

THE PERFECT BARN

A Weekend House in Sandby, Sweden





CRAFTS WITH HEART

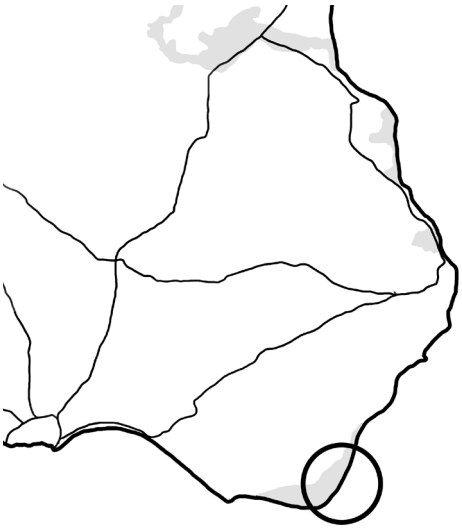
Inspiring, truthful, speaking to emotions: this is how Johan Sundberg describes good architecture. The Lund native, who has studied art and graphic design, understands his practice as artistic and spiritual, with technical elements – a view confirmed by his poetic projects with perfect details.

Johan Sundberg's office became famous almost overnight, at 27, when his "Villa Bergman" got the nomination for the Swedish magazine Arkitektur's Debut Award in 2007.
After the accelerated start came years dedicated to small projects, teaching and starting a family. Around the time the Sundberg family got their second child, the office grew to the largest company in town with 12 employees, among them former students. Johan Sundberg Architektur is working mainly on villas and summer houses and branching through to the public sector.

Talking about large scale projects, Johan Sundberg mentions the responsibility towards future users as an essential guideline, together with the architectural and functional complexity of such a task.

"When working on residencies for private clients, I try to get close to every family to discover and understand their needs. It's necessary for creating bespoke housing solutions.
I listen a lot, have big ears and a small mouth.
If our clients have something that reminds them of their grandmother and is dear to them, we'll make it a part of their new house. As an architect, I want to be soft and adaptable rather than dogmatic."

Johan Sundberg



Johan Sundberg's first projects gained popularity across the internet, resulting in several project requests. Some of his future clients had friends who have been building with the office; others just called after seeing their work online. Such was the beginning of the Sandby project, a summer house for a family of four, with a clear wish for privacy and intimacy.

Although located in a pine forest, protected from the strong Scanian winds and intense sun, with no sea in direct sight – except the top floor – the house is a coastal residence.
The sea waves provide a calming background melody, while the light Siberian larch facades and roof shine in the beautiful northern light.

Map showing the location of the house on the Scania peninsula. Grey areas indicate forests along the coastline. A circle marks the area around Sandby: location of the house by Johan Sundberg Arkitekten.







THE PERFECT WOOD HOUSE

"I wanted to make this house my masterpiece of the genre, the perfect Swedish woodhouse I could imagine. The shape of a barn was a clear choice, as this interpretation of the vernacular architecture in the area perfectly matched the form of the client's land. For the façade, we picked by hand the most beautiful boards from the highest sorting of Siberian larch; the rest was used on the roof. It's fascinating how much you can express with one material just by applying differentiated surfaces."

Johan Sundberg

A wooden structure – hollow timber frame with insulation between, planked with wooden boards – stands on a masonry wall built on the perimeter of the concrete floor slab.

The load-bearing structure of the house divides its interior into four zones and is visible from the outside: the garden façade setbacks follow its rhythm, the walls' are only solid elements between the room-high and wide glazed sliding doors. The dimensions of each compartment are defined by the maximal length of a wooden board, 5.5 meters. Elegant, slim roof overhangs make the façade look lower, shifting attention to the roof.

Johan Sundberg describes the garden façade as "absence of a façade," and the wooden deck as "the wall that fell on the floor" – playful interventions distinguishing the summerhouse in Sandby from standard barn-typology buildings. Replacing the southern wall with sliding glazed doors invites the inhabitants to circulate freely between the garden and the interior.

