

beyond food

How can design be used to celebrate diversity and increase an understanding of different cultures within communities?

"Food is maybe the only universal thing that really has the power to bring everyone together. No matter what culture, everywhere around the world, people eat together" - Guy Fieri -



- collage: 'food x community' that expresses the power of food and its ability to bring the people from different backgrounds.

designing for the community

Beyond Food, a food and community centre, encourages the users of all ethnicities, age and background to celebrate their diversity and the value, history and knowledge of their culture through food. Food is deeply rooted in culture and people can learn and understand a specific culture by just trying their food. Ethnic and racial divisions can hurt society but learning, understanding and appreciating diverse cultures can play a major role in developing communities.

benefits of understanding different cultures

- minimizes stereotypes
- helps prevent ethnic and racial divisions
- enhances effective communication
- exposure to new experience
- understand the world better

"...(inclusive practice) is to listen and elevate the stories of those who have often been silenced." - Liz Ogbu -

ethnic minority groups and their community

- 7.5% of the UK population are from Asian ethnic groups
- 3.3% are from Black ethnic groups
- 2.2% are from Mixed ethnic groups

(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk)



- collage: 'reach' was created in response to Liz Ogbu's talk that emphasises the importance in listening to those who have often been silenced; inclusive practice that can contribute to an equal and cohesive society, bringing awareness to one another in the environment.

(barriers to belonging - british red cross)



- collage titled 'digging for true history' in response to Theaster Gates's talk on the importance of reconnecting with history and culture so as to learn about the community.



the red dining room



the value of connected communities through dining

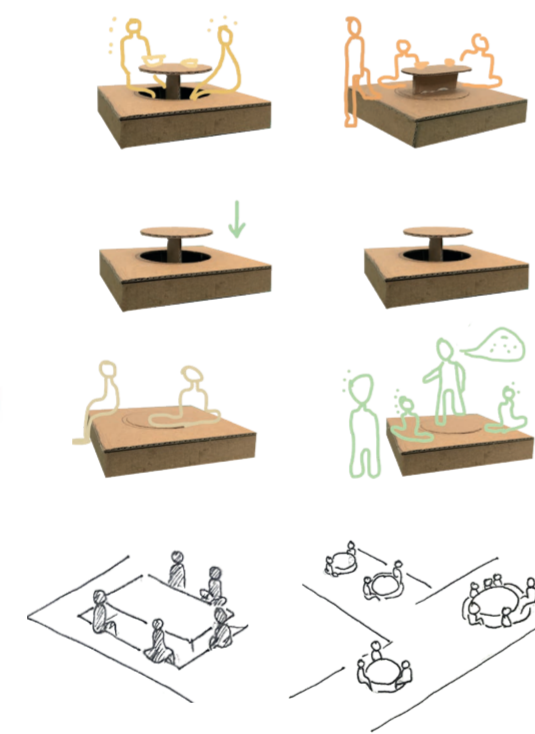
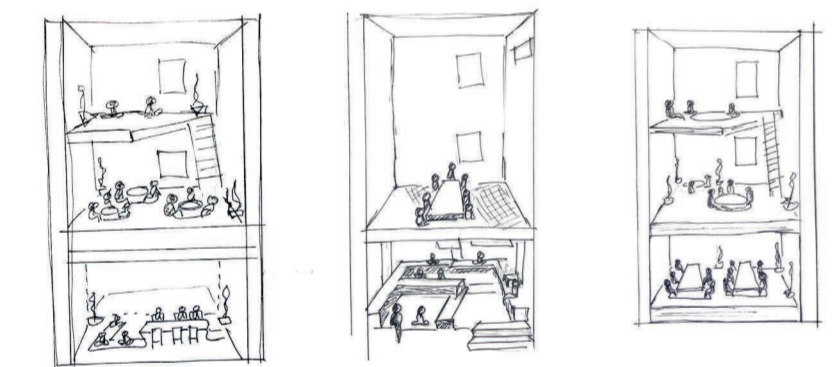
"Everytime we gather around a table, we are performing one of the most important social activities we do as human beings - eating not only nourishes our bodies but our soul. Every bite is a bite of culture, of history and knowledge that has passed from generations to us." - Rocio de Aguilla -



- a collage titled 'let's eat' represents the diversity in communities coming to cook and eat together, expressing the atmosphere of the proposed design.



