

ARCHITECTURAL SYMBOLS OF HATE:
REDEMPTION THROUGH ADAPTIVE REUSE

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Table of Contents

Abstract

Acknowledgments

List of Figures

1

Chapter 1: Introduction

30

Project Introduction

Rational and Context

Project Objectives

Questions of Inquiry

Methodology

Limitations

3

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Memory in the Built World

Understanding Undesired Buildings

Corrupt Architecture

Adaptive Reuse

12

Chapter 3: Site Analysis

Building Analysis: History

Site Selection Rationale

Site Context: Location

Site Context: Paths and Edges

Site Context: Nodes, Districts, & Landmarks

Site Inventory

41

68

22

Chapter 4: Precedent Studies

71

Precedent 1: Centre for the Documentation of the History of the Third Reich

Analysis

Design Considerations and Applications

72

Precedent 2: Soho Synagogue

Analysis

Design Considerations and Applications

Precedent 3: dieDAS – Design Akademie Saaleck

Analysis

Design Considerations and Applications

Chapter 5: Design Program

Introduction

Program Objectives

Human Factor Analysis

Client Profile

User Profile

Project Requirements

Functional and Spatial Requirements

Zones, Adjacencies, Circulation

Chapter 6: Design Solution

Introduction

Conceptual Exploration

Spatial Organization

Design Drawings

Plans

Elevations

Sections

Renders

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Introduction

Responding to Questions of Inquiry

References

Appendices

I. Construction Documents

II. Code Analysis

III. Material and Furniture Selections

Abstract

Throughout the tainted history of our modern world, architecture remains its most concrete form of memory. Architectural ruins and remnants of distinct moments of fascist and dictatorship regimes, with a focus on the Nazi National Socialist party, stand as both offensive personifications of hate while also being the object that represent a local and sociocultural identity. Through the understanding of the anthropology of undesired buildings as well as the theory of collective memory, the methods and strategies to properly adaptively reuse these existing buildings can breathe new life into the architecture and place an important reminder of its past. The adaptive reuse of the House of the Wannsee Conference into the Beth Wannsee Synagogue can answer the questions of (a) how can a building embedded with the memories of hate be repurposed into a beneficial site?; (b) what functional typology can be housed in this site?; (c) and who do we reuse these site for?

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List of Figures

Figure 1	Framework Findings. Table generated by author. 2023. Table.
Figure 2	Framework Key Plans. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 3	Jewish Community in Berlin. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 4	Visual Timeline: House of the Wannsee Conference. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 5	Sun Path Diagram of Wannsee, Germany. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 6	Paths & Edges of Wannsee, Germany. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 7	Nodes, Districts & Landmarks of Wannsee, Germany. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 8	House of the Wannsee Conference - Site Plan. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 9	Original Site Plan. Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.
Figure 10	Original First Floor Plan. Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.
Figure 11	Original Second Floor Plan. Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.
Figure 12	Original Third Floor Plan. Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.
Figure 13	Original Exterior Elevations. Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.
Figure 14	Original Exterior Elevations. Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.
Figure 15	Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds, Nuremberg/Günther Domenig/Zoom Visual Presentations. Retrieved from Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände. Visual Image.
Figure 16	Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds, Nuremberg/Günther Domenig/Zoom Visual Presentations. Retrieved from Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände. Visual Image.
Figure 17	Sanctuary Hall of the Soho Synagogue. Image created by author. 2023. Visual Image
Figure 18	Aron HaKodesh designed by Dror. Image created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 19	Aron HaKodesh designed by Dror. Image created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 20	Infinity Bridge designed by Mandrup. Image created by Author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 21	Precedent Findings. Table generated by author. 2023. Table.
Figure 22	Precedent Key Plans. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 23	Area Requirements. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 24	Zoning Diagram. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 25	Primary and Secondary Traffic Flow. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 26	Wannsee Conference Protocols. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 27	2D Conceptual Exploration. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 28	3D Conceptual Exploration. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 29	Conceptual Exploration Overlay. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 30	Conceptual Exploration Overlay. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 31	Ner Tamid Conceptual Exploration. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 32	Ner Tamid Conceptual Exploration. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 33	Ner Tamid Conceptual Exploration. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 34	Historical Significance Key Plans. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 35	Level 1 Floor Plan. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 36	Level 1 3D Floor Plan. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 37	Level 2 Floor Plan. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 38	Level 2 3D Floor Plan. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 39	Level 3 Floor Plan. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 40	Figure 40: Level 3 3D Floor Plan. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 41	Building Approach. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Figure 42	Level 1 Exterior Access. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 43	Exterior Lakeside Garden. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 44	Foyer and Sanctuary Entrance. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 45	Sanctuary Space. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 46	Sanctuary Space. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 47	Configurable Event Spaces. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 48	Historical Conference Room. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image
Figure 49	Library Interior Workspace. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 50	Library Exterior Workspace. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 51	Longitudinal 3D Section. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.
Figure 52	Latitudinal 3D Section. Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Project Overview

This practicum explores the methods and strategies for adapting structures that once stood, or continue to stand today, as corrupt architecture. This includes buildings and sites that possess a negative history in the public eye due to the functions that took place there or the people who occupied them. These symbols of hate can be reprogrammed, redesigned, and repurposed into functioning public buildings for their communities. This practicum will investigate the adaptation of the “House of the Wannsee Conference” into "Beth Wannsee Synagogue", a functioning synagogue for the Jewry of the Greater Berlin Area and Potsdam. It will be a site for prayer, education, and growth of the Jewish people.

Rational and Context

“Seventy years after the Fuhrer committed suicide in his Berlin bunker much of the architectural legacy left behind in 1945 remains with us.”¹

If nothing else, the Nazis were excellent builders and even better planners². It is through Adolf Hitler’s need to secure the Nazis place in history that he, along side his chief architect Albert Speer, attempted to immortalize themselves through architecture. By leaving a physical legacy on Europe, the National Socialist Party would be able to impose their ideologies for thousands of years, outlasting far longer than any one individual member of the party. Although short-lived, the reign of the Nazis was cemented into Germany’s history with dozens of structures completed with hundreds more planned for. Hitler’s idealized ‘World Capital Germania’ would be cut short and ended with bombings in many of his most symbolic sites by the allies.³ While most of the Nazi High Command were eliminated at their own hands, or by the verdicts of the Nuremburg trials, it is symbolic that the architect of the Third Reich escaped with his life.⁴ In addition to his life, most of his structures survived the aftermath of the war, and some continue to stand tall today.

Some of the surviving structures would be reused by services desperate to restart the German state, and many were completely ignored due to the shame that the physical remnants of the Third Reich had on society.⁵ An investigation into these sites that are still standing over seventy years later, some have been preserved, are publicly accessible, and stand as testaments to the remembrance of the atrocities that took place. However, the public opinion of what to do with these architectural symbols of hate remains contentious; should they be left to ruins; should they be physically removed and erect something new in their place; should they be memorialized through the introduction of a museum or monument; or should the existing structure lend its form to a new program and function reuse? This practicum will explore these questions, in addition to acting as a road-map for how to decide the fate of similarly disputed structures. It is will also demonstrate that a site embedded with a negative past can be altered into a functional space through the use of interior design strategies and tactics.

Project Objectives

- To better understand how we view buildings that hold a negative history within their walls
- To interpret what our options are for dealing with them
- To defend how we can reuse a building that holds negativity within it and provide for the community
- To better understand why we need to reuse these buildings
- To explore who we are reusing them for

1 Colin Philpott, Relics of the Reich: the Buildings the Nazis Left Behind. (Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Military, 2016), x.
2 Philpott, xi.
3 Philpott, xi.
4 Philpott, xi.
5 Philpott, xi.

Questions of Inquiry

- How can interior design strategies facilitate the growth of a religion and culture in a building that was formally used to organize hate against them?
- How can the adaptation of an existing memorial site to a functional centre for the community increasingly support those directly affected?
- How can programming and design language reverse the negative narrative associated with buildings that formerly enabled hate to occur within their walls?

Methodology

The methods in which this practicum is explored begins with the thorough exploration and review of literature. These sources focus on collective memory, undesired and corrupt architecture, and adaptive reuse. Secondly, an exploration of the history of the site as well as an analysis of the site's existing site conditions will create an outline for adaptive reuse strategies and tactics. These will identify the building's historical significant features and inform what limitations the site has for the adaptive reuse intervention. Precedent studies will help inform design language and introduce relevant projects which have an impact on this site. Finally, the program and design will combine the literature and precedent reviews into a comprehensive design solution. These solutions will help answer the above questions of inquiry.

Limitations

This practicum focuses on the cases of sites and structures that were used by the Nazi party during their reign of terror in 1930s-1940s Europe, however this topic is not unique to this region and time period. Throughout history, buildings have been used to house evil regimes, parties, and dictators. Once their power lost, and their reign comes to an end, the structures and sites left behind do not vanish into history books like their occupiers. In fact, the architecture left behind has the ability to evoke memories, recall its histories, and transform the spaces around them. This is not a foreign idea and is quite evident in our own backyard here in Canada.

Residential schools dating back to the late 1800s until as recently as the late years of the 1900s forcibly stripped children of their Indigenous cultural ties. These buildings, some only a few decades since their abandonment, stand in disrepair and risk the deterioration of the evidence of what occurred there. Those that still stand in a maintained state remain a physical and emotional imposing fixture in the communities that surround them. Countless debates have occurred within these communities whether to destroy these structures or maintain them for a certain repurpose, however, the sources of financial compensation for their decisions has also been up to debate. The final residential school still standing in Muskowekwan First Nation, Saskatchewan has been under consideration for the implementation of a museum and site of memory. Unfortunately, the community has only received grants and funds from the government to board up its windows and for its demolition. Without proper funding, the goal of creating a national museum is out of their hands. If this is the case, this fixture of memory will ultimately be destroyed, and history will be lost.

Although the case of the Muskowekwan First Nation is not the only scenario in which sites may be lost forever, it is one where a vision for a repurposing of a building, that once embodied hatred, was decided upon by the community. This is a critical decision that cannot be decided by the governing bodies controlling the land in which it sits, but by the community that it survives in. Due to the nature of this practicum, the focus on the horrors that occurred in 1930s-1940s Europe to the Jewish people will be emphasized. However, the findings and theories used can apply to any site and structure that personifies a hateful memory within its walls; including but not limited to the sites of residential schools in Canada.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

A building or site can remind some people of amazing experiences, such as a favorite childhood park or sports venue where their favourite team plays. Other buildings remind us of the people that populated it or the events that transpired there. This can be as minor as the place on the sidewalk that one fell off their bike and injured themselves, as small as the scary, deserted, rundown house that has horror stories told about it, or as impactful as the facilities that housed the most evil political party in our modern history. What happens to those sites when those who populated these building have vacated the premises? How does that physical structure make one feel after 10 years; 50 years; or even 100 years of vacancy? As a population we bind certain sites and structures to our subconscious years after those events have taken place and no amount of time can allow us to see them any other way. This is one main reason why historical sites and museums are created in former sites of atrocities or historically significant buildings. But even as we take over those sites and use them for educational purposes, what role does the physical structure play in the new narrative of the site? What can we do to breathe new life into these buildings that are overrun with ideals of hatred, destruction, and evil? It must be evaluated how we reuse these buildings, for whom do we memorialize them for, and how this new program can properly serve the overall narrative of the site.

Memory in the Built World

The concepts of place in our current world can be illustrated through the stimulus of “visual memory”, where the physical structures surrounding us today enable us to document important events in our lives.⁶ This can be demonstrated through communities linking specific historical events to physical places and buildings. This frequently leads to the development of memorials, museums, and other types of physical manifestations of memory to places that either have physical remains or a site where the events took place.⁷ It is through this collective memory that the communities who are intertwined with the historical event can encapsulate it into their physical world. The structures that housed these events or the site that surrounds it ultimately become this link to the past and are thus responsible for teaching future generations through memorials and museums. However, sometimes the architecture associated with the historical event doesn’t match the story being told. This is the case with the House of the Wannsee Conference and its role in the murder of innocent Jewish people.

To begin to understand the memory that architecture can hold, one must first look to art critic John Ruskin who’s views on preservation of historic structures influenced the many to follow. In 1849, Ruskin published his book, The Seven Lamps of Architecture, through which chapter VI spoke about the embedded memory of buildings and structures. Ruskin’s emphasis on the importance of the past life of historic sites stress his views on what should happen to sites left to ruins or by abandonment that hold a certain eventful history. Ruskin proposed that ruinous structures, that embody a collective memory of the past, should be reused as building blocks for a new structure to come in its place. This would act as an honest reuse of the structure and the site of memory.⁸

However, Ruskin’s ideologies of reconstruction are seemingly to only concern the physical appearance of the building, as, in his eyes, is what portrays the memory of the event that took place. However, this is not the only method of memorializing an event as historical monstrosities can exist in the collective memory far longer and outreaching than the physical structures associated with it. It is, however, important to step in before the ruinous state and develop strategies of conserving these valuable structures so that history and memory can be preserved together in a physical sense.

6 Ehab Kamel-Ahmed, “What to Conserve? Heritage, Memory, and Management of Meanings” in International Journal of Architectural Research. (9:1, March 2015), 72.

7 Kamel-Ahmed, 72.

8 Ruskin, 254.

Tracing a building’s life even further back, Ruskin vehemently believed in constructing our world’s structures with the proper care and materials that they may last forever.⁹ This was not the case for the way the architects of the Third Reich constructed their buildings. It can be speculated that Hitler was aware of Ruskin’s principal aspirations that our buildings last forever, however, his chief architect, Albert Speer, had proposed a different method of constructing eternal monumental buildings. In 1934, Speer developed a theory entitled, “A Theory of Ruin Value” which would enable his structures to stand proudly and then promptly decay in a predetermined manner to resemble the great ruins of the Romans.¹⁰ His theory discussed that buildings of modern construction were not able to last the eternity that Hitler’s regime was calling for, so by understanding materials and applying principles of statics, the monumental structures of the Third Reich could, even in a state of decay, portray the sentiments set forward by the regime of power, control, and conquer.¹¹

By understanding how the buildings of Hitler’s regime were constructed as well as how they were meant to decay, it can be viewed that, regardless of their function, they hold an embodied memory associated with them. Viewing them, fully upright or as rubble, reminds the viewer of the beliefs that they were designed to hold and stand as a testament to the atrocities that the perpetrators committed. If these structures were to be kept untouched, surely, they would fall to a ruinous state and stand as an aesthetic eyesore. However, repurposing the existing buildings can be a controversial topic due to the history and memory associated with the structures. It is through adaptive reuse strategies and methods discussed later that the buildings can serve new functions without the complete destruction of the sites or the embodied memory.

Understanding Undesired Building

The lifespan of any building or site always begins with its conception and birth, continues as the structure grows and matures, and finally passes into its third phase of aging and death.¹² In the conception process, the building is planned, calculated to house a particular program inside, and constructed to operate said programs. As time goes on, the building falls into a growth and maturation phase where its users or program adapts with certain technological advances and so the building much adapt with it. When a building no longer sufficiently meets the requirements of the program or users, or the program itself has come to fruition, architectural theorist Neil Harris believes there are three main solutions. Firstly, the site can maintain its program and commence a series of renovations to allow it to continue to serve its purpose in that program.¹³ Secondly, the building can change program and function entirely to serve a different purpose which usually requires modifications to achieve this.¹⁴ Finally, the building and site can be vacated and abandoned by its users.¹⁵ Abandonment of a site has a few possible futures that it can experience. It can be reoccupied by the previous owner, be redeveloped by someone else into a new program through the process of adaptive reuse, it can be demolished and make way for a new use on its site, or finally, it can be left to fall into a ruinous state.

At this point in a building’s life, its abandonment and ultimate death, the significance of the history of the place becomes significant and often dictates the next steps in its afterlife. The history and memory associated, in addition to who the ownership of the site has fallen to, determines what can then occur. Architect and preservationist James Marston Fitch argues that there are seven courses of action that can ensue to intervene before the ruinous state ultimately takes place.¹⁶ These range from degrees of intervention action and begin with the idea of preservation.

1. Beginning with the least invasive of the intervention approaches, preservation deals with the care of the site as it was received.¹⁷ This means that any additional aging and degradation of the site should be resolved and preserved to its current state. Should any integral structural intervention be needed, they should be kept to a minimal impact on the overall aesthetic and remain non-invasive.
2. Restoration deals with the reversion of the site as it was in any historically significant period. This grants the designers the ability to send the building back in time and selecting what period was most significant. The state at which it is reverted to can also be by historical association, a frozen moment in time significant to its history, or aesthetic integrity, returning it to its overall truest form.¹⁸ Additionally, it allows the narrative of the past to be brought forward as it pertains to the new program of the space. The time in which the space is restored to has some contention associated with it as many buildings have multiple significant moments in their history.
3. Conservation and consolidation refer to physically intervening to control structural integrity of an abandoned ruin.¹⁹ This can be as minor as regulating the cleanliness of the space through cleaning finishes, or as extreme as replacing rotten wood beams for safety concerns. This stabilizes the site to prevent it from falling into a more ruinous state and minimizing the aesthetic intervention.
4. When a structure has fallen too far into disarray through natural disasters or through the perils of war, reconstitution acknowledges the fragments that may be scattered on a site and allows the reassembly of the building either in situ or on a separate site²⁰ This is a more extreme variation of the above intervention course as the reconstruction of a certain section of the building or the entirety of the structure need to be broken down to be rebuilt as it was.
5. Adaptive reuse is a method that is not new but has been recently favoured for many abandoned structures. The reuse of a site is critically dependent on the cultural values associated with the structure, the financial support of the project, and the strategies and tactics implemented in the new project.²¹
6. One of the most radical of the intervention options, according to Fitch, is the reconstruction of vanished buildings on their original site.²² This new site would serve as a three-dimensional stand-in for the original structure however it is practically impossible for this new structure to be a perfect recreation. Unfortunately, there will always be subjective assumptions which will have to be made by the new designer no matter how many resources are available on a historic building or site.²³
7. Finally, replication involves the creation of an existing building on a site separate from the original. As this is a radical idea, it also has a fundamental purpose. When a building cannot structurally survive in the open air and needs to be relocated to a controlled environment, a surrogate can be erected in its place standing as its replacement.²⁴

Each intervention strategy, as suggested by Fitch, has its advocates and opposition however each structure and case must be evaluated independently to determine the best results for the upcoming project and the historical significance of the site. It is ultimately up to the designers and shareholders in the future development to agree upon the selected method. When it comes to dealing with structures that embody hate and corruption, the conversation often leads to different strategies to deal with the undesired structures.

It is evident that through Finch’s specific strategies there is a role that interior design plays on the new life being given to the site. Whether the space is conserved, restored, or replicated, each strategy selected can alter the way a site’s historical significance gets passed on from the state of the old into the program of the new. This is especially true when the historical significance is that of hate and genocide as it is for the case of the House of the Wannsee Conference. It also critical to allow these strategies to be selected by those in the community of this site, rather than governments or corporations not directly involved in the project or the history. Community initiated support will ensure the space is reused for their needs and the healing that they need to process in order to heal this site of the horror’s that took place and allow the building to serve them once again.

9 Ruskin, 243.
10 Cornelius Holtorf, “A Theory of Ruin-value”, University of Toronto, December 21, 2004, <http://wayback.archive-it.org/6473/20160819144823/https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/citd/holtorf/7.4.html>.
11 Holtorf, 2004.
12 Neil Harris, Building Lives: Constructing Rites and Passages. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999. 5.
13 Harris, Building Lives, 110.
14 Harris, 110.
15 Harris, 110.
16 James Marston Fitch, Historic Preservation : Curatorial Management of the Built World Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990, 46.

17 Fitch, Historic Preservation, 46.
18 Fitch, 46.
19 Fitch, 46.
20 Kelly Ronda, “De_Fragmentation: Translating the Ruinous Narrative in Adaptive Reuse Design,” Electronic Thesis or Dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 2011, 18.
21 Graeme Brooker, and Sally Stone, ReReadings: Interior Architecture and the Design Principles of Remodelling Existing Buildings, (London: RIBA Enterprises, 2004), 11.
22 Fitch, 47.
23 Fitch, 47.
24 Fitch, 47.

Corrupt Architecture

A corrupt building can be defined in two main ways: firstly, by concerning a ruinous or contaminated building through structural deficiencies or through organic material.²⁵ Secondly, the corruption refers to historical sites that are “perceived as concrete embodiments of a wrong ideology or dark period in history.”²⁶ The first definition can be resolved using one of Fitch’s methods discussed earlier, specifically conservation and consolidation, and allow the structure to be “healed” from its physical corruption. The second definition is where the controversial conversations begin to arise. On one hand these structures embody the ideologies in which they were created, the functions which they sheltered, and the memories of the events that occurred.²⁷ The structures in question are grandiose, concrete monstrosities that were erected to intimidate. They were sites of mass extermination, genocide, and destruction. How can we consciously do anything to these sites besides turning them to ash and rubble?

1. Destruction

The simplest and most effective solution to eliminating the symbolic hatred bestowed on these buildings would be the complete destruction of the physical structures. As the structures still stand more than seventy years later, few publicly believe in this idea as the destruction of history and the tangible evidence of the Nazi regime can impact how future generations remember the atrocities that took place. In his 1985 book, *Albert Speer: Architecture 1932-1942*, architectural theorist and urban planner Leon Krier discussed Speer’s architectural plan for the Nazi regime including the neoclassical World Capital Germania, the future capital of the world, Berlin. Krier romanticizes the plans as beautiful, powerful, and grandiose while agreeing with the force that the embodied memories associated with them have on future generations. Krier concludes convincingly on his belief of the fate of these sites: “Oblivion is considered the appropriate form of criticism and dynamite the adequate instrument for dealing with Speer’s buildings and projects.”²⁸ Ultimately, Krier believes that the destruction of these structures would be a better solution than the reuse of their walls.

While this argument is often brought forward, others believe that the history of the site can “act as a part of the local sociocultural identity of the place.”²⁹ Conservationist John Ashurst believes that through the understanding of the past, embodied by physical structures left behind, the people of those sites and their societies have been shaped and created around it.³⁰ It is the fact that these events took place, and there are witnesses to it, that force the continuation of the dialogue and disallows the destruction of the specific site. These relics left crumbling by the Nazi regime in Germany have a duty to serve in their afterlife as they still have a story to tell.

Finally, as the architectural community progresses into the conscious understanding of the environmental impacts of the built world, the ultimate demolition of these concrete monstrosities is falling further and further away from being a possibility.³¹ The sheer waste of water, sand, and other natural resources should surely remove this as an option entirely.

2. Monumental Reuse

After destruction, the second solution would be to freeze time on the site and memorialize the events that took place there. As the embodied memory of the structures stand as the primary witnesses, this solution would preserve, consolidate, or restore the structures as museums or memorials. Liliane Wong, author, and professor at Rhode Island School of Design, expresses in her book, *Adaptive Reuse: Extending the Lives of Buildings*, that sites related to war and plunder typically serve as vehicles for bearing witness to the crimes that took place.³² Wong continues by stating that these sites of merciless events including terrorism and genocide must be memorialized to act as physical evidence for generations to come.³³ It is through the preservation and the restoration of the structures that time can be frozen and history can be remembered through a physical space. This would specifically pertain to sites such as Auschwitz-Birkenau and other death camps scattered throughout Poland. Rather than demolition of its buildings or providing a new use for the spaces that survived the war, the preservation of the horrors that those walls have borne witness to takes precedent.

3. Functional Reuse

While sites such as extermination camps can and should survive as physical reminders of history through the preservation of their walls, what happens to the places that do not hold any visual evidence of their events? Buildings that contained offices of evil, former residences of its leaders, and suburban villas that were only acting as shelters for their meetings that culminated in mass genocide; what can we do to them? The third solution regarding former Nazi structures is to reuse the existing concrete symbols of hate in a new, functional manner. Through the proper preservation, restoration, and reuse of these sites, we explore its past without rewriting its ingrained history, but rather to breathe new life into it.³⁴

The House of the Wannsee Conference is one that exists currently with the second definition of corruption in architecture. While the building itself has been maintained and inhabited since its transfer of hands from the Nazis in 1945, the memory associated with the site remain interwoven with the infamous meeting held on its premises. It is because of this collective memory that this site must remain standing and allow for the education of future generations through its physical attributes. Destruction ultimately cannot be the conclusion of this building’s story as it still has a role to play. The current state of the house and grounds exist in the monumental reuse category. The site is maintained and preserved to allow it to stand, however the building’s narrative remains as it was in 1945. This preservation limits the future uses of the grounds and concludes the chapter on it. With a proper reuse of the interior and exterior of the site, the historical significance can remain relevant and significant, but a new program can redeem the building of its negative connotations in history and allow new life to flourish within it. This can better serve the community it once was built into and reverse the narrative from destruction to that of growth.

25 Mélanie van der Hoorn, *Indispensable Eyesores: an Anthropology of Undesired Buildings*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 2.
26 Van der Hoorn, *Indispensable Eyesores*, 2.
27 Ronda, *De_Fragmentation*, 37.
28 Leon Krier, *Albert Speer: Architecture 1932 – 1942*, (A Bruxelles: Aux Archives D’architecture Moderne, 1985), 217.
29 Van der Hoorn, 5.
30 John Ashurst, *Conservation of Ruins*, (Taylor and Francis, 2007), 255.
31 Graeme Brooker, and Sally Stone, *ReReadings: Interior Architecture and the Design Principles of Remodelling Existing Buildings*, (London: RIBA Enterprises, 2004), 11.

32 Liliane Wong, *Adaptive Reuse: Extending the Lives of Buildings*, (Boston: Birkhäuser, 2017), 52.
33 Wong, 52.
34 Arian Mostaedi, *Building Conversion & Renovation*. (Barcelona: Carles Broto & Josep Ma Minguet, 2003), 8.

Adaptive Reuse

While not a new concept, adaptive reuse has become more favourable as a reconciliation tool for undesired buildings or spaces with historical significance. Adaptive reuse is the process in which a disused or corrupt site is reclaimed for a different purpose, preserving its identifiable characteristics while allowing for a new program to blossom within. In their extensive overviews of adaptive reuse in architecture and interior design, co-authors Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone express the desirable alternative to the destruction and rebuilding of a space. They believe that collective memory and sense of continuity have grown to become more important to the communities surrounding these sites.³⁵ ReReadings, and their subsequent book ReReadings 2, signify the important relationship of the history of space to its future considerations of structure. These primarily relate to the cultural values attributed to the site, the financial support of the project, and the strategies and tactics utilized by the new designer.³⁶ These strategies and tactics are laid out like a roadmap for designers to use in their projects.

The first step begins with an analysis of the existing; an understanding of the form and structure still standing today. This is followed by extensive research into the history of its occupants, historical functions, and the context of the site in relation to its surroundings. Finally, the proposed function and program of the project is considered for how to reshape the existing space. Just as Fitch had proposed, Brooker and Stone outline a select number of ways that a project can be altered relating its existing and future conditions. These include the strategies of intervention, insertion, and installation.³⁷

The first strategy identified by Brooker and Stone, Intervention, combines the old and the new in a way that creates an inseparable element; an amalgamation that forever alters the existing.³⁸ This can be through the addition of elements important to the new function, or contrastingly, the subtraction of the existing structure for movement through the space. These changes physically alter the state of the site in a way that permanently exists for the lifetime of this current iteration of the space. This strategy typically occurs when the relationship between the old and new are vastly different in their programmatic needs and more intensive mediation is required to connect the two. While it can often be necessary, the historical impact of the intervention can cause the irreversible destruction of historical sites and thus the collective memory of the space. Used intentionally, this approach can mend a ruinous structure left to disrepair and revive its walls with a new program and user group.

Insertion allows the existing site conditions to dictate the changes necessary for adaptive reuse. The historical program can also be used to define the new program’s physical parameters by imposing direct limits of the design. This is implemented through the insertion of the new building elements within the confines of the existing structure, or the necessity to keep the old and new visually separate to enhance the narrative.

Finally, Installation is the creation of the new elements that can be inserted into the existing structure, but are not based on the old, have no direct effect on the physical structure, and can be removed without a trace being left. Traditionally this strategy is selected on historic sites where care on the conservation have been made and temporary programs can be implemented without disturbing the historic characteristics.

Through the utilization of the existing structures that still stand today creates a blueprint for how the space can be reused. This is displayed by way of reusing its existing entrances, corridors, and envelope. With the functional alterations of revising circulation routes and relationships of spaces, the structure can house a new program efficiently and convert the site into a useful building typology.³⁹ However, this form of reuse can quickly lose the critical relationship connecting the past and the present as function is not the only important adaptation that can be addressed. On the other hand, stripping away key aspects of the interior and only preserving the envelope or exterior strips away crucial details of the building’s history and possibly the embodied memory within it.⁴⁰ It is through proper adaptive reuse strategies and tactics that designers and shareholders can convert sites that embody collective memories into spaces that allow for growth while preserving historical significance.

Just as the House of the Wannsee Conference was the site of the destruction of European Jewry, it is through adaptive reuse strategies and tactics that it can become a house of growth for the Jewish people. By preserving the building and grounds as it was during World War II and adaptively reversing its program, this building can once again be welcomed into the community. This dichotomy of function is one that makes the new program, a synagogue and education centre for Jews in Berlin, even more important and crucial to the community it belongs to. It is even more crucial to adapt the existing memorial space that currently exists in the building to allow for daily functional use by the community rather than just for tourism and awareness of the events that occurred. Finally, through the guidelines outlined by Brooker and Stone in their literary work, the designers have the ability to use design language to reverse the negative narrative associated with the site and allow the new function to take priority in its new home.

