

Sensory Serenity:

A Charity Shop Where Community Care and Sensory Wellbeing Comes First.

The project Sensory Serenity presents a redeveloped charity shop located in West Way Square Botley, Oxford, designed to cater to individuals with sensory processing issues.

Inspired by the initiative 'Buy it in Botley' a local campaign launched to encourage foot traffic to the stores on site. The design proposal stems from a wide site analysis which took into account physical and social conditions at the site. This brought to light an opportunity for collaboration between local school SEN teams, the charity shop and local residents.

Briony Foreman

Sensory Serenity explores social responsibility throughout spatial planning, sensory friendly materials and interactive elements providing a safe and stimulating environment that helps children gain functional independence.

By integrating insights from educational initiatives focused on nature based learning and sensory engagement. This collaborative effort not only enhances the practical learning experience for children, but also provides a tangible, inclusive solution that benefits the local community.



Contextualizing The Community: Sensory Stimulation

Thinking With A Multisensory Mind



Site Visit: West Way Square, Botley, Oxford

Sensory processing disorder is a condition where the brain has difficulty processing information received through the senses. Estimated that between 5-16% of children experience difficulties with processing sensations such as touch, sound, taste, smell and sight and leads to challenges in regulating emotions and behaviour; impacting various aspects of everyday life including social interactions, learning and participation in activities.



Architecture Becomes a Catalyst For Positive Change Within Botley's Community.

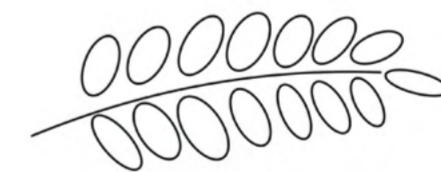
In this modern world sensory development issues are becoming more commonly talked about but how well are these issues addressed?

Acacia, the charity the site is owned by, funds childrens education in Kenya and Uganda, improving their way of living and lifetime oppurtuinities. My collage "Thinking with a multisensory mind" is a visual representation of how my proposal solves a similar issue locally, in helping the younger generation in and surrounding Botley schools and nurserys to develop sensorial skills.

The charity shop offers its surplus textiles to a sensory team which, in collaboration with local school and SEN families, will run weekly workshops to create sensory items such as clothing and toys which are suitable for children with sensory challenges.

This interactive stimulating process addresses a social and functionally sustainable agenda, ensuring a practical therapy and physical solution that can be kept or donated to schools.

Additionally baby sensory classes and sensorial assesments will take place in the designated private space (sensory room), designed for trigger friendly sensitivities and to cut distractions from the hussle of the semi private and public retail space.



ACACIAUK



Embedded in the Community



Making connections with Botleys Forest School programme, encouraging children to learn outside and connect with the environment.

Local sensory therapist Suzie Ankers.

Obtaining Acacia's Charity purpose for children, connected with shop coordinator and operations manager Laura.



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:30am-10am	Charity donations and Retail Space	Baby Sensory Classes with Baby College Botley		Repurposing sessions with Botley Forest School Programme	'Compassion crates' Volunteers send the packages to local schools	Baby Sensory Classes with Baby College Botley	
10am-2pm	Repurposing sessions for Botley Forest School sensory Programme	Charity Donations and Retail Space	Volunteers session for public sensory way-finding around Botley	Charity Donations and Retail Space	Charity Donations and Retail Space	Charity Donations and Retail Space	Sensory enhancing craft workshop with local children/parents
2pm-5pm	Charity Donations and Retail Space		Charity Donations and Retail Space	Organising unsold products for repurposing workshops the following week	Sensory assessment with occupational therapist Suzie Ankers		Closed.
5pm-8:30pm	'Compassion crates' Volunteers help make care packages to local schools	Closed.	Sensory enhancing craft workshop with local children/parents			Closed.	

● Sensory Workshops
● Charity Donations and Retail Space
● Voluntary community sessions

Dividing Spaces Through Programming

In relation to the current programme for the proposal, there are three distinct realms. Botleys children sensory workshop and craft evenings are held within all areas of the space depending on the time of day, but predominantly in the front of the shop. This area is adapted for a crafting set up at night but continuation of retail space in the day.

Across the threshold lies the heart of the charity shop the sensory room. The privacy of the walls that wrap around this space address the spatial conditions children with sensory issues would prefer.

Connecting to this room a designated storage space that's adapted for those who require therapy or individual assistance with Botleys sensory therapist Suzie Ankers.

In the bustling donation and retail space, the racks and shelves lead the way as the general community pursue each purchase for the greater good.

