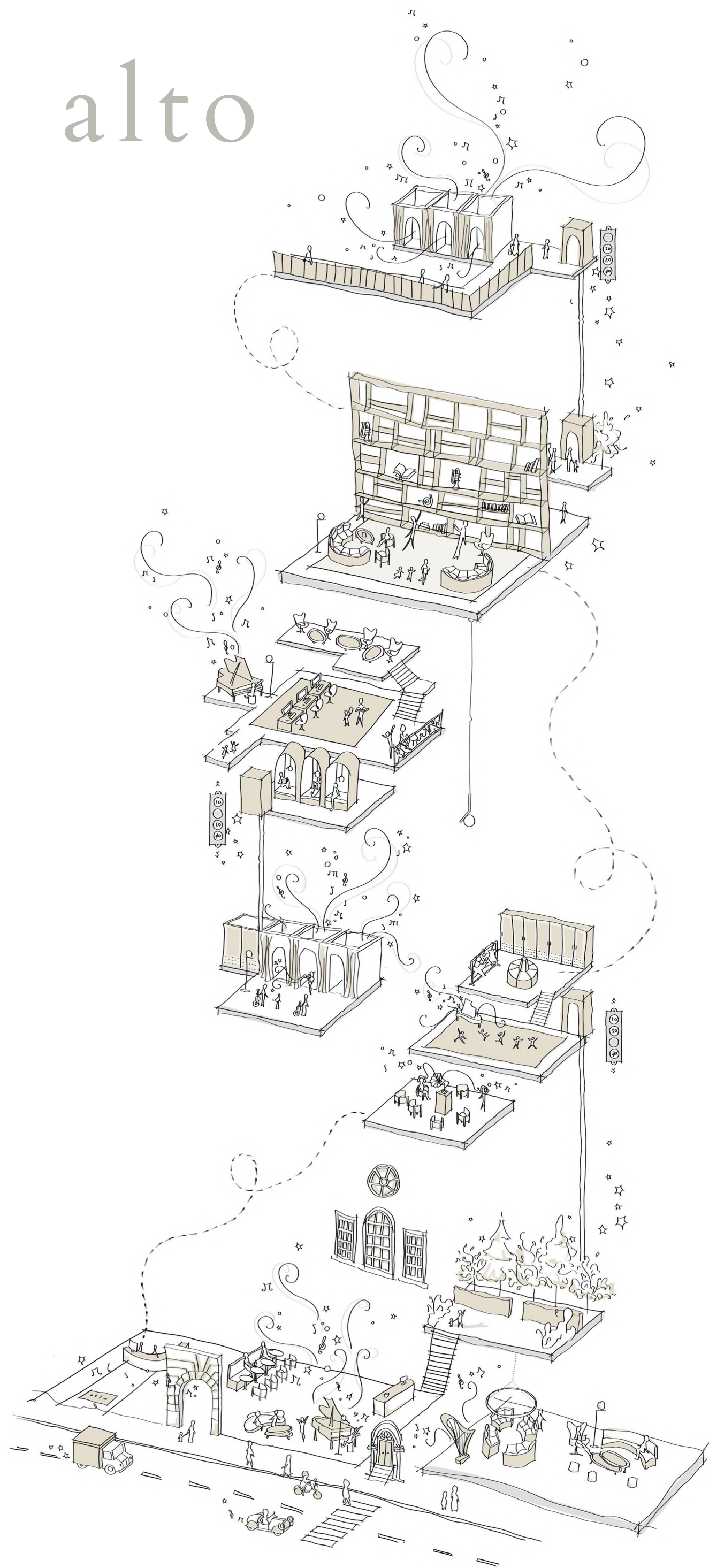


alto

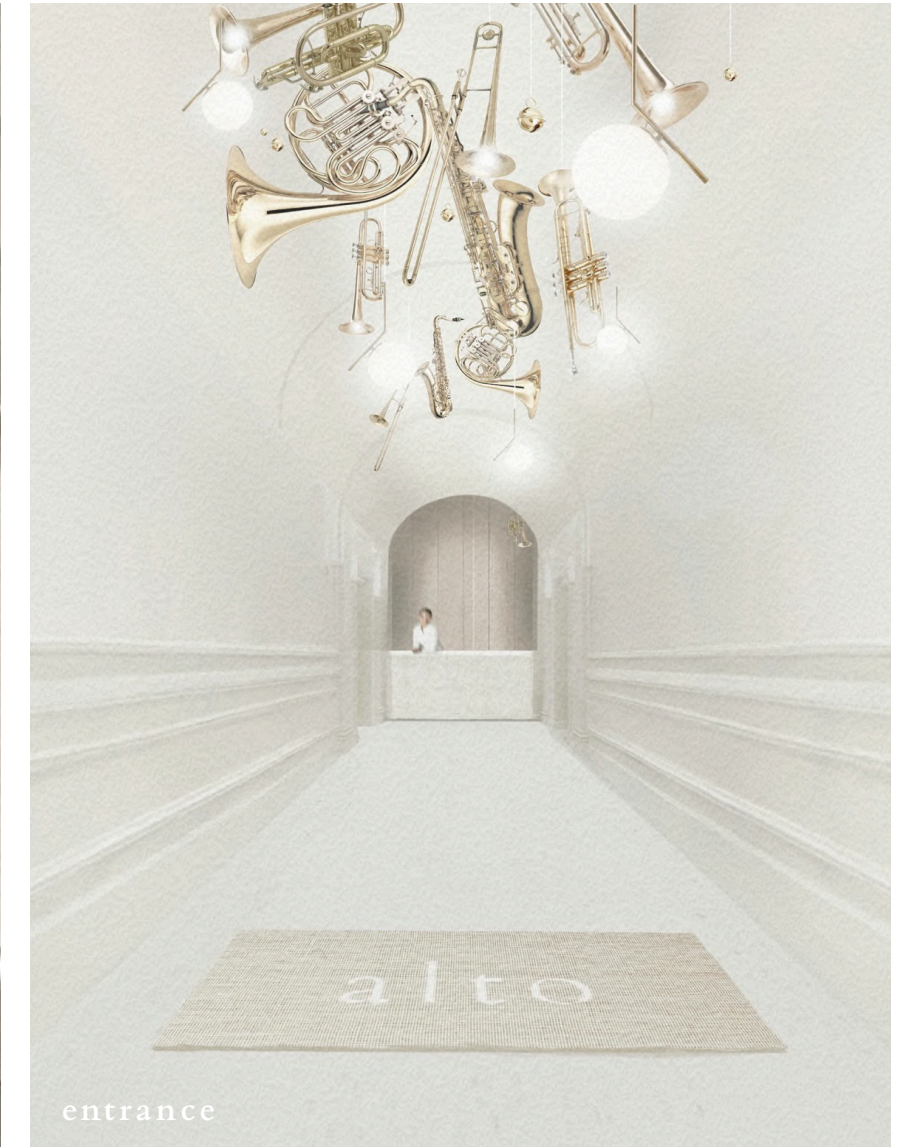


55-57 Westgate Road, a grade II* listed building, will be converted into Newcastle's first fully comprehensive Musical Therapy Centre - 'alto', providing a gentle, healing space for those in need. A uniquely holistic experience, alto will take visitors on a journey of self discovery, integration, wonder and delight. A melody of activities weave throughout the building, revealing rhythmic patterns that have been hiding within the historic building for centuries.

Alto has been crafted to provide a cutting edge environment for all types of musical therapy, from passive listening therapies to the very loudest of expressions. Visitors of all ages, backgrounds and stories and will have an equal opportunity to develop confidence through games, singing, and dancing, whilst cultivating new, transferrable skills within a specialist environment. Acoustic soft rooms provide