



During the period leading up to the P4 presentation, significant progress was made as definitive decisions were solidified. One of the key concepts that took center stage was the idea of using soil excavation as a powerful tool for shaping and defining the architectural qualities of the design.

By embracing the notion of excavation, I aimed to create a design that not only respects the historical context but also establishes a strong architectural presence that is deeply rooted in the site. The act of excavating the soil allowed me to sculpt the landscape and create distinctive forms and spatial compositions that seamlessly blend with the surrounding environment.

The process of excavation became a metaphorical and physical exploration of uncovering hidden layers, revealing the inherent beauty and potential within the site. The extracted soil, once viewed as a byproduct of construction, was repurposed to act as a building material itself and to shape the terrain.

Through this intentional manipulation of the earth, I sought to establish a harmonious relationship between the built environment and the natural landscape. The excavated areas became opportunities for unique architectural interventions, such as sunken forum square and courtyards, terraced descents, or subterranean spaces, which add depth, texture, and a sense of discovery to the overall design.

The concept of excavation became a transformative force that guided the development of the project as the P4 presentation drew near. It served as more than just a physical action of removing soil; it became a metaphorical figure of uncovering hidden potential and creating a design that resonated with its surroundings.

By embracing the idea of excavation, I aimed to tap into the site's history and context, allowing the architectural qualities to emerge organically. The process involved delving into the layers of the site, unearthing its stories, and understanding its inherent qualities. By embracing the logics of building with excavated rammed earth, the architectural expression became an embodiment of the project's narrative and design principles. It spoke to the project's connection to the site, its commitment to sustainability, and its desire to create a unique and contextually sensitive architectural experience.

The logics of building with rammed earth also influenced the spatial organization and form of the design. The inherent properties of the material, such as its thermal mass and acoustic qualities, played a crucial role in determining the layout of the spaces. The earth walls provided a natural insulation, ensuring comfort and energy efficiency within the building. Additionally, the solidity and texture of rammed earth created a visually striking and tactile experience for the occupants.

After countless iterations and attempts to create a subtle and unobtrusive pavilion within the park, I reached a pivotal moment where I had to make a bold decision. Recognizing the significance of the surrounding landscape and the desire to harmonize with the natural environment, I took a radical step and drastically minimized the above-ground volumes of the building.

In this design approach, the majority of the public functions found their place underground, carefully arranged around a sunken forum space. By concealing the majority of the building below ground level, I sought to create a dialogue between architecture and nature, blurring the boundaries between the built and natural environments.





void between the docks' walls



building on site

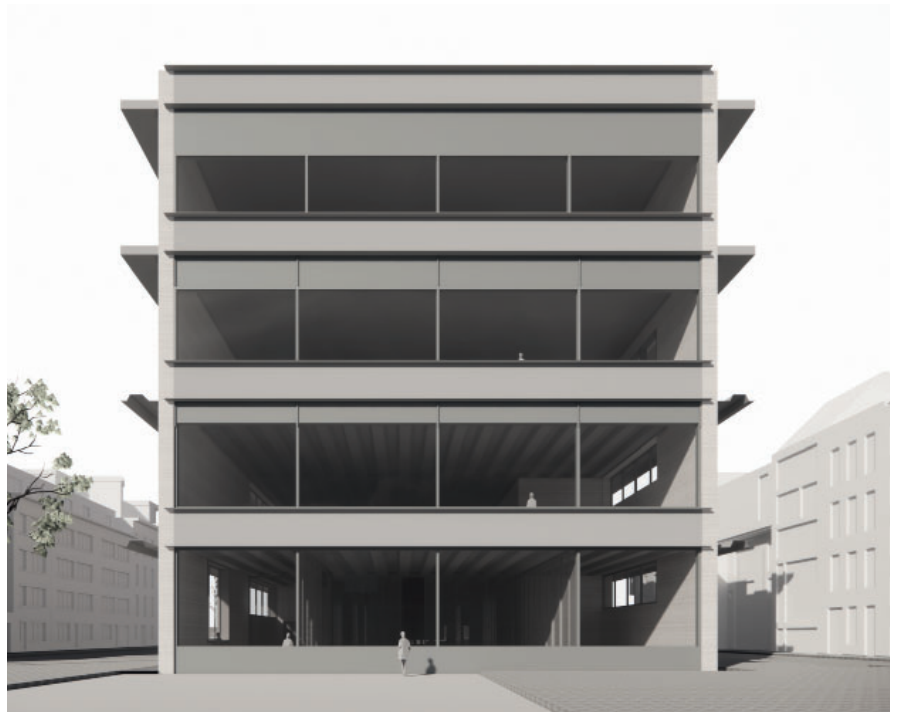


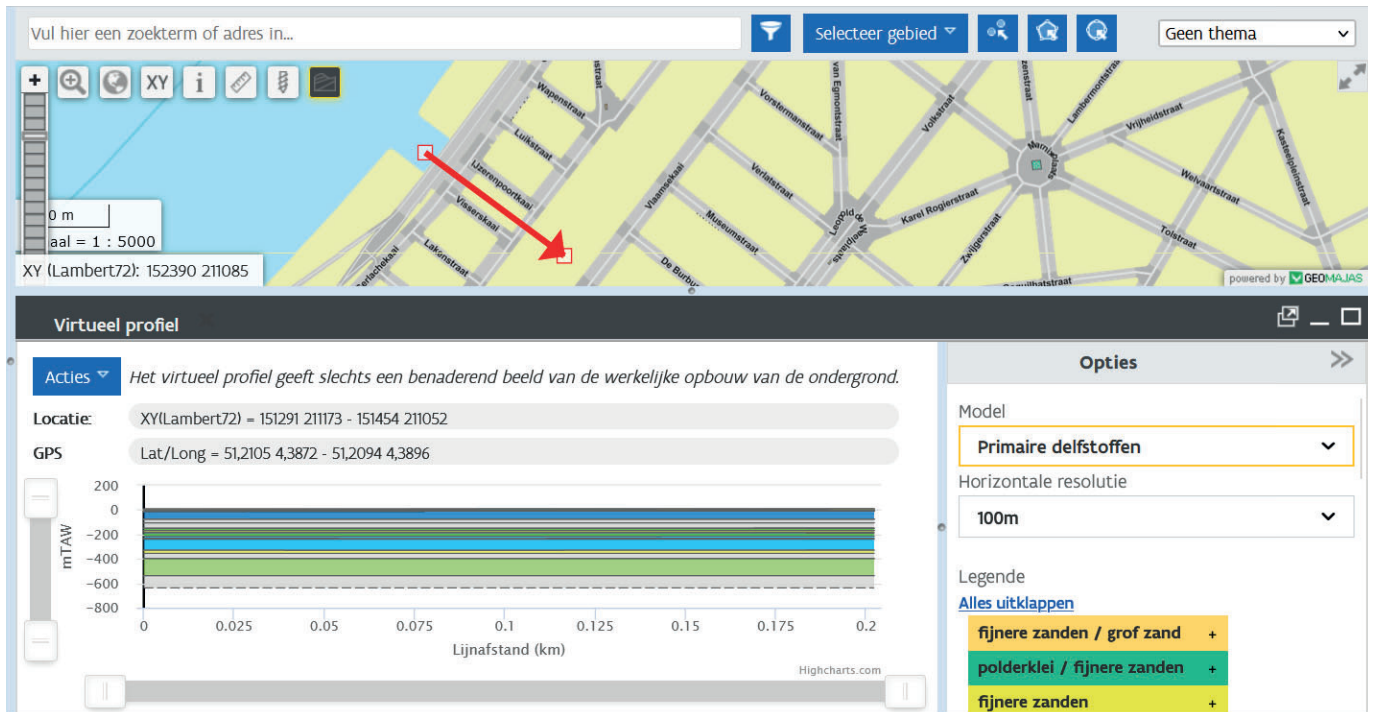
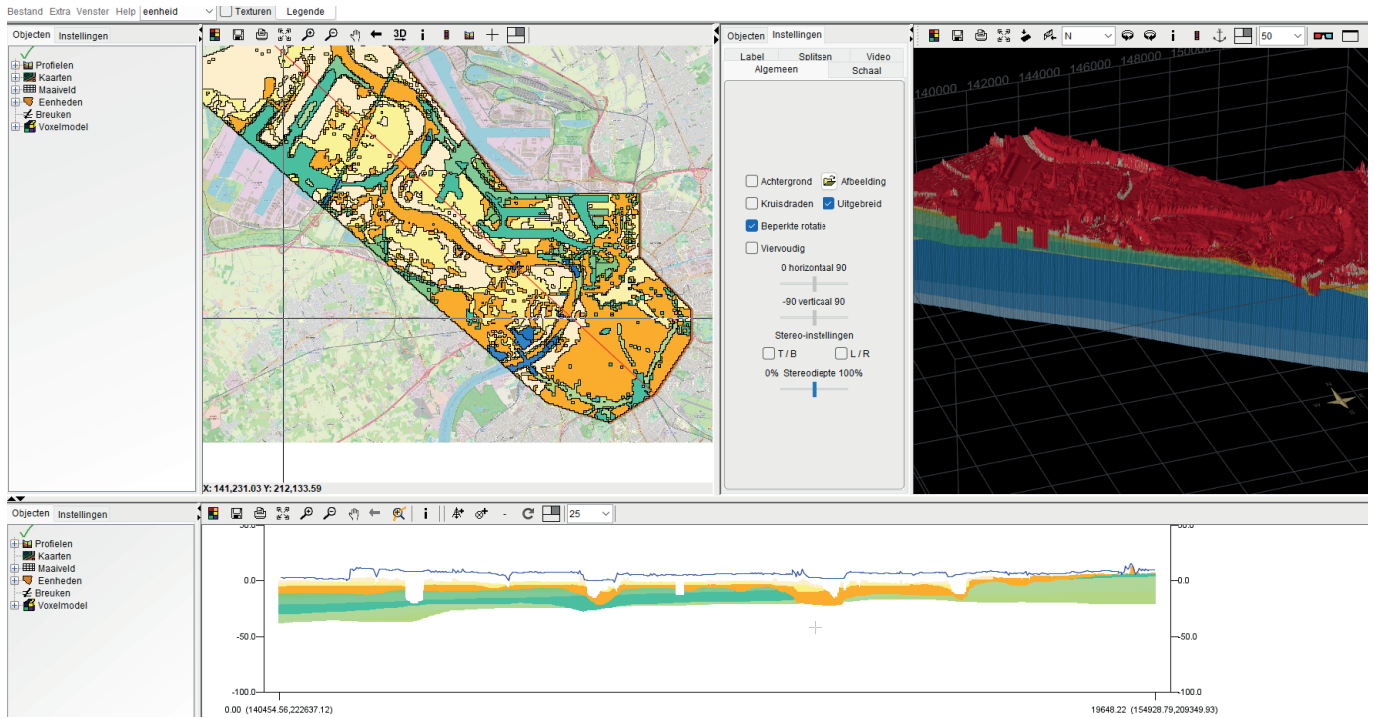
functions on floor -2.

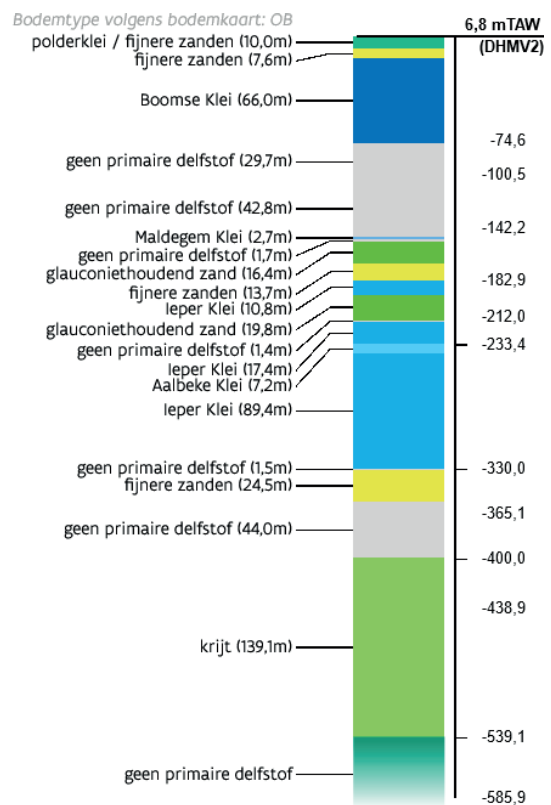
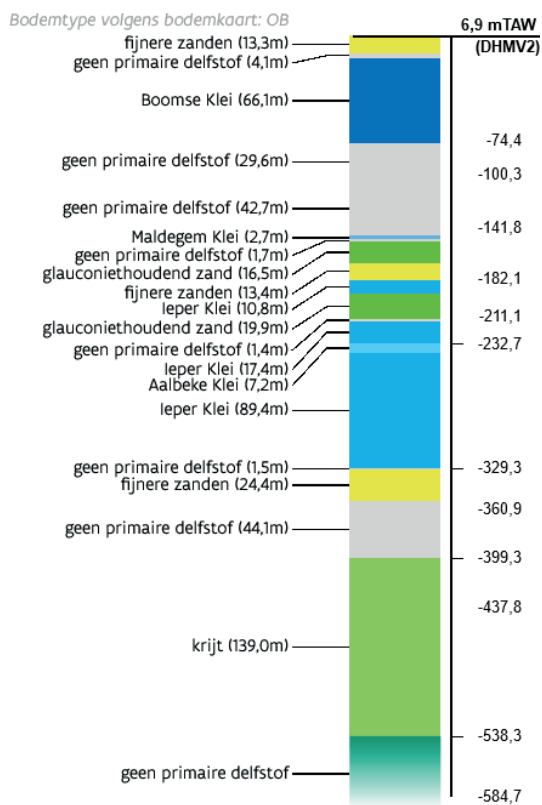
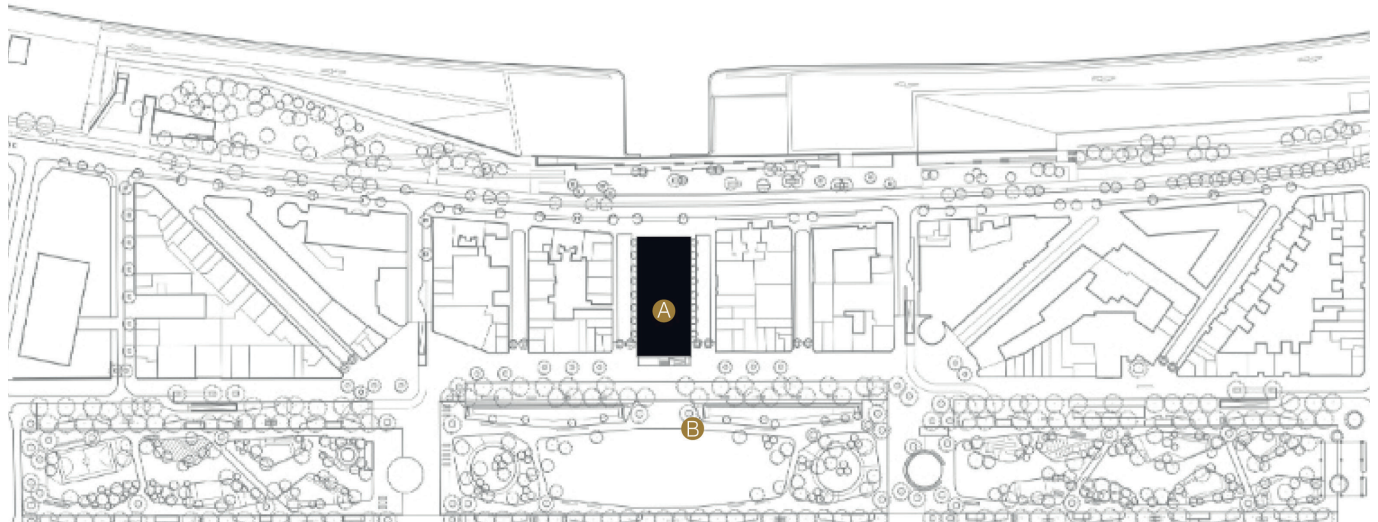


