



## John Dobson Music Therapy Centre

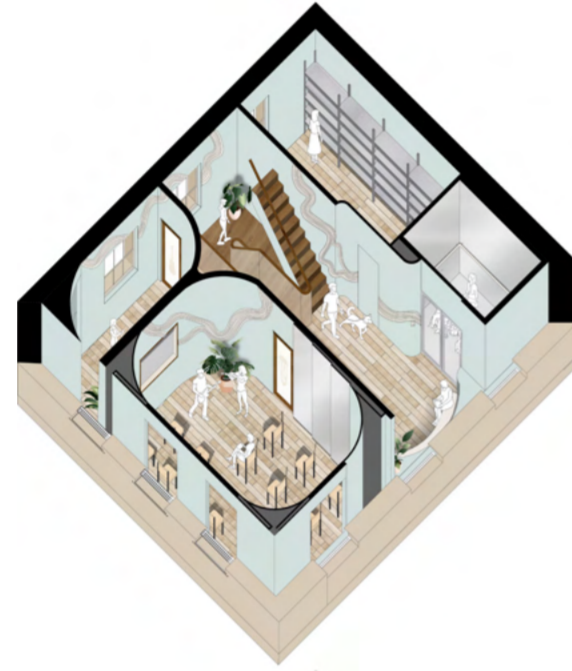
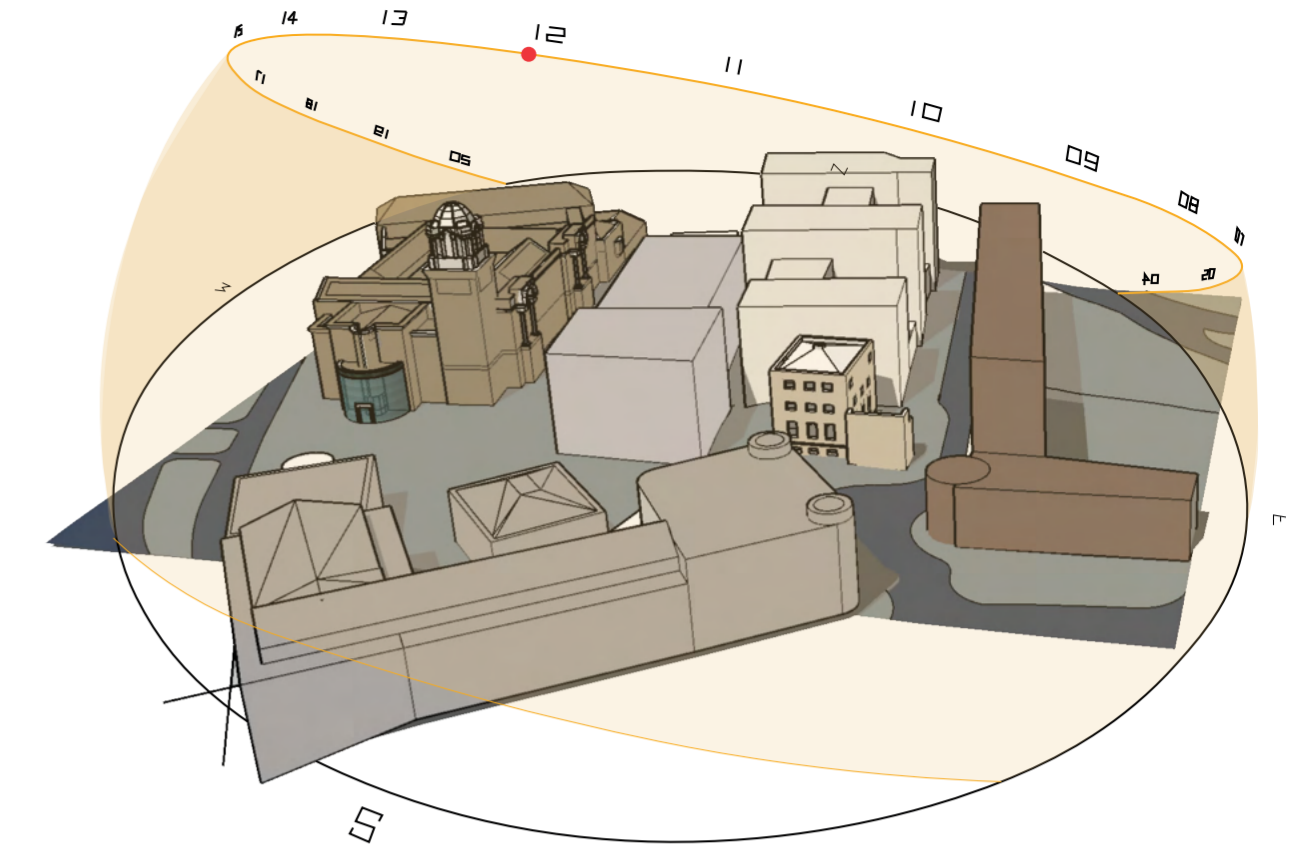
India Lloyd



This 1823 Grade II\* listed building with conservation areas internally was built by John Dobson. The building's history has a theme of embracing music, this will be continued through the music therapy design proposal which will ensure access to everyone and the ability to utilise all senses. The centre will encourage relaxation and reflection by creating a winter garden glass house behind the Oxford Gallery Portico. Socialising is a very important part of the scheme due to the fact that almost 7 in 10 young disabled people are chronically lonely due to being isolated from society. The scheme works by making the key journey through the building accessible for people in wheelchairs leaving enough room for two wheelchairs to comfortably pass each other. The centre is a refuge from the busy, crowded and stressful city centre and allows isolated people to have an adventurous day out while still feeling safe and comfortable.

