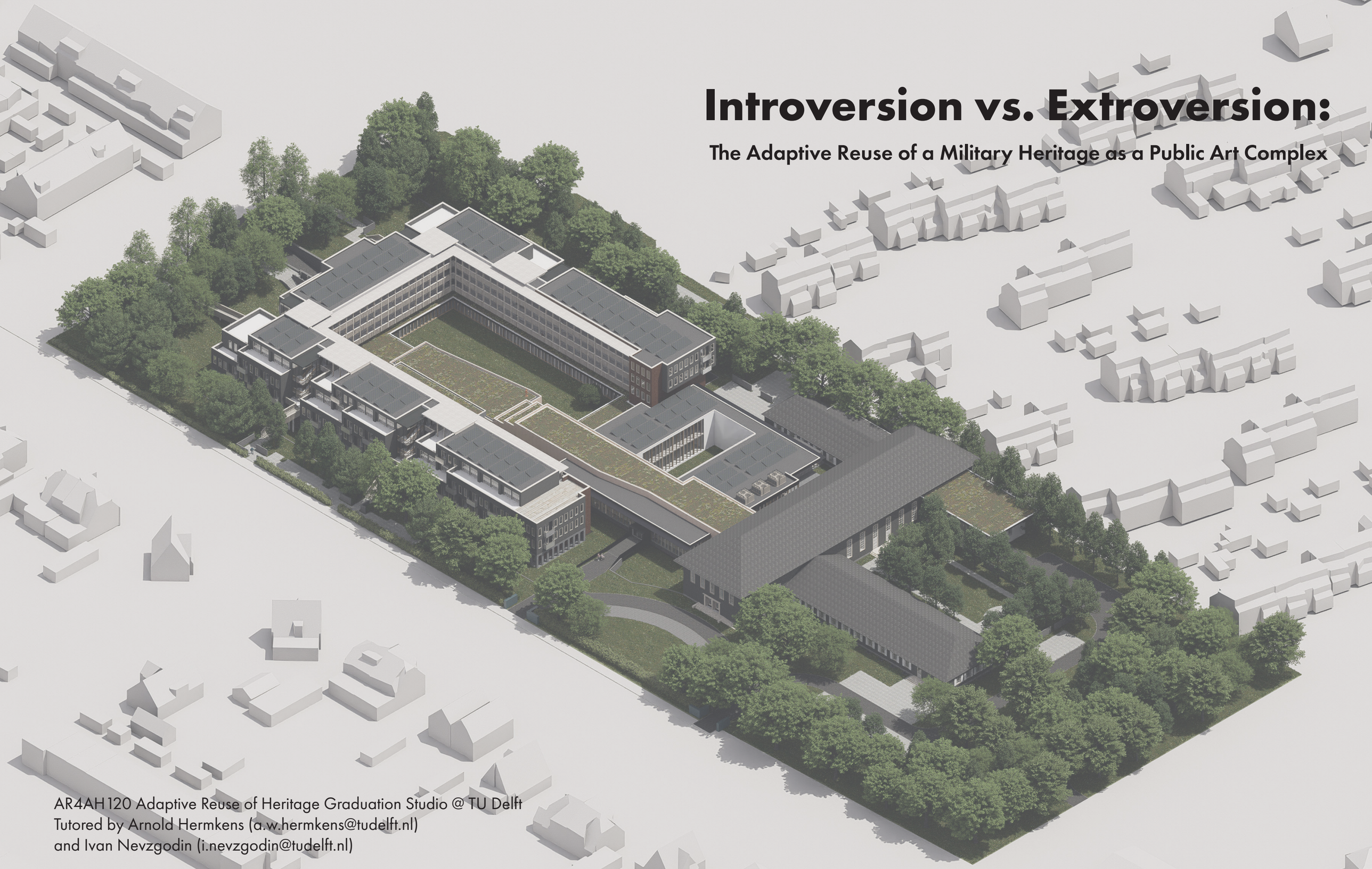
# Introversion vs. Extroversion:

## The Adaptive Reuse of a Military Heritage as a Public Art Complex



AR4AH120 Adaptive Reuse of Heritage Graduation Studio @ TU Delft
Tutored by Arnold Hermkens (a.w.hermkens@tudelft.nl)
and Ivan Nevzgodin (i.nevzgodin@tudelft.nl)

Shizhong Zhang, 6157297


Soest

Soest

Amersfoort

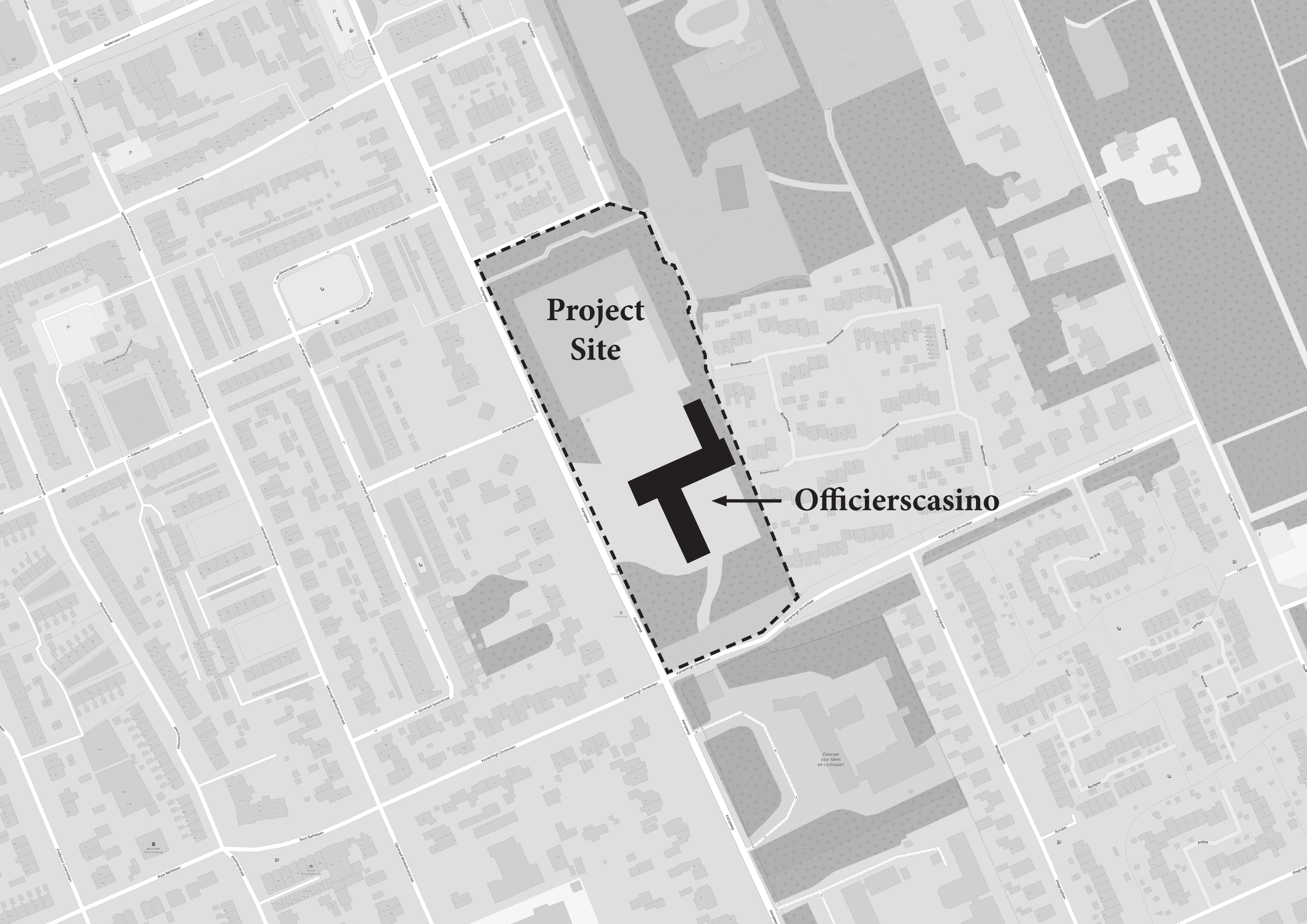
Soesterberg

Utrecht

Soesterberg Airbase

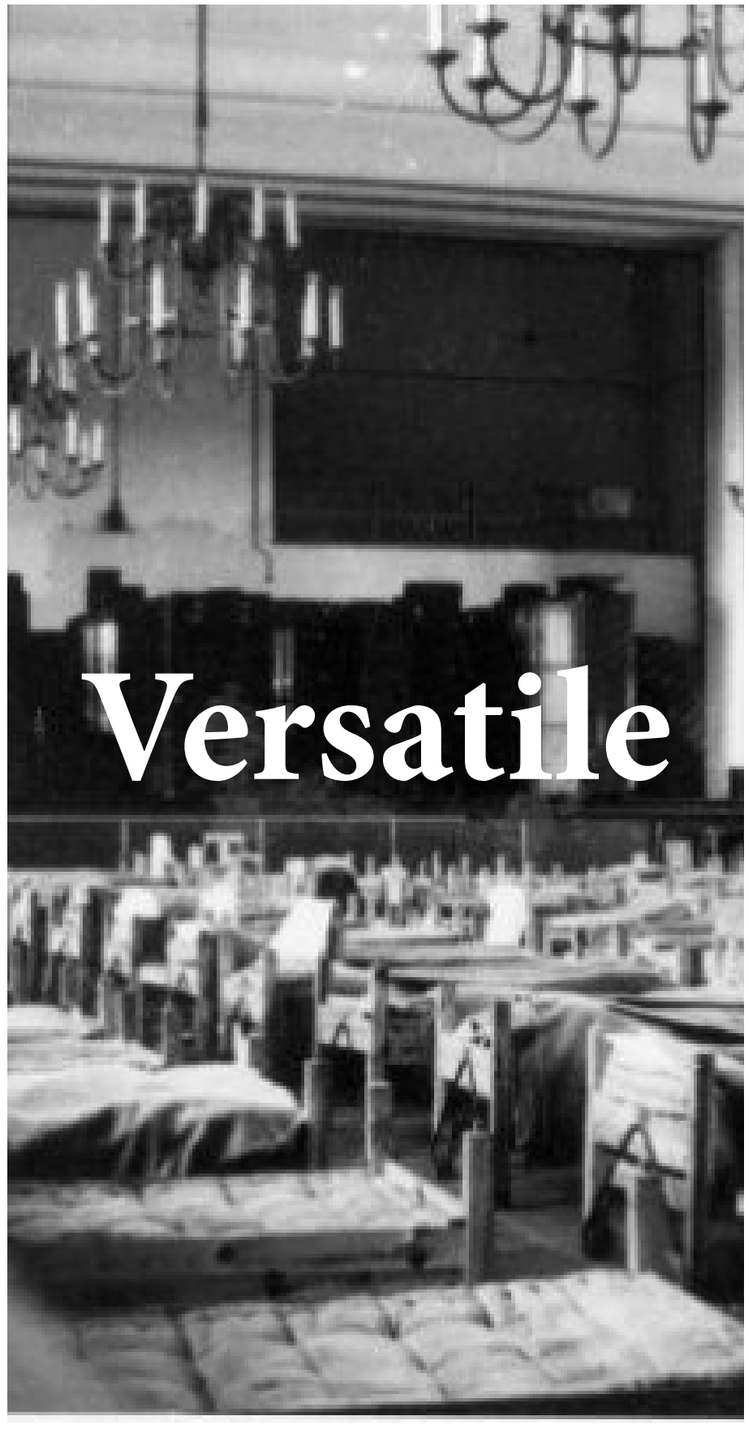
Soesterberg

Project Site


Project
Site
Officierscasino

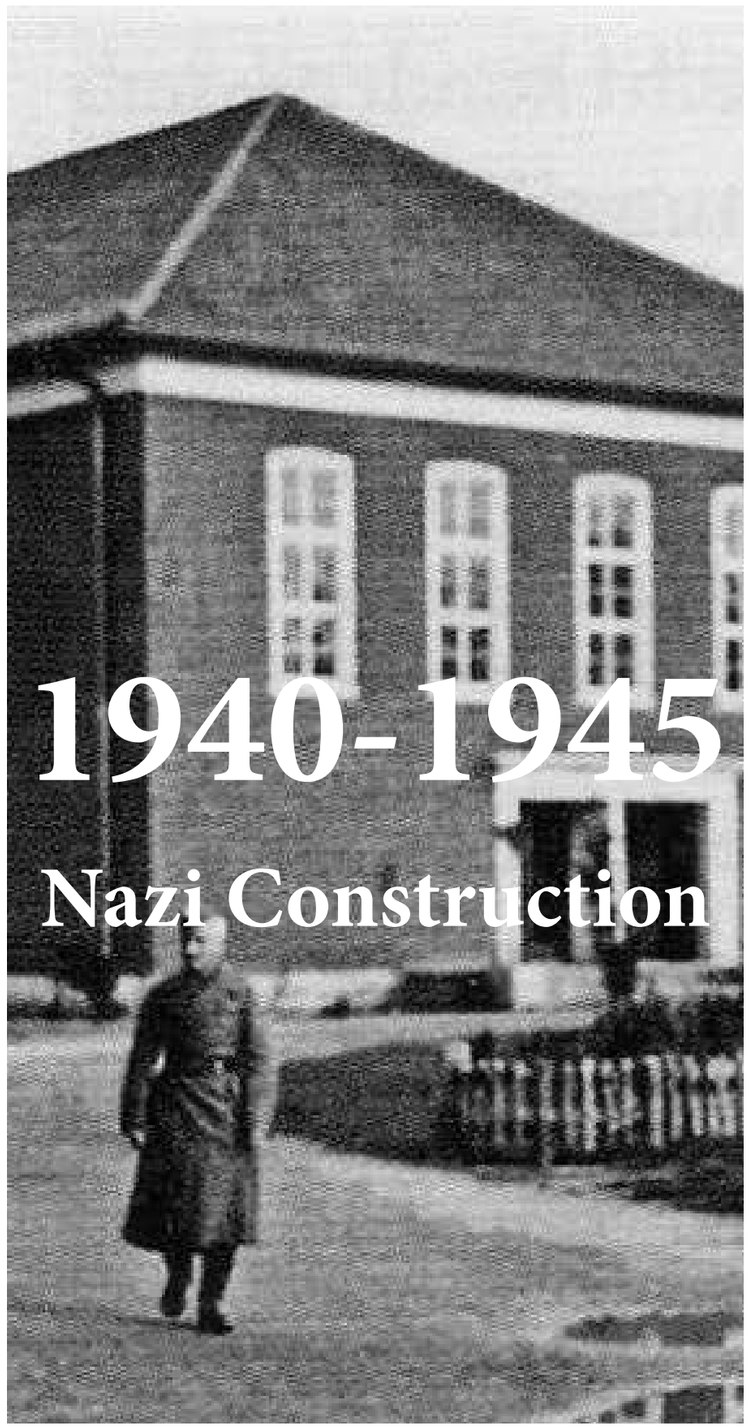
# Officierscasino: a Versatile Military Recreation Facility






# History of Officierscasino









## Heritage

- History of Officierscasino
- Value Assessment
- The Introverted Phenomenon

## Adaptive Reuse

Context Condition

The Artist Residence as
the Adaptive Reuse Program

Issues of the current model of
Artist Residences

**Sub Q.1** - Introverted Phenomenon
Translated into Design Guidelines

**Sub Q.2** - Towards a Extroverted
New Artist Residence Typology

**Sub Q.3 - Introversion vs. Extroversion**

**The Design**

## Heritage

- *History of Officierscasino*
- *Value Assessment*
- *The Introverted Phenomenon*

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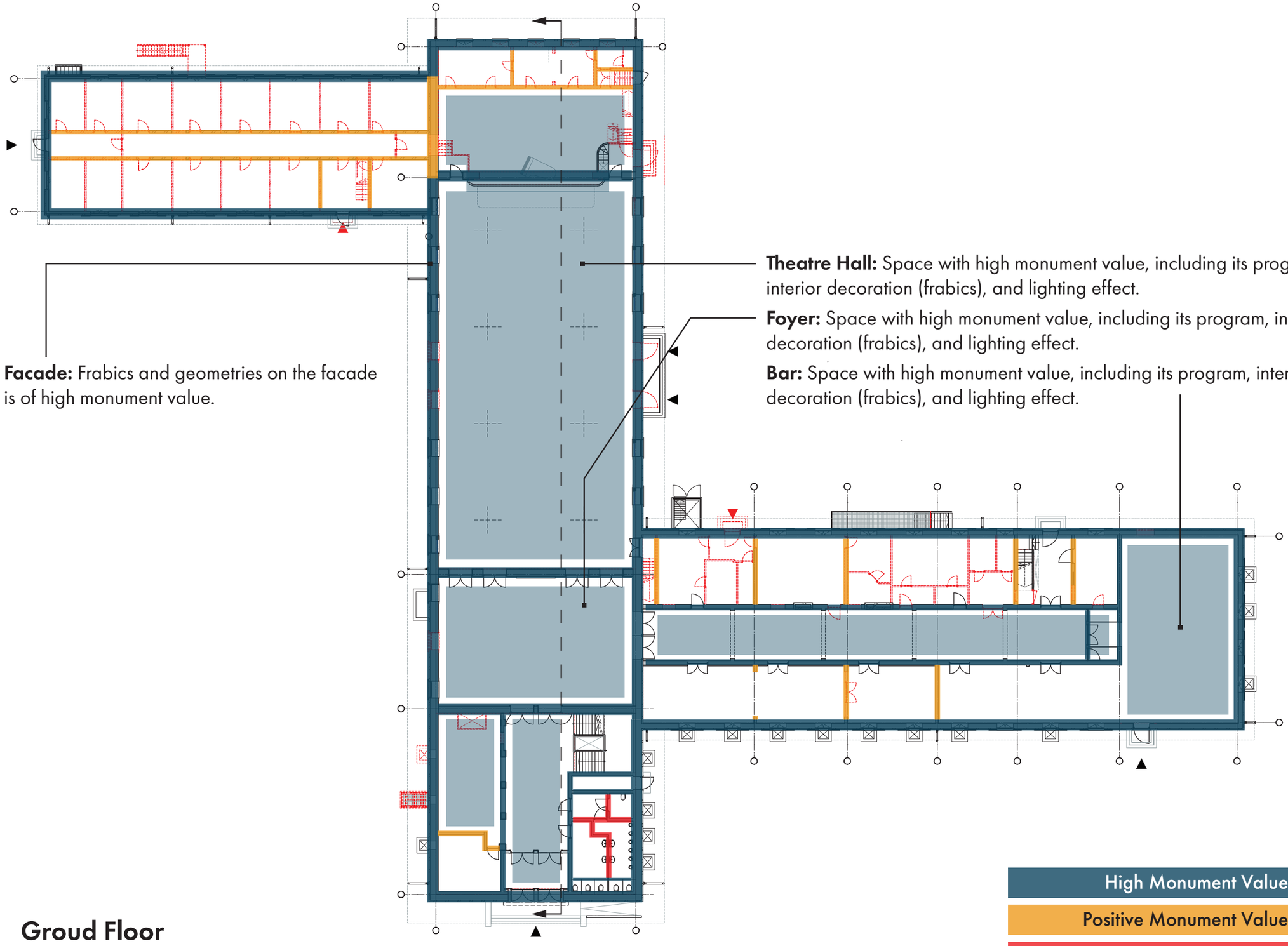
# Value Assessment

| | AGE value | HISTORICAL value | INTENTIONAL COMMEMORATIVE value | NON INTENDED COMMEMORATIVE value | USE value | NEW-NESS value | (relative) ART value | RARITY value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SURROUNDINGS / SETTING [+]** | **Indifferent.** Soesterberg boomed in the 1920s. | **High.** The booming of the town was the result of the establishment of the airbase and the tram line between Utrecht and Amersfoort. | **Indifferent.** The town was not established in commemoration of a certain person or event. | **High.** The town was greatly involved in the German occupation during WWII, and the cold war history. | **High.** Active town occupied by around 8000 residents with commercial, industrial establishments. | **Medium.** Soesterberg boomed in the 1920s. Most of the housing were built during this time. Housing Complex in proximity to the north was built in 2018. | **Indifferent.** | **Indifferent.** |
| **SITE** | **Indifferent.** Built in the 1940s. | **High.** Layout the trees serves as the camouflage for the building, which is related to its original and historical military character. | **Indifferent.** No sign, engraving, or statue present on the skin. | **Indifferent.** | **Indifferent.** The open space enclosed by the building is currently occupied by construction materials. The west garden remained badly maintained and unused. | **High.** The site had a strong potential for newness through refreshed landscape design, clearer access, and upgraded outdoor spaces. | **Medium.** The presence of old and expansive trees is of great aesthetic value. | **Indifferent.** |
| **SKIN (exterior)** | **Indifferent.** Built in the 1940s, currently in great condition | **High.** The architectural style of the facades reflects Nazi aesthetics and construction techniques. The bricks are part of the urban camouflage. | **Indifferent.** No sign or engraving present on the skin. | **High.** The image of the building is the strongest historical ankor of the German occupation time. | **Medium.** Renovation is needed to improve its technical performance. | **High.** No alternation. | **High.** The surfaces represent Nazi Neo-Classical. | **High.** One of the few remaining buildings in Nazi architectural style in the Netherlands. |
| **STRUCTURE** | **Indifferent.** Built in the 1940s. | Functional zoning expressed in the structure. German built structure | **Indifferent.** | **Indifferent.** | **High.** Still intact and Stable. | Strong foundation, wall structure built to last | **Indifferent.** | **Indifferent.** |
| **SPACE PLAN** | **Indifferent.** Built in the 1940s. | **High.** The plan of the building represents the archetype of Nazi *Officierscasino.* | **Indifferent.** | **High.** Multiple events during and after WWII took place in these spaces. | **High (Hall & Bar).** The theatre hall and bar still operates with their original programs. **Low (The rest).** The rest of the building has either been turned into offices or left unused. | **High.** No alternation. | **Indifferent.** | **High.** The plan of the building represents the archetype of Nazi *Officierscasino.* One of the few left in the Netherlands. |
| **SURFACES (interior) [+]** | **Indifferent.** Built in the 1940s. | **High.** The surfaces represent Nazi aesthetics. | **Indifferent.** Nazi decorations have been removed. | **High.** Multiple events during and after WWII took place in these spaces. Presnet in historical photographs. | **Indifferent.** | **High (Foyer & Hall).** Surfaces of the hall mostly unchanged. **Low (The rest).** | **High.** The surfaces represent Nazi aesthetics. | **High.** The surfaces represent Nazi aesthetics. One of the few left in the Netherlands. |
| **SERVICES** | **Medium.** Built in the 1940s, yet abandoned with gravel inside. | **High.** The ventilation system for the hall represents German building technology in the 1940s. | **Indifferent.** | **Indifferent.** | **Indifferent.** The original heating/ventilation system for the hall is no longer in use. | **Indifferent.** The original heating/ventilation system for the hall is no longer in use. | **Indifferent.** | **High.** The surfaces represent Nazi aesthetics. One of the few left in the Netherlands. |

