

between use and abandonment: reassembling architectural continuity

adaptive reuse of the Sithoff building, Rijswijk

contents.

**Between use and abandonment: Reassembling architectural continuity**  
Adaptive reuse of the Sijthoff building, Rijswijk

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## abstract.

This thesis investigates how adaptive reuse can establish architectural continuity in post-1965 concrete office buildings. Using the Sijthoff Building in Rijswijk, widely known as the “Eierdoos,” as a case study, it addresses the contested status of late-modern concrete architecture, which is often regarded as obsolete and therefore vulnerable to demolition. Through a combined analysis of perception, material condition, and spatial typology, the building is understood as part of a continuous process in which past identity, present conditions of vacancy, and future potential, coexist.

Vacancy is interpreted not as failure, but as a transitional state that reveals latent architectural, cultural, and urban capacities. Based on this, a reuse strategy is developed through three interrelated dimensions: urban, material, and spatial continuity. Urban continuity is established by reconnecting the building to the public realm through greater accessibility, permeability, and programmatic activation. Material continuity is achieved through the reinterpretation, damage analysis, repair, reuse, and recycling of the existing prefabricated façade system, transforming the building's own materials and elements into an internal circular system in which components are disassembled, restored, and reassembled into new architectural configurations. Spatial continuity is pursued through the reconfiguration of the interior by introducing voids, clarifying circulation and movement, and creating flexible and sustainable spaces that follow both function and form.

The proposal demonstrates how a vacant, mono-functional office building can become an active urban actor while preserving and transforming its architectural identity.

Ultimately, the project positions adaptive reuse as a process of continuity, arguing that post-war concrete buildings should be understood not as expendable relics, but as integral components of the contemporary city capable of accommodating change over time.

**KEYWORDS:** ADAPTIVE REUSE, ARCHITECTURAL CONTINUITY, VACANCY, TYPOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION , FAÇADE TRANSFORMATION, MATERIAL REUSE , URBAN REACTIVATION

## introduction.

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

This tension between preservation and demolition is clearly articulated by the urban planner Maarten Reiling, who describes the city as a history book in which the loss of even unpopular or generic architectures represents an irreversible erasure of collective memory. Fundamentally, the contemporary built environment has reached a point at which there is no clear “manual” defining what should be valued in the architecture of today. While historic monuments are widely recognized and protected as heritage, more recent structures often remain overlooked or forgotten. Architectural periods such as late Modernism, Functionalism, and Brutalism occupy an ambiguous position: they are neither monumental nor truly contemporary. As a result, their relevance is frequently questioned, and their architectural value remains contested. Yet they remain part of the layered history of the city and contribute to its urban identity.

This condition becomes particularly relevant in the case of generic concrete office buildings from the post-1965 period. Designed for office standards and spatial requirements that no longer align with contemporary demands, many now face vacancy, degradation, or demolition. Within prevailing practices, they are frequently approached as technical problems to be solved through replacement, instead of as architectural artefacts shaped by use, memory, and collective experience. As Petzet argues, even so-called “ordinary” buildings possess inherent qualities that can be revealed through careful and creative transformation (Petzet, 2012). Vacancy, therefore, should not be understood as evidence of architectural failure, but as a temporal condition produced by shifting social and economic dynamics (Zukin, 2010) and by interpreting it as an endpoint, forecloses the possibility of reuse and continuity (Solà-Morales, 1995).

### RELEVANCE

Continuity is understood in this thesis as the capacity of architecture to connect a building’s past identity, present condition, and future potential through processes of transformation and reuse. Adaptive reuse is explored as an architectural method through which continuity can be sustained and reinterpreted via selective transformation, moving beyond the static conservation of form. The project therefore investigates not simply how to preserve post-war (post-1965) office buildings, but how to adapt technically obsolete and introverted structures to contemporary spatial, environmental, and urban conditions without erasing the identity embedded within their structure, façade systems, material presence, and urban character. Through spatial reorganization, façade transformation, material reuse, and public engagement, the project examines how existing buildings can evolve while maintaining their architectural identity and perceptual continuity.

*“The physical city is like a history book you can leaf through. Now, I’m not saying you should just keep everything - there’s certainly some uninspired junk in there (that applies to any architectural style), but think carefully about what you demolish. What’s gone will never come back. A style like Brutalism isn’t widely used in the Netherlands, and the few remaining examples are threatened. Let’s cherish those last few examples, if only as an ode to ugliness.”*

- Maarten Reiling, *Urban Planner* (2019)

These broader debates surrounding preservation, vacancy, and the future of post-war office buildings become concrete in the case of the Sijthoff Building in Rijswijk, in the Netherlands. Originally designed as a concrete office building, it remains structurally robust despite long-term vacancy and visible physical deterioration. The building carries strong cultural associations as a former newspaper headquarters and urban landmark, often referred to as the “Eierdoos,” while current redevelopment approaches largely prioritize technical upgrading and programmatic replacement at the expense of its architectural character. Once highly visible within its surroundings, the building has also become increasingly obscured by surrounding developments, weakening its urban presence.

**OBJECTIVE AND  
MOTIVATION**

The challenge of the project is how to establish continuity between the past identity, present vacancy, and future potential of a post-war office building while responding to contemporary urban, spatial, and environmental demands. To address this, the project aims to establish continuity through three interrelated architectural dimensions: urban, material, and spatial continuity. Urban continuity repositions the building as an active urban actor through increased accessibility, visibility, permeability, and engagement with its surroundings, transforming it into a more attractive and publicly active destination. Material continuity is achieved through the repair, upgrading, reuse, and reinterpretation of the existing prefabricated façade system, treating the building itself as a source of material and architectural continuity. Spatial continuity transforms the introverted office typology into a more open, flexible, and contemporary spatial system through voids, visual connections, and reorganised circulation. Together, these dimensions represent the primary architectural layers through which the building’s identity, use, and relationship with the city are experienced, maintained, and transformed.

**RESEARCH  
QUESTION**

This graduation project is guided by the following research question:

“How can the adaptive reuse of a post-1965 concrete office building establish architectural continuity across past, present, and future through urban, material, and spatial transformation, while reinforcing its identity and re-establishing its role within the urban environment?”

**SCOPE**

Beyond the specific case of the Sijthoff Building, the project responds to the growing number of vacant post-war concrete office buildings by exploring how abandonment, deterioration, and obsolescence can become conditions for architectural transformation rather than demolition. Through the adaptive reuse of the Sijthoff building, the thesis investigates how existing structures and prefabricated façade systems can be repaired, upgraded, reused, and reinterpreted while maintaining their architectural identity and material expression. At the same time, it explores how the introverted office typology can be transformed into a more open, collective, and contemporary spatial environment. The project is developed as a research-by-design investigation at an architectural scale, focusing on how structural, environmental, and technical systems can inform architectural form, spatial organisation, and façade transformation. Detailed engineering calculations, construction-level resolution, and fully developed technical specifications are not the primary focus of the thesis.



## Approach.

This graduation project follows a research- by – design methodology aiming to investigate how vacancy in post-65 office buildings can be transformed into architectural continuity, ensuring that any design decisions emerge from evidence rather than assumption.

The research was conducted collectively by a group of six people, studying and analyzing a set of 22 post-1965 office buildings located in the Netherlands. Through a comparative analytical framework assessing perception, material and technical condition, structural integrity, and spatial typology, the set was reduced to six representative case studies. The case study selected for the individual research was the Sijthoff Building in Rijswijk, due to its strong public recognizability, prolonged vacancy, visible physical decline, robust concrete structure, and the ongoing debate about its future. Its position between use and abandonment established it as a critical case study through which questions of continuity and reuse could be examined.

The individual study was structured around the same three analytical layers as the collective research, but was developed by a more in-depth analytical approach. The perception analysis examined how the building is understood and valued over time. A material and technical analysis evaluated the structural system, façade, and condition of components. Finally, a spatial and typological analysis investigated internal organization, circulation, and relationships between interior and exterior. The results of the individual analysis were synthesized into an evaluation of the building's opportunities and constraints, forming the basis for determining whether reuse was possible for the Sijthoff building. Reuse was therefore not assumed as a starting point, but derived as a conclusion of the research.

Based on this evaluation, the adaptive reuse strategies were defined through a architectural framework of spatial, urban, and material continuity. Throughout the design development phase, iterative analytical studies and research, including circulation studies, façade explorations, programmatic testing, and material investigations, were continuously used to evaluate and refine the proposal.

METHODS

THEORITICAL  
FRAMEWORK

The research questions are addressed through a theoretical framework that informs both the analytical approach and the design proposal. Adaptive reuse is approached not only as a technical intervention, but as an architectural process capable of extending the life, use, and relevance of existing buildings. The framework supports the investigation of vacancy, transformation, material reuse, and urban activation, forming the basis for the strategies developed for the Sijthoff building.

### **Vacancy and Transformation**

Vacancy is understood as a condition produced by changing economic and social circumstances rather than architectural failure (Zukin, 2010). Solà-Morales describes abandoned spaces as conditions of openness that allow reinterpretation and new forms of occupation (Solà-Morales, 1995). In the Sijthoff building, vacancy exposed the structural system, spatial limitations, and material deterioration while also revealing opportunities for transformation. These conditions are approached as part of the building's ongoing development rather than as conditions requiring complete replacement.

### **Building as an Adaptive System**

The existing building is treated as a long-life structural system capable of accommodating changing uses over time. Stewart Brand argues that buildings evolve through adaptation within stable structural frameworks (Brand, 1994). Technical obsolescence is therefore understood as a mismatch between existing buildings and contemporary requirements rather than structural failure. Rafael Moneo similarly describes typology as something that gains relevance through transformation and reinterpretation (Moneo, 1978). These ideas support the reuse of the concrete structure and the transformation of the introverted office typology into a more open, connected, and flexible spatial system.

### **Architecture, Identity, and Material Reuse**

Architecture is also understood through memory, perception, and material presence over time. Aldo Rossi argues that architectural artefacts contain traces of both past and future conditions (Rossi, 1982). This supports the retention and reinterpretation of the Sijthoff building's prefabricated façade system, where repair, reuse, and transformation maintain the recognisable identity of the "Eierdoos" while allowing new spatial and environmental performances to emerge. The introduction of new façade elements, together with the reuse and recycling of existing components, continues this approach by transforming existing material into a new architectural layer while maintaining the façade's geometry and repetitive rhythm.

### **Architecture and Urban Life**

The framework also draws from theories relating architecture to movement, accessibility, and public life. Jane Jacobs criticizes mono-functional urban environments that disconnect buildings from surrounding activity (Jacobs, 1961), while Jan Gehl emphasizes the importance of permeability, interaction, and movement at the human scale (Gehl, 2010). These ideas inform the introduction of passages, public programs, visual connections, and open ground-floor conditions that reconnect the building to its surroundings and support everyday urban activity.

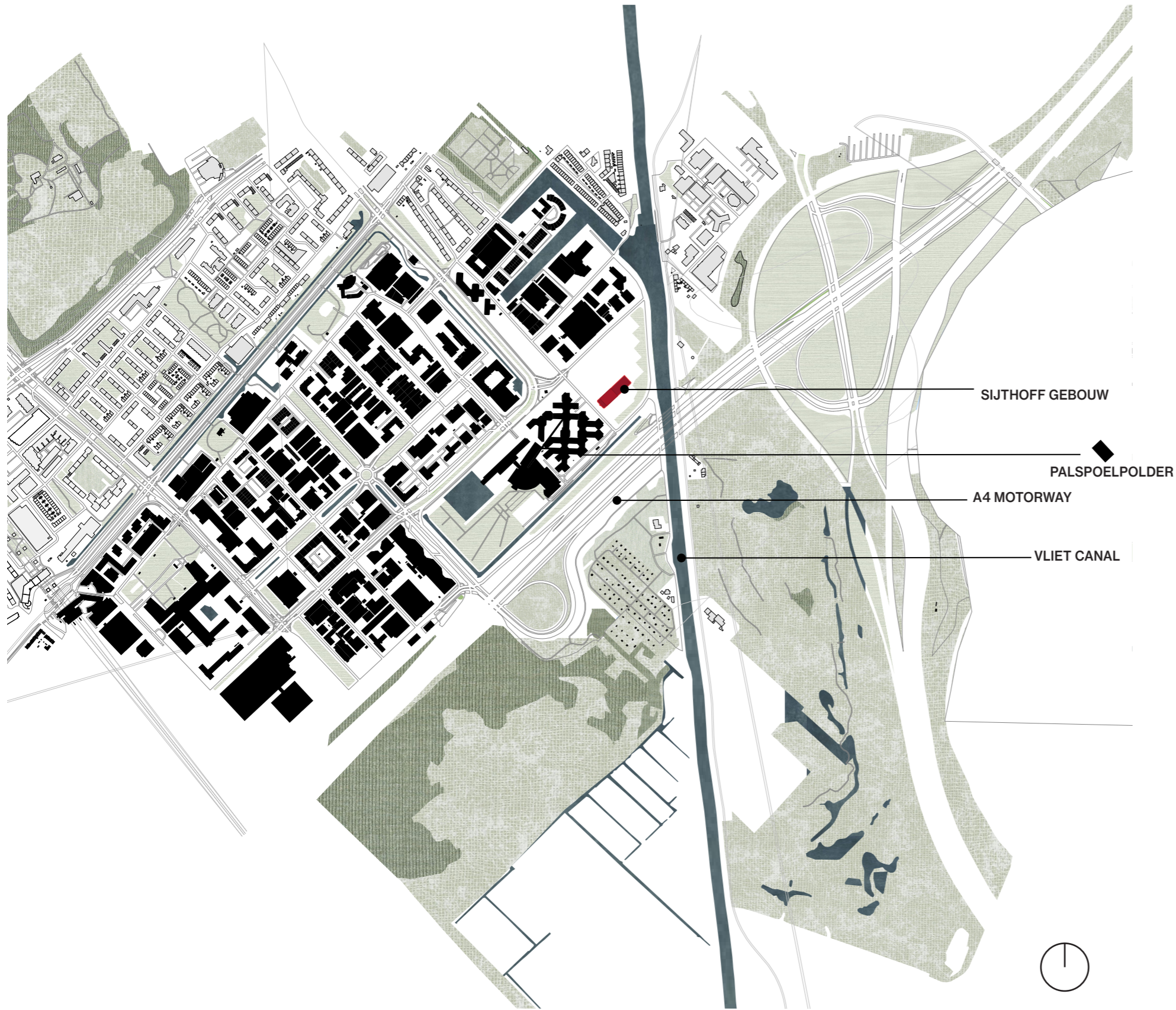


FIGURE 1: MAP OF EASTERN PART OF RIJSWIJK INCLUDING SIJTHOFF AND PART OF THE PALSPOLDER BUSINESS DISTRICT, 1:1000

## Case study.

\*For a more extensive analysis of the case study, see AR4AH130 Collective Booklet 2025–26 Fall Semester (Petrou et al., 2025), pp. 30–32, 100, 260–359.

The Sijthoff Building is located at the edge of the Palspolder neighbourhood in Rijswijk (Fig. 1). It was opened in October 1981 by Prince Claus and designed by LIAG Architects for the Sijthoff Pers newspaper company, publisher of the *Haagsche Courant* (Mooiman, 2025). The building combined office spaces with a production facility and formed part of a larger printing complex active since 1971. Its position near the Vliet canal and the A4 motorway gives it strong visibility within its surroundings (Groenevinger, 2022)

The building is entirely constructed from reinforced concrete and is organised as two interconnected volumes: a lower horizontal base and a taller tower volume. These two parts are articulated through two distinct prefabricated façade typologies. The base uses a more linear and repetitive prefabricated concrete façade system, while the tower is defined by deeply folded prefabricated concrete elements that create strong shadow effects and a highly recognisable texture. This folded façade gave the building its widely known nickname, the “Eierdoos” (egg box) (Den Boer et al., 2023, p. 117).

After Sijthoff Pers relocated in 2004, the building was briefly reused by media organisations, including the *Algemeen Dagblad* (Groenevinger, 2022b), before becoming largely abandoned by 2009. Subsequent informal occupation contributed to its physical deterioration (*Eindelijk Zicht Op Nieuwe Toekomst Eierdoos Sijthoff*, n.d.). In 2018, the interior was stripped, exposing façade damage, while the demolition of surrounding structures left the building isolated. Recent redevelopment plans propose its transformation into a hotel and business center (Sijthoff | Gemeente Rijswijk, 2023).

The analysis (Petrou et al., 2025) revealed a condition in which continuity is simultaneously preserved and disrupted. The building retains a strong architectural identity through its recognisable façade composition, exposed concrete structural system, and cultural associations as a former newspaper headquarters. The reinforced concrete structure remains largely intact, demonstrating long-term material durability and spatial flexibility.

At the same time, prolonged vacancy has weakened the building's relationship with its surroundings and reduced its role within everyday urban life. The interior organization is defined by deep floor plates, inward-oriented circulation, and repetitive office layouts that restrict spatial variation and connectivity. The façade system also reveals technical limitations, including thermal bridging, ageing components, and poor environmental performance.

Vacancy plays a critical role within this condition. The removal of interior layers exposed the concrete structural grid and revealed the spatial potential of the large-span floor plates, while material deterioration and façade damage highlighted opportunities for reinterpretation and reuse. The building is therefore understood not simply as a deteriorated office structure, but as an adaptable architectural system containing latent spatial, material, and urban potential.



*FIGURE 2: SIJTHOFF BUILDING,  
RIJSWIJK , THE NETHERLANDS.  
PHOTOGRAPH BY S. P EREGO.*



## Results.

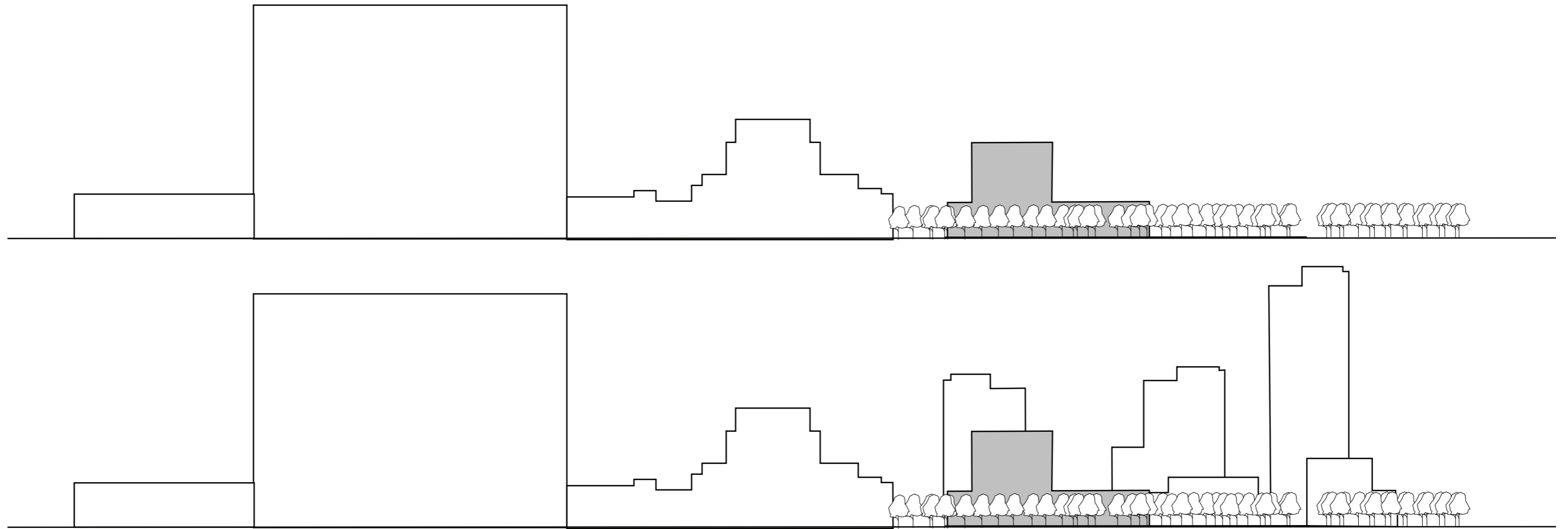
### URBAN CONTINUITY

Although originally designed as a mono-functional office building, the Sijthoff Building gradually became a landmark through the visibility of its distinctive façade and prominent urban position (Fig. 3-6).



**FIGURES 3-6: VISIBILITY OF THE SIJTHOFF BUILDING FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE SURROUNDING AREA. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: VIEW FROM THE SOUTH ADJACENT TO THE PLOT, VIEW FROM THE A4 MOTORWAY, VIEW FROM THE NORTH-WEST EDGE OF THE SITE, AND VIEW FROM THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE CANAL**

Following its abandonment, the building lost much of its active role within the area, while current redevelopment plans proposing larger and denser urban volumes threaten to further reduce its visual prominence within the future urban context. (fig. 7-9)



**FIGURE 7: SKYLINE OF THE SITE VIEWED FROM THE MOTORWAY, SHOWING THE CURRENT CONDITION AT THE TOP AND THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT PLANS AT THE BOTTOM.**



**FIGURES 8,9: RENDERINGS OF THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR THE SIJTHOFF SITE BY AA ARCHITECTEN. SOURCE: SIJTHOFFLOCATIE.NL**

At the same time, the vacant condition of the building revealed spatial opportunities within the partially open ground floor created by the removal of façade elements (fig. 10). These openings exposed direct visual and physical relationships between the interior and the surrounding public space, suggesting possibilities for increased accessibility and permeability (fig. 11).

The existing office typology also lacked publicly accessible programmes and supportive amenities within the surrounding work environment (fig. 12), while the outdoor spaces around the building remained largely inactive and disconnected (fig.13-25). Together, these conditions reinforced the isolated character of the existing office typology and weakened its relationship with the surrounding urban context.



FIGURE 10: PHOTO SHOWING THE CURRENT VACANCY TRACES

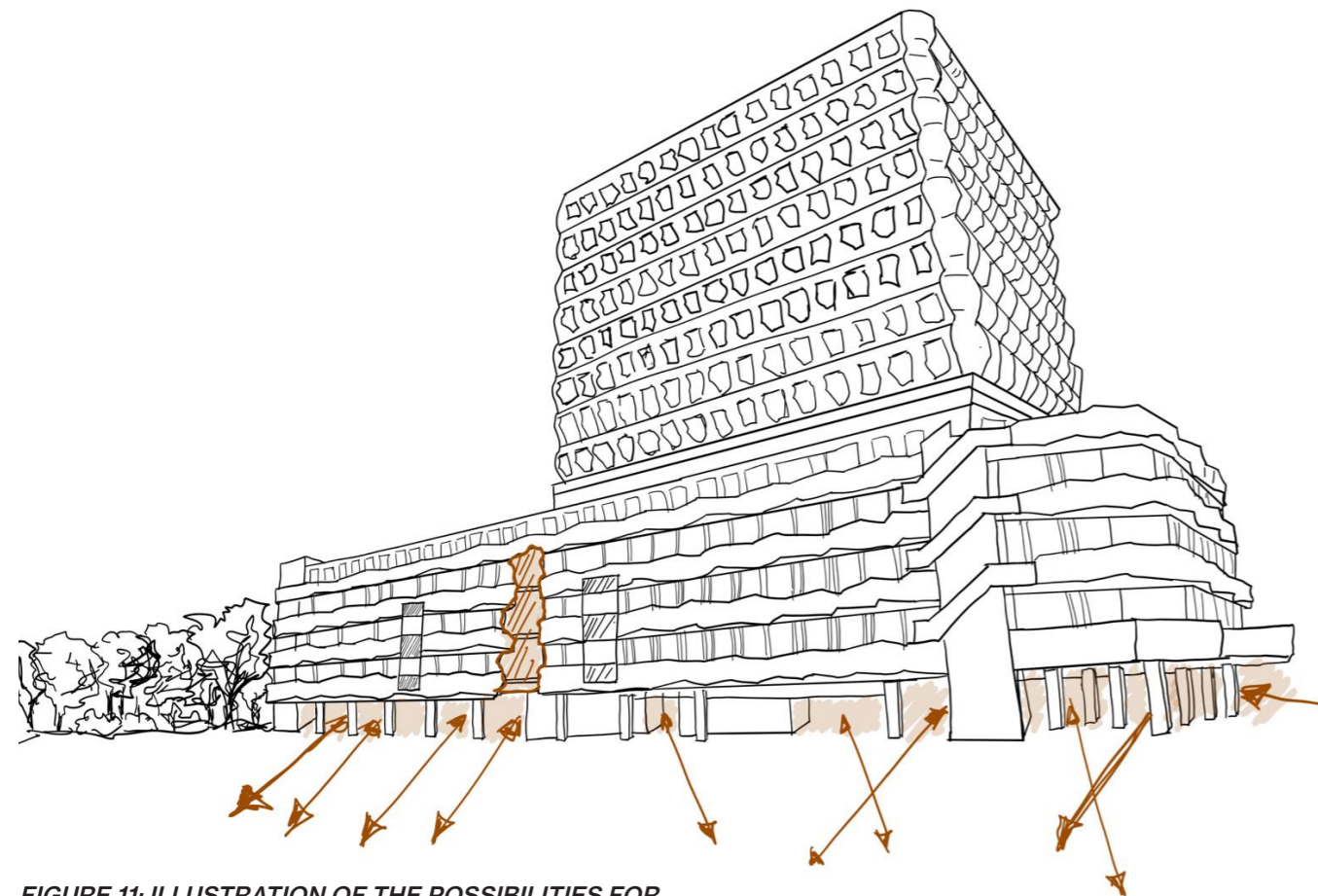


FIGURE 11: ILLUSTRATION OF THE POSSIBILITIES FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND PERMEABILITY

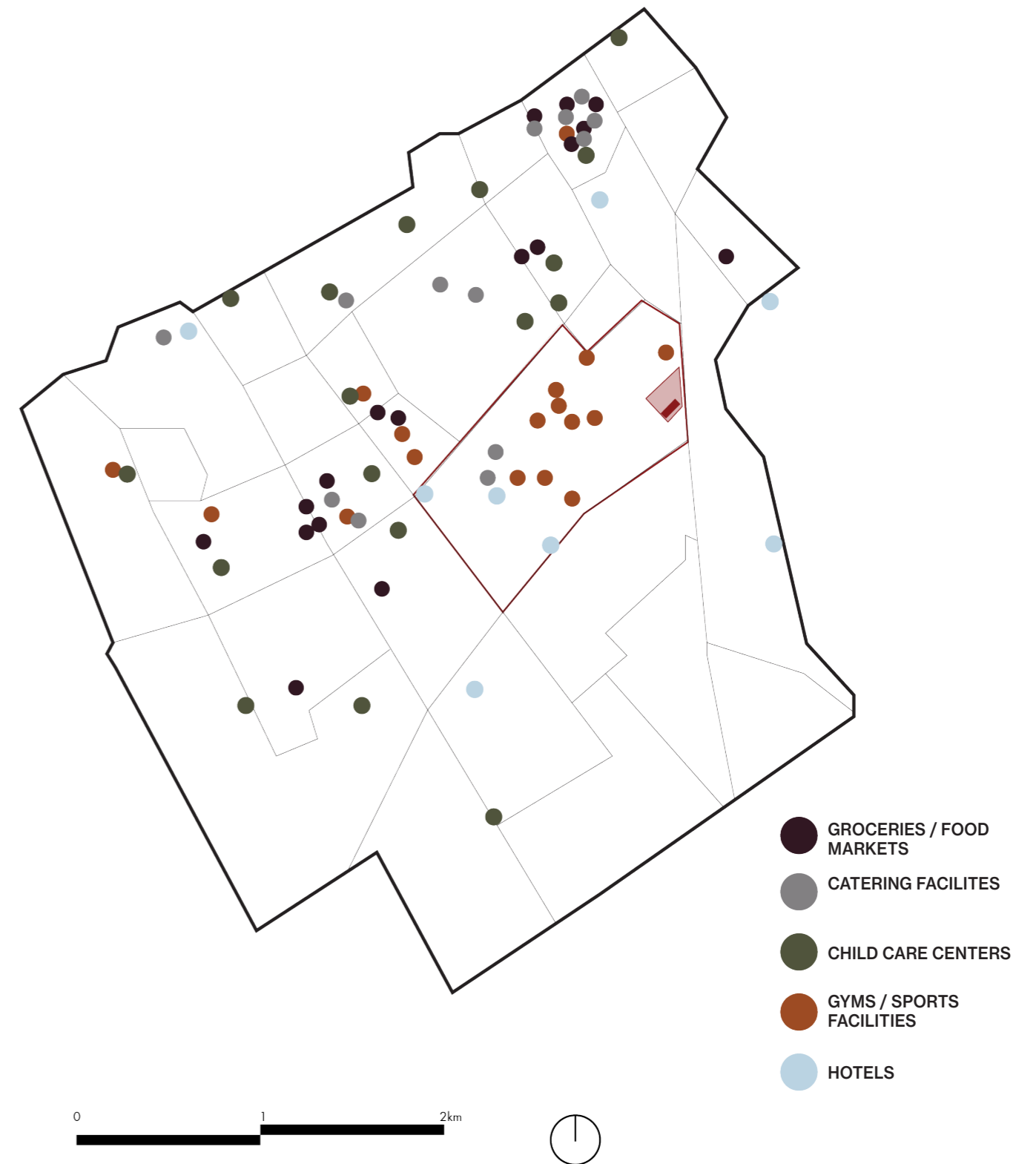
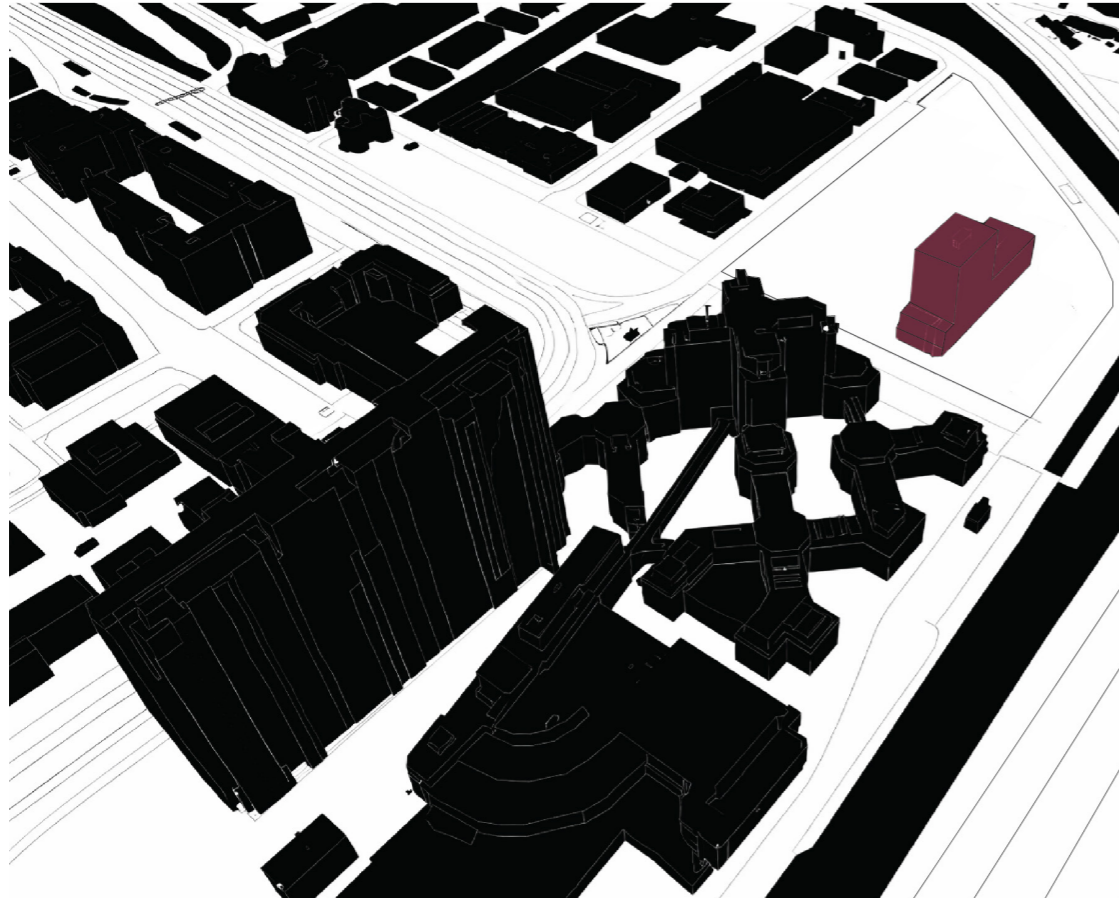
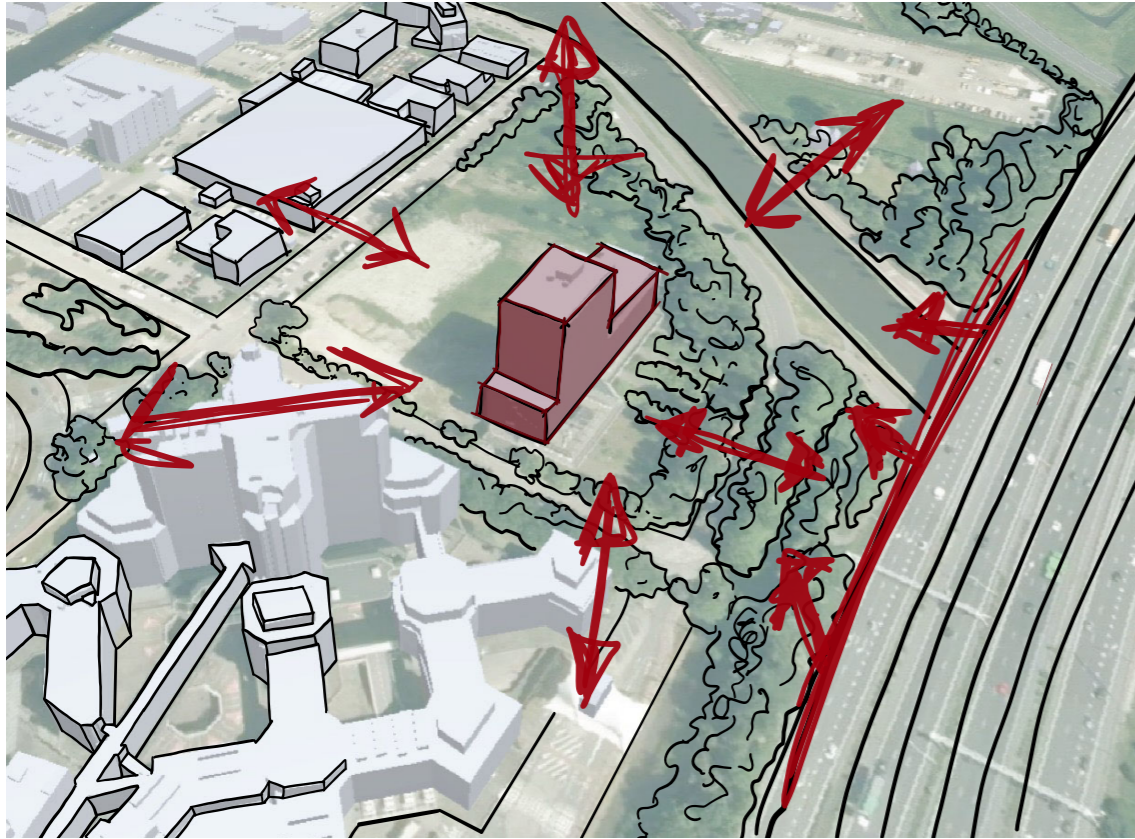


FIGURE 12: MAP OF SUPPORTING WORKPLACE AMENITIES IN RIJSWIJK



FIGURES 13-15: SHOWING THE ISOLATION OF THE SITJHOFF IN SITE



Initial urban studies approached the site in its existing condition, where the Sijthoff Building remained relatively isolated within a largely open plot (fig. 16). As the research developed, the project redirected its focus toward engaging more directly with the future redevelopment vision of the Plaspoelpolder area and the increasing density proposed for the surrounding site (fig. 17,18). The studies therefore examined how the Sijthoff Building could establish new relationships with the proposed surrounding developments while remaining the primary architectural focus of the intervention. Environmental studies for the redevelopment area also indicate generally suitable conditions for pedestrian use despite local wind acceleration around taller buildings (Peutz BV, 2025), supporting the feasibility of maintaining active public use across the site together with the surrounding developments.

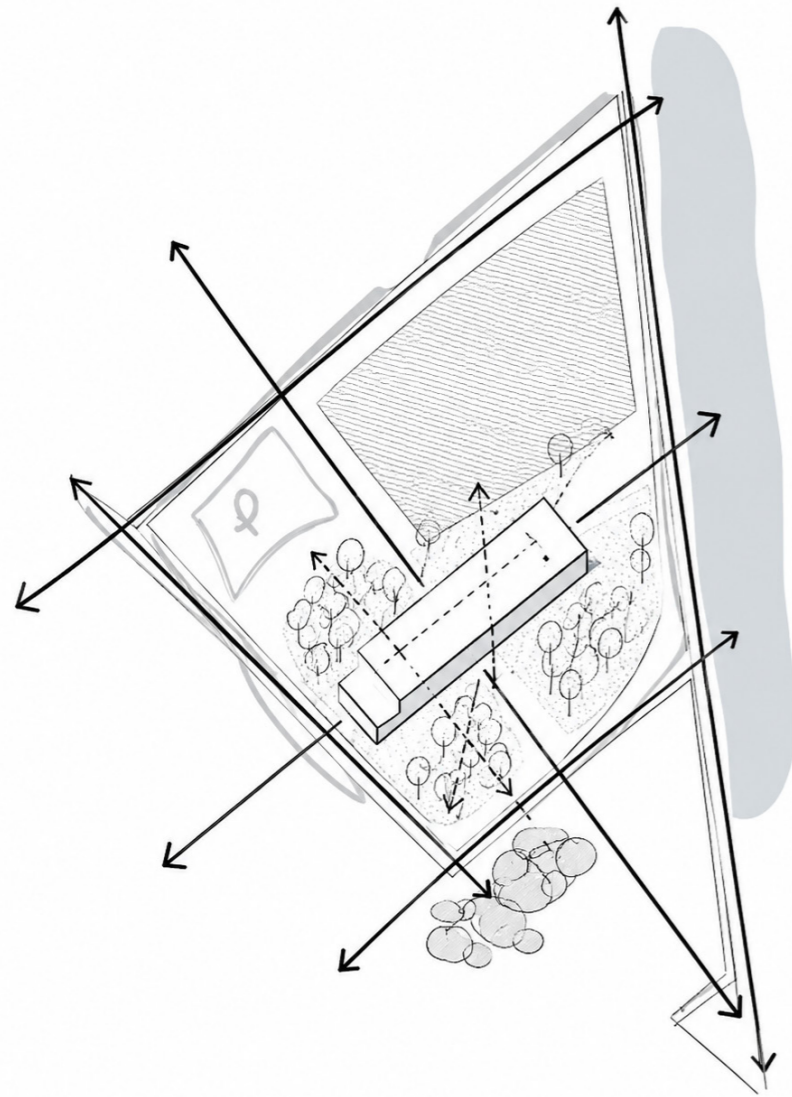


FIGURE 16: DIAGRAM OF INITIAL SITE EXPLORATIONS

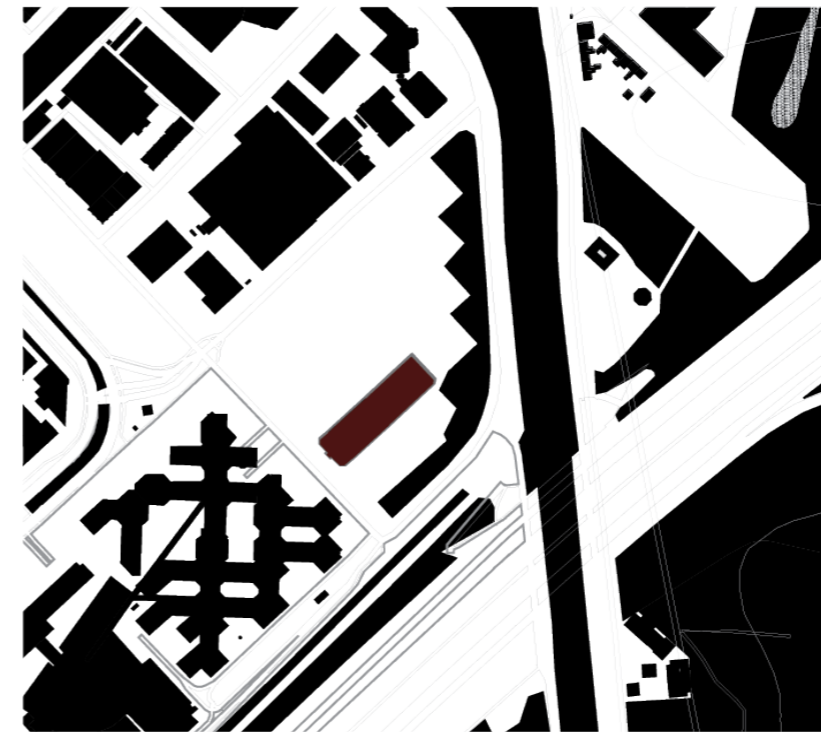


FIGURE 17: CURRENT SITUATION - EMPTY PLOT



FIGURE 18: FUTURE SITUATION - NEW DEVELOPMENT

Within the context of the future densifying urban environment, early ideas investigated extending the building vertically to reinforce its visibility within the changing skyline. Although these interventions increased the visual presence of the tower, they disrupted the proportions and identity of the existing façade system. (Fig. 19,20)

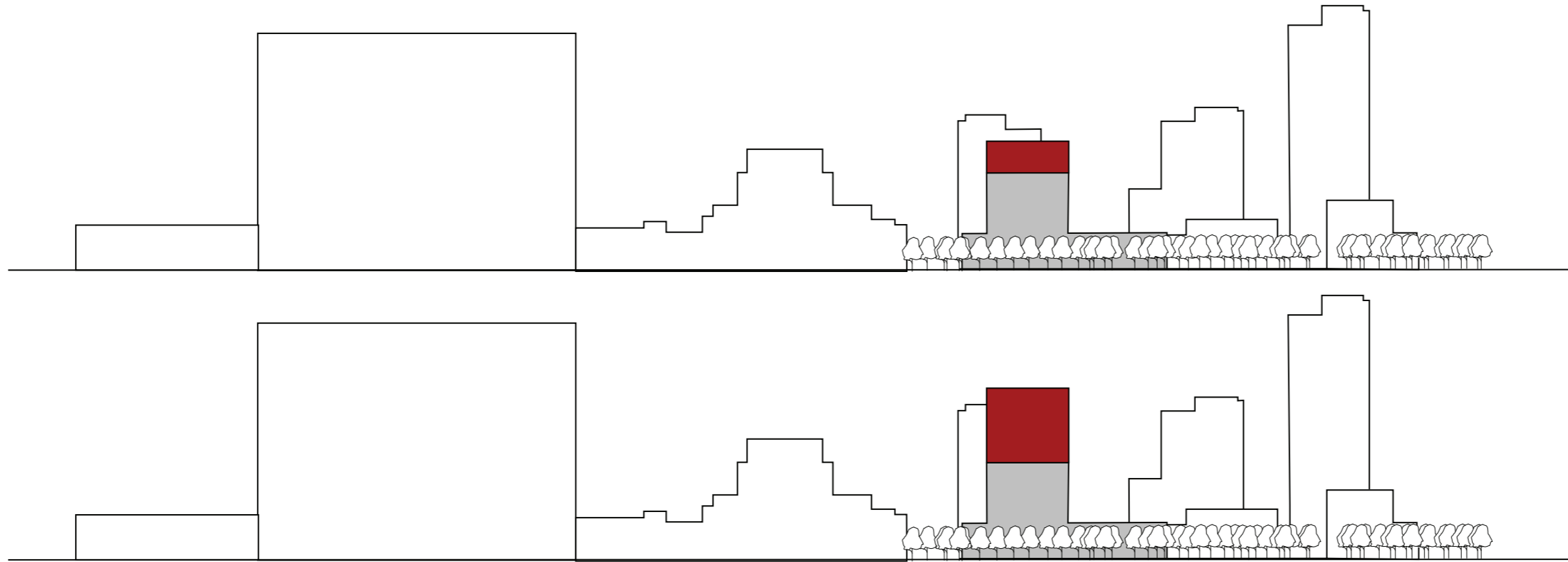


FIGURE 19: SKYLINES SHOWING THE VERTICAL EXTENSION OF THE BUILDING EXPLORED

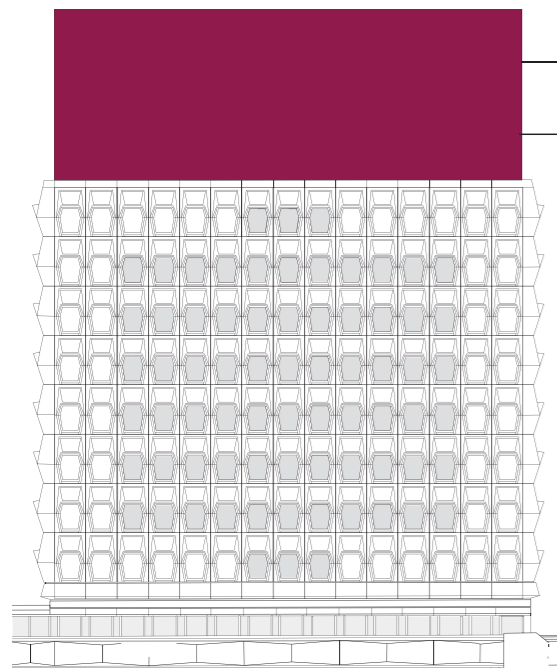


FIGURE 20: DIAGRAM SHOWING THE VERTICAL EXTENSION OF THE BUILDING EXPLORED

Different circulation strategies were tested through movement diagrams and ground-floor accessibility studies, testing how far new public connections should extend through the site and building. Early explorations examined both ground-level passages and elevated connections crossing above the building (Fig. 21). The elevated intervention was ultimately rejected due to the significant height difference and large distance toward the motorway, which would have required a disproportionately large and visually dominant intervention.

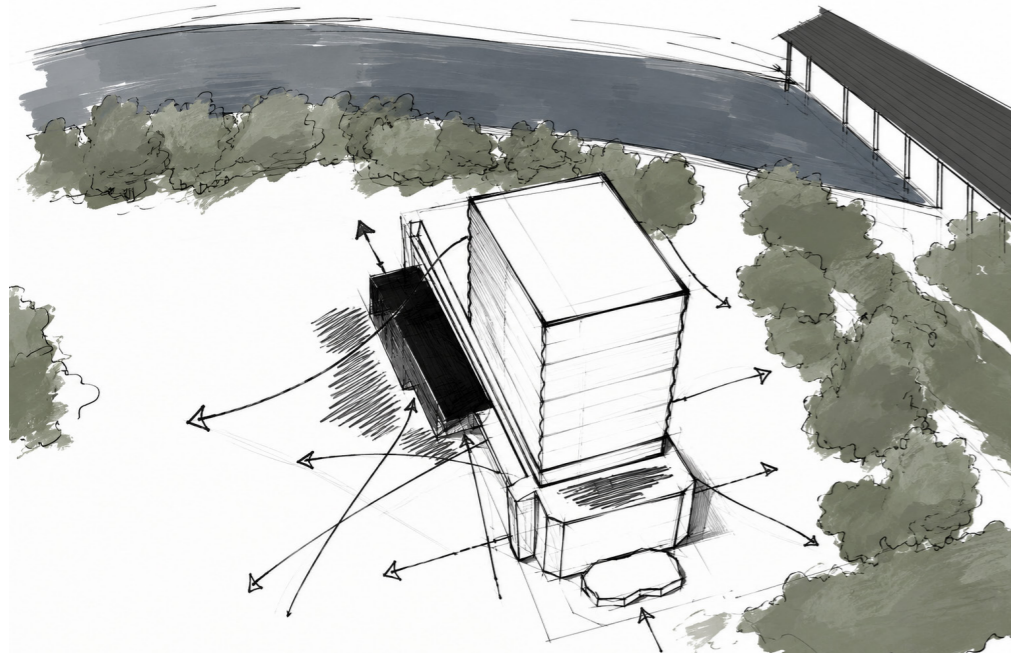


FIGURE 21: EXAMPLE SKETCH OF THE EXPLORED PASSAGES



FIGURE 22: PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING THE TWO FACADE TYPOLOGIES

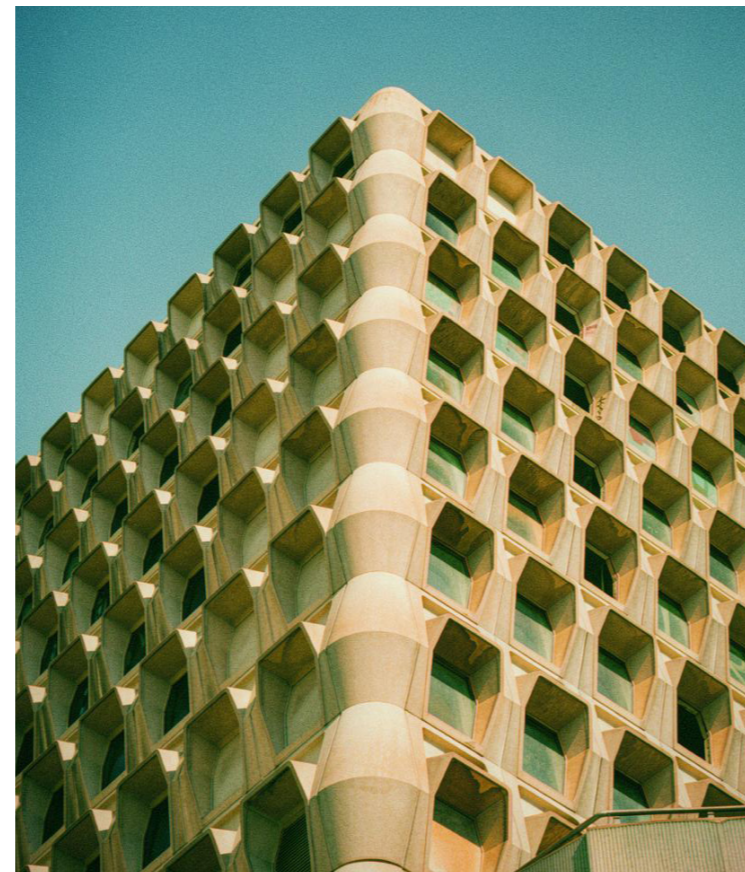


FIGURE 23: THE TOWER FACADE TYPOLOGY



FIGURE 24: THE BASE FACADE TYPOLOGY

Regarding the programmatic organisation, the goal from the beginning was for the Sijthoff Building to reconnect with its surroundings and re-establish itself as an active part of the city. An early decision was therefore to introduce a highly public base combined with a more private tower (fig.29), responding to the existing façade typologies (fig. 26-28).