35 Graeme Brooker, and Sally Stone, Re-Readings: 2. (London: RIBA Publishing, 2019), 1.

36 Brooker and Stone, ReReadings, 11.

37 Brooker and Stone, ReReadings, 14.

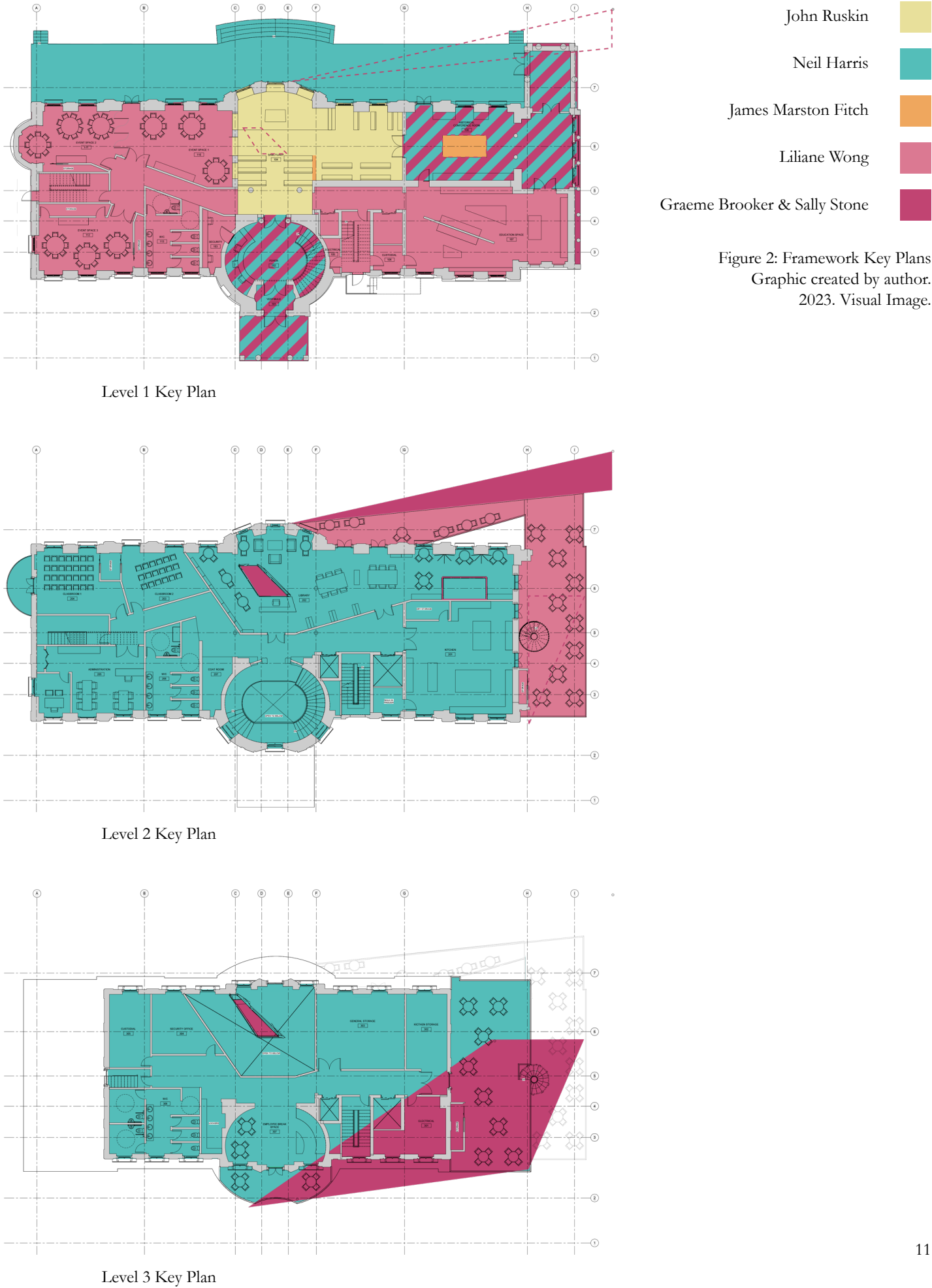
38 Brooker and Stone, Re-Readings: 2, 70.

39 Graeme Brooker, and Sally Stone, ReReadings: Interior Architecture and the Design Principles of Remodelling Existing Buildings, (London: RIBA Enterprises, 2004), 11.

40 Ronda, 39.

Theory	Theorist	Theory Extract	Design Strategies
Collective Memory	John Ruskin	Past life of a building should dictate the new function	Reuse the existing structure as a Synagogue to contrast the historical function of the site
Corrupt Architecture	Neil Harris	- Sites that no longer meet the requirements for their program need to renovate or adapt to a new program - Non-historically significant aspects of the site can lend themselves for adaptation to ensure proper programing needs	- Demolish existing walls on second floor for new program - Preserve exterior finishes and details - Preserve ceiling feature in Meeting Room - Preserve entrance stair - Increase natural daylight in the space through new openings and less physical barriers
	James Marston Fitch	- Seven intervention approaches in which to evaluate and reuse abandoned sites and structures - Restoration and adaptive reuse strategies will be implemented	- Restore floor plan to as it was in 1942 - Preserve artifacts found from site as it was in 1942
Adaptive Reuse	Liliane Wong	- Memorialization for sites where merciless horrors occurred - Preservation of the space takes precedent over demolition to ensure sites of memory to exist - Minimal physical changes to the existing structure in specific spaces - Create a visual connection between the new intervention and the existing architecture	- Minimize finish alterations in Meeting Room, Entrance, Foyer - Create new spaces from insignificant areas of the site (second floor, back garden) - Introduction of modern materials (glass, metal) to contrast existing stone construction
	Graeme Brooker & Sally Stone	- Utilization of the existing structures still standing creates a blueprint for how the space can be reused - Proper adaptive reuse strategies can convert sites of memory into new functional spaces while preserving historical significance - Design strategies: intervention, insertion, installation - Intervention and installation strategies will ensure the original structure and site relate to the new function proposed - Existing site conditions will dictate the programming of the new space - Visual/materialistic separation of the old and new to emphasize new intervention within the old structure	- Create new intervention off-axis of original structure to create contrast - All new interventions to be in contrasting materials (metal, glass) to original structure - Floor plan and design details from 1942 will be used to determine the historically significant artifacts that will remain preserved - Floor plan from 1942 will determine boundaries of new intervention however

Figure 1: Framework Findings
Table generated by author. 2023. Table.



Chapter 3: Site Analysis

History of Jews in Berlin

The state of the Jewish people and the practicing of Judaism in Berlin has fluctuated significantly since the first record of Jews living in Berlin in 1354. Beginning with six families living in the *Judenhof*, the “Jew’s Court”, the creation of the modern Jewish Community in Berlin was finally established by fifty families arriving from Vienna after their expulsion in 1671. A royal decree from Prince Friedrich Wilhelm on May 21, 1671, prohibited the creation of synagogues in Berlin, limiting services and prayer to private rooms called *shtiblach*. Finally, after nearly fifty years, the prohibition of synagogues was lifted and the community established the “Old Synagogue”, as it was later known to be called, in 1714. The Jewish people of Berlin were granted, for the first time, civil rights in 1812. Berlin’s “New Synagogue” was inaugurated in 1866 and stood as the largest ever existing in Europe, with services allowing to exist in both Hebrew and German. By 1933, the Jewish community of Berlin grew to over 160 000 members, most of whom would emigrate or be deported in the following years as the Nazi Party came to power. This began with the loss of civil rights once again for all Jews under the Nuremburg laws and culminated with *Kristallnacht*, the Night of Broken glass in 1938. Many synagogues in Germany and specifically Berlin were attacked, Jewish stores were looted, and Jews imprisoned, applying pressure for Jews to emigrate out of Germany. Any remaining Jews left in Berlin as of 1941 were forced to wear yellow stars on their clothing under the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question” and deportations began, sending over 50 000 Jews to their death in concentration camps. 1943 saw the final destruction of the New Synagogue by American air force bombers while Berlin was declared “*judenfrei*”, free of Jews. Of the 7 000 Jews who were hidden in Berlin during the final years of the war, only 1 700 survived and began the creation of the new Jewish community in West Berlin. The first Jewish school since the war in Germany opened in 1993 and the new community center was established at the site of the former “New Synagogue” in 1996.

Today, there are seven active synagogues associated with the Jewish community of Berlin, protected by police 24/7. This number is drastically lower than the eighty synagogues in use prior to the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany. While the number of Jews living in Berlin today is difficult to calculate, there is almost 11 000 active members of the Jewish Community of Berlin, however, due to the “religion tax” in place in Germany, many more Jews exist in Berlin without any official affiliation. This number has been estimated to be anywhere from 15 000 to 30 000 Jews in Berlin alone. There also exist four rabbinical seminaries in Berlin and its neighbour Potsdam, which resides just to the West of the state of Berlin in Brandenburg.

Jewish Community of Berlin

The Jewish Community of Berlin exists today largely as an accumulation of immigrants, primarily from the former Soviet Union in the late 1900s and early 2000s. These immigrants, along with expats from North America and Israel create a majority of the current active members of the Jewish community. The official Jewish Community of Berlin receives public funding yearly and survives with the addition of community donations. These funds support the employment of rabbis in differing denominations, orthodox, conservative, and reform. Additionally, members of the community do not belong to a specific synagogue, but rather have the ability to participate at any community synagogue.

The newest addition to the Jewry of the region of Berlin and Potsdam is the creation of the new synagogue in the recently inaugurated European Center for Jewish Learning at the University of Potsdam. Combining the school of Jewish Theology and the two rabbinical seminaries, this synagogue is the first to open in Potsdam since the Nazi Party’s reign of terror and the first to be associated with a university in Germany. The aim of this recent addition was to increase applicants from around Europe to its rabbinical program and can house a small forty congregants.

Besides this newest addition to the Jewish Community, the few synagogues serving the Jewish Community in Berlin operate differently than the typical synagogue experience in much of Europe. The eight synagogues in the Berlin Jewish Community operate as active houses of prayer which do not function as tourist attractions. This limits the hours and accessibility of the sites to those during prayer times and do not offer tours, even for those with specific historical significance.

This distinct situation creates a separation of site and function which can be utilized in this practicum to create a new category of synagogue for the region. The creation of a synagogue that allows for the exploration of the history of the Jews in the region, with emphasis to its distinct historical significance to the Nazis, allows for a site to become a beacon for the future Jewry in the area.

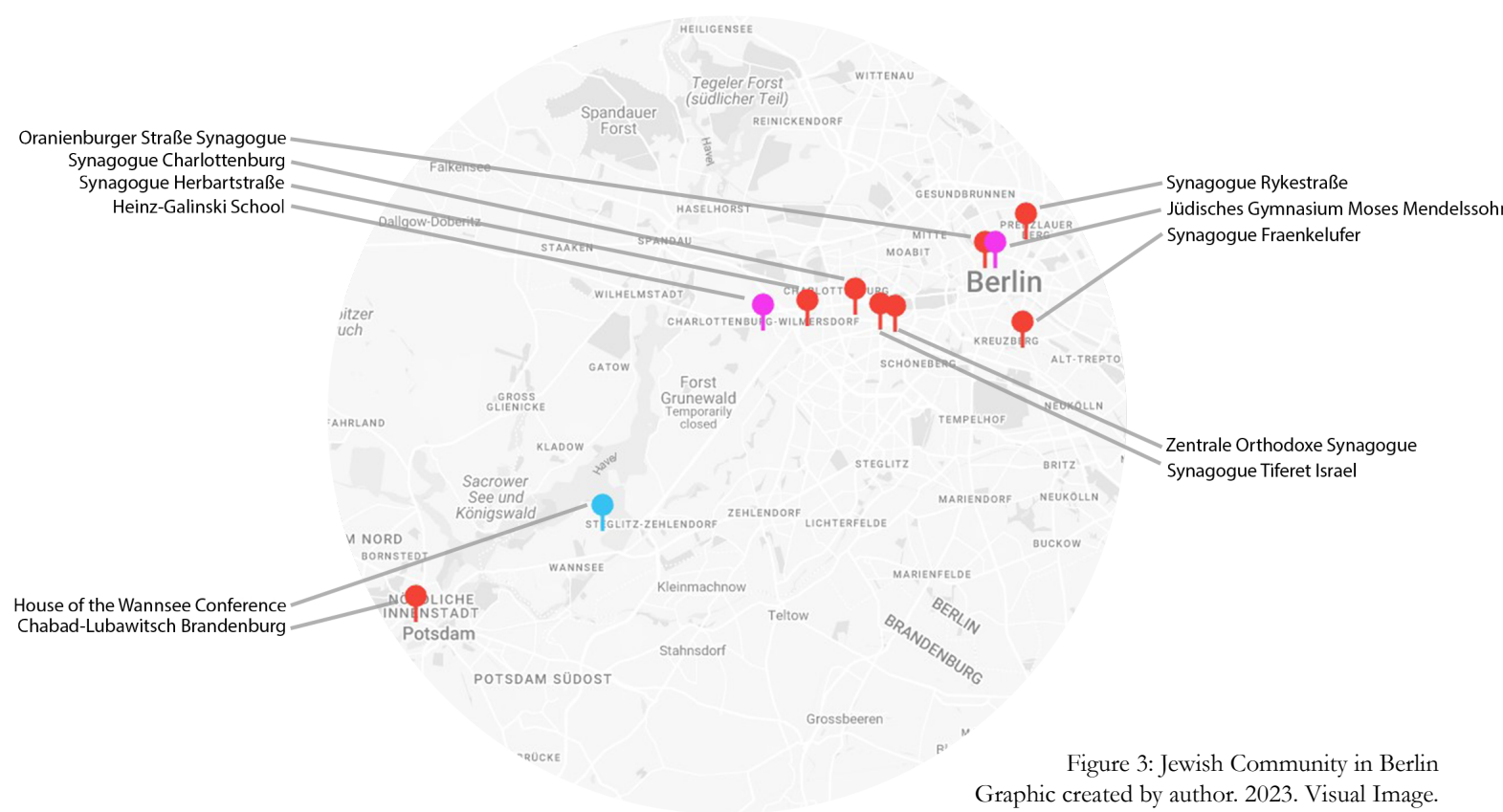


Figure 3: Jewish Community in Berlin
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Building Analysis: History

The building and site often referred to as “The House of the Wannsee Conference” was constructed in 1914-1915 as the residence for factory owner and Privy Commercial Councilor, Ernest Marlier. Located at 56-58 Am Grossen Wannsee, Berlin, Germany, the 1500m² dwelling and 30000m² garden was designed by Architect Paul O. A. Baumgarten. After only a few years, the house and grounds were sold to industrialist Friedrich Minoux in 1921, and finally to the Nordhav SS Foundation in 1940 for use as private and official vacation houses for the SS Security Service (SD). In actuality, the site functioned primarily as a guest house for out-of-town officers and guests of the SS from October 1941 - February 1943. According to the Order Bulletin of the Chief of the Security Police and SD on November 15, 1941: the guest house offers “Completely renovated guestrooms, communal rooms such as music rooms, gamerooms (billiards), a large hall and winter garden, terraces facing the Wannsee, central heating, running water and all the amenities...”.

Aside from the advertised excellent views and easy access to the heart of Berlin, the main residence also served as a house of conferences and meetings run by Chief of Security Police and SD, Reinhard Heydrich. It is because of one such meeting, on January 20, 1942, that the site was ingrained in history as the ultimate perpetrator site; a location that was used by members of the Nazi regime to commit genocide. Heydrich had invited fourteen men on that date to decide on the fate of over eleven million Jews across Europe, the Final Solution to the Jewish Question. They briefly discussed the quantities of Jews in the respective Nazi-occupied regions, the means of transportation to concentration camps, and to inform those present of Heydrich’s leading role in such plans. Lunch was to follow the brief meeting, followed by cognac by the fireplace in the parlour.

Following the end of the war in 1945, the villa traded hands frequently. It was taken over by Russian marines and shortly afterwards by American officers. In 1947, it served as a residential adult education centre, and finally from 1952-1988 as a school hostel for children in Neukölln. The site was publicly made aware of the events that happened in the house by historian and Auschwitz survivor Joseph Wulf. It was in 1965 when Wulf suggested the site be transformed into the “International Documents Center for the Study of National Socialism and its Consequences” however the Berlin government made that plan extremely difficult; even though the idea was supported by many worldwide. Due to the struggle and lack of progress on getting this site recognized as a landmark and holocaust memorial centre, Wulf committed suicide in 1974. The site was finally dedicated as a memorial site in 1992, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Wannsee Conference, and it was transitioned into an educational setting in 2006 with a permanent exhibit. This exhibit has educated visitors on the minutes of the meeting, as well as understand the wider Nazi plan for the persecution of European Jewry.

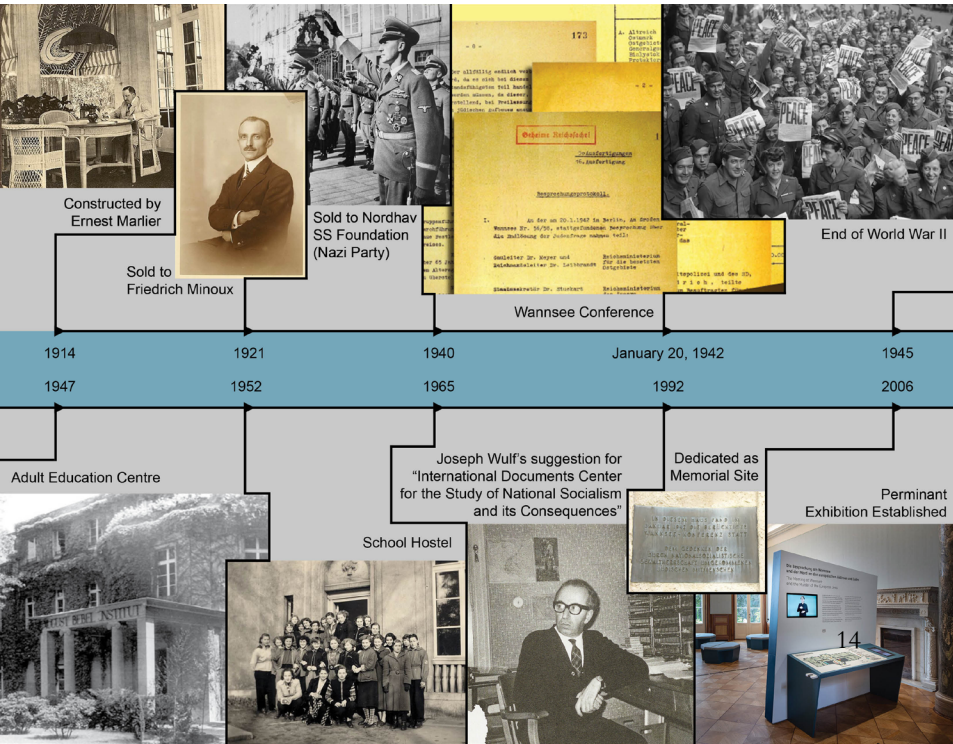


Figure 4: Visual Timeline:
House of the Wannsee Conference
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Site Selection Rationale

In a short ninety minutes, the fate of this beautiful Italianate style villa was forever changed. A building that was constructed to allow a family to grow and a future to be raised, suddenly became the backdrop for one of the deadliest meetings in human history. A complete juxtaposition of its initial creation, this site has been altered in the collective memory of all who learned about its evil past. It is obvious today that the creation of a memorial site was critical in the conservation of the history of the site. However, the memorial site as it stands today terminates the timeline of the building. The manor in which this site has been transformed into a monument for the remembrance of the Holocaust eliminates any future this site holds. While memorials or museums are excellent methods of preserving history for future generations, it is only through adaptive reuse concepts and strategies that this site can function in society once again. This site can continue to recall the history that once occurred and will stand as evidence of the atrocities of the past while serving the community of the Jews in the Greater Berlin area.

Site Context: Location

Country: Germany

City: Berlin

Borough: Steglitz-Zehlendorf

Locality: Wannsee

Latitude: 52° 25' 0" N

Longitude: 13° 9' 0" E

Time Zone: UTC +1:00

Population: 10 126 (2020)

Located in the southwestern Berlin borough of Steglitz-Zehlendorf, Wannsee is the westernmost district of Berlin. The area is surrounded by two lakes, the Großer Wannsee (Greater Wannsee) and the Kleiner Wannsee (Little Wannsee). In the late 1800s, the Wannsee region became developed into an upper-class suburb with villas designed by well-known architects, landscape architects and artists for the wealthy industrialists, bankers, and publishers. The House of the Wannsee Conference and its grounds face East overlooking the Großer Wannsee.



Figure 5: Sun Path Diagram of Wannsee, Germany
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Site Context: Paths & Edges

Wannsee is primarily connected to the rest of Berlin and neighbouring region Brandenburg by the Berlin-Wannsee Railway Station. This station services the Berlin S-Bahn S1 line as its terminal station and the S7 connecting the nearby city of Potsdam. It is also linked to Kladow in the North by way of the Berlin ferry line F10. By car, the German federal highway Bundesstraße 1 (B1) connects the district of Wannsee to the capital city, Berlin.

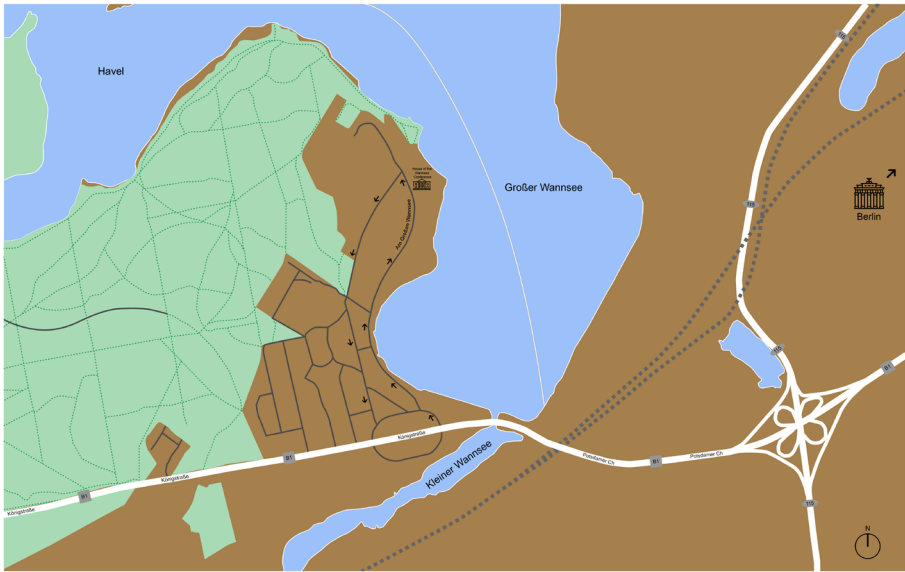


Figure 6: Paths & Edges of Wannsee, Germany
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Site Context: Nodes, Districts & Landmarks

In addition to the villa known as the House of the Wannsee Conference, there are several notable locations located in Wannsee. The Liebermann villa, the summer house that belonged to painter Max Liebermann, now stands as a museum and is just down the road. On the western portion of the island where Wannsee sits are two castles, the Glienicke Castle and Jagdschloss Glienicke connected by a series of parks. Finally, the Church of St. Peter and Paul, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is situated on the northern edge of Wannsee. It has served the community living in the area since 1837.

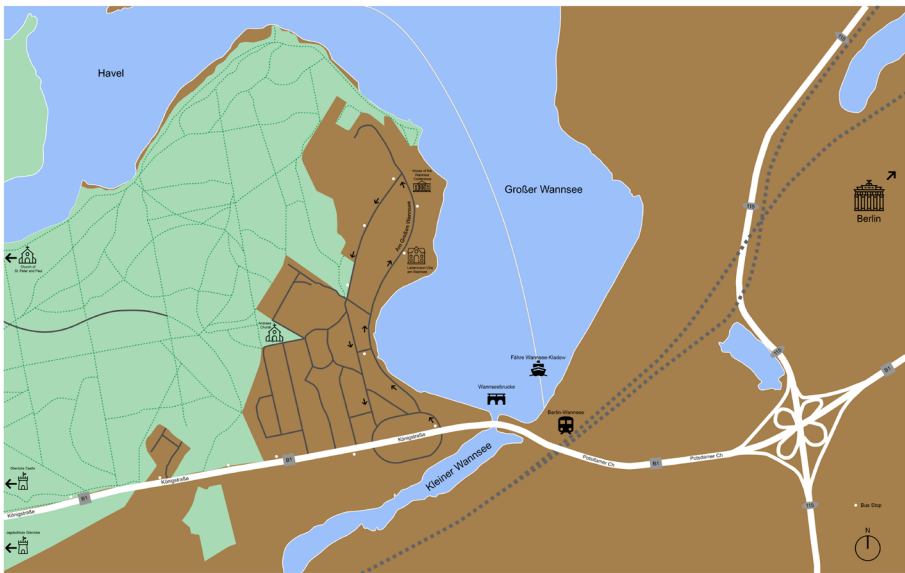


Figure 7: Nodes, Districts & Landmarks of Wannsee, Germany
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Site Inventory

As visitors enter from the street on the west, the building slowly emerges through the trees as the long driveway conceals the structure's true grandiose stature. The main building stands proud in the centre of the driveway with several other buildings scattered around the site. The gate house at the main street access point, the gardener's house at the secondary entrance, and boat house by the site's easternmost point along the water.

Paved garden paths surround the main house stemming from the driveway at the front and continue around the site towards the water. Several benches can be found along the driveway providing rest points to observe the front facade of the house while a few others behind the building allow for scenic views overlooking the Großer Wannsee. Ample street parking is available along the one-way Am Großen Wannsee street however a small parking area is present on the south of the property from employees of the site. Tree coverage on the extents of the site conceal the views into the neighbouring properties and from the street however remain sparse along the lake to ensure proper viewpoints of the water from all points on the site.

Figure 8: House of the Wannsee Conference - Site Plan
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Figure 10: Original First Floor Plan
Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.

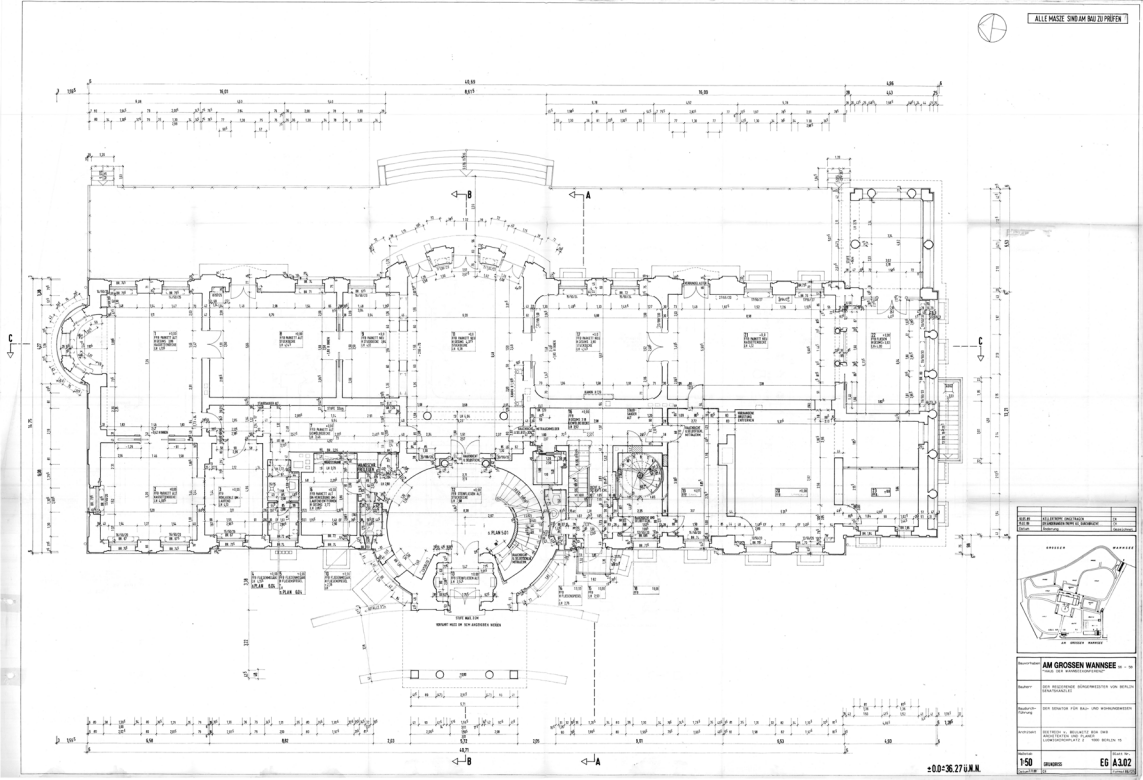
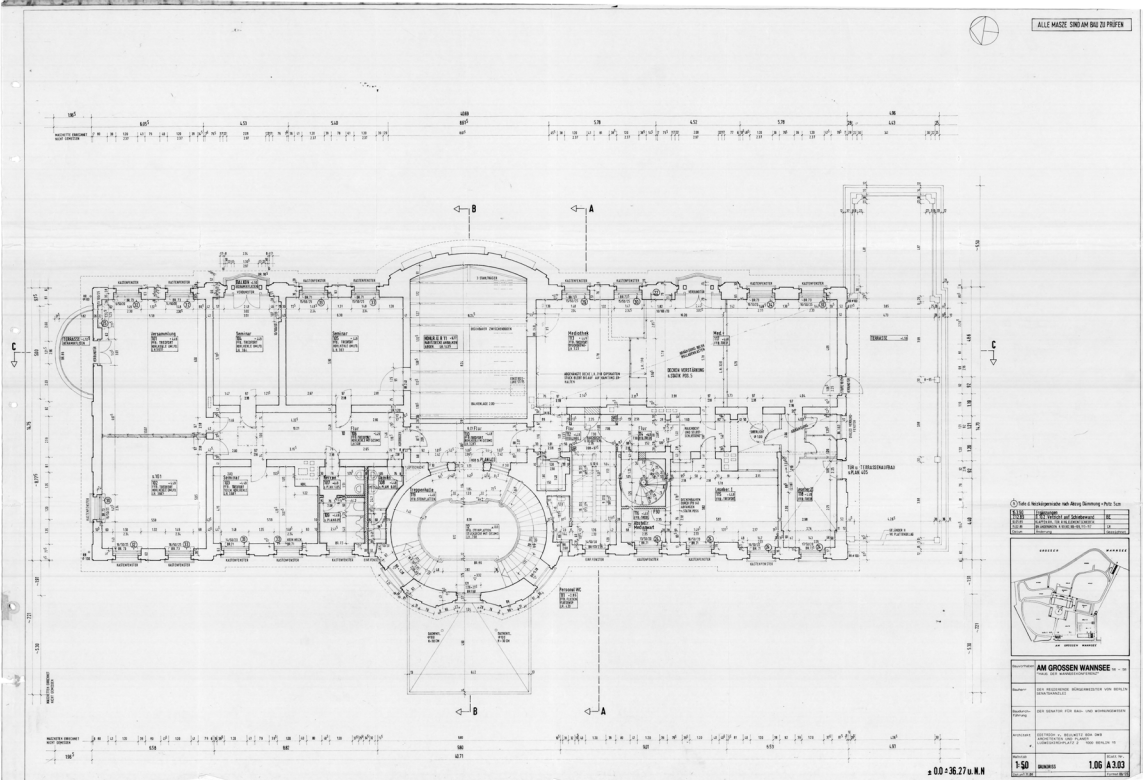


Figure 9: Original Site Plan
Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.



