



The revival of the Byzantine church Hagia Irene in Istanbul

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# Content

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- Design intentions
- Design

An aerial photograph of Istanbul, Turkey, showing the Hagia Sophia and the city skyline in the background. The Hagia Sophia is a large, historic building with a prominent dome and minarets, situated in the center of the image. The city skyline is visible in the distance, with various buildings and structures. The foreground shows a mix of residential and commercial buildings, including a large, modern building with a curved roof on the right. The overall scene is a mix of old and new architecture, with a hazy sky and a body of water in the background.

## Research and conclusions





# Location analysis



Rich history with many layers of architecture most concentrated on historical peninsula



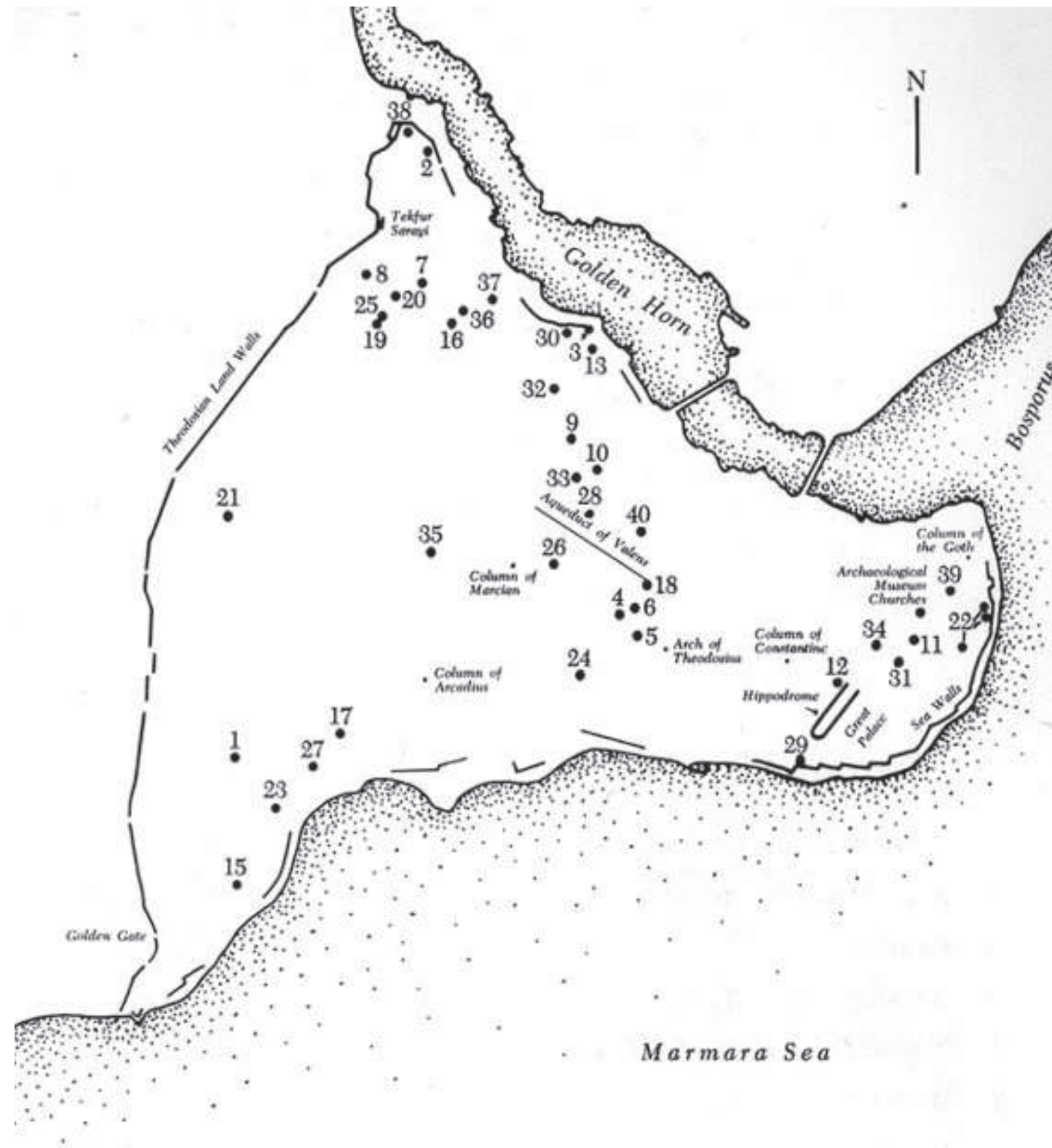


Most important monuments are from two layers, concentrated around “the Great Church”





Byzantine layer not well preserved because of reuse among other things



Map of Byzantine churches



## Problem statement & fascination





## Research question & sub-questions

How can we preserve the specific characteristics of the Byzantine church Hagia Irene in Istanbul when giving it or its surroundings a new function?



- 1 What are the specific characteristics of the Byzantine church of Hagia Irene in Istanbul?
- 2 What are the specific characteristics of the surroundings of the Byzantine church of Hagia Irene in Istanbul?
- 3 “What are the possible approaches for re-purposing the Hagia Irene and its surroundings?”
- 4 How can we preserve the characteristics of the church and its surroundings when repurposing and what should be taken into account?

## Methods



Literature  
Interviews  
Case studies  
Location visit

# Perspectives

*“Whoever is worshiped in what kind of worship place or location that place shouldn’t be used for another purpose than what it is built for. You can do anything in its ambiance which is appropriate to the environment of the church.”*

Diakos Vagarsag Seropyan

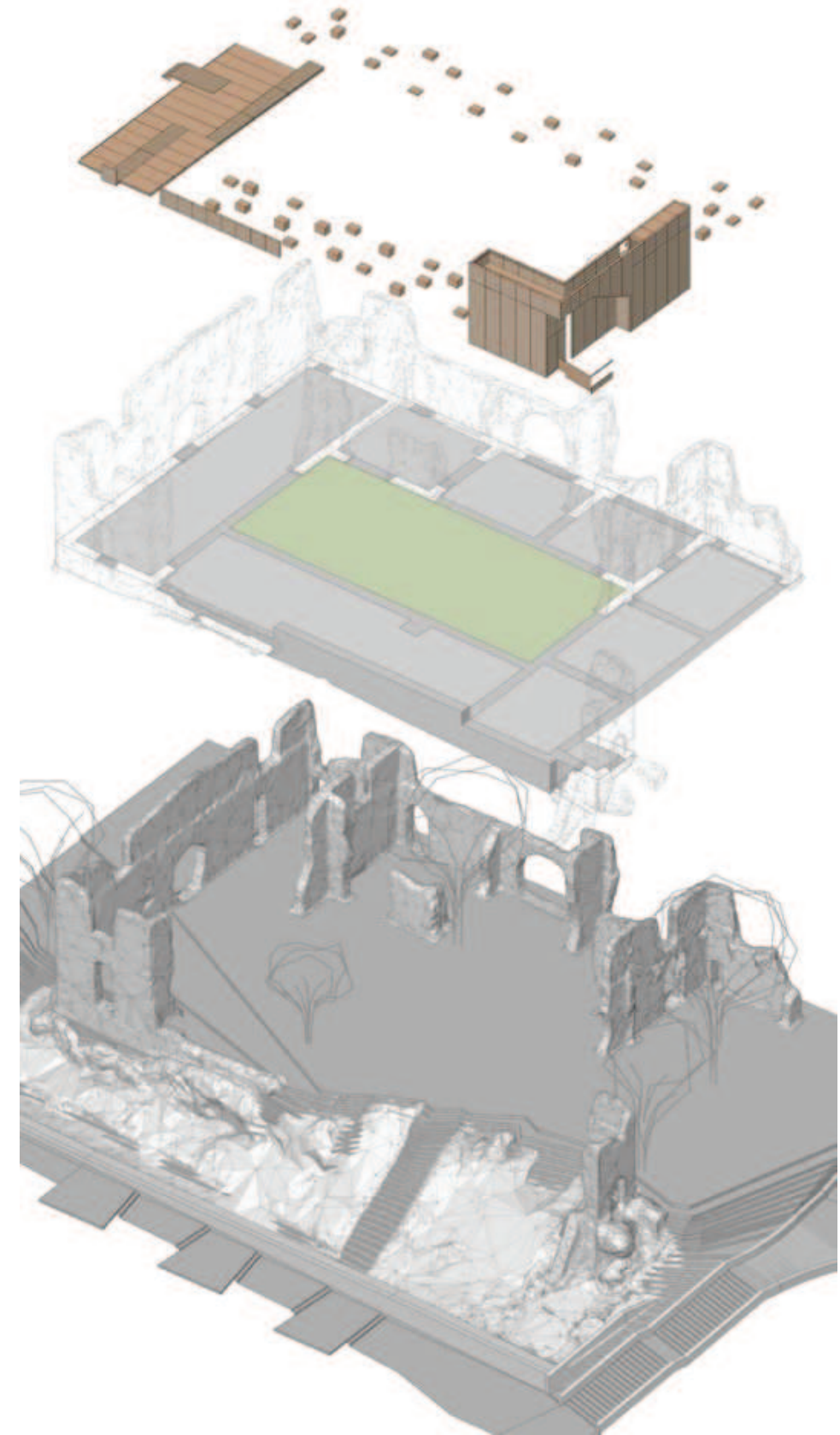
*“You should not change its design or impair what has been preserved from the original building. The additions should respect the original structure, not damage its structure, looks and visual appreciation.”*

Prof. Dr. Zeynep Ahunbay



## Case studies





Szathmáry Palace, Hungary





Astley Castle, United Kingdom



## Final conclusions:

### Function:

- respect the original function of the church
  - be multifunctional
- fit in the context of the location; the functions already present so these will strengthen each other.

