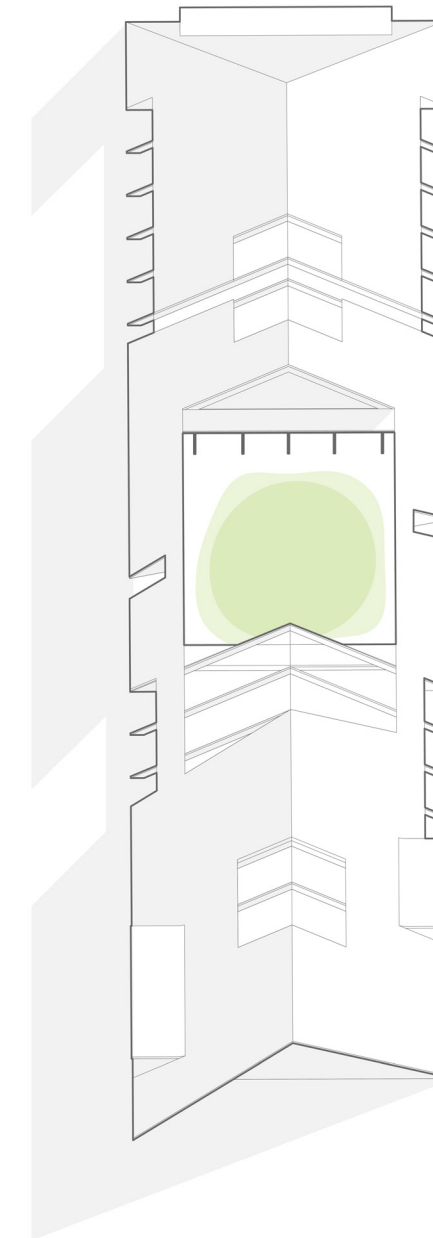
The Monastery as a Starting Point



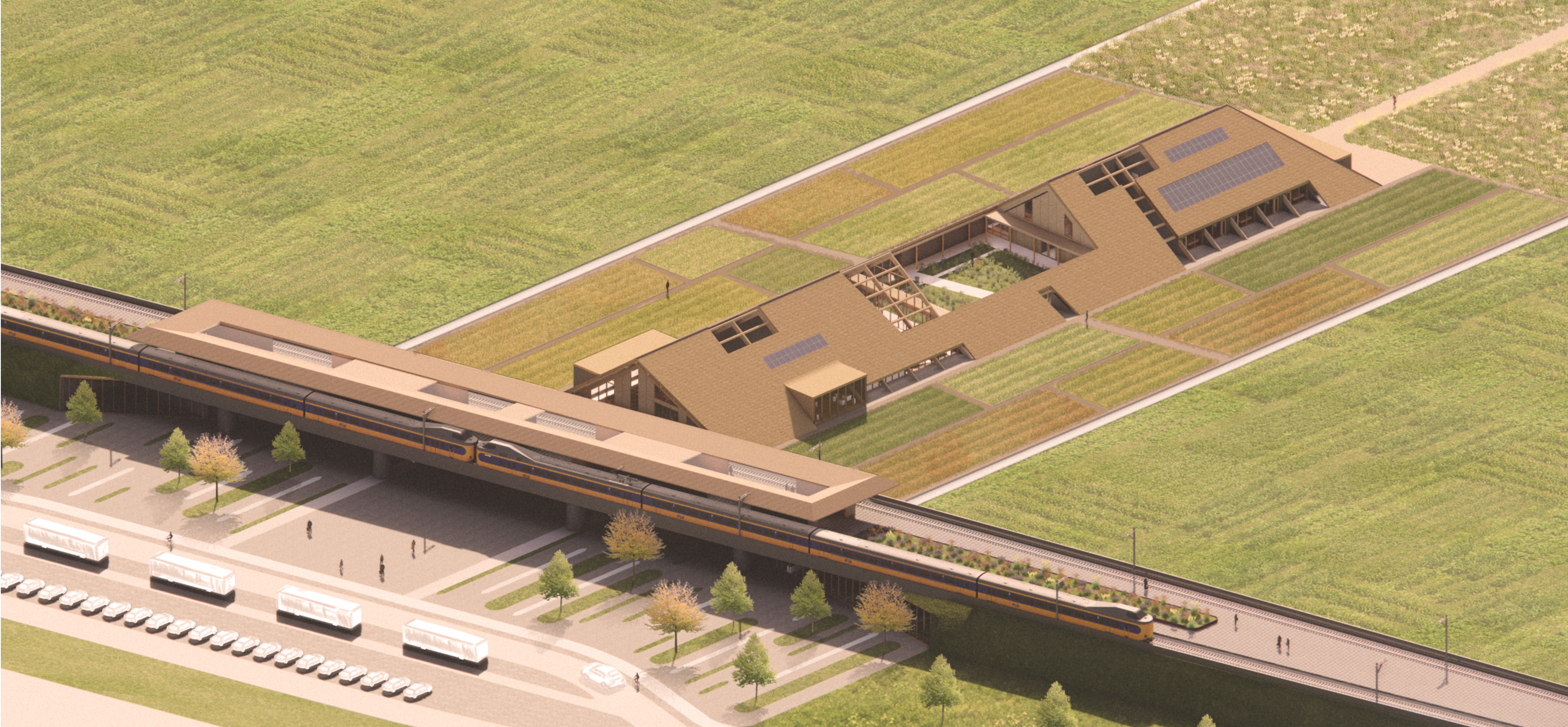
Pulling Apart & Re-arranging

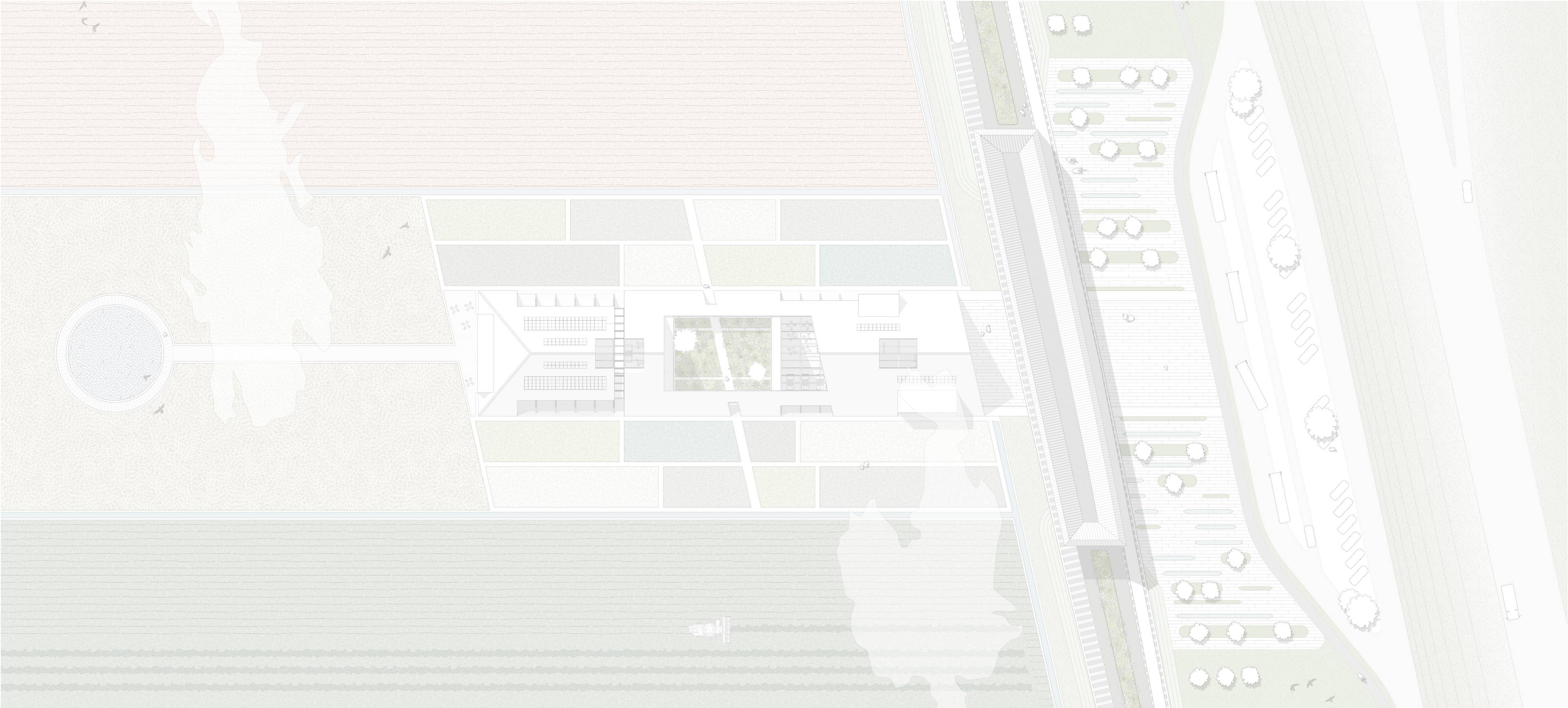


Separation  
"Sacred" & "Secular"  
& Shape 'Plaggenhut'