Figure 11: Original Second Floor Plan
Drawing retrieved from Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. 1988. Visual Image.



Chapter 4: Precedent Studies

Centre for the Documentation of the History of the Third Reich

Designer: Günther Domenig

Location: Nuremburg, Germany

Year: 2001

As the starting point for Hitler’s National Socialist party, Nuremberg, Germany stood to be a central hub of gathering and meeting. Designed and developed by Chief Architect Albert Speer, the Nuremberg Rally Grounds and Kongresshalle were constructed in 1935 as the jumping off point for the ultimate master plan of the “World Capital Germania”; Hitler’s new capital city of the world.

Although never fully completed, the horseshoe shaped auditorium was supposed to seat fifty thousand party officials as a backdrop for Nazi propaganda. These sites narrowly survived the war and allied bombings and were declared historic monuments in 1973. Throughout the years, plans for its reuse were discussed and debated; a new sports stadium, a rehearsal space for the Nuremberg Orchestra, or even a shopping centre were suggested. Ultimately standing functionally empty, these structures began decaying and thus began debates surrounding its future operational state or outright demolition.

As the largest standing building used by the Nazi’s to survive the war, the Kongresshalle stood as a concrete reminder of the uncomfortable legacy of the Nazi regime. Through an architectural competition, Gunther Domenig of Austria was awarded the opportunity to adaptively reuse the existing structure as the new home of the National Socialist Documentation Centre. This included housing lecture rooms, exhibitions, and film studios all dedicated to providing documentation of the history of the Third Reich. Using the intervention strategy of Adaptive Reuse, outlined by Brooker and Stone earlier, Domenig designed a piercing arrow of glass and metal which cuts through the existing structure. This new entrance and circulation route slices through the orthogonal building at a dynamic diagonal, counteracting, heightening, and exposing the original structure. Brooker analyzes that the significant geometrical intervention “response draws its cues from the original building.” The modifications to the proud standing Kongresshalle act intrusively with its new elements forcing themselves through the front and back of the building. In addition, the materials selected by the architect directly contrast that of the reinforced concrete of the existing structure, creating a dramatic entrance to the new space. The remainder of the Nuremburg Rally Grounds have yet to be altered however they occasionally act as backdrops to festivals and public gatherings.

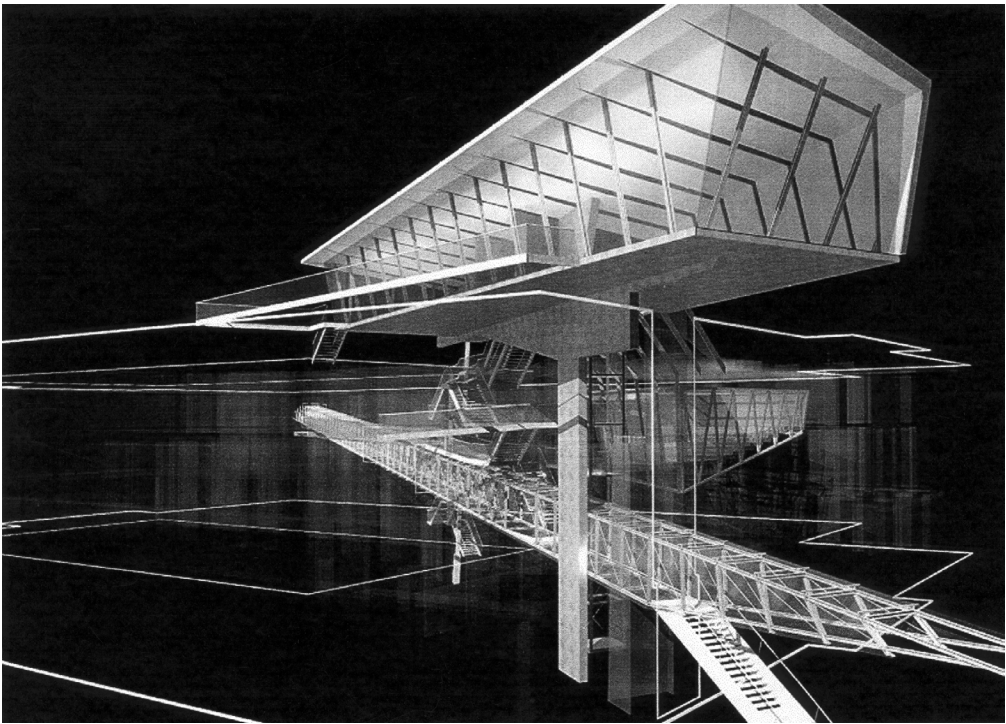
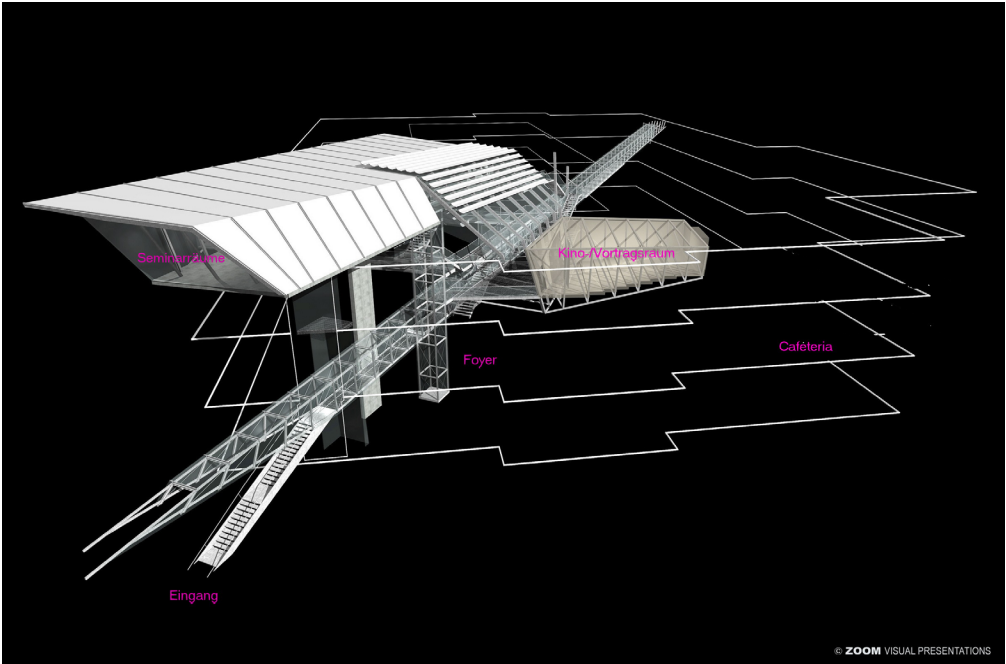
The Documentation Centre utilizes multiple adaptive reuse strategies when it comes to the reuse of the existing building stock. Firstly, the dichotomy of its new functional reuse of this corrupt architecture is most important. Finding the right reuse for this space is crucial in allowing the history and new program coexist and have an important narrative. Domenig’s intervention also directly correlates to the idea of contradiction. It is the use of modern materials, glass, and steel, which contrast the reinforced concrete commonly used in Nazi architecture. The dynamic design language used in the architect’s intervention allows the interaction of the existing structure to directly contradict the orthogonal design of Speer’s original designs. By creating this visual stress between the old and new, Domenig’s design allows the qualities of the building’s stories to be remembered and reactivates the narrative of the corrupted site into one that will ultimately surpass its function.

Design Considerations & Applications

The use of juxtaposition through circulation and materiality greatly influences the intervention at the Beth Wannsee Synagogue. While both sites were constructed with the solid materials of reinforced concrete and stone, the visual contrast of modern materials including metal and glass create a separation of the old and new. The new intervention, which will create new circulation routes, will penetrate the axial plan at a contrasting angle and will collide with the perfect symmetry of the house. This allows the visitors of the space to understand the physical space that once stood, while the new circulation routes created allow for new navigation through the space.

As the exterior facade of the Nuremberg Rally Grounds remain untouched to this day, they survive as a backdrop for festivals and events. This remained influential in the preservation of the eastern exterior facade to continue to act as a backdrop to events that will take place in the gardens of the house overlooking the water. However, just as Domenig’s arrow “pierced” through the exterior of the structure, the new intervention will extrude from inside to connect the back terrace to the program inside. This creates a connection with both the interior elements and the exterior garden to the east.

Figure 15 & 16: Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds, Nuremberg/
Günther Domenig/Zoom Visual Presentations
Retrieved from Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände. Visual Image.



Soho Synagogue

Designer: Dror

Location: New York, USA

Year: 2011

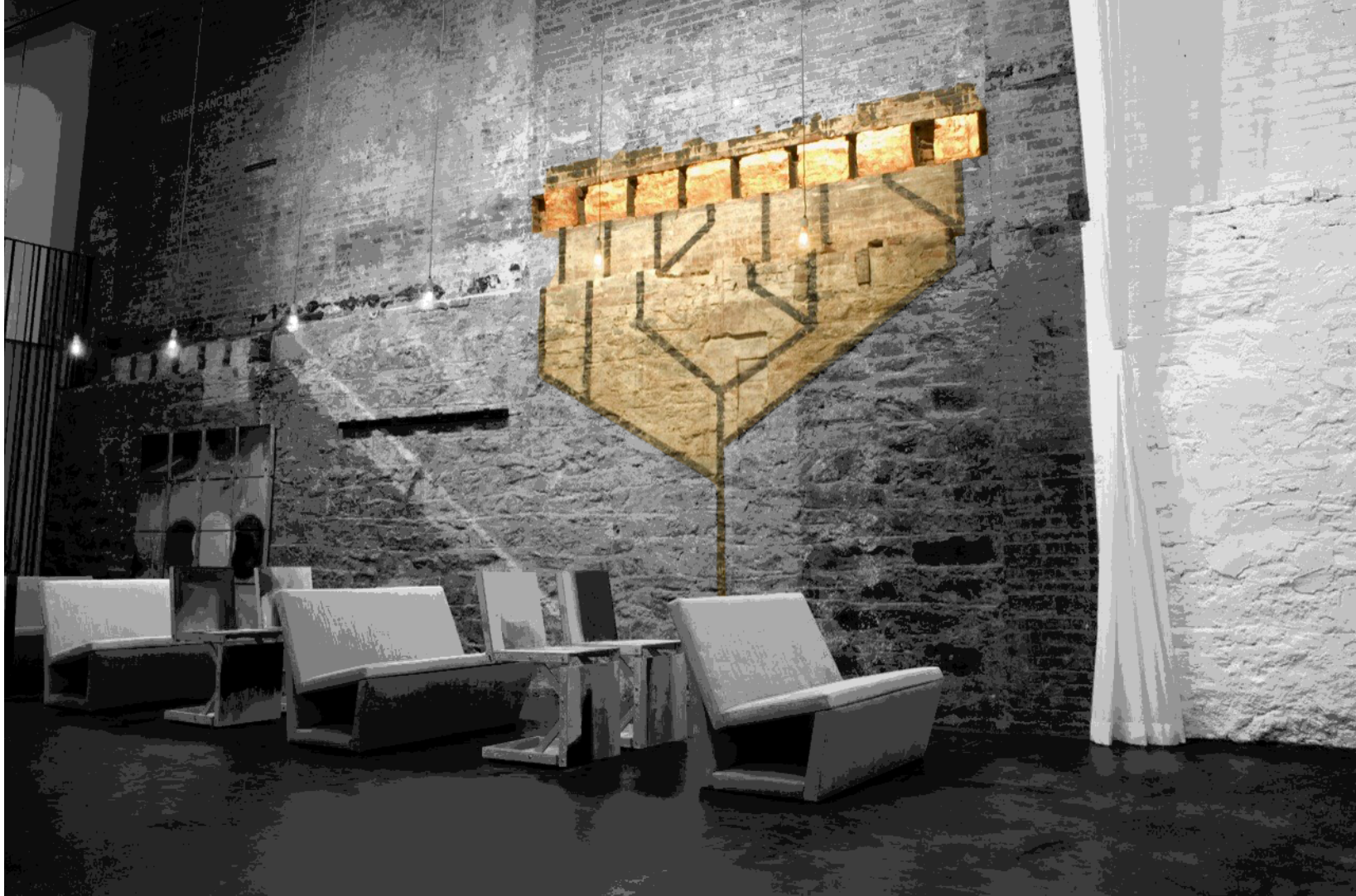
Designed for the younger generation of New York Jewry, the Soho Synagogue was built to integrate religion with the modern lifestyle. Rabbi Dovi Scheiner aimed to reinvent the synagogue as a place of comfort and an enjoyable setting for growth and communal connection. Set into a former fashion boutique on the streets of lower Manhattan, the modest entrance is unique to that of typical synagogue architecture in North America. This synagogue functions as both a house of religious services but also for social gatherings for the community and congregants.

Subtle motifs of Judaic symbolism are scattered throughout the halls beginning with its understated street entrance. Stripes representing the *tzitzit* of a *tallit* provide privacy from the street while the ceiling design of the circulation corridor resembles a menorah or modern grid of a subway map. As the congregant enters through the glass and metal stairwell into the below-grade sanctuary hall, the details of the existing architecture are left as found-objects in the space. Exposed pipes and bare brick walls were kept as features of the sanctuary hall, including seven aligned square bricks embedded within the foundation. These were used to create a fresco in the wall representing a menorah. While stained glass windows are usually used in synagogue architecture, this basement sanctuary is illuminated through single Edison bulbs suspended from the ceiling above. The integration of the physical history of the shell and the religious space was intended by Dror to bring a new light into the religious traditions of Judaism.

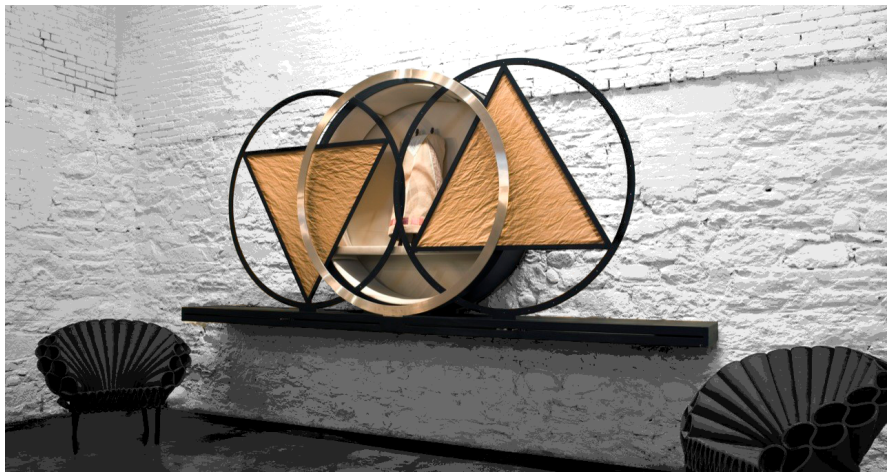
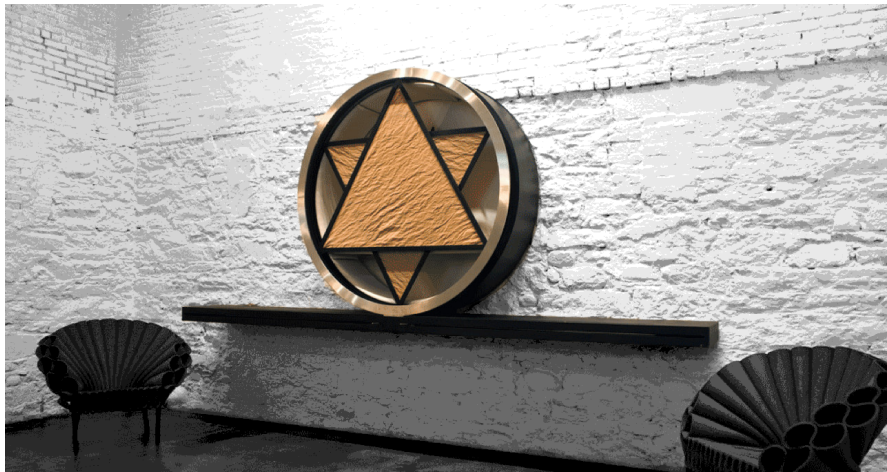
Symbolism plays a major role in modern and traditional Judaism. As synagogue architecture does not contain many rules on its requirements, designers can use their own judgment to determine meaning within the new space. Dror successfully used this creative freedom to integrate symbolism in the design details of the new space through found objects in the architecture. Although the history and function of the of the previous program was not crucial in its reuse, the architecture itself lent its form and structure to create meaningful spaces within. Art pieces on the walls served as multi-functional furniture pieces as they can be removed and unfolded as chairs or tables. The prayer benches were interpreted by Dror and designed as low couches. Additionally, the Judaic elements within the space were all carefully designed including the meticulously designed *aron hakodesh* (Ark) housing the *torah*.

Design Considerations & Applications

The multifunctional and adaptable spaces and furnishings of the Soho Synagogue influence the programmatic functions for this adaptation of the House of the Wannsee conference. The size and scale of the New York Synagogue are similar to the prayer room and sanctuary of the Beth Wannsee Synagogue. It is this small space that then defines the number of congregants, the furniture selection, and the ability for the space to shift for different programs. This includes the multitude of functions that a Synagogue houses on a daily, weekly, and yearly basis. These include daily prayer, larger High Holiday prayer services, housing *bar/ bat mitzvah* and wedding receptions, and other events throughout the Jewish calendar year. This means that custom, adaptable, and multifunctional furnishings are essential for the main sanctuary space in the house. The custom symbolic fixtures, specifically the *aron hakodesh*, provide insight on how new and found objects can be inserted into an existing space and remain functional and beautiful. This influenced the *bimah* (stage) added into the new space, as well as the design of the *ner tamid* (eternal flame lamp).



(Above) Figure 17: Sanctuary Hall of the Soho Synagogue
Image created by author. 2023. Visual Image



(Left)
Figure 18 &19: Aron HaKodesh designed by Dror
Image created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

dieDAS – Design Akademie Saaleck

Designer: Dorte Mandrup

Location: Naumburg, Germany

Years: 2018-2027

The Saaleck Workshops, constructed by German architect Paul Schultze-Naumburg, were the former residence of the architect and a formal think tank for the Nazi party’s totalitarian and racist thoughts.

The residence was originally built in 1902 and was soon after the site for the Saalecker Werkstätten for Applied Art. It was his anti-modernist stance and his diatribe “Art and Race”, written in 1928, that connected Schultze-Naumburg to Hitler. This site became a common meeting place for the National Socialist party and its infamous members as Schultze-Naumburg joined the party as a member of the Nazi art propaganda unit in 1930.

After the war the residence was converted into a retreat for the elderly where it functioned until the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. Afterwards the site was left deserted until the purchase by the Marzona Foundation in 2018 to reuse the space. In 2020, the restoration and expansion projects were awarded to Dorte Mandrup with the final stage of the dieDAS campus to be completed by 2027. This campus was founded to create an environment for designers to develop and exchange ideas with one another in an open community. The financial support of this project is provided by federal and state government in addition to donors and its patrons.

Dorte Mandrup approached this project with the goal of allowing the history to be visible while adding new layers over top and in between. This included an open glass facade that reuses the former chicken coop as a documentation centre for Schultze-Naumburg’s writings and ideologies and for the history of the site. With the addition of new layers, history can coexist with the current functions, movements, and ideals of the space. Some of the spaces are going to be left intact, retaining the history from the early twentieth century architecture, while bright and strong colours will indicate the places of significant changes. It is through both the juxtaposition of colour and materiality that the new and old can be viewed in a new way to create the overall narrative. It will also allow the structure to be viewed from a new perspective, one that is not just its dark moment in time. Additionally, the exterior garden has been altered from its orthogonal axis to meandering paths that inspire its visitors to venture on alternative routes through nature. It also contains an organic infinity bridge that connects the different levels of the site together.

Similar to the House of the Wannsee Conference, the series of buildings at the dieDAS campus sit atop a cliff overlooking the beautiful Saale River and rural woods. Although both seem innocent and harmless as they sit among nature, they both are shadowed by a dark past by their occupants. Mandrup utilizes this intense dichotomy of beauty in nature with the evil that stemmed from there and creates a connecting point between them through exterior interventions. It is also through the contrasting colours and materiality that layers of history can be recognized and remembered separately and in unison with its new function.

Design Considerations & Applications

The Saaleck Workshops and House of the Wannsee Conference survive as similar grey areas in history. Both sites both have dark histories however interior design strategies have the ability to rewrite the narrative of the buildings that housed the evil. The primary influences the workshops have on the new design is the new programmatic function that will be served. The juxtaposition of converting a studio that produced Nazi propaganda to an art studio that focuses on open-mindedness and inclusivity allows for redemption of the space, which directly influenced the new program of the House of the Wannsee Conference. It is through this direct dichotomy that reinforces the healing of a building and allows it to function in society once again.

The preservation of certain spaces as a concrete reminder of what occurred there directly relate to the qualities of the historic conference room that are preserved. These include the original flooring, design details on the walls and ceiling, and the quality of light in the space. The only alterations to this space take place inside the walls and are purely function-focused changes relating to the program. Other spaces, similar to the chicken coop from the original Saaleck Workshop, have the ability to be adapted as the collective memory of the site is not directly related to these

physical spaces. This allowed for a space for documentation which influenced the second floor’s library, containing literature related to building, the Final Solution, and the Wannsee Conference. These functional spaces will allow for almost complete redesign as there is no considerable historical significance associated with the upper floors. These floors will also allow for administrative and custodial services to be housed here.

Finally, the use of contrasting materiality will be integrated into the spaces to highlight the layers of history of the building. This is an effective way to allow the visitor to move throughout the space and understand what is significant to the history of the building and what serves the new function housed inside the building today. The glass enclosure and Infinity bridge are also excellent examples of how installations can bridge the old and new through new means of circulation and provide new vantage points that were previously unavailable during the history of the building. This will be utilized through the new circulation routes in the space and will expand into the exterior garden to create new points of interest.

Figure 20: Infinity Bridge designed by Mandrup
Image created by Author. 2023. Visual Image.



Precedent	Precedent Extract	Design Considerations
Centre for the Documentation of the History of the Third Reich	- Dichotomy of its original use and the new program to create narrative - Previous function facilitated the destruction of Judaism while the new function allows for the rebuilding and celebration of it - Contrasting materials to visually demonstrate the distinct changes made to the space - Altering circulation routes through the space using new intervention as a narrative tool - Materialistic separation of the old and new	- Visually contrasting materials for new interventions including metal and glass to juxtapose the stone and concrete - Create new circulation route to contrast axial movement in the existing building - Bridge the interior and exterior through new intervention that pierces through the shell and provides views of the garden
Soho Synagogue	- Judaic symbolism as a tool for narrative - Multifunctional furniture and space	- Incorporation of traditional synagogue symbolic elements in a modern way to follow the modern congregants that will occupy the space (<i>aron hakodesh, bimah, ner tamid</i>) - Movable, adaptable, custom-built furniture for all the function a synagogue serves
dieDAS – Design Akademie Saaleck	- Function transformed from a space that spewed out hate into a space where history can co-exist with the future ideals of diversity and openness - Layering of old and new to create unique perspective of what happened and what will take place in the new space through materiality and design details - Contrasting colour and materiality to create perspective on old vs. new - Exterior design elements connect the spaces as circulation and add to narrative	- New synagogue program juxtaposes the original function of the space: a place that controlled the destruction of Judaism to one that allows it to blossom and grow - Preservation of Meeting Room details to ensure the original history is not forgotten - Reuse of auxiliary spaces that do not hold a significant visual memory - Painting of new surfaces in contrasting colour - Intervention creates new vantage points that were previously unavailable throughout the history of the building

Figure 21: Precedent Findings
Table generated by author. 2023. Table.

Precedent Considerations

The analysis of these three precedent cases has a significant impact on the design for the new Beth Wannsee Synagogue. From these cases, a significant consideration towards the idea of juxtaposition is realized. Through sufficient dichotomy of materiality and orthogonal design, the new program can function without erasing the history of what occurred there. Additionally, the old can survive alongside the new and coexist. By visually contrasting material selection for the new intervention in the space, the user can observe the old structure while the inclusion of new circulation can lend itself better to the new function.

The connection between interior and exterior is also prevalent in the precedent studies. Through bridging of the gap of the historical interior to the beautiful lakeside garden, the new users can experience the entire site to its fullest extent. This is evident through the creation of new vantage points through transitional spaces along the intervention. These new moments of pause will connect the user within the building to the site and its natural beauty.

Finally, the preservation of the historical conference room is critical in this adaptive reuse project. As this space encompasses the collective memory of the site, the reuse of this space cannot overshadow the history that took place. Careful adaptation can allow for reformatting of the use, however ultimately this space must maintain resemblance to how it functioned in 1942.

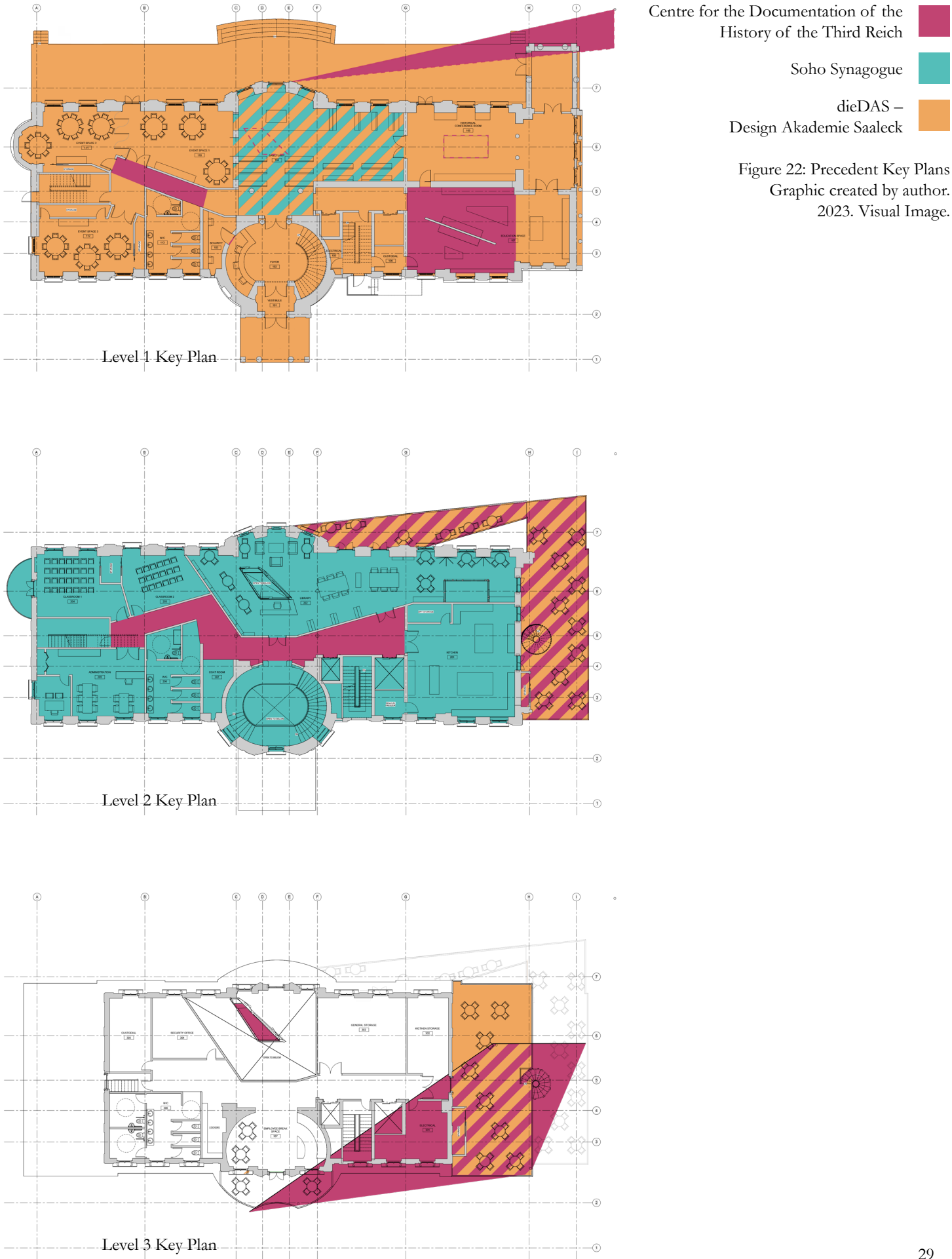


Figure 22: Precedent Key Plans
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Chapter 5: Design Program

Beth Wannsee Synagogue

Project Overview

The Beth Wannsee Synagogue bridges the gap between the history of the site and the new community-focused centre. The synagogue will invite members of the Jewish community of Berlin and Potsdam to celebrate the Jewish religion and cultures of its members. It will act as a place of worship, learning, and gathering.

