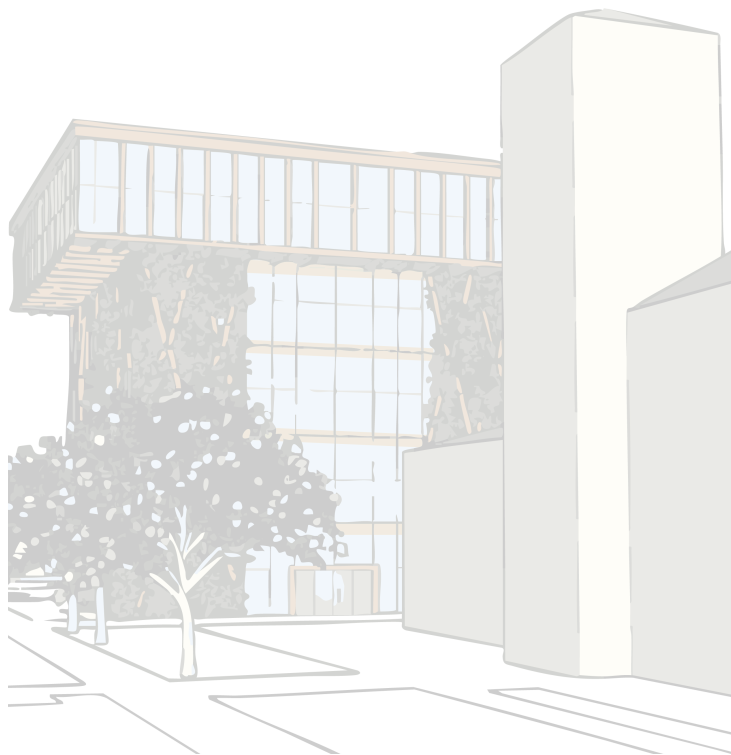




Brief Summary:

Research Question and Objectives

My graduation project focuses on creating a new perspective on the current frameworks of ongoing redevelopment plans in Kopli, Tallinn, with a stronger emphasis on the local cultural heritage. The central question was therefore reframed as follows: Looking at both the historical and contemporary context, how can architecture and programming contribute to the redevelopment of a neglected area, such as the plot of Kopli 93, in a way that allows it to integrate into the future urban fabric?

The aim is to design something that ensures the neglected area will be redeveloped in a manner that reconnects to its original heritage.

Reflection on the Design and Research Process

The research process was primarily rooted in literature, which provided a solid theoretical foundation for design decisions. Yet, there was a continuous interplay between research and design: insights gained during feedback moments shaped the research, while new findings informed design adjustments. This dynamic created an iterative process that was enriching but also challenging; constant reconsideration of starting points sometimes felt like circular progress.

The first P4 moment became an important reflection point for me. It forced me to re-examine what I had been doing in previous months. It was a setback, but a valuable one—it encouraged me to restart and improve my project and my process.

Evaluation of Approach and Methodology

While my intentions remained consistent throughout the year, my approach was marked by some instability in execution. This was partly due to my broad interests and different priorities at the time, and tendency to explore multiple directions at once. As a result, I sometimes lost oversight, which complicated decision-making. I often found myself lagging behind, but after my first P4 I regained focus.

With the guidance of my tutors, support from my academic advisor, and encouragement from friends and family, I returned to the core of my project. I began using design diamond diagrams to structure my graduation process. This gave me a better focus. This clarified both my current position in the process and the steps still ahead.

Research remains a valuable methodology, but it is important to know in advance when and how to branch out, and when to stay within the boundaries of the research scope.

Academic and Societal Relevance

The project addresses urgent urban issues related to redevelopment and the treatment of cultural and historical heritage. In contemporary practice, redevelopment projects are often realized as large-scale, financially exclusive interventions. My research advocates for a more nuanced, context-driven approach that respects and builds upon the existing and past identity of buildings and neighborhoods.

Its social relevance lies in raising awareness of the social, economic, and cultural implications of redevelopment—not only in Tallinn but also in places like the Netherlands.

