SMART
REHABILITATION 3.0

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The military hospital was turned into a startup space.

Reconstruction of a building complex 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   VILNIAUS TECH PARKAS, Antakalnio g. 17, Lithuania

Objectives   Rehabilitation of the hospital complex that was built
in the 19th century.

Property

Designer   UAB "A2SM". Arch. Aurimas Sasnauskas,
Viačeslavas Malenko, Joris Šykovas, Eglė Židonytė,
Greta Frišmantaitė, Paulius Venckūnas, Aistė
Jankauskaitė; Co-Architects, „Senojo Miesto
Architektai": Diana Sabaliauskienė.

Date   2015-2017

UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE CATALUNYA BARCELONATECH

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PALERMO

Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου

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Background to the intervention

The manor complex was converted into a military hospital in the 19th century and now reconstructed into a start-up centre „Vilniaus Tech Park".It is the largest start-up centre in the Baltic States and is located in the historic Sapiega Park in Vilnius. Sapiega Park itself now is an open recreation area for citizens in Antakalnis. Antakalnis is one of the oldest suburbs of Vilnius, formed in the 15th century. on the eastern slope of the Neris River. From time immemorial, an important tract has passed through it, leading to the northern borders of the state. Here, near the city centre, nobles, officials, monasteries and churches developed.

In the 17th c. in Antakalnis, the palace was built by Sapiega, a famous family of GDL nobles. Initially, wooden palaces were built, later they were replaced by brick ones - which have survived to this day. The complex consisted of a baroque palace, a monastery with the Church of the Savior and an Italian-style park. Offices and outbuildings were also built in the residence, there were ponds, fountains, sculptures, even a grove and a beast. Next to the palace was a baroque park and garden, nearby the Church of the Savior, a monastery.

In the 19th century this place was bought by the tsarist city administration and the buildings of the military hospital were built in the territory of Sapiegai Park. Not only Tsarist Russia, but also French, and in later periods, Polish and German soldiers had to be treated here. 19th century remodelling was carried out in the middle of the 19th century, and new hospital pavilions appeared in the park area, drastically changing the face of the place. With the outbreak of World War I, the hospital's facilities were rapidly expanded, with the number of beds increasing from 350 to 1700. The buildings served war and healing, it is a unique complex, in 2001. It was included in the list of cultural heritage values.

In 2015 the hospital complex was converted into a modern startup space. A large, complex and expensive project has been prepared. The goal is to open history to the public, to help build a community. In this eight-hectare area, the spaces of the baroque park inspired by Italian architects, the buildings of the tsarist hospital and new fragments of today's works dedicated to the work of technology companies intertwine. The building complex now consists of the former hospital buildings connected to a new annex with a 300-seat conference hall.
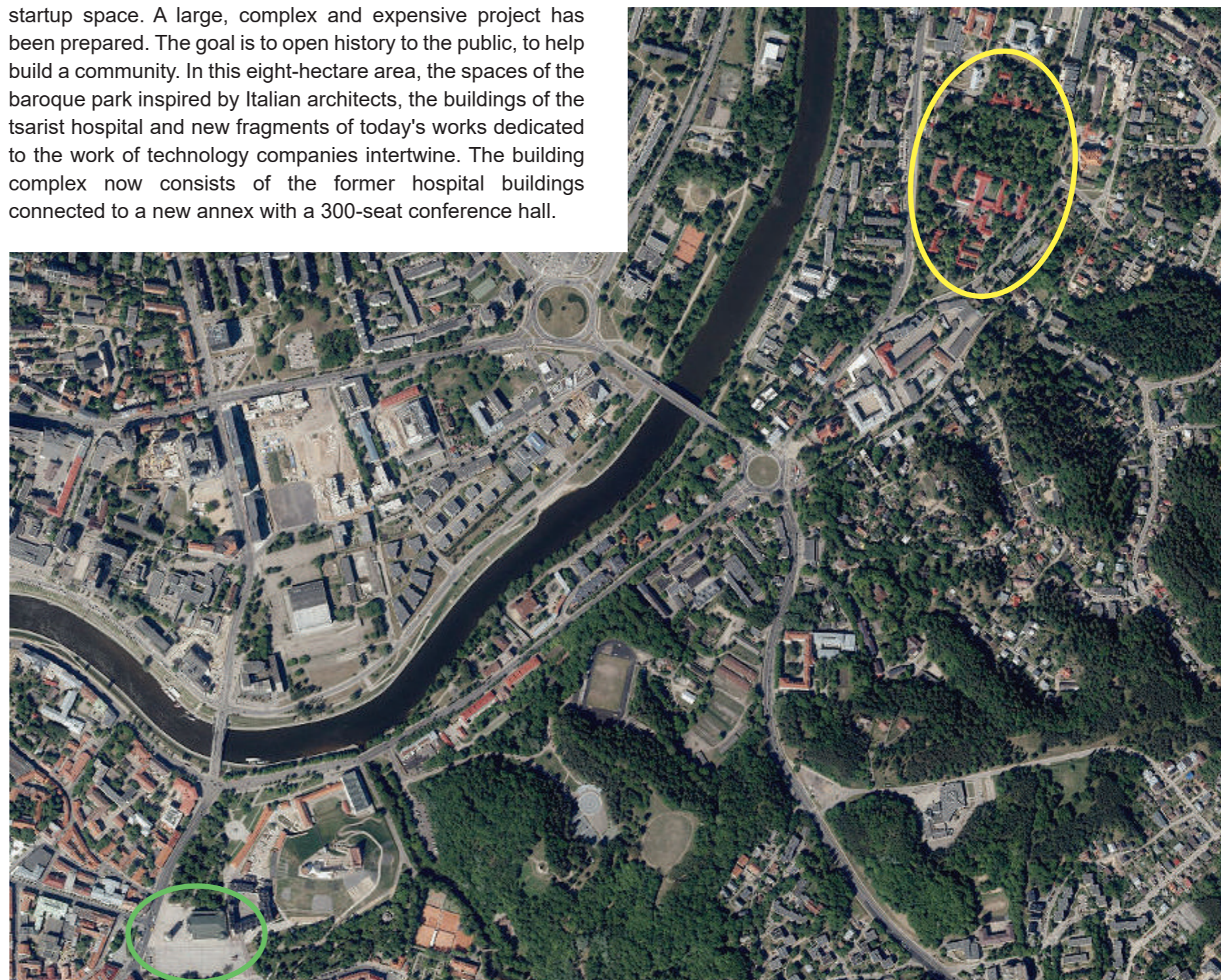

