



CHILDREN'S HOME OF THE FUTURE

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Children's Home of the Future

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Danish architecture studio CEBRA has completed a pioneering project for a new type of 24-hour care centre for marginalized children and teenagers in Kerteminde, Denmark. The tile- and wood-clad building plays with familiar elements and shapes to create a homely environment in a modern building that focuses on the residents' special needs. The Children's Home of the Future combines the traditional home's safe environment with new pedagogical ideas and conceptions of a modern children's home and the needs it should fulfil.



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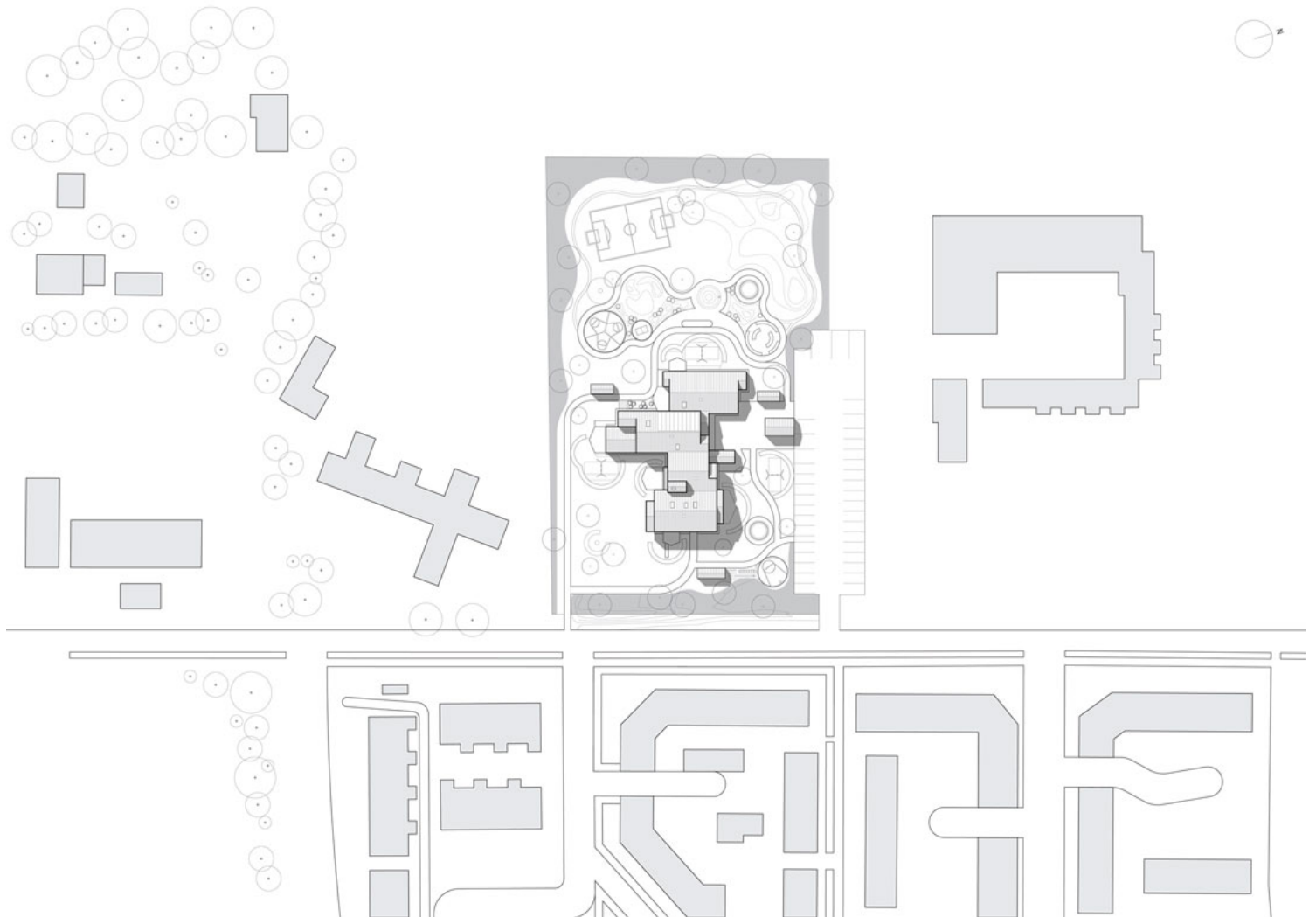


The vision for the new institution is to establish a care centre that encourages social relations and a sense of community, while at the same time accommodating the children's individual needs – a place that they are proud to call their home and that prepares them for their future path in life in the best possible way. The physical surroundings reflect a practice-oriented pedagogic approach so that the architecture actively supports the staff's daily work with children, who struggle with behavioural, social and mental health problems.

