

# 'Murmuration'

*A collective noun for a group of starlings, forming spectacular, swirling synchronized patterns in the sky before roosting.*

## Imagining Interiors

'Murmuration', located within the German Gymnasium, London, imagines the possibility of interiors catalysing collective action. Through creating imagery drawn from the fluid, unified motion of starling formations, a sculptural insertion evolves and emerges, guiding user movement through an interactive exhibition. Moving through the space, users are invited to reflect on and respond to contemporary social and environmental challenges.

The design process was not linear but reciprocal: the critical positioning, and therefore the use of the space, informed the shape of the murmuration, whilst the motif of the murmuration informed the critical positioning.

The outcome imagines a responsive interior where individuals become part of a larger collective movement, transforming observation into participation.

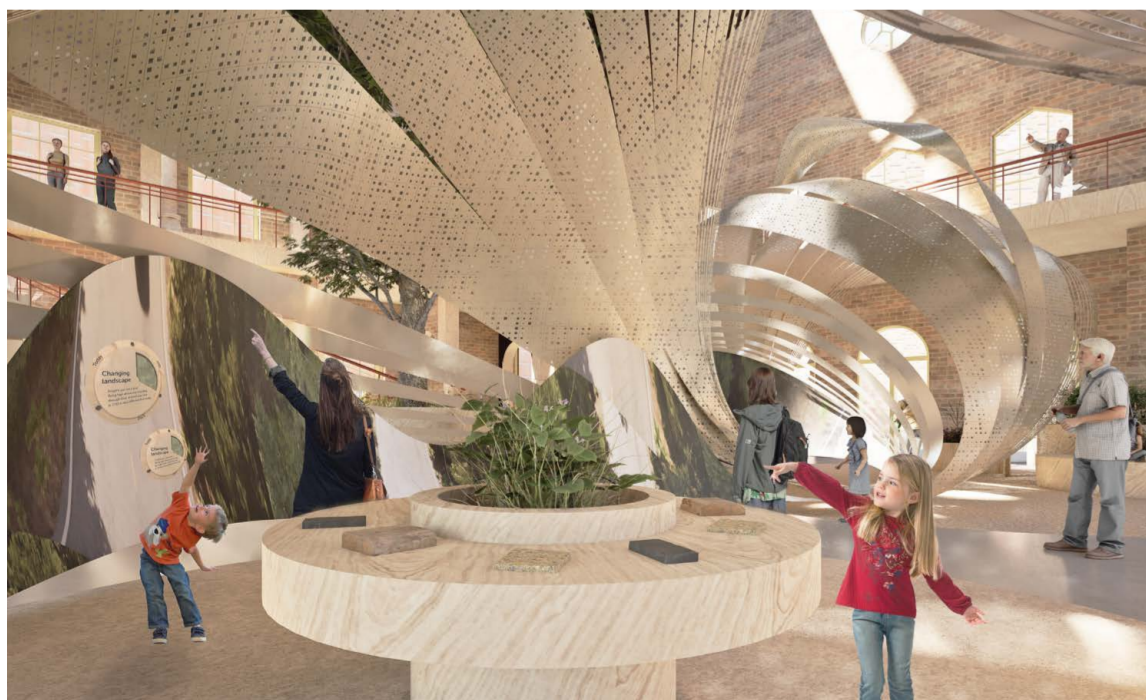


## Critical issue

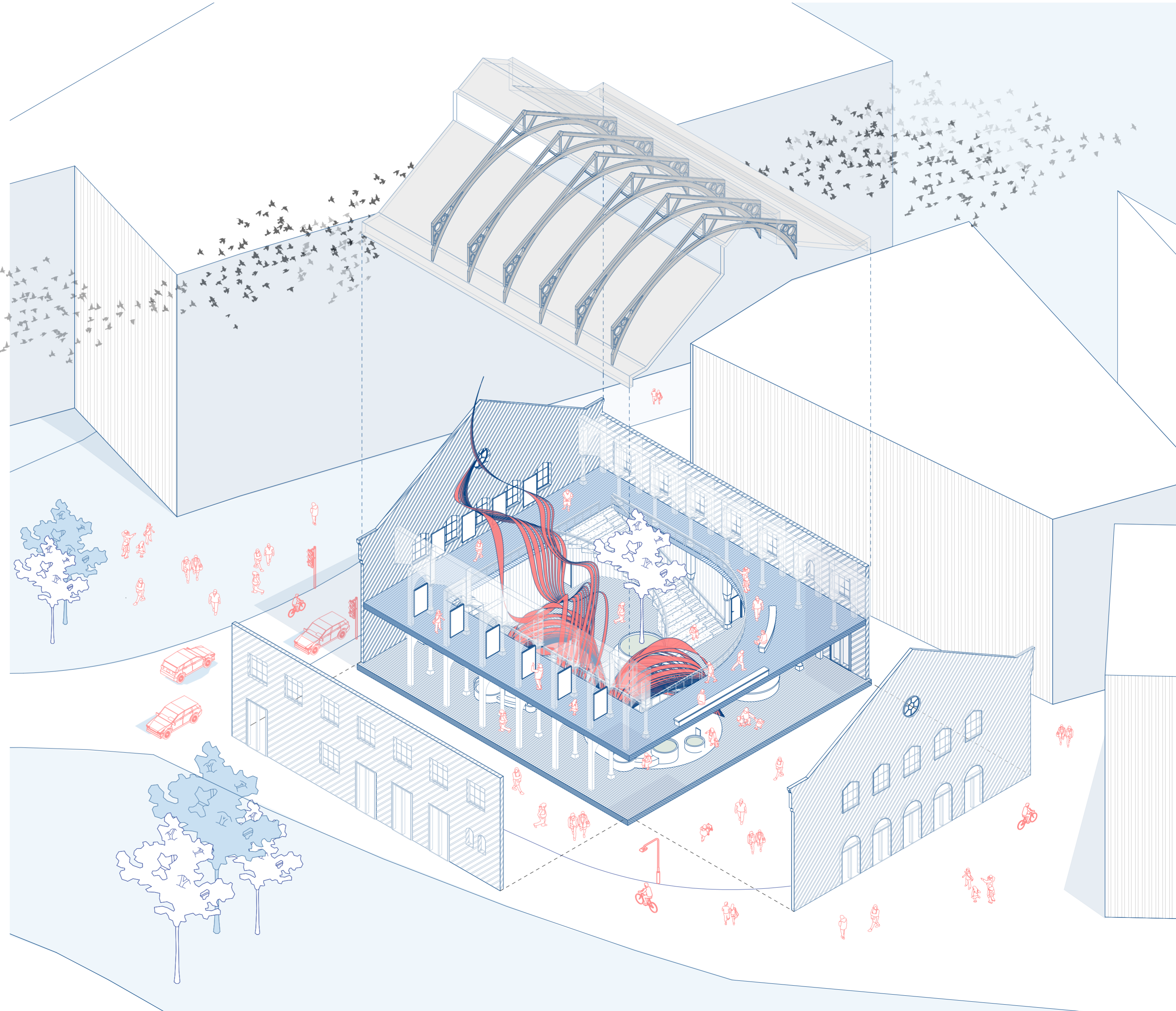
The world is facing a climate crisis, yet the world still remains deeply divided by wealth and demographics. This should instead be a catalyst for change, where we come together as a collective to form a more empathetic and sustainable future

The architecture and design industry has the power to shape environmental and social outcomes. It can either empower or reject communities, serve the natural environment or be a catalyst in its destruction.

