

IT'S NOT PARADISE

BUT THE DIRECTION HAS CHANGED

BY LIBBY BEAVON

A better future... "IT'S JUST AROUND THE CORNER AND HARDLY EXOTIC. BUT THAT'S THE POINT. IT'S NEAR, TANGIBLE". Hopkins, R. (2023) as cited by Haines, G. (2023).

Following the traces of the past, can a building left otherwise to deteriorate face a new future?

Treadgolds, a former ironworks building in Portsmouth, is far from Paradise. Left in a state of disrepair, it remains largely unused and unsafe.

By looking closer at the building's existing interior, the marks of time start to appear. Old brick walls damaged by smoke, flaking paint, cracking plaster, all traces of things left behind long ago. The building remembers its past life within its fabric.

It's Not Paradise.

Paradise is a far away place, unreachable in the everyday, and static.

But the direction has changed.

Once a space left disused with the decline of iron trade, Treadgolds has the potential to be rehabilitated, reinhabited, and reinvigorated. The building has a new future. Housed within original Victorian brick walls, the interior can become a non-static paradise: a space which embodies the ever-changing nature of life. The space can move with the times, and move with the needs of its users: a transient space.

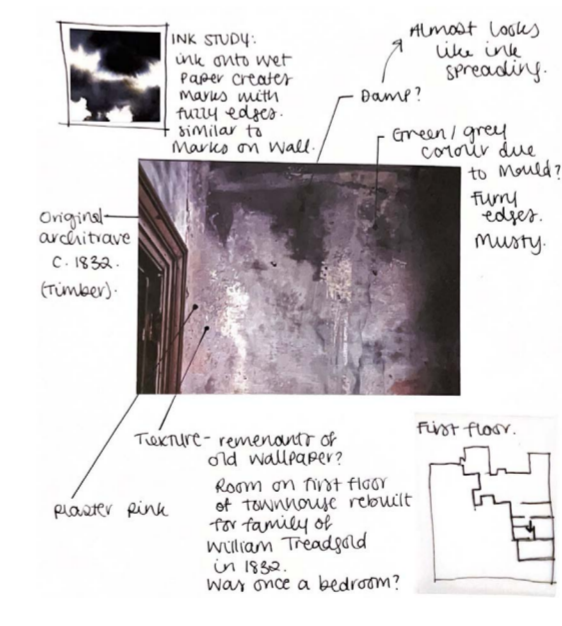
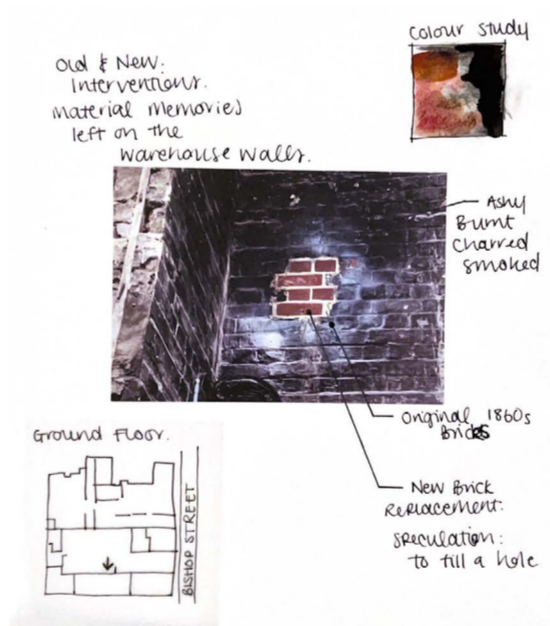
Honoring Treadgolds' heritage as a making space, the new scheme brings this making concept into modern life- a community creative arts centre and artist residency. A place where Portsea residents can come together to create, learn new skills, share, connect, and enrich their own futures.

The artwork on the walls is constantly changing, but the brick beneath shows the traces of time. A paradise on your doorstep, this space inspires creative futures.

It's Not Paradise, But The Direction Has Changed.

