

Project Journal

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Brief 1

LOOKING CAREFULLY: SCENES FROM A PUBLIC LIBRARY

Thinking and doing

This year, the Graduation Studio will undertake a design project for a public library in relation to the existing Stockholm City Library by Erik Gunnar Asplund. The opening weeks of the Graduation Studio engage in a collective period of design research as preparation for the main project, establishing the contexts in which it will develop through a process of thinking and doing across the Design Studio and Research Seminar. As students, themes, questions and your developing positions oscillate between these two spaces, each informing the other. These weeks are critical in establishing the terms through which we engage with one another and from which your individual projects will emerge. This is emphasised through collective teaching and group work. The conclusion will be a set of drawn and modelled outcomes. These are situated in a body of thinking and articulated through collective research documents and individual research plans that will, together, begin to establish the concerns and ambitions of your graduation project. Previous examples of each will be available for consultation and discussion. The weeks up to the P1 will be arranged as two periods in the Research Seminar and Design Studio. The first, Looking Carefully, will be followed by the second, First Thoughts.

Asplund

The first weeks of the Research Seminar will explore the world from which Stockholm City Library emerged by examining the work and thinking of its architect, Erik Gunnar Asplund. Working in groups of four, you will carefully study and describe eight buildings from different periods of his practice to begin to understand the ideas, methods and aesthetic, compositional and material concerns that characterised his developing architectural concerns. These will also provide the lens through which you will gain a collective understanding of the wider social, political, cultural, physical and architectural contexts in which Asplund worked. Considering the individual position that will begin to emerge from your early design work and study of the City Library itself, the questions raised through these studies will help inform your individual research plans.

Villa Snellman, 1917–1918

Woodland Chapel, 1918–1920

Lister County Courthouse, 1917–1921

Skandia Cinema, 1922–1923

Stockholm Exhibition Main Entrance & Exhibition Hall for Transport, 1930

Bredenberg Department Store, 1933–1935

Göteborg Law Courts Annex 1934–1937

Woodland Crematorium 1935–1940

Each group will prepare a succinct presentation in which you will introduce the project. This will be accompanied by collating a complete set of drawings and a selection of images to describe its key characteristics. Alongside an investigation of the building itself, you will situate the project within wider architectural and societal developments in Sweden and Scandinavia, considering its relation to other projects from beyond Scandinavia and, perhaps, from different times. Finally, you will make a set of drawings in which you investigate the project with regard to the following themes:

Spatiality

Ornament

Composition (plan and/or elevations)

Landscape or urban setting



Exterior photo Göteborg Law Courts Annex
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Interior photo of Stockholm City Library rotunda
David Grandorge

These are drawings you make yourself; they could be sketches or digital drawings. From them, you will produce one presentation drawing representing what you consider to be the essence of the project. Defining what kind of drawing would best describe your critique of the building is part of the exercise.

Scenes from a Public Library

In parallel, the first weeks of the Design Studio will focus on the Stockholm City Library itself. You will collectively draw the building and construct a three-dimensional digital model. Alongside this, working in the same groups of four at the Research Seminar, you will research, study and make models of key spatial moments in the library. These will relate to four key spatial themes:

The Rotunda

The poche which surrounds it, including the stairs

The children's library

The perimeter halls

Each of these will be represented by one or two models, which might encompass the following key spaces to be agreed upon:

The central rotunda reading room

The lobby and staircases

The erotica library

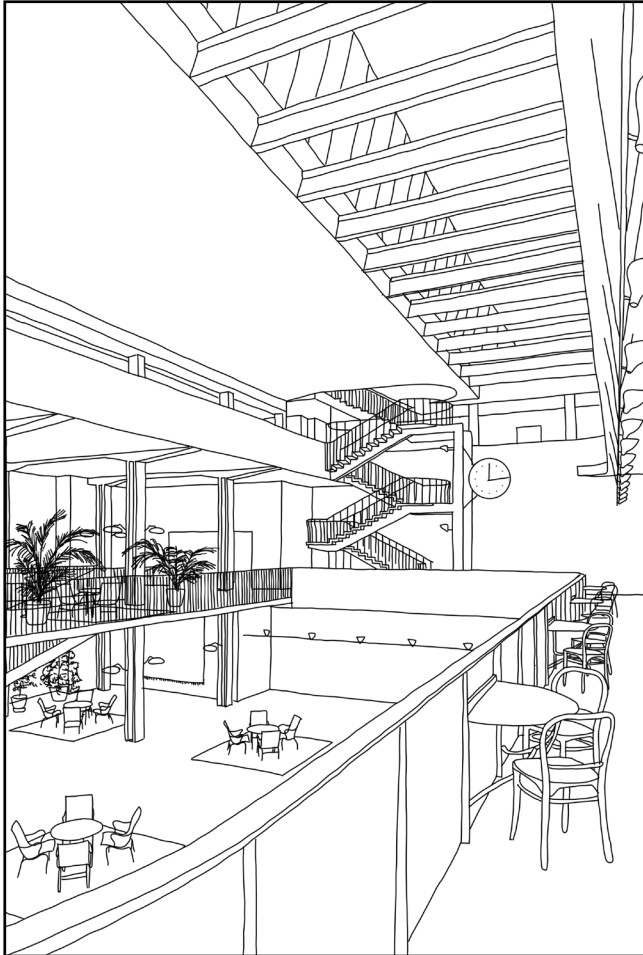
The Head librarian's office

The Children's entrance, reading room and storytelling room

The North and South Halls

The models will be made at a consistently large scale, to be agreed upon, and will depict the rooms as they were first designed and opened. They will include the furnishings and colour schemes of the original interiors as well as representations of any decorative artworks. They will therefore record both the library as it was conceived and, speculatively, how it might feel once restored. When you visit the library on the field trip you will carefully record adjustments and changes that have happened to the spaces you studied since. The models should be made to be displayed as physical artefacts as well as through photography. Alongside the models, you will present your studied rooms in plan and section through developed surface drawings. Both will be exhibited in the Department.

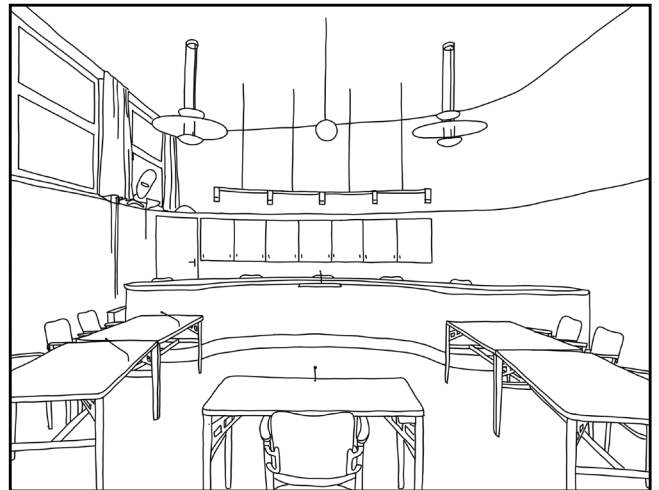
UNDERSTANDING ASPLUND'S ARCHITECTURE



Drawings based on Gareth Gardner photos. Showing the spatiality of the courtyard



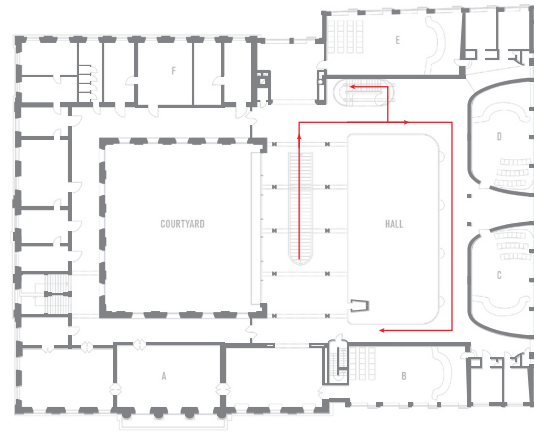
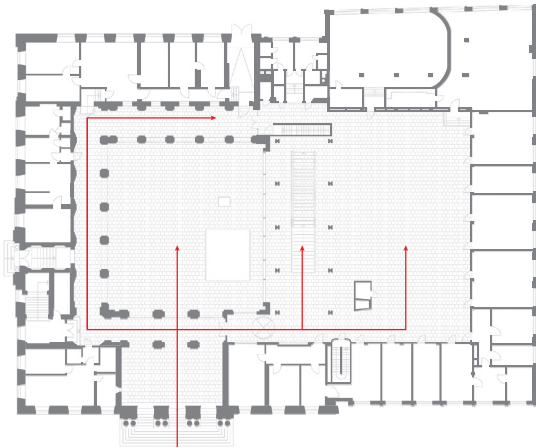
Drawing based on Gareth Gardner photo. Showing the spatiality of the waiting area



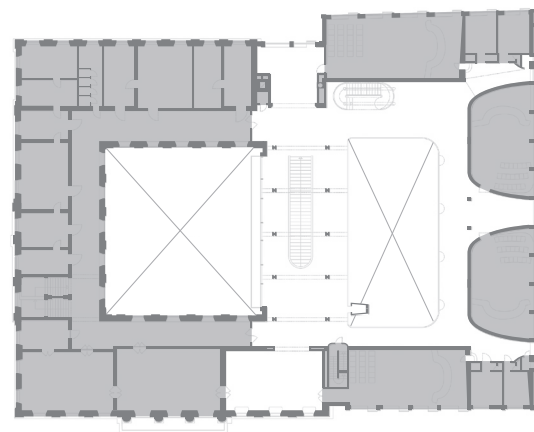
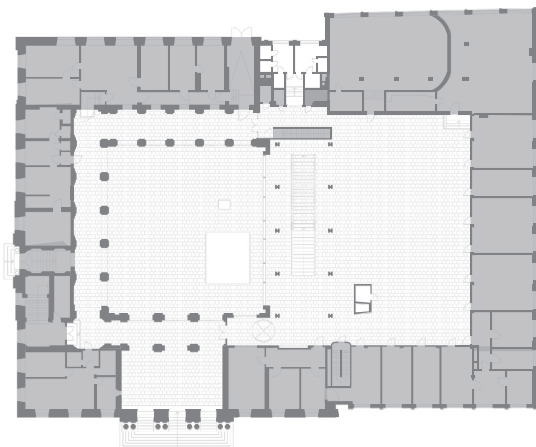
Drawing based on Gareth Gardner photo. Showing the spatiality of the courtroom

Gothenburg Law Courts Annex

As part of the Gothenburg Law Courts Annex research, I drew these interior sketches to try to capture the spatiality of the building. It became clear that the interior doesn't look like an interior you would expect for a law court. Asplund wanted people to feel at ease while waiting for their trial, so he created these informal waiting spaces with homely elements such as rugs, plants and wicker chairs. In all the spaces Asplund designed in this building you see him balancing informality with formality. For example in the courtrooms you see low podiums with a semicircular table for the judge and advisers. The low podium make it seem like the judge and advisers are more approachable as people can look at one another more easily, but when the accused or witnesses have to swear their oath to the bible in the middle of the semicircular table, the height difference becomes more noticeable and the accused or witnesses find themselves almost surrounded by judges and advisers.



Routing Public, ground floor (left) and first floor (right)

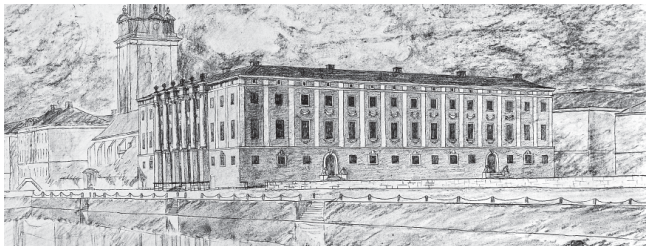


Public (white) vs Private (grey)

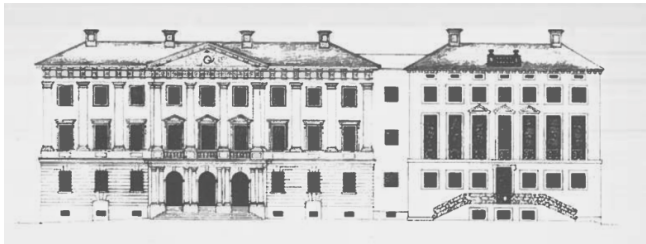
I also analysed the routing of the building for the public and the differences between public and private spaces. Here you can see that the courtyards function as the heart of the building. Most spaces are directly connected to the corridors around the courtyards. The courtyard of the extension is almost a mirrored version of the existing courtyard. All rooms are facing the outside, as if they are the wall protecting the people on the inside from the outside, which gives them the privacy they need.



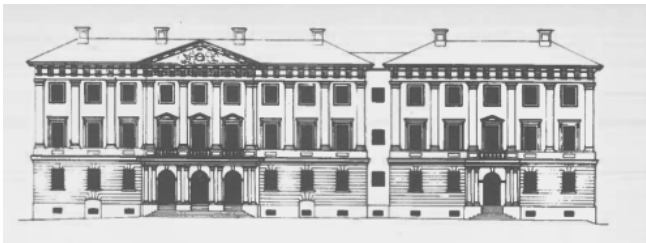
1913



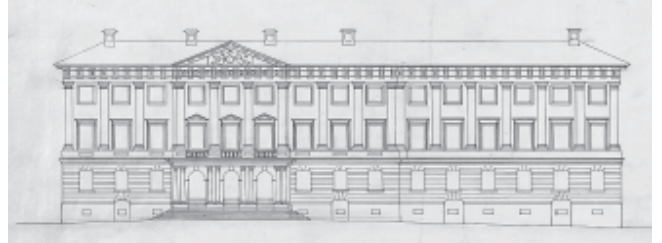
1916



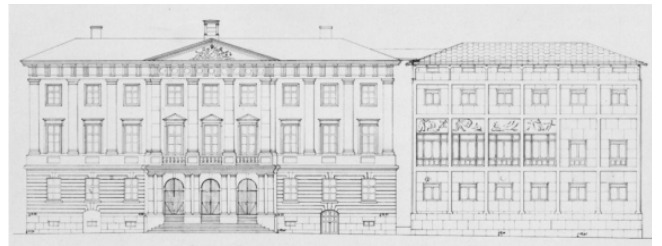
1920



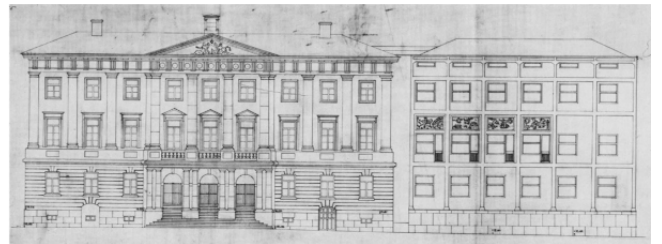
1925



1934



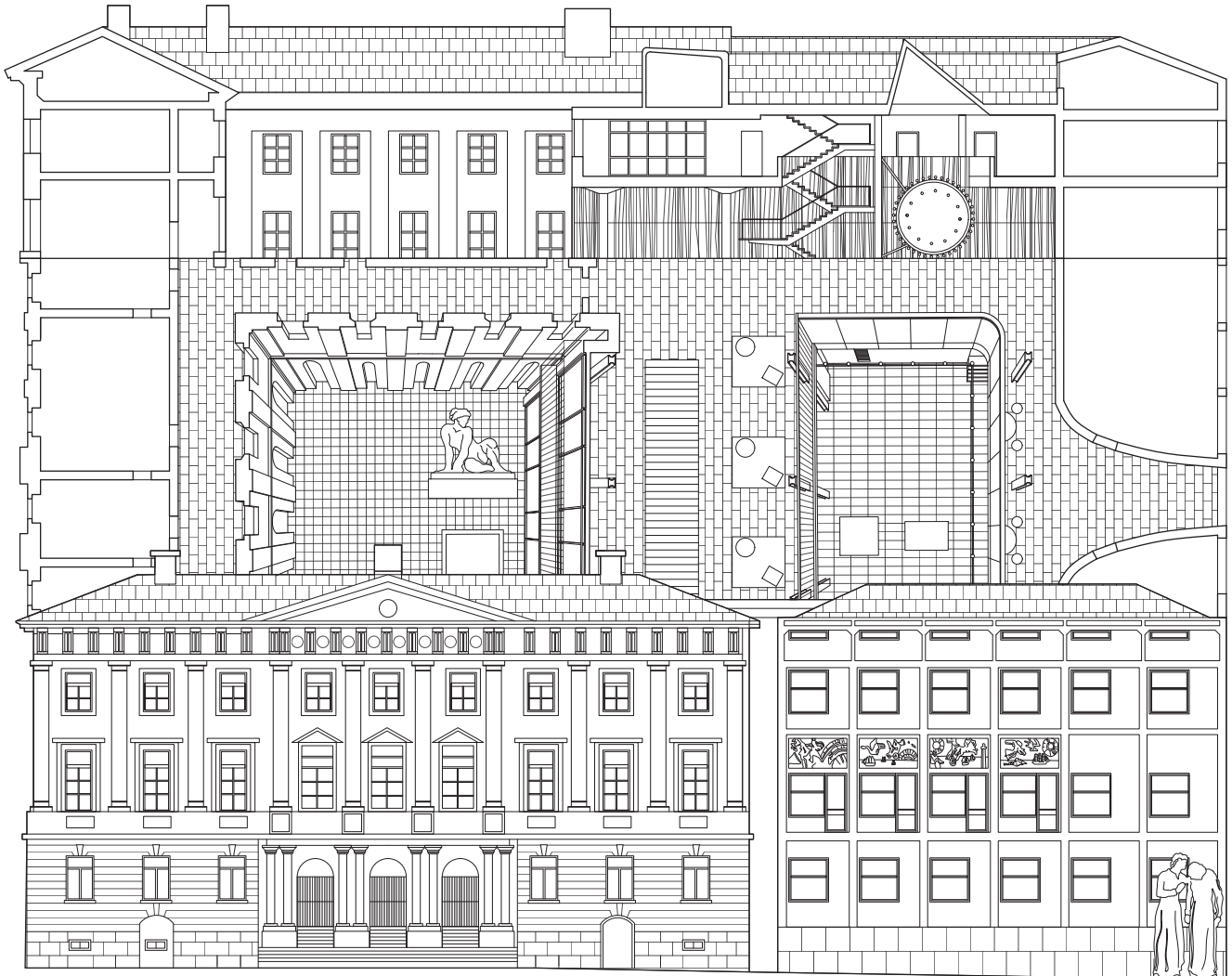
1935



1937

Drawings by Asplund. Showing the design alterations of the facade over the years.
 Years 1913, 1920, 1925 are from Blundell Jones, P. (2002)
 Years 1916, 1934, 1935 and 1937 are from Adams, N. (2015)

While going through the literature about the Law Courts Annex we noticed that there had been many revisions on the facade design. And I think it's interesting to see them all together because it also shows how Asplund is developing his own style through the years. He got the commission to work on the Law Courts Annex while he was still in his early years of being an architect, and he continued to work on it on and off until only a few years before he died. The first designs show more classical elements which you see him interpreting in a more modern way in later versions of the design. It has been a long process to get the design approved by the city council. It can be quite difficult to design something new attached to a monumental building. And to consider that this graduation studio is also about designing something new with consideration of what is already there (the Stockholm Library), this project can be a great source of inspiration. It shows how Asplund approached a project like this.



Summary drawing of the analysis, made together with my research group

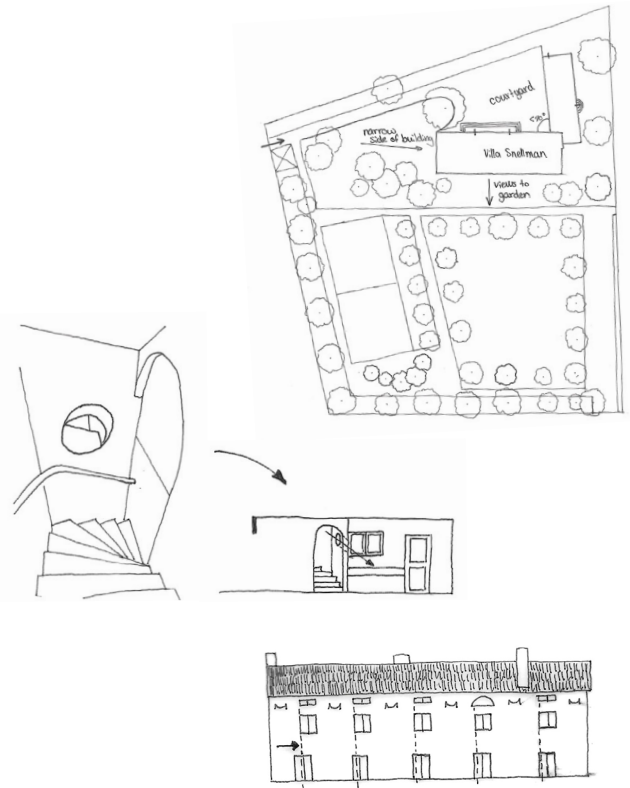
For the summary drawing of the analysis we wanted to somehow 'unfold' the design of the law courts. By placing the front facade above a floorplan it shows the connection of both drawings and shows you what is behind the facade when you'd walk into the building. The section and the perspective in the courtyards help you understand the vertical connection between floors. By drawing this perspective it also shows the modern facade of the extension that's facing the left courtyard. It's fascinating to see that the transition between facades is not visible in the open space inside the building. Here you see a more seamless transition and you wouldn't know if you're in the old or in the new.

The drawing also emphasizes some elements. The clock is bigger, as it's a design by Asplund such as many other decorations and furniture in this building. The sculpture in the courtyard of a woman, as a woman's body was Asplund his inspiration for the curved elements in the building. And the decorations in the facade. The four reliefs above the windows symbolizes the four winds of gothenburg. The two people in the lower right corner, The Guilty and the Good, were not realised but Asplund had a sculpture in one of his sketches for the facade. It gives a small hint to all the design changes he went through.

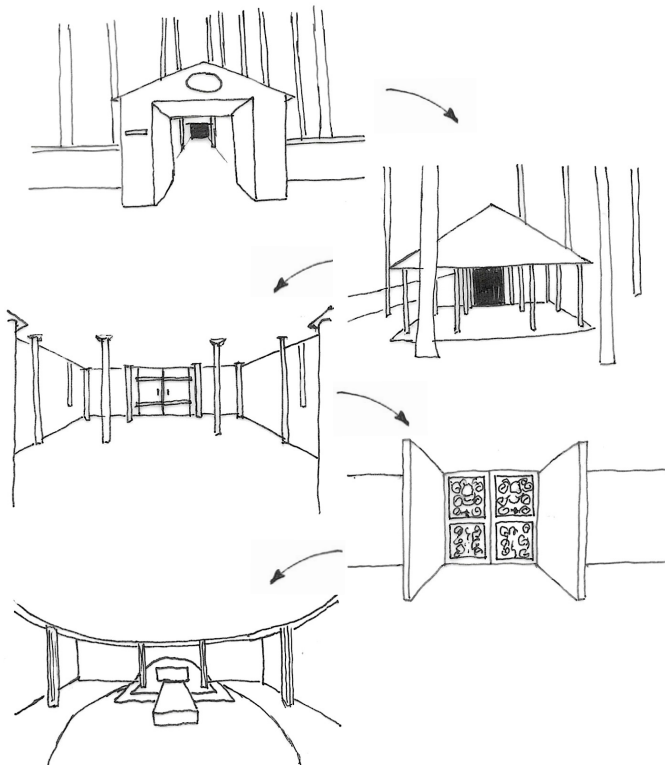
Villa Snellman 1917-1918

This villa was one of Asplund's early designs. It was designed for Emil Snellman, a bank director. The villa is located in a suburb of Stockholm. This design shows that Asplund was experimenting with the arrangement of openings, windows and ornamentation on the facade. Asplund intentionally shifted the first-floor windows so that they are not aligned to the ground floor windows. It creates a playful facade composition which you see in more of Asplund's designs. The villa is all about simplicity, geometric shapes and there is a focus on the practical use of the spaces. There is less ornamentation like you see in the Swedish architecture of that time. When visitors arrive at the villa they don't instantly see the whole building, only when they walk further down the path they find themselves in a semi-enclosed courtyard which is created by the angle of the two buildings. The circulation of the building and functional rooms are oriented towards this courtyard, giving the residents a nice overview of what is happening in front of the house. The spaces designed for leisure and relaxation are oriented towards the garden.

Asplund put great detail in the experience of the spaces in this house. Sightlines are created by skewed walls, holes in walls and by carefully placing doors and windows which are aligned to each other to see through the building from opposite sides.



Sketches of Villa Snellman



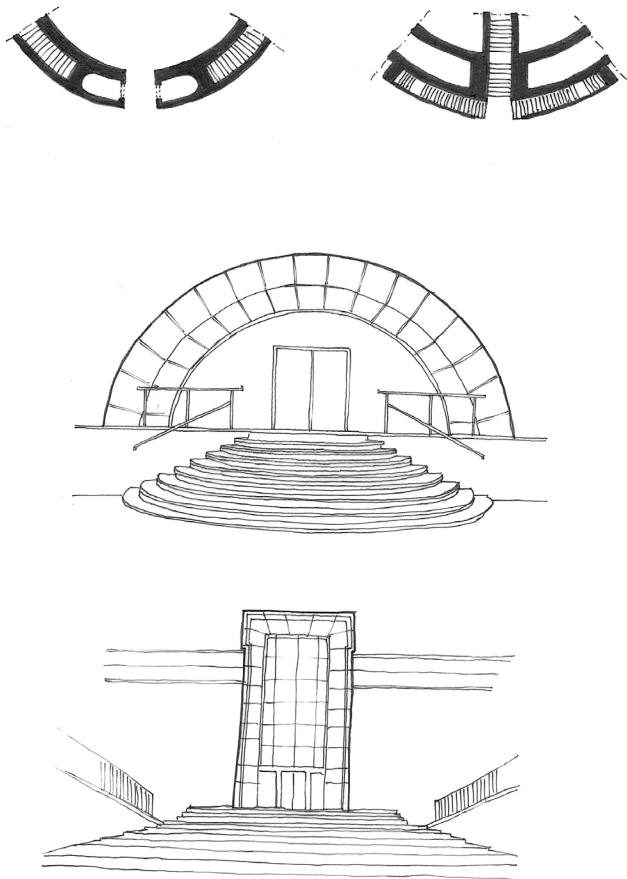
Sketches of Woodland Chapel, the sequence of scenes and spaces

Woodland Chapel 1918-1920

The chapel is situated in the forest of the Woodland Cemetary. It's enclosed by walls with a small portal as an entrance. Visitors of the chapel have to go through this small portal, after which they find themselves surrounded by trees. It feels like you are in this open space, but still you are covered by the canopy of the trees. When you are in front of the chapel you are, just like in the entrance portal, in a low space. You almost feel the weight of the roof that is above you. The columns of the chapel mimic the trees surrounding it, making this transition of open space to somewhat enclosed space more seamless. The outside door is a solid, heavy door, whereas the inside door is open and has beautiful decorations. When you walk inside the chapel, you'll be once again greeted by a heigh space. The dome in the ceiling with a skylight provide a diffused soft light, which light the inner circle of the room. This chapel is a good example of Asplund his ability to create intimate atmospheres. The experience is a key aspect of this design and he uses architecture to evoke certain feelings. The interchange of low, enclosed spaces and high open spaces is seen in more of Asplund his designs.

Lister County Courthouse 1917-1921

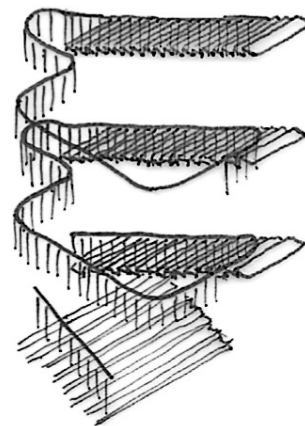
The design of the Lister County Courthouse has many similarities with the Stockholm City Library. The concepts that Asplund implemented in the Library were tested in this design. One of these things is the cylindrical space as a center of the plan and having vertical circulation surrounding this cylinder. The entrance to the courthouse is placed on a pedestal and it is accentuated by a stone frame around the door. The courtroom, which is the main room of this building is centered to the main entrance. There is a symmetry in the way Asplund designed the spaces and the facades, but it is also noticeable that he playfully disrupts this by adding windows on only one side of the courtroom.



Sketches of Lister County Courthouse, showing similarities with Stockholm City Library

Bredenberg Department Store 1933-1935

This was the first commission after the Stockholm Exhibition of 1930 where he proposed a manifesto of acceptance. Showing the people of Sweden the possibilities of modernism combined with Swedish culture. This exhibition had influence on Asplund his later designs, just like this department store. Here he designed almost every aspect, from the structure to the ornaments, developing his unique style. This project can be seen as a testing ground for the Gothenburg Law Courts Annex, as some elements that he designed in this building are also implemented in the Law Courts Annex building. For example, he used the same type of stairs in both designs. A stairs that almost seems to float.



Sketch of the stairs of Bredenberg, key design element of the store

Reflecting on Asplund his work

These studies about Asplund his work and working on the 1:25 scale model of the Stockholm City Library, has made me realised how much his earlier designs influenced his design of the library. His designs show a journey of him finding his own voice, his own idea of what architecture should look like and what it should provide for its users. There are quite a few themes noticeable in his designs, like creating unique experiences, playing with different shapes of spaces, ornaments. He was an architect that thinks about every little detail and the relationship between that detail and the greater picture. His buildings, especially his later designs where he designed everything from the furniture to the structure, are beautiful examples of a gesamtkunstwerk. Understanding this, makes me think that the new design of the Stockholm library should respect what is already there.

SCALE MODEL 1:25

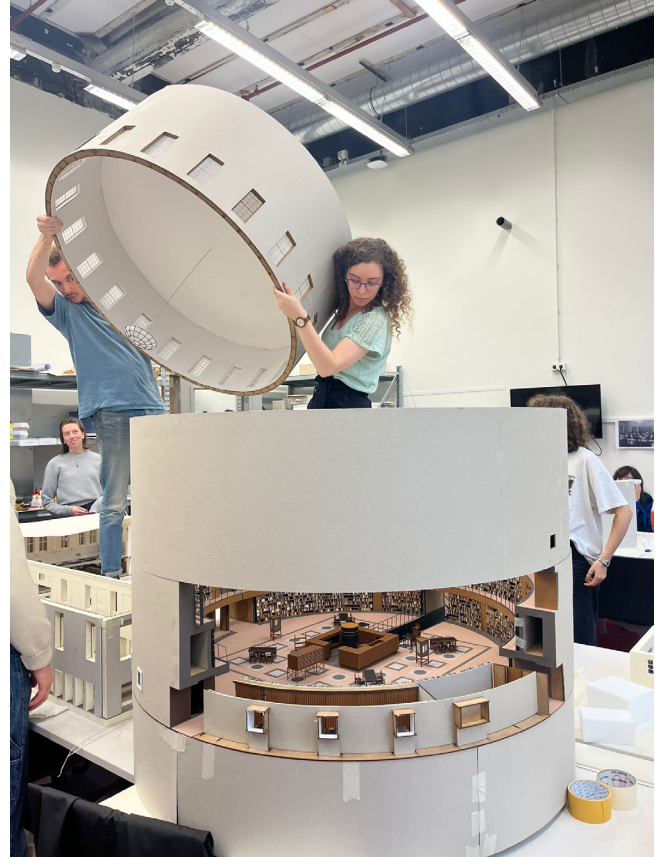
Getting to know the Stockholm Library through making models is very effective. You really have to look carefully at photos and drawings to understand how things are made, so you'll be able to replicate it but then smaller. It became clear that the rotunda looks different nowadays compared to what it used to look like when it was built. The biggest difference is the staircase. Back in 1928, the upper two galleries were not accessible to the public. So there were only staircases 'behind the scenes' for the librarians to gather the books for the visitors. The first gallery was opened in 1974 and could be accessed via the staircase designed by Asplund's son Hans Asplund. It's positioned above the entrance staircase.

I really thought that that staircase had been there since the beginning, so I was surprised to not see it on the archival photos.

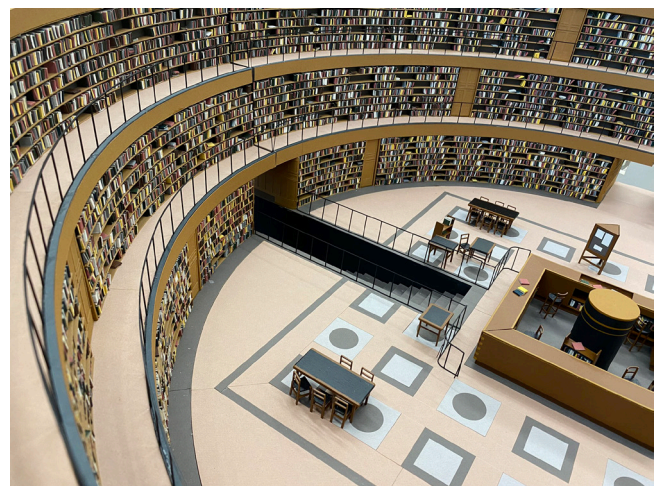
The space had a more formal setting than it currently has. You enter the rotunda via the big staircase, going from a dark narrow space into this big, open space with, surprisingly, a lot of light. The railing forces you to walk past the librarians behind the counter and then you make your way to one of the few tables to sit down and read a book or go to one of the reading rooms.

One thing we only noticed when the furniture was placed is that this whole room is a repetition of circles and squares. The space itself is a circle, the center is outlined with a square, inside of that square you have patterns of circles in squares, the counter is a square and then the books elevator is a circle again.

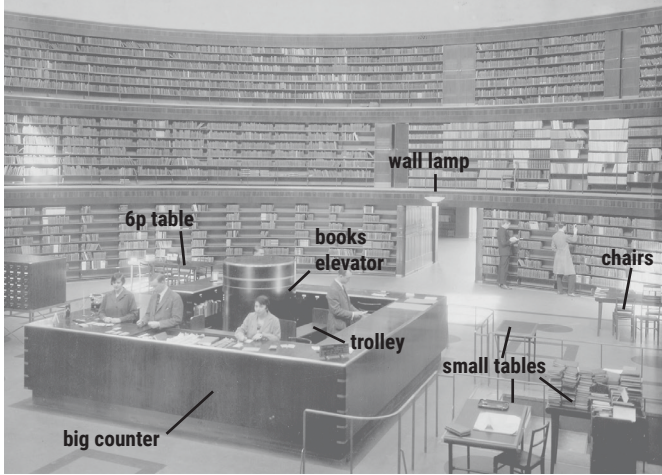
My thoughts about this space is that it was never meant to be a space to comfortably sit down and read something. In the current situation I still see a large, quite empty space. Only they have added some benches to sit down, but it's mainly a space people orientate themselves in, find information about where to find the books they need, and go into different directions. When it comes to the architecture, I am fascinated by the amount of light that comes through the windows all the way at the top of the drum. This is a bit harder to replicate in our physical model. But I love that you have windows all around the top drum, so when you sit inside you can see the light change during the day. This way you can still have a sense of time.



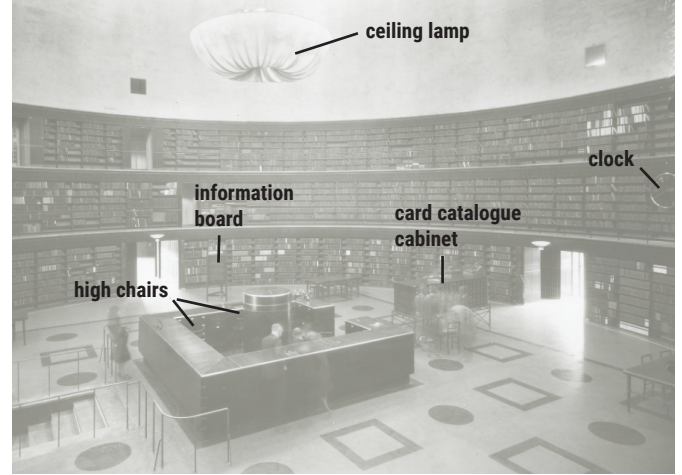
Assembling the rotunda. Picture taken by Van der Linde, P. (2023)



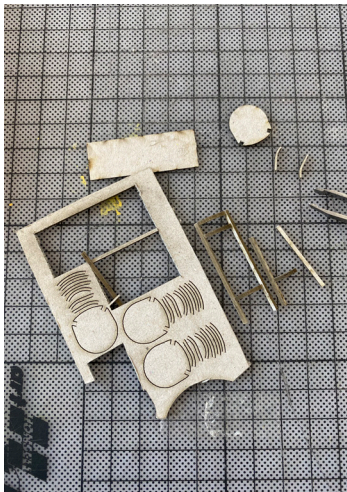
Inside of the rotunda



Archival photo of the rotunda. Stjernström, J. (1928)



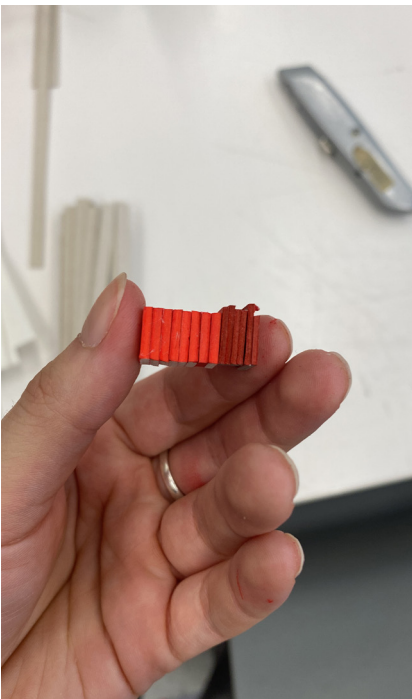
Archival photo of the rotunda. Malmström, A. (1928)



Making the furniture



I worked on several elements of the model, but I think I learned the most from making furniture. I have never made furniture for a physical model before. After finding archival photos we made a list of all the furniture we had to make and divided the work. I worked on the trolleys, the clock, the big counter, the high chairs and the books elevator. There were no colored images available of this furniture. I could only guess by looking at colored images from a later time and assume they used the same materials. Also the measurements of the elements are somewhat of a guess. I used the people in the image as a reference and measured myself and others to find out how high or big things needed to be. I found this being a very nice way to get a sense of the scale of the things you're drawing. It will become clear if things are off or if they seem local in size. So I think I should use this more often when I'm designing.



The process of making books

A library isn't a library without books, so we had to find a way to make thousands of books in the fastest possible way. There were a few options: folding strips of paper; folding paper around cardboard strips and cut them in books or painting cardboard strips and then cut them. The paper options meant that we needed a lot paper in different colours and folding was quite tedious so we decided to make strips out of cardboard, paint them and then cut them in small rectangles. And because we use paint, we could make the exact colours we want for the model.



The almost finished rotunda model



Asplund clock



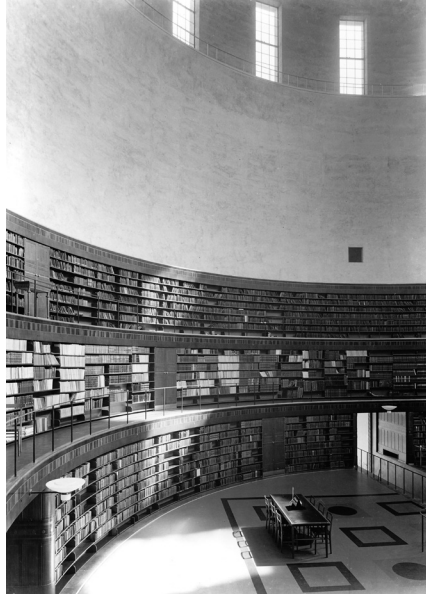
Assembly with the delicate lamp



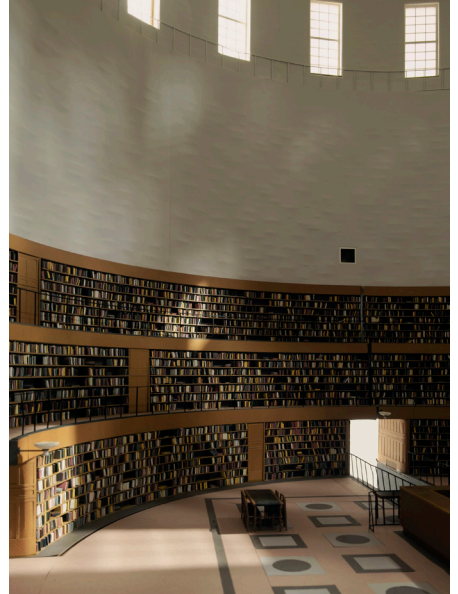
Photo series of the assembly of the Stockholm City Library model. Photos taken with the IBC MSc3/4 Palace studio group under supervision of Leemans, B. (2023)



Current situation photo. Van der Ploeg, J. (2023)



Archive photo. Rosenberg, C.G. (n.d.)