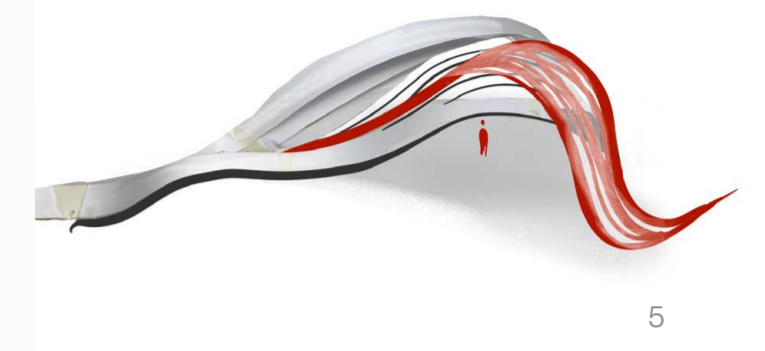
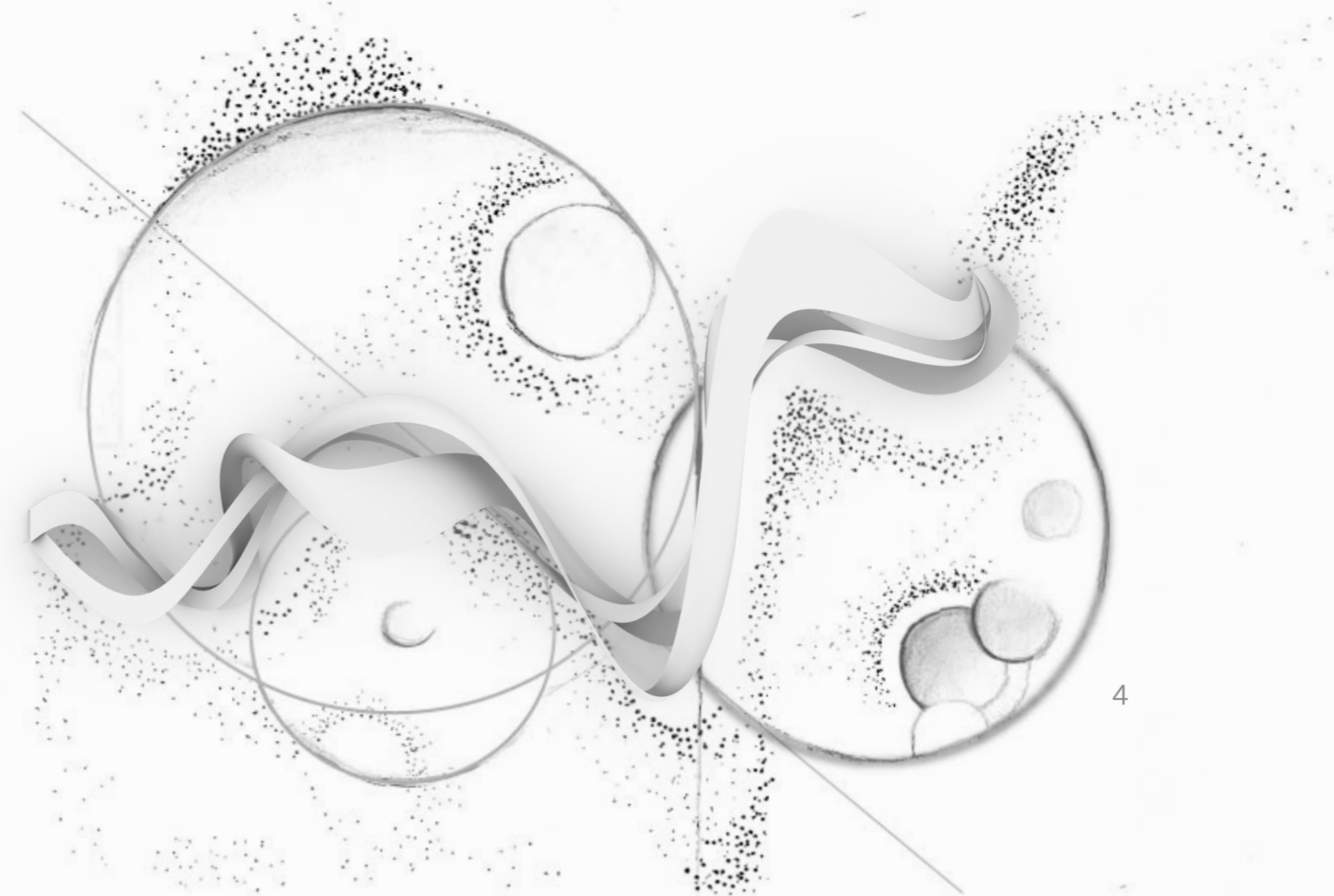
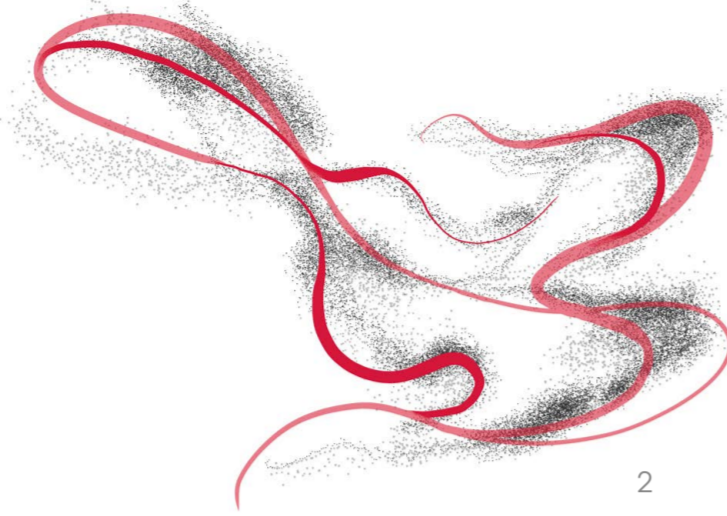
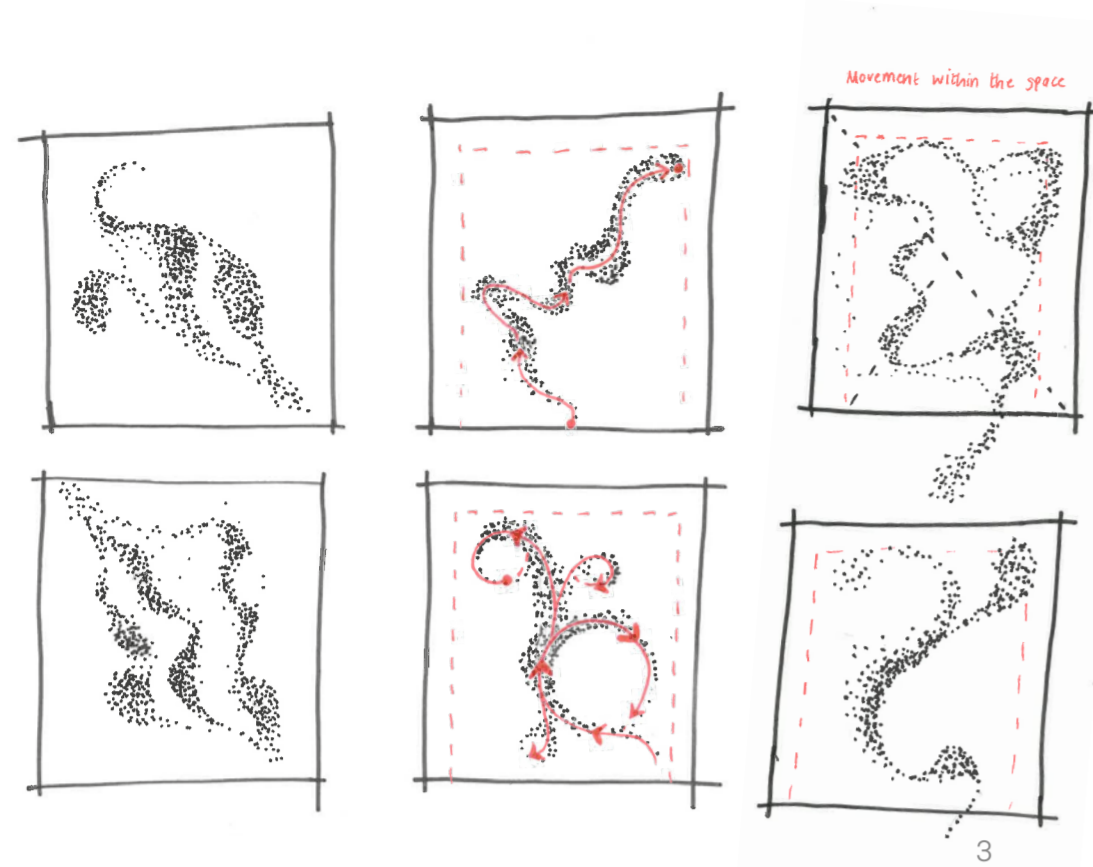
So... How could we encourage a future of design that unites us to better benefit both people and the environment?



