

# LIMBIC PASSAGE

What if we could feel less lonely in our Grief?



Visualisation of Evergreen Haven (Memorial Garden)

## CREATIVE REUSE

This project takes a creative reuse approach by **transforming** Hulme Hippodrome into a space for communal healing while preserving its **historical** and **cultural** essence. Rather than altering the building beyond recognition, original materials like brickwork, metal, and glass have been reused to maintain its architectural integrity and **evoke** a sense of memory.

**Patterns** from the theatre's past are reinterpreted throughout the design, honouring its original function while giving it a new role in supporting grief and connection. The nearby garden centre contributes plants and scents, bringing in the local community and using **nature** as a tool for emotional healing. This approach to creative reuse doesn't just preserve the building—it **reimagines** it as a space where the past and present **coexist**, allowing the Hippodrome's story to continue in a way that responds to **contemporary emotional and social needs**.



Visualisation of the Aroma Nook



## PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Limbic Passage is a spatial project designed to **support** people experiencing grief at different stages. Set within the historic Hulme Hippodrome, the project transforms a **culturally rich** but underused space into a centre for **healing, memory, and connection**.

Grief is complex and deeply personal. Using sensory design, especially scent and texture, the space allows individuals to reconnect with loved ones through memory. Scent, in particular, engages the limbic system, triggering emotional recall and **aiding** reflection. This **multisensory** approach helps make space for unspoken feelings and private rituals. Nature plays a vital role. The space balances **solitude and solidarity**, with private zones for reflection and communal areas for gentle interaction. Hulme's strong, diverse community makes it an ideal location welcoming all backgrounds and creating a **supportive environment** for navigating loss.

## THE PROBLEM

There is a lack of space needed for people to grieve

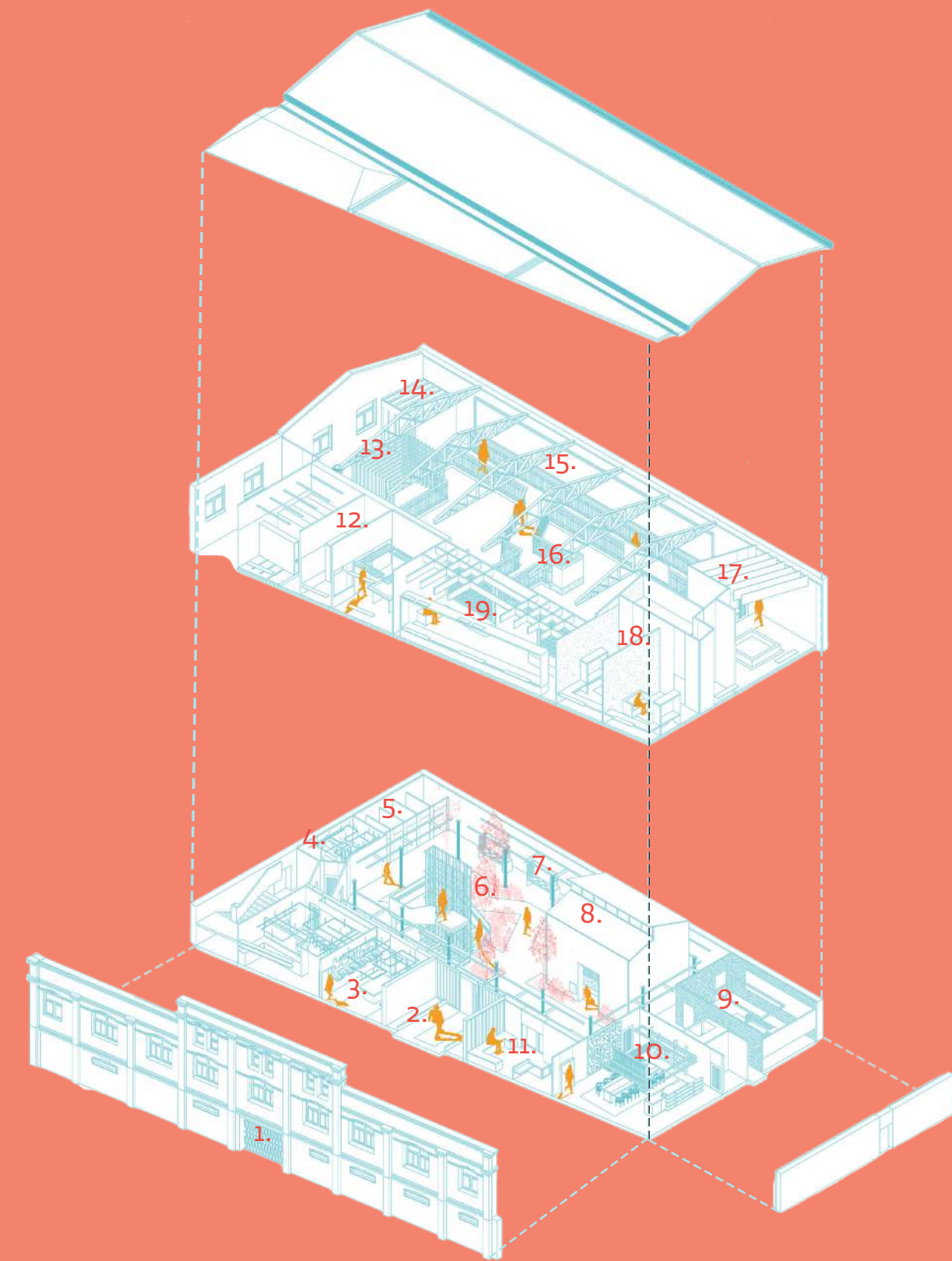
Many people have not tried a communal support group to help with grief

