

**Karášjoga Mánáidskuvla**  
School and cultural arena in Karasjok

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### Abstract

Karášjoga Mánáidskuvla explores the role of a small primary school in a rural area, and specifically in a Sámi context. In my Pre-Diploma I refer to four different ways to understand architecture in Sápmi; The Typological, The Analogical, The Rhetorical, and The Pragmatic. This project explores the pragmatic, steering away from the analogical and typological image of Sápmi, creating a building not trying to mimic Sámi vernacular architecture, but rather a building true to function and use.

Karasjok municipality is well underway of planning a big center development. The needs of the municipality include a new school, health centre, emergency central, and a building for technical services. The new primary school acts as a catalyst to invigorate the community, first insuring a good foundation for families and the community as a whole. This is a first step towards pulling the village center toward the terrace edge overlooking the river.

The school has a rather large footprint for the number of pupils, at 2675 kvm and only about 140 pupils. However, in addition to classrooms, the school offers specialized rooms for traditional Sámi arts and crafts, food preparation and preservation, a public library, and a dedicated stage for music, theatre and cinema. These spaces are shared with the general public, as well as the neighbouring secondary school.

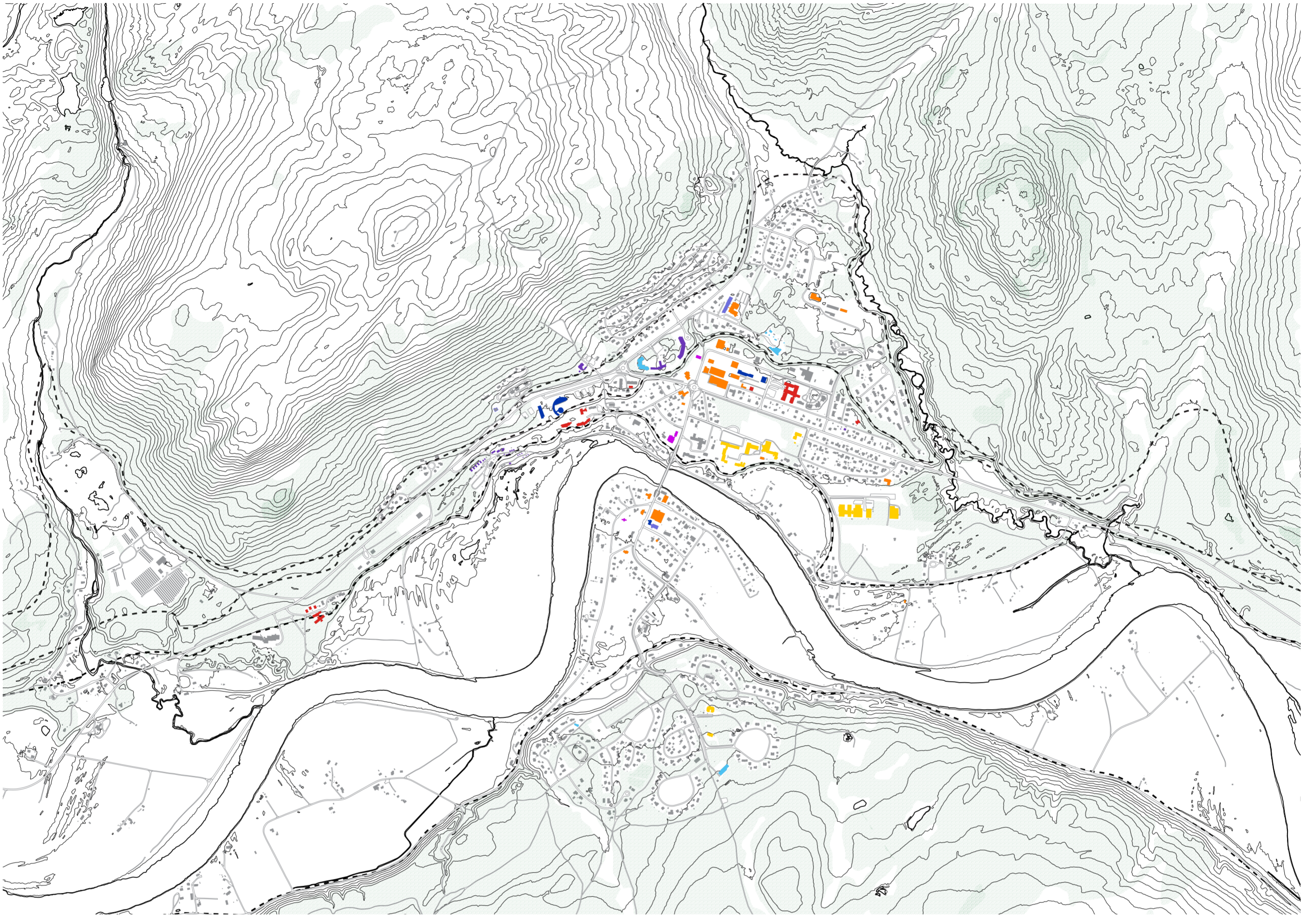
Combining the school with complementing cultural programs, makes the cultural arenas less vulnerable. The new school fortifies and facilitates for existing culture and meeting grounds, from the Easter festival, to the knowledge transfer between generations.

To deal with the low temperature in Karasjok, I use unclimatized rooms to the north to act as an isolation buffer. Conservatories placed at some south facing rooms to maximize the sun's heating capabilities, to be able to expand the school's footprint as early in the year as possible.

In the Sámi courtyard everything is on display; food production, maintenance of equipment, storage for materials, cars, and animals. The isolation buffer works in the same way, and deals with both climactic and functional at the same time; the facades is either a working display that supports the activities within the building, or holds items to support outdoor activities.

Karášjoga Mánáidskuvla is a place to teach and learn. A place to gather for the two national days on the 6th of February and the 17th of May, and get expert help to adjust the shawl just so. A place to roast reindeer meat between heats during the easter festival snowmobile cross. A place to celebrate weddings, birthdays, confirmations, and the return of the sun.





--- River terrace  
 Pine Forest  
 Sametinget, Rådhus, Fylkeskommunen  
 Museum, Tourist Center  
 Shops and offices  
 School, kindergarden and sports  
 Hotel, Motel, Camping  
 Community/Culture house  
 Church  
 Health services



Representative.  
 Above: Sametinget  
 Below: Sápmi Park



Every day life.  
 Above: Grocery store  
 Below: Sámi high school



Coming down from the vast and barren plateau of Finnmarksvidda with constant birch scrubs, Karasjok lies encompassed by pine trees on the terraces by the lush riverbed along Kárašjohka. The village lies protected between the mountain formations Olgevarri to the north and Mannevarri to the east, overlooking the meandering river valley. The built environment is mainly located on three distinct levels along the river. The floodplain is dominated by sandbanks, birch scrubs, and farmland. This is Markannjarga, the original village center in Karasjok. Here you find the old church – the only remaining building since the Nazis burned everything else.

In the 70s, due to fear of floods, the village center was moved to the first river terrace and away from the river. Albeit an understandable development, it is unfortunate that the river's presence in the village center was diminished. This terrace contains the main body of buildings in Karasjok center and is where the village was rebuilt after the war. This is also where people live their everyday lives. This is where you find the school, church, town hall, library, groceries, café, sports hall, swimming pool and shops, in between pine trees.

One the second terrace and on the pine covered hillside you find the representative Karasjok, visited by tourists and TV cameras. Here you find Sametinget, Sápmi Park, Riddo Doulttar Museum, the hotel and camping, and NRK Sápmi.

When building in Karasjok, it is important to be mindful of which layer in both the landscape and society you are touching upon. The school's natural place is in between pine trees on the first terrace edge overlooking the river.

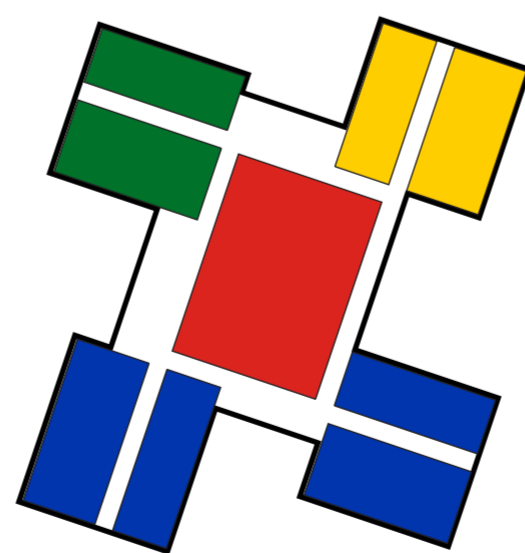




Above: The traditional easter festival snowmobile cross at the old sports field next to the existing school.  
Below: Reindeer racing at the easter festival



Above: The library in the village center.  
Below: My mother and grandmother at the shop Holbi, where you can buy traditional ribbons and shawls.



- Kitchen and library
- Duodji
- Class rooms
- Community cultural stage

The community functions today are very separated, and does not combine to support each other. The school is a school, the library is a library, and the community house is a community house.

