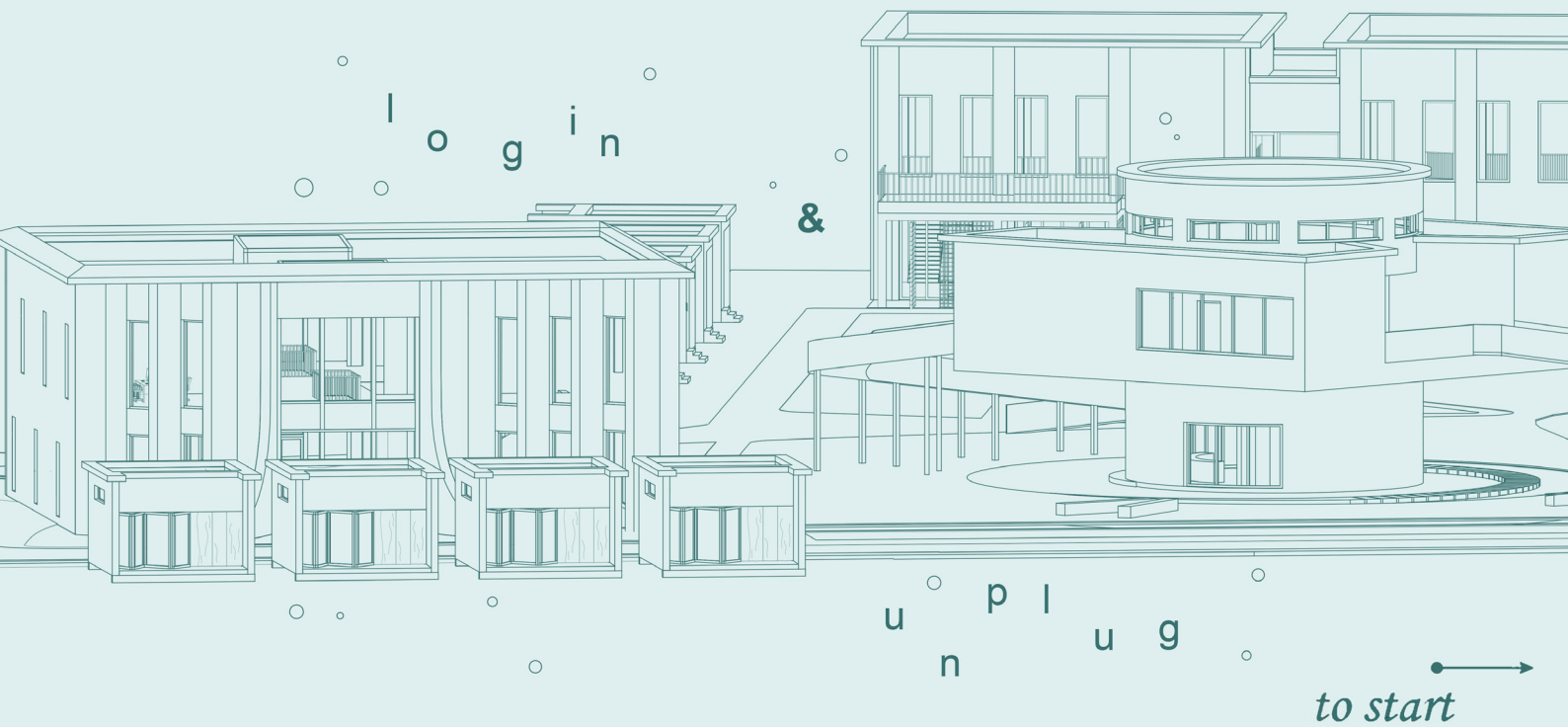


-For the Inhabitant of the Threshold Landscape-

A hub for digital detox.



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Graduation Report

01 Introduction

02 Approach

03 Results

04 Conclusion & discussion

01

Introduction

For the Inhabitant of the Threshold Landscape:

A Hub for Digital Detox

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Keywords: threshold landscape, detox hub, digital nomadism, phenomenology, digital fatigue

Abstract

This graduation project investigates how architecture can respond to the mental strain, detachment and fragmented perception of time intensified by remote work and constant digital connectivity. It proposes a “digital detox hub” as a spatial counter-model that supports slowness, awareness and psychological recovery within everyday life. Developed through a research-by-design methodology, the project combines site analysis, precedent studies, experiential mapping and iterative design testing. The architectural concept is structured around thresholds and transitions, drawing from the hybrid condition of the Dutch landscape, where boundaries between land and water are continuously negotiated. Through phenomenology and critical regionalism, this condition is reinterpreted as a spatial strategy for digital detox. Rather than treating detox as a destination, the design distributes the experience through a sequence of spaces that gradually separate users from digital overstimulation and guide them toward sensory recalibration, consciousness and mental restoration.

Problem statement

This project explores the “Detox Hub” as a spatial response to digital fatigue and the weakening of embodied experience. Taking form in Mareland, Winsum, the proposal investigates how architecture can be perceived as a psychological and sensory framework. Through a sequence of spatial zones, thresholds and atmospheric transitions the project seeks to elicit reflection, withdrawal, encounter and processes of healing.

On a broader scale, the province of Groningen is undergoing a long-term process of spatial and social recovery following decades of gas extraction and induced seismic activity. In response, the Dutch government introduced the Nij Begun agenda, a thirty-year plan that seeks to move beyond repair toward regeneration, endeavoring to stimulate sustainable economic development rooted in local identity.

In Winsum these ambitions intersect with persistent challenges: tourism remains largely seasonal, while many younger residents leave for education and employment in larger cities without returning. This produces a fragile condition in which the village requires spatial and programmatic strategies that can support year-round activity, accommodate emerging forms of work and create renewed reasons for residents and visitors to remain connected to the area.

Parallel to these regional challenges, patterns of work and habitation are undergoing fundamental transformation. Remote work, digital nomadism and forms of neo-nomadism are rapidly expanding creating new possibilities for small places such as Winsum. However, these lifestyles are often associated with prolonged screen exposure, digital fatigue, social isolation and a diminished sense of physical presence. The architectural debate around cognitive wellness, rural regeneration and post-digital living therefore becomes central to this project.

The spatial challenge of Mareland lies in its position as a separated edge between the village of Winsum and the open landscape. For a detox hub, this separation is a necessary condition as recovery from digital fatigue requires distance from everyday intensity, but this distance should not become isolation.

The design challenge is to transform Mareland’s fragmented border into a sequenced detox landscape: a spatial framework that guides users through different degrees of withdrawal, encounter, reflection and reconnection. Through zoning and thresholds architecture weaves together fragmented realities.

Relevance

My research explores the design of architectural environments that address the challenges of digital overstimulation and constant connectivity in contemporary society. By creating spaces that encourage individuals to unplug and re-establish a meaningful relationship with their physical surroundings, architecture is positioned as an intermediary between people and their environment. The proposal seeks to foster a stronger sense of affiliation with place while counteracting the fragmentation of reality often associated with digital culture. By implementing transition spaces and segregation moments I am stressing how this sequence can induce healing.

Architecture therefore frames as a critical mediator between contemporary socio-technical conditions and embodied spatial experience. In response to digitally dependent ways of living, it challenges this tendency to address well-being. Hence, it reasserts phenomenology as an operative architectural framework, arguing that spatial sequencing and atmospheric conditions can recalibrate perception of time by foregrounding sensuous experiences.

By focusing on thresholds and their phenomena of spatial perception, this project contributes to an architectural discourse that reconsiders these underappreciated spaces. It proposes engagement with the *threshold landscape* as gradual transition from online saturated environments to outdoor experience and slowness.

At a societal level, this project critically responds to the increasing normalization of digital fatigue, remote work exhaustion and social fragmentation. Instead of proposing an escapist environment, the project articulates architecture as a collective framework for re-embodiment, where mental well-being emerges through sensory engagement. In this respect it aligns with the ambitions of Nij Begun to foster health and improve quality of life.

By proposing year-round regenerative forms of tourism and introducing the figure of digital nomad, it challenges seasonal tourism models that marginalize local communities, triggering concurrently positive models for economic development and social cohesion.

Research and Design questions

Main question:

“How can architecture, through thresholds, spatial and sensory transitioning act as a prescription for digital detox?”

Subsequent questions:

1. User experience:

How can environmental elements such as water, vegetation, light and materiality be spatially sequenced to reduce cognitive load and enhance embodied experience?

2. Typology:

How can a hybrid detox hub combine private accommodation for digital nomads with public programs for the local community?

3. Tourism:

How can architecture support year-round regenerative tourism rooted in local identity and participation?

Scope

This project envisions a 2,500 m² Detox Hub in Mareland, Winsum, exploring how a detox hub can mediate between local and transient use, landscape and built environment, to support embodied experience and regenerative tourism.

The program includes multifunctional communal spaces for local residents, co-working spaces for digital nomads, small-scale guest accommodation, activity and workshop spaces, rental and access facilities. Finally, outdoor spaces are integral to the architectural concept, extending the program into the landscape and enabling informal gathering, movement and interaction.

02

Methods

The project follows a Research by Design methodology, in which design operates simultaneously as a mode of inquiry and as a form of knowledge production. Rather than separating analysis from proposal, theory from practice or research from imagination, the project treats these components as interdependent. The overarching design strategy is structured around two interrelated principles: hybridity and multiplicity.

The research began with a preliminary thematic investigation into the figure of the tourist as the target user, alongside the themes of memory, identity and monumentality. This initial research helped frame the project's socio-cultural position and established the relationship between tourism, collective memory and place identity. In parallel, qualitative stakeholder interviews were conducted in order to understand local perspectives, everyday use patterns and expectations related to tourism. These interviews provided insight into how the site is currently perceived, used and imagined by different groups.

A significant part of the methodology consisted of site-specific spatial and sensory mapping. Existing conditions were documented through observation, sketching, psychogeographical mapping, soundscape mapping, wind direction studies and the analysis of existing spatial typologies and sequences. These techniques made it possible to understand the site not only as a physical location, but also as an experiential landscape shaped by movement, atmosphere, exposure, orientation and perception. The fieldwork findings were then translated into a contextual analysis, including a three-dimensional tourist map that visualized spatial relations, routes, points of attention and experiential qualities.

The project also used data-based and literature-based research to position the design within broader contemporary debates. This included research into slow and regenerative tourism models, digital fatigue, collective memory, local history and the maritime identity of Winsum. Comparative case study analysis was used to study how atmosphere, materiality, sequencing and sensory modulation can influence well-being and spatial experience. Projects by Peter Zumthor were examined for their careful use of material presence, atmosphere, tactility and light. Concurrently, Dimitris Pikionis's work was studied for its understanding of topography, memory and lived experience as generators of architectural form. His approach to paths, fragments, ground conditions and embodied movement helped inform the project's treatment of walking as more than a functional connection. In addition, the theoretical framework was developed around the concepts of thresholds, phenomenology, public space, critical regionalism and spatial sequencing. The design process therefore functioned as an iterative method: research findings generated design tests, while design tests revealed new questions about movement, atmosphere, memory and use.



Figure 1: Contextual analysis, public functions of Winsum.



Figure 2: Contextual analysis, functional zoning of Winsum.



Figure 3: Mapping the Physical Setting of Winsum.

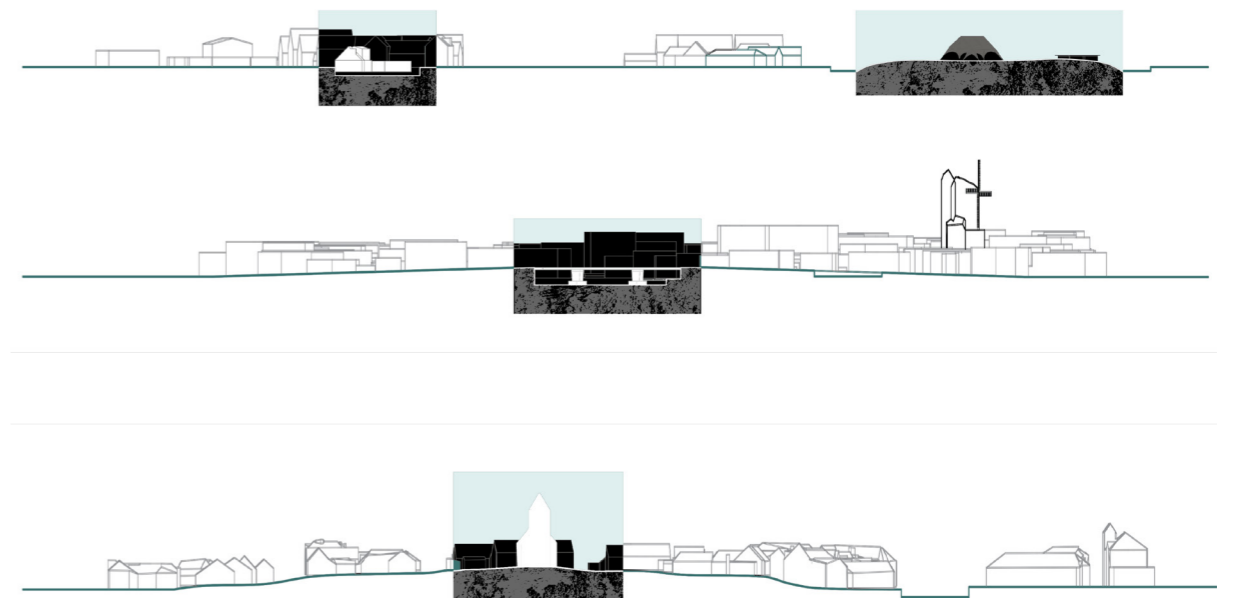


Figure 4: Mapping thresholds in Winsum, identifying zones where the spatial character shifts, such as transitions between land and water, village and open landscape, or low ground to elevated ground. This contextual reading established the foundation for interpreting Winsum as a threshold landscape composed of sequential conditions rather than fixed boundaries.

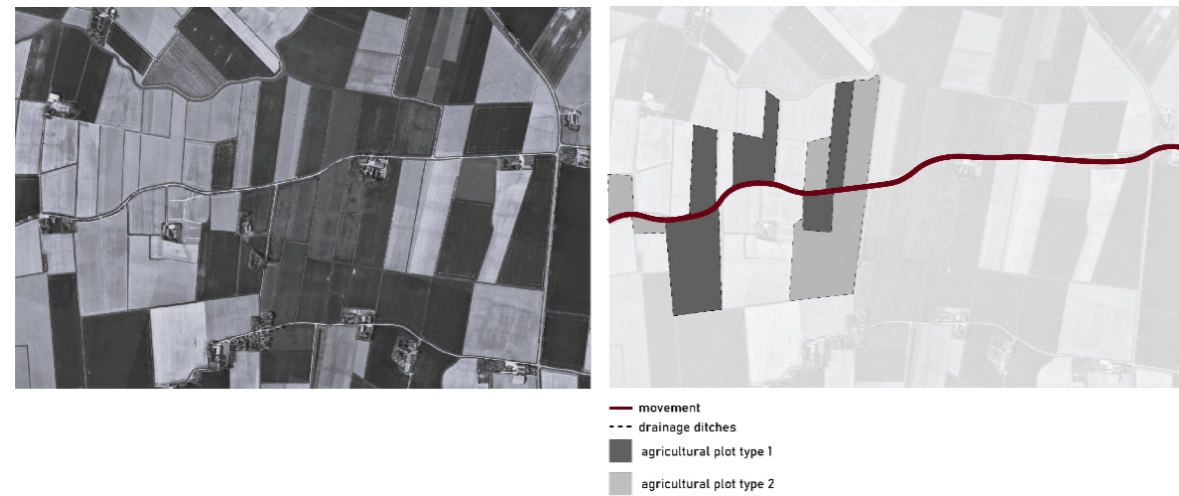


Figure 5: Concept diagram of primary elements of Dutch agricultural landscape.

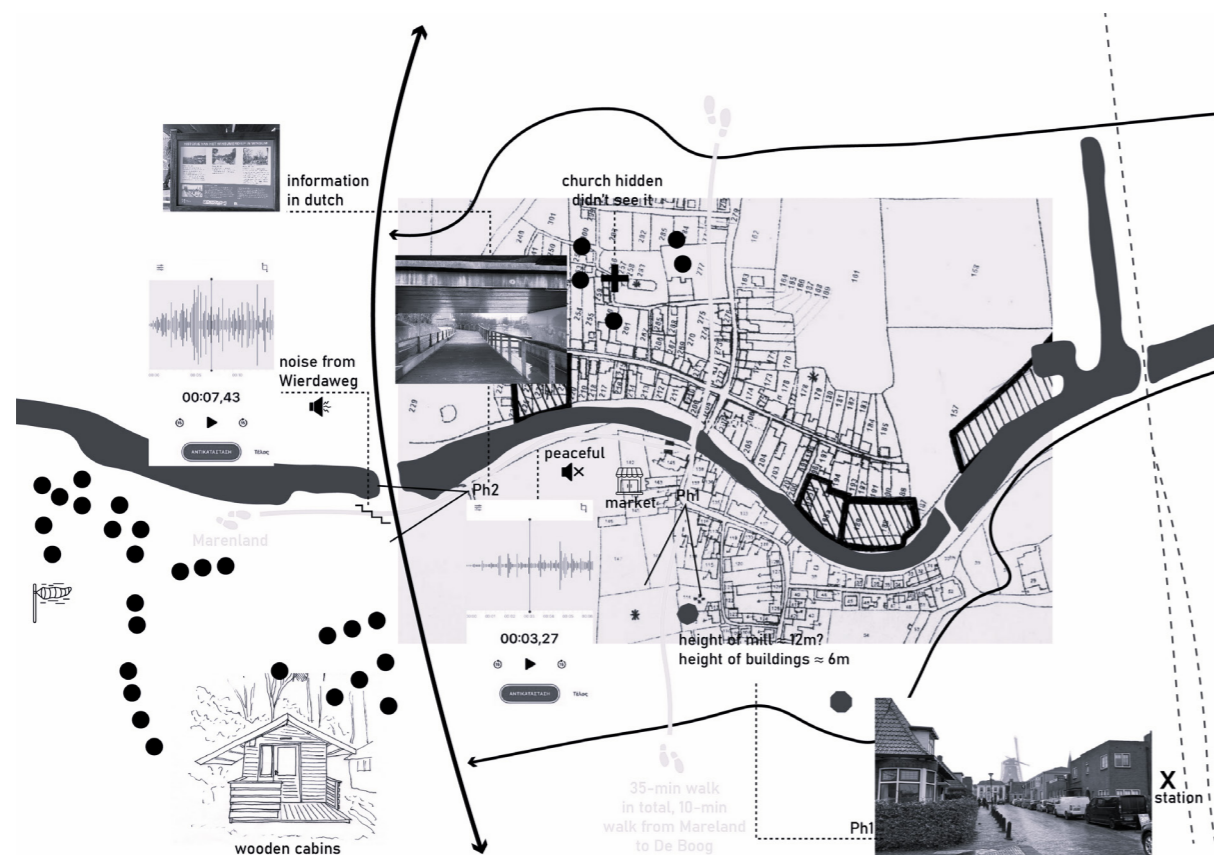


Figure 6: Site visit analysis mapping psychogeographical patterns.

Theoretical framework

This project is grounded in architectural theories that address the relationship between spatial experience, embodiment and contemporary digitally mediated reality. Central to the framework is the concept of the in-between, understood as a spatial condition that mediates between **public** and **private** realms. Rather than enforcing rigid separations, **intermediary spaces** allow for gradual transitions that encourage shared use, informal occupation, and social interaction. Such spaces support a balance between individual presence and collective life (Hertzberger, 1991; Gehl, 2011; Van Eyck, 1962).

Phenomenology forms a key theoretical foundation of the project. Influenced by the work of Juhani Pallasmaa, the project challenges visually dominant and efficiency-driven approaches to design by emphasizing **multisensory engagement**. Pallasmaa is critical of technological culture for separating people from their senses, producing settings that provoke detachment. Moreover, he argues that life-enhancing architecture should address all the senses and that space should be understood not as an image, but as an experiential field, unfolding through the body over time (Pallasmaa, 2024).

The concept of the **threshold** operates as a unifying spatial principle. Understood as an articulation between different spaces and realities, the threshold is treated as a key architectural condition rather than a residual zone (Boettger, 2014). Extended thresholds allow for gradual **transitions** between states such as digital and physical, individual and collective, or built and natural.

Moreover, the project draws on Kenneth Frampton's theory of **critical regionalism** particularly in its attention to site-specific conditions and embodied experience. Critical regionalism resists the abstraction and placelessness often associated with universal architectural approaches, instead emphasizing the particular qualities of topography, climate, materiality and light. Frampton describes architecture as regional when it responds to the physical character of its site, from the terrain into which it is placed to the changing play of local light across its surfaces. In this sense, light is not only a visual element but a means through which volume, atmosphere and tectonic presence are revealed. Moreover, Frampton foregrounds the tactile and sensory dimensions of architecture, arguing that space is perceived through temperature, humidity, air movement, sound, smell, material texture and bodily movement, rather than through sight alone (Frampton, 1983).

Finally, the research is further informed by reflections on **digital reality** and its impact on bodily experience. Drawing on Toyo Ito, the contemporary subject is understood as inhabiting a dual condition, simultaneously present in virtual environments and in the physical body (Panetsos, 2018). This split condition foregrounds the need for architectural environments that support **re-embodiment**.

