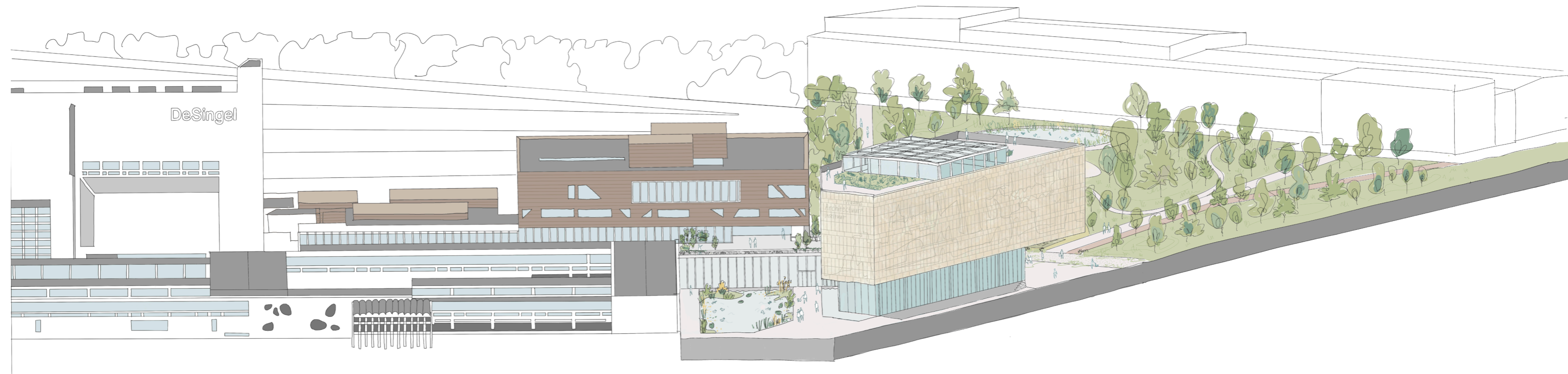


Bridging the Archive

weaving a public landscape into de Singel



chapter 01. introducing the VAI and de Singel

- a. VAI needs a new home
- b. Antwerp through the years
- c. Leon Stynen's vision
- d. de Singel today: challenges & opportunities

chapter 02. understanding the archive

- a. what is an archive?
- b. a modular archive

chapter 03. a proposal for connectivity

- a. a network
- b. a bridge
- c. a building
- d. a landscape

chapter 01. introducing the VAI and de Singel

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Vlaams
Architectuur
instituut



current building of the Vlaams Architectuur instituut (VAi)



antwerpen city map with the current VAI archive and de Singel



de Singel axonometric view



LEON
deSINGEL CAFE



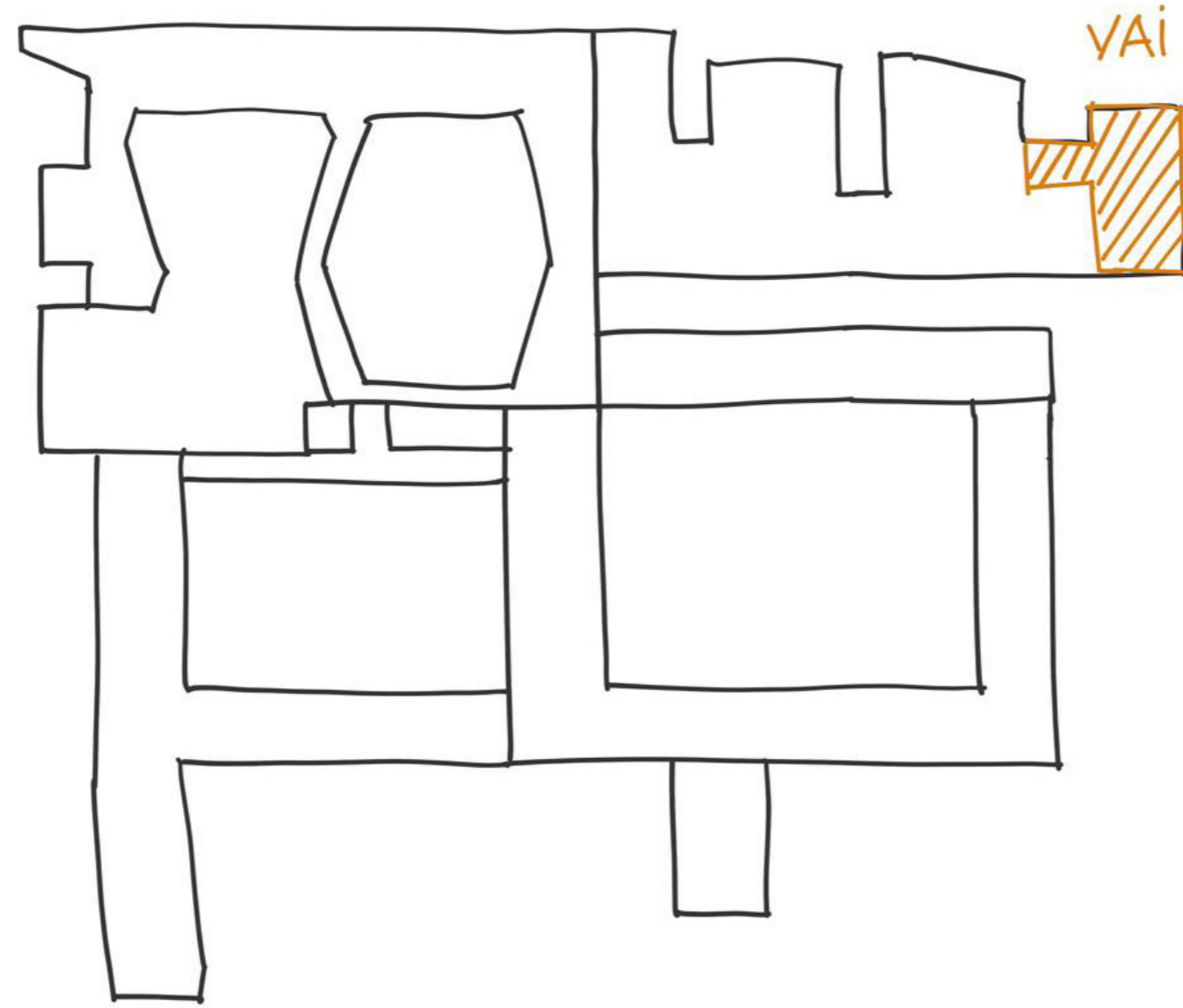
DE SINGEL

Vlaams
Architectuur
instituut

 **Koninklijk Conservatorium
Antwerpen**

 **AP HOGESCHOOL
ANTWERPEN**





current VAI offices in de Singel





1. limited office space de Singel



2. limited depot space



3. inefficient structure



4. undisplayable collection

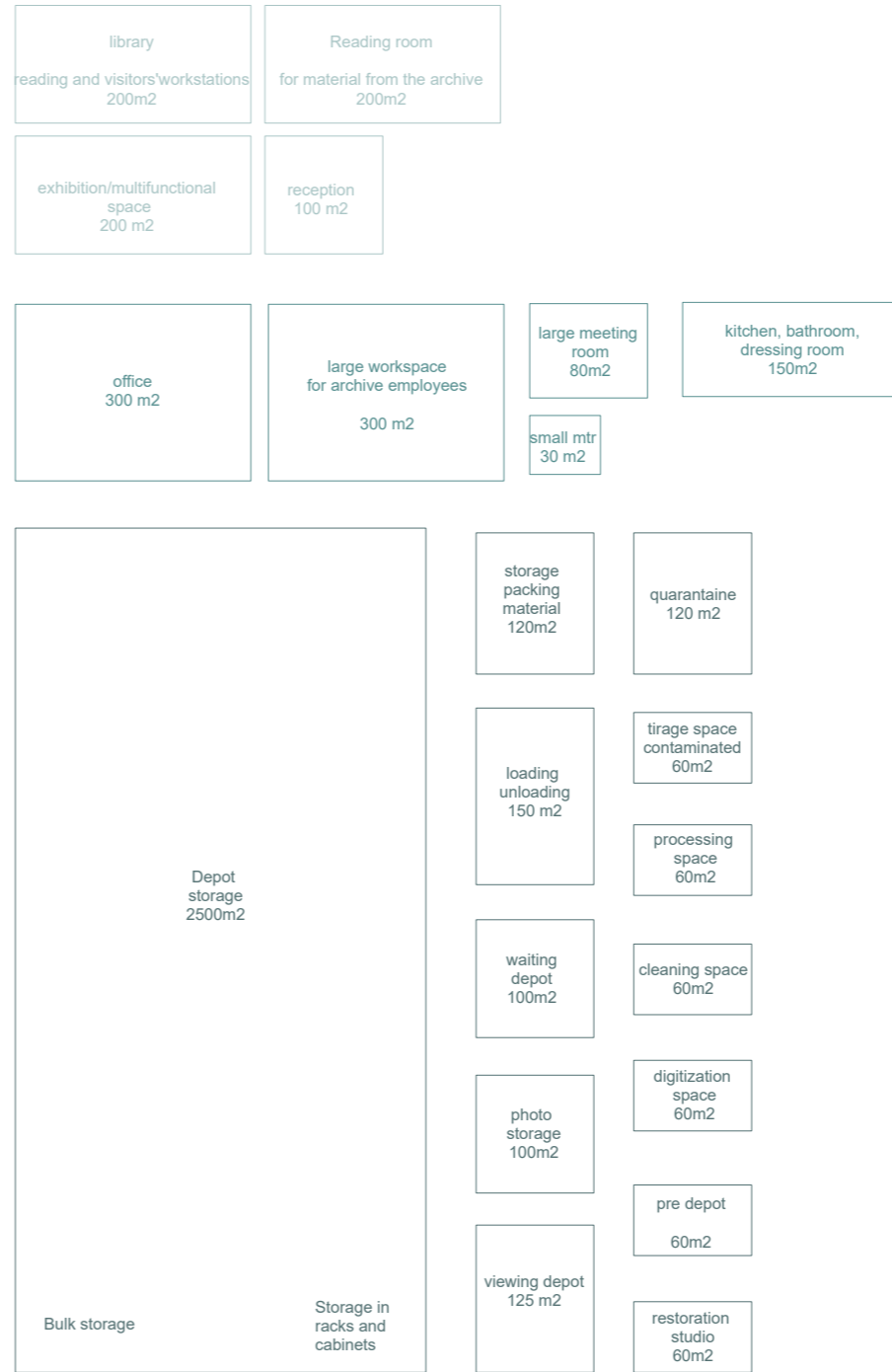
problem statement

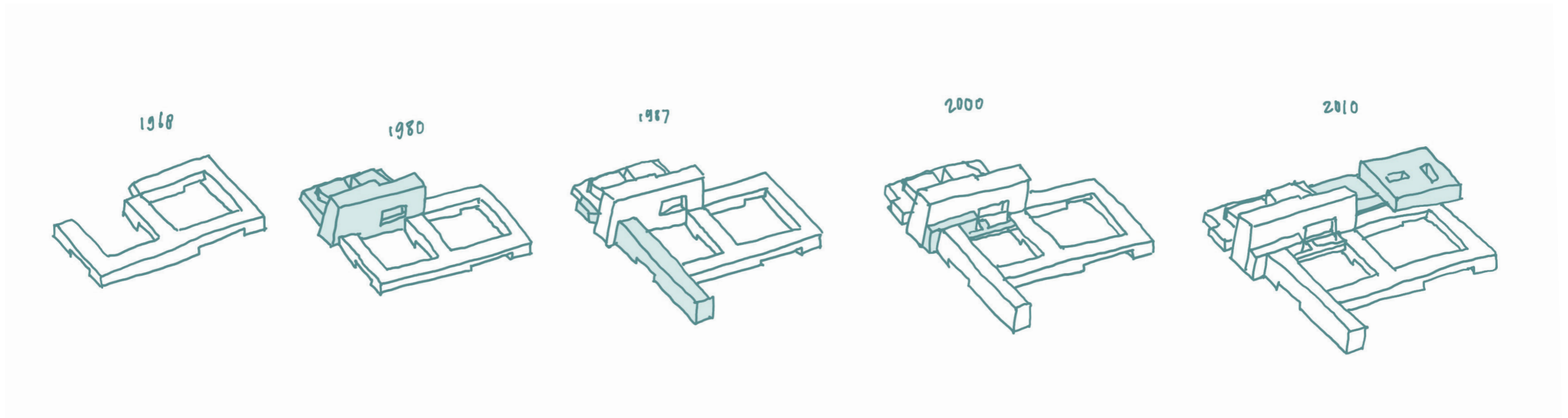
700m2
PUBLIC

560m2
ADDITIONAL

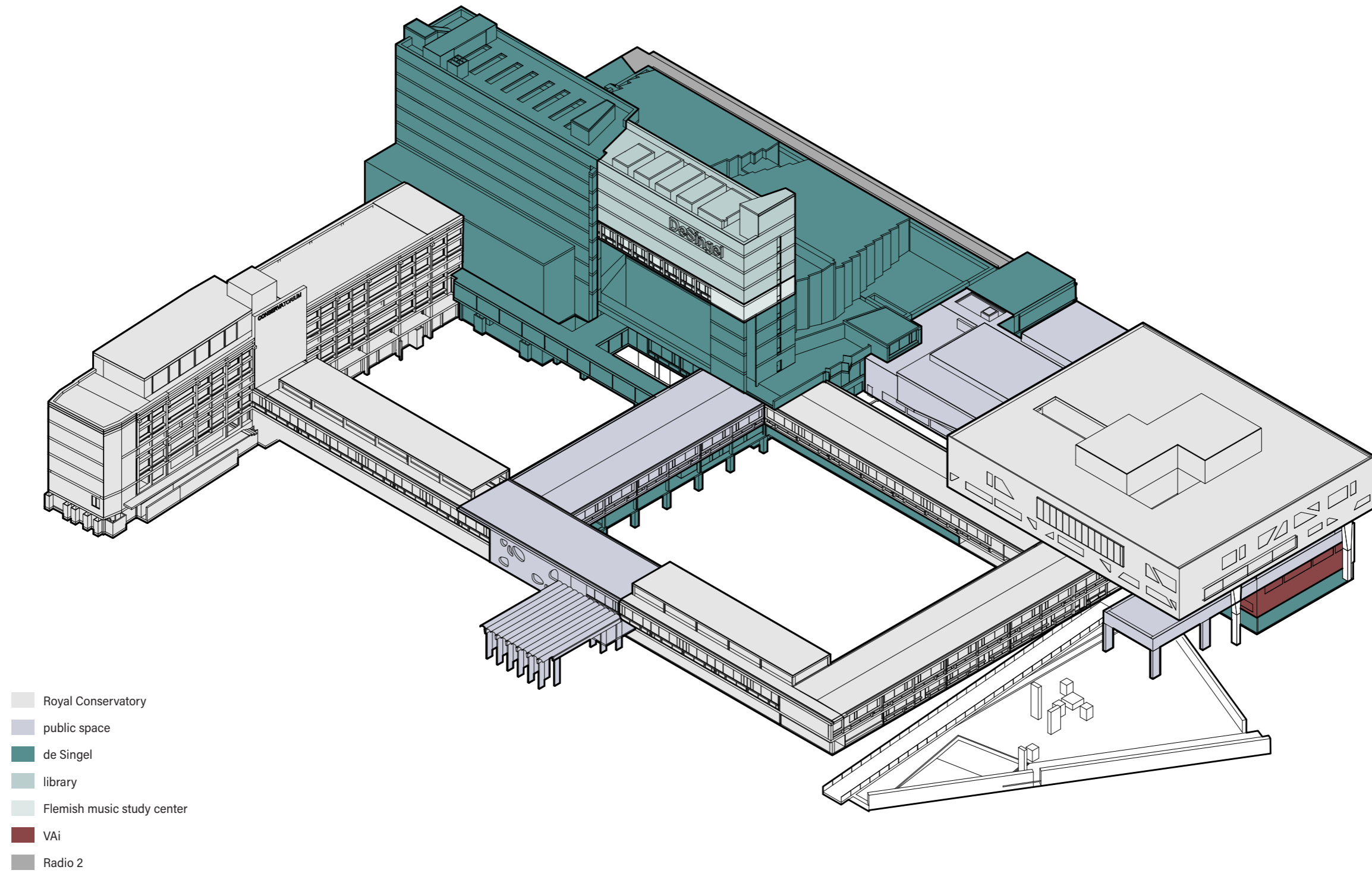
+/- 4000m2
ARCHIVE

brief: 5260 m2





de Singel timeline



de Singel functions



de Singel exterior

chapter 01. introducing the VAI and de Singel

a. VAI needs a new home

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1830



1897

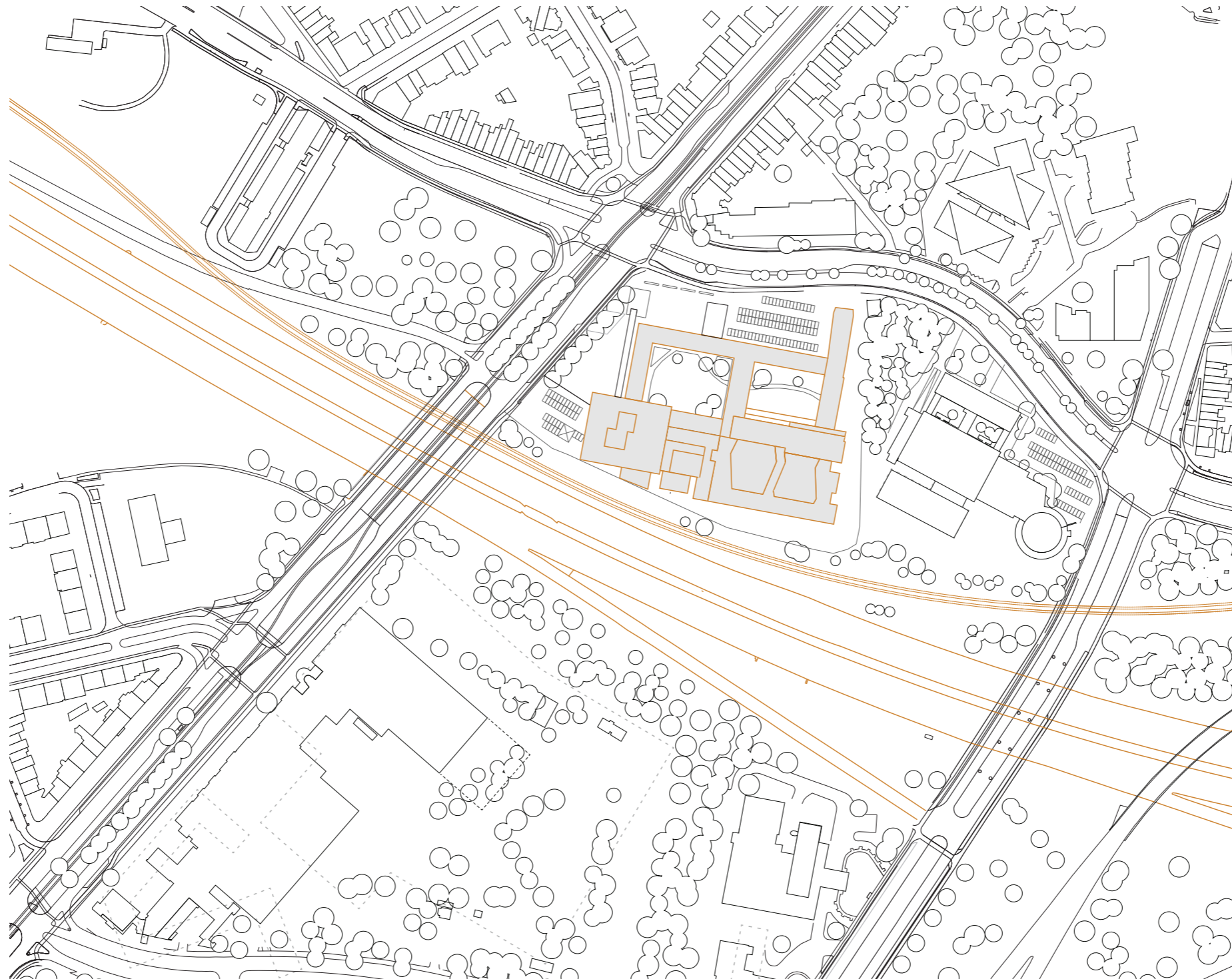


1950



1981

historical timeline Antwerp

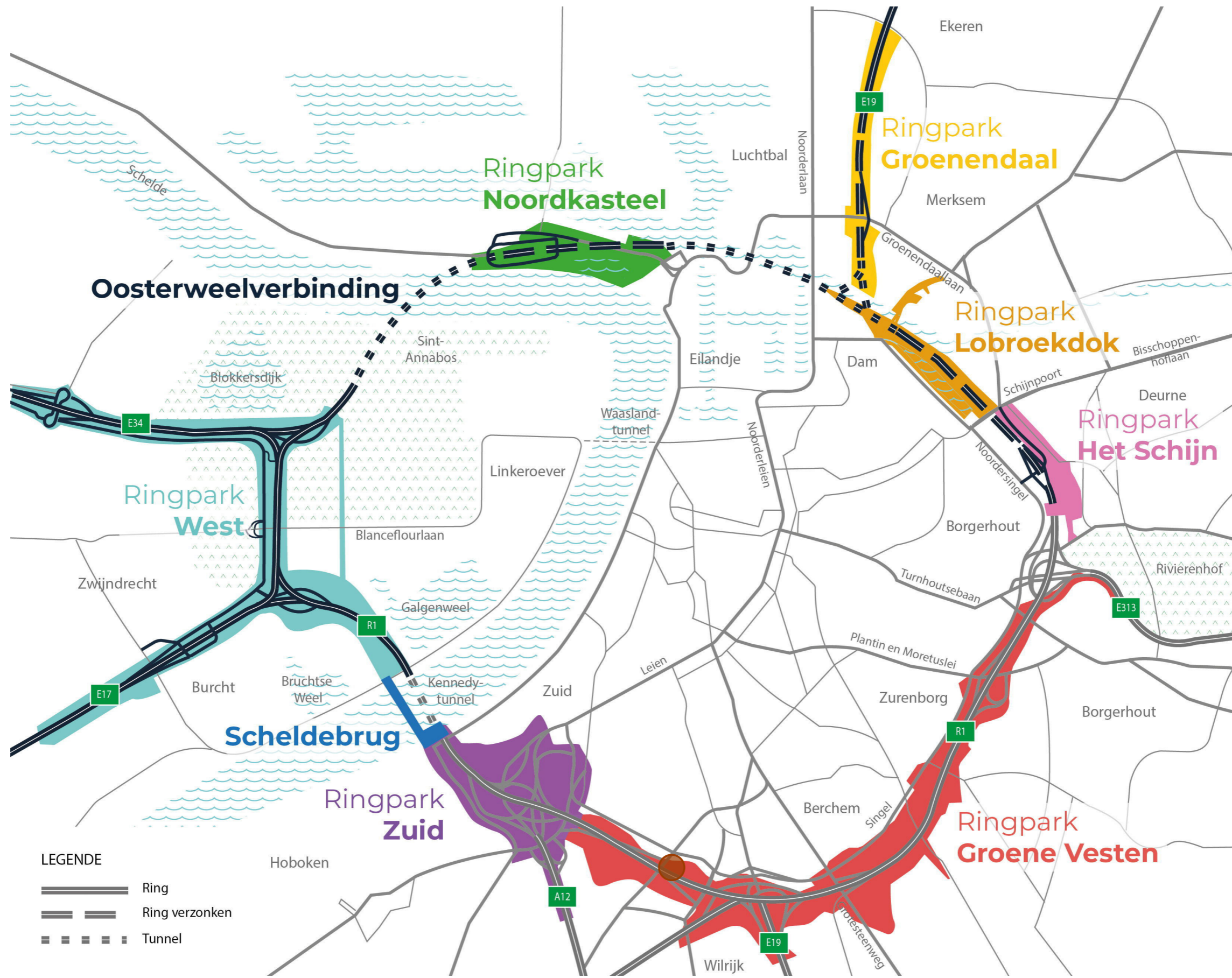


urban site plan current situation

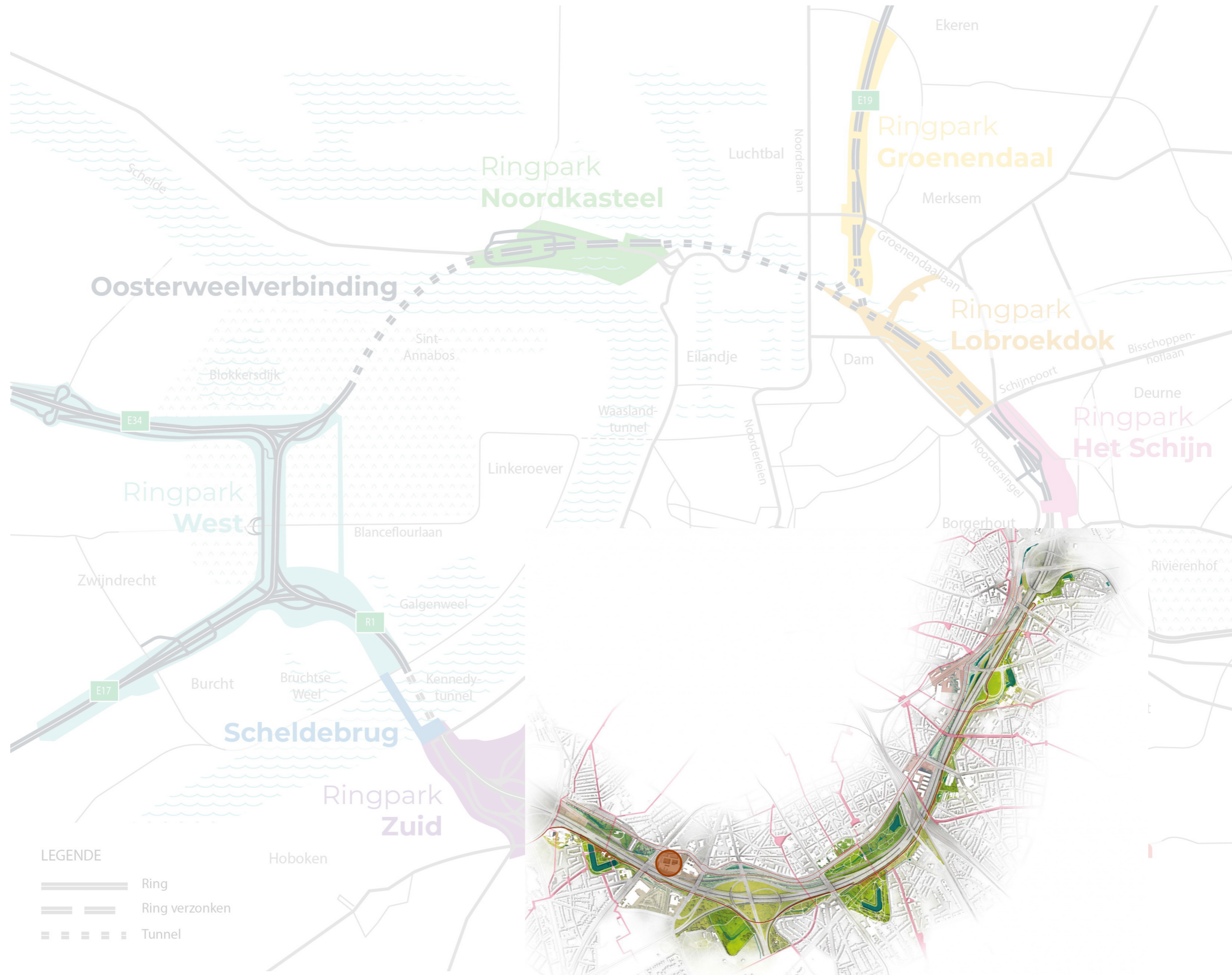




future urban development plans in antwerp

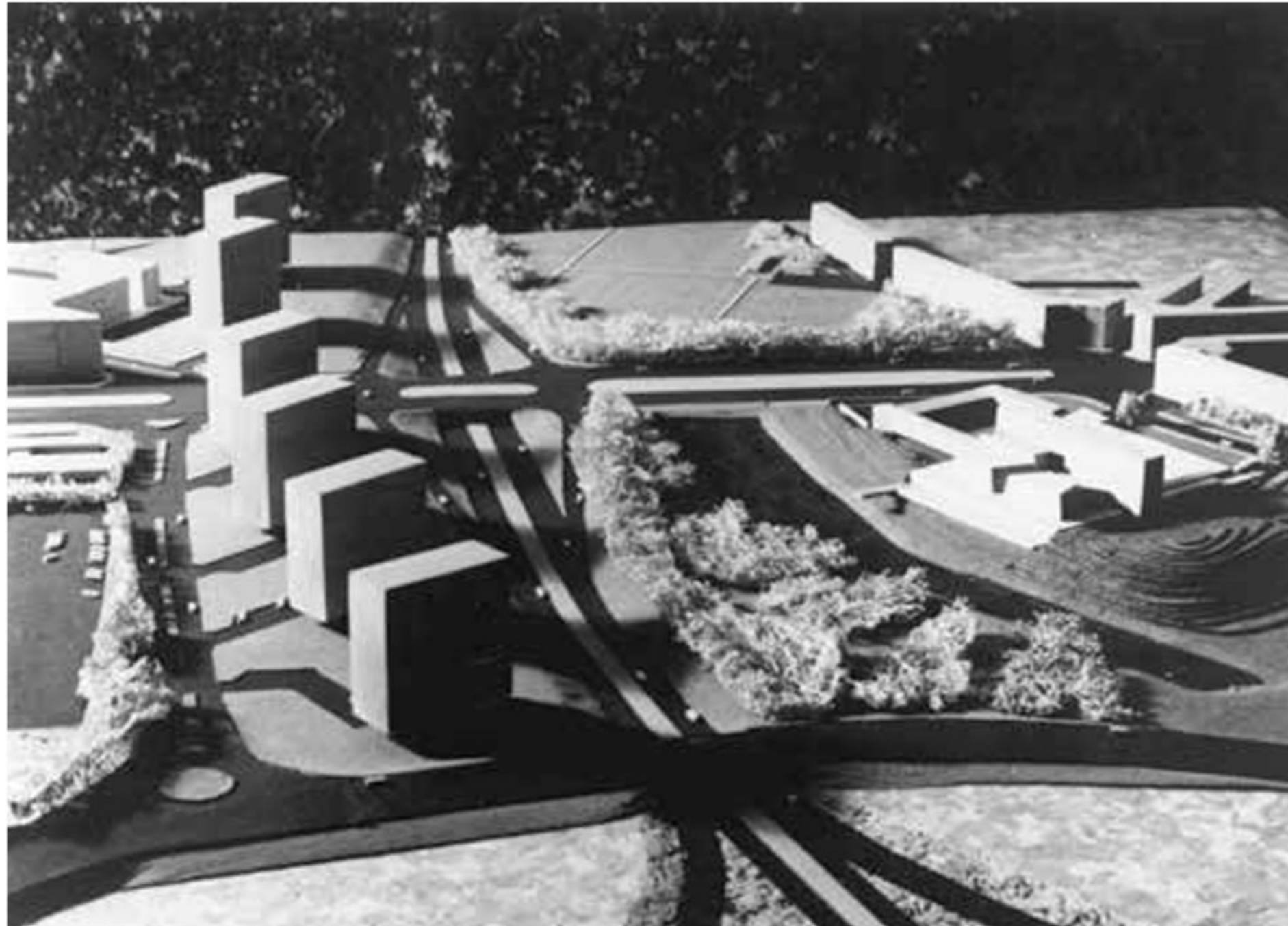


de grote verbinding



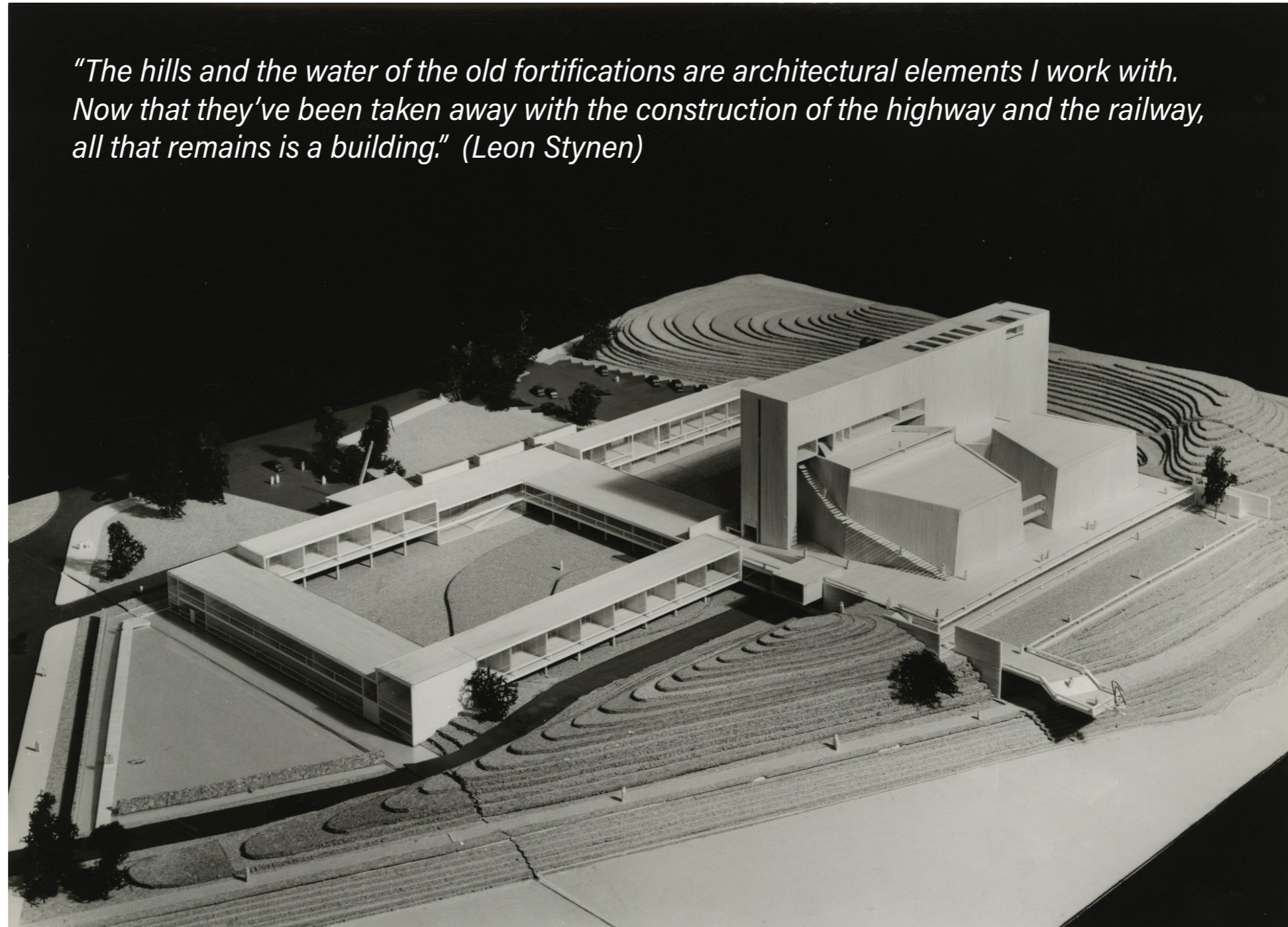
chapter 01. introducing the VAI and de Singel

- a. VAI needs a new home
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- c. Leon Stynen's vision**
- d. de Singel today: challenges & opportunities

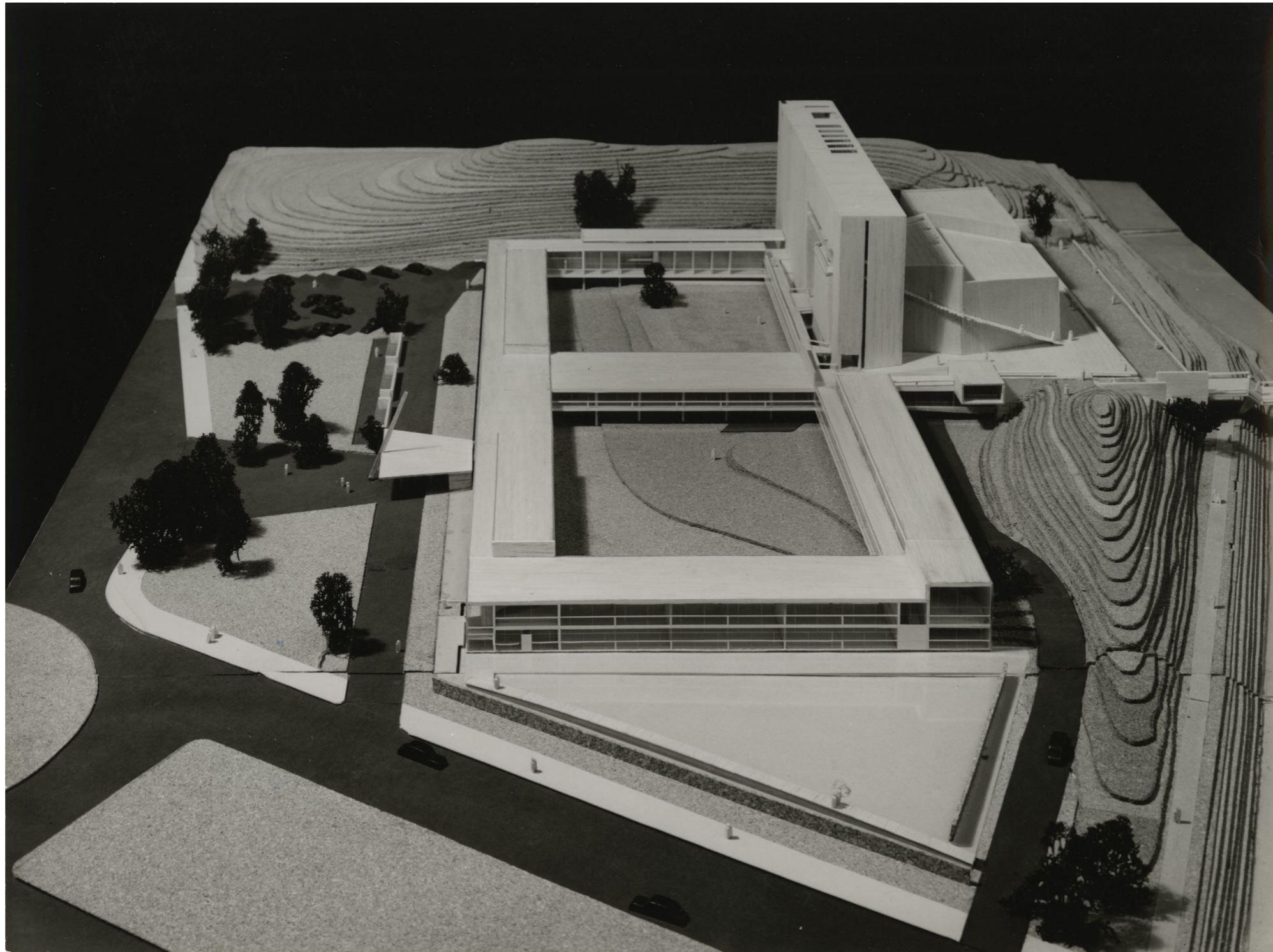


model of the development plan of wezenberg (ca. 1962)

"The hills and the water of the old fortifications are architectural elements I work with. Now that they've been taken away with the construction of the highway and the railway, all that remains is a building." (Leon Stynen)



model of leon stynen's design for de Singel (ca. 1962)



model of leon steynen's design for de Singel (ca. 1962)



the ring zone in 1968 with de Singel highlighted



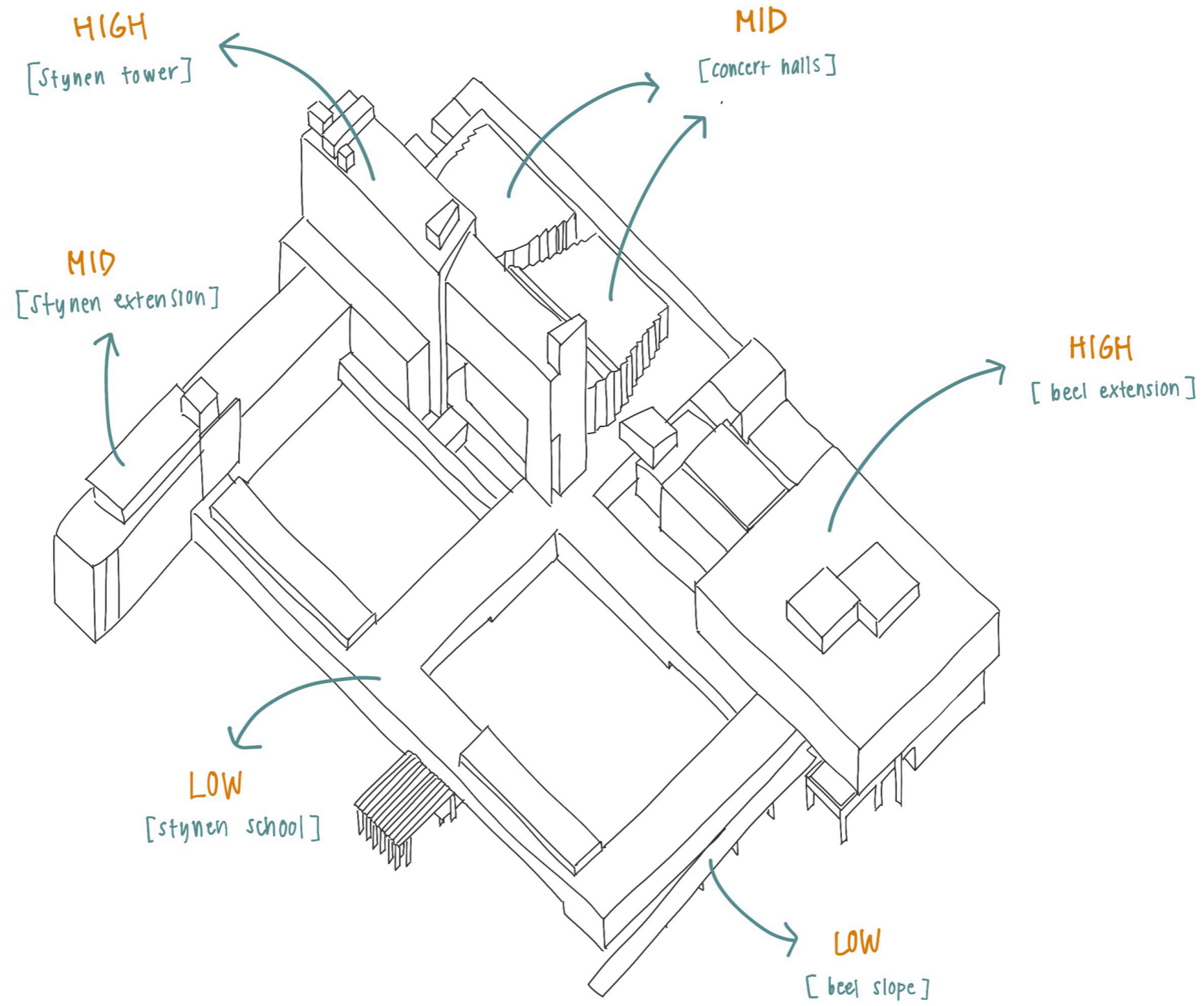
de Singel's changing position in the landscape



