

The industrial building takes on a face/shape.

Renovation of the former warehouse in Vilnius.

Type of intervention

Restoration Rehabilitation / Renovation

Concerned elements on the intervention project

- 1. Foundations and underground structures
- 2. Vertical structures
- 3. Horizontal structures and vertical connections
- 4. Roof and terraces
- 5. Façade and building envelope
- 6. Finishes and completion elements
- 7. Integrate services
- 8. General strategies for building recovery

Site START-UP CENTER „Tech Loft“ Algirdo g. 38, Vilnius

Objectives Rehabilitation of the XIXth c. outhouse / storage building into a start-up centre.

Property

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Date 2020



Background to the intervention

The new business centre "Tech Loft" is located in a popular place of the capital, Naujamiestis. It is a part of Vilnius, located in the city centre, on the left bank of the Neris River, west of Vilnius railway station. Although "Naujamiestis" is a "new city" by its name, in fact it is one of the oldest districts in Vilnius. With the construction of the St. Petersburg-Warsaw railway in the 19th century, the development of the district became extremely rapid. According to the new plan, the district has been divided into rectangular quarters, with straight streets planned instead of the former streets and roads. At the end of the 19th century, construction on these streets intensified significantly. As in the whole of Vilnius, the construction of multi-storey brick buildings has started here. Many industrial, trade, communication, construction and transport companies operate in Naujamiestis, with branches of commercial banks, embassies, medical institutions, tourism and service companies.

The building that housed the new Tech Loft start-up centre was formerly a two-story outbuilding and now has been transformed into a vibrant, attractive office centre with collaborative spaces.



Fig.1a: Location of the building in the city; Town Hall Square is marked in yellow, "Tech Loft" in red.

Description of the building

The building where the new start-up centre was located was formerly a two-storey outbuilding built from the 19th century. At the end of the 20th century it was reconstructed several times - the volume of the building was increased, the floors and roof were changed. At the end of the 20th century it was reconstructed several times - the volume of the building was increased, the floors and roof were changed. The building was used for storage. The last reconstructions took place in 1994. A new project for the reconstruction of the administrative building was prepared in 2010. But it was not fully implemented and influenced subsequent decisions. A major renovation of the disused loft-type building on Algirdo Street was started in 2019.