There is great diversity in the community. By bringing people together through cultural cooking and dining, Beyond Food aims to have spaces that create a cultural connection with its users and avoid creating a barrier - this is explored by looking at the ways of dining in different cultures, based on paintings that depict family feasts and their traditional dining etiquettes in countries of ethnic minority groups.

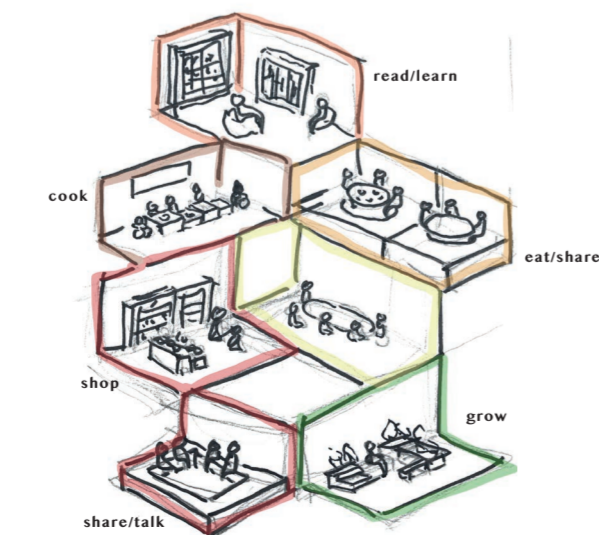


Through sketches and collages, ideas were developed to focus on designing spaces that celebrated dining traditions with an emphasis on bringing people closer together.

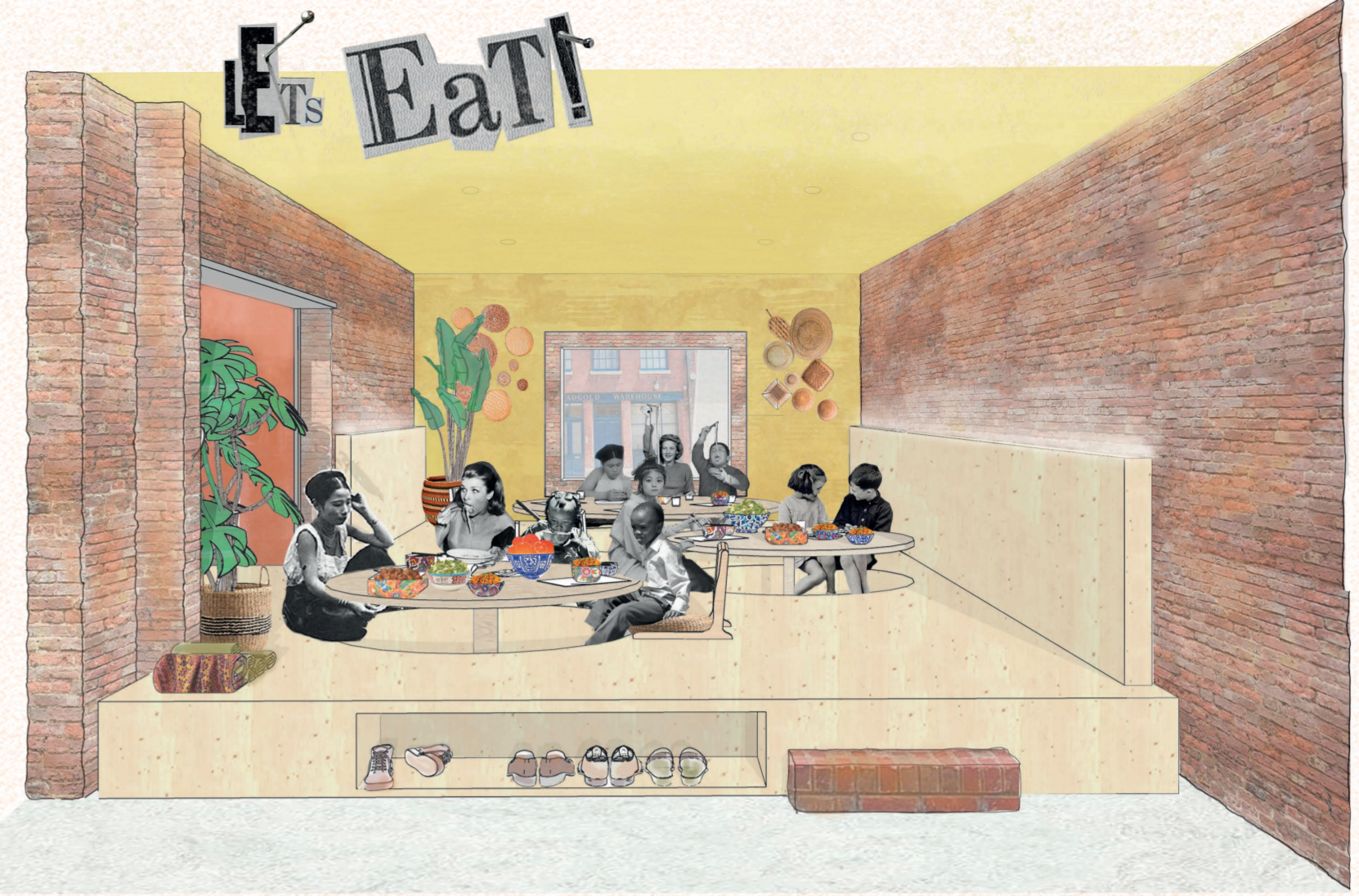
grow, cook, eat, share...

