

AN  
ENTRANCE  
TO  
MÅRBACKA



**CHALMERS**

Master Thesis  
Architecture and Urban Design, MPARC  
Chalmers University of Technology

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# ABSTRACT

This Master Thesis consists of two parts closely intertwined. One is a design proposal for an entrance building to the memorial estate of Mårbacka – former home of the world renowned author Selma Lagerlöf. The other consists of material explorations with the aim to gain knowledge about wood.

Wood is an infused part of Nordic identity and building history and the project has aimed to comment on how this heritage is treated today. Combined the two parts investigate how architecture could be developed in close relationship to a given material in a site specific context.

Mårbacka was chosen for several reasons; one is the deep forest in the province of Värmland, Sweden - an inspiring context for developing a wooden architecture - another is the current lack of introduction to the area of Mårbacka and thereby also the authorship and history of Selma Lagerlöf. The memorial estate also struggles with attractions and facilities being dysfunctional to their contemporary use and too spread out to maintain, and the project saw that an entrance building could solve some of these issues and lift the estate as a coherent whole.

The work started from an investigation of the site and its current situation – a reading from which the mere project and its program were invented. At an early stage the material was approached and integrated in the project, where material properties have been studied as well as technical developments, appearance and jointing methods.


The project has mainly been developed through model studies, sketches and drawings, complemented by literature studies and writing. The concluding proposal is influenced by the material wood, the context of Mårbacka and the novels of Selma Lagerlöf; an architectonic study, where space and the experience thereof are of equal value as the parts it consists of.

## TWO PARTS

**ONE** A design proposal for an entrance building to the memorial estate of Mårbacka with the aim to create an introduction to the area.

**TWO** Explorations in wood with the aim to gain knowledge of the material and contribute to a discussion concerning contemporary wood architecture.

*Mårbacka is the home of the world renowned author Selma Lagerlöf.*





# INTERTWINED

**THE TWO PARTS** are closely intertwined and combined they investigate how architecture can be developed in a close relationship to a given material in a site specific context.

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Mårbacka, Värmland

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*”If I have not accomplished anything in my life I  
have at least drawn tourists to Värmland”*

*Selma Lagerlöf*

# INTRODUCTION

This project is situated in Mårbacka, Värmland - former home and birthplace of the author Selma Lagerlöf. According to Lagerlöf's last will Mårbacka became a memorial estate and opened for tours in 1942 after Lagerlöf's death. The area is open for public display still today and around 35.000 people visit the site each year.

I visited Mårbacka on the 23 of August 2014. From a previous visit, many years ago, I remembered the extraordinary manor house and its flourishing garden, where two peacocks had found their home. The peacocks still inhabit the garden and there is a calm and peaceful atmosphere connected to the site. This time I had arrived to Mårbacka with ambitions to formulate a framework for my Master Thesis. Beforehand I had imagined a project inspired by the enthralling novels of Selma Lagerlöf, e.g. a wood pavilion sprung from 'The Adventures of Nils', a space that plays with scale and triggers imagination. Though, while strolling the site deliberating with representatives from the Mårbacka Foundation, I found that the estate struggles with other issues; issues connected to a confusing entrance situation, dysfunctional spaces and utilities being too spread out.

While visiting the estate a project started to grow on me and has continued to develop during the autumn. I saw that another layer could be added to Mårbacka - a layer that complements the existing structure and creates an introduction to the area. For my Master Thesis I therefore chose to develop an entrance building to the estate, a gateway into the world and home of Selma Lagerlöf.

The site has been an important starting point for my project and I have searched for an intriguing relationship between added structure and existing context. When rearranging utilities at the estate it has also been important to suggest new functions suitable for the existing buildings. These proposals should be seen as ideas rather than finished proposals.

The program has mainly sprung from my own observations at the site and I'd like to mention that I have no official client. However, communication with representatives from Mårbacka Foundation has been an important input while initiating the project.



Selma Lagerlöf - the first woman and the first Swede - was awarded with the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1909, followed in 1914 by her election, as the first woman, to the prestigious Swedish Academy. Above: Selma Lagerlöf to the left.

Photo varmlandsgille.se (Bilder av Mårbacka)

# PART ONE / CONTEXT

## Selma Lagerlöf & Mårbacka

Selma Lagerlöf was born and grew up at Mårbacka in the province of Värmland, Sweden. Due to financial problems Mårbacka was sold after her father's death. Lagerlöf's literary success made it possible for the author to redeem the farm in 1907, where she first used it as a summer house.<sup>1</sup>

Mårbacka's main attraction is the main building which Lagerlöf re-built twice. The result of the second transformation, 1921-1923, with drawings from Gustaf and Isac Clason - is the building seen today (3, page 13). The old timber building originally constructed 1796, is enlarged with a second floor and extended seven meters eastwards. New rooms were added as well as subsidiary spaces, a kitchen and a new entrance veranda. The red panelling and white moldings of the exterior, features commonly known in the area, are replaced with light yellow painted plaster, subdivided and framed by white pilasters of wood. Mårbacka is imposingly placed in the open landscape and Lagerlöf's transformation of the estate created a grandiose manor, completely in contrast to its humble context. In a presentation from the nineteenth century Mårbacka is referred to as *"the most famous manor in Sweden and of Swedish manors the most famous in the world"*.<sup>2</sup>

Lagerlöf's last will turned Mårbacka into a memorial estate and opened for tours in 1942, although Mårbacka was considered to be a tourist attraction long before that and Lagerlöf was visited by tourists and journalists during her entire life in the building. Lagerlöf re-built Mårbacka not only as a home, but also as a museum. Architect Katarina Bonnevier states in her doctoral dissertation:

*"It is telling how both the Clason architects and the client wanted to manifest Lagerlöf – the world renowned author (the institution) – in the re-building of Mårbacka. Their aim was a backdrop and a stage befitting one of the world's foremost authors. It was going to be a home not a museum, but a home on public display."*<sup>3</sup>

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1 Information from Mårbacka Foundation

2 Bonnevier K (2007) Behind straight curtains: Towards a Queer Feminist Theory of Architecture, Second printing 2011, Axl Books

3 Bonnevier K (2007) Behind straight curtains: Towards a Queer Feminist Theory of Architecture, Second printing 2011, Axl Books

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**1** Selma Lagerlöf was born and grew up at Mårbacka in Värmland.  
Above: Mårbacka 1850-1881  
Photo varmlandsgille.se

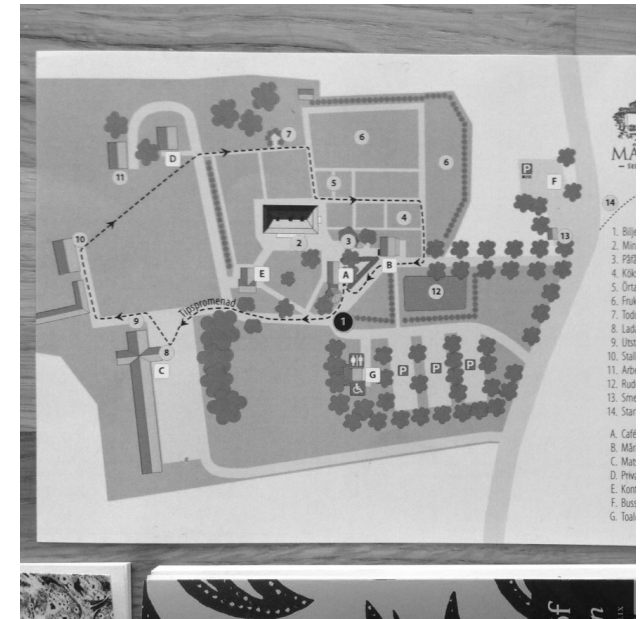


**2** Lagerlöf re-built the main building of Mårbacka twice.  
Above: Mårbacka 1909-1921  
Photo varmlandsgille.se





**3** The result of the second transformation - with drawings from Gustaf and Isac Clason - is the building seen today.  
 Above: Mårbacka after 1923.  
 Photo varmlandsgille.se



**4** According to Lagerlöfs last will Mårbacka became a memorial estate and opened for tours in 1942 after Lagerlöfs death.

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Several of Lagerlöf's novels were written at the estate and many novels hold the spirit of the surrounding landscape. Above: Selma Lagerlöf's work space at Mårbacka.



Mårbacka is situated on a hilltop in an undulating landscape where open fields are intertwined with deep forests and blue mountains.



# CONTEXT

## Landscape & Surroundings

Mårbacka was closely linked to Lagerlöf's literary production and several of her novels are written at the estate. Many novels also hold the spirit of the area and the surrounding landscape. In her debut novel 'The Saga of Gösta Berling' Lagerlöf portrays Värmland and rural Sweden during the 1820s. The text reflects the atmosphere surrounding Mårbacka and is a poetic description of the landscape, to some extent valid still today.

### The Saga of Gösta Berling (1891) Chapter One: The Landscape

"Now I must describe the long lake, the fertile plain, and the blue mountains, because this was the setting where Gösta Berling and the cavaliers of Ekeby lived out their eccentric existence.

The lake has its sources rather far up in the north, which is a splendid country for a lake. The forest and the hills never cease in gathering water for it; streams and brooks tumble down into it year-around. It has fine, white sand on which to extend itself, promontories and small islands to reflect and observe, water sprite and sea witch have free rein there, and the lake quickly grows large and lovely. Up there in the north the lake is happy and amiable: you need only to see it on a summer morning, lying there drowsily under a veil of mist, to feel how merry it is. First it teases for a while, creeping slowly, slowly along out of its light covering, so bewitchingly beautiful that you hardly recognize it, but then with a jerk it throws off the covers and lies there exposed and bare and rosy, glistening in the morning light.

...

The plains are just as long as the lake, but you might think that it has difficulty emerging between lakes and hills, all the way from the basin at the northern end of the lake, where it first dares to spread out, and then onward, until victoriously it lies down in indolent repose by the shore of Vänern. It can only be that the plain would prefer to follow the lakeshore, long as it is, but the hills grant it no peace. The hills are mighty granite walls, covered by forest, full of gorges difficult to move in, rich in moss and lichen, in ancient days home of a multitude of wild animals. One often encounters a marshy bog or a tarn with dark water up among the extensive ridges. Here and there is also a charcoal stack or an open place,

where timber and wood have been removed, or a burned clearing; these testify that hills can also endure work. But normally they lie in carefree repose, content to let shadows and daylight play their terrenal game across their slopes.

...

From ancient time people have cultivated the magnificent plain, and it has become a large district. Anywhere a river with its white-foaming rapids throws itself down the lakeshore slope, ironworks and mills appeared. On the light, open laces where the plain comes up to the lake, churches and parsonages were built, but at the edges of the valleys, halfway up the hillside, on stone covered ground where seeds do not thrive, are the farm-yards and officers quarters and an occasional manor house.

However, it must be noted that in the 1820s the area was far from as developed as it is now. There was much forest and lake and bog then that can now be cultivated. The people were not numerous either and made their living partly through transports and day labour at the many ironworks, partly by working in other places; agriculture could not feed them.

...

But these three - the long lake, the fertile plain, and the blue hills - formed one of the loveliest landscapes, and still do, just as today people are vigorous, courageous, and talented. Now they have also made great progress both in well-being and in education.

May all go well for those who live up there by the long lake and the blue hills! And now I wish to relate a few of their memories."

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Besides the main building the estate holds a vast amount of outbuildings.

The main building is facing south, overlooking the plain.

The estate has an English garden and a garden of apple trees.



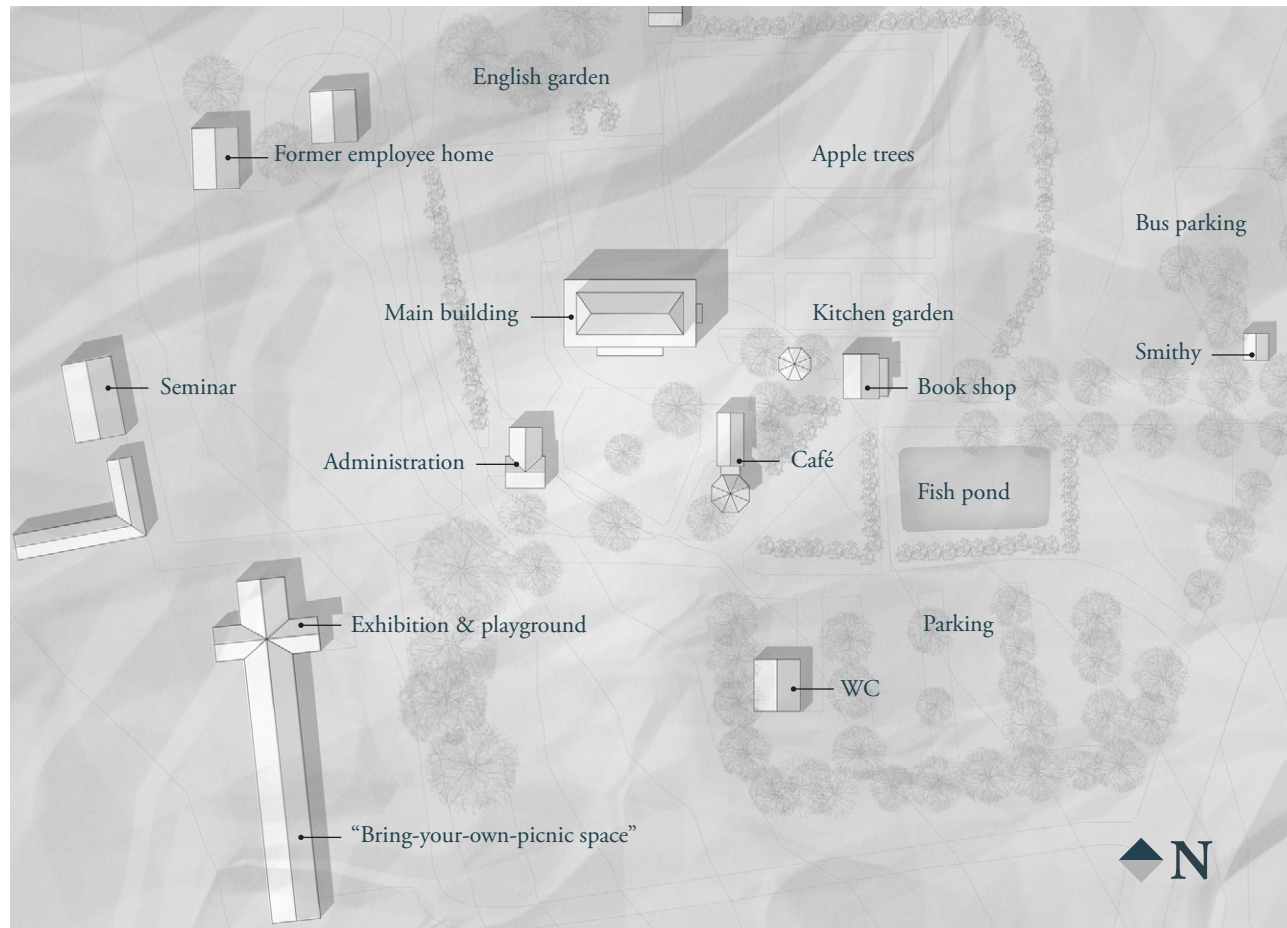


Built to be the biggest barn in the region.