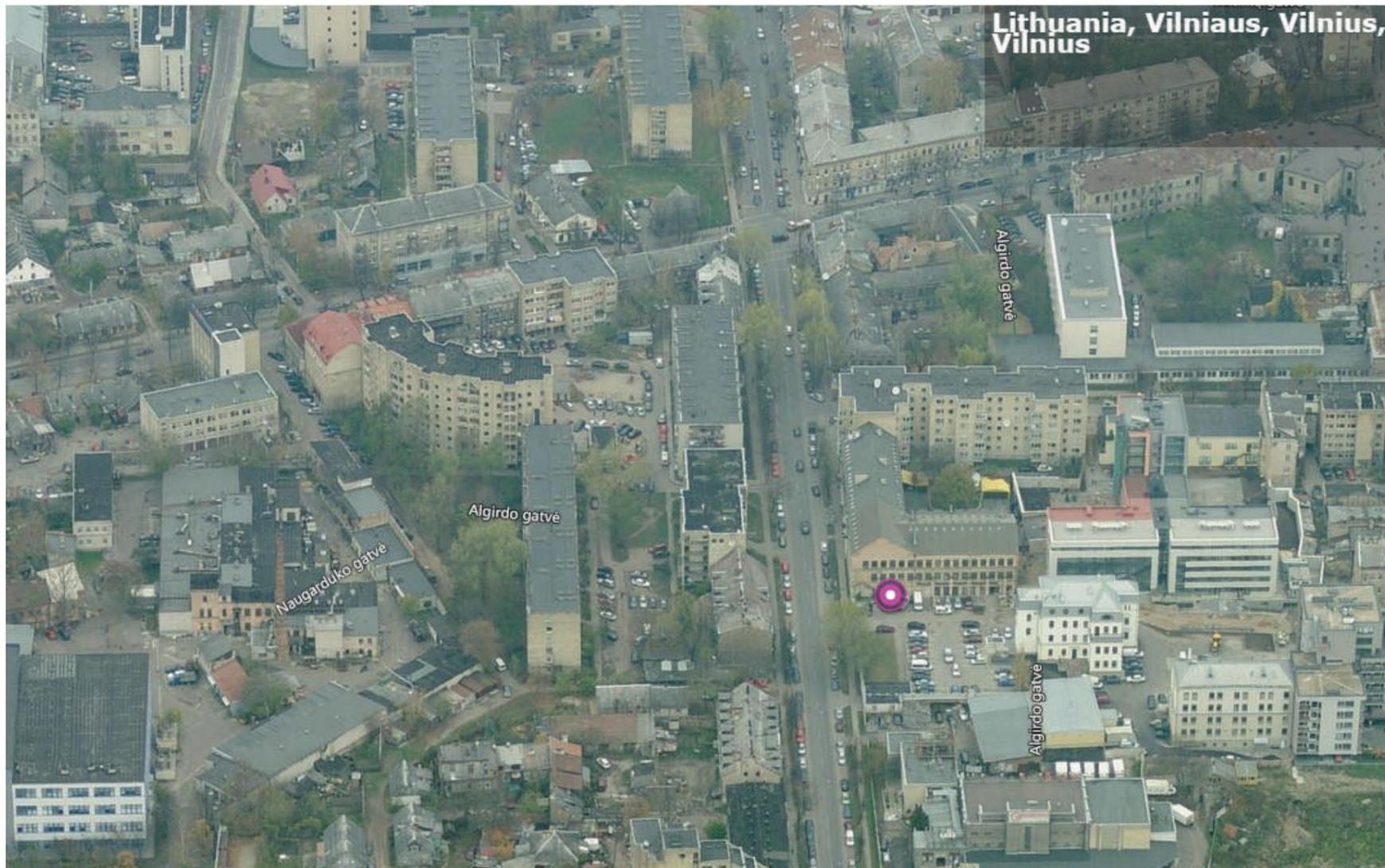


Fig.1b: Location of the building in the city.



Fig.2: Renovated building.

The Diagnosis of the building (values and state)

The building was used as a warehouse, its value was small.



Fig.3: Street facade before renovation.



Fig.4: Street facade after renovation.



Fig.5: Yard facade before renovation.



Fig.6: Yard facade after renovation.

Rehabilitation works

The uniqueness of the project is to take into account the heritage protection aspects, the harmony of the old and the new. Some of the details of the iteration of the various periods have been moved to a new context. While reconstructing this 19th century farm building, efforts were made to maintain its character, leaving open structures and concrete floors in the interior, without using excess decor, but making maximum use of the former elements.

The architects managed successfully to preserve and integrate what is possible into the new building: the old elevator, the old structures, and certain other elements of the building. Even old wooden gates are also used on the facade. They wanted to use everything we found valuable. Therefore, there were both doors and windows that they used in the interior after the renovation, with a new feature.

One of the interior design solutions is to use old furniture, restoring it and reviving it. It was necessary to adapt to the existing structure of the building - structural elements, volume, rhythm of windows, certain elements left over from older reconstructions (the main staircase with an elevator), but at the same time not hiding the history of the building. Some elements had to be strengthened or supplemented, but the former brick walls, monolithic and part of the metal columns remained, the existing stairs and some new elements of the building appeared - a small first floor extension, a shop window on the third and attic floors, roof correction. New parts of the facade appeared for both functional and aesthetic reasons. One of them is the first floor extension (frosted glass box). The walls of the old building on the ground floor were reinforced with additional brick traffic lights, which were quite active on the façade. In order to hide them, a first-floor annex was created, which became a new element of the façade, directing visitors towards the main entrance. It is equipped with a shared kitchenette, and the glass profile used for decoration is a restrained but non-standard

solution. Other new expressive facade elements: a showcase window and a balcony. The showcase, which visually connects the third and attic floors, has become a recognizable and characteristic element of the facade when looking at the building from further perspectives, for example, at the intersection of Kaunas and Algirdo streets. A balcony has been installed in the attic floor to allow access to the attic floor by the main staircase of the building, as the former slope of the roof did not allow for a convenient entrance to the site. Thus, in search of both functional and aesthetic solutions to the problem, it was necessary to "fold up" part of the roof, at the same time opening a large balcony under the roof, which the current tenants of the attic office are successfully using.

The building is monochrome, painted very light grey. The bright building in the surroundings of Vilnius Naujamiestis becomes visible and stands out from the surroundings. The finishing materials of its facade are close to the former building: plaster on the side of Algirdo Street, painted brick on the side of the inner yard. Glass profile was used for the decoration of the first floor extension - frosted glass decoration. Rolled sheet metal is selected for the roof. Aluminium frame windows are installed. Due to the recent increase in hygiene requirements and the prevention of the spread of viruses, Tech Loft will use a range of protective equipment. For example, ultraviolet lamps will be installed here to disinfect the premises.