# Value Assessment



**Facade:** Frabics and geometries on the facade is of high monument value.

**Theatre Hall:** Space with high monument value, including its program, interior decoration (frabics), and lighting effect.

**Foyer:** Space with high monument value, including its program, interior decoration (frabics), and lighting effect.

**Bar:** Space with high monument value, including its program, interior decoration (frabics), and lighting effect.

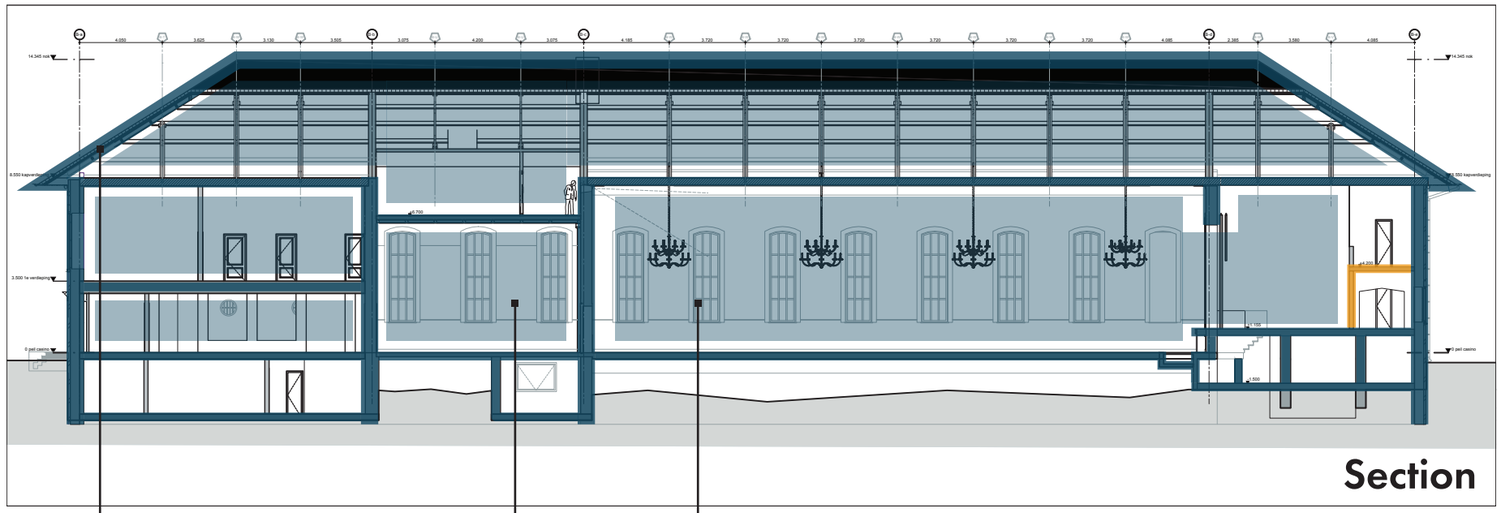
High Monument Value

Positive Monument Value

No Monument Value

## Groud Floor
## Level of Significant Mapping

# Value Assessment




**Roof:** Frabics of the roof structure is of high value.

**Foyer and Theatre Hall:** Space with high monument value, including its program, interior decoration (frabics), and lighting effect.



**Bunker:** Space with high monument value, including its program, interior decoration (frabics), and lighting effect

**Basement Floor**
**Level of Significant Mapping**

High Monument Value

Positive Monument Value

Low Monument Value

# The Introverted Phenomenon



**(Primary question prior to the site visit)**

The site has been carrying an "introverted" character since the very beginning of its existence. At first it was a club for Nazi officers, sheltering itself in a regular Dutch Neighborhood with a very "ordinary" appearance, which can be considered as an "urban camouflage." After WWII, trees were planted along its parameters, covering the building and the sport plot in proximity with dense green. Does the site really appear to be "introverted" in the reality? How does it relate to its proximate context? Can passersby notice its existence without paying attention?

**(Observation during the site visit)**

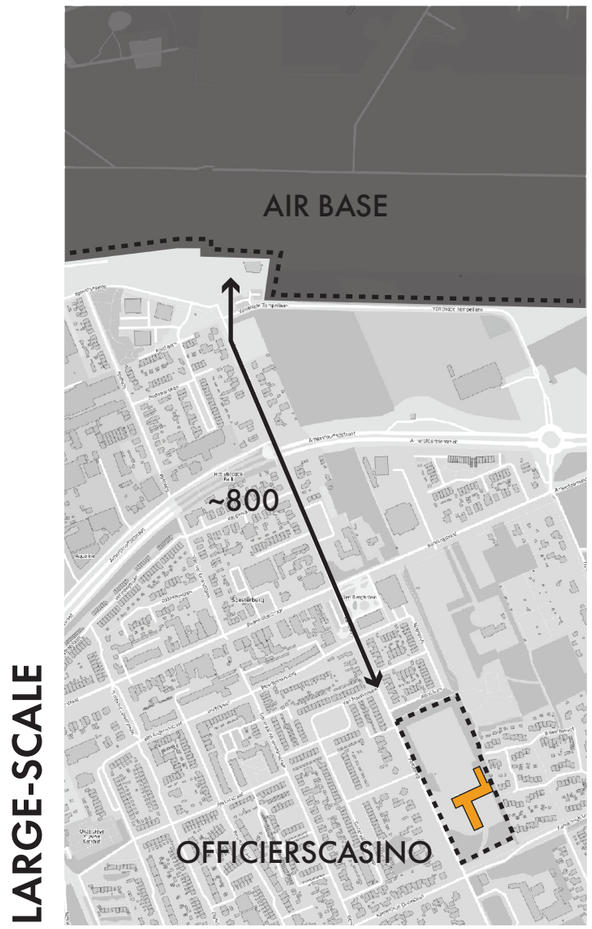
We drove to the site with a car. Leaving the A28 motorway through a woody ramp, we soon found ourselves in Soesterberg. The little bend and tunnel under the motorway somehow blurred the sense of my direction. The town showed up before us in a very reserved way. The building is to our right, covered by dense woods. We had a hard time locating the complex, even with the navigation on. The entrance to the plot was a narrow trail between high bushes. We only realized that we had arrived through the fraction of front facade exposed between autumn leaves. I believe this experience can already quality how introvert the site is.

**2025.11.17 - Visits to Officierscasino Soesterberg**

**(Towards a problem statement)**

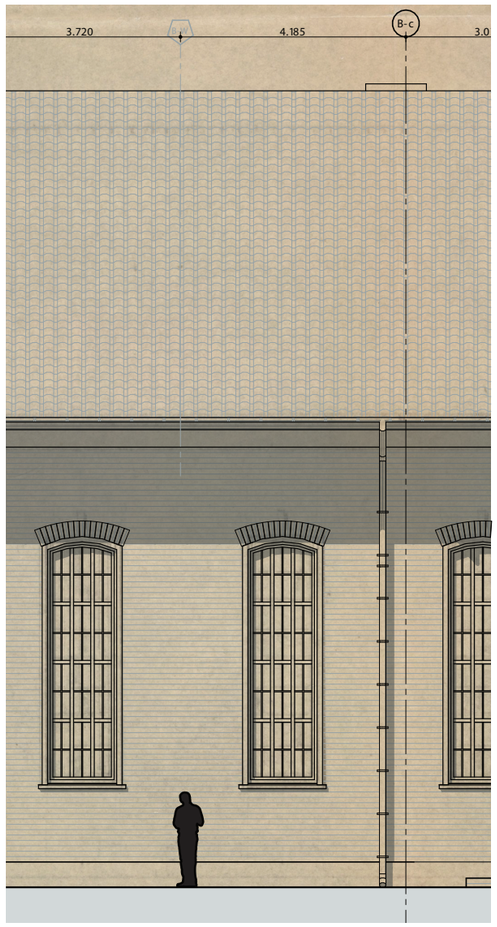
<Can this introvert character of the site be recognized as its identity, and furthermore a basic guideline when defining a contemporary adaptation for it? Building Program? Building Technique? Aesthetic? And everything else? Would preserving this introvert character of the site be a strong position in preserving its history and memory?>

# The Introverted Phenomenon












LARGE-SCALE — SMALL-SCALE

URBAN — LANDSCAPE — FACADE — FABRICS

## Heritage

- History of Officierscasino
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***Sub Q.1 - Introverted Phenomenon Translated into Design Guidelines***

## Adaptive Reuse

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**Sub Q.2** - Towards a Extroverted New Artist Residence Typology

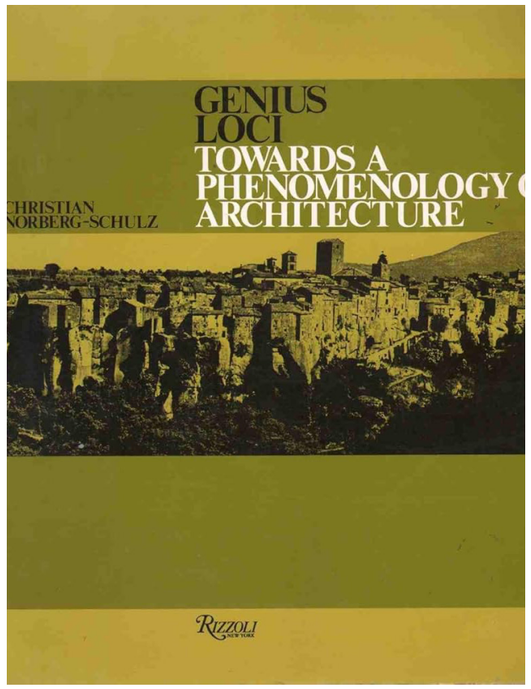
**Introversion vs. Extroversion**

**The Design**

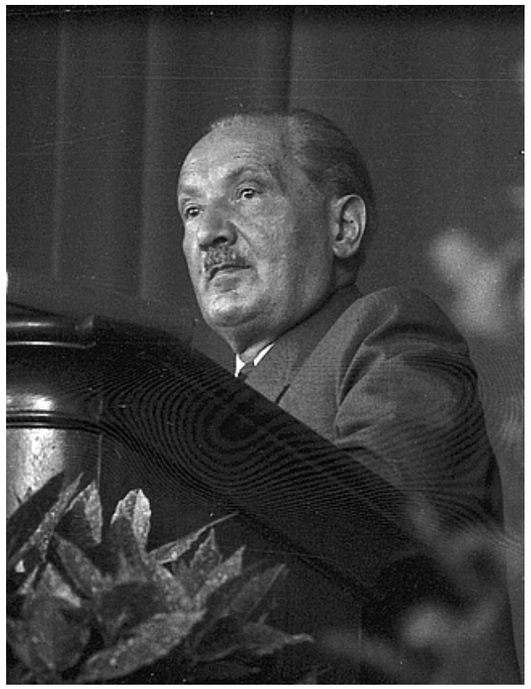
**Sub Research Question I:**

What are the spatial properties that dominate the formation of the introverted phenomenon and how can they be translated into executable design guidelines?

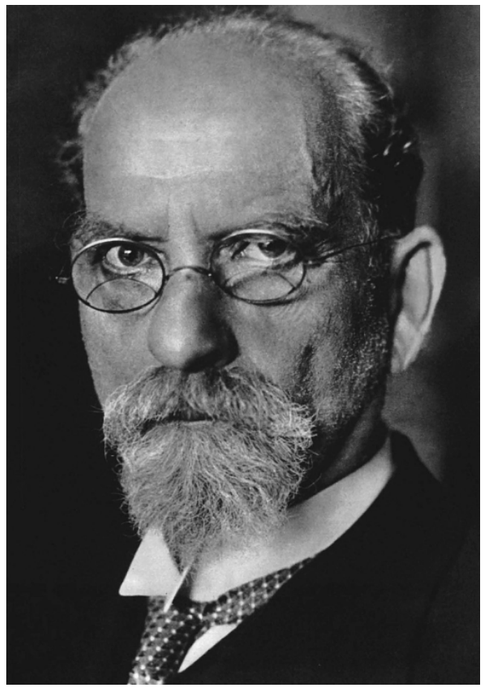
# Phenomenology As an Architectural Design Tool?




C. Norberg-Schulz's
**Genius Loci**



Martin Heidegger's
**Existential Phenomenology**



Edmund Husserl's
**Eidetic Reduction**

Analytical Tools emphasizing the totality of a phenomenon
**cannot** inform design

Deconstructive Analytical Tools
that **can** inform design

# The Introverted Phenomenon Translated into Design Guidelines

Feed into Gemini,
command to increase **transparency**




*The image of the vegetated site boundary was taken from the eye-level, simulating the situated view of a passers-by. The image was then imported into Gemini as the source image for adaptation.*




*Gemini worked with the prompt "make the scene more transparent, by means of reducing the density of vegetation." The site is immediately less introverted once the lawn behind the boundary is more visible.*




*Gemini worked with the prompt "make the scene less transparent, by means of introducing an opaque wall." The site becomes more introverted as nothing behind the boundary can be seen.*

Feed into Gemini,
command to decrease **transparency** → is a dominating spatial character concerning the introverted phenomenon, thus it should be strictly controlled.

## Heritage

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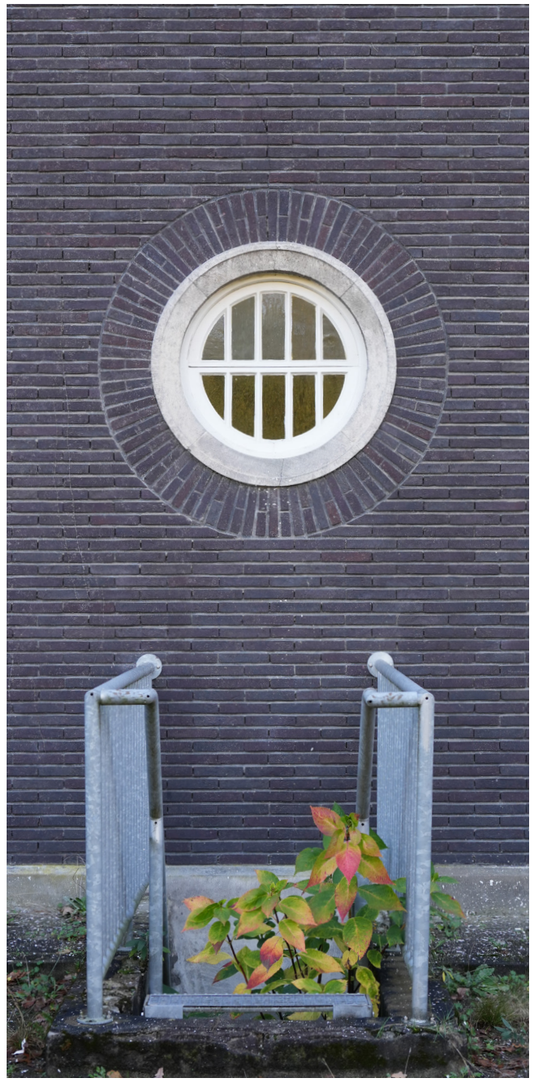
***Introversion*** **vs. Extroversion**

**The Design**

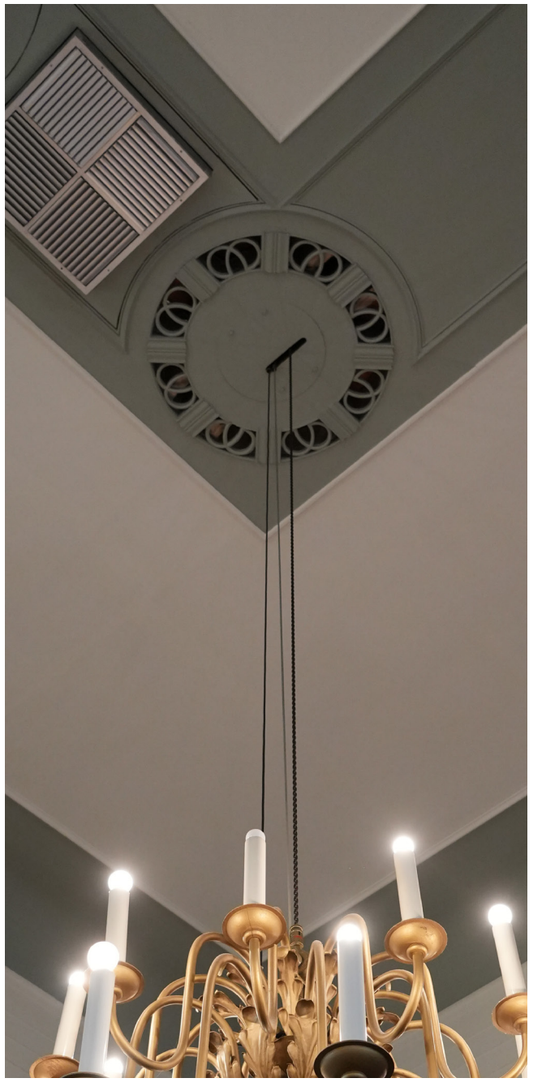
# Preserving the introverted heritage values