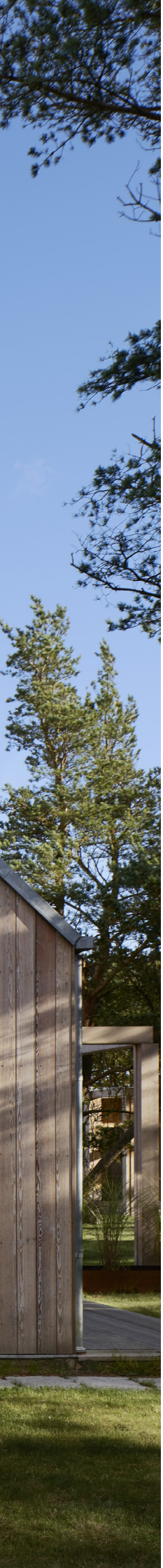
A pergola, an echo of a ceiling, strengthens the functional bond of the deck to the interior: it's one continuous space, especially in the kitchen area and the outdoor dining.

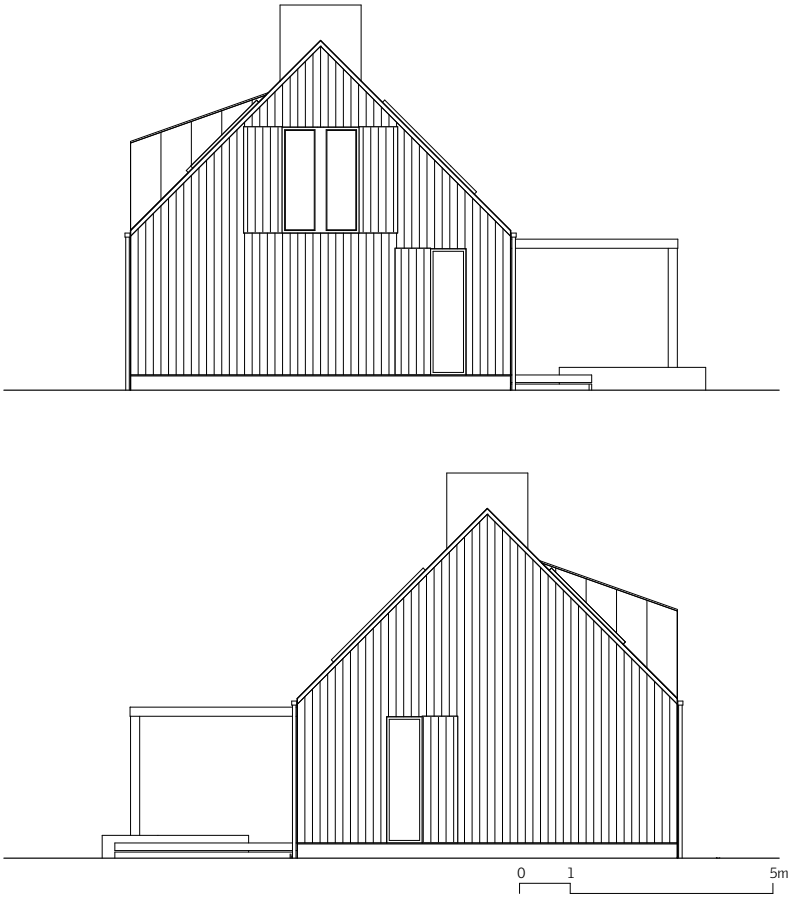


Site plan. The entrance to the property is on the northern, closed facade. Thanks to the surrounding forest, all houses, albeit dense, enjoy privacy both indoors and in the gardens.