The symbol of the Tech Loft start-up centre became the legendary display of the "Žalgiris" stadium, which was preserved before the stadium was demolished in the centre of Vilnius.



Fig.7: Façade of the reconstructed building.

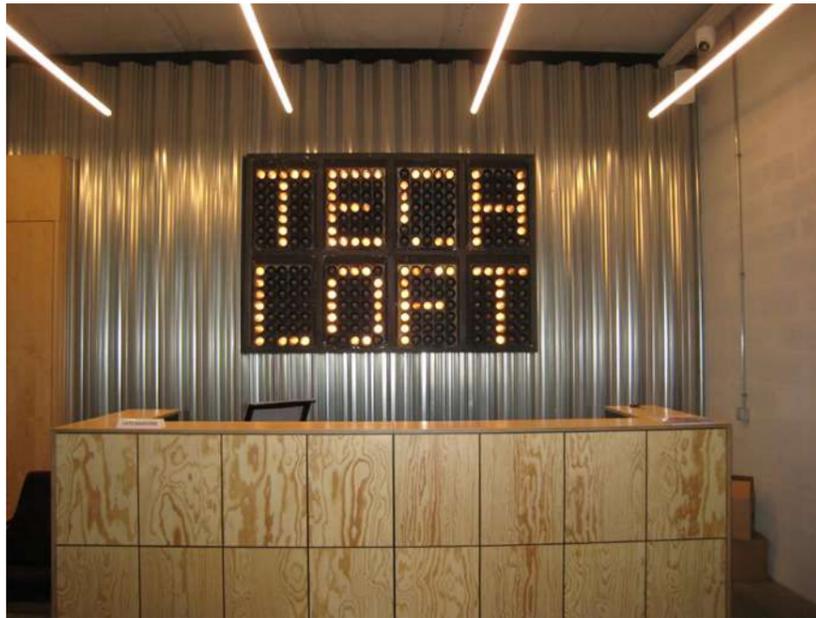


Fig.8: Stadium board in the interior.



Fig.9: Office interior.



Fig.10: Section drawing.