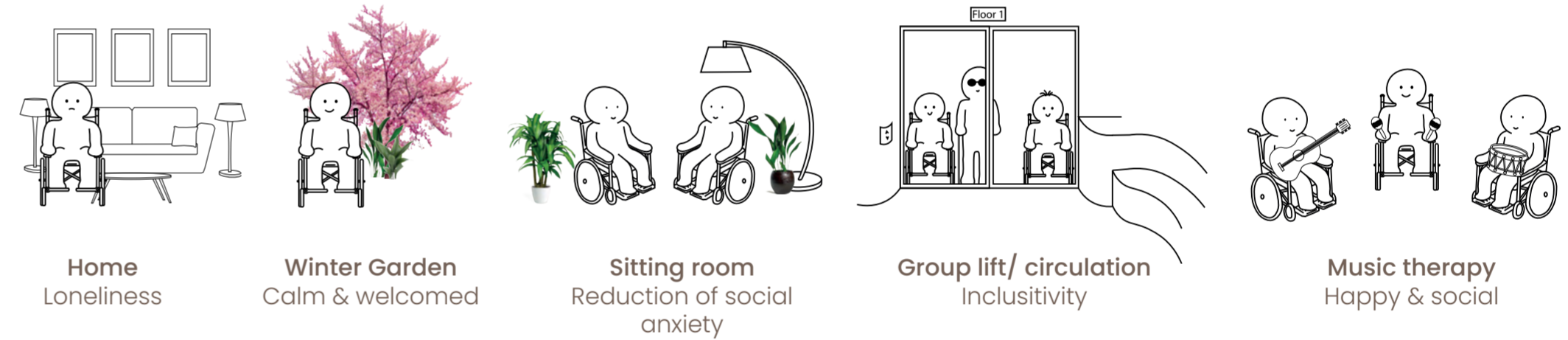
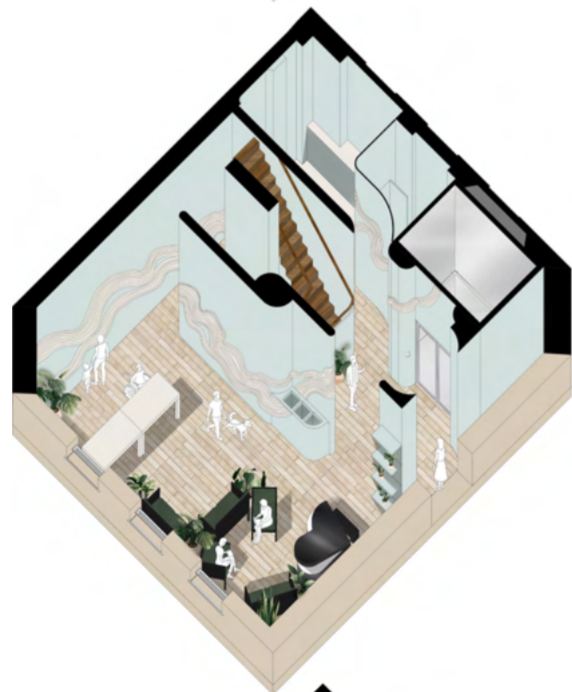


# AXONOMETRIC & DESIGN CONTEXT



The proposed design has a thought through hierarchy of space allowing louder musical activities to be done on the low levels where a larger flow of people come through the building. To keep acoustics down on the busier floors and studio rooms acoustic waves have been strategically placed to reduce sound reverberations. The walled winter garden incorporates circulation and nature to bring visitors up to the main entrance on the ground floor. The ramp allows enough room for two wheelchairs to pass making it inclusive for all visitors.

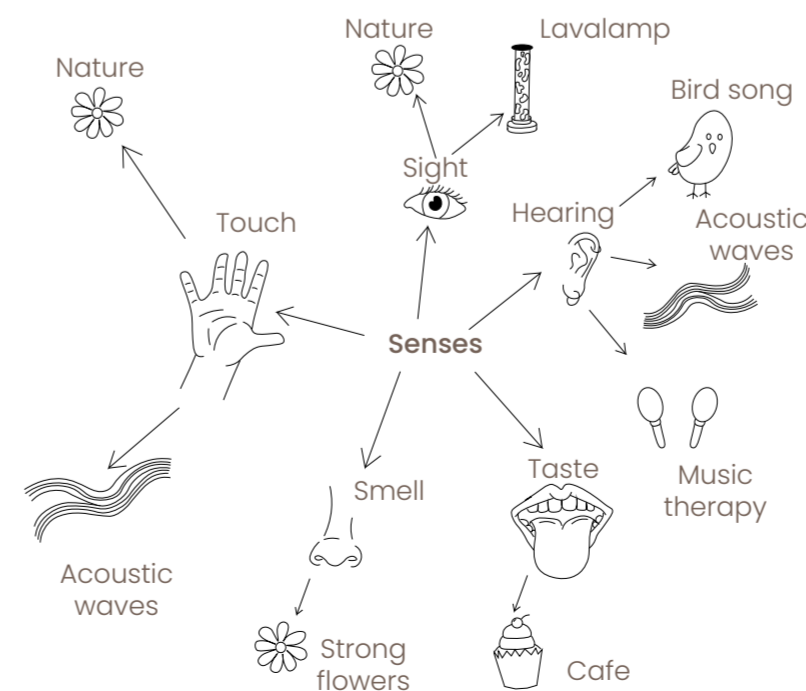
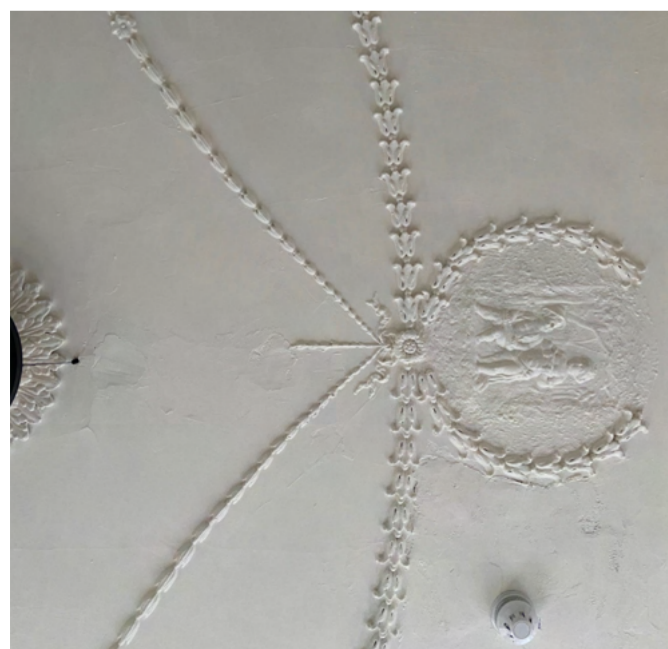
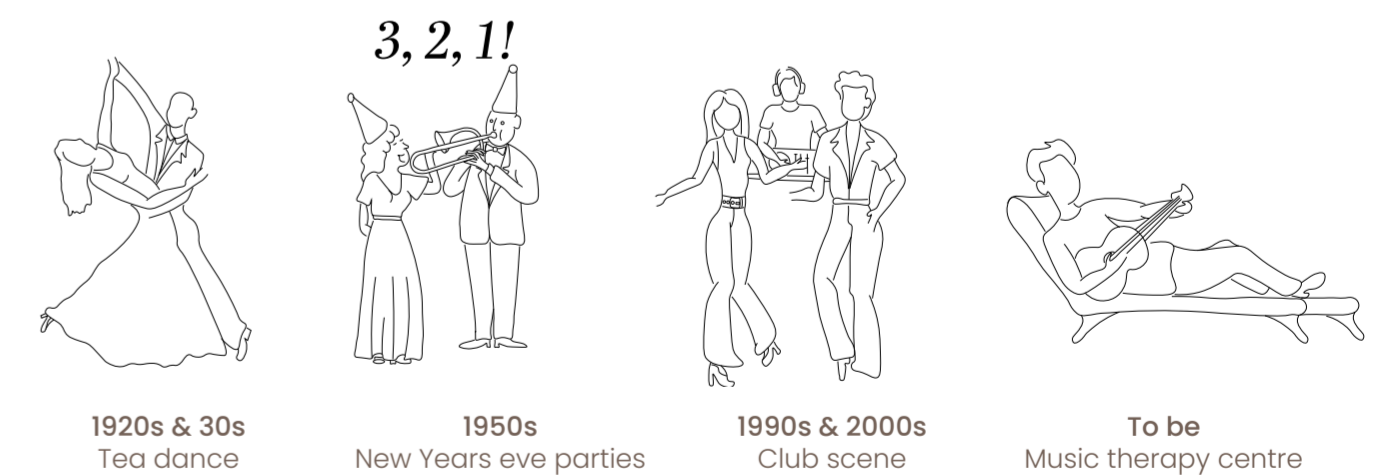
John Dobson house is on New Bridge Street looking out onto the Blue Carpet. The architect was John Dobson who built it to live in himself in 1823 and the building was extended with the top floor being added in the early 1920s. The building has just been renovated by the architects GT3 but, before this it had been a venue of multiple night clubs/dance rooms. The building itself was not used for the night club but a big extension connected to the north and east side of the building, which has now been destroyed. The building has Grade II\* listed features on the outside and some conservation areas on the interior, which include handrails on the staircase and stucco on the ground and first floor. The entrance to the building is currently on the westside with stairs leading up to the ground floor.



