

FALKIRK COMMUNITY LIBRARY



Unit 5

Transforming Scotland's Towns

Re-Thinking The High Street

Located in the central lowlands of Scotland, Falkirk was historically a crucial town for agriculture and manufacturing, which also connects to larger cities such as Edinburgh and Glasgow. Due to changes in retail and commercial patterns, the closure of retail shops caused a lack of variety and mobility in Falkirk's high street. This addresses the need to reintroduce new and diverse energies in the high street. Falkirk is also the social and economic centre to 20 nearby dependent towns. Hence, the revitalisation of the Falkirk High Street is crucial not only for the local community but for the wider region.

In a broader sense, the study of Falkirk town centre demonstrates the need for new purpose and vibrancy in many other high streets in Scotland today as they struggle to survive. With deserted town centres and automobile-dependent residential neighbourhoods, the call for the return of high-density living become more immediate.

02

According to USP figures, Falkirk has a significant number of residents who travel over 30 km to work and to study; these figures are much higher than other towns with more further education opportunities. The past of Falkirk has informed us of the momentous history of Technical institutes since the 1940s. It was until the 1960s when all of the four original trade training centres merged into a single Technical College, now known as the Forth Valley College. It is the only higher and further education institute in Falkirk today. We believe that education is the key catalyst of town regeneration since Falkirk has suffered from most of its population travelling beyond the town for work and study.

The project creates a lifelong learning hub that offers a diverse education and living experience. The area includes a community library, studio and workshop spaces, a theatre with housing and a student housing on top of an education and sports complex. Traffic and buses are rerouted into this area in order to bring people back into the High Street and reactivate the town centre.



Former Falkirk Bus Terminal



Retail on High Street



Callendar Riggs

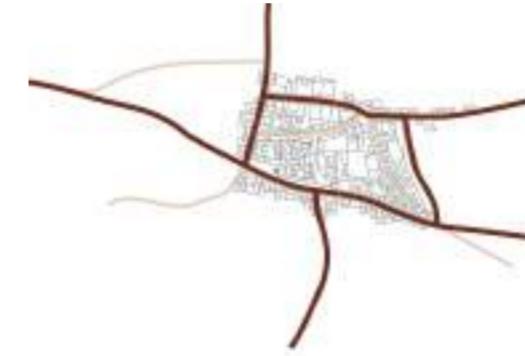
1. Research — Past, Present, Future

Past

We looked at the evolution of the landscape of the High Street due to our site's proximity to an extensive amount of green space. The theme of education also emerged as we found a constant emphasis on handcrafts and vocational education in Falkirk's past.



Changes in the boundary of green space



Evolution of the ring road



Hundred Years of Falkirk High Street

03



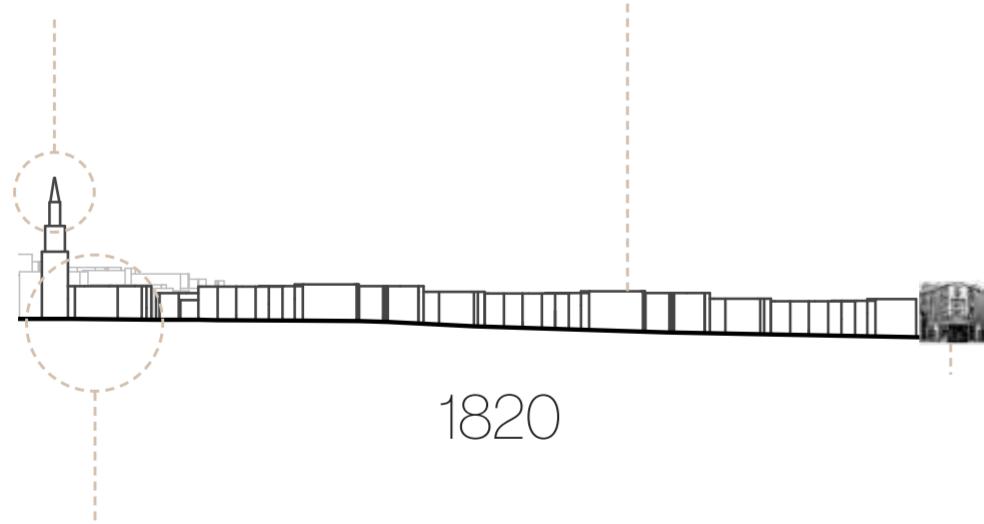
High Street Housing

Houses at the time was 2 to 3 storeys high, slated. Housing on some streets like Back Row were very irregularly built.



Town Steeple

The physical and cultural symbol of Falkirk. The first steeple was built in 1697. The current one dates from 1814, designed by Scottish architect David Hamilton.



1820

Old Market Place

Falkirk was a market town until the second half of 19th century. The centre of High Street was the site of markets, public proclamations, punishments and executions.

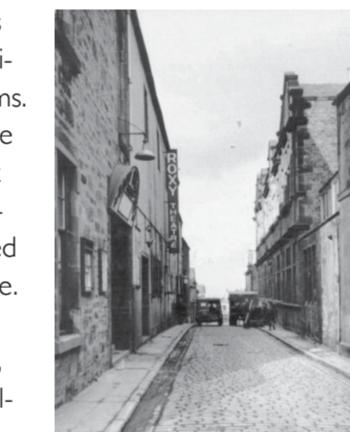


Tram station

There were two tramways in Falkirk, one ran round a circular route linking the outer parts of Falkirk from 1905 – 1936, and another service operated between High Street and Laurieston from 1909 – 1924.

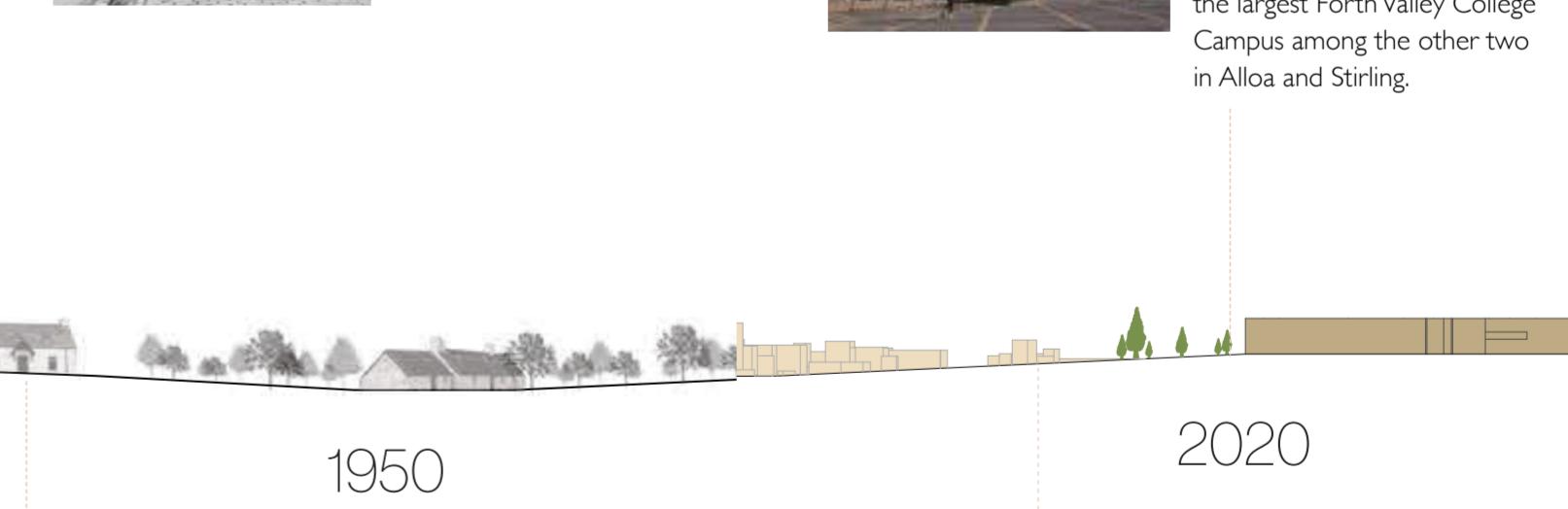


1890



Silver Row

This area used to be site of public buildings, e.g. St Francis Primary School, graveyard, private houses and Masonic Arms. The development programme in the late 1950s has brought closure and demolition to Silver Row, with the area replaced by Callendar Shopping Centre. Due to unpopularity, it was demolished in the late 1960s, replaced with the current Callendar Square since 1994.



1950



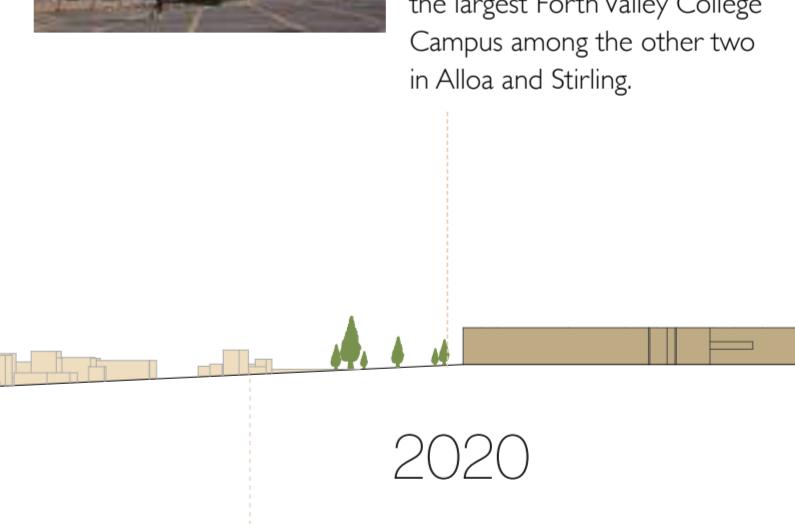
Forth Valley College

The previous Forth Valley College in Falkirk closed in December 2019. New Falkirk Campus is opened in January 2020, now known as the largest Forth Valley College Campus among the other two in Alloa and Stirling.



Doaks Dance Hall

A dance hall opened in September 1933 by Johnny Doaks, used to hold dancing classes.



2020



Technical College

Falkirk Technical College opened in September 1963, it merged with Clackmannan College in 2005 to form Forth Valley College. The merged college had eight departments, including Applied Science, Engineering, Social Science, Care and Education.

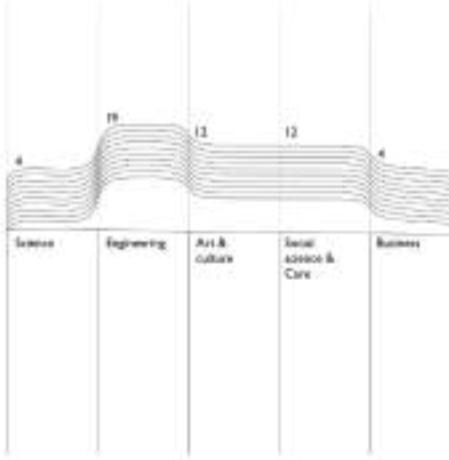
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Distribution of dependent towns near Falkirk

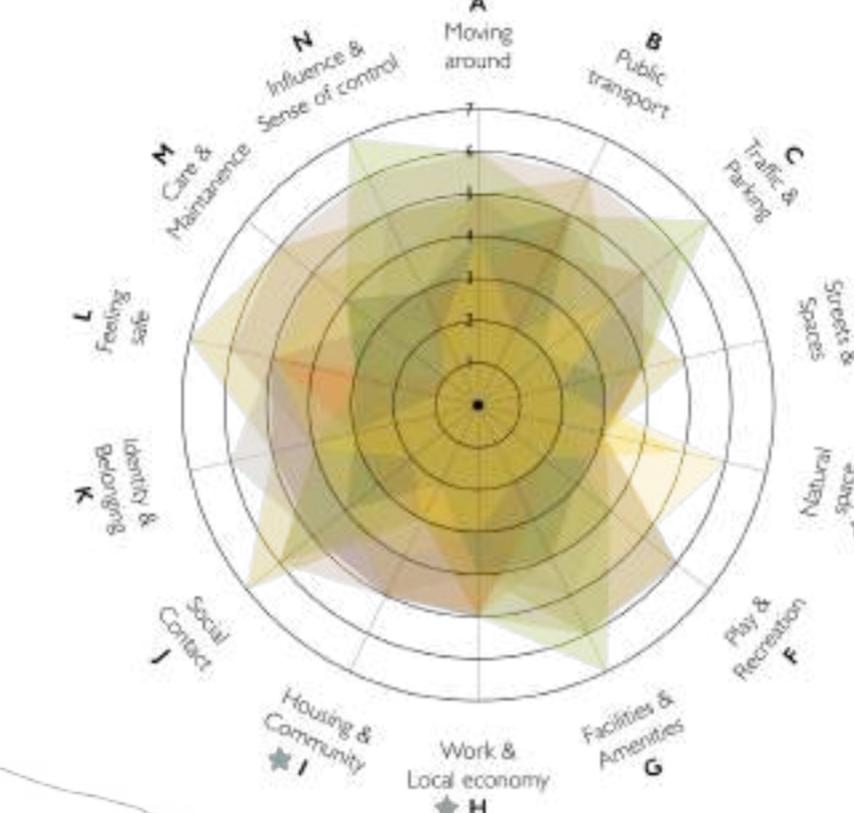
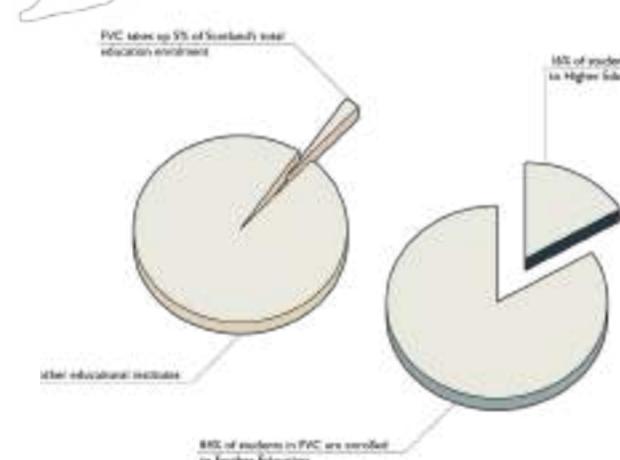
- dependent town
- border of Falkirk
- routes
- Falkirk town



Number of full-time courses offered at Falkirk Forth Valley College
The graph indicates the popularity of different choices at the Falkirk Forth Valley College.



