



As a principal design gesture we introduce a "thick wall" envisioned to act as a large scale optical device, a **viewing machine** through which the vast landscape is framed, measured and ultimately internalized in the life of the building.

It is through this element that the building forms a dialogue with its historical context and it is within its walls that this History is preserved and exhibited.

The significance of the Bamiyan Cultural Center surpasses its pure functional use.

Designed to stand within the rich cultural context of the Bamiyan Valley, during a period of continuous political turmoil and social upheaval, it carries a strong symbolic weight. A symbolic weight that has a twofold expression :

The first and more direct is to announce the building as an incubator of hope for the local community, a shelter for culture and tradition, a middle ground to negotiate peace and forge the path for political stability.

The second is to highlight and reinforce the agenda of the 1972 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and National Heritage. **The Bamiyan Cultural Center will bring its visitor to the awareness of universal cultural values that transcend time, national borders, ethnic identities.**

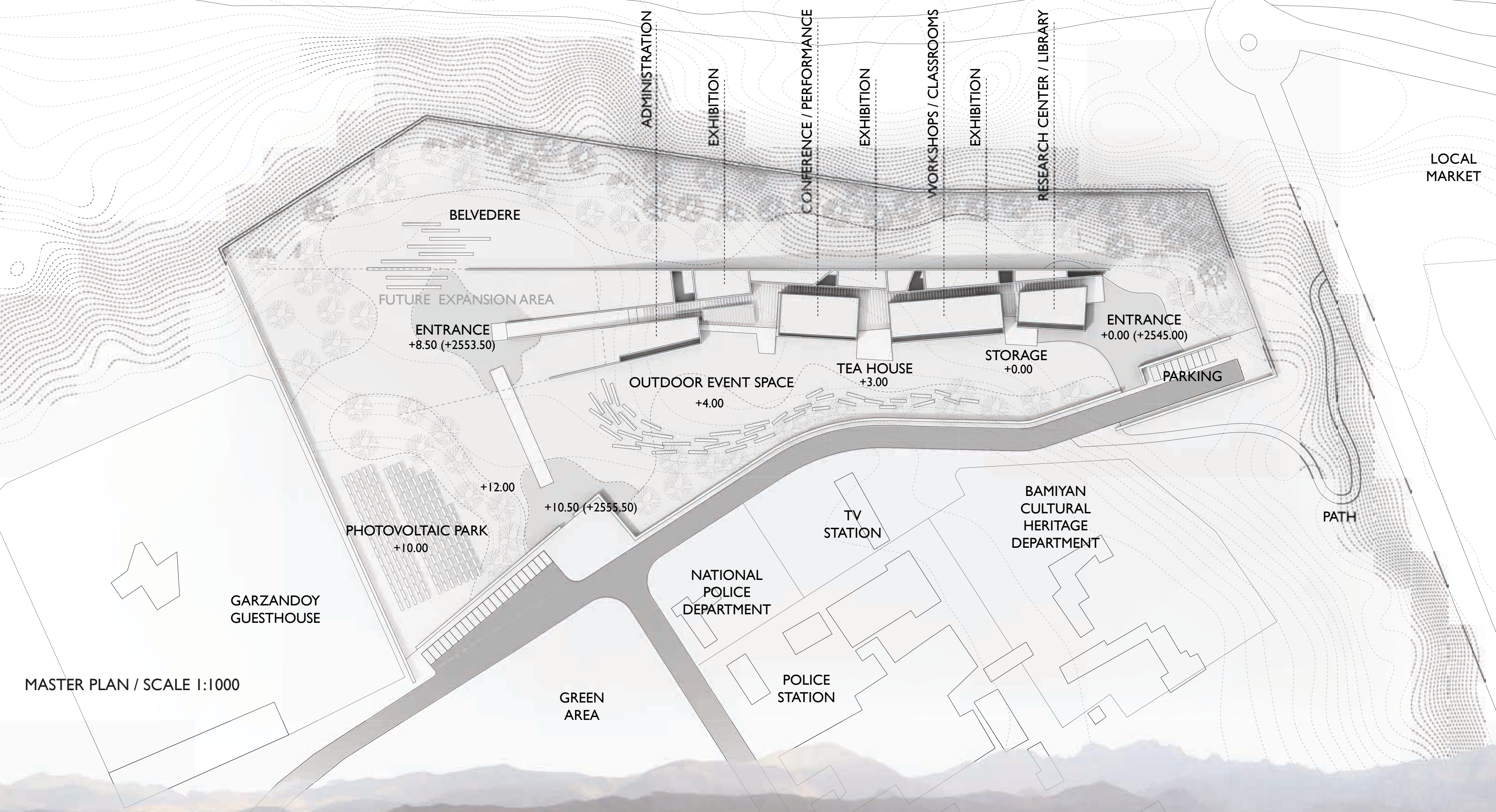
In the case of the Bamiyan Cultural Center, Architecture is called upon to speak for both the immediate present and the distant past and future, to integrate local values and cultural habits while putting forward a design that is up-to-date and reaches its global audience.