Many of the visitors to the centre will struggle with loneliness from being isolated from the community throughout covid. After the pandemic 7 in 10 young disabled people are chronically lonely and leaving the safe space of their house could be a daunting idea, that's why it is extremely important to make the centre welcoming and calming. Facilities like toilets and the lift are signed and easy to get to allowing people to find them fast and reduce levels of anxiety. The sitting room is a space to meet friends taking workshops or for staff to introduce you to others if you are new and can reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed and social anxiety. Once visitors have found friends the group lift is a great way to travel to the workshops. The music workshops help build confidence by gradually being introduced back into society gradually.

## Timeline of music through the history of John Dobson House

It felt important to keep music as part of the main function of the building as throughout its life has held various music venues starting from tea dances in 1920 and most recently nightclubs. Nightclubs can be a place of alcohol and substance abuse which can come from addiction, the idea of turning the building into a space where people can overcome these problems while still enjoying music feels like a step in a great direction. Clubs are often not disabled friendly, but this centre will allow everyone to enjoy all types of music.



Throughout the building different features in the design trigger senses. The aim was to allow all senses to be used in a subtle and relevant way to the scheme. As a music therapy centre hearing could be stimulated by the sound of music but we wanted this to go beyond the workshops, as the site is located on busy roads in the centre of town bird song will be played from speakers into the garden to make the noise pollution from the cars less obvious. The centre has a cafe allowing visitors to sit and enjoy food and drink. The winter garden can stimulate smell, touch and sight, with bright flowers making the space pop with colour and a living wall with carefully picked out herbs and plants with a poignant aroma allows visitors to become interested and be at one with nature. Within the building acoustic waves are placed on various walls, made of felt the waves are fun to brush your hands along while walking through the building. Even though the building is towered over by other taller buildings, it is still important to let natural sunlight in. A sky light has been added to the second floor circulation area to make the space feel much bigger and open. Another stimulant for the eyes is the sensory room where a bright lava lamp and an LED roof allows visitors to relax and enjoy.



# PERSPECTIVES

The perspective allows insight into four key spaces of the scheme. Each perspective shows at least one sense being used within the spaces and allows an idea of how the centre is used and enjoyed by visitors.

