

The Library of Fiction

Ella McLane

In the collapsed ecosystem of 2146, a group of hiding rebels and a dog, the last proof of animal existence on earth, take refuge in the former Nottingham Library. Using a sound manipulating relic to decode cassette tapes discovered within the library that hold proof of animal existence, the rebels work together to uncover the truth that has been erased and rewritten by the government, exposing the suppressed history and freeing society from its false grasp.

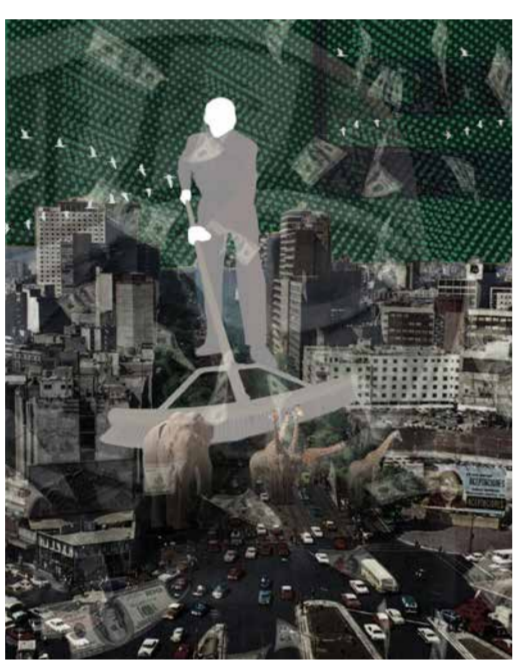
The building is designed to transform the deteriorating library into a self-sustaining refuge, where an array of different people work together to create an indoor ecosystem, powered by humans and nature while uncovering forgotten truths and sharing this with the world. Nature is allowed to gradually reclaim the building through the use of natural light flowing through the designed structure that frames the buildings decay and the stair leading up and out. The self-sustaining nature of the building creates a strengthened relationship between the users, the space, and rebuilds the love for the natural world. It highlights importance of the natural world and it's undying strength to survive, surpassing some human intention to overcome it.

Through the merging of human and natural life depending on each other, the project explores how interior architecture can become a catalyst for cultural recovery, environmental awareness, and social change.



2026

Between 2026 and 2146, rising inflation changed world. Traditional currency lost value, so exchange shifted toward physical assets, animals. Animals were increasingly removed from the wild and controlled by the government as the new currency 'Fleshcoin'. Freedom of animals was forgotten, empathy decreased and animals were no longer viewed as living beings but as units of value. History was selectively erased to enable compliance, urbanisation continued to expand while the ecosystem weakened, pushing the world toward irreversible ecological collapse.



Transition

The ecosystem has fully collapsed and animals no longer exist in the wild. 'Fleshcoin' operates as the currency and acts as social control. Food, materials and environments are entirely manufactured, as the ecosystem cannot produce anything anymore. With ecological history erased along with empathy, people accept this world as normal, unaware of what has been lost. Cities continue to function, while collapsing with the ecosystem around them, they are completely controlled and lifeless, existing without the balance that once allowed both nature and society to thrive.



2146

The Decoder

She could tell the tapes were of importance with her knowledge of audio equipment. So she left her home, moved into the site, and began work everyday to find the truth. It was too dangerous to do at her own home as people would hear.



The Connector

While navigating the caves, he discovered the site, and The Decoder (Rebel 1) already working within it. Recognising the significance of the tapes and the risks involved, The Connector (Rebel 2) stayed. His role quickly formed around coded communication, and external connection.



