

STEEL WARRIORS

WHERE THE BUILDING IS THE GYM

BRIEF OVERVIEW

In recent years this prime retail hub, known as Oxford Street, has fallen in its success and has had an increase in vacant units due to its limited consideration for modern times - having American candy stores dominate the shop front. Our objective in this project is to transform a small sandwiched 'Change Money' shop into a dynamic, innovative, and brand representative space for **Steel Warriors** - **a brand that focuses on building new communities and channelling energy away from knife crime and into physical health to give them a brighter future.**

In 2021, the Westminster Council reform was announced, with the key themes being:

- Greener** - Exploring solutions that are sustainable and considered regarding the environmental impacts.
- Smarter** - Technological integration where relevant to ensure a progressive and efficient design.
- Future** - Exploring innovative ideas to reflect ever-changing trends and tactics to ensure the survival of the high street.
- Together** - Examine and embrace how the digital world has altered retail requirements and how physical stores facilitate a space for 'community' and reflect to what extent this should be implemented.

This design project must reflect these themes whilst ensuring careful consideration of the 'Steel Warriors' brand.

BRAND OVERVIEW

Steel Warriors is an **anti knife crime charity** that melt down knives taken off the streets and recycles the steel into outdoor street gyms. They use street workout to transform the lives of young people affected by crime, violence and social exclusion, giving them the skills and confidence they need to create positive futures. Their vision is to build a UK-wide network of gyms, a street workout movement, that not only **empowers young people** to realise their passions and pursue their goals, but also fosters stronger, closer and more loving communities.

CLIENT OVERVIEW

Steel Warriors main **target demographic are young people** (aged 10-18) at risk of gang/ knife violence/ participation who are looking for a safe and encouraging community to improve their lives and their futures. In order to attract that audience to the new site, it is imperative to foster the open and free aspect of the outdoor gyms, enabling users to enter without intimidation and enjoy the equipment as well as become interested in the brand and what it offers; it must **allow young people to participate without pressure.**

WHAT IS MY DESIGN INTENTION?

Steel Warriors has created a strong identity around their branding and values giving them a deserved platform in the health world promoting community, change, and opportunity. There is a huge opportunity to cement Steel Warriors indoor gym brand recognition in this project as they currently only have outdoor gyms, allowing me to innovate the existing structural elements and materiality. I plan to embrace their ethos of **openness, community, and growth** through an innovative and **interconnected framework of callisthenics and equipment**- emulative of the brand existing outdoor gym- to create a cohesive, contemporary, and collaborative environment. The entire building will be designed to emulate the accessibility of the outdoor gyms, creating an **indoor exercise playground** where **everything can be used as equipment** such as the extra wide staircase cardio and the rope banister as equipment immersive users in the active environment.

I plan to **integrate mental/emotional health as well as physical health** in this project as people who have been effected by knife crime need support in that area as well. Additionally, it is vital that the **facade is eye-catching** on the busy street as the site is small and narrow so it must make a visual impact.

SITE ANALYSIS

- The site
- Surrounding retail shops attracting younger people
- Tottenham Court Road Station



📍 SITE ADDRESS: 12 Oxford St, London W1K 3PG

- S
- High pedestrian traffic
- Easily accessible via public transport
- Easy to attract new users/customers as its a busy area

- W
- Could be overshadowed by famous neighbouring shops
- Completely different location ad site type to previous gyms

- O
- Allowed to change facade
- Has outdoor space
- Can extend the floors

- T
- Westminster are planning to pedestrianise the street so you can't drive to the site



THE MELTING AND MANUFACTURING PROCESS



Around one tonne of seized knives are collected each month to be melted down and recycled into Steel Warriors gym frames, re purposing the materials to change their outcome- emulative of the potential for people involved with or effected by knife crime. The equipment doesn't come out too polished, it embraces the layers of its origin.

'PUT DOWN, PULL UP'