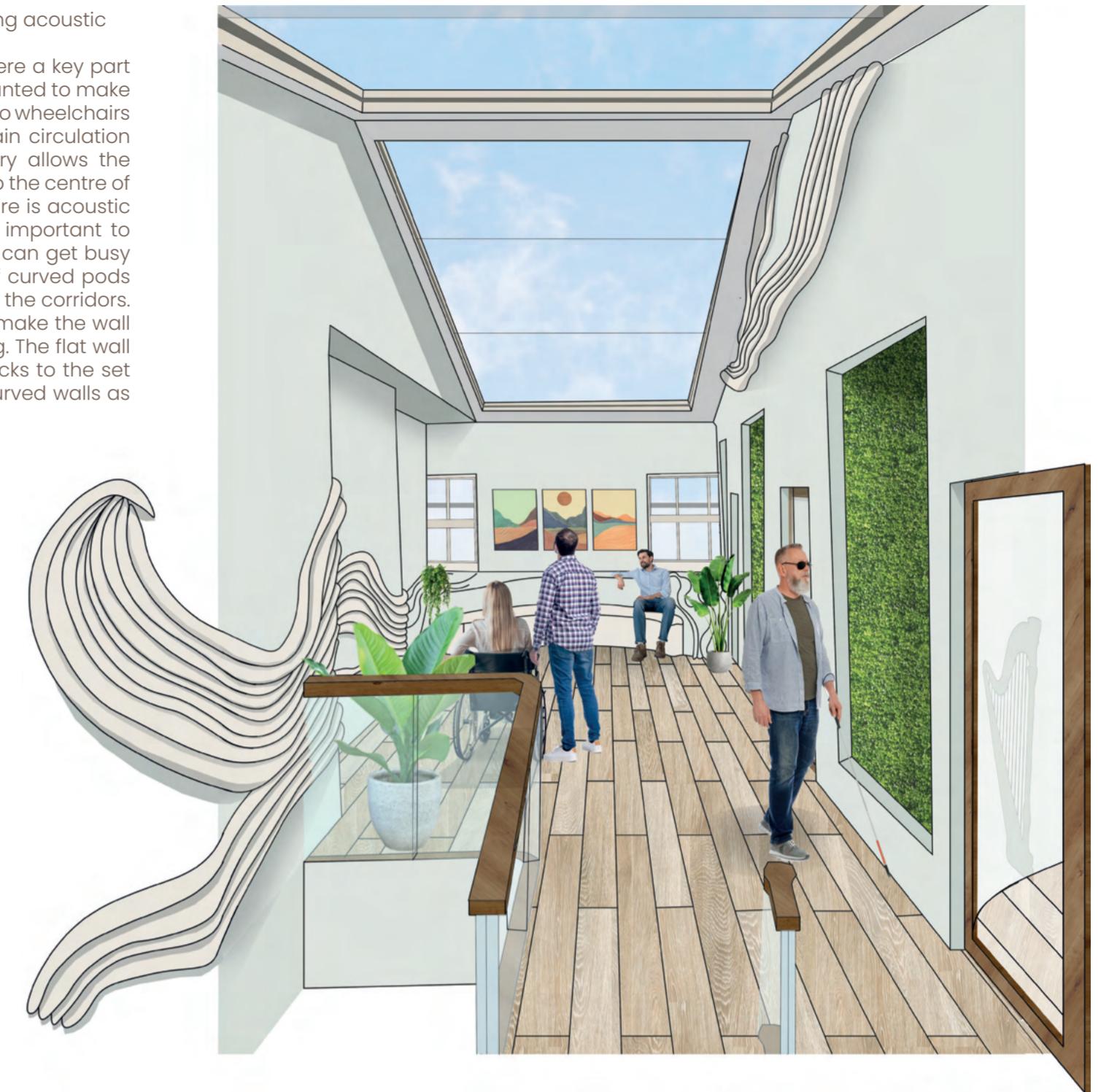
## Sitting room - Touching acoustic waves and Taste of cafe food

This room allows visitors to relax before and after the workshops but is also a place for carers to wait while workshops are taking place. It's a welcoming and open room with a range of relaxed sofas and more formal chairs and tables for eating. The sofas and armchairs have been placed to allow wheelchairs in between and next to them, making sure no one feels excluded or left out. There is an open piano where anyone can sit and play a piece of music, to encourage people to step out of their comfort zones. This space can be completely cleared for private functions in the evening to allow extra income for the charity. The sofas and armchairs can be relocated to the storage room or outside in the garden to allow for relaxed seating. Having the sitting room multifunctional not only allows extra income but awareness of the charity.



## Circulation - Sight of sky and touching acoustic waves

The circulation spaces in my design were a key part of the journey through the building. I wanted to make sure that there was enough space for two wheelchairs to comfortably pass each other in main circulation areas. The building's existing geometry allows the conserved staircase and lift to flow up the centre of the building. In all circulation areas there is acoustic panelling as waves and moss. It was important to have them in these areas as corridors can get busy and loud. The studios are made out of curved pods making lovely extracted curved walls in the corridors. A straight wall in front of these curves make the wall feel extracted from the original building. The flat wall is there to help visitors with walking sticks to the set back doors instead of mistaking the curved walls as door openings.

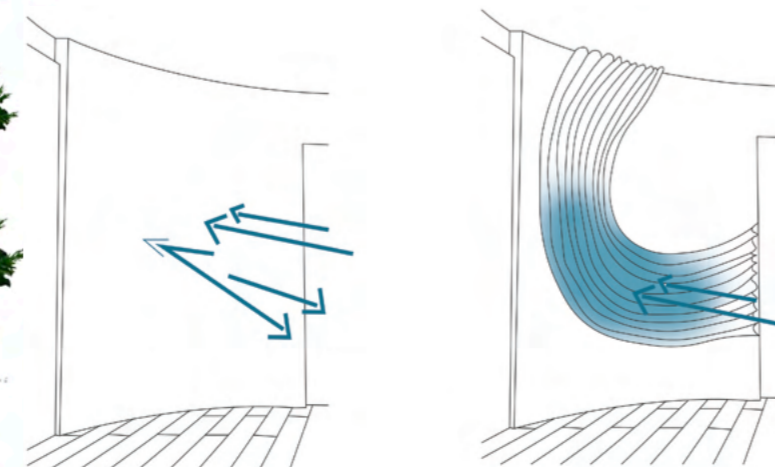


## Winter Garden - Smell of flowers and Sight and sound of nature

The winter garden is the entrance to the centre allowing the plants to calm visitors and reduce anxiety. Within the winter garden there are two entrances to the building through the basement and the ground floor via ramps. It was important that the main routes into the building were wheelchair friendly making sure no one was excluded. Specific plants and flowers have been planted to make the space smell pungent and stimulating to the senses. The winter garden is a covered garden with a brick wall on the east side and a glass wall on the north side. It was important to have a roof on the winter garden to allow people to access the building via the wheelchair ramp without getting wet if it was raining.

### Acoustic waves

Acoustic waves are placed on curved walls as sound vibrations bounce off back into the room. The felt waves help absorb sound waves into the wall helping recording quality.