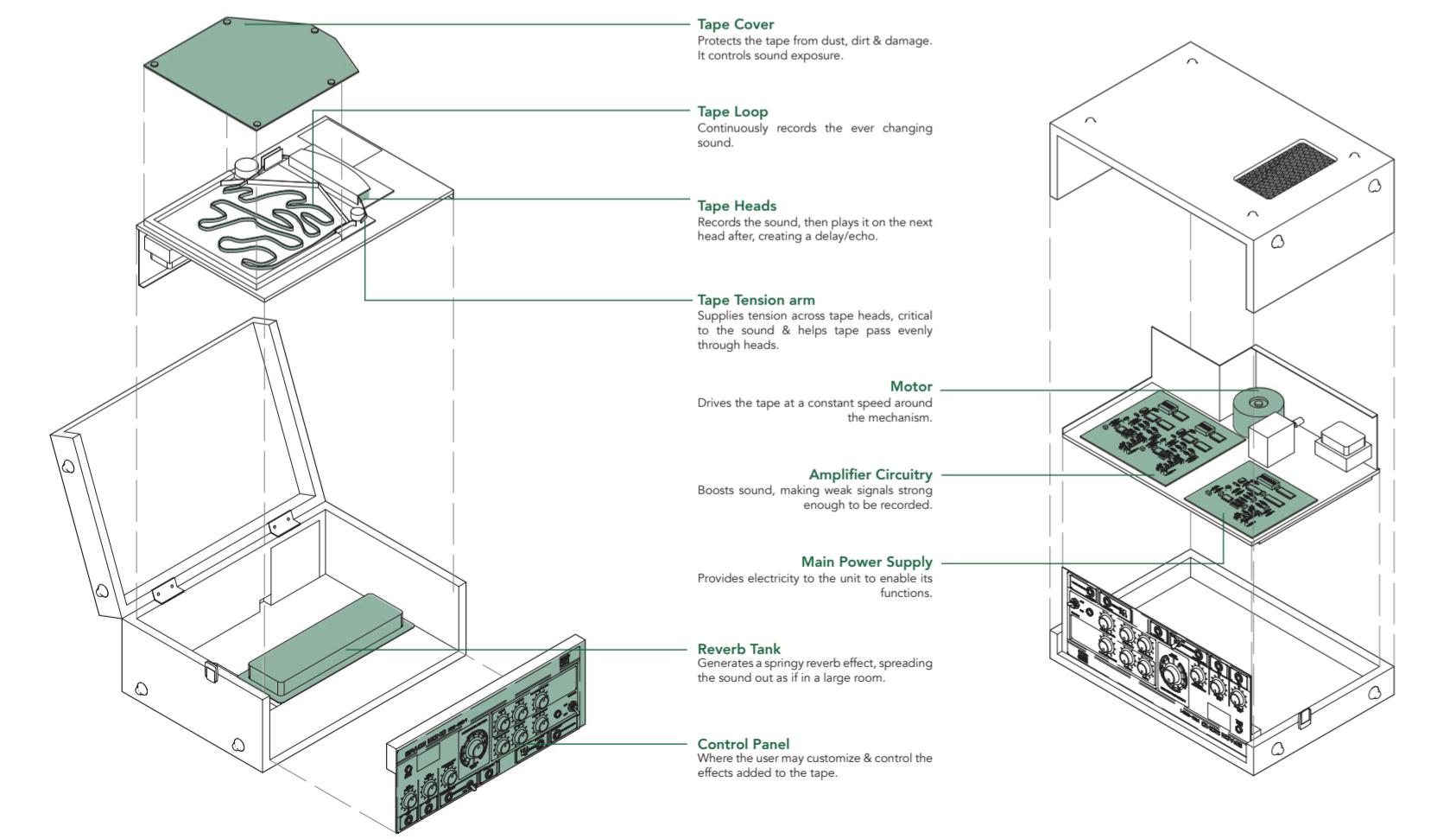
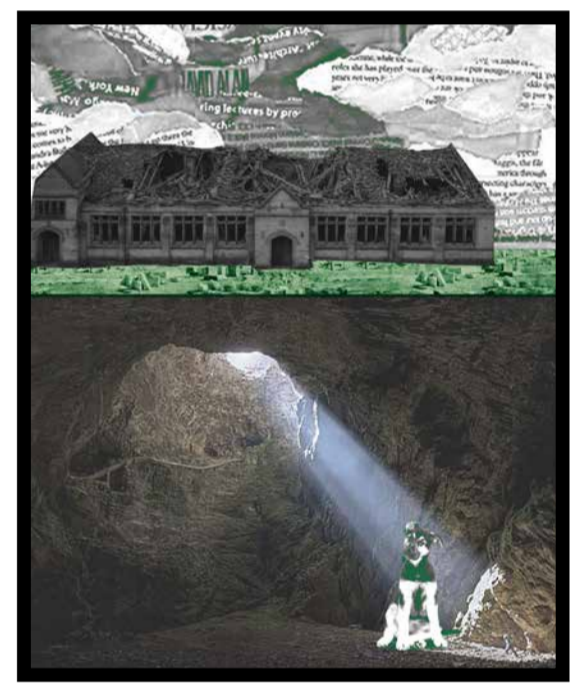
The Controller/Protector

While working, Rebel 3 discovered the site, the rebels, and the dog. As a child, he had been told stories about animals as living beings and an ancestor who once founded a charity to free them from captivity, they believed this to be myth. Seeing the dog made those stories real. Rather than reporting the site, Rebel 3 abandoned their job and joined the collective, applying their knowledge of surveillance and protection.



The Proof

The dog had been discovered in Nottingham caves, while Rebel 2 was travelling between routes. She reacted instinctively to sounds recovered from the tapes and became The Proof.



The relic within my project is a 1974 Roland Space Echo RE-201, originally designed as a musical effects unit used to manipulate sound through delay and distortion. During periods of political unrest, rebel networks repurposed the device to scramble covert recordings, disguising messages as meaningless noise while remaining legible to other rebels. Hidden within libraries and forgotten over time, the relic is rediscovered 120 years in the future within the abandoned Hyson Green Library, where it becomes the only tool capable of decoding damaged tapes and revealing the erased truth about animal existence.

The Concepts

DECAY & SOUND



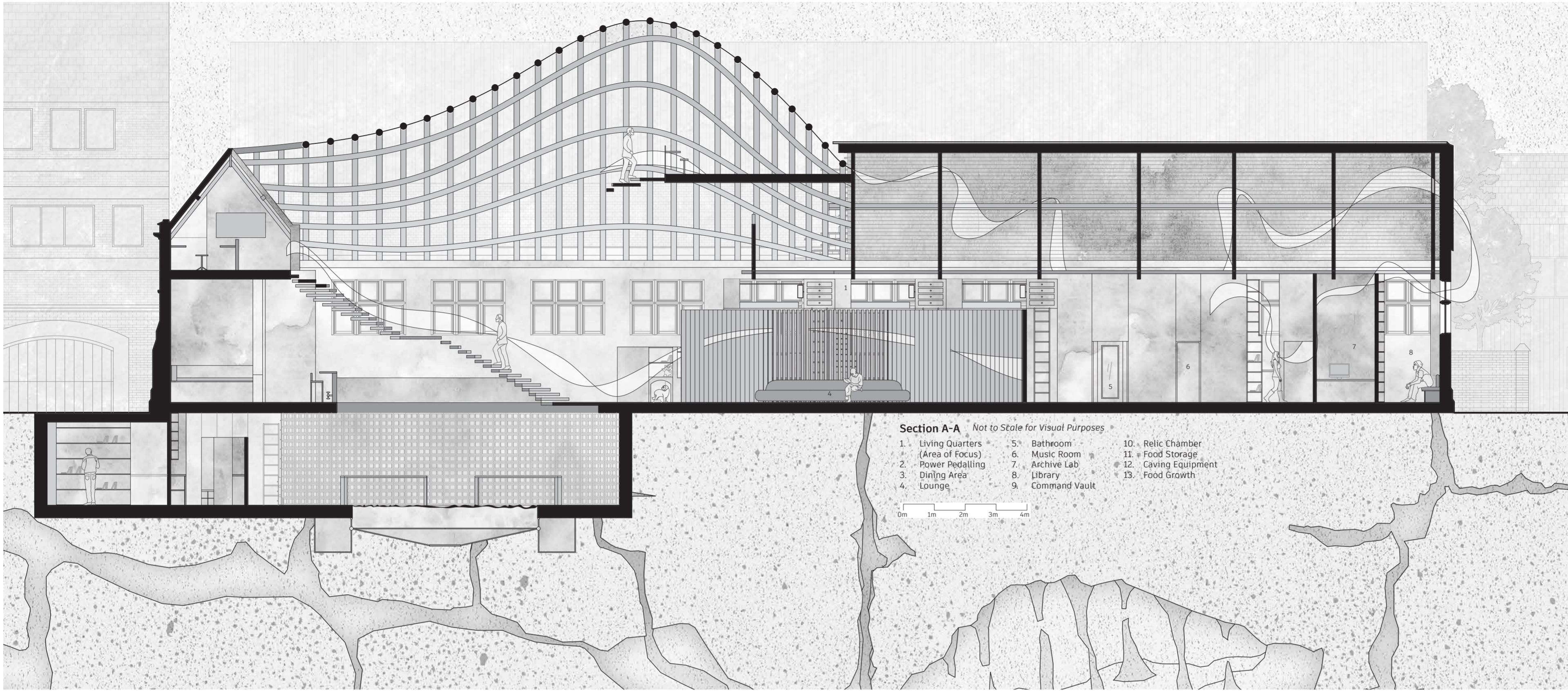
The concept explores the relationship between sound and decay.