Karasjok has in the later years had difficulty maintaining formal cultural arenas and meeting places. The culture house, built outside the town center along with NRK Sápmi in 1984, was in 2014 sold to NRK. While it retains some function as a concert venue, it is not in regular use by the population outside NRK. The sports hall located next to the high school is also sometimes used for concerts, but the uses are conflicting. The existing community house is located in Mar-kannjarga together with the old municipality building. It was built in 1957, and is no longer up to code, and requires a total refurbish-ment.

Every year Karasjok hosts an Easter festival that everyone "comes home" to attend. The festival includes concerts, reindeer races, duodji classes, joik competitions, ice fishing competitions, winter games, lasso competitions, skiing, and snowmobile cross.

The new school will fortify and facilitate for existing culture and meeting grounds. Most important of these are perhaps the meetings and transfer of knowledge between generations, where daughters learn to weave belts from their grandmothers, and sons learn to build a winter sleigh from their fathers.

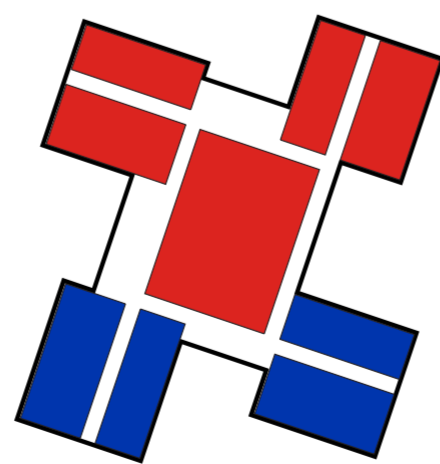
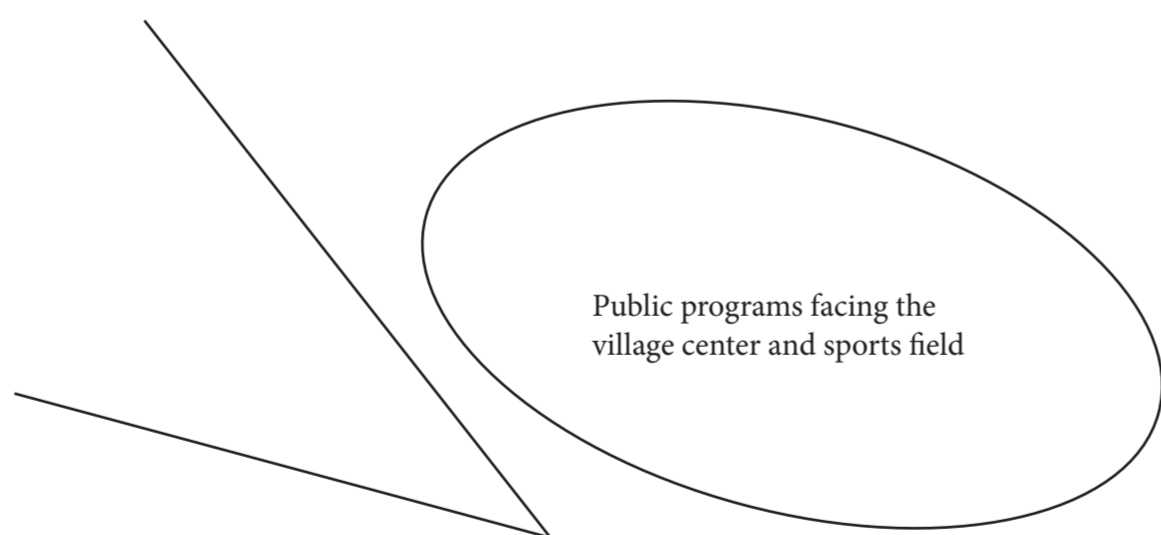
Combining the school with complementing cultural programs, makes the cultural arenas less vulnera-ble to the whims of owners and politicians, or funding issues.

Besides classrooms, the school will include a culture stage for concerts and theatre, a public library, kitchen/cantina, and workshops for duodji (traditional Sámi arts and crafts). These special rooms will be shared with the secondary school, as well as being available for the public for events and classes.





- 1] Bording school
- 2] Administration
- 3] Gym
- 4] Primary school
- 5] "Mellombygget"
- 6] Swimming pool
- 7] Secondary school
- 8] Kindergarden
- 9] Old sports field

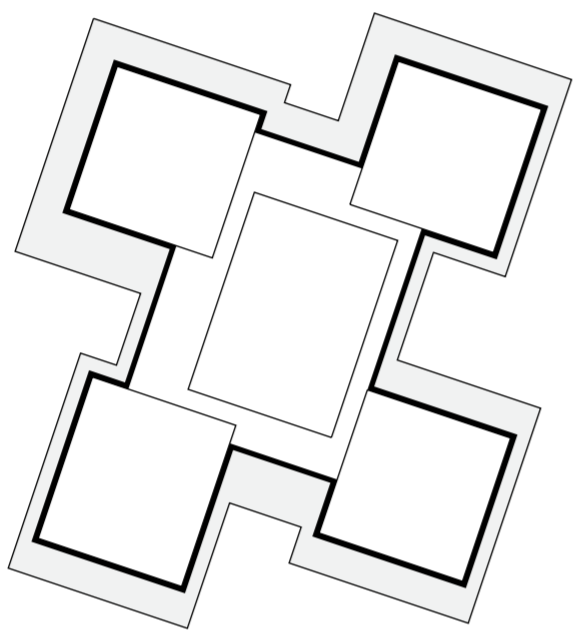


Classrooms facing the river

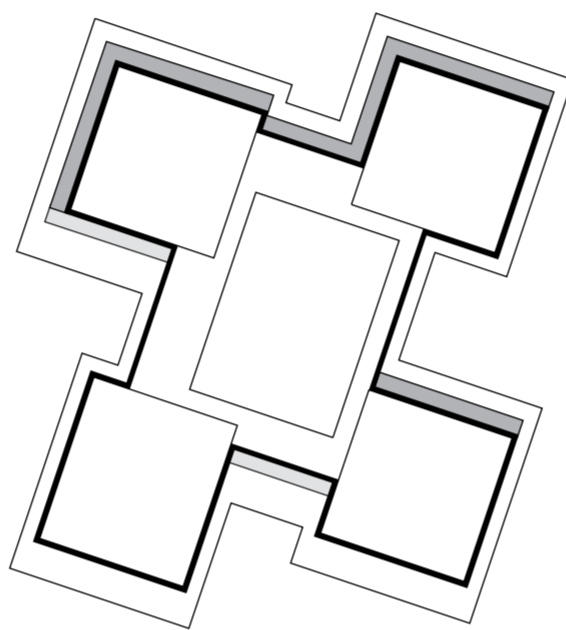
The latest population projections show that in the near future the number of students attending the grades 1-10 will be 200. The existing boarding school, primary school and lower secondary school was built in the 1950s as part of the rebuilding of Karasjok after the the second world war, and consist of five buildings at 9300 BTA. For today's use it is too big and too costly to heat and maintain. The secondary school has recently been refurbished, but the boarding school and primary school is set to be demolished.

The existing site is ideal also for the new school. I have chosen the site where "mellombygget" now stands, and this is the only building that needs to be demolished to be able to build. The site lies on the edge of the river terrace, is close to the city center and bridge, next to the old sports field used for the traditional Easter snowmobile race, and next to the secondary school and new swimming pool. The new school is a first step in beginning to draw the village center toward the terrace edge overlooking the river.

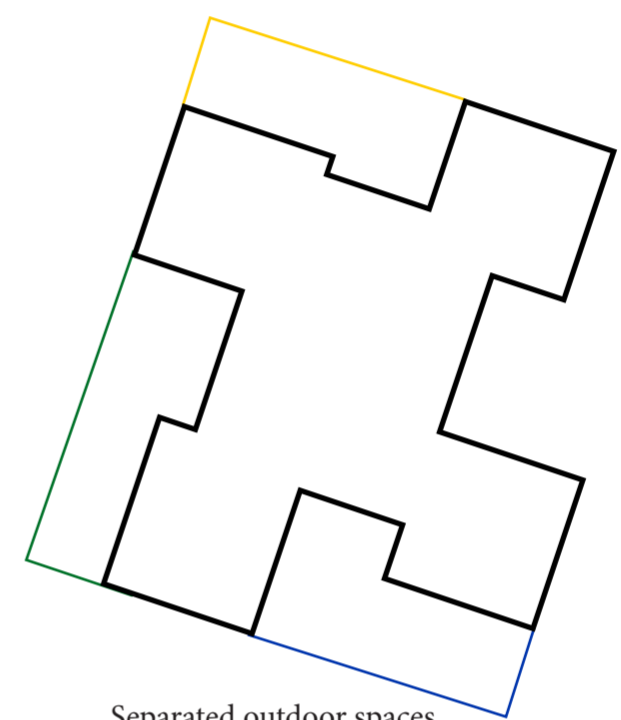




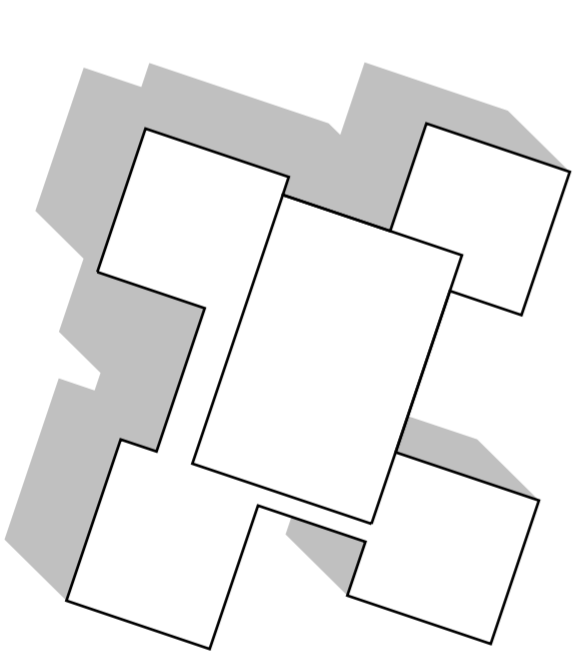
A portico surrounding the building with a slightly raised deck to protect from melting snow in spring, and the warmest sun rays during summer.



