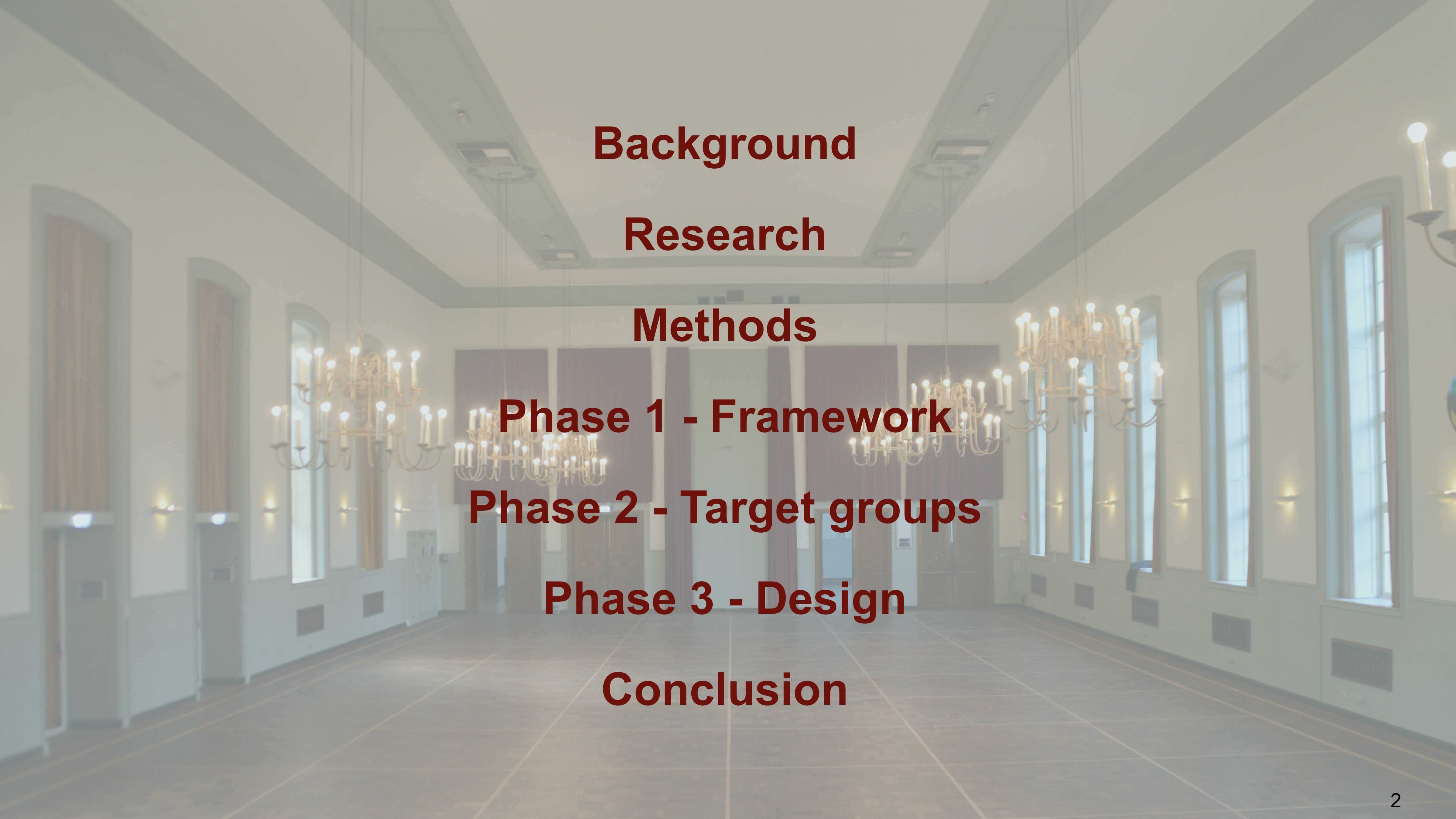


Community Cares

**Transforming the Officer's Casino into
community-care housing**



Background

Research

Methods

Phase 1 - Framework

Phase 2 - Target groups

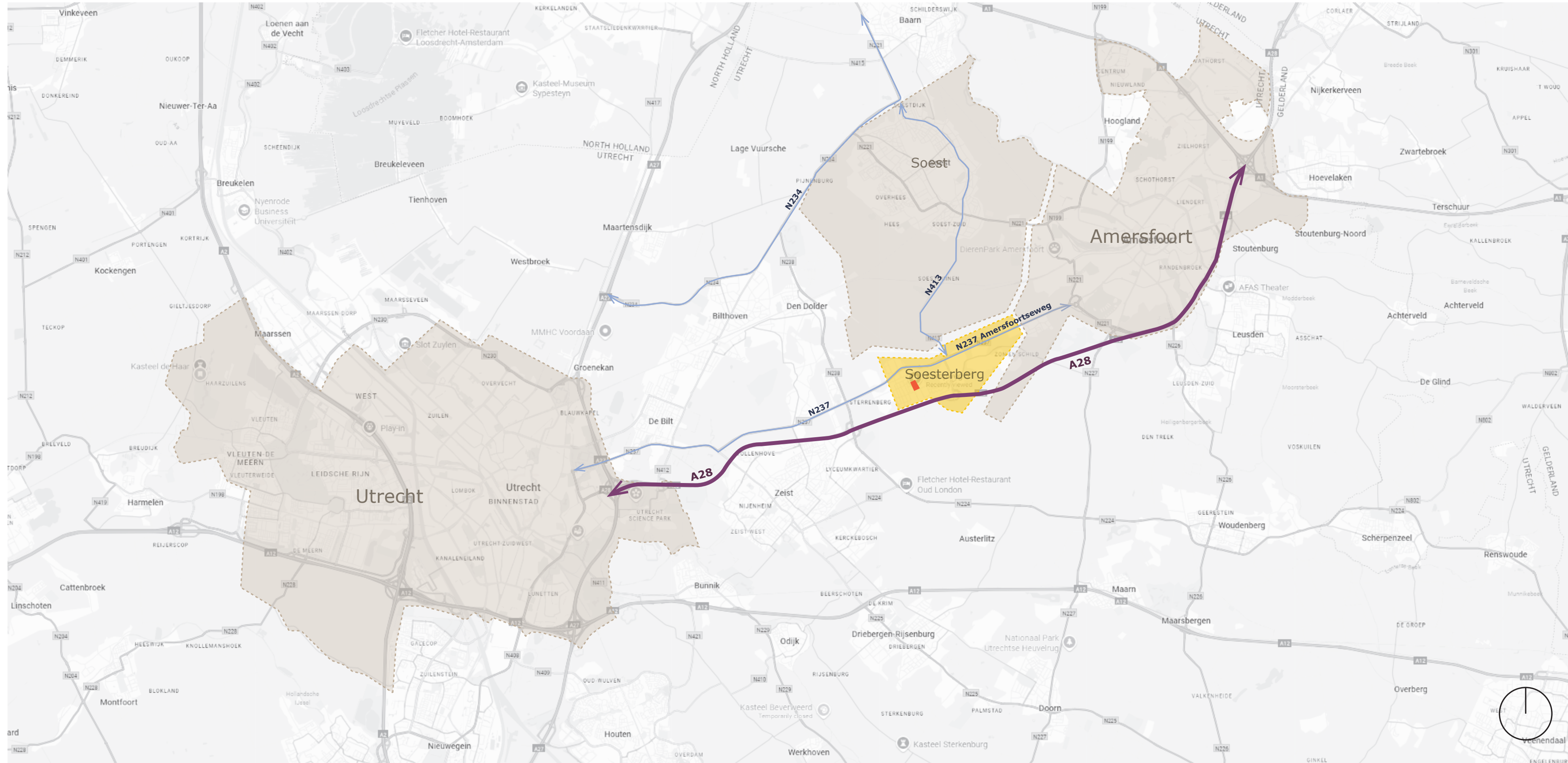
Phase 3 - Design

Conclusion

Background Officer's Casino



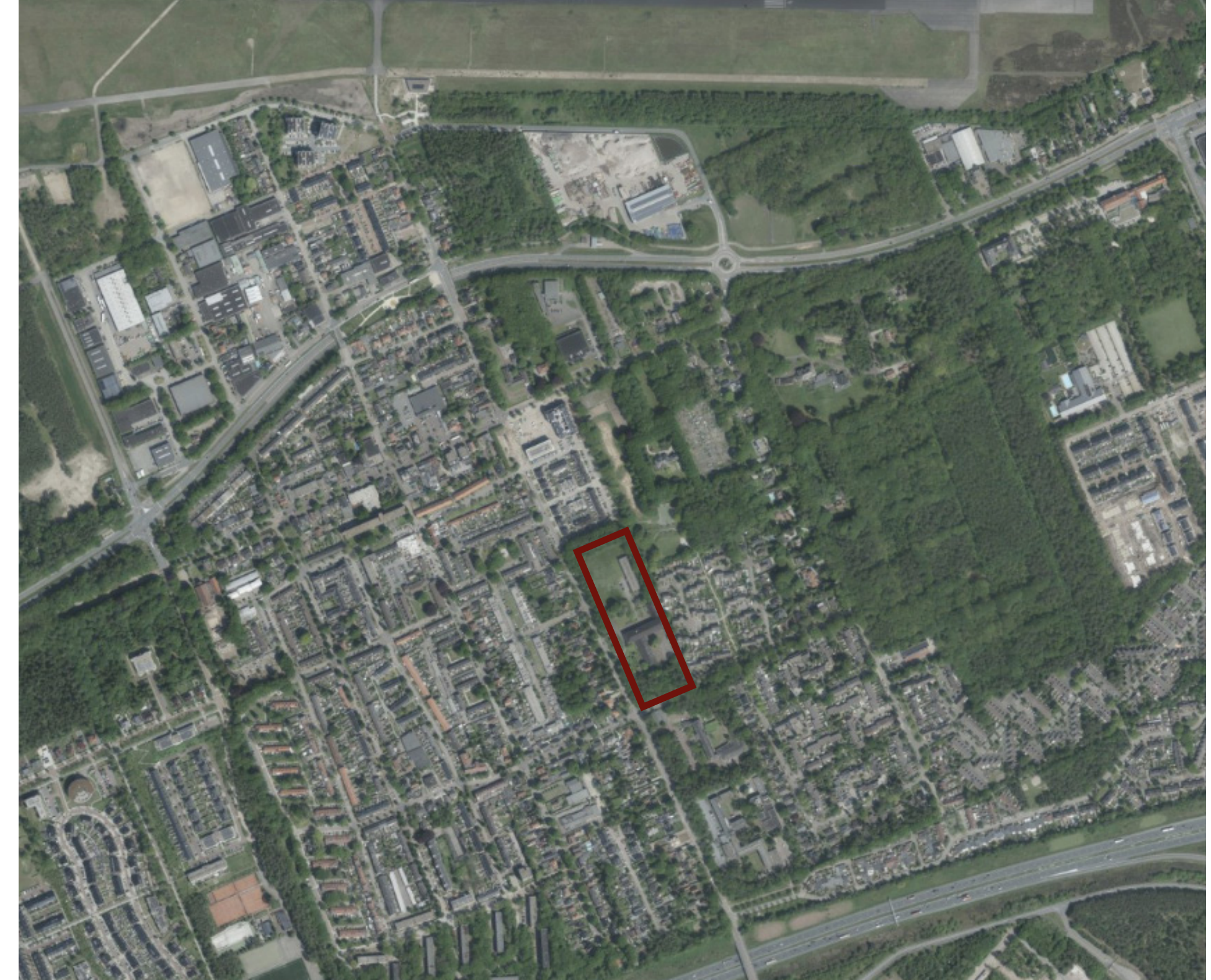
Source: Current photo of front facade. (Officierscasino: Toelichting, n.d.)



Source: (Groupwork)

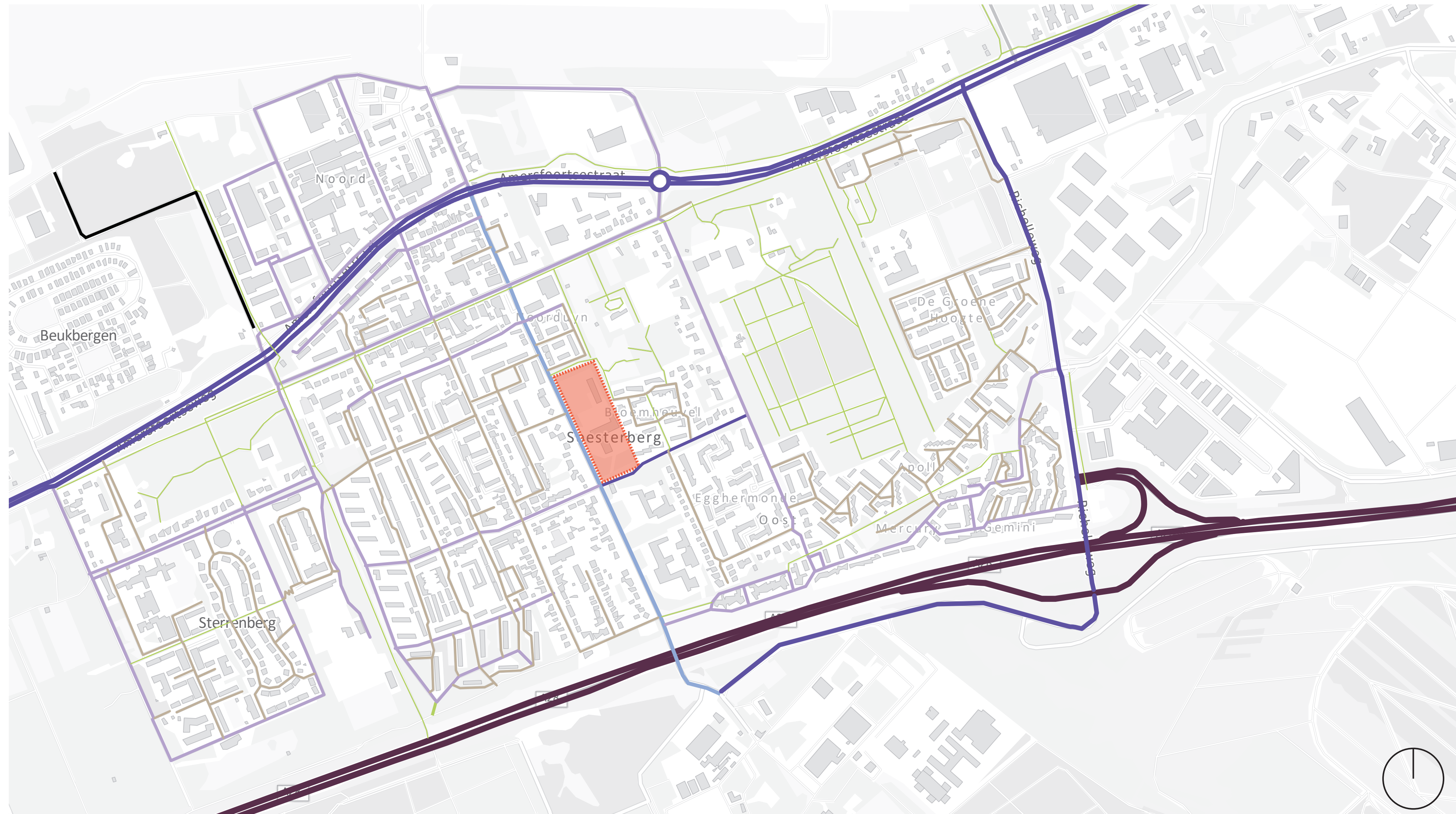


1953

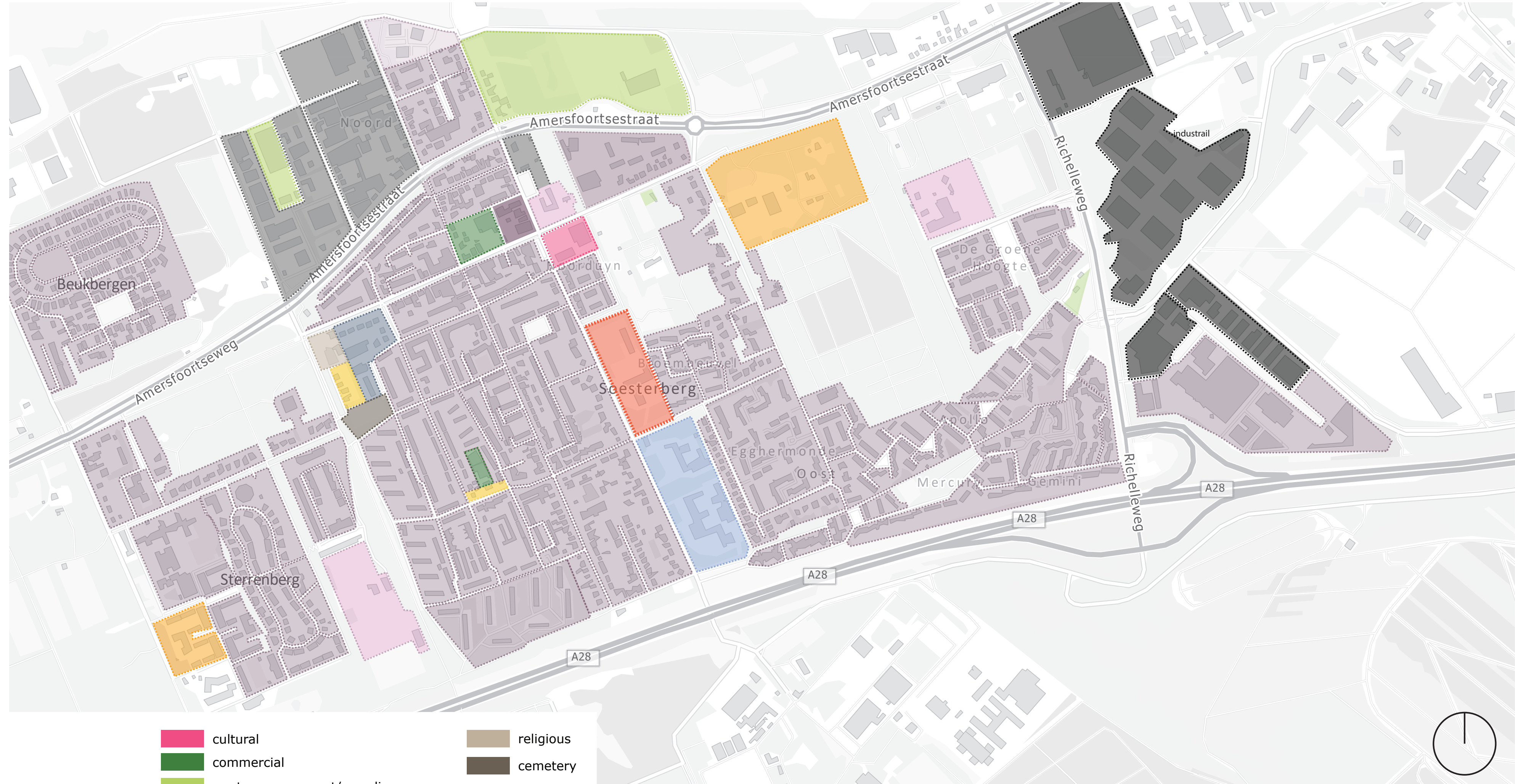


2021

Source: (topotijdreis)