To investigate how this concept would take physical form, I created a series of cast models exploring different stages of the building's deterioration and collapse over time. Alongside this, I created physical models that displayed sound waves into three-dimensional forms, by listening and absorbing the feeling of sounds.

By overlaying and merging the most successful outcomes from both sets of models, I developed this into the roof structure that appears to emerge from the building itself, framing areas of decay rather than concealing them.

The resulting design acts as a physical representation of the truthful history resurfacing through the ruins, allowing light and nature to penetrate the building while celebrating its gradual transformation over time.



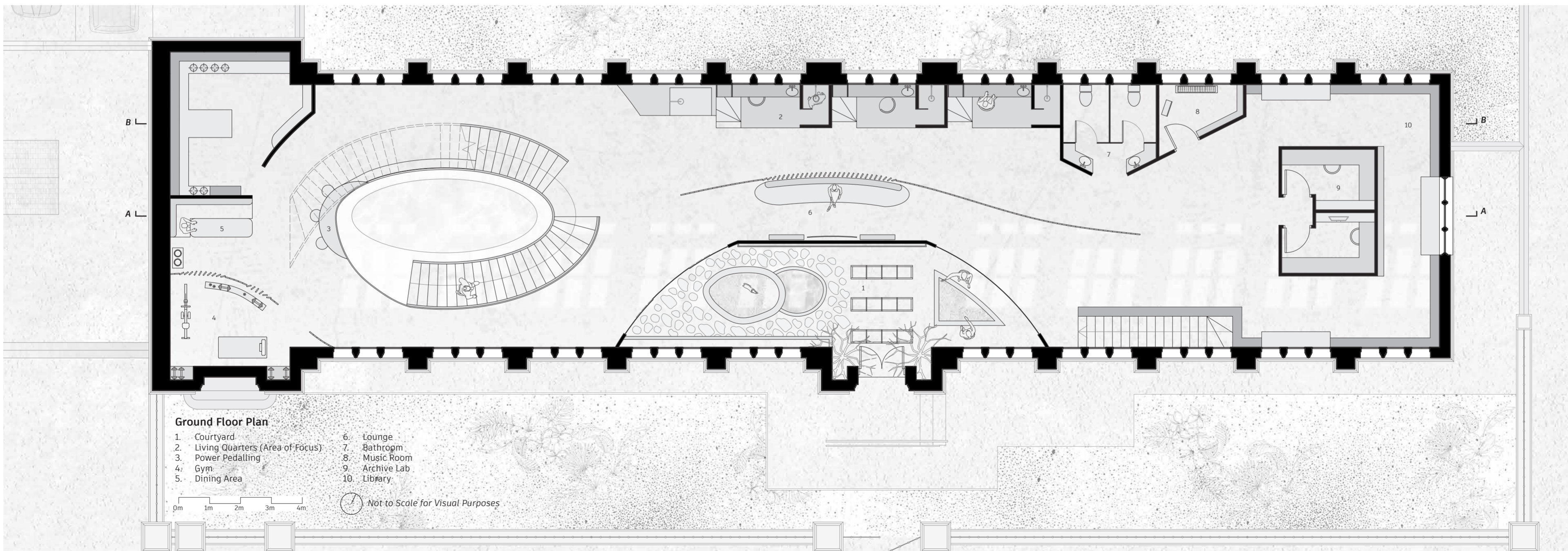


Section A-A Not to Scale for Visual Purposes

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Living Quarters (Area of Focus) | 5. Bathroom | 10. Relic Chamber |
| 2. Power Pedalling | 6. Music Room | 11. Food Storage |
| 3. Dining Area | 7. Archive Lab | 12. Caving Equipment |
| 4. Lounge | 8. Library | 13. Food Growth |
| | 9. Command Vault | |

0m 1m 2m 3m 4m

The concept of sound is expressed through the new roof structure, which is derived from the sound-based forms explored during the concept stage. As it moves through the building, the structure responds to the function of each space, becoming acoustic treatment within the decoding room, forming the handrail to the central stair, and flowing through the existing roof structure to be admired. This allows the rebels to remain connected to the building's history while occupying the new intervention. The new roof design mirrors the organic forms of the Nottingham caves beneath the library, bringing the hidden landscape above ground and strengthening the relationship between the building, its context, and the people who inhabit it.



