

Maksimir Stadium and Svetice Sports and Recreation Centre, Zagreb

The Svetice Sports and Recreation Centre (SRC) represents one of Zagreb's most important sporting landmarks – a place where history, collective memory, and contemporary urban life intersect. Since the late twentieth century, the site has been continuously shaped by sports and recreation, becoming deeply embedded in the identity of the city through generations. The modern SRC is a dialogue between the past and the future, embracing the legacy of its predecessor, Maksimir Park, and redefining the site's urban significance. Its immediate proximity to Maksimir Park further enriches its character, creating a new dialogue between the built environment and the natural landscape. Any future transformation of this site must carry the responsibility of preserving and strengthening the historic, cultural, ecological, and social values that have defined it for more than a century.

Today, however, the scale and functional organization of the existing complex create a significant barrier to its integration into the urban fabric of Zagreb. The stadium and its surrounding facilities exist as an isolated entity, separated from the everyday rhythms of the city. The central ambition of the project is to overcome this fragmentation by reconnecting the site with its urban surroundings and transforming it into a new civic landmark – one that belongs not only to sports, but also to the daily life of the city. The space between the flag and stadium have been interpreted as an active public realm, open, accessible, and inclusive environments that encourage movement, interaction, and informal encounters. Through this approach, the project seeks to bring together the fragmented urban fabric and create a place where sport, nature, and community converge.

The new stadium emerges from a dialogue between memory and transformation, inspired by Vladimir Šturm's original concept, where architectural expression was inseparably connected to structural principles. The proposed design continues this tradition by viewing the task of construction as becoming the foundation of architectural identity. The structure is not conceived as a hidden technical system, but as the essential element shaping the character, rhythm, and atmosphere of the building.

The project does not attempt to recreate the historic form of the original stadium, but rather to reinvent the idea that gives it lasting architectural value. Recorders, structure, canopy, and spatial rhythm are translated into a contemporary vocabulary that acknowledges the past while embracing the future. The new stadium becomes a contribution to an ongoing architectural story – one rooted in the legacy of Maksimir, yet open to new interpretations and experiments.

Through a careful balance between heritage and innovation, preservation and change, the stadium is envisioned not merely as a venue for sporting events, but as a new urban landmark and a place of collective identity. It becomes an extension of the city's heart – a space where architecture, landscape, and people come together, preserving the spirit of the site while creating a new chapter in Zagreb's evolving urban narrative.



Wood stand, 1954, photo: Foto Dubac



View of the western arcades with the entrance to the stadium



Triangle



Line



Circle



Rectangle

One of the fundamental design concepts originates from the analysis of Zagreb's historic urban structure. The city plan from 1907 revealed that the Maksimir Stadium was originally conceived as a continuation of the main axis leading towards Maksimir Park, recognizing the importance of this axial relationship. The proposed 'Maksimir' is a triangular public square on the north eastern edge of the site.

This new urban vision establishes the historical position, connecting the stadium to the surrounding urban fabric. The project seeks to create a new urban identity, reinforcing the site's role as a central public space and a key element in the city's urban structure.

The second essential element of the composition is a linear urban axis connecting the stadium to the city. This axis, which runs through the park, is a key element in the city's urban structure. The project seeks to create a new urban identity, reinforcing the site's role as a central public space and a key element in the city's urban structure.

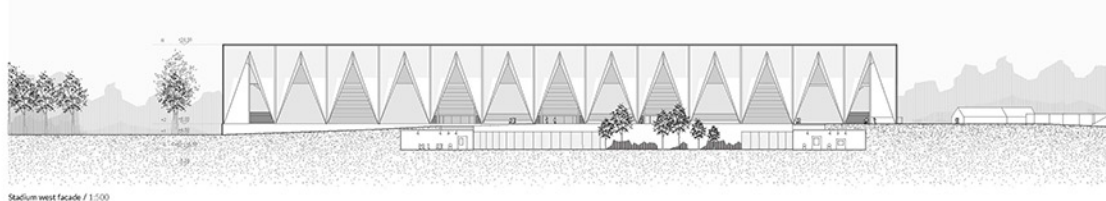
Towards the north, the axis intersects with a key intersection with the triangular square, forming a transitional space and a direct connection between the sports complex and the city landscape. The axis is a key element in the city's urban structure, reinforcing the site's role as a central public space and a key element in the city's urban structure.

A major design challenge was integrating the urban heart of the stadium with the surrounding urban fabric. The project seeks to create a new urban identity, reinforcing the site's role as a central public space and a key element in the city's urban structure.

The circular main is positioned tangential to the main conceptual axis, creating a dynamic relationship between the stadium and the surrounding urban fabric. The project seeks to create a new urban identity, reinforcing the site's role as a central public space and a key element in the city's urban structure.