03

Design Principles

The detox hub's spatial organization is driven by a zoning strategy that integrates programme, circulation and landscape interaction. Detox is approached not as an isolated function but as a spatial condition that emerges through the reintroduction of perceptive awareness. The landscape operates as an amplifier of this experience, structuring a sequence of environments that guide the user from overstimulation to restoration. The program is organized into three primary zones: privacy, restoration and collective thresholds. This results in a composition of dispersed volumes embedded within the landscape. Fragmenting the program responds to both context and experience: it preserves the small-scale character of Marenland while creating a sequence of transitions that heightens bodily awareness through walking.

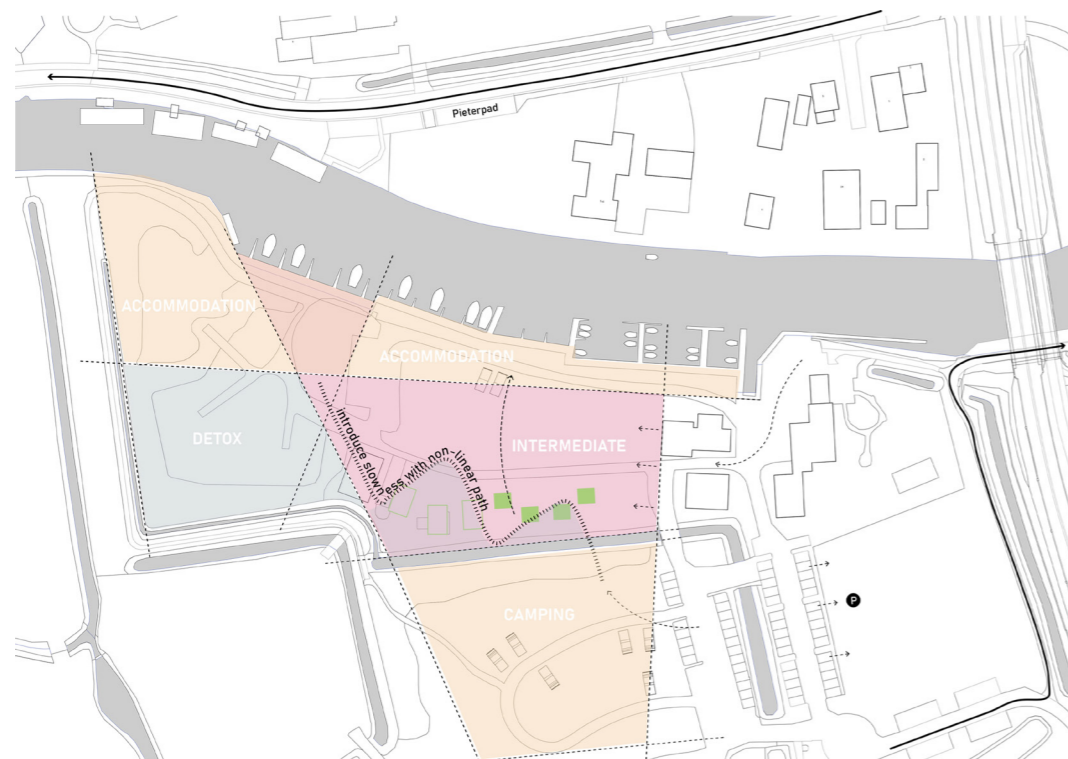


Figure 7: Site zoning strategy

The concept of the threshold is translated into a spatial system that organizes movement, perception and use by leading visitors through different levels of intensity, moving from active and social settings toward quieter and more introspective spaces. Grounded in research linking nature to improved mental well-being and cognitive restoration (Ting & Bahauddin, 2022; Berman, Jonides, & Kaplan, 2008; World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, 2021), the proposal positions nature as an active therapeutic component.

Circulation is conceived as the primary architectural tool that structures spatial experience. Aligned with existing routes yet strategically redirected, paths introduce moments of pause, compression and expansion. Variations level and enclosure mark transitions between spatial conditions. In this way, movement becomes an architectural promenade rather than a neutral act of passage, echoing Dimitris Pikionis's understanding of topography, memory and lived experience as generators of form.

The hub is structured around a daily routine that balances work, social interaction and restoration. This sequence is based on the habits of digital nomads, yet its public components remain open to locals. The project therefore counters one of the main risks associated with digital nomadism, namely isolation and fragmented social ties

(Hensellek & Puchala, 2021), by creating repeated points of overlap between temporary and permanent users.

The program is deliberately separated into three buildings, each defined by a distinct cluster of related functions. Rather than dispersing activities randomly across the site, each building is organized around a specific programmatic character and daily rhythm. The productive cluster brings together coworking, docking, and event spaces, forming a zone of work and exchange. The restorative cluster contains Unplug Space, therapy, tea room and activity areas, creating a quieter environment focused on wellbeing and retreat. The social and public cluster combines workshop spaces, restaurant, tourist information and lunch break functions, trigger interactions between digital nomads and local users. Through this strategy, separation becomes a design tool: each building maintains its own identity, while the relationships between clusters structure movement, transition and social overlap across the site.

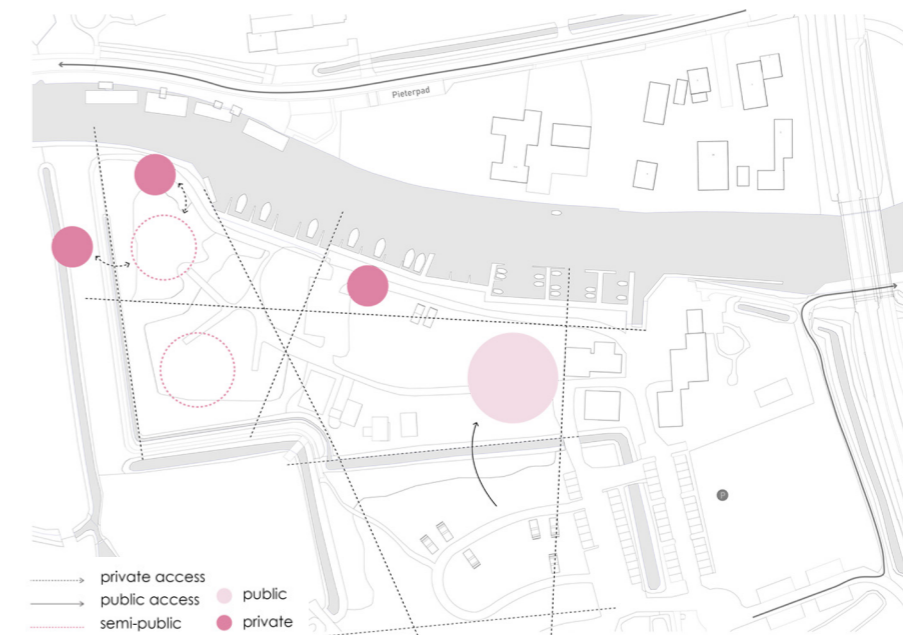


Figure 8: Private and public realms

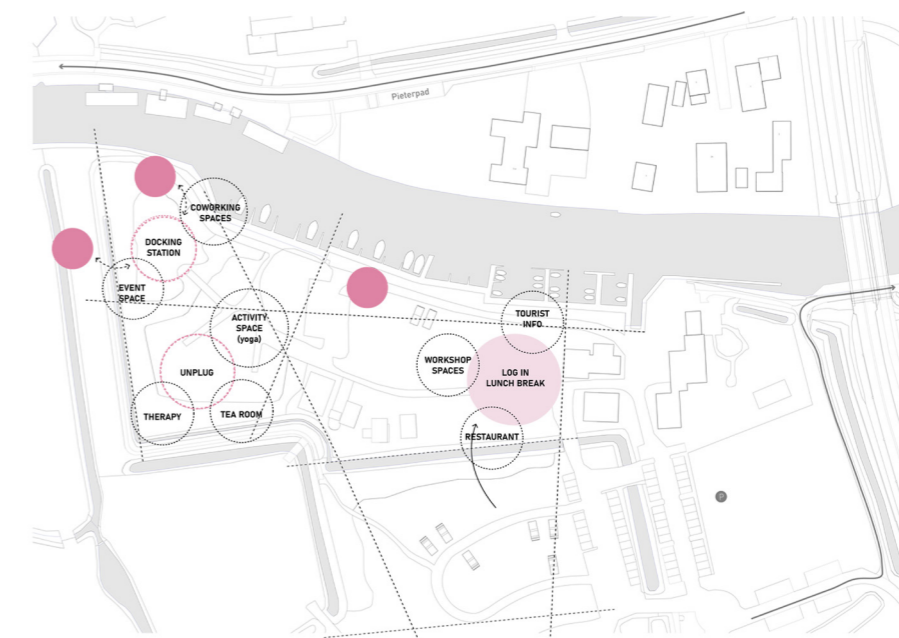


Figure 9: Clustering the functions.

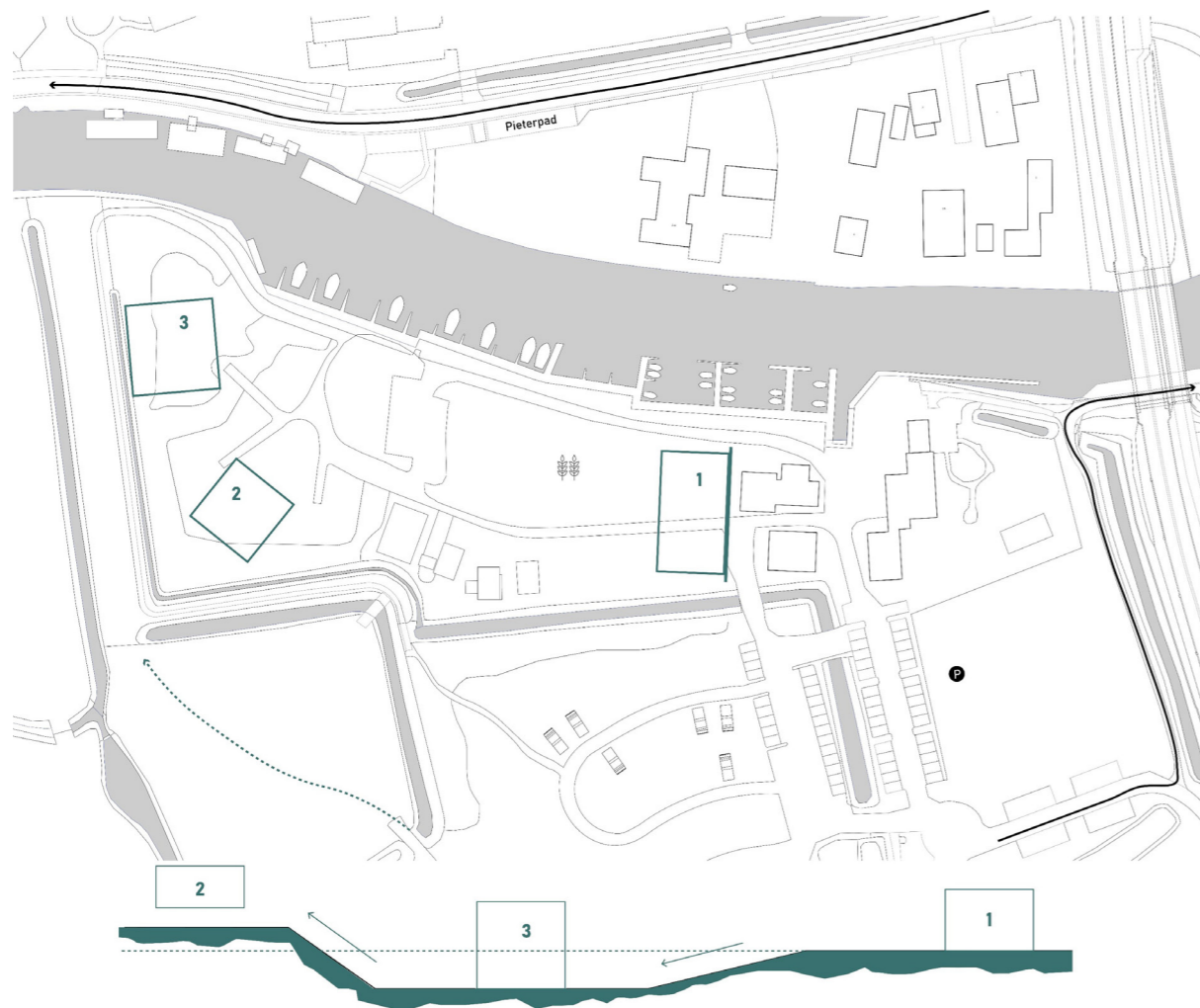


Figure 10: Introducing volumes (1: log in & lunch break space, 2: unplug space, 3: docking station).

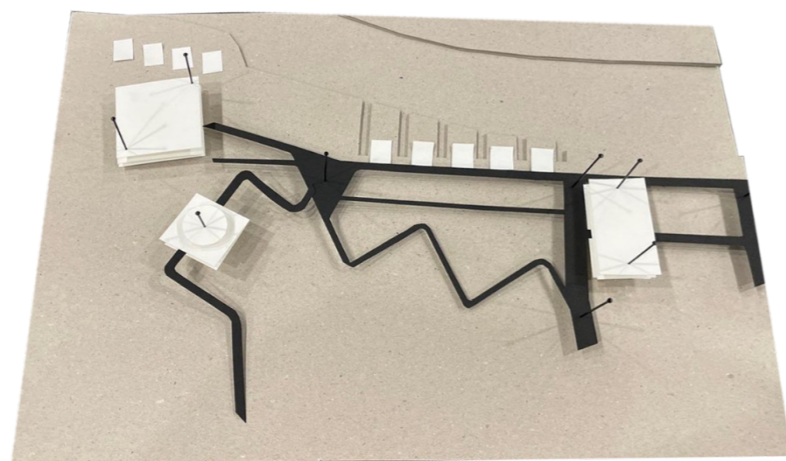


Figure 11: Conceptual model exploring how circulation and program are organized through overlapping layers.

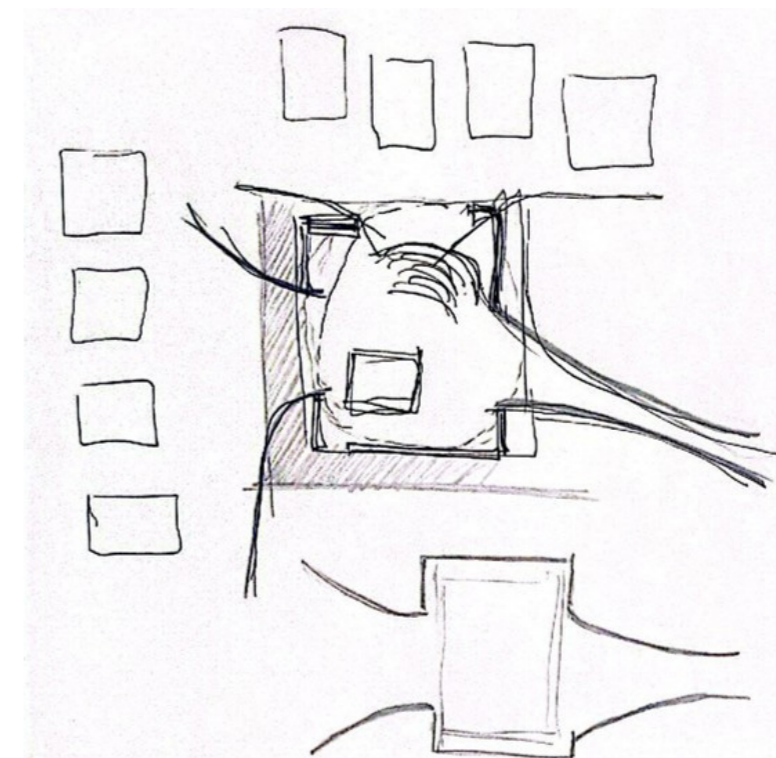
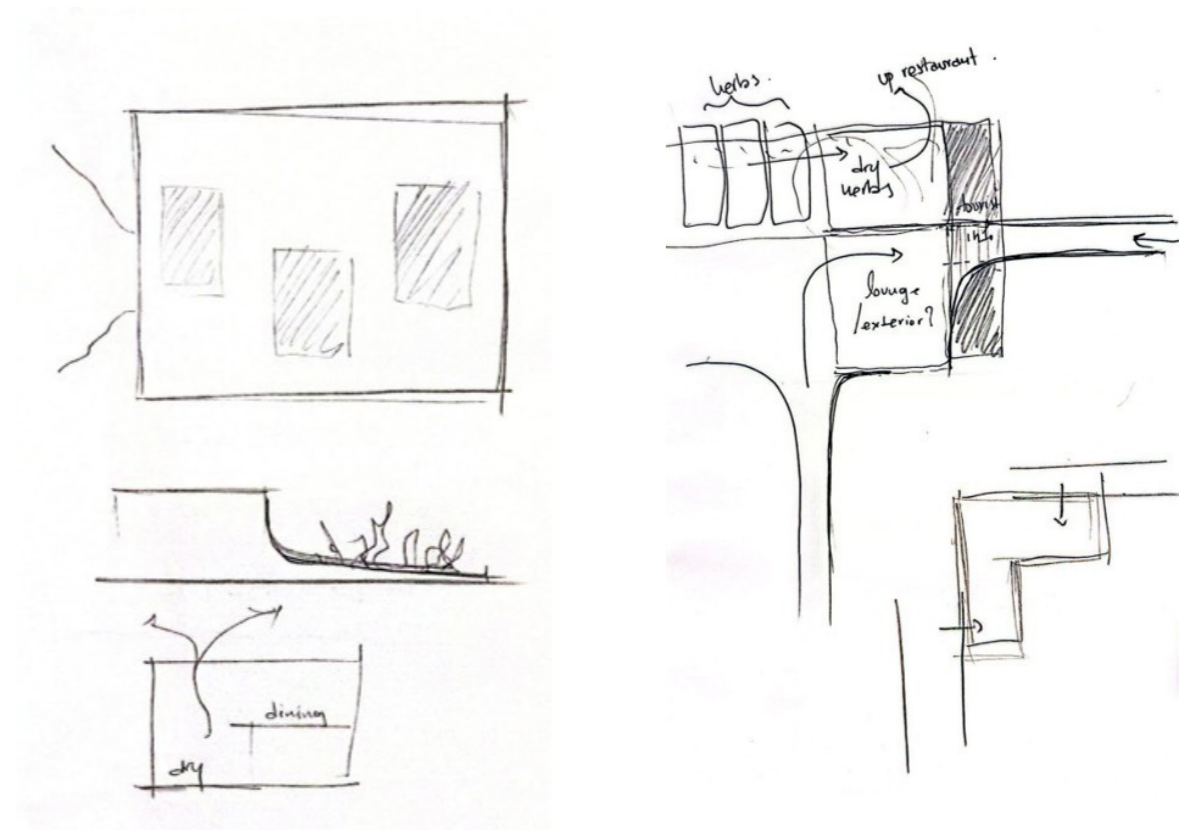


Figure 12: Exploring "transition" in the different typologies.

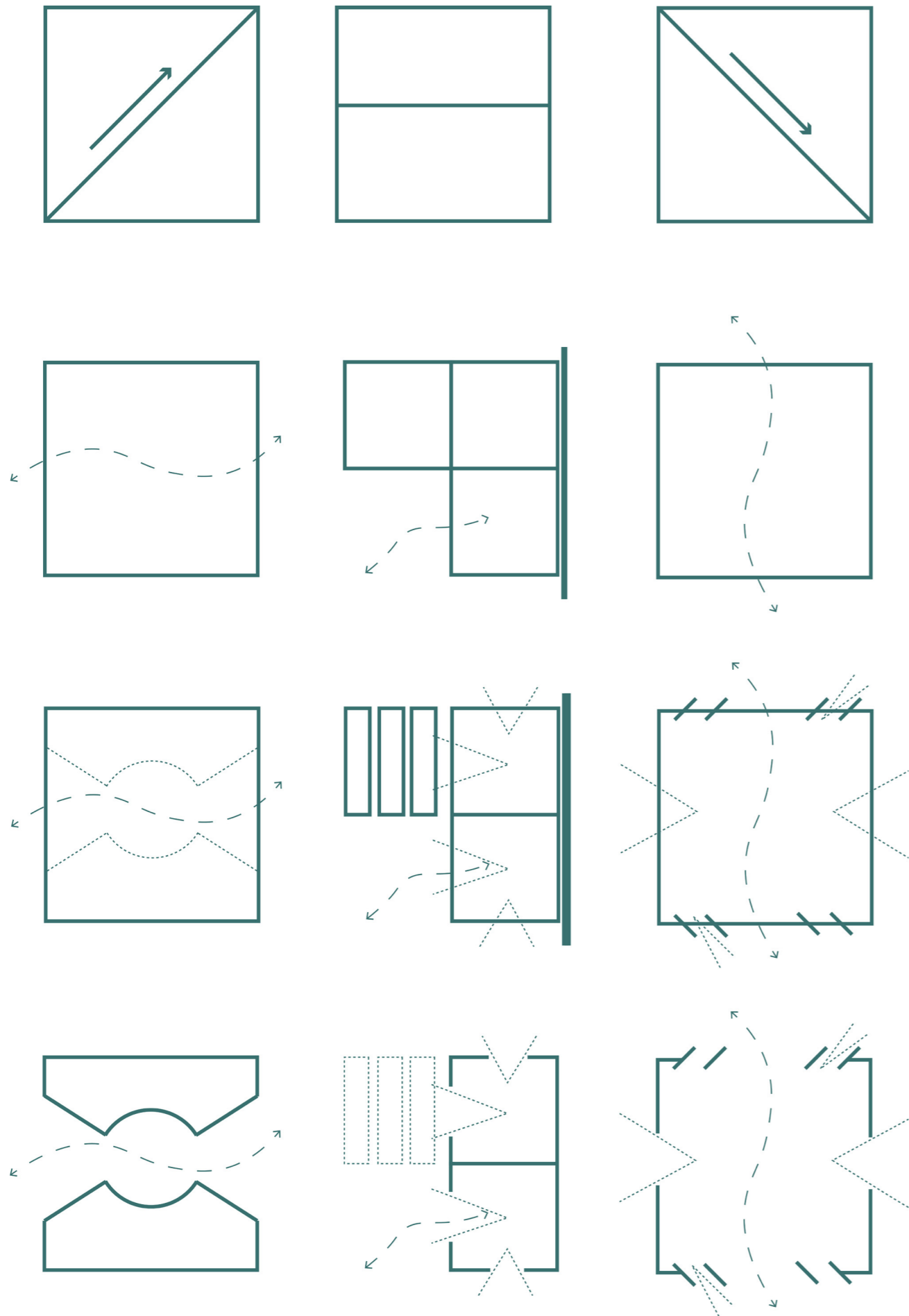


Figure 13: Transformation of the rectangle through movement and views.