Transferability of the Results

The insights and design approaches from this project are transferable to similar redevelopment challenges in other urban contexts. In particular, the focus on small-scale interventions, heritage-sensitive design, and upgrading existing contexts can serve as a model for future policy and design practices. The methodology and conclusions thus contribute to broader applicability and may guide architects, urban planners, and policymakers in comparable settings worldwide.

1. With hindsight, would I have approached the process differently?

Yes. Looking back, I would have structured my design process differently. While my natural curiosity and eagerness to learn drove me, I now realize that I should have experimented more with a variety of research methods early on. Instead of relying mainly on literature, I would have included more practice-oriented and experiential approaches.

One example was a workshop where we designed a board game as a research tool—this was refreshing and inspiring precisely because it departed from conventional methods. Such approaches could have enriched my process and given more nuance to my design decisions.

After my first P4, I did start experimenting more with different design and research methods. I had many opportunities to exchange ideas with others, which became a valuable addition to the process.

2. In what ways have I developed as a designer?

During this graduation process, I have become more aware of my working style as a designer. I recognize that I am intuitive and explorative, but that this often comes with doubt and indecisiveness. My strength lies in seeing potential and quality in diverse ideas, but this is also a weakness—it makes it difficult to choose a clear direction and stick to it.

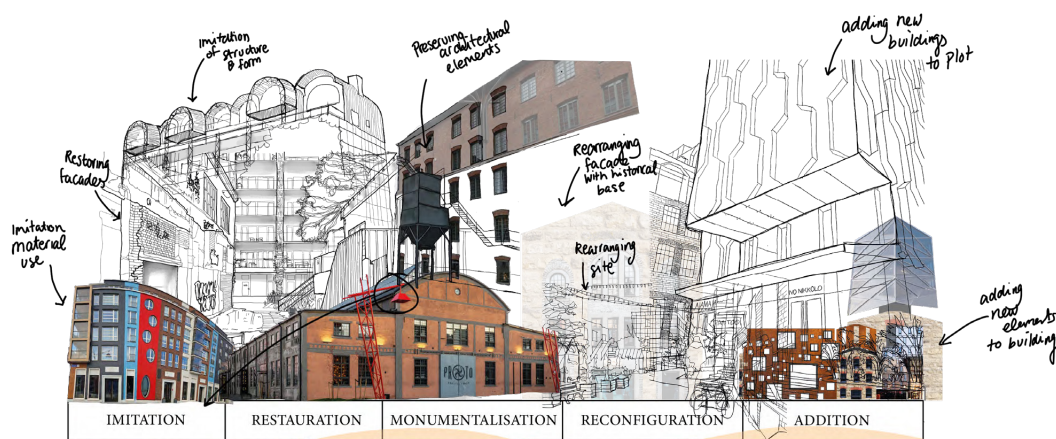
This duality caused moments of confusion and lack of focus. The key lesson I've drawn from this is the importance of making decisions more quickly and working through action rather than staying too long in reflection.

Since my first P4, I have grown significantly as a designer. I now understand better how to navigate research and design: knowing when I have explored enough, and when something falls outside the scope. This awareness gave me confidence that the choices I made were indeed the best possible ones within the reach of my investigation.

P1: “The Seeds of my Graduation Project”

During the two-week research excursion to Tallinn, I explored and investigated the city's layered urban fabric within its contemporary context. Together with my peer, I conducted a study on the “Sleeping Beauties” of Tallinn—buildings that were once neglected but have been revitalized. It was during this period that the conceptual seeds for my graduation project were sown.

We discovered a variety of strategies for adaptive reuse and examined numerous redevelopment plans featuring diverse functions. What intrigued me most was how historical narratives and collective memory are translated into contemporary design—how buildings converse with one another through architectural language and contextual response. As part of our analysis, we extracted “working tools” from several case studies, a methodology that enabled me to systematically translate observed qualities into actionable design strategies. I would later apply this method to my own research and site, resulting in informed and well-founded design conclusions.



