

Even better view.

KaTaSa

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Alpine mountain region Semmering, located at an elevation of 1000m above sea level, in mid 19th century, after the railway was built, became a famous summer escape-from-the-city destination for Viennese Bourgeoisie as well as a beloved hiking, skiing and climbing region.



Nowadays, Semmering does not only attract people from Vienna seeking a weekend escape, but also tourists from all around Austria and surrounding countries, which directly affects the context and what is expected to be offered in terms of leisure, sport and health programme by such tourist hotspot.

“The view is the currency”

-Wolfgang Kos, Austrian journalist, historian and author

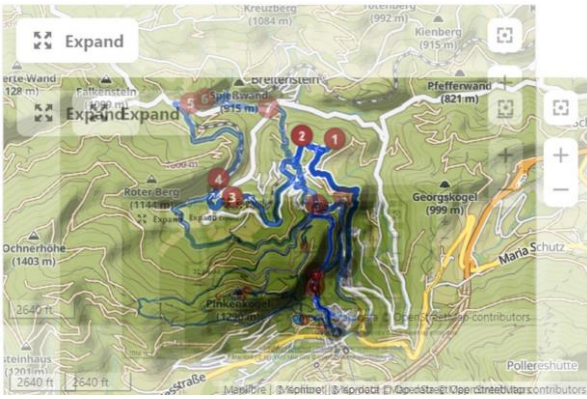
Semmering is a region rich with scenic views, leisure spots and hiking trails. The most important feature of Semmering is the view, or as Kos said: The view is the currency.



Along Hochstrasse there are many platforms for enjoying the views, such as the view over the Railway - 20 Schilling view or the one over ski slopes.



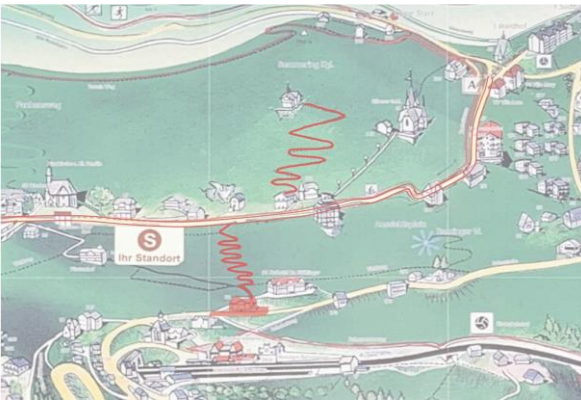
Also, there are numerous info boards and boxes with purpose to bring the history and culture of Semmering closer to visitors, as well as sight seeing spots and monuments.



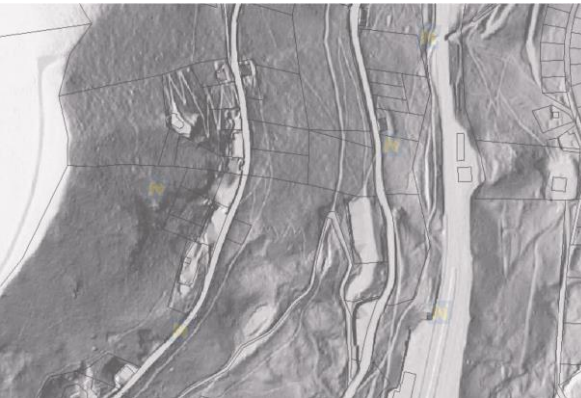
Hiking is one of the many activities people can enjoy in hills of Semmering and it was one of our guidelines for the visitor center project. Many curated hiking and walking paths start from the railway station and at some point include Hochstrasse as a hiking path.



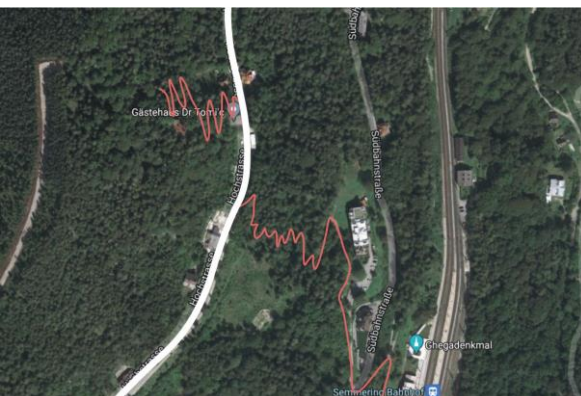
On one info board we noticed one more kind of hiking paths that are not usually shown on official maps.