The site holds a variation in style, form, material and detail.

# Current Site Plan 1:800 (A3)



# CONTEXT

## Layout & Outbuildings

The main building of Mårbacka is accompanied by a pair of detached wings and a vast amount of outbuildings; formerly used as stables, barns, smithy, storage, employee housing etcetera. Currently these buildings hold various exhibitions, lecture rooms, administration facilities, a book shop, a small café and storage utilities.

Mårbacka Foundation struggles with attractions and functions being too spread out to maintain and the supplementary spaces being dysfunctional and not fit for their contemporary use. For example, spaces used for exhibitions are un-insulated, damp and lack digital equipment and the seminar room is damp and cold. No reception exists, which leads to a confusing entrance situation and several visitors - the foundation estimates 10.000 - not paying the entrance fee.

Given this I saw that a new layer could be added to Mårbacka - a layer that complements the existing structure and creates an introduction to the area. This is the background to why I chose to develop an entrance building at the estate.

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Exhibition spaces are not fit for their contemporary use.



Seminar room is damp and cold.



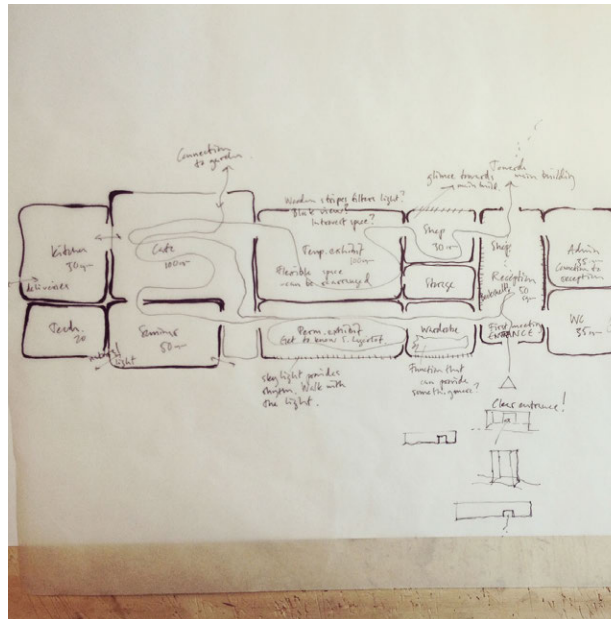


A reception is lacking.



A public toilet is the first building visitors approach.

AN ENTRANCE TO MÅRBACKA



Sketch searching for connections and movements within program.

# CONTEXT

## An Additional Layer

I saw that several of Mårbackas existing functions could be combined in an additional structure, designed to fit its specific program, benefitting the foundation as well as visitors to the estate. By creating a new building I also saw a chance to lift one of Sweden's greatest authors and to create a better introduction to the area. I chose to design a new building, instead of refurbishing a standing one, mainly due to the layout of the existing plot.

The program for the new building has sprung from my own observations on site and from communication with Mårbacka Foundation about their visions for the future, where amongst others dreams of a 'Visitor centre' is mentioned.

### **Program**

Entrance/Reception (65 sqm)

Exhibition (110-140 sqm) (Permanent + temporary)

Café (85 sqm)

Museum shop (35 sqm)

Administration (35 sqm)

Video/Seminar (25 sqm)

Library (25 sqm)

Kitchen (50 sqm)

Wardrobe (25 sqm)

WC (35 sqm)

Technical room/Storage (25 sqm)

**Total ca 545 sqm**



*“The configuration of a wooden structure reveals the production process it has undergone, its age and the source of its raw material. It not only tells what is but also what was, what happened and what has been. More sensitively than structures formed of other materials, a wooden artefact and a wooden surface tells a story.”*  
*Eero Paloheimo*

# PART TWO / THE MATERIAL

## Contemporary Wood

*“Wooden architecture is not eternal, it requires care and upkeep,  
which also makes it so human.”*

*Roy Mänttari*

Seventy percent of Sweden’s land area is covered by forest and timber has traditionally defined the image of the country, in both nature and the built environment.

[The Swedish forest consists of 42 % fir, 39 % pine, 12 % birch and 7 % deciduous trees.<sup>4</sup>]

Despite its natural character wood today is a highly engineered product and timber structures have made massive leaps over the last decades, especially in the fields of glue-laminated components. Today we can build higher and span longer than before, and to a bigger extent we are able to control the material, producing wood components and angles with high accuracy.<sup>5</sup>

New opportunities for structural use, hybrid constructions and surface treatment, together with the progress of the environmental movement have positively led to a growing interest in contemporary wood structures. Timber is a renewable material with a complete cycle, from growing forest to decomposing biomass or fuel, and given resilient forestry techniques - an ecologically acceptable one.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.svenskttra.se/om\\_tra\\_1/tra-och-miljo\\_1/skogen-och-dess-foradling](http://www.svenskttra.se/om_tra_1/tra-och-miljo_1/skogen-och-dess-foradling)

<sup>5</sup> Kasivo M, Mänttari R et al. (2005) From Wood to Architecture, Museum of Finnish Architecture

<sup>6</sup> Slavid R (2005) Wood Architecture, Laurence King Publishing Ltd.



Study of timber characteristics.

# THE MATERIAL

## Properties & Joints

To approach and understand the characteristics of the material I studied timber properties and as a result of this I created a library consisting of a selection of technical properties as well as properties connected to appearance. I saw knowledge of the material as an essential prerequisite for designing a wooden building and that the material could influence the design process as well as the final result.

Wood is an organic, nonhomogeneous material and its properties vary depending on annual rings, species, number of knots and general uniformity.<sup>7</sup> While studying the technical properties of the material – strength, pliability, moisture movement, softness etcetera– I soon found one essential limit of timber:

*“The nature of wood leads to the first general boundary condition, which applies to the form of the structure. You cannot cast massive solids of wood as you can of concrete nor can you weld or solder it like steel”.*<sup>8</sup>

Timber constructions are thereby dependent on joints. Wood is usually fixed with glue or with metal connectors and the most common connector today is probably the nail plate used in trusses. I saw that finely tailored connectors could lift the appearance of a structure and while studying elderly jointing methods, where craftsmanship and understanding of the material played a crucial part, I wondered if some of this knowledge are lacking within contemporary architecture. To lift this issue I strived to reach far in my understanding of how details and joints are developed within my proposal. It was my hope that this approach would contribute to the atmosphere within the building.

*“Buildings are artificial constructions. They consist of single parts which must be joined together. To a large extent, the quality of the finished object is determined by the quality of the joints.”*<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Kasivo M, Mänttari R et al. (2005) From Wood to Architecture, Museum of Finnish Architecture

<sup>8</sup> Kasivo M, Mänttari R et al. (2005) From Wood to Architecture, Museum of Finnish Architecture

<sup>9</sup> Zumthor P (2005) Thinking Architecture, Birkhäuser

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*“We perceive atmospheres through our emotional sensibility - a form of perception that works incredibly quickly, and which humans evidently need to help us survive.”*  
*Peter Zumthor*



# THE MATERIAL

## Wood As An Experience Level

*“As we enter a space, the space enters us and the experience is essentially an exchange and fusion of the object and the subject”.*  
*Robert Pogue Harrison*

Wood is tactile and provides a human scale - a material to touch and smell. Sometimes I feel that this aspect is lost in, or even stands in difference to, the industrialisation of the material. Our bodies and senses are important instruments for experiencing architecture, and in this project I have strived to integrate the psychological dimension, i.e the appearance of the material throughout my process.

To actively work with this approach model studies and sketches has been essential tools, as well as study visits and literature studies connected to phenomenology. I've strived to investigate different characteristics of wood, eg. light contra massive, and I've aimed to understand the spatial experience thereof. In the final proposal these investigations are merged with program, site and influences from Lagerlöfs literature.



To physically work with wood has been a way to approach the material, to understand characteristics and appearance.

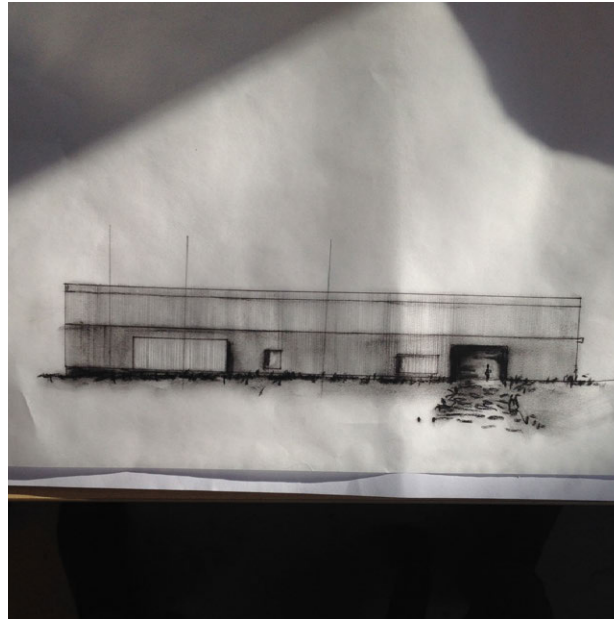


Model studies has been an essential tool to explore atmospheres during the process. Through model sketches materiality is combined with space, light and shadows.

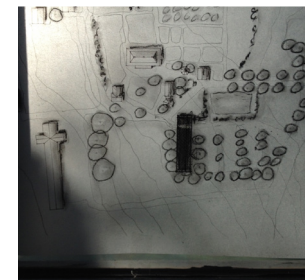
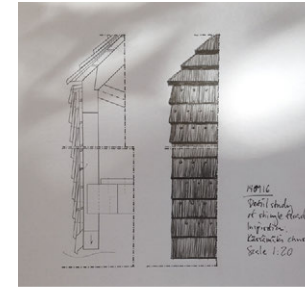
AN ENTRANCE TO MÅRBACKA



Material study



Facade sketch



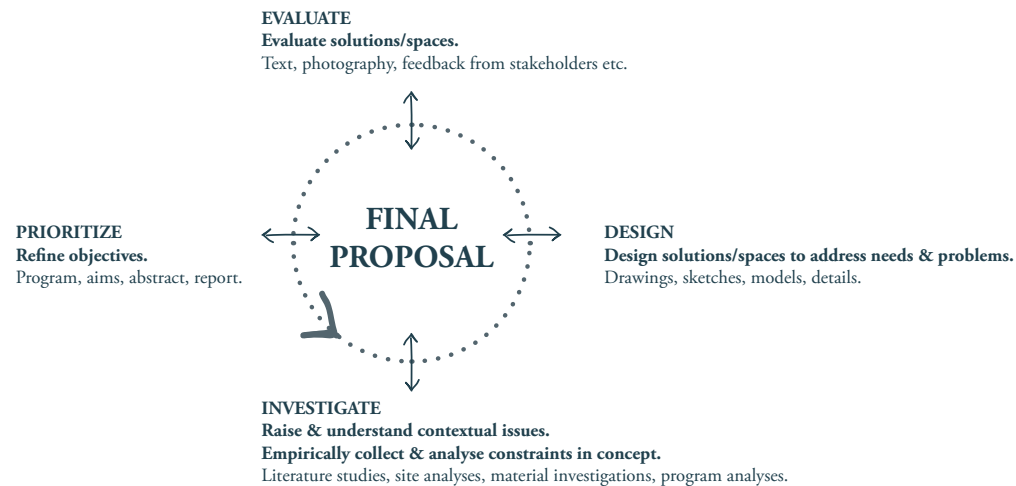
Volume study

# PART THREE / PROCESS

## Method

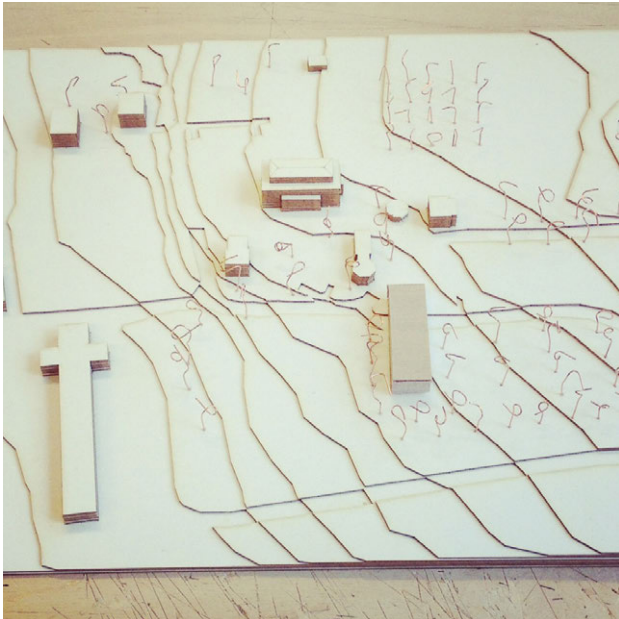
The project has mainly been developed by a research by design method where model studies and sketches are complemented by literature studies and writing.

I intentionally started the process at a broad angle, with the aim to funnel down all aspects - site, material, program – to a comprehensive design proposal. I have worked at several layers simultaneously and therefore it has been important to constantly loop back to evaluate and prioritize the work. The figure below roughly illustrates my process, and on the following pages material important for the reading of the concluding design proposal are presented.



# PROCESS

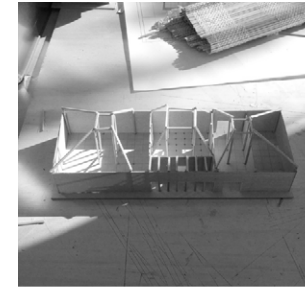
## Site & Volume



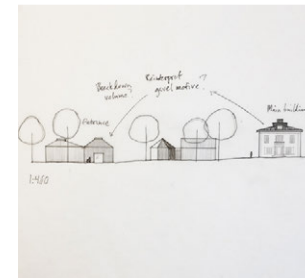
Enhance outdoor rooms and directions.



Catch movement when approaching.



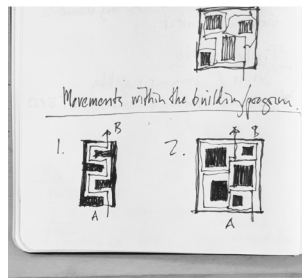
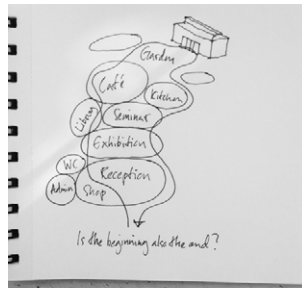
Intriguing relation to site.