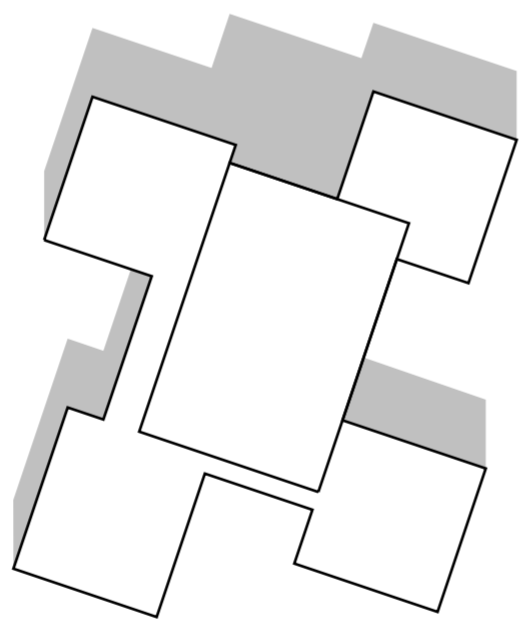
Unclimatized rooms to the north to act as an isolation buffer for north facing rooms. Conservatories placed at some south facing rooms to maximize the sun's heating capabilities, to be able to expand the school as early as possible.



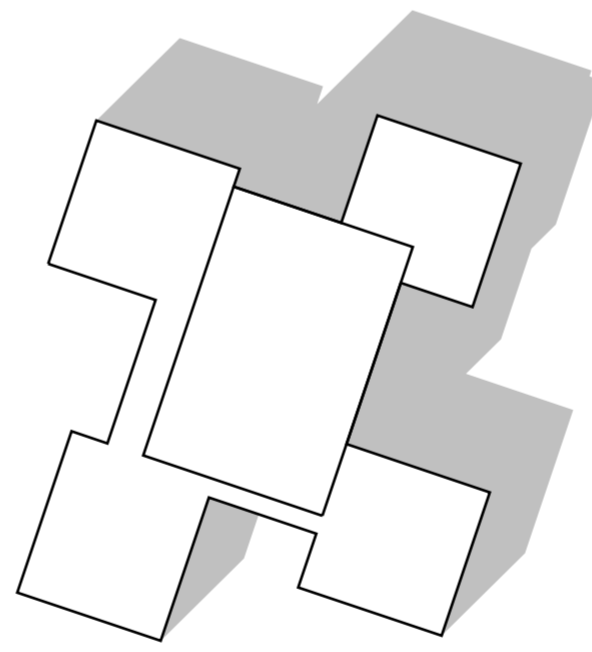
Separated outdoor spaces



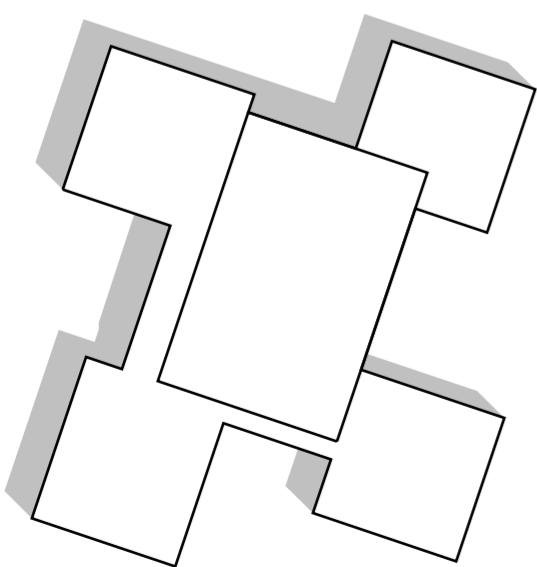
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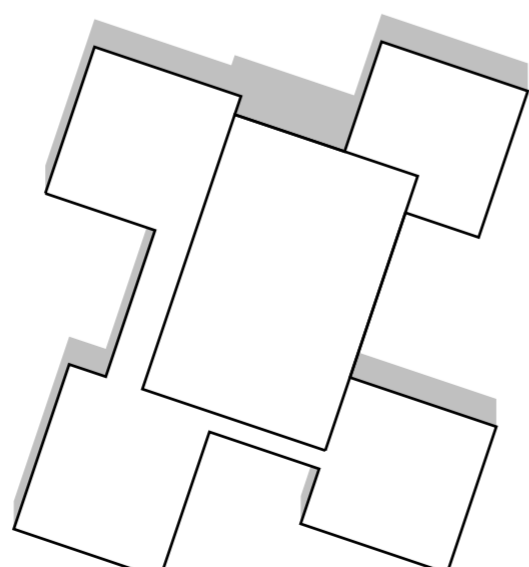
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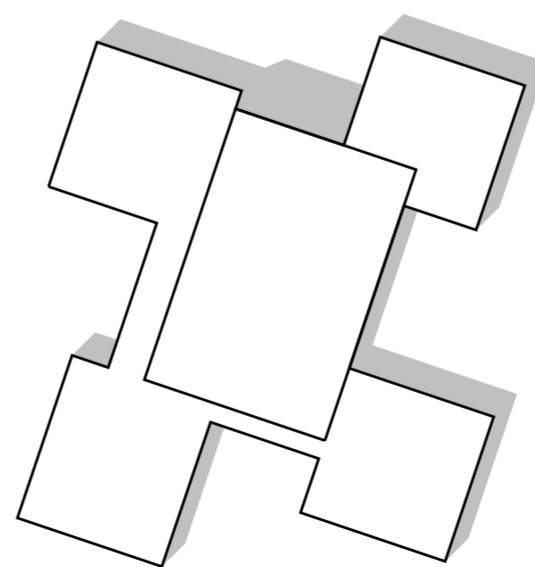
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The climate in Karasjok is cold and dry, with long and freezing winters and short and mild summers. Karasjok has recorded the coldest official temperature in Norway at  $-51,4^{\circ}\text{C}$  in January 1886. The mean temperature in January is  $-16^{\circ}\text{C}$ , but it is quite common with dips below  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Karasjok is located at the 69th parallel north, the same as Tromsø. As this is north of the polar circle, the sun does not rise from November 29th to January 14th. Although snow is frequent during the winter months, it is not abundant. Karasjok has a yearly precipitation of only 385,5 mm, and the wettest months are during the summer. The summer is typically mild with frequent rains. The temperature averages only at 13 degrees in the hottest month of July, but there can be very hot periods as well, with degrees as high as  $30^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The sun does not set from May 20th to July 24th. Karasjok is protected from the strongest winds from north and north-west. During the winter the wind comes from south south-east, but they are rarely strong.

The most important climatic considerations in Karasjok are low temperatures and darkness.

To deal with the low temperature, I use unclimatized rooms to the north to act as an isolation buffer. Conservatories placed at some south facing rooms to maximize the sun's heating capabilities, to be able to expand the school's footprint as early in the year as possible.

The body of the building creates separate protected outside spaces.

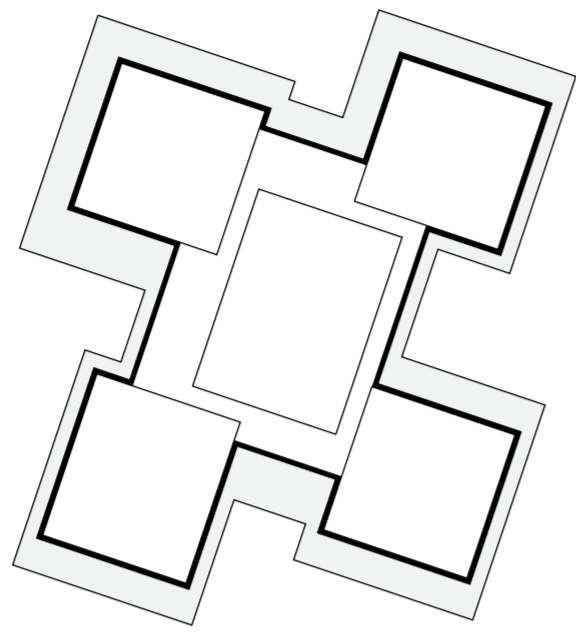
The classrooms are in the south most part of the school to benefit from the sun during the early parts of the day when the children are in school.