### Architecture:

- continue the integrity of the original interior space, the structural and decorative elements who should be exposed and perceptible; the new design should be modest
- should be interwoven with the existing and strengthen/reinforce it whereby the history and the story of the buildings and the location is told

# Design approach

## Statement:

1) Keep its functions

2) Adjustments/redesign should be in line with the characteristics of the Hagia Irene:

- peace
- characteristics of the urban space
- architectural characteristics

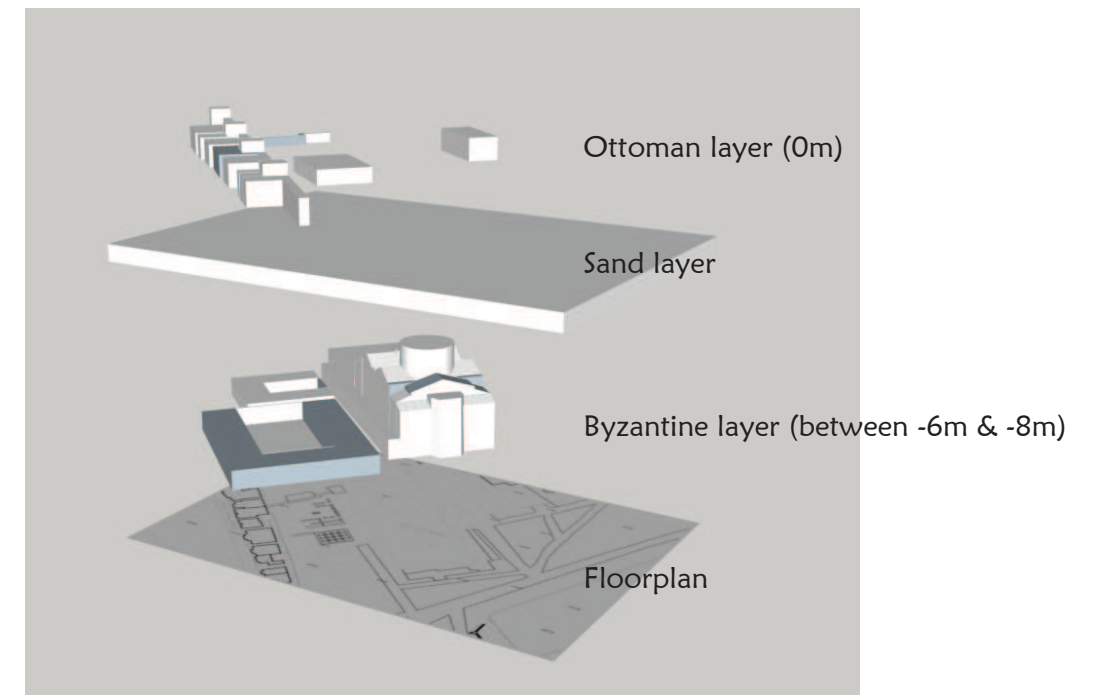
3) Tell its history and story by framing the layers

4) Bring back the old connection and connect with the new situation



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Istanbul, showing a large domed building (possibly a mosque or church) in the center, surrounded by other buildings and greenery. In the background, a body of water (the Bosphorus) is visible, with a distant city skyline (likely New York City) on the horizon under a cloudy sky. The text "Site analysis" is overlaid in the center of the image.