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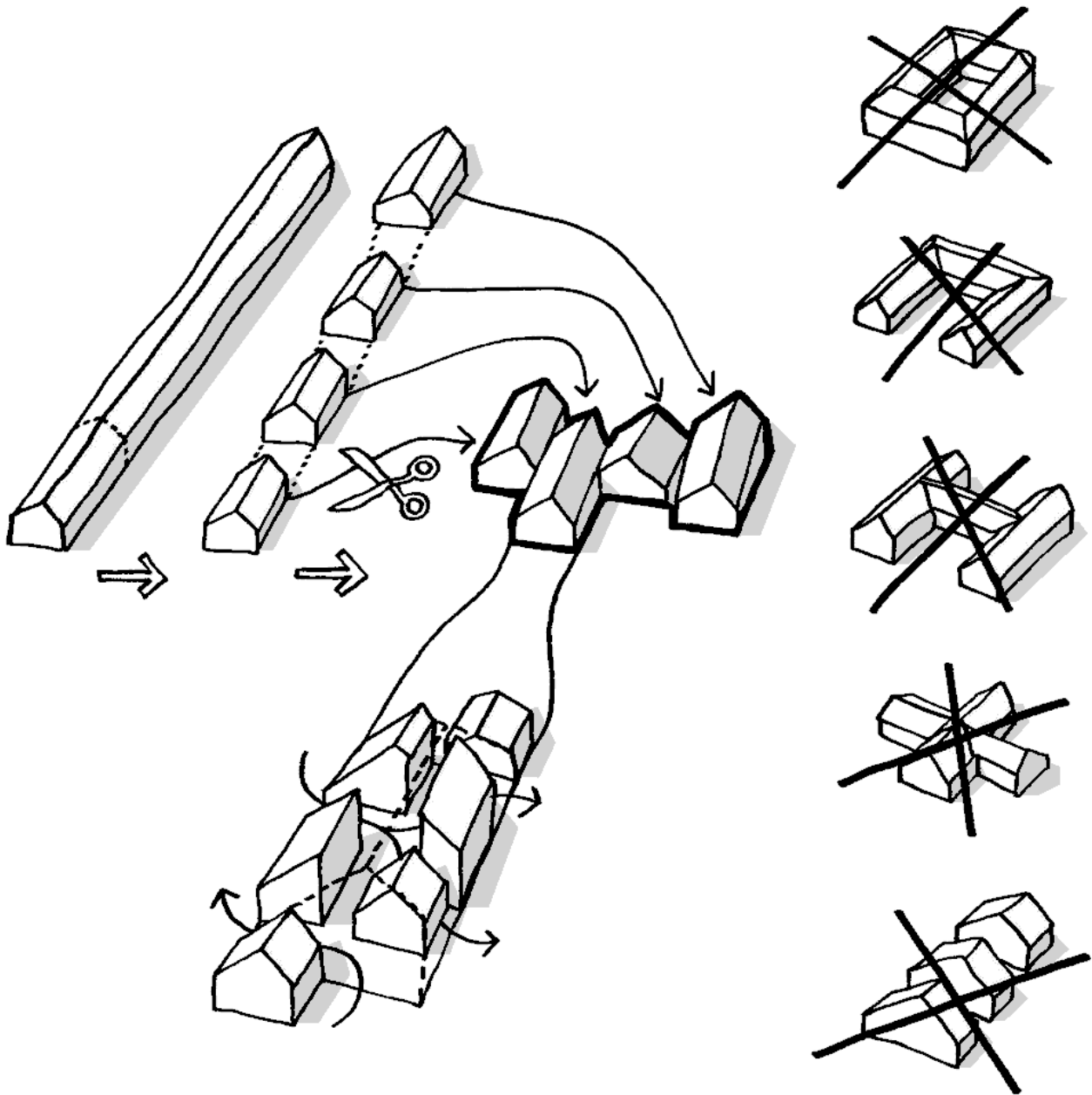


Site plan

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Diagrams

A place like home

Whether it is in children's drawings or a web browser's stylised icon, at all ages we recognise and use the rectangular pitched-roof building with a chimney as a sign for "home". It is the visual essence of the functions it contains, both literally and symbolically. The design for the new children's home takes the familiar basic shapes of the typical Danish home as its natural starting point: the classic pitched-roof house and the dormer motif. The two elements are used in their most simplified form to create a recognisable exterior appearance and integrate the building into the surrounding residential area. They make up the project's underlying architectural DNA, which expresses inclusion, diversity and an atmosphere of safety.