The final conceptual element is defined by the stadium's form and its relationship to the surrounding urban fabric. The project seeks to create a new urban identity, reinforcing the site's role as a central public space and a key element in the city's urban structure.

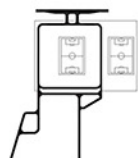
The stadium's form is a key element in the city's urban structure, reinforcing the site's role as a central public space and a key element in the city's urban structure. The project seeks to create a new urban identity, reinforcing the site's role as a central public space and a key element in the city's urban structure.



Stadium west facade / 1:500

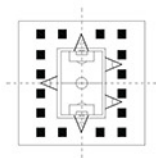


View of the Football complex zone from pedestrian perspective



Transportation Infrastructure

The internal road network has been designed to provide maximum flexibility in traffic management and access control. The main parking circulation ring is connected from both the southern and northern sides, enabling smooth filling and phased release of parking areas on match days. On the southern side, between the main stadium and the training pitches, dedicated open hardstand areas have been provided for event operations, including broadcast compound, an emergency services zone (police, fire brigade, ambulance services), and a logistics/loading area for heavy goods vehicles.



Openness of the entrance level

Given the existing urban context, it was essential to maintain visual connections into the stadium for visitors approaching from the west. This is achieved through the VIP zone, positioned below the promenade level, together with independent VIP box volumes located at the concourse level. The rhythmic sequence of built volumes and visual openings allows visitors to experience the anticipation of the event from the moment they approach their designated sector. At the same time, the stadium establishes a stronger and more direct relationship with its surroundings.



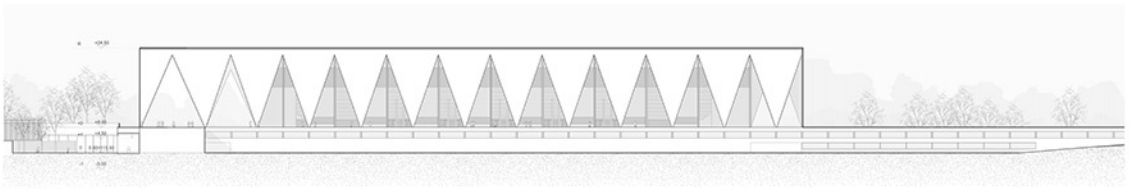
Layered Functional Organization

The allocation of areas serving different user groups has been designed in a clear and rational manner. Level 1 accommodates the players' zone, levels 2 and 3 comprise the VIP areas, while the concourse level serves as the main spectator entrance zone, providing access to both the upper and lower seating tiers. This functional arrangement ensures the efficient operation of a venue of this scale and significance, while maintaining the high standards of safety and security required for major sporting and entertainment events.