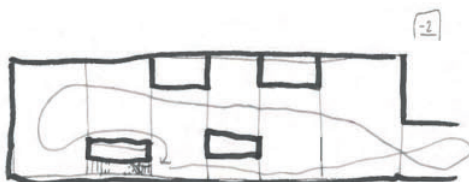
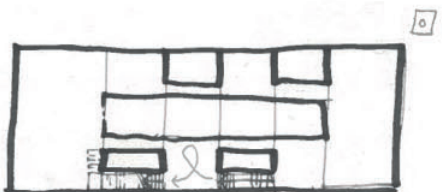
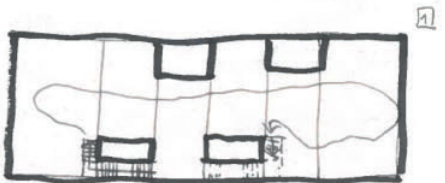
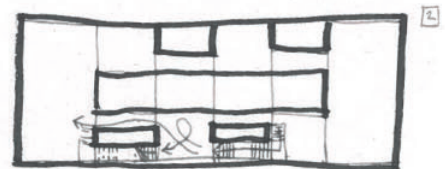
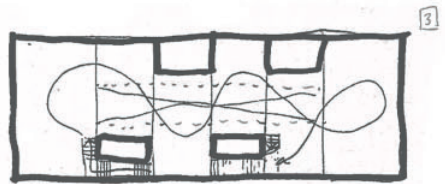
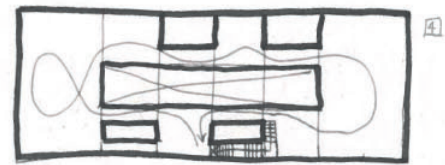
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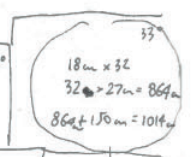
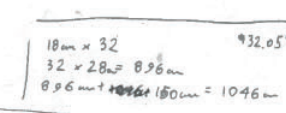
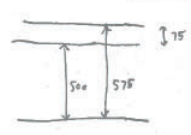
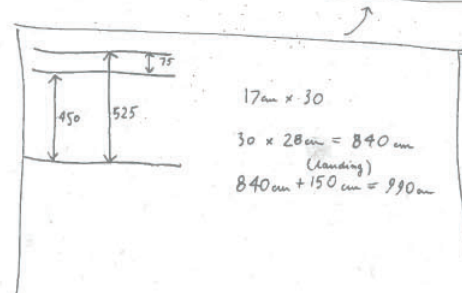
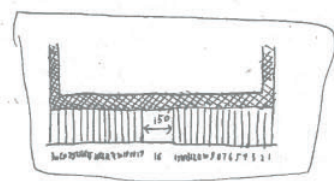
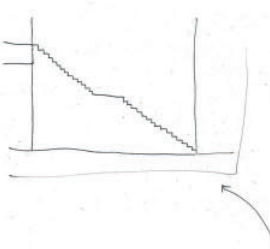
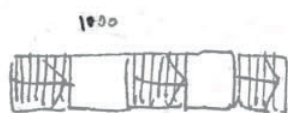
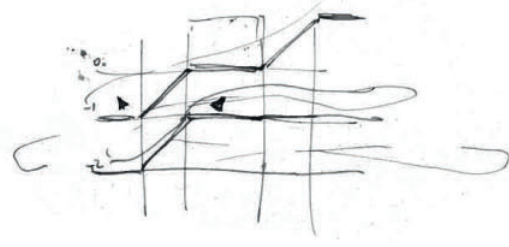
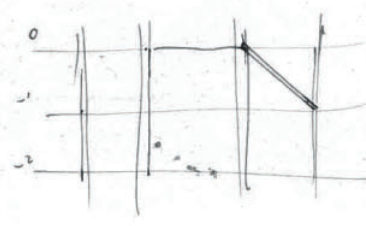
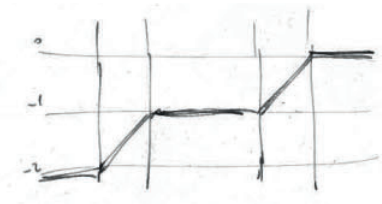
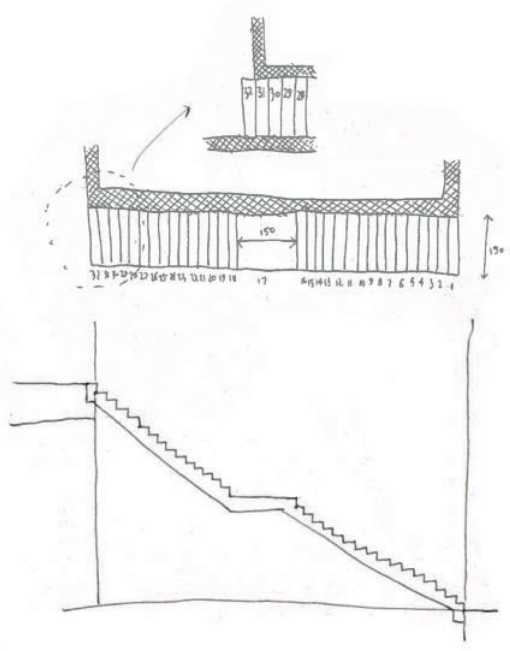




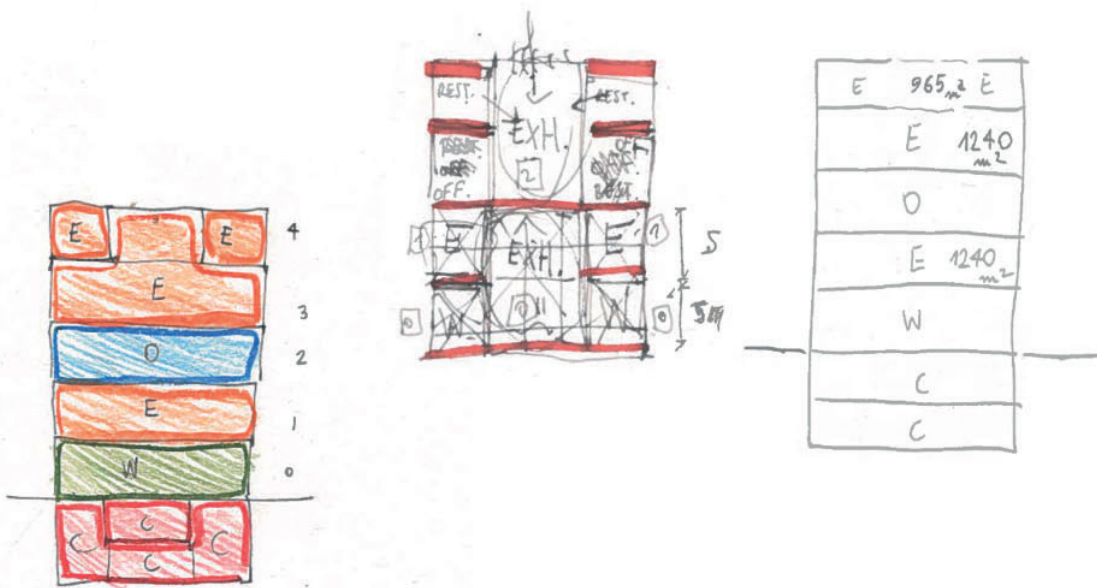
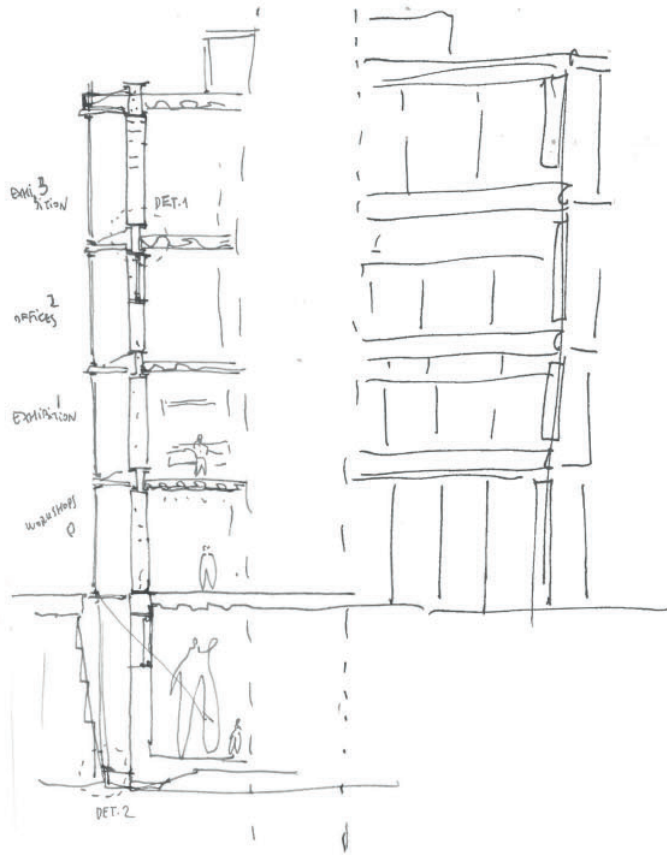