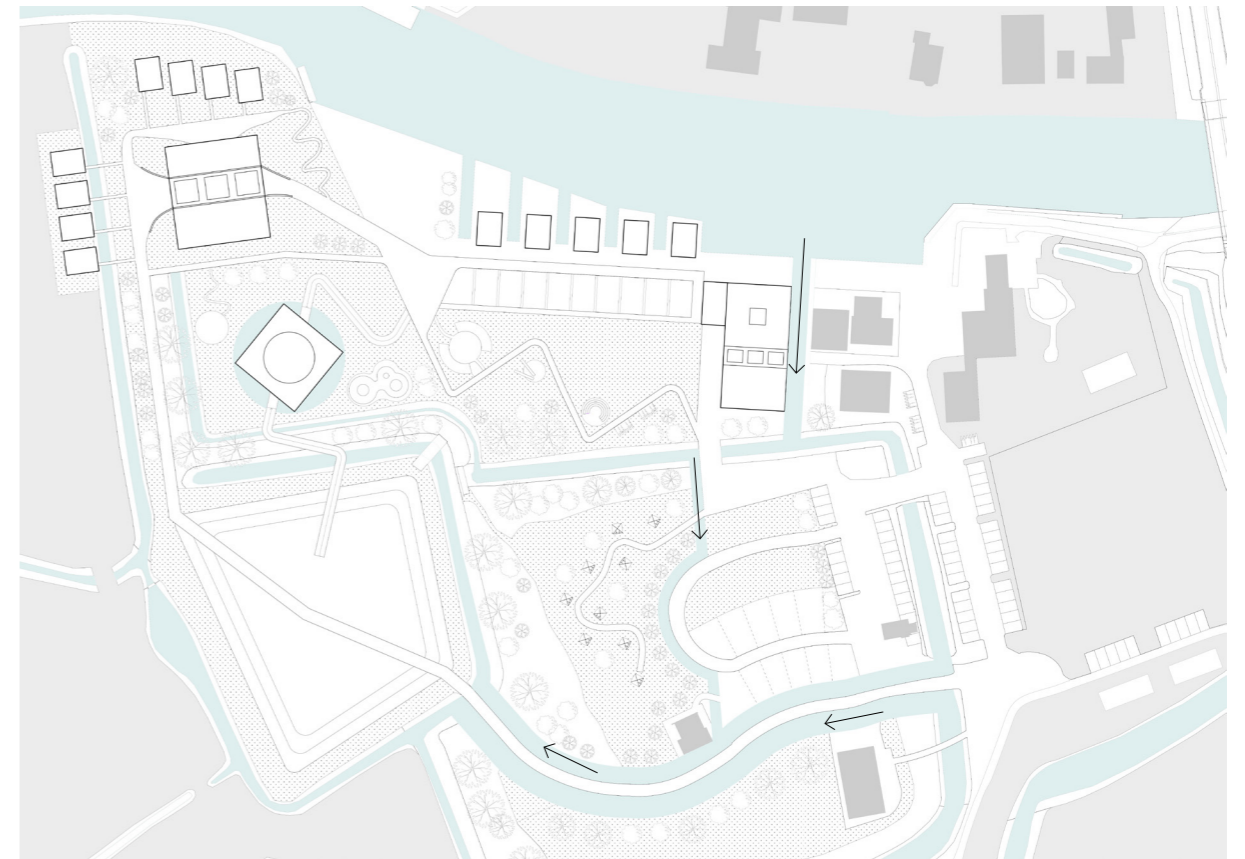


Figure 14: Introducing water bodies.

patch 1: amplifying the quality of water

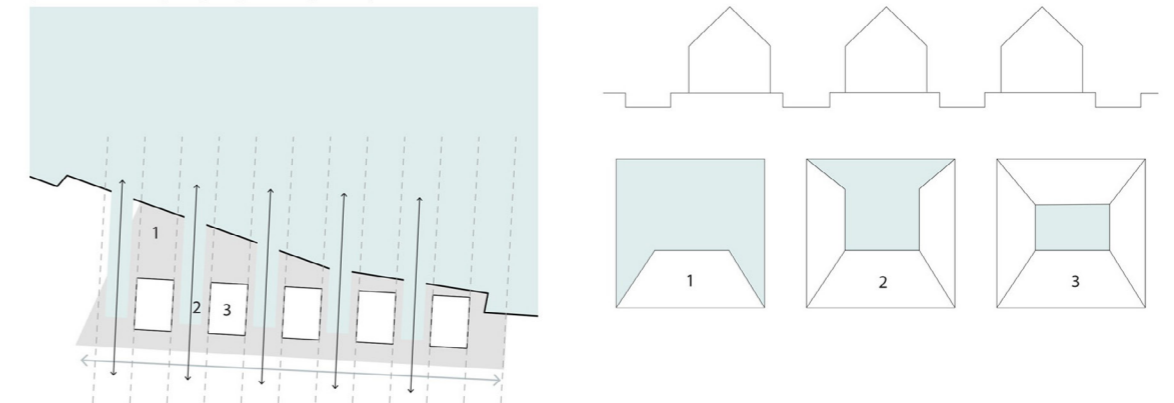


Figure 15: Amplifying the quality of water around Sleep Mode cabins for digital nomads.

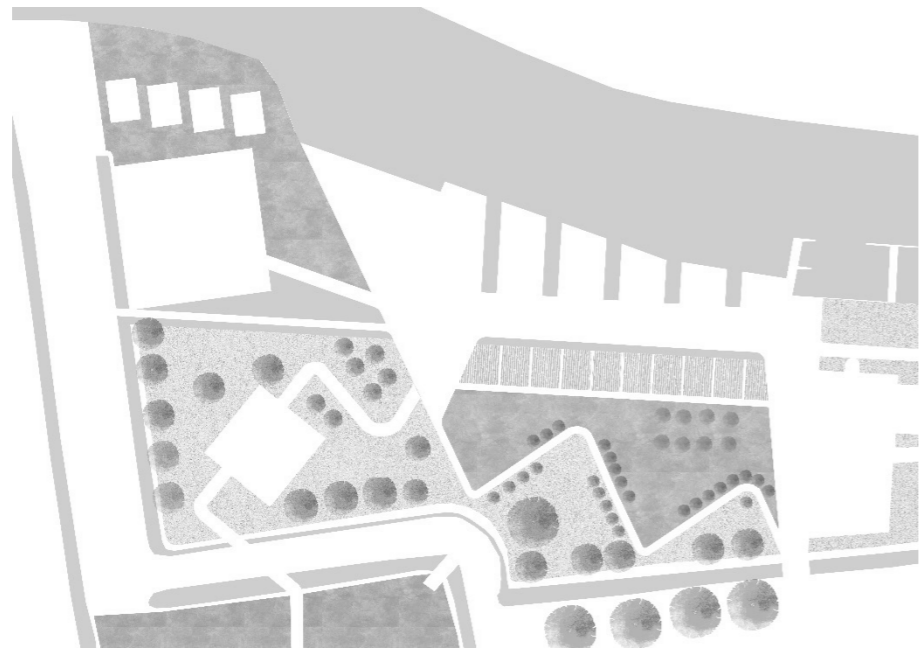


Figure 16: Applying different forms of vegetation.

The introduction of water bodies around the hub creates a deliberate separation from the existing plot. This separation is not only physical, but experiential. By amplifying an element already present in the landscape, the project transforms water into a spatial threshold between the everyday environment and the detox hub. The act of crossing or moving alongside water slows down the approach and marks a transition from a digitally saturated routine towards a more embodied state of awareness. In relation to the theoretical research, the water operates as an in-between condition, mediating between site and building, public and retreat, access and pause. At the same time, its reflective and atmospheric qualities connect to the project's phenomenological and critical regionalist intentions, where light, materiality and sensory perception become part of the architectural experience.

This is further supported by the design of the surrounding landscape, where different forms of vegetation and cultivation are introduced to extend the detox experience beyond the building itself. Nature plays an active part of the healing process, working together with water through its calming, restorative and sensory qualities.

Having established the broader design principles, zoning strategy and landscape framework, the following section examines each volume individually. Each building is understood not only through its functional zone, but also through its spatial role within the overall detox sequence. By discussing the volumes separately, the relationship between program, atmosphere, circulation and landscape can be clarified, showing how each cluster contributes to the gradual transition from productivity and social interaction toward restoration and embodied awareness.

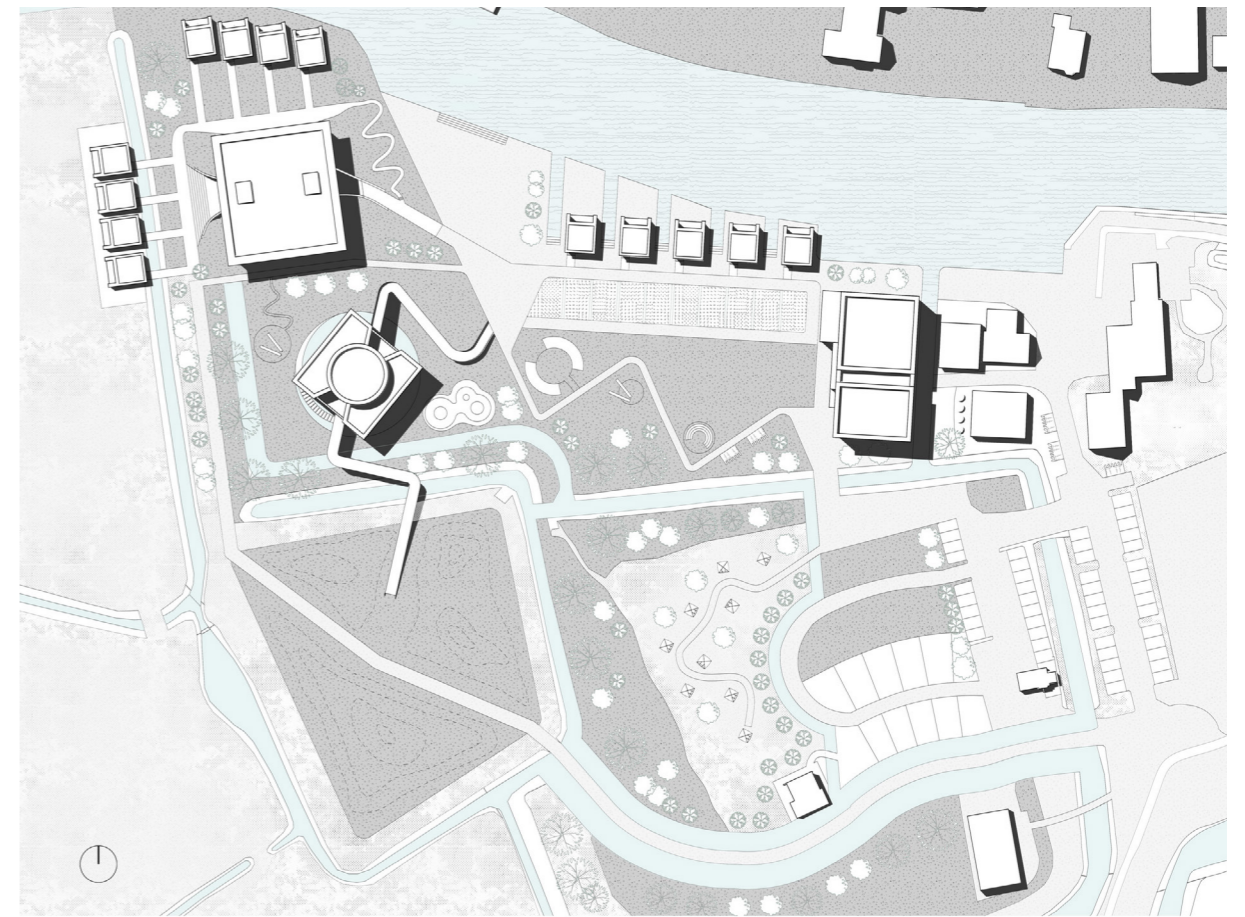


Figure 17: Site plan and south elevation.

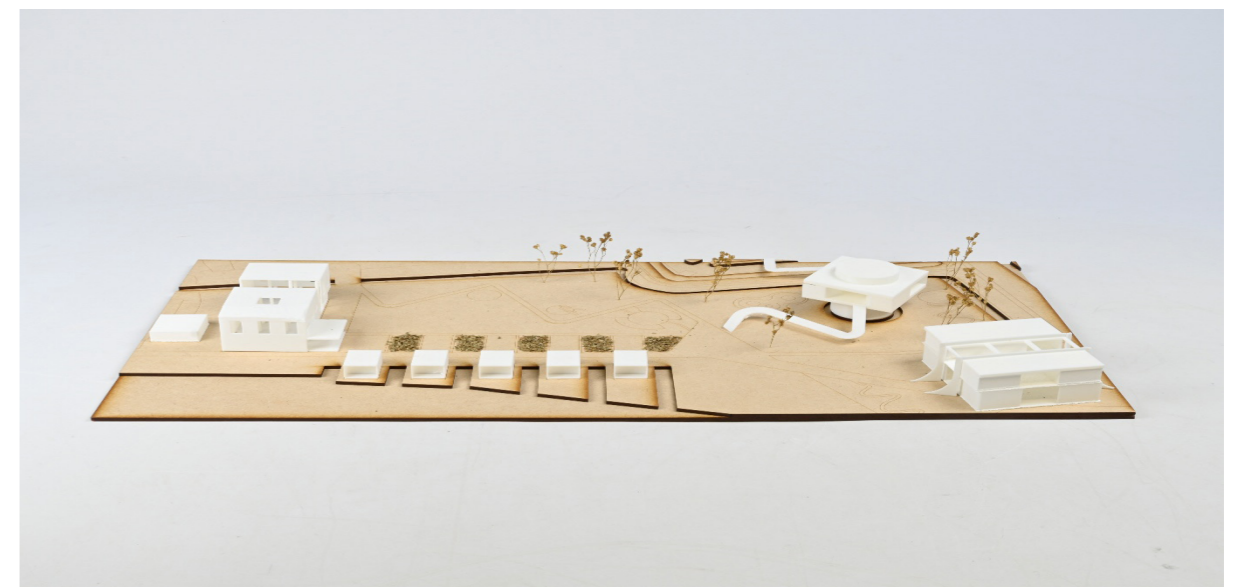


Figure 18: Initial model used to define the volumes (for A2), scale 1:300.

The sequence begins with an arrival space, the Log In space, positioned at the interface between the existing Marenland buildings and the new intervention as the border. This first threshold marks the shift from the everyday context into the detox hub.



Figure 19: Log In, ground floor, including the lounge area, workshop spaces, and herb-drying room for herbs cultivated on site.



Figure 20: Log in, first floor, including restaurant.

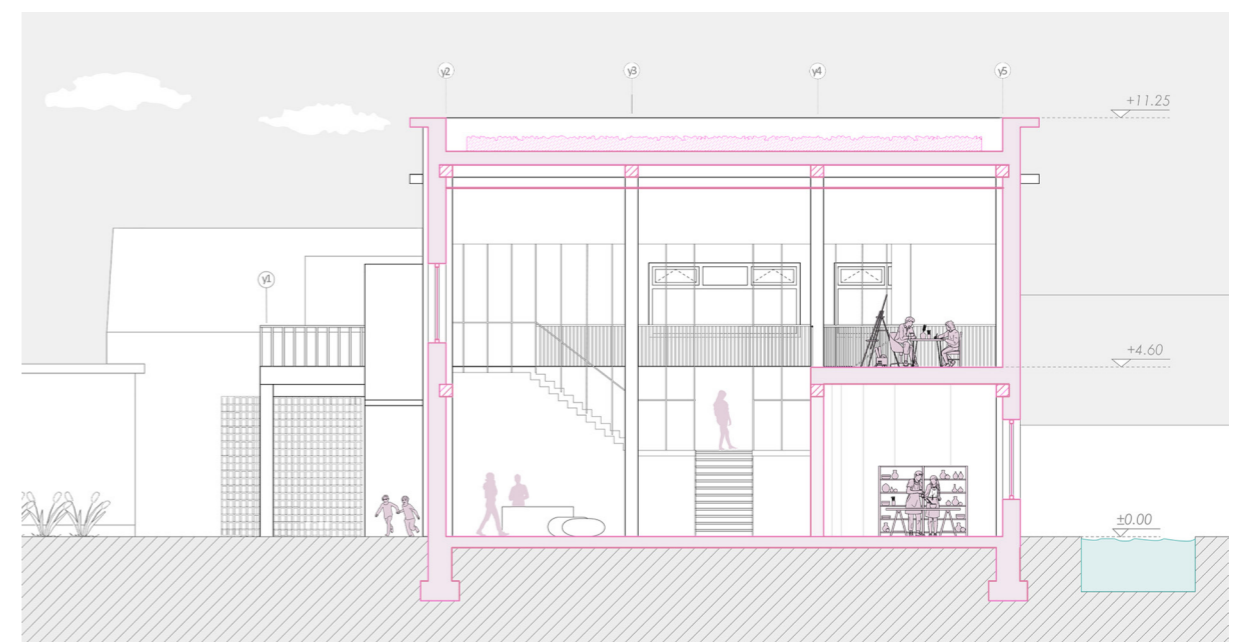


Figure 21: Section through the Log In volume, showing the lounge area and workshop spaces.

The accommodation zone consists of dispersed units, the Sleep Mode cabins, embedded within the landscape. These units intentionally exclude workspaces to maintain a clear separation between productivity and rest.

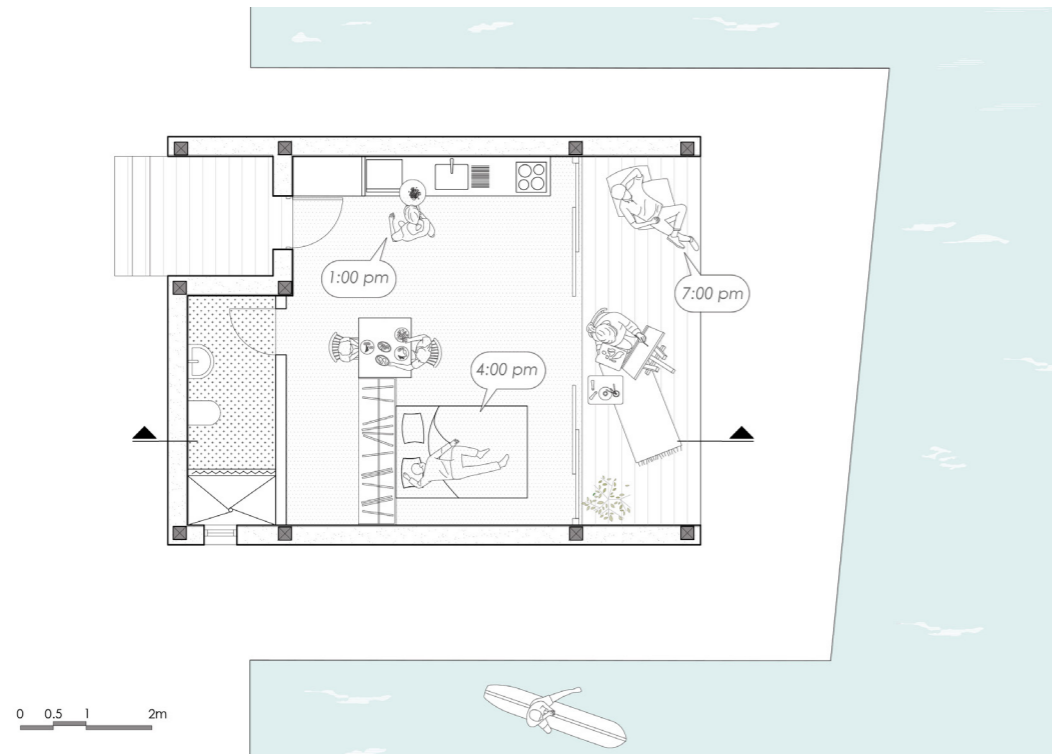


Figure 22: Floor plan of the Sleep Mode cabin for a digital nomad.