With designated spaces for dining, a community kitchen, speciality shop, gardens, multi-purpose studios and a mini-food library, the users of Beyond Food can share, listen, cook, eat, grow and share food and about food.

Diversity in this context means two things: diversity in diet which ensures nutrient adequacy and the other is diversity in the types of cuisines from different cultures that are experienced and learnt collectively as a community in order to encourage not only good health, but to reflect upon and disregard any preconceived ideas about each others cultures that exist within and beyond the community.



Perspective collages showing the 'yellow dining room': one of the spaces created to be used as dining area and can be transformed into a space where users can teach, talk and share things about their culture.



The community kitchen where workshops and cooking lessons are held by volunteer cooks, teaching users in the community the different cuisines through easy recipes and healthy dishes with local ingredients and vegetables grown in the community garden.



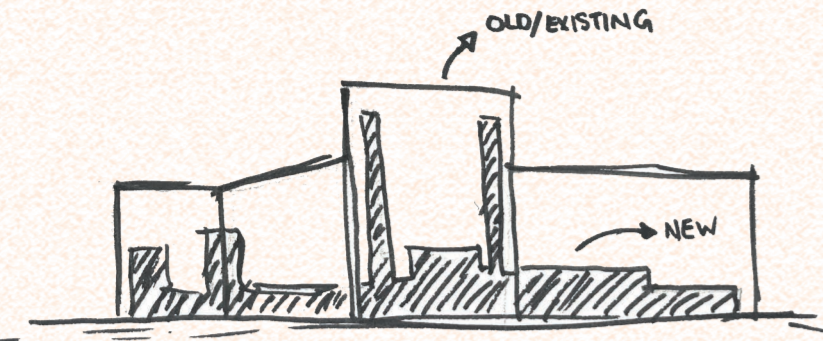
A perspective showing the speciality shop where herbs and vegetables that are grown at the community centre by people at the community, will be sold; products from local businesses are also sold here and profits are redirected back into the community centre.



- collage: 'grow' that expresses the idea that the users can grow their own vegetables and herbs at the community centre.