There are also some wilder paths, shortcuts in a way, that are made by frequent use, they are well hidden forest paths.

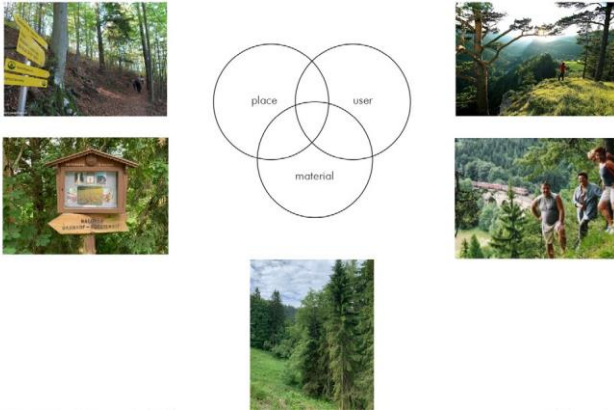


They are hardly noticeable, especially from the air.



We got interested in exactly those.

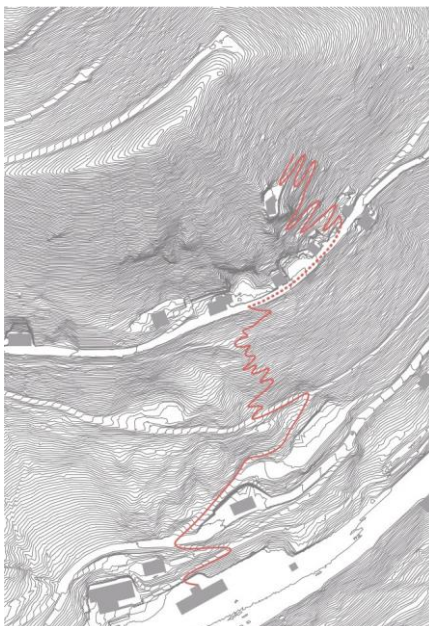
Idea



We are focusing on those hidden but well-used forest paths and big variety of people that arrive at railway station as visitors, people responsible for forming those unofficial paths at the first place and on local material that is the most present at the site - wood.



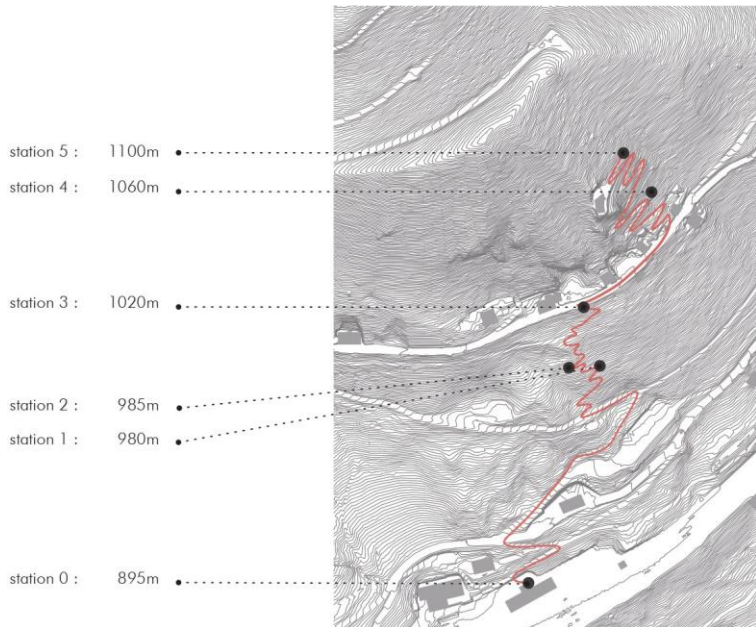
Having all that in mind, we are proposing a visitor center as an add-on to the existing path net with the goal to provide even better view as well as a rest stop, shelter and new experience.