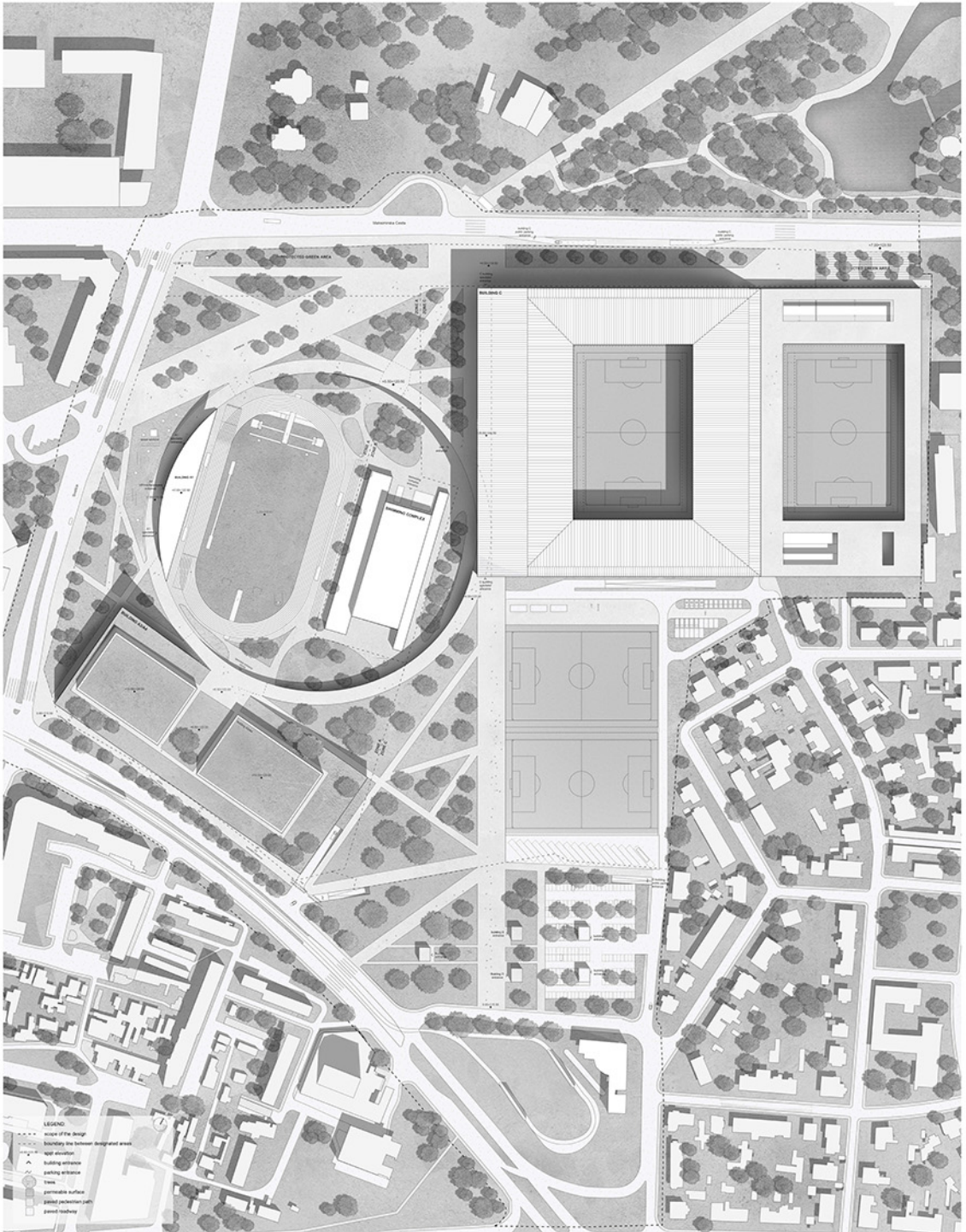


Integration of the Stadium and Training pitch

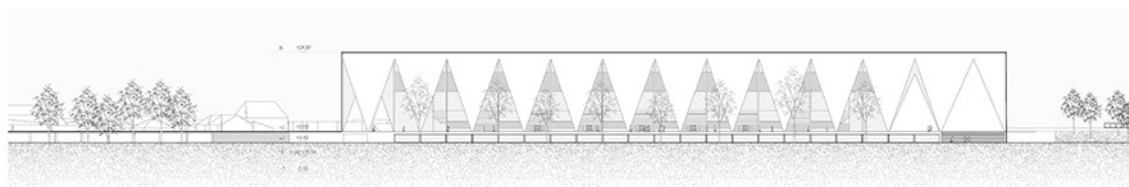
Due to stringent site constraints, the main stadium and the training stadium have been integrated into a single architectural volume. The spectator promenade level forms the roof of the training stadium, while the VIP level accommodates the VIP boxes associated with the stadium stand. This solution enables the shared use of parking facilities, storage areas, staff maintenance equipment, and other operational infrastructure. As a result, it enhances the quality of the public realm while simultaneously optimizing operational and maintenance costs.



Stadium south facade / 1:500



Site plan with a roof plan of the Borongji Transit Hub garage / 1:1000



Stadium north facade / 1:500



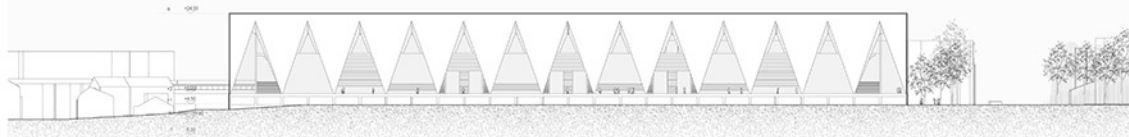
Aerial view of the wider competition scope