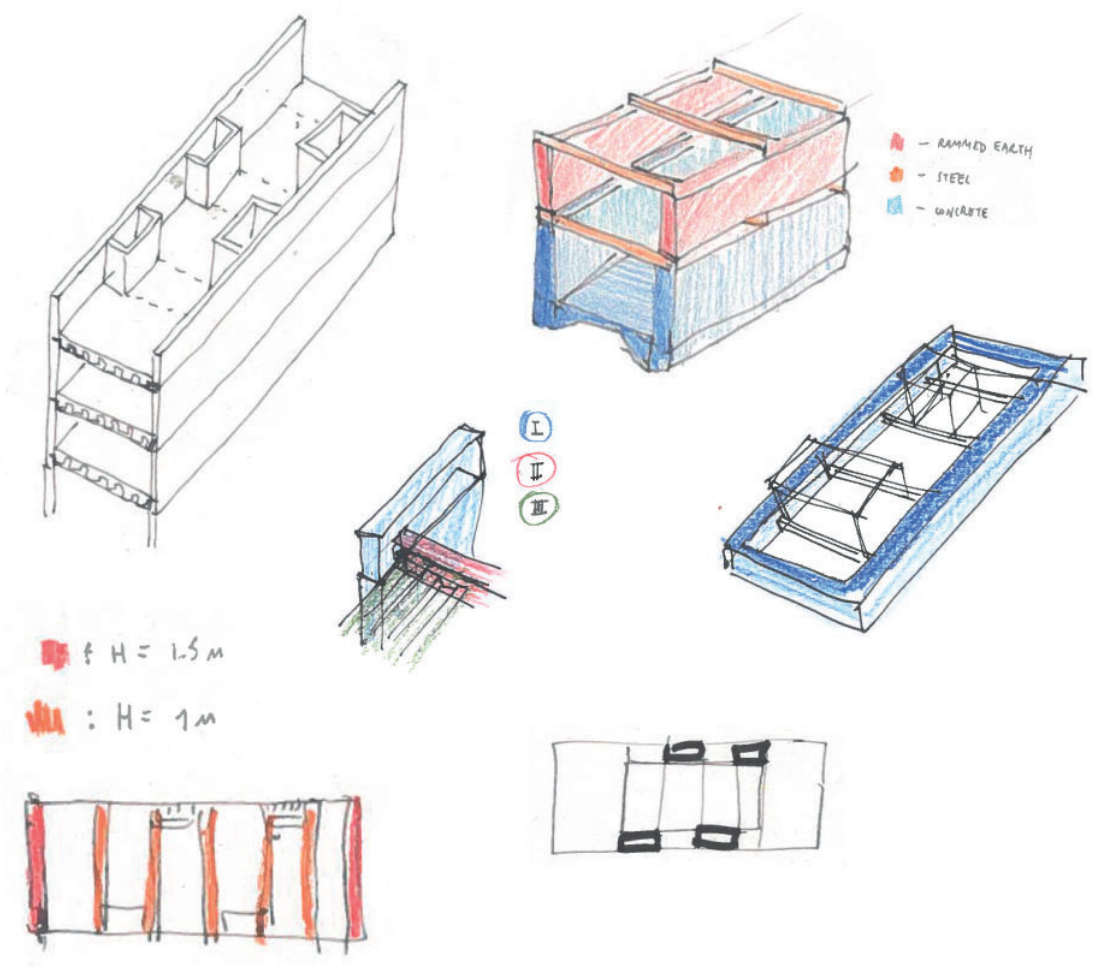


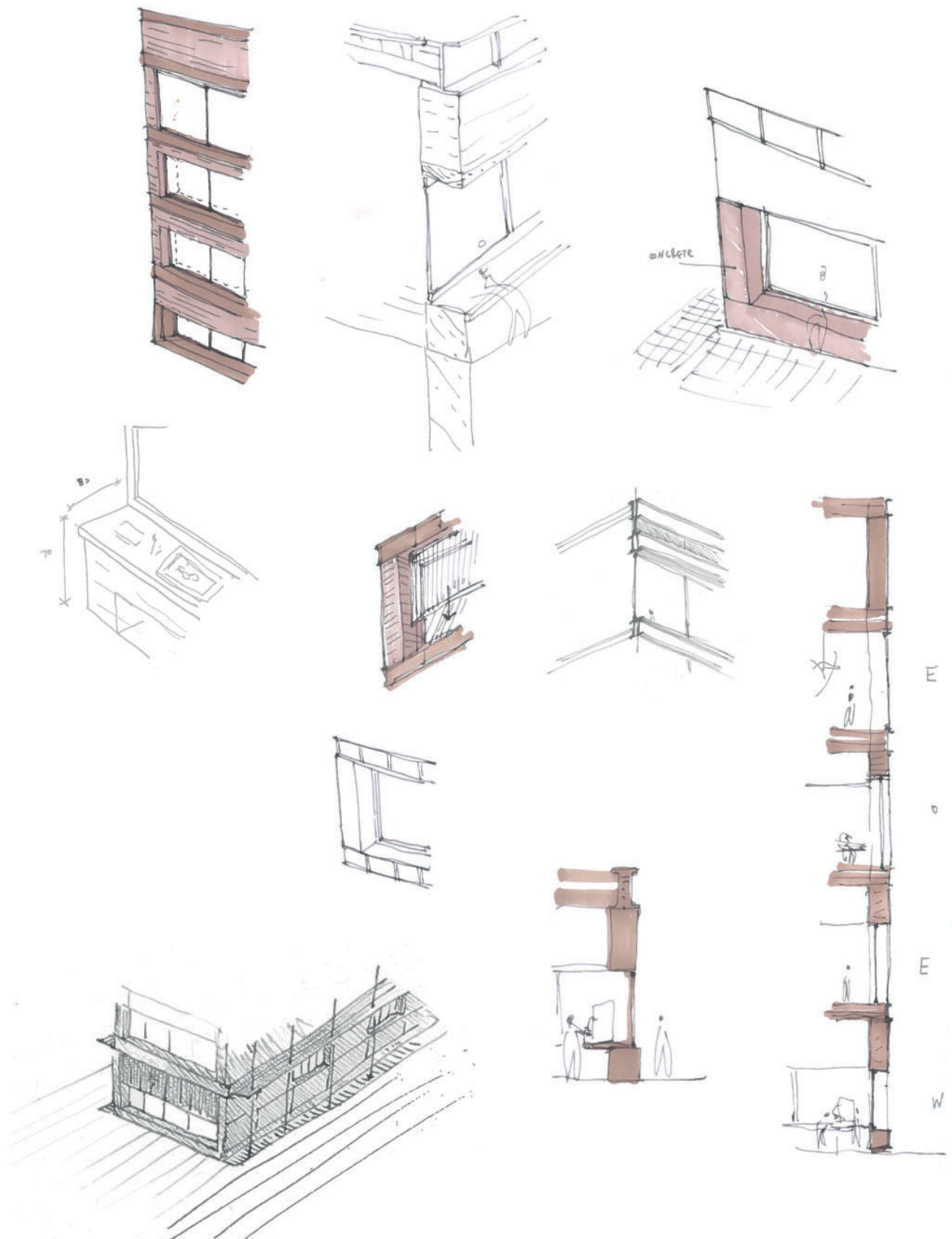




$24 + 5 = 63$



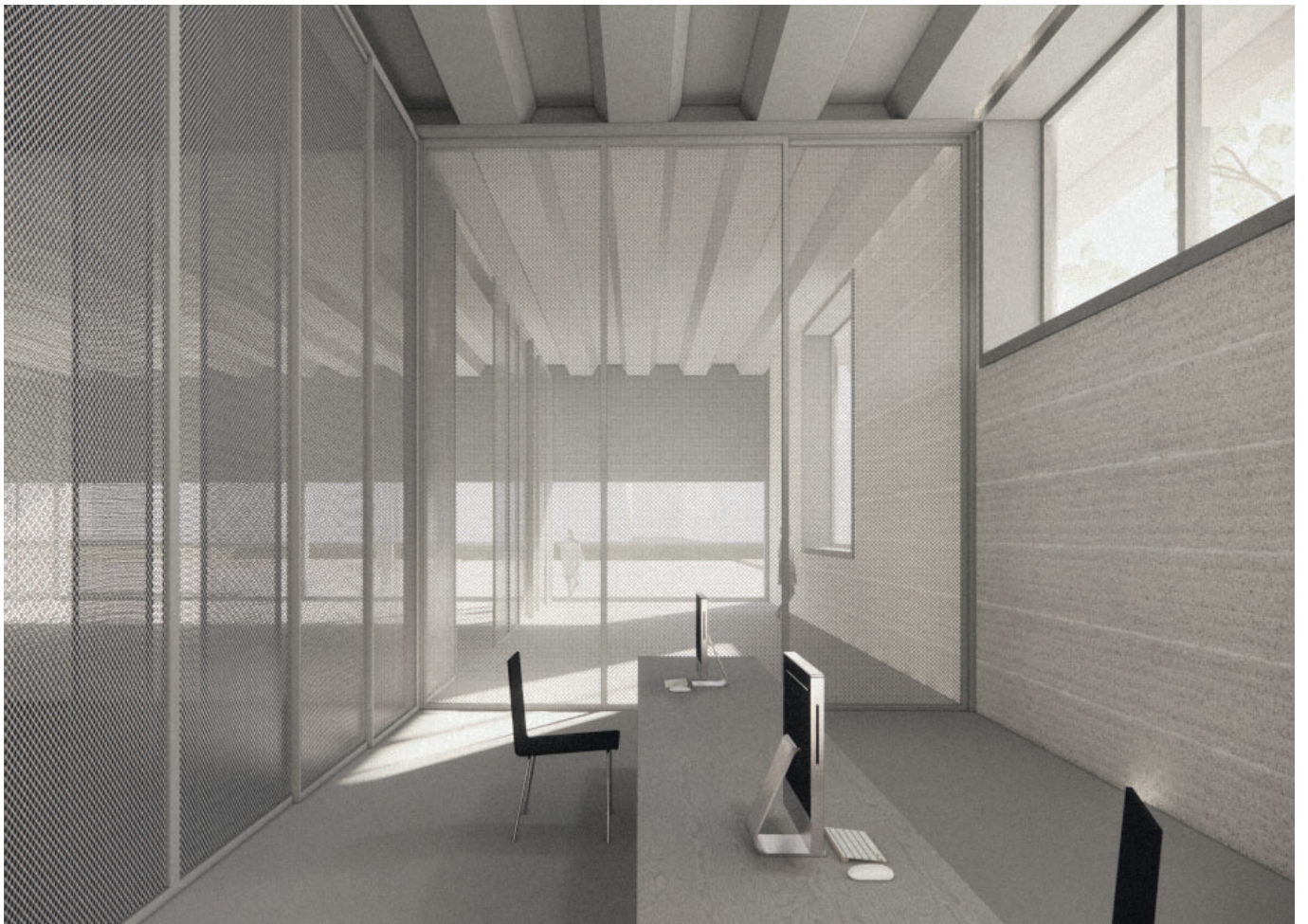




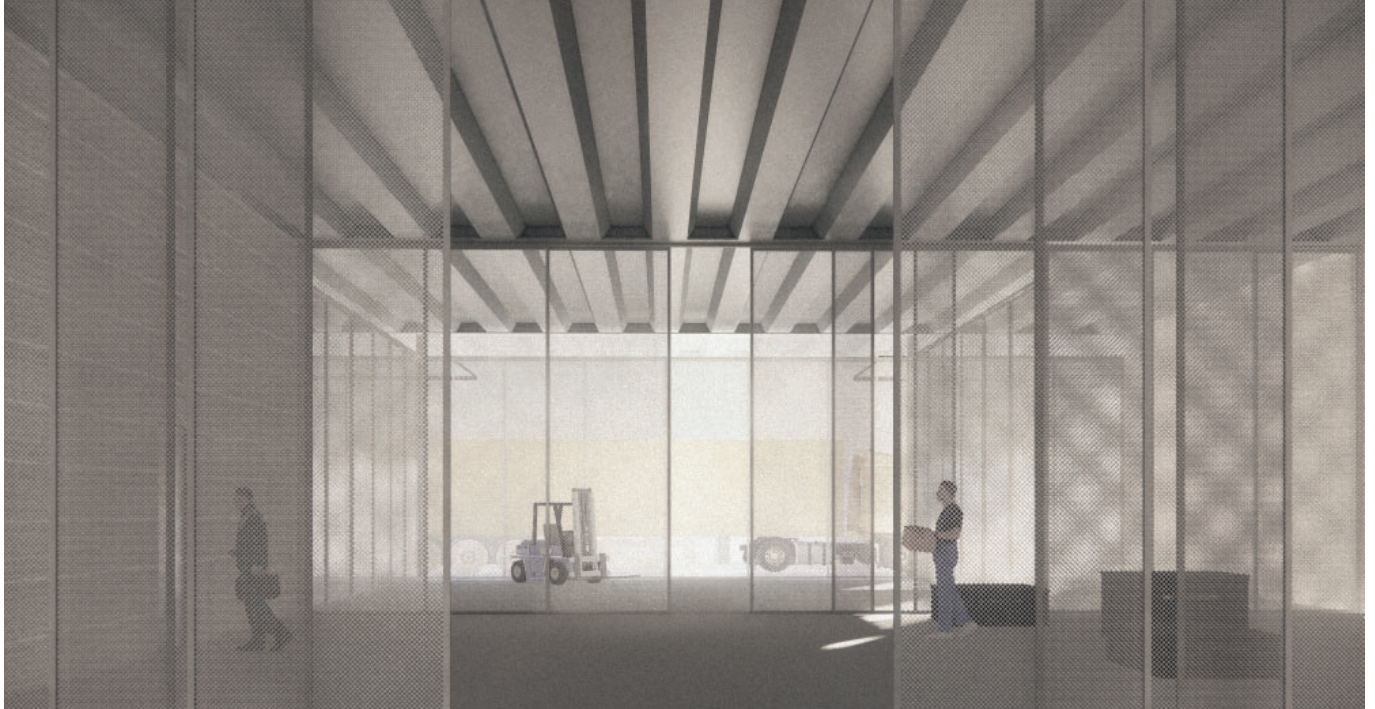


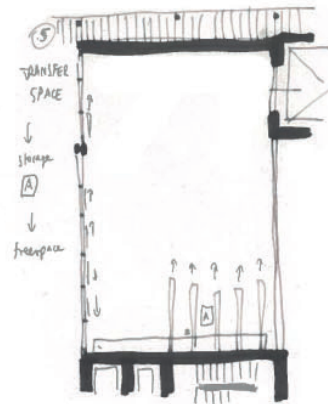
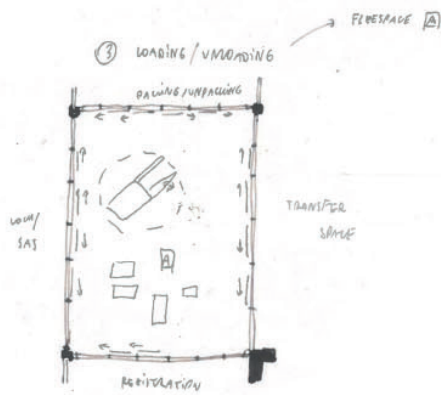
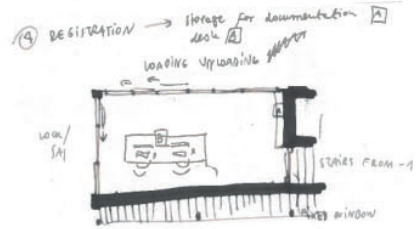
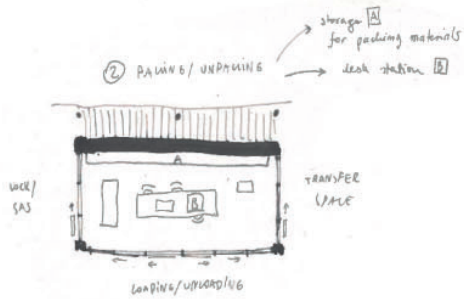
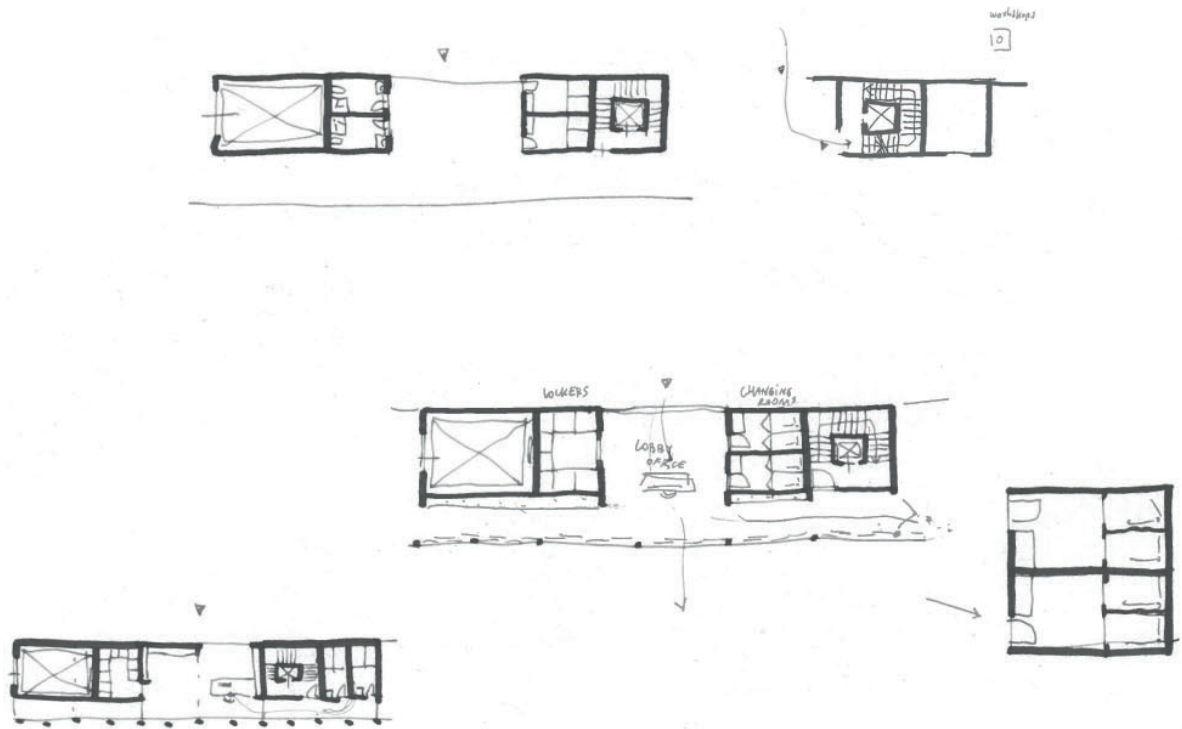


