

The Handwritten Letter Project

This proposal is informed by the growing number of people living with dementia in the UK today. **Dementia is a condition that gradually disconnects individuals from place, time, and memory**, altering their relationship with people and environment. My interest in this topic stems from the importance of belonging and interaction within a space, and how these qualities can be explored through design to create meaningful experiences for users and their loved ones. **The project seeks to shift perceptions of a place associated with endings into one centred on connection, collaboration and intergenerational exchange**, bringing together older generations whose memories of Ladywell are rapidly slipping away, with younger generations still forming their own lasting connections to the area.



Site Analysis

Ladywell, Lewisham is an area defined by its strong sense of history, heritage, and community. Rich in life and memory, it is home to a diverse population spanning many cultures, backgrounds, and generations. Along Ladywell Road stands the Coroner's Court and Mortuary, one of the few remaining historic landmarks on the street. With its Gothic architecture, the building has stood as a symbol of death, loss, and final goodbyes.



Demographic collage



Fold out booklet showing key moments inside the site

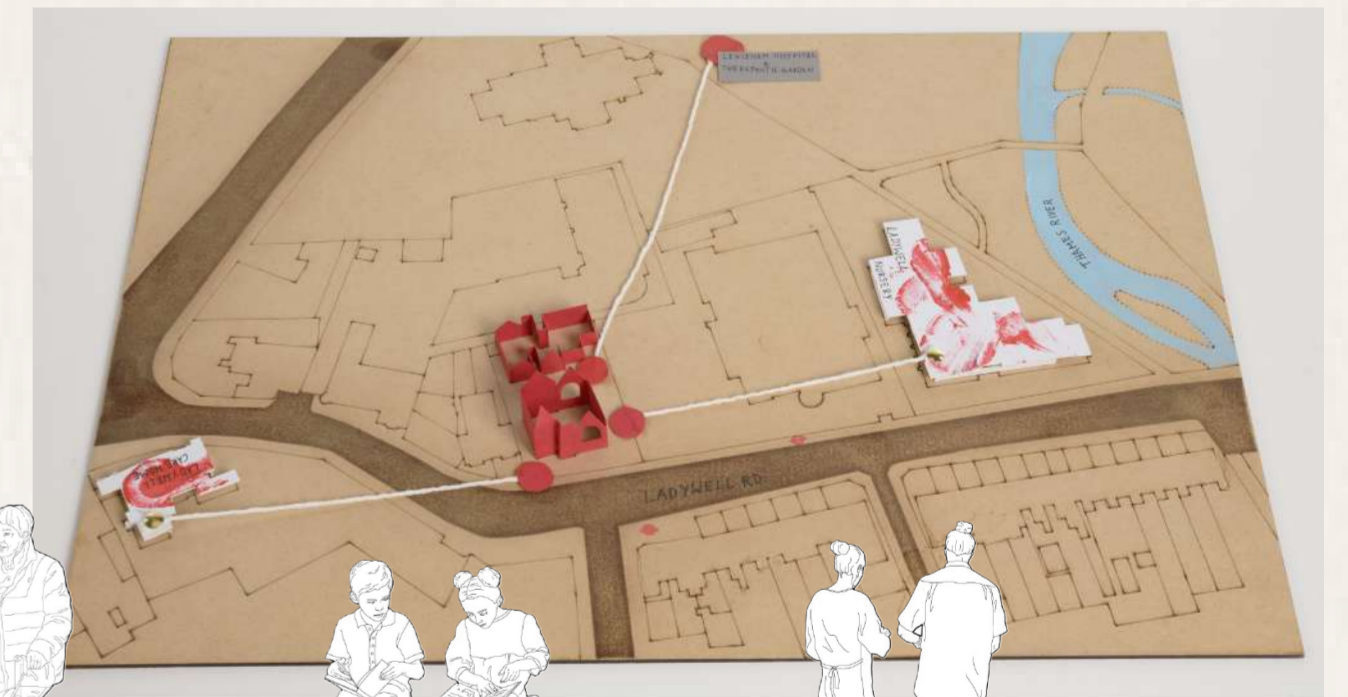


1:20 model section of the site

Topic Research

Key connections to site. The map highlights spaces that have connections to the users:

1. Care homes
2. Educational spaces
3. Hospitals



Audience:



Individuals with dementia



Primary school children



Family members

1 million - people in the UK are living with dementia

1.4 million - People diagnosed in the UK by 2040

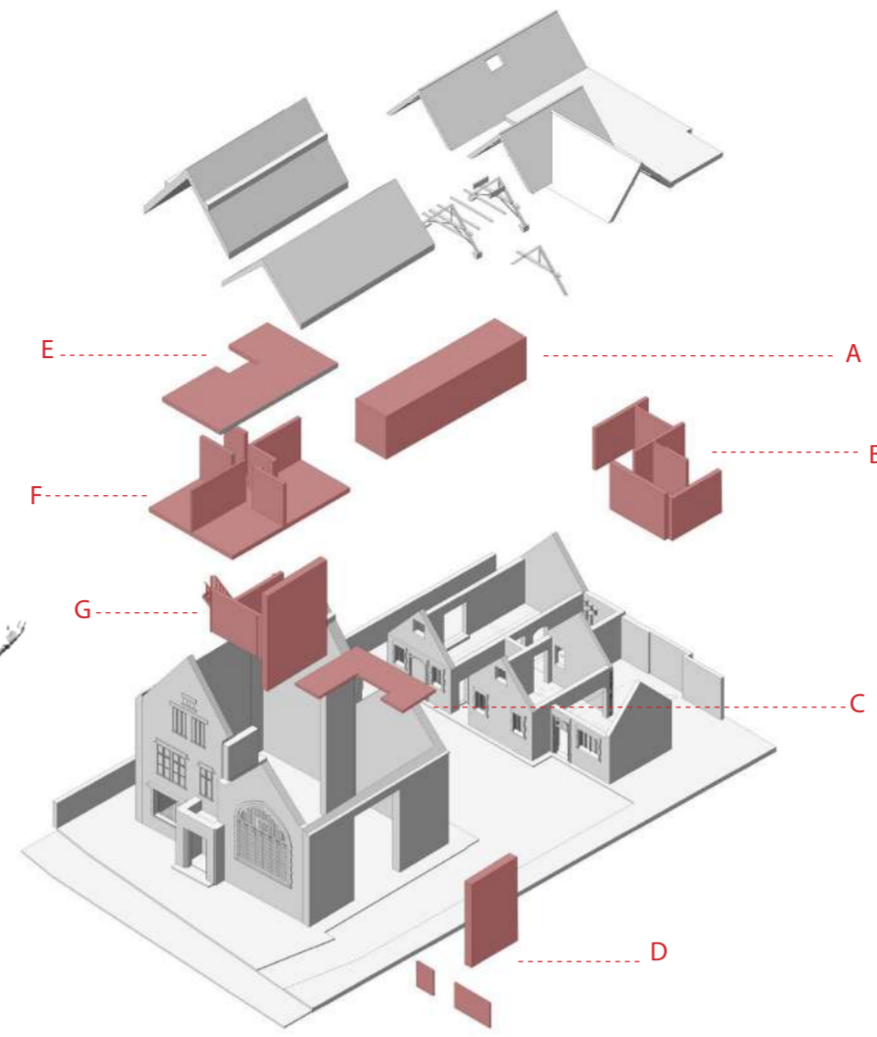
1 in 3 - People born today will develop dementia

35% - increase in social engagement and reduced isolation among older adults engaged in intergenerational activities.

