

# BIBLIO.GRAF.ie

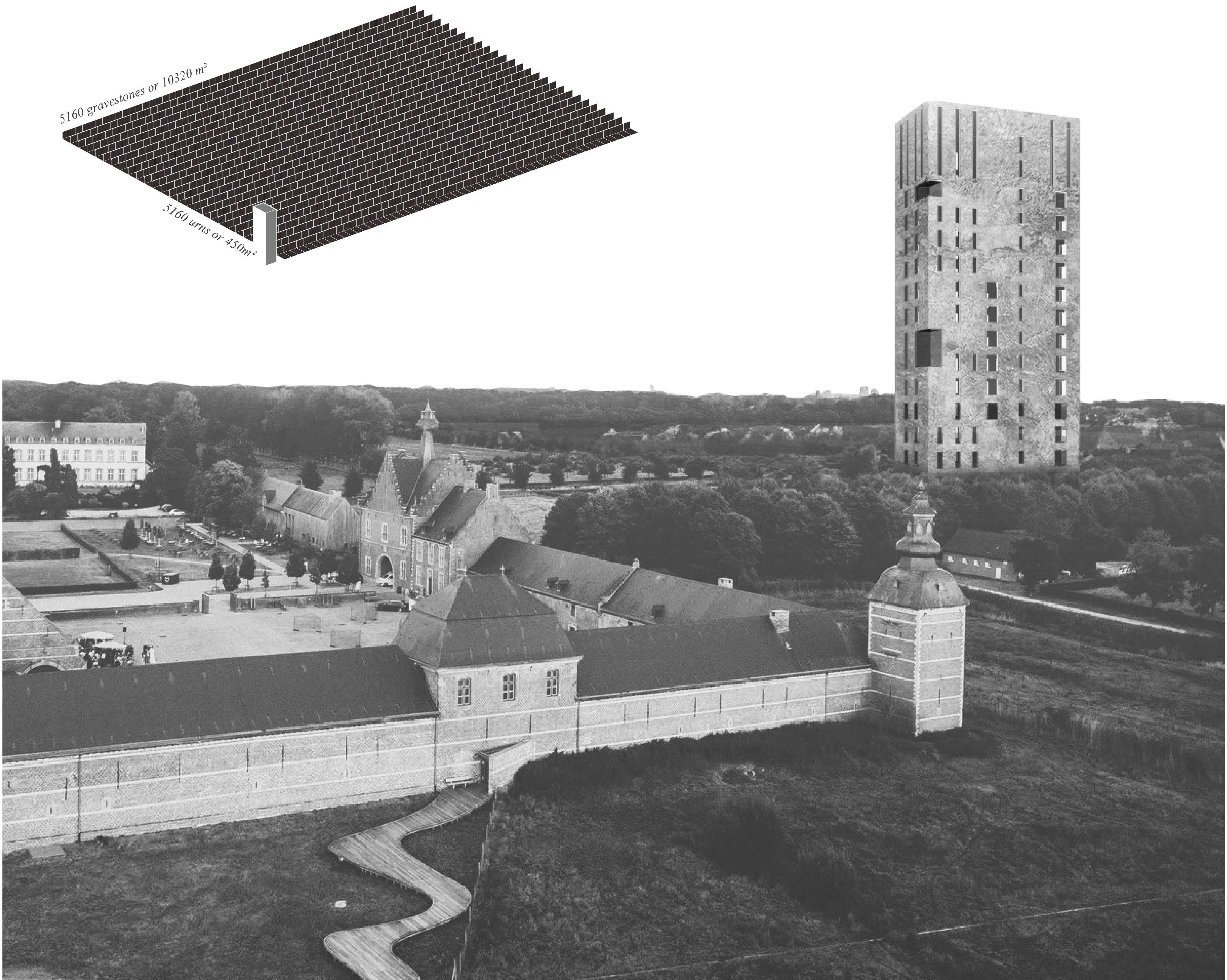
Own research shows that Herkenrode and its surroundings are no longer connected. The abbey is isolated by barriers and the landscape is less recognisable due to the disappearance of paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks, as described by Kevin Lynch in ‘The Image of the City’.

he introduction of a vertical tower to the gatehouse of Herkenrode is proposed as a solution to these issues. This tower would act as a prominent and recognizable feature within the landscape, serving multiple purposes. Firstly, it would function as a highly visible beacon, drawing attention to the abbey site from a distance and re-establishing its presence in the broader landscape. This increased visibility would help to attract visitors and highlight the significance of the site.

Secondly, the tower would offer visitors a unique vantage point from which to view and appreciate the surrounding landscape. By providing an elevated perspective, the tower would allow people to see the natural beauty and historical context of the area in a new and enhanced way. This can foster a deeper connection between visitors and the site, encouraging them to explore and engage more fully with the environment.

Moreover, the construction of the tower would play a crucial role in preserving the natural landscape amidst ongoing urbanization.

The study also showed that the way death has changed dramatically over the last century, from an event that happened in the living room, which all generations faced. With increasing industrialisation, technologisation and medical advances over the last century, death has moved to sterile environments such as hospitals and palliative centres. As a result of this shift, people today are no longer in touch with death, so a sense of ignorance prevails. Death is no longer seen as a natural part of life, but rather as something alienating that evokes feelings of fear and taboo.







The project BIBLIO.GRAF.ie is intended as a response to the alienation of death in our busy contemporary society. Architecture acts as a tool that offers more than physical answers to social problems, but also has a direct connection to the everyday living environment. Combining two programmes that at first glance have nothing to do with each other in our contemporary society, but are on the same line historically and socially, and therefore making them complementary, has been the hidden guideline throughout the design phase. The goal of bringing death back into everyday life focuses the search for programmes that would also be used on a day-to-day basis by residents of the subdivision districts and visitors to Herkenorde. The ambition to preserve the reputation and history of Herkenorde refines the search a little more together with the researched historical and social values of columbaria monuments. This leads to the final decision to combine the columbarium with a public library. The monolithic architecture used for the project is characterised by large and uninterrupted concrete surfaces. This choice was deliberately made as an emphasis on honesty and simplicity of structure. The focus here is on form, spaciousness and light rather than any decorative additions. This is also evident in these two images, both of which show the internal structure. The true nature of the building is exposed without embellishment. This simplicity gives a sense of calm and serenity to visitors to the building, which in the case of columbaria and the processing of mourning takes on an important symbolic value. Besides its minimalism, the tower (landmark) has a timeless aspect thanks to the use of concrete. It is seen as a translation of permanent presence and continuity. These aspects make the use of concrete an obvious choice for the building that is meant to stand for generations.