To the west you find the outdoor area connecting the kitchen, library, and culture hall, that gets the sun later in the day.

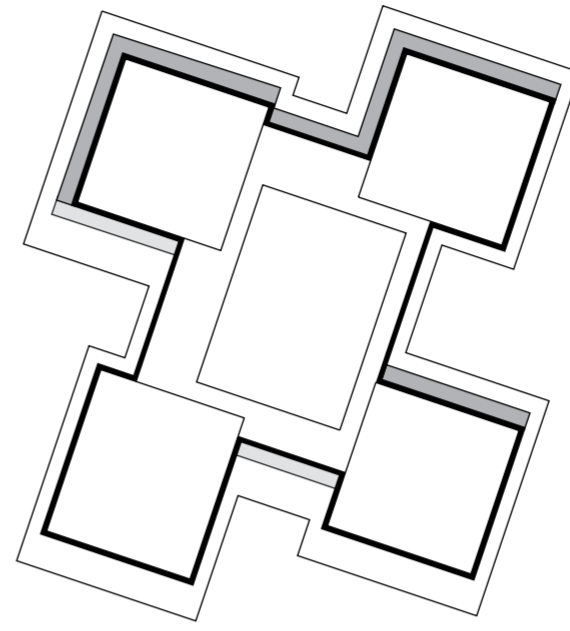
To the east you find a parking lot for staff and the goods entry.

The north facing area was always going to be a challenge when it comes to sun conditions. At the same time, this is the façade that connects the building to the village center and to the old sports field. The main entrance is placed here, and the kitchen, library, and workshops have facades facing the small square in front of the building. The facades, although mostly closed, is either a working display that supports the activities within or holds items to support outdoor activities.

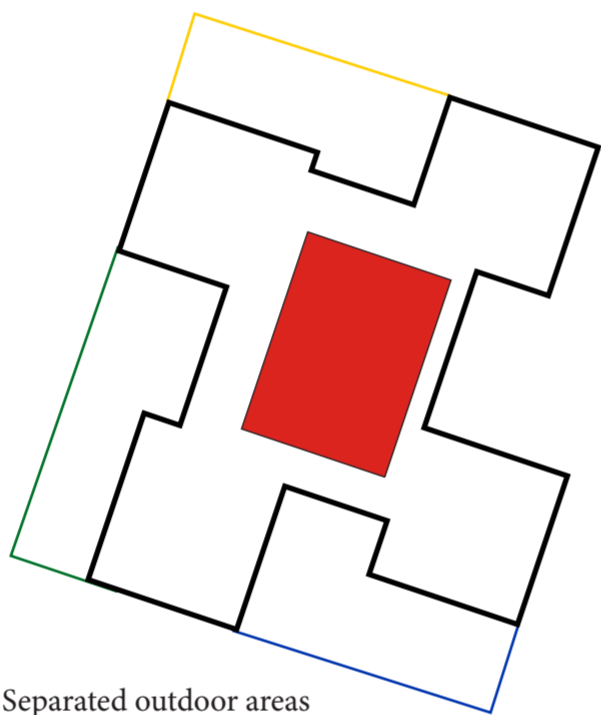




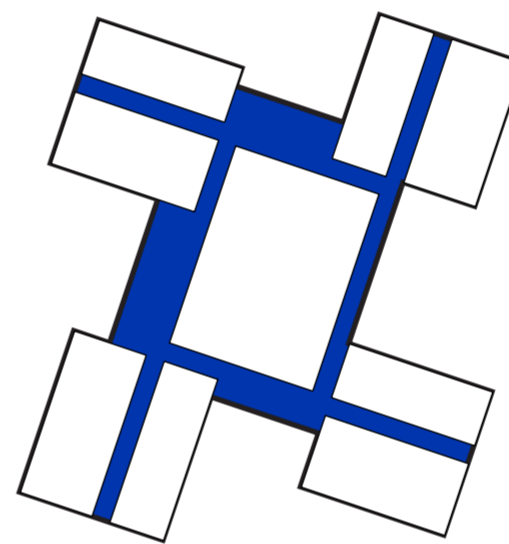
Portico with a raised deck



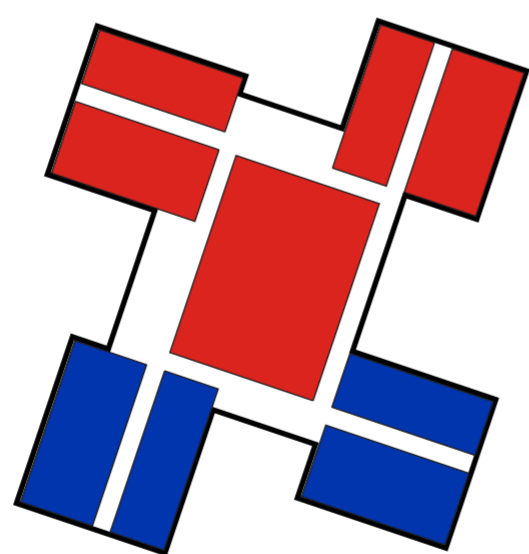
Unclimatized rooms to the north as an isolation buffer  
Conservatories to the south



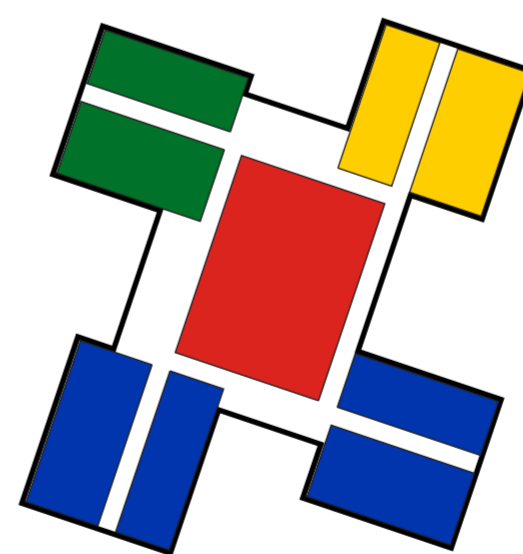
Separated outdoor areas  
Community culture stage in the center



Common area for work and play



■ Public programs facing the village center and sports field  
■ Classrooms facing the river