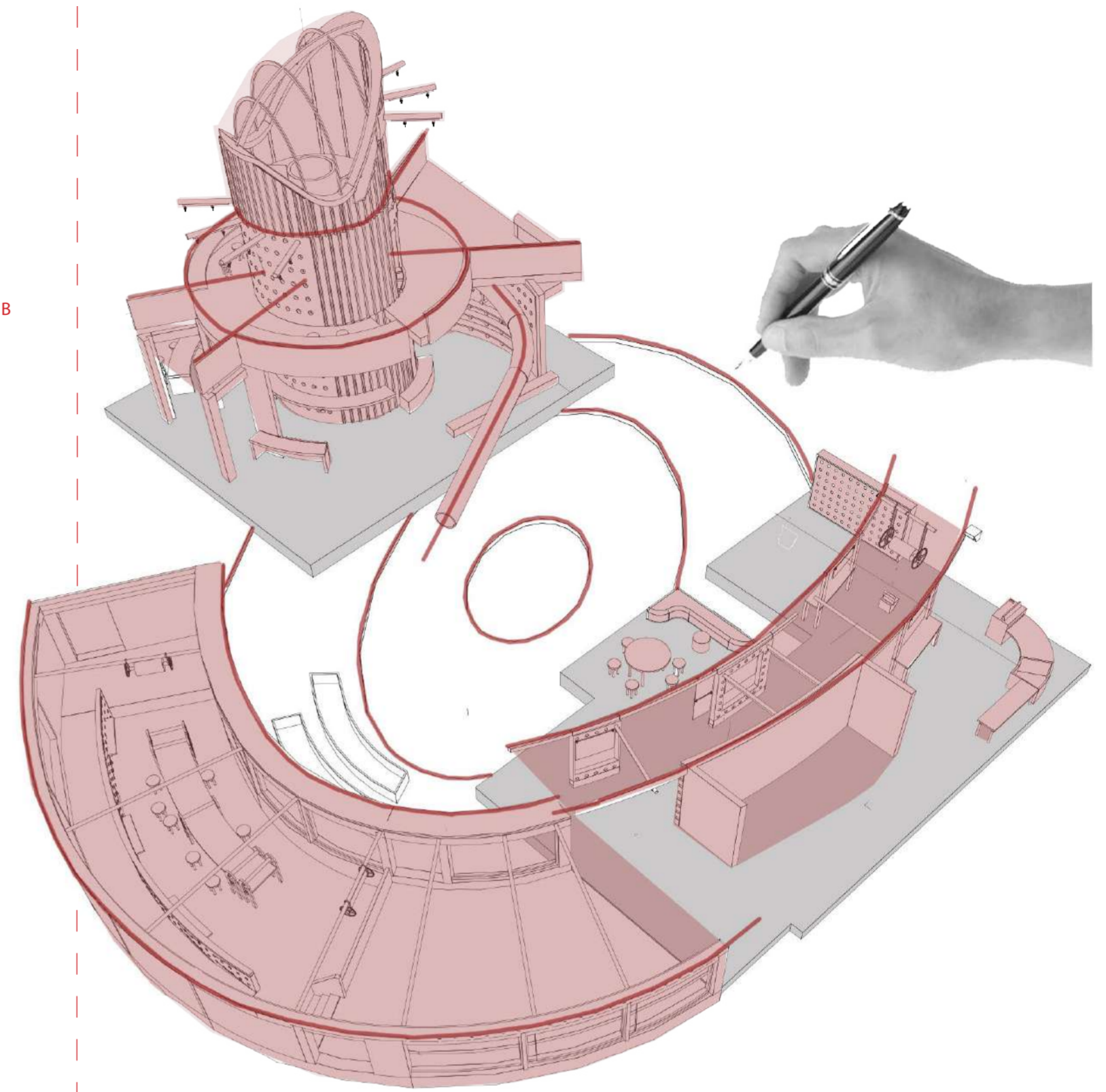


Concept Development

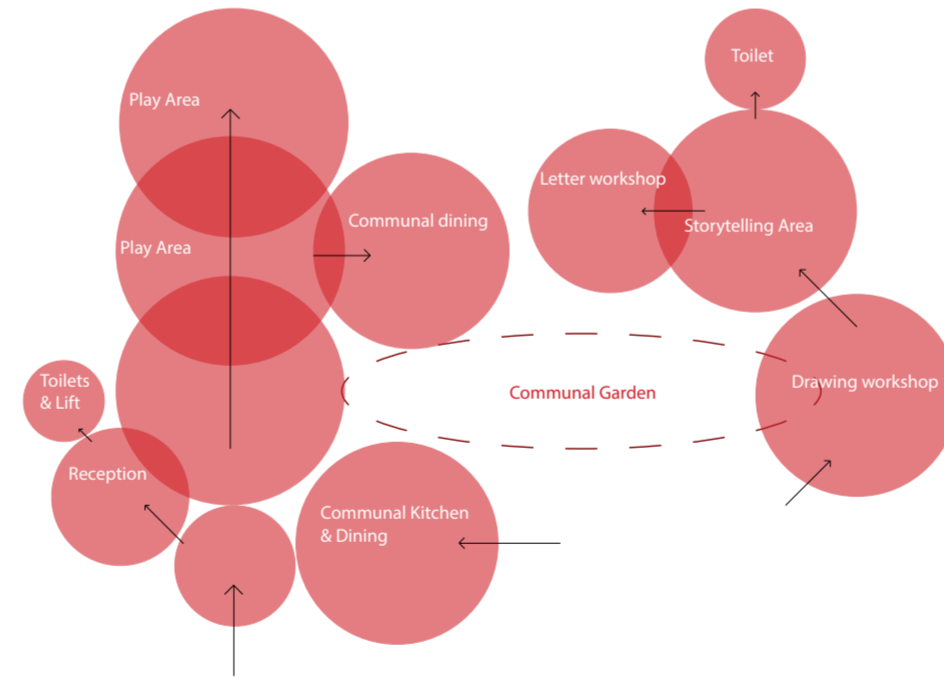
Exploration of symbols. The site topic is surrounded by the meaning of death. Therefore, I explored the topics of Life and the symbolism of cycles. Looking at the *Fibonacci spiral*, also known as the spiral of life. As well as the *Celtic symbol called triskelion* which symbolizes the ever-moving cycle of life, death, and rebirth. Both symbols present themselves similarly to the detail design in the mortuaries windows. **These symbols informed the project design through their organic nature that I utilized to develop the structure relationship**



- Removing:**
- A. Existing Mortuary extension
 - B. Interior walls of back building
 - C. Stage - Coroners court
 - D. Opening side of building - Coroners court
 - E. F2
 - F. F1
 - G. GF interior walls



The Program was informed through analysis of interview content, topic precedents, building precedents & local links.