refuge through focused learning, while a bespoke choir and dance studio promotes friendship and community integration. Alto features a small coffee house, designed to nurture friendships beyond group work and provide a community feel, as well as a large library and research centre, where visitors can flourish into independence in total comfort and safety.



the musical library

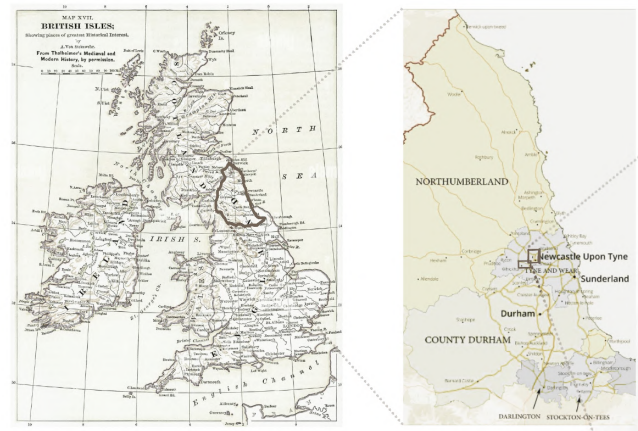


entrance



focus zone

site plan & context



Situated along the south - easterly length of Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, Assembly House boasts an opportunistic position within the city.

Once the economic foothold of the city, Westgate has fallen into disrepair in recent years. There is a huge amount of scope to utilise Assembly House as a beacon of change for the area, providing a measure to address some of Newcastle's key issues.

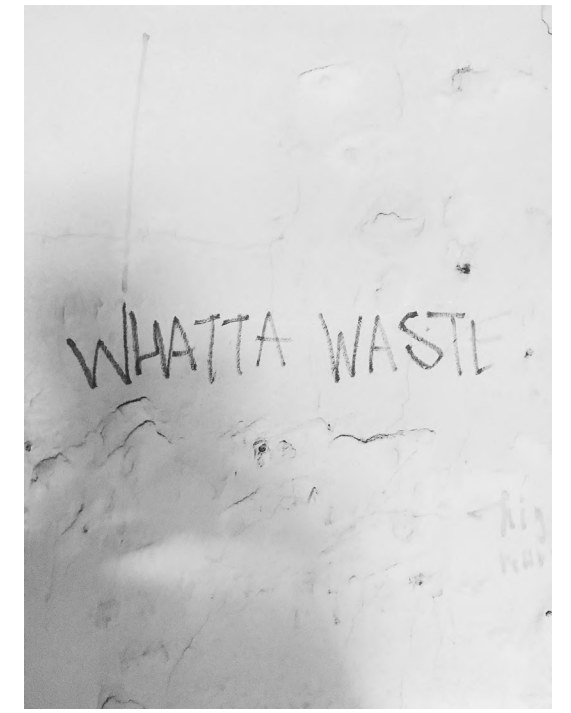
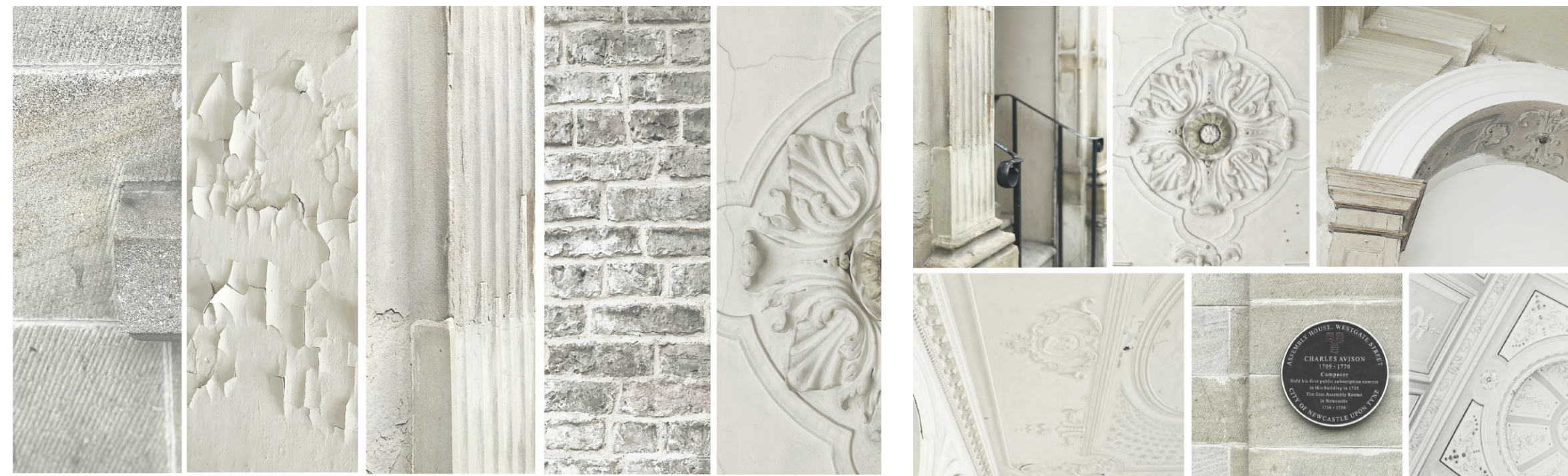