Goals

The goal of the Beth Wannsee Synagogue is to design a space that facilitates the celebration of the Jewish faith and its people. In turn, this will create a space that builds the bond between the history and the future of Judaism. Finally, the Beth Wannsee Synagogue will unify the different types of people that gather under its roof.

Objectives

The facility will create an environment that connects the contrasts of past and present while also creating a flexible space that adapts to its user's needs. It will also create a safe space for its members to celebrate, gather, and grow.

Project Assumptions

The mechanical, electrical, and plumbing of the site will be upgraded to modern day standards. The renovations will also satisfy all building codes required for accessible travel within the entirety of the site.

Site Description

The Beth Wannsee Synagogue is located at the site of the Wannsee Conference, held at 56-58 Am Grossen Wannsee, Berlin, Germany. This site was built for the growth of a family but was transferred to the Nazi's to be used for the destruction of the Jewish people in Europe. This dichotomy creates the perfect narrative for the synagogue to be able to celebrate growth and family once again.

Site Opportunities

The area of Wannsee is set perfectly to allow residents living in Potsdam or Berlin to be able to access the site for weekly *shabbat* prayer, high holidays, or special events in the community. The location is easily accessible through public transportation, motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. Street parking along the one-way Am Grossen Wannsee is perfect for individual motor vehicles with additional public parking available on the adjacent Zum Heckeshorn street. A small parking lot on the South side of the site services the staff and employees of the site.

Site Constraints

The placement of the site along Am Grossen Wannsee restricts public access through the main gates at 58 Am Grossen Wannsee. All employees and service access to the site will be through the gates located at 56 Am Grossen Wannsee.

Building Analysis: History

The three-story building was first constructed in 1914 from stone and wood timber as a family residence. The building has been used for residences, as a guest house and meeting space, as a schoolhouse, and as a museum in its over 100-year history. The ~1 500m² interior space and ~30 000m² garden feature views overlooking the Großer Wannsee to the east. The three floors are stacked vertically on top of each other with each floor decreasing its footprint creating layered terraces. The footprint of the building is 14.75m wide by 45.65m long. The building tops at 12.75m at its highest point.

The main floor is roughly 550m², with the entry foyer being double-volume spaces. The ceiling heights on the main level vary from 2.53m to 6.28m high. This creates a smaller second floor with 410m² of floor space and roughly 3.28m high with the third floor above totaling 425m² at roughly 2.6m high ceilings.

Building Opportunities

The three-floor layout creates a clear separation of public, semi-public, and private spaces. In addition the double-volume spaces and large windows along the east and west facades allow for generous amounts of natural light to fill all three floors. The large interior space on each floor can accommodate multiple functions at the same time. These spaces can be separated or combined to serve multiple sizes of groups. The tiered floor plates allow for outdoor terraces and views of the gardens. These exterior gardens and pathways on the east side facing the lake will be able to highlight the site's natural beauty from multiple levels providing different vantage points. The vast tree coverage on the western side of the building creates a privacy buffer from the street and shield private events from passers-by.

Building Constraints

A new vertical circulation system will be required to satisfy private circulation of the space including the administration and catering staff. This will require a new service elevator for food transport separate from the public elevator. Interior and exterior circulation must also be reworked for accessibility and fire safety requirements.

Building Analysis: Adaptive Reuse

Exterior Analysis

The exterior facade of the House of the Wannsee Conference has remained relatively unchanged since its inception in 1914. While much of the historical significance of this building is situated in a specific space within, the front facade still stands in the collective memory of those who are familiar with the atrocities that took place inside. The specific exterior characteristic that makes this structure stand out is the symmetrical nature of the building. The main entrance is centrally framed by windows to the left and right, each specific to their individual level. Tall, arched windows on the main floor, squared off windows on the second, and shorter windows above on the third floor. The neutral coloured exterior stucco imitating stone is common of the Italianate style of architecture and is paired with fluted structural columns providing visual strength to the building. Ionic capitals can be observed at the main entrance and along the side portico. Finally, dentil moulding surrounds the building's exterior above the second level and miniature figurines sit atop the roof watching over the grounds from above on both the front and back of the building.

Interior Analysis

The interior of the building has had subtle changes throughout the life of the building as it passed from owner to owner however the interior walls, openings, and circulation have remained consistent. The main foyer encompasses the main vertical circulation curved staircase which connects the first and second level. This feature staircase contains a detailed metal railing and flowing treads inviting its users up to the second floor. The main floor plan has primary and secondary circulation routes running longitudinally throughout the structure. Arched doorways provide access connecting the small rooms to each other however these types of openings are inconsistent, some being arched while others squared off with detailed frames. A secondary circulation route connecting the three levels can be found along the main interior circulation route and serves proper emergency egress requirements. Additionally, a hidden spiral staircase is also present connecting the three levels.

Frequent flooring changes are also present on the main floor with rooms containing square basket pattern, others with herringbone parquet flooring, and secondary spaces with tile flooring. Opposite the flooring, coffered ceilings with ornamented details inside can be found in the historical conference room while differing patterns of coffered ceilings are found in adjacent spaces. The central space is a double volume room with curved wall-to-ceiling transitions with similar details embedded into the plaster. Along the walls, wood wainscoting can be found in these central spaces as well. Supporting the floors above, detailed Corinthian capped columns line the larger interior spaces of the central zone and the conference room. Finally, water closets can be found on each level stacked above each other connecting the plumbing together.

Interior Strategy

Utilizing Brooker and Stone's methods for adaptive reuse, strategies and tactics are identified and implemented to properly reuse this site. The strategy of "Intervention" is applied to the House of the Wannsee Conference allowing the integration of the old and new. These two are no longer independent of each other as this strategy permanently alters the structure.

The first step of this strategy is to identify the historically significant elements of the building and preserve them. These elements are impervious to redesign and what allow the narrative of the collective memory to exist. All other "historically insignificant" spaces are able to be stripped back and allow for the second stage to begin; the imposition of newly designed elements into these spaces. These alterations do not need to use similar design language and are intended to be easily distinguishable from the old to the new.

Interior Tactics

The tactics, as outlined by Brooker and Stone, include the elements of plane, object, light, surface, openings, and movement. These characteristics help identify the areas of preservation and intervention. The areas of preservation for this building include the historical conference room, the grand foyer and feature staircase, and the exterior facades. These are the elements that historically define this site and are what must remain historically accurate. Minimal alterations are implemented to these however any elements added are done in contrasting materials to help the user understand the old and new. This is evident through the exterior glass and metal structures that pierce through these spaces. Original circulation between the first two levels have been preserved and restored while private circulation has been improved for the new program including the addition of a service elevator and upgraded egress. Existing openings have been preserved to ensure the exterior facade remains intact however new interior openings have been added to allow for proper movement within the spaces of the interior. Some of the existing windows have been converted into doorways to allow for new exterior access points from the inside. These new exterior viewpoints and spaces were added to allow for additional programmatic uses for the site.

Removal of interior partitions allows the expansion of the smaller rooms into larger spaces. These changes create more useful spaces for the new program including the expanded sanctuary space and library above. Movement through the spaces has been altered to contrast the original orthogonal pattern. The connection of spaces through the intervention has also allowed for the integration of light to the library and sanctuary space. Specific elements including the introduction of the *bimah*, *ner tamid*, and *aron hakodesh* define the sanctuary space. Finally, the existing spiral staircase has been repurposed for exterior use connecting the second and third floor exterior spaces.

Human Factor Analysis

The Beth Wannsee Synagogue will employ a clergy of a rabbi and *hazan* (cantor) who will lead the weekly prayer and High Holiday services. They will be backed by an administration team consisting of Executive Director, Director of Programing, and Historical Director who will coordinate all aspects that occur within the building and on its site. A Caterer, Administrator, Facilities Manager, and Security Manager will also work from the building to coordinate their individual team’s day-to-day activities. These individuals will have access to all spaces within the site and will work out of the private and semi-private spaces. The visitors to the space, including the congregants and event guests, will be restricted to the public and semi-public spaces.

Staff Profiles & Needs

Primary Users	Description	Psychological Needs	Spatial Needs
Rabbi & Cantor	Coordinates the daily prayer services	Private spaces hidden from daily occupants. Sufficient lighting for daily work	Private workspace with horizontal work surface
Executive Director	Oversees all aspects of the site	Private spaces hidden from daily occupants. Sufficient lighting for daily work	Workplace with horizontal work surface
Director of Programing	Coordinates all events for the site	Private spaces hidden from daily occupants. Sufficient lighting for daily work	Workplace with horizontal work surface
Historical Director	Manages all aspects related to education of the history of the site	Private spaces hidden from daily occupants. Sufficient lighting for daily work	Workplace with horizontal work surface
Caterer	Organizes all aspects related to event and <i>shabbat</i> meals. Coordinates with kitchen staff	Private spaces hidden from daily occupants. Sufficient lighting for daily work	Workplace with horizontal work surface adjacent to kitchen
Administrator	Manages all administration for the synagogue and site	Private spaces hidden from daily occupants. Sufficient lighting for daily work	Workplace with horizontal work surface
Facilities Manager	Coordinates all main-tenance in the building. Directs maintenance staff in daily duties	Private spaces hidden from daily occupants. Sufficient lighting for daily work	Workplace with horizontal work surface
Security Manager	Daily and event security supervisor. Oversees all additional security officials	Private spaces hidden from daily occupants. Sufficient lighting for daily work	Security office equipped with surveillance equipment

Primary User Profiles & Needs

Primary Users	Description	Psychological Needs	Spatial Needs
Congregants	Visitors to the daily, <i>shabbat</i> , and High Holiday prayer times	Adequate lighting for daily activities in public spaces	Inviting and safe public spaces that are contain accessible entrances and exits
Event Guests	Visitors for special events such as weddings, <i>bar/ bat mitzvahs</i> , historical events, among others	Adequate lighting for specific events located in public spaces	Inviting and safe public spaces that are contain accessible entrances and exits

Secondary User Profiles & Needs

Secondary Users	Description	Psychological Needs	Spatial Needs
Media	Members of the press who visit for documentation of individual events	Ample lighting and sight lines through interior and exterior public spaces	Accessible access throughout the site
Kitchen Staff	Members who work in the kitchen for special events and High Holidays	Non-disruptive lighting	Private storage of belongings, break space, horizontal work surfaces within the kitchen

Tertiary User Profiles & Needs

Tertiary Users	Description	Psychological Needs	Spatial Needs
Delivery Services	Member of a third-party delivery service who coordinates with the facilities manager on the delivery of food and goods to the site	Well-lit exterior access	Loading access from the street to the site
Janitorial and Maintenance Staff	Members of staff who are responsible for frequent maintenance services, reporting to the facilities manager	Sense of security and well-lit public and private spaces	Private storage of belongings, break space, access to private and public spaces
Security Officials	Members of staff who report to the security manager and maintain daily and event security for the entire site	Sense of security and well-lit public and private spaces	Private storage of belongings, break space, access to private and public spaces

Activity Summary

Public prayer times will be available for *kabbalat shabbat* on Friday evenings, *shabbat shacharit* on Saturday mornings, and *mincha/maariv* on Saturday evenings. Outside of these weekly prayer times, holiday services will be available according to the Judaic calendar. The site will also be available for *bar/bat mitzvahs*, weddings, *brit milot*, and conversions. Outside of the synagogue’s general uses, the site will be accessible to the public for daily visitors to the education centre and library. It will also service public and private classes/lectures related to the Holocaust, history of the building, and Judaic life.

The public activities will be serviced through multiple spaces spread across the first two floors of the building. These include the sanctuary space, education spaces, event spaces, classrooms, and the library. These spaces can be expanded or closed off to support groups and events of multiple sizes and needs.

Outside of the public aspects, the employees of the Beth Wannsee Synagogue will conduct daily work in the private and semi-private spaces within the main structure. These spaces will be only accessible to the staff on a daily basis and will allow the Synagogue to support all events that take place on the site. These will occupy the second and third floor of the structure and include the kitchen, administration spaces, and break spaces for use by the employees. It is critical that there is a clear separation on each floor between staff and the public as well as public and private vertical circulation. This will allow services such as catering to move freely within the space without disruption of any public event in the space.

System Requirements

Mechanical	HVAC Elevators Sprinkler System
Electrical	Lighting Data and Phone Outlets Wireless Internet Services Emergency detectors
Plumbing	Janitorial Services Water Fountains Public Washrooms
Security	Motion Sensors Security Cameras Emergency Alarms Card Readers 24/7 Security

Functional & Spatial Requirements

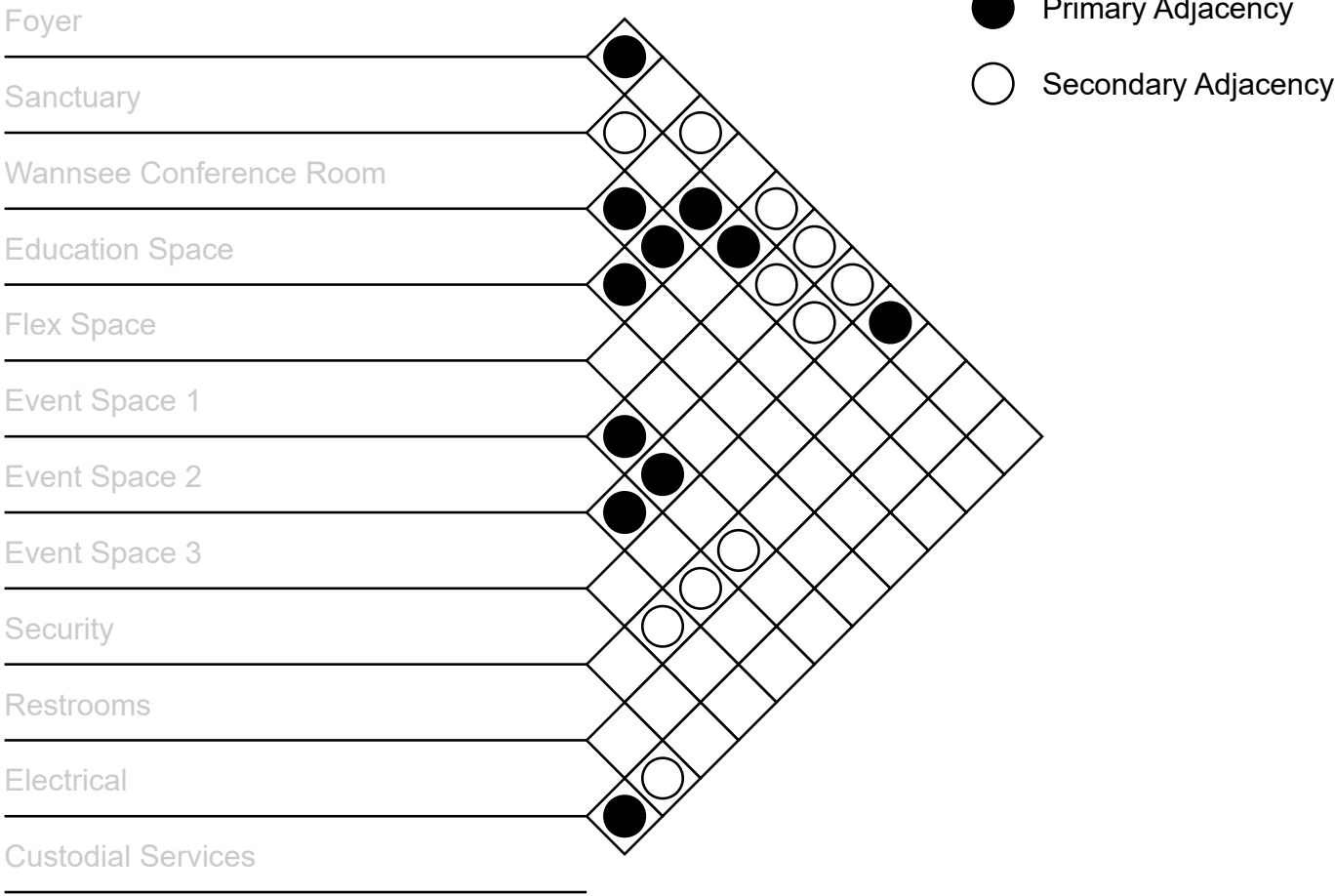
Level 1: 550m ²		Level 2: 410m ²		Level 3: 425m ²	
Circulation	100m ²	Circulation	70m ²	Circulation	100m ²
Foyer and Entrance	40m ²	Catering Kitchen	75m ²	Employee Break Space	120m ²
Sanctuary	80m ²	Demonstration Kitchen	40m ²	Storage	150m ²
Wannsee Conference Room	50m ²	Classroom 1	35m ²	Restrooms	15m ²
Education Space	80m ²	Classroom 2	20m ²	Custodial Services	25m ²
Flex Space	40m ²	Library	100m ²	Electrical	5m ²
Event Space 1	40m ²	Administration	45m ²		
Event Space 2	40m ²	Restrooms	15m ²		
Event Space 3	30m ²	Electrical	5m ²		
Security	15m ²	Custodial Services	5m ²		
Restrooms	15m ²	Coat Room	10m ²		
Electrical	5m ²				
Custodial Services	5m ²				

Area Requirements

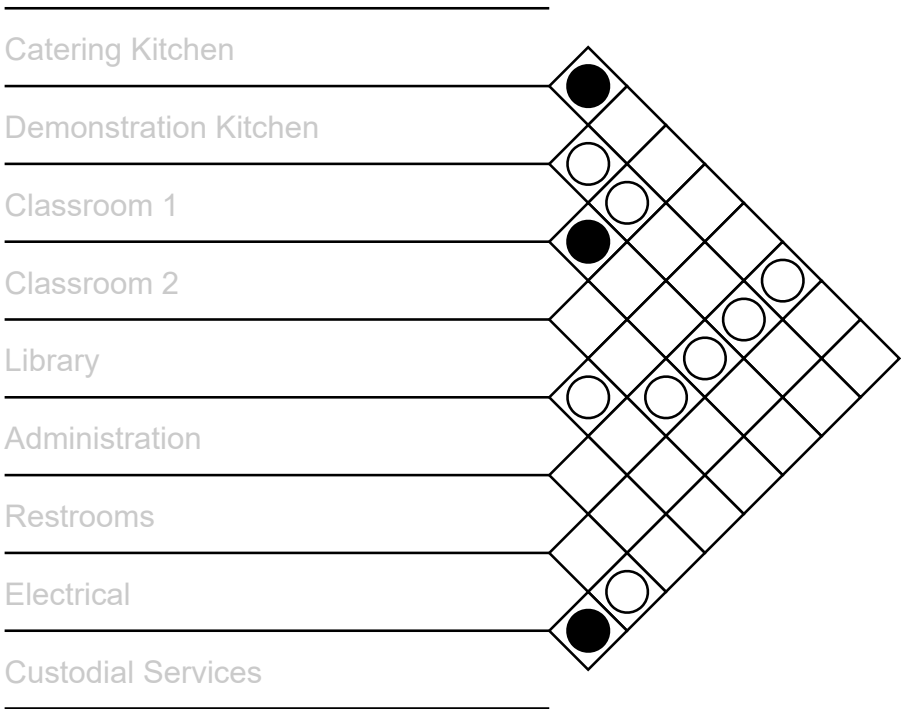


Spatial Adjacencies

Level 1



Level 2



Level 3

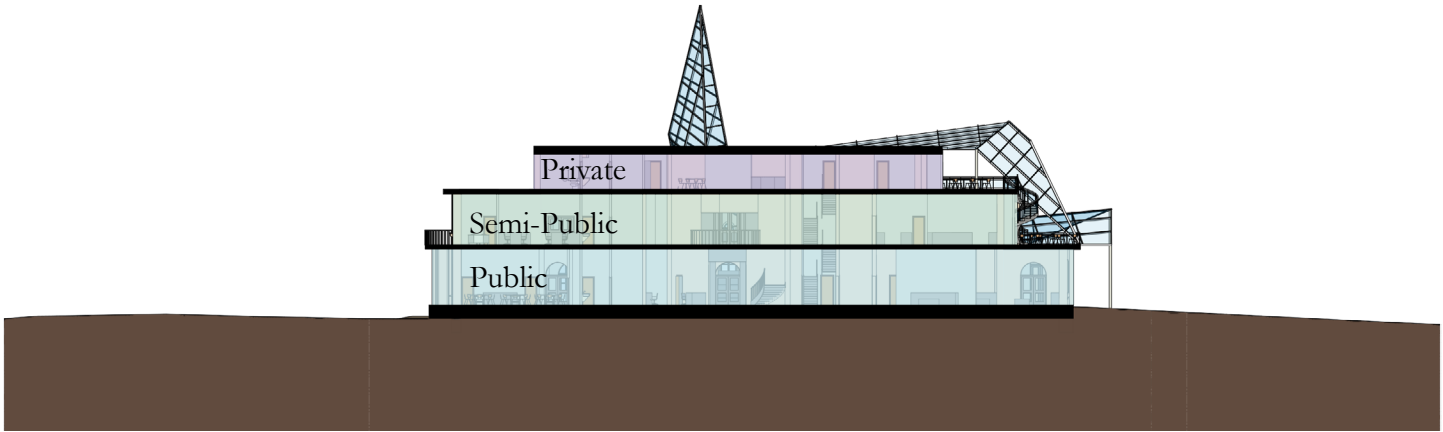
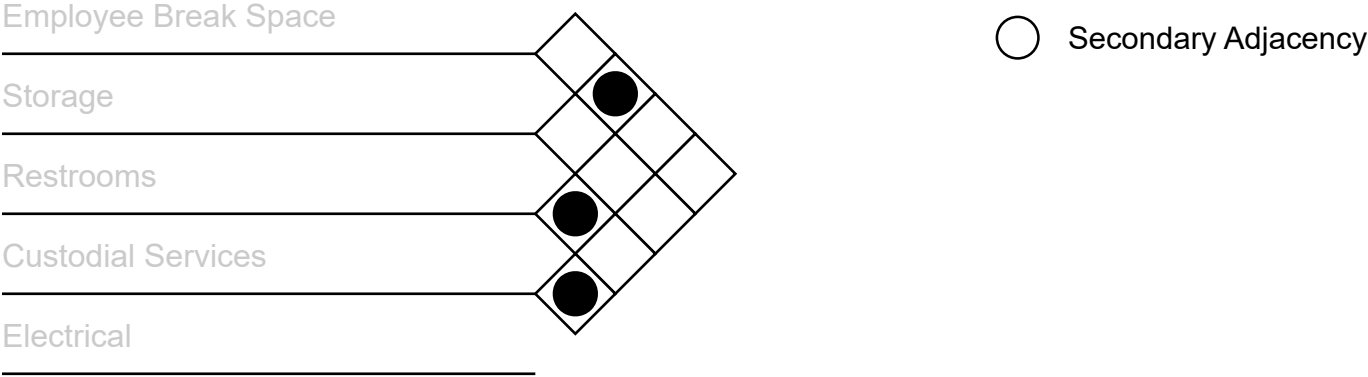


Figure 24: Zoning Diagram
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Zoning

Beth Wannsee is separated into functional zones based on access to its users and visitors. The ground floor is comprised of public space available to the visitors of the centre during open hours. These spaces will be utilized on a daily or weekly schedule including the Sanctuary for weekly and holiday prayer, event spaces for special events including *bar/bat mitzvah* and wedding celebrations, and educational spaces which are open to the public for understanding the significance of the site.

The second floor is made up of semi-public spaces that will be occupied by administration and their guests to the site. These spaces include classrooms, available for conferences and presentations, the library, where visitors can learn more about the greater picture of the final solution and the history of the site, and finally the kitchens, which function to serve *kiddush* lunches on *shabbat* afternoons, special events, and Jewish cooking classes. These spaces are adjacent to the administration offices which coordinate all activities and events that occur within the grounds of the synagogue.

The third floor consists of private spaces dedicated to the operation of the building. These include employee spaces which serve as a break space for the daily and event employees, and storage spaces for furniture and equipment. This space will be off limits to visitors to the space and utilize the secondary vertical circulation method for access.

Vertical Circulation

Public vertical circulation will occur through the main foyer utilizing the existing grand staircase. An accessible lift inside the building will also enable those with mobility issues to access the other floors, which security clearance required for the third floor. Service circulation will allow access for employees and staff to circulate the three floors easily with a separate service elevator that can enhance the movement of catered meals from the second floor kitchen to the main floor event spaces. The service elevator will also facilitate the ease of storing furniture and equipment from the public spaces into the private storage spaces on the third floor.