Interviews



Helena, Employee at Alzheimers Society

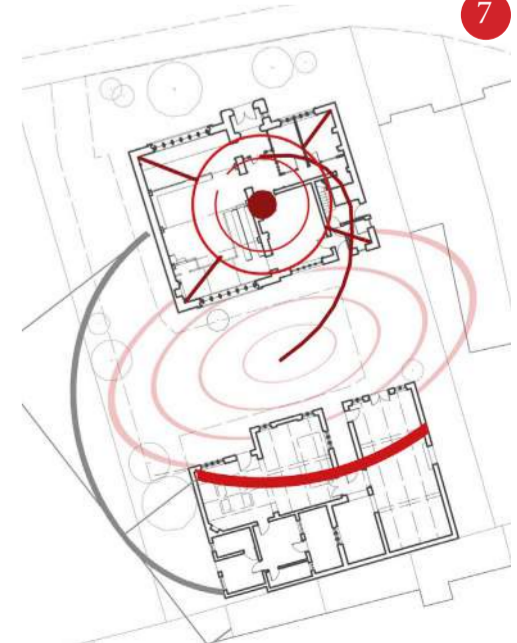
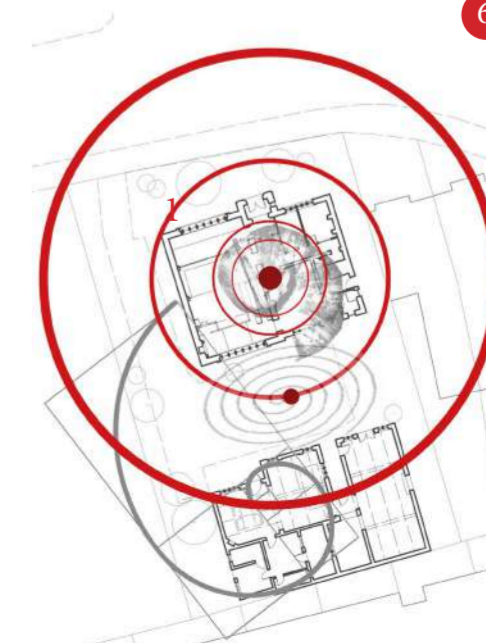
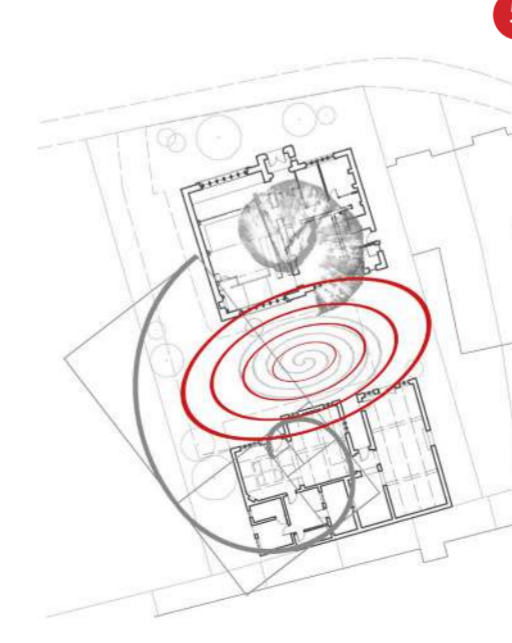
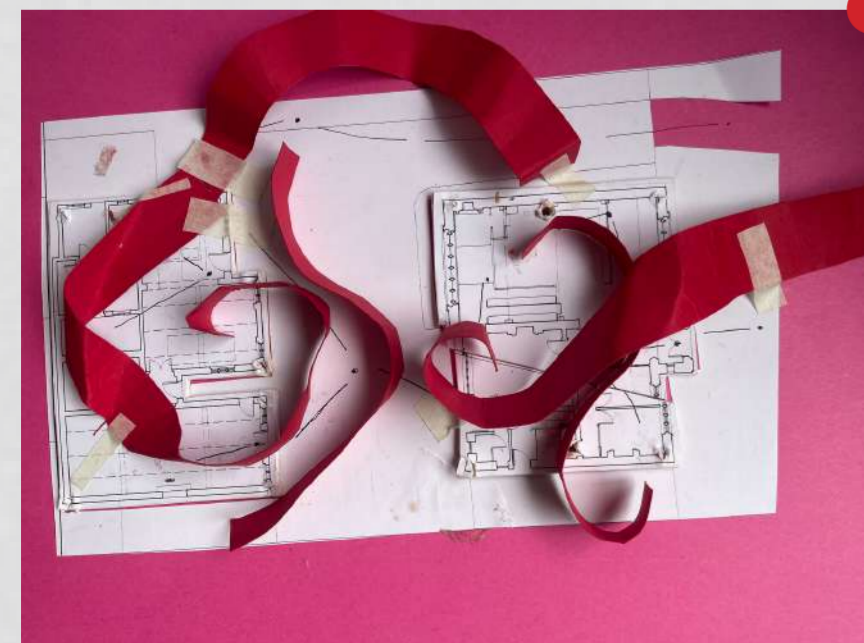
" - Individuals with dementia are within a highrisk group as the diagnosis presents itself differently in everyone. The surrounding environment has the biggest impact. We see the biggest behavioral improvement when the patient is placed within green spaces that feel safe, vibrant spaces as well as creative environments. Such activities are key for dementia individuals."