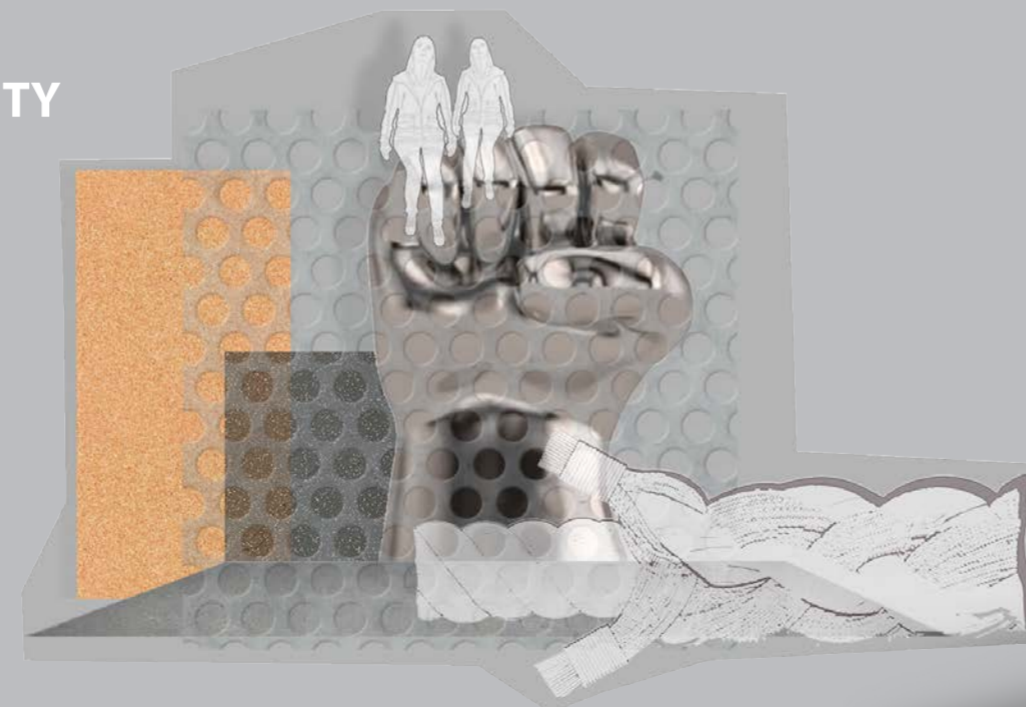
COMMUNITY

GROWTH

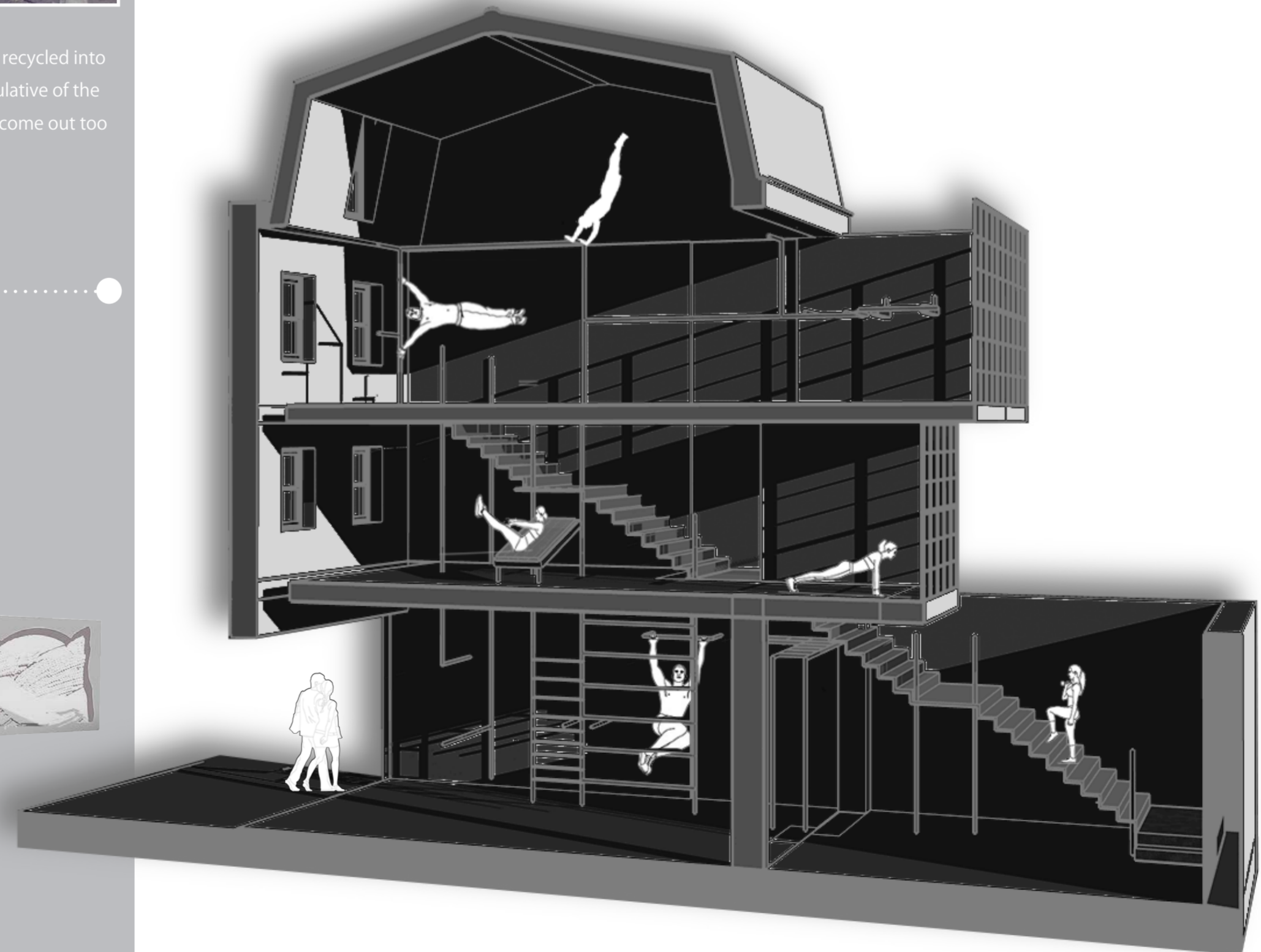
MOTIVATE

URBAN

FUTURE



Following these themes to creatively transform the site into something impactful for the London community.





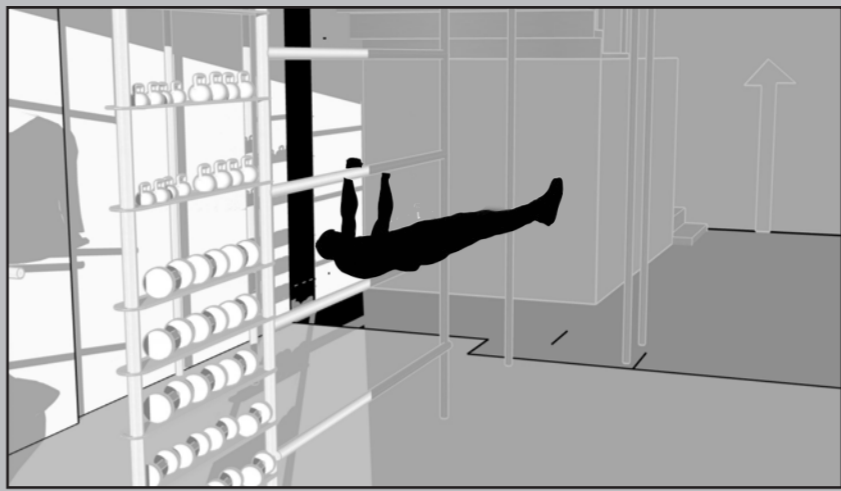
Group of young people are attracted by the Steel Warriors facade and shop front and go inside



They look at the merchandise in the retail area and are attracted to the callisthenics equipment behind