People have become isolated due to lack of support in grief.

The societal discomfort around discussing loss

## AIMS

- To **EXPLORE** different ways in which interior environments can help a bereaved individual **MAINTAIN A CONNECTION** with deceased loved ones
- Create an environment that **CONNECTS** people of different backgrounds and **HELP** one another on their journeys of grief.
- To allow the people to process grief in different ways but gain a new **POSITIVE PERSPECTIVE** on grief.
- The space will build **NEW BONDS**.



- |   |                                 |                              |                          |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Shutters                               | 5. Public Toilets & WC Restroom | 10. Chiyu Tea Room           | 15. Moss Wall            |
| 2. Entrance                               | 6. The Evergreen Haven          | 11. Chiyu Tea Room Reception | 16. Viewing platform     |
| 3. Olfactoria (Scent Lab)                 | 7. Moss Way                     | 12. The Passage Archive      | 17. The Unburdening Room |
| 4. Private Olfactoria (Private scent lab) | 8. Reflection Hall              | 13. Canopy                   | 18. Linger Point         |
|   | 9. Stillpoint (Reflection room) | 14. Aroma Nook               | 19. The Woven Voices     |

## WHY?

If there is no adequate support when grieving this can lead to:

PROLONGED ISOLATION  
EMOTIONAL NUMBNESS  
DEPRESSION, ANXIETY  
POST TRAUMATIC STRESS.

Left UNADDRESSED with no help this can make individuals **DISCONNECT** FROM THEIR ENVIRONMENTS, ROUTINES AND SOCIAL CIRCLES.

Memory-filled spaces become **EMOTIONALLY CHARGED**, but homes often lack tools to turn these triggers into healing.

People may **FEEL PRESSURED** to move on leading to UNRESLOVED EMOTIONS to FESTER over time

## WHY WE NEED SPACES FOR GRIEF



Gives people a tangible way to **CONNECT** with their memories and feelings



Can help **RITUALISE REMEMBRANCE** creating a gentle structure to a healing journey



Allows people to **MEET** and **CONNECT** with other people who share the same experiences and can learn and process grief differently.



Offers privacy and **EMOTIONAL SAFETY** when social support isn't available and feels overwhelming



## POSTER BRIEF



Research into the Hulme Hippodrome revealed a once-vibrant cultural venue now left abandoned and decaying, with its exterior materials—**scrap brickwork, broken glass, and timber**—weathered but full of character. These elements informed a design approach rooted in creative reuse, allowing the building’s material memory to support a space of emotional healing.

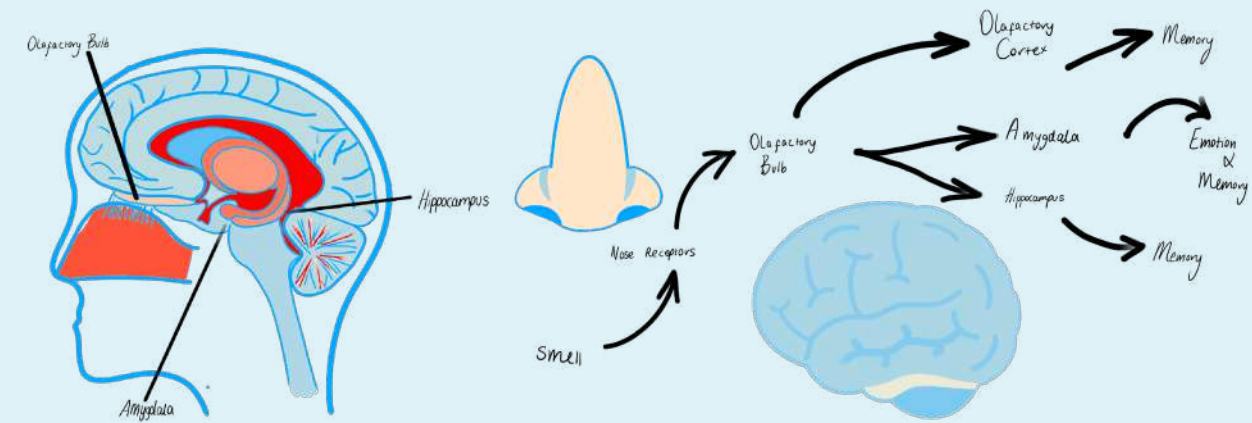
The project is guided by the **Proust Effect**, focusing on how scent-triggered memories evoke emotion and reflection. This shaped the spatial exploration, supported by schematic diagrams and 3D model-making, with a concept based on **bridging**—connecting people to their memories, their grief, and to each other.

Protagonist research focused on a multigenerational group experiencing different stages of grief. This informed the design of spaces that **shift between privacy and community**, supporting a range of emotional needs and responses. The result is an environment that gently **unites**, supports, and adapts to the grieving process.

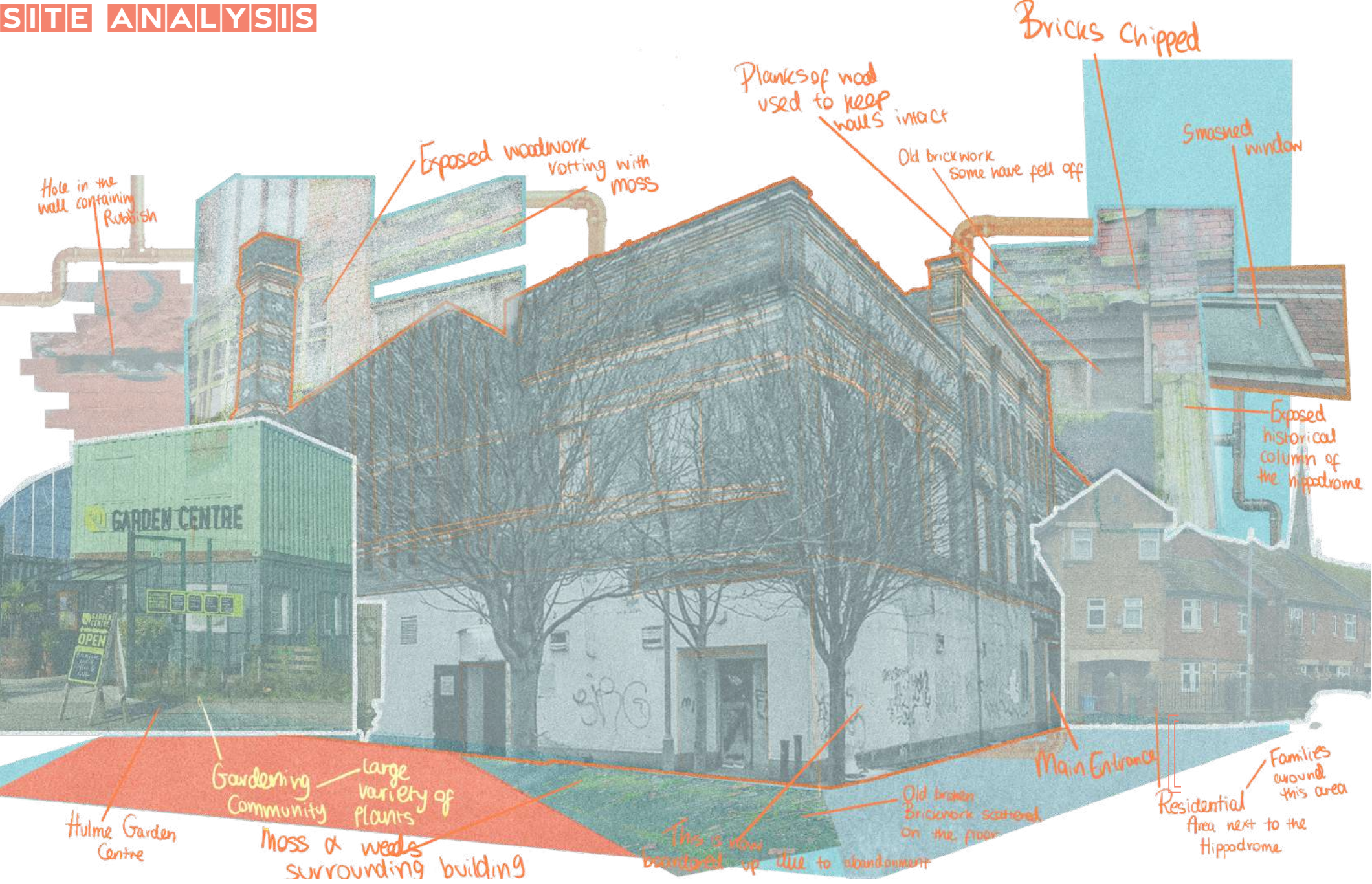
THE PROUST EFFECT



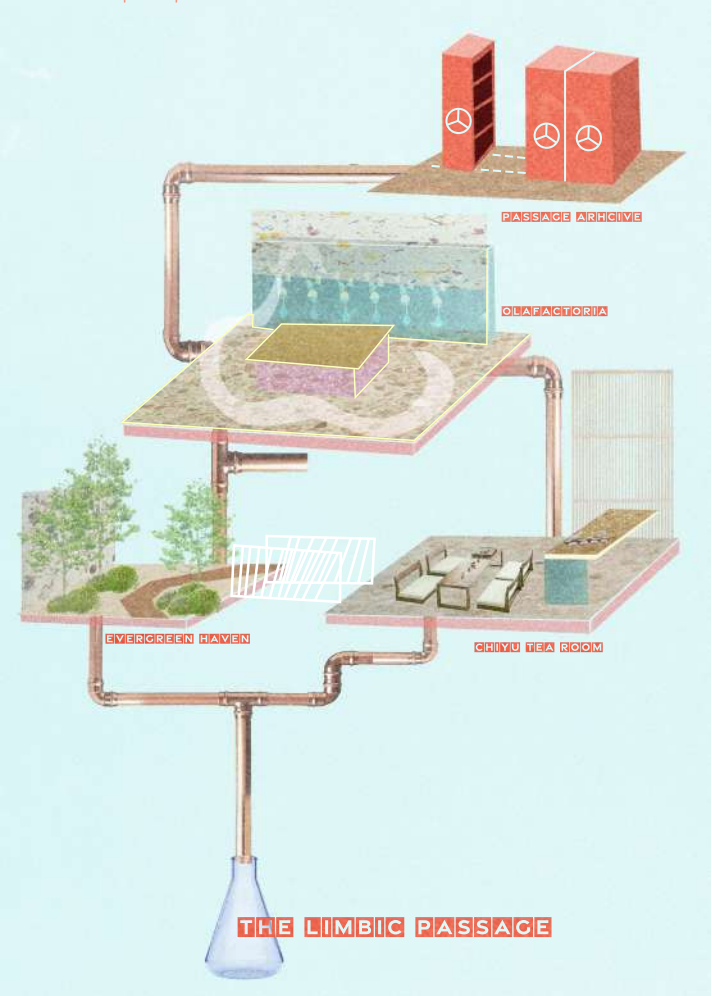
- Hippocampus & orbitofrontal cortex are involved in evaluating sensory information like smell.
- The “Proustian moment” shows how scent can evoke vivid, emotional memories.
- This strong link exists due to the brain’s anatomy connecting smell and memory.
- Smell is fully developed in the womb and dominant until about age 10.
- Early childhood determines our lifelong scent preferences.
- Smell and emotion are stored together, making scent a powerful emotional trigger



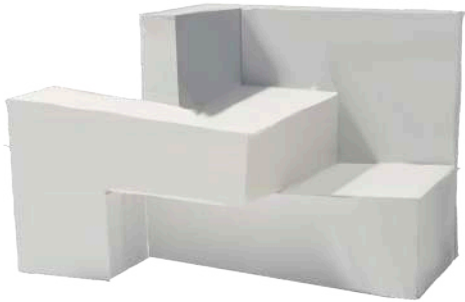
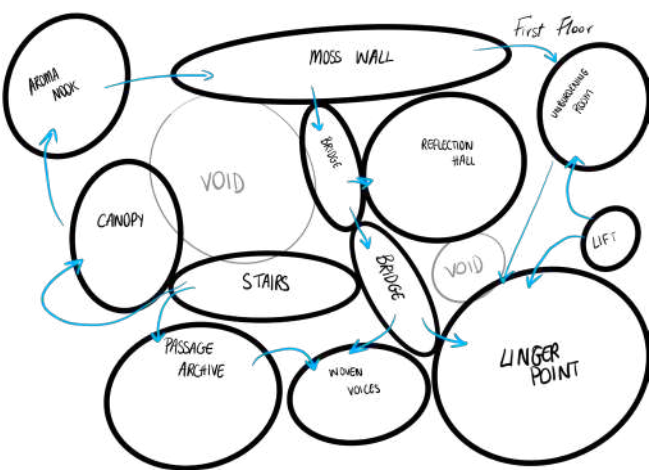
SITE ANALYSIS



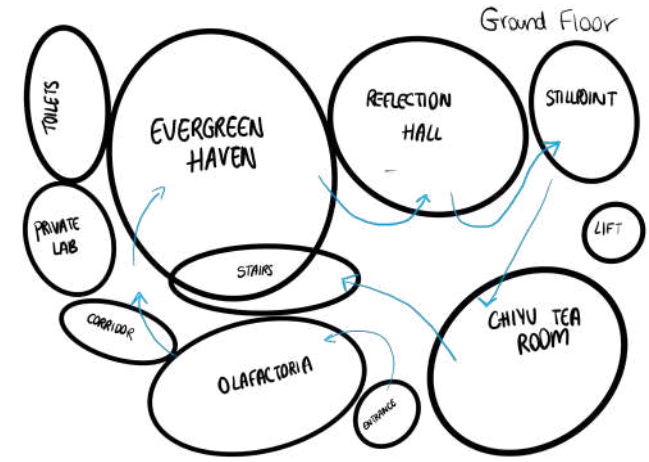
Concept poster



SPATIAL EXPLORATION



UNITE—come or bring together to form a whole.



BOND—strong connection or tie that binds objects together

NEEDS FOR THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF



DENIAL

A quiet, private space offers a needed escape as they cope—supporting a gradual transition into more social settings.



ANGER

A space for release and grounding, balancing privacy with openness. Interactive elements gently shift focus to softer, calming thoughts.



DEPRESSION

A safe, gentle space that uplifts—offering solitude with the quiet presence of others, without pressure to engage.



BARGAINING

A reflective, grounding space that supports personal rituals and self-expression, with the quiet presence of others offering comfort without interaction.



ACCEPTANCE

Encourages reflection, with quiet areas for solitude and communal spaces for gentle connection—allowing them to inspire others at different stages.

PROTAGONIST

Key  
Bereaved  
Deceased  
The users of this space are multigenerational: individuals and families who are each experiencing grief in unique ways.



- Father and daughter coping with the loss of the mother
- NEEDS:
  - Need a quiet, comforting refuge
  - Father needs space to reflect and bond through activities
  - Daughter benefits from sensory experiences to recall memories



- Struggles with loneliness after losing her husband
- NEEDS:
  - Needs comfort and connection
  - Space should evoke memories and soothe grief
  - Presence of others helps ease isolation



- Grieving her mother, feeling disconnected from grief and faith
- NEEDS:
  - Needs quiet reflection and a sense of her mother’s presence
  - Seeks community with others who have had similar losses



- Grieving couple coping with the loss of their son
- One seeks solitude, the other connection, creating distance
- NEEDS:
  - Need communal support and shared reflection to stay connected





Visualisation of the Olafactoria Scent Lab



Visualisation of the Passage Archive



Visualisation of the Reflection Hall

A scent lab where the customer can produce a perfume that reminds them of their loved one.

100% recycled copper pipes incorporated with an LED hanging light copper/opal glass

Lab flasks filled with scent serum. To smell this the user must squeeze the horn. To make this accessible the podium has brailled so the less able visitor can identify what scent they want.

Wood Aspen table with different containers the user can put their perfume into.

An archival space where visitors can explore their loved one's old belongings that they donated. The bereaved are able to share stories about their past memories here. This space is for the protagonists to maintain their connection with their loved one through memories.

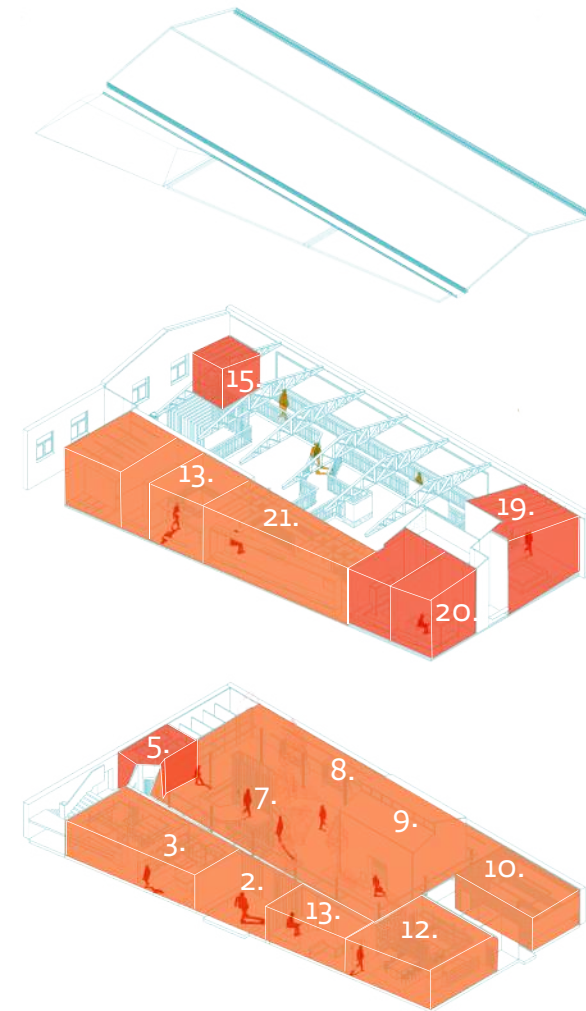
Rolling shelves used to store archival products for the bereaved. These are stored under safe conditions to ensure no items are damaged.

A large exhibition hall where protagonists can place images of their deceased loved one and remember to then reflect on their memories.

Viewing platform from the first floor looking into the hall.  
Skylight to let light bounce off into the room to create a brighter atmosphere for a bittersweet room.

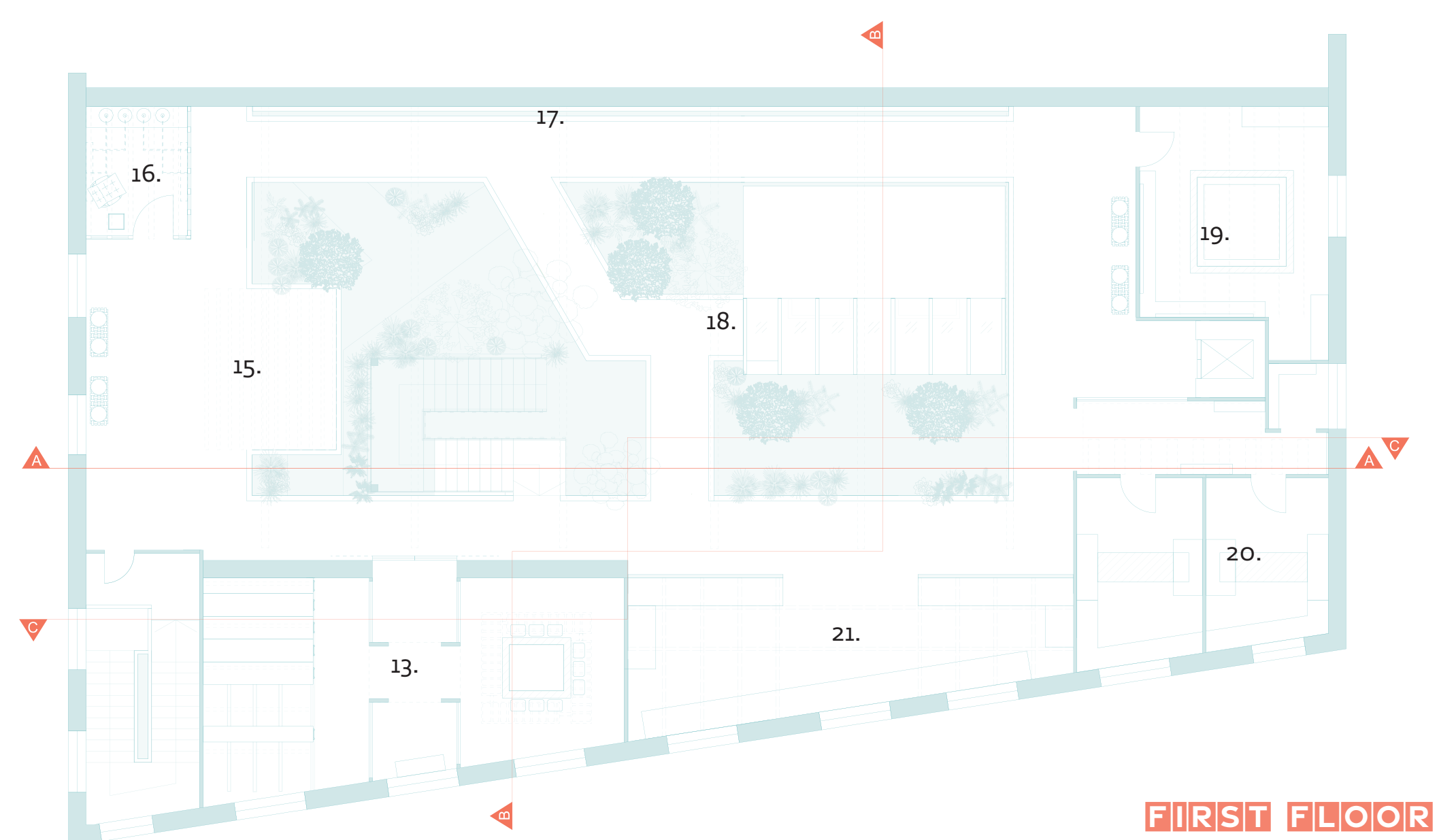
Shelving and exhibit where people can place images of their loved ones they have lost and can therefore look at and reflect.

The spatial arrangement **balances** private and communal areas, allowing for different emotional needs. Each room offers a unique experience, creating **flexible** journeys for those at different stages of grief. There's no fixed path, grief is complex. Inspired by the concept of bridging and bonding, the rooms are connected, so each space **supports** and prepares you for the next.