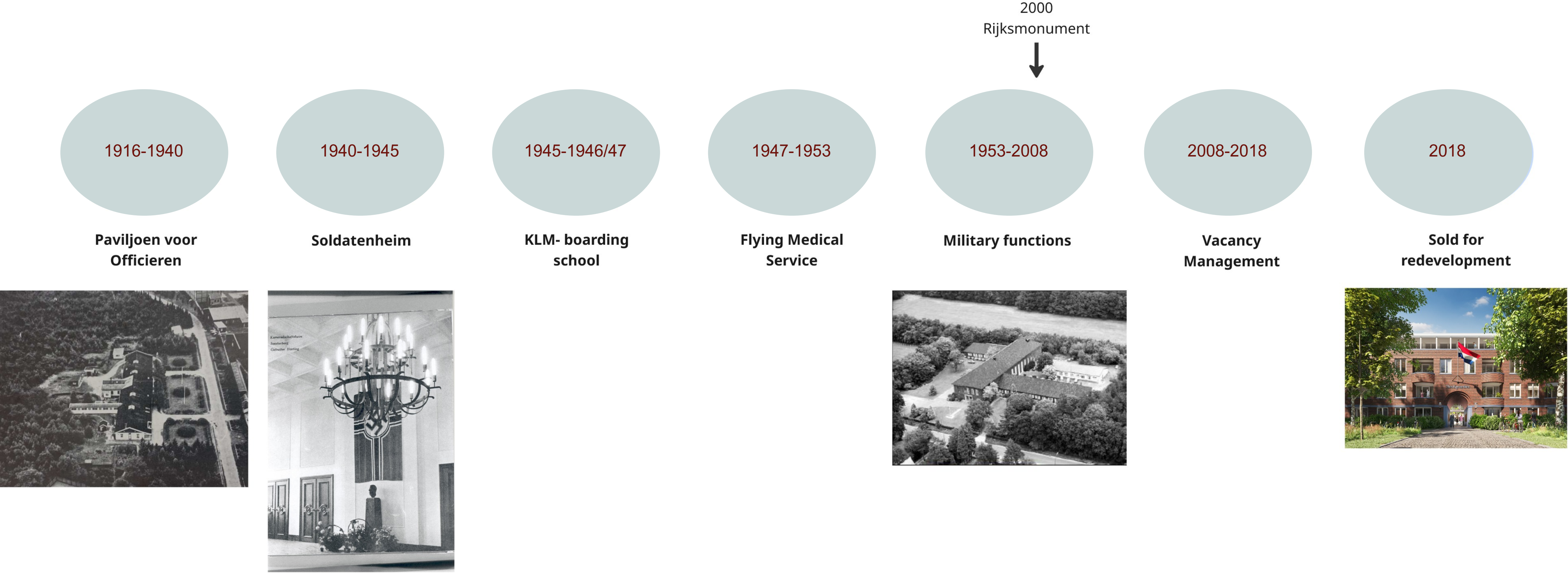


Source: (Groupwork)



Source: (Groupwork)

Historical timeline



National monument



“The officers’ mess is of general importance due to its cultural and architectural-historical value as a rare example of a “Soldatenheim,” or casino, with the characteristic design of neoclassical Nazi architecture from the period 1940-1945. It is significant because of its history, as a design by the occupying forces during World War II. The building is intact in terms of its main form, detailing, and use of materials, both on the exterior and interior.”

Translated from dutch. (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, n.d.)

Research Questions

How can the Officer's Casino and its site be transformed into community-care housing for two combined target groups, while considering its cultural and architectural heritage?

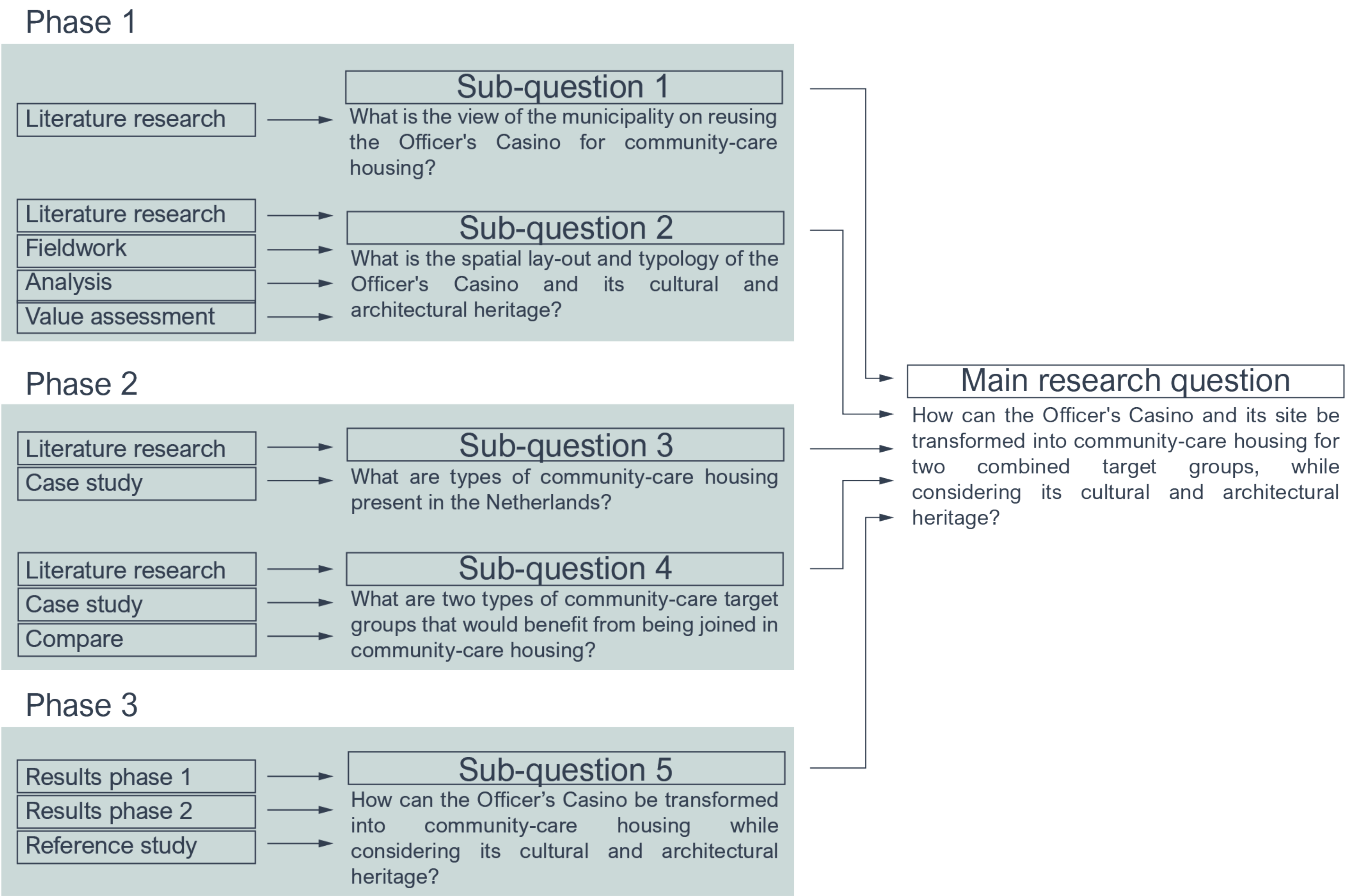
1. What is the view of the municipality on reusing the Officer's Casino for community-care housing?
2. What is the spatial lay-out and typology of the Officer's Casino and its cultural and architectural heritage?
3. What are types of community-care housing present in the Netherlands?
4. What are two types of community-care target groups that would benefit from being joined in community-care housing?
5. How can the Officer's Casino be transformed into community-care housing while considering its cultural and architectural heritage?

Method & Theory

Community-care housing

Community-care housing is a collective noun for living typologies which bridge the gap between independent living and organized care or support. In this project, the noun refers to housing or housing complexes that function as a community in which the residents of two target groups receive support from each other. Specialized care and support is present and closely available for the second defined target group.

Sub-question scheme



Reusing Heritage

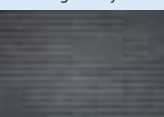
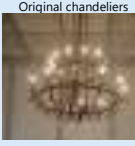
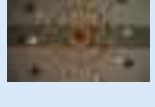
‘The haunting ghosts will still be present when changing the atmosphere and program of the building. The reuse of the Officer’s Casino is not meant to erase the past but aims to create an even stronger identity in its new function.’

Adaptive reuse: Hosts and Ghosts (Wong, 2017)



Phase 1 Framework

Cultural and architectural heritage

RIEGL > BRAND v		AGE value	HISTORICAL value	INTENTINAL COMMEMORATIVE value	NON INTENDED COMMEMORATIVE value	USE value	NEW-NESS value	(relative) ART value	RARITY value	ATMOSPHERE INFLUENCED BY LIGHT	OTHER relevant values [+]
SURROUNDINGS / SETTING		X	Military landscape in use since 1818 (artillery camp, later air base), with over 200 years of continuous defence-related activity;	posh residential area for people from amersfoort or utrecht	Active military/aviation hub	quite and not so diverse village; there are a majority of middle aged families that usually commute for most of their activities (work, leisure, school)	Growing village	X	Kamp van Zeist 1818 origins, aviation archaeology	The surrounding forest landscape filters daylight and creates a calm, subdued atmosphere	
	SITE	the old landscape recognizability is in the contrast between open and dense vegetation	the contours of the 17th-century reclaimed land, and in relation to the route to the former air base	The access road at the building's entrance leads directly to the airbase. Located within a residential area, the site was likely chosen for both its proximity to the airbase and its potential influence on the surrounding community.	Lots of greenery that was previously used for defence and camouflage is now available on site	quality of its urban design, with its open location, amidst green surroundings	The site had a strong potential for newness through refreshed landscape design, clearer access, and upgraded outdoor spaces.	The presence of old and expansive trees is of great aesthetic value?	X	The building's orientation and open clearings on the site allow direct daylight to shape the spatial experience around the casino	From a horticultural history perspective, its significance lies in the recognizability of the preserved open green structure and its relationship with the avenue plantings that mark the old reclaimed land.
SKIN (exterior)		Intact preserved building, few of these german structures from early 1940s remain	Architectural style - neoclassicistische Nazi architecture in the Netherlands	Camouflage, architecture mend to blend into dutch architecture	Material usage stands out in dutch neighbourhood	Grand' architecture and monotome skin can be continued easily	Dark coloured brick is in good condition	Refined proportions, masonry detailing, ceremonial architectural expression. The craftsmanship and formal composition gives a strong relative art value		High contrasts in the skin of the building. Dark masonry gives different expression at night vs daytime	Use of high value materials for skirting of the building.
STRUCTURE		well-preserved structure 	functional zoning expressed in the structure. German built structure	sturdy concrete structure, long-lasting	Safety bunker in cellar.	potential in repurposing the labimth-like basement. Reinforced basement walls for storage, safety and shelter.	Strong foundation, wall structure built to last	The load bearing structure in the hallway of the wing roof structure in the first hall. High ceilings	Nazi/german labor and material ethics. Amount of different and innovative structures	X	
SPACE PLAN		The original space plan is still intact, although the programs in it has changed. Historic spatial hierarchy still legible: central hall, ballroom, salons, corridors, and service areas retain original proportions and sequence. Reflects early 20th century military culture, ceremonial circulation and social zoning.	The space plan illustrates the power hierarchy of the Nazi regime through compartmentalization, routing (accessibility and escape routes), and in striking details such as the sheet steel doors and escape routes. <u>As well as the instability of its occupation of NL and the great oppression power of the allies through the inclusion of an air-raid shelter in its space plan.</u>	clearly structured floorplans. The space plan was not designed to commemorate a certain figure or event.	Complex basement, theatre hall: Multiple events during and after WWII took place in these spaces. Great not intended commemorative value may be shared by the veterans who held their gatherings in the building.	Great potential in all three layers of the building: basement, theatre hall level, dorms level	The original space plan is largely kept, yet with different programs. The proper proportions and connectivity of the space plan provide great potentials for newness through refreshed landscape design, clearer access, and upgraded outdoor spaces.	X	The combination of individual relaxation and mass gatherings makes the Wehrmachtheim in Soesterberg a unique example of 'perpetrator heritage'. One of the few examples left in NL	X	The specific function of a hospital of the Wehrmachtheim has become part of the collective memory. This also applies to its use as a theater and casino. The original function, which was much more complex, was lost sight of in the postwar years, when the building had a rather one-sided educational and, above all, recreational function.
SURFACES (interior)		Aging traces of interior walls, marble flooring, wood crafts	Aging Italian marble, original woodwork doors and windowframes, the moulding, ceiling skeleton, refurbished during cold war age (green repaint and etc)	ratio and symmetry express prestige (authority) and the presence of the German occupier, not just to house soldiers(staged monumentality)	Wartime luxury & occupation, cold war time refurbishment	prvide a feeling of formal, serious, political exclusiveness, care to detail	Marble preservation and woodwork in great state	Craftsmanship of that time (air vents, wood details , moulding, chandelier etc.) / gold paint on the wall	interior experienced WW2 and cold war these two ages, and each age had some traces		
SERVICES		Built in the 1940s, yet abandoned with gravel inside.	The ventilation system for the hall represents German building technology in the 1940s.	X	X	Existing service routes and technical spaces offer a usable framework for new systems, but outdated installations limit comfort, performance, and flexibility.	The original system is no long in use.	X	A rare example of integrated air based heating system from the 1940s.	X	
STUFF		well-preserved objects in the main rooms: theatre hall, tabletennis room; they have left to decay in the rest of the spaces	 Original chandeliers	wartime luxury	X	restored to resemble original design; can be used	 	X			
SPIRIT OF PLACE		Aged atmosphere or early officers' culture still perceptible in the building's spatial grandeur, acoustic, worn thresholds, and ceremonial layout. These qualities evoke memories of past military gatherings and give the casino a distinctive historic mood.	WWII occupation, resistance narratives; As Cold War heritage (also as a part of Soesterberg Air Base), can be understood as one of the architectural manifestations of the diplomatic relationship between the NL and the US	the ceremonial atmosphere intentionally created to honour military identity still permeates the building. Its grand halls and formal spatial character evoke the commemorative purpose for which the casino was designed, giving the place a dignified and symbolic spirit.	Implicit sense of exclusiveness created by furbishment and lighting	(Cultural) large scale events, concerts, weddings	Unique hybrid: Nazi prestige + Allied liberation + Cold War + modern civility	The qualities of spaces for entertainment that evokes memories of past military gatherings couldn't be seen everywhere.	Cafe: low ceiling and a column-free layout, subdued lighting , reinforces a sense of intimacy and comfort; Table tennis room: yellow-tinted glazing, filters daylight into a softer, warmer light quality, more relaxed spatial experience.		

Legend

X = no value

? =no answer, please change when info is found

high importance

positive importance

indifferent importance

assumed assesment

stated assesment

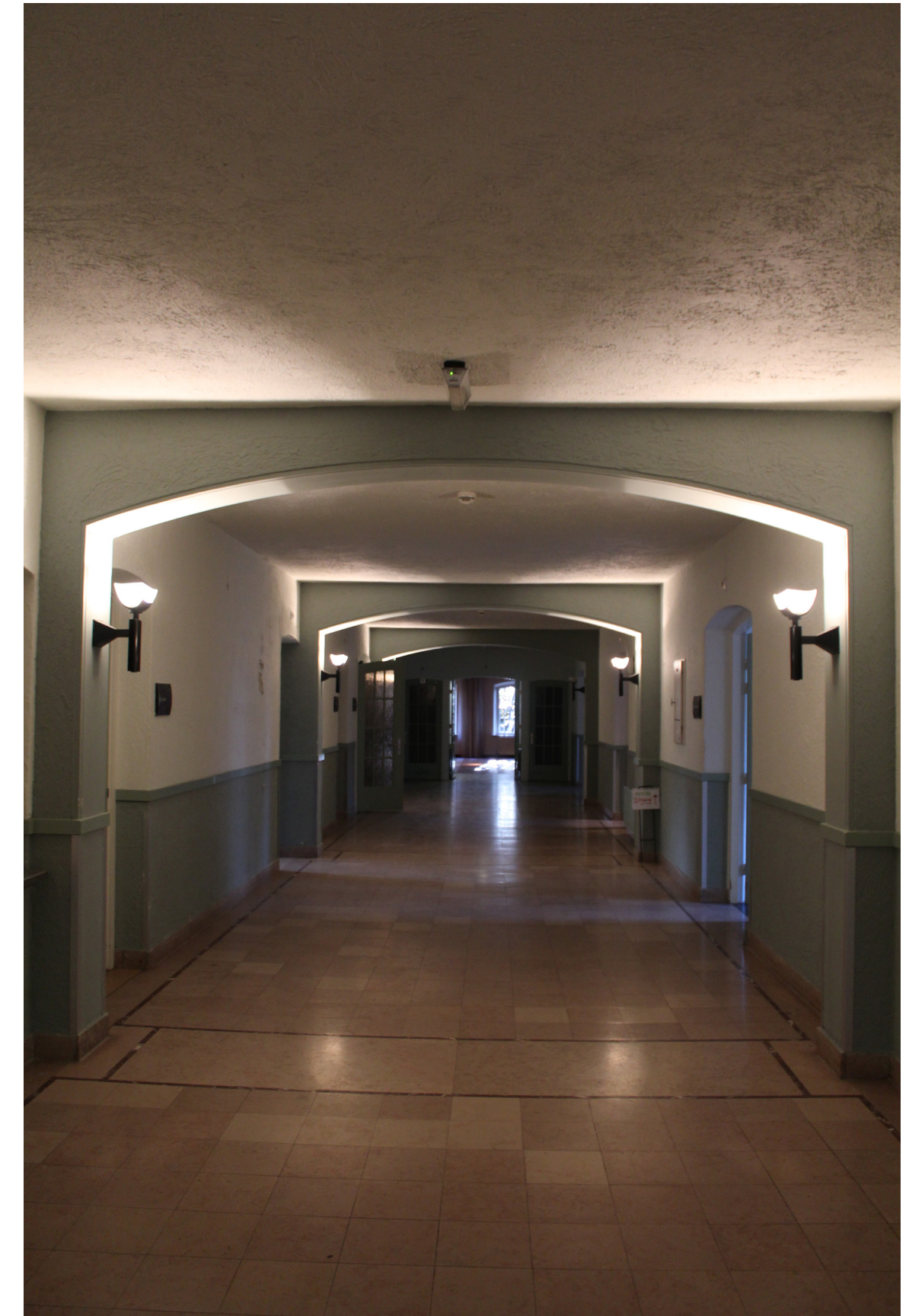
Source: Value assessment based on Kuipers and De Jonge (2017) (groupwork)