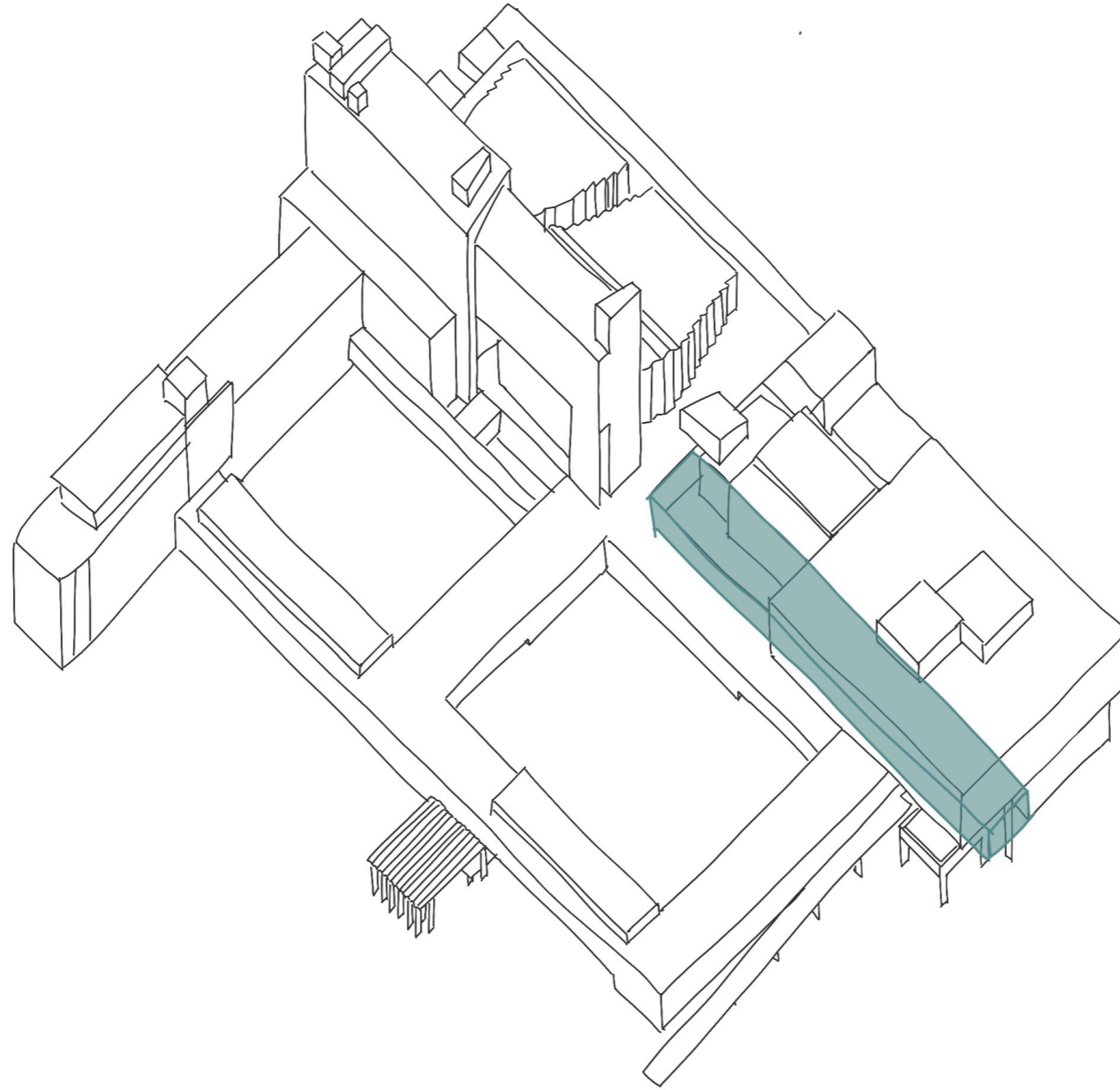
urban surroundings

chapter 01. introducing the VAI and de Singel

- a. VAI needs a new home
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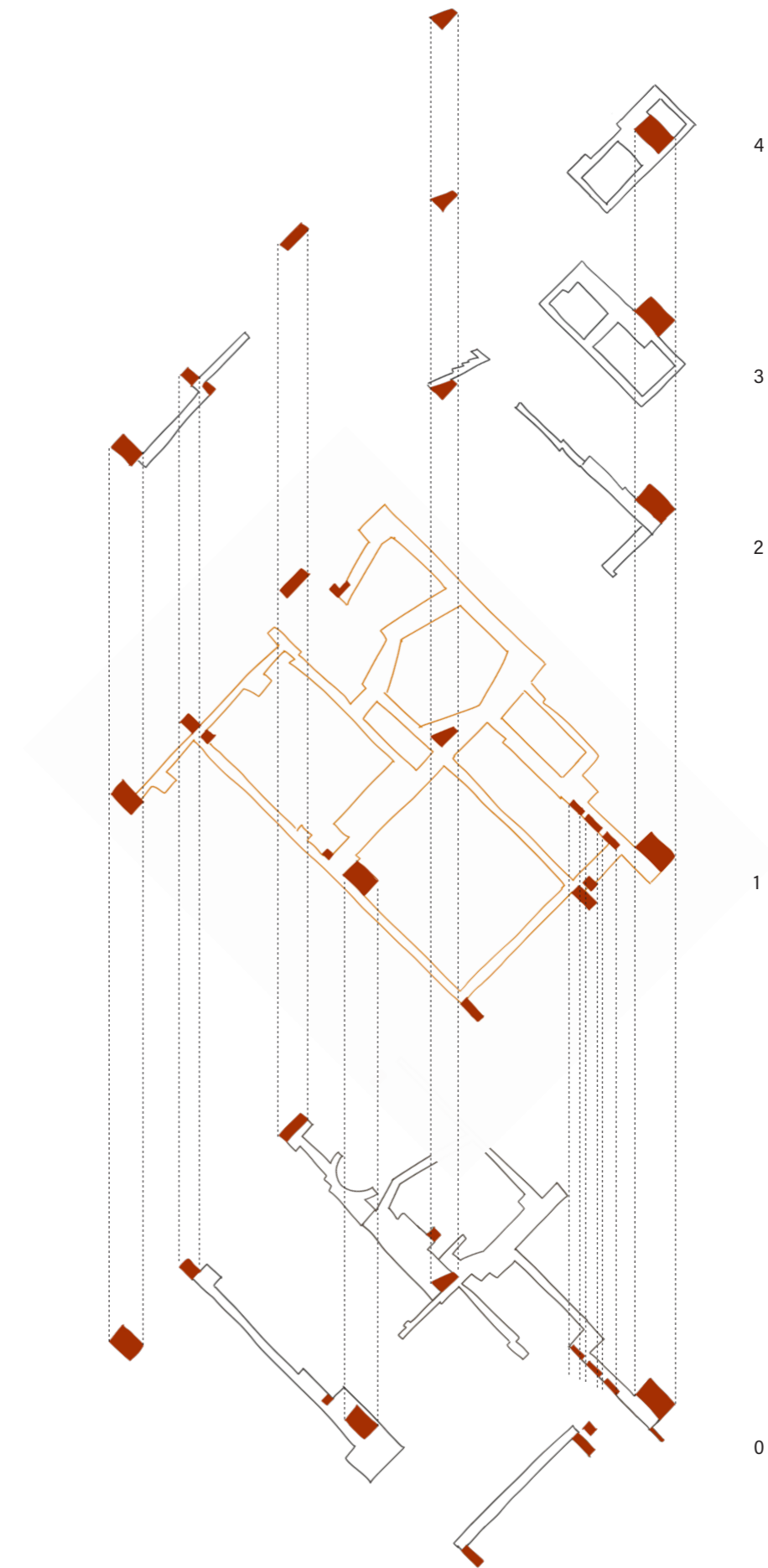
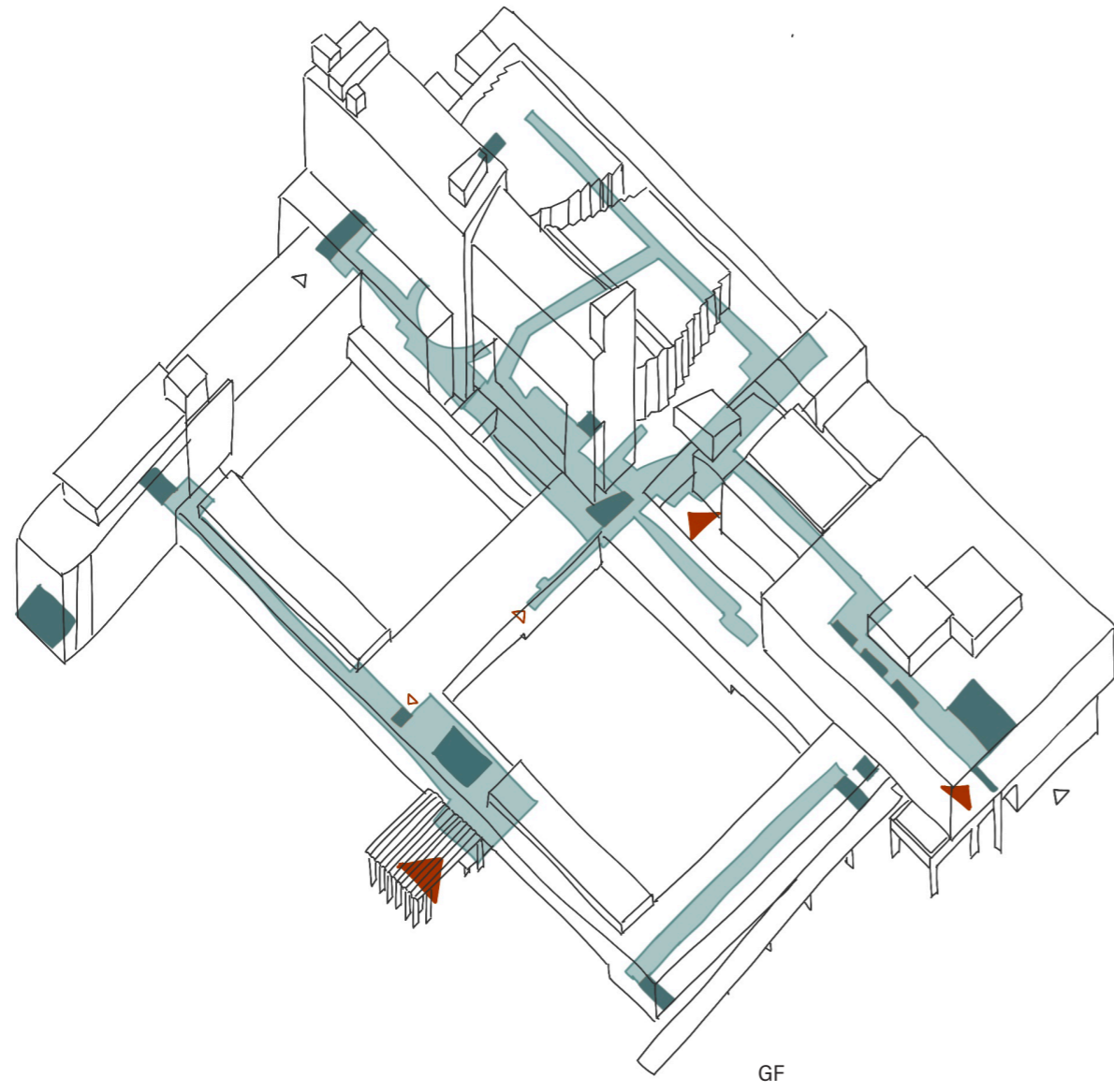
architectural fragmentation



corridor space creating empty circulation



corridor space



circulation in de Singel



lack of public engagement



threshold accessibility



introverted courtyards

1. Make the VAI work effectively as a modern public archive
2. Establish a strong public presence for the VAI within de Singel
3. Rethink the relationship of de Singel to its surroundings through landscape

- chapter 02. understanding the archive
- a. what is an archive?
- b. a modular archive

archive

noun

a collection of historical records relating to a place, organization, or family:

(also archives [plural])

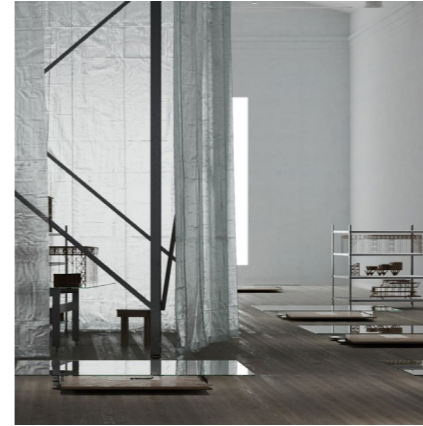
a place where historical records are kept



John Soane Museum, London, 1808-1812, Sir John Soane



Beinicke rare books and manuscripts library, Yale University, Connecticut, 1963



Ark Des, Stockholm, 2024, Rafael Moneo (conversion), Arhov Frcik (redesign)



Herzog de Meuron Kabinett, Basel, 2014, HdM



Ungers House extension, 1990, OM Ungers



Drawing Matter Archive, Somerset, UK 2014, Hugh Strange



Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, 1989, Peter Rose

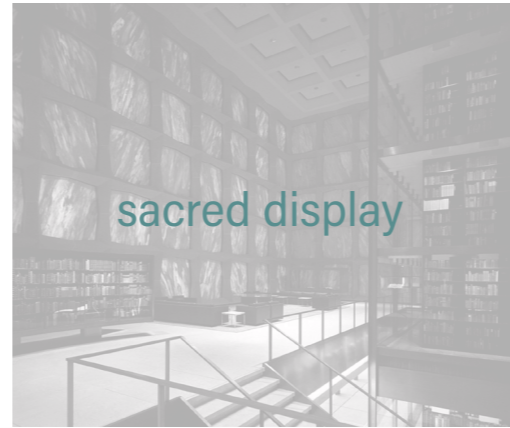


City Archive, Bordeaux, 2015, Robbrecht en Daem



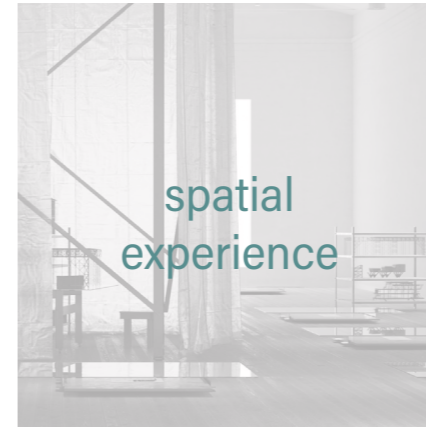
museum

John Soane Museum, London, 1808-1812, Sir John Soane



sacred display

Beinicke rare books and manuscripts library, Yale University, Connecticut, 1963



spatial experience

Ark Des, Stockholm, 2024, Rafael Moneo (conversion), Arhov Frcik (redesign)



furniture

Herzog de Meuron Kabinett, Basel, 2014, HdM



collection

Ungers House extension, 1990, OM Ungers



private engagement

Drawing Matter Archive, Somerset, UK 2014, Hugh Strange



scientific process

Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, 1989, Peter Rose



study hall

City Archive, Bordeaux, 2015, Robbrecht en Daem



Gabor Szilasi, 1989



CCA section (Danesin, 2024)

original photograph

Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA)



model 1:15 by Jenny Fang, Daan Franken, Veronica Danesin, Yunke Li
Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA)



Photo: Ossip van Duivenbode / Tim Fisher Photography



Photo: Mike Bink

research references

Depot Boijmans van Beuningen, MVRDV



Photo: Ossip van Duivenbode



Photo: Pim Top

research references

Het Nieuwe Instituut, Jo Coenen

- chapter 02. understanding the archive
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archive

noun

a collection of historical records relating to a place, organization, or family:

(also archives [plural])

a place where historical records are kept

material



space?





the city as an archive



P1 project

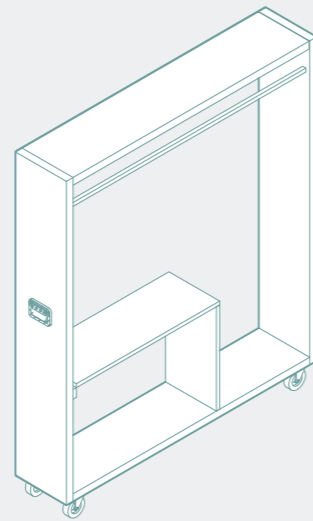


P1 project



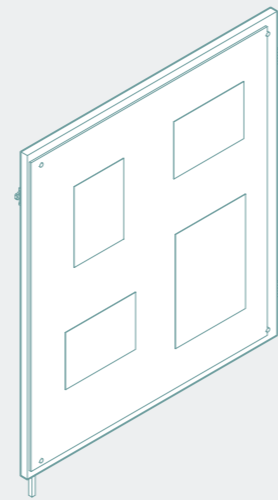
cabinet with shelves and drawers

function: storage



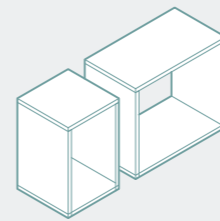
space with foldable table and racks

function: study



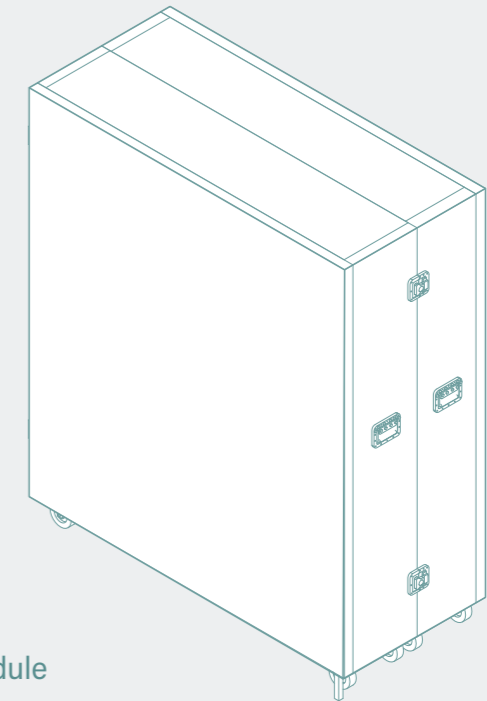
empty board

function: display



multifunctional boxes

function: comfort and display



module

1500 x 650 x 1800
(lxwxh)

1. archive as public typology
2. heal urban wound
3. permeability across all scales
4. re-wilding the landscape

2. THE ARCHIVE AS URBAN TYPOLOGY

What it means: The archive isn't contained in a building - it operates at city scale.

How to state it:

"To reimagine the architectural archive not as a closed institution but as an urban network - where the city's modernist buildings become part of the collection, and the landscape becomes the reading room."

1. Ambition for the City: To be an Urban Repair Catalyst

What it is: The project doesn't just sit on a site; it actively heals a fractured part of the city.

How it achieves this:

The Bridge as Suture: The landscape bridge acts as a surgical stitch, re-connecting the urban fabric torn apart by 20th-century infrastructure. It's not merely a crossing but a new piece of ground that makes the Ring Road permeable for pedestrians, cyclists, and ecology.

Completing the Vision: It fulfills the city's own "Grote Verbinding" master-plan, positioning your project not as a standalone object but as the crucial first piece of a larger, city-led transformation.

The ambition is to demonstrate how architectural intervention can mend urban wounds and turn infrastructural barriers into new civic connectors.

3, Permeability across all scales

What it means: Openness and connection at every level - urban, building, interior.

How to state it:

"To create a porous architecture that operates from urban scale (bridge connecting fragmented landscapes) to building scale (ground floor as public threshold) to interior scale (visible archival processes), challenging the traditional opacity of institutional buildings."

1. RE-WILDING THE INSTITUTIONAL LANDSCAPE

What it means: Instead of creating a neat, controlled park, you're restoring an ecological, productive landscape that references the original fortification character.

How to state it:

"To re-establish de Singel's relationship with landscape not as a domesticated institutional garden, but as a wild, productive green infrastructure that reconnects to the ecological and spatial qualities of the original fortification landscape."

chapter 03. a proposal for connectivity

- a. a network archive as public typology
- b. a bridge heal urban wound
- c. a building permeability across all scales
- c. a landscape re-wilding the landscape

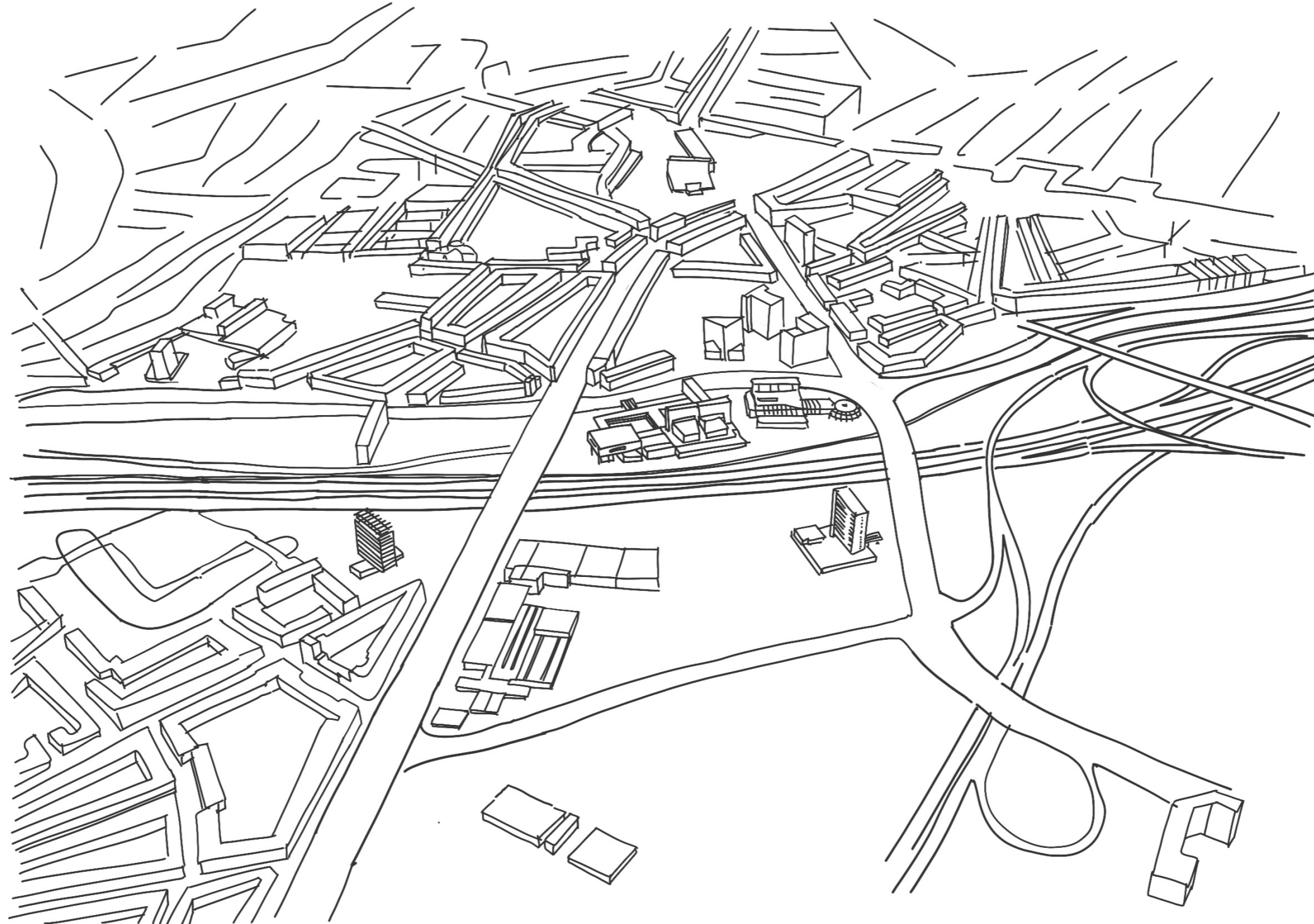
chapter 03. a proposal for connectivity

a. a network

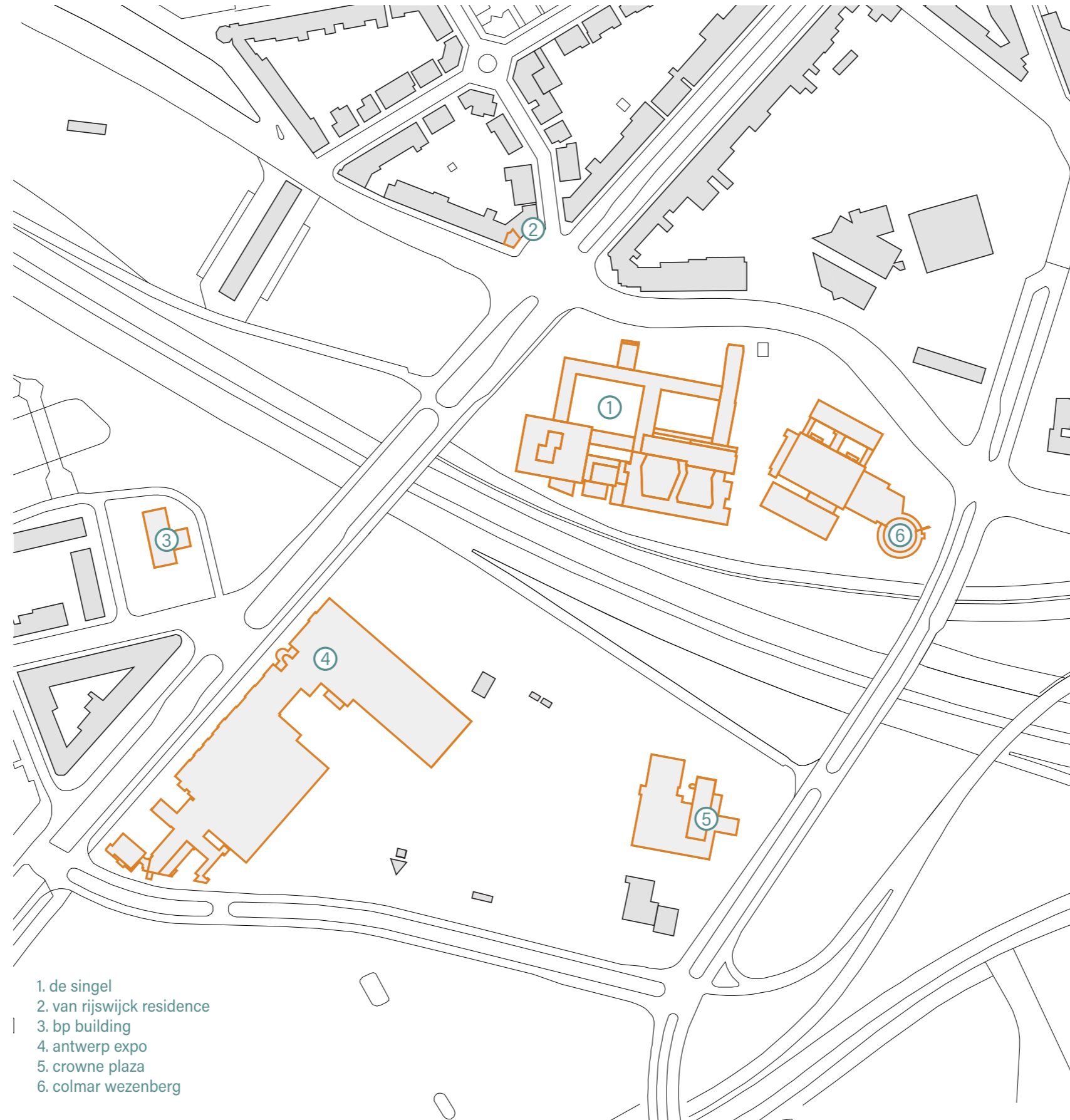
b. a bridge

c. a building

c. a landscape



current situation



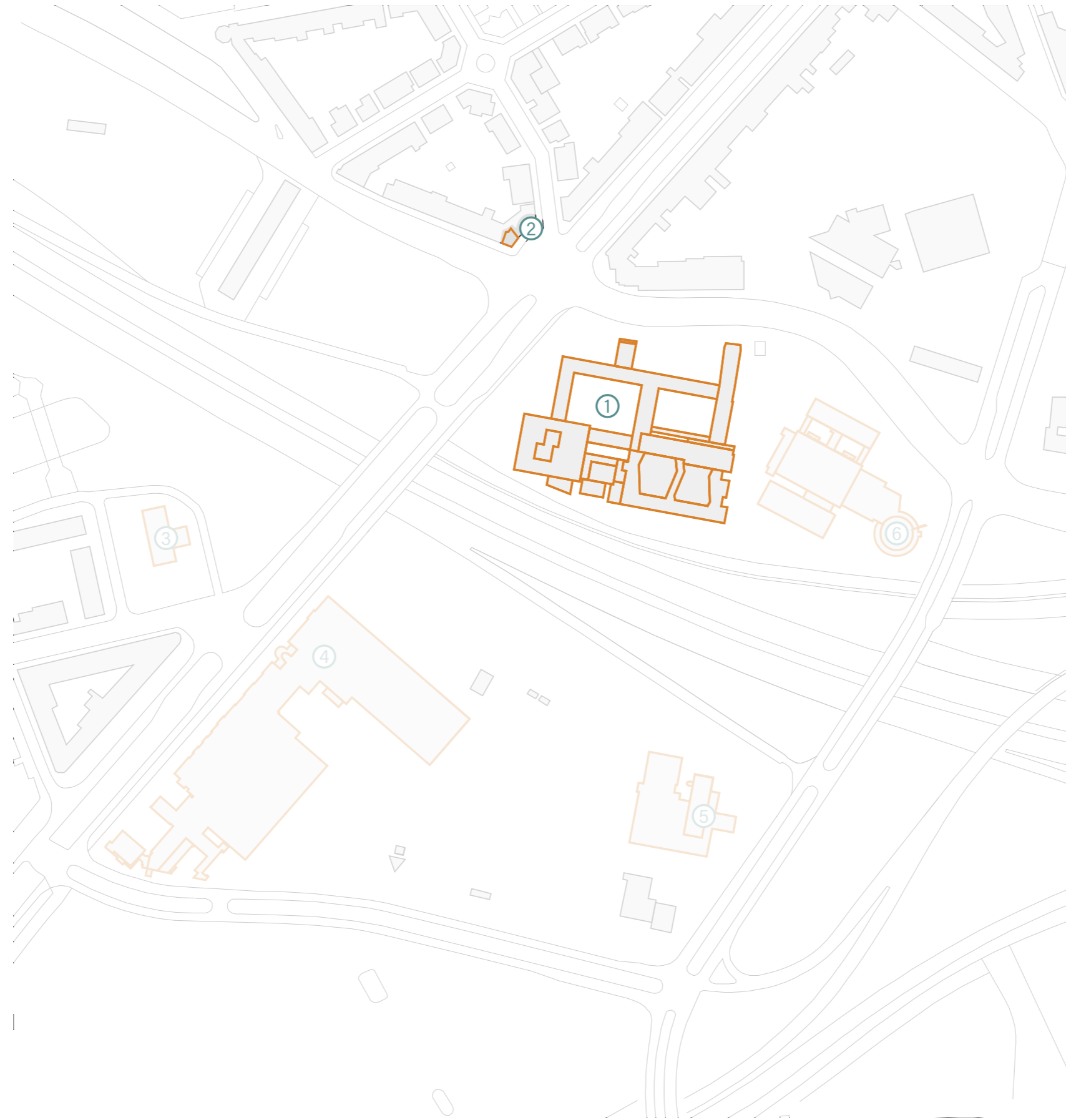
- 1. de singel
- 2. van rijswijck residence
- 3. bp building
- 4. antwerp expo
- 5. crowne plaza
- 6. colmar wezenberg

landmarks in the surrounding area





2. van rijswijk residence, leon stynen 1932



landmarks in the surrounding area

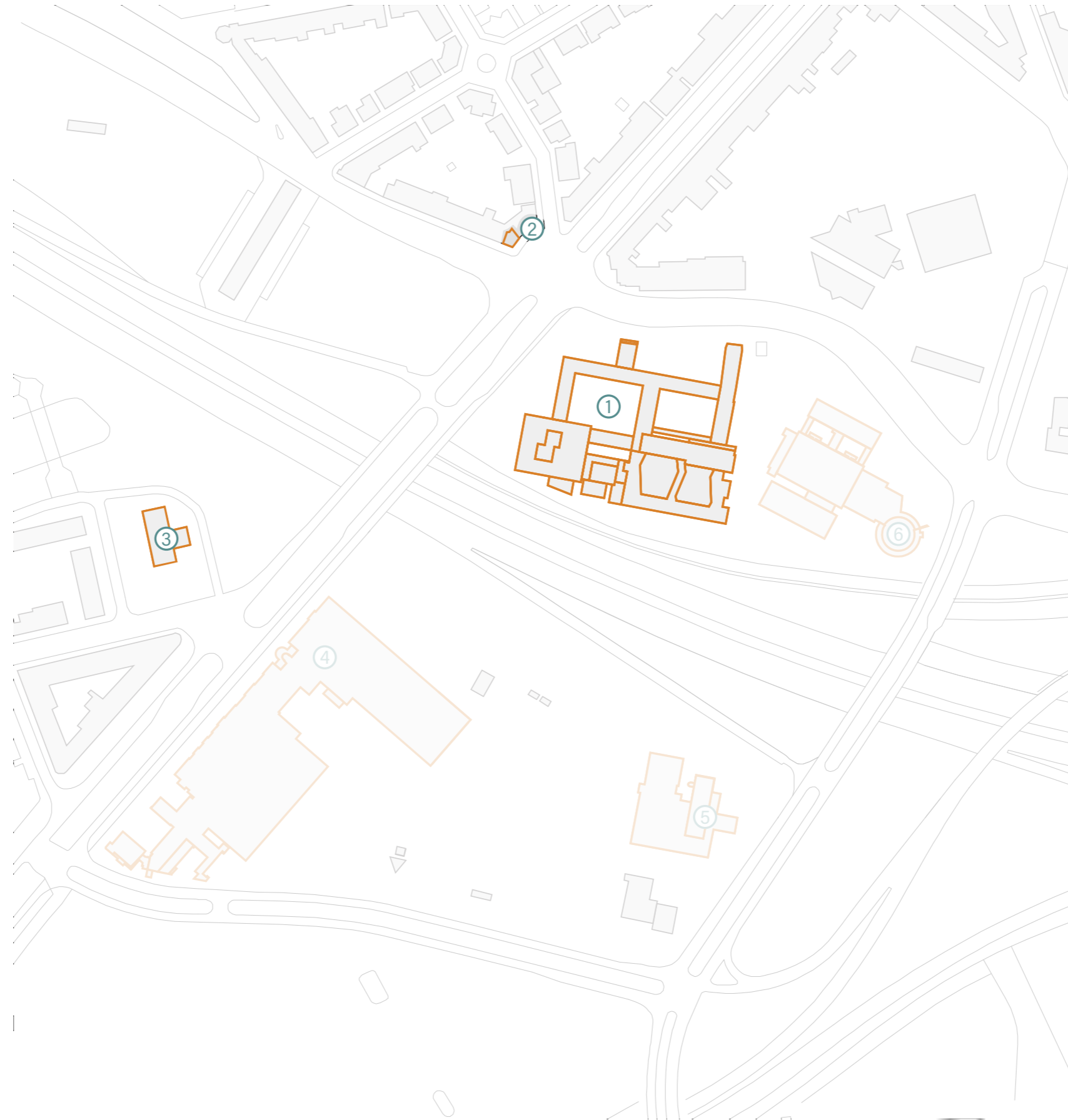




2. van rijswijck residence, leon stynen 1932



3. bp building. leon stynen, 1963



landmarks in the surrounding area

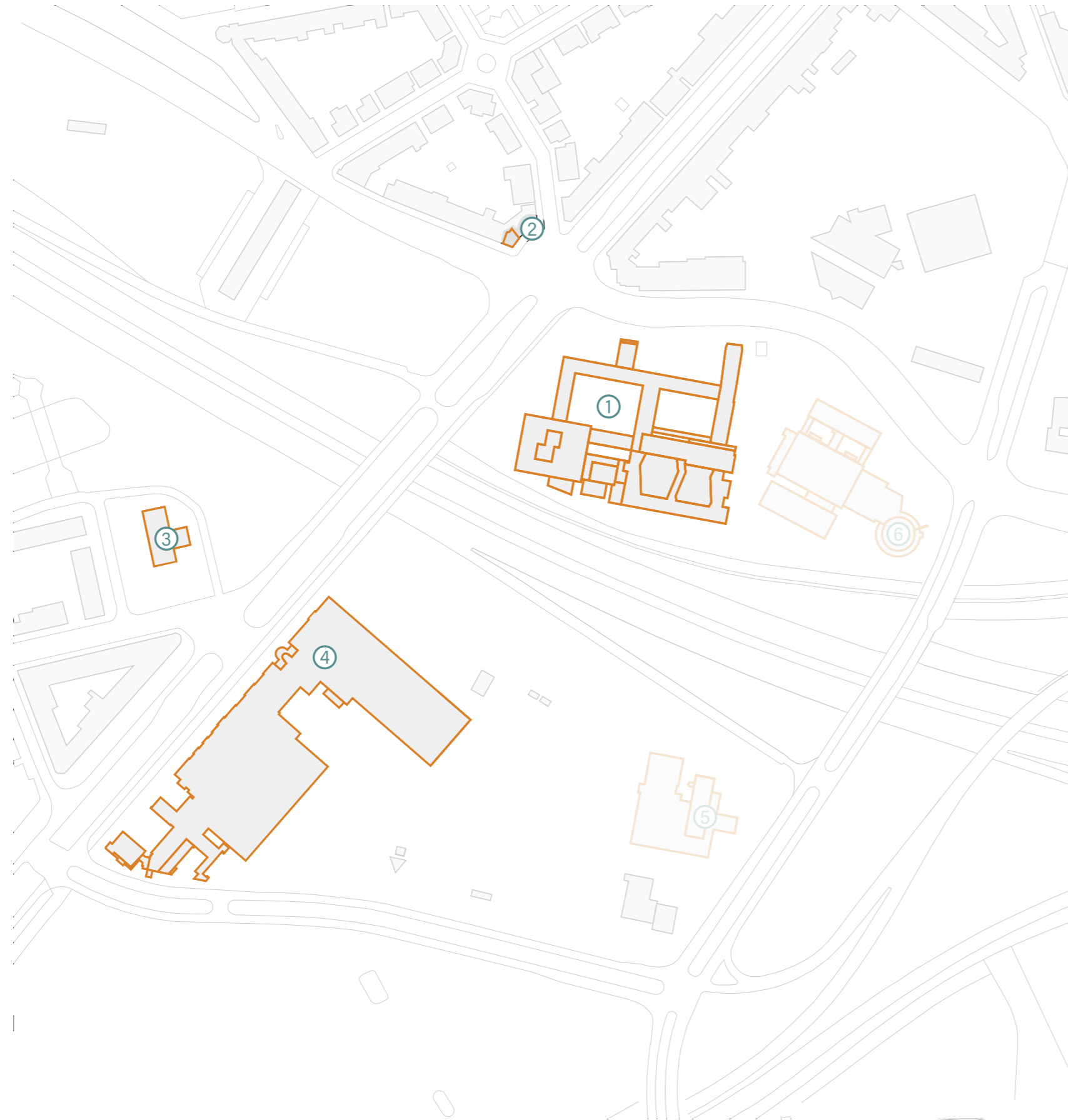




2. van rijswijk residence, leon stynen 1932



3. bp building. leon stynen, 1963



landmarks in the surrounding area



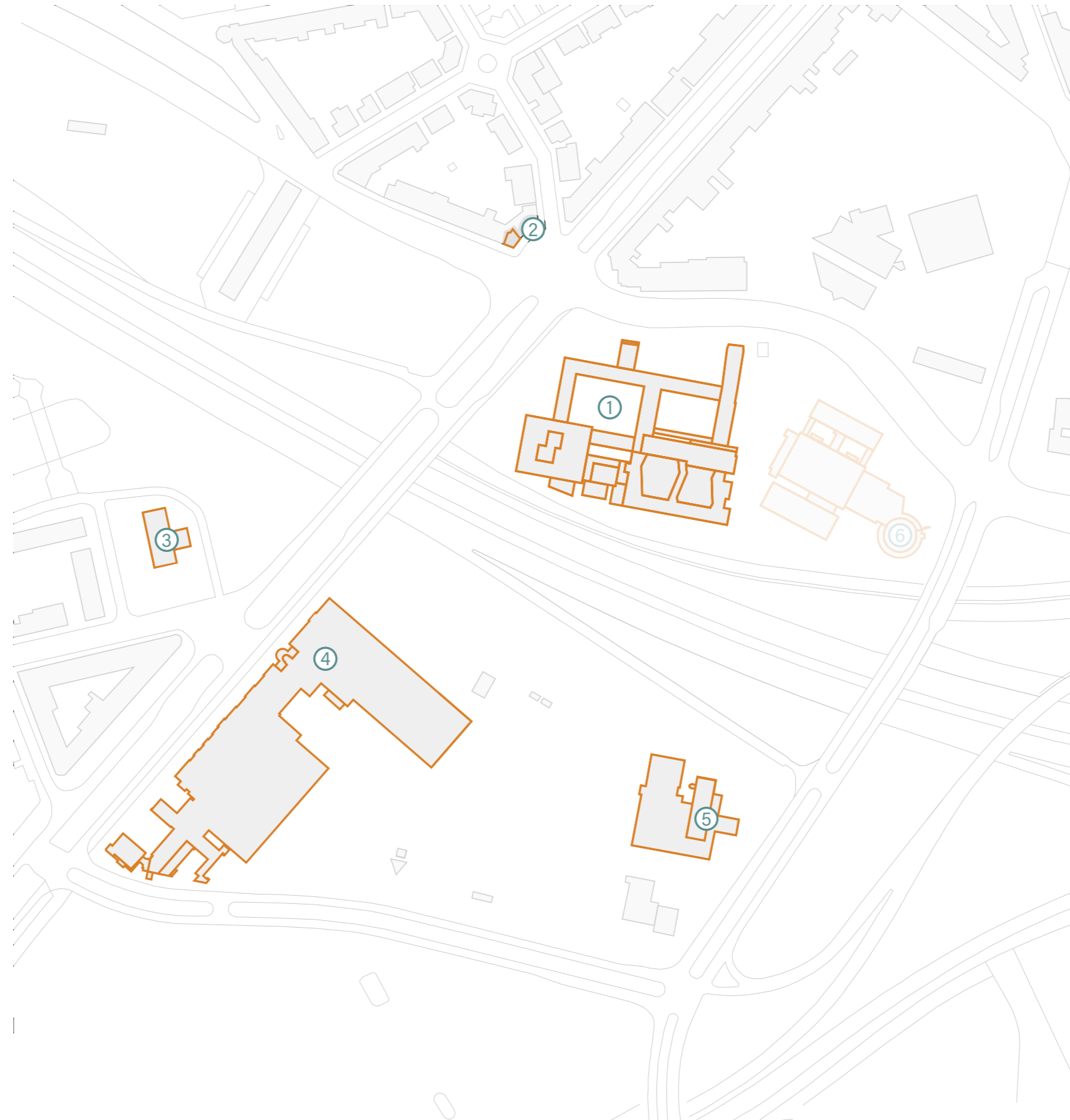
4. antwerp expo, 1958



2. van rijswijck residence, leon stynen 1932



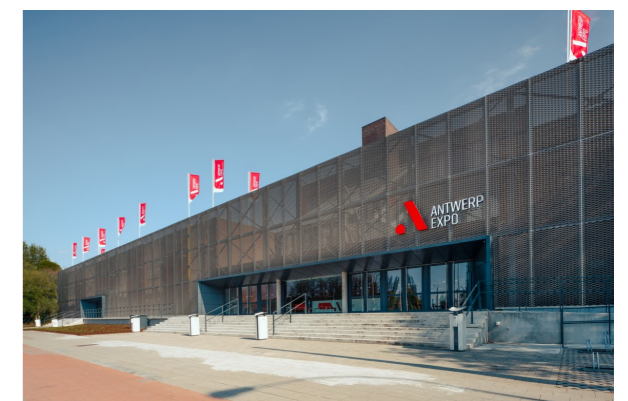
3. bp building. leon stynen, 1963



landmarks in the surrounding area



5. crowne plaza, leon stynen, 1986



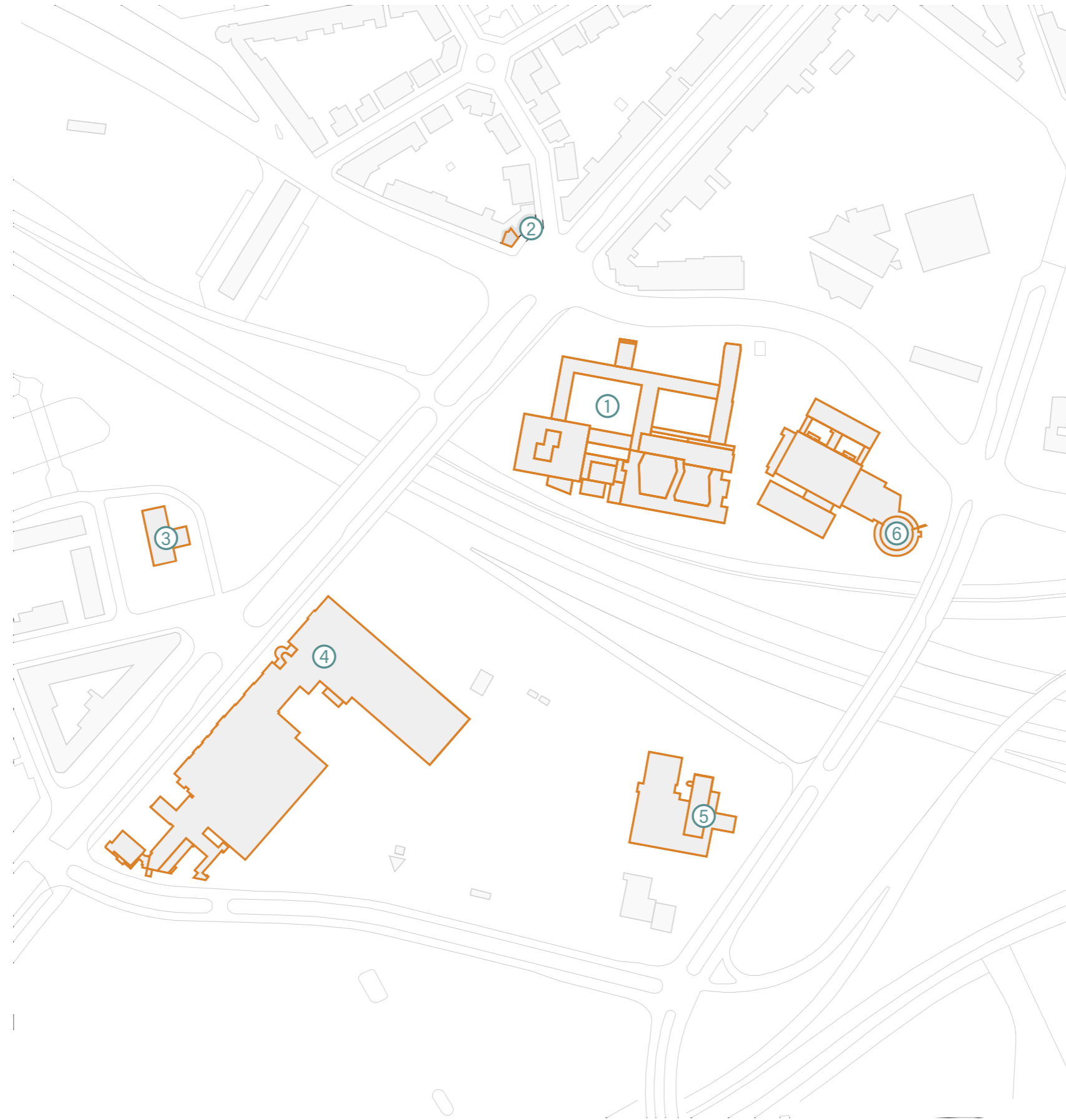
4. antwerp expo, 1958



2. van rijswijk residence, leon stynen 1932



3. bp building. leon stynen, 1963



6. colmar wezenberg (former expo), 1950



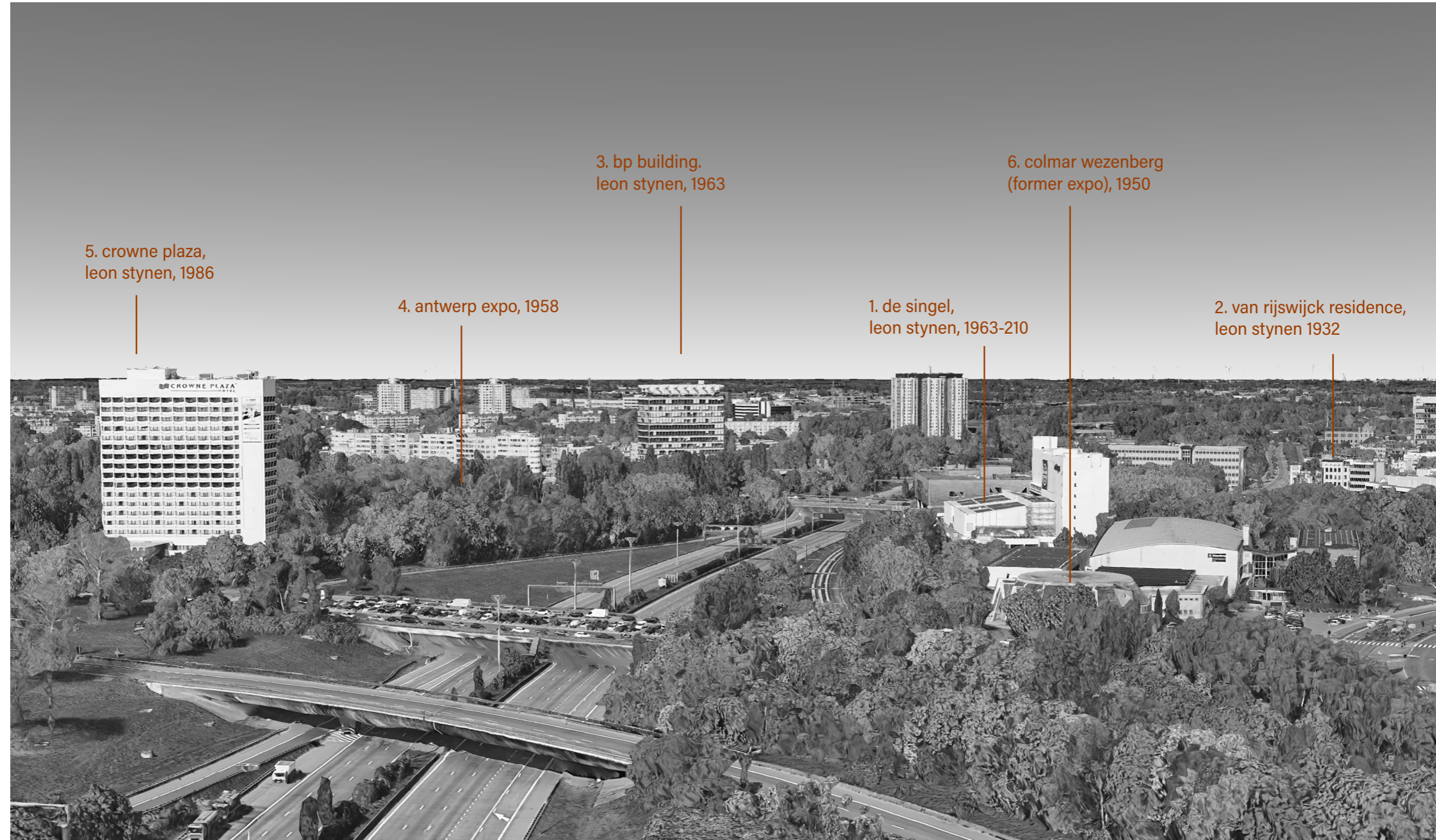
5. crowne plaza, leon stynen, 1986



4. antwerp expo, 1958

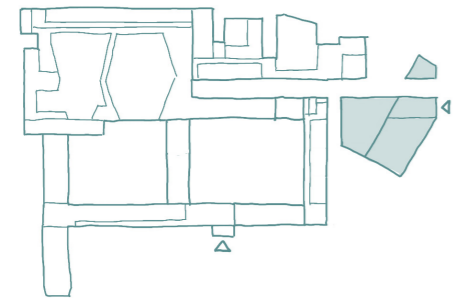
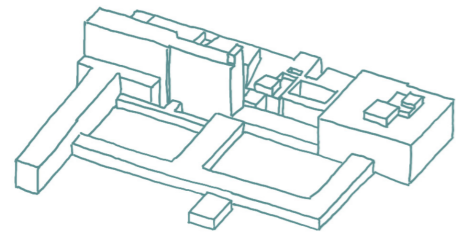
landmarks in the surrounding area