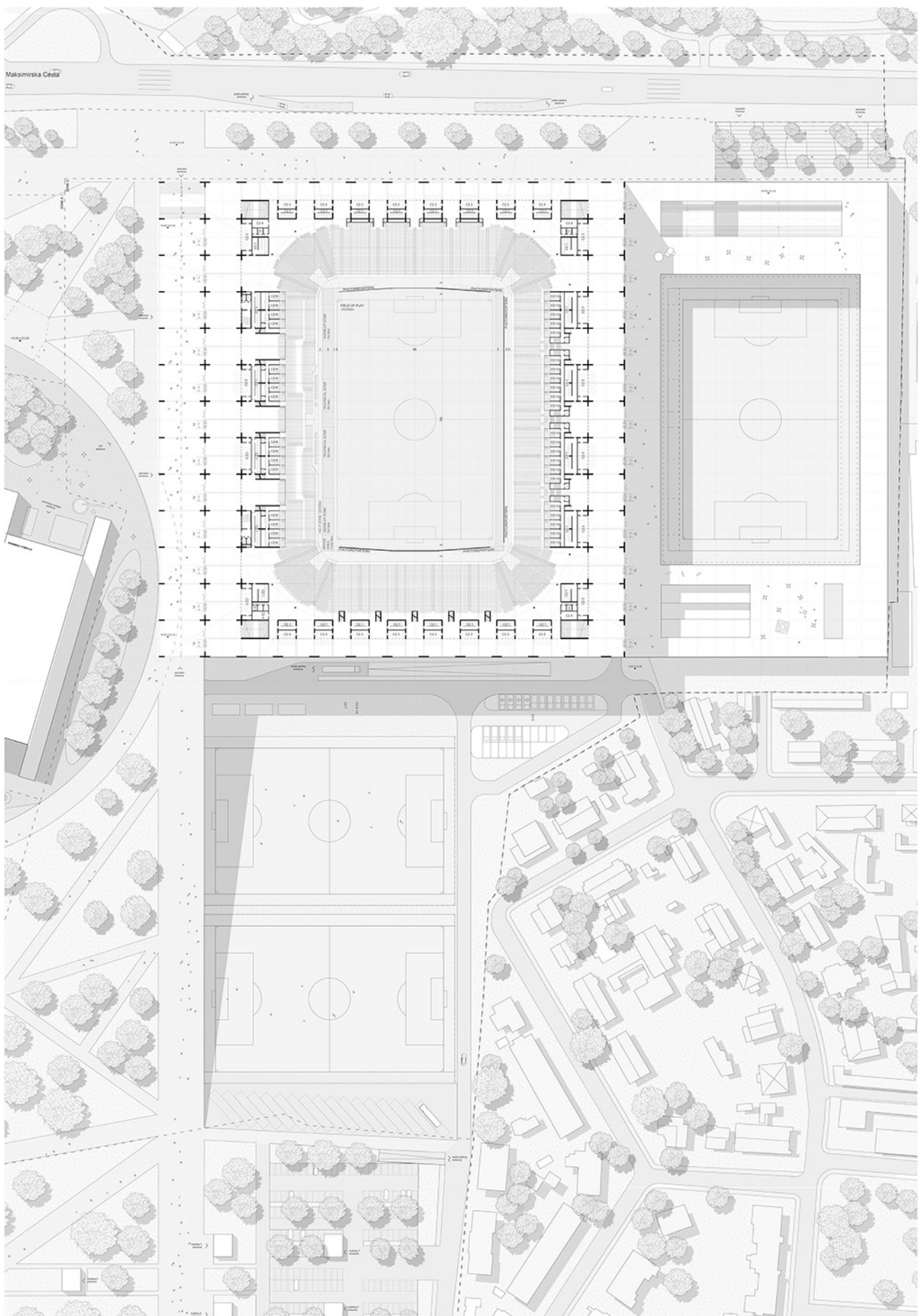
Aerial view of the football complex zone



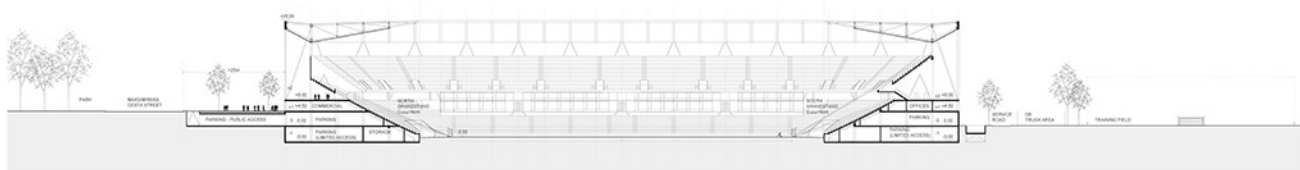
View of the indoor sports zone from a grandstand of the athletic stadium