Thomas, Family member of an individual with dementia

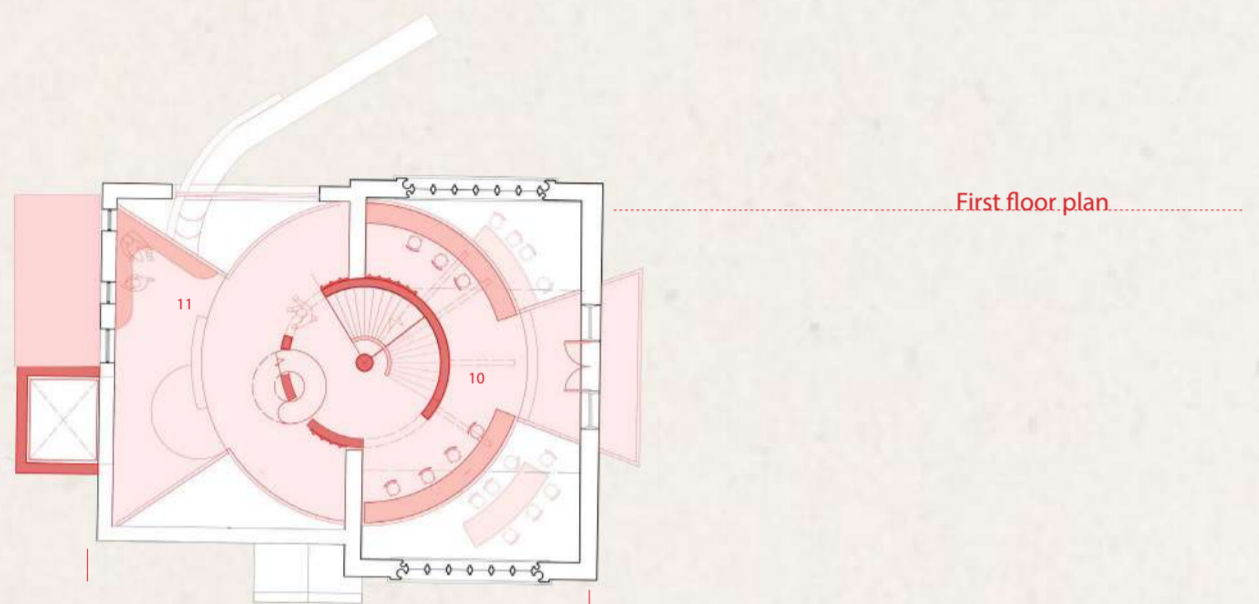
"My mother has Multiple Sclerosis (MS), which has caused her to develop cognitive decline. When she received the diagnosis she started writing letters to document her memories. The activity has allowed her to express herself creatively. This has given her a sense of self, as well as helped with regulation of emotions and behaviors."