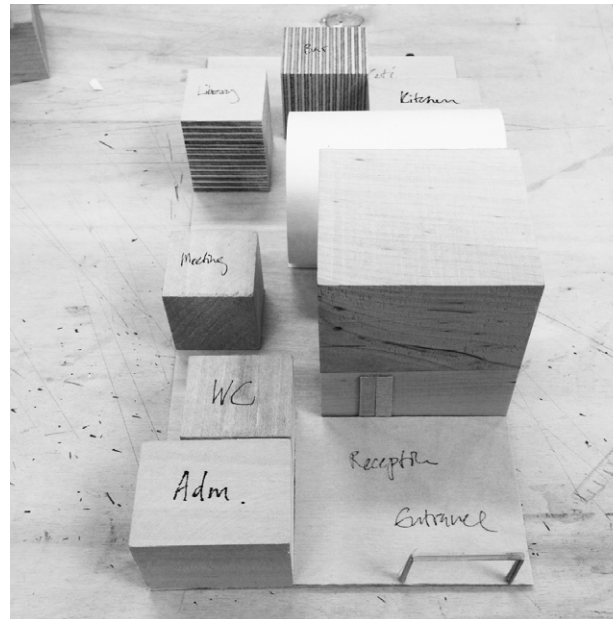
**KEYWORDS** Clear directions/Rhythm/Scale/Out-views/Pause/Outdoor spaces/Existing trees/Refined outbuilding/Outbuilding Costume/Enter with dignity.

# PROCESS

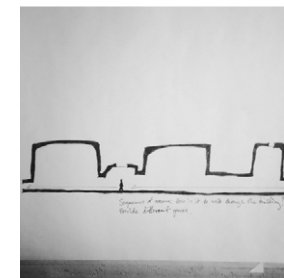
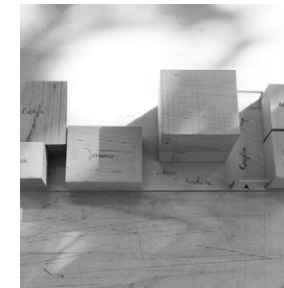
## Program & Movements



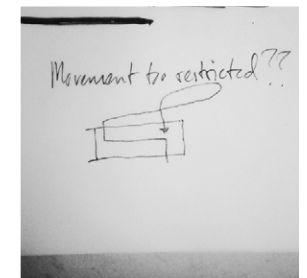
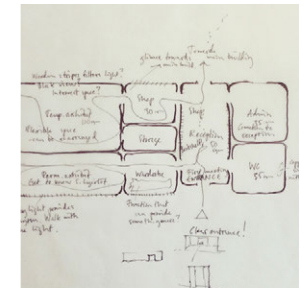
How to direct movements?



Search for connections within program.



Create a sequence of rooms.

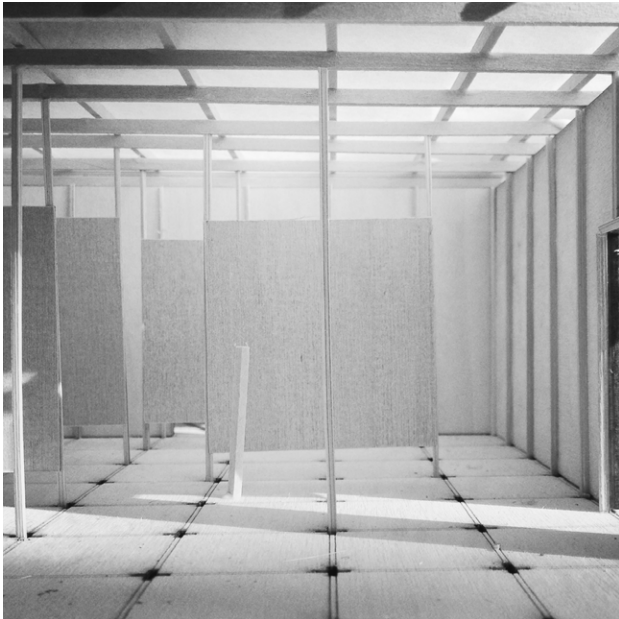


**KEYWORDS** Sequence/Directed flow/Target points/Optional movement/Sight-lines/Connections/Variation/Beginning/End/Public/Private.



# PROCESS

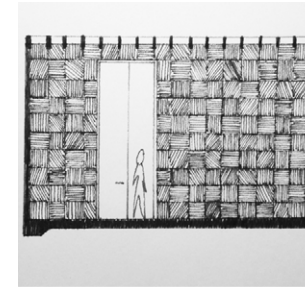
## Space & Atmosphere



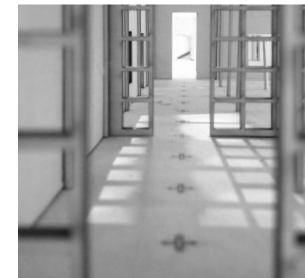
Search for space.



To enter a bookshelf.



Row of rooms a' la manor house.

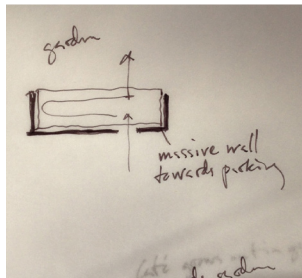
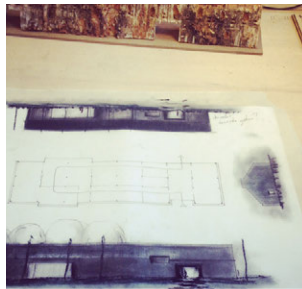


**KEYWORDS** Sequence of rooms/Contrast/Scale/Light/Shadow/Sight-lines/Intriguing/Rhythm/References/Humble/Tectonic.



# PROCESS

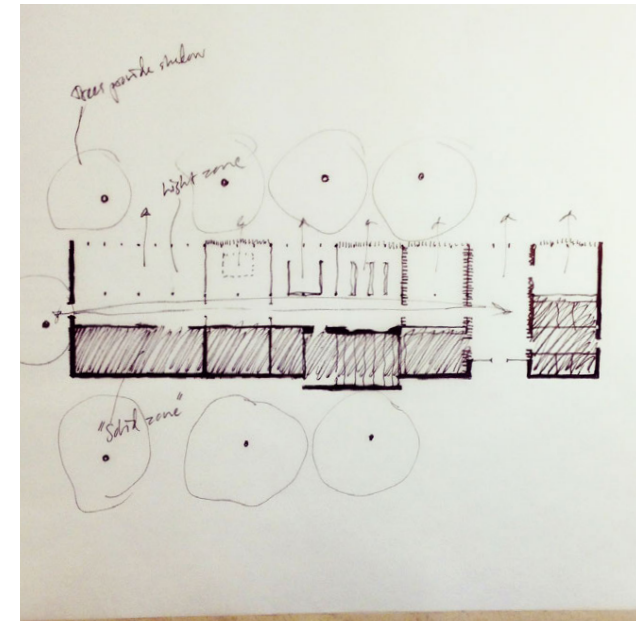
## Concept



Development of a concept.



Structure divided in two zones.

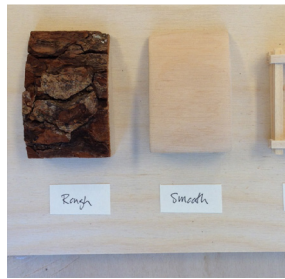
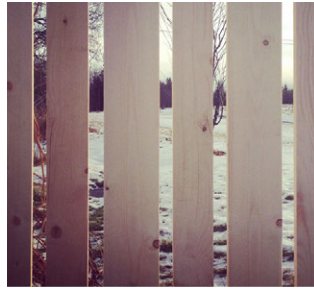


Solid versus light. How does it feel to move in between?

**KEYWORDS** Contrast/Massive versus Light/Divided program/Create expectations/Queerness/Direct & guide.

# PROCESS

## Material



To walk in massive wood.

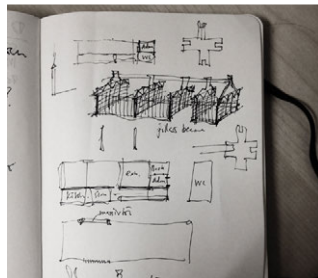
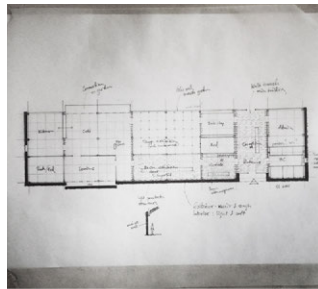
To touch wood.

Search for jointing methods utilized by the material itself.

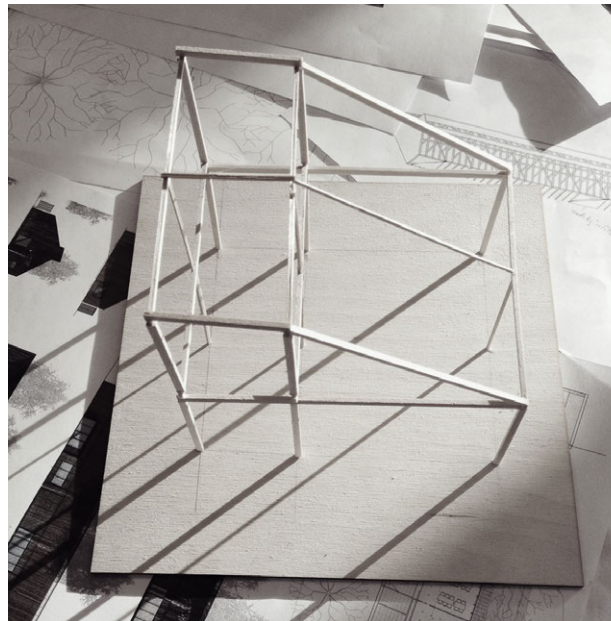
**KEYWORDS** Properties/Physical appearance/Jointing methods/Tactility/Structure/Backdrop/Massiveness/Lightness.

# PROCESS

## Structure



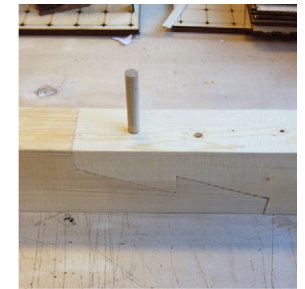
Search of a system.



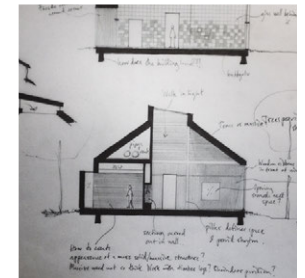
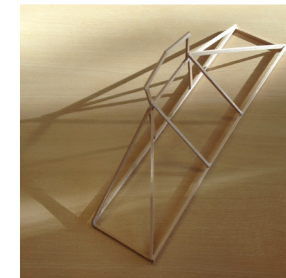
A pillar beam structure.



How is the roof constructed.



Structure generates space.



**KEYWORDS** Tectonic/Industrial vs. hand craft/Joints/To carry and being carried/Enhance spaces/Repetition/Rhythm/Reference studies.



# PROCESS

## References

Some projects of inspiration for my process.



**Jensen & Skodvin** Monastery



**Anssi Lassila** Shingle Church



**Anssi Lassila** Kårsämäki Shingle Church  
Clear movement.



**Barge Bouza Arquitectos** Ethnographic Center



**Miller & Maranta** Market Hall  
Joints with no adhesives.



**Celsing** Millesgården  
Close relationship to context.



**Snøhetta** Reindeer pavilion  
Old construction method combined with contemporary technique.

# PROCESS

## Study Trip

1-7 October - Switzerland



**Miller & Maranta** Market Hall



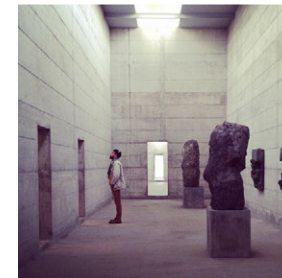
**Caminada Vrin**  
Contemporary timber structures.



**P. Zumthor** St Benedict Chapel  
Refined simplicity.



**P. Zumthor** Vals



**Peter Märkli** Giornico  
Light and materiality.



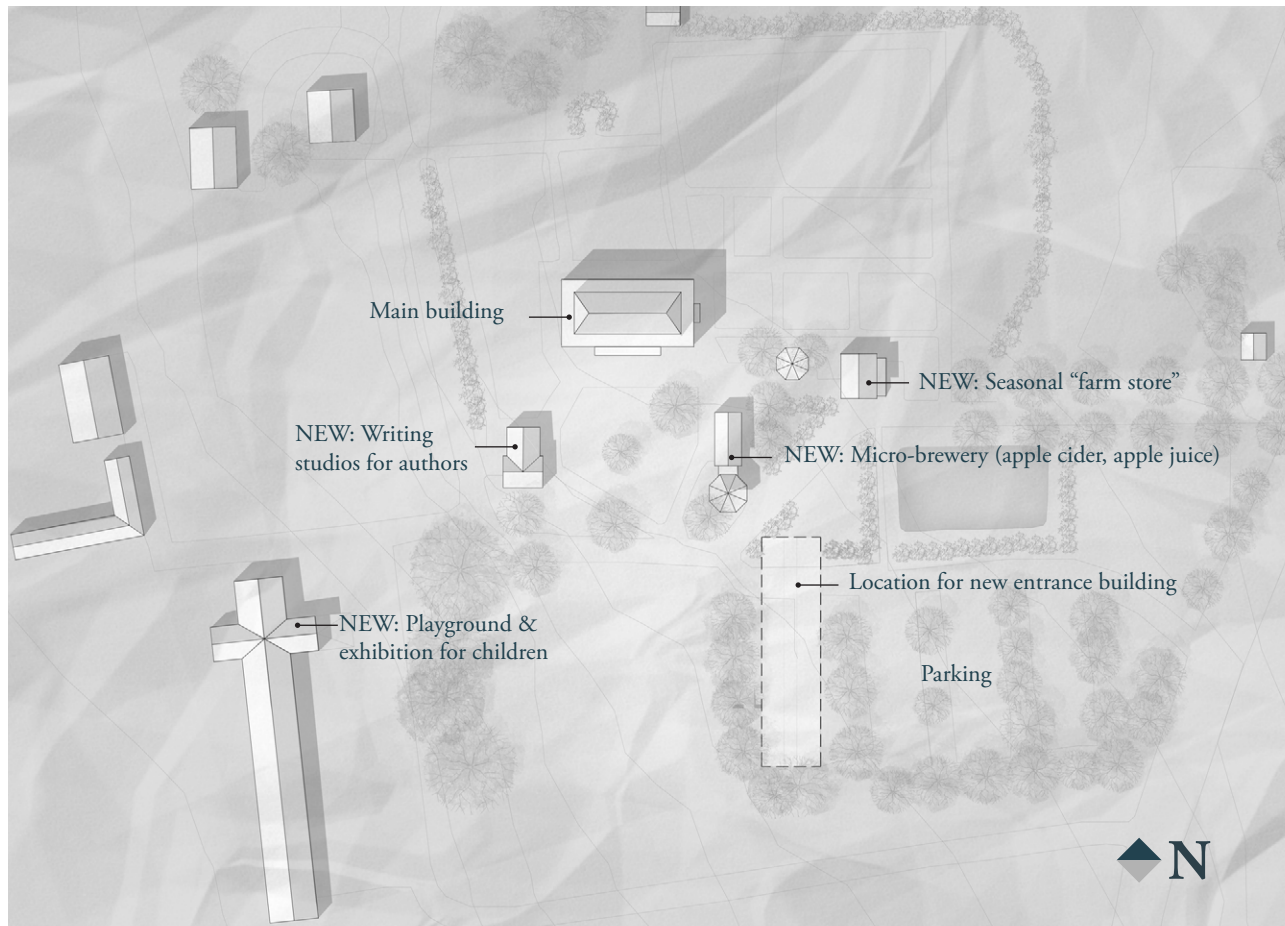
**Olgiati** Flims



**Herzog de Meuron** Vitra  
Rural museum.

# New Functions

1:800 (A3)



0m 20 40  
1:800 (A3)

# PART FOUR/ PROPOSAL

## Rearrange

When rearranging the plot it has been important to suggest new functions and activities in the existing buildings.