Collage of set of tools that can be used for redesign with heritage; balancing all tools together for an integrated design.
(Own work, based on Contextual Analysis)

P2: “A Stem with Leaves”

I saw immense potential in Kopli 93 and envisioned it as the foundation for my graduation project. Although I had already been inspired by various large-scale redevelopment projects, I became increasingly concerned with their scale and commercial nature. Many of the cases my peer and I had studied were bold, flashy, and highly commercialized—terms often associated with being “hip and happening.” How could I create something that contributed meaningfully while still responding to the same context and constraints?

Initially, my designs overshadowed Kopli 93 rather than respecting it. This misstep, combined with my fascination for Soviet-era architecture (often under threat of demolition), pushed me to refine my research question: What Soviet design principles can inform the redevelopment of Kopli 93, based on its historical context and the current urban redevelopment of Kopli?

West Facade - Section BB



East Facade - Section AA



First Designs of my Graduation Project

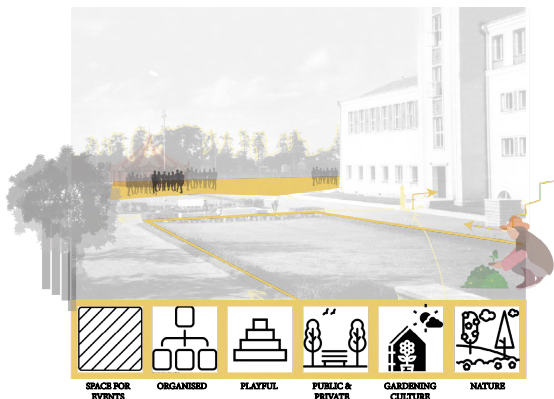
P3: “A young Ivy”

At first, I aimed only to renovate Kopli 93. Later I realized that to unlock its potential, I needed to work on a larger scale by adding new buildings to the surrounding area.

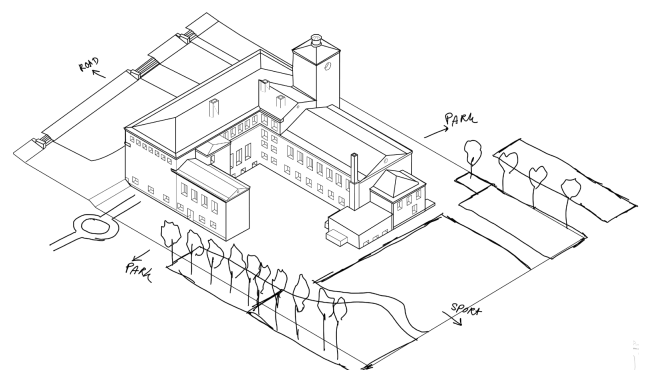
My intervention envisioned a small park with complementary structures, positioning Kopli 93 as a recognizable anchor within a redeveloped neighborhood. The idea was to counterbalance large-scale new developments with something intimate, elegant, and rooted in community and history.

Feedback at this stage helped me recognize the lack of coherence among my buildings—they looked like unrelated objects. One tutor linked this to my hobby of DJing: even unrelated songs can make people dance if they share rhythm or key. Likewise, my buildings needed a unifying language.

I shifted focus from making a statement about Soviet design to drawing inspiration from buildings of the Soviet era without directly copying their principles.



Conclusion Drawing of Research



Axo of Kopli 93 and its plot

P4: “The Ivy is growing”

At present, the three newly designed buildings form a cohesive family alongside Kopli 93. The tower acts as a mature tree—a taller sibling to the original structure's tower. The performance space serves as the stem with branching leaves, while the pavilions are envisioned as architectural seedlings.

Together, they create a small-scale, park-like campus centered around Kopli 93, integrating musical functions, playful elements, and cubist forms. This intervention revitalizes the site, not by overwriting its history, but by weaving it into a new, urban narrative.

To improve accessibility, Kopli 93 has been opened at strategic points, strengthening its relationship with the surrounding park and enhancing the human scale of the site.

The new buildings are inspired by several contextual references: the once-present oak forest, the traditional Estonian wooden sheds, and the architectural language of Kopli 93 itself. By embedding natural elements and a park-like structure into the overall composition, the design strikes a balance between architecture and landscape—an approach historically proven to be effective in this context.

