

SITE



KEY:

- University Buildings
- Roads
- Buildings
- Supermarket & Convenience Stores
- Site (Junction Hotel)
- Social Housing (target protagonists)

HULME DEMOGRAPHICS

47.9% 35.6%

(Manchester City Council, 2023)

(Manchester City Council, 2021)

POPULATION
DEPRIVED

RESIDE IN SOCIAL
HOUSING

Down to Earth seeks to enhance the lives of those in economically deprived Hulme by offering access to affordable, nutritious food while championing sustainable food production. Through a joyful, community-focused design, it promotes hands-on harvesting and reimagines the shopping experience, drawing inspiration from time-honored practices and encouraging a return to the basics—“back down to earth.”

The Junction Hotel, a once-iconic establishment in Hulme, Manchester, is a derelict building that holds a significant place in the area's history. Dating back to the Victorian era, the hotel and pub were central to the local community until it closed its doors in 2016 and has remained abandoned ever since. As one of the last traditional pubs in the area, the preservation of its original facade and the recognition of its architectural beauty are key elements in the proposed redevelopment.

Historically, the building featured three floors plus a basement, though it now stands with only three levels, a change reflected in archived photographs. Despite the building's decline, it still boasts a generous outdoor area and a spacious roof terrace, offering plenty of room for potential development. Its prominent corner position ensures the hotel is visible from multiple angles, making it a landmark within the neighborhood that can be reimaged while paying homage to its rich heritage.

The Hulme Crescent council estate, constructed in the 1970s, stands as a stark representation of the long-standing issues faced by the community, including poverty, social exclusion, and a lack of cohesion. These multi-generational struggles have deeply impacted the area, with the Crescents themselves becoming a symbol of these challenges. The Junction Hotel holds significant historical relevance to this context, having served as the local pub for the residents of the Crescents and outlasting the demolition of the Crescents in the late '90s.

The Junction Hotel stands prominently at the corner of two busy roads and a major university campus, with a striking approach framed by a clear corridor that enhances its visibility and presence from every angle.

The Junction Hotel features a distinctive shape, resembling a corner store with a rhythmic pattern of repeating windows. Relocating the aperture to the front elevation would improve its presence from the approach.

It offers a spacious outdoor area for development, with potential for a roof terrace. The rear access is more private, lacking road presence and visual appeal, while the detailed front is better suited for public-facing use.

A palimpsest structure, with a detailed original facade that adds character and depth. The design must preserve and compliment the building's historical features and celebrate the notion of adaptive reuse and regeneration.



1 APPROACH



2 SYSTEM & RHYTHM



3 THRESHOLD



4 PALIMPSEST



CONCEPT GRAPHIC

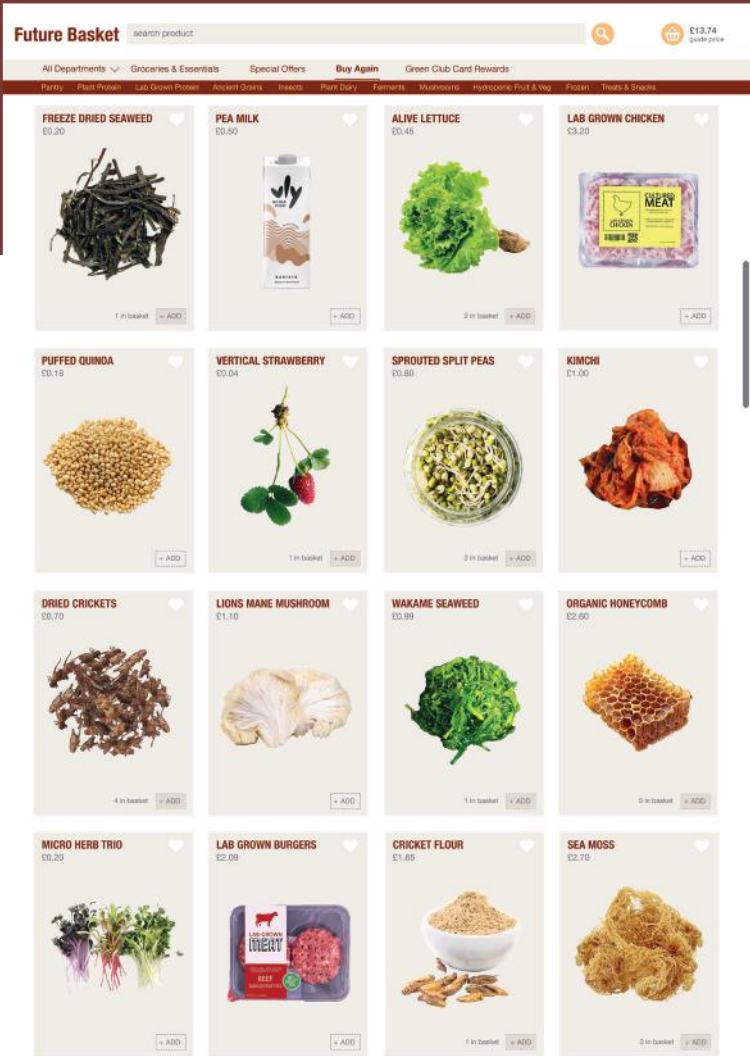
FUTURE

What if supermarkets could harness the **joy** of harvesting and sustainably **nurture people and planet?**

Future forecasting is a powerful tool for imagining and planning toward more intentional, values-driven possibilities. It helps project teams anticipate change, challenge assumptions, and design solutions that are not only reactive but visionary. By exploring a range of futures—probable, possible, preferable, and wildcards—we can identify which directions are most aligned with human and planetary well-being, and proactively shape them rather than passively accept them.

The preferable future for supermarkets lies in a blended path—where high-tech innovation meets time-honoured traditions. This vision merges the community-rooted, small-scale values of farmers markets with the regenerative, decentralised food practices of sustainable food cultures. Supermarkets become more like community commons: spaces that prioritise local food, zero waste, ancestral knowledge, and mutual care, all enhanced by ethical technology that supports—not replaces—human relationships and ecological balance.