Looking at the history of Mårbacka, Selma Lagerlöf was an inventive entrepreneur who constructed a vast apple farm, a kitchen garden and a herb garden. The produced goods were sold in Mårbacka's own store, as well as in the neighbouring town Sunne and nearby hotels. Except for the farming, Lagerlöf also operated the registered company "Aktiebolaget Mårbacka Havremjöl", where oatmeal was exported to Stockholm and America.<sup>10</sup>

I saw that Mårbacka could revitalise some of its production facilities. The apple garden as well as the kitchen garden, still produce a yearly harvest and this could with small means be refined. For example could a micro-brewery be installed and apple cider or juice be produced and sold.

I also imagined that some parts of Mårbacka could hold author studios, where aspiring authors could rent or by scholarship borrow a space on the estate. This would be a way to enhance writing within Sweden and also make the estate even more alive.

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<sup>10</sup> Information from Mårbacka Foundation



AN ENTRANCE TO MÅRBACKA



Exterior perspective from parking.



# PROPOSAL

## Final Design

The relationship to the plot is of great importance for the final design proposal. The new structure is located to support outdoor rooms at the site and to create a clear entrance gate to the estate. The facade towards the parking is kept “solid”, as a way to create tension before entering. No existing trees are cut down and the view from the main building over the plain is kept clear. It has been important to preserve the main building as the key attraction at the estate and this is a strong reason for why the new entrance building has a character of an outbuilding, though a refined one. I’ve also seen the long stretched structure as a counter post to the barn already located at the plot.

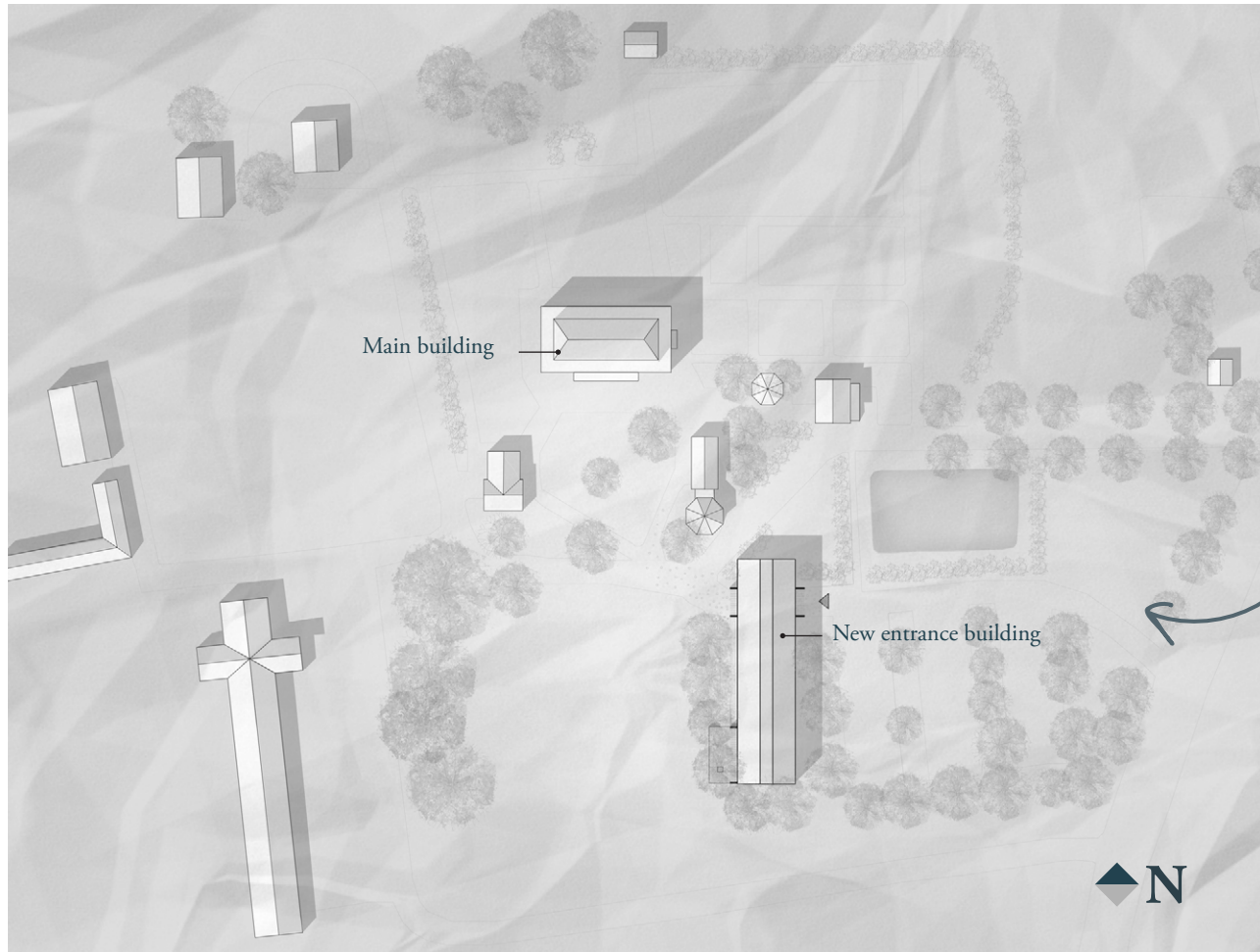
The plan layout of the new building is kept simple and the main movement is located to a central axis that corresponds with a light shaft in the roof. The movement within the building is a part of a bigger pattern covering the site and I have strived to guide the visitor through their visit, though also opening up for optional routes. Walking from the reception towards the cafe the visitor will pass through a row of rooms (‘Rum i fil’). This layout is inspired by old manor houses, such as the Mårbacka main building and Ekeby in the Saga of Gösta Berling. Along the walk the visitor will experience a variation of spaces and atmospheres. The surrounding landscape is present while moving through the building, sometimes via selected views and sometimes filtered through the semi-transparent facade.

The building is roughly organized in two zones; a light zone that opens up towards the garden space, and a solid back containing practical functions and activities that demands darkness or neutral light conditions, e.g. ghost stories read in the library or the video screen of ‘Kejsarn av Portugalien’! The light zone mainly holds public spaces such as a cafe, a book shop, exhibition spaces etcetera. Though, I do not see the building as an exhibition hall.

Connected to wood I’ve particularly strived to understand details and joints within the building, and also investigated atmospheres sprung from a massive versus a light structure. I wish to mention that I have not studied dimensions for the construction, as this stands outside my area of knowledge. To develop the building further the next step would be to study dimensions together with a building engineer.

On the following pages drawings and illustrations from the final design proposal are presented.

# Site Plan 1:800 (A3)



The building is placed to support outdoor rooms and create directions. Existing trees are preserved as well as the view from the main building.

# Floor Plan 1:200 (A4)

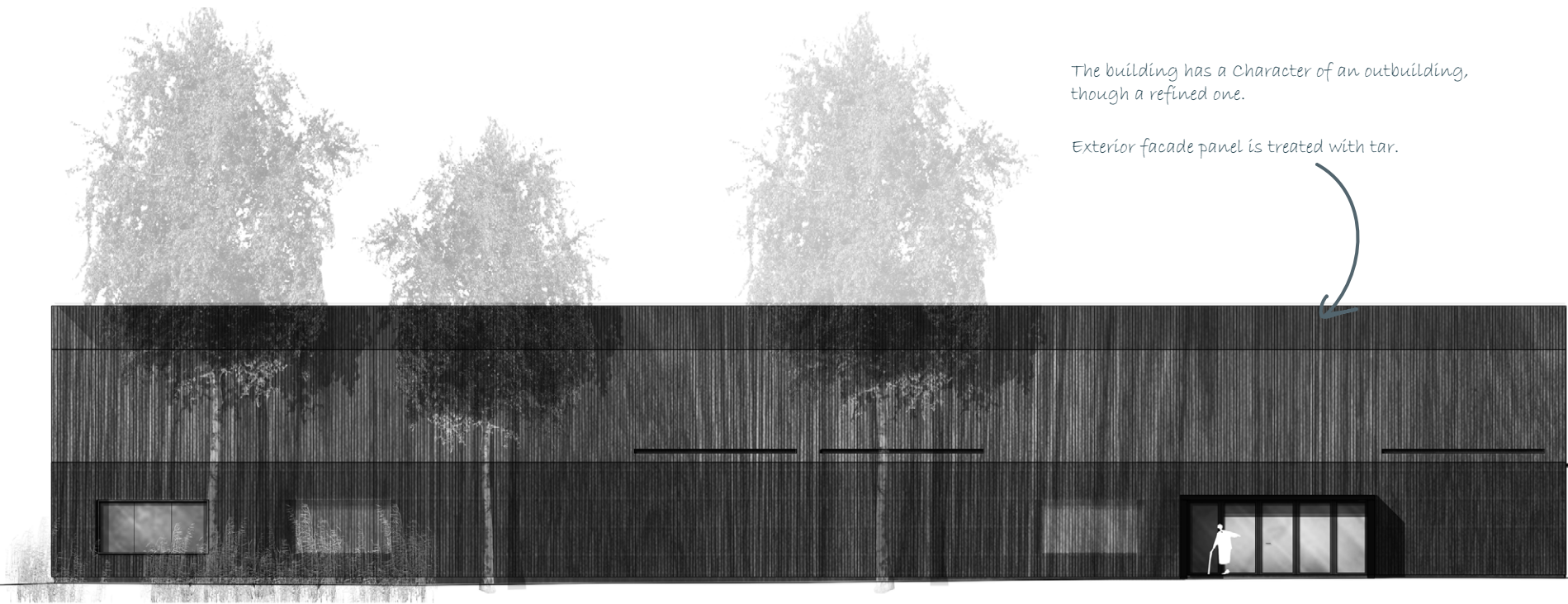


# Facade East

1:200 (A4)

The building has a Character of an outbuilding, though a refined one.

Exterior facade panel is treated with tar.

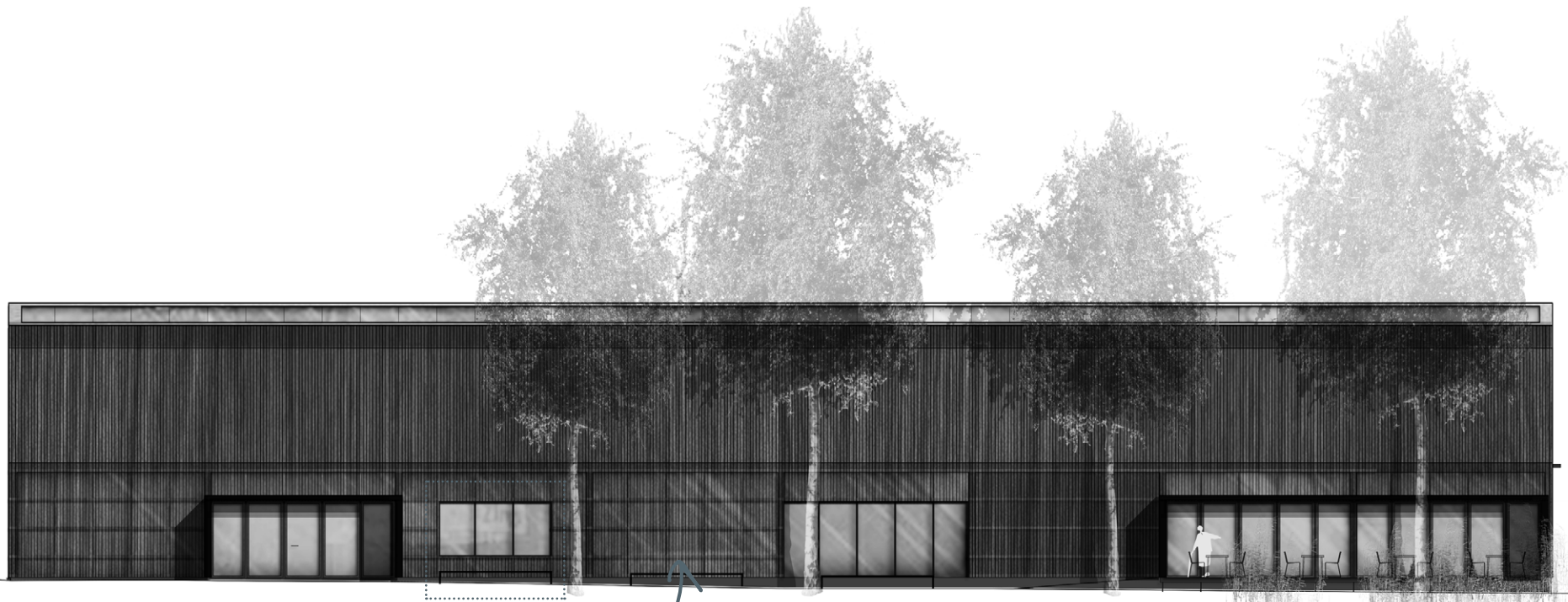


Entrance

The facade towards the parking is kept "solid", as a way to create tension before entering the estate.



# Facade West 1:200 (A4)



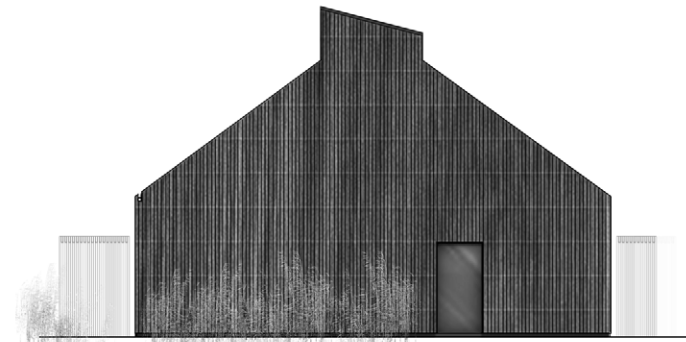
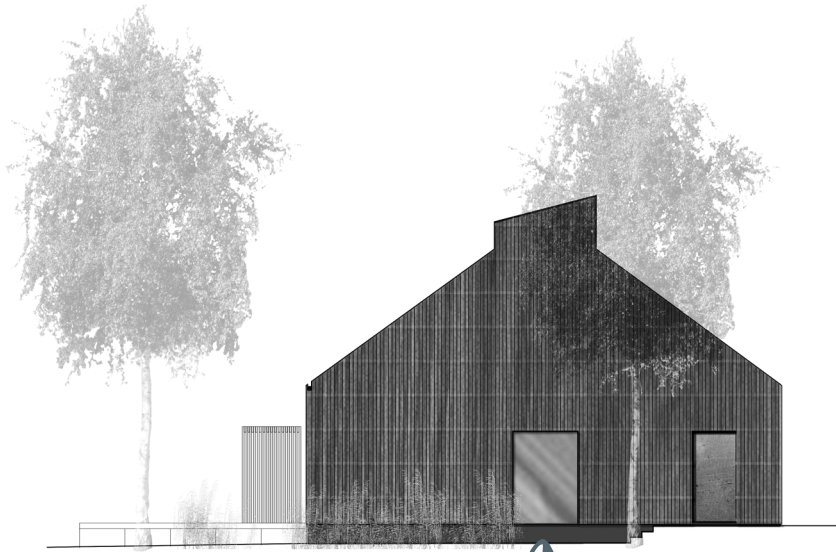
Facade cutout, p. 51

Towards west the building opens up and the facade is semitransparent with a glass wall behind the exterior panel. Views are directed towards the garden space.

