ADAPTIVE REUSE OF CHURCH ST. BARTHOLOMÄI ZERBST

THESIS WINTER SEMESTER 2025-26

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History

- Former collegiate and court church
- Built around 1200
- Romanesque basilica in cruciform plan
- Severely damaged during WW2-1945
- 1951- Reconstruction of choir and transept

Current Situation

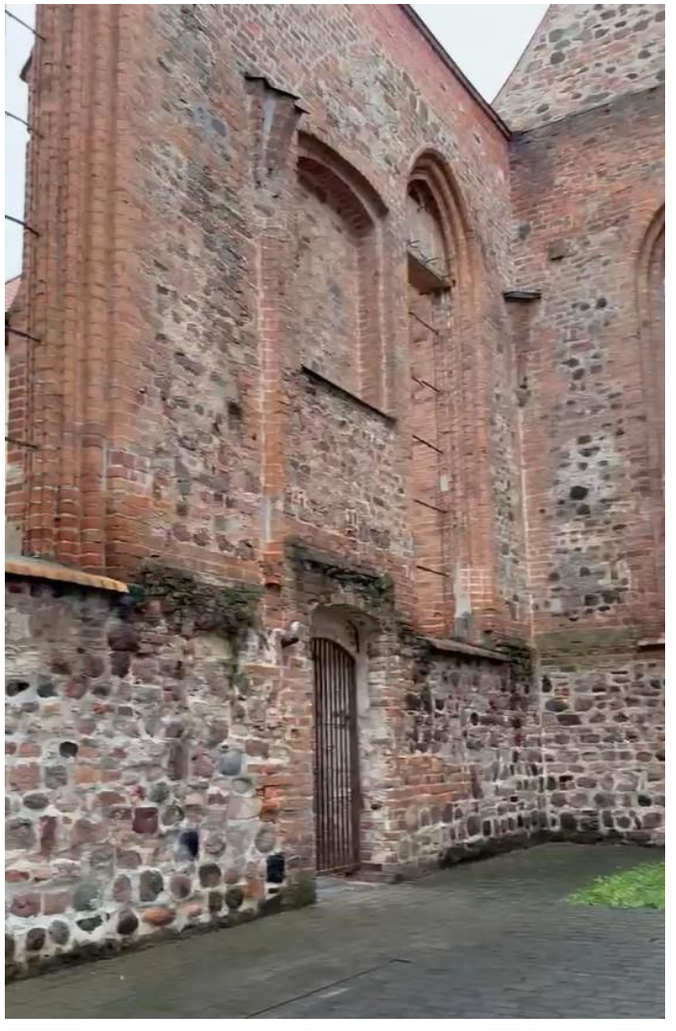
- The west part of the building is in ruins
- No vaulting and roof
- Material deterioration

Aim

- Retain the existing facade
- Create a roof
- New use- focusing on the western part
- Spaces which can fund the preservation/ generate revenue

Scope and Limitations

- Main focus on creating usable volumes
- Minimal intervention on the existing fabric
- Blending of old and new materials

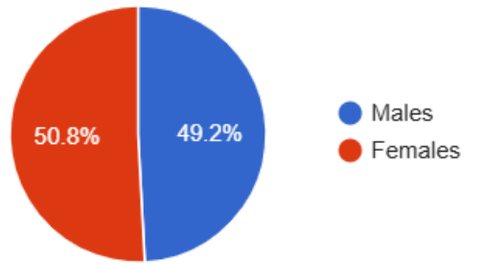


SITE ANALYSIS

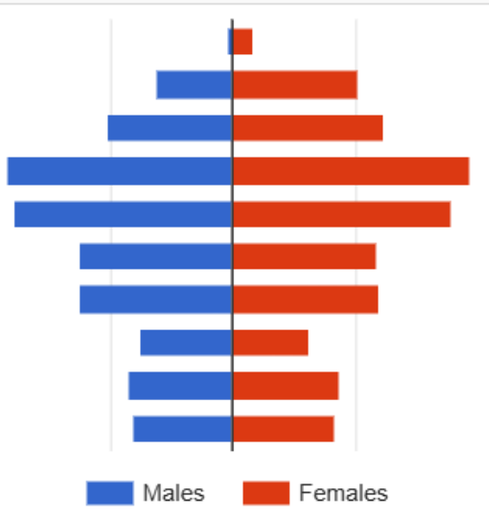
Name	County	
Zerbst/Anhalt	Anhalt-Bitterfeld	

Zerbst/Anhalt

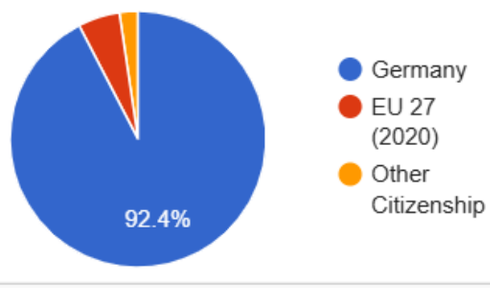
- **21,124** Population [2024] – *Estimate*
- **470.9 km²** Area
- **44.86/km²** Population Density [2024]
- **-0.090%** Annual Population Change [2022 → 2024]



Gender (E 2024)	
Males	10,384
Females	10,740



Age Distribution (C 2022)	
90+ years	211
80-89 years	1,656
70-79 years	2,260
60-69 years	3,789
50-59 years	3,594
40-49 years	2,434
30-39 years	2,456
20-29 years	1,384
10-19 years	1,734
0-9 years	1,649



Citizenship (C 2022)	
Germany	19,560
EU 27 (2020)	1,117
Other Citizenship	496

The Waterdog, Belgium

- Two offices and a meeting room.
- The first floor is a public space of 180 square metres.
- Hosts art exhibitions, corporate dinners, jazz concerts and photo shoots.

CASE STUDY 1

The Old Church of Vilanova de la Barca, Spain

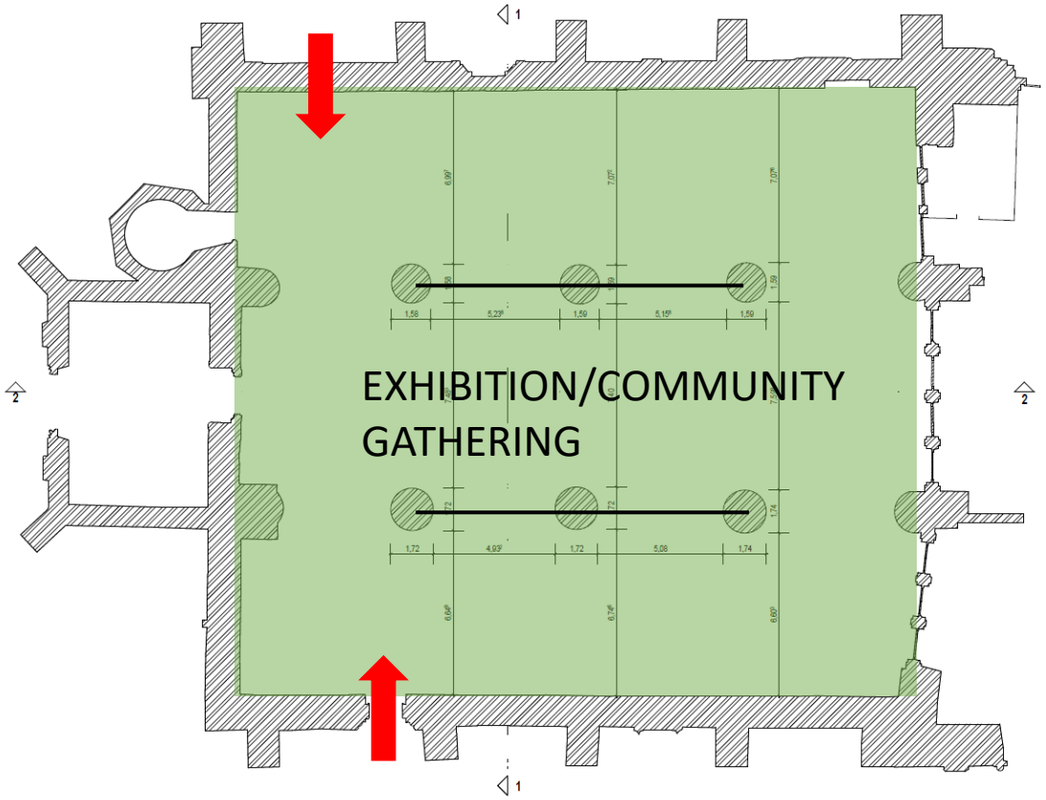
- The new brick façade and roof are gently supported over the remains of the ancient walls.
- The outer facade is untouched, with the stone ashlars of the ancient church.
- The inner facade is designed with a white perforated brick.