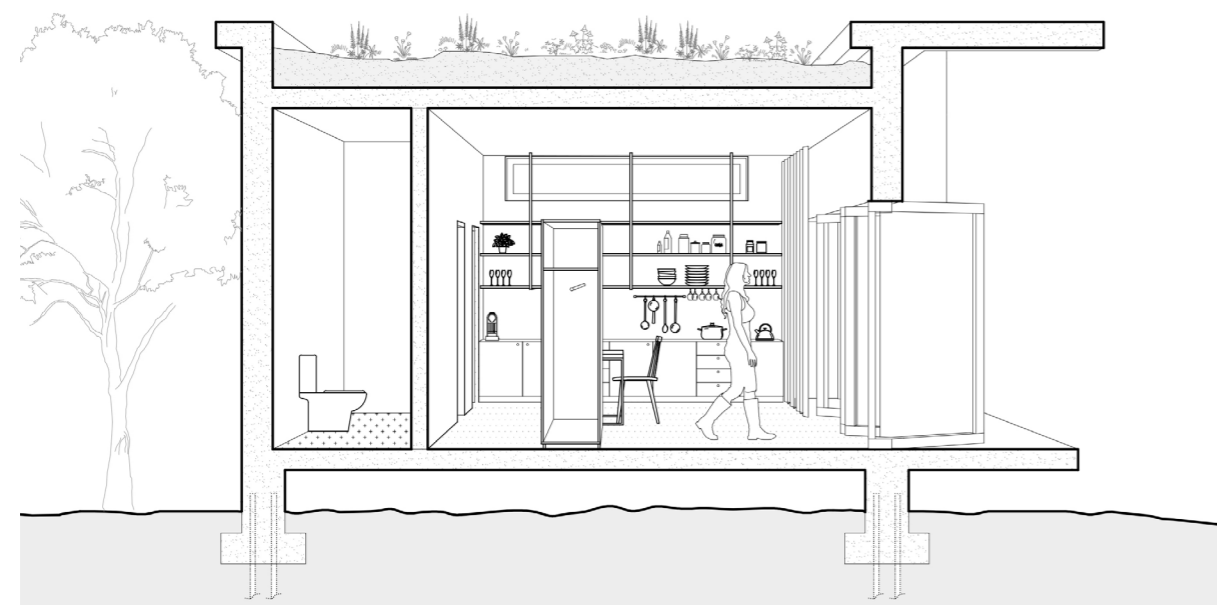


Figure 23: Perspective section of Sleep Mode Cabin.

The coworking building, the Docking Station, forms the productive core of the hub. It is organized vertically, with quieter workspaces on the upper levels and more collective functions on the ground floor. This arrangement allows users to regulate concentration and interaction throughout the day. The building extends its use beyond working hours through spaces for events, workshops and informal gatherings, functioning as a hybrid social and creative environment. To enhance the transition into work mode, a descending ramp marks the entry sequence, creating a gradual shift from the external environment into the focused atmosphere of the coworking space.

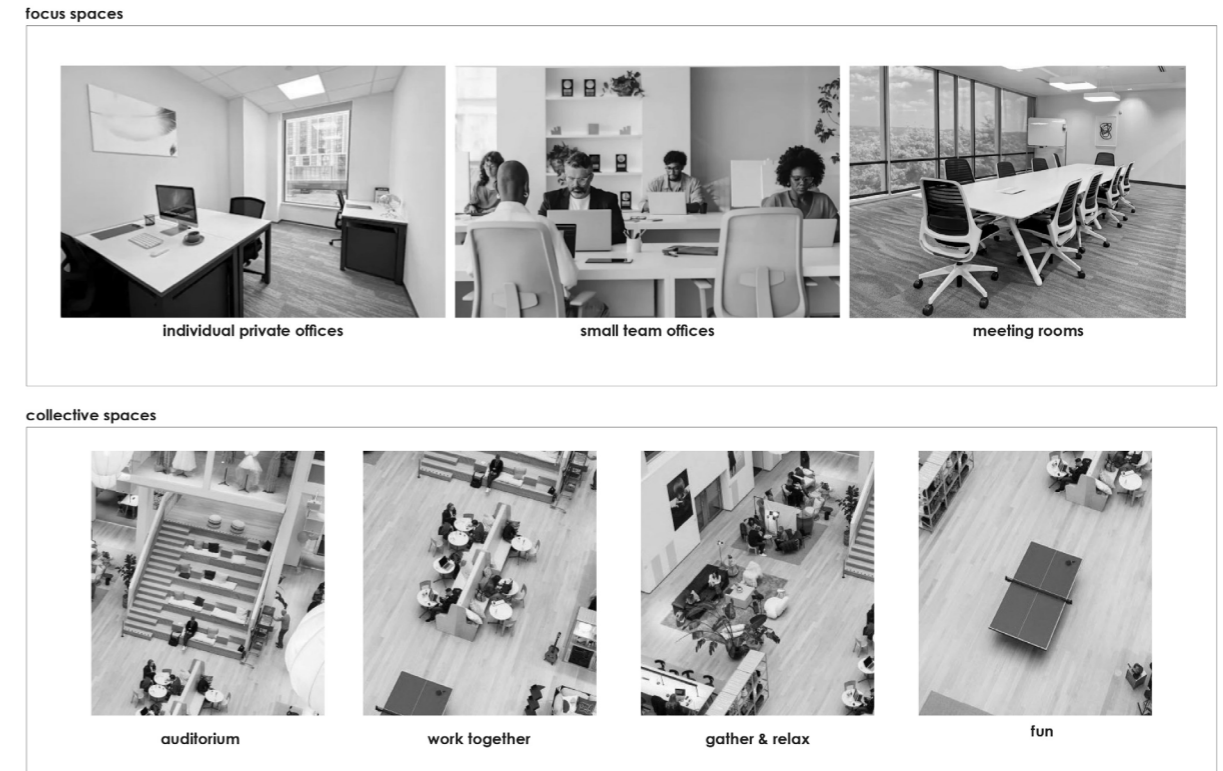


Figure 24: Exploring focus and collective spaces in coworking environments.

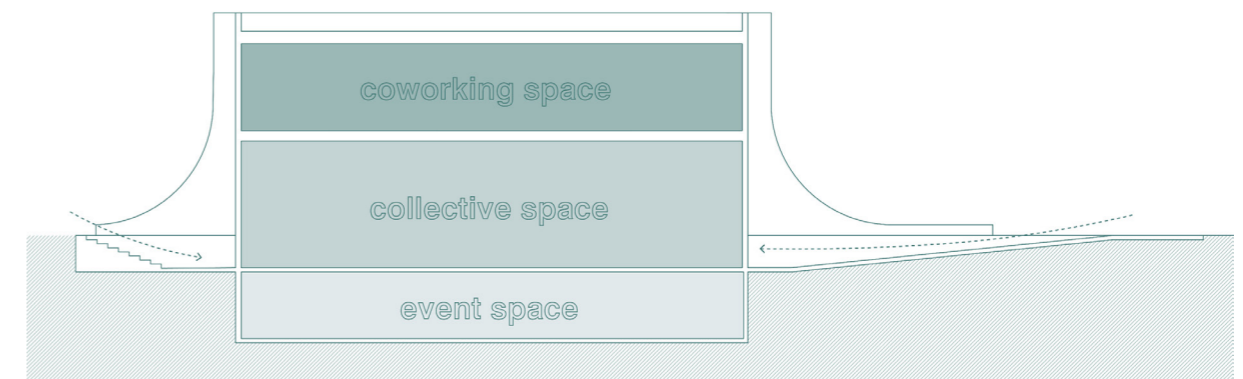


Figure 25: Diagrammatic section illustrating the initial design concept of a vertical gradient of functions, from entertainment and collective space to coworking space.

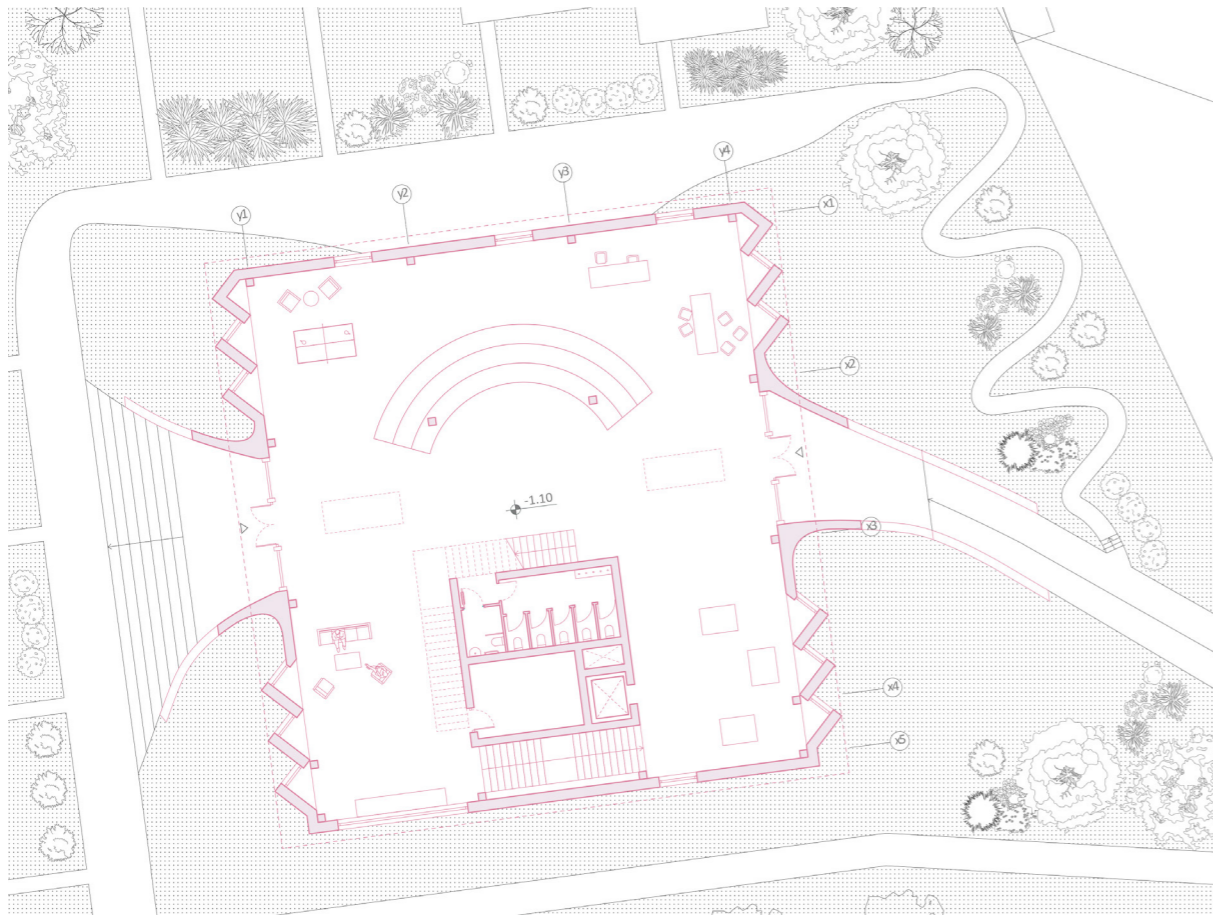


Figure 26: Docking Station, ground floor, including event space and sitting areas.

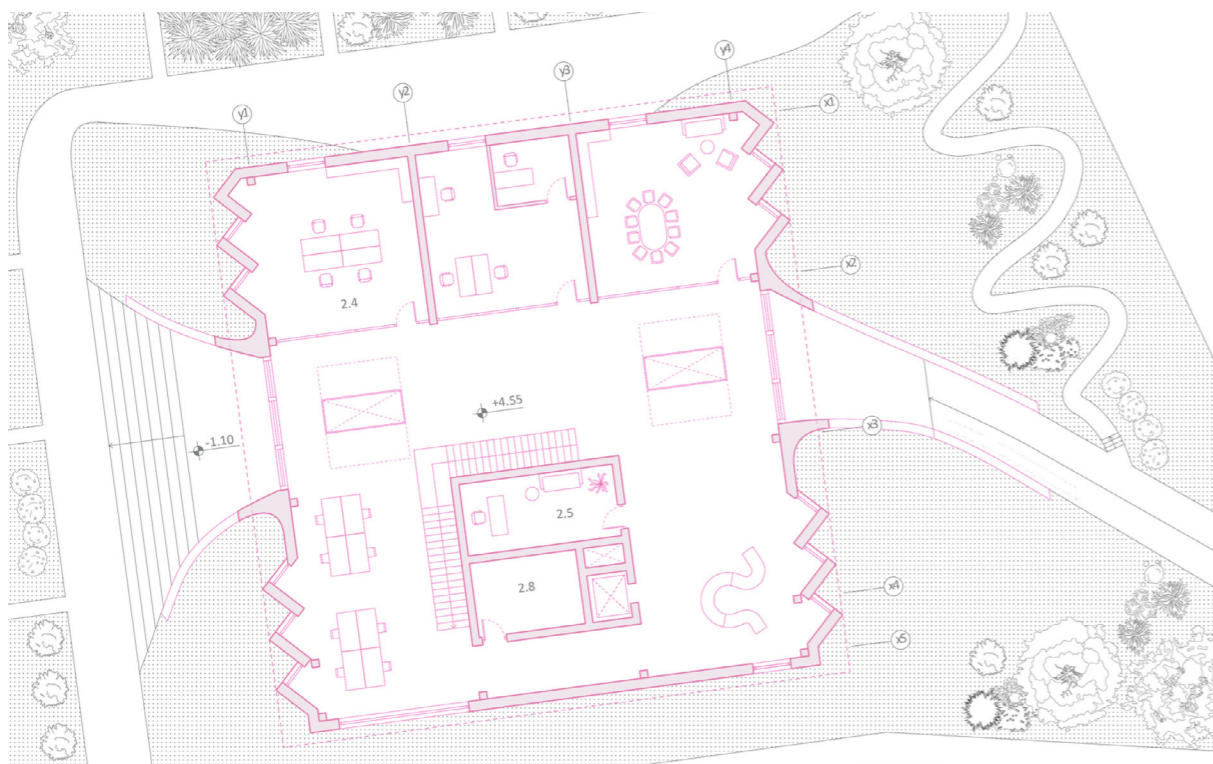


Figure 27: Docking station, first floor, including coworking spaces.

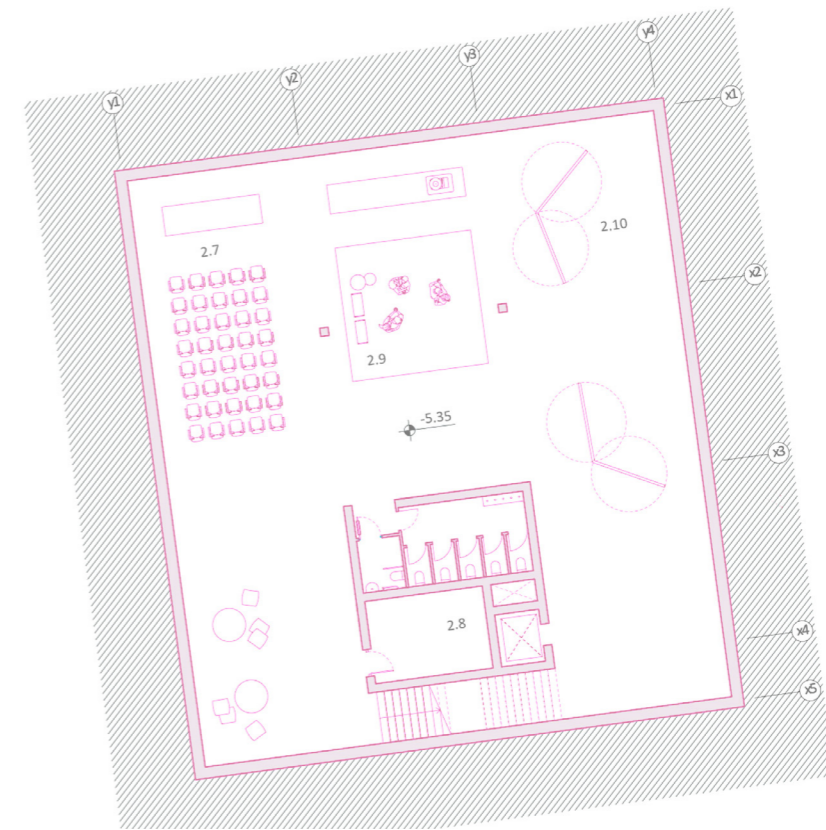


Figure 28: Docking station, underground, including flexible space for events, exhibitions and entertainment.

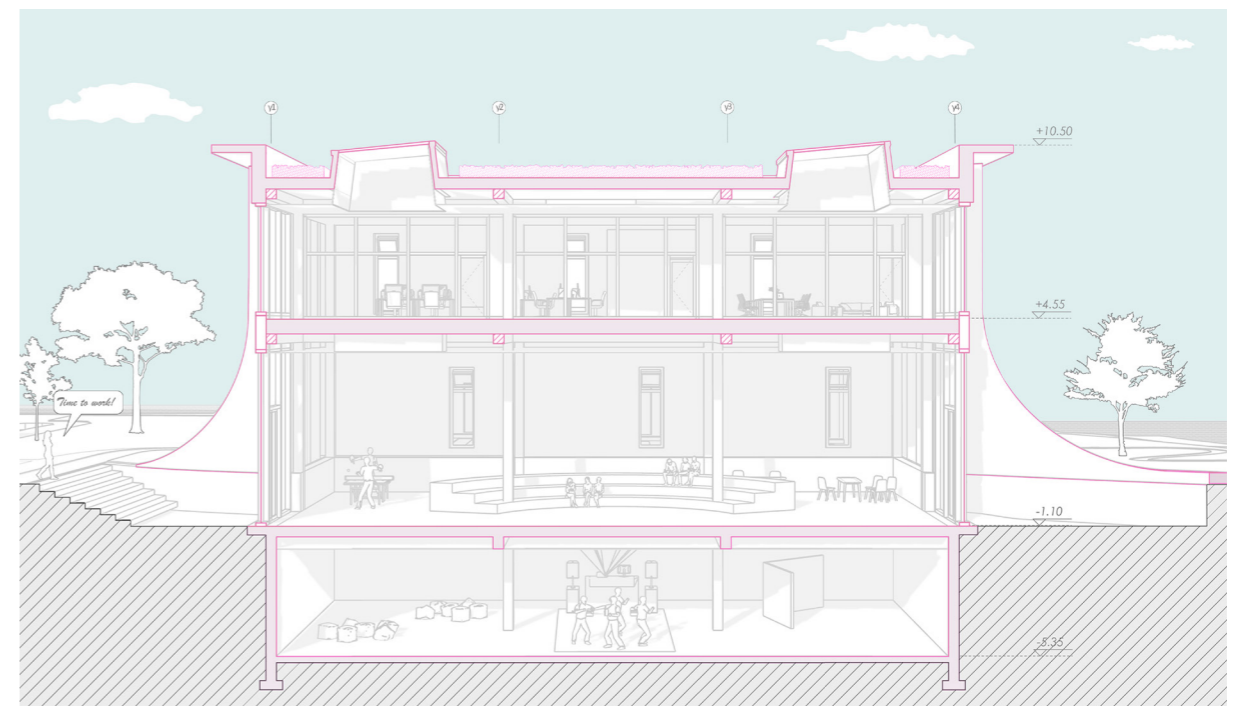


Figure 29: Perspective section, Docking Sta

The final stage represents the most introspective part of the sequence, the Unplug Space. The detox building is organized as a progression of spaces that gradually reduce sensory intensity and encourage focus on the present moment. A ramp marks the entry into this environment, followed by spaces with filtered light, framed views and tactile materials that culminate in a tearoom. This space draws on phenomenological thinking and Japanese spatial traditions, particularly the use of shadow and subdued light to heighten ritual, sensory awareness, and spatial atmosphere (Tanizaki, 2001). The illusion of floating on water further reinforces a sense of detachment and calm.