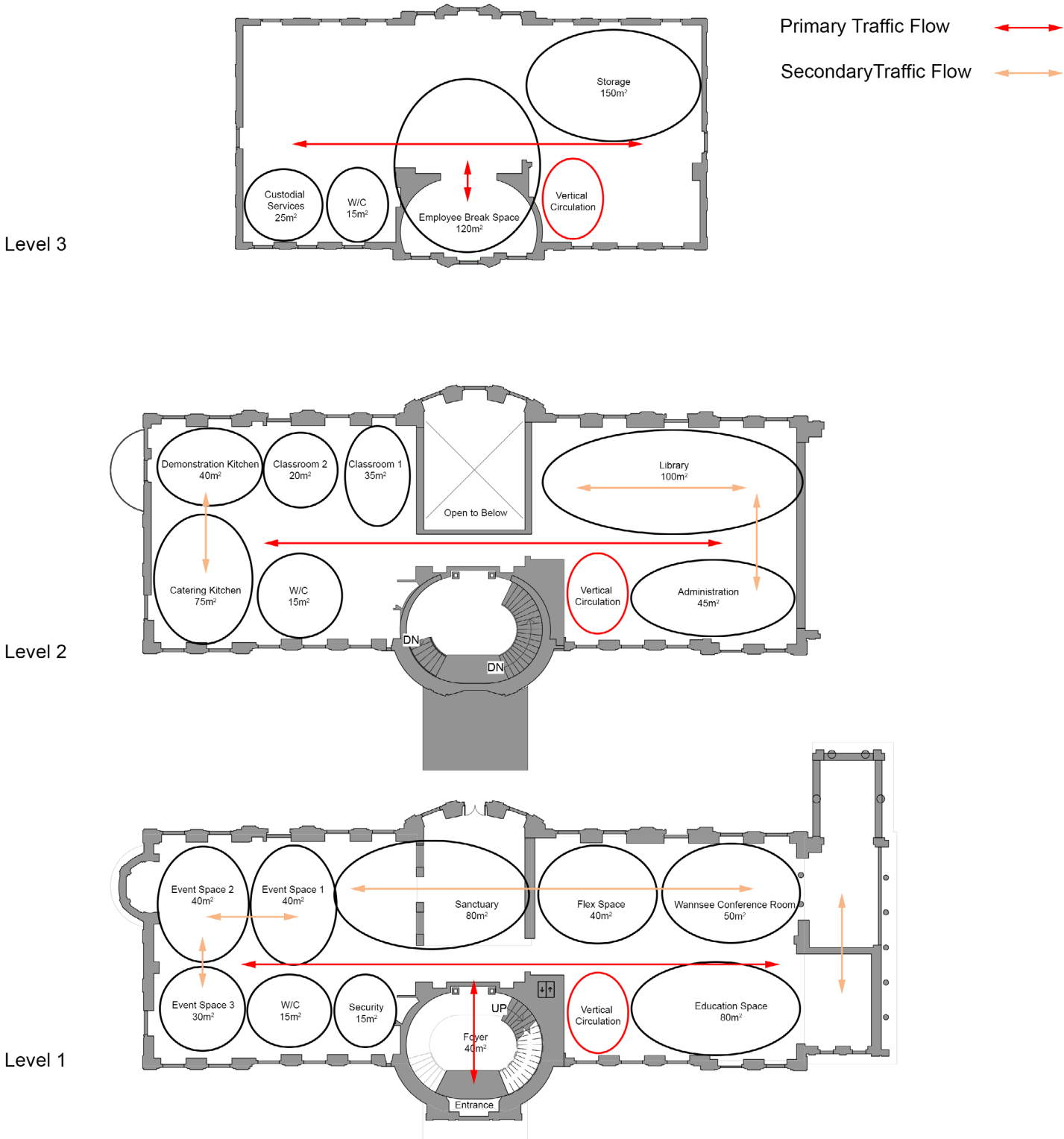


Figure 25: Primary and Secondary Traffic Flow
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Chapter 6: Design Solution

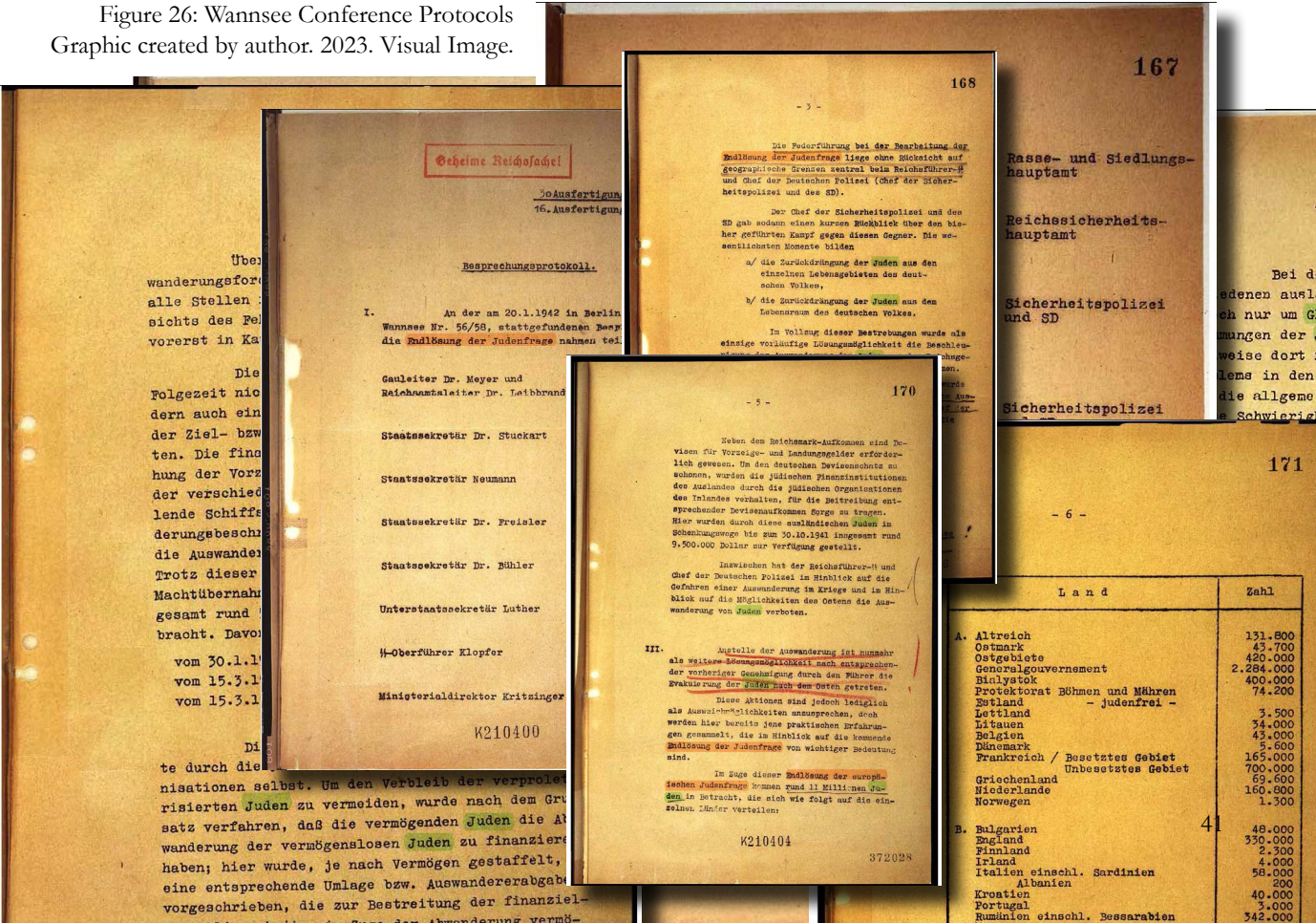
Conceptual Exploration

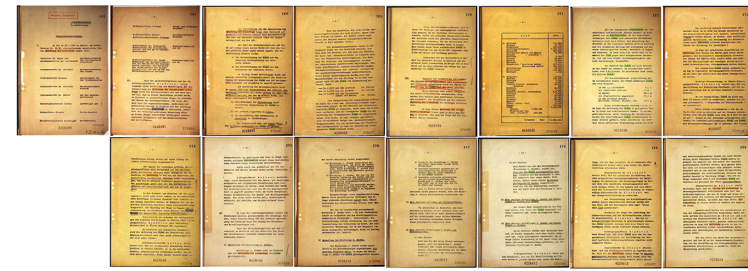
The conceptual exploration process began with observing the tangible evidence of the events that took place on the site: the protocols of the meeting from January 20, 1942. These meeting minutes were one of the only pieces of evidence of this meeting's occurrence and confirmed its significance in the Nazi's plan for genocide. It is these documents that we today can understand that the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" began its operation at this meeting. It is this meeting that then sentenced this building to its demise as "The House of the Wannsee Conference".

Due to the protocol's significance to the fate of the site, these documents were key in the creation of the new synagogue's design. The protocol's pages were laid out in two rows aligning with the two lanes of organization in the existing site, running latitudinally. Each mention of "Jew" or "Jewish" were connected in sequence as well as each mention to "The Final Solution to the Jewish Question". Once overlaid over the floor plan, key connections were formed and observed. As this site has three levels, this projection mapping of connections was replicated in three dimensions. Stacking the pages on top of each other allowed a single point to connect each key word. These overlapped connections were surveyed in organic and rigid forms to create fascinating relationships.

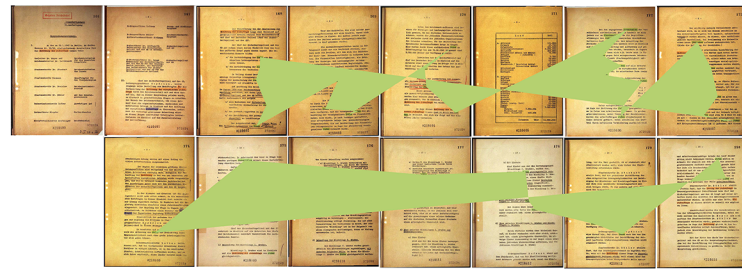
The harsh nature of the rigid connections creates an axial clash with the original structure and generates visual interest points. These connection points were extrapolated into segments of circulation space that will create moments of pause for the users as they explore the site in a new way. These transitional points and spaces juxtapose the original orthogonal layout of the structure creating a clash between the old and new. These elements will interact with the structure at non-perpendicular angles and penetrate the building envelope, creating unique transitional spaces from interior to exterior, generating additional shade and coverage on the lakeside facade. In addition to the juxtaposing angles, the material of the addition will be made from metal and glass to separate itself from the existing site conditions. The organic connection method provided a sculptural form used for the *ner tamid* hanging through the intervention.

Figure 26: Wannsee Conference Protocols
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.





Protocol pages



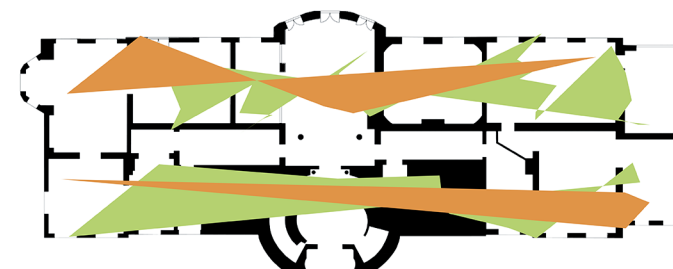
"Jewish" mentions



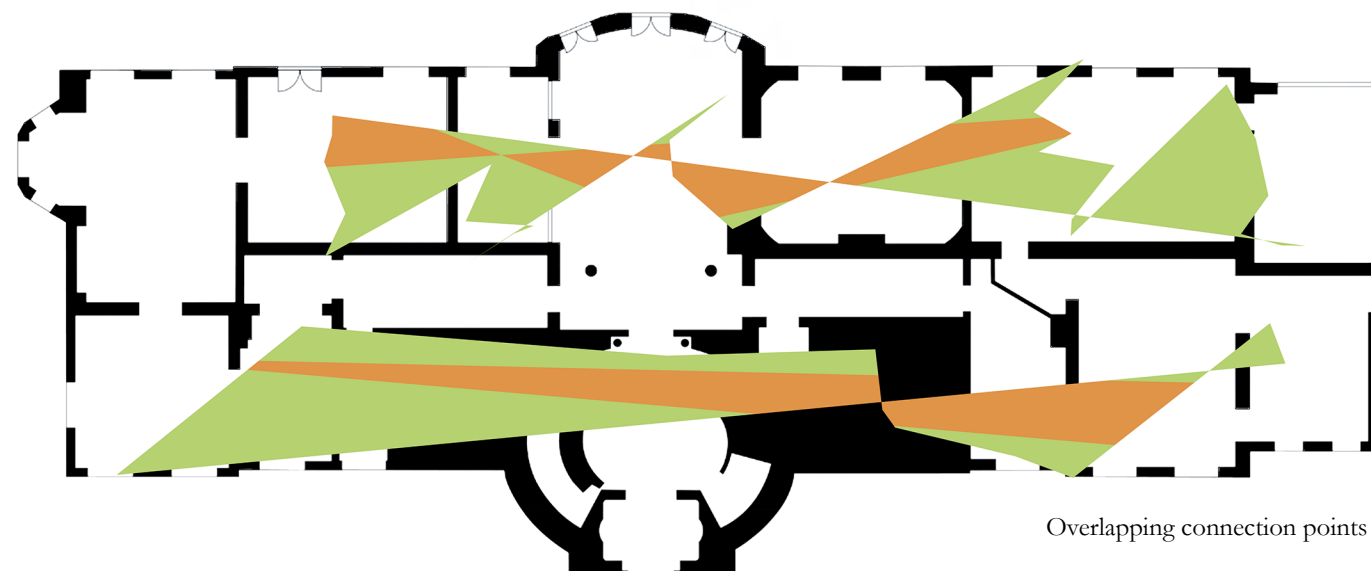
"Final Solution" mentions



Overlapping connections

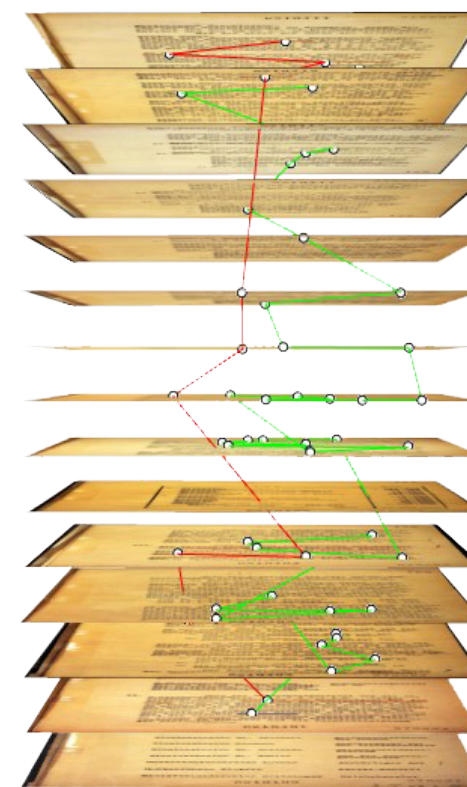
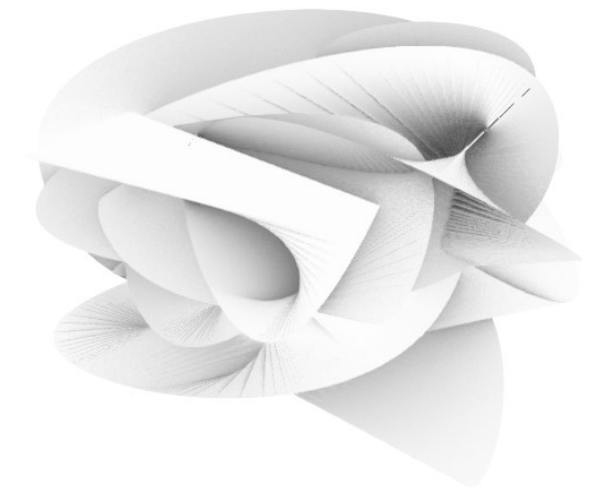


Floor Plan overlay

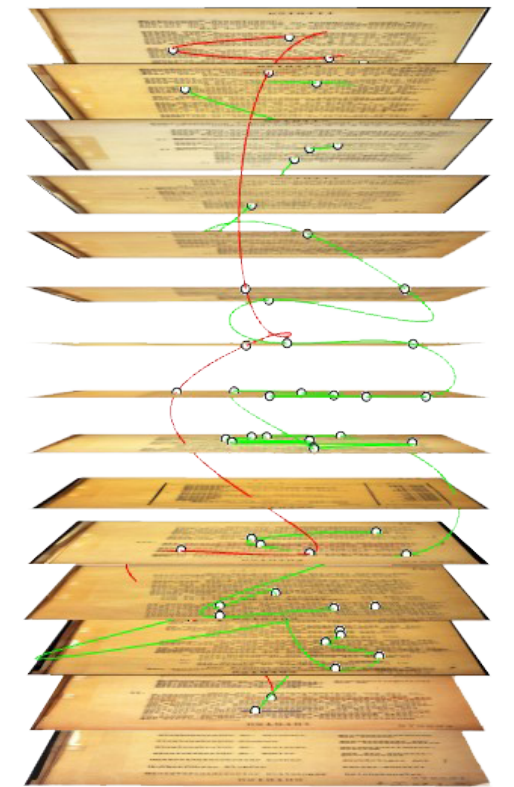


Overlapping connection points

Figure 27: 2D Conceptual Exploration
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Rigid connections



Organic connections

Figure 28: 3D Conceptual Exploration
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

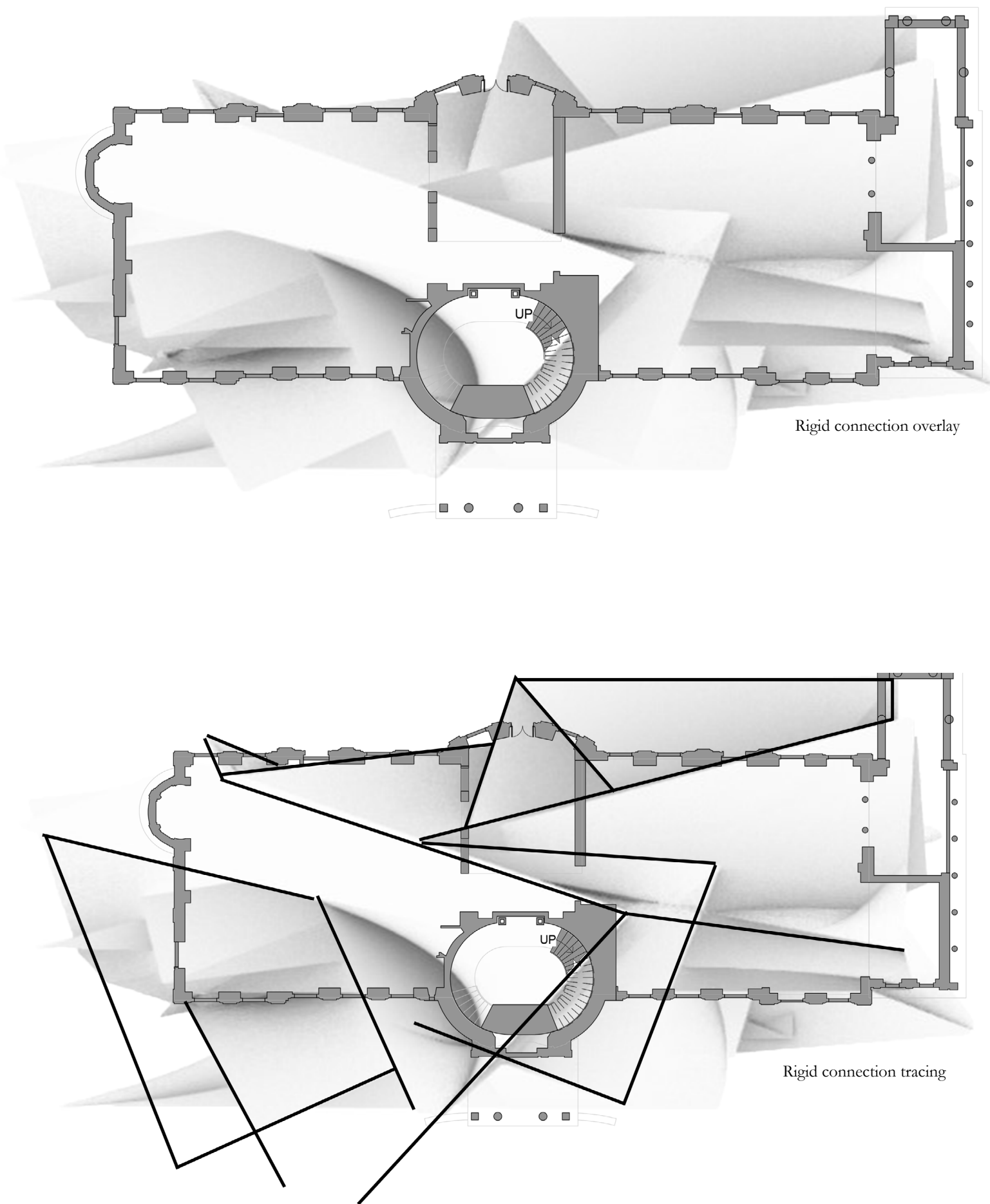


Figure 29 & 30: Conceptual Exploration Overlay
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Judaic Symbolism

The *ner tamid* is a synagogue fixture, a lamp that burns perpetually, and is typically found above the *bimah*. The symbolism of the *ner tamid* is that the eternal flame calls to mind God's presence and care of the Jewish people. In the Beth Wannsee Synagogue, the *ner tamid* was derived from the same connection points used to create the intervention's form however the connection points were made organically rather than through sharp angles. These smooth curves were extruded digitally and constructed from rippled, blue and clear glass. The ribbons are hung inside the intervention piercing through the floor plates and can be viewed from the sanctuary and library above. The colour blue was selected specifically for its symbolism in Judaism. The specific blue, *tekhelet*, is a blue-violet that was used in the clothing of the High Priest, the fabrics of the Tabernacle, and the *tzitzit* on the *tallit*. The ancient methods to obtaining this specific colour were lost for centuries and often debated among rabbinic sources. They are believed to derive from the *hillazon*, a snail found in the Mediterranean region. Modern technology has allowed *tekhelet* to be revived and it once again is being used in *tzitzit*.

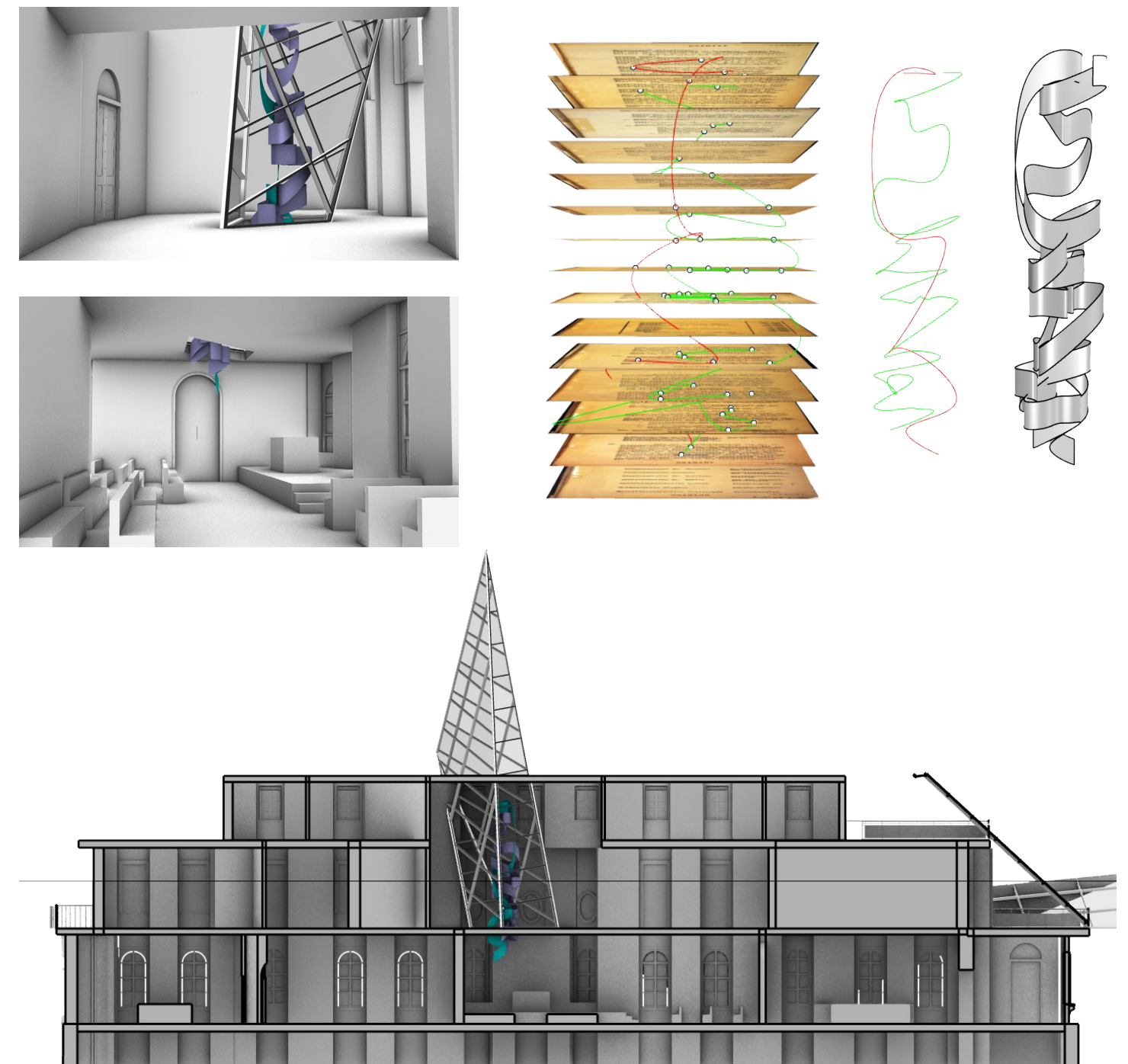


Figure 31 & 32 & 33: *Ner Tamid* Conceptual Exploration
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Spatial Organization

Level 1

Building Approach and Foyer

The main entrance from the street up to the Beth Wannsee Synagogue acts as it was back when the building was constructed. A central walkway followed by a green roundabout directs users into the main doors where the users are received by security. This grand foyer acts the same way it did throughout the building's history; it directs the different users through into the two public levels of the building. Straight forward through the doors allows the visitor to join services in the sanctuary, to the right to the education spaces, to the left to the event spaces and washrooms. If the user is heading towards the library or classrooms, they can make their way up the grand staircase to the second level. The layout and materiality of this foyer remains untouched save for the physical security desk that is required for adequate protection of the site. The entrance doors are controlled by the security desk to ensure the safety of the users.

Sanctuary

As the visitor proceeds through the entry doors, they are greeted by the large sanctuary space at the heart of the building. This space is flooded with natural light from the eastern facing windows along the back wall and the skylight above. Hanging down through the opening above is the *ner tamid*, two illuminated glass ribbons which interact with the light. The furniture in the space is of Bauhaus origin and resembles the works of Marcel Breuer and his tubular steel fixtures. On the back wall of the sanctuary space is the *bimah*, the elevated platform for the rabbi and *hazan* to lead the congregation in prayer. Behind them stands the *aron hakodesh*, the ark containing the Torah scrolls. This artifact is made from the fireplace which previously stood along the southern wall and is repurposed as found object.

Event Spaces

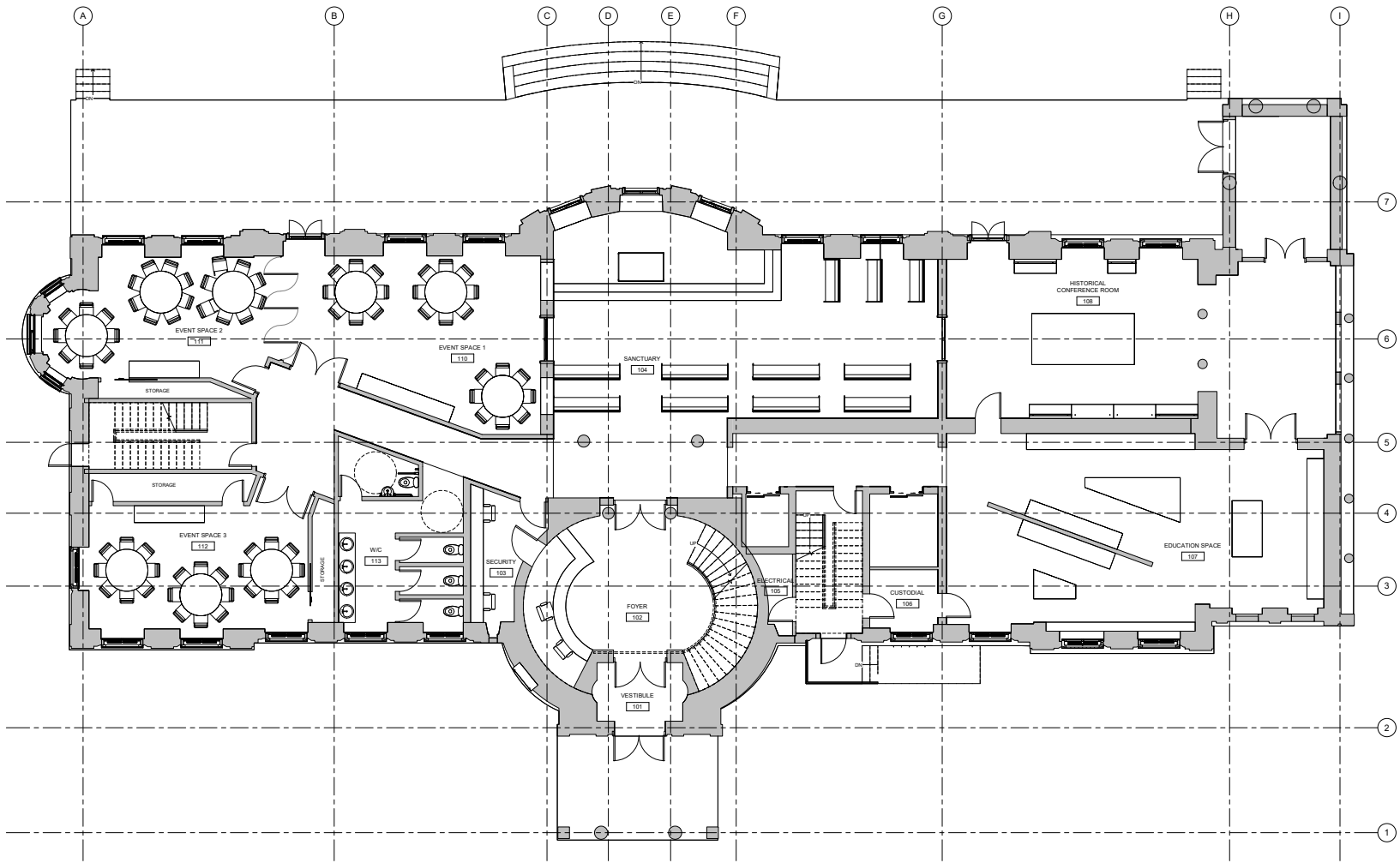
The three event spaces are situated on the north end of the building and can be reconfigured to join two smaller spaces into one grand space through movable partitions. This large event space connects directly to the sanctuary space and is commonly used for *kiddush* after *shabbat* prayers or for larger events such as weddings or bar/bat Mitzvahs where the service is concluded with a celebration of food and drink. These spaces are serviced by the catering kitchen above through use of the service elevator down the hall.

Historical Conference Room

The infamous Wannsee Conference took place entirely in this space and decided the fate of million of Jews across Europe. The gravity of the historical significance this space has on the collective memory is incredible. Due to this, the space has been virtually redesigned to look as it was in 1942. The coffered ceilings, columns, the windows and doors, and the circulation has all been restored to preserve the history. The function of this space is the one aspect that was altered. Instead of a large conference room table in the center of the space, a podium holding the meeting's minutes is placed. Directly above this platform is the only alteration to the architecture as a skylight was cut out of the center ceiling structure exposing it to the library above, additionally flooding the space with natural light. Surrounding the room are surfaces containing supportive educational materials educating the visitors of the participants of the meeting, the motivation behind it, and the ramifications it led to.

Education Space

Adjacent to the historical conference room sits the education space. This space is connected along the main circulation route and is used for additional supporting memorial and museum space. This space has various vertical and horizontal surfaces for presenting the historical information and its content can be rotated frequently based on the historical director's curation.



(Above) Figure 35: Level 1 Floor Plan
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



(Below) Figure 36: Level 1 3D Floor Plan
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Level 2

Library

Visitors exploring upstairs from the grand foyer are met by the second-floor circulation corridor that connects the administration and classrooms to the left, the library located directly in the center, and kitchen to the right. The library entrance is directly accessible from the stairway and is a large double volume space directly above the sanctuary. The skylight below is now clearly a piercing arrow of glass and aluminum mullions which extend upwards piercing again through the roof above. The full extents of the glass ribbons of the *ner tamid* are in view and can be seen from all spaces of the library. The stacks surround the space and are Breuer-inspired shelving systems made from tubular steel and solid walnut. These systems display books, news-clippings, and other artifacts related to the Wannsee Conference, the historic building, and the greater Nazi plan. The library also has an overlook into the historical conference room below connecting the literature to the physical space where it took place. A new exterior access point is also available through the library which overlooks the beautiful garden and lake to the east. This space features seating on the second and third level maximizing the exterior experience. The levels are connected through the re-purposing of the internal spiral service staircase. Both exterior spaces are partially covered with the glazed intervention.