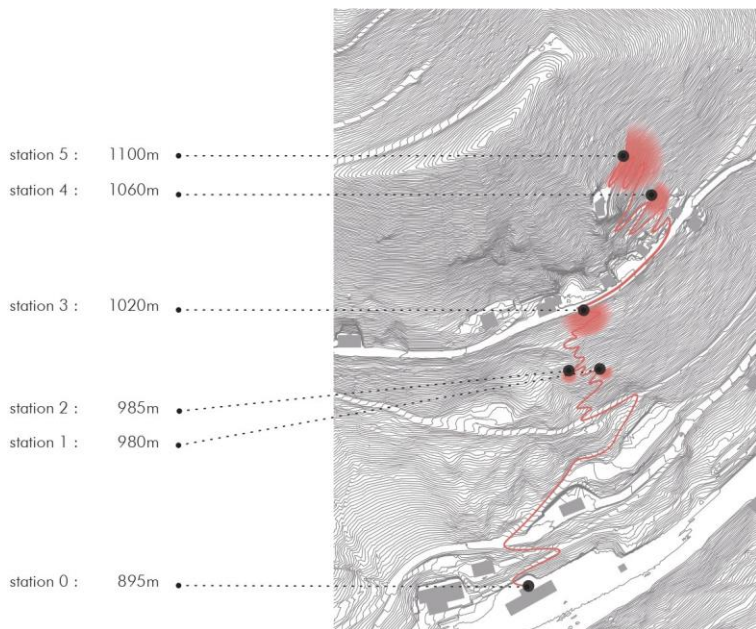
As our starting point we wanted to connect 2 already existing forest hiking paths located on our site.

One path is starting directly above train station and ends on Hochstrasse, which gives visitors the opportunity to come straightforward to the visitor center.

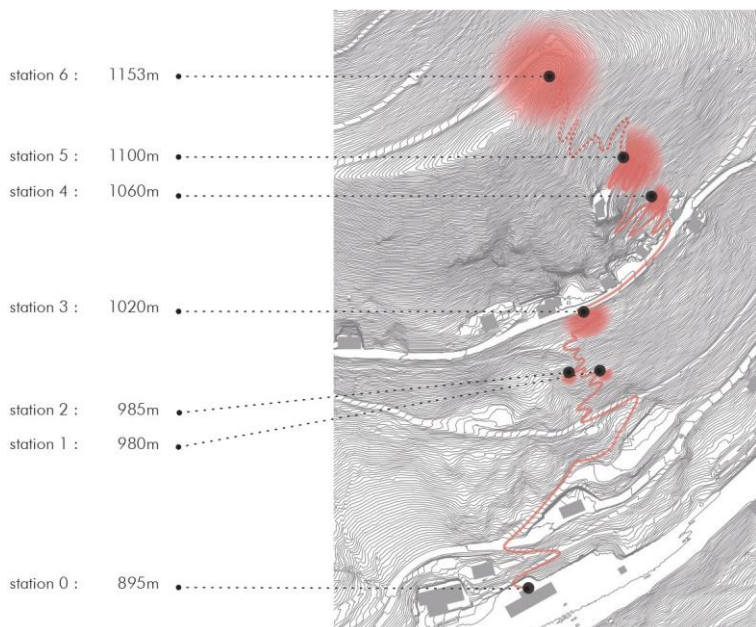
The second one starts at Hochstrasse and is steeper, ending somewhere in the woods on much higher level than Hochstrasse and therefore offers a better view.



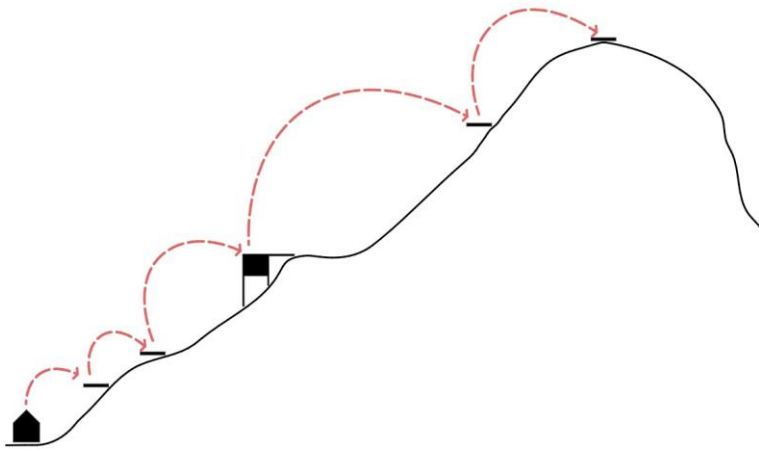
The idea is to provide even better view by placing the set of viewing platforms as rest stops (stations 1,2), starting all the way down, from Railway station (station 0), and in such way connecting it to Hochstrasse where is our visitor center located (station 3) which is by being on the path directly inviting hikers to explore it.