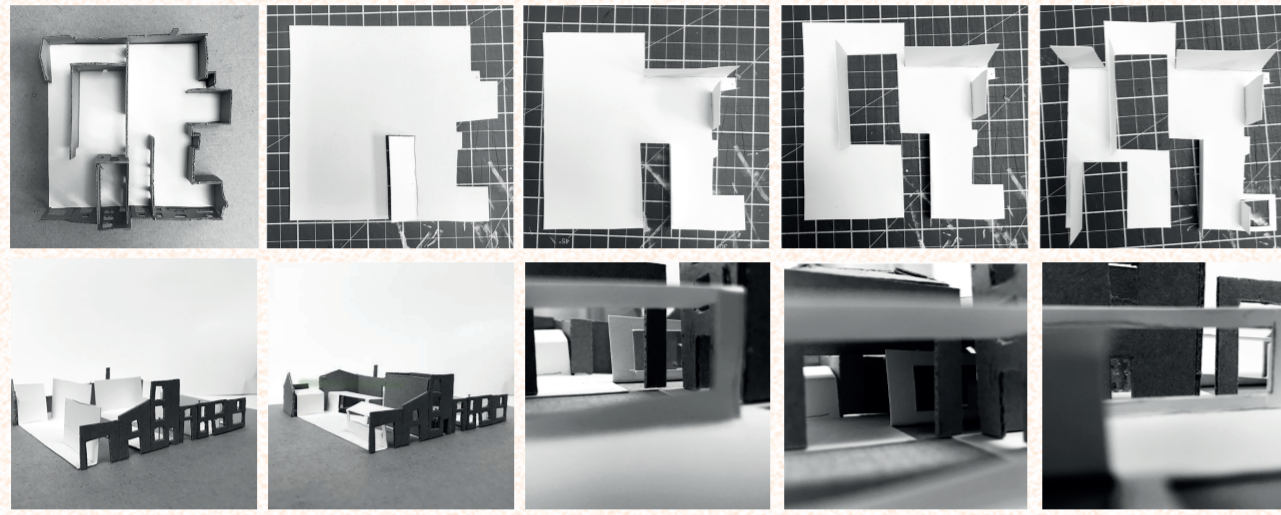


A perspective showing the garden where vegetable and herbs are grown by users and volunteers at the community centre; produce are then used for cooking as well as being sold at the speciality shop.

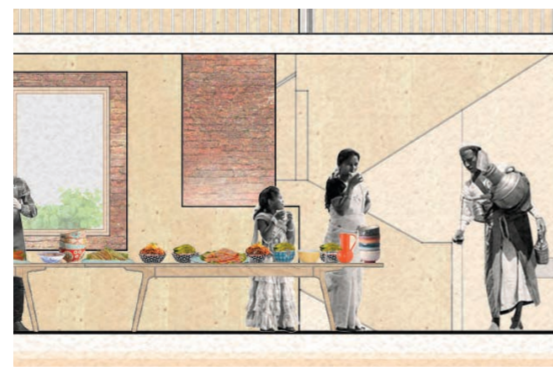
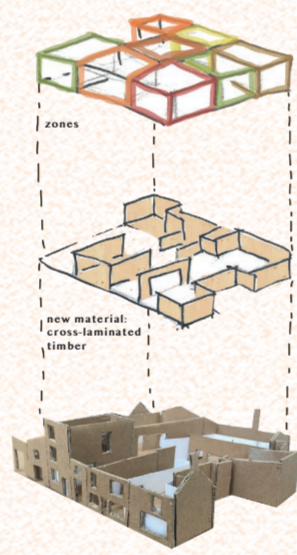


design approach: juxtaposition

Beyond Food is situated in a Grade II Listed brick building; the design approach is focused on the relationship between the new and the patina of the old. Sketch models were used to explore the levels, zones and spaces through the continuity of one new material, that can be inserted in the existing building. Cross-laminated timber is chosen as the new structural material that weaves through the spaces as it embraces the existing walls.