illustrated thoughts



Recycled cardboard used to represent the existing fabric of the building; old and 'patched together', yet equally as sturdy as it is fragile, with a recognised effort that it should be recycled and made into something new.

I chose to pick out key details I took from the site; the bright, wispy skies seeming to serve as a blank canvas for the sympathetic redesign of assembly house.



site photography

initial modelling



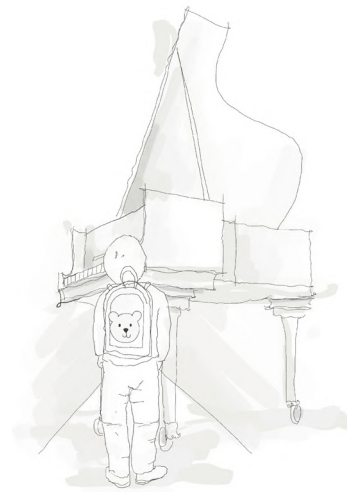
the story of alto



A good few years ago, there was a dark, smoky town, where a small boy named Charlie lived. Charlie was a little bit different to the other children; while they chattered and bubbled, Charlie couldn't find his words.



Each night after school, Charlie would go exploring, searching high and low for any sign of where they could be. One day, he came across an old house, with a long, gloomy tunnel inside - the perfect hiding place for a sentence or phrase. He slipped gently through the rusty gate, heart beating nervously as he crept inside. Charlie took a deep breath and shone his torch into the darkness.



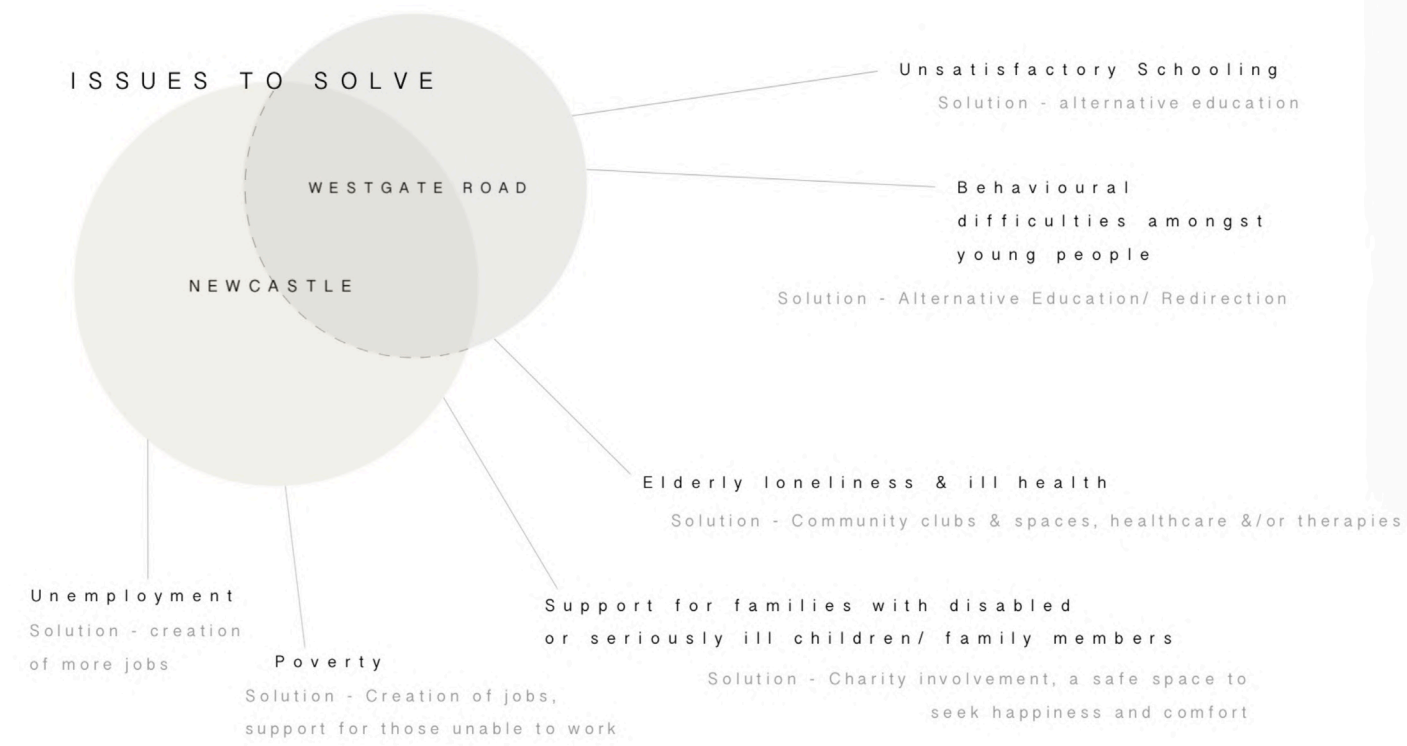
Charlie gasped, for he had never seen anything quite like what lay before him. It stood even taller than he, with a flapping sail like a pirate ship, and a peculiar wing that fluttered gently, open and closed. Inside, he could see something that looked like a row of pearly white teeth. What could it be? A rocket ship? A monster?