Concept exploration through making 1-7

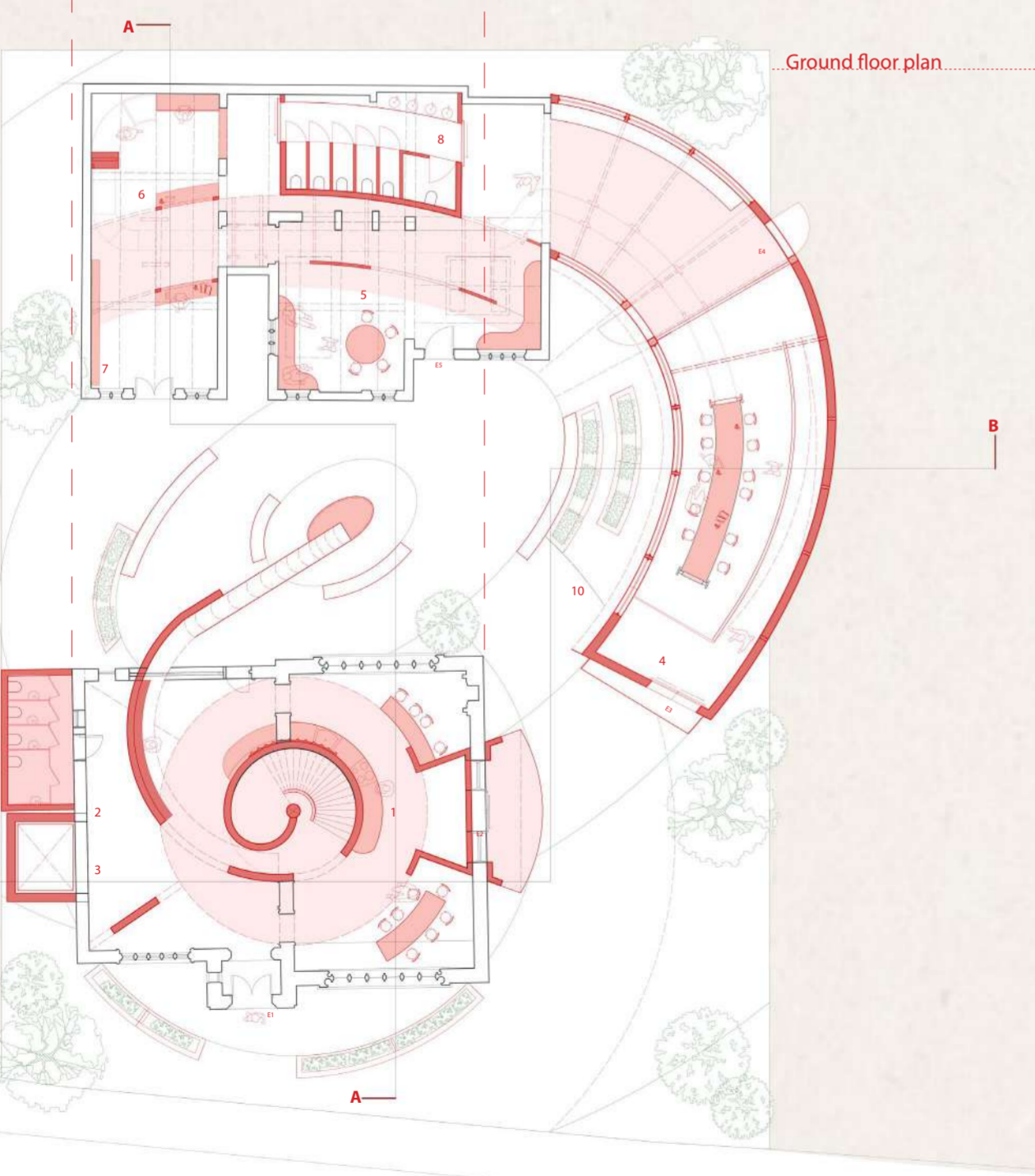




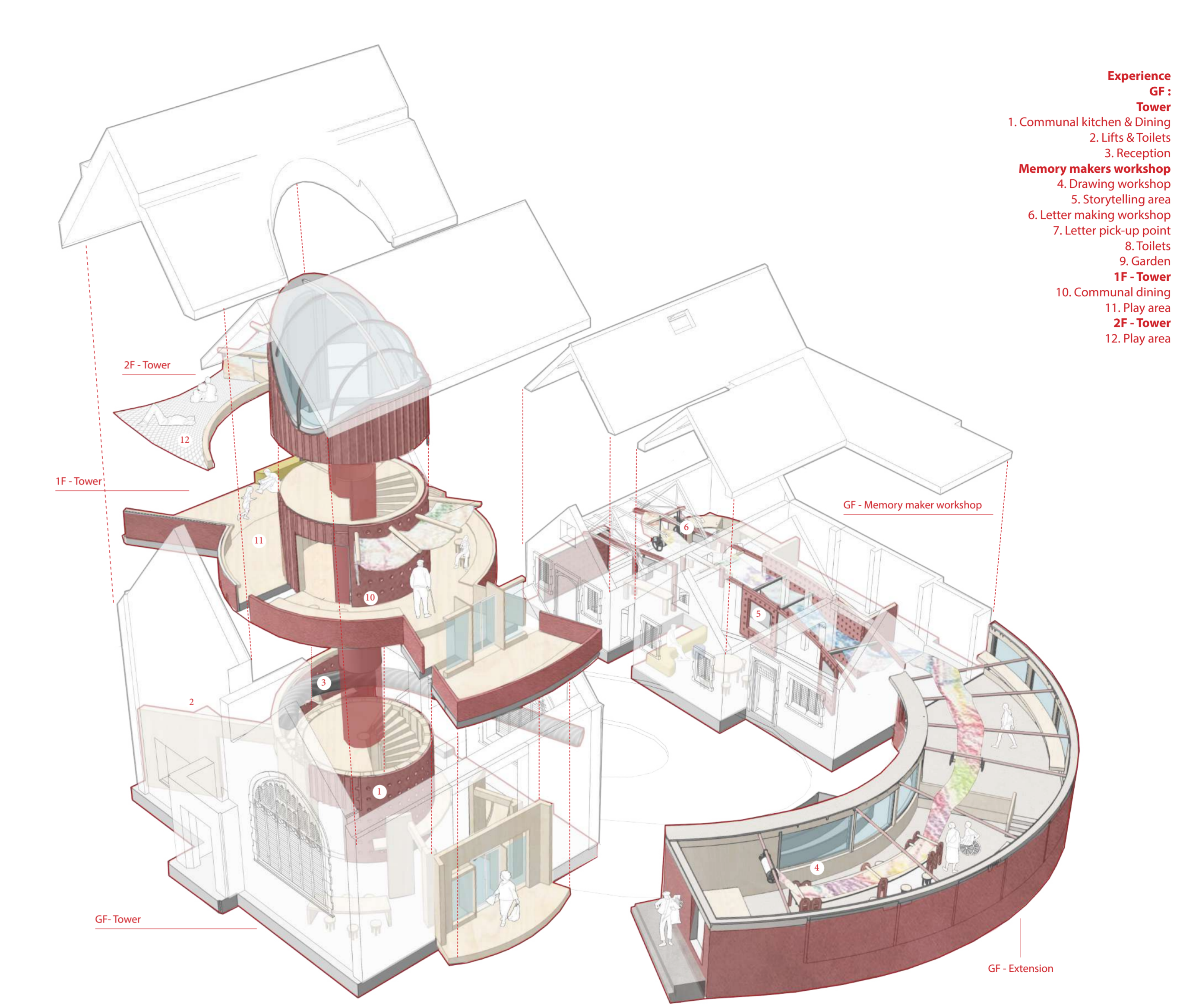
Atmospheric section A-A



First floor plan



Ground floor plan



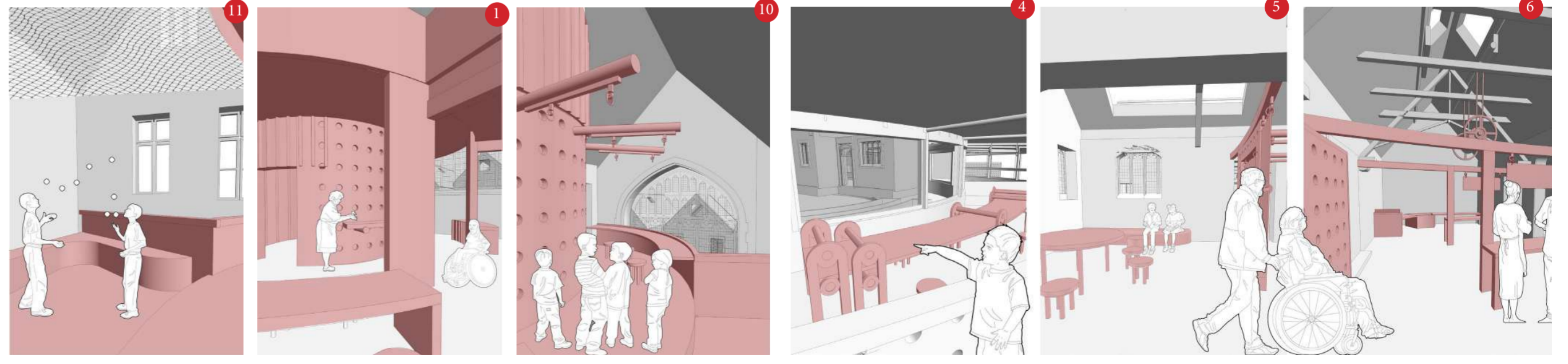
Experience

GF :

Tower :