They play on/ experiment with the equipment



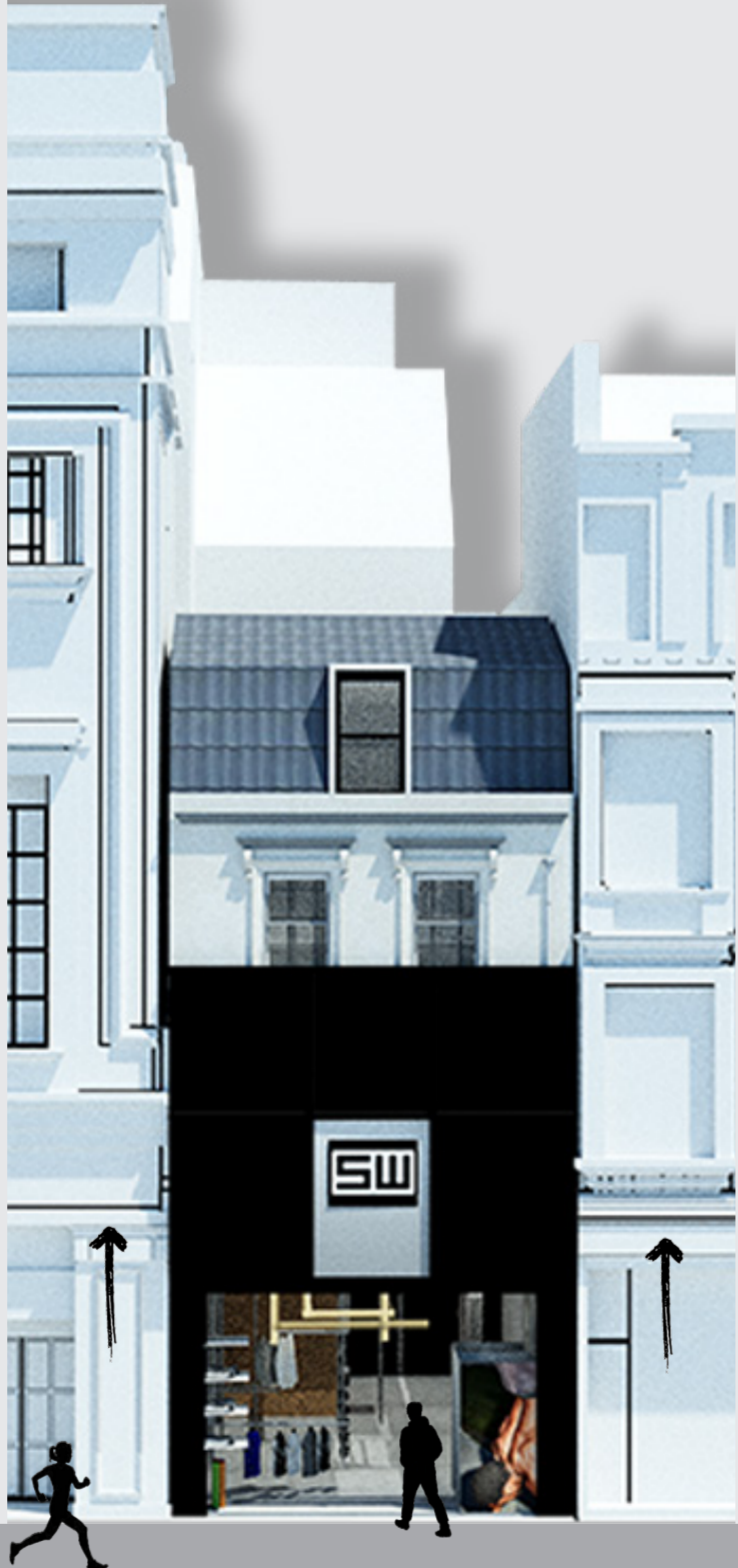
A trainer approaches them and offers them some tips and tricks for exercises and engages in casual conversation



The trainer tells the group about classes, the community and opportunities encouraging them to get involved with Steel Warriors.

PRIVATE HOURS

OPEN HOURS



Embracing the ‘larger than life’ ethos of one of the most renowned retail streets in Europe while incorporating a ‘Camden’ aspect to the facade design. Camden street is well known for its gimmicky and playful façades emulating the stores service/goods to attract passers by into the site. I have integrated this into the Steel Warriors facade as it needs to claim its new presence on Oxford Street and stand out amongst the well known stores. There will be ‘private hours’ for when it can only be used by members or by booked classes, The fortress front includes the brands logo with metal inside allowing passers by to peek inside the space and see what’s going on during members hours, thus creating a sense of mystery whilst maintaining the theme of openness.



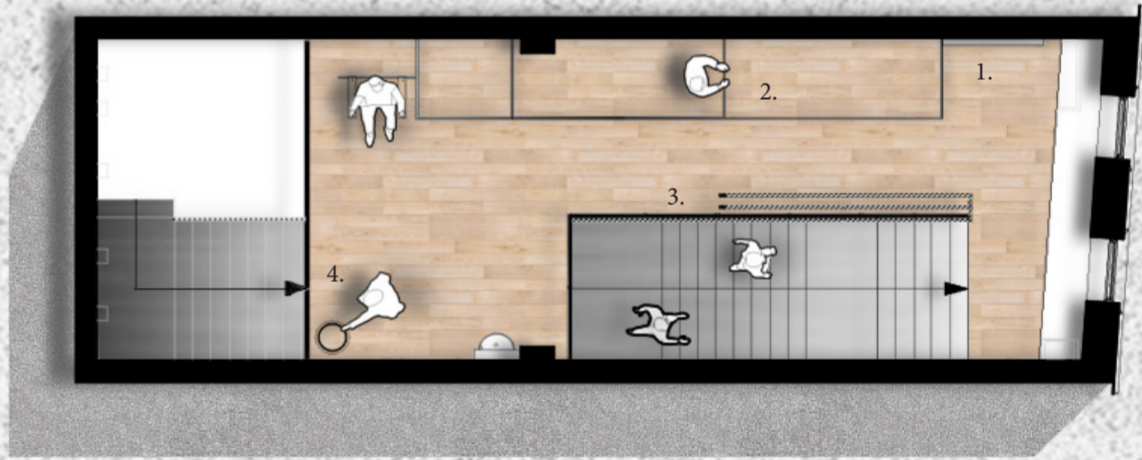
BRANDING AND OUTREACH

- **MOBILE APP** - Enables users to easily access information and book classes driving up interactions and customer database. It also acts as a exercise monitoring app on workout devices.
- **BACKPACK** - Universal for ages and usage while providing free advertisement.
- **EXERCISE MATS** - Aesthetic item that can be used at the gym or at home, brand immersion.