Render showing the integration of the sculptural insertion.



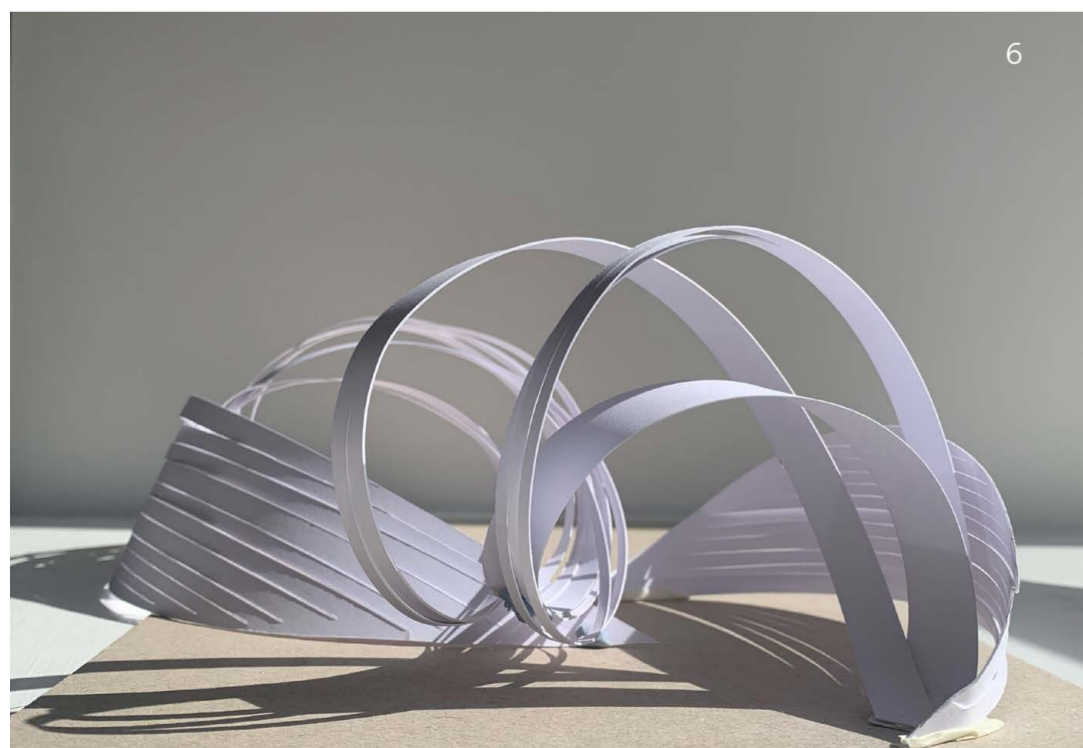
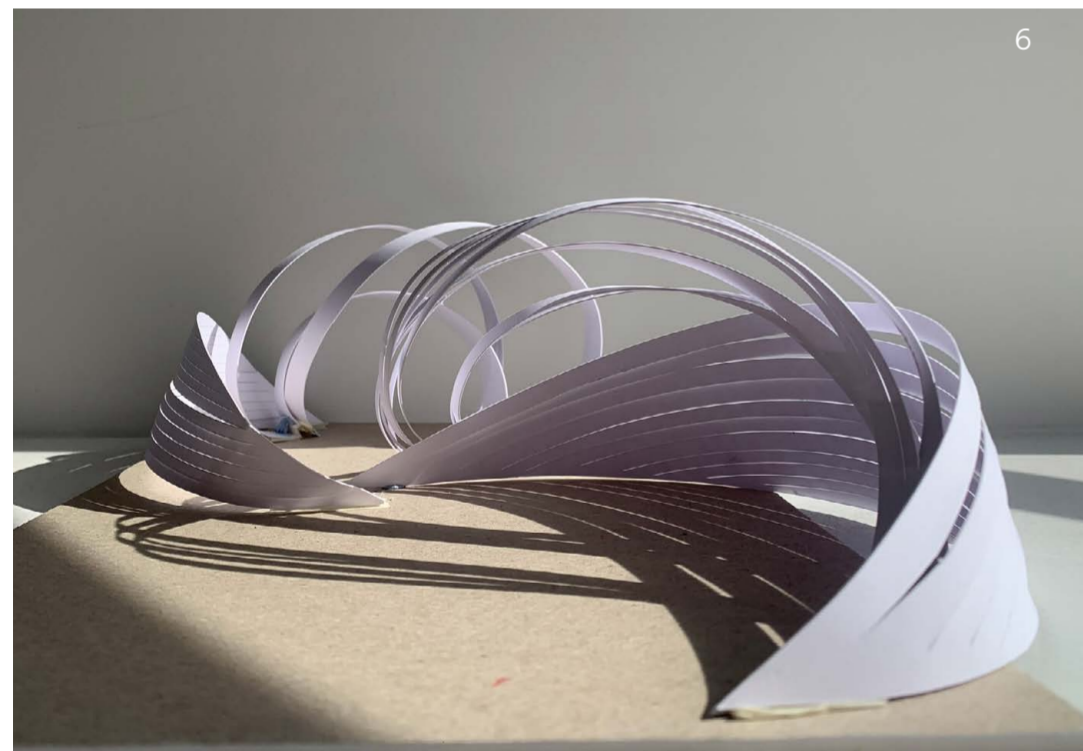
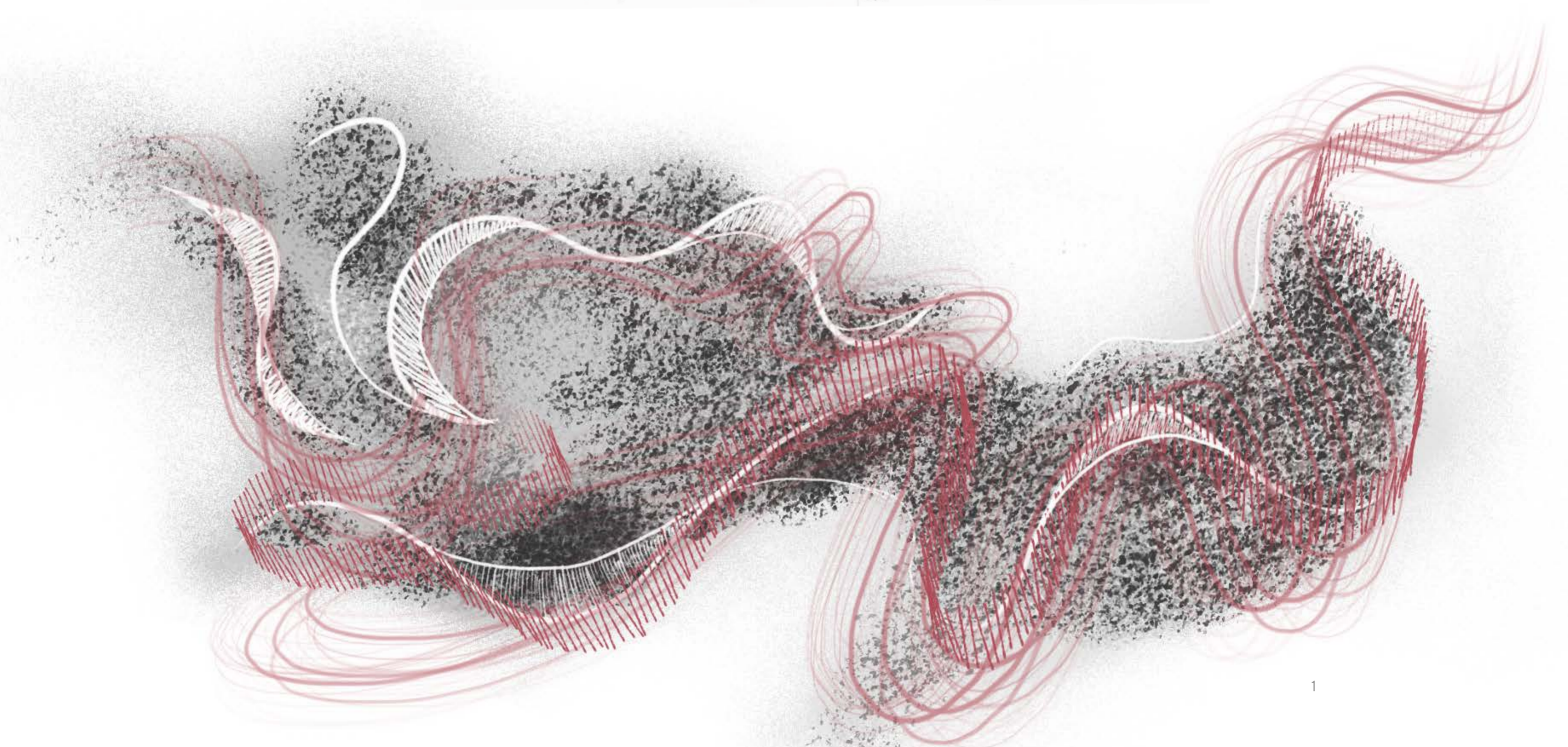
Exploded axonometric of the imagined space, and the interaction with the site context.



## Murmuration: **strength in unity**

Starling murmurations are a phenomenon where enormous numbers of starling birds come together as one, able to communicate as a single collective entity. By travelling in mass it provides security from predators and allows the spread of information. Rapid communication and co-ordination allows for a beautiful, fluid dance in the sky. It is a symbolisation of **strength and natural beauty**.

The design will explore how these murmurations can be imagined into a physical space, **encouraging user movement, spread of information and collective responses**.



## Image creation

Observing the dynamic movements of starling formations provided a unique source of inspiration; a murmuration is never the same and is constantly being imagined and re-imagined through the interactions of individual birds.

Through the act of creating imagery, unpredictable outcomes form into fluid drawings and three-dimensional interpretations. This process allowed me to question how the observations can fit into the constraints of a physical space and act as a mirror for human movement.