**INTROVERTED INTERFACE**



**INTROVERTED ENVELOPE**



**INTERIOR FABRICS**



**CRITICAL PROGRAMS**

# Preserving the introverted heritage values



## Heritage

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**The Design**

# Context Condition: **Soesterberg is a well-connected town**

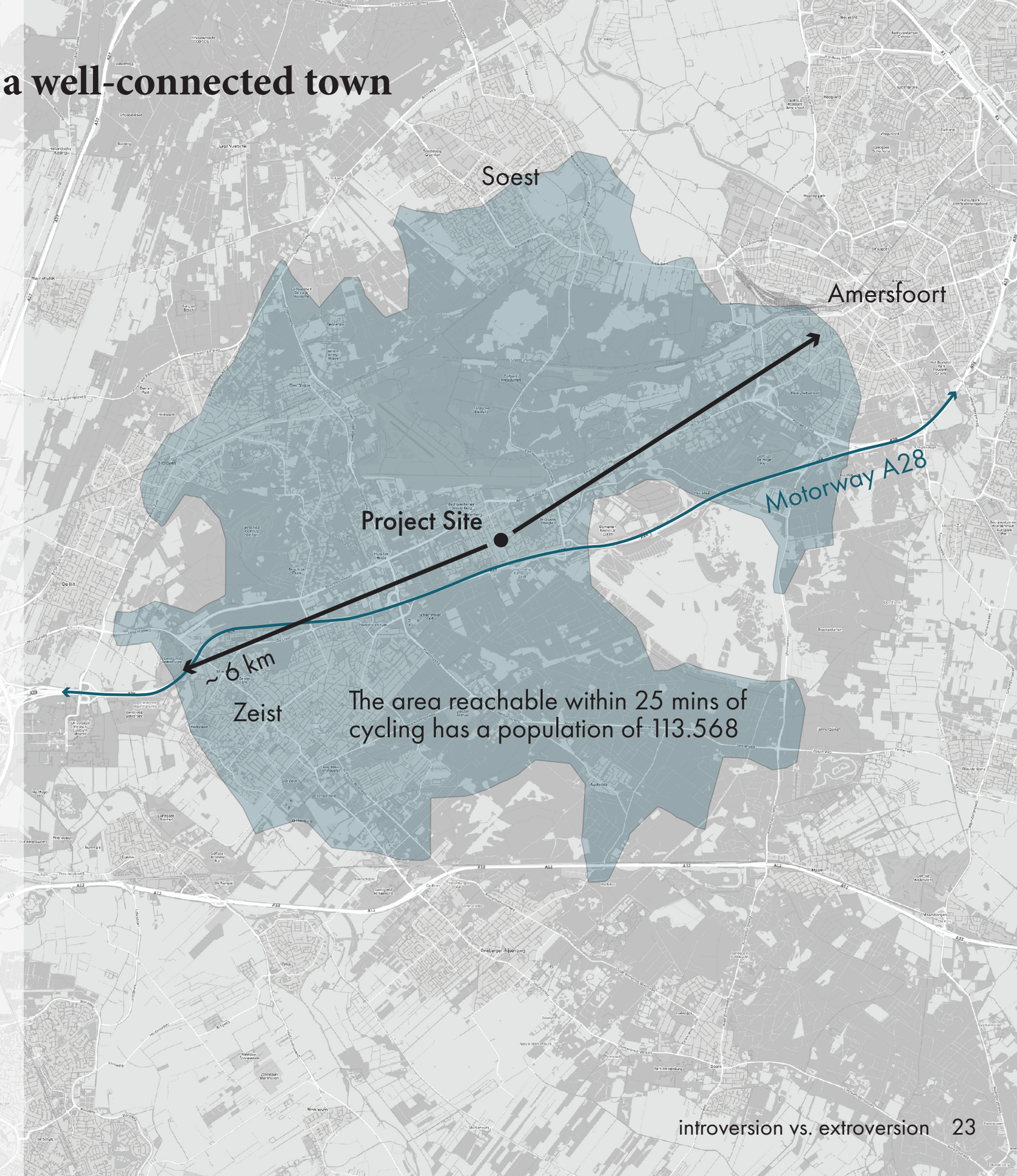
| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Huidige reistijd dichtstbij | 81 | 3 | 10 | 9,03 | 7,72 |
| **Cultuur** | | | | | | |
| Auto | Acceptabele reistijd | 449 | 20 | 45 | 38,29 | 27,18 |
| | Huidige reistijd bezocht | 95 | 12 | 25 | 21,20 | 18,31 |
| | Huidige reistijd dichtstbij | 92 | 10 | 20 | 14,84 | 10,08 |
| Ov | Acceptabele reistijd | 314 | 30 | 60 | 50,91 | 33,58 |
| | Huidige reistijd bezocht | 47 | 15 | 45 | 36,70 | 31,56 |
| | Huidige reistijd dichtstbij | 41 | 15 | 45 | 31,10 | 28,65 |
| Fiets | Acceptabele reistijd | 316 | 15 | 30 | 24,75 | 15,29 |
| | Huidige reistijd bezocht | 72 | 10 | 20 | 16,73 | 12,89 |
| | Huidige reistijd dichtstbij | 73 | 5 | 15 | 13,35 | 9,25 |
| Lopen | Acceptabele reistijd | 70 | 15 | 30 | 20,84 | 12,07 |
| | Huidige reistijd bezocht | 32 | 10 | 25 | 25,68 | 34,29 |
| | Huidige reistijd dichtstbij | 32 | 10 | 15 | 15,22 | 11,08 |
| **Natuur** | | | | | | |
| Auto | Acceptabele reistijd | 532 | 15 | 30 | 29,58 | 21,47 |
| | Huidige reistijd bezocht | 163 | 5 | 24 | 20,26 | 27,71 |

This document from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Works shows the results of a survey investigating the maximum acceptable travel time via different modes of transportation to public facilities with certain functions in the Netherlands.

For cultural facilities, which fall under the category of recreational destinations, the maximum acceptable travel time is 38,29 mins by car, 50,91 mins via public transport (OV), 24,75 mins by bike, and 20,84 mins on foot. For work, the maximum acceptable travel time is 35,70 mins by car, 47,38 mins via public transport (OV), 28,09 mins by bike, and 20,52 mins on foot.

Based on these numbers an estimation of the potential user population can be made with the help of an online platform OpenRouteService (ORS). The platform makes use of OpenStreetMap (OSM) data and sophisticated algorithms to determine optimal paths, distances, and areas, which are then compared with user profiles such as cars, bikes, pedestrians, and wheelchair. The isochrones ORS generated is then laid onto open-source population density maps, which will showcase the population residing in the areas covered by the isochrones.

The results shows that a population of 8.448 may access the Officierscasino site on foot within the acceptable travel time, 113.382 by bike, 2.007.558 via public transport, and 2.220.012 by car. However, the estimation made for public transport is not reliable as the platform does not consider transport routes and time table, meaning that the actual state may be significantly lower than the estimation.



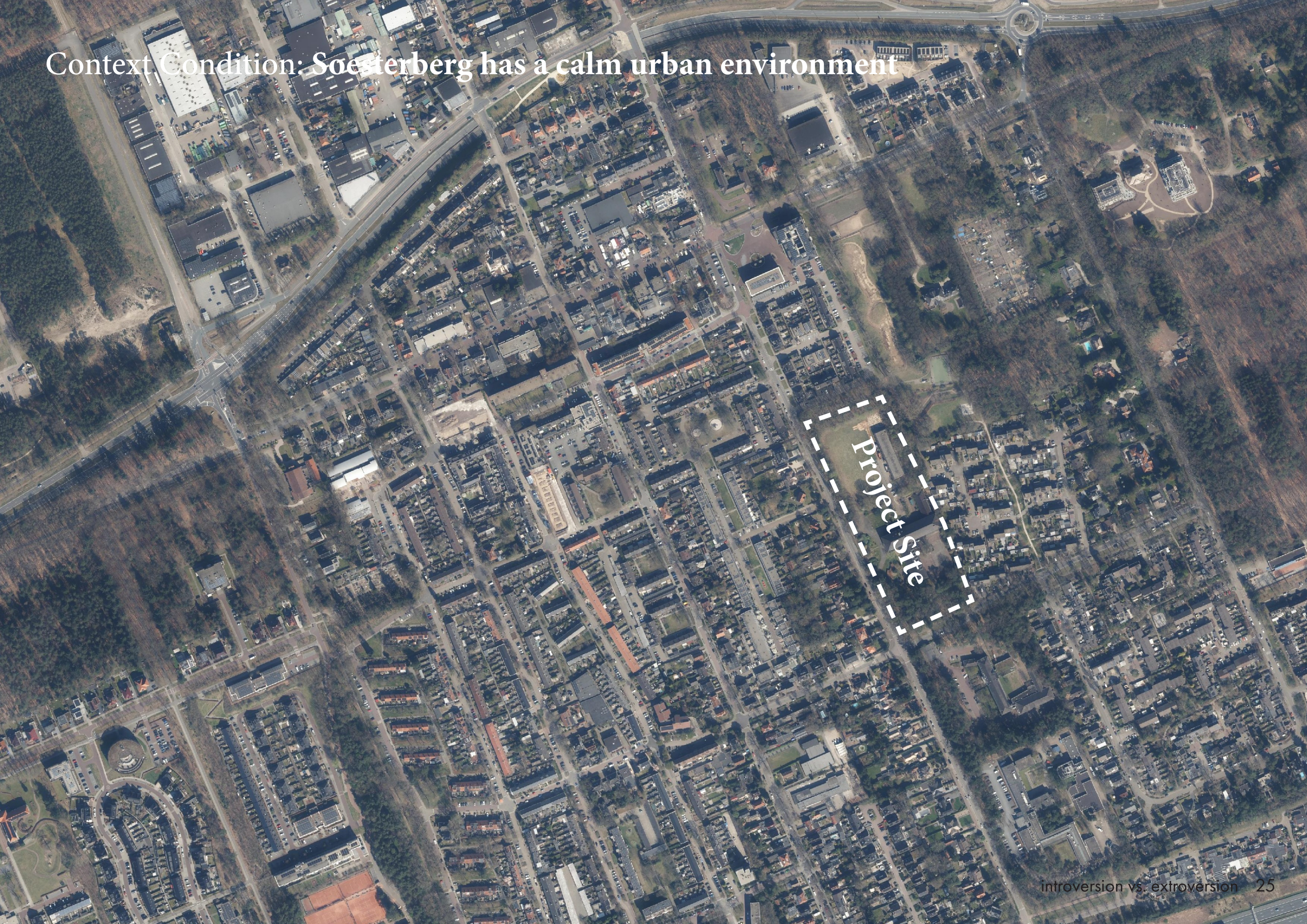
Context Condition: **Soesterberg is close to nature**

**Soesterberg Airbase**

**Project Site**

**Utrecht Hill Ridge National Park**

# Context Condition: Soesterberg has a calm urban environment



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***The Artist Residence as the Adaptive Reuse Program***

Issues of the current model of Artist Residences

**Sub Q.2** - Towards a Extroverted New Artist Residence Typology

**Introversion vs. Extroversion**

**The Design**

# The Artist Residence as the Adaptive Reuse Program

CLOSE | Apply

WHAT DO WE OFFER? —

The Rijksakademie provides time, people and possibilities. Apart from facilities such as a studio, work budget and stipend, there are extensive technical facilities, a library and collections and a social practice workshop.

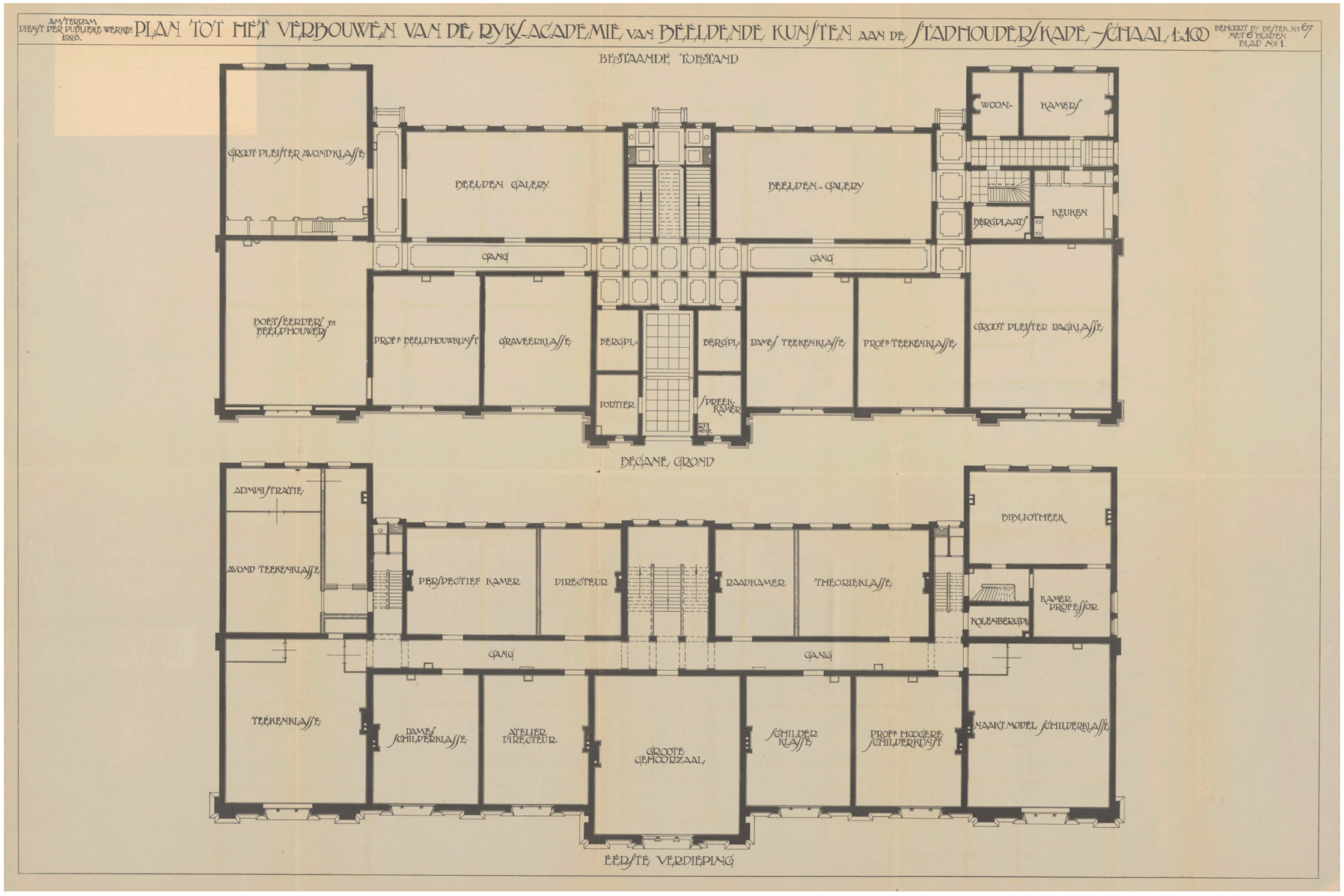
We offer:

— A private studio including wireless internet/heating/electricity.
— A stipend €19,800 (in 2026).
— A working budget of €2,500 per year, provided by RAEF (Rijksakademie Artists Endowment Fund) and Stichting Ammodo.
— Access to artistic/technical/theoretical advice, support and facilities.
— Exchange and collaboration within an international community.
— Lunch and dinner for subsidised prices in our Cantina (Rijksakademie restaurant) during the week.
— Support with visa process in the Netherlands and access to modest, but affordable housing in Amsterdam for international artists.

FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE RESIDENCY +

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# The Artist Residence as the Adaptive Reuse Program



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**Sub Q.2** - Towards a Extroverted New Artist Residence Typology

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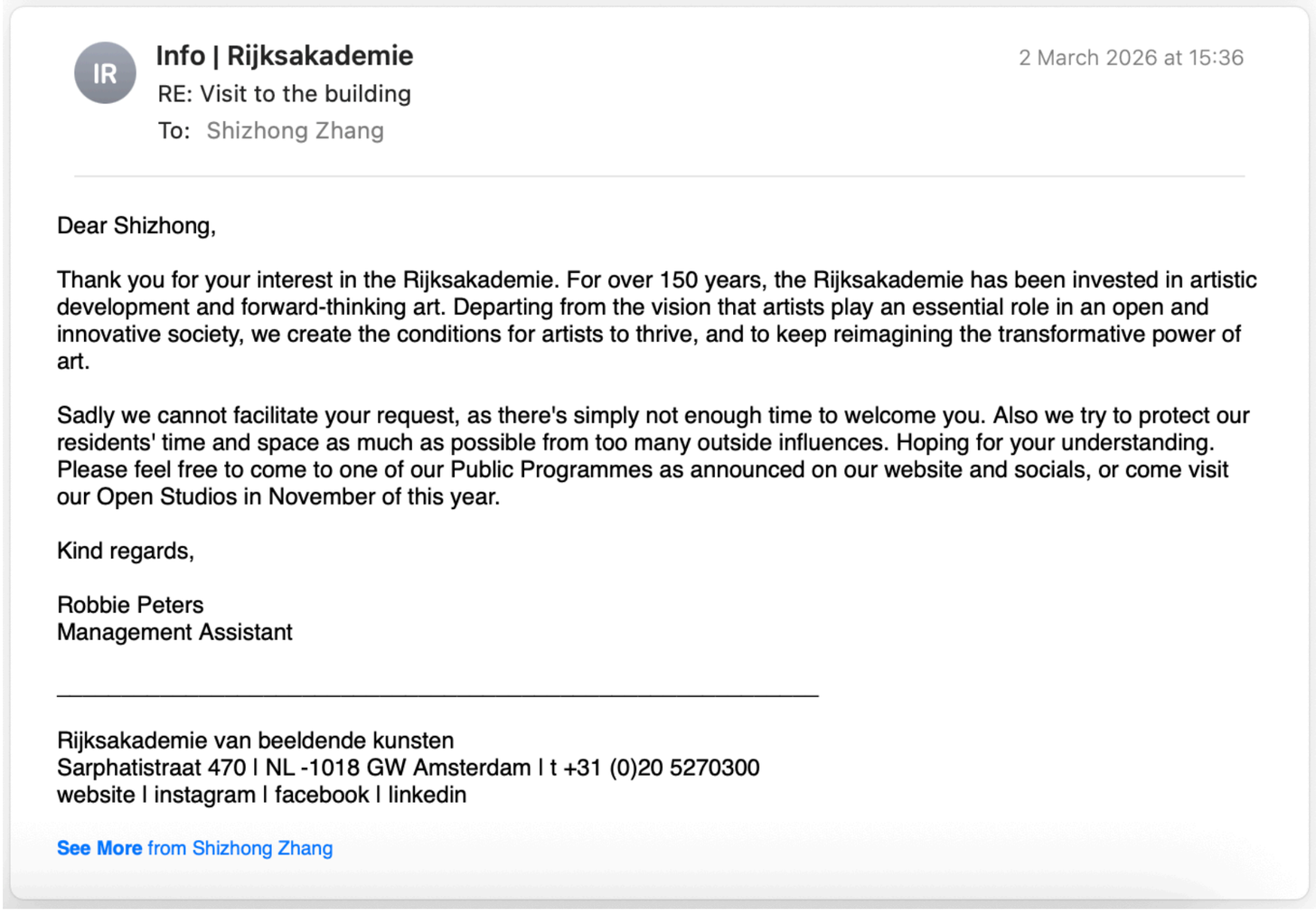
# Issues of the current model of Artist Residences

## Low Transparency, Limited Public Engagement



IR **Info | Rijksakademie** 2 March 2026 at 15:36

RE: Visit to the building

To: Shizhong Zhang

Dear Shizhong,

Thank you for your interest in the Rijksakademie. For over 150 years, the Rijksakademie has been invested in artistic development and forward-thinking art. Departing from the vision that artists play an essential role in an open and innovative society, we create the conditions for artists to thrive, and to keep reimagining the transformative power of art.

Sadly we cannot facilitate your request, as there's simply not enough time to welcome you. Also we try to protect our residents' time and space as much as possible from too many outside influences. Hoping for your understanding. Please feel free to come to one of our Public Programmes as announced on our website and socials, or come visit our Open Studios in November of this year.