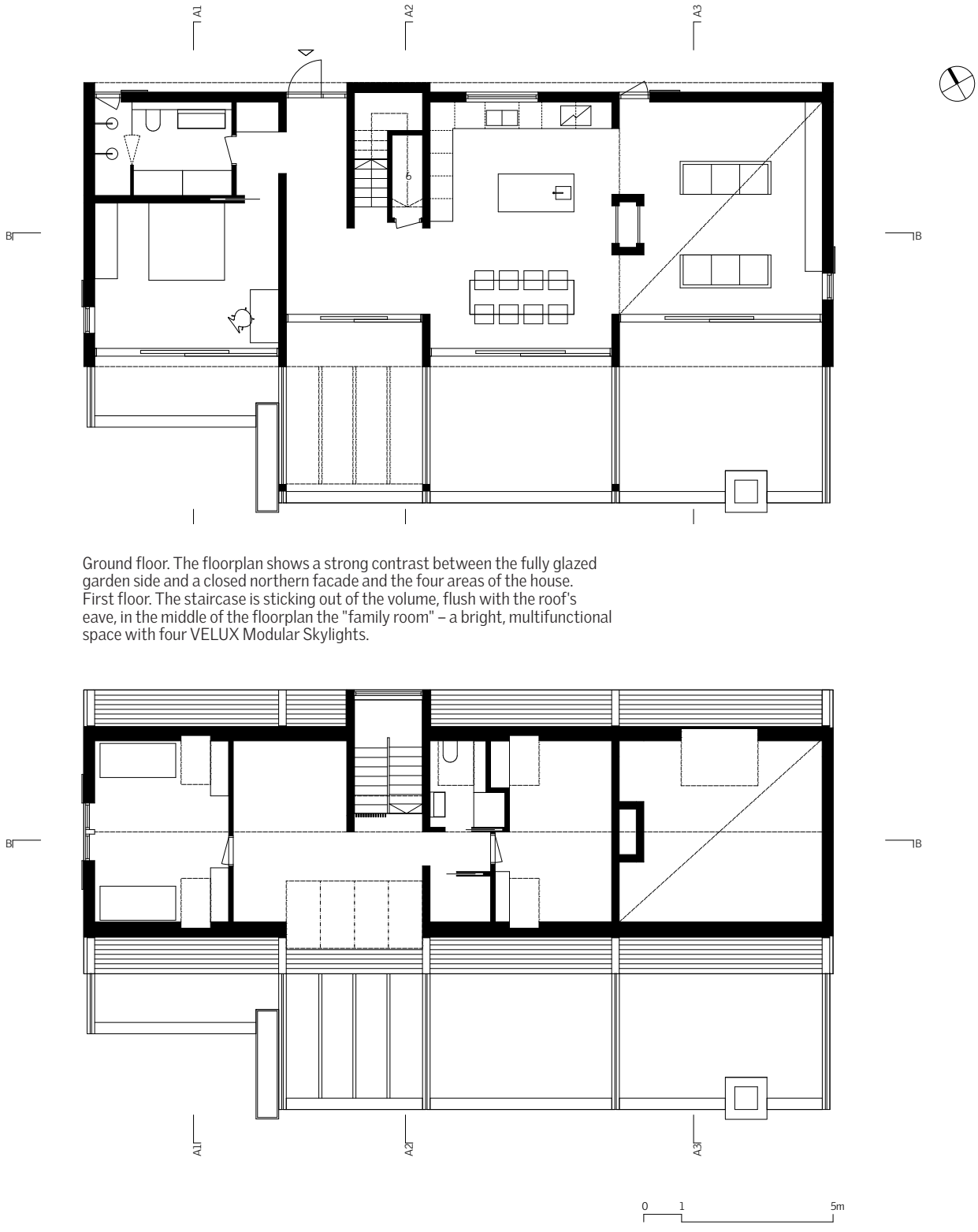


North-west and south-east facades cite vernacular architecture of the region. The volume is relatively narrow – just enough to fit a bedroom and a bathroom, so the staircase sticks out from the volume. The resulting form reminds of a traditional roof gable used to lift up the hay into the storage.

"This project is much closer to a barn than to a traditional Scanian house. It's luxurious, though, thanks to best possible materials, perfect detailing, and last but not least – plenty of daylight."

Johan Sundberg





Ground floor. The floorplan shows a strong contrast between the fully glazed garden side and a closed northern facade and the four areas of the house.
First floor. The staircase is sticking out of the volume, flush with the roof's eave, in the middle of the floorplan the "family room" – a bright, multifunctional space with four VELUX Modular Skylights.

"The best place in a house is usually the kitchen; it's no different here: from the centrally located cooking island, one sees the garden and the interior at the same time. Behind the transparent fireplace, an enormous double window gives the house an extra injection of daylight."

Johan Sundberg







SUMMERS AND WINTERS

With the help of thick curtains, the interior changes into a very private, cosy space, with only views opening up to the sky and treetops. Combined with a burning fireplace, this setting is optimal in the colder months; many families choose to spend the summer and winter holidays in their countryside homes. All-season functionality, together with an outlook of the house becoming the main habitation after retirement, results in holiday homes with full functionality in all seasons.

A beautiful, open, big fireplace located between the dining and living room plays a crucial part in this functionality. The heat generated by it is reused in the heating system.