## Key-in chronology of creation

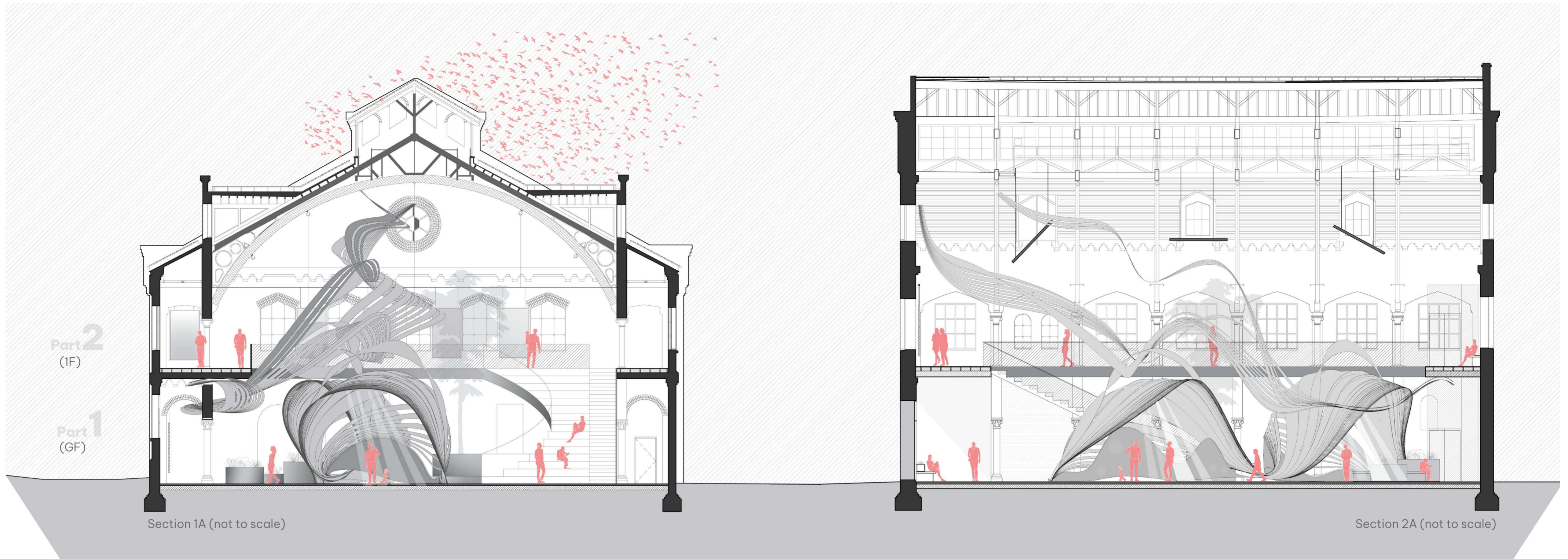
- ① Image creation (digital)
- ② Image creation (digital)
- ③ Observing how I could convey the similarities between starling murmurations and human movement within a fixed space (hand-drawn)
- ④ Translating a murmuration into physical space. This image was later interpreted into a floor plan (hand-drawn and over-layered with a Rhino experiment)
- ⑤ Observing how 2D could translate into 3D
- ⑥ Paper sliced and curved. The process was unpredictable and the flow of the paper established the outcome.



Murmuration mapping. Footage taken by me whilst observing a formation in Penzance, Cornwall. The background was isolated from the movement to create dynamic, ever-changing patterns.

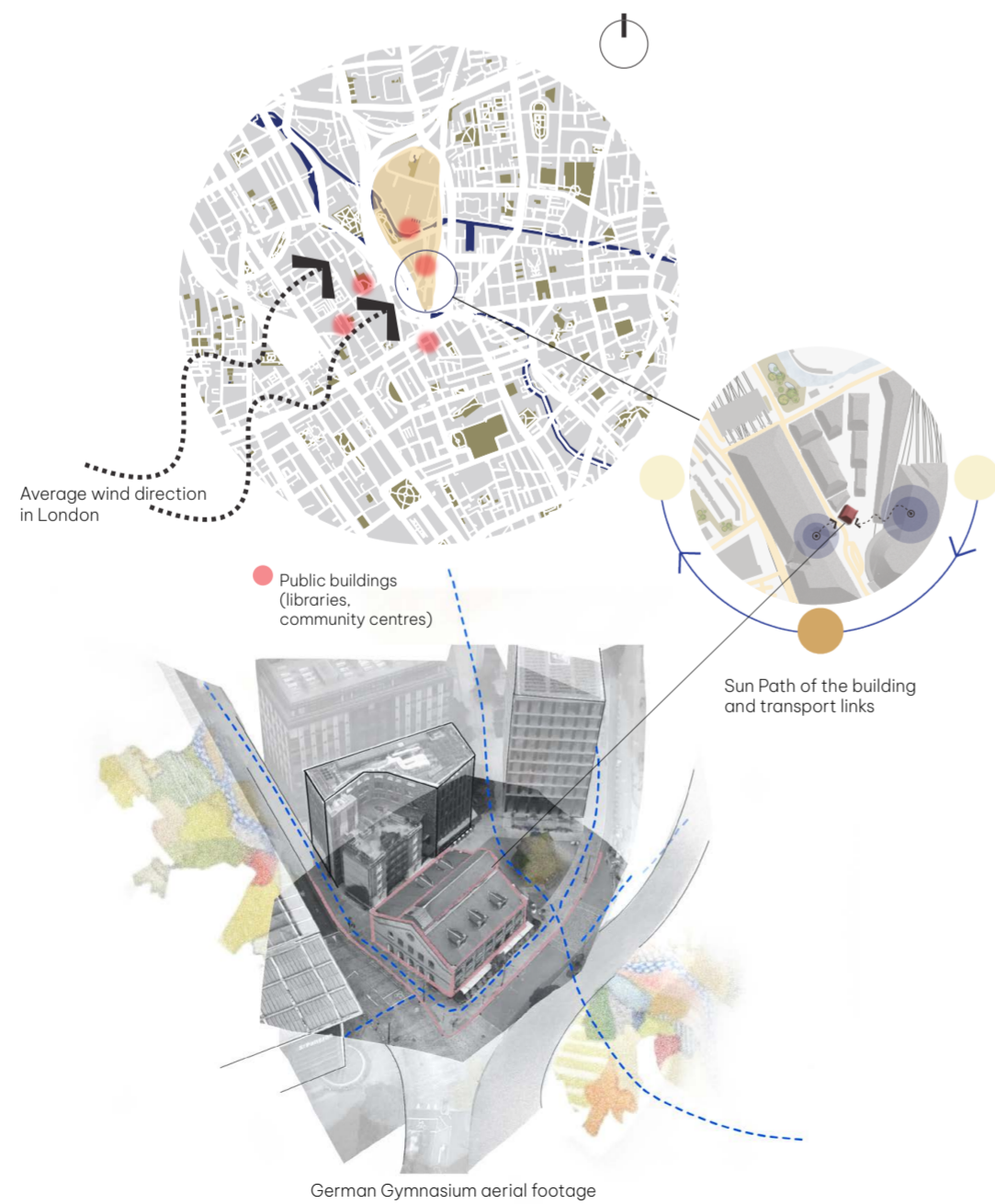
<https://youtu.be/081IJ9759Ho>





**The Site**

Located within the master plan of Kings Cross, London, the German Gymnasium is a grade II listed building. Having cycled through various functions since its Olympic usage in 1866 and 1908, it is currently utilised as a dining destination. I will strip back the building to its original preserved state, allowing a maximisation of the large open space, and use an insertion strategy.



**Scheme**

**A museum in motion**

The critical themes of the project will be explored by the user through an interactive exhibition, guided by a sculptural insertion following the murmuration, connecting critical themes with the motif of unity and collective responses.