Charlie wished he had the words to ask.



Charlie felt so sad and so worried about his words and the monster, that frightened tears began to roll down his cheeks. They fell like silent snowflakes past his quivering knees, but he could not shout for help.

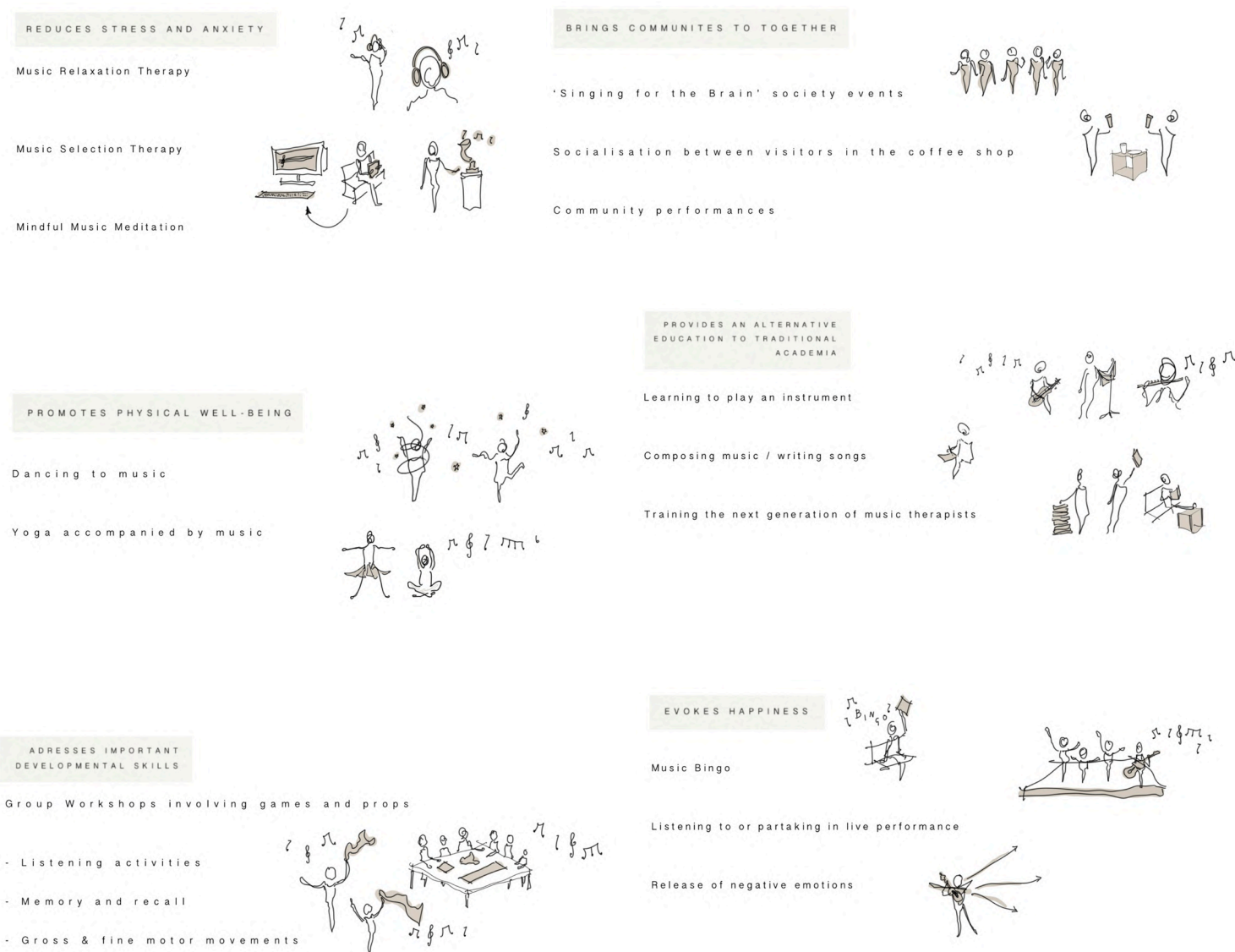
brief investigation: developing a narrative



relevance & suitability - historical narrative

Given that Assembly House is steeped in rich history, earning the building a grade II* listing, to ensure a sympathetic restoration it is vital that the new purpose is linked to its past stories and events. *Musicality*: notably, Assembly House was the venue of Charles Avison, a famous musician and composer's, first ever subscription concert. Furthermore, *alternative education*: Lady Windsor made the building into a girls school, going against the grain of only boys being educated at the time. Also significant is the use of Assembly house as a *community beacon*; bringing people from all over the north together to celebrate differences and enjoy the benefits of one another's company; the building referred to in historical writing as 'singing in the midnight air'.

functional analysis, derived from the six purposes



REQUIREMENTS

- Alternative education source
- Community space for advice, socialisation and support
- Provide Jobs
- Offer a form of healthcare or therapy
- To be a safe space