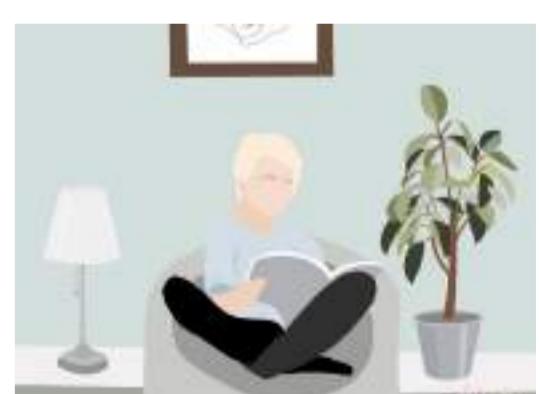
Distribution of HE and FE in Forth Valley College
Enrolments totalled the project of Forth Valley College were 20,000.



A day in the life of an office staff



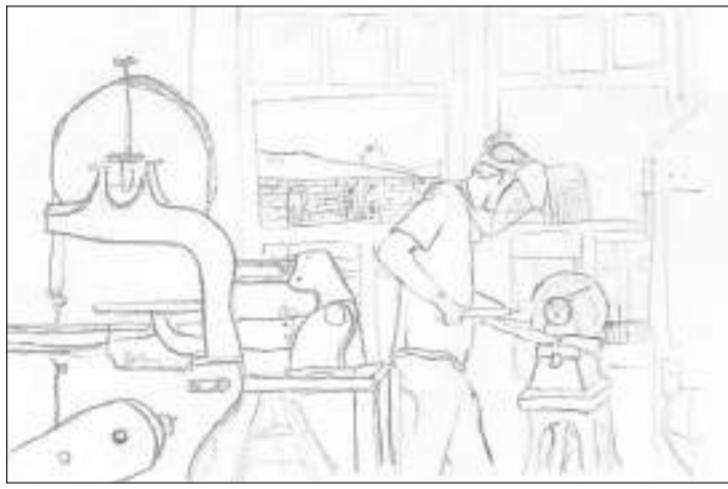
A day in the life of grandma



Present

In the present section, we focused on the connectivity of Falkirk as well as the living experience of local residents. We also discovered a lack of cultural facilities such as gym, theatre and library in the town centre.

05



Future

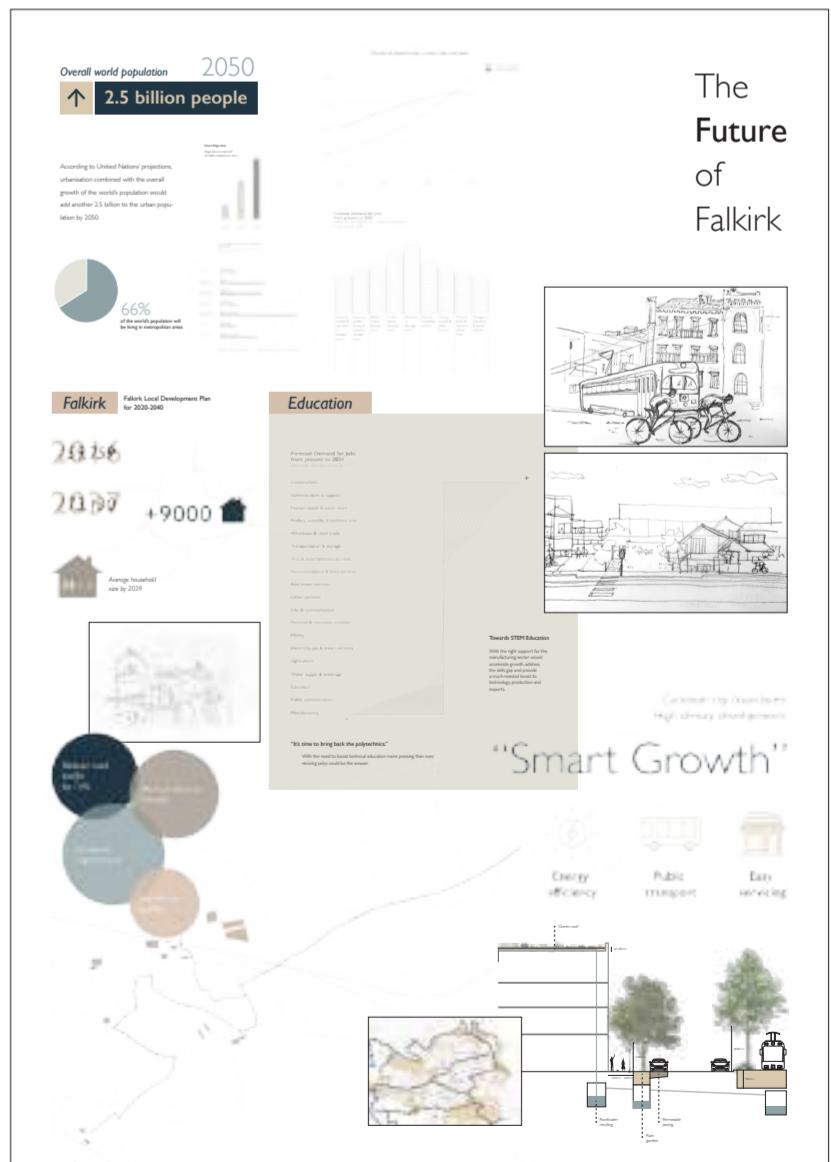
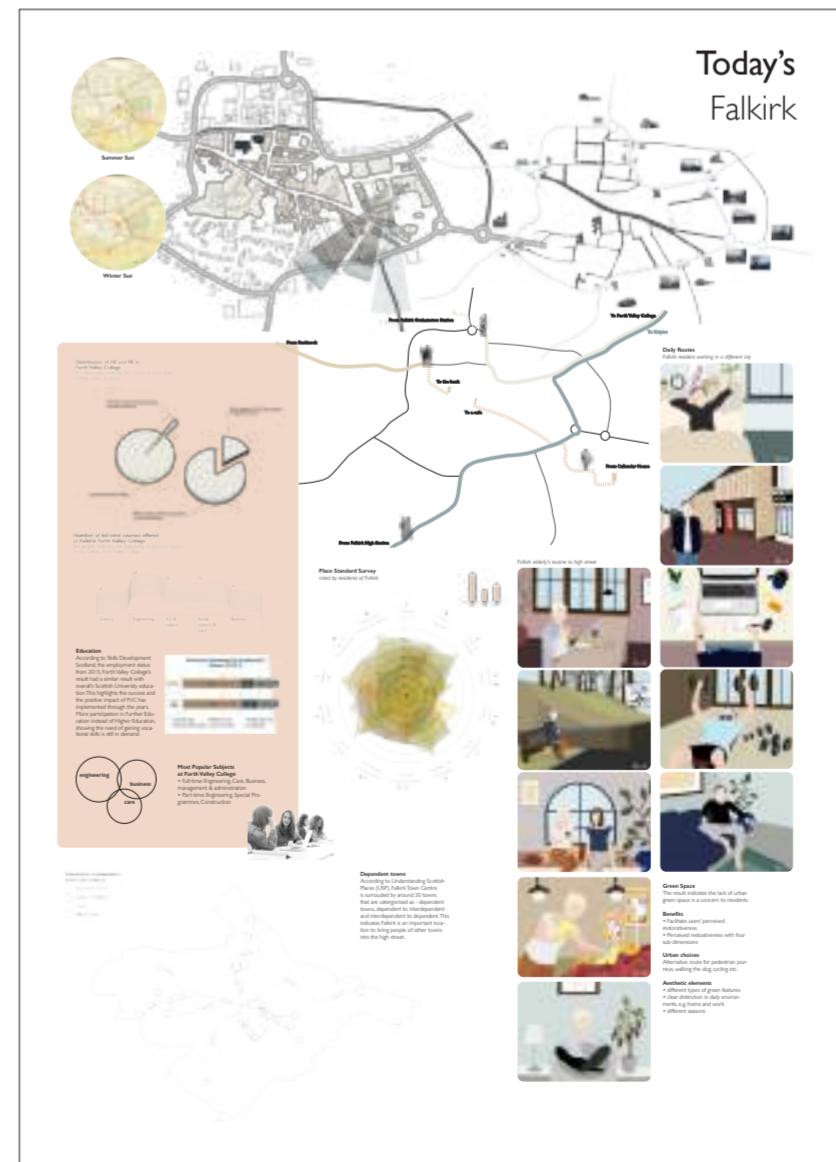
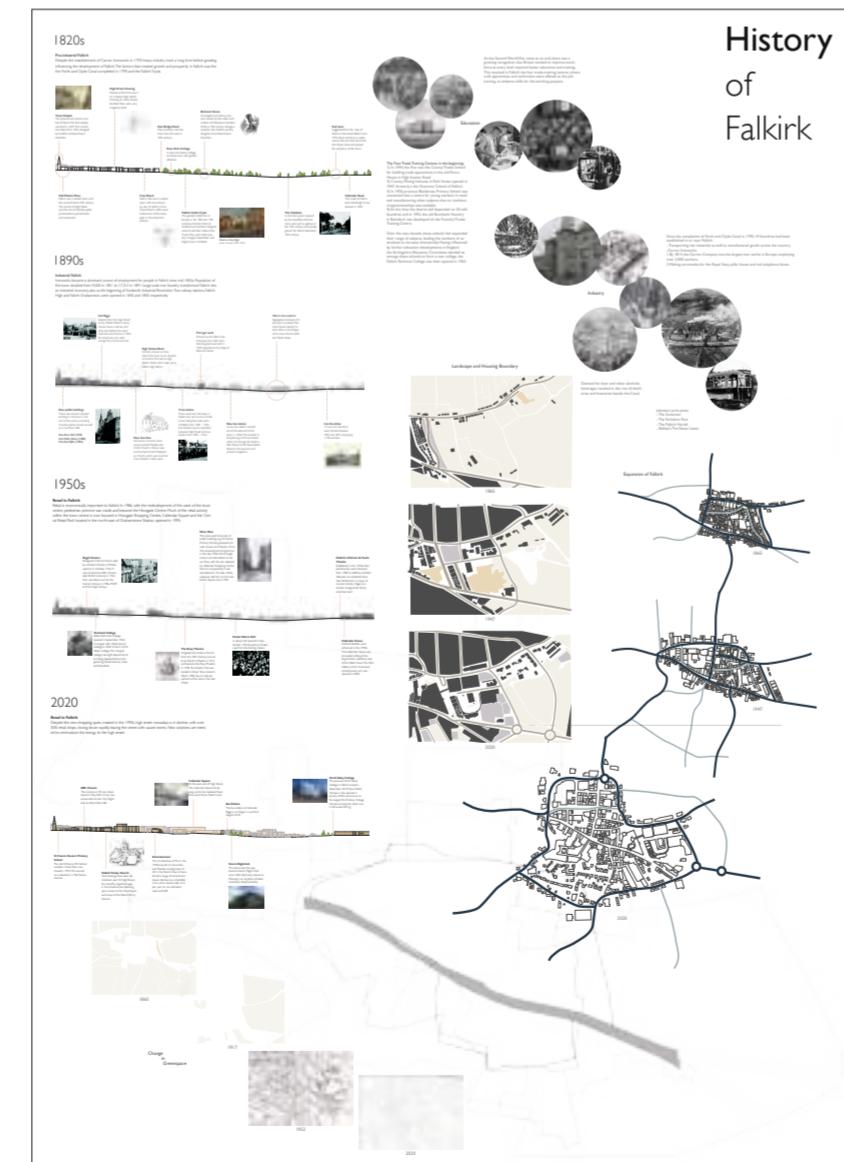
For our vision of Falkirk's future, we imagined possible green network and new ravel modes. To summarise our research findings, we've identified two key themes as our project's main focus:

1) Connections

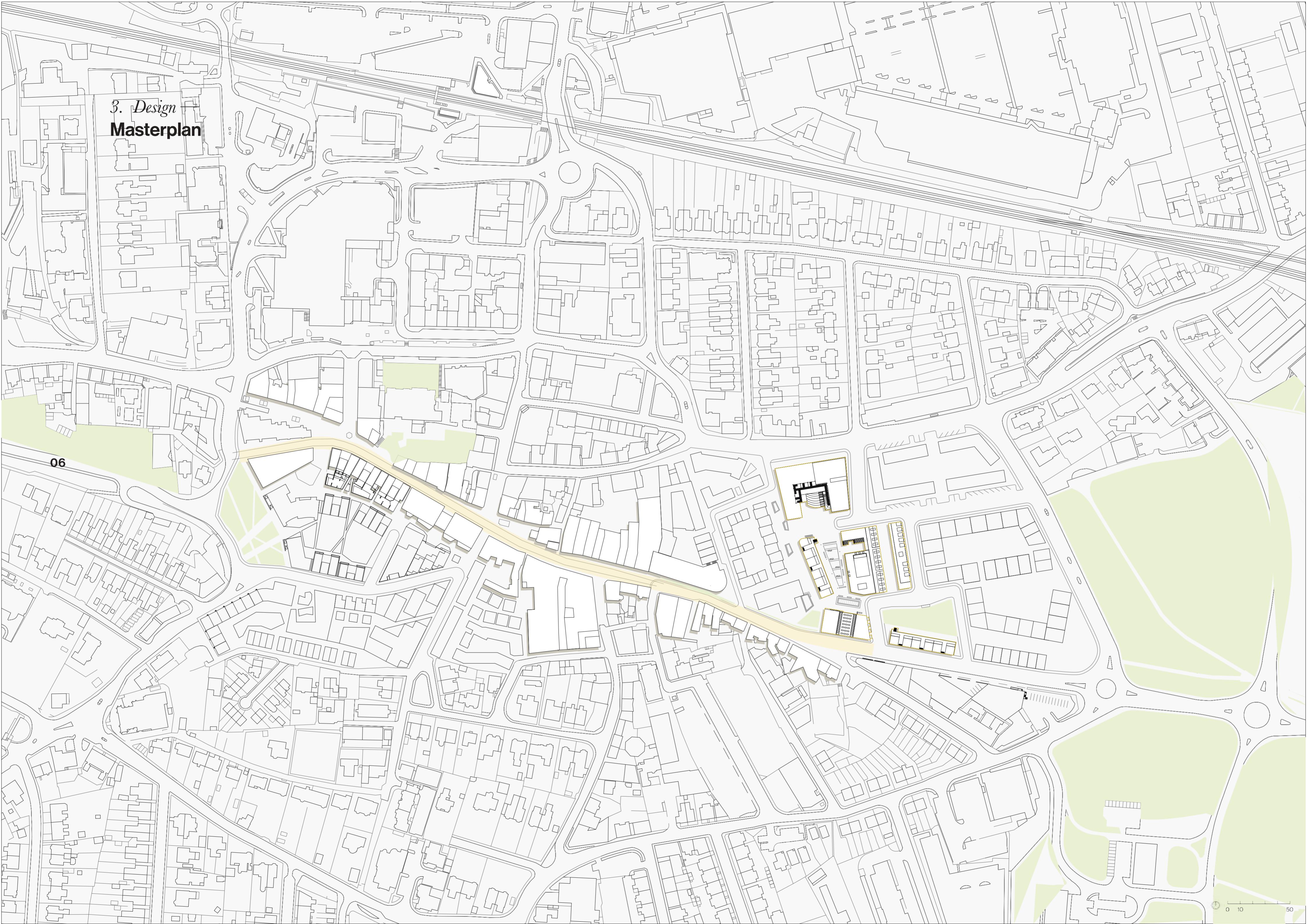
- A. Re-establish the relationship between High Street and existing green space
- B. Making town centre more accessible to local community
- C. Connection with the wider region (Falkirk's dependent towns)