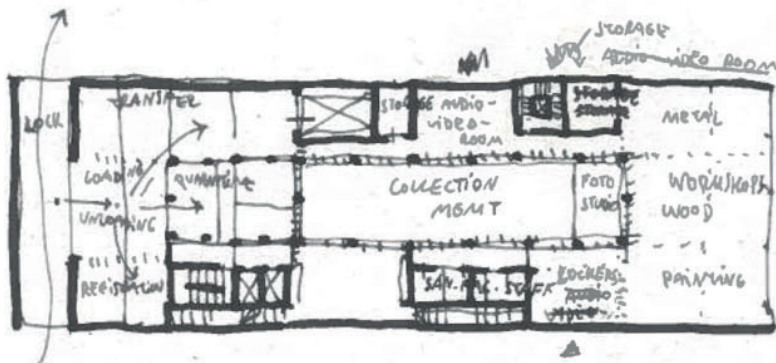




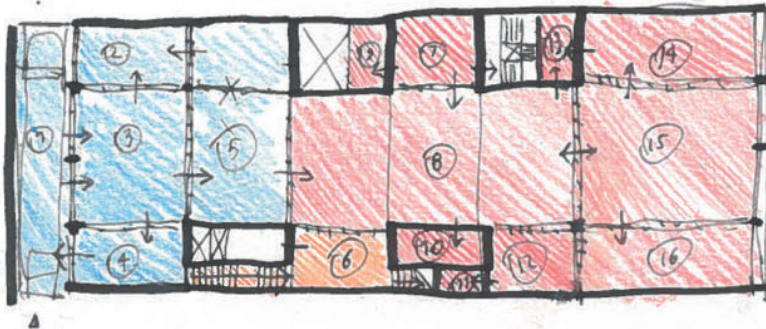








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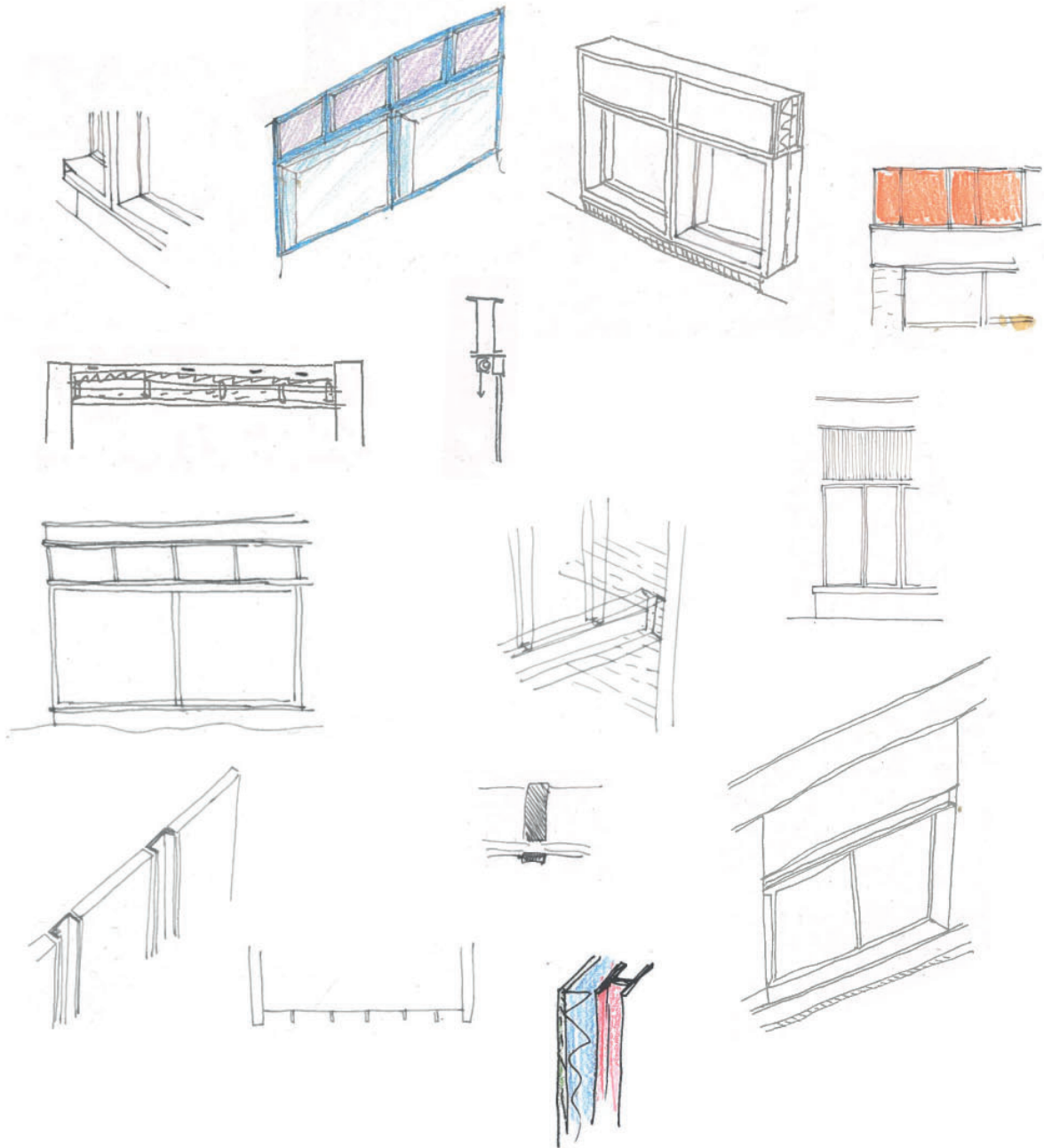
0 → TOTAL: 1280 m<sup>2</sup>  
(without elevators & shaftcores)

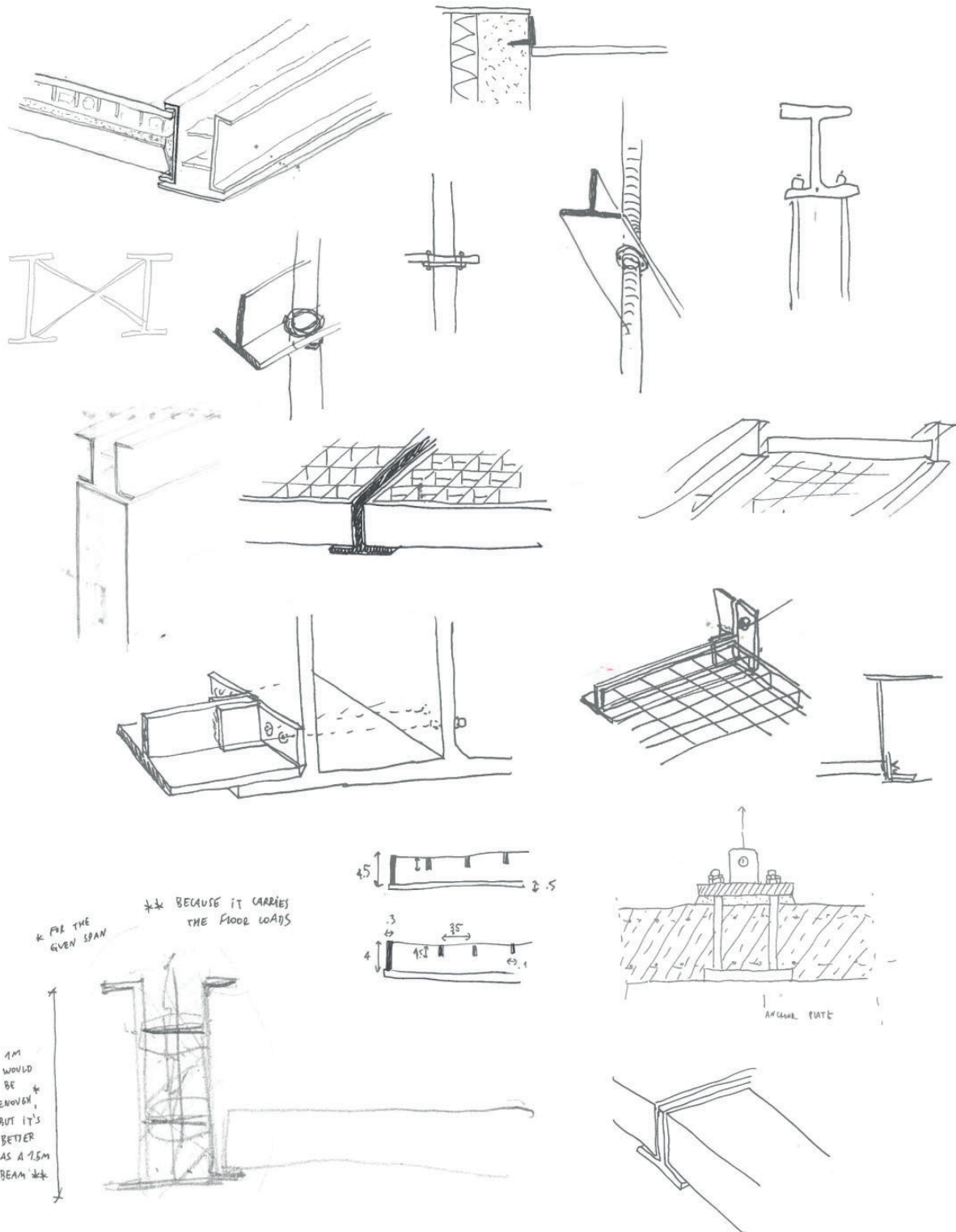
1. lock/sas	100 m <sup>2</sup>	- (29 m <sup>2</sup> )
2. zone for packing/unpacking	45 m <sup>2</sup>	?
3. zone for loading/unloading	110 m <sup>2</sup>	- (10 m <sup>2</sup> )
4. registration/maintenance	45 m <sup>2</sup>	?
5. transfer space/quarantine	155 m <sup>2</sup>	- (105 m <sup>2</sup> )
6. zone for visitors	45 m <sup>2</sup>	?
7. entrance/reception for staff	45 m <sup>2</sup>	?
8. collection management	325 m <sup>2</sup>	+ (28 m <sup>2</sup> )
9. lockers for staff/changing rooms	15 m <sup>2</sup>	✓
10. toilets for staff	25 m <sup>2</sup>	- (35 m <sup>2</sup> )
11. storage	10 m <sup>2</sup>	
12. audio- and video-room	45 m <sup>2</sup>	+ (15 m <sup>2</sup> )
13.	15 m <sup>2</sup>	
14. painting workshop	70 m <sup>2</sup>	- (10 m <sup>2</sup> )
15. wood workshop	160 m <sup>2</sup>	✓
16. metal workshop	70 m <sup>2</sup>	✓

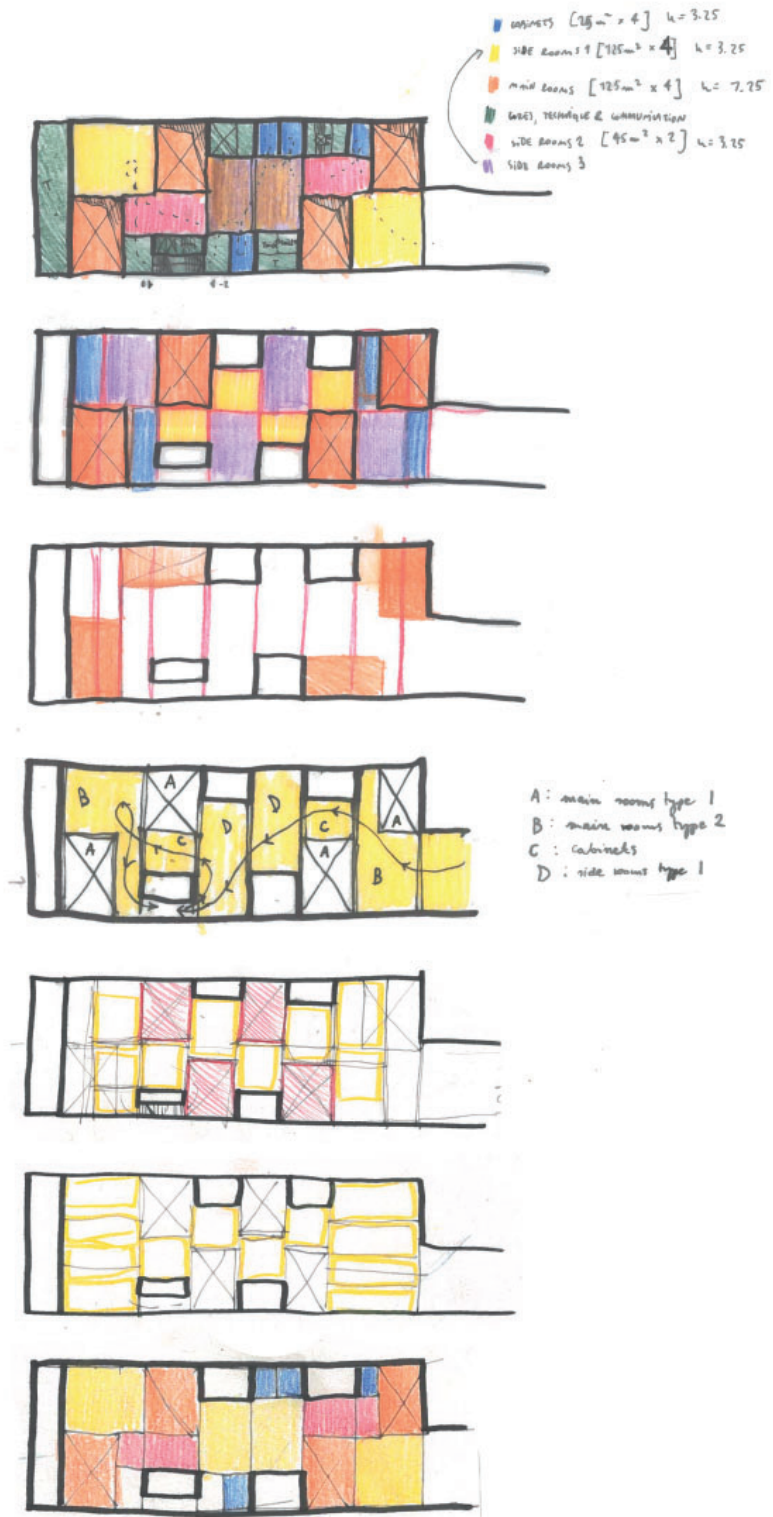
- BACK-OFFICE ART HANDLING  
455 m<sup>2</sup>  
- (104 m<sup>2</sup>)
  - BACK-OFFICE COLLECTION MGMT  
325 m<sup>2</sup>  
+ (28 m<sup>2</sup>)
  - BACK-OFFICE WORKSHOPS  
370 m<sup>2</sup>  
- (5 m<sup>2</sup>)
  - BACK-OFFICE STAFF ROOMS  
85 m<sup>2</sup>  
+ (85 m<sup>2</sup>)
- +/ (4 m<sup>2</sup>)