Rather than always forging forward, this vision invites us to “backtrack” in meaningful ways, drawing from the wisdom of the past to repair and redesign the systems of the future. By integrating farmers market models, cooperative ownership, and regenerative principles into modern food infrastructure, we can create a supermarket and food system that’s not just efficient, but deeply human, nourishing, and resilient.



CONCEPT GRAPHIC



AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1

EDUCATE & EMPOWER

Provide hands-on experiences, like self-harvesting and dining at an in-house restaurant, to educate individuals on sustainable nutrition and foster a deeper connection to food and the environment.

2

PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

Advocate for locally sourced, environmentally sustainable food options, focusing on regenerative practices that support long-term ecological health.

3

REINFORCE NUTRITION & GUT HEALTH

Improve human well-being by offering nutrient-dense foods that promote gut health, supporting future generations' physical and mental resilience.

4

INNOVATE FOR THE FUTURE

Blend traditional food practices with cutting-edge, sustainable innovations like lab-grown meat and insect protein to ensure a resilient and adaptable food system for generations to come.

NUTRITION & HEALTH

Research has highlighted the crucial link between nutrition and human health, emphasising the significant role proper nourishment plays in overall well-being. Impoverished communities, especially those affected by food insecurity and poverty, are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of malnutrition, facing increased risks of nutrition-related diseases and mental health issues. To secure a healthier future for humanity, we must recognise food as medicine and prioritise nourishing the global population.



of the UK's population are experiencing food poverty* (Devine, 2024)



of all adults screened in the UK were found to be at risk of malnutrition-related disease (BAPEN, 2023)



more likely to be living with a mental health condition when facing food insecurity (The Food Foundation, 2024)

SUSTAINABLE DIETS

PLANT-BASED

Plants convert sunlight into food making them resource efficient, protein rich with lower greenhouse gas emissions, supports soil biodiversity, supports gut health and nutrition, reduced production waste.



£0.65

2 in basket

+ ADD

FERMENTS & CULTURES

Live bacteria creates nutrient-rich foods that support gut health and balance the microbiota. Resource-efficient, reduce food waste and able to be preserved and stored in a sterile environment.



£1.20

6 in basket

+ ADD

REGENERATIVE CROPS

Restore soil health, enhance biodiversity, and sequester carbon. Reduce synthetic input use and improve resilience to climate change, ensuring long-term food security and environmental health.



£0.75

2 in basket

+ ADD

AQUACULTURE

Method of producing seafood with lower environmental impact compared to wild-caught. Promotes biodiversity, reduces overfishing, and supports ocean health, while ensuring ethical and climate-resilient food production.



£1.95

1 in basket

+ ADD

SEAWEED

Low environmental impact, supports ocean ecosystem health, rich in antioxidants and nutrients, plant-based protein, resilient in most challenging environments.



£0.60

1 in basket

+ ADD

INSECTS

Resource-efficient manufacturing, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, nutrient-packed, protein-rich, can be manufactured as circular economy reducing waste, climate resilient, high feed conversion efficiency.



£0.80

3 in basket

+ ADD

ANCIENT GRAINS

Non-GMO grains are nutrient-dense, support gut health and digestive balance. Traditional production methods, require fewer resources, preserve biodiversity and thrive through natural fermentation processes.



£1.05

1 in basket

+ ADD

LAB-GROWN MEAT

Resource-efficient alternative to traditional meat. Lower greenhouse gas emissions, minimal land use, no livestock, non-GMO. Offers a more ethical approach to meat production while reducing environmental impact.