Ground Floor Plan

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Courtyard | 6. Lounge |
| 2. Living Quarters (Area of Focus) | 7. Bathroom |
| 3. Power Pedalling | 8. Music Room |
| 4. Gym | 9. Archive Lab |
| 5. Dining Area | 10. Library |

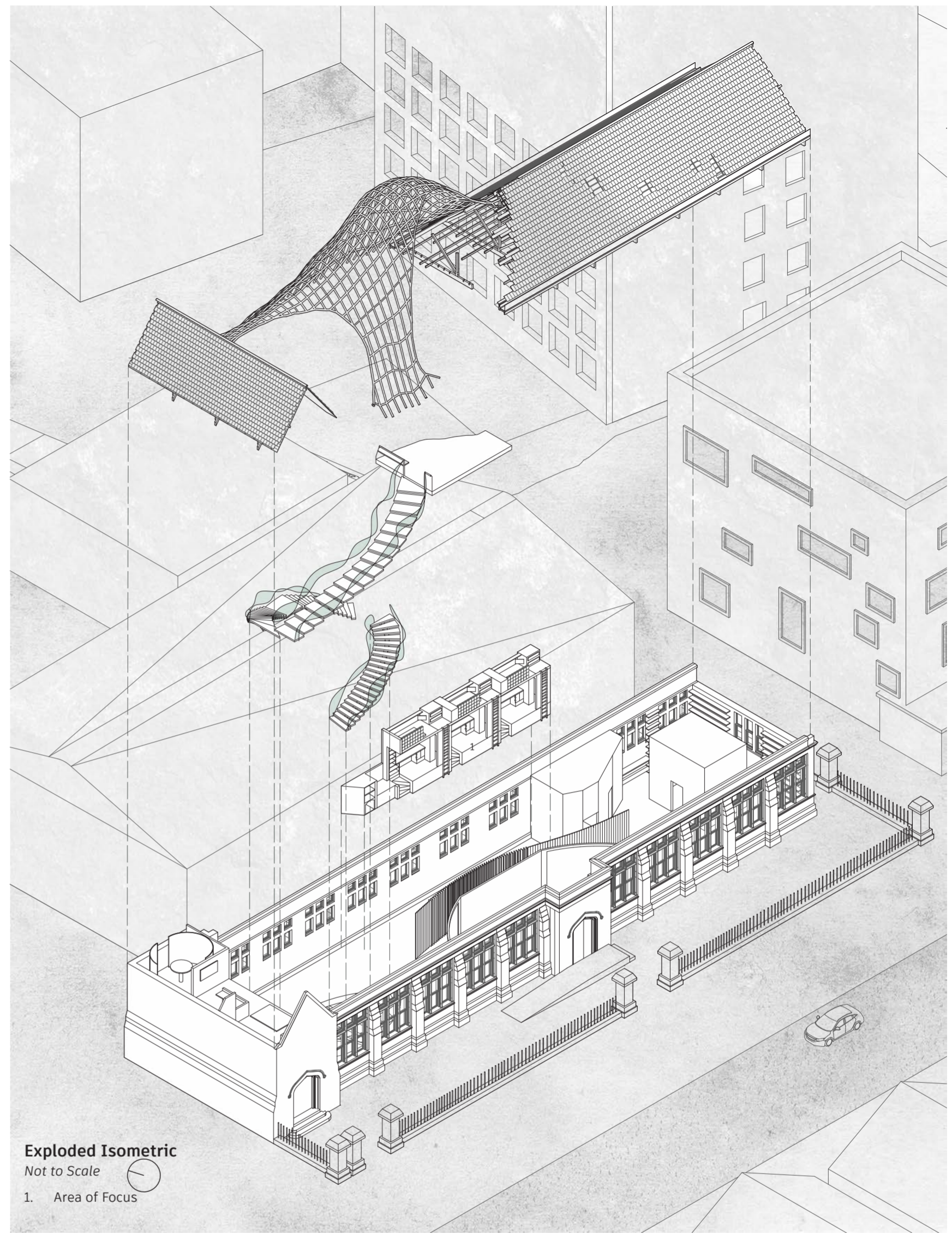
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Not to Scale for Visual Purposes



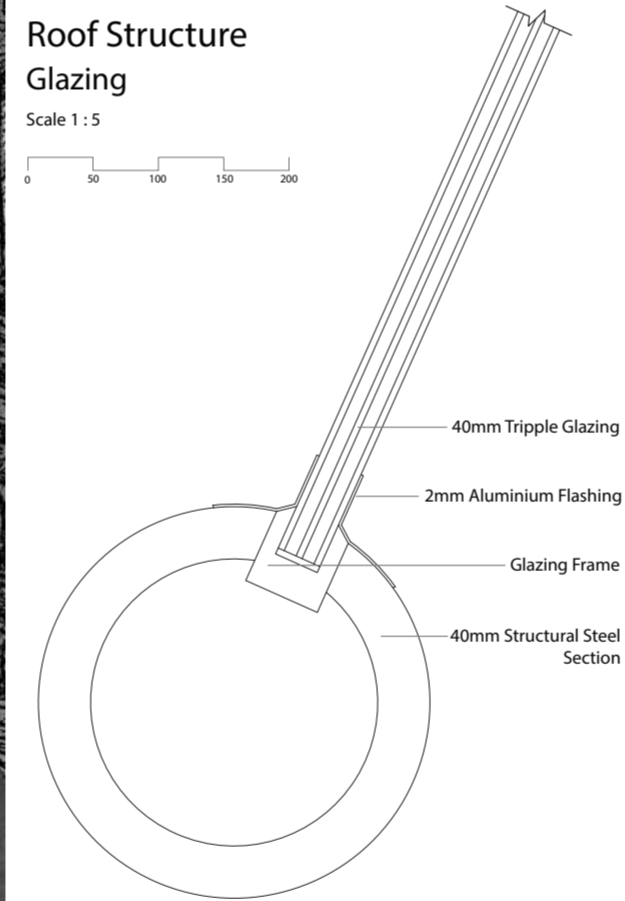
Roof Structure

The roof structure is designed as a unifying intervention that celebrates, rather than conceals, the existing decay of the Hyson Green Library. Emerging from the exploration of sound and deterioration, the structure frames areas where the building has been lost over time, preserving the character of the ruins while creating opportunities for renewal. Large openings allow natural light to penetrate deep into the building, supporting the growth of vegetation that gradually weaves through the architecture and reconnects the interior with nature. At its centre, the roof frames the primary stair, emphasising it as the main point of connection between the different levels, occupants, and functions of the building. Acting as both a physical and symbolic link, the structure brings together spaces for living, learning, growing, and resistance, creating a cohesive environment where nature, people, and architecture coexist within the remnants of the former library.