An Atmosphere Within: Crafting The Sensorial Realm

The Core Of The Charity Shop

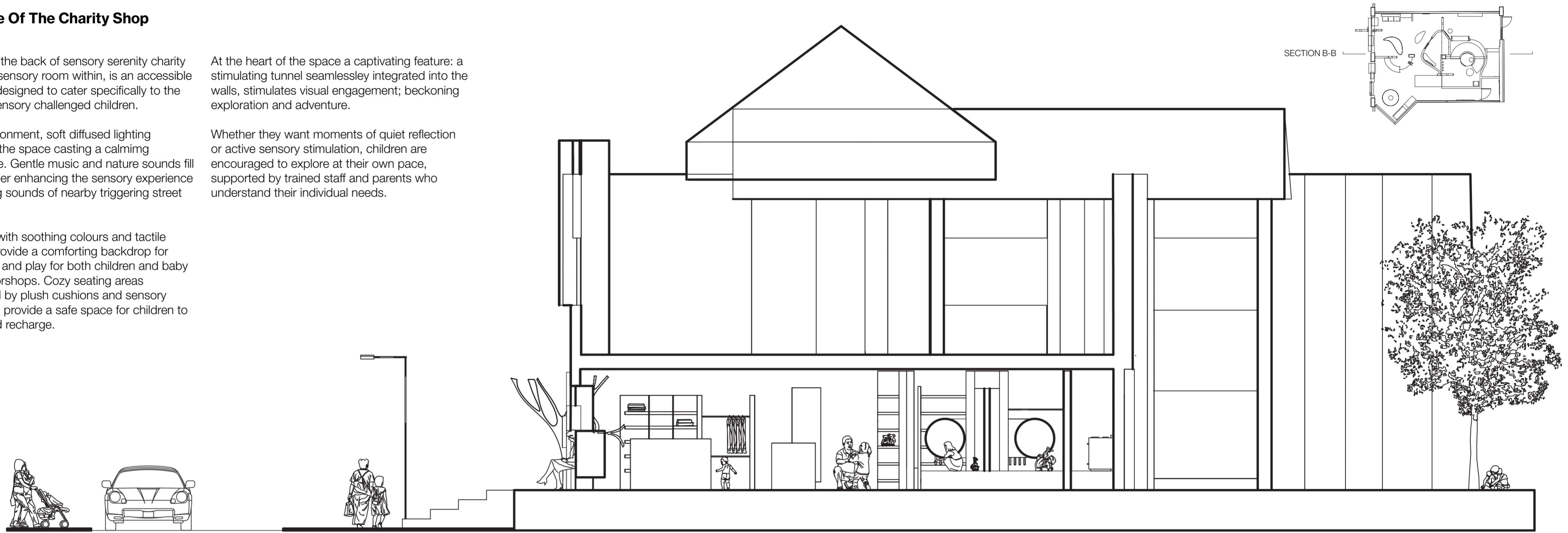
Located at the back of sensory serenity charity shop, the sensory room within, is an accessible sanctuary designed to cater specifically to the needs of sensory challenged children.

In this environment, soft diffused lighting illuminates the space casting a calming atmosphere. Gentle music and nature sounds fill the air further enhancing the sensory experience and erasing sounds of nearby triggering street hustle.

The walls, with soothing colours and tactile textures, provide a comforting backdrop for exploration and play for both children and baby sensory workshops. Cozy seating areas surrounded by plush cushions and sensory equipment provide a safe space for children to unwind and recharge.

At the heart of the space a captivating feature: a stimulating tunnel seamlessly integrated into the walls, stimulates visual engagement; beckoning exploration and adventure.

Whether they want moments of quiet reflection or active sensory stimulation, children are encouraged to explore at their own pace, supported by trained staff and parents who understand their individual needs.



Section B-B 1:60 @A2

Sensorial Materials

1-3

Rubber flooring has soft acoustic qualities.

Bright coloured plaster and textiles, are visually stimulating and touch sensitive. Contrasting hard and soft surfaces.

Textured walls, embodying small spaces through the tactile sense.