Classrooms

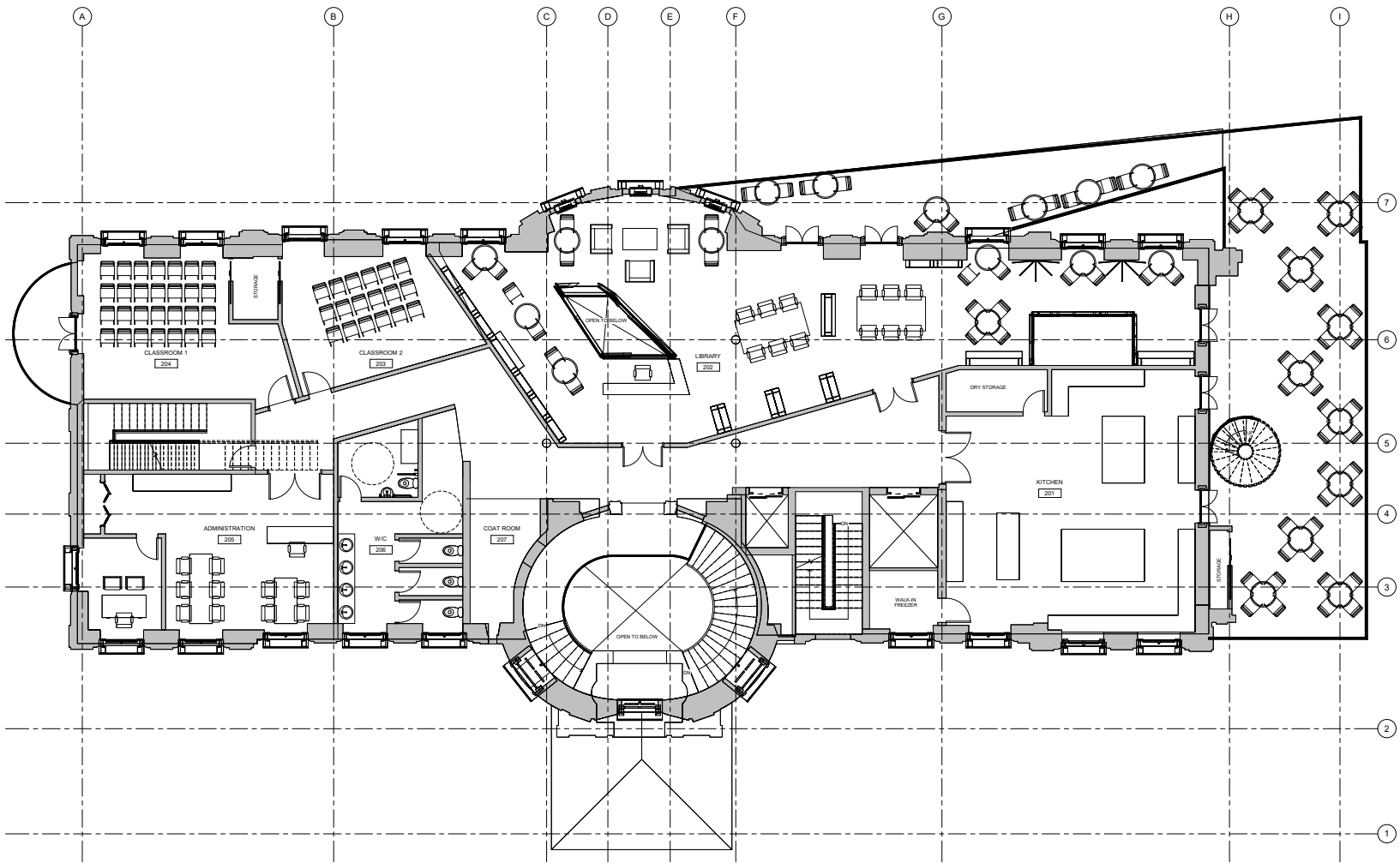
Two classrooms are located down the corridor towards the north side of the building. These spaces are used for organized conferences, lectures, and classes such as conversion or group *bar/bat mitzvah* classes. These classrooms are easily reconfigured with stacking chairs and tables stored in the shared storage space connecting the rooms.

Demonstration and Catering Kitchen

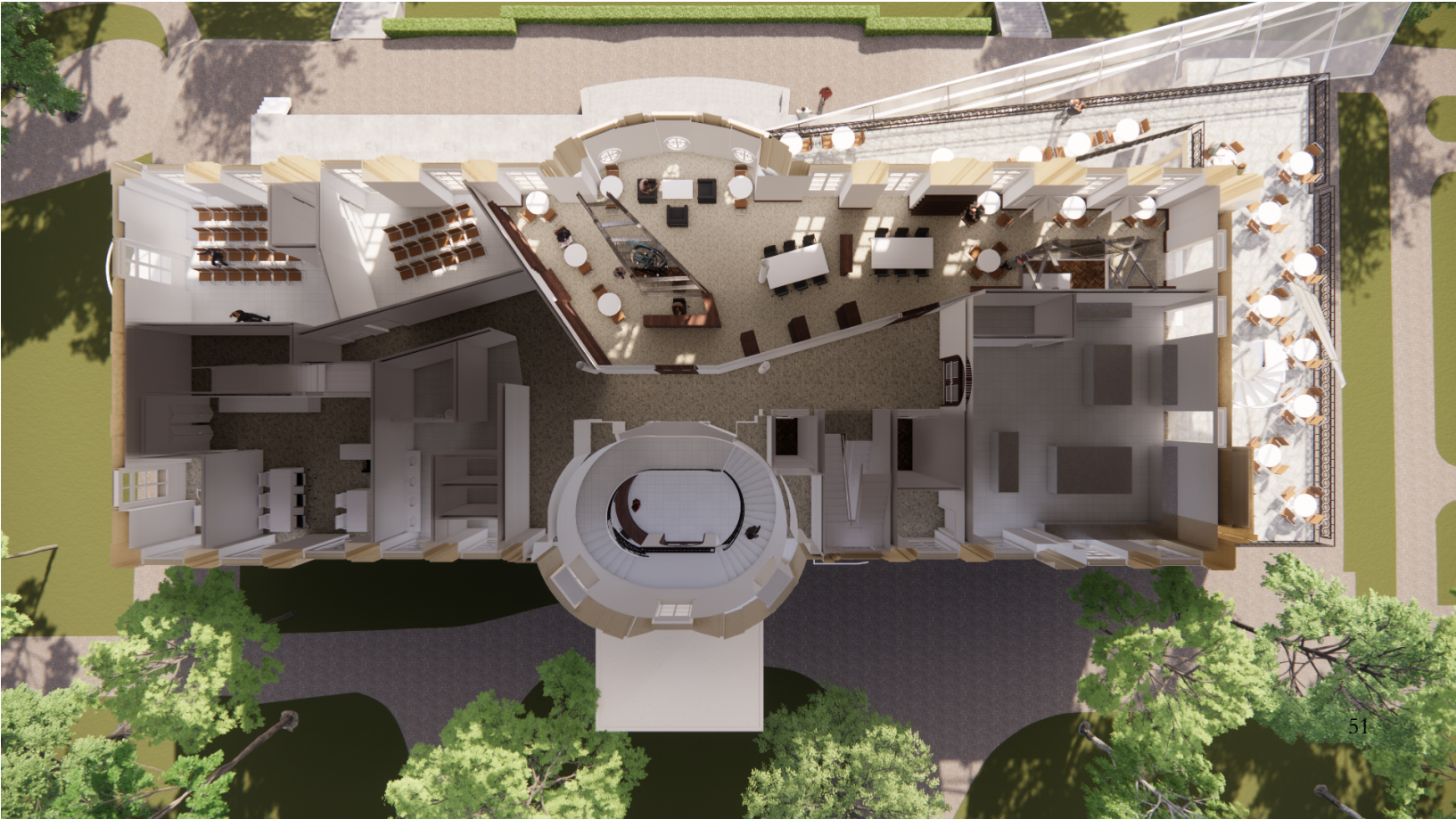
The kitchen is located in the south-western corner of the building, across from the library. This space is often used internally through the creation of *kiddush* meals following weekly *shabbat* services and catering events such as *bar/bat mitzvahs* and weddings. The event spaces below are serviced through use of the adjacent service elevator for easy transport of food and drink to the guests. Public and private events can also utilize this space for Jewish cooking classes celebrating the religion and cultures of the users of the synagogue. Easy access to the second and third floor exterior patios allow for a space to sit to enjoy your cooking and baking creations after the classes.

Administration

The final space on the north-western quadrant of the second floor is the administration offices. Here, the administration team can properly plan cultural events, and coordinate programs for the congregants and visitors.



(Above) Figure 37: Level 2 Floor Plan
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



(Below) Figure 38: Level 2 3D Floor Plan
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Level 3

Employee Break Space

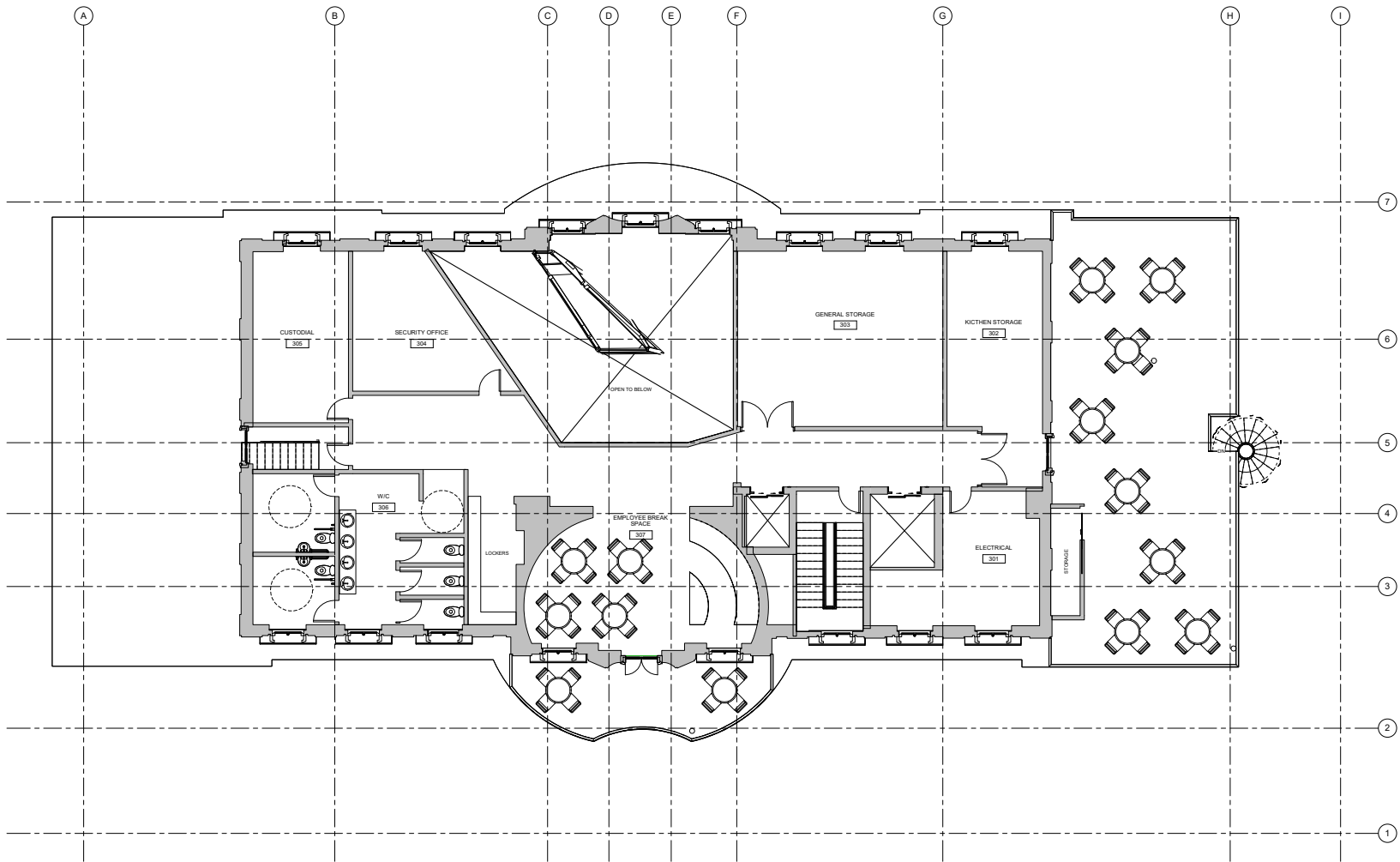
Employees of the Beth Wannsee Synagogue, including those working on the security, kitchen, and custodial teams have access to the third level of the building. These spaces are only accessible by key through the elevator and adjacent secondary stairwell. These public spaces are equipped with lockers for individual storage, a small kitchenette, and seating. The space also opens up to the front of the building with a small balcony which is covered by the glazed intervention.

Storage

Additional storage space for both the educational and kitchen needs are available on the third floor. These spaces are only accessible to the building staff and are mostly utilized to store additional educational material, extra chairs and tables, and excess dry goods for use in the kitchen below.

Security, Custodial, Electrical

The final spaces located on the third floor are for utilities such as additional security offices, custodial services and supplies, and electrical services.



(Above) Figure 39: Level 3 Floor Plan
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

(Below) Figure 40: Level 3 3D Floor Plan
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

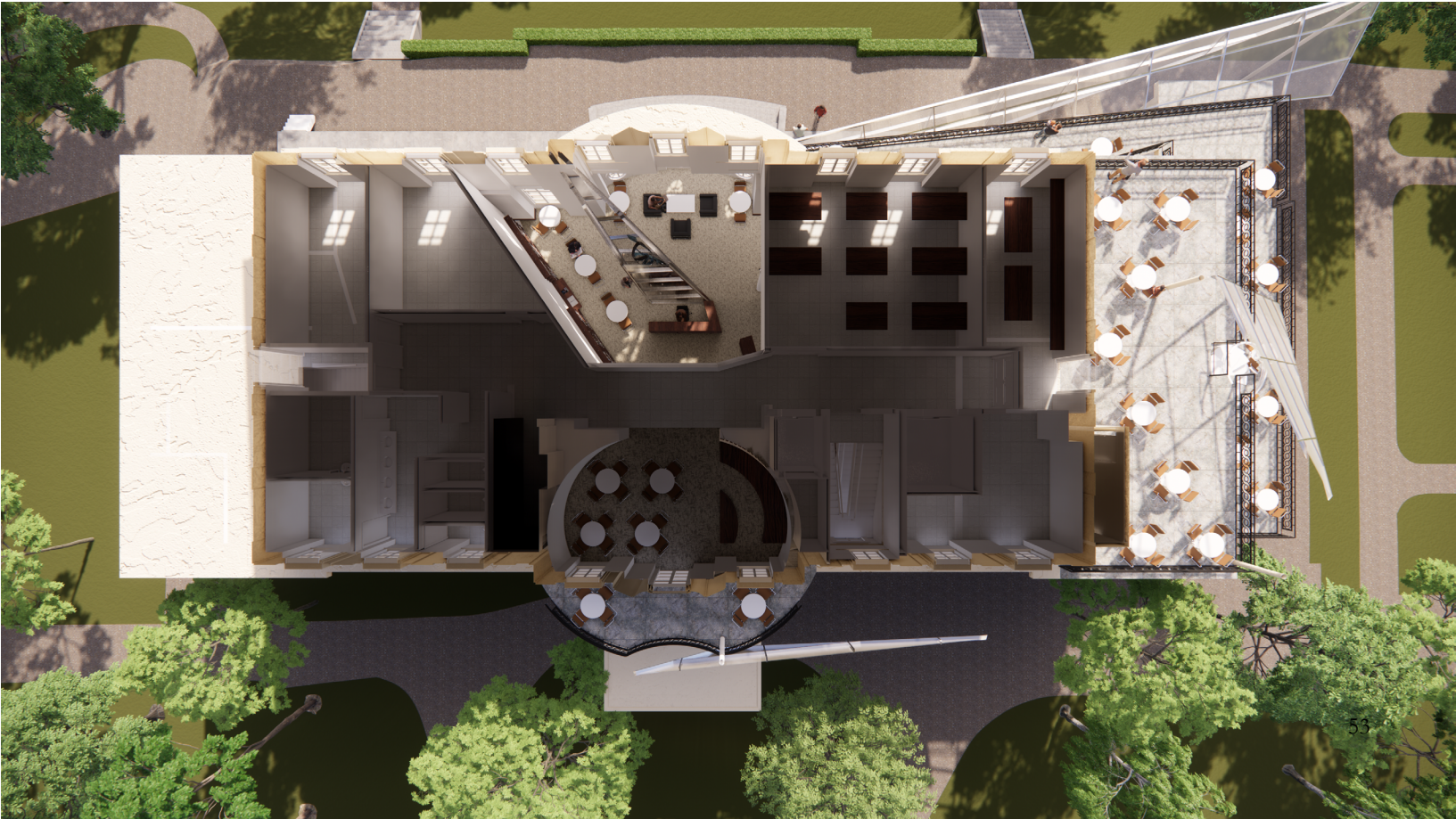




Figure 41: Building Approach
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Figure 42: Level 1 Exterior Access
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Figure 43: Exterior Lakeside Garden
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Figure 44: Foyer and Sanctuary Entrance
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Figure 45 & 46: Sanctuary Space
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Figure 47: Configurable Event Spaces
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Figure 48: Historical Conference Room
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.





Figure 49: Library Interior Workspace
 Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Figure 50: Library Exterior Workspace
 Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.





Figure 51: Longitudinal 3D Section
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.



Figure 52: Latitudinal 3D Section
Graphic created by author. 2023. Visual Image.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Introduction

The Hebrew word for synagogue, "*Beth Knesset*" literally translates to "house of assembly" and is the true purpose of the Beth Wannsee Synagogue. With open doors, this synagogue welcomes the Jewish community of the Greater Berlin Area to understand the atrocities of its past while pushing forward together. It is the intersection of the architecture and program of the site that illuminates the future of the Jewish people in Wannsee.

This practicum project began with a theoretical investigation into how architecture is embedded into the collective memory of the public. Historical sites have the ability to hold an embodied memory within the physical structures left behind and thus become intertwined with the communities surrounding it. These sites have a set lifespan but once they near their final phase of life, specific measures can be taken to revive the site including restoration, conservation, and adaptive reuse. By understanding the historical significance these spaces hold in the memory of the public, even infamous spaces utilized to conduct horrible atrocities can be redeemed. This can be achieved through either destruction, monumental reuse, or adaptive reuse. Analysis of specific adaptive reuse strategies and tactics allows sites such as the House of the Wannsee Conference to be reborn as a space for Jewish growth. Specific programming and alterations to the existing site are critical for successfully redeeming this building from its infamous history. These changes allow the building to be responsive to the needs of its users.

The typology of a synagogue was selected for this site after the literature review process was concluded. This selection was critical as it juxtaposes the infamous memory associated with the building. By flipping the function completely, from a site of destruction of the Jewish people, into a site for the growth of the Jewish people, this building has the ability to finally be redeemed. This typology also allows the site to function for the general assembly of the community, creating a place to gather, practice, and celebrate the Jewish religion. Functional spaces for an array of cultural practices were prioritized and planned thoughtfully. The inclusion of the catering kitchen is critical for serving the congregants and guests for special events, however the kitchen also plays a major role in the Judaic culture as most Judaic festivals and holidays are centered around the consumption of food and drink. Through the combination of cooking classes and demonstrations held in the second floor kitchen, guests are able to assemble and learn about cultural Jewish foods, their history, and cooking techniques. They can learn the traditional method of braiding *challah*, how to perfectly crisp Hanukkah *latkes*, and how to fold and fill their *hamantaschen* so they are bursting with flavour.

Response to Questions of Inquiry

1. How can interior design strategies facilitate the growth of a religion and culture in a building that was formally used to organize hate against them?

Interior design strategies can help to reprogram this site into a place of community and growth rather than a place of remembrance and mourning. This is achieved through the strategies and tactics outlined by Brooker and Stone, in addition to specific programming studies conducted to adaptively reuse this site. Through the re-purposing of "historically insignificant" spaces with a new functional program, the community can utilize this space in a novel way that brings them together. Contrastingly, spaces that truly hold a significant amount of historical significance, such as the specific rooms utilized by the Nazi officials in their journey to genocide, are reserved for the specific functions of education and remembrance. These two concepts of spaces working along side each other strengthen the idea of redemptive design; one space is focused on remembering the past while the other specializes in growth for the future.

Upon completion of this exercise, the program of each space could be further explored. The functions of this synagogue revolve around the idea of growth, where users of the space can grow together as a community. These specific programs include weekly public prayers, *bar/bat mitzvah* education classes and events, Judaic conversions, weddings, and *brit milot*. These programs require designated areas such as a sanctuary space, event spaces of multiple sizes, classrooms, as well as a catering kitchen that can moonlight as a demonstration kitchen for Jewish cooking classes. This site requires spaces for education centering on the Holocaust, as well as specific education on the building and the infamous meeting that took place. These dedicated spaces are housed in the historically significant spaces where visitors can learn about the history of the site while experiencing it firsthand. These educational areas are supported by a library containing specific literature on the site and repercussions of the meeting, along with classrooms that can house lectures and conferences. Finally, the needs of the administration and employees of the space facilitated the creation of offices, and private spaces for those working on site.

2. How can the adaptation of an existing memorial site to a functional centre for the community increasingly support those directly affected?

The adaptation of the memorial site known as "The House of the Wannsee Conference" into the Beth Wannsee Synagogue has the ability to spark interactions with different users who otherwise may not have been involved in the community or wanted to visit the site. On one hand, this building provides an educational setting where a visitor can learn about the key historical events that occurred there and understand the gravity of this site's role in the Holocaust. The Historical Conference Room and adjacent educational space concisely tell the story of the site and the events that transpired. The library invites users to delve deeper into the greater Nazi plan and its impacts on the remainder of the Holocaust, while providing key literature on the history of the site. These important displays of history will be able to reach a broad audience, while still allowing the rest of the site to become a new area of growth for Jewish people in the immediate community and beyond. While one visitor learns about the atrocities that took place in the education space or library above, another can partake in a conversion class with the Rabbi; a young child can prepare for their *bar or bat mitzvah* in the next room; and a group of Jewish mothers can enjoy a cooking class down the hall. The Beth Wannsee Synagogue can support all of these visitors simultaneously, allowing the Jewish community to assemble and grow under one roof.

3. How can programming and design language reverse the negative narrative associated with buildings that formerly enabled hate to occur within their walls?

Programming and design language have the ability to reverse the negative narrative of a space by creating a place for growth in a site that was previously used for destruction. Even though hateful narratives were conceived within the walls of the building, reversing the typology into a nurturing space for the Jewish people can redeem the structure of its past. Programming spaces of historical insignificance allows these areas to take on an entirely new meaning in support of the rest of the site. This is exemplified in the re-purposing of the entire third floor and much of the second floor into private and semi/private spaces containing offices, storage, and services. These spaces did not significantly contribute to the infamy associated with the Wannsee Conference and the house itself, therefore these spaces are subject to be reprogrammed.

Design language and materiality also play a major role in completing the narrative of any reused space. These alterations have the ability to breathe new life into specific spaces, placing an emphasis on the 'old' while highlighting the contrasting 'new'. The newly added piercing skylight made from metal and glass stands out as it penetrates the building envelope and floor plates, adding much needed light to interior spaces. This skylight also holds the *ner tamid*, which was created through the organic connection method of the Wannsee Conference meeting minutes. The elevated column sculpture of glass and light visually connects the library above to the historical conference room below, creating a sense of connection between the written material and the physical space. Found objects often play a key role in adaptive reuse, and in this case allowed for the re-purposing of the central fireplace for use in the *aron hakodesh*. Finally, the elevated levels of glazing act as a connection point between the interior and exterior faces of the building, connecting the beautiful lakeside garden with the multi-level seating spaces. Acting as an overhang, these new spaces can be used to service the synagogue's programs and events, thereby utilizing the building in ways that were previously unimaginable.