■ Kitchen and library  
■ Duodji  
■ Class rooms  
■ Community cultural stage

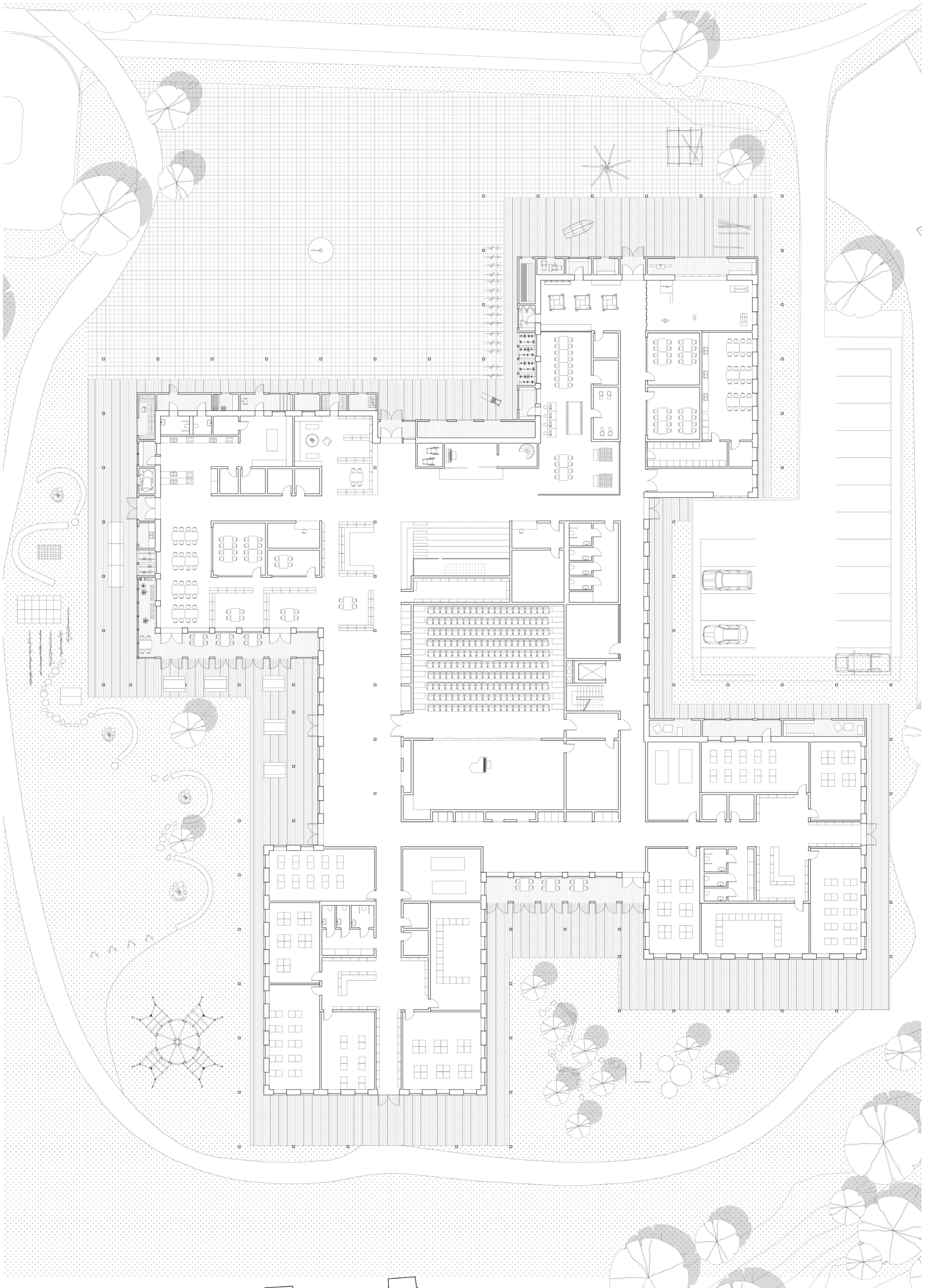




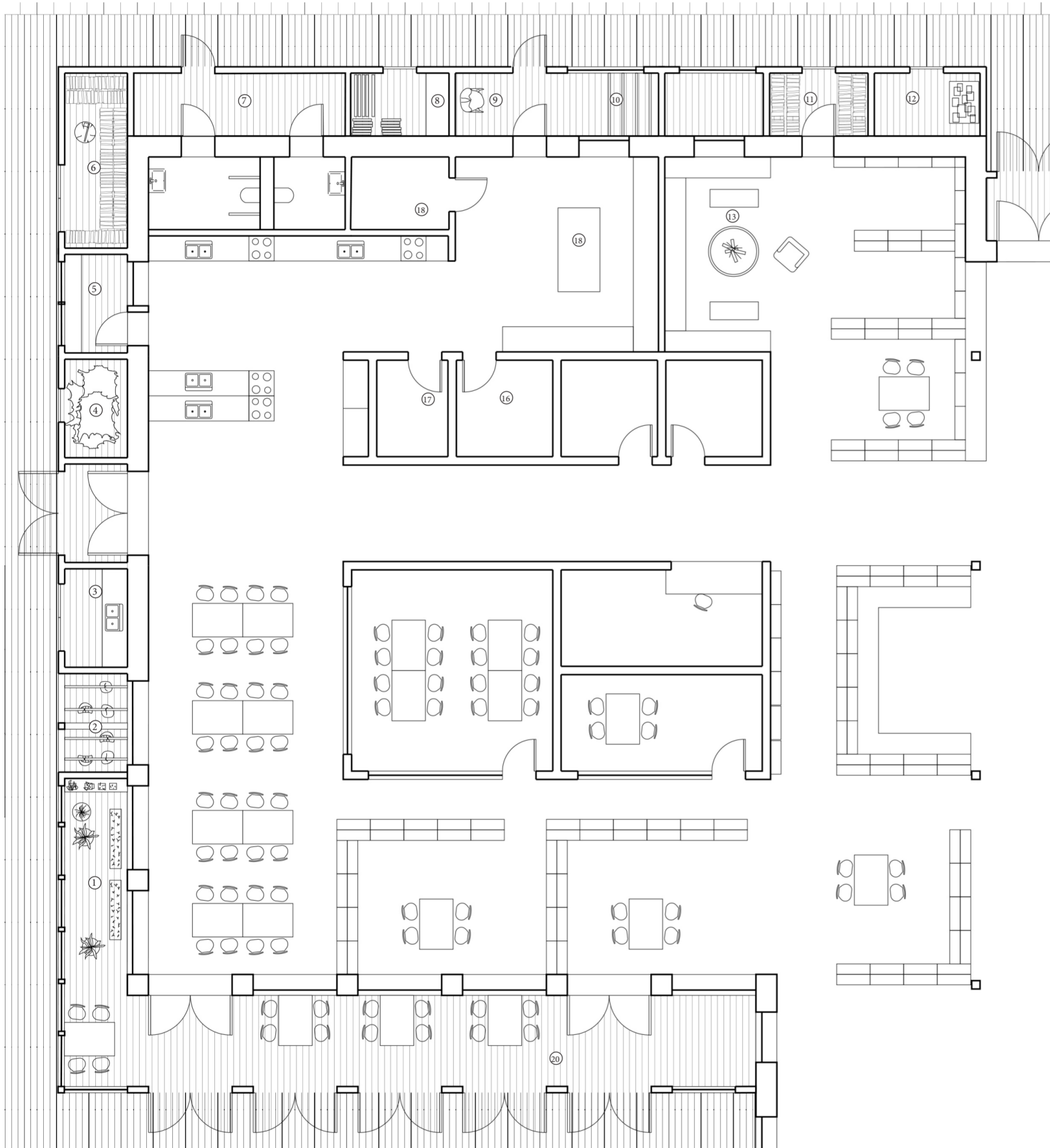
The school connects to the old sports field, where there now are permanent humps dedicated to snowmobile racing during Easter. They will also be used as a ski slope for the smaller children, and during summer they are perfect for bicycle cross.

The new school paved the way for additional development on the boarding school lot.

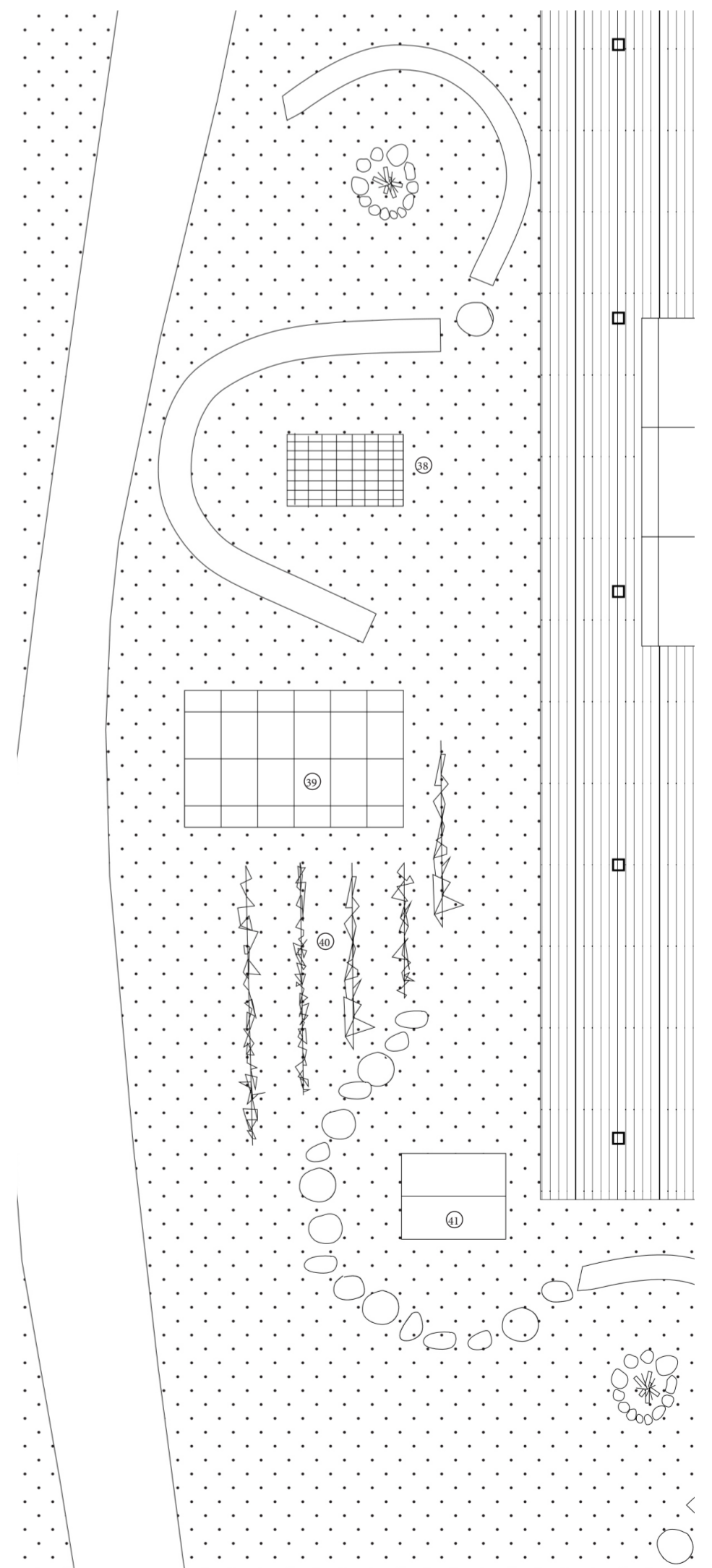








1. Plant nursery
2. Meat drying rack
3. Kitchen sink
4. Storage for reindeer hides
5. Kiosk
6. Storage firewood
7. Public toilet
8. Storage outdoor furniture
9. Entrance to scullery
10. Drying rack for pelts
11. Firewood for firepit
12. Storage
13. Firepit for storytelling
14. Storage
15. Storage
16. Cold storage
17. Dry Storage
18. Scullery
19. Laundry
20. Winter garden



The school kitchen includes a generous scullery to be able to carve large animals such as reindeer. It is also equipped for "wet doudji", like leather tanning. The rooms are available for public to rent for birthdays, confirmations, weddings, and classes.