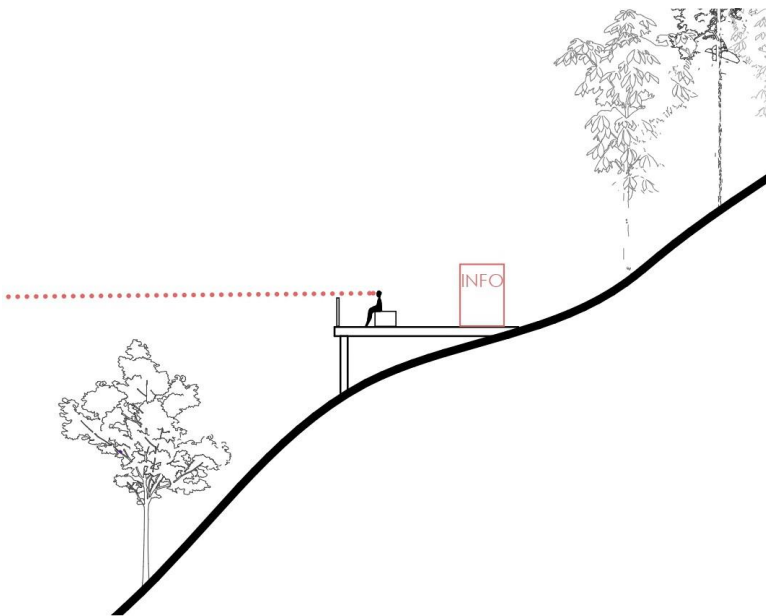
The way from the visitor center, further along Hochstrasse and the 2nd existing path lead to another viewing platform (station 4), where the view is even better than the one from Hochstrasse. Following further the steep path hikers arrive at the station (station 5) that is on higher altitude than any previous and of course because of it has nicer view.



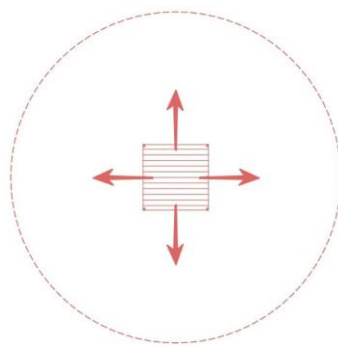
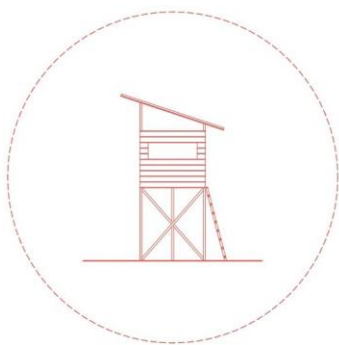
As always, the best, most breathtaking 360 degree view is on the very top of the hill. So therefore, as an addition in a mission for getting the best view, we are proposing a new hiking path, an extension of the already existing paths. It is more extreme than the first 2 paths but it comes with a prize - it leads to the viewpoint (station 6) with the best, full view of Semmering.



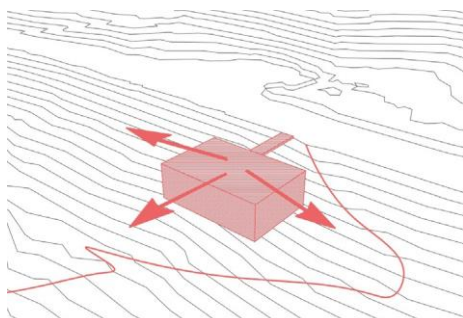
The combination of rest stops and our visitor center gives visitors the opportunity to experience nature in different way and explore it with different intensity.



The rest stops located right next to the hiking path are flat, not covered platforms, providing simple seating and possibility for enjoying the view and having a break. Also, on every platform there is an info board describing something about history, culture and current events happening at Semmering.



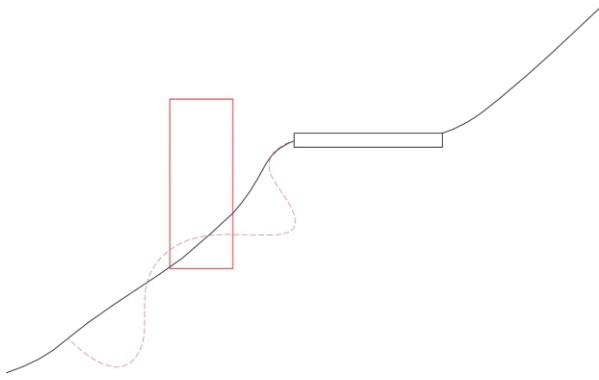
The visitor center is located higher in the hill, directly on the hiking path and connected to the Hochstrasse. It shares the values of an alpine hut - it is a small shelter in the middle of a hiking path, a meeting point for hikers combined with values of a hunting pulpit - providing the better view in all directions by being elevated from the ground.