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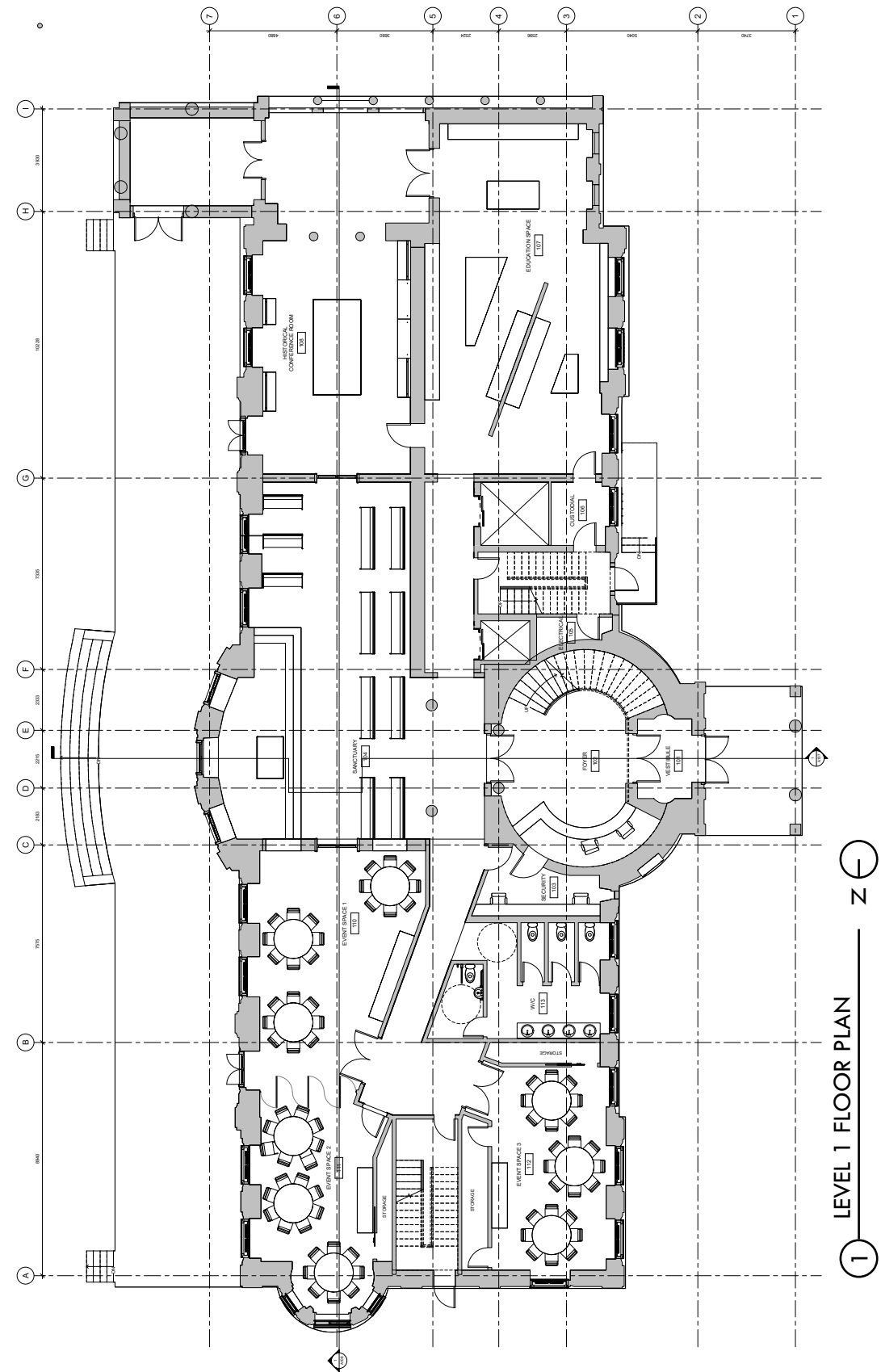
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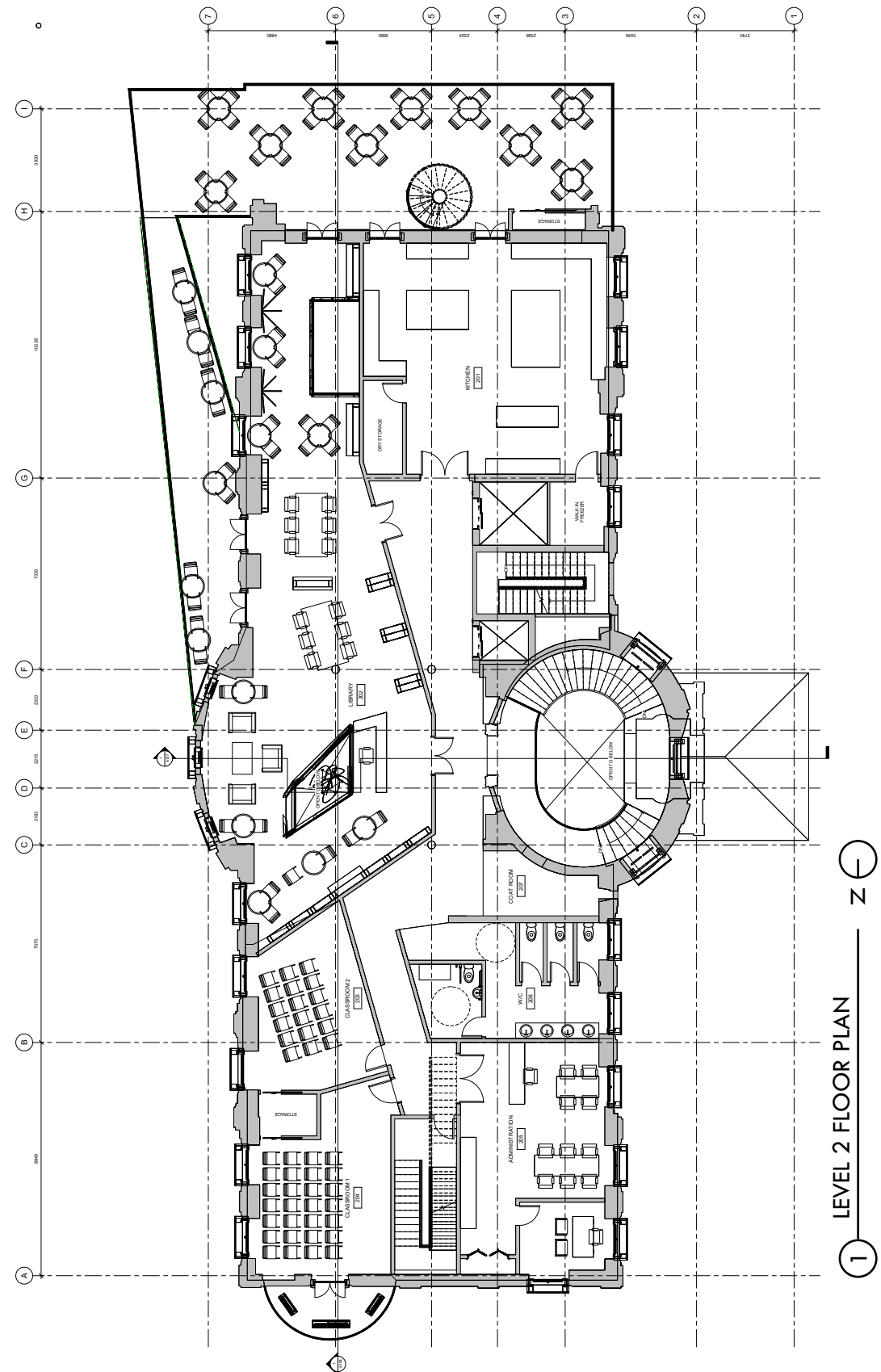
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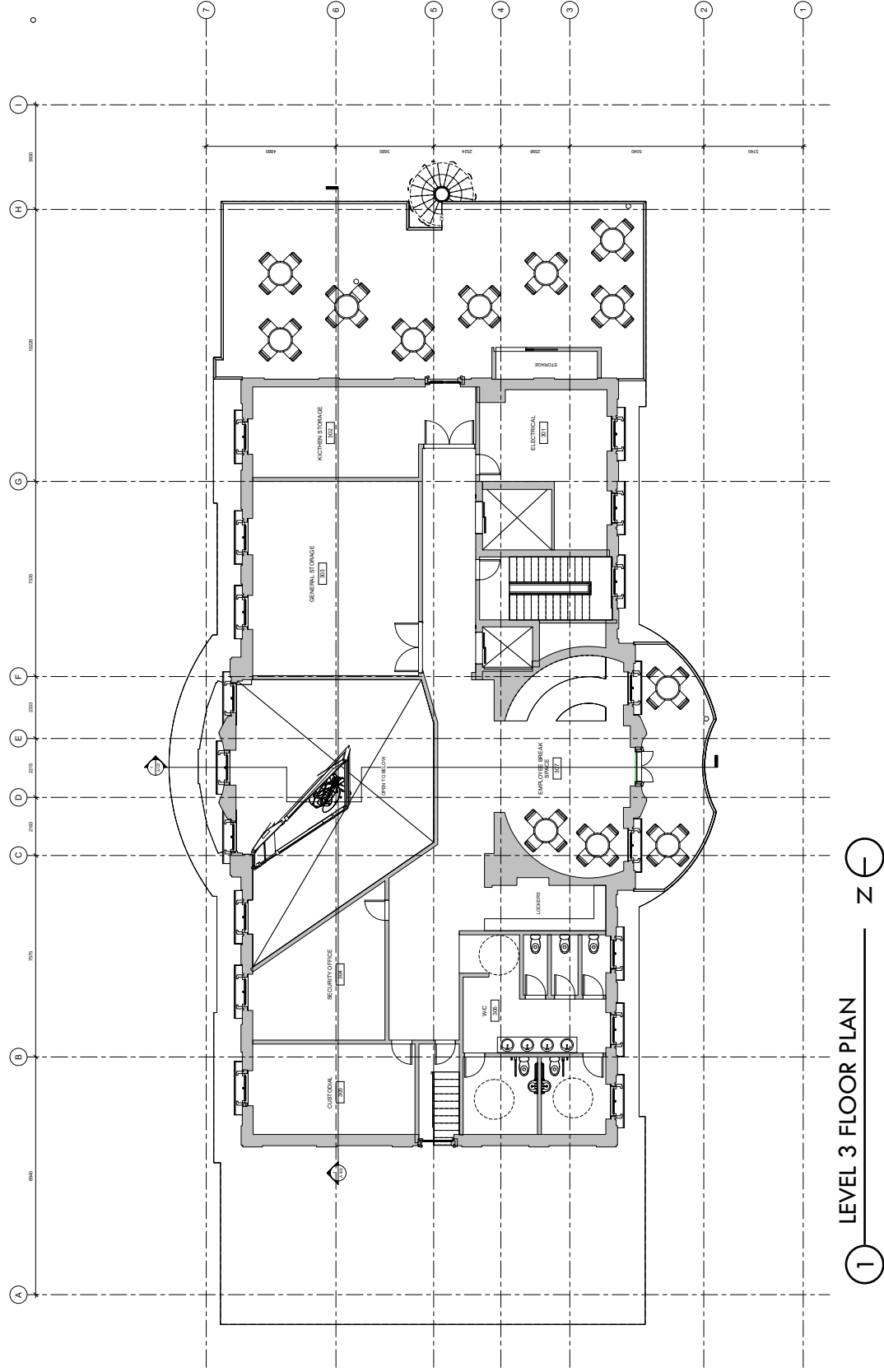
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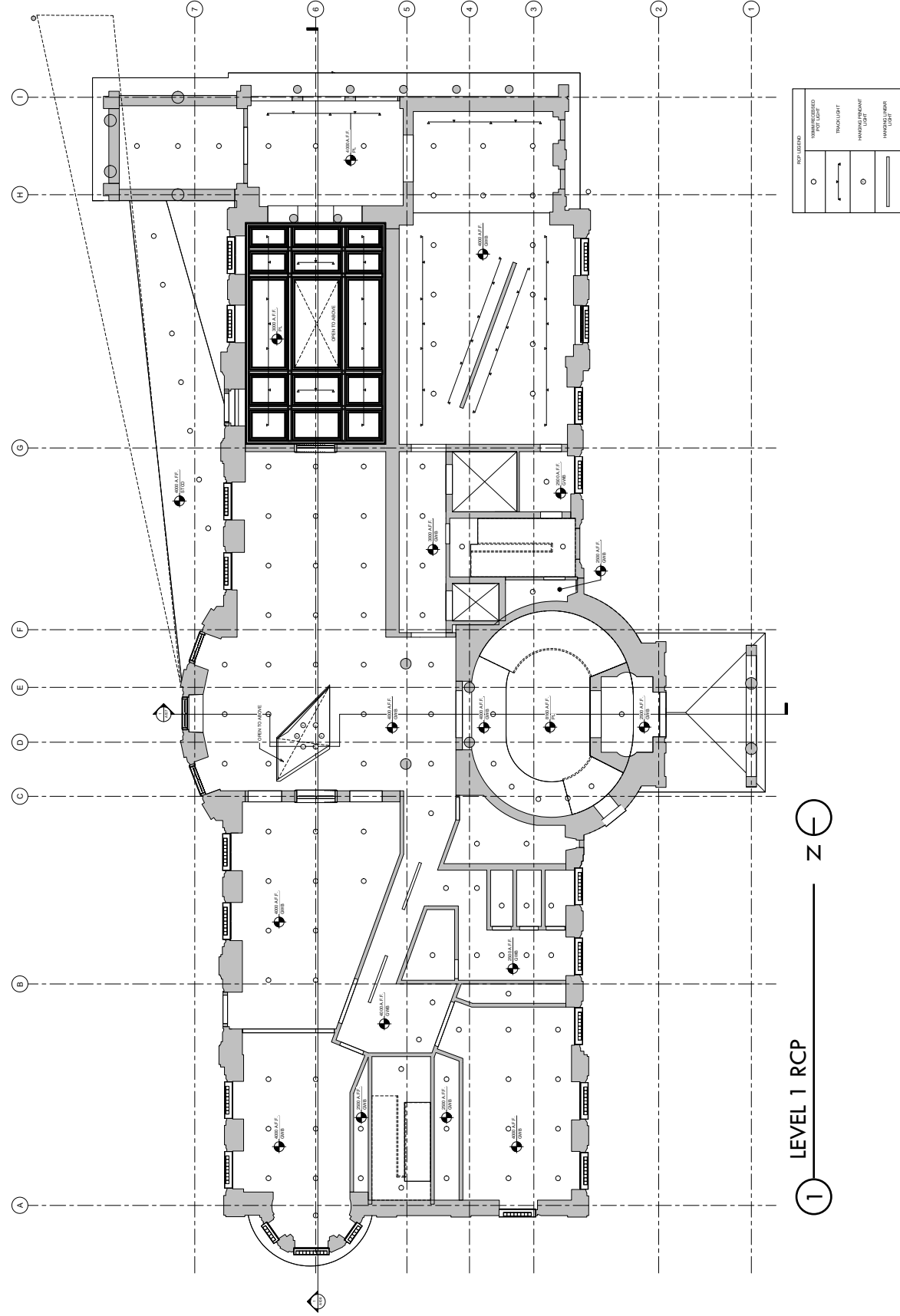


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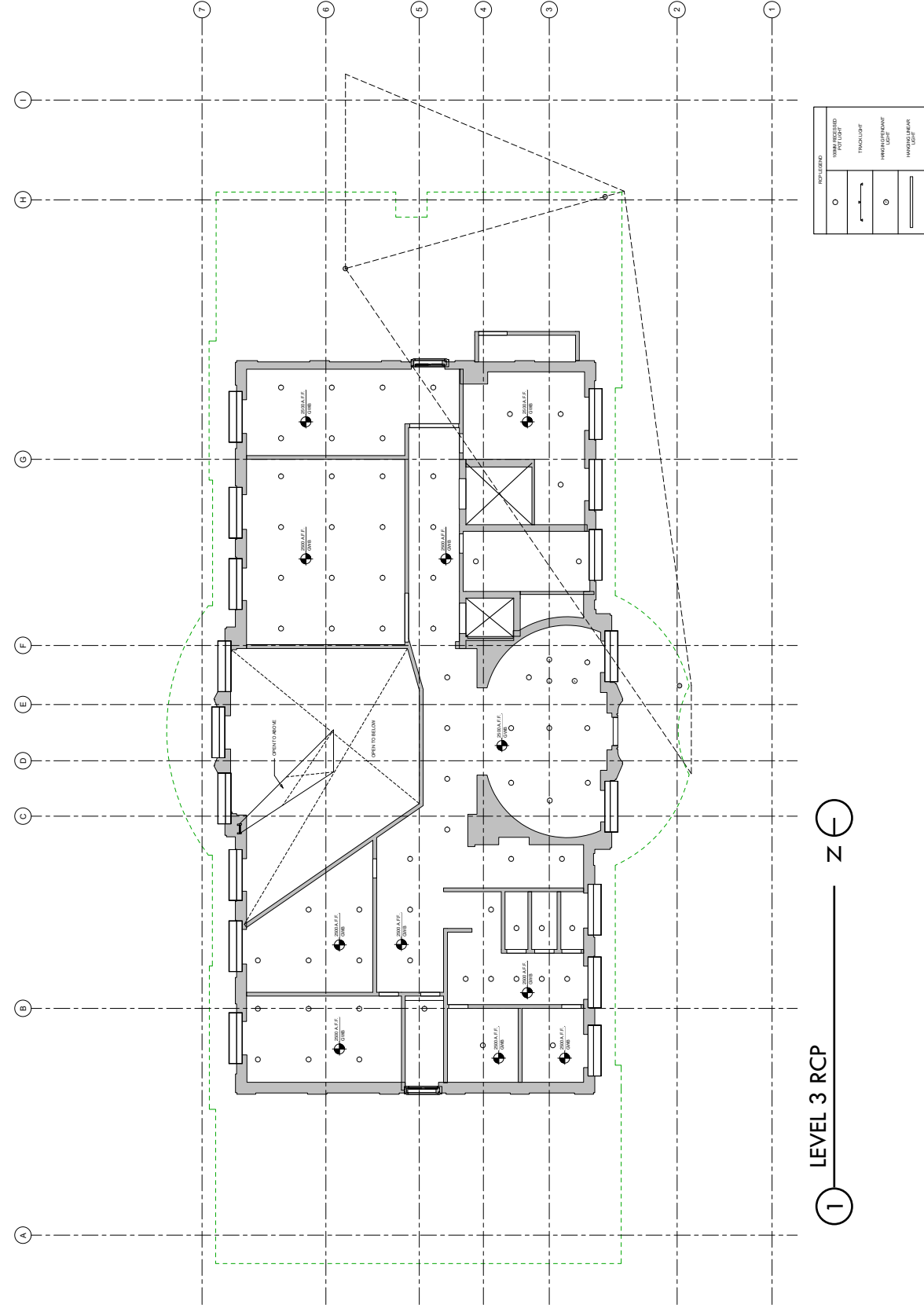
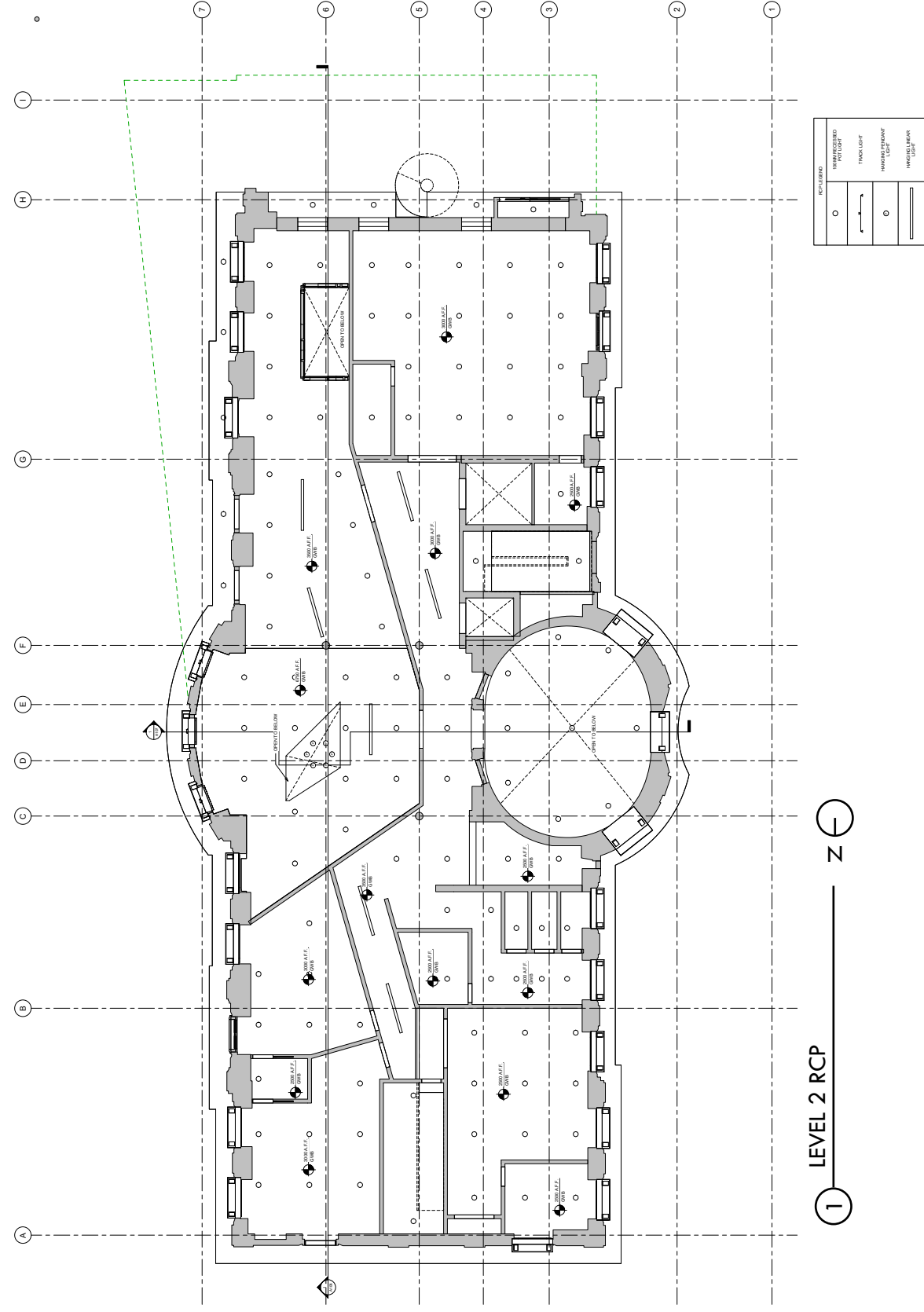
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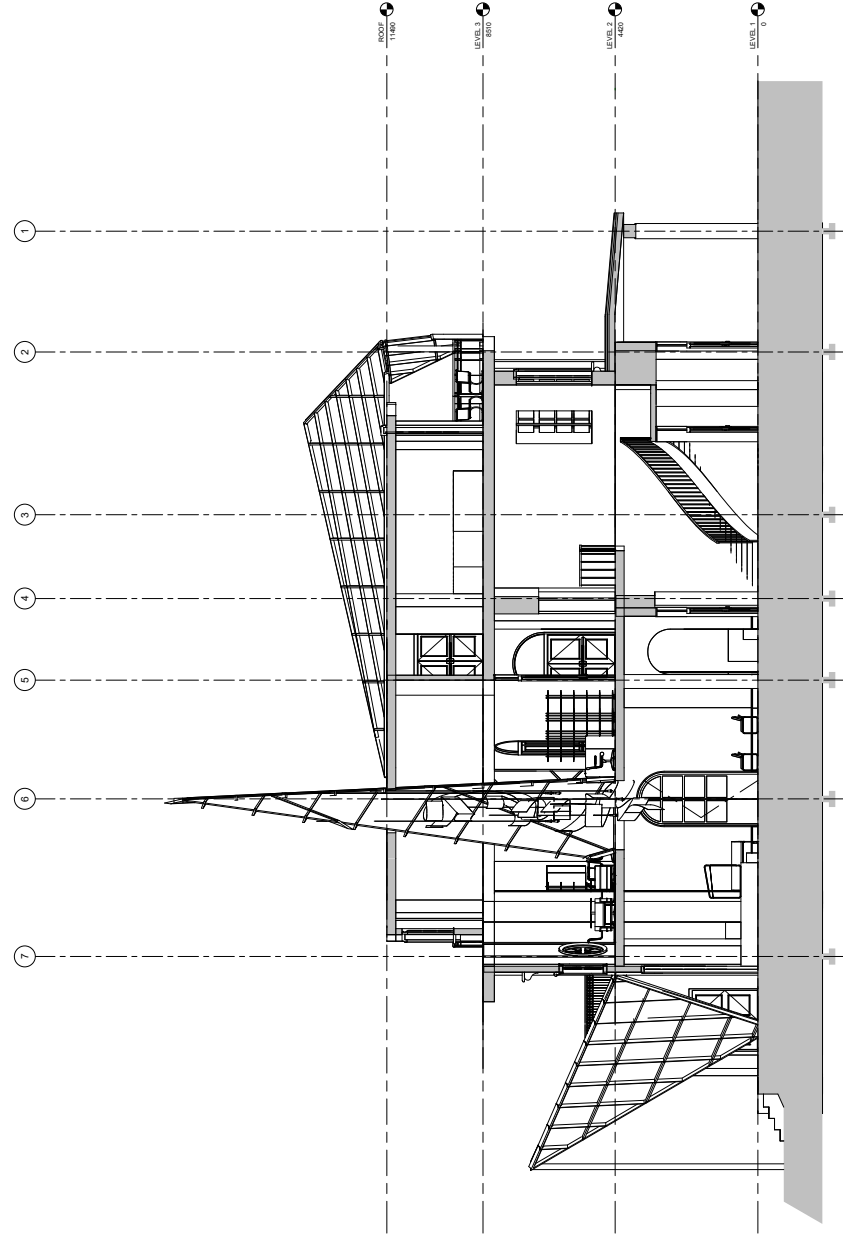
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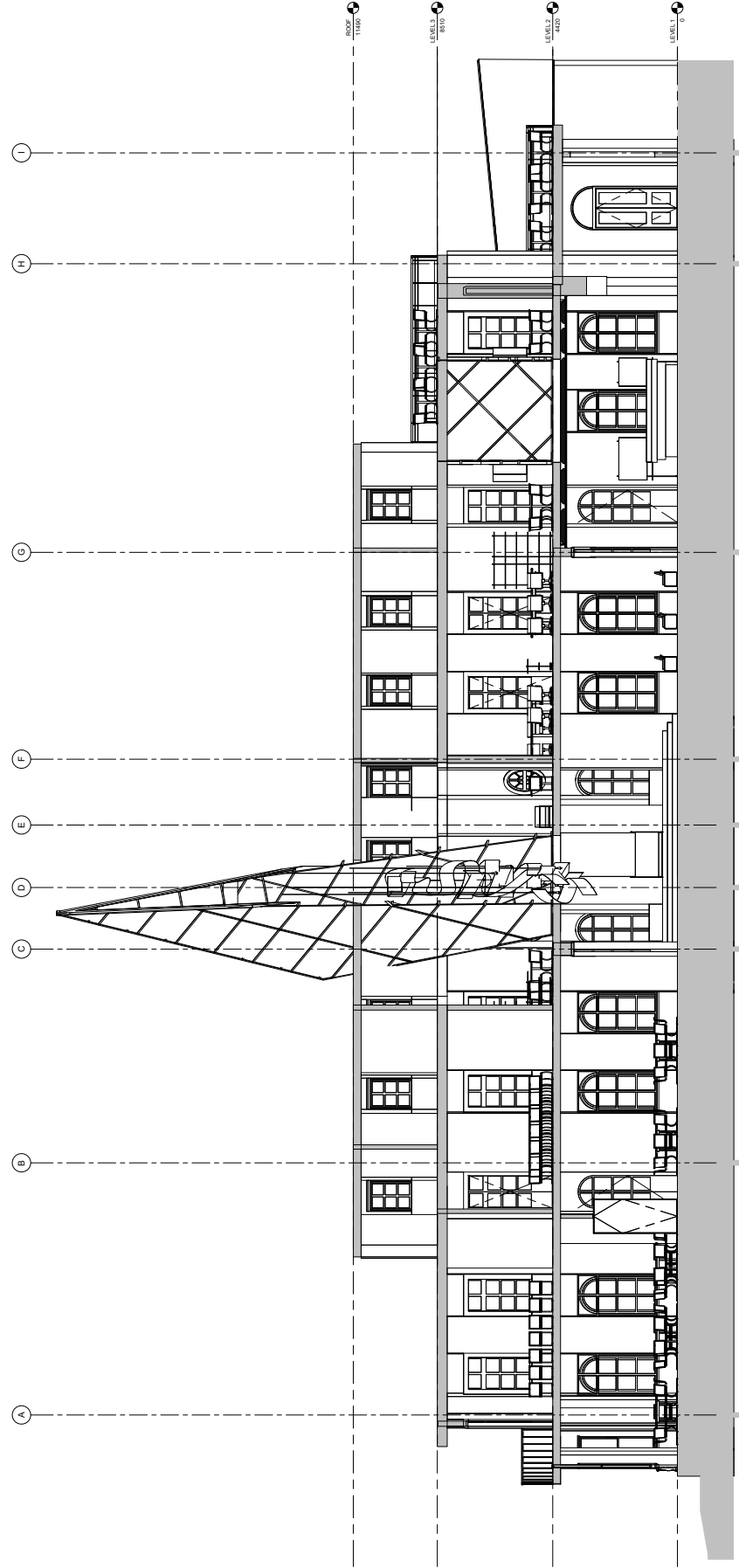
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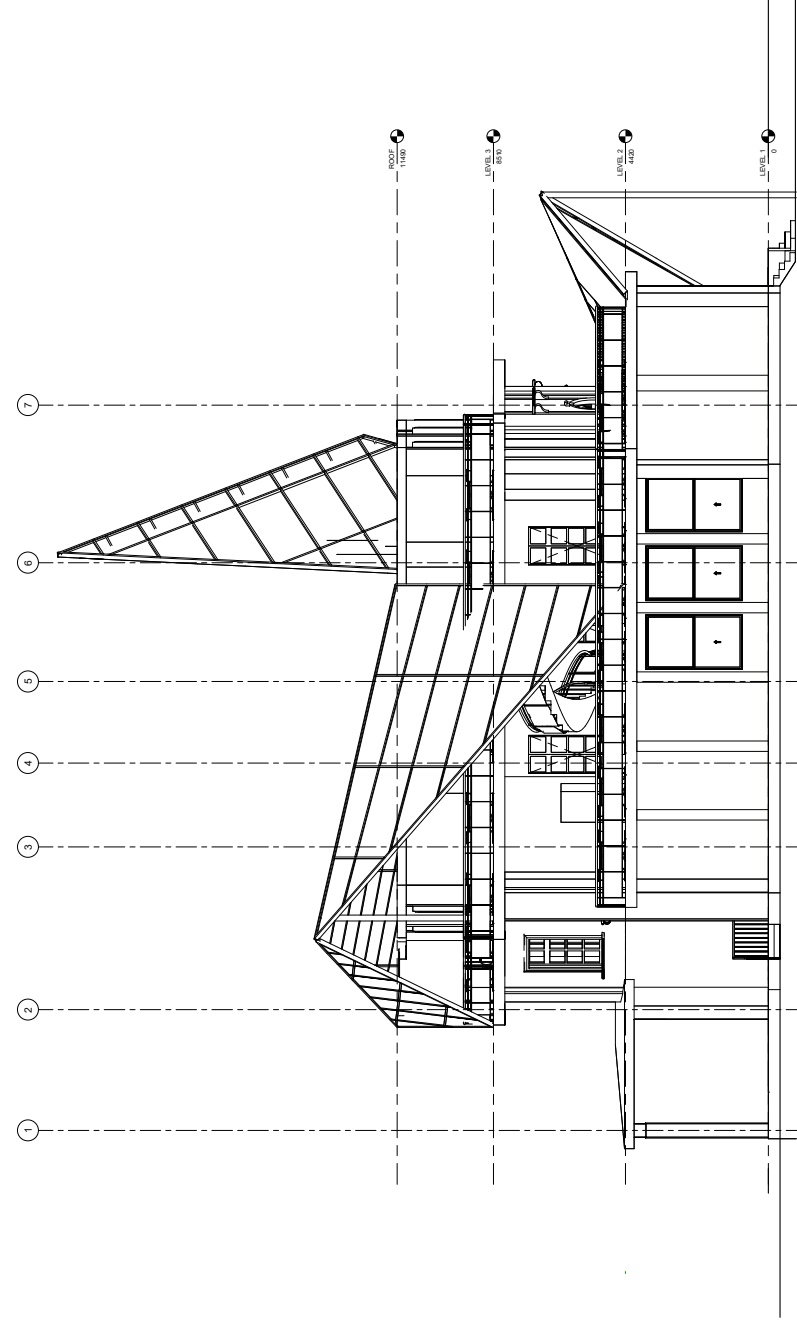
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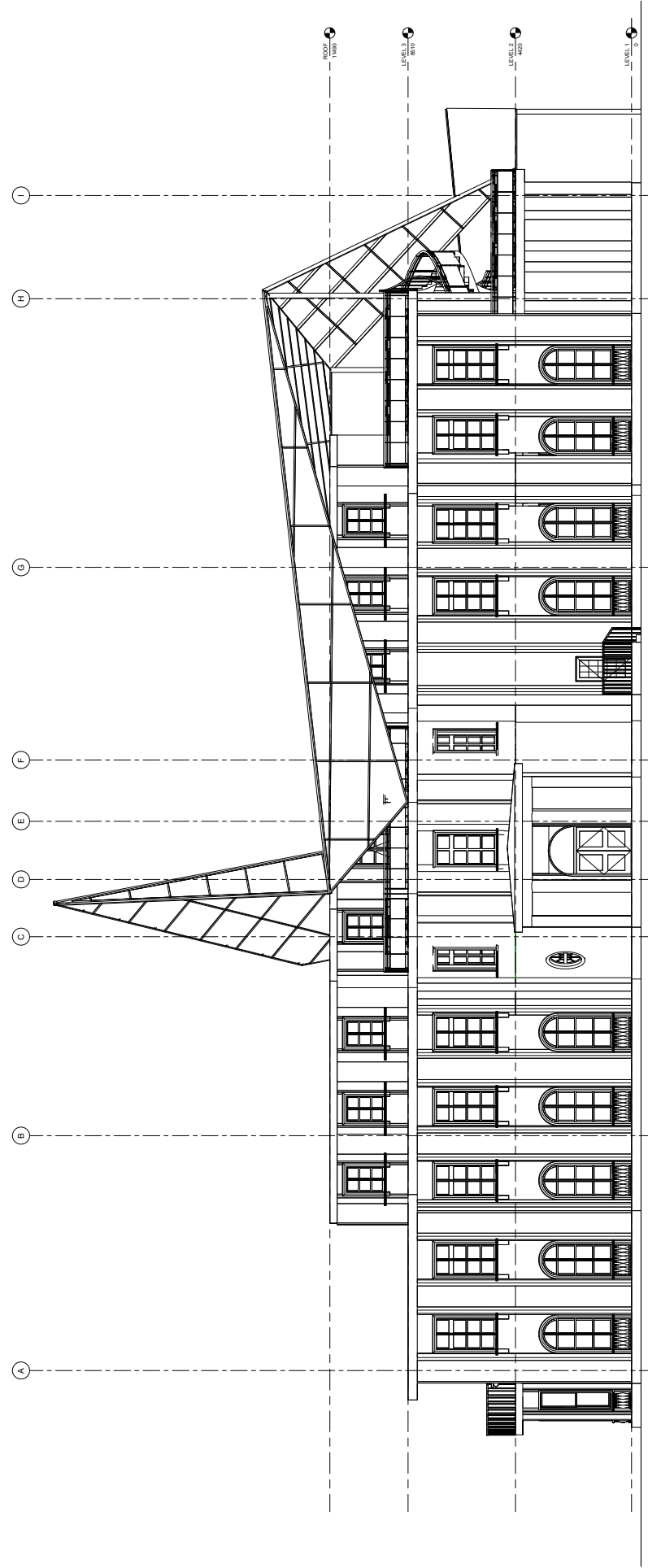
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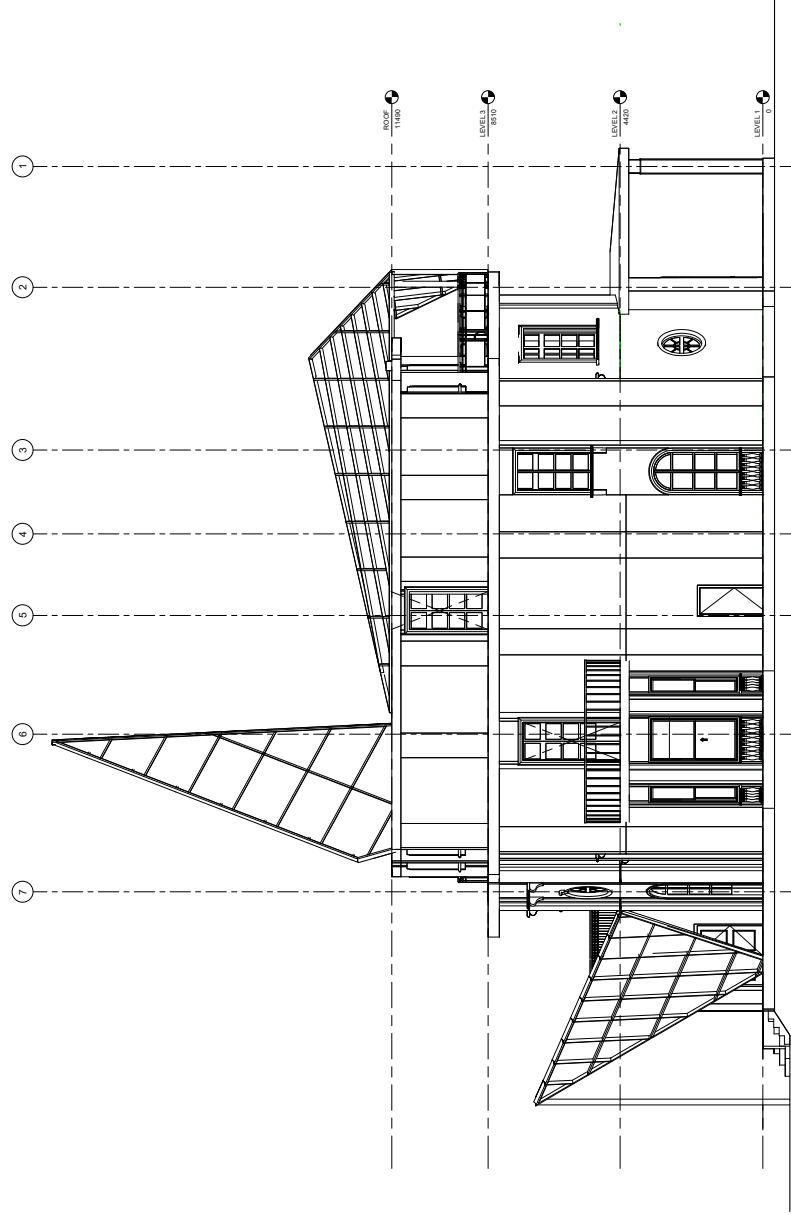
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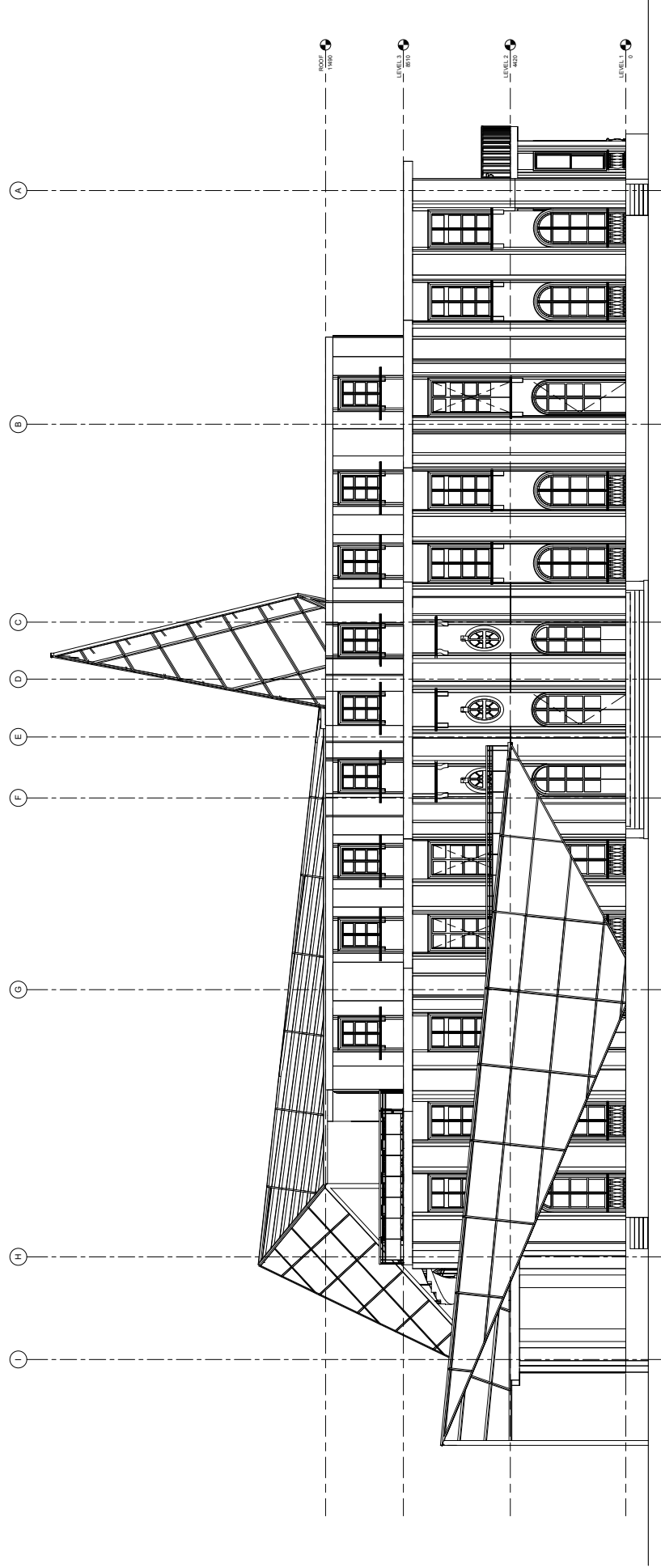
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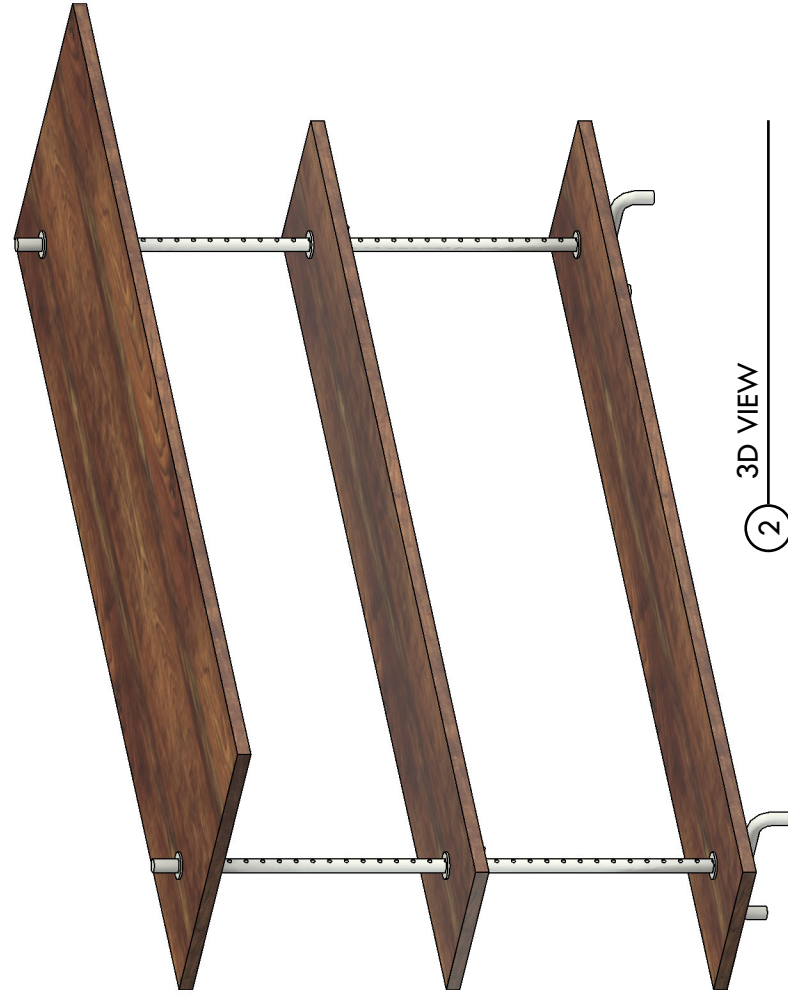
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BUILDING ELEVATION	DATE - 03/16/2023	A111
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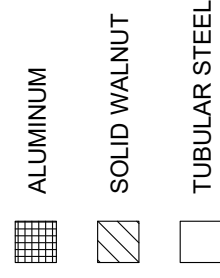
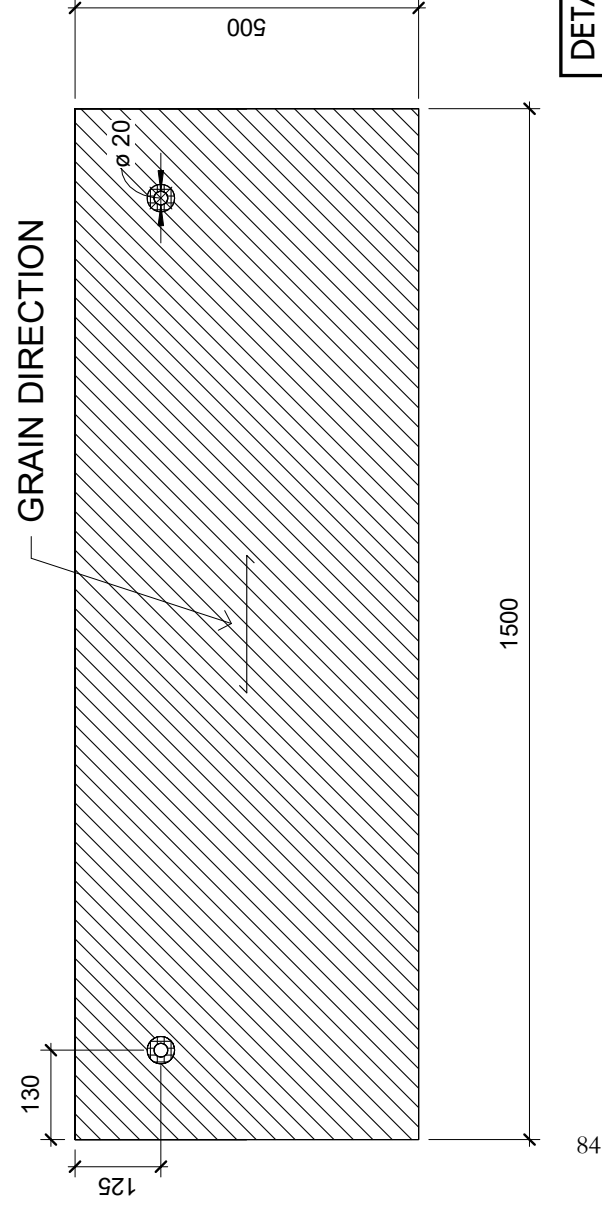