Adjusting according to  
spaces, views and landscape

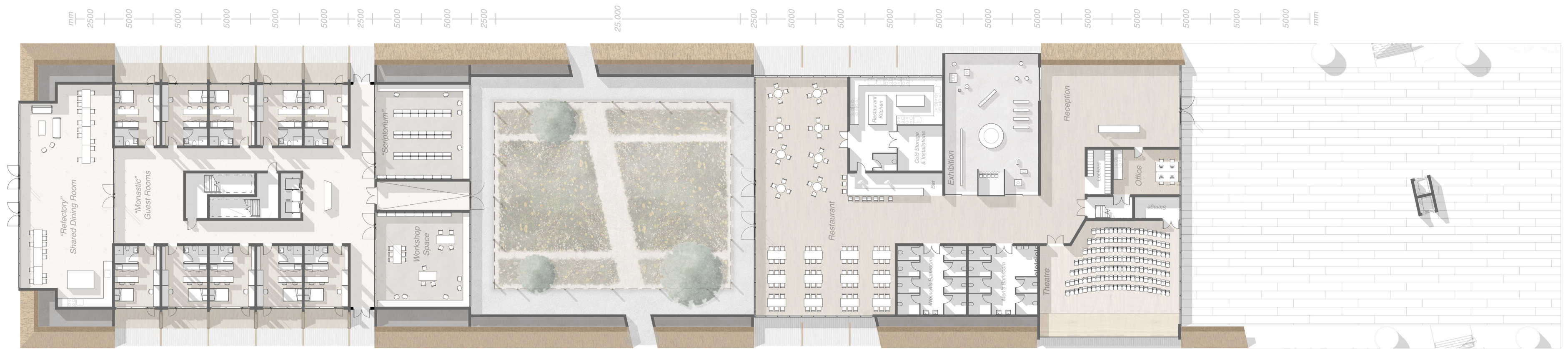




# Floor Plan

## Ground Floor

Chris van der Maas





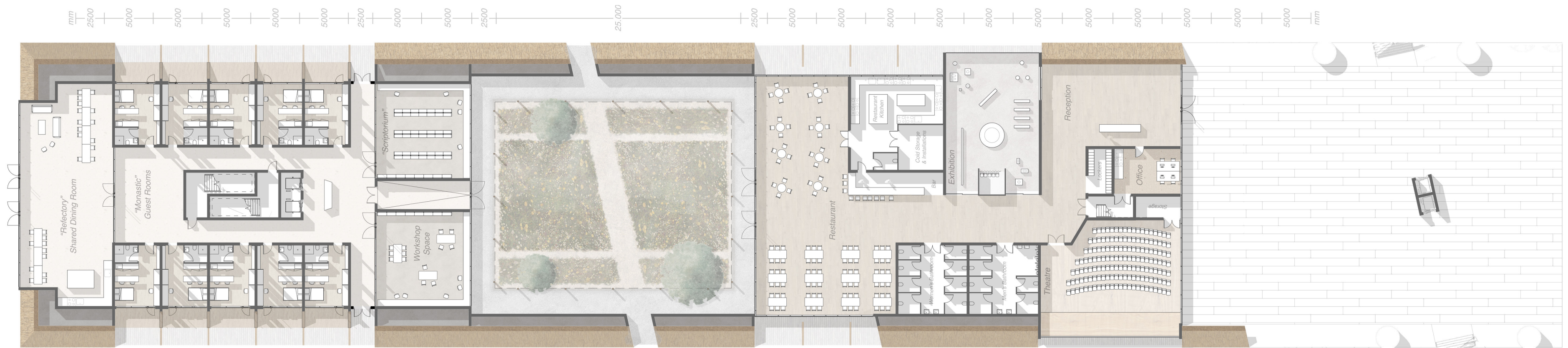