Form finding

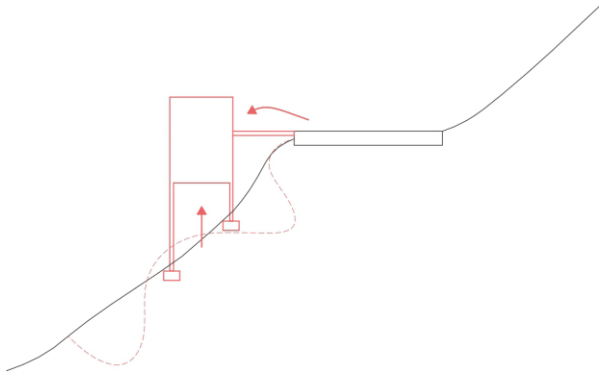
tower

We wanted a tower like structure to be implemented into the landscape. Our visitor center is situated just next to the Hochstrasse and on a very steep slope, so a structure that develops upwards is better than a flat one.



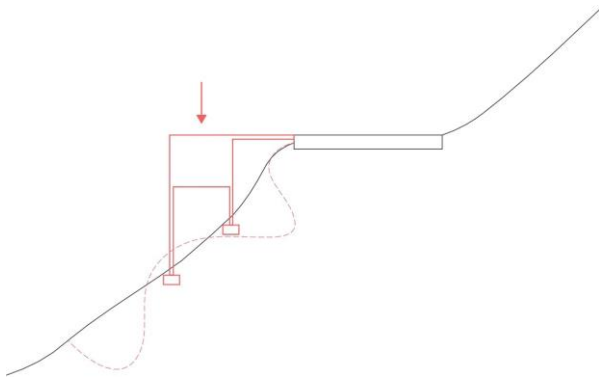
elevation above ground + connection to Hochstrasse

Also, visitor center is just above forest path, so we elevated the building above ground. Bridge is added as a connector between Hochstrasse and visitor center, that way the pedestrian path is prolonged into the center.



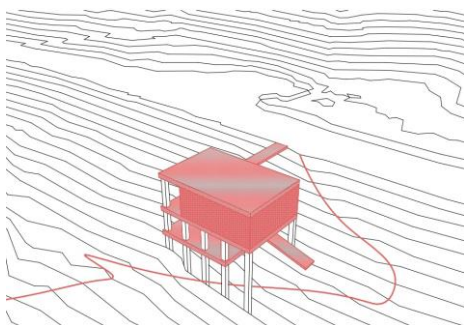
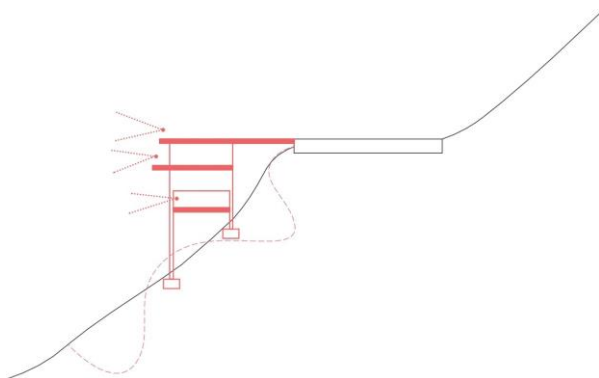
making the roof part of Hochstrasse

Then we wanted to give visitors a possibility to enjoy an even better view and that is why we decided to make ground floor as a type of platform that is also a rest stop for all the hikers on the Hochstrasse.



floors on different levels for different experience

at each level there is a different picture of the landscape on each floor visitors enjoy different types of entertainment in nature while being surrounded by it