**Part 1 (Ground floor) Ecological regeneration**

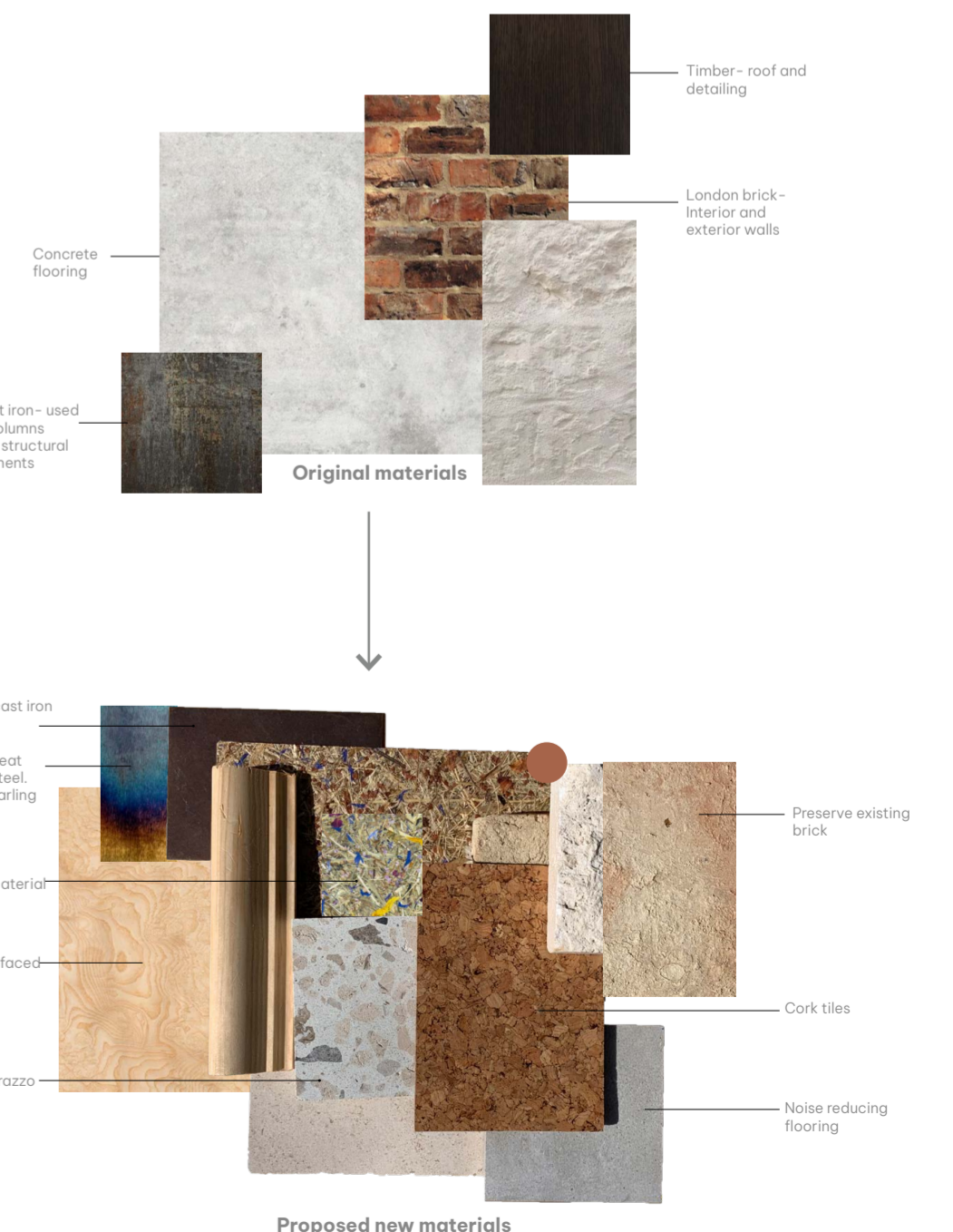
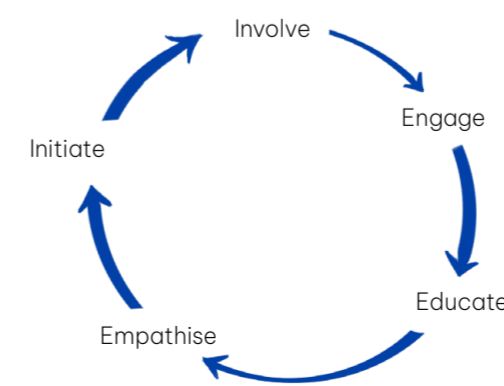
Creating better understanding and connection between the natural environment, the problems we are facing, the impact architecture and design has on this, and how we can sustainably respond to these challenges.

**Part 2 (Mezzanine) Cultural and social transformation**

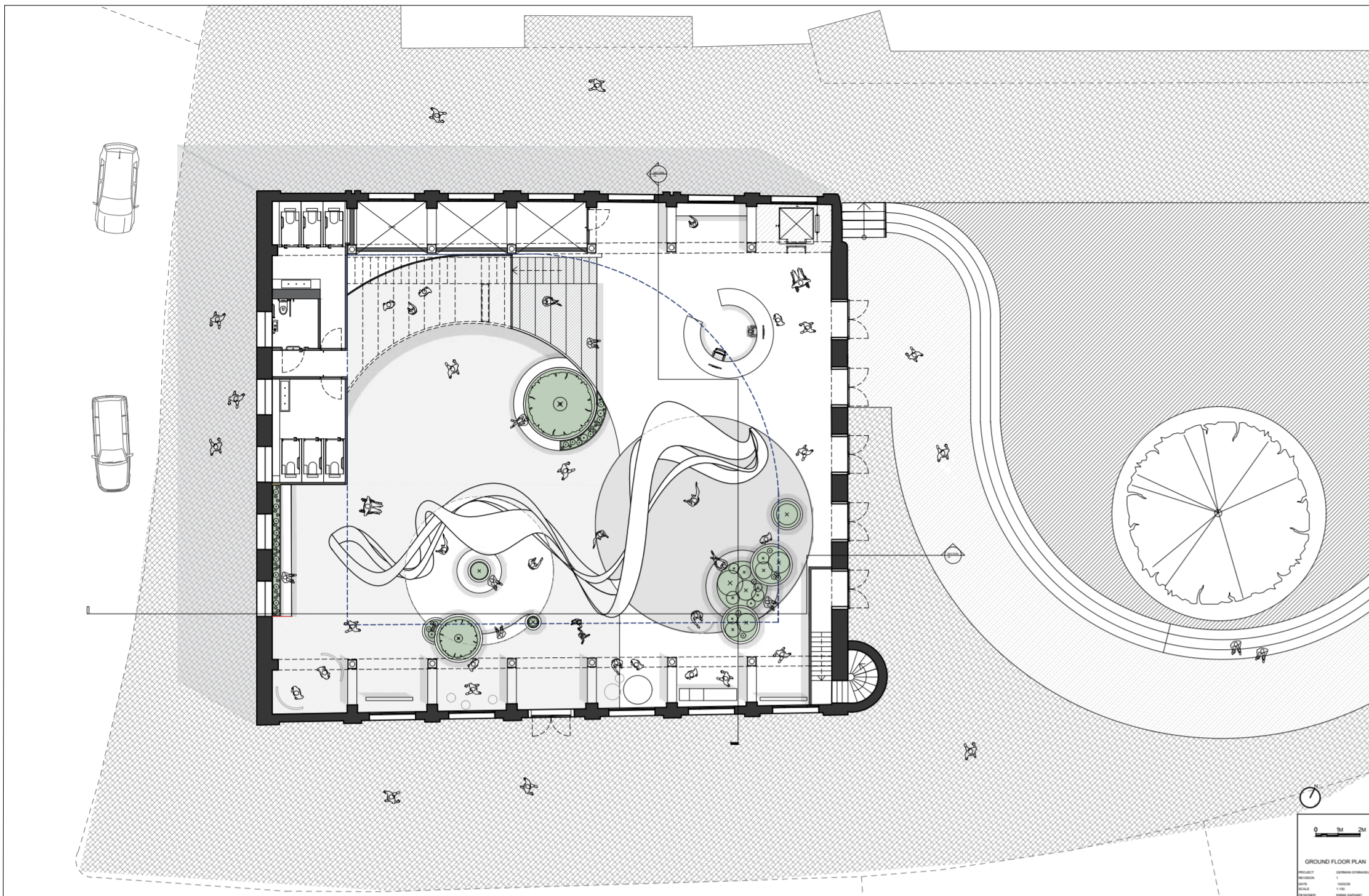
Educating on social and cultural issues that are currently being faced and encouraging empathy to form. Making the user question how the current built world forms divisions between demographics.

