

Cemeteries are unique typologies for planning and architecture, as they evoke intense feelings of visitors. They serve as stages for both farewells and remembrance, representing the journey between death and life, loss and memories. Creating such a space goes beyond practical needs for burial or movement. It requires creating a series of sequences in which emotions and ritual needs flow simultaneously.

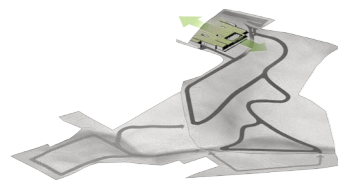
**How can we redefine an irregular and hilly piece of land into a place of memorials blended into the nature ?**

**Can a cemetery be more than just a field of tombs in a row ? How can we create a catalog of remembrance units that are smaller in size and deeper in their emotions?**

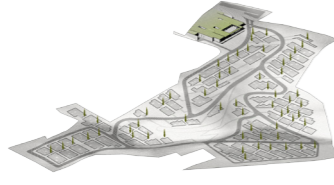
The proposal for the New Cemetery in Berane seeks to address these questions by creating a serene landscape that seamlessly integrates natural and physical elements. The aim is to let visitors experience the space with an uninterrupted and tranquil emotional and spatial depth.

*\*central structure*

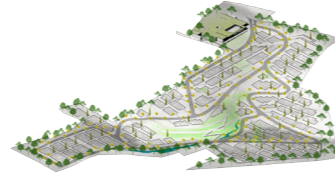
*\*section*



01. Central Structure &amp; Main Route



02. Rooms



03. Overall Design

## Conceptual Design Explanation

Berane is a city surrounded by the scenic rural character of the northeastern part of the country, settled along the Lim River with a modest population of approximately 30,000. The new cemetery is planned on the northeast of the city center on a sloppy terrain surrounded by agricultural fields and rural views. The characteristics of the location, topographical conditions, and a common central structure will serve both the Orthodox and Muslim cemeteries become the main inputs of the overall approach. The cemetery's design aims to create a dialogue between the natural and fabricated elements and redefine the area as a public park.

The main structure sits at the southern end of the plot, running in a northeast-to-southwest direction and blending seamlessly into the natural topography. It contains a chapel, a ghush room, administration offices, and other essential services.

Individual units of the building program are arranged around an internal square, which is covered by a large green roof. The central structure offers a panoramic view of the surrounding site from both ground and roof levels, creating a buffer zone between the two cemeteries and an outdoor space with lush vegetation.

The parking space will be located in the southwest corner of the project area, along the road connecting the cemetery to the city. The main entrance will serve both pedestrians and vehicles, situated between the parking area and the central structure.

The circulation is designed to follow the natural flow of water, collecting and transferring it to reservoir points that will serve as water features. A main promenade creates multiple enclosed loops for different phases of the project, defining the main spine of pedestrian and vehicle flow.

The burial plots varies in slope and orientation due to the relationship between the project boundary and the main promenade. To maintain harmony and consistency with the concept, the project suggests using various types and sizes of Burial **Rooms** instead of defining the entire terrain to cascade in one direction. These rooms will settle into the existing slope, creating smaller sub-plots and spatial diversity. The tombs maintain their eastward orientation but vary in size and type, making it easier for families and visitors to locate their graves and feel a closer connection to their loved ones during their visits. Secondary pedestrian links parallel to the slope will connect the Burial Rooms to the main promenade through straight paths.





### Central Structure (Chapel / Ghush Room)

Farewell spaces, outdoor square, mortuaries, and other utilities requested in the brief are planned under the same roof around a central courtyard which also defines the internal square for gatherings. The building is situated on the highest level of the site and stands out as a centerpiece due to its simple yet strong design. Raw concrete, natural stone, and wood are the main materials used throughout the project, creating a seamless blend between the interior and exterior spaces. The overall architectural language is defined by a limited selection of natural materials that are enhanced by natural light and greenery.