# Floor Plan

## Ground Floor

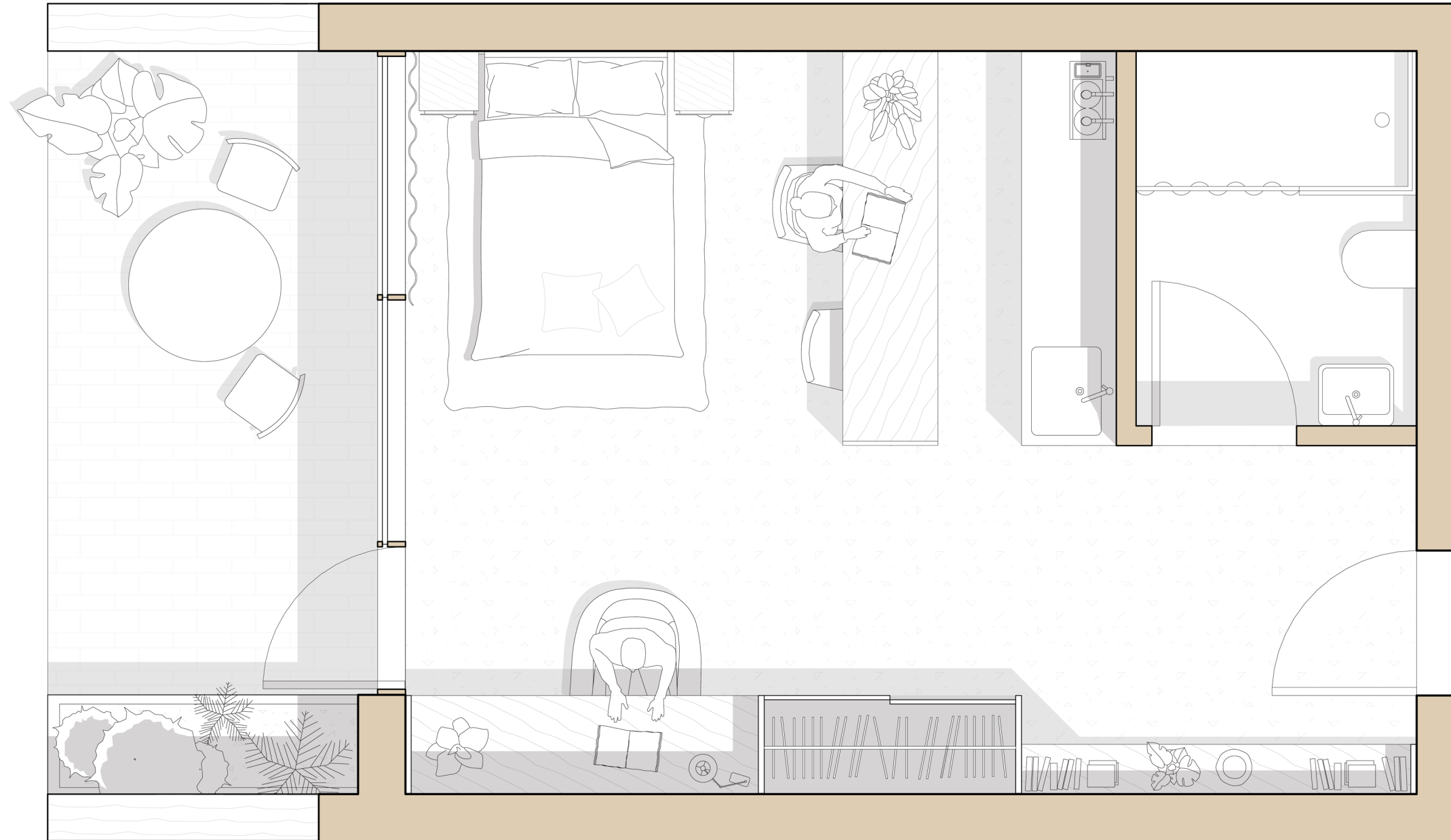
Chris van der Maas



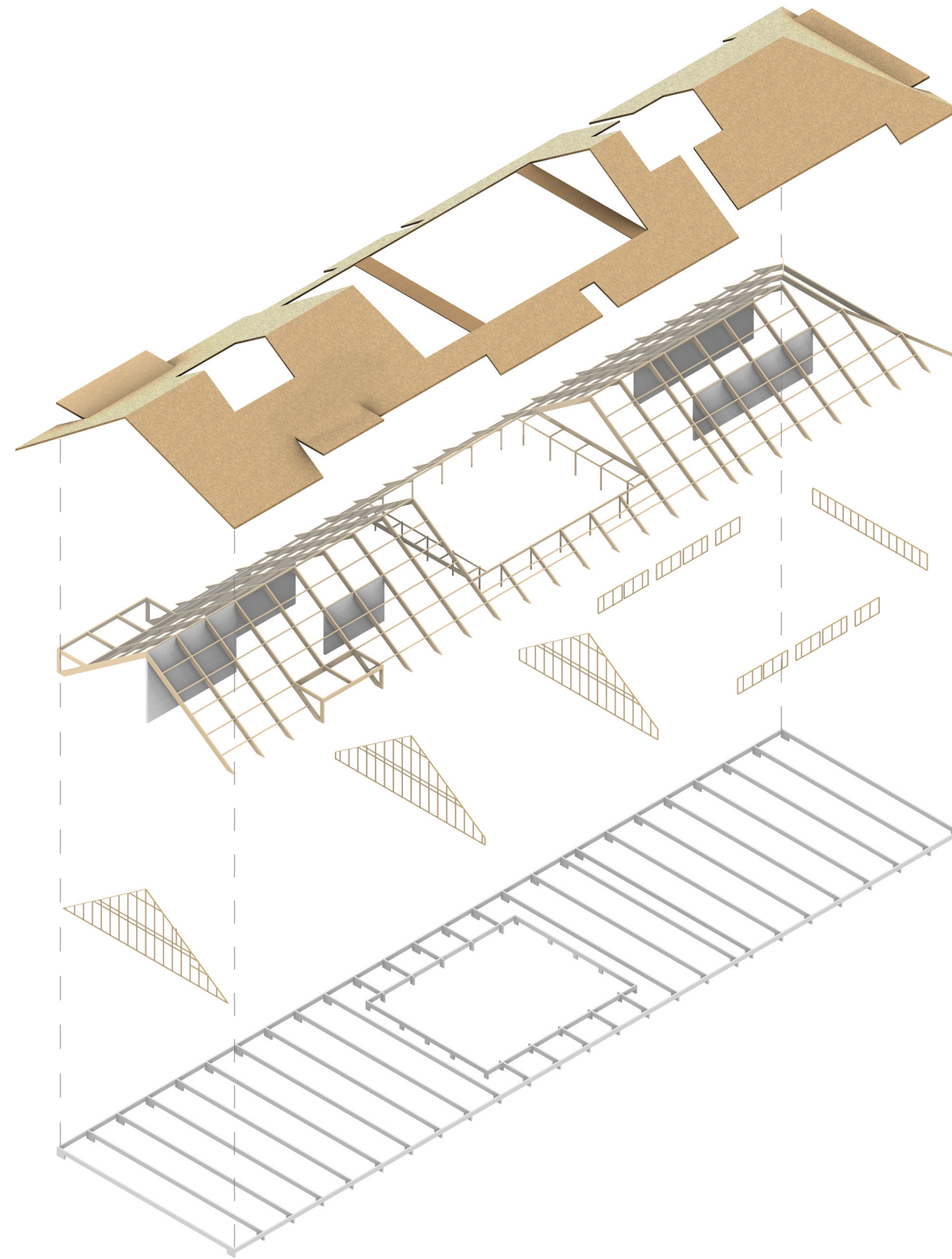
# “Monastic” Guest Room

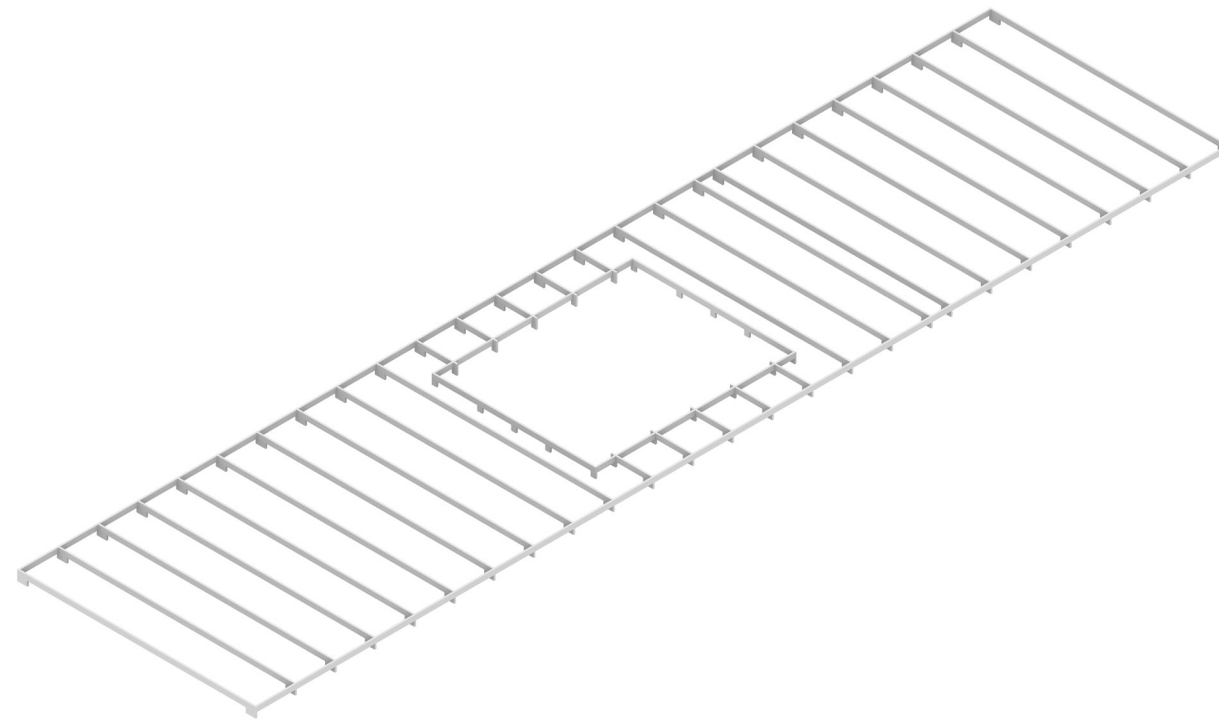
## Floor Plan 1:50

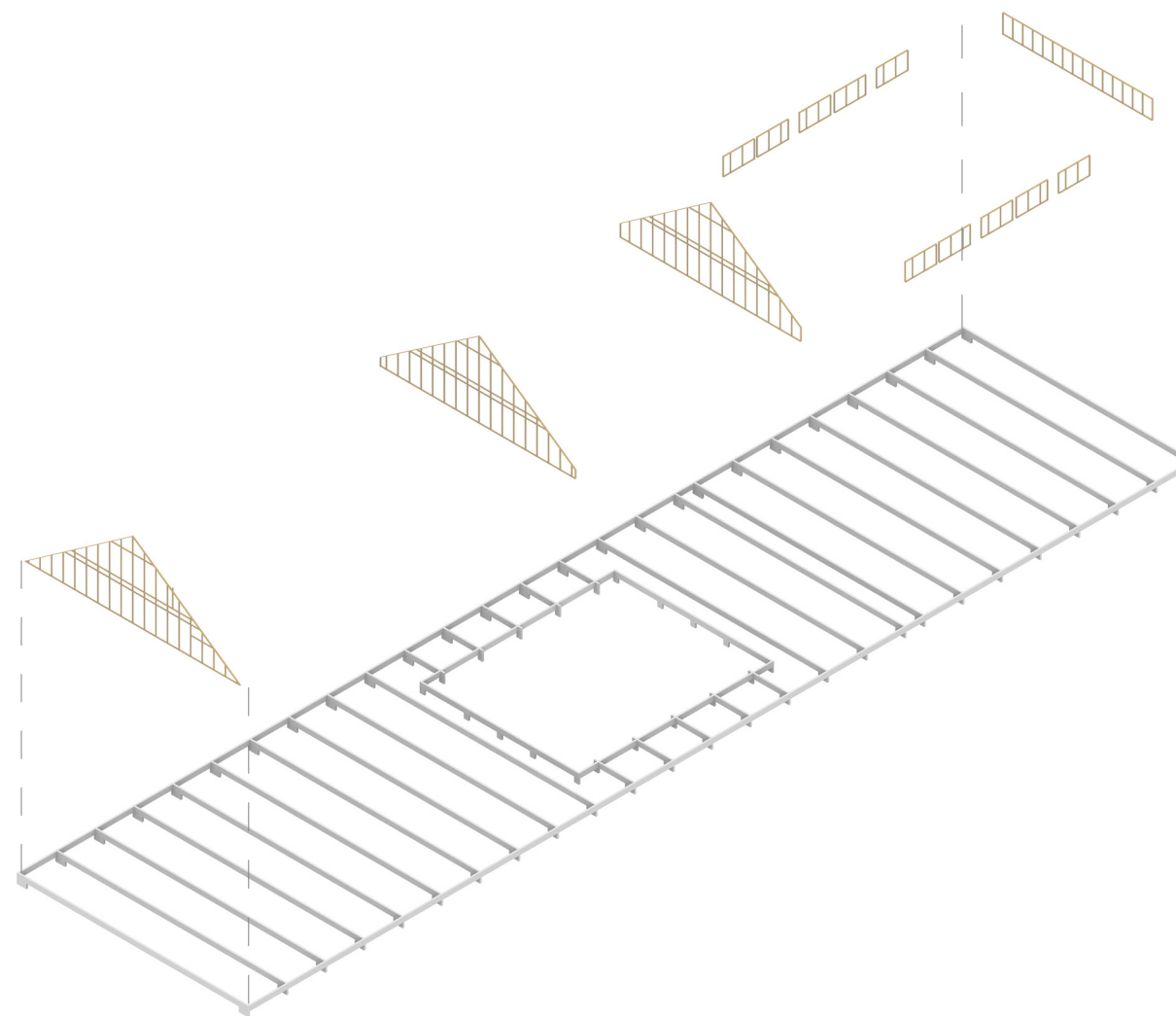