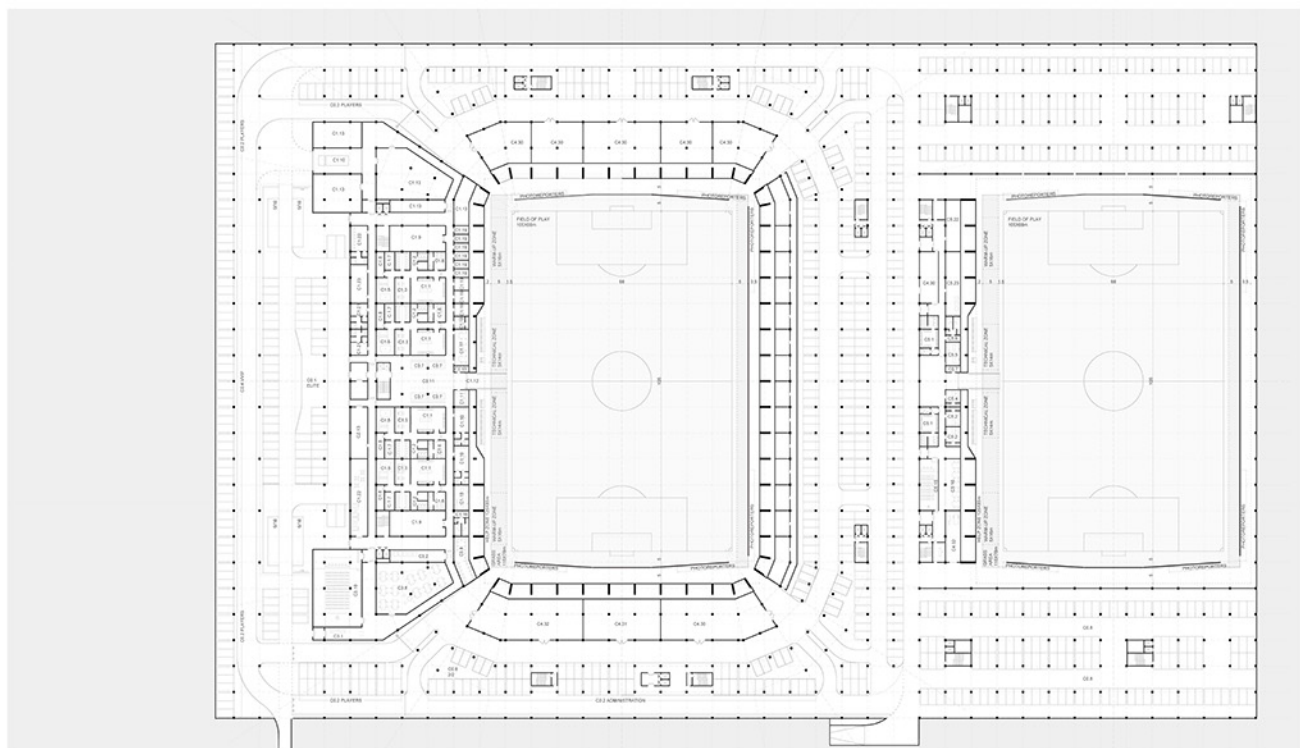
Stadium east facade / 1:500



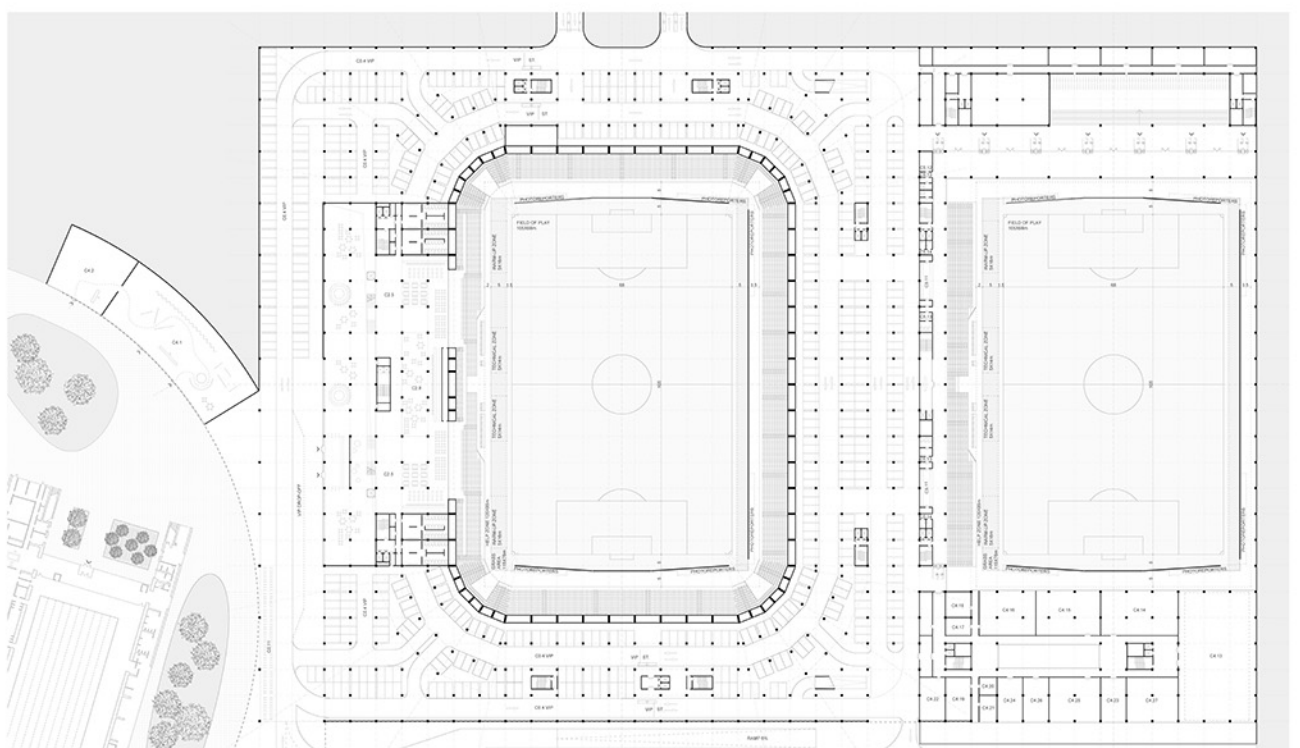
Site plan of the football complex with a presentation of the ground floor - promenade entrance level / 1:500