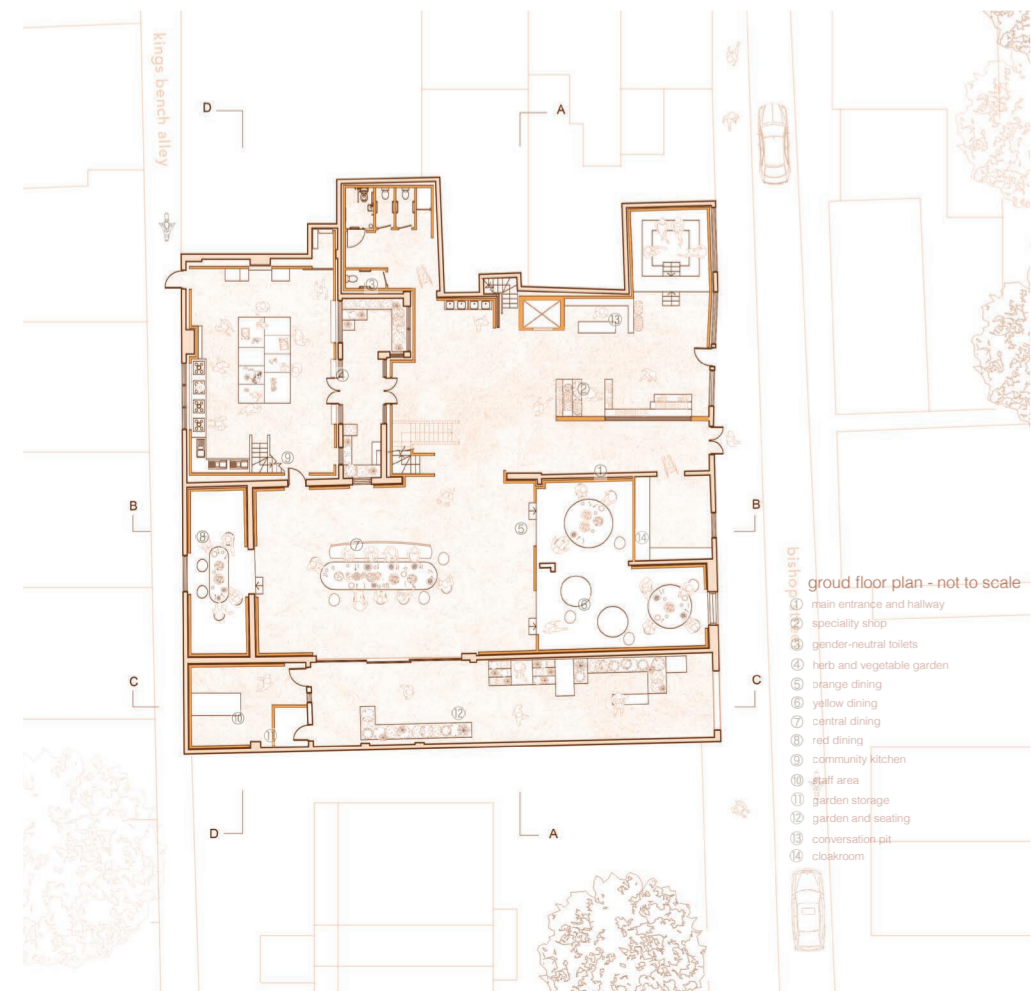
- collage 'palimpsest' overlapping the past and present of the existing building through materiality so as to express its historical value to the local community.