SOLUTION CONCEPT

MUSIC THERAPY

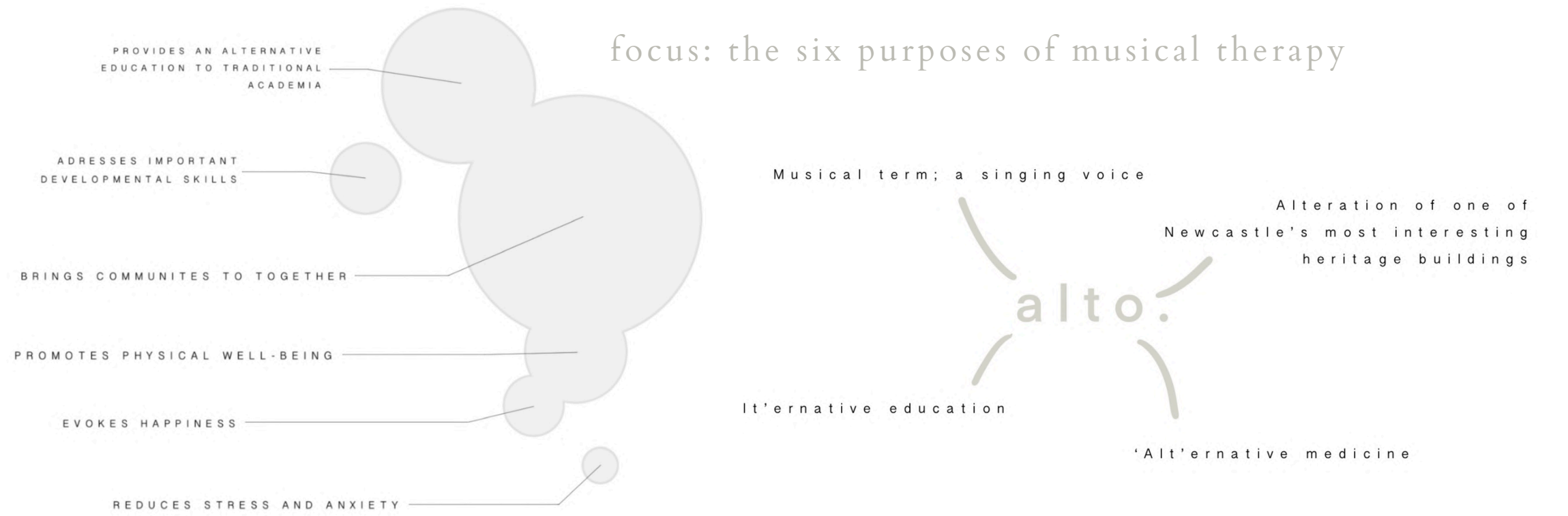
COMPETITORS?

- Sage Gateshead
- Extremely overwhelming, noisy & crowded
- Sunbeam Centre
- Fit for purpose but located in Cumbria- unreachable for many
- Nordoff Robbins Jesmond
- Primarily a training facility, building unfit for therapy purposes

SOLUTION PROPOSAL

alto.

focus: the six purposes of musical therapy



relevance & suitability - building anatomy

Depicting music through visual studies; this integral part of the staircase plasterwork within assembly house demonstrates a range of sounds, including melody, pitch, rhythm & crescendo. I recreated this as a modelling study in clay, pva and acrylic paint. Despite the colour culture of the imperialist plasterwork being mainly blue, this hugely central yet overlooked feature echoes the soft, mellow tones of traditional sheet music.

Using this theory that music should be prevalent within the fabric of the building itself within my avison inspired shelving design

brief investigation: developing a narrative



The little boy was about to run away, when he noticed that his tricky tears had fallen like dewdrops onto the rocket ship, collecting in puddles that began to shimmer and shine. The puddles grew bigger and bigger until the most wonderful thing happened. The rocket ship began to speak in a strange language, so beautiful that it made Charlie want to twirl round and round, right up into the sky. He brushed his tears gently from the ivory buttons that turned out not to be teeth after all, and spoke again, in a voice that sounded like jewels and magic. Even though Charlie couldn't understand the language, he knew it was telling him that it wasn't a rocket ship at all, but a lovely friend from far away who, for the first time Charlie could remember, wanted to speak to him.



Charlie decided to call his new friend Pia, and he visited her at the old house every day after school, where they had the most wonderful fun. Charlie never ever felt sad when he was with Pia, and after some time, his dark, smoky town began to feel a little lighter. Pia taught Charlie her strange, magical language so that she could tell him stories about the enchanted kingdom that came from, where beautiful songbirds dance on the whirling winds, and the rivers all run with shimmering gold.

The best part was, neither Charlie nor Pia had to use any words at all.



One day, Pia brought along her friends, Tom-Pete and Belle. Tom-Pete was wearing an excellent suit of strong brass armour, with handsome buttons scattered down his front. Charlie thought it must have been a gift from a very important King. Tom-Pete was a funny man, who spoke in noodes and oodes that tickled anyone who heard, especially Charlie who laughed and laughed.

Like Charlie, Belle didn't speak, but she wore a beautiful long dress made from thousands of shimmering diamonds. When Belle danced, the diamonds clinked together and sang a chorus of sparkles, rings, tinkles and chimes.

