

Co-Living Newcastle

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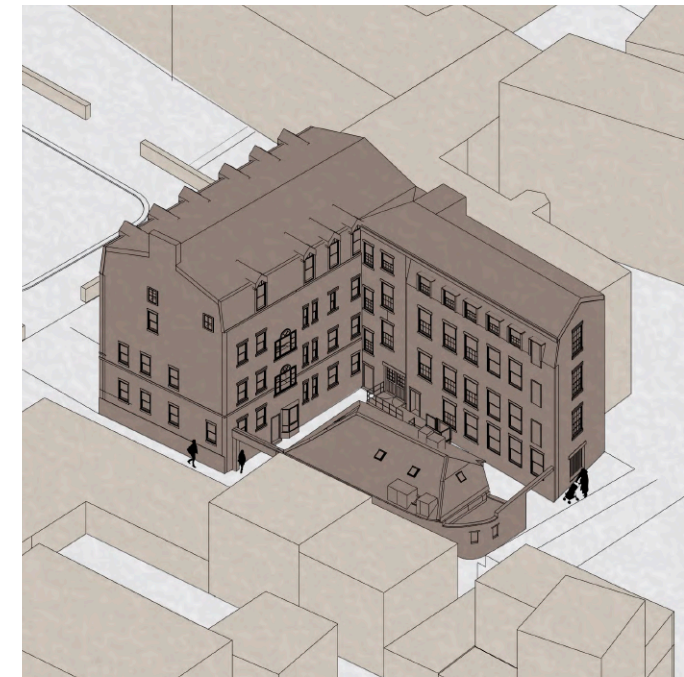
With the increasing number of refugees and homeless individuals in the UK, this project at 1 Charlotte Square responds to the urgent need for unconventional and affordable housing solutions. Drawing on the site's rich history, where even the Blackfriars once sought refuge, this co-living scheme offers temporary accommodation (6–12 months) for asylum seekers alongside local homeless individuals in Newcastle.

The design fosters a supportive, inclusive community where both groups can rebuild their lives together. By enabling mutual support, such as homeless residents helping asylum seekers develop language skills and access local services, the project empowers individuals to regain agency, resilience, and dignity. The scheme prioritises social justice and diversity, encouraging cultural exchange and breaking down barriers. It aspires to create not just shelter, but a compassionate and equitable environment that respects fundamental human rights and supports integration, fostering hope and empowerment for all.

Newcastle, UK



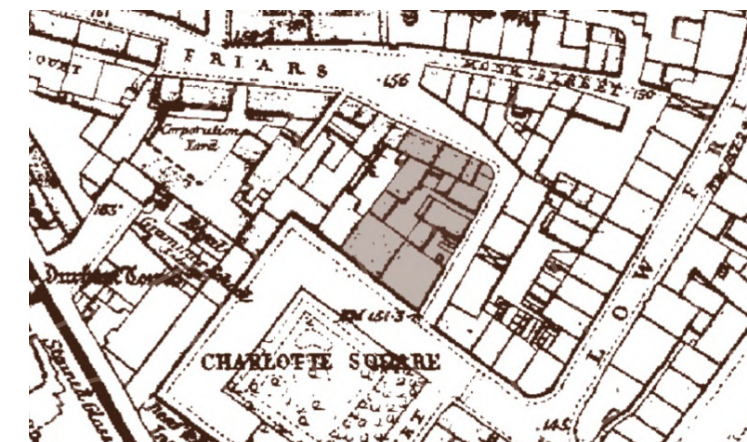
1 Charlotte Square



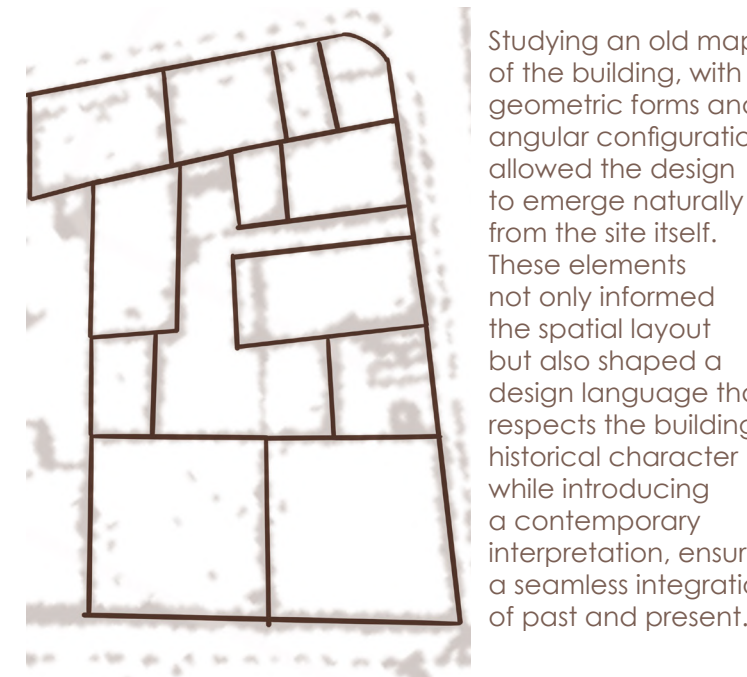
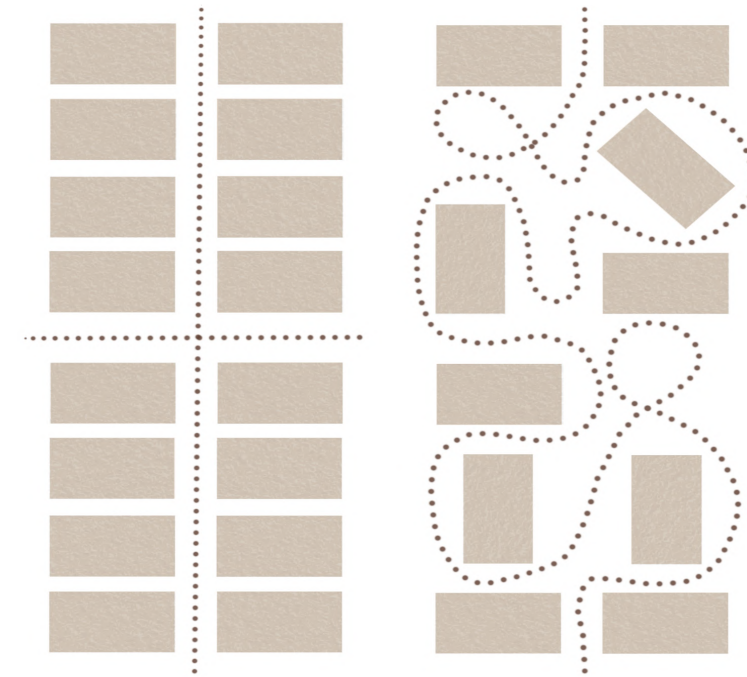
A large number of refugees urgently need a safe, supportive environment where they can regain stability and begin to feel at home again



Often placed in cramped, overcrowded camps where privacy is scarce and basic human needs are unmet.



Inspired by refugee camps but moving beyond their limits, this design creates open communal spaces that foster circulation, connection, and a sense of belonging.



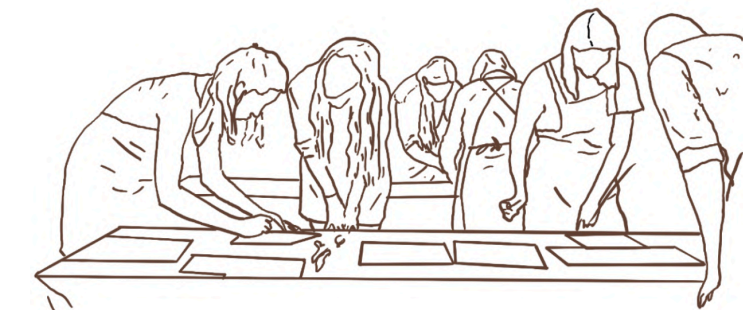
Studying an old map of the building, with its geometric forms and angular configurations, allowed the design to emerge naturally from the site itself. These elements not only informed the spatial layout but also shaped a design language that respects the building's historical character while introducing a contemporary interpretation, ensuring a seamless integration of past and present.