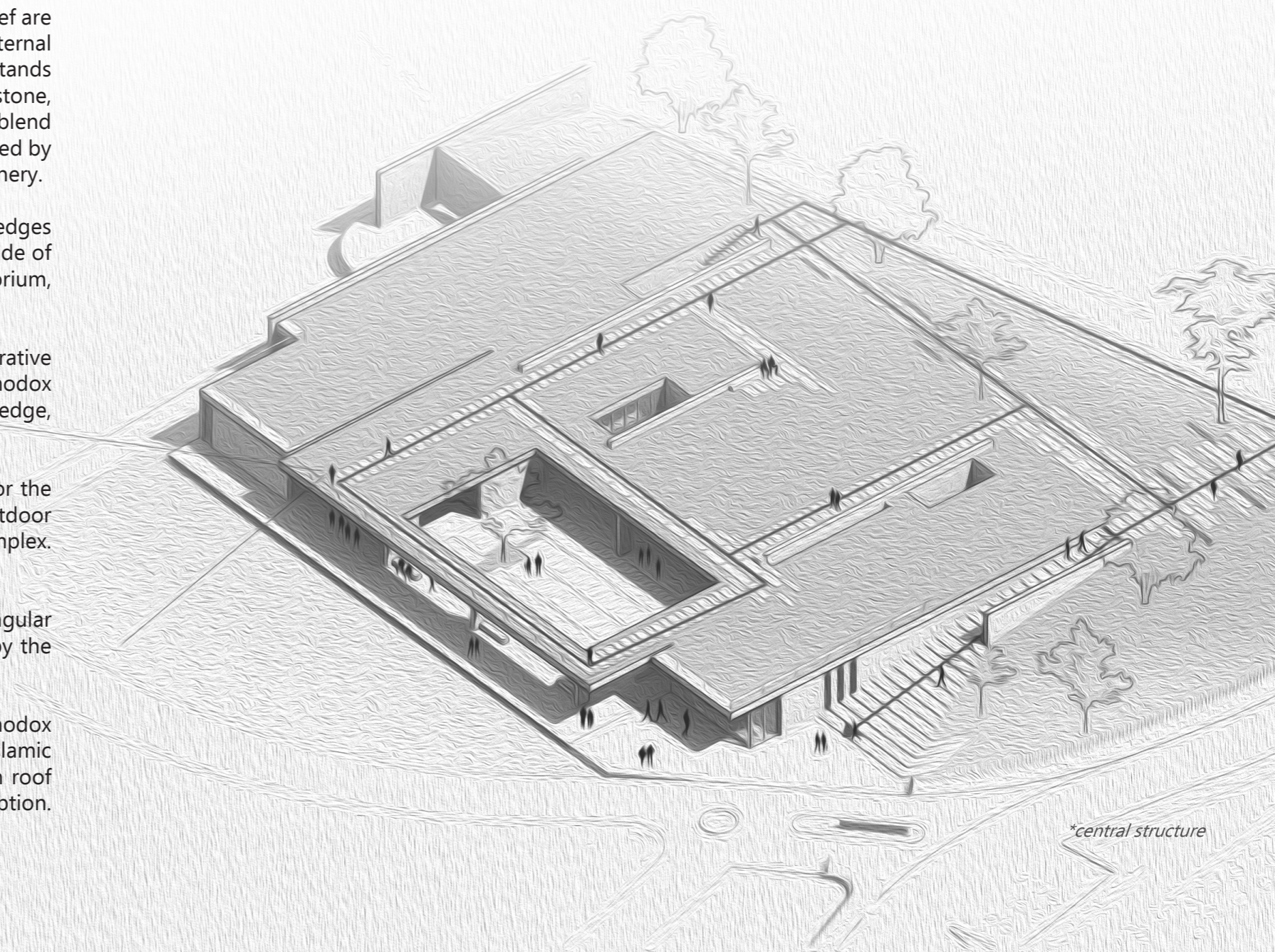
The different functions of the building program are divided and placed along the edges of a rectangular layout, based on spatial and ceremonial requirements. The back side of the building, which is underground, contains mortuaries, a ghush room, a crematorium, and other facilities that are related to the main visitor areas.

On the west edge of the building, there is the flower shop at the front and administrative rooms at the back, overlooking both the inner and outer circulation areas. The Orthodox cemetery has three condolence rooms and serving rooms located along the south edge, running parallel to the internal plaza, with a covered canopy area in between.