Fig.1: Vilnius Centre and Antakalnis: Cathedral Square is marked in green, Tech Park in yellow.

Description of the building

Each period left its mark here. The longest buildings were used for military hospital purposes. A huge complex of elongated rectangular hulls was connected so that it was possible to pass through the entire area without going outside. The corridor system connected the wards and other premises. Most of the single-storey buildings, part of the two brick walls, were also wooden. The buildings belonging to the eclectic style are characterized by the symmetry of the facades with characteristic pediments, cornices, pilasters, rusts and window sills.

Fig.2: Bird's eye view of the complex.

Fig.3: 3D Plan of the building complex.

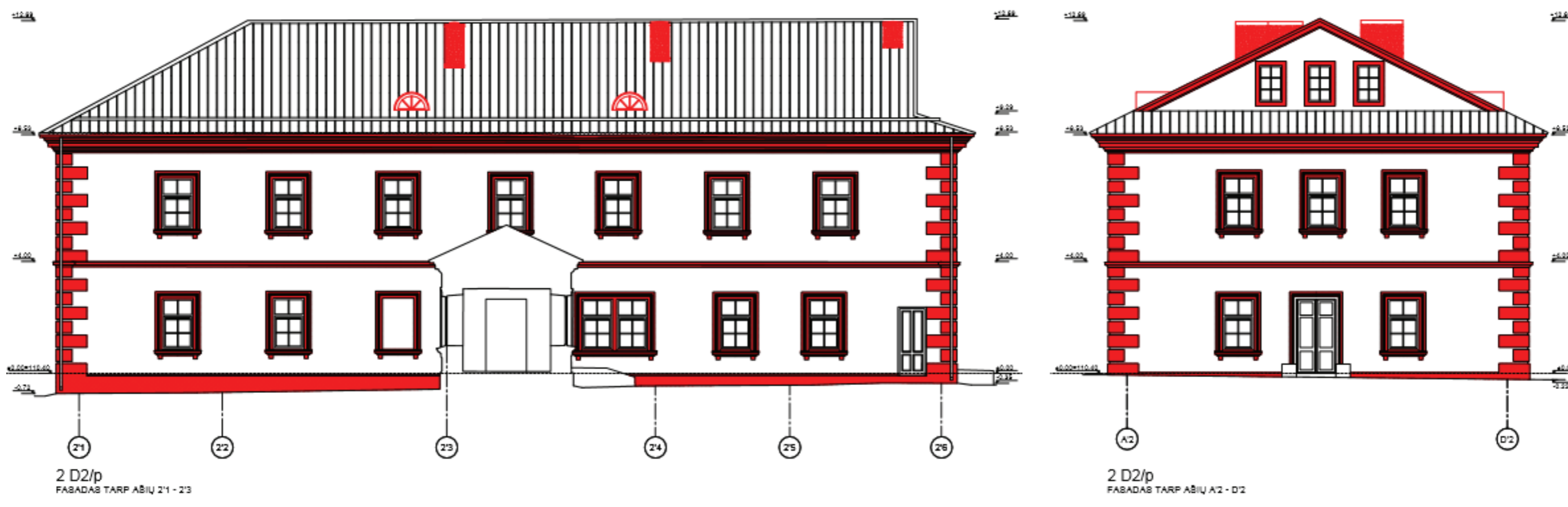Fig.4: The façade of one of the wooden buildings.
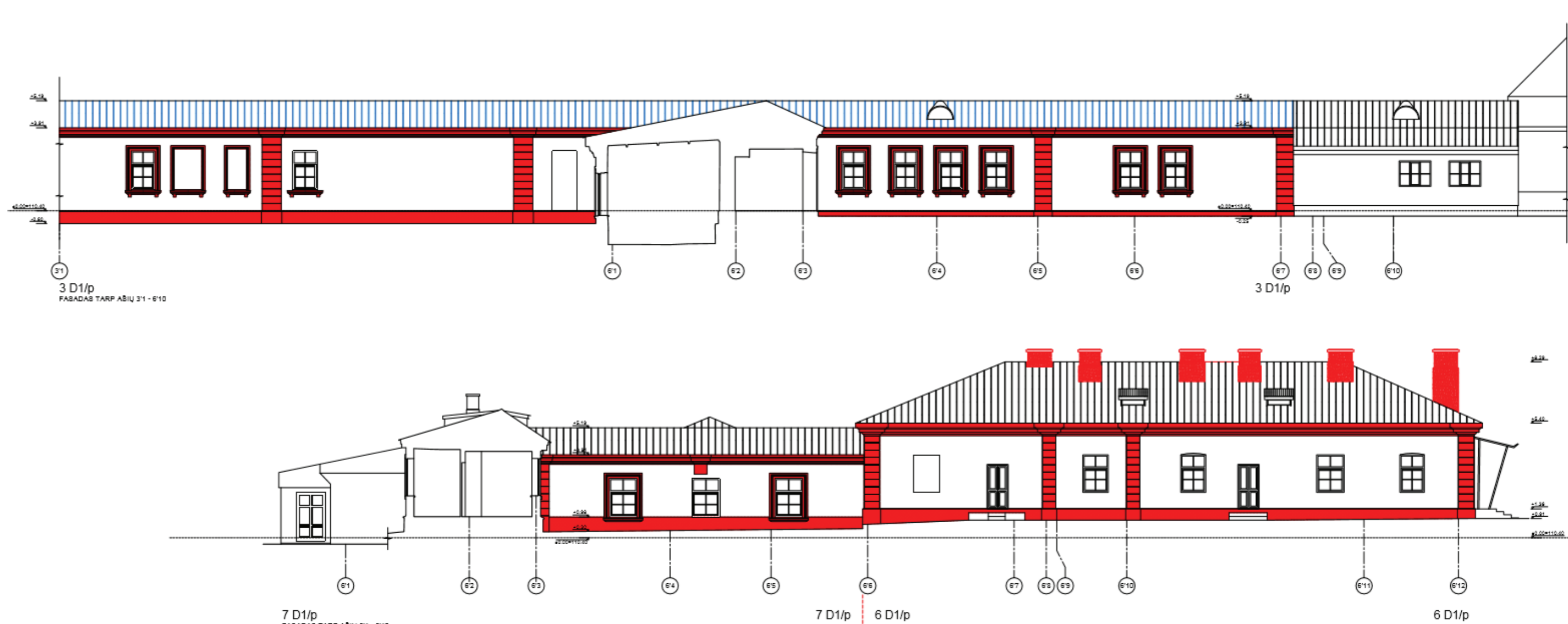
Fig.5: façade of one of the brick buildings.

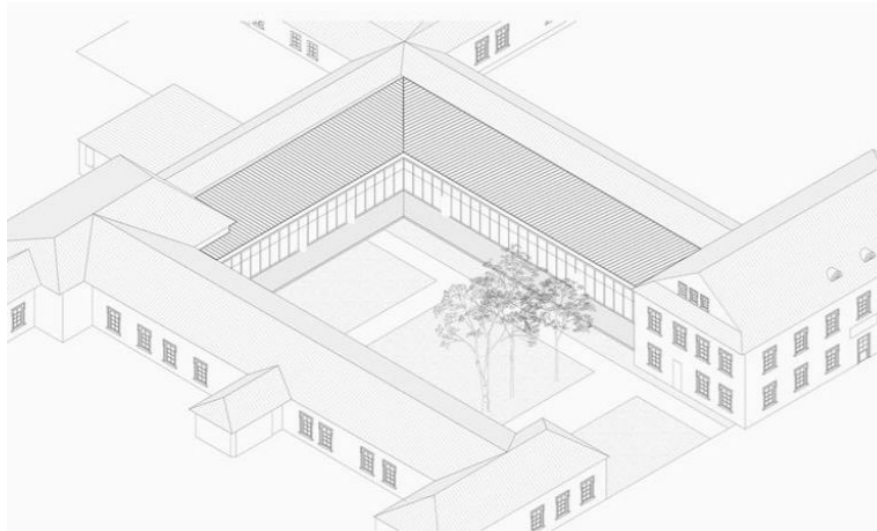Fig.6: façade of another of the brick buildings.