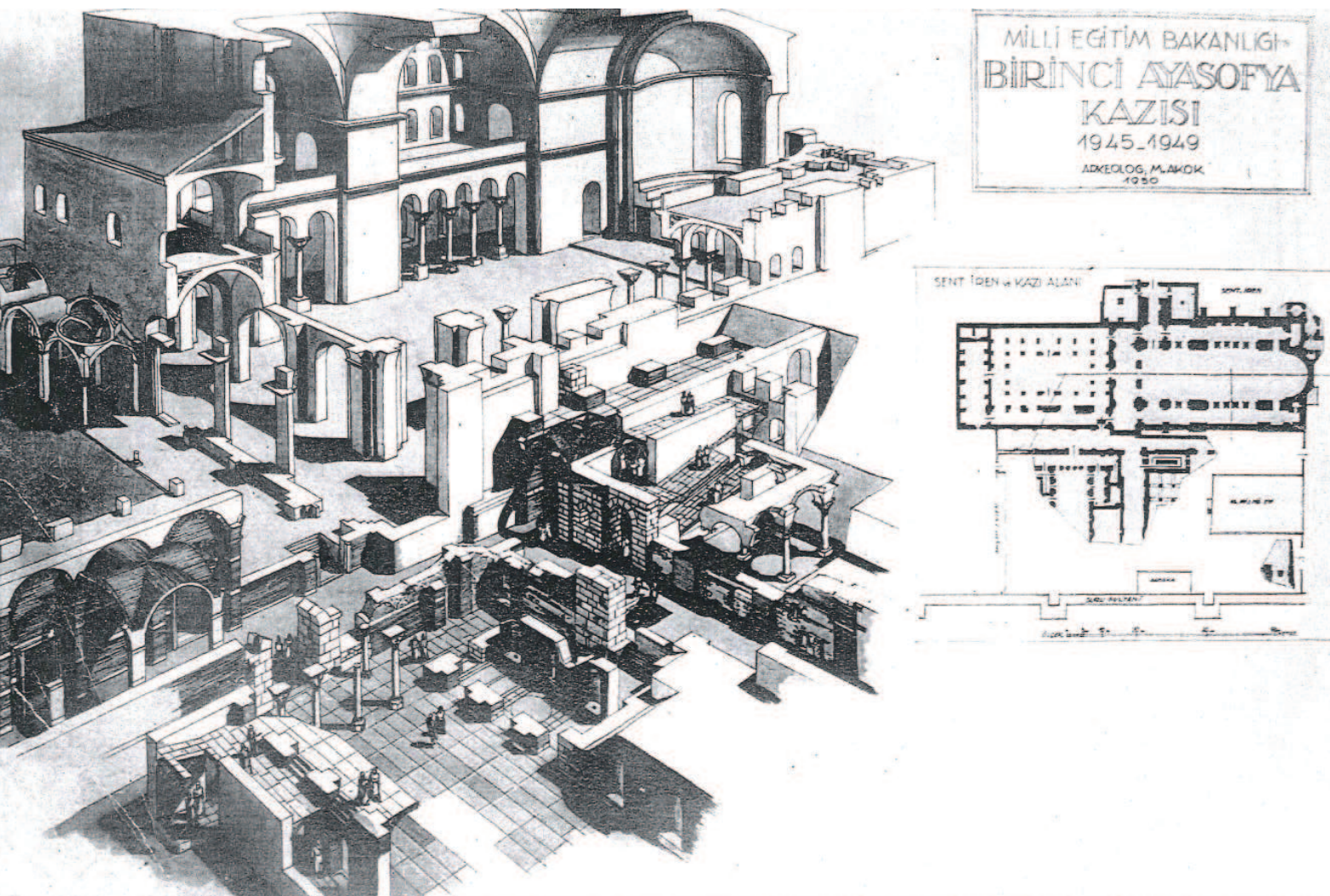
## Site analysis



The layers of the site



Byzantine layer remained mostly as ruins, important layer to the history





Ottoman layer is well preserved



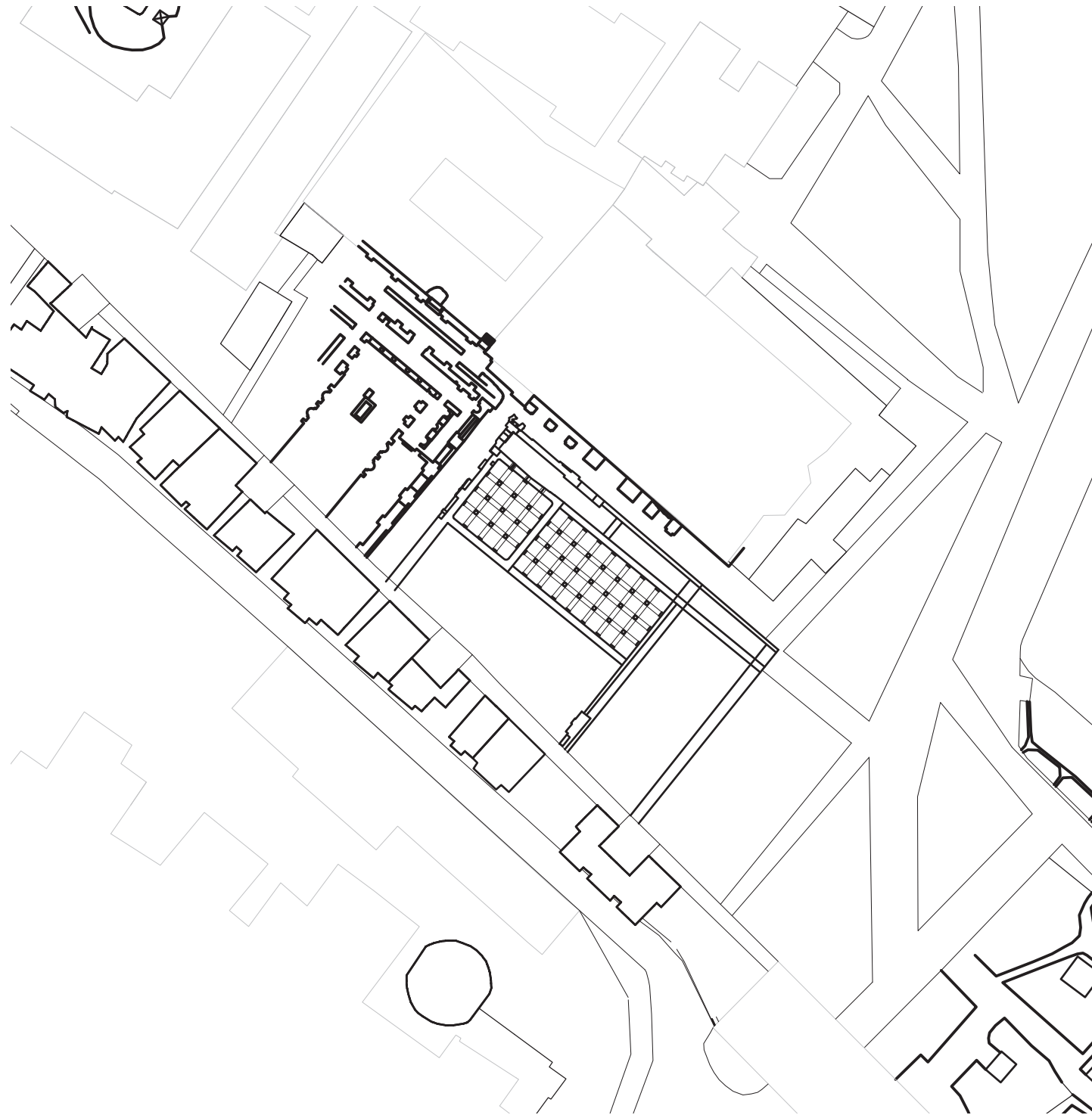
Ottoman layer



An aerial photograph of Istanbul, Turkey, showing the city's skyline across the Bosphorus Strait. The Hagia Sophia is a prominent feature in the center, surrounded by other historic buildings and greenery. The city's skyline is visible in the background, with the Bosphorus Bridge and other structures spanning the water. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.

## Design intentions

Expose Byzantine layer by removing the sand layer



## Telling the story by framing

### Church

- expose the characteristics

### Location

- vertical and horizontal connection

### *Ruins*

- *expose the characteristics*
- *pavilion*