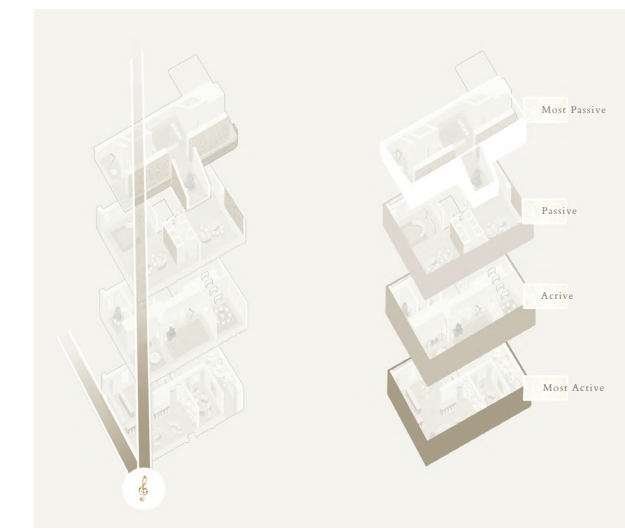
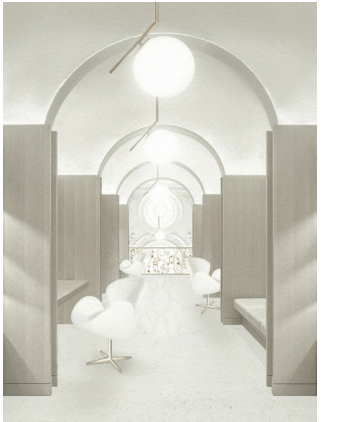
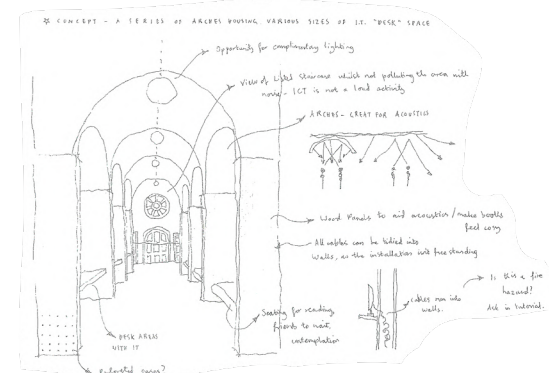
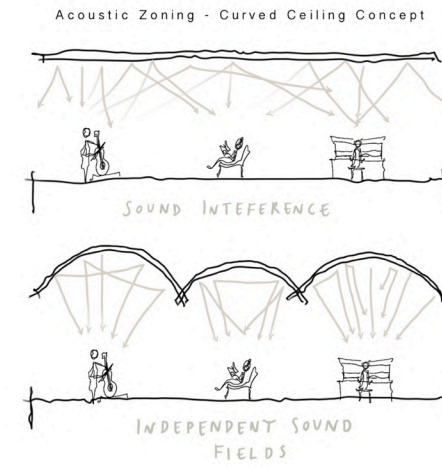