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By combining and applying the basic elements in a new and playful way the care centre is highlighted as an extraordinary place with its own identity. The basic geometric shape is modified by the distinctive dormer profiles, which grow into and out of the building volume, are turned upside down and even rise up to form a view point. The concept adds spatial variation and functional flexibility to the interior organisation. The dormers give the residents the opportunity to make their own mark on the building by involving them in the arrangement, décor and use of these "bonus spaces" according to varying needs and changing activities. The varying sizes and orientations allow for a wide range of applications such as reading and movie corners, a study for doing homework, areas for painting and crafting, common rooms for festive events etc.

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More home, less institution

The overall organisation consists of four interconnected houses. The elongated wings of the traditional institutional building are split up and contracted to form a compact building with offset volumes. Thereby, the building scale is reduced, and self-contained varied units are created for the different groups of residents. Each age group has its own house in connection with a central unit for flexible use. The layout aims to provide the residents with a sense of belonging to their unit – a homely base where they can retreat alone or in smaller groups.

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The smaller children's units are retracted from the street and oriented towards the garden with direct access to the playground. The central unit contains the main entrance, connecting with the parking lot, which gives the staff an overview of arriving visitors and deliveries without affecting the housing units. The teenagers' unit is the most extroverted section of the building and is oriented towards the street. The older residents are encouraged to use the city and engage in social activities on equal terms with their peers.

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Typical institutional functions such as administration, staff rooms and storage are mostly located in the basement and on the 1st floor so that they are “lifted” out of the residents' everyday lives, minimising the feeling of being in an institution. The building's rational organization ensures short distances and proximity between the different units so that the personnel are always close by for residents. Thus, the personnel's working procedures are incorporated effectively in the daily routines, freeing up more time for taking care of and spending time with the children – more home, less institution.

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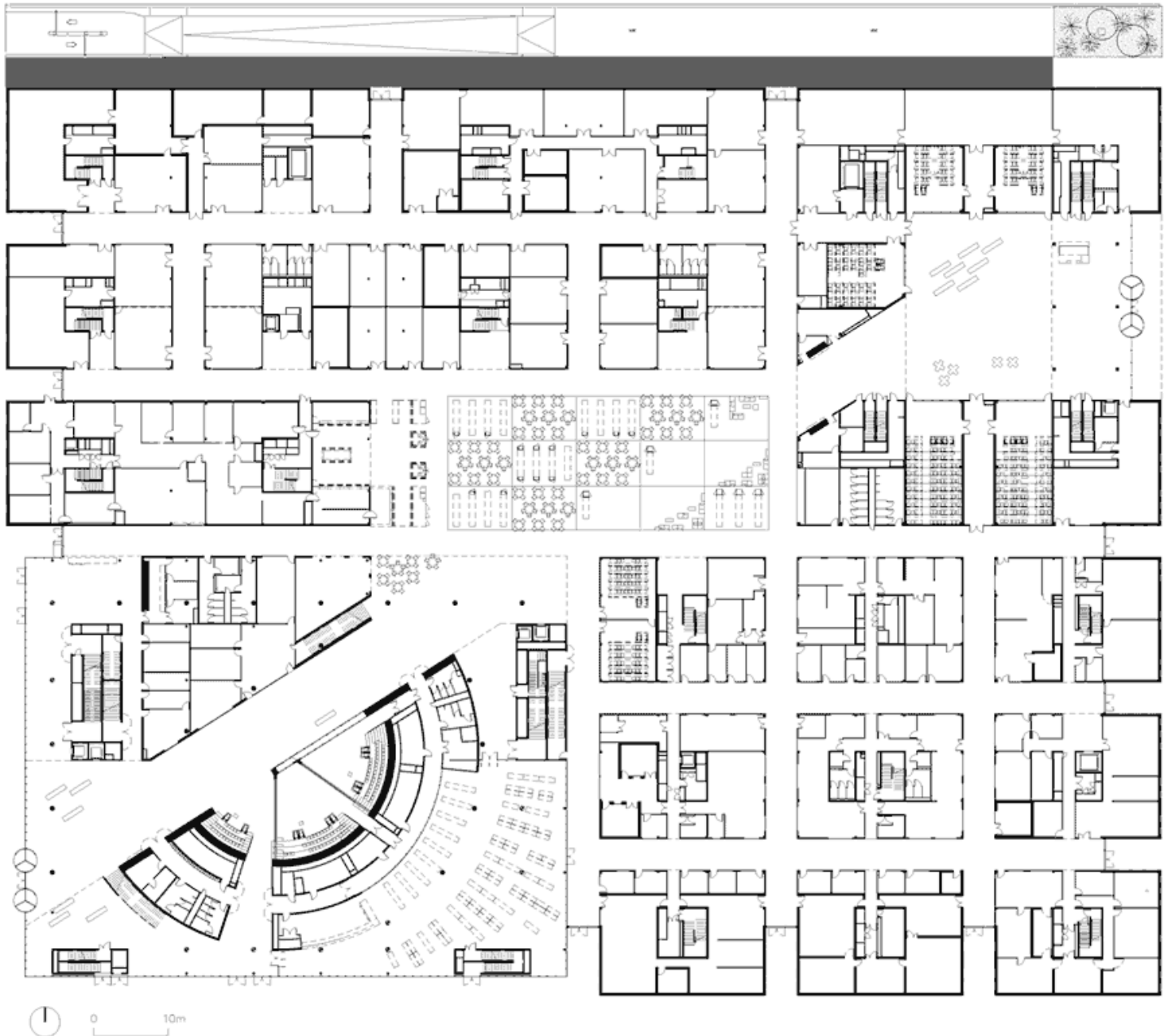