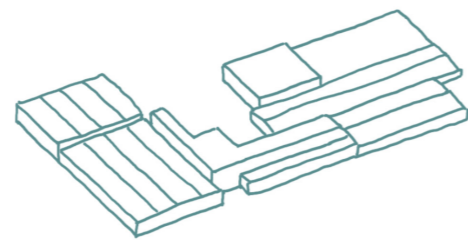


landmarks in the surrounding area

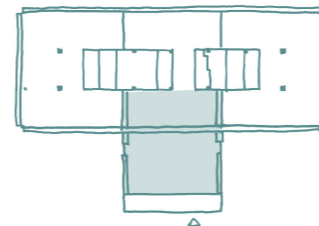
de singel



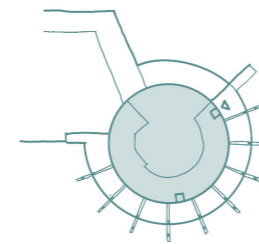
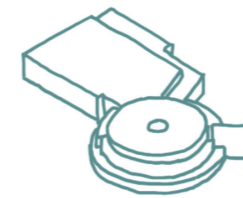
antwerp expo



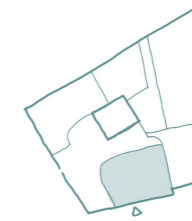
bp building



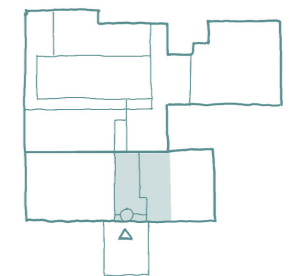
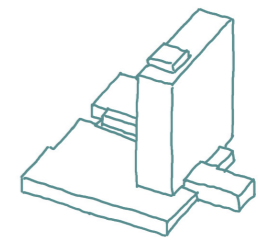
wezenberg



van rijswijk

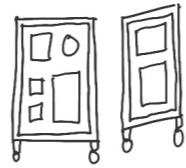


crowne plaza





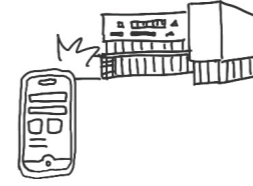
wayfinding



temporary activations



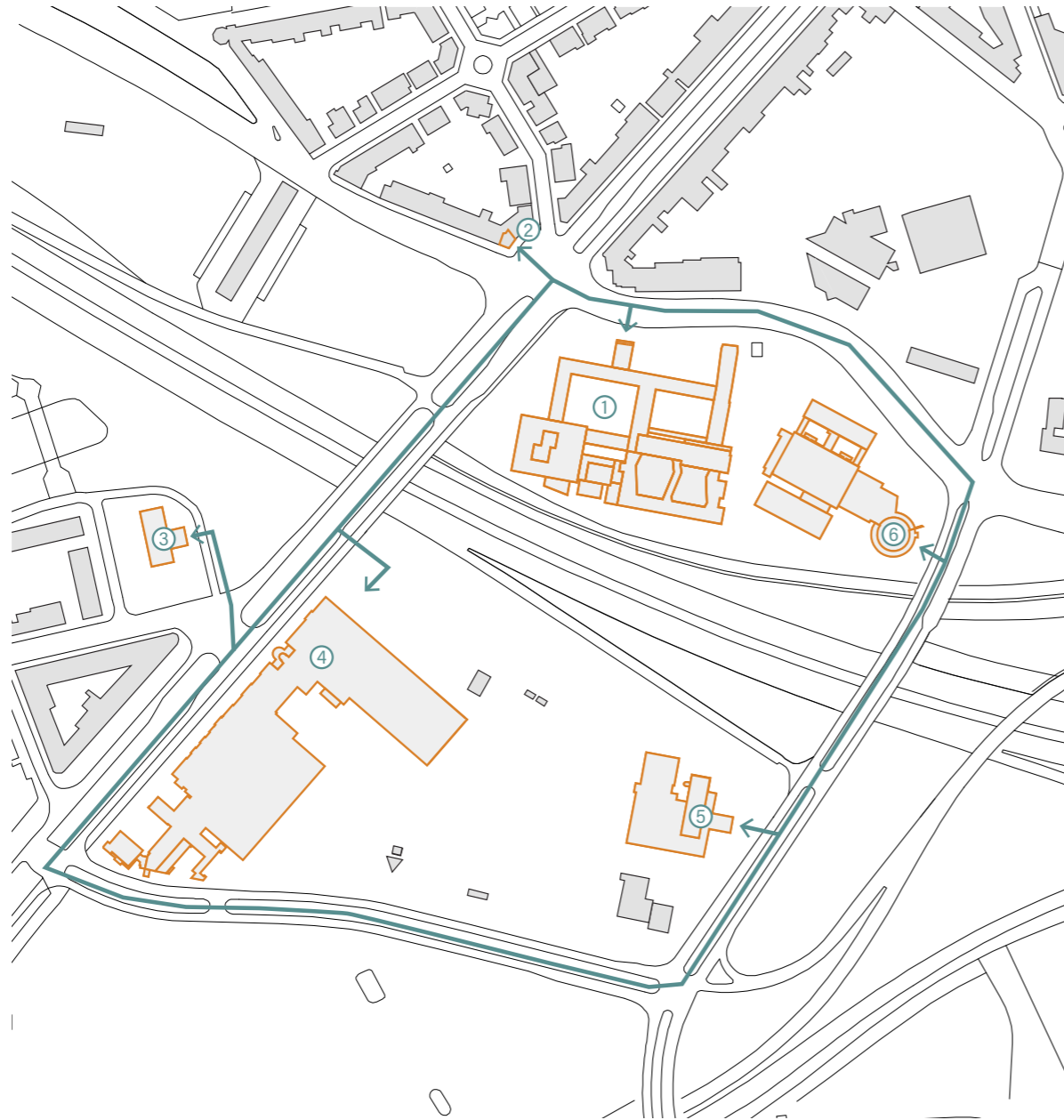
visual framing



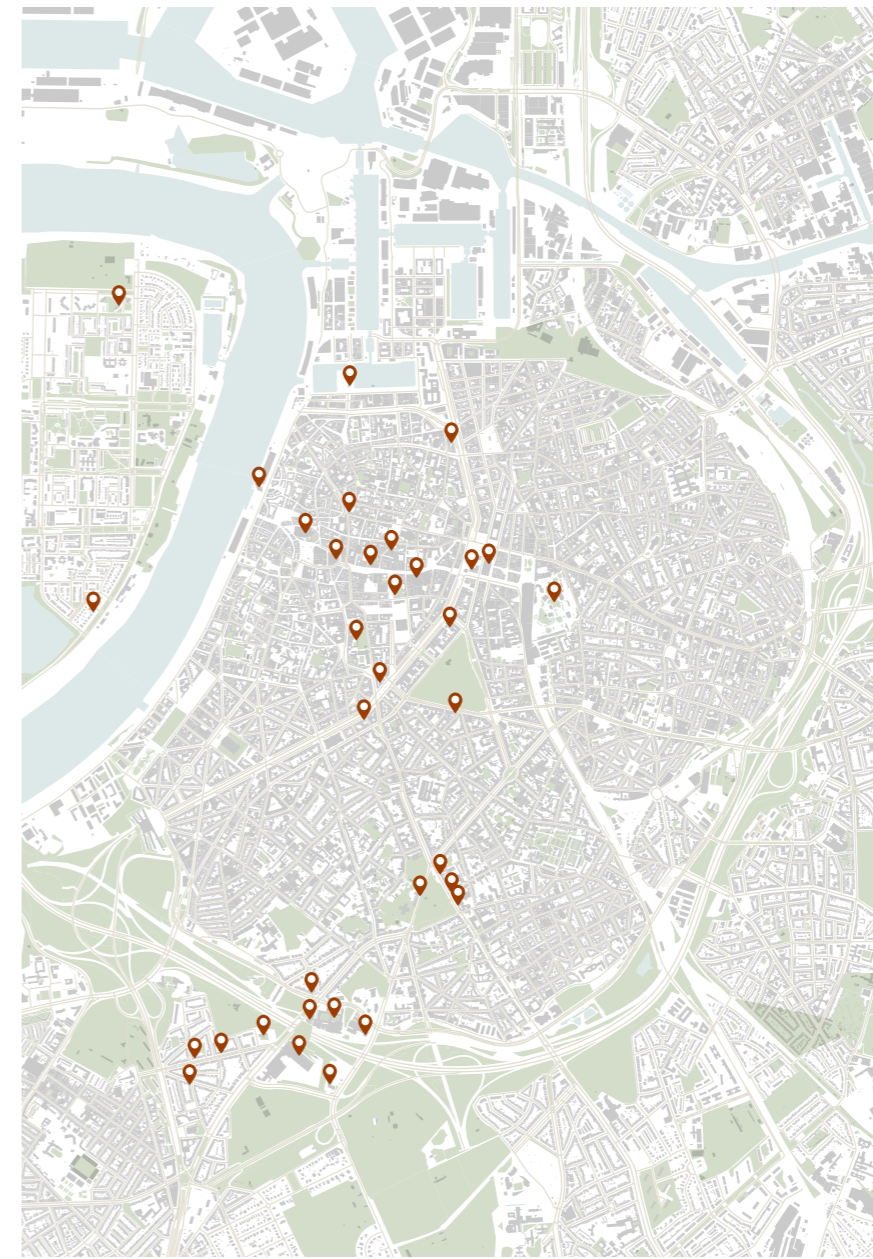
online interaction



printed maps

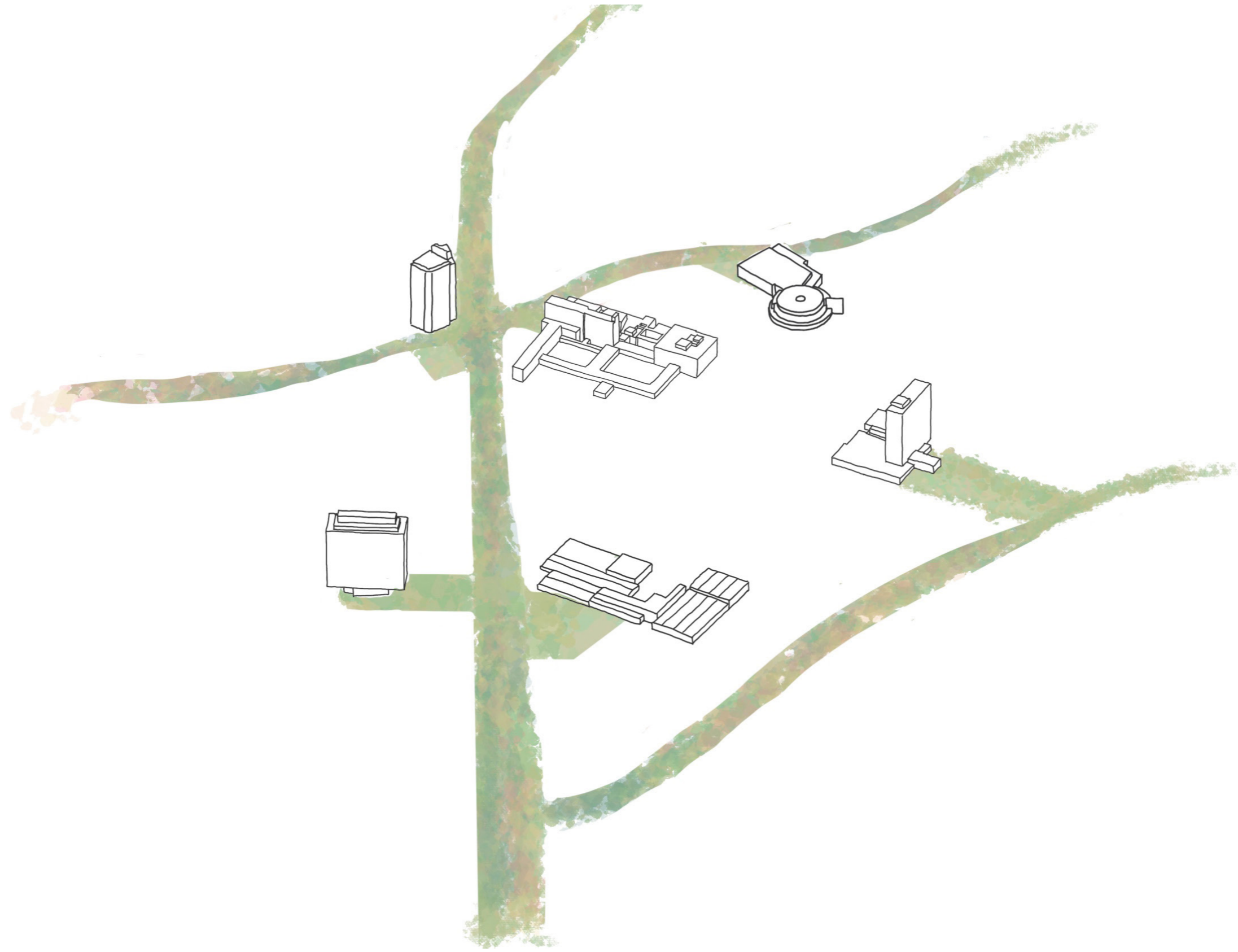


THE VAI WALK



THE CITY ARCHIVE COLLECTION WALK

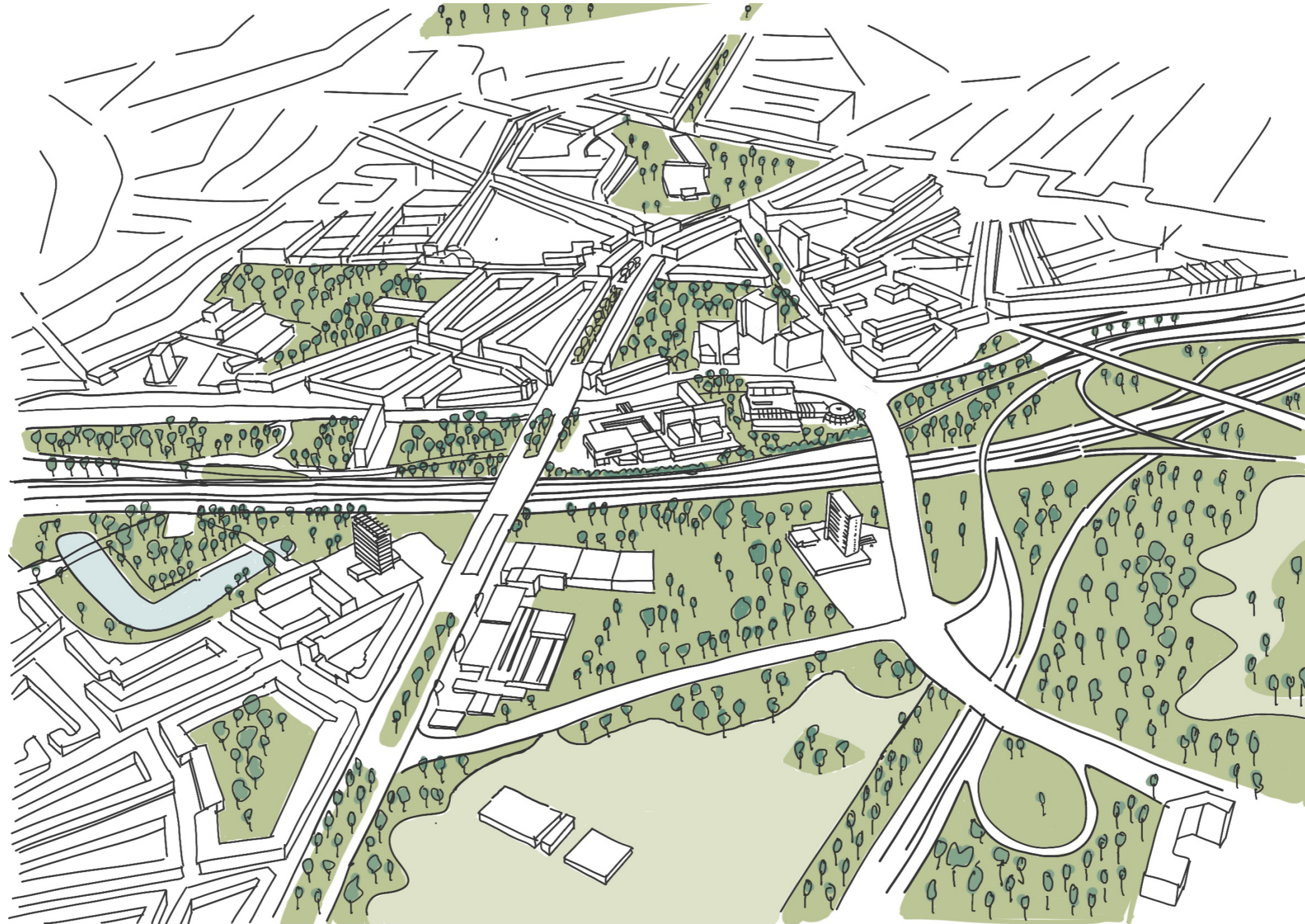
a multi-scale walking network



reimagining the city as an archive

chapter 03. a proposal for connectivity

- a. a network
- b. a bridge**
- c. a building
- d. a landscape



current situation



1.



2.

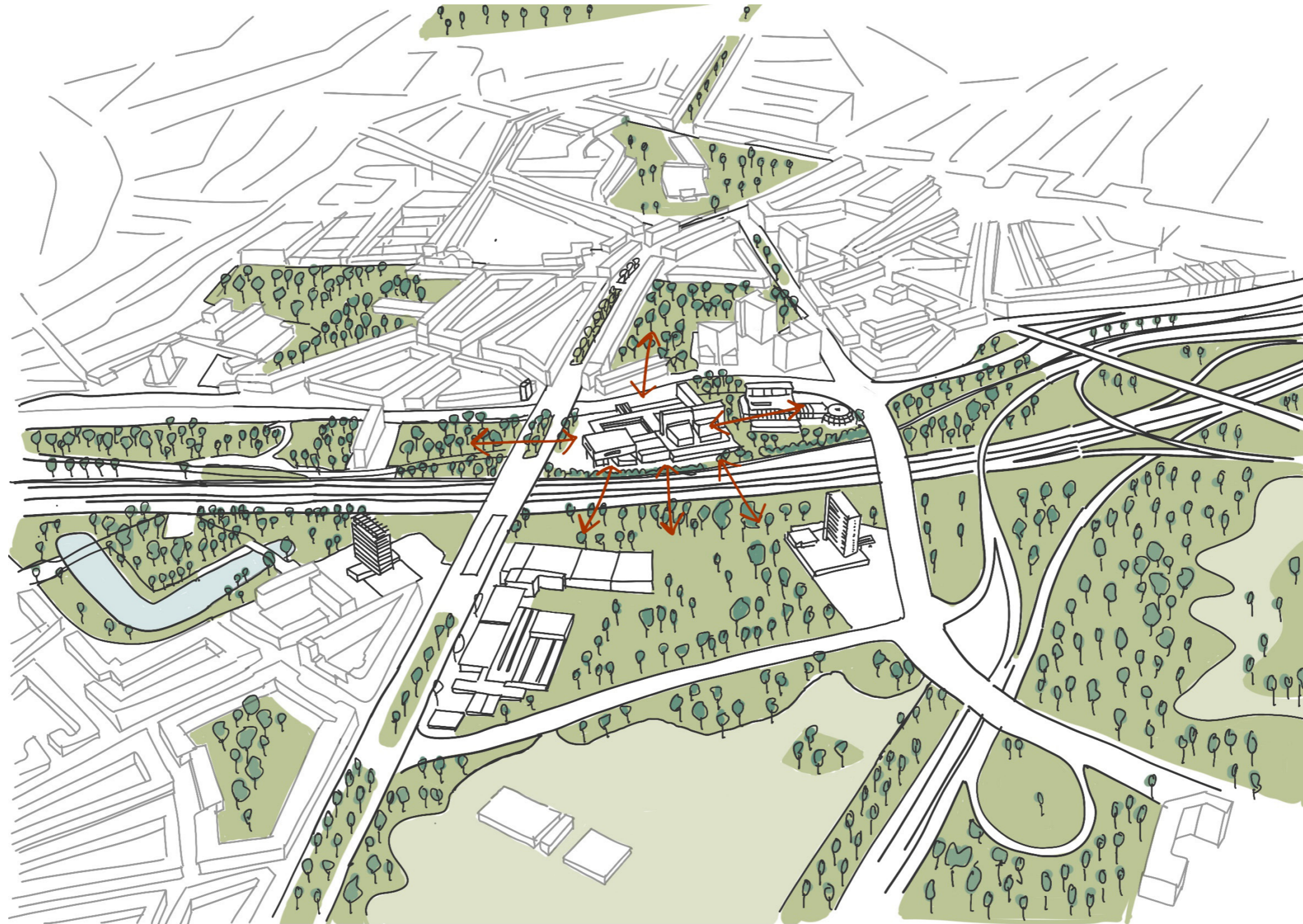


3.

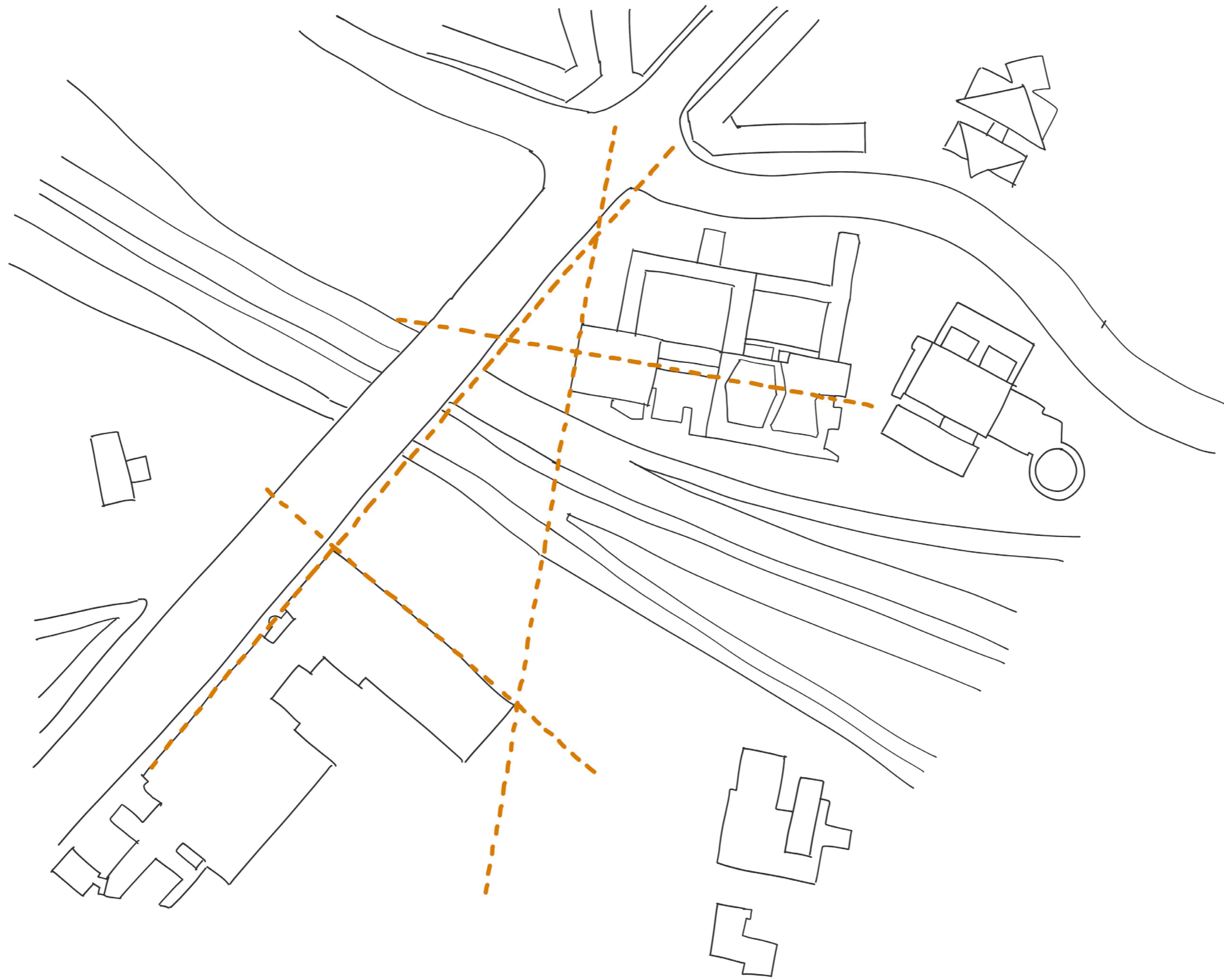


4.

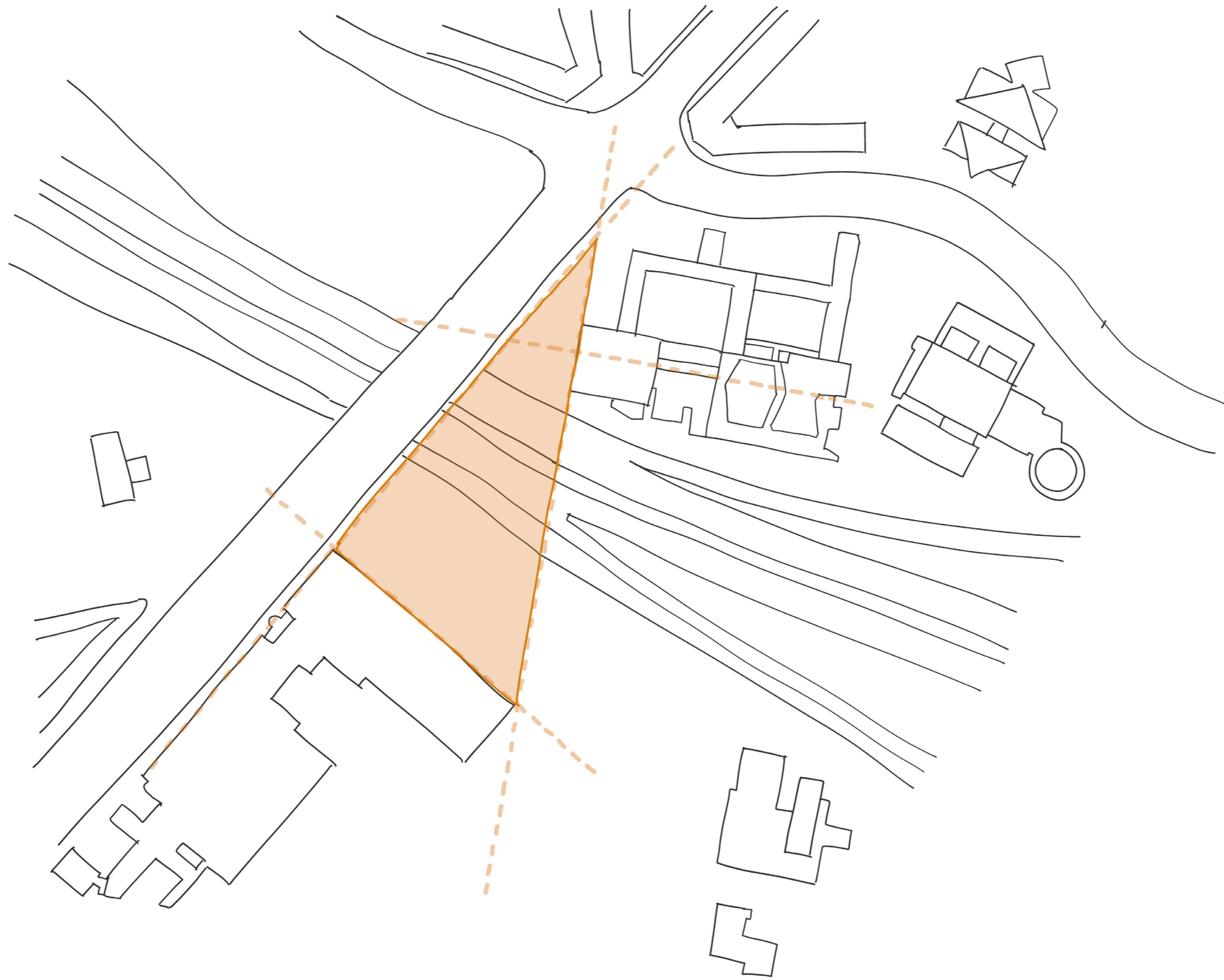
surrounding area is a non-place



reconnect landscape to de Singel



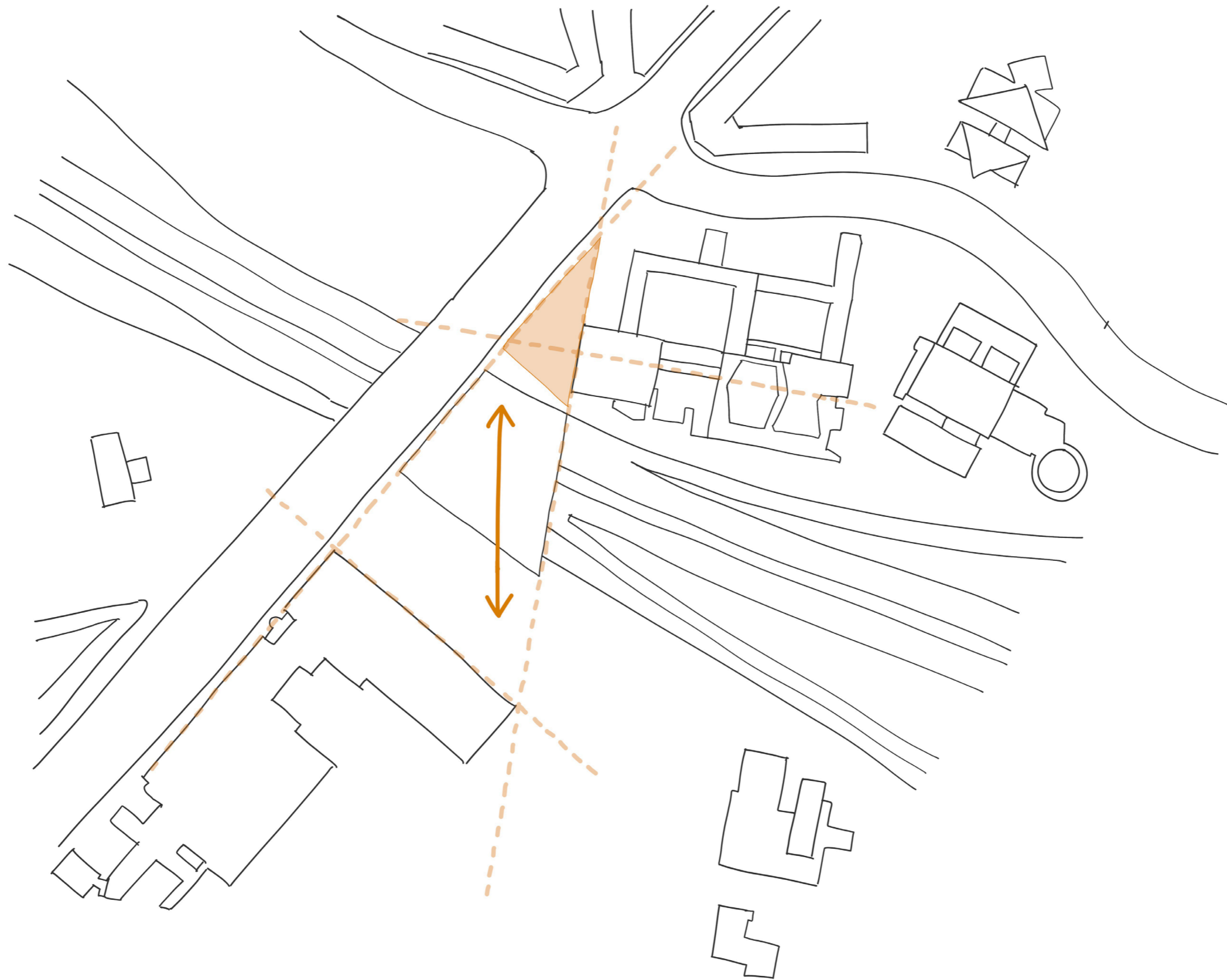
geomtetry main axis



building development



building development



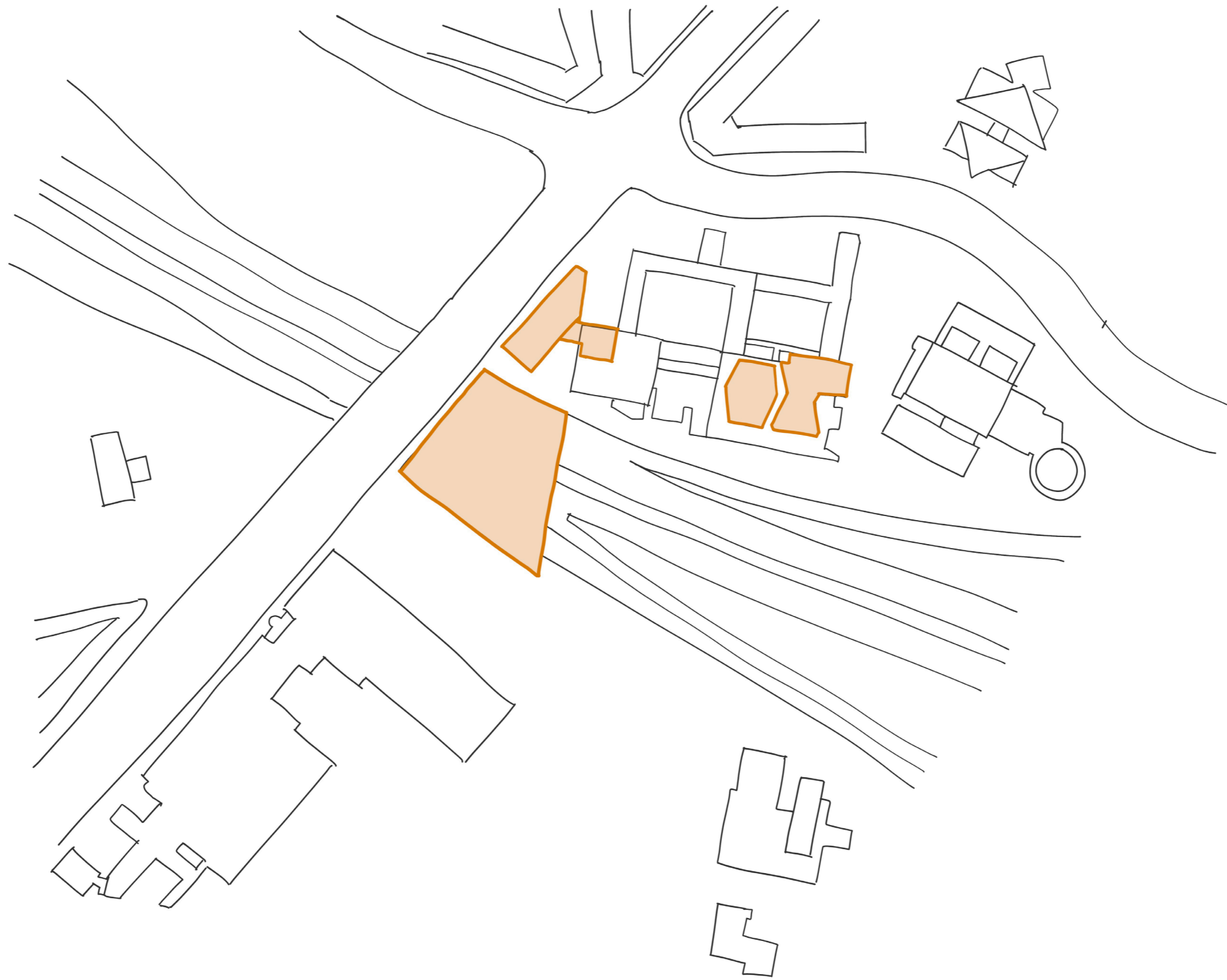
building development

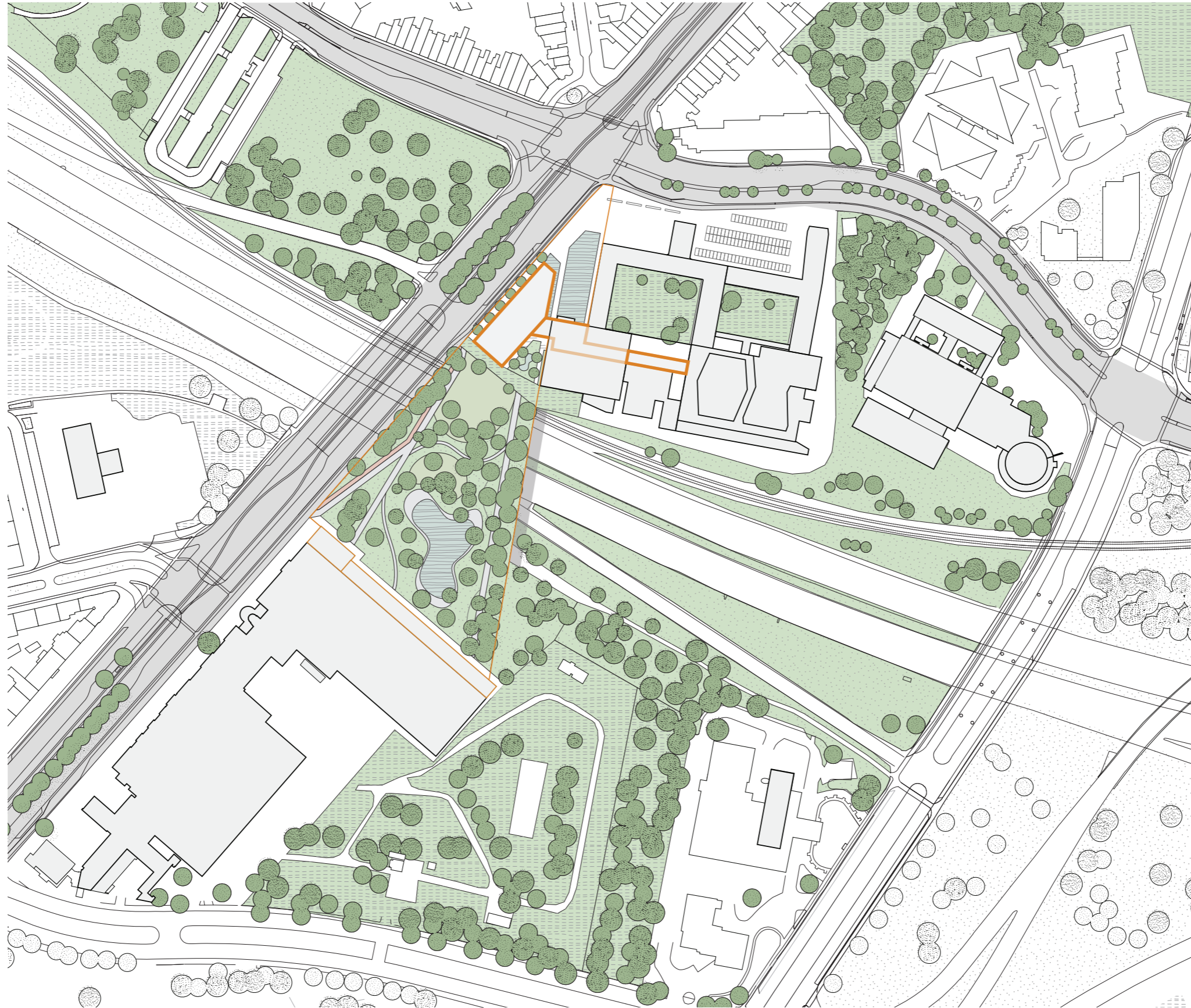


building development



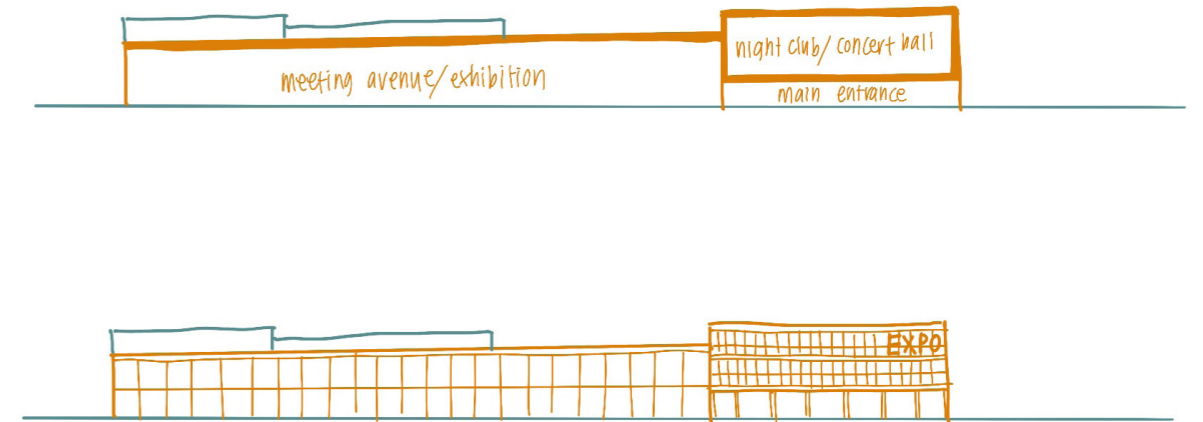
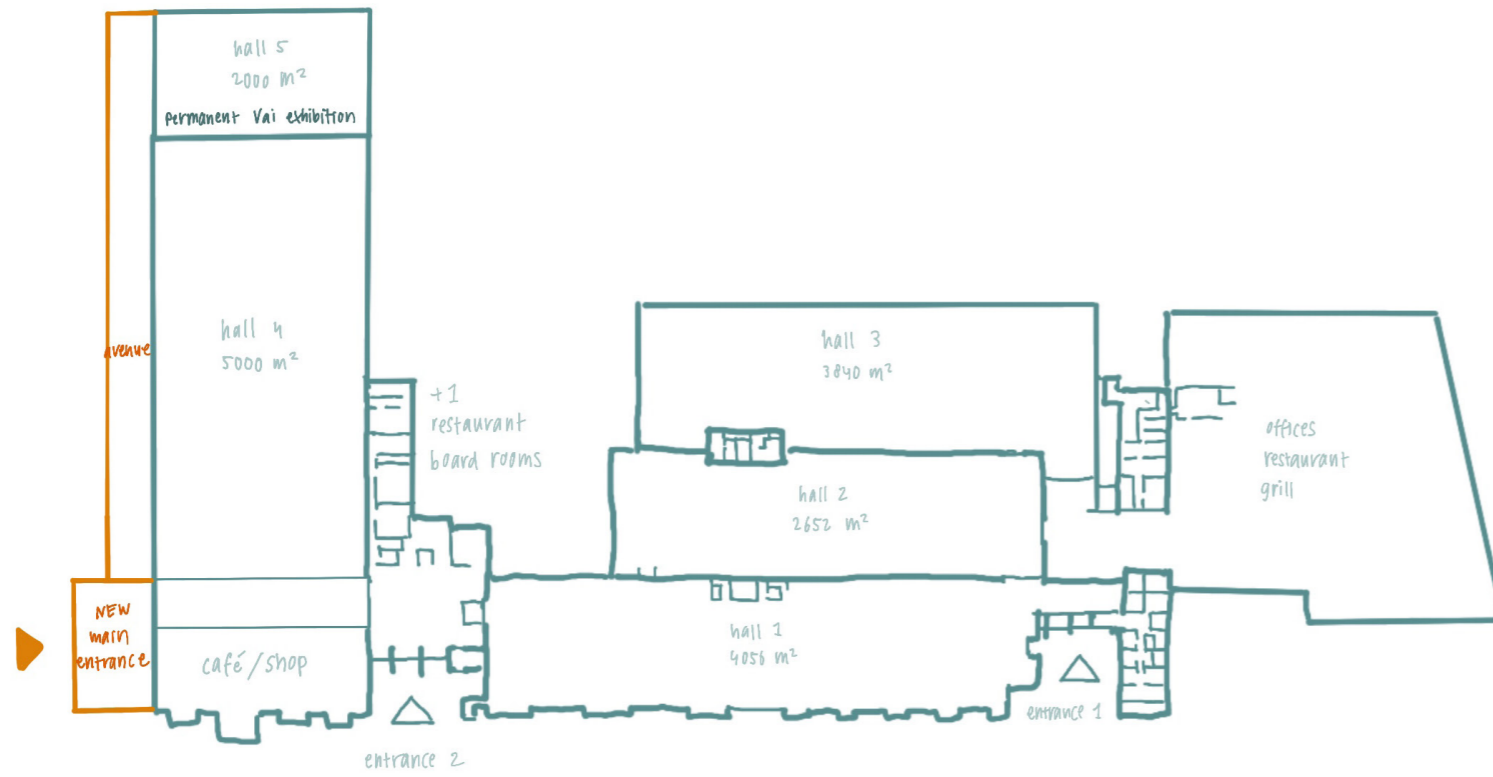
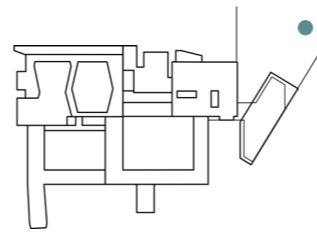
building development