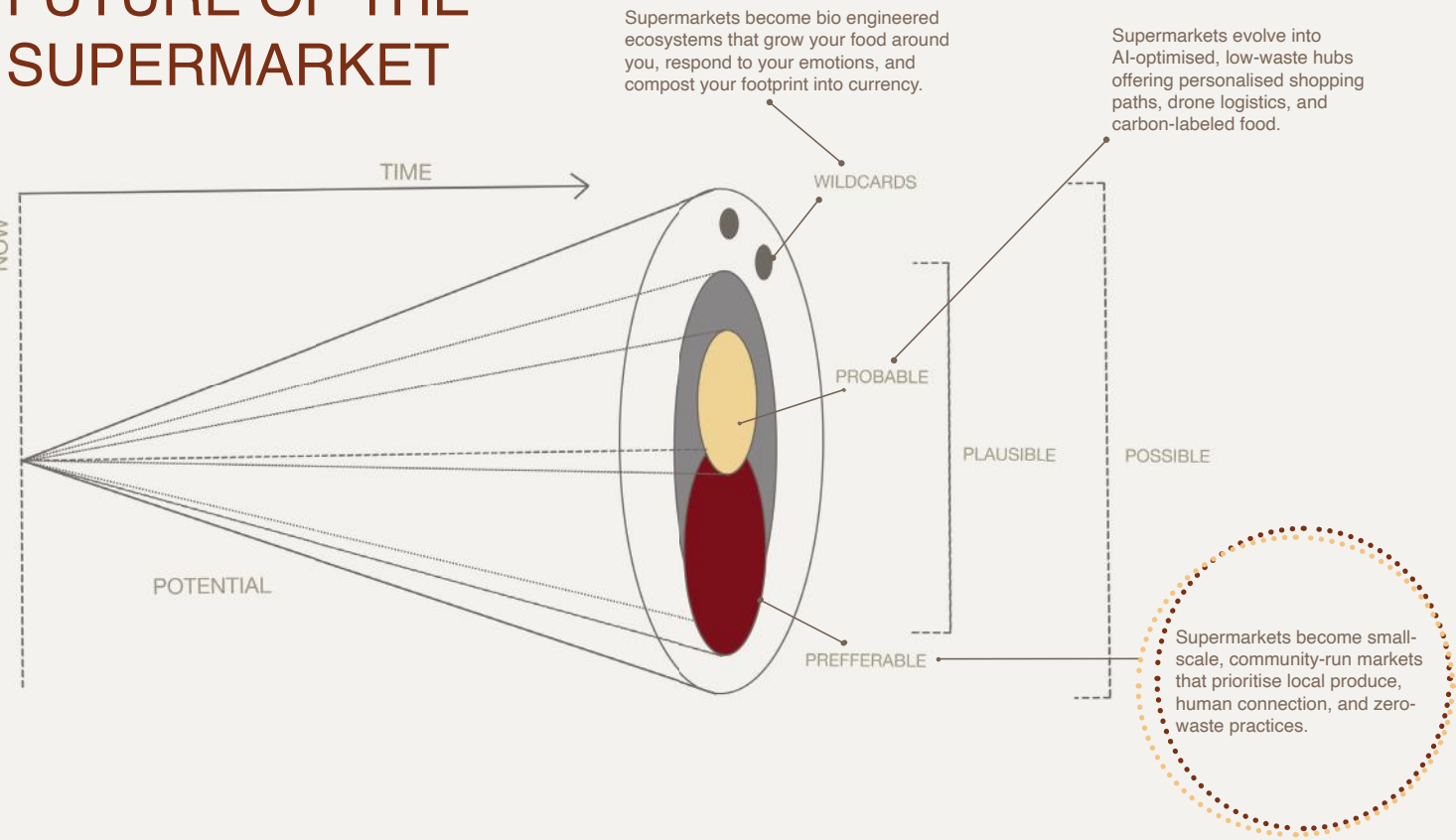


£2.05

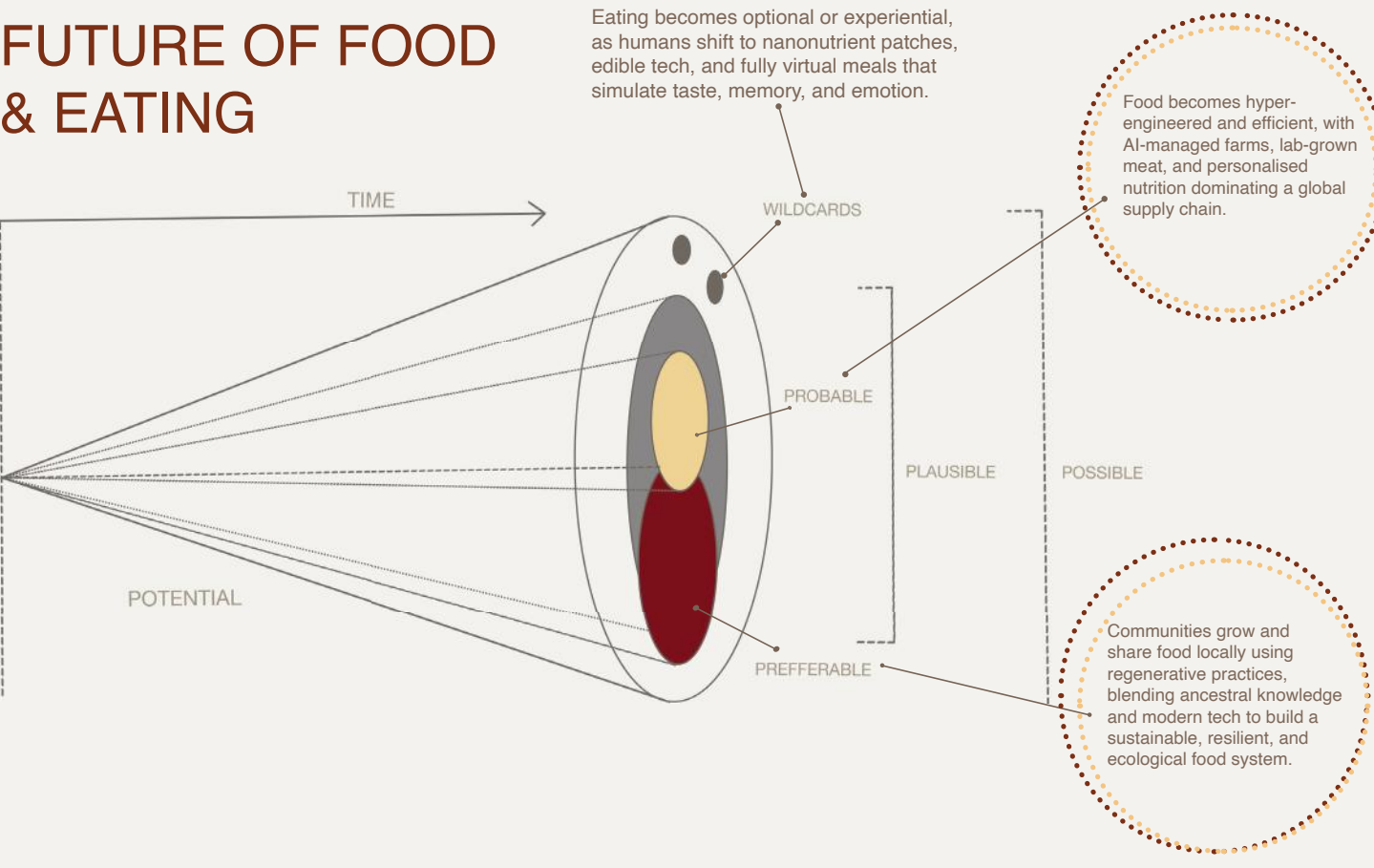
4 in basket

+ ADD

FUTURE OF THE SUPERMARKET



FUTURE OF FOOD & EATING



CONCEPT

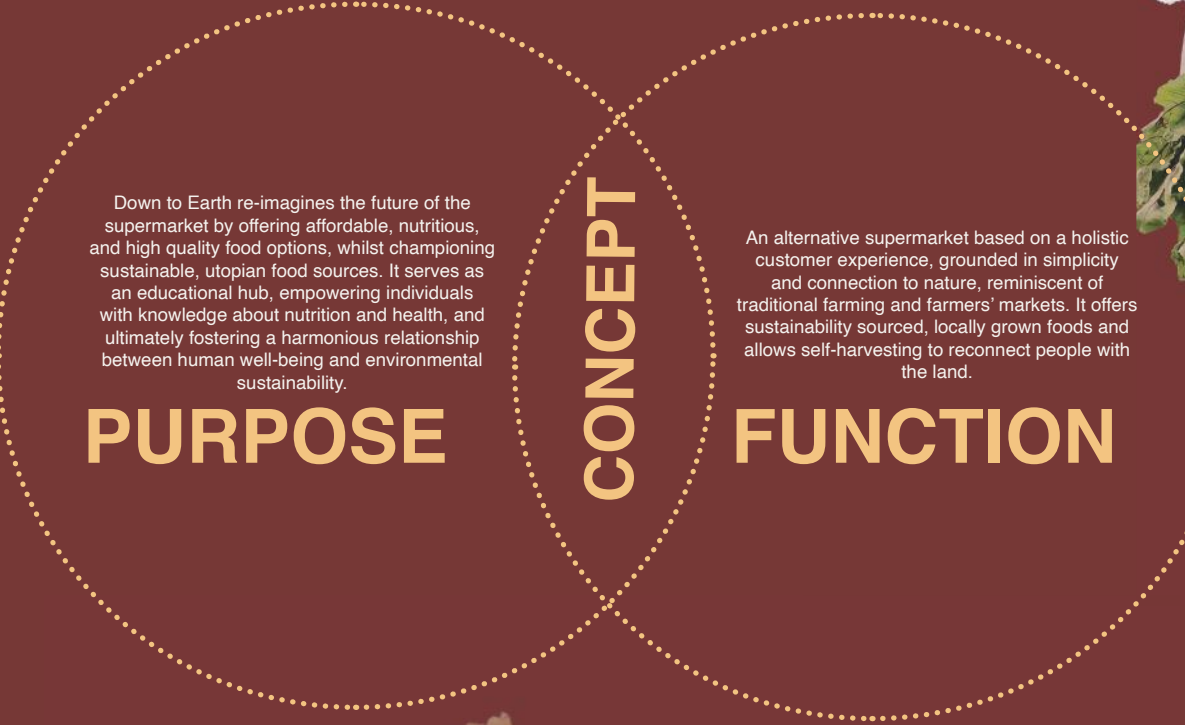
HARVEST

Purpose
Down to Earth re-imagines the future of the supermarket by offering affordable, nutritious, and high quality food options, whilst championing sustainable, utopian food sources. It serves as an educational hub, empowering individuals with knowledge about nutrition and health, and ultimately fostering a harmonious relationship between human well-being and environmental sustainability.

Function
An alternative supermarket based on a holistic customer experience, grounded in simplicity and connection to nature, reminiscent of traditional farming and farmers' markets. It offers sustainability sourced, locally grown foods and allows self-harvesting to reconnect people with the land. The in house restaurant offers unique food experiences, encouraging customers to explore unfamiliar, nutritious options like ancient grains, fermented foods, and small-scale aquaculture, alongside innovative solutions like lab-grown meat and insect harvesting. It's a fusion of time honored food practices and forward-thinking sustainability.

Visual Concept
The design of Down to Earth is centered around the theme of harvesting which is reflected both functionally and aesthetically with self-harvesting stations allowing customers to directly with the produce and self-dispensing displays emphasising a hands-on-approach as well as materiality which reflects the concept. Many key elements of the design feature rounded rectangular forms inspired by the iconic tram-line pattern left by tractors during harvest .

Material Strategy
The material strategy is rooted in the themes of harvesting, food waste and sustainability with a rich and warm colour palette and raw and organic textures which reflect the concept of being 'down to earth.' The hero materials have been carefully curated to align with these principles, utilising sustainable, food-based materials that not only enhance the design but also reinforce the commitment to sustainability and responsible sourcing. This approach deepens the connection between the space, its purpose, and the materials that bring it to life.