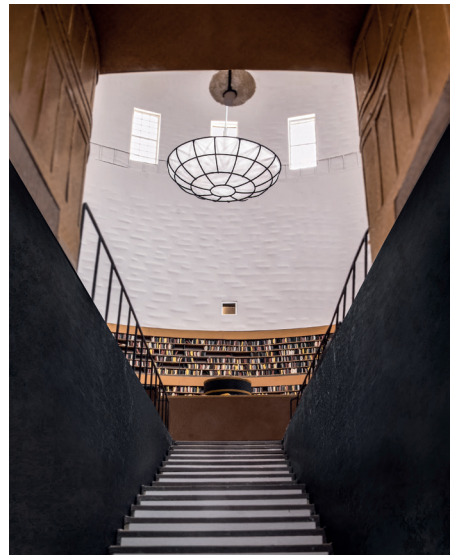
Model photo. Urban, K. (2023)



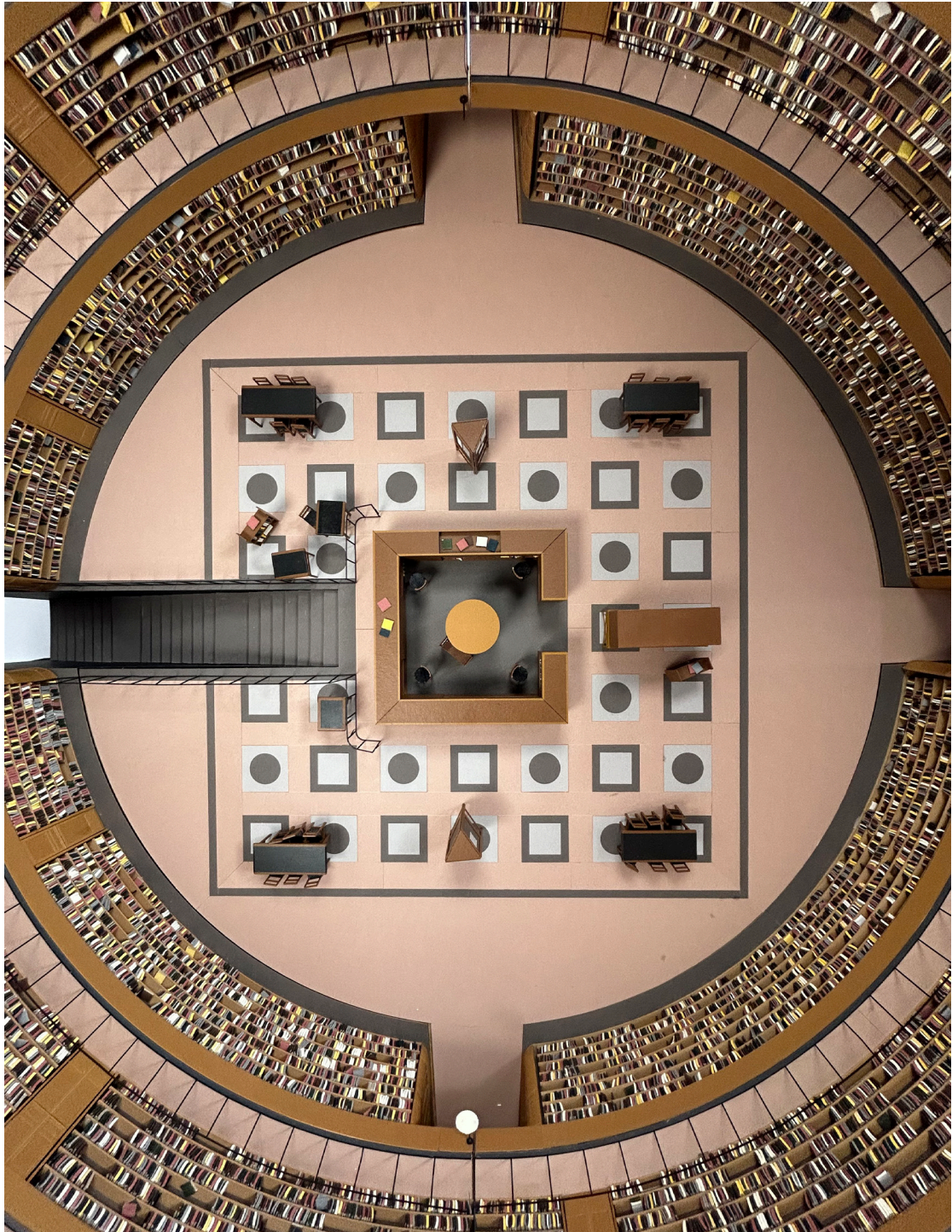
Current situation photo.



Archive photo. Rosenberg, C.G. (n.d.)



Model photo. Kubicka, D. (2023)



Model photo from above. Westerbeeck, R. (2023)

Studytrip.

VISITING STOCKHOLM

I had never been to Stockholm before so I was very enthusiastic about the studytrip. I didn't realise that the city is build on an archipelago. The islands are connected by bridges. I climbed the tower of the city hall to have this amazing view of the city. What I noticed is that there is only one high rise building which is build far from the historical center of the city, Gamla Stan. Also I hoped to see the Stockholm Library, but because it's behind a hill I was only able to see the building on top of the hill and the trees of the park. From the top it shows that the library is quite far from the city center, but when you walk through the city, it doesn't seem that far. You can walk in one straight line from the city center all the way to the park with the library. While you walk down that main road you notice the height differences. Sometimes you don't realise that you're a few meters higher than a road below you. It makes walking through the city very interesting as you come across different sceneries.



Gamla Stan



Top view of Stockholm, looking towards Norrmalm and the observatory hill



The city, seen from the City Hall



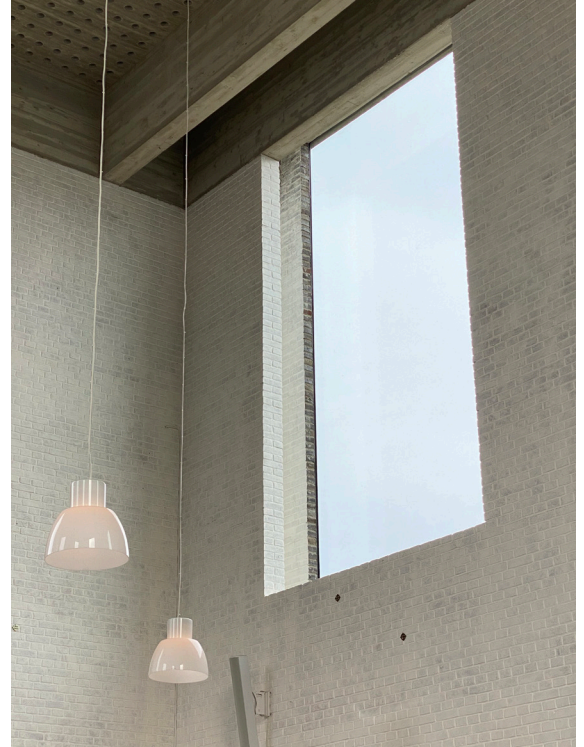
Gamla Stan at sunset

A DESIGN BY JOHAN CELSING

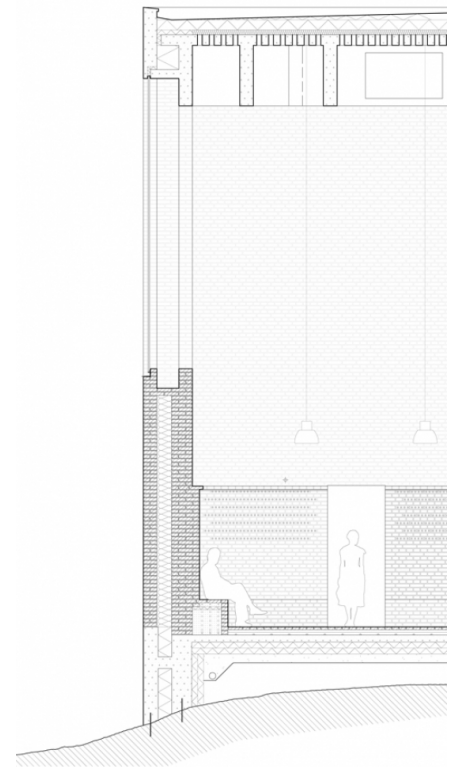


Interior of the church

The Årsta Kyrka is quite a modern church. The space seem larger than it actually is because of the white walls and high ceiling. There is a lot of light coming in from the large windows high in the wall. When you look through the windows you only see the sky and it almost seems like there is no window at all. Only when you look through the window lower to the ground you can see the surroundings. The detailing in the large windows is very interesting, because you don't see the windowframes and it makes the walls seem thinner than they actually are.



Window with interesting detailing



Facade fragment. Celsing, J. (2011)

INSPIRING ARCHITECTURE BY SIGURD LEWERENTZ

One part of the studytrip was visiting some buildings designed by Sigurd Lewerentz. He worked together with Asplund on the winning entry of the Woodland Cemetery competition, but in a later stage of the design it was only Asplund that continued working on it. Though, Lewerentz was given the commission for the southern chapel of the cemetery, the Resurrection Chapel. In his later career he also designed the St. Mark's Church and the Marginalen Bank building.

When I stepped into the Resurrection Chapel, I was simply in awe by how the light comes into the building. It creates these interesting shadows, only highlighting the altar and the catafalque and it makes the floor shine. The floor was important in his design, as he wanted people to be able to look at something beautiful when overcome by emotion. It's interesting to see that symbols of religion are not the focal point in this chapel. I also noticed this in the St. Mark's Chapel. The cross is not visible from far, only when you come close to the church you see the cross. The same happens with the church bell. I found the architecture quite interesting, because I only had the idea of it being a church when I went inside. It's a dark space, which makes the lights that hang from the ceiling stand out against the gray walls and ceiling. It almost seems like the lights are floating above the benches. The light from the windows accentuates the intricate ceiling, which has the same purpose as the floor in the Resurrection Chapel.

As someone that did a bachelor in architectural engineering, I can really appreciate the technical details Lewerentz used in his designs. The gutter and drainpipes at the St. Marks Church are really thought through and not just added to the building, but designed with the building. And I think this is very inspiring to see.



Resurrection Chapel



Beautiful craftsmanship. Mosaic laid by hand to make an intricate pattern and 'cracks' are painted on the walls



Interior St. Mark's Church



Marginalen Bank ventilation detail



Hidden church bell



Gutter and drainpipe design



Window handle designed by Lewerents

VISITING ASPLUND'S ARCHITECTURE

During the studytrip we also had the pleasure to visit some of Asplund's buildings. On the day I arrived, the Skandia Teatern was open for visitors, so we were able to have a look inside. I was pleasantly surprised by this theatre. It was way darker than I thought it would be, but because of that, the light mainly accentuated ornaments and symbols. I also noticed he used a lot of mirrors or make it seem like there are mirrors. The hall with the stairs to the first floor is what got my interest. The glass wall right in the center of two spaces seems like a mirror, as the floor, windows, stairs and lamps are exactly mirrored on each side of the glass wall.

We also visited the Woodland Crematorium and Woodland Chapel. Here I saw some similarities between Asplund his architecture and that of Lewerentz. The floors of these buildings are also designed with the idea that people should be able to look at something beautiful when overcome by emotion. In the Chapel of the Holy Cross the floor is sloped towards the altar and the lines of the grout guide your eyes to where the coffin would be. The fresco 'Life-Death-Life' on the wall is absolutely stunning.

The Woodland Chapel is of a more intimate scale. It's interesting how you walk from open space, through a portico into a space where you are surrounded by trees. You walk under the large roof where the trees are now columns that support the roof. And when you walk inside, you find yourself in this small but light space. The only light that comes in, comes from the skylight.



Woodland Crematorium



Altar of the Chapel of the Holy Cross



Portico to Woodland Chapel



Gutter detail



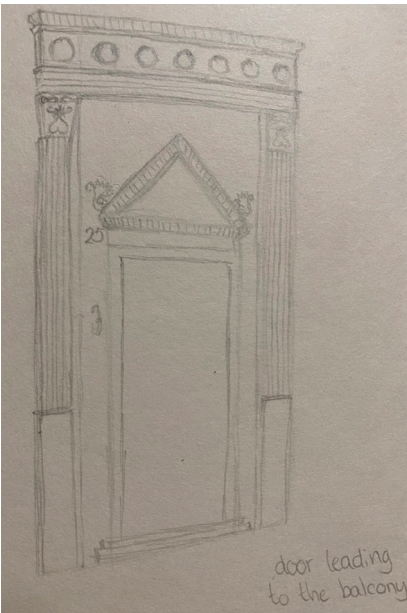
Woodland Chapel altar and catafalque



Skandia Teatern



Stairs to first floor

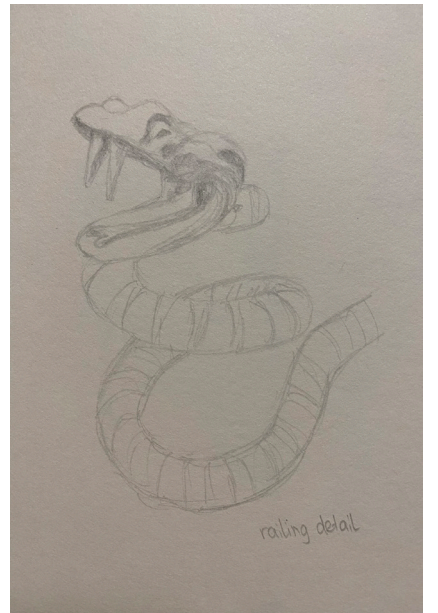


door leading to the balcony

FSketch of one of the doors leading to the balconies



Mirror and endless circles



railing detail

Sketch of the end of the railing

VISITING OTHER LIBRARIES

We thought it would be a good idea to also look at other public libraries in the city, so we can compare these with the Stockholm Library. I was mainly drawn towards the teenagers' and children's libraries. As I thought they provide more different places visitors can use. The Tranströmerbiblioteket had a children's library with a teenagers' library one floor above, overlooking the children's space. From the top you could see the playful layout of the children's library, with various little reading nooks and places to explore. This was also used in the Rum för Barn in the Kulturhuset. Where the bookshelves form a maze children can walk through, while adults can look over the shelves to keep an eye out. The maze has some dead ends with bean bags for the children to read a book. These fun playful spaces is what the children will remember when they go home and it's spaces like these that are fundamental for positive associations with libraries, which will be the reason why they will keep using libraries through adulthood and old age.

It makes me question why don't we see spaces with playful elements in adult libraries.



Tranströmerbiblioteket teenagers' library



Tranströmerbiblioteket children's library story telling room



Rum för Barn Kulturhuset

STOCKHOLM CITY LIBRARY

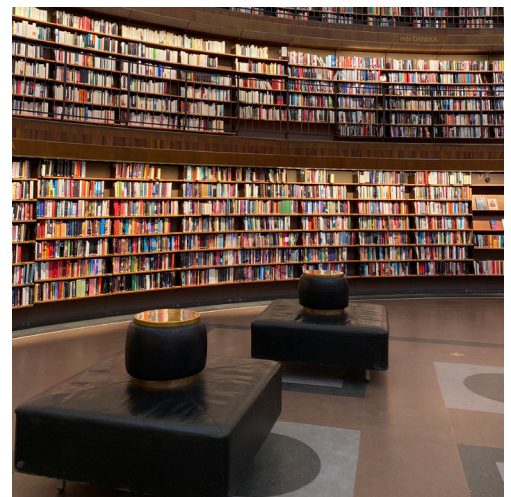
My first impression of the Library is that it's smaller than I thought, especially the rotunda. Cameras seem to make the space look bigger. The rotunda is brighter than I expected. The windows all the way at the top bring in the light which is reflected by the white stucco walls. It doesn't really need the artificial light during the day.

The main entrance was not accessible on our trip, but I can imagine it being an interesting transition from the hustle and bustle of the street, entering the library and climbing upstairs into this serene calming place. It almost seems like you enter a different world. You only have windows close to the ceiling, except for the large windows in reading rooms 2 and 4. Through these large windows you can either see the city or the park. And I think that sitting next to these large windows is one of my favorite spots in the library. It's nice to be able to look outside of a window, especially when the view is a park. It makes you feel more connected with the outside world.

I feel like there is a missed opportunity to make the rotunda more of a meeting place. The furniture is scattered around, it's only a few tables, some square benches and benches in a theatre set up. People don't stay long in this space to work or read, they use the other rooms for that. And I think it could be interesting to find a way to make the rotunda more than a monumental crossroad between reading rooms.



Archive photo Af Petersens, L. (n.d)



Attempt to replicate the archive photo



the stairs that was added in 1974



View from the 'river' to the children's library entrance



View from the observatory hill to Sveavagen



View of the library from vantage point on top of the hill



Sculpture at the pond



The flower market in front of the west wing



The main entrance



Walking down the street Odengatan



The library from Odengatan



The library from the park



The library seen from Karlbergsvagen



Sketches of visitors of the library

On the last day of the studytrip I took the time to document what people are doing in the library. There are many different people coming to the library. You see tourists admiring the spaces, especially the rotunda. There are people reading in all reading rooms, including the rotunda. I noticed that most of the time people that enter the rotunda, walk straight to one of the reading rooms and you won't see them for hours. The reading rooms seem to be full all day long. And it's quiet, almost everywhere. You only hear people talk in the rotunda and teenagers' library spaces. Reading room 3 is used by people of all ages. It has a more casual setting and it's an active space, which means that people are allowed to make noise. It's the only room where people can sit and do groupwork. The cafe was only for people that wanted to eat or drink something, so if you wanted to sit there together, you had to at least buy something from the cafe.



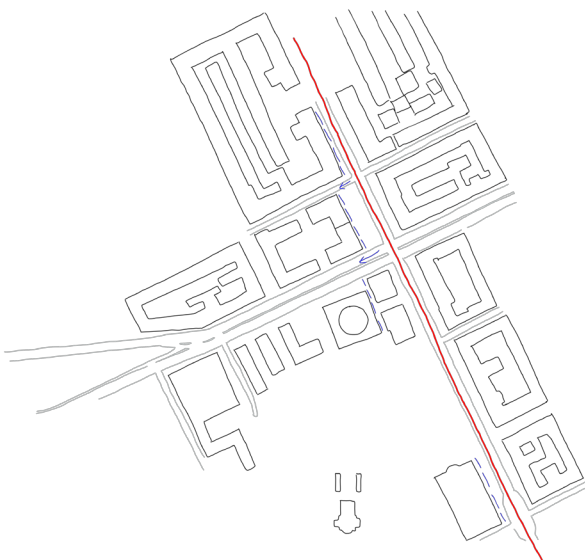
Entrance at Odengatan



Main entrance



View from Sveavagen



Sketch of the location of the library, red line is Sveavagen

Looking at the buildings surrounding the library, I think the library blends in very well. There are quite some buildings with these warm color tones, going from yellow to dark orange. I thought it was interesting to see that the library can be seen from far when you walk down Odengatan and Karlbergsvagen. But when you walk along Sveavagen from the north to the south, you can not see the library until you are close. From this side it's the bazaar you see first.

Brief 2

FIRST THOUGHTS: UNPACKING THE LIBRARY

"I am unpacking my library. Yes, I am. The books are not yet on the shelves, not yet touched by the mild boredom of order. I cannot march up and down their ranks to pass them in review before a friendly audience. You need not fear any of that. Instead, I must ask you to join me in the disorder of crates that have been wrenched open, the air saturated with the dust of wood, the floor covered with torn paper, to join me among piles of volumes that are seeing daylight again after two years of darkness, so that you may be ready to share with me a bit of the mood. It is certainly not an elegiac mood but, rather, one of anticipation, which these books arouse..." - Walter Benjamin, Introduction to Unpacking my Library, in Illuminations, 1969

Through this brief, we will begin to unpack the library, not *the* library, as in Erik Gunnar Asplund's Stadsbibliotek in Stockholm, which we have just visited together, but the idea of a library, in its modern, public form. For almost two decades, *the* library has struggled with the idea of what a library needs to be, in order to serve the needs of a diverse contemporary society in an increasingly digital age (in Sweden). At the moment, like Benjamin's disarrayed books, your own thoughts might also be unfocused, muddled yet filing

The Modern Public Library

In the next four weeks you will start to define your first thoughts about the project, through two parallel pieces of work. In the research seminar you will be studying eight modern public libraries that are also considered significant in terms of their architecture. These encompass different contexts, both in place and time. You will not only consider what the motivations of those who made them might have been, but also investigate the ways in which these are expressed and elaborated upon in terms of their architecture and translated into spatial, organisational and functional strategies. The outcome of this part of the seminar will be a set of newly made architectural drawings, undertaken in the same way and at the same scale as drawings of Asplund's library, to allow them each to be compared with the other. Alongside these you will develop methods of making analytical diagrams which will again all for each precedent to be understood and compared in terms of its strategic order.

A Room for a Library

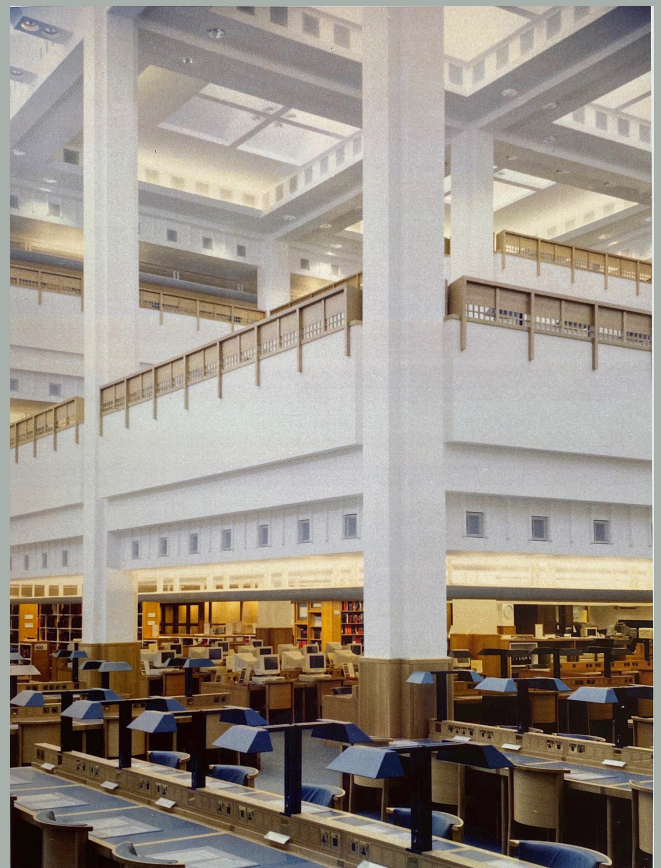
In parallel, in the design studio, you will begin to think about how your attitudes to the question of the library can be expressed through design. Working in the abstract, we ask you to develop a room for a library. This room is not necessarily *the* library at this stage, nor is it necessarily in Stockholm. However, it should be understood as a real, functional, tangible place, with architectural qualities, where people can do things. To consider what those qualities and uses might be, you will need to reflect upon your own developing attitude to what a public library is *now*, also drawing perhaps on your own experience as a user of libraries: What happens in your room? Is it for one, a few or many? What scale is it? Does one read there and, if so, how or what? Can one eat, talk, drink coffee? Is it ok to fall asleep? What are the qualities and atmosphere that it presents? What does it offer? How formal is it? How is it lit? Can one see outside, or be seen by passers by? Is anybody watching you? Does it matter who you are?

Asplund's reflections on such questions, more than 100 years ago, led to particular forms, spaces and relations: between people, between people and books, between books and the city. How might you respond in the present? It is an open question whether your proposal for a room, is a room in relation to Asplund's library. For some or perhaps all of you, it might be liberating not to be too concerned with this now.

However directly you choose to respond to, or counterpoint, Asplund's spaces, this initial project will be developed and presented in the form of a model, at 1:25. This will allow your thoughts to be comparable, not only with each other but also with the spaces in the Stockholm library that you have already



Exterior photo of the British Library. Hall, J. (1998)

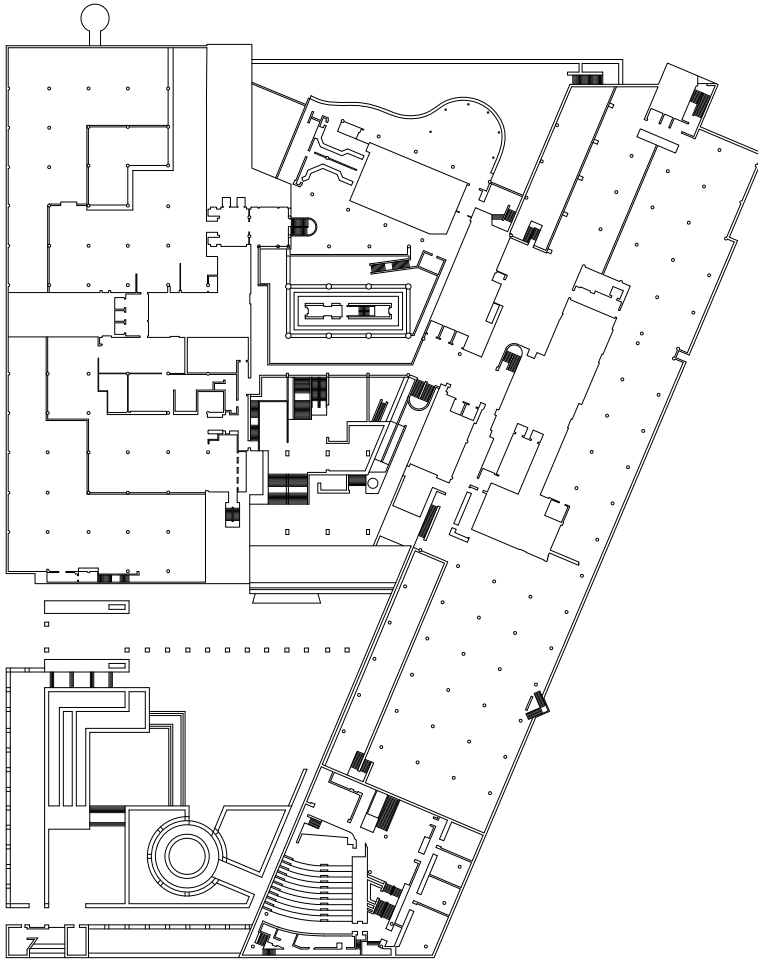


Humanities Reading Room One. © Gerhard Stromberg (2004/2006)

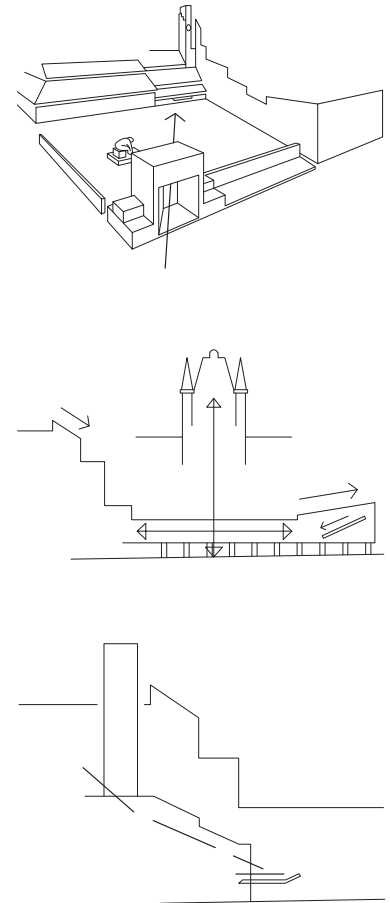
focused so intently upon. It would be interesting to consider whether or how, the strategies he employs might be reiterated in your own thinking. Your model should be presented as a physical artefact and through photography. It should be thought about in terms of inhabitation and furnishing and you should also consider about how it might perform technically, both structurally and environmentally, in terms of light and air. Accompanying the model should be a set of drawings, describing it in section, plan and reflected ceiling plan.

You should be able to discuss this initial design project in terms of both Asplund's work and wider thinking about the contemporary public library, encompassing the given precedents and your own thoughts and interests. These individual proposals will form the core of your P1 presentation alongside the collective work.

STUDYING MODERN LIBRARIES



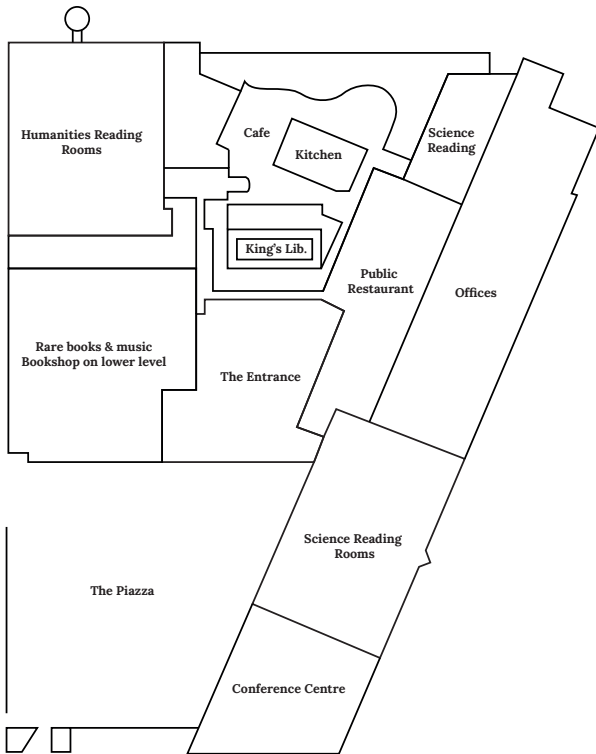
Diagrammatic floor plan, showing multiple floors



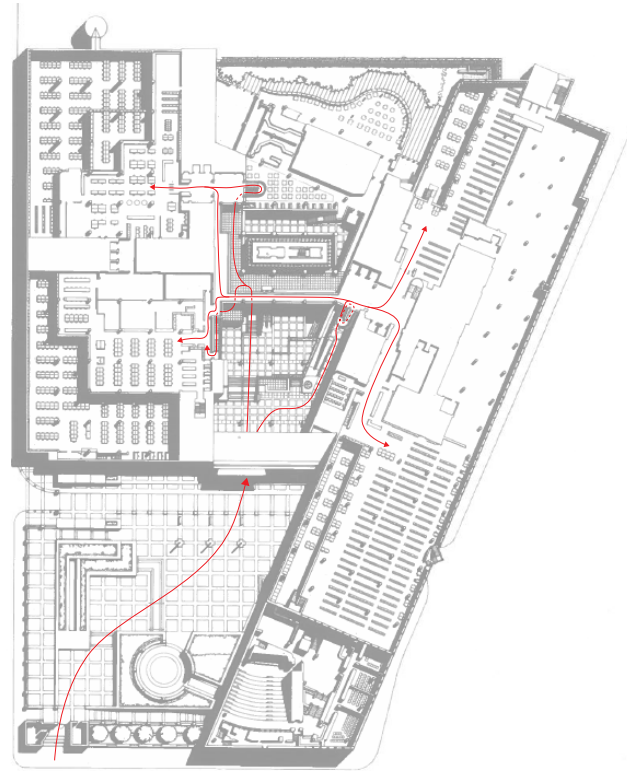
Diagrams. Stonehouse, R. (2007)

The British Library is the largest library I have ever seen, it took quite a while to draw one floorplan and even longer to understand the building. What is interesting about this building is the journey visitors take from the street to the book they are going to read. The entrance portico presages the building beyond. It contains the space in front of the library, and perfectly frames the sculpture by Eduardo Paolozzi's Newton after Blake. On passing through the portico, your eyes are drawn to the library's entrance which is accentuated by the clock tower.

The building respects and even compliments the surrounding buildings. The Science wing is lowered in the middle to form a balance horizontally with the height of the St. Pancras. The west side of the building is kept low to accommodate enough daylight for the apartments on the other side of the road. Designing with the surrounding buildings in mind can even make a large building perfectly fit within the area. And even though this building is as big as it is, it does have elements of an intimate scale. The entrance for example is deliberately designed as a slope going down, with the entrance at the lowest part. Almost as if the building is bending forward to greet the visitors. It also creates a nice transition on the inside of the entrance hall as you're not immediately in a large open space, but it gradually opens up as the ceiling becomes higher.



Floor plan organisation



Routing to reading rooms

The entrance is formed by the space in between the humanities wing and the science wing, with at the heart of the entrance the King's Library. The reading rooms of the humanities have been deliberately set back to ensure you can access them transversely from the entrance hall. This makes the reading rooms equal. The routing is quite fascinating as it's clear that the entrance is the crossroad of the circulation through the building. From the entrance you can go in different directions. Each reading room has multiple journeys to get there, and along the way, you'll come across interesting scenery. A visit to this library is an experience which is what I like most about it. The way it's designed makes so sometimes want to stand still and appreciate the space. The height differences allow you to see the spaces from different angles and also experience different scales. From the more open spaces to more intimate spaces. And it's mainly the transitions between these spaces what I think is very inspiring.

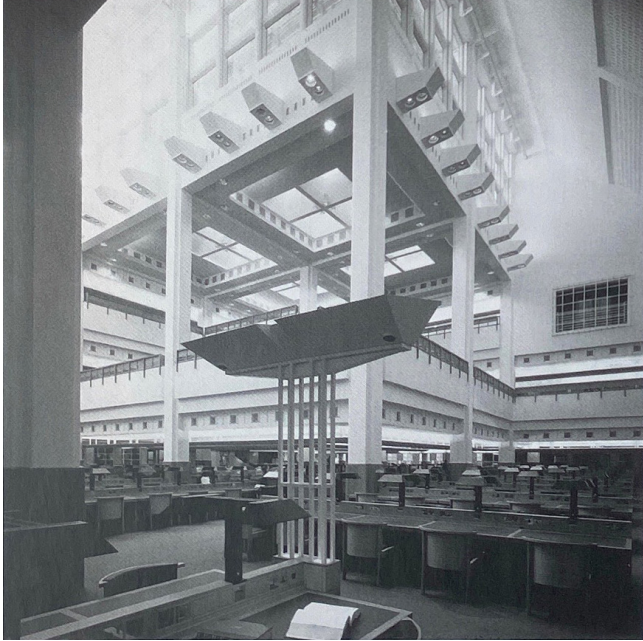
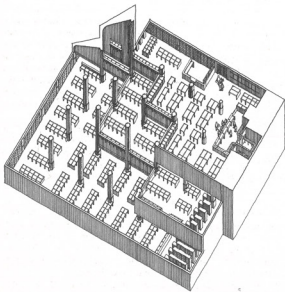


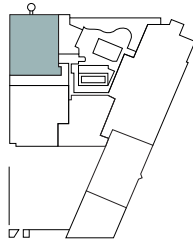
Photo of humanities reading room. Stonehouse, R. (2007)



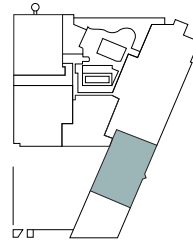
Photo science reading room. Stonehouse, R. (2007)



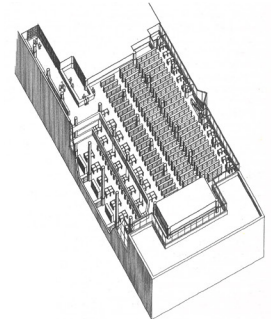
Axo humanities reading room.
St. John Wilson, C. (1998)



Location of the humanities reading room



Location of the science reading room



Axo science reading room.
St. John Wilson, C. (1998)

The reading rooms have their own character. Each have a different shape and a different arrangement of furniture. But I noticed that each reading room is entered in a similar sequence. You start in the entrance, this will bring you to a subsidiary space which is either within the entrance or it's a space that has a view of the entrance hall, you walk further into an anteroom or lobby and continue to walk into a narrow, linear low space in the reading room. The reading room opens out horizontally because of the terraces before it expands vertically when you find yourself on the edge of a terrace. So here again you have this theme of a journey, exploring spaces while finding your way through the building. The height differences in the humanities reading room provide a variety of places a visitor can choose from. Whether you want to sit in the large open space, or feel more comfortable in a corner under one of the terraces. Everyone has the opportunity to find a spot where they feel most 'at home'.

A ROOM IN A LIBRARY

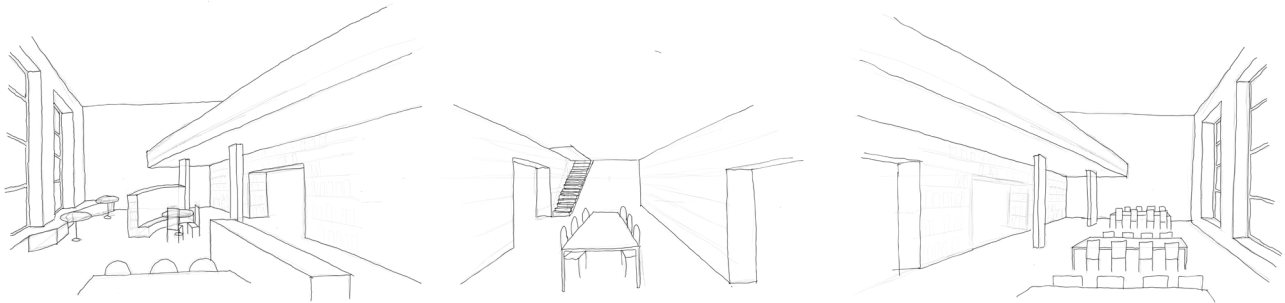
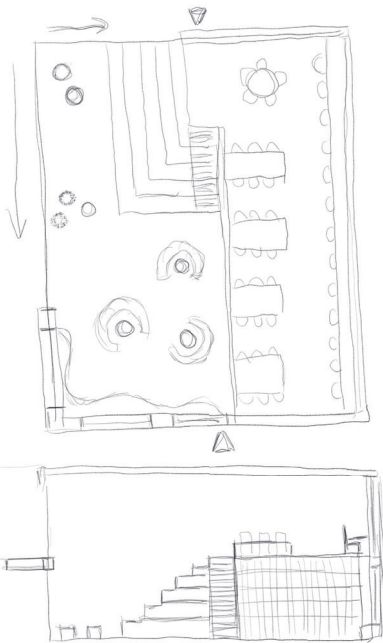
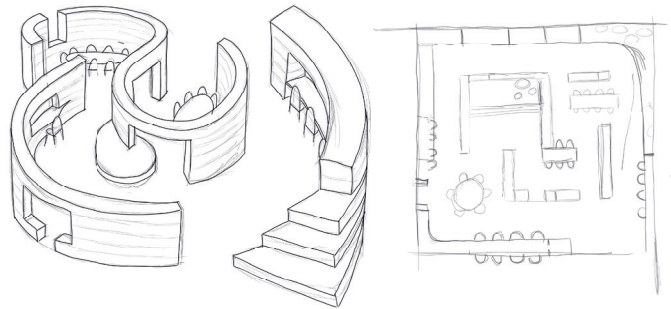


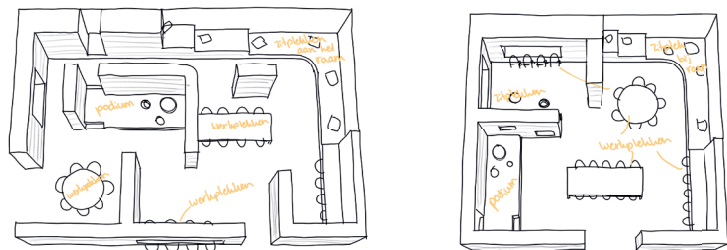
Figure 93 First sketch, a sequence of spaces with a terrace



Second sketch, a space with intimate and open spaces.

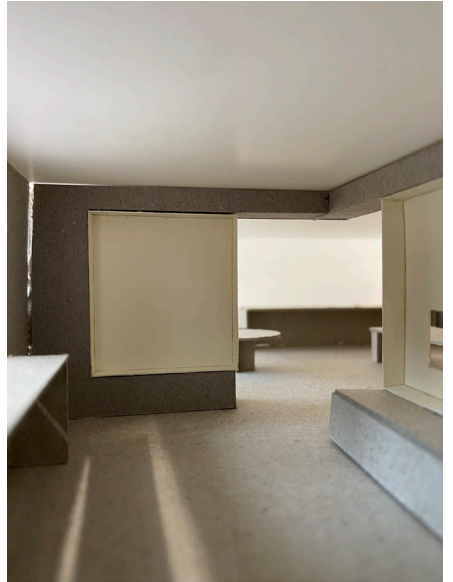
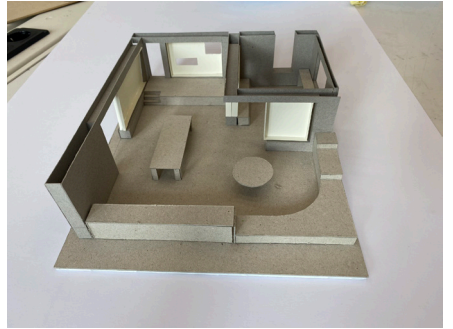
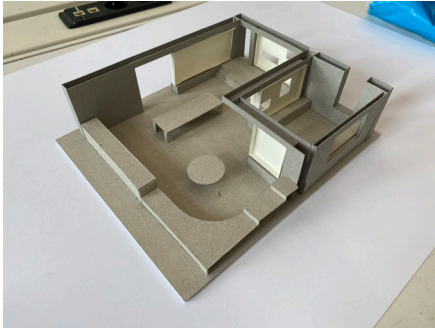
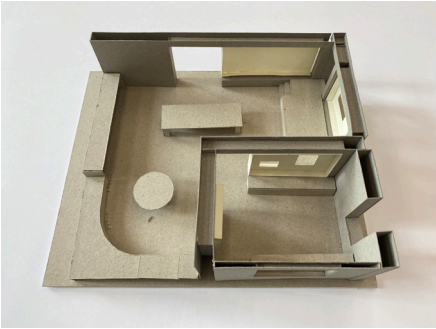


Sketches in search for a smaller room that focuses on exploring

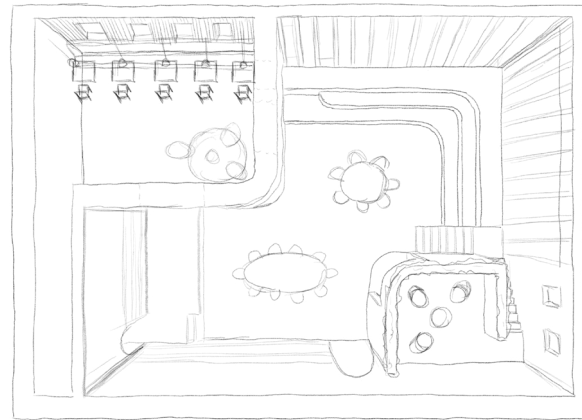
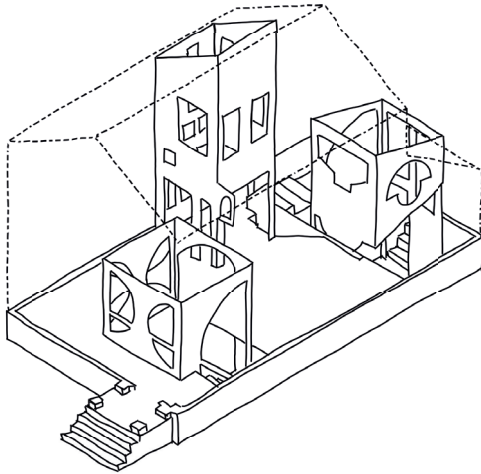
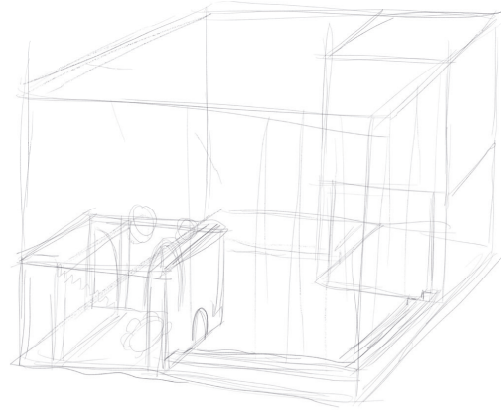
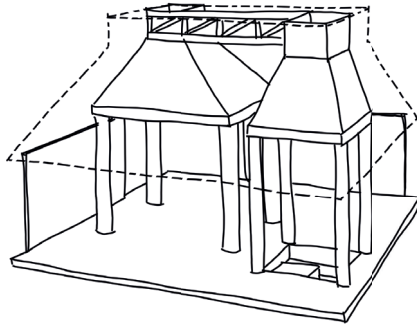


Making a space more compact to find the essence of the space

As a start for this design brief I reflected on what I think a public library is nowadays and look back at the libraries I have seen. And by just writing out sentences of what I think is important, I came to the conclusion that I think a public library is a central point for the community. Somewhat of a public livingroom. A place where people can come together without feeling the need to buy something. Where you can also simply be on your own, but don't feel alone. I think it's important to create spaces to accommodate different needs, but more focus on social spaces. Because a library isn't only for reading books. It's also a place to do homework together, to talk about your day and a place where you meet new people.