## Create unity

space form image composition

material construction climate

function use ritual movement

urban context site

social cultural historical philosophical context

An aerial photograph of Istanbul, Turkey, showing the city's dense urban landscape and the Bosphorus Strait. The word "Design" is overlaid in the center. The image captures a mix of traditional Ottoman architecture with domes and minarets, and modern buildings. The Bosphorus is visible in the background, with ships and the distant city skyline under a cloudy sky.

Design

## Concept & qualities

# Concept

Framing the layers of time

## Qualities

1 Reconnect and connect functions and urban space

2 Preserving and framing the old

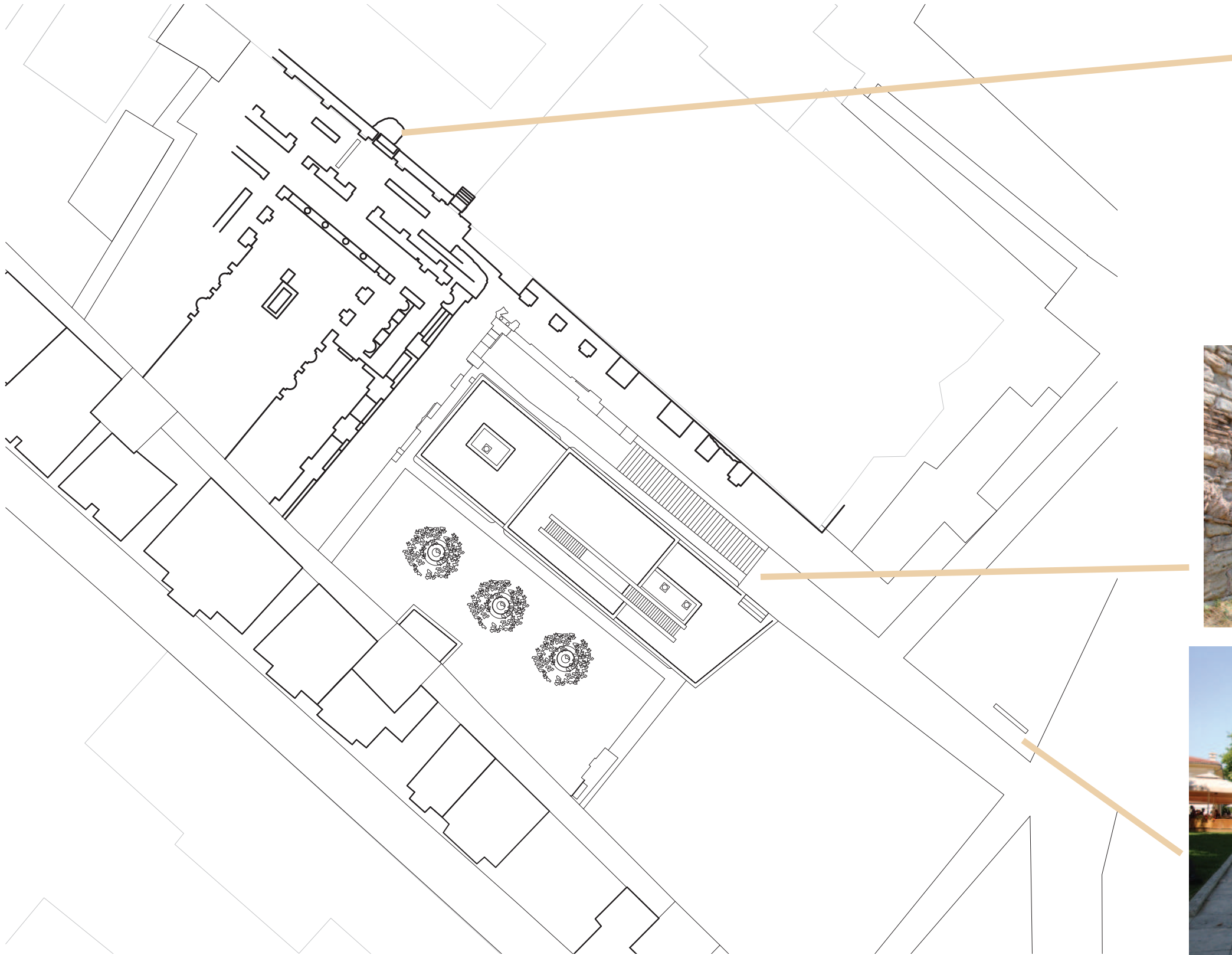
3 Telling the story



## Quality 1

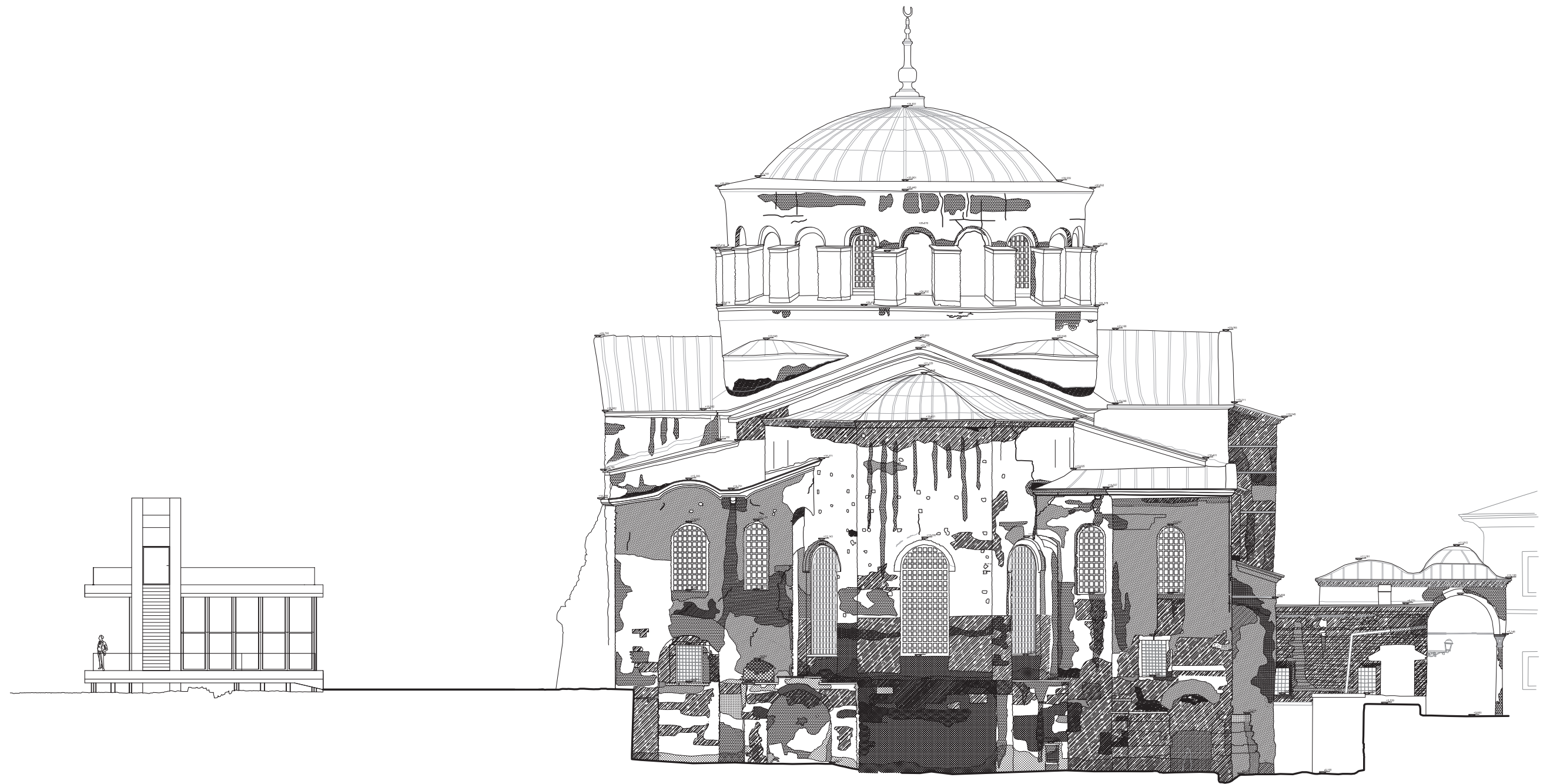
Reconnect and connect functions and urban space