THE BEST VIEW



platform 4



platform 3

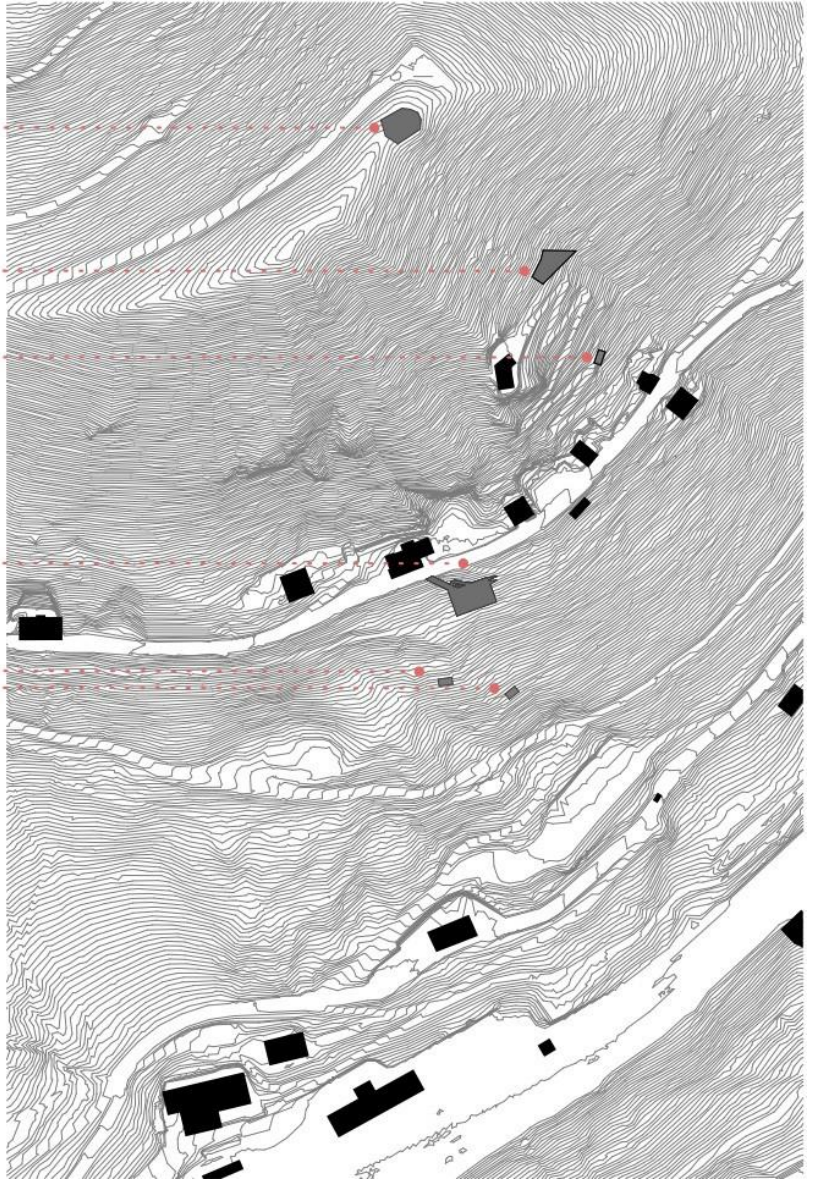
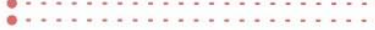