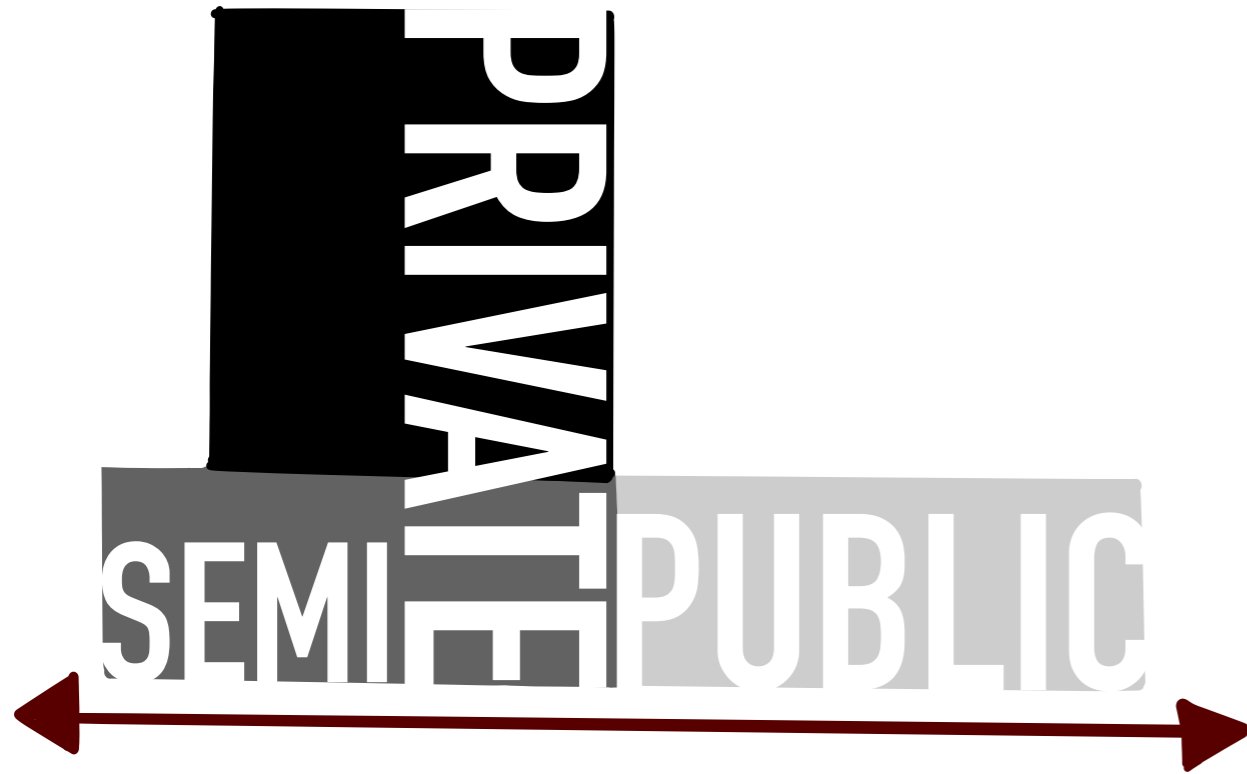


FIGURE 25: DIAGRAM OF EARLY PROGRAMATIC DIVISION

The first scenario approached the building as a civic destination by introducing functions such as exhibition spaces, retail, and educational facilities. This increased public activation but reduced the connection between the building's existing office identity and the economic character of the Plaspoelpolder (fig. 26).

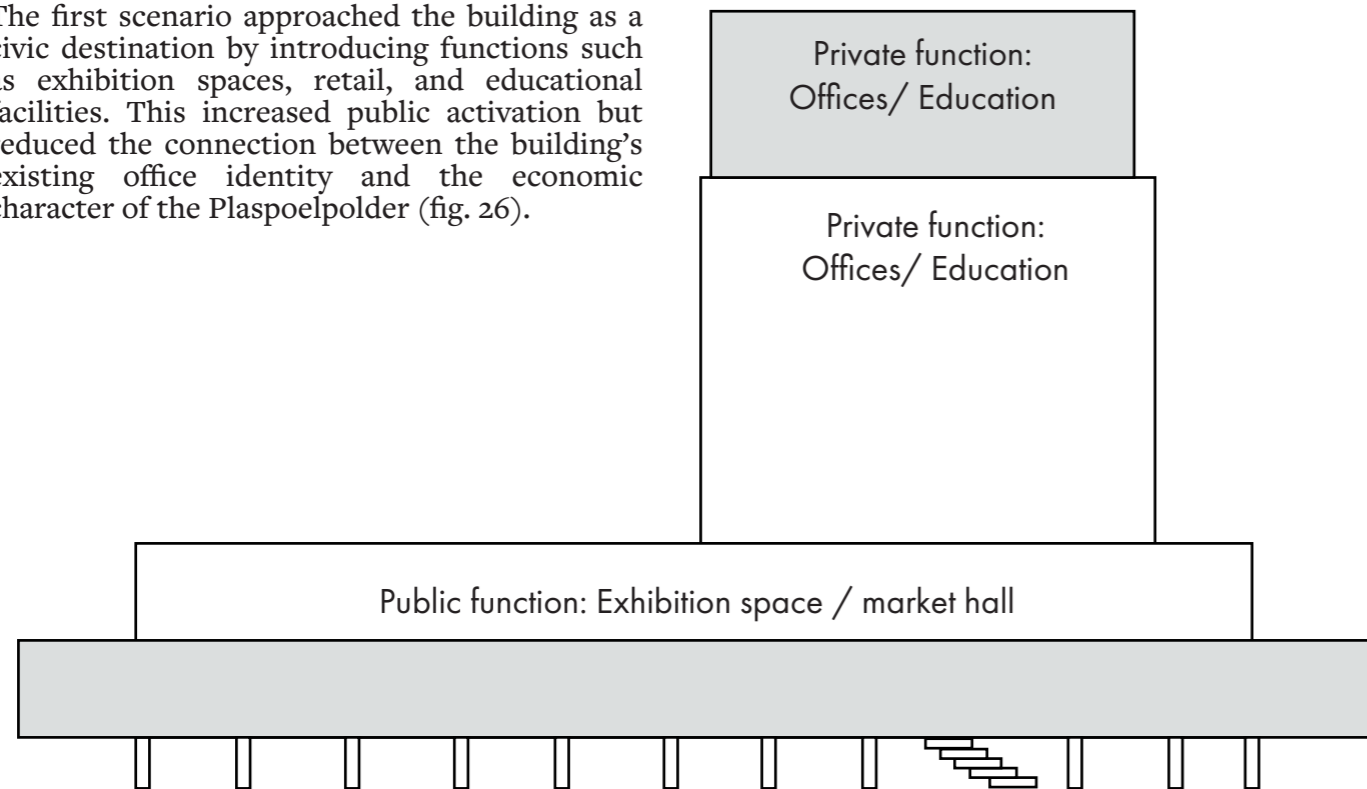


FIGURE 26: EXAMPLE OF AN EARLY PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

A more context-driven programmatic direction gradually emerged through the analysis of the wider Plaspoelpolder area. According to the "Concept Addendum to the Future Vision Plaspoelpolder" (fig.27), the district currently suffers from an oversupply of office space while simultaneously requiring a stronger mix of functions and improved spatial quality to strengthen its business climate (Gemeente Rijswijk, 2019). In parallel, the "Future Vision Plaspoelpolder" identifies the need for transformation, renewal, and more future-proof working environments within the area's existing building stock (Gemeente Rijswijk, 2017). The "IPP Haaglanden Investment Agenda" further highlights issues of vacancy, ageing office buildings, and the necessity of improving workplace quality and the overall public environment in order to support long-term economic vitality (IPP Haaglanden, 2023).

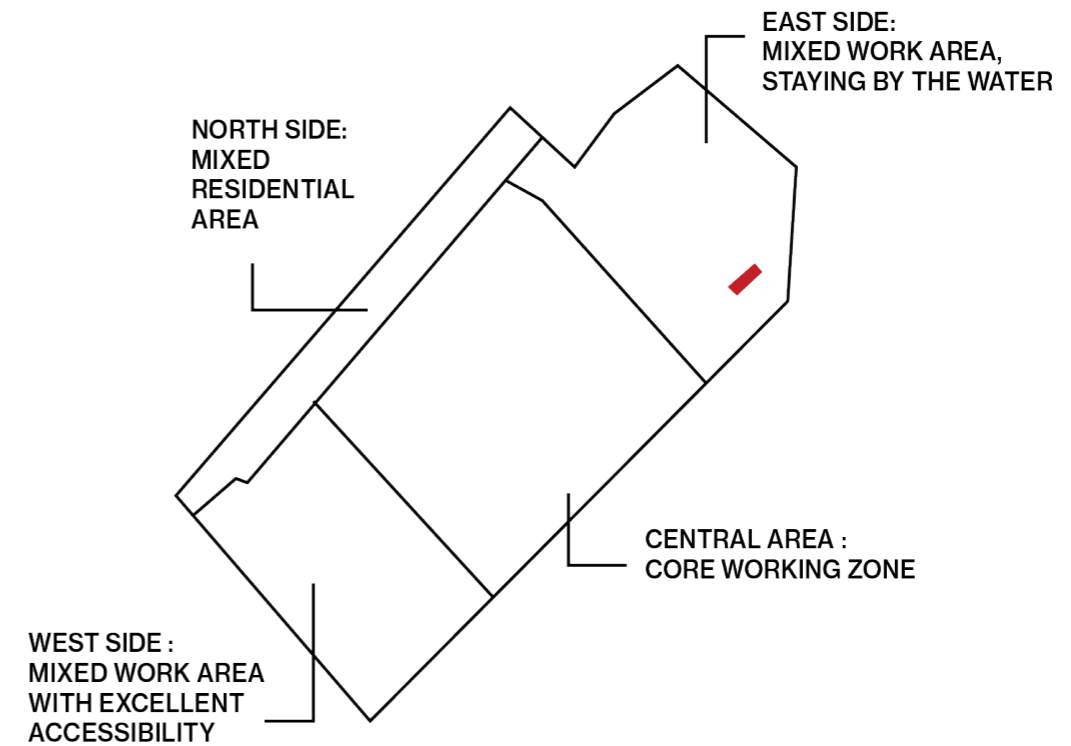


FIGURE 27: VISION FOR PLASPOELPOLDER FROM 2019

The research began examining how the existing office identity of the Sijthoff Building could be adapted and expanded rather than fully replaced. Hybrid working models, mixed-use programmes, and improved public environments became increasingly relevant to the redevelopment of both the building and the wider Plaspoelpolder area (fig.28), where renewed workplace environments and spatial quality are positioned as drivers of long-term urban and economic revitalisation (Gemeente Rijswijk, 2019; Gemeente Rijswijk, 2025).

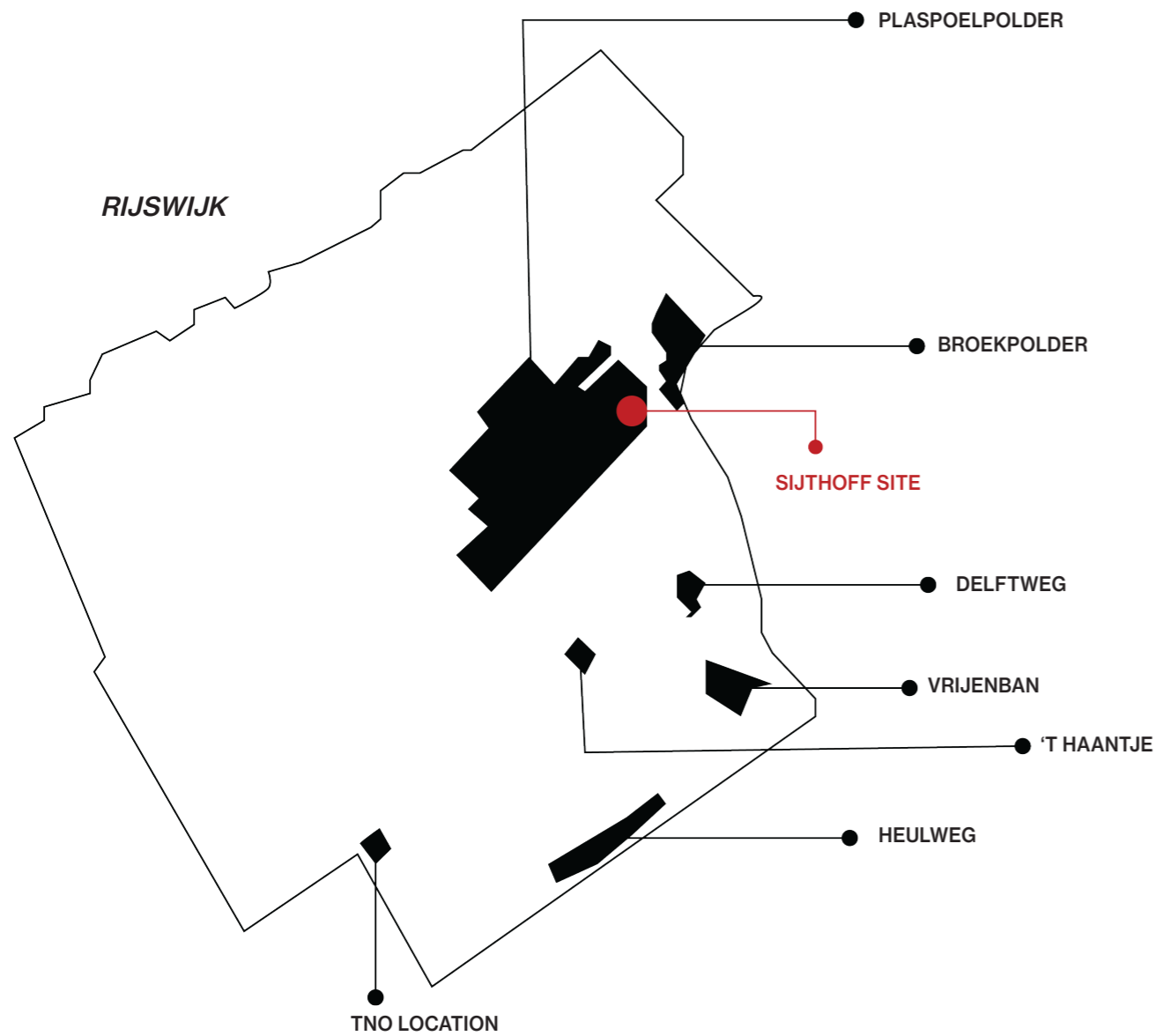


FIGURE 28: PLASPOELPOLDER AND OTHERS BUSINESS ESTATES IN RIJSWIJK

The lower levels were developed as an accessible plinth containing co-working spaces, food and beverage areas, childcare, and meeting facilities. The upper levels accommodate rentable office spaces and short-stay business functions, allowing flexibility while maintaining economic viability over time. (fig.29)

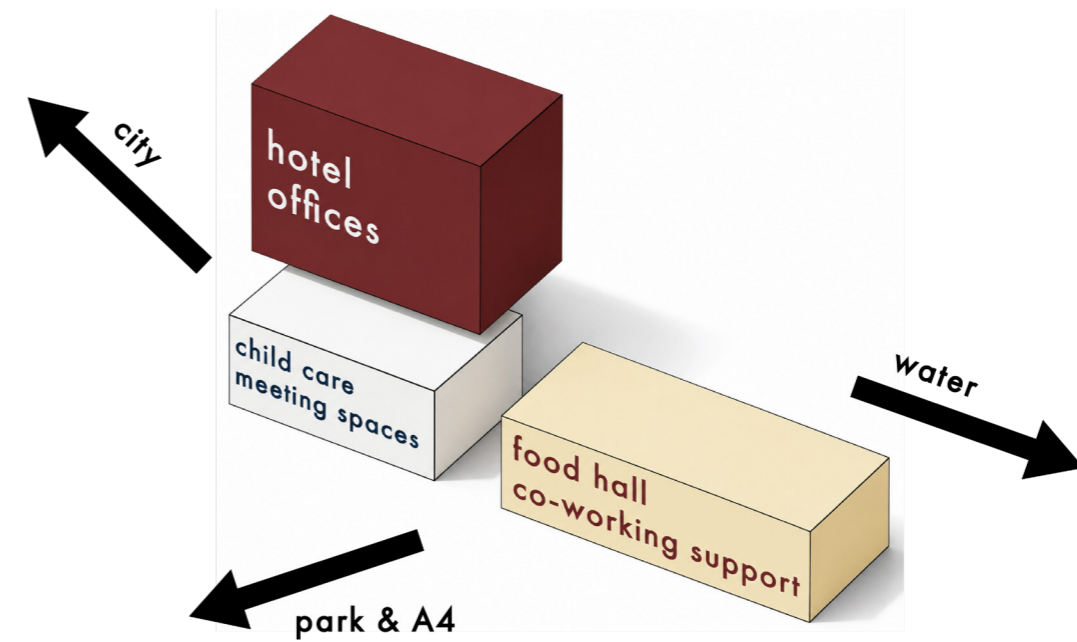
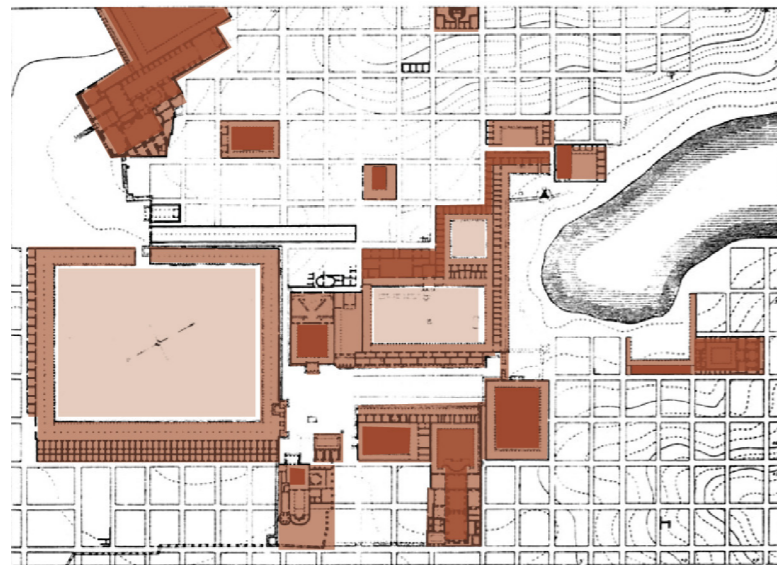
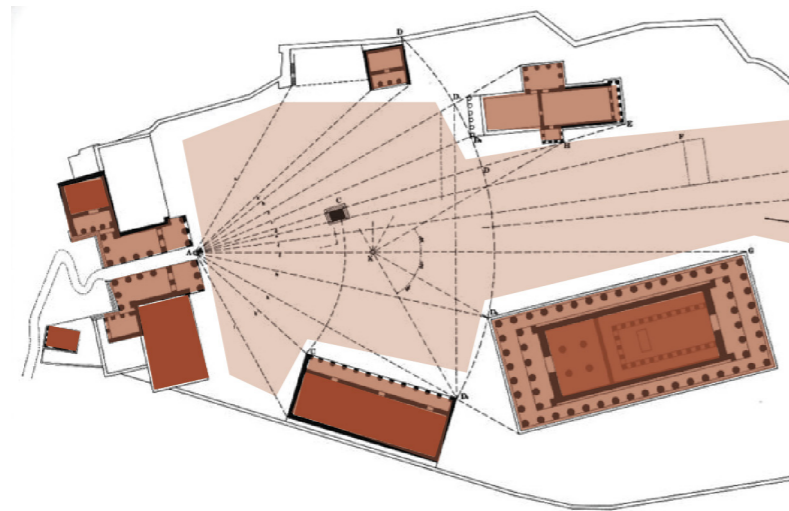


FIGURE 29: DIAGRAM OF THE GENERAL FINAL PROGRAM

Inspired by the ancient Greek agora as a space of collective activity, the surrounding open areas were reconsidered as active public spaces through pedestrian passages, terraces, and flexible uses extending activity beyond office hours. (Fig. 30,31)



- AGORA (PUBLIC FLOW) - PLAZAS AND COLLECTIVE AREAS IN THE PLOT
- STOA (COLLECTIVE GRID) - SPACE AROUND THE BUILDINGS
- CHAMBERS (PRIVATE ANCHORS) - BUILDINGS

FIGURE 30: THE CONCEPT OF ANCIENT AGORA

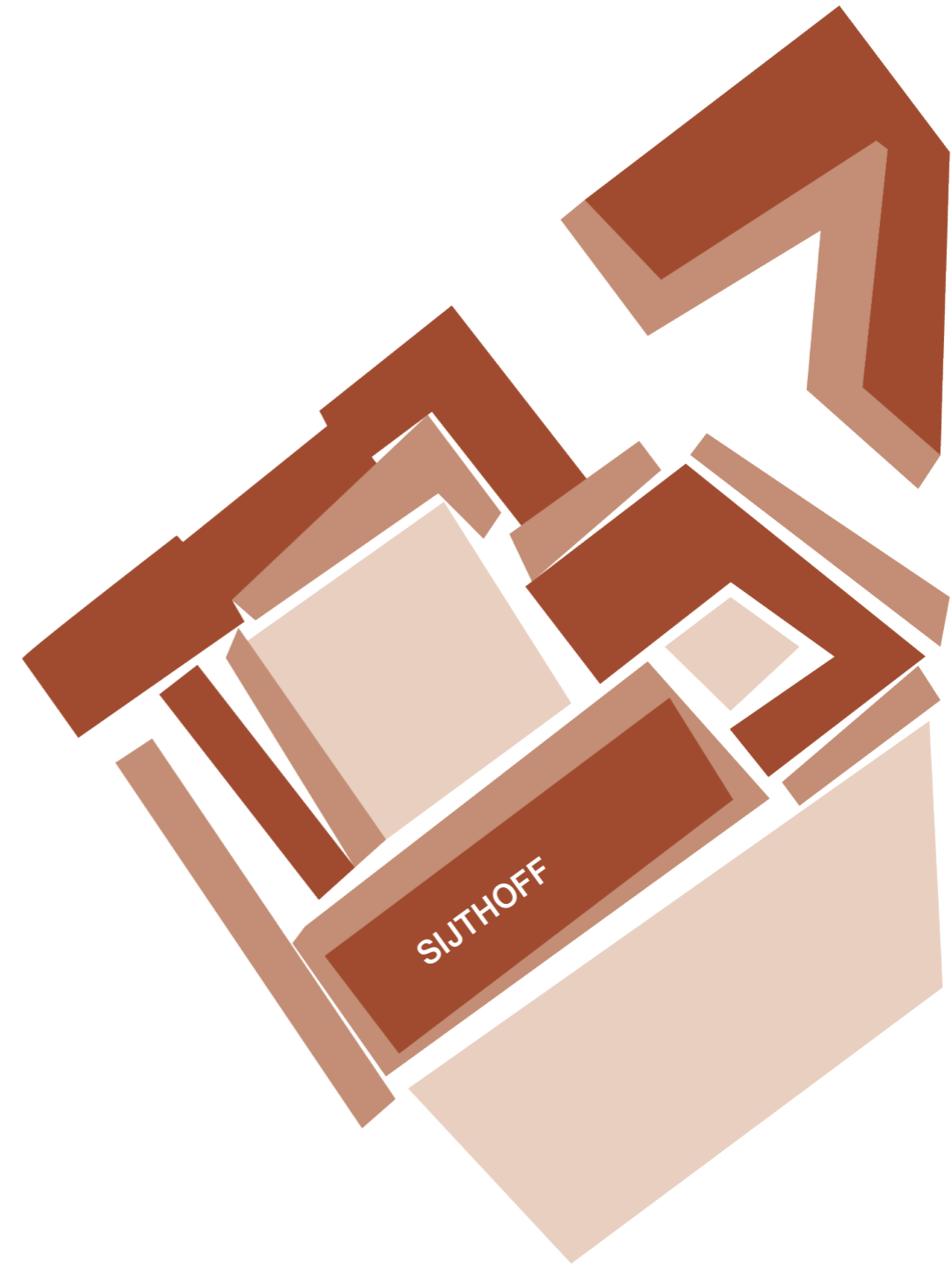


FIGURE 31: ABSTRACT CONCEPT OF ANCIENT AGORA IN SIJTHOFF'S SITE

The final proposal preserves the existing silhouette of the Sijthoff Building while maintaining its visibility and landmark presence within a future densifying urban context without increasing its height. This is achieved through ground-level activation, landscape interventions, stronger physical and visual connections with the surrounding city, direct relationships with the canal and the motorway, and a more transparent upper volume(fig.32).

Urban interventions further reinforce the recognisable identity of the building. A large “Eierdoos” sign is positioned at roof level in the location of the former “Sijthoff Pers” signage, referencing both the collective memory of the building and the informal visual occupations that emerged during vacancy (fig.33-35). The planned park on the north-west side extends toward the building, while pedestrian passages and bicycle routes are prioritised across the site( fig.36), unlike the AA Architecten proposal where roads continue through the plot (fig.37). The open ground floor also functions as a public passage connecting different sides of the site and strengthening access toward the canal edge. Additional public functions, including a playground, basketball court, outdoor terraces, flea market space, and landscape seating areas, attract activity beyond office hours. A staircase integrated into the landscape hill improves connections with the southern side of the city.

The proposal also introduces red colouring across the open ground floor and surrounding interventions to increase visibility, spatial legibility, and pedestrian attraction within the dense urban environment. (fig. 38) Bright colours at ground level are frequently used as urban activation strategies because they strengthen the perceived accessibility and public character of buildings while creating a stronger visual relationship with the surrounding city (Lynch, 1960; Whyte, 1980).

The final program develops a hybrid model supporting contemporary working environments both within the building and across the wider business district. The programme is organised vertically as a gradient from public and collective functions at the base to more private uses in the upper levels. The lower floors form an active plinth containing co-working spaces, meeting facilities, food and beverage areas, childcare functions, a grocery store with direct public access, and support spaces including gaming, wellness, and social areas connected to the rooftop productive garden above the base volume. The upper levels accommodate rentable office spaces and short-stay business functions, allowing long-term spatial and economic flexibility. (fig.40)

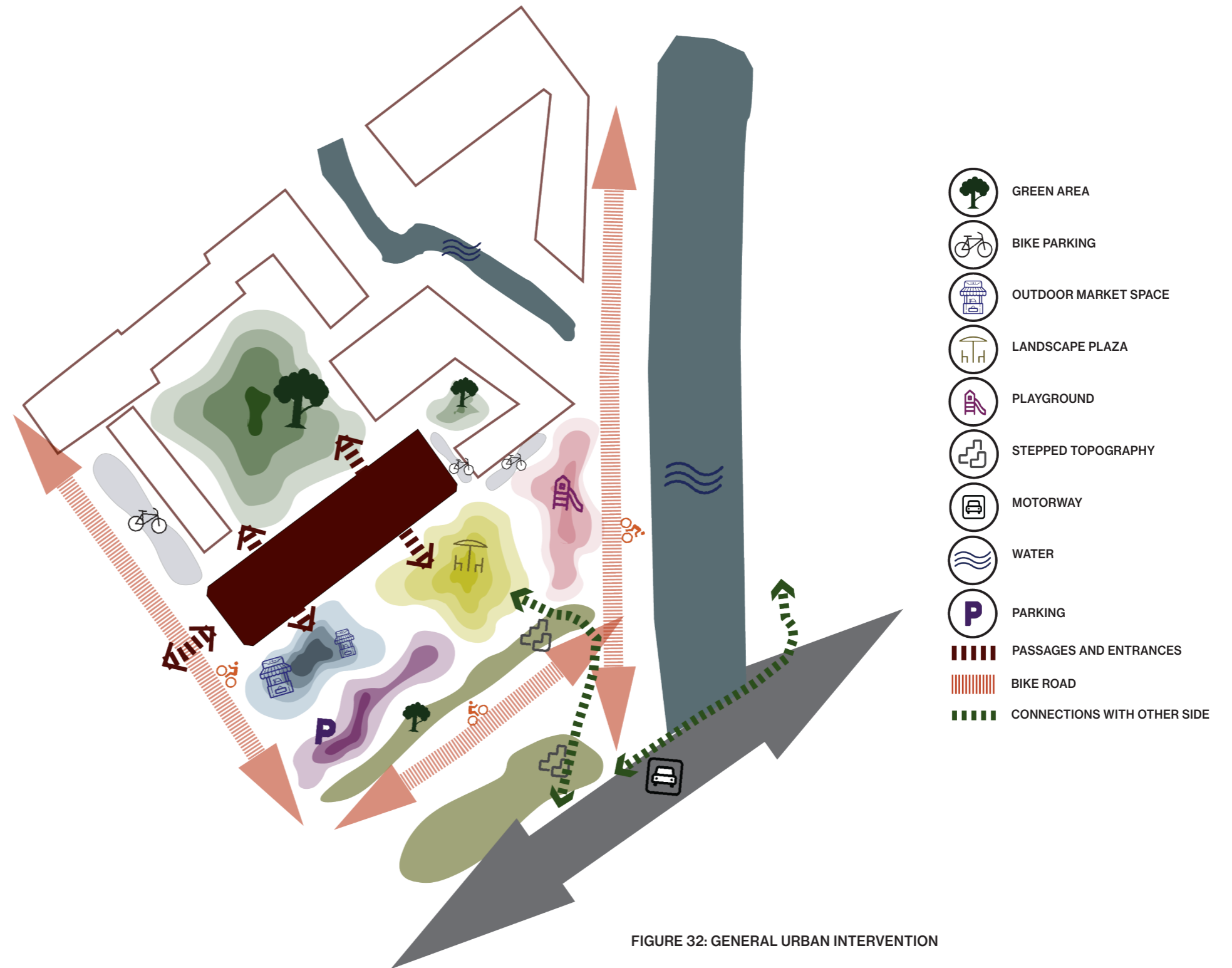


FIGURE 32: GENERAL URBAN INTERVENTION



FIGURE 33: THE FORMER OFFICE'S SIGN



FIGURE 34: THE VACANCY PROTESTS



FIGURE 35: THE PROPOSED INTERVENTION

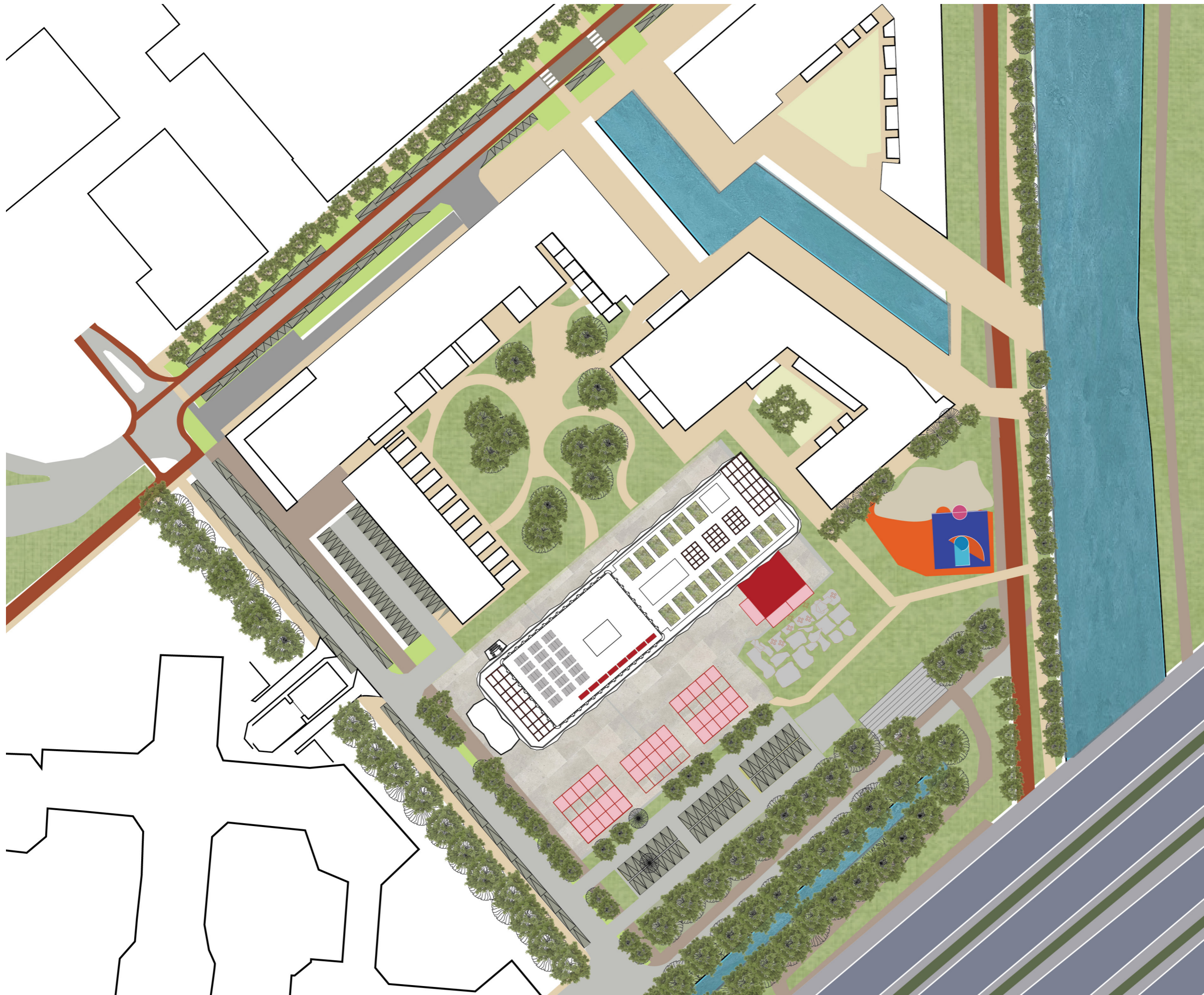


FIGURE 36: 1:1000 MASTERPLAN



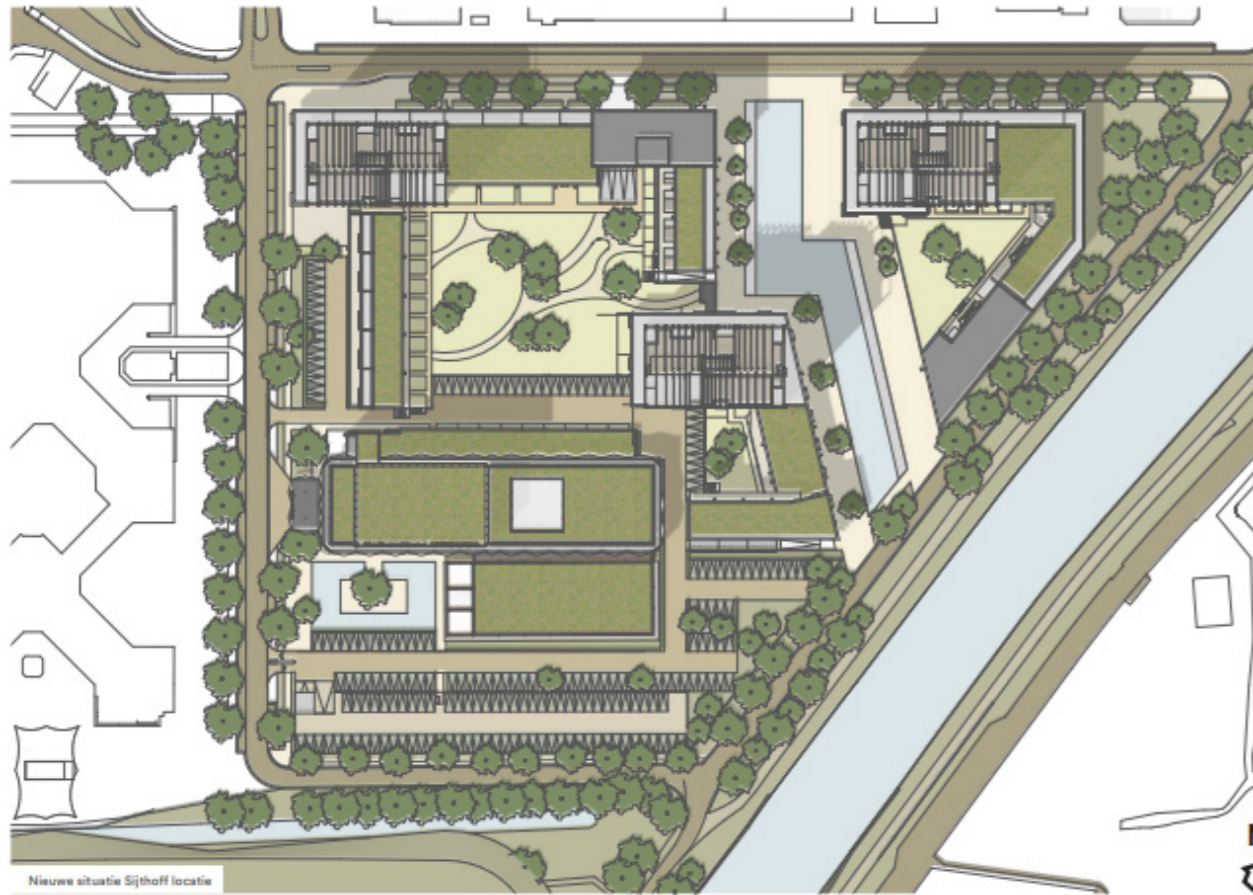


FIGURE 37: PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT VISION FOR THE SIJTHOFF SITE IN RIJSWIJK BY AA ARCHITECTEN. SOURCE: AA ARCHITECTEN, BS-RAPPORT SIJTHOFF (2022), RETRIEVED FROM SIJTHOFFLOCATIE.NL.



FIGURE 39 : URBAN PERSPECTIVE



FIGURE 38: IMPRESSION OF THE RED GROUND FLOOR PASSAGE



FIGURE 39 : IMPRESSION OF THE OUTDOOR MARKET

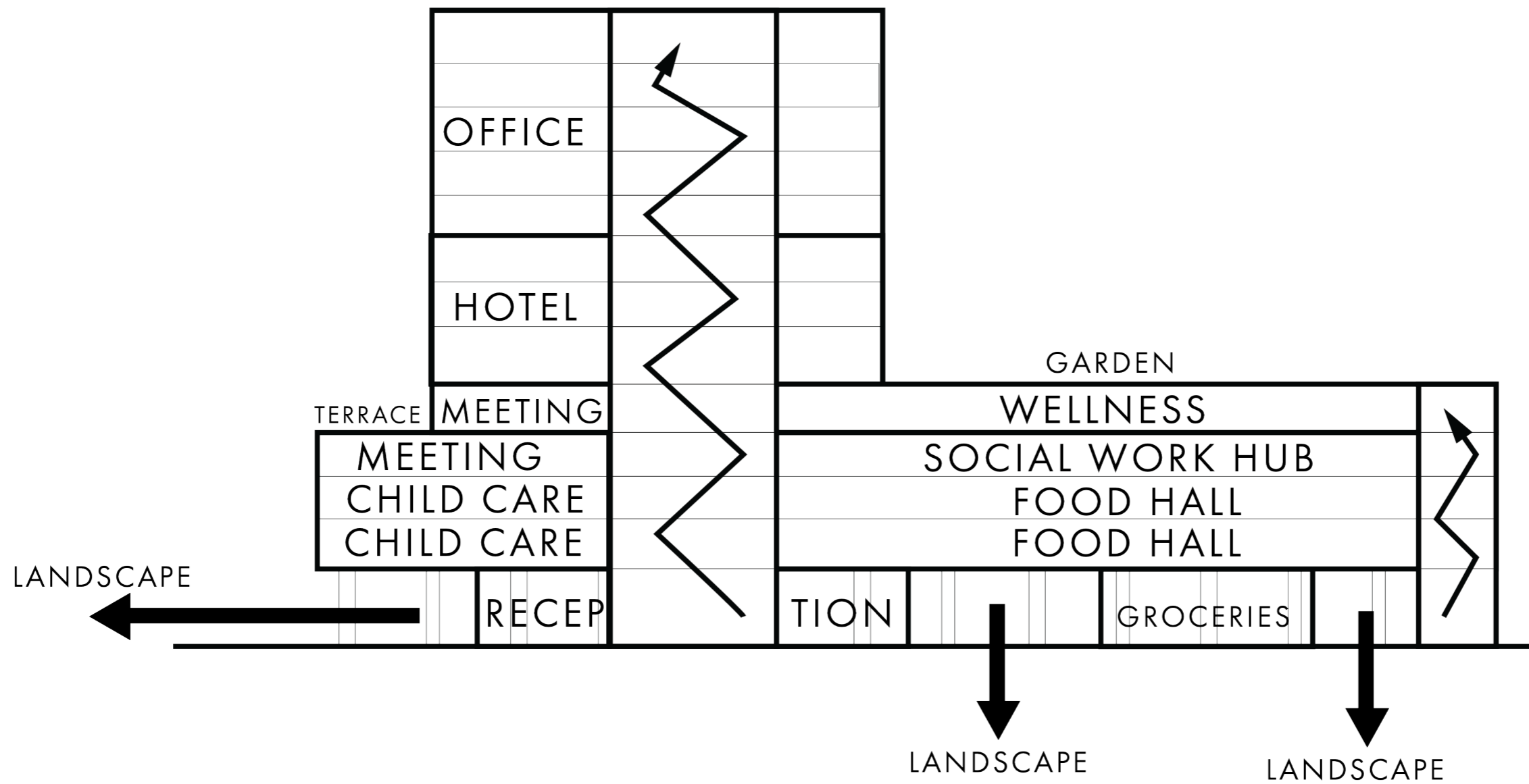


FIGURE 40 : DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR SIJTHOFF

## MATERIAL CONTINUITY

A visual survey of the existing structure and envelope was conducted to identify deterioration patterns, material damage, and risks relevant to adaptive reuse. The assessment focused on structural concrete elements, façade panels, glazing systems, and exposed ground-floor zones.



FIGURE 41: NORTH-WEST SIDE OF THE DAMAGED FACADE



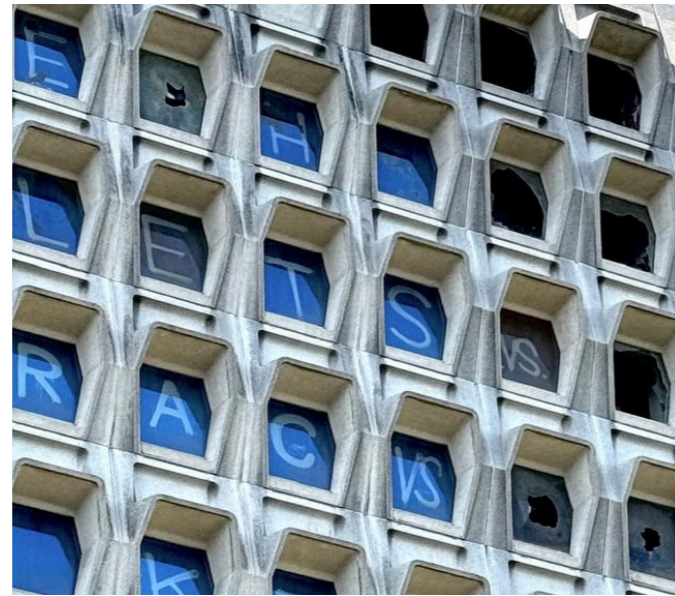
FIGURES 42,43: SOILING ON BASE'S PREFAB ELEMENTS (TOP), AND SOILING ON TOWER'S PREFAB ELEMENTS (BOTTOM)





2006

FIGURE 44: PART OF THE FACADE WITH NO VISIBLE SOILING IN 2006



2026

FIGURE 45: PART OF THE FACADE WITH SOILING 20 YEARS LATER

Although the soiling on the façade (fig.42,43) was initially considered acceptable to remain, as it does not yet constitute severe damage, intervention is recommended because the staining is visibly increasing year by year (fig.44,45). If left untreated, it may increasingly affect the appearance and architectural expression of the prefabricated façade elements. (Bouichou & Marie-Victoire, 2021; Hamdia et al., 2018)

The probable cause is moisture-driven atmospheric soiling of the Portland-cement concrete with Rijn–Maas aggregates. The porous concrete surface retains moisture and traps airborne dirt and pollutants, while the deeply folded egg-box geometry creates different conditions of rain exposure, runoff, shading, and drying. As a result, identical prefab panels develop different staining patterns depending on the interaction of water, wind, and geometry.

Cleaning is proposed as both a preventive and aesthetic intervention, but without damaging the original concrete surface. Aggressive cleaning could remove the cement skin, expose aggregates, or increase surface roughness, accelerating future soiling. Only the gentlest effective method should therefore be applied following testing on representative areas (Bouichou & Marie-Victoire, 2021; European Committee for Standardization, 2009).

The aim is not to make the façade appear new, but to reduce excessive staining while preserving the original texture, patina, and material integrity of the prefabricated concrete panels.

A phased approach is recommended. First, is testing the panels by undertaking trials on representative zones (exposed, recessed, damp, heavily stained, cleaner control) (fig. 46) and reassessing after 24–72 hours drying. Then, following is working with the lowest effective method and going deeper according to the reaction of the concrete:

1. Dry soft brushing
2. Low-pressure superheated steam cleaning
3. Gentle hand brushing
4. Mild neutral detergent only if required after testing

Steam cleaning with soft brushing is identified as a suitable low-impact technique for historic concrete (Bouichou & Marie-Victoire, 2021).

The aim is not full uniformity, but reduction of excessive staining while retaining patina, texture, and authenticity. Some tonal variation should remain, as it reflects the façade geometry and weathering history.

Final recommendation is the trial cleaning using a superheated low-pressure steam system (DOFF-type or equivalent) at the gentlest effective setting, followed by local hand brushing where necessary. No abrasives, acids, or high-pressure cleaning should be used. This provides the best balance between aesthetic improvement and long-term conservation of the historic concrete surface (Bouichou & Marie-Victoire, 2021; European Committee for Standardization, 2009).



FIGURE 46: SHOWING THE REPRESENTATIVE TESTING ZONES OF THE FACADE



Heavier graffiti occurs at accessible lower levels and interior areas (fig.48,49). Here, stronger intervention may be needed due to layered paint and repeated tagging. For this reason, a more constructive strategy was considered, aligned with the future reuse of the building.

Only limited graffiti is present on the upper façade (fig.47), and the affected areas are to be cleaned first by trial dry-ice blasting; only where this proves ineffective in specific locations will gentle hand brushing (DOFF-type) be used as a secondary

FIGURES 47-49:  
 TOP LEFT: LIMITED GRAFFITI ON THE PREFABRICATED FAÇADE ELEMENTS.  
 MIDDLE: EXTENSIVE GRAFFITI COVERAGE ACROSS THE GROUND FLOOR. BOTTOM RIGHT: CARTOON-STYLE GRAFFITI ON THE GROUND-FLOOR SURFACES.



A full removal (fig.51), would require aggressive cleaning that could damage the exposed concrete, while stains and traces would likely remain visible. Much of the graffiti also reflects vacancy and neglect through vandalism and repeated tagging rather than meaningful cultural value.



FIGURE 50: PHOTOGRAPH OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF GROUND FLOOR



FIGURE 51: IMPRESSION OF THE GROUND FLOOR IF CLEANED (GRAFFITI REMOVED)

One option is a controlled colour intervention at ground-floor level, transforming the plinth into a more active urban interface inspired by the bold use of colour in MVRDV projects. This also relates to the existing red entrance canopy (fig.56) and connects with the urban continuity strategy where colour is used to strengthen visibility, accessibility, and the relationship between the building and the surrounding public space.

Different strategies were considered. Green tones could connect the lower level with the surrounding landscape (fig.53), while curated murals or artistic interventions could replace uncontrolled graffiti and transform the ground floor into a more welcoming public space with new identity and activity (fig.54).