## Connection of urban layers by walls and stairs; referring to the old structure

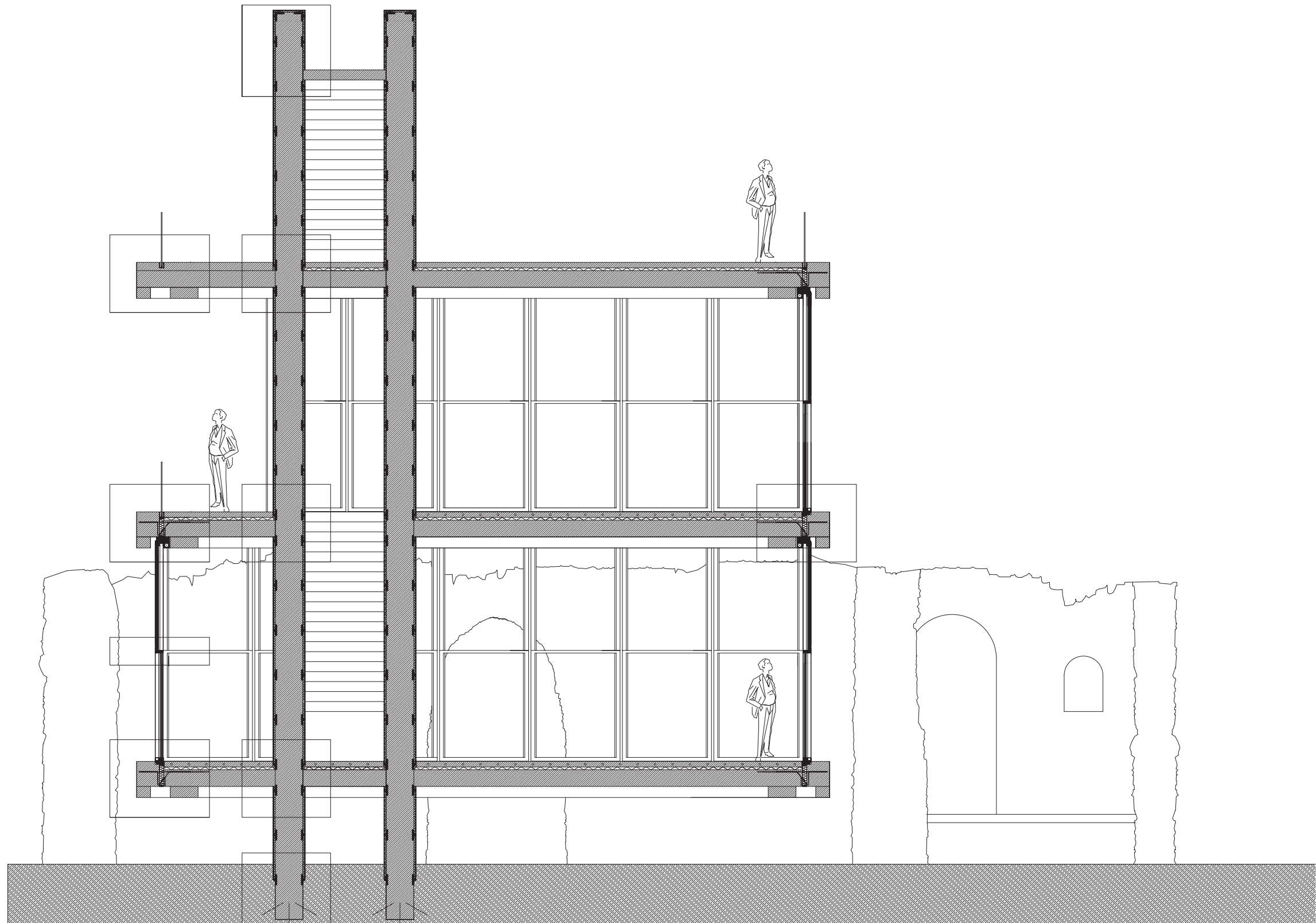




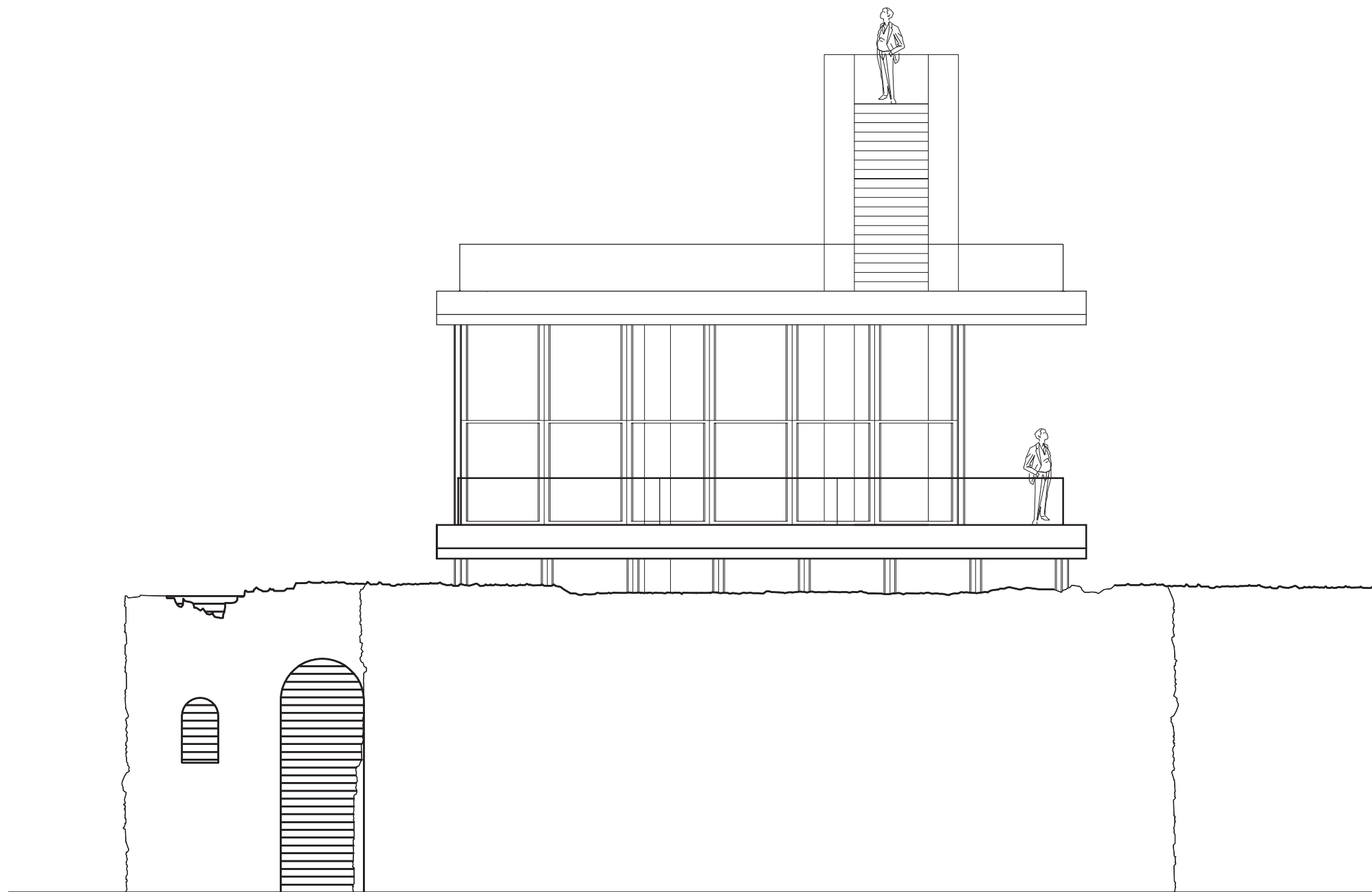
## Vertical connection within the ruins







Close physical and visual connection



Direct connection to the surroundings and ruins

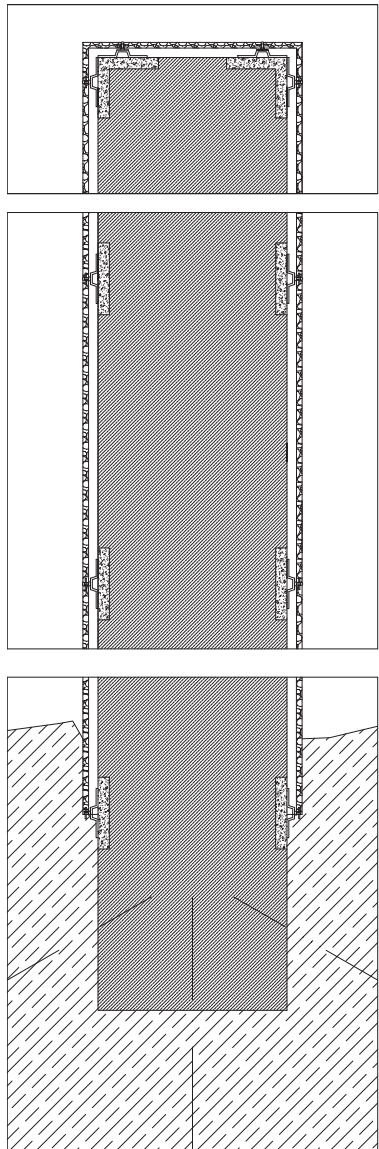


Connection to the existing layers: colors and material of the ruins are defining the aesthetic of the new design