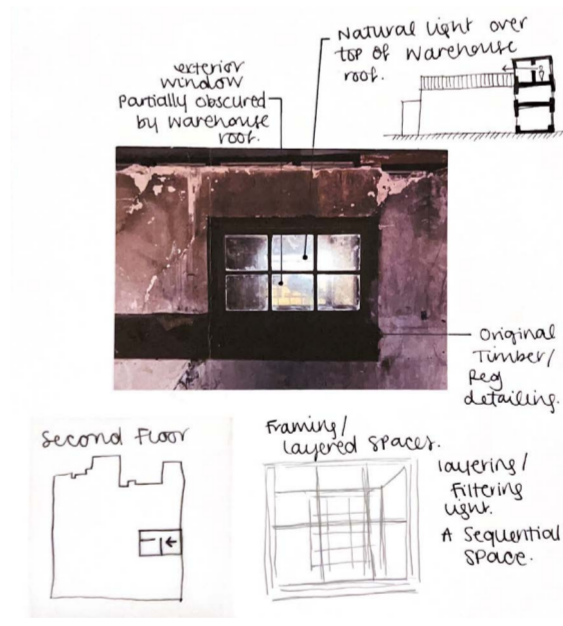


SECTION BB



MATERIAL STUDIES

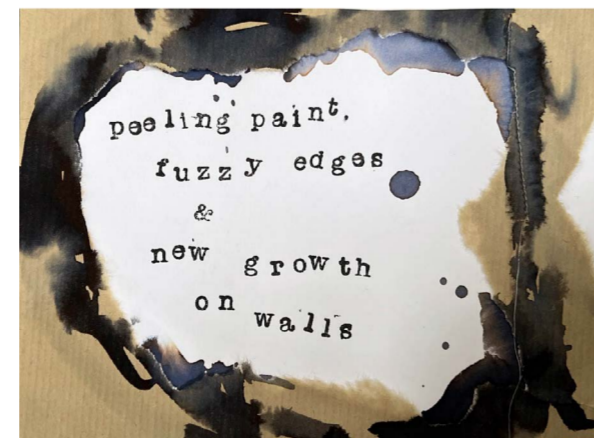
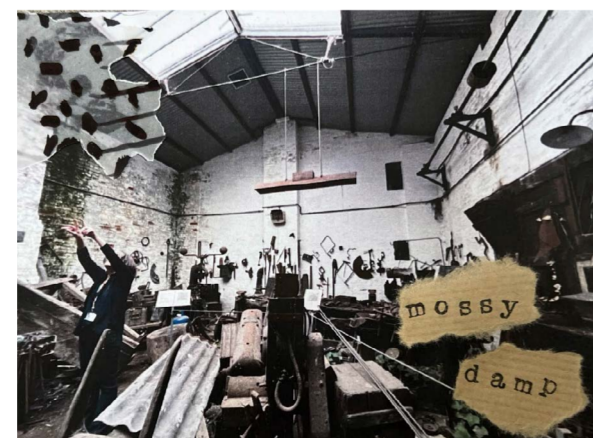
A key standout from a visit to site was the remaining materiality on the walls.



TRACES OF THE PAST

A 'ghost sign' for Treadgolds on the corner of Bishop Street, a memory of old iron works forge & shop. (Caroline's Miscellany, 2020).

POSTCARDS FROM (IT'S NOT) PARADISE



SCHEDULE OF SPACES

WOMEN IN THE DESIGN INDUSTRY COLLAGE

Inspired by a Design Week article which stated that only 23% of people in the design industry are female. The cause of this comes down to care- with the main reason for female designers leaving the workforce being to find a less demanding job whilst they also care for children (Bamford, 2023).

A key driver behind It's Not Paradise is the idea of care. How can a space be carefully designed, in order to care for its users?

CONCEPT & AIMS

It's Not Paradise is a space for creating and connecting, which embodies transience and the ever-changing nature of life.

It's a space which is open to all, providing creative arts workshops and studio spaces as well as housing an artist in residence to provide creatives with an opportunity to practice and share creative work within a creative community.

Care, transience, and joy are key motivators behind the concept of It's Not Paradise.