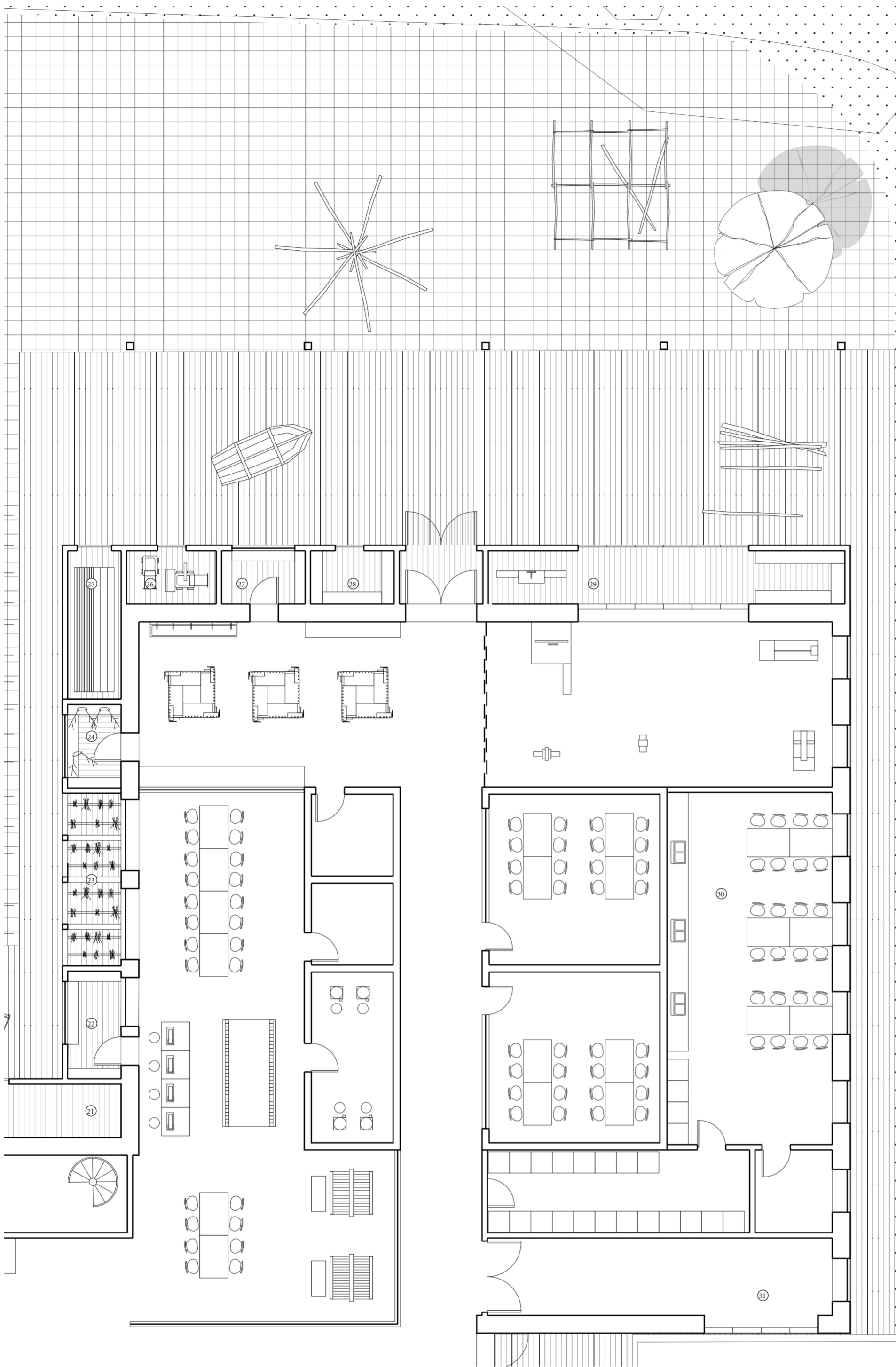
The cantina shares some spaces with the library, and is so able to expand if there is a large happening. The library continues through the main hall, up the tribune stairs, and to the second floor. The li-brary's main attraction on the first floor is the fire pit, where people can meet at tell tales.

The isolation buffer provides support for outdoor activity. There is access to running water, firewood, reindeer hides to sit on, and toilets. This ensures that the school is never fully closed.

In addition, the use of the rooms decorate the facade. There are carcasses hanging in the entrance to the scullery, drying pelts, drying meat, and a view in to the fire pit in the library.

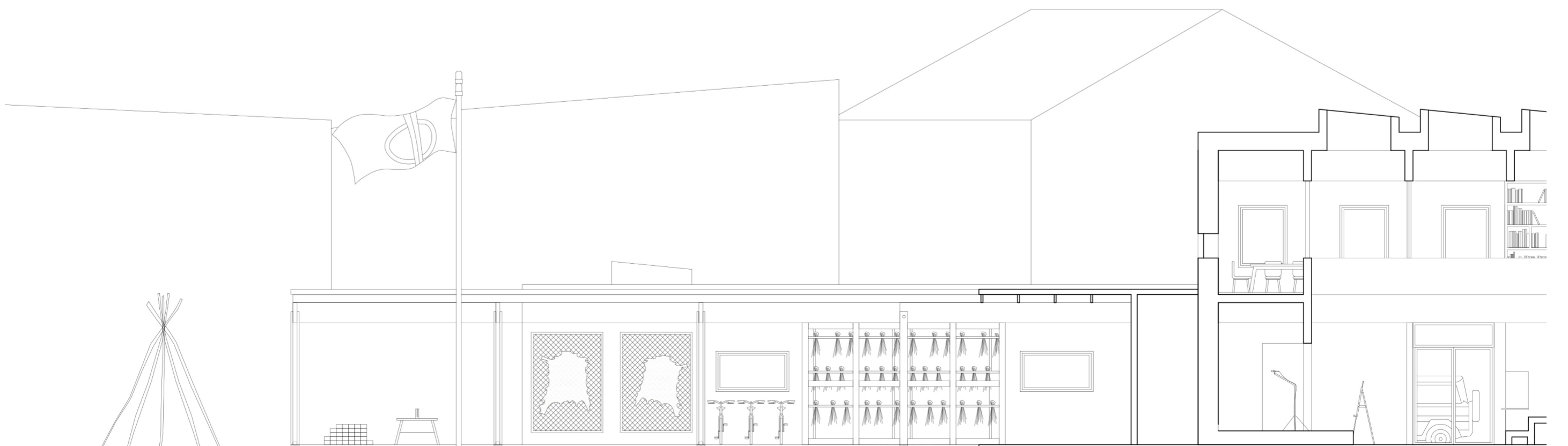
38. Grill
39. Green house
40. Kitchen garden
41. Smoke house