Use & Activity



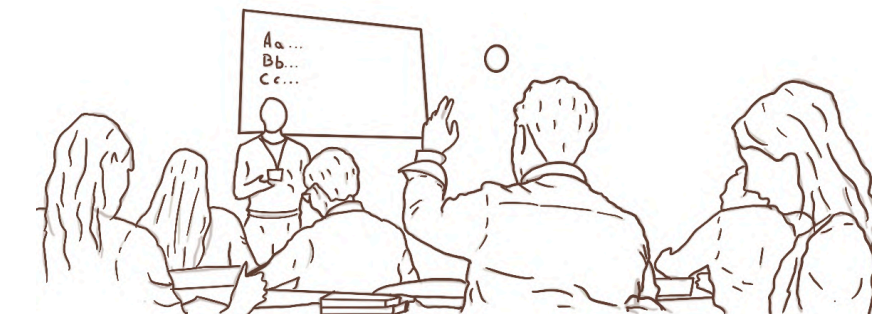
(A) Public restaurant

The scheme includes a small restaurant where residents can gain employment and share traditional dishes from their home countries, fostering cultural exchange and community through food.



(B) Cultural workshops

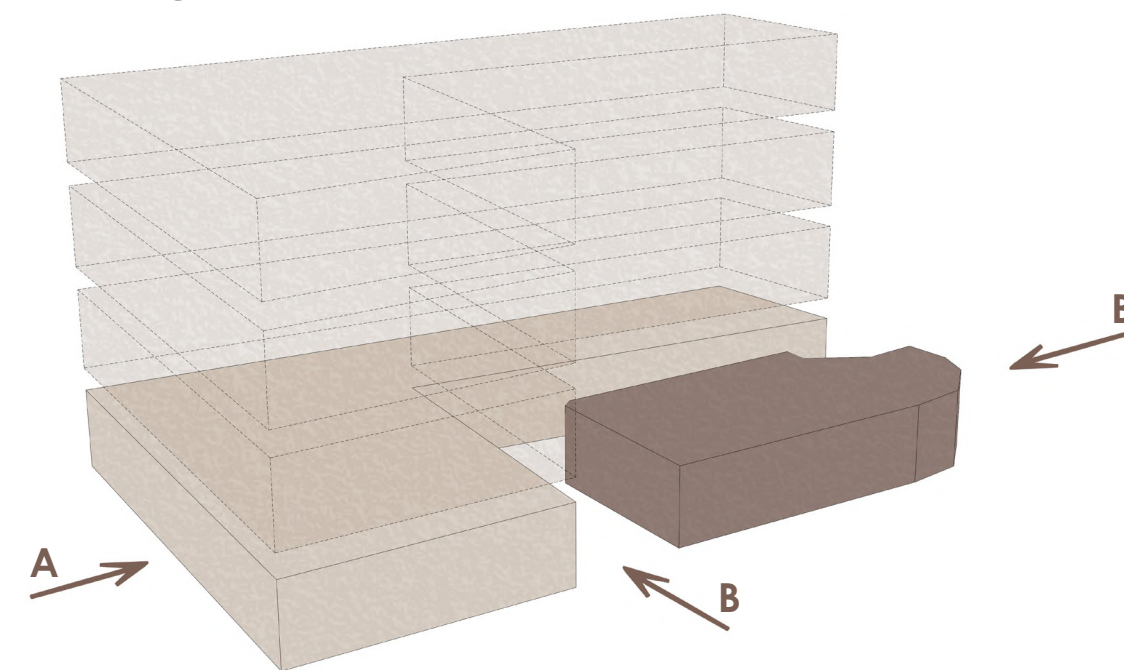
to unite the occupants, foster a sense of community and celebrate cultural identity.



(B) Language classes

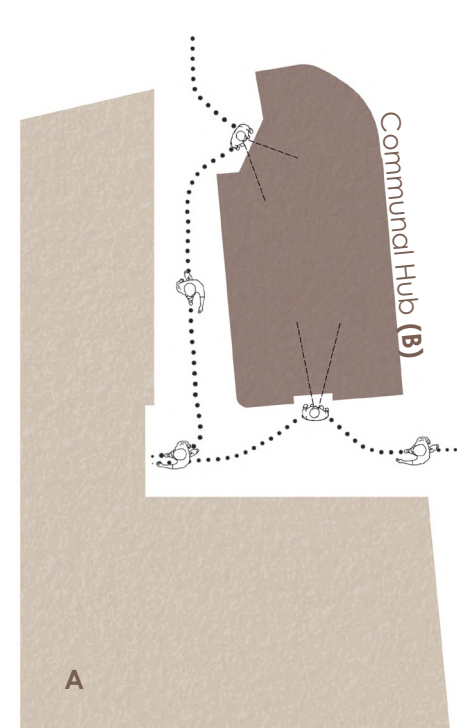
For the occupants to enhance their communication skills and support their integration into society.

Strategies

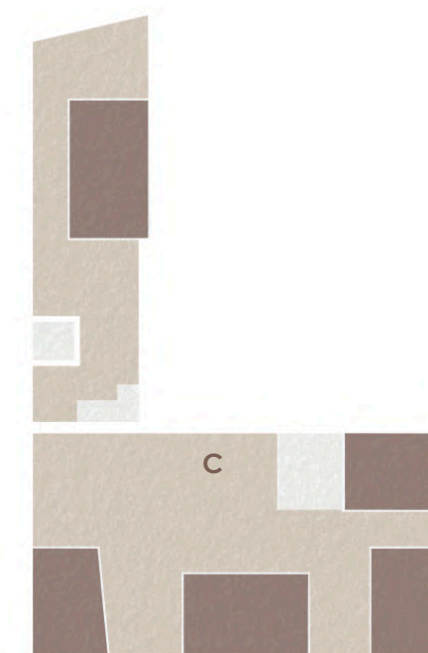


A. Public Entrance

B. Residents Entrance



The building has two residential entrances that pass by the communal hub, giving residents the option to walk through or engage with the space, promoting interaction and community connection.



Inside, communal spaces are placed near staircases and lifts to become part of the residents' daily circulation, creating frequent opportunities for informal encounters and strengthening social bonds over time.



(B) Personal development sessions

to empower individuals, enhance their skills and encourage active community participation.



(C) Shared kitchen and dining areas

will foster community by encouraging social interaction, connection, and shared experiences in a welcoming environment.