urban site plan





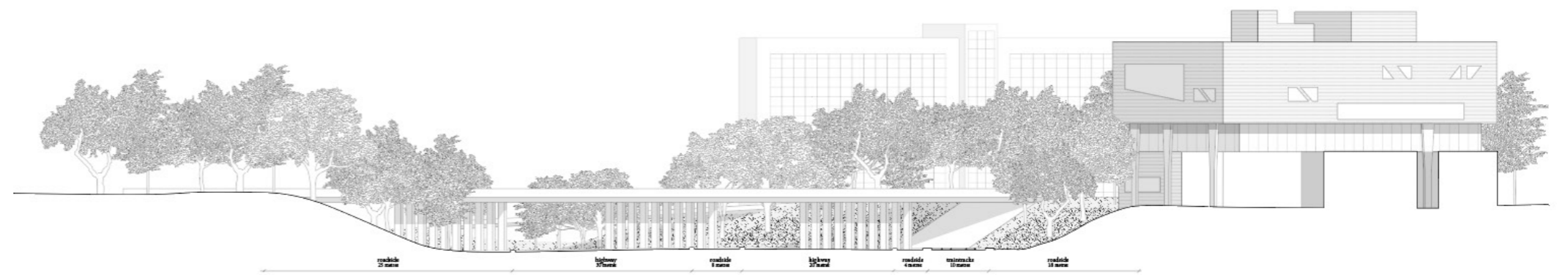
expo extension concept



view of the current situation

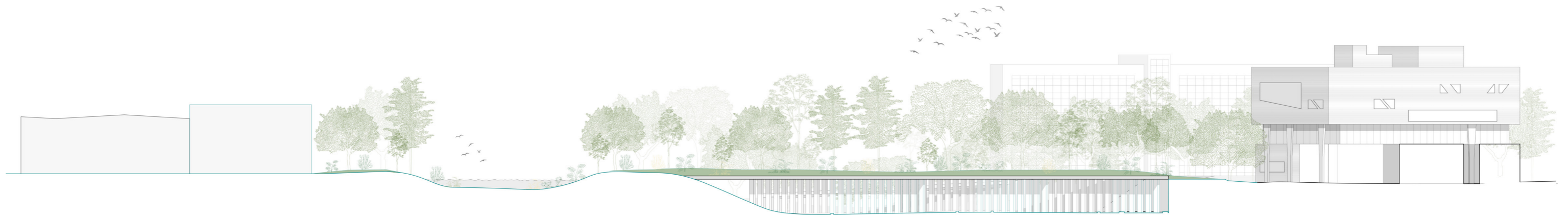
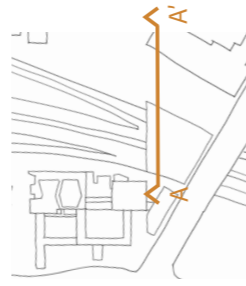


view of the situation after intervention

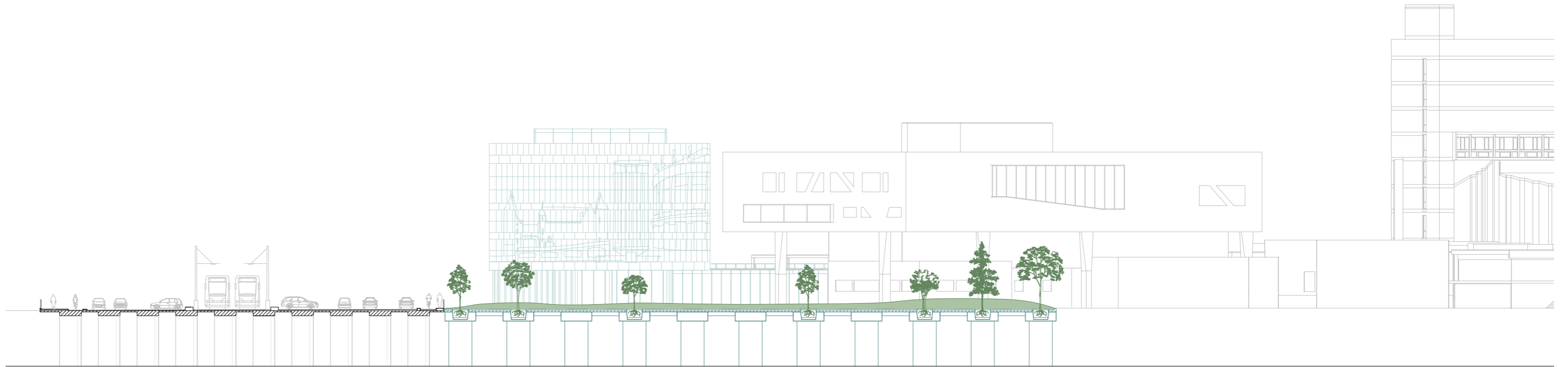
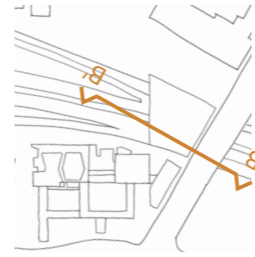


section
existing bridge

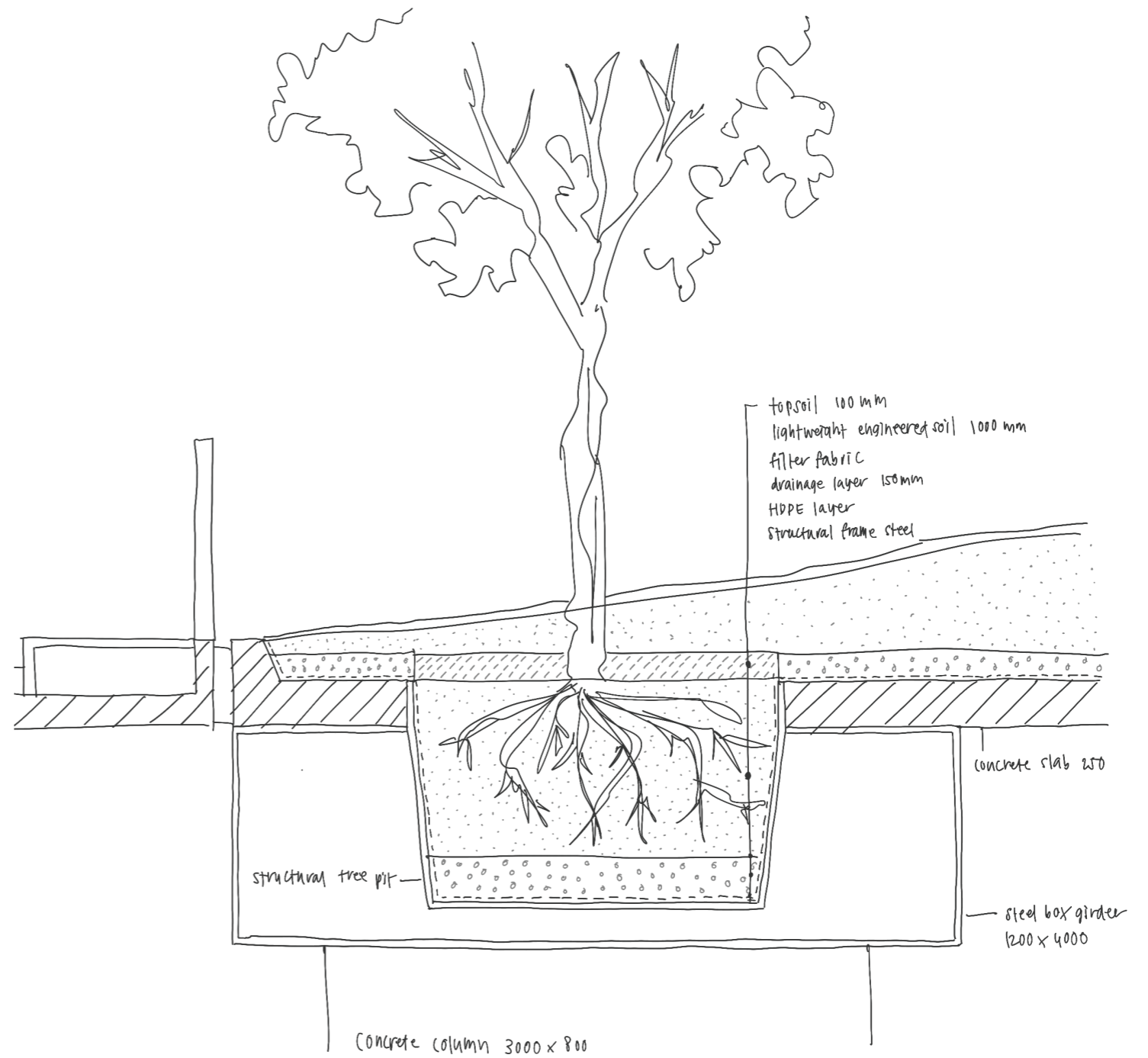
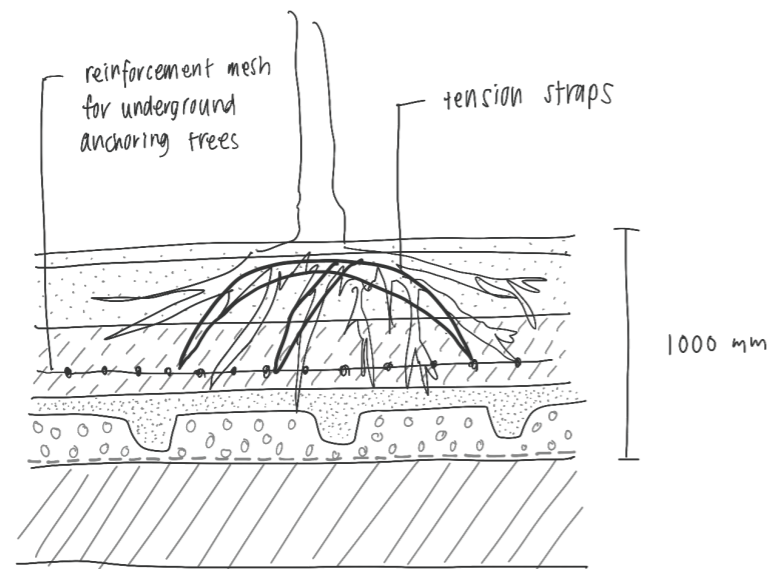
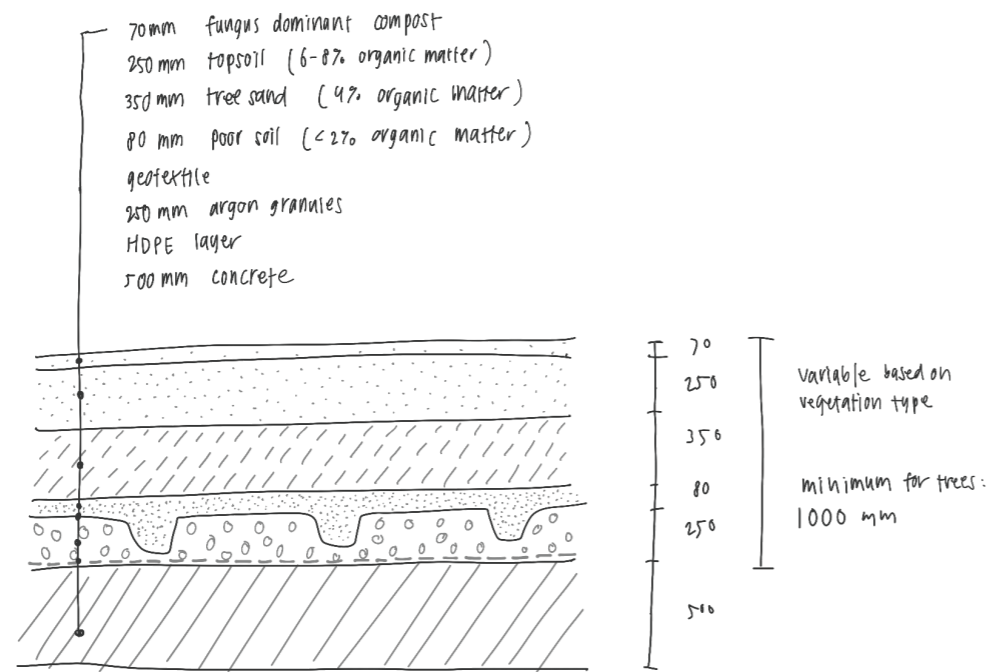
a bridge



section AA'
green bridge extension



section BB'
green bridge extension





section and details
 green bridge extension



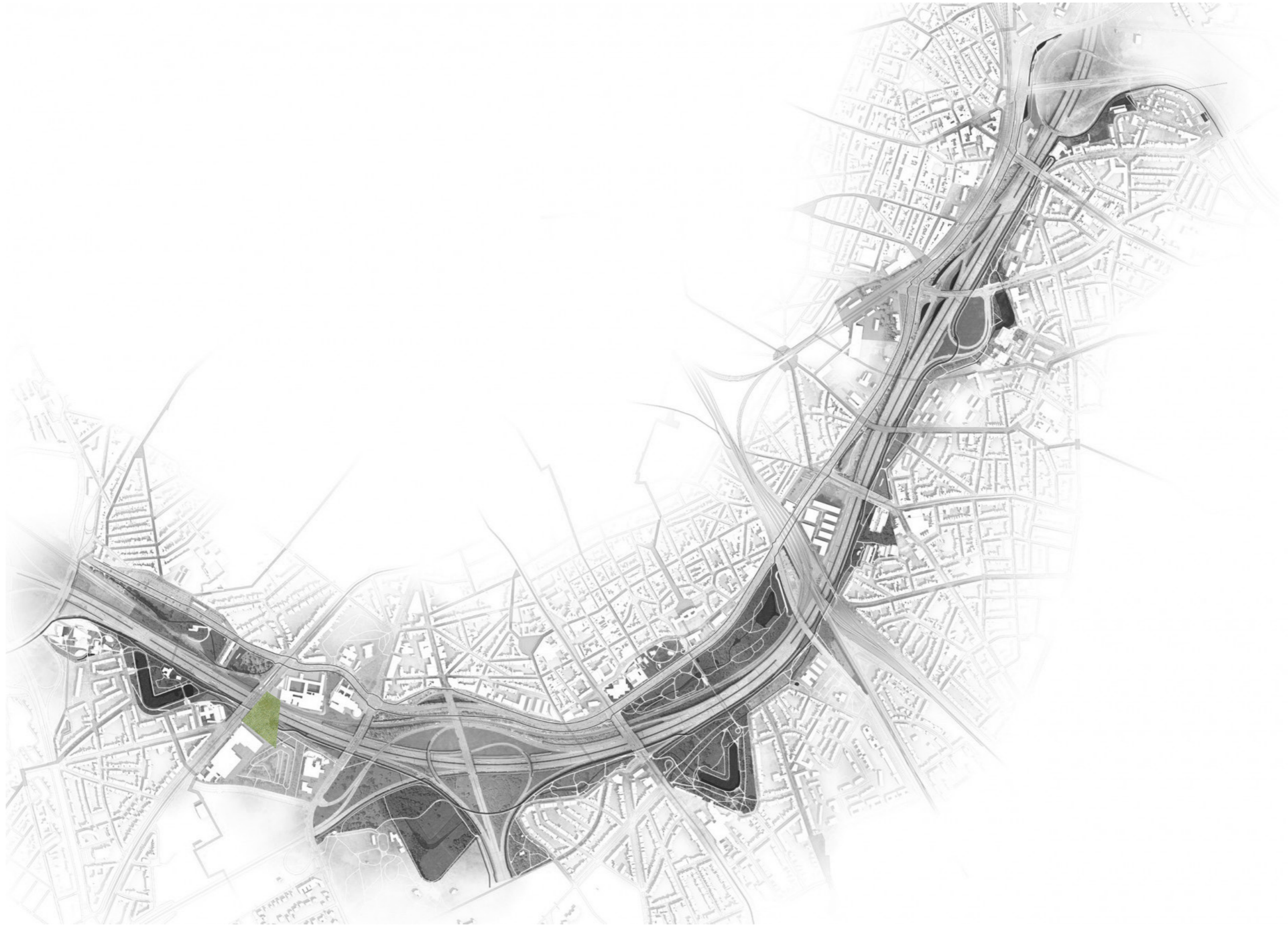


antwerpen city map with green

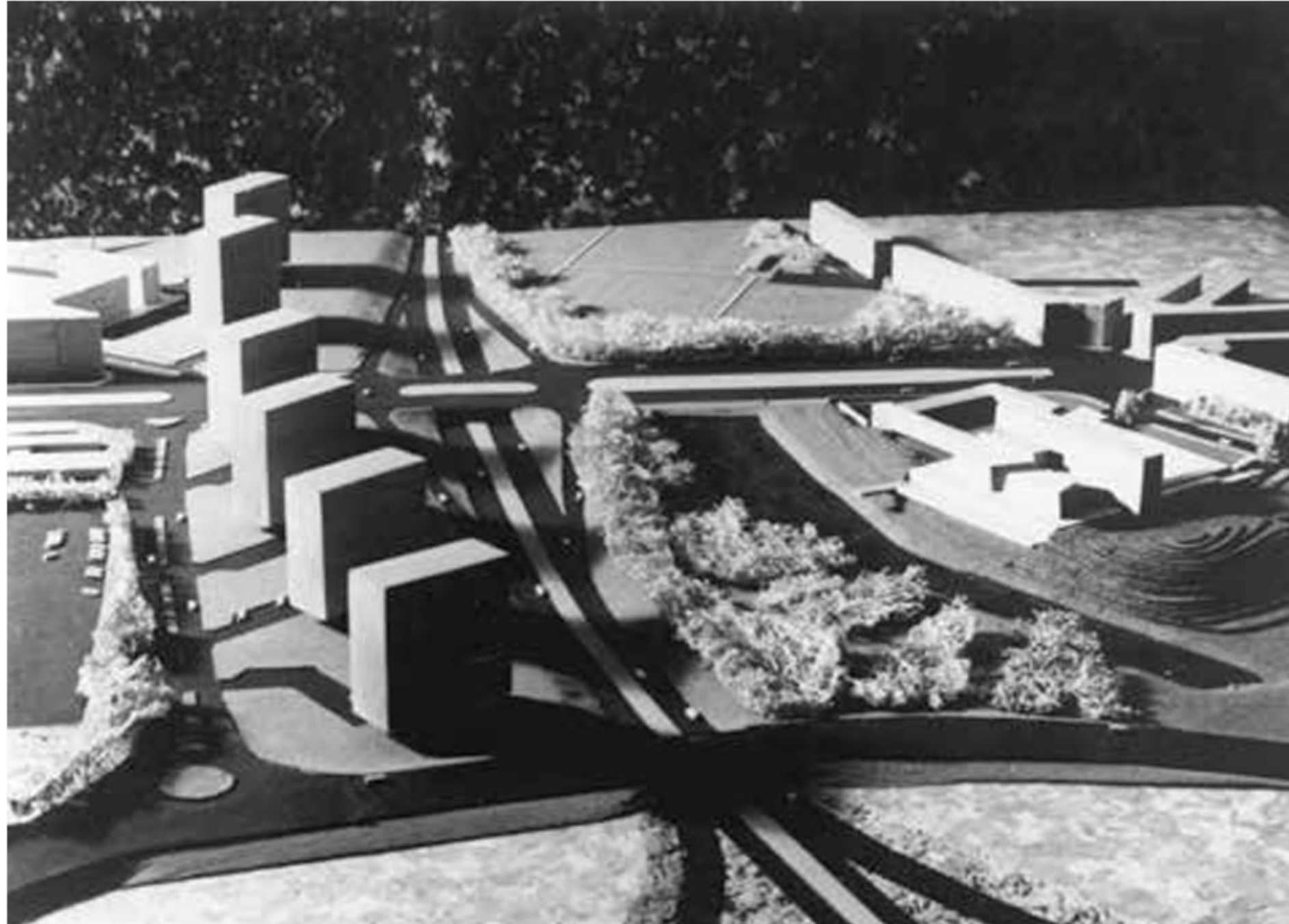


-  green areas
-  public green areas

antwerpen city map with green



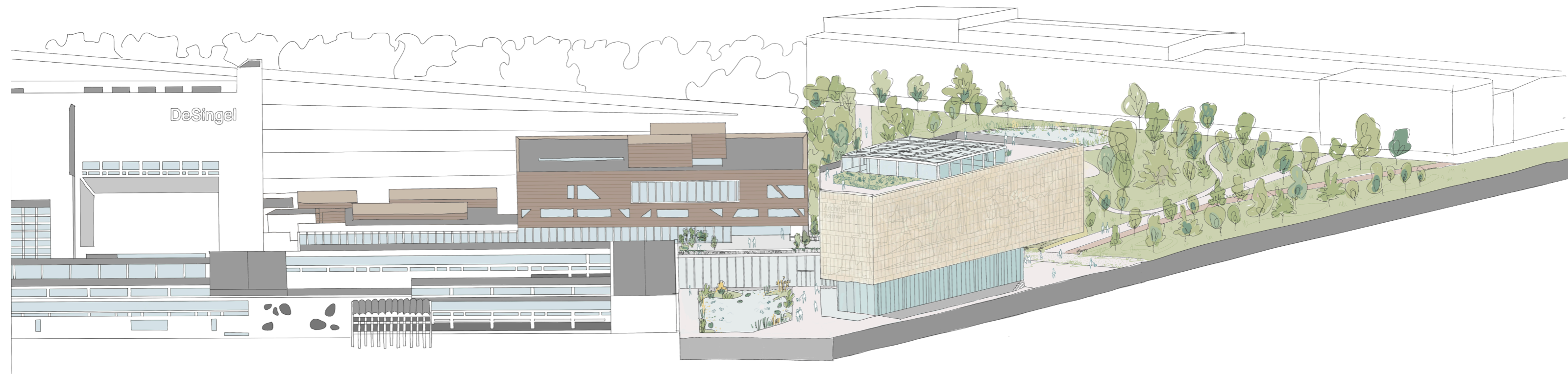
key part of de grote verbinding



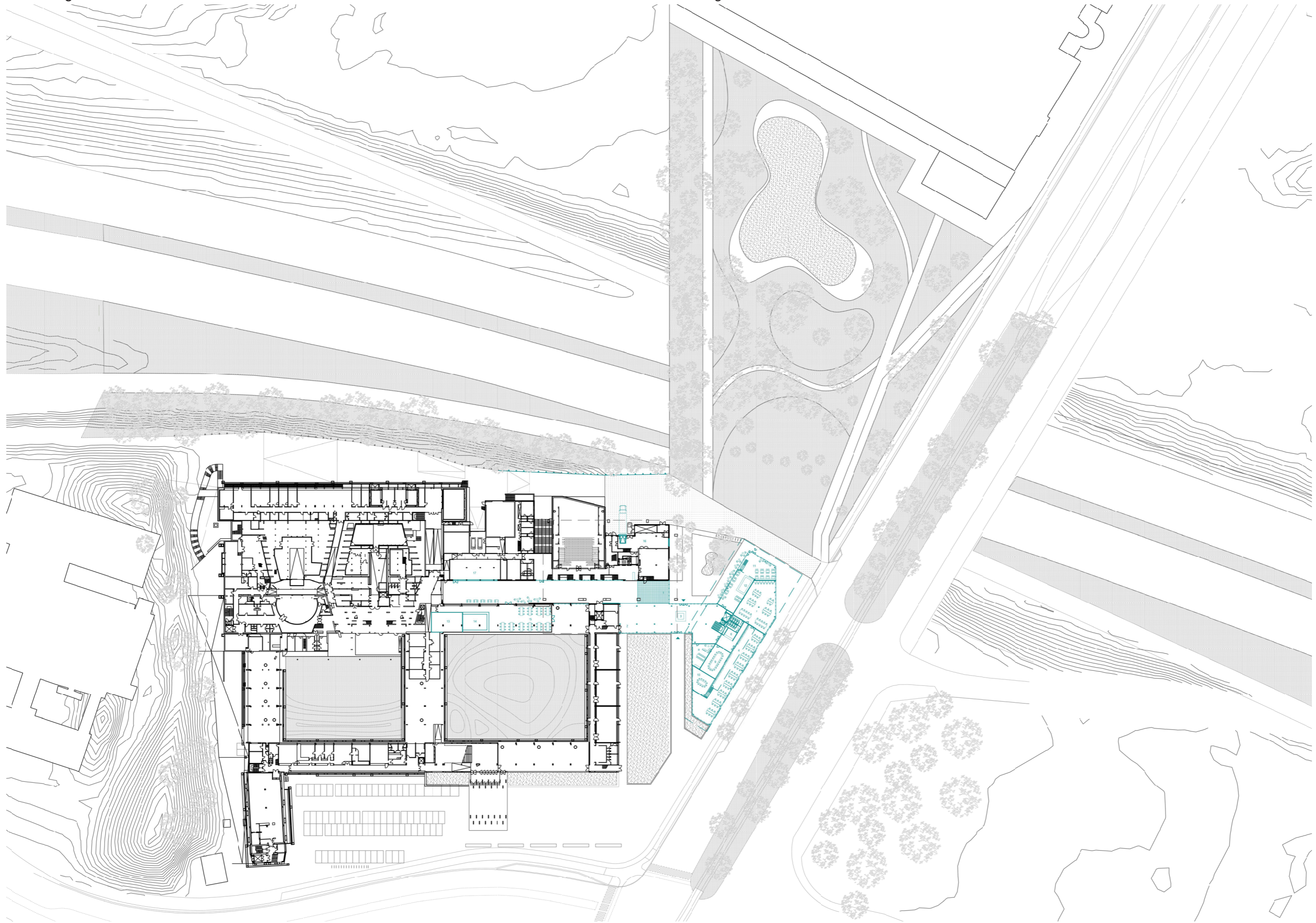
returning to Stynen's original vision

chapter 03. a proposal for connectivity

- a. a network
- b. a bridge
- c. a building**
- d. a landscape

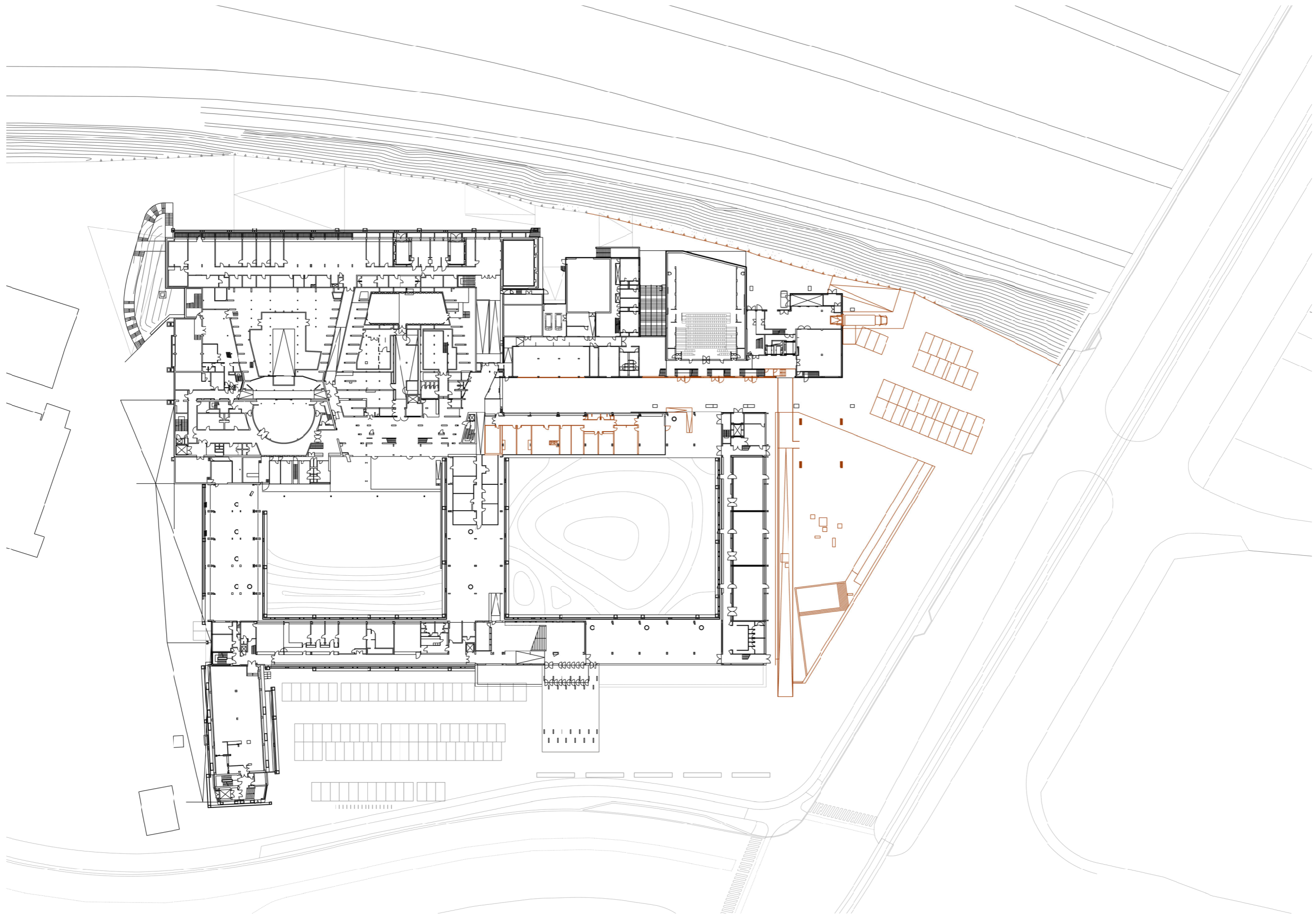


axo overview



site plan ground floor t 1:1500

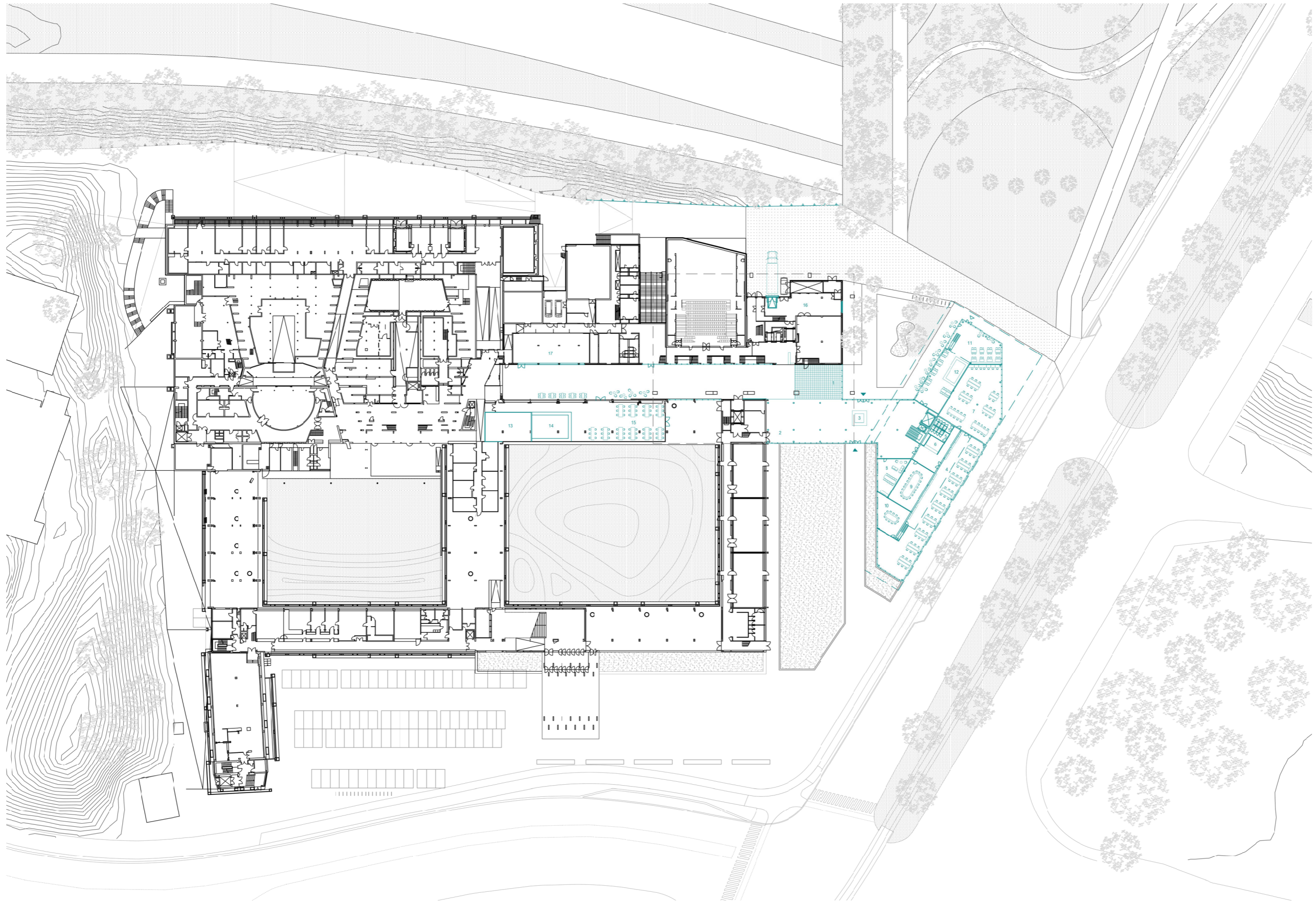




site plan ground floor t 1:1000



0 5 25 50

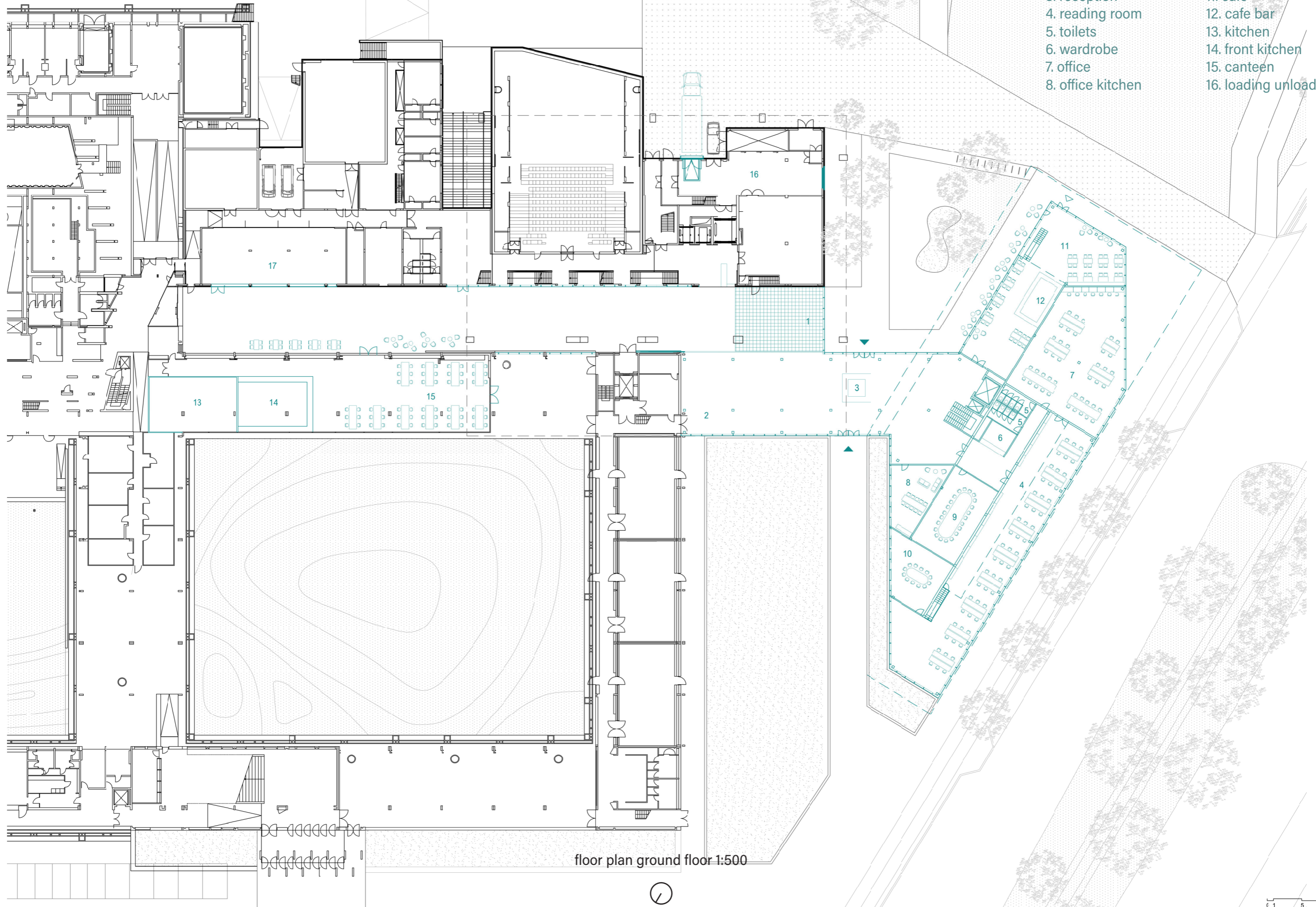


site plan ground floor 1:1000

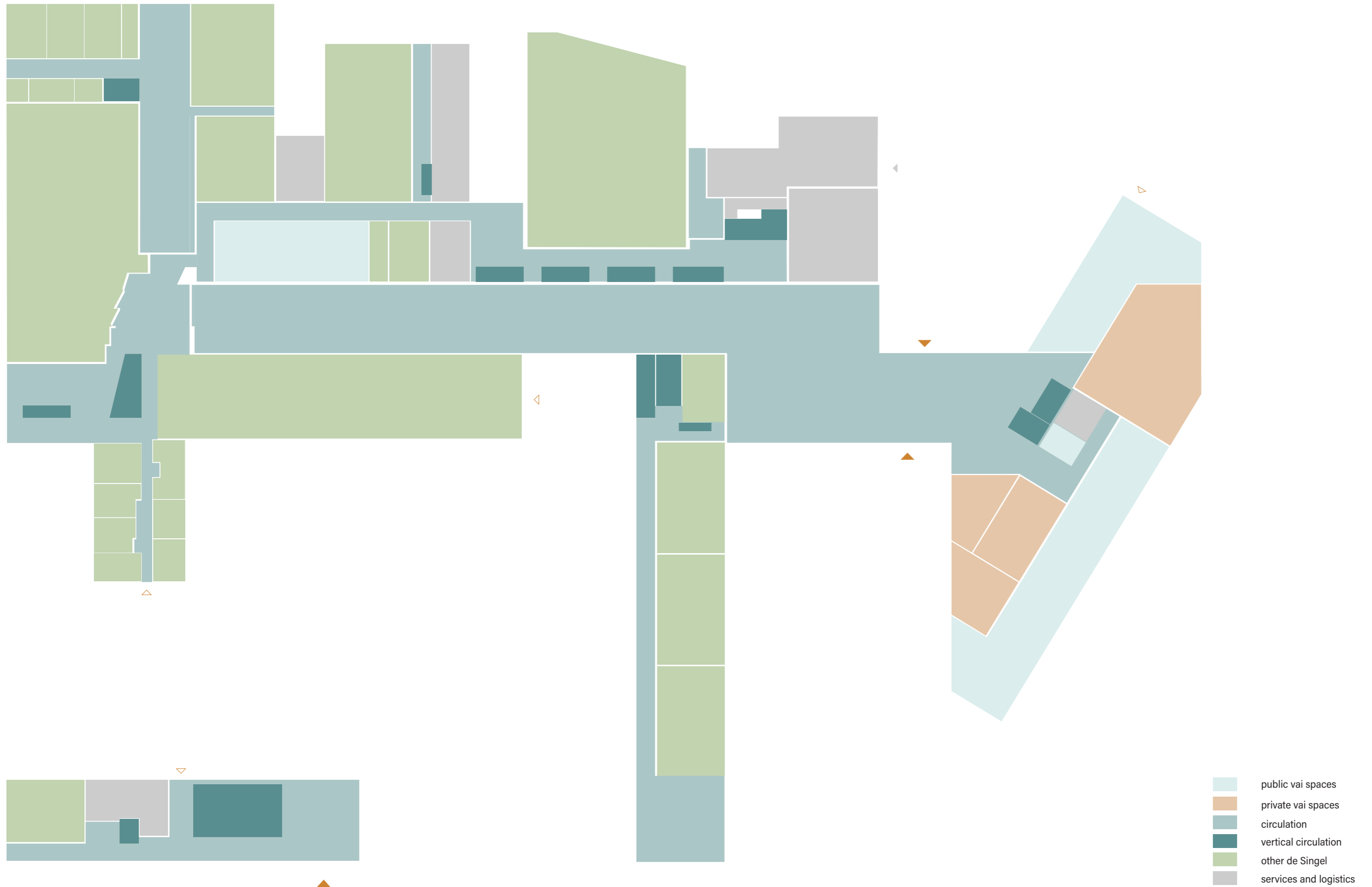


0 5 25 50

- 1. main entrance
- 2. shop
- 3. reception
- 4. reading room
- 5. toilets
- 6. wardrobe
- 7. office
- 8. office kitchen
- 9. large meeting room
- 10. small meeting room
- 11. cafe
- 12. cafe bar
- 13. kitchen
- 14. front kitchen
- 15. canteen
- 16. loading unloading