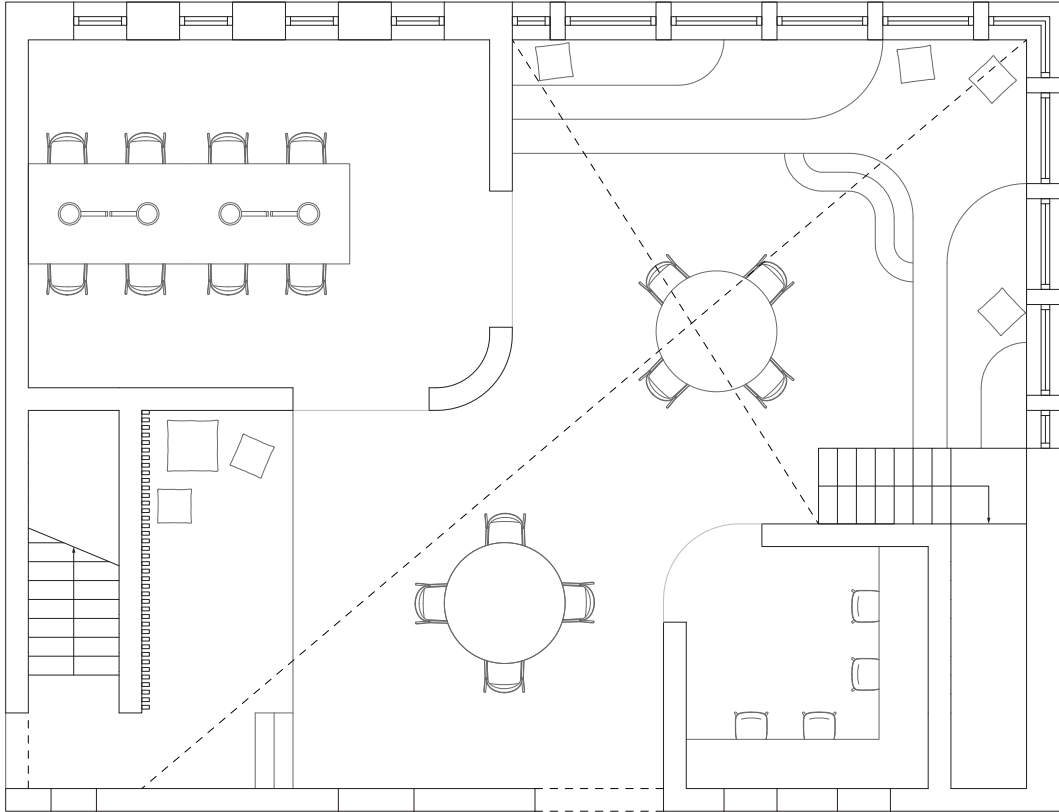
Photos of first sketch model



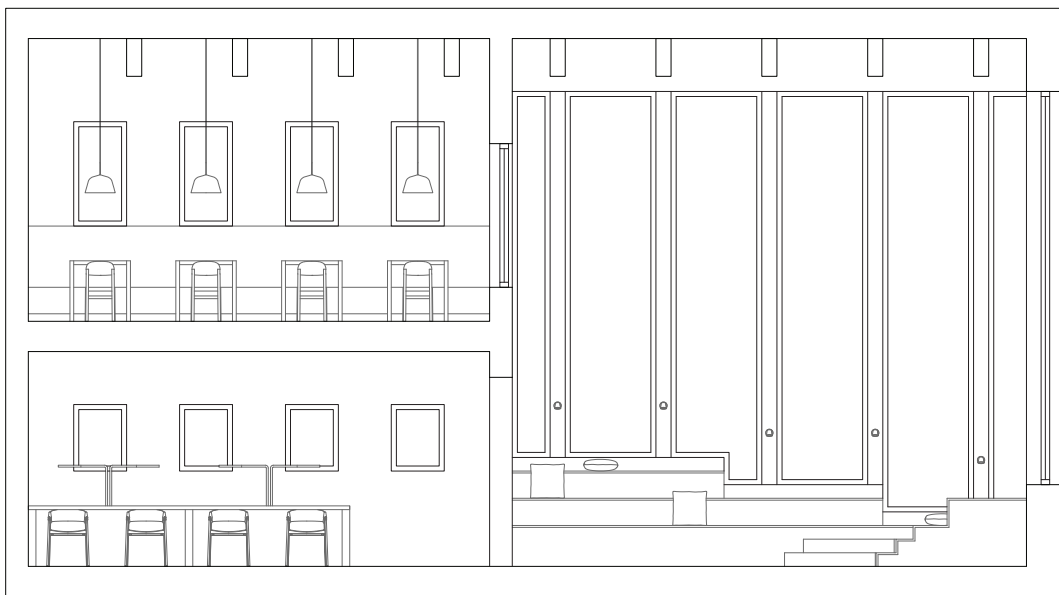
Diagrammatic drawings of houses designed by Charles Moore

New sketches after feedback

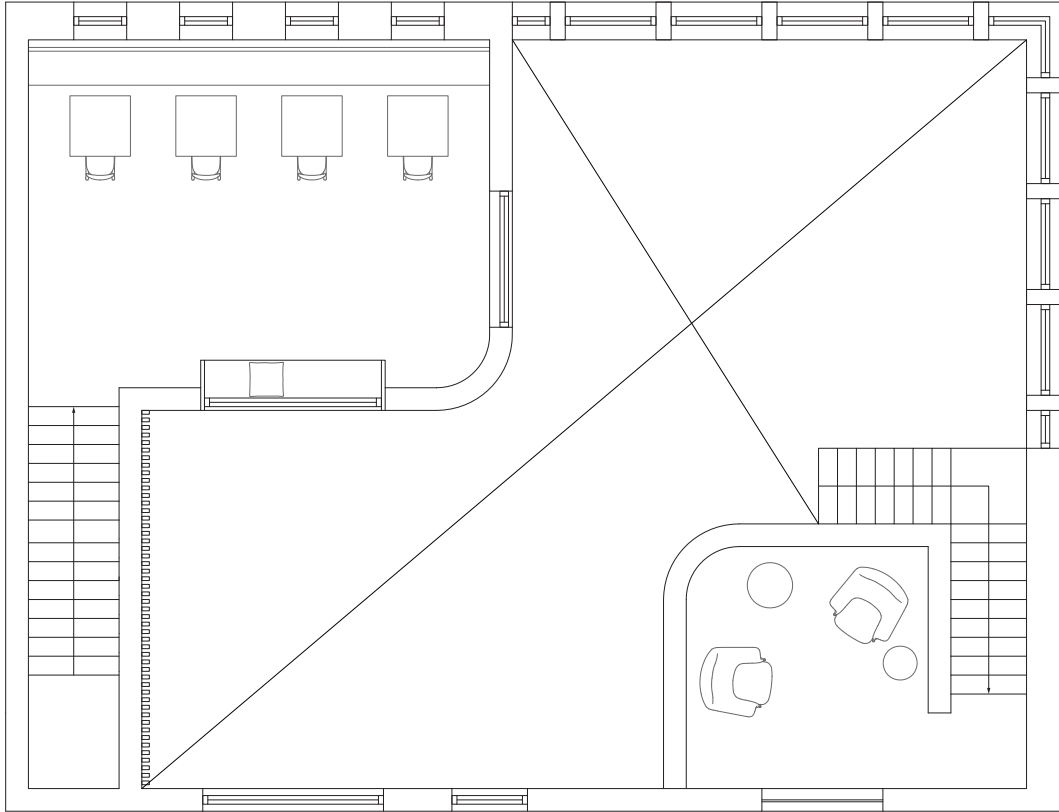
I think the main question I had while designing the room in a library is: why can't adult libraries not have playful elements? Many reading rooms for adults that I have seen, have a very formal setting. I don't think this is wrong, because some people feel more concentrated in rooms like that. But I noticed that those are the only spaces designed for adults. The more playful spaces, are mainly for teenagers or children. These provide a bigger variety in places for users to sit. From a small reading nook to a storytelling room. They are not just big open spaces, but are designed in a way that makes you want to explore to find a spot you feel comfortable in. And I felt like this exploring factor and the alternation between intimate and open spaces, was lacking in my first sketch model. It was only one floor, which made the whole room seem like one intimate space. And you only have some holes in the walls that provide a view to the other side of the room, to show what is beyond and try to guide you to it. So I felt like I had to find a way to extend on my ideas and make it more prominent in the room I'm designing. I found inspiration in the Charles Moore house in New Haven, which was part of my feedback. The house is designed as a shell that contains smaller spaces, like pavilions on a square in the city. The holes in the walls provide views from pavilion to pavilion but also through the pavilions themselves. I started exploring with height differences like in my first sketch, but use the ideas I wanted to show in my sketch model. This resulted in a combination of the sketches I made.



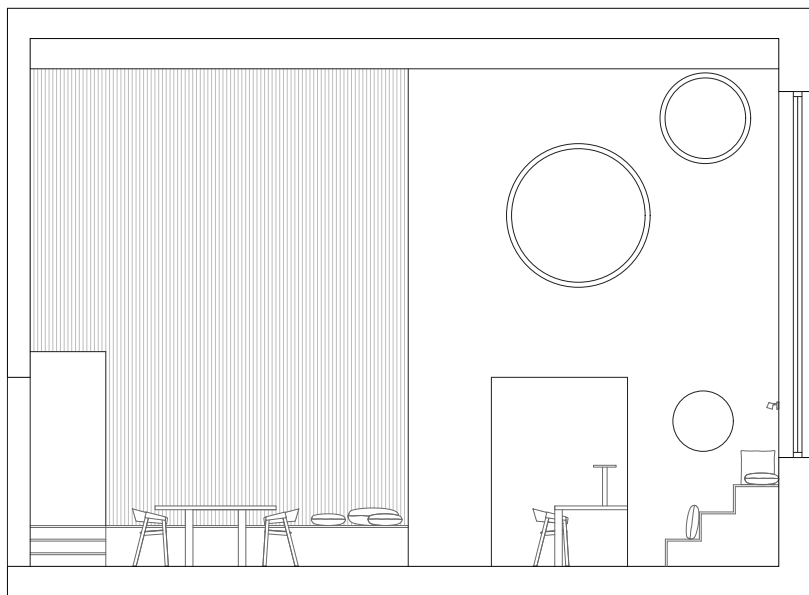
Floorplan ground floor



Section long side



Floorplan first floor



Section short side

Library's living room

Two pavilions are positioned on opposite sides of the room, defining a diagonal open area between them. This open space is like a public square from which people can go into different directions. The square is versatile in its use, offering flexibility to accommodate various activities, from social gatherings to solitary pursuits. Drawing inspiration from children's libraries, the incorporation of varying heights and mix between open and intimate spaces gives this room a playful character and encourages people to explore. Openings in the walls offer glimpses of adjacent areas, while the window seating in the corner of the open space provides an overview of the entire space.



Photo of the final model



Photo of the final model, view from large corner window

Reflection

In these first weeks of the MSc3/4 Palace were quite intense. We had to do a lot in a short amount of time. The research seminar was very helpful to get more knowledge about Asplund and about designing libraries. And the detailed 1:25 model of the Stockholm City Library helped to understand the building we would work on from P2 and onwards. The rotunda model is what I am most pleased with from all the things I did towards P1. The way it looks identical to the building in real life still amazes me.

The P1 presentations is also a moment to reflect on things that could have gone better. For me I would like to be more prepared for coming presentations and think more about how I would present things. The drawings that I showed at P1 did not resemble the drawings I usually make. I underestimated how much time I needed to make the model of the room in a library, which resulted in very basic and rushed drawings. These drawings I later changed to make them look better.

I think that I learned a lot already, but after seeing the presentations of others I think there is still more to learn.



P1 presentation



Exhibition photo



Exhibition photo

Brief 3

PROJECT FOR A PUBLIC LIBRARY

Developing a Library

This brief introduces the project you will each focus on for the remainder of the academic year. It asks you to individually consider how you can develop and transform the Stockholm City Library, by Erik Gunnar Asplund, into a contemporary public library, serving the needs of a diverse, Twenty-First Century society, almost 100 years after its inauguration. As you already know, this question is a complex and disputed one, an elaboration of an ongoing critique that began almost as the building opened and has evolved significantly in the last 20 years. Already in 1931, while it was still new, the building was considered too small. It was extended by Asplund himself, in a manner which counterpointed the architectural concerns of both the original interior and exterior, reflecting his reinvention of himself as a modernist architect in the short, intervening period. Significant areas of the library have changed their function since then. Smaller physical adjustments undertaken by his son have densified the existing structure and changed how both the public and staff used it, while further adjustments in the 1970s sought to make it more accessible.

Competitions

In 2006, a major international competition was announced, with the intention of reinventing the library through a significant new addition which, alongside the existing building, would have delivered a net usable floor area of 24.000m². This project, which attracted enormous interest from the architectural profession, was abandoned in 2009 due to public and political disquiet. In 2012, a brief focused on care for the existing building was produced, detailing its heritage concerns. This was followed in 2014 by another brief, which sought to both re-establish the questions of the failed 2006 contest, while critiquing some of its assumptions and, simultaneously, acknowledging the much-reduced circumstances in which the project would now take place. In seeking to deliver a version of the original aspiration within a total floor area of approximately 15.000m², which the combination of the existing library and bazaar offers, this brief asked a more open question than its predecessor. Instead of listing prescribed areas, as required in 2006, it challenged the architect to consider how they might make best use of the original building, in order to accommodate as much of those original intentions as possible, but in a more flexible manner, while also proposing that various elements could be reduced or removed. In doing so, it emphasised issues of diversity, questioned the necessity to accommodate large areas for new media, proposed a shift in the provision of study spaces to smaller group and individual work environments, and opened up the possibility for overlapping uses, in time as well as space.

Caruso St John, the British practice that was awarded the project, reinforces this negotiative position in their response to the task: "In a completely new building it is possible to devise a functional programme that, in the abstract, prescribes sizes and adjacencies and to ask the design team to meet these requirements. In an existing building the development of the brief goes hand-in-hand with the spatial opportunities and connections that are possible. And in the case of a listed building this process is even more intimate, where the aspirations for improvement and change must be reconciled with the quality of the existing architecture."

In 2019, Caruso St John's project was halted. Now, close to 20 years after the original competition, it is your turn to devise an appropriate response to the Stockholm City Library and to consider how it might best serve the needs of today, and into the future.

Requirements

Working up to the P2 examination and following careful interrogation of both the 2006 and 2014 briefs, you will each develop an individual attitude to the

library, which you will test through the development of both an architectural strategy and an accompanying programmatic brief. In communicating your intentions, you will need to engage not only your knowledge of this library but also the wider research you have been conducting as individuals and a group in relation to the public library as a type, in order to address the larger questions facing it. Amongst many, the following issues are of particular concern:

- **What are the responsibilities and expectations of a contemporary public library now?** How are these situated in relation to the particular concerns of Swedish society, within its capital city, and how might the redeveloped library acknowledge and engage the already established network and infrastructure of libraries in Stockholm?

- **Who is the library for?** How does it serve the needs and aspirations of a complex and highly diverse contemporary society, which includes a shifting demographic and many for whom Sweden has become their home, but is not their place of birth and for whom Swedish is not a native language?

- **What is an appropriate response to the existing building?** Should one create a more or less autonomous building, as the 2006 competition suggested, allowing the monumental status of Asplund's library to be reinforced; should one work within that monumental building, densifying and optimising it, as was suggested in 2014; or is there a possibility somewhere in between, where the existing library might be extended or added to in a more limited way?

Taking the intellectual premise of the 2014 brief as our collective starting point, you will each, individually, establish your response to these questions and those that ensue from them. You will then go through a process of testing and critiquing the original terms and scale of the 2006 brief in order to consolidate your attitude and conclusions in response to your premise for what the resulting library might be. The outcome, as a functional brief, will depend on your concerns and how you conceive these being translated into built form and space.

We should also remember that the questions asked of the original brief by its successor in 2014, are now themselves a decade old. Since then the world has changed fundamentally in many ways: it has become far more cognisant of the planet-wide environmental crisis that we collectively face, and the need for both wider society, and for architects and architecture in particular, to respond to it proactively and effectively; mass migration, often as a direct result of environmental change, has become a major social and political question and a driver for change; we have been through a global pandemic, one of the effects of which has been to transform the way many people approach their working environment and their public lives; both the outcomes and aftermath of colonialism and the priorities that underpin traditional social hierarchies have been fundamentally called into question; there is an ever wider understanding that learning and education is a life-long activity; there is far more scepticism about the concerns of neoliberalism in response to these and other questions. How can your own reflections on the role of this library, in this city, and in relation to the contemporary culture it fosters, incorporate such questions?

Outcomes

By P2, you will be able to evidence and represent your concerns and conclusion through the following:

- **A statement of your attitude to the role of the library**, its situation in society and the city, the qualities and character of the existing monumental building and the ways in which you propose to transform it, in order to address the questions and issues you have raised.

- **An architectural proposition in relation to the existing library**, defining whether you intend to densify it, extend it, or see it as part of an ensemble, with a new building or buildings. This needs to be presented within either or both the site model (1:500), physical building model (1:100) or the digital model, each of which you are already preparing as a studio.

- **A series of clear diagrams, expressed in plan**, section and three dimensions, which describe how this proposition works, in response to the brief, the site and the existing building. Ideally the graphical language of these diagrams should correlate with those used in the analysis of existing library precedents to allow for comparison.

- **A consolidated room or area programme**, as a spreadsheet but also graphically represented and compared with the 2006 brief, translated through the aforementioned diagrams into the architectural proposal, in strategic terms.

Timetable

These abovementioned outcomes ideally are developed on parallel tracks as they inform one another. You will see on the Notion site that you have 8 weeks to prepare yourself for the P2 presentation. However, you will only be able to have feedback on the process during the coming 4 weeks, before the start of the end-of-year break (we do not teach on 20 December).

Annexes

2006 Competition Brief (to study)

2012 Conservation Brief (for reference)

2014 Revised Brief (to study)

UNDERSTANDING THE DESIGN BRIEF

The Stockholm City Library is an icon of the city. It's visited by people all over the world. It was designed in the early 20th century, when public libraries were a new concept in Sweden. Back then people had different beliefs in what a public library should be. It was mainly about making the library accessible for everyone and have open shelves so people can browse through the books themselves. This is still what defines a public library, but in current society it has a more social mission as well. This change in what the public library means for the community and what it should provide, resulted in the question whether the Stockholm City Library could still accommodate these different needs.

Program comparison existing building, 2006 brief and 2014 brief

Existing program Asplund's Library



Competition brief 2006



Caruso St John Architects 2014



Program comparison

In 2006, there have been a competition for an extension of the Stockholm City Library designed by Asplund. The City of Stockholm deemed the library too small for its ambitions. The brief formulated a program that would increase the public space significantly. Many architects from all over the world had entered this competition, and the winner of this competition was Heike Hanada with Delphinium. But this design has never been built. In 2014 another competition was announced. This competition still used the 2006 competition as a starting point but it also contains some reflections on this earlier design brief. The square meters are drastically lowered by combining some of the spaces in the program. In this program diagram the different programs are compared: existing program, 2006 competition brief program and the program designed by Caruso St John Architects. The program of Caruso St John is a good example of how to translate the 2014 brief into a design that only makes use of the existing buildings. The brief itself doesn't have a list of the required square meters because it asked the architects to create their own, considering the 2006 program.

What I think is most interesting about the 2006 competition brief is that it states that the library has to become more of a meeting place for the inhabitants of Stockholm. It still values the need of the library to be a place of silence, a place to study and learn, but they do acknowledge that the library is becoming more than just that. This is exactly what has changed about public libraries. A public library is not only a repository of books. It is a place where people come together, be social and learn from each other. It's also a place that is accessible to everyone and you don't have to consume something, you can just be there and do your own thing. The social mission became important and with that, the public library would need to accommodate a bigger variety of spaces. You could think about spaces for group work, meetings, workshops and exhibitions. Spaces of which most aren't available in the current Stockholm City Library.

When I look at these 3 programs and think about my own experience from using the library. I do agree that the library needs more space. The first space you enter from the north of the building is quite cramped (image below). There is a lot going on here and I think it would help if some of the program is relocated elsewhere. It feels like they are trying to fit a program in this building that is way too big for the spaces it provides, but I also think that it misses program you would expect in a contemporary public library. So I do think the library needs to be extended somehow.



Current entrance space. Picture taken by De Groot, M. (2023)

A VISIT TO A LIBRARY - PREDIKHERENKLOOSTER



The near zone



The deep zone



The centre zone

Korteknie Stuhlmacher Architecten designed a public library in a former monastery in Mechelen. The monastery used to be in bad shape after years of decay. The city council eventually decided to repurpose the ruins that were left of the monastery into a public library for the city.

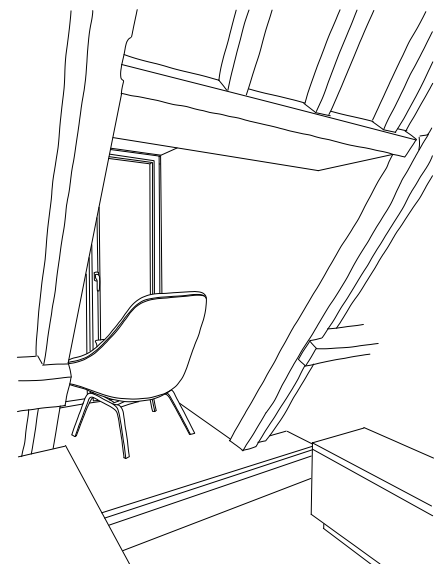
The design of KSA respects the characteristics of the existing building. The original structure is kept the same as much as possible, only necessary adjustments have been made. The most striking aspect of this design is that the architects chose not to cover up the ruinous state of the monastery. Instead, they made it part of the design. The historical layers of this building are still visible and the furnishings are designed like a new layer. The wooden panelling, bookshelves and furniture can be easily removed and they made it possible to conceal installations and regulate acoustics. The warm colour of the wood gives the spaces a warm atmosphere, which is complemented by the colours of the furniture. These colours are based on the different layers of stucco and paint on the walls and ceilings. The original wooden elements like the ceiling on the first floor and the structure of the roof are visible to keep the existing character of the spaces. To renew the slate roof and create new dormers, it was necessary to add a steel structure. This steel structure is hidden as much as possible. For example, the steel columns that support the mezzanine are covered by bookshelves. And when you do see a steel structural element, you'll notice that the elements have unusual shapes. One of these unusual shapes is a beam that bends two times before the bearing, so it doesn't touch the existing wooden structure.

The library is split up in zones, "near", "deep" and "centre". The "near" zone is based on the ground floor. It is the most public zone of the three. Here you find the entrance, café and exhibition space. From two sides you can enter the courtyard, which serves as the terrace of the café and it can be used for events.

The "deep" zone is situated on the first floor. The inner ring is the study space and the outer ring has office spaces and classrooms. The study spaces are all positioned in the large windows facing the courtyard, bringing in soft natural daylight. The width of the windows define the width of the tables. This does make the tables quite shallow. There is not much room for you to sit down with a laptop, which makes it seem more of a table suitable for reading. This "deep" zone space sets a visitor in a different state of mind, it's quiet and it feels more separated from the rest as it is closed off space in the large corridor.

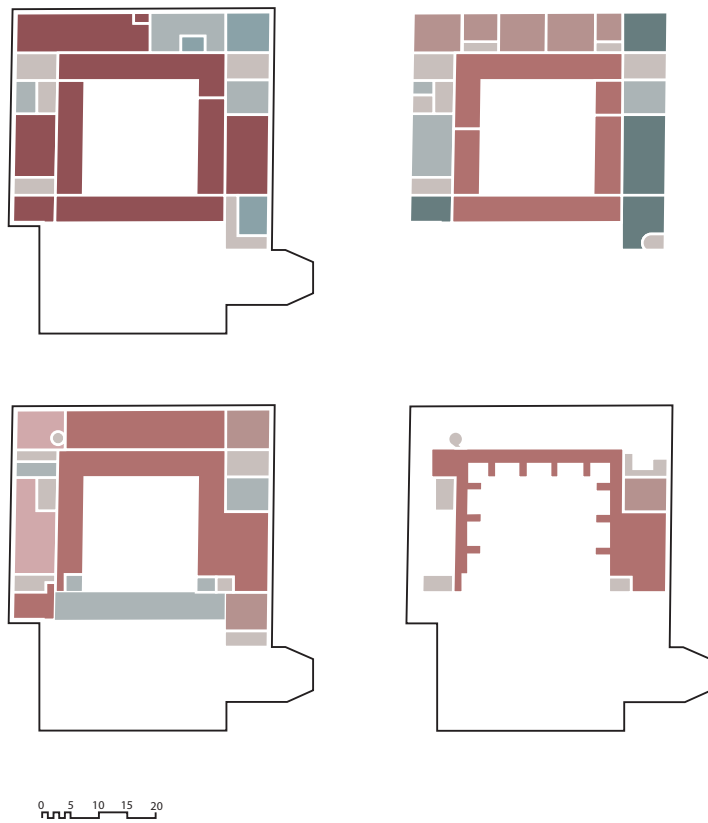
The third zone is the "centre", which is in the attic. The new and large windows bring in a decent amount of light, and provide views over the city. The dormer windows at the mezzanine create intimate and private spaces for the individual. When you sit in these windows it really feels like this is your own little space. And it's because of these little nooks that you don't conceive the attic as one big space. The wooden structure gives this space a unique character, and the low bookshelves complements this structure. Along the bottom of the roof are bookshelves, seating areas or workspaces. These workspaces are all facing the windows.

This library is one of the most beautiful libraries I have ever been to. The way this modern design complements the old is very inspiring. And it does show that it's not always needed to demolish things. Finding the beauty in things you might first see as flaws, can result in very interesting and eye opening designs.



Reading nook

PROGRAM ANALYSIS - PREDIKHERENKLOOSTER MECHELEN



- Public space
- Reading rooms
- Group rooms / meeting rooms
- Children's library
- Circulation
- Services / technical spaces
- Storage / logistics
- Administration / staff

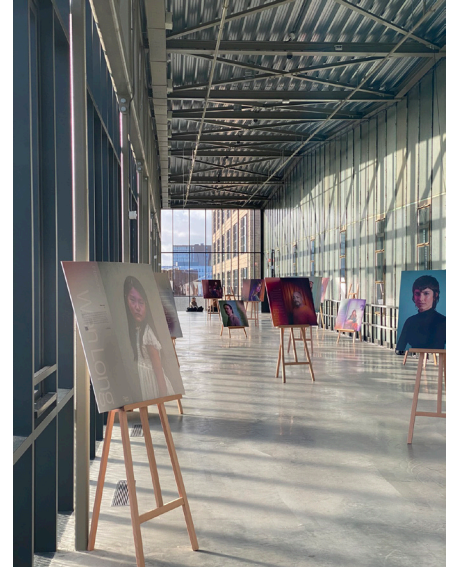
A VISIT TO A LIBRARY - LOCHAL



View from the tribunes



Workplaces on the top floor



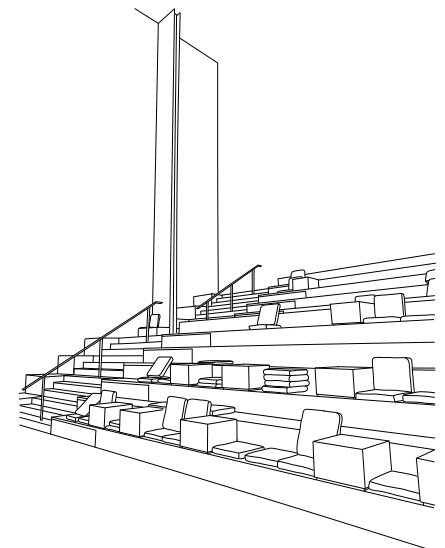
Exposition space

A design by CIVIC architects together with Braaksmas & Roos architectenbureau, Inside Outside and Mecanoo. Another example of a project that transforms an existing building into a public library. For this library it is a former locomotive hangar of the Dutch National Railways. It's located next to Tilburg station.

This library is called a living room for the city. A place where people can come together to study, read and meet. It houses amenities shared by the library, arts organisations and co-working facilities. It also provides spaces for lectures, public events and 'labs'. The smaller spaces are designed as a space within a space as it's all part of this one big hall. It's almost a small city, but then covered. The openness of the space allow it to be used in different ways and it can be divided into smaller spaces by moving the curtains. These curtains are a reference to the city's history as Tilburg was an important city for the Dutch textile industry. This reference to the past is visible all over the library. The existing structure is still there and some elements have been given a new purpose. The large tables at the coffee kiosk are on old train parts, with the old tracks still there, it's possible to move these tables and create a podium with the stairs as a tribune.

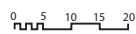
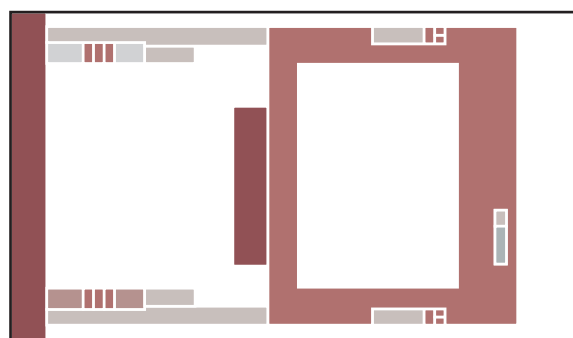
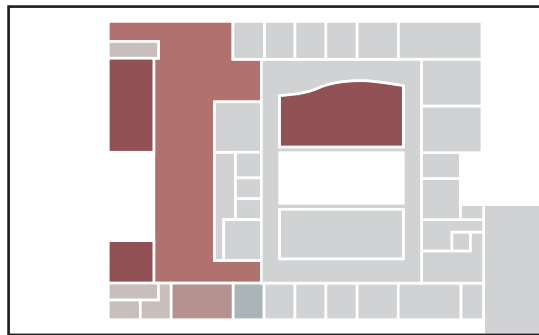
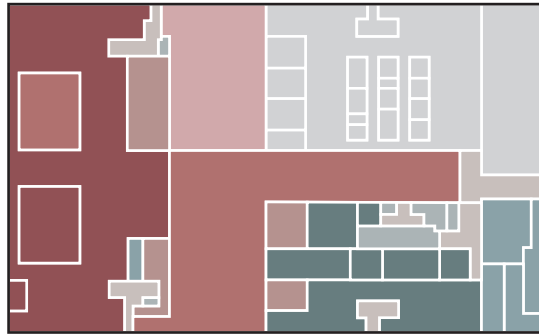
As you walk through the space and ascending your way up the stairs you'll go from the most public and noisy spaces to the more quiet zone of the library. At the top floor you find workspaces for small groups and individuals and there even are some small closed rooms people can reserve to work more focussed. But this is only a small part of the library. It is a large space and if you look at how many workspaces there are, it's actually not a lot. Of course the stairs are also spaces people can sit down and read or work. But I wouldn't say that these stairs are the most comfortable sitting spots of the library. You don't find pillows on the whole length of the stairs and tables to put down your laptop are also scarce. Though, these stairs do give you good views over the space and it's a nice meeting place for people.

With a large old building like this you would expect it to be quite hard to regulate acoustics and temperature. Here they chose to only heat areas what are used. The heating output is hidden in the tribunes and the closed rooms are fully self regulated. By only heating what is needed it was possible to keep the openness of the space.



Tribune

PROGRAM ANALYSIS - LOCHAL TILBURG



- | | |
|--|--|
| Public space | Circulation |
| Reading rooms | Services / technical spaces |
| Group rooms / meeting rooms | Storage / logistics |
| Children's library | Administration / staff |

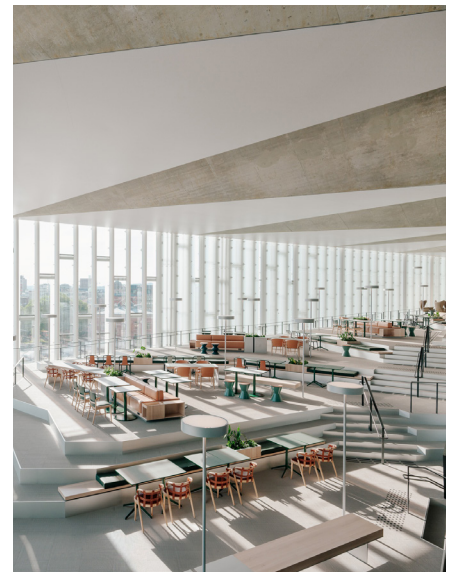
DEICHMAN LIBRARY



Exterior Deichman library. Einar Aslaksen



Light shafts in the library. Einar Aslaksen



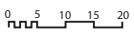
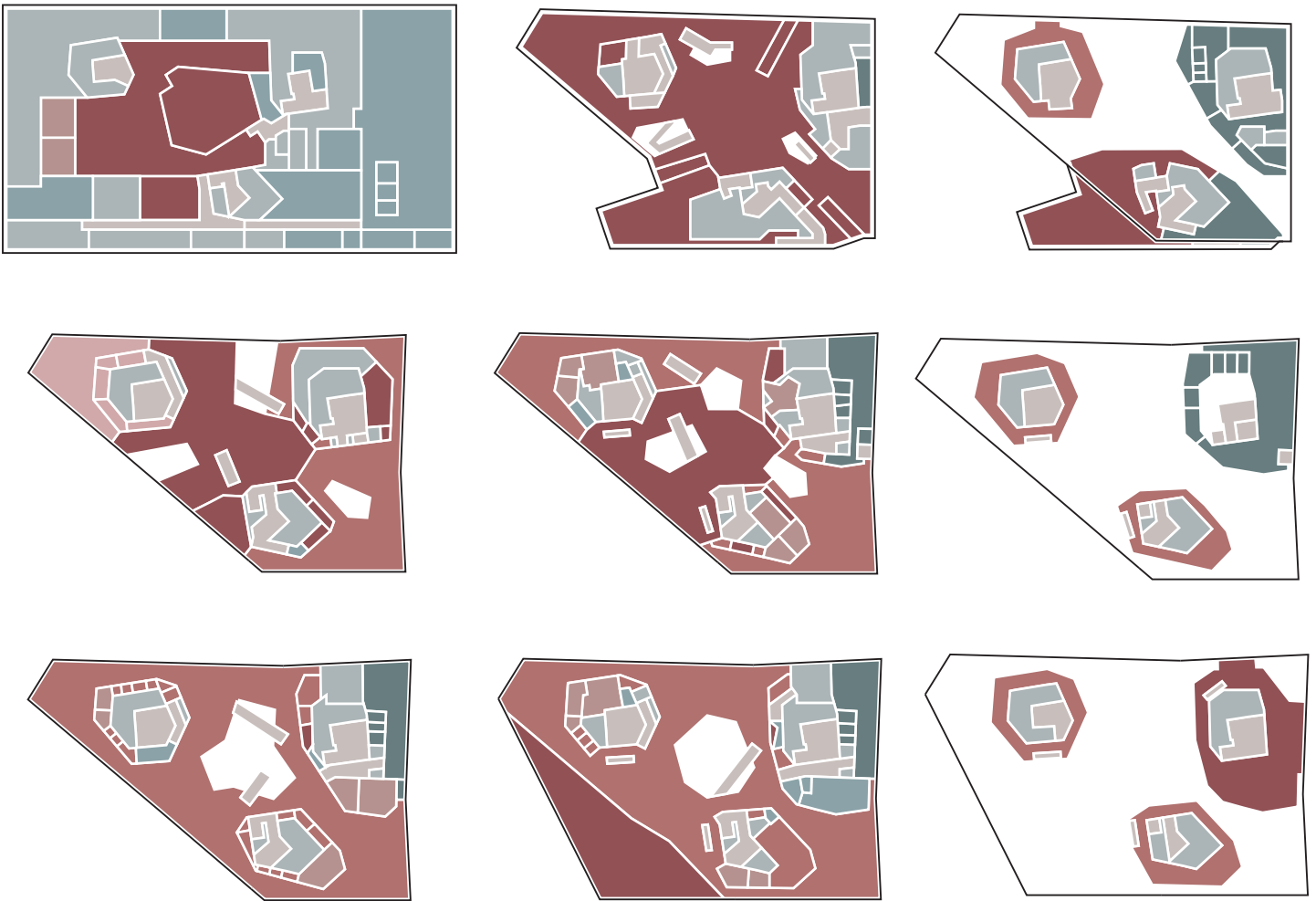
Landscape like interior. Einar Aslaksen

Besides the two libraries we have visited I was also interested in two other libraries, one of them is Deichman Library in Oslo. This library is of a different scale than the Predikherenklooster and Lochal. It is the city library of Oslo and it's designed by Atelier Oslo together with Lund Hagem. The build was completed in 2020. The design is made in a way to inspire visitors to explore the library. The building has an open layout with 3 cores around which people can bookshelves, toilets and working rooms. In the centre of the building three light shafts cut through the floors connecting them and distribute daylight downwards from the skylights. By organising the enclosed spaces around the core, it's possible to have a completely open facade and get a lot of daylight in from different directions.

The program is organized in a way that all the noisy and big program are positioned on the lower floors and gradually when you ascend in the building you'll go to the more calm and quiet areas. This layout distribution of program is similar to that of the Lochal.

I can use this library as an inspiration for my own design. I liked the way the cores have all the service spaces which allows for a completely open floorplan. But this library also provides spaces for people to meet or do activities. It is interesting that this library has a gross area that is about the same as the total square meters of the 2006 design brief for the Stockholm Library.