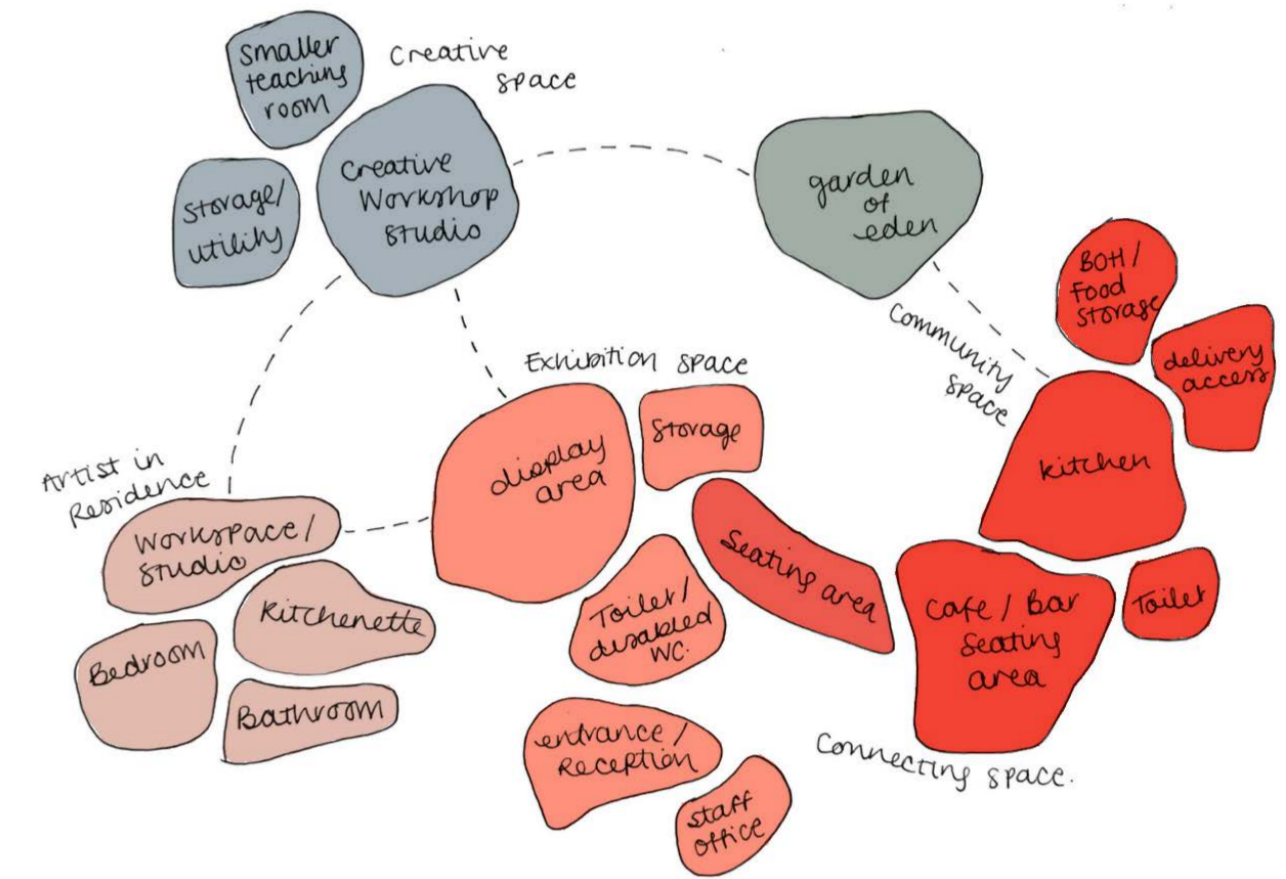
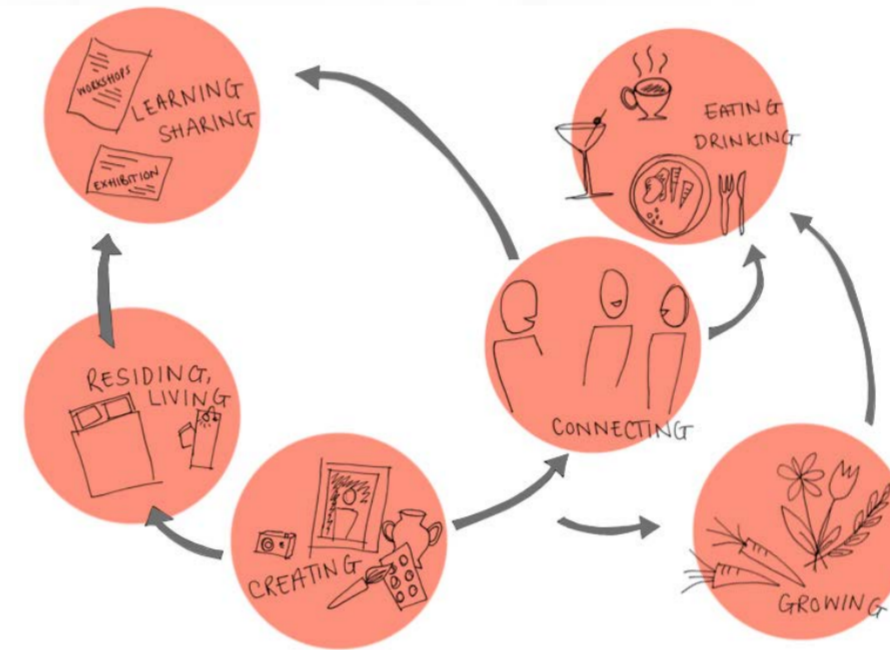
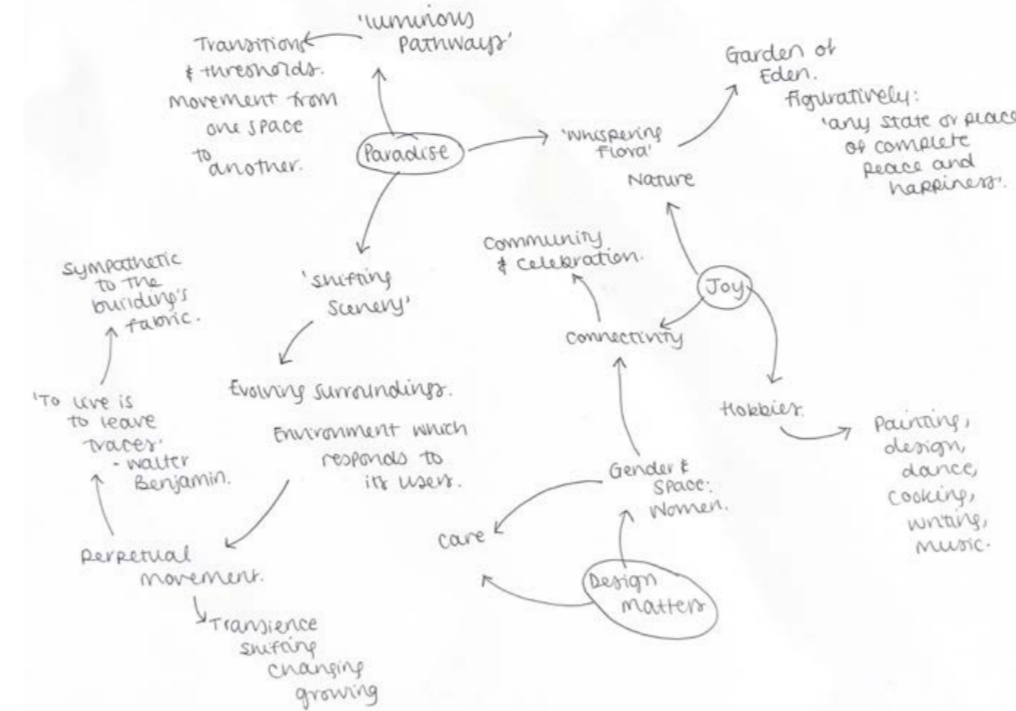
THEORETICAL POSITIONING

Underpinning the purpose of It's Not Paradise is the idea of care. Many of our everyday spatial environments are inherently gendered, and the built environment profession is largely dominated by men. I wanted to make sure that I was designing with women in mind throughout this project.

I had considered making this space female-only, however after looking into the theories surrounding gender and space, as well as the origins of space through *chora*; I decided that gender can be fluid and ever-changing, much like the transience which underpins my project brief. It's Not Paradise will be a space which is open to all, regardless of gender identity.

Chora is a concept coined by Plato, used to signify the notions of 'place'. *Chora* also has an "irreducible connection to the function of femininity" (Derrida, n.d., as cited in Grosz, 2000).

Caring environments, and environments designed with care in mind, through *chora* are always intrinsically linked to the idea of female maternal nurturance. I hope that It's Not Paradise will be a space designed with care, which in turn cares for its users, and creates a welcoming and inclusive environment.



USERS

The venue will be open and welcoming to all, catering to all backgrounds and levels of creative ability.

Groups of children from local schools can use the dedicated wet studio for activities like hand-built clay or painting, which may be too messy for the classroom.

Young adults in local youth groups can use It's Not Paradise to meet in the evenings, participating in workshops or catching up with friends over homework in the cafe.

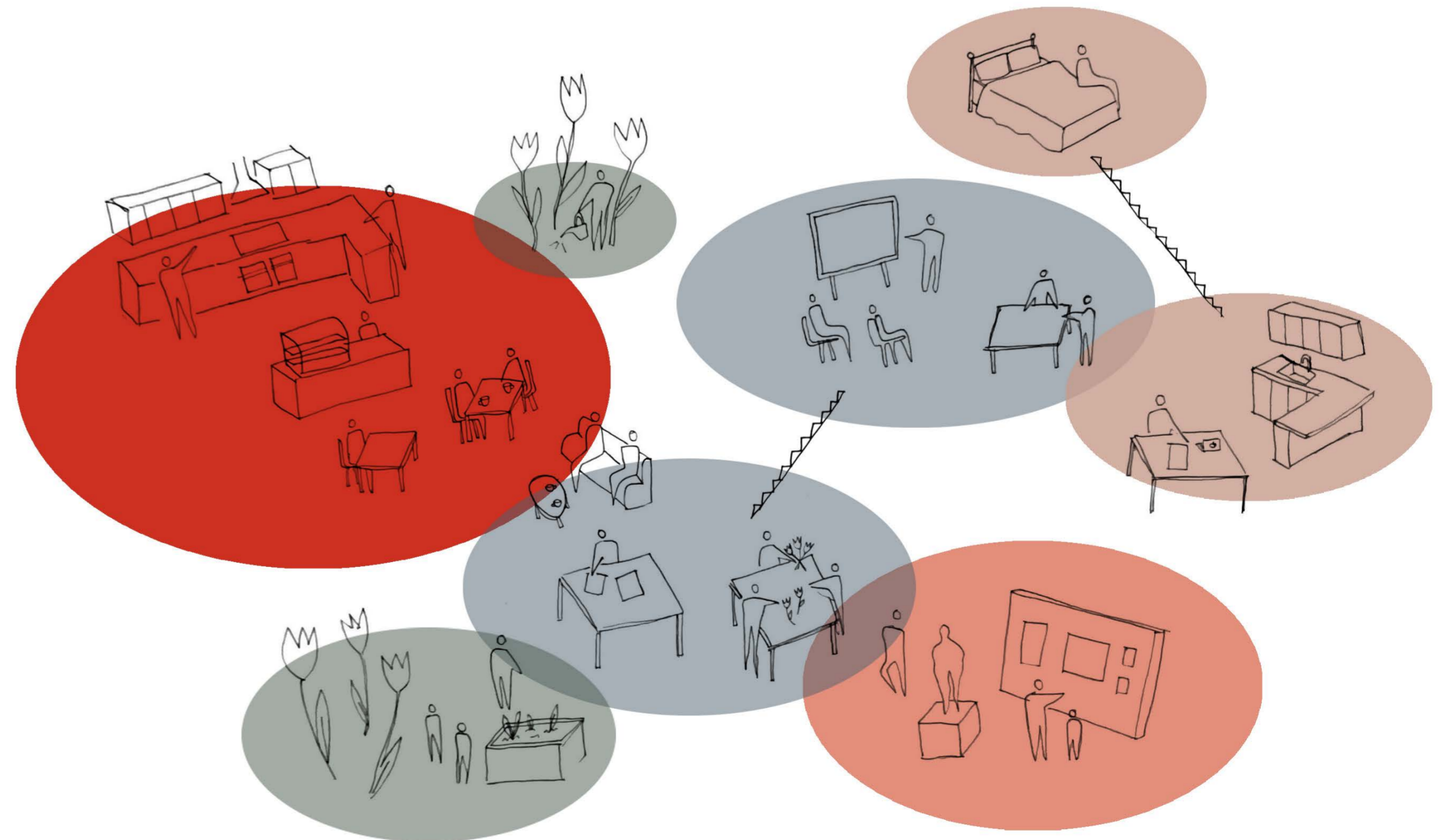
Parents or professionals can enroll in a short course of evening classes, a way to learn something new whilst escaping from the everyday.

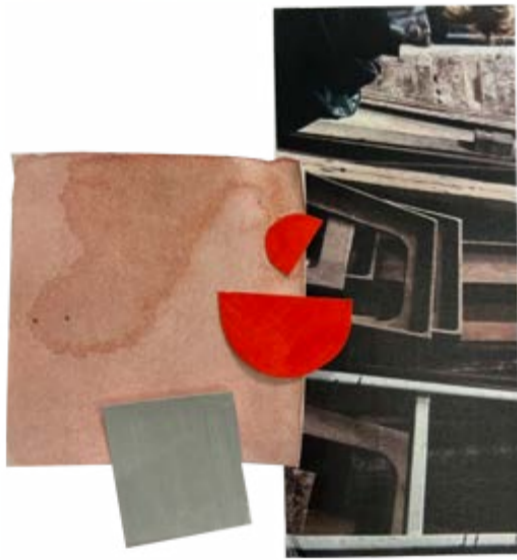
Retired locals can use the space as somewhere to connect and meet new people, taking up a creative hobby or enjoying a moment of peace in the community garden of eden.

The space will also have residency space for an artist to inhabit for a season, before being taken over by someone new. By living in the space the artist will be able to develop their practice in a specialised environment, network within Portsmouth's creative community, share their skills in workshops or classes, and exhibit their work in the gallery space; opening up the opportunity for potential future commissions or employment.

The wide variety of users within the space, and the constant changing of the artist in residence, means that the space embodies the nature of transience- constantly reflective of the people creating within it.

IT'S NOT PARADISE IS NOT A REMOTE ISLAND ESCAPE. BUT THE DIRECTION HAS CHANGED. IT IS AN EVERYDAY PARADISE, ENCOURAGING CARE THROUGH CREATIVITY, PROVIDING A MOMENT OF RETREAT, AND CULTIVATING JOY THROUGH ITS USERS.





COLOUR STUDIES

The textures within the walls of Treadgolds stood out to me in particular, so I collaged some of my photos from site with painted colour swatches to start to build up a more complex palette. Inspired by Flores & Prats I wanted to use colour in a way that modernises the space, whilst being sympathetic to the existing building fabric, and without removing any of Treadgolds' rich textural qualities.

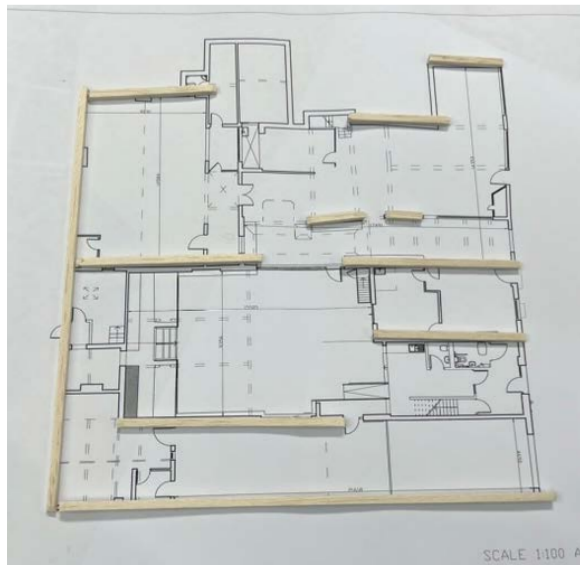


3D ATMOSPHERES COLLAGE

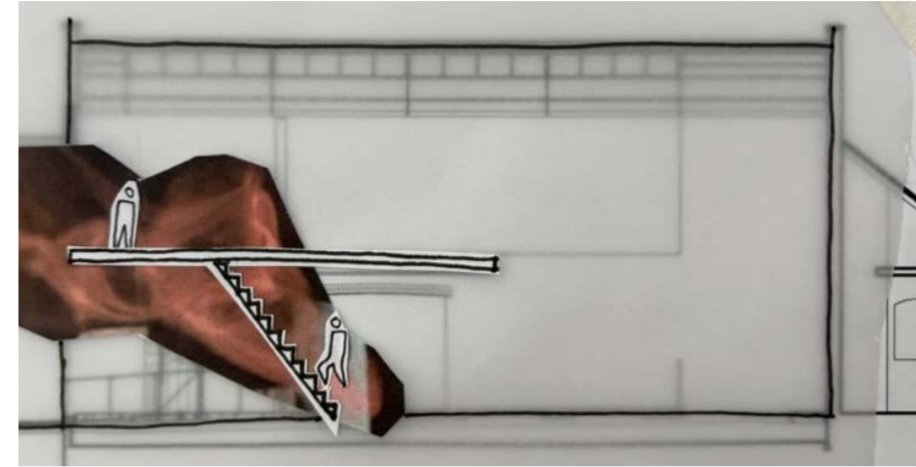
An abstract model following the form of structural walls within the Treadgolds plan, combining my chosen colour palette with photos of textures and materials from Treadgolds, taken whilst on site. My aim was to create a 3D collage model, showing the layering of colours, forms, and textures, in the hope to convey the material feeling of the space I want to take forward in my design.