Chris van der Maas



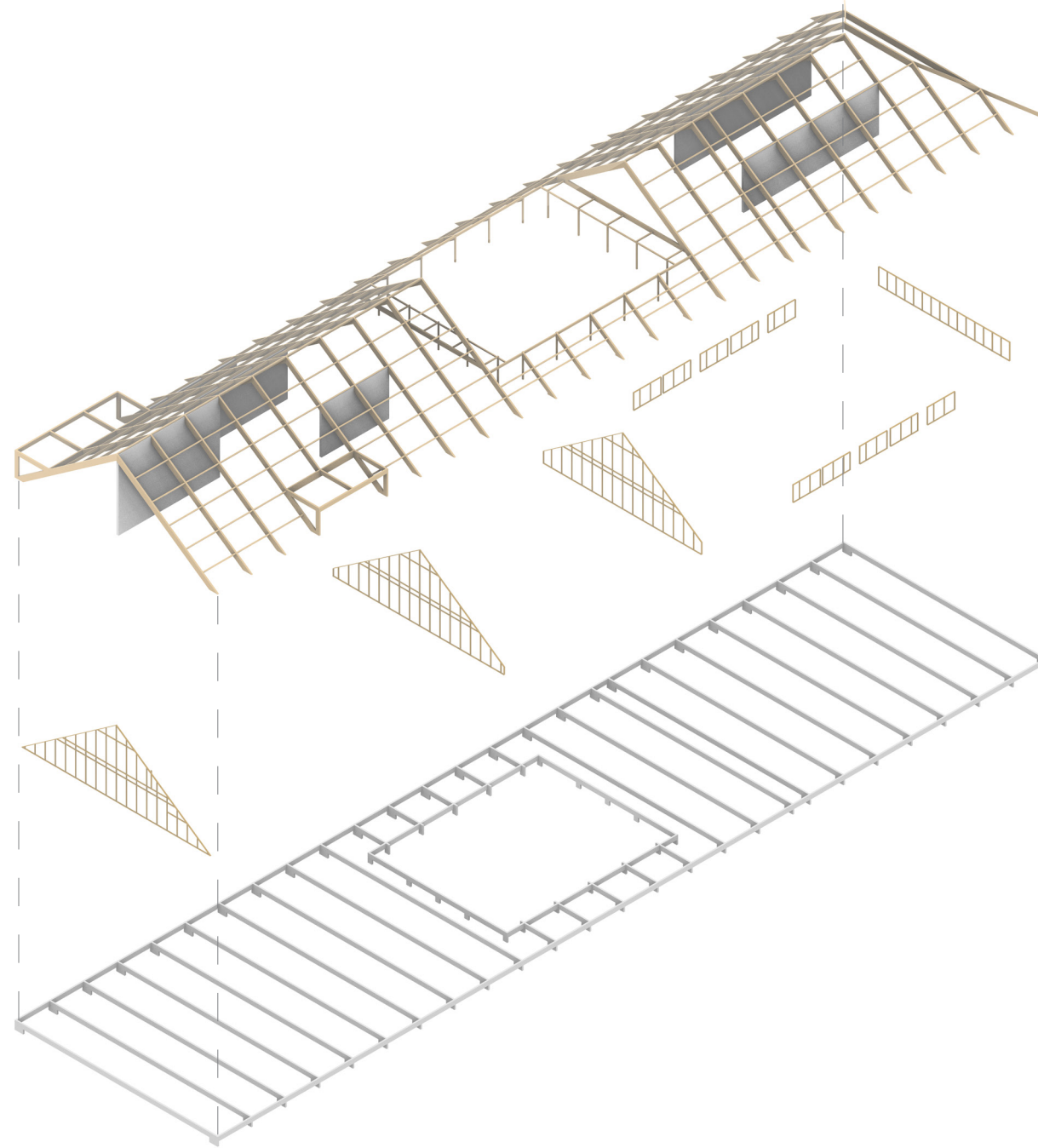


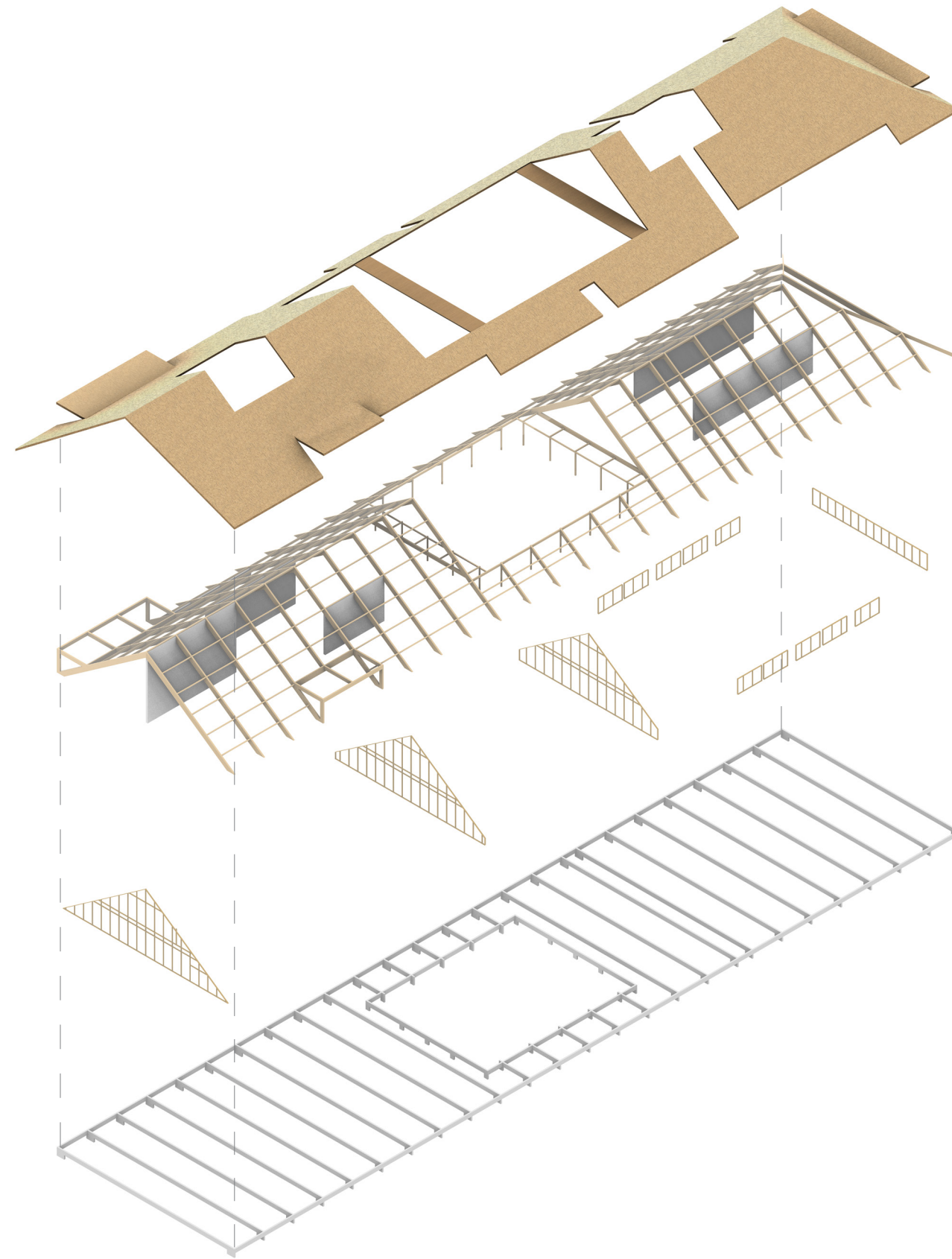


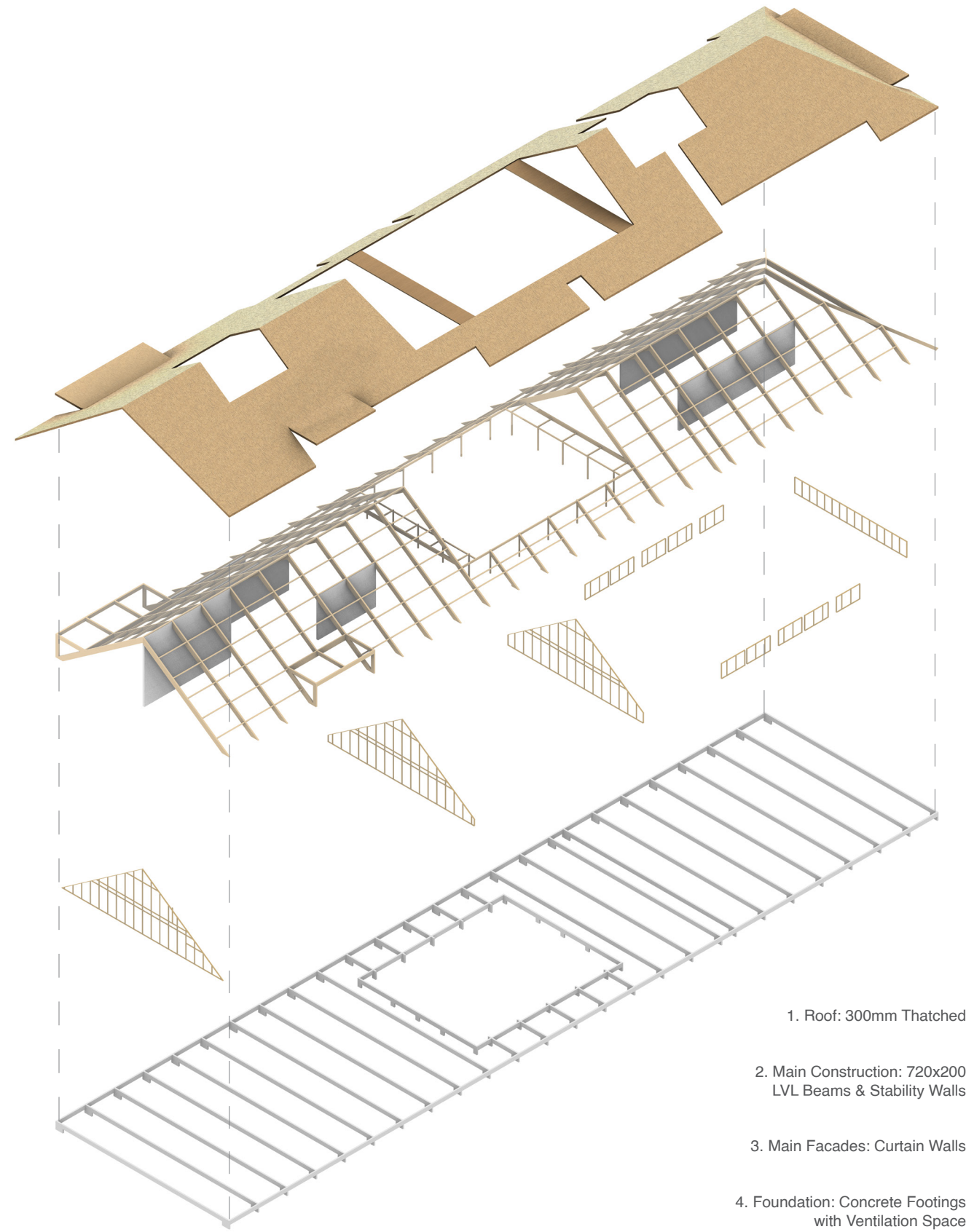




*Framing & Stability Walls*