# Facade South & North

1:200 (A4)

Roof shape inspired by the roof ('Säteritak') found at Mårbackas main building, here merged with a barn typology.



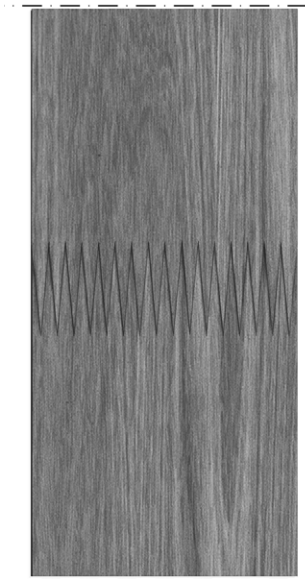
Outlook towards plain



# Facade Cutout

Facade panel is mounted with wood dowels.

Where necessary, e.g. on the gables, the facade planks are extended using finger joints.





Towards the parking the building has one main entrance.

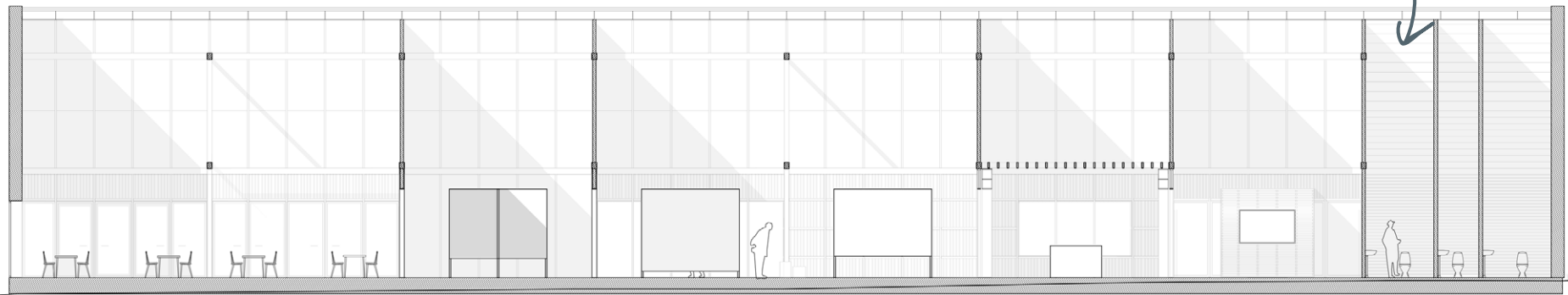




The main movement within the building is organized along a central axis - a row of rooms - corresponding with a light shaft in the ceiling.

# Section A-A 1:200 (A4)

Be "small" like Nils Holgersson



Café

Temp. exhibition

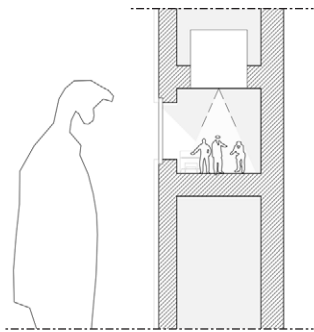
Perm. exhibition: The Life & Authorship of S. Lagerlöf,  
The History of Márbacca

Shop

Reception

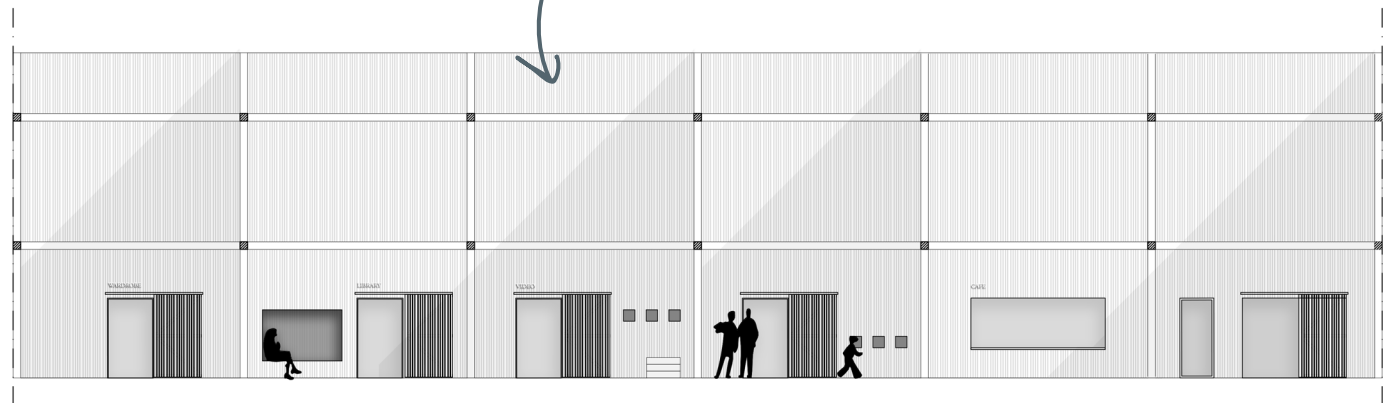
This month an exhibition is showing various illustrations from "The adventures of Nils"

# Elevation 1:200 (A4)



Peekhole: Glimse the world of  
e.g. The cavaliers in Ekeby

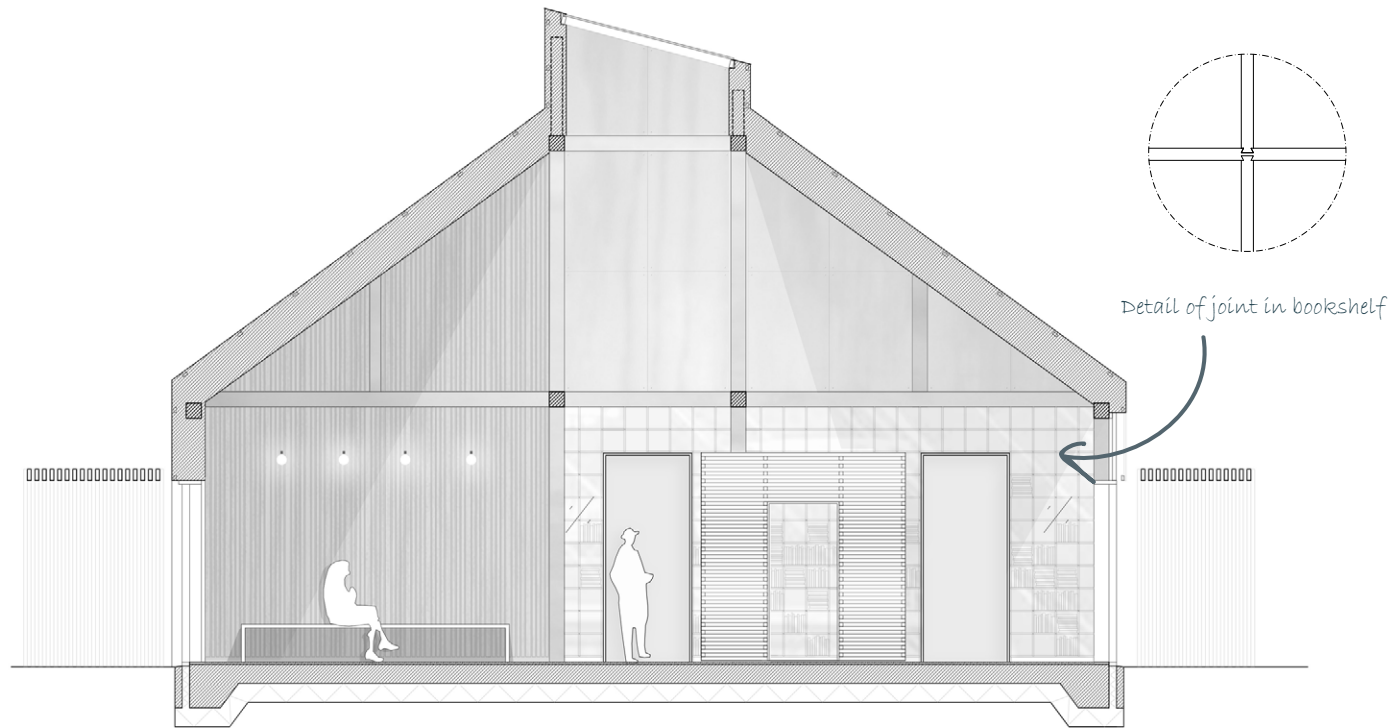
High wall reflects light.  
Interior wood panel creates a relief along the wall



Seating carved out in wall

# Section B-B

1:100 (A4)

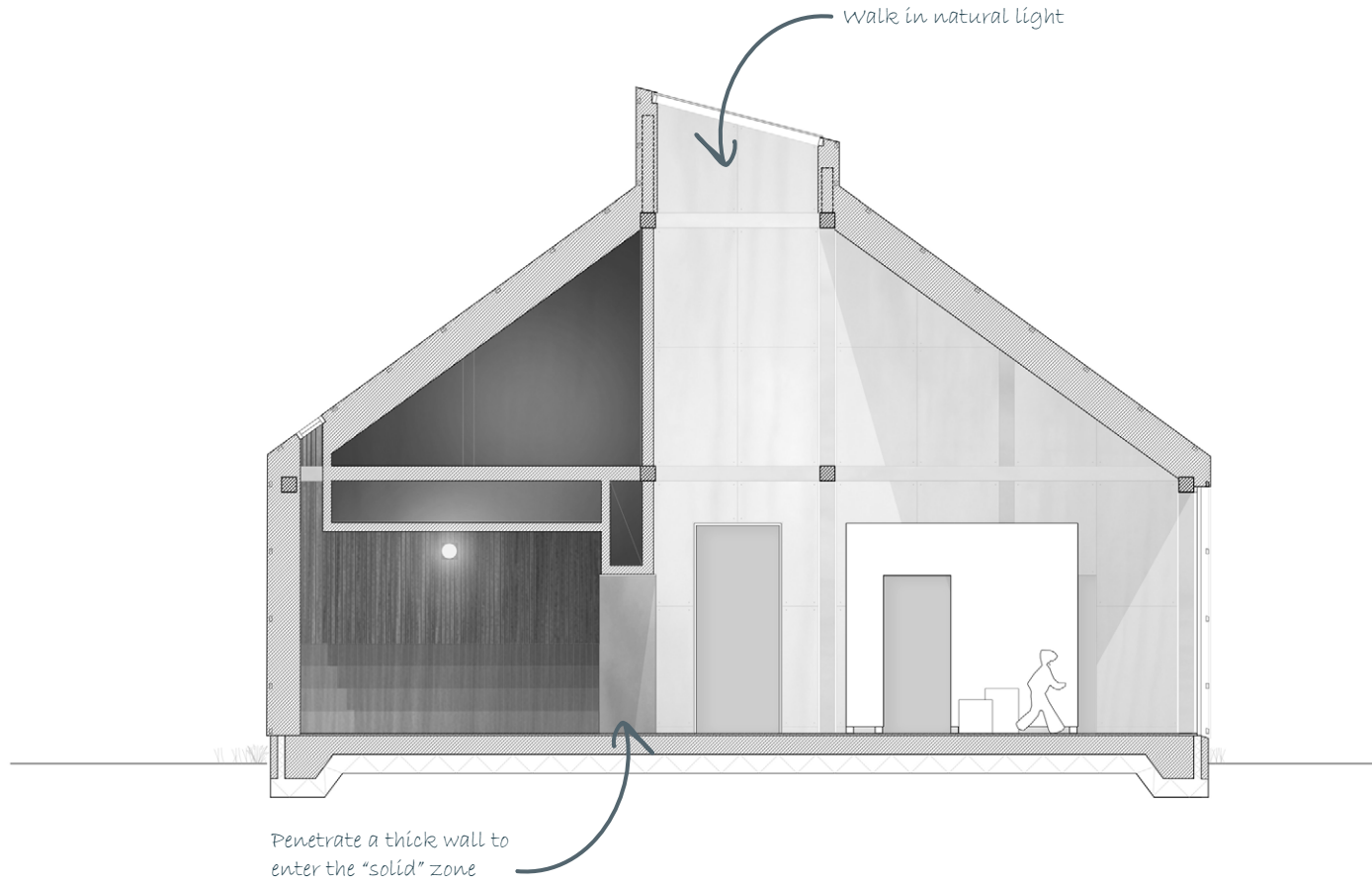


Detail of joint in bookshelf

Entrance room has full roof height

# Section C-C

1:100 (A4)

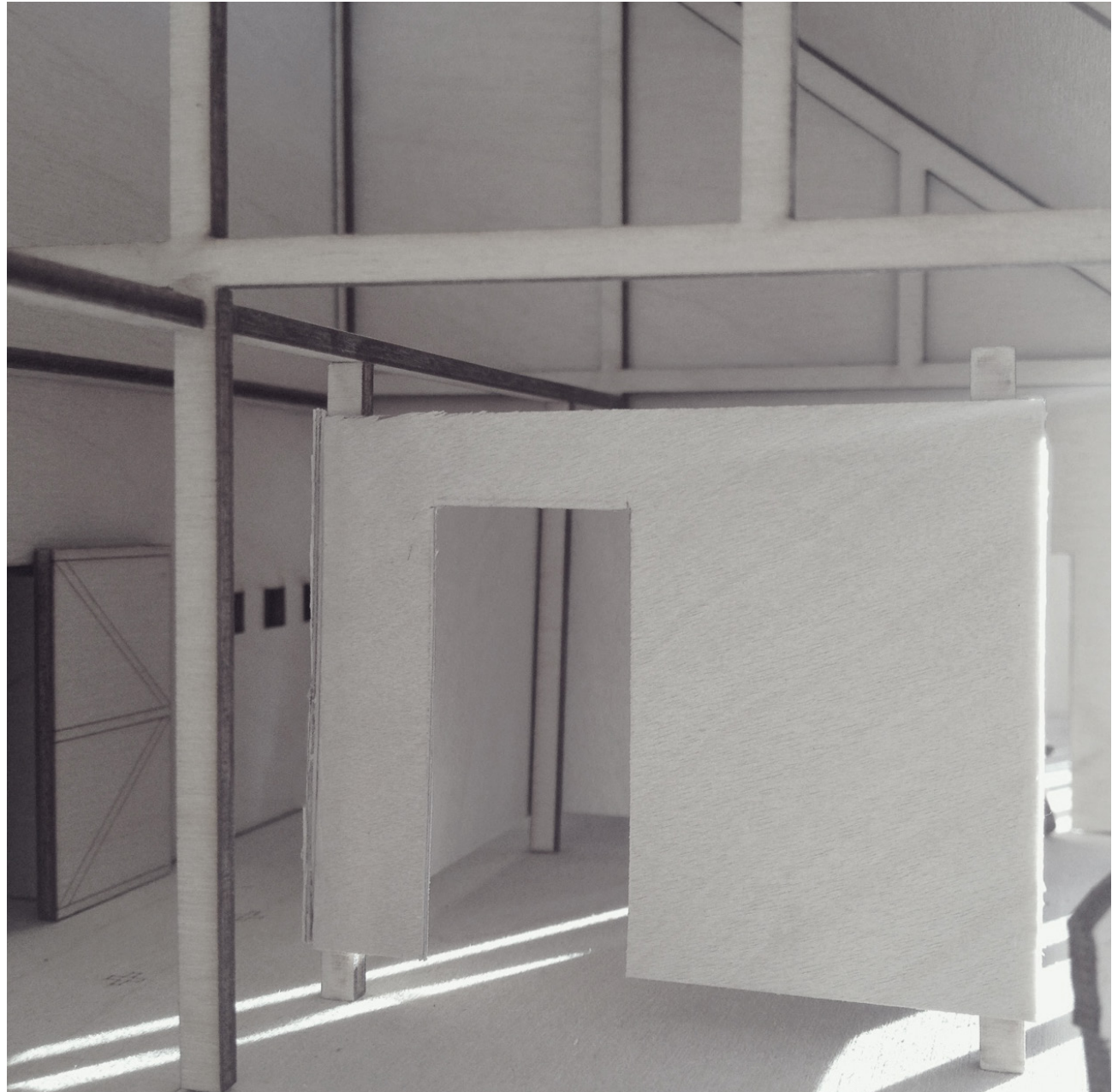




Beside the main axis visitors can chose to loop around the exhibition spaces.