Apart from this, the fireplace plays a central role in the ritual of "coming home": making a fire, sitting around, watching the flames turning to a shining glow as the night gets late is a calming and bonding experience.

Johan Sundberg believes that engaging the users into forming their habitat strengthens the connection between people and space: pulling curtains on hot days to prevent glare and overheating or opening the windows for necessary airing. In places where one can't reach a window – for example, because of its placement high in the roof – he appreciates automatic steering systems, provided with VELUX skylights.



Cross section A3 through the full-height living area,
longitudinal section through the middle of the house, showing the chimney, and the interior bedroom, with daylight and views provided by two VELUX windows only.

"There must be
a double-height room
somewhere in
a barn-like house."

Johan Sundberg





AN OUTDOOR PLAYGOUND INDOORS

The ground floor, next to the day area, features a master bedroom with a generous bath. On the first floor, the stair leads to what the architect calls a "family room", an extra space of multiple uses: one can work at the desk, watch TV sitting on a little couch, children can arrange their toys in the entire area. A significant part of the roof surface is glazed: VELUX Modular Lighting windows have been used to ensure a friendly atmosphere and plenty of daylight.

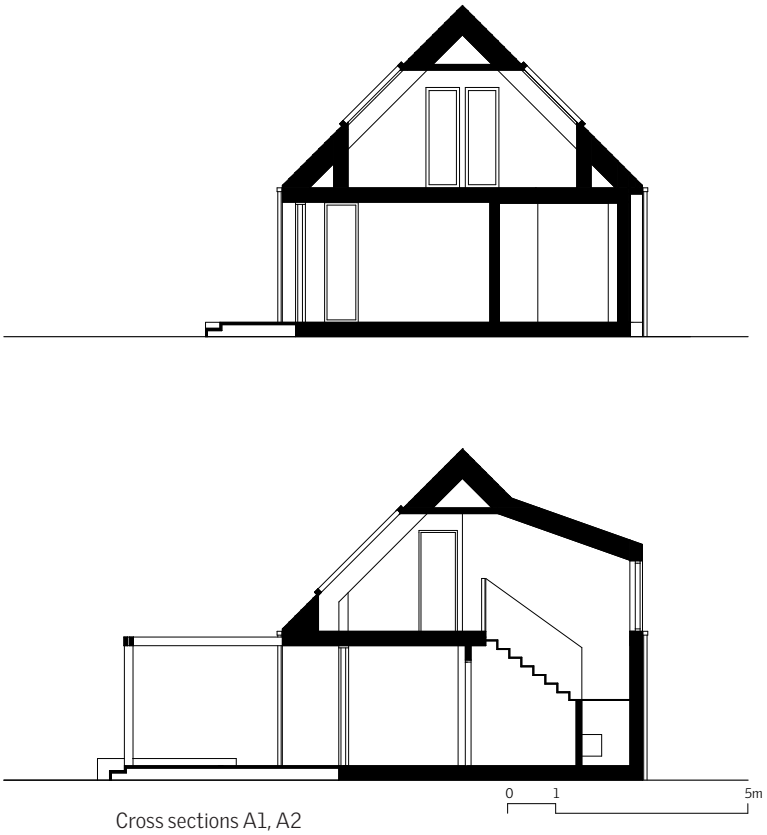
The bedrooms are tucked in at both sides of the family room, each equipped with two VELUX windows, providing lots of daylight and ensuring optimal airflow.

"Asking for the role of daylight in architecture is a bit like asking for the role of oxygen in breathing. Daylight is crucial in any design, although I believe that architecture is much more than just the "play of volumes in the light", quoting Le Corbusier. All houses we design have to function without electrical light during the day."

Johan Sundberg

"Skylights allow for inexpensive, but spectacular, light effect. Even a little window over a sink converts a bathroom into a beautiful, generous space. Besides it, you don't need air conditioning in a house with roof windows, as it is replaced by natural cooling through air circulation."

Johan Sundberg



Cross sections A1, A2







PROJECT DATA

Project:	Summer house
Architecture:	Johan Sundberg Arktitekten, Lund
Location:	Österlen, Sweden
Area:	287 sqm
Year:	2017
Photos:	Markus Linderoth (exterior), Johan Sundberg (interior)





VELUX Svenska AB
Karbingatan 22
254 67 Helsingborg
+4642208380

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