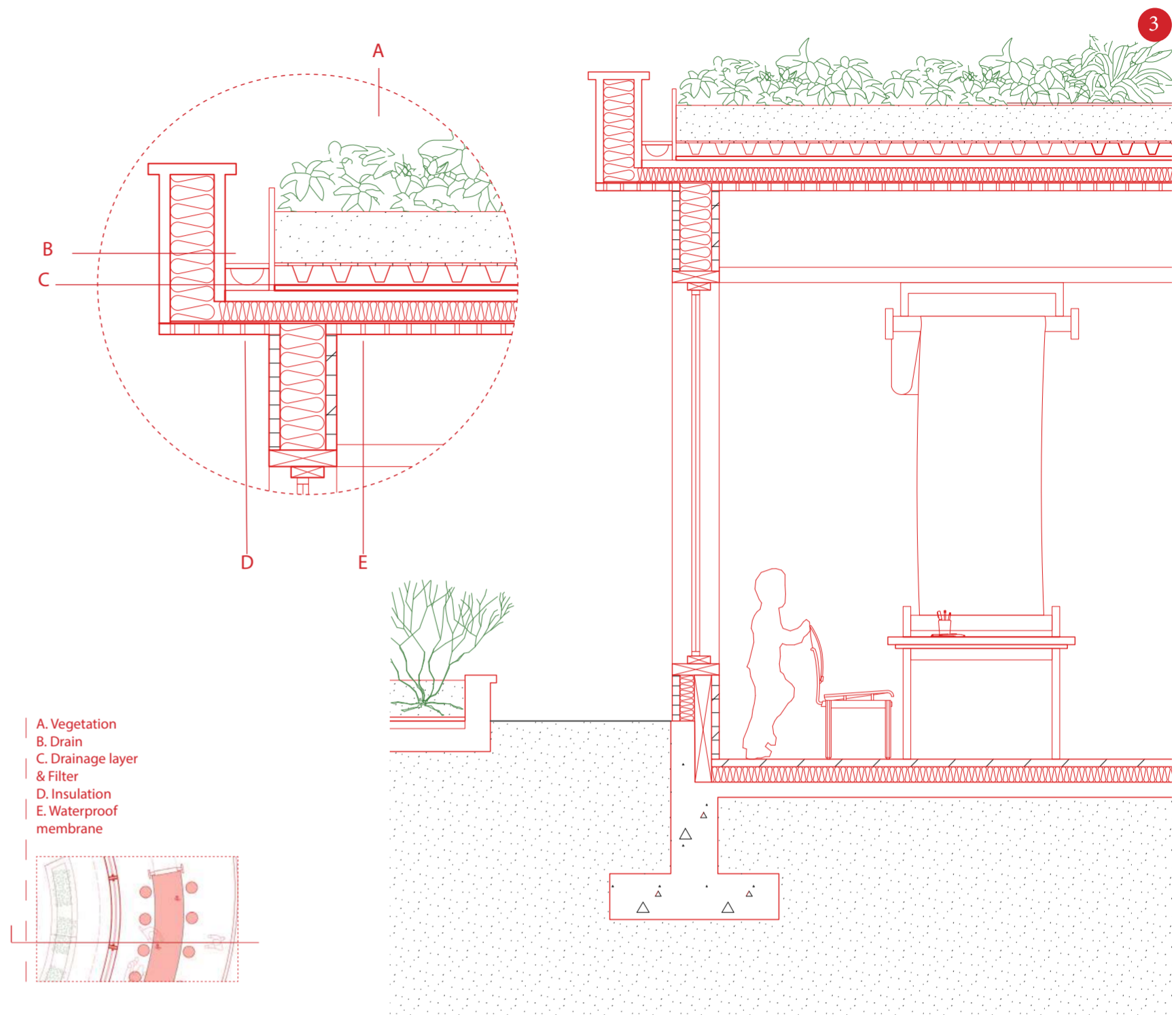
- 1. Communal kitchen & Dining
- 2. Lifts & Toilets
- 3. Reception
- Memory makers workshop**
- 4. Drawing workshop
- 5. Storytelling area
- 6. Letter making workshop
- 7. Letter pick-up point
- 8. Toilets
- 9. Garden
- 1F - Tower**
- 10. Communal dining
- 11. Play area
- 2F - Tower**
- 12. Play area

Storyboard



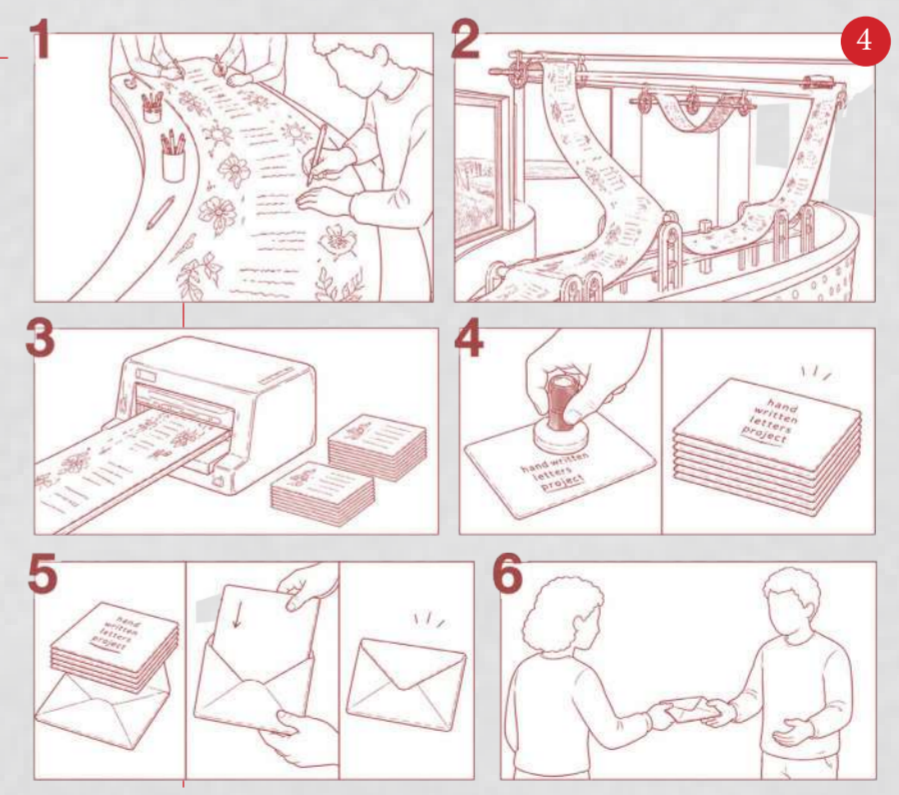
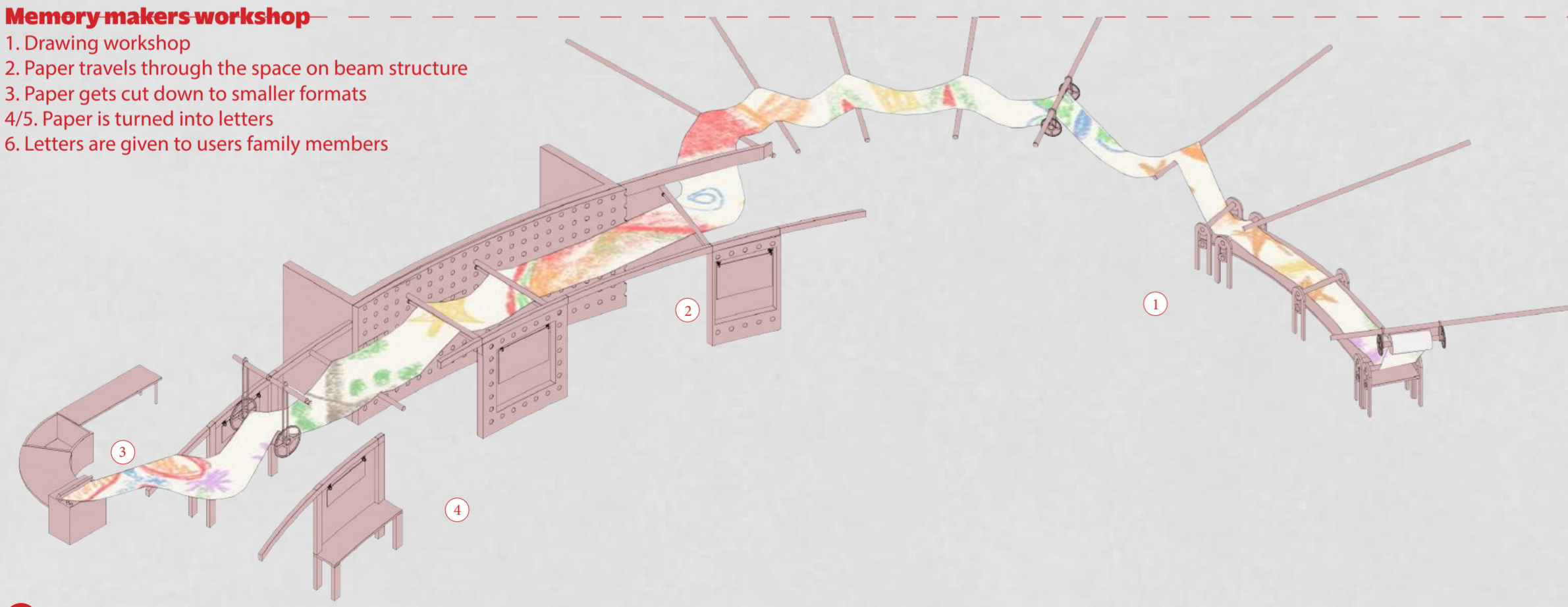