2) Education

- Bring students into Falkirk's town centre
- Foster intergenerational exchanges within the community

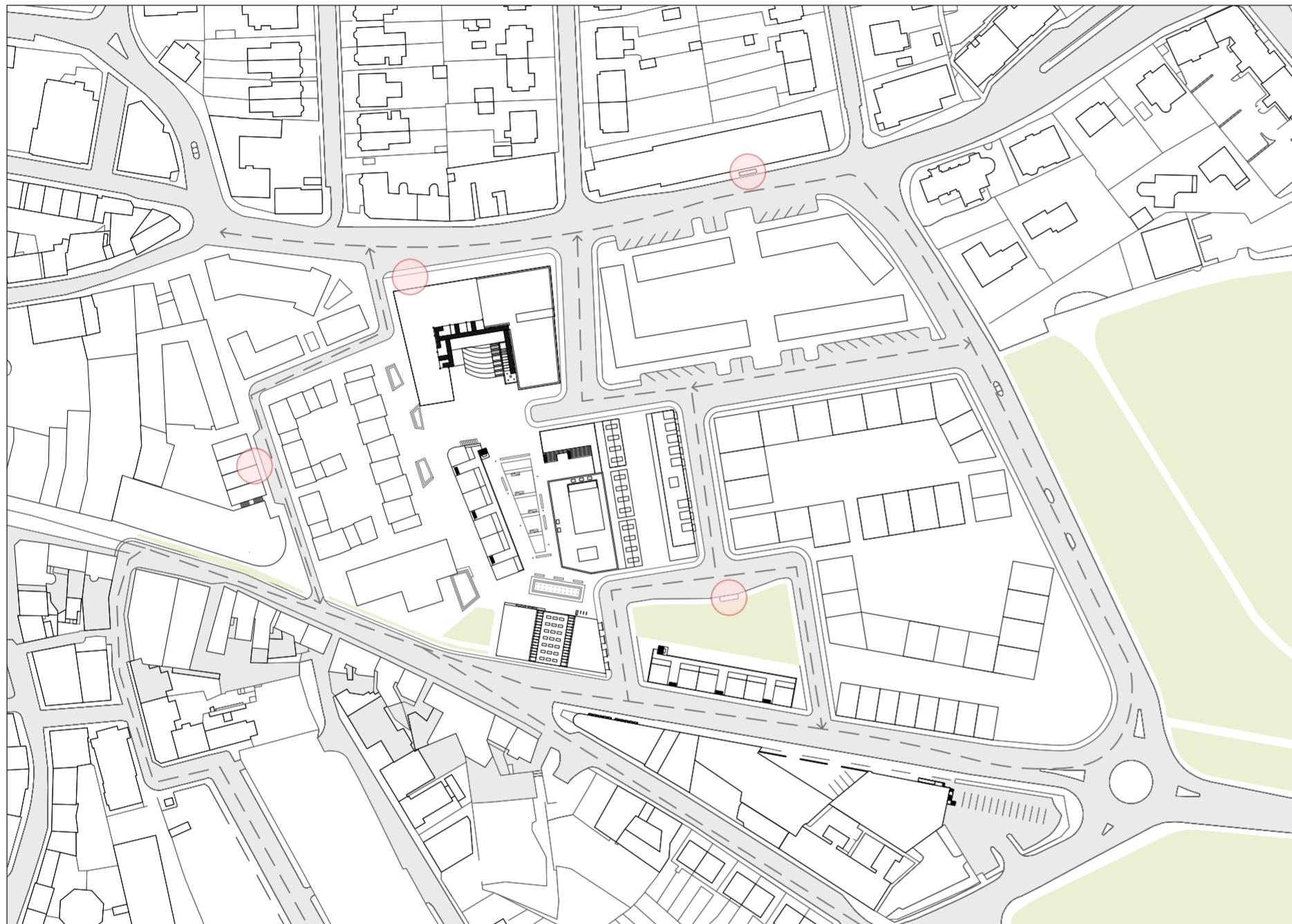


3. Design
Masterplan



3. Urban Response — **Urban Strategies**

07



Transportation

Reintroduce traffic into the site and one section of high street. The new road now connects to Burnhead Lane. Bus stations are also placed on site to bring people back into the town centre. As a part of High Street remains pedestrian-only, the connection to buses on our site become a key transportation node to the town centre. The buses also connects the site with train stations and the Forth Valley College in the North.



Green Space

Adding landscape and water feature to create a square for the local community to congregate. Green space are created in between buildings for outdoor activities. To enhance the living environment, green streetscapes will enrich pedestrian journeys, facilitate human's perceived restorativeness as well as connect existing greenspace in Falkirk.

4. Design — Project Programme

The site is located at the East end of Falkirk's town centre, sitting on the former ground of Falkirk's bus terminal and marking the end of High Street. In the new masterplan, the area becomes a lifelong educational hub: a student housing with sports facilities that promote physical education; a public theatre with educational functions; studio on the street level for students studying in Forth Valley College to practise their crafts as well as providing public workshops; and lastly, a community library that offers a sheltered public space and a Falkirk archive in the top level to strengthen the town's past history.

Being a part of a lifelong learning campus, the three-storey library not only acts as a key educational facility but also enriches civic engagement in Falkirk's town centre by offering a sheltered meeting ground for local interaction and exchange. Hence, besides designing space that accommodates for traditional media and quiet learning, group learning and socialising areas are also essential to encourage more dynamic activities.

08



- 1 Student housing with sports facilities
- 2 Theatre
- 3 Housing
- 4 Studio + Housing

