

THE ART OF TRANSFORMATION

This project proposes the adaptive reuse of an existing 18th century stable block and coach house into a community arts centre through the investigation and reinterpretation of architectural traces embedded within the site. The design explores how new interventions can engage with the building's historical, spatial, and material conditions through iterative development, material experimentation, and spatial reconfiguration.

The community centre is designed as a creative and inclusive space where people can create, design, and explore through artistic materials and collaborative activities.

By encouraging both creative expression and social interaction, the proposal aims to foster a strong sense of community ownership and engagement.

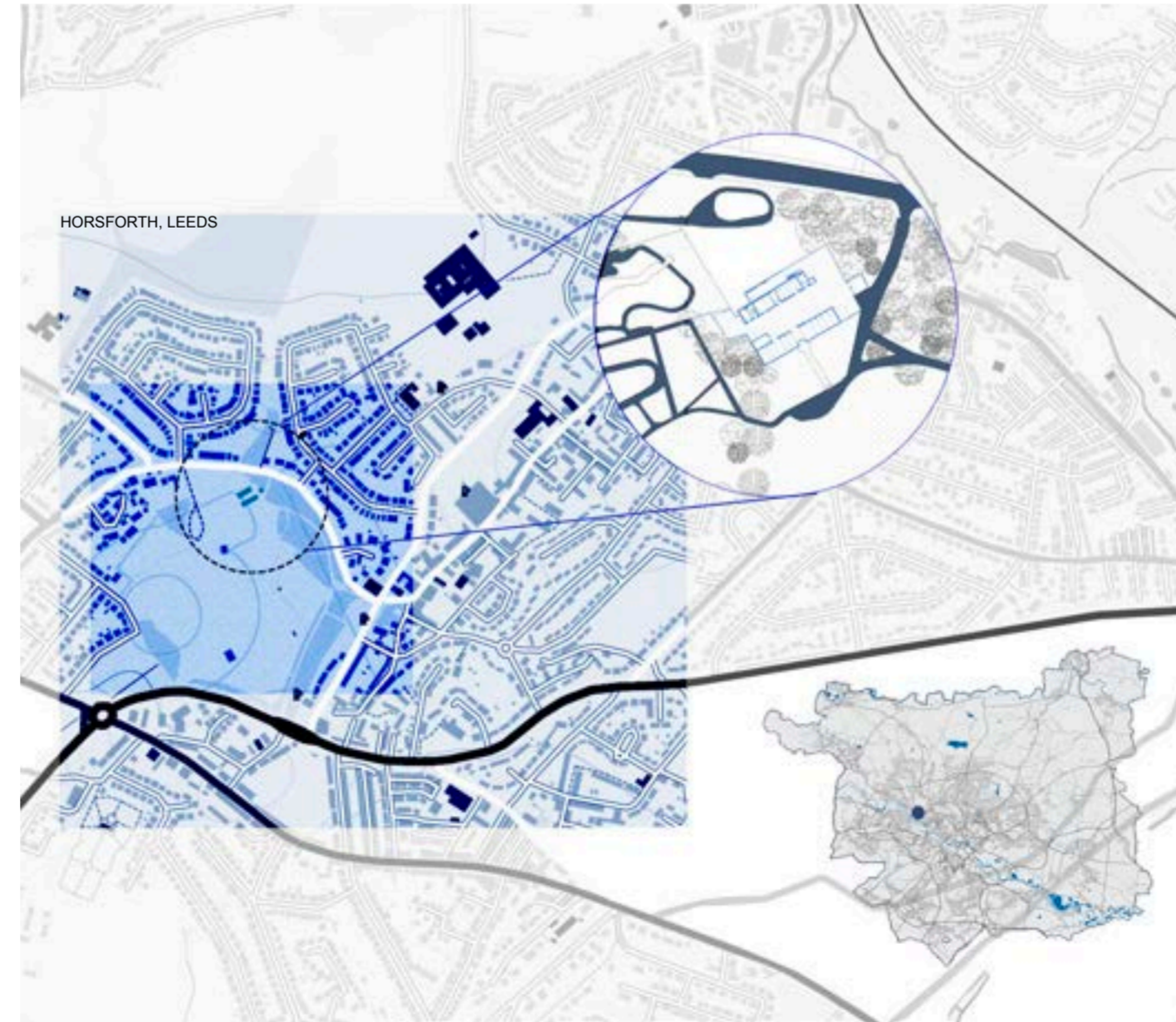
A key aspect of the design is the careful balance between preserving the character of the existing building and introducing contemporary interventions that support its new function. Through adaptable spaces and a strong emphasis on accessibility, the project creates a welcoming environment that can evolve alongside the needs of its users while celebrating the building's heritage.



SITE PHOTOS



SITE CONTEXT

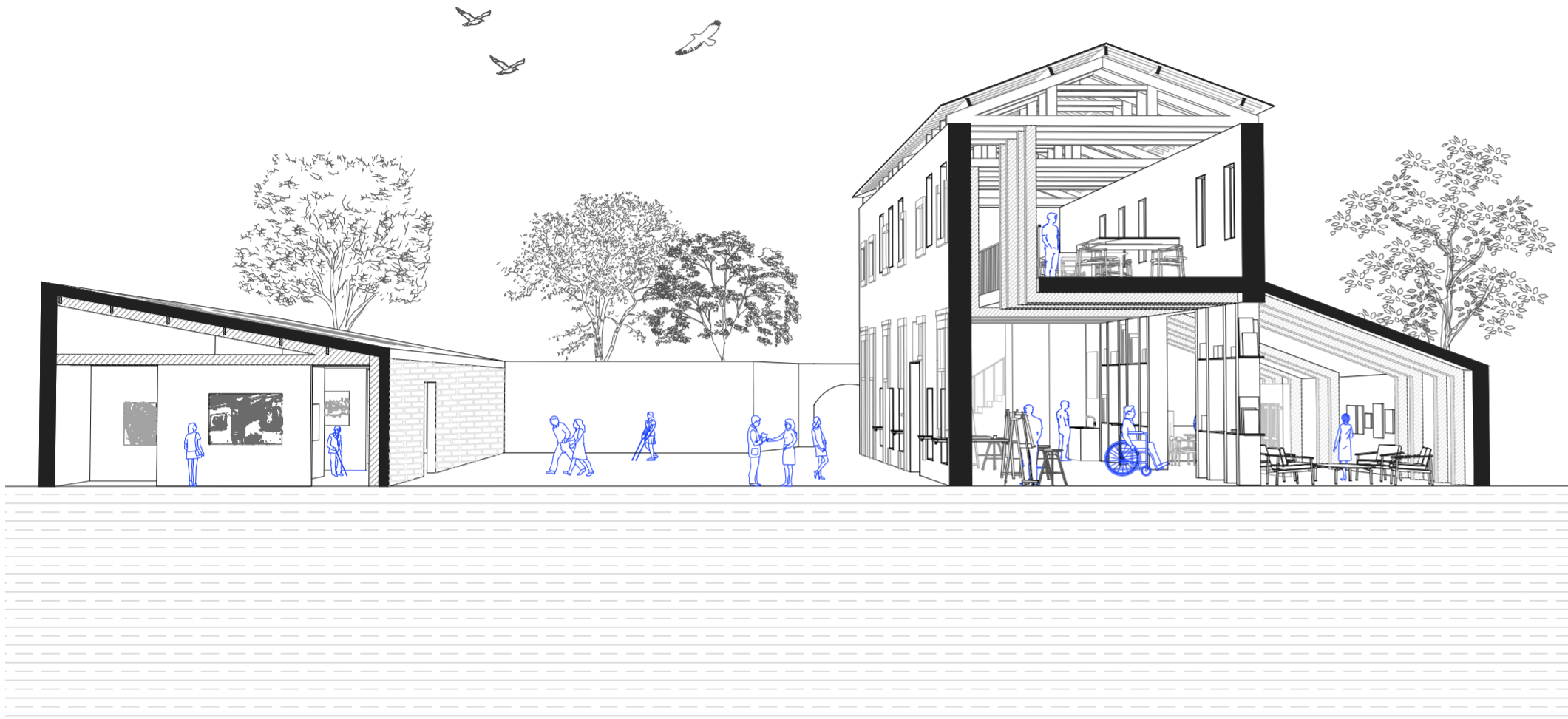


NARRATIVE

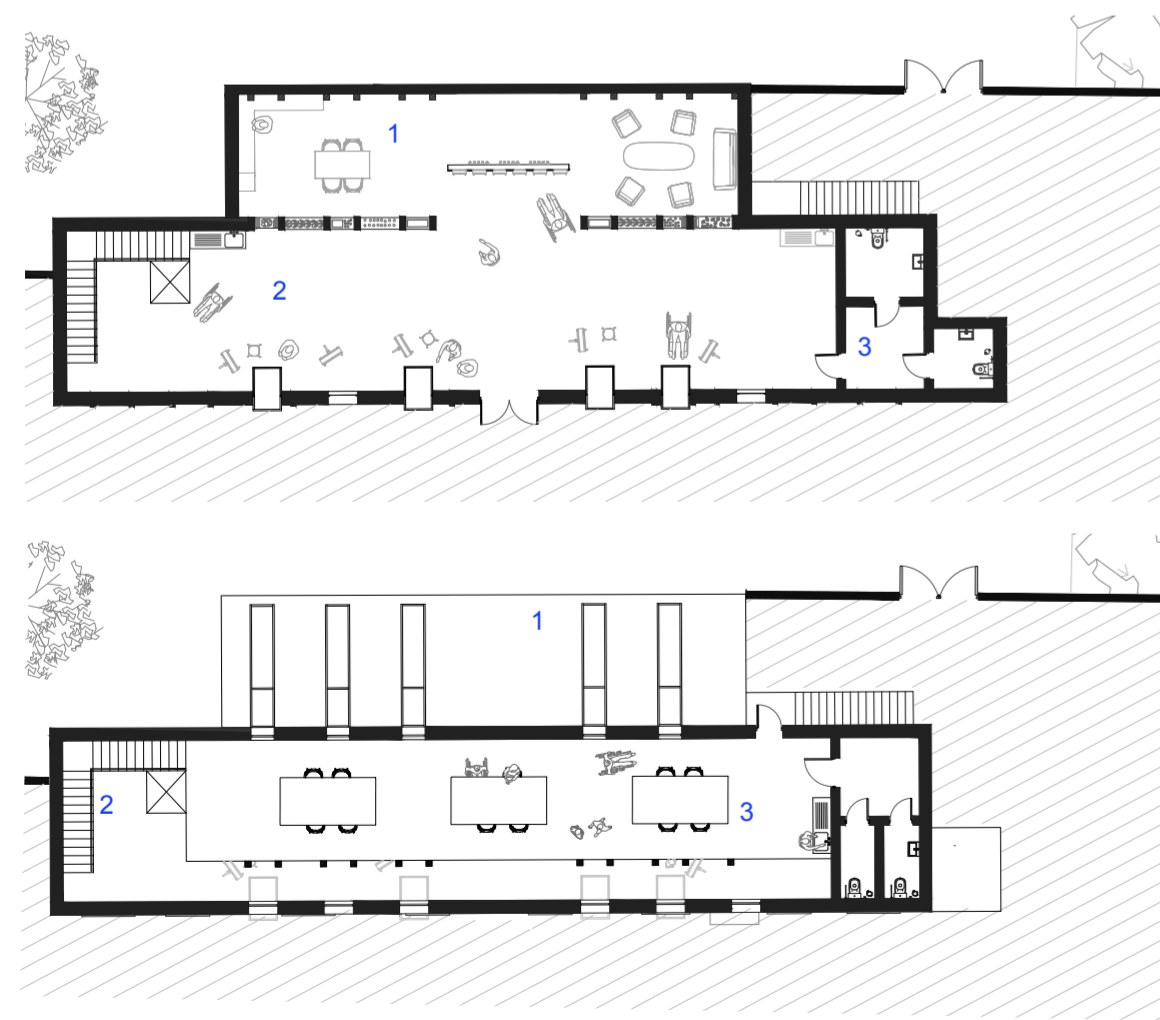
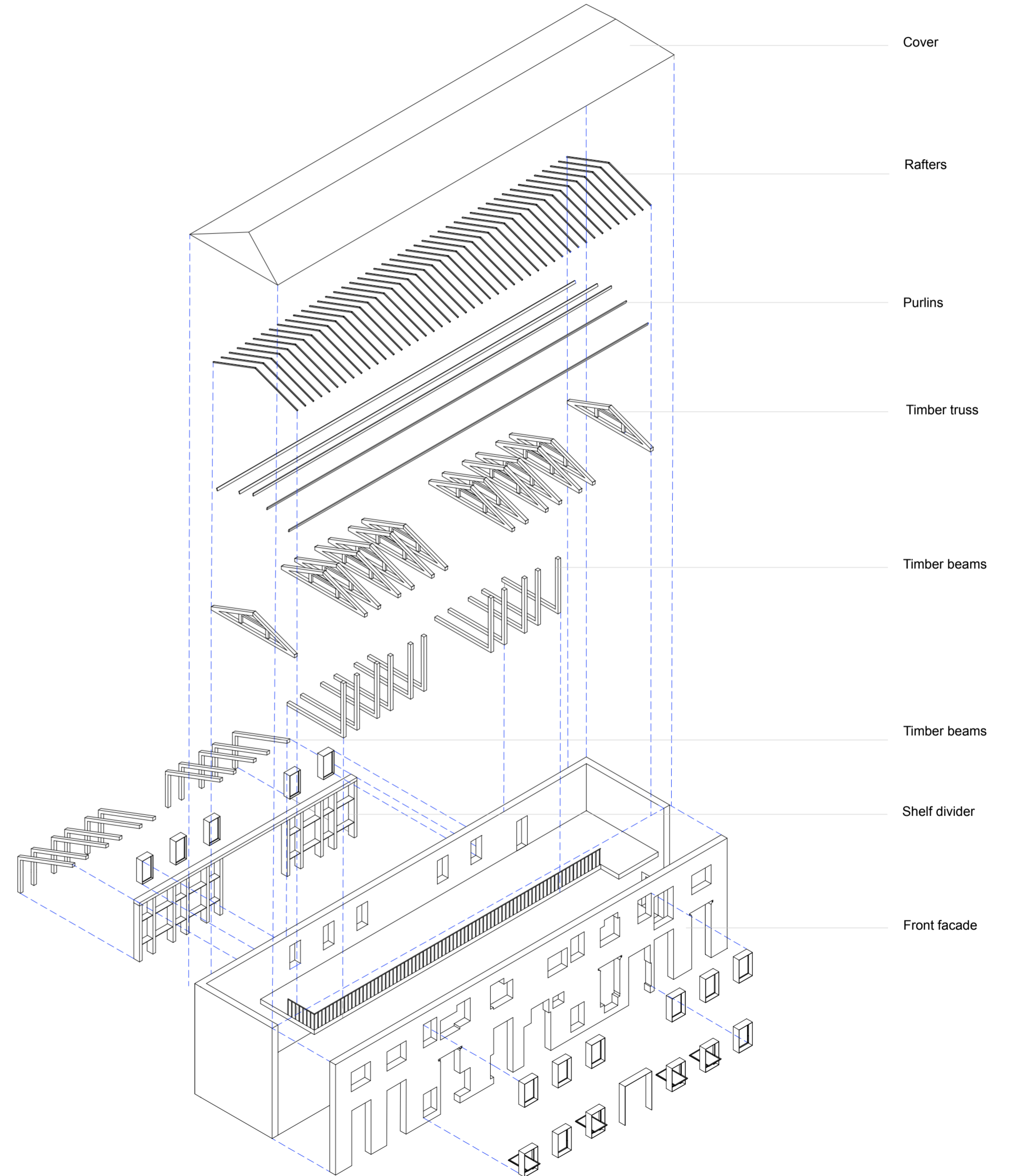


DESIGN PROPOSAL

PERSPECTIVE SECTION



EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

- 1. Community lounge
- 2. Artist space
- 3. Accessible w/c

The ground floor is organised as an open-plan space, allowing it to remain highly adaptable to changing needs and future uses. A shelving system acts as a flexible divider between the art and community lounge spaces. This arrangement enables the spaces to function independently when required or to be combined into a larger, unified area for community.

Vertical circulation is positioned on the left and comprises of a staircase and a platform lift, providing equitable access to the mezzanine level for all users.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

- 1. Community lounge roof
- 2. Vertical circulation
- 3. Artist space

The mezzanine floor provides a space for users to socialise and create. It was recognised that people are comfortable with different ways of working, whilst some prefer standing at an easel, others enjoy sitting at a table and creating alongside others. This floor accommodates those preferences through the inclusion of three carefully positioned tables, with wheelchair accessibility and circulation considered throughout. Overlooking the main studio below, the mezzanine strengthens the connection between the two levels, creating a more open and connected creative environment.

MATERIAL LOOPS

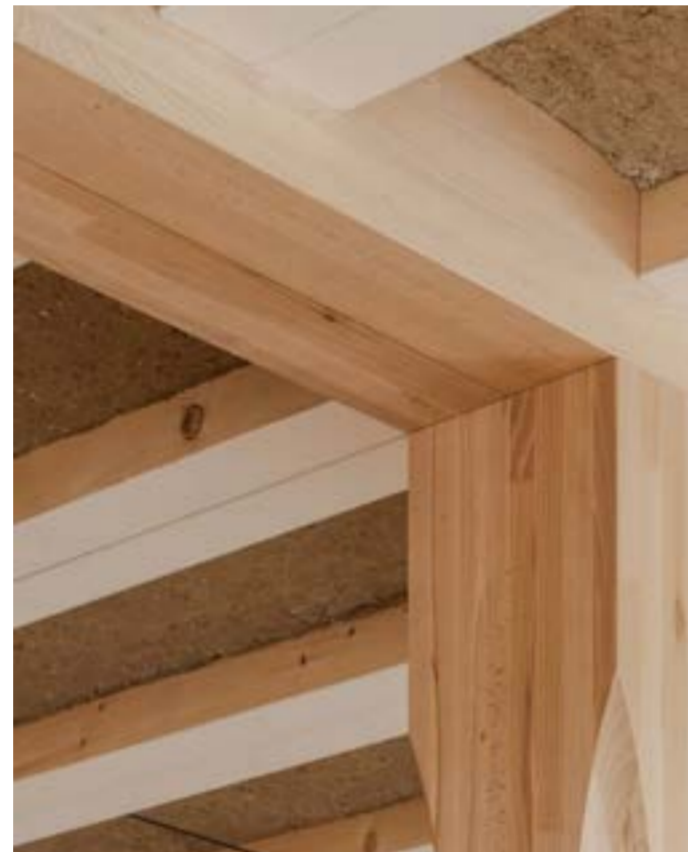
The material palette was kept deliberately simple due to wanting to avoid an overwhelming design. Expanded cork flooring was introduced for its acoustic properties, helping to absorb sound and create a calmer environment, whilst also bringing warmth and texture underfoot. This is complemented by the exposed timber structure, which establishes a natural and inviting atmosphere throughout the studio.

The use of timber and cork reflect a broader material strategy centered on sustainability and climate awareness. Both materials are renewable, low carbon alternatives to more energy intensive construction products, reducing the environmental impact of the intervention whilst enhancing user comfort. Furthermore, the selection of durable and recyclable materials supports a circular design approach, encouraging material longevity and future reuse.

Together, these choices form a material loop that balances the environmental responsibility and qualities expected of a contemporary creative environment.



EXPANDED CORK - FLOORING (ACOUSTICS)



CEDAR TIMBER - BEAMS AND WINDOW FRAMES



CORTEN STEEL - DURABLE AND LOW MAINTENANCE



STONE FACADE - EXISTING (HISTORIC PALIMPSEST)



FRONT FACADE

HISTORICAL PALIMPSEST

EXISTING FACADE



ISLINGTON, LONDON

Architects: Amin Taha Architects (Groupwork)
Year: 2017

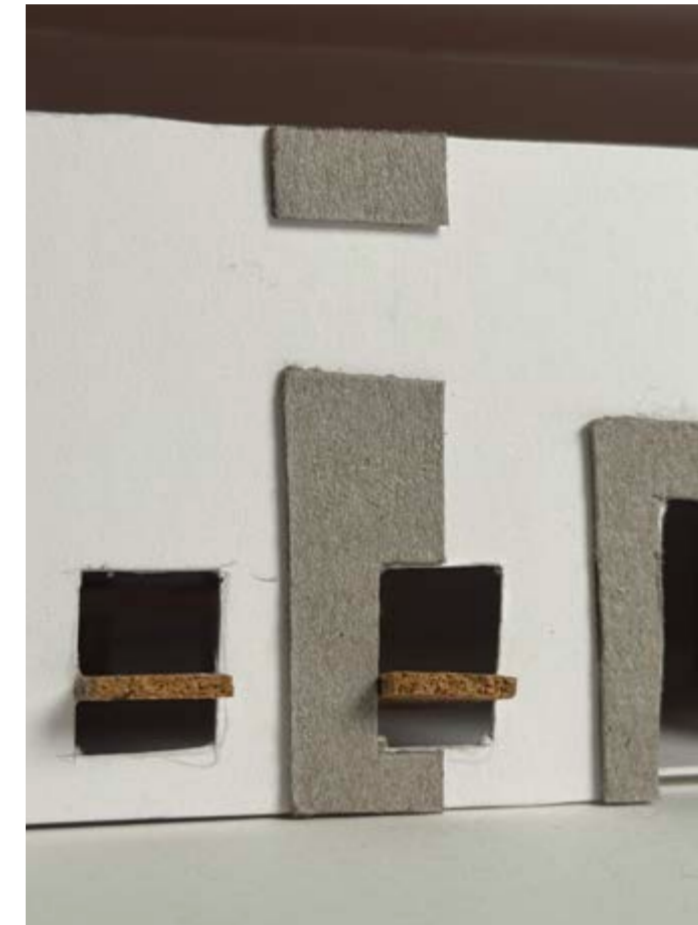
168 Upper Street is a terracotta-colored concrete block designed as a distorted replica of a Victorian terrace destroyed during WWII.

The project acts as an intentional infill within the terrace, using contemporary additions and reconstructed elements to reference the lost building while creating a clear contrast between old and new.

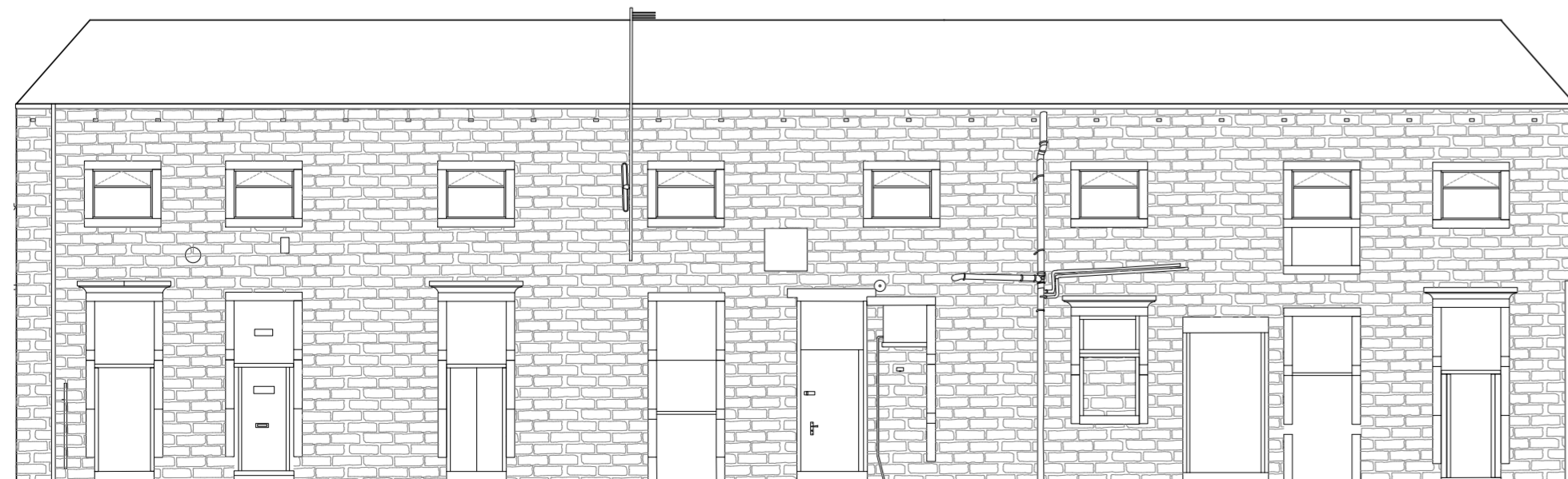


This model demonstrates how the new windows are integrated within the existing facade, while the infilled stonework introduces an additional layer of history to the building.

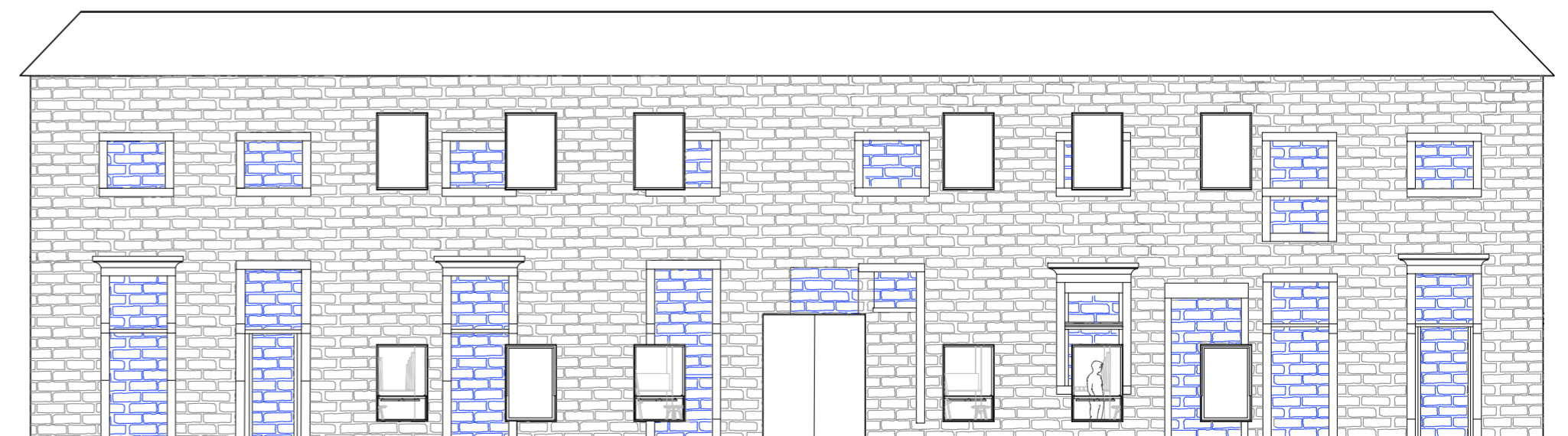
The contrast between the original structure and the new interventions helps to highlight the building's change over time.



ORIGINAL FACADE

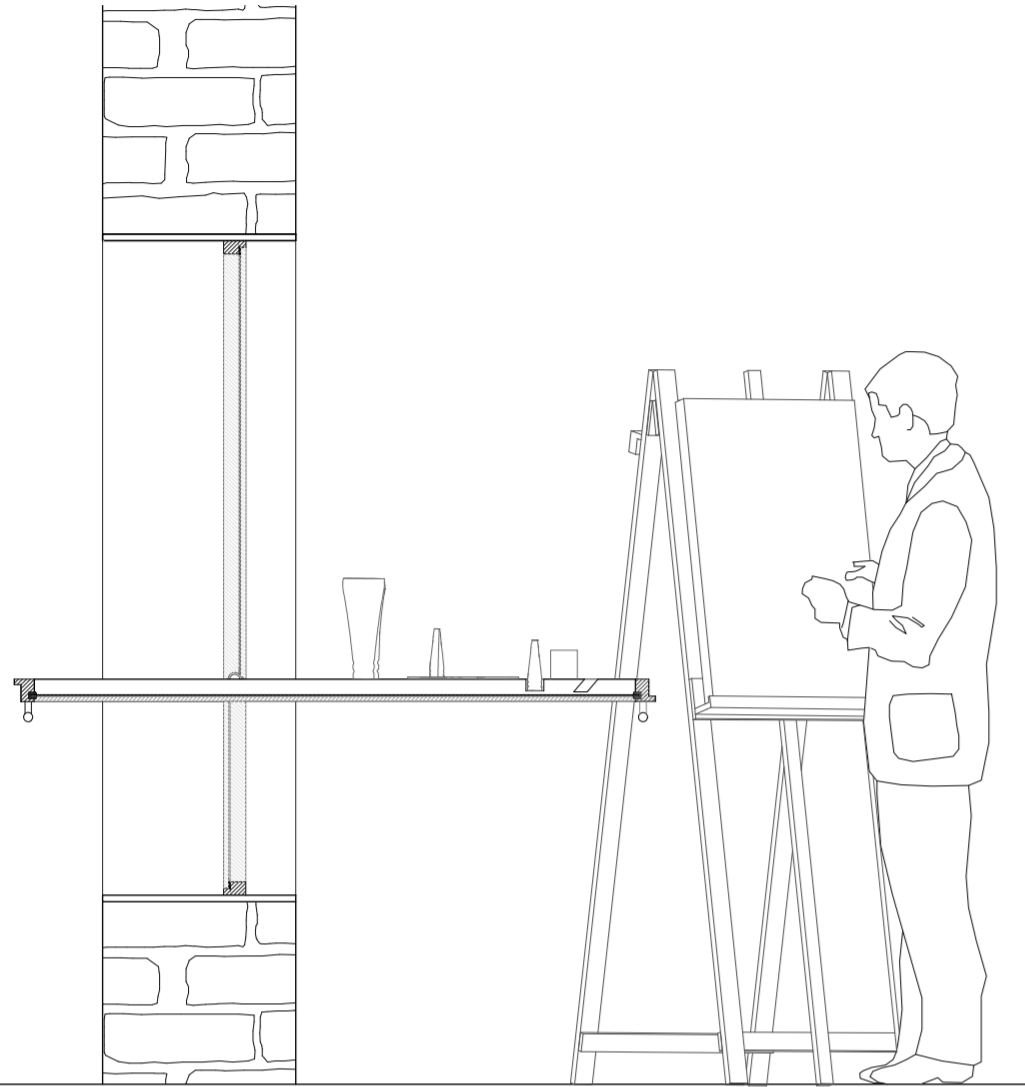


CONTINUED INFILLS + PROPOSED FACADE



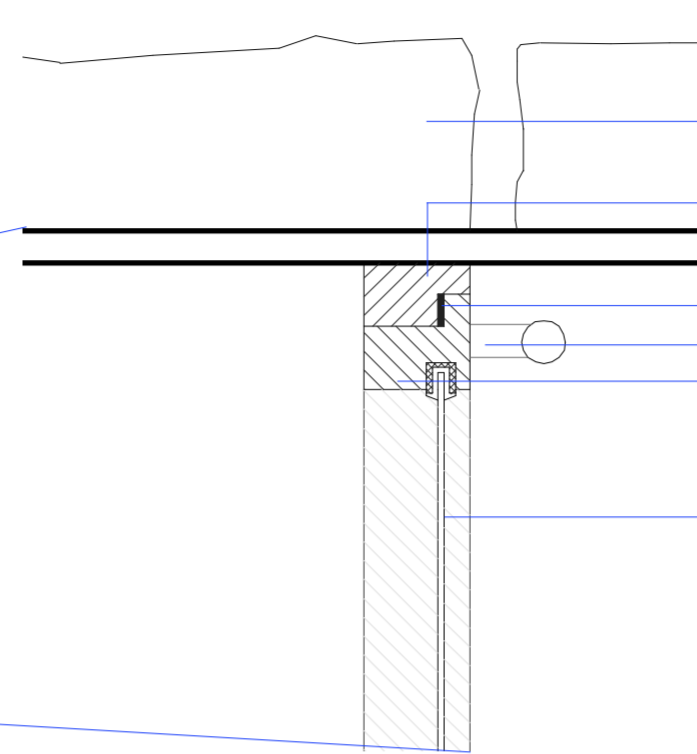
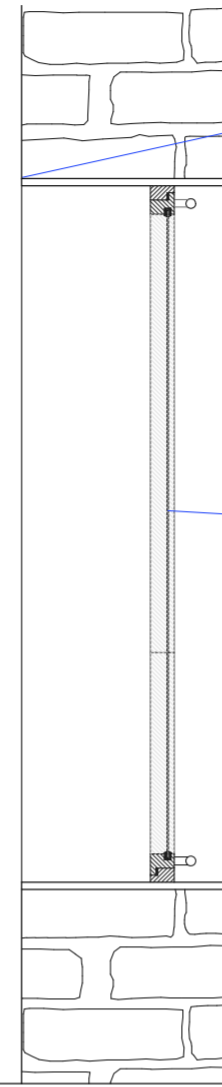
DETAIL COMPONENT

DETAIL COMPONENT IN USE



NOT TO SCALE

TECHNICAL BUILDUP



- Stone wall
- 970 x 50 x 30mm cedar wood fixed frame
- 3mm rubber seal
- Handle bar
- 970 x 50 x 30mm cedar wood frame
- 4mm glass

This detail component, focused on the front facade, serves as the central element that informs the rest of the design. Featuring transformable windows, the design allows the panels to fold down, creating multi functional surfaces and counter tops for users of the space (particularly artists with easels) but also allows the space to remain versatile. There also contains an additional cedar wood insert, which allows these windows to become counter tops, protecting the glass.

When closed, the windows allow generous natural light to enter the art space during the day. More importantly they create a strong visual and physical connection between the interior and exterior of the building. Constructed from lightweight and cost-effective cedar timber, as well as containing a corten steel frame that clearly distinguishes the new intervention from the original stone wall. There also contains an additional cedar wood insert, which allows the window to become a tabletop.

The system has also been carefully designed to ensure accessibility, enabling wheelchair users to operate the windows with ease.