**Use-value x
spirit of place**



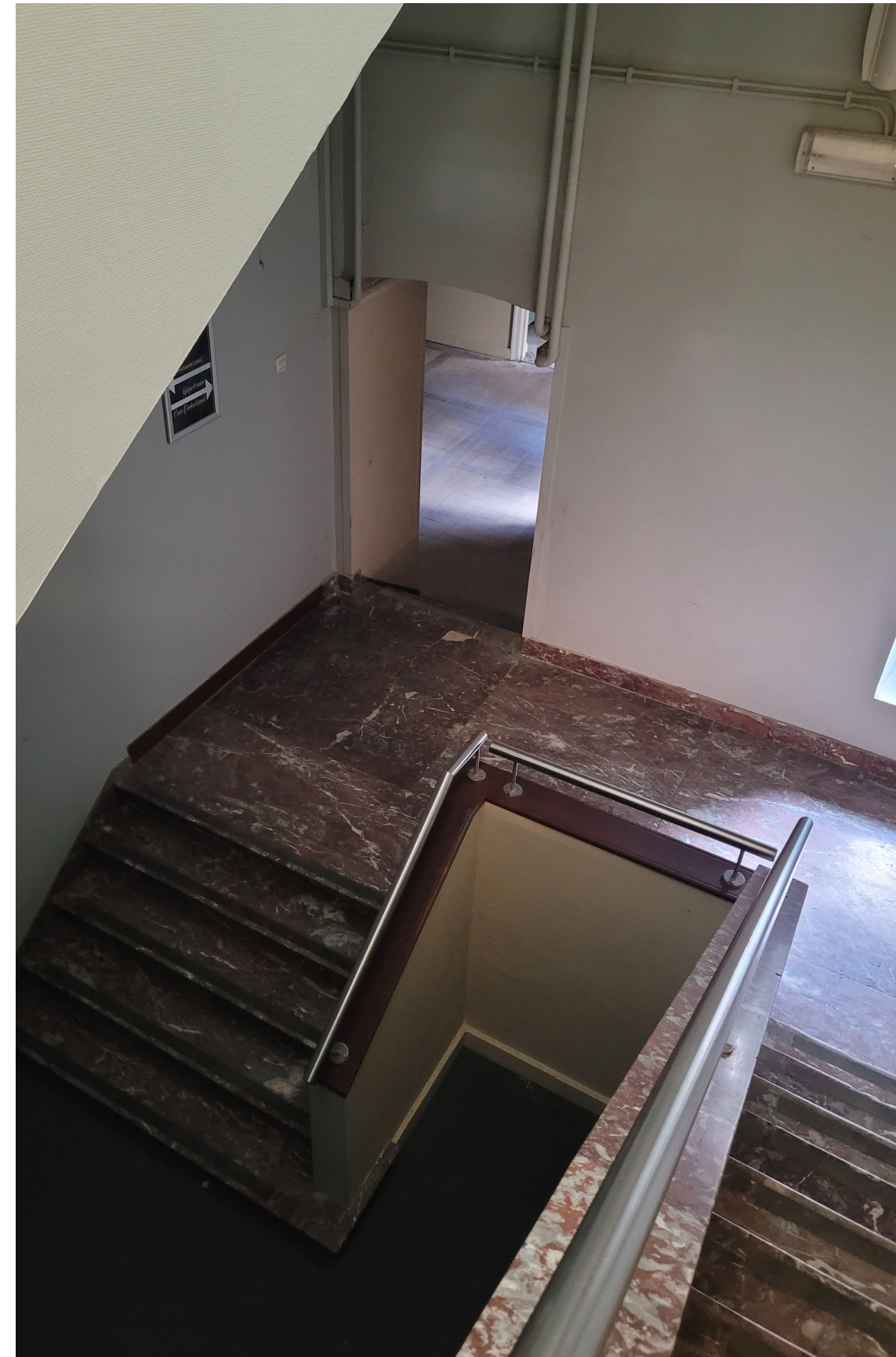
**Historical-value x
surfaces/stuff**



**Age/historical-value x
space plan**



**Historical-value x
surfaces**



**Historical-value x
surfaces**



Age-value x structure

Phase 2

Target groups

Community-care housing typologies pairing



Case study parent-child housing

Source: (Driestroomhuis Twentyfourseven, 2025)

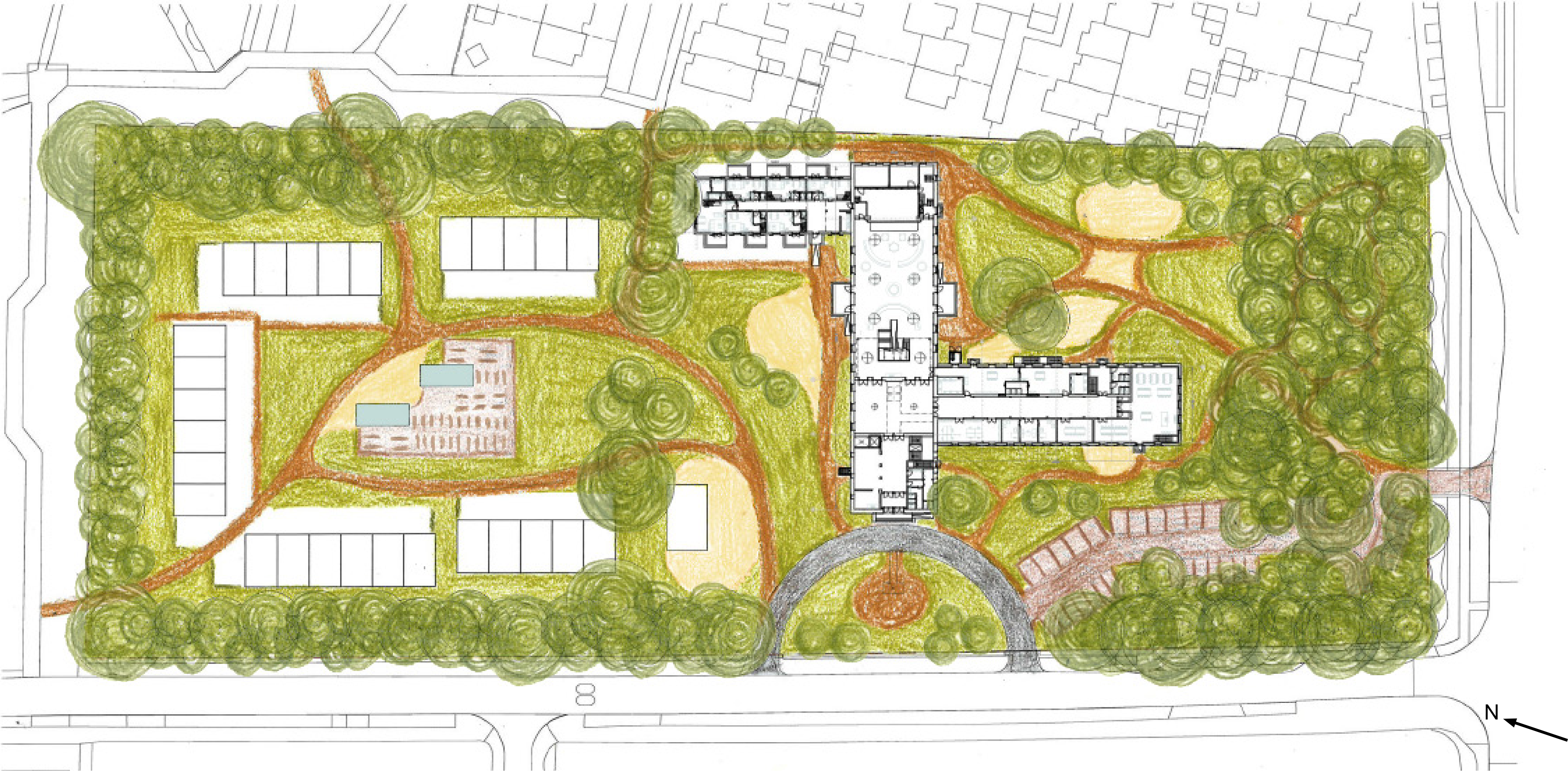


Case study Knarrenhof typology

Source: (Home - Aahof-Zwolle, 2025)

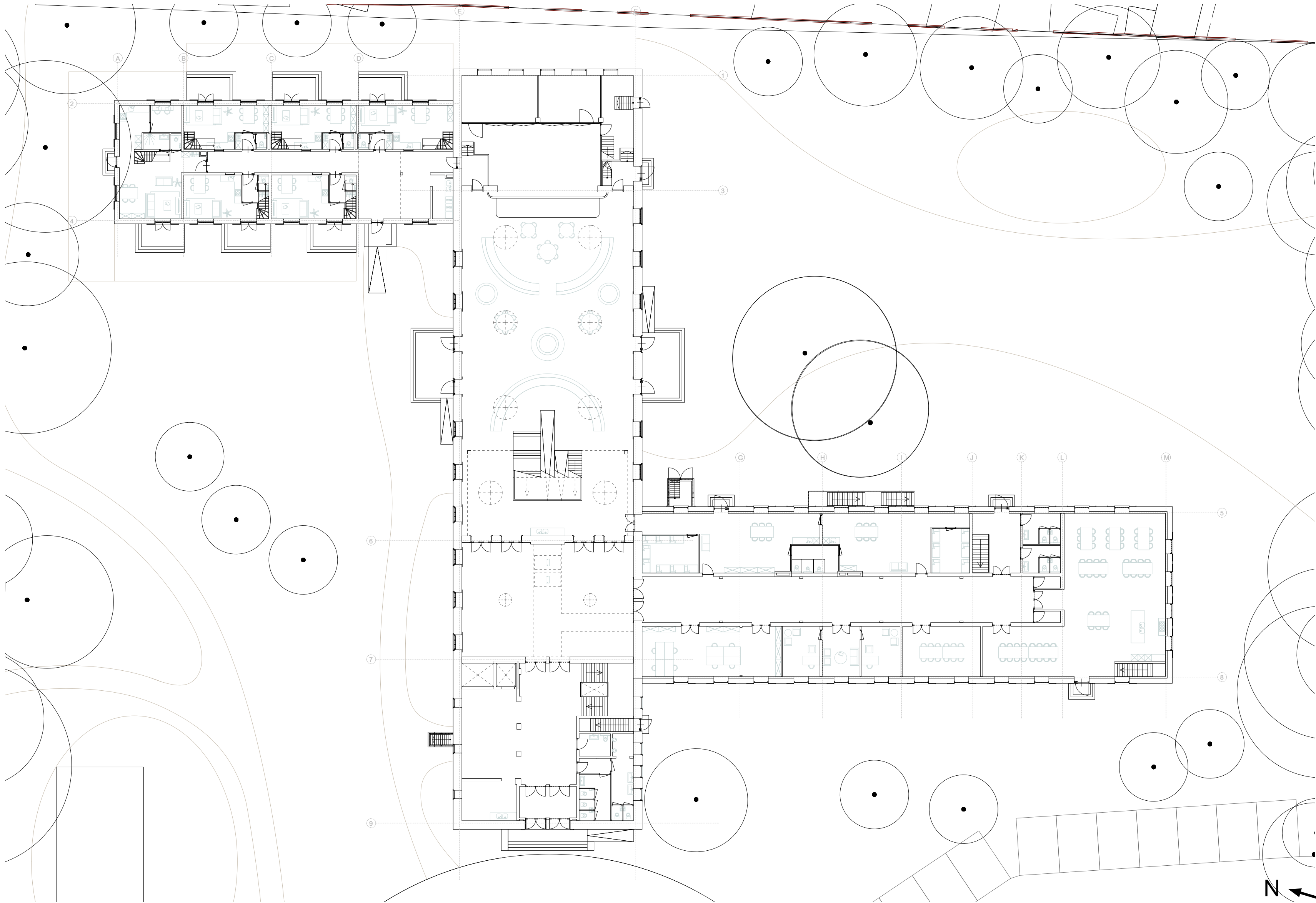
Phase 3 Design

Masterplan



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Plan ground floor



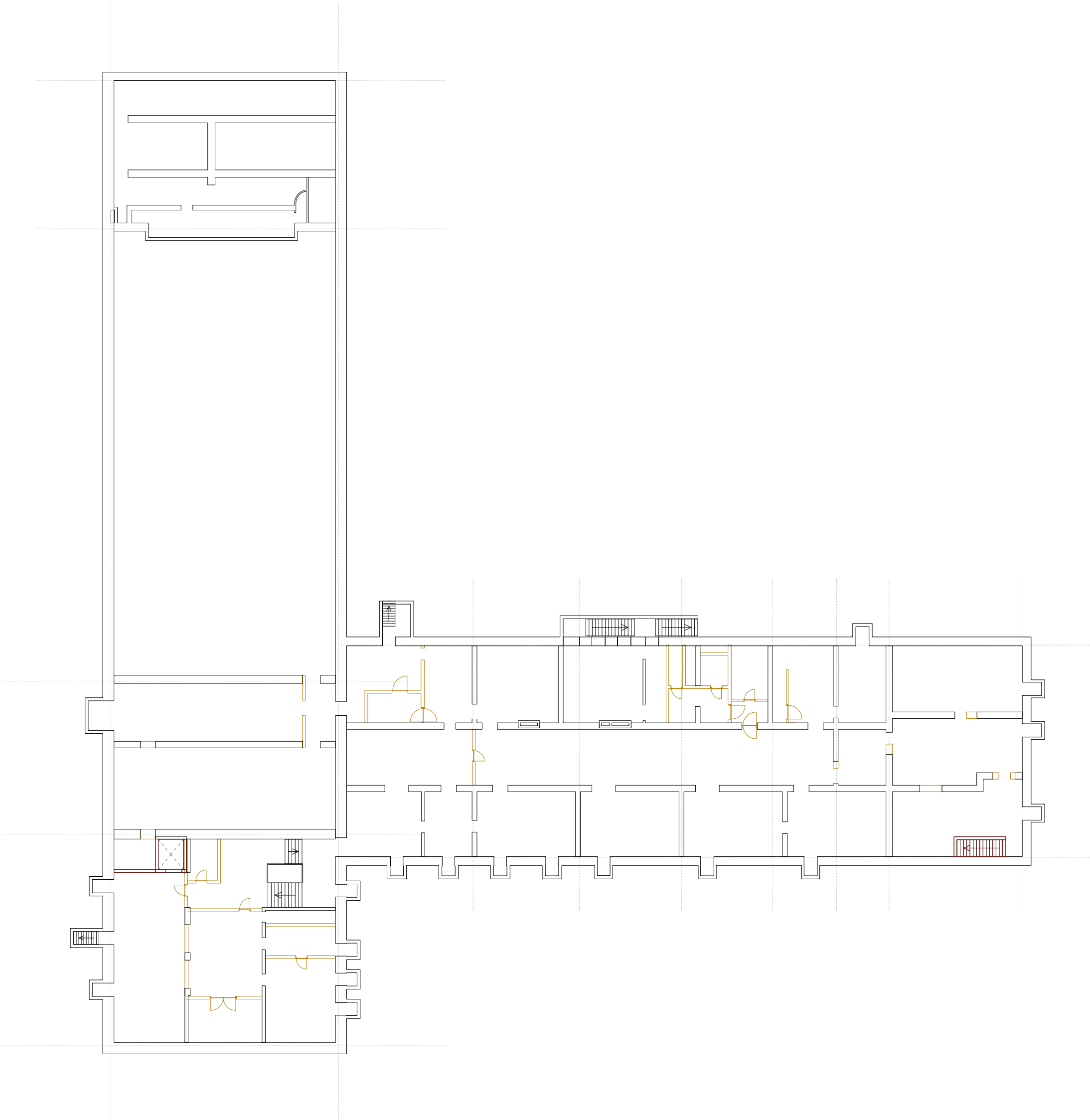
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Plan ground floor



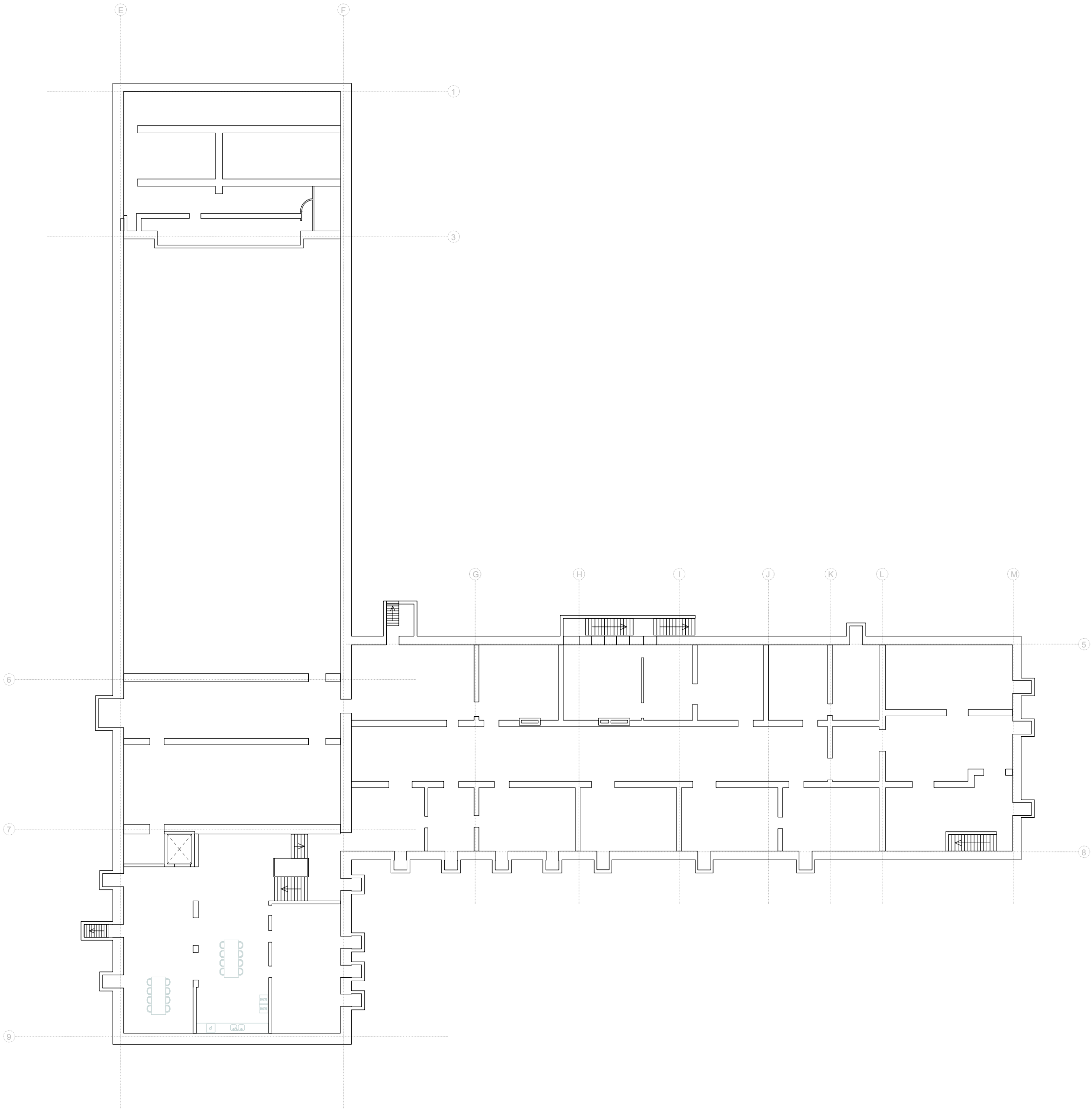
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Plan basement