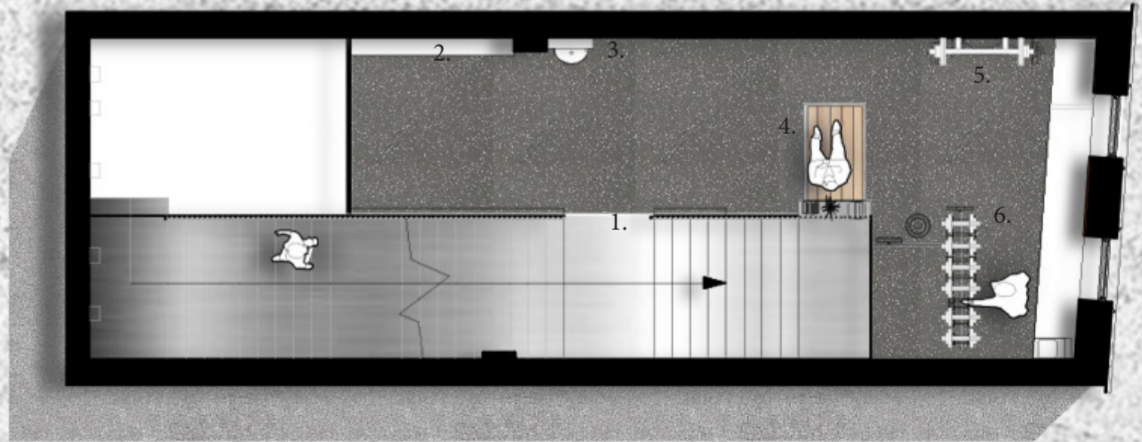
SECOND FLOOR

1. Steel peg board
2. Callisthenics/ gymnastics bars
3. Rope banister into exercise ropes
4. Boxing bag



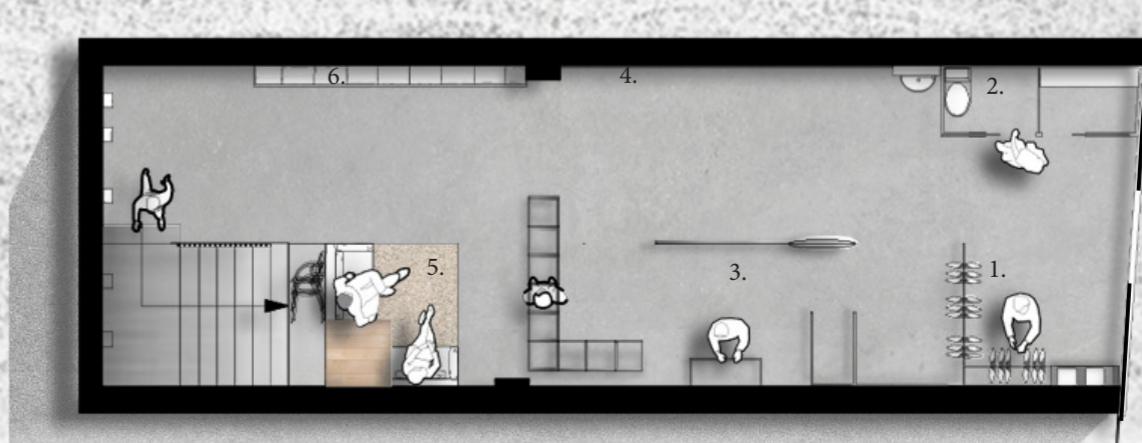
FIRST FLOOR

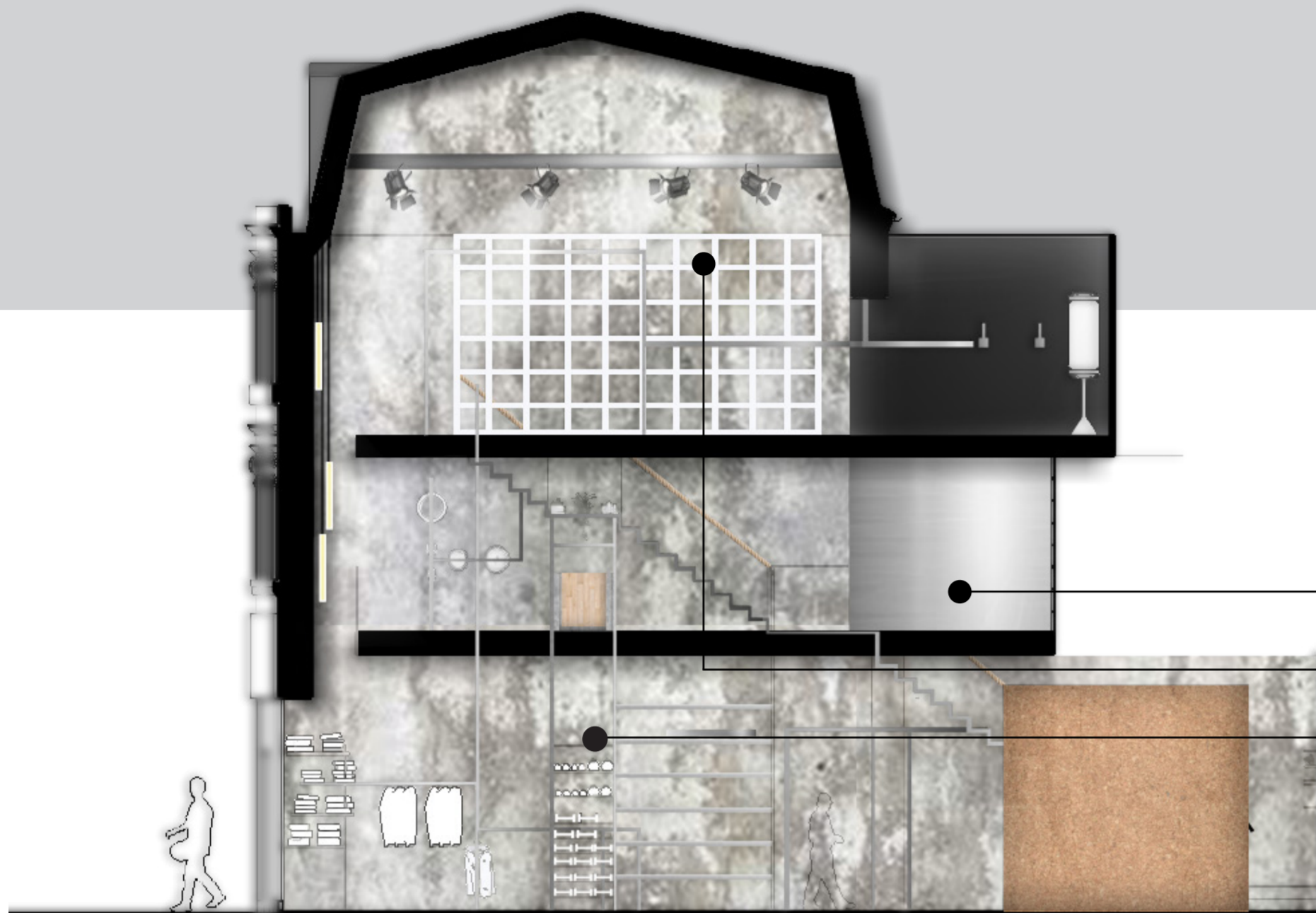
1. Entrance
2. Exercise bench and mat area
3. Water fountain
4. Workout bench
5. Weight rack
6. Dumbbell rack