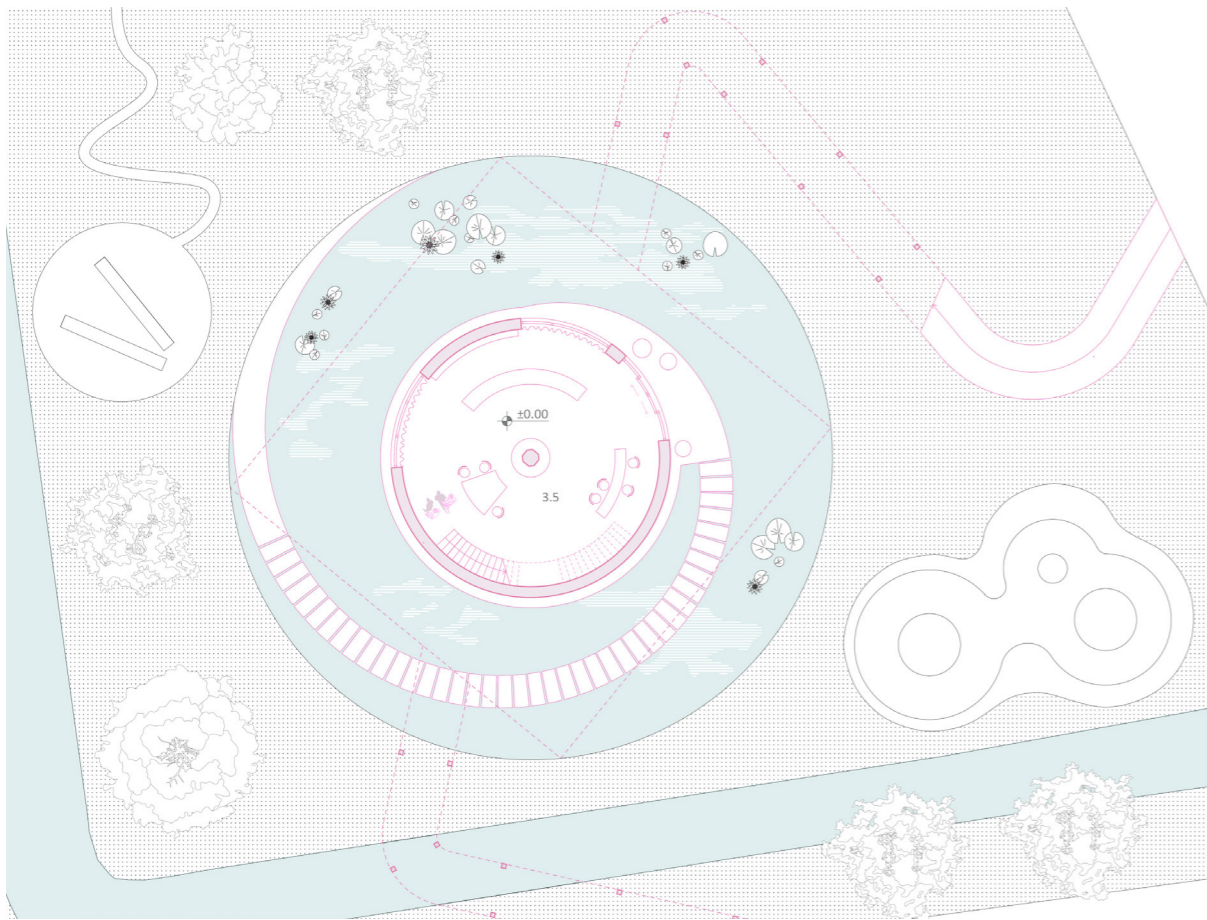


Figure 30: Ground floor, Unplug Space, including tea room.

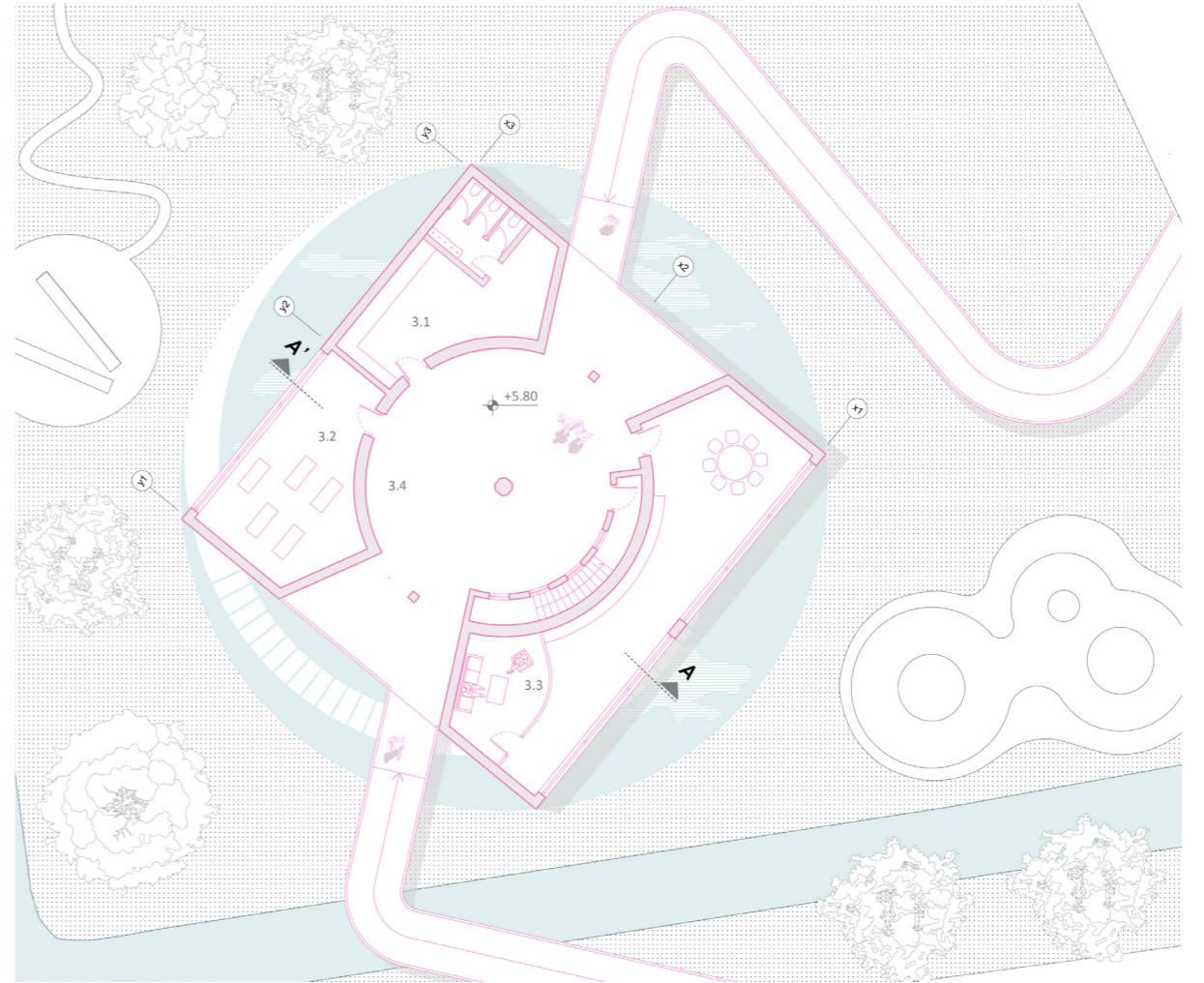


Figure 31: First floor, Unplug Space, including yoga room and therapy spaces.

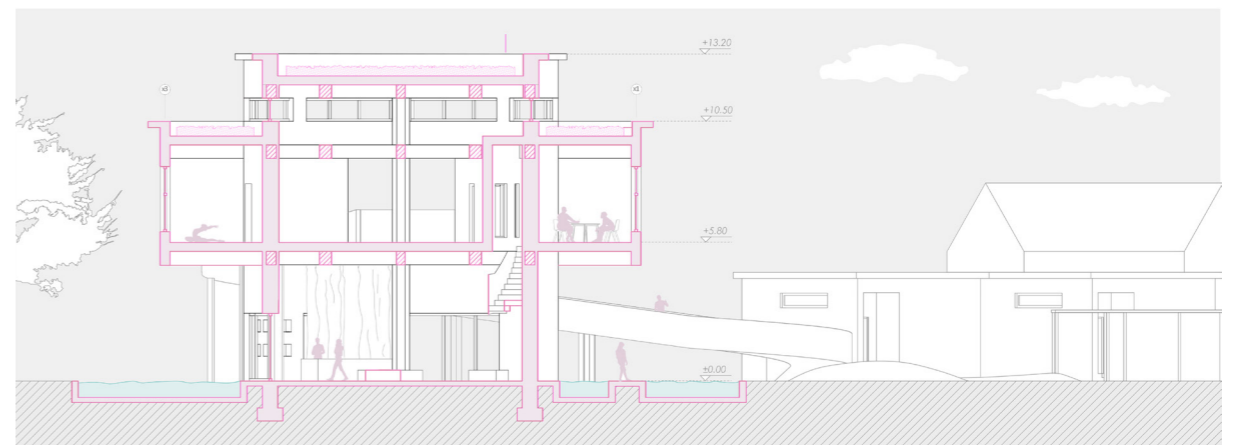


Figure 32: Section of the Unplug Space, showing the tearoom on the ground floor and the yoga space and therapy room on the first floor.

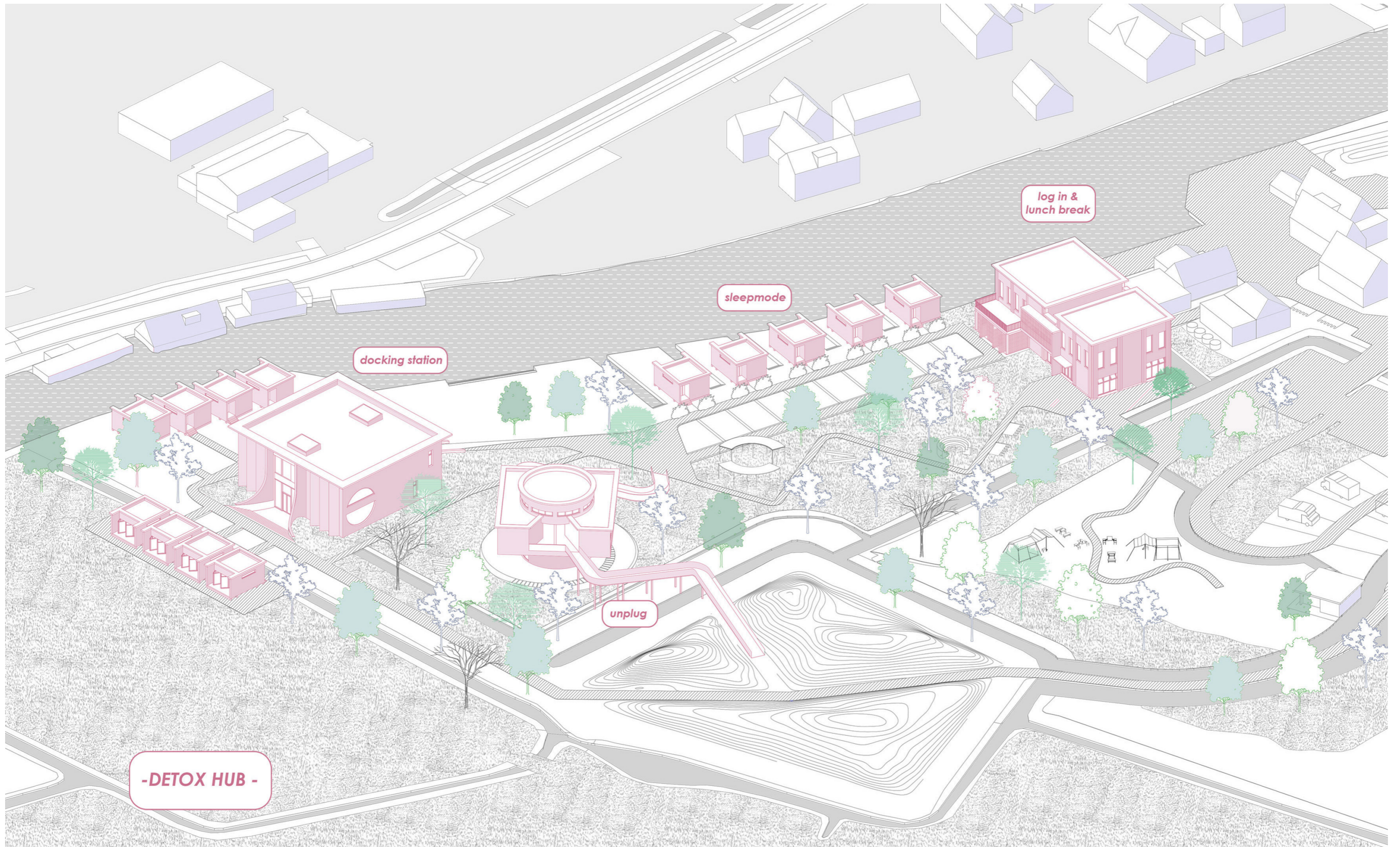


Figure 33: Axonometric view of the Detox Hub, showing Log In/Lunch Break Space, Sleepmode cabins, Docking Station and Unplug Space together.

The transition from work to social engagement is mediated through an open in-between space of agricultural activity. Herb gardens, small cultivation plots and workshop spaces are brought into close, guiding users toward the restaurant. This stage is informed by regenerative tourism principles that emphasize local production, seasonality and participation. By placing cultivation, processing and consumption alongside one another, the project makes these cycles visible and accessible. Everyday acts such as growing, cooking and eating become shared spatial experiences, reinforced by tactile materials and open-air structures.

Taken together, the project redefines the threshold as a generative architectural condition. It demonstrates how architecture can mediate between digital and physical realities while supporting social exchange, mental restoration and regenerative engagement with landscape.

Materiality

Studies indicate that natural materials can positively influence users' sensory and emotional experience of space. Hempcrete, in particular, offers tactile, thermal and acoustic qualities that make it well suited to restorative interiors. Its visually quiet surface creates a calm background condition, allowing atmosphere, light and spatial transitions to become more prominent.

As a locally sourced material, hempcrete also supports the project's environmental approach. It can be cast in situ or assembled as prefabricated panels, allowing flexibility in construction while maintaining material continuity. Across the three buildings, hempcrete acts as a unifying element. Together with the atmospheric sequence of moving in and out, it helps establish the buildings as a coherent ensemble rather than separate architectural objects.

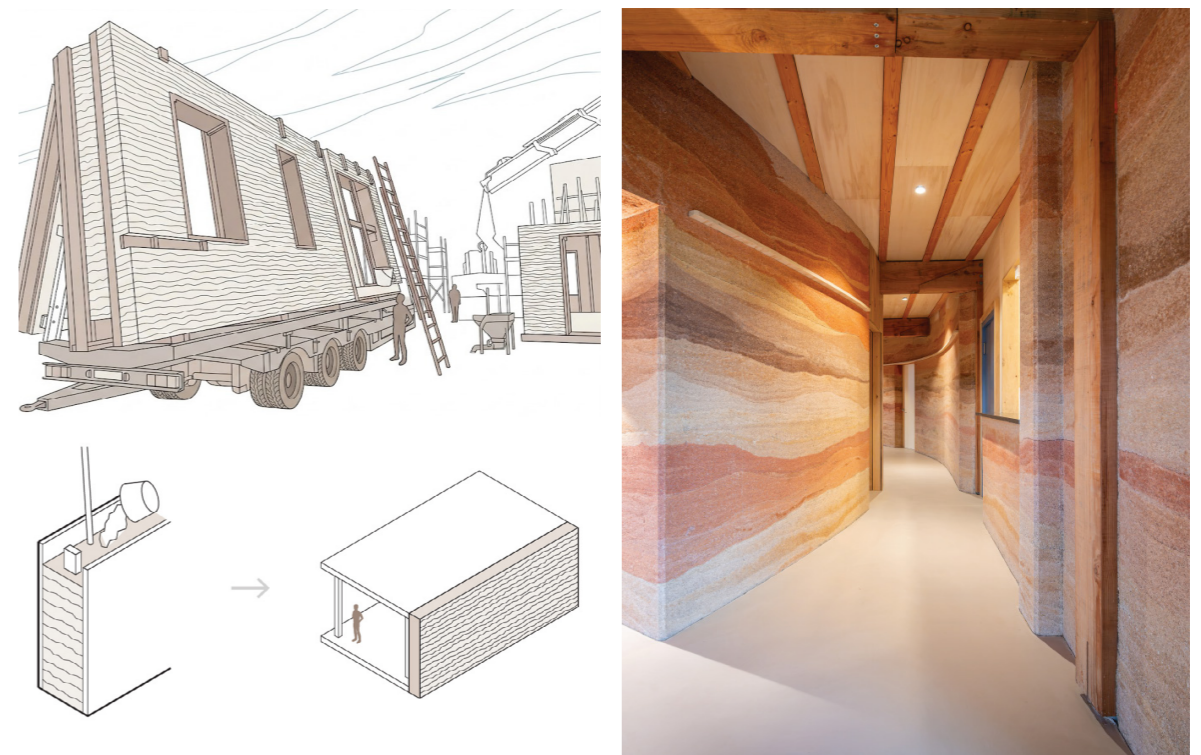


Fig 34: Cast-in situ hempcrete wall. Project by Giesen Architects and YOMABOUW.

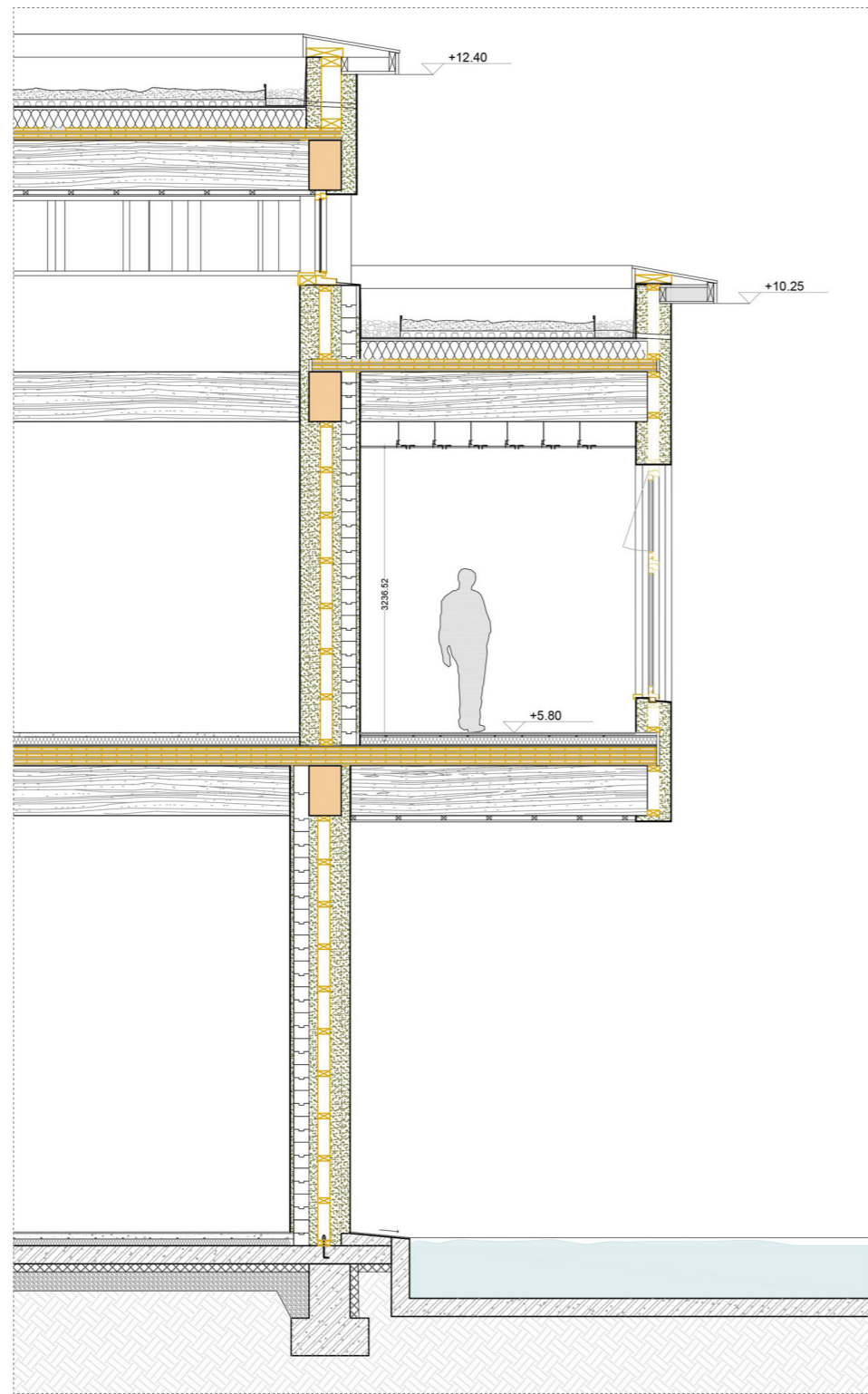


Figure 35: Fragment of the Unplug Space.