The indoor and outdoor ceremonial spaces, prayer areas, and gathering spaces for the Muslim community are on the west side of the building. These areas face an outdoor space surrounded by structural walls, which isolates them from the rest of the complex. The walls are oriented towards the southeast, which is necessary for worship.

The distribution of different volumes is fragmented by circulation areas, and the rectangular scheme provides a panoramic view of the entire site towards the north, framed by the walkable green roof.

The green roof's upper layer serves as an observation park between Islamic and Orthodox cemeteries, extending the existing terrain and providing pedestrian access to the Islamic cemetery from the central structure. Together with its vegetative layer, the green roof provides heat and light control, making a significant contribution to energy consumption. It becomes a crucial element of biophilic and sustainable design strategy.







### The Rooms (as Memorial Units )

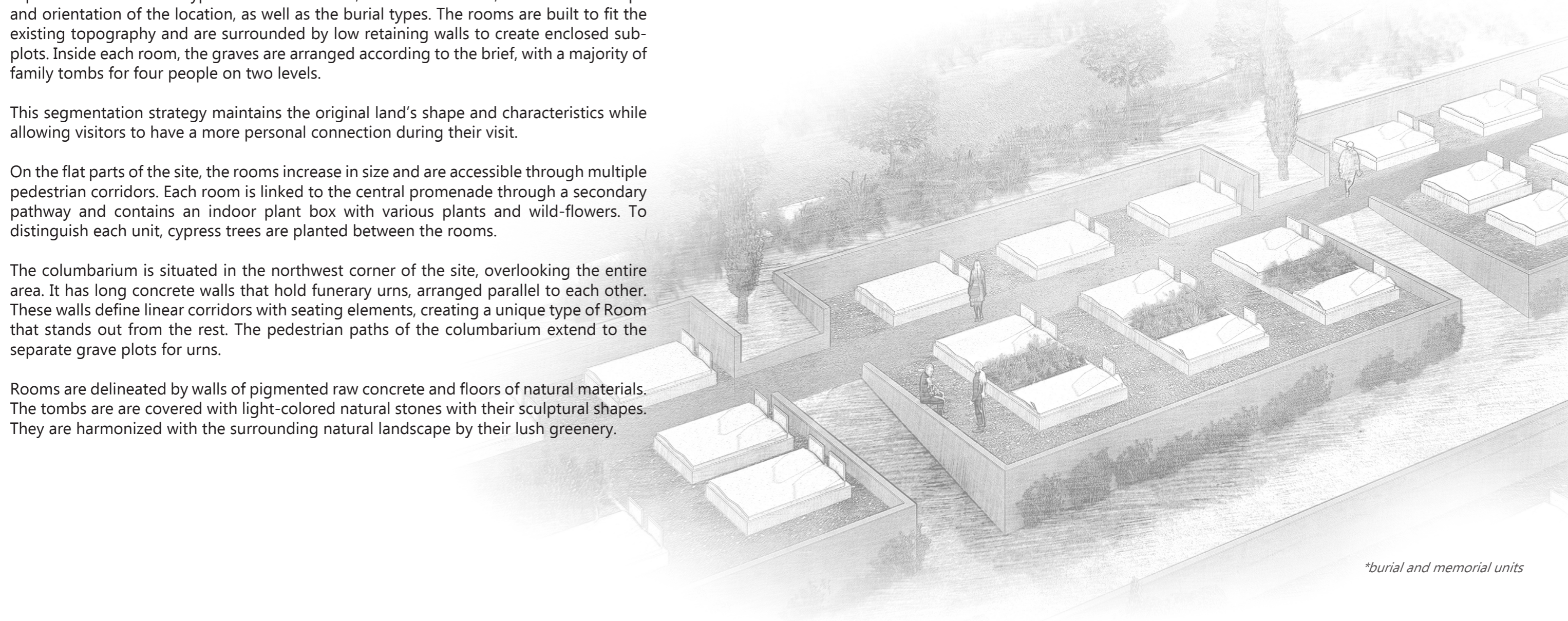
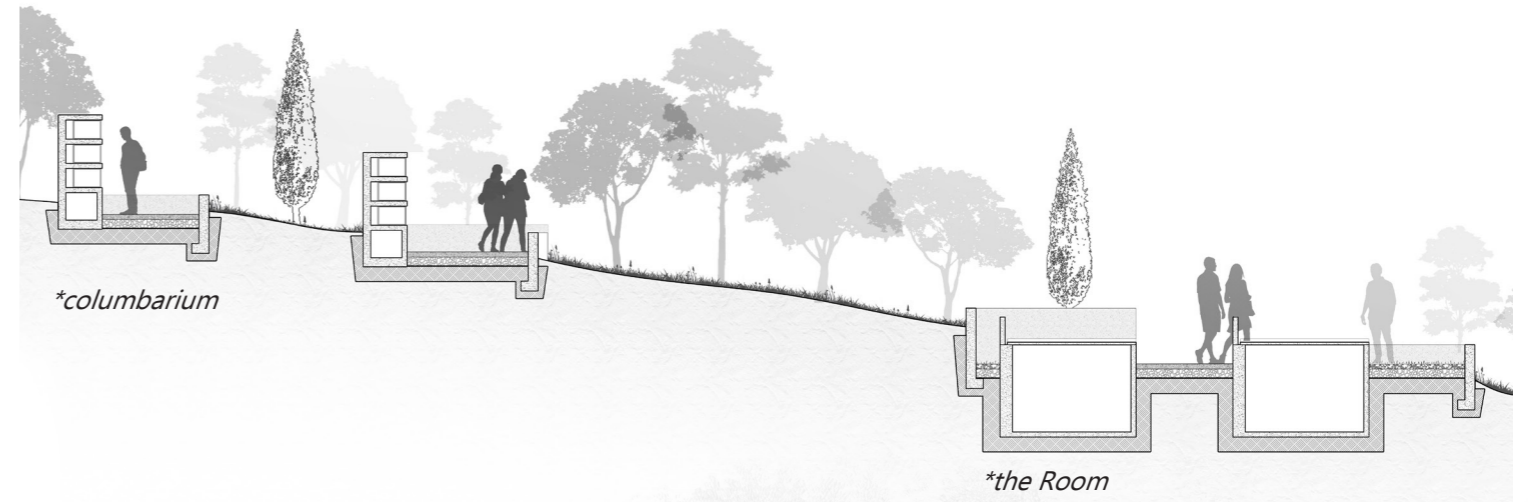
The cemetery is made up of various grave plots spread out across the area. These plots are separated into different types of memorial units, named as "Rooms," based on the slope and orientation of the location, as well as the burial types. The rooms are built to fit the existing topography and are surrounded by low retaining walls to create enclosed sub-plots. Inside each room, the graves are arranged according to the brief, with a majority of family tombs for four people on two levels.