EVEN BETTER VIEWS

visitor center

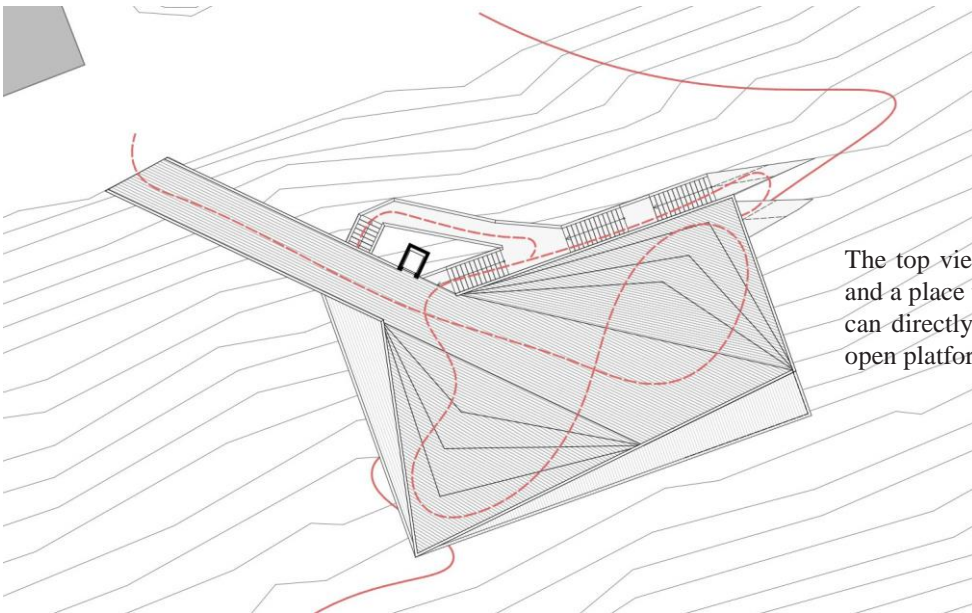


platform
1 & 2



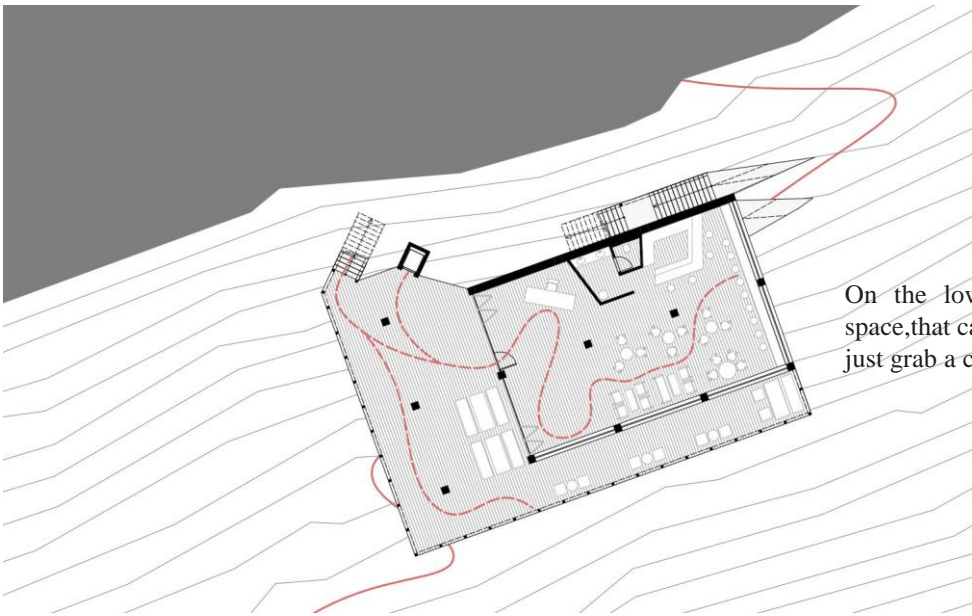
site plan

Project
even better view



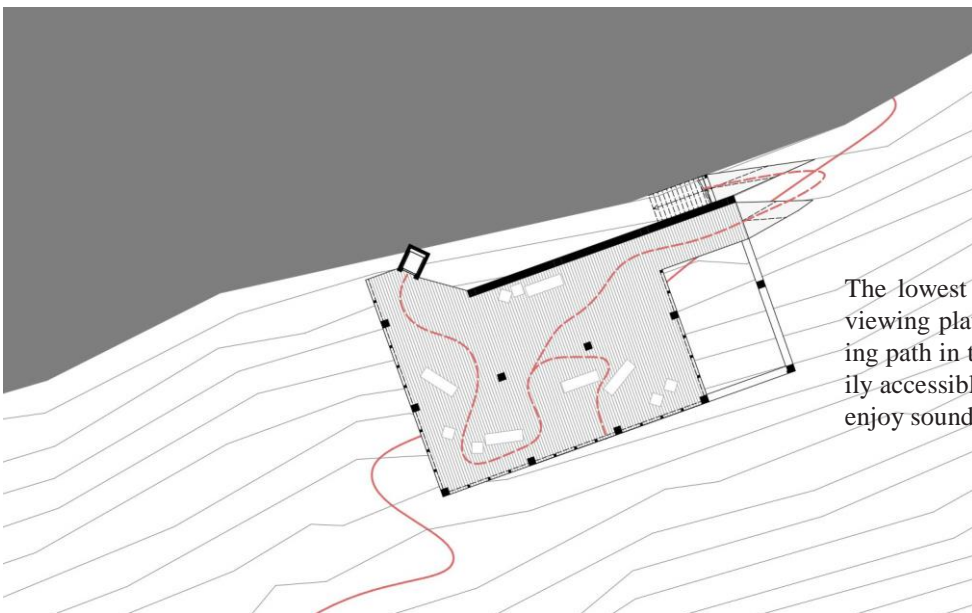
level 0

The top viewing platform offers a south east view and a place to sit in the open. From there on visitors can directly go to the lower floor or to the lowest open platform.