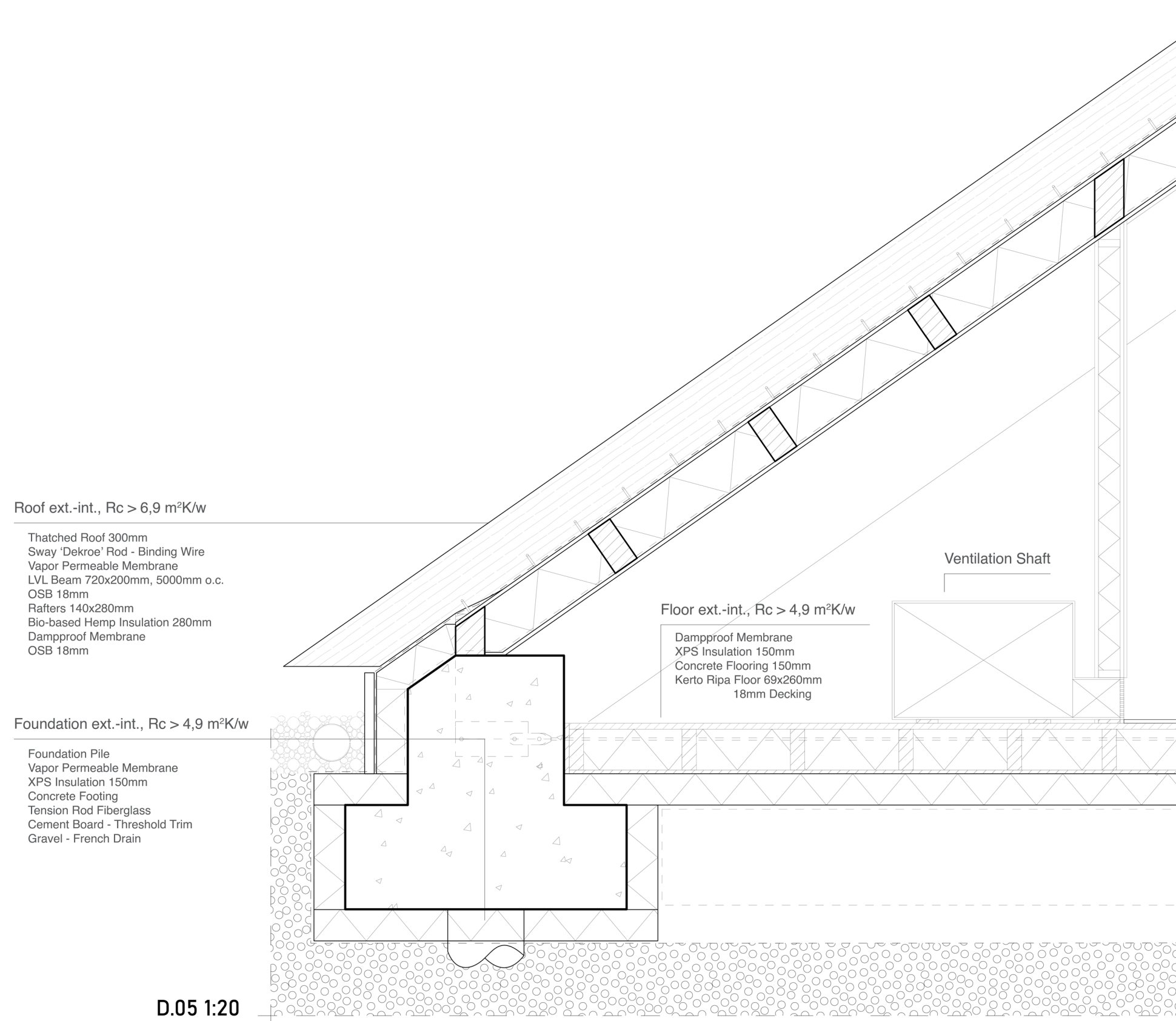
*Thanks for listening!*





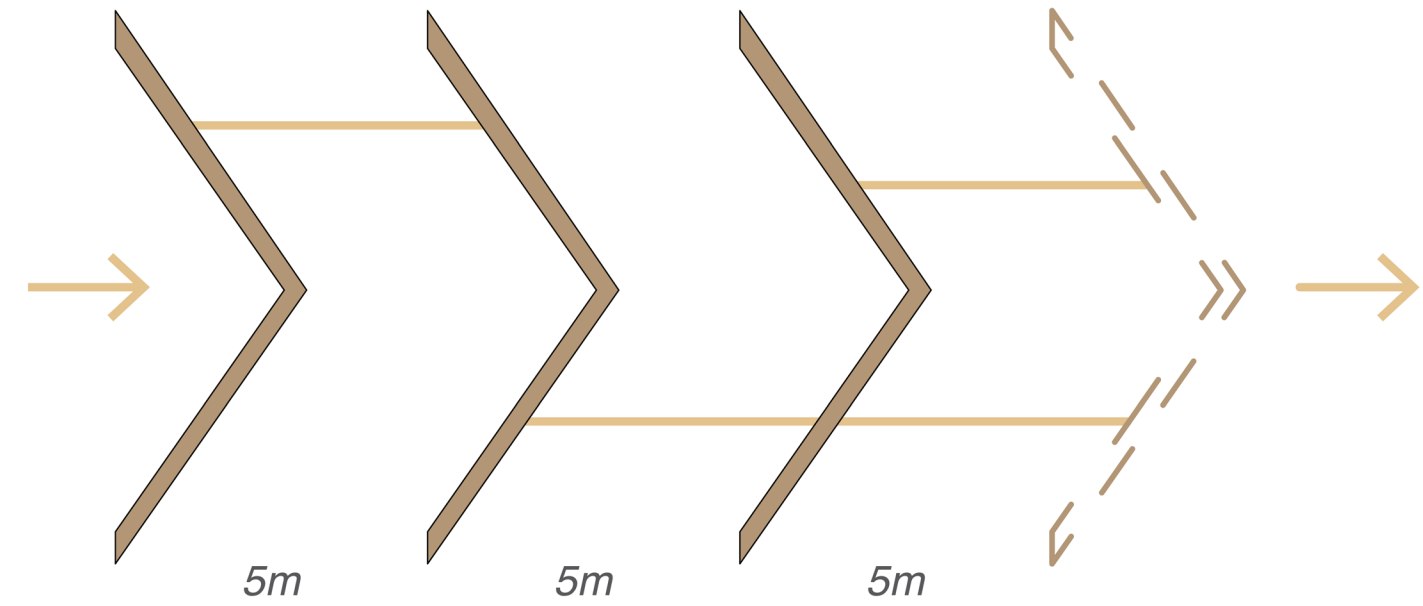


Roof & Ground Connection

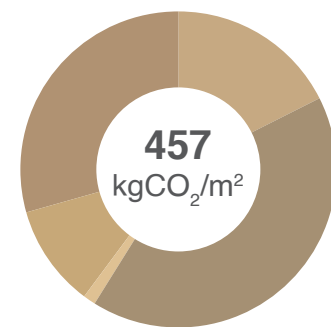




Circular Materials: Thatched Roof & Timber Framing