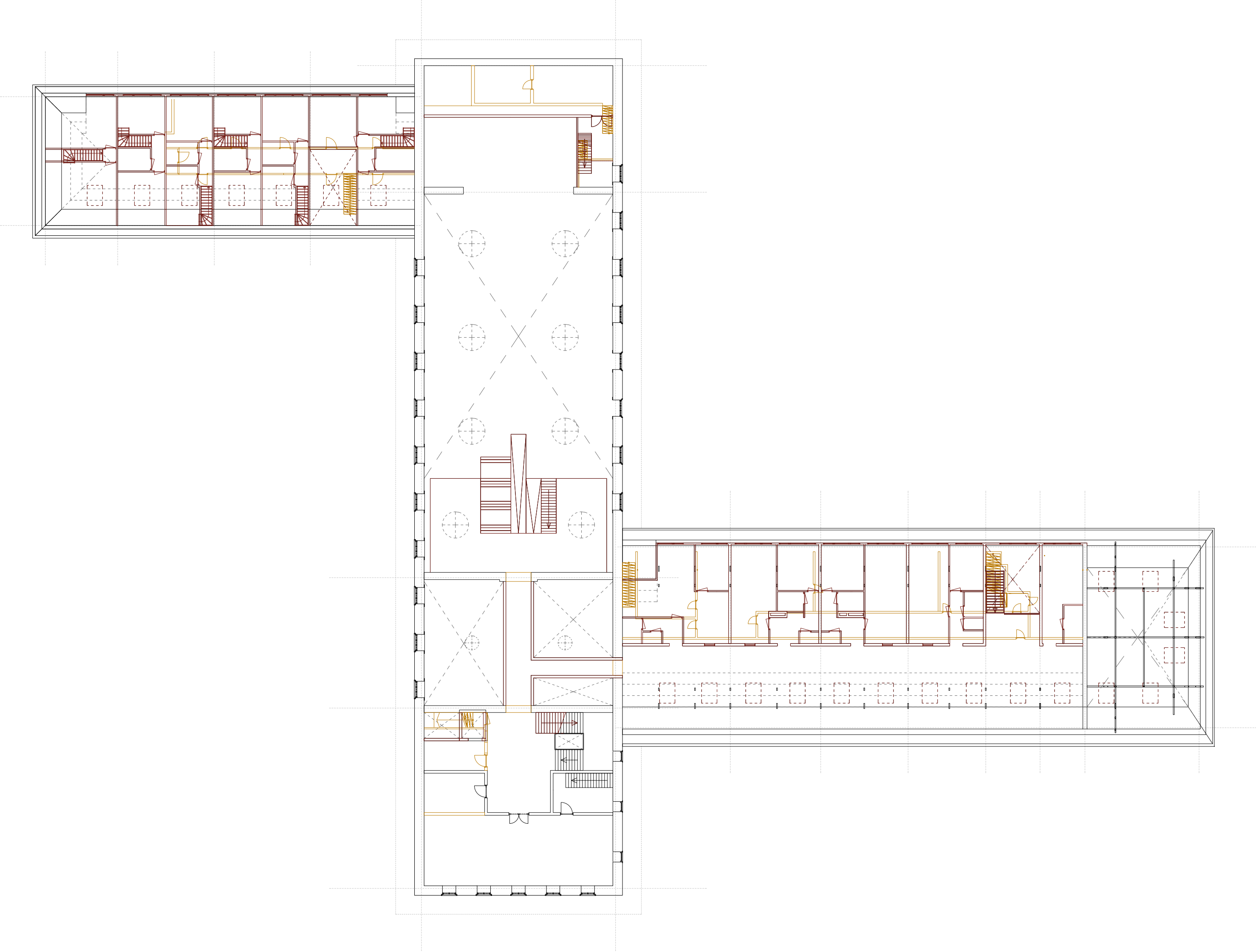
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Plan basement



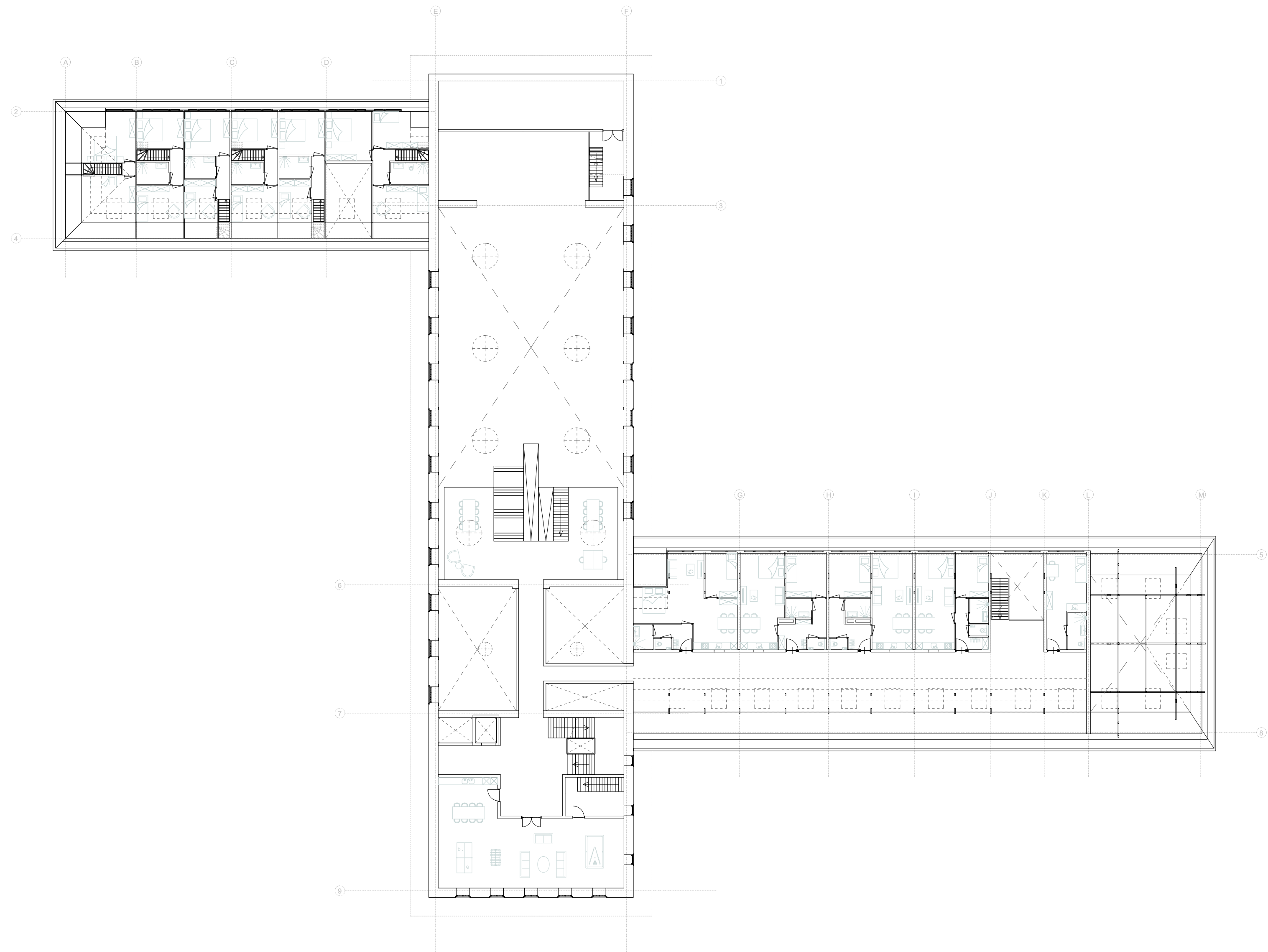
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Plan first floor



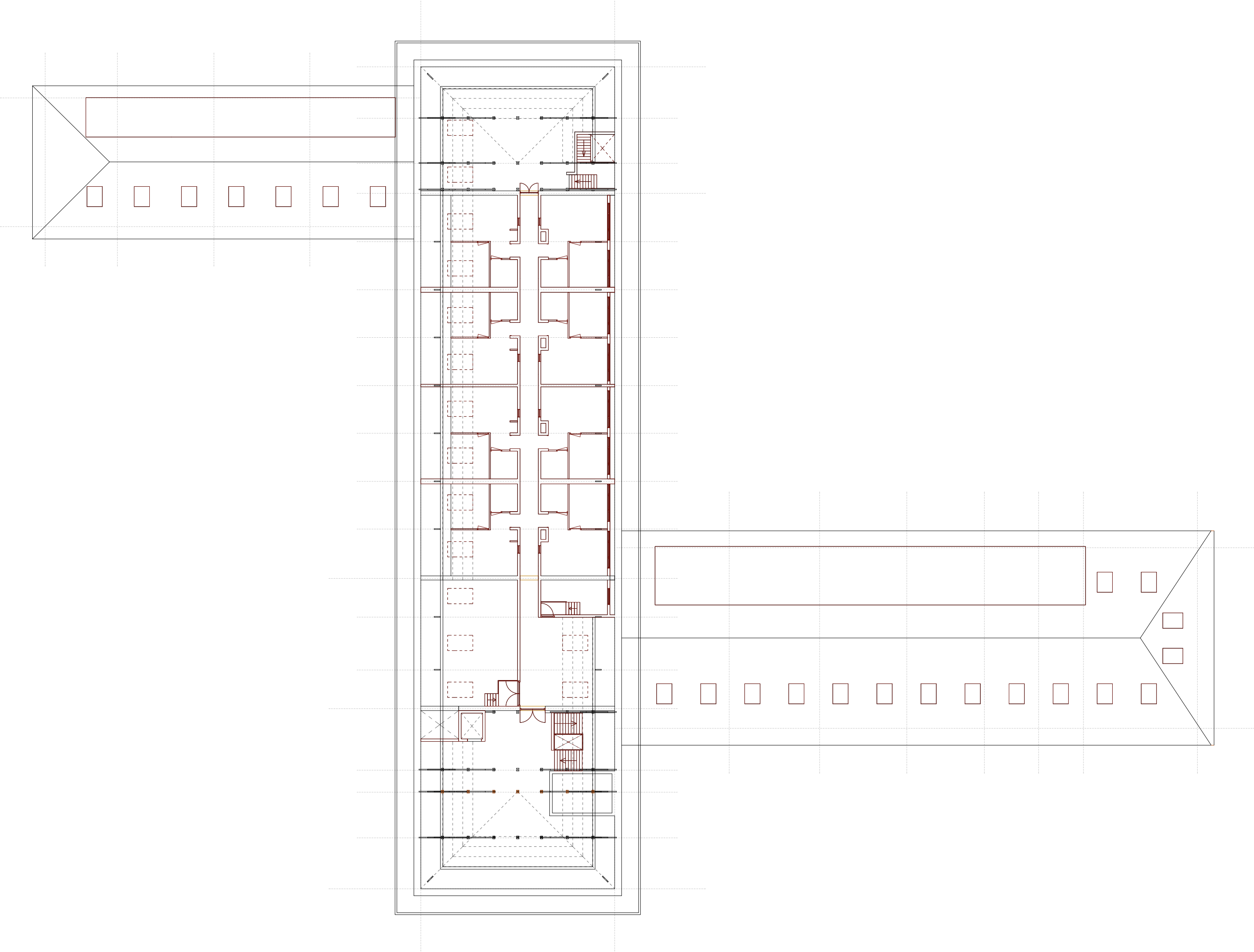
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Plan first floor



N
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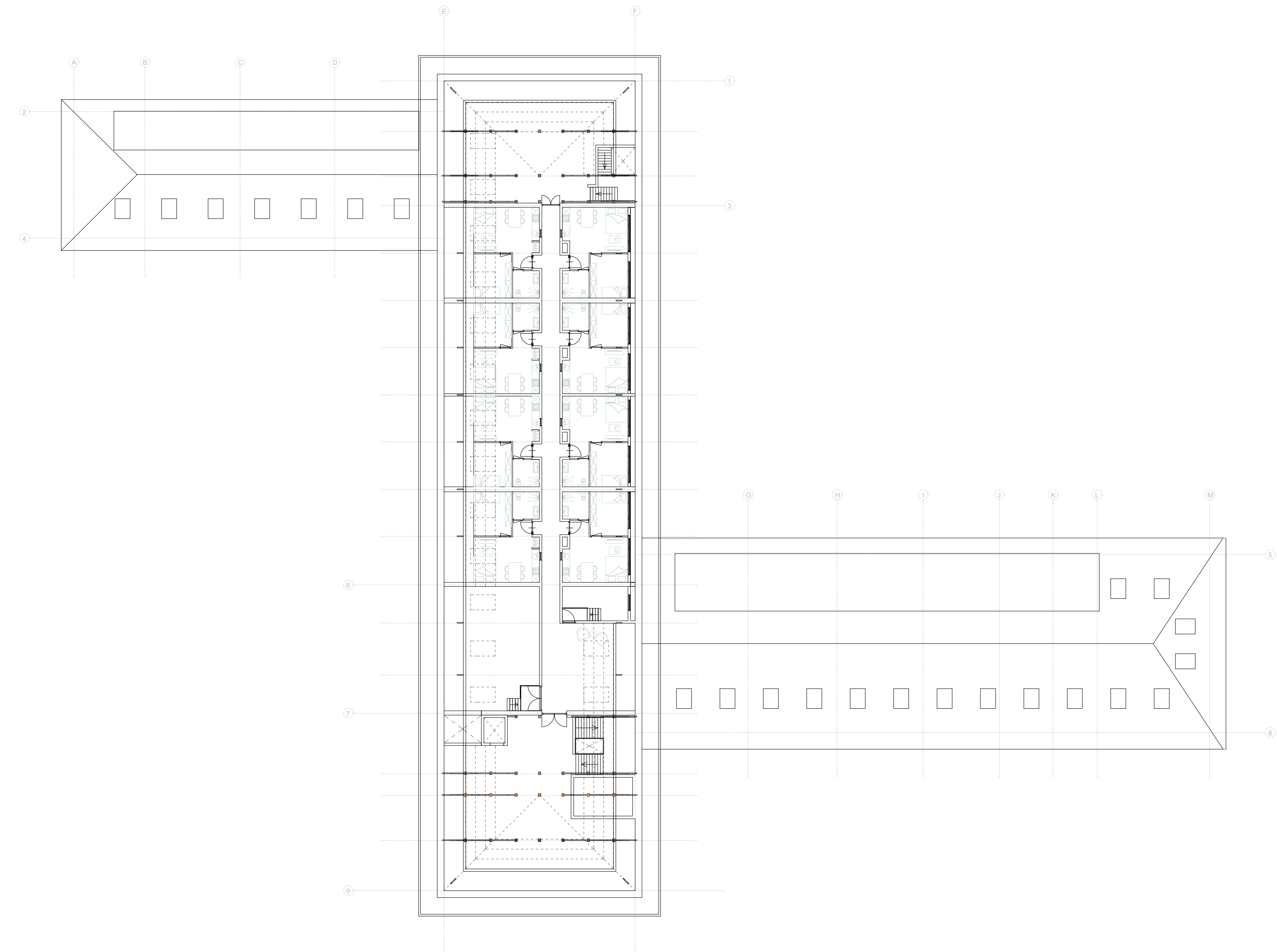
Plan second floor/attic



N ↙

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Plan second floor/attic

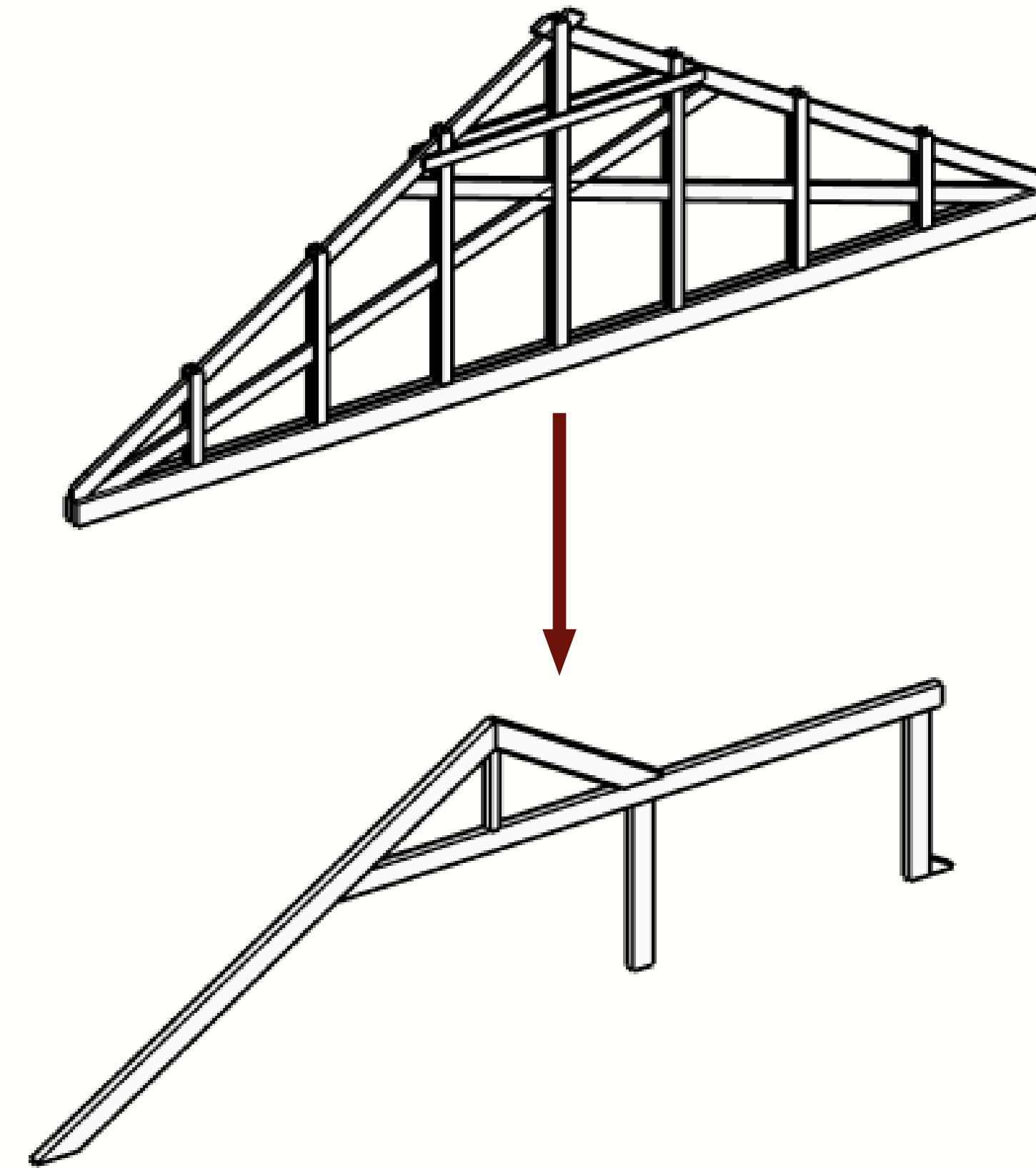


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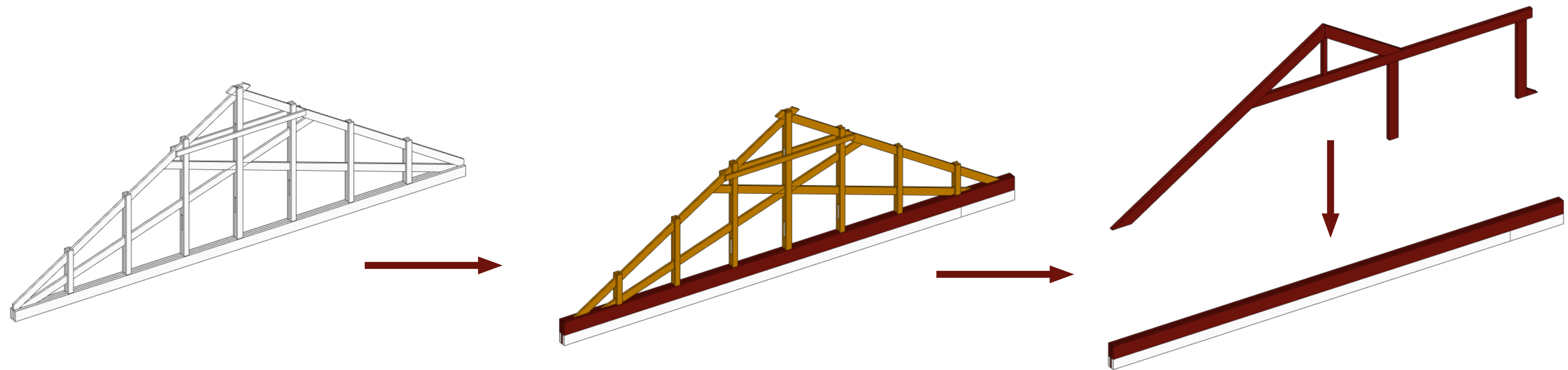
Structural intervention