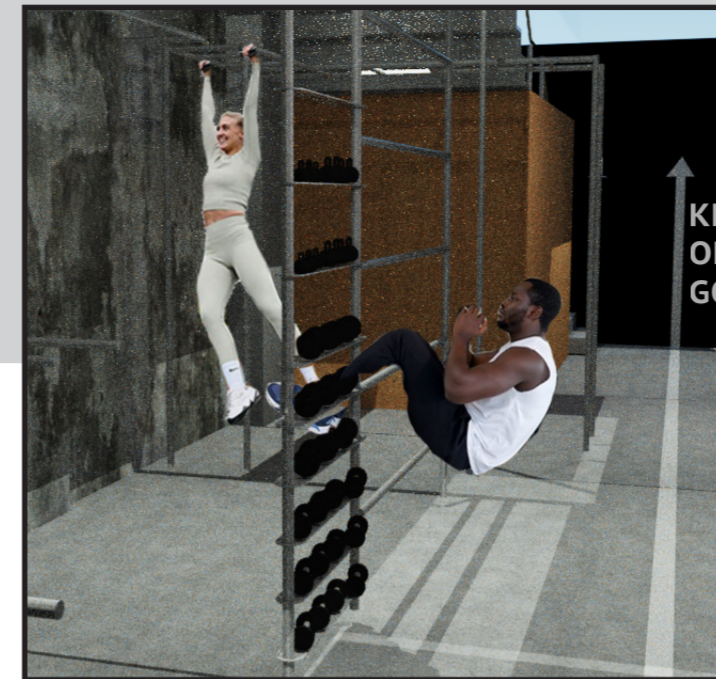
GROUND FLOOR

1. Retail area
2. WC and changing room
3. Workout area
4. Mirror
5. Therapy/meeting room
6. Lockers





Callisthenics bars on the ground floor



Mat and bench area with mirror on first floor



Second floor- double height ceiling

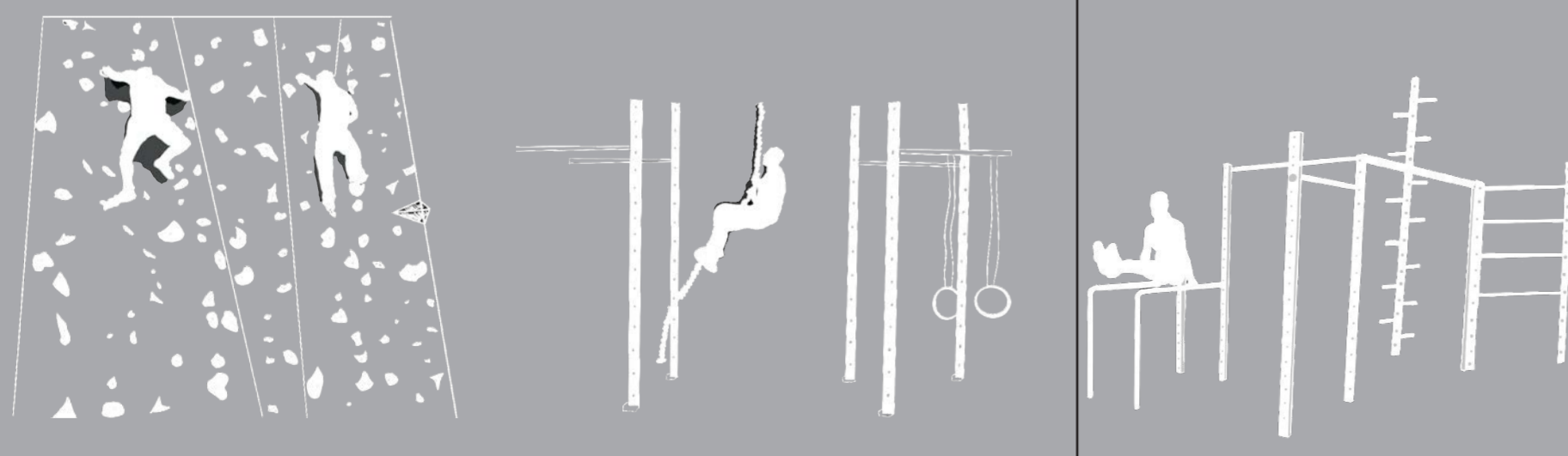


Exploring mobile façades

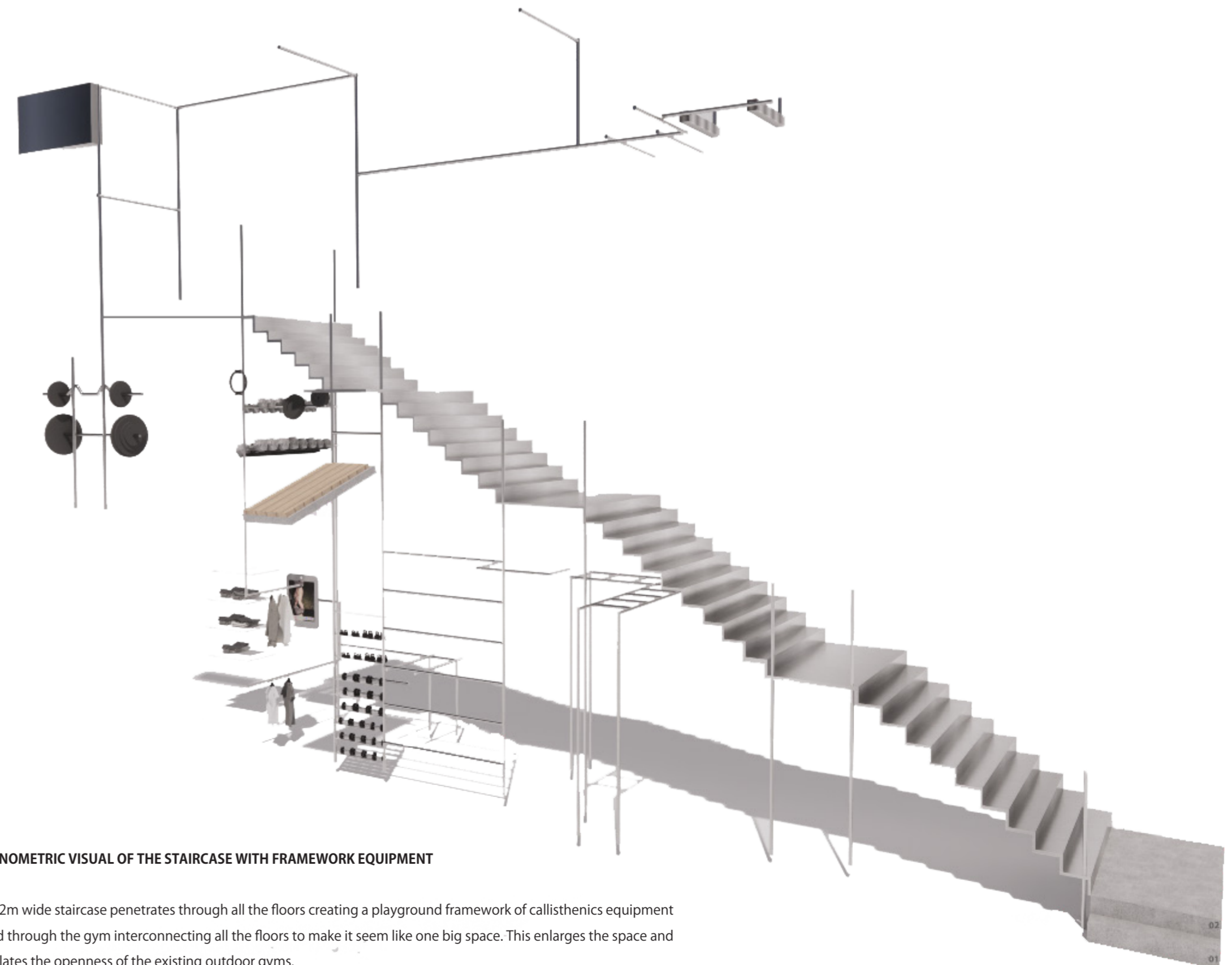


Attracting new users into the site means having an eye-catching facade. I experimented with various mobile facade types to support my aim of having both open and private hours to enable the gym to cater for paying members whilst also maintaining Steel Warriors ethos of open and free workouts. I tried a folding and garage type facade, however these mean taking up valuable space inside the site, therefore a facade that lifts up creating a free flow of motion between the street and the gym, without obstructing the public of the users is the best fit while also being unique and attractive.