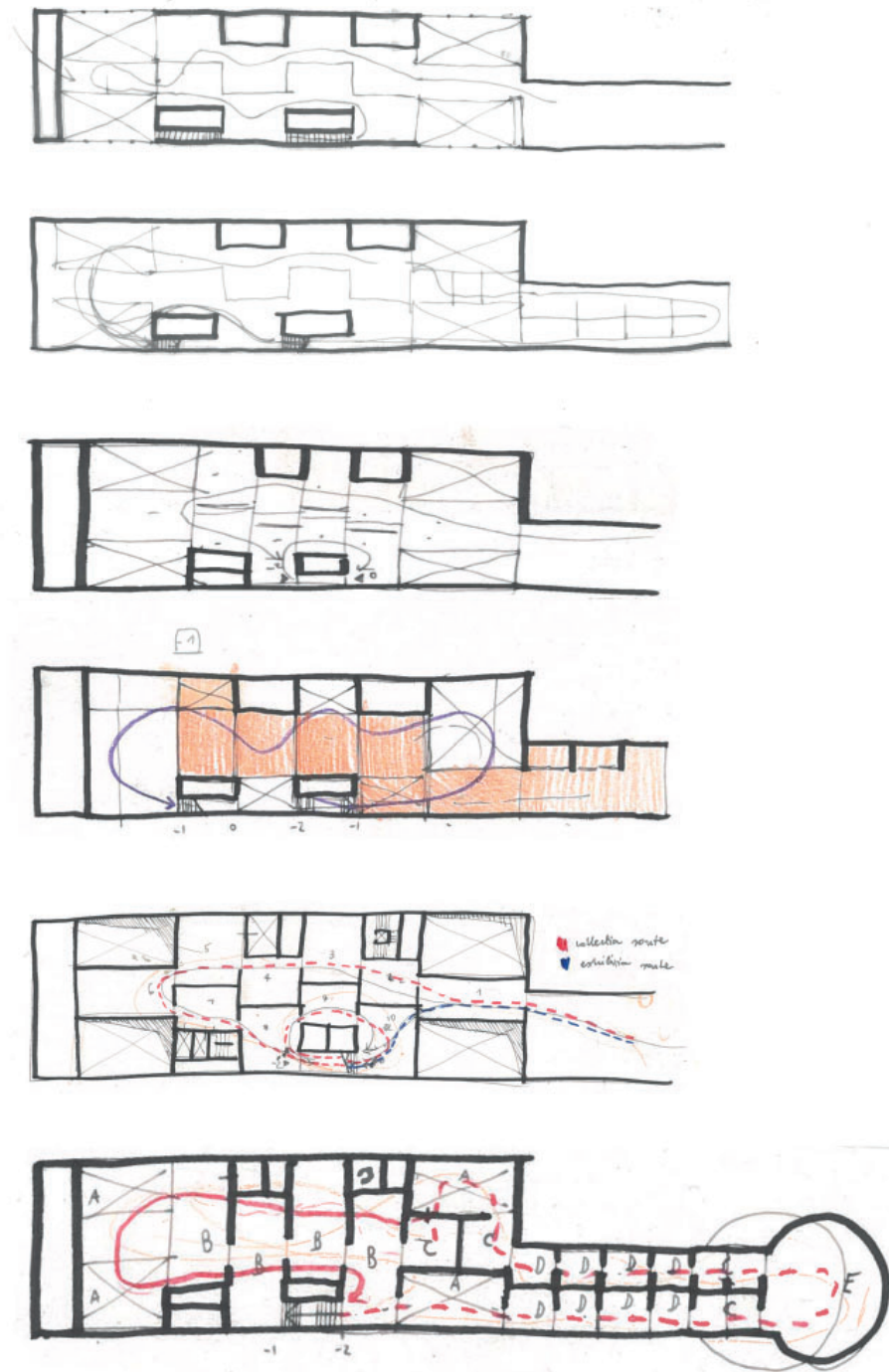


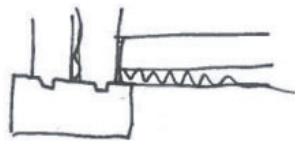
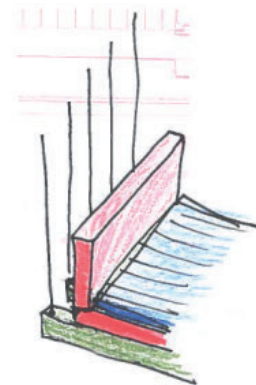
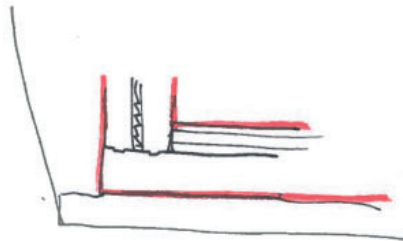
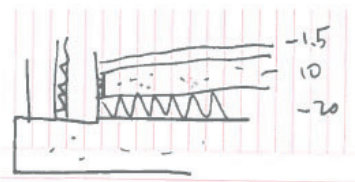
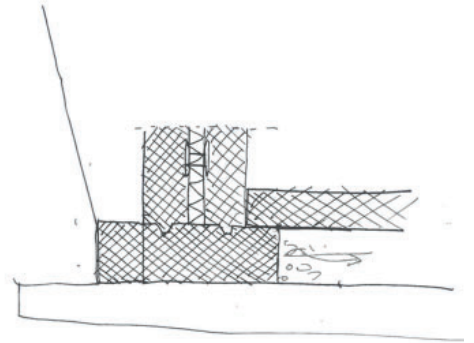
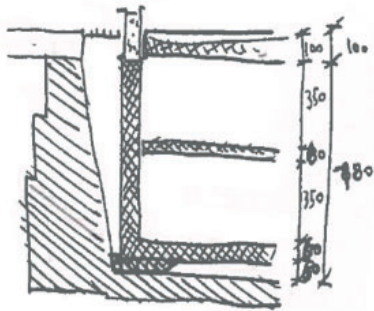
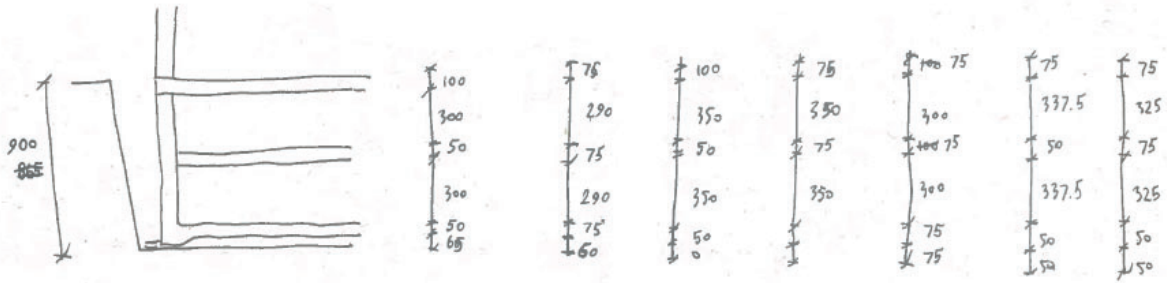


