

GROUND FOR THOUGHTS



“The role that bathing plays within a culture reveals the culture’s attitude towards human relaxation. It is a measure of how far individual well-being is regarded as an indispensable part of community life.”

Siegfried Giedion

# GROUND FOR THOUGHTS

The square

Location

Context

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Detail

Night

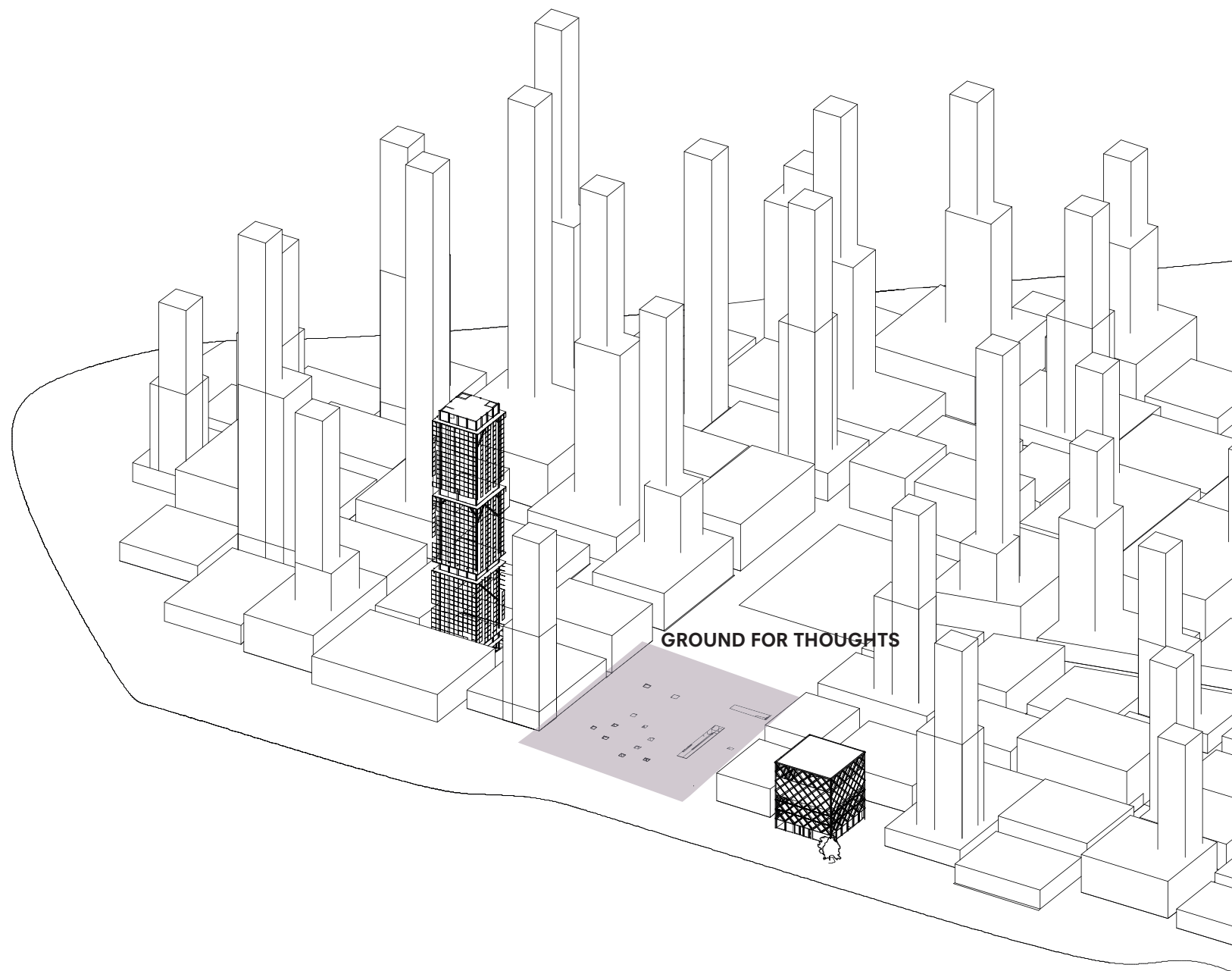
## The square

The *Ground for Thoughts* is laying just beneath the surface of the central square of Sluisbuurt. The different openings and materialisation of the square reveal parts of the layout of the design below. The square areas that are covered with pink tiles show the places of the special bathing spaces underground. Because these spaces are lower, they create the possibility of placing trees on top, which have 1,5 meters space in depth to grow. The window openings are covered by milky semi-transparent glass. This is done to enhance the private character below, but still give the suggestion of movement when standing in the underground part and looking up. The big swimming pool is covered by small round openings, that function as windows during the day, and as artificial lightning during the night. On the top right of the square, the entrance of the *Ground for Thoughts* is visible, subtly covered with golden metal ring mesh, to create a slow transition between city and the bathhouse below.



## Location

The *Ground for Thoughts* has a central spot within the highrise area of Sluisbuurt. Despite its prominent location, this part of the *Moments* complex is the most humble one. It shapes the design of the square, creating sitting and meeting spots. The *Ground for Thoughts* is an important part of the ensemble, because it is also the connector between the *Tower of Talks* and the *House of Rituals*. The entrances for the underground part don't only give access to the underground bathhouse, but also lead towards other spaces in between and eventually the other two parts of the ensemble. Creating the ability to leave the city in the middle of the most crowded square of the area was one of the most important reasons to locate this part of the design at this particular spot.