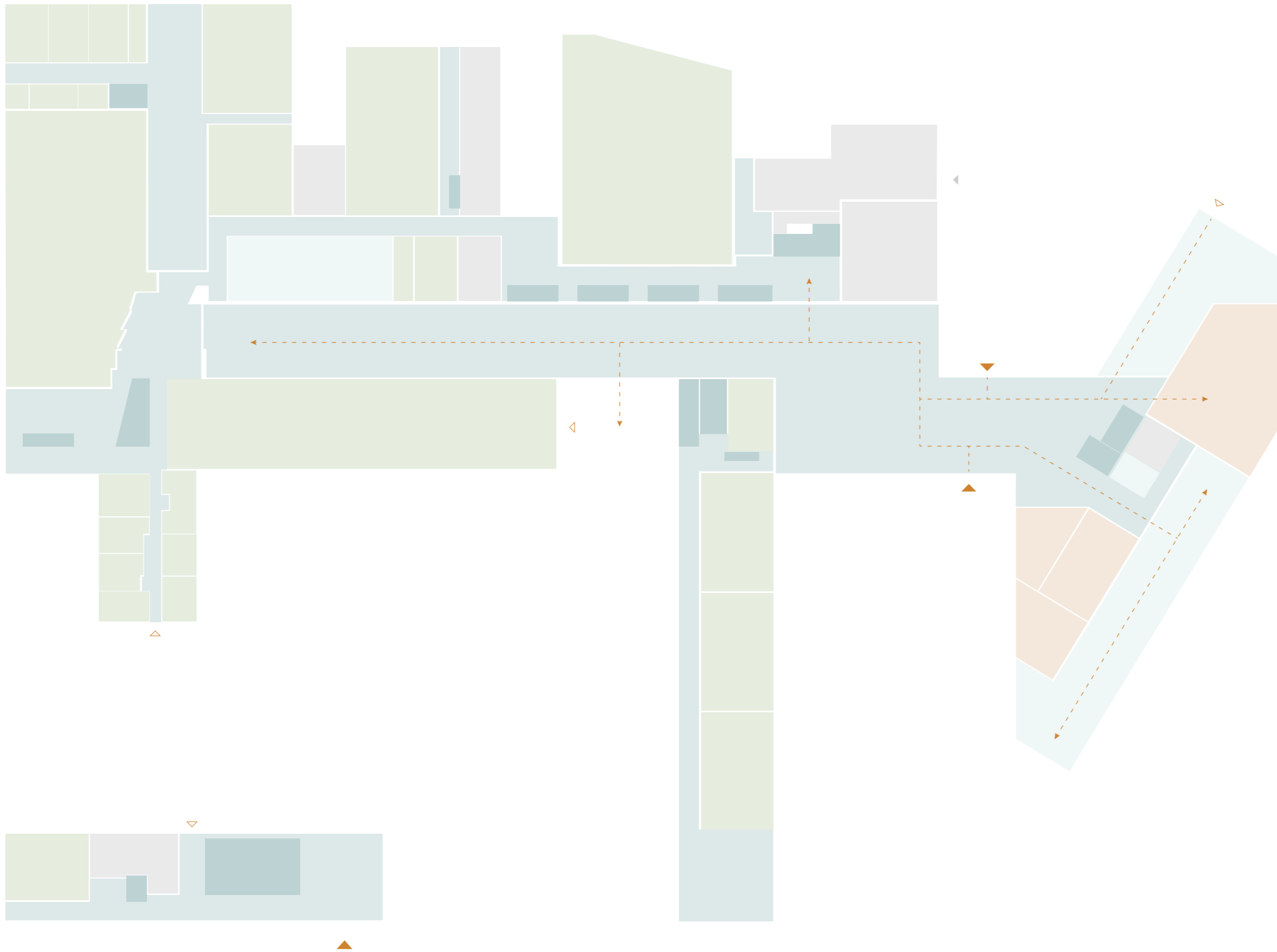


floor plan ground floor 1:500



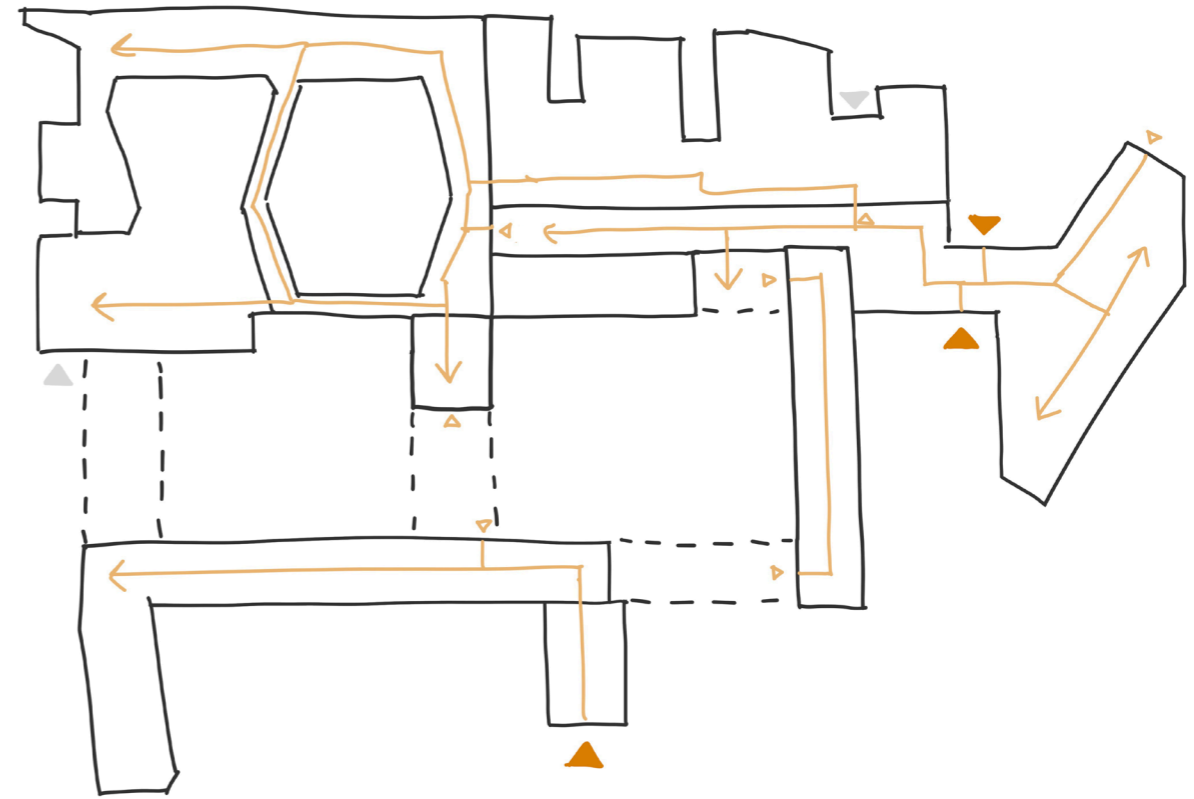
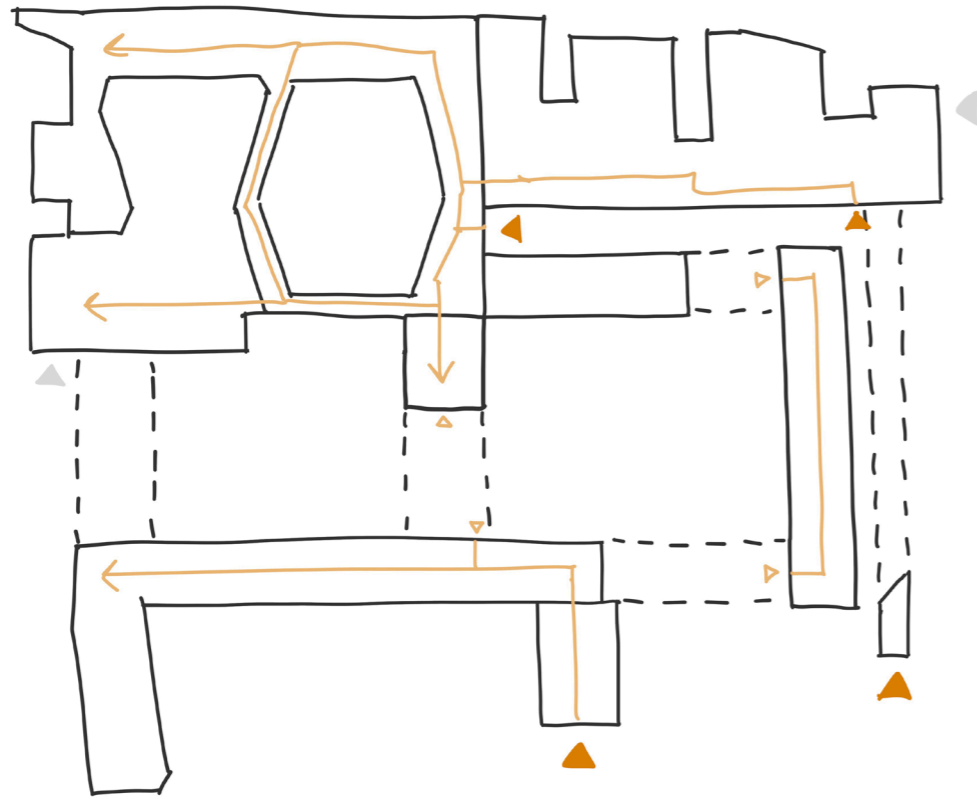
functions ground floor





circulation ground floor

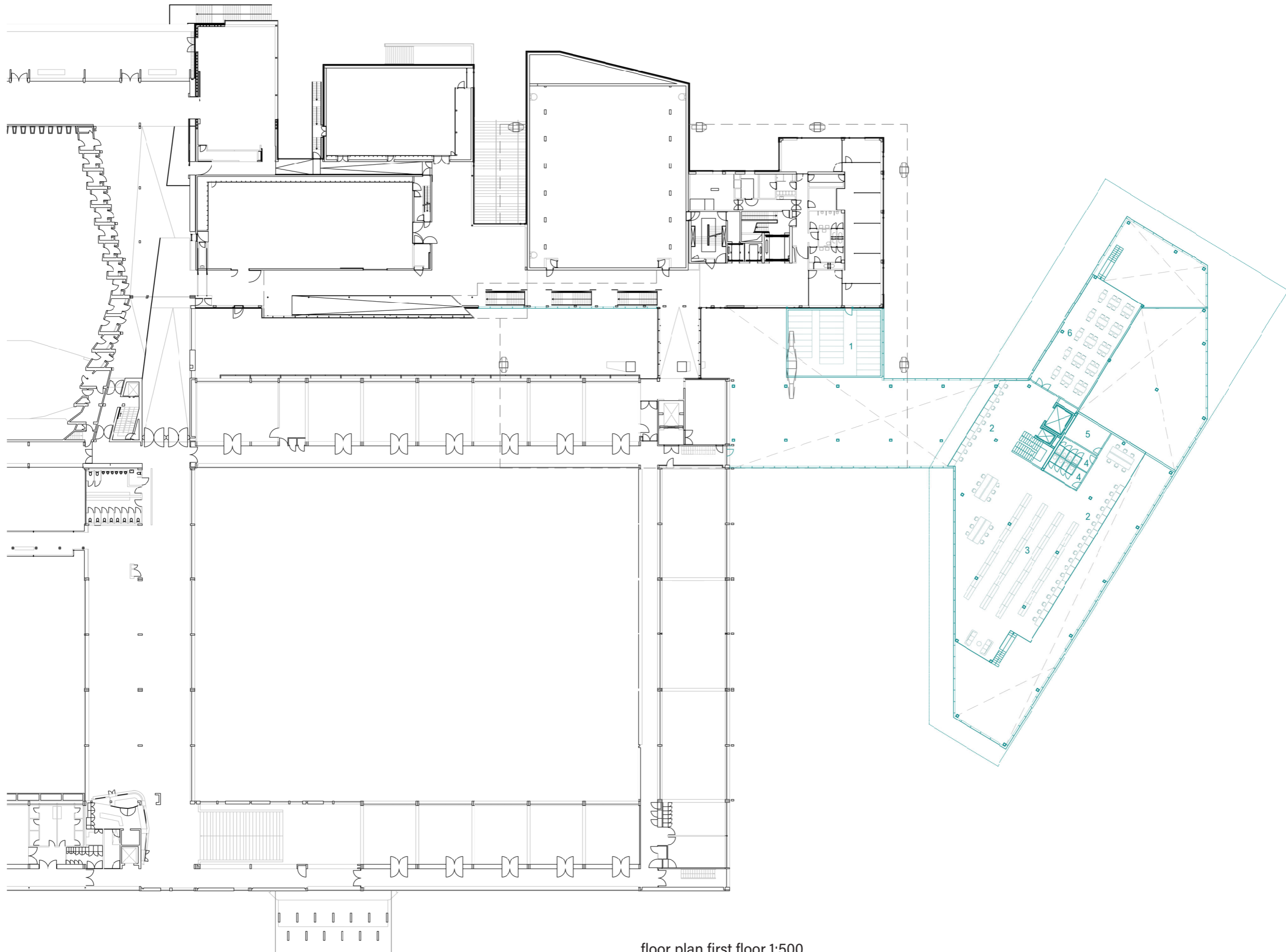




- ▶ main entrance
- ◁ secondary entrance
- ▶ logistics entrance

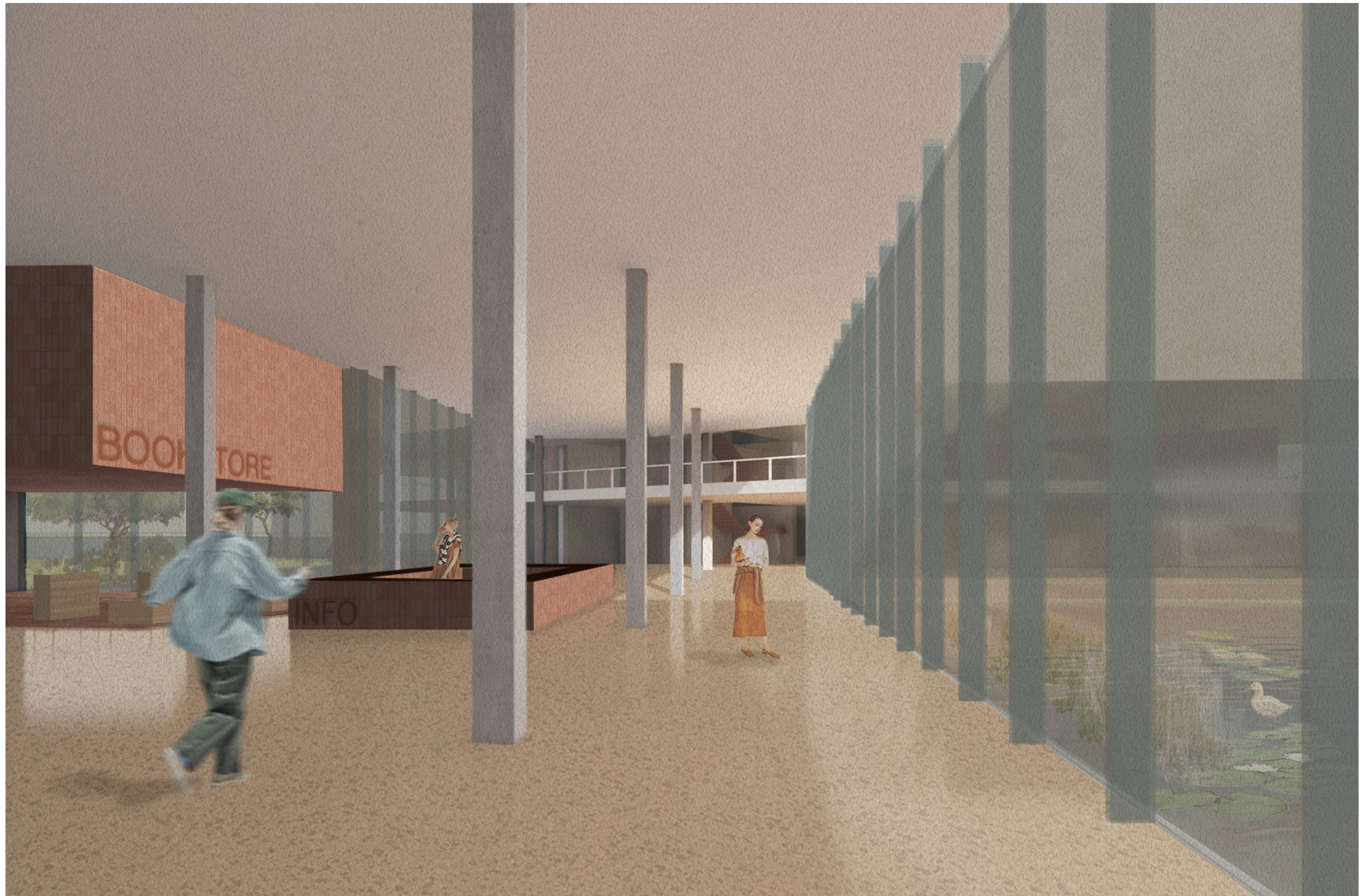
accessibility existing and new

- 1. storage bookshop
- 2. working spaces
- 3. library
- 4. toilets
- 5. technical room
- 6. cafe

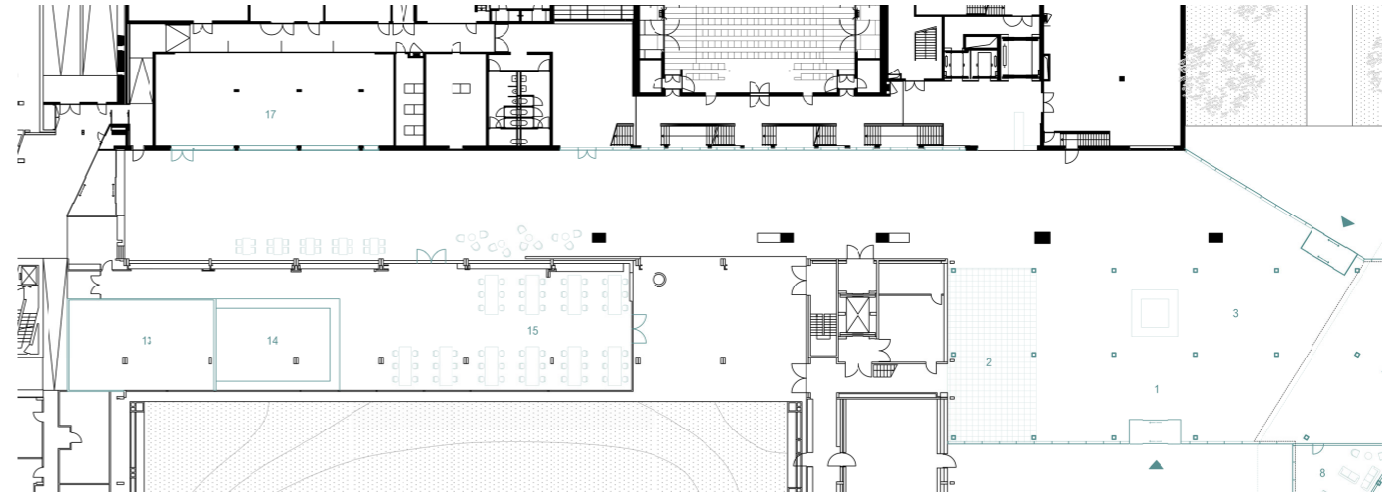
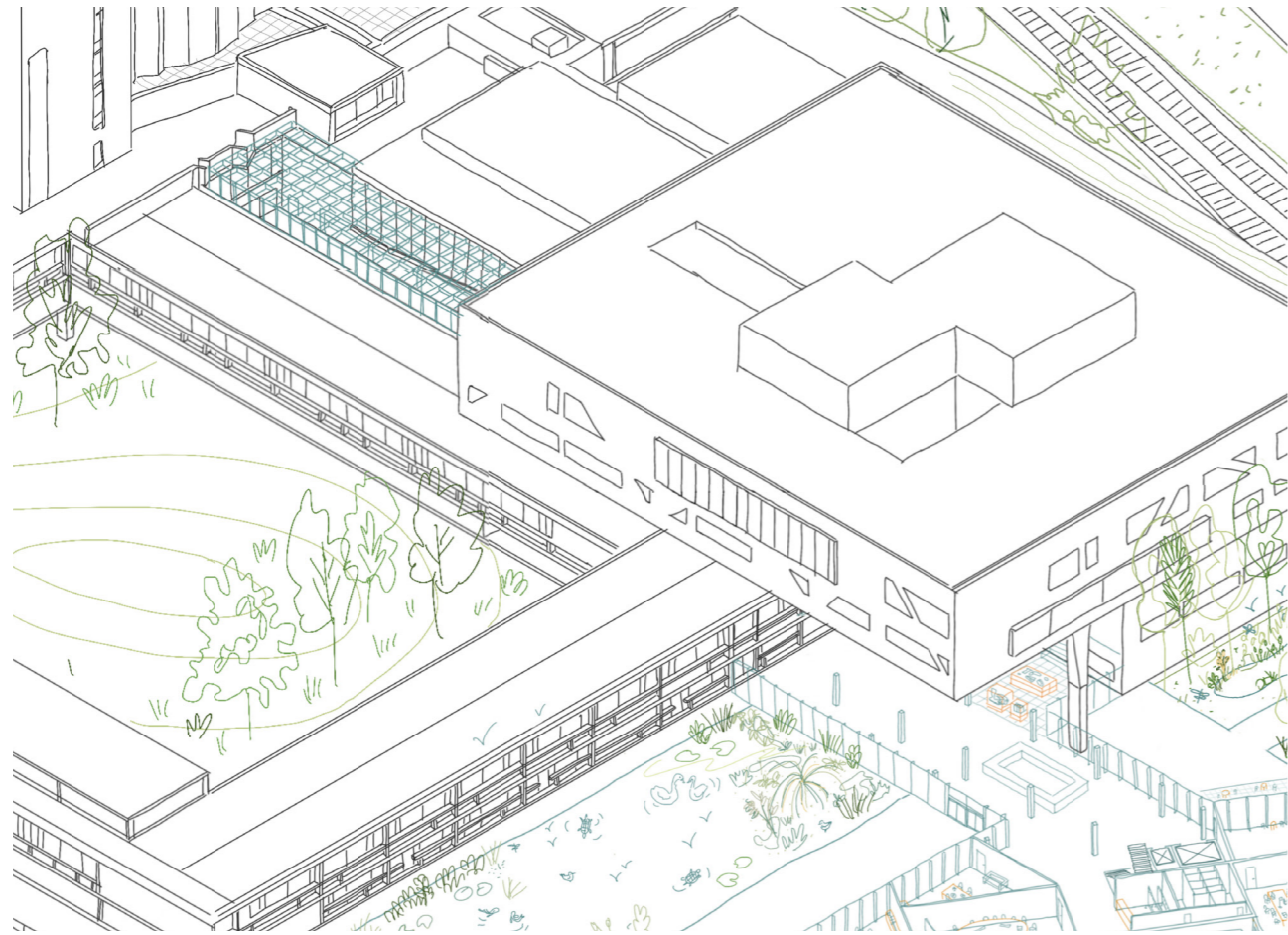
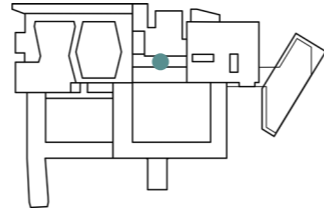