## Blending of new materials into the old

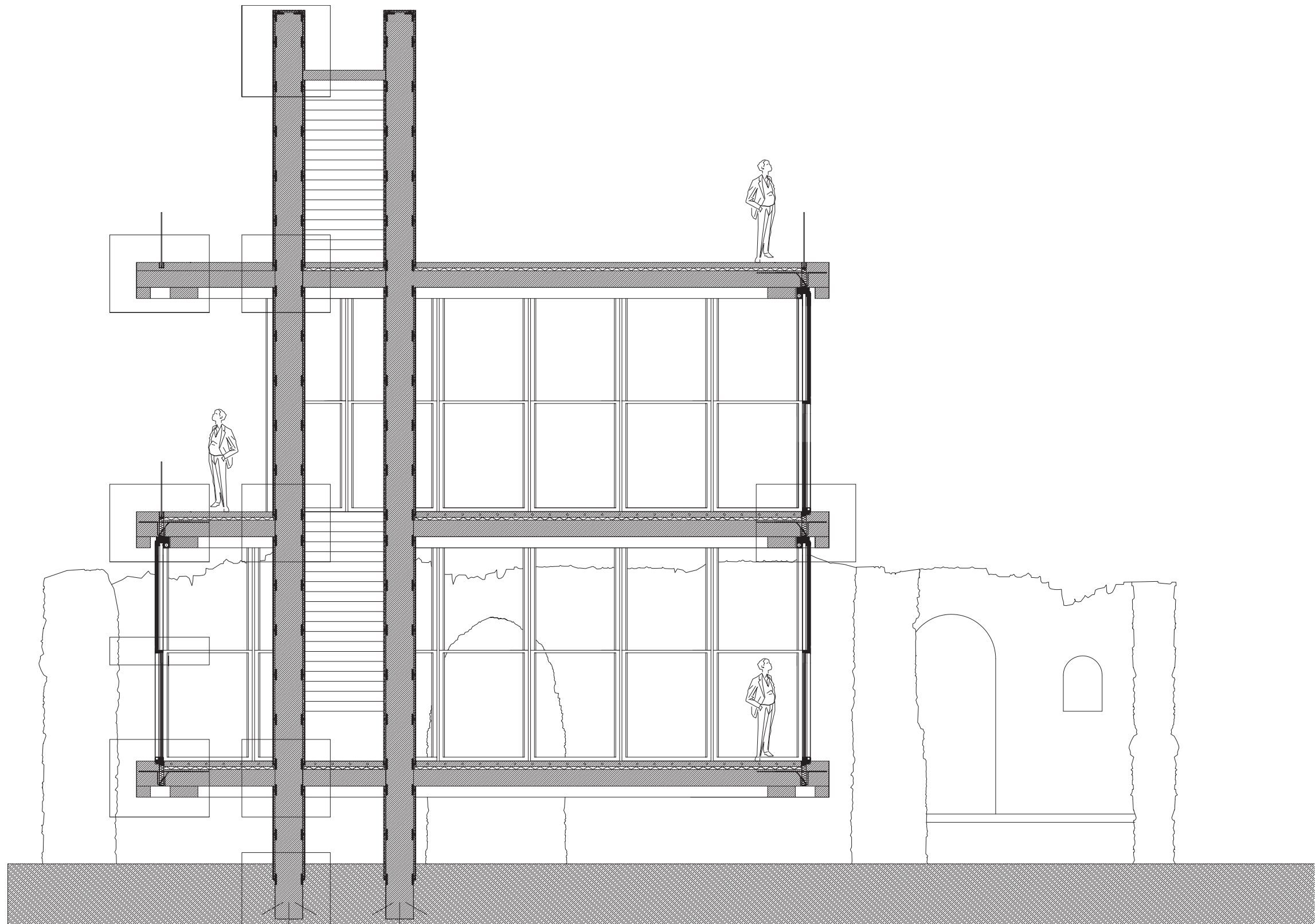


## Quality 2

Preserving and framing the old



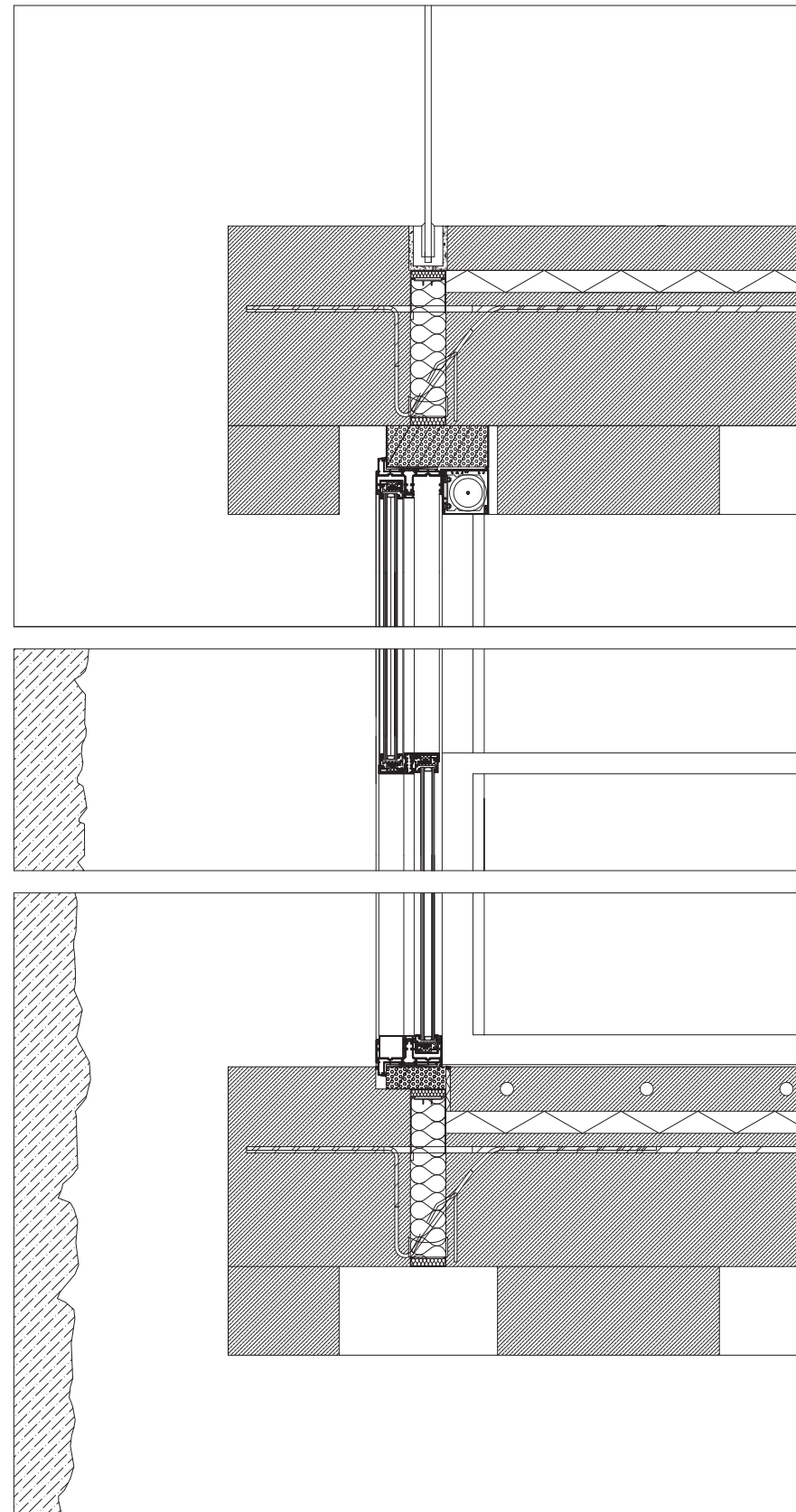
## Preserving the old by a detached structure