PROGRAM ANALYSIS - DEICHMAN LIBRARY OSLO



- Public space
- Reading rooms
- Group rooms / meeting rooms
- Children's library
- Circulation
- Services / technical spaces
- Storage / logistics
- Administration / staff

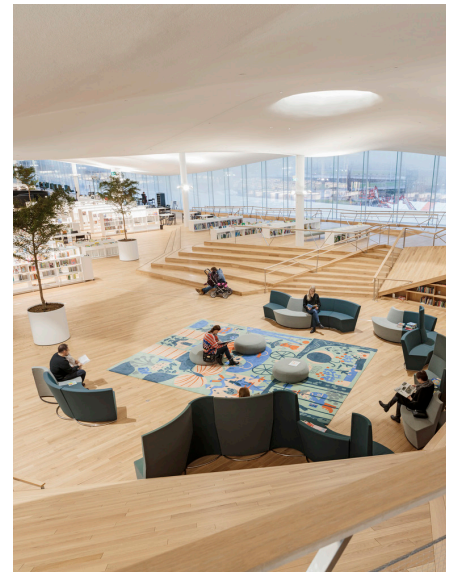
OODI LIBRARY



Exterior Oodi. Tuomas Uusheimo



Reading space. Tuomas Uusheimo



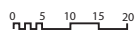
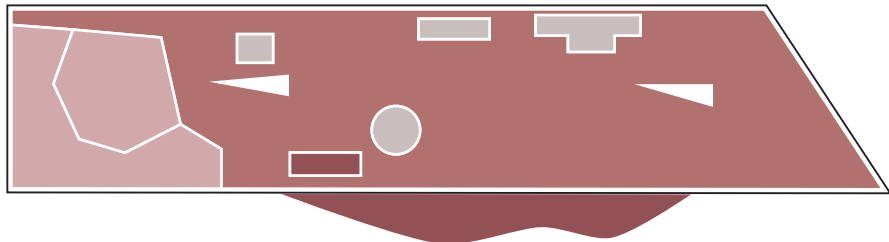
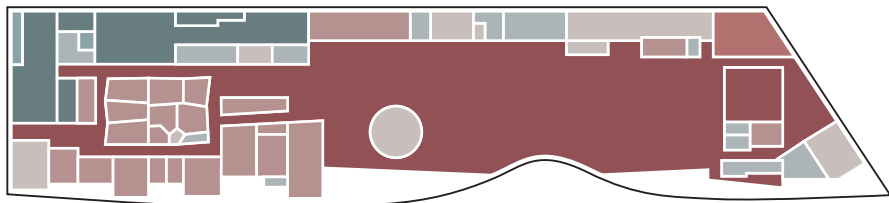
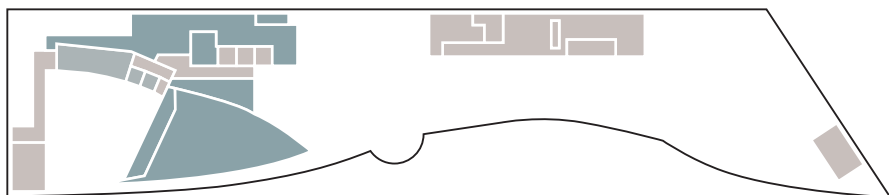
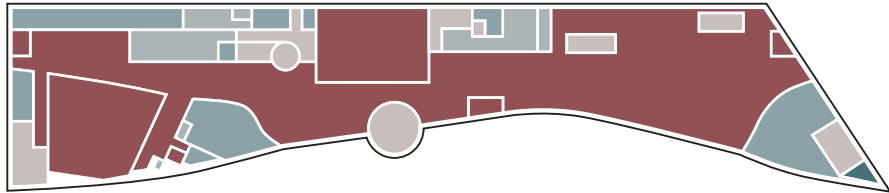
Reading space. Tuomas Uusheimo

Oodi is a library that accommodate additional services and facilities. It is designed by ALA Architects and it is of about the same scale as the Deichman Library. On the top floor you'll find a more "traditional" library, this is where the books collections is located. It is an open floorplan with only some rooms under the floor that forms a landscape at one side of the building. The other floors hosts meeting rooms, audio-visual recording studios and there even is a movie theatre.

This library also has this vertical organisation of noisy large programs on the lower levels and the quiet areas at the top. The ground floor is more of an extension of the public square outside and functions as a lobby for all the facilities in this building.

Looking at the floorplans and pictures of this library I find this building quite empty. The large open spaces on multiple floors can be used for many different activities which is a nice addition to a library building. But I do feel like this building is missing a balance between open landscape and more intimate spaces. Functions are just stacked on top of each other, giving each floor a different purpose, But there is no visible connection between the floors other than the stairs, escalators and elevators. I think the library would have worked better if the smaller rooms are more mixed with the open spaces.

PROGRAM ANALYSIS - OODI HELSINKI



- Public space
- Reading rooms
- Group rooms / meeting rooms
- Children's library
- Circulation
- Services / technical spaces
- Storage / logistics
- Administration / staff

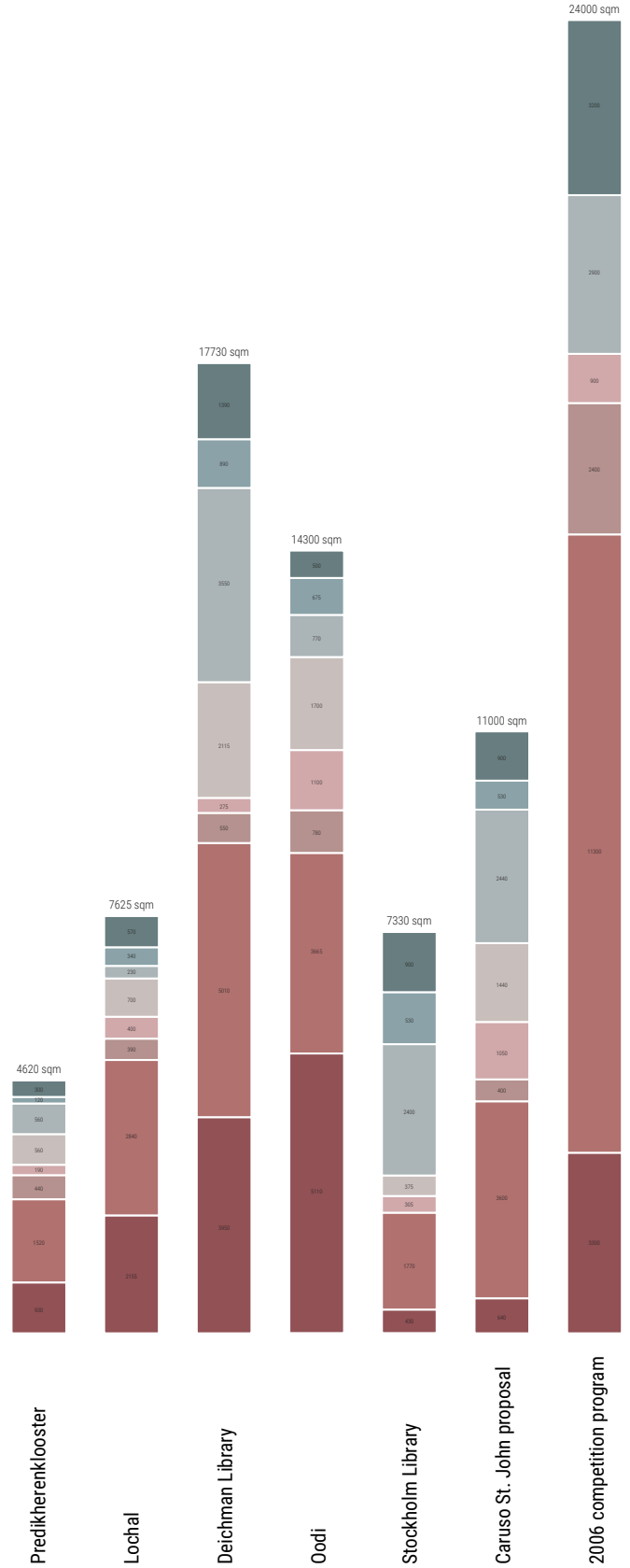
PROGRAM ANALYSIS - COMPARING LIBRARIES

The bar graph visualises the scale of the different libraries and their program. Surprisingly, the Lochal is almost the same size as the Stockholm Library, but the distribution of the program is very different. What is also interesting is the difference between the Stockholm Library and the Deichman Library and Oodi, which are both libraries of large cities just like Stockholm. Seeing this difference makes it even more clear that the Stockholm Library is missing program.

The proposal of Caruso St. John is closer to the other two Scandinavian libraries. There is a better balance between what is public and what is not. But I also think that there could be more public spaces that aren't necessarily reading spaces but just a public space. I see this as more of a square that you see in the city, people can use that space for many different things. And I think a public library is an ideal type of building that can become an extension of the outside and essentially become an indoor public square.

So what does this graph tell me?

I think that by seeing this comparison it makes sense to extend the Stockholm Library, to make it bigger so that it can provide more and a variety of spaces. It also tells me that in terms of size and program, staying in the range of the other two Scandinavian libraries would seem most appropriate for a library that is supposed to be a main library of a large city. I can definitely use the knowledge I have from looking at the different libraries to think about the spaces I will design in my own design.



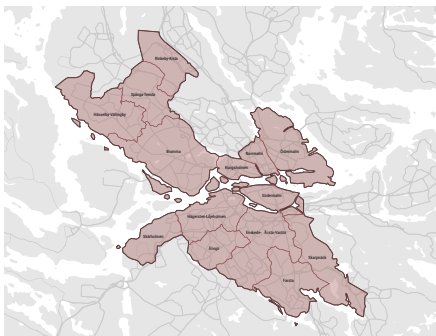
URBAN CONTEXT



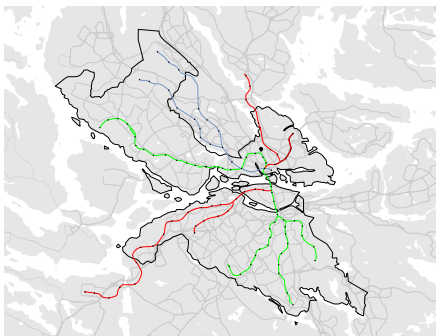
Map of Stockholm showing the location of the library

URBAN CONTEXT

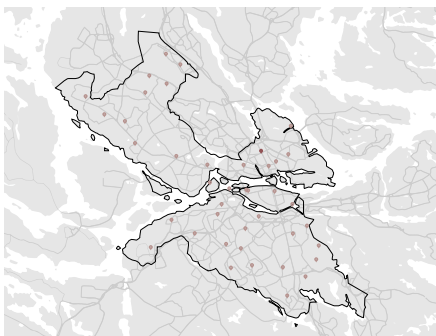
The Stockholm City Library is located in Normalm. The city centre is in the south of this district, so the library is quite centrally located. You can especially see this in the metro system map. The green metro line that goes to Odenplan, a metro station close to the library, reaches a large portion of the city. And because of this metro station being this close to the library, people from all over the city can easily access it.



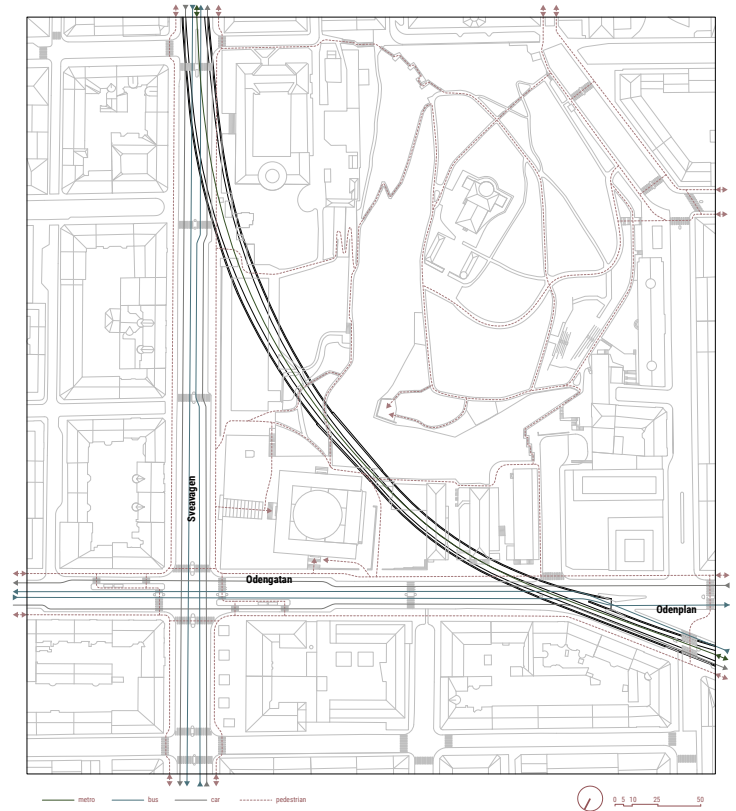
Districts of Stockholm City



Metro system



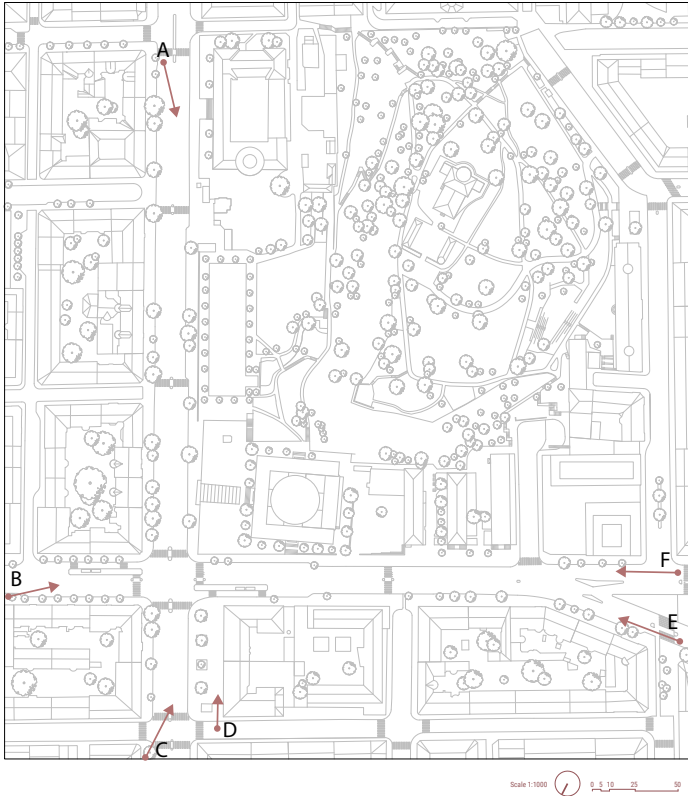
Stockholm City Library and other libraries in Stockholm



Site analysis, transportation

The urban situation of the Stockholm City Library is complex. It is positioned on the corner of a crossroads between two main roads of the city: Sveavägen and Odengatan. The metro tunnel of the green metro line goes underneath the lamella buildings and comes close to the corner of the library. This means creating an extension to the library on the right side of the library has to be build around this tunnel or at least find a way to bridge over it with the foundations. People can come from different directions to visit the library. Currently the north entrance is the only entrance that has been adjusted to make it more accessible. This is also the entrance people will most likely take when they come from Odenplan. It therefore makes sense to keep this entrance in the new design for the library.

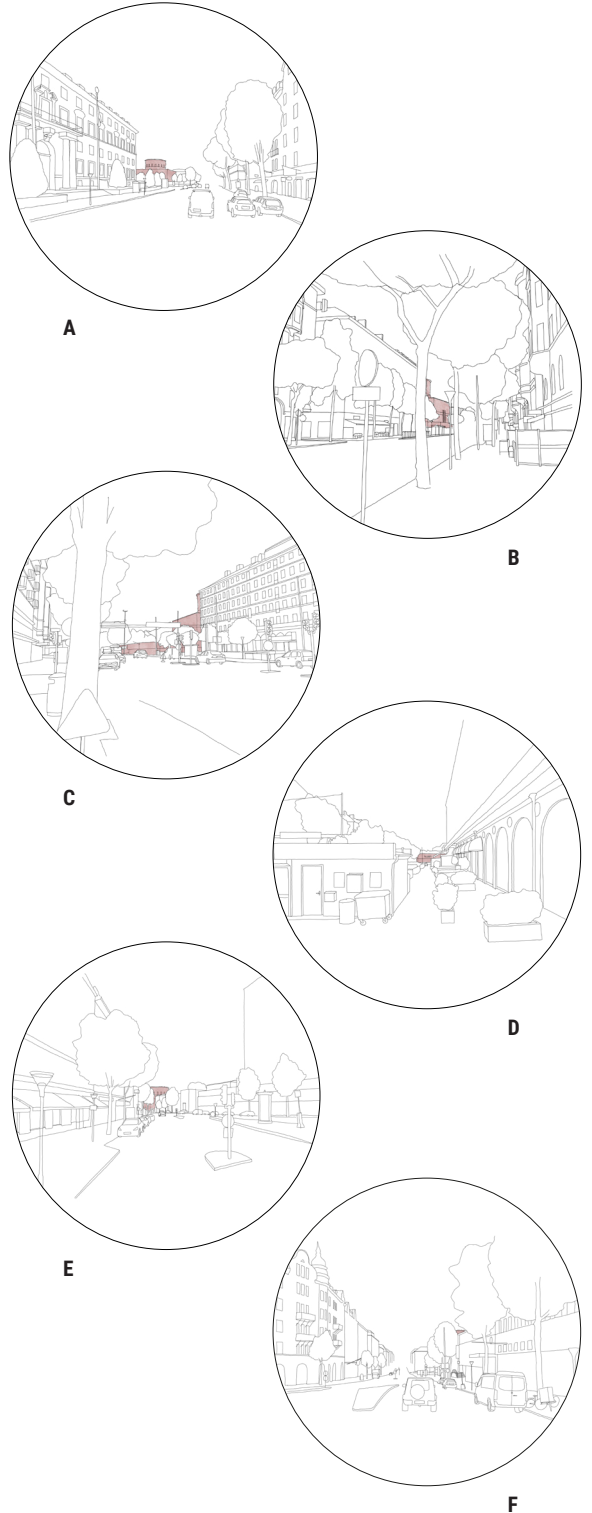
The route to the park from Odengatan doesn't feel inviting. This side of the hill clearly seems to be the back side. There is this path behind the lamella buildings to go around the hill. And the path along the west wing of the library becomes narrow when you walk around the corner to the children's library entrance. I think there is much to improve to this north side of the hill to make the street better connected to the green space.



Site analysis, sightlines

I wanted to capture the library from different angles to see until when you can still see it. These views are shown in figure to the right. The locations of these views are noted in the drawing above.

What is noticeable is that the library is a bit hidden when you come from the north side of Sveavagen. You will only see the bazaar building until you reach the crossroads. From other angles you can see the library from far away. So when I think about extending the library, using the bazaar would be my first idea. It makes sense to use this building that is already there. It will make the library more visible from the north of Sveavagen.



Site analysis, views of the library from different angles



Lindhagensplan 1866, Albert Lindhagen



Dark pink is more-or-less built as planned, light pink is unbuilt



Streets of Norrmalm all going into the same direction, except for one area (light pink).

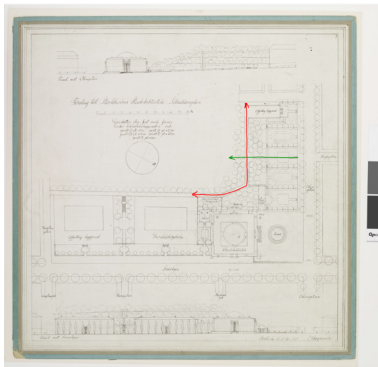
The street Karlbergsvagen interested me the most from the analysis of sightlines. And after further studies I found out many of stockholm's current roads are based on the Lindhagensplan of 1866. When the city started to grow the city needed a good system for the roads. Lindhagen came with a plan where boulevards end at either green areas or at the water. And as you can see in the top left figure, the diagonal road Karlbergsvagen is one of those roads. The road doesn't have both ends lead to a green space, but it still does lead to the observatory hill.

This made me think that connecting the street with the hill and the park is indeed an interesting idea. But how would that look like?

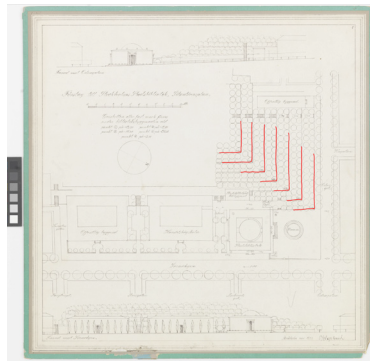
RESEARCHING THE ARCHIVES

I delved into the archives to learn more about the original ideas for the site. Asplund made many sketches of the Stockholm Library and the whole area around it. The library was supposed to be part of a bigger plan to make this area a campus of knowledge. The plan included a university building on top of the hill and 4 annexes next to the Stockholm City Library. Only three of these annexes were eventually built. The university building on top of the hill was never realised as the university had been given a different location in the city.

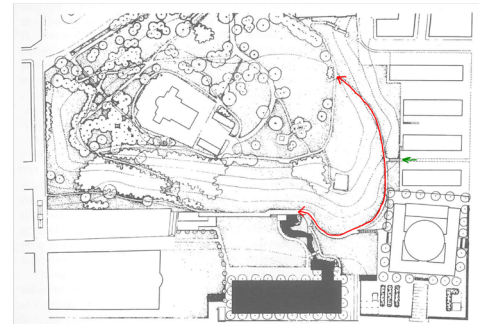
Asplund was also thinking about connecting the street with the hill. In his sketches you see him experimenting with terraces going down the hill and adding staircases to guide people from the street to the hill. When decided to move the library to make the centre of the rotunda align with the axis of the observatory, he started designing a park on between the library and the economics building. The idea of the terraces is gone, but the idea of having a staircase going up the hill remained.



Asplund drawing from 1921

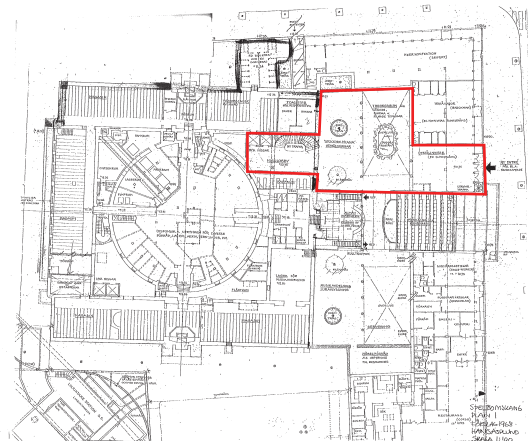


Asplund drawing from 1922, showing terraces going down the hill

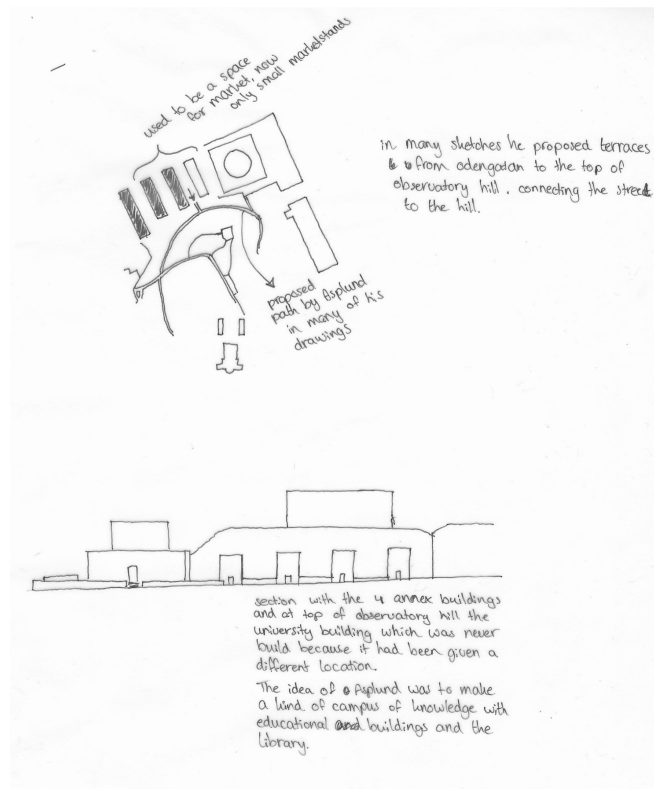
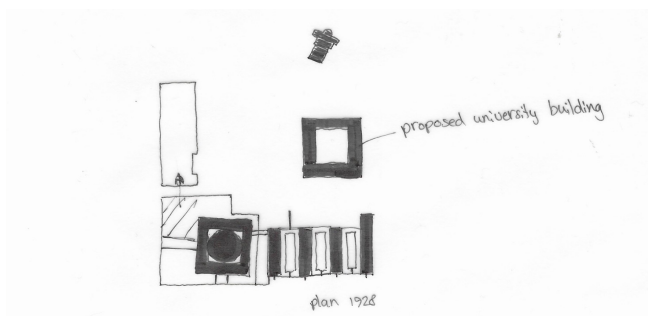
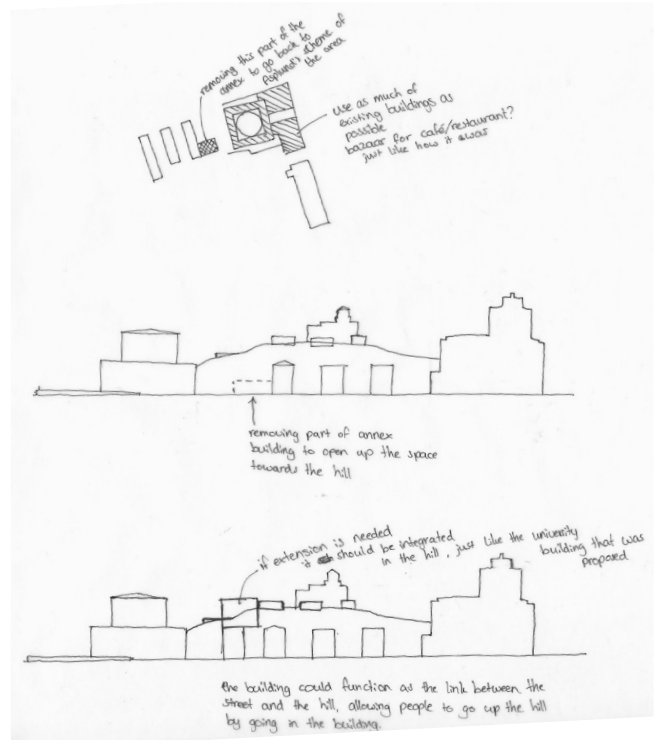
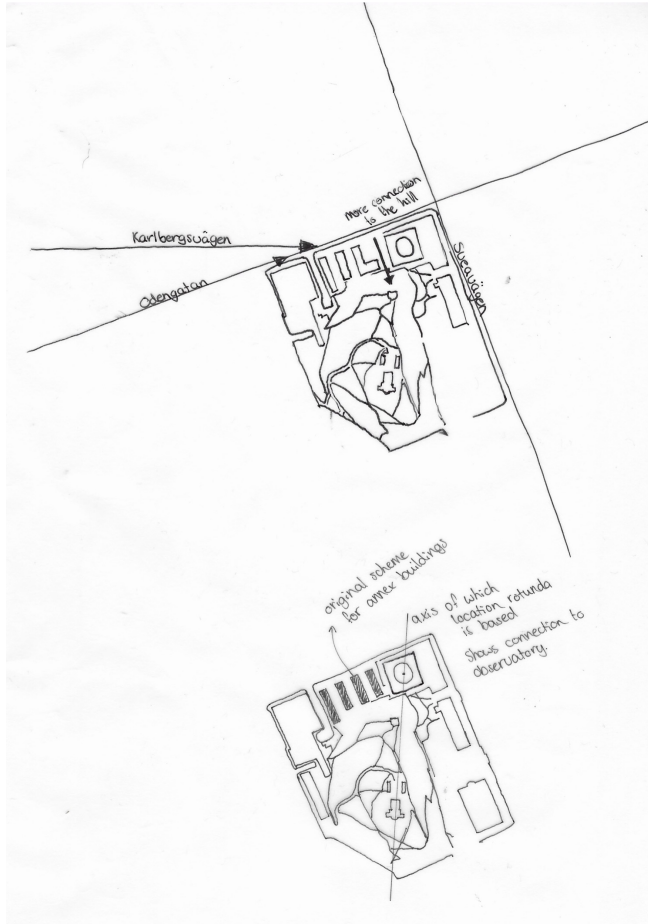


Asplund site plan

Hans Asplund, the son of Erik Gunnar Asplund, worked on the idea of creating an entrance for the physically challenged through the bazaar building. The elevators were therefore extended to the level of Sveavagen, but the entrance was never realised.

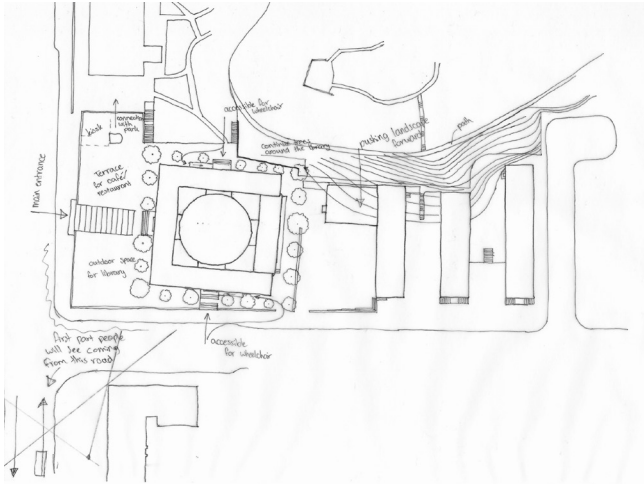


Hans Asplund idea of connecting the bazaar to the library



Sketches that summarize aspects of Asplund his ideas for the location of the library. And show my first thoughts for the design

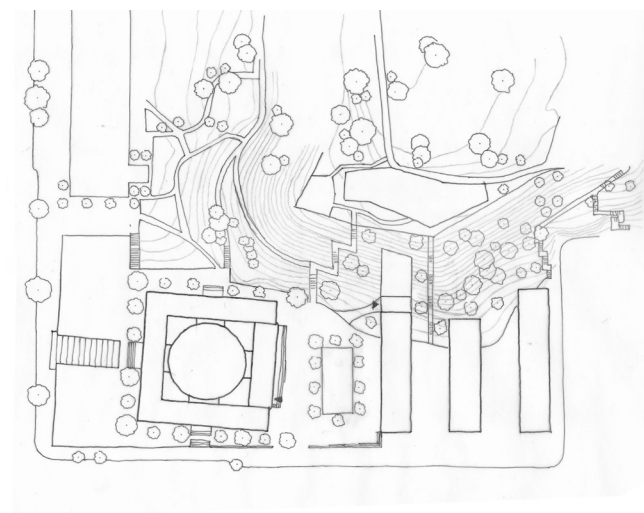
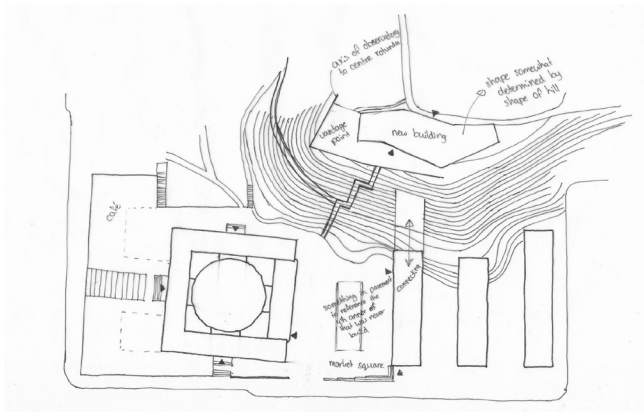
FIRST THOUGHTS



While I already knew I wanted to incorporate the bazaar building, I didn't know what to do on the other side of the library. The library wouldn't become that much bigger when I would only incorporate the bazaar. So I started designing a new building on the west side of the library. At first I thought about extending the hill forward and make the space in between the annex buildings an extension of the park. I would build a new building on top of the hill as a reference to the university building asplund had proposed. The first annex would be extended into the hill and it will make a connection to the building on the hill. The open space I created by removing the wing of the first annex would have a small pond in the middle, referring to the 4th annex building that was never realised.

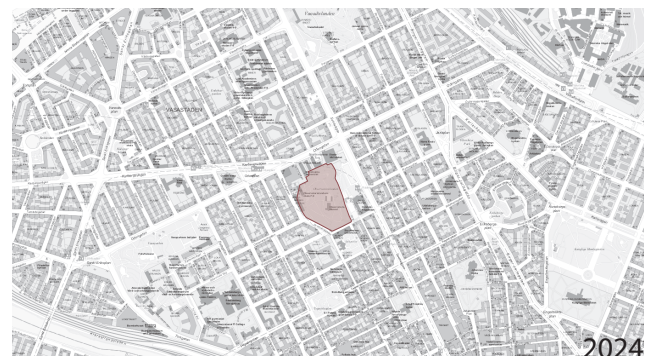
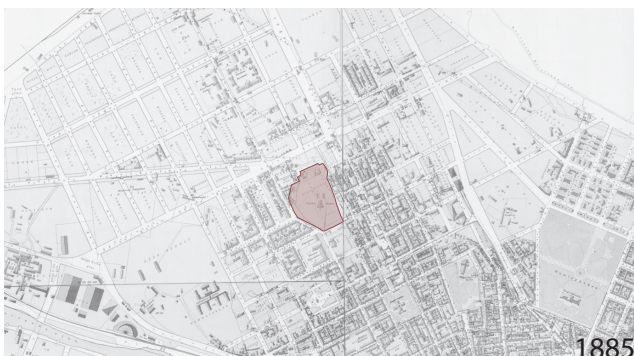
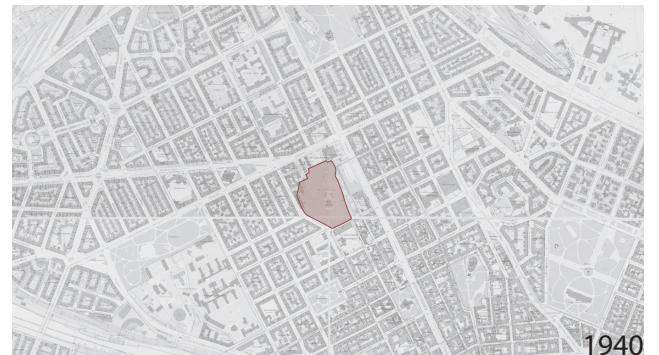
I think this idea has some qualities, but things could be better. At first I thought a building on top of the hill would be interesting, but how would you connect a building that far from the Stockholm City Library? I did want the new building to function as 1 library together with the Stockholm City Library, so having them separated would not work. How would people know in what building they have to be? How would this logistically go? Many questions came to mind, also questions I wouldn't know how to solve.

But the idea of doing something with the hill excited me, I think it is a good starting point in finding that connection between park, hill and street. So I want to continue to explore this.



Sketches of first design ideas

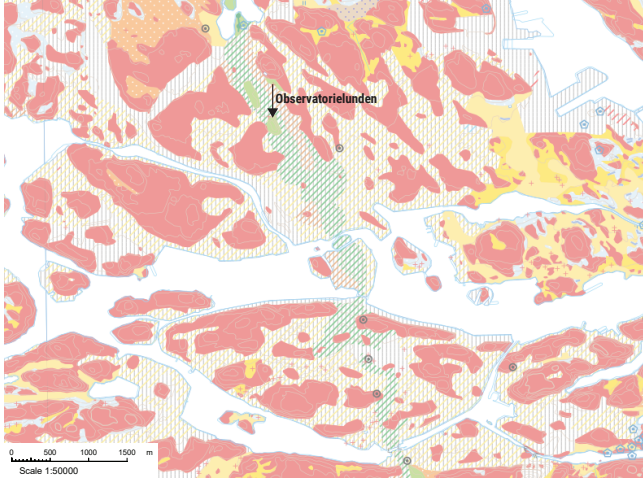
THE OBSERVATORY HILL



The development of Stockholm City and the changing observatory hill.

If I want to design a building into the hill I need to know more about the hill, so I looked at older maps of Stockholm to find out how this hill was formed. It appears that the Observatory hill used to be bigger as it was part of the Brunkebergsåsen (Brunkeberg Ridge). Large parts have been excavated, so the Observatory hill is one of the only remains of this Brunkeberg Ridge. This ridge was an esker, a hill in the landscape caused by meltwater under an ice cap. This esker stretched from the northern part of Stockholm's Norrmalm district to the southern part of this district, effectively dividing Norrmalm into an east and west part. Because it was such a significant obstacle to connect the two parts of the city, much of this esker was excavated, creating space for Norrmalm to expand.

The maps you see above show the expanding Stockholm City. It also shows how the observatory hill changed.



The Brunkeberg Ridge stretching all the way through Stockholm (green hatch).

From what I could find is that the hill is mostly sand, gravel and stone. And when I looked at archival images of the observatory hill this indeed seems to be the case.

The archival photos also showed that there were houses on the hill before it was turned into a park. And the foundation of one of the houses is currently a vantage point on the hill. The shape of the hill has been changed to make space for the annex buildings. It is interesting that the hill seems way smaller when it is not surrounded by the Stockholm Library and annexes.

From these images and the fact that the hill has been excavated already, I think it should be possible to design a building in the hill.

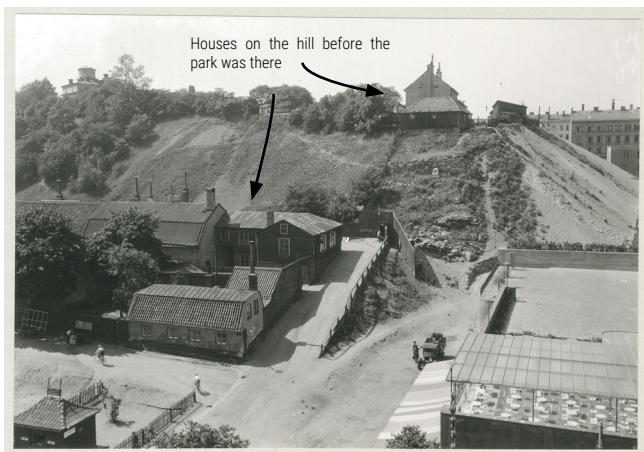
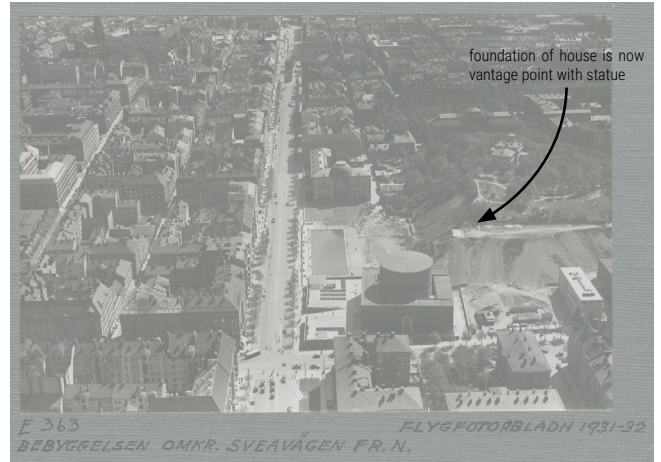
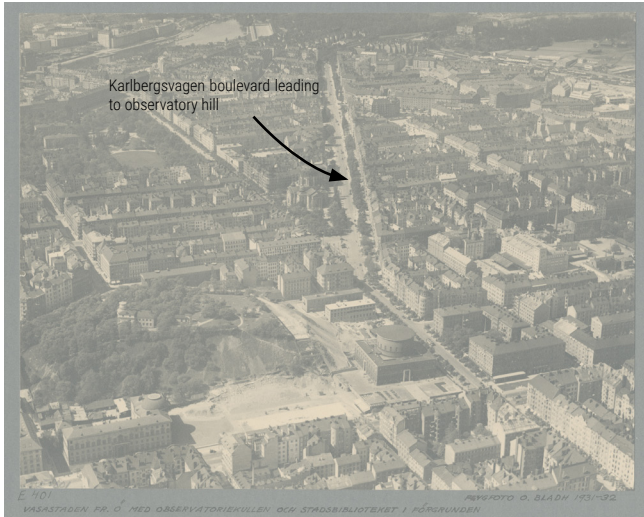


Observatory hill before the Stockholm City Library was built. Ateljé, L. (1902)

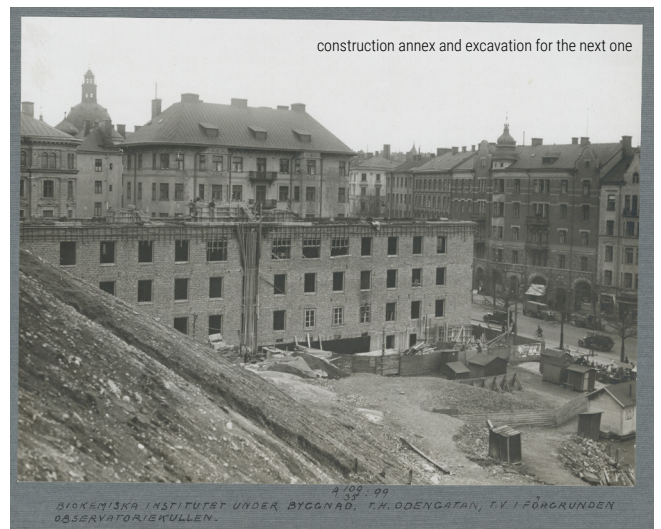


Observatory hill seen from the crossroads of Odengatan and Sveavagen. Ateljé, L. (1906)

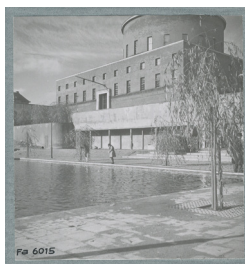
ARCHIVAL PHOTOS - SITE



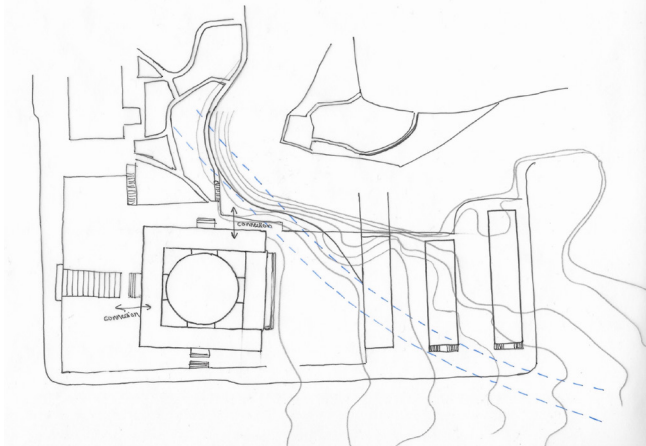
Retake of older photo



ARCHIVAL PHOTOS - THE LIBRARY



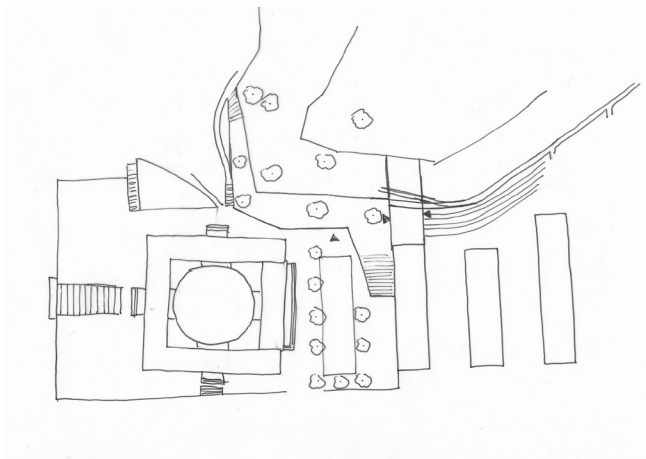
A BUILDING INSIDE THE HILL



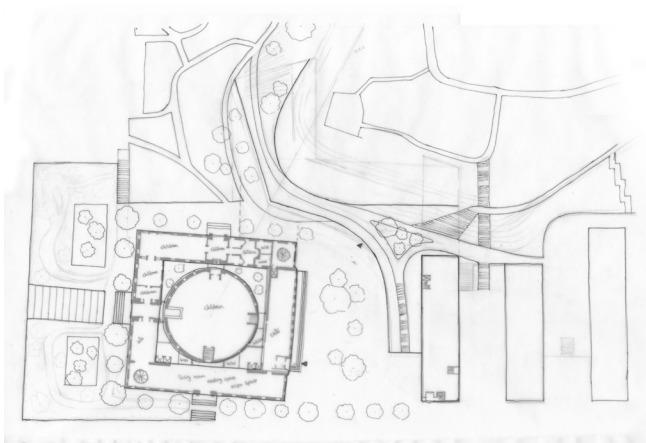
The building I previously designed on the top of the hill has been replaced by a building inside the hill. It resembles in a way the terraces Asplund had drawn in his studies. The annex building would be connected to this new building on the side and there will also be a connection to the Stockholm City Library, but underground to leave the library visibly untouched. I was thinking about making the connection in the corner underneath the children's library, because it would be the shortest path to the new building. Behind the children's library would be a stairs going down to a circulation space that brings people back up again into the new building. The metro tunnel should be low enough at this point to make this connection possible.