The Bamiyan Cultural Center rests in-between the local and the universal, in-between the time of the present and a non-time, the time of a continuous presence, of the deep history of the Monuments.

In our proposal we wish to incorporate these dualisms through the blending of two distinctly different design approaches. **One that forms a clear dialectic with the transcendental context of the Valley , and one that ties the building back to the city, in terms of scale and spatial relationships.**

Facing the Budha Cliffs the building assumes an austere expression - one that does not compete with the Monuments yet borrows from them its critical characteristics : a sense of verticality and a punctuation of the facade. On the opposite side the building breaks down in volumes that respond to the programmatic requirements and relate more directly to their immediate surrounding.

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE



SOUTHWEST VIEW OF THE BAMIYAN CULTURAL CENTER



FAR VIEW OF THE BAMIYAN CULTURAL CENTER





RETAIL STORE



THE ENTRANCE RAMP



PERFORMANCE HALL LOBBY



THE BUDDHA DIORAMA

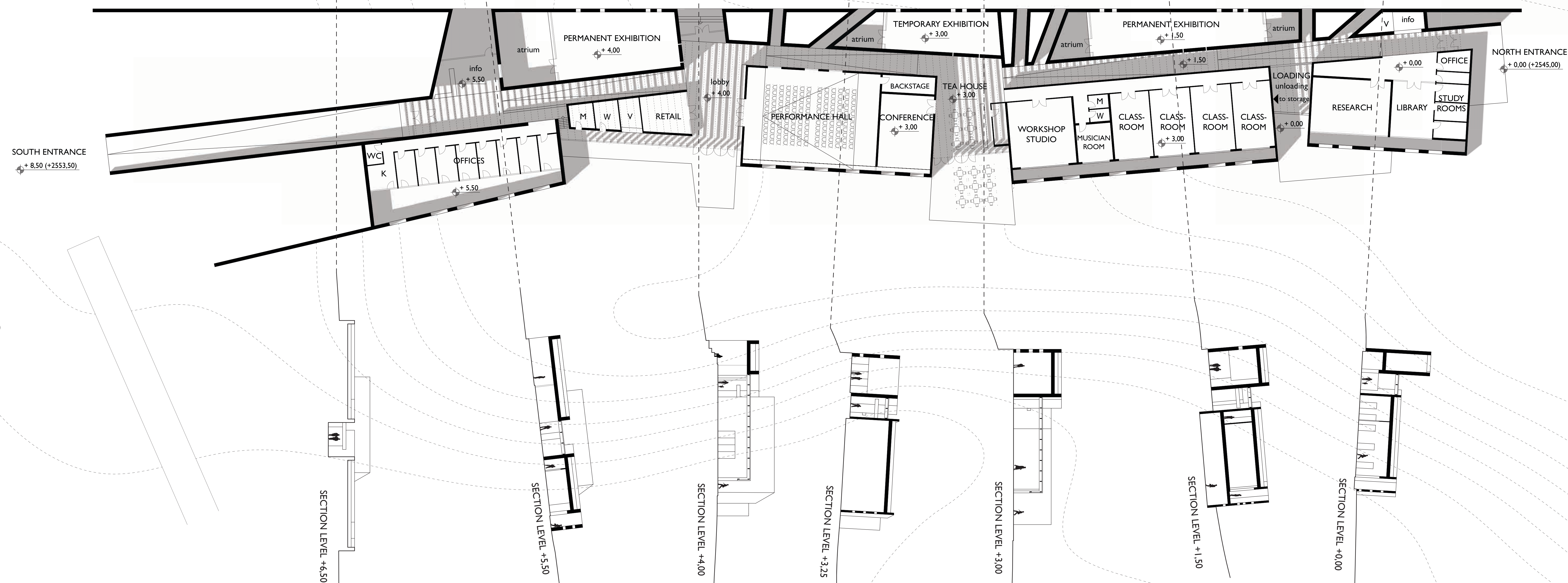


ETHNOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

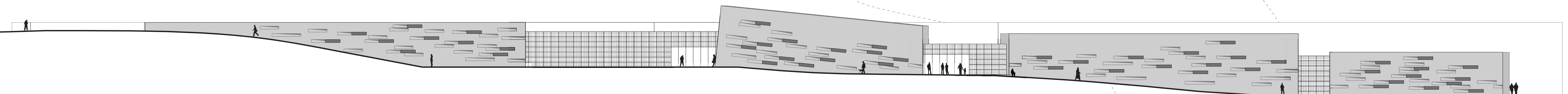


TEA HOUSE

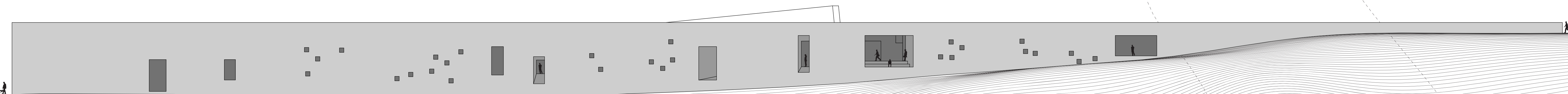
PLAN / SCALE 1:250



SOUTHEAST ELEVATION / SCALE 1:250



NORTHWEST ELEVATION / SCALE 1:250



By means of ramps and intermediate plateaus, the building spine unfolds as a continuous descent from the upper to the lower elevation of the site, adopting in this manner its longitudinal form. It adapts to the site and at the same time forces the immediate landscape of the site to adapt and respond to its interior programmatic organization.