The new park around Kopli 93 connects the various plots, establishing a site-specific architectural language: a form of constructivism infused with playful, landscape-driven elements. This playfulness is a conscious nod to the aesthetics of Soviet architecture—where decorative elements were often discouraged, but here serve as tools of cultural expression. The formal language of the new interventions draws from cubism and is enriched by natural and whimsical features. The result is a layered design that choreographs the relationship between abstraction and nature, old and new, solid and void.

Reflecting after my first P4, I realized I had been too focused on Kopli 93 alone. The real strength of my design lay in how the new interventions reactivated the area around it, reconnecting people to history, nature, and each other. Music and gathering became central themes, fostering a sense of intimacy and belonging in contrast to the scale of modern redevelopments.

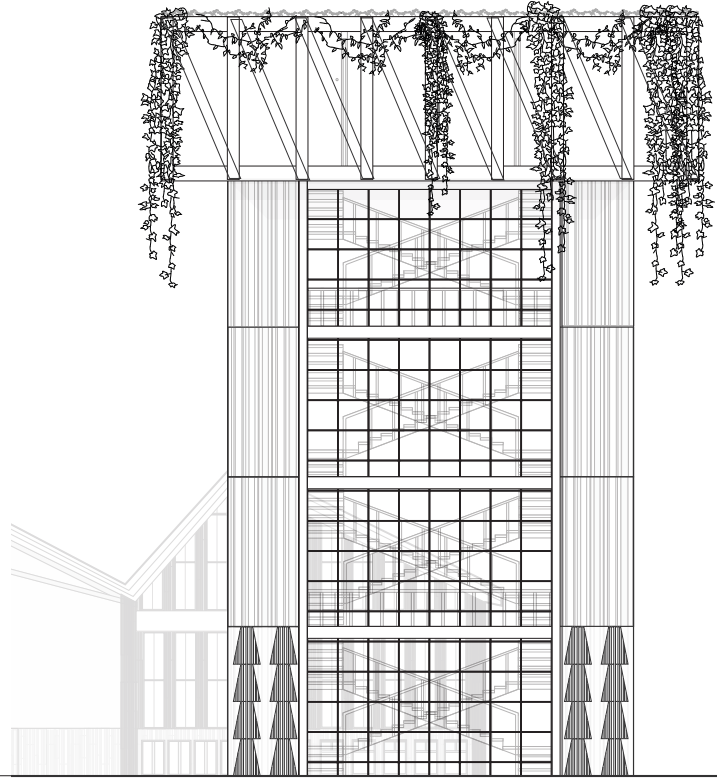
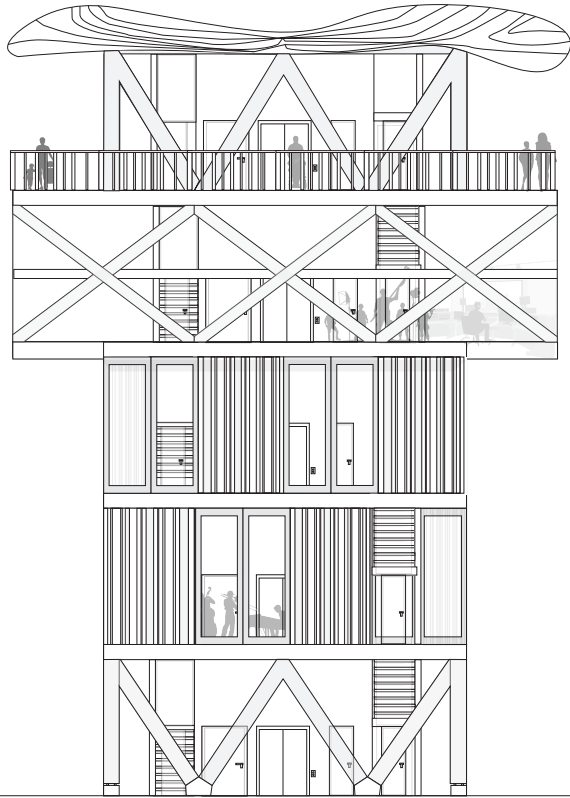
By integrating wood, openness, and park-like structures, my final design celebrates both nostalgia and renewal—honoring the cultural memory of Kopli while offering space for a vibrant, collective future.