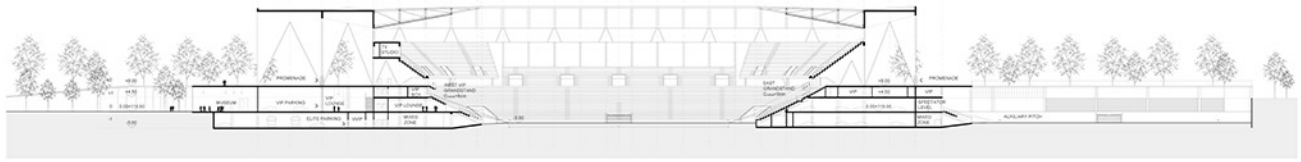
Stadium longitudinal section / 1:500



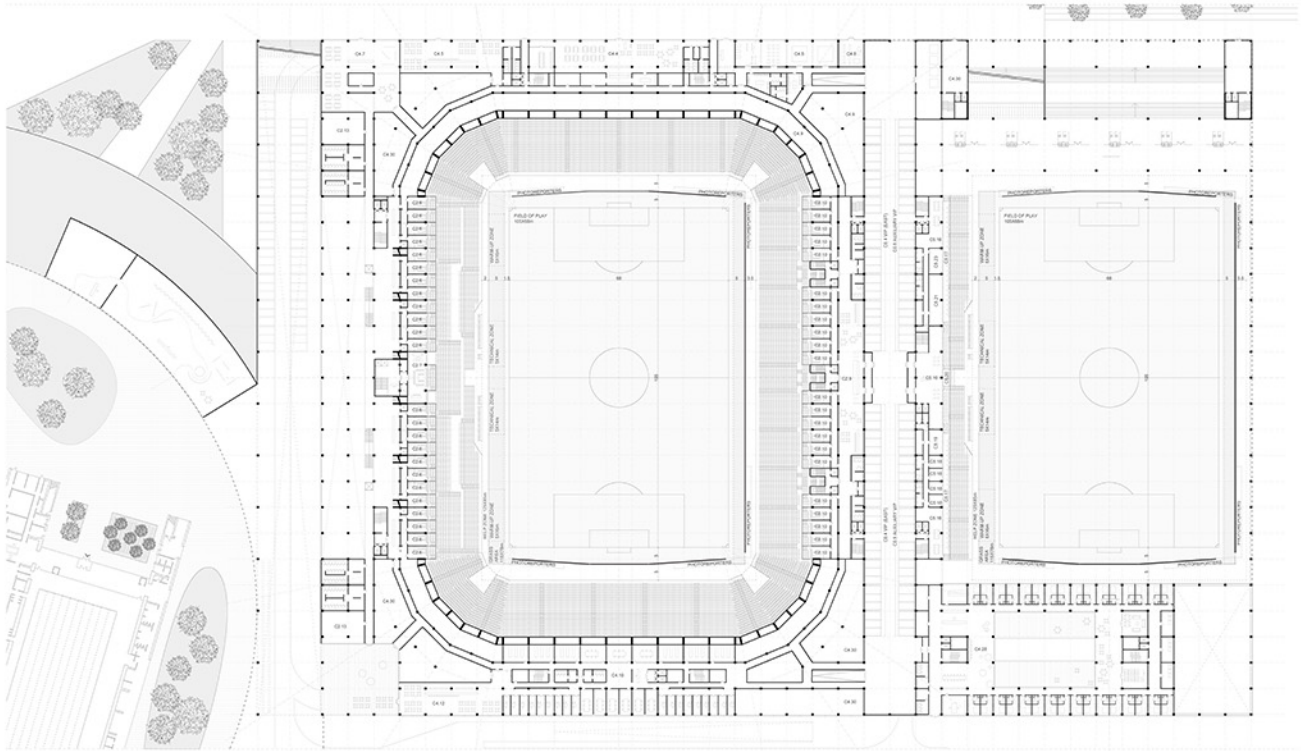
Stadium floor plan / level 1 / 1:500



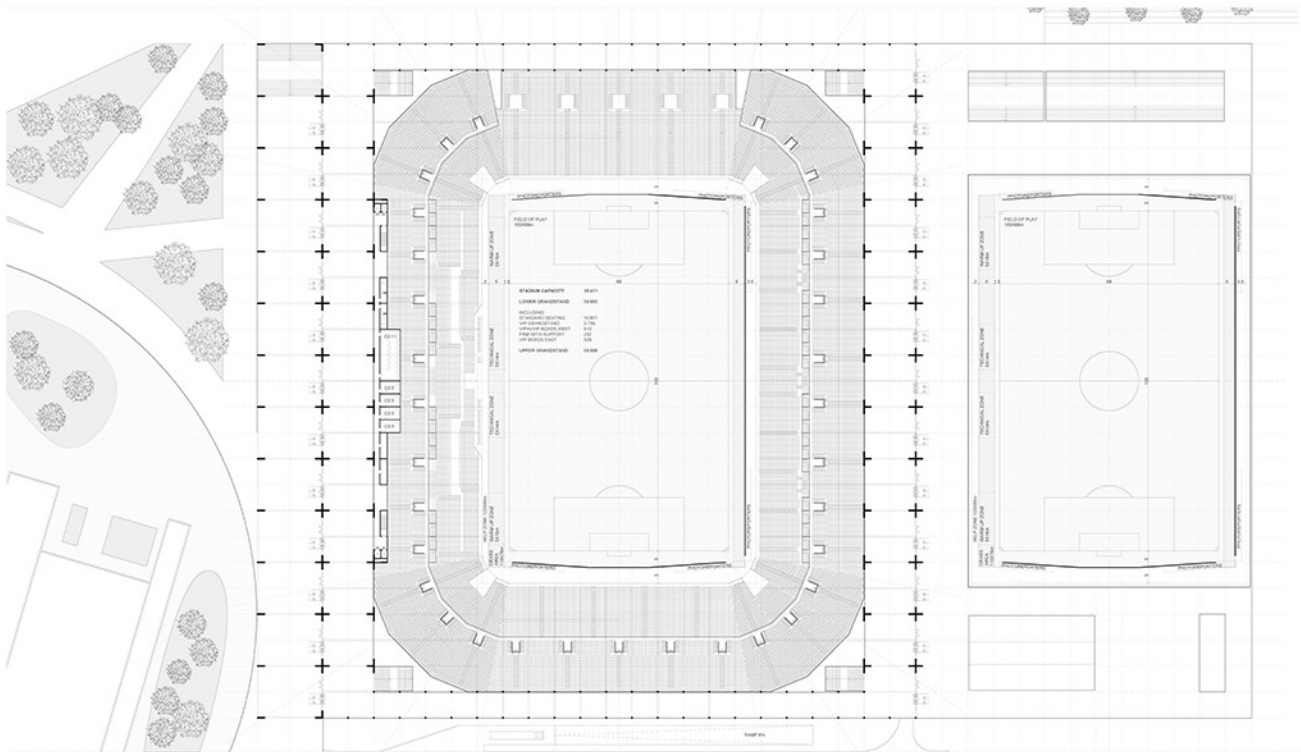
Stadium floor plan / level 0 / 1:500



Stadium cross section / 1:500



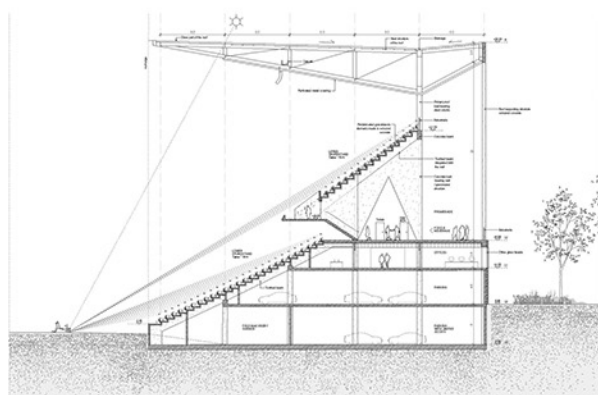
Stadium floor plan / level +1 / 1:500



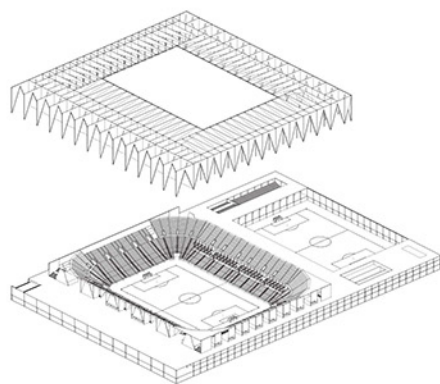
Stadium floor plan / level +3 / 1:500



View of the Borongj Transit Hub Area



Segment of characteristic stadium section 1:1,200



Structure diagram



View of the north-west entrance zone



Handball hall and multifunctional hall / North facade / 1:1000

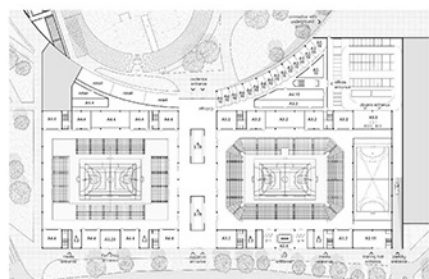


Handball hall and multifunctional hall / South facade / 1:1000

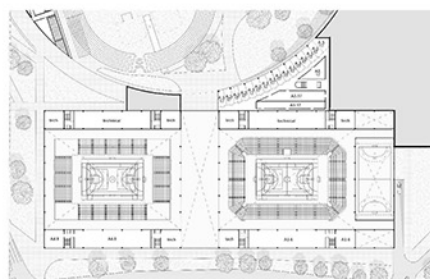


Handball hall and multif. hall / West facade / 1:1000

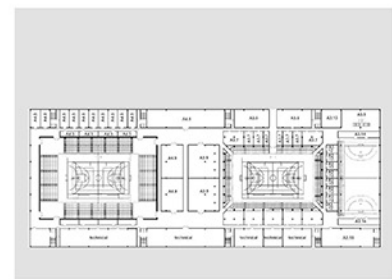
Handball hall and multif. hall / East facade / 1:1000



Handball hall and multifunctional hall / Level 0 / 1:1000



Handball hall and multifunctional hall / Level +5 / 1:1000



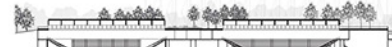
Handball hall and multifunctional hall / Level -5 / 1:1000



Handball hall / Section / 1:1000



Multifunctional hall / Section / 1:1000



Handball hall and multifunctional hall / Section / 1:1000



View of the Athletics stadium zone

Svetits Sports and Recreation Complex

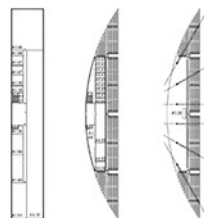