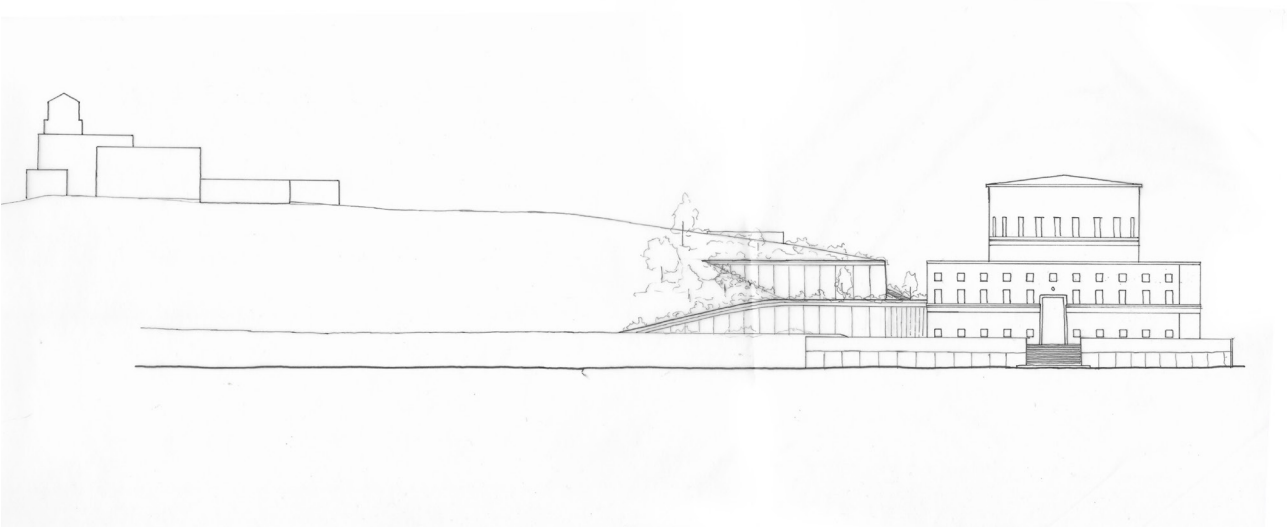
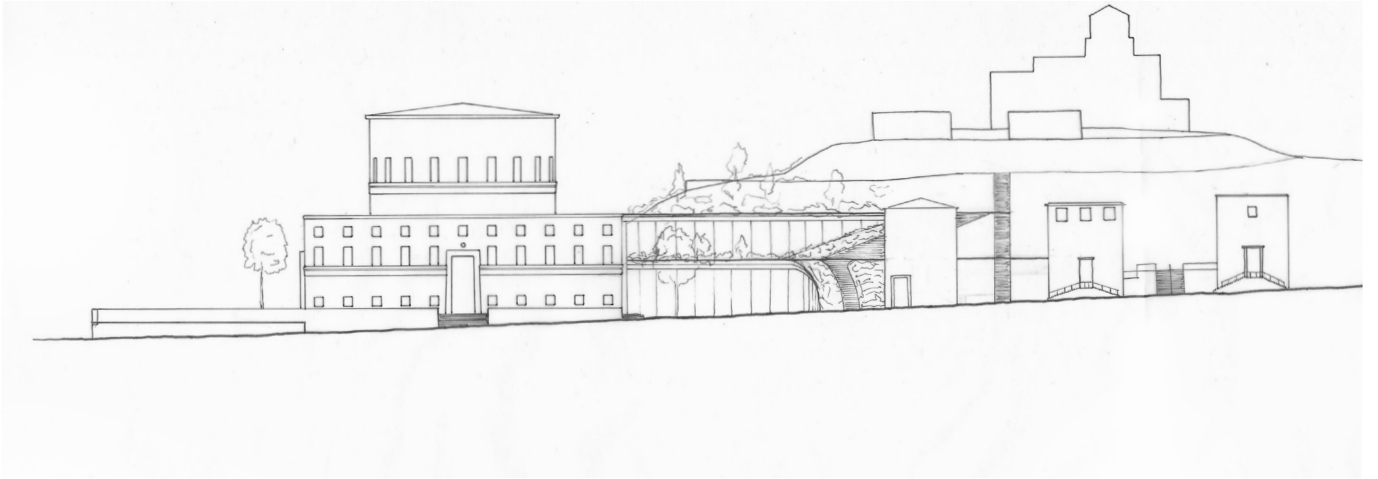
The new building follows the shape of the hill. A path with stairs brings people up the roof of the building, from where people are able to continue going up the hill, go to the park or to the other annexes. The curve of the building invites people to walk to the park, making the route more welcoming.

In section it is clear that the building is inside of this hill. The height of the terraces is determined by the height of the cornices of the Stockholm City Library.



I think the main quality of this idea is the routing to the park and the way the roof of the new building is part of that routing. But the routing of the Stockholm City Library to this new building is a bit strange. When someone would enter the Stockholm Library through the main entrance, they would have to walk around to get to the back of the children's library, then they go down to get back up again. This makes not sense. It would still feel like two different buildings.





Sketches of the north and east elevations

REFERENCES - LIBRARY IN THE EARTH



Architects: Hiroshi Nakamura & NAP

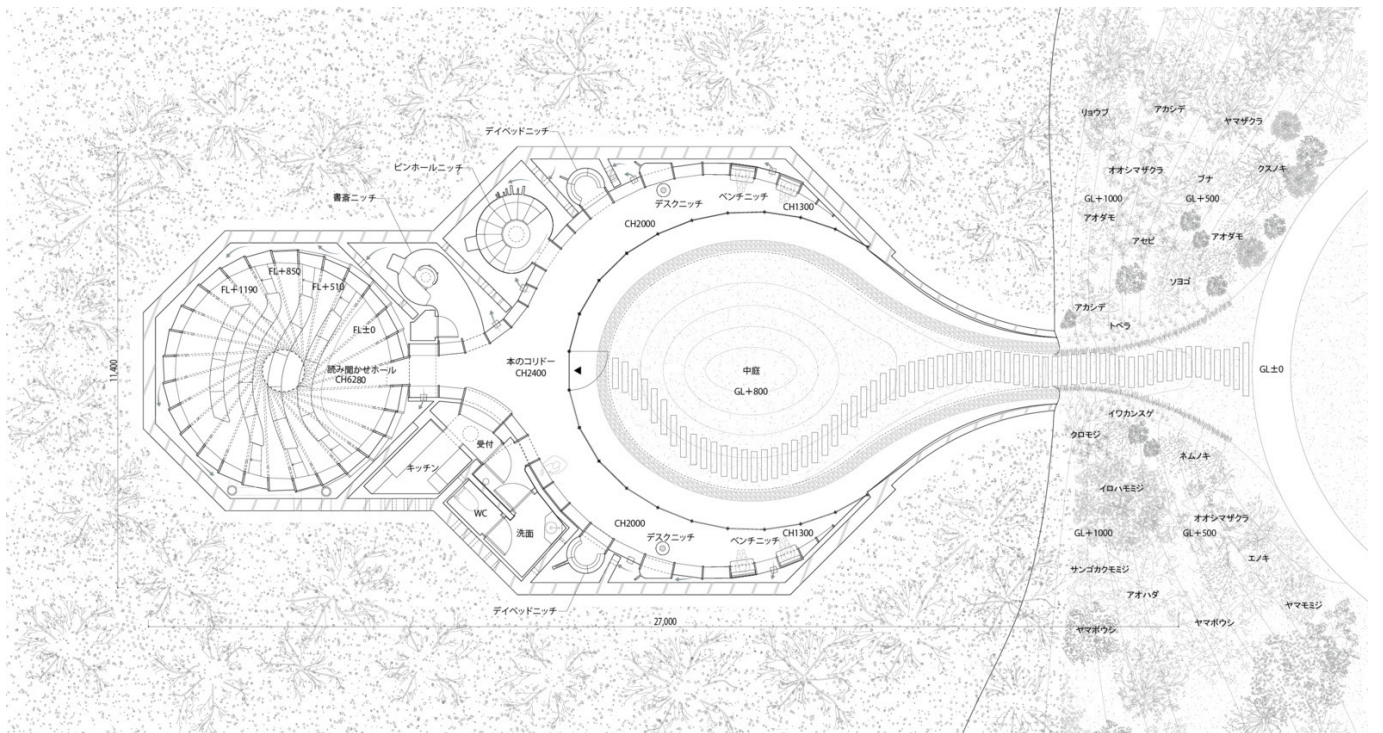
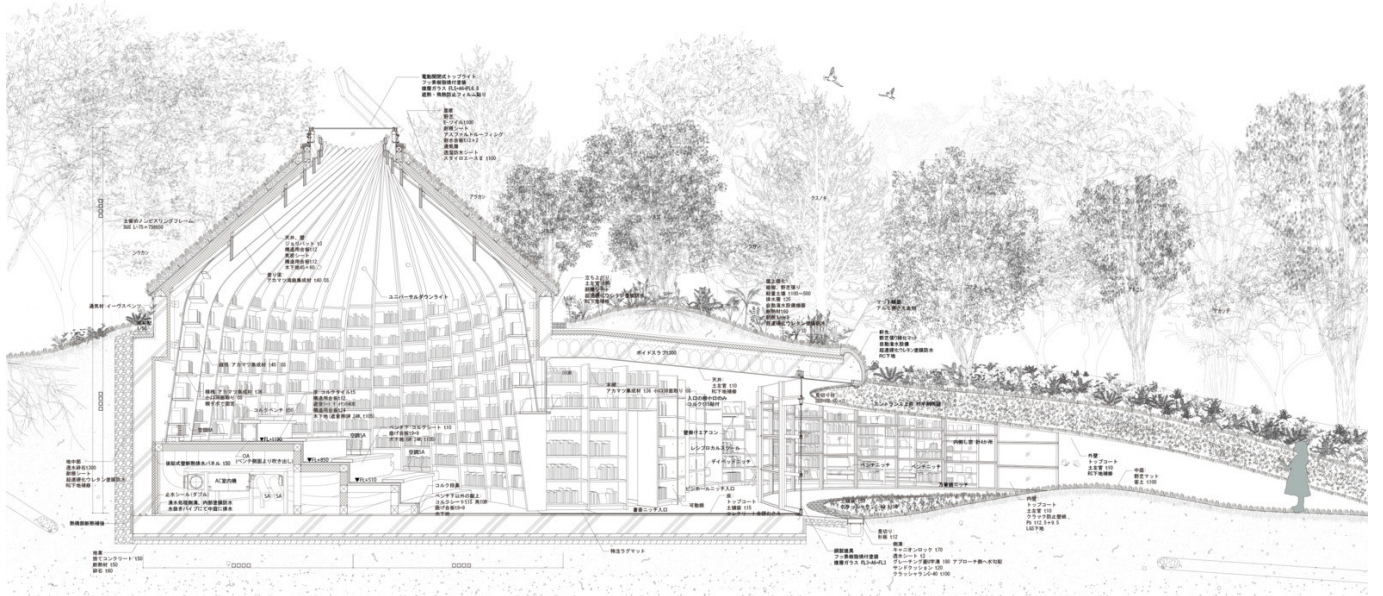
Area: 113 m²

Year: 2022

Location: Kisarazu, Japan

I stumbled upon this project when I was looking for references of buildings that are built underground and work with the landscape. I think this small farmer's library is amazing. The way it perfectly blends within its landscape is really well done. The earthiness of the materials used inside makes it clear that you're sitting underground. The ceiling extends outwards making it feel like a cave. A small room is hidden behind the bookshelves, only with a small light coming through from the ceiling, lighting the table. It has a very intimate atmosphere.





REFERENCES - NUNAVUT INUIT HERITAGE CENTRE



Architects: Dorte mandrup

Area: -

Year: 2023

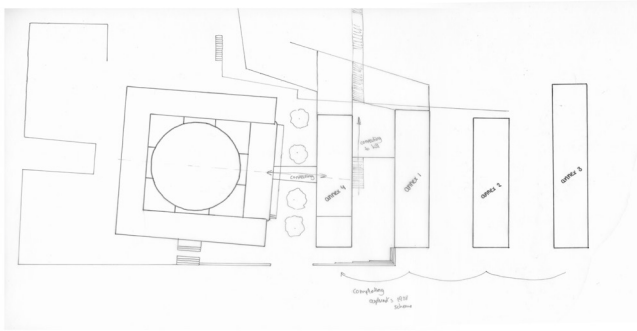
Location: Iqaluit, Canada

This project is not build yet but it is the winning entry for a competition to build a new Inuit heritage centre in Iqaluit. I like how this roof transitions from landschape to roof, it's seamless. The building just fades away into the ground. It is quite a big building when you compare it to the people standing on the roof, but it is not noticeable from the top.

The spaces along the large glass window give a warm contrast to the cold and rough environment outside.

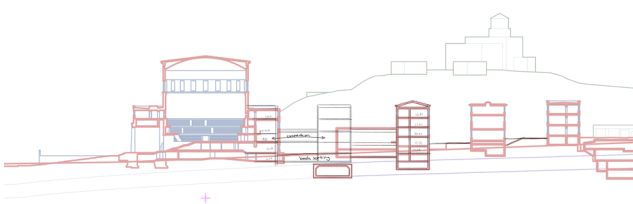
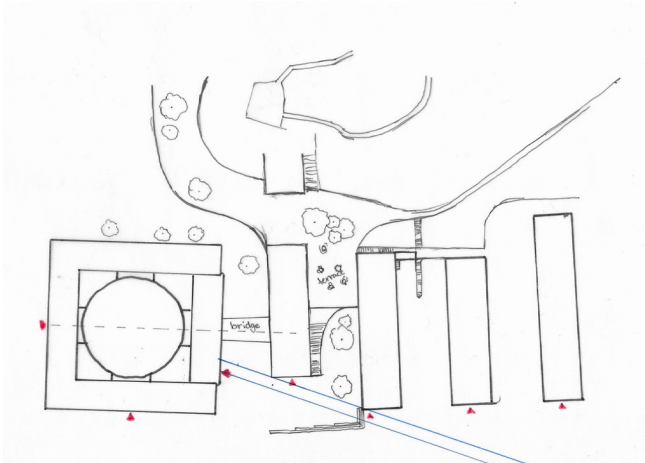


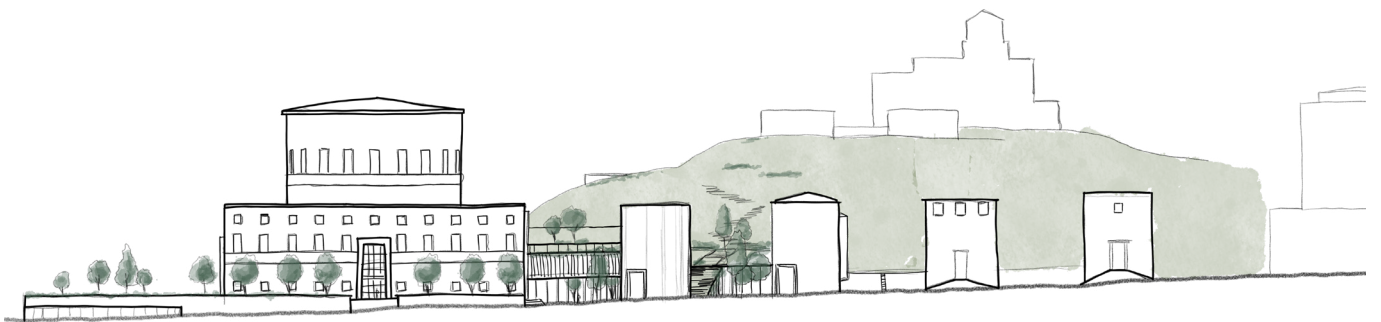
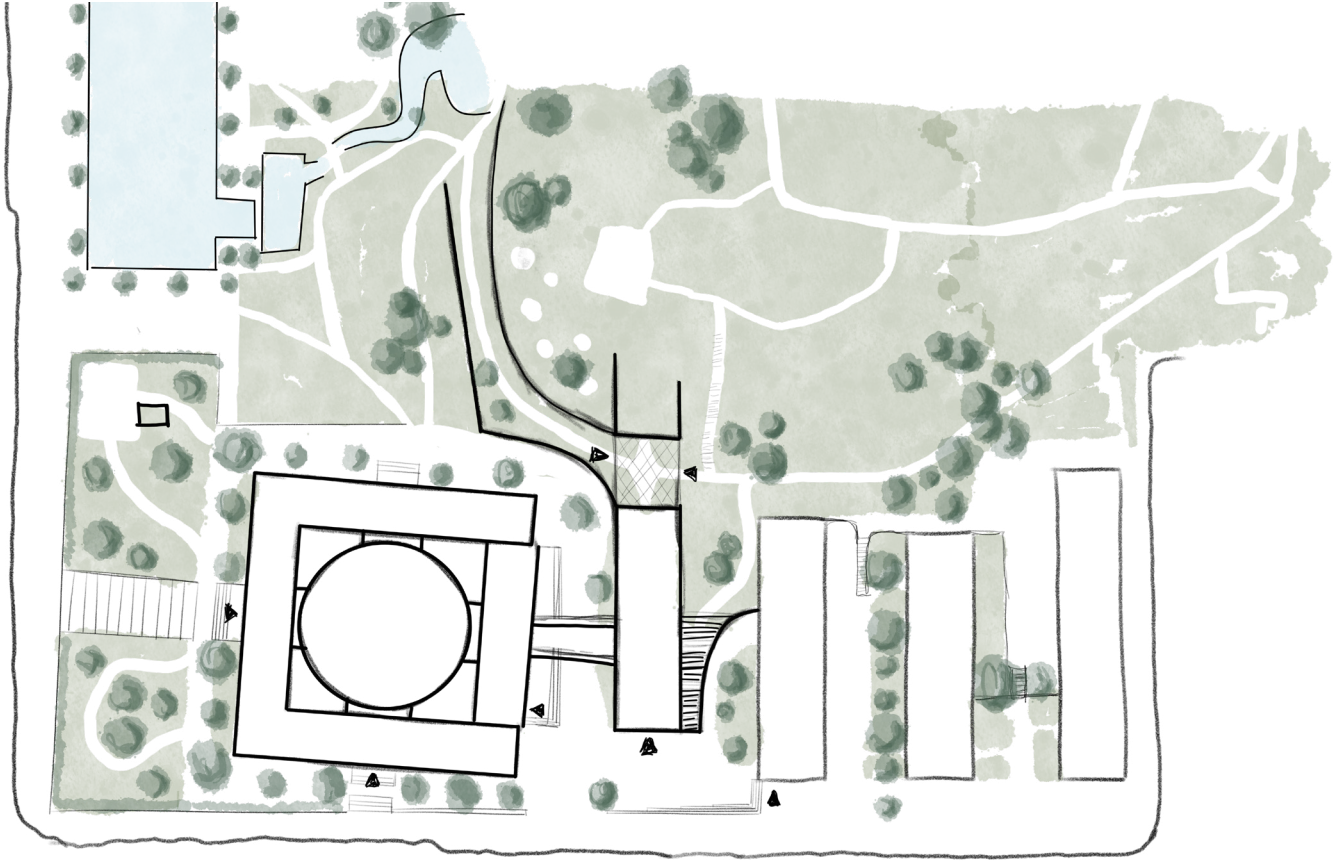
COMPLETING THE SCHEME



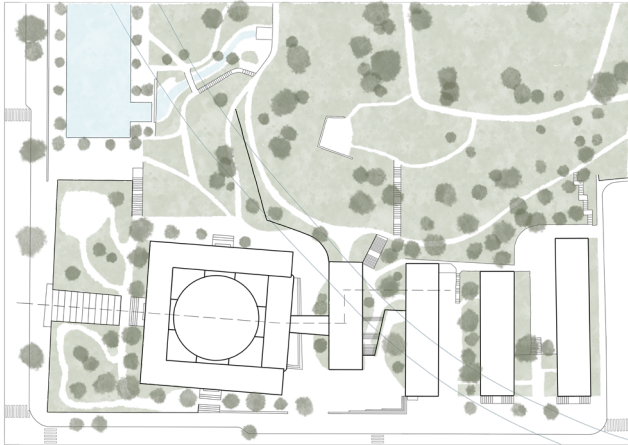
If connecting the new building to the Stockholm City Library with an underground passage is not working. Then what would be the place I could make a connection above ground, while still respecting the monumentality of the library? I think the only place would be the west wing. Asplund has always envisioned this side to be different from the other sides. And the west wing reflects a new era of architecture. So why not extend on that idea? Connecting yet again something new to the Stockholm Library.

Making a bridge aligned to the main entrance creates a better flow for the routing between buildings. People would walk up the stairs of the Rotunda, which is the main floor of the Library, and in one straight line, people can walk to the new building. This intervention will have an impact on the experience of the current reading hall. But I think this bridge can help making a better space. It won't just be a bridge, but the space will be able to flow through the bridge to the new annex. It will become significantly bigger so more space will be available for this active zone of the library. I am thinking about adding more places for groupwork, because in its current situation there are only a few tables.





P2 CRITS

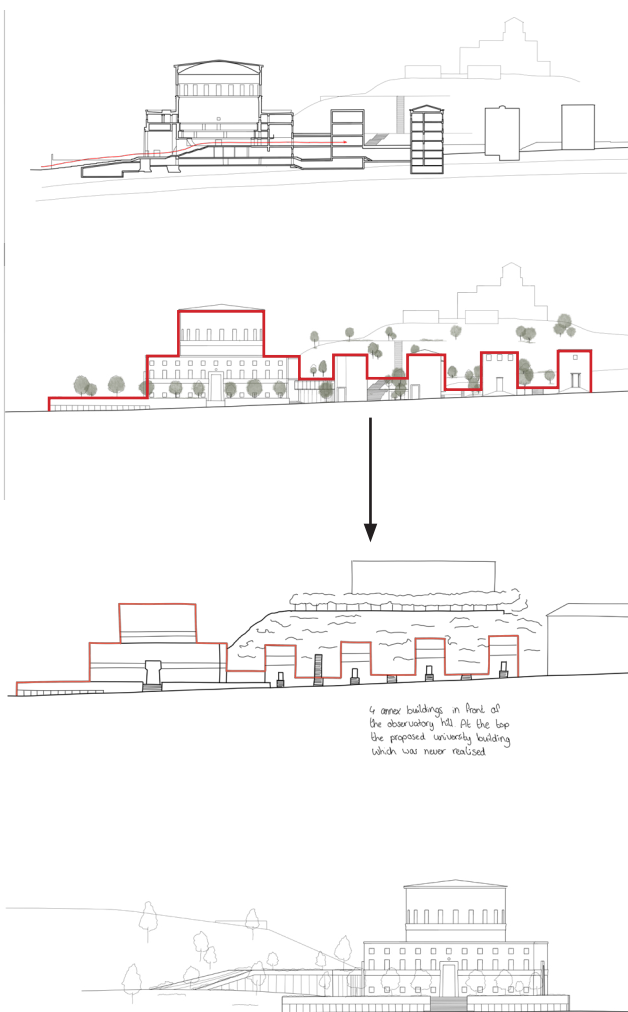


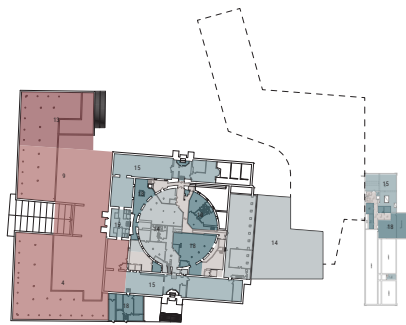
With the P2 crits I presented my design with this idea of connecting to the Stockholm City Library with a bridge. What this bridge will look like, I am not sure about. Just like I was not yet sure about the shape of the building. In this scheme I have a sharp corner which is in line with the axis of the observatory to the centre of the rotunda, but does that corner really need to be there? I think it would be better if the building completely embraces the natural shape of the hill.

For this presentation I also wanted to think more about the program. And I think I already have an idea of what I want to do with the spaces in the Stockholm City Library and the bazaar, but I am not yet sure how to plan the new building. It is quite complicated with the height differences between this new annex and the existing annex. I think, because the west wing won't be a back side anymore, the logistical part of the library needs to find a new place. The existing annex used to be part of the library and has a loading dock in the back. I might be able to use that for the logistics, but now I need to find a way to move the media through the different buildings and have it make sense.

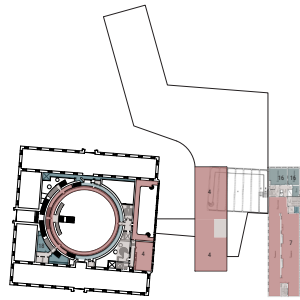
As the shape of the new annex is not yet determined, I can't really imagine how it will look like inside. But what I do know, is that I want it to be more of a landscape inside. So a large open space of workplaces in between the collection. Bigger functions like an auditorium or group rooms like workshop spaces will be placed more into the hill.

The combined program would be just a little bigger than the design of Caruso St. John in 2014. But it will not come close to the 2006 brief. The 2006 brief was way too big, especially when you also compare it to city libraries that are built fairly recently like the Deichman Library in Oslo and the Oodi in Helsinki. So for the program I am more looking at these precedents to get a feeling if it is too big or too small.

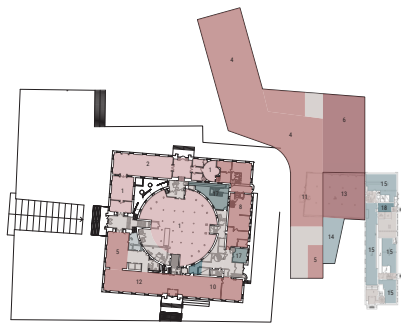




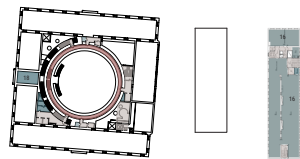
BASEMENT



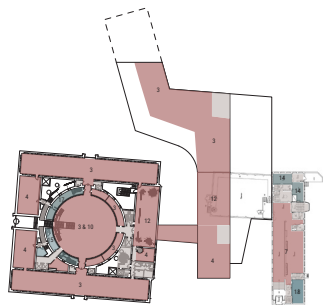
SECOND FLOOR



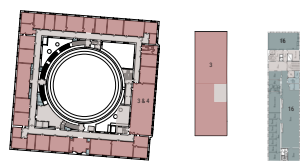
GROUND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

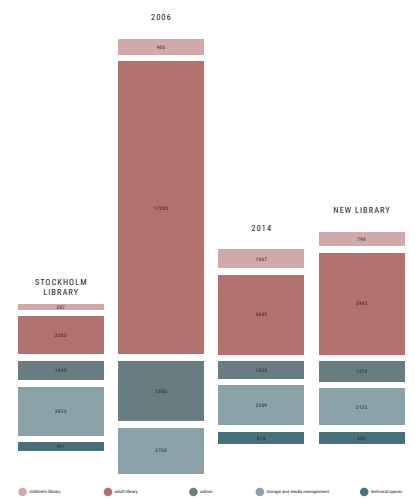


FIRST FLOOR

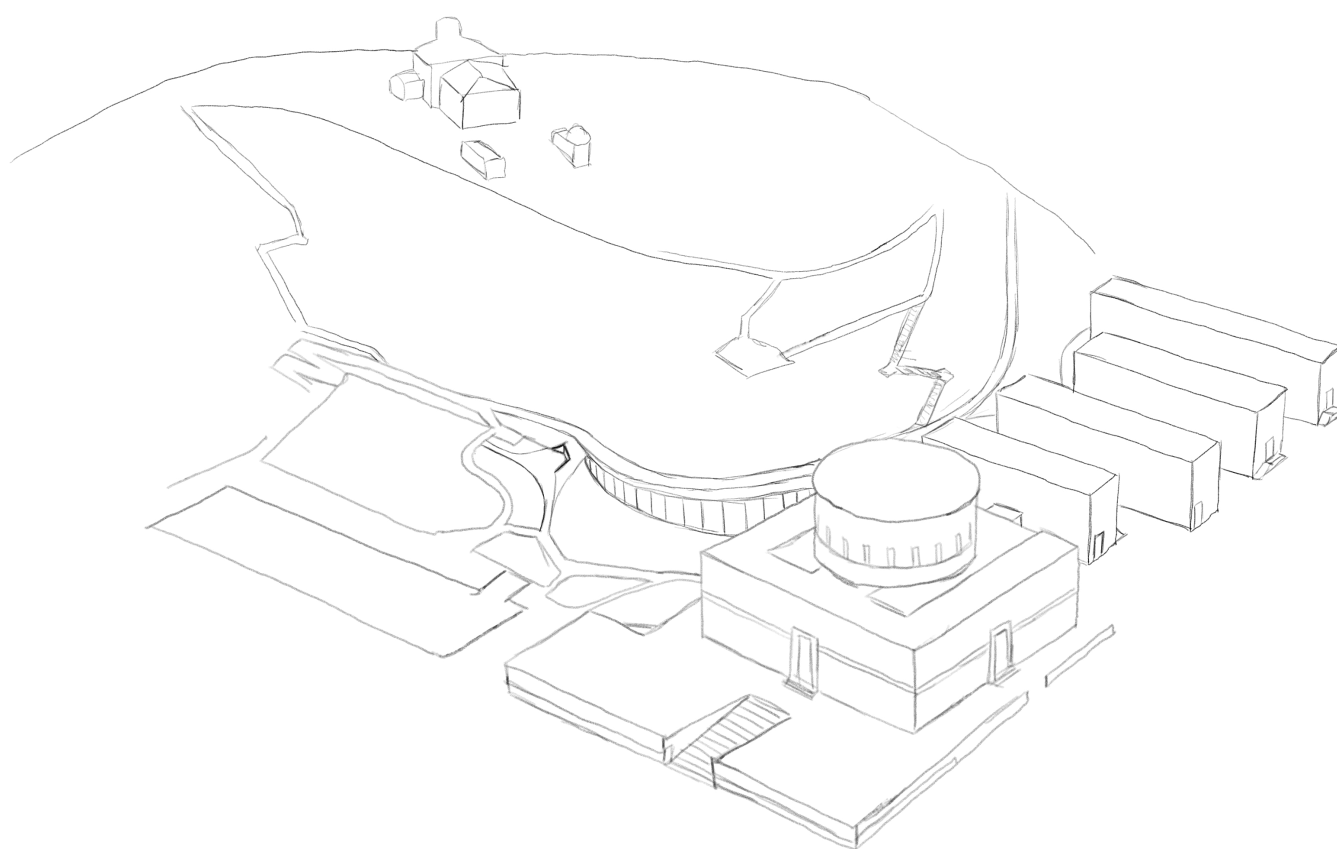
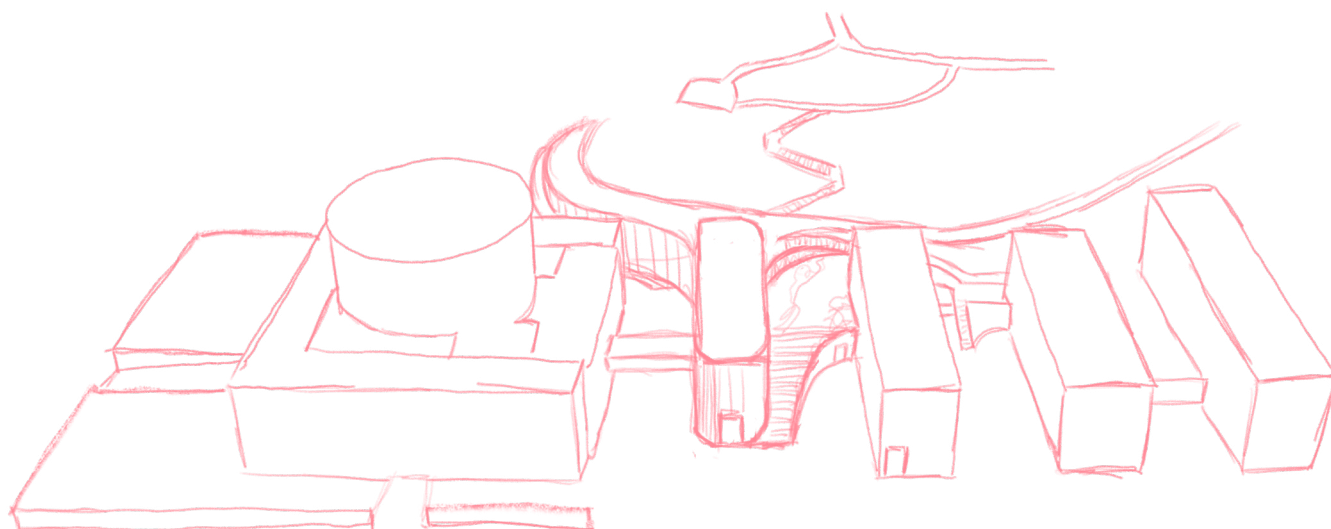


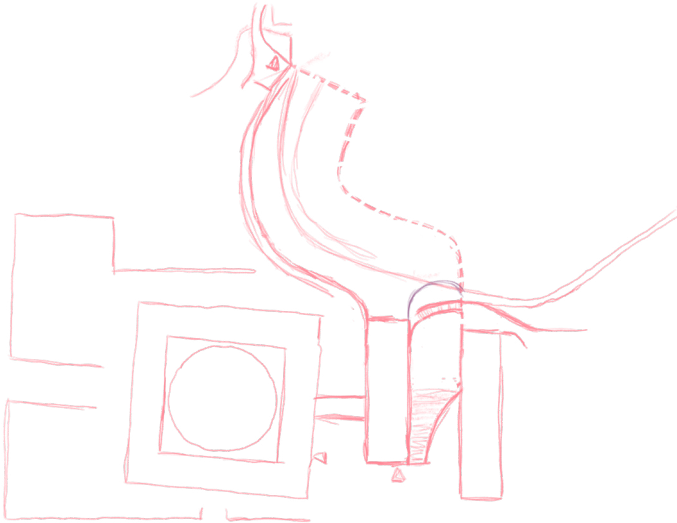
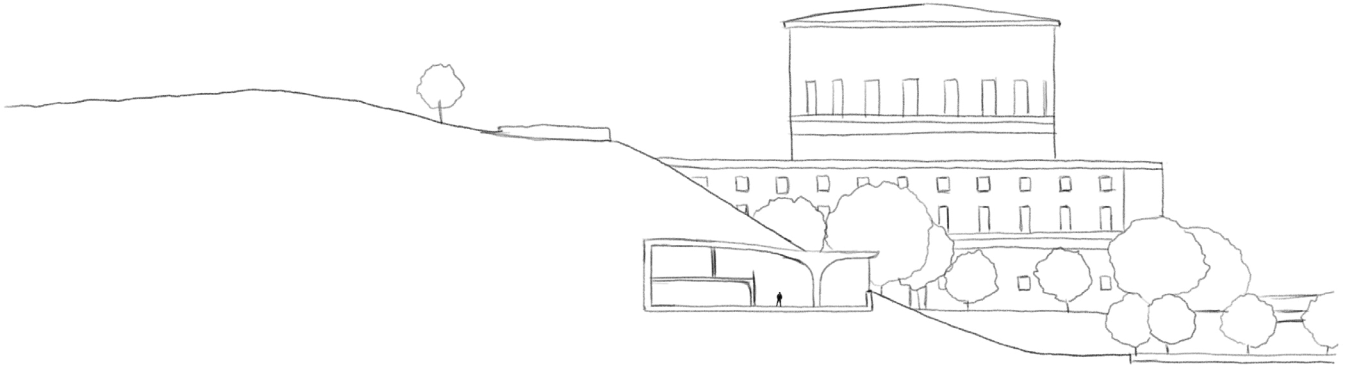
FOURTH FLOOR

Program of the P2 design proposal



EMBRACING THE ORGANIC SHAPE



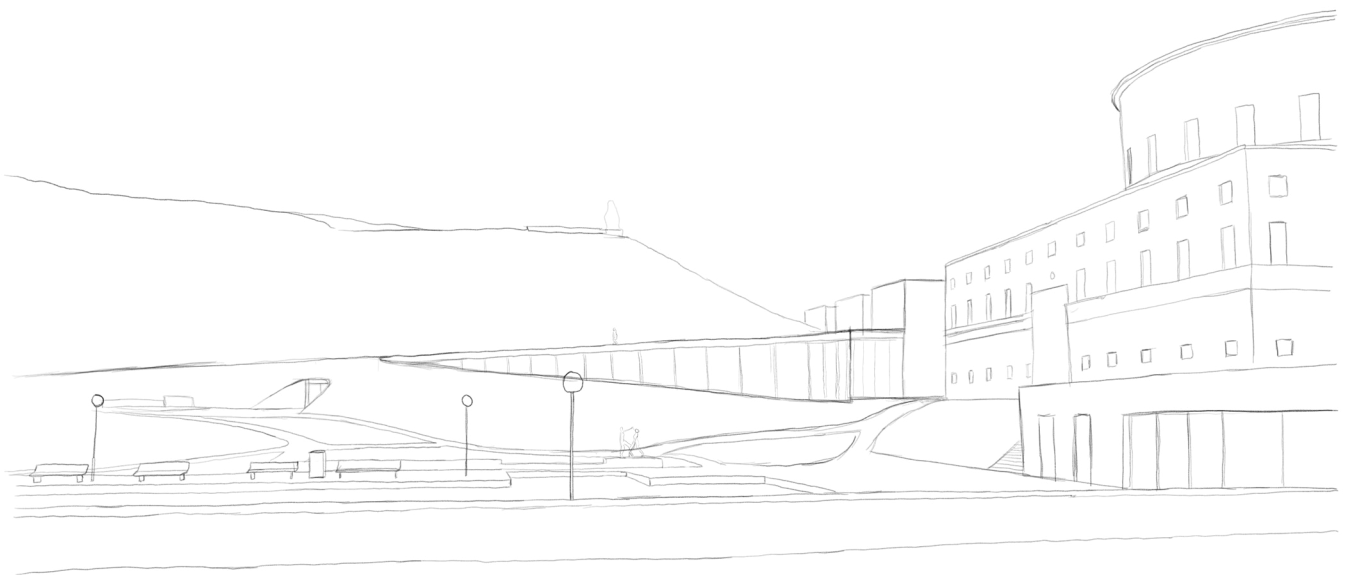


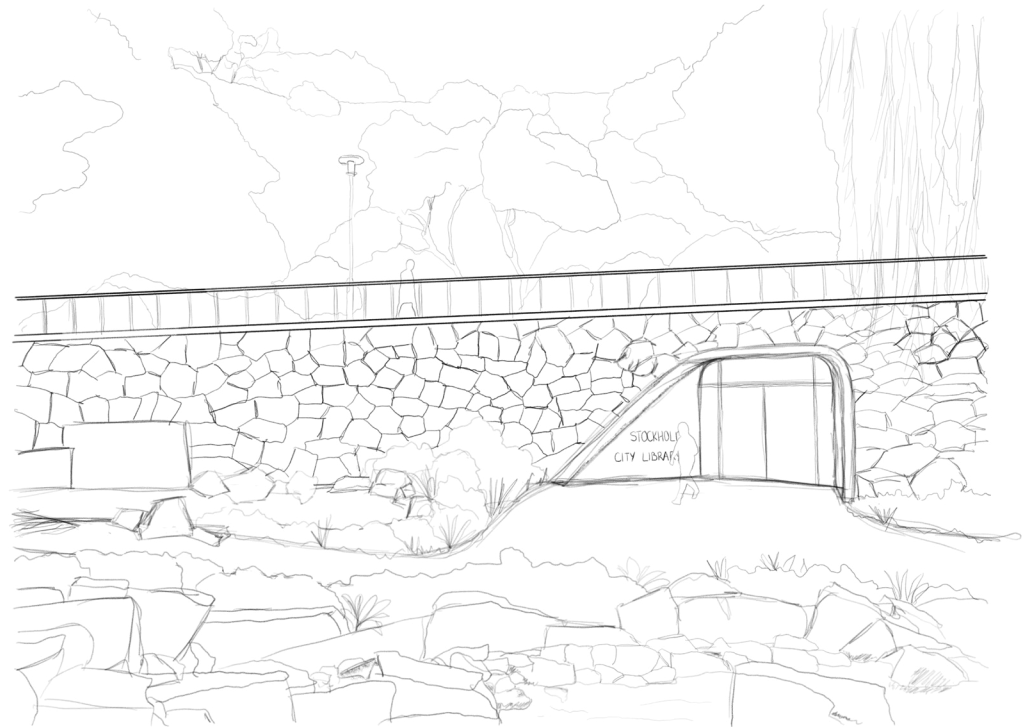
At P2 I presented a building that would be completely inside of the hill on the park side. From the street it is completing the scheme originally envisioned by Asplund of four annexes. I think this idea of two sides can be explored more.