FIGURE 52: IMPRESSION OF THE RED GROUND FLOOR



FIGURE 53: IMPRESSION OF THE GREEN GROUND FLOOR

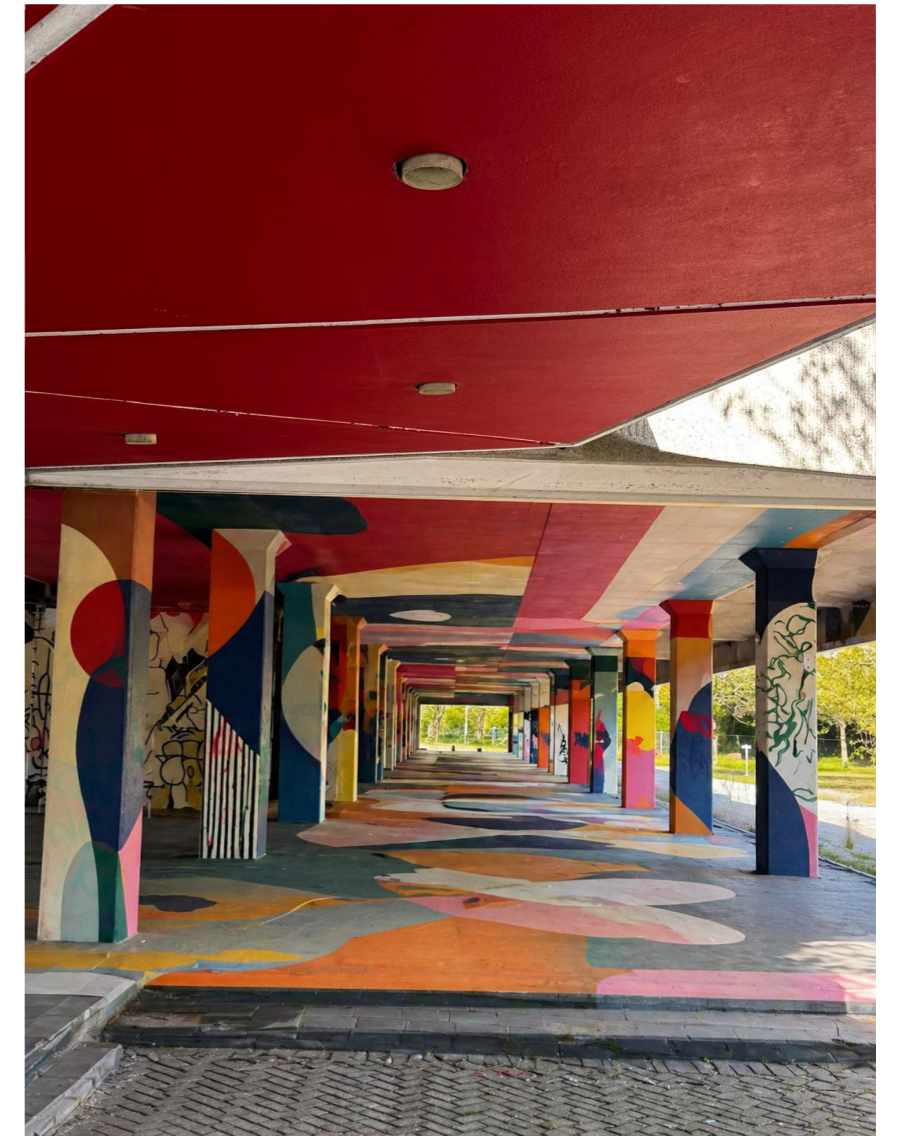


FIGURE 54: IMPRESSION OF THE MURAL GROUND FLOOR

Red was retained as the main ground-floor intervention colour (fig. 52), referencing the motorway railings (fig.55) and reinforcing the idea of reconnecting the building with its surroundings. All new structures in the project use the same shade for visual continuity, while one graffiti artwork is preserved for its colour and relationship to the childcare function (fig. 57).



FIGURE 55: THE RED RAILINGS ON THE EDGE OF THE A4 MOTORWAY



FIGURE 56: THE RED CEILING OF THE CANOPY OF SIJTHOFF



FIGURE 57: THE SELECTED GRAFFITI TO BE SAVED

Localized mechanical damage is visible in the concrete façade, creating a large breach within the self-bearing prefabricated envelope. The damage was most likely caused during the 2018 interior demolition works through mechanical impact and clearance operations.

The damaged area corresponds to the location of a former smaller window-loggia element similar to the projecting openings still visible elsewhere on the façade (A, B). An exposed steel fragment within the breach remains visible, likely part of the original window or support frame (fig. 58).



FIGURE 58: THE MECHANICAL DAMAGE ON THE NORTH-WEST FACADE

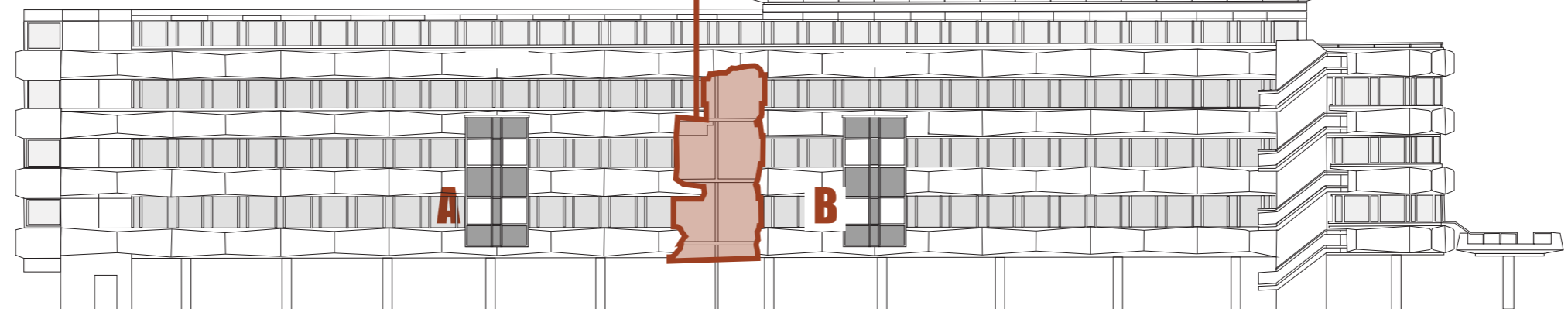


FIGURE 59: EXPOSED AND DAMAGED PREFAB ELEMENT AND FLOOR SLABS AT THE DAMAGED LOCATION

No visible reinforcement exposure was identified in the primary structural frame, although limited exposure is present in several damaged prefabricated elements and exposed floor slab edges (fig.59). While no immediate structural risk to the main load-bearing system was observed, the damaged areas remain vulnerable to moisture ingress and weathering and are therefore proposed to be repaired and resealed.

Beyond material deterioration, the damaged opening marks the transition from abandonment to redevelopment and is treated as a spatial trace of vacancy reworked into a new architectural intervention.

Two strategies were considered: a projecting balcony and a recessed window-loggia. The recessed solution was selected due to its better compatibility with the limited opening dimensions and the existing self-bearing façade. Its design draws on the geometry and rhythm of the two existing projecting loggias (fig.60), which are converted into fully glazed window elements by retaining their original frames and replacing the intermediate panels with glazing (fig.63).



FIGURE 60: DAMAGED LOGGIA

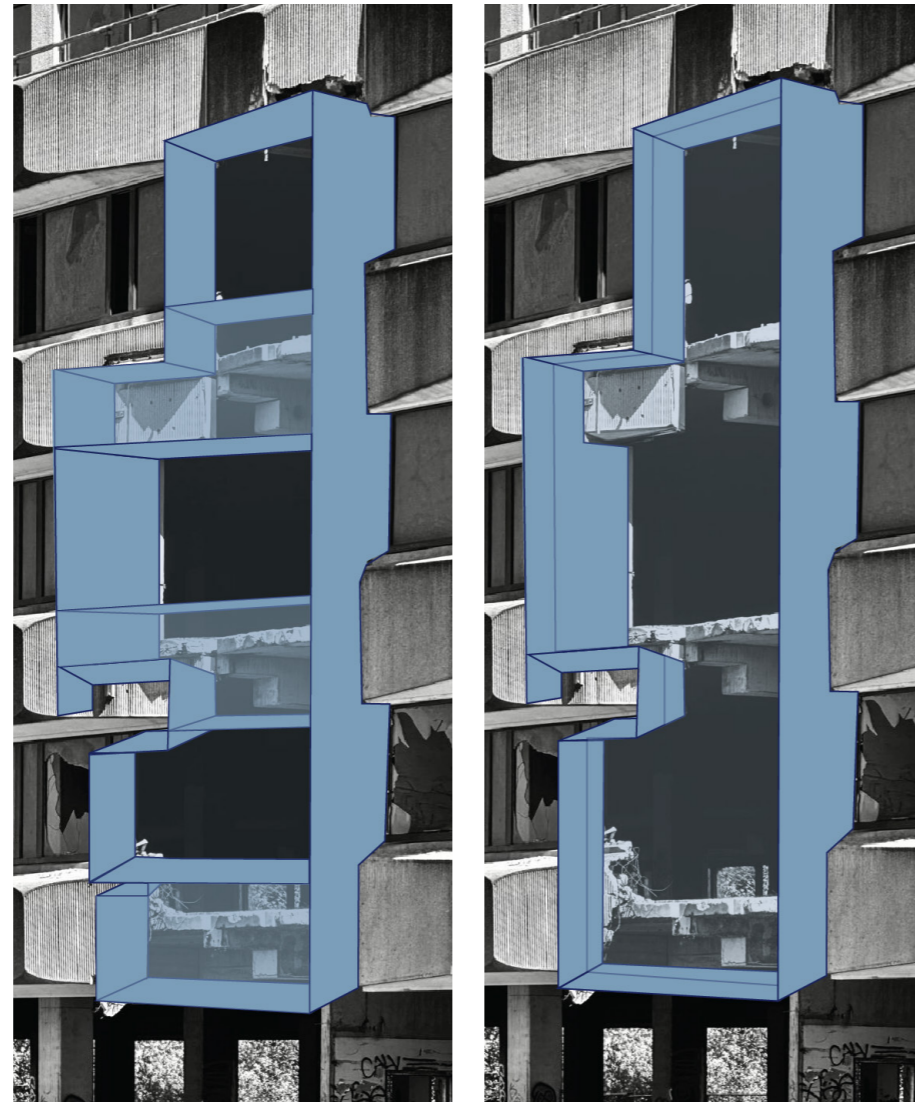


FIGURE 61: TESTS OF THE FRAME GEOMETRY FOR THE NEW INTERVENTION ON THE OPENING

A new steel frame projects slightly beyond the façade plane, making the intervention legible as a contemporary layer while expressing continuity with the vacancy condition. The selected option reinterprets the former window-loggia as a single glazed opening, exposing the floor plates and exaggerating the façade breach to transform the damaged zone into a stronger architectural expression of vacancy and reuse (fig.62).

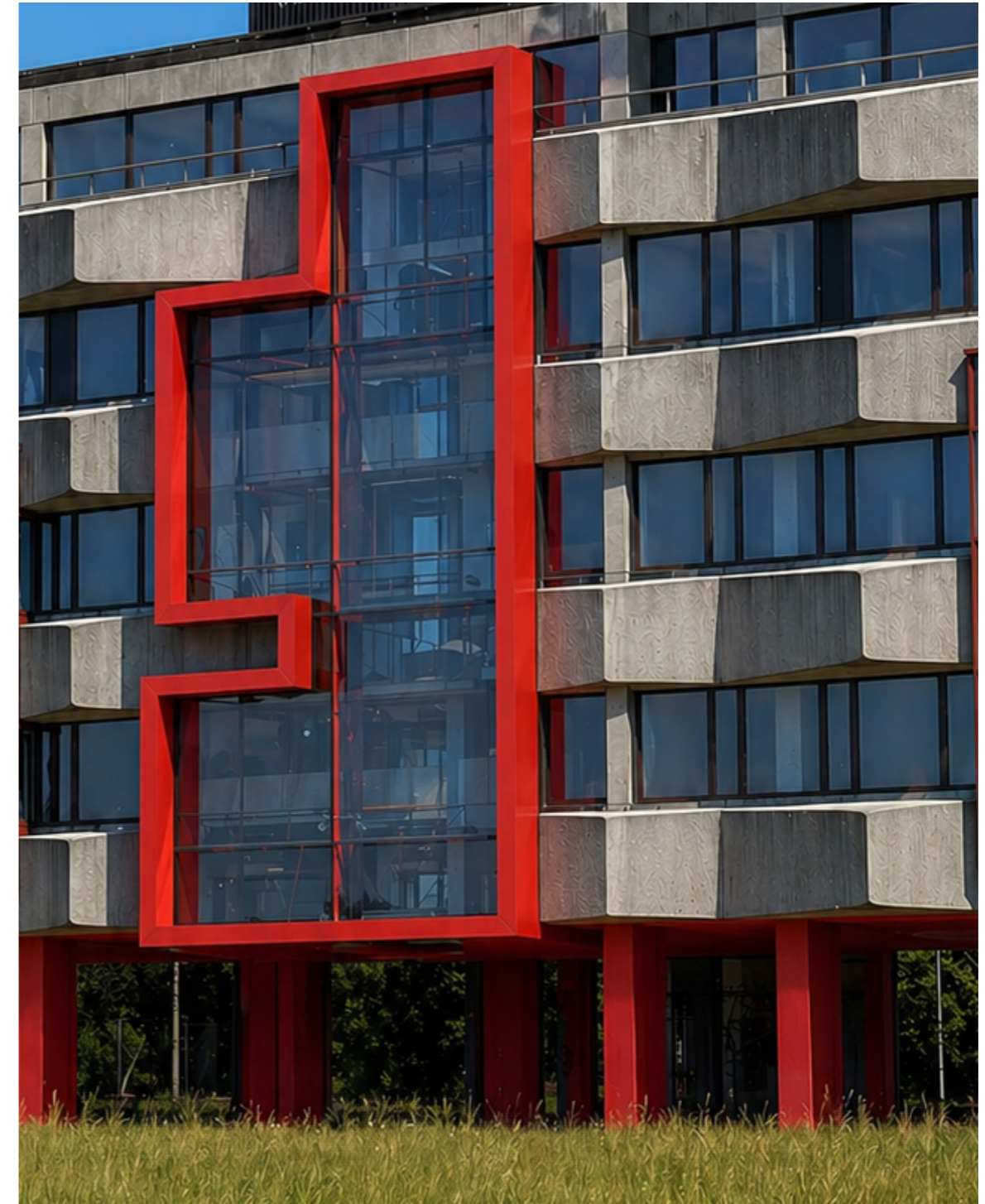


FIGURE 62: IMPRESSION OF HOW THE INTERVENTION COULD LOOK LIKE

Both facades, tower and base, functioned as climatic façades, but dry connections create thermal bridging and reduce thermal performance (Petrou, 2025). The tower consists of a  $37 \times 23$  m floor slab organized around a central core of approximately  $132 \text{ m}^2$ , resulting in a perimeter-based occupied zone. The existing façade includes 40 openings, producing a window-to-floor ratio of approximately 13%. Research indicates that a ratio between 15–20% provides improved daylight autonomy and visual comfort (Baker & Steemers, 2002). With a floor height of 3.52 m, daylight penetration is estimated at approximately 4.5–7.5 m, depending on façade geometry and sky conditions (Lechner, 2015).

The existing 980 mm canopy already moderates glare, overheating, and direct solar exposure while creating softer diffuse daylight conditions. Studies show that controlled daylight conditions often provide greater visual comfort than fully glazed façades (Boleska, 2018). Based on this analysis, enclosed façade modules were opened, increasing the total number of openings from 40 to 48 and raising the window-to-floor ratio to approximately 15.5%, while preserving the repetitive rhythm and identity of the façade (fig. 64, 65).

Therefore, the programmatic distribution within the tower positioned hotel rooms along the perimeter to benefit from direct views and controlled daylight exposure, while office floors were located higher in the tower where daylight access is improved.

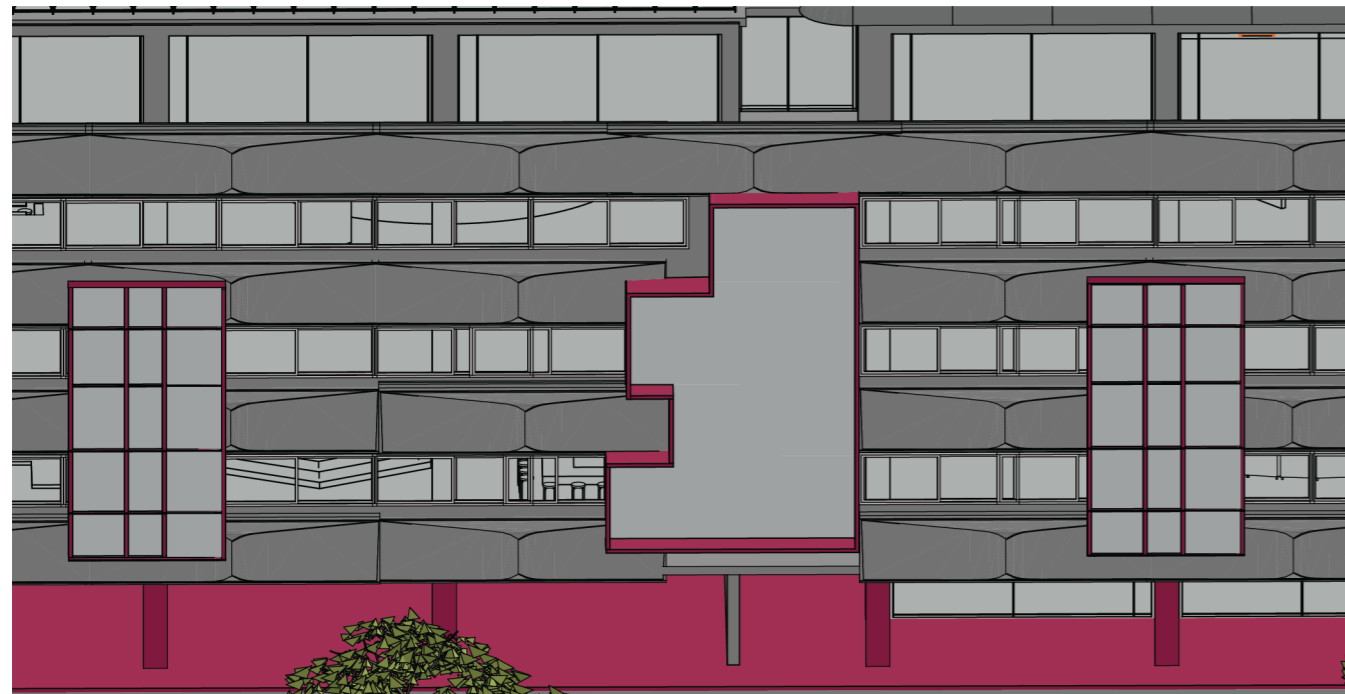


FIGURE 63: SHOWING THE LOGGIAS AND MECHANICAL DAMAGE SOLUTION

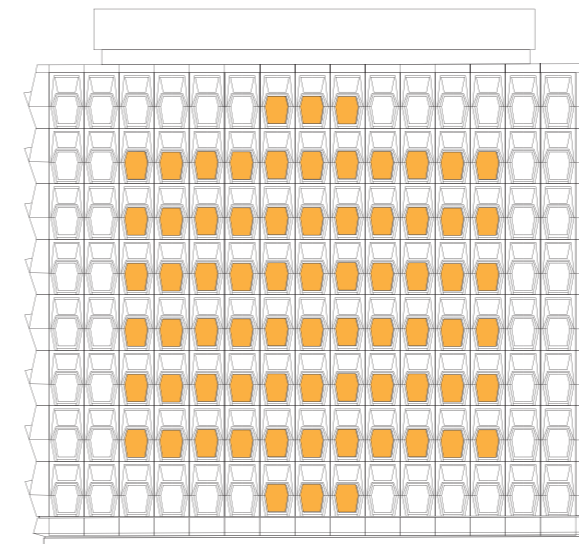


FIGURE 64: THE FACADE OPENINGS BEFORE

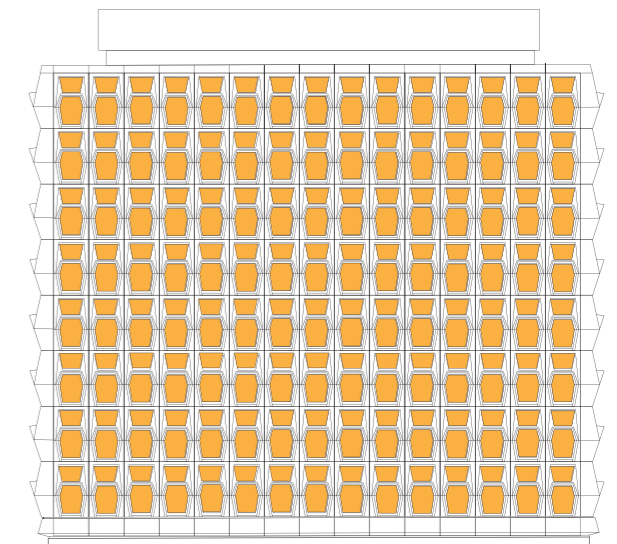
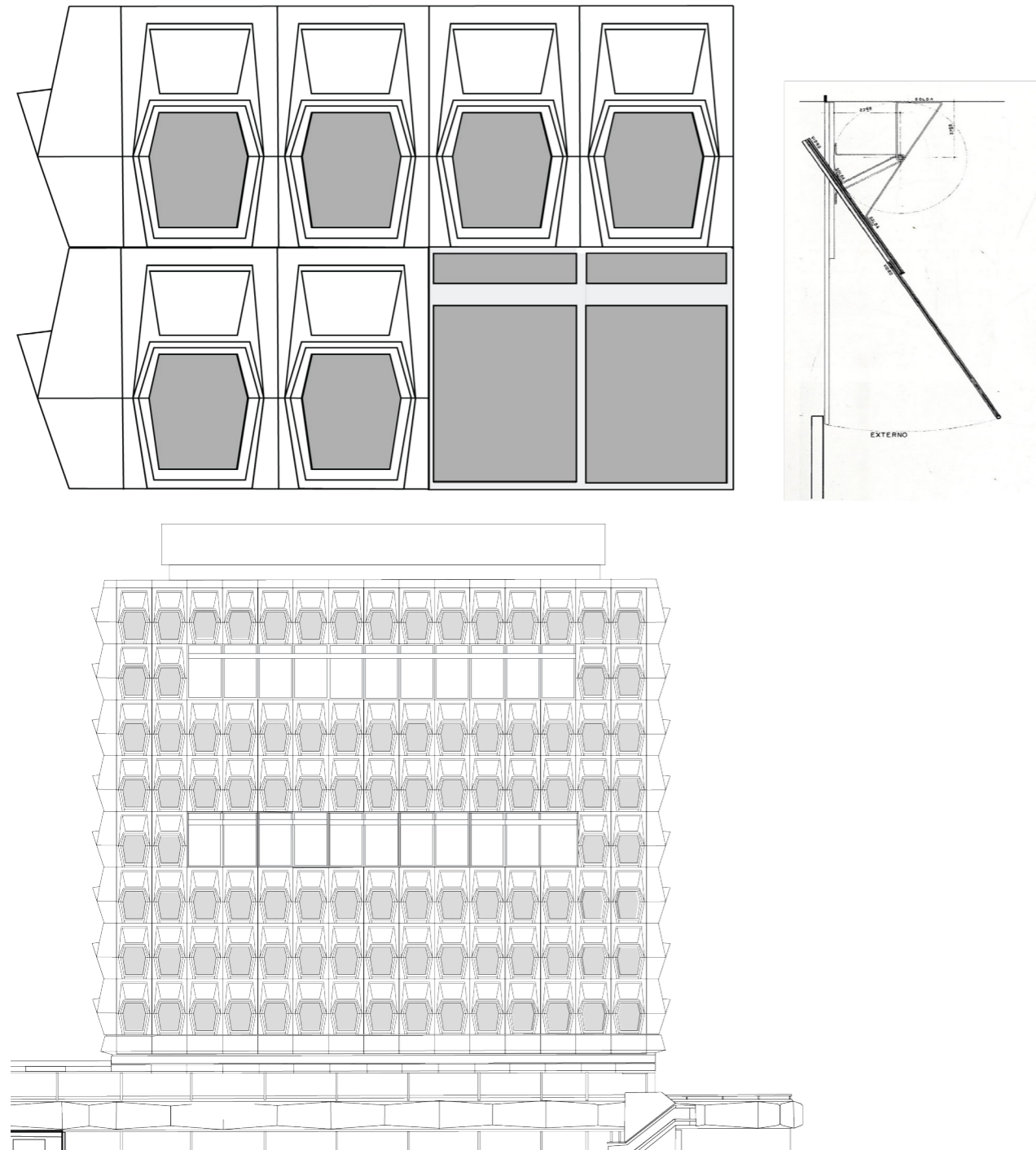


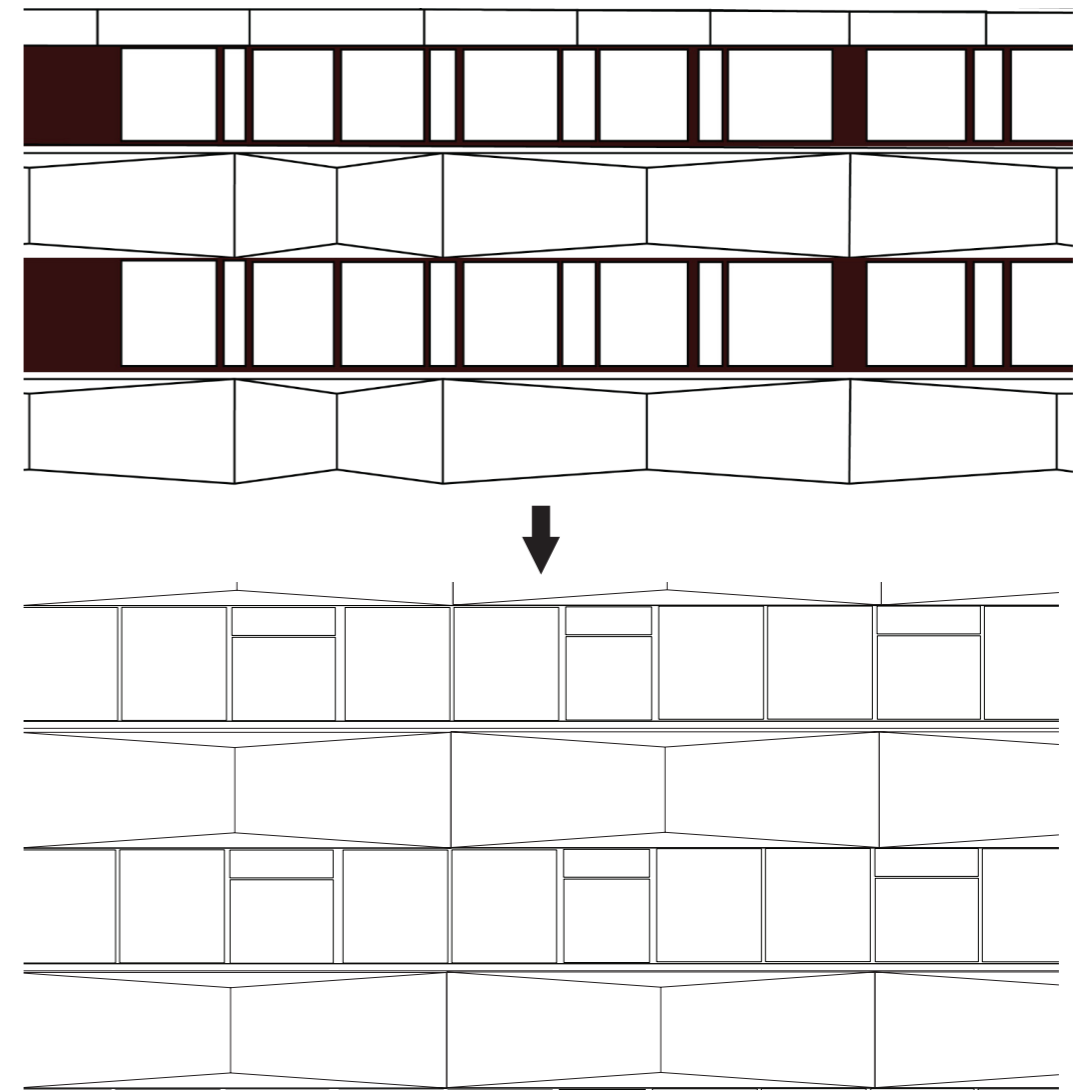
FIGURE 65: THE FACADE OPENINGS AFTER

Since daylight, visual comfort, and spatial openness are closely linked to wellbeing and productivity in contemporary workplaces (Allen et al., 2016; Heerwagen, 2006), a new intervention was required to increase daylight penetration within the tower office spaces. The proposal selectively replaces some prefabricated concrete façade elements with glazed components (fig. 66, 67). However, this raised a critical question: how could daylight access be improved without significantly altering the façade composition and the “Eierdoos” identity of the building? Equally important was how to intervene without compromising the climatic performance and environmental logic of the original façade system.



FIGURES 66, 67: THE FACADE WITH THE FLAT WINDOWS

At the same time, replacing the old, broken, graffiti-covered glazing with new high-performance double insulated low-E operable glazing systems (fig.68) and the removal of the tower's glazing raised the issue of material waste. Direct reuse was not possible due to contamination, fragmentation, and technical obsolescence. Although glass is theoretically infinitely recyclable, most construction and demolition glass waste is rejected from closed-loop recycling streams and is therefore often downcycled or landfilled (Bristogianni et al., 2018).



FIGURES 68: THE REPLACES GLAZING OF BASE, TOP DIAGRAM SHOWS THE EXISTING SITUATION AND THE BOTTOM THE TRANSFORMED ONE

Cast glass (fig.69-71) offered an alternative because it can incorporate contaminated or mixed glass waste without significantly compromising structural or visual performance (Bristogianni et al., 2018). The removed glazing could therefore be melted and reused as new cast-glass façade elements, including the new openings and the two existing loggia-style window interventions.



FIGURES 69,70: FLYING ANVIL STUDIO. (N.D.). CAST GLASS [PHOTOGRAPH]. FLYING ANVIL STUDIO



FIGURE 71: SHOWING THE TRANSLUCENCY OF CAST GLASS  
FREARSON, A. (2015, JUNE 10). NAMELESS ARCHITECTURE  
REINTERPRETS TRADITIONAL KOREAN DOOR SCREEN IN RESIN  
AND SILICONE [PHOTOGRAPH]. DEZEEN

Selected office floors then, replace concrete modules with translucent cast-glass elements which try to replicate the original concrete prefab element. This would eventually increase diffuse daylight penetration while maintaining privacy and the repetitive identity of the façade. (fig.72,73)



FIGURES 72,73: CONCEPTUAL DIGITAL DAYLIGHT COMPARISON BETWEEN THE TWO  
FAÇADE ELEMENTS, WITH THE TOP FIGURE SHOWING THE ORIGINAL CONCRETE  
ELEMENTS AND THE BOTTOM FIGURE SHOWING THE CAST-GLASS ELEMENTS.

More enclosed floors retain the original concrete modules. The location of those cast-glass elements was explored scematically (with black being the openings, and gray the cast glass elements) (fig. 74, 75).

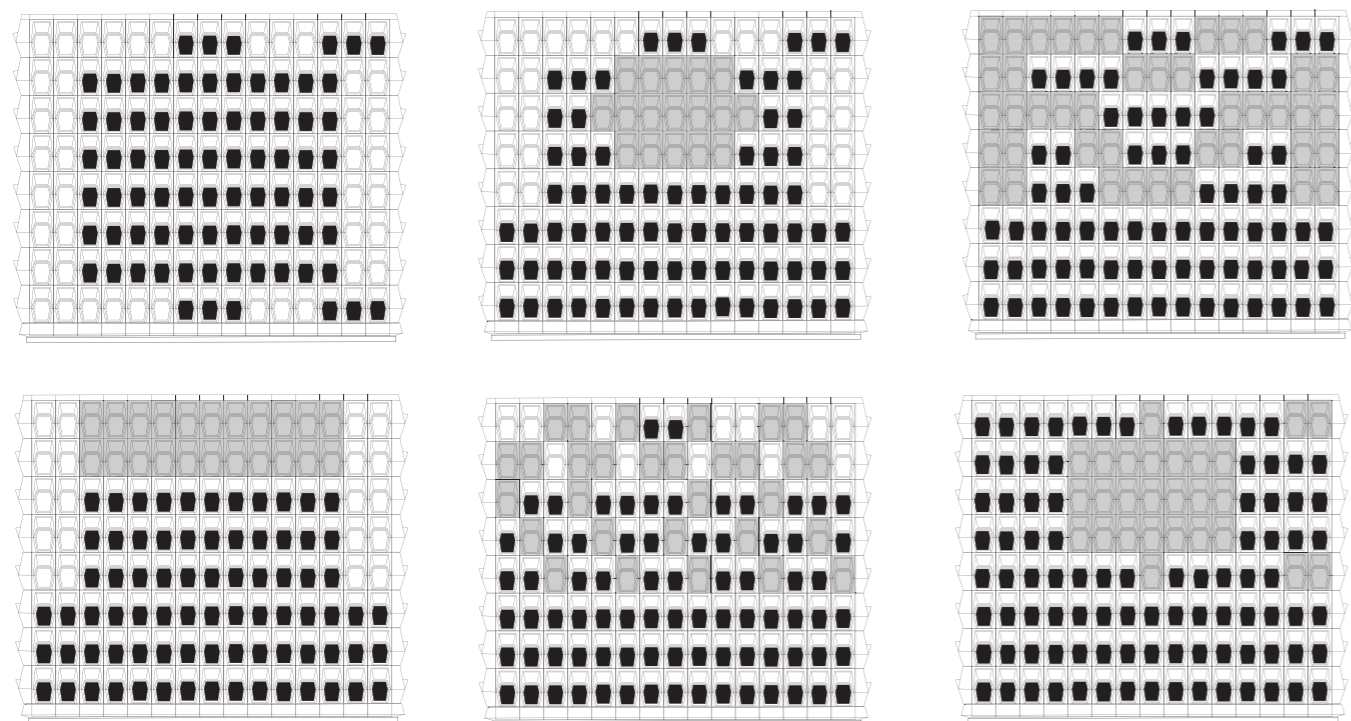


FIGURE 74: NORTH-WEST FACADE OPTIONS WITH FIRST TOP LEFT BEING THE EXISTING

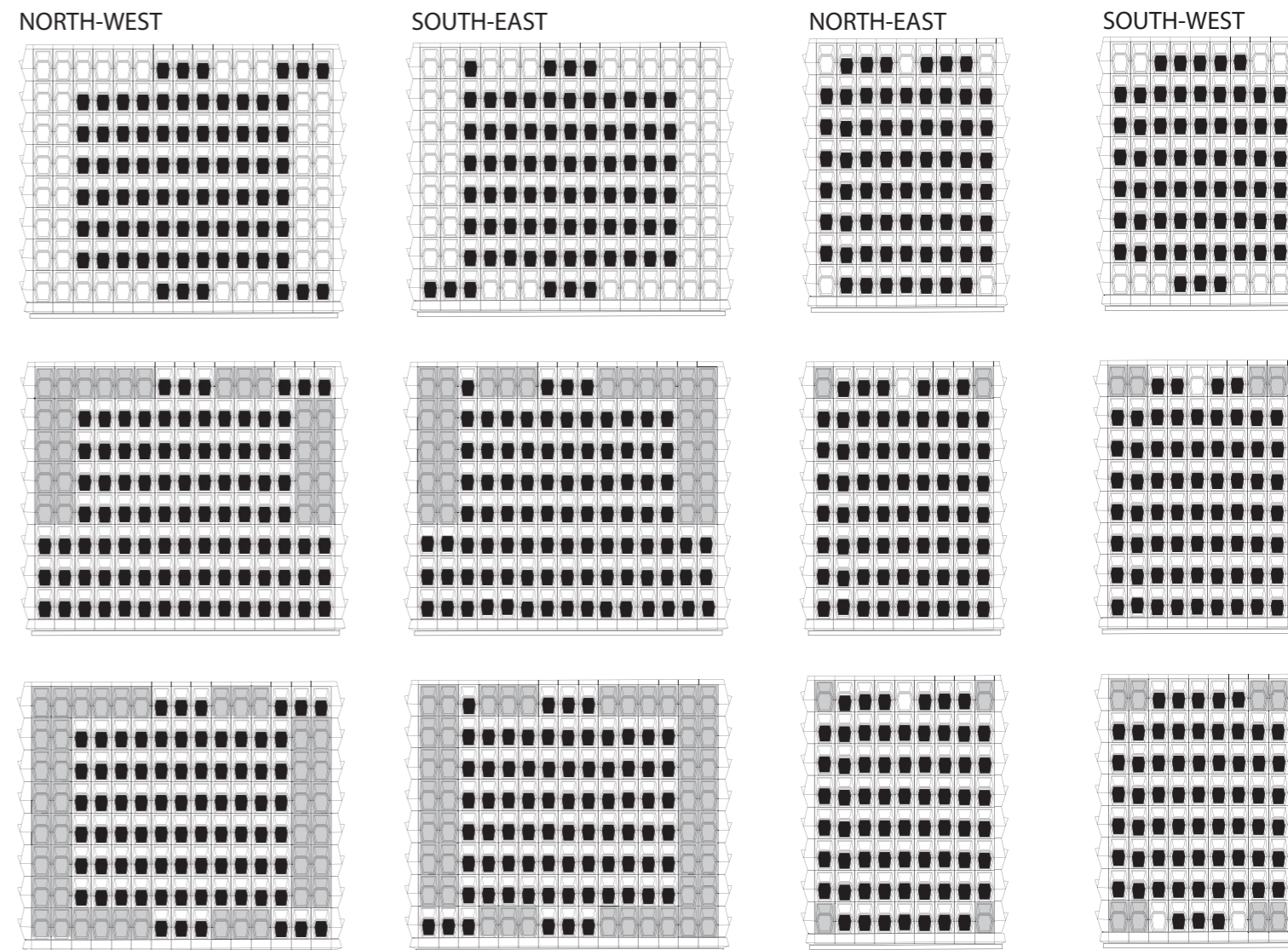
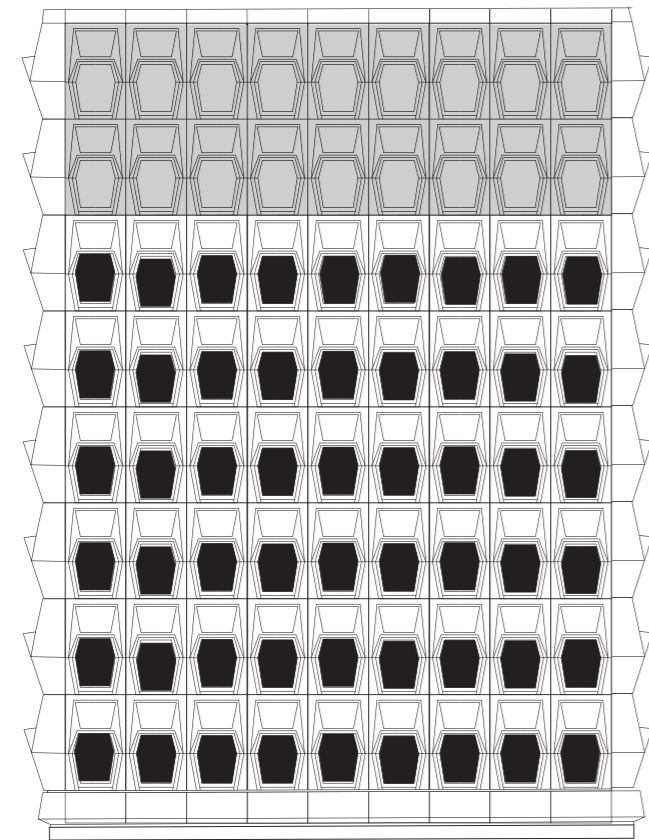
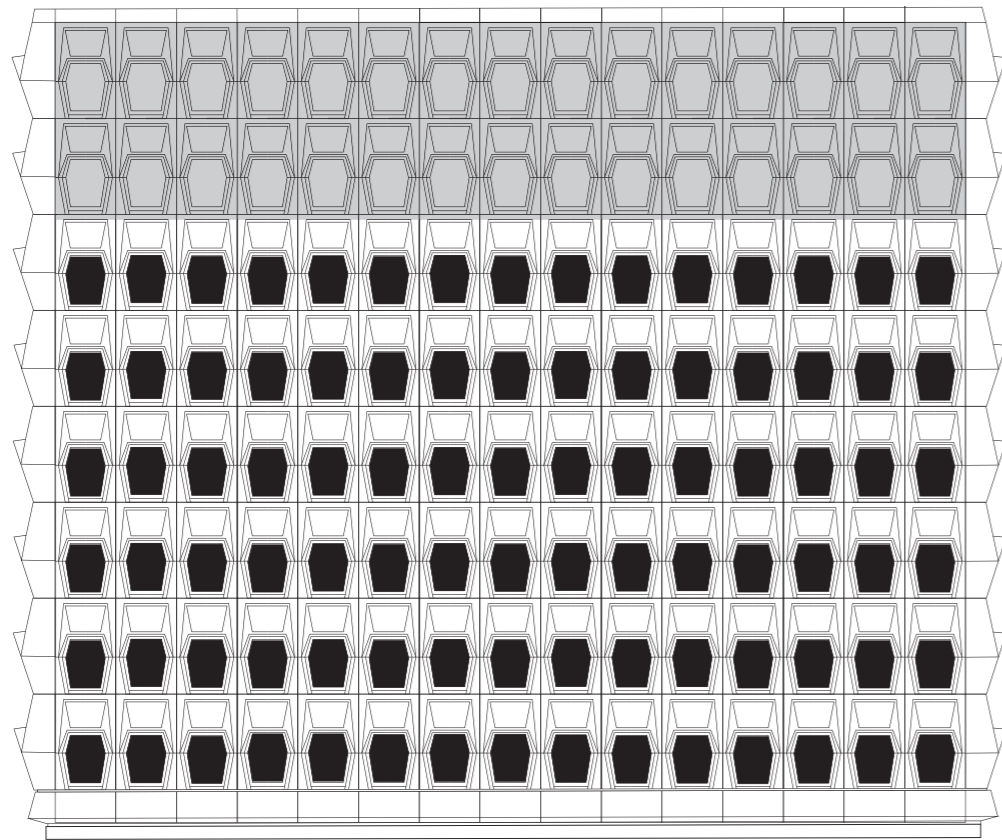


FIGURE 75: OTHER OPTIONS FOR THE LOCATION OF THE CAST-GLASS PREFAB ELEMENTS WITH THE FIRST ROW BEING THE EXISTING SITUATION



FIGURES 76,77: THE FINAL SOLUTION (BLACK=OPEN WINDOW PANELS, GREY=CAST GLASS ELEMENT)



FIGURE 78: IMPRESSION OF TEH CAST GLASS TOP AT NIGHT

The final decision was to concentrate the glazed elements on the upper floors, (fig. 76,77) following the initial concept of creating a visible glass top integrated within the tower façade. At night, the translucent elements allow the upper part of the tower to glow softly, maintaining and exaggerating the building's visibility from the motorway, as illustrated in the atmospheric impressions (fig.78).

Maintaining the same appearance and geometry from a distance was essential. Although the cast-glass replicas required simplification for fabrication and assembly (fig.79), the depth, rhythm, and overall form of the Eierdoos façade remain visually consistent in long-range views.(fig. 80-81).

The proposal preserves the geometric logic of the original prefabricated façade while transforming its material properties. Cast glass enables monolithic three-dimensional components with high geometric freedom (Oikonomopoulou et al., 2018), but large castings require long annealing times, precise moulds, and high production costs.

To address these limitations, the façade is subdivided into smaller cast-glass components manufactured separately through mould-casting techniques (Oikonomopoulou et al., 2020). The pieces are stacked and bonded using transparent UV-curing adhesives, similar to the Crystal Houses façade system by MVRDV and TU Delft (Oikonomopoulou et al., 2017). A surrounding metal frame connects the modules to each other, the floor slabs, and the retained concrete façade system.

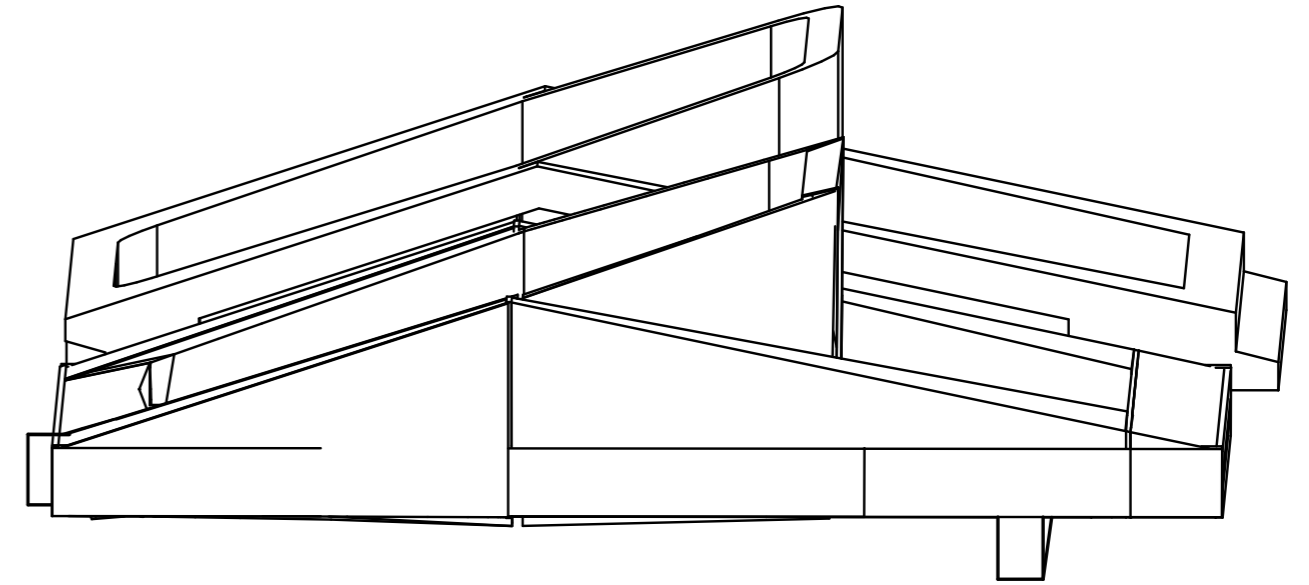


FIGURE 80: TOP: ORIGINAL PREFABRICATED CONCRETE FAÇADE ELEMENT. BOTTOM: RECONFIGURED CAST-GLASS PREFABRICATED

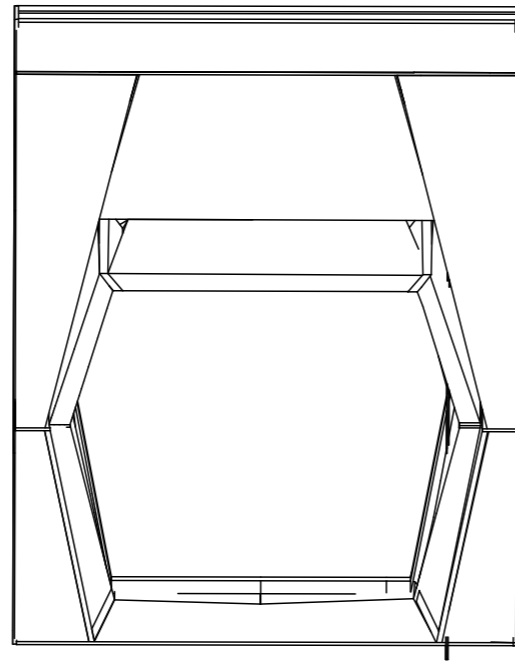
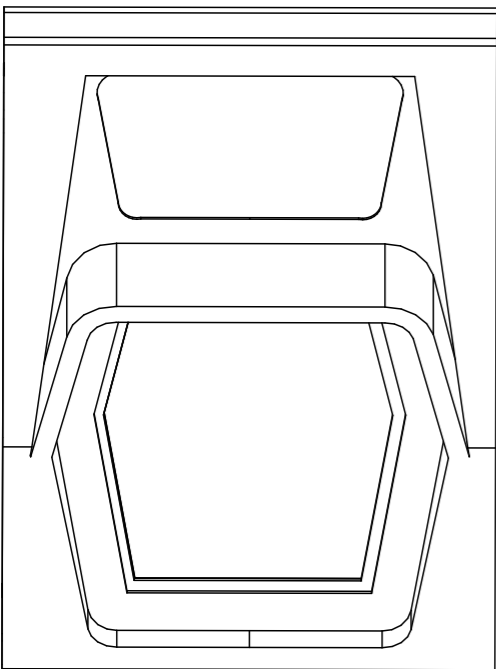


FIGURE 79: LEFT: ORIGINAL PREFABRICATED CONCRETE FAÇADE ELEMENT. RIGHT: RECONFIGURED CAST-GLASS PREFABRICATED FAÇADE ELEMENT.