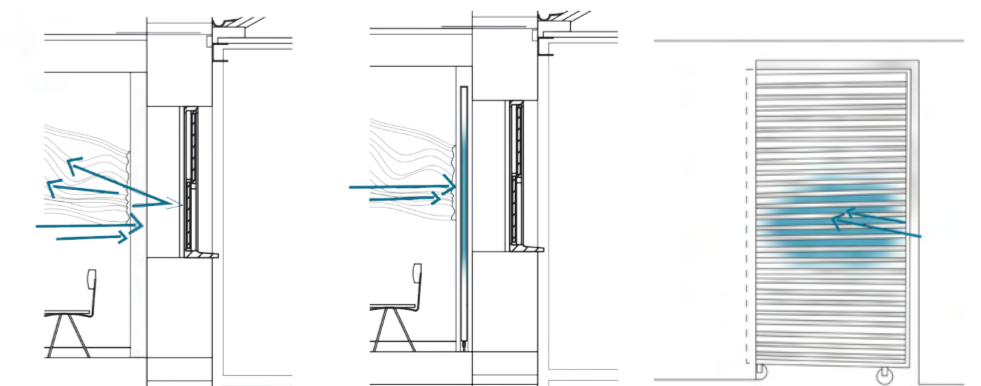


## Studio - Sound of music

The music therapy centre has 3 studio rooms. The main studio room on the first floor has a personal control room. The room can be used for dance classes as well as music workshops. To make the studio a flexible room the curved walls hold sliding mirrors that spread across a wall. Under the wooden flooring there is a springy floor mechanism to allow a bouncer and safer landing for visitors and workers. It was important to make the space minimalistic but multi purpose due to the room being rented out in the evenings for local artists and dance classes for extra income for the charity. Acoustic waves and bafflers have been added to the room to minimise sound vibrations. The bafflers can be hidden in the curved walls and pulled out when needed. All the chairs and plants are movable and can be stacked to allow access and space for wheelchairs and band practice.

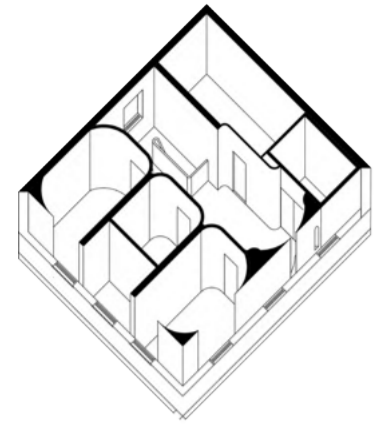
### Baffles

Sliding bafflers cover up windows as glass also reflects sound waves back into the room. The bafflers have slits to allow sunlight in. The Baffles can slide into the walls as top quality sound is not necessary for all activities.



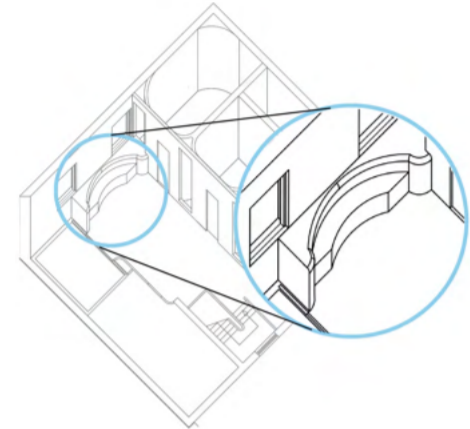


# FLOOR PLANS AND SPATIAL AMBITIONS



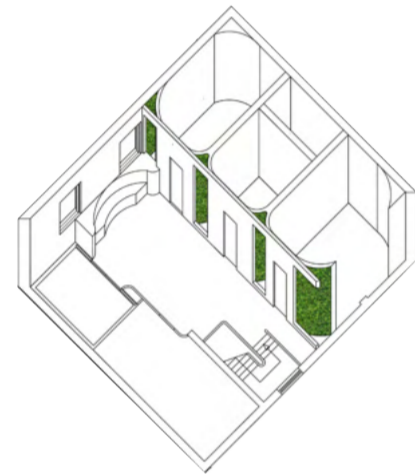
## Curved walls

The studios and control rooms have been shaped like pods. As curved walls have been proven to decrease levels of stress.



## Circulation Seating

In the scheme there is generous space for circulation to allow for wheelchairs passing each other. Due to there being four floors it was important to make resting spaces on the first and second floor with seats to wait in comfort. The lift doors are glass allowing better visibility.



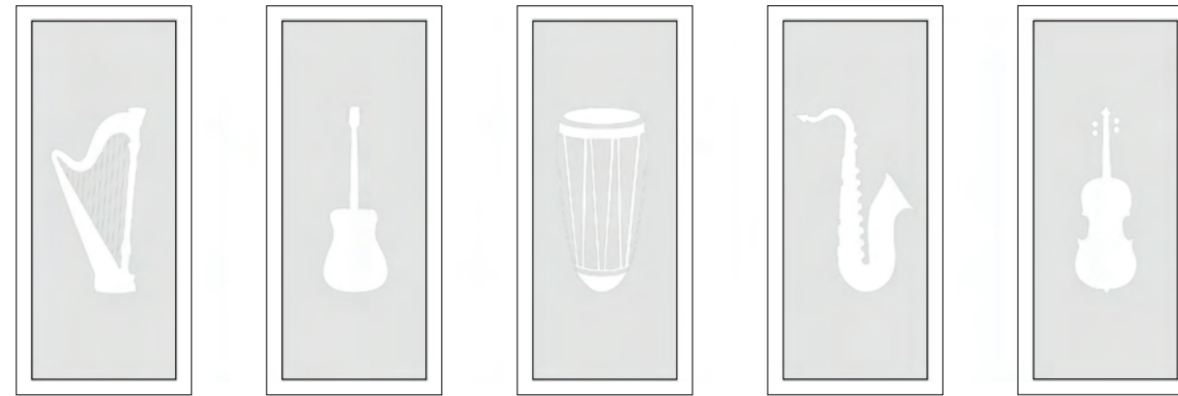
## Acoustic moss around pods

The pods have acoustic fake moss on them to connect the inside to the outside. The pods are placed along the load bearing wall, there is a beam above creating a straight wall and the curved walls curving from it. The beam line along the top has been mirrored on the floor to make the curved walls seem like they are windowed off, this was done to make it easier for people who are blind to find the doors as public doors are set back from walls and private ones are seamless.