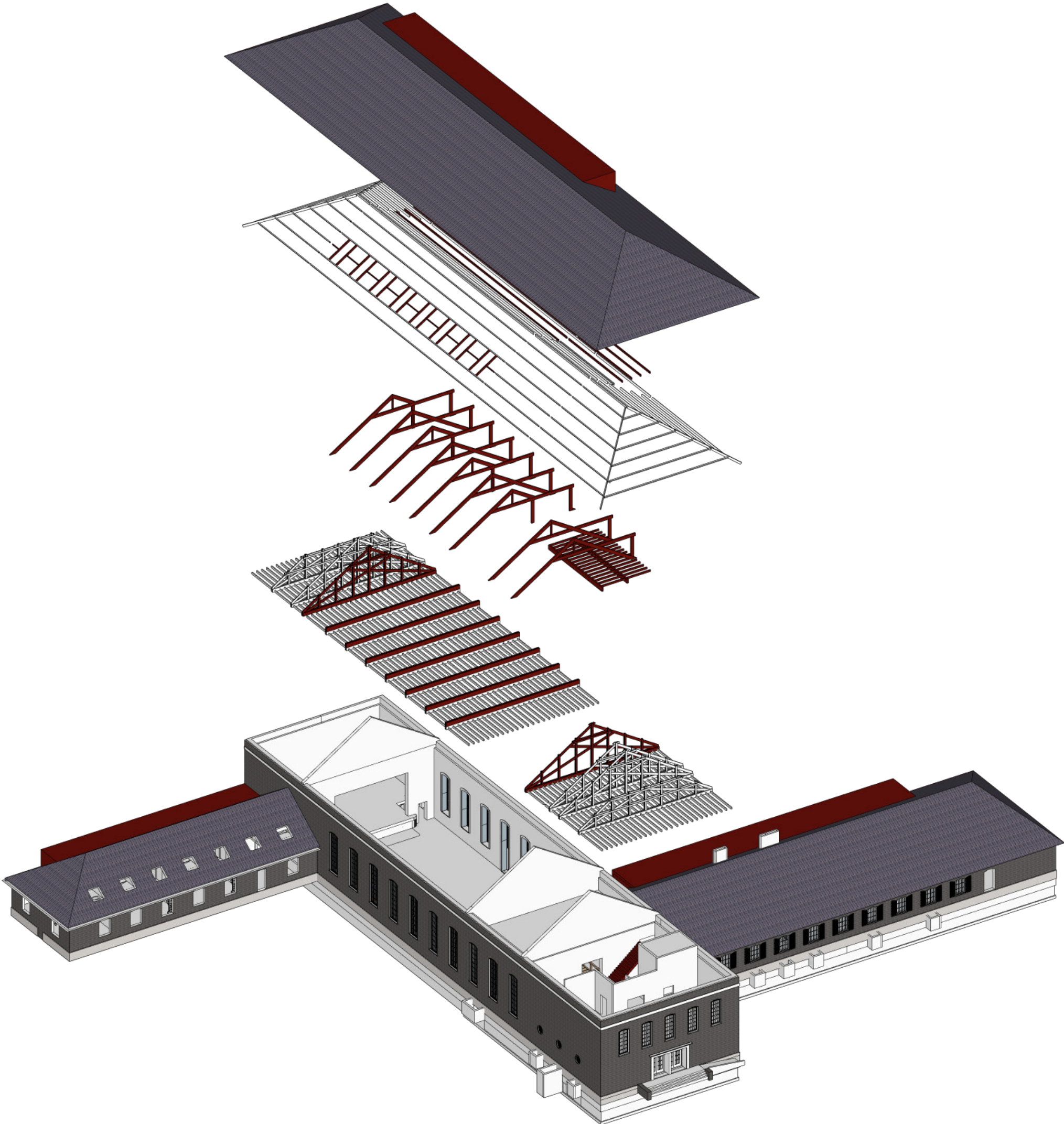
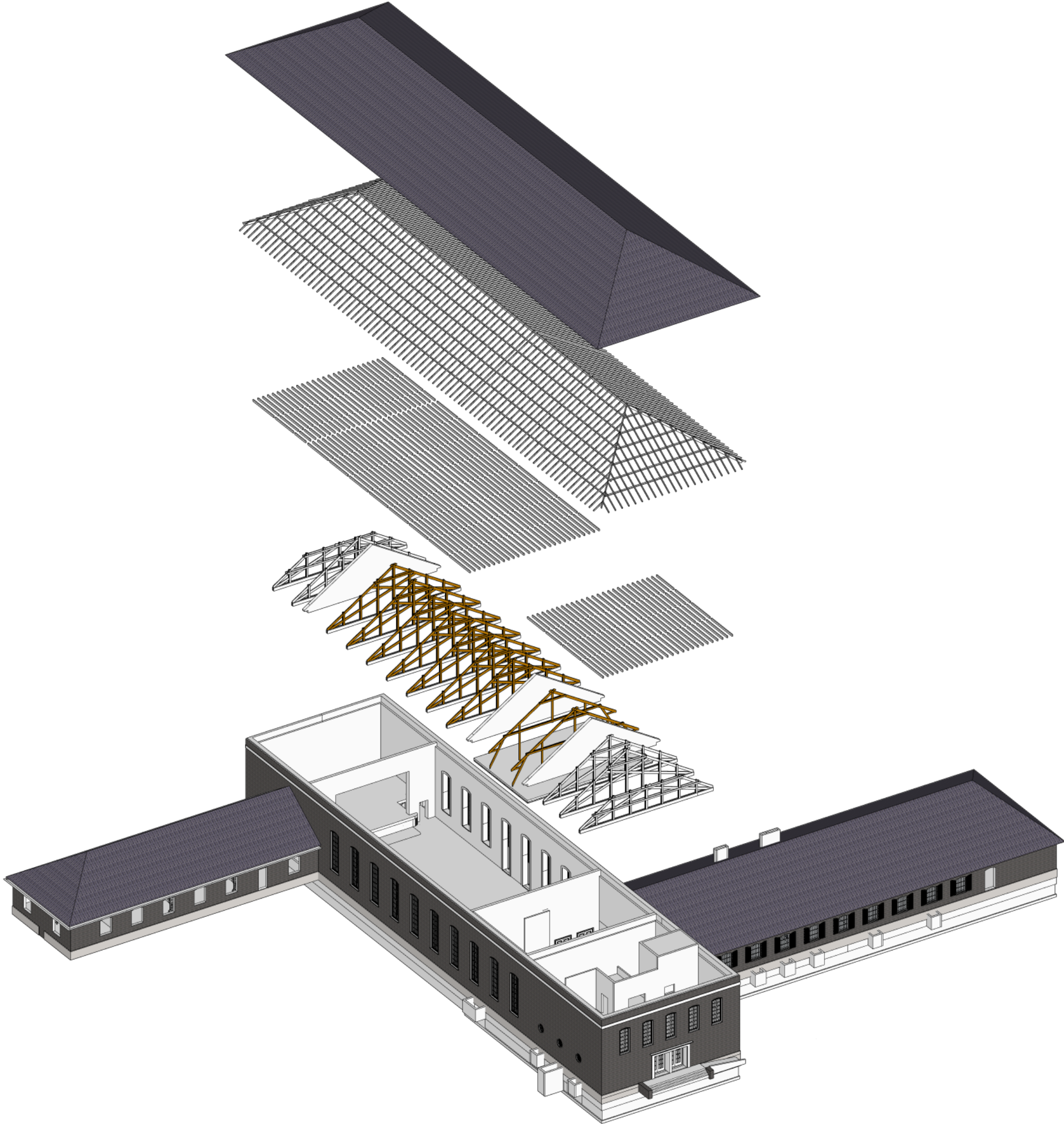
Age-value x structure