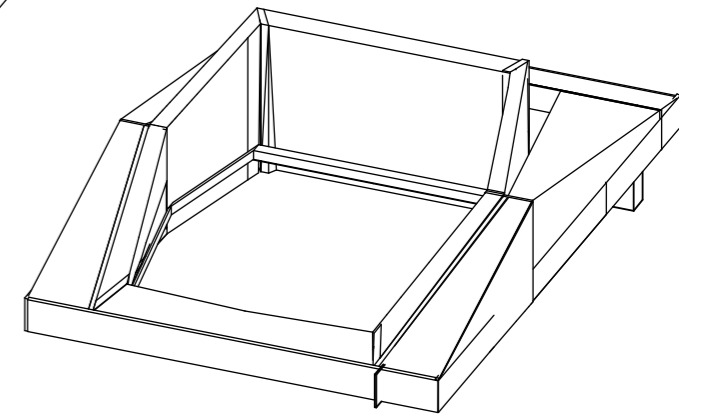
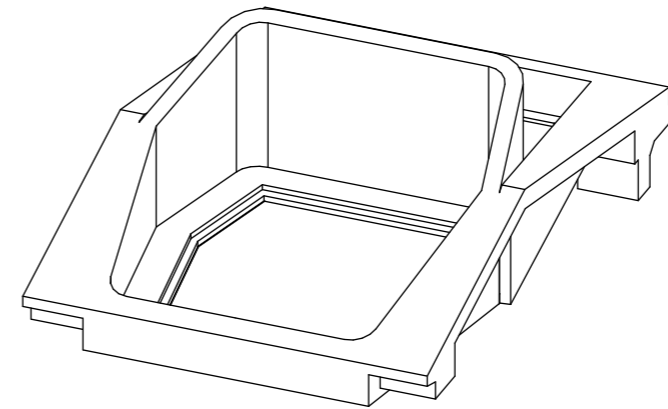


FIGURE 81: LEFT: ORIGINAL PREFABRICATED CONCRETE FAÇADE ELEMENT. RIGHT: RECONFIGURED CAST-GLASS PREFABRICATED FAÇADE

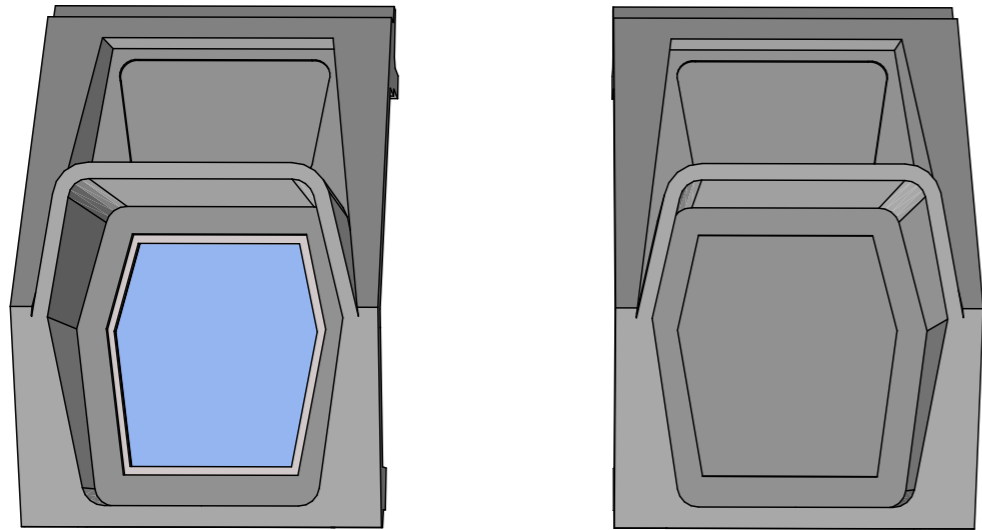


FIGURE 82: ORIGINAL PREFABRICATED TOWER FAÇADE ELEMENTS. LEFT: WINDOW MODULE WITH REFLECTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING MIRRORING THE SKY. RIGHT: ENCLOSED CONCRETE FAÇADE MODULE.



FIGURE 84: IMPRESSION SHOWING THE TOWER DURING DAYTIME

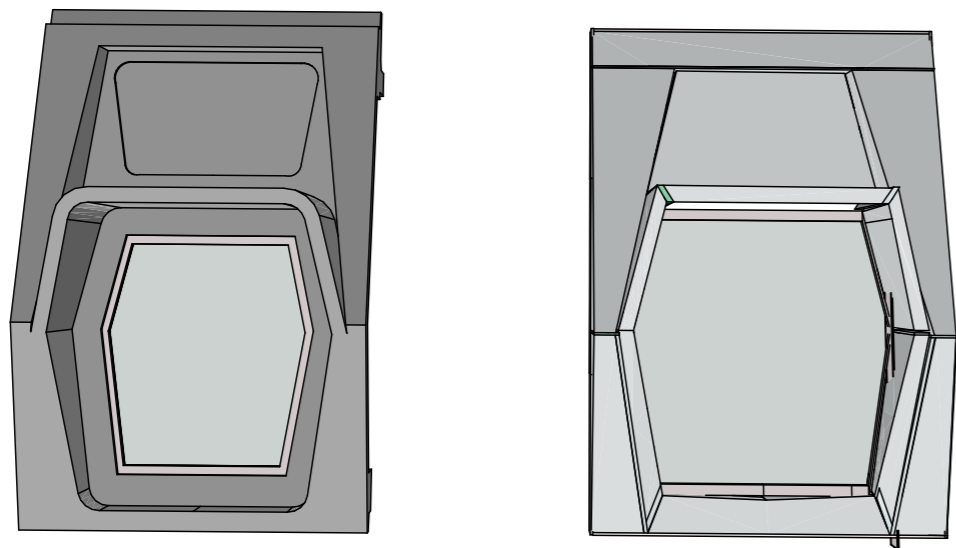


FIGURE 83: TRANSFORMED PREFABRICATED TOWER FAÇADE ELEMENTS. LEFT: WINDOW MODULE WITH REMOVED COCNRETE ENCLOSED PANEL, RIGHT: CAST GLASS REPLICA



FIGURE 85: IMPRESSION SHOWING THE TOWER DURING NIGHT

The final reuse proposal seen in figure 86, replaces selected concrete prefab modules with translucent cast-glass replicas produced from recycled glazing removed from the building itself. All solid concrete tower façade elements are opened, with these interventions concentrated on the upper floors, while the window-loggias on the base are reinterpreted using flatter cast-glass elements. The removed concrete façade elements are preserved and stored as reusable components for potential future reassembly rather than being destroyed or downcycled. In addition, concrete removed from slab openings and void interventions is reused within the surrounding landscape and public-space interventions. The proposal therefore approaches material continuity as a process of selective disassembly, reuse, recycling, and reassembly, in which the building itself becomes the source of material transformation and continuity.

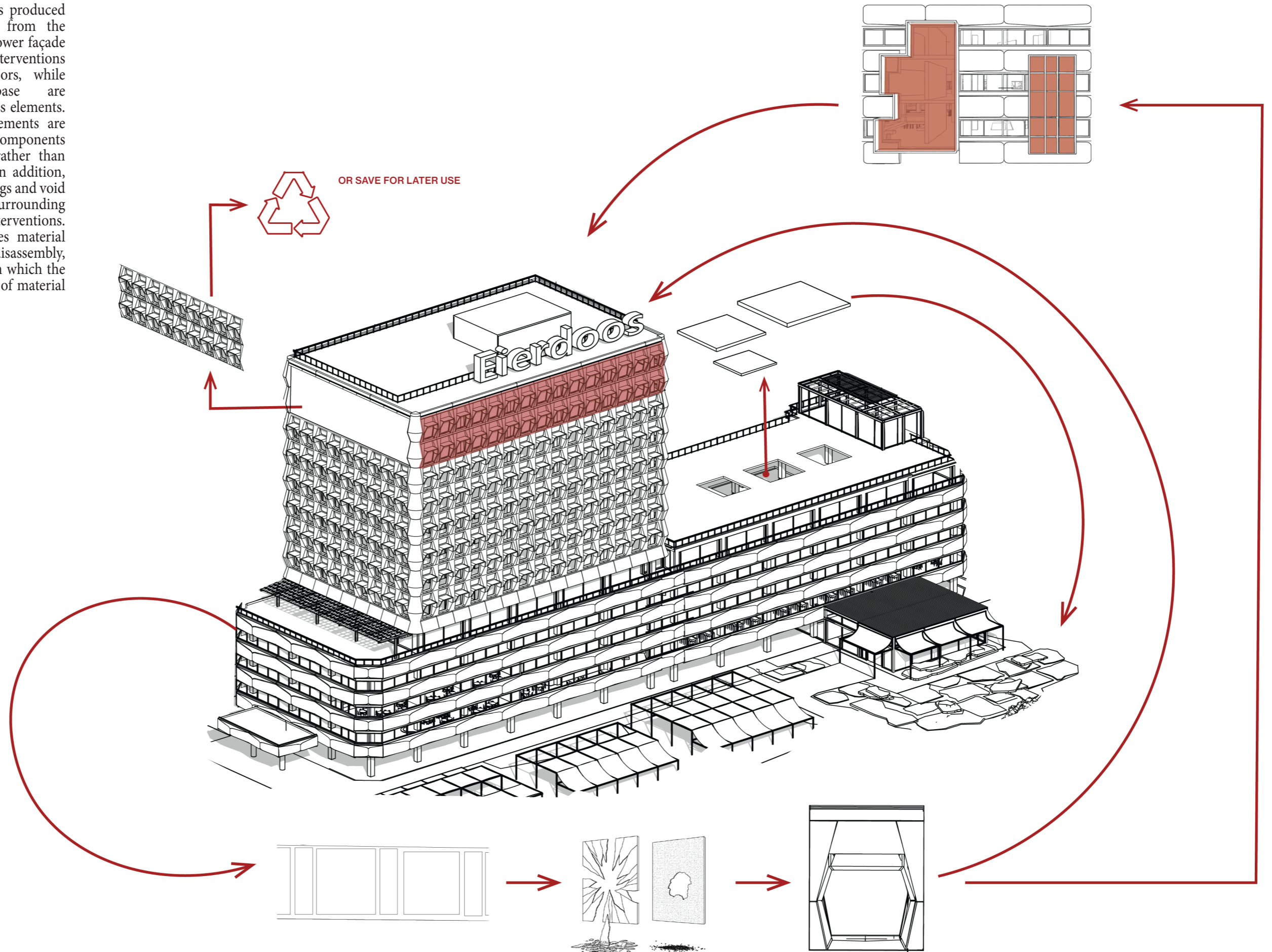


FIGURE 86: THE FINAL REUSE SYSTEM

## SPATIAL CONTINUITY

The spatial strategy preserves the primary structural system and geometric logic of the Sijthoff (fig. 87,88) while transforming its original monofunctional office organisation. The old occupied condition was characterised by deep floor plates, repetitive layouts, enclosed corridors, and inward-oriented circulation, resulting in limited daylight penetration concentrated mainly at the façade perimeter, weak orientation, and minimal spatial hierarchy within the base volume. In contrast, the tower floor plates already possessed sufficient façade openings and proportions to achieve adequate daylight access once secondary partitions were removed.

At the same time, long-term vacancy and the partial interior demolition works exposed the structural grid and open floor plates, revealing the spatial flexibility and adaptive potential of the existing concrete structure (fig. 89,90). Rather than replacing the organisational logic of the building entirely, the proposal uses targeted spatial interventions to reconfigure circulation, improve daylight distribution, strengthen visual connections, and introduce a clearer hierarchy of collective and secondary spaces while maintaining continuity with the existing structural framework.

94

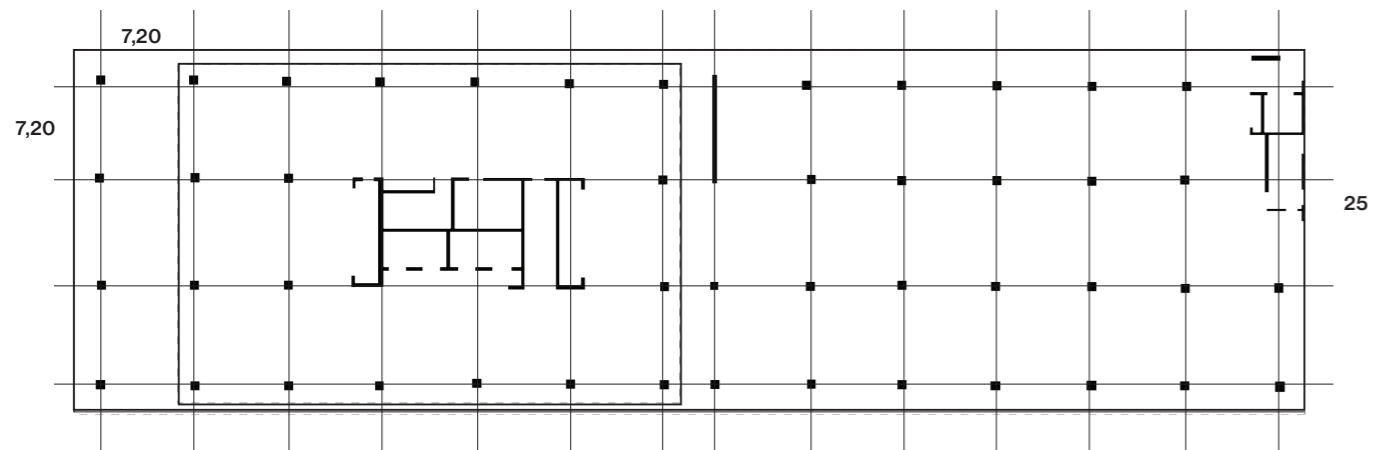


FIGURE 87: THE SITUATION OF THE EXPOSED CONCRETE STRUCTURE OF THE BASE

37

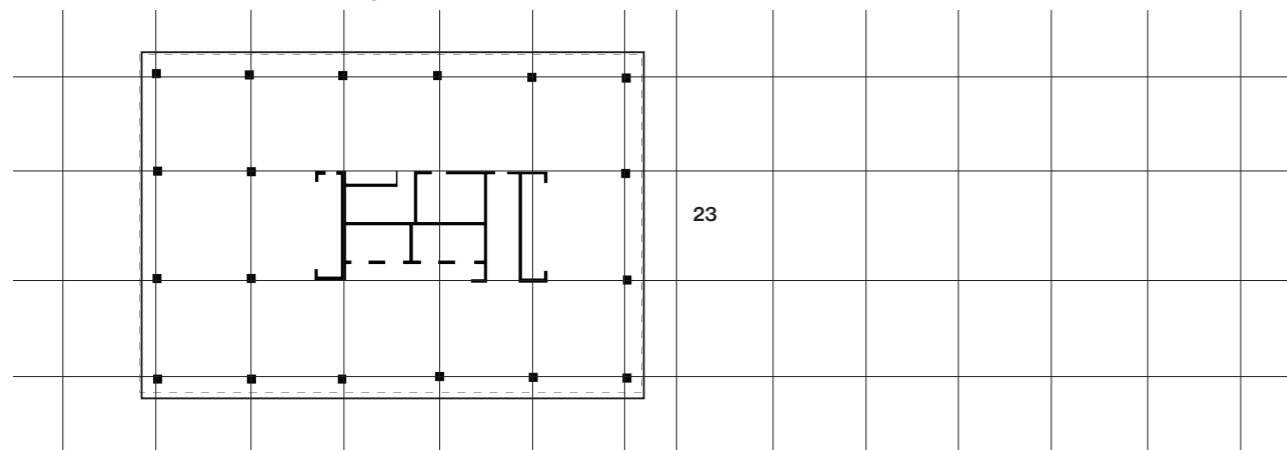


FIGURE 88: THE SITUATION OF THE EXPOSED CONCRETE STRUCTURE OF THE TOWER



FIGURE 89: INTERIOR SITUATION OF THE BASE



FIGURE 90: INTERIOR SITUATION OF THE TOWER

Based on these conditions, the proposal introduced the idea of voids as the main spatial intervention (fig.91). Early studies tested multiple fragmented openings distributed across the floor plates (fig.92,93).

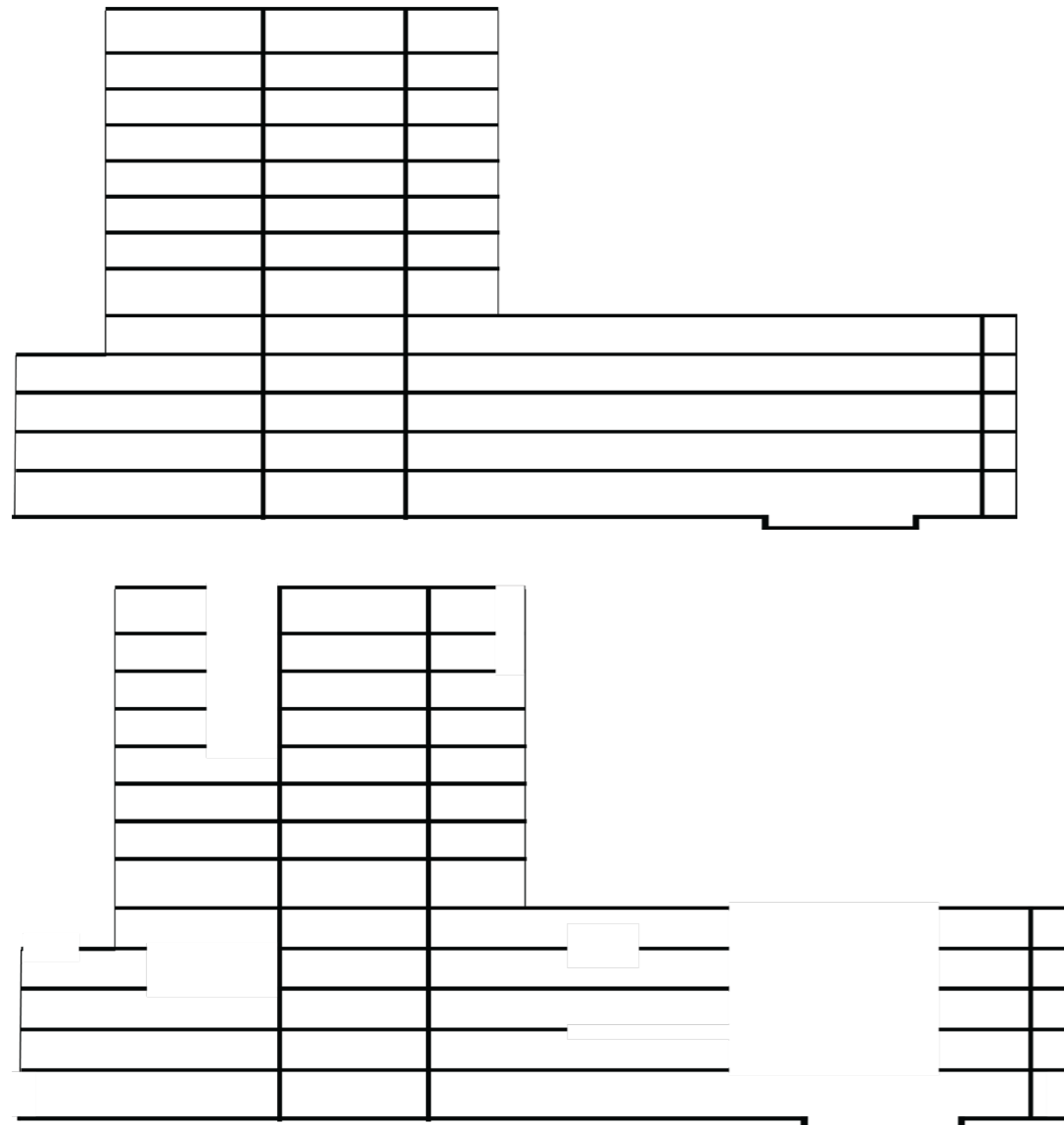


FIGURE 91: DIAGRAMS SHOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF VOIDS SCHEMATICALLY (TOP IS THE EXISTING SITUATION)

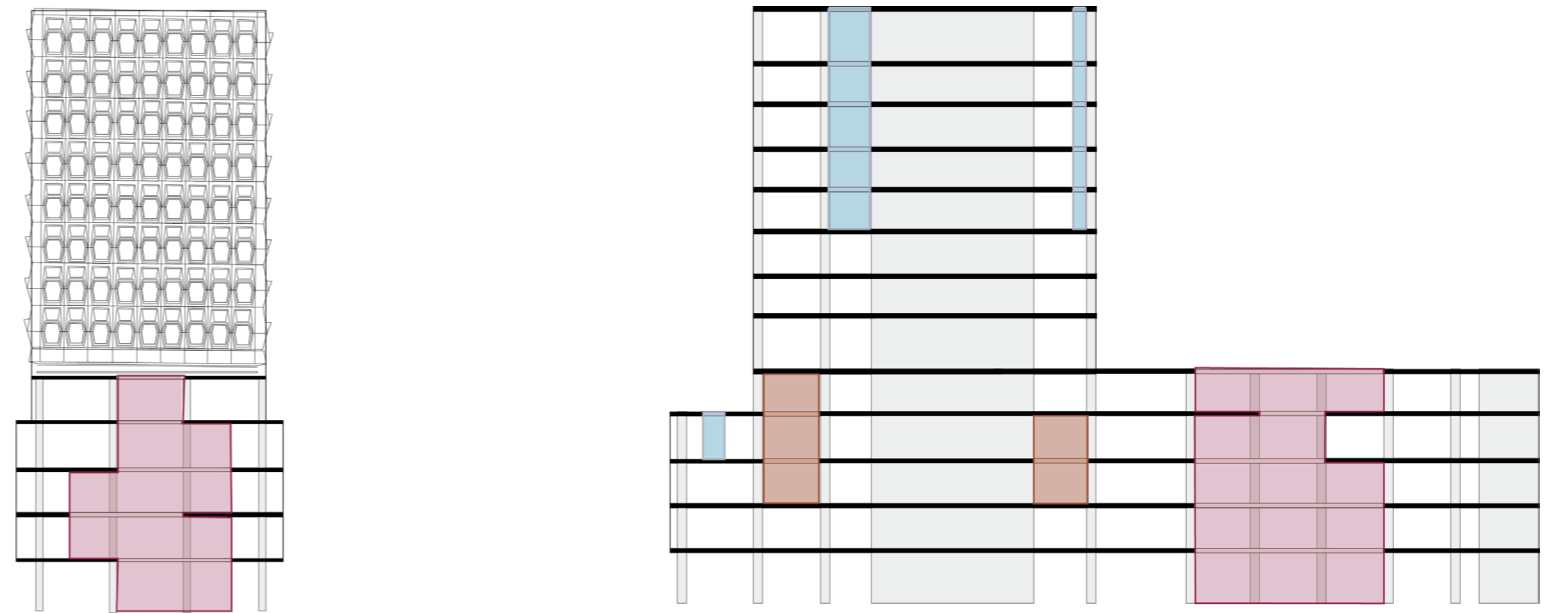


FIGURE 92: DIAGRAMS OF VOID STUDIES

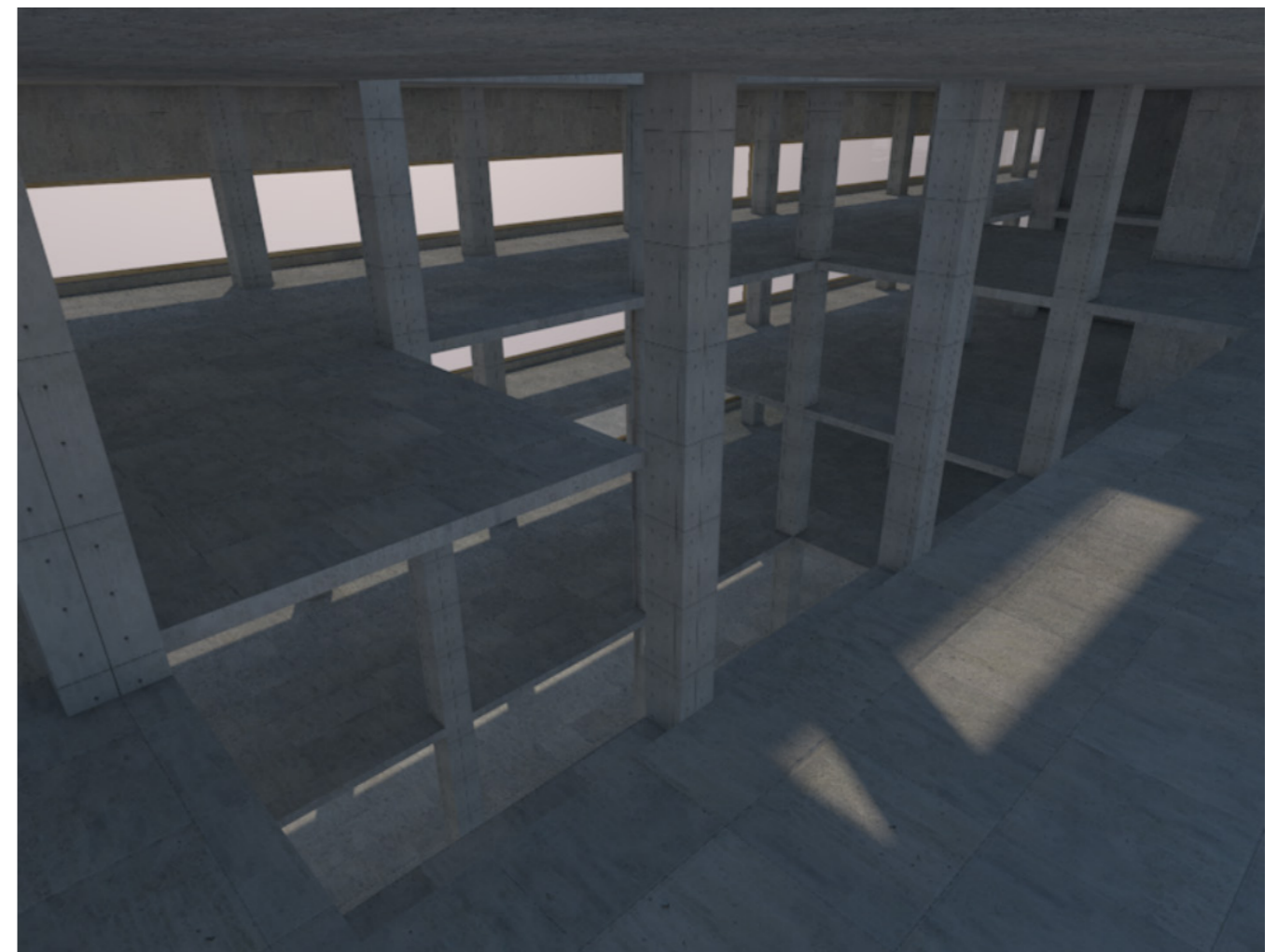


FIGURE 93: DIAGRAM OF 3D MODELING VOID STUDIES

The final void system reorganises the interior through interconnected vertical openings aligned with the structural grid, establishing a clearer spatial hierarchy. Instead of functioning as isolated atriums, the voids restructure circulation, visibility, and spatial perception, transforming the repetitive office structure into a more open and differentiated spatial environment. Larger voids are concentrated within the collective lower levels, while the tower retains a more controlled spatial organisation. Two void conditions organise the spatial system. The collective void forms the main spatial anchor within the base and vertically connects collective spaces while strengthening orientation. Smaller local voids organise circulation and interaction between adjacent spaces and create moments of visual overlap between floors (fig. 94). Together, these interventions establish hierarchy while reducing dependence on the façade perimeter as the only source of light and orientation (fig. 95).

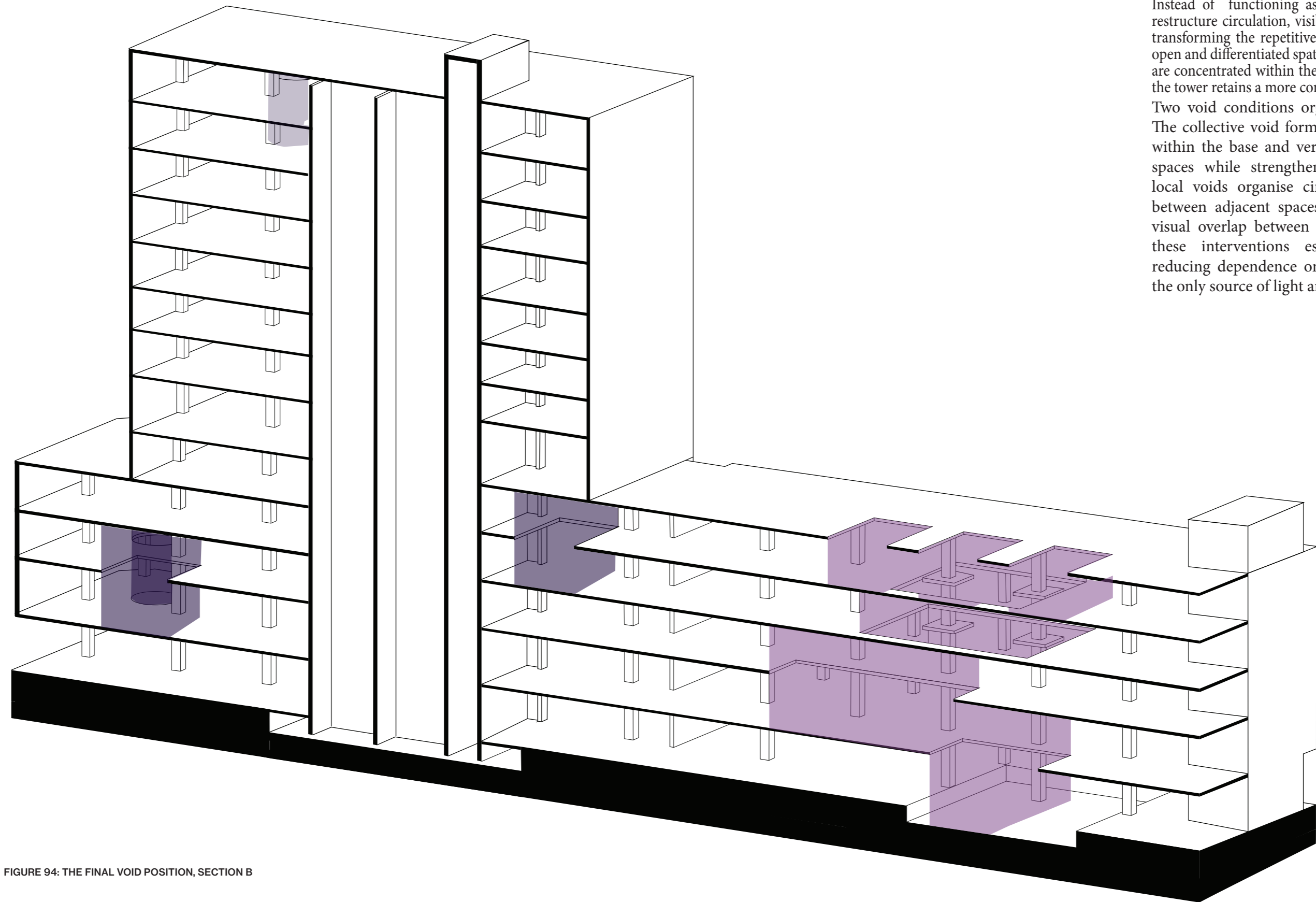


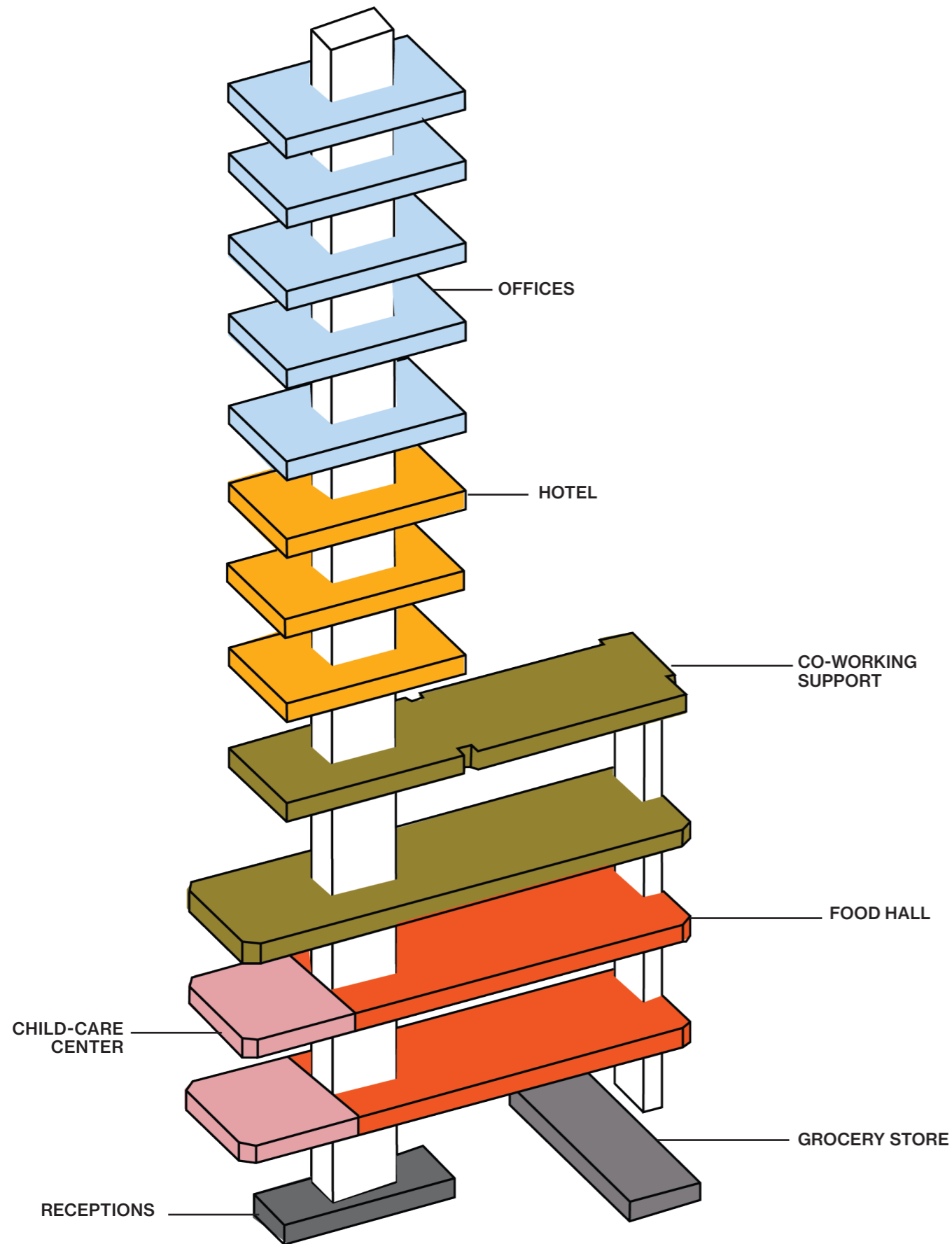
FIGURE 94: THE FINAL VOID POSITION, SECTION B



FIGURE 95: IMPRESSION OF THE URBAN VOIDS SHOWING HOW DAYLIGHT MIGHT ENTER THE SPACE



FIGURE 96: IMPRESSION OF THE URBAN VOIDS SHOING HOW CIRCULATION COULD WORK



The final programme reorganises the former office building into a mixed-use environment combining public activity, workspaces, and temporary living. The lower levels of the base operate as active collective environments organised around the main voids and include a 517 m<sup>2</sup> grocery store, 387 m<sup>2</sup> reception area, 1220 m<sup>2</sup> childcare facilities, and a 3200 m<sup>2</sup> food hall and restaurant area with an estimated capacity of 1000 users. Coworking support, meeting, gaming, and lounge spaces occupy approximately 3900 m<sup>2</sup> with a maximum capacity of 600 users.

Intermediate levels between the base and tower incorporate wellness areas, terraces, and roof gardens connected to the collective circulation system. The office floors reinterpret the original spatial logic through open-plan layouts and modular partition systems aligned with the 7.2 × 7.2 m structural grid. Two office typologies are introduced: open-plan glass façade offices accommodating approximately 116 users within 1490 m<sup>2</sup>, and modular office spaces providing 2240 m<sup>2</sup> rentable area for approximately 185 users.

The hotel programme occupies the upper tower and consists of 45 rooms with a maximum capacity of 99 guests, including 6 accessible rooms, 9 studio apartments, 3 four-person rooms, 9 double rooms, and 18 standard rooms.

FIGURE 97 : THE FINAL PROGRAM

The circulation strategy was developed alongside the void system through sketches, movement studies, and digital modelling, transforming movement through the building into a spatial journey rather than a purely functional transition (fig.98). The original circulation cores are preserved (fig.99) and expanded through three circulation systems: linear circulation within controlled areas (fig.100), grid circulation supporting flexibility and multiple routes (fig.101), and flowing circulation concentrated within the collective lower levels to encourage exploration and informal interaction (fig.102). New passages, multiple entrances, and open ground-floor conditions improve permeability and strengthen connections with the surrounding public space, while the circulation systems informed the organisation of the final floor plans.

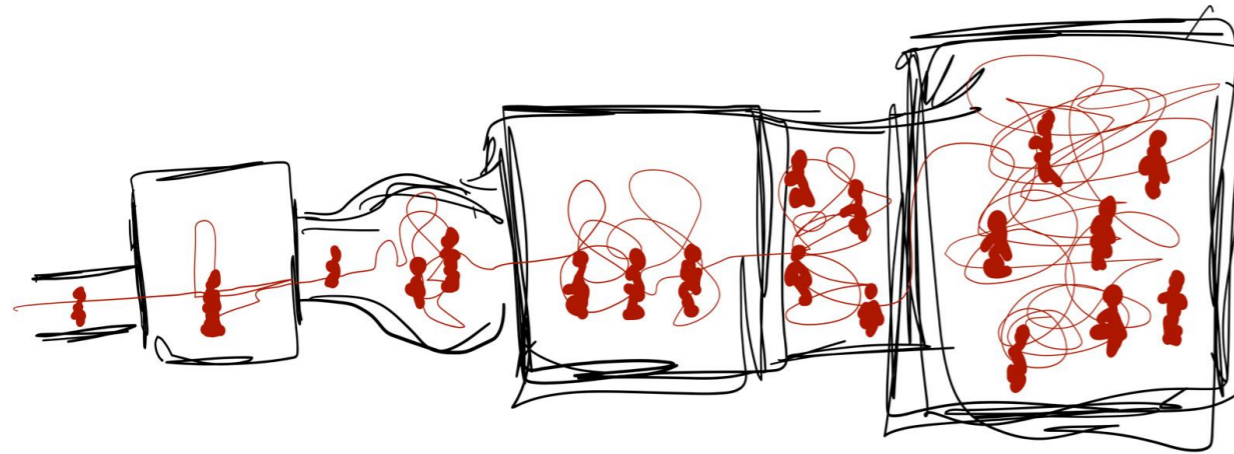


FIGURE 98: IMPRESSION OF THE SPATIAL JOURNEY

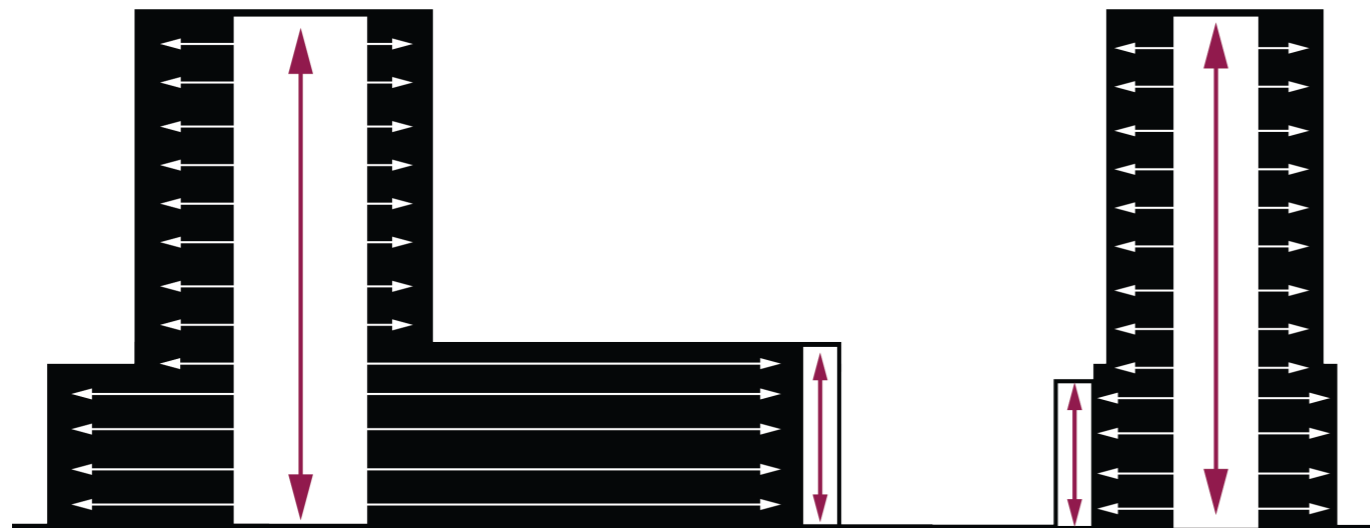


FIGURE 99: THE EXISTING CORE CIRCULATION

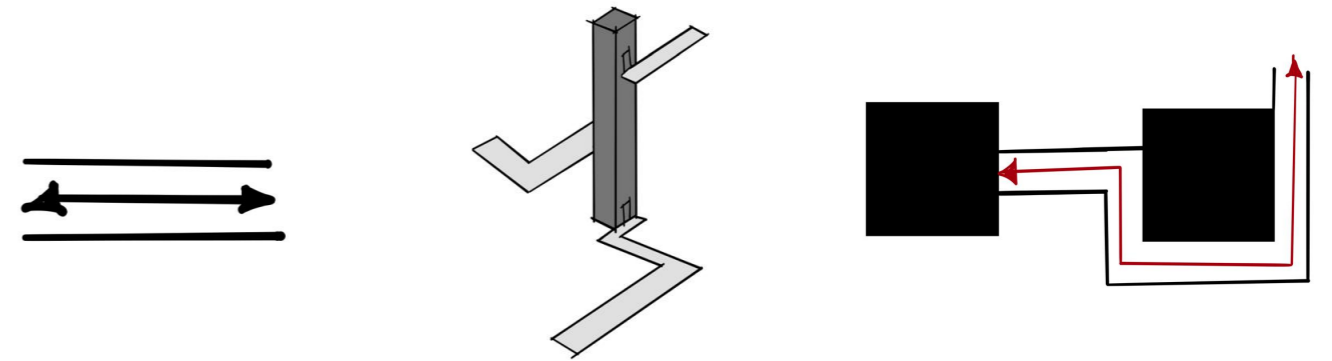


FIGURE 100: LINEAR CIRCULATION

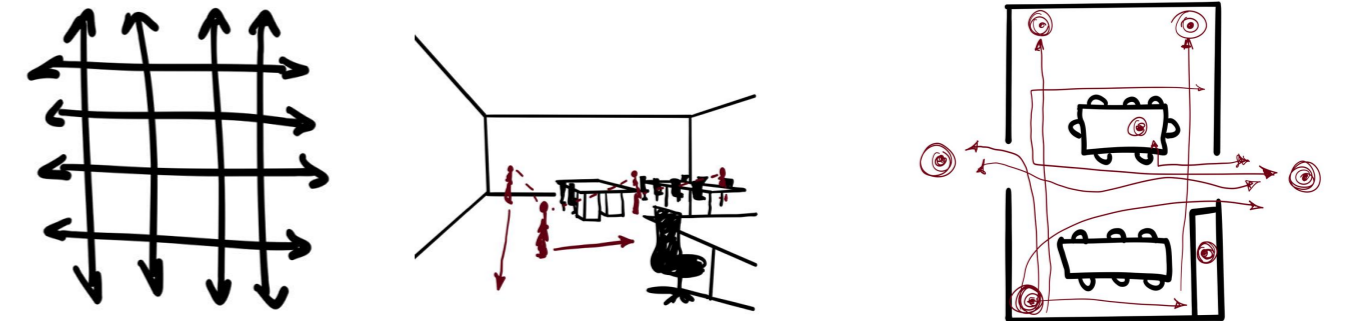


FIGURE 101: GRID CIRCULATION

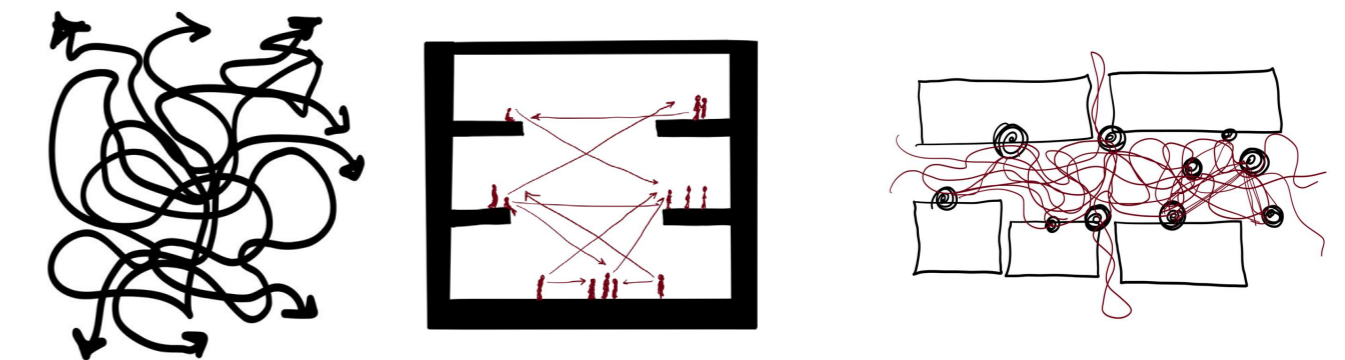
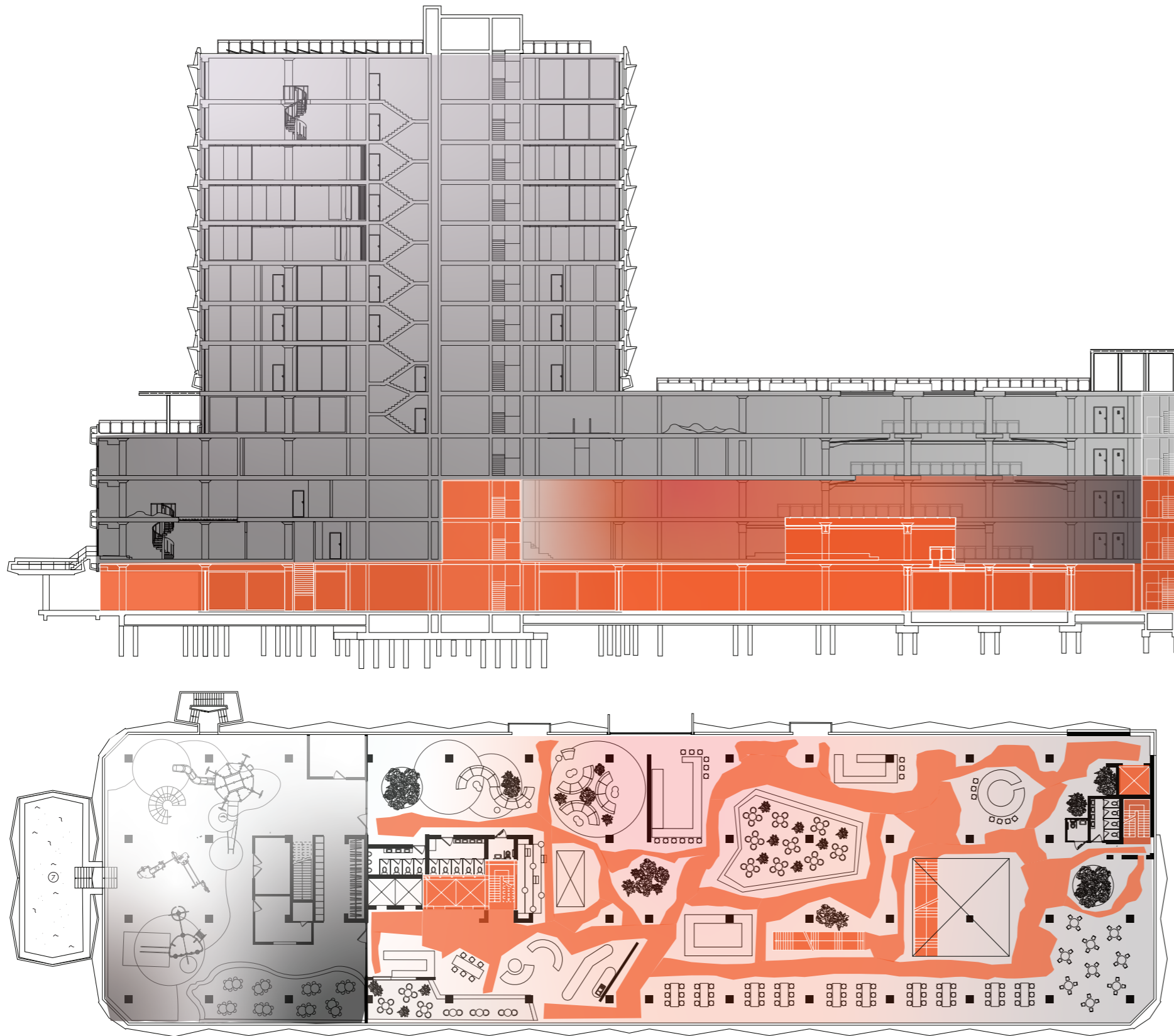


FIGURE 102: FLOWING CIRCULATION



All functions can access the building through the existing cores and the introduced voids, improving accessibility, orientation, and safety. The voids mainly support the food hall, where flowing circulation is created through furniture, level changes, partition screens, plants, and spatial zones that compress and decompress the floor plan to break the original linear movement. (fig. 103)

The childcare and office functions share the same core, although the childcare spaces also contain internal staircases and mainly use grid circulation (fig. 104). The co-support spaces combine linear, grid, and flowing circulation depending on the function (fig.105), while the hotel uses linear circulation for direct room access through its dedicated core (fig. 106). The office floors mainly follow a grid circulation system to support flexibility and multiple route options. (fig.107)