MATERIALS PALETTE

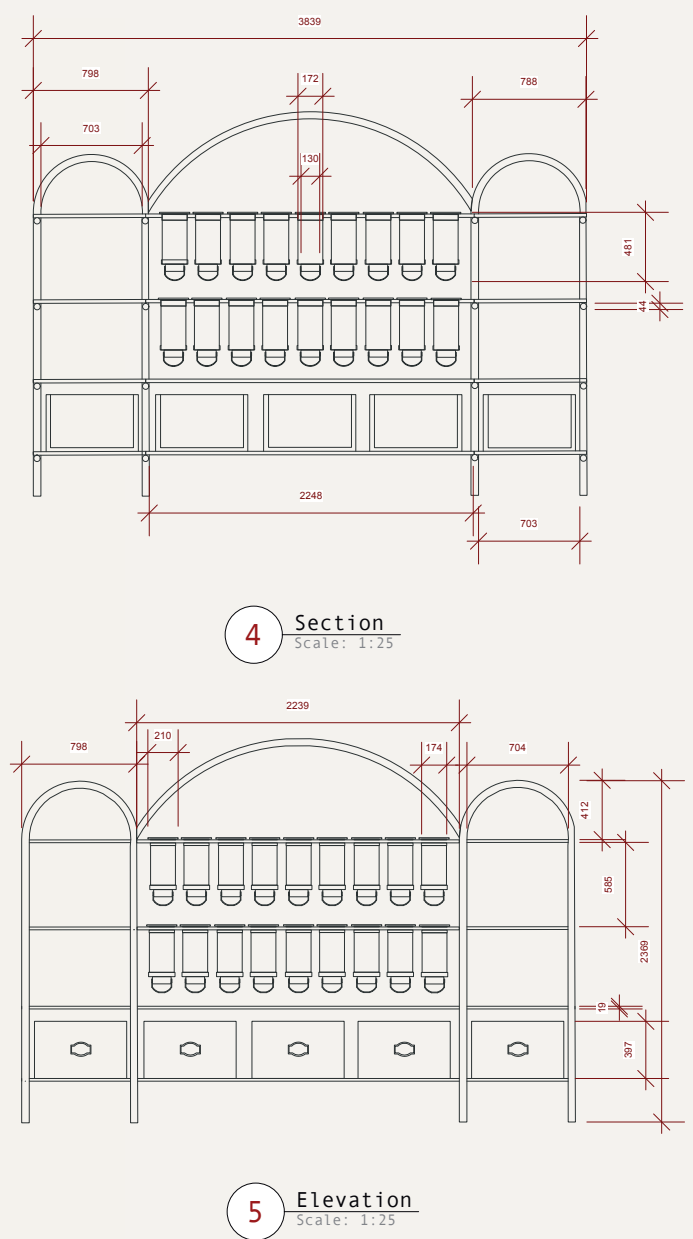
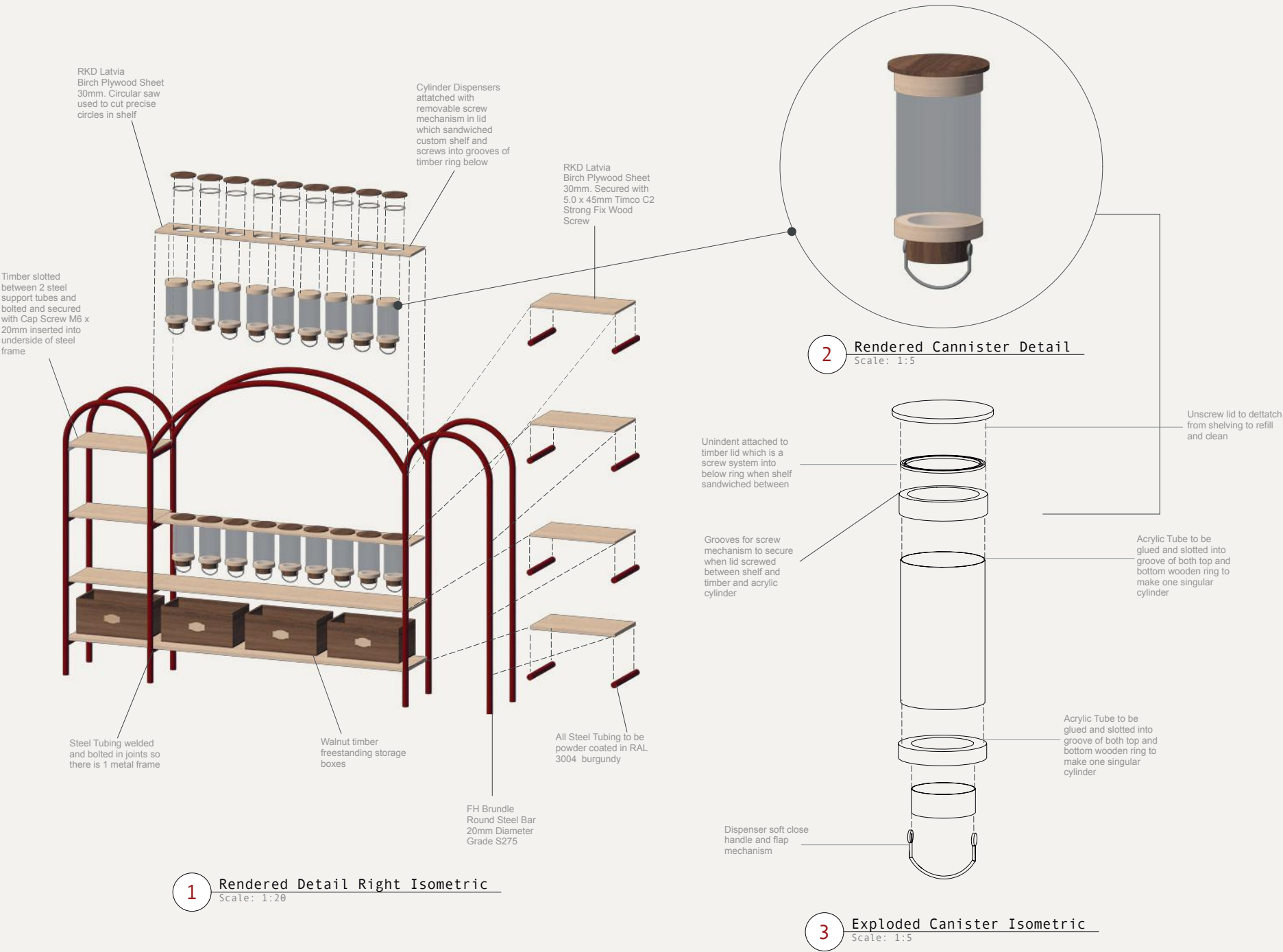
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MATERIAL TYPE	SUPPLIER
Surface, Foreoso- Bianco London	Foreoso https://foreoso.co.uk/collections/samples/products/sample-bianco-london-plane?variant=41943270359196
Acoustic Panel, Baux- Wood Wool Panel Earth Brown 35m Panel	Baux- https://www.baux.com/naux-acoustic-materials/wood-wool/panels/
Upholstery, Camira- Hemp, Oat HWPO5	Camira- https://www.camirafabrics.com/en-uk/contract/fabrics/hemp?colourway=Bale
Surface, Solid Wool Welsh Mountain	Solid Wool- https://www.solidwool.com/material-shop
Surface, Ottan- Blackberry Marmalade	Ottan- https://www.ottanstudio.com/kopyasi-earth-1
Acoustic Panelling, Ottan- Green Grass	Ottan- https://www.ottanstudio.com/kopyasi-earth-1
Brick Slip, K-Brig- Chapman Burnt Orange.	Kenoteq- https://www.kenoteq.com
Wall Panelling, WheatBoard	CaraGreen- https://caragreen.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Wheat-Board-Color-Cards-2.pdf
Timber- Hansson Plywood Sheet, Birch Plywood	Hansson Plywood- https://hansson-plywood.co.uk/products/exte-glued-birch-throughout-plywood



DETAILED DRAWINGS

The custom designed self-dispensing zero waste station is a central feature of the proposal, offering an intuitive, mess-free way for customers to refill pantry staples while eliminating unnecessary packaging. Its curved rectangular form draws direct inspiration from the tram lines left by tractors during harvest—an agricultural imprint reimaged in the design to honour the cycle of growing, gathering, and giving back.