SMOKE EXPERIMENT

I then blew smoke through the model, linking back to the materiality of Treadgolds' smoked bricks, and also as a material experiment - using smoke as a transient moving form. The fluidity and vertical movement of the smoke is something I went on to try and capture within the staircases in my design scheme. Videos of the smoke experiment can be found [HERE](#) on my design blog.



Exploring the concept of a smoke-inspired scheme through collage and diagrams, looking at creating a sense of movement and fluidity in the space.



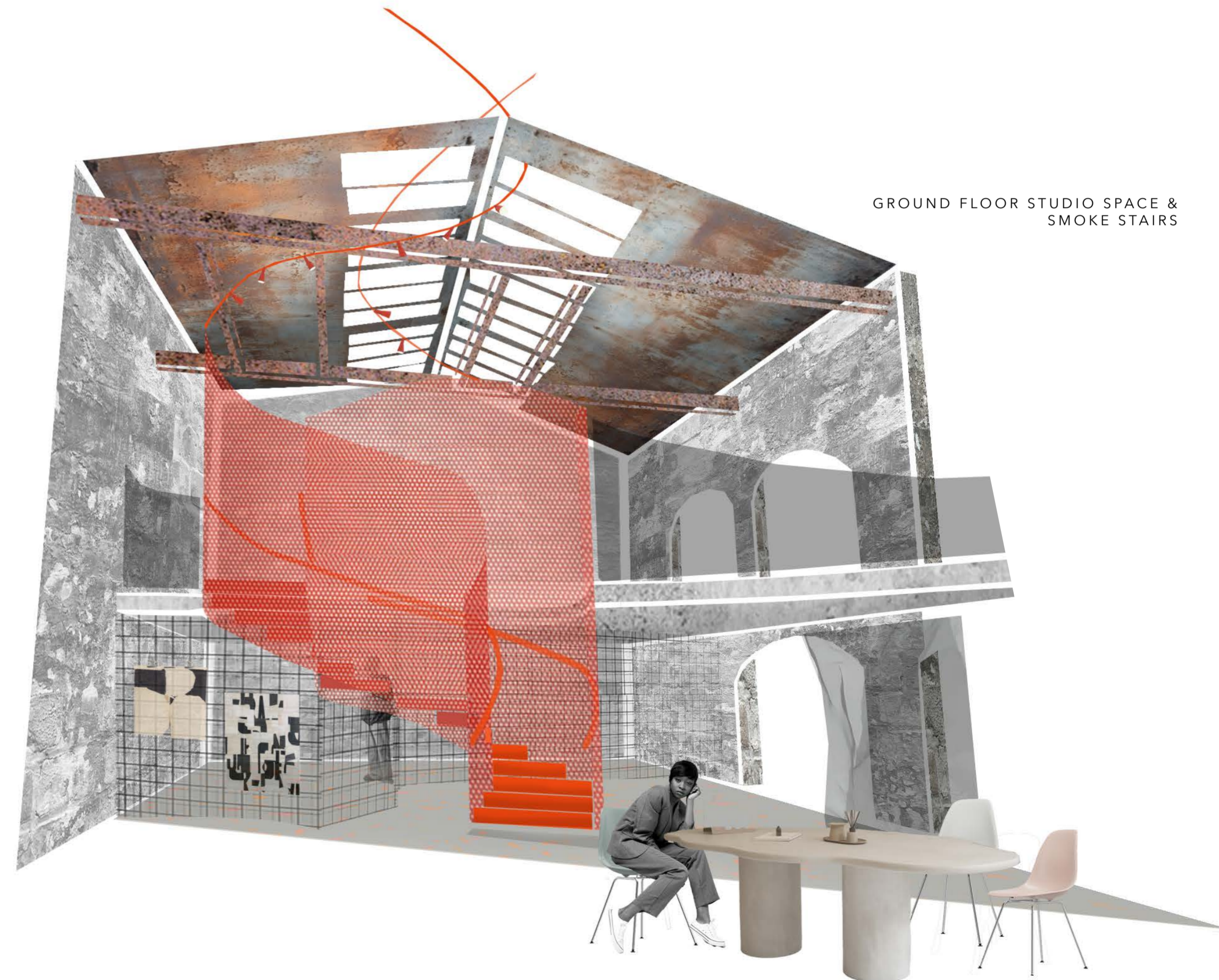
Layers of spaces & movement