- 5 Community
- 6 Extra-car housing
- 7 High-rise housing
- 8 Open space

- 9 Water feature
- 10 Bus station
- 11 Public Park

5. Drawings —
Site Plan



4. Design —

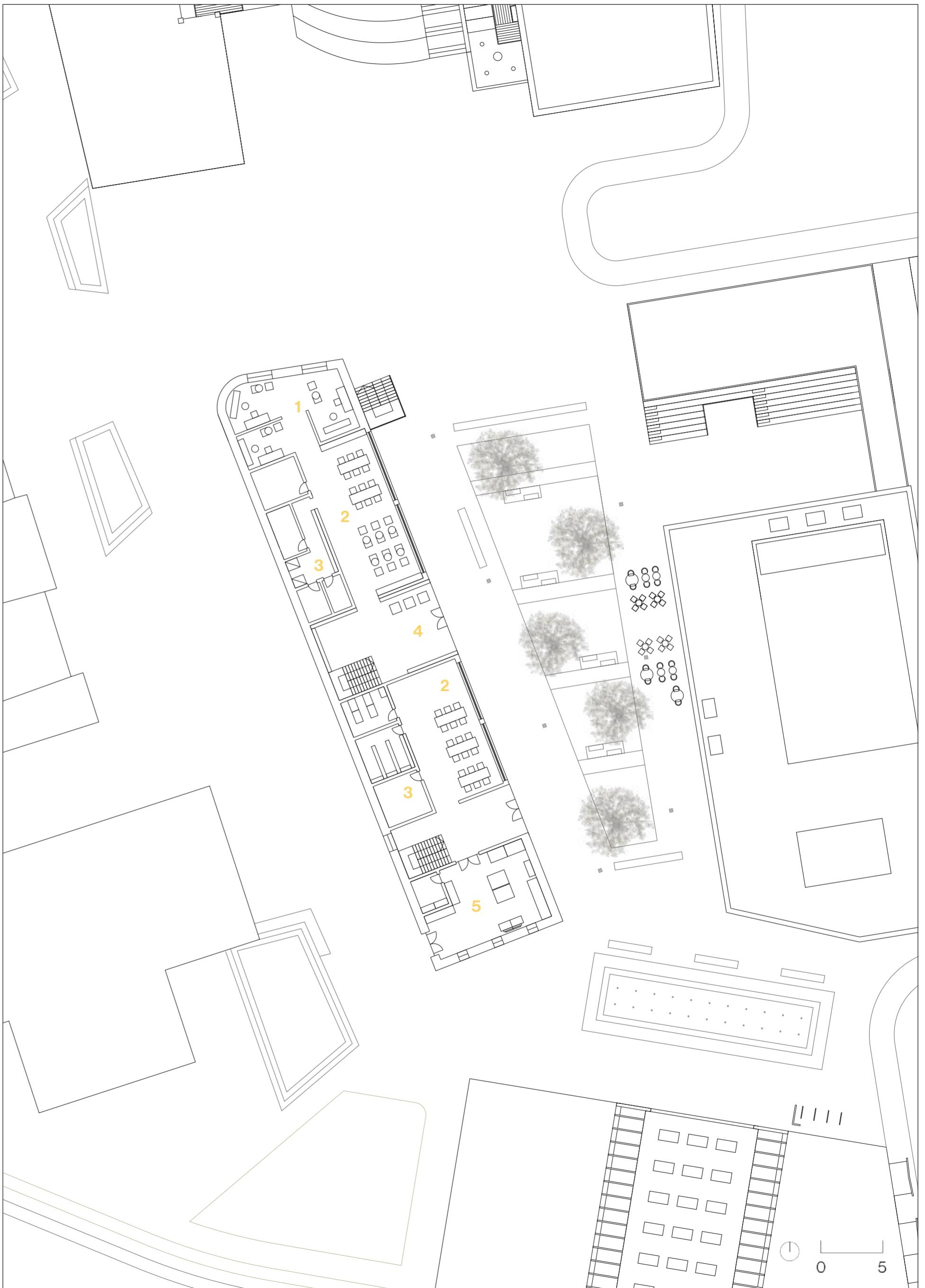
Studio + Housing

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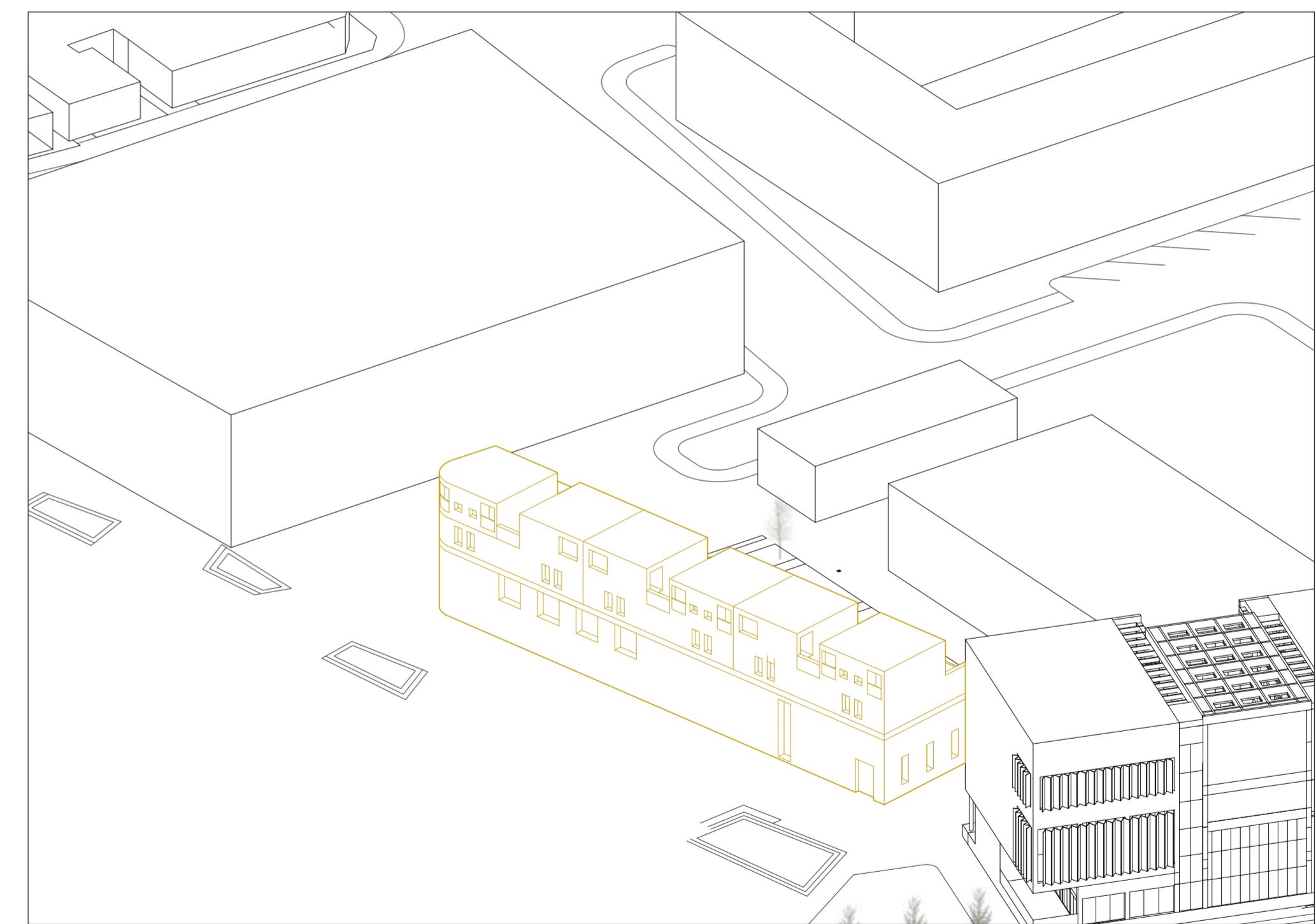
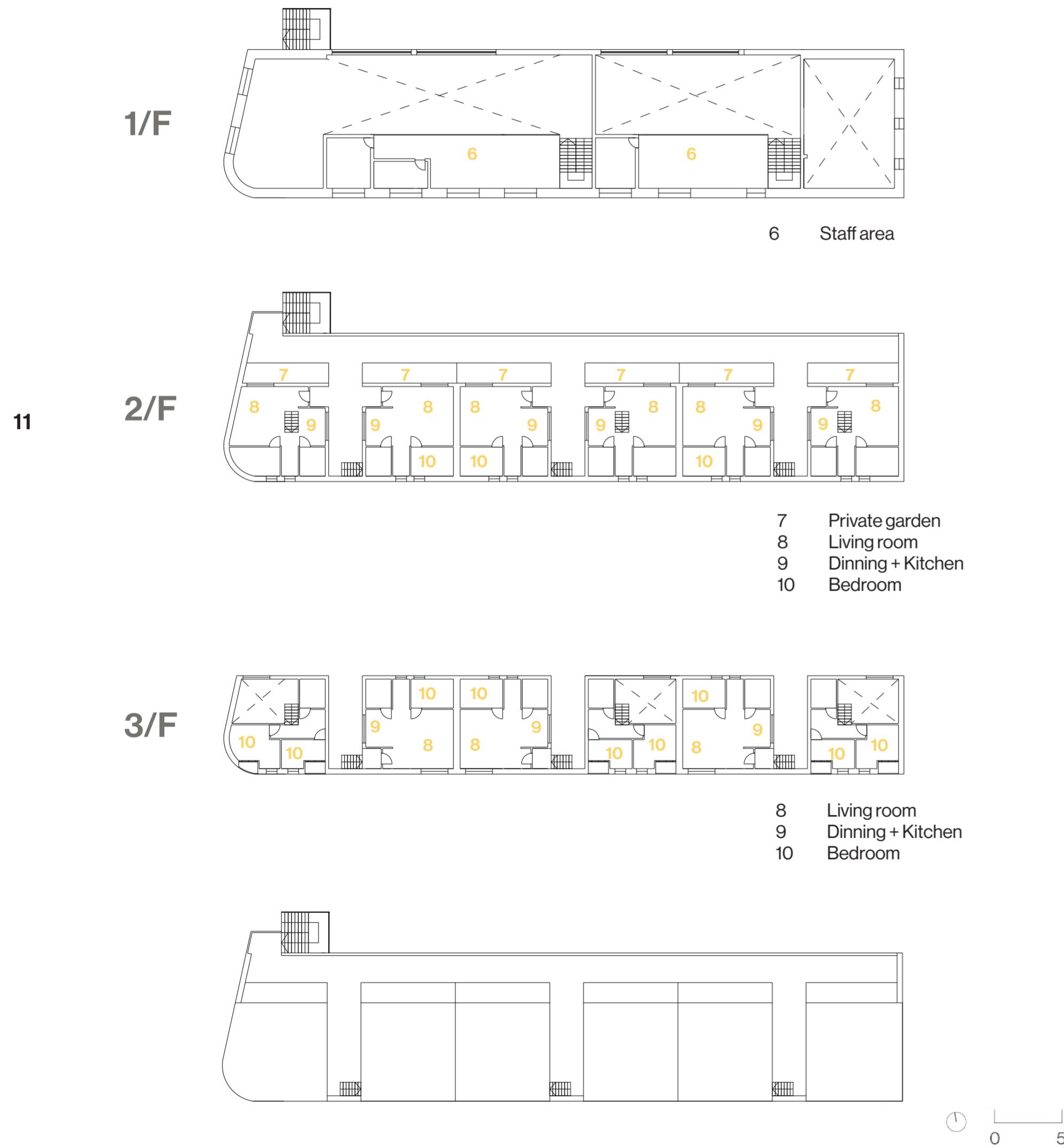
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- 1 Artist studios
- 2 Public workshop
- 3 Storage
- 4 Gallery
- 5 Wood workshop



4. Design —
Studio + Housing



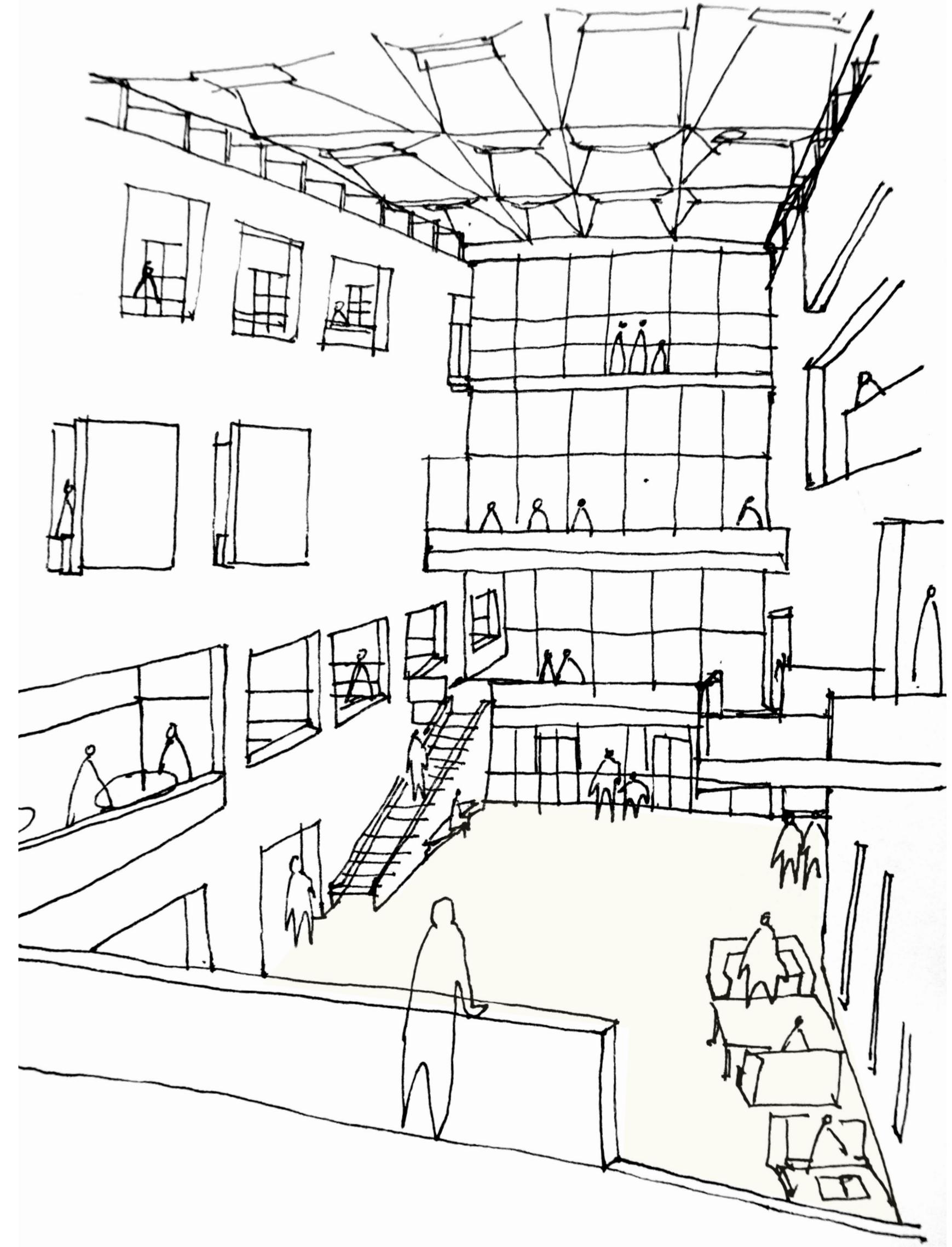
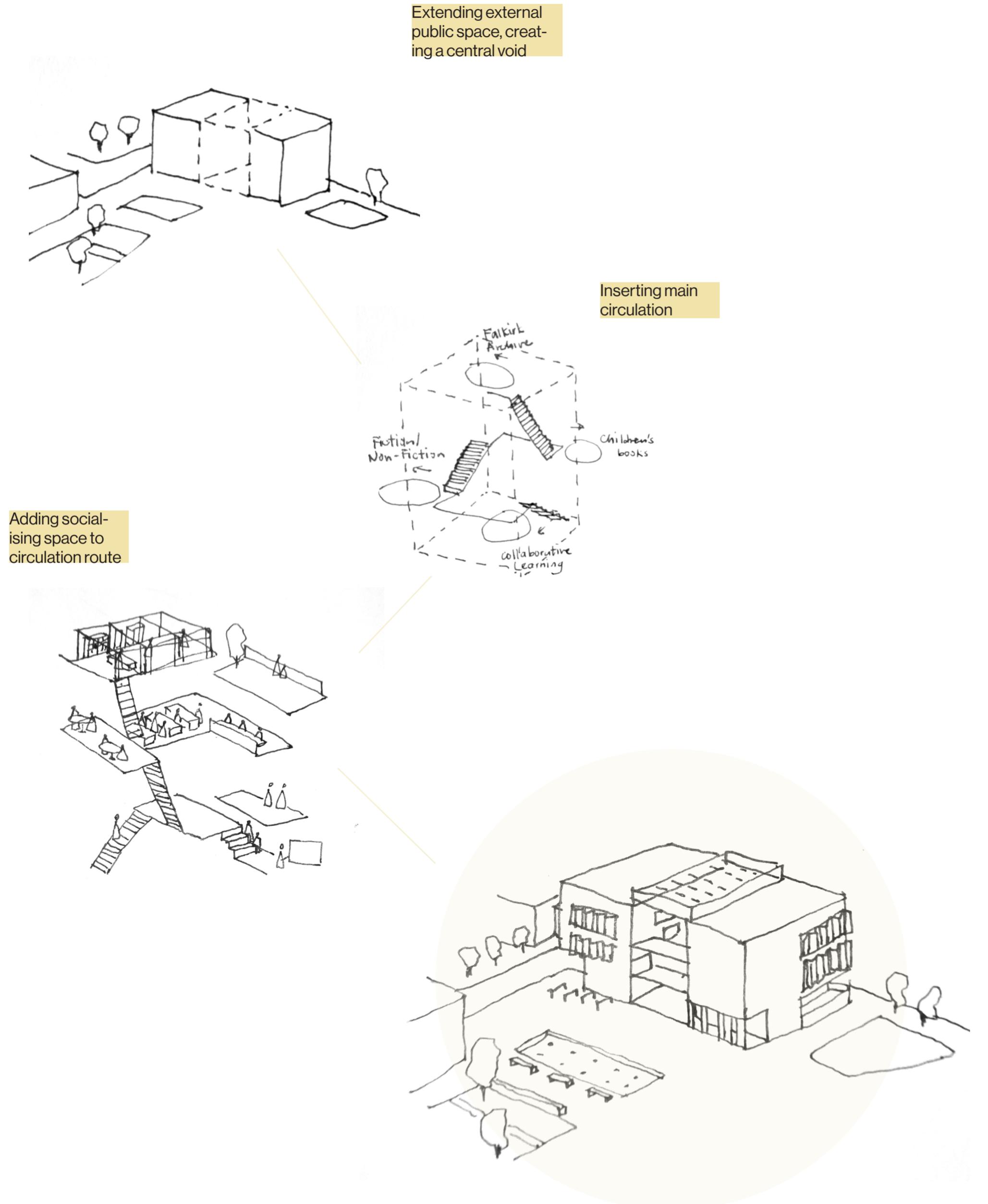
4. Design —
Community Library

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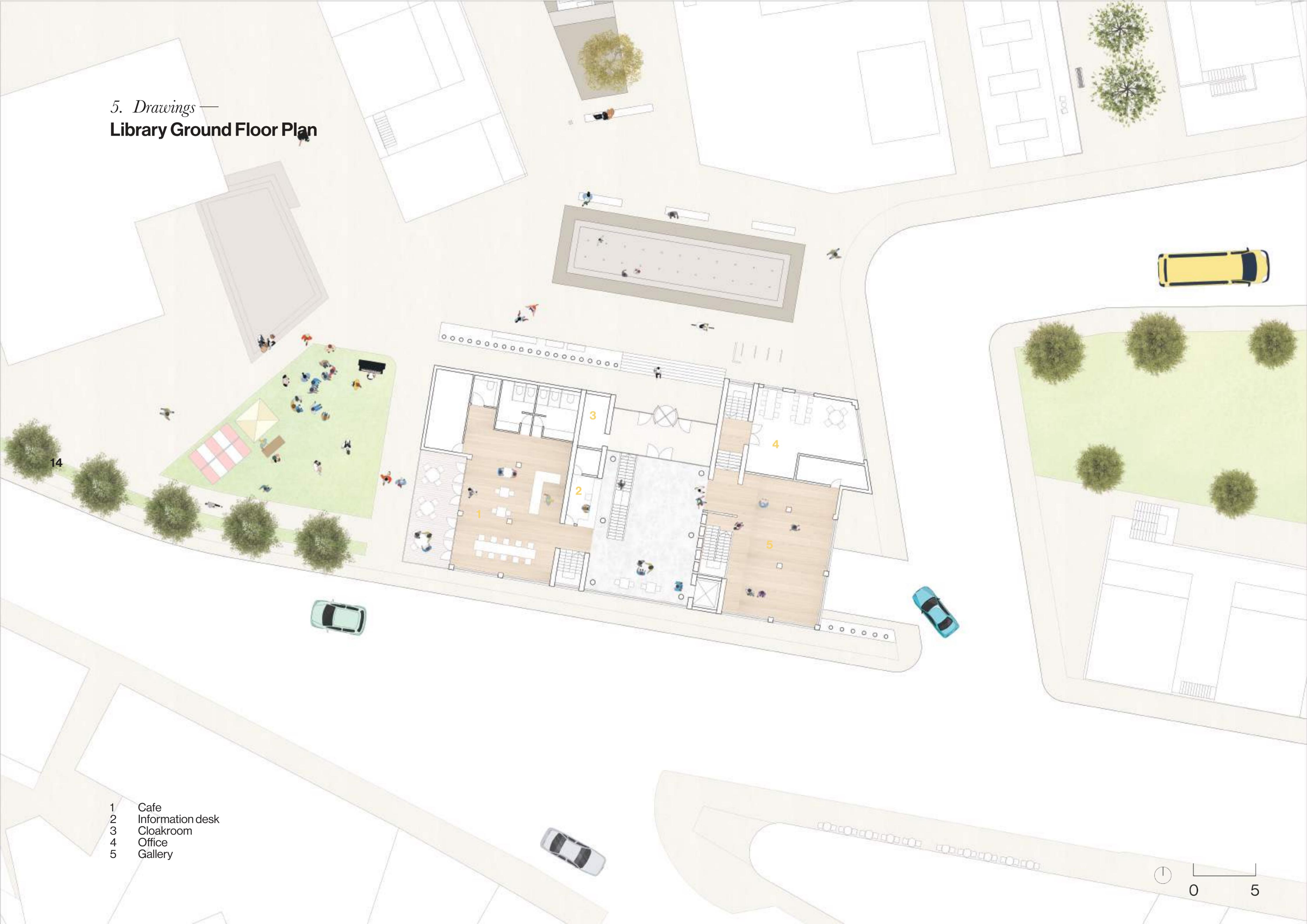