DEVELOPMENT

Circulation and touchpoints play a pivotal role in the design, with multiple route options thoughtfully crafted to align with each protagonist's unique journey. Every path is intuitive and easily navigable, whether one seeks efficiency or immersion. Key touchpoints have been strategically placed to enable seamless "quick routes" that ensure convenience and completeness — without disrupting the flow for those who choose to linger, explore, and savor a more enriching experience.



THE COLLECTED NURTURER

Motivation

Seeks convenience without compromising on quality. Values shared experiences, community education and uses the supermarket as a space for learning.

Behavior/ Needs

"Quick route" signage, strategically placed essentials, intuitive circulation, and easy checkouts near entrance/exit zones.

Family-friendly routes, interactive zones, educational activities, seating areas, and storytelling touchpoints.

SHARE
TASTE
GATHER



THE CAUTIOUS NEWCOMER

Initially drawn by necessity—affordability, convenience, or word-of-mouth—but gradually motivated by growing curiosity and a desire to engage with new food.

Affordable tasting menus or dish samplers that lower the risk of trying something new. Clear connections between bar/restaurant menu items and retail products.

Comfortable and more casual atmosphere that feel socially inclusive, not elitist or health-focused.

HARVEST
LEARN
CHOOSE



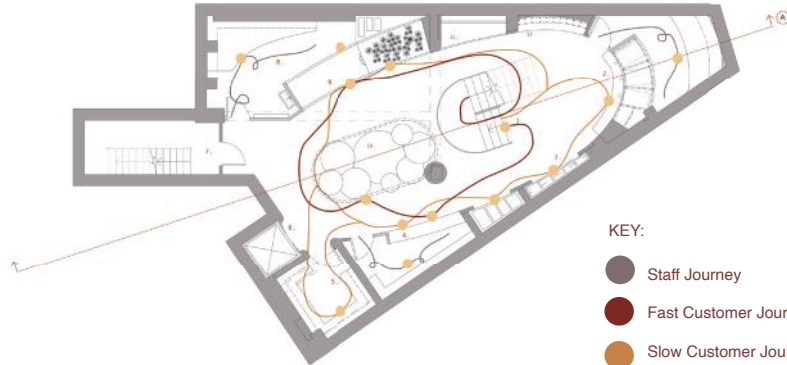
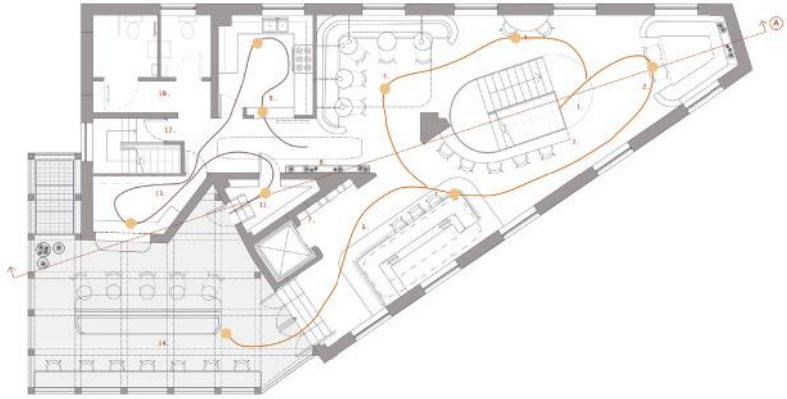
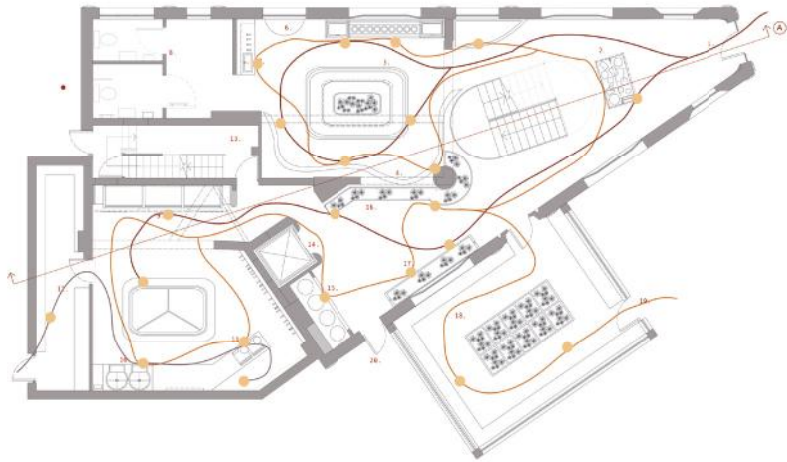
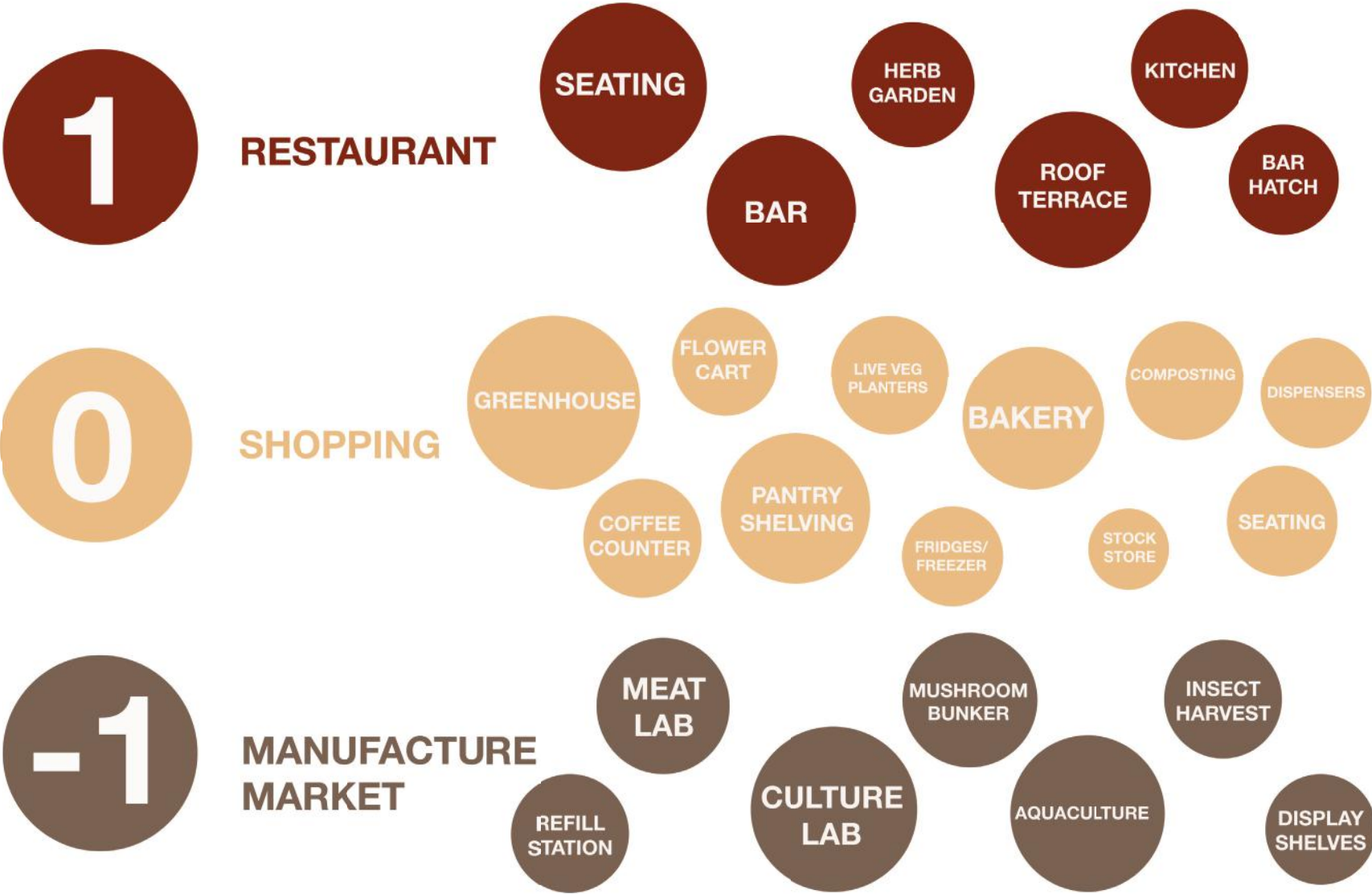
THE CONCIOUS NOURISHER