section B-B
not to scale

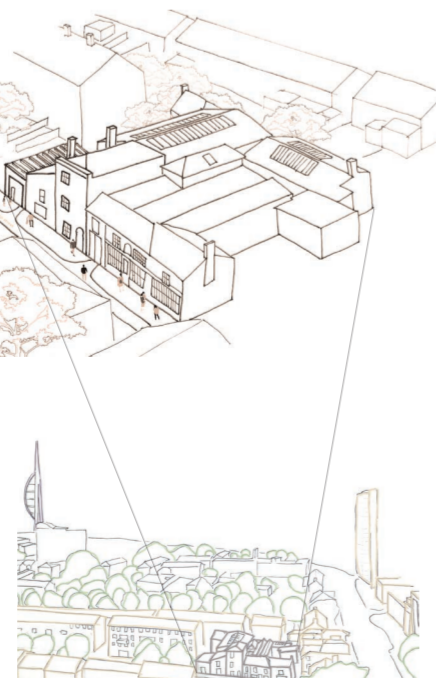


section D-D
not to scale



ground floor plan - not to scale -

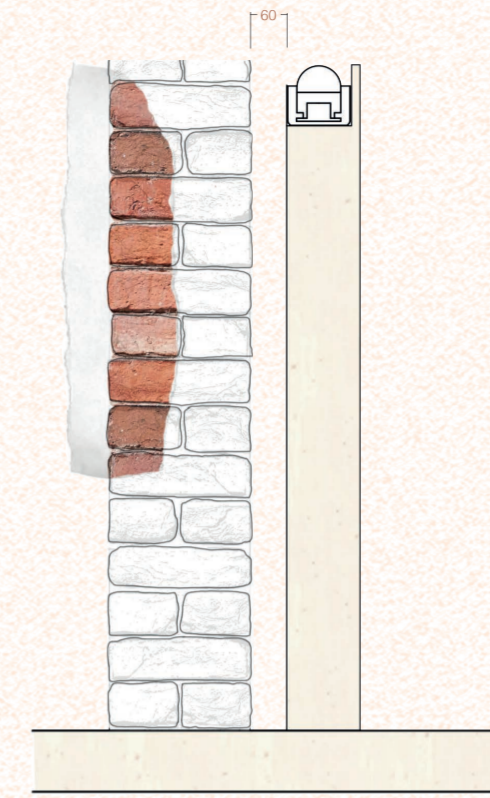
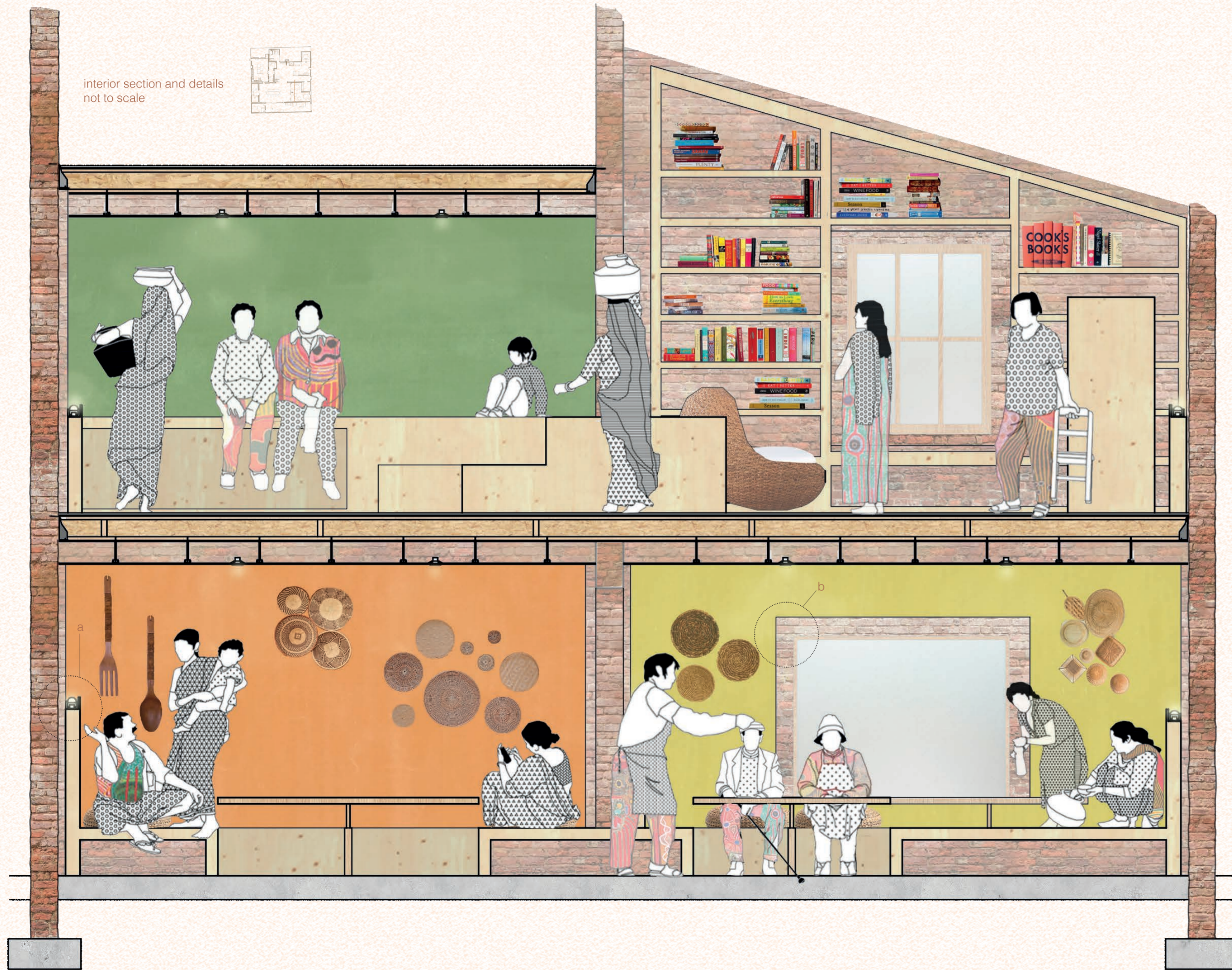
- ① clean entrance and hallway
- ② specialty shop
- ③ gender-neutral toilets
- ④ herb and vegetable garden
- ⑤ lounge dining
- ⑥ yellow dining
- ⑦ central dining
- ⑧ red dining
- ⑨ catering kitchen
- ⑩ staff area
- ⑪ garden storage
- ⑫ garden and seating
- ⑬ conversation pit
- ⑭ cloakroom