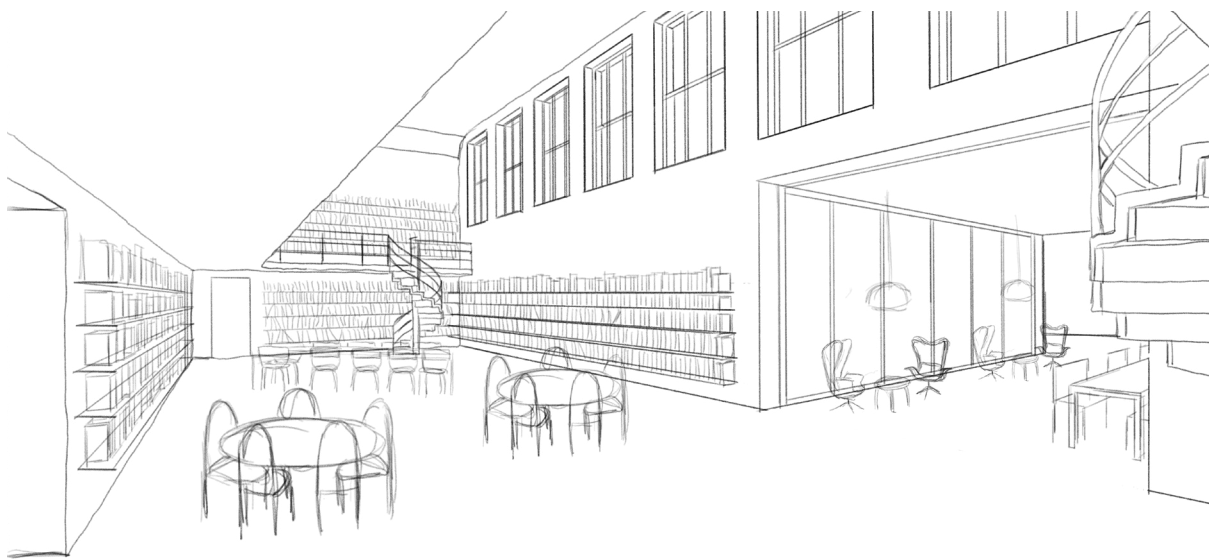
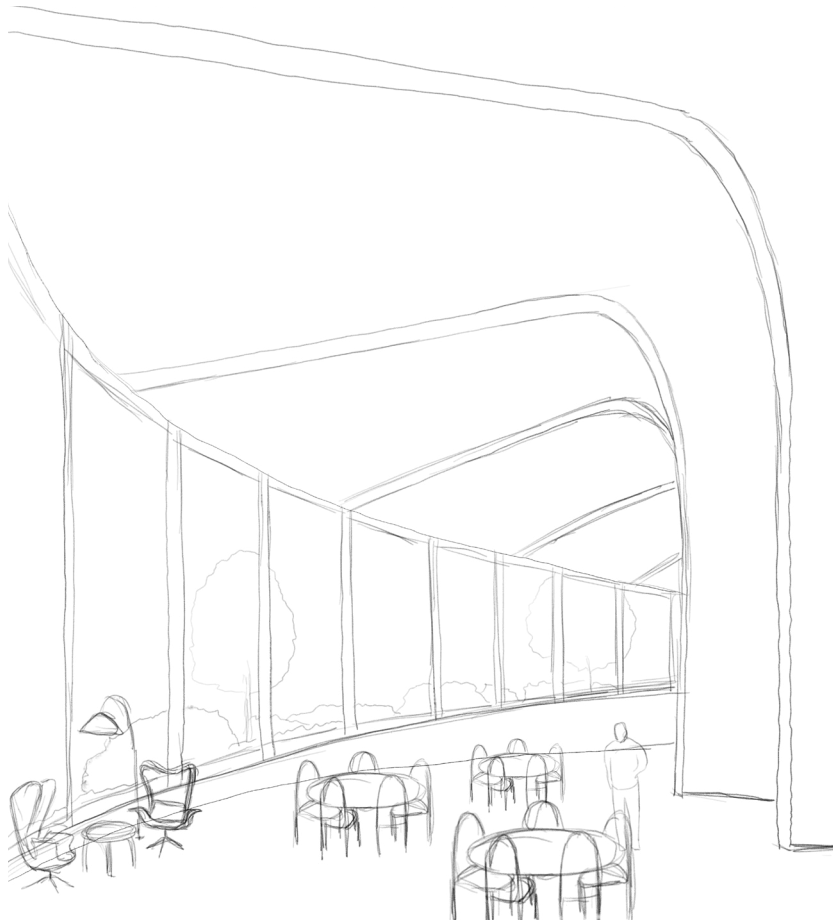
The shape is what made it hard for me to envision the interior spaces. Most of the building would be far into the hill so a large part of the building wouldn't have enough daylight. The suggestion I got from the tutors was to push the building more forward into the park. I think that this can resolve many problems.

The bridge between the new building and the Stockholm City Library feels a bit out of place. I need to rethink this, because there might be a better way to connect the buildings.

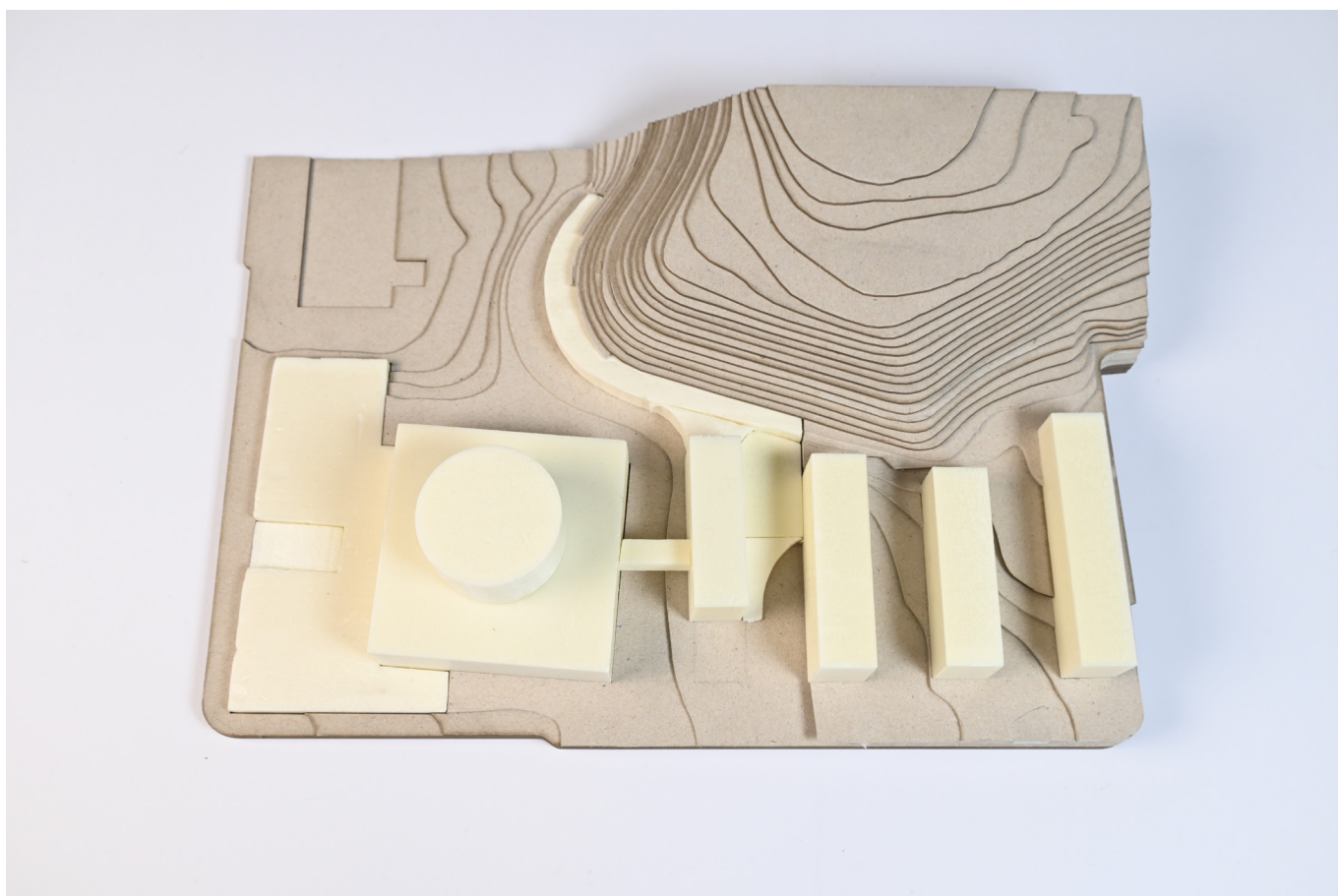


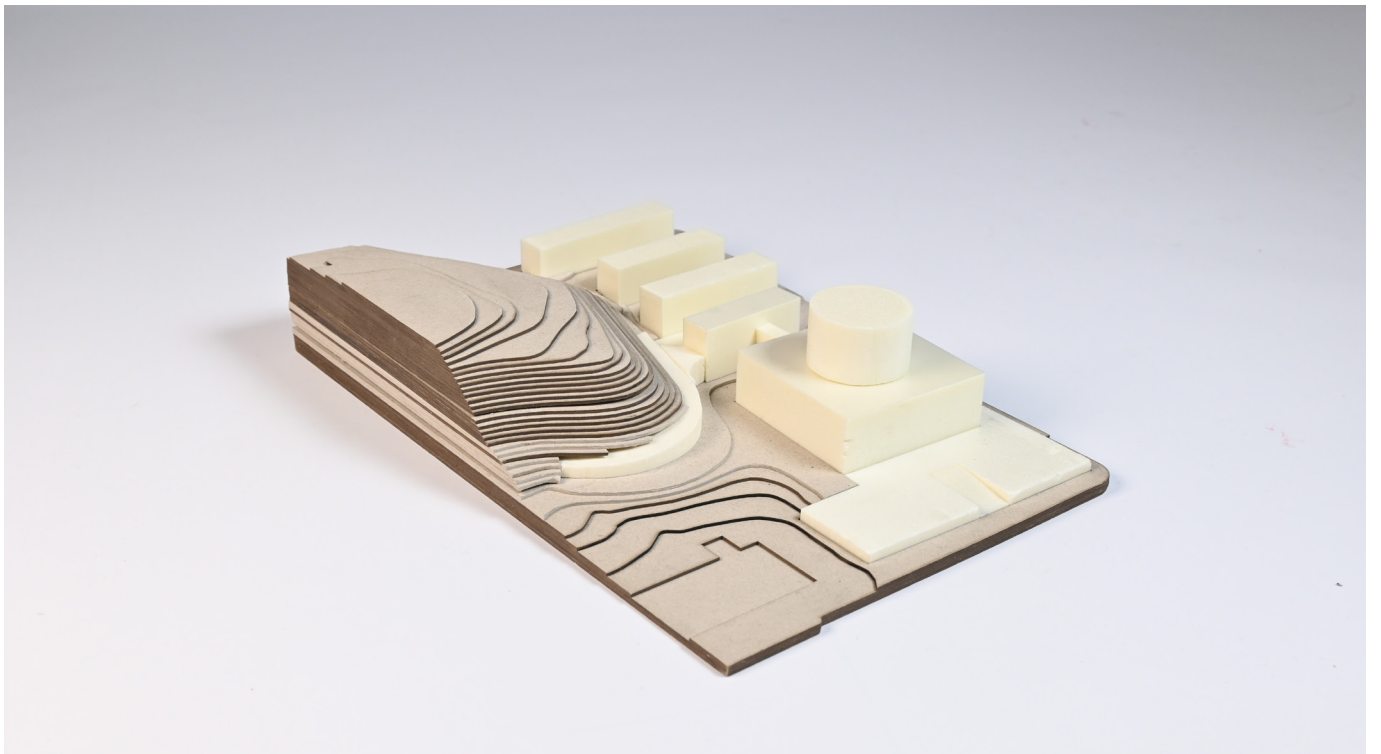
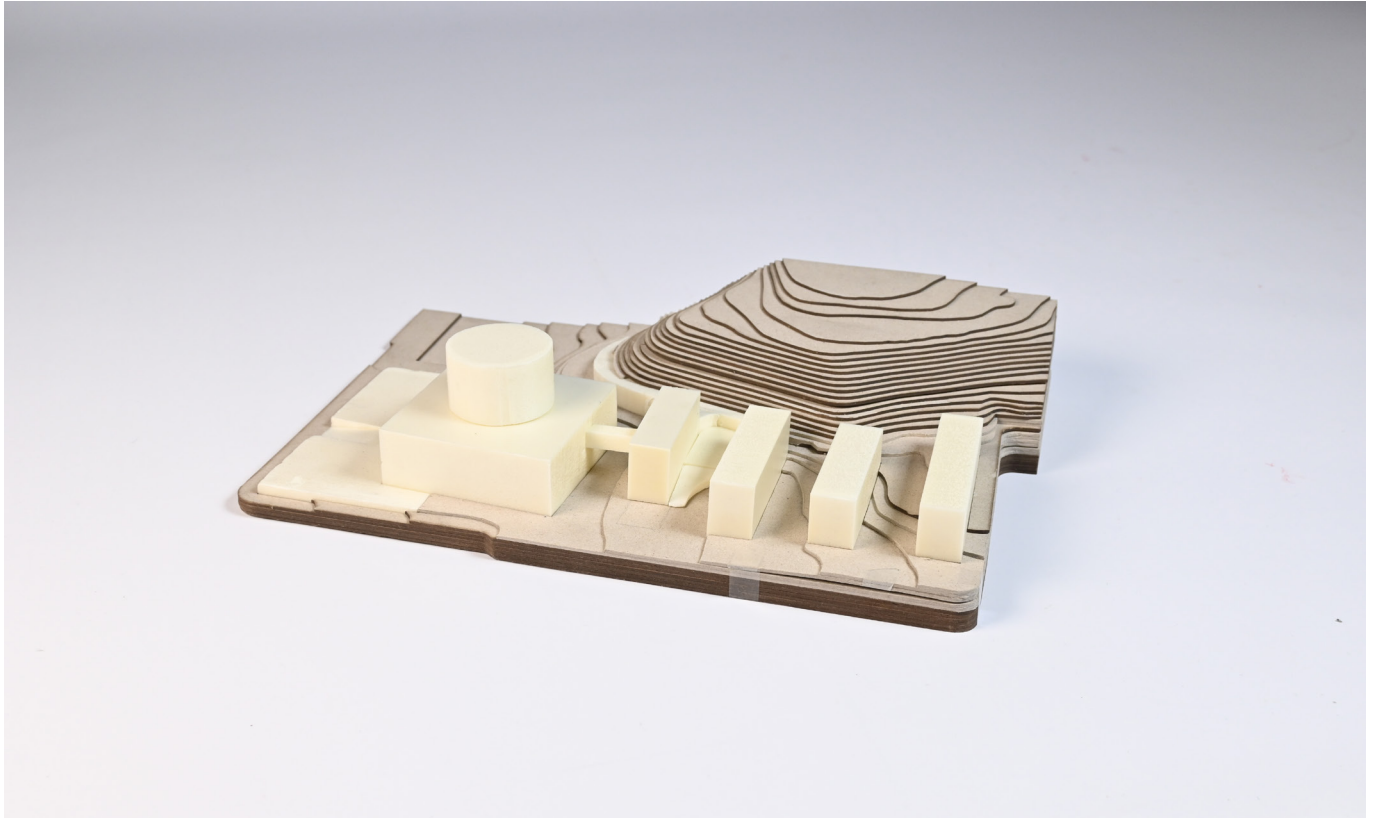




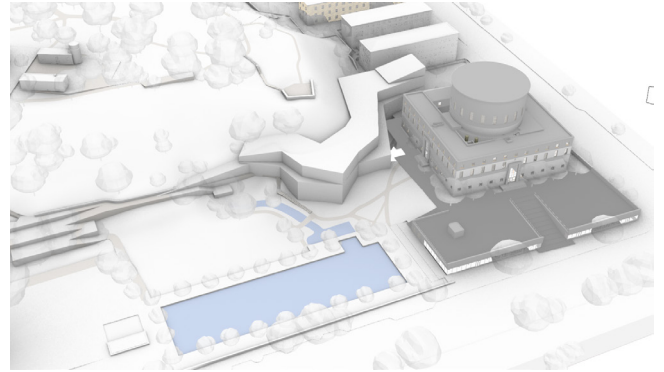


1:500 MODEL





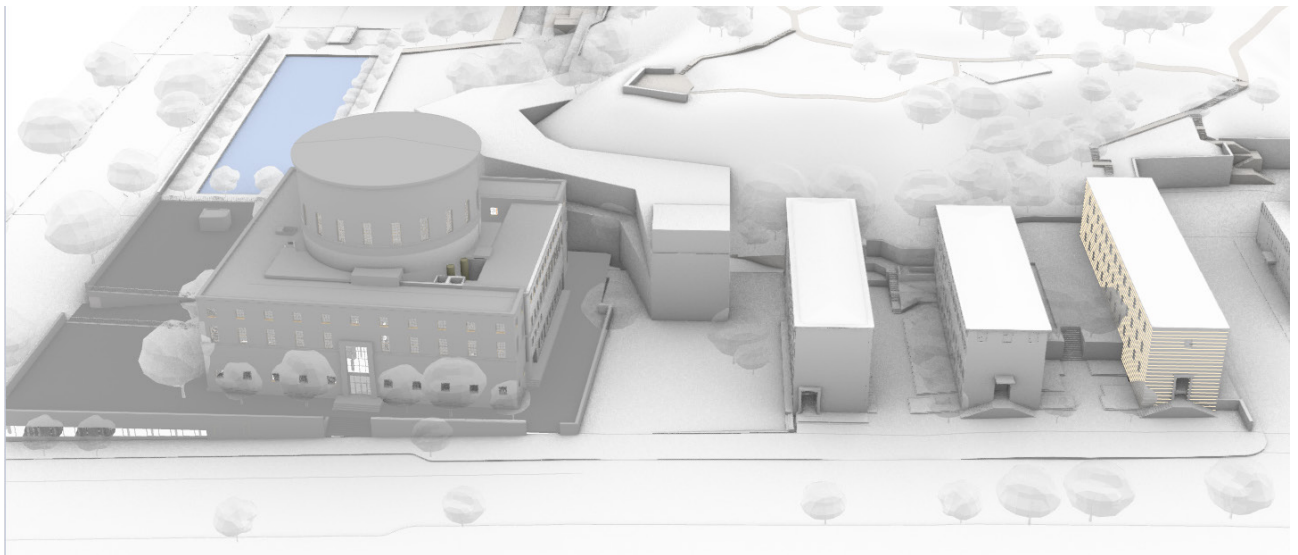
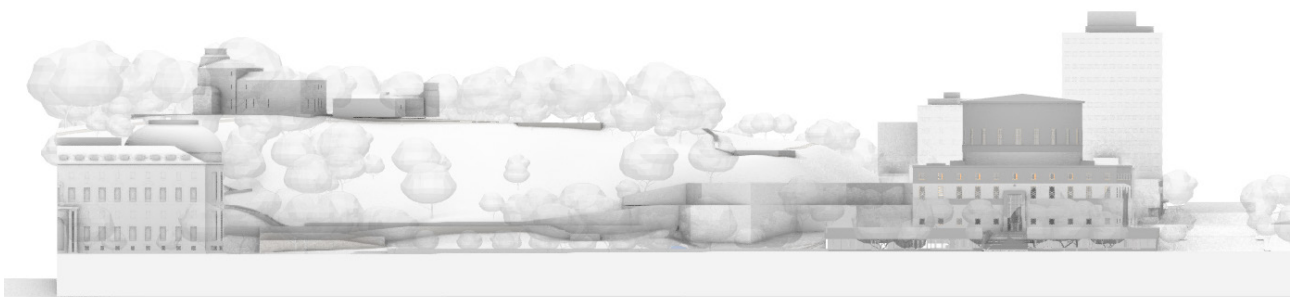
CHANGING THE SHAPE

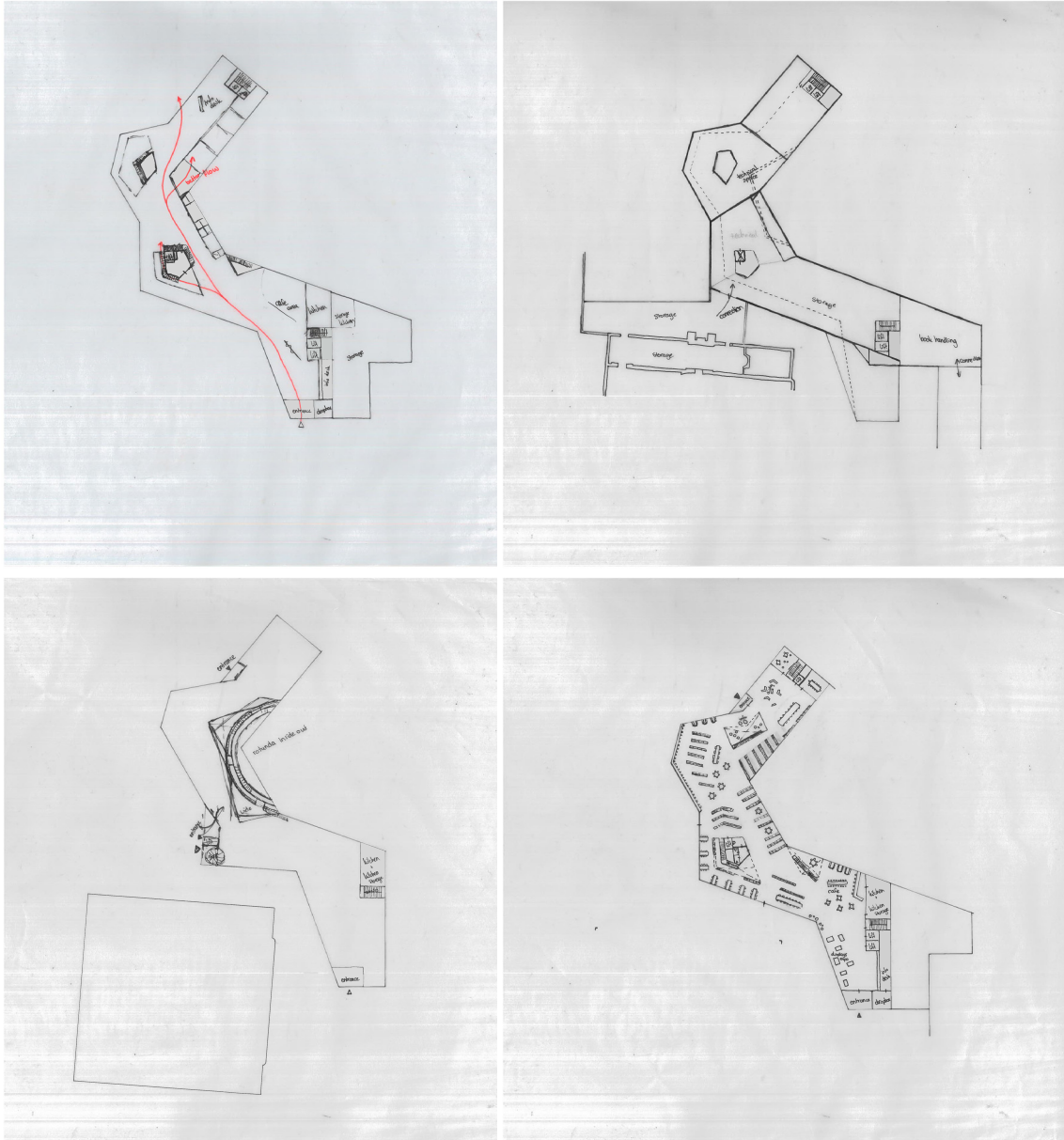


After P2 I wanted to try different things with the shape of the building. I felt like the round shape was holding me back with designing. The overall idea of following the shape of the hill does make this building feel part of its surroundings. But this building is also something new, and it might not need to be so hidden inside of the hill. So I studied different shapes to see what would work best. First I thought that the building seemed flat if it was going to be the same height as the design proposal of P2. That's why I added a floor. And by pushing the building forward into the park and closer to the Stockholm City Library, it created this interesting connection between the building and the hill. The hill goes down and touches the first floor of the building. This gap could become something really interesting. Imagine a window there, so you can look up the hill from the first floor. I think this will make the relation between the building and the hill even stronger.

I pushed the first floor back, to make this terraced shape. This pushes the building back from the Stockholm City Library, and it also makes the shape more part of the hill. It now feels more related to the shapes on top of the hill.





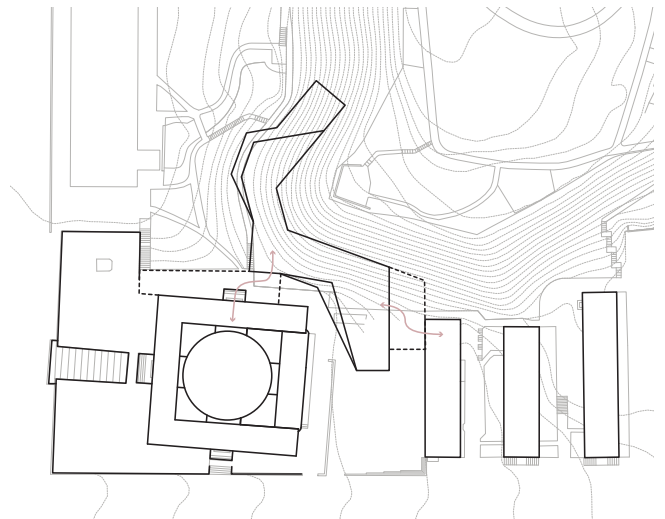
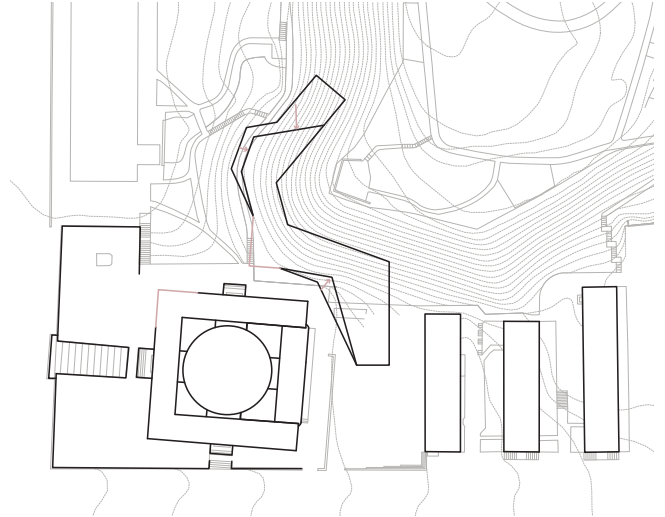


The large landscapes reminded me of the Helsinki library. I think the floorplans would work better with voids to create visual connections between the floors. I started to think about the experiences of the spaces and how people would walk through the building. By adding voids and staircases in different parts of the building, it created more possibilities in routing. People will wander more and explore the spaces. It will increase the chances of encounters.

The solid back wall against the hill needed something. I was looking for a way to make the most use out of the spaces up against the wall. This made me think, maybe this back wall should be like the bookshelves walls of the rotunda. Trying to fit round shape into this building didn't work, but this idea of a back wall completely made out of bookshelves intrigued me.

The shape of the new library building has changed a lot since P2. This final shape is a refined version of what is shown earlier. It still follow the shape of the hill but now there is a logic behind it. There are still many angles in this building, but walls are often parallel to each other. The building pushes outwards at parts where it's possible, to the street, to Asplund's Library and to the park. The part in front of the children's library became a 90 degrees angle, which is rotated to make it relate to the rotation of the Stockholm City Library. The corridor between the two buildings is smaller, but the new building still leaves enough space to respect the existing library building as it's pushed back on the first floor.

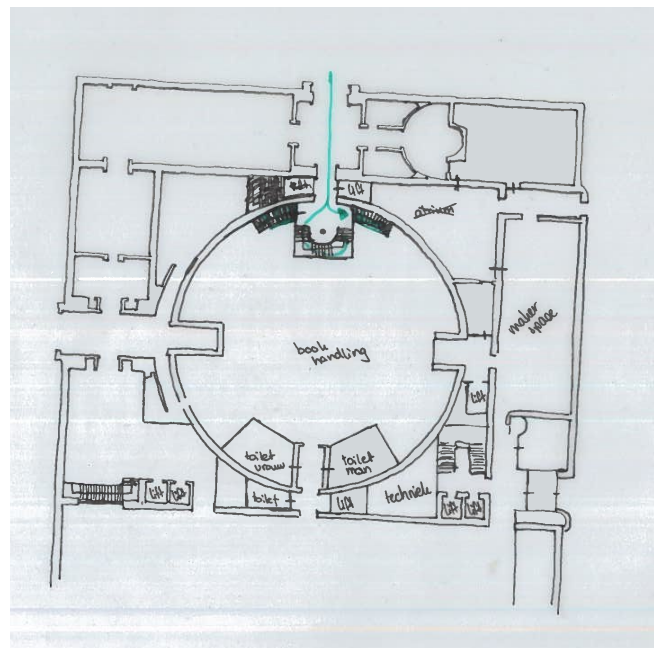
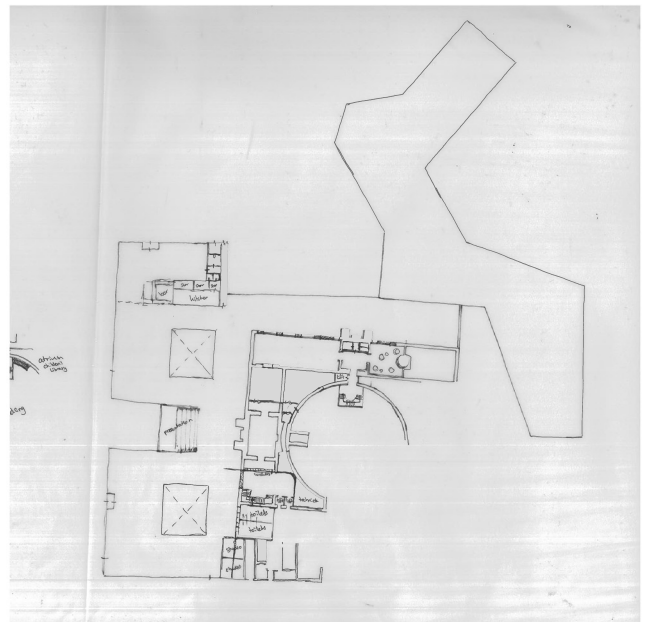
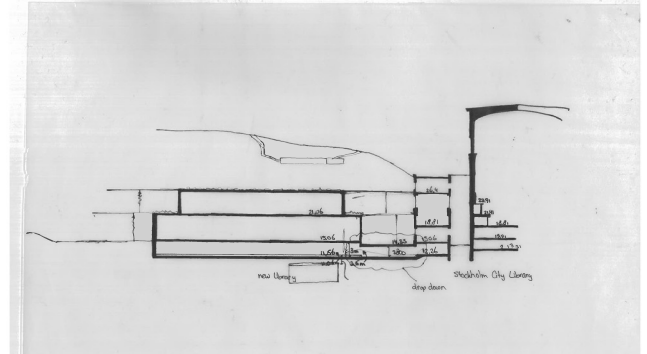
The new building is connected to Asplund's Library and the annex at the parts that are parallel to the existing buildings. Both of these connections will be underground to minimize the interference to the existing scheme.

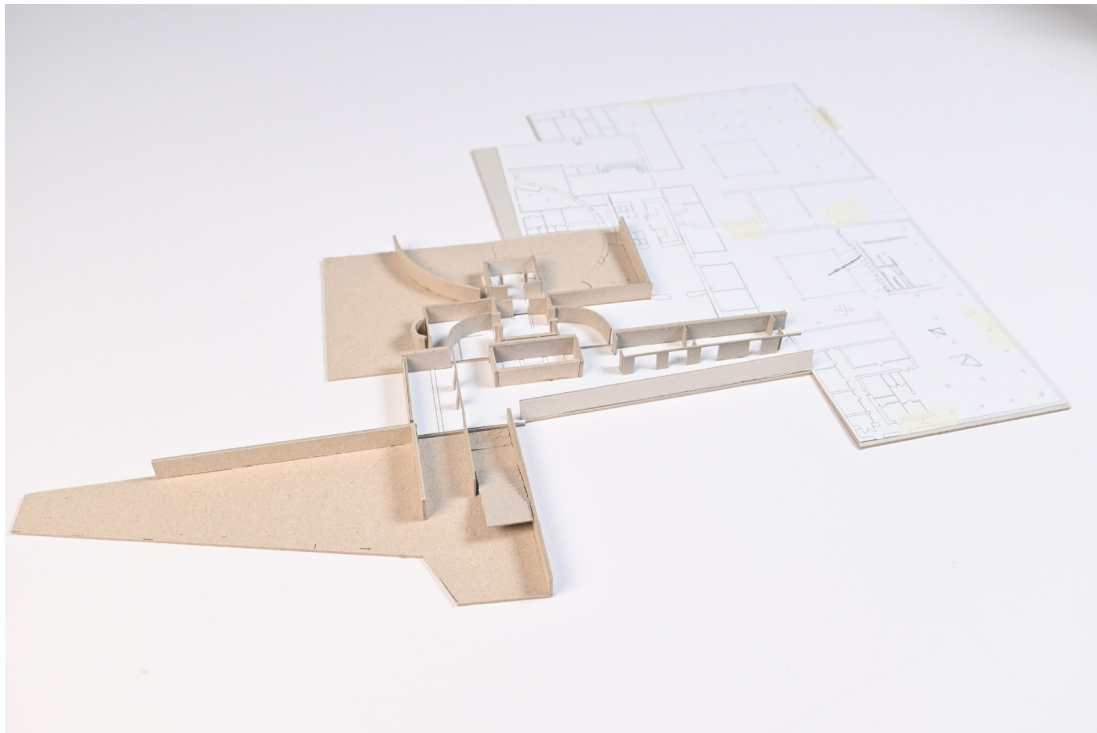
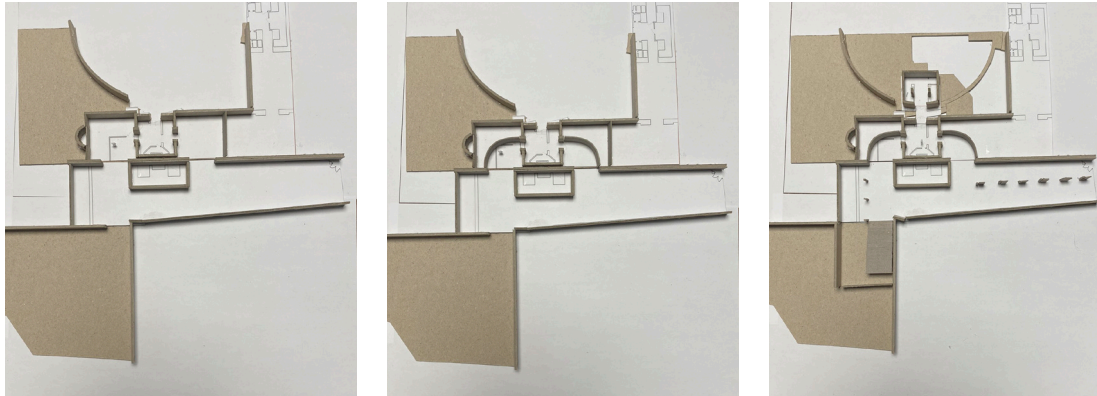


CONNECTING TO THE STOCKHOLM LIBRARY

The new building would be connected to Asplund's library. This is not only for logistical reasons, but also to provide a way for visitors to easily walk move from one building to the other. For this connection I'm thinking about extending the bazaar to wrap it around the Stockholm library on the south side. Caruso St. John had the idea to connect the bazaar with the library and I want to continue with this idea in my design as well. So by adding this extension of the bazaar on the south side, the bazaar now wraps around the library on two sides. But how will people get from Asplund's library to the new building? The best way would be to make a staircase go down in the children's library, under the rotunda. From there people can walk into the extended bazaar and to the new building. Another way would be to go down with a staircase next to the main elevators of Asplund's library. These elevators already go down to the level of the bazaar, so it's just a case of adding a staircase. It does mean people will have to walk a long way to go to the new building, but it is an option.

The challenge about this connection is the different floorheights and the limited space because of the ground above and the metro below the connection. The metro should be low enough under the extension of the bazaar, leaving no problem for the construction of the new additions to the Stockholm City Library.





I made a sketch model of the connection between the Stockholm City Library, the bazaar and the new building. The connection is basically an extension of the bazaar so the outside wall is parallel to the facade of the bazaar. The other elements are based on the lines of Asplund's library.

From the back of the children's library people can take the stairs to go down. They will be guided by the curved walls into the new space. From here people can walk in a straight line up the stairs into the new building or go around the corner to the bazaar. There is a clear circulation zone defined by walls.

Brief 4

PROJECT FOR A PUBLIC LIBRARY

A Difficult Whole

"An architecture...able to admit the paradox of the whole fragment: the building which is a whole at one level and a fragment of a greater whole at another level...It is the difficult unity through inclusion rather than the easy unity through exclusion."

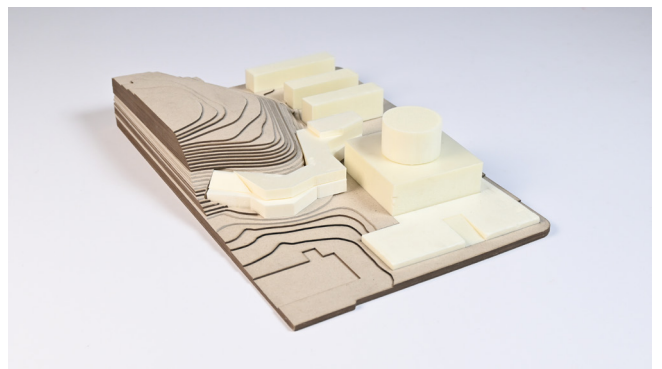
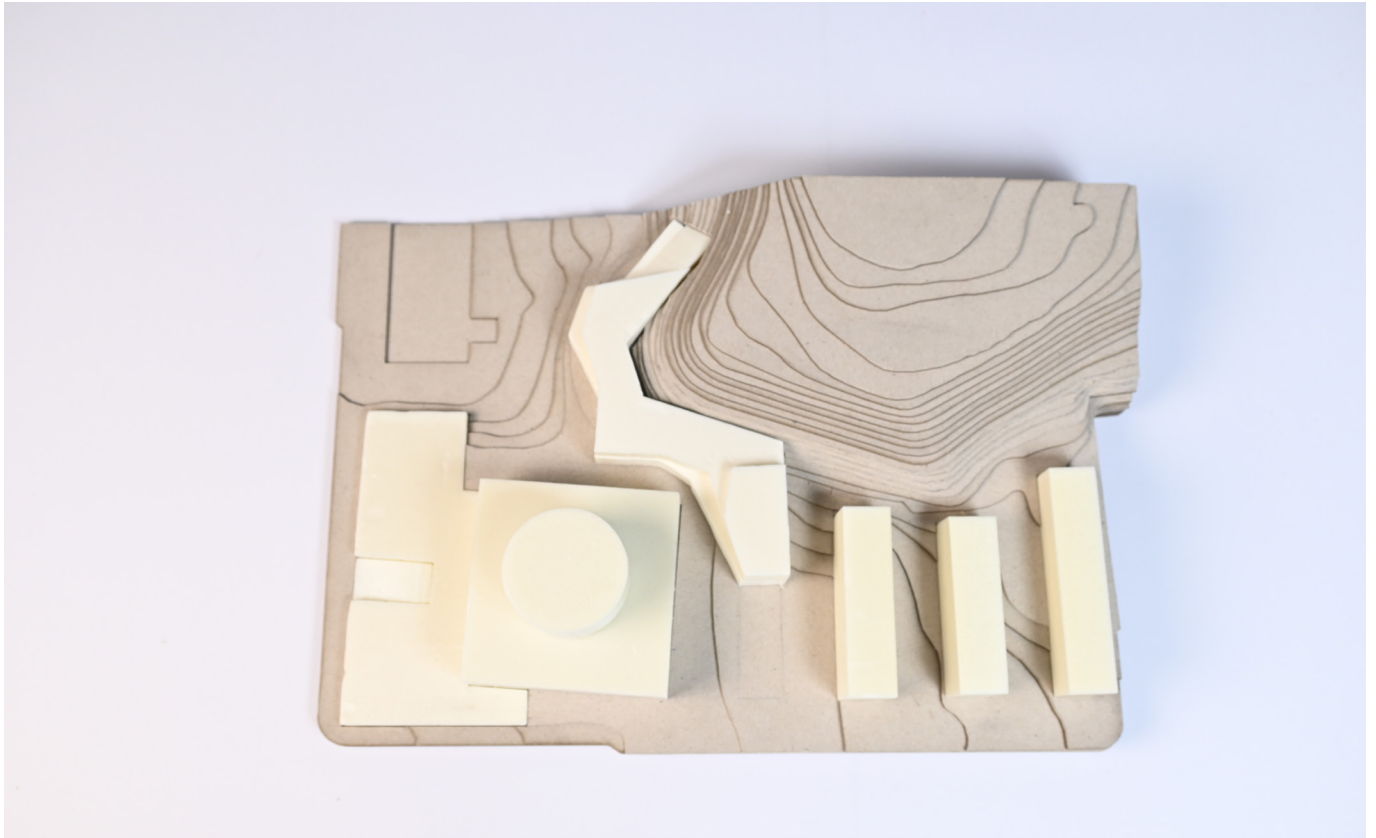
– Robert Venturi, The Obligation Toward the Difficult Whole, in Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture

Confronted with the messy realities of the contemporary city, engaged in fragments of the past and addressing the uncertainties and challenges of the future, the thoughts of the American architect Robert Venturi on the possibilities of the difficult whole, written half a century ago, continue to have resonance. Beyond the, sometimes failing, formalities manifested in the work of Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown, it might represent the possibility of a negotiative architecture: one that looks outwards with a welcoming gesture, which enjoys what it finds; which searches for wholeness, rather than unity; which is open and political and has agency.