Experimenting with how to make the whole building a gym and utilise the height

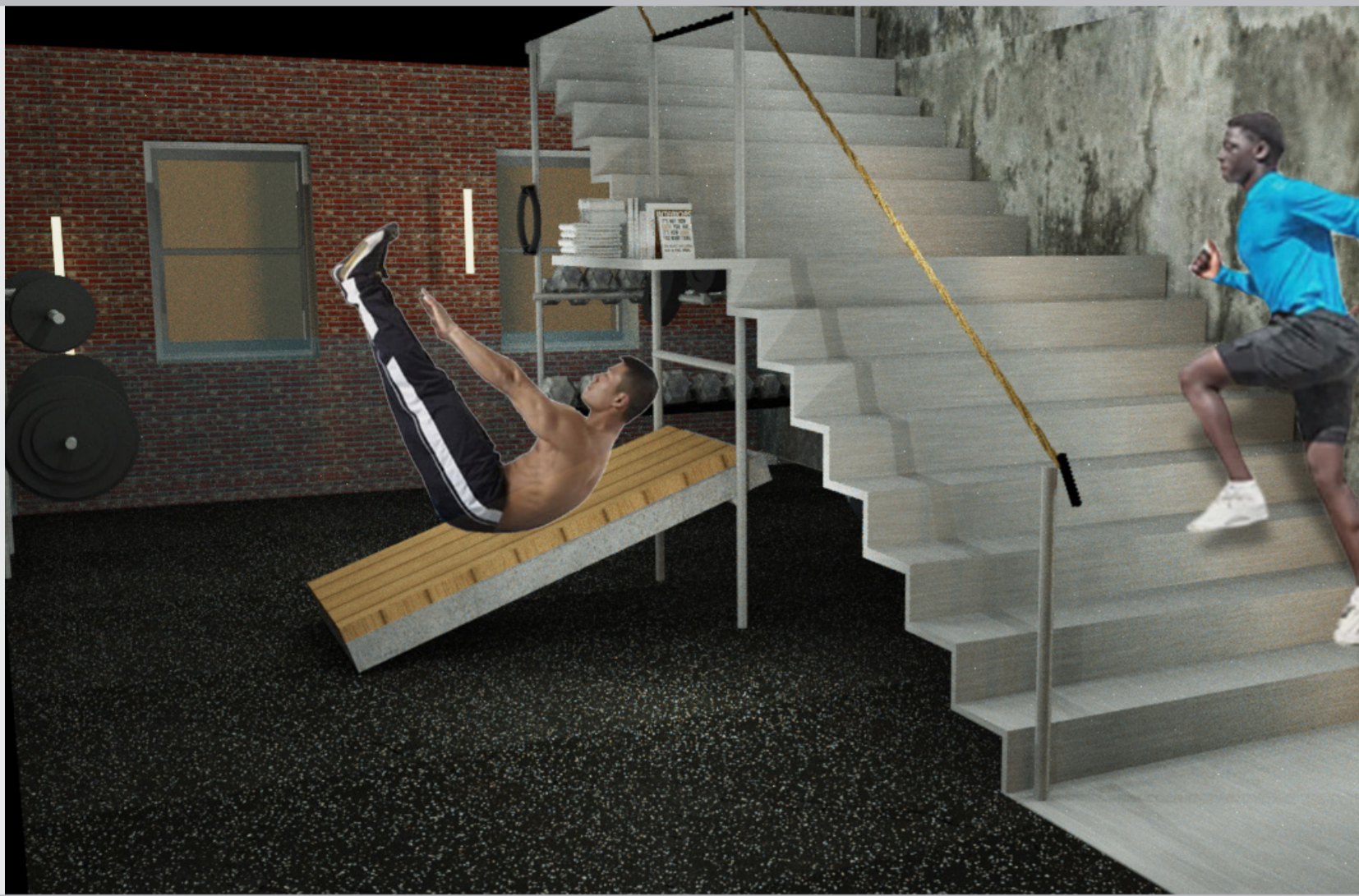


Experimenting with rock climbing and rope climbing to use the full height of the space for an open atmosphere and integrate exercise into the entirety of the building. I landed on an integrated framework, demonstrated in the third example, to follow the workout qualities the Steel Warriors outdoor gyms use, which will be incorporated with a wide staircase carrying the frame and traditional callisthenics workout equipment throughout the floors.

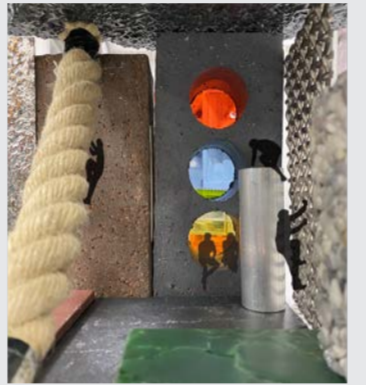
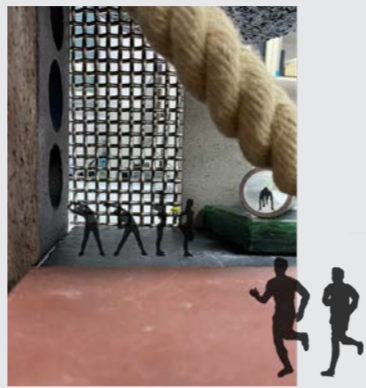


AXONOMETRIC VISUAL OF THE STAIRCASE WITH FRAMEWORK EQUIPMENT

This 2m wide staircase penetrates through all the floors creating a playground framework of callisthenics equipment laced through the gym interconnecting all the floors to make it seem like one big space. This enlarges the space and emulates the openness of the existing outdoor gyms.



MATERIALS AND SUSTAINABLE FINISHES



Experimenting with making materials active



Decorative cork wall tiles RUSTICO N 3x300x600mm - package 1,98 m² - naturally sustainable as the trees absorb 5 times more carbon from the atmosphere during bark regrowth.

Microcement - finished with a Cerebo base and a Cerebo sealer. Water-based, eliminating the need for toxic solvents that emit VOCs, making it a safer and healthier option for people and the planet. It also requires minimal water reducing water consumption during the process.

Engineered Wood flooring - varying between 2-6mm thick, Timber, oil finish. Sourced from sustainable forestry.

Synthetic hemp rope - 14mm, excellent breaking load, good resistance to abrasion and will not rot. Low stretch and easy to splice. natural hemp fiber, cannot harm the environment due to its manufacturing or decomposition.

Stainless Steel - Seized from knives and reformed into equipment

Plywood- recyclable and biodegradable wood, sustainably sources and sealed meaning low formaldehyde emissions

Commercial rubber floor mats - 10000 mm X 1000mm, thickness form 4mm - 12mm, natural rubber so it renewable and has recycled pieces of rubber creating the pattern.