Structural intervention



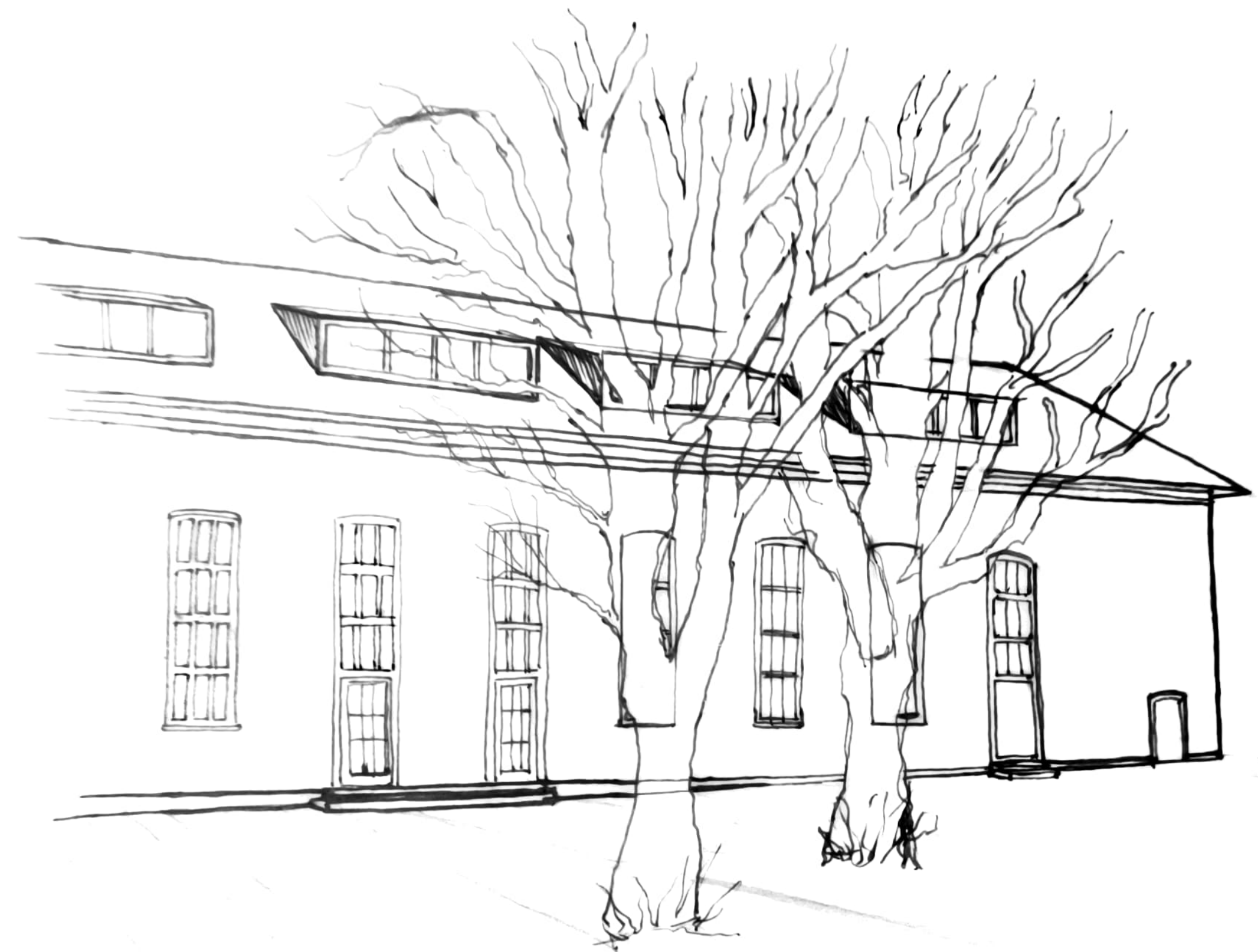
Structural transformation



Structural transformation and heritage preservation



Architecture and Atmosphere



Original facades



Front facade



Back facade

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Facades



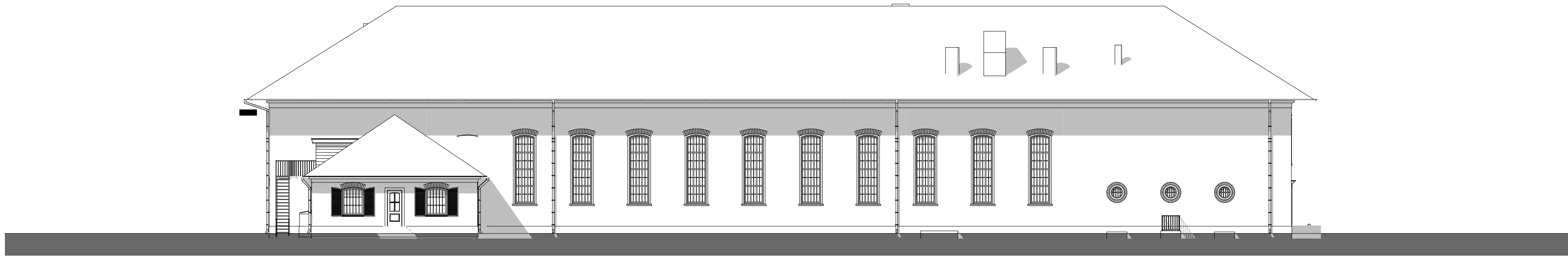
Front facade



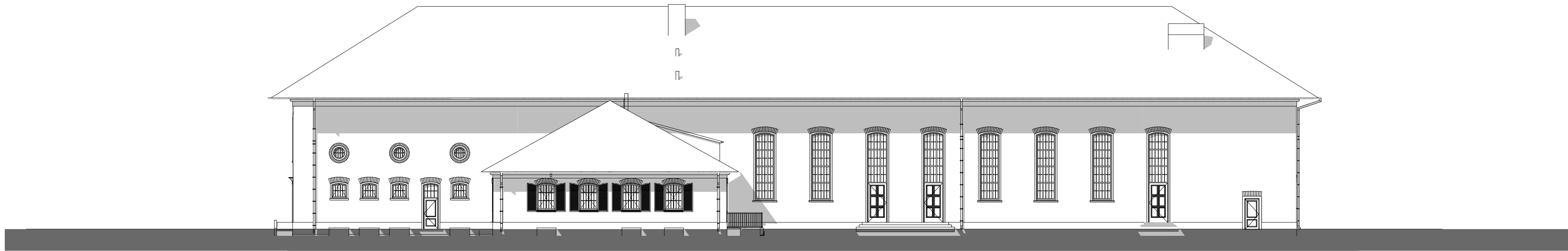
Back facade

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Original facades



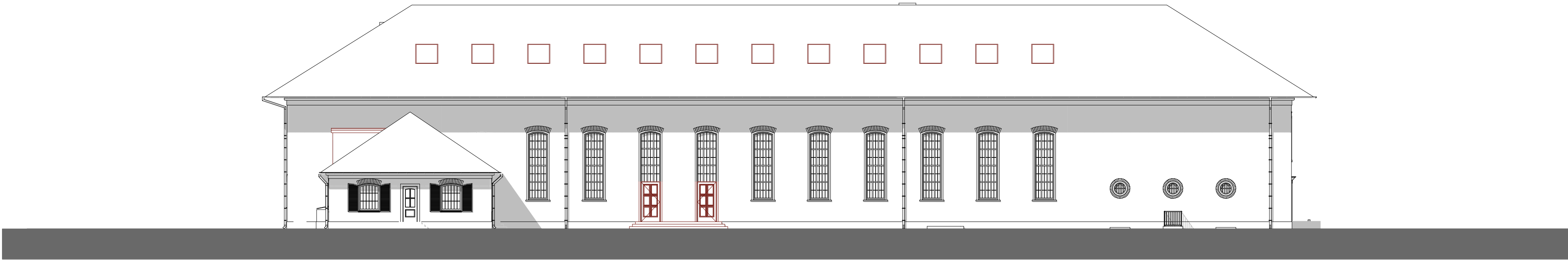
North facade



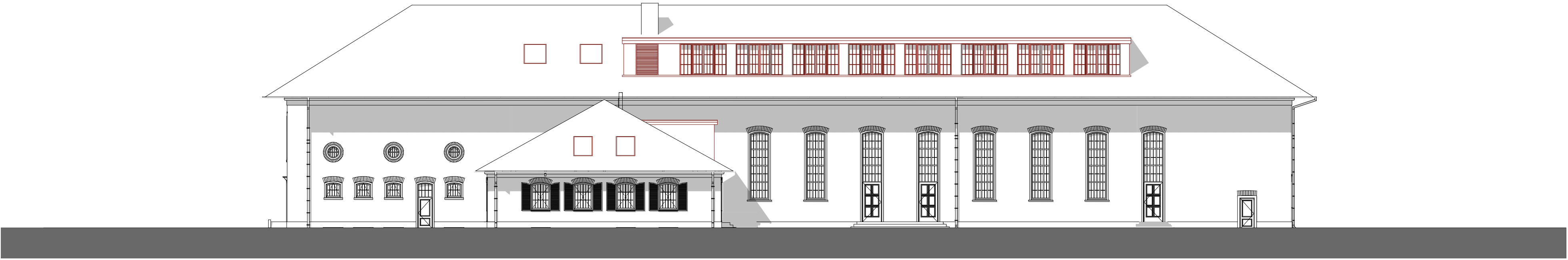
South facade

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Facades



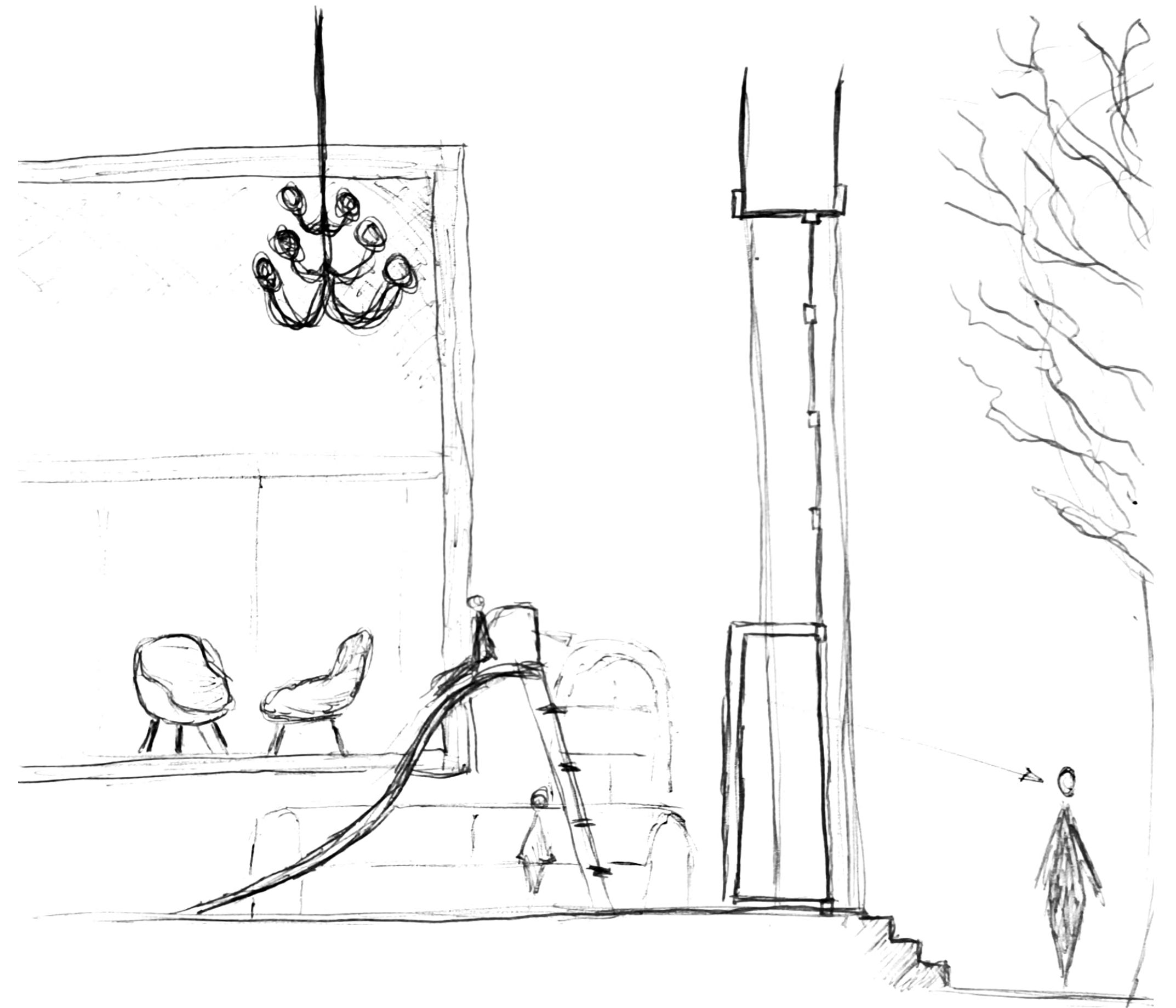
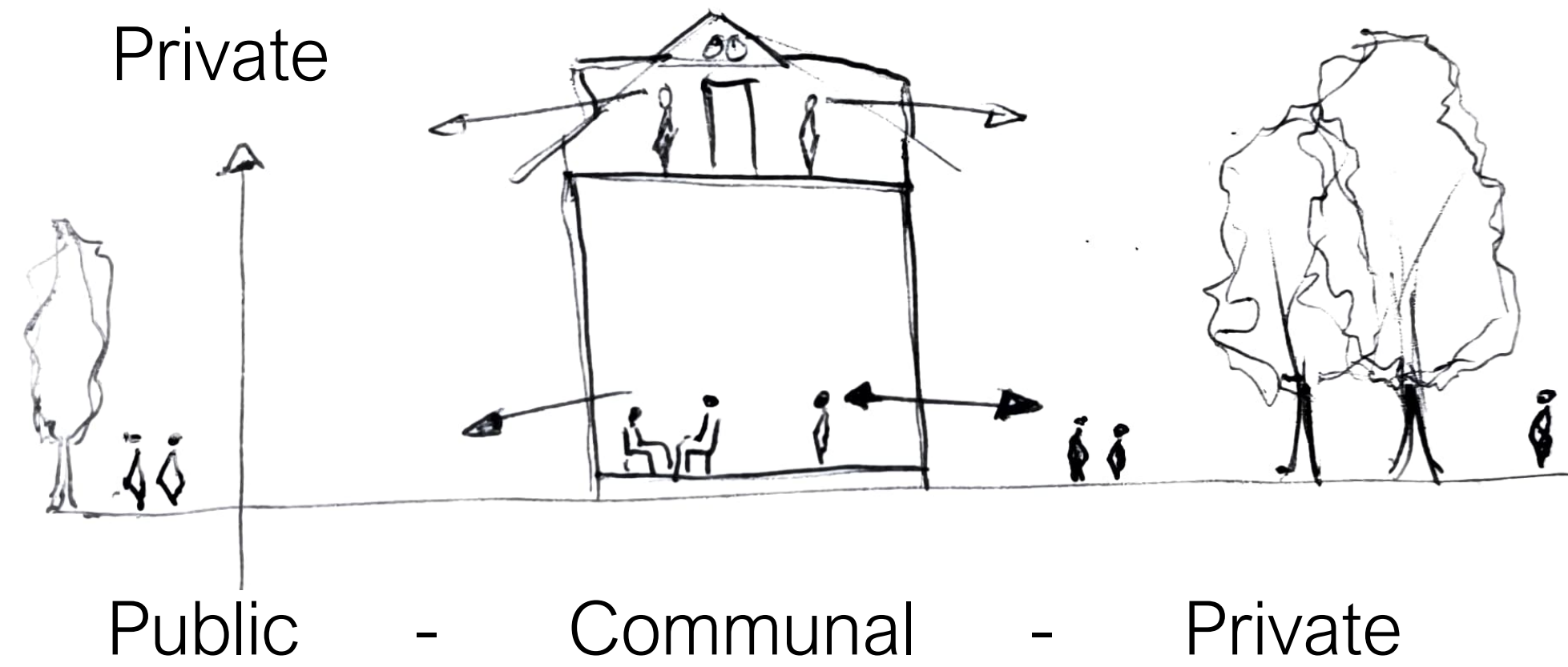
North facade



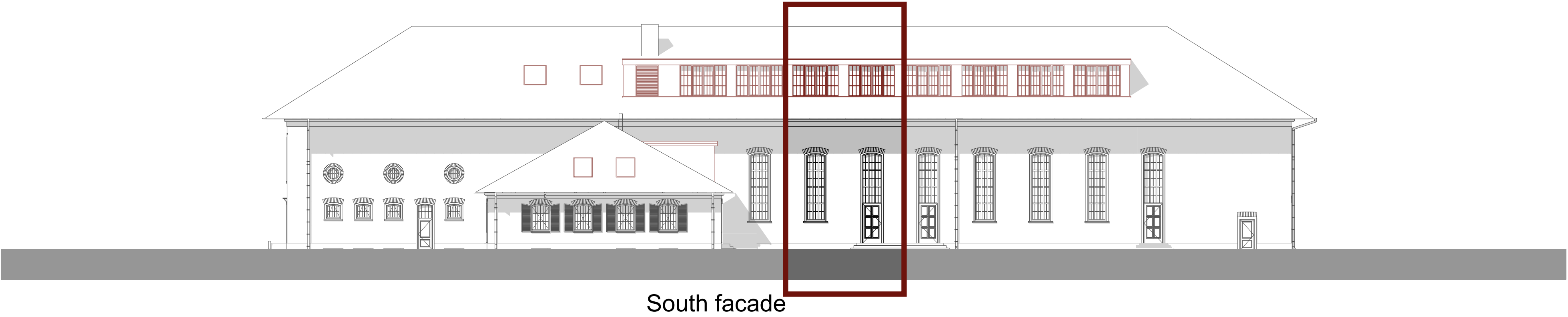
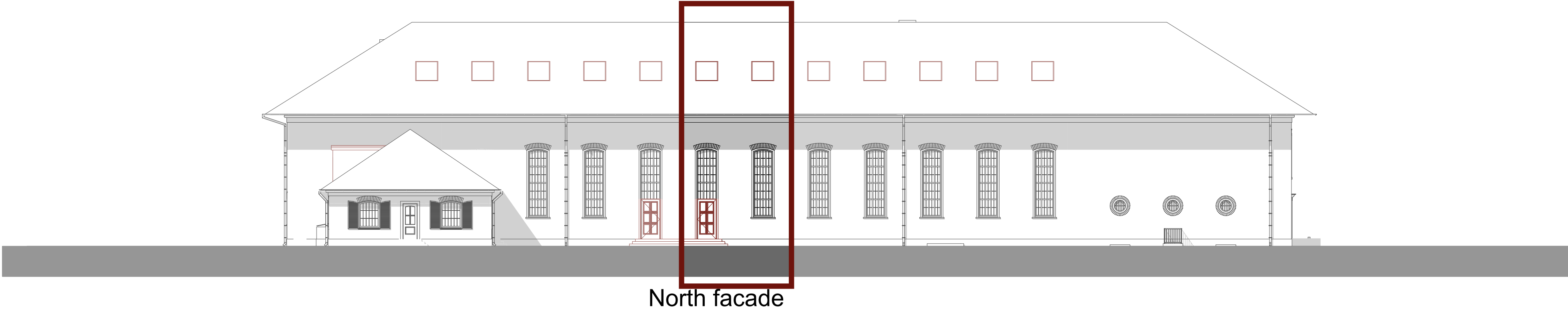
South facade

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Architecture and Atmosphere

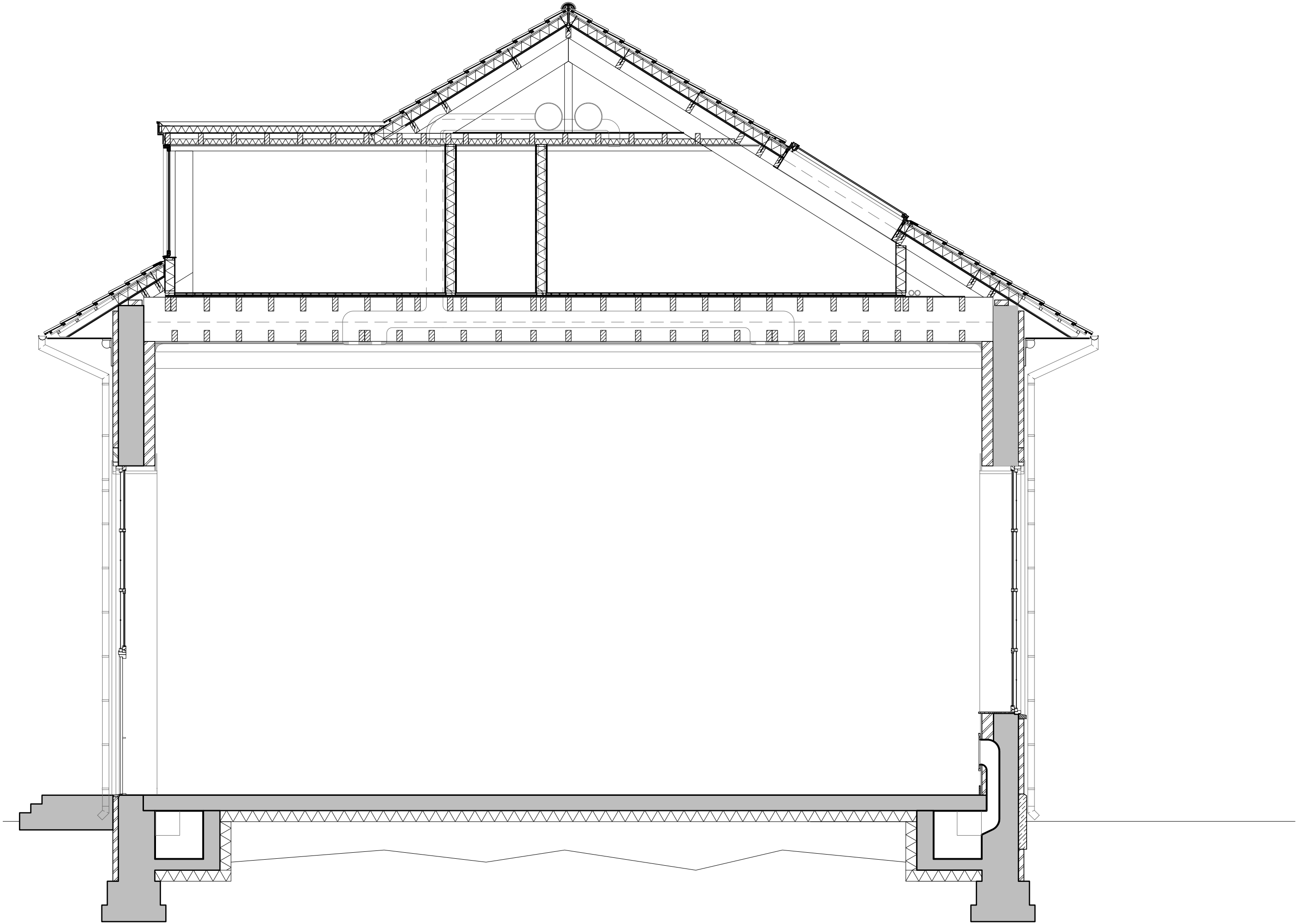
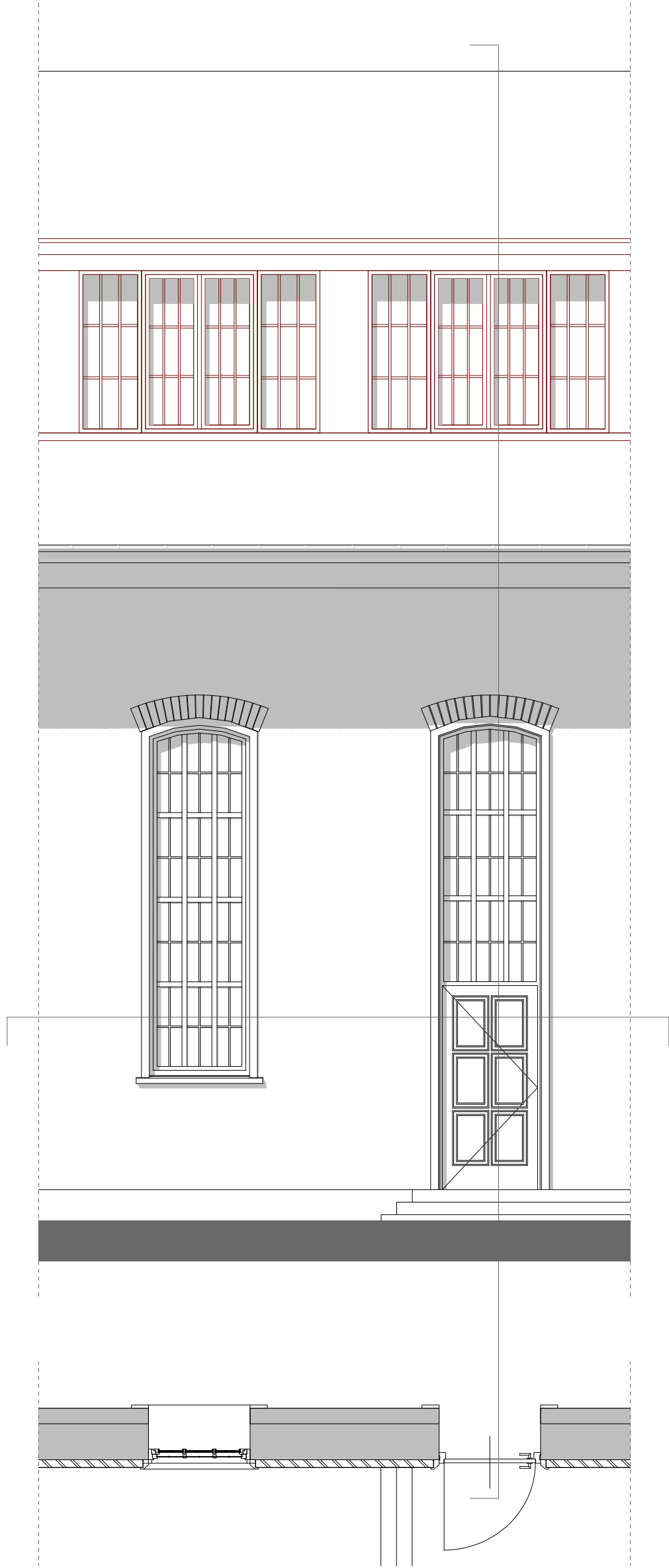