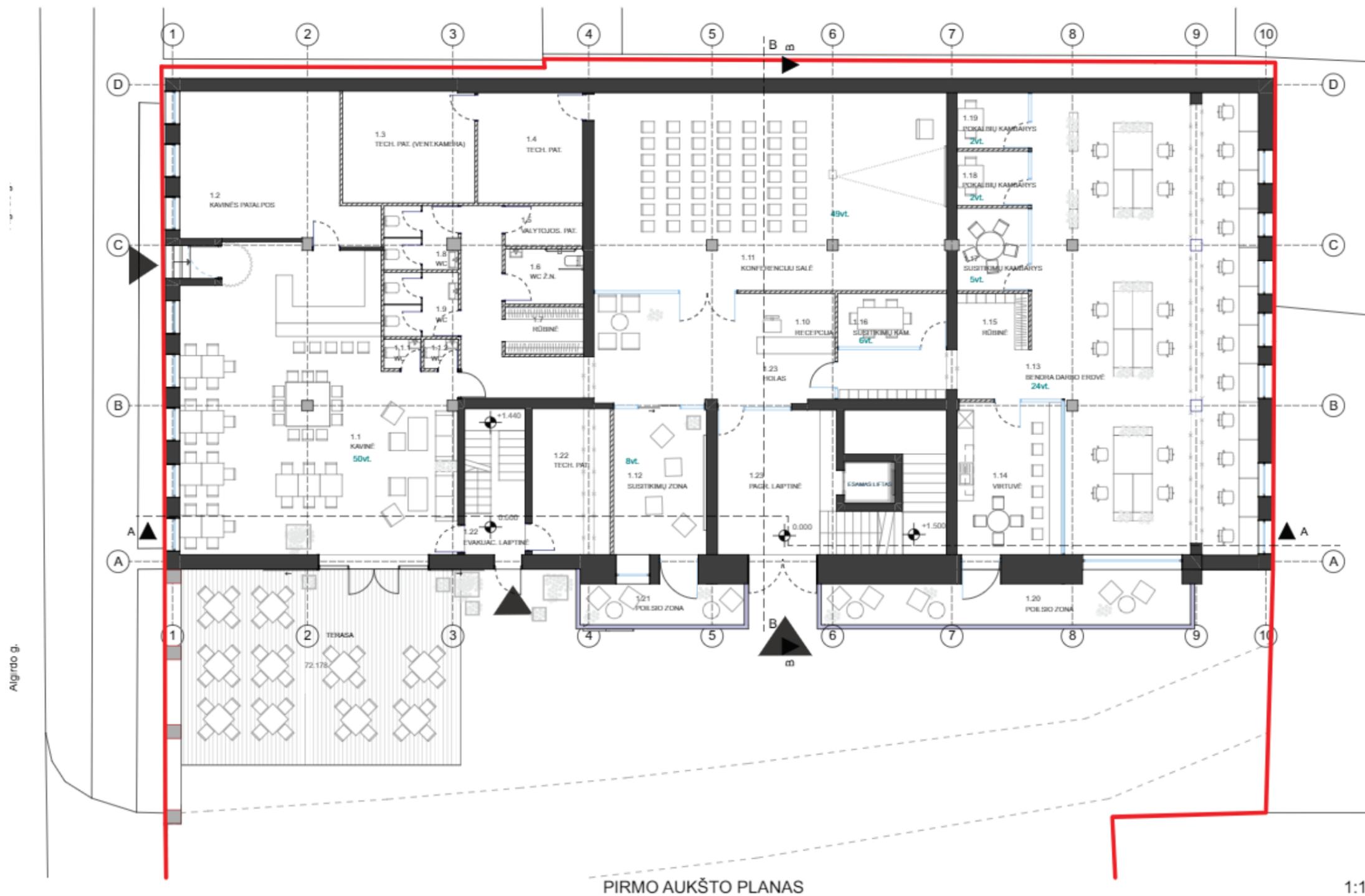


Fig.11: Floorplan.



Fig.12: Newly formed balcony.



Fig.13: The interior of the hall.



Fig.14: Foyer.



Fig.15: Café.

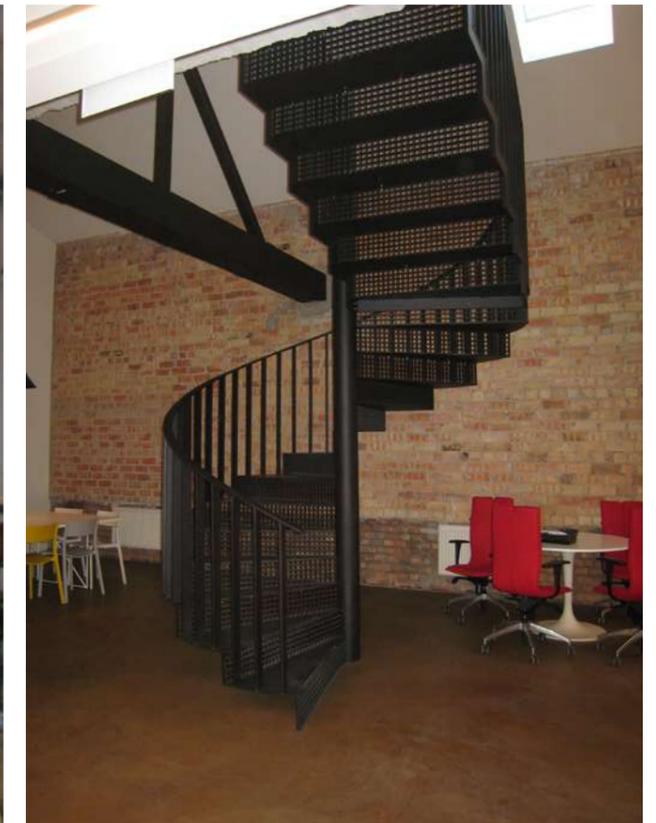


Fig.16: New stairs.

Assessment of the results

The reconstruction of Tech Loft helps to preserve a certain part of the authenticity of this place and at the same time exploiting the potential of the district. It contributes to the revival of the place by overcoming it and creating value for the city and the community.

The architectural concept is based on highlighting the character of the old building. The history of the building is felt and visible, but the spaces are adapted to today's needs, and the architectural elements reflect modern solutions and details.

Object is distinguished by the fact that when renovating an old building, was decided not only about attractive jobs in it, but also about the implementation of bold, non-standard solutions by choosing finishing materials or using the authentic details of the building. One of the interior design solutions is to use old furniture, restoring it and reviving it to a second life.

References

<https://sa.lt/rekonstruotame-xix-a-pastate-vilniuje-isikure-start-uoliu-centras-tech-loft/> (Foto by Norbert Tukaj Fig. 2, 7, 13)

<https://www.geoportal.lt/map/> (Fig. 1)