MATERIALITY & ATMOSPHERE



Scan for smoke material experiment videos



GROUND FLOOR STUDIO SPACE & SMOKE STAIRS



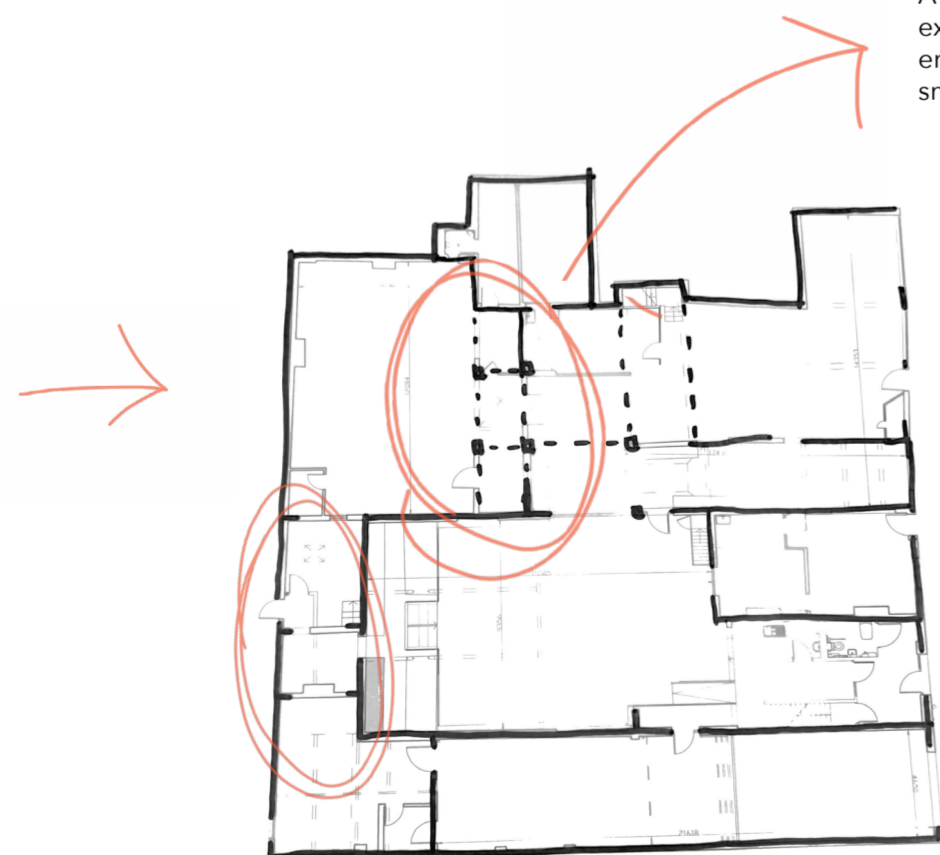
SECTION AA

STRUCTURE & SPATIAL CONCEPTS

STRUCTURAL DEMOLITION DIAGRAMS

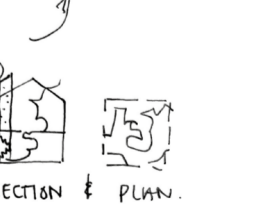
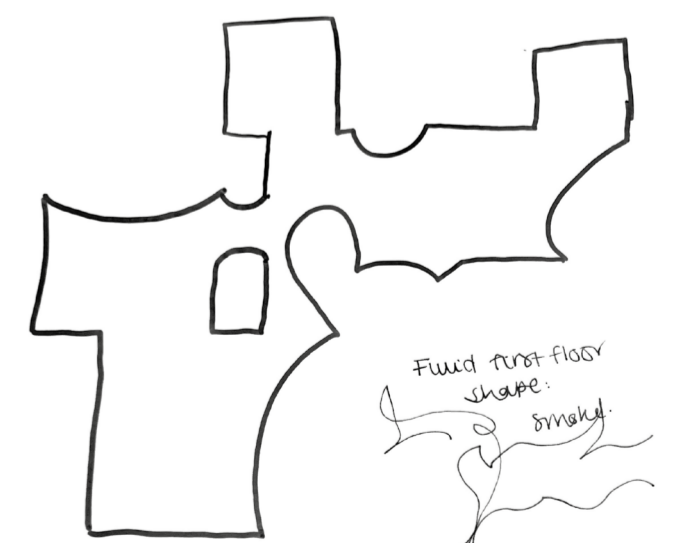
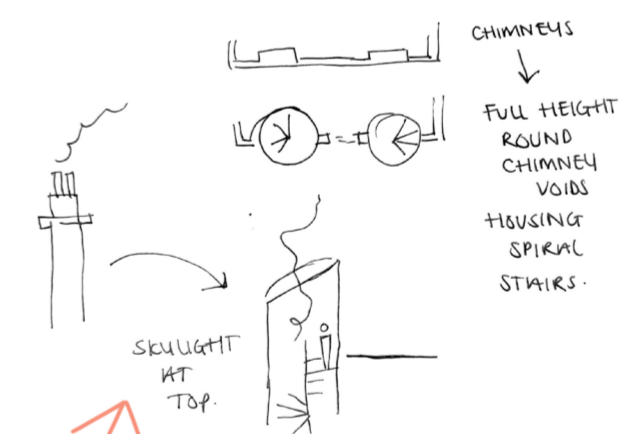
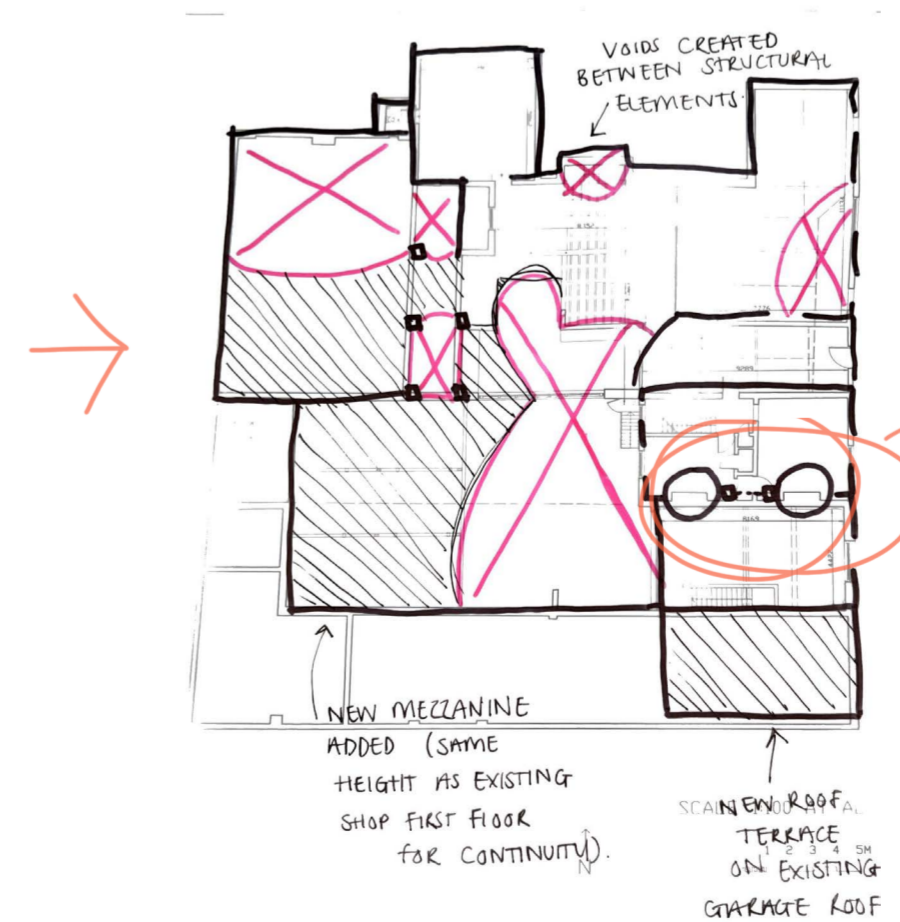
Choosing to carefully open up this area as the main circulatory zone between many of the spaces. A column and beam system replaces the existing walls, and a new roof will be added to enclose the open volume which is currently a small courtyard.