## The mult use of the ground floor sitting room

In the daytime the ground floor will be used as a cafe and social. People can't wait for their sessions, get on the floor from the cafe and relax with friends. The ground floor can be hired out in the evening for private functions and charity events. The large studio on the first floor can also be hired out to generate income for the building.



## Door designs on the first and second floor

The doors into the studios and control rooms have different musical instruments on them which resembles the name of the room. The image on the door is clear glass while the rest of the glass around it is fogged to allow some sight into the rooms but offers some privacy. Public doors are set back from the walls and private doors run seamlessly with the walls to allow visitors who use guide sticks to distinguish between rooms.



- Materials**
- Farrow & Ball - Borrowed light & California collection - palm
  - Farrow & Ball- stong white
  - 3D acoustic wave paneling
  - Original listed stucco
  - Oak wooden floor
- Nature**
- Plants on site**
- Mint
  - Lavender
  - Rosemary
  - Blue bells
  - Jasmine

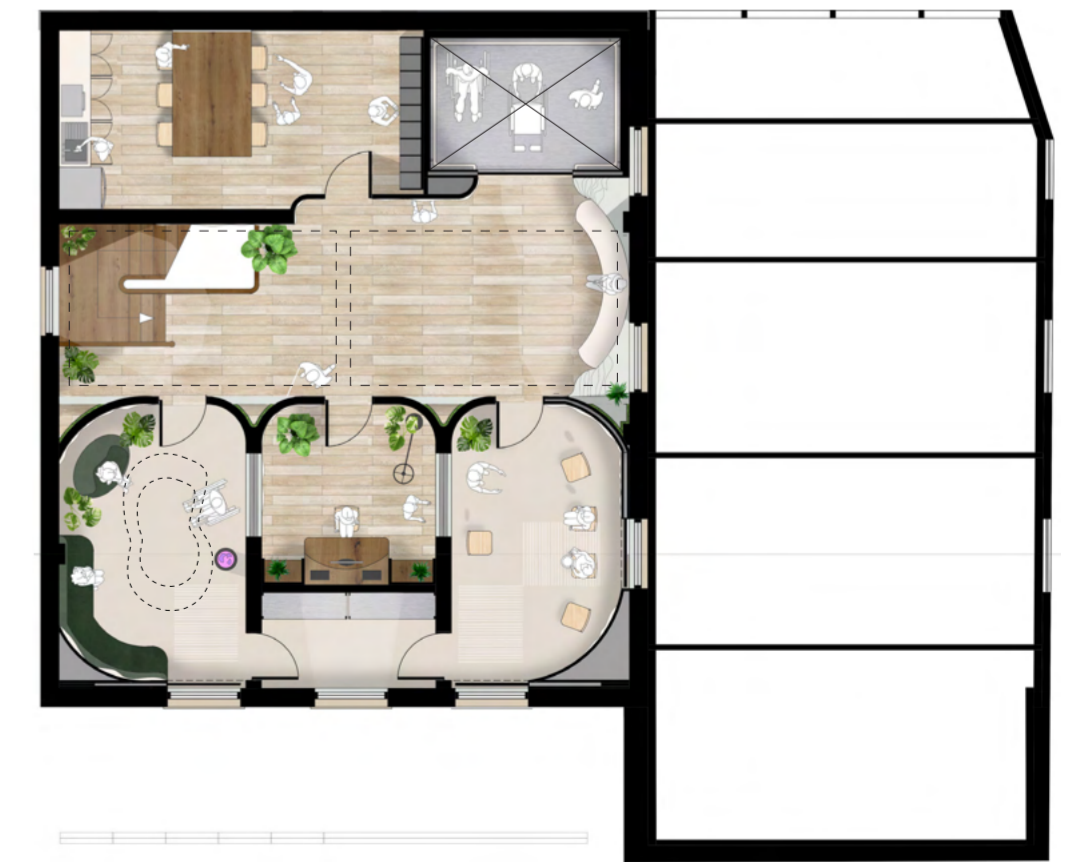


- Basement**
1. Entrance
  2. Living wall
  3. Ramp
  4. winter garden
  5. Adult changing toilet
  6. Disabled toilet
  7. Group lift
  8. Storage
  9. Spare wheelchairs
  10. Rain water storage

- Ground floor**
3. Ramp
  4. Winter garden
  11. Reception
  12. Stairs
  7. Group lift
  13. Emergency exit
  14. Cafe
  15. Kitchen
  16. Kitchenette
  17. Cafe seating / private functions (night)

- First floor**
7. Group lift
  12. Stairs
  18. Storage
  19. Large studio (drum)
  20. Control room 1 (guitar)

- Second floor**
7. Group lift
  12. Stairs
  21. Studio 2 (violin)
  22. Sensory room / studio 3 (harp)
  23. Control room 2 (saxophone)
  24. Storage
  25. Staff room
  26. Ceiling light over hallway