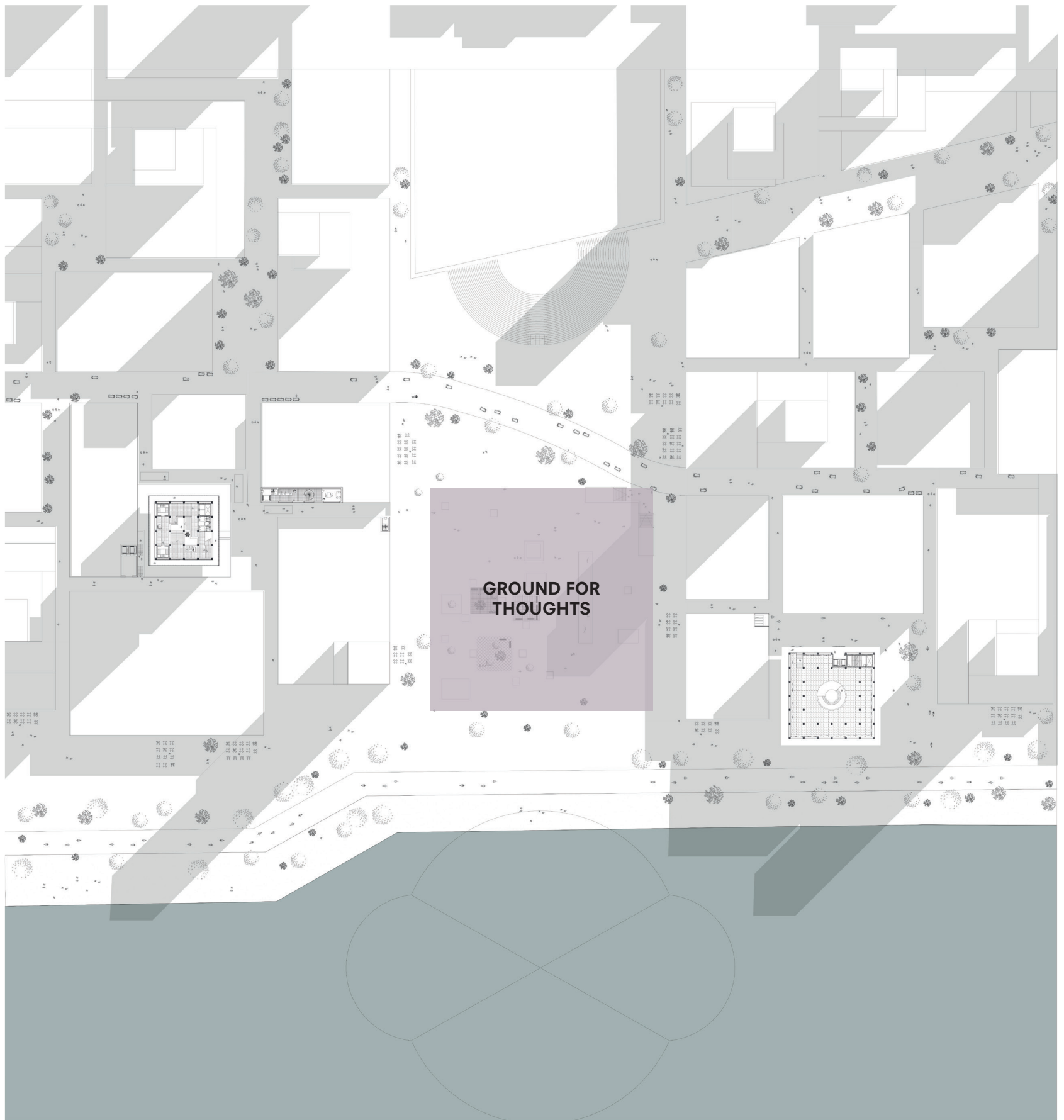


**GROUND FOR THOUGHTS**

## C o n t e x t

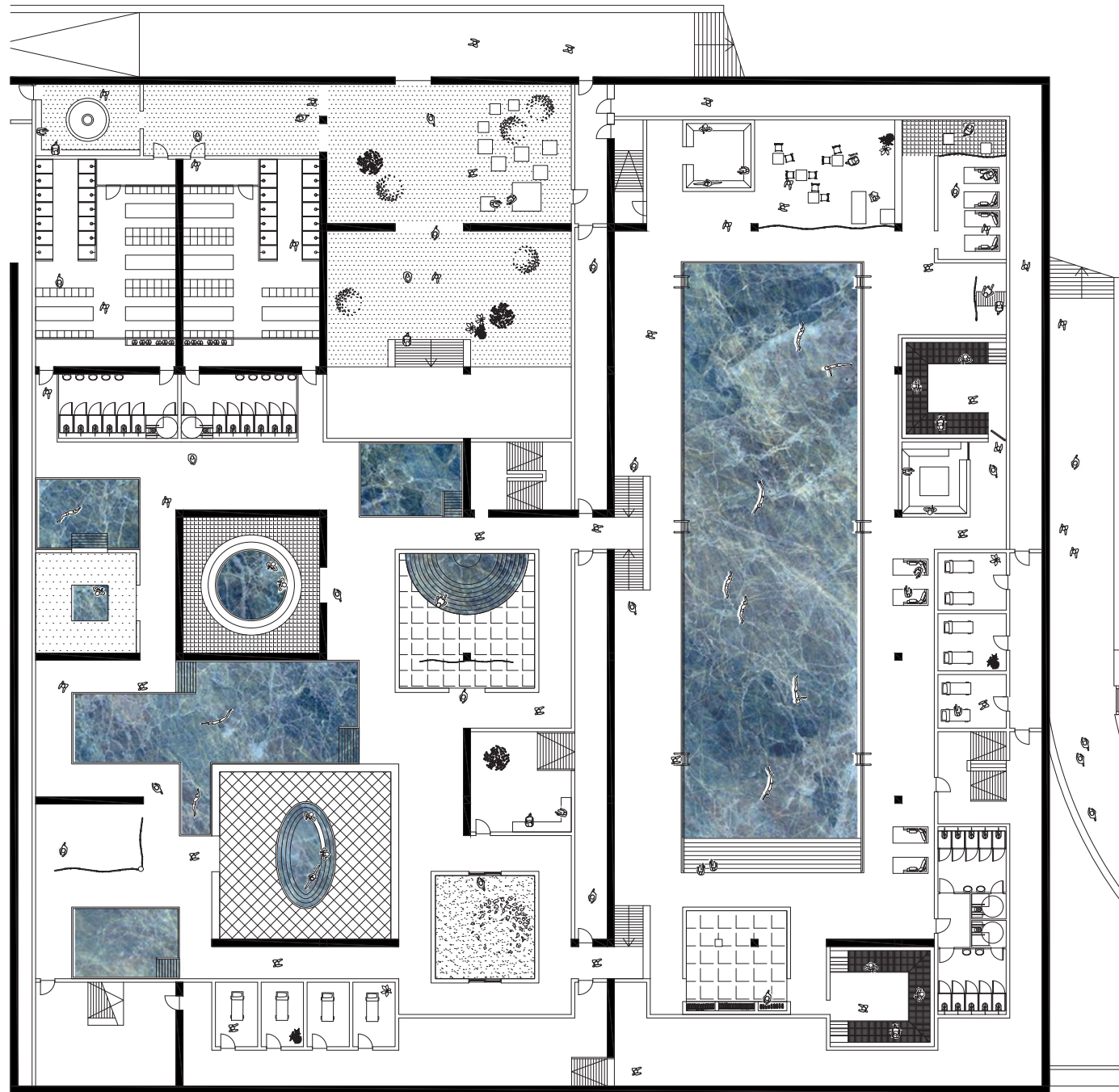
Seen from top view, the Ground for Thoughts is laying in the middle of the square, surrounded by different elements. On the left and right, the square is surrounded by buildings and towers of different heights. On the upper side, the loop for electric vehicles crosses the square. On the lower side, the project is situated next to the water of the IJ. The project is reachable from the square itself, but also via different other entrances throughout the entire complex. The complex is designed in such a way that there are multiple possibilities of leaving the hectic city life, towards the underground part. This underground part can also be used as a ritual itself, leaving the city for a moment of rest, to then enter into the urban life again. The narrow streets, of only 5 meters wide, have openings covered with semi-translucent glass, to always keep a connection with the world above.