The memory makers workshop allows individuals with dementia and children to come together in a playful and creative experience. The vibrant space presents a drawing workshop that overlooks the garden, allowing users to have visual engagement. The workshop structure runs through the new extension and into the existing mortuary building. The memory logbook from the drawing workshop to the letter making workshop leads through the storytelling area.



Memory makers workshop

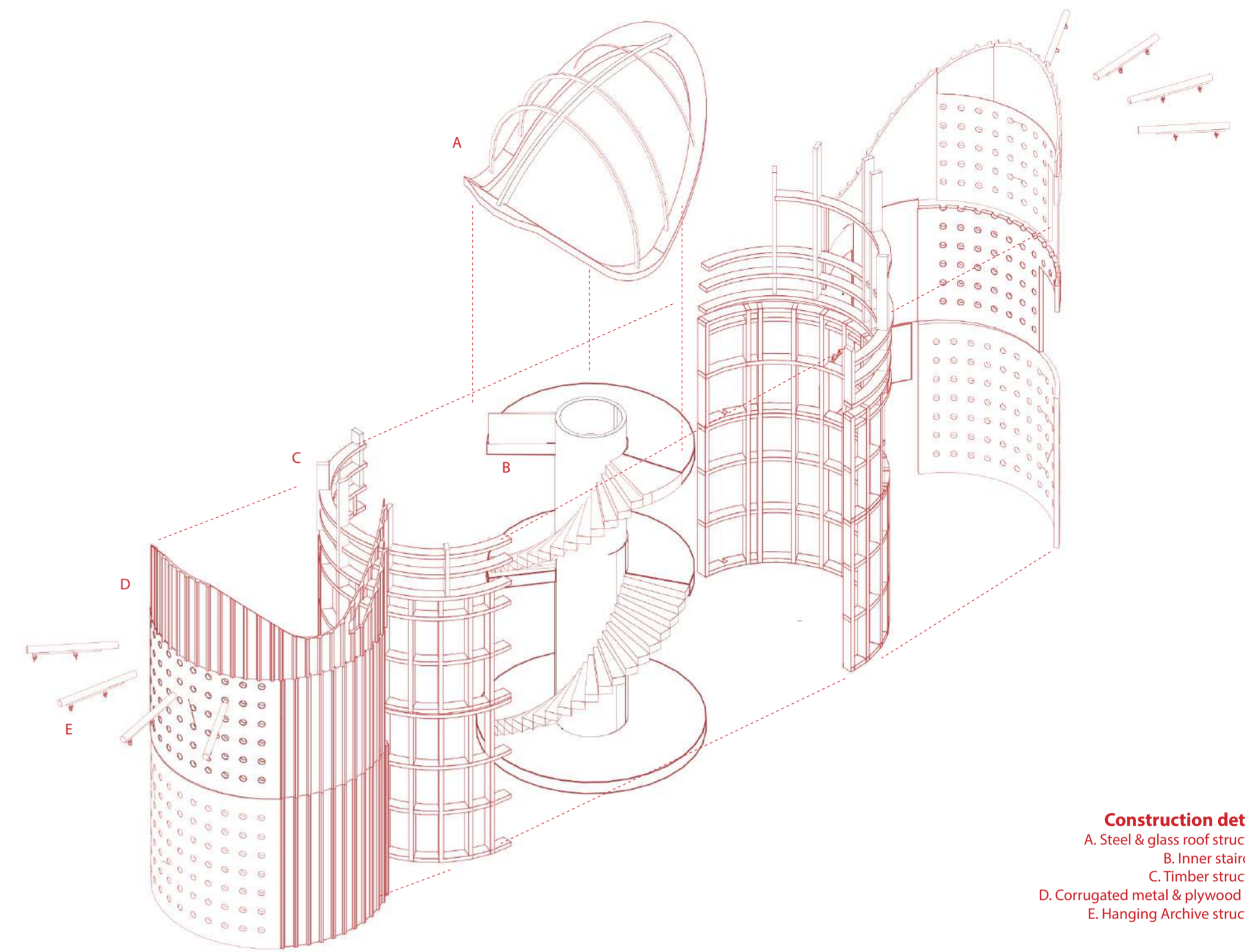
- 1. Drawing workshop
- 2. Paper travels through the space on beam structure
- 3. Paper gets cut down to smaller formats
- 4/5. Paper is turned into letters
- 6. Letters are given to users family members



1. Interior view of the drawing workshop
 2. workshop structure
 3. Extension detail
 4. Storyboard showing program
 5. Drawing example based of a letter that was written by the family member of Thomas. Which he shared in the interview.



1



Construction detail:
 A. Steel & glass roof structure
 B. Inner staircase
 C. Timber structure
 D. Corrugated metal & plywood skin
 E. Hanging Archive structure