FIGURE 103: THE FINAL CIRCULATION OF THE FOOD HALL - FLOWING CIRCULATION

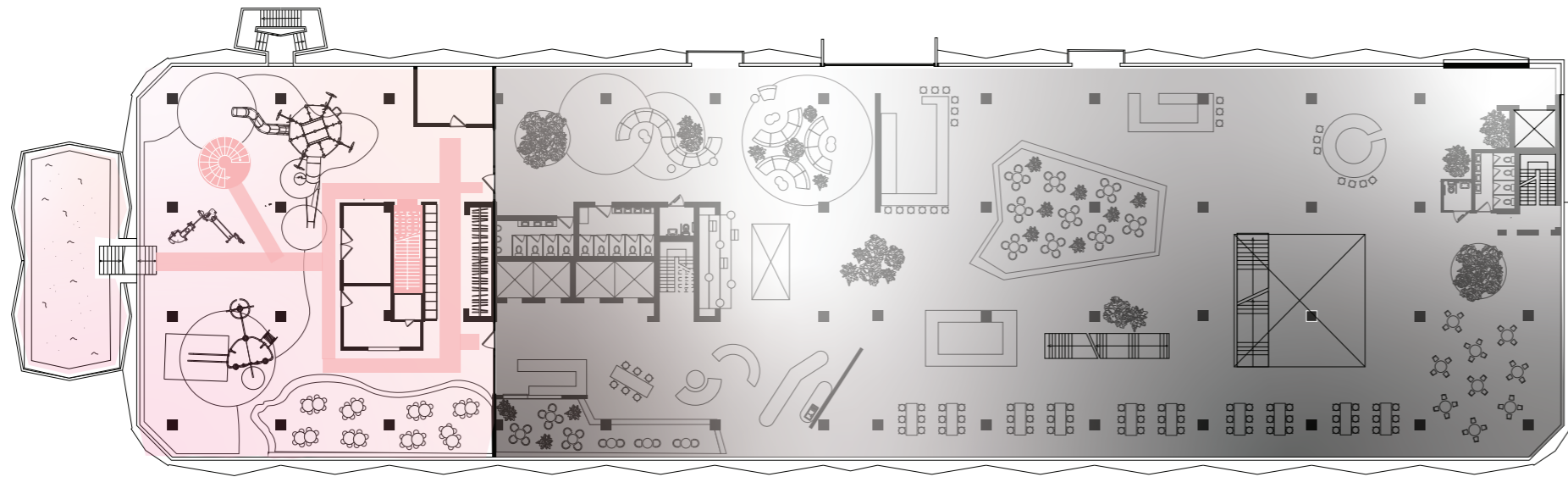
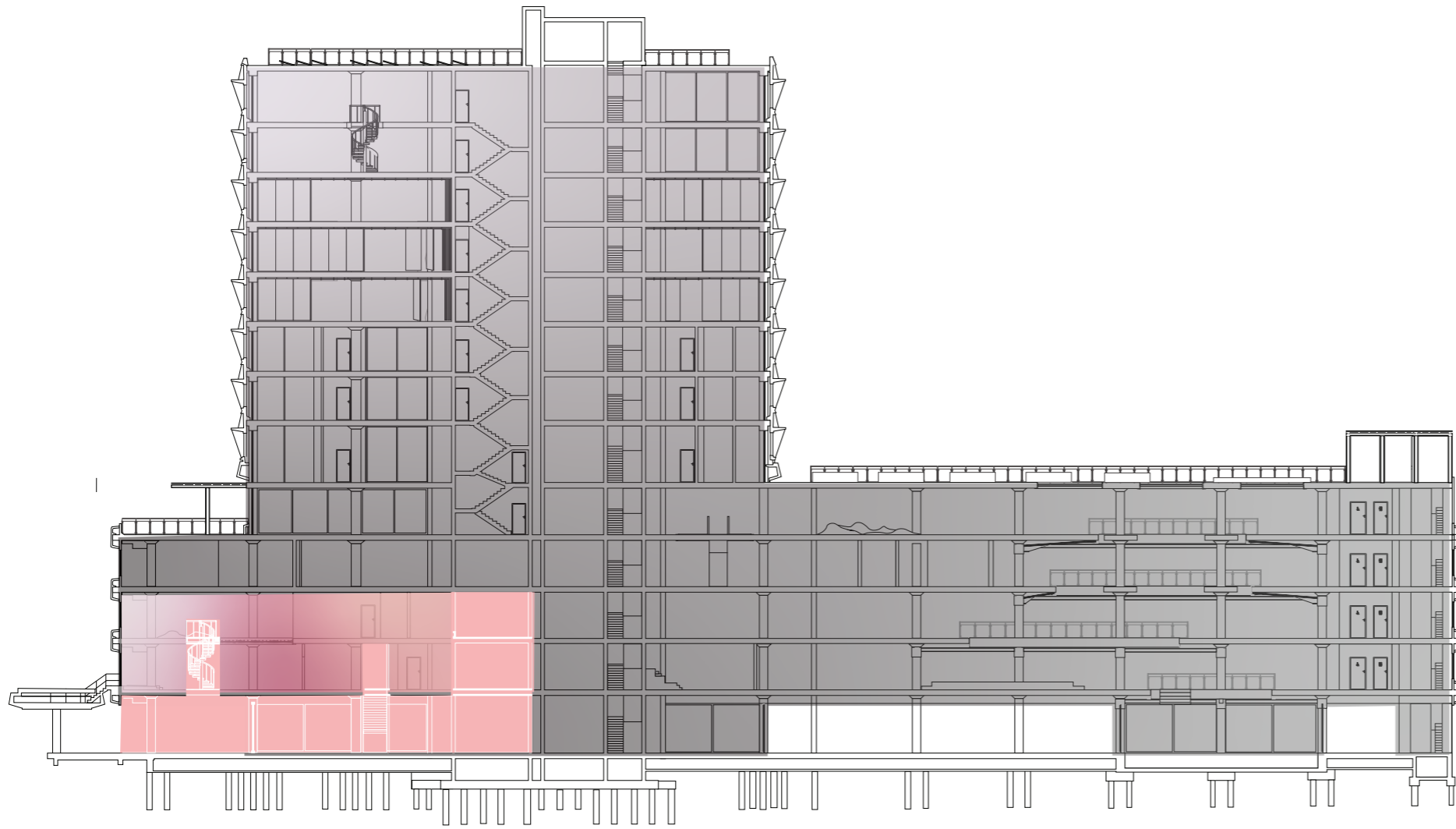


FIGURE 104: THE FINAL CIRCULATION OF THE CHILD-CARE - MIX OF GRID AND FLOWING CIRCULATION

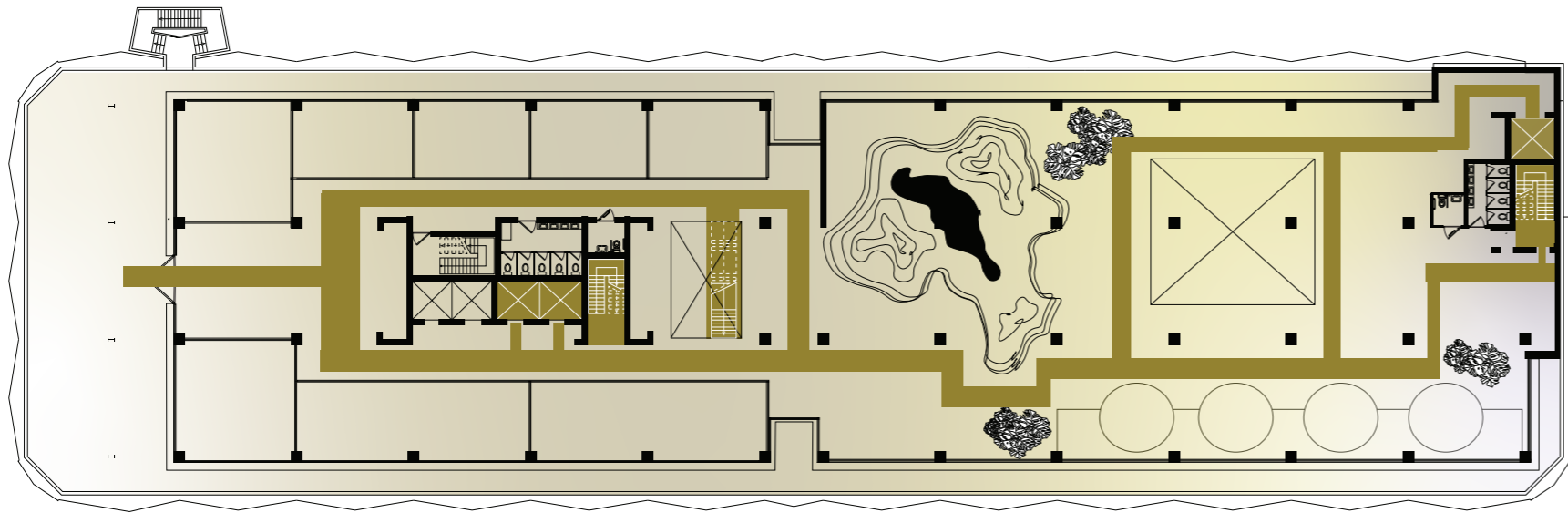
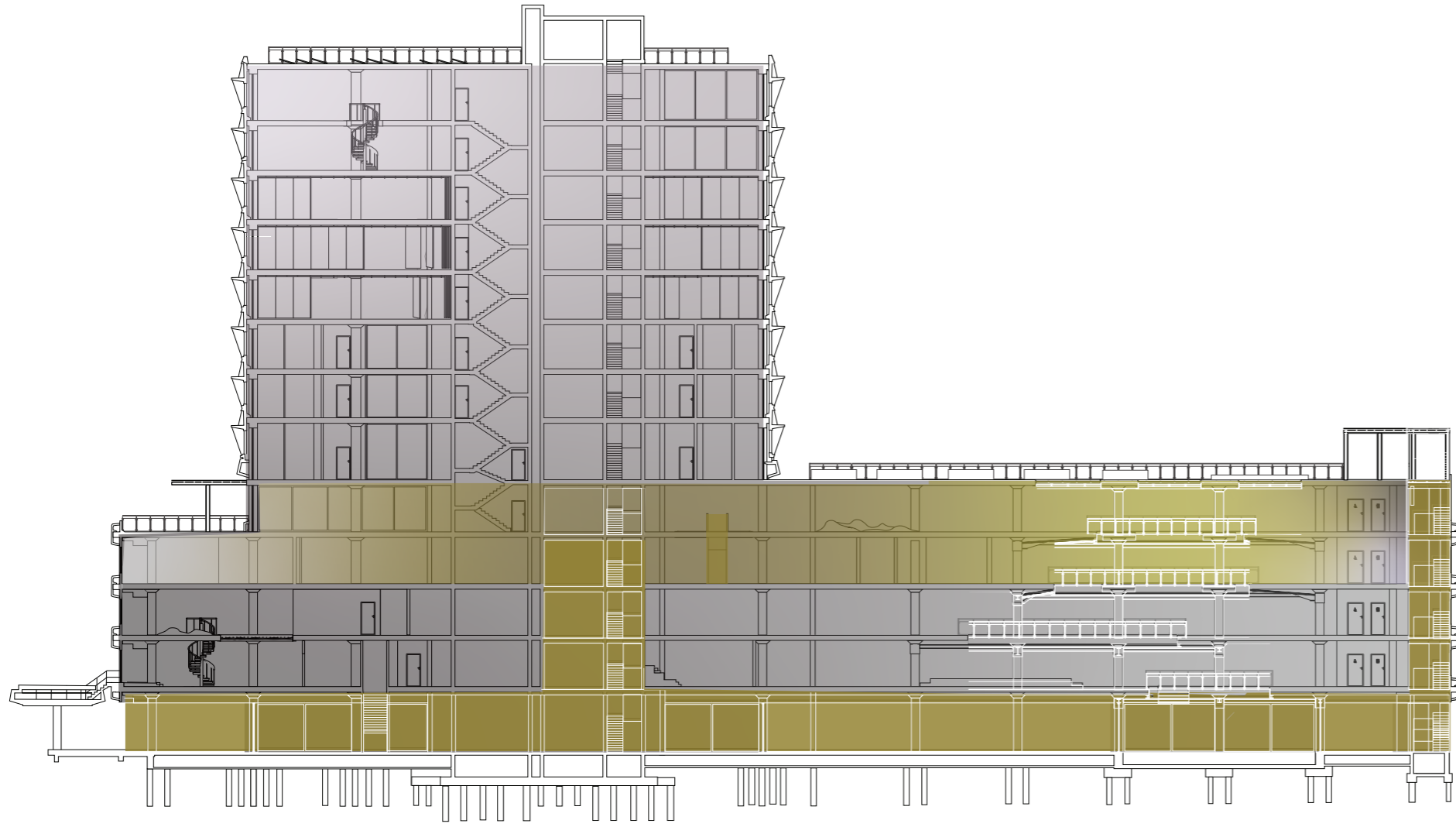


FIGURE 105: THE FINAL CO-SUPPORT SPACE CIRCULATION - GRID CIRCULATION

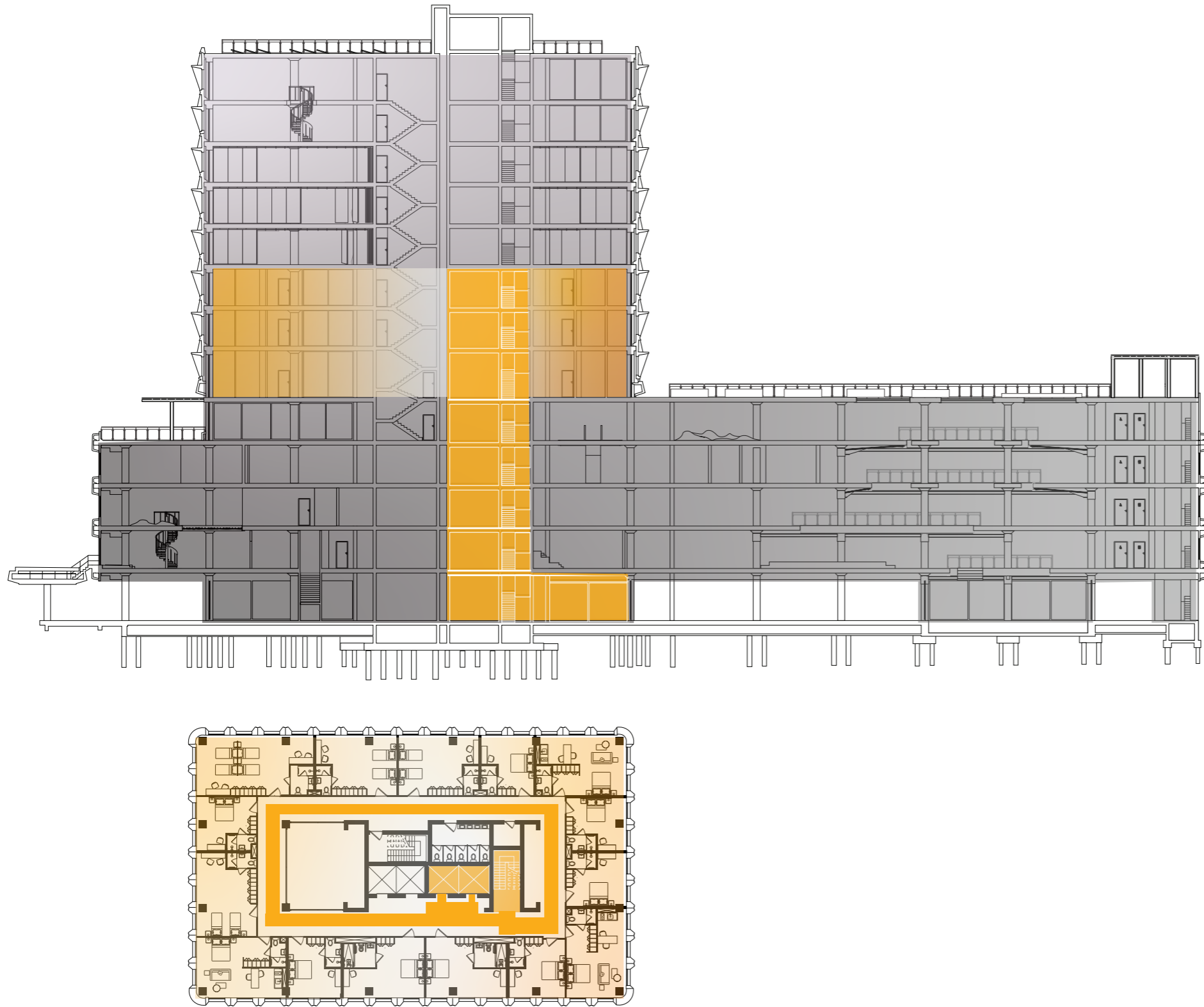


FIGURE 106: THE FINAL HOTEL CIRCULATION

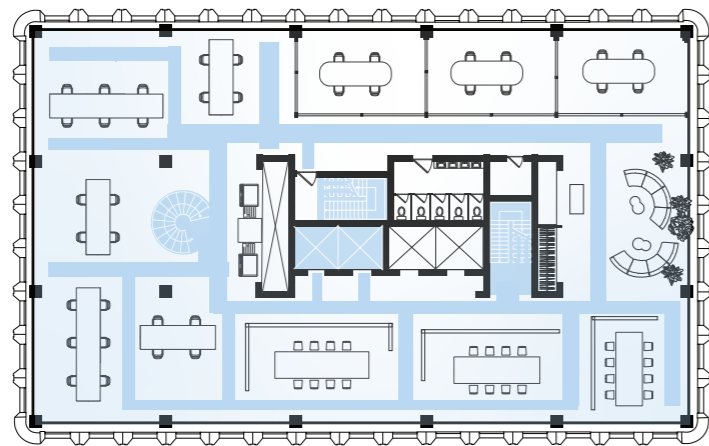
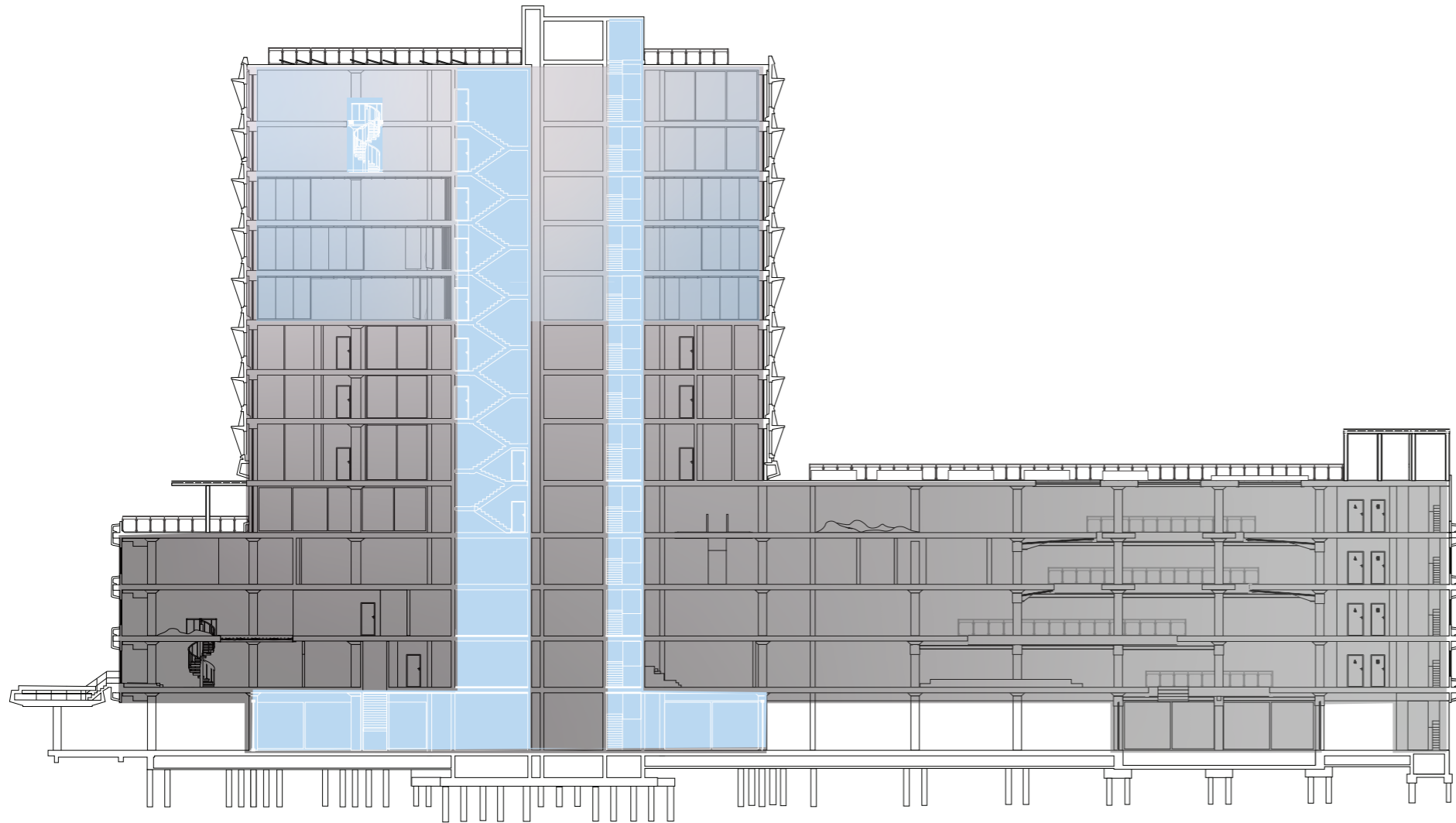
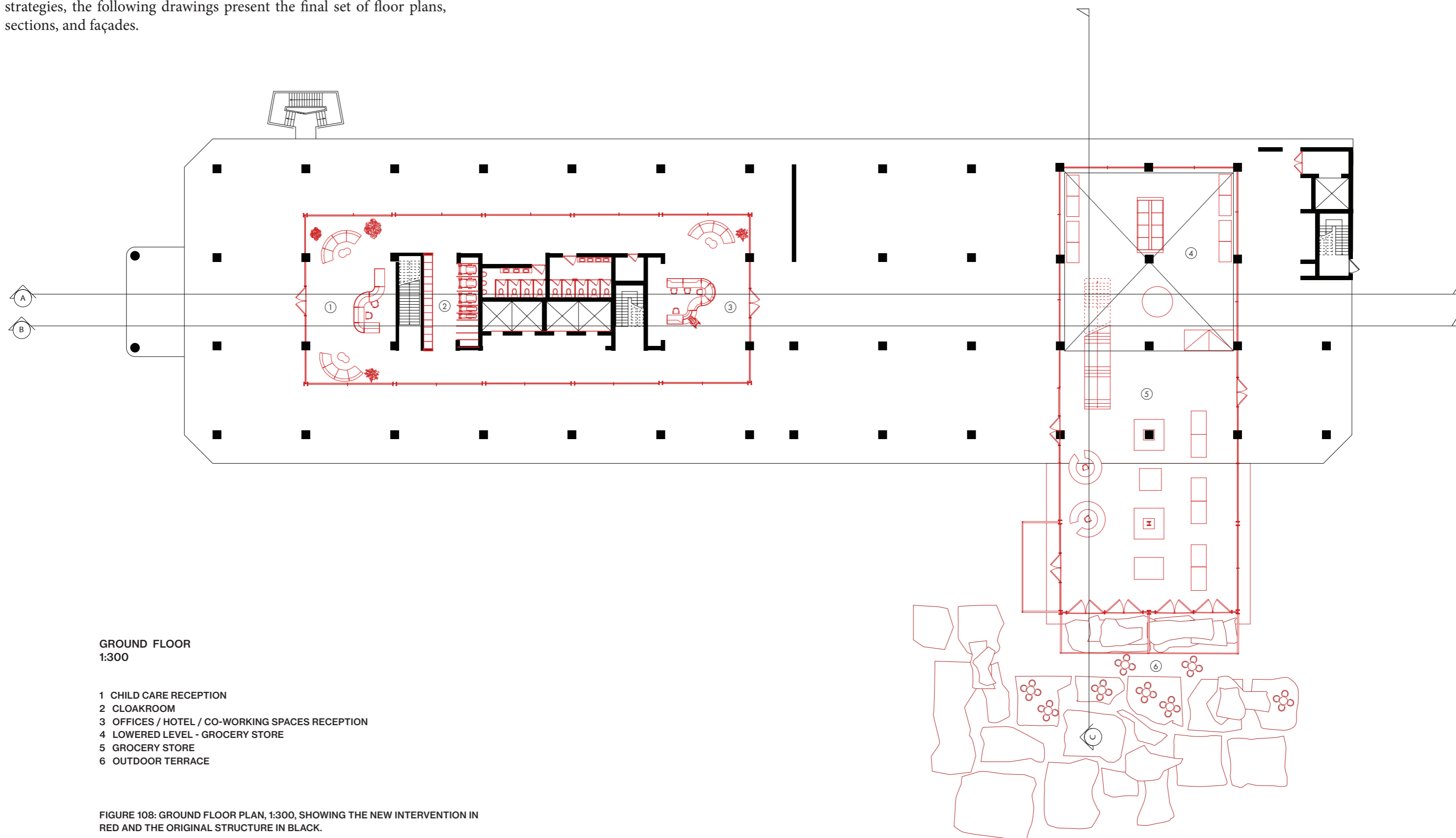
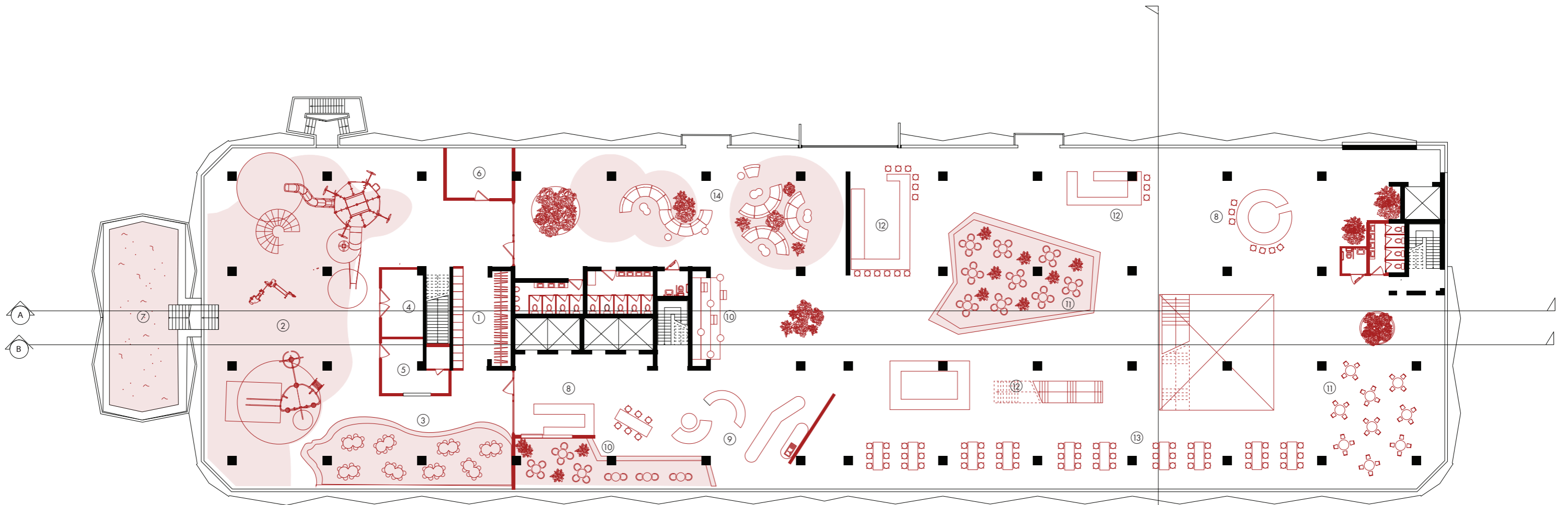


FIGURE 107: THE FINAL OFFICE CIRCULATION

Flexibility forms a central component of the proposal. Open-plan layouts are prioritised throughout most of the building, while modular office partition systems and lightweight reassemblable gypsum walls allow changing spatial configurations over time while maintaining the identity and spatial rhythm of the original concrete structure. Based on the previous analyses, design tests, and spatial, urban, and material strategies, the following drawings present the final set of floor plans, sections, and façades.





**FIRST FLOOR  
1:300**

- |                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 CHILDREN'S CLOAKROOM      | 8 COFFEE POINT            |
| 2 PLAY ROOM                 | 9 BAKERY                  |
| 3 DINING HALL               | 10 INFORMAL SEATING       |
| 4 STORAGE ROOM              | 11 DINING AREA            |
| 5 KITCHEN                   | 12 FOOD STANDS / CANTEENS |
| 6 OFFICE                    | 13 STANDING DINING AREA   |
| 7 OUTDOOR SENSORY PLAY RING | 14 LOUNGE AREA            |

FIGURE 109: FIRST FLOOR PLAN, 1:300, SHOWING THE NEW INTERVENTION IN RED AND THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN BLACK.

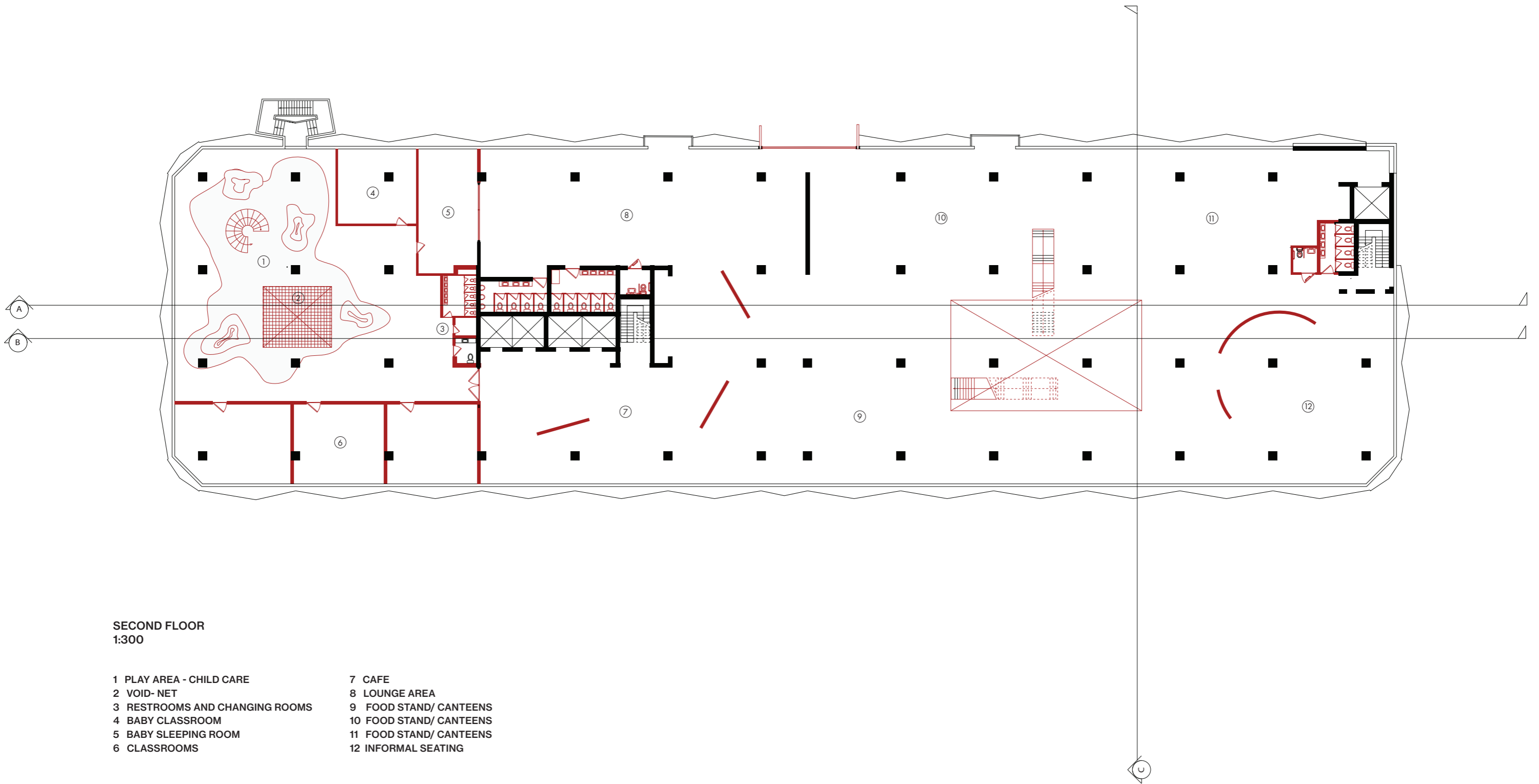


FIGURE 110: SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1:300, SHOWING THE NEW INTERVENTION IN RED AND THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN BLACK.

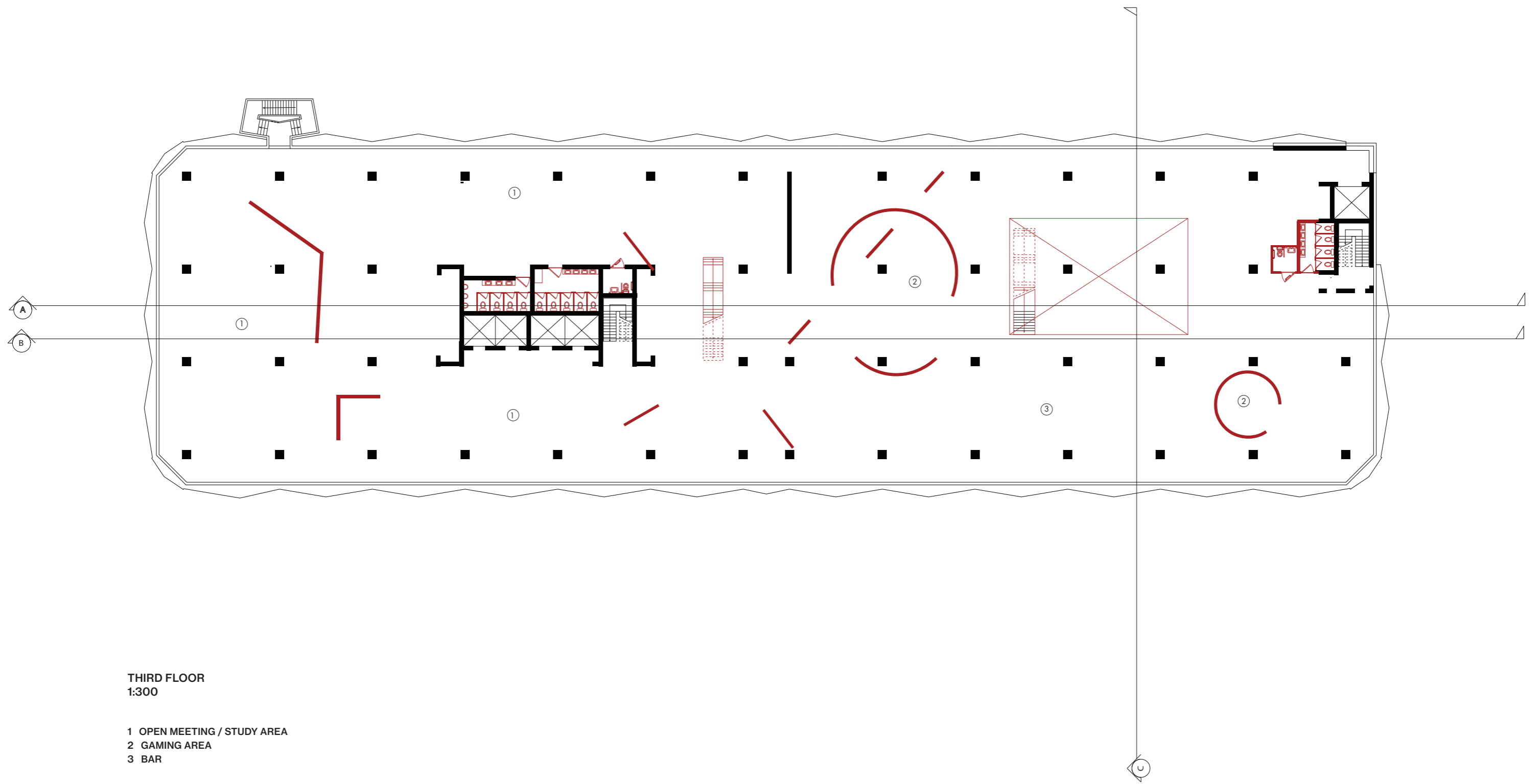
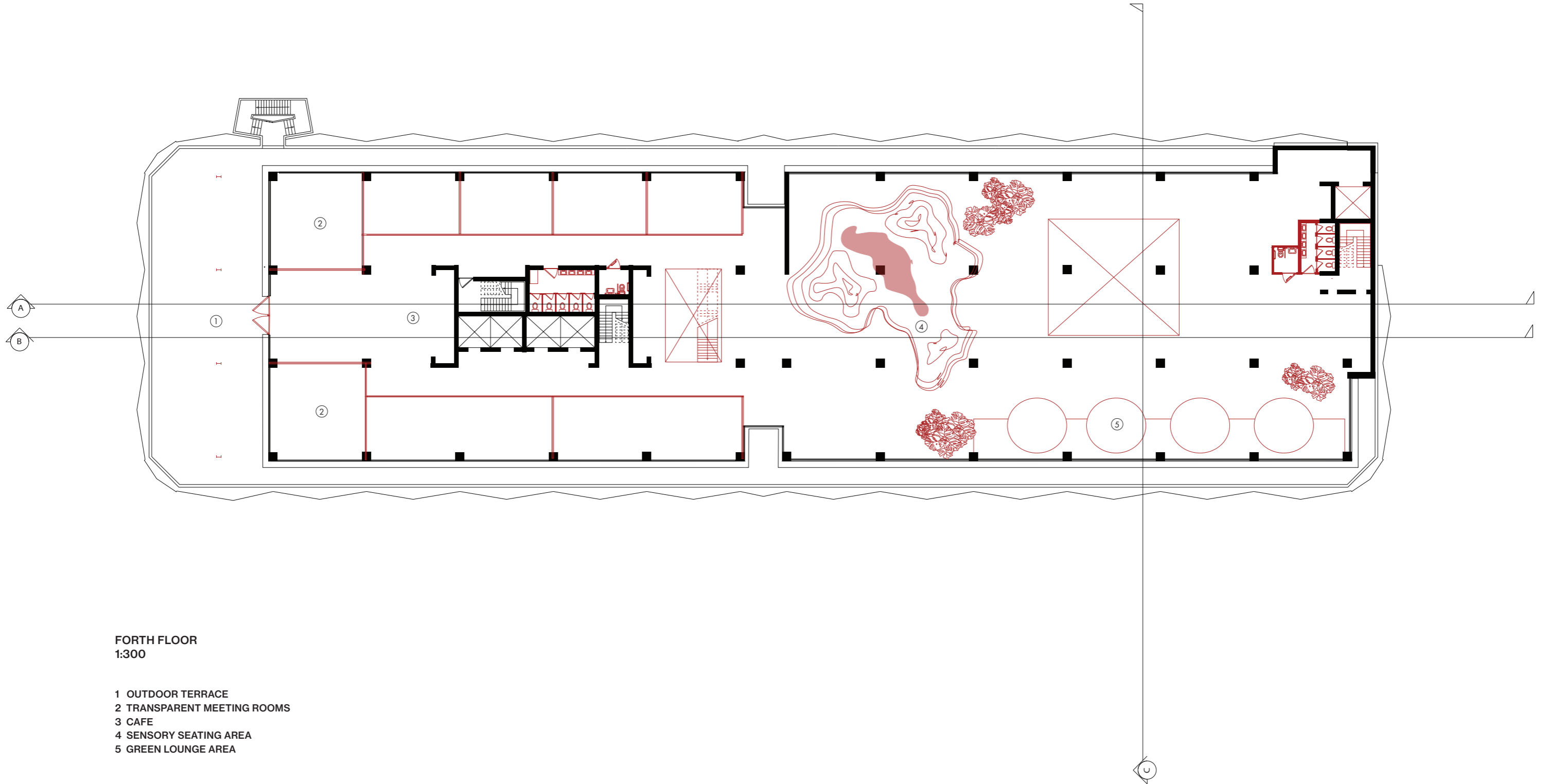


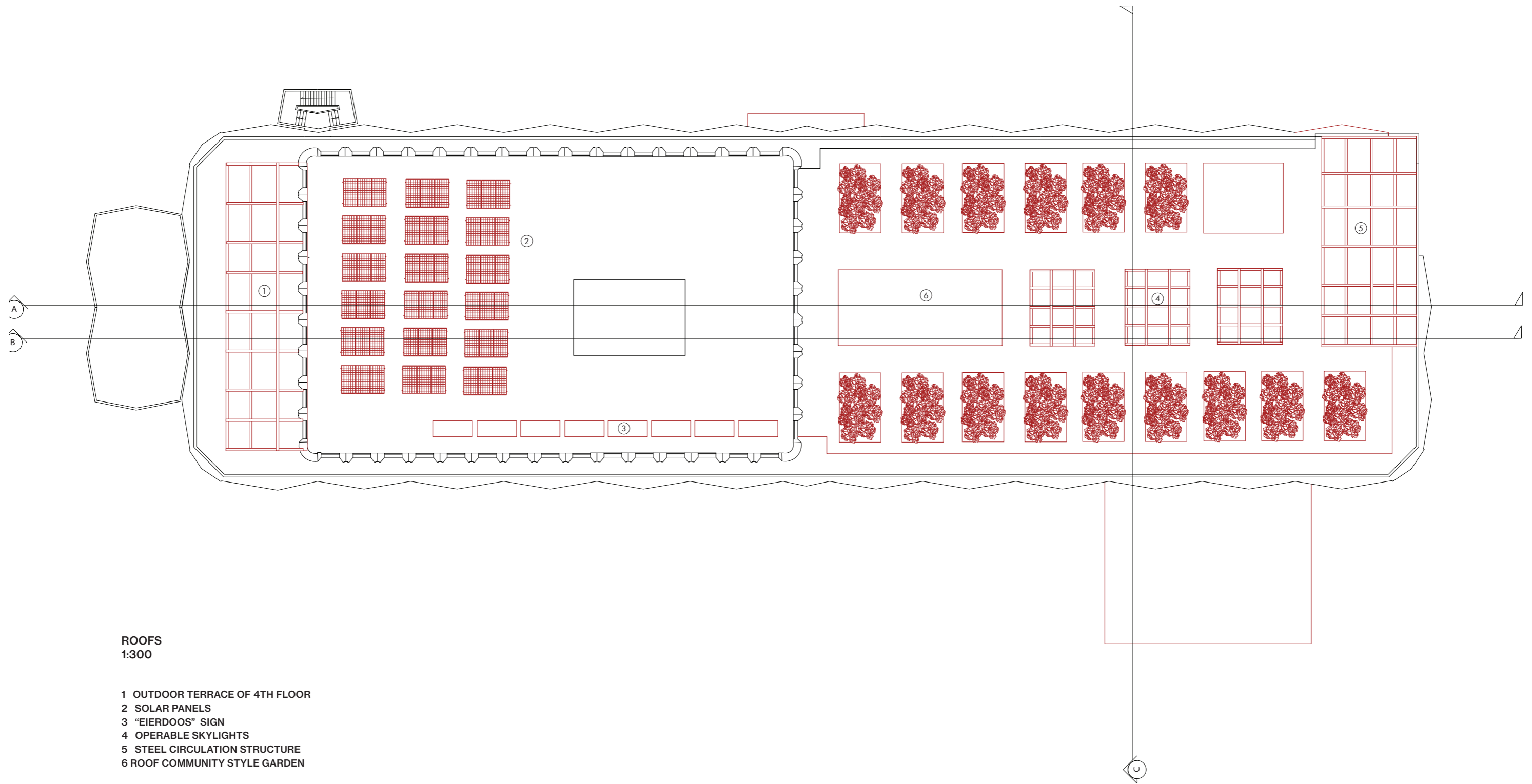
FIGURE 111: THIRD FLOOR PLAN, 1:300, SHOWING THE NEW INTERVENTION IN RED AND THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN BLACK.



**FORTH FLOOR  
1:300**

- 1 OUTDOOR TERRACE
- 2 TRANSPARENT MEETING ROOMS
- 3 CAFE
- 4 SENSORY SEATING AREA
- 5 GREEN LOUNGE AREA

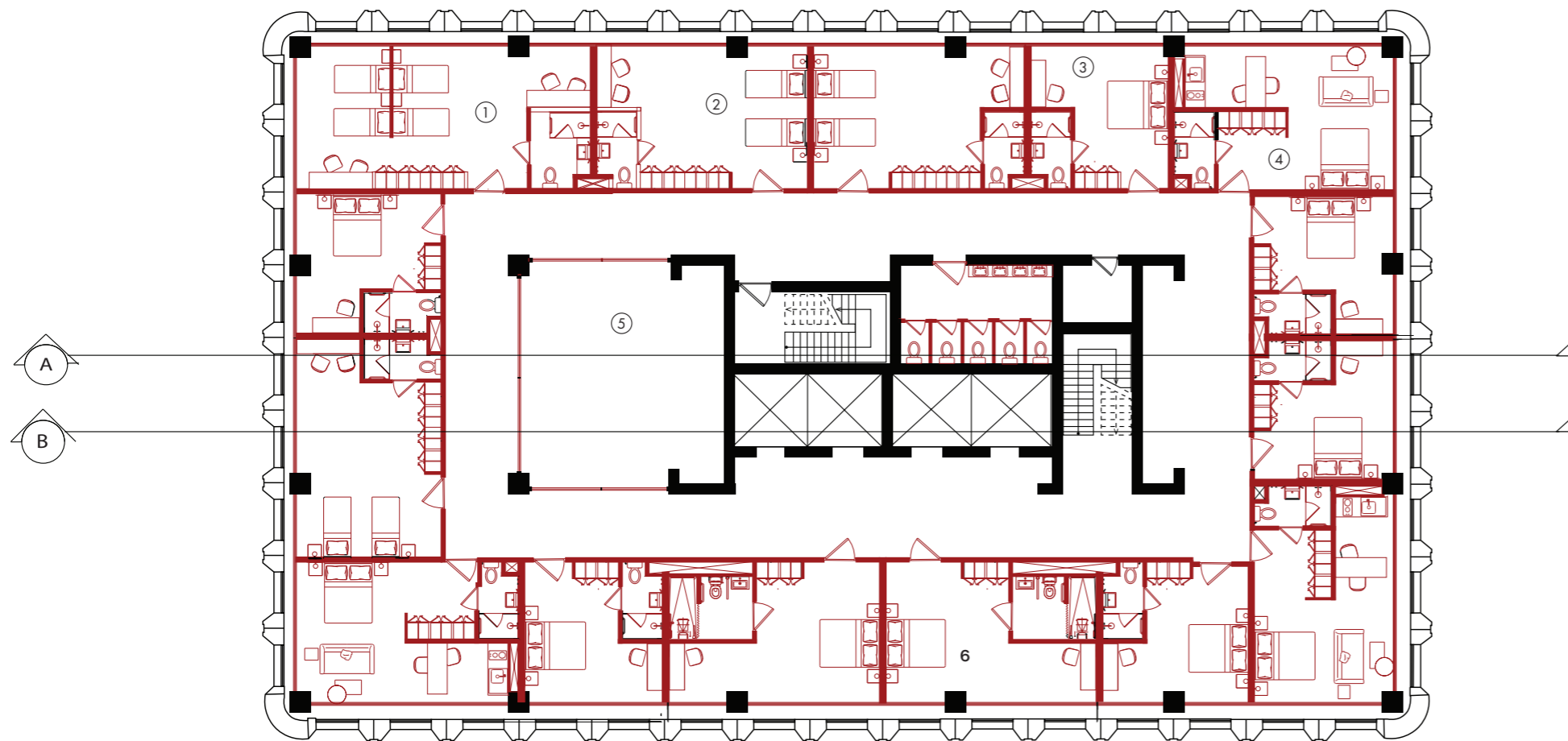
FIGURE 112: FORTH FLOOR PLAN, 1:300, SHOWING THE NEW INTERVENTION IN RED AND THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN BLACK.



**ROOFS**  
1:300

- 1 OUTDOOR TERRACE OF 4TH FLOOR
- 2 SOLAR PANELS
- 3 "EIERDOOS" SIGN
- 4 OPERABLE SKYLIGHTS
- 5 STEEL CIRCULATION STRUCTURE
- 6 ROOF COMMUNITY STYLE GARDEN

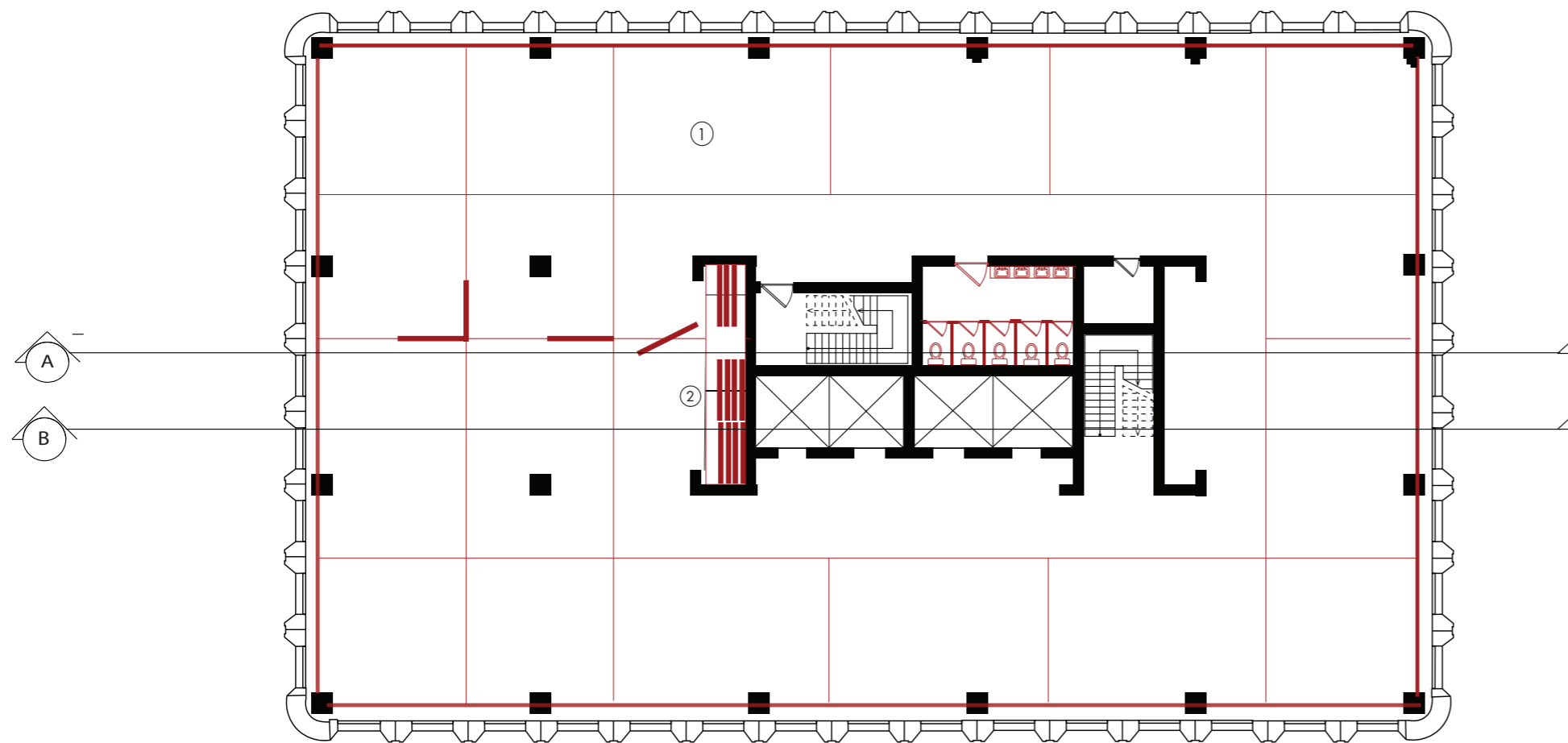
FIGURE 113: ROOF PLAN, 1:300, SHOWING THE NEW INTERVENTION IN RED AND THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN BLACK.