For the sports complex, including its relationship to the site and the existing swimming pool, the primary design challenge was to establish a clear organizing principle in respect of its siting within the urban landscape. A carefully positioned circular sports arena is the project's fundamental spatial device, connecting the sports programmatic elements while simultaneously separating the swimming pool project from the athletic stadium. Within the framework, the orientation of the swimming pool building itself becomes secondary to the clarity of the overall spatial concept.

The swimming pool and athletic stadium are set at the same level in the parking area located within the stadium precinct. This arrangement makes it possible to ensure efficient parking flow for the stadium space, ensuring it exclusively for pedestrians and cyclists. The athletic sports facilities are extended to form a common parking area, creating both an and strengthening the cohesion of the complex.

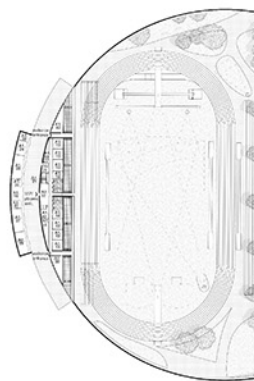
To the west, the site is completed by a building incorporating the athletic precinct. Constructed as a separate element from the stadium precinct, the structure is placed at the stadium stadium to sit slightly below the surrounding terrain to the football stadium, creating a more intimate environment and ensuring appropriate spatial context.