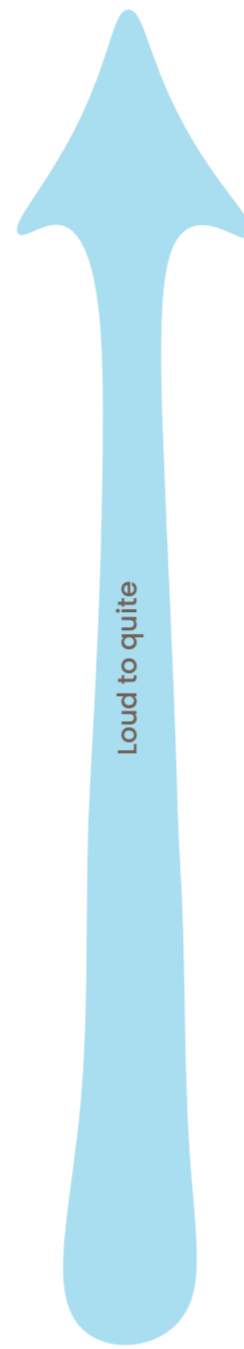
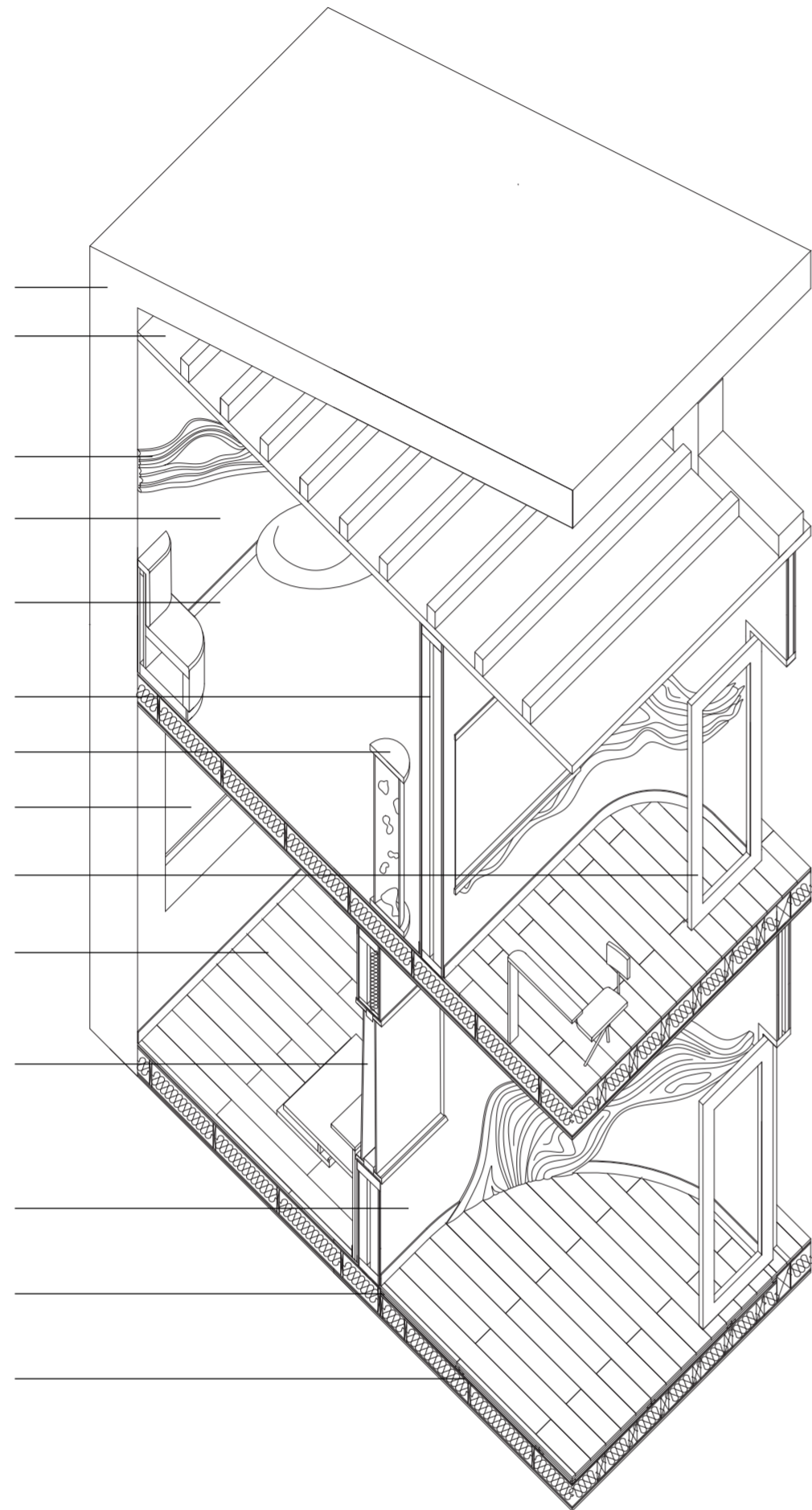




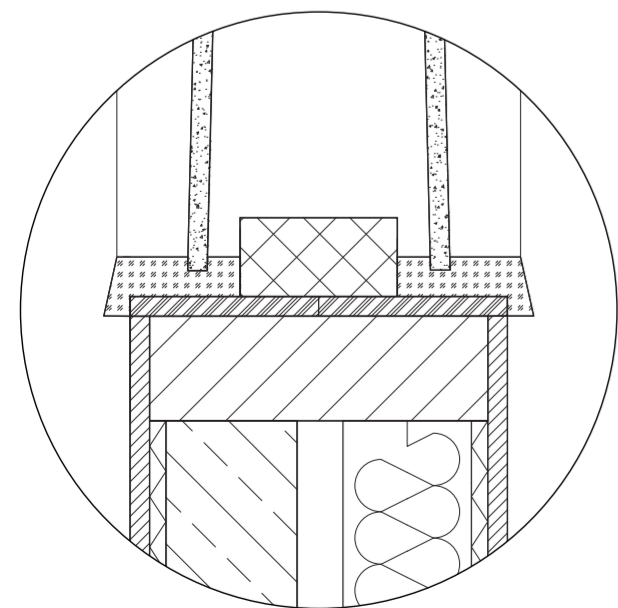
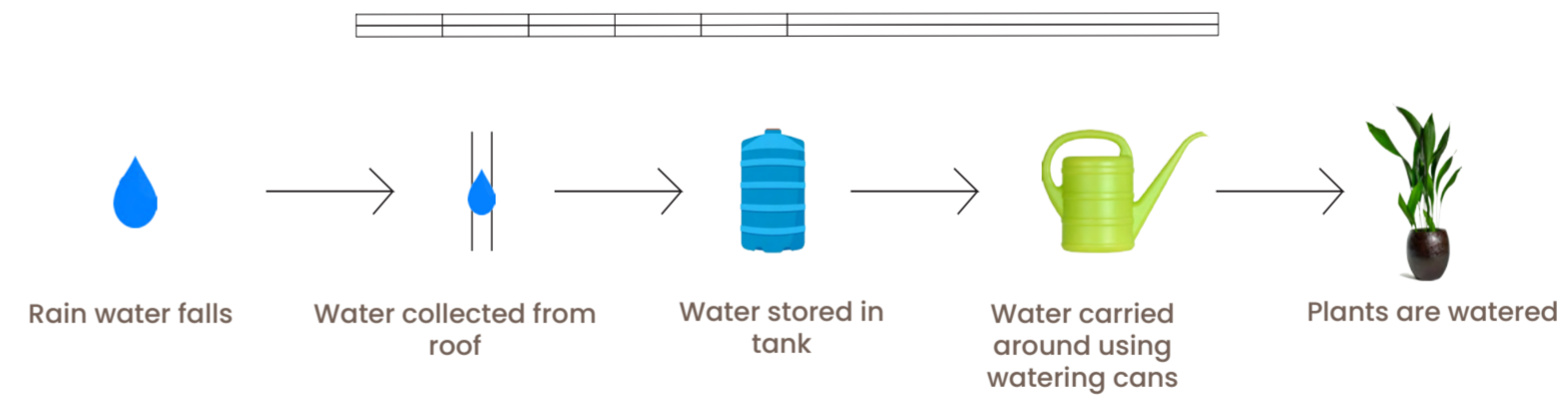
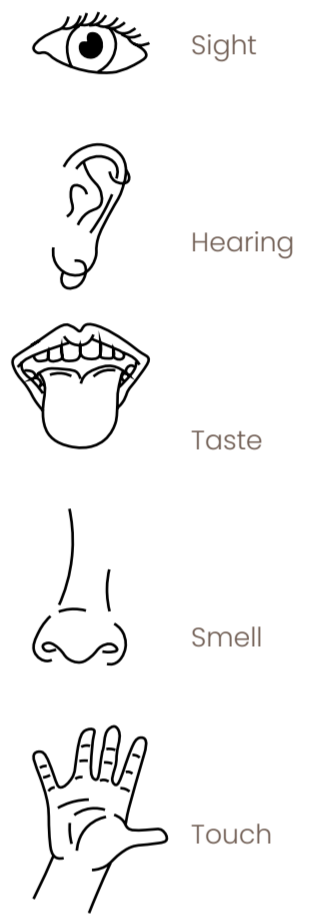
# Detailed axonometric & Environmental strategy