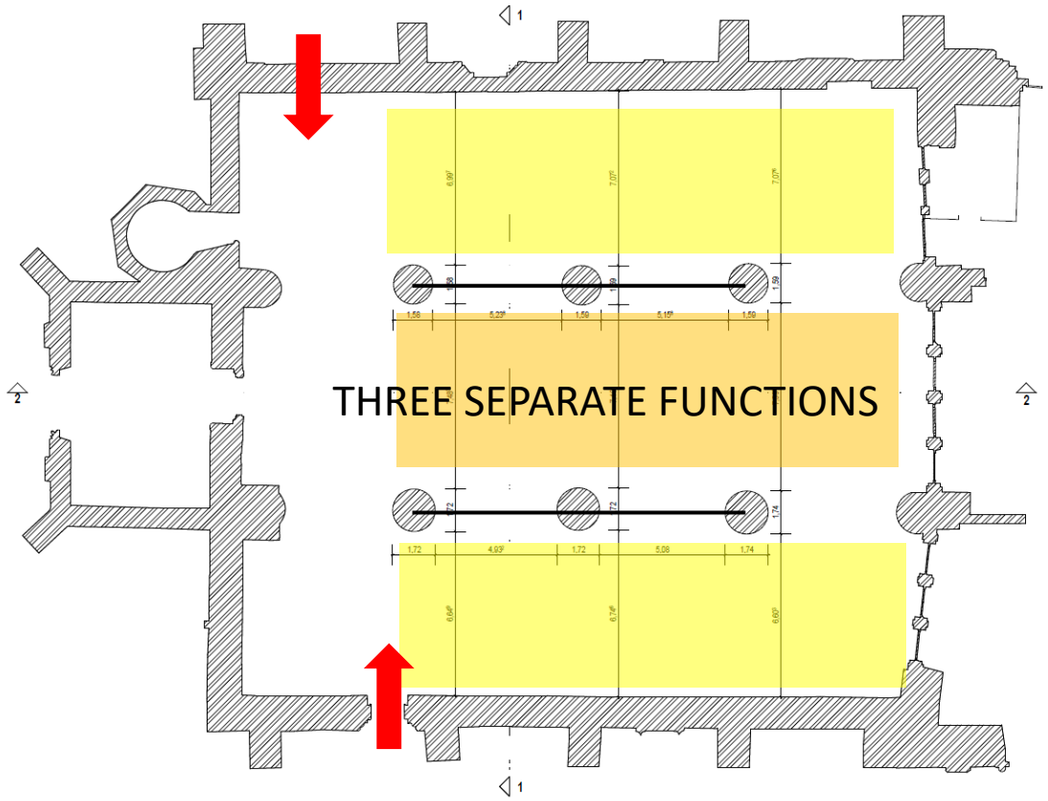
CASE STUDY 2

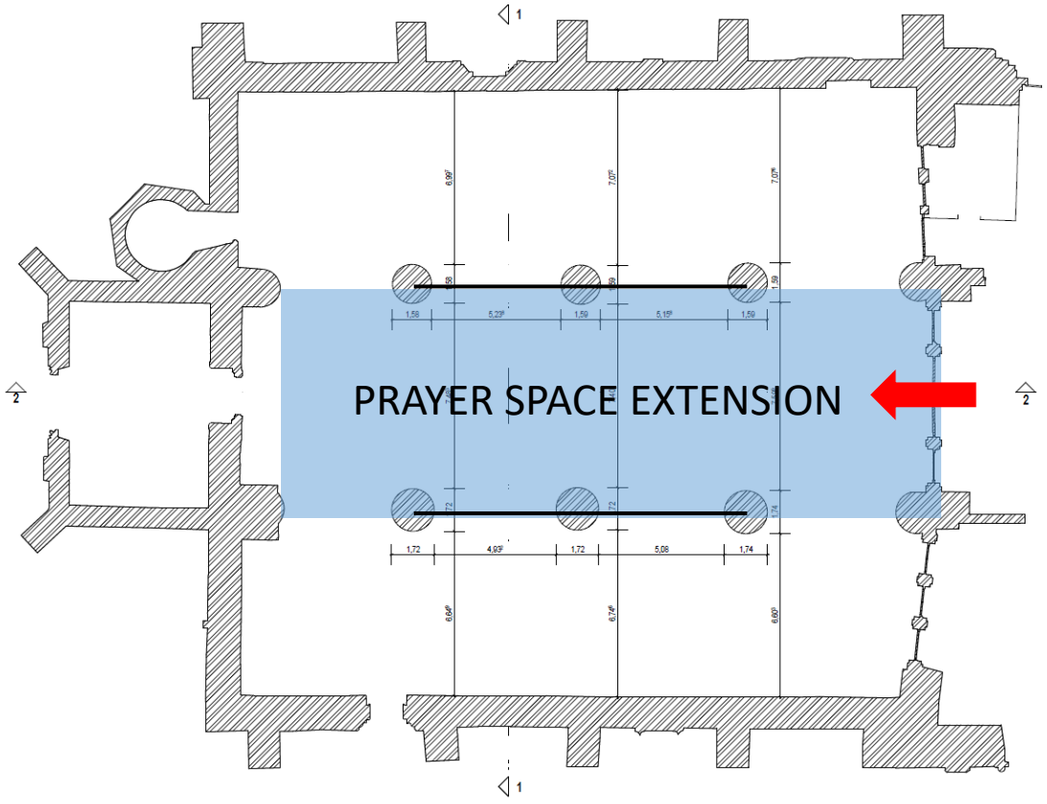
Sant Esteve Church, Spain

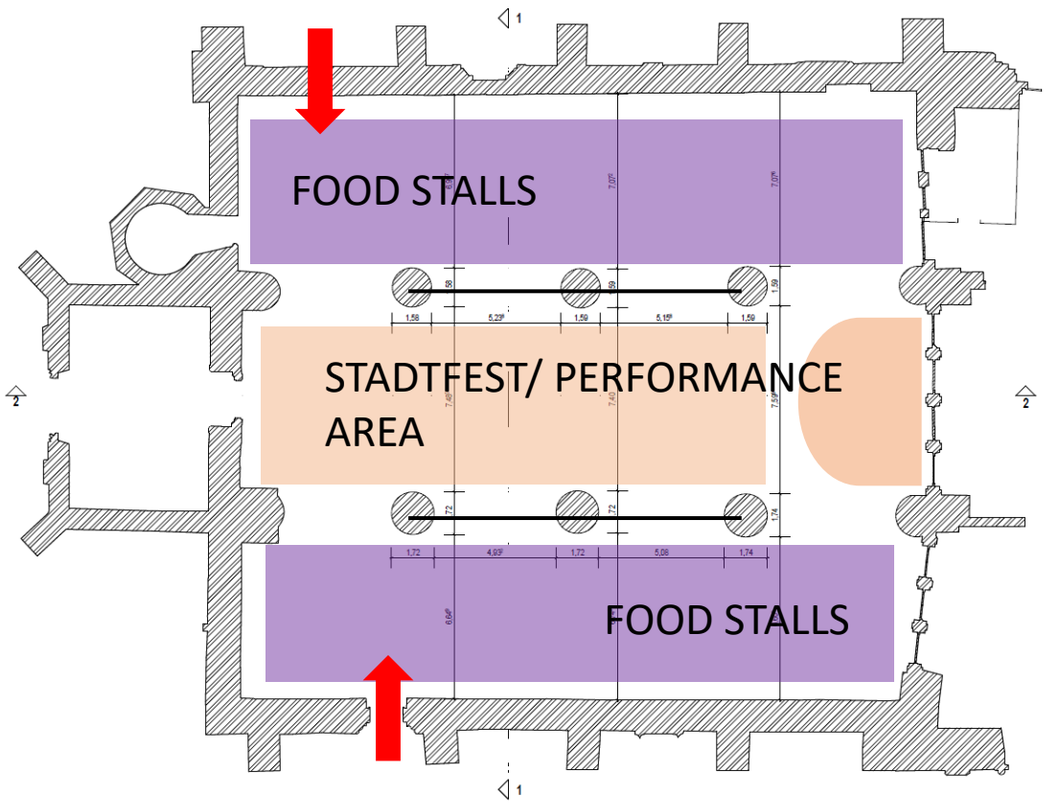
- The space can hold indoor cultural and religious events, and maintain its function as a public space open to the villagers.
- Bell tower with new stair acts as a viewing platform.