**5TH-7TH FLOORS  
1:300**

- 1 QUADRABLE ROOM
- 2 DOUBLE ROOM
- 3 NORMAL ROOM
- 4 STUDIO AP. ROOM
- 5 GYM / LAUNDRY / KITCHEN
- 6 ACCESSIBLE ROOM

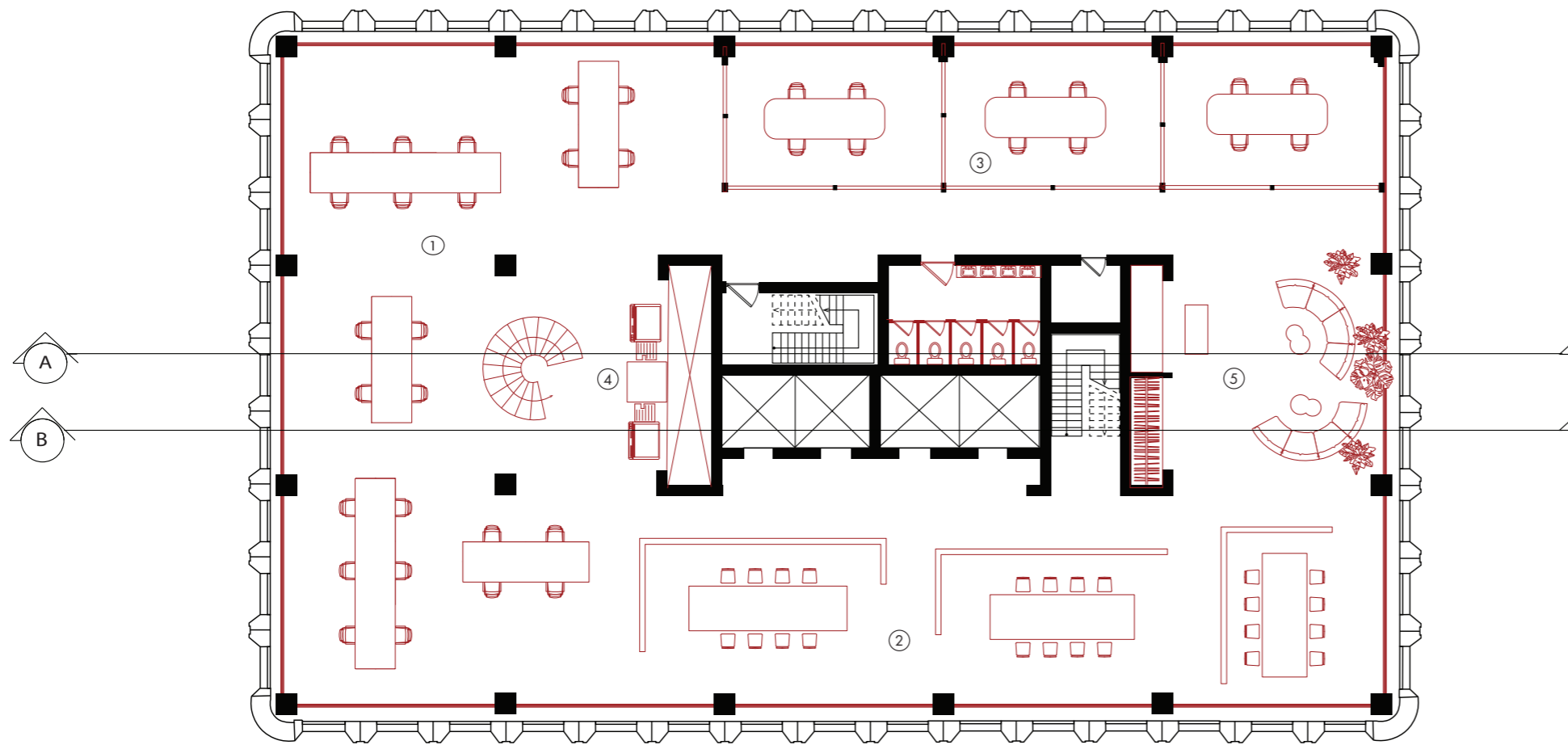
FIGURE 114: HOTEL FLOOR PLAN, 1:300, SHOWING THE NEW INTERVENTION IN RED AND THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN BLACK.



8TH-10TH FLOORS  
1:300

1 FLEXIBLE OFFICE SPACE  
2 MODULAR WALLS STORAGE

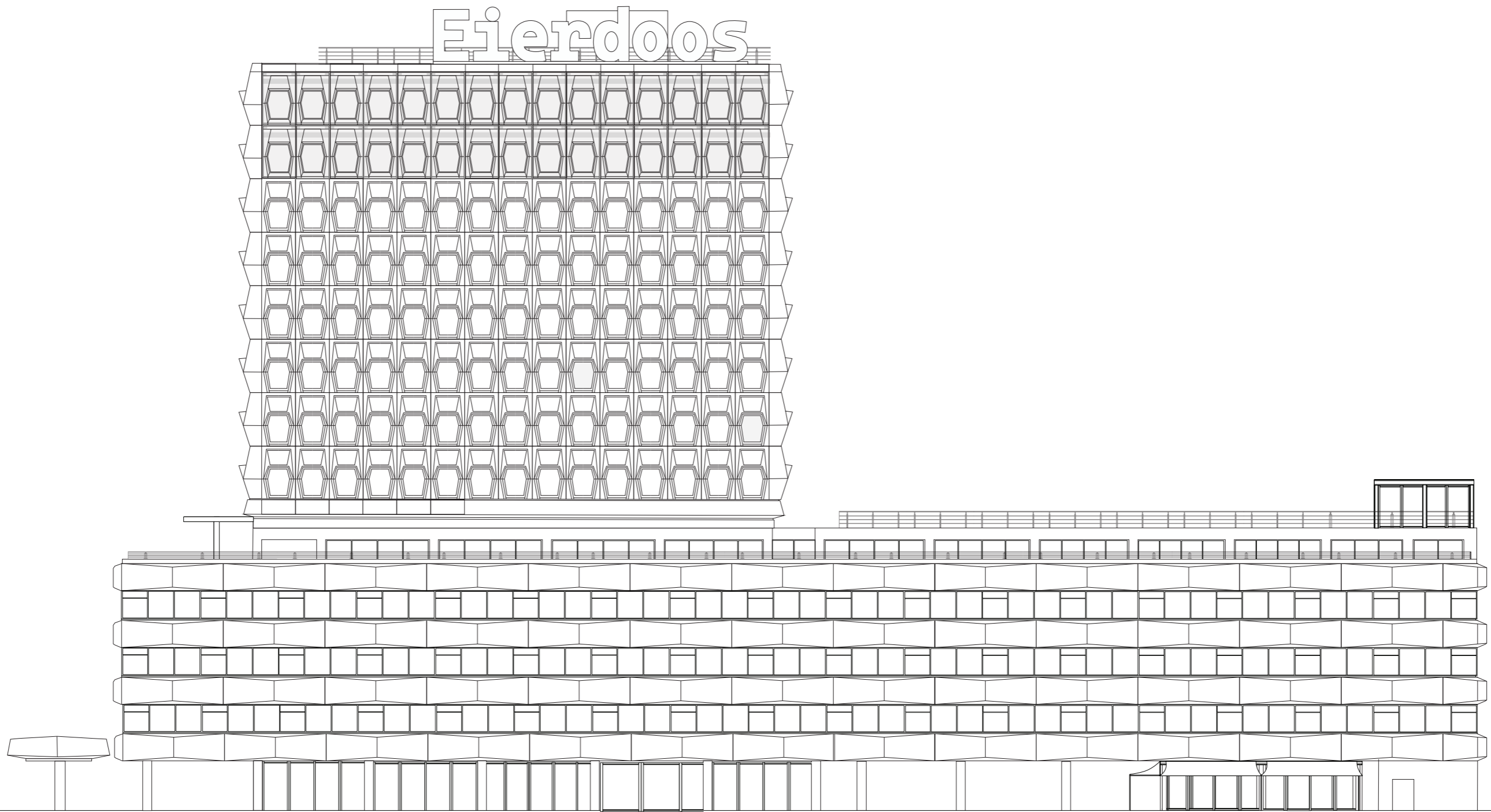
FIGURE 115: MODULAR OFFICE FLOOR PLAN, 1:300, SHOWING THE NEW INTERVENTION IN RED AND THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN BLACK.



11TH -12TH FLOORS  
1:300

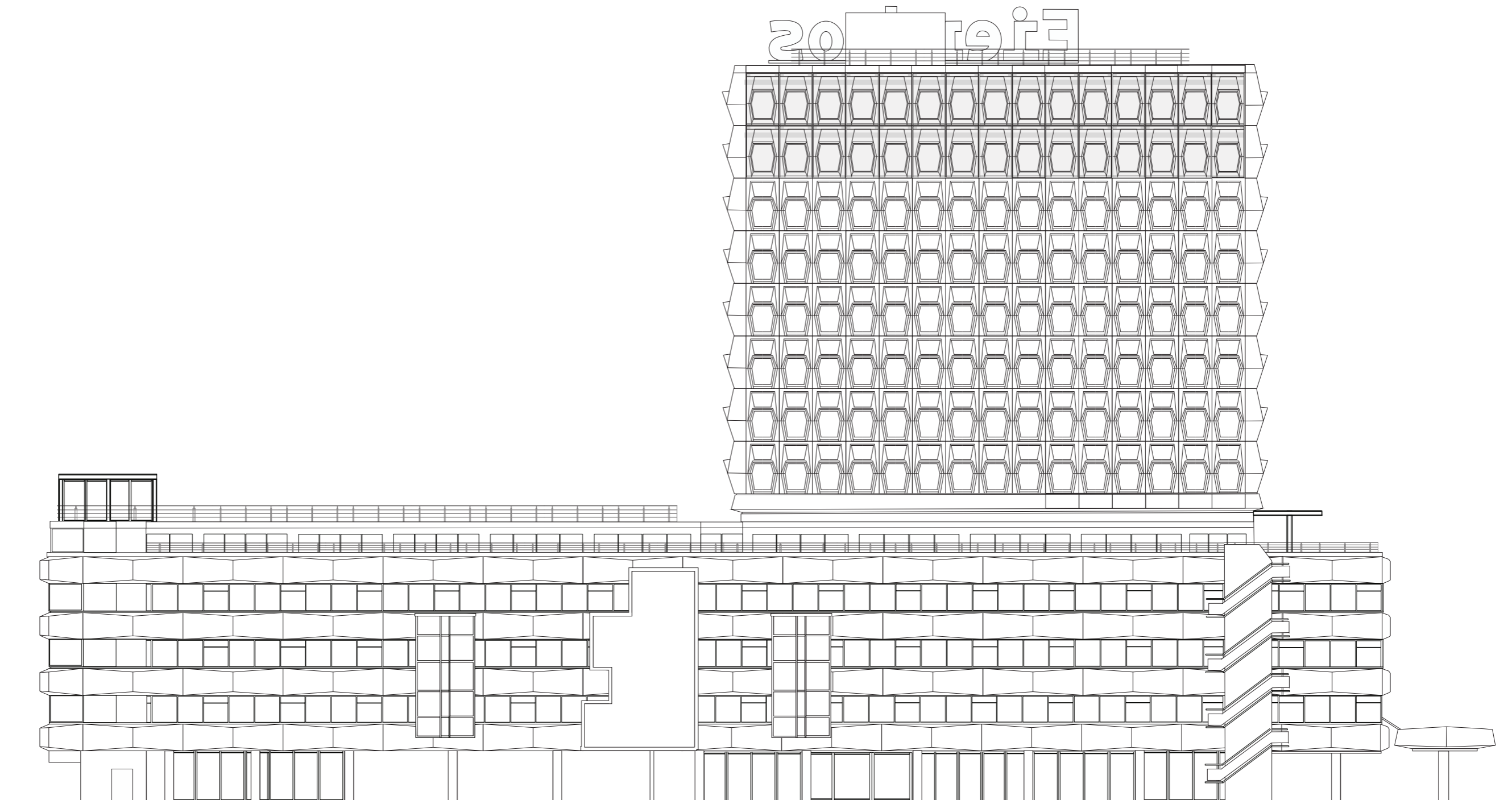
- 1 OPEN COLLECTIVE WORKSPACE
- 2 MEETING OPEN SPACE
- 3 MEETING ROOMS
- 4 PRINTING ETC
- 5 LOUNGE / KITCHEN

FIGURE 116: OPEN OFFICE FLOOR PLAN, 1:300, SHOWING THE NEW INTERVENTION IN RED AND THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN BLACK.



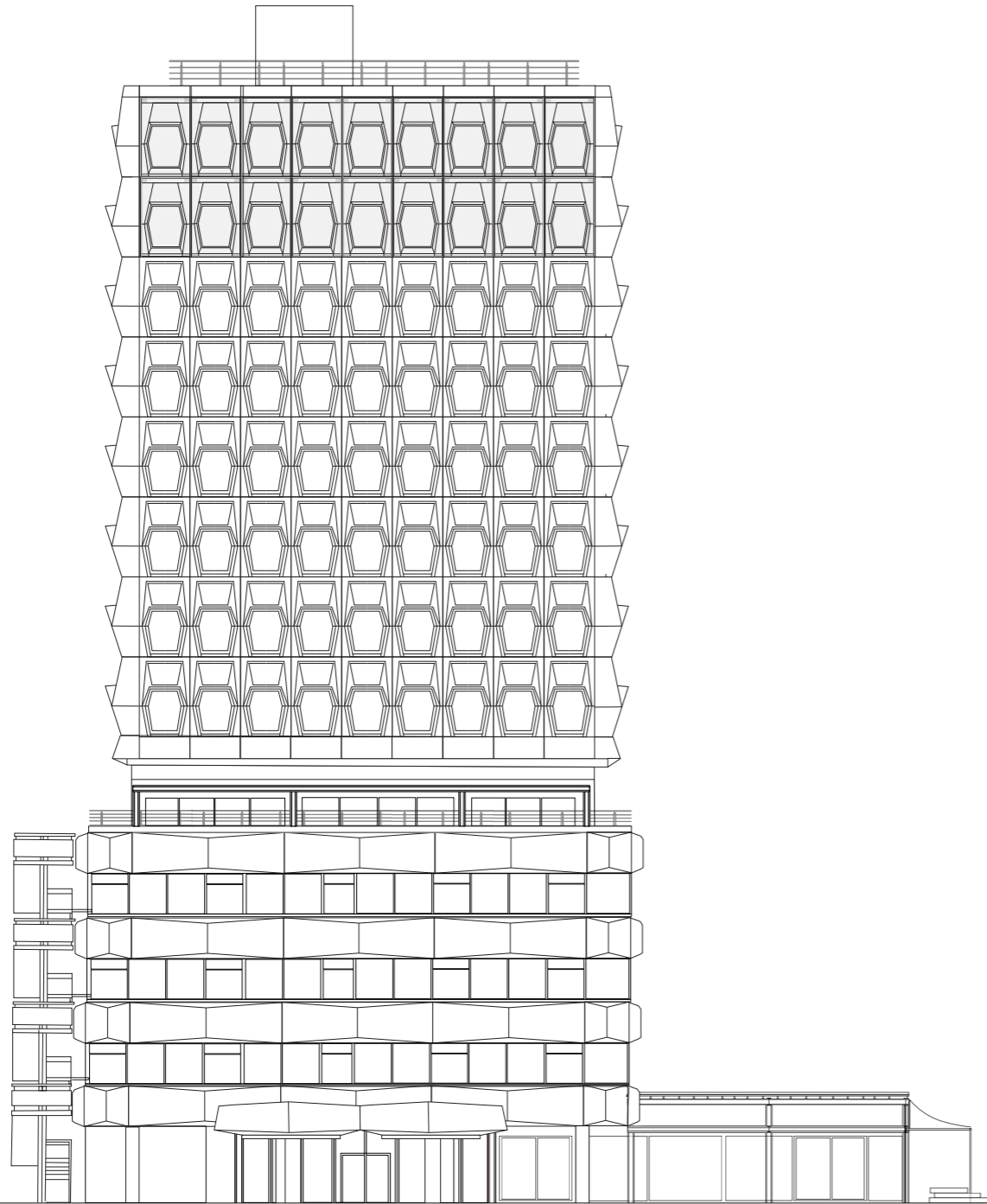
FACADE NORTH-WEST  
1:300

FIGURE 117: FINAL FACADE MOTORWAY SIDE



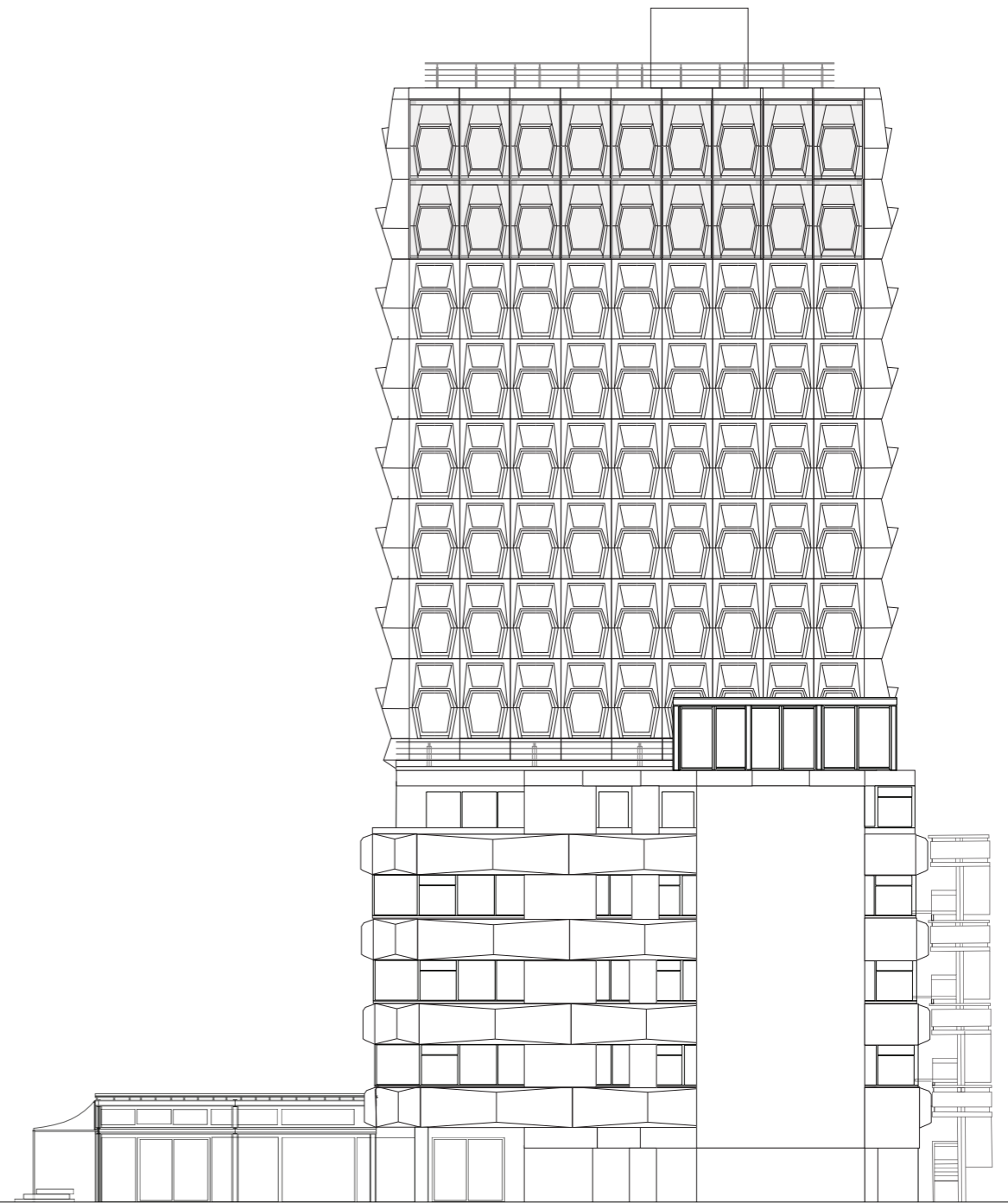
FACADE SOUTH-EAST  
1:300

FIGURE 118: FINAL FACADE CITY SIDE



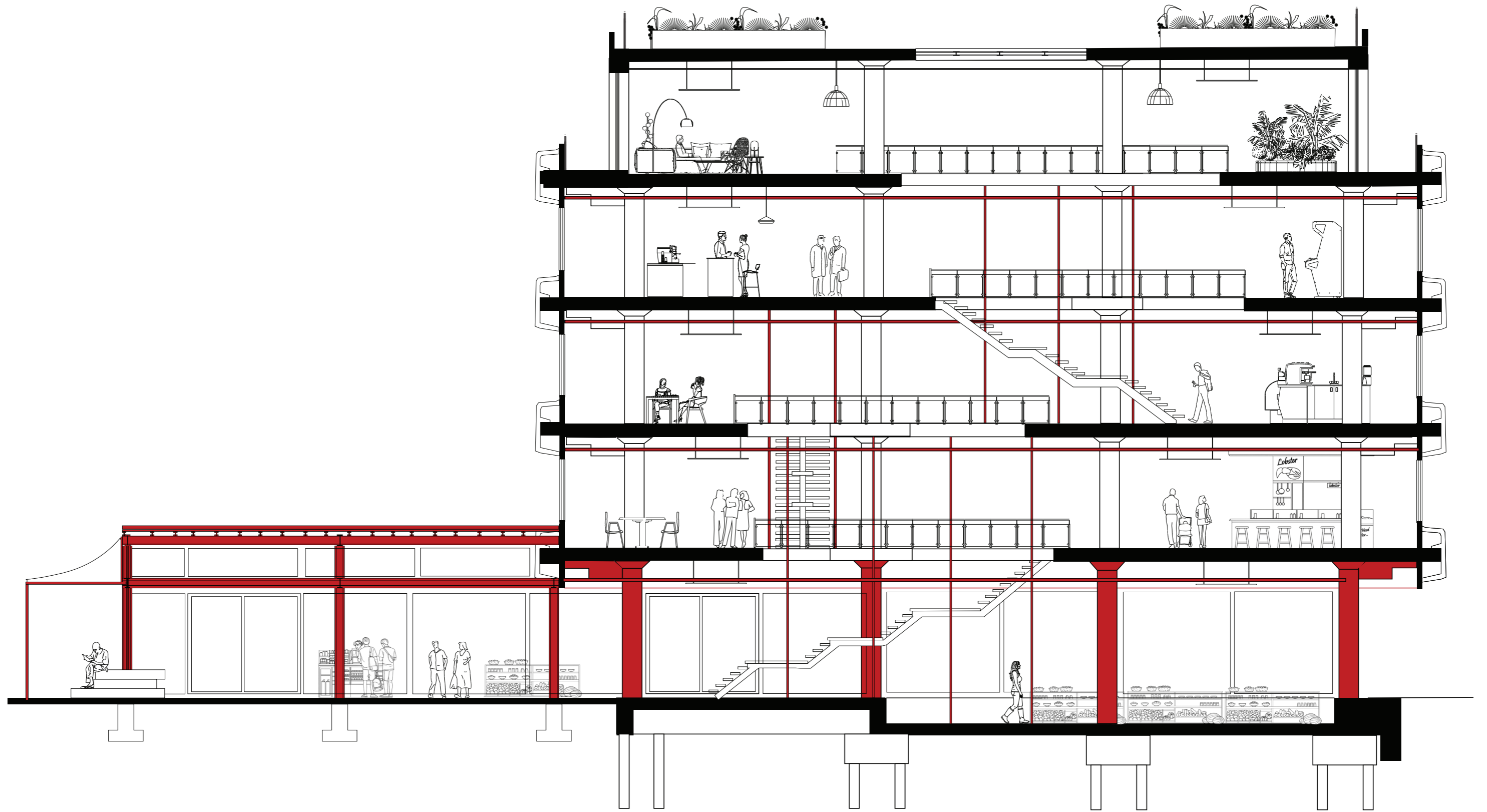
FACADE SOUTH-WEST  
1:300

FIGURE 119: FINAL FACADE CANOPY SIDE



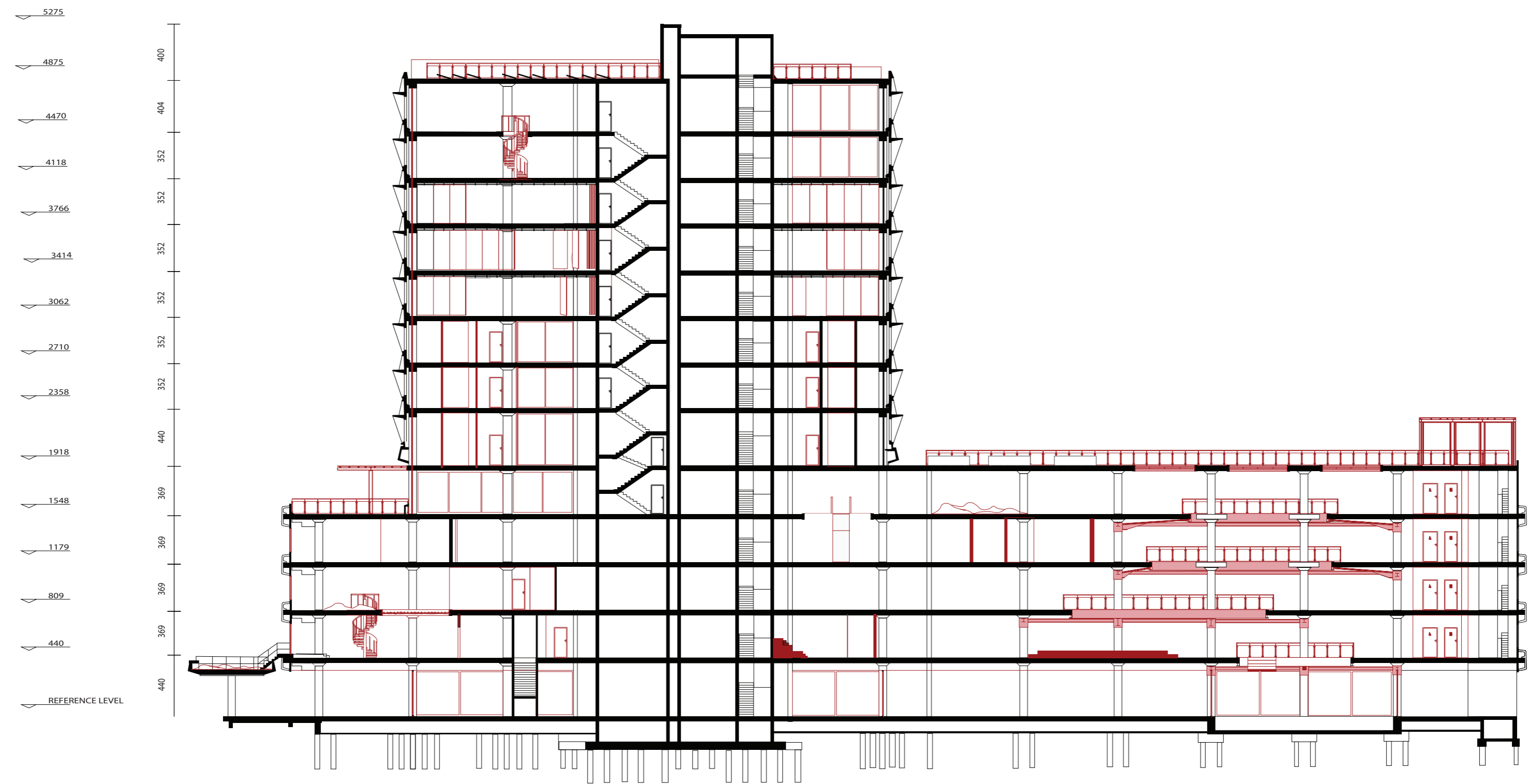
FACADE NORTH-EAST  
1:300

FIGURE 120: FINAL FACADE CANAL SIDE



SECTION C  
1:125

FIGURE 121: SECTION SHOWING THE REAL RED INTERVENTION ELEMENTS, THE VOIDS, AND THE INTERACTION OF PEOPLE WITHIN THE FOOD HALL AND THE OTHER PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC FUNCTIONS OF THE BASE.

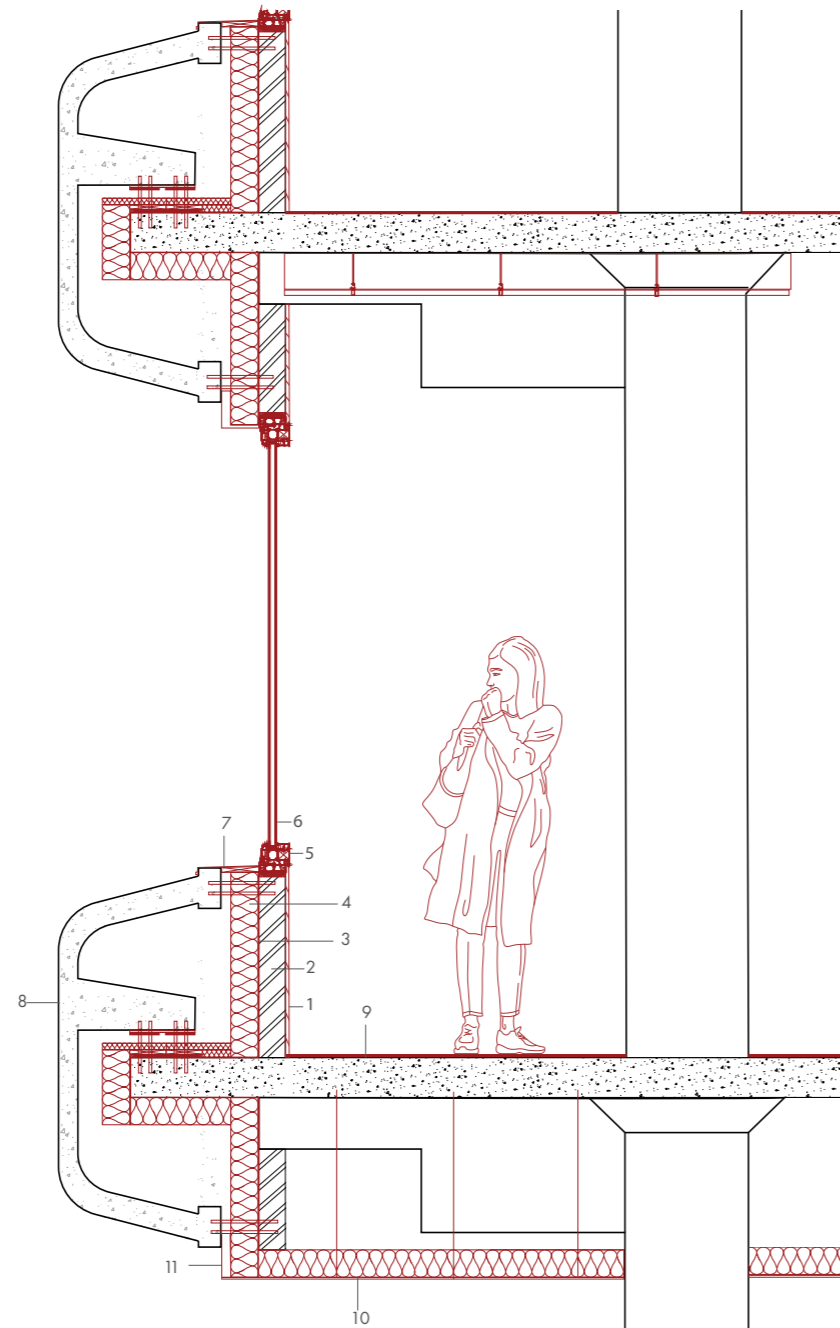


SECTION A  
1:300

FIGURE 122: SECTION SHOWIN GIN RED THE NEW INTERVENTIONS AND WITH BLACK THE EXISTING STRUCTURE

**BASE'S FAÇADE STRUCTURE**  
1:40

The façade is upgraded through an external insulation strategy in order to preserve the exposed concrete structure internally and reduce thermal bridges at the slab edges and columns. The existing prefabricated concrete elements are retained and re-mounted in front of the new insulated wall build-up, maintaining the original façade depth, geometry, and shading qualities. New thermally broken operable glazing improves environmental performance while preserving the original horizontal façade rhythm. (See appendix A10 for correct 1:20 scale)

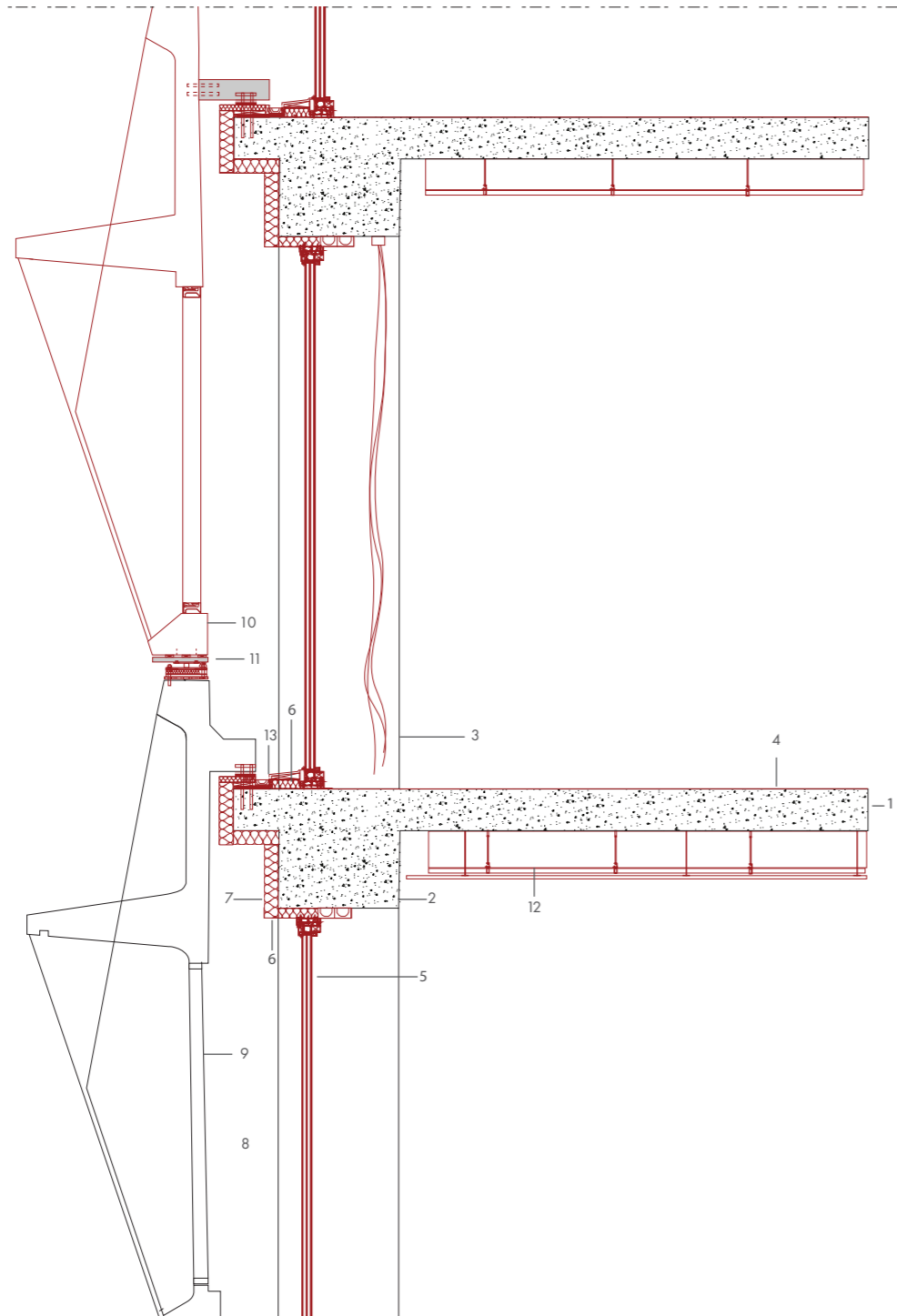


1. LIME PLASTER FINISH
2. EXISTING MASONRY WALL CONSTRUCTION
3. AIRTIGHT MEMBRANE, 3 mm
4. CONTINUOUS MINERAL WOOL THERMAL INSULATION, 120 mm
5. THERMALLY BROKEN ALUMINIUM GLAZING FRAME
6. DOUBLE-GLAZED INSULATED GLAZING UNIT (IGU)
7. ALUMINIUM DRIP FLASHING AND DRAINAGE JOINT
8. EXISTING PREFABRICATED REINFORCED CONCRETE FAÇADE PANEL RE-MOUNTED ON THERMALLY BROKEN MECHANICAL SUPPORT BRACKETS
9. EXISTING REINFORCED CONCRETE SLAB, 200 mm, POLISHED WITH MINERAL SILICATE SEALER FINISH
10. FIBRE CEMENT SOFFIT PANEL SYSTEM, 15 mm
11. FOLDED ALUM. FLASHING



FIGURE 123: SHOWING THE FAÇADE FRAGMENT AND DETAIL OF THE BASE'S FAÇADE

TOWER'S FACADE STRUCTURE



- 1 EXISTING RC SLAB
- 2 EXISTING RC PERIMETER BEAM
- 3 EXISTING RC COLUMN
- 4 POLISHED EXPOSED CONCRETE FLOOR FINISH
- 5 THERMALLY BROKEN ALUMINIUM GLAZING FRAME WITH TRIPLE INSULATED GLAZING UNIT
- 6 AIRTIGHT MEMBRANE
- 7 MINERA WOOL
- 8 VENTILATED CAVITY, 300-600 MM
- 9 EXISTING PRECAST CONCRETE CLIMATE SCREEN
- 10 NEW CAST-GLASS REPLICA CLIMATE SCREEN
- 11 THIN METAL PERIMETER FRAME TO CAST-GLASS UNIT
- 12 EXPOSED HVAC AND SERVICE SYSTEM
- 13 WATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM

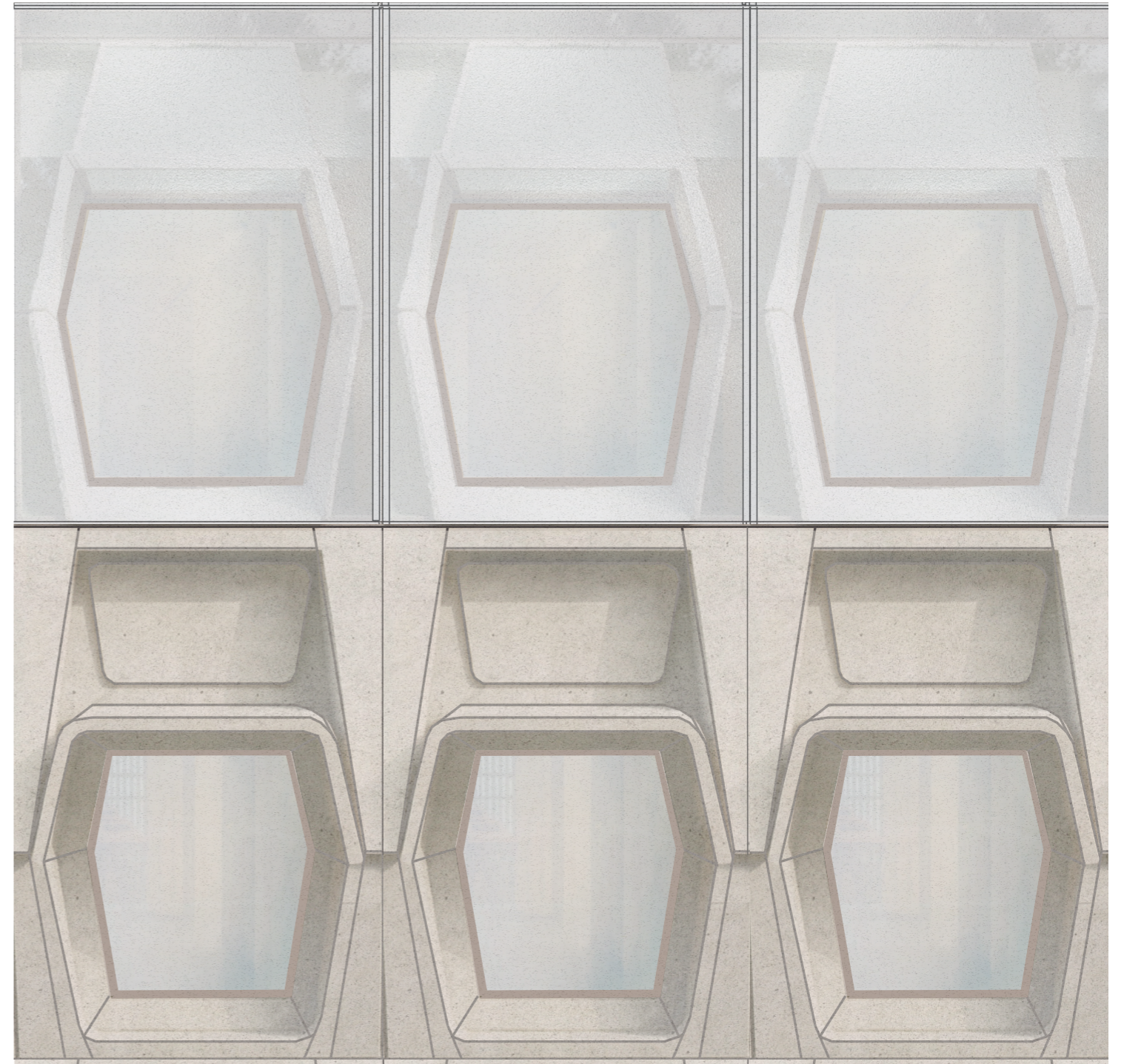


FIGURE 124: SHOWING THE FACADE FRAGMENT AND  
DETAIL OF THE TOWER'S FACADE

The original prefabricated facade is retained as a ventilated environmental screen positioned in front of a new thermally efficient inner facade. While the outer layer remains open and non-airtight, its depth and geometry reduce solar gain, filter daylight, and preserve the building's architectural identity. A naturally ventilated cavity between the two layers improves environmental performance while maintaining the perception of the original facade system. (See appendix A11 for correct 1:20 scale)

The new volumes are supported by a lightweight steel frame composed of beams and columns, reducing additional load on the existing concrete structure while allowing the intervention to remain reversible. Bolted dry connections enable easier assembly, adaptation, dismantling and future reuse, supporting the project's strategy of material and spatial continuity. The steel structure therefore acts as a secondary layer that extends the building without permanently altering its original structural logic.

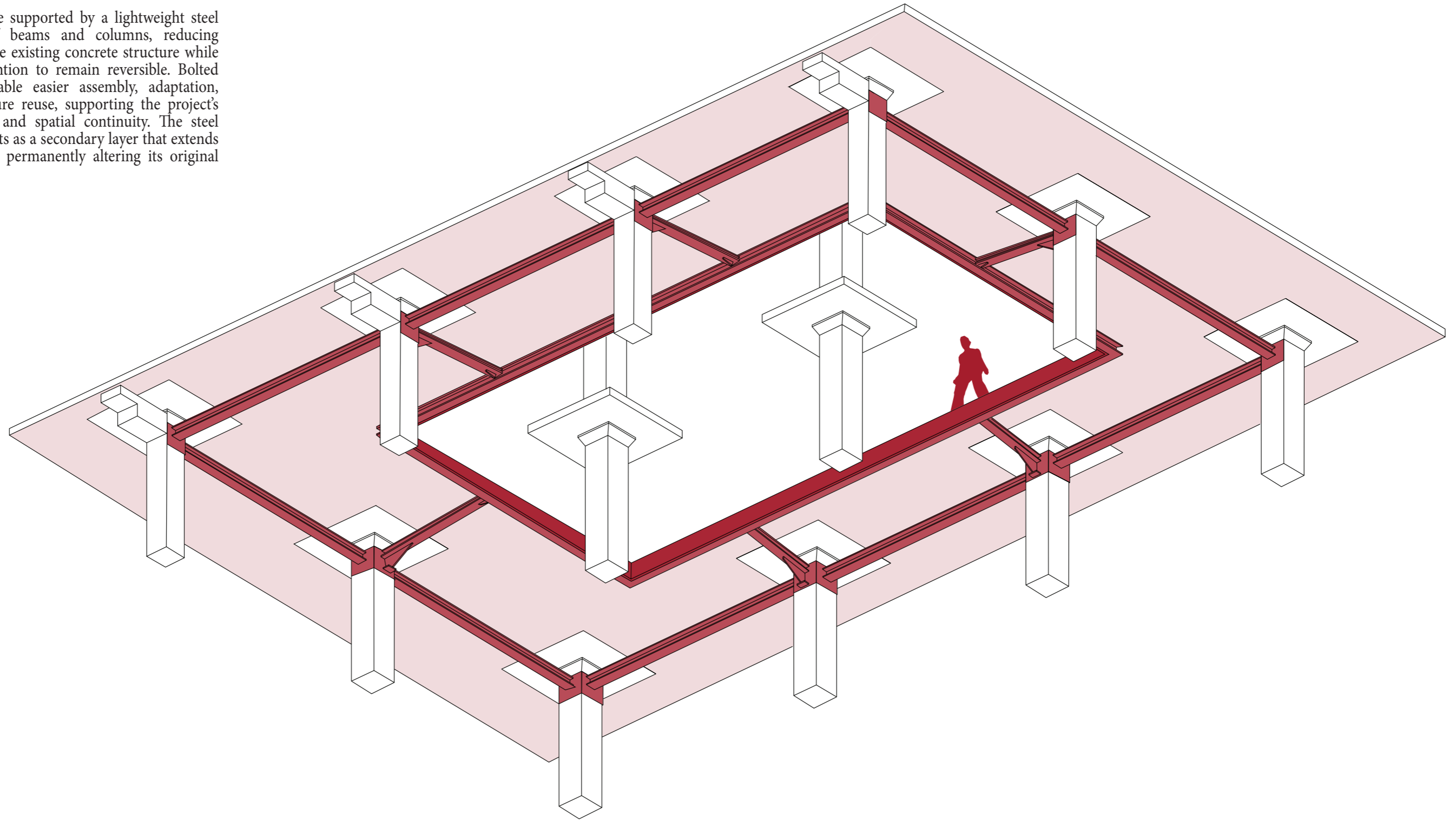


FIGURE 125: PERSPECTIVE VIEW FROM BELOW SHOWING THE STRUCTURAL INTERVENTION OF THE NEW VOIDS AND SECONDARY STEEL SUPPORT SYSTEM

The voids are reinforced through a secondary steel support system connected to the existing 600 × 600 mm reinforced concrete columns. Three-sided steel collars fixed with steel plates and chemical anchors act as the primary transfer nodes. From these points, custom triangular-cut welded H-section transfer beams and diagonal HEA 200 steel beams redistribute loads toward the slab edges and increase local rigidity. Continuous perimeter HEA 200 edge beams support the slab openings, reinforced with U-shaped steel channels fixed around the slab thickness. Additional horizontal steel beams spanning 7.20 m between columns provide overall structural continuity.

All new steel elements are coated with red intumescent fire-protective paint, visually distinguishing the intervention from the existing concrete structure. The structural strategy forms part of the architectural proposal, while final dimensions, member sizing and connection details remain subject to structural engineering development and verification.