In conclusion, this project approaches the redevelopment of Kopli 93 with respect for its existing structure and historical depth. Through thoughtful, contemporary, and playful additions, the design reinforces the soul of the site while offering a new, sustainable vision for its future within the urban fabric.

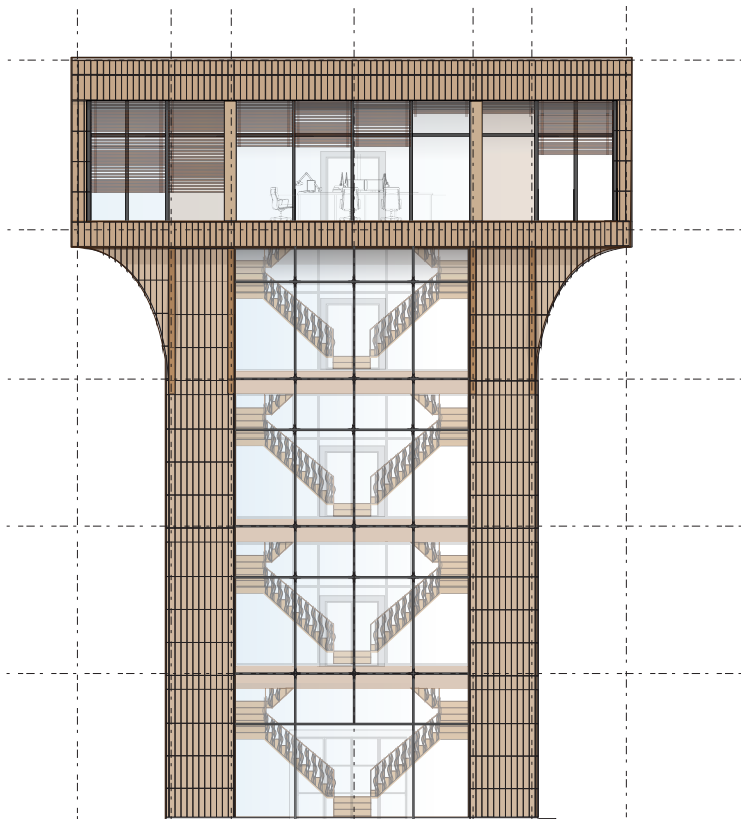


New Proposal in the redevelopment area

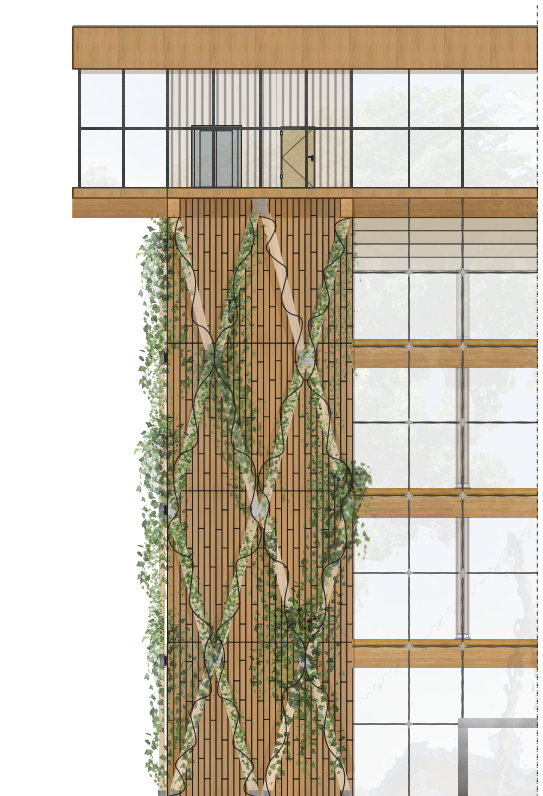
Design Developments



Designs at P3



Design at first P4



Design at final P4 ;)