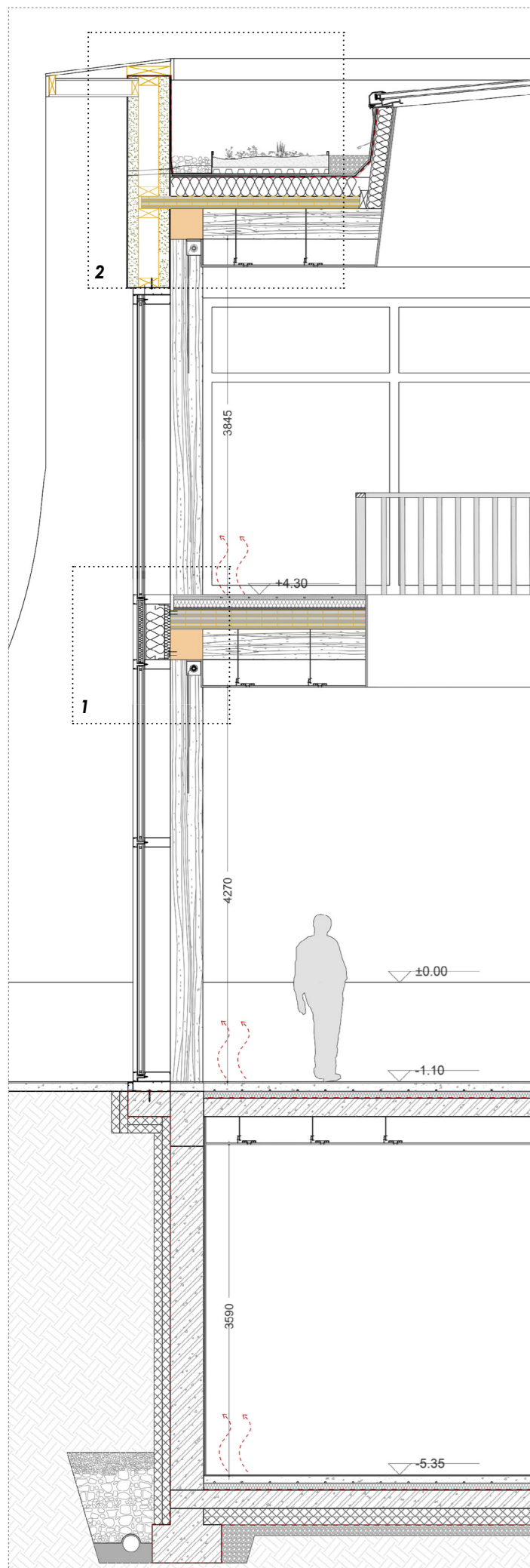
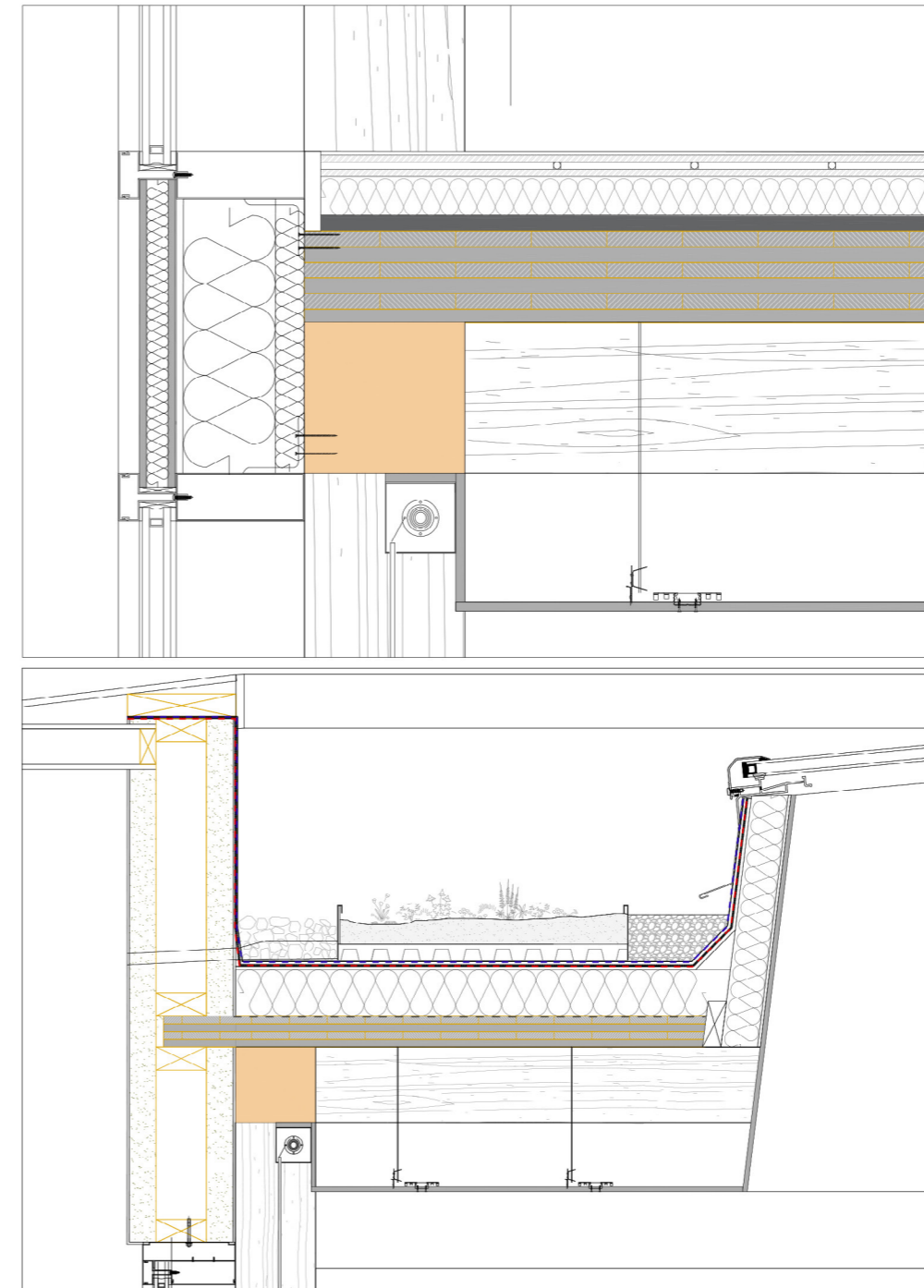


Figure 36: Fragment of the Docking Station.



1. CLT floor junction detail showing the edge connection, insulation continuity, and curtain wall façade interface.

2. Green roof and skylight junction detail showing roof build-up, drainage layers, insulation continuity and skylight integration.



Figure 36: Axonometric detail of vertical louvre-like hempcrete forms as part of the Docking Station façade exploration.

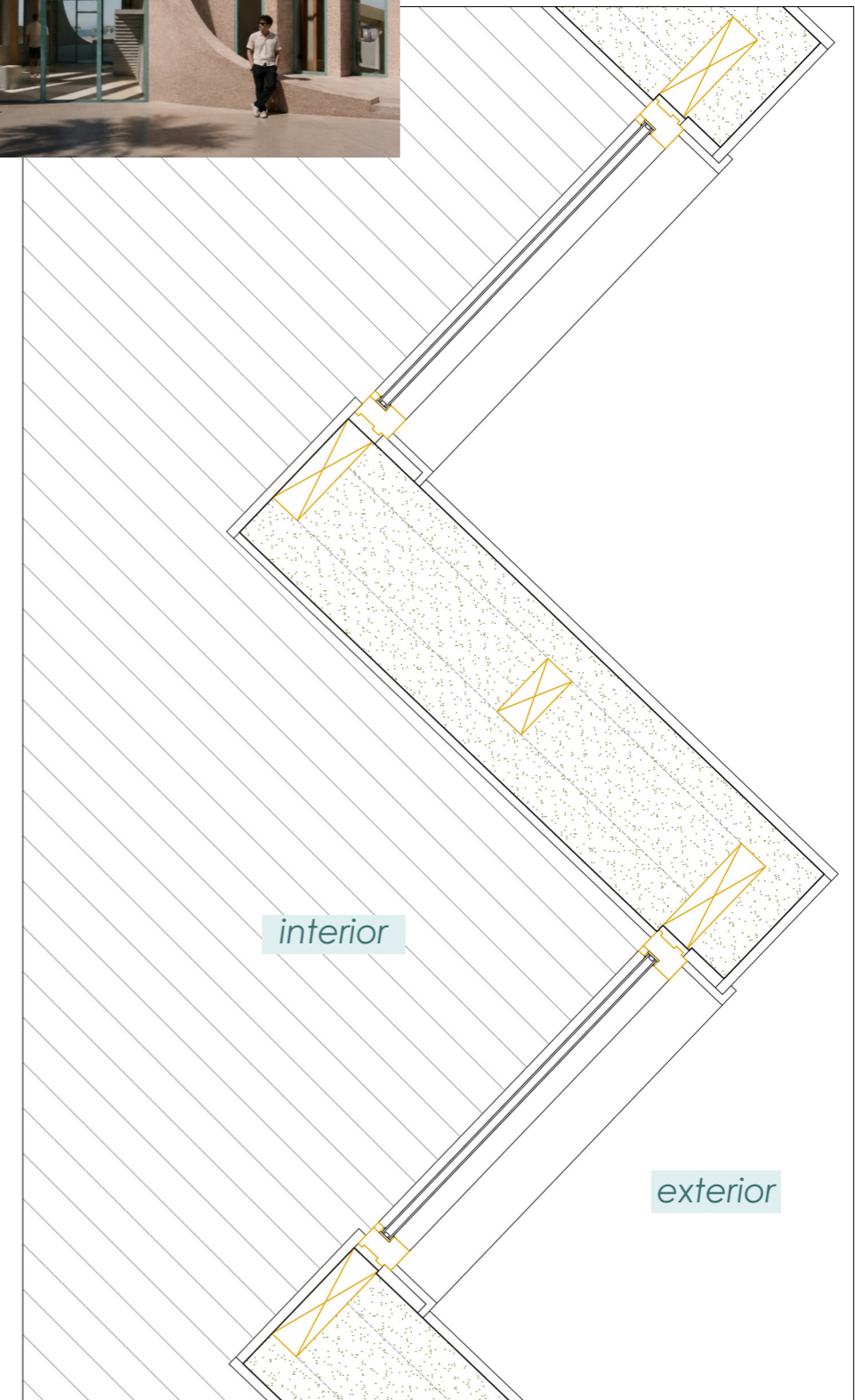


Figure 37: Floor plan detail of projecting window bays, originally designed in 1:10 scale.

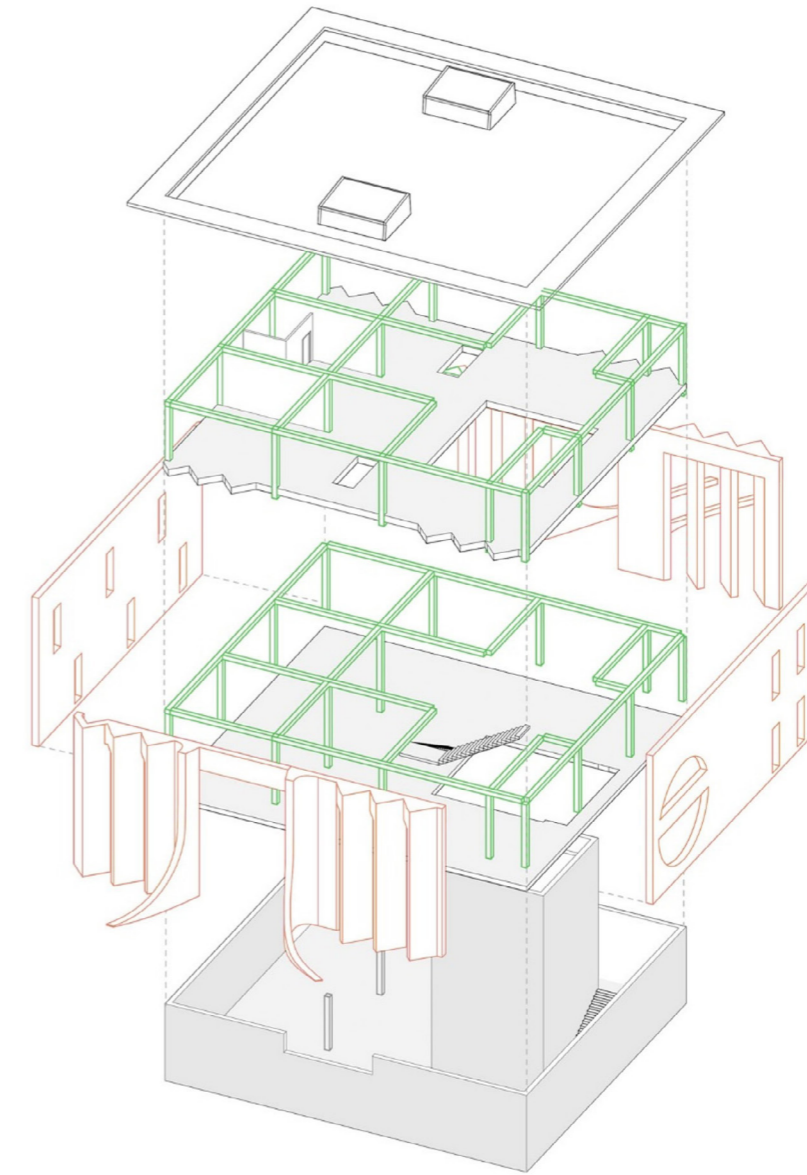
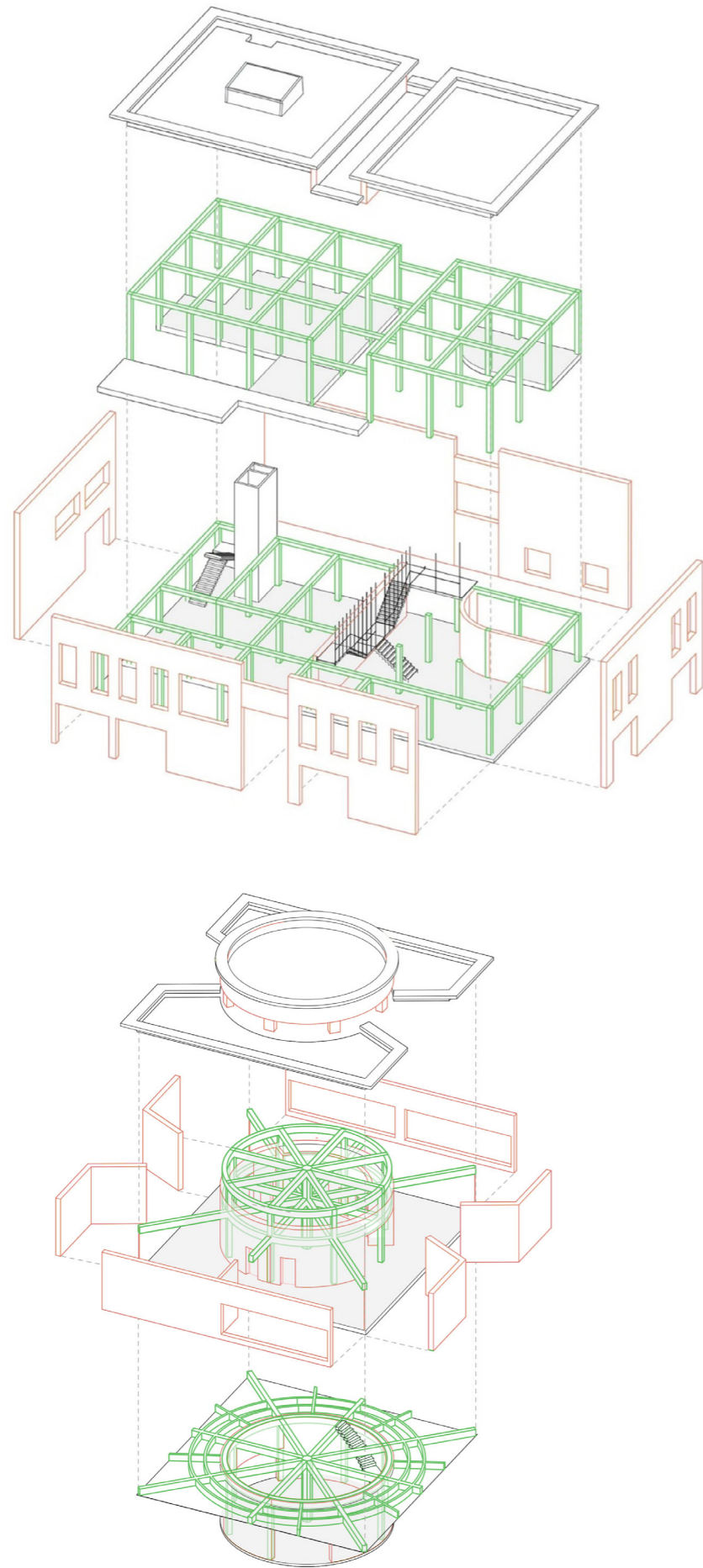


Figure 38, 39, 40: Structural diagrams showing glulam beams and columns, in-situ hempcrete walls and prefabricated hempcrete panels. Sequence: Log in Space, Unplug Space, Docking Station.

Environmental strategies are embedded in the design approach. Water functions as both a spatial and ecological system: rainwater is collected, stored and reused for irrigating the agricultural plots and herb gardens. This establishes a closed-loop relationship between climate, landscape and program. Climate analysis, including sun-path and prevailing-wind studies, informs the orientation and articulation of the volumes (see Appendices). This supports passive solar gain, natural cross-ventilation and seasonally responsive use. Roof surfaces accommodate photovoltaic panels, while the possibility of underground heat storage contributes to the long-term energy balance of the project.

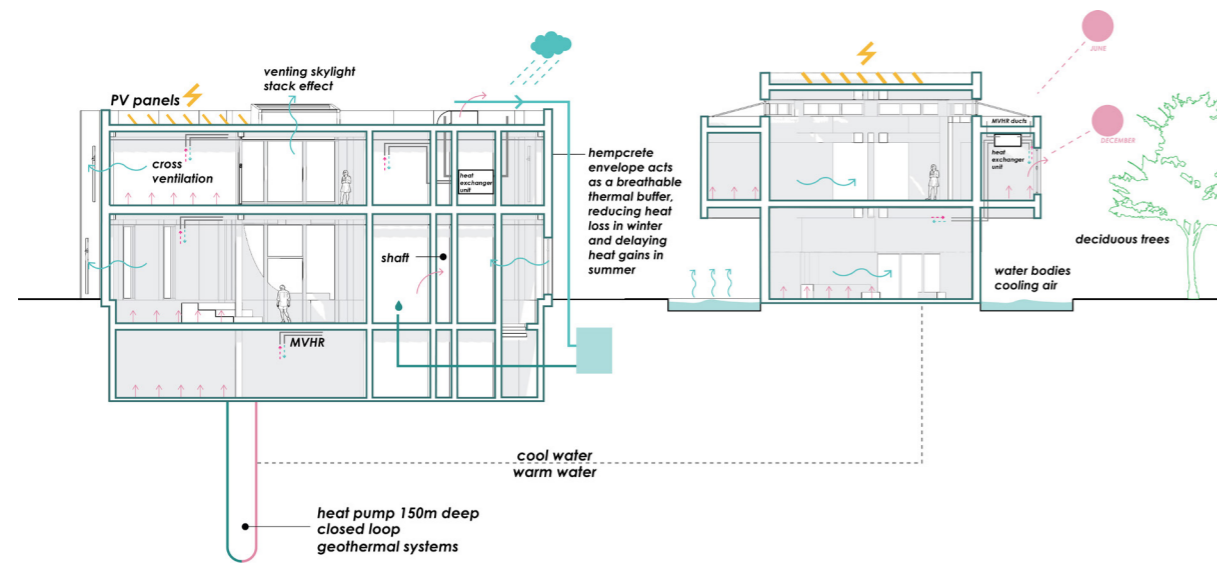


Figure 41: Climate design principles diagram

Exploration of atmosphere

Atmospheric studies exploring how material, light and shadow shape the sensory experience of the different buildings.

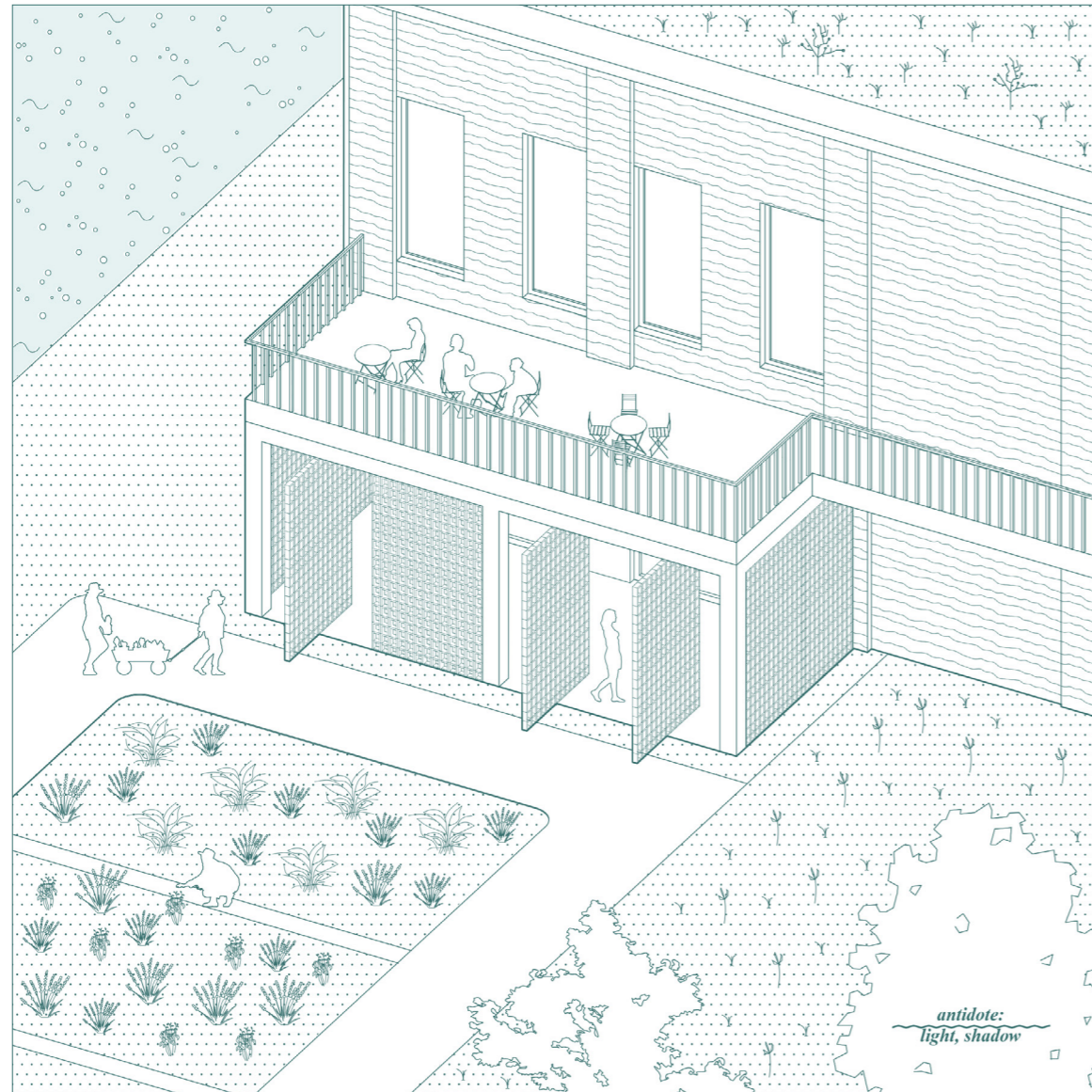


Figure 42: Axonometric view of the Log in / Lunch Break Space.