Kind regards,

Robbie Peters
Management Assistant

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Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten
Sarphatistraat 470 I NL -1018 GW Amsterdam I t +31 (0)20 5270300
website I instagram I facebook I linkedin

**See More** from Shizhong Zhang

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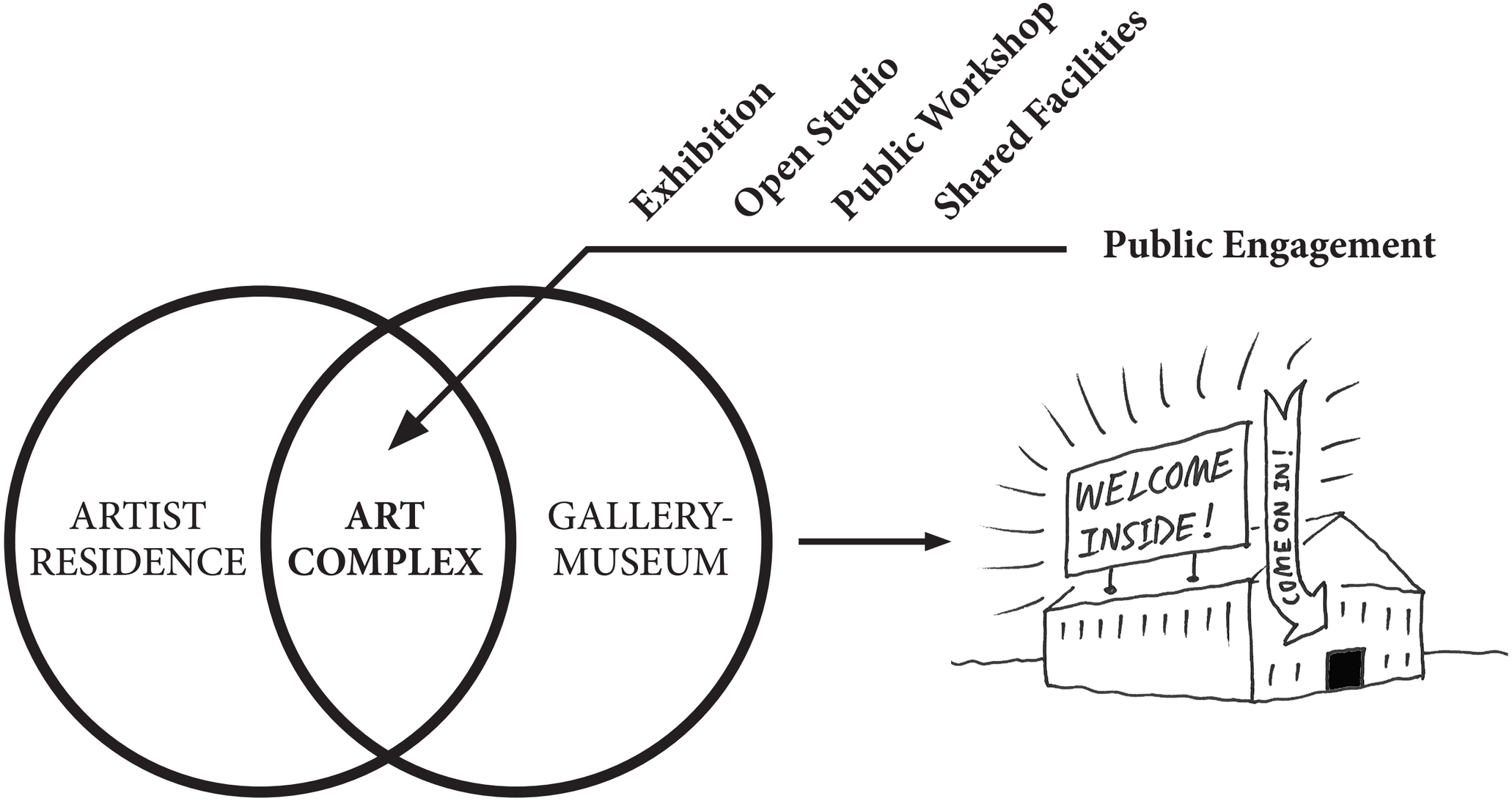
**Introversion vs. Extroversion**

**The Design**

**Sub Research Question II:**

How can the new artist residence typology promote public engagement and transparency while preserving the privacy necessary for the artists-in-residence?

# Introducing an extroverted adaptive reuse program



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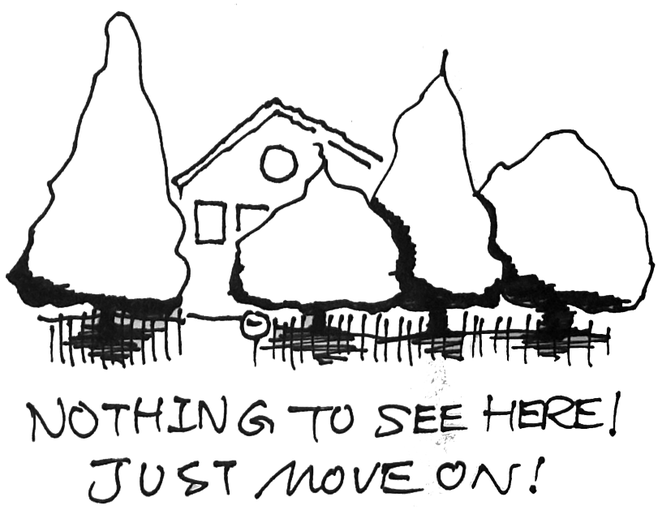
**Sub Q.2** - Towards a Extroverted
New Artist Residence Typology

***Sub Q.3 - Introversion vs. Extroversion***

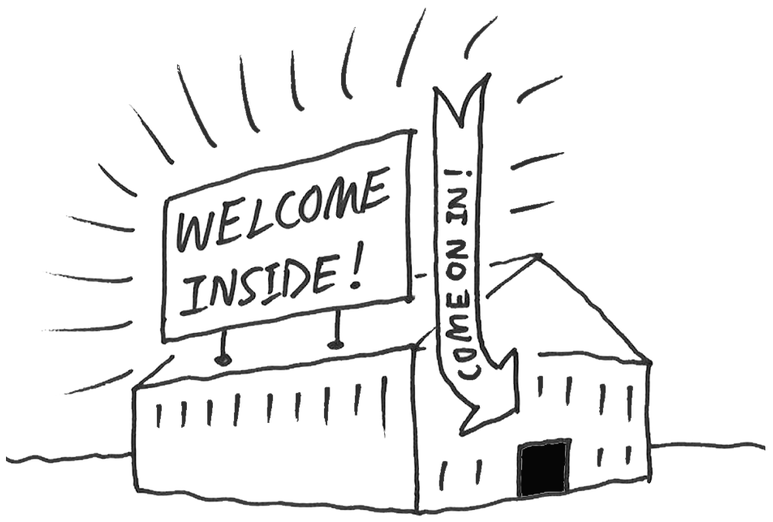
**The Design**

**Main Design Question also Sub Research Question III:**

How should the landscape, new building volumes, interventions in and around the monument, and the interfaces between them be designed to introduce an extroverted public program onto an introverted site?




*vs.*



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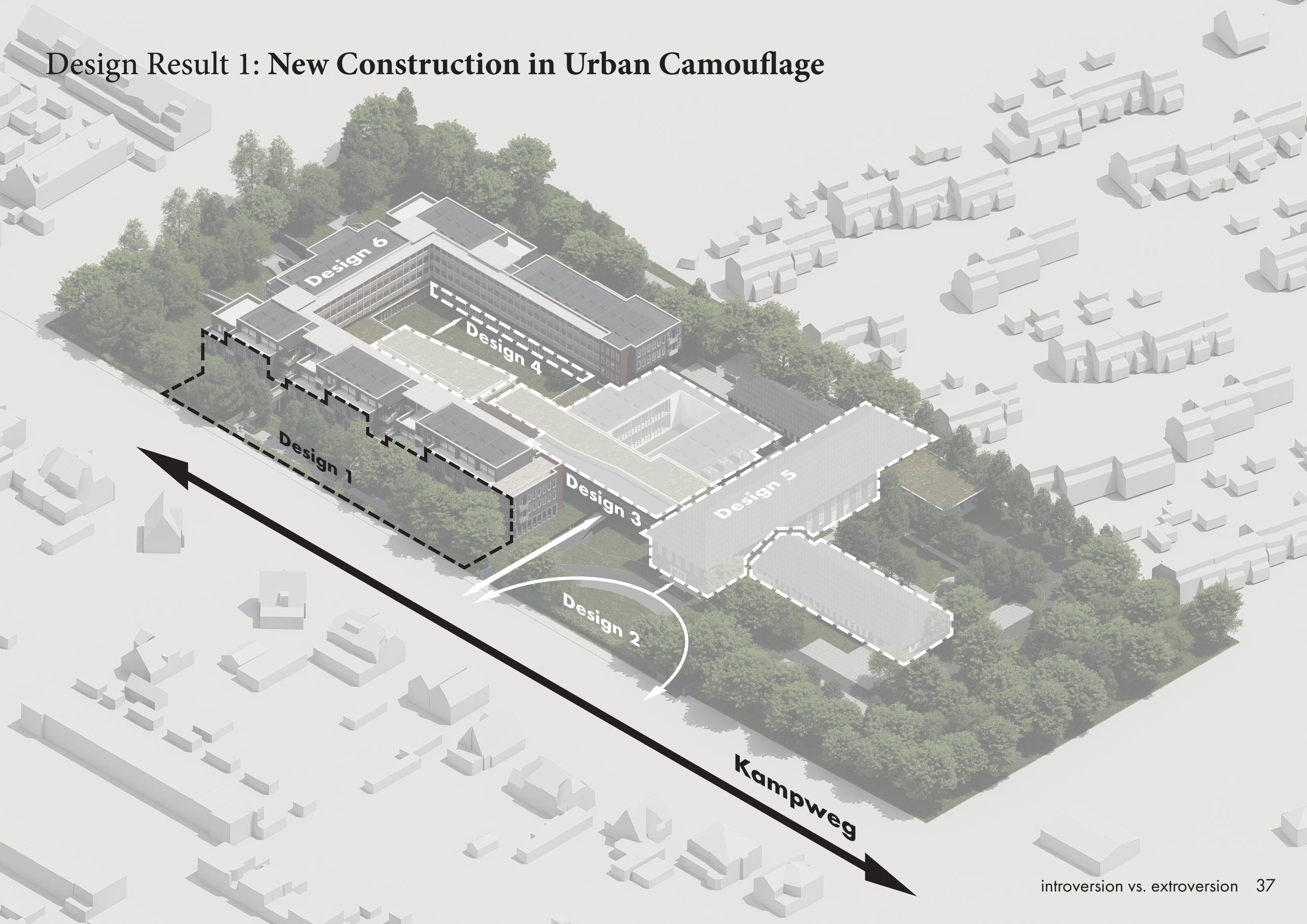
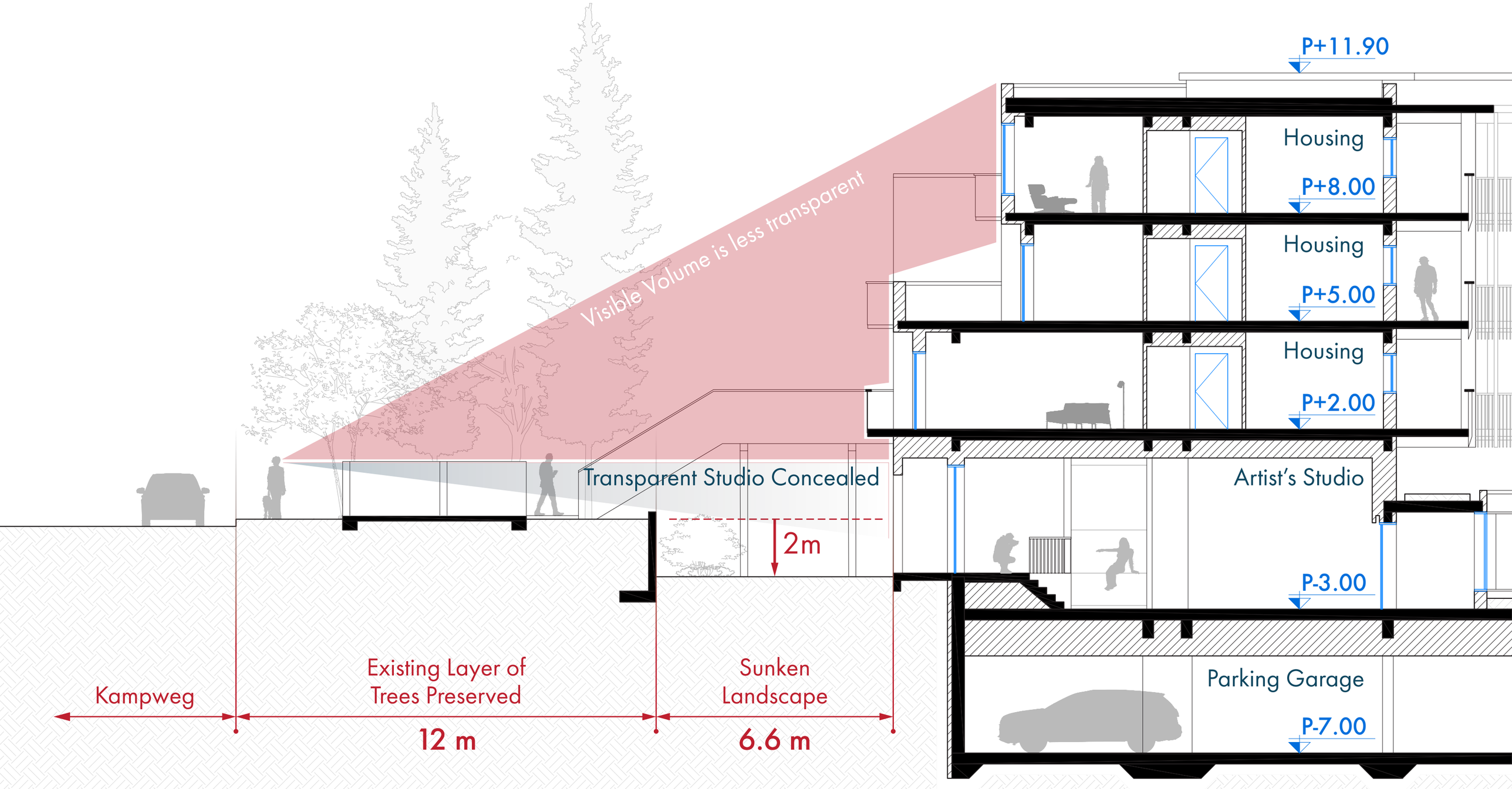
**The Design**