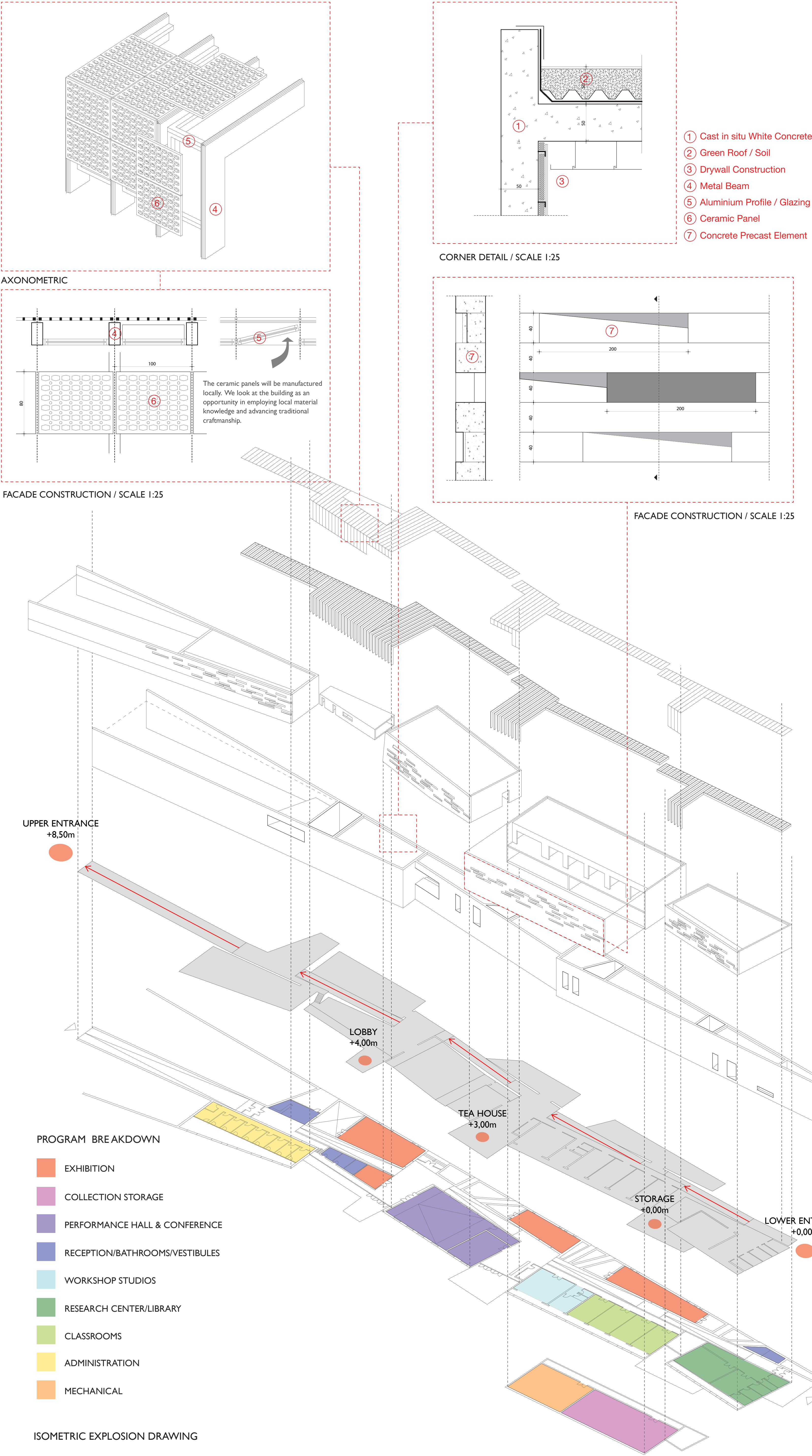
Although the upper south entrance, following the major parking area, is conceived as the official entrance to the building we consider a multiple of entrances and a building that is as penetrable as possible. The entrance on the lower elevation is destined primarily as a service to the Research Center, while a separate nearby entrance can be found for the Storage and Mechanical room area. (the latter are presented in the isometric drawing in board 03)

In the interstitial spaces of the Lobby (at level +4.00) and the Tea House (at level +3.00) a direct connection to the landscape has been planned. In both instances the landscape becomes the natural extension of the interior allowing outdoor events to be fully integrated in the function of the building.

In terms of programmatic organization, all major exhibition-related program is integrated in the outer "thick wall". The rest of the program is housed in distinct, separate building modules. Captured between the Wall and the rest of the building volumes, the core circulation becomes a cinematic strip of varying frames and views, in turn of the Bamiyan valley and the nearby landscape of the site.

The differentiation in *hard* program (core spaces) and *soft* program (circulation) is expressed also in the materiality of the building. White, cast in situ concrete, both as structure but also as finishing is employed for the first, while a light metal structure, clad with custom ceramic panels is used for the latter.