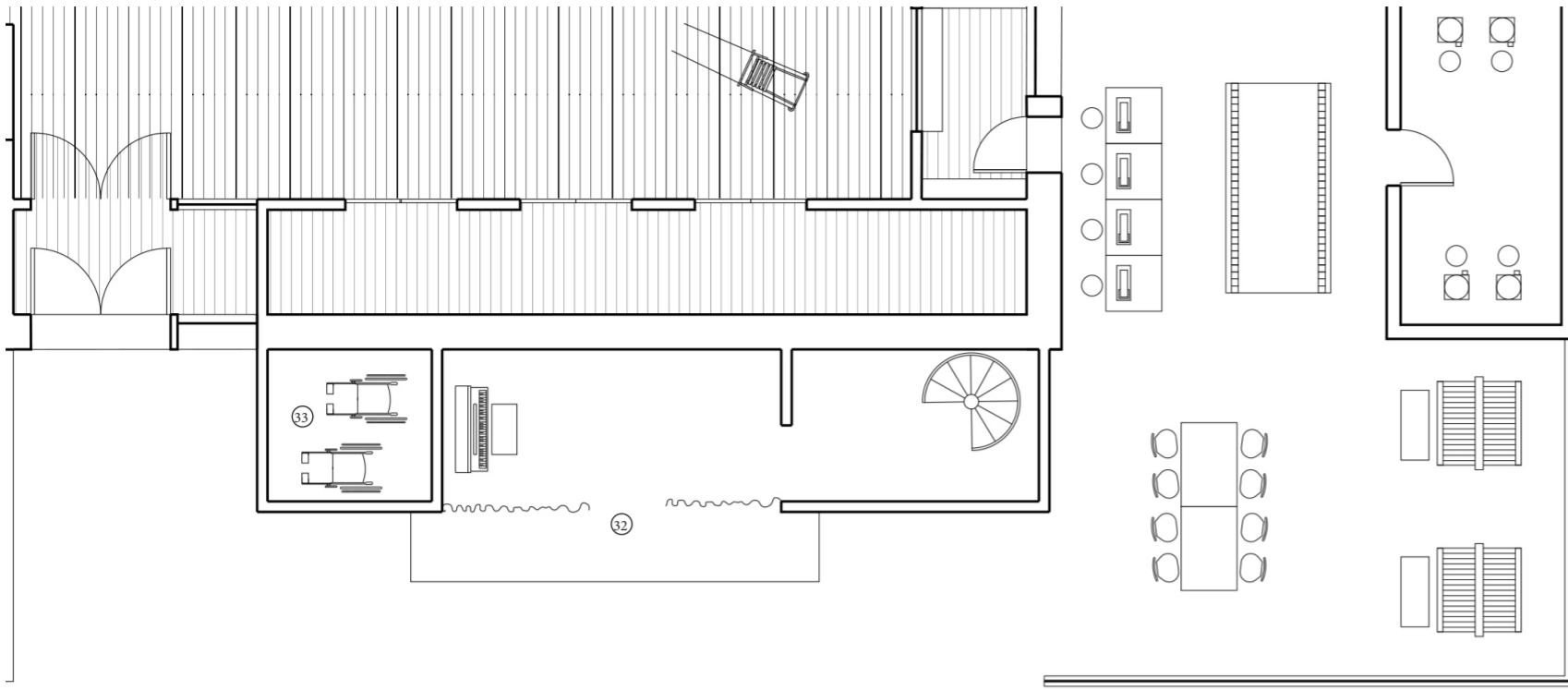


- 21. Storage for skis and winter coveralls
- 22. Storage for tools
- 23. Drying rack for sedge (sen-nagress)
- 24. Storage for horn
- 25. Storage for timber
- 26. Storage for snow blower
- 27. Storage for tools
- 28. Storage for tools
- 29. Large entrance to workshop
- 30. Science room
- 31. Goods entry

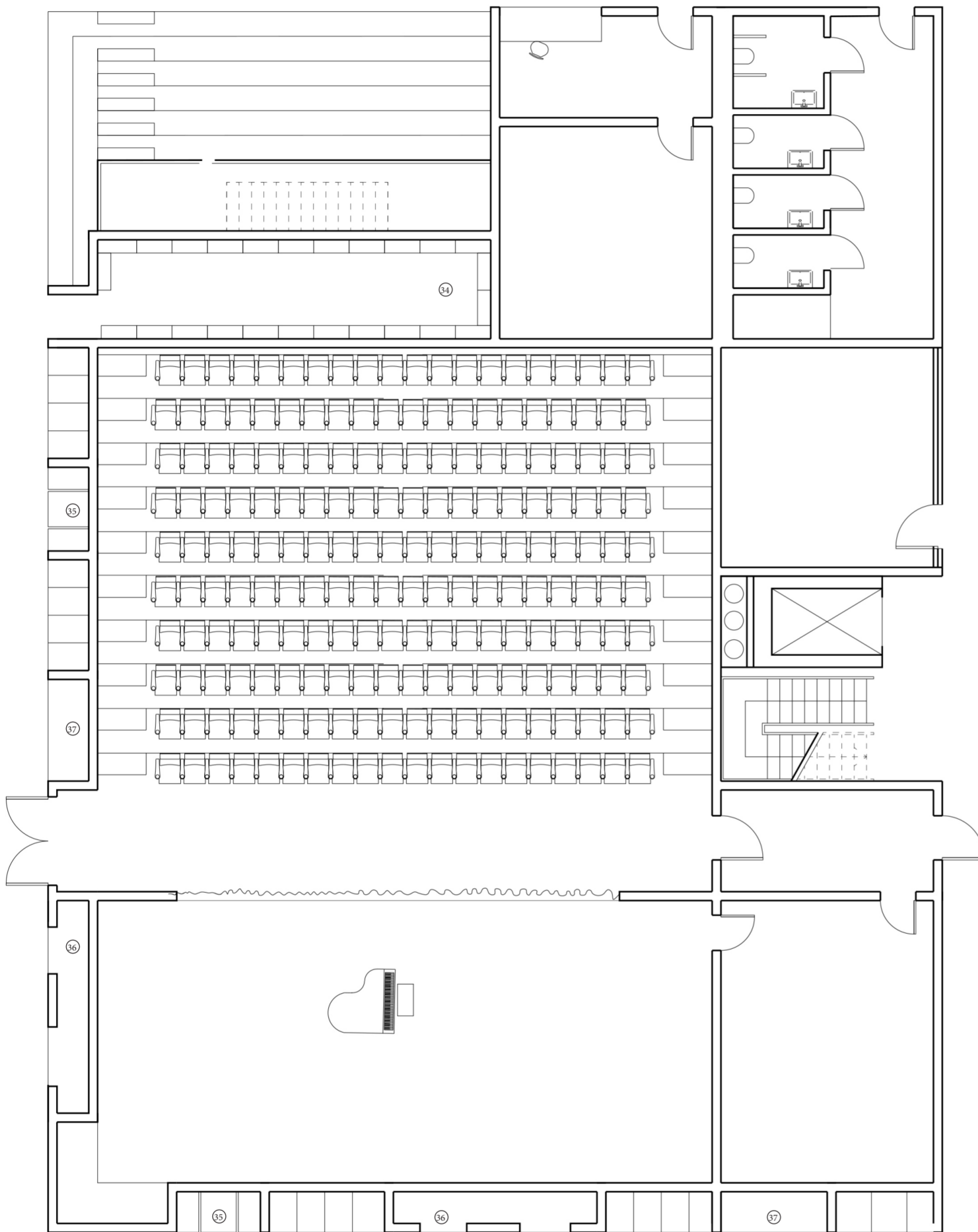
In the duodji workshops you can work with both hard duodji such as horn and wood, and soft duodji like leather and fabric. The work being done bleeds out in front on the building on display.







- 32. Small stage
- 33. Storage for aids
- 34. Cloakroom
- 35. Table and bench in the wall
- 36. Hidden playroom in the wall
- 37. Seating in the wall

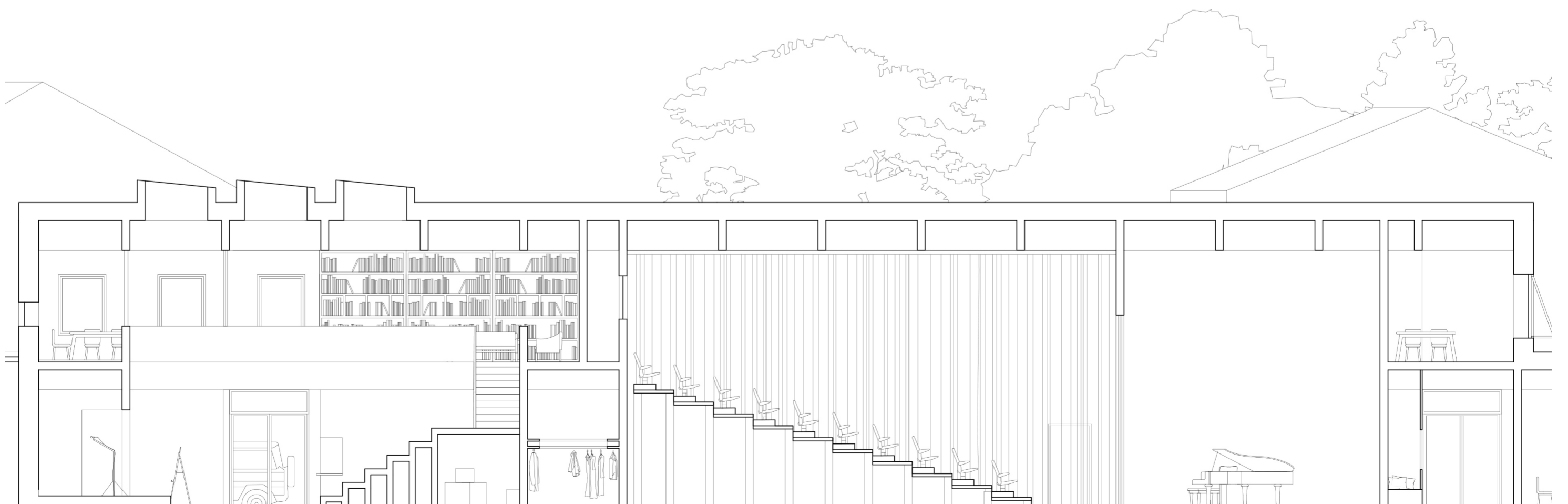


When entering the building the first thing you see is the tribune stairs facing the small stage. The stage is used for announcements from the principal, book readings, or simply playing theatre.