Preserving the ruins

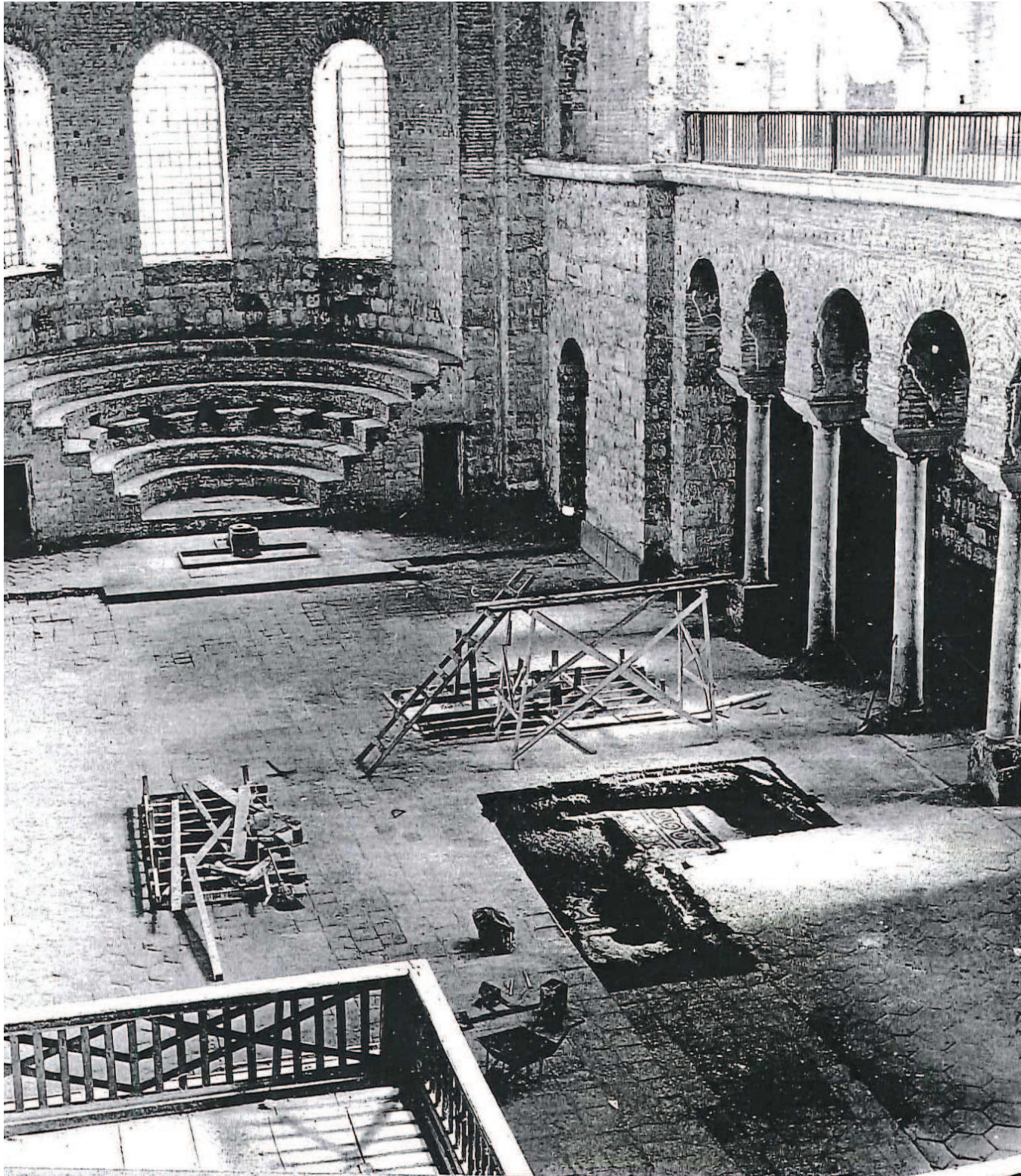


## Framing the historical layers by large windows and the structure



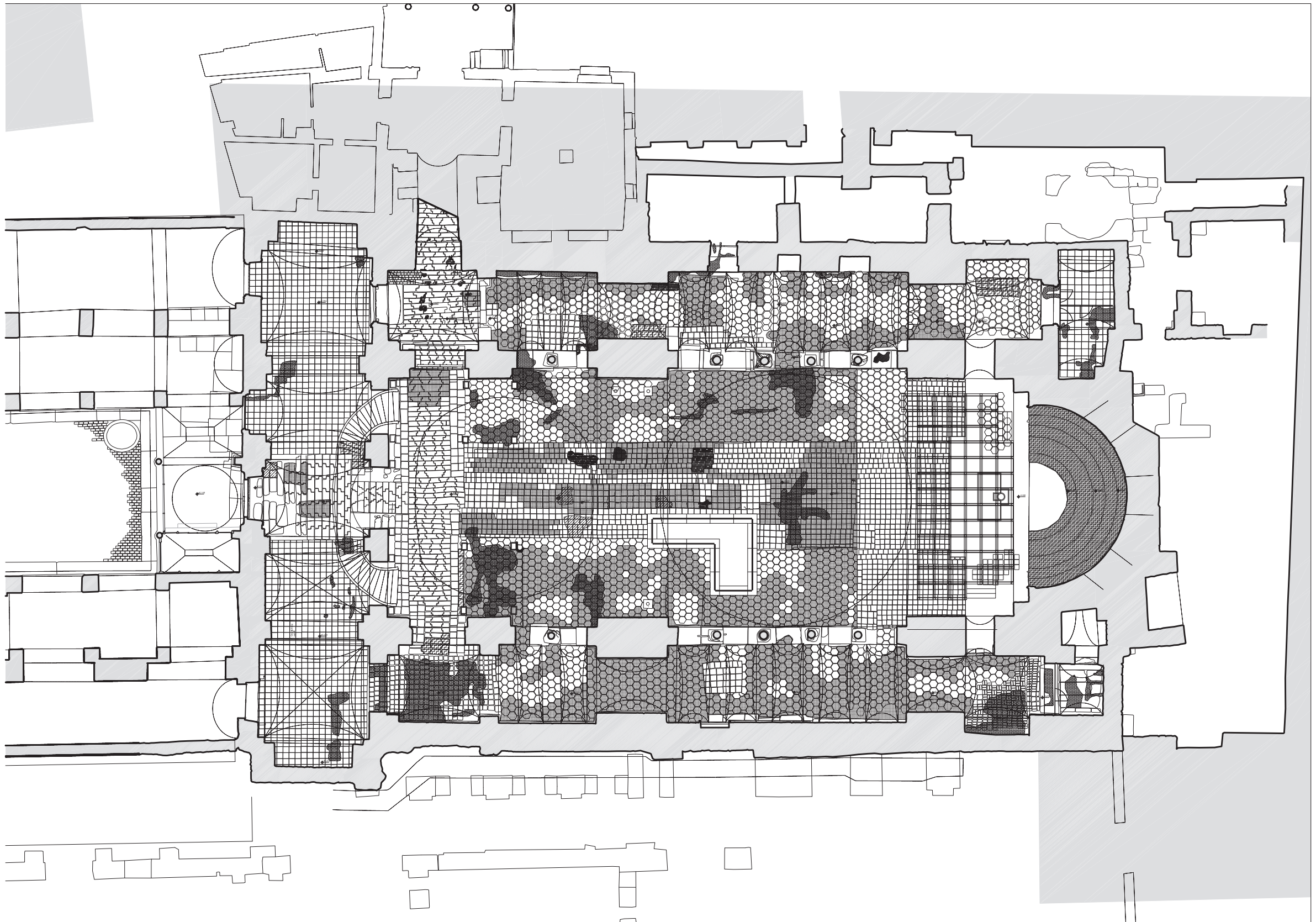


## Uncovering the original design



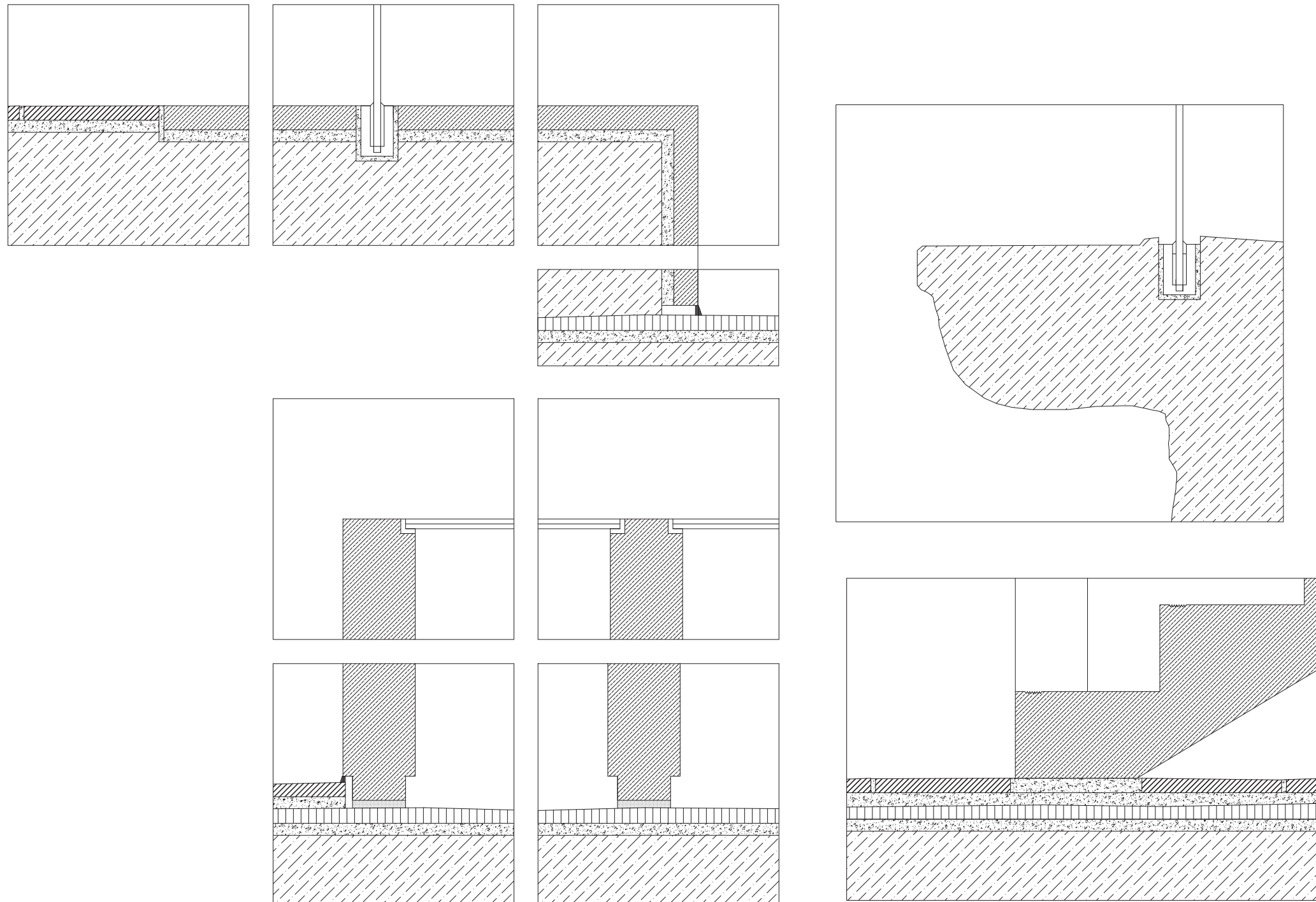
Uncovering and preserving





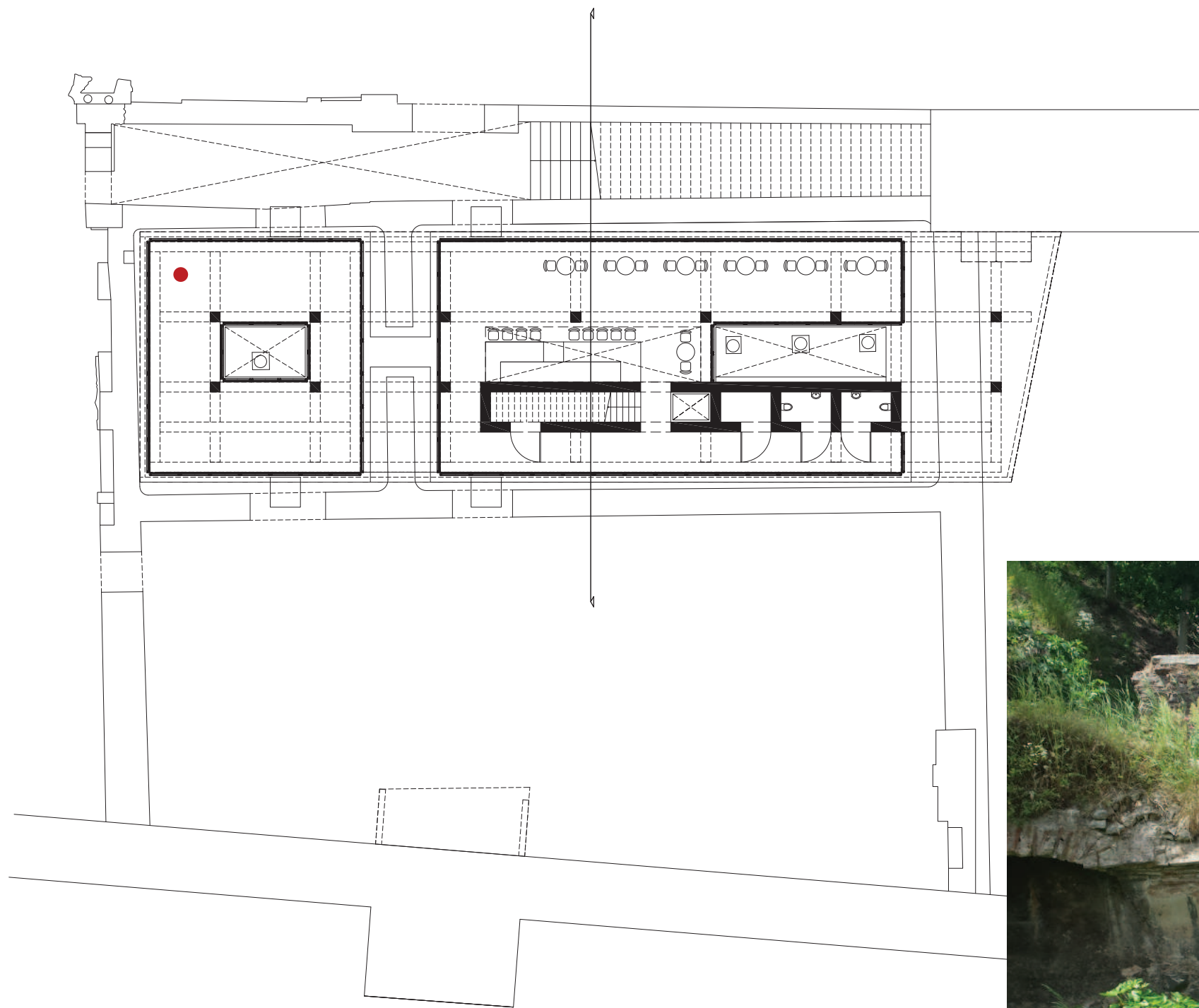
Exposing and preserving the originality of the church