# Design Result 1: **New Construction in Urban Camouflage**

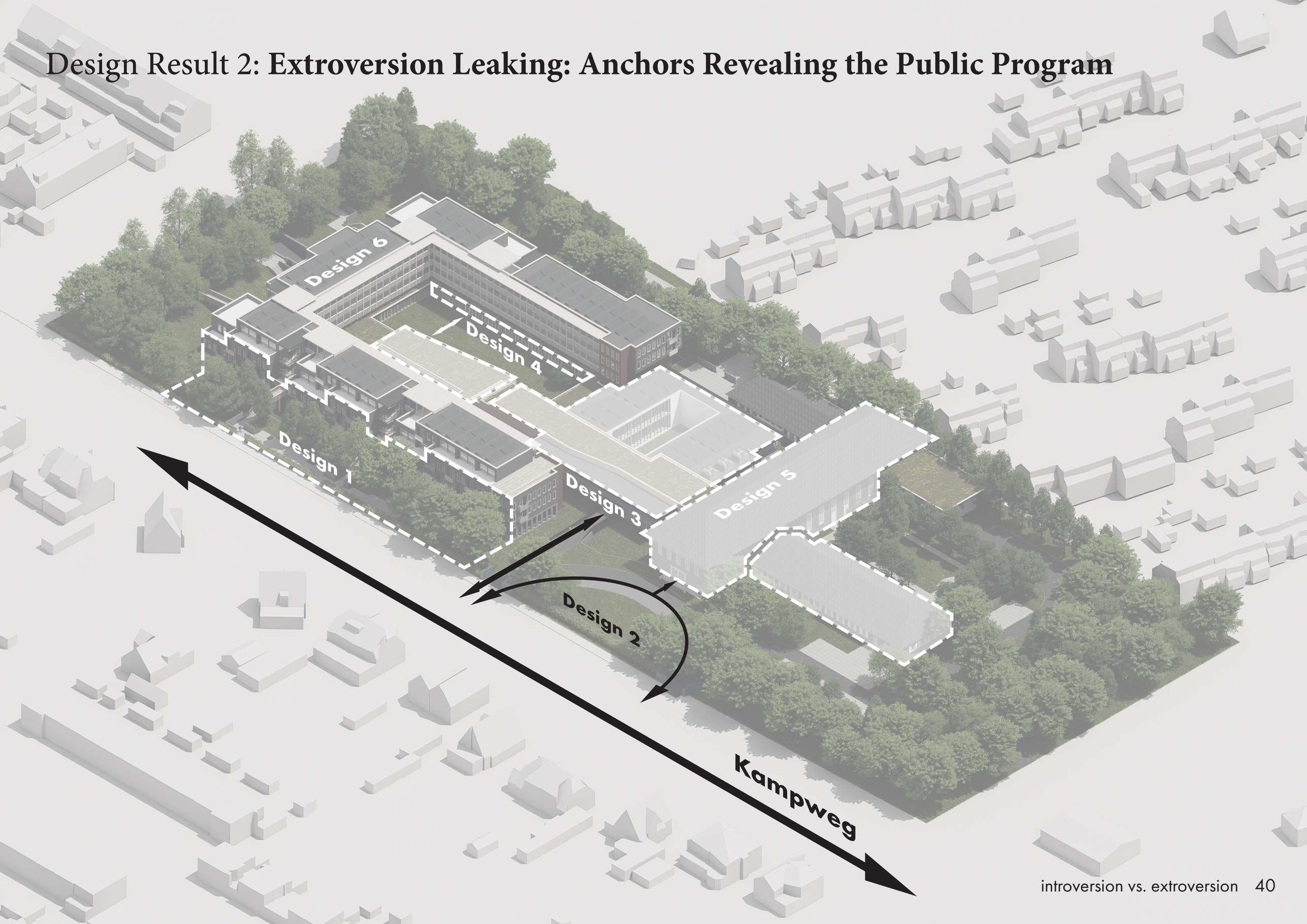


# Design Result 1: **New Construction in Urban Camouflage**

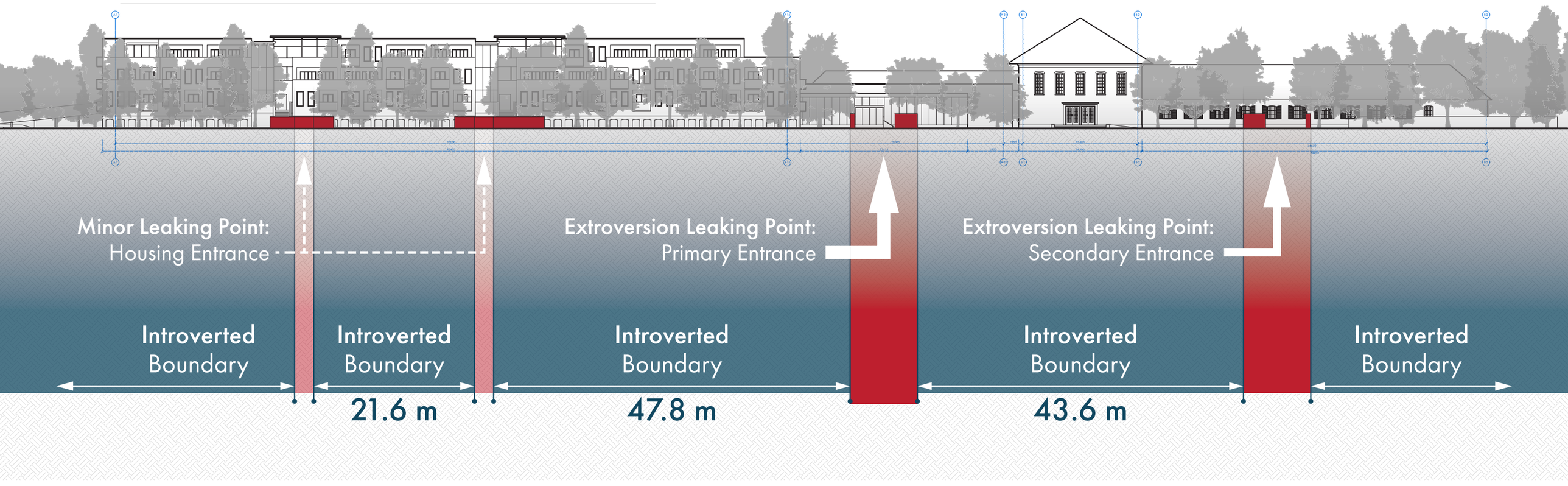


# Design Result 1: New Construction in Urban Camouflage

# Design Result 2: **Extroversion Leaking: Anchors Revealing the Public Program**



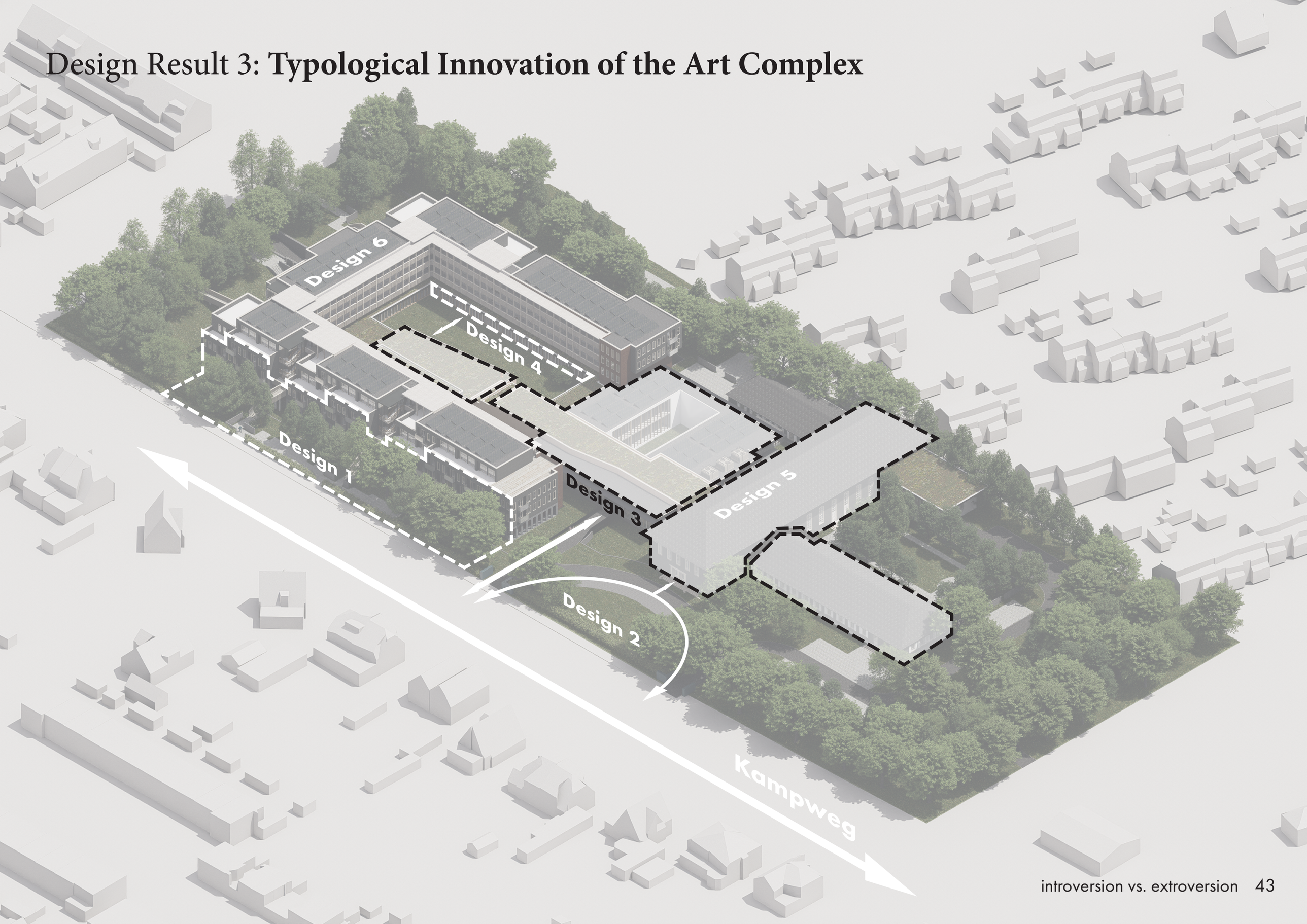
# Design Result 2: **Extroversion Leaking: Anchors Revealing the Public Program**



# Design Result 2: **Extroversion Leaking: Anchors Revealing the Public Program**

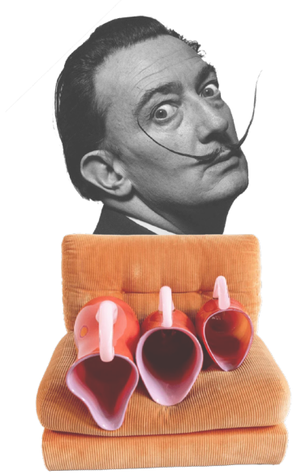


# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex**



# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex**

## The Primary Users:



### Artists-in-residence:

young professionals entering the creative industry.



### Workshop participants:

adventurous visitors coming for artists' open workshops.



### Creative Hobbyists:

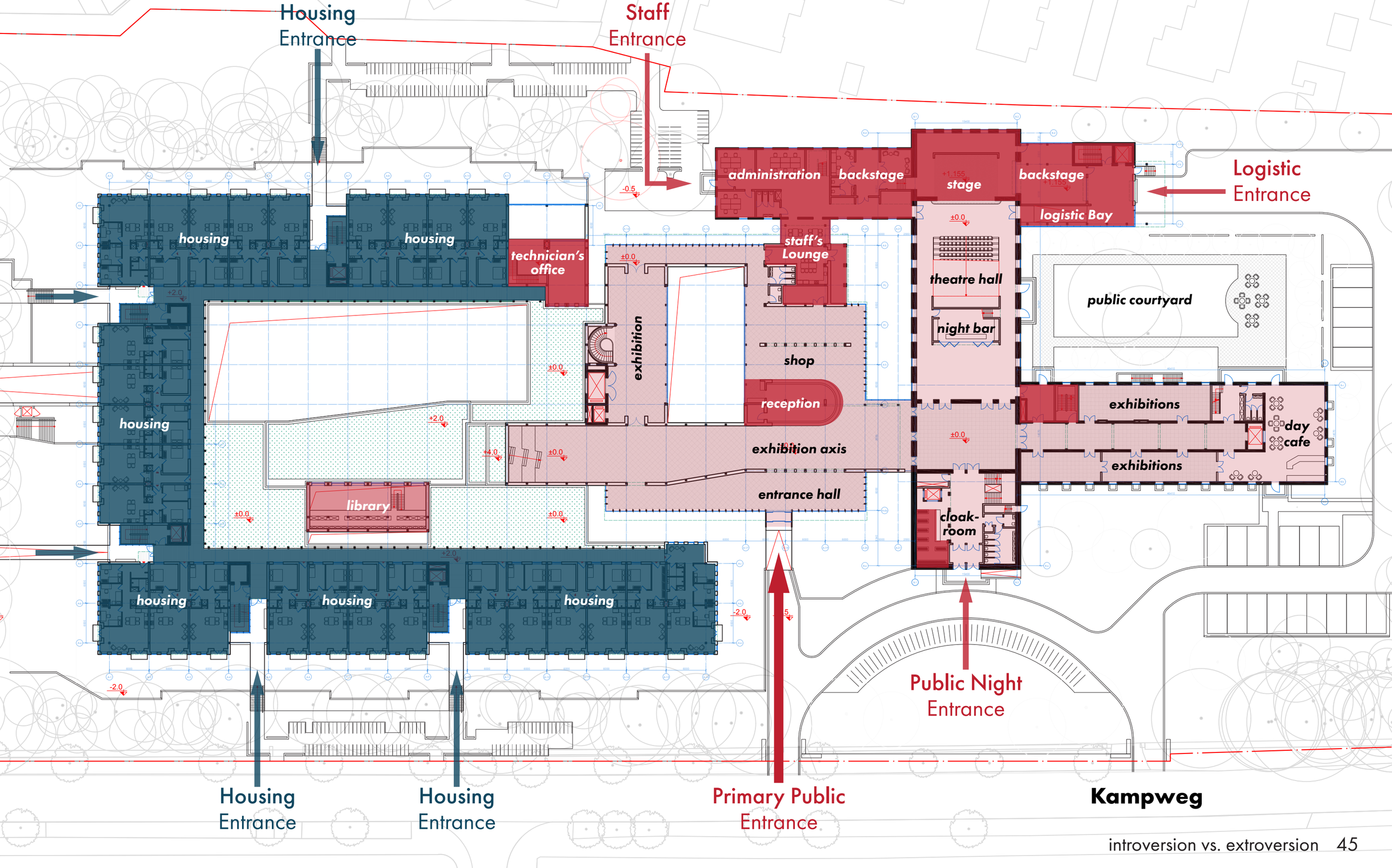
ambitous ambitious amateur looking for some extra help.



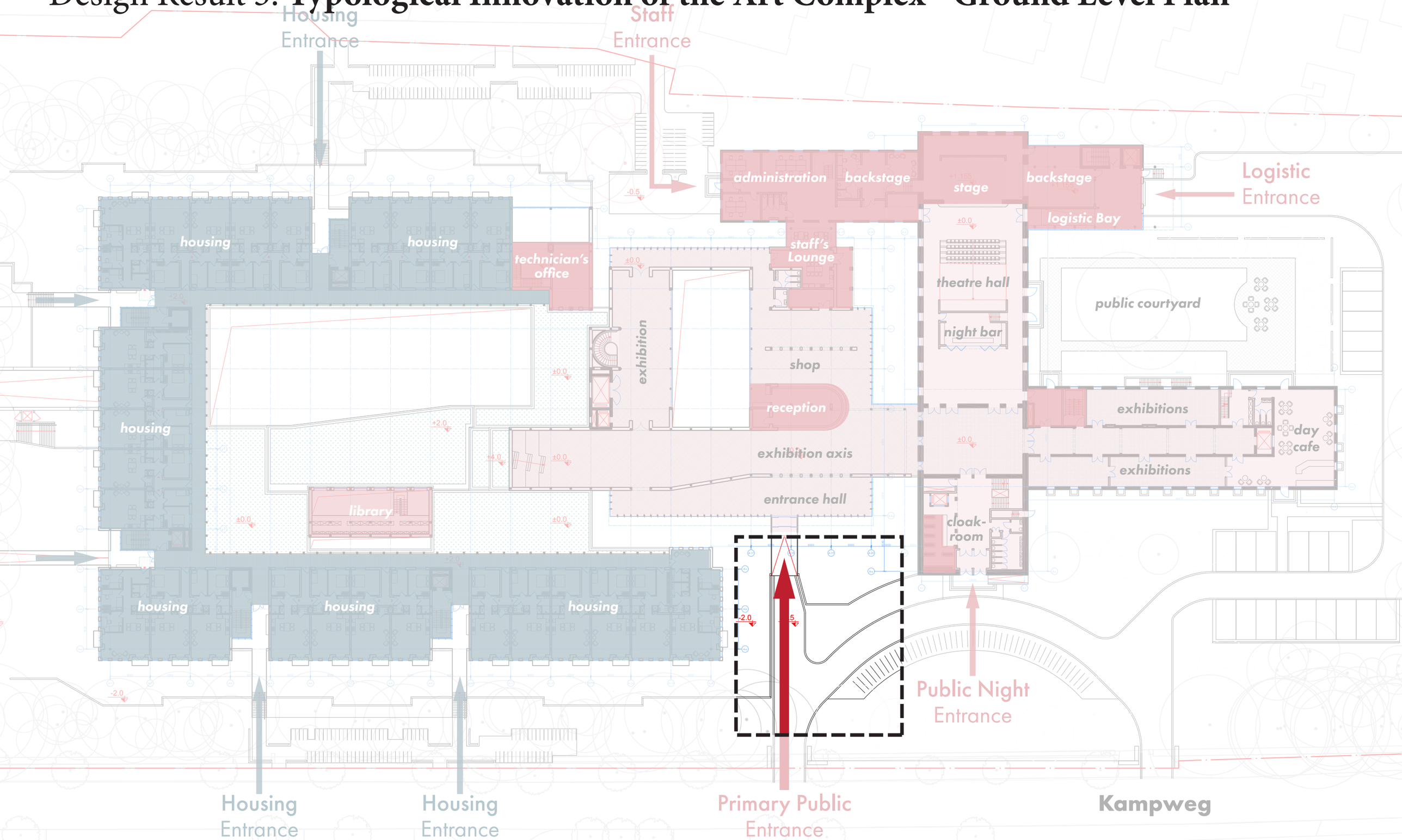
### Exhibition Audience:

curious visitors to exhibitions and occasional performance.

# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - Ground Level Plan**



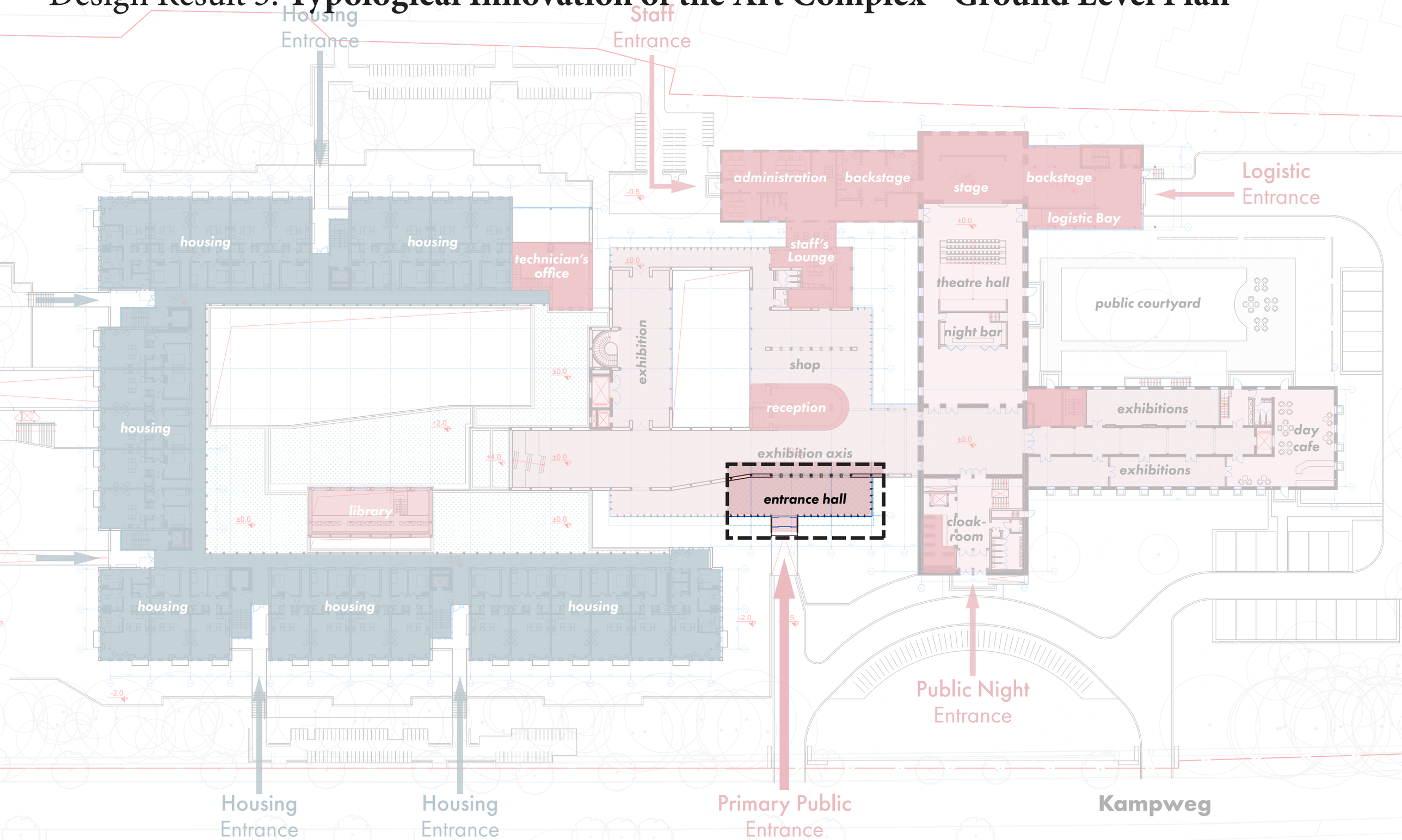
# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - Ground Level Plan**



# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - Ground Level Plan**



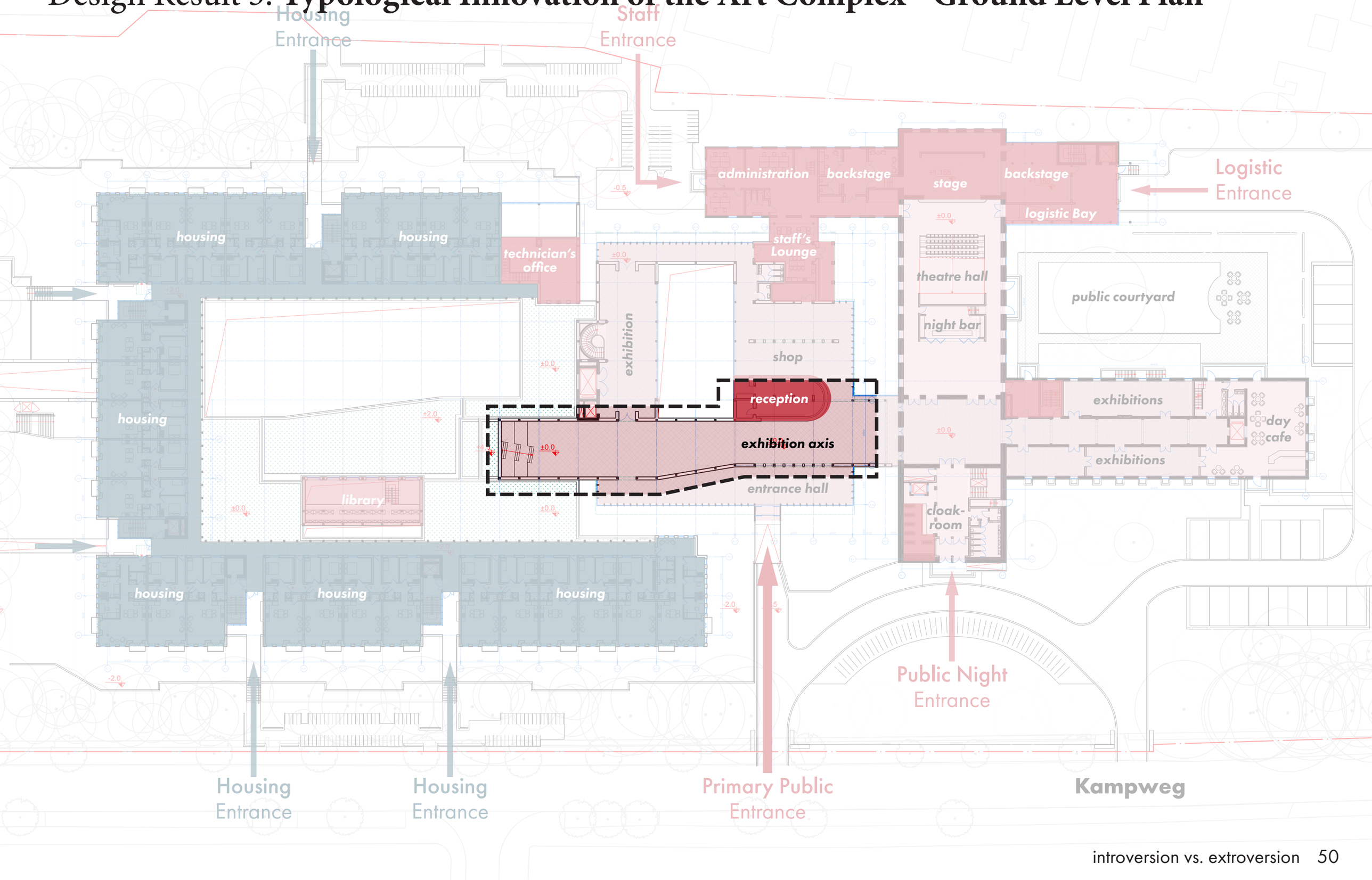
# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - Ground Level Plan**