This segmentation strategy maintains the original land's shape and characteristics while allowing visitors to have a more personal connection during their visit.

On the flat parts of the site, the rooms increase in size and are accessible through multiple pedestrian corridors. Each room is linked to the central promenade through a secondary pathway and contains an indoor plant box with various plants and wild-flowers. To distinguish each unit, cypress trees are planted between the rooms.

The columbarium is situated in the northwest corner of the site, overlooking the entire area. It has long concrete walls that hold funerary urns, arranged parallel to each other. These walls define linear corridors with seating elements, creating a unique type of Room that stands out from the rest. The pedestrian paths of the columbarium extend to the separate grave plots for urns.

Rooms are delineated by walls of pigmented raw concrete and floors of natural materials. The tombs are covered with light-colored natural stones with their sculptural shapes. They are harmonized with the surrounding natural landscape by their lush greenery.



*\*burial and memorial units*

## Ecological Sustainability and Landscape Strategy

The design approaches the soft and hard landscape strategy of the project from a sensitive ecological perspective. To activate a local living microenvironment, it is aimed to protect the existing tree community as much as possible, recover existing soil, and maximize the ratio of vegetation and permeable surface.

Water canals offset from the main circulation route are proposed to collect water and carry it towards the lower terrain through reservoir areas that function as linear ponds with changing water levels throughout the year. These areas also serve as recreational zones as micro wetlands.