Exhibition spaces consist of a permanent part, telling the story about Lagerlöf and Mårbacka, and a temporary part where displays can vary.



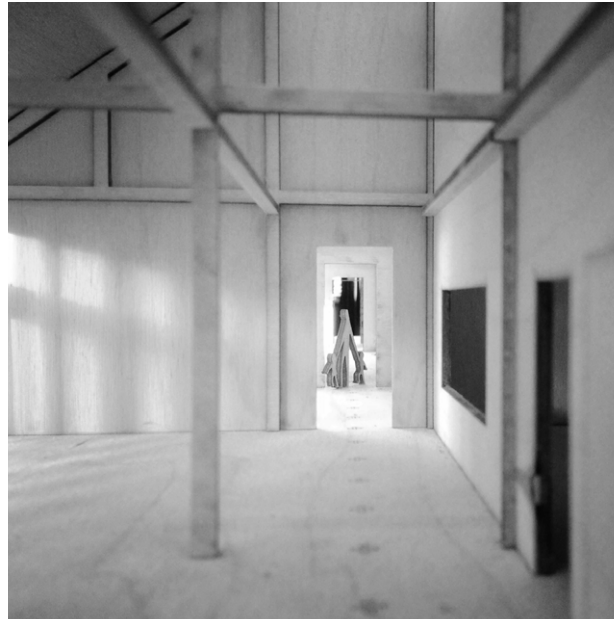


In the building the visitor can experience how it is to be “small” like Nils Holgersson, or glimpse the world of Ekeby’s cavaliers.



The surrounding landscape is present while moving through the building, sometimes via selected views and sometimes filtered through the semitransparent facade.





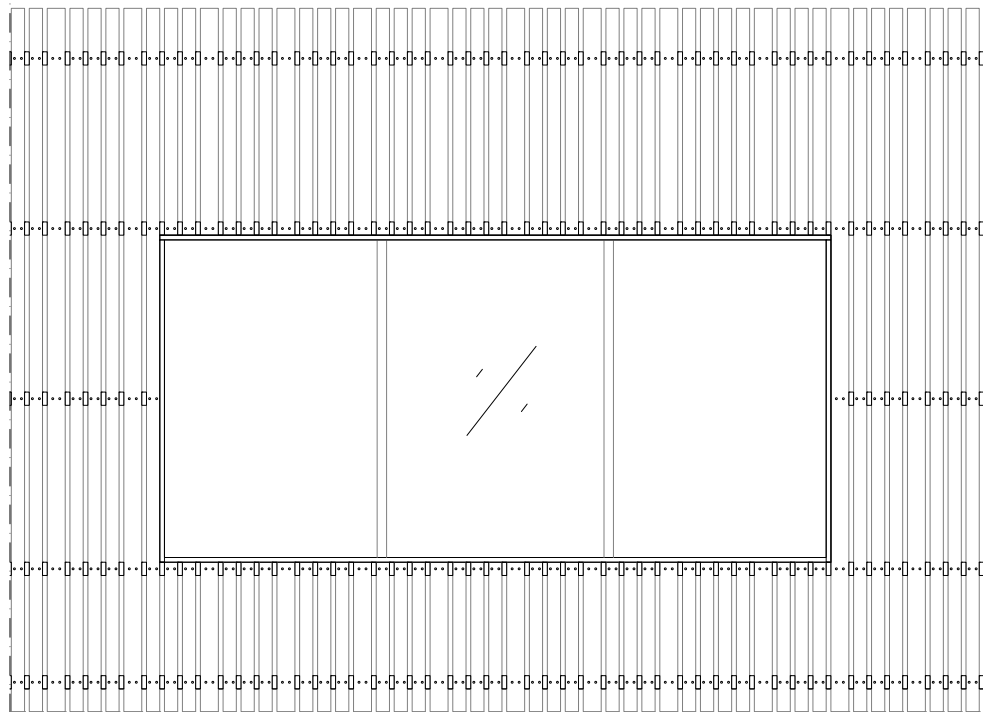
The main axis leads to the cafe, a target point within the building.

The cafe opens up towards the garden space, which guides the visitor onwards to the main building.

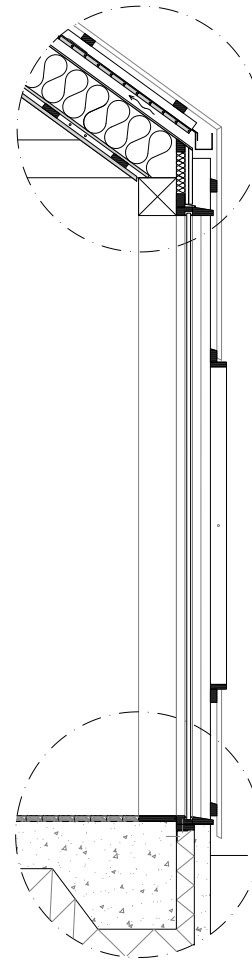


# Details 1:40 (A4)

## ELEVATION, PANEL WALL



## HORIZONTAL CUT



## DETAIL A

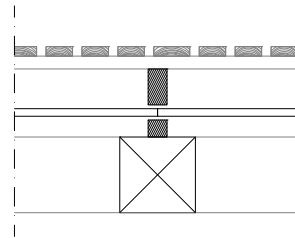
The facade consists of two layers, where the outer panel boards are mounted with a distance. This gives the facade a semitransparent appearance, inspired by barns in the area.



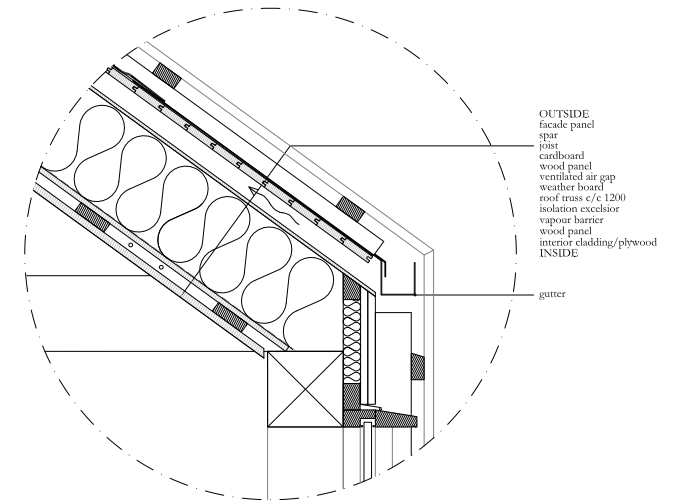
## Study of Facade Panel

## DETAIL B

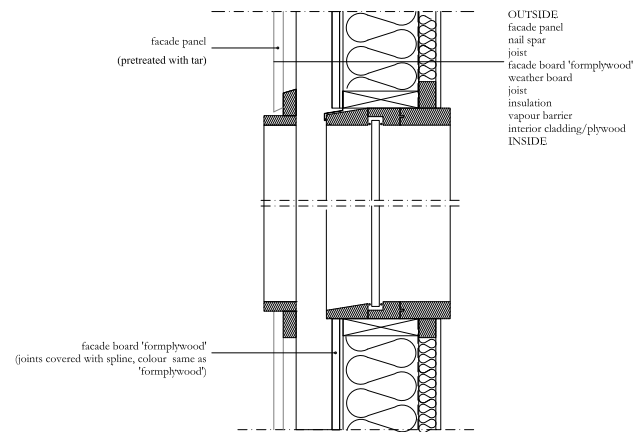
# Details 1:20 (A4)



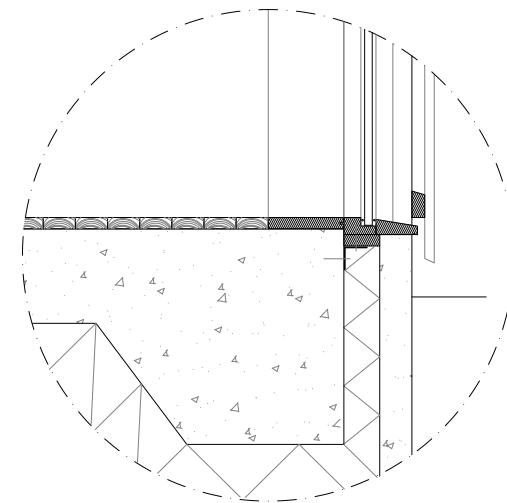
**DETAIL C**  
**HORIZONTAL CUT, GLASS WALL**



**DETAIL A**



**DETAIL D**  
**VERTICAL CUT, EXTERIOR WALL**



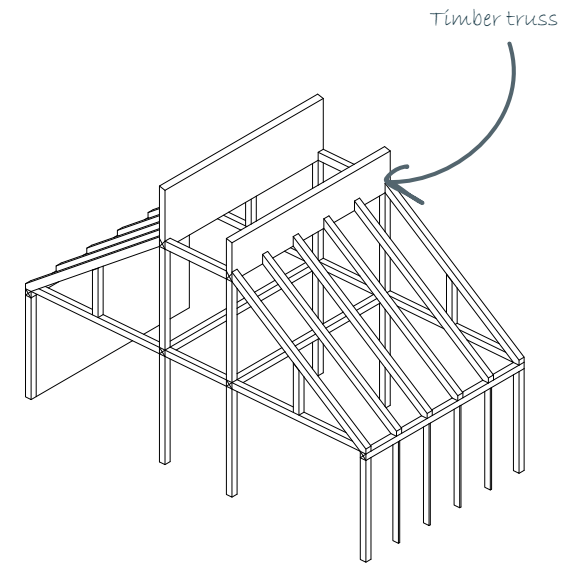
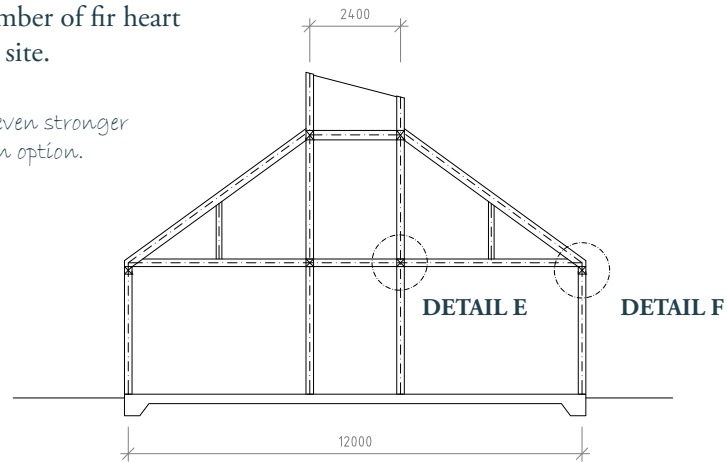
**DETAIL B**



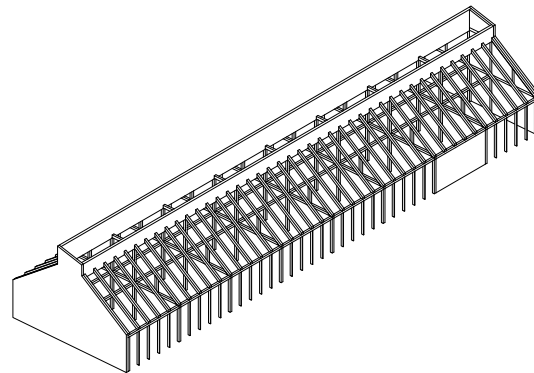
# Structure

The building is constructed by timber of fir heart wood. The structure is mounted at site.

*ALTERNATIVE: If loads demands an even stronger structure, I see glue-laminated fir as an option. Joints are in this case CNC-cut.*

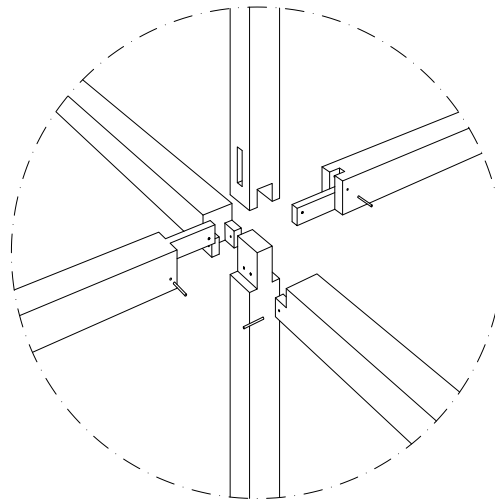
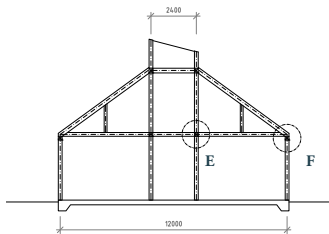


STRUCTURE PRINCIPLE

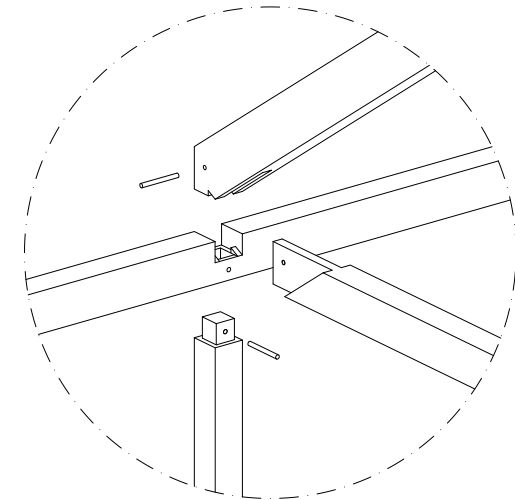


STRUCTURE CUTOUT

# Details



**DETAIL E,  
PRINCIPLE JOINT**



**DETAIL F,  
PRINCIPLE JOINT**

*These details investigate how the structure could be mounted with no metal connectors. The joints demand a high level of handicraft, though a repeated system can bring economy to the solutions.*

AN ENTRANCE TO MÁRBACKA



The entrance room has a close relationship to the book shop, where a bookshelf creates a semitransparent interior wall.