floor plan first floor 1:500

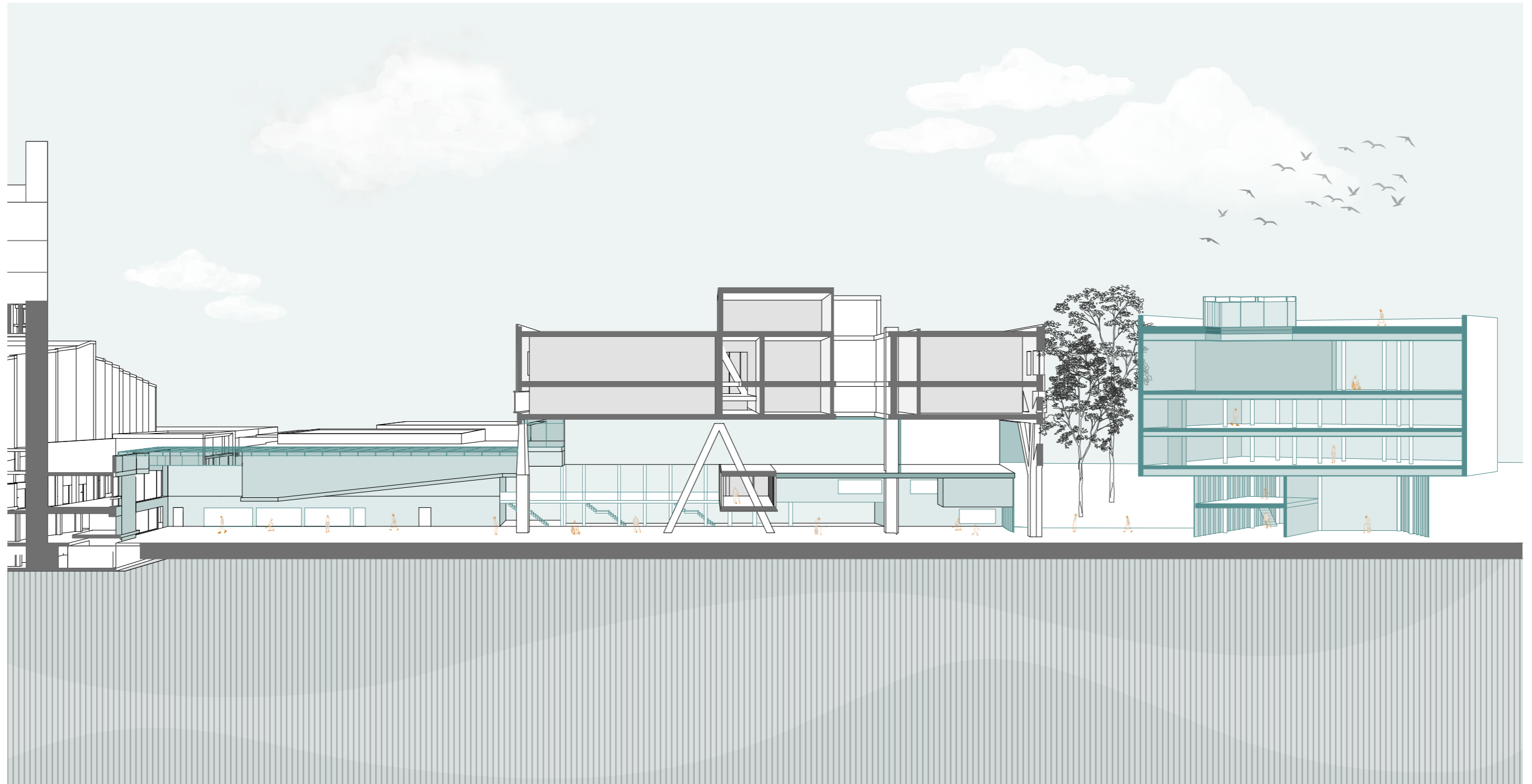




main hall



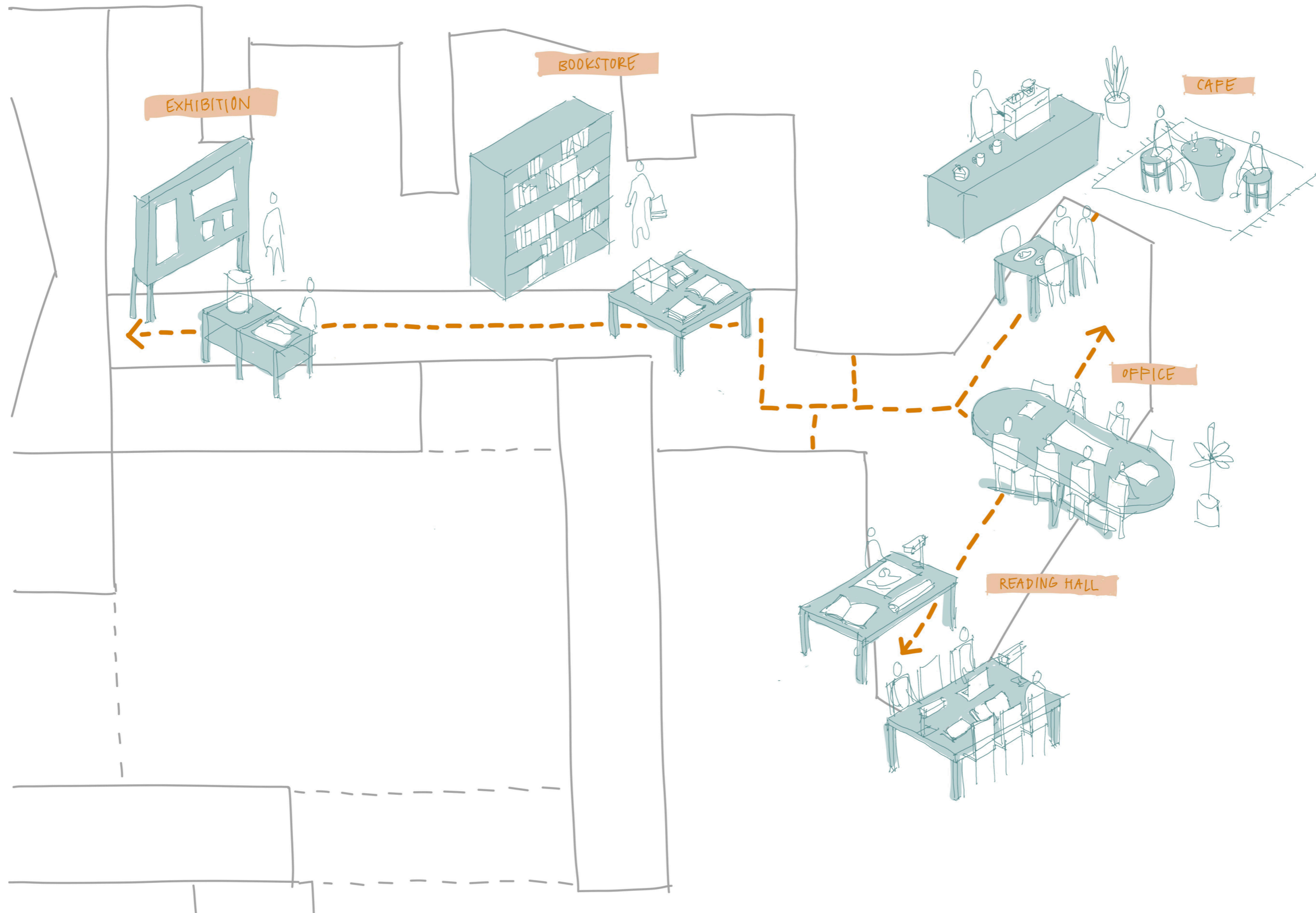
passage



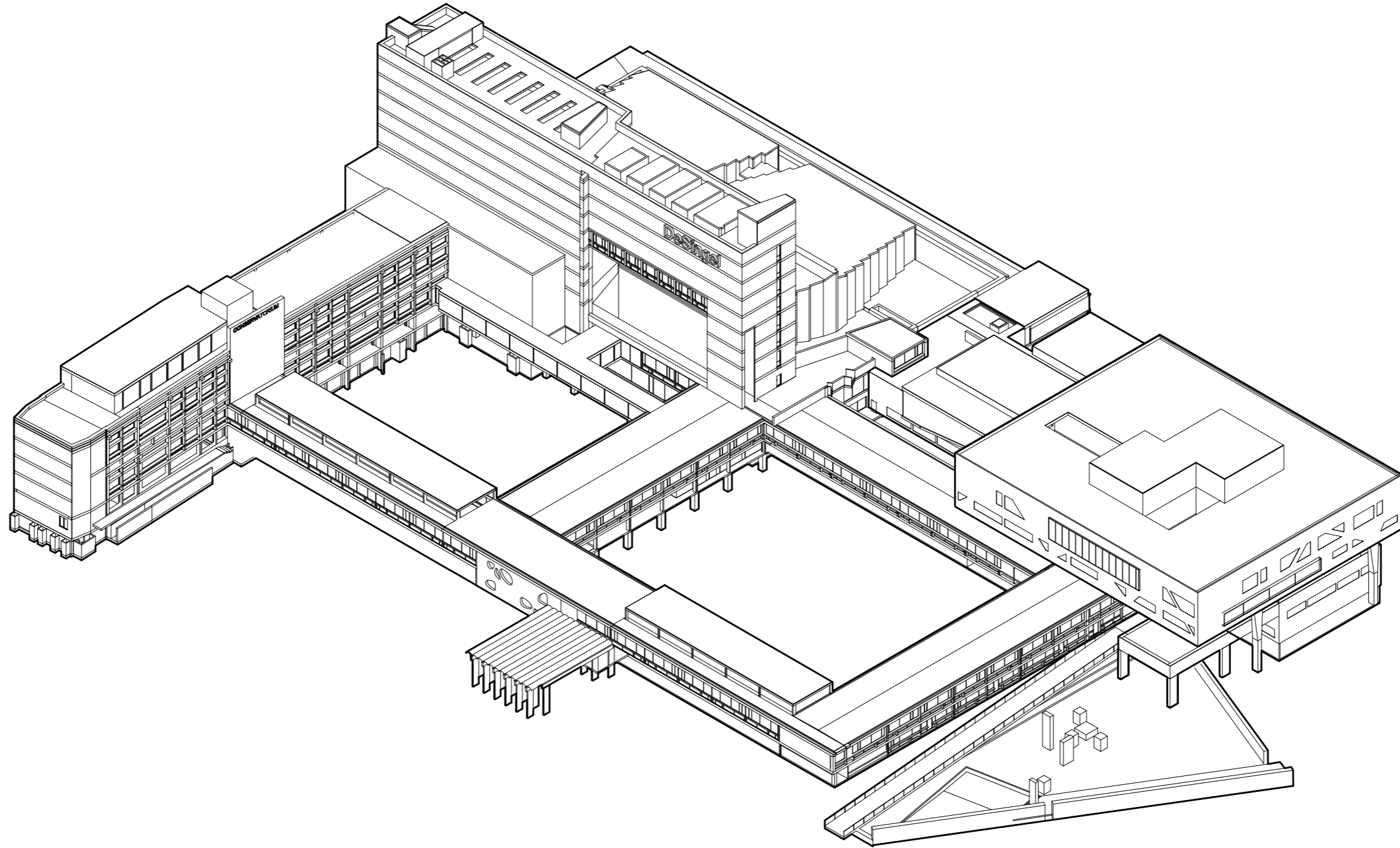
perspective section



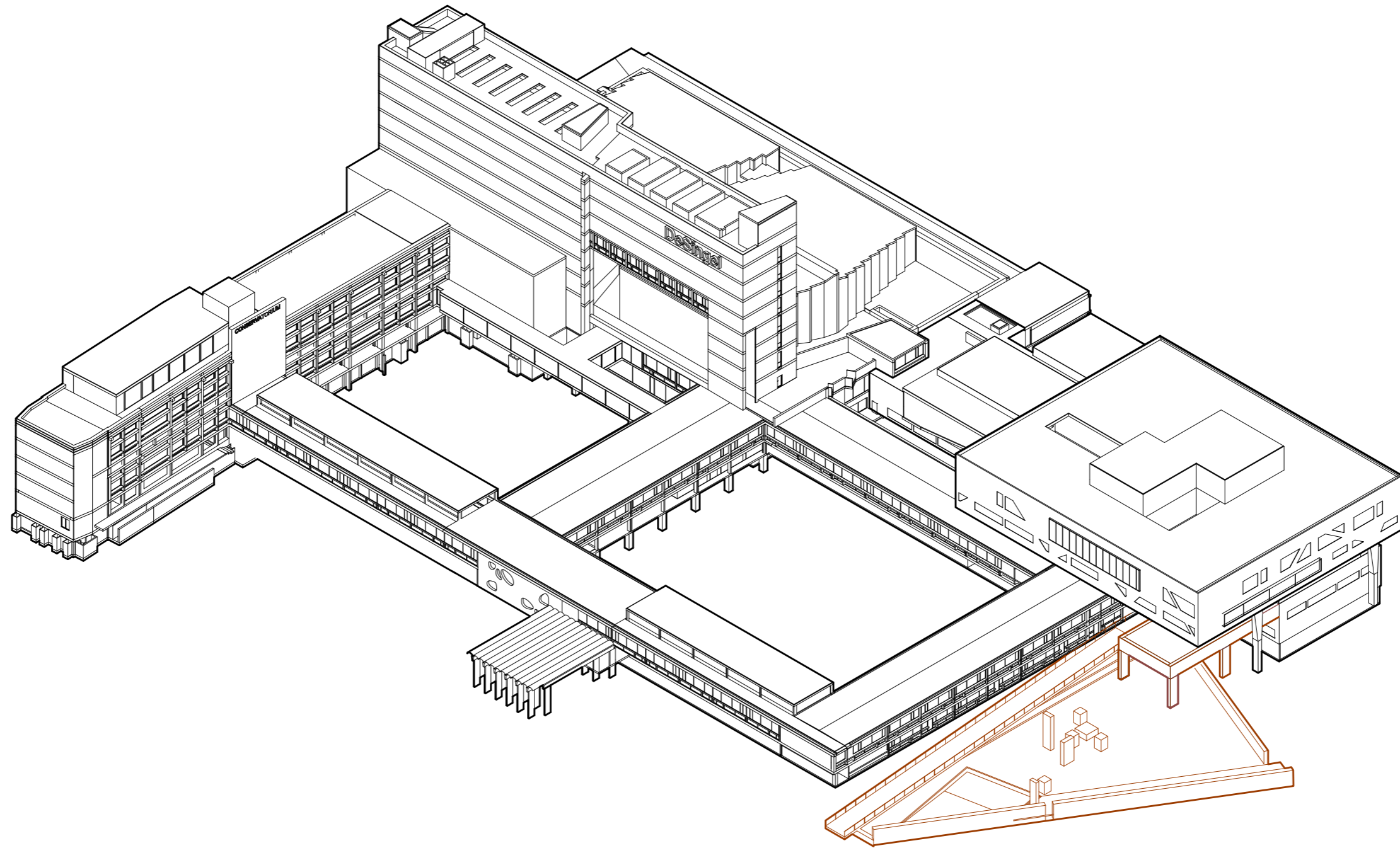
passage



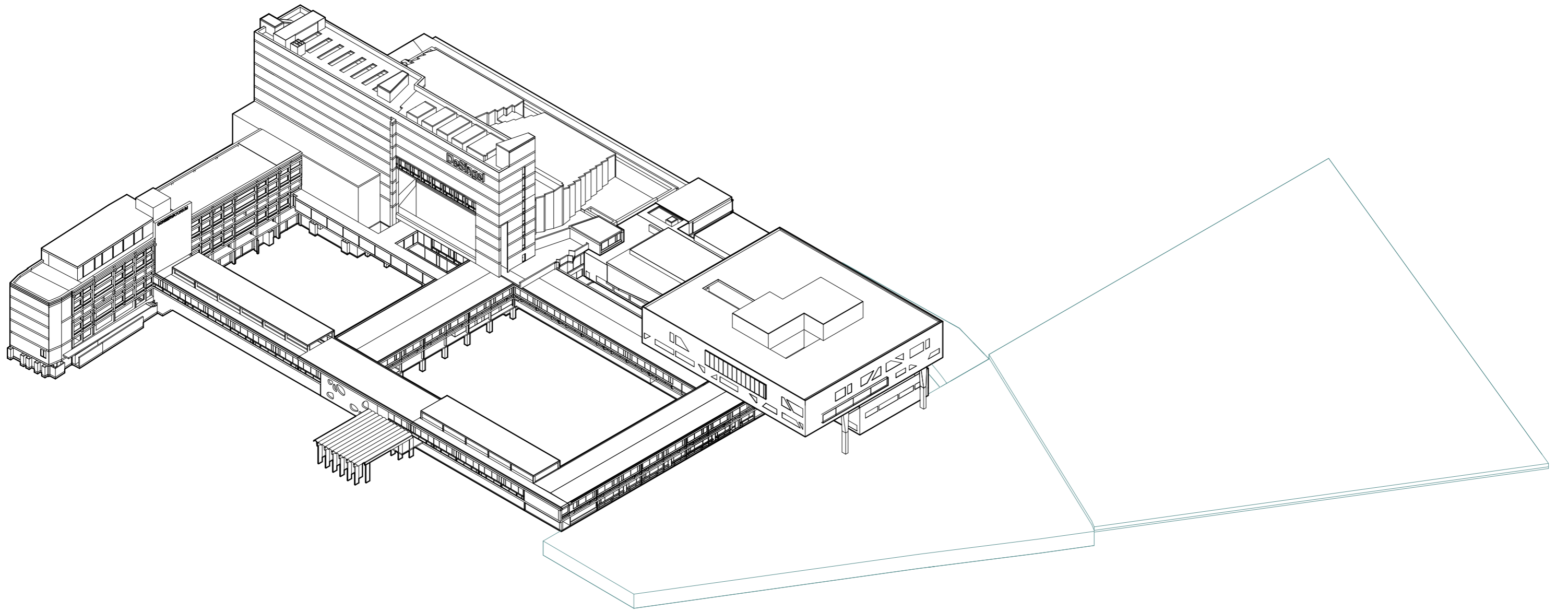
interconnected network functions



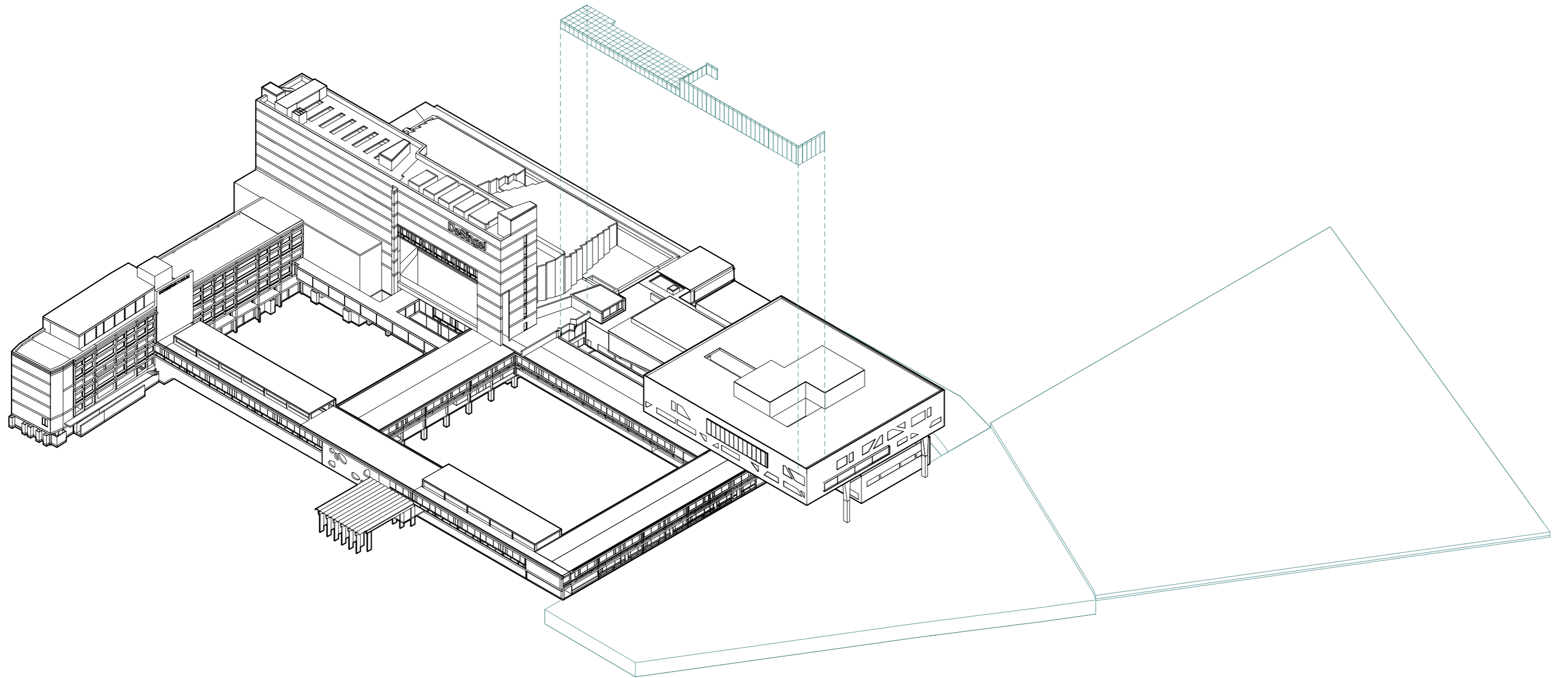
current situation



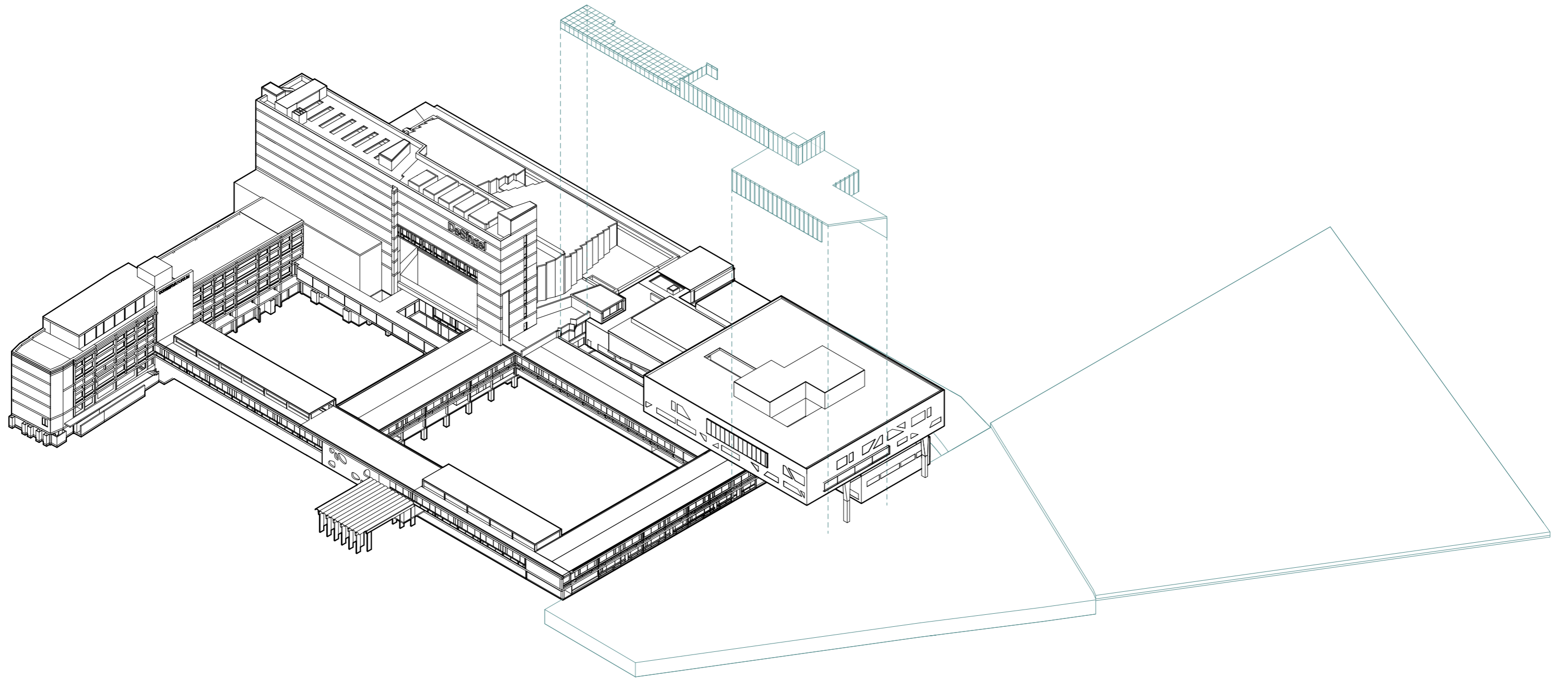
demolition



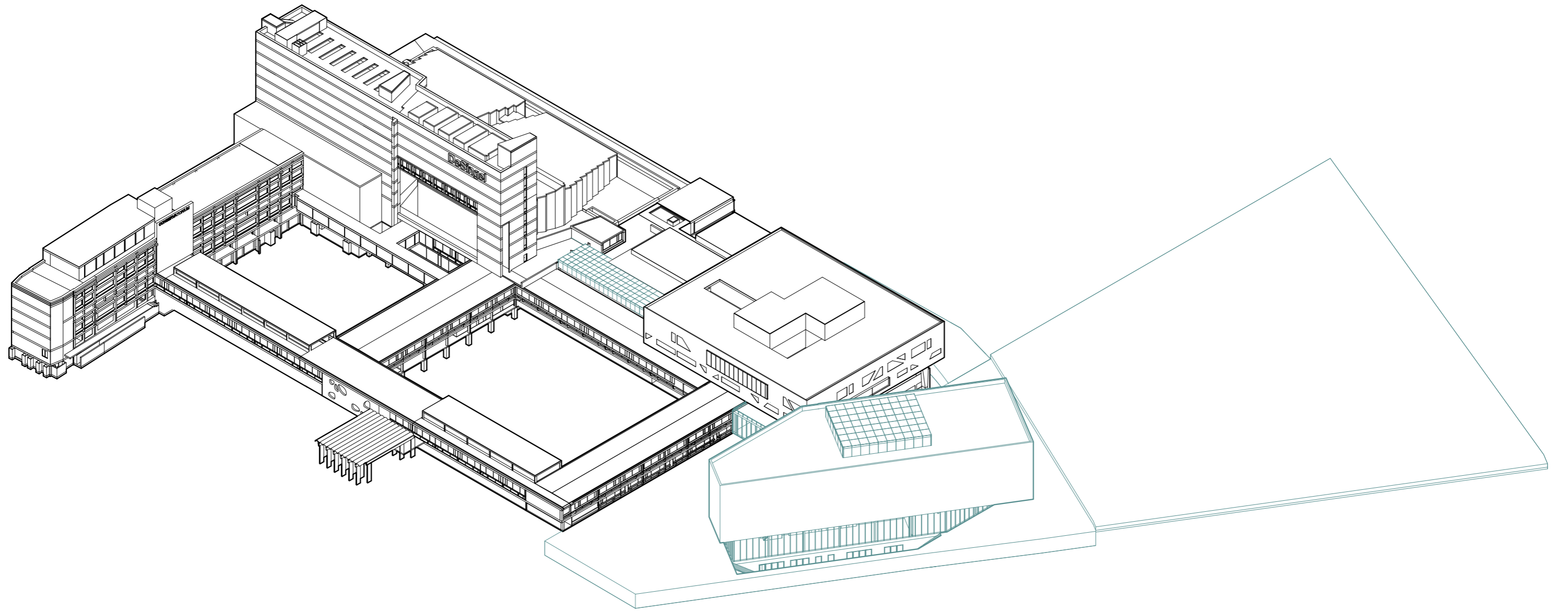
addition: the bridge



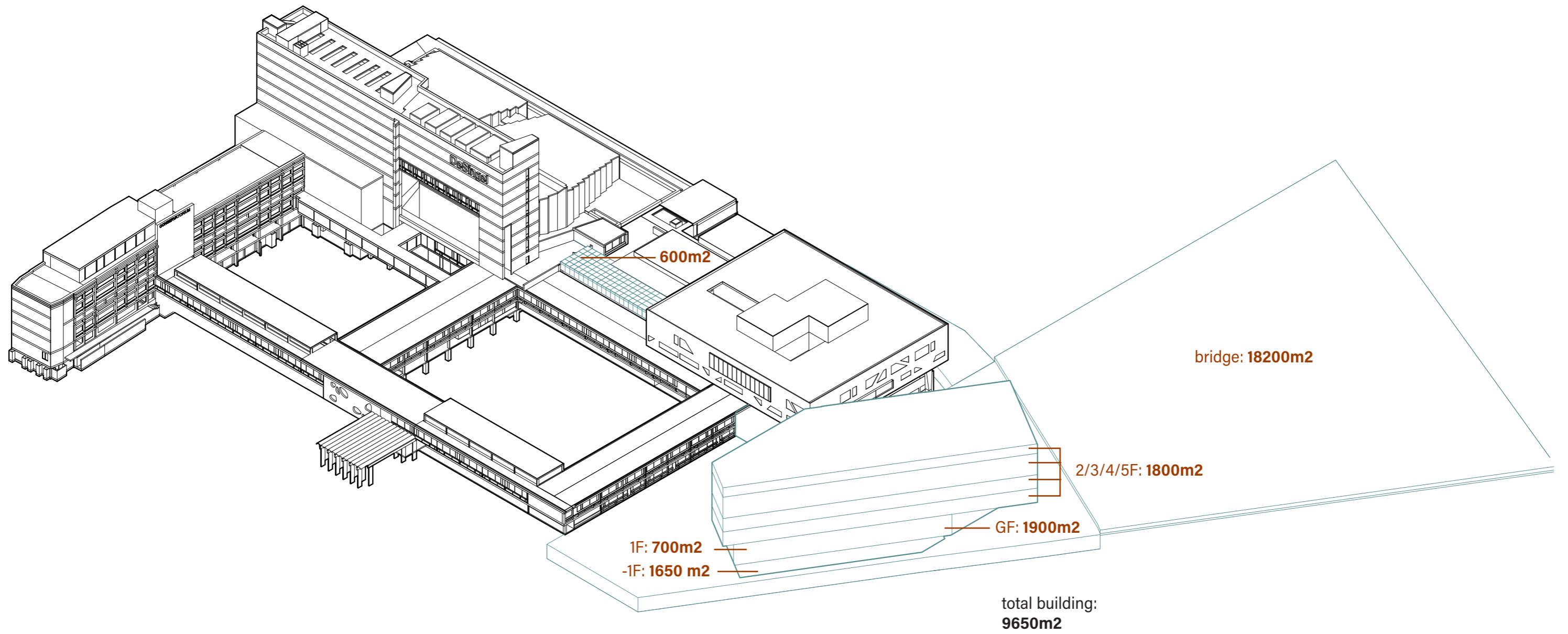
addition: the passage



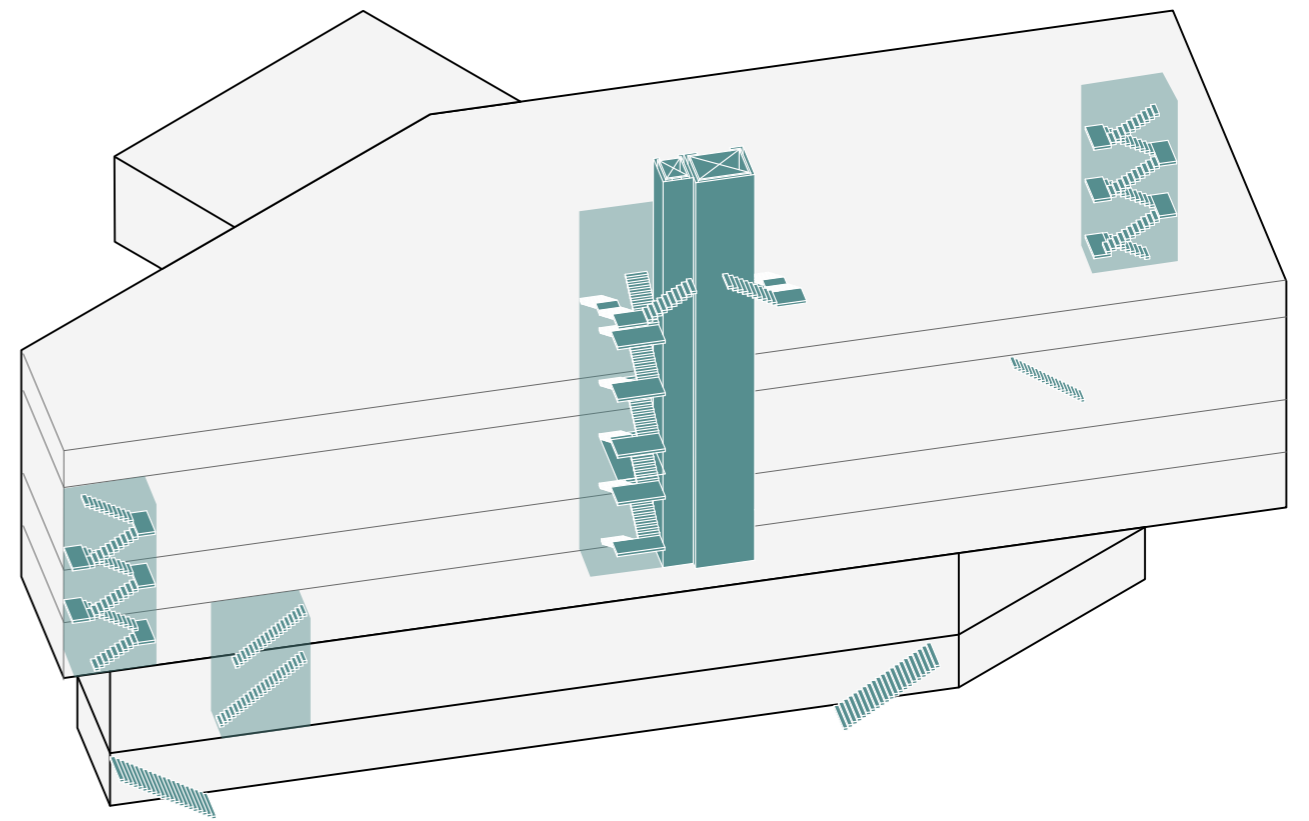
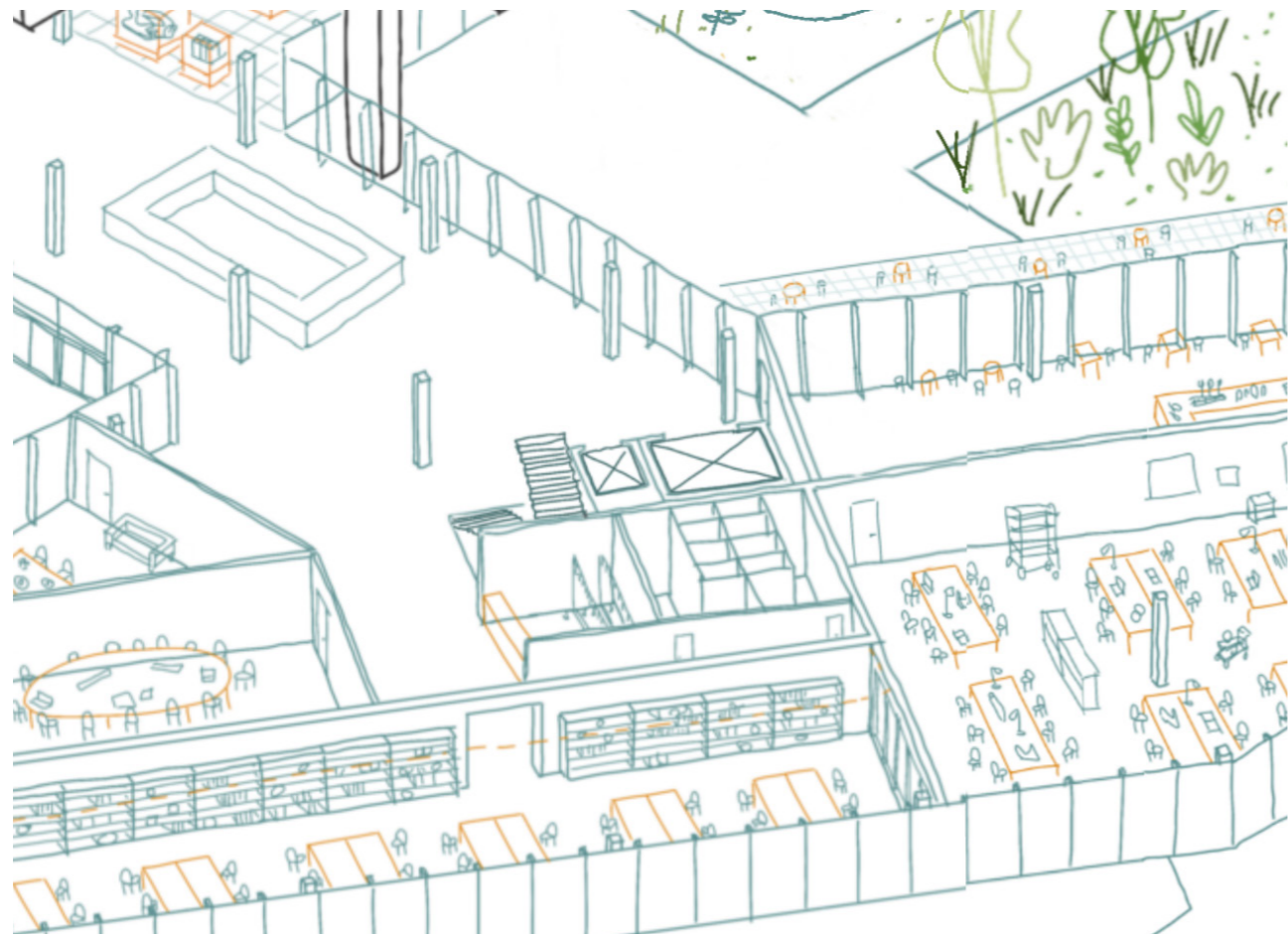
addition: the main hall



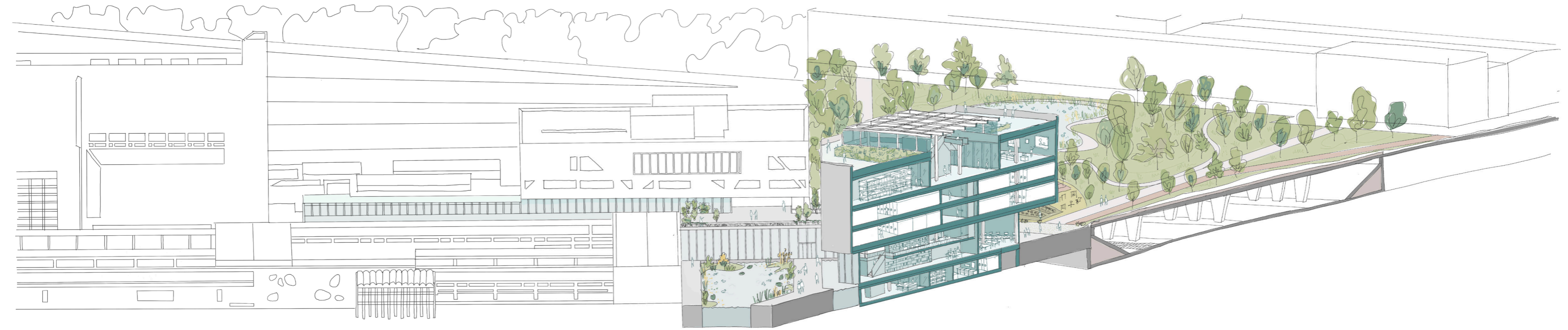
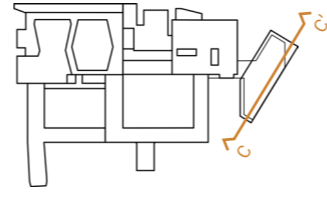
overview of the new volume



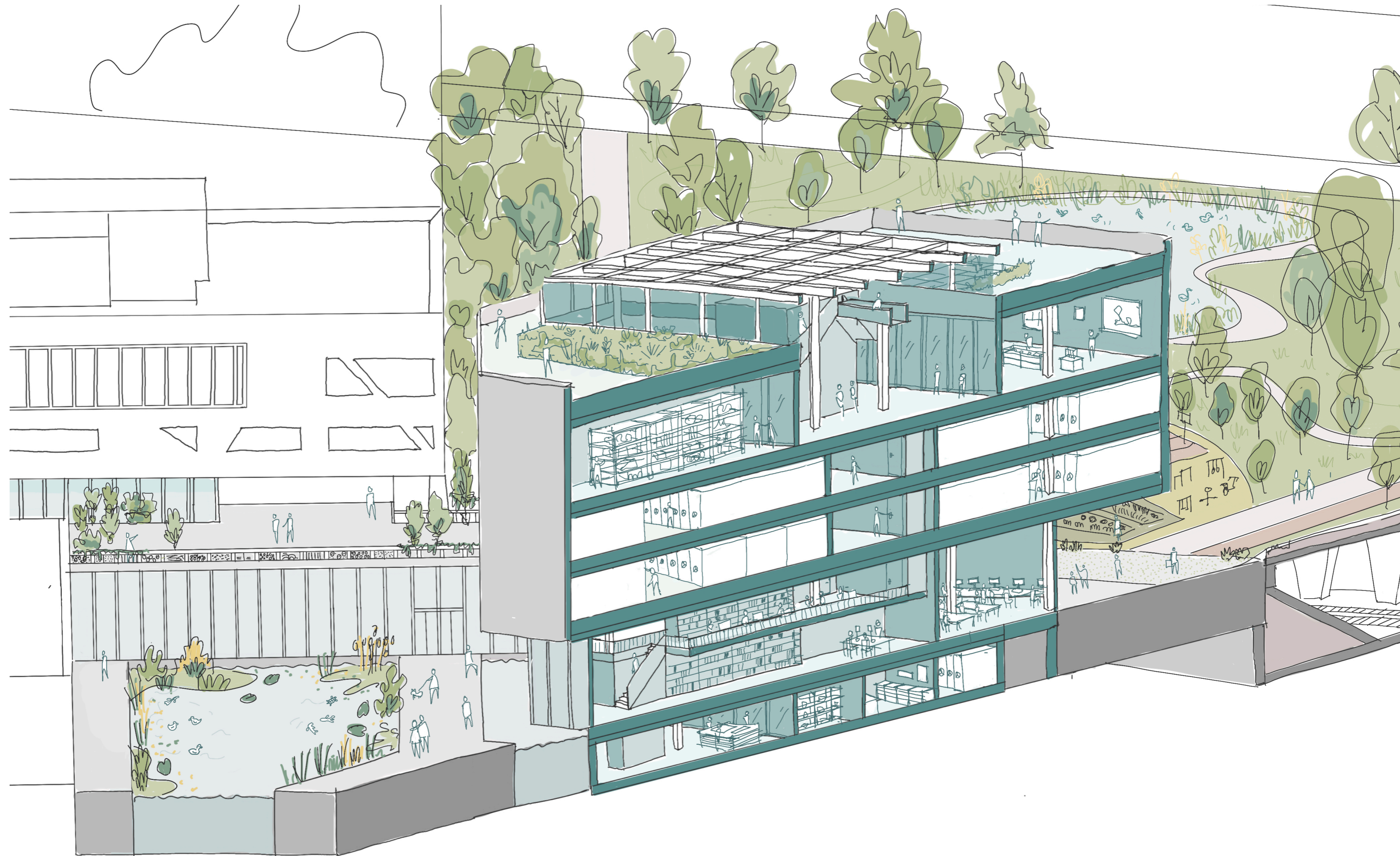


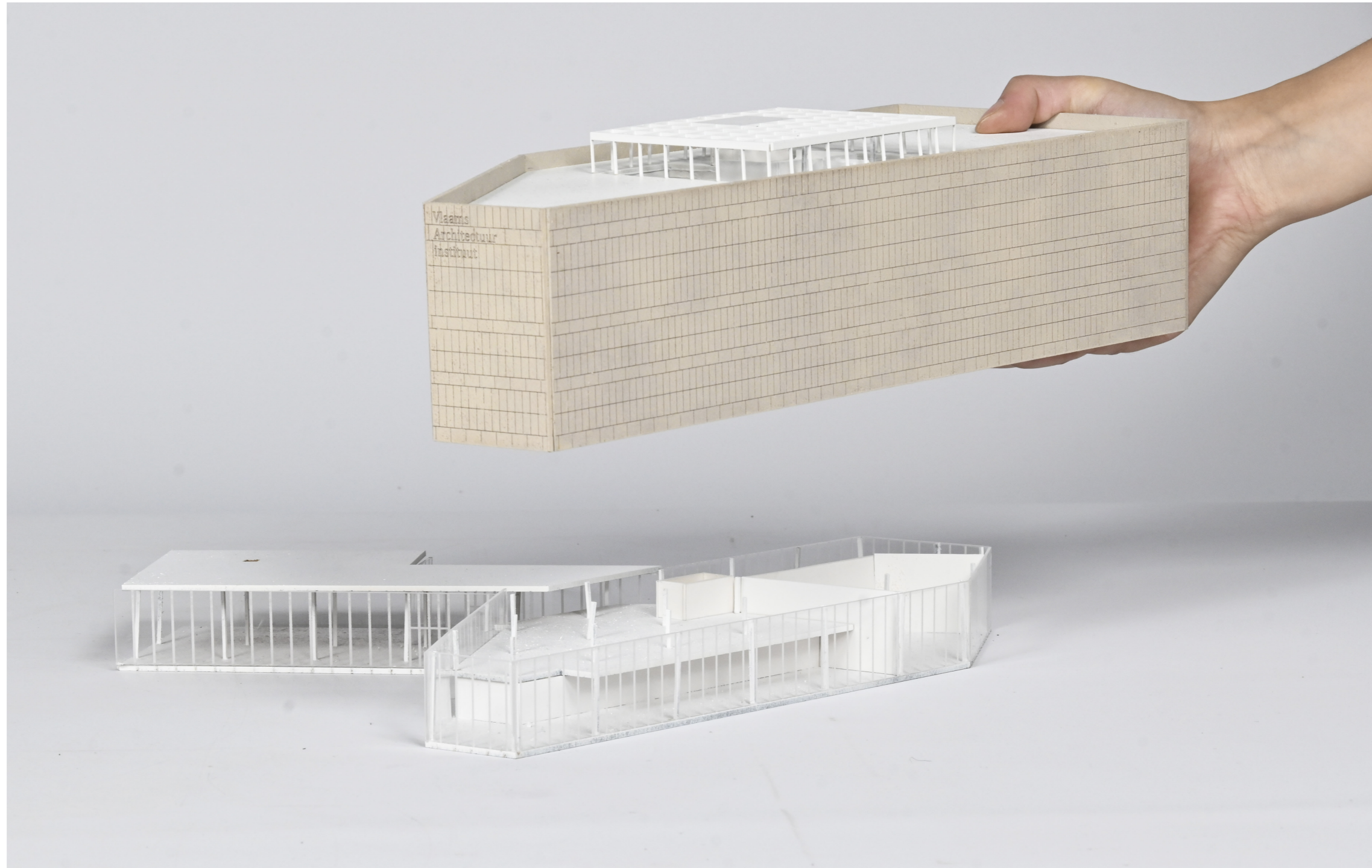


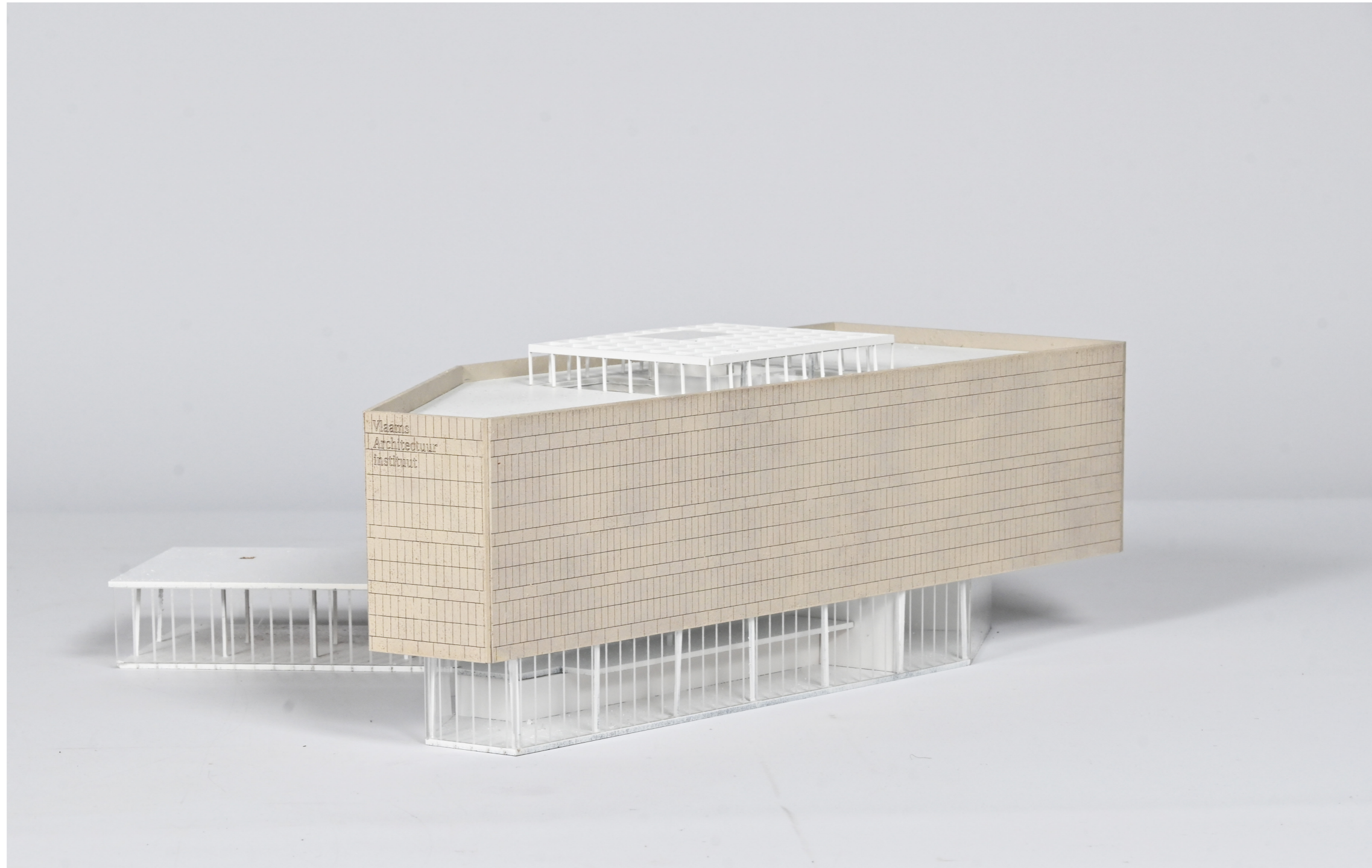
circulation building

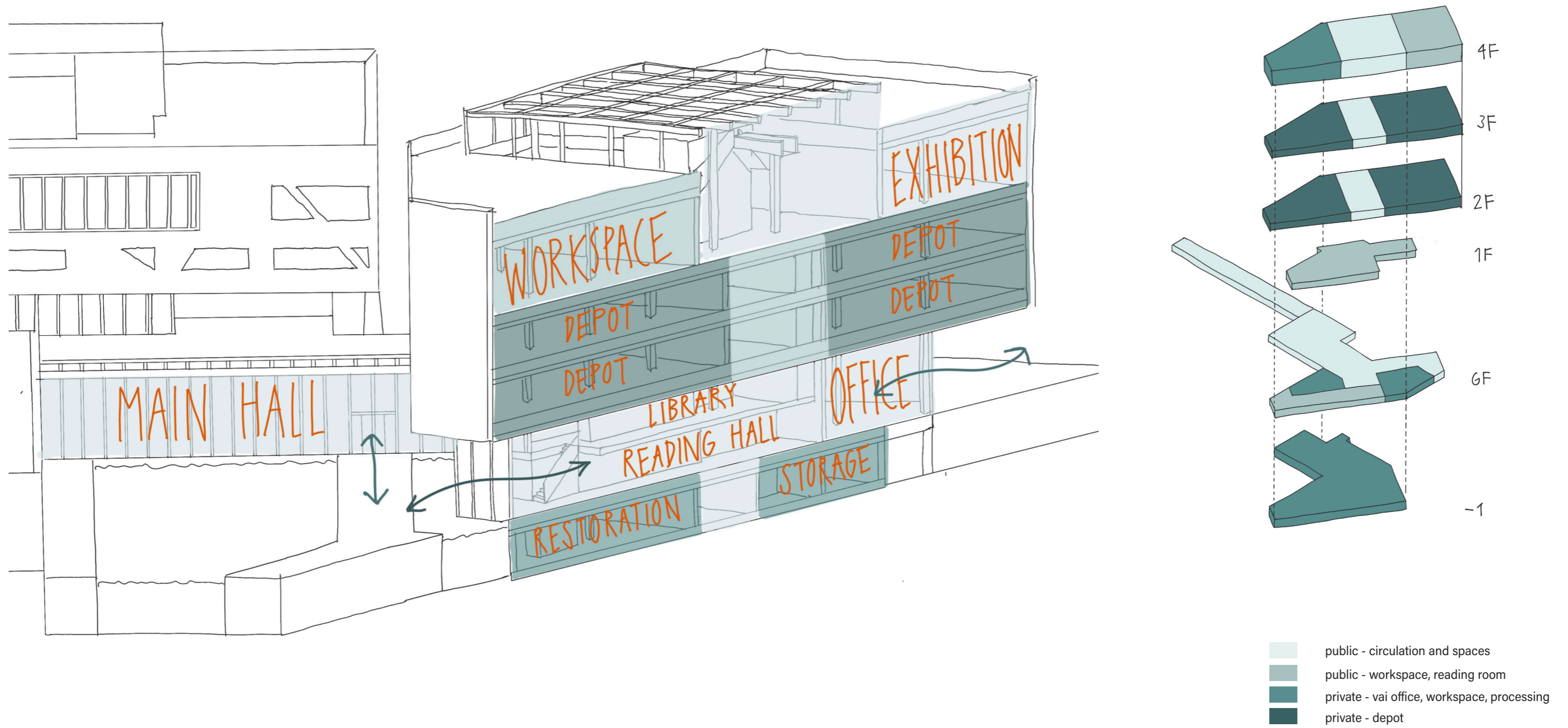


section
west longitudinal section CC'

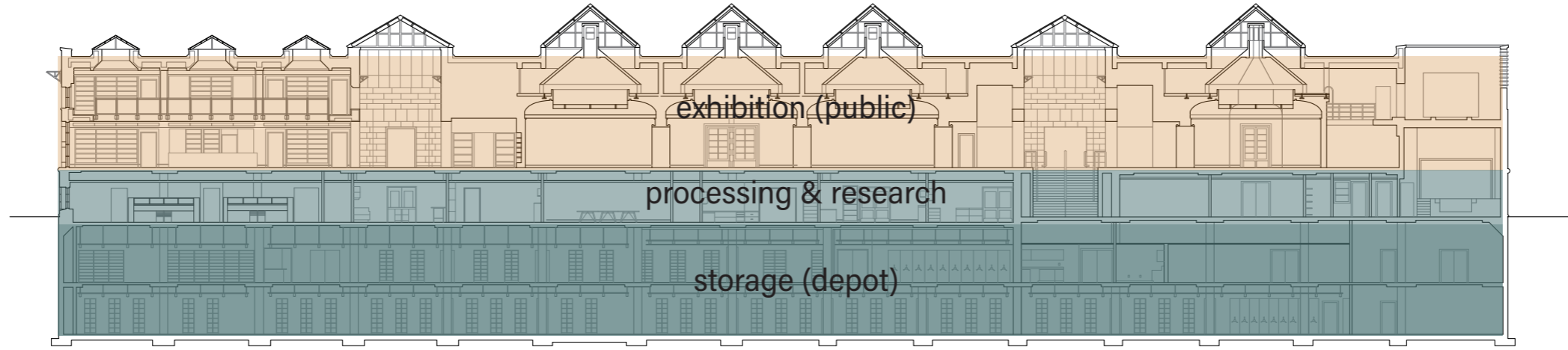




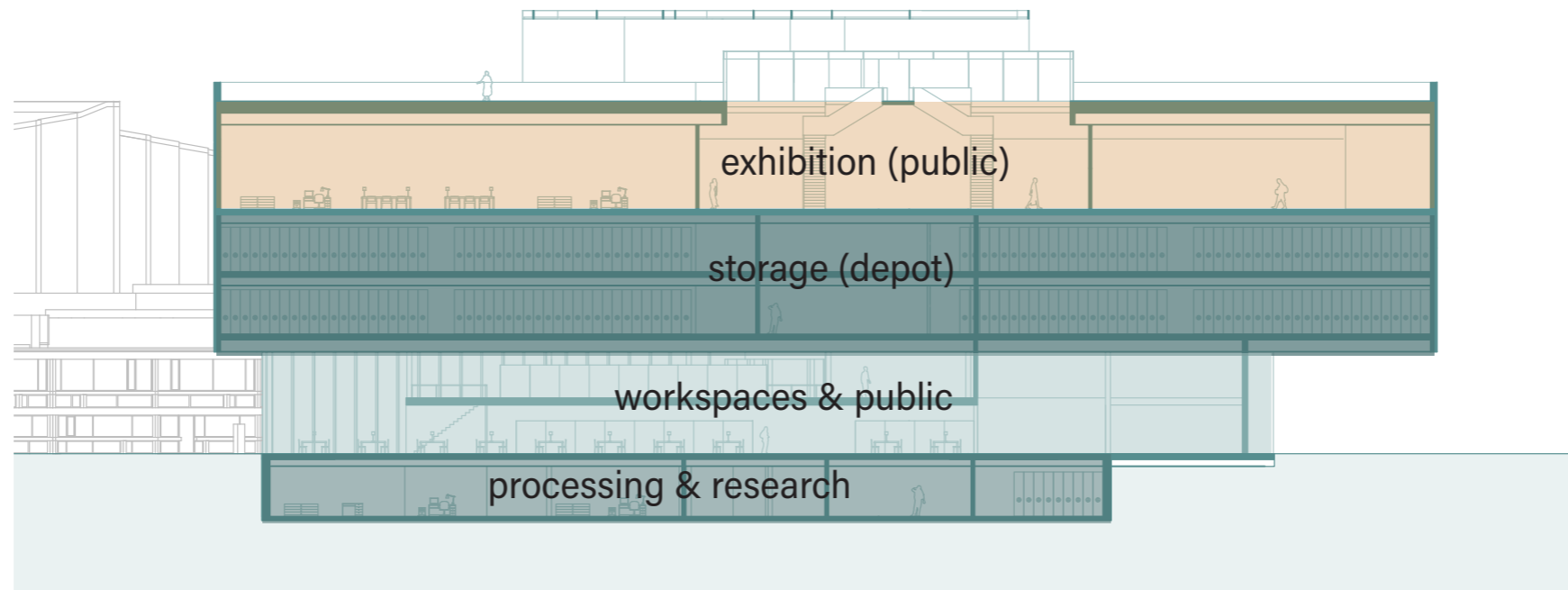




section with functions



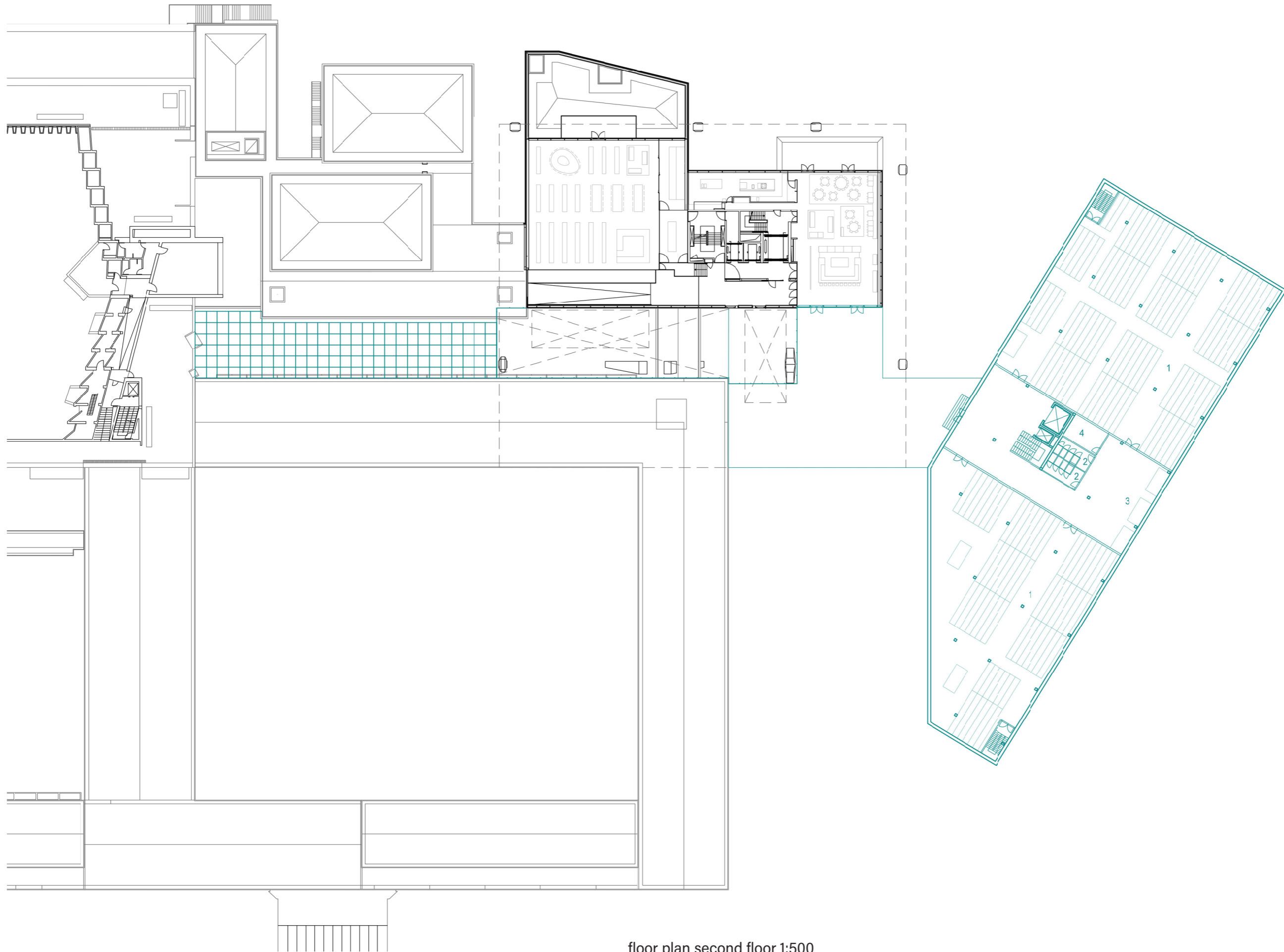
CCA section (Danesin, 2024)



VAi section

concept building sections CCA and VAI

- 1. depot
- 2. toilets
- 3. workspace
- 4. technical room

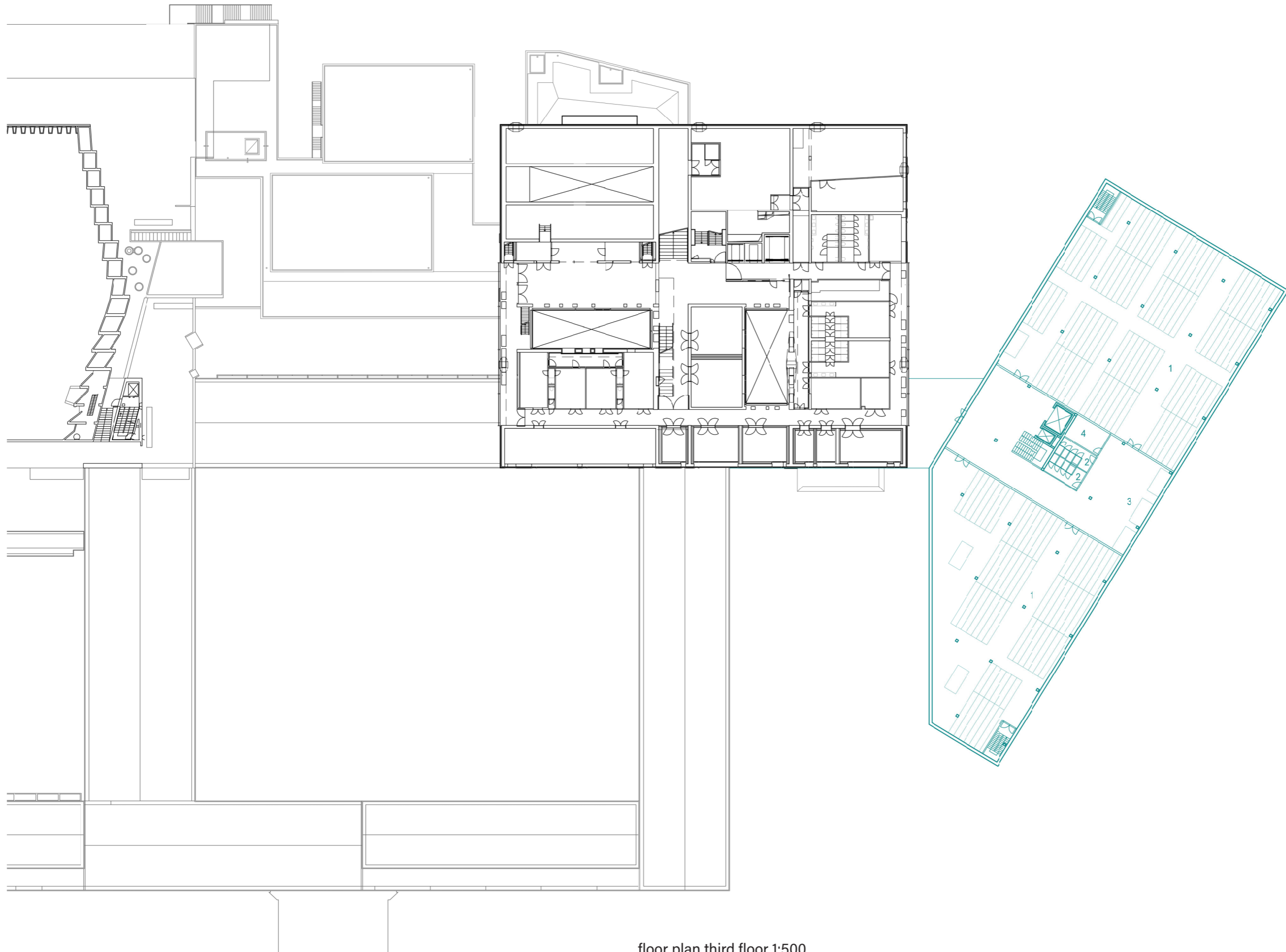


floor plan second floor 1:500

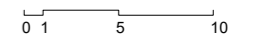


0 1 5 10

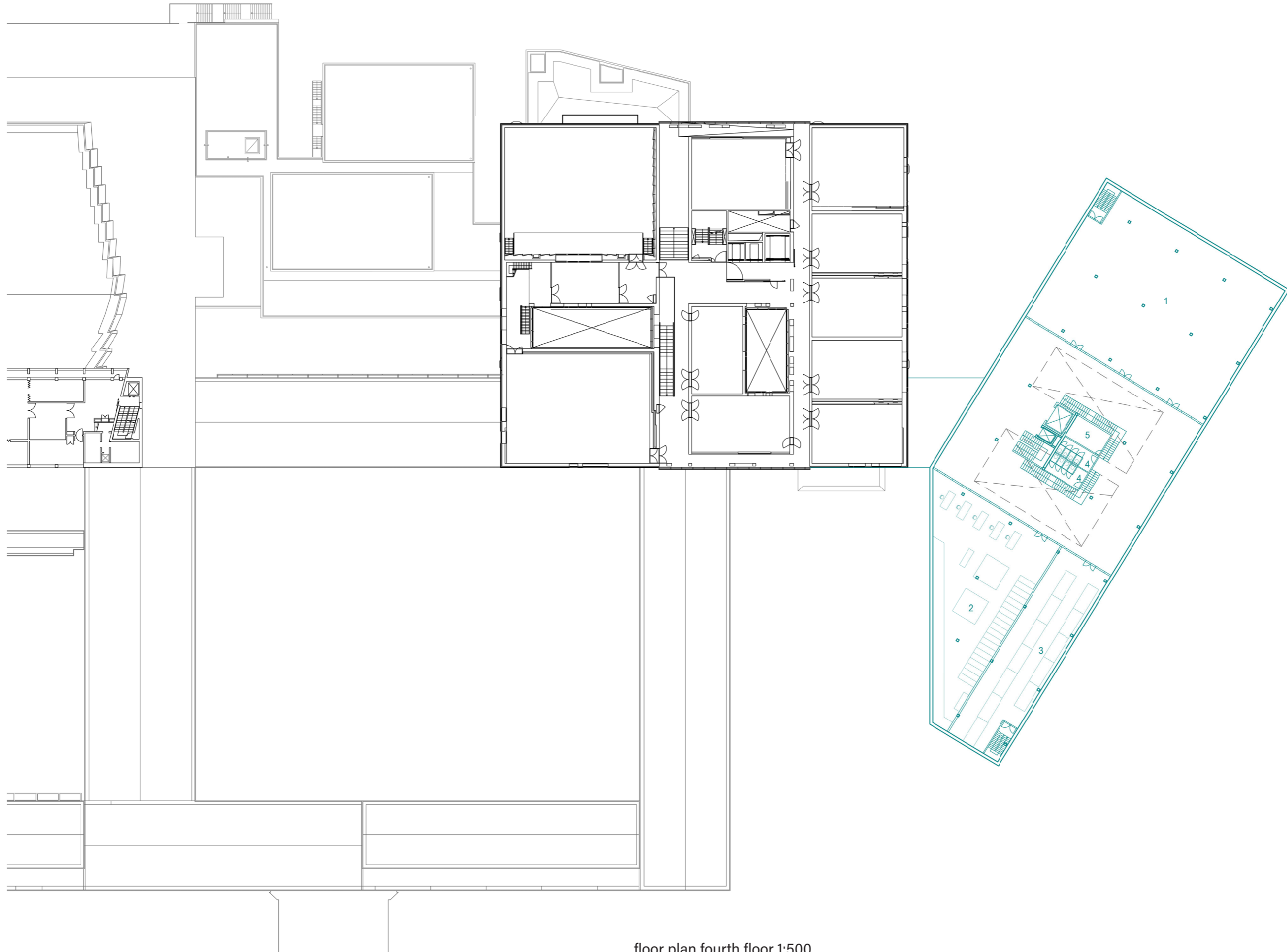
- 1. depot
- 2. toilets
- 3. workspace
- 4. technical room



floor plan third floor 1:500



- 1. exhibition
- 2. vai workspace
- 3. viewing depot
- 4. toilets
- 5. technical room