**The User**

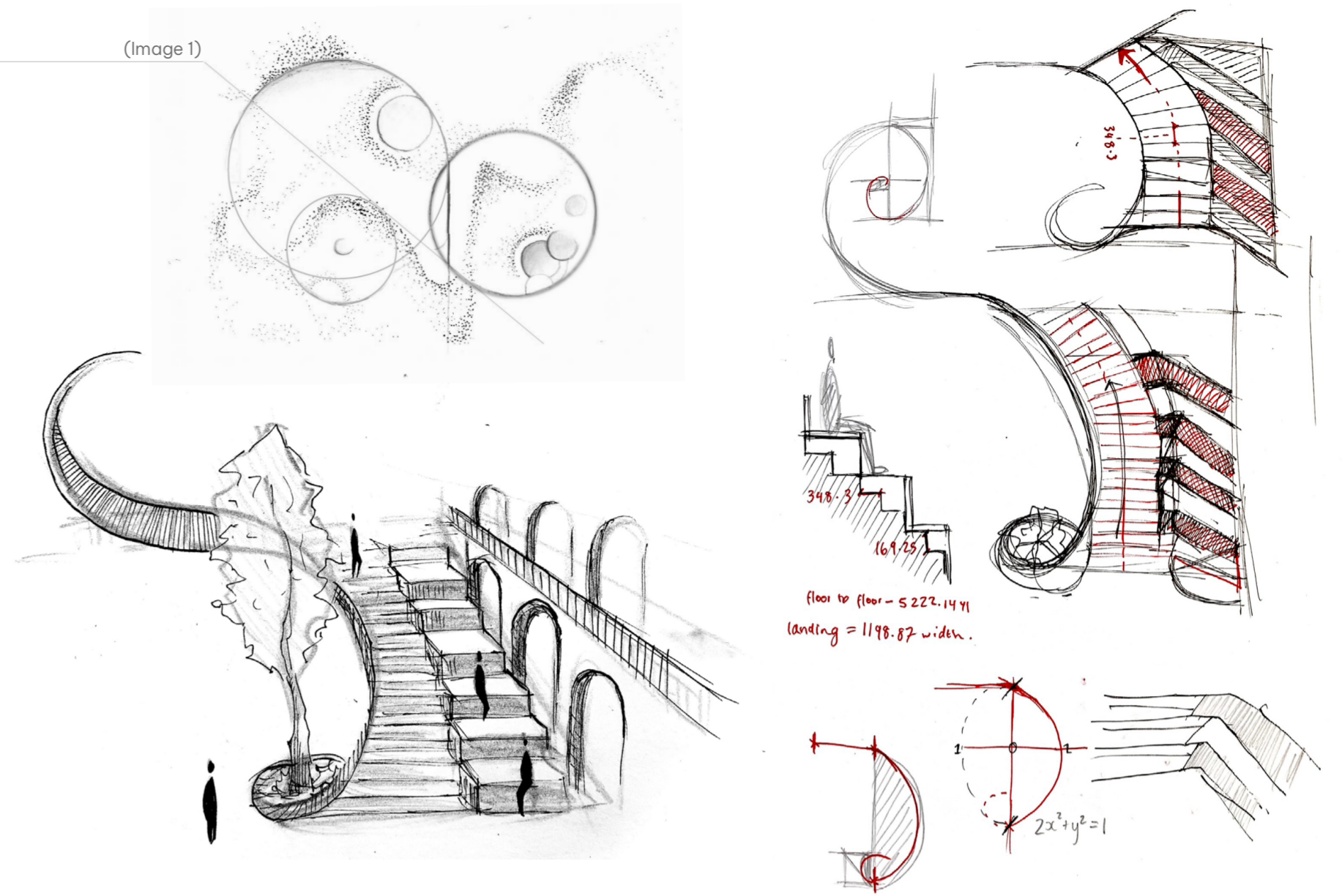
Users that interact with the scheme come from all demographics including the general public, educational involvement (such as universities and schools) and industry involvement.



Ground floor technical plan (Refer to scale bar)