CASE STUDY 3

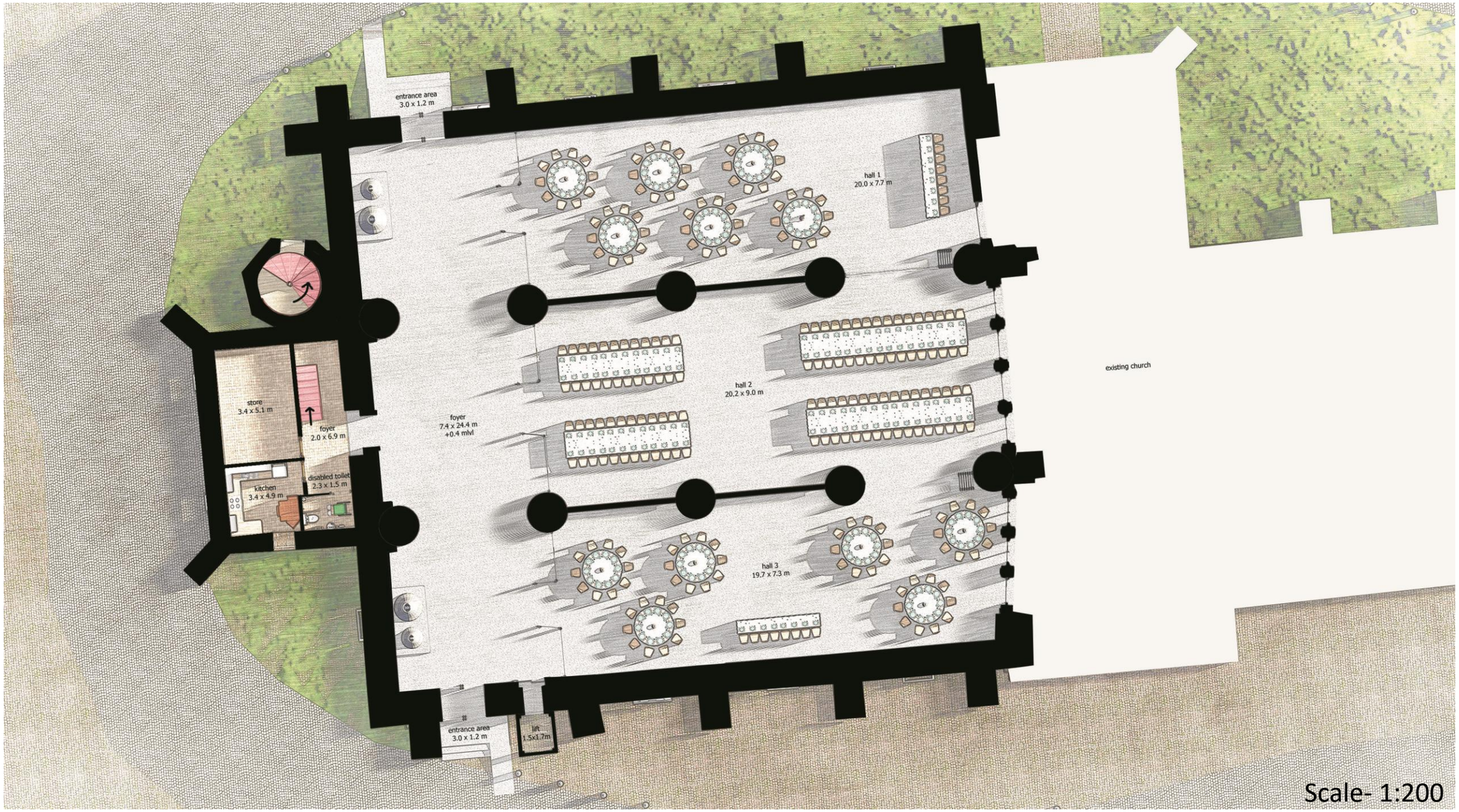

EXHIBITION/COMMUNITY
GATHERING


THREE SEPARATE FUNCTIONS

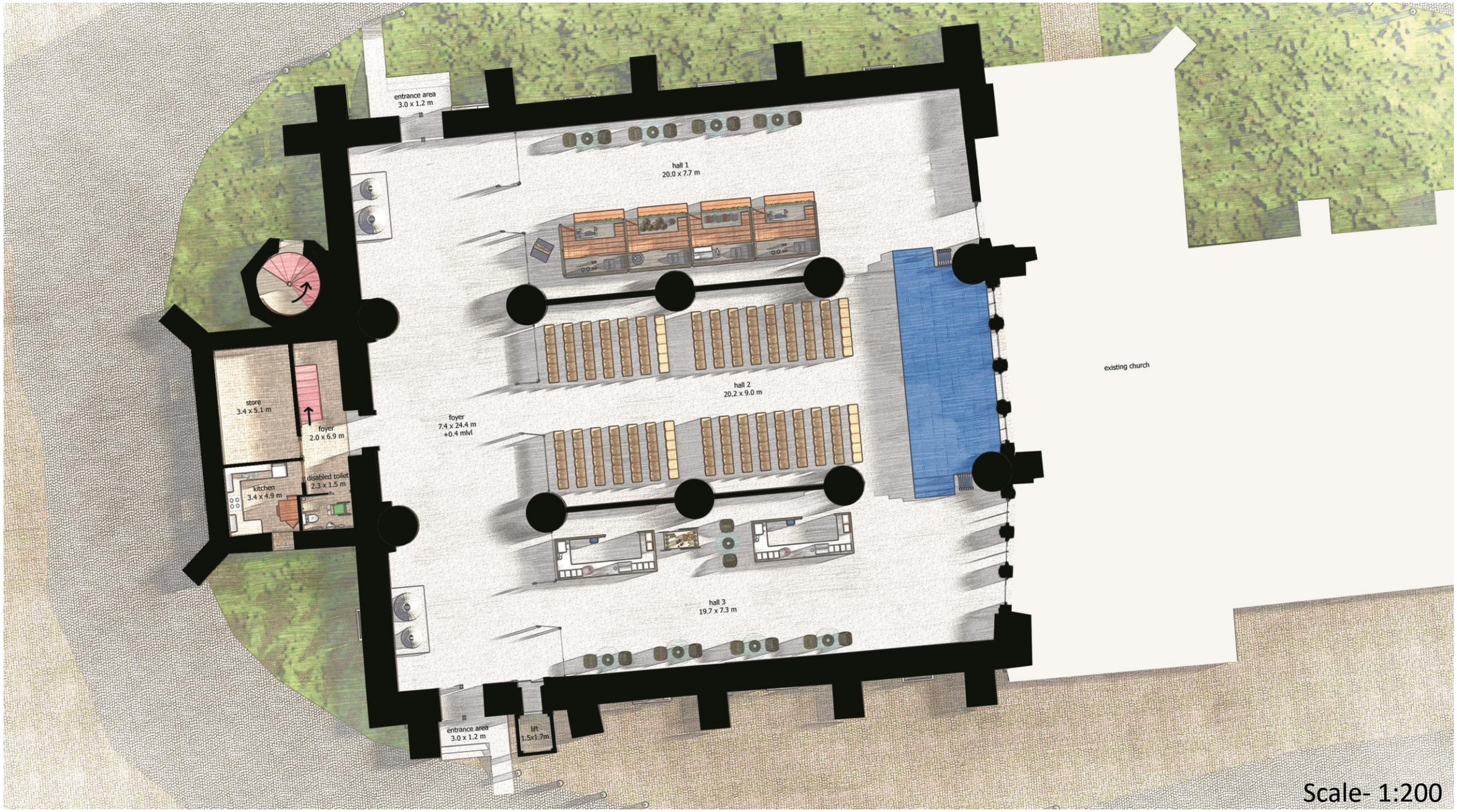

PRAYER SPACE EXTENSION


FOOD STALLS
STADTFEST/ PERFORMANCE
AREA
FOOD STALLS

CONCEPT



GROUND FLOOR AS A MULTIFUNCTIONAL SPACE



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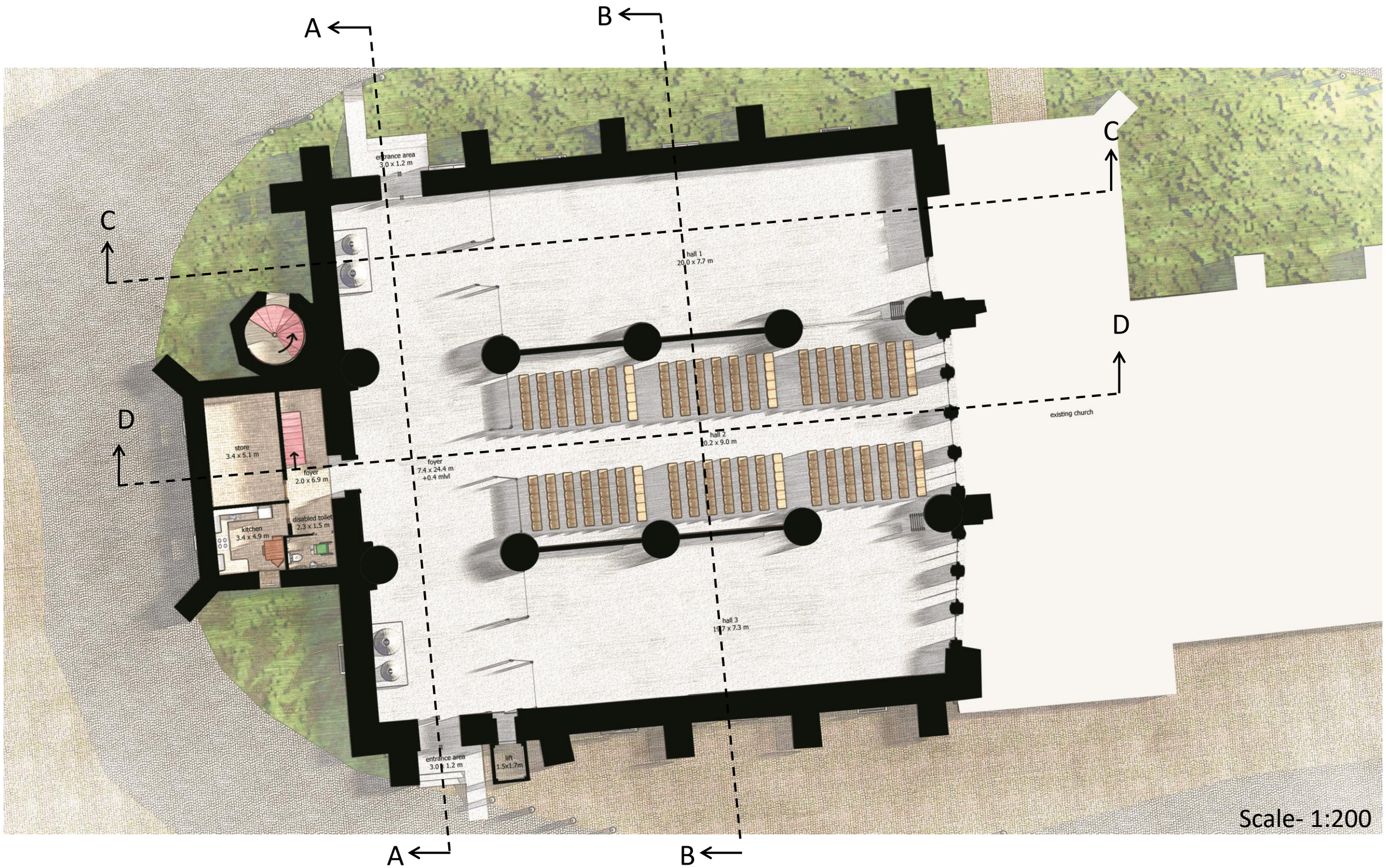