Hybridity and Flexibility: Flexible Infill & Expandability

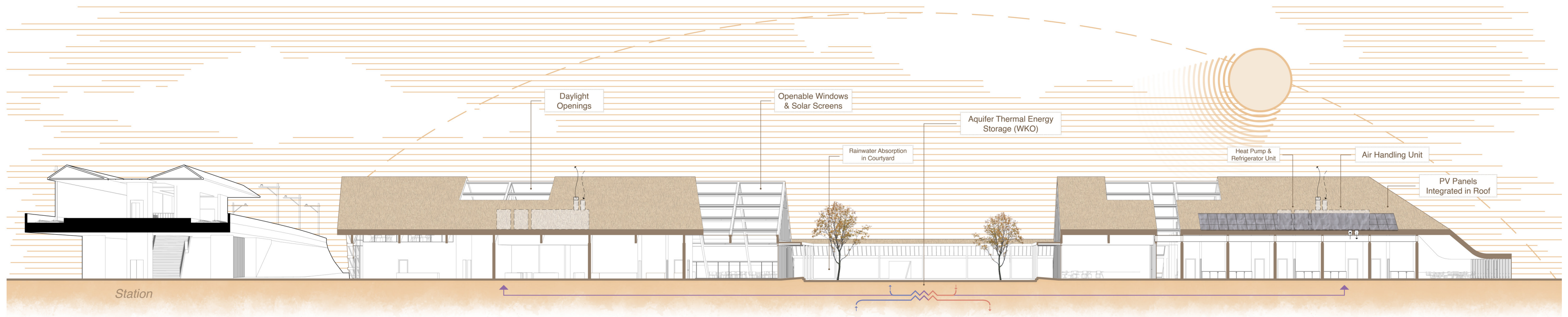


- Substructure (17%)
- Skin (42%)
- Space Plan (1%)
- Services (29%)
- Superstructure (11%)