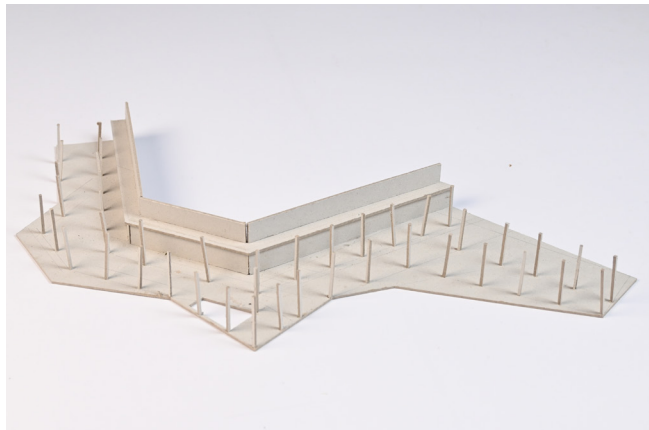
The Stockholm City Library might, on first glance, be considered a kind of unity – the circle in the square – but in reality it might be considered the embodiment of the difficult whole of which Venturi speaks, expressed in its geometrical offset to the city grid; through the frictions evident in its forth side; in the radically different architectural expression of its plinth; in the transformed whiteness of its interior; in the clutter of its voids. Stepping beyond it, the similarities and differences of the three lamellae, or the constructed picturesqueness of the surrounding landscape can all be understood as fragments, whose disjunctions and tensions elaborate on this complex whole, as well as offering both qualities and challenges to the ways in which it is experienced. Your project will add yet another new fragment or fragments to the ensemble. Through this brief we would like you to begin to explore the creative tensions in the moments where things meet through volume, ground, façade, colour, material or composition for example. Many of you are struggling to escape the tyranny of the plan diagram.

This brief asks you to think at the scale of the fragment in a more traditional sense, elaborating in detail upon a moment where your project must negotiate its relationships with other things - whether existing buildings or landscape or both, while also exploring its own scale, proportion, structure, order and materialisation in more detail. The outcome will take the form of a physical model of a fragment of your building and the existing element or elements that it engages, made with an equivalent level of detail and care. The model might include spatial or structural components and more than one surface – for example roof and wall. The model may be made in any material or technique you wish but should be precise in its form and relationships. It should be supported by drawings of varying scales and projections which establish in the context of your wider project, through a description of the whole, while also exploring the constructional relationships you seek to resolve, through detailed elaboration of the external face in plan and section. The elaboration of the building section will be particularly important in developing the way in which the interiors of new and existing relate to one another. The moment you are looking at should be agreed upon by next week's tutorial with a sketch version of the model completed the week after. The final, photographed version, and its accompanying drawings, should form part of your P3 presentation.

NEW 1:500 MODEL



FIRST IDEAS FOR THE STRUCTURE



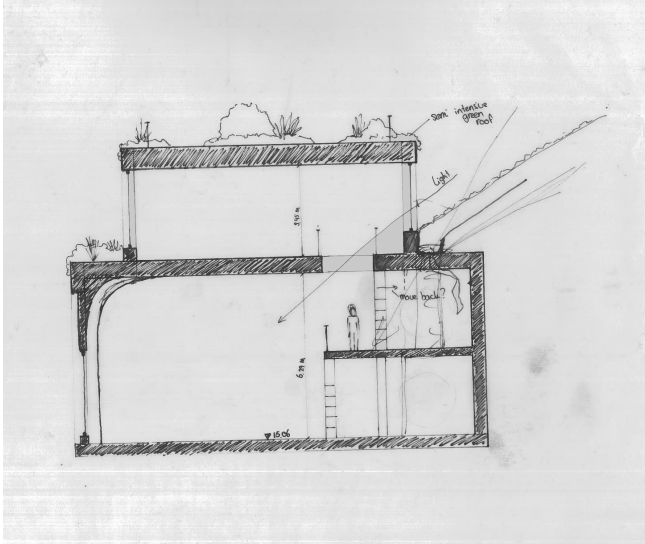
I found it hard to think of a good structure for the building. One thing was clear and that's the retaining wall, but the different angles of the building made it hard to get a clear idea of where to place columns. Drawing all the different axis did not make it clearer so I decided to make a sketch model. It helped a lot to just intuitively glue columns on a piece of cardboard. And straight away I found this structure of having a row of columns following the back wall. These columns now also define a circulation space along the bookshelves. The other columns follow the shape of the facade. Some columns are pushed away from the facade, this is because of the pushed back first floor. The columns are following the facade line of the first floor.

The structure will be a concrete structure, as it allows for larger spans and a relatively thin structure. It also allows for better connections with the retaining wall, which is necessary for the stability of the structure. I do think I need to add cores as well.

The retaining wall needs to hold the hill in place, so I think it's wise to add walls perpendicular to this retaining wall to support the retaining wall.

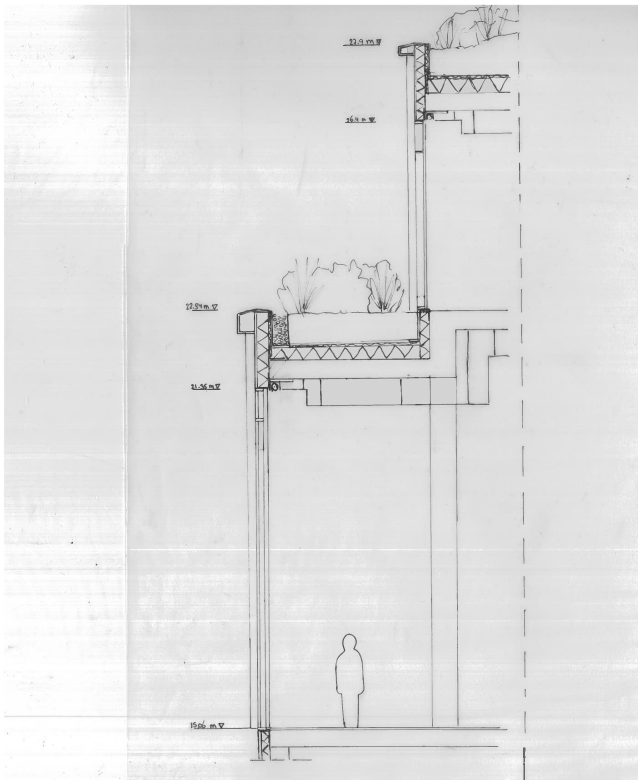


FIRST IDEAS FOR A FRAGMENT



While designing the library it became clear how important a section is to the design. Especially in my case where I am making a building in a hill. There are multiple ways to build into a hill so I was trying different schemes in the section which also influenced my floorplans. One crucial decision was to shift from having the retaining wall stepping up to the hill, making the floorplans essentially shift from one another, to one large straight retaining wall. This made it possible to have all the shafts and service spaces on the back wall, leaving the rest of the space open. And by pushing the bookshelves forward to make a gallery, there was enough space to make rooms and add stairs and elevators behind the bookshelves. This is similar to the rotunda of the Stockholm Library, where you'll find staircases and storage behind the bookshelves.

When I changed the shape of my design of P2, I also pushed the building more towards the park, which created this intimate relation with the hill where the hill touches the first floor of my building. The hill seems to continue through the building, but inside the library it's transformed into the bookshelves wall. In my section I was trying to find out this connection of the first floor and the hill would look like. As I wanted people to be able to see through the building and look up the hill. This back wall should have a window so people can see the hill, and I also think this is a perfect place to add a void, so people on the ground floor can also have a view on the hill.

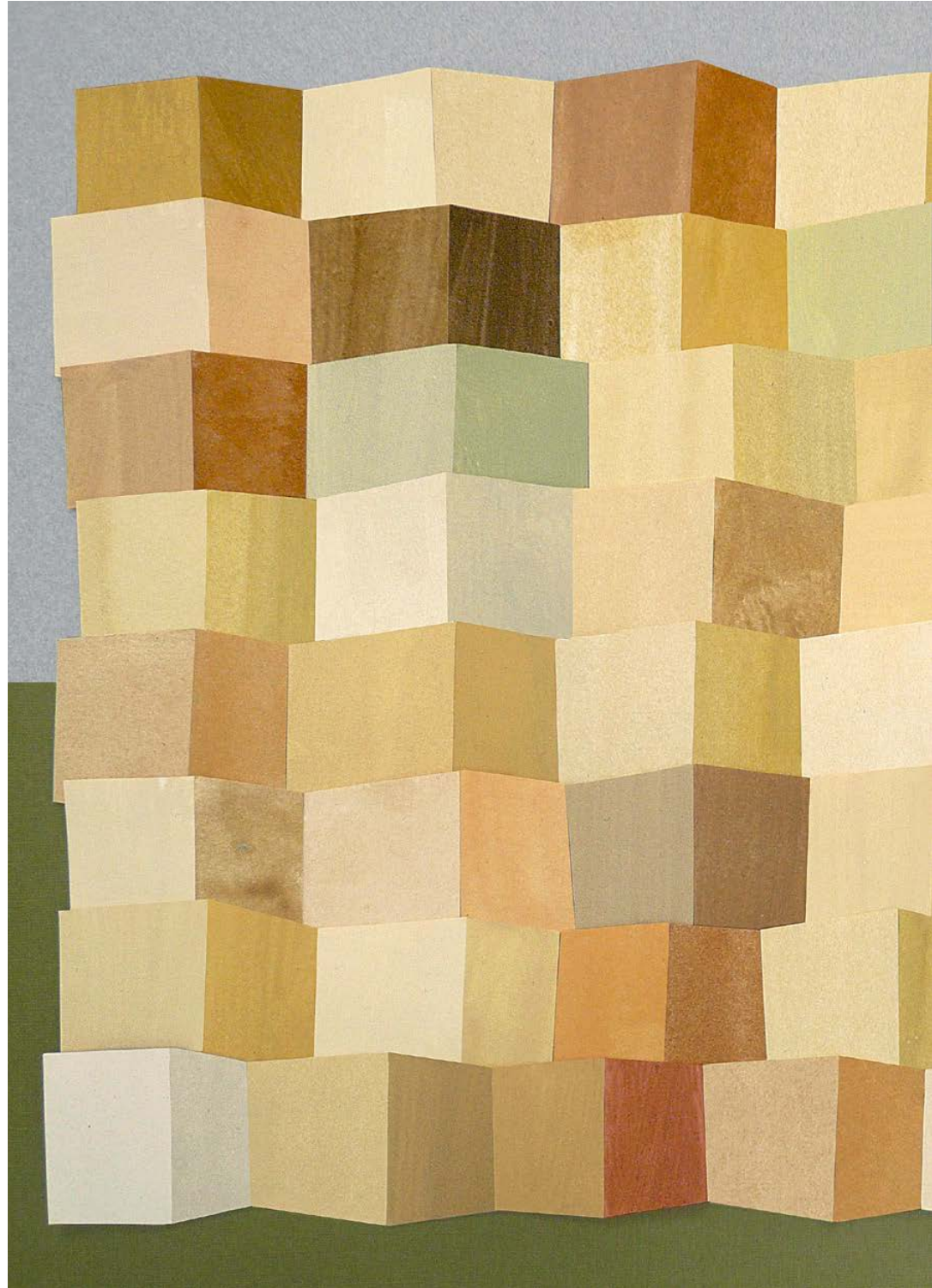


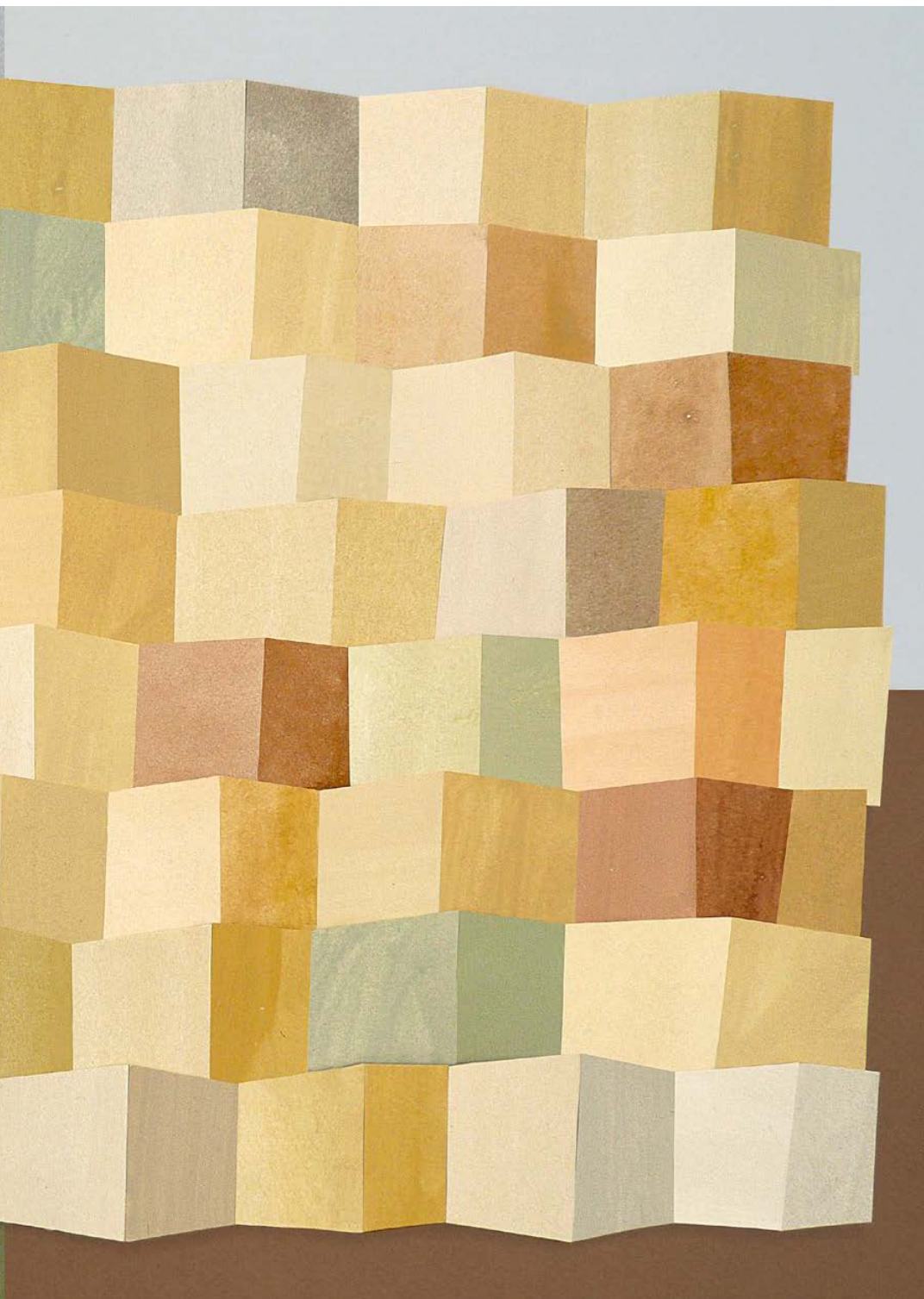
Part of BT is to detail a fragment of the facade. Most of my facade will be a glass curtain wall to have maximum view to the park. I want people to really feel like you're sitting in the park instead of inside a building. The inside should become part of the outside landscape.

The building has terraces which I would like to be semi-intensive roofs to make them part of the hill.

INSPIRATION FACADE COLOUR

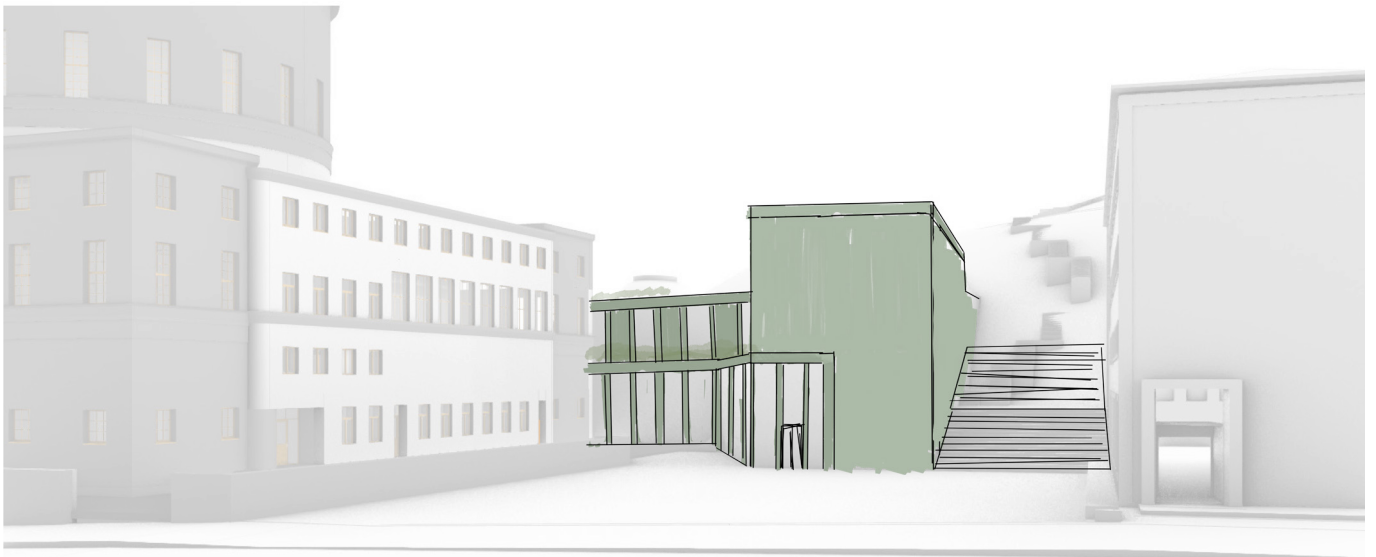
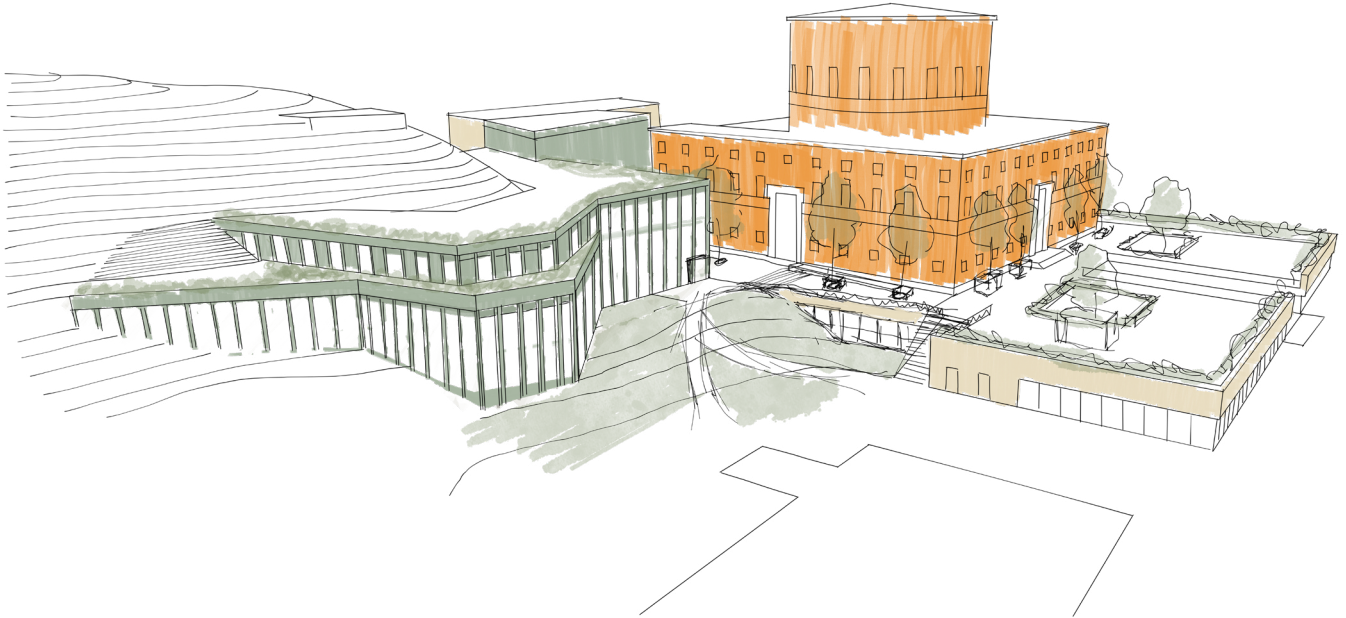
The new library building will be part of an ensemble of 3 annexes and the Stockholm Library. These buildings have warm yellow and orange colours and when you look around in Stockholm it's clear that these warm colours are part of the architecture of the city. I found a document that describes the different districts of Stockholm and the typical architecture of these districts. One image caught my interest. It's this artwork by Magnus Carlén, called "the tone of the city". It illustrates all the different colours of the buildings you'll come across when walking through the city. The green colour stands out as it's not a warm colour, but it seems to blend really well with the other colours as well. This is exactly what I was looking for for my design. Because I want my building to blend in with the nature of the park and stand out on the urban side. By making my building green, it will be more hidden in the green of the park, but it will be a completely new colour in the scheme of the Stockholm Library and the annexes.





Magnus Carlén, The tone of the city. Illustration of an important part of Stockholm's identity. Retrieved from Stockholms Byggnadsordning, 2020.

FACADE SKETCHES



For the facade I had some ideas as to what I want to achieve. The north facade, which is the one towards the street, would fit best into the scheme of annexes if it somewhat related to them. Two annexes have the staircase leading up to an entrance centered to the facade, but the annex closest to the Stockholm City Library didn't follow this scheme. This annex has a small staircase and the entrance is shifted to the left. If I would make the entrance of the new building centered, it would make annex 1 seem out of place, as it would be the only one with a different position for the entrance. So instead I shifted the entrance also to the left. Now it related to annex 1 and the overall scheme of the 4 annexes seems to work really well.

P3 PRESENTATION



For my P3 presentation I actually felt like I haven't done enough. My floorplans were far from done, because I was mainly making sketch models. We were asked to make a model of a fragment of the building. I wanted my fragment to show the most important element of my design, which is the hill that seems to go through the building. The view of looking up from the ground floor to the hill is very interesting. The idea of this continuation of the hill through the building by this bookshelves back wall works very well. It adds something unique to the space. And I am glad I chose to spend my time in making this model, because it explained my story very well. Of course, the model wasn't completely done but I am able to build upon this model and try different things, like facade ideas. So this should help me figuring out other parts of my design.

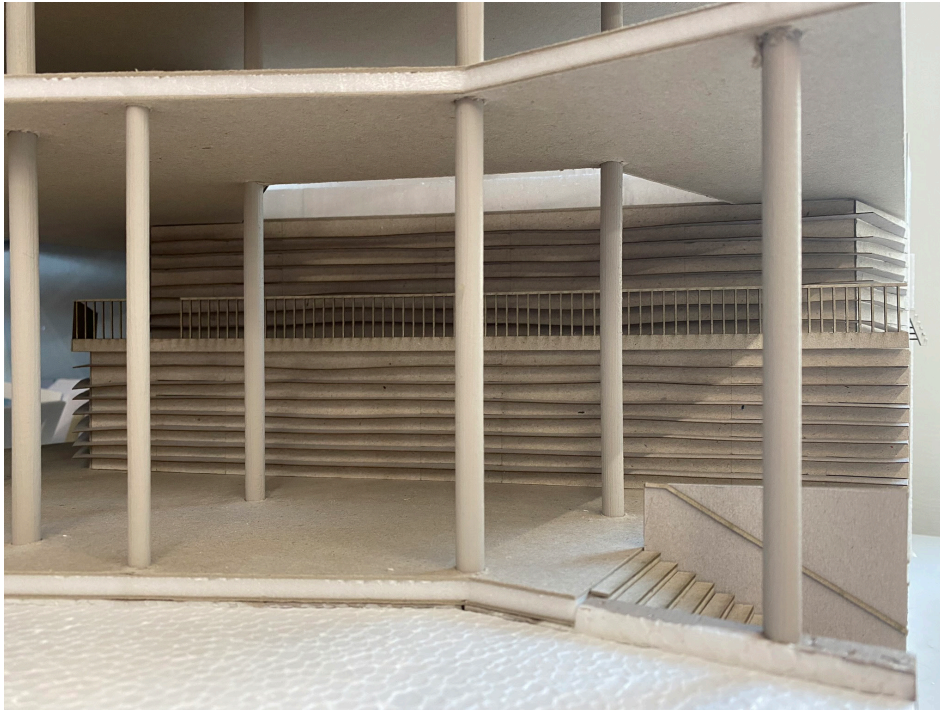


I had a lot of positive feedback and the tutors gave me ideas for making my design even better. As for the facade, the building looked better without facade. So I think I should just have a curtain wall with less solid parts than I had. The idea of having spaces behind the bookshelves was good, but it might be best to have all the stairs and services behind the bookshelves. The staircase in front of the bookshelves is disturbing this view of looking up the hill.





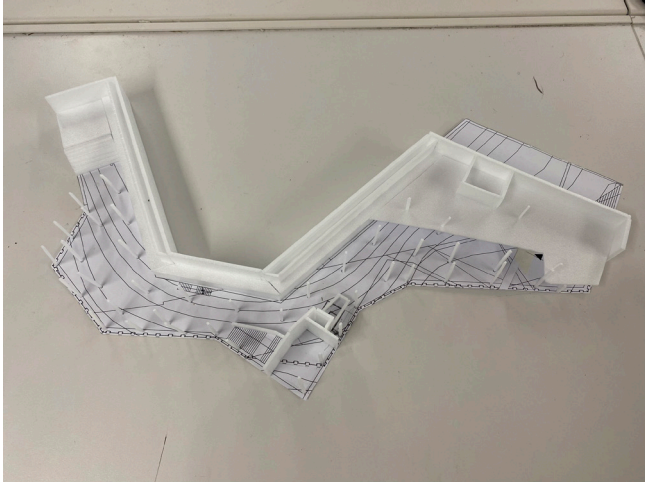




Removing the staircase was indeed a better decision. I looked if it would work to move the staircase to the side, but I think it's better to have no staircase in front of the bookshelves wall. The scheme is clearer when you have staircases behind the bookshelves. This is also what you see in the rotunda of Asplund's library. The staircases to the first gallery were a later addition by Hans Asplund, they were not part of the original design. So by leaving the staircases out of sight it relates better to Asplund his design.

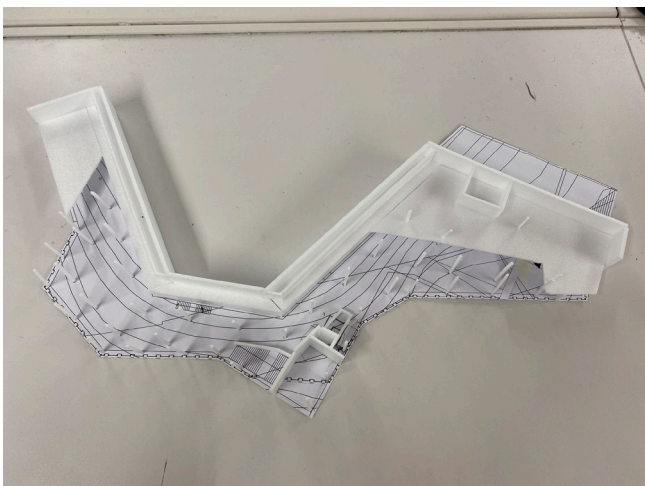


STUDYING ON FLOOR PLANS



I had a few problems to solve in the floor plans of my design. One of them is the two entrances, they needed a vestibule to keep out the draft and the cold. However, the space of the ground floor is 2 storeys high, and I don't like the idea of having this 1 storey box in the open space. It will only collect a lot of dust on top of it. Instead I was thinking of making the main entrance, which is halfway the S shape of the building, 2 storeys high. This way you'll enter in this tall space, which feels more grand and suits a main entrance better. Attached to this vestibule will be an elevator that goes up to the first floor and down to the basement connection. A staircase in front of the vestibule will go down to basement level as well. This staircase is quite wide, but I like it this way, it makes it more welcoming for people to walk down into the basement.

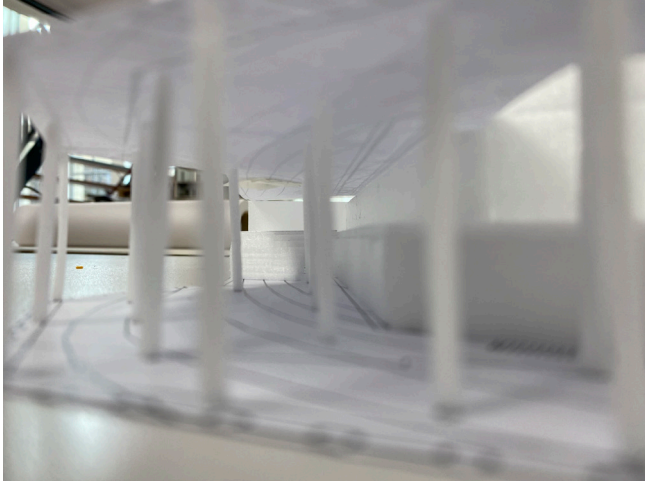
And by adding a mezzanine above the second entrance, it had solved this part. What I like about this mezzanine is that it makes the transition from the entrance to the open landscape of a space more interesting. You're not directly in this tall open space, there is more of a journey, a sequence of spaces. It's something you also see in Asplund's architecture. Asplund's library has this sequence of tall narrow space to a lower space to the large space of the rotunda. And it's because of this sequence that the space behind it will feel bigger. I might need to adjust the main entrance of my building to also have more of a sequence.



The mezzanine on one end of the building made me think I also needed one on the other end of the building. So I tried different things to see what would work best. The only problem with this part of the building is that the facade will go up diagonally to match the slope of the terrain outside. Making a room underneath the mezzanine would be a large room without any daylight. So this might not be the best idea. A staircase leading up would work with this diagonal facade, but a normal staircase doesn't work. I think it should feel more like a landscape going up, just like the landscape outside. The Deichman library of Oslo has something that could be interesting for this. I'll need to test if something like that will work.



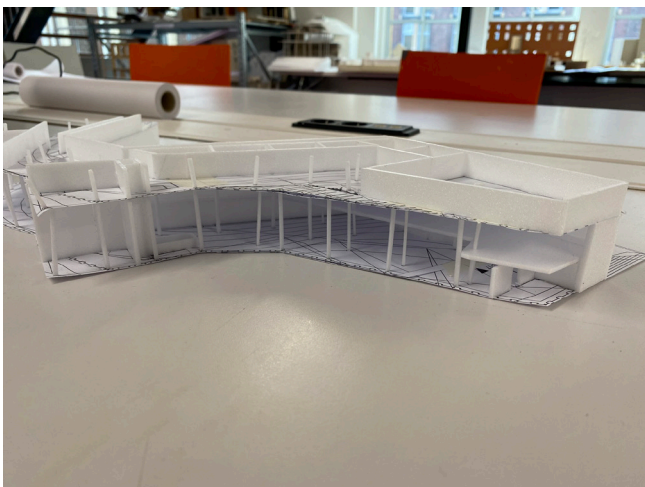
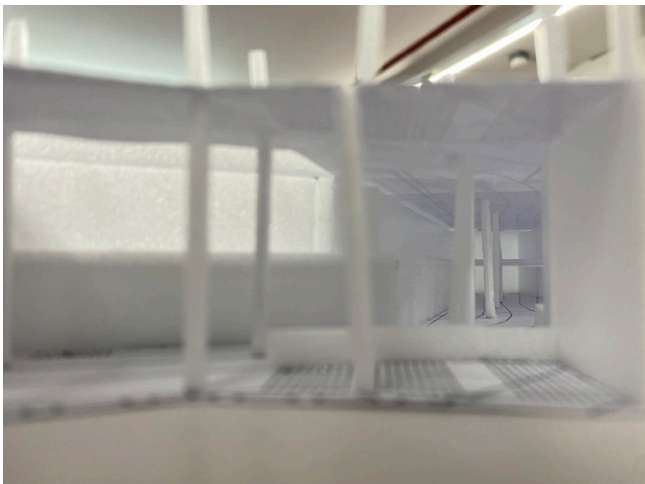
Deichman tribune that is like a landscape going up. Einar Aslaksen

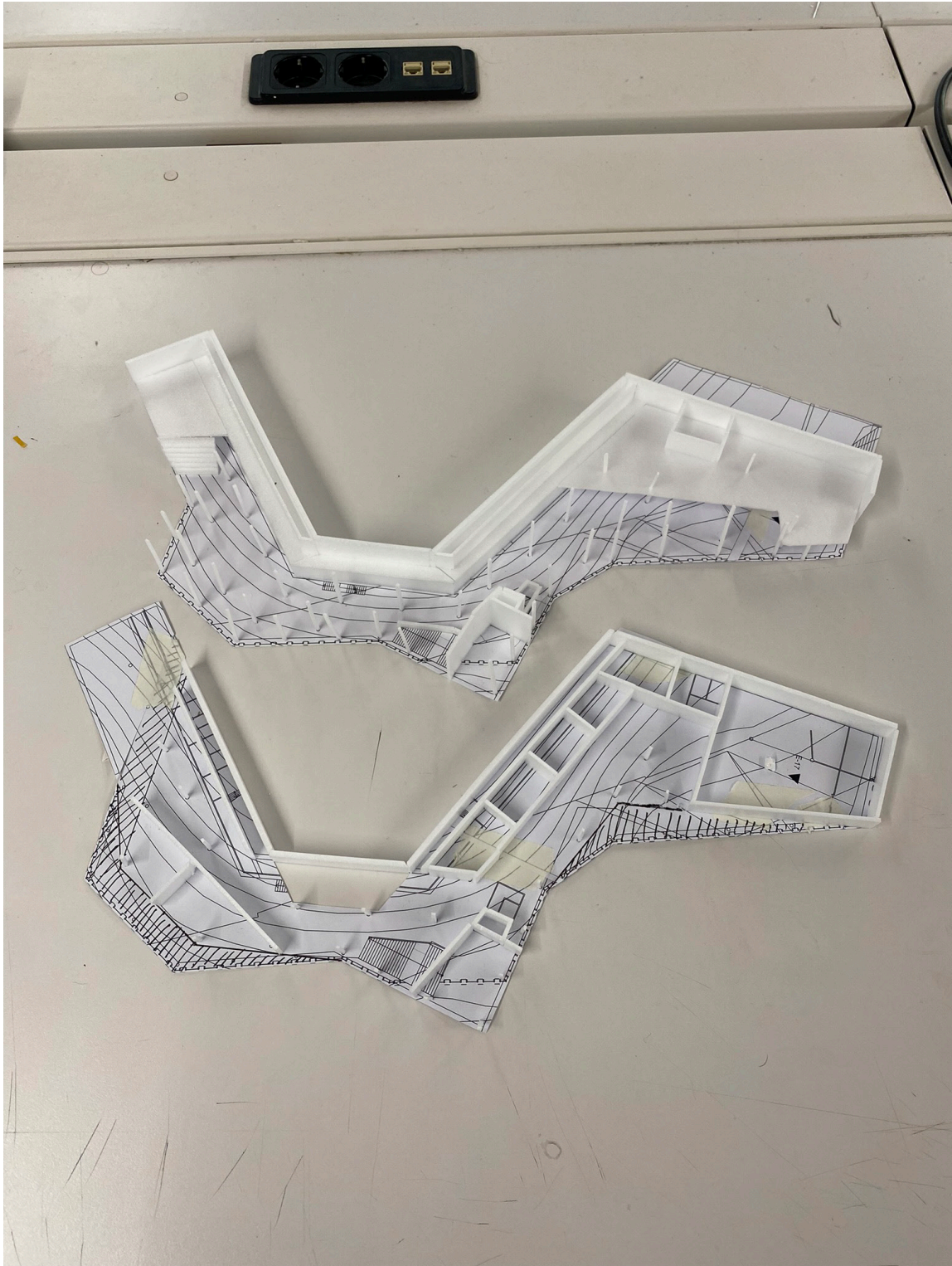


The sight from the central part of the library to each ends are really interesting. And they are accentuated by the bookshelves wall and the columns parallel to this back wall. This created a clear floorplan, that is easy to understand.

The first floor however is still a search as to what it will be. I like the idea that it's something different from the open space below, but the shape of the building makes it hard to create rooms of reasonable size. I noticed that the part above the second entrance offers a better space for rooms. This space is the wider so the rooms can be deeper. If I would want to add an auditorium, something that isn't available in the existing building, than this larger space would work best. And it does make sense to say all the meeting spaces and larger program is located on the street side of the building. This way, the further you go into the library from the second entrance, the more quiet it will become.

The rooms I made on the narrow part of first floor didn't work, there is simply not enough space to make good rooms. And it definitely isn't a good idea to place the rooms at the facade as it will block daylight, which can only come from one side in this building.



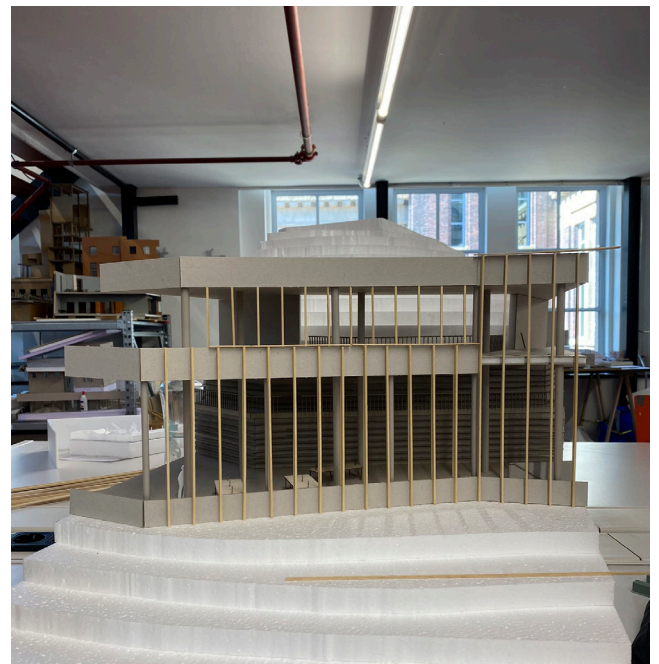
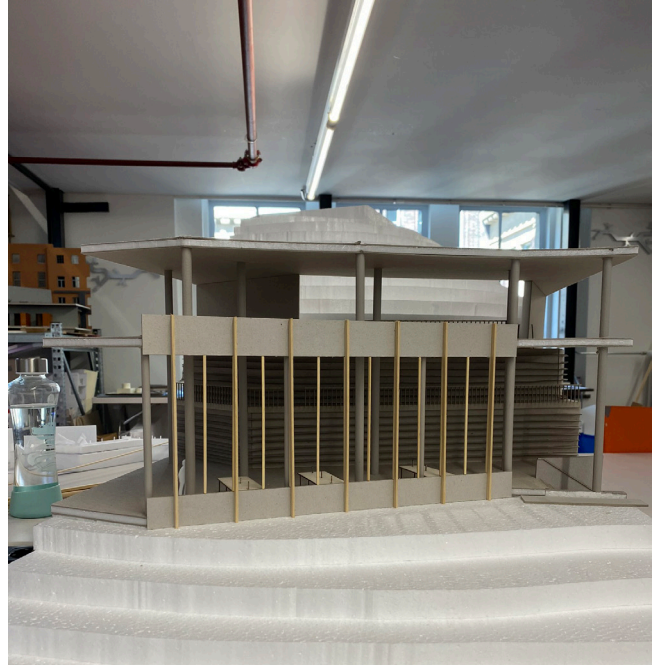


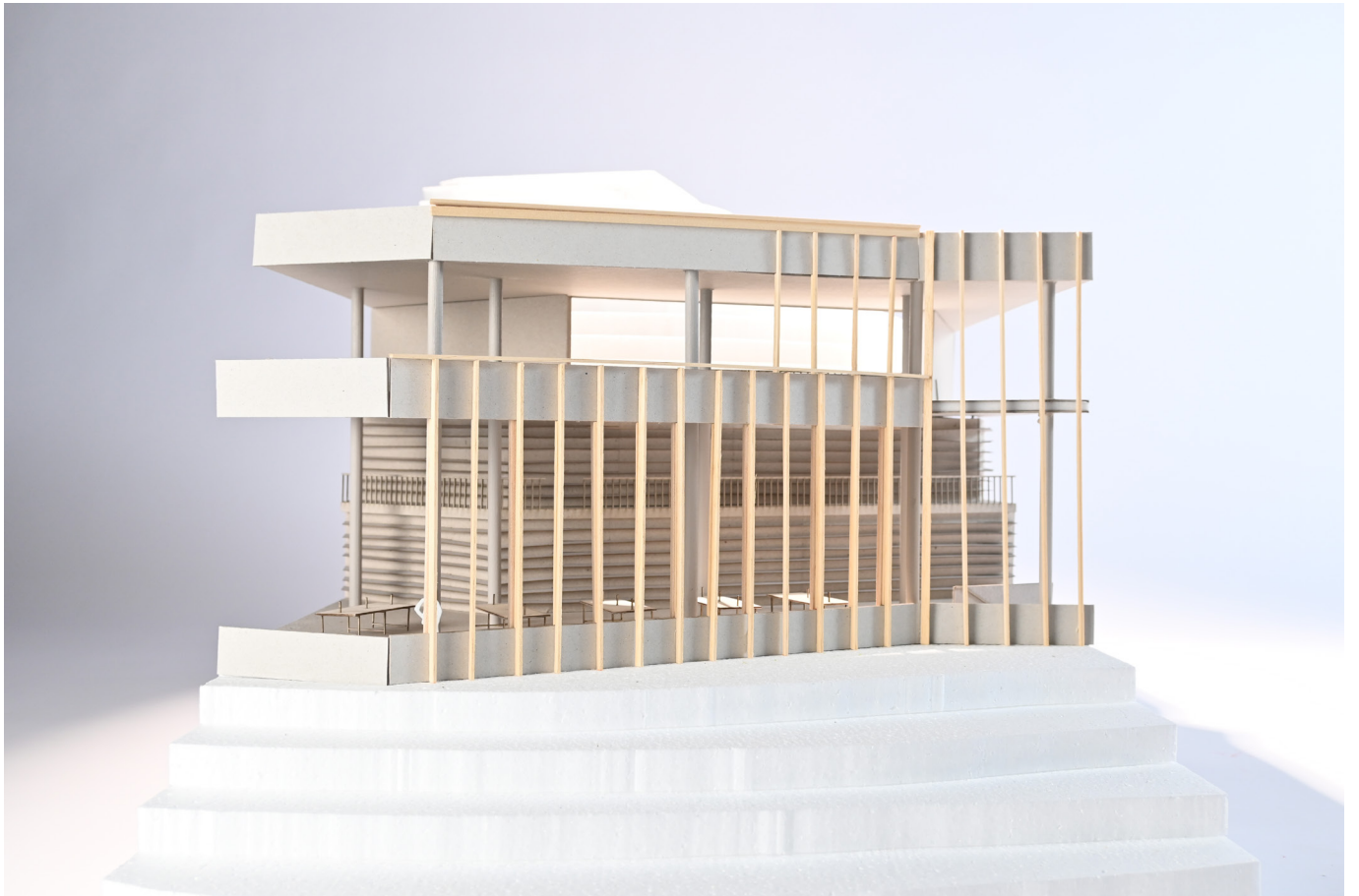
THE FACADE

The facade I had at P3 was too solid, blocking the experience of the hill from when you're looking into the building from the outside. The 1:50 model I made was perfect to test different patterns of lines in the facade.