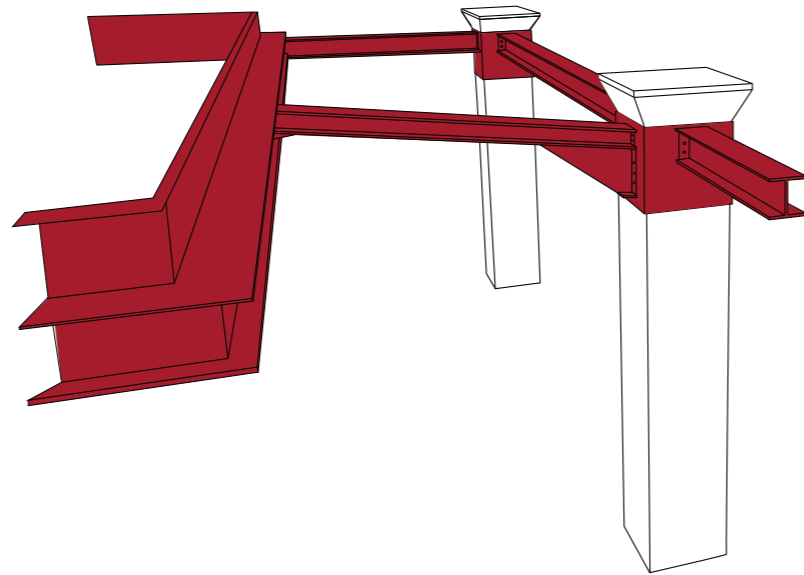


FIGURE 126: THE RED STEEL VOID SUPPORT STRUCTURE

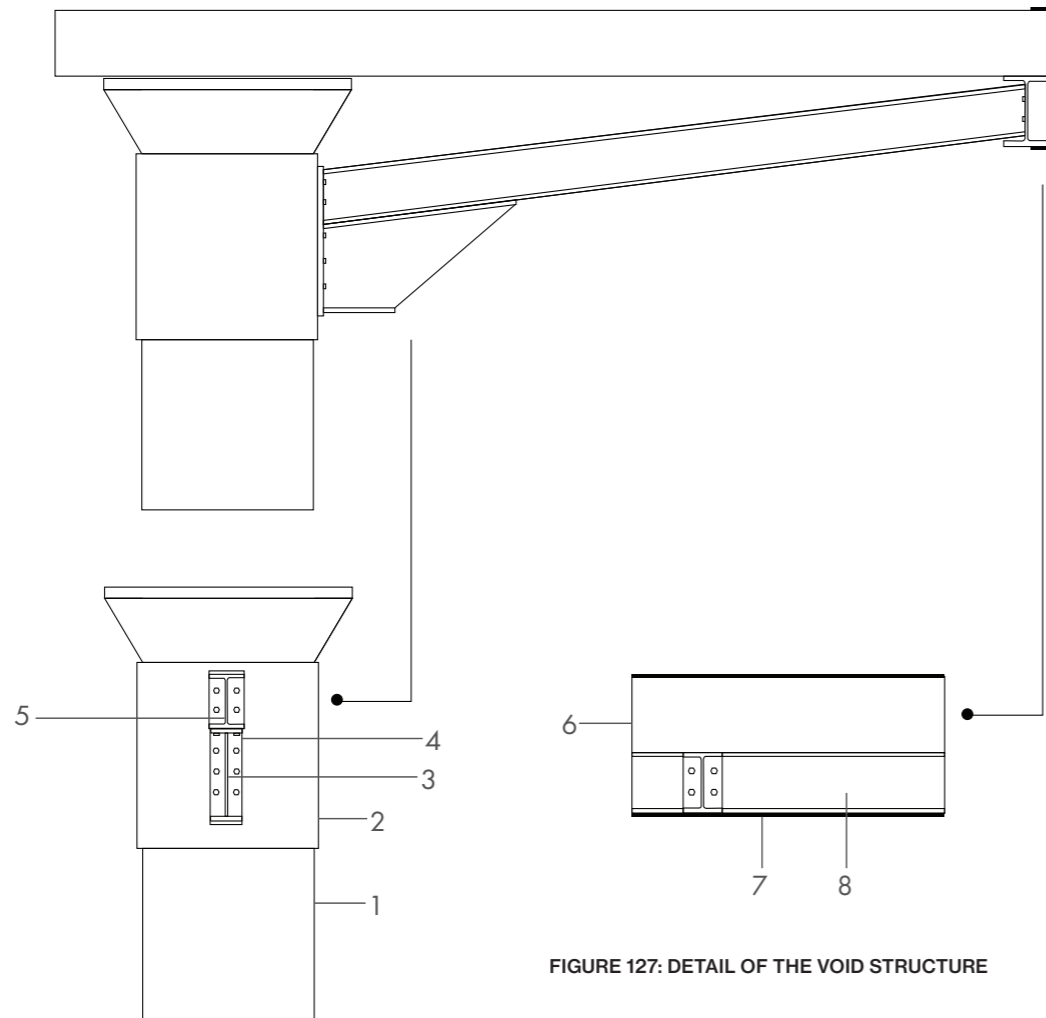


FIGURE 127: DETAIL OF THE VOID STRUCTURE



FIGURE 128: IMPRESSION OF THE VOIDS

- 1 EXISTING MUSHROOM HEAD COLUMN 600 X 600
- 2 STEEL COLLAR
- 3 CUSTOM TRIANGULAR-CUT WELDED H-SECTION STEEL TRANSFER BEAM
- 4 BOLTED STEEL CONNECTION PLATE
- 5 DIAGONAL HEA 200 STEEL BEAM
- 6 EXISTING CONCRETE SLAB
- 7 U-SHAPED STEEL CHANNEL PROFILES
- 8 HEA 200 STEEL BEAM

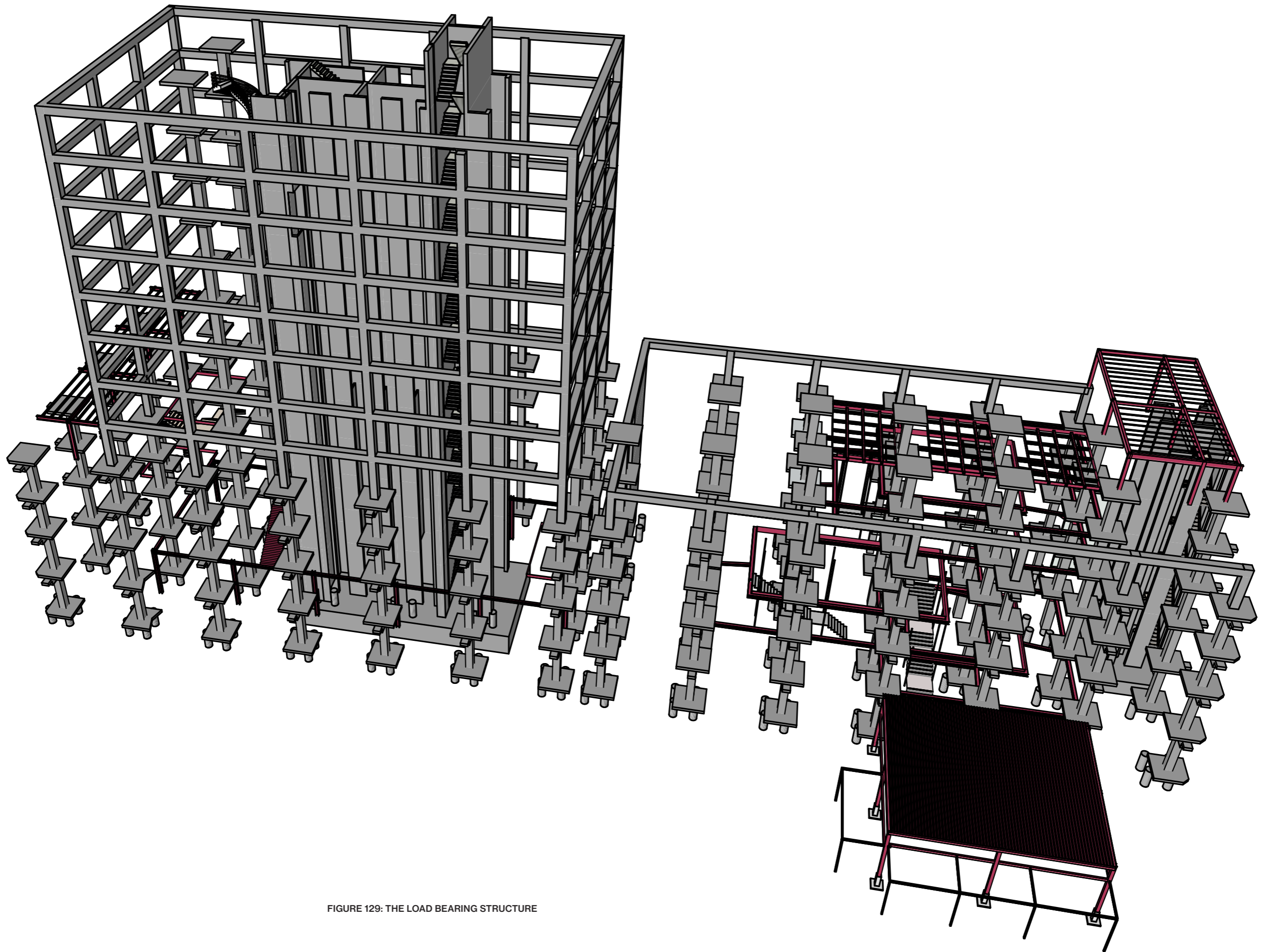
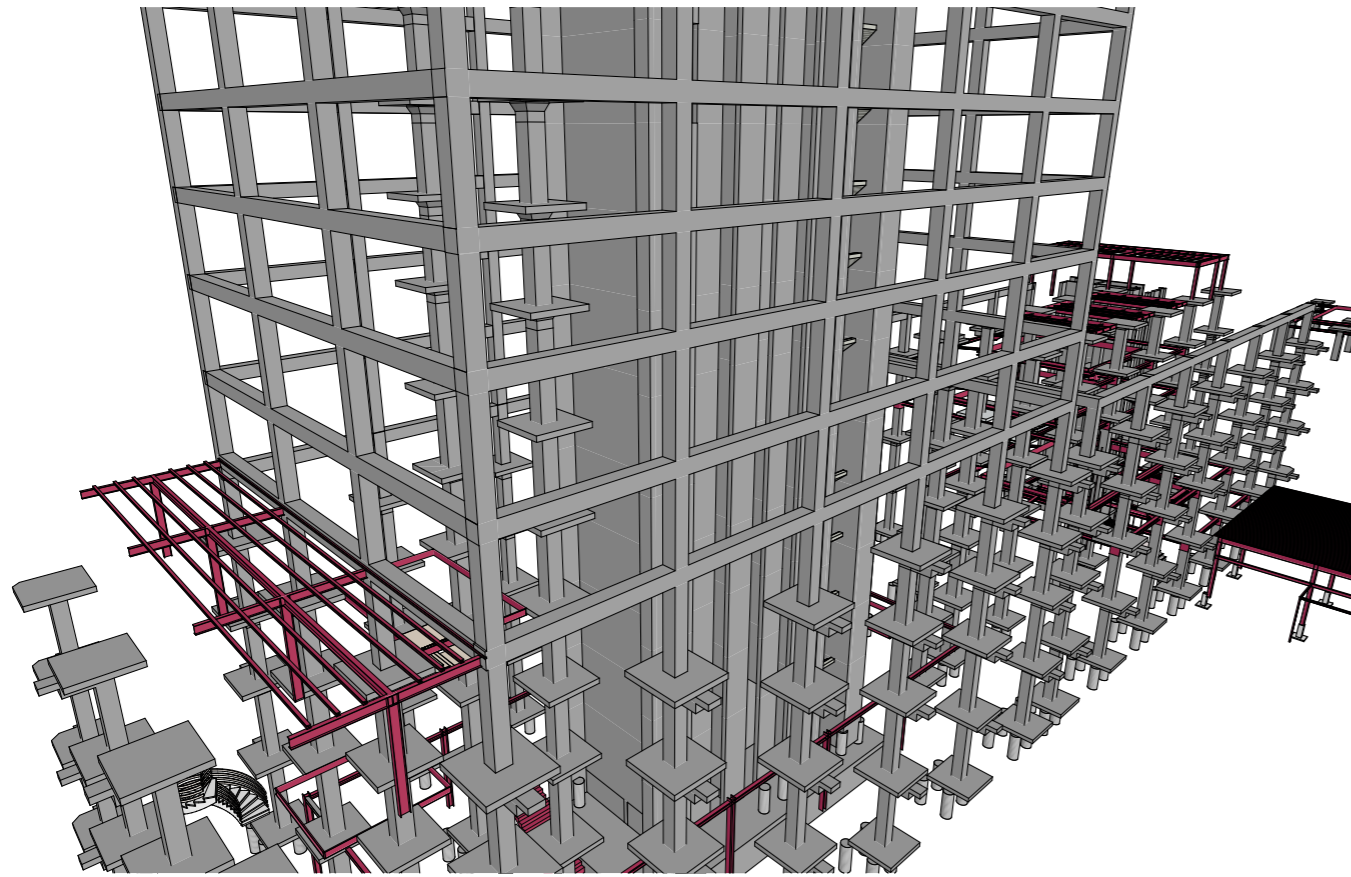


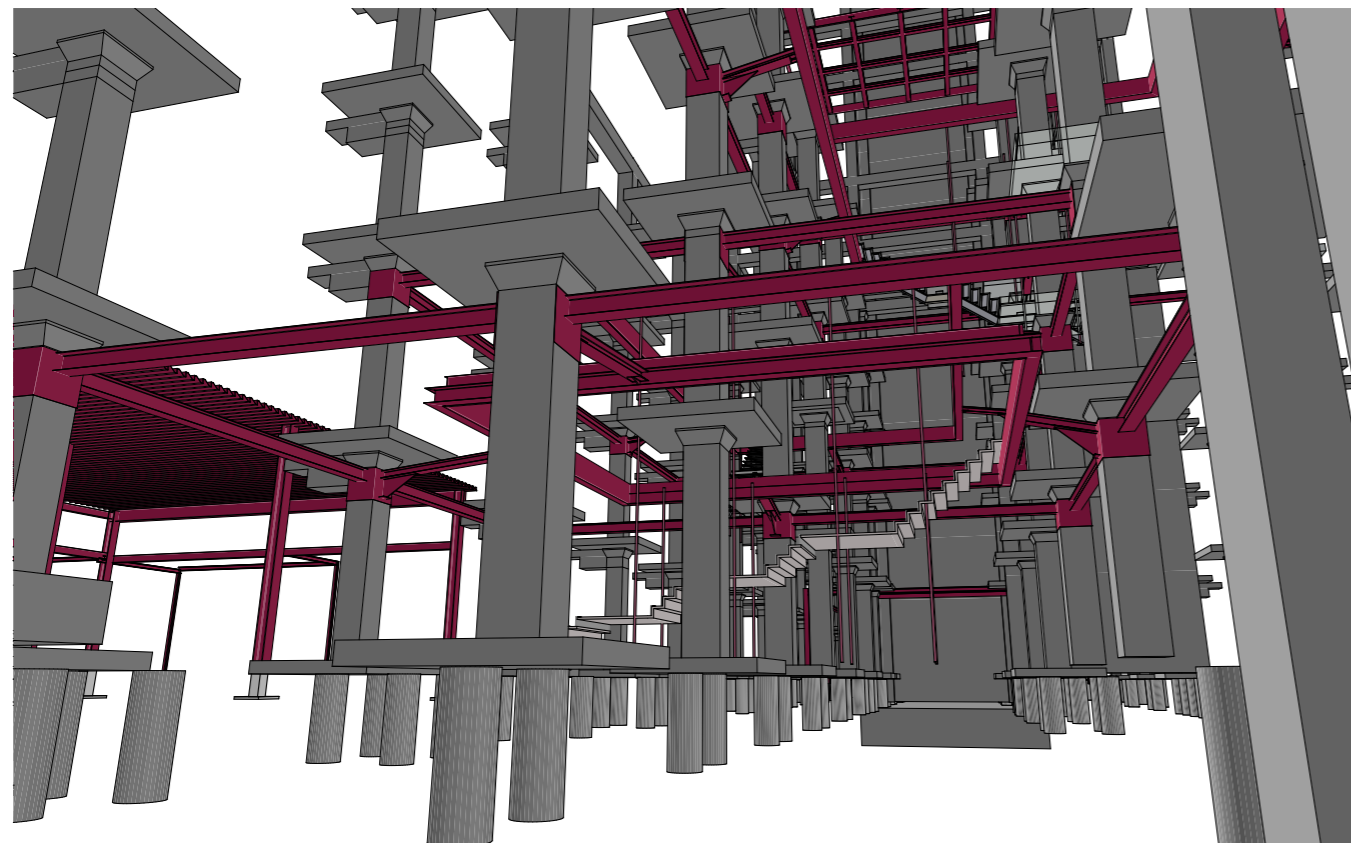
FIGURE 129: THE LOAD BEARING STRUCTURE



FIGURES 130,131:: THE LOAD BEARING STRUCTURE

The existing load-bearing structure consists of a reinforced concrete frame system with  $600 \times 600$  mm concrete columns arranged on a regular grid. Different column head typologies are used throughout the building, while the floor slabs are locally reinforced in  $1.8 \times 1.8$  m zones around each column. In the tower, the perimeter columns do not include column heads and are instead connected by continuous concrete beams. Structural stability is further provided by reinforced concrete cores located centrally in the tower and along the edge of the base volume.

The intervention preserves the existing primary structure. New additions consist mainly of lightweight steel structures, while the introduced voids are carefully positioned around the reinforced slab zones to maintain the structural integrity of the existing system.



The building uses a mixed-mode environmental strategy combining natural and mechanical systems while maintaining the exposed concrete structure and visible building services. The food hall and collective floors use cross ventilation through operable façade openings and stack ventilation through the central voids, where warm air rises toward operable roof skylights. Mechanical fresh-air supply and extract ventilation with heat recovery (HRV) support the system during winter and peak occupancy, while CO<sub>2</sub>-controlled ventilation regulates airflow according to occupancy levels (ASHRAE 62.1). Heating and cooling are provided through air-to-water heat pumps connected to exposed ceiling-mounted fan coil units, while the concrete slabs function as thermal mass and support night purge ventilation for passive cooling. The child care spaces use a more controlled mixed-mode system with operable windows, mechanical ventilation, and radiant ceiling panels or fan coil units. Co-working spaces follow a similar strategy to the food hall, while the hotel uses a fully mechanical system with individual fan coil units and fresh-air supply. The office floors combine operable windows with CO<sub>2</sub>-controlled mechanical ventilation and zoned fan coil units. Exposed ducts, pipes, kitchen exhausts, and ventilation shafts connect horizontally below the slabs before rising through the existing cores to rooftop plant areas containing heat pumps, HRV units, and other mechanical equipment. Rainwater from the tower roof is collected through exposed drainage systems, filtered, stored, and reused as non-potable water for irrigation, cleaning, and toilet flushing, while photovoltaic panels on the tower roof contribute to the building's on-site renewable energy production.

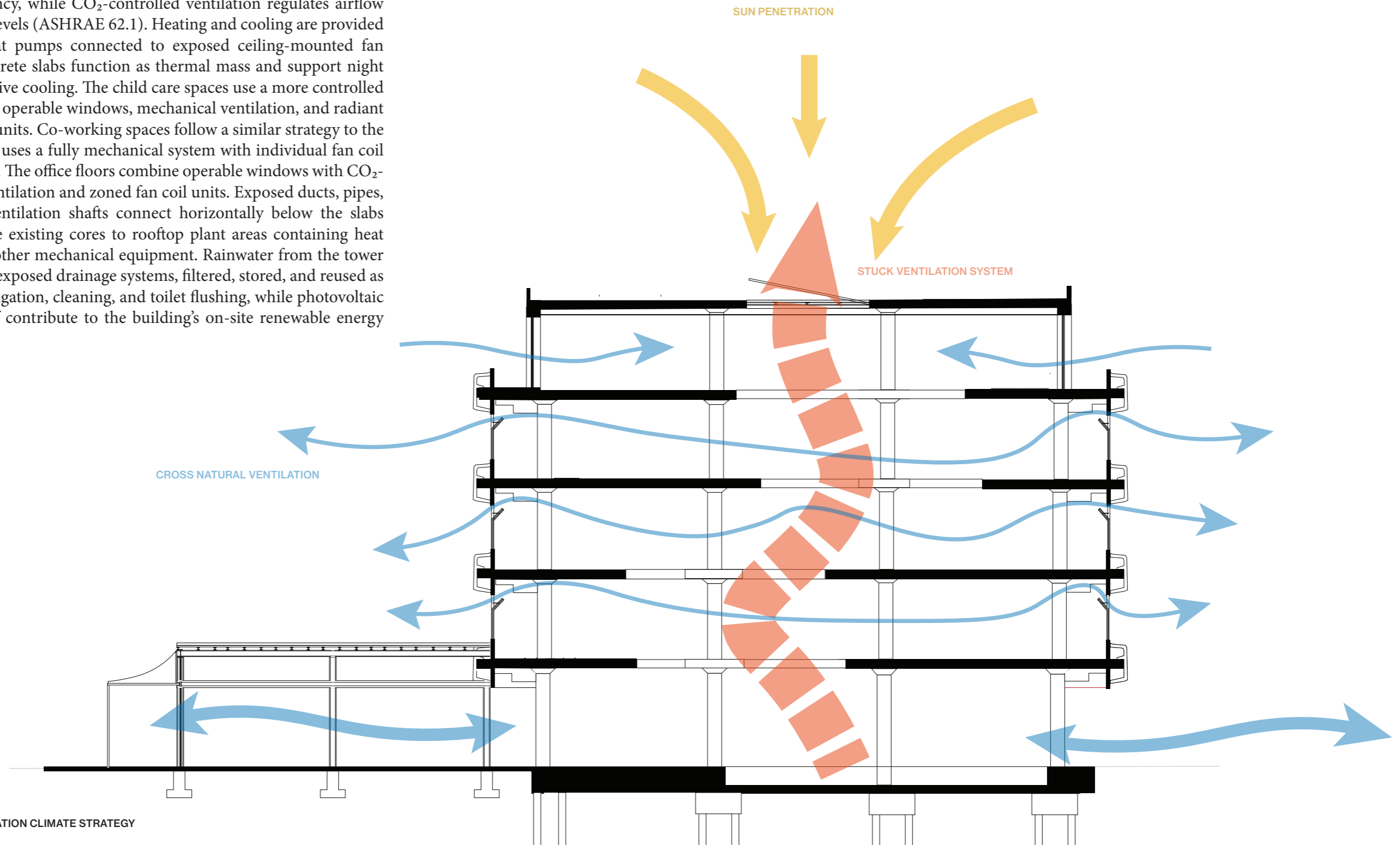


FIGURE 132: THE VENTILATION CLIMATE STRATEGY

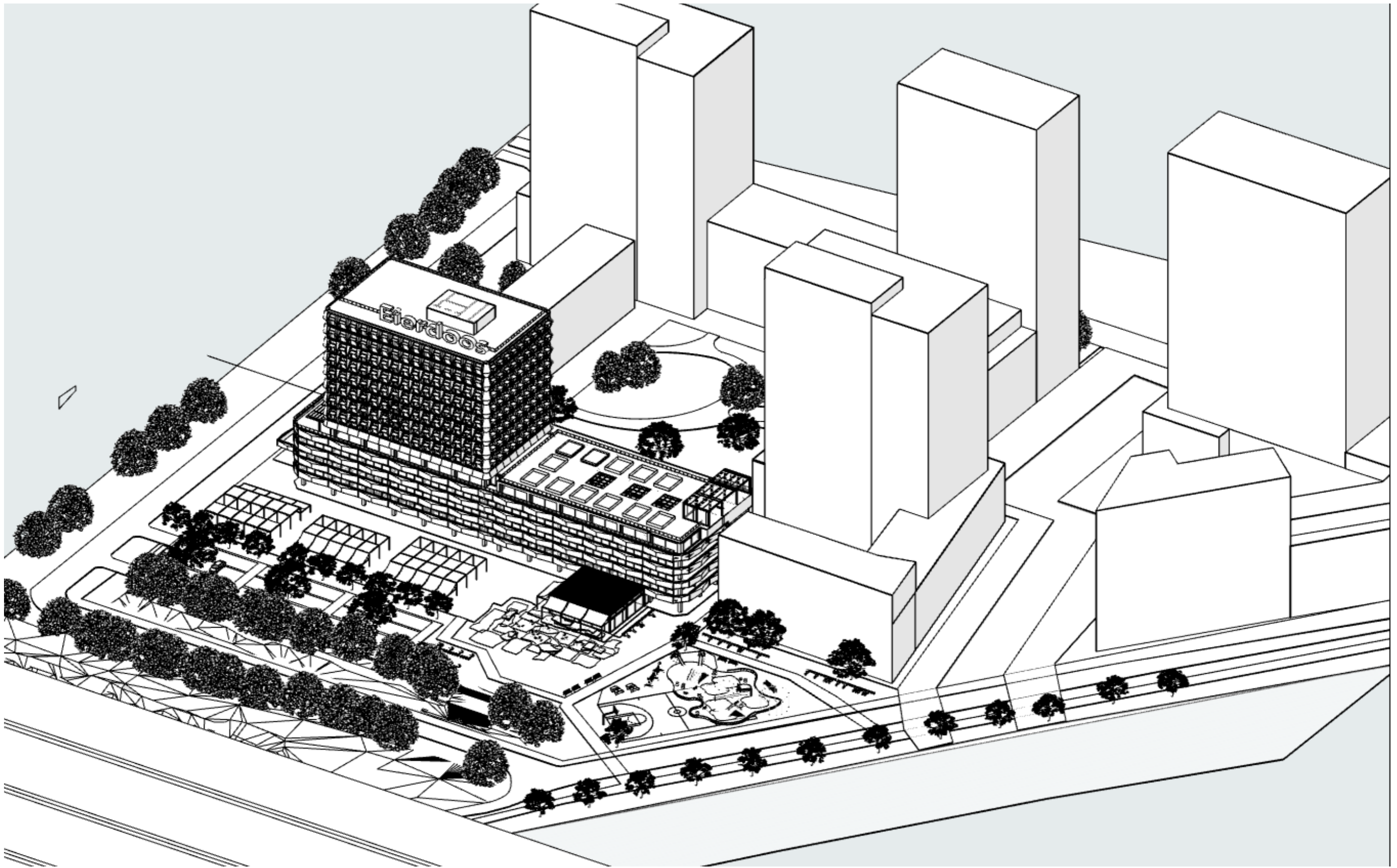


FIGURE 133: AXONOMETRIC VIEW

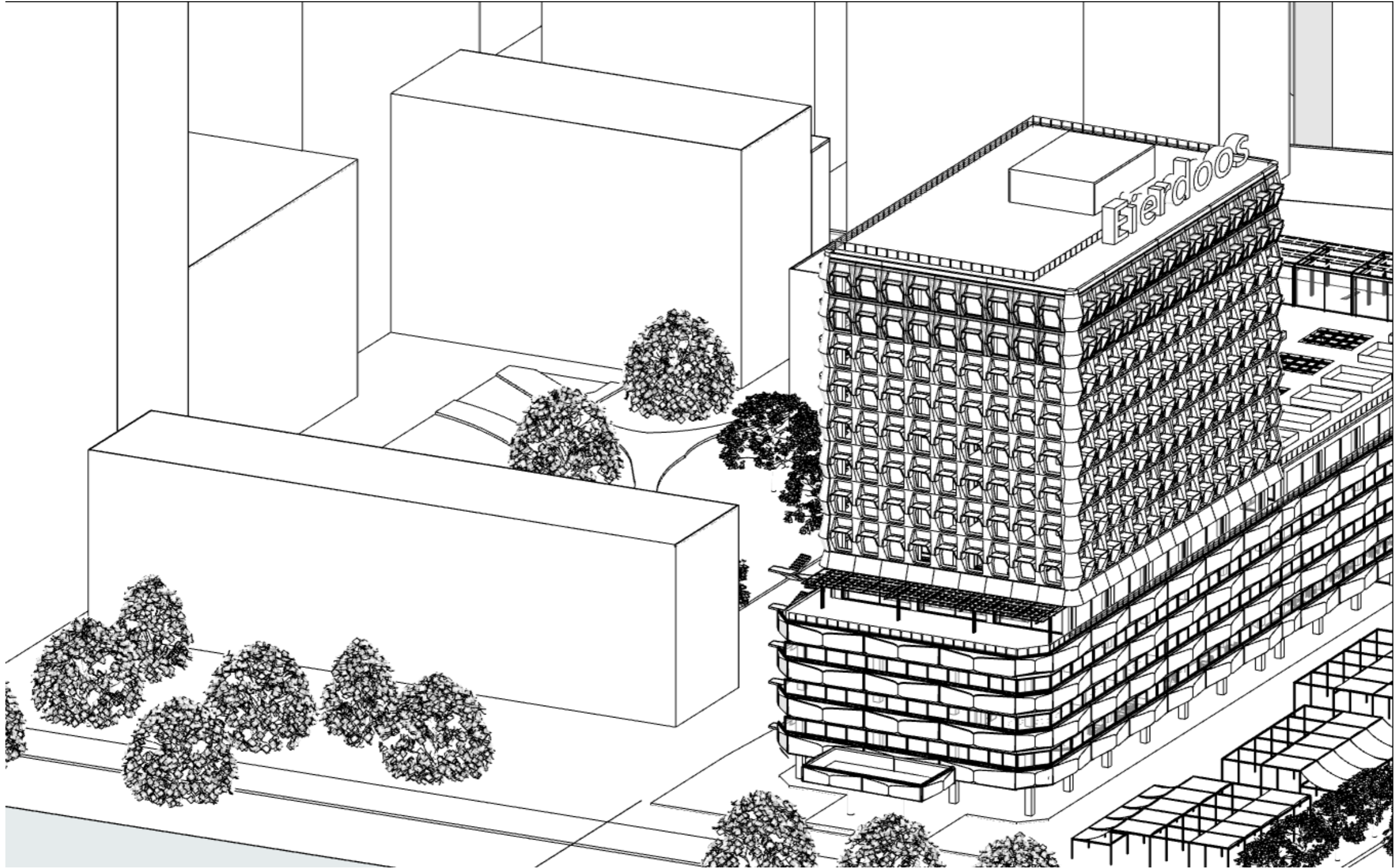


FIGURE 134: AXONOMETRIC VIEW

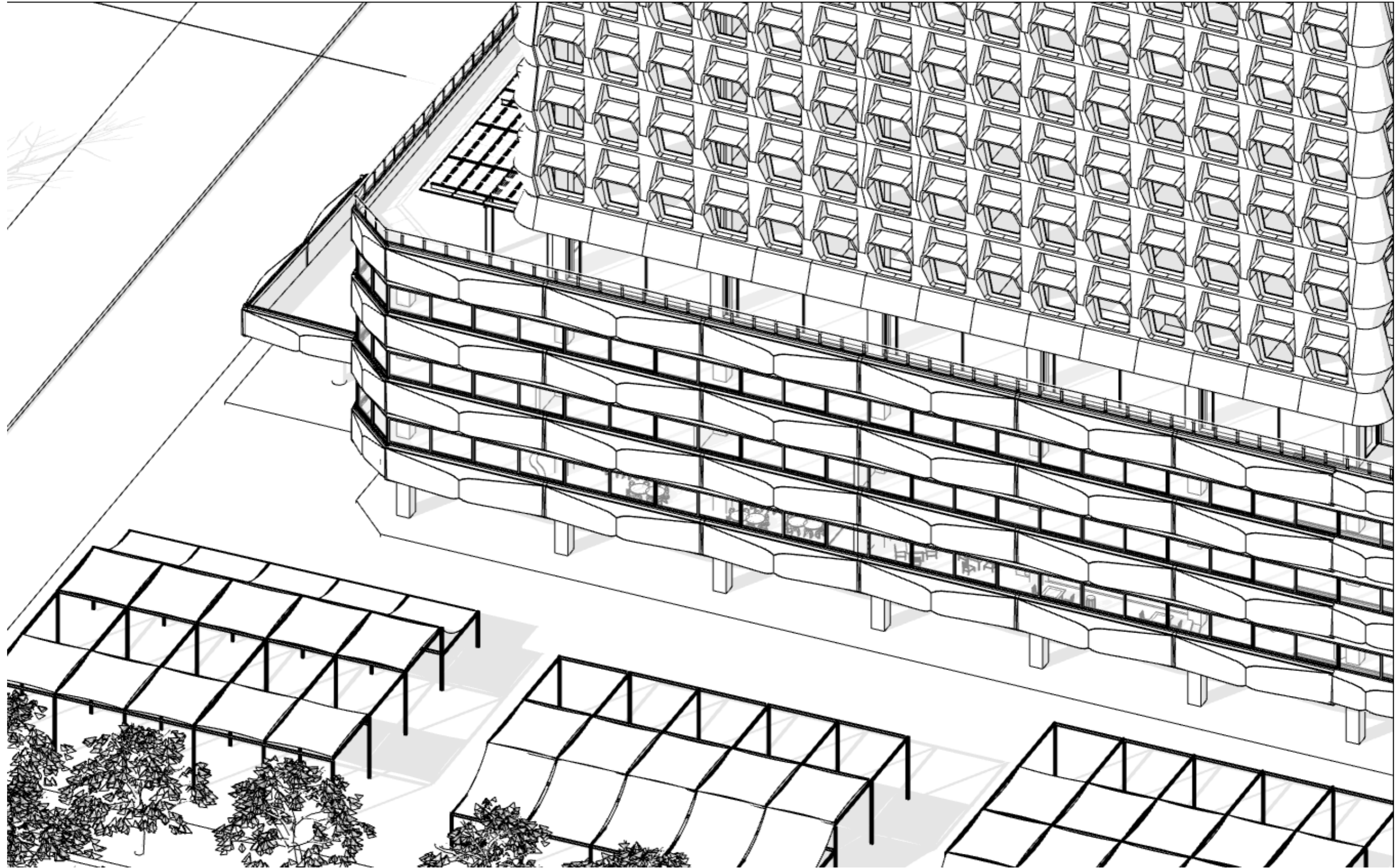


FIGURE 135: AXONOMETRIC VIEW

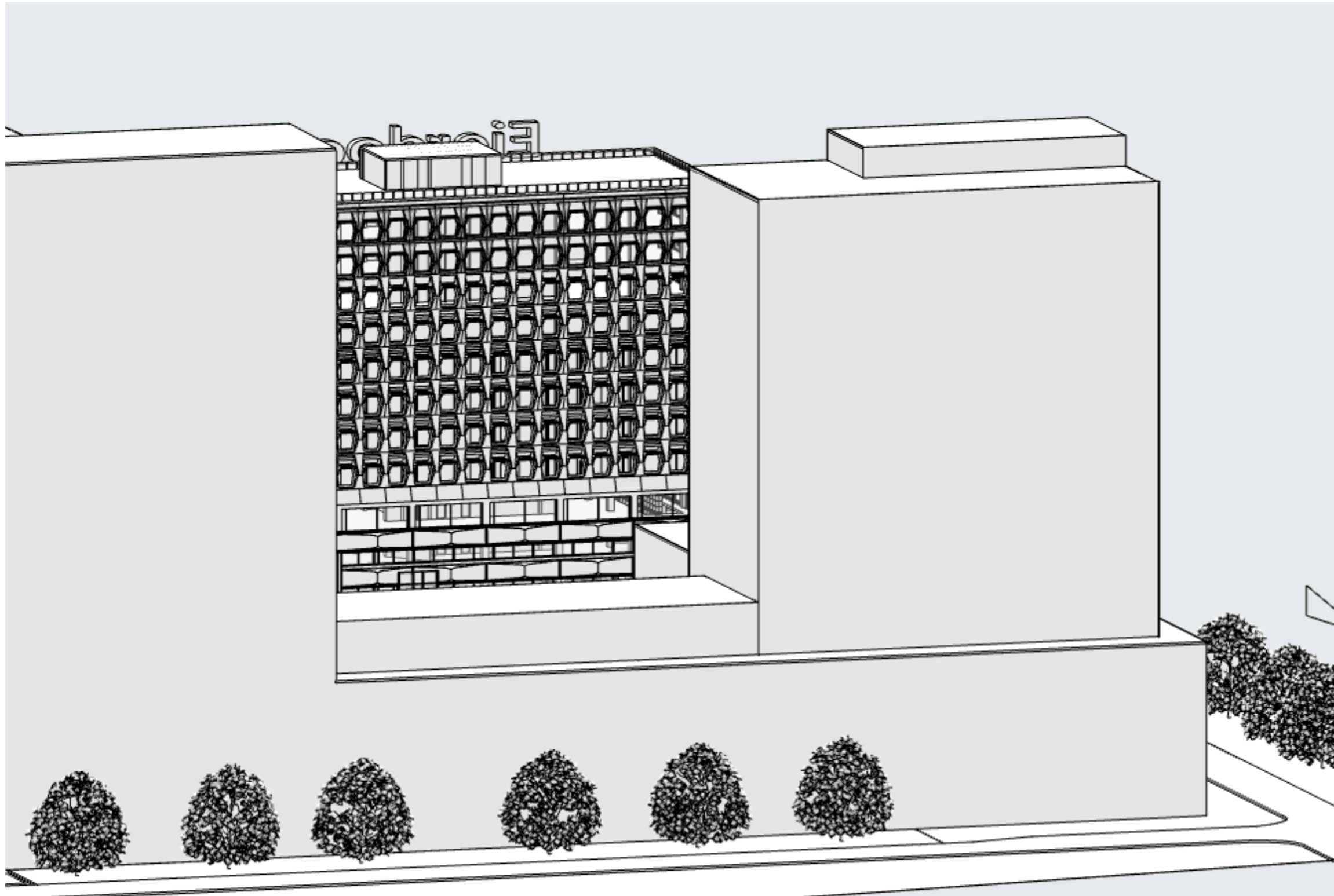


FIGURE 136: AXONOMETRIC VIEW



FIGURE 137-140: 3D MODEL IMPRESSIONS



FIGURE 141, 142: FOOD HALL IMPRESSIONS

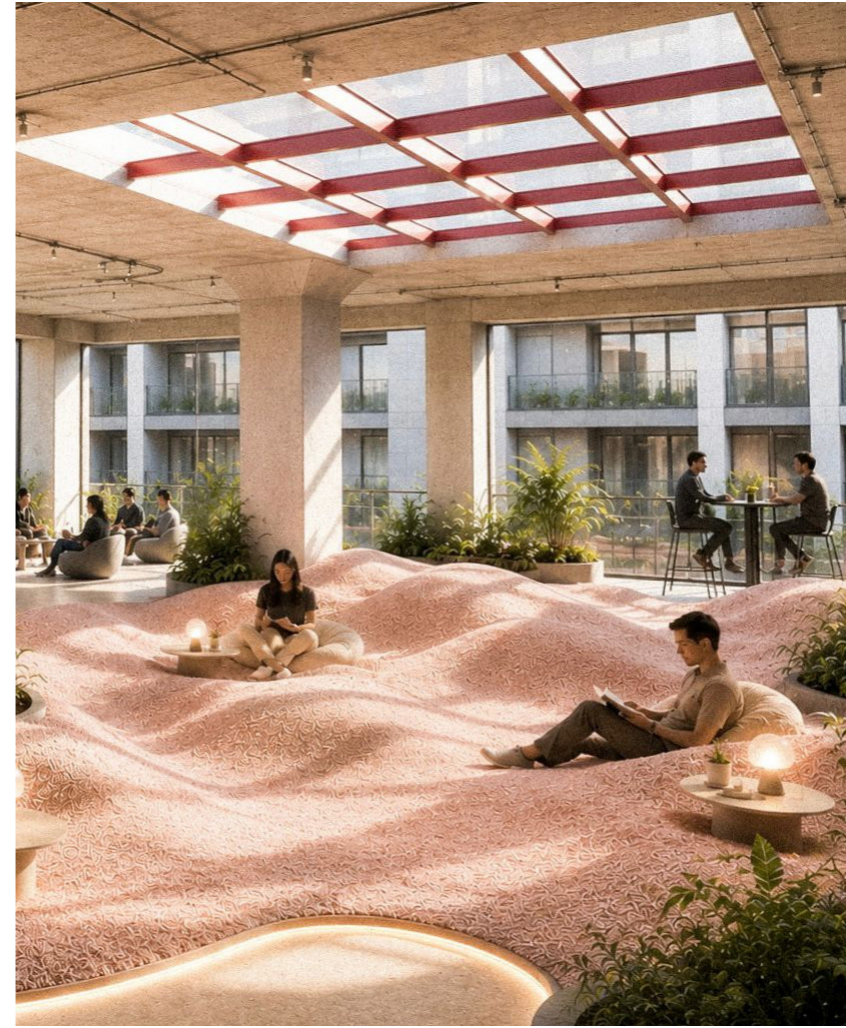


FIGURE 143, 144: WELLNESS IMPRESSIONS

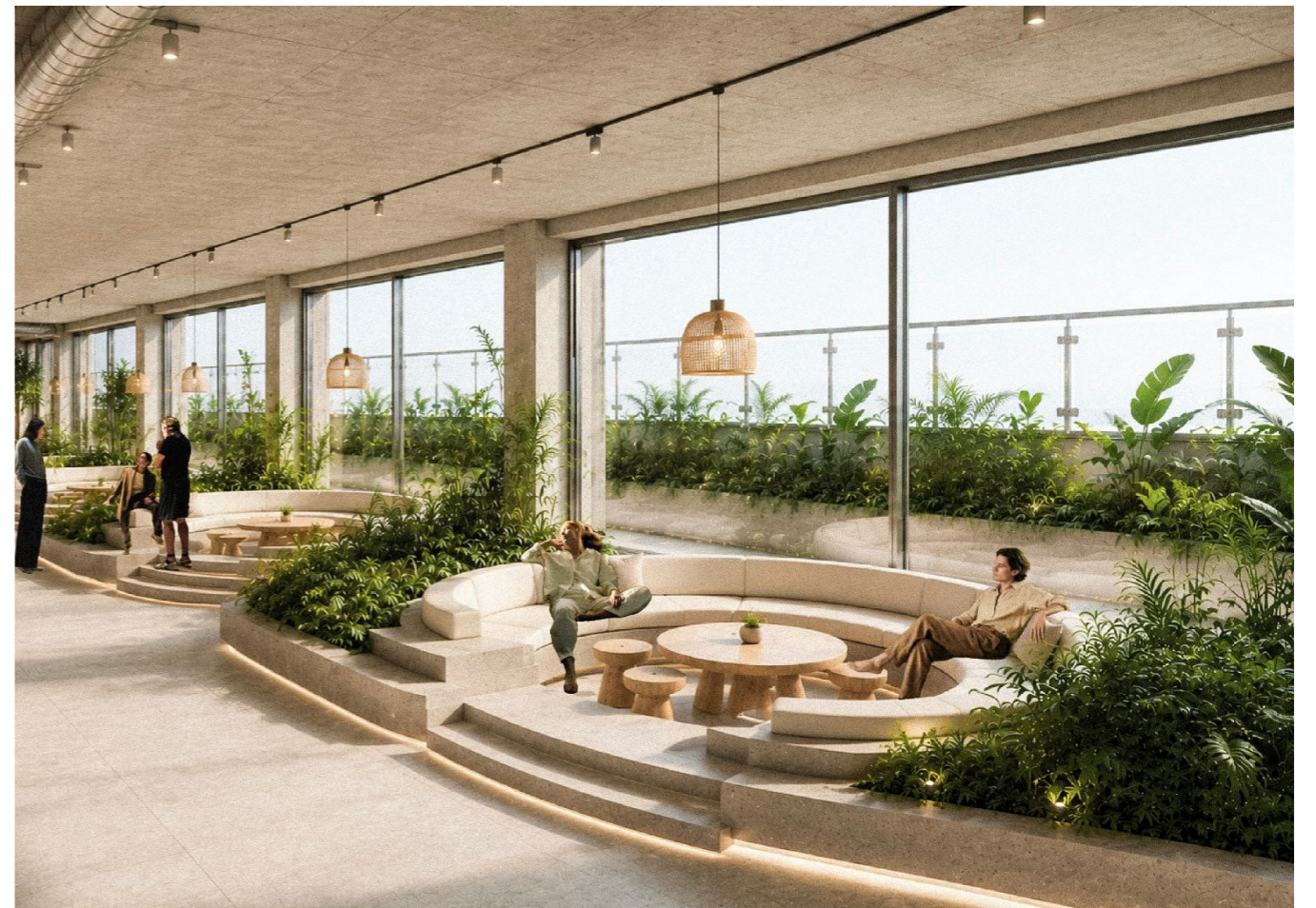




FIGURE 145: HOTEL IMPRESSION



FIGURES 146, 147: OFFICES IMPRESSIONS





FIGURES 148-150: OUTDOOR SPACE IMPRESSIONS



FIGURE 151: FINAL 3D IMPRESSION

## Conclusions.

The aim of this thesis was to explore and investigate how the adaptive reuse of vacant post-war concrete office buildings can establish architectural continuity by reconnecting past identities, present conditions, and future potentials through transformation and reinterpretation. Using the Sijthoff Building in Rijswijk as a case study, the project addresses the following research question: “How can the adaptive reuse of a post-1965 concrete office building establish architectural continuity across past, present, and future through urban, material, and spatial transformation, while reinforcing its identity and re-establishing its role within the urban environment?”

This research addresses vacancy and obsolescence in many post-war office blocks. Though structurally sound, these buildings are often deemed outdated and expendable. The Sijthoff Building exemplifies this trend: prolonged vacancy weakened its ties to the city and public, revealed material decay, and exposed the limits of its single-use office design. Nevertheless, its distinctive “Eierdoos” façade and landmark silhouette give it a strong identity. Planned redevelopment and rising density threatened to erase this legacy, raising the question of how to meet contemporary needs without losing its character.

The proposed solution shows that continuity is achieved not by freezing the building in time, but through selective transformations guided by its original logic. This meant reconnecting three temporal layers: its past (as a newspaper headquarters and print facility), its present (vacant and aging), and its future (a flexible, mixed-use structure). This layered approach was key to a reuse strategy that extends the building’s life beyond obsolescence.

The adaptive reuse strategy rests on three interconnected themes: urban, material, and spatial continuity.

At the urban scale, continuity is achieved by reactivating the Sijthoff Building through a hybrid program that keeps the building active beyond office hours while extending its original working identity. Instead of competing through height, the proposal strengthens its relationship with the city through accessibility, visibility, and everyday use and ground level activation. Public functions, inside and outside, including a grocery store, food hall, terraces, playground, market space, and rooftop community garden are combined with coworking support spaces, childcare, a business hotel, and offices, supporting both the business character of Plaspoelpolder and the needs of residents. New pedestrian and bicycle routes reconnect the building with the canal, motorway, and surrounding neighbourhoods, while a terraced landscape stair improves movement across the site and permeability. Also, continuity is expressed through the reinterpretation of the building’s identity: the preserved “Eierdoos” façade, the new rooftop sign referencing its vacant past, and the reintroduction of red elements derived from the original entrance canopy and motorway infrastructure.

The material strategies achieved continuity by working with the existing structure and façade as active parts of the transformation instead of replacing them. Key façade elements, prefabricated façade elements and concrete structure, were retained. Vacancy-induced features, such as the open ground floor and the mechanical damage on the northwest facade, remain in the design as evidence of past use.

Material continuity is achieved by working with the existing structure and façade as active parts of the transformation rather than replacing them. The proposal preserves the “Eierdoos” façade, its repetitive concrete system, and the visible traces of ageing, including stains, cracks, graffiti, and weathering, treating them as evidence of the building’s occupation, abandonment, and reuse over time. Vacancy-related conditions, such as the lifted ground floor and the exposed northwest opening, remain visible as part of the building’s history. Selected concrete façade modules are replaced with cast-glass replicas produced from recycled glazing removed from the building itself, maintaining the original geometry and façade rhythm while improving daylight conditions and environmental performance. Removed concrete façade elements are preserved and stored as reusable components for potential future reassembly, while concrete from slab openings is reused within the landscape interventions. Continuity is established through selective disassembly, reuse, recycling, and reinterpretation, allowing the building to adapt without losing its identity.

For the spatial intervention, the deep floor plates, repetitive column grid, and exposed concrete frame provided the basis for the new intervention and proved capable of accommodating new forms of occupation over time. Continuity is established by preserving the original structural logic while selectively transforming it through voids, circulation, and programmatic layering. The introduction of large voids improves daylight, orientation, visual connections, and social interaction, reducing the isolated character of the former office floors and creating collective spaces connected across multiple levels. Different circulation systems respond to different uses: linear routes organize controlled functions, grid circulation supports flexibility, and flowing circulation encourages informal movement within the public areas. Lightweight reversible steel additions and modular partitions allow future adaptation without permanently altering the existing concrete structure.

In summary, this adaptive reuse strategy achieves continuity not by static preservation but through selective transformation that honors the building’s legacy. By reconnecting its past, present, and future layers, the Sijthoff Building gains new life as a vibrant, multifunctional asset. Its history remains legible even as it becomes an active part of the city. The project demonstrates that vacancy can be a catalyst rather than a failure, and that repurposed post-war concrete offices can meet contemporary needs without losing their identity.

## Implications and Recommendations.

The project suggests that many post-1965 office buildings should be understood as adaptable architectural systems capable of accommodating change and supporting new forms of occupation over time.

It also highlights the importance of integrating spatial, urban, and material strategies within a single reuse approach. Reconnecting the building with the public realm, transforming the deep office typology through voids and circulation, and reinterpreting the prefabricated façade system together create a more comprehensive response compared to purely technical renovation alone.

Several aspects of the project could be further developed through technical investigation. The cast-glass façade system and the rest of the prefabricated façade could evolve into a higher-performing double-skin climate façade supported by more advanced environmental analysis. Daylight, thermal performance, and natural ventilation studies could be integrated more precisely throughout the design process, allowing daylight performance to play a stronger role in the architectural development, while structural calculations could further evaluate the capacity of the existing concrete frame and the introduced void interventions. Although the project approaches the building as a material reservoir and a transformable system through reusable façade components, dry connections, and reversible lightweight interventions, the introduced structural voids remain largely irreversible transformations. Future research could therefore investigate how large spatial interventions in adaptive reuse projects can balance long-term flexibility with permanent structural modification. In addition, the removed original prefabricated façade elements from the tower could be reused through a more developed and systematic strategy, exploring how dismantled concrete components may become integrated into new façade systems, public space interventions, landscape elements, or future building extensions instead of being treated only as stored material.