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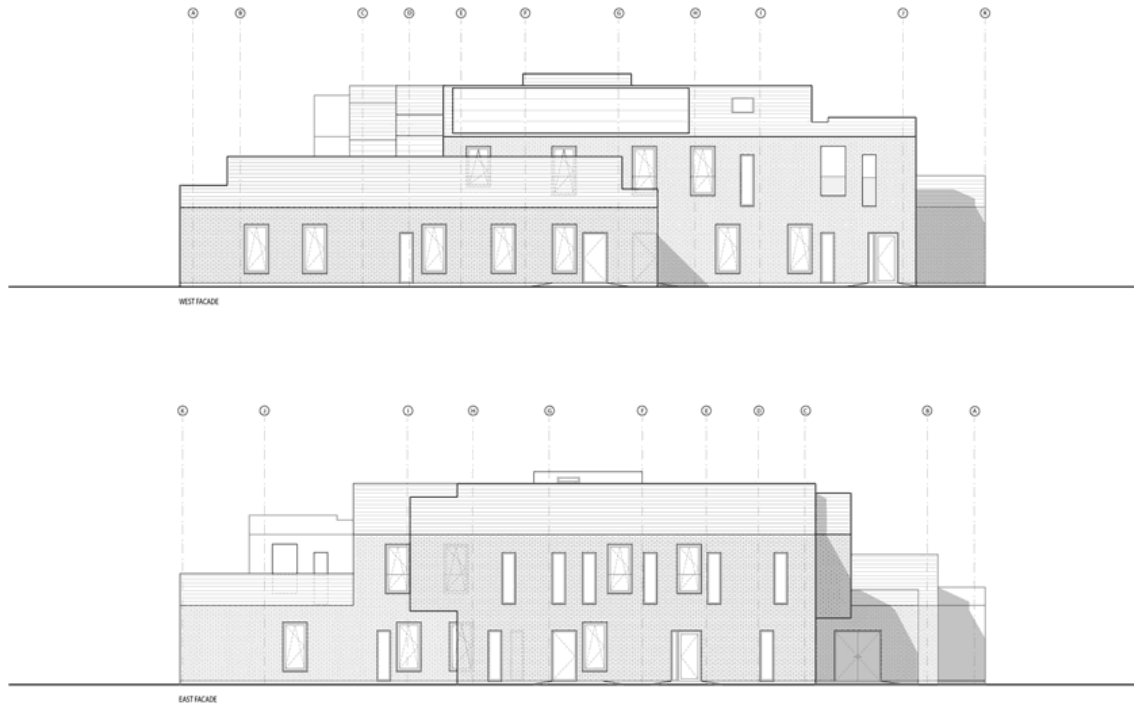


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Plans



Sections

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