GROUND FLOOR



Taking care to make interventions that are sympathetic to the building's existing structures

FIRST FLOOR



Adding a fluid-shaped mezzanine level as an extension of the existing first floor. Existing geometries have been rounded and smoothed to mimic the movement of smoke.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



LEGEND

- 1. Studio Space: Dry
- 2. Teaching Room 1
- 3. WC
- 4. Teaching Room 2
- 5. Artist Residency: Living Area
- 6. Artist Residency: Studio
- 7. Artist Residency: Garden Of Eden Roof Terrace

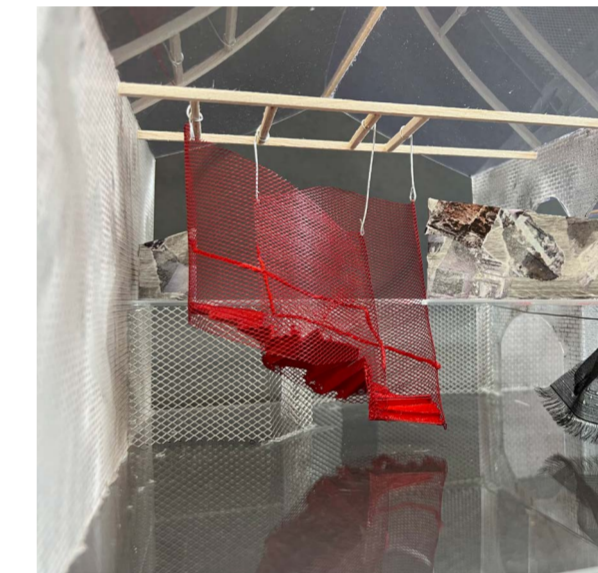
FIRST FLOOR ARTIST RESIDENCY (STUDIO, LIVING AREA, & SPIRAL STAIR CHIMNEYS)



DOUBLE HEIGHT CURVED WALL (GROUND FLOOR GALLERY / FIRST FLOOR STUDIO)



1:50 SCALE COLLAGE MODEL



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



LEGEND

- 1. Gallery Space
- 2. Reception & Cloakroom
- 3. Staff Office
- 4. WC
- 5. Cafe
- 6. Kitchen (Back of House)
- 7. BOH Food Storage Area
- 8. BOH Fridges & Freezers
- 9. BOH Staff Changing Room
- 10. Studio Space: Wet
- 11. Materials Storage
- 12. Bag Storage Area
- 13. Garden Of Eden
- 14. Potting Shed
- 15. Artist Residency: Kitchen & Dining Area

GROUND FLOOR GALLERY SEATING AREA