4. Design — Concept

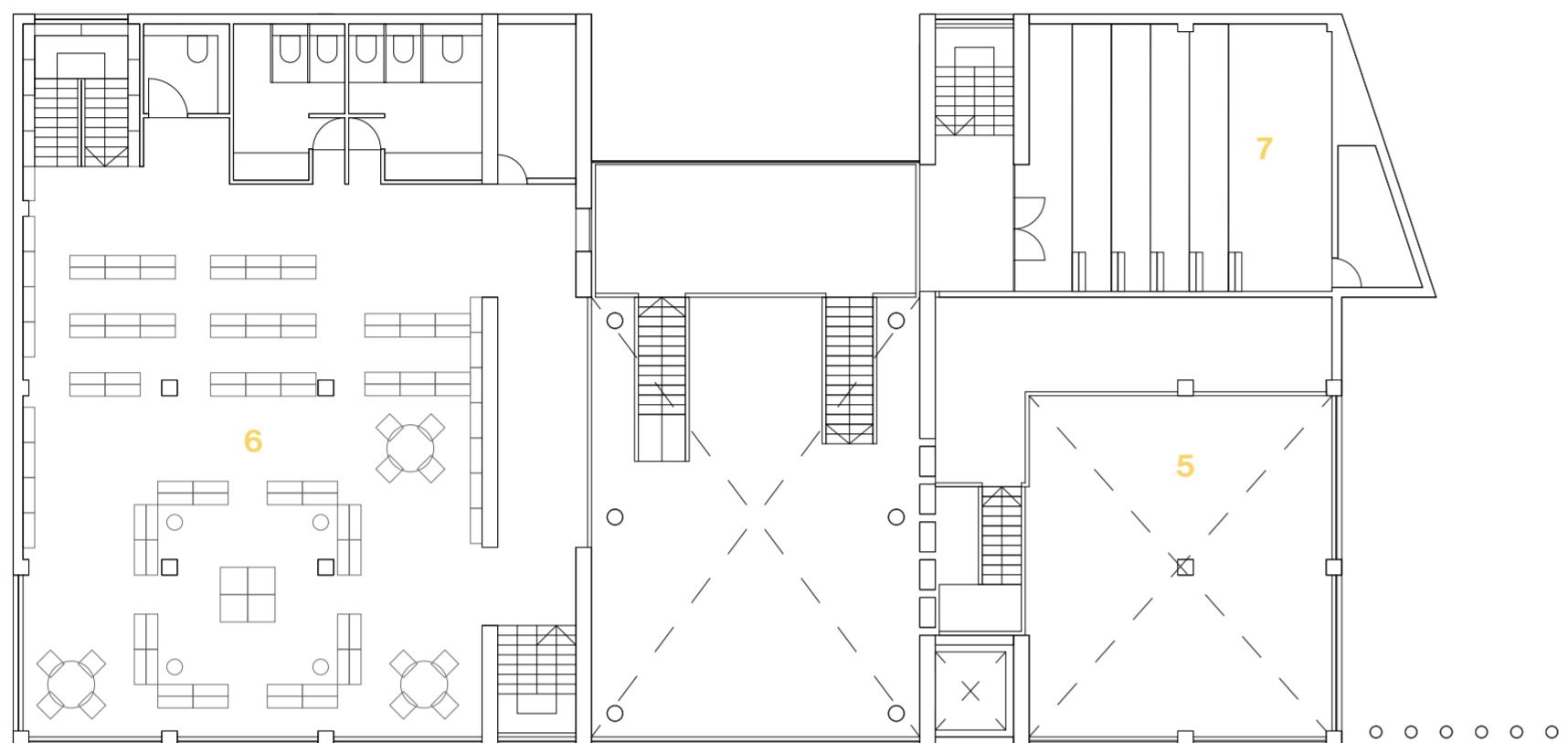
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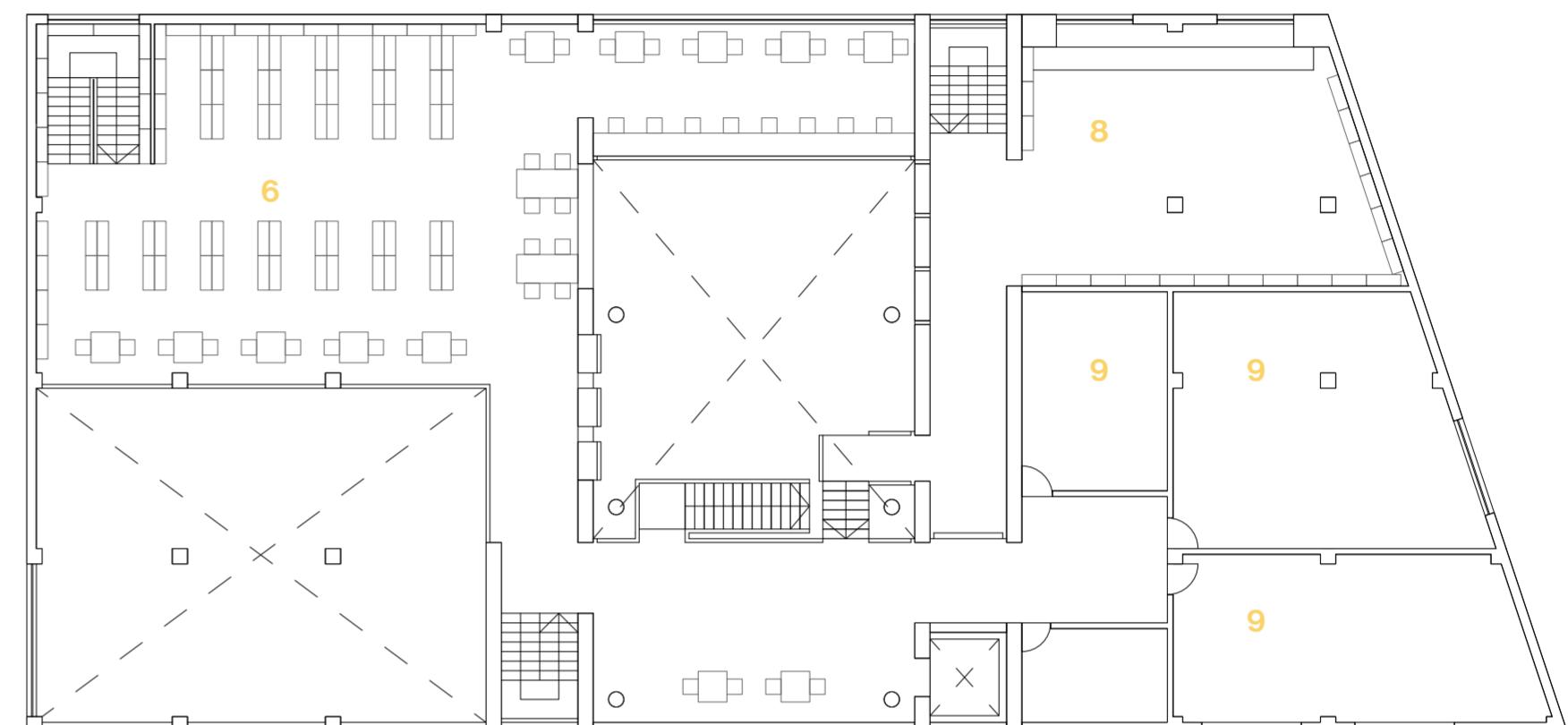
5. Drawings —
Library Ground Floor Plan



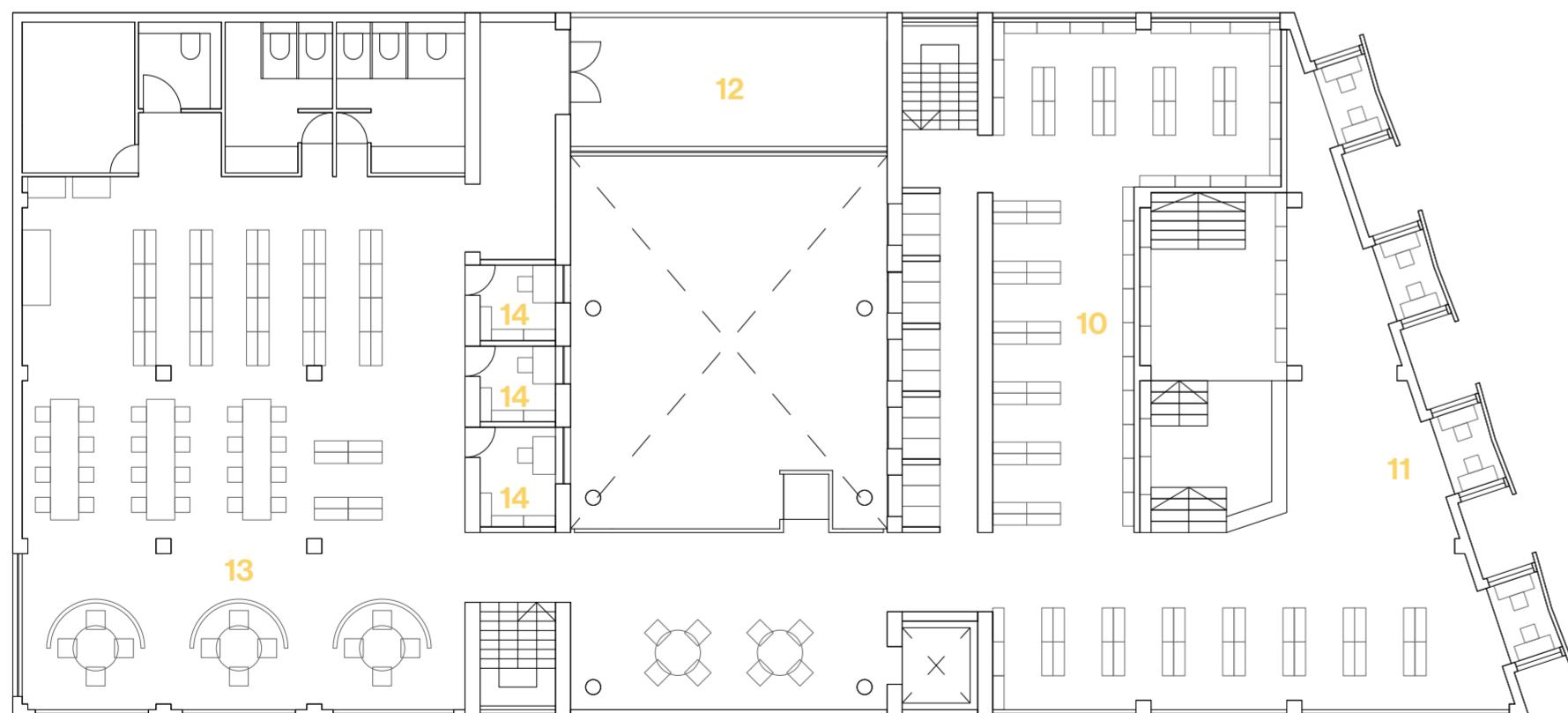
5. Drawings —
Floor Plans



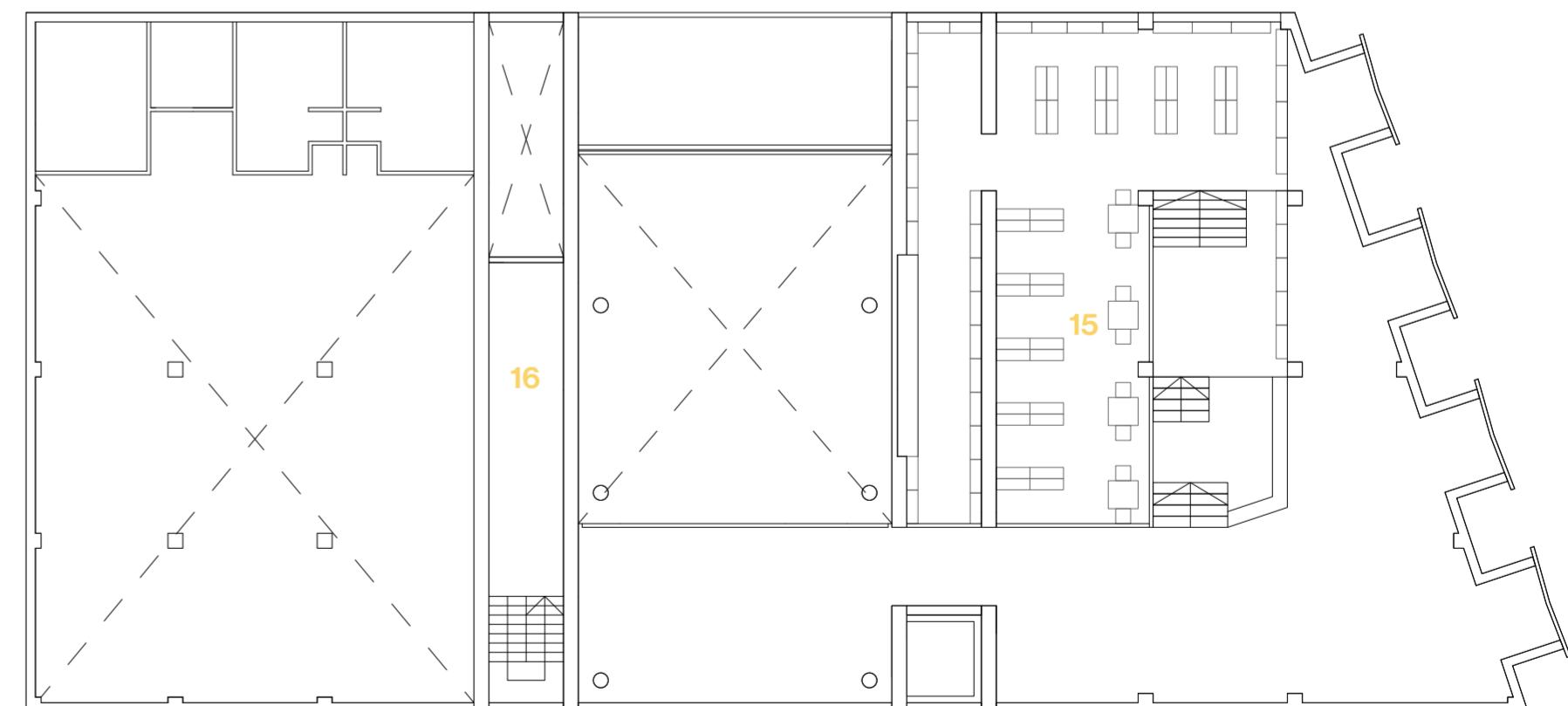
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5 Gallery
6 Public reading room
7 Lectural hall