Next page: Exterior and interior view of the herb drying room within the Lunch Break Space.



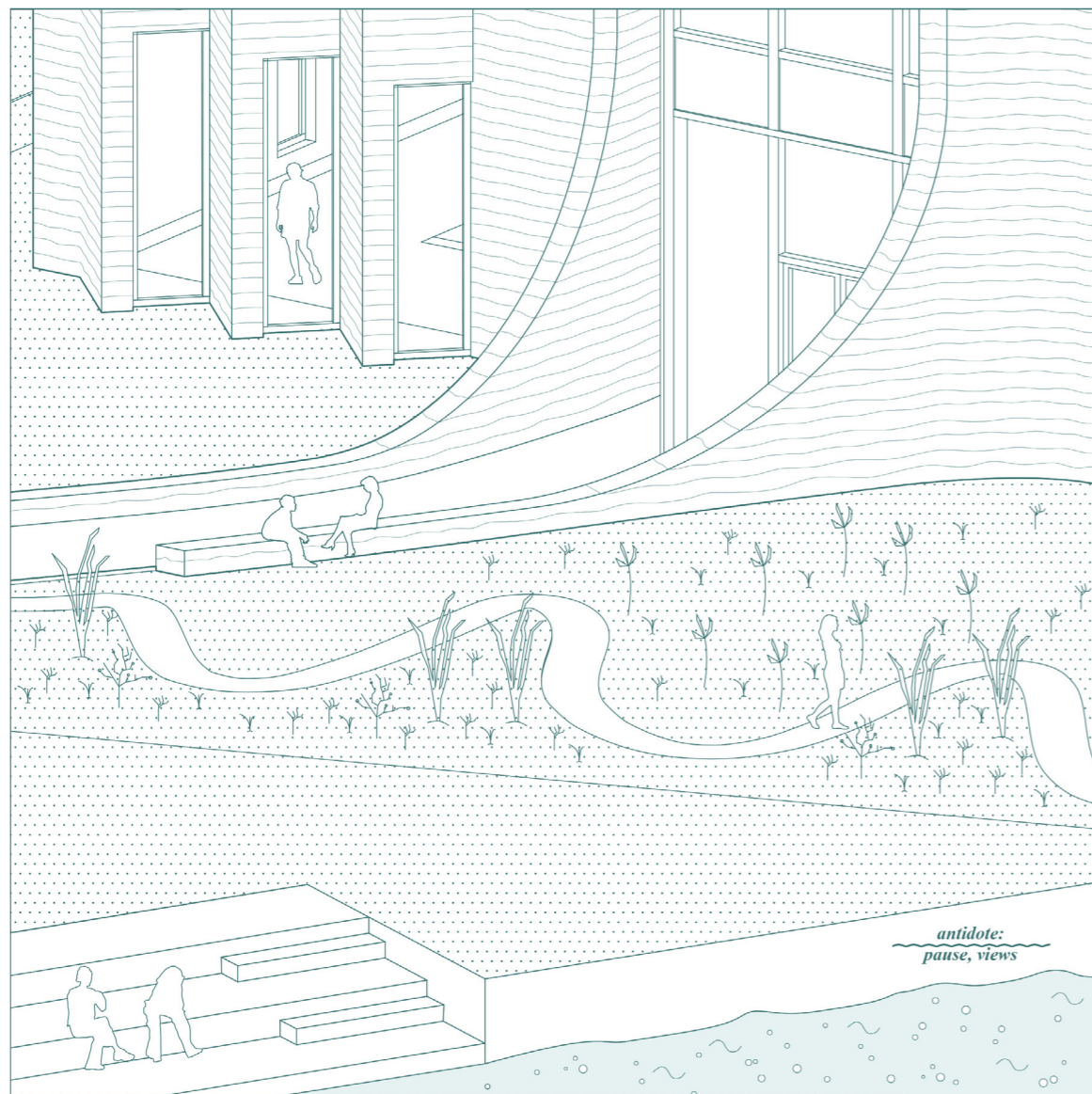


Figure 43: Axonometric view of the Docking Station.

Next page: Exterior and interior views of the coworking spaces.



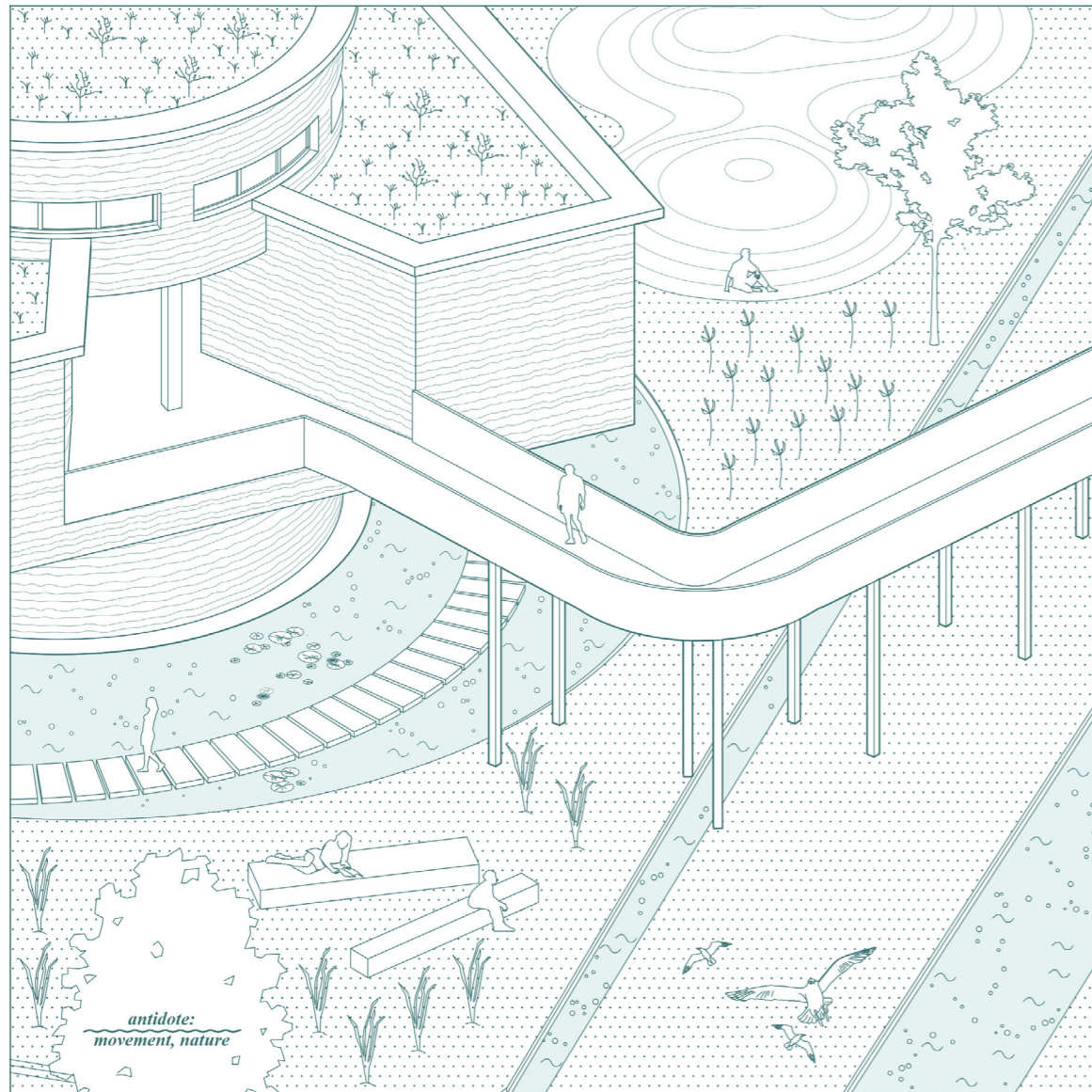
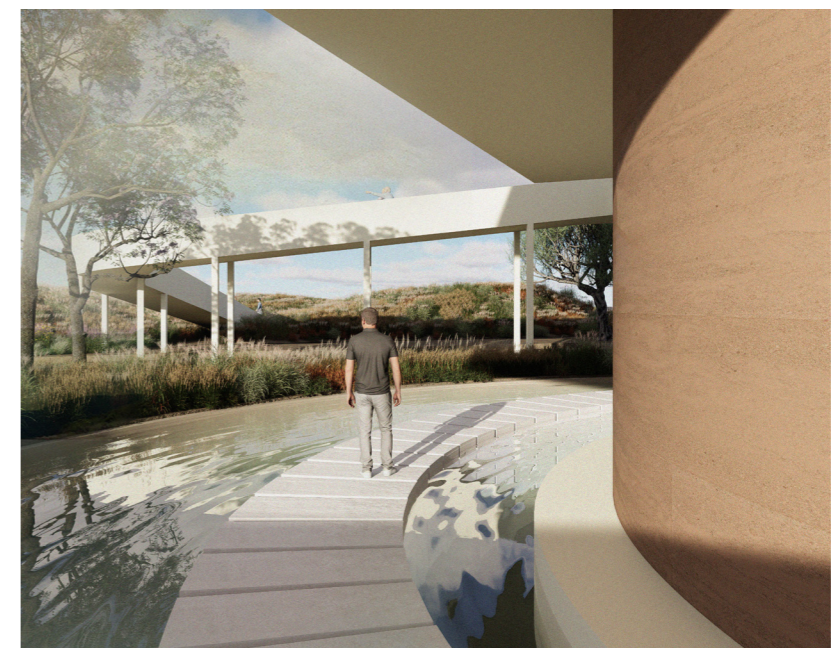
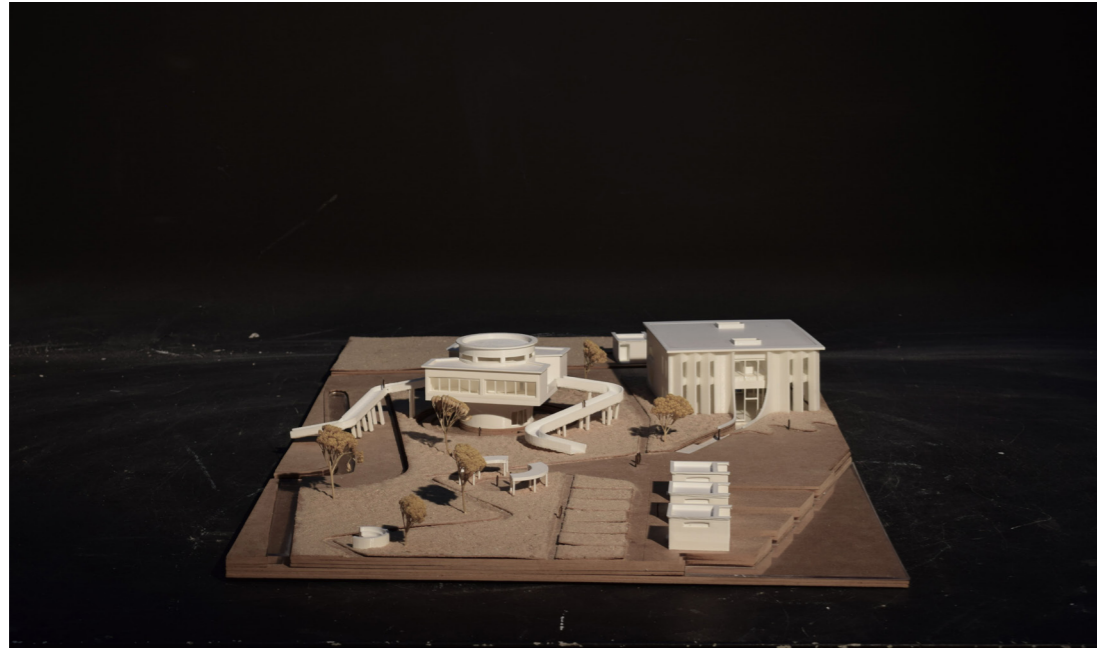


Figure 44: Axonometric view of the Unplug Space.

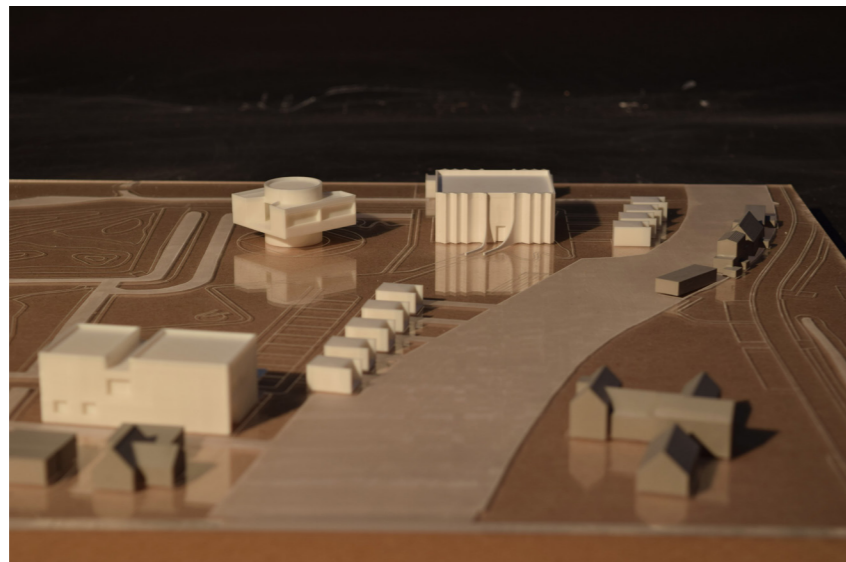
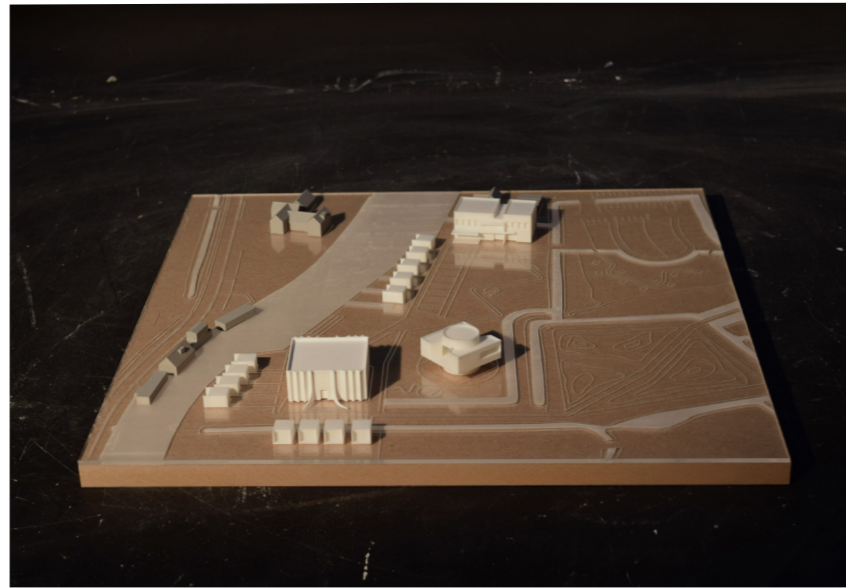
Next page: Exterior and interior views of the yoga studio, tea room within the Unplug Space.



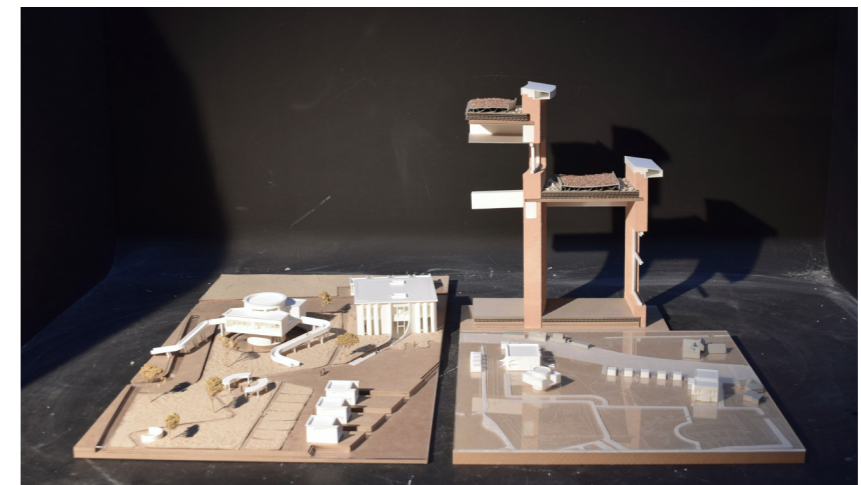
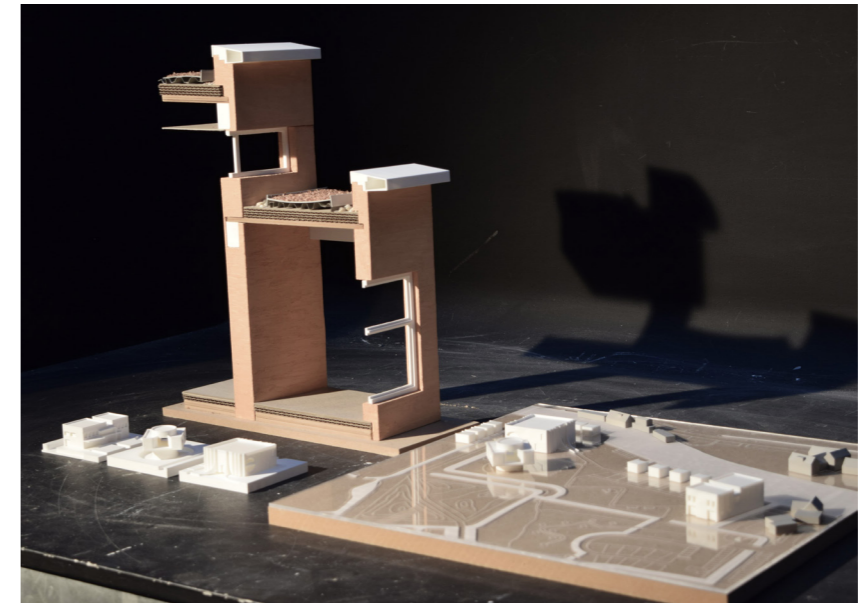


Photos of the 1:200 scale model.





Photos of the 1:500 scale model.



Top photo: 1:20 scale model.

04

———— ***Conclusion & discussion***

Conclusion and discussion

This graduation project researched how architecture, through thresholds, spatial and sensory transitioning can act as a prescription for digital detox. The final proposal answers this question by redefining digital detox not as a single isolated function, nor as an escape from everyday life, but as an architectural sequence between work and rest, public and private, digital presence and physical presence. The Detox Hub in Marenland, Winsum, becomes a spatial framework through which users gradually move from digital overstimulation toward embodied awareness, restoration and reconnection with landscape and community.

The final design addresses the mental strain, social isolation and fragmented perception of time associated with remote work and constant connectivity by proposing spaces that slow down movement, heighten sensory perception and structure moments of withdrawal, encounter and reflection.

The physical context of the Mareland site, positioned at the edge between historical center and the open landscape is not treated as a limitation, but as the basis for the project's architectural argument. The existing separation of the site from the village provides the necessary distance for recovery from digital fatigue, while its proximity to local context and landscape conditions allows the hub to remain connected to everyday life. The design transforms this fragmented border into a threshold landscape. Water, shadow and light, paths, gradients and dispersed volumes are used to create a gradual transition between the everyday context and the restorative environment of the hub.