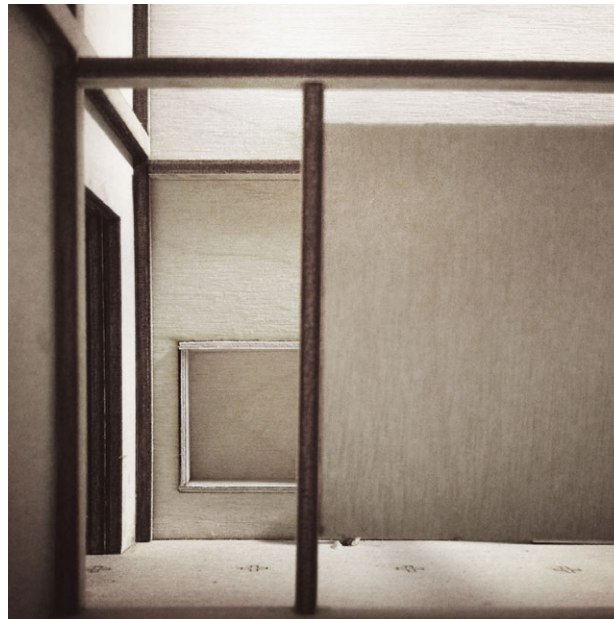
# PART FIVE / DISCUSSION

## Process & Result

This work has allowed me an opportunity to deep dive in a project combining material investigations and program studies in a site specific design proposal. Choosing *one* of these areas would probably have led to a more thorough understanding, e.g. merely focusing on jointing methods. Though, at the time I found it more interesting to merge all aspects in an architectonic study, where space and the experience thereof are of equal value as the parts it consist of; narratives embodied in spatial and detail investigations. In this report I have aimed to lift my process as an essential part adding up to the final result and I see the concluding proposal as a method to illustrate my thoughts and findings. The final design can, of course, be developed further and some parts I have not managed to cover, for example material treatments.

Working with wood I realize that I have only scratched a surface of the material, and that I still have a lot to learn. To study elderly jointing methods was for me a good way to initially approach and understand the material and it is my belief that this knowledge - joints utilized by the material itself - to a bigger extent can be integrated within contemporary architecture. To look at my own role as an architect I see that I can take a bigger responsibility when it comes to material awerness and how the design matches the construction. In this work I also see the importance of close collaborations between architect, engineer and carpenter (or other occupations with knowledge within the area). Good examples exist, where modern techniques are combined with elderly methods - e.g. Snöhetta's Reindeer Pavilion or Shigeru Ban's Tamedia Office Building in Zürich - though it is my belief that we can reach further in this area here in Sweden. I also believe it's of great interest to challenge the properties of the material, but to do this I see knowledge of the basic characteristics as an important prerequisite.

The concluding proposal is inspired by the material wood, the context of Mårbacka and the author, as well as the person, Selma Lagerlöf. One important question for the design has been how Lagerlöf is represented within the proposal. I saw the first step as to integrate the building at the plot - which breathes of Lagerlöf and her literature - and the entire program is thereafter developed to enhance the authorship and history of Selma Lagerlöf. The plan layout refers to a building layout common during Lagerlöfs lifetime, and while detailing the building I have strived to integrate references to literature and Lagerlöfs novels in a coherent whole.



Wood structures has a strong tradition in Värmland.

# DISCUSSION

## Sustainability

### **Ecological**

Wood is an organic material that absorbs carbon dioxide as it grows and has a low 'embodied' energy compared to other materials.<sup>11</sup> To enhance wood as a building material is therefore of ecological interest. Further, the building could be constructed in a way that makes it easy to dismantle and reuse/recycle.

### **Economical**

The material could be harvested within the area and thereby contribute to a local economy. To attract more visitors/tourists to the area would also be a way to provide an income to a rural part of Sweden. By constructing the building with a systematic thinking I saw possibilities to bring economy even to a more finely tailored structure.

### **Social**

Selma Lagerlöf is a strong source of identity in Värmland and a project like this could contribute to a sense of pride and a community feeling. Mårbacka also functions as an important meeting place for the area, which could further be enhanced through this project.

### **Cultural**

Wood structures have a strong tradition in Värmland, and the landscape speaks thereof. To develop the building in close collaboration with local wood industries could be a way to nurture and cultivate this cultural heritage. The project could also be a way to further enhance writing and story telling, and lift the history of one of Sweden's greatest authors.

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<sup>11</sup> Slavid R (2005) Wood Architecture, Laurence King Publishing Ltd.

# LIST OF LITERATURE

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# APPENDIX

## Biography / S. Lagerlöf

- 1891** Gösta Berlings saga  
**1894** Osynliga länkar  
**1895** Ett äfventyr i Vineta  
**1897** Antikrists mirakler  
**1899** Drottningar i Kungahälla  
**1899** En herrgårdssägen  
**1901** Jerusalem 1  
**1902** Jerusalem 2  
**1904** Herr Arnes penningar  
**1904** Kristuslegender  
**1906** Nils Holgerssons underbara resa. Första delen  
**1907** Nils Holgerssons underbara resa. Andra delen  
**1908** En saga om en saga och andra sagor  
**1911** Liljecronas hem  
**1911** Hem och stat  
**1912** Körkarlen  
**1913** Tösen från Stormyrtorpet, dramatiserad  
**1914** Kejsaren av Portugallien  
**1914** Dunungen, dramatiserad  
**1915-1921** Troll och människor, 1 och 2  
**1918** Bannlyst  
**1918** Kavaljersnoveller  
**1922** Mårbacka  
**1925** Löwensköldska ringen  
**1925** Charlotte Löwensköld  
**1928** Anna Svärd  
**1930** Ett barns memoarer  
**1932** Dagbok  
**1933** Höst  
**1933** Skriften på jordgolvet.  
**1943-1945** Från skilda tider. (Novels published after Selma Lagerlöfs death 1940.)

Information from Selma Lagerlöf-sällskapet.

# APPENDIX

## Photo Log Book

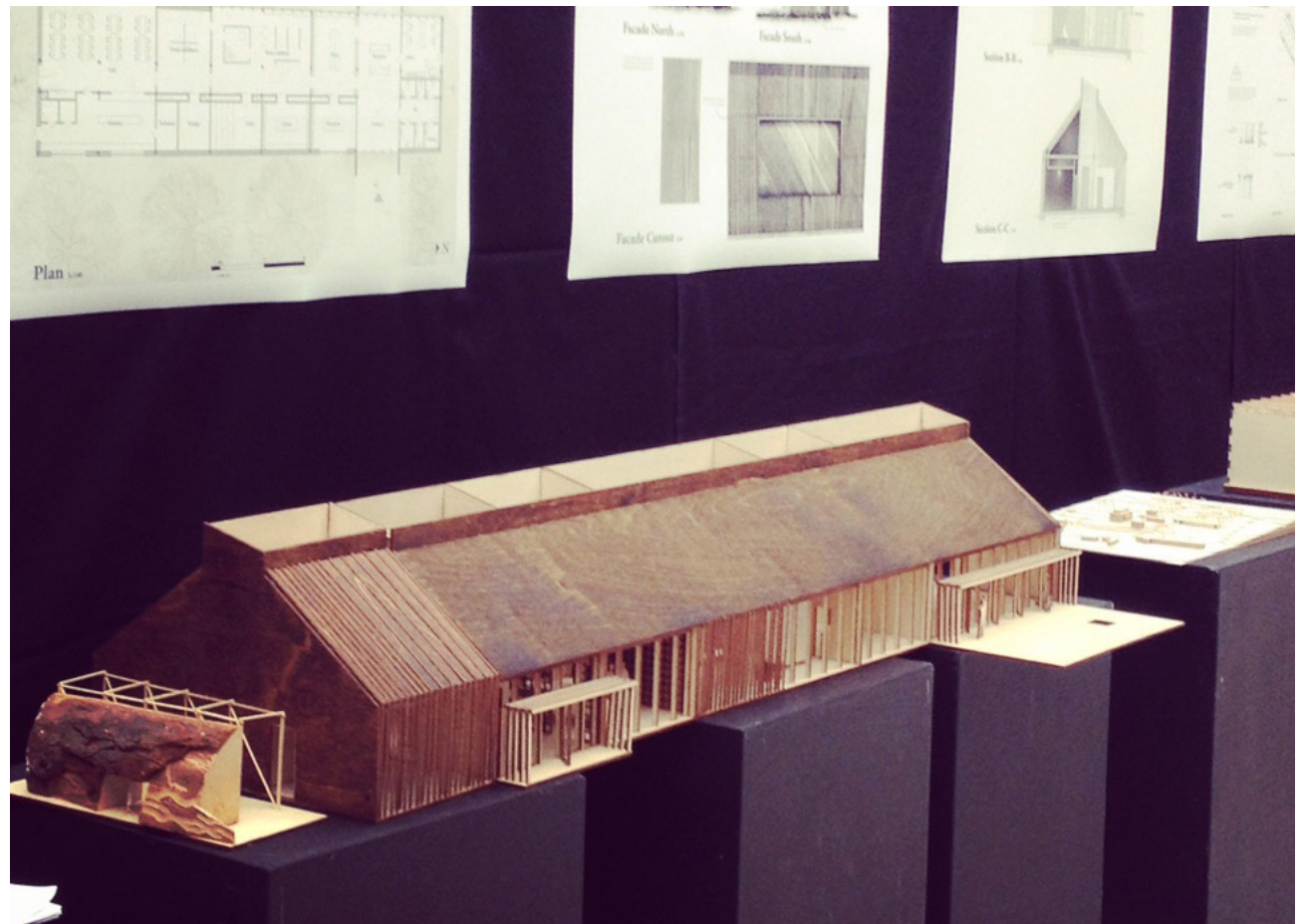


Cut out from photo log book.



# APPENDIX

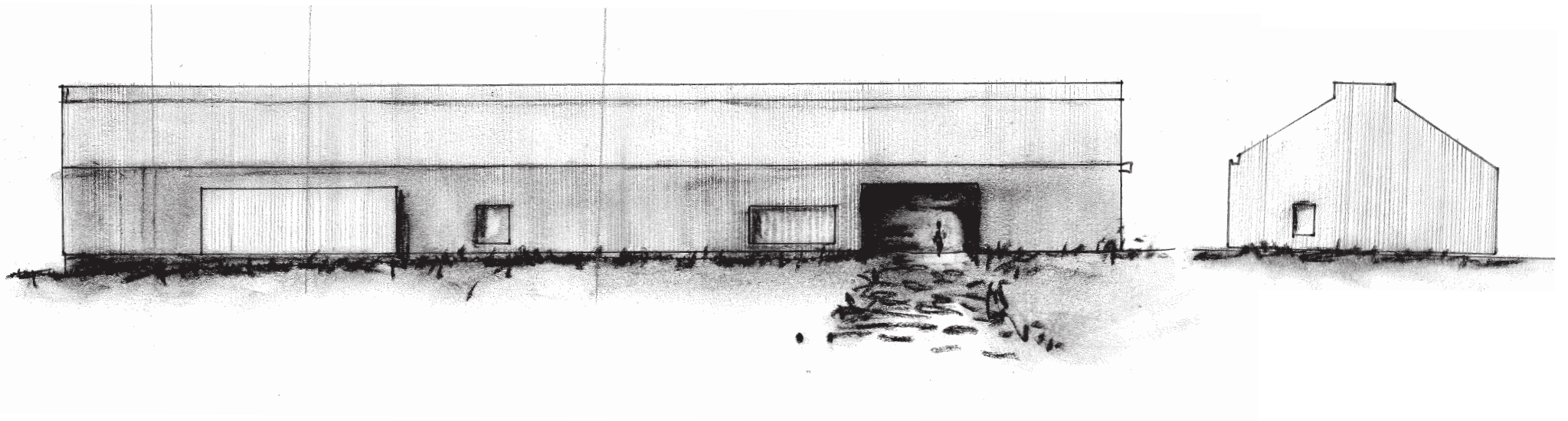
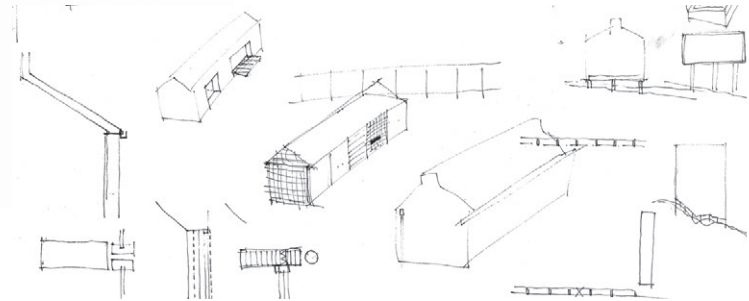
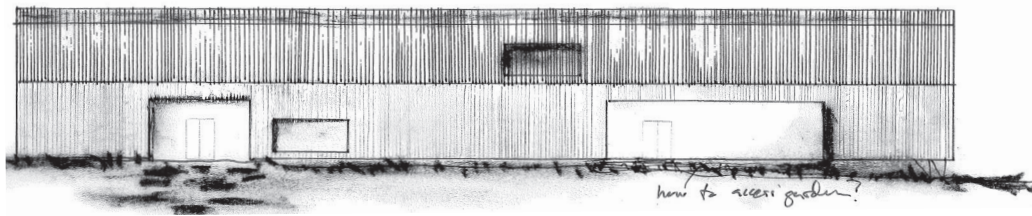
## Exhibition



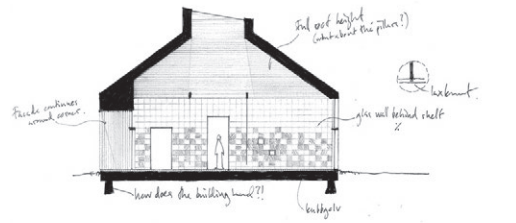
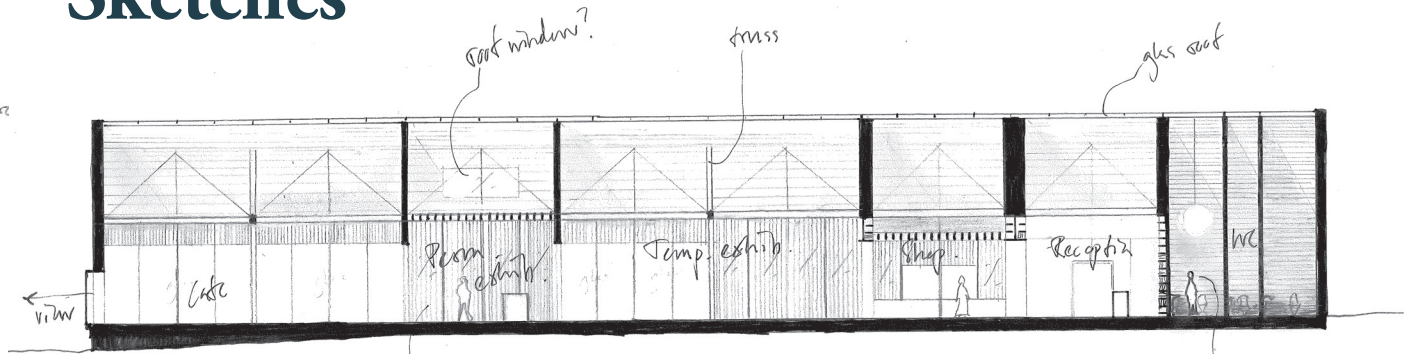
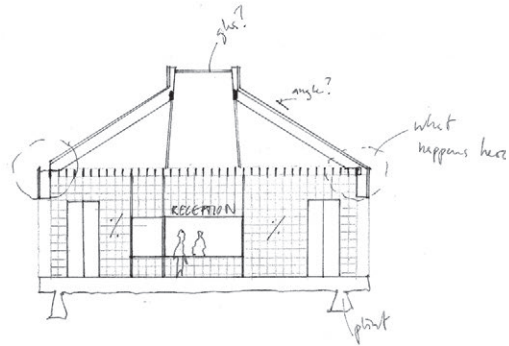
Exhibition 14-23 January 2015.