Fig.7: Scheme of the building complex.

The Diagnosis of the building (values and state)

Although it was included in the list of cultural heritage values, the complex's buildings were almost unattended until 2015. After World War II, the buildings, which have been in existence for one and a half hundred years, have been dismantled, for example, the ancient arch was built with inferior bricks, and the walls of the beams and holes were in critical condition. Less than a decade ago, it was once again "stolen" from the European Union budget, but irresponsible patching did more architectural damage than good. The most significant value of the complex consists of the planning solutions of the whole, the volumetric spatial composition, and the authentic details of the construction period

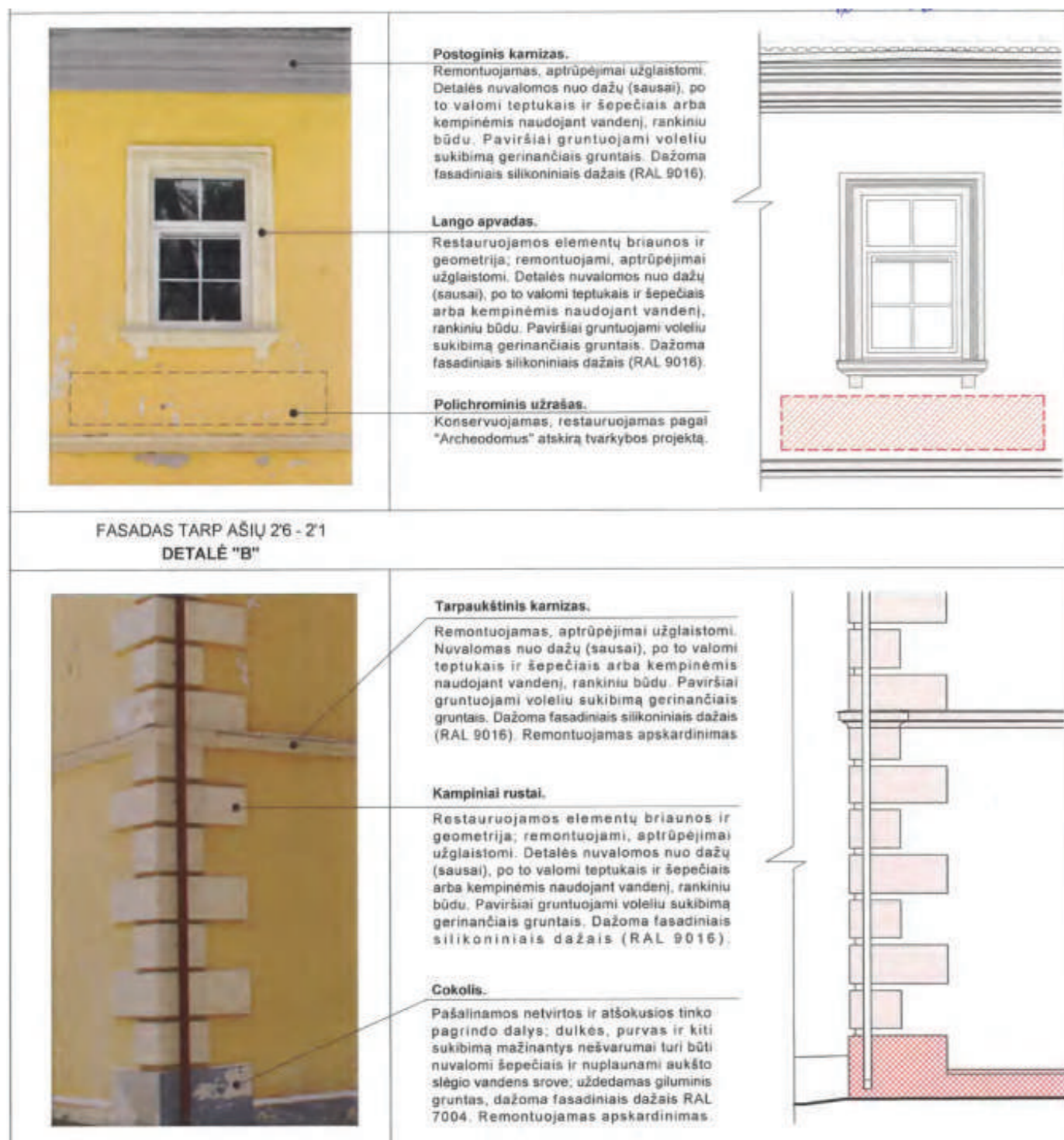Fig.8-9: Images of fragments of the complex before reconstruction.