The program reinforces this spatial concept. By combining coworking, accommodation, public workshops, restaurant functions, tourist information, activity spaces, therapy, tearoom and outdoor cultivation, the project develops a hybrid typology that responds to both digital nomads and local residents. The proposal avoids a closed retreat model by creating repeated moments of overlap between temporary and permanent users. Each building has its own atmosphere and rhythm, while the spaces between them become equally important as encounter zones.

Detox is induced by organizing the users' daily rituals. Digital nomads are supported by spaces for work, rest and social exchange, but the project deliberately separates accommodation from workspaces in order to protect rest from productivity. The symbiosis between temporary and local users, in the more public parts, becomes part of the detox process itself: after prolonged engagement with digital environments, establishing a framework from human interaction offers a way to reconnect with physical presence and collective rhythms.

The spatial concept is most clearly expressed through movement. Circulation becomes the primary design tool through which users experience the project by structuring perceptions. The user is not asked to disconnect instantly but is guided through a sequence in which digital intensity is progressively replaced by sensory attention, making the architectural promenade central to the detox experience.

Implications and recommendations

The significance of this project for the architectural profession lies in its attempt to reposition architecture as an active mediator between digital culture and embodied experience. As digital connectivity increasingly shapes work, leisure and social interaction, architecture must address not only functional needs, but also the psychological and sensory consequences of these new conditions. It seeks to construct frameworks

that tackle physical fragmentation by addressing how sequential and transitional gestures can induce healing.

Moreover, thresholds as spaces are often treated as secondary or transitional spaces, but this proposal understands them as the main architectural condition. The in-between becomes the place where transformation occurs: between productivity and rest, isolation and collectivity, built form and landscape, digital saturation and sensory awareness. Designing both for interior and exterior perspectives. In this sense, the project expands the threshold beyond the interior of the building, treating it as a spatial strategy that shapes both indoor atmospheres and exterior relationships with the landscape.

In addition, the project suggests that hybrid programs should not only be resolved through efficiency or general flexibility, but through zoning, spatial sequencing and the productive separation of functions. The division of the program into three buildings shows how segregation can become an architectural strategy when it is used to organize different rhythms, atmospheres and degrees of publicness.

Its societal relevance lies in the way it reimagines public space as an active participant in counteracting the isolation associated with digital nomadism and remote work. By creating spaces for shared routines, encounter and sensory reconnection, the project frames architecture as a response to the social and psychological effects of digitally mediated life. In this sense, it also points to a broader responsibility for future architects: to critically engage with rapid technological change and to design environments that address its spatial, social and emotional consequences.

The proposal is also relevant to discussions on rural development and regenerative tourism. In Winsum, tourism is seasonal and younger residents often leave for education and employment elsewhere. By introducing a long-term user the project proposes a regenerative tourism model by introducing a more sustained form of engagement.

Finally, the design approach could be applied beyond Winsum. The concept of a threshold landscape offers a transferable method for sites that exist between urban and rural conditions, infrastructure and nature, productivity and retreat. However, its application should remain site-specific. The value of the project is not that it offers a universal model for digital detox, but that it demonstrates how digital detox can be spatially interpreted through the physical, cultural and environmental qualities of a particular place.

Reflection

The design and research process followed a Research by Design methodology, in which analysis, theory and design testing were blended in envisioning the experiential question of how architecture can support disconnection from digital overstimulation and reconnection to body, landscape and community and allowed me to design a spatial narrative in which users detox gradually.

Literature review and exploration of academic sources on phenomenology and threshold spaces helped frame the project as a sequence of spatial and sensory transitions. These references clarified that atmosphere is produced through circulation, proportion, materiality, light, enclosure and movement.

Site analysis was central to the process. Mapping Winsum as a threshold landscape revealed transitions between land and water, village and open landscape, low and elevated ground and public and private conditions. These observations helped shaping a site-specific proposal rooted in theory of critical regionalism. Sensory mapping, sound-

scape studies, wind analysis, psychogeographical observation and sketches of existing spatial sequences further supported this approach by focusing on atmosphere, movement, sound, light and bodily perception.

The iterative design process was important in translating these ideas into architecture. Zoning diagrams, conceptual models, clustering studies, plans, sections and transition studies were used to test the relationship between programme, landscape and experience.

The threshold concept proved to be a consistent and productive design framework across multiple scales. It informed the site strategy, the organization of the programme, the circulation, the relationship between buildings and landscape, and the intended user experience.

However, the process also involved several challenges. One of the main difficulties was defining the right balance between a restorative detox environment and the public character of the hub. The project required a degree of autonomy and separation from everyday intensity in order to support withdrawal, reflection and recovery. At the same time, it could not become an isolated retreat disconnected from Winsum and its local community. The design addresses this tension through water thresholds, dispersed volumes and public programmes, allowing different degrees of separation, exposure and collective use to coexist across the site.

A further uncertainty concerns the target group. Although the project focuses on digital nomads, it is unclear whether this lifestyle will continue to exist in the same form in the future. Remote work, mobility and living patterns may change and digital nomadism may expand, decline or merge with other forms of hybrid work. This uncertainty is intensified by the advancement of technology itself. As digital tools, automation, artificial intelligence and communication platforms continue to evolve, the relationship between work and place may change again. Work may become more immersive, while new forms of cognitive fatigue may emerge through increased mediation by screens, data systems and virtual environments.

For this reason, the proposal should not be understood as a response to one fixed lifestyle, but as an adaptable spatial framework for changing work cultures. Its flexibility lies in the fact that it addresses broader conditions of contemporary work, mobility, fatigue and restoration. The dispersed organisation allows the buildings to operate independently, in different combinations and according to different rhythms, making the hub adaptable if the original target group changes.

This adaptability could be further developed in relation to the ambitions of the Nij Begun agenda, which seeks to move beyond repair toward long-term regeneration and sustainable economic development rooted in local identity. In this context, the hub could become a place where entrepreneurship, knowledge exchange and detoxing are brought together. It could support start-up communities, creative workers or local entrepreneurs who need spaces for focused work and collaboration, workshops or public presentation. This would shift the project from a facility for mobile users toward a broader regenerative infrastructure that contributes to social and economic vitality in Winsum.

Another scenario could be related to connecting the proposal more strongly to Groningen's academic environment. The hub could potentially support the academic community connected to the city's university and knowledge economy by functioning as a campus extension and thus strengthening its year-round use.

The technical and material studies could also be developed further. Hempcrete became a strong material choice because of its tactile, acoustic, thermal and environmental qualities, but more detailed testing of façade systems, junctions, humidity performance, acoustics and maintenance would improve the technical resolution.

Overall, the process showed that architecture can address digital fatigue by working through atmosphere, movement, landscape and material presence. While the future of the digital nomad as a user group remains uncertain, the broader need for spaces that mediate between work and rest, mobility and rootedness, digital life and embodied experience is likely to remain relevant and only become more relevant. The proposal can therefore be understood not only as a hub for digital nomads, but as a flexible framework for detoxing, knowledge exchange, temporary residence and communal life.

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I am also deeply grateful to PhD researcher Sofia Souvatzolgo for generously sharing her invaluable knowledge of healthy public environments.

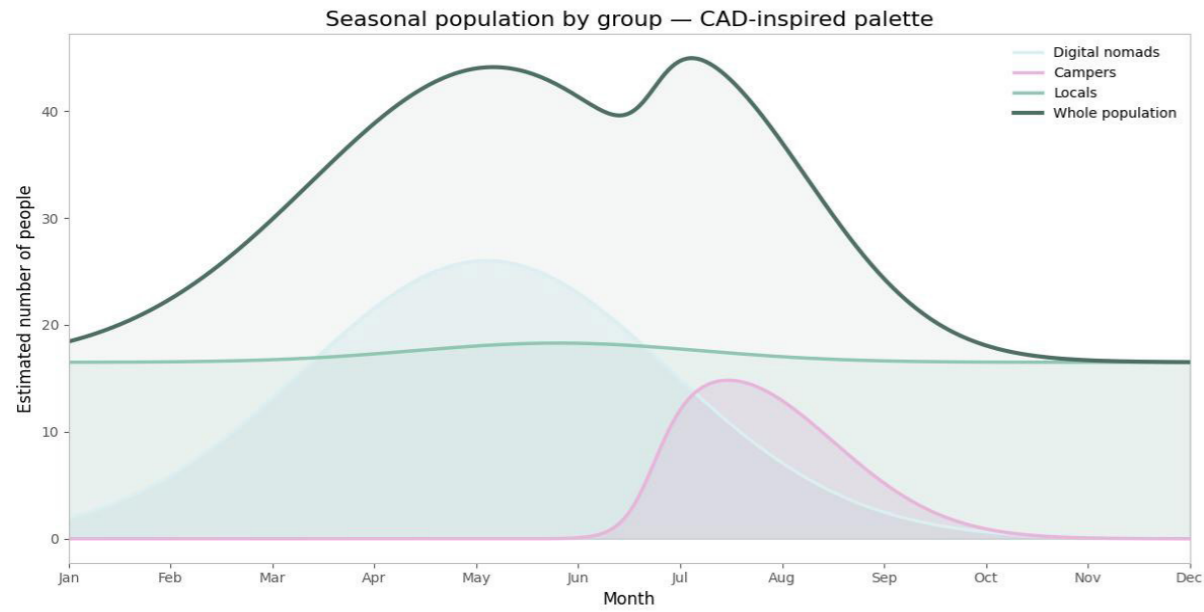
Finally, I owe my deepest gratitude to my family; to my friends Georgios, Andromachi, Evgenia, Giouli and Ioanna. This thesis reflects not only the knowledge accumulated throughout this process, but also my curiosity about how architecture can support moments of disconnection, reflection and wellbeing in an increasingly digital world.

AI Use Declaration

During the preparation of this thesis, Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools were used as auxiliary support for improving language, editing text and assisting with visual material. The research approach, analytical work, design choices, drawings, conclusions and final thesis content were developed and remain the responsibility of the author. Any AI-assisted material was carefully checked, assessed and revised where needed to ensure that it was accurate, relevant, and aligned with the aims of the project.

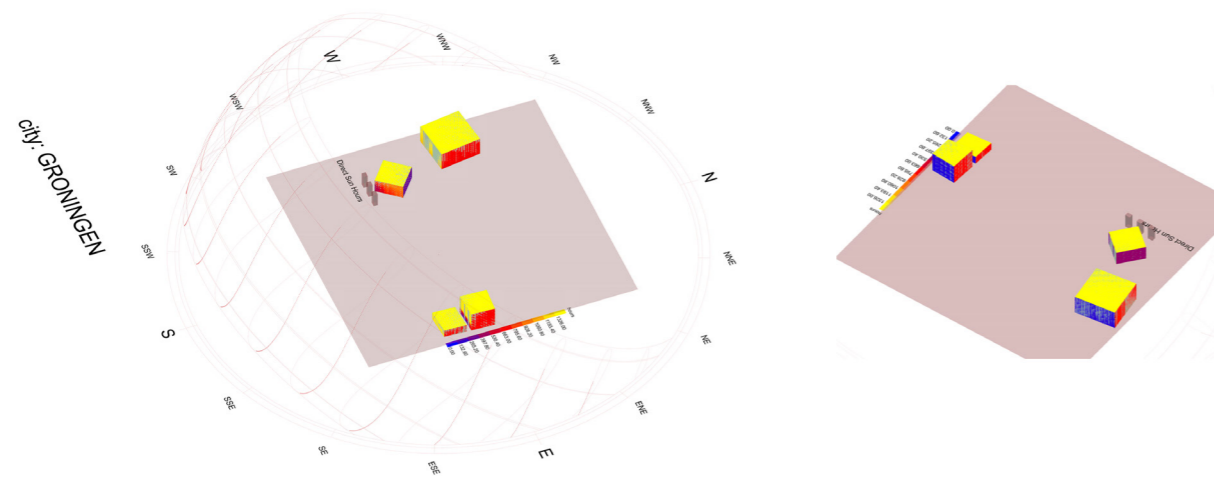
Appendix A

Seasonal population variation by user group, showing the whole population peaking in spring and midsummer, with digital nomads highest around May and campers concentrated in July–August.



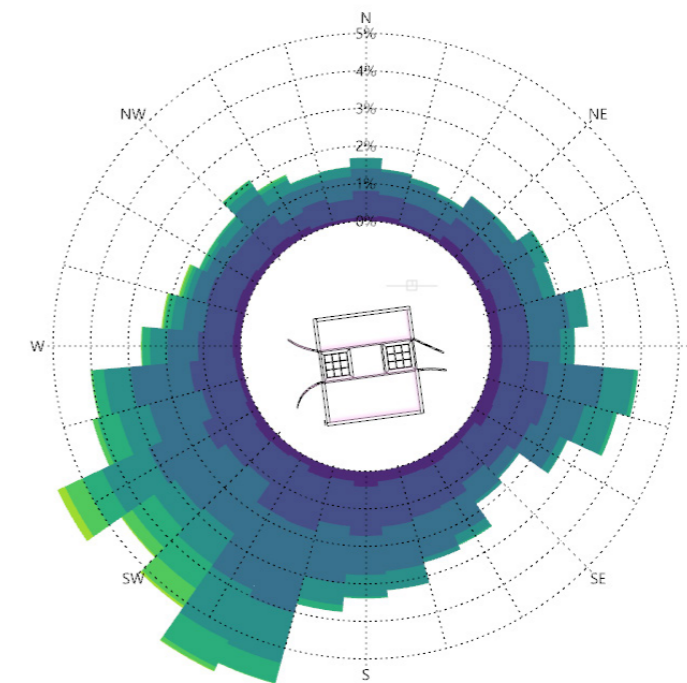
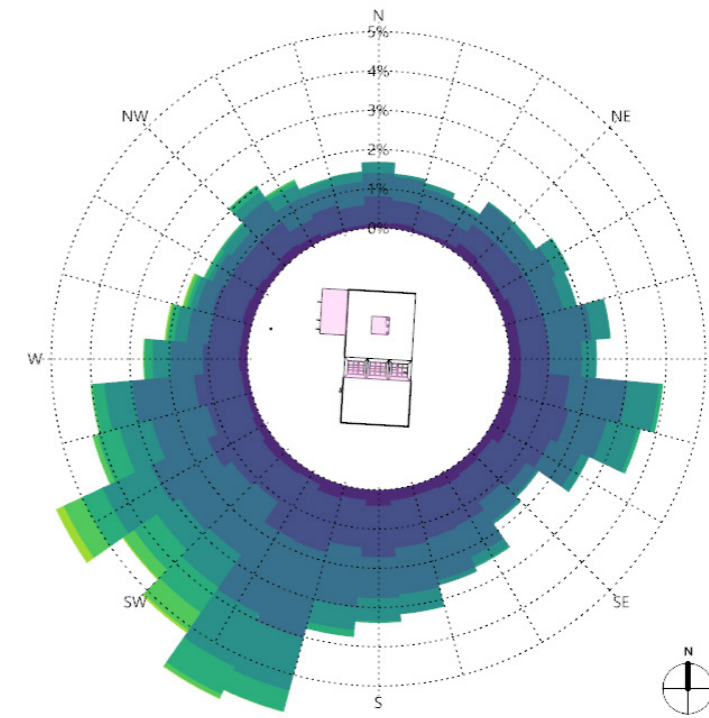
Appendix B

Sun path analysis diagram generated using Ladybug Tools in Grasshopper during the design development phase.



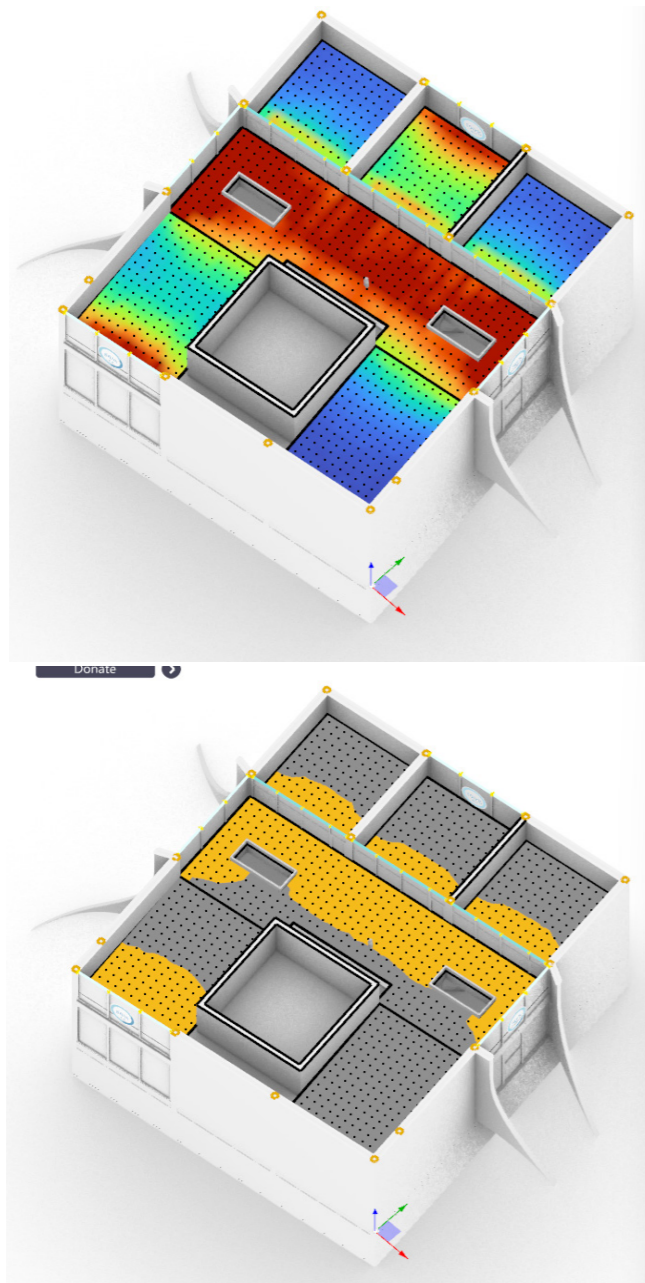
Appendix C

Wind Rose generated using ClimateStudio in Rhino during the design development phase. The longest and most frequent bars on the wind rose are concentrated between south and southwest, with the peak clearly leaning closer to southwest (SW).



Appendix D

Daylight analysis generated using ClimateStudio in Rhino during the design development phase.



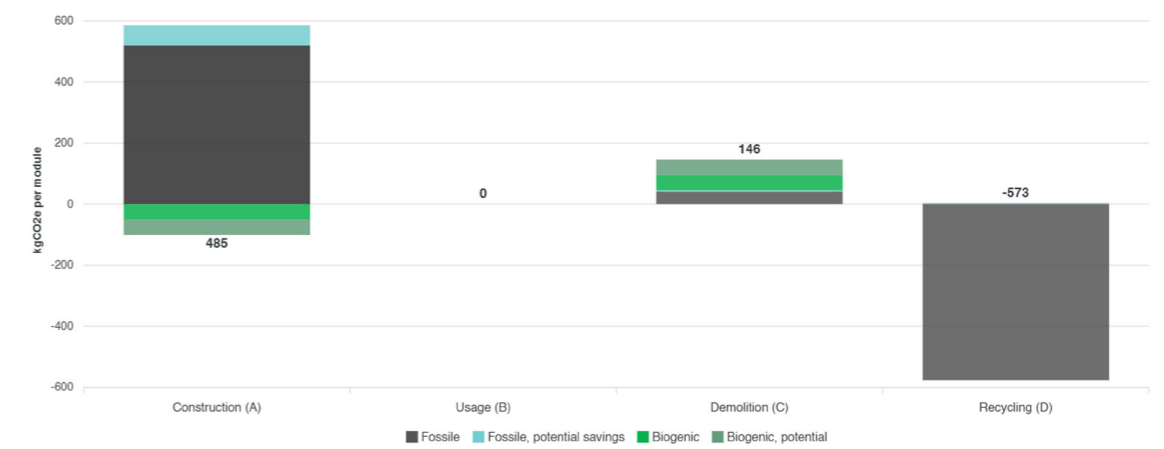
Appendix E

Estimation on embodied carbon emissions in early design stage using Carbonspace by MVRDV Next.

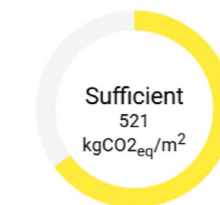
Detailed overview

Enable / disable options	Mass kg	Biogenic kgCO ₂ eq	Total kgCO ₂ eq
- Building	2911 - 3267	51 - 101	521 - 586
+ Superstructure	98 - 453	43 - 93	24 - 89
+ Substructure	2732	0.0	239
+ Skin	55	8.2	50
+ Space Plan	23	0.0	5.8
+ Services	4.5	0.0	201

table settings



GFA 3,000 m²
 Height 10 m
 Weight 3,267 kg/m²gfa
 Facade ratio 0.50 % m²facade / m²gfa
 Glazing ratio 0.45 % m²glazing / m²gfa

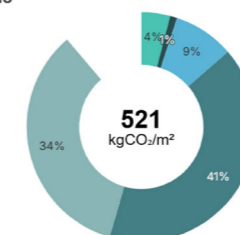


Picking all lowest impact products will lead to the **Sufficient** rating

Where is carbon emitted?

Biggest potential for reduction are in: Superstructure 11%

Minimum scenario



Maximum scenario