A green zone with denser vegetation and pedestrian boardwalks that connect different levels are proposed for the steep slopes of the site that are not suitable for burial activities. Together with linear pond and its surrounding wetland formation, it defines a central recreational zone in the heart of the overall project area.

The proposed planting strategy supports and reinforces the overall concept. The peripheral zone between the project area boundary and the grave plots acts as a green buffer with dense tree communities and low-lying ground cover plants that require minimal maintenance and water. This helps create a peaceful environment by isolating the inner space from the outer atmosphere.

Low flowering trees and a high contour planting are proposed along the main circulation route, providing visitors with an exhibition of local flora during their visits. Locally native shrubs and tall plant species provides a spatial effect to the main promenade and define a living boundary between the movement and memorials. Only cypress trees are planted between each memorial unit to better mark their locations. Inside the rooms, landscape areas between tombs are planted with colorful flowers and bushes.

To ensure environmental vitality, grounds throughout the project are planned as permeable as possible. Porous concrete –as a sustainable and also durable option- is proposed for the main promenade, while secondary pathways linking Rooms to the main route are proposed as soil pathways with gravels, and inner ground surfaces of the memorial units are completed by natural grass-stones.

*\*overall view*

CHART I - Gross & Net Construction Areas

CENTRAL STRUCTURE	ORTHODOX COMMUNITY SPACES		MUSLIM COMMUNITY SPACES		ADMINISTRATION AND UTILITIES		COMMERCIAL SPACE			
	Condolences Room I	55	Entrance Hall	50	Administrative Office	25	Flower Shop	52		
	Condolences Room II	55	Room for Deceased I	26	Open Office	25				
	Condolences Room III	55	Room for Deceased II	26	Office Foier	22				
	Serving Room	50	Serving Room I	28			COMMON OUTDOOR AREAS			
	Kitchenette	16	Serving Room II	28	WC	8				
	Pantry	8	Kitchenette	17	Staff Room	9	Internal Square & Plateau	263		
	Mortuary	64	Pantry	8			Entrance Plaza	150		
	WC	30	Ablution Space	20	Utility Room	15	Outdoor Circulation	210		
			WC	32	Workshop&Store Room	35				
	Porch - Canopy	150	Ghusl Room	35	Store Room for Firewood	32				
			Cooling Room	15	Boiler Room	32				
					Crematorium	32				
			Outdoor Area / Canopy	150	Gardener&Maintenance R.	10				
					Waste Disposal Room	10				
					Circulation	225				
	NET INDOOR AREA	333	NET INDOOR AREA	285	NET INDOOR AREA	480	NET INDOOR AREA	52		
TOTAL GROSS AREA : 1.300 sqm										
TOTAL NET INDOOR AREA : 1.150 sqm										
TOTAL OUTDOOR AREA : 923 sqm										

CEMETERY	OUTDOOR MEMORIAL, BURIAL and LANDSCAPE AREAS	
	Total Surface Area for Memorial Units	16.700
	Family Tomb 01 - capacity : 93	
	Family Tomb 02 - capacity : 775	
	Tomb 01 - capacity : 150	
	Tomb 02 - capacity : 150	
	Tombs for Urns - capacity : 57	
	Columbarium Walls - capacity : 180	
	Total Surface Area for the Main Route	8.200
	Total Surface Area for Secondary Paths	6.500
	Total Area for Soft Landscape/Greenery	39.500

CHART II - COST ESTIMATION

STRUCTURE TYPE	COST ESTIMATION
Central Structure	~1.400.000 €
Landscape (Hardscape & Softscape)	~ 800.000 €
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	~ 2.200.000 €

\* The investment estimation for the construction cost is calculated based on statistical data from open sources and comparison of similar type and category examples.

From internal research of completed similar projects, it is seen that the unit costs per square meters for similar type of the construction is around 1.100 - 1.400 € per/sqm.

The calculation regarding the above information has been concluded as follows:  
1.300 sqm(gross area) x 1.100€ = ≈ 1.430.000 €

\* Estimation of other simple structures and landscape works are also estimated based on local unit prices and European market comparisons.