Plans

- 01. Public Entrance
- 02. Restaurant
- 03. Cultural object display shelving
- 04. Floor seating raised platform
- 05. Takeaway window
- 06. Kitchen
- 07. Booth seating
- 08. WCs
- 09. Existing staircase
- 10. Reception
- 11. Seating-integrated shelving for info leaflets
- 12. Seating/ waiting area
- 13. Welcoming admin room for new residents
- 14. Refreshments table
- 15. New residents exit
- 16. Existing window intergrated with seating
- 17. Outdoor seating bench
- 18. Existing stair lift
- 19. Residents entrance to the building
- 20. Existing lift
- 21. Laundry room
- 22. Kid's playroom
- 23. Group therapy room
- 24. Parent observation window
- 25. Individual therapy room
- 26. Community hub entrance
- 27. Seating both
- 28. Small kitchenette
- 29. tiered seating facing projector screen
- 30. Storage for foldable tables and chairs & projector screen
- 31. Residents community/ gathering space
- 32. Residents shared toilets
- 33. Shared kitchen
- 34. Shared dinning area
- 35. Shared bedroom (2 people)
- 36. Family bedroom (3 people)
- 37. Single bedroom
- 38. Family bedroom (2 people)
- 39. Family bedroom (4 people)
- 40. Resident quiet reading zone
- 41. Fire escape staircase
- 42. Platform bed with seating & storage below
- 43. Sliding wall with door and built-in shelving
- 44. Bunk bed
- 45. Working desk