Driven by a desire to support both personal health and the planet, she seeks natural, ethically sourced food and make intentional choices that reflect their values of care, balance, and sustainability.

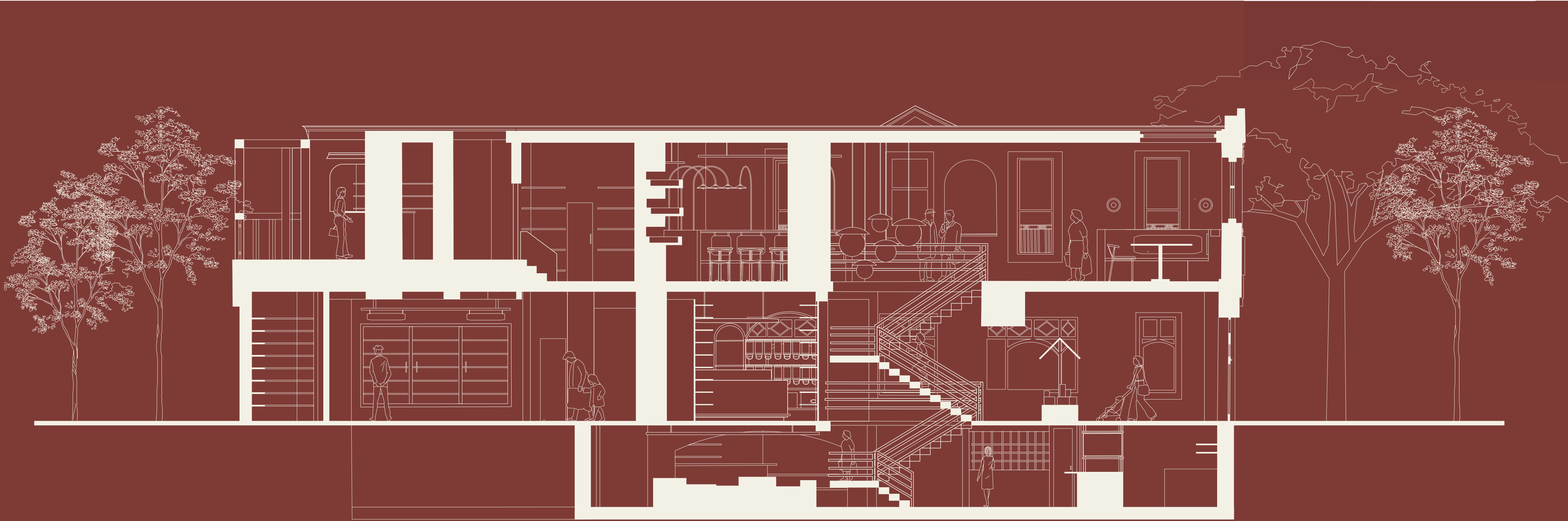
Spends time exploring nutritional content, seeks fermented foods, ancient grains, and gut-friendly products.