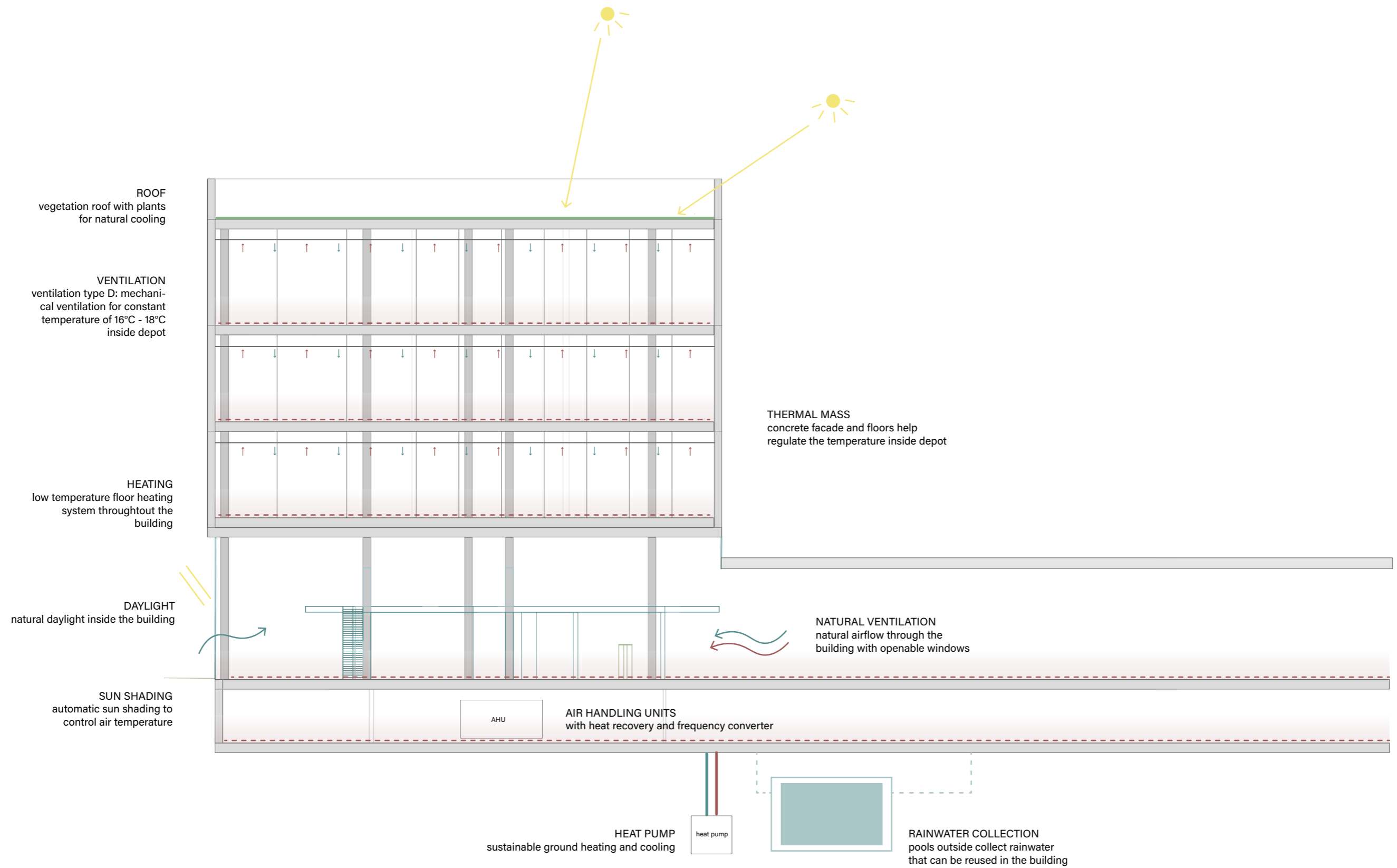
floor plan fourth floor 1:500



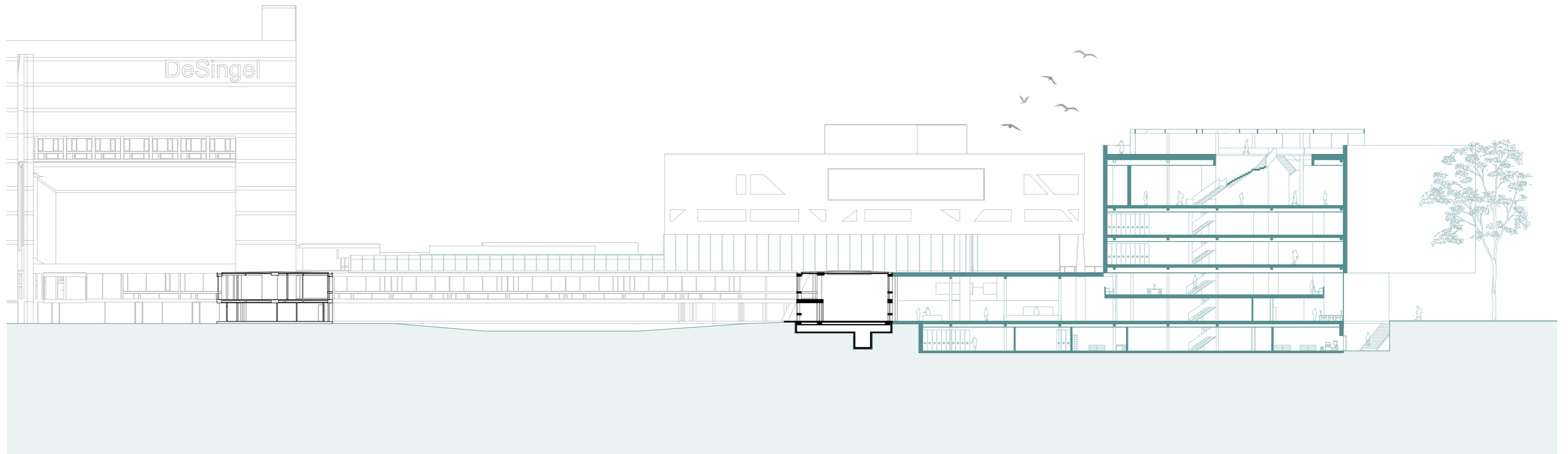
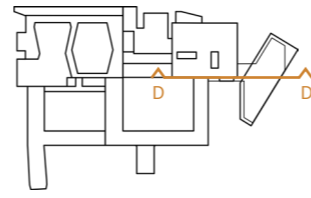
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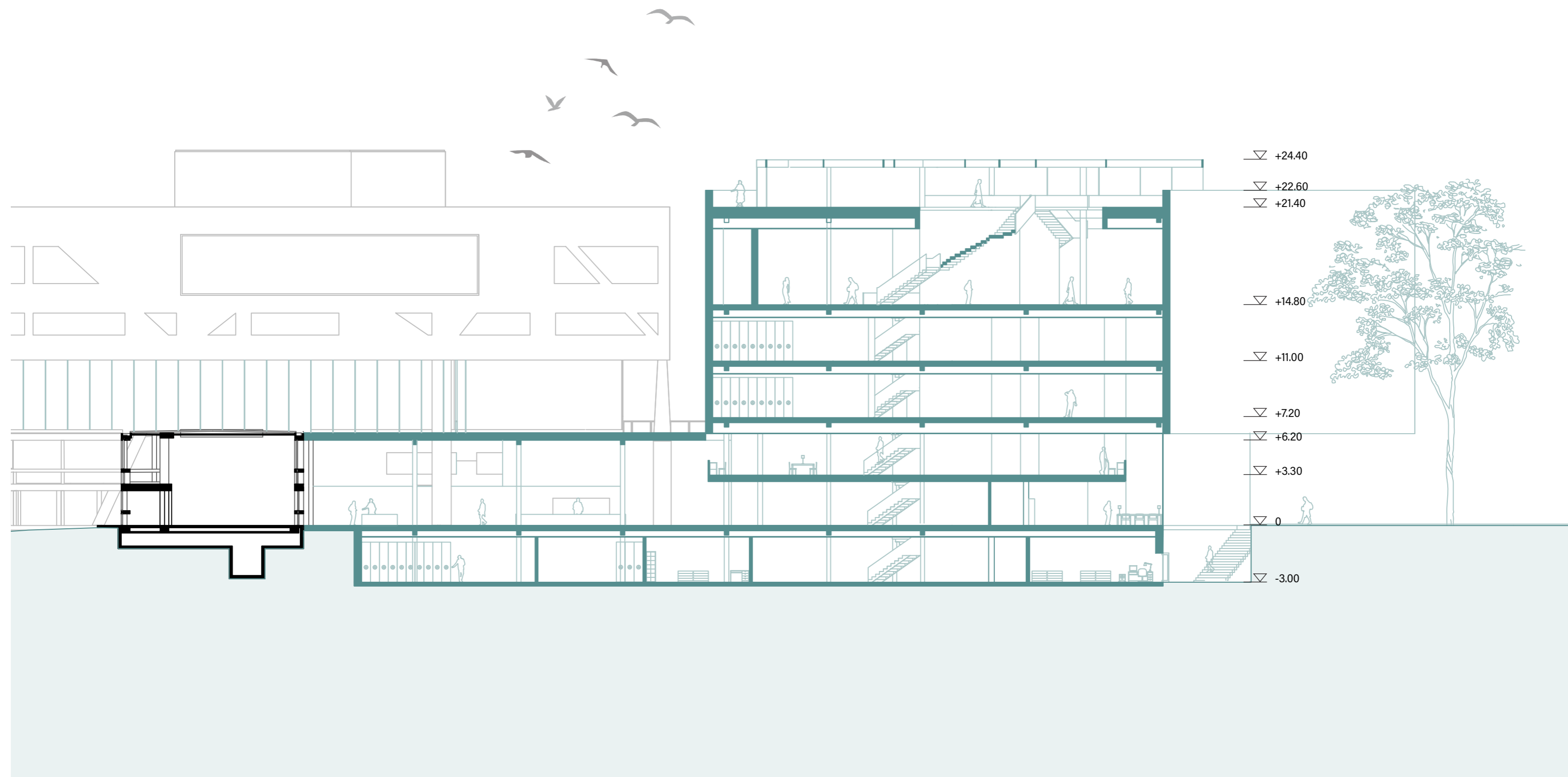
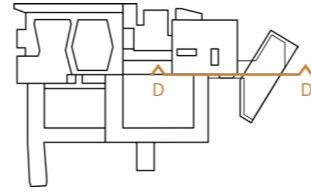
atrium



climate diagram



section 1:500
south section DD'



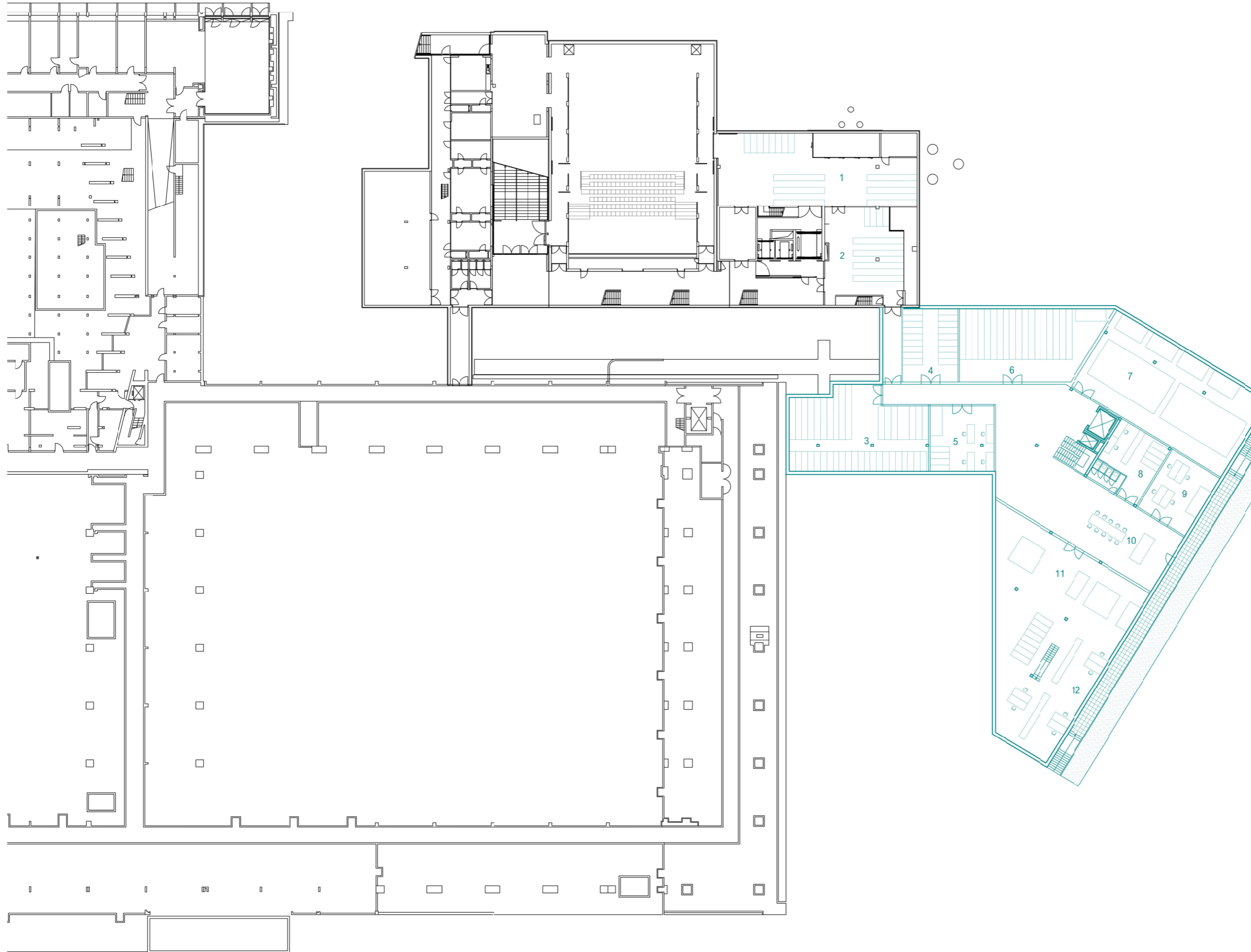
section 1:500

south section DD'



sunken passageway basement

- 1. storage packing material
- 2. waiting depot
- 3. quarantine
- 4. tirage space contaminated
- 5. processing space
- 6. photo storage
- 7. technical room with AHU
- 8. pre-depot
- 9. cleaning room
- 10. workshop space
- 11. restoration studio
- 12. digitization space

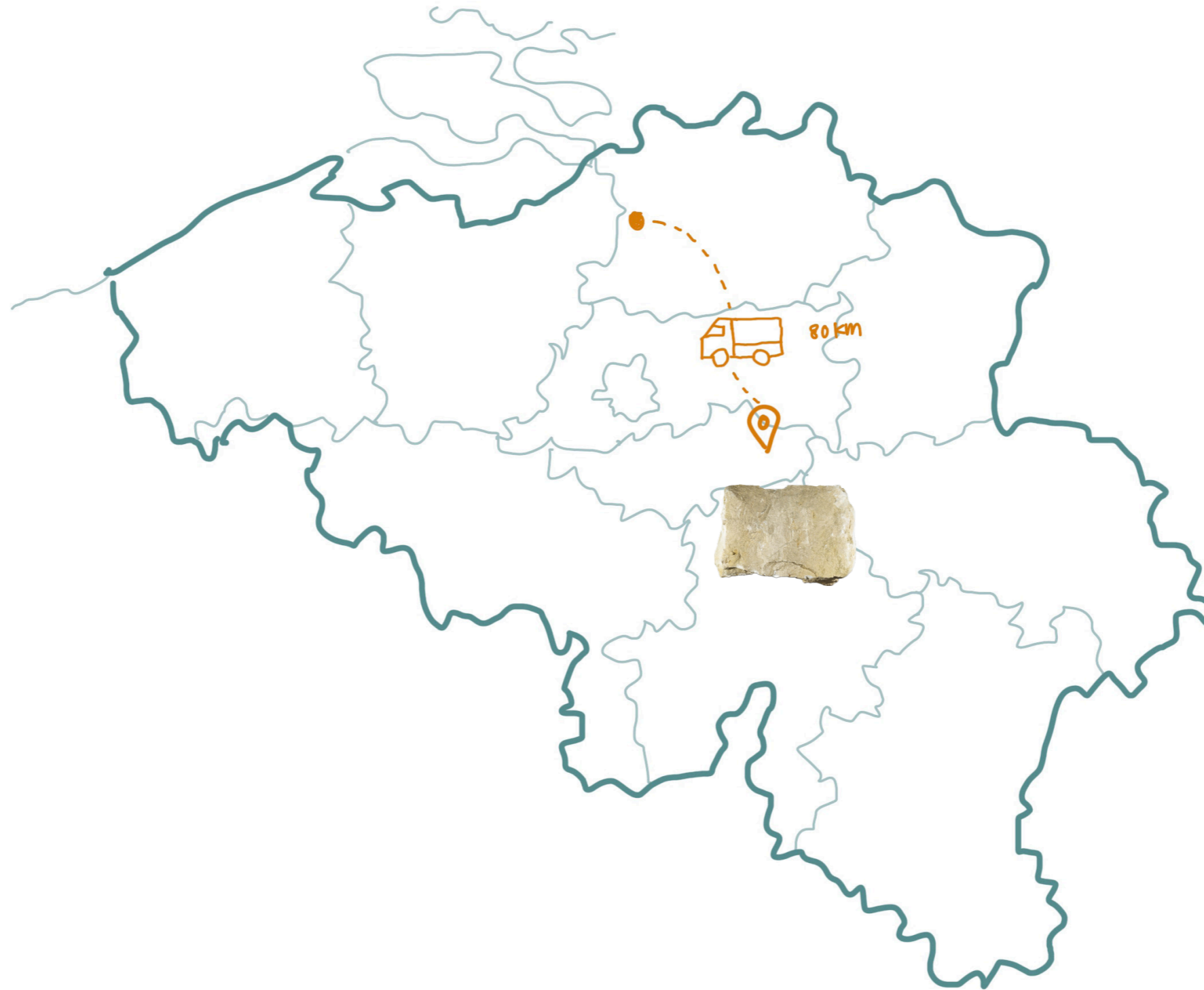


floor plan basement 1:500



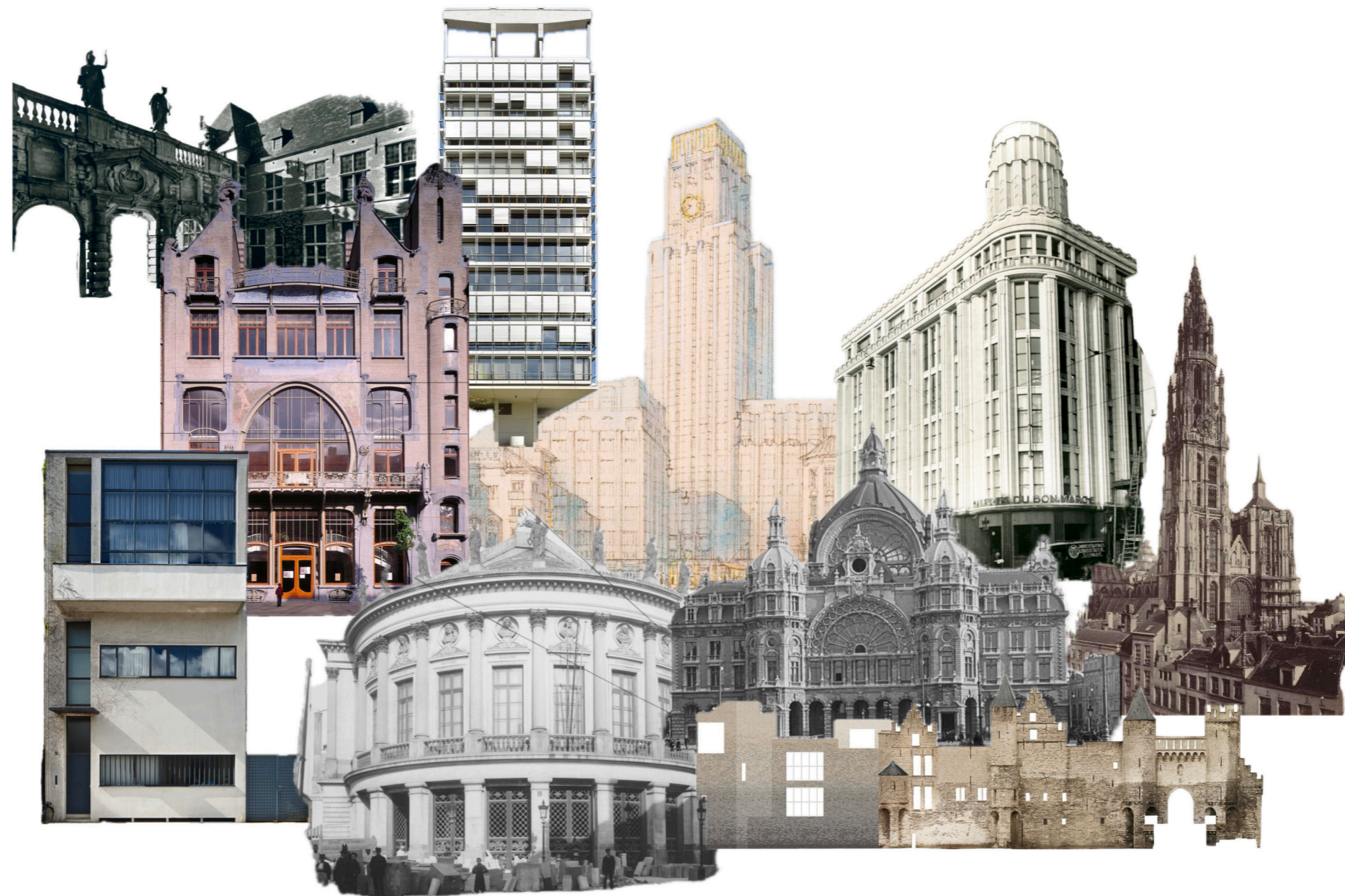


facade design
connection with the city



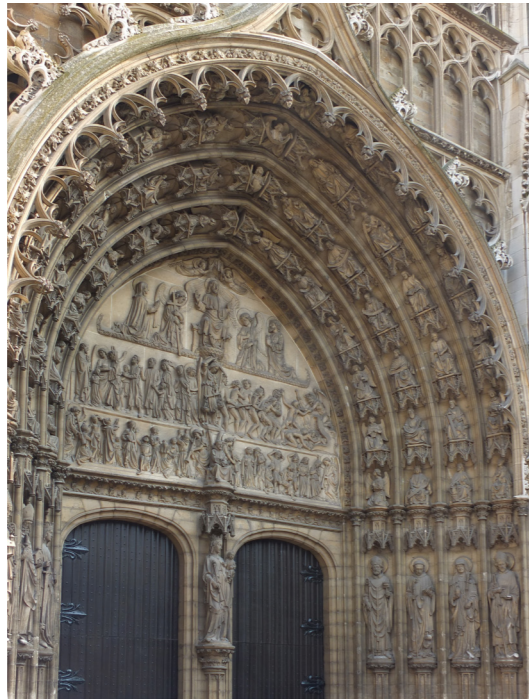
facade design

material gobertangestein



facade design

architecture in antwerp as a timeline



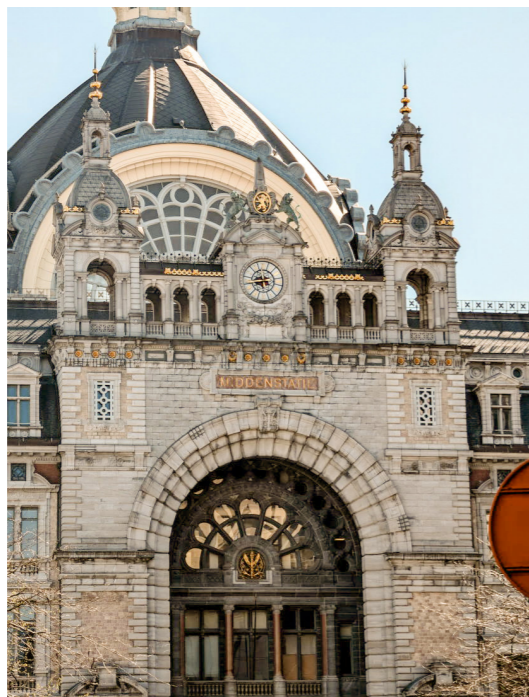
gothic



renaissance



neoclassicism



eclecticism



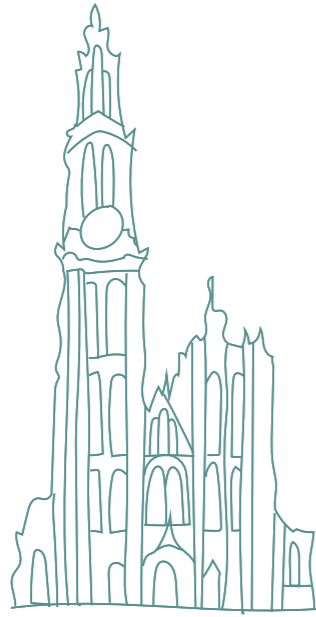
art-nouveau



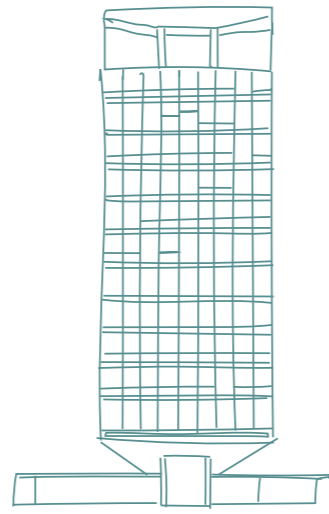
modernism

facade design

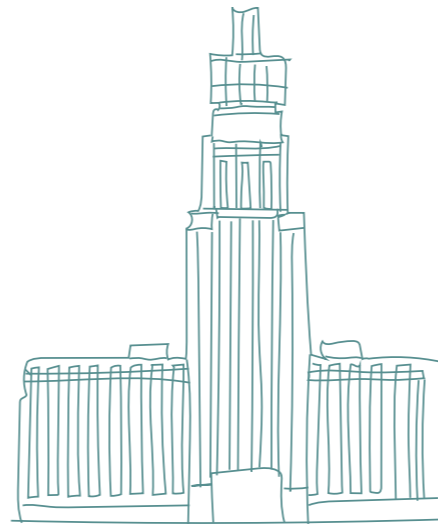
ornamentalism in architecture



onze-lieve-vrouwekathedraal



BP gebouw



boerentoren



maison guiette



galeries du bon marché



antwerpen centraal station



liberaal volkshuis



het steen



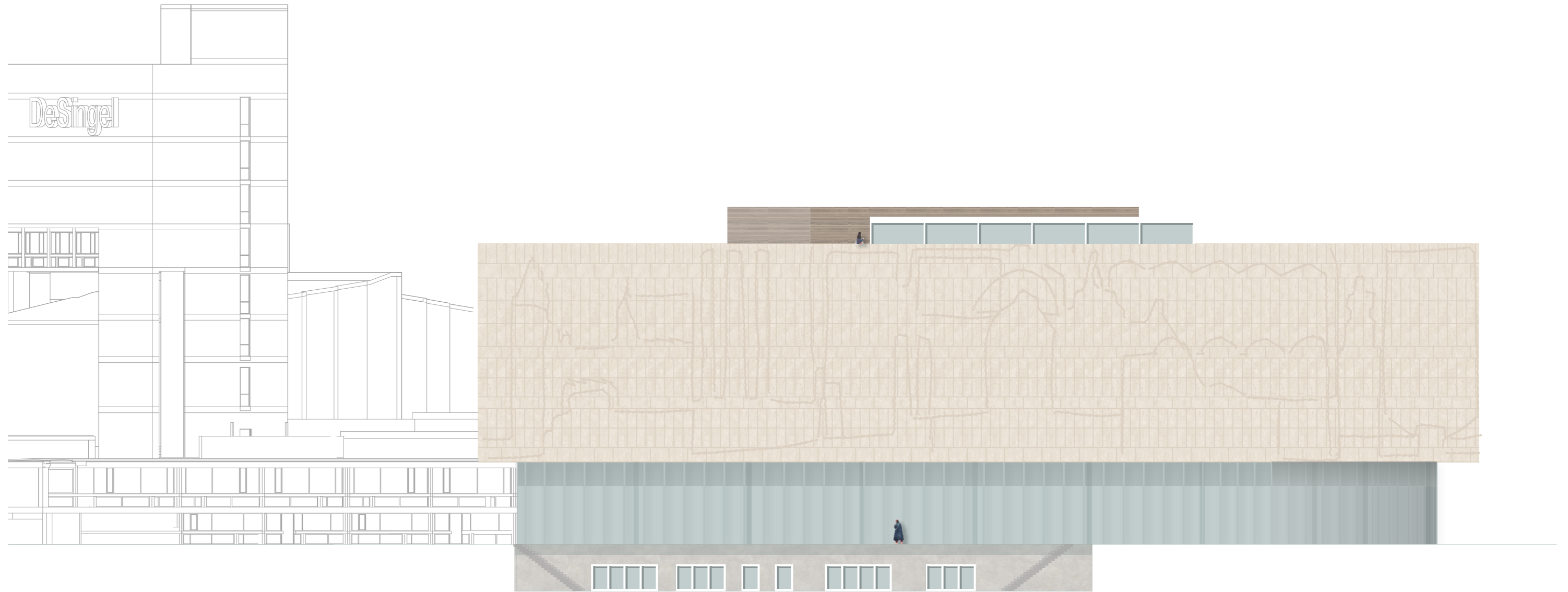
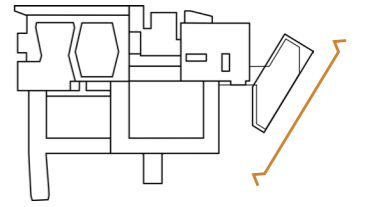
bourlasschouwburg



rubenshuis

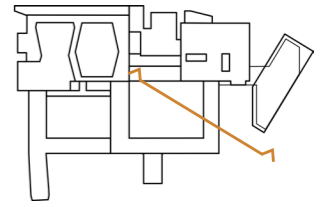


facade design
verticality vs horizontality

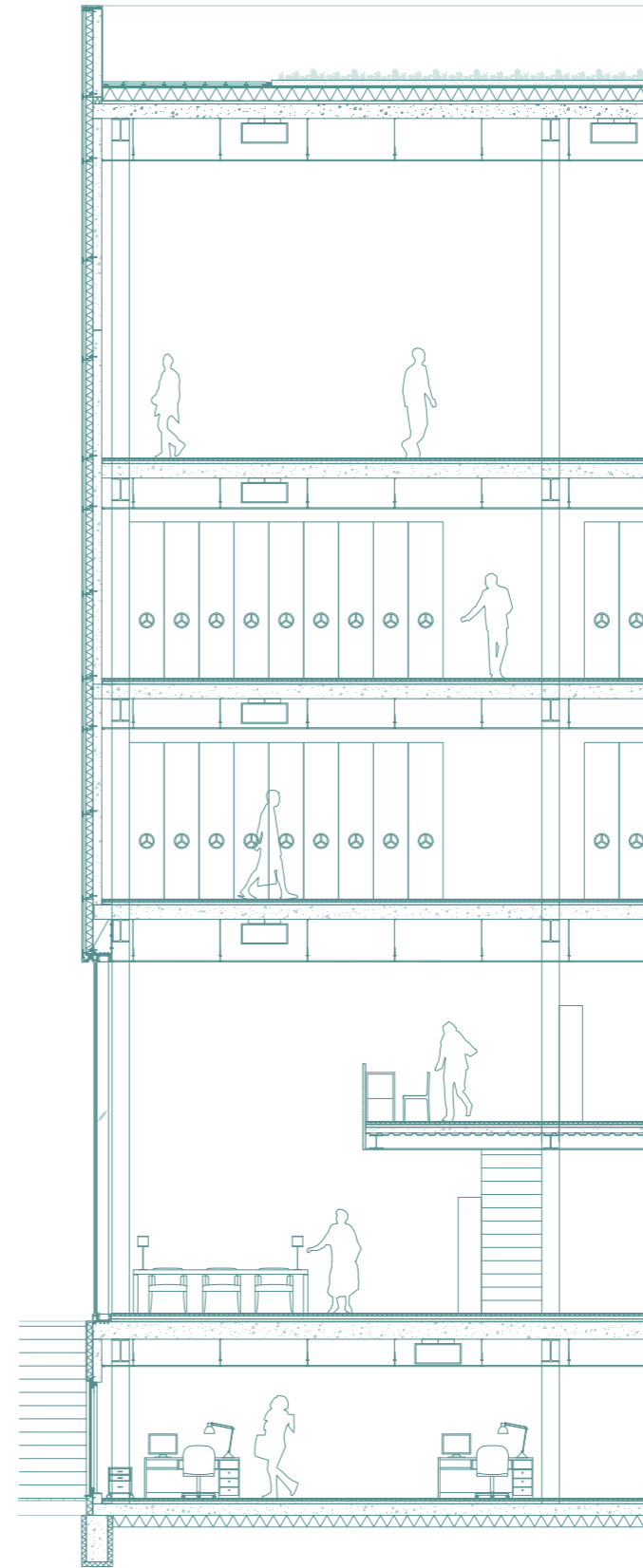
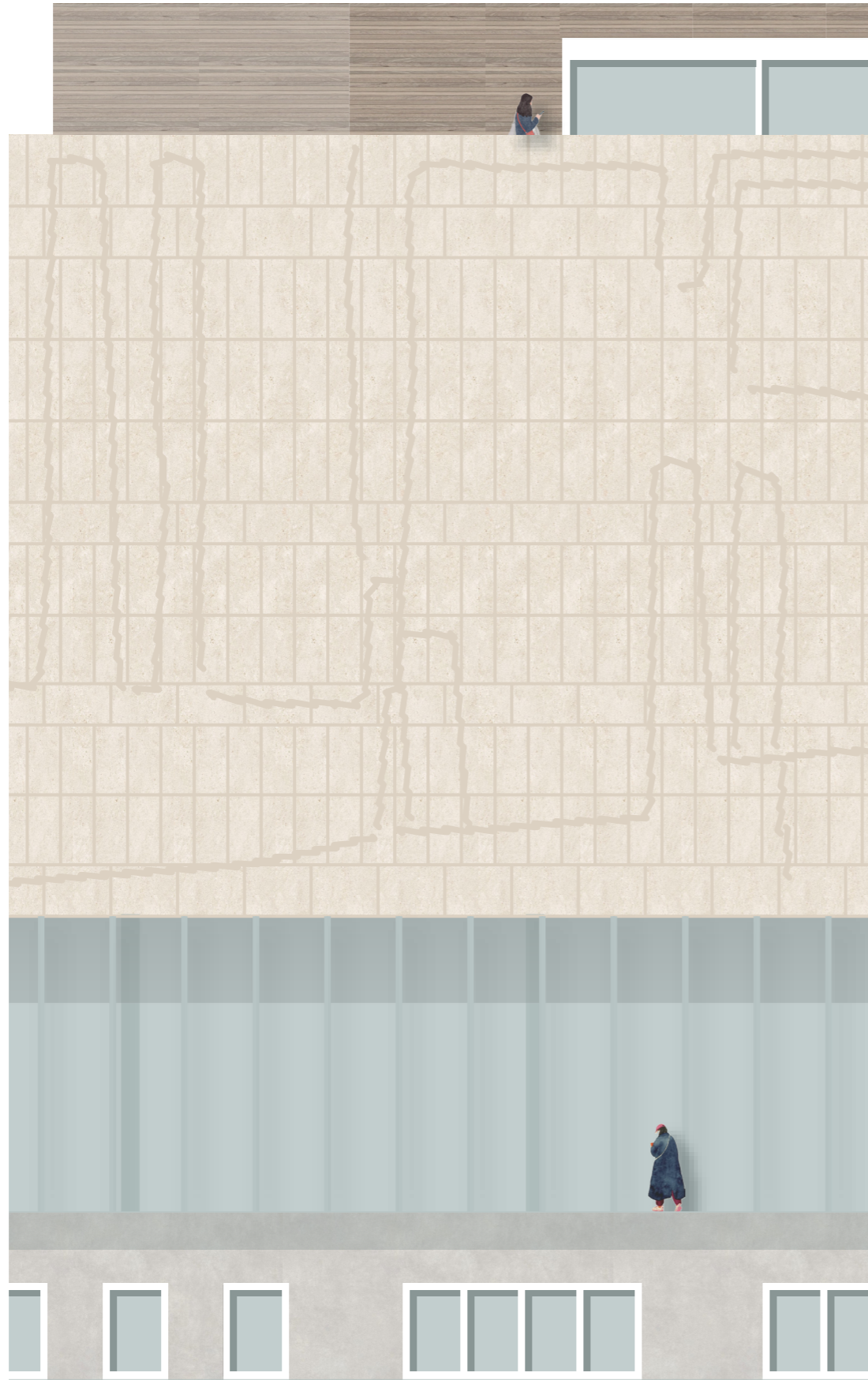