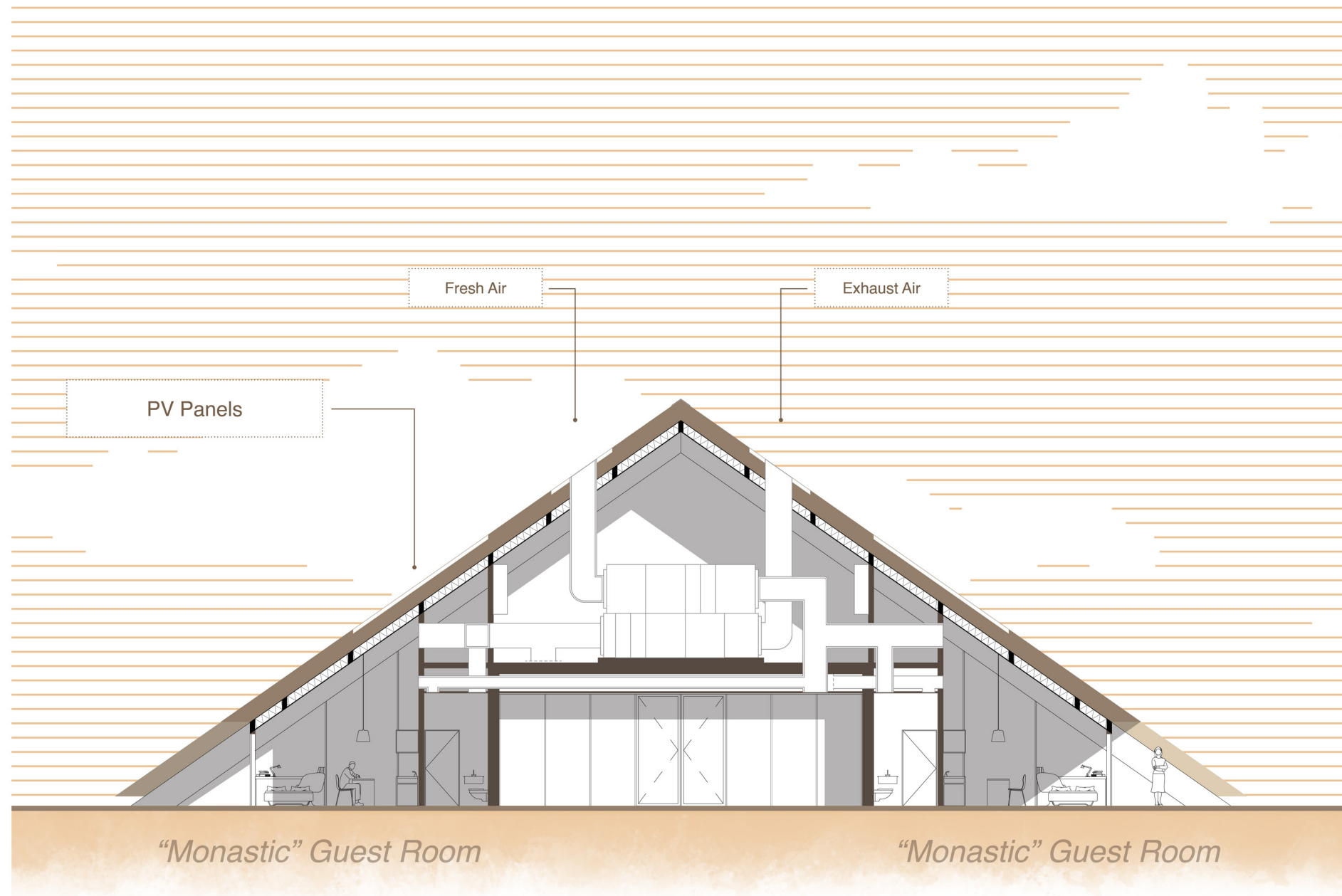
Floor Plan  
*First Floor*

Chris van der Maas

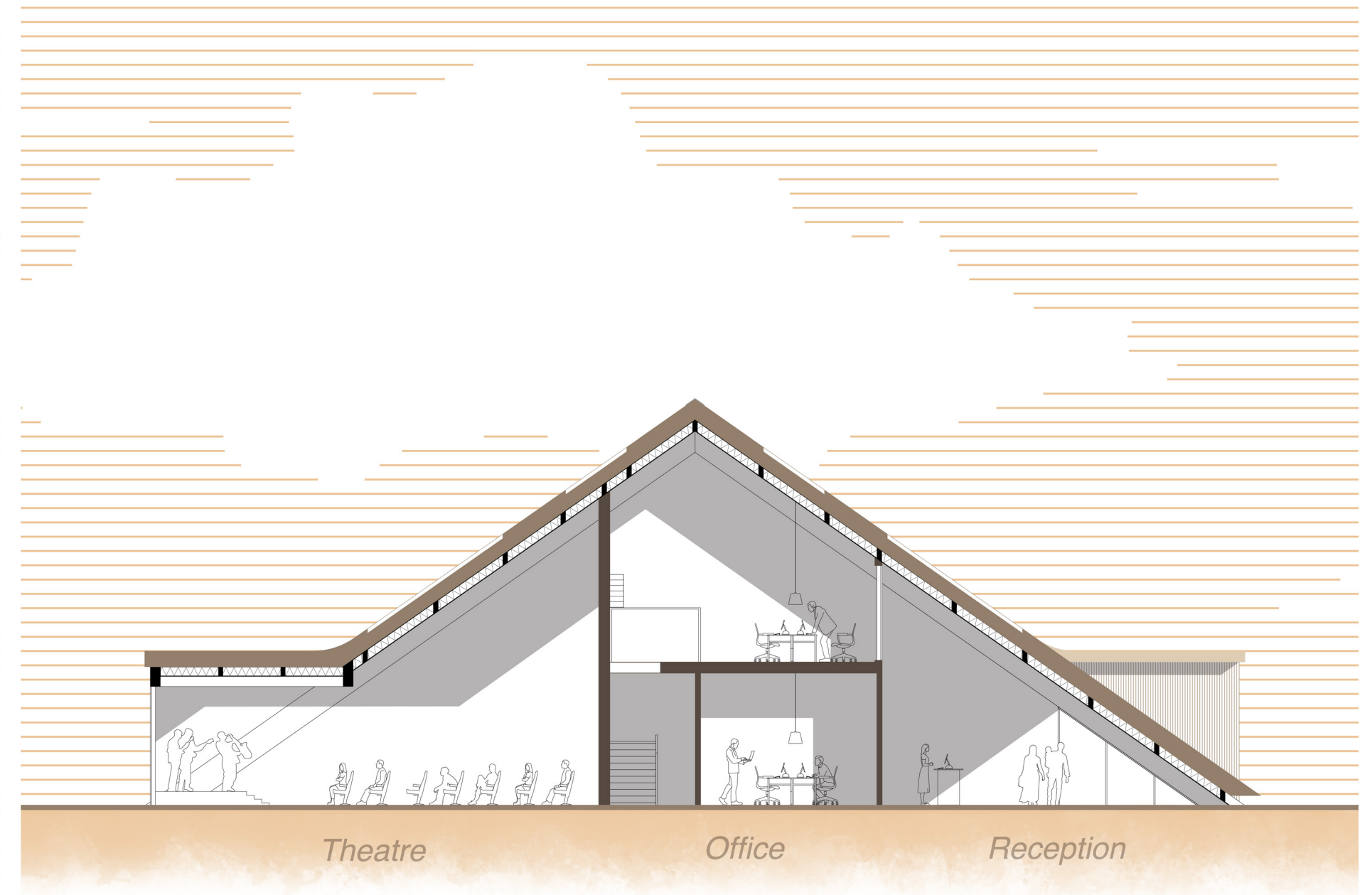




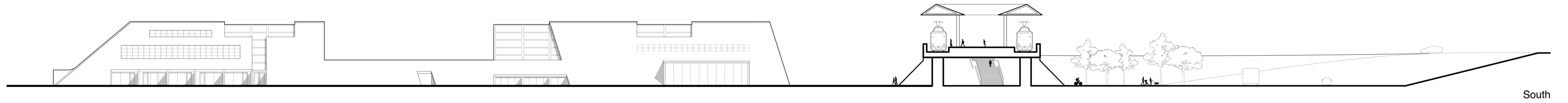
*Technical Space & Theatre*



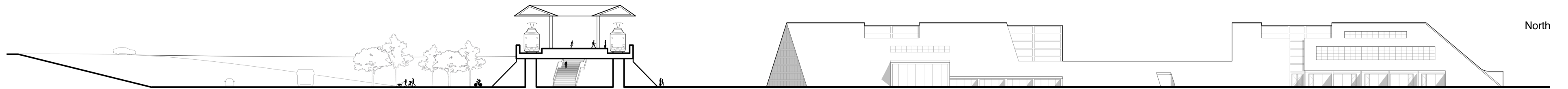
Section AA' 1:200



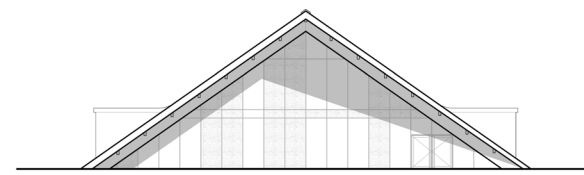