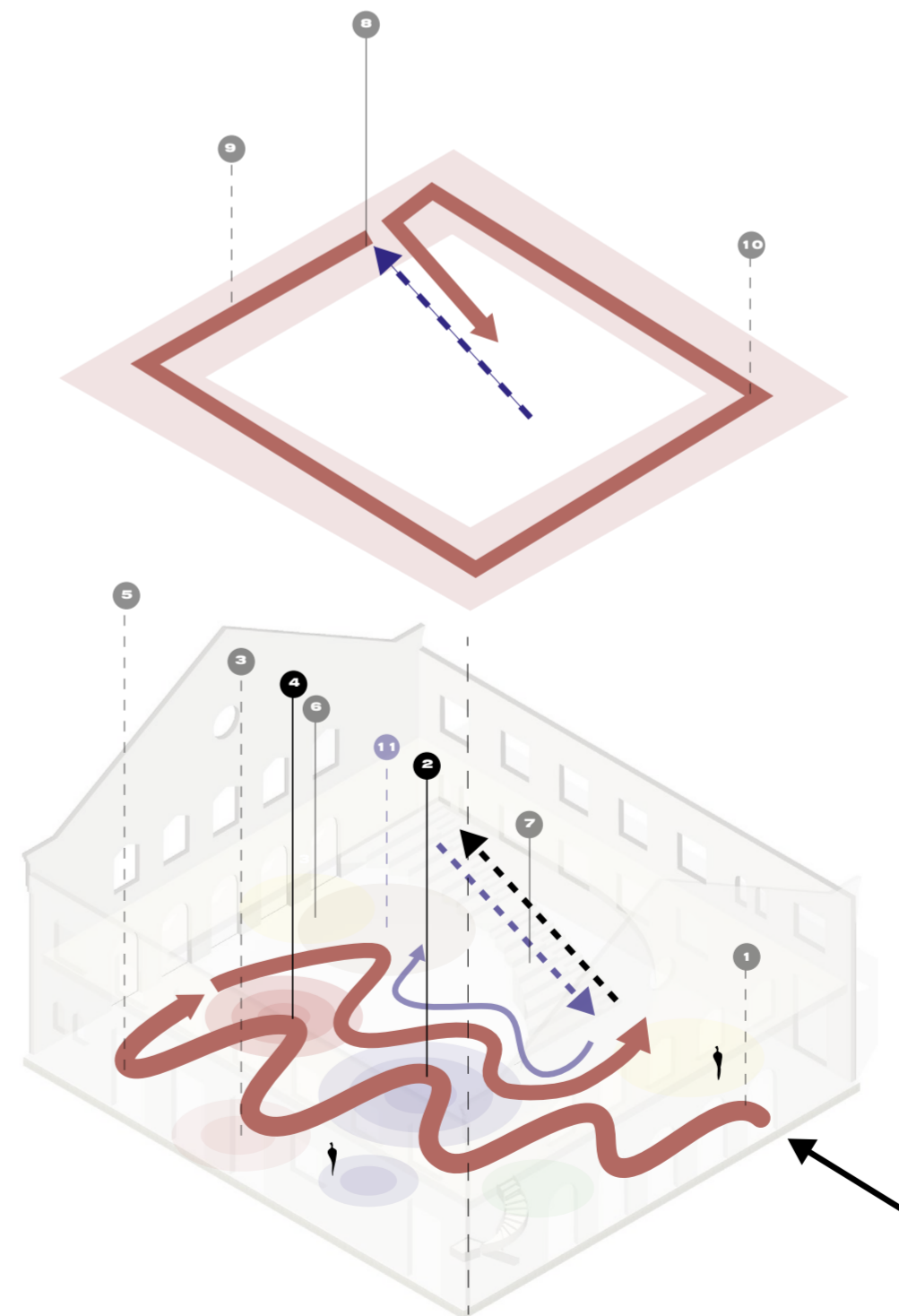
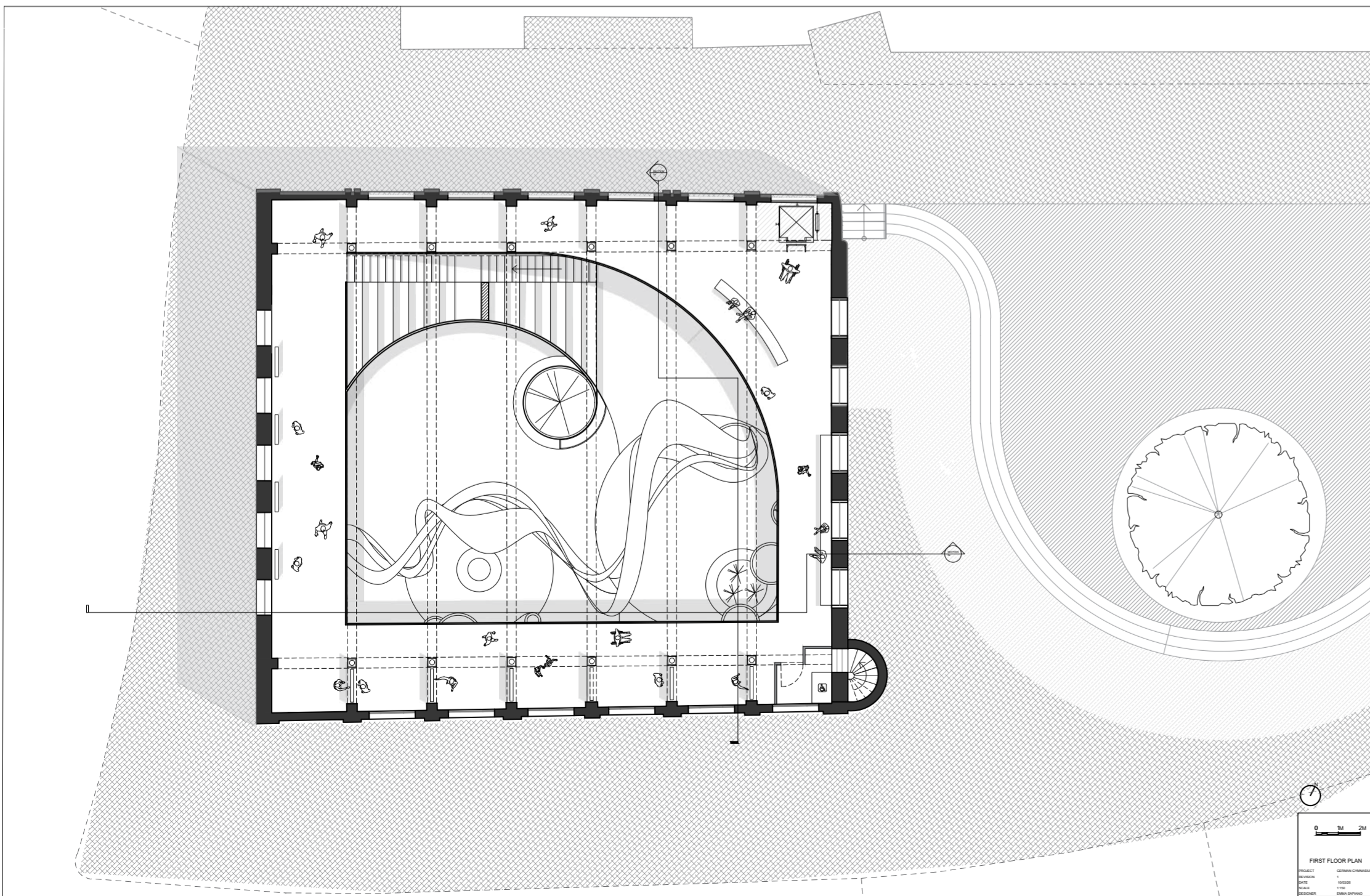


(Image 1)



The creation of the floor plans stemmed from translating (image 1) into the key zoning areas, and evolved by addressing the spatial needs drawn from the critical themes, and the movement created from the sculptural insertion.

First floor technical plan (Refer to scale bar)



### Spatial Journey

- ① Entrance desk
- ② Educate: Climate emergency
- ③ Interactive: How much carbon footprint do you use?
- ④ The significance of the architecture and design industry on the climate emergency (Informative)
- ⑤ How could the industry be more sustainable, and the current challenges in becoming more sustainable
- ⑥ Toilets and drinking water fountain
- ⑦ Bleacher seating to allow informative talks regarding relevant topics, intentionally creating diversity and inclusivity of demographics and experiences.
- ⑧ Empathise: Social and cultural regeneration
- ⑨ Installation and exhibitions rotating social challenges, and the impact of architecture and design upon this. For example, an audio installation about homelessness, refugee experiences, or the housing crisis
- ⑩ Observation point
- ⑪ Initiate: Interactive digital VR screens: How would you design a sustainable city? Each choice showcases the social and environmental impacts



The rendered image above imagines the interaction between the user and the interior space, showcasing how the sculptural insertion could be interpreted and realized.