Roof Structure Glazing

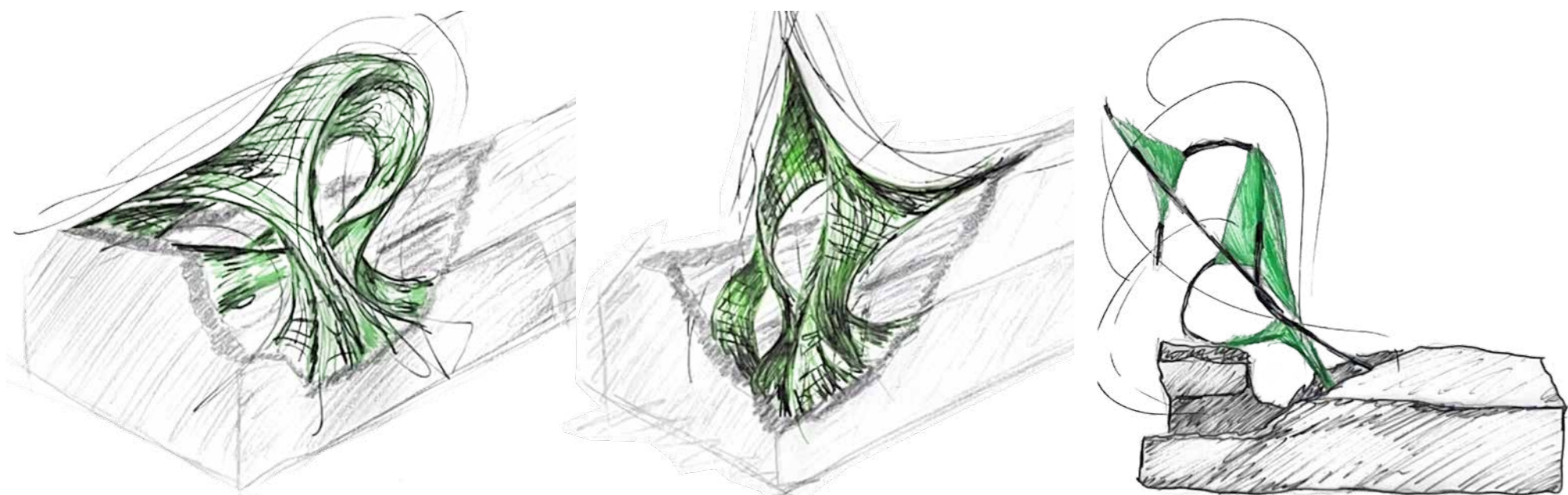
Scale 1 : 5



Exploded Isometric

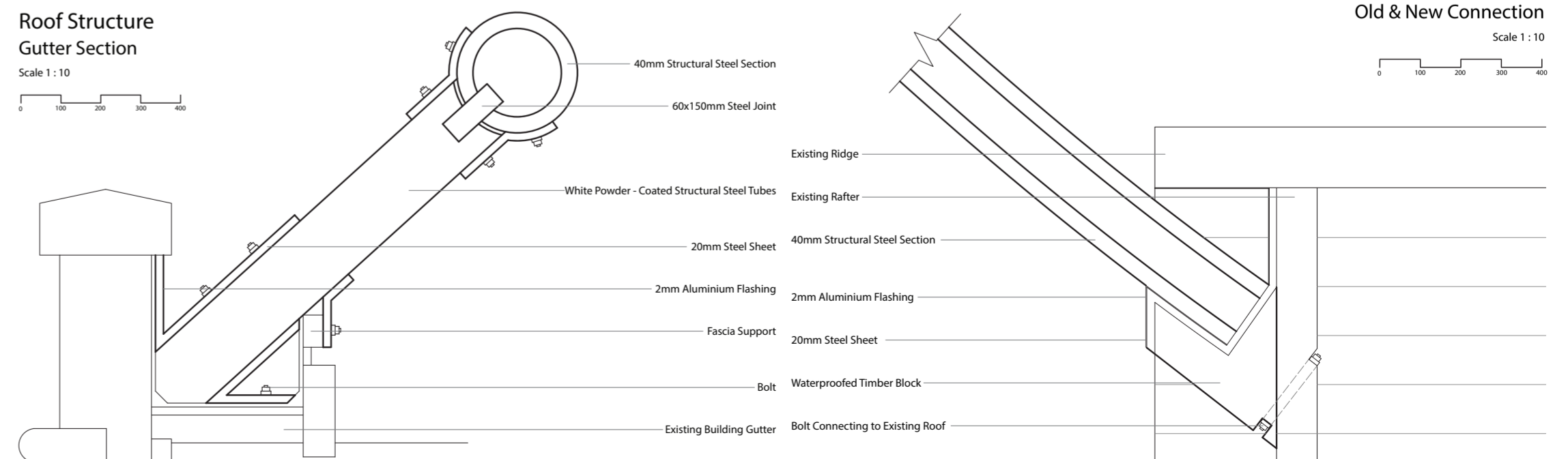
Not to Scale

1. Area of Focus



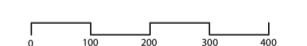
Roof Structure Gutter Section

Scale 1 : 10



Roof Structure Old & New Connection

Scale 1 : 10

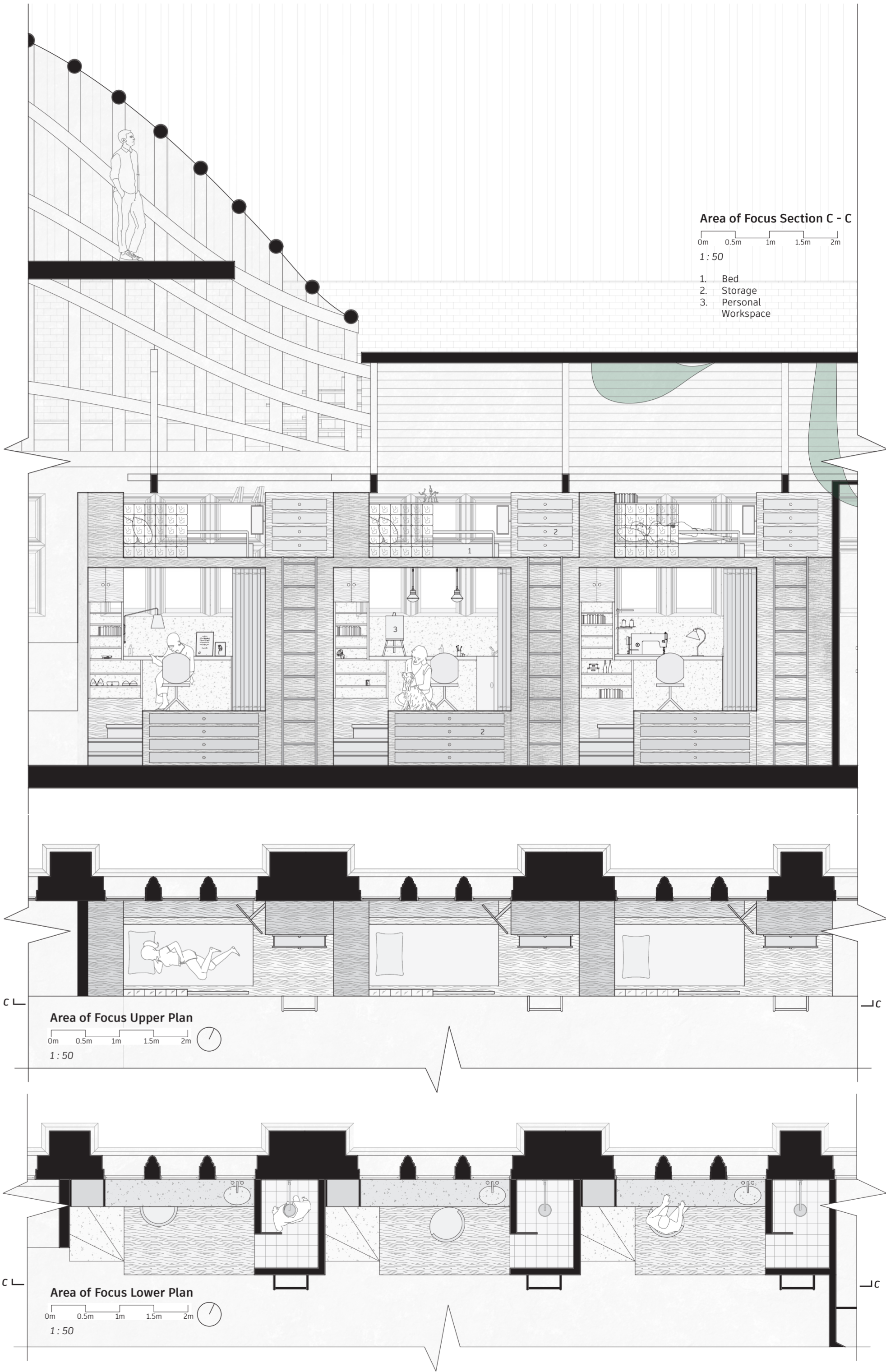


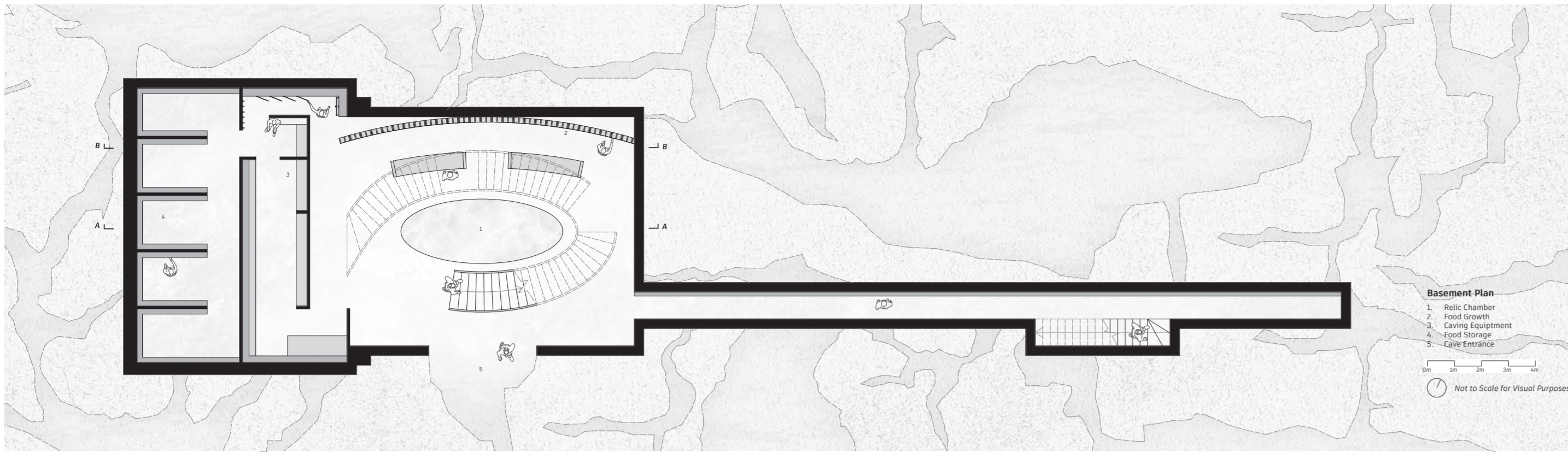
Living Area of Focus

The living quarters are designed as adaptable spaces that balance privacy with social interactions. This allows the rebels to choose when to be alone and to engage with others. Each quarter provides a personal area for sleeping, washing, storage, and individual activities, creating a sense of ownership and refuge within the larger building and problems in the world. Through the use of curtains and a rotating timber slat wall, the spaces can be enclosed to form private rooms or opened up to connect with neighbouring quarters and living area, transforming into a shared social environment. This flexibility reflects the rebels' way of life, supporting both the need for personal space and the importance of collaboration. In a world centred around survival and resistance, the living quarters provide moments of comfort, self-expression, and human connection, allowing the occupants to maintain their individuality while living as a collective.