# APPENDIX

## Sketches

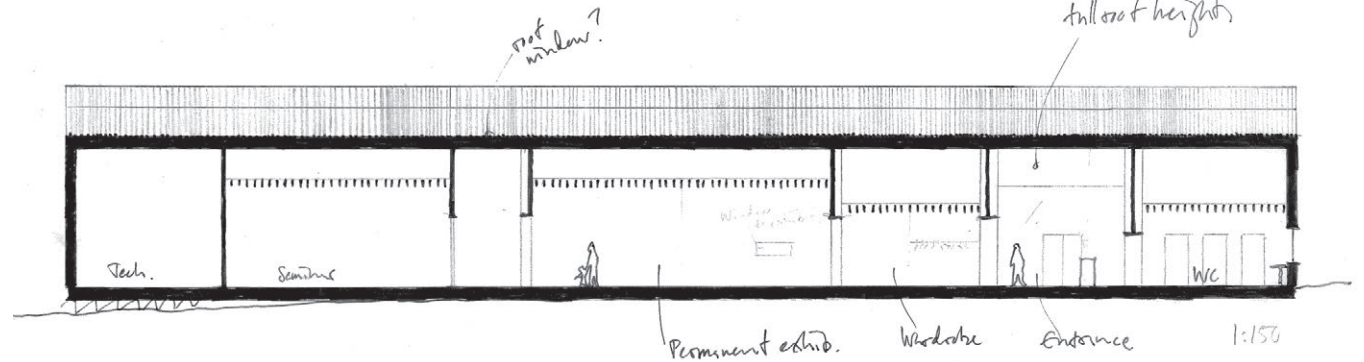
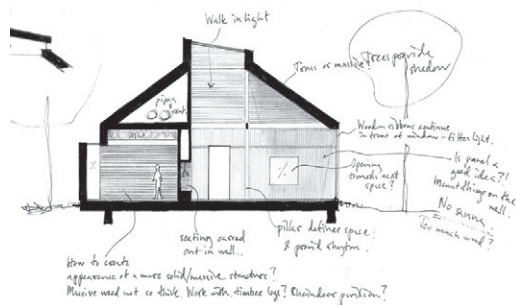


# APPENDIX Sketches



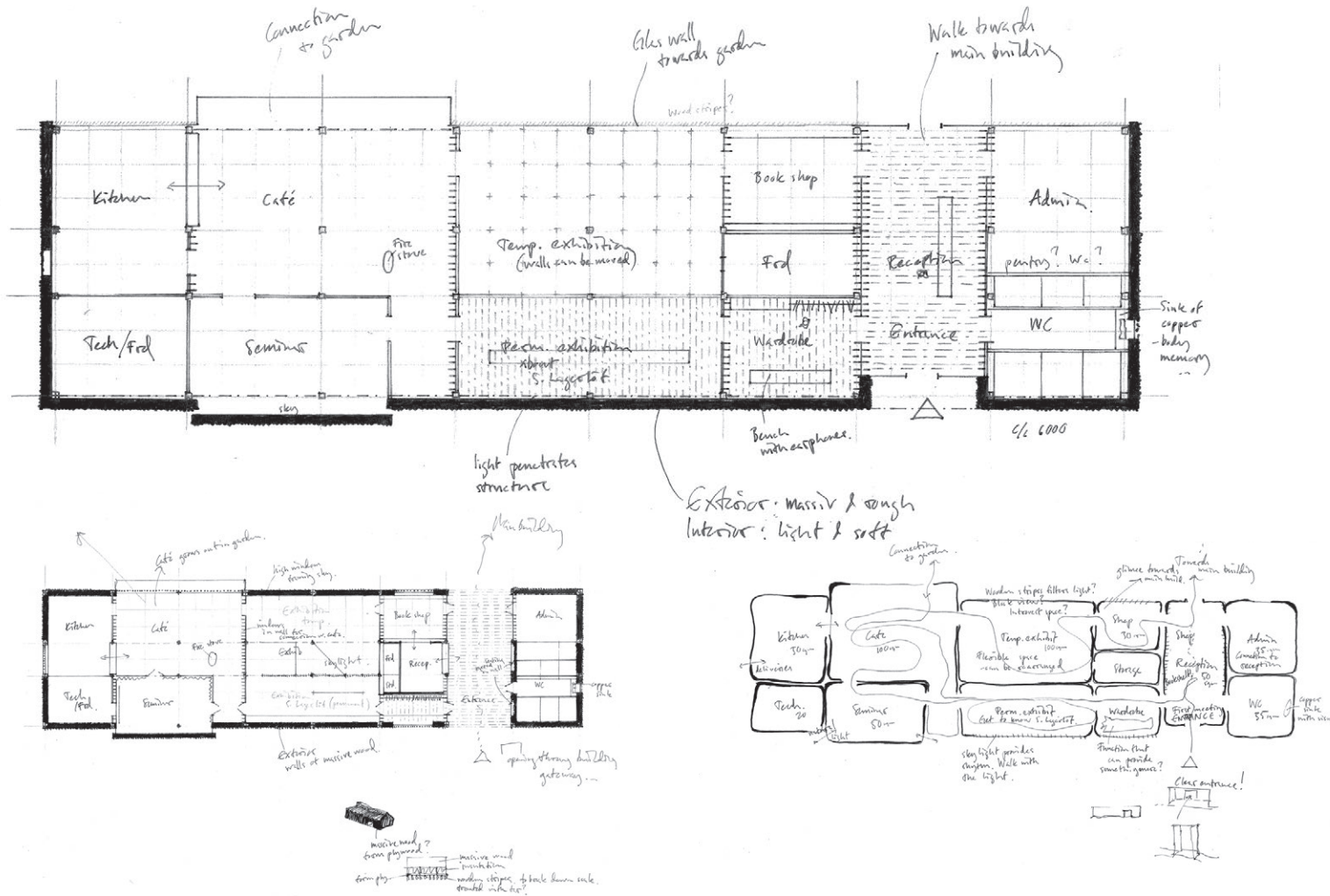
wood stripes filters light in front of windows.

Full scot height. Be 'small' like Nils H



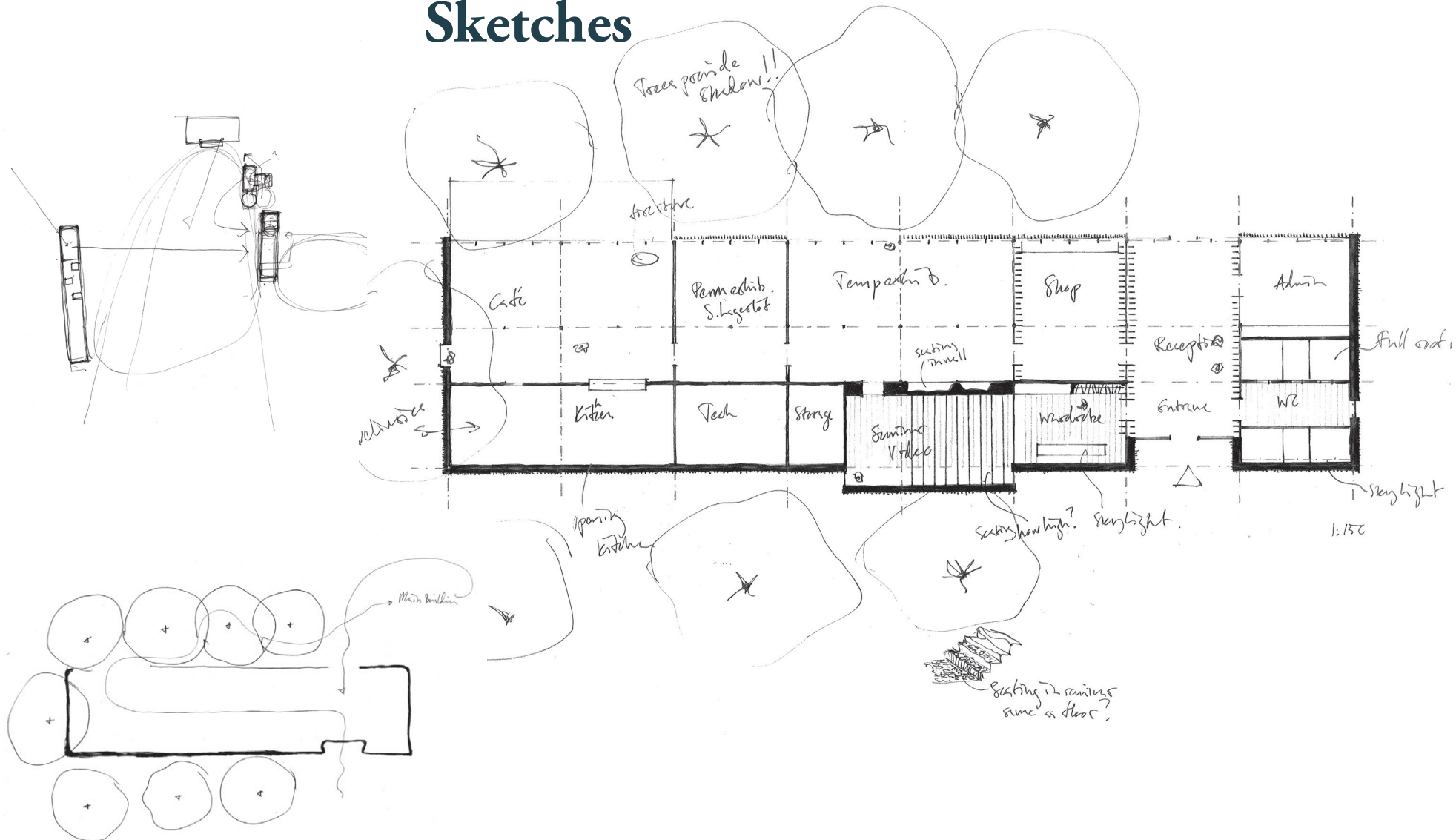


# APPENDIX Sketches



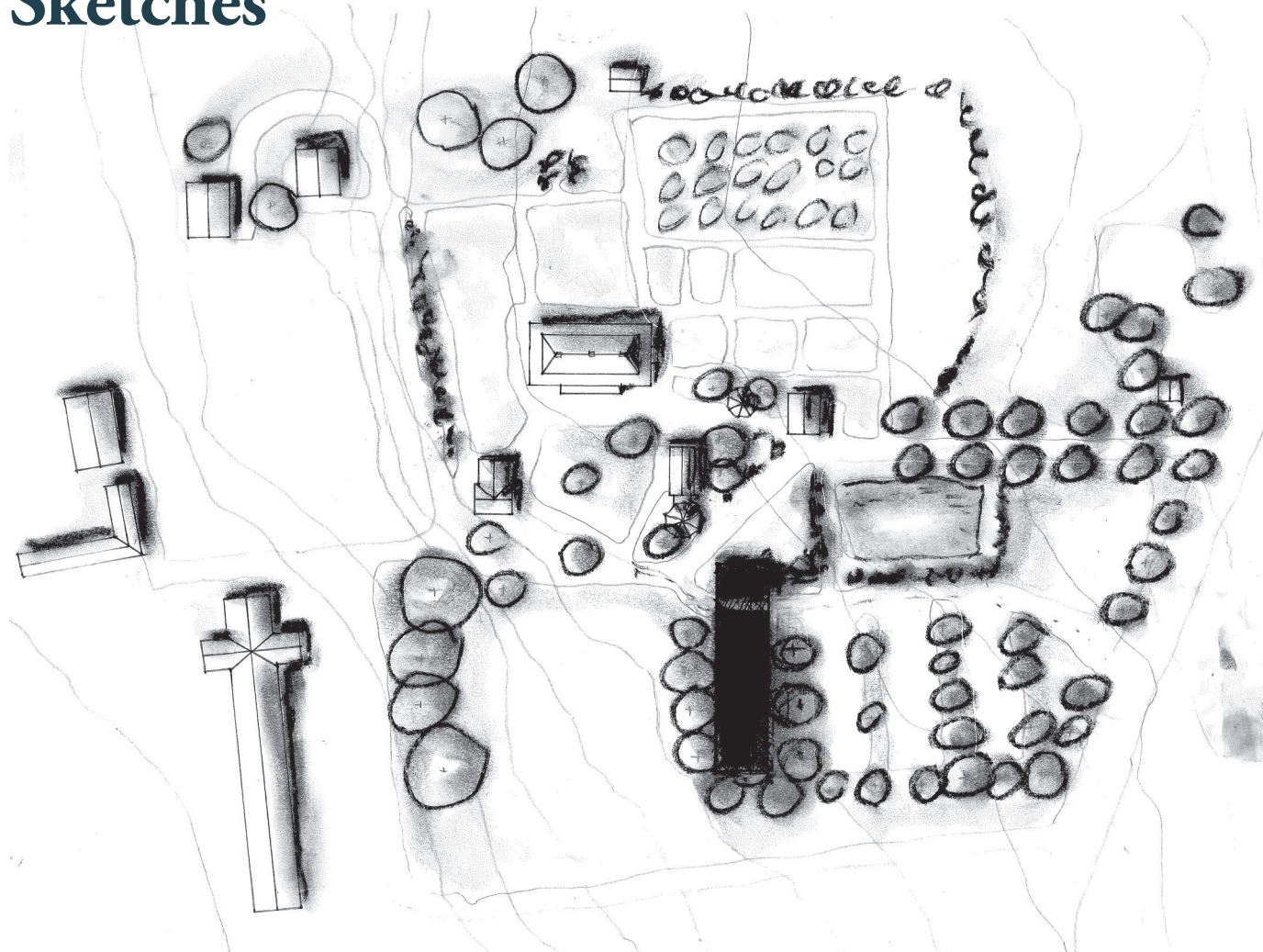
# APPENDIX

## Sketches



# APPENDIX

## Sketches





**The End.**