Clear signage, slow-flow circulation with immersive food zones and opportunity to be inspired and connected to food.

CULTIVATE
DISCOVER
REIMAGINE



KEY:
● Staff Journey
● Fast Customer Journey
● Slow Customer Journey
● Touchpoints



SECTION (NOT TO SCALE)

DESIGN

The design of Down to Earth is grounded in the theme of harvesting, reflected in both form and function. Self-harvesting stations and self-dispensing displays create a tactile and immersive customer experience, reinforcing the joy and simplicity of gathering food directly from the source. Visually, the space is shaped by rounded rectangular forms reminiscent of tram-line patterns left by tractors, subtly referencing traditional agriculture. A warm, earthy material palette and the use of sustainable, food-based materials further embody the ethos of environmental responsibility. This cohesive strategy ties together purpose, aesthetics, and sustainability to create a space that is truly “down to earth.”



Whole Food Pantry- Ground Floor



Restaurant Bar Area- First Floor



Restaurant Bistro Seating- First Floor



Bakery & Coffee Station- Ground Floor



Live Vegetable Self Harvesting Planter- Ground Floor



Ferments & Culture Dispenser- Basement Floor

NUTRITION

EMPOWERS
PEOPLE FUELS
FUTURES &
STRENGTHENS
COMMUNITIES

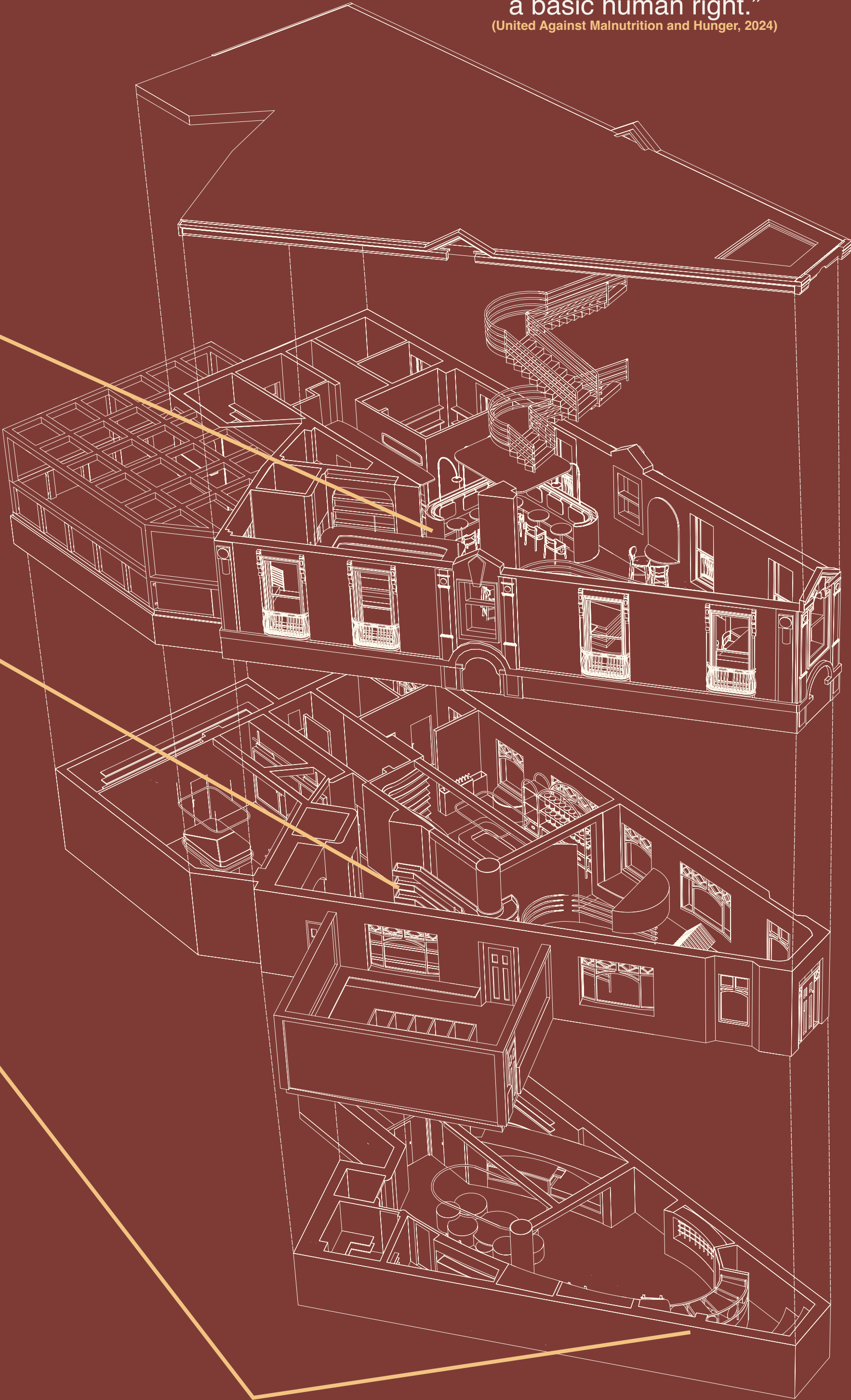
SCAN ME



link to digital flythrough



“Access to good nutrition should be a basic human right.”
(United Against Malnutrition and Hunger, 2024)



3D ISOMETRIC NOT TO SCALE