Design approach

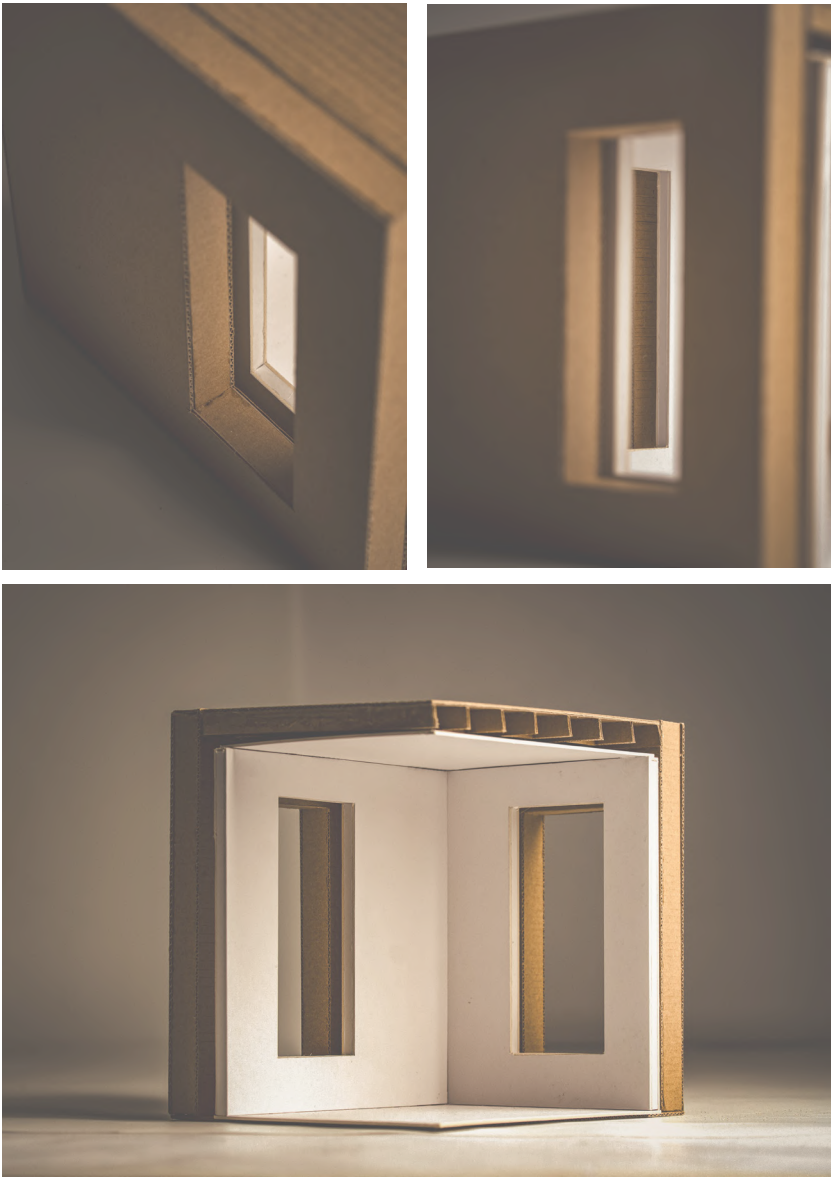


Materials

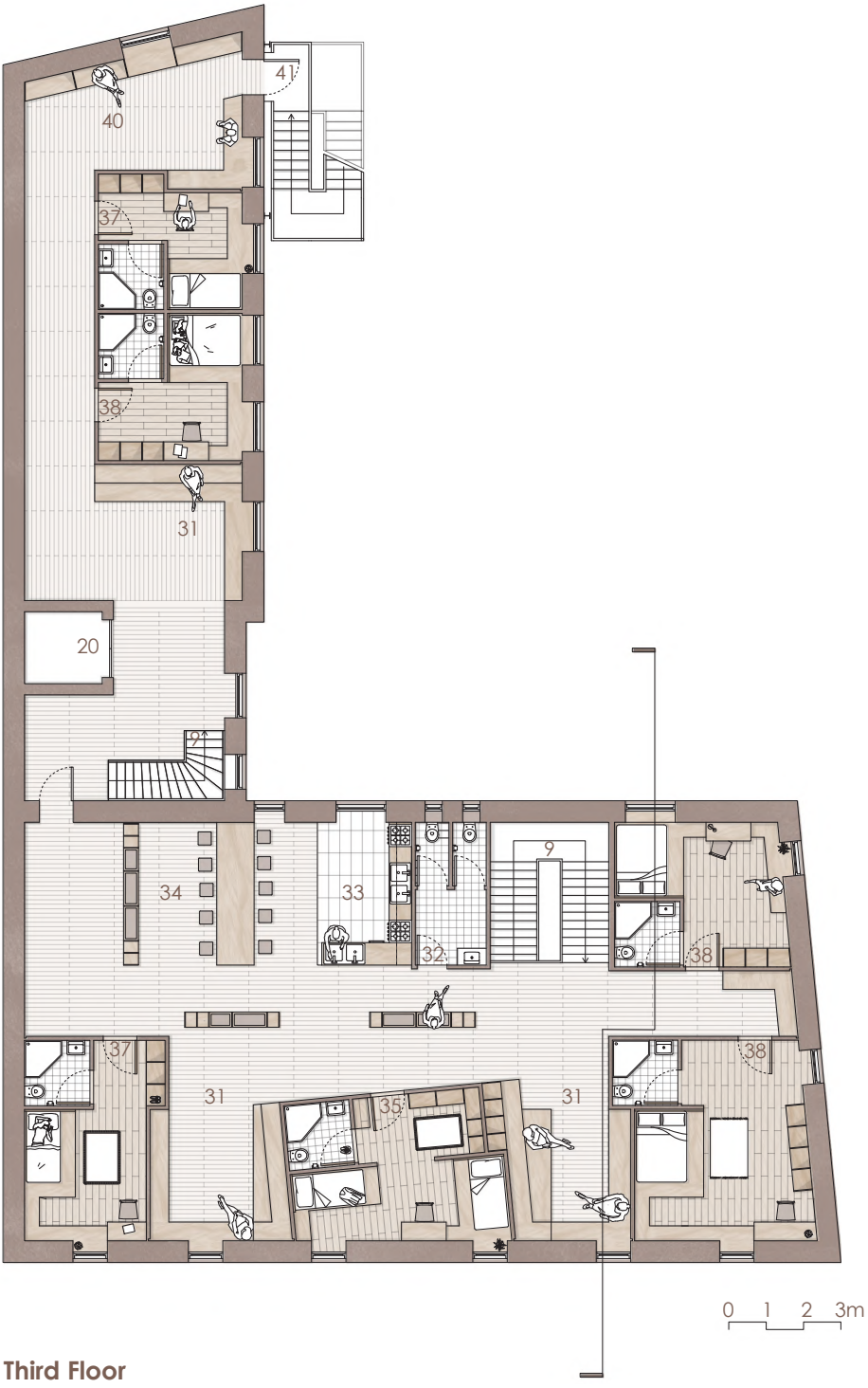
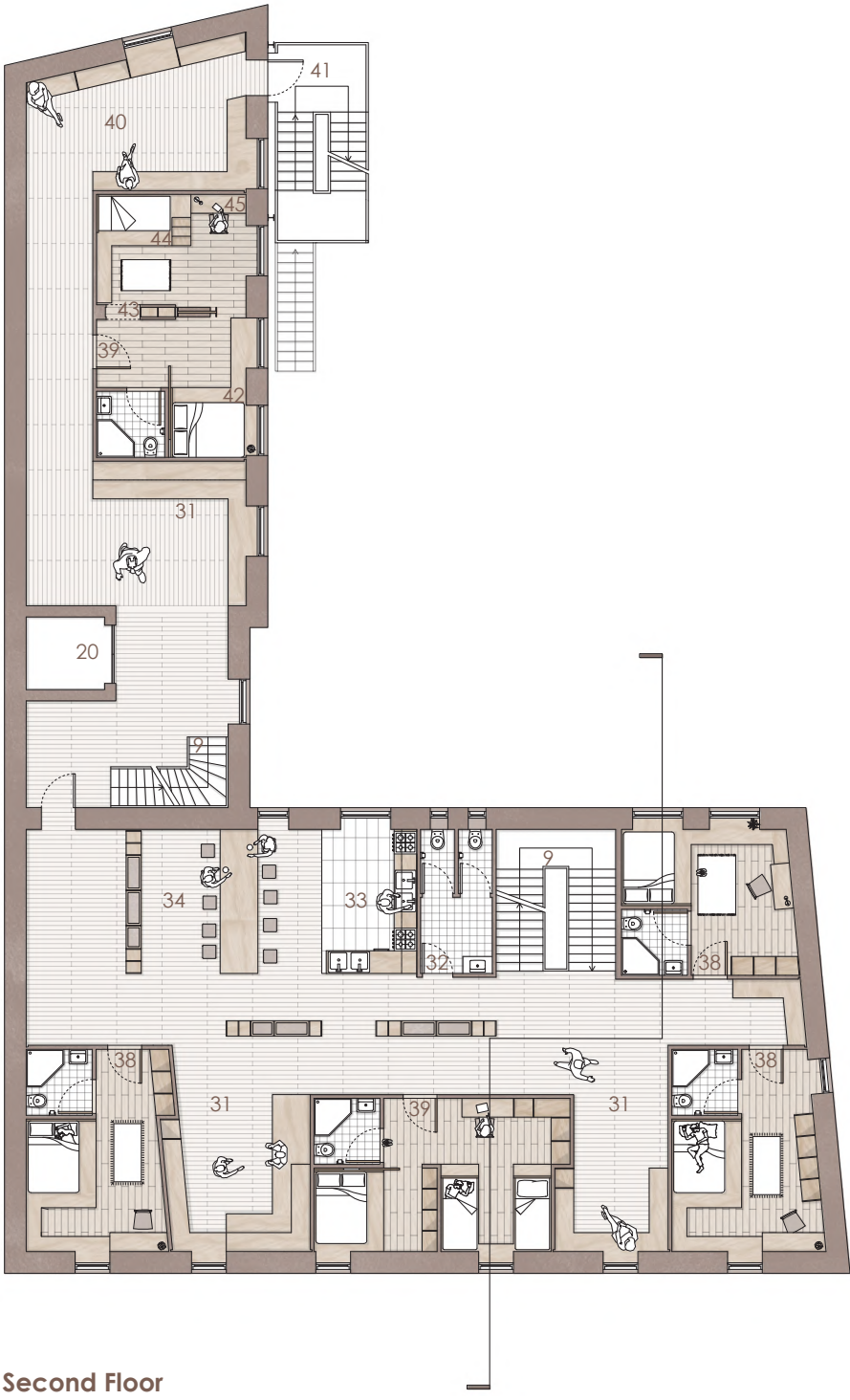
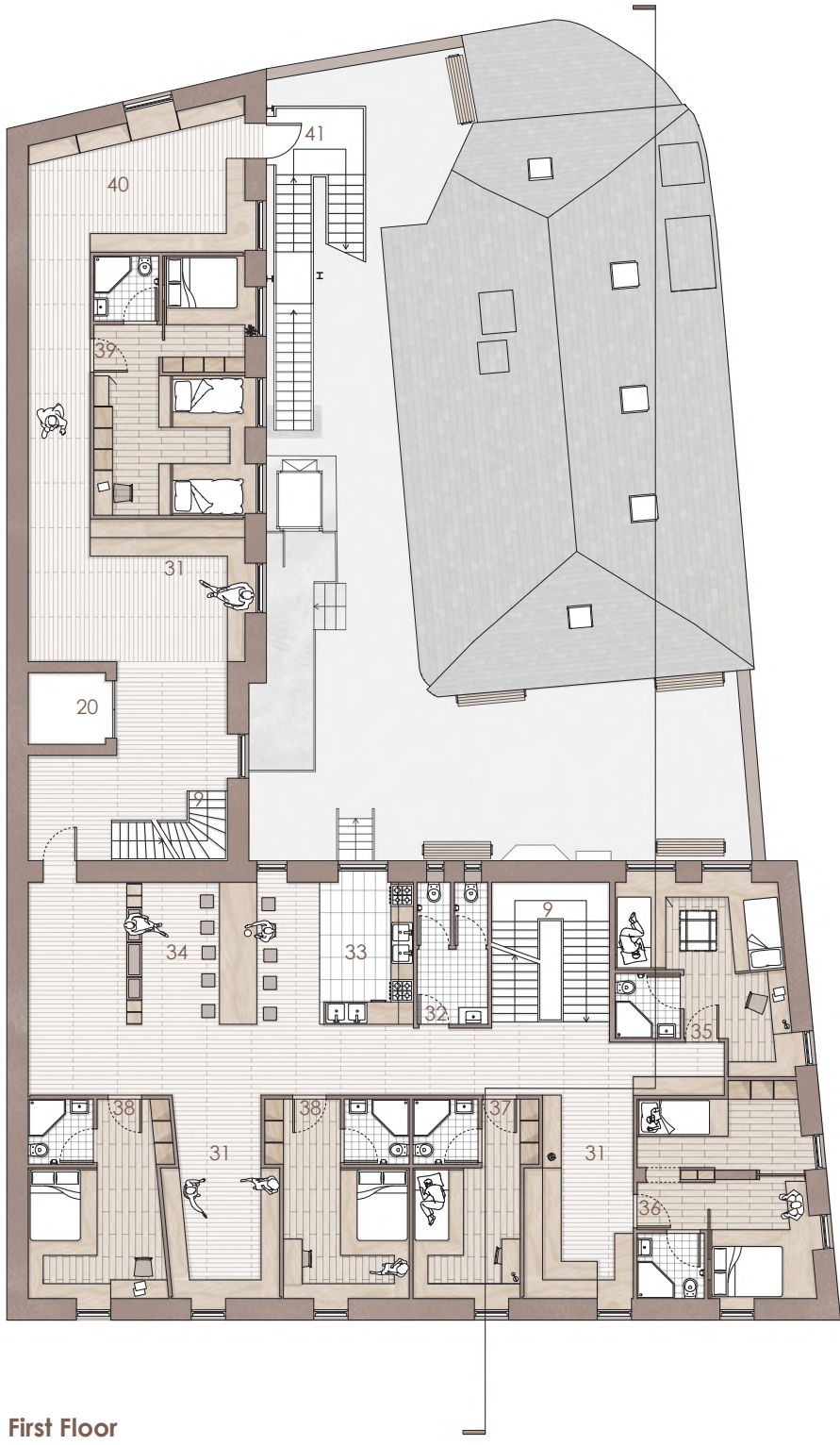
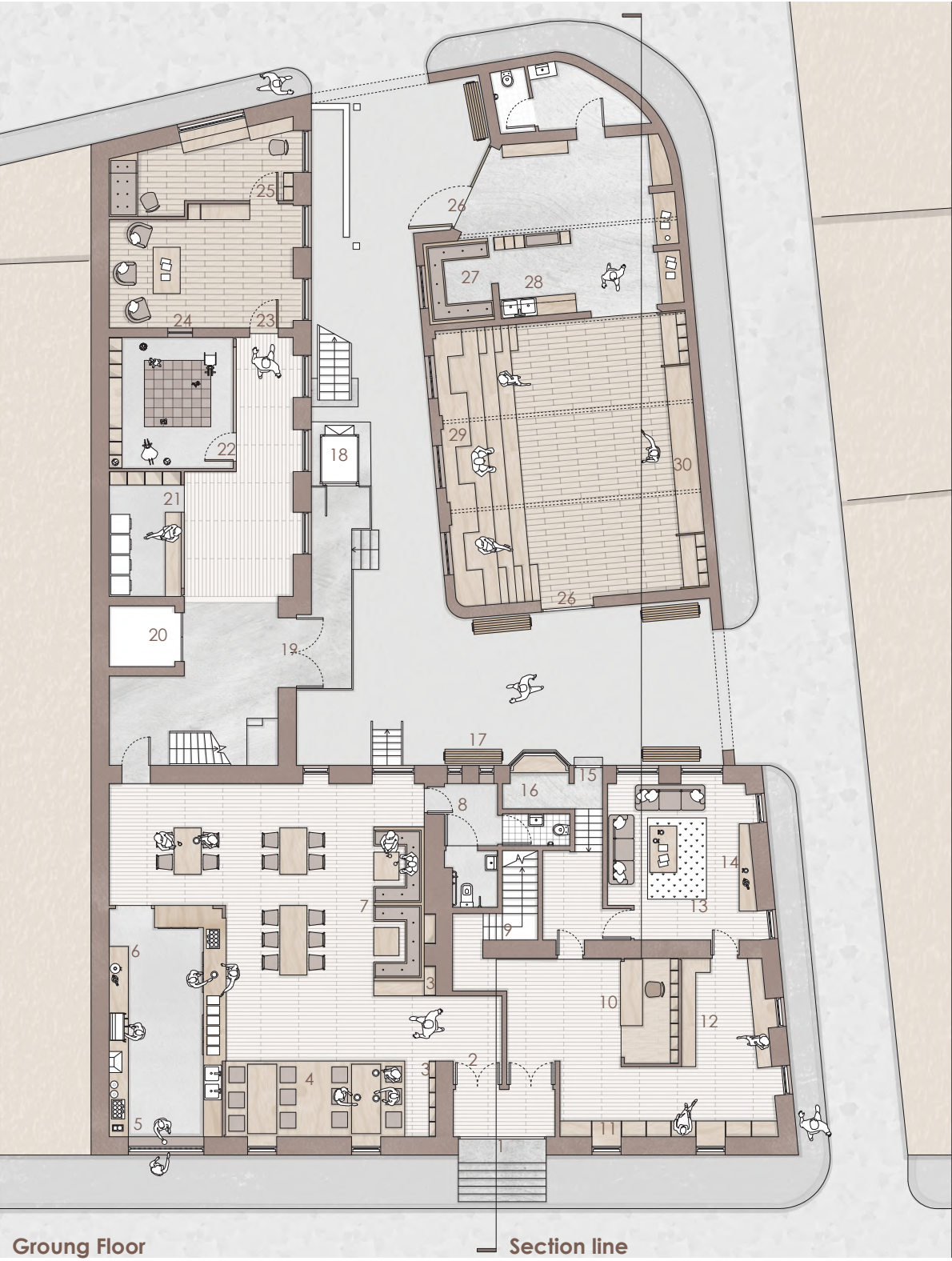
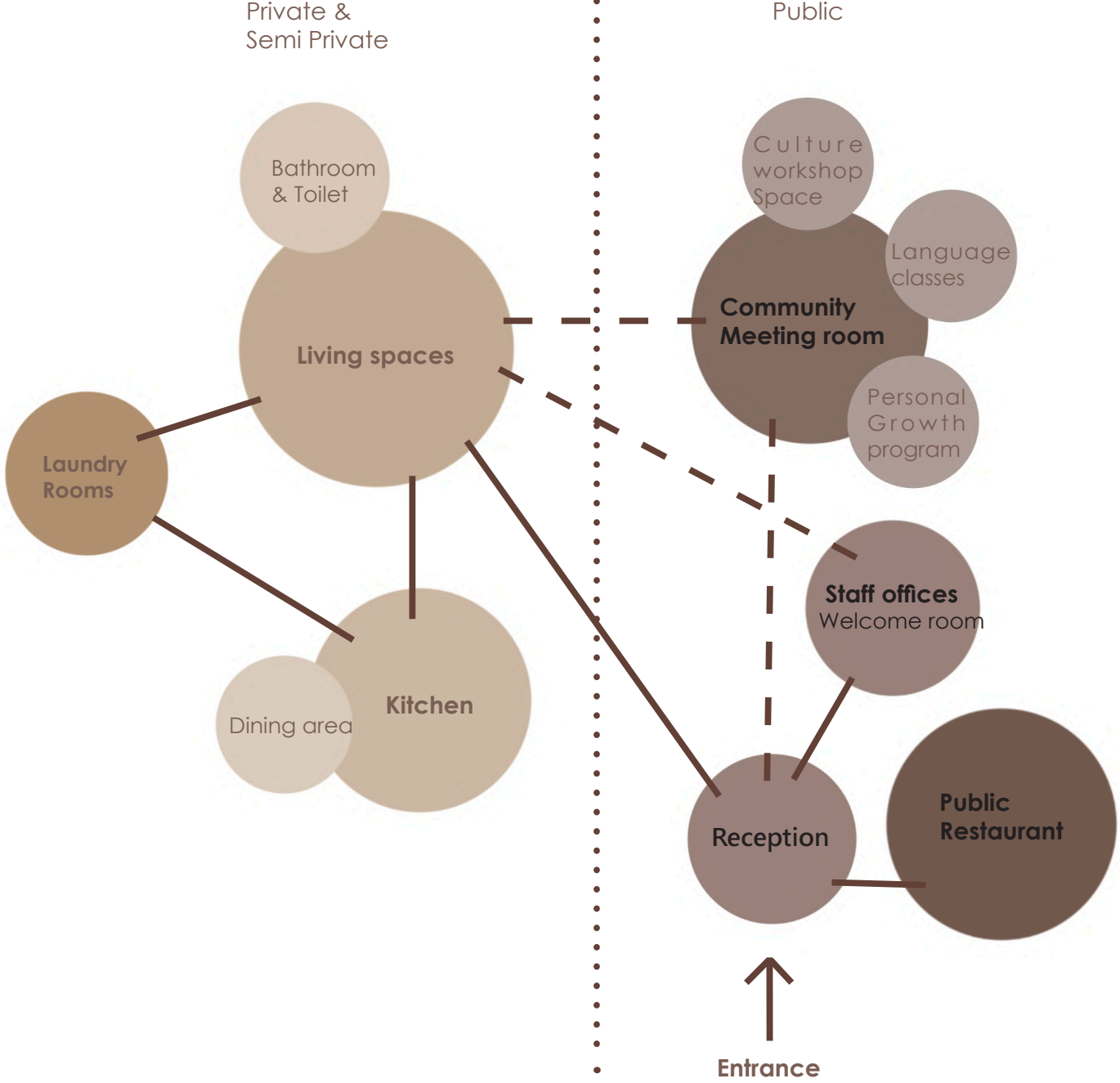
The historic building features a rich palette of materials, reflecting its layered history and contemporary renovations. Traditional elements such as timber lintels, red brick, limestone, and timber joists highlight its original construction techniques. In contrast, concrete blocks indicate more recent modifications, showcasing a blend of old and new materials that reveal the building's evolving character over time.