1

SECTION DETAIL

1:20

10 x 900 glass balustrade
5 mm neoprene
7 mm steel support base

2200x2500 interior window
Black aluminium
RAL 9005

80 x 120 RHS
stainless steel finish

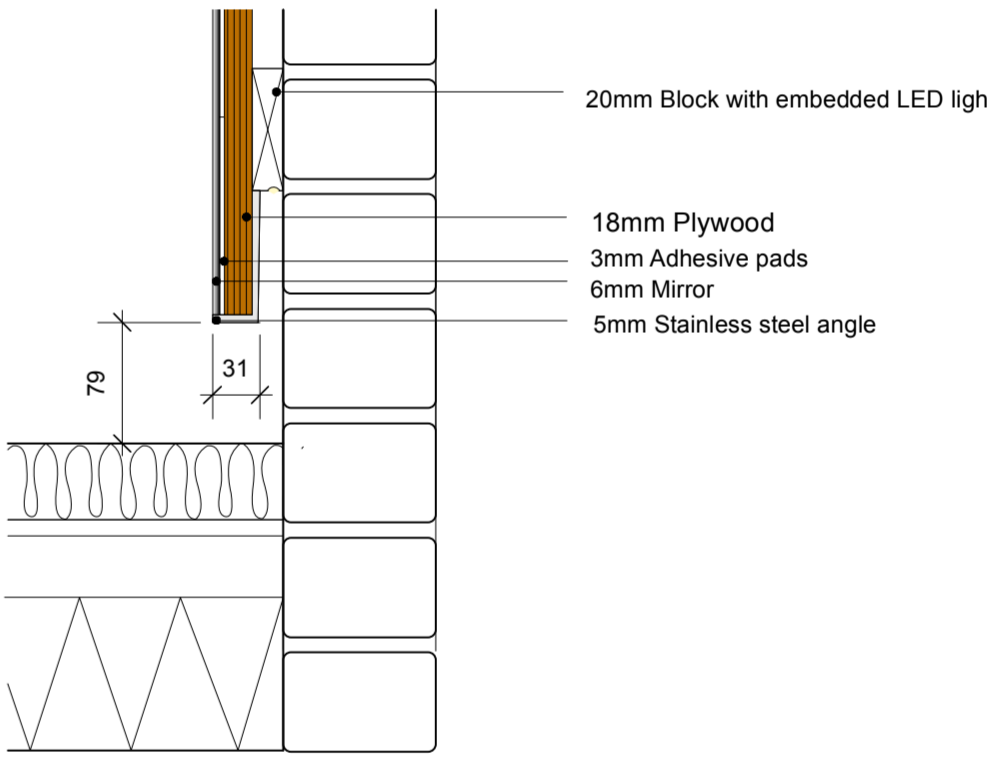
50 mm thick
commercial gym grade
foam floor mats



2

DETAIL 1:50

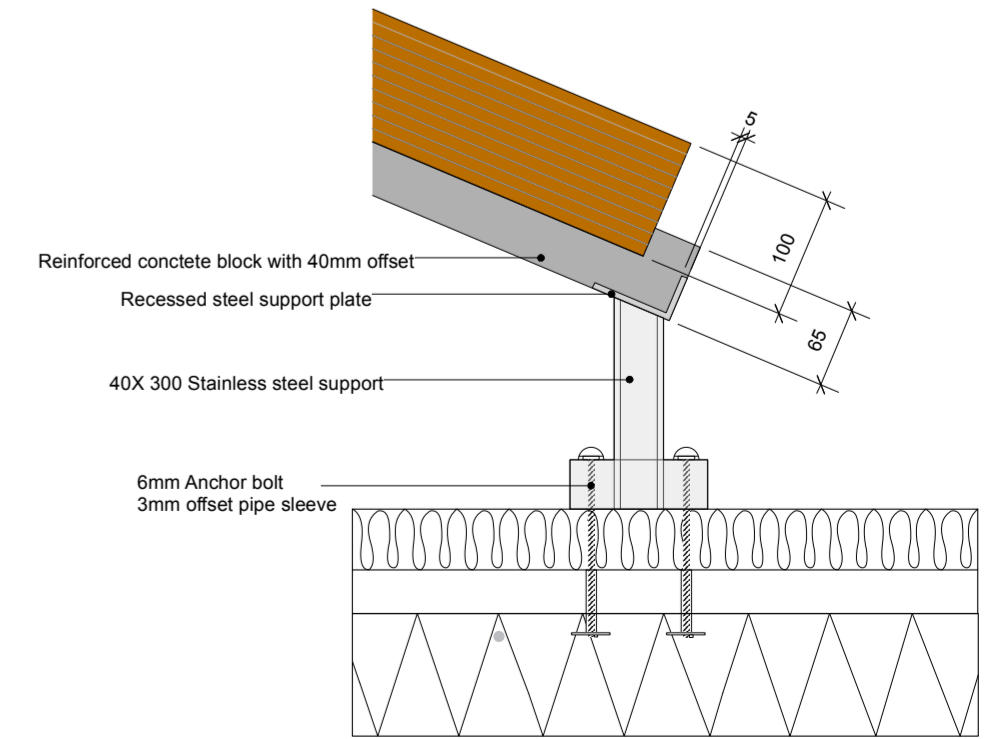
FLOATING MIRROR



3

DETAIL 1:50

WORKOUT BENCH



MEETING/THERAPY ROOM FLOOR

- Available to everyone who has been affected by knife crime, whether it be themselves or someone they know, can receive free help from a counsellor.



ENTRANCE

- Upon entering the retail area is at the front as Oxford street is a retail hub and during open hours people can shop from Steel Warriors.
- There is a line on the floor leading into an upwards arrow guiding people through the long space and upstairs.
- There is a glass ceiling at the back of the space allowing natural light to enter. While the facade is up, there is natural light entering at the front and back of the site making it seem fluid with the street, embracing the themes of openness and the outdoors emulating the existing outdoor gyms.



SECTIONAL VISUAL

- Showing the singular open staircase and interconnected framework within the space
- Displaying the varied floor lengths emulating the built up city landscape surrounding the site on Oxford Street, both having a window wall at the back to allow natural light flood the space following in my themes of openness and embracing an outdoor feel.
- Clear showcase of the varied lighting on each floor - all simple but all different.
- Showing the cork wall outside the therapy/meeting room for the Steel Warriors and the community to put up posters advertising events, jobs etc, assisting in building a strong and supporting network within the Steel Warriors community.