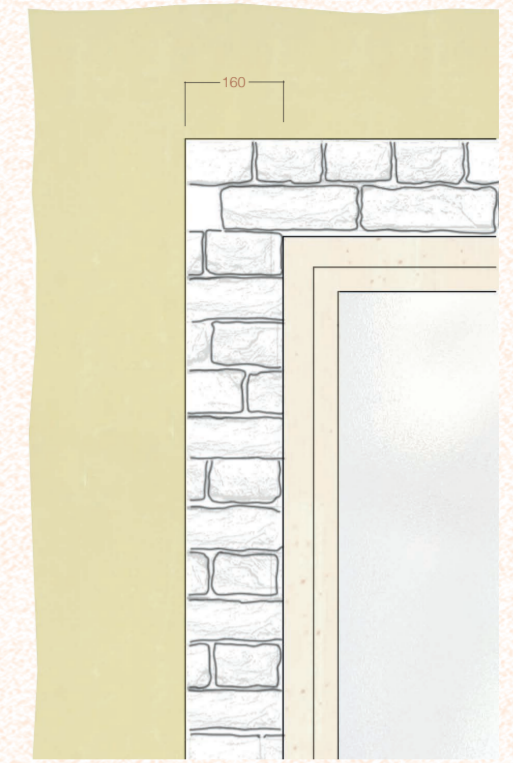
the chosen location: Treadgolds, Bishop Street

interior detail

The design intentionally unites the old with the new; the 60mm gap in detail a is the space between the old brick wall and the new cross-laminated timber wall which is consistent on the ground, first and second floor. The 160mm gap in detail b is also a measurement that is applied between the windows and the wall - both gaps between the brick and the cross-laminated timber allows for the exposure of both old and the new whilst introducing furniture that draw influence from ethnic cultures and traditional forms.



detail a - not to scale



detail b - not to scale