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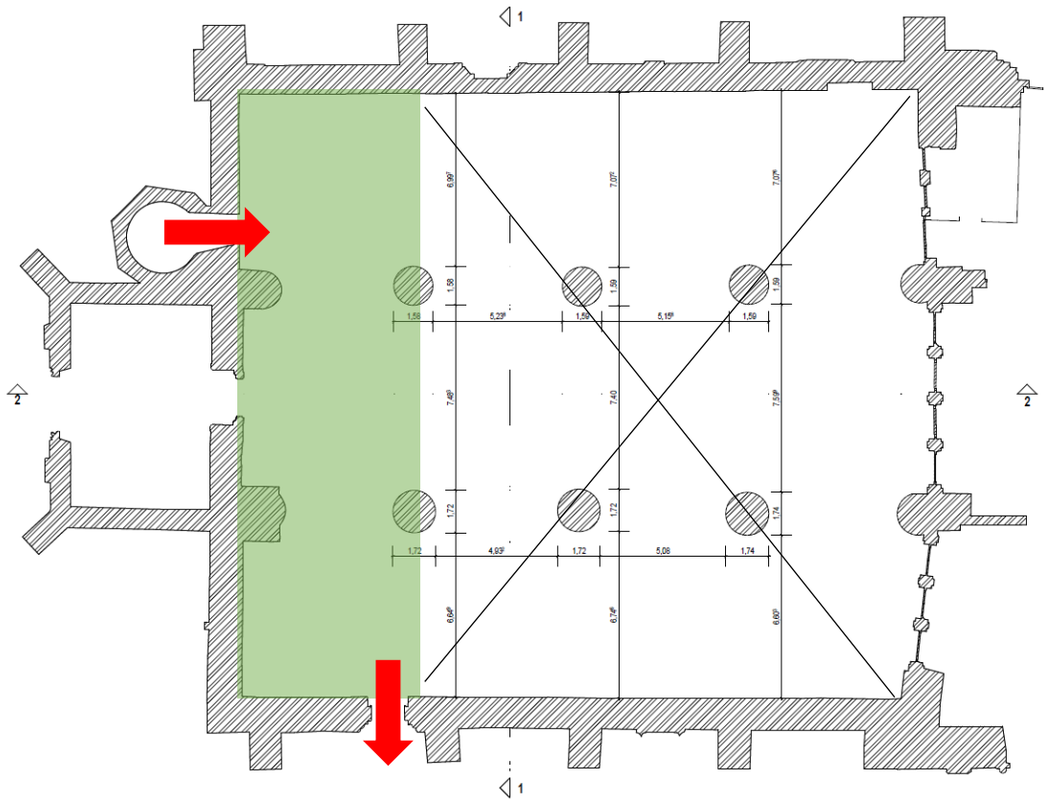
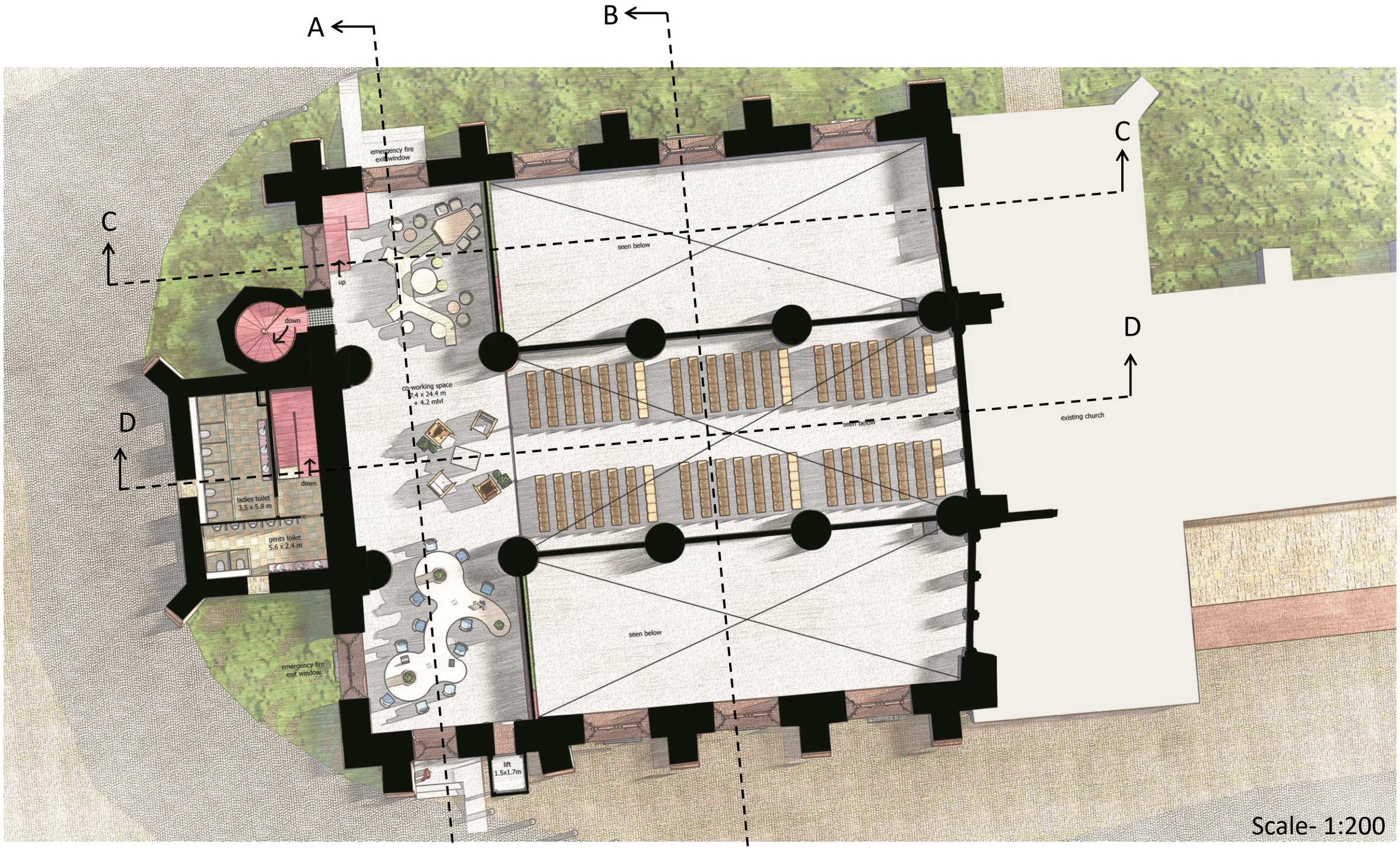
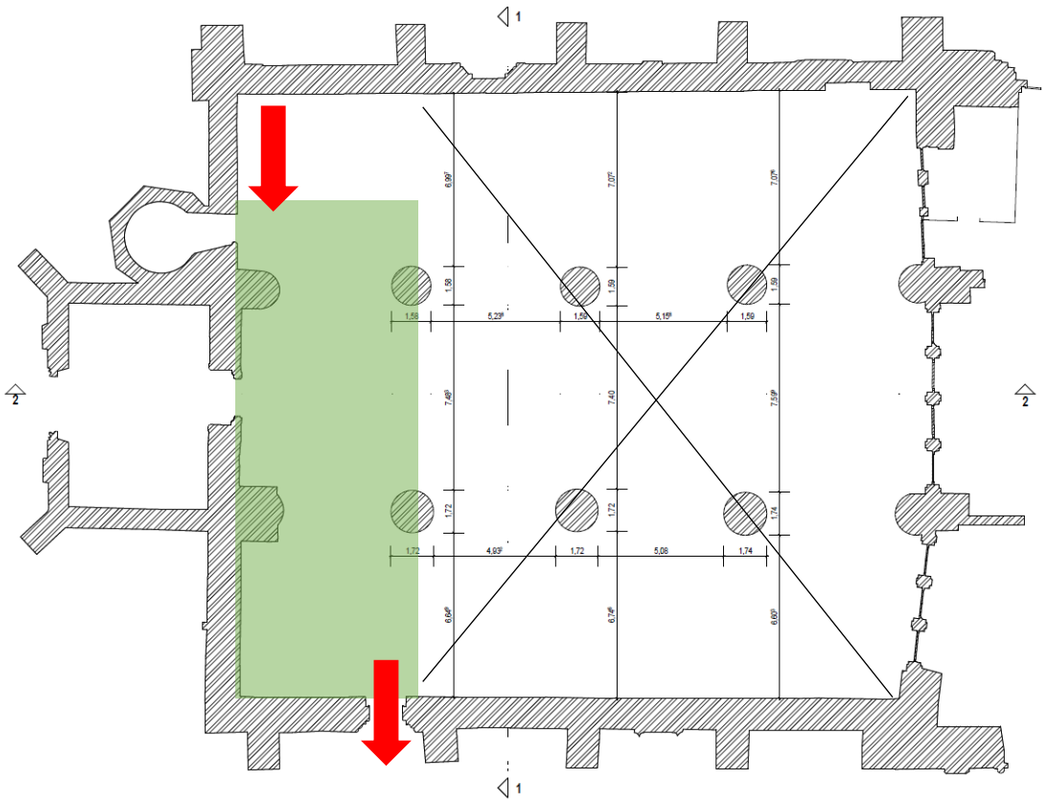