## Material details

- Original wall and roof
- Original roof structure
- Felt acoustic wave panel
- California collection ( palm ) - Farrow and Ball
- 10mm cushioned Rubber Flooring - To reduce injury when visitors get up from their wheelchairs.
- Double insulated wall
- lavalamp
- original window
- Doors - fogged over glass door with musical instrument shapes, corresponding to room name
- 20mm Maple planked flooring
- Acoustic studio window
- Borrowed light - Farrow and Ball
- 20mm Harlequin engineered board
- 200mm Dual density shock dampening elastomer blocks at predetermined intervals

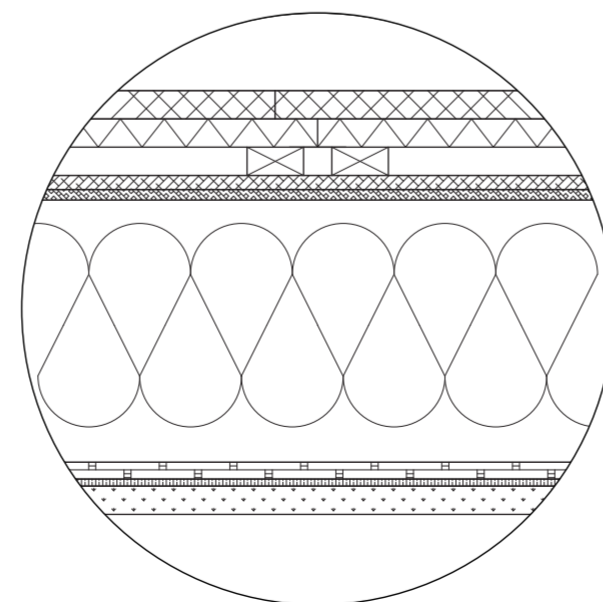


Sensory icons placed around the building to indicate where senses are activated.



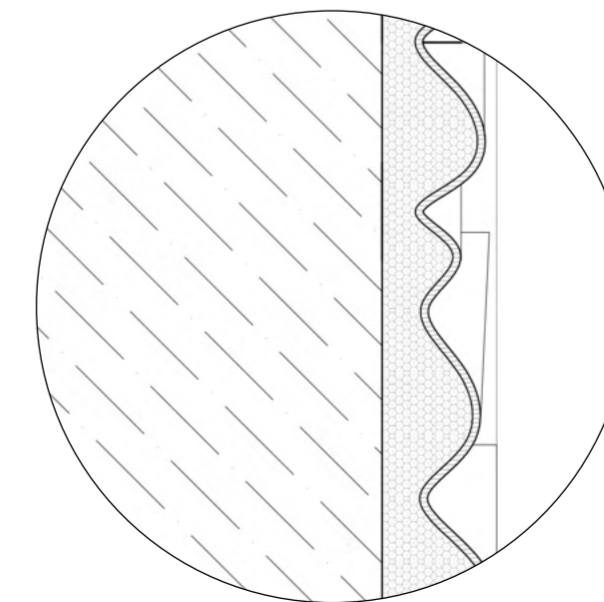
### Studio window

- 16.8mm Laminated glass with polished edges
- 12.8 mm Laminated glass with polished edges
- Lining sleeve with acoustic absorber
- Oak frame & internal strip with glass bedding
- 25mm MDF
- Plimph
- 20mm Clear space between studs
- 100 x 50mm Timber stud
- 100mm Herdwick wool insulation
- 15mm acoustic plasterboard
- 12.5mm acoustic plasterboard



### Large studio spring floor

- 20mm Maple planked flooring
- 20mm Harlequin engineered board
- 200mm Dual density shock dampening elastomer blocks at predetermined intervals
- Air
- 7mm Royale professional sonic gold underlay
- 10mm Recycled wooden subflooring
- 200mm Joists & Herdwick wool insulation
- 20mm plank
- 5mm MLV50 high performance acoustic membrane
- 12.5mm layer of acoustic plaster board



### Acoustic wave panel

- 600mm Existing wall
- Acoustic foam
- 5mm Felt covering - Cream