

The Learning Terrace: A Home for Shared Discovery

"The nature of a third place is one in which the presence of a 'regular' is always welcome" - Ray Oldenburg

Horsforth Park:

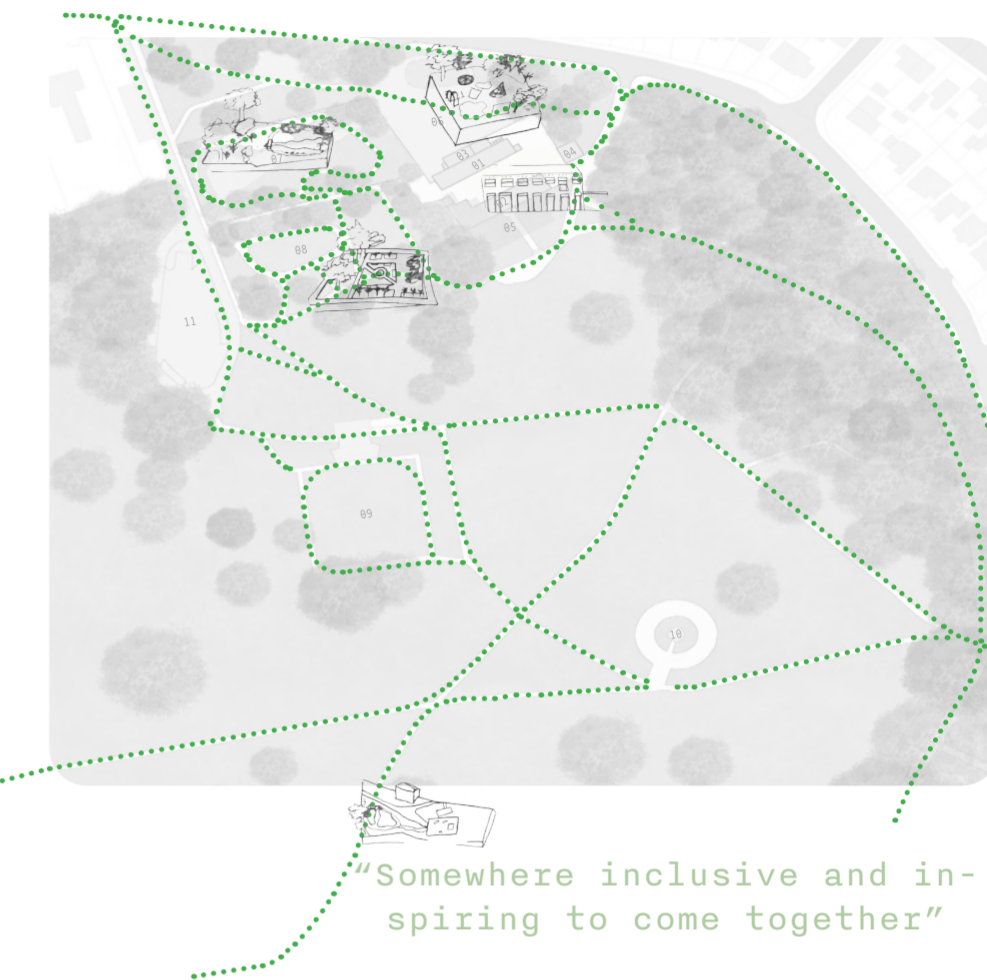
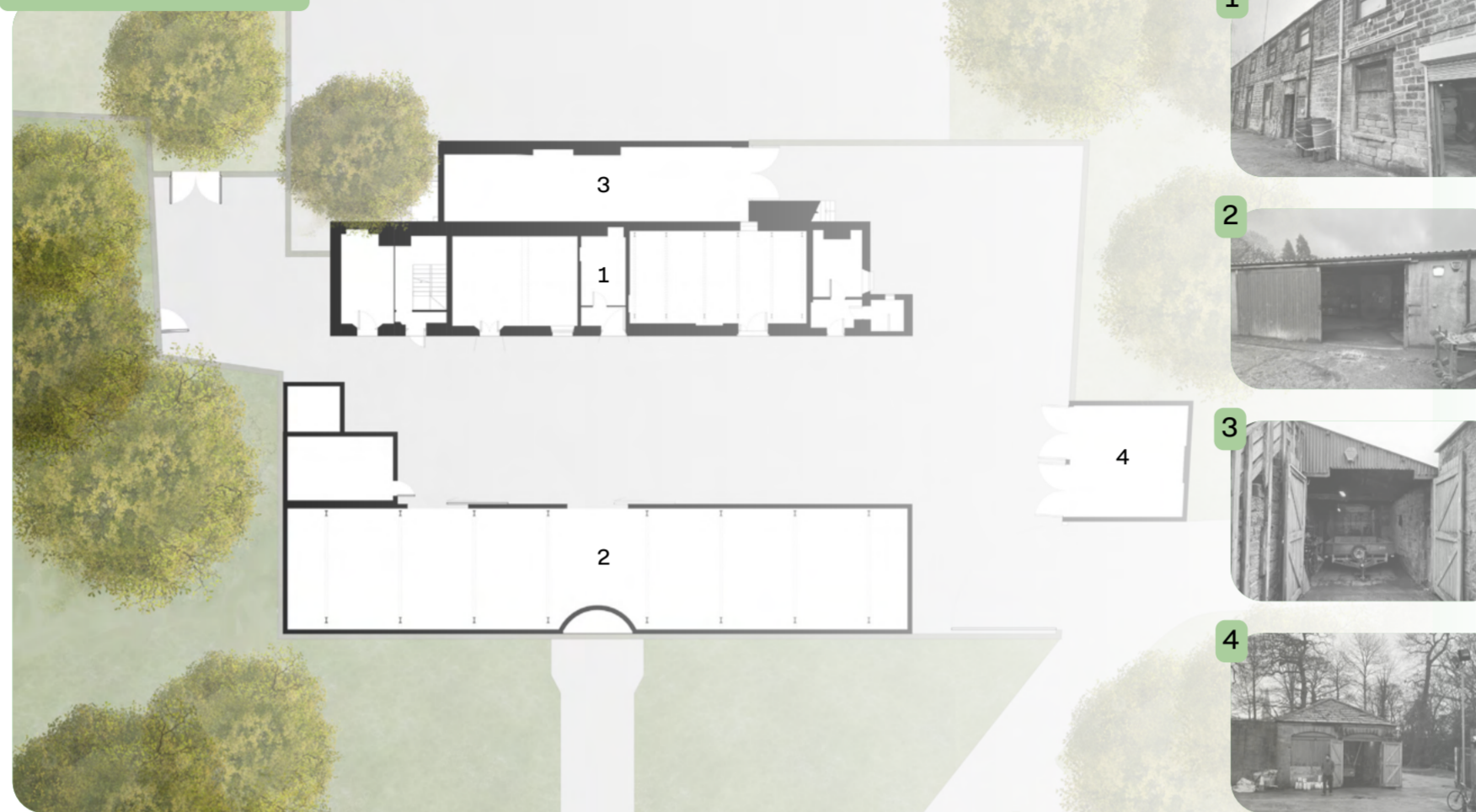


Horsforth Hall Park was historically the site of 'New Hall'. The Hall stood from 1707 until the 1950's when it was demolished due to subsidence. Left on the grounds includes the Long Shed, Stables, and Coach House which are now being used as offices for the local council despite being gifted to the Horsforth community.

During WW2, the Hall was used as a military communications centre and the headquarters for the local air raid precautions. As well as the Hall's wartime contributions, the community of Horsforth raised £241,000 to build the HMS Aubrietia. This boat in 1941 led to a German submarine being forced to surface and surrender in the North Atlantic Ocean. Below the decks, they found the German Enigma machine, which was sent to Bletchley Park, allowing the code to be broken therefore shortening the war.



Existing Site:



"Somewhere inclusive and inspiring to come together"

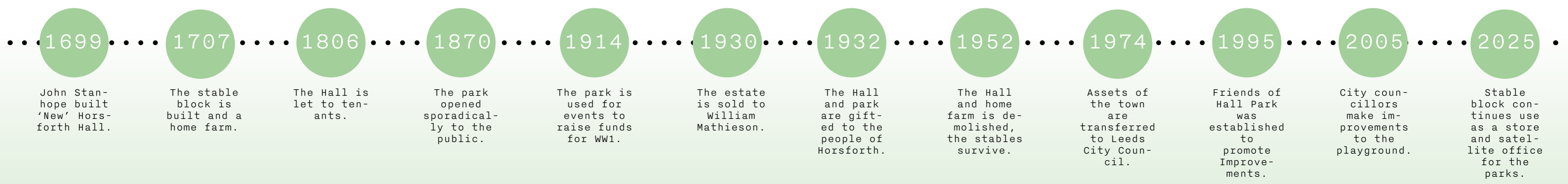
Concept:



The concept looks at how the existing exterior has a terrace-house appearance, linking to the 'third space' concept. This site will be designed to welcome individuals of all ages within the Horsforth community. As a result of conducting research about Bletchley Park, it was found the code breakers had a variety of neurodiversities. To honour this fact, while improving inclusivity, this space will be made inclusive by looking at sensory factors like textures from exposed bricks and appropriate colour schemes. Neurodiverse individuals benefit from feeling at home in external environments, therefore creating this communal and educational 'homes' forms a welcoming and supportive environment. Each educational 'house' will provide a space for hands on, informal learning. The historical presence of this site was key to feature within the design proposal to restore its traces. This includes highlighting original features as well as exploring the past uses of the area. This led to involving the concept of the enigma and its rotating parts into the design, which can be seen in the 'Green House' mechanical irrigation system. This reverts back to Horsforth's contribution in finding the German enigma which contributed to the end of WW2 by de-ciphering the code.

Project Summary:

This project re-imagines an old stable block within Horsforth park as a series of terraced 'houses', each one forming a distinct yet interconnected informal learning environment. Inspired by the concept of the third space. The design creates a welcoming, domestic-scale environment that encourages curiosity, creativity, and community engagement. Each "house" is tailored to a specific hands-on activity, transforming traditional ideas of education into immersive, experiential spaces. An area for learning through planting and environmental interaction. A craft house allows for creativity and a movement studio provides space for dance, yoga and bodily expression. Together, these spaces form a cohesive sequence allowing users to move fluidly between different modes of learning.

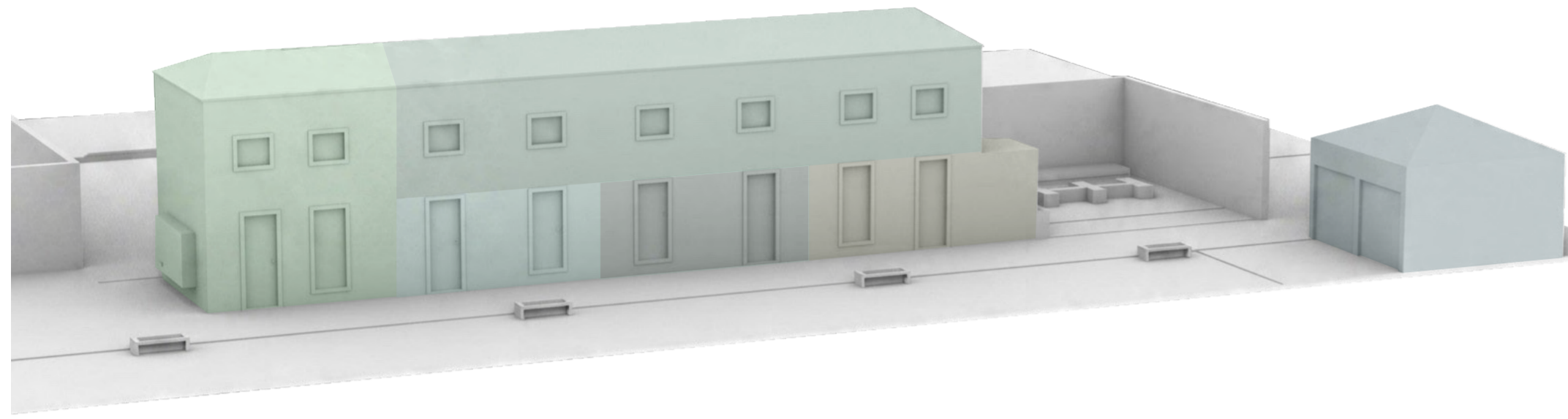
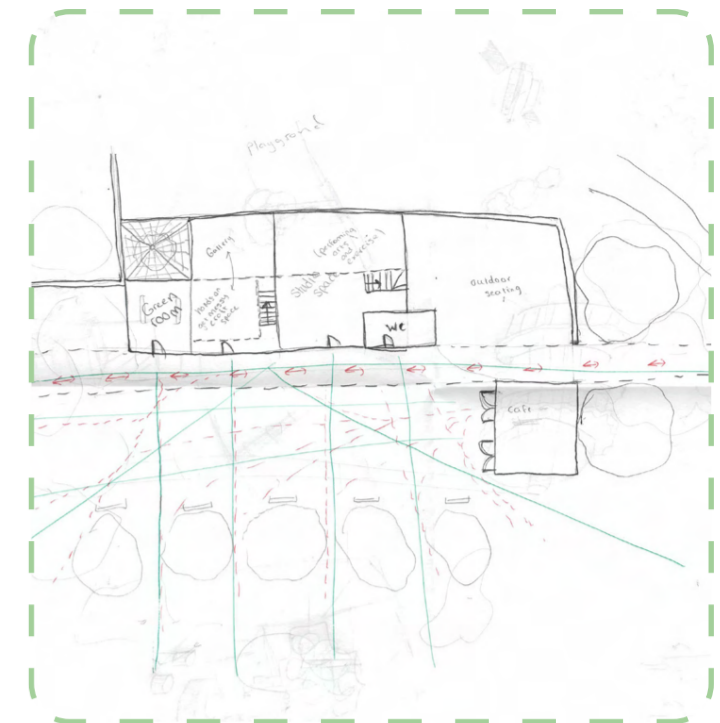
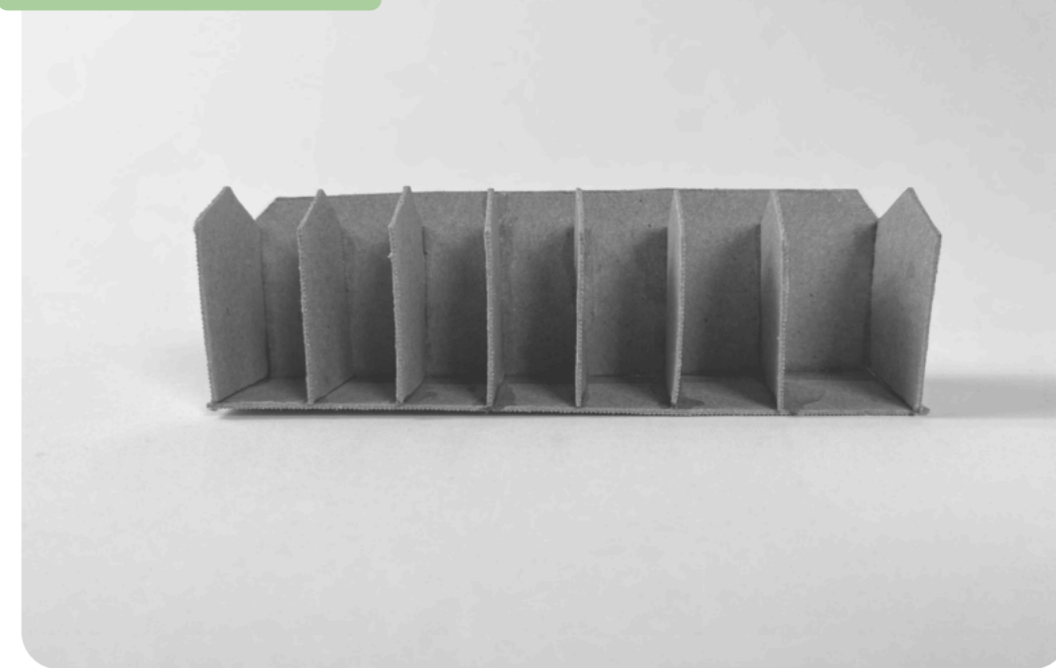


Spatial Strategy:

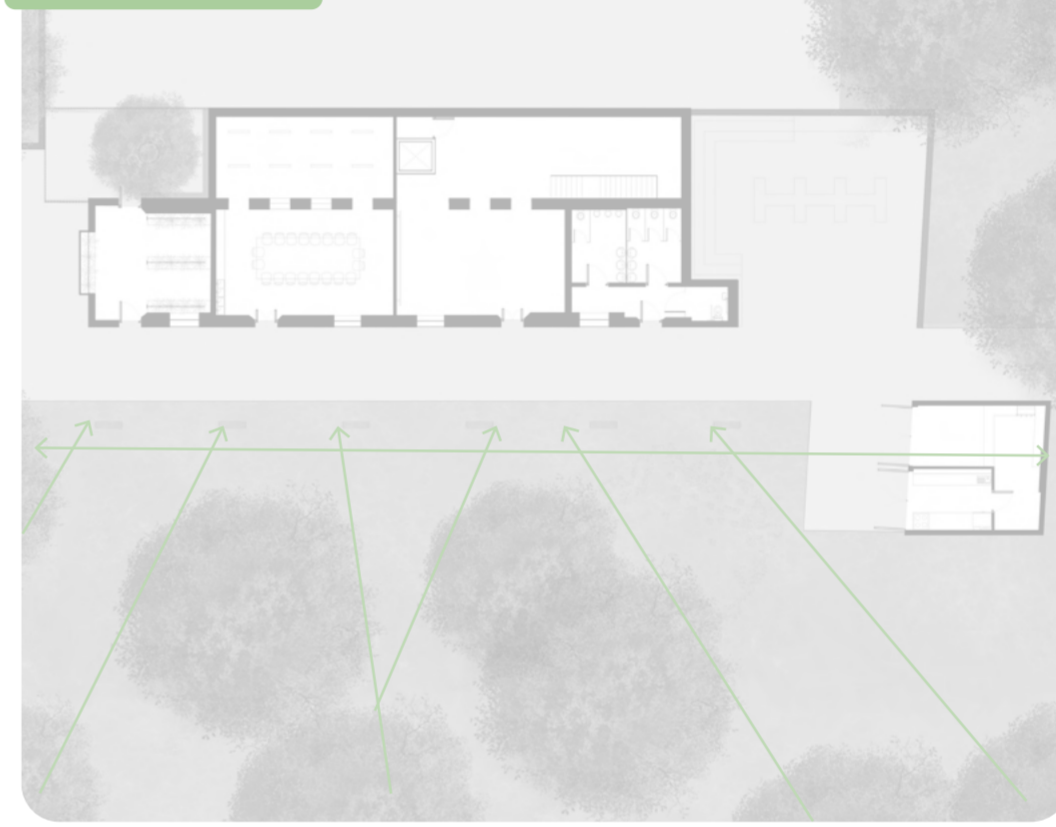
The key spatial strategy of this design is exploring the existing terrace house appearance of the stable block to create an educational centre in the heart of the community that welcomes all. Each 'house' provides a different form of hands-on learning, beneficial for neurodiverse individuals who lack support in Horsforth.

- "The Green House" ●
- "The Craft House" ●
- "The Movement House" ●
- "The Park Lounge" ●
- "The Out House" ●
- "The Cafe" ●

Initial Ideas:



Sight Lines:

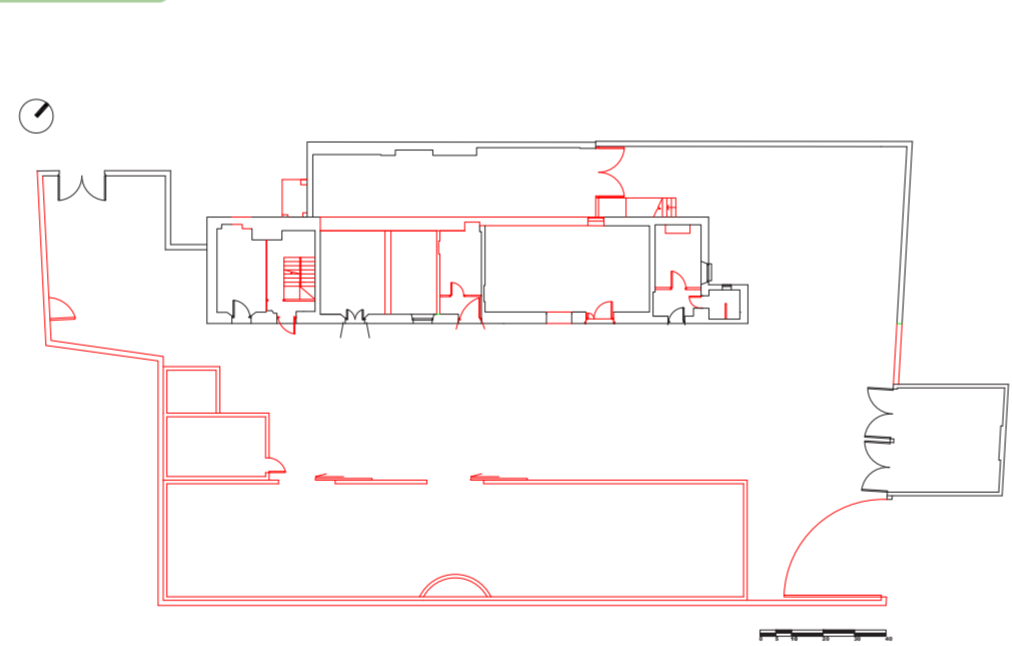


By creating multiple sight lines, it creates a strategy for reducing importance of specific aspects of the building. This approach distributes visual attention across several points, rather than one single entrance, perfect for the multiple access points this terrace design includes. This makes the site less intimidating for people visiting which is beneficial for neurodiverse individuals to reduce anxiety. This makes the building feel more approachable.

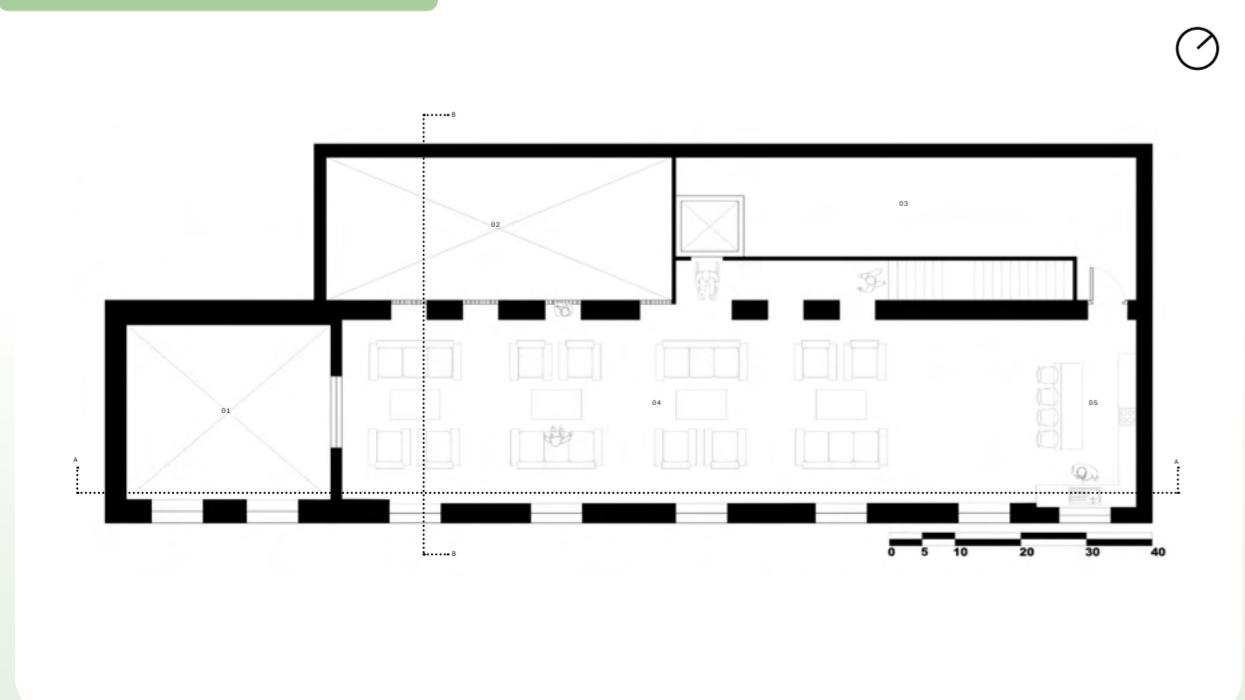
Ground Floor Plan:



Key Moves:

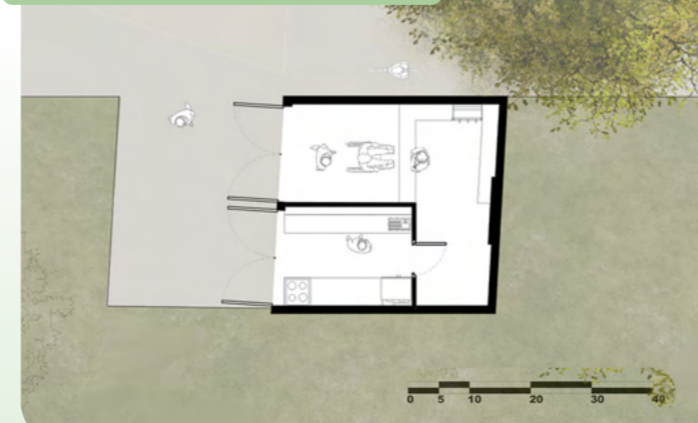


First Floor Plan:



Removing the new unlisted long shed restores the history while also becoming more open, allowing opportunity to create a 'street', linking to the terrace concept. This welcomes more people in from the wider area. Additionally, replacing newly added doors with the original, forms 4 separate entrances to the stable block to become the 4 'houses'.

Coach House Plan:



The coach house locates the new cafe. This will feature a public access service counter for takeaway food and drinks, and a private kitchen for those working. Both spaces have their own access point from the park but are connected within the building.

Street-view Visual:



Narrative:

This project is designed to create a third space where individuals within the Horsforth community can socialise and learn through hands-on activities. This concept expanded from the idea in which existing stable block had a terrace house appearance.

Users:

This project is targeted as a space for the community of Horsforth. Inclusive to individuals of all ages and needs, while being catered specifically to support neurodiversities. Horsforth is known for a lack of support with neurodiversities, therefore this site is beneficial. Additionally, supporting these needs reverts back to the sites past links to Bletchley Park where many individuals were neurodiverse.

Section BB:



Movement Plan:



The Spaces:

The Green House: A home for exploring nature and working hands-on with plants.

The Craft House: A home for the creativity of model making, sketching and painting.

The Movement House: A home for exploring bodily movements through dance and yoga to make art.

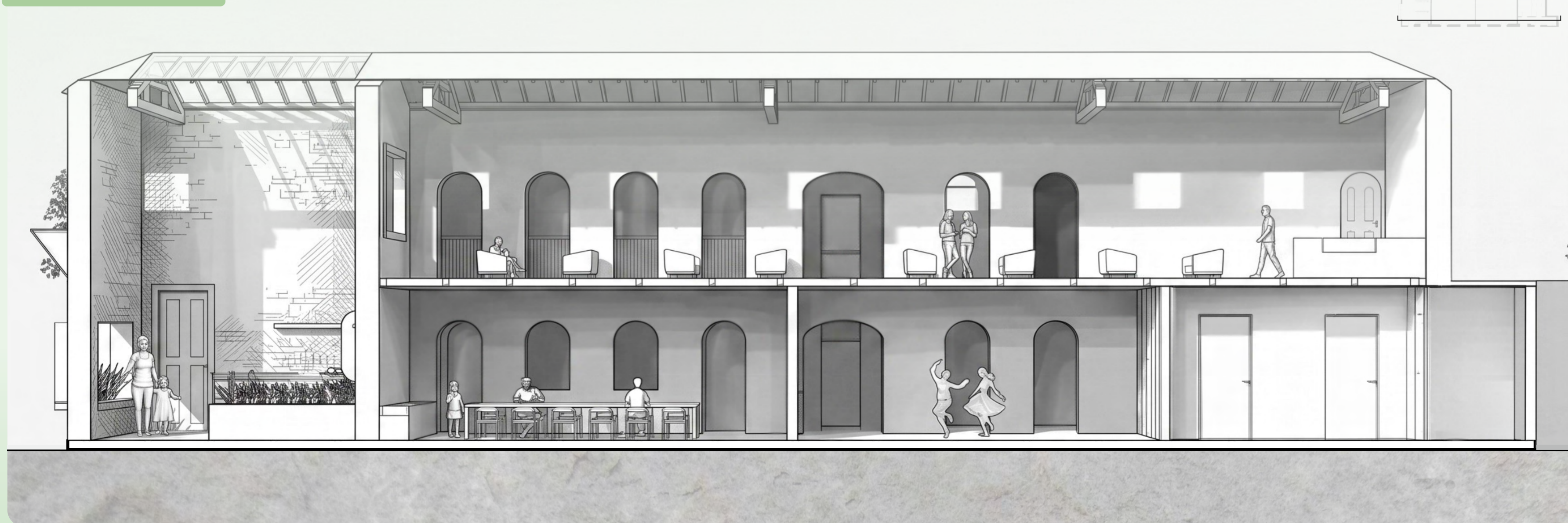
The Out House: The public toilets accessible for all.

The Park Lounge: A low-sensory space to feel at home and improve focus.

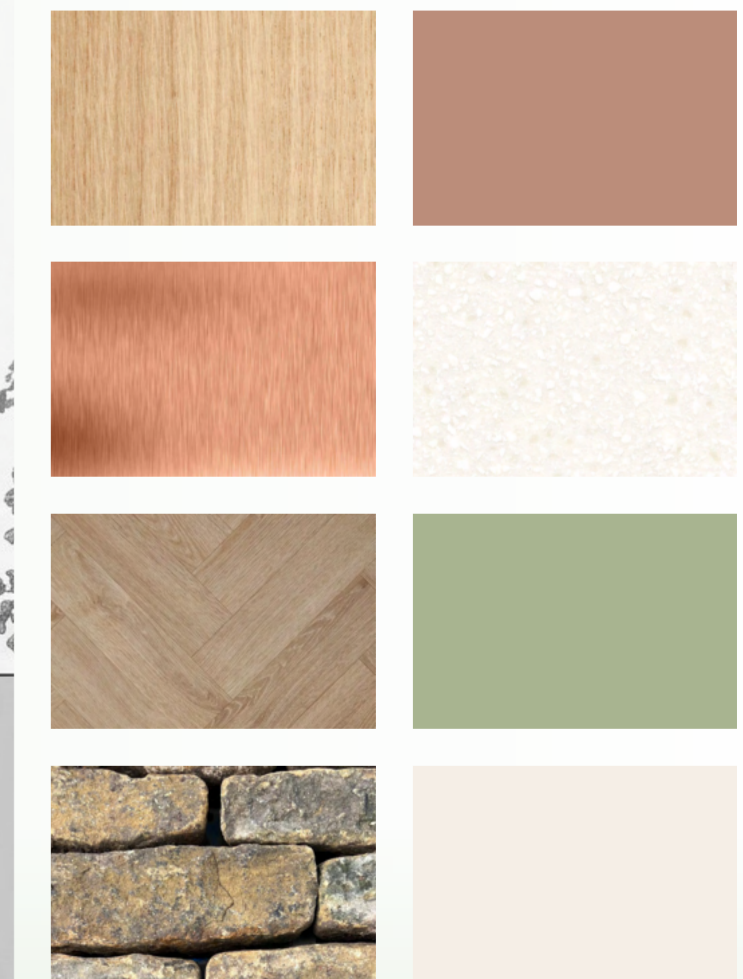
The Cafe: A social space for takeaway food and drink to be enjoyed in the park.

The movement around the space forms a clear circulation that can be easily navigated with accessibility features such as a lift. Each 'house' has its own individual access point, allowing individuals to directly reach their destination as soon as they walk through the door. This felt important as it removes the anxiety for neurodiverse individuals by having a clear layout.

Section AA:



Materiality:



The use of natural materials and colours is an eco-friendly way of bringing the outside, inside and promoting mental wellbeing.

Restoring History:

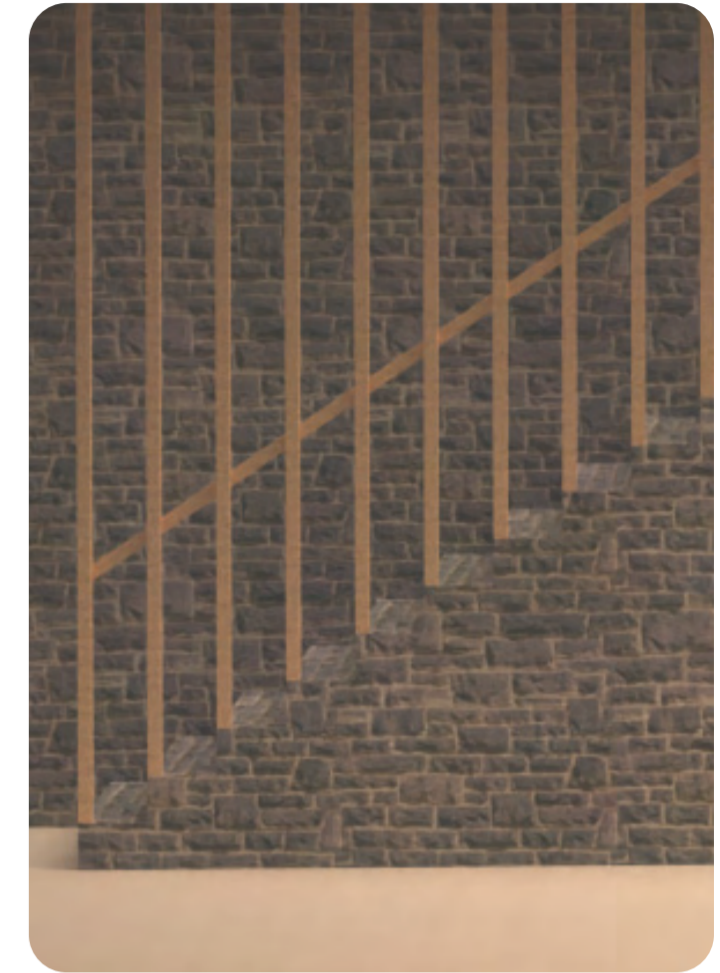
Archways:



Windows & Doors:



Stone Stairs:



The site features a series of stone arches that have been blocked up. These are located within the stable block, where it joins to the lean-to. In order to restore original features of the site, it was decided to open these up. After carrying out sketches and research, the space would benefit most by converting the stables and lean-to into one space. This led to the exploration of opening up the original arches as a way of linking back to the site's history. These arches would become open passage-ways to the back of the building. This design language would be continued through to the first floor. Open archways, opposed to closed doorways are beneficial for neurodivergent people as it creates a more predictable environment, reducing anxiety.

Over time, the windows and doors have been changed. Some original windows and doors have been blocked up, while some new ones have been added. It would be a key move to restore the facade of the building by removing newly added doorways, and opening blocked up original windows and doors. This would result in having four doorways across the front facade. Each doorway would provide access to the four different 'houses', the 'Out House', 'Green House', 'Craft House' and 'Movement House'. This creates a clearly defined spatial arrangement. In addition to this, the opened up windows on the south-facing facade will allow more natural light into the interior.

The original stone staircase, currently located outside is a key feature to keep as it is listed. While this will be kept, changes will be made in order to meet current regulations. For example, in a commercial building a landing is required after 12 steps. This isn't currently the case, while the stairs are also quite steep. Another change made to the stone stairs is that they will no longer be located outside due to the lean-to being extended. By making this staircase interior, it will promote functionality as the weather in Horsforth can't justify making visitors go outside in order to get upstairs as it is often cold and wet.

Interior Objects:

Craft Table:



A singular large craft table allows for a more intimate feel as everyone sits together to create crafts, boosting socialising.

Planters & Irrigation System:



Wooden planters continue the natural material and colour scheme through the design and allow the plants to be kept inside. The irrigation system stores recycled rainwater to water the interior plants sustainably.

Sofas:



Residential-scale seating compliments the homely feel, rather than large pieces of furniture making the space feel more commercial.

Exhibition Boards:



Cork exhibition boards allow for easily changeable displays so the range of community artwork can be rotated and refreshed over time. This will make a dynamic environment that promotes repeat visits.

The Gallery:



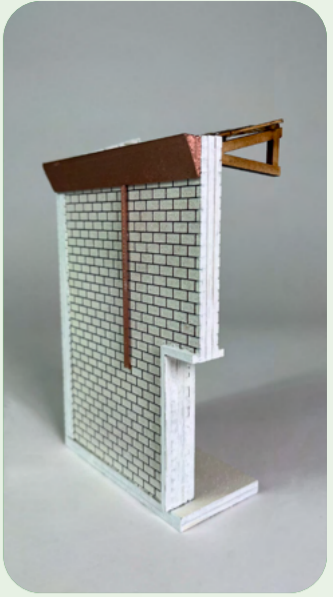
The gallery, connected to the crafts space allows for the community to display their artwork. This will bring the community together through their creations. This transforms the crafts space into a reflection of the locals who use it with a dynamic environment of changing exhibits.

The Movement House:



A studio space where people can do exercise in small intimate environments compared to traditional gyms. Activities like yoga and dance can be carried out here. Movement regulates the nervous system, reduces sensory overload and manages high energy levels.

Green House Model:



The Craft House:



The "Craft House" features a large worktable where groups can work together or individually and embrace creativity through crafts. Crafts are beneficial for neurodiverse individuals as it forms a flexible, low-pressure environment that caters to sensory needs.

The Park Lounge:



The "Park Lounge" is located across the entirety of upstairs. Creating a homely environment. This allows for individuals to relax and socialise. There is a kitchen which allows for self catering. This forms a low-sensory space which prevents overloads and improves focus.

The Canopy:



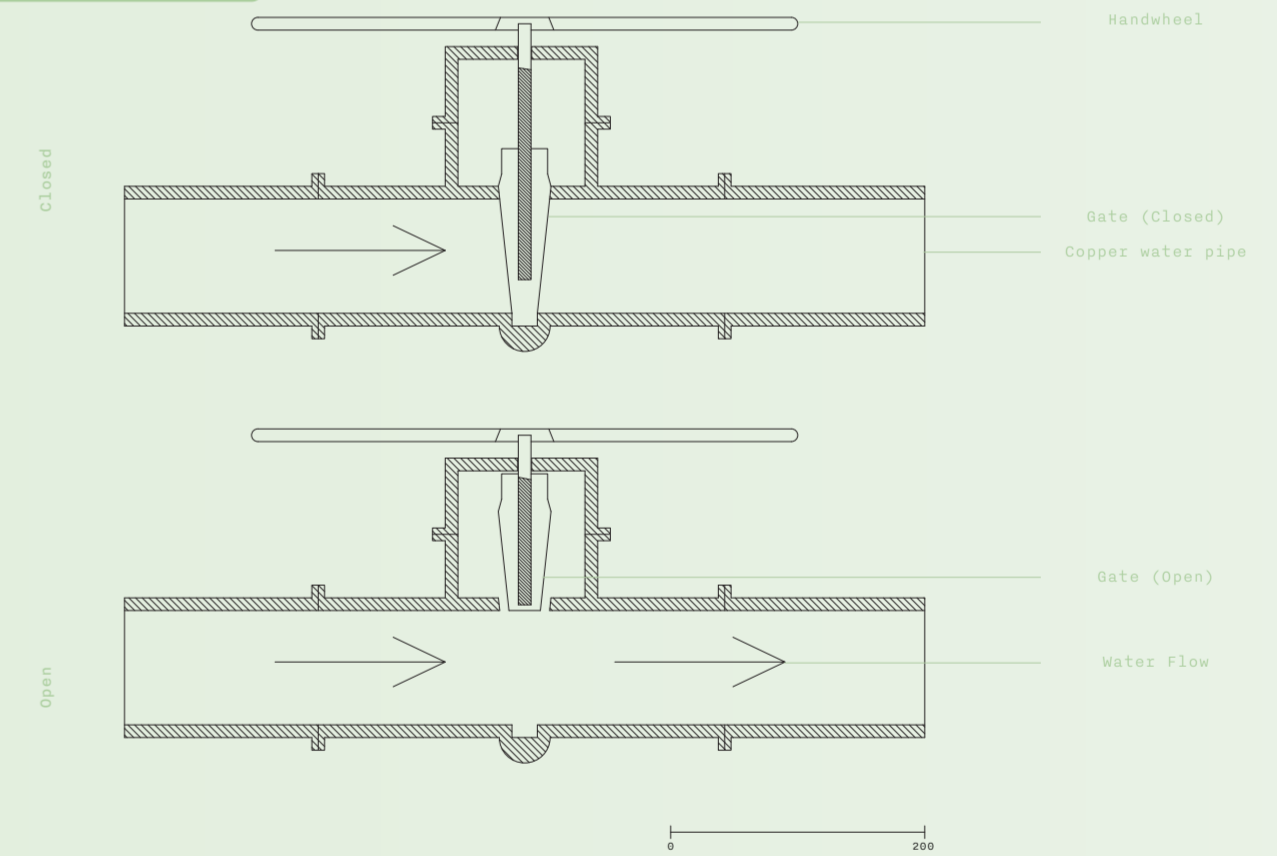
The outdoor canopy forms an extension of the green house. This space can be used for social and educational purposes. Allowing learning revolved around nature to continue outside and into the wider park. This space is accessible from the 'green house', playground, and 'the street'.

The Green House:

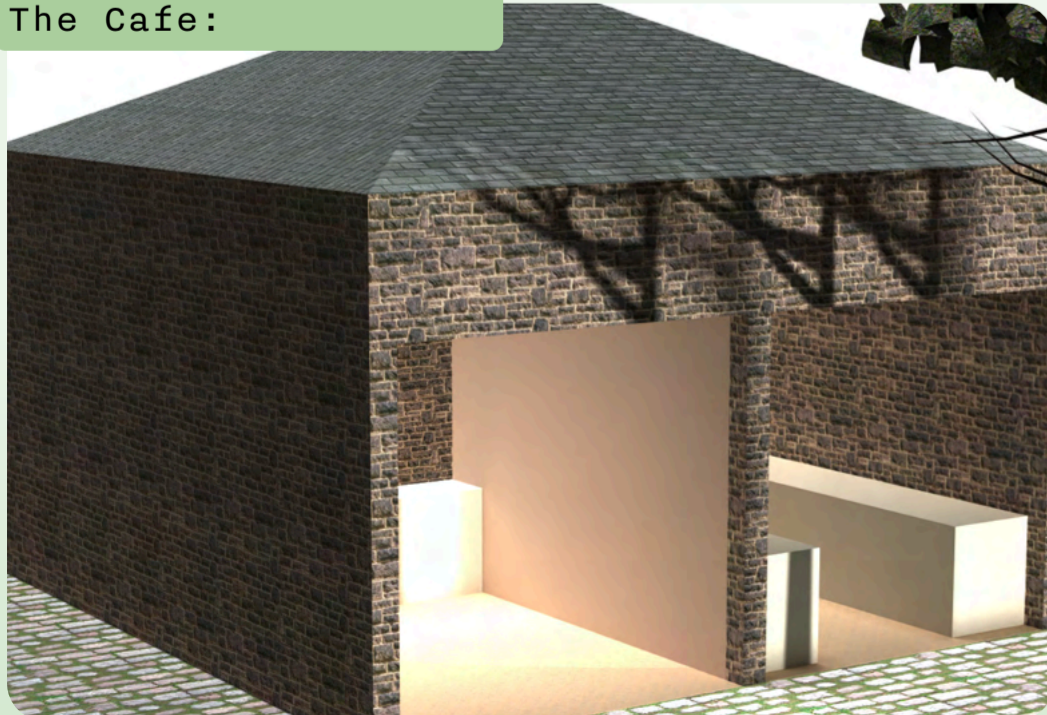


The 'Green house' creates a space for education focusing on plants and gardening. This connects to the outdoor canopy where education is continued outside. The double-height space consists of an oriel window, glass roof, planters, and an irrigation system with a hand-wheel valve.

Handwheel Valve:



The Cafe:



The cafe is located in the Coach House which has kept the same exterior with an interior space featuring a serving counter and a kitchen. This forms the opportunity for visitors to stay the day at the park by having food services on site as well as forming a new way of income.

The Street:



The street pans across the front of the Learning Terrace and allows visitors to stroll around or stop and sit on a park bench as people walk by. This links back to the terrace concept by forming a street to enhance this feeling of a home-like space.

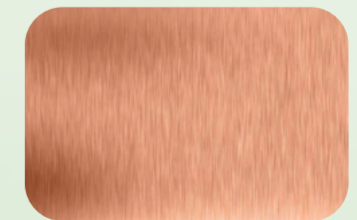
Irrigation System:

Within the Green House is an irrigation system inspired by the enigma's mechanical workings. This explores the use of a hand-wheel valve which can be used by visitors in order to water the plants. Rain water will be collected and stored within copper butts to hydrate the plants sustainably. This wheel uses rotating mechanics, similar to the enigma machine. By having this system, it creates an immersive design feature which supports sensory needs while also ensuring the plants are cared for efficiently.

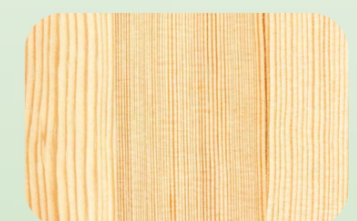
Materiality:



Exposed stone forms a biophilic space, reducing artificial stimulation.



The copper pipes and water butts are durable, low maintenance, and aesthetic.



Treated and lined pine wood is ideal for interior planters while being cost-effective.