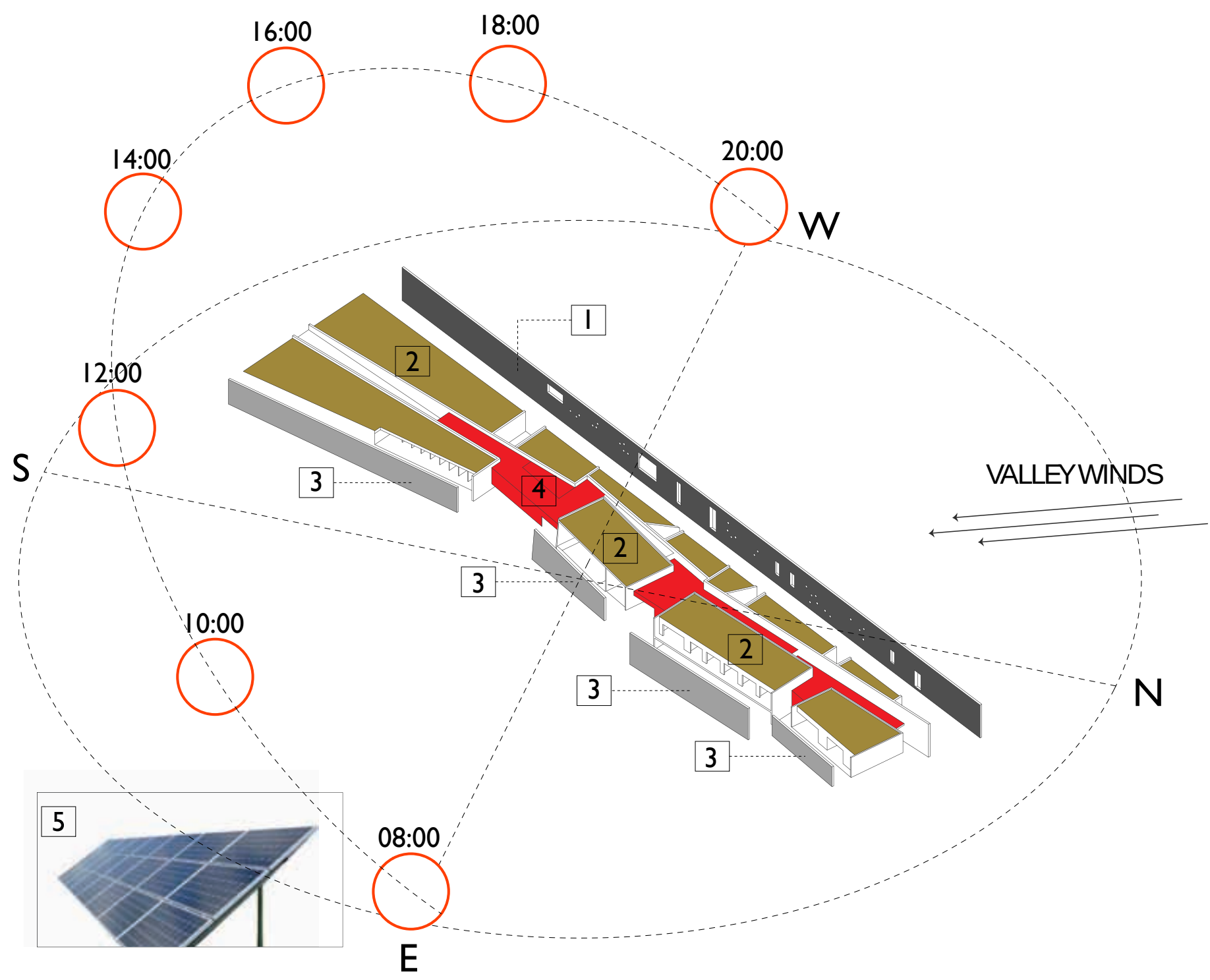
In terms of the overall energy strategy, the concrete building mass coupled with the extensive use of green roofs help reduce heating needs by raising the thermal resistance value of the building. The interstitial circulation area is considered for its potential as a climatic buffer zone : acting as a greenhouse in winter time and enhancing natural ventilation through summer time.



EAST VIEW



SOUTH VIEW



- ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES**
- 1 THE OUTER WALL THROUGH ITS MASS AND THE LIMITED AMOUNT OF OPENINGS INSULATES THE BUILDING FROM THE PREVAILING NORTH VALLEY WINDS AND MINIMIZES THE THERMAL LOSSES TO THE ENVIRONMENT
 - 2 GREEN ROOFS HELP REDUCE HEATING DEMANDS BY ADDING MASS AND THERMAL RESISTANCE VALUE
 - 3 DOUBLE LAYERED, DEEP FACADES CONSISTING OF GLAZING, MINI-ATRIUMS AND A SYSTEM OF CLAUSTRAS CREATE COMFORT ZONES IN THE SOUTH ALLOWING THE SUN, WHILE FILTERING THE ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE
 - 4 THE CIRCULATION CORRIDOR IS ENVISIONED AS AN INTERSTITIAL SPACE, A CLIMATIC BUFFER ZONE
 - 5 THE PROPOSED PHOTOVOLTAIC PARK IN THE SOUTH END OF THE PROPERTY IS KEPT OUT OF DIRECT SIGHT AND IS EXPECTED TO COMPENSATE SUBSTANTIALLY TO THE ENERGY REQUIREMENTS OF THE BUILDING



NORTH VIEW