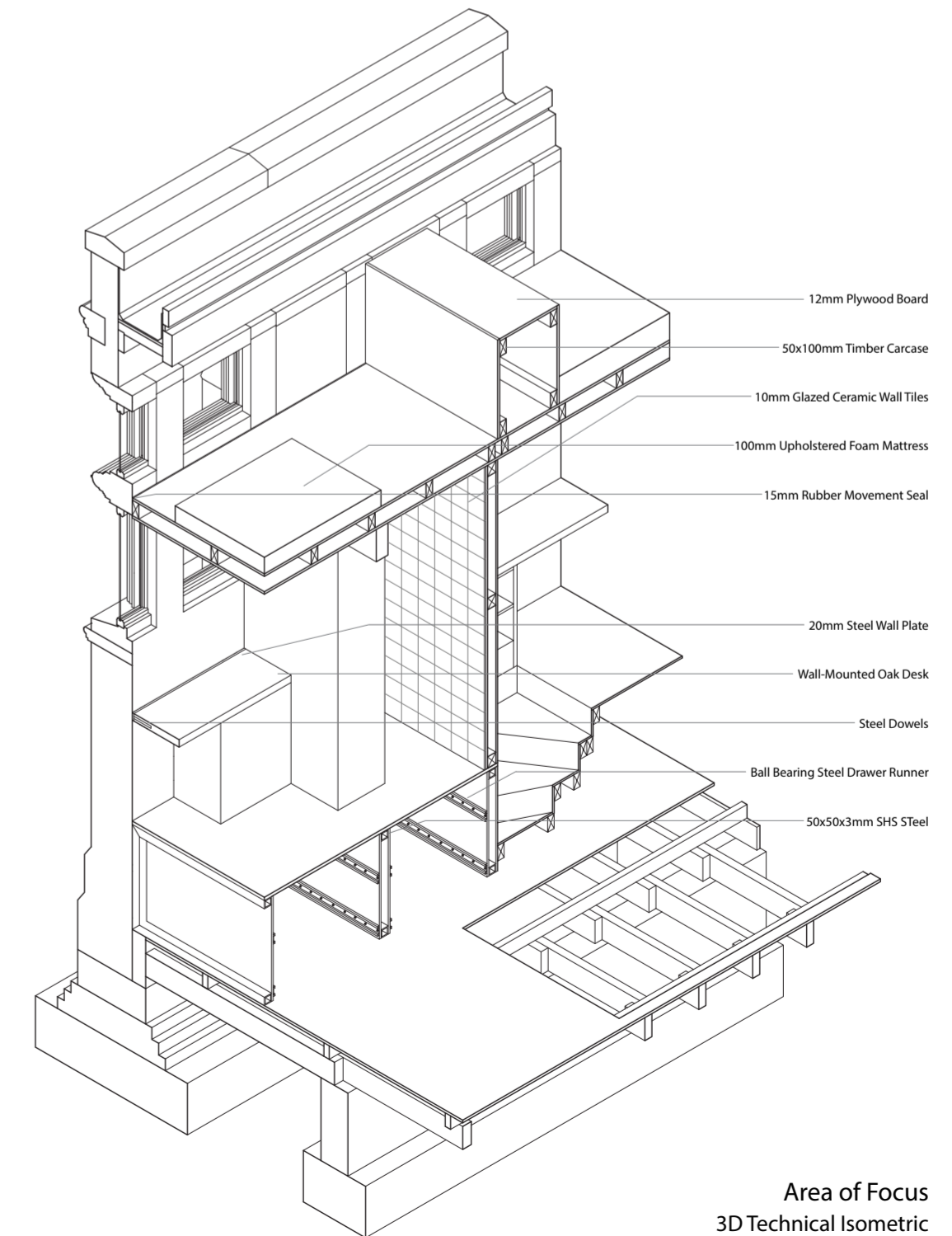
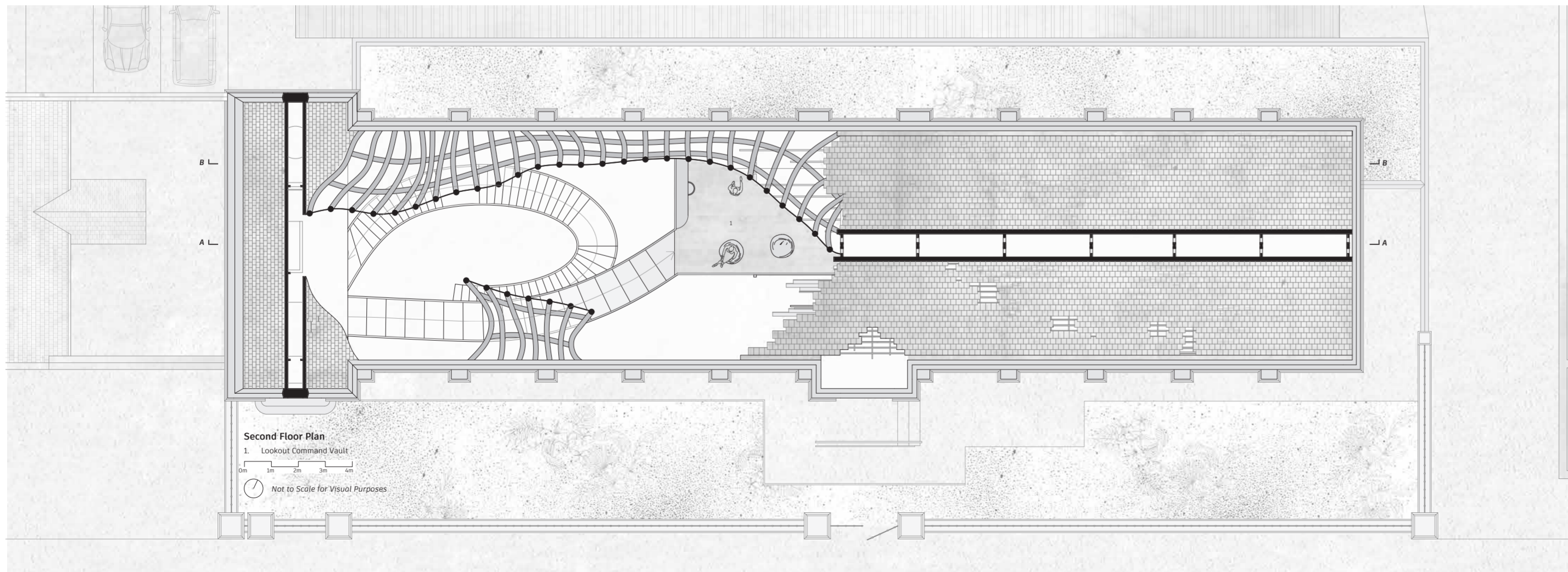
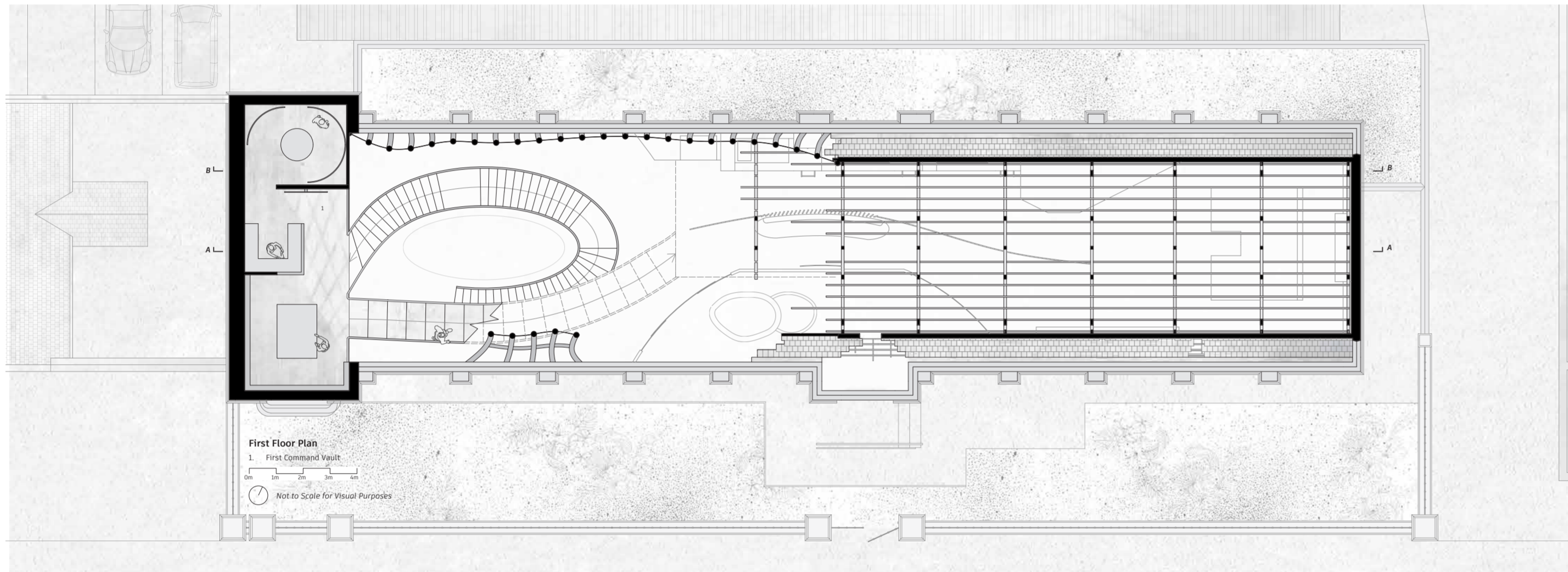
Visual
Using a combination of hand drawing, 3D escape rendering and post rendering in Photoshop, I have created this visual Looking to and past the area of focus. This are private living spaces for each of the rebels, featuring storage, a shower, personal desk and a bed deck, TV and Privacy Curtain. The the right hand side is the rotating timber wall, this is an organic form running through the building that can be closed and opened to change the space for its use.





The Building

The building is organised around a central stair that connects a series of spaces dedicated to living, decoding, growing, gathering, and sharing knowledge. Each level serves a different function while remaining visually and physically linked through the vertical circulation. Extending beyond the building, the rebels utilise Nottingham's cave network and the surrounding landscape to move undetected, spread information, and cultivate food. By responding to the existing environment rather than imposing upon it, the design creates a symbiotic relationship between architecture, nature, and the people working to uncover and share the truth.



Area of Focus
3D Technical Isometric