# Design Result 3: Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - View of Entrance Hall



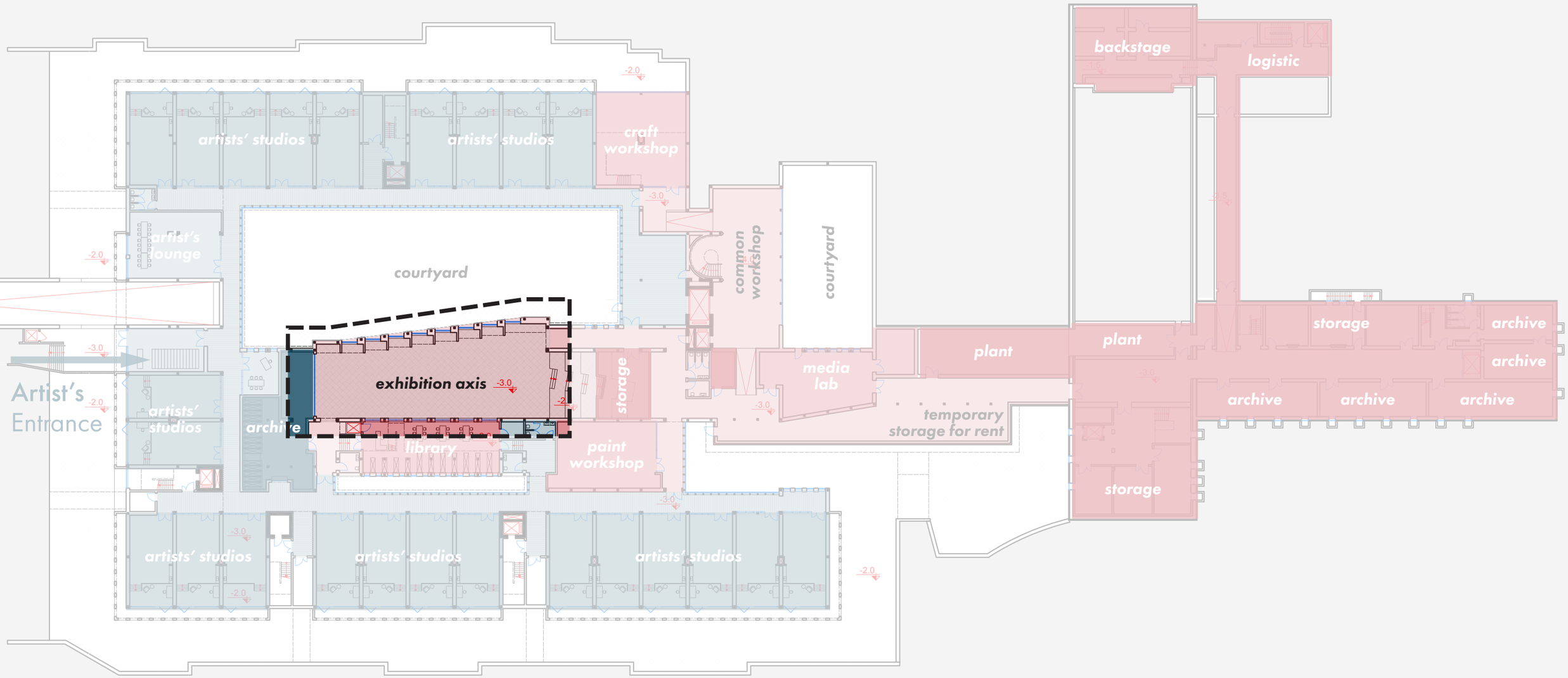
# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - Ground Level Plan**



# Design Result 3: Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - View of Reception



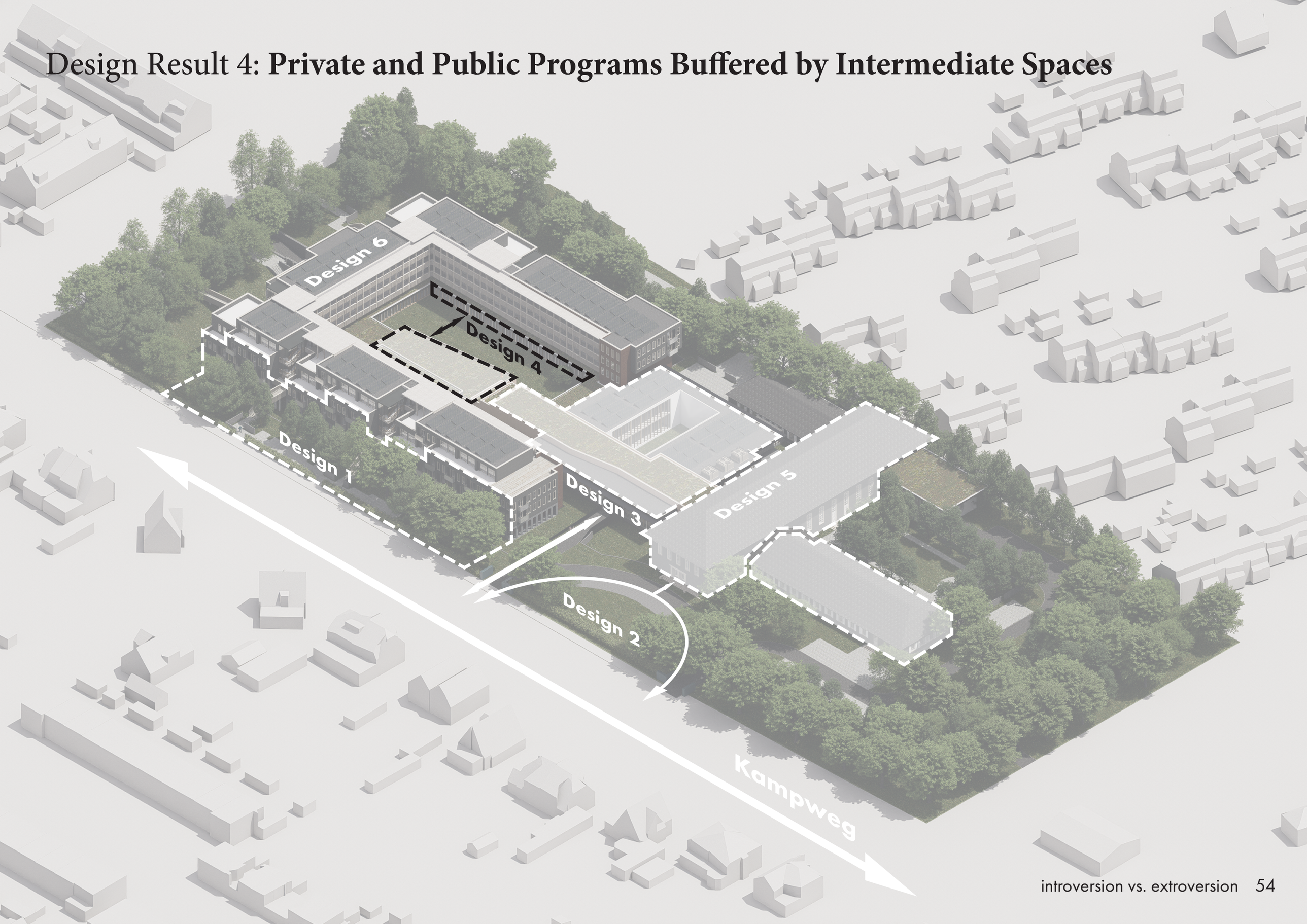
# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - B1 Level Plan**



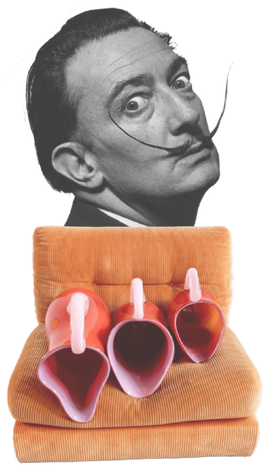
# Design Result 3: Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - View of Exhibition Axis



# Design Result 4: **Private and Public Programs Buffered by Intermediate Spaces**



# Design Result 4: **Private and Public Programs Buffered by Intermediate Spaces**



## Artists-in-residence:

"I want to show my creative process whenever I want. But the visitors shouldn't disturb me too much!"

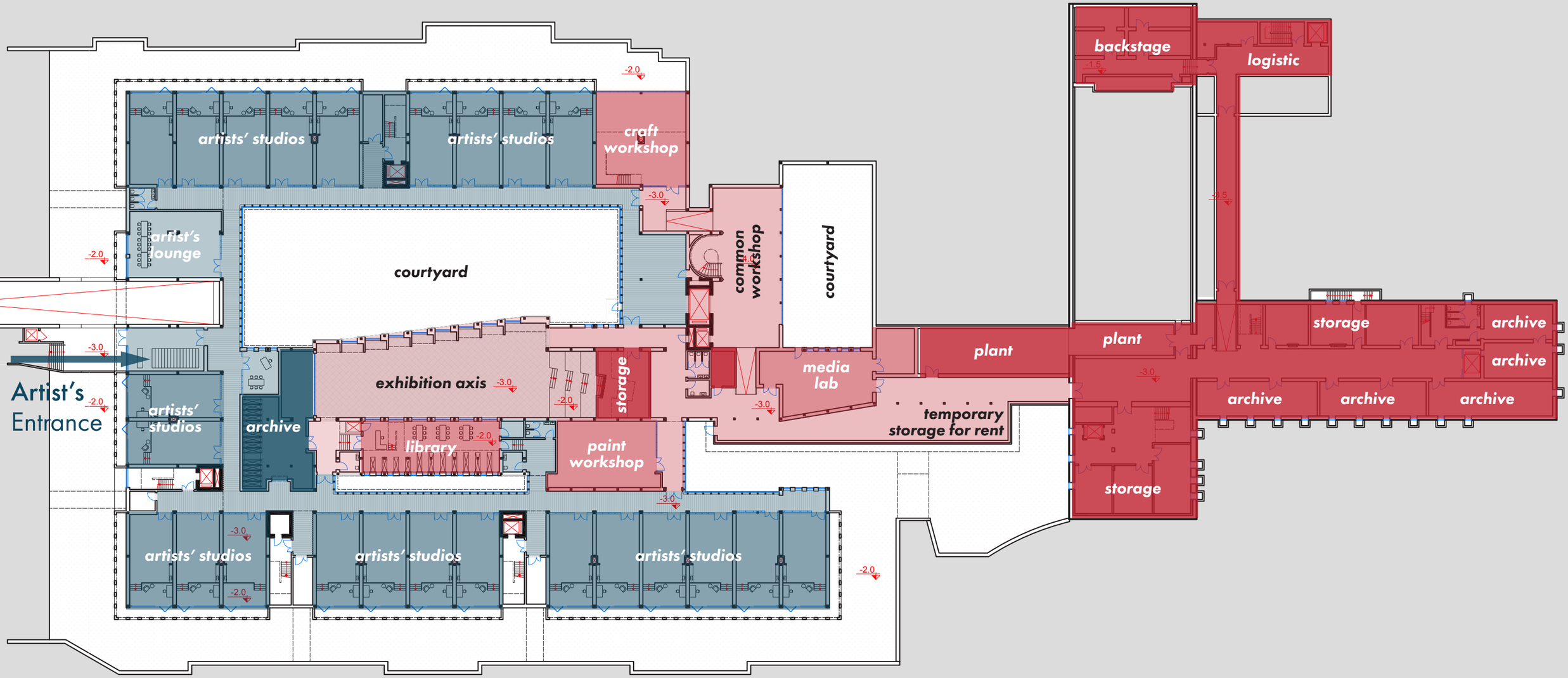
*vs.*



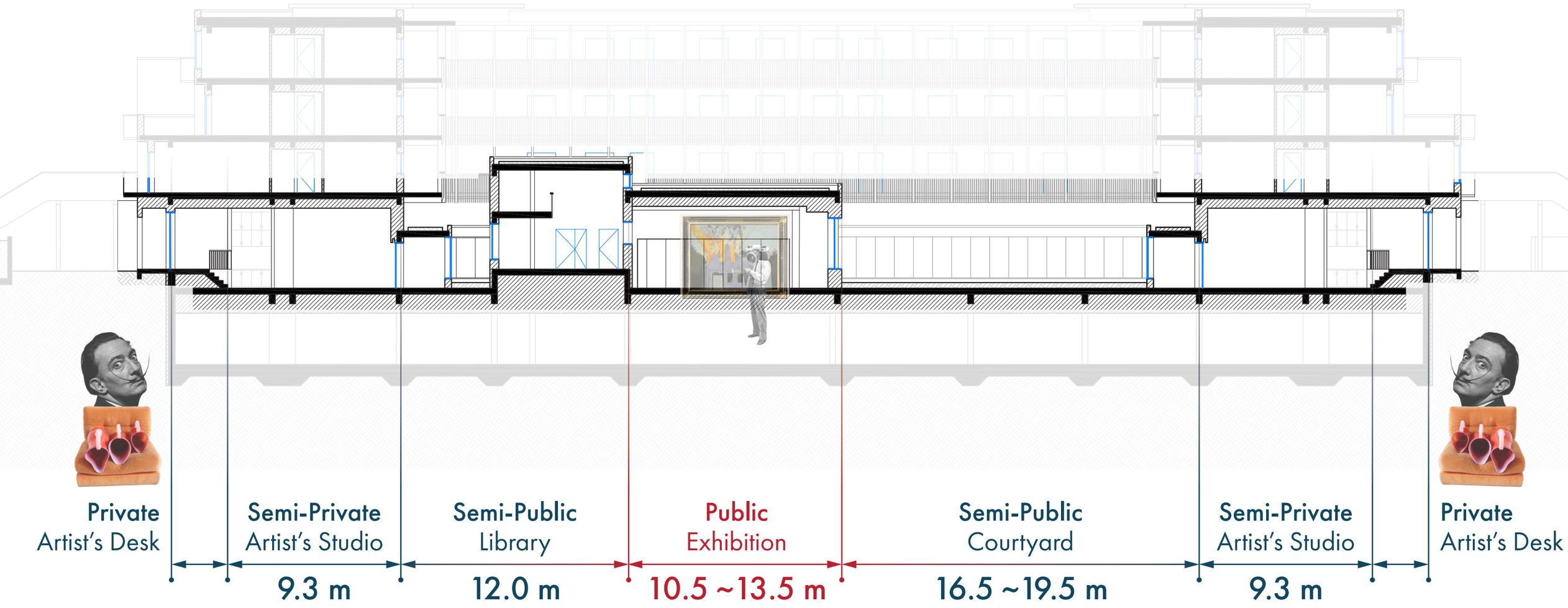
## Exhibition Audience:

"I want to find out what those artists are doing, but it would be awkward if they find out that I am peeking!"

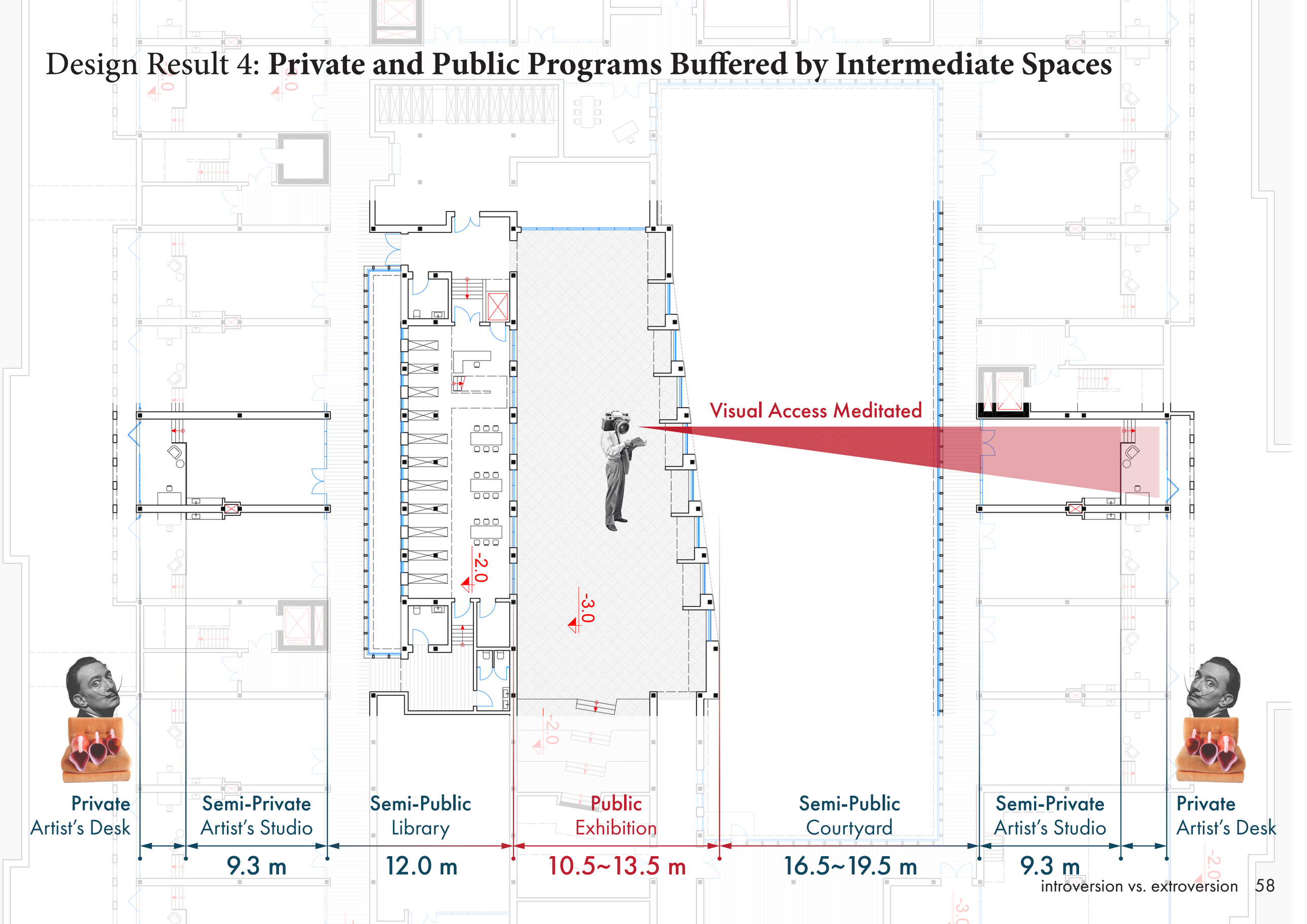
# Design Result 3: **Typological Innovation of the Art Complex - B1 Level Plan**