elevation 1:300

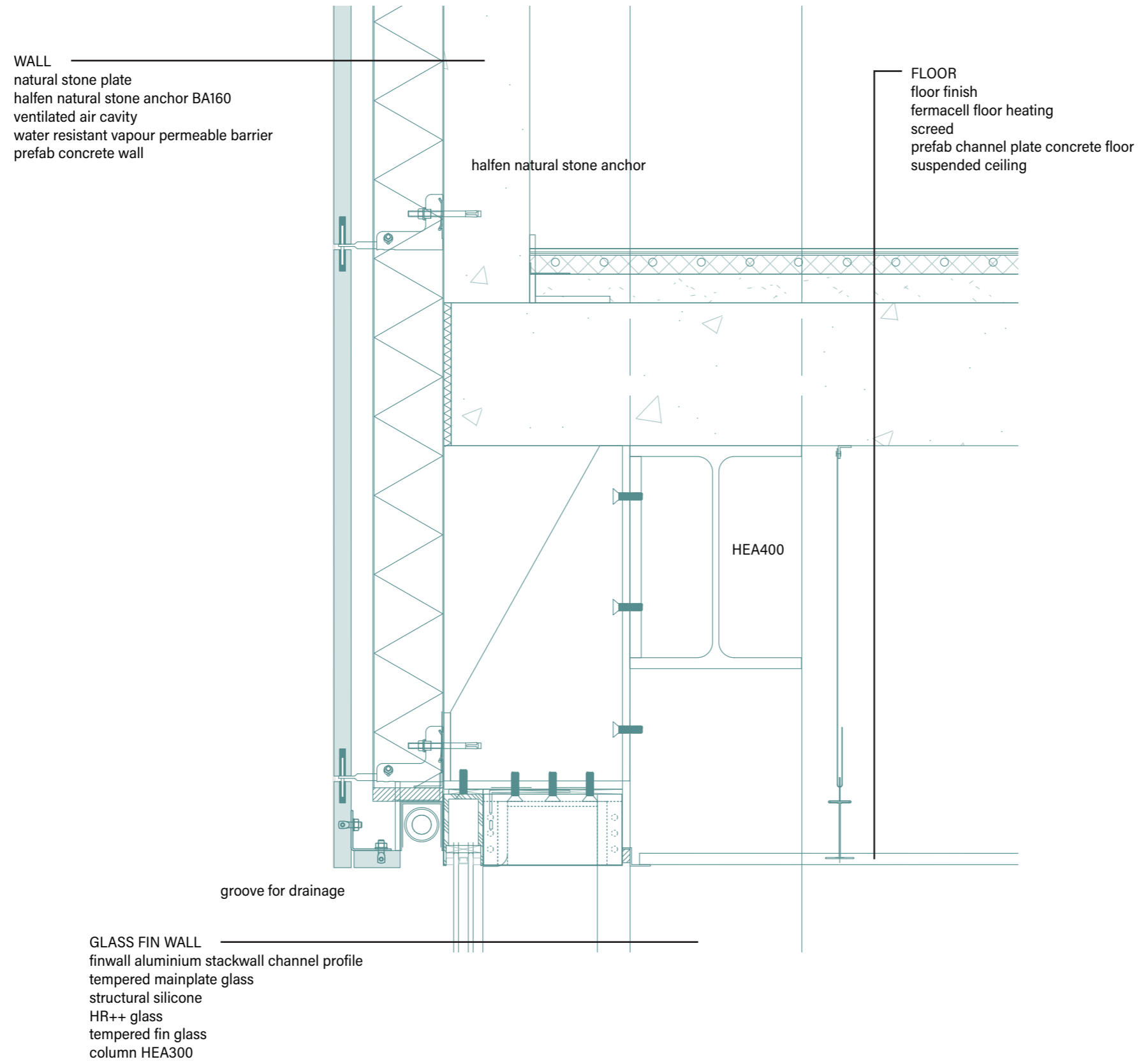
west longitudinal side



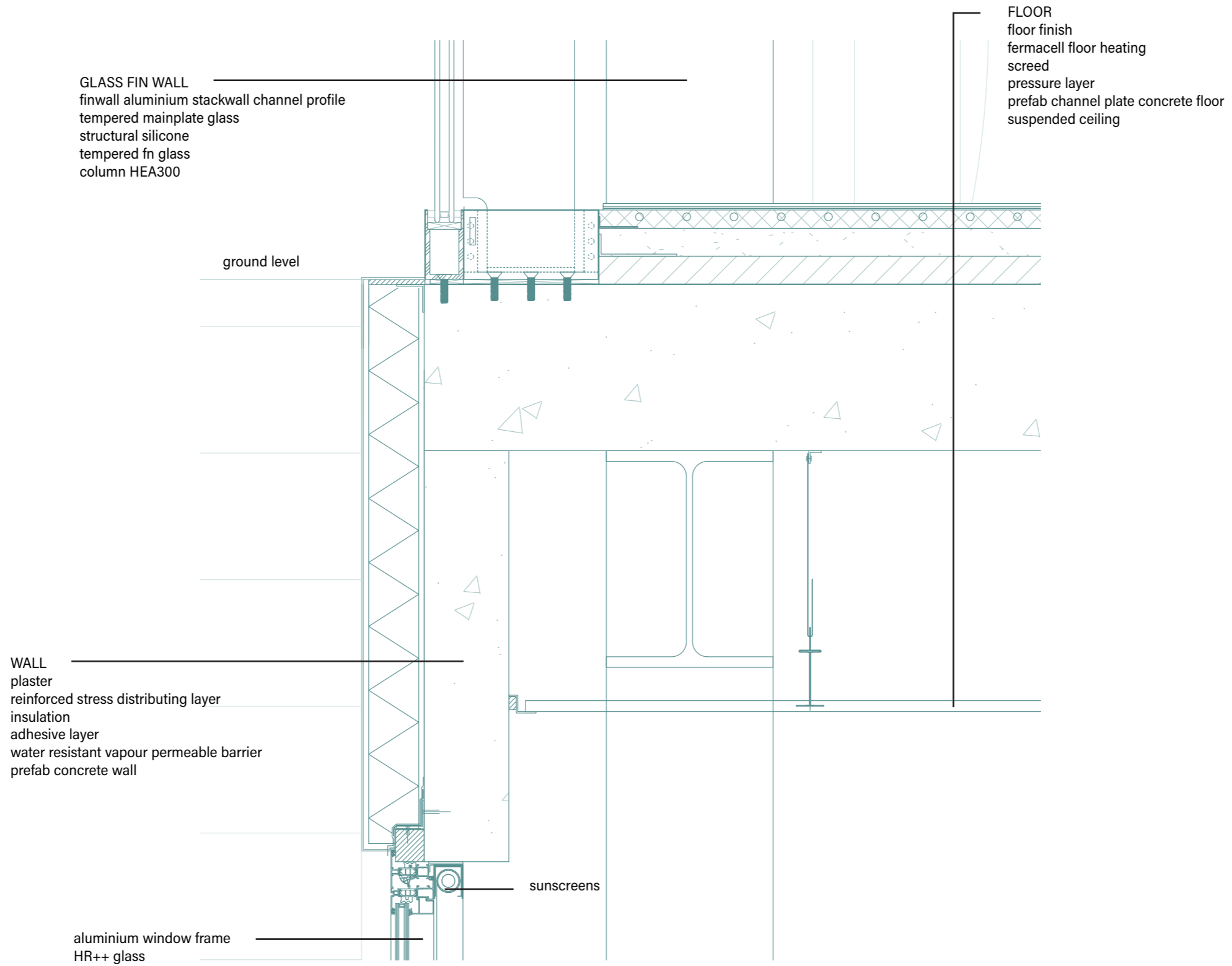
elevation
north short side



facade fragment 1:20



details 1:5



details 1:5



rooftop





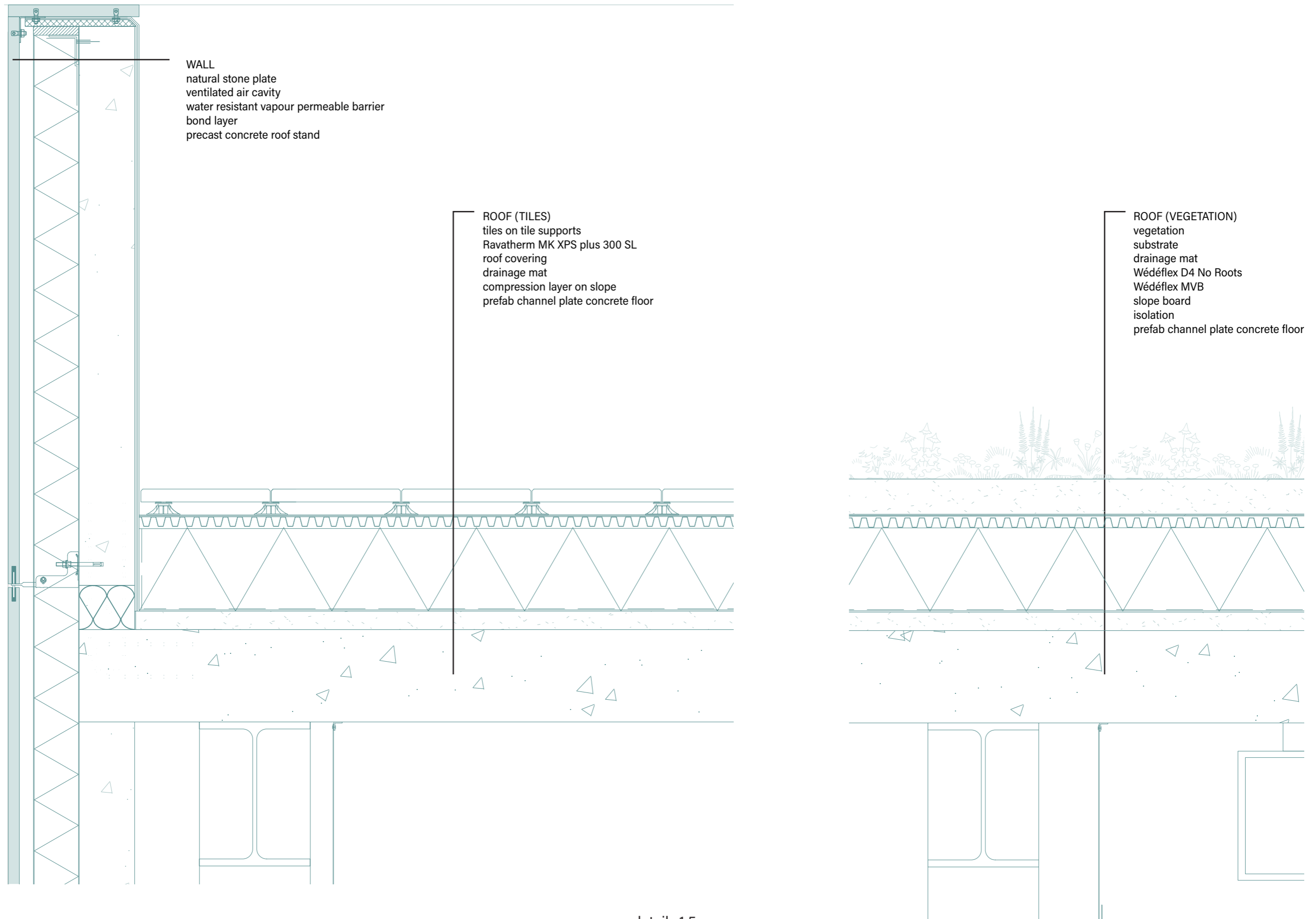
roof plan 1:500



0 1 5 10

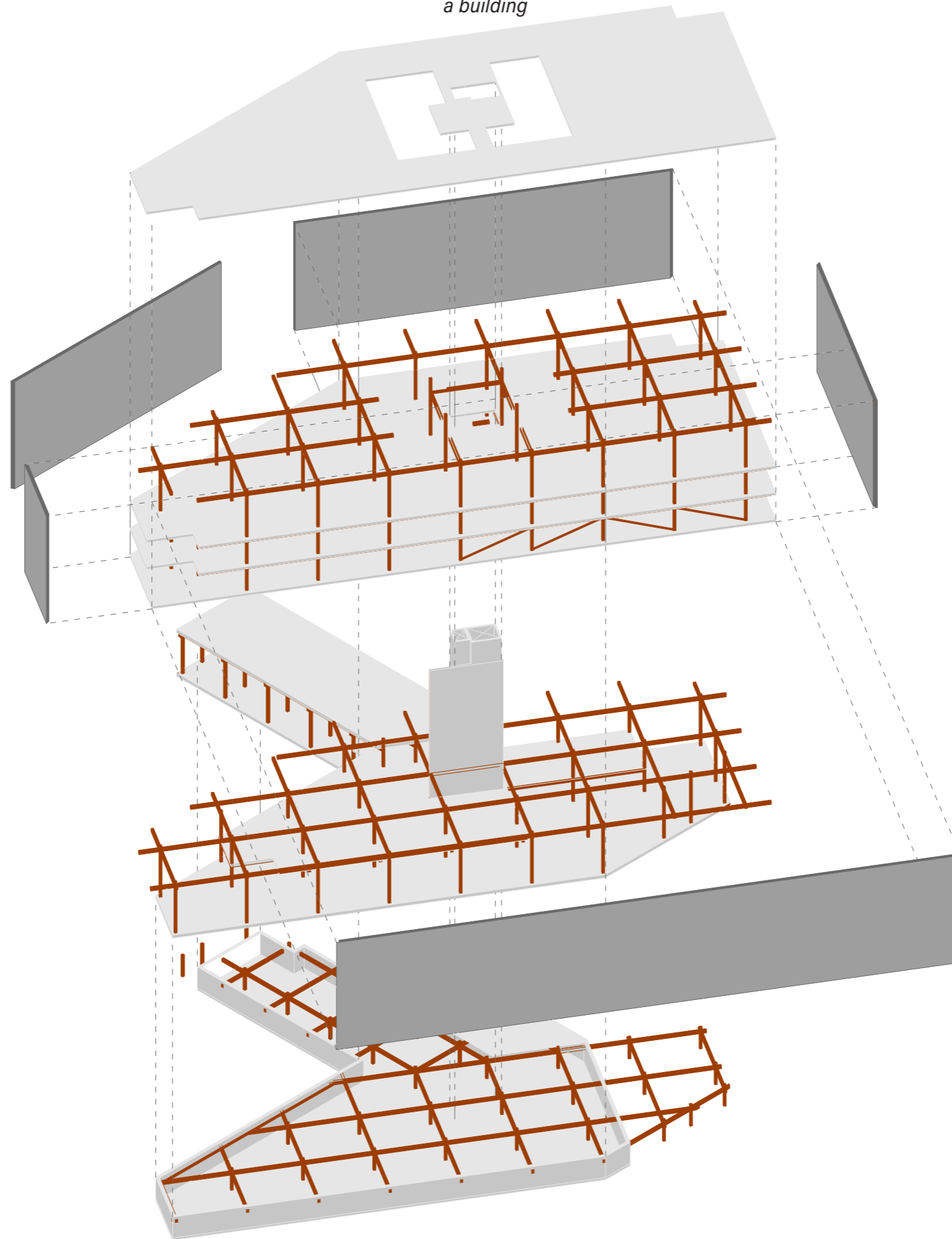


Depot Boijmans van Beuningen, MVRDV



details 1:5

a building

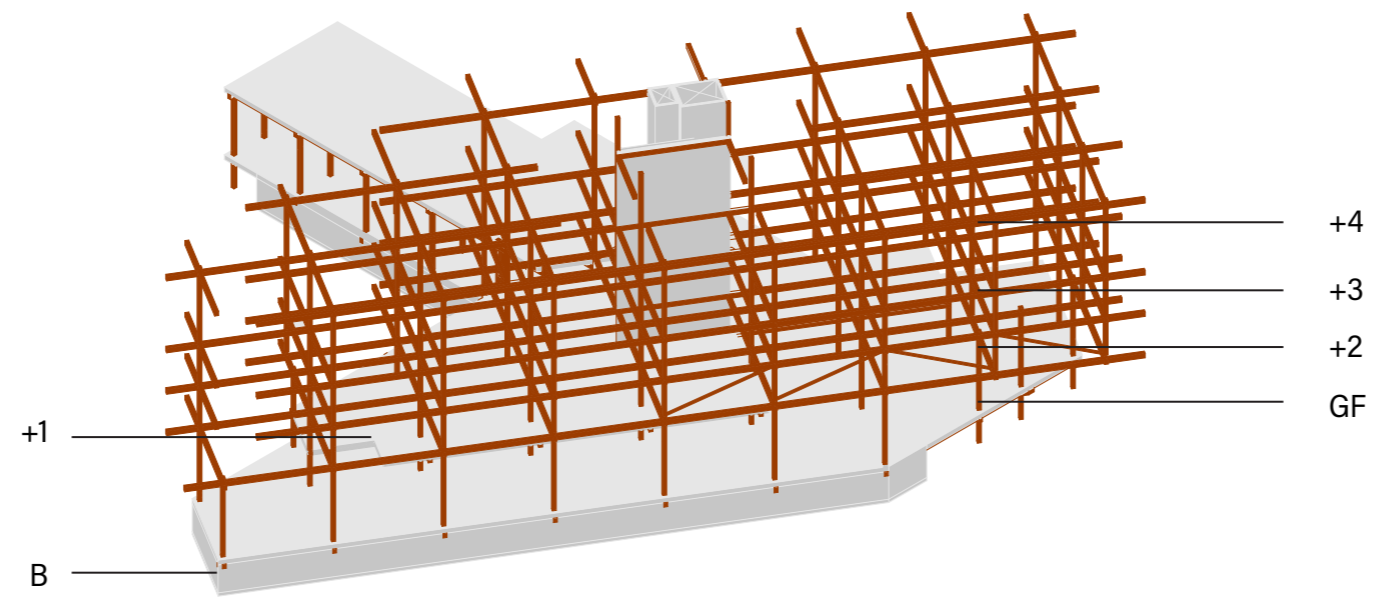


steel beams and columns

concrete structure

concrete facade

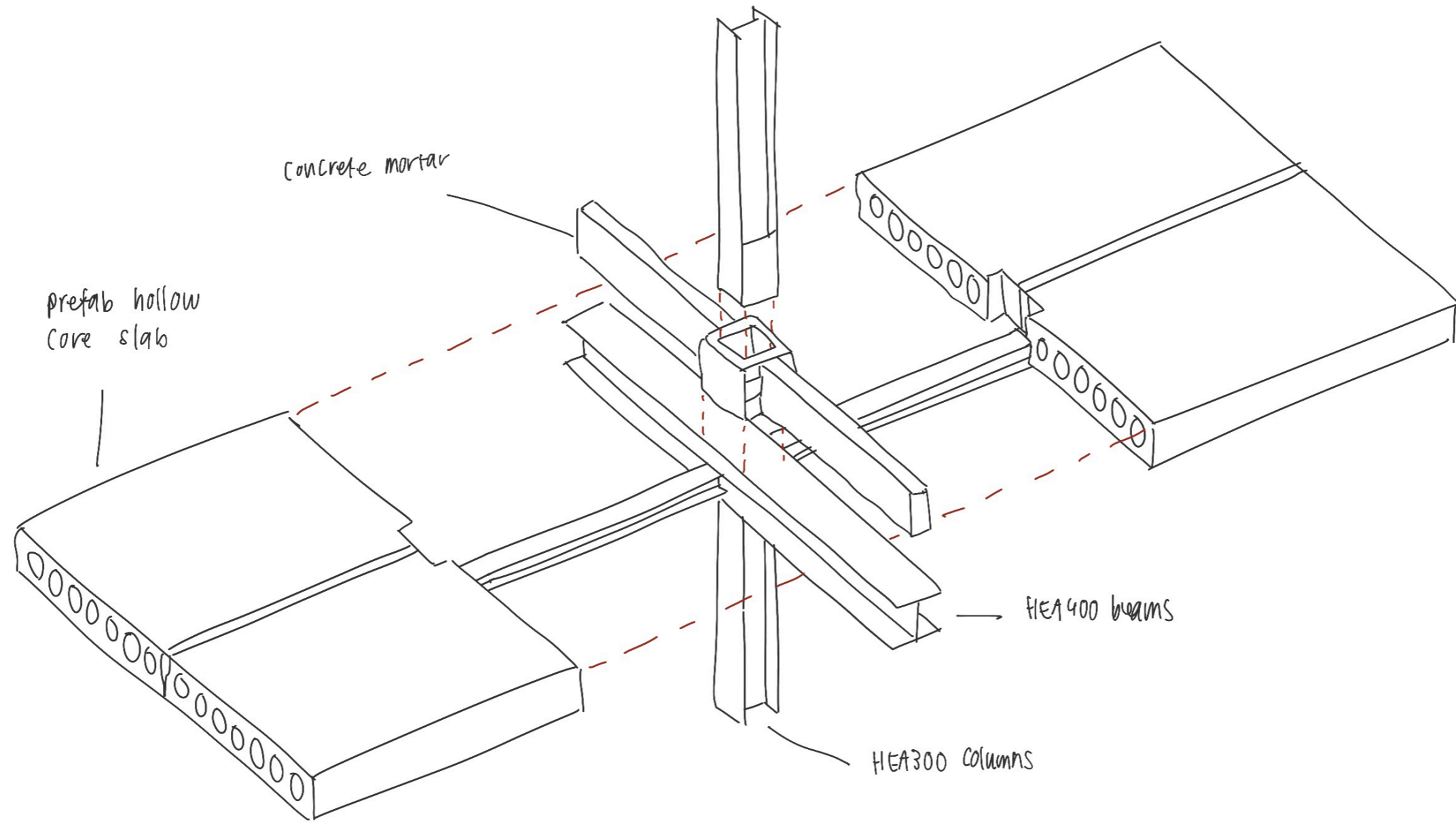
load-bearing structure



steel beams and columns

concrete structure

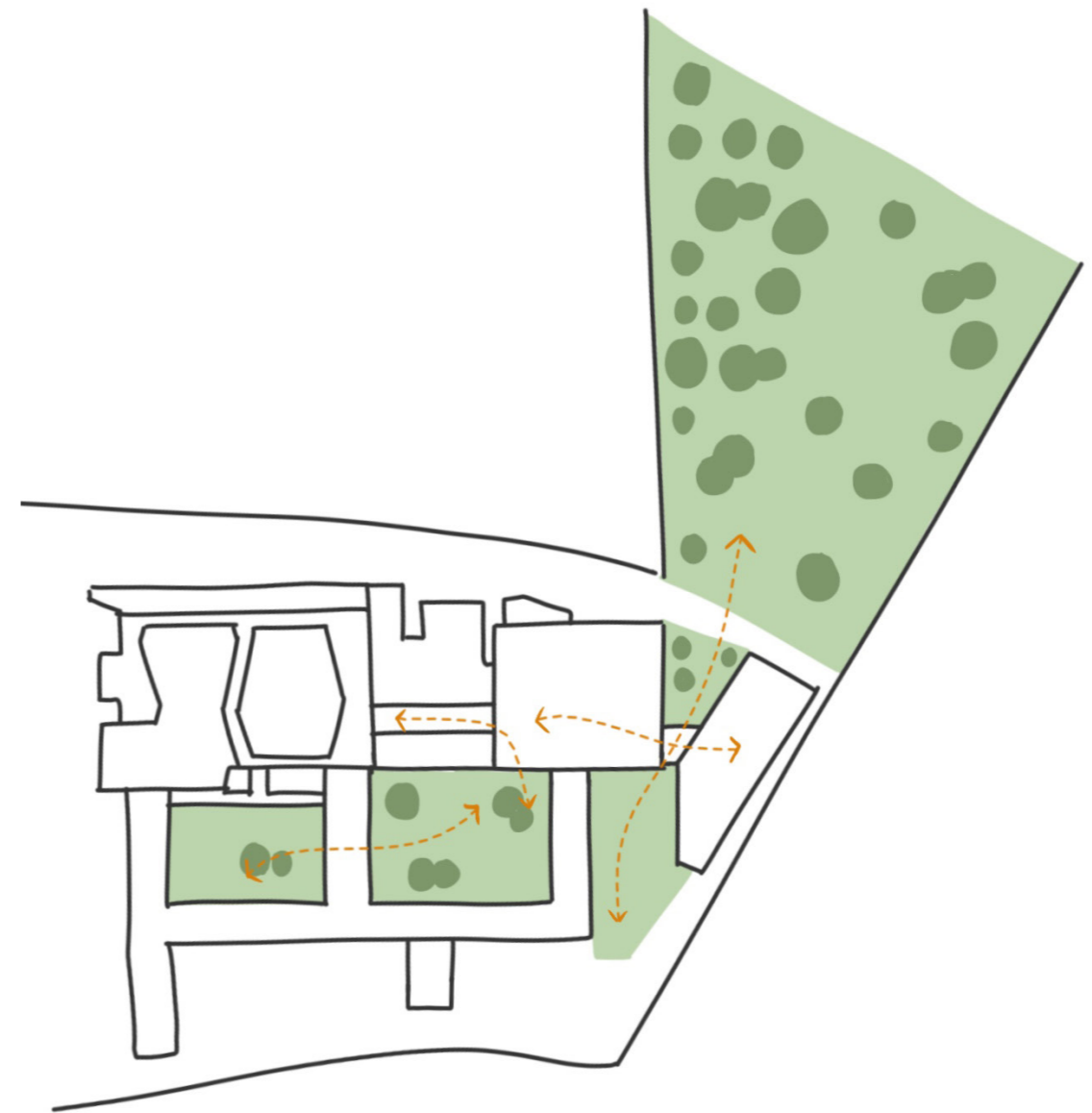
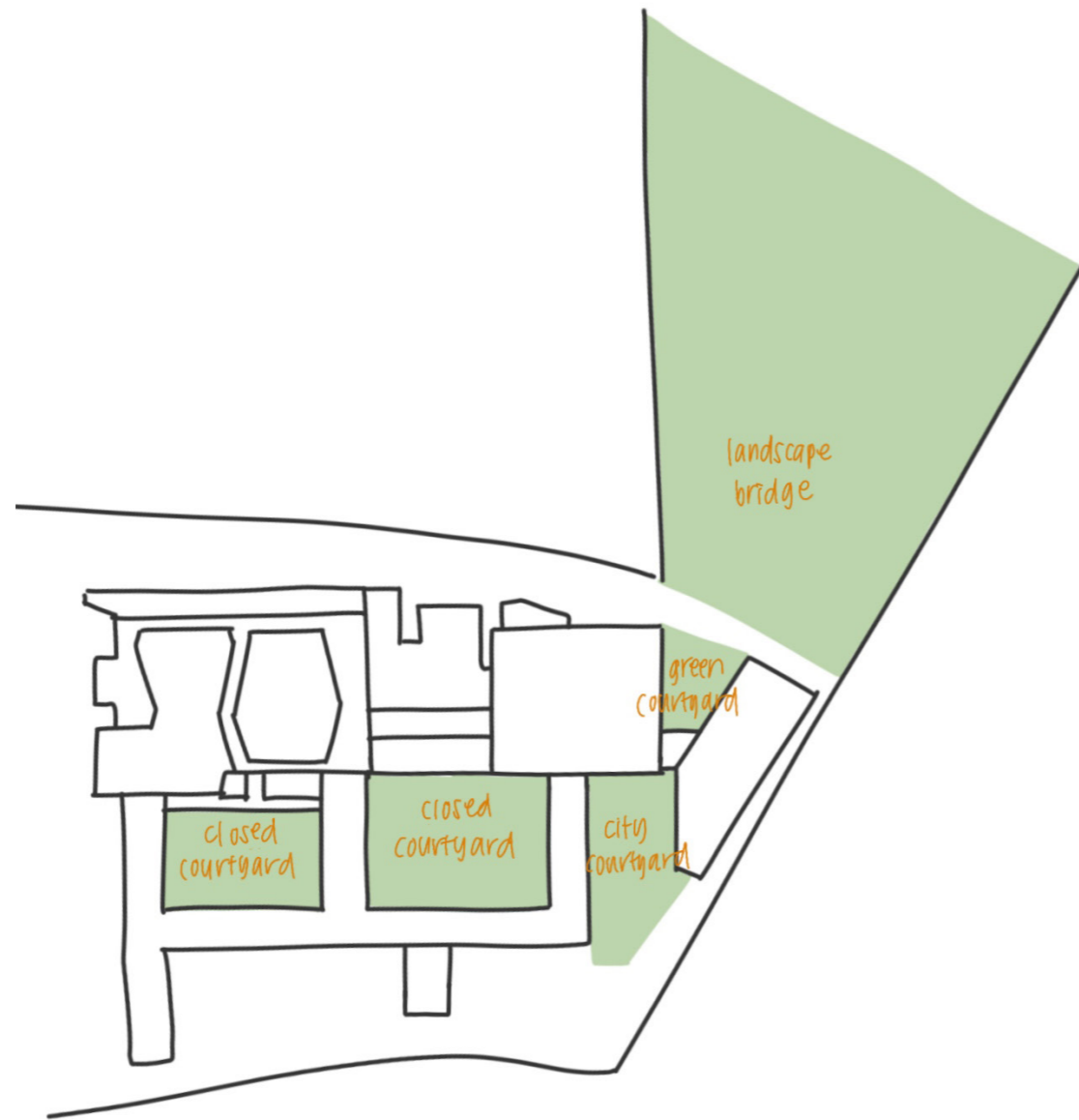
load-bearing structure

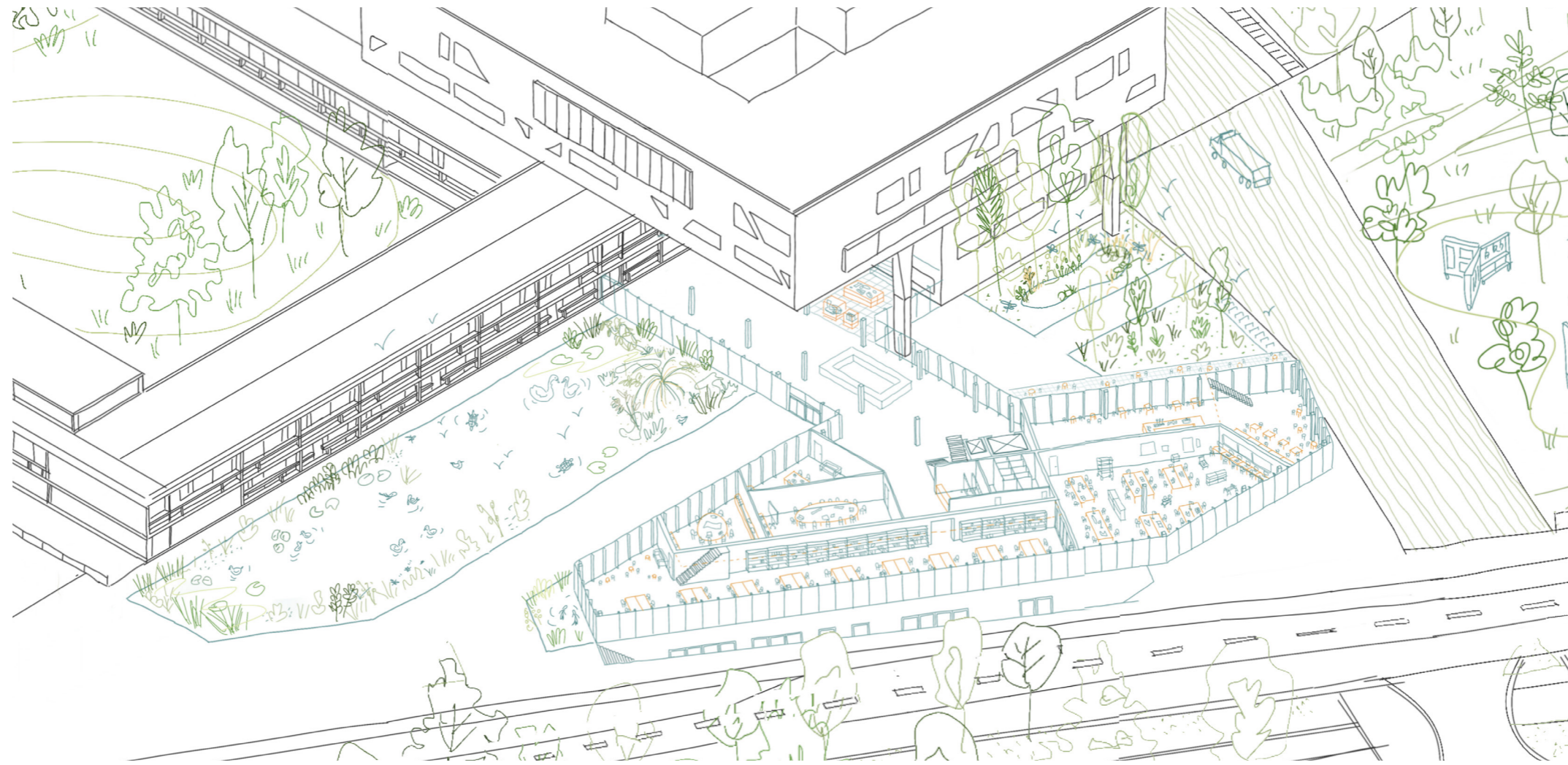


detail floor assembly

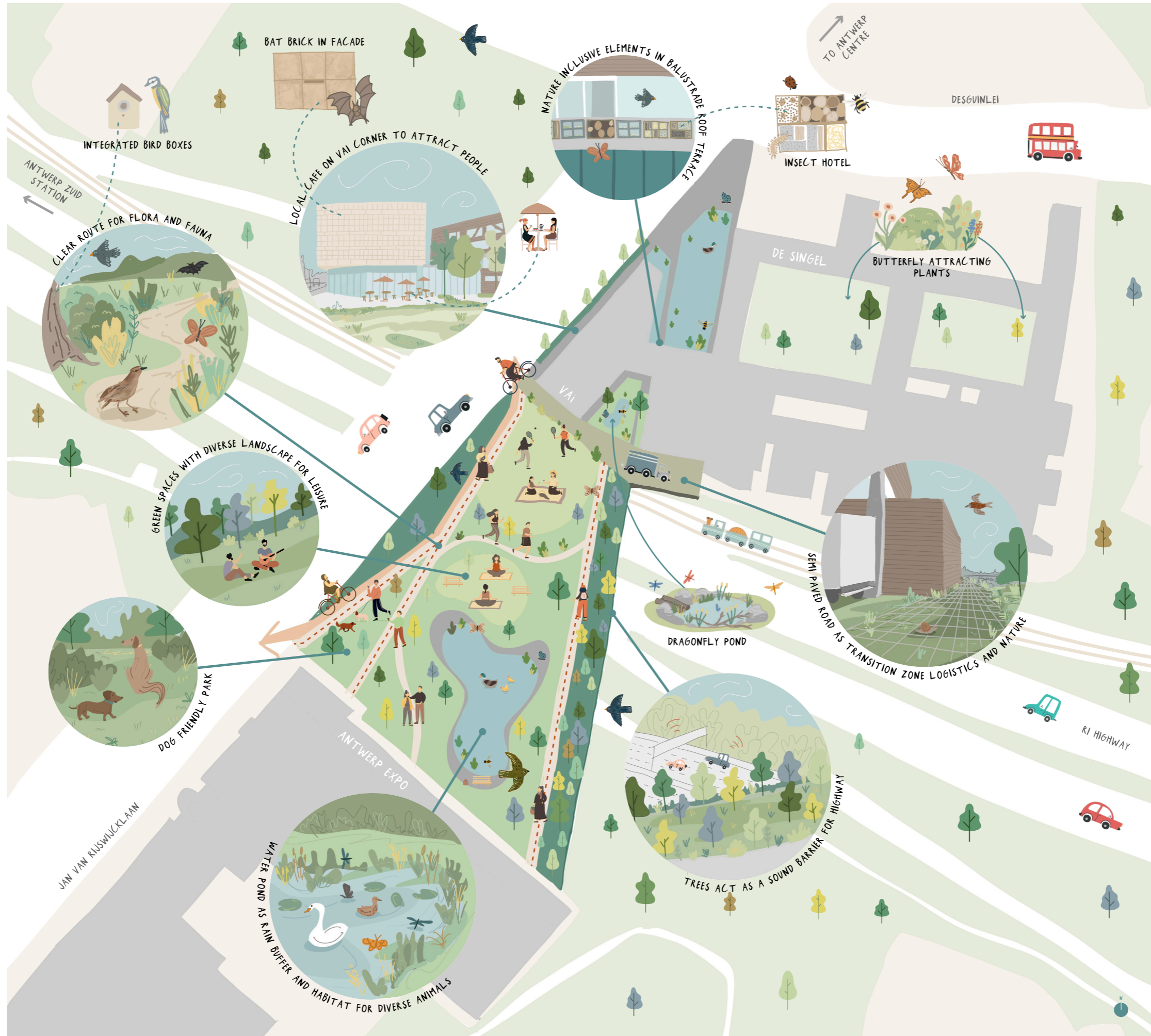
chapter 03. a proposal for connectivity

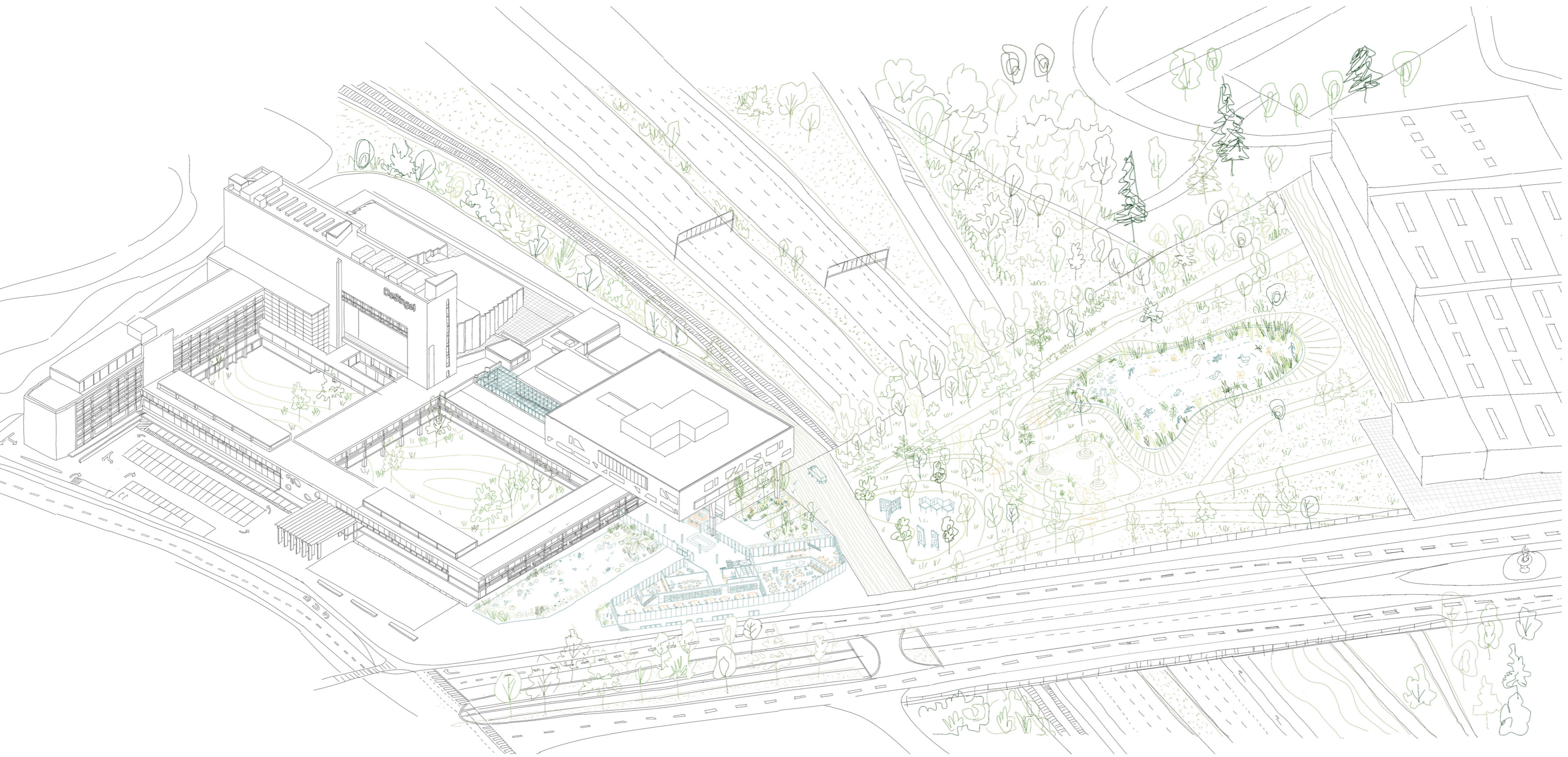
- a. a network
- b. a bridge
- c. a building
- d. a landscape





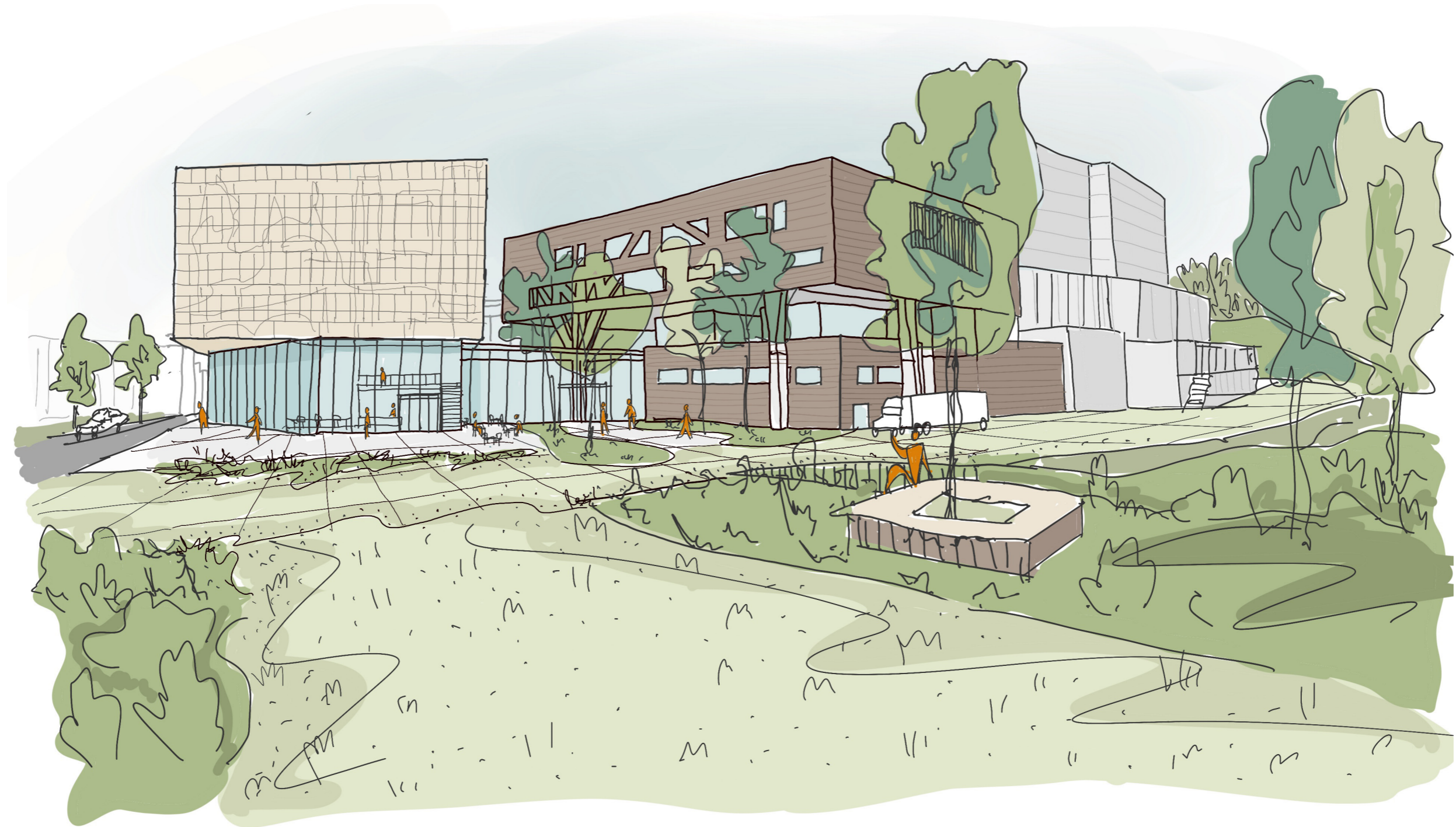
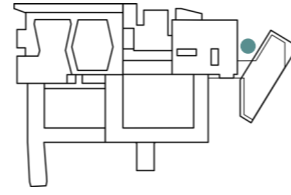
courtyards



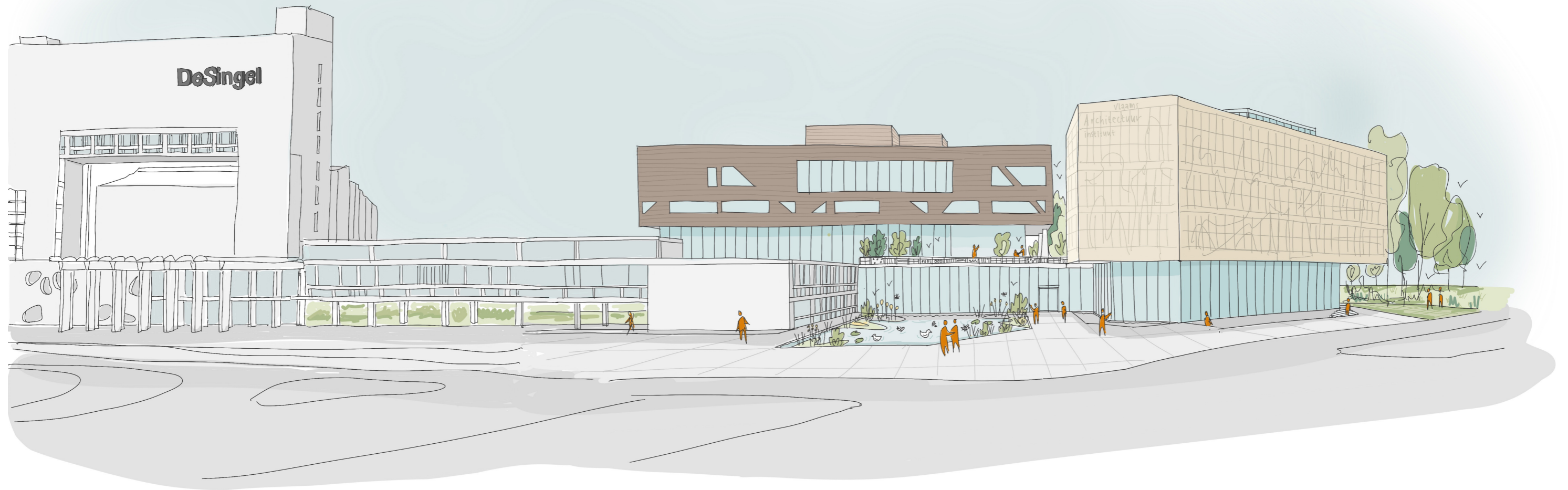
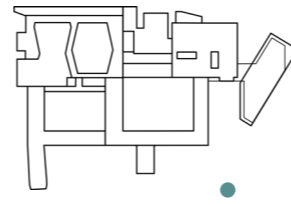








impression
green courtyard



impression
city courtyard

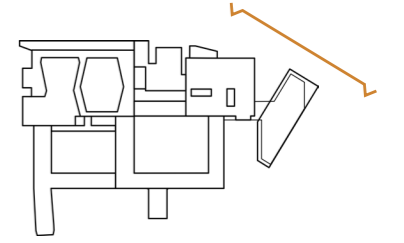




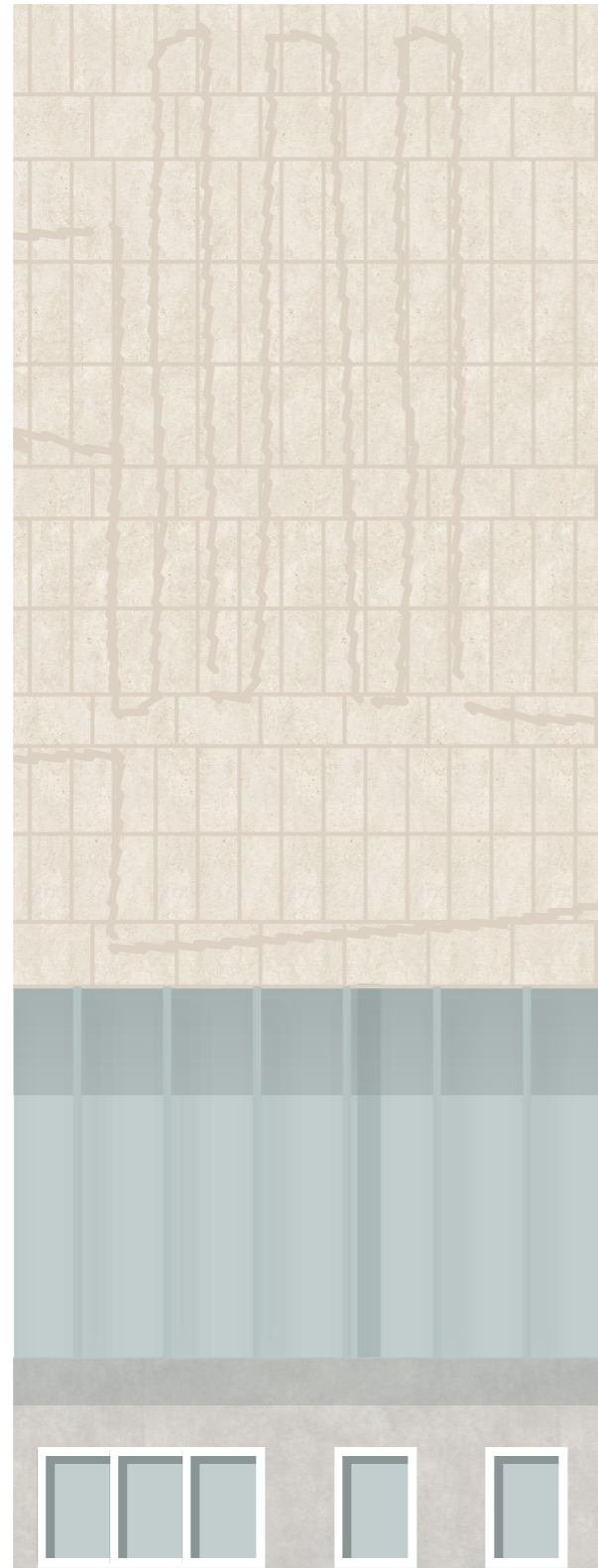
urban - network - building - landscape

thank you!

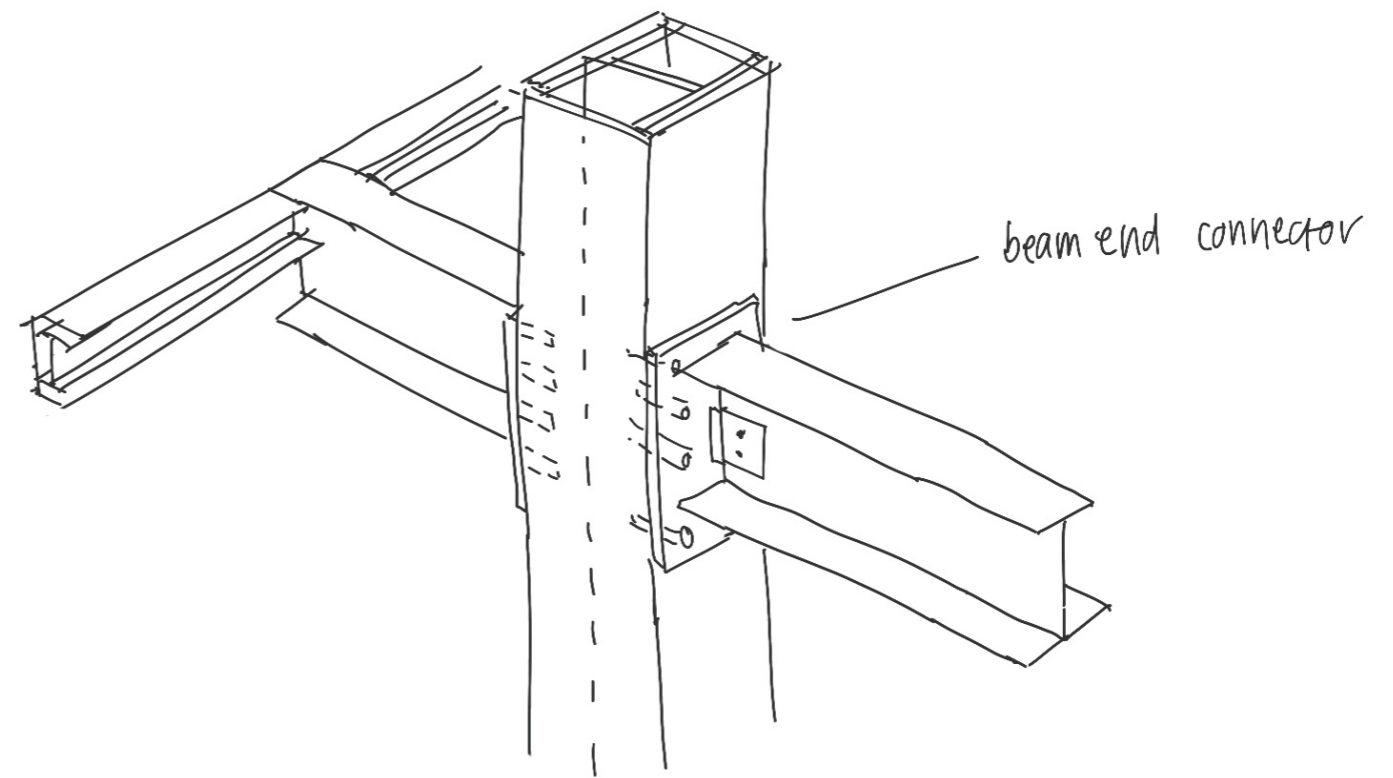
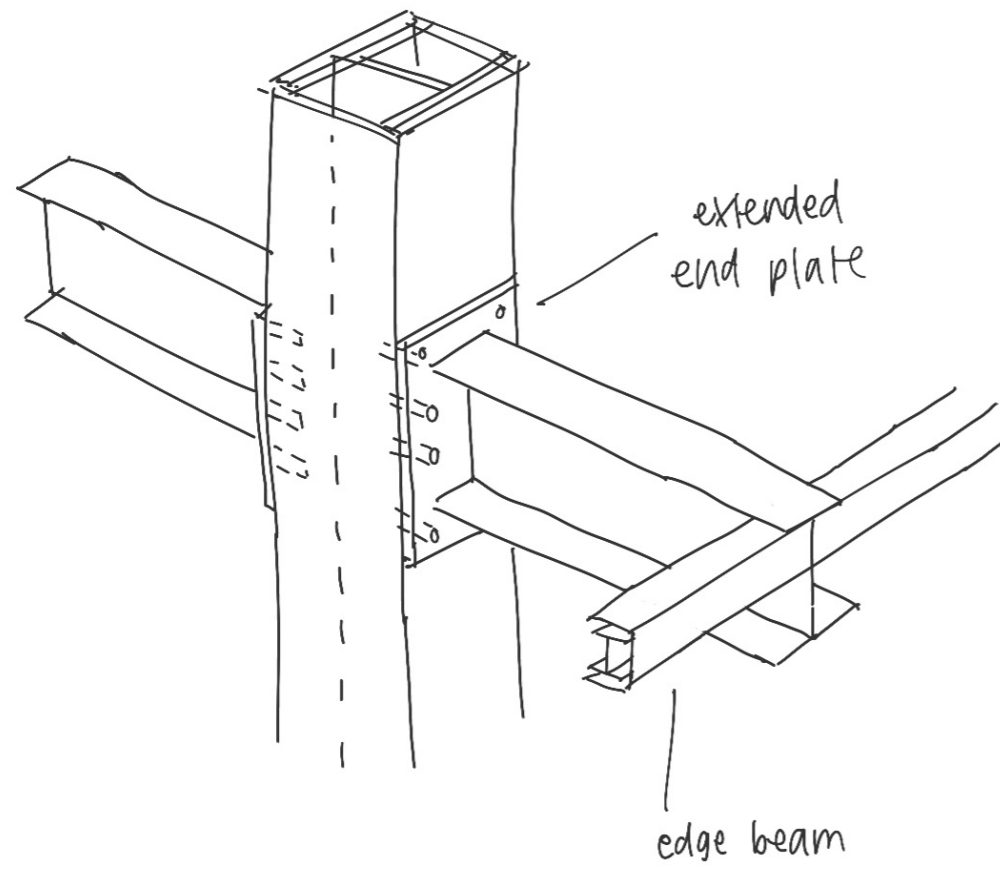




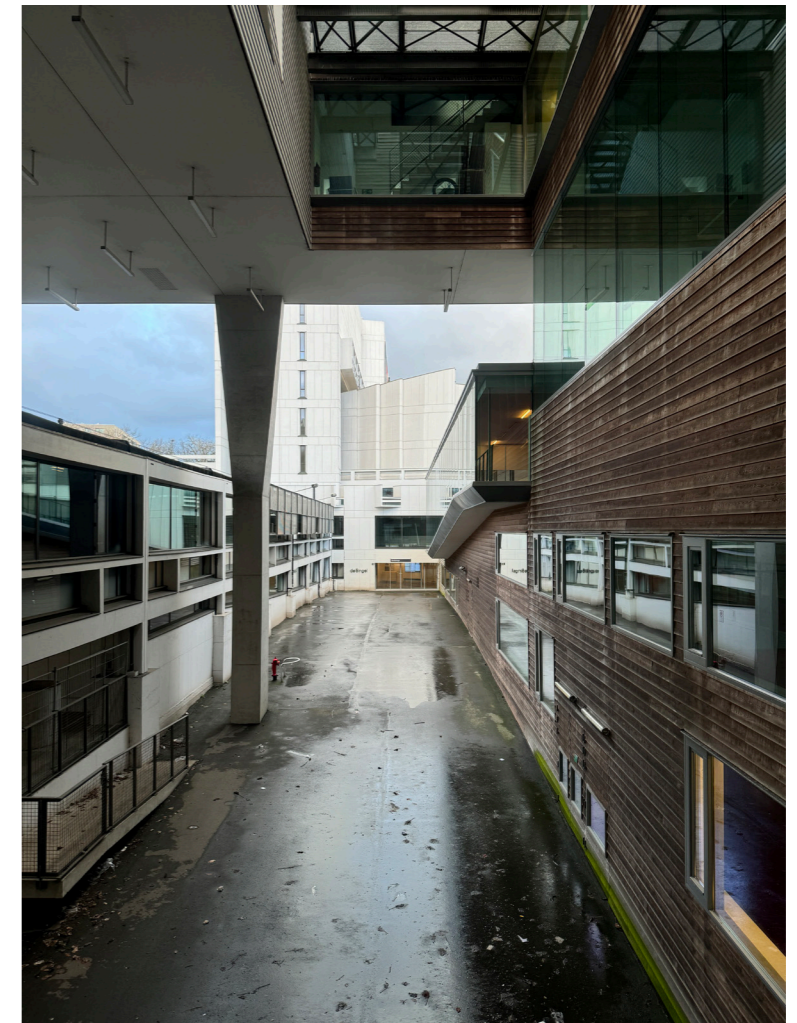
elevation_south_facade



facade weathering



detail cantilever



main hall existing space