## Plan

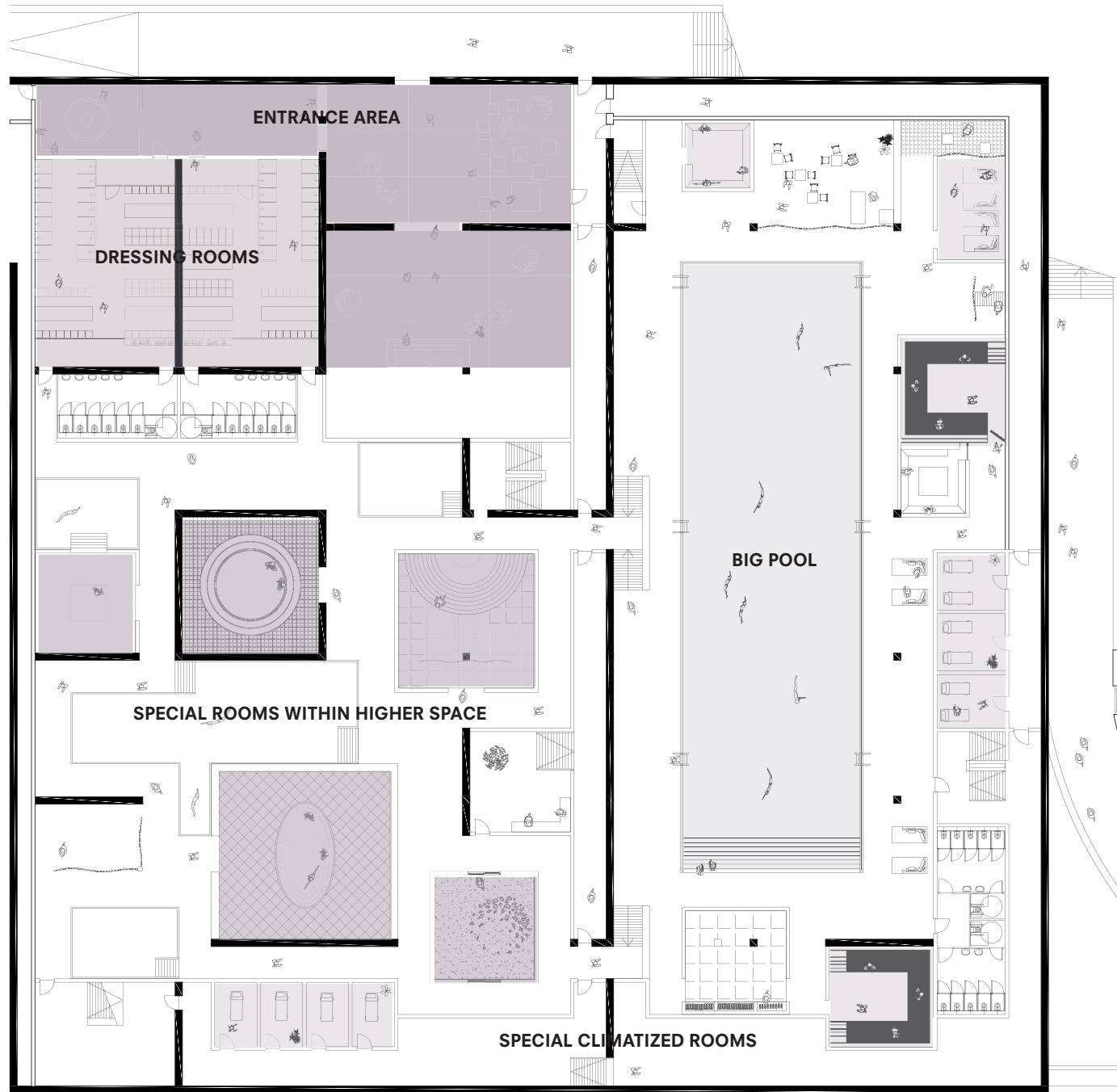
The *Ground for Thoughts* contains numerous different hot and cold baths. When wandering through the complex, you finally end up at the stairs leading towards the big swimming pool, which is situated lower than the other parts. This part is 10 meters deep, compared to the 7 meters deep floor that contains the smaller baths. The complex has 4 pools, 4 special baths and one big swimming pool of 42 meters long.