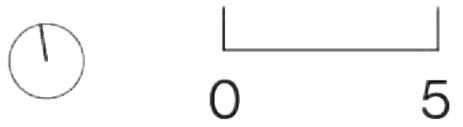
6 Public reading room
8 Kid's reading corner
9 Meeting room



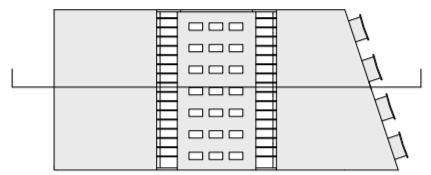
10 Falkirk archive
11 Study pods
12 Sky garden
13 Digital workspace
14 Private study rooms



15 Falkirk archive
16 Maintenance workspace

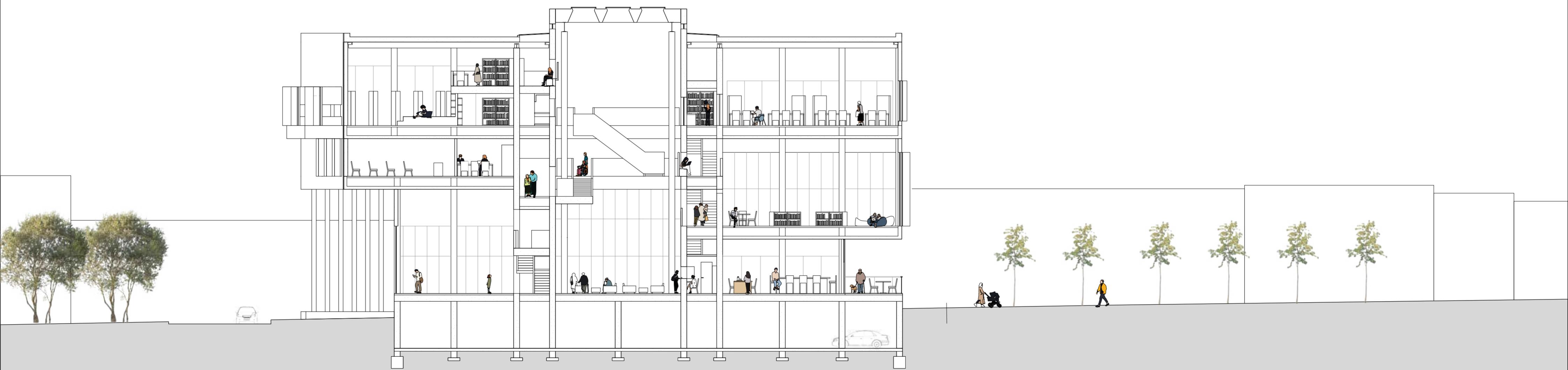


5. Drawings —
Section A



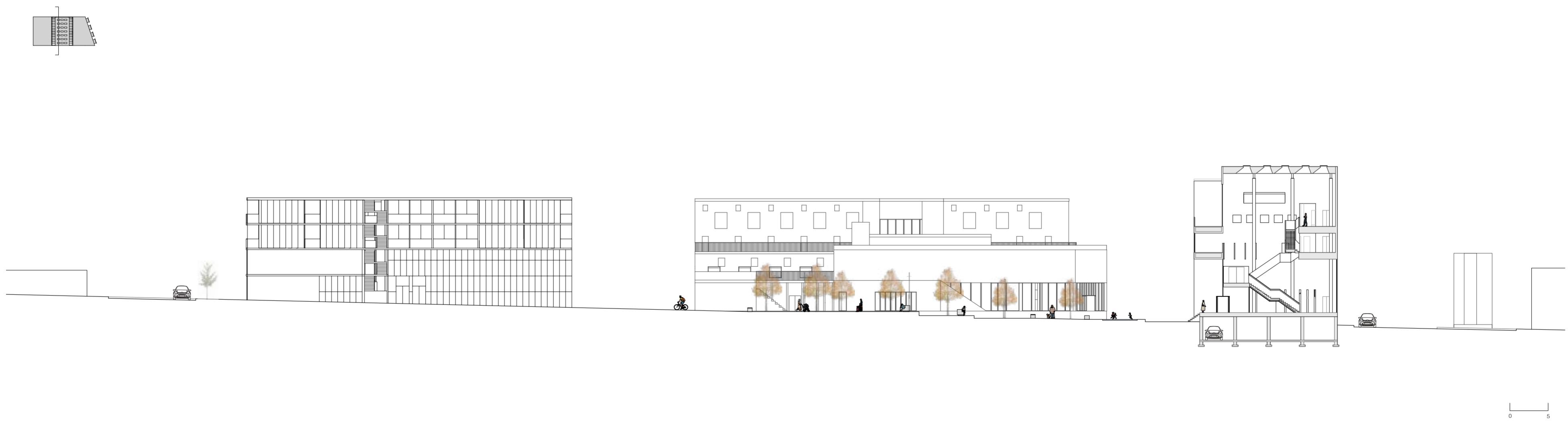
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5. Drawings —
Section B

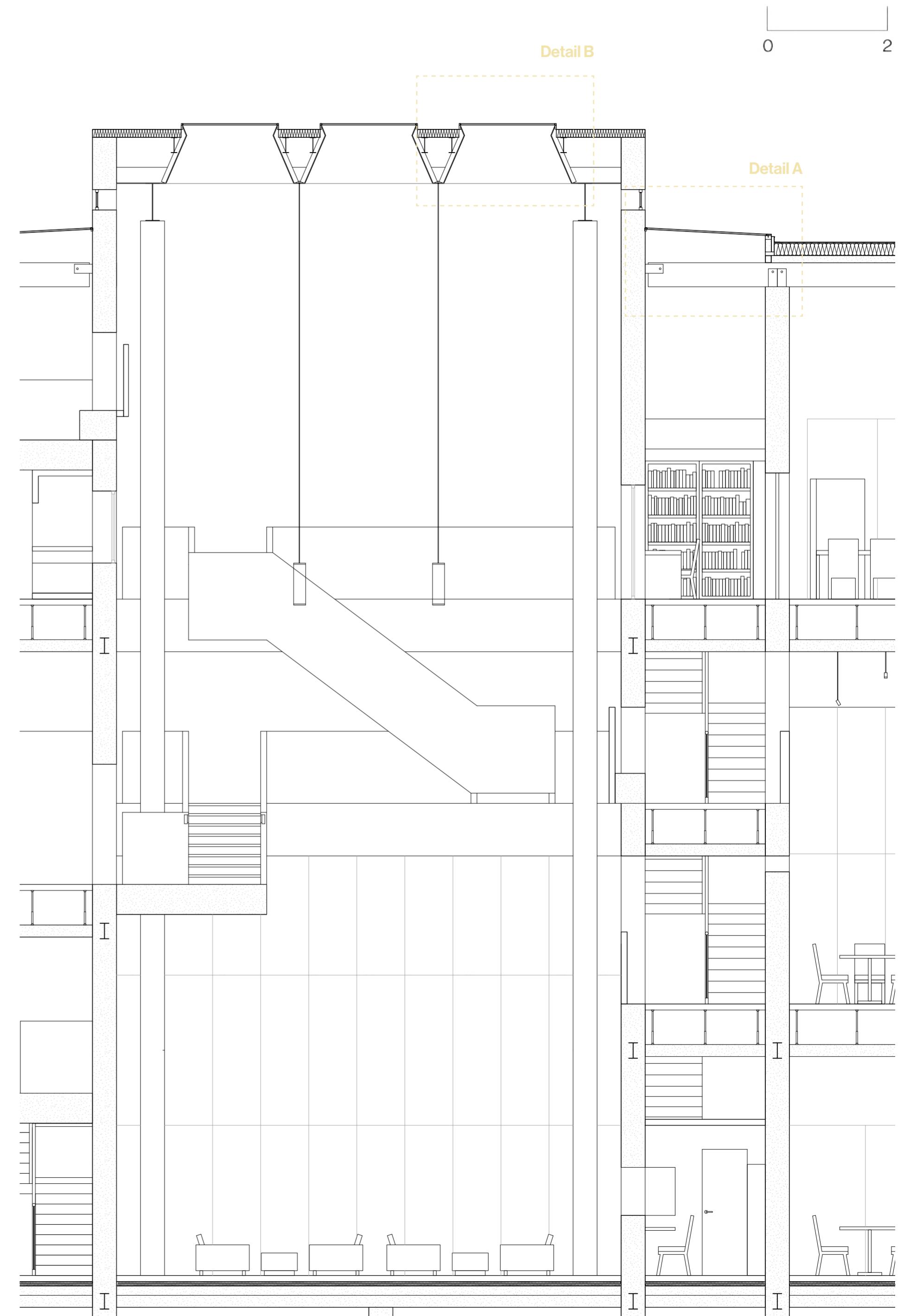
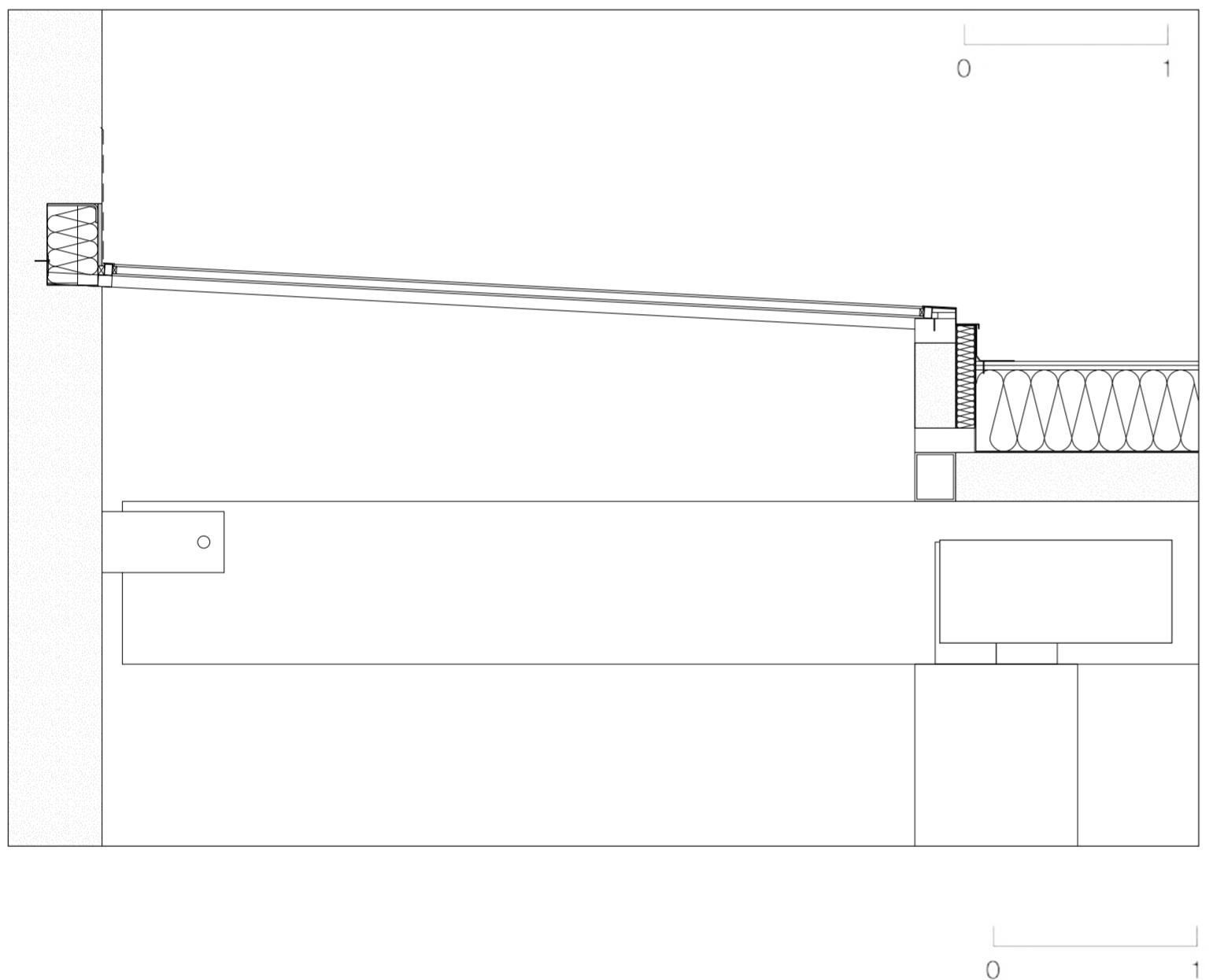
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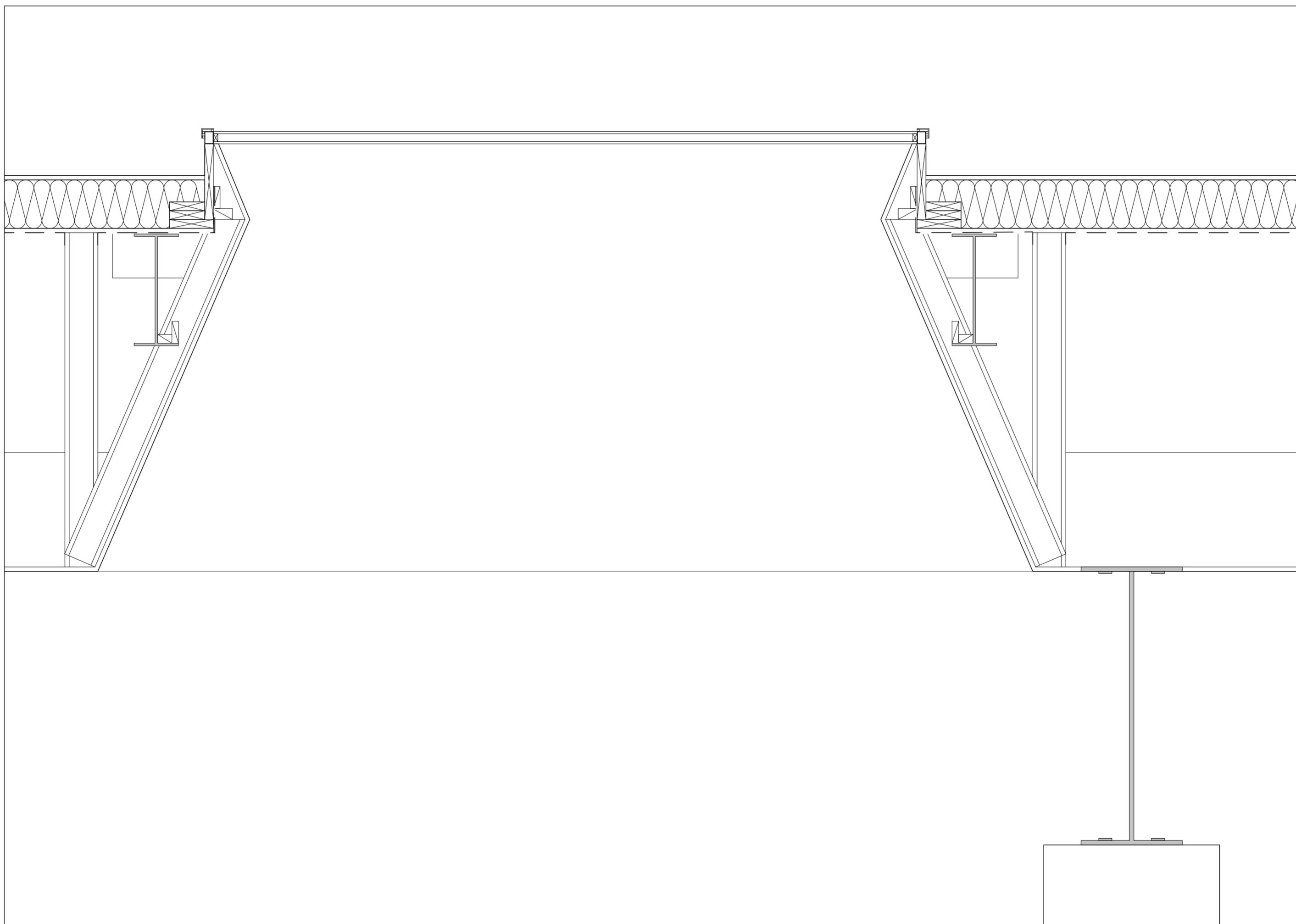
5. Drawings —
Technical Detail