# Design Result 4: **Private and Public Programs Buffered by Intermediate Spaces**



# Design Result 4: **Private and Public Programs Buffered by Intermediate Spaces**



# Design Result 4: Private and Public Programs Buffered by Intermediate Spaces

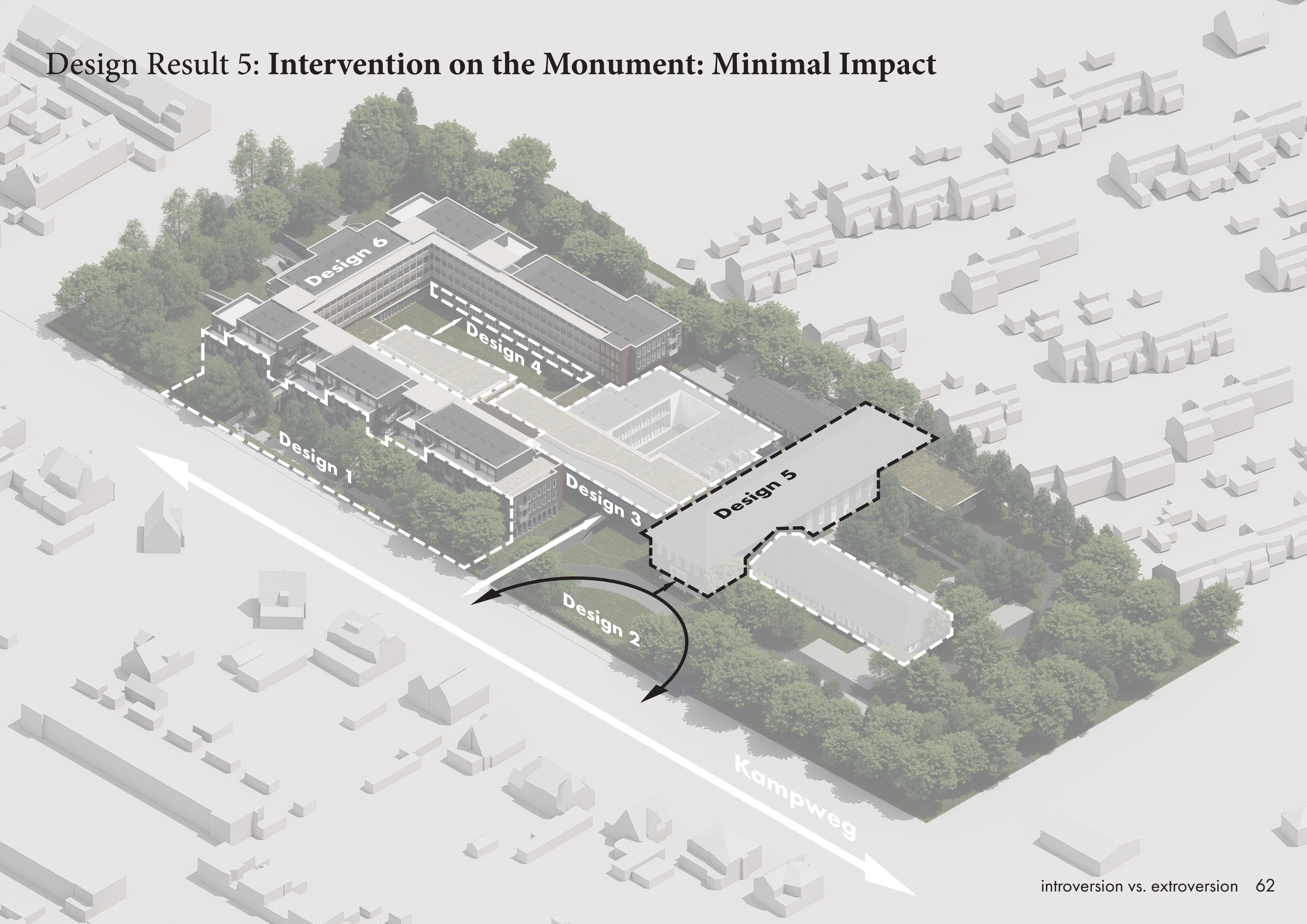
# Design Result 4: **Private and Public Programs Buffered by Intermediate Spaces**



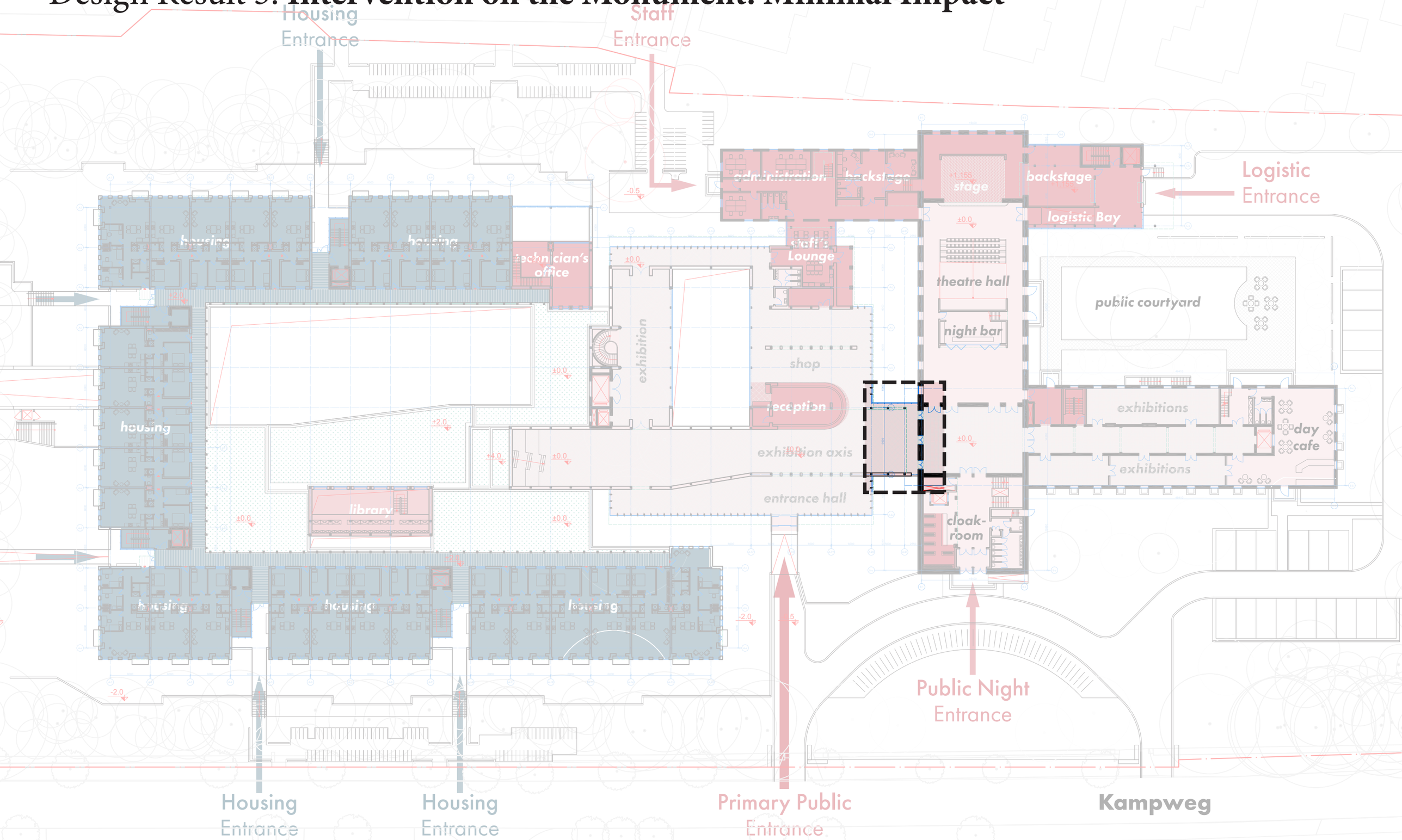
# Design Result 4: **Private and Public Programs Buffered by Intermediate Spaces**



# Design Result 5: **Intervention on the Monument: Minimal Impact**



# Design Result 5: **Intervention on the Monument: Minimal Impact**



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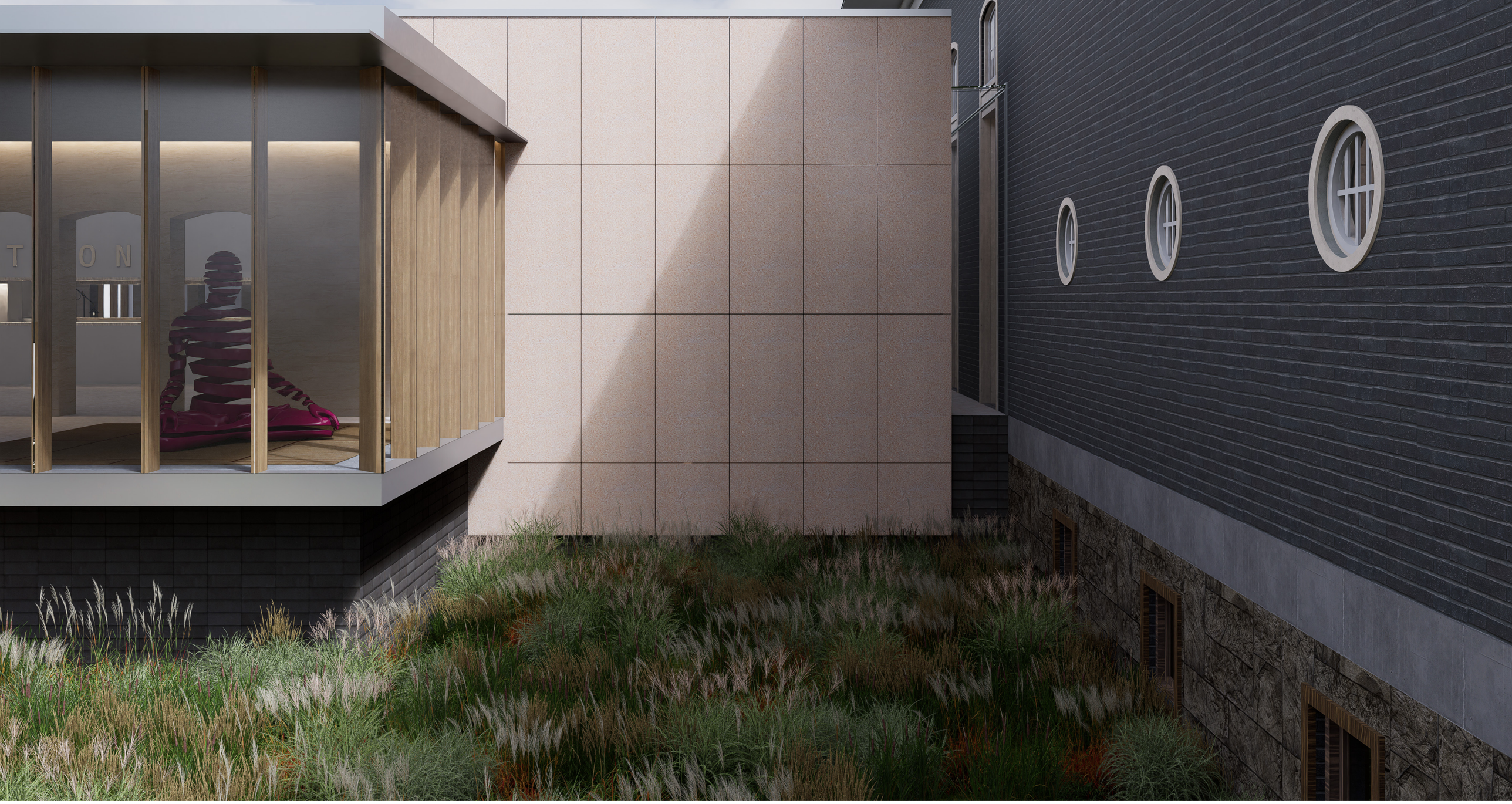

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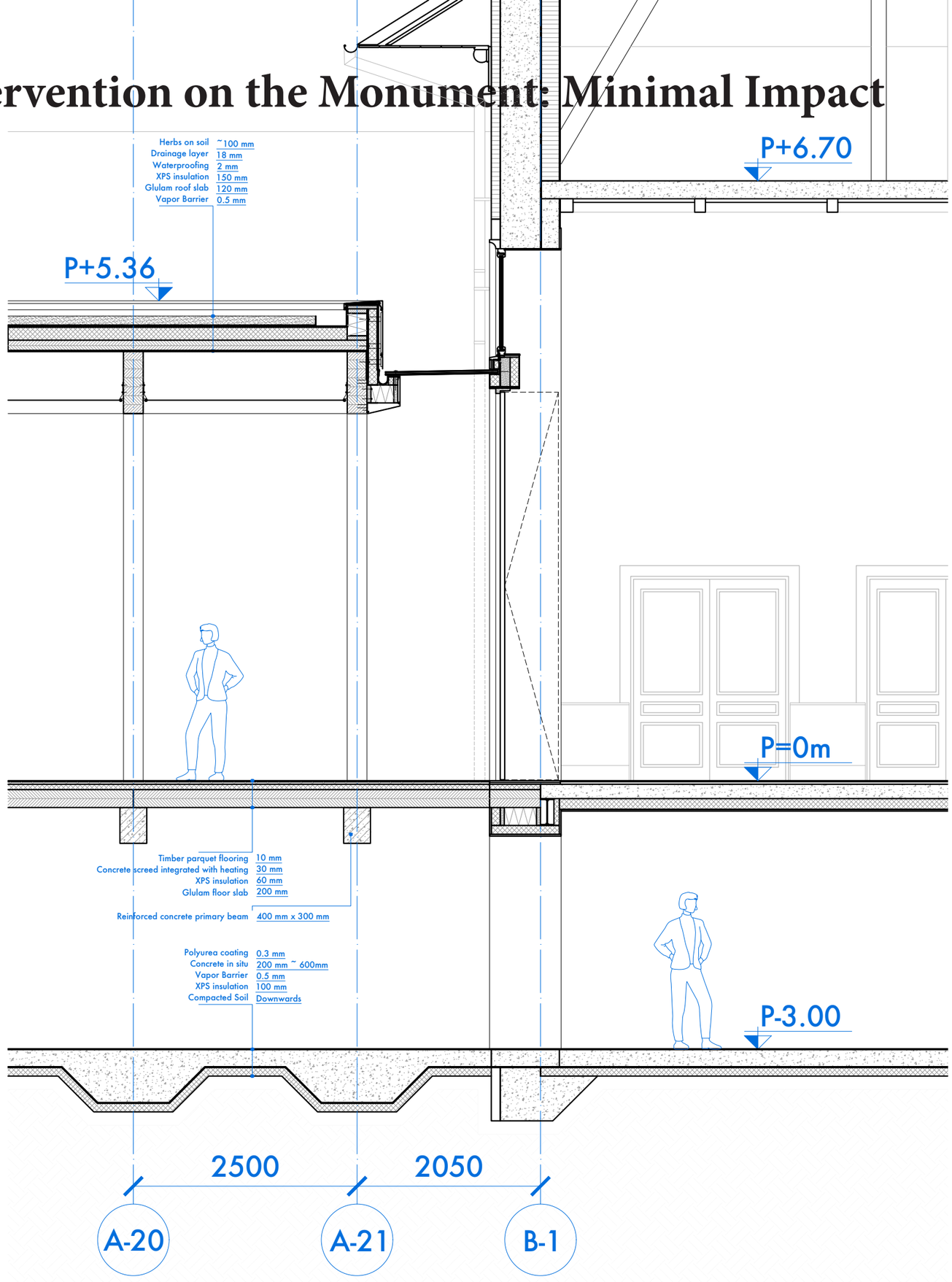
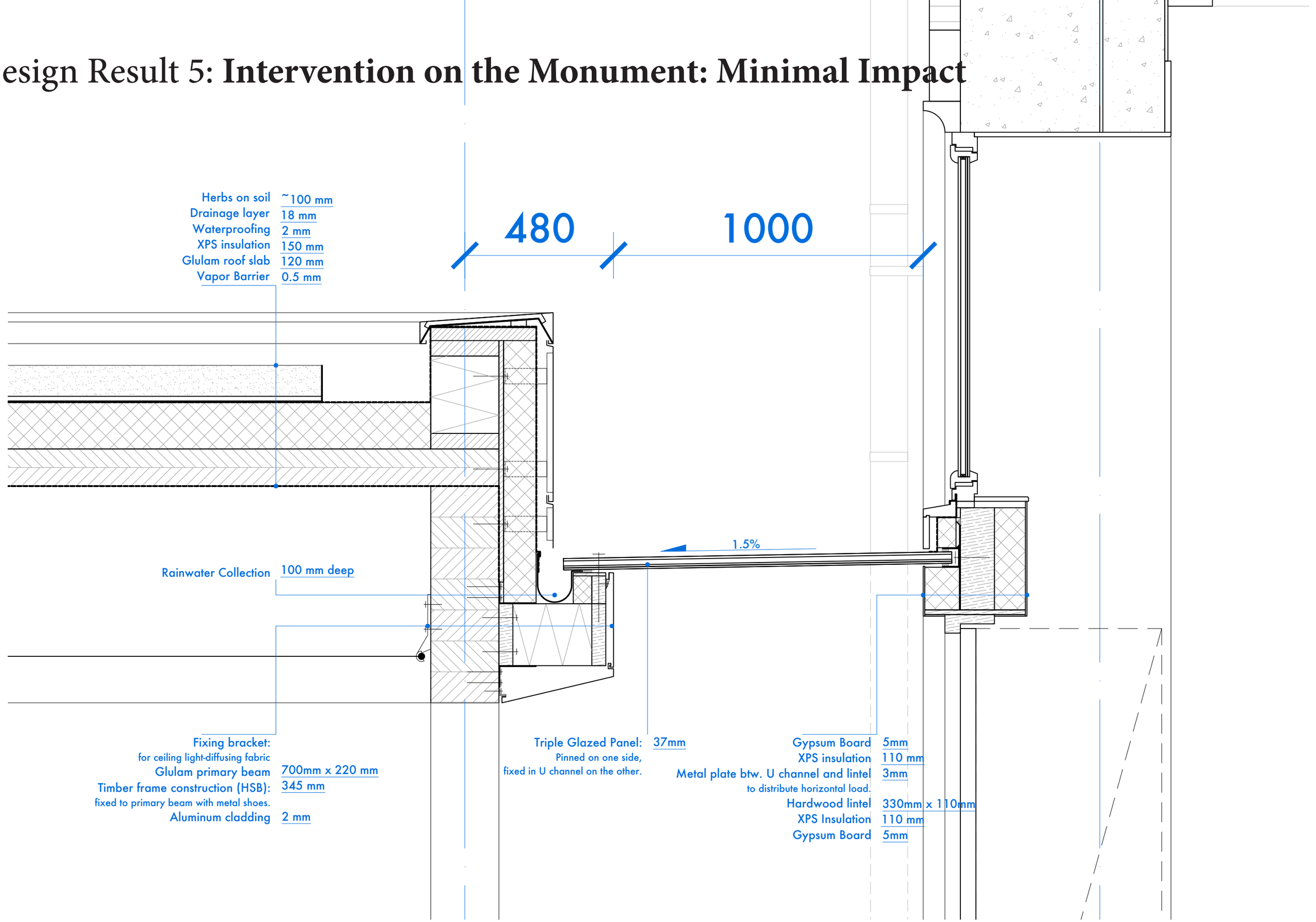
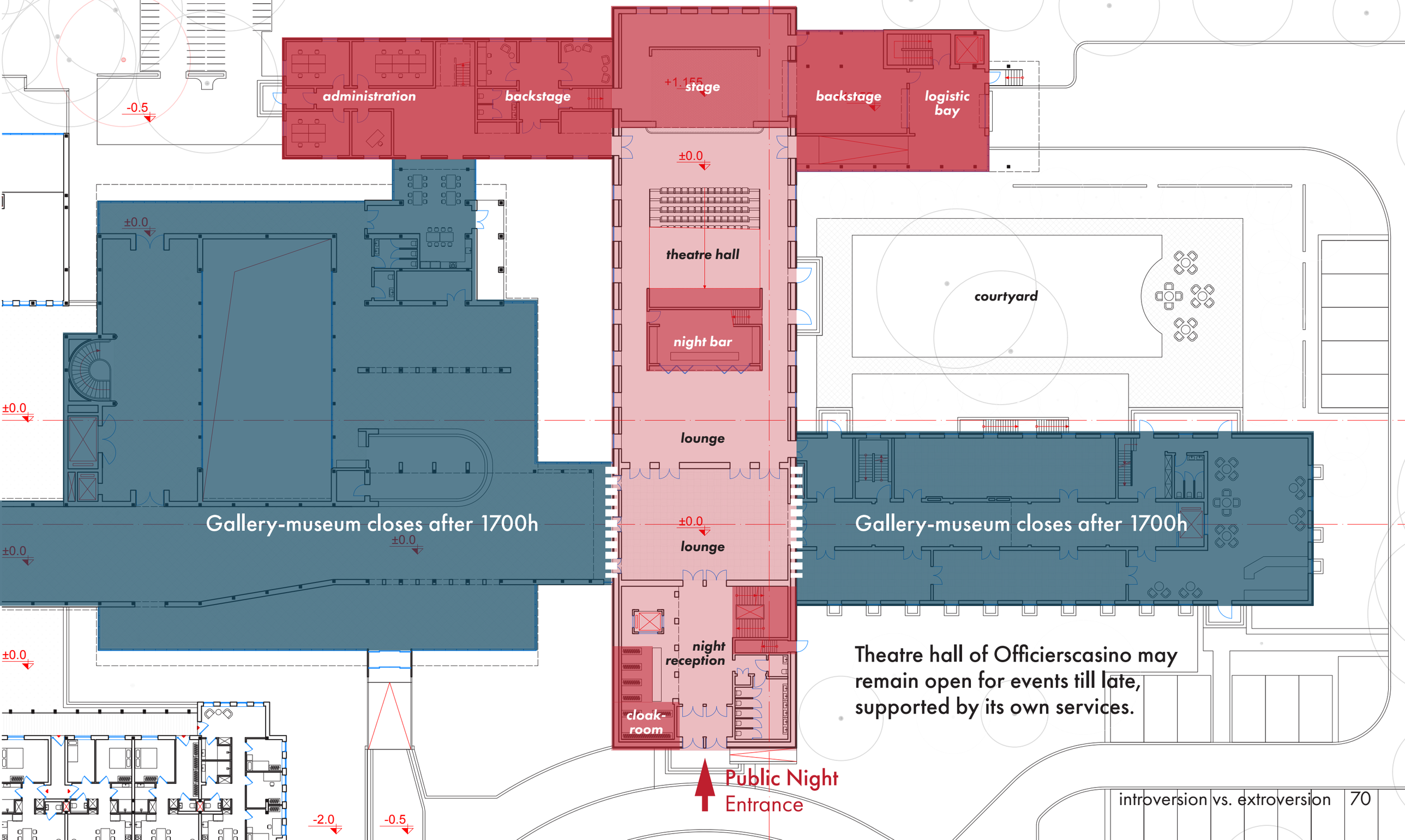