long section

concepts & motifs

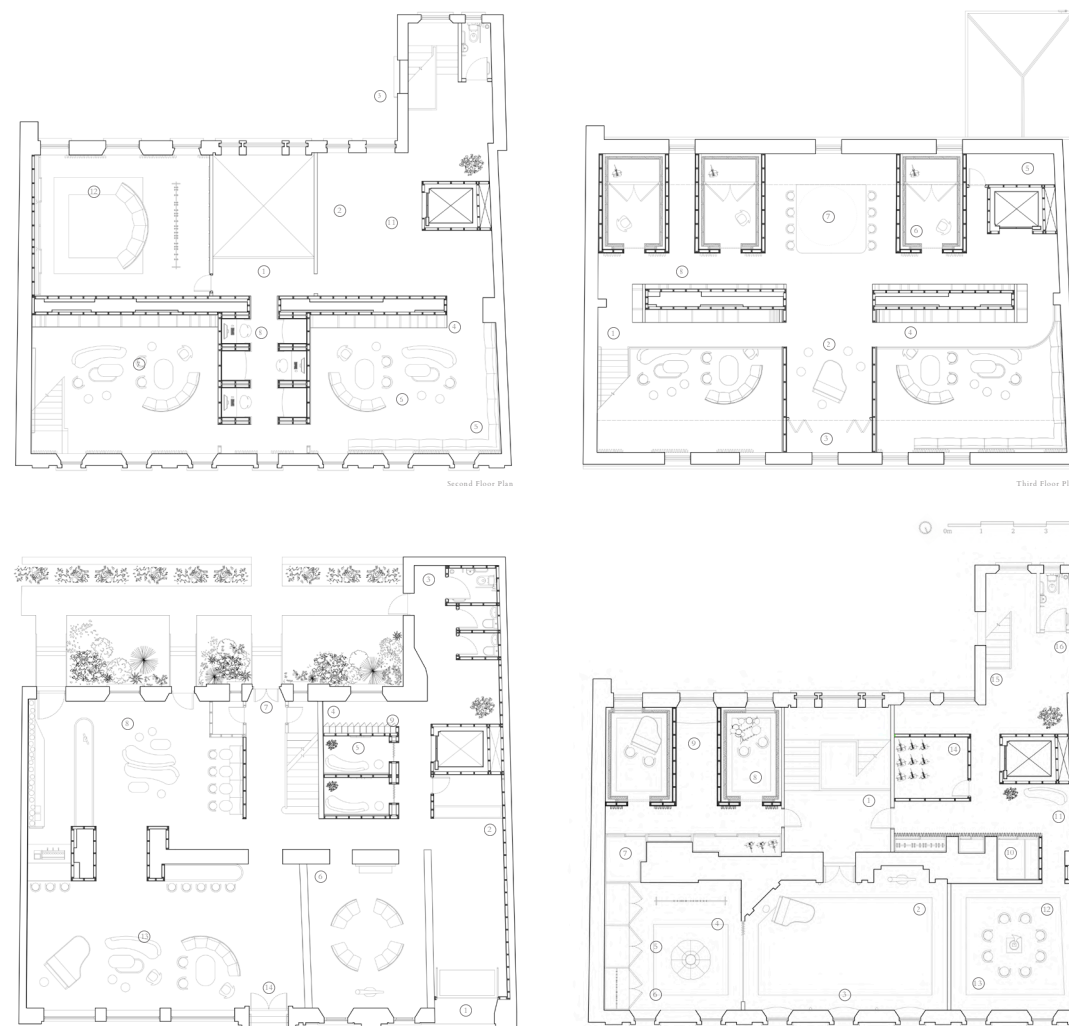


Given the potential sensitivity of alto's visitors, palettes have been kept soft, muted and calm to avoid triggers or distractions. The palette of gentle oaks, antique brass, alabaster and ecru replicate the mellow tones of traditional sheet music. Whilst these materials give a tranquil feel, they also need to be robust; washable, wipeable and water resistant materials have been chosen, alongside sustainable options, such as cork flooring, 100% recycled acoustic pulp panels, and waste resourcing of old floor joists.



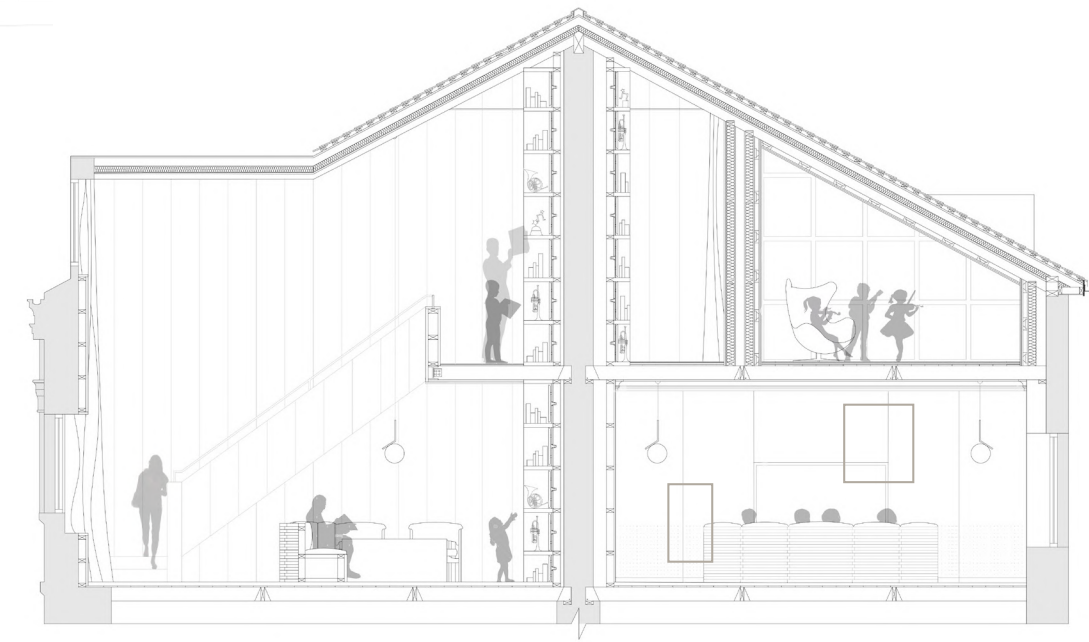
Acoustics and zoning are of vast importance within alto, as not only does noise from outside need to be kept out, but inside noise needed to be dispersed appropriately. I chose to design with learning types in mind, having quiet, passive activities in the quietest zone (third floor) and the loudest, active activities closest to the street noise on the ground floor. Internally, acoustic strategies (see above and below) have been used to minimise noise pollution whilst maintaining the integrity of the building.