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Detail A



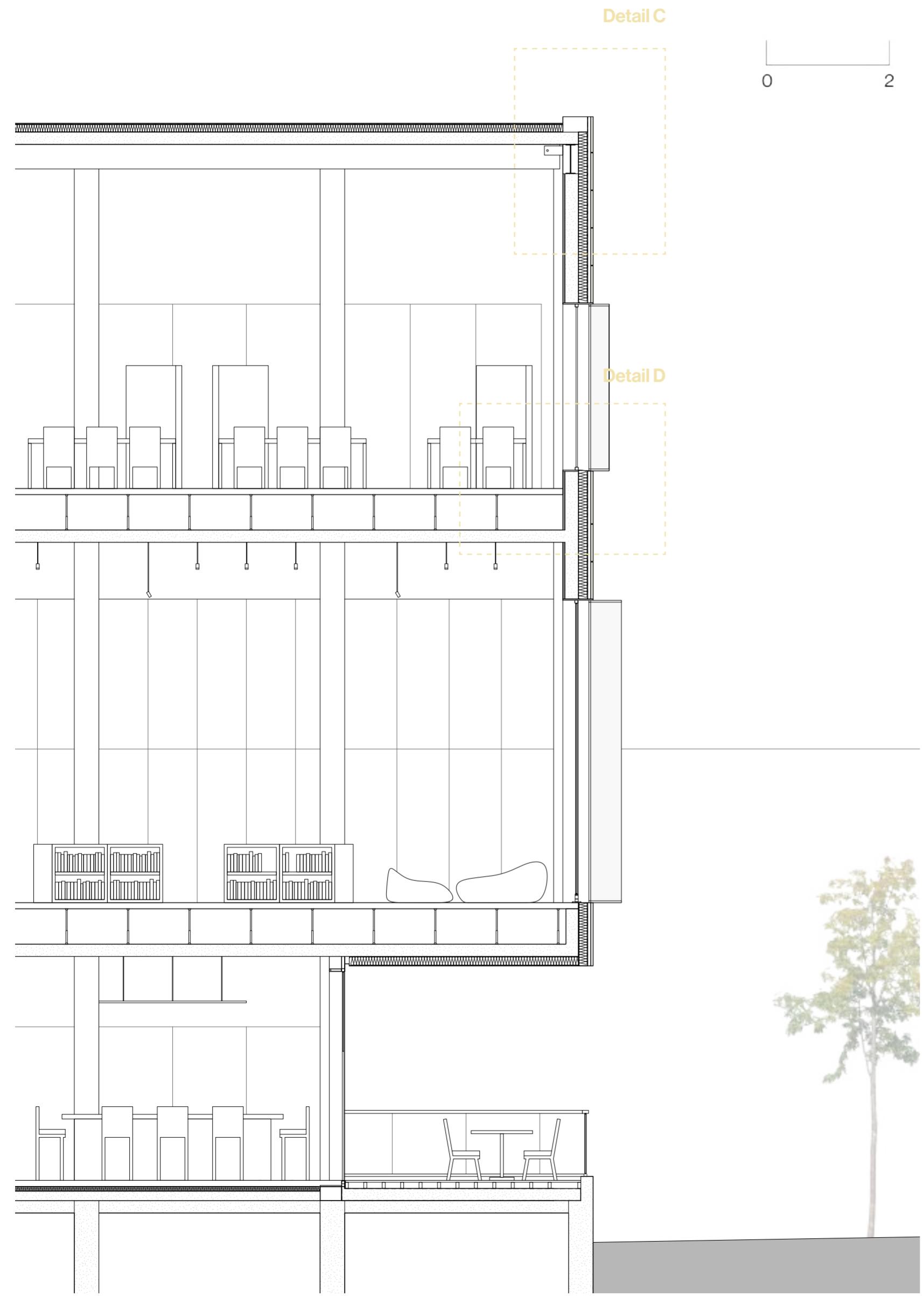
Detail B



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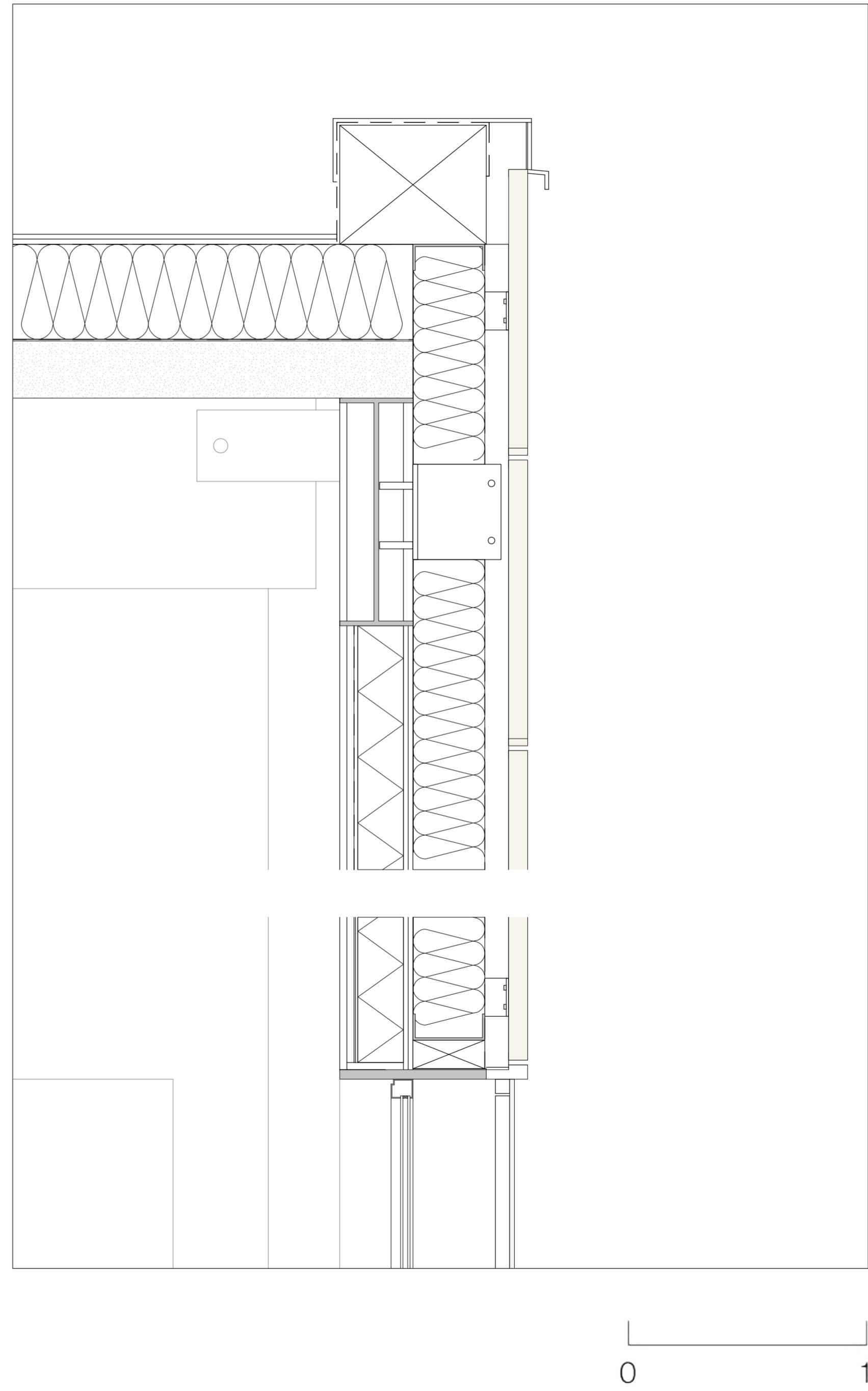
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5. Drawings —
Technical Detail

Detail C

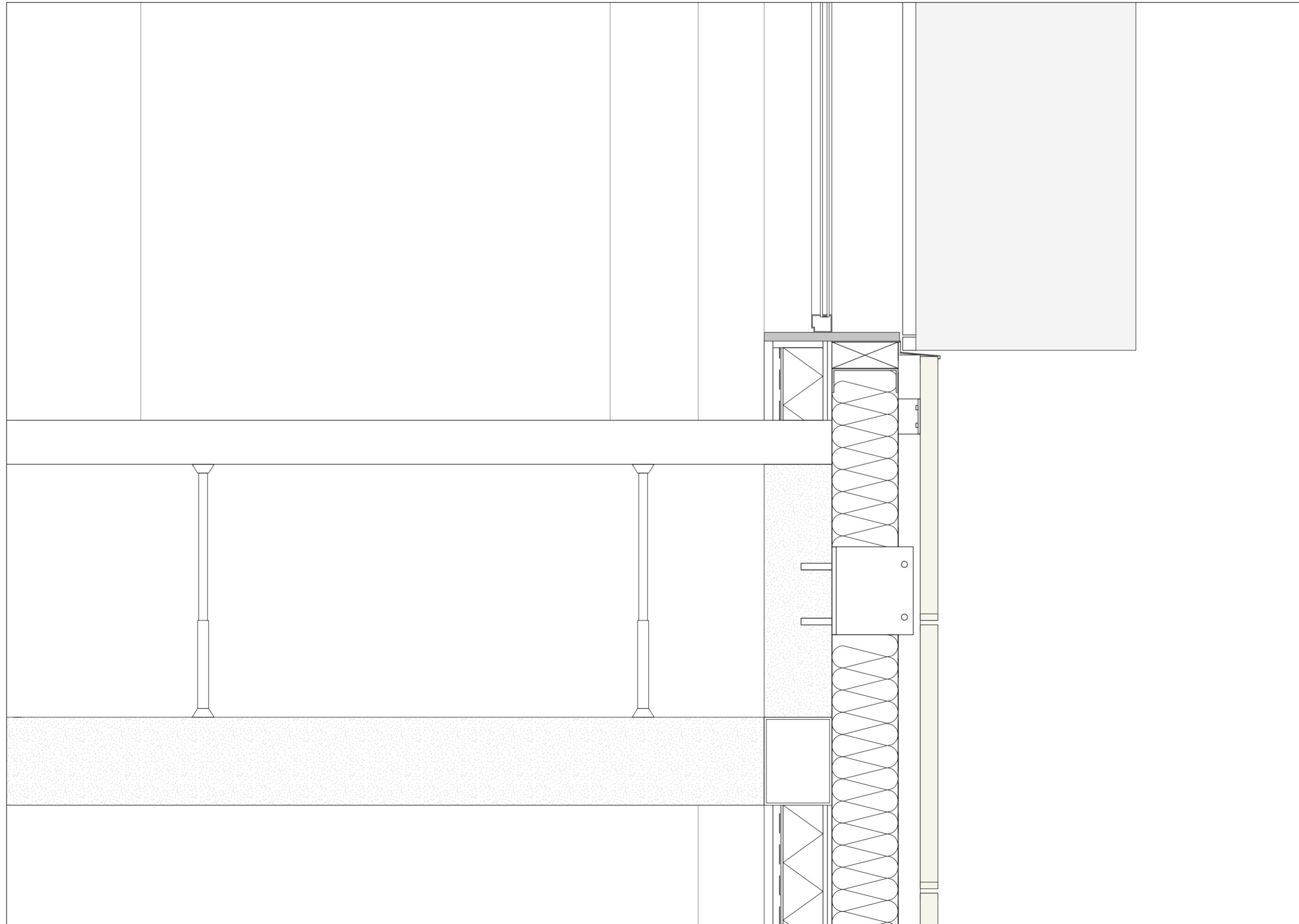


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5. Drawings —
Technical Detail