1 EAST ELEVATION — z —

BUILDING ELEVATION	DATE - 03/16/2023	A112
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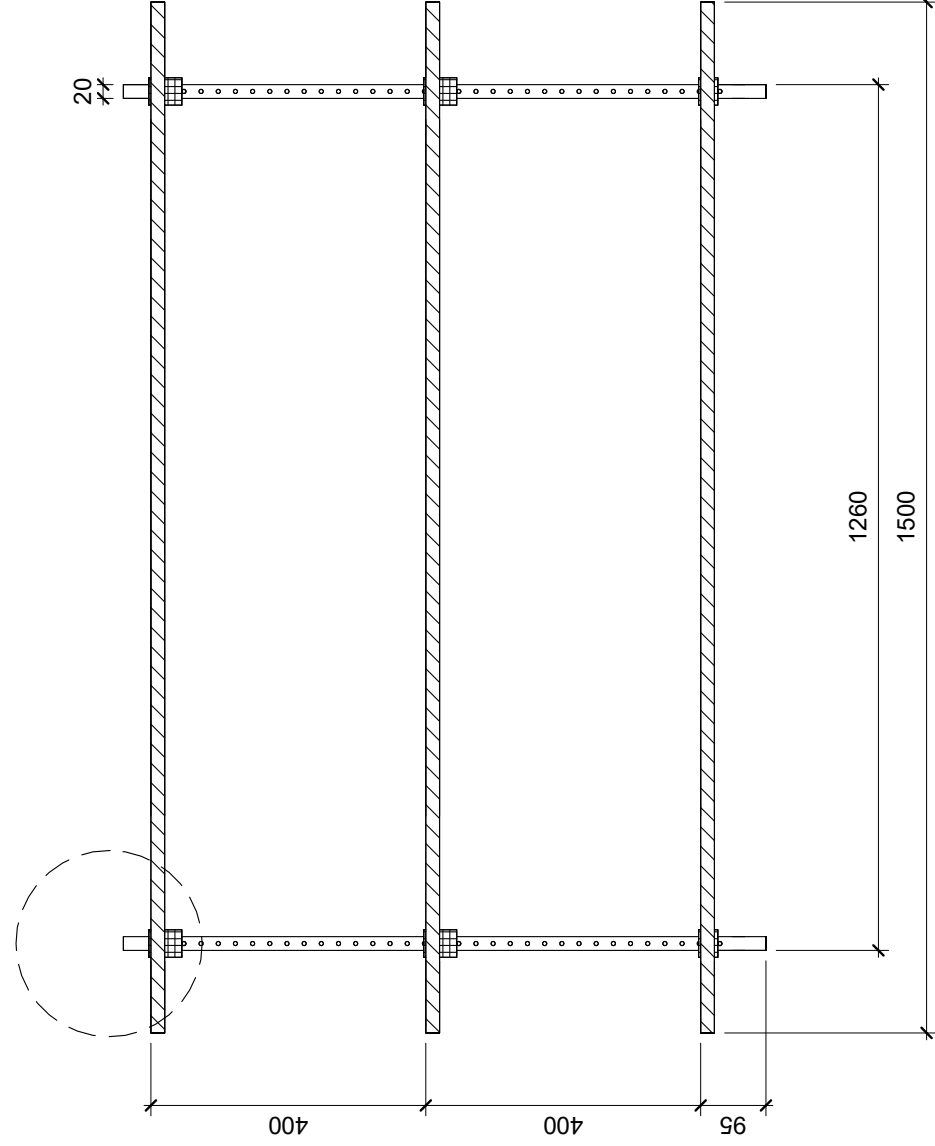
1 PLAN VIEW



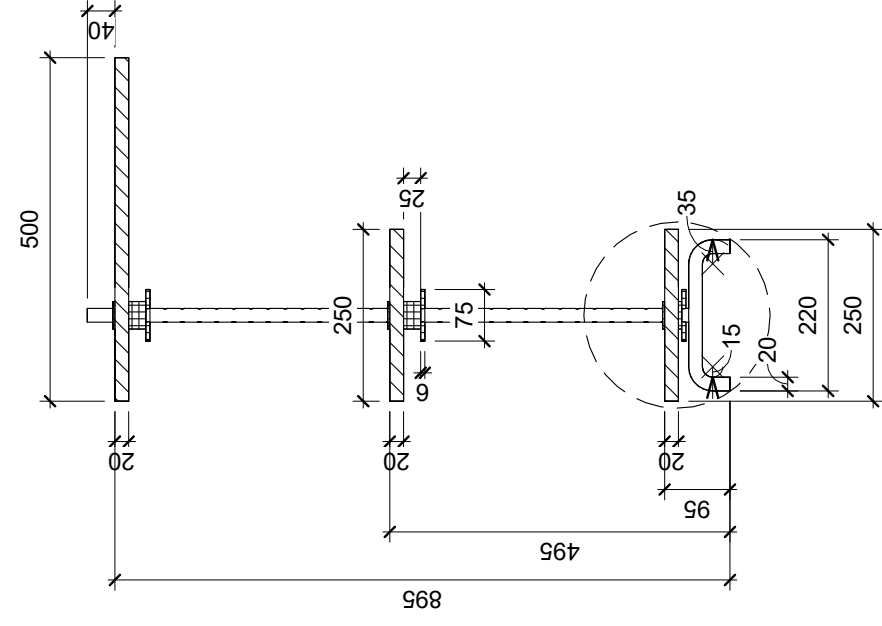
**DETAIL - DISPLAY SHELVING
3D & PLAN VIEW**

DATE - 03/16/2023
SCALE - NTS

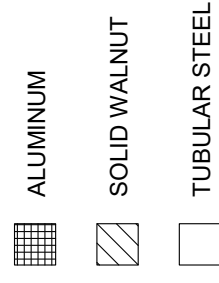
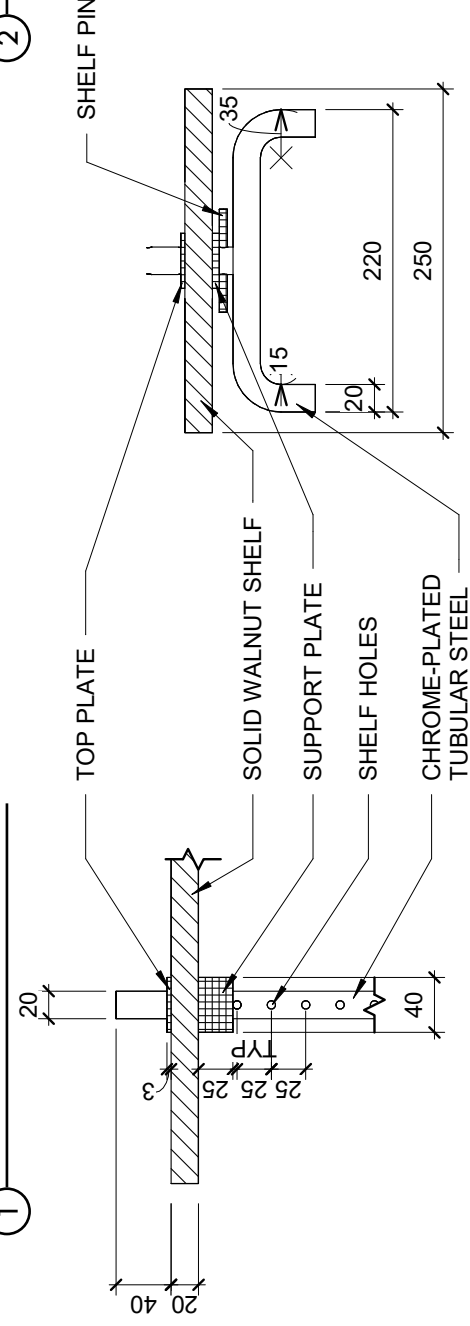
D100



FRONT ELEVATION



2 SIDE ELEVATION

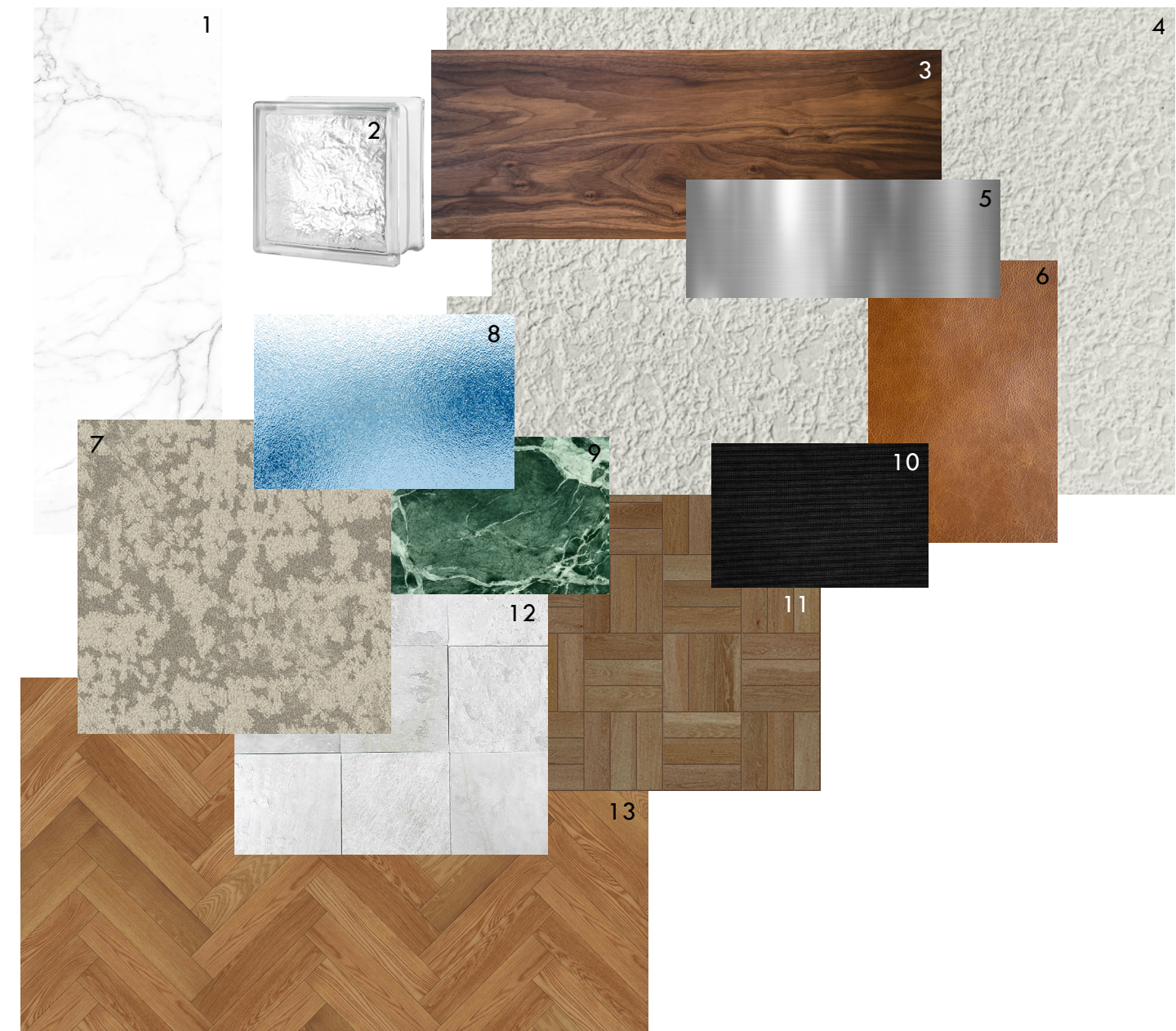


DETAIL VIEWS

DETAIL - DISPLAY SHELVING ELEVATIONS & DETAILS

DATE - 03/16/2023
SCALE - NTS

D101



Material ID	Material	Product Description	Notes
1	Stone	White marble	Existing finish
2	Glass	Glass block	Located inside interior partition between sanctuary and event space 2
3	Wood	Solid Walnut	Existing wall bases, wainscoting, and custom shelving
4	Surface Material	Exterior Plaster	Exterior surface material and interior ceiling condition
5	Metal	Brushed Aluminum	Mullion finish and used in custom furnishing
6	Upholstery	Brown Leather	Custom furnishing material
7	Flooring	Carpet Tile	Library and bimah flooring
8	Glass	Rippled Glass	Ner tamid and aron hakodesh finish
9	Stone	Green Marble	Existing column finish
10	Upholstery	Black Fabric	Soft seating upholstery finish
11	Flooring	Basket-weave Flooring	Sanctuary and Historical Conference Room existing flooring
12	Flooring	Stone Flooring Tile	Foyer and exterior patio flooring
13	Flooring	Herringbone Flooring	Event Space existing flooring

Appendix III: Code Review

Notes:

Code review based on the National Building Code of Canada 2020 & Manitoba Building Code Amendments.

Number of surrounding streets: 1
Sprinkled: Yes
Total number of storeys: 3
Building Area: 1841m²

3.1 General

3.1.2.2 Major Occupancy Classification: Group A, Division 2
3.1.5.12.2 Combustible interior wall finishes... are permitted in a building [and are] required to be of noncombustible construction, provided they have a flame-spread rating not more than 150 on any exposed surface...
3.1.8.1.1 Any wall, partition, or floor assembly required to be a fire separation shall... be constructed as a continuous element...
3.1.8.1.2 Openings in a fire separation shall be protected with closures, shafts, or other means...
3.1.8.13.1 ... every door in a fire separation... should be equipped with a self-closing device designed to return the door to the closed position after each use.
3.1.13.2.1 ... the flame-spread rating of interior wall and ceiling finishes, including glazing and skylights, shall be not more than 150...
3.1.13.6.1 ... the flame-spread rating shall be not more than 75 for the interior wall finish of a) a public corridor, b) a corridor used by the public in an assembly occupancy, or c) a corridor serving classrooms.
3.1.17.1 Designed Occupancy Load: 504

3.2 Building Fire Safety

3.2.2.10.1 Every building shall face a street
3.2.2.11.2 The floor assembly of an exterior balcony in a building or part of a building.. shall a) be of noncombustible construction...
3.2.2.18.1 ... an automatic sprinkler system... shall be installed throughout a building...
3.2.2.23.2 ... a building classified as Group A, Division 2 shall... be of noncombustible construction and...
a) the building shall be sprinklered throughout, b) the floor assemblies shall be fire separations with a fire-resistance rating not less than 2h...
3.2.4.1.1 ... a fire alarm system shall be installed in buildings in which an automatic sprinkler system is installed.
3.2.4.11.1 If a fire alarm system is installed, smoke detectors shall be installed in... b) each room in a contained use area and corridors serving those rooms,...
3.2.4.19.1 Where a fire alarm system is installed, visible signal devises shall be provided in addition to alarm signal devices...
3.2.5.7.1 Every building shall be provided with an adequate water supply for firefighting.
3.2.7.3.1 Emergency lighting shall be provided to an average level of illumination not less than 10 lx at floor or tread level...

3.3 Safety within Floor Areas

3.3.1.5.1 ... a minimum of 2 egress doorways located so that one doorway could provide egress from the room... if the other doorway becomes inaccessible to the occupants due to a fire which originates in the room... shall be provided for every room... b) intended for an occupant load more than 60...
3.3.1.6.1 If more than one egress doorway is required from a room... the travel distance within a room or suite to the nearest egress doorway shall not exceed the maximum travel distance...
3.3.2.3 Non-fixed seating shall conform to the NFC

3.4 Exits

3.4.2.1 Every floor area intended for occupancy shall be served by at least 2 exits
3.4.2.3.1 ... the least distance between 2 exits from a floor area shall be a) one half the maximum diagonal dimension of the floor area...
3.4.3.2.1 ... the minimum widths of exits shall be... 1100 for exit corridors and passageways, 900mm for stairs, 850mm for doorways
3.4.3.4.1 ... every exit shall have a clear height over the clear width of the exit of not less than 2050mm.
3.4.4.1.1 ... every exit shall be separated from the remainder of the building by a fire separation have a fire-resistance rating not less than 45 min...
3.4.4.2.1 ... no exit from a floor area above or below the first story shall lead through a lobby.
3.4.5.1.1 Every exit door shall have an exit sign providing visual information placed over or adjacent to it if the exit serves a) a building more than 2 storeys in building height
3.4.6.9.1 Exit stair flights shall consist solely of a) straight flights, or... a curved flight [with] a handrail on each side, a minimum run of 240mm...
3.4.6.12.1 ... every exit door shall a) open in the direction of exit travel and b) swing on its vertical axis

3.7 Health Requirements

3.7.2.2.1 ... water closets shall be provided for each sex assuming that the occupant load is equally divided between males and females...
3.7.2.2.6 The number of water closets required for places of worship and undertaking premises shall be at least one for each 150 persons of each sex
3.7.2.3.1 ... at least one lavatory shall be provided in a room containing one or 2 water closets or urinals, and at least one additional lavatory shall be provided for each additional 2 water closets or urinals.

3.8 Accessibility

3.8.2.2.1 ... all pedestrian entrances to barrier-free story of a building.. shall be barrier-free and shall connect to a barrier-free exterior path of travel...
3.8.2.3.1 ... a barrier-free path of travel... shall be provided throughout the entrance storey and within all other normally occupied floor areas.
3.8.3.6.2 Every doorway that is located in a barrier-free path of travel shall have a clear width not less than 850mm when the door is in the open position.