floor plans & key

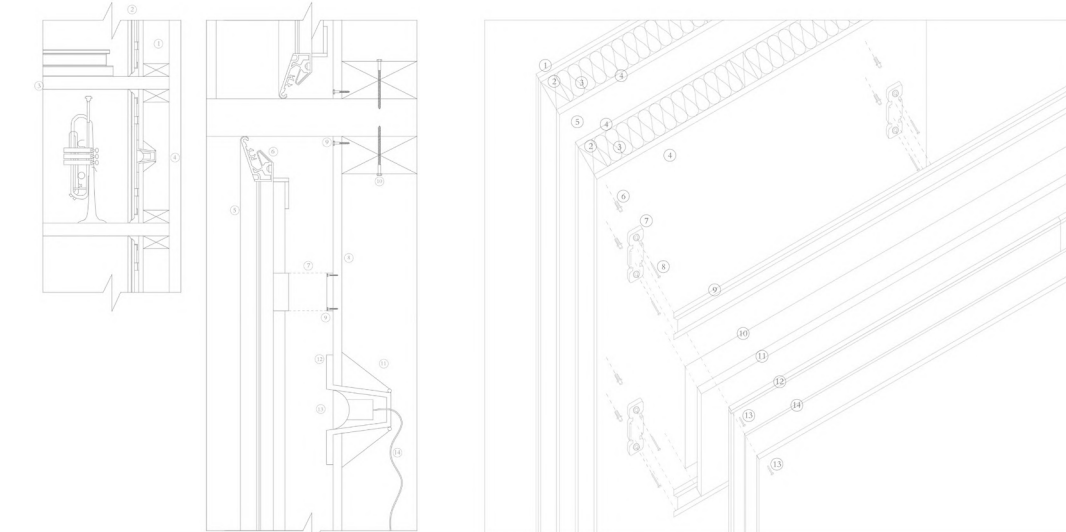


- Ground Floor**
 - Welcome
 - 1. Primary Entrance
 - 2. Reception
 - 3. WC & Hand Wash Facilities
 - 4. Lockers
 - 5. Private Waiting Rooms
 - 6. Community Waiting Room
 - 7. Ancillary Entrance
 - 8. Store
 - Clif Coffer
 - 9. Seating and Circulation
 - 10. Outdoor / Miniature Garden
 - 11. Back of House / Food & Drink Prep
 - 12. Performance Zone
 - 13. Instrument Store
 - 14. Seating and Circulation
 - 15. Secondary Entrance
- First Floor**
 - 1. Landing
 - 2. Dance / Choir Studio
 - 3. Window Seating
 - 4. Costume Rail
 - 5. Seating
 - 6. Store - Studio
 - 7. Store - Therapy Booths
 - 8. 1-2-1 Therapy Booths
 - 9. Window Seat
 - 10. Headphone Store
 - 11. Breakout Area
 - 12. Listening Room
 - 13. Gramophone 'Speaker'
 - 14. Instrument Store
 - 15. Stairs to Second Floor
 - 16. WC & Hand Wash Facilities
- Second Floor**
 - 1. Viewing Platform
 - 2. Zone for Musical Installation
 - Please refer to Axonometric for Details
 - 3. WC & Hand Washing Facilities
 - 4. Musical Shelving Exhibit
 - 5. Bench Seating
 - 6. Loose Seating
 - 7. Focus Pod
 - 8. IT Pod
 - 9. Access to Third Floor
 - 10. Screen for Guided Imagery
 - 11. Seating
 - 12. Brass Headphone Rail
- Third Floor**
 - 1. Mezzanine Level
 - 2. Piano Zone
 - 3. Eaves Storage
 - 4. Musical Shelving Exhibit
 - 5. Maintenance Room - Access to Pipes and Plant within lift shaft/ Cooling towers on roof
 - 6. Sound Proof Pod
 - 7. Group Activity Table
 - 8. Pin Board / Extra shelving

detail section & technical details



1. Seal Wall, Stone & 100mm Insulation CLS Trusses
2. Knauf Acoustic Silt GIP System
3. 100mm 100mm x 100mm x 100mm Old Stud
4. Existing Structural Wall
5. 100mm x 100mm Truss/Joist of Solid UK Merkle, Ivory
6. Silver Anodised Aluminium Minimalist Truss Clip
7. Stainless Steel Magnet System Stone & 100mm x 100mm
8. 1200mm x 12.2m x 100mm Plyboard
9. 20mm x 20mm Stone
10. 20mm x 20mm Stone
11. Spring Clips
12. Spotlight Fins
13. Stone Backed LED Spotlight, Warm White 30 Lux
14. Cloud Electrical Cabling



1. 1200mm x 12.2m x 100mm KNAUF plyboard, 4mm, double layered
2. 2000 x 100mm x 100mm C16 graded CLS timber, each spaced 400mm apart
3. 100mm Backward only acoustic mineral wool insulation
4. 1200mm x 12.2m x 100mm KNAUF plyboard, 4mm, single layered
5. 100mm air gap/ acoustic door pocket
6. 100mm x 100mm handrail wall plug
7. 170mm x 100mm x 50mm Backward only Spring hole, diameter 7.5mm
8. 100mm x 50mm Stone
9. Stone & Stone & 200mm Stone Backward only Spring hole, diameter 100mm (vertical)
10. Elastic Spray adhesive
11. 20mm Backward only acoustic mineral wool insulation
12. AC20 Trade Stone Acoustic Sealant
13. 1200mm x 100mm x 100mm acoustic grade plyboard, 12.2m long per m2 fixed with 20mm screws
14. 1200mm x 5.5m x 100mm Trusswood 3000 acoustic membrane

3D exploration: visualising alto - axonometric study



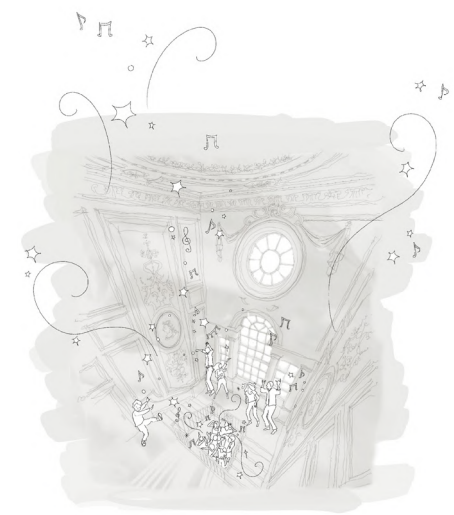
alto
on film



Pia, Charlie, Tom-Pete and Belle became the very best of friends, twisting, laughing and tippy-tapping throughout the old house every week. Charlie even forgot all about his work - he had never felt so wonderful in his whole life.



One night, Pia, Charlie, Tom-Pete and Belle made such a terrible racket of boom-claps and noodle-cootles that they woke the neighbours from their snoozes. A particularly grumpy man, Mr. Elkon, gathered the townspeople and marched into the old house, shouting at the poor crumbly walls for breathing dust onto his brand new pyjamas.



The closer and closer they got to the noise, the less grumpy and more wonderful the townspeople began to feel. They all began to dance together, delighting at the sight of Pia, Charlie, Tom-Pete and Belle having so much fun.

Eventually even Mr. Elkon joined in, and the whole town sang together so loudly as one that the darkness lifted and the smoke blew away for the first time in many years. Charlie knew that from then on, it would be the happiest town in the whole wide world.

The townspeople agreed that Pia, Tom-Pete and Belle should stay in the old house, as they had helped Charlie and the little town so much. Over the next few weeks, they worked very hard to repair the crumbly house, crafting a special twinkly dancing studio for Belle, a handsome stage for Tom-Pete to practice his noodles and cootles, and a library big enough for the whole town, where Pia likes to tell enchanting stories about the magical kingdom they came from.

You can still visit Pia, Tom-Pete and Belle in their beautiful old house today.