Negative and Positive Disciplines



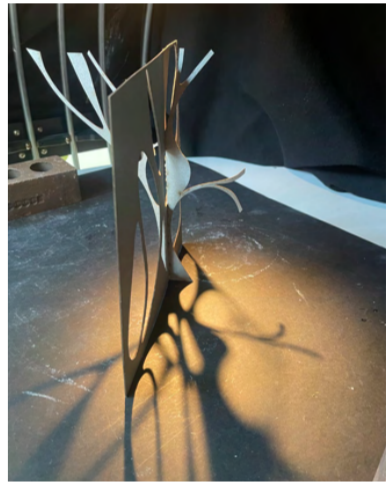
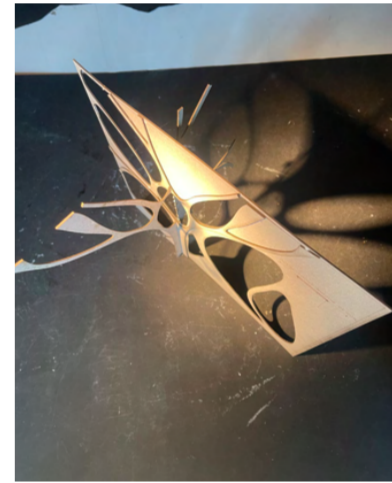
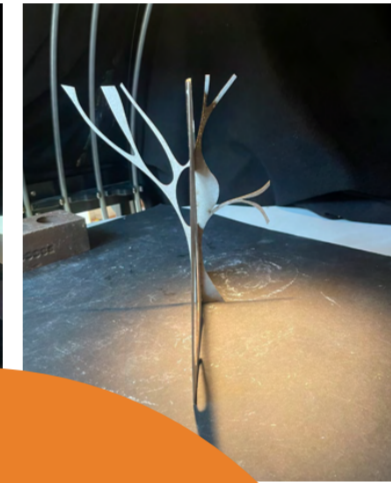
1:20 Final Section Model



Furniture That Connects the Interior and Exterior

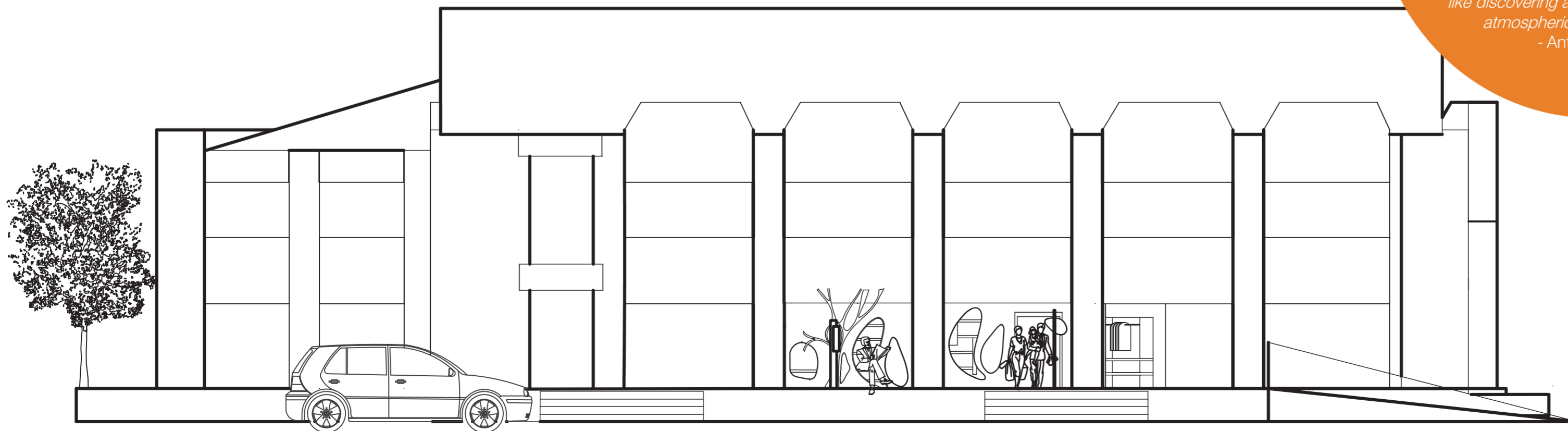
In designing the facade for Sensory serenity charity shop, furniture is implemented as a transformative force, drawing attention to the shops agenda and community values. Traditional seating and shelving transcend their conventional roles, morphing into multifunctional elements that dissolve the boundaries between the interior and the exterior spaces.

Furniture seating, with its continuous modular configurations, serves as both a place of rest for passing residents in West Way square. It stages for gatherings and lores people towards the shop front. Meanwhile the shelving that sits the opposite side to the window seating adorns the facade as a canvas for curated displays and maximises internal space.



The Branches and tree column not only represent Botleys connection with forest schooling and nature but also resignates with an Acacia tree, the symbol for Acacias charity known for being native in Africa.

"The magic of the building exists in the realm of the senses. No matter what time of day, you feel something," says Gautier of Gaudi's design. "Other buildings can be bigger, newer, but Casa Batlló is like discovering a cave or an especially atmospheric place in nature"
- Antoni Gaudi



Facade Elevation 1:100 @A2