Facades



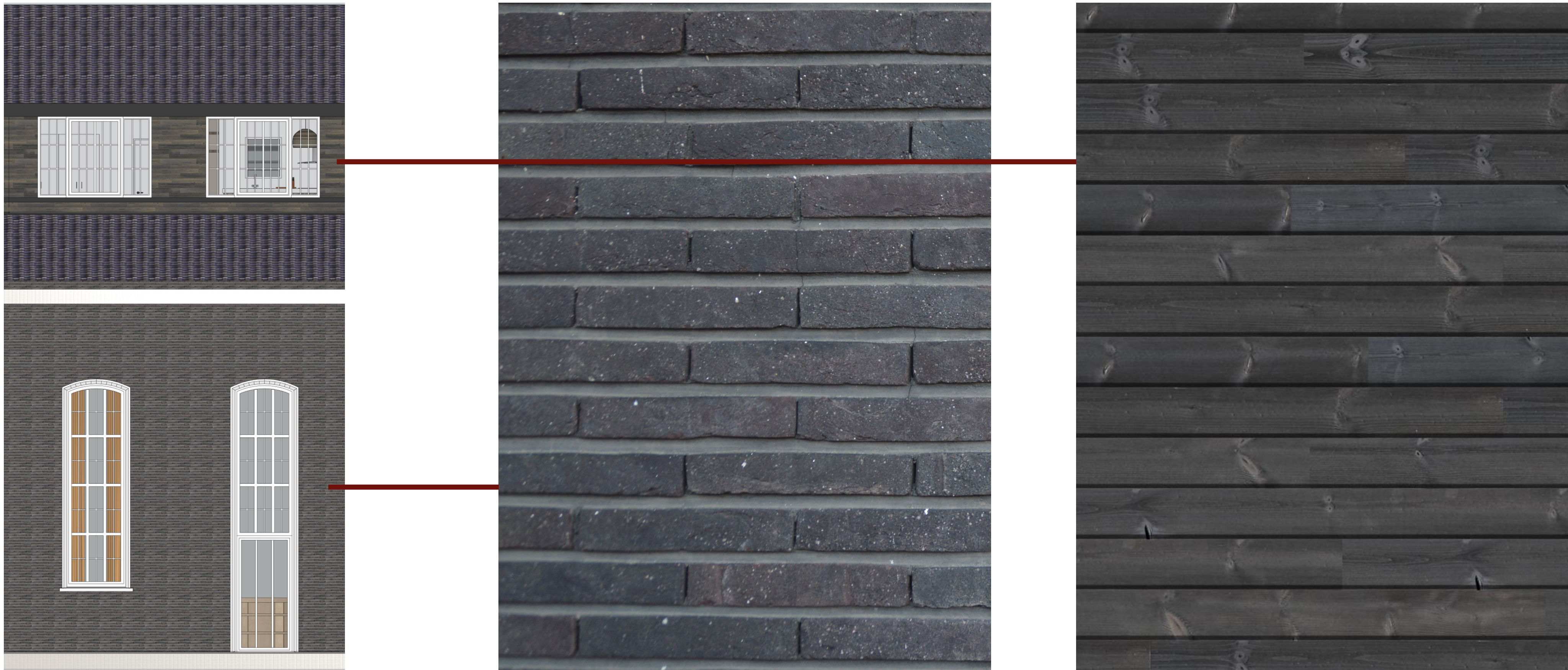
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Facade fragment



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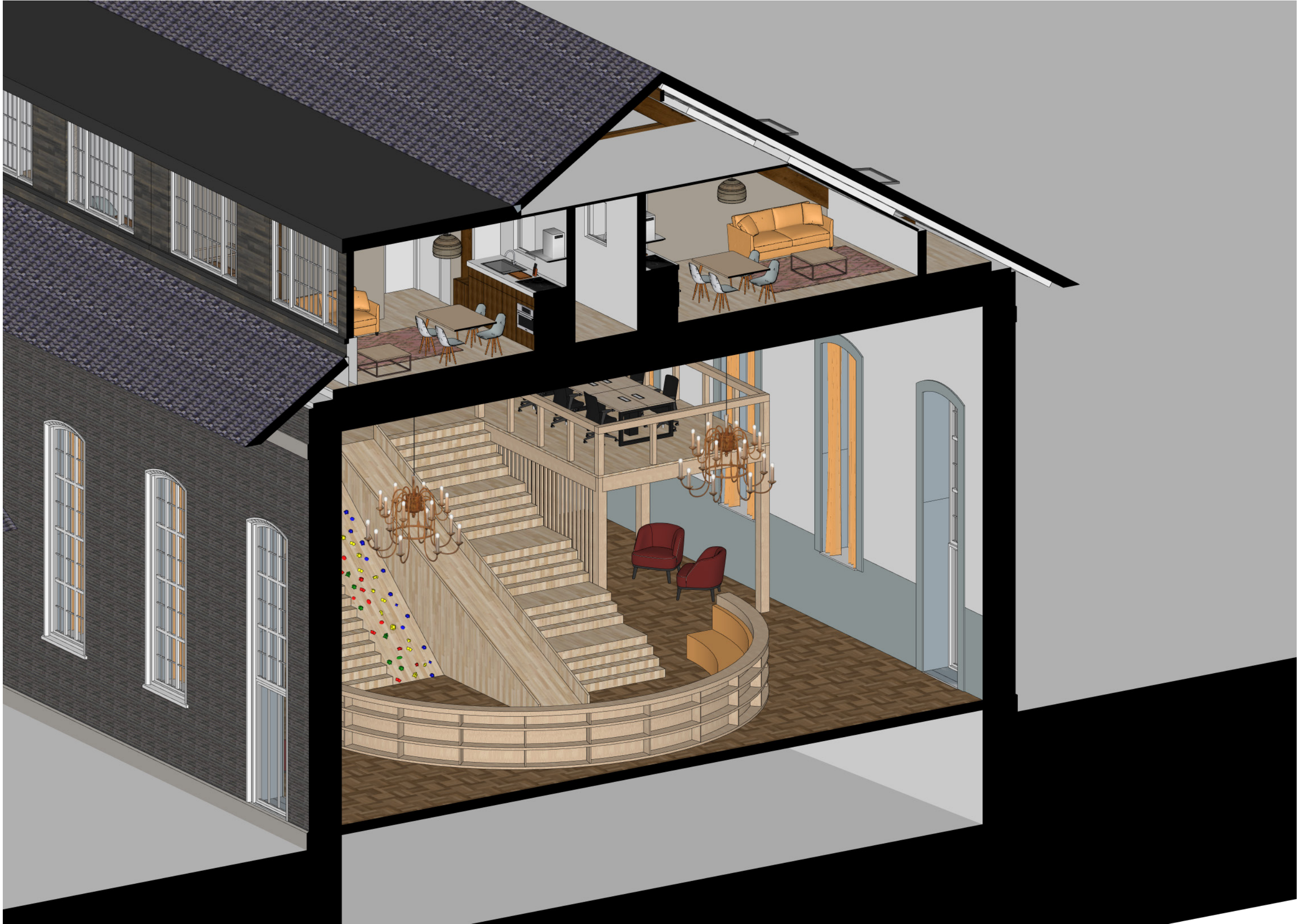
Facade fragment



Rarity-value x skin

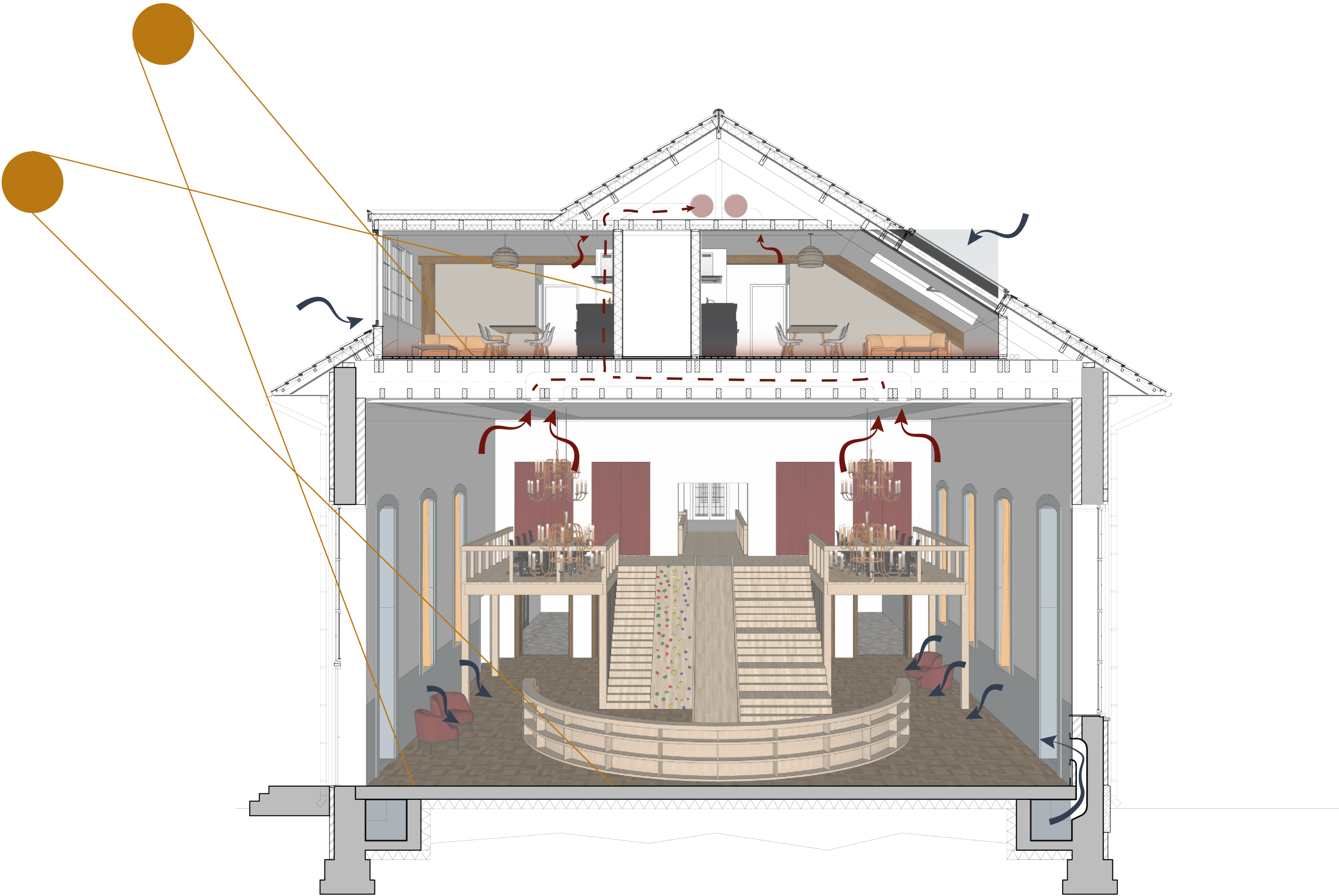
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Facade fragment



1.50 scaled to fit. (Own ill.)

Indoor climate

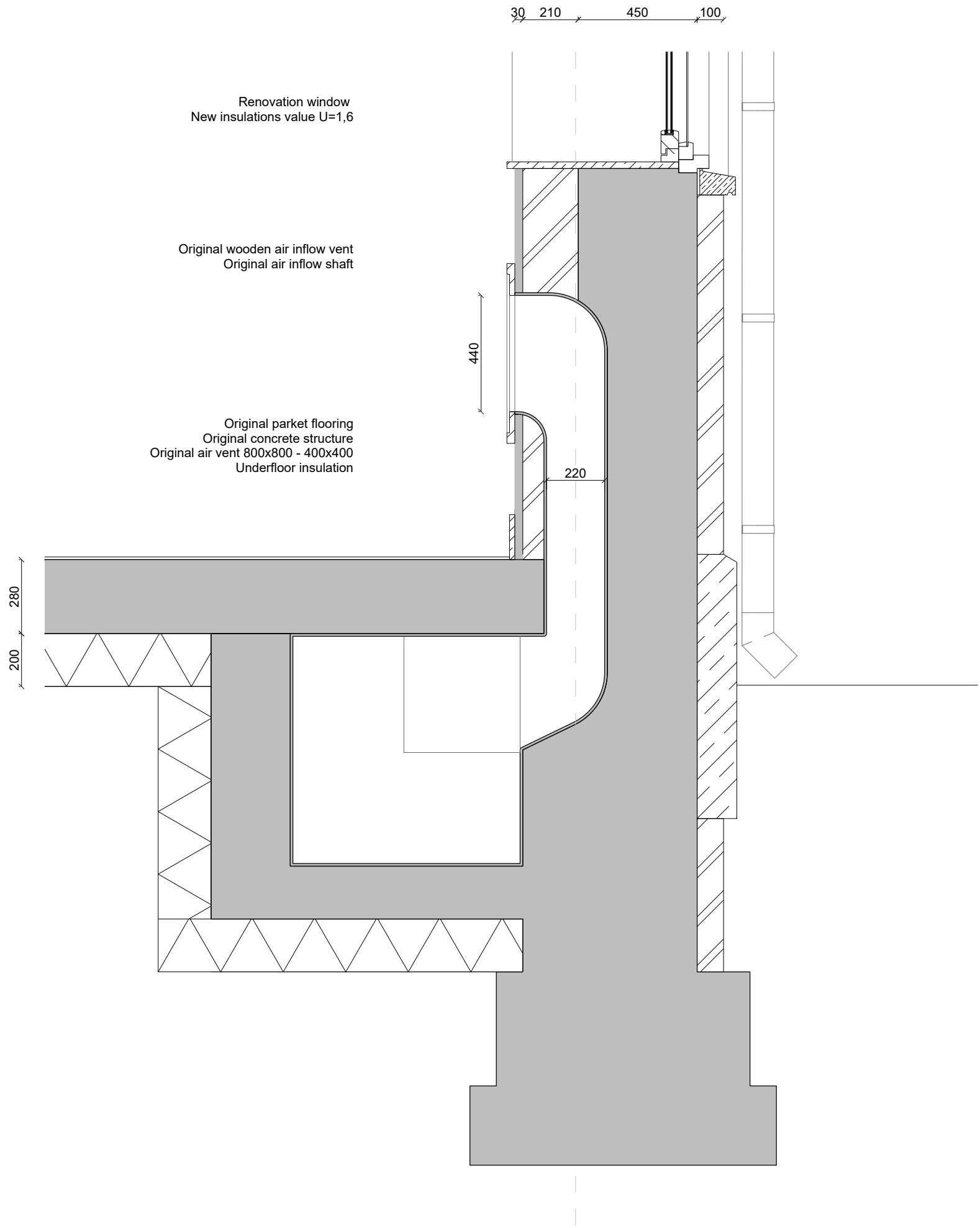


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Technical details

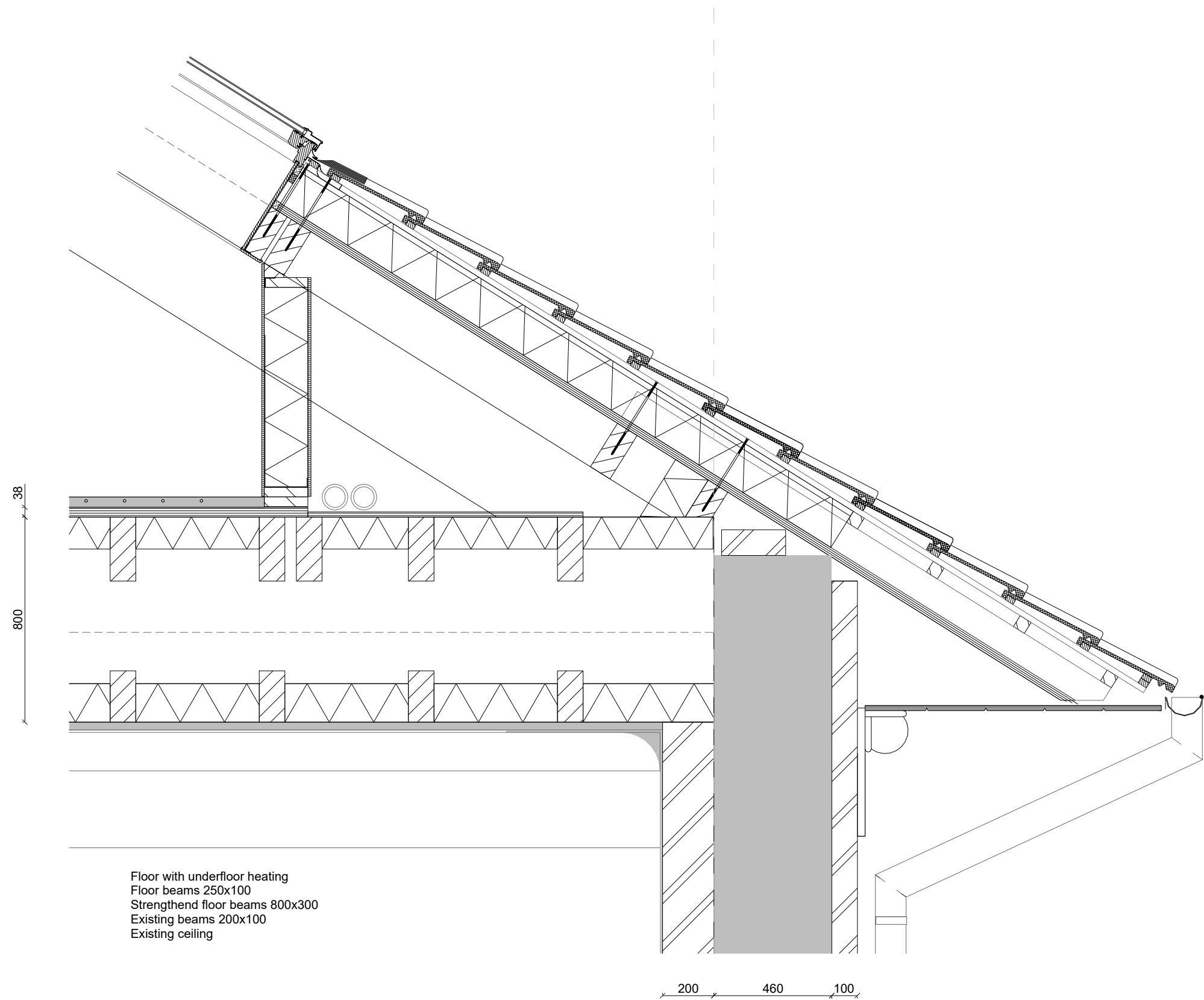
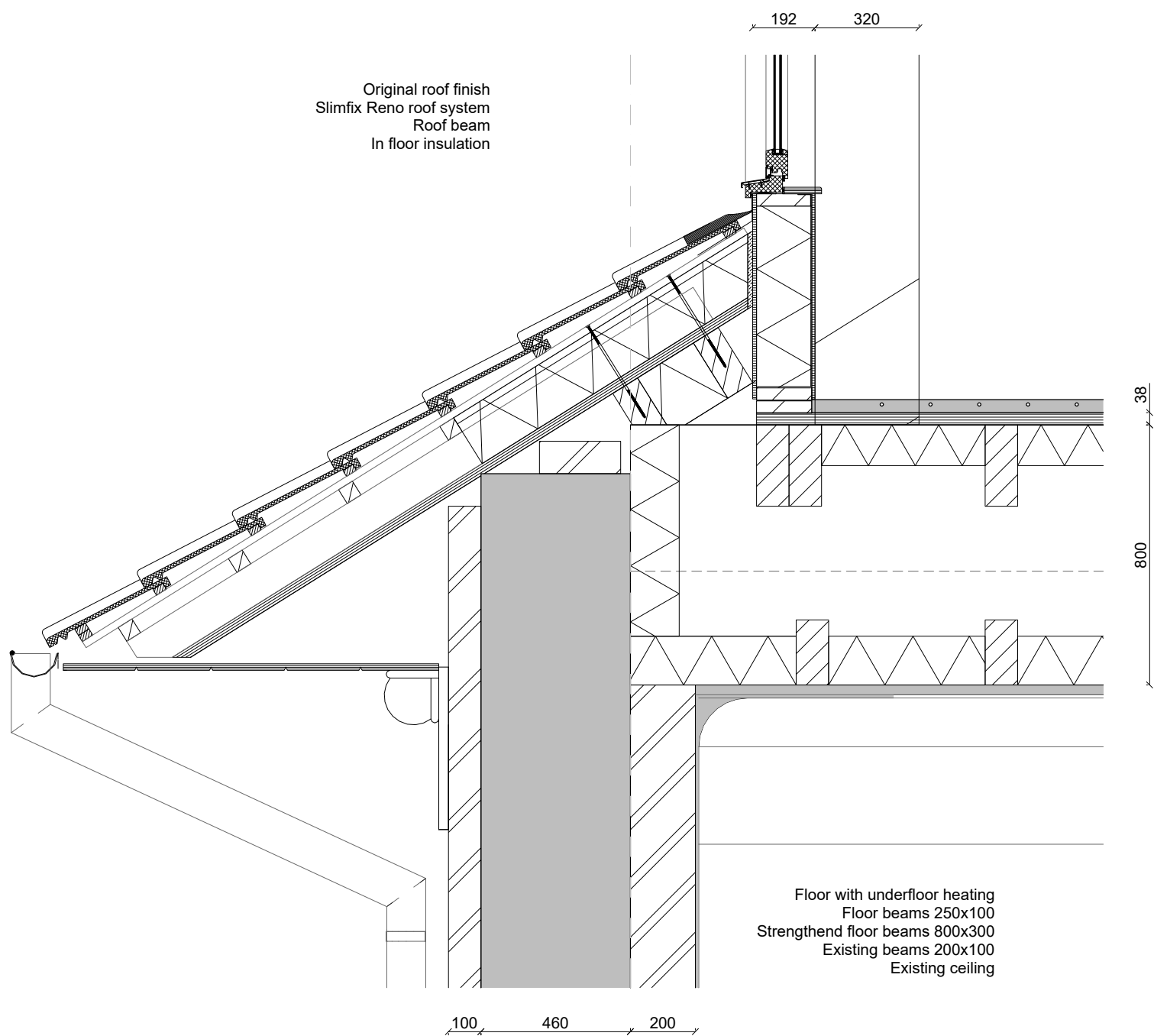