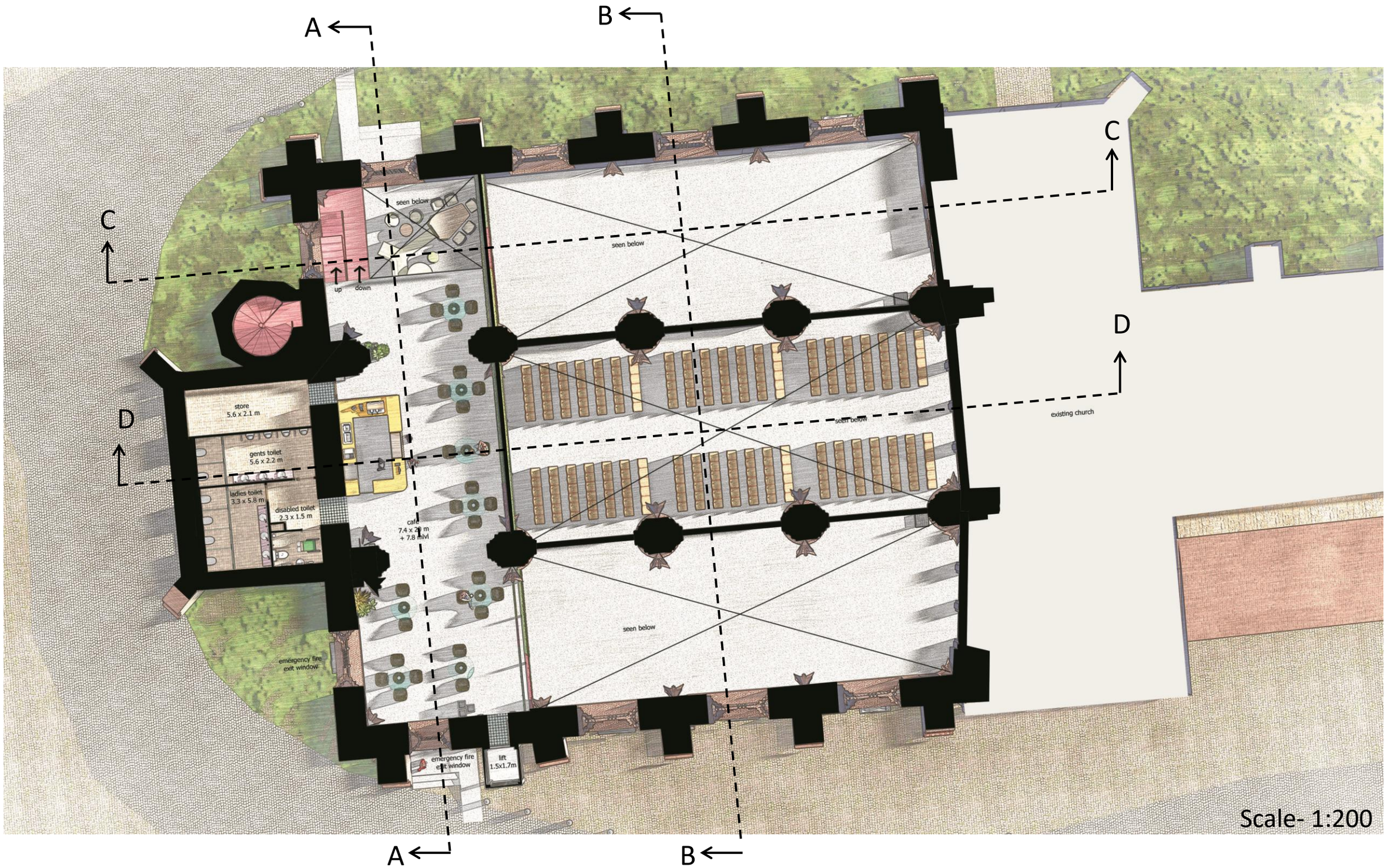
FIRST FLOOR AS A COWORKING SPACE



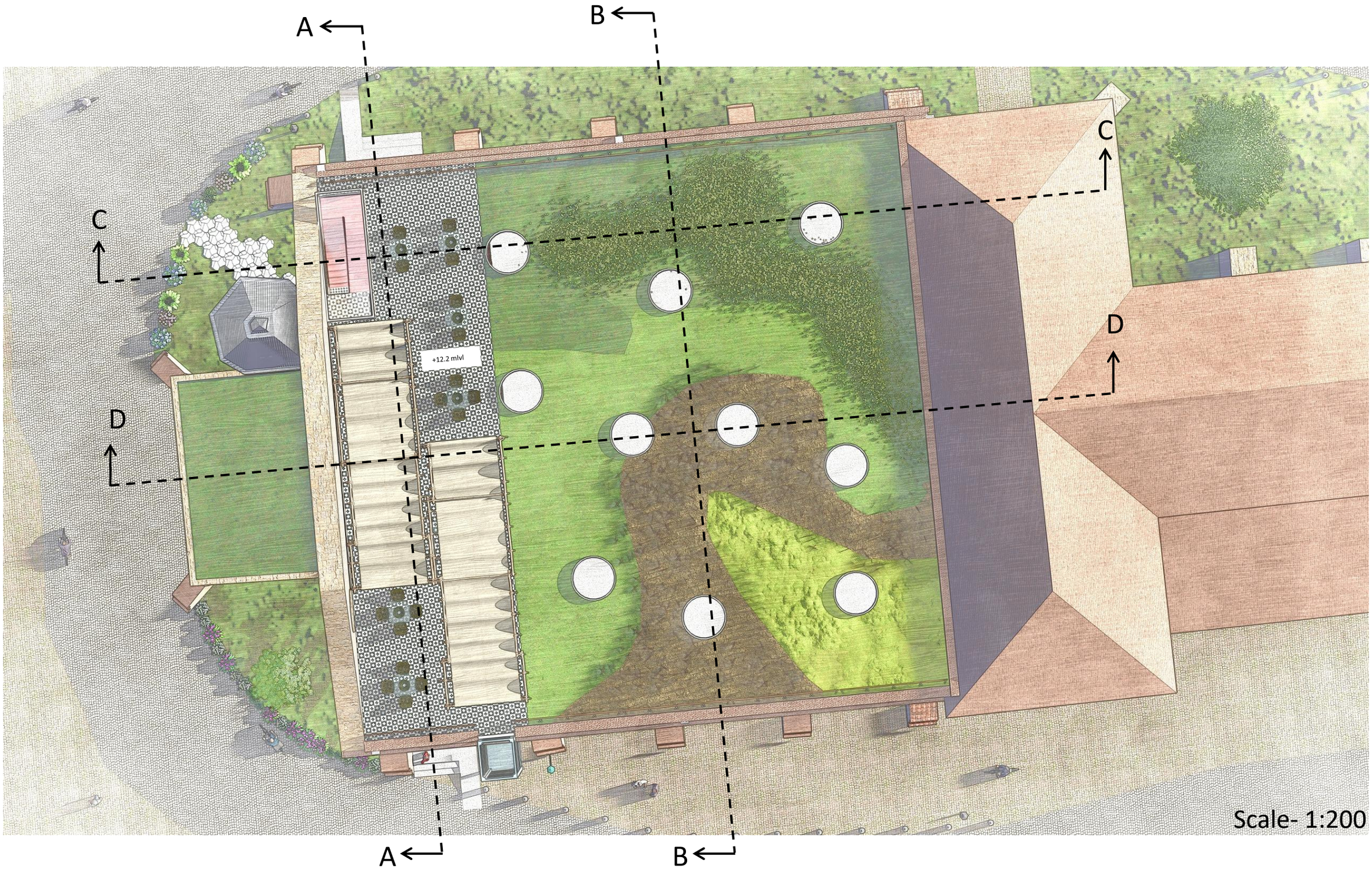
FIRST FLOOR AS A COWORKING SPACE



SECOND FLOOR AS CAFE



SECOND FLOOR AS CAFE



ROOF FLOOR

SECTION AA

SECTION BB

SECTIONAL ELEVATIONS

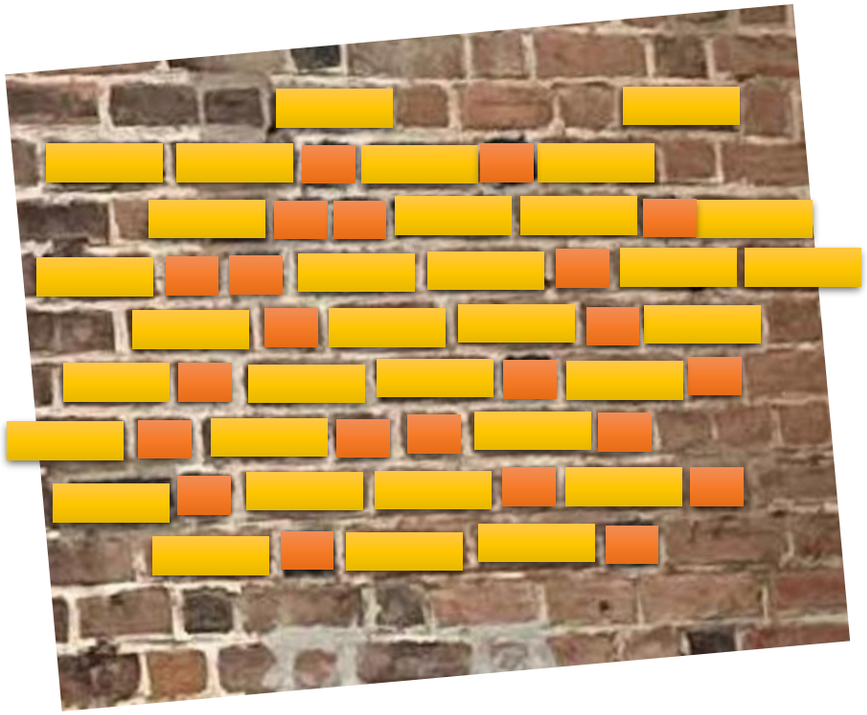