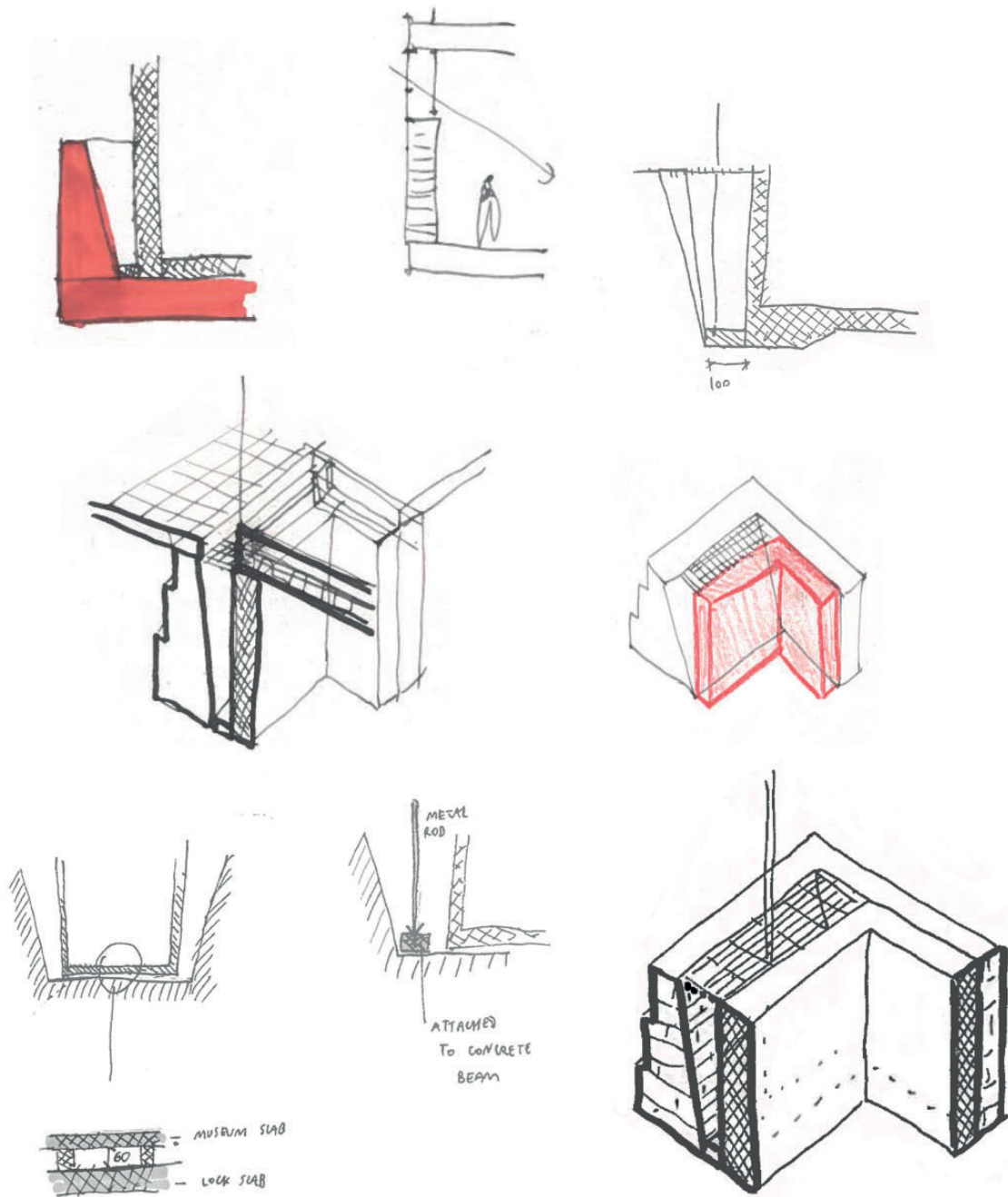


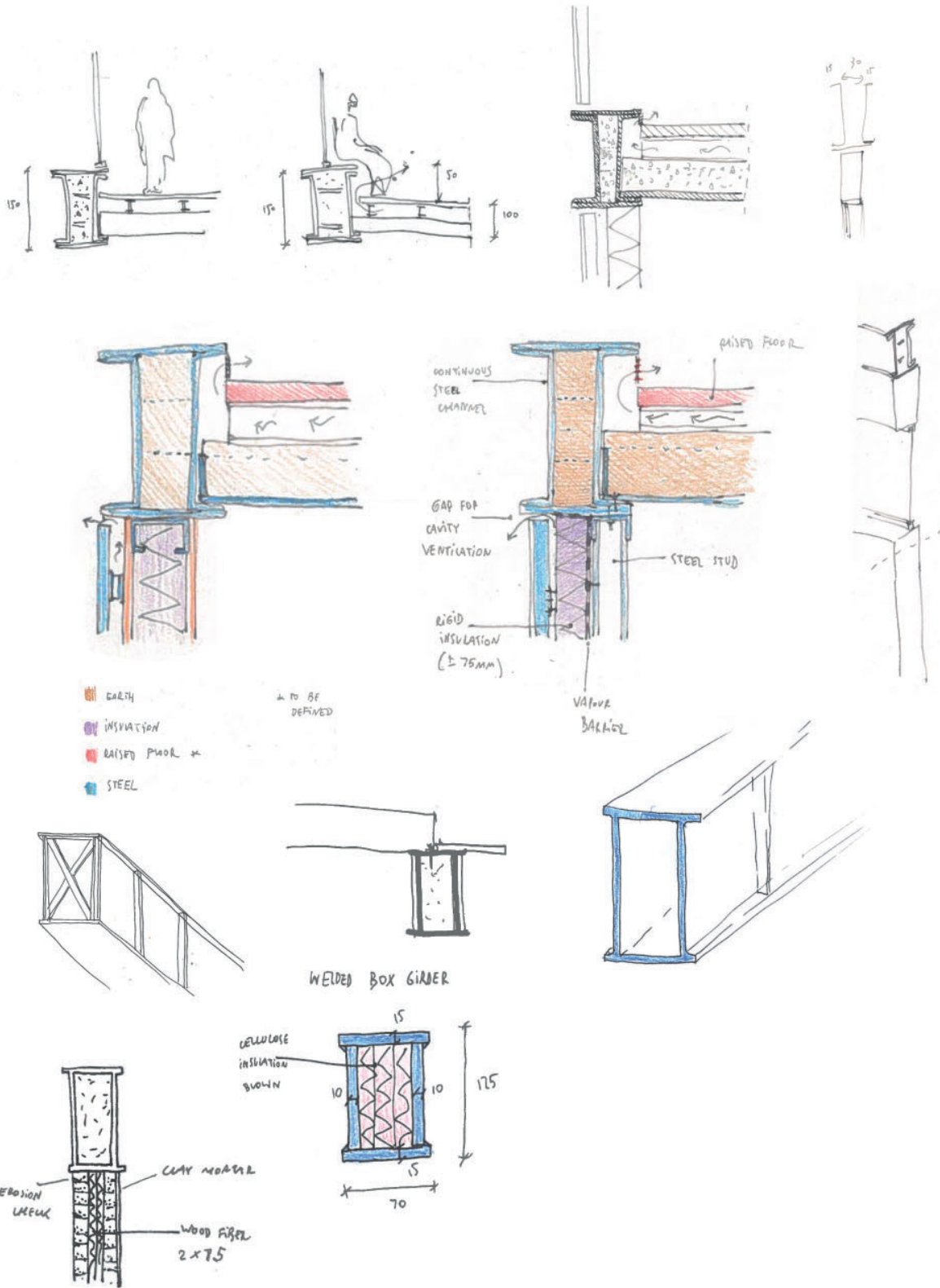


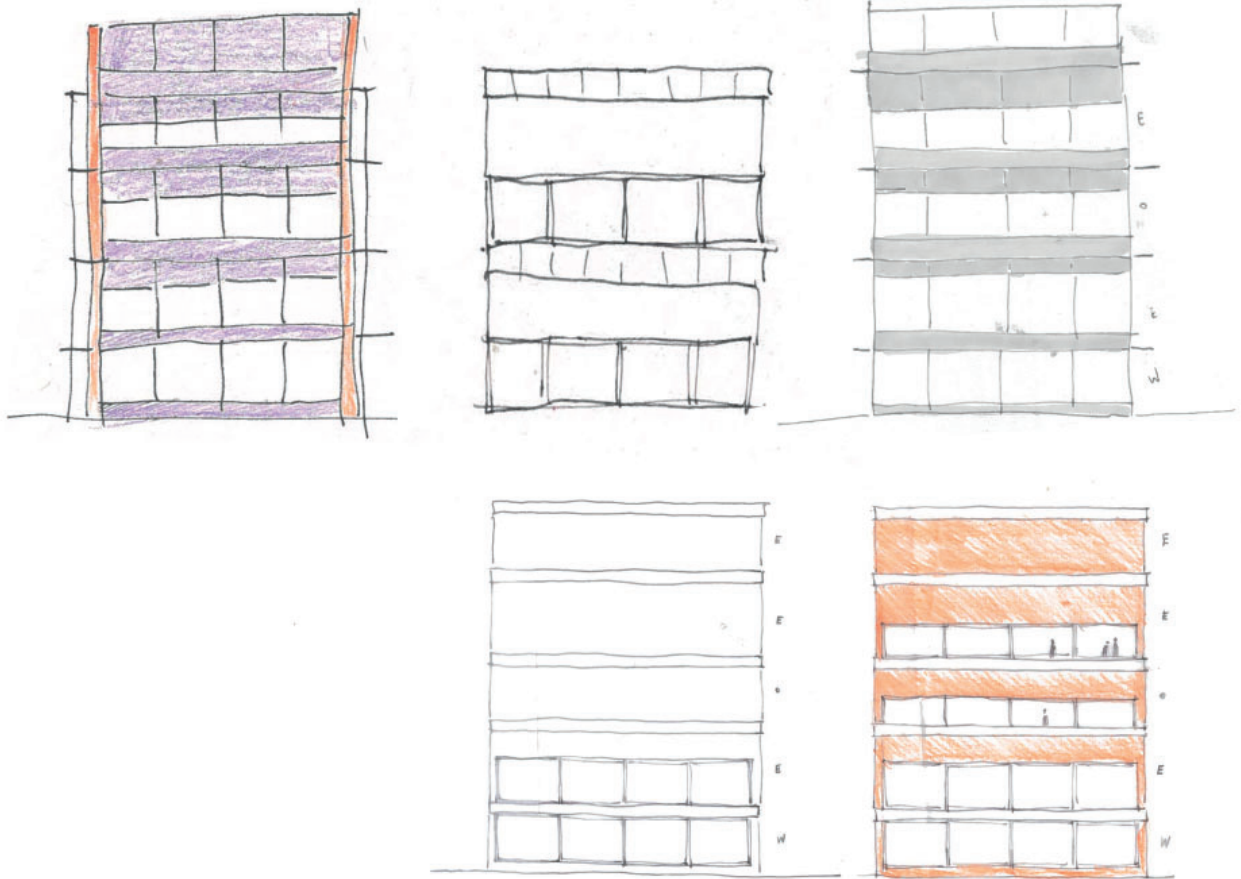


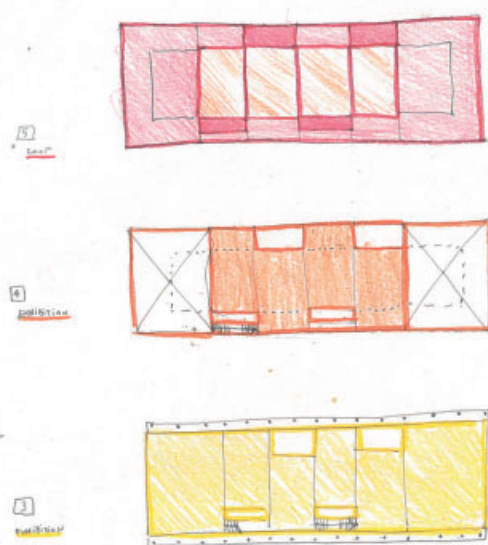
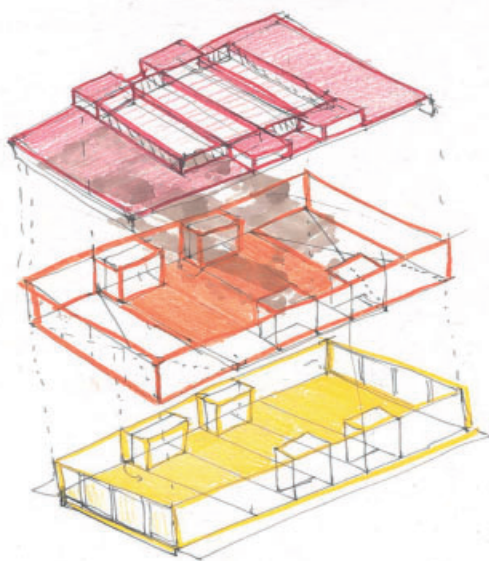
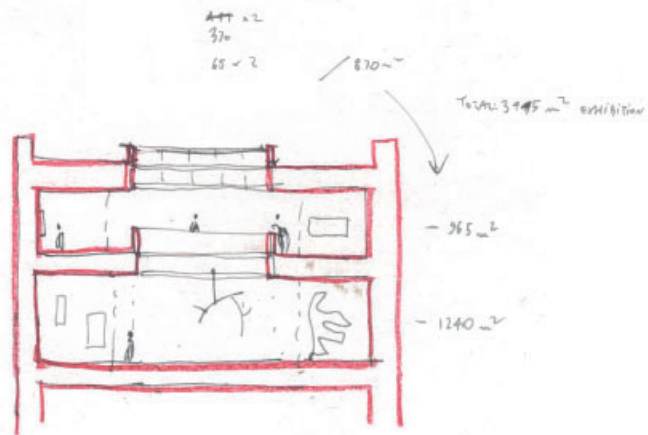
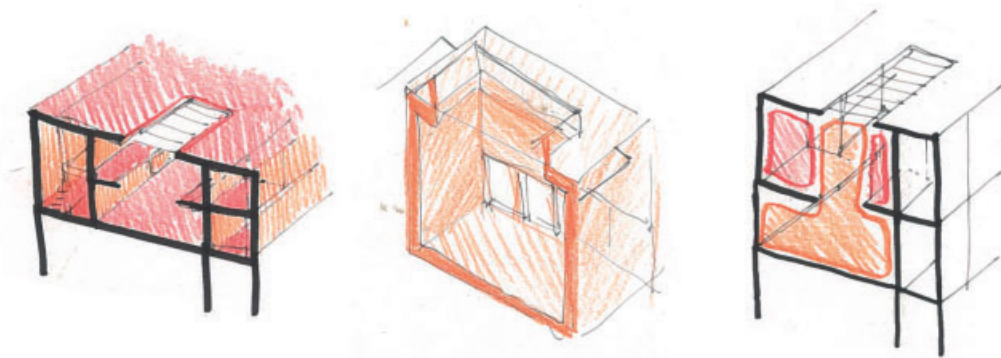


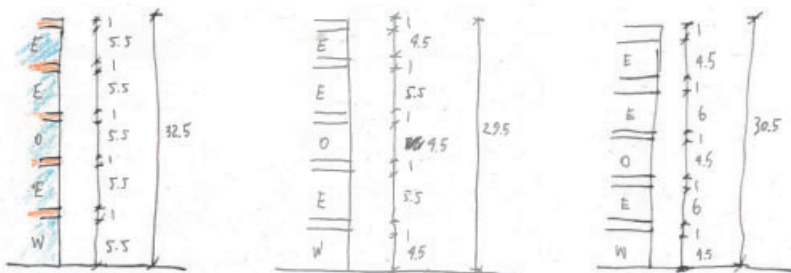
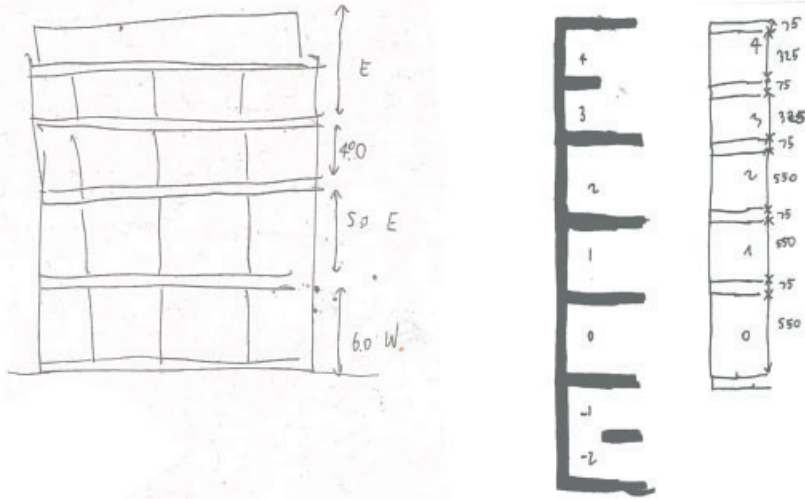