The terrain in front of the building is not as straight as in the model, so it would be impossible to have the glass curtain wall end at the same height all around the building. The tutors suggested a solid base with the top on the same height as a table, so when people are sitting down, it feels like they are sitting in the terrain of the hill.

The roof edge of the terrace above the ground floor will be of the same height as the cornice of the Stockholm City library. The roof of the first floor is not really aligned to something important of Asplund's library, so it could be something different in this facade. But I think it's nice to have 3 solid lines of about the same height across the facade. It gives balance to the pattern of the verticality of the curtain wall.





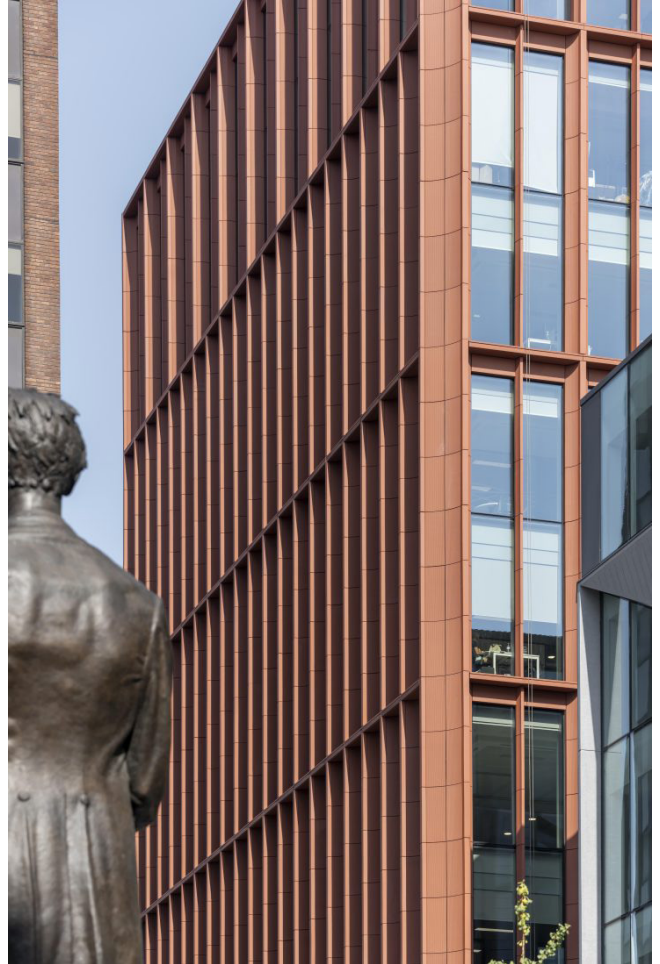






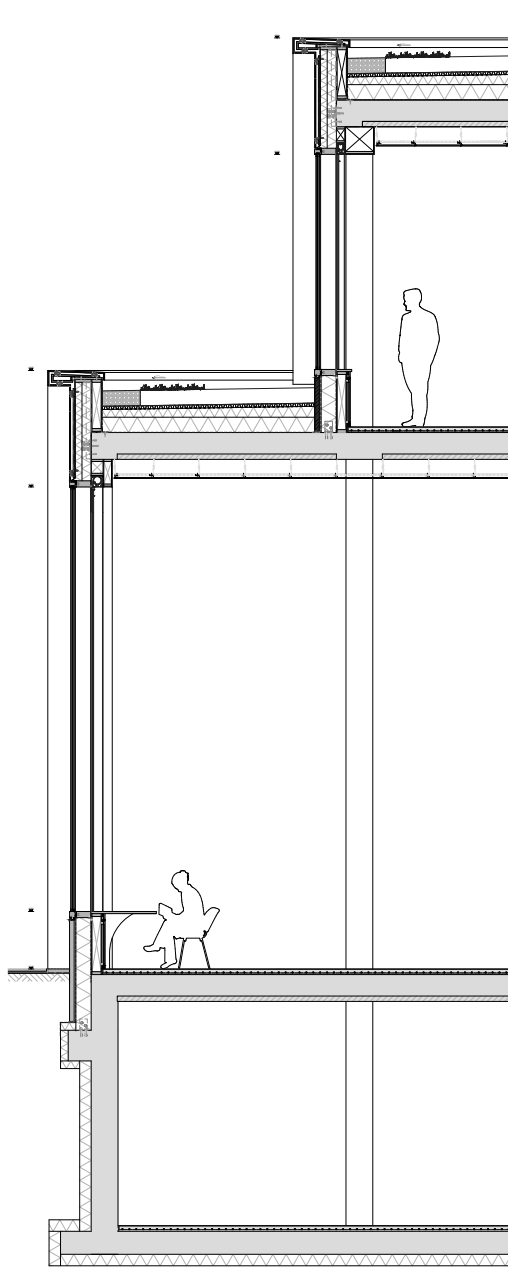


Carlsberg Central Office in Denmark. Adam Mørk



125 Deansgate. Howells

Now that I have a general idea of what I want the facade to look like, I started searching for references. This will help me detailing the facade fragment, which is a requirement for P4. I knew I wanted the facade to be green so the material of the facade needs to be something that can be made in a green colour. I also think it should be of a material that works well with the stucco facades of the buildings around the new library building. I found Carlsberg Central Office an interesting building. The shape is very similar to what I am making, and the facade has a similar pattern. Though, I do not like the use of copper, in my design. It would be something completely different in the scheme of Asplund's library and the annexes. The terracotta facade of 125 Deansgate in Manchester feels like it would fit better. I especially like the thin lines of terracotta in front of the glass. Maybe it's possible to have terracotta attached to the curtain wall frame so that it's not only the roof edges that are made of terracotta? I think it is nice when the complete curtain wall has 1 type of finish. It creates a calm image.

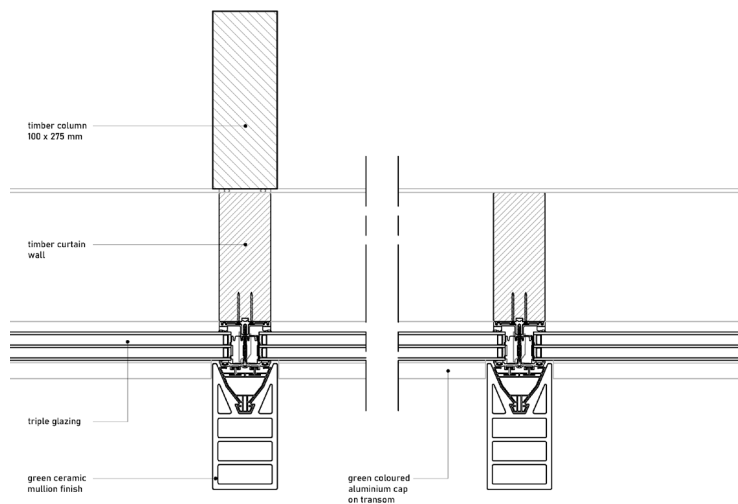
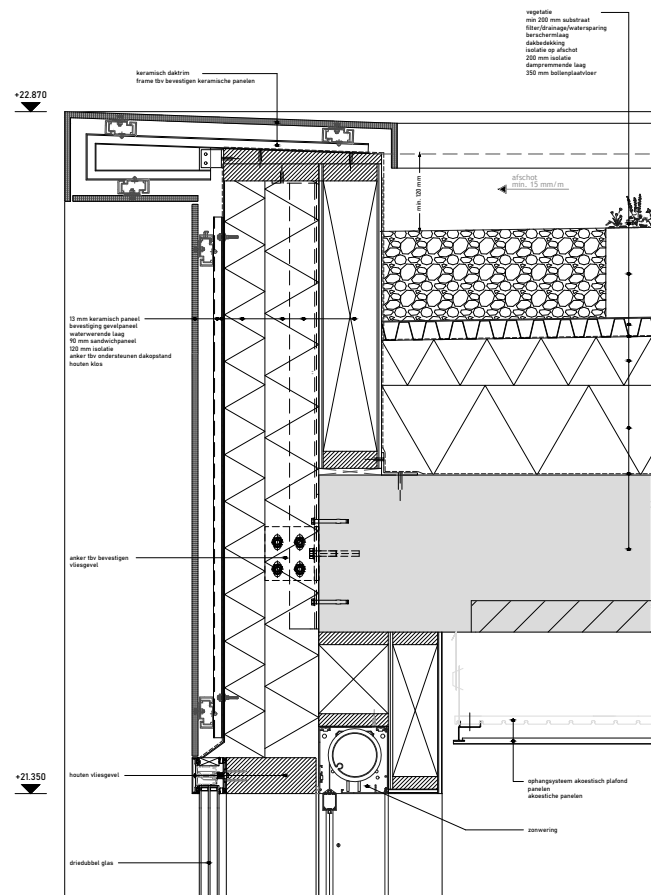
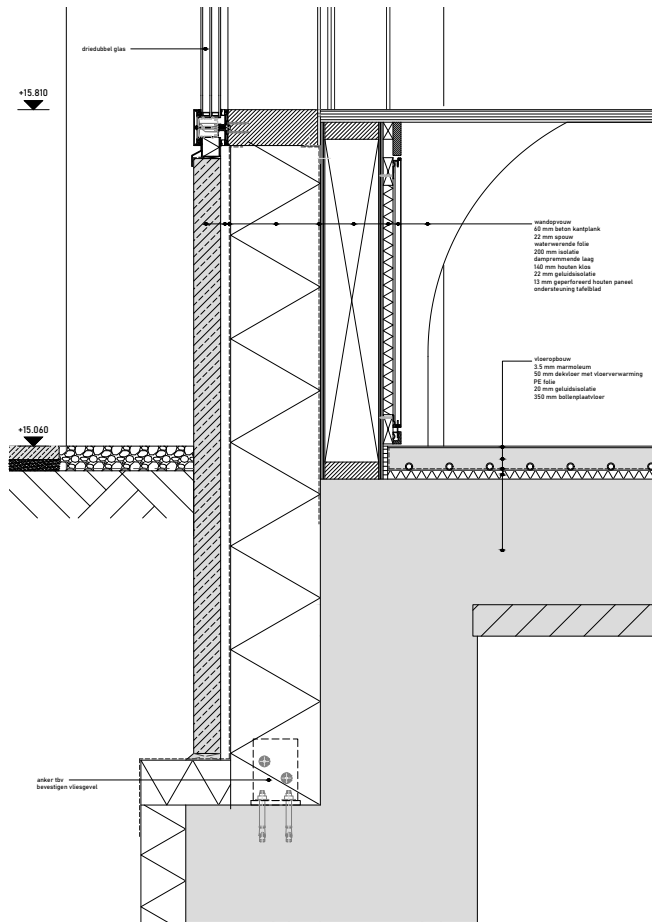


The drawing of the 1:20 fragment has evolved a lot since what I had at P3. The first floor no longer drops down at where the terraces are, which makes the structure less complicated. The acoustic dropped ceiling helps with the acoustics of the space, while also providing space for installations.

The curtain wall will go in front of the floors to have a clear thermal line going around the structure. As the terrain outside differs in height, I wanted the curtain wall to go further down to make sure it will always be lower than the ground level. I added a concrete base to the basement wall so that the curtain wall could be anchored to that.

It was important to me to make the table against the facade flush with the top of the curtain wall transom. Now when you look out of the window from this table it's almost as if there is not window at all, bringing you closer to the landscape outside.

I have sunshading on the inside of the facade, because I didn't want them visible on the outside. But I think I don't need this at all, because this curtain wall is for the most part north and east oriented, so it will only have the morning sun. There are also many trees in front of the building, blocking some sunlight. To some extent, the mullions that are like fins sticking out of the facade, will also provide some sun shading.

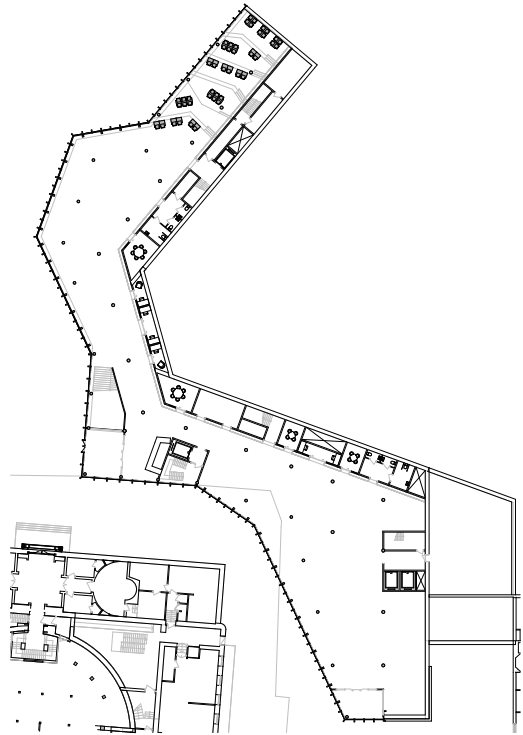


MAKING A DIGITAL 3D MODEL

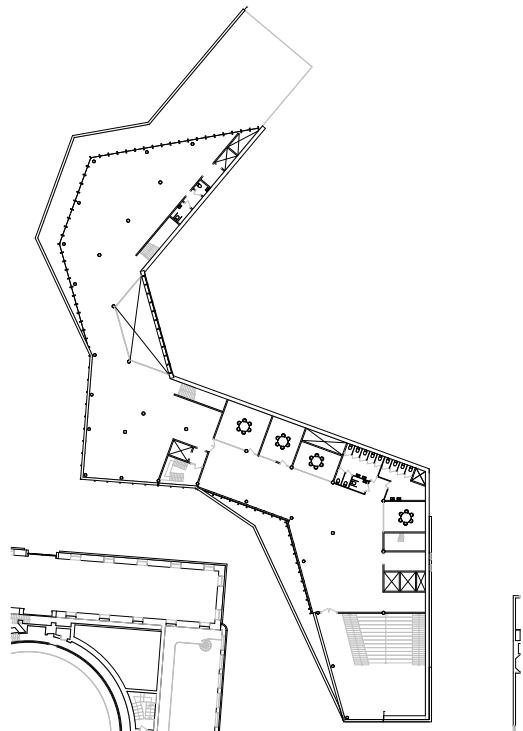
Up until this point I didn't have a good digital 3D model of my design. I only had some parts modeled to be able to sketch over it by hand, and when I had to test things in 3D I made sketch models of it. I never had a design process where a digital model was the last thing I made. But I think I learned a lot from this way of working. Now I already had different parts of the building solved and it became easier to make a digital model out of it. The reason why I wanted to make this model, is because it is hard for me to visualise sections and elevations when the building has all these different angles. This model allows me to take a section wherever I want. Now I also have the option to look at the spaces on eyelevel, so I have a better understanding of the experience of the spaces

As seen in the floor plans to the right, I was able to fit many service spaces behind the bookshelves wall. Here you'll find staircases, elevators and shafts going up to all the floors. Because there is quite some space between the retaining wall and the bookshelves, it was also possible to fit in some smaller rooms, individual workspaces and toilets.

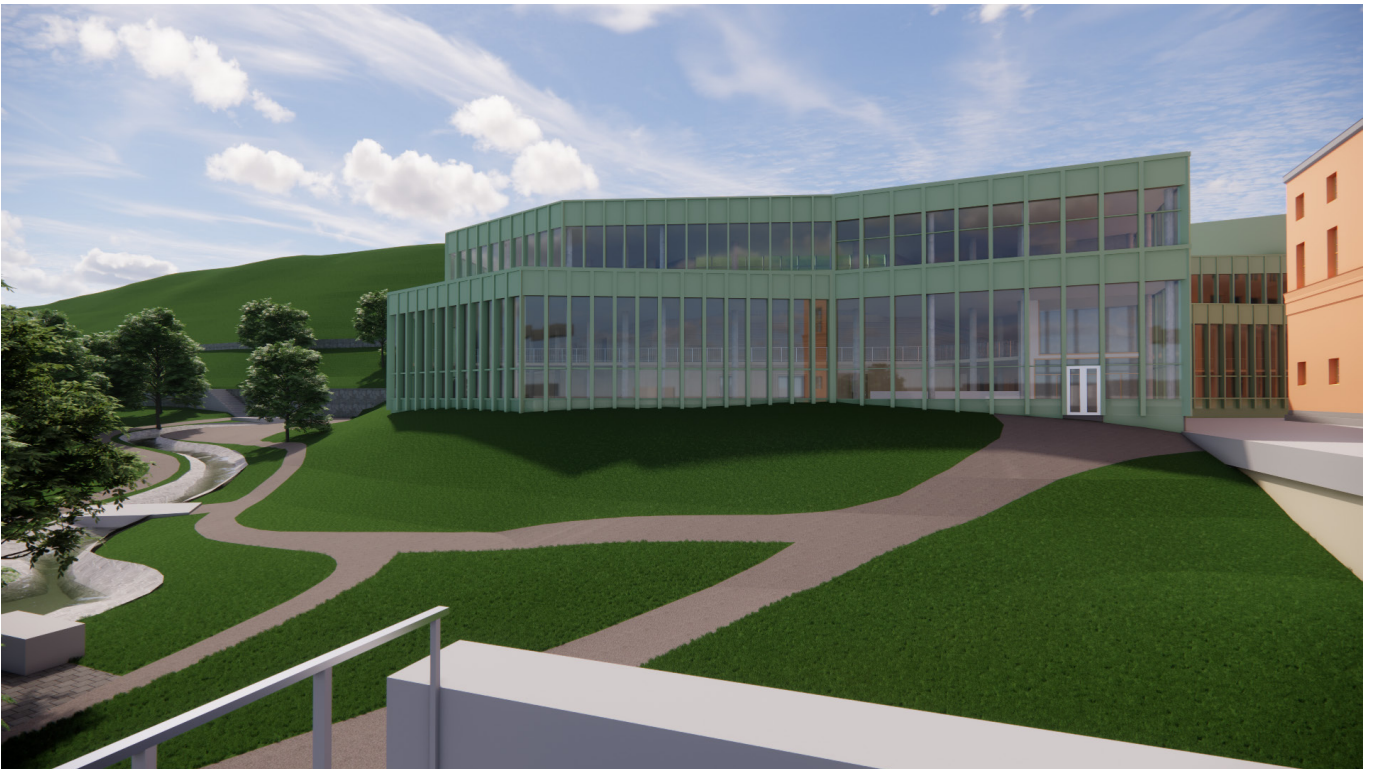
I moved the core with elevator that goes down to the basement away from the main entrance vestibule. And by rotating it to make it parallel to the bookshelves, it creates more space to place an information desk right in front of the entrance.



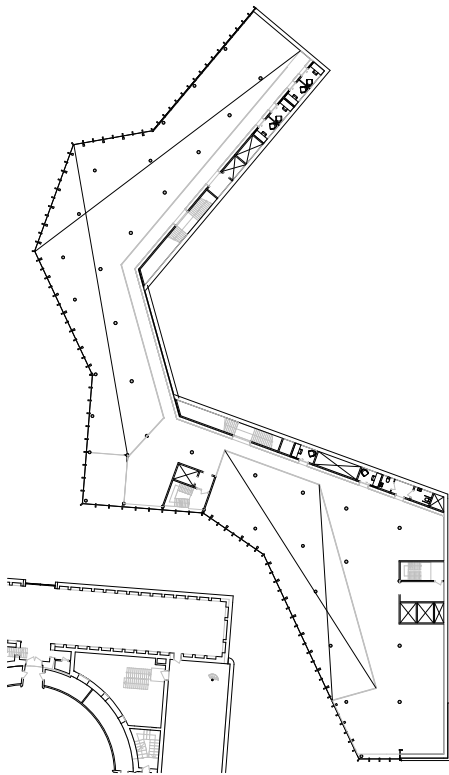
Ground floor



First floor



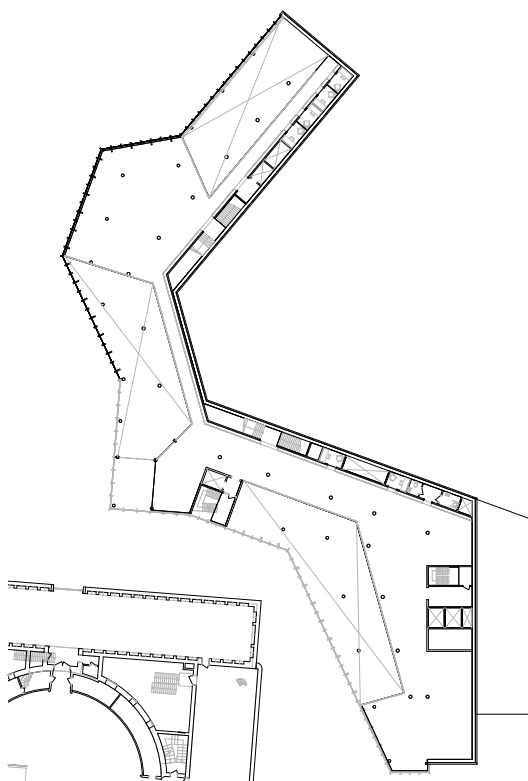
REFINING THE DESIGN



As I noted before, the sequence of spaces when entering through the second entrance is what I liked more than the main entrance. When the core was still attached to the vestibule of the main entrance I couldn't find a way to make the experience more interesting. But now that the core is pushed back, it creates more possibilities. I extended the gallery of the back wall outwards to the main entrance. Now, when people enter the building, they enter this tall space followed by a space that's lower. When they walk further they are again in a tall open space. This transition is better. I especially like the view to the left from entering the library. The different heights and the window through which you can see the hill, makes this a special space. This view captures the most important feature of the building very well. It shows the building's strong relation with the hill and the landscape it's part of.

The final floor plan of the mezzanine has a third platform that extends the gallery to the facade. Now the three platforms define 3 voids and create spaces above and underneath the platforms. I think this will help when thinking about the furniture. It feels less like this vast open landscape. Some spaces will be more intimate than others, which also provide spaces for different activities.

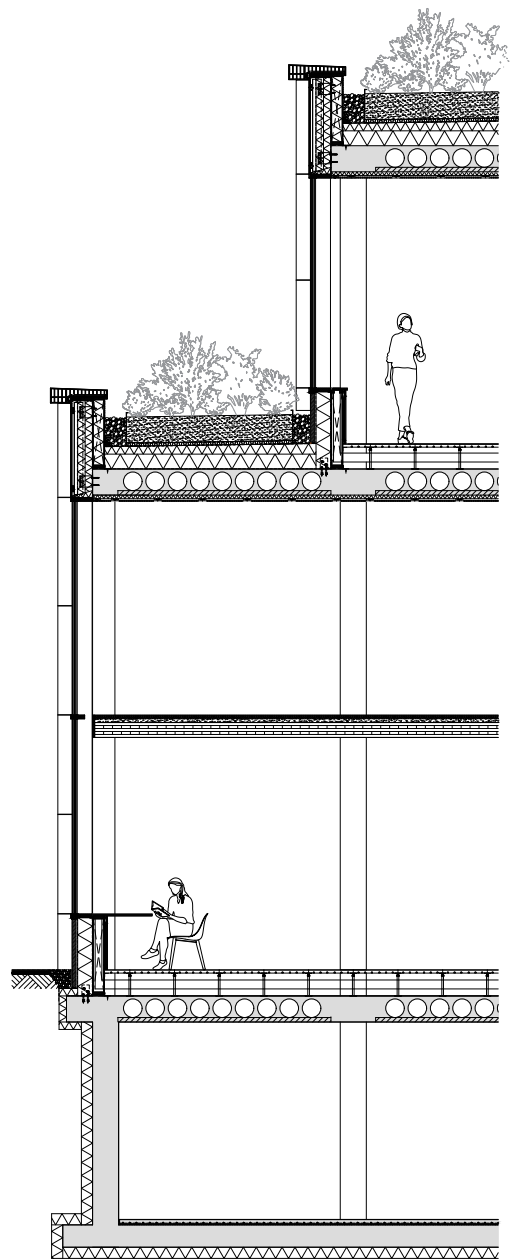
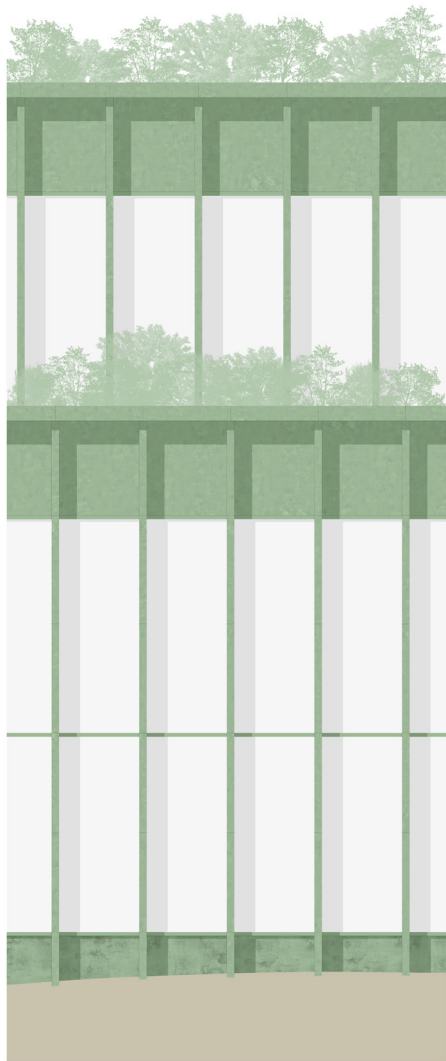
I did test different things with this third platform. Does it need to go all the way to the facade? I did like the height of the space when someone would sit at the window, but when I look at the other two platforms, it makes more sense to have the platform go all the way to the facade. Then the floorplan has a clear scheme, at parts that the building is pushed outwards from the hill, you'll also have the gallery of the bookshelves extending outwards. Now the workspaces at the window feel more intimate. The view of the ground floor to the outside is more focussed towards the park instead of the sky.

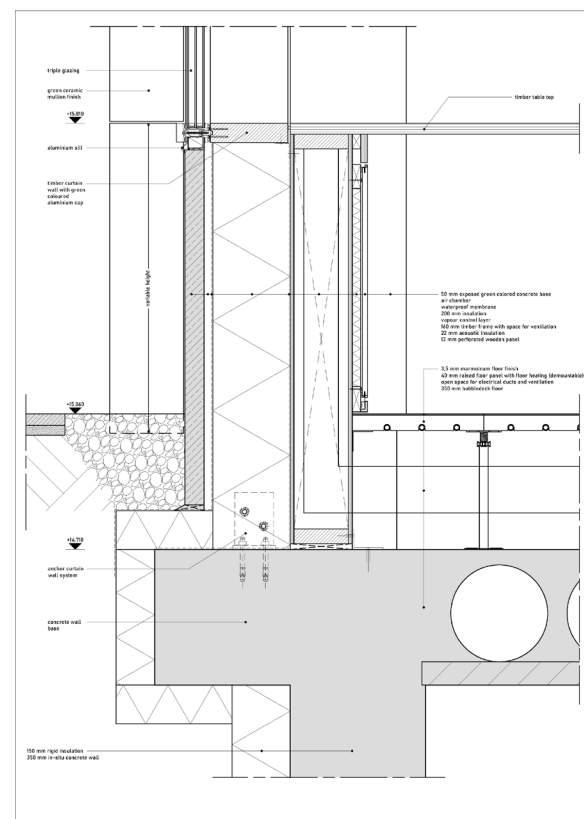
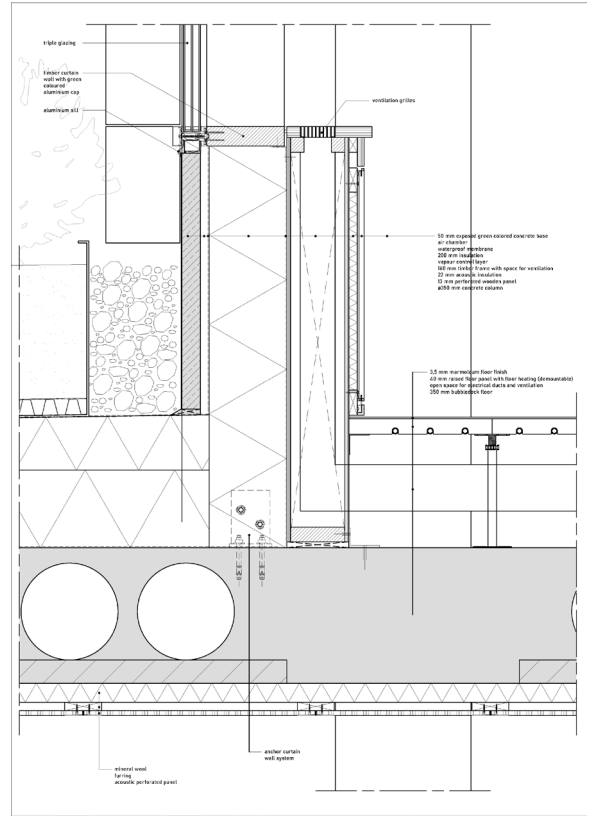
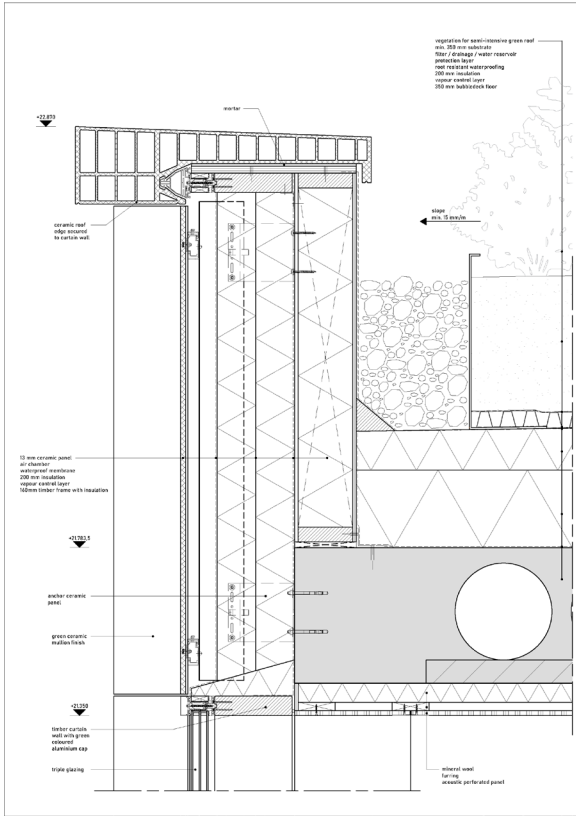






Now I have a model that's even further developed, it is easier to see how it relates to its surroundings. I think the two sides of the building work really well. The curtain wall facade and the terraces make it blend with the park and the hill, whereas the north facade stand out besides the existing buildings. It is a new shape added to the scheme, and not at all what Asplund originally envisioned for the site, but it does bring back the scheme of the four annexes.





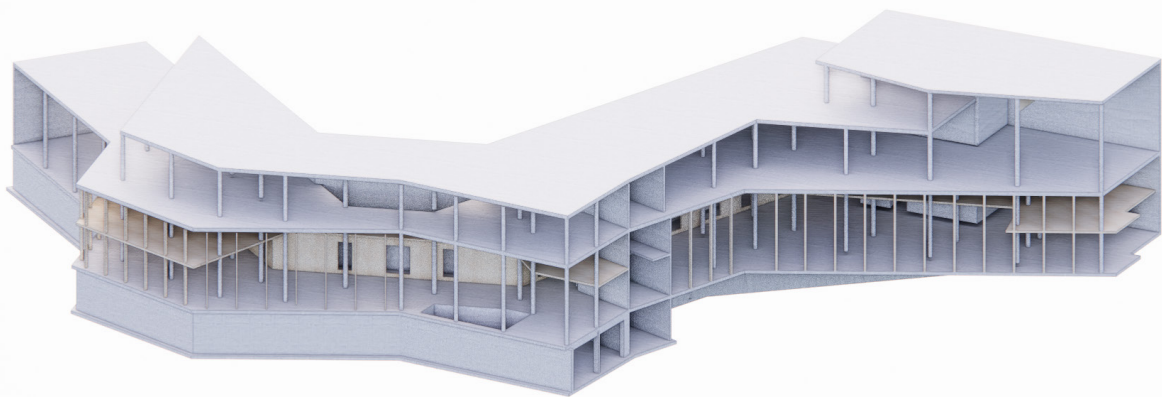
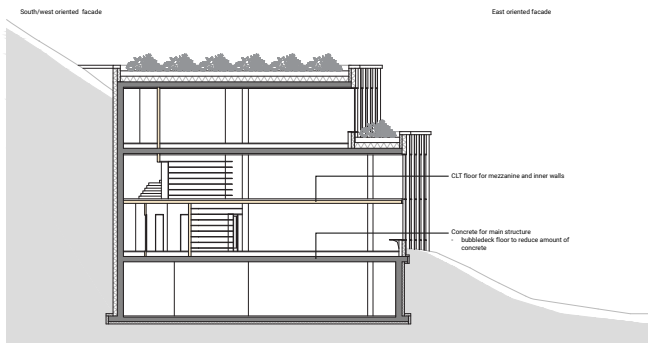
After the consults for climate and structure I had new insights on how to solve the technical part of this design. I shifted from having a dropped ceiling for installations to a raised floor. This made it also possible to have more substrate on the roofs, because I had to drop the floors down to have the level heights unchanged.

The facade has a ceramic finish. I chose for ceramics because it can be better resistant to water and differences in temperature. From the first details I also changed the roof edge. It is now one element attached to the parapet and the curtain wall. This makes it less likely to break during construction work.



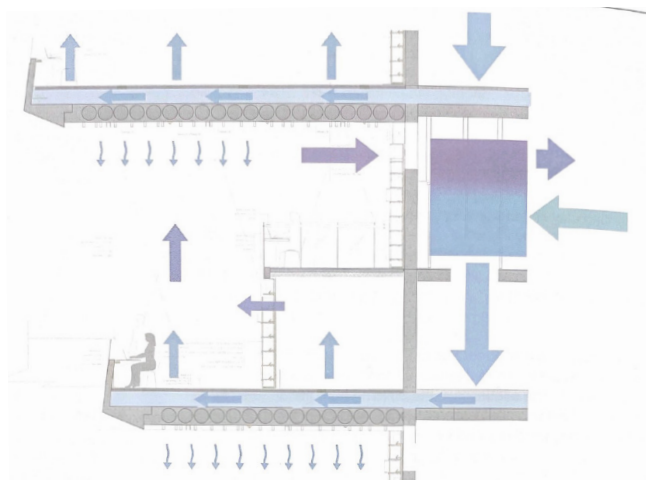
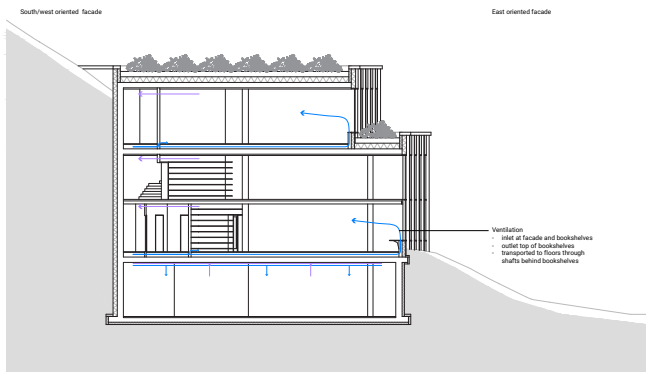
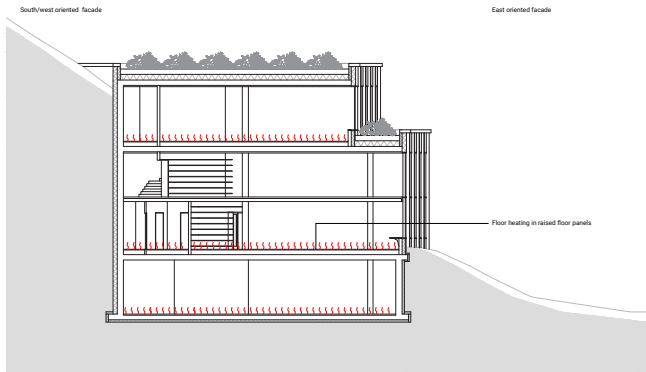
Floor Deichman library. Niklas, Elif Shafak, Liv Sæteren, Einar Aslaksen, Iwan Baan, and Héleine Binet. 2022. Deichman Bjørnvika = Oslo Public Library : Lundhagem and Atelier Oslo Architects.

For the structure I had already chosen to use concrete for the main structure, and for the secondary structure (the mezzanine) I'll use CLT. This makes it more flexible to change parts of the building. To reduce the amount of concrete used, the floors will be bubbledeck floors. The bubbles are placed on top of a prefabricated slab, with rebar under, on top and in between the bubbles. These slabs will be placed on a supporting frame and the columns. The top layer of the floor will be poured on site. This floor allows for beams that are integrated in the floor itself, giving maximum flexibility for installations above and underneath the floors.



The ventilation principle is based on the concept used in Deichman Library. In that library they have cores with bookshelves around them, which is similar to the retaining wall with bookshelves in my design. There will be airflow coming from the floor, into the space and leaving the space through the top of the bookshelves. This way the bookshelves wall is not only something decorative, but it is more an integral part of the design.

Heating and cooling will be done through the panels of the raised floor. I have not added heating and cooling in the mezzanine floor, because it's part of the same space as the ground floor.



Floor Deichman library. Niklas, Elif Shafak, Liv Sæteren, Einar Aslaksen, Iwan Baan, and H el ene Binet. 2022. Deichman Bj orvika = Oslo Public Library : Lundhagem and Atelier Oslo Architects.



REFLECTING ON THE PROCESS

This graduation project has been a long journey. When I look back at the progress I've made from P1 to P4, I can only be proud. The design has changed a lot since my first thoughts, but there are still ideas in there that survived all the way until the end of the project. I learned to be critical, and that feedback is only there to help you look at things from a different perspective. Often it will lead to better results.

My previous study was more technically oriented, so I knew I had a lot to learn about the conceptual side of architecture. What is the story behind the design? Why are you doing certain things? These are questions that I struggled with when designing. This project has made me understand how important it is to find an answer to the 'why' questions, as it really guided my whole process and it was easier to make decisions and improve the design significantly. There is always something to improve, but for the limited time we had, this is already a big step up from my P1.

What would I have done differently, had I been given more time? I think I would want to work more on the interior spaces. I have the idea to make the interior feel like an extension of the landscape outside. So I think the furniture should reflect that idea. I thought a lot about the experience of the spaces in my design and I think architecturally it works well, it just needs furniture to complement the spaces.

I learned new skills and I improved the skills I already had. From making models to making presentable drawings. But I do think that it's the process that was really interesting. The studio Interiors Buildings Cities focusses on different scales, and I noticed by zooming in and out while designing, I was able to make a more integral design. The different elements of the design are all related to each other. And it helped to shift to a different scale to solve something elsewhere.

I think I have become a better designer because of this project. I know better what I would want to do after graduating. The project gave me insights in how to deal with a complicated project like this. And also how to design with monumental buildings. This knowledge is valuable and I'll be able to use it in future projects.