5m

## L a y o u t

The plans of Ground for Thoughts exist out of three main areas. The first one is the big entrance area, connected with the dressing rooms. This entrance area is very big, referring to the imposing scale of the ancient bathhouses that I researched during my graduation. The second area is the area with many smaller pools and special rooms within a higher space. This area is meant for wandering around and contemplating, swimming and relaxing. The small openings towards the square let light in, that guides you around corners and into other spaces. The third main area, is the area that contains the big swimming pool. This space, which is even higher than the other areas, has small round openings towards the square. Around this big pool, there are several smaller sauna's and other rooms that need a special climate. The staff area and other technical spaces surround these areas. This also creates interesting crossings between staff and visitor.



## Interior

The interior of the *Ground for Thoughts* is calm and peaceful. It is focused on the horizontality of its layout, with all daylight coming from above. The higher concrete spaces give access to different pools and lower spaces. All the lower spaces contain special baths and are materialised with pink tiles. The materialisation is based on layers of harder and softer materials, and differences in transparency. Soft and colourful curtains and textiles contrast with the concrete and terrazzo tiles. The serene atmosphere enhances the character of the space. The act of moving through these spaces encourages room for thought.

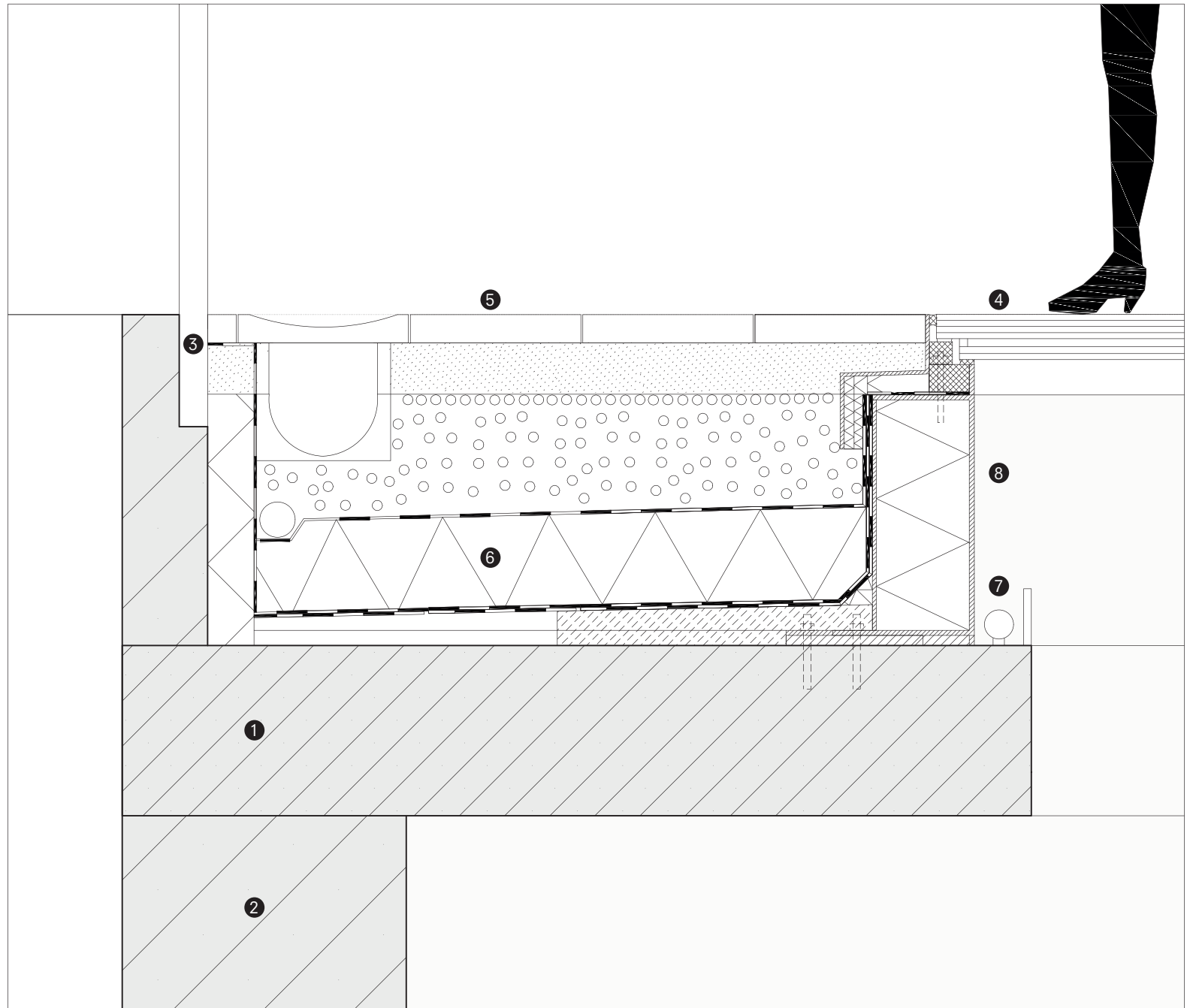


interior

## D e t a i l

This detail shows the materialisation and construction of the roof of the underground part of the complex. The underground routes that lead to the different buildings have openings towards the streets above, making a subtle connection between the two worlds. The concrete slabs are carrying the semi-translucent glass of the openings.





Square roof detail  
1:10

- 1 reinforced concrete slab
- 2 reinforced concrete structural wall
- 3 GM railing
- 4 skylight to bear foot traffic,  
surface etched to reduce danger of  
slipping
- 5 concrete pavement tiles
- 6 thermal insulation
- 7 lightbulb
- 8 steel cone, painted

## N i g h t

The Moments complex is opened 24/7. At nighttime, the building lights up from beneath, which strengthens the presence of the bathhouse on the public square. These lighted openings create a mysterious atmosphere on the square, subtly lighting up the trees and other direct surroundings. Sometimes, the bathhouse ventilates through the square openings, leaving waterdamp on the square like fog, which creates another layer of invisibility.