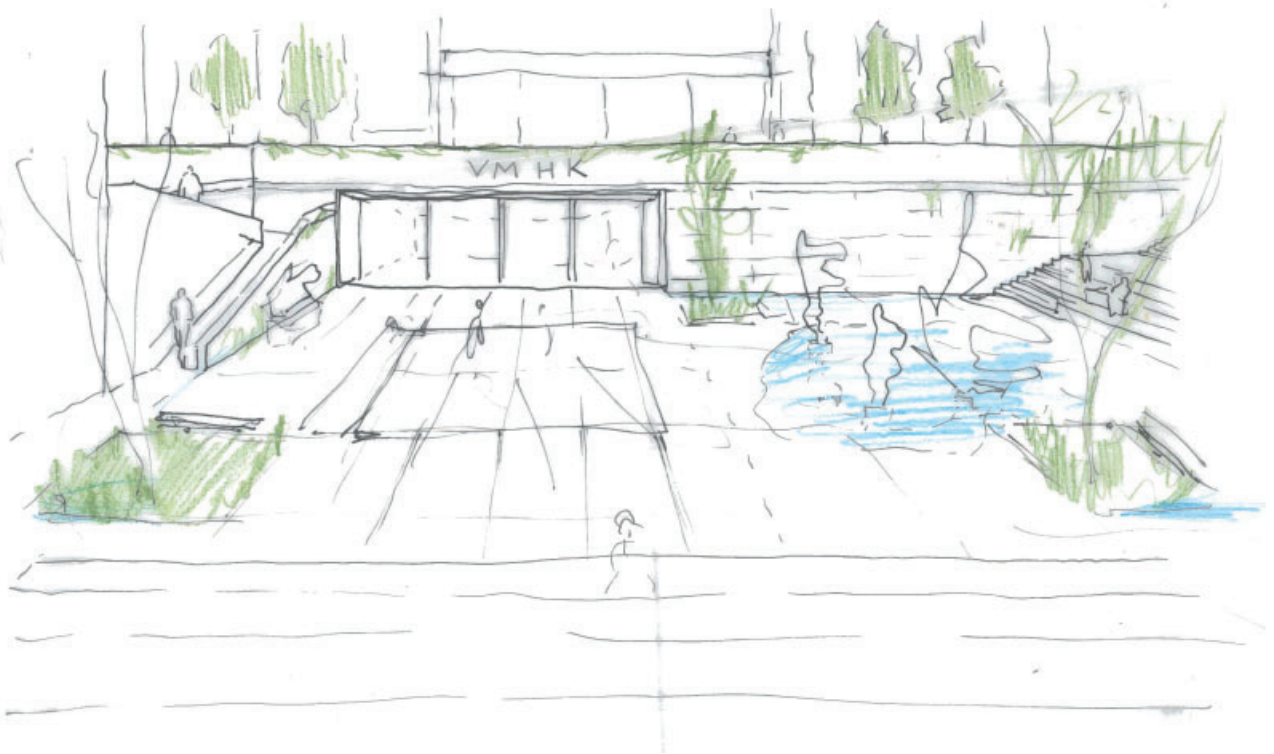




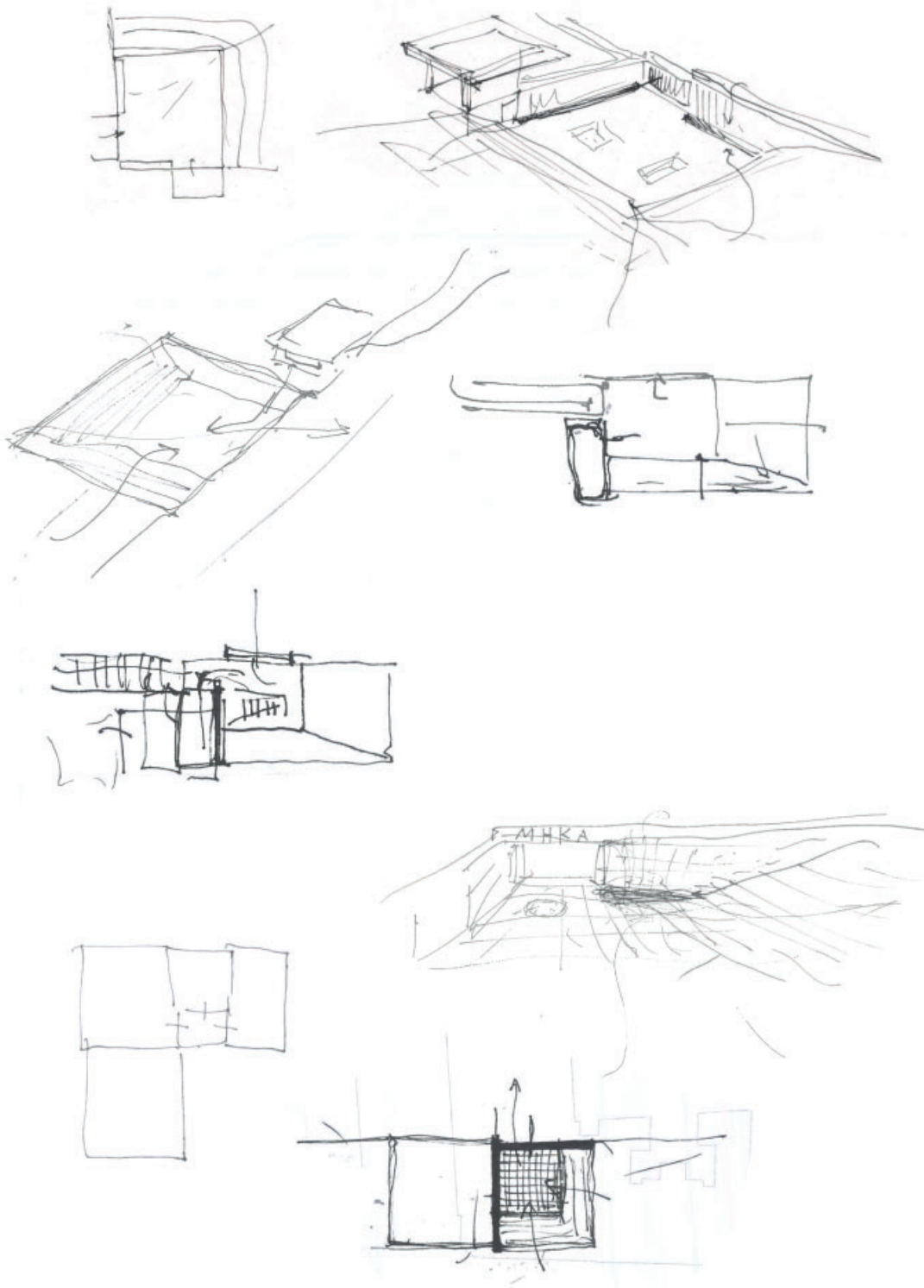




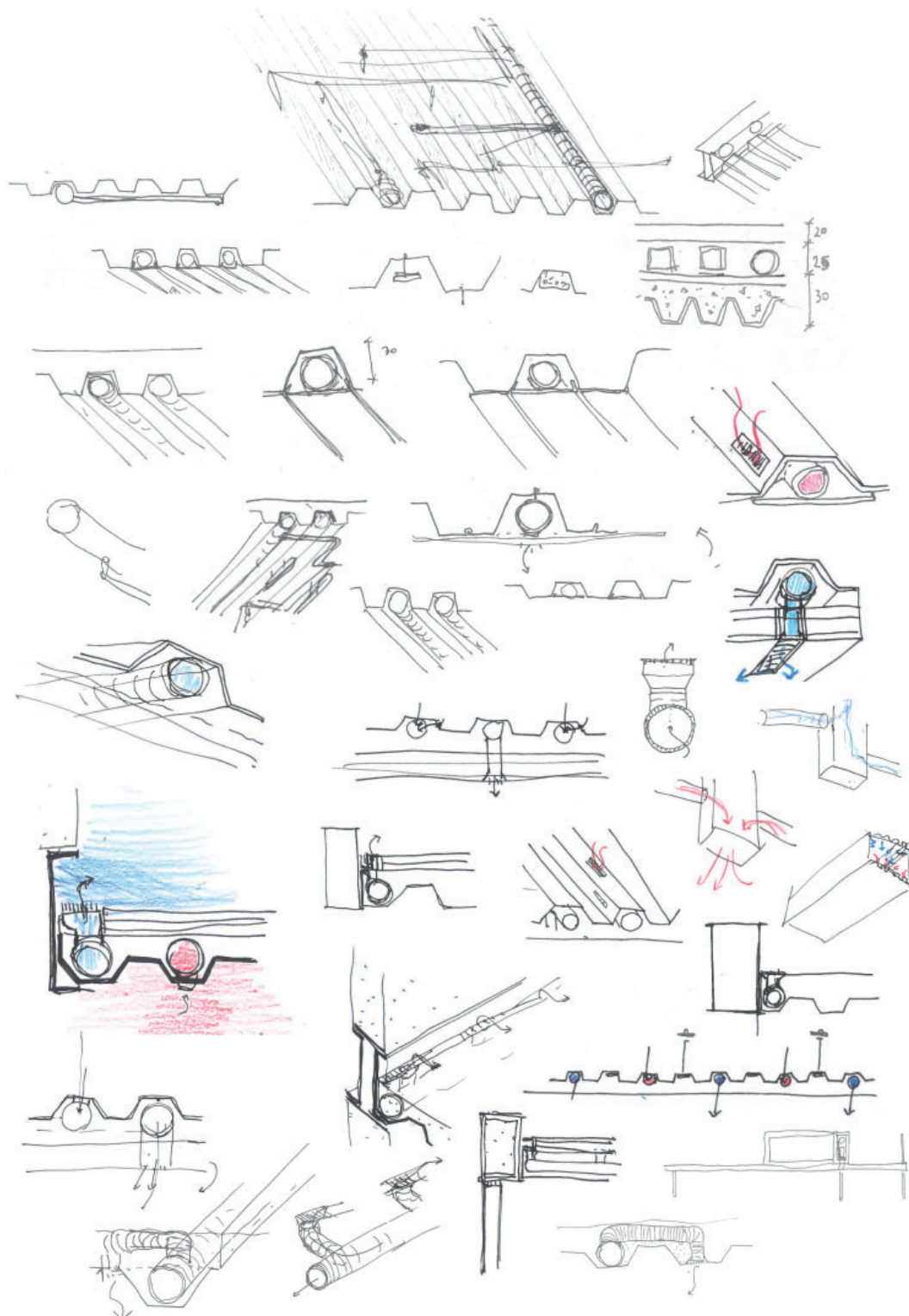












P4.

### I. MUSEUMS [MUSEOLOGICAL CONTEXTS]

- ORIGINS OF MUSEUM → KUNSTKAMER
- [EVILIST CULTURE, COLLECTORISM]
- HOW DOMESTIC INTERIORS FORMED THE CHARACTER OF MUSEUM SPACES → CHIPPEDFIELD
- INSTITUTIONALISM AND MONUMENTALITY → MUSEUM PASADEJ
- INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE → INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE CHANGE IN ART AND POSITION TOWARDS MUSEUMS, RELATIONSHIP WITH PUBLIC

### II. M. HKA

- ART SCENE IN ANTWERP IN 603
- ART AS PROCESS CHANGE IN PERCEPTION OF ARTITSELF
- M HKA - ORIGINS [PAST]
- M HKA - FROM ANTI-MUSEUM TO INSTITUTION [PRESENT]
- M HKA - ASPIRATIONS [FUTURE]
- BRIEF AS A SUGGESTION OF MONUMENTAL INSTITUTION

### III. POSITION

- ANTI-INSTITUTION, ANTI-MONUMENTAL MUSEUM.
- OPEN TO PUBLIC
- ROOTED IN PLACE
- OPEN RESPECTING THE CONTEXT
- THE FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
- RESPECTING THE NEEDS OF THE BRIEF

- REFUSE THE COLLECTORISM.
- MUSEUM AS A DISPLAY & GO PRODUCTION SITE

### IV. CONTEXT

- ANTWERP
- CHANGING THE SITE
- THE NEIGHBOURHOOD'S VIBE
- CRITIQUE OF COURTHOUSE
- ART SCENE IN ANTWERP ZUID
- ZUIDERBOKKEN [FULL STORY]

### V. PROJECT

- MAX. COMPRESSING BUILDING ON SITE
- REDISTRIBUTING THE PROGRAMME IN THE PARK
- EXPOSING THE LOCK & THE DOCKS
- REUSING SOIL FOR THE BUILDING
- BUILDING ON SITE: ART-RELATED
- REST OF THE FUNCTIONS: PUBLIC, IN THE DARK
- FORUM - SQUARE
- FORUM: ENTRANCE TO THE MUSEUM, ACCESSIBILITY, SCENARIOS, EXPOSED DOCK WALL
- AROUND FORUM: UNDERGROUND FUNCTIONS, LANDSCAPE, SKYLIGHTS PATIOS, PAVILION.
- MUSEUM BUILDING: ENTRANCE THROUGH THE LOCK → COLLECTION → WORKSHOPS → EXHIBITION → OFFICE/EDU → EXHIBITION
- MATERIALITY: ANTWERP'S SOIL, STRUCTURE, CLIMATE (...)

### VII. REFLECTION

- COMPARISON TO OTHER PROJECTS FROM OUR GROUP

RELATION WITH CITY  
 GROUND FLOOR WORKSHOPS  
 WINDOWS - VITRINES  
 FORUM - SQUARE  
 HEIGHT OF THE BUILDING  
 ACCESSIBILITY [FORUM]  
 VIEWS - RIVER & PARK  
 WINDOW SIZES  
 PUBLIC EXPERIENCE OF THE PROJECT  
 INDUSTRIAL CHARACTER [HARBOUR]

RELATION WITH LANDSCAPE  
 SUNKEN PATIOS  
 SKYLIGHT - BENCHES  
 LIGHT IN THE UNDERGROUND  
 DESCENT  
 WATER HARVESTING  
 RAINWATER IN THE PARK  
 SEASONALITY

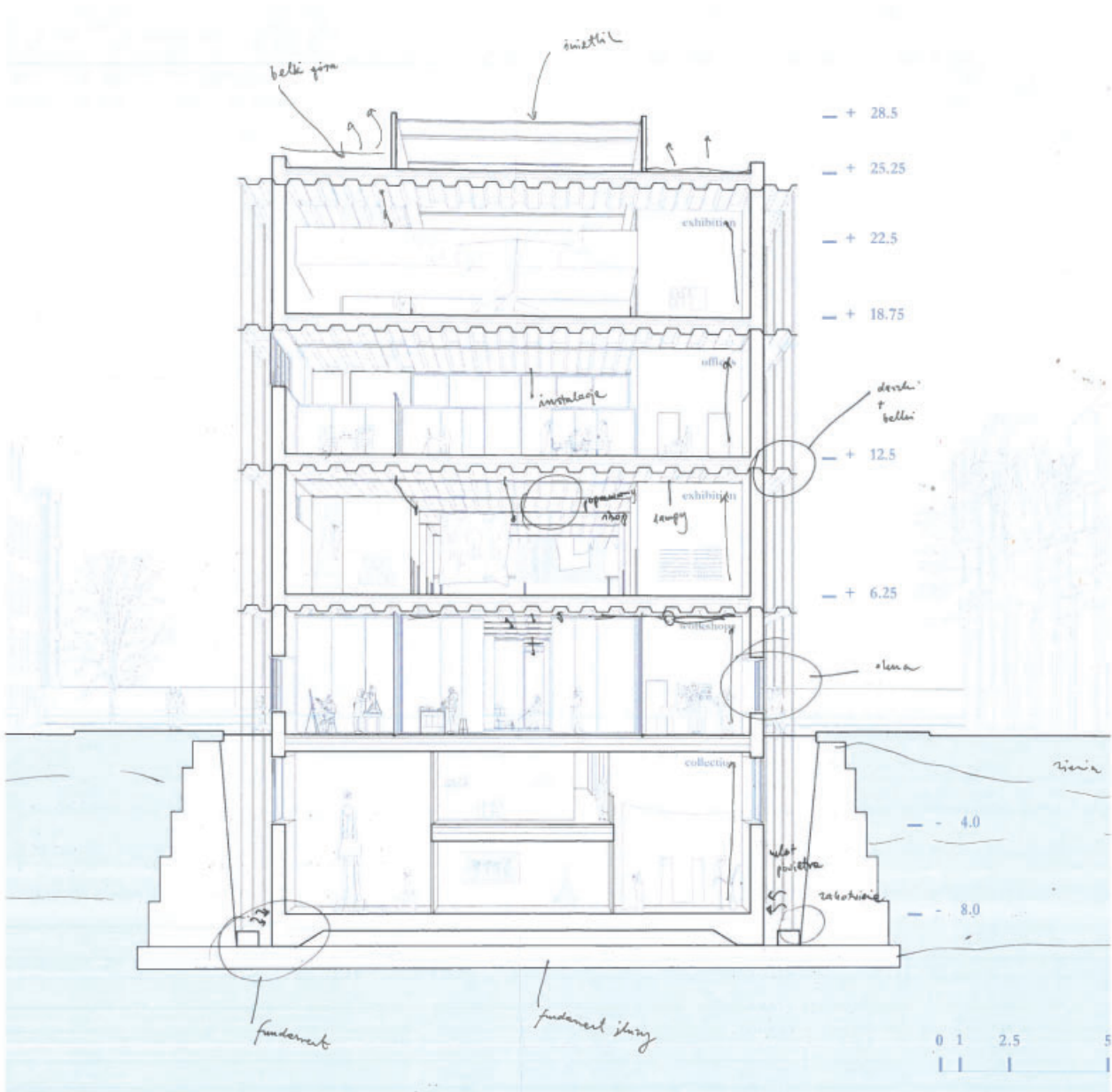
ORGANISATION OF THE MUSEUM  
 OUTDOOR FORUM  
 ENTRANCES  
 PATH FOR: VISITORS, STAFF, PUBLIC, ART  
 GRADATION OF PUBLIC SPACES  
 SERVICES: AIR, HEATING, COOLING, WATER, LIGHT

SOIL  
 • RELATION BETWEEN VOID AND VOLUME  
 SOIL SPECIFICATIONS ON SITE  
 SPECIFIC STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLE  
 THICKNESS OF WALLS  
 - CAVITIES FOR FUNCTIONS (BENCHES, SHELVES)  
 - HEATING (THERMAL MASS, PIPES)  
 - ACOUSTIC PROPERTIES  
 - MOISTURE ABSORBANCE  
 - STRUCTURE  
 RELATION OF SOIL & STEEL  
 SOURCE CHAIN  
 HANGING ARTWORKS  
 IN SITU OR CONSTRUCTION

P4

RELATION WITH HERITAGE  
 EXCAVATED LOCK & DOCKS -  
 SITE-SPECIFICITY  
 EXPOSED WALLS IN THE PATIOS  
 EXPOSED WALLS IN CONNECTION ROOMS

RELATION WITH ART  
 FREESPACE EXHIBITIONS  
 "SPECIFIC WHITE CUBE" APPROACH  
 SHOWING THE PROCESS  
 ART IN LANDSCAPE  
 COLLECTION - ALTERNATION OF SMALL & BIG SPACES  
 GRADATION IN THE BUILDING



**What is the relation between your graduation project topic, your master track (Ar, Ur, BT, LA, MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?**

In my Graduation Plan, delivered for the P2 presentation, I described the project topic and its relevance in a larger framework as follows:

*The project opens up the potential of re-imagining the typology of the museum in a specific spatial, historical, social, environmental context (...), on a scale from the structure of a developing urban district to the intimate interior. Seen not only from the perspective of a design task, but also as an ongoing research, it provides a valuable case study and a voice in the ongoing discourse of the ways in which public buildings, and the institutions they host, can influence the life of contemporary cities and react to the dynamics of societal changes.*

In retrospect, approaching the penultimate presentation, I still find this description relevant. Over the past few months, the collective research done at the beginning of the academic year has provided the basis and core for making decisions about the building's architecture, its role in the formation of the museum institution, what meaning it has for the city and the individual viewer, and - also - about topics such as responsibility towards the environment and the existing context. Reflections on the nature of the museum buildings (and particularly on the specific character of the contemporary art galleries) in present-day settings are part of the professional discourse towards which I am being prepared as part of my Master Programme.