# Design Result 5: **Intervention on the Monument: Minimal Impact**



# Design Result 5: **Intervention on the Monument: No Compromise**



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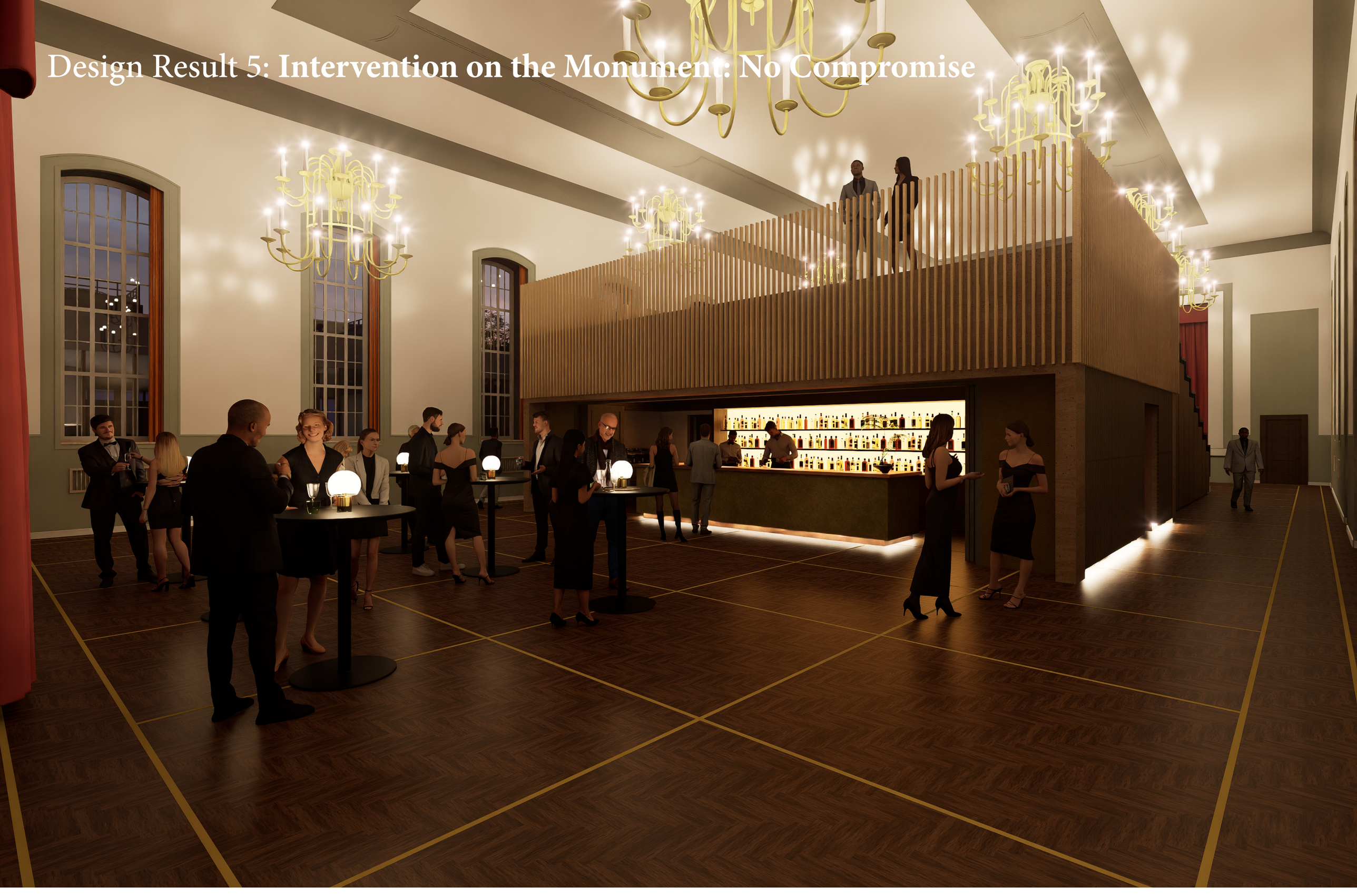
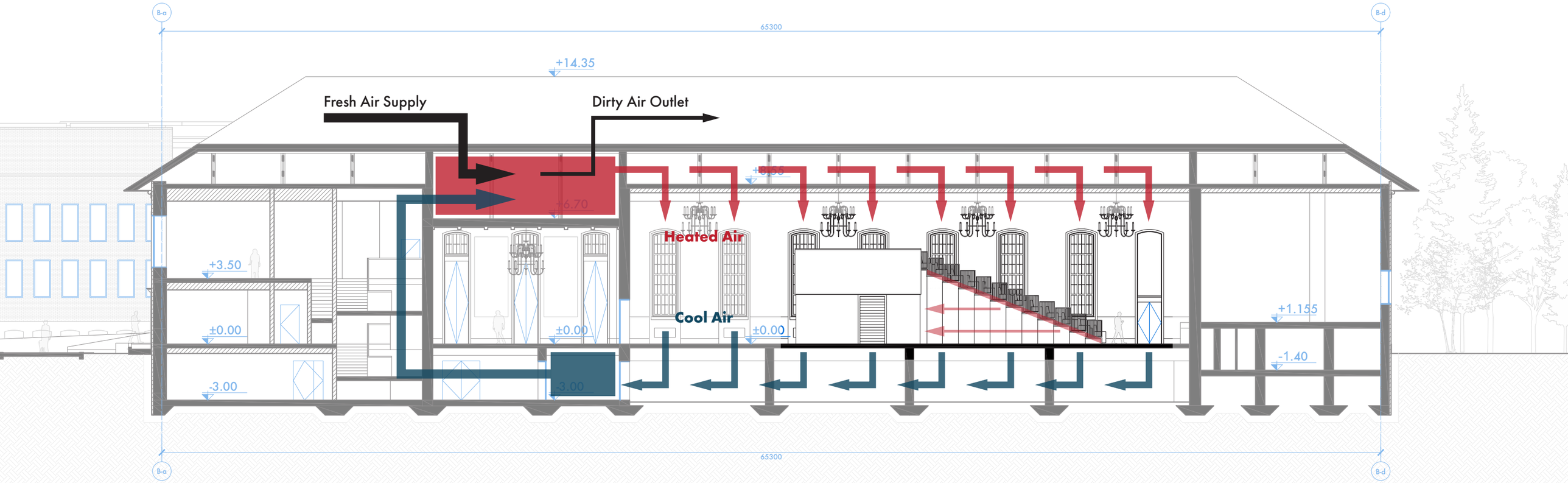
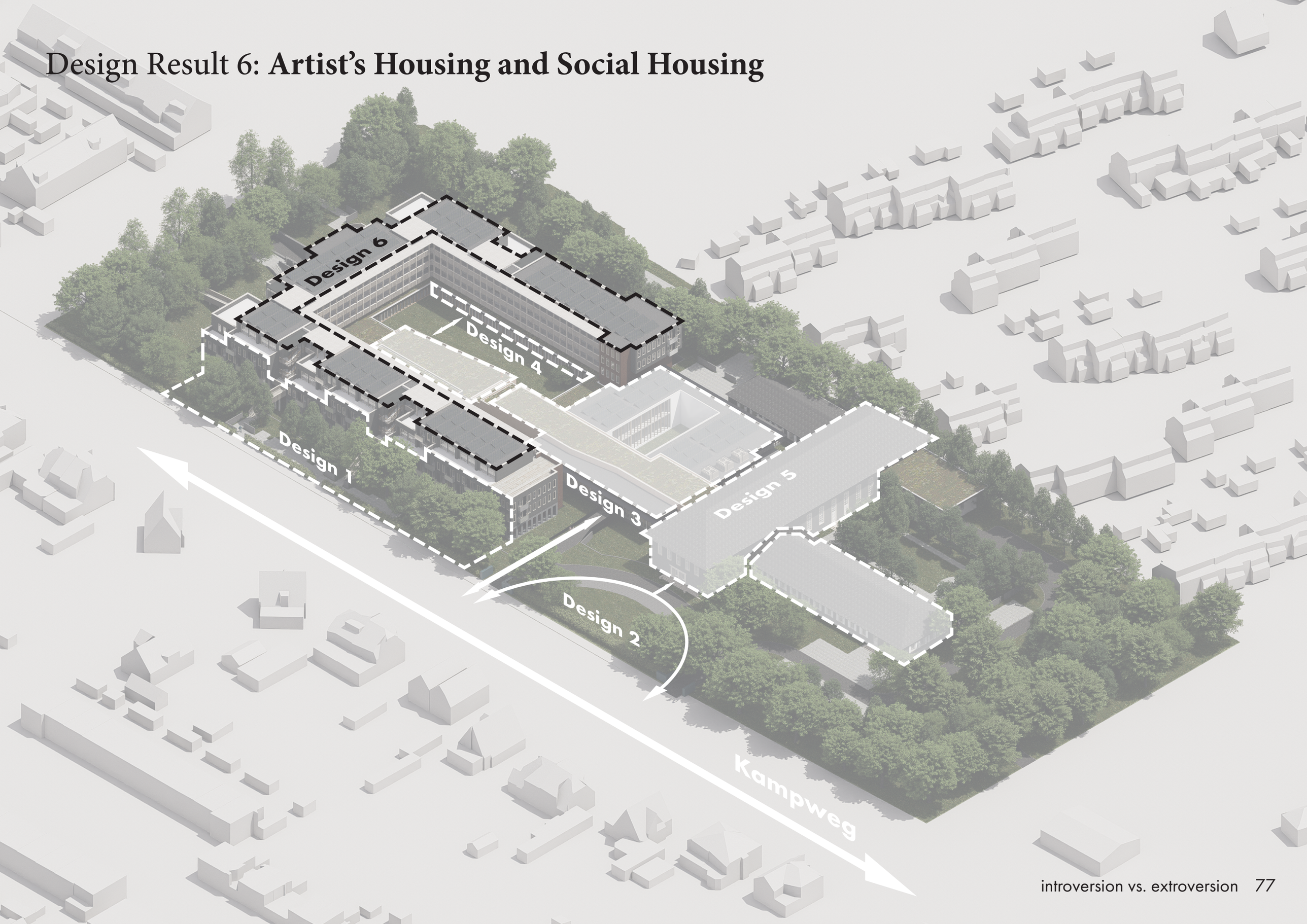


# Design Result 5: **Intervention on the Monument: No Compromise**

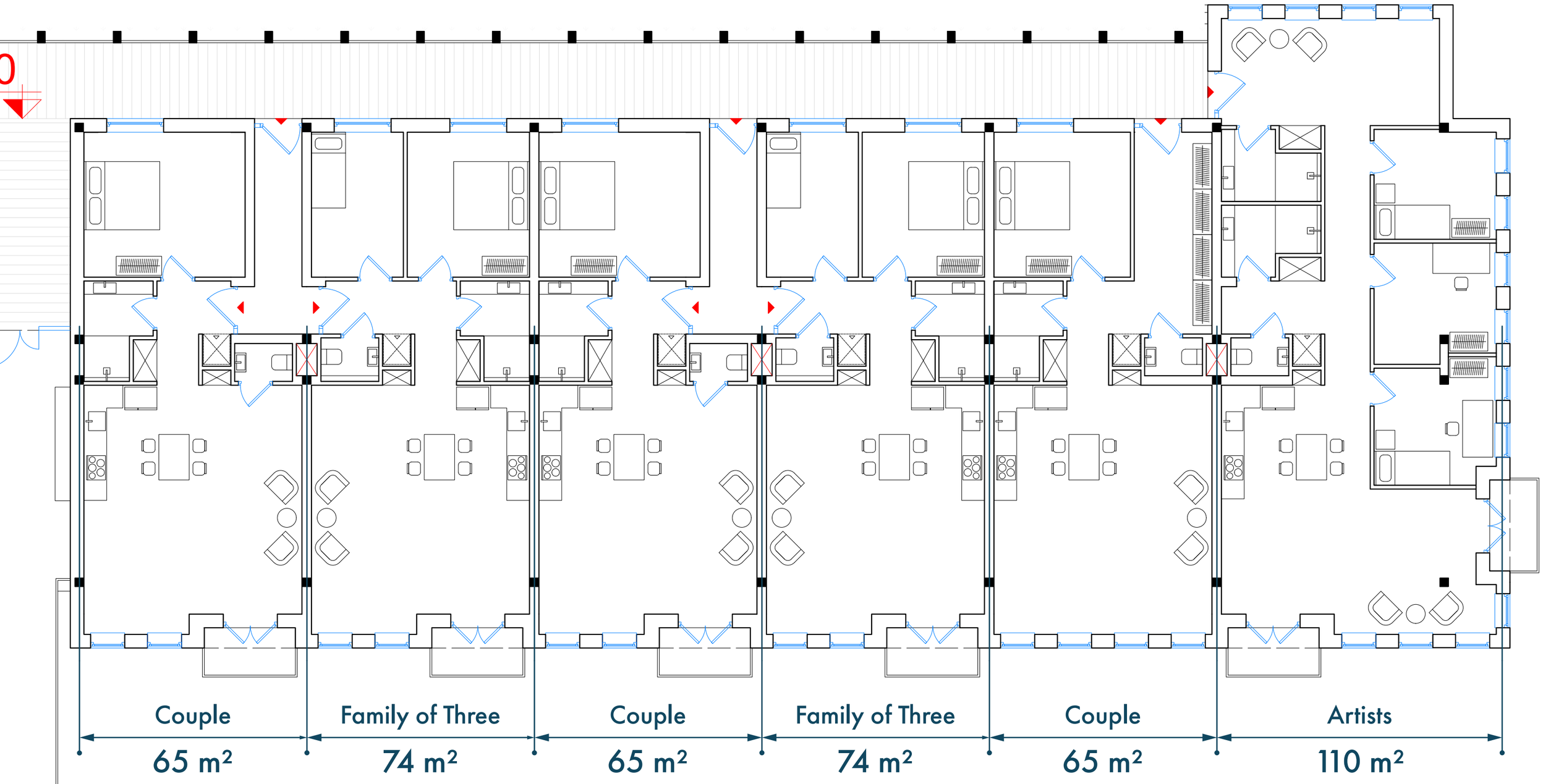


# Design Result 6: **Artist's Housing and Social Housing**

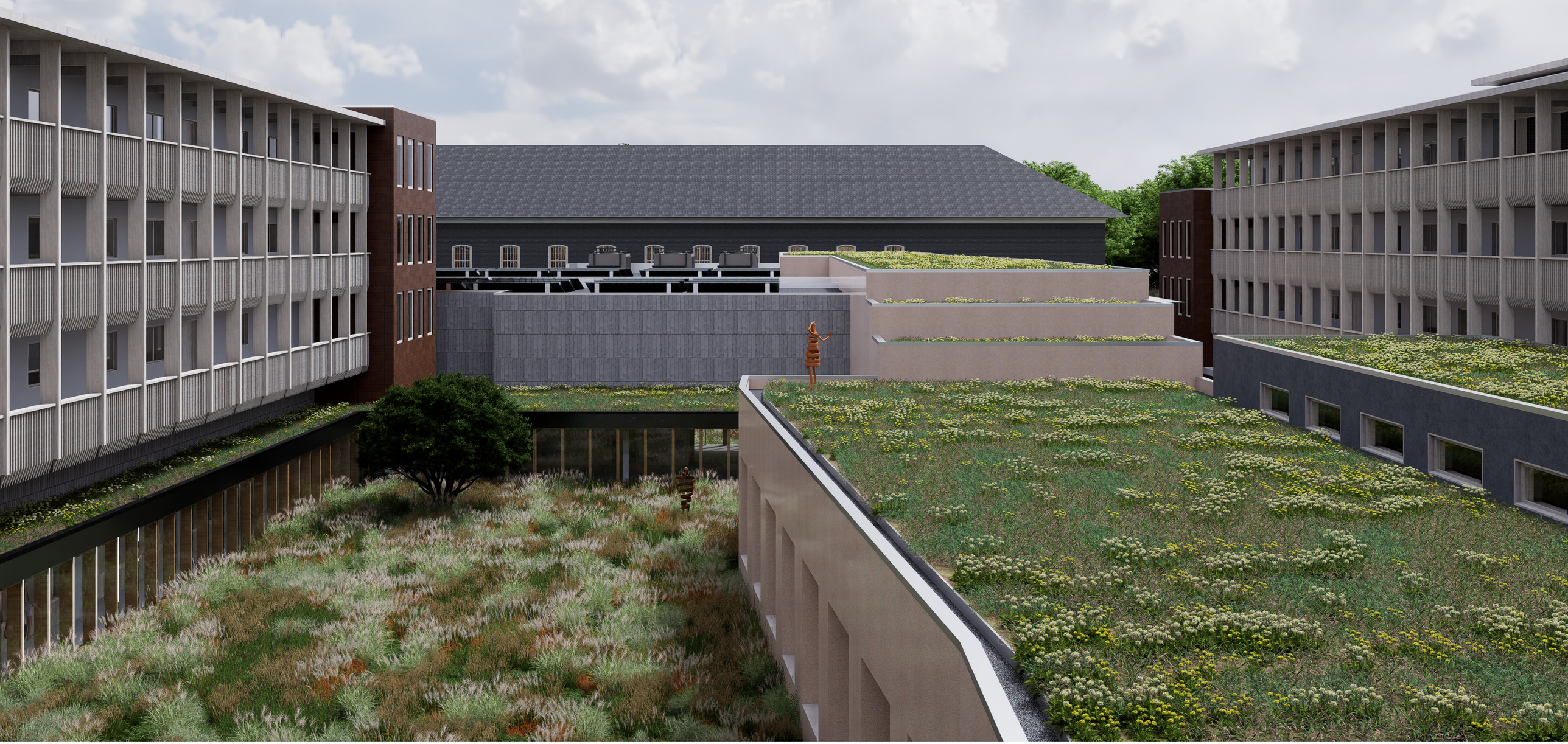


# Design Result 6: **Artist's Housing and Social Housing**

**24 beds for artists, 42 apartments for couples, 30 apartments for families of three, with 120 parking slots.**



# Design Result 6: **Artist's Housing and Social Housing**



# Introversion vs. Extroversion:

## The Adaptive Reuse of a Military Heritage as a Public Art Complex

# THANK YOU!

AR4AH120 Adaptive Reuse of Heritage Graduation Studio @ TU Delft
Tutored by Arnold Hermkens
and Ivan Nevzgodin

Shizhong Zhang, 6157297