Fig.10: A fragment of research on the condition of buildings before reconstruction.

Fig.11-12: Images of complex fragments after reconstruction.

Fig.13: Images of complex fragments after reconstruction.

Rehabilitation works

The external structure remained almost unchanged, with a single annex built along the perimeter of one inner courtyard, but the internal functional scheme of the buildings was adapted to the new needs. By adapting the buildings to the starters, the structure of the hospital building complex was preserved, and only the conference hall extension was a new building, designed in the very centre of the complex. The exterior of the buildings has been tidied up and preserved, and the former interiors of the hospital have changed the most. They have demolished partitions, opening up impressive spaces but preserving valuable details of the old interior: fireplaces, ceilings, stairs and wooden roof structures. The core work philosophy of the team of architects was based on the desire not to reject or deny any period that contributed to those buildings. Some of the details of the iteration of the various periods have been moved to a new context. The goal of the IT Tech and Start-up Centre Vilnius Tech Park is to create an entire start-up ecosystem under one roof with common workspaces for start-ups, laboratories, conference rooms with regular community events, additional infrastructure for start-ups working in the park, Antakalnis community and all Vilnius residents: restaurant, gym, food laboratory.

The small rooms, connected by long, erroneous corridors, contradicted the architects 'vision to create bright open spaces that would bring people together. As a result, all low-value partitions were abandoned. The installed 3.5 m high glass showcases reflect the facade of the historic building and create a spatial illusion. Wooden columns and beams replicate the roof structures of the existing building, thus preserving the architectural integrity of the complex. The interiors have been reconstructed while preserving the authentic beauty of the building's structures - the wooden ceiling. These elements of the building can be seen throughout the complex, with brickwork and original floor tiles exposed in places. Former tile stoves are left here that are not found in any other modern office. All the interior elements that were created there almost 170 years ago give the spaces a unique charm. Therefore, work spaces were planned next to them. Not the other way around.

Some of the removed window frames are used in the interior. Roof beams have been adapted and removed from the interior, the fragments, which no longer met the safety requirements for structures. Efforts have been made to preserve and integrate values into new spaces. The most striking example is 2.5 m high solid wood door, which was enough to clean the old layer of paint and return it to its original places. But we had to knock out the plaster, the floor, the ceiling, run the ventilation system, the internet, the data and security networks, like glueing a puzzle, renovating and restoring the old walls, and the roof.

Some valuables have been damaged during previous repairs, so it was necessary additionally to decide how to preserve what had already been damaged. There are outdoor terraces in the courtyards, spaces for concerts and summer events have been created in the park.

Assessment of the results

In this eight-hectare area, the spaces of the baroque park inspired by Italian architects, the buildings of the tsarist hospital and new fragments of modern technology dedicated to the work of technology companies intertwine. Hundreds of talent from Lithuania and abroad are already developing under one roof in the park for game development, metadata, cyber security, smart solutions, financial technology and digital design.

The uniqueness of the project is to take into account the heritage protection aspects, the harmony of the old and the new. The building's history could be felt and seen, but the spaces are fully adapted to today's needs and the architectural elements can reflect modern solutions and details.

Reconstructing the complex of historic buildings has given it a relevant function, preserving the local spirit and urban fabric. Sapiega Park is now an open-air recreation area for city dwellers.

References

http://www.a2sm.lt/en/work/architecture/vilniaus-sapieg-tech-parkas

https://www.geoportal.lt/map/ (Fig. 1, 2)

Images and drawings

Fig.14-15: New elements on the outside.

Fig.16-17: Façades with new elements.

Fig.18: Newly installed glass showcases.