Section BB' 1:200



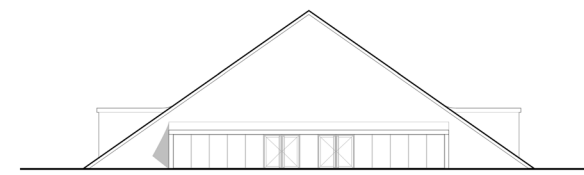
South



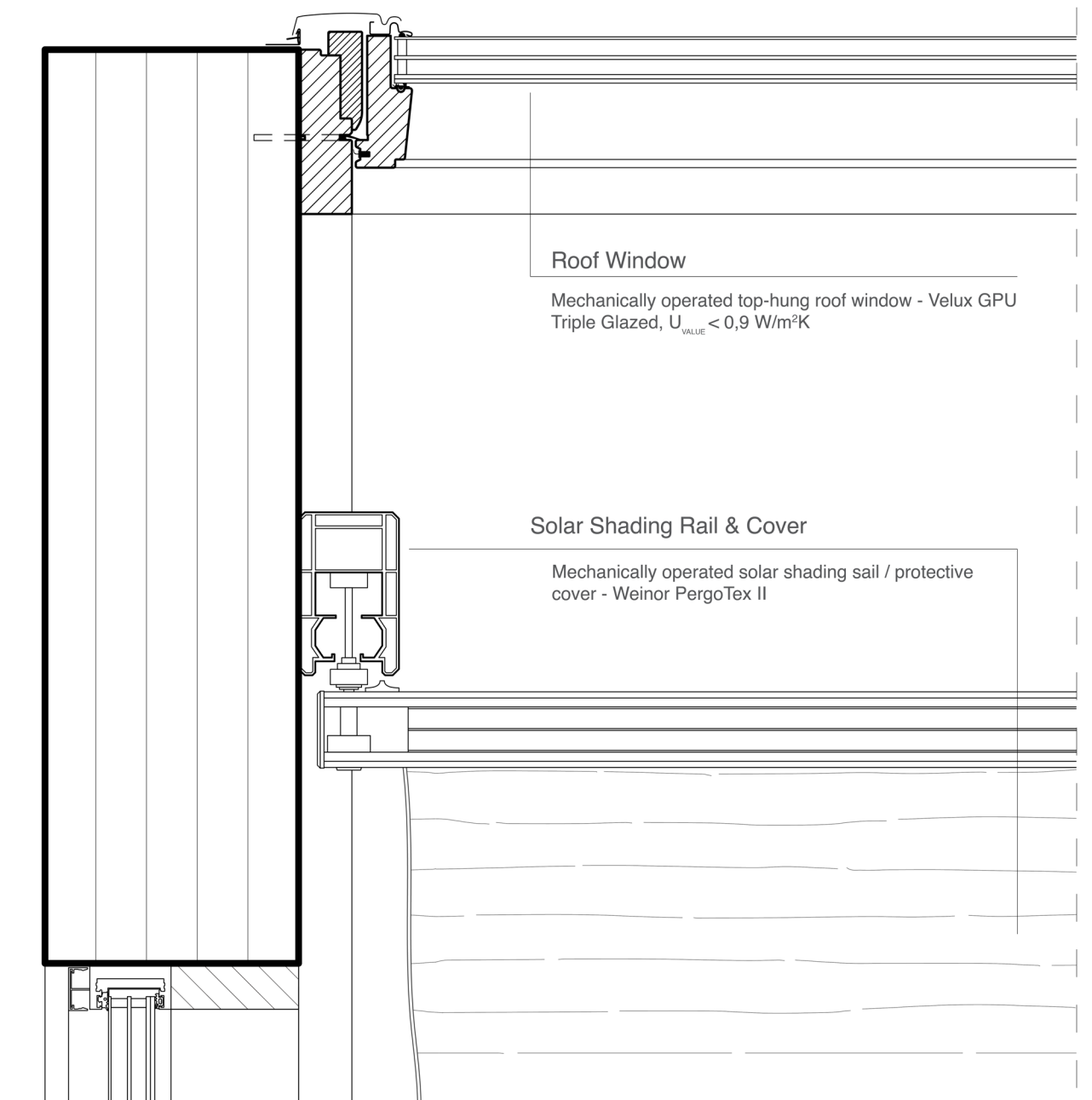
North



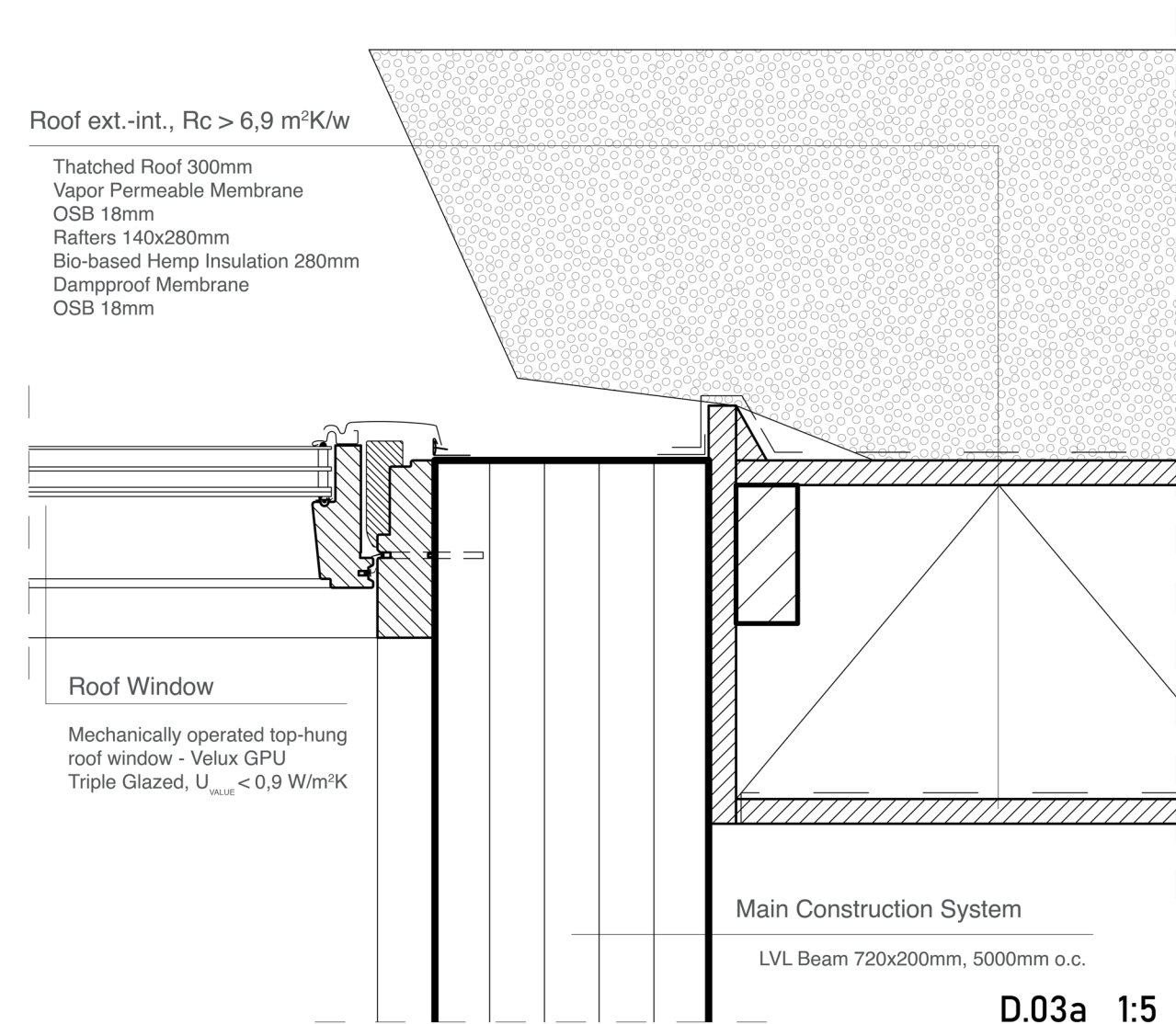
East



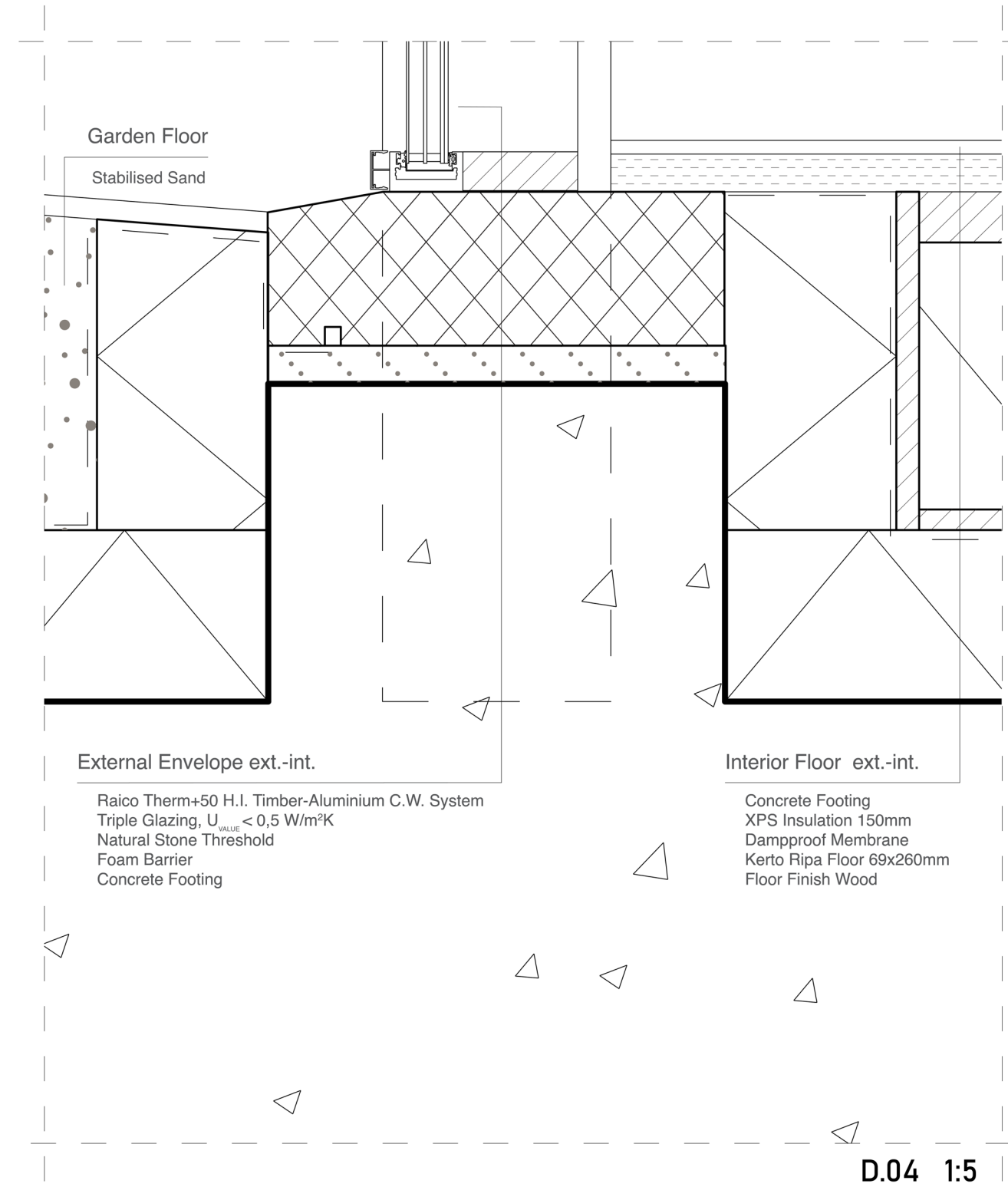
West



D.03 1:5



D.03a 1:5



# ISLANDS OF REFUGE FOR:

