

YORK WAY FABRICATION ASSEMBLY

'CITIES HAVE THE CAPABILITY OF PROVIDING SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY, ONLY BECAUSE, AND ONLY WHEN, THEY ARE CREATED BY EVERYBODY'
- JANE JACOBS

The development of the concept for the Fabrication Assembly came with the intent to question what public space is and challenge what it could be when put into the context of politics and public agency. Following my previous project, entitled 'The Counter Chamber', I explored the use of structure to platform and enable local communities to both improve and challenge changes in their local area. The title is a play on the two chambers of the Houses of Parliament, suggesting an alternate space that allow for the development and discussion of ideas that affect local people and communities. Without the bi-partisanship of a national party system. A space that is collaborative at its core. The site on York Way has the potential to take this further, where the space isn't just for debate but for the development of political and community initiatives.

Research into 'Architecture as a platform for political dissent' also guided the development of the Fabricated Assembly. Looking into Pressure groups and activist movements that often protest for good but are seen through a negative light both by the public and government, challenge convention through temporary assembly and performance. The elusive use of architecture in protest, whether it be the use of temporary structures, occupation or art installations, has the potential to change public and political opinion. The Assembly proposes providing space for pressure groups and protest movements with the aim of providing them with legitimacy, safety, and agency with locals and communities, as the space is open to all rather than operating within online forums and chat rooms. Make these social spaces physical.

Visiting the areas of King's Cross as well as the Cally, it is easy to recognise a duality between the two communities. The former is defined by tech giants and rapid development, while the latter feels more oriented around its community and the locals that inhabit it. Though these communities have rich political histories, the rapid development in areas like King's Cross has led to their rebellious identity being chipped away, with few organisations dedicated to maintaining this identity. Unlike the majority of buildings built in the last two decades in King's Cross that are highly catered to the tech industry in the area. These don't suit the needs of communities further afield. The Assembly will be designed for all.

With these factors in mind, the Assembly provides space for the open discussion of political, civic and community issues without the restrictions of a conventional governing body. This can be emphasised through the production of political media with the intention of inspiring further change. In addition to engaging as many local people and community members within the political process at any level, meaning more voices can be heard when making big decisions. Putting people before reputation to create an accountable, transparent and accessible space to change the way in which local politics operates.

COMMUNITIES



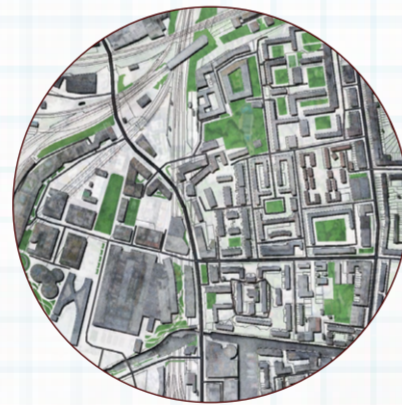
TRANSPORT



COMMUNITY HUBS



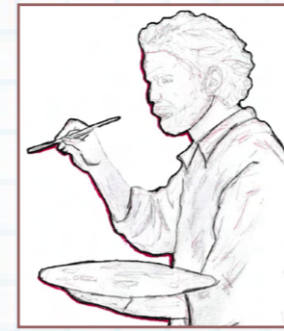
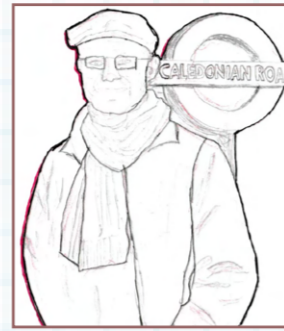
GREEN SPACE



SITE MAPS

Mapping the area around the site helped in establishing the cause that The Fabrication Assembly is based around. This gave me insight into what the area has in excess as opposed to what it doesn't have. The maps depicted from left to right show the divide between The Cally and King's Cross that the site sits on, in particular showing the transport access to the site, nearby community assets and green spaces.

While my design leans towards political debate and agency, these maps highlight the importance of existing community assets, transport access and green spaces to an ever changing area.



USERS

While visiting the area around the site, rather than just looking into local activists and residents. I also looked at local artists and manufacturers, as these community representatives can work together for a collective goal of improving the living standard of their local area through the planning and production of community initiatives, as well as devices to aid initiatives.

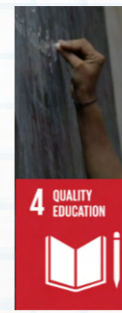
CAUSE

The development. Extinction Rebellion is a global outsider political group pushing for climate awareness and action. While heavily supported, they do not have a base of operation, meaning assembly is often fleeting.

The Assembly proposes a platform from which they can be recognised with some legitimacy, breaking from the typical organisation of pressure groups and protest.



RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SDG 4
Ensure users can take something of educational value away.



SDG 10
Ensure equal representation and platforming of users of the site.



SDG 13
Promote climate action and exposure of the topic.



SDG 8
Ensure the assembly provides a benefit to the growth of the community.



SDG 12
Utilise techniques that promote sustainability and growth.

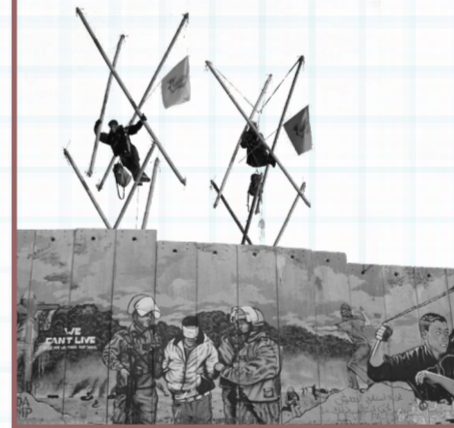


SDG 16
The space must be accountable, transparent and accessible.

Architecture within Politics

This Essay explores the use of architectural devices in aid of protest and activism. The broad use of architecture shows both its potential as a tool for protest and the visual manifestos that can be delivered through occupational movements, temporary installations, and street art. Architecture allows us to challenge the restrictions set out by the government. While unconventional and often frowned upon, their results are irrefutable; they are media magnets.

ARCHITECTURE AS A PLATFORM FOR POLITICAL DISSENT: THE MULTIFACETED ROLE OF ARCHITECTURE WITHIN ACTIVISM



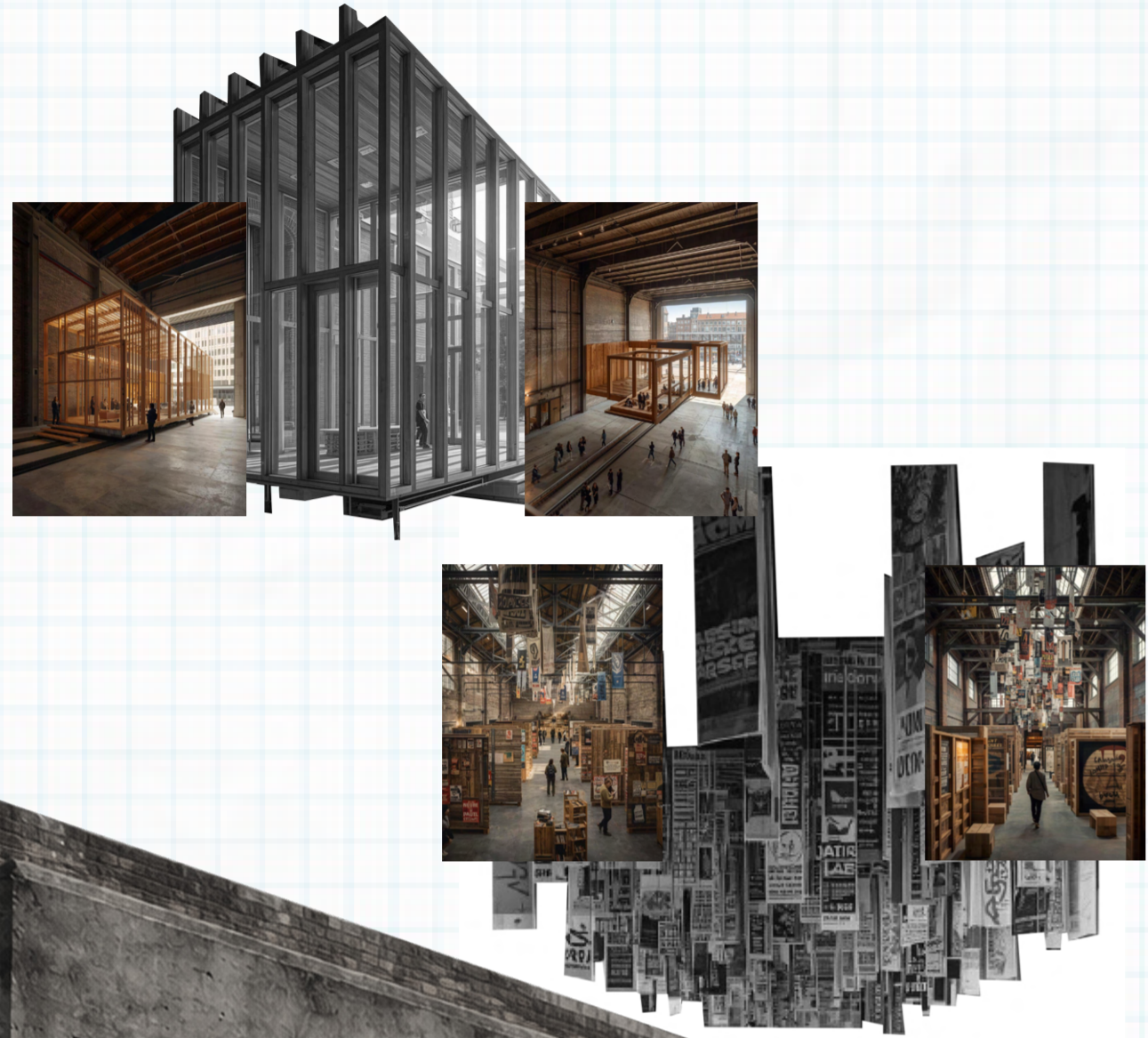
POLITICAL POSTERS

These posters, generated for the project as a manifesto and indicator of the programme within the space. The large poster seen below is broken into thirds showing the three stages of the main program. The debate and discussion of ideas, the creation of media to support these ideas and finally the archiving and celebration of the work done on the site. This suggests how the interior will operate.



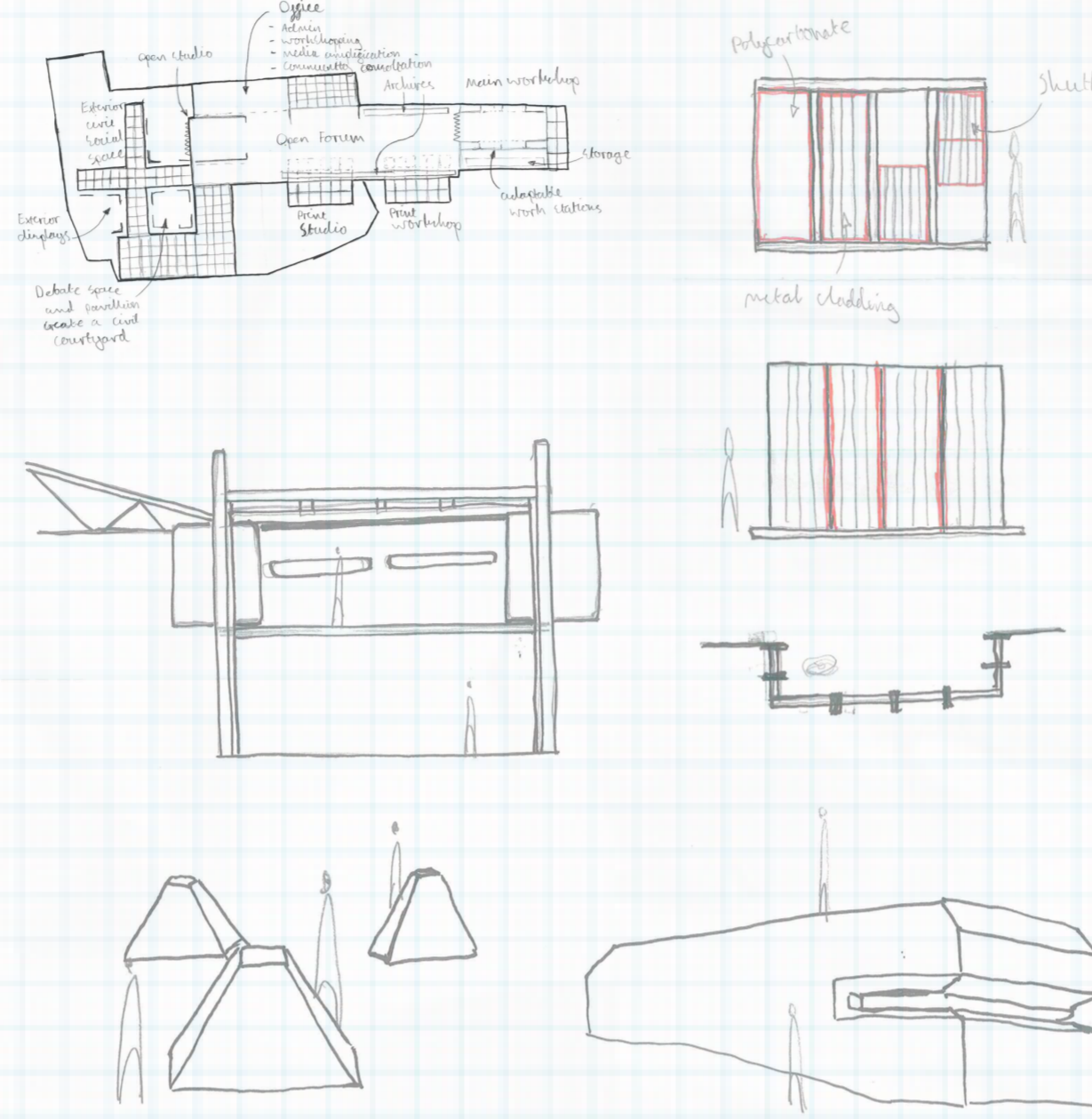
AI DEVELOPMENT

When starting the design process, I was caught between a duality of open access to the space and creating a safe space for activists. The use of AI aided in establishing the appearance of this duality, represented through spaces resembling bunkers, giving the impression of fortification, while also using kinetic structures, which allow certain spaces to reach out to the community. To create an evolving political archive, AI imagery also aided in showing how this would work within a space such as 176-178 York Way, with posters and architectural devices displayed throughout the space.



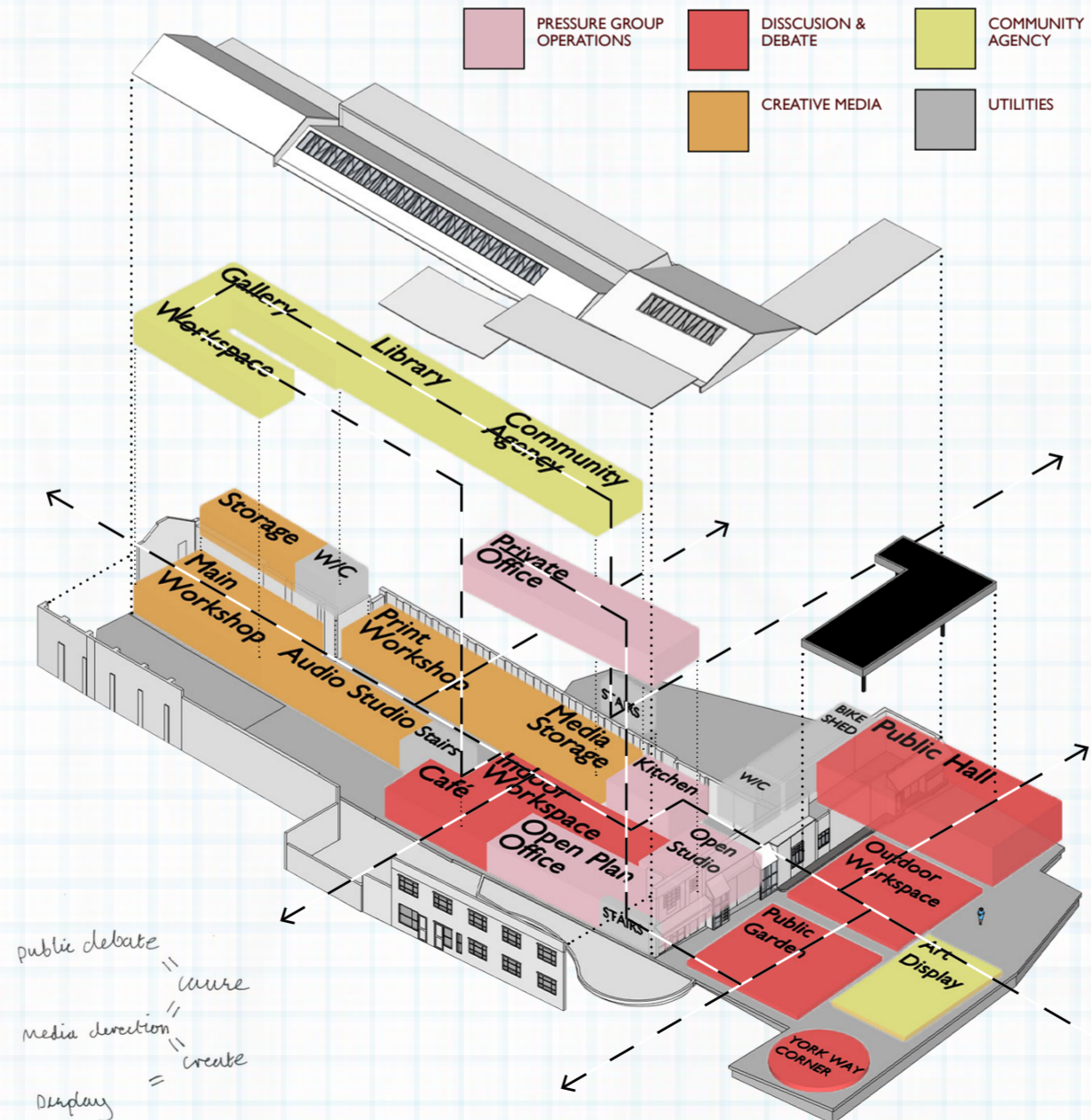
SKETCH DEVELOPMENT

Similar to AI imagery, sketching helped the design process as I was not only able to develop the visual design of the space but also the spatial layout containing the program. This helped as I could place the bunker insertions as well as kinetic structures into the plan, allowing for the fast development of the program as a political production line that both welcomes and protects its users' interests.



VOLUMETRIC DEVELOPMENT

Volumetric development specifically aided my layout of the space and the division of different types of spaces. In this diagram, public spaces are put at the forefront, bringing conversation to the community, as opposed to the more personal spaces that are given protective thresholds. It also shows the development of the political process from the front of the space to the rear.



public debate = muse
media direction = create
display



MULTI-USE PUBLIC HALL

In order for the community to grow and develop together, it requires a space in which local representatives can gather and discuss the future of their area. This also has the potential to provide space for performances and exhibition, encouraging both the exposure and development of community initiatives and activism strategy.

The space can also be used by outsider political groups to discuss and strategise in a large scale format.

This provides a space where local voices can be heard, in addition to platforming voices that are often marginalised.

XR OFFICES

The space being dedicated to outsider pressure groups provides a safe protected space from which they can freely project their opinions and challenge convention.

While protected on the first floor, the ground floor of the office is open to the rest of the building, making it more accessible to the public.

This provides a connection between the local community and the groups operating from the site through collaboration and communication.



NORTH ENTRANCE

On the north face of the forum the site is accessible through a cafe that uses aluminium shutters allowing the facade to open and close depending on the situation on site.

When open it provides a space where the community can connect with each other and with political representatives and activists.

When closed the space can be used to project political opinions from a safe space.

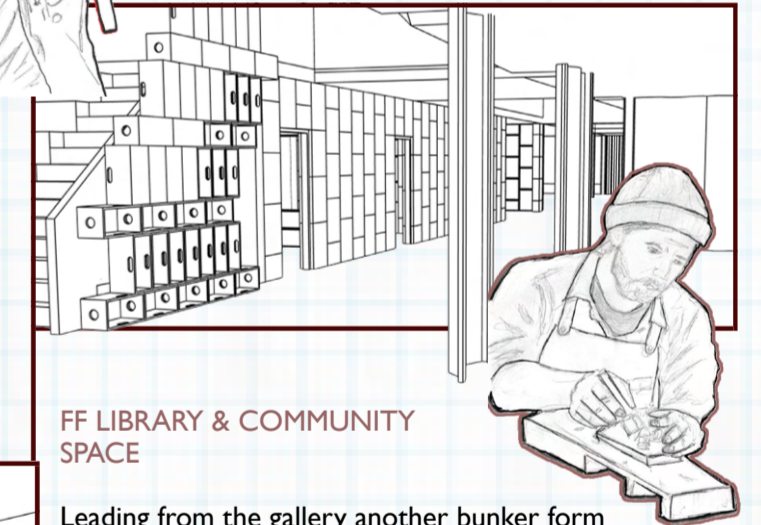


GF WORKSHOPS & STUDIOS

Print media workshops allow both political groups and community groups to spread ideas as well as advertise local initiatives through creative mediums.

A large wood workshop allows for the production of political architecture which can be used to project and defend.

Audio recording studios allow for the production of audio media with live broadcasting and recordings.



FF LIBRARY & COMMUNITY SPACE

Leading from the gallery another bunker form provides the community with more spaces dedicated to political agency and activism.

Within this space is a political library, which can be used to house work dedicated to local activism and protest that provides an educational space for the community.

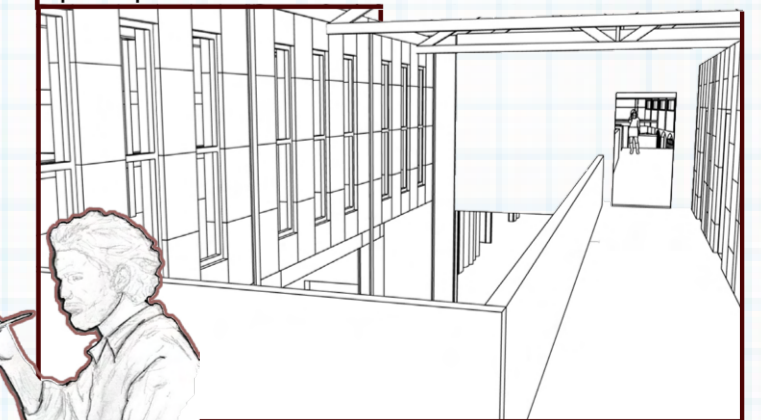
Also included in the space is a community workshop, allowing local groups and schools to use the space for educational purposes, exposing more people to the importance of political participation.

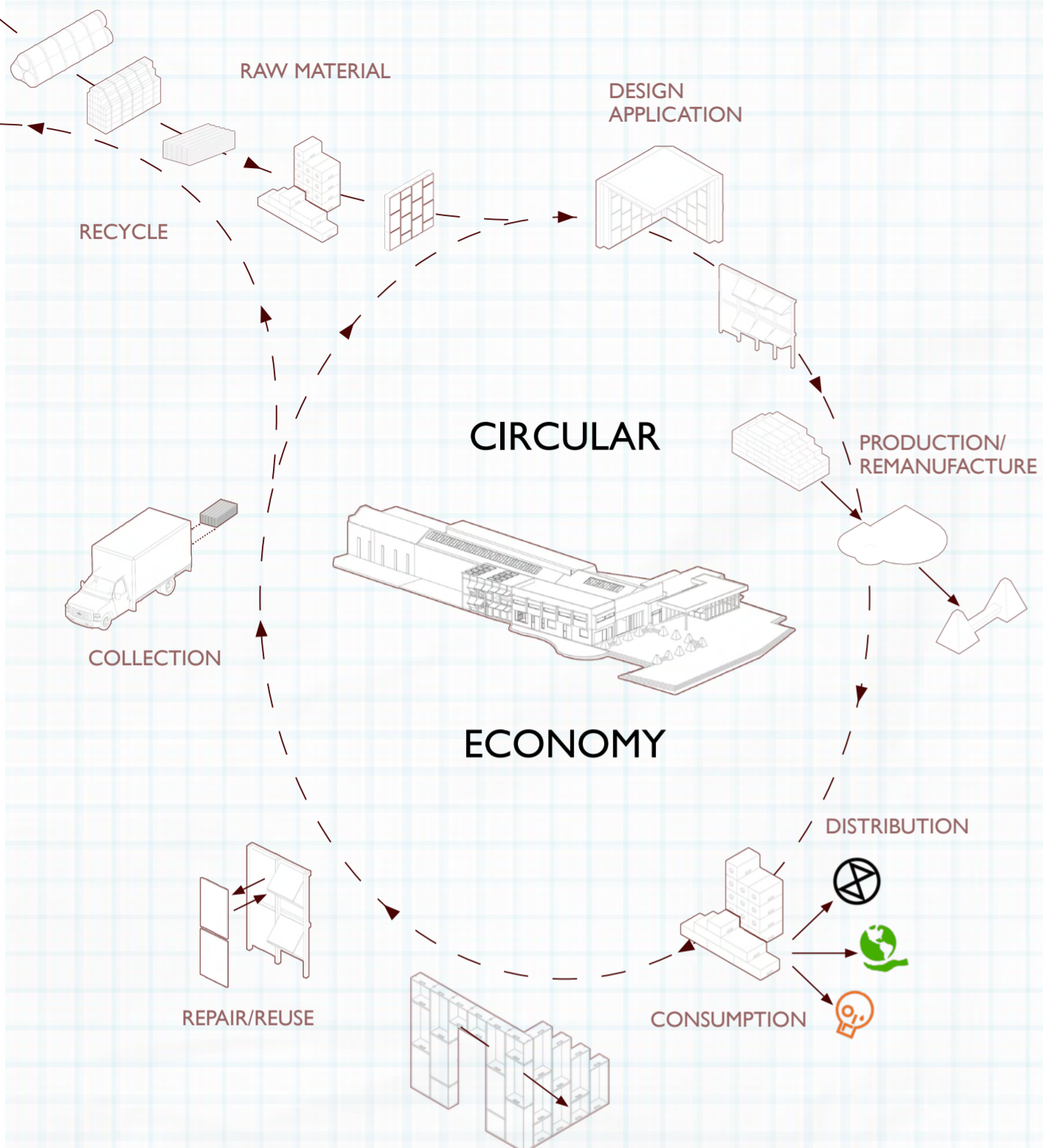


FF WORKSPACE AND GALLERY

To the eastern side of the open forum, private work booths provide space for employees in a different work setting, as well as to local community members.

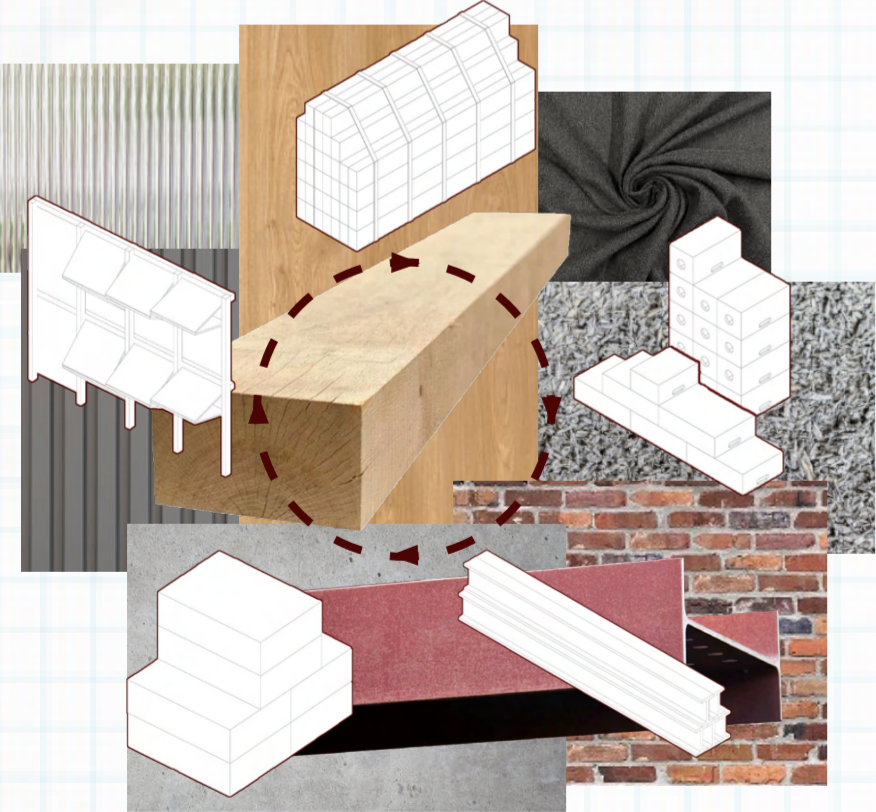
Opposite these work booths lies a gallery which provides a dedicated space for the display of visual media both produced by the pressure group occupant as well as community members. This can be used to celebrate the success of the community.





SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

At the core of the design concept is the creation of a sustainable circular economy site. Some of the materials used are recycled from the site itself. Additionally, sustainable architecture is produced on the site itself in the form of the modular boxes that create thresholds and stages.



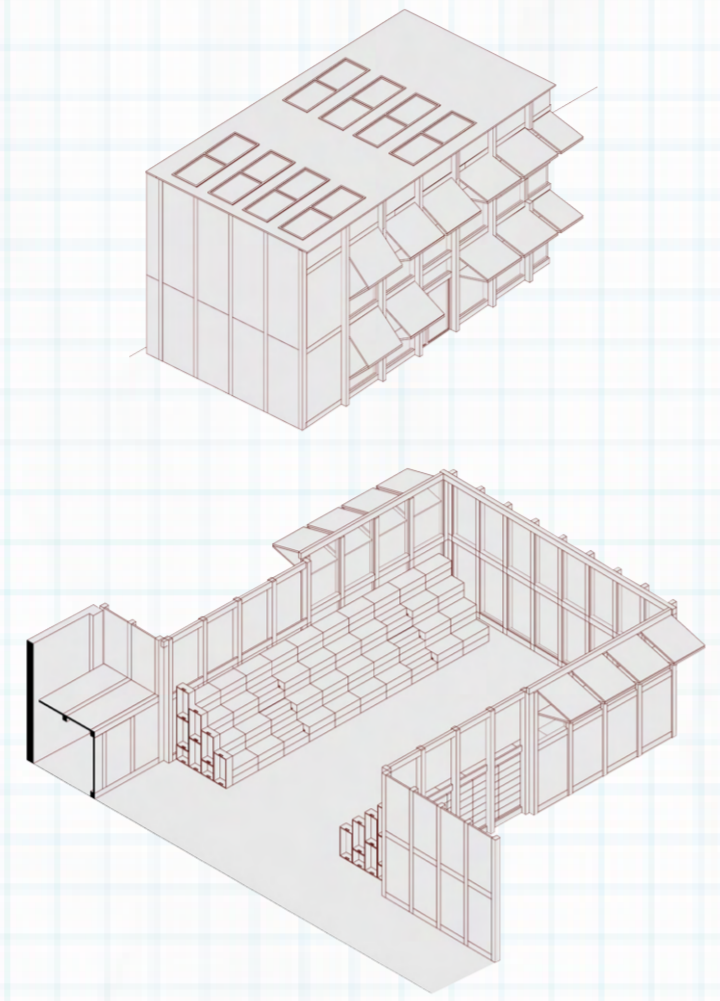
MATERIAL USE

The materials used in the project are sourced sustainably and primarily from the site and around the site in derelict rail yards and warehouses. This is designed to promote sustainable growth, as well as promoting the development of climate aware techniques.



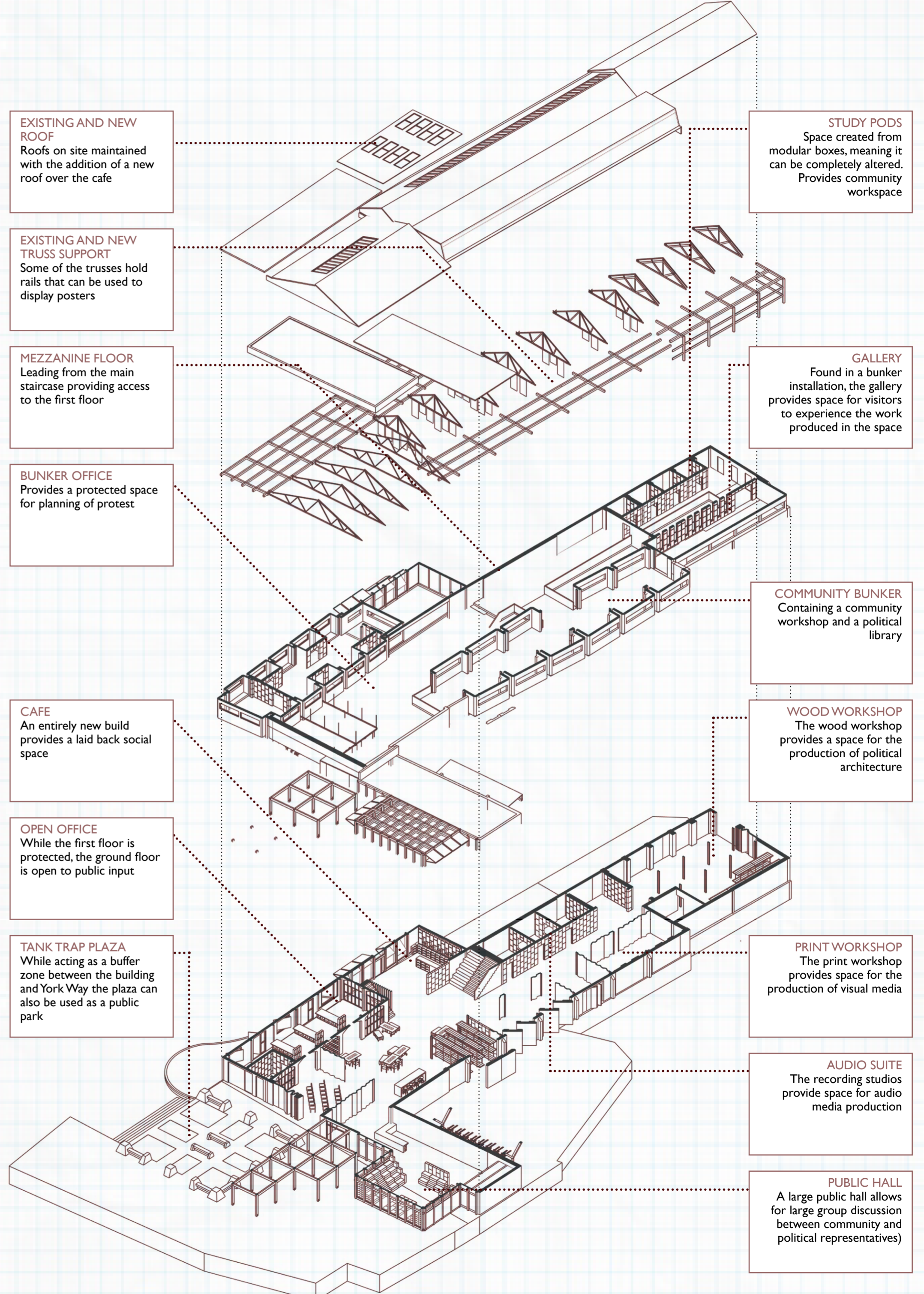
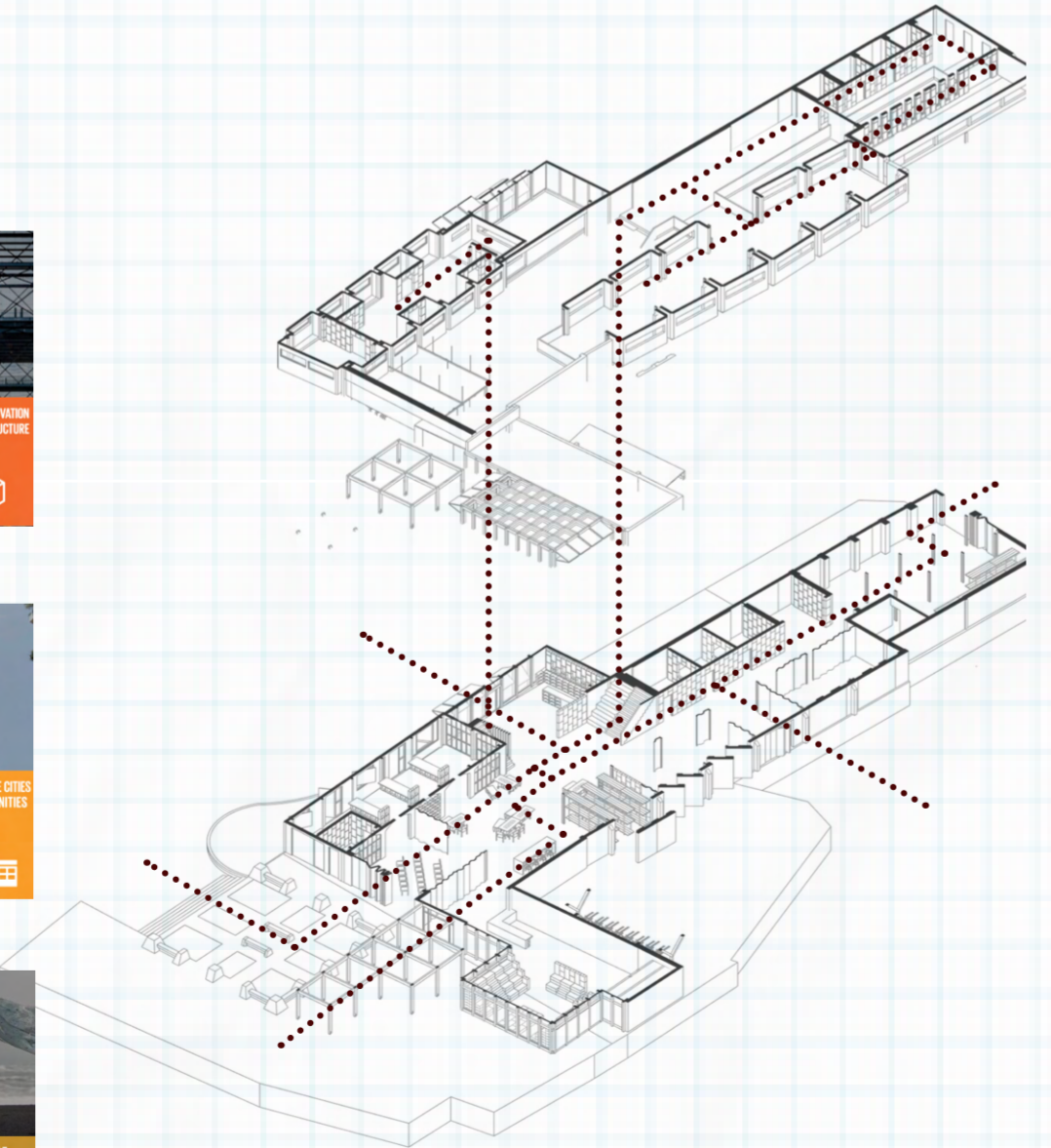
ADAPTABLE SPACES

These spaces develop the concept of community outreach and the maintenance of free speech. Metal shutters allow the space to open and close. The public hall has the ability to expand towards York Way with the aim of bringing debate to local people.



CIRCULATION

The layout of the space provides a central heart within the Assembly. This central hub is connected to the entire space via entrance from all elevations. The intent is to make an interconnected political system.



EXISTING AND NEW ROOF
Roofs on site maintained with the addition of a new roof over the cafe

EXISTING AND NEW TRUSS SUPPORT
Some of the trusses hold rails that can be used to display posters

MEZZANINE FLOOR
Leading from the main staircase providing access to the first floor

BUNKER OFFICE
Provides a protected space for planning of protest

CAFE
An entirely new build provides a laid back social space

OPEN OFFICE
While the first floor is protected, the ground floor is open to public input

TANK TRAP PLAZA
While acting as a buffer zone between the building and York Way the plaza can also be used as a public park

STUDY PODS
Space created from modular boxes, meaning it can be completely altered. Provides community workspace

GALLERY
Found in a bunker installation, the gallery provides space for visitors to experience the work produced in the space

COMMUNITY BUNKER
Containing a community workshop and a political library

WOOD WORKSHOP
The wood workshop provides a space for the production of political architecture

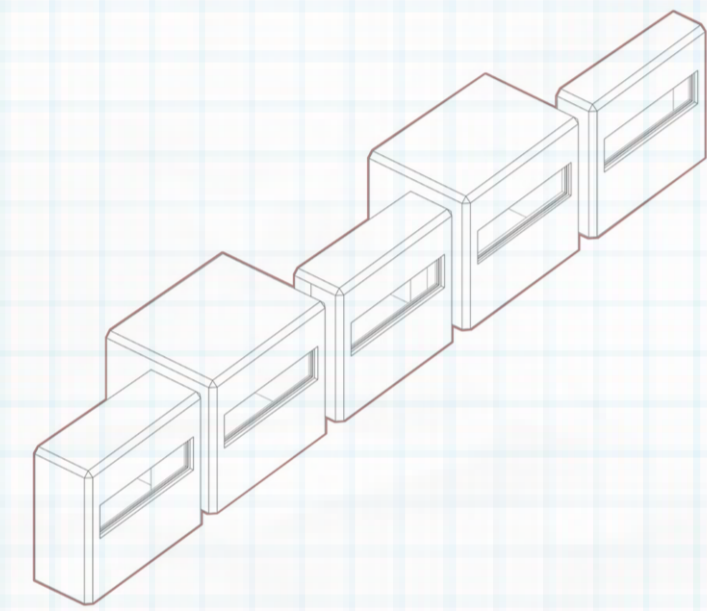
PRINT WORKSHOP
The print workshop provides space for the production of visual media

AUDIO SUITE
The recording studios provide space for audio media production

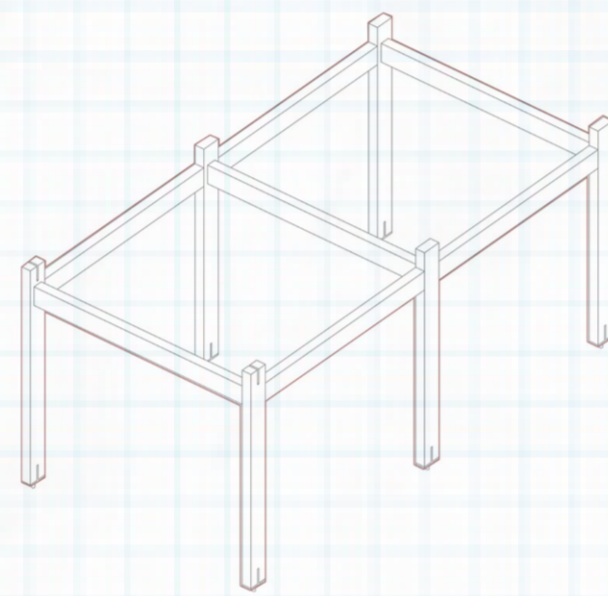
PUBLIC HALL
A large public hall allows for large group discussion between community and political representatives

NORTH ELEVATION

The north elevation shows the introduction of newly built spaces such as the new cafe. In addition, it shows the interaction between the existing brick building and the new concrete bunker insertions. The bunker remains a strong hold for the political ideas of activists while an accessible cafe makes it open to the public.

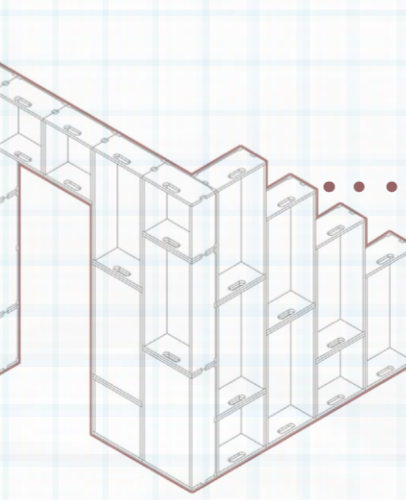
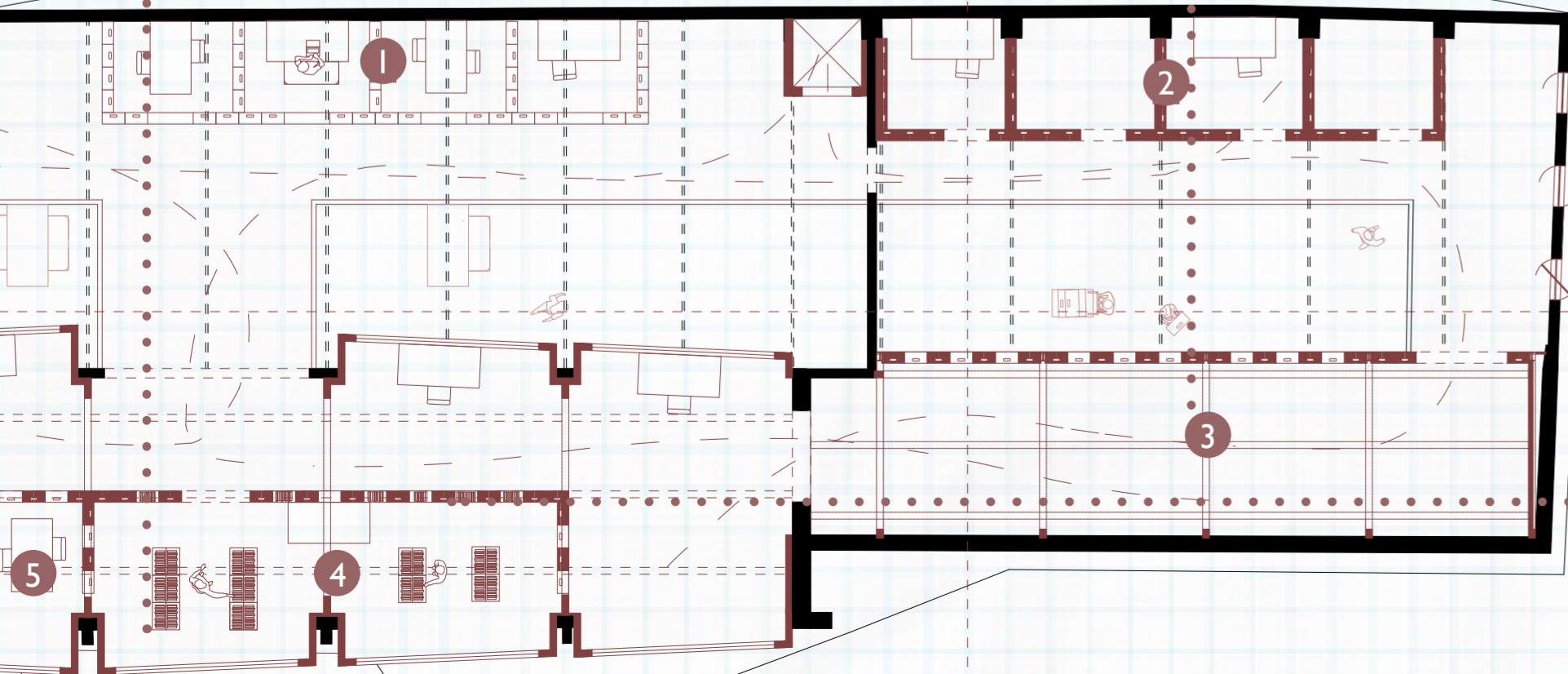


BUNKER INSERTION
To create the feeling of defence and protection the inserts on the first floor are made to look like defensive bunkers, maintaining the concept of protecting the inhabitants of the space.

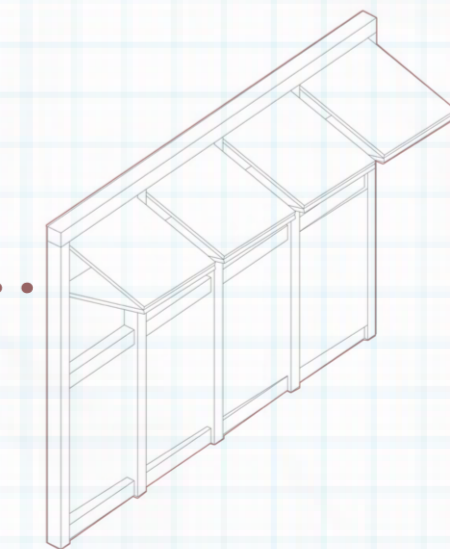


RECYCLED RAIL SLEEPER AND I BEAM SUPPORT
Taking material from around the site and reintroducing it into the design, wooden sleepers and the existing steel beams have the ability to support inserted structures.

FF PLAN



MODULER BOXES
Within the interior of the Assembly the thresholds are made from mostly moveable and adaptable material, meaning the space can adapt to future uses.



RECYCLED METAL SHUTTERS
In the entirely new spaces the construction uses structural beams with metal shutters, allowing the space to open and close depending on the situation on site.



KEY	
GF	
1:	Public Plaza
2:	Display Area
3:	Public Hall
4:	Reception
5:	Seminar Studio
6:	XR Open Office
7:	Kitchen
8:	Media Storage
9:	Interior Forum
10:	Cafe
11:	Workshops
FF	
1:	Mezzanine Floor
2:	Study Pods
3:	Gallery
4:	Library
5:	Community Workshop

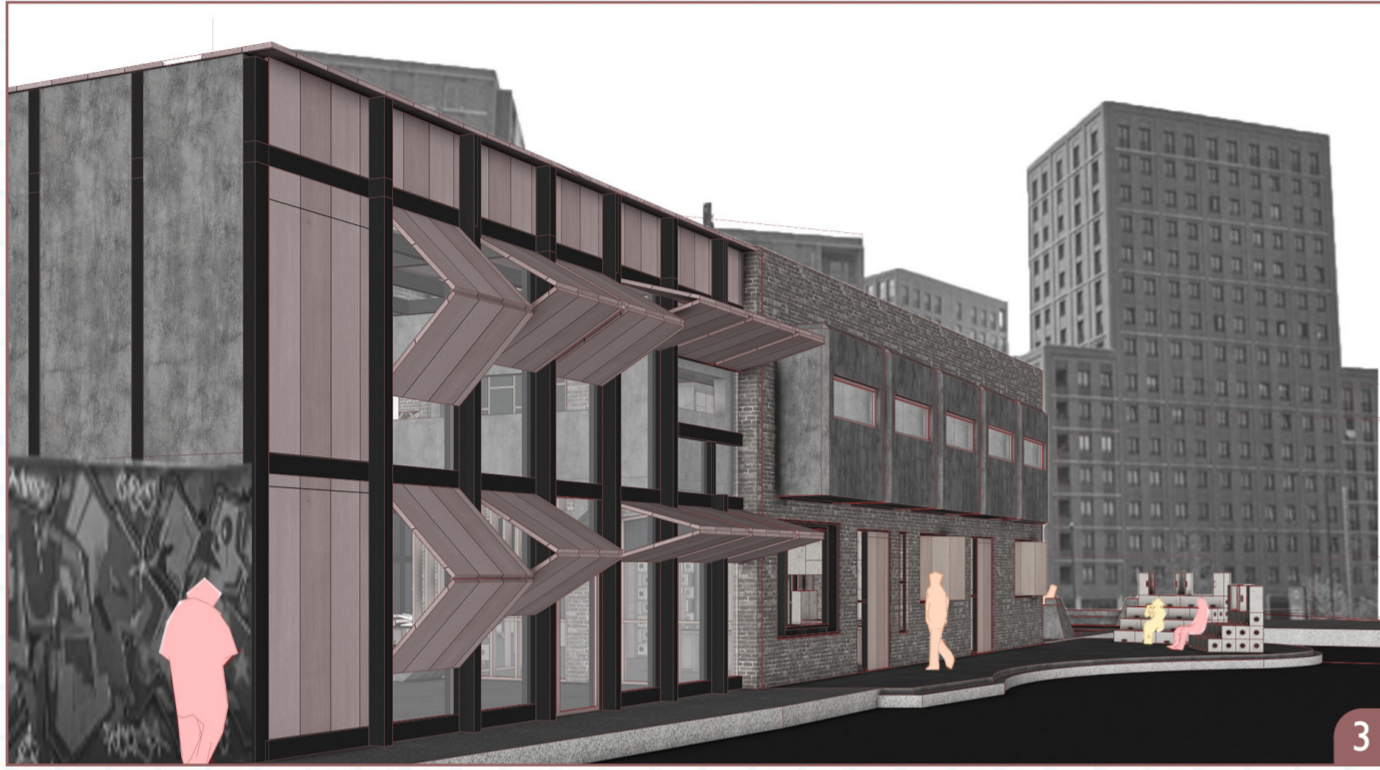
LONG SECTION - MEDIA PRODUCTION LINE

This rendered long section shows the development of the space from west to east (right to left). Upon entering from York Way, visitors are presented with social debate spaces, while travelling further into the space, they can find workshops and studios for the production of political media. The layout here is supposed to reflect the process of political discussion and production throughout the



SHORT SECTION - OPEN SPACE AND CLOSED SPACE

This short section shows the interior of the west elevation. On the left, the Public Hall can be seen, with connections to York Way and the rest of the Assembly. The theme of social conversation is continued through the seminar studio. The defensive aspect of the site is seen through the bunker insertion on the right.



- KEY
- 1: LONG SECTION
 - 2: SHORT SECTION
 - 3: NORTH ENTRANCE
 - 4: EAST ENTRANCE
 - 5: INTERIOR FORUM
 - 6: PUBLIC HALL ENTRANCE
 - 7: STUDY PODS AND GALLEY
 - 8: LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

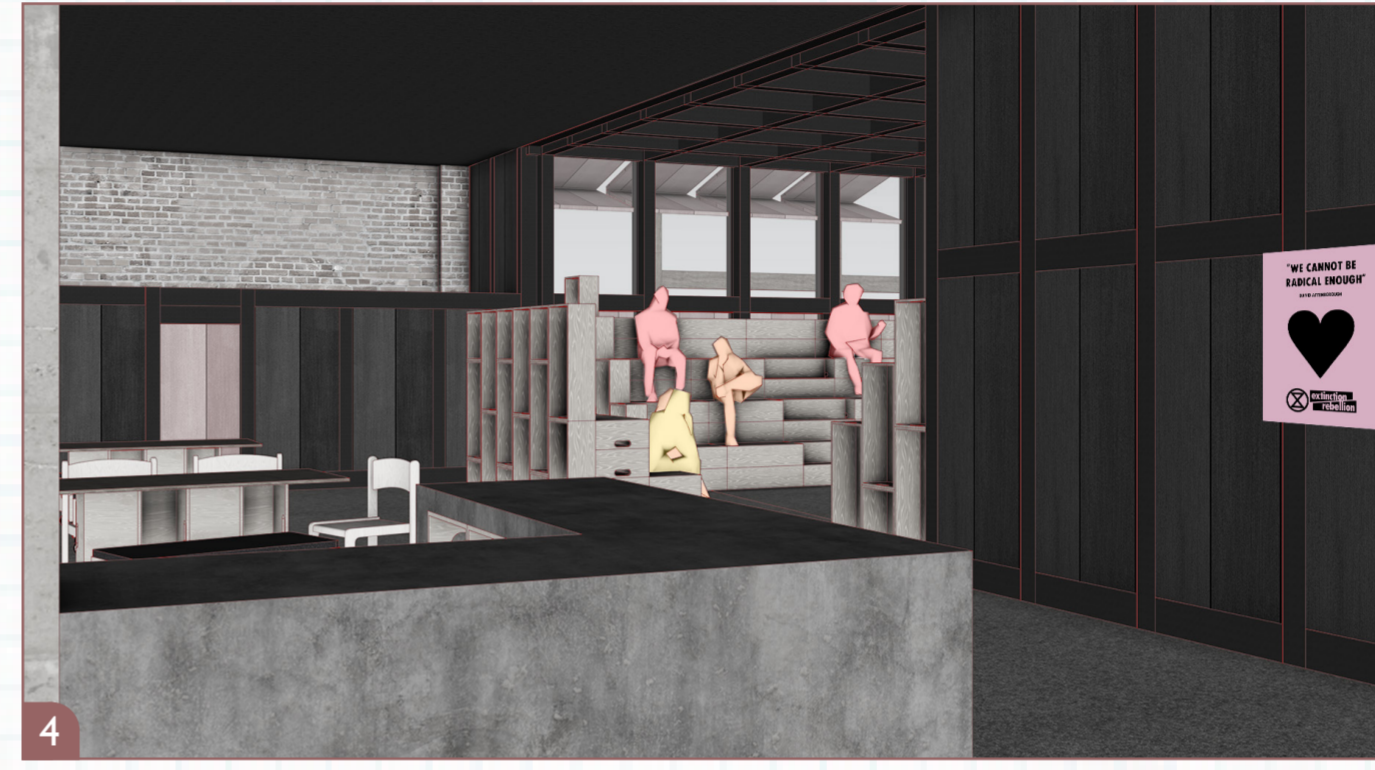
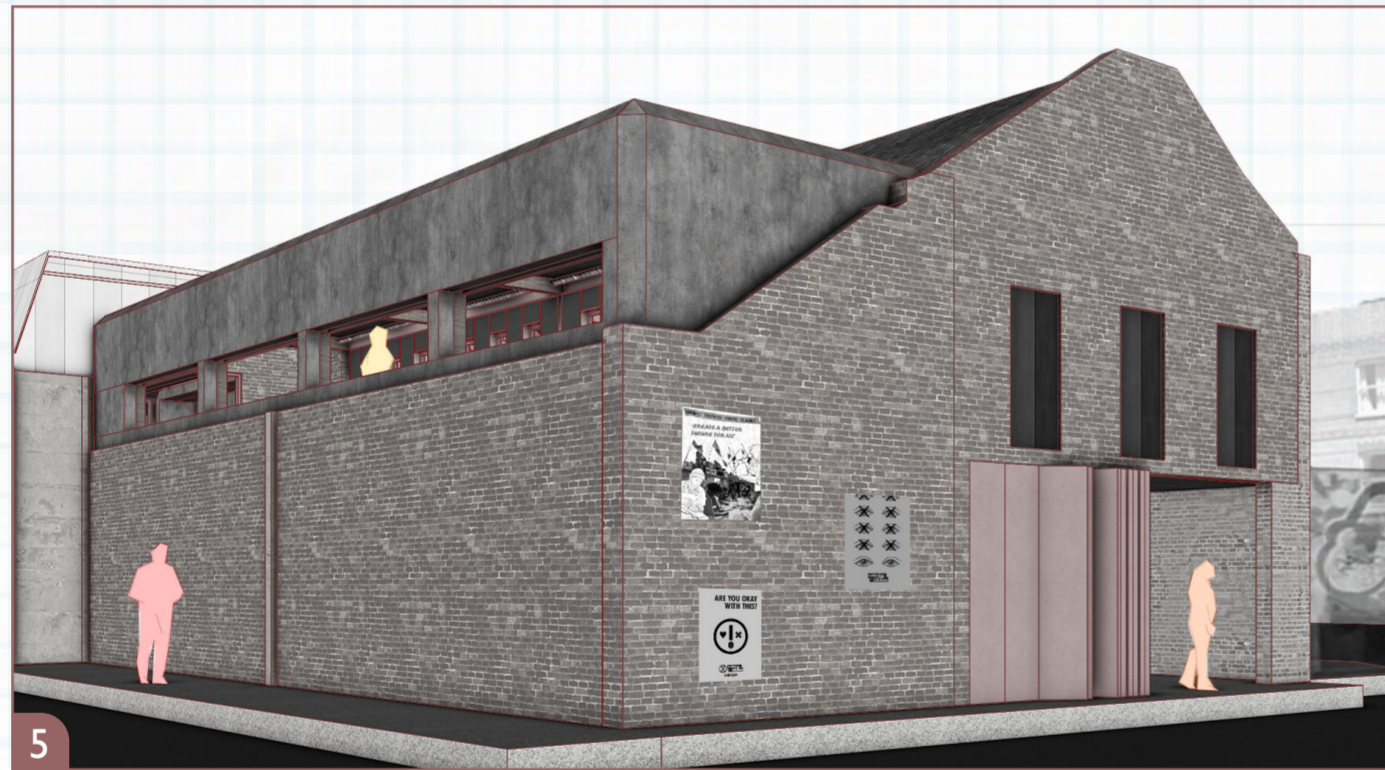
ENTRANCES - FORTIFIED EXTERIOR

The entrances to the Assembly are defined by defensive structures. Facades can be opened and closed using recycled metal shutters, which allows the space to adapt to different situations outside.

In addition, the first-floor bunker forms give vulnerable community members a defensive and protected position to work from.

This gives the Assembly a feeling of defence of community initiatives and political opinion.

While this is a key concept behind the project, the ability to open the facade means the Assembly can also be made accessible to anyone who wants to use the space.



PUBLIC HALL - DEBATE AND DISCUSSION

The concept behind the Public Hall was to create a multi-use space that has the ability to host conversation, performance and exhibitions.

While the space can accommodate smaller group meetings, it can also expand and double in size, allowing it to accommodate larger community groups and outsider political groups.

Most crucially, the hall can provide a large space that can host a large number of people for open and free conversation in the development of political and community initiatives.

This space is dedicated to collaborative work and celebration, as are the workshops and studios around the Assembly.

FIRST FLOOR SPACE - COMMUNITY AGENCY

In contrast to the ground floor, the first floor has a more guarded and protected appearance and feeling for both activists and community members.

Included on the first floor are private study rooms for both employees and community members.

A gallery provides a dedicated space for the exhibition of work produced in the Assembly.

A library acts in a similar way, providing the community with access to literature based on politics and the community.

Finally, there is a community workshop that allows engagement with the production of political media.

These spaces are provided to individually contribute to the delivery of political media in a variety of ways, bringing people with different skills to the Assembly.



GROUND FLOOR INTERIOR - MEDIA PRODUCTION

The ground floor is open and provides collaborative workspaces to community members, political groups and activists.

Leading on from this visual, the ground floor consists of public debate spaces, as well as a variety of workshops and studios for the production of political media, either for the community or for political groups.

Alongside these spaces allowing for the development of ideas, the ground floor provides abundant space for the display of protest architecture and of visual media such as posters, with the intention of spreading awareness of potentially controversial topics.

These visuals are meant to represent the space after it has been used for the production of media that can be seen displayed around the open interior space, primarily along the existing trusses that support the roof.



CONCLUSION

These visuals illustrate the impact of bunker spaces that provide a protective and defensive space for activists and community members.

They also illustrate the adaptability of the space, which can open up to the community in order to make it more approachable and accessible.

When developing the concept for the design, I intended to create a space that encourages the process of debate and discussion of political ideas and community initiatives, as well as the creation of media for these ideas and initiatives, and celebrating them with the community and people further afield.

The idea is to challenge the current perception of political institutions and organisations in order to make them accessible to a wider range of the public. In addition to making it clear that political participation can be made easier, as well as entertaining and collaborative.