Fig.19: Conference room space formed between a glass showcase and an authentic façade.
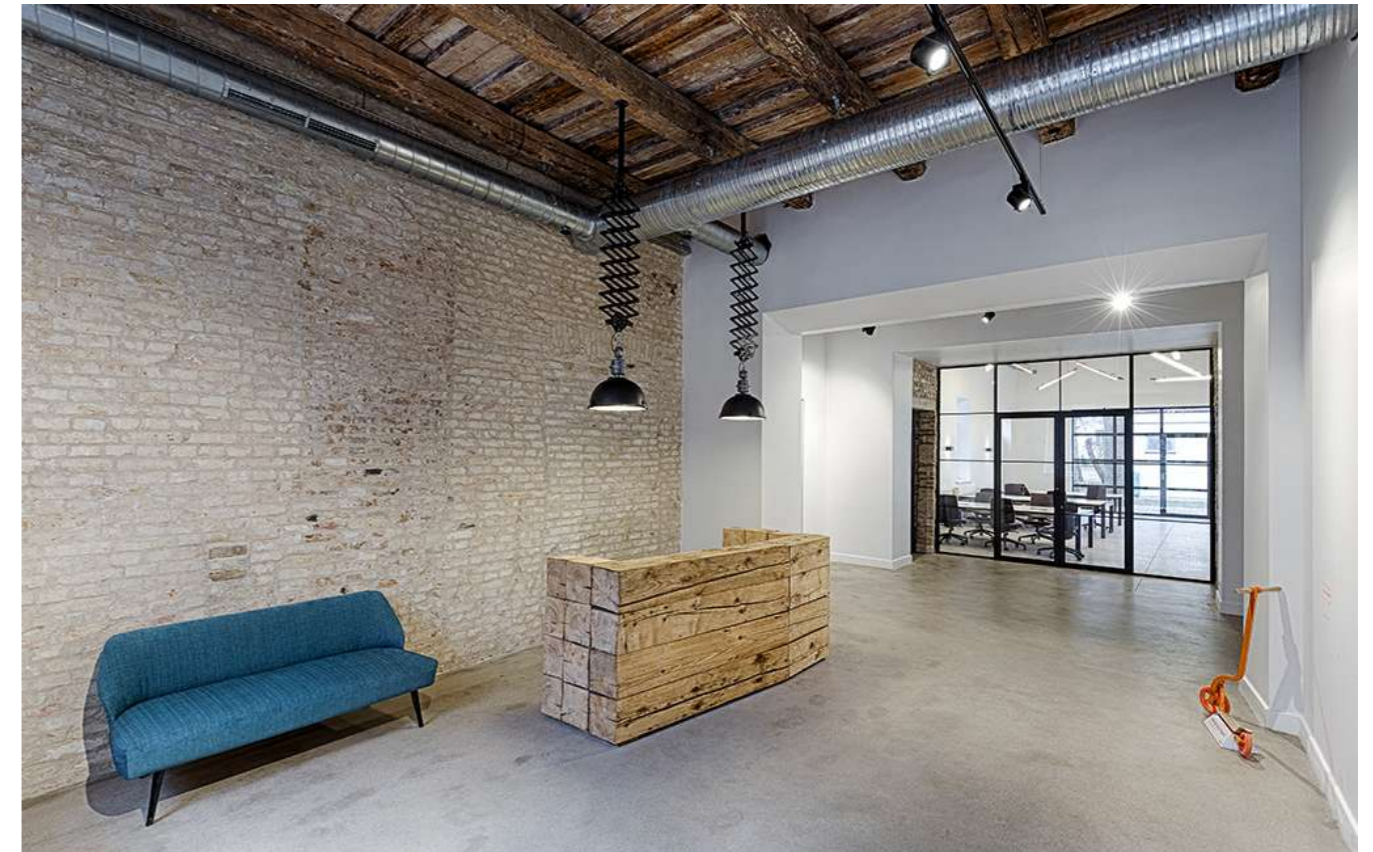