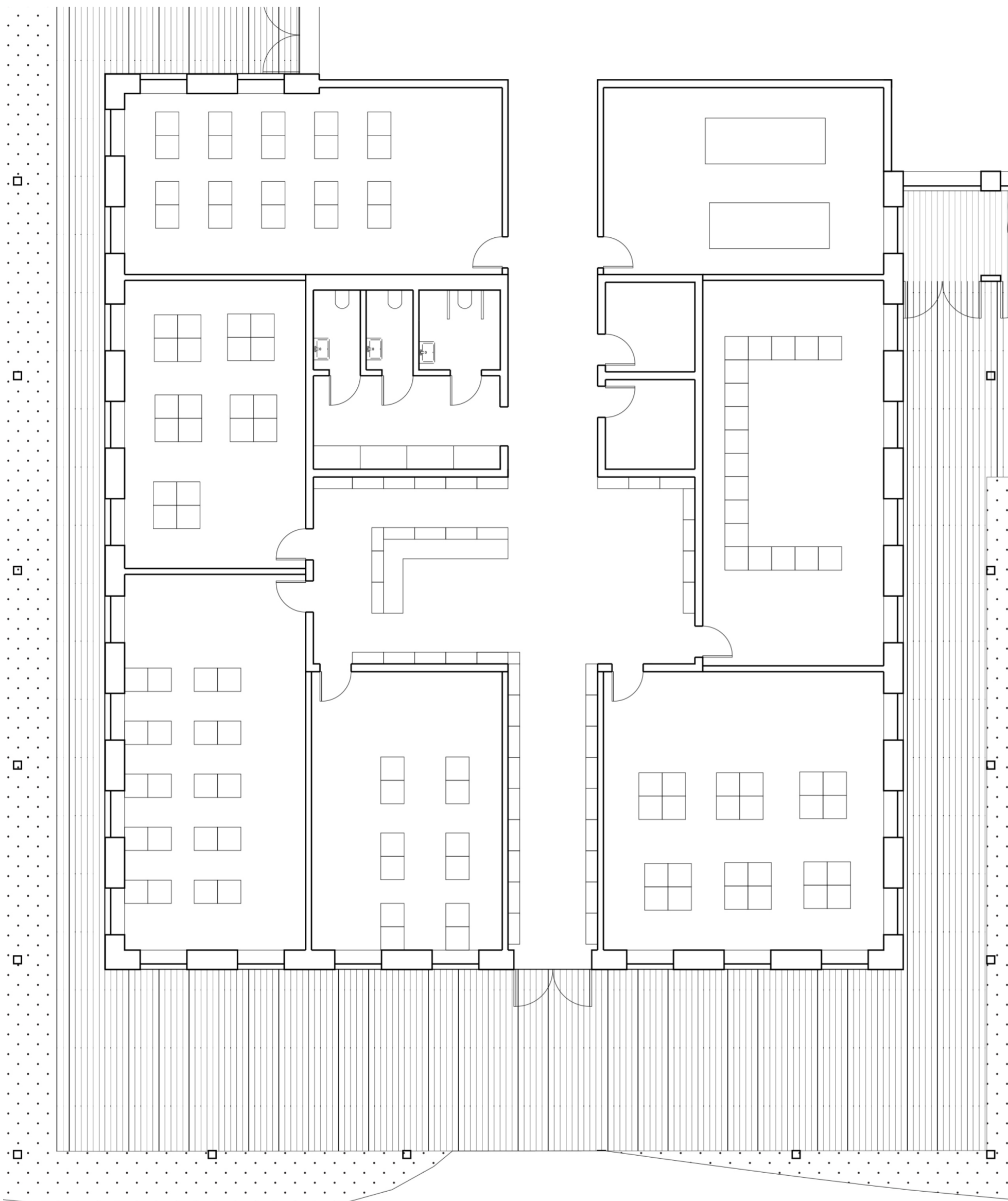
Continuing straight ahead you soon find the entrance to the culture stage. The stage is equipped with a telescope tribune that can seat 200 people. The flexibility of the telescope is necessary to be able to host concerts with a larger standing audience, but most importantly to host Sámi traditional weddings, that can have upwards of 1000 guests.

In addition to concerts and theatre, the room is set up for cinema.

The walls of the culture stage are lined with storage and hidden seating for play and work, mimicking the buffer zone outside. This helps with sound isolation.







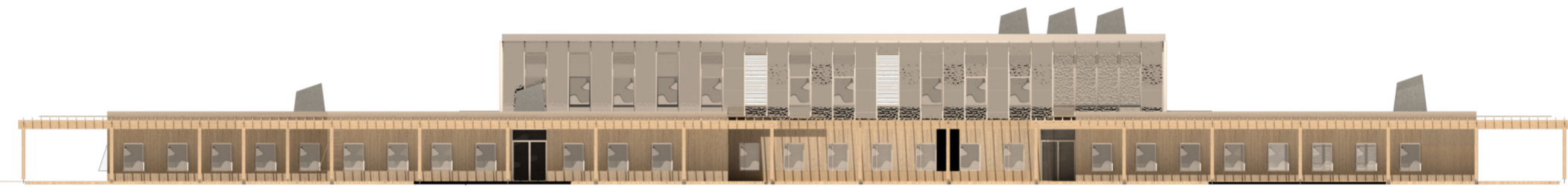
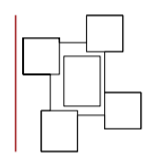
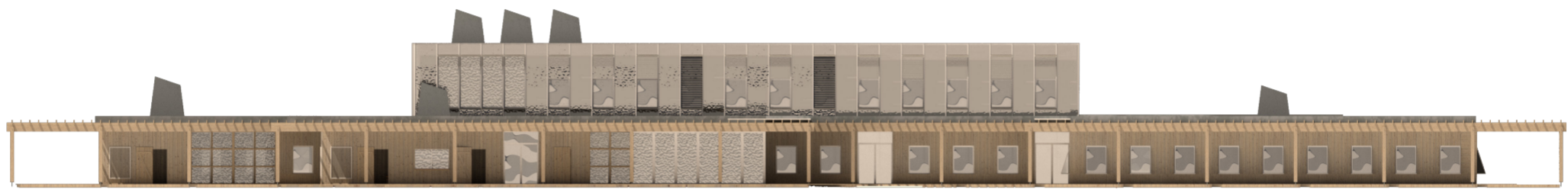
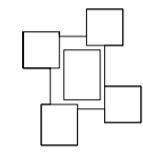
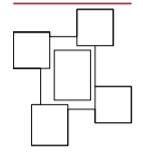
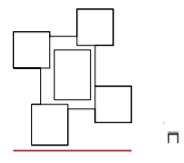
There is only one class per grade in Karasjok, with a projected average number of pupils of 20. Each class gets their own traditional classroom. There are also two smaller classrooms for the Norwegian speaking pupils, as they are taught separately.

The two boxes containing the classrooms are fairly autonomous, allowing the pupils to withdraw from the main body of the school into a calm and safe space.

In the middle, ample space is provided to hang heavy winter clothes, and hang out between classes. Outside each window a mosquito net is framed.



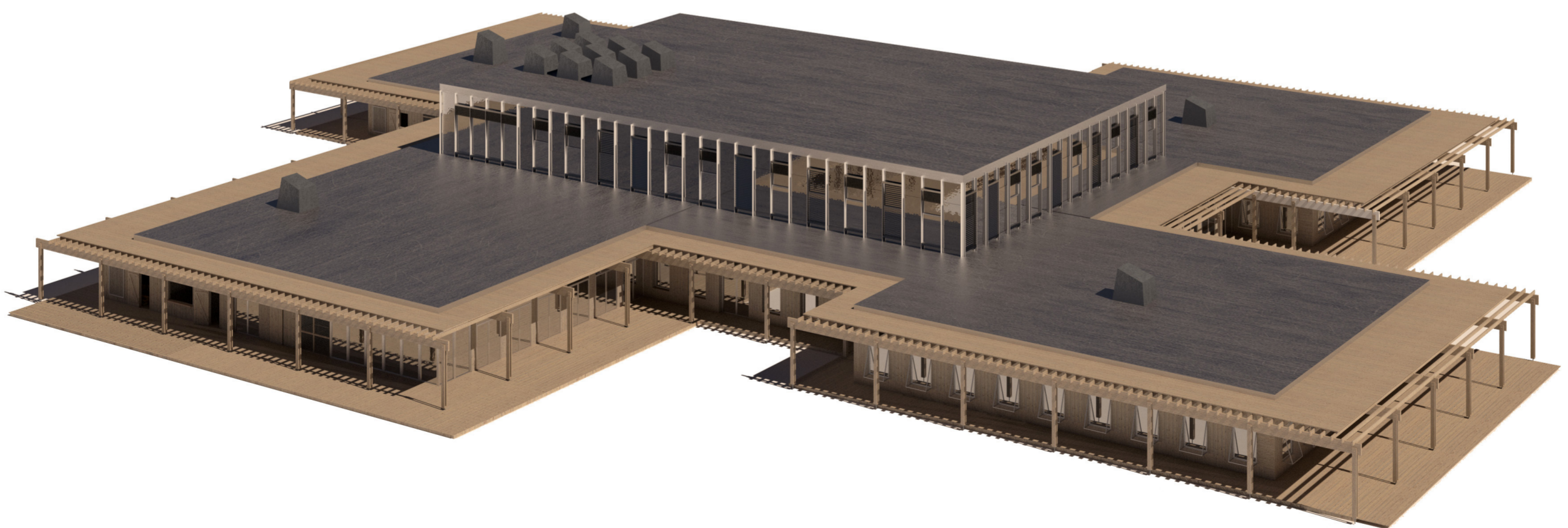




Loadbearing massive wood element walls, and glue lam beams. Wood cladding in the lower facades, and glossy, highly reflective panel cladding in the top box. Concrete flooring.

Modest building heights at four and eight meters. One the ground floor, there is three meters from the top of the flooring to the bottom of the beam.

Unimposing building grounded in between the pine trees, where the crown of the trees mirror themselves in the upper facade.







Render. Outside the kitchen



Render. Looking out through the southfacing winter garden.