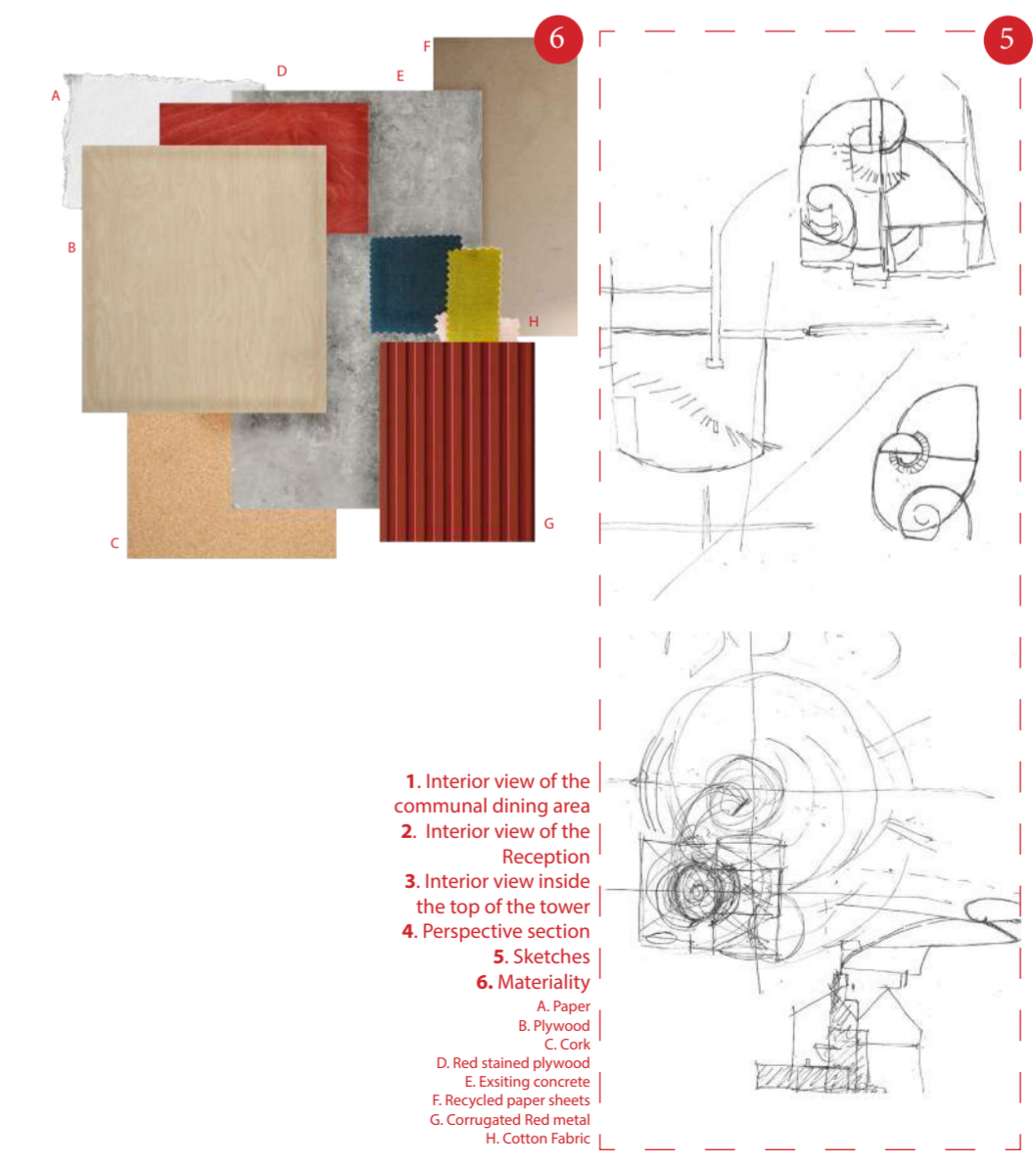
The Tower acts as a focal point that influences the remaining structure design. Acting like a beacon within the proposal, it is positioned in the center of the host building. As the floors above expand out of the tower, with a geometrical relationship, they create voids. The communal dining area on the first floor looks onto the gothic designed windows in Coroners court, that allow the visitor to get glimpses of the outside courtyard. This space additionally acts as an archive space from the memory makers workshop, bringing art and stories into this space.



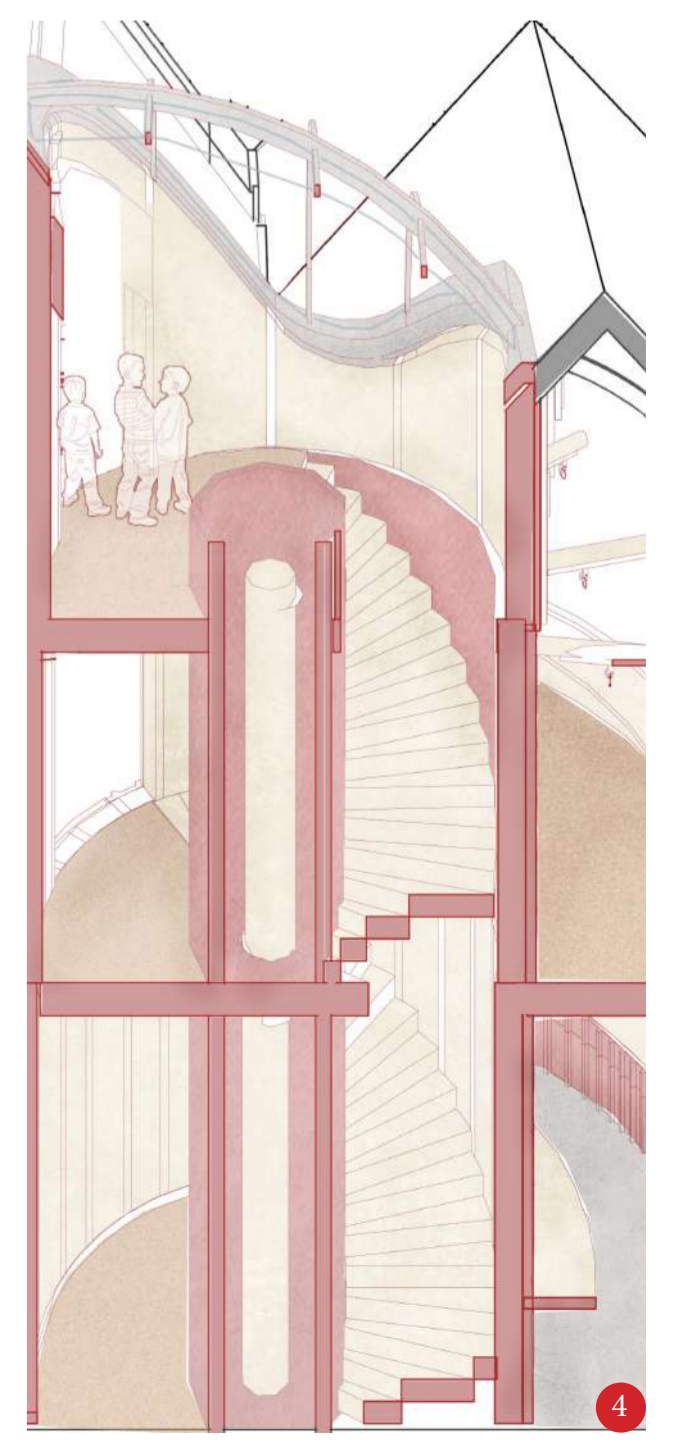
2



3



1. Interior view of the communal dining area
 2. Interior view of the Reception
 3. Interior view inside the top of the tower
 4. Perspective section
 5. Sketches
 6. Materiality
 A. Paper
 B. Plywood
 C. Cork
 D. Red stained plywood
 E. Existing concrete
 F. Recycled paper sheets
 G. Corrugated Red metal
 H. Cotton Fabric



4