Scale- 1:200

SECTION CC

SECTION DD

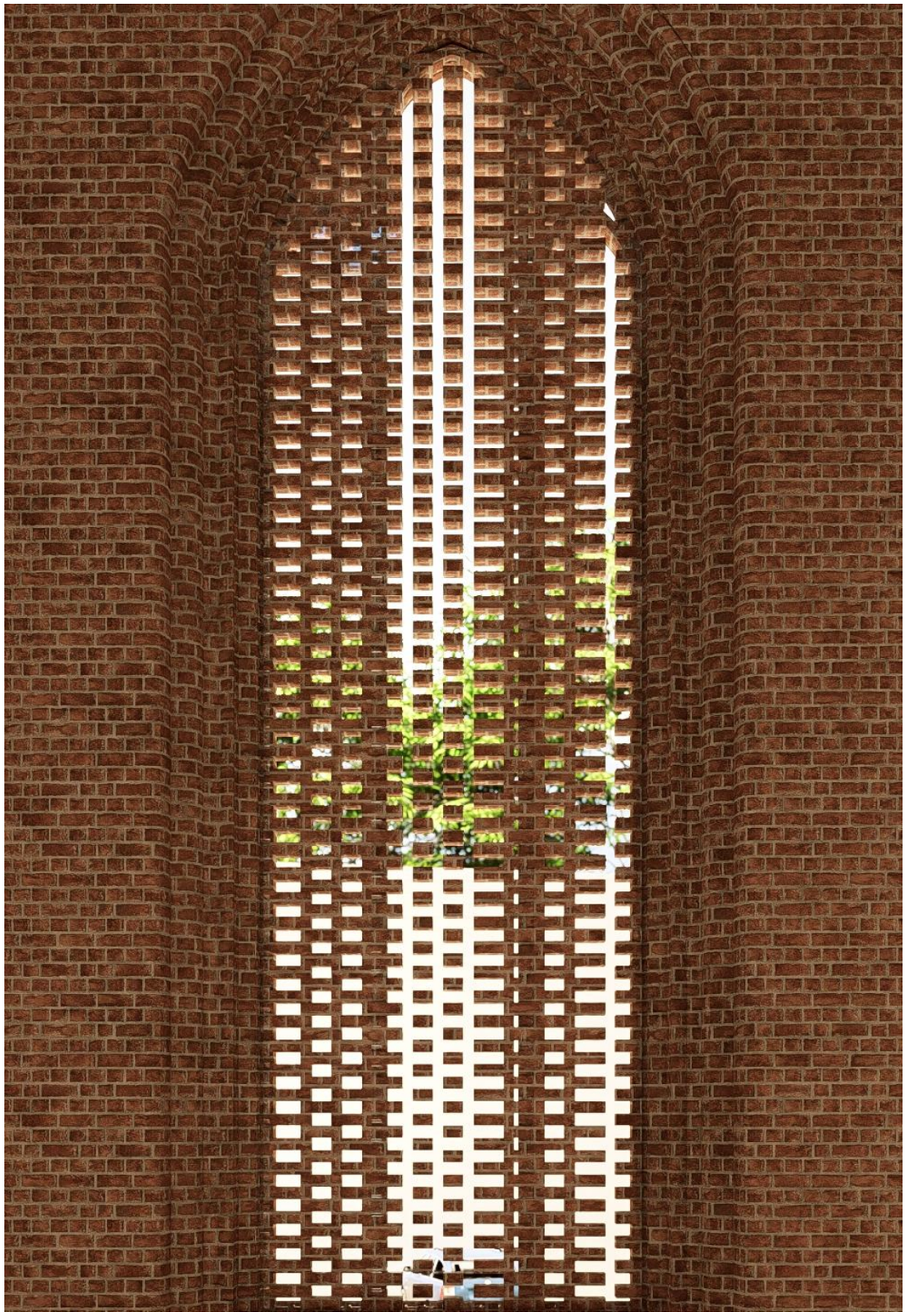
SECTIONAL ELEVATIONS

Scale- 1:200

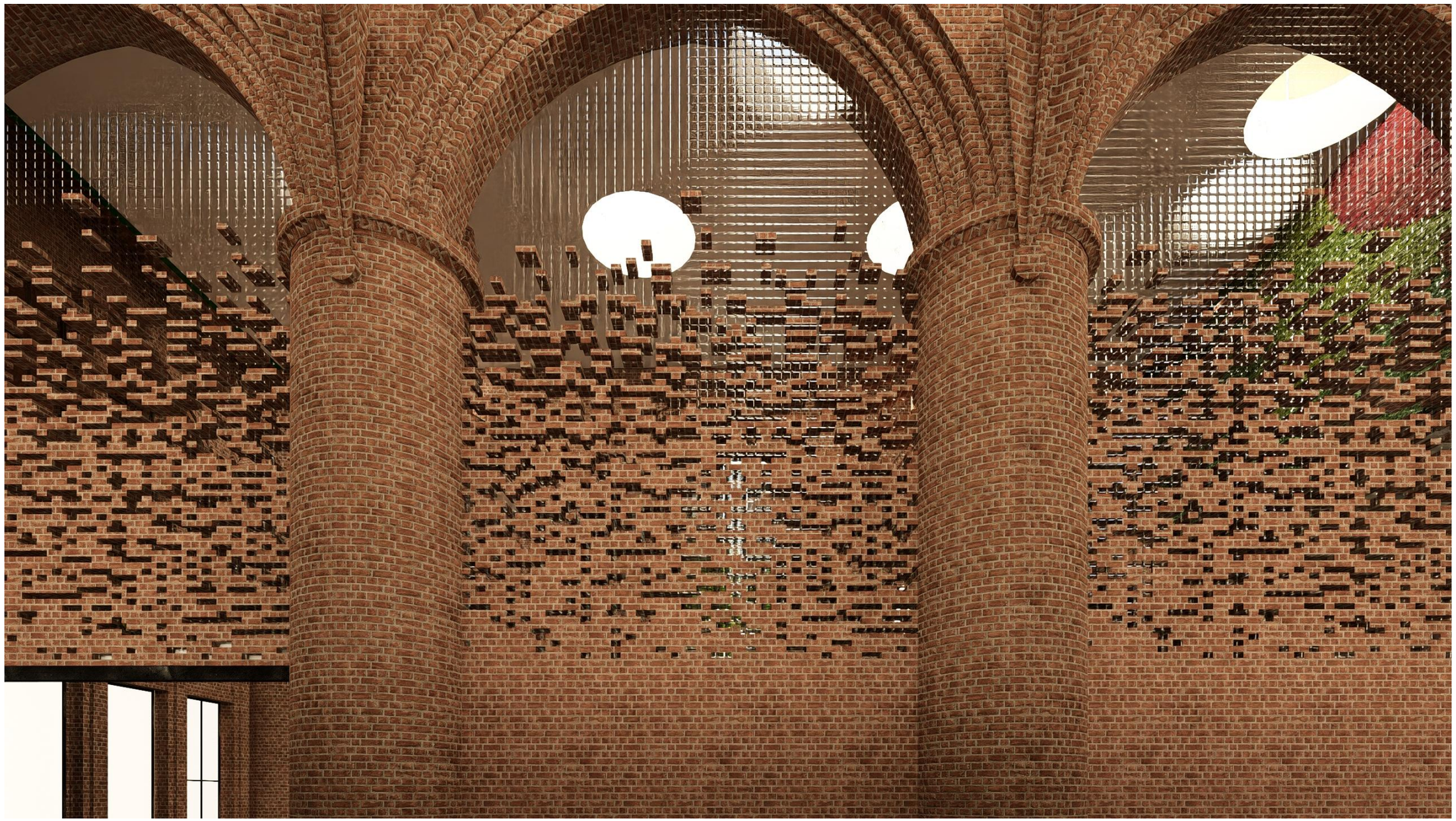


24x11.75x5.4 cm

SOLAR SQUARED

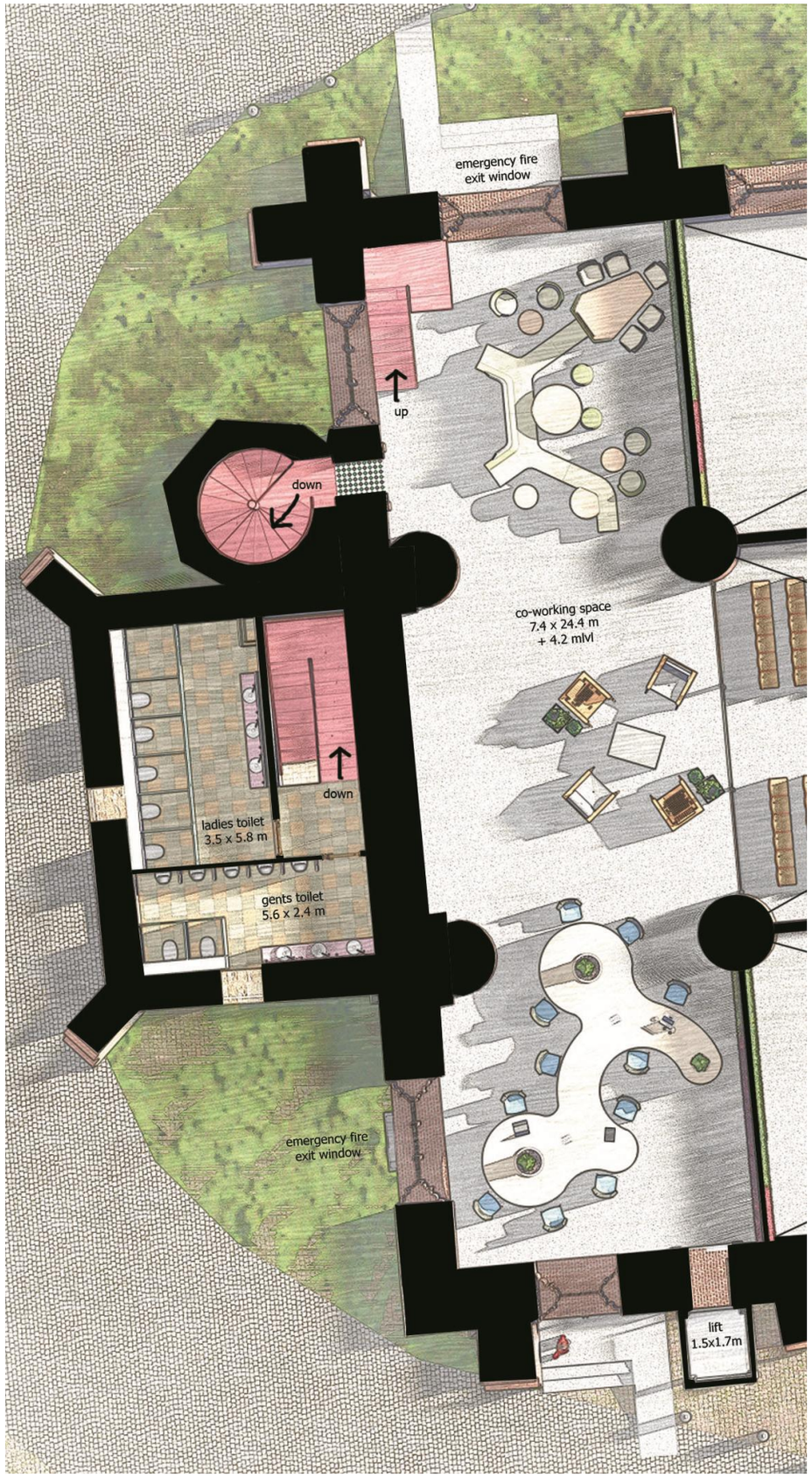


WINDOW- FLEMISH BOND- MIX OF GLASS BRICK

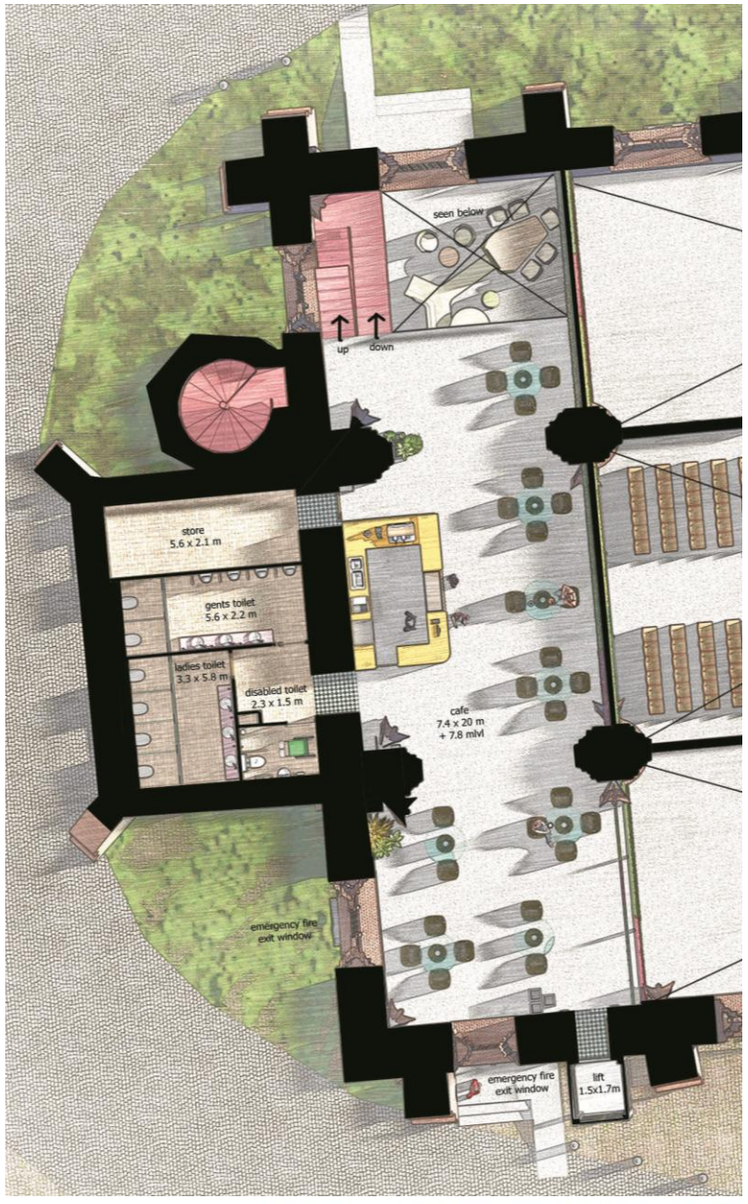