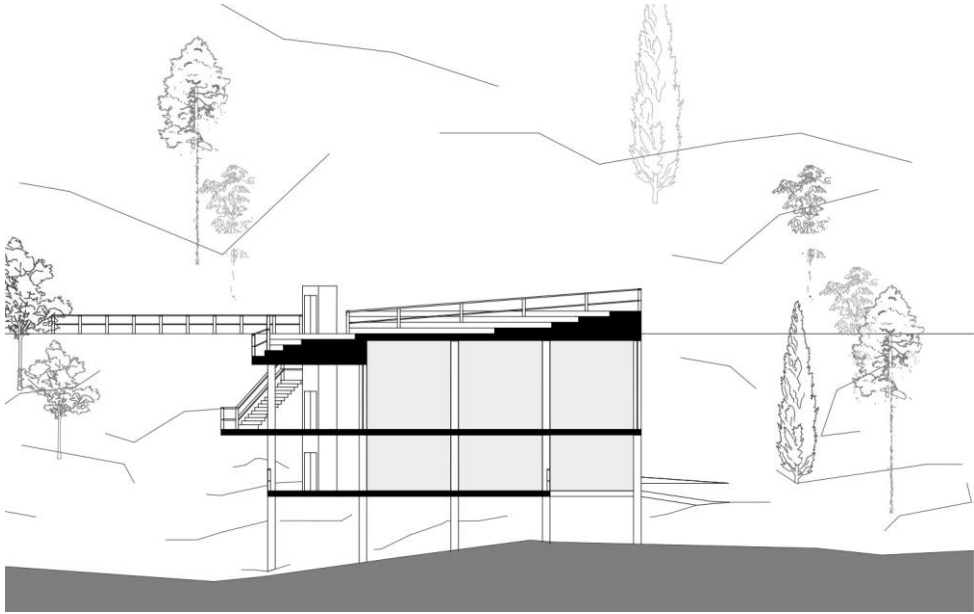
level -1

On the lower floor we offer a multifunctional space, that can be used for shelter, event or simply to just grab a coffee and enjoy the view.

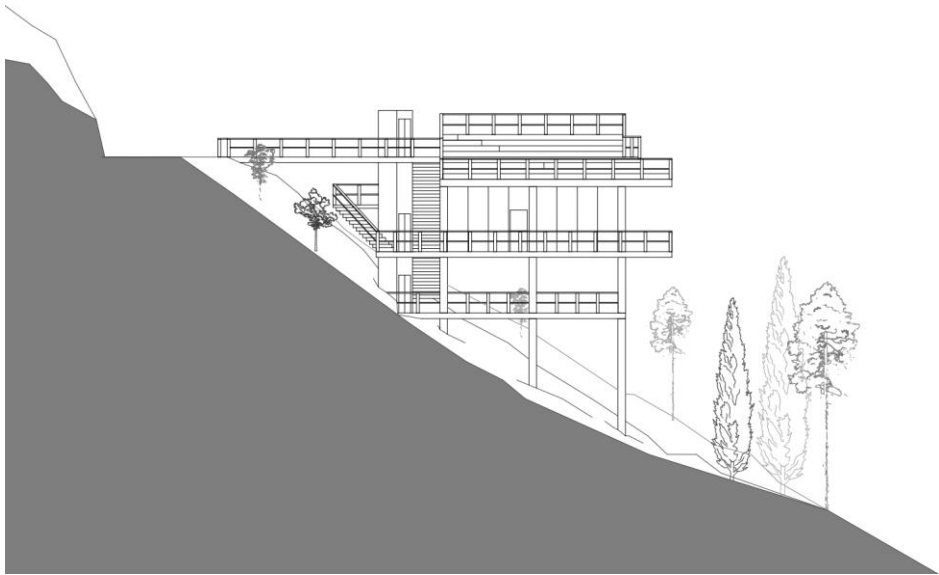


level -2

The lowest platform can be accessed from the top viewing platform as well as from the already existing path in the woods. It is an open sitting area easily accessible for all those who just want to rest and enjoy sounds from nature.



section



elevation