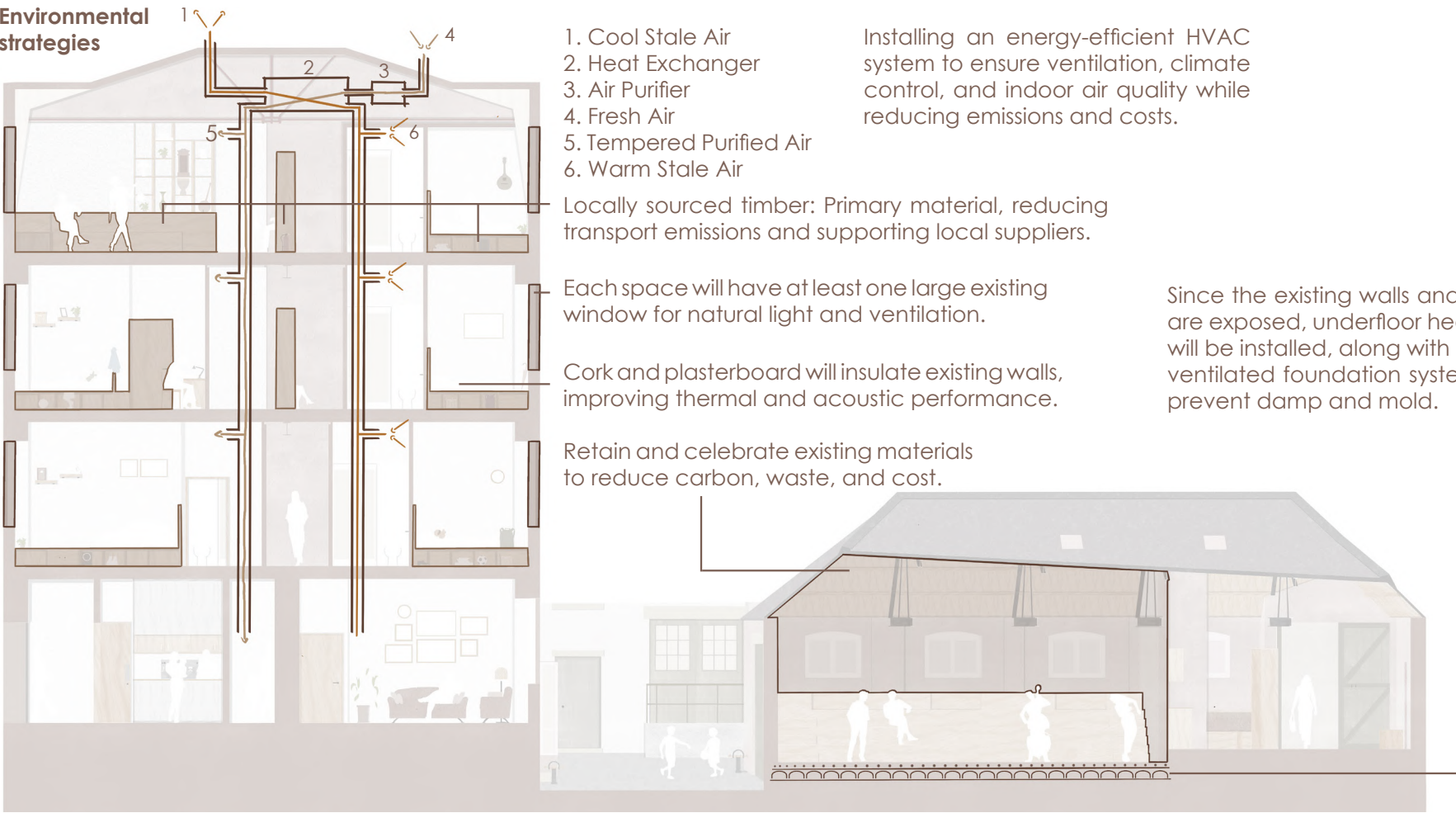
Adaptive potential

Embracing the adaptive potential of the site, the design responds by positioning a modern intervention alongside the existing wall, creating a deliberate contrast between old and new. This approach respects the building's materiality while enhancing its historical character, allowing the past and present to coexist harmoniously and enriching the site's architectural identity.



Adjacency diagram





Material



Section



Types of residential units



Scheme Axonometric

At the far end of the building, a small library and reading area will offer residents a peaceful space for quiet reflection and reading

Drawing inspiration from Mario Praz's museum, these shelves will provide residents with a space to display artifacts and personal items from their home countries, fostering a sense of belonging while encouraging cultural exchange and connection within the community

As a co-living space designed to foster connection and communication, the kitchen and dining areas will be shared among residents, encouraging social interaction and community building

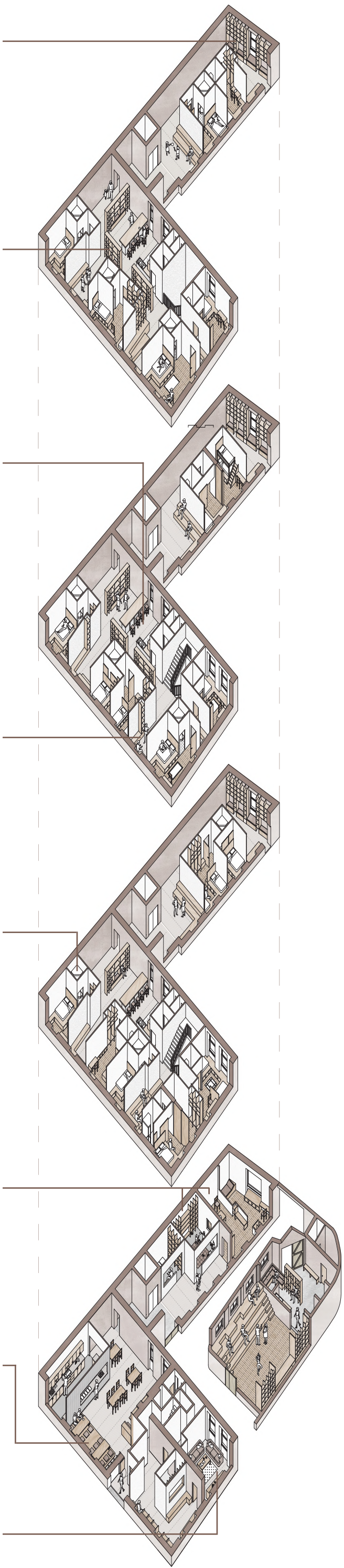
To foster a sense of community, communal spaces are strategically scattered throughout the building, positioned between residential rooms and placed opposite staircases and lifts, encouraging residents to pass by and engage with these shared areas as they move to and from their rooms

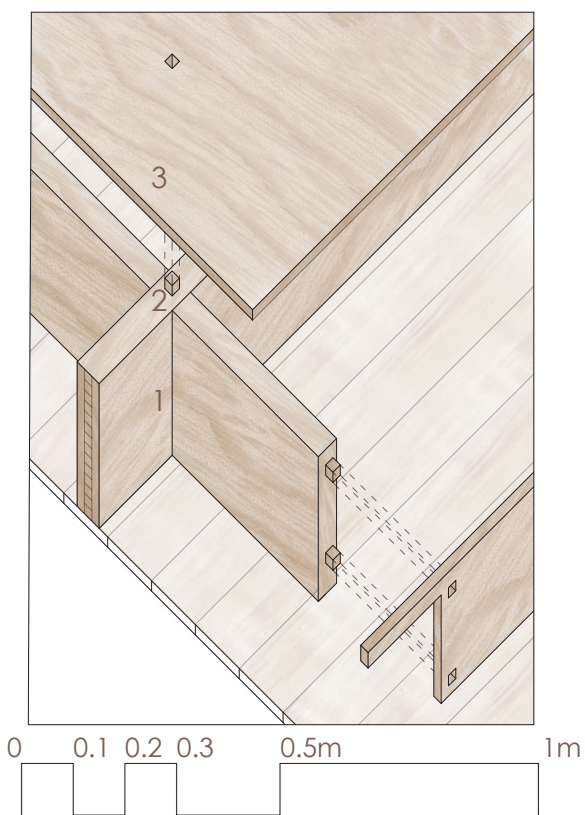
Research highlights that privacy is a fundamental need for refugees, particularly those from the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. To respect this, the scheme ensures that each room is equipped with its own private toilet and shower, offering residents essential privacy and comfort.