Historical-value x services



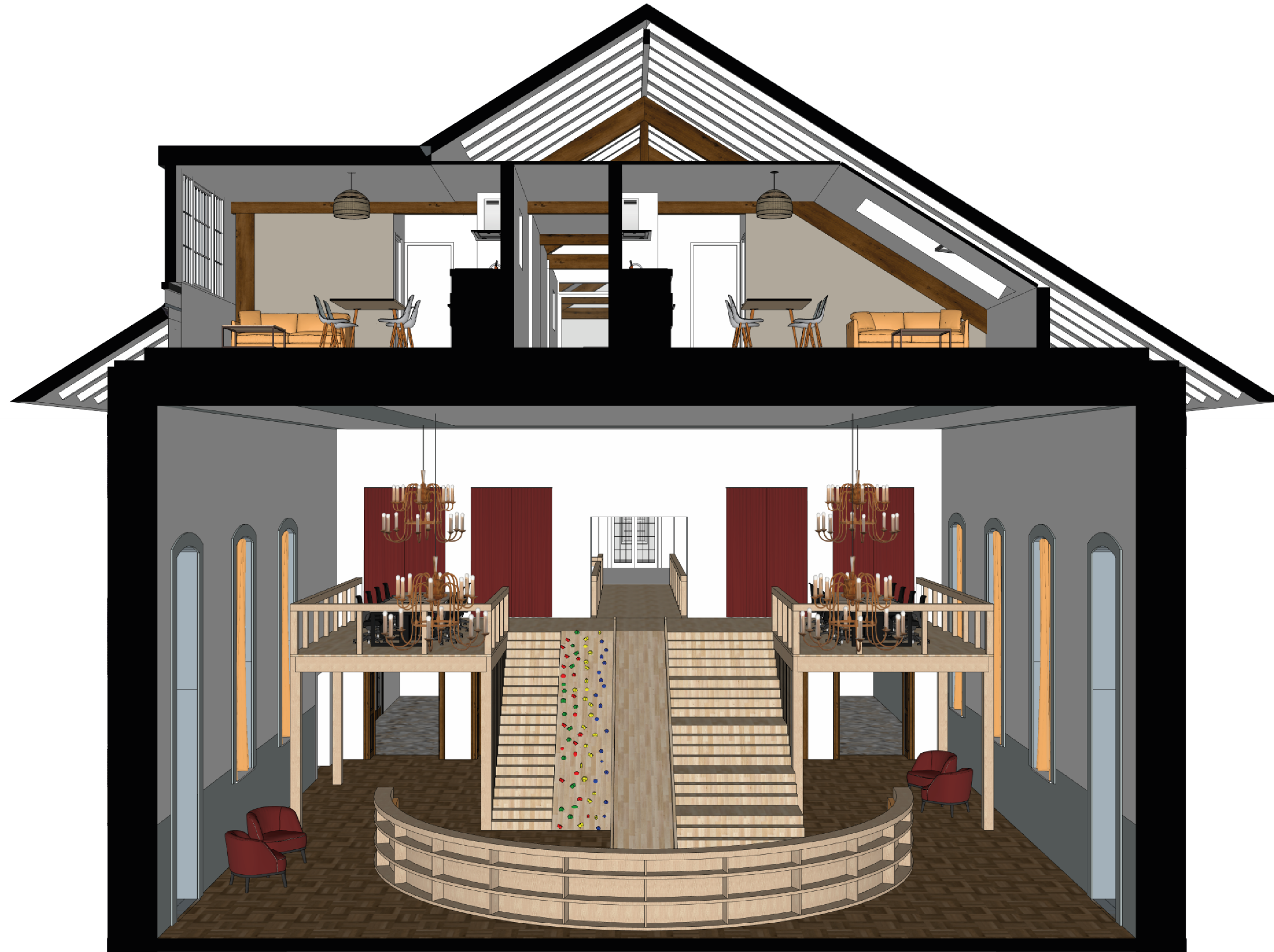
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Technical details



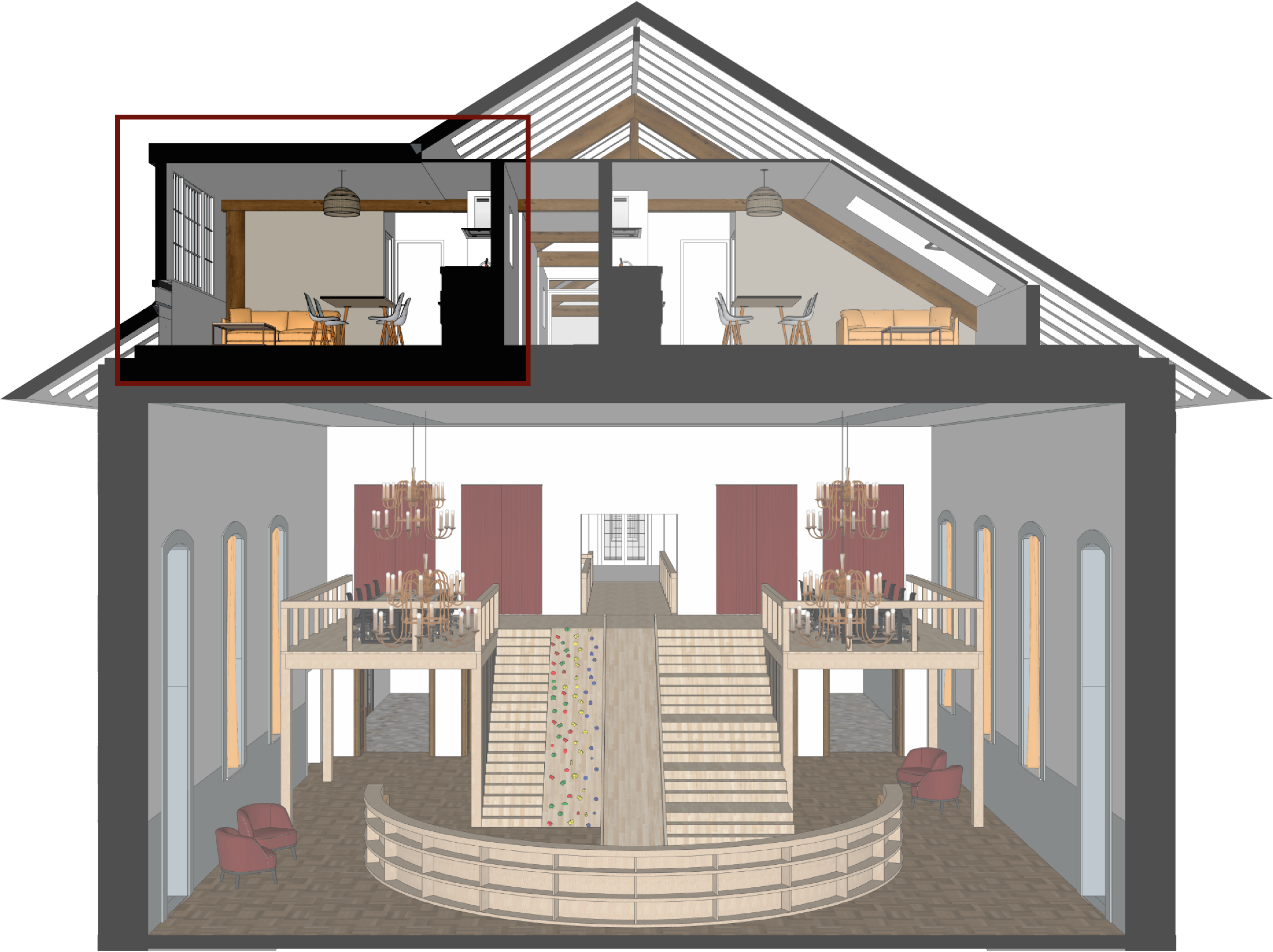
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Interior



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Section



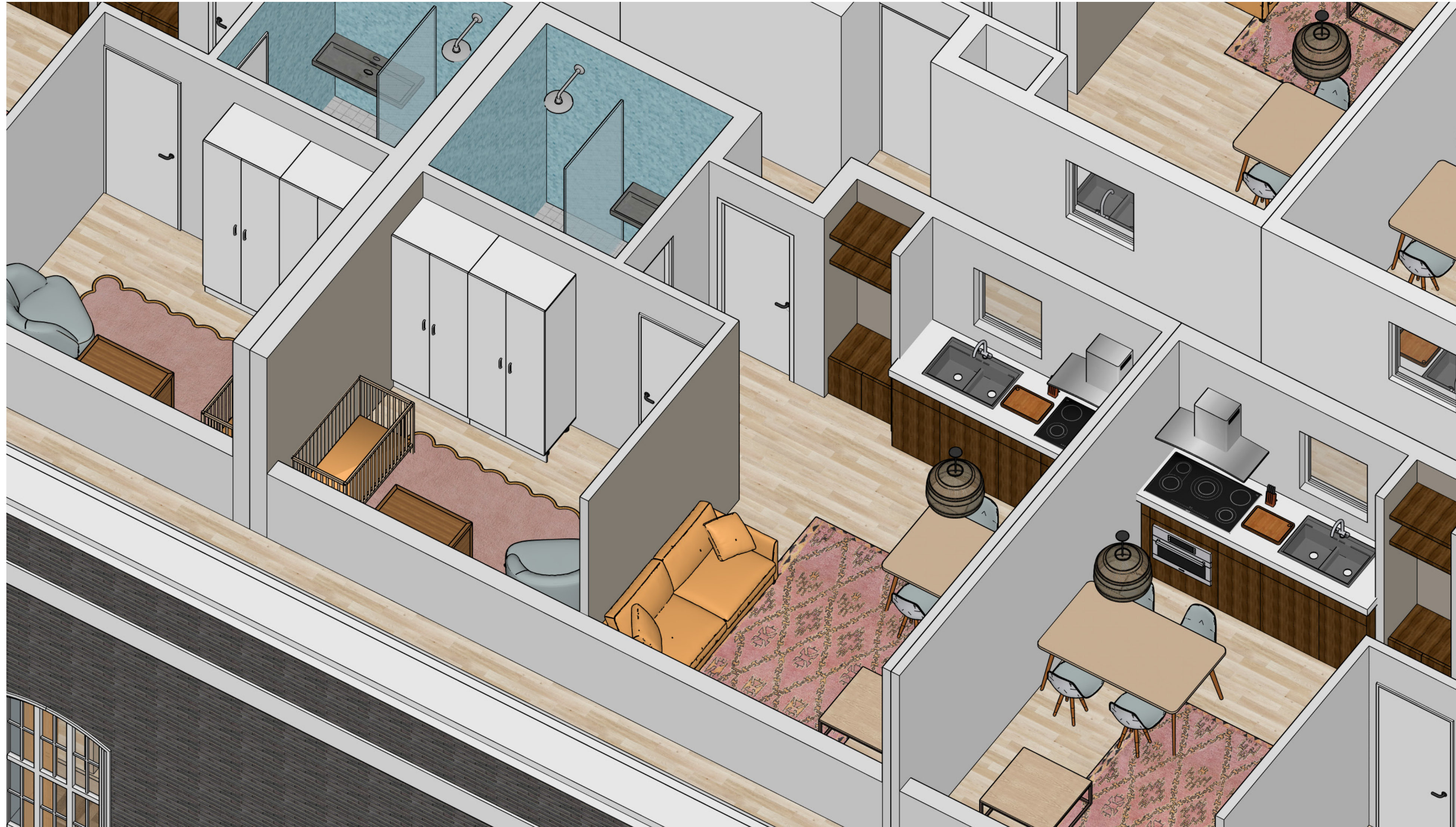
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Attic apartment A



1.10 scaled to fit. (Own ill.)

Attic apartment A



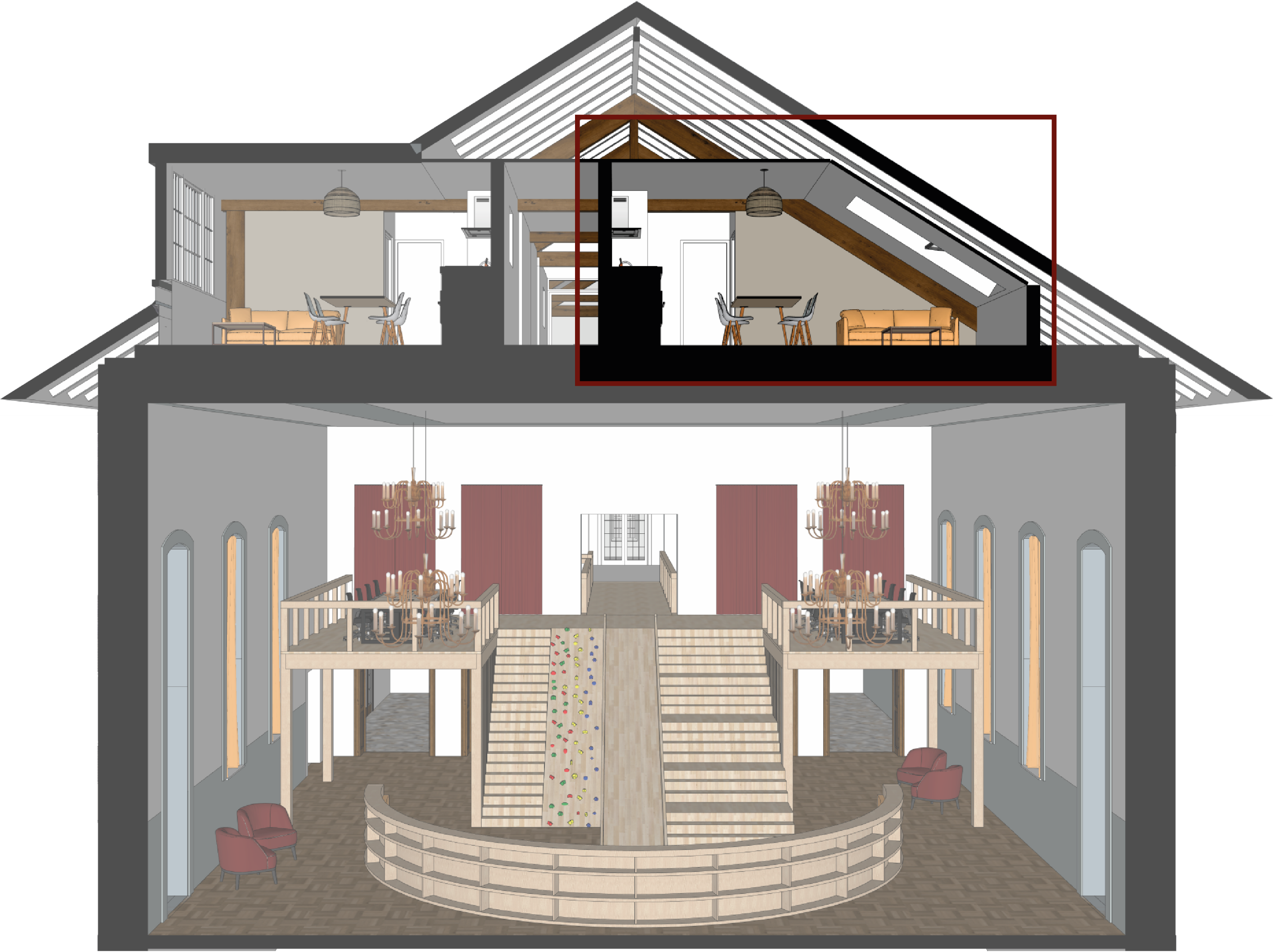
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Attic apartment A



1.10 scaled to fit. (Own ill.)

Section



1.50 scaled to fit. (Own ill.)

Attic apartment B



1.10 scaled to fit. (Own ill.)

Attic apartment B



1.10 scaled to fit. (Own ill.)

Attic apartment B



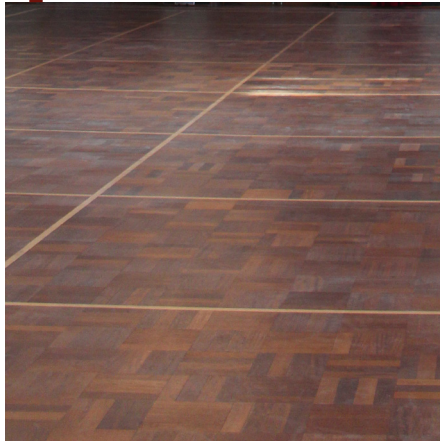
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Design



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Materials

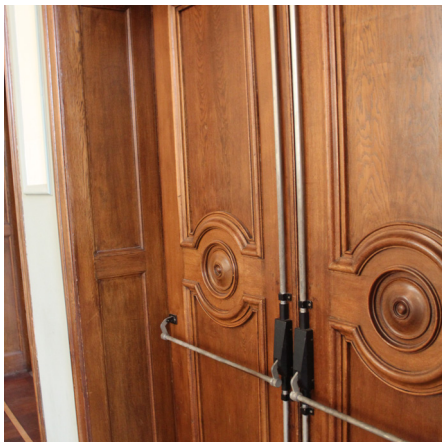


Materials

New materials



Reintroduction





Foyer



(Own ill.)

Foyer



(Own ill.)



1.200 scaled to fit. (Own ill.)

Theatre



(Own ill.)

Theatre



(Own ill.)

Theatre



(Own ill.)

Conclusion



Community Cares

**Transforming the Officer's Casino into
community-care housing**

Mentors: Lidy Meijers & Thijs Bennebroek

Pictures: collection from Harma van der Meer,
Jasmijn van Breemen, Lieke Gudde, Shizhong Zhang
and own work

Implications and reflection