To the north, the composition is defined by a linear volume associated with the football arena and the multi-purpose sports hall within a single elongated building. The shared entrance forms a semi-circular form that sits within the stadium precinct. The roof of the hall forms an accessible public platform connected to the elevated circular promenade. Two adjacent roof volumes accommodate the long-span sports structures above the arena and are subtly linked to provide a visual connection between the landscape roof element and the sports events taking place below.

The spatial hierarchy of the complex has been carefully calibrated to maximize functionality while establishing a direct identity for each sporting discipline. The football stadium, emerging as the dominant landmark, the aquatic masterstroke of the swimming pool and athletic facilities and the football arena, each with a purpose but defining the southern edge together form a coherent and complementary ensemble. These facilities are united by a network of public spaces, creating an integrated sports campus that balances a diversity of organization, operational choices and a strong sense of place.



Athletic Stadium / Level -1 / +1 / +2 / +1000



Athletic Stadium / Level 0 / 1:1000



Athletic Stadium / Sections and South facade / 1:1000



Athletic Stadium / East facade / 1:1000



Athletic Stadium / West facade / 1:1000



Borong Transit Hub Parking / Level -1 / 1:1000



Borong Transit Hub Parking / Level -2 / 1:1000



Borong Transit Hub Parking / Level -3 / 1:1000