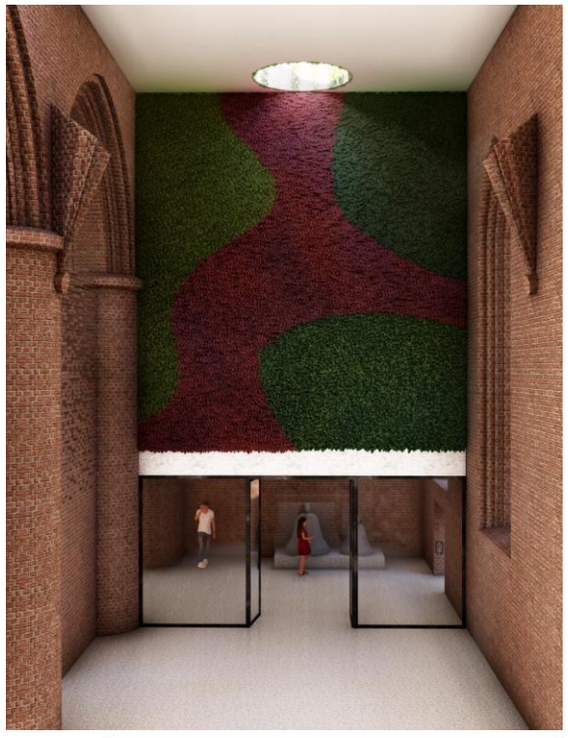
ARCH PARTITION WALL

Each glass panel, uniquely colored by the creativity of children and adults, will be installed, celebrating individuality and deepening the bond with current users.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT





Tradescantia

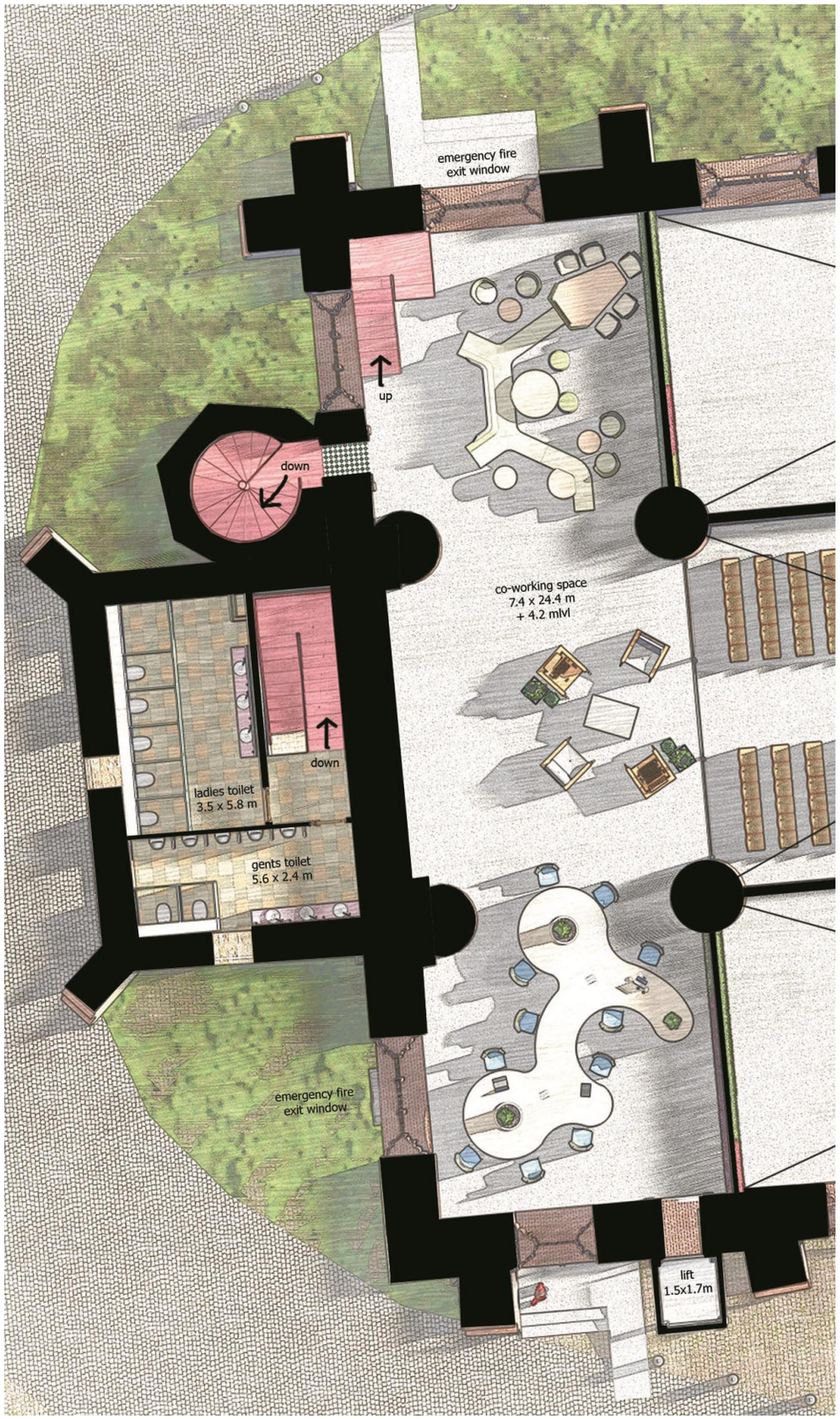
Dryopteris

Philodendron 'Imperial Red'

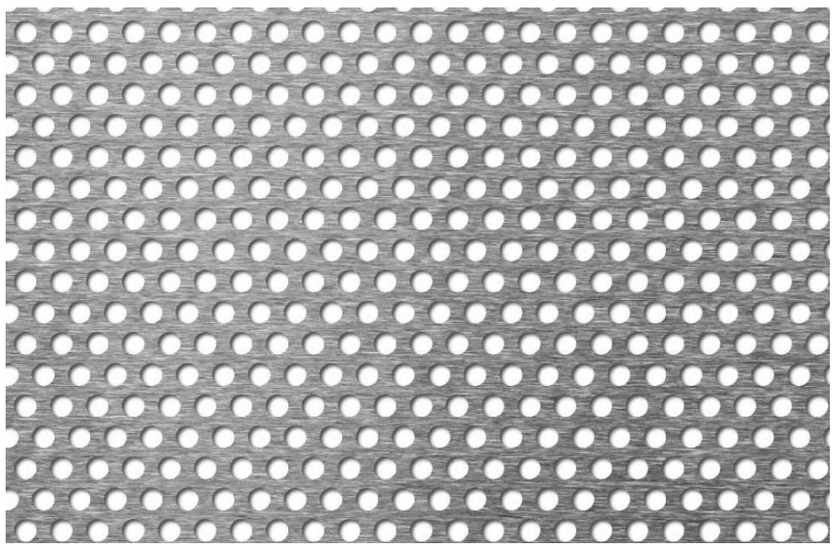
Hedera helix

Epipremnum

VERTICAL GARDEN

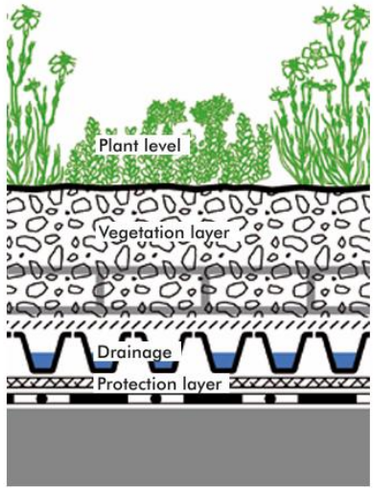


R5 T8 perforated sheet stainless steel, 1.50x1500x3000mm



PERFORATED METAL STAIRCASE

Weight kg/m²		Height mm
dry	at water capacity max.	
70	98	70
2	10	30
72	108	



Plant level as per plant suggestions
"Rockery Type Plants"

System Substrate "Rockery Type Plants"

Safety Device "Fallnet®", if required
(attention to load requirements)
Filter Sheet SF
Floradrain® FD 25-E
Protection Mat SSM 45
Root Barrier WSF 40,
if waterproofing is not root-resistant

Build-up height:	ca. 100 mm
Weight, saturated:	ca. 110 kg/m²
Water retention capacity:	ca. 36 l/m²

Sedum album varieties	White stonecrop varieties	50–100	white	6–8
e.g. ‚Coral Carpet'		50–100		
‚Murale'		50–100	white	6–8

Hieracium pilosella	Mouseear hawkweed	150–200	yellow	5–7

Koeleria glauca	Large blue hair grass	450–500	bluish	6–7

Sedum spurium	Dragon`s blood			
in varieties.				
e.g. ‚Album Superbum'		100–150	white**	7–8

SolarVert® "Saddle" Type

EXTENSIVE GREEN ROOFING

EXTERIOR VIEWS

EXTERIOR VIEWS

EXTERIOR VIEWS

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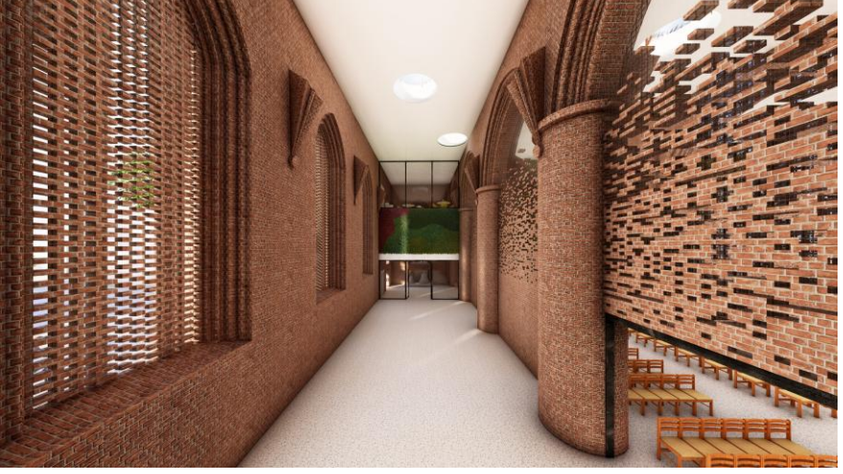

INTERIOR VIEWS

The purpose of this thesis was to propose a concept for the reuse of the demolished, abandoned western part of St. Bartholomäi Church, Zerbst/Anhalt. The original structure and the eastern part remain untouched, with very few yet deliberate interventions. The proposed multipurpose hall, coworking space, and café can attract people of all ages to this once-unused space.

The church’s spatial hierarchy, material integrity, natural lighting, and symbolic presence are carefully preserved. At the same time, new functions are introduced to respond to the evolving cultural and social needs of the community. The use of contemporary sustainable materials strengthens its environmental responsibility while extending the building's lifespan.

The result is a renewed civic space—meaningful, functional, and enduring. The church is no longer defined solely by its past, but by its ability to serve the present and adapt to the future. It stands as a place for gathering, interaction, and shared experience, welcoming people of all ages and backgrounds.

CONCLUSION

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