A children's playroom is provided so parents can leave their kids in a safe, engaging space while attending therapy sessions, recognising that many may have come from difficult backgrounds or experienced trauma.

Floor seating reflects the residents' cultural traditions, offering a familiar experience for them while inviting locals to engage with and appreciate these customs

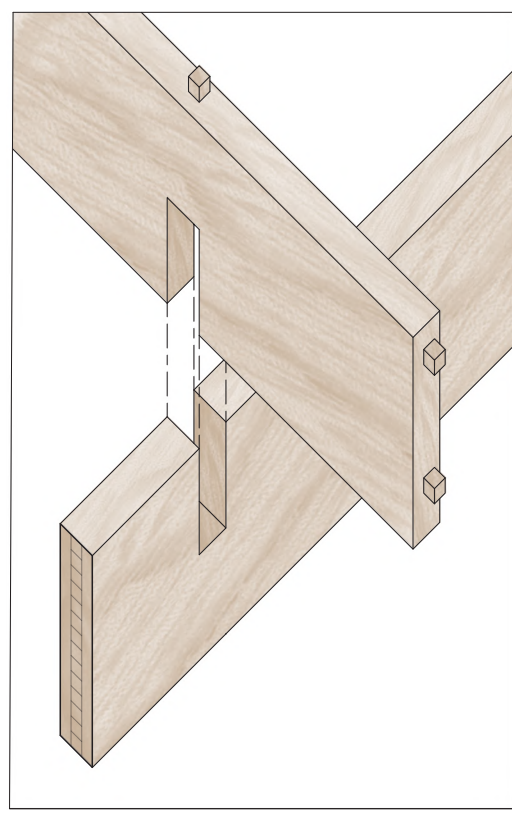
A calm, welcoming administration room is designed to receive newcomers upon arrival, providing a cozy and reassuring environment as they settle into their new living space.





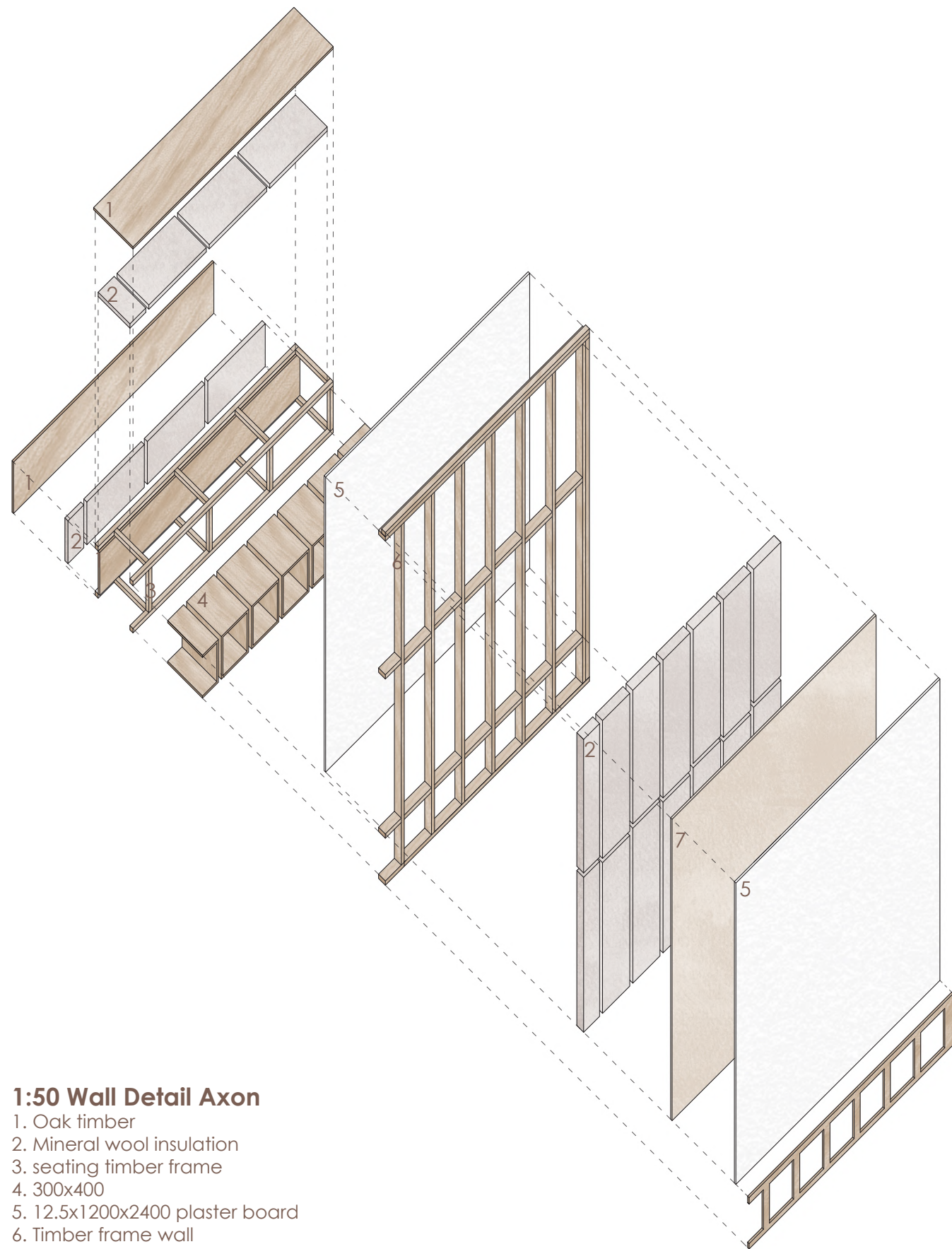
A. Detail Axon

CLT panels (1) with integrated plugs (2) allows pre-drilled timber sheet (3) to be securely fixed using glue for added stability.



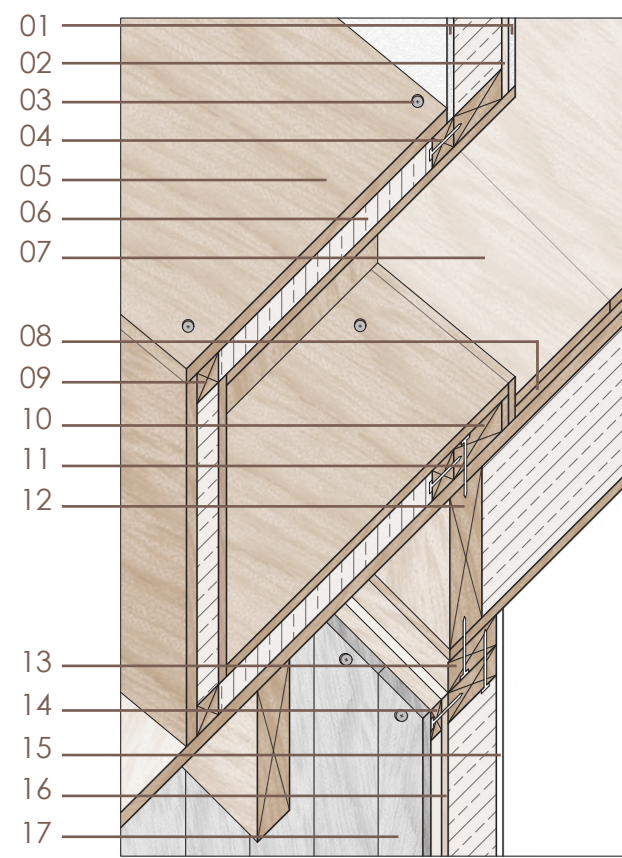
A.a 1:10 Detail Axon

Using cross-joint timber connections secures the CLT without nails or external materials.