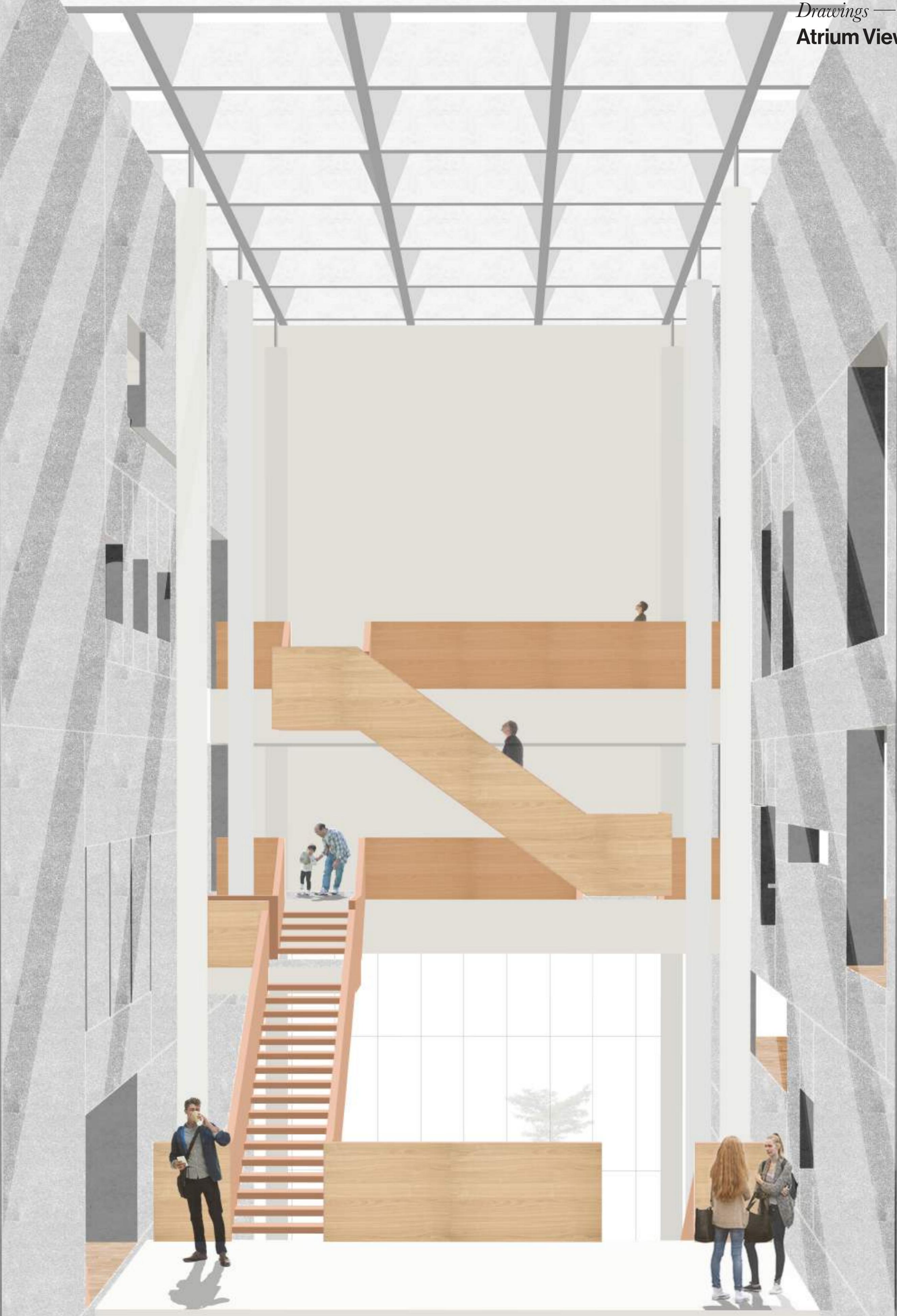
Detail D

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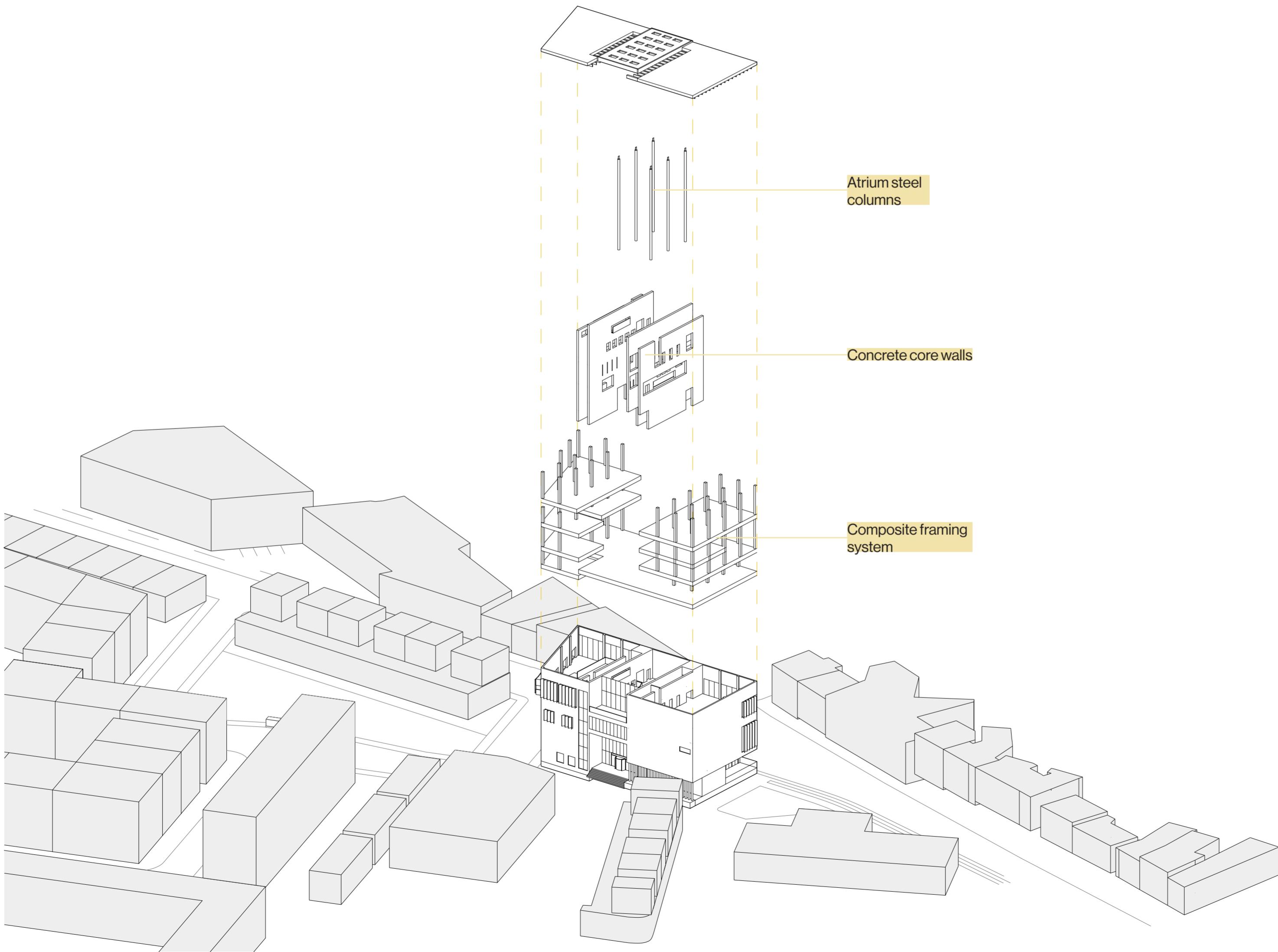
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Drawings —
Atrium View



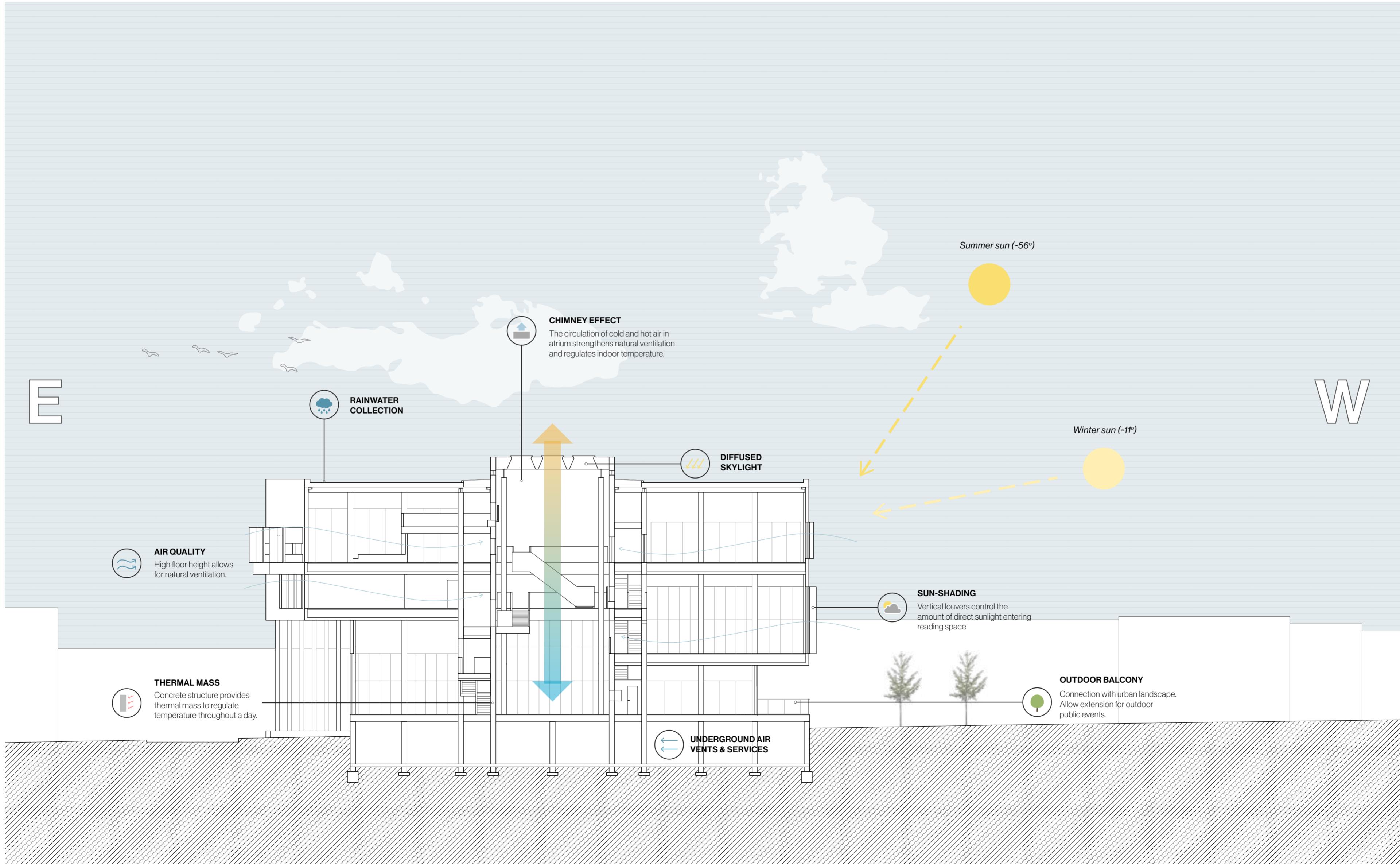
5. Drawings —
Structural Design

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5. Drawings —
Environmental Design

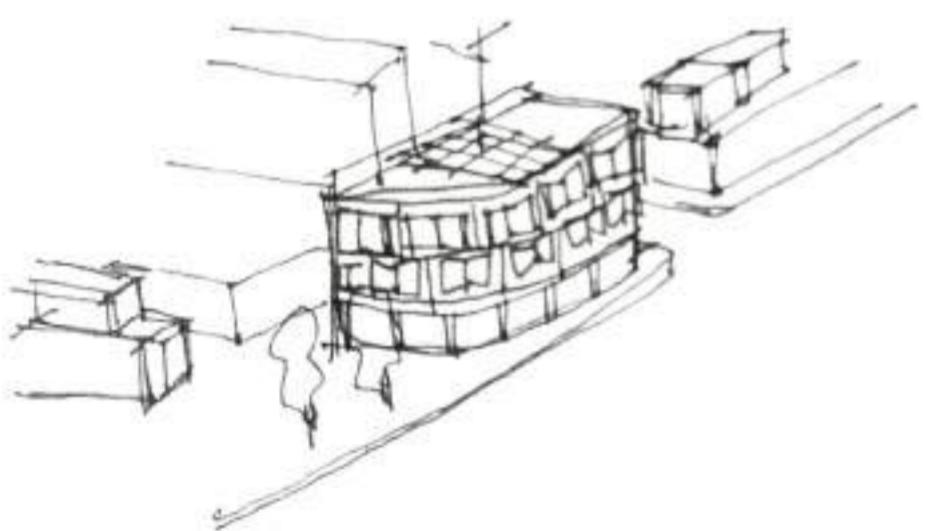
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6. Project Summary —
Conclusion

The creation of a life long learning hub in Falkirk High Street involves a vast community with different ages and backgrounds. From the masterplan, connections with other areas and green spaces are created. The studio+housing promotes the skills locals and students whereas the community library affords a socialising and learning hub in all weathers. The scheme actively encourages interactions and exchanges among the local community, which would ultimately inject new energies to the high street and the town centre. The future vision of Falkirk demonstrates a possible solution of the high street readapting to new purposes, leading towards a more friendly and sustainable living environment to cities today.

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