**How did your research influence your design/recommendations and how did the design/recommendations influence your research?**

Graduation Studio Interiors Buildings Cities is based on a research-by-design strategy. In the initial phase of the course, as a group, we carried out collective theoretical research, which I would consider as a preparatory phase to gain knowledge and valuable background on the investigated topics of contemporary art and museum spaces.

However, the most substantial part of the process was the individual act of designing, which was also in itself research. This research started with the formulation of a general research question<sup>1</sup>, which was explored through design processes. In this case, research and design were in fact inquires, which were, and still are, inseparably linked.

**How do you assess the value of your way of working (your approach, your used methods, used methodology)?**

Contrary to what I anticipated in the beginning, and formulated in my report for P2, the methodology in this course revolved mostly around individual investigations. As stated earlier, those inquiries were very much centered around the design processes. As such, they were usually carried out by using methods such as drawing, model-making, hand-sketching.

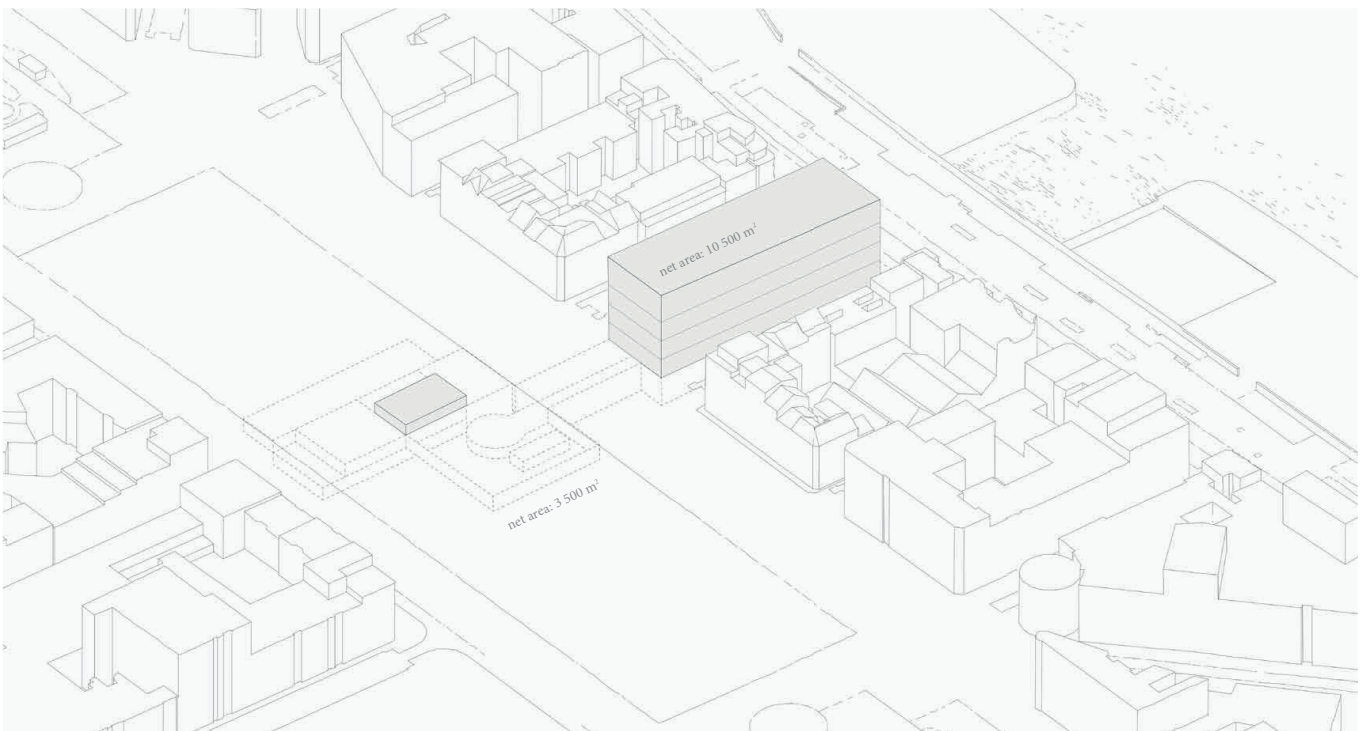
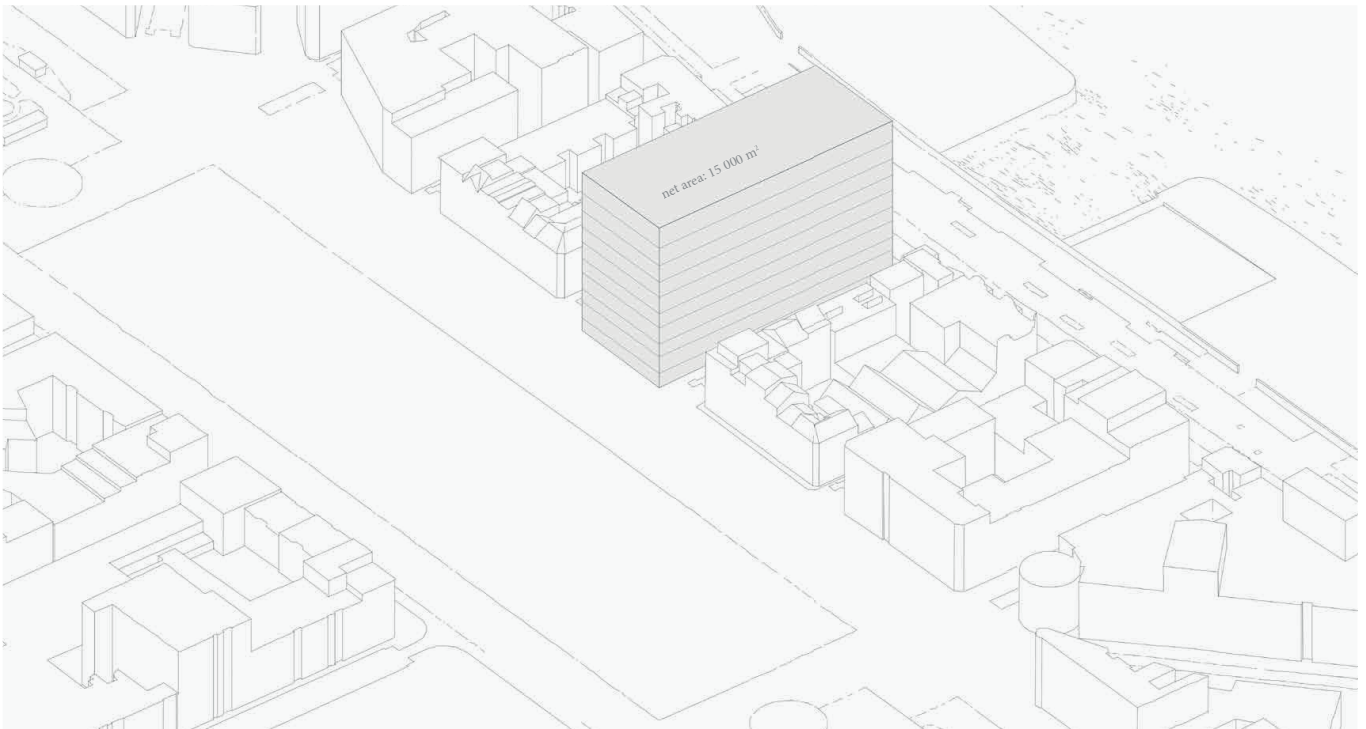
I feel that the working method at Interiors Buildings Cities studio is well suited for this kind of project. Thanks to the focus on design, the time spent on resolving the project was quite long, allowing time for conscious decision-making and a smooth progression of work, from the scale of the city to the interiors. This year's theme - Architecture for Art - is a very complex project, not only in terms of the challenging programme requirements, but also the specificity of the context. Personally, I needed time to arrive at a result that satisfied me and responded to my initial assumptions. There have been almost a dozen drafts and each of them, although imperfect and problematic, has taught me something and opened my eyes to new issues. With the benefit of hindsight, I consider the whole process, including all the mistakes

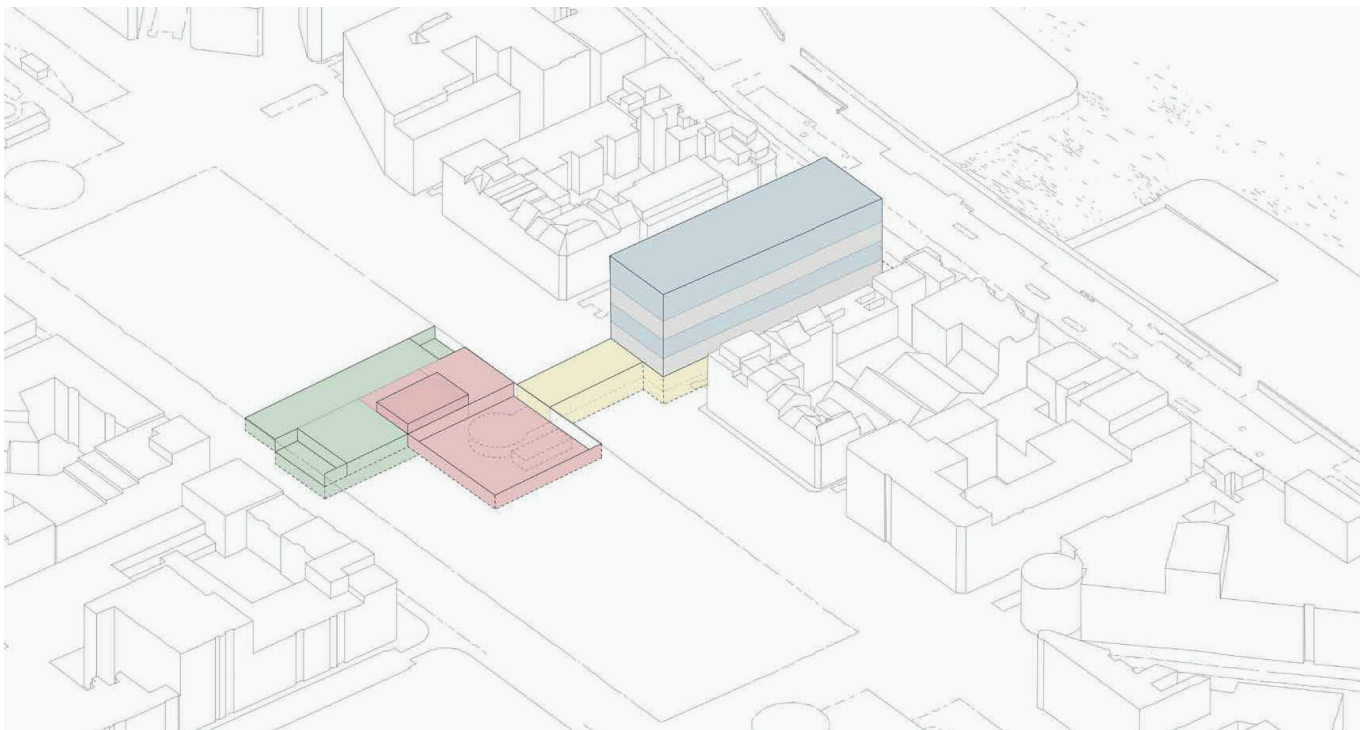
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<sup>1</sup> Research question, stated in the Graduation Plan: *how to create a contemporary museum that denies the monumental expression of the institution, but at the same time meets all the formal and technical requirements for the complex functioning of such a building typology?*











The process of designing a new building for M HKA, guided by the principles of anti-monumentality and a commitment to public engagement, led to a site-specific intervention centered around the excavation of the Zuiderdokken area. This intervention not only shaped the architectural expression but also aligned with the anti-institutional ethos of M HKA.

By excavating the docks and revealing the layers of history and memory buried beneath the surface, the design embraced an approach that challenged traditional notions of institutional grandeur. The act of unearthing and exposing these hidden elements symbolized a rejection of the conventional and a desire to create a museum that defied the established norms. It became a means of deconstructing the established power dynamics often associated with institutional spaces, offering an alternative perspective that celebrated inclusivity, accessibility, and the democratization of art.

In embracing the excavation of the Zuiderdokken area as a design strategy, the project celebrated the spirit of anti-institutionalism that defines M HKA. It represented a radical departure from conventional museum typologies, emphasizing the importance of engaging with the local context, reclaiming forgotten spaces, and creating an environment that fosters openness, exploration, and shared experiences. The excavation, as an integral part of the design process, reflected the commitment to challenging established norms, provoking critical discourse, and redefining the relationship between the museum and its visitors. It embodied the ethos of M HKA as an institution that not only displays art but actively engages with its audience, blurring the boundaries between art and life.

In summary, the decision to excavate the Zuiderdokken area as part of the design process for the new M HKA building not only created a unique architectural expression but also aligned with the anti-institutional ethos of the museum. It represented a deliberate departure from traditional notions of monumentality, embracing the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, and the democratization of art. The excavation became a powerful symbol of challenging established norms and fostering a deeper connection with the local context, embodying the spirit of anti-institutionalism that defines M HKA.