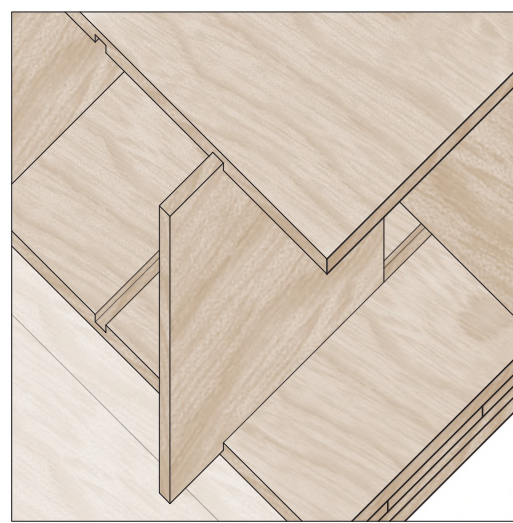
1:50 Wall Detail Axon

1. Oak timber
2. Mineral wool insulation
3. seating timber frame
4. 300x400
5. 12.5x1200x2400 plaster board
6. Timber frame wall
7. 20x500x1000mm cork board insulation



B. 1:10 Detail Axon

01. 12.5 x 1200 x 2400 plaster board
02. 20 x 500 x 1000mm cork board insulation
03. M6 x 50mm stainless Steel Pan Head Screw
04. M6 x 50mm stainless Steel Screw
05. custom mabe oak timber sheet
06. Mineral wool insulation
07. 177 x 1212mm manor oak vinyl flooring planks
08. 12 x 1220 x 2440mm ply wood sheet
09. 50 x 50 timber frame
10. 40 x 90mm bottom plate
11. M8 x 70mm Stainless Steel Screw
12. 60 x 200mm existing timber joist
13. (2x) 40 x 90mm top plates creating shadow gap
14. 25 x 50mm timber batten
15. 12.5 x 1200 x 2400 plaster board
16. 12 x 1220 x 2440mm plywood sheet
17. 12 x 180 x 3600mm cedar arctic white plank cladding

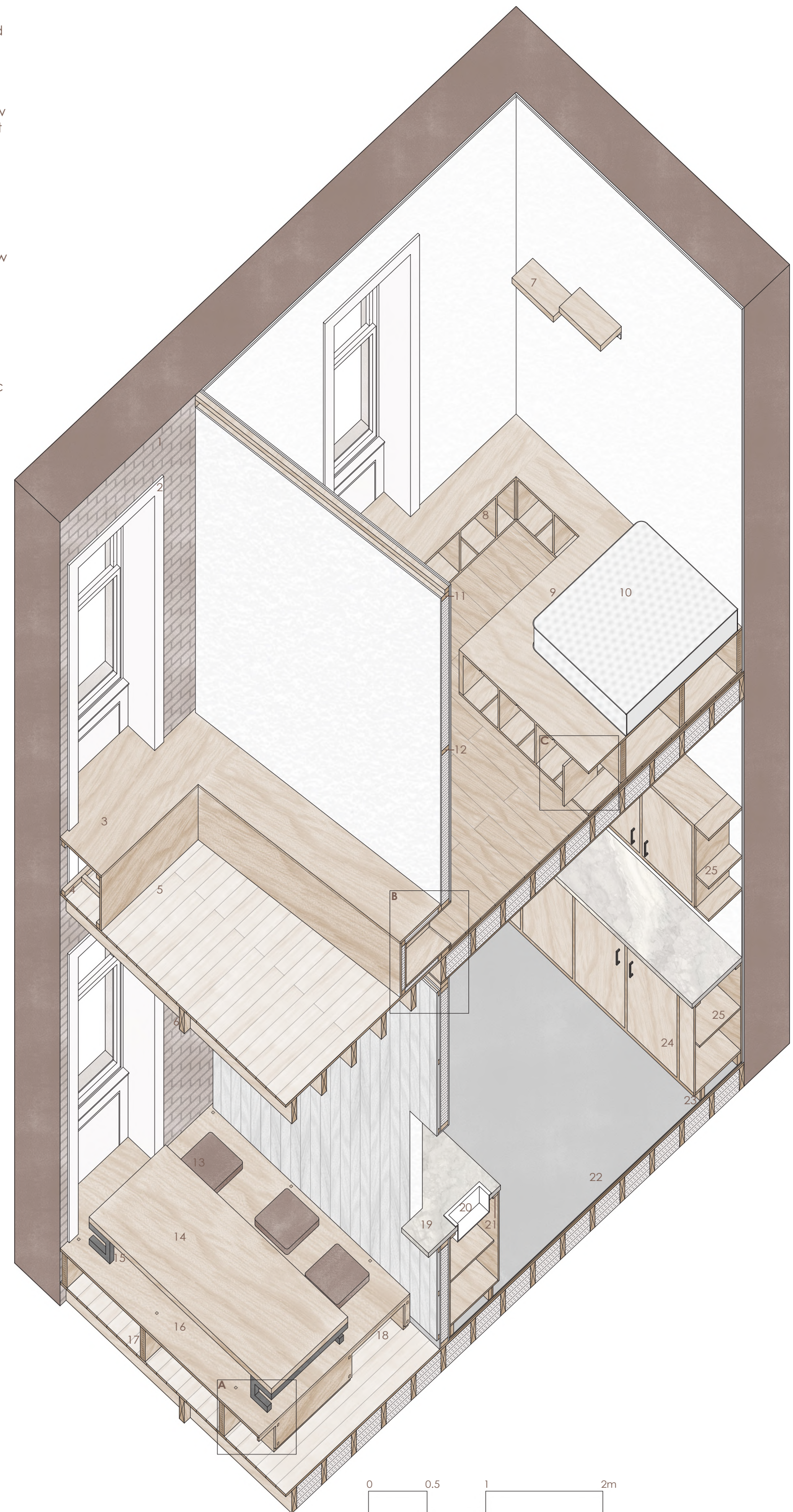


C. 1:10 Detail Axon

Adjustable 380 x 400mm divider plates for size storage flexibility

1:20 Axonometric

01. Existing exposed brick
02. Existing sash window
03. custom mabe oak timber sheet
04. 50 x 50 seating timber frame
05. 12 x 120 x 2400mm existing flooring timber planks
06. 60 x 200mm existing timber floor blocking
07. 50 x 200 x 500mm oak timber shelf
08. 380 x 400mm divider plates
09. raised platform bed & seating
10. mattress
11. 40x90 and 40x50mm top plate creating shadow gap
12. 40 x 90mm nogging
13. 40 x 40mm seating cushions
14. 50 x 900 x 2200mm oak timber table
15. black stainless steel table base
16. custom mabe oak timber sheet
17. 60 x 250mm (3 layers) CLT
18. shoes storage opening
19. 30mm think marble effect laminate countertop
20. Food container integrated into the countertop
21. 20 x 60mm blocking
22. Grey rubber flooring
23. toe-kick
24. 600 x 800mm oak timber door
24. 20 x 500 x 1000mm oak timebr shelving





Perspective 1, Communal/ shared space



Perspective 2, Communal hub



Perspective 3, Residential room



Perspectives, 1:20 Model