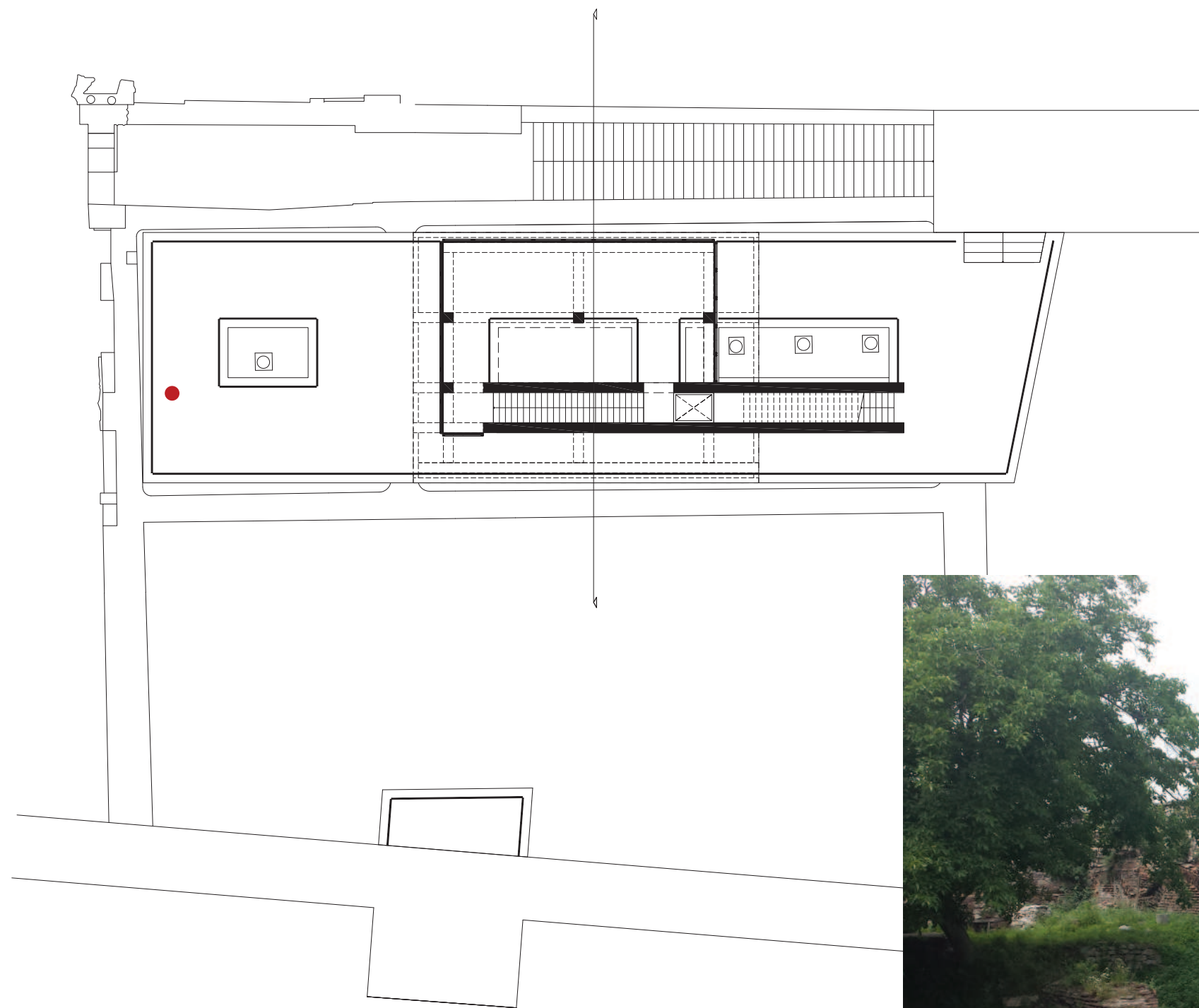
## Quality 3

Telling the story



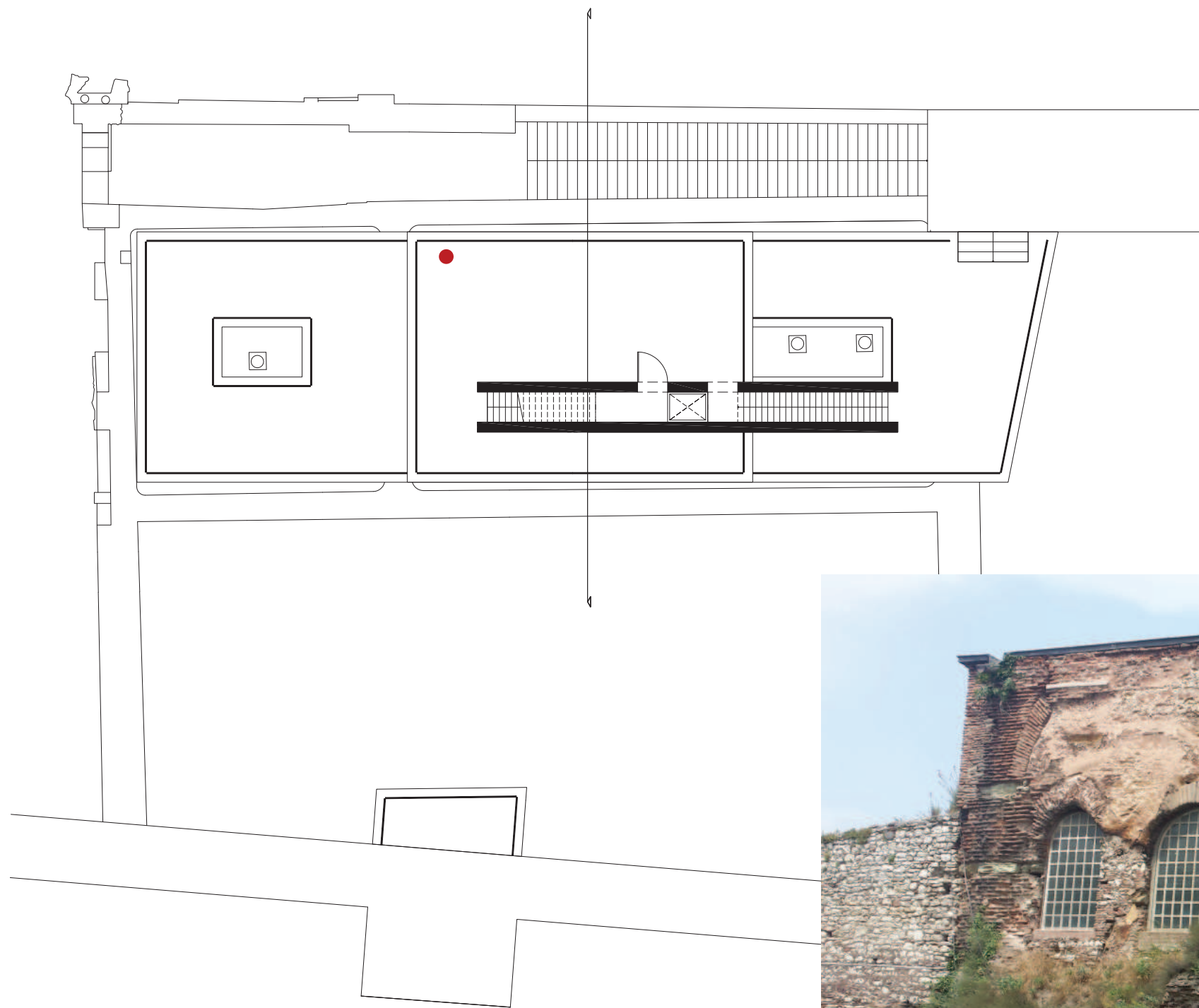
Floorplan -1





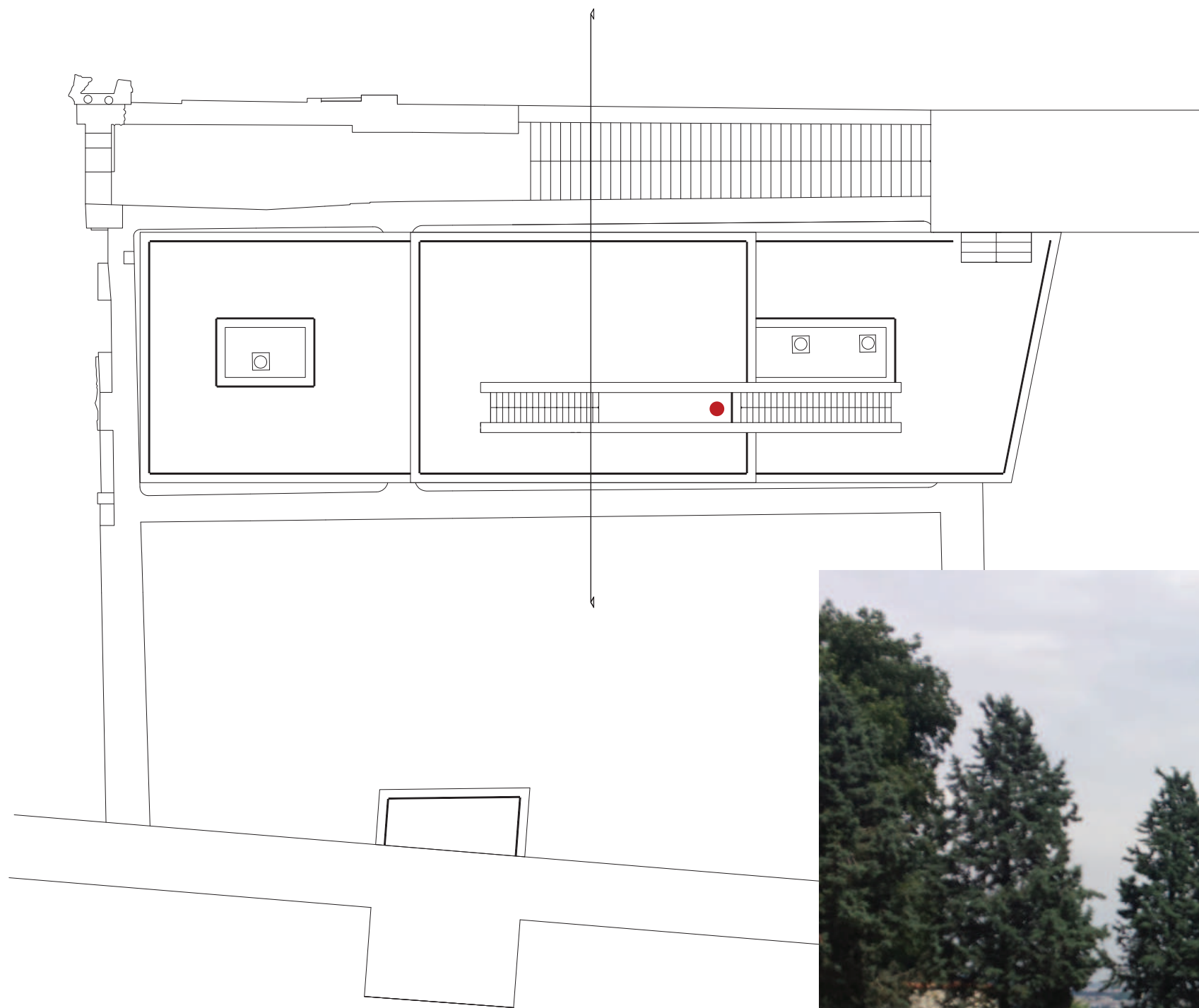
Ground floor





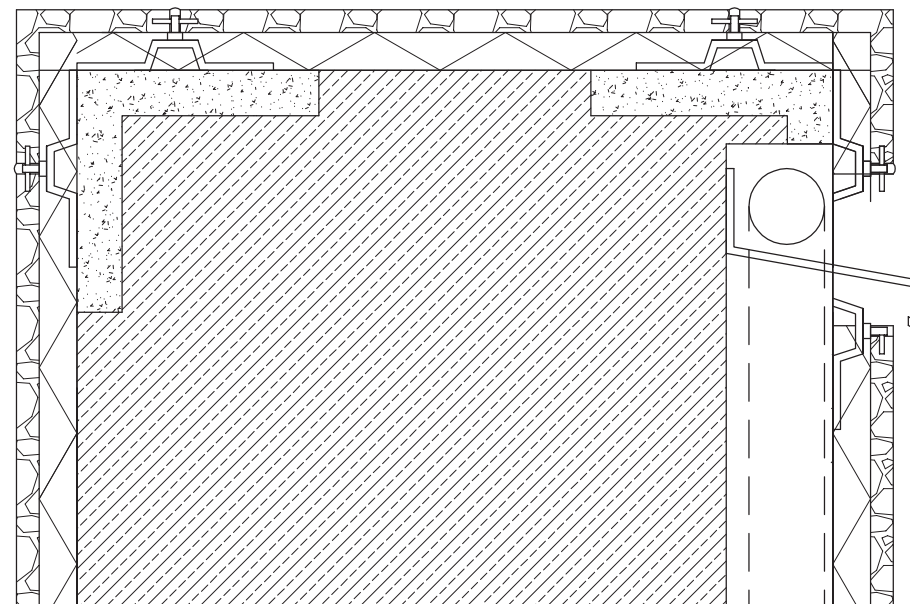
Floorplan +1





Floorplan +2





Bringing back the water to the design

# What to do for P5

3D images  
Models