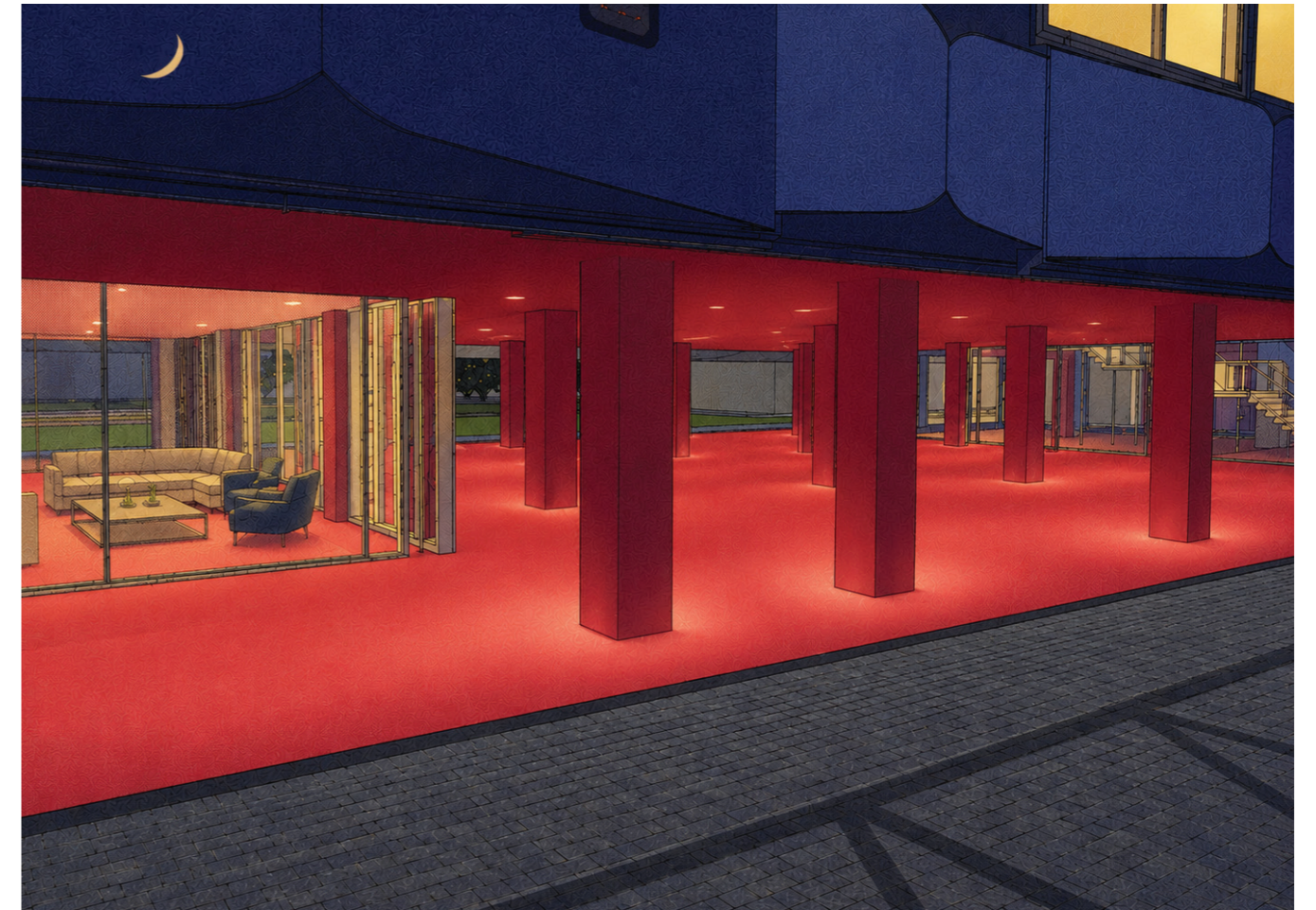


FIGURE 152: CARTOON GROUND FLOOR IMPRESSION AT NIGHT

## Reflection.

The project developed through an iterative research-by-design process in which analysis and design continuously informed one another. Instead of defining a fixed architectural solution from the beginning, the proposal evolved through circulation studies, programmatic testing, façade experiments, environmental considerations, and spatial investigations. Reuse was therefore not the starting point, but developed through the analytical evaluation of the building's existing spatial and material potentials.

Digital modelling, drawings, diagrams, and visual studies became important tools for testing relationships between structure, façade, circulation, and public space. Environmental strategies such as daylight access, natural ventilation, thermal mass, and material reuse also informed the architectural development of the proposal. However, several technical aspects remained conceptual and could be further developed through advanced structural and environmental simulations.

The process showcased the importance of working with existing structures by treating vacancy, damage, and ageing as opportunities for architectural transformation. It also developed an understanding of adaptive reuse as an ongoing process through which buildings can respond to changing urban, social, and environmental demands over time.



FIGURE 153: OUTDOOR IMPRESSION

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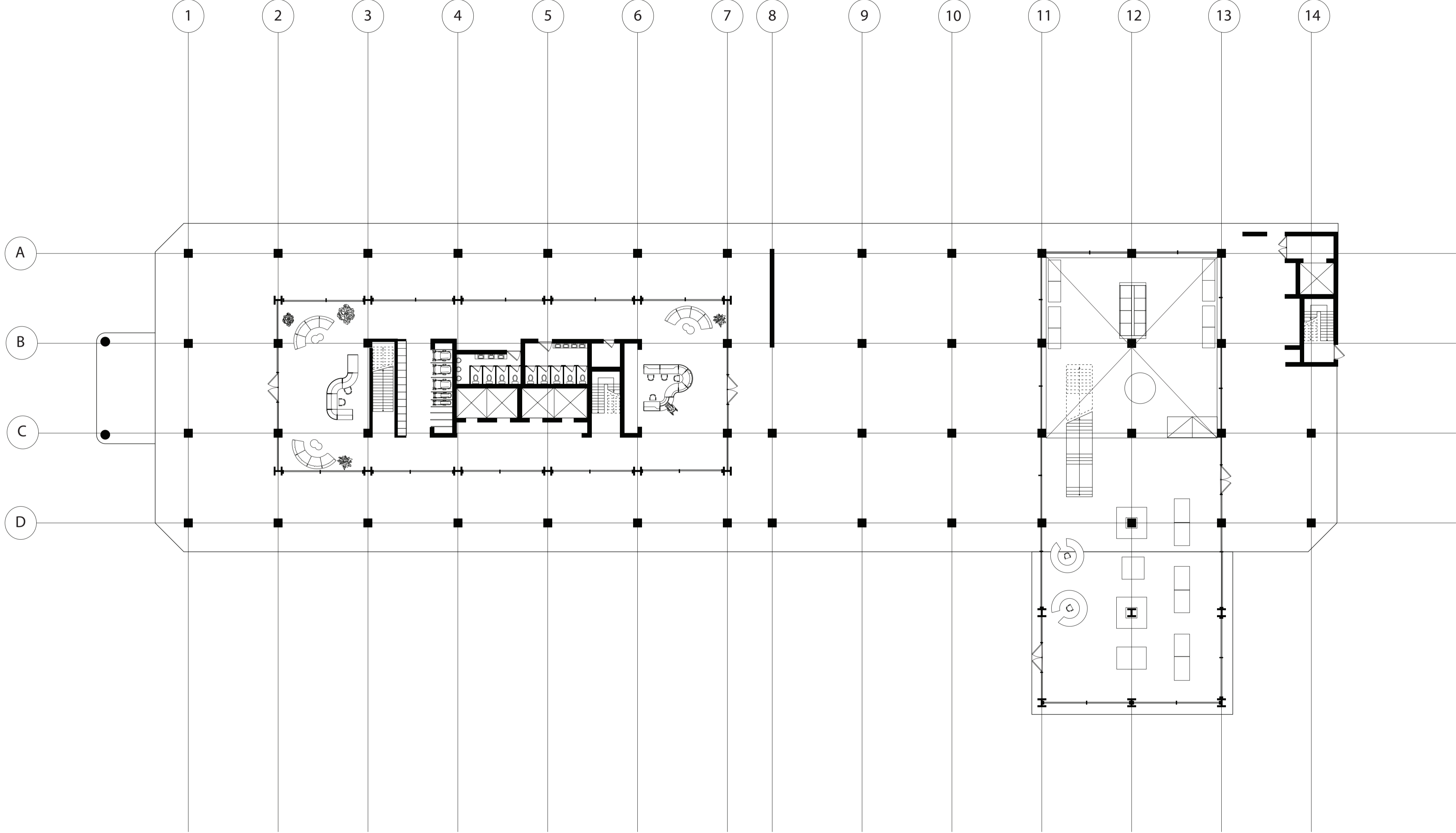
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#### AI Use Statement

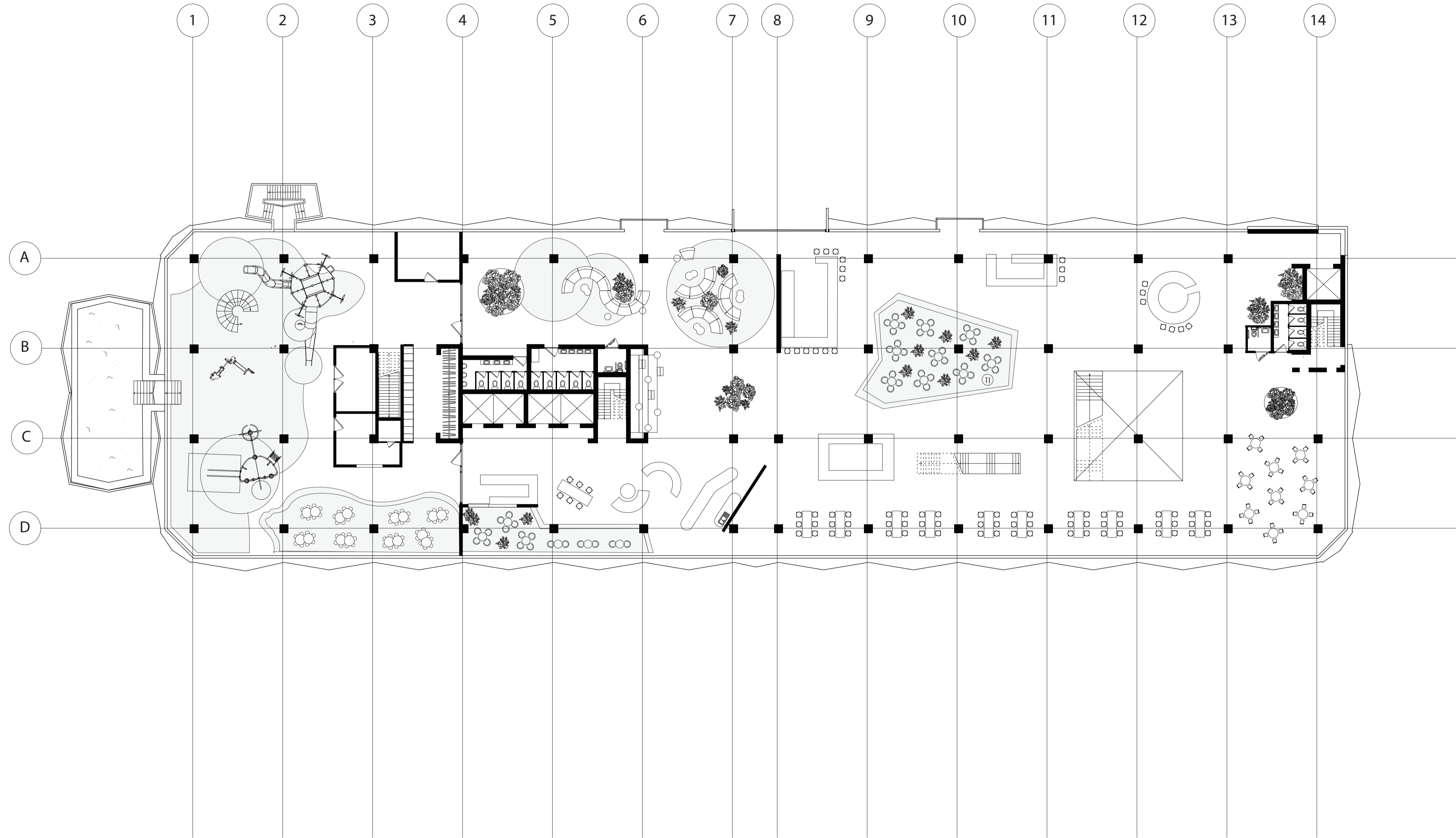
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Appendix.

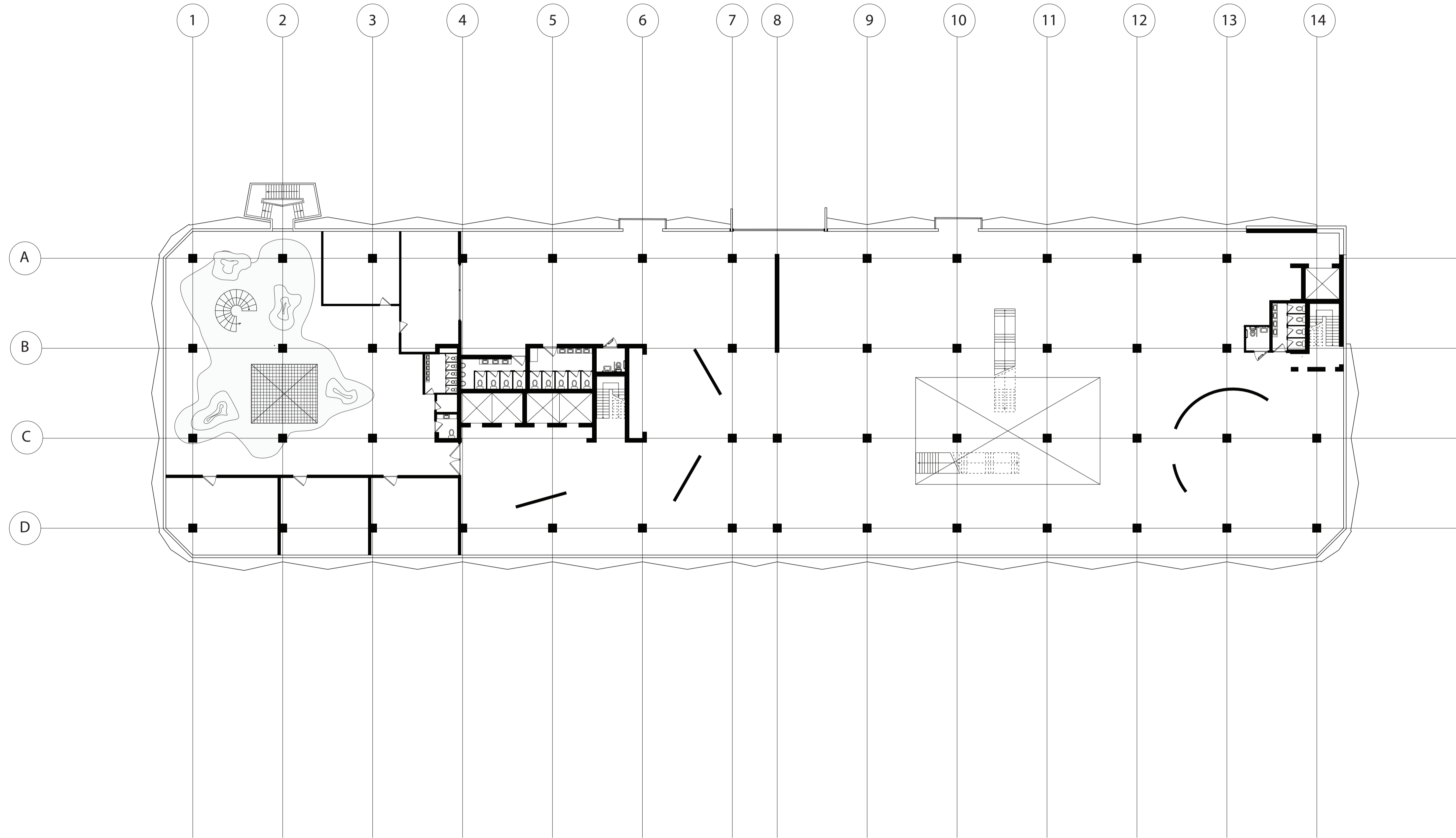
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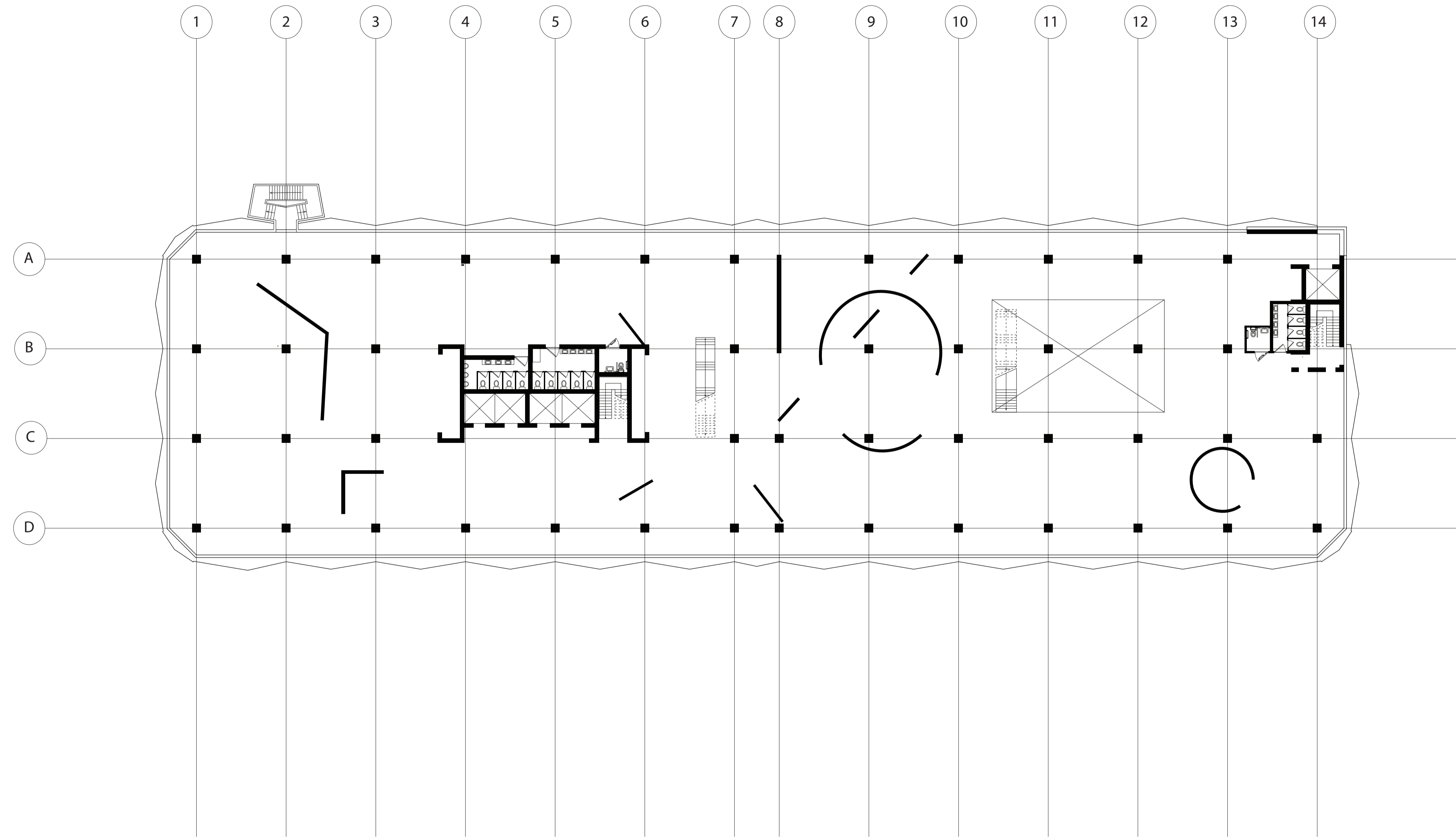
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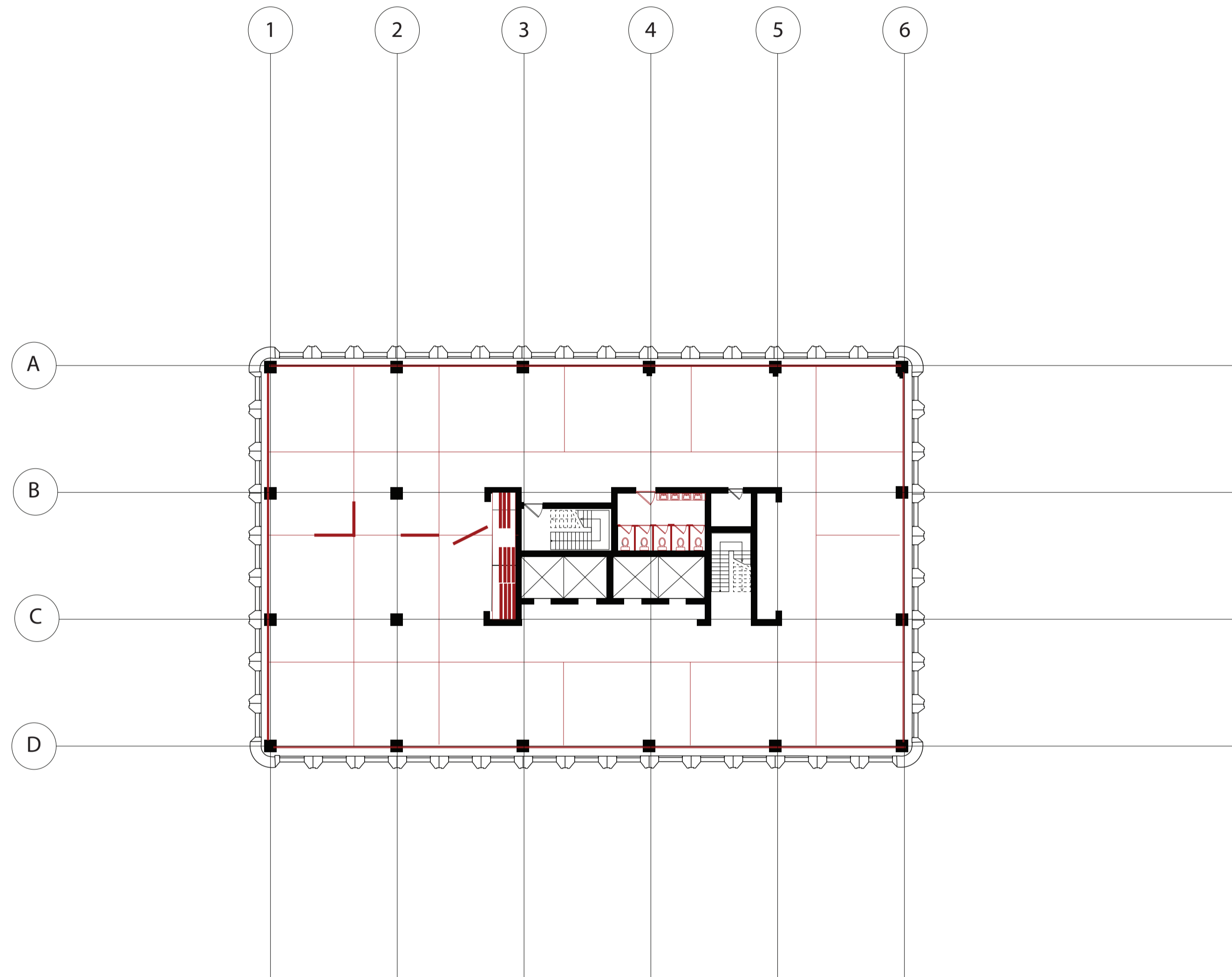
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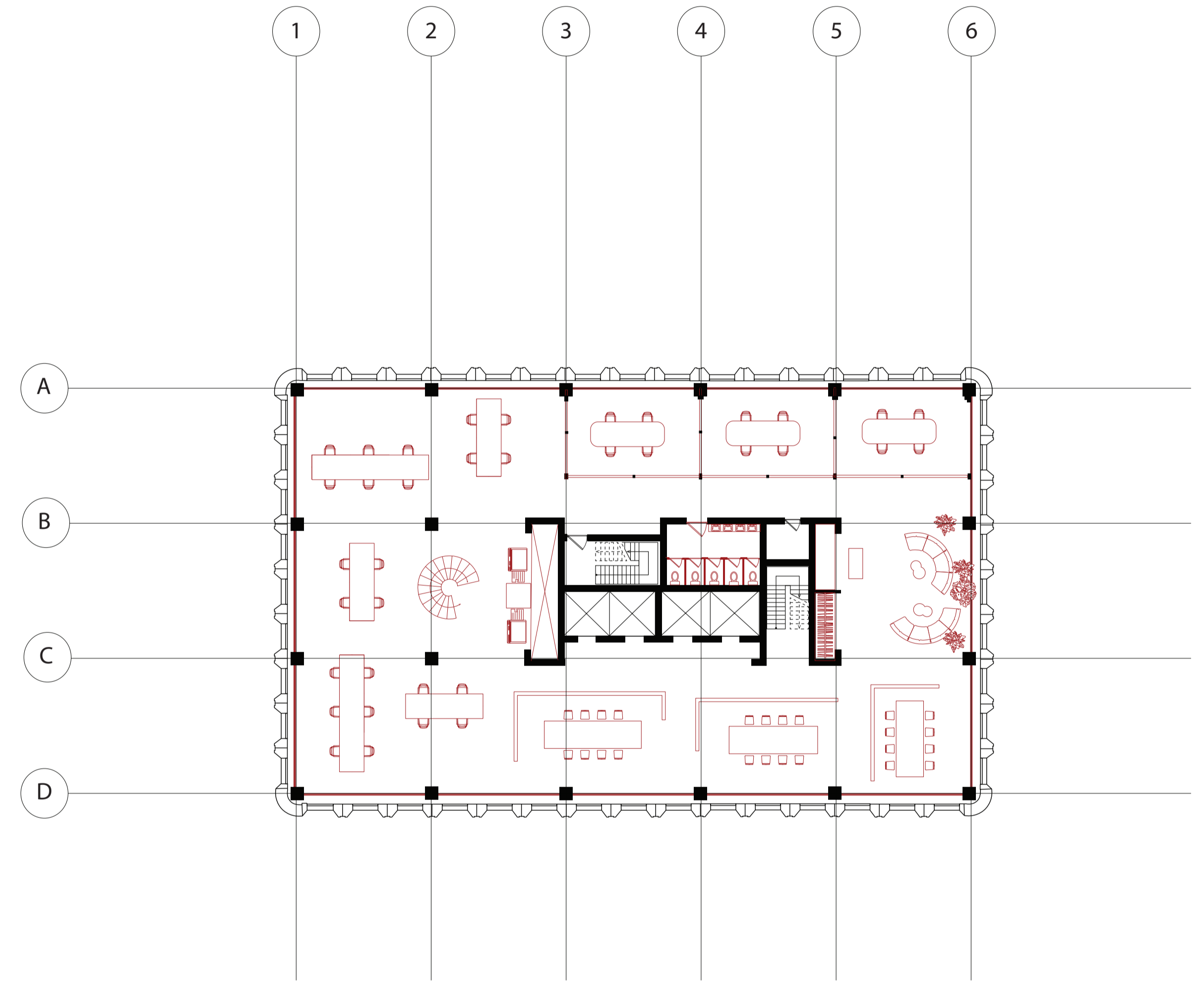
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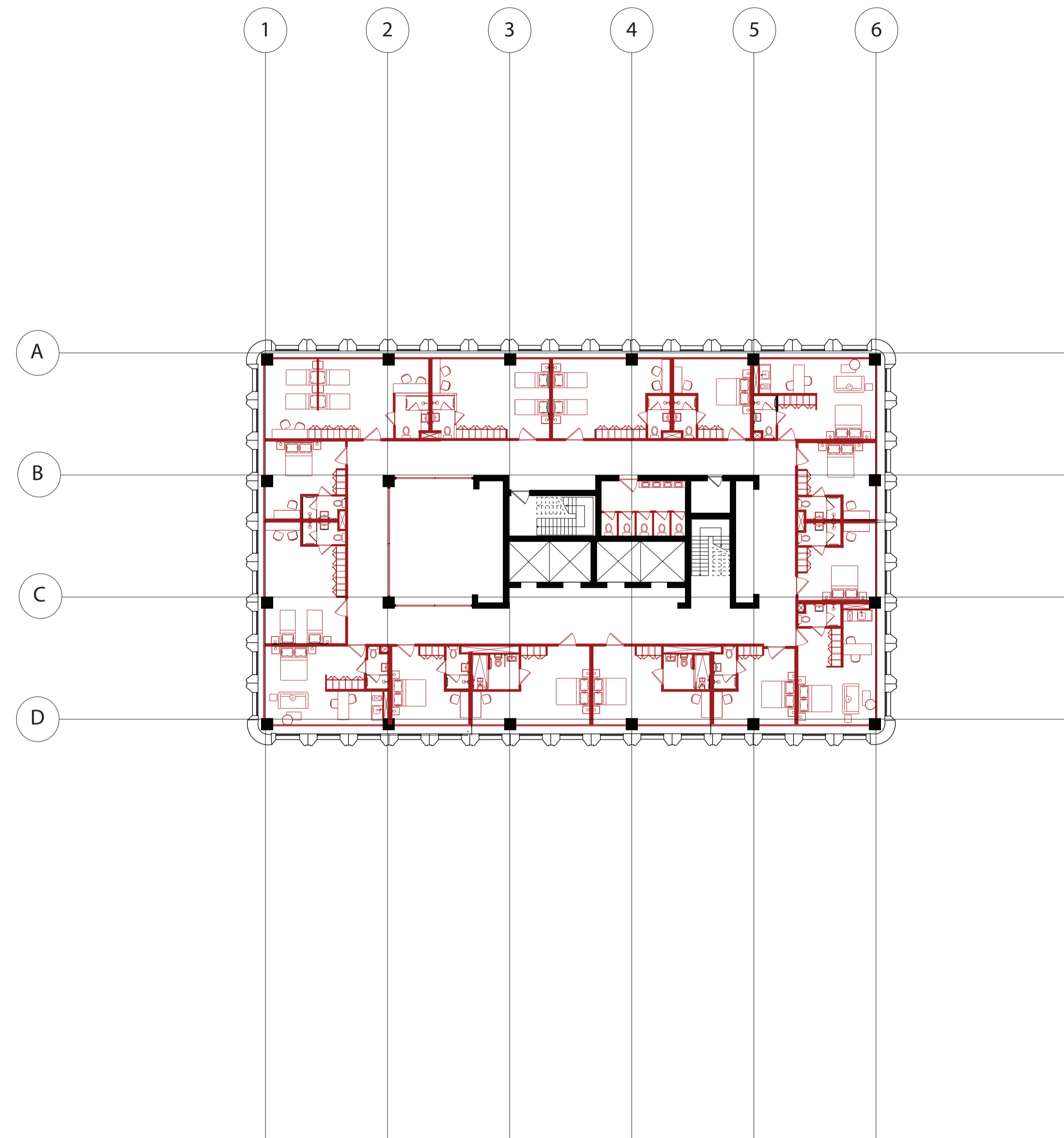
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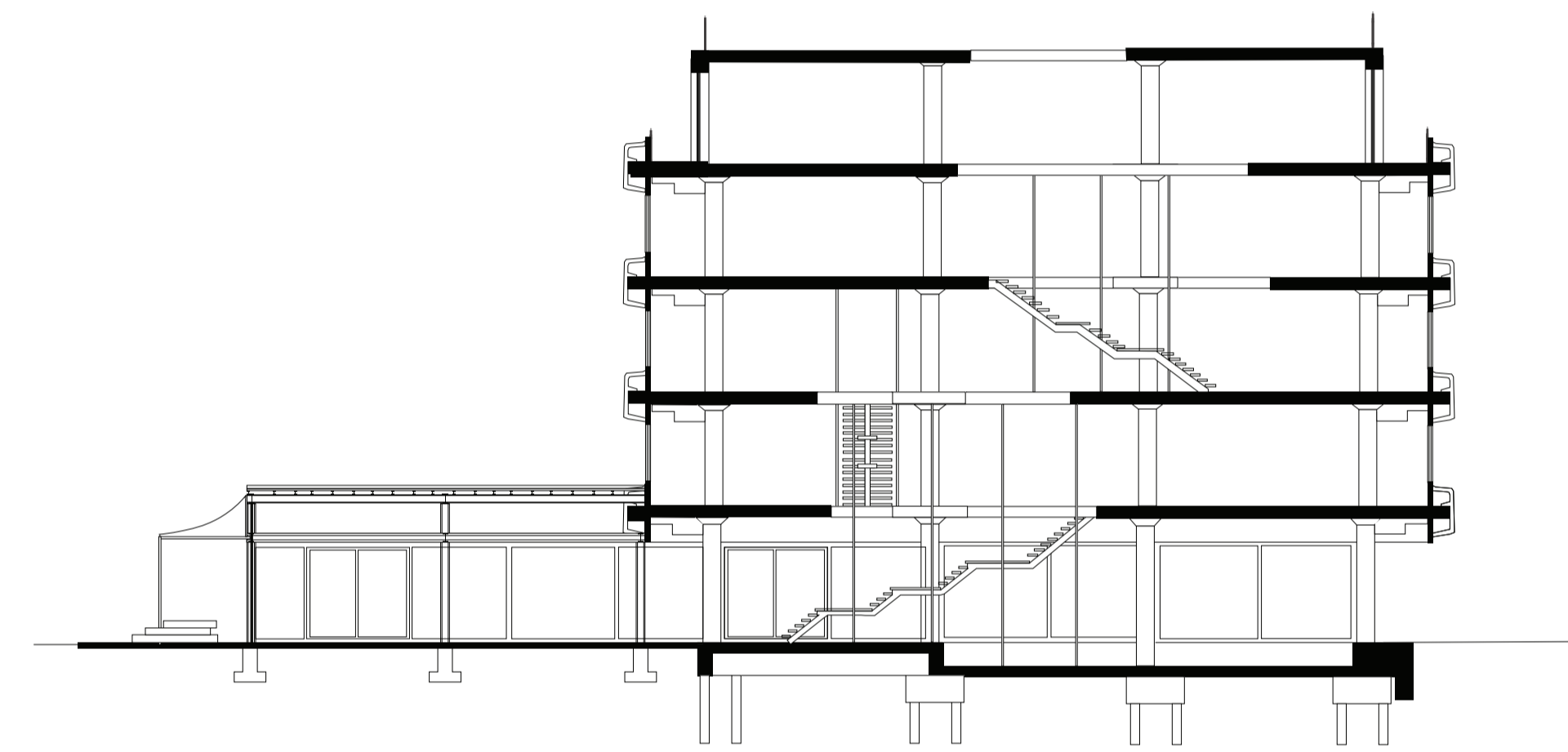
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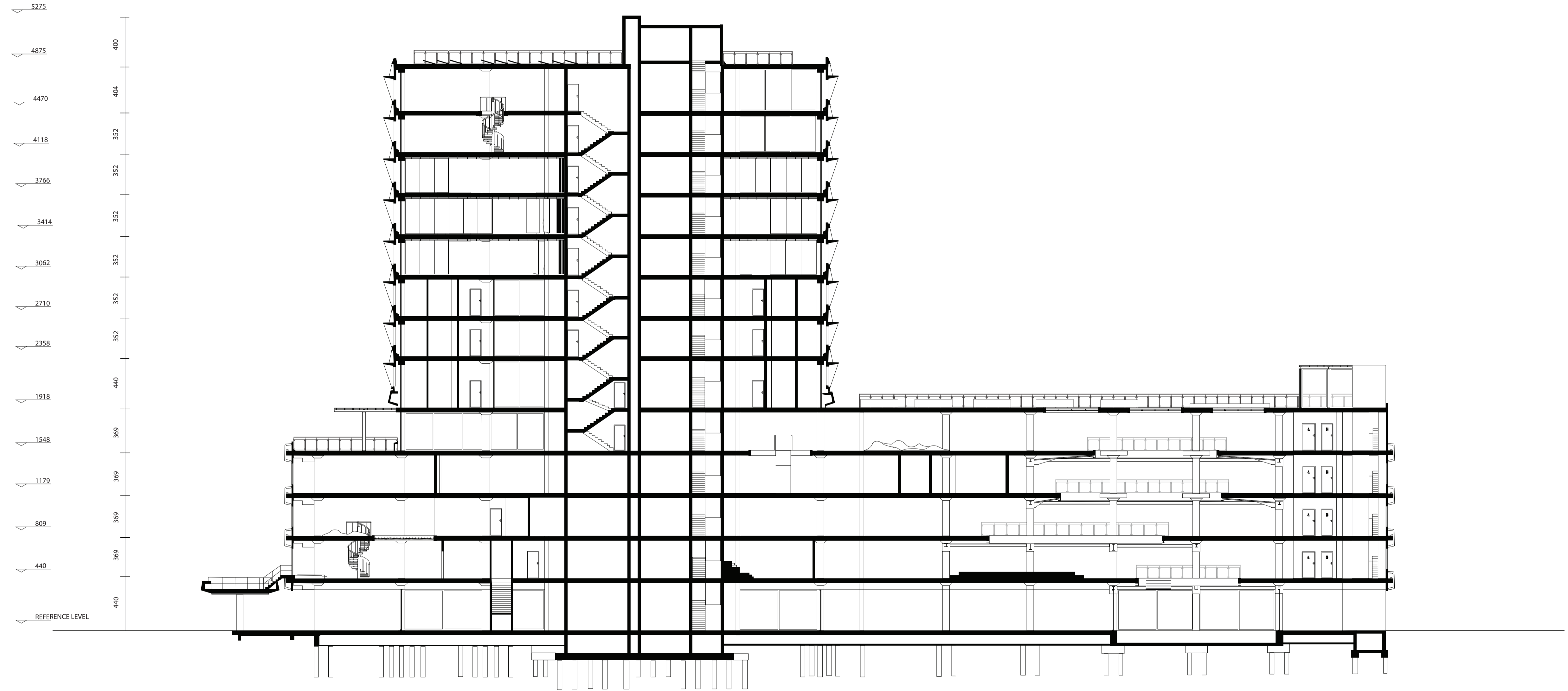
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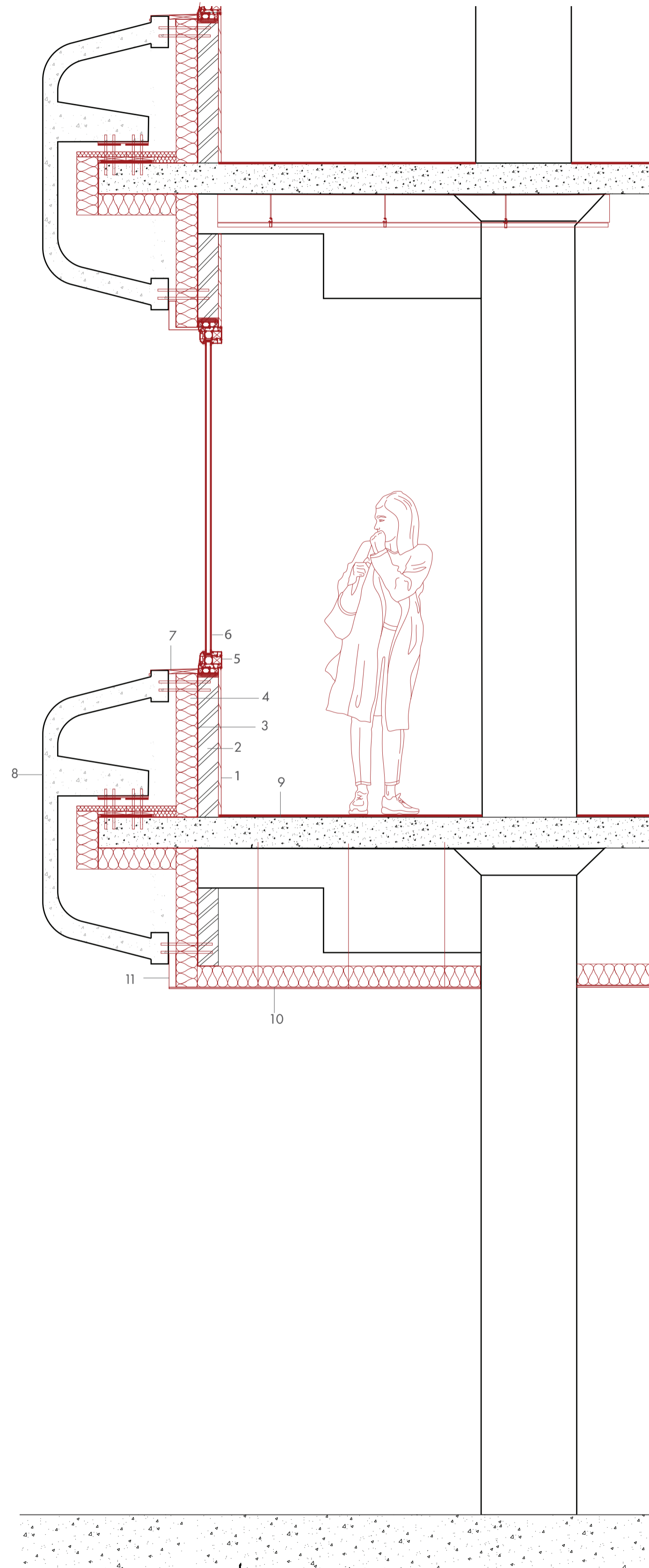
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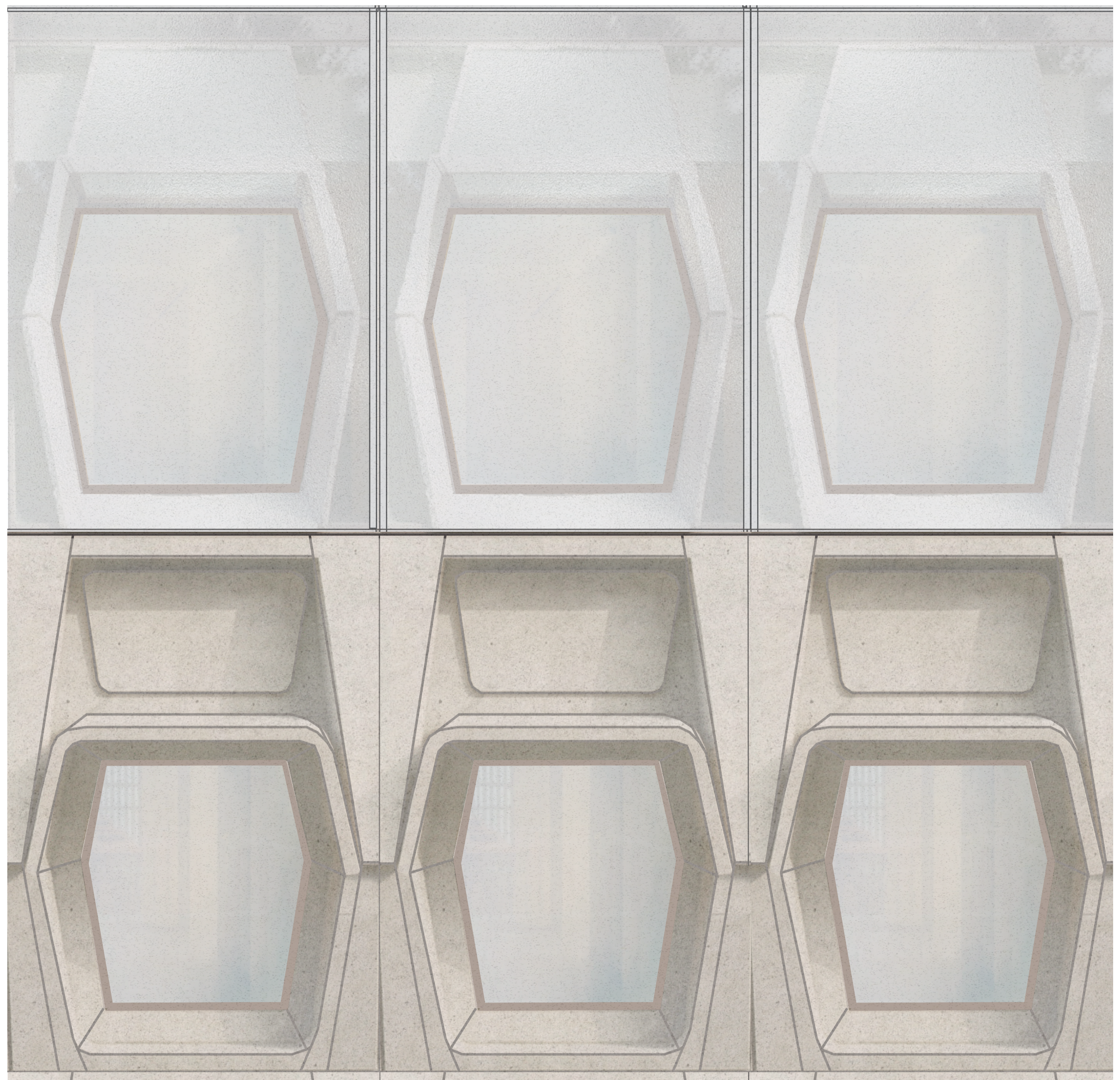
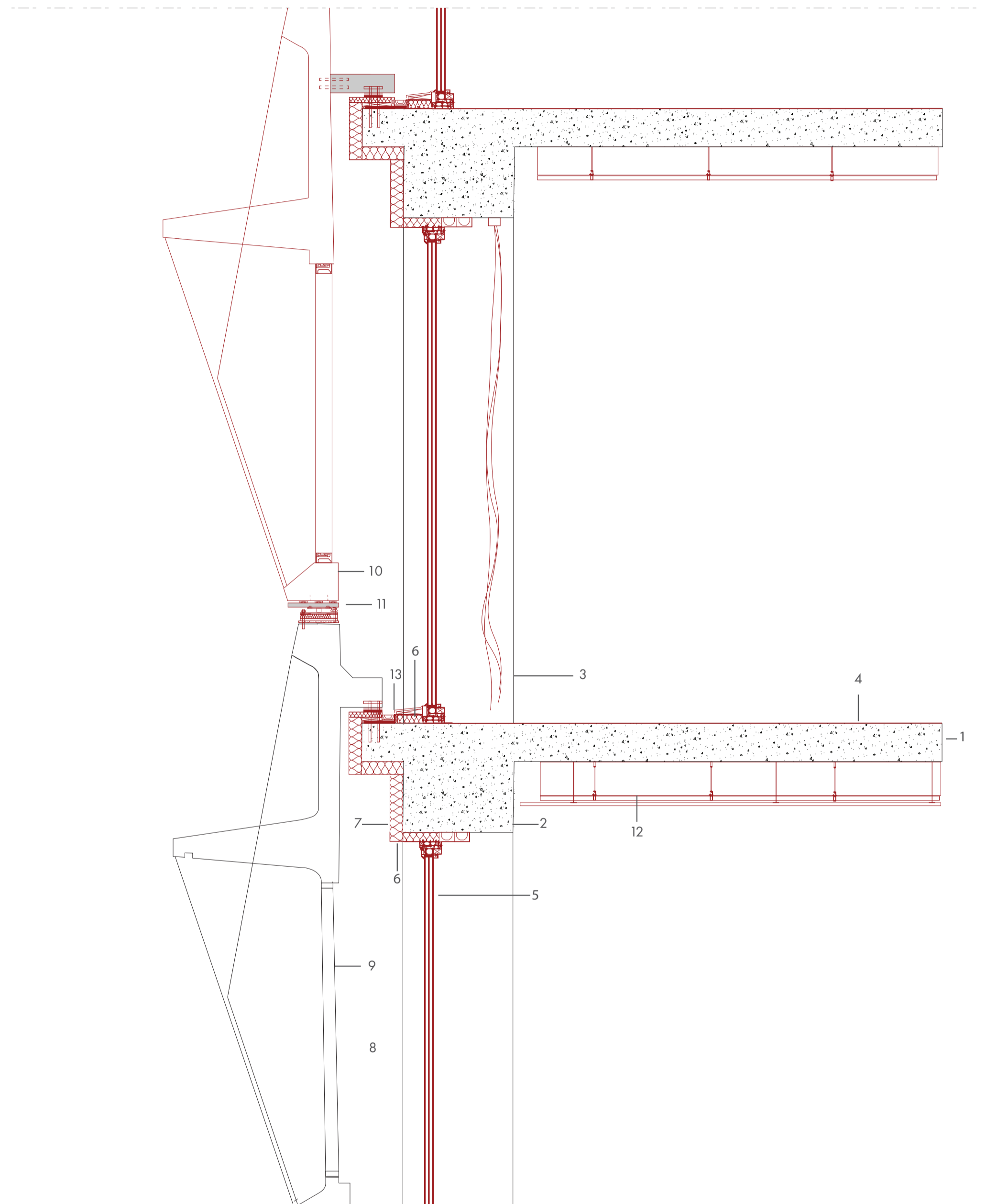
A9: SECTION A, 1:200



A10: BASE 1:20



A11: TOWER 1:20



- 1 EXISTING RC SLAB
- 2 EXISTING RC PERIMETER BEAM
- 3 EXISTING RC COLUMN
- 4 POLISHED EXPOSED CONCRETE FLOOR FINISH
- 5 THERMALLY BROKEN ALUMINIUM GLAZING FRAME WITH TRIPLE INSULATED GLAZING UNIT
- 6 AIRTIGHT MEMBRANE
- 7 MINERAL WOOL
- 8 VENTILATED CAVITY, 300-600 MM
- 9 EXISTING PRECAST CONCRETE CLIMATE SCREEN
- 10 NEW CAST-GLASS REPLICA CLIMATE SCREEN
- 11 THIN METAL PERIMETER FRAME TO CAST-GLASS UNIT
- 12 EXPOSED HVAC AND SERVICE SYSTEM
- 13 WATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM