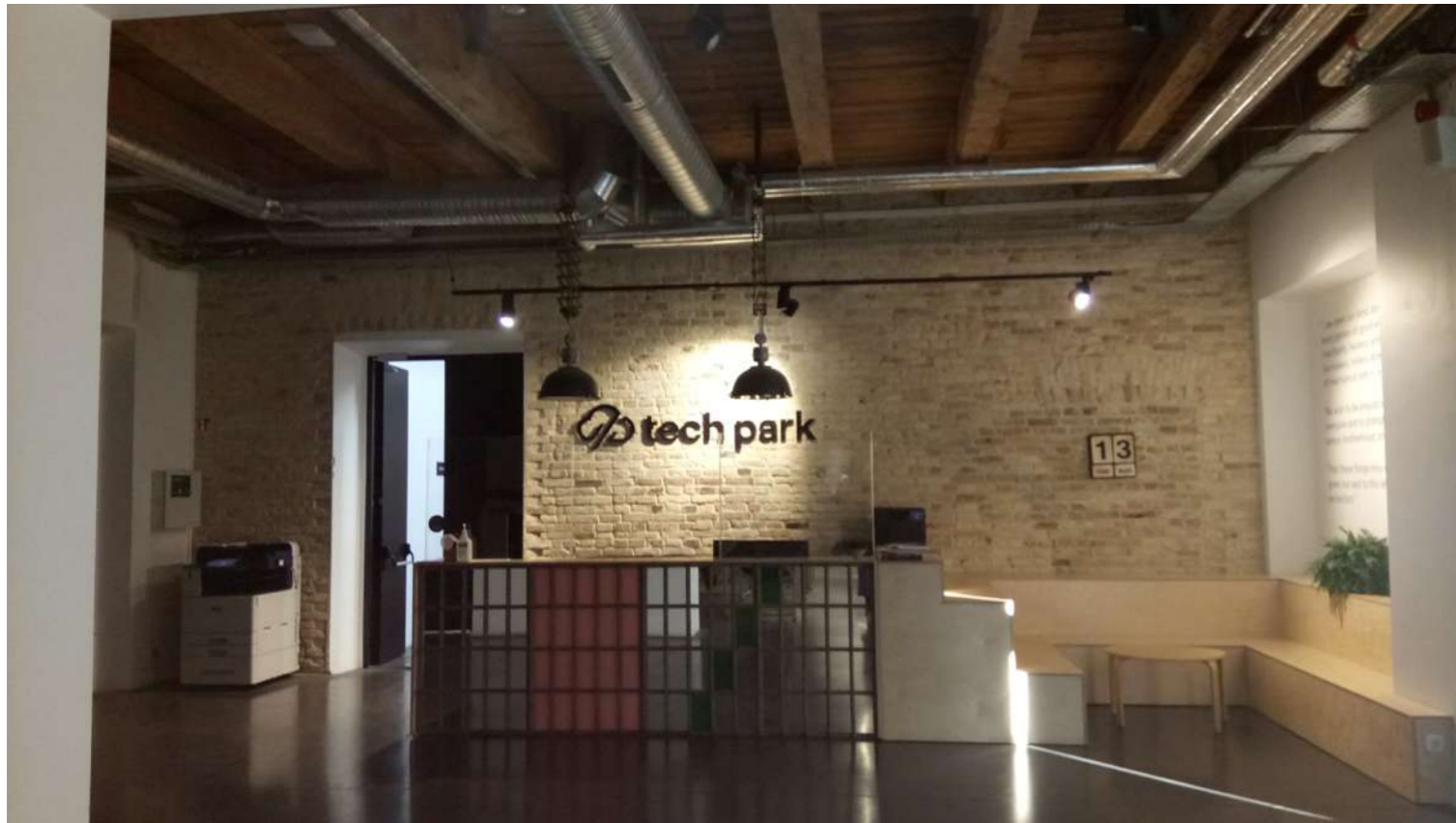
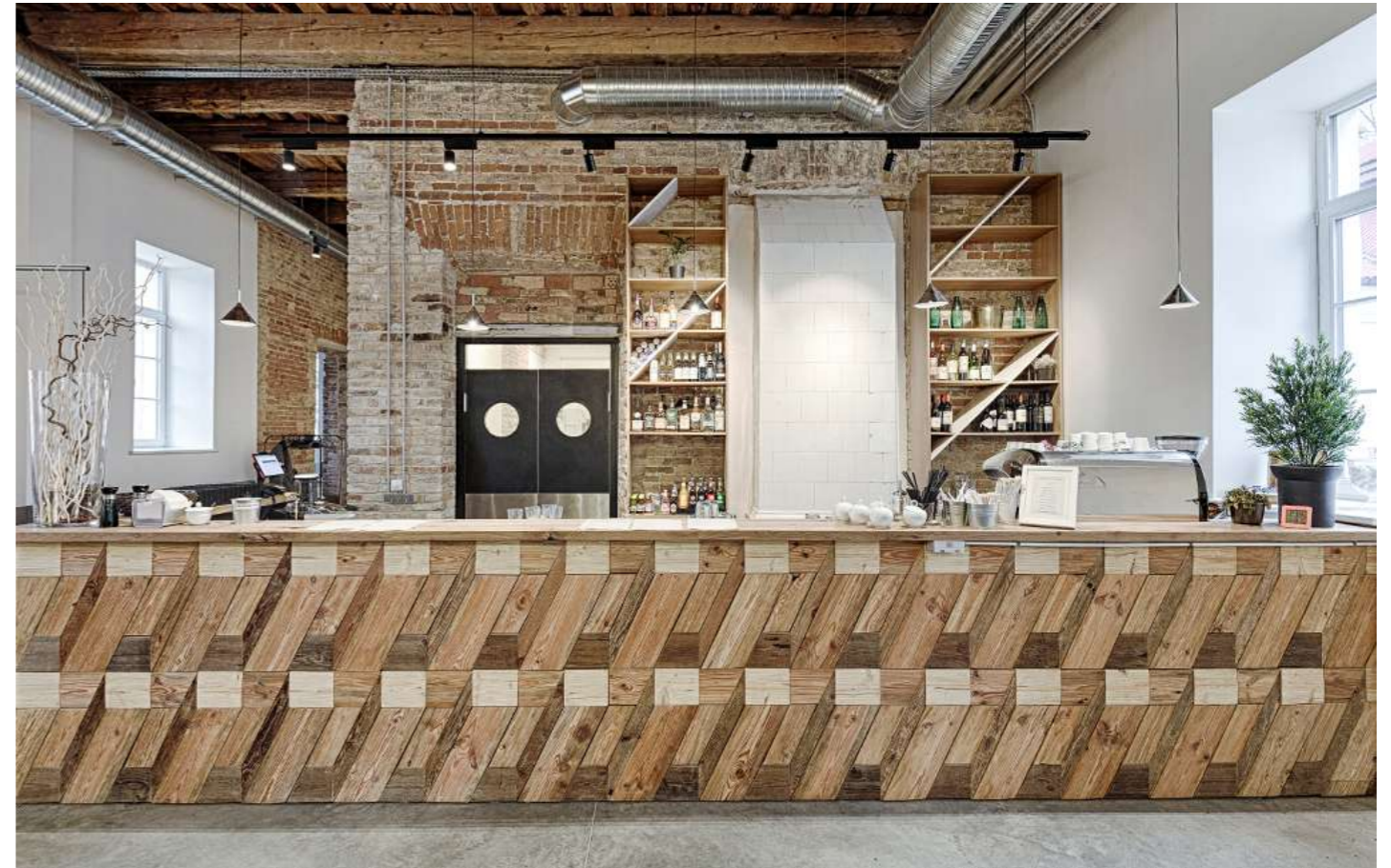Fig.20-21: Lobby spaces.

Fig.22: Office space.
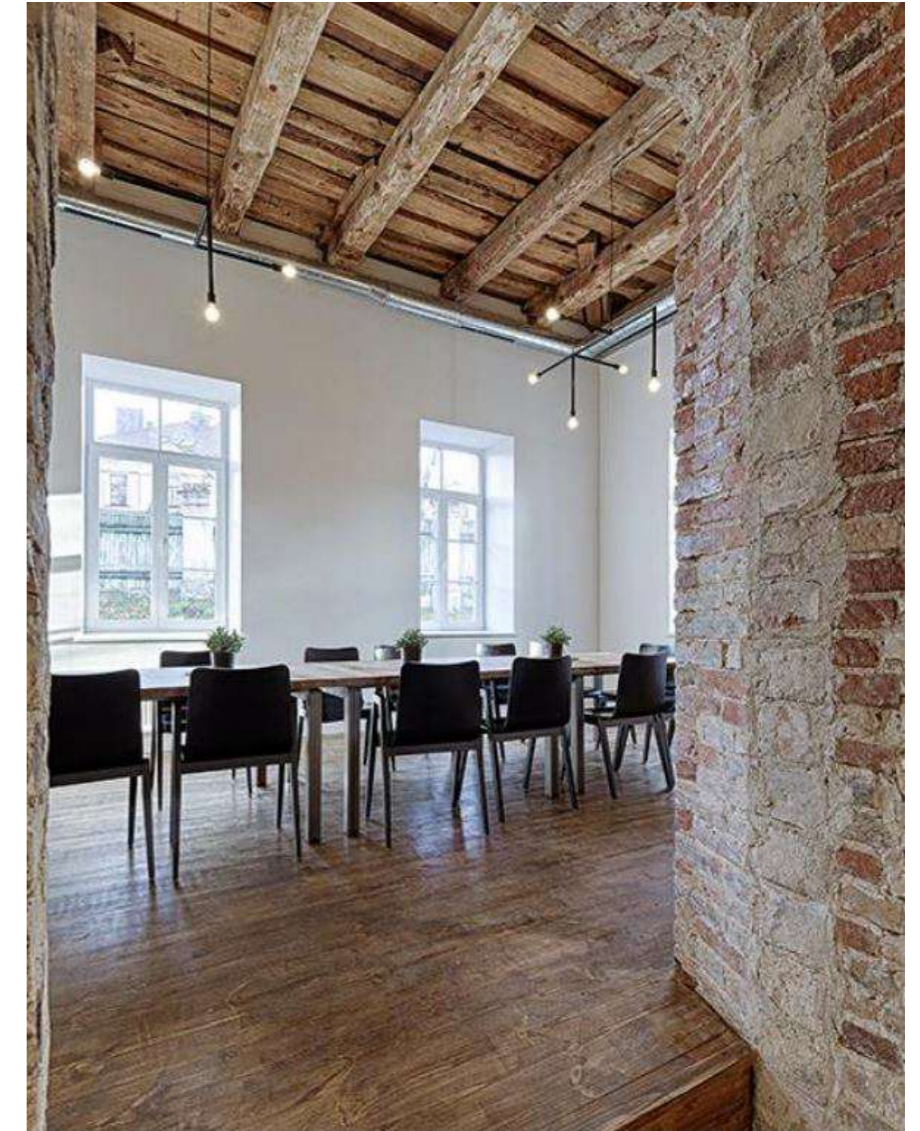

Fig.23: Bistro interior.

Fig.24: Office space.

Fig.25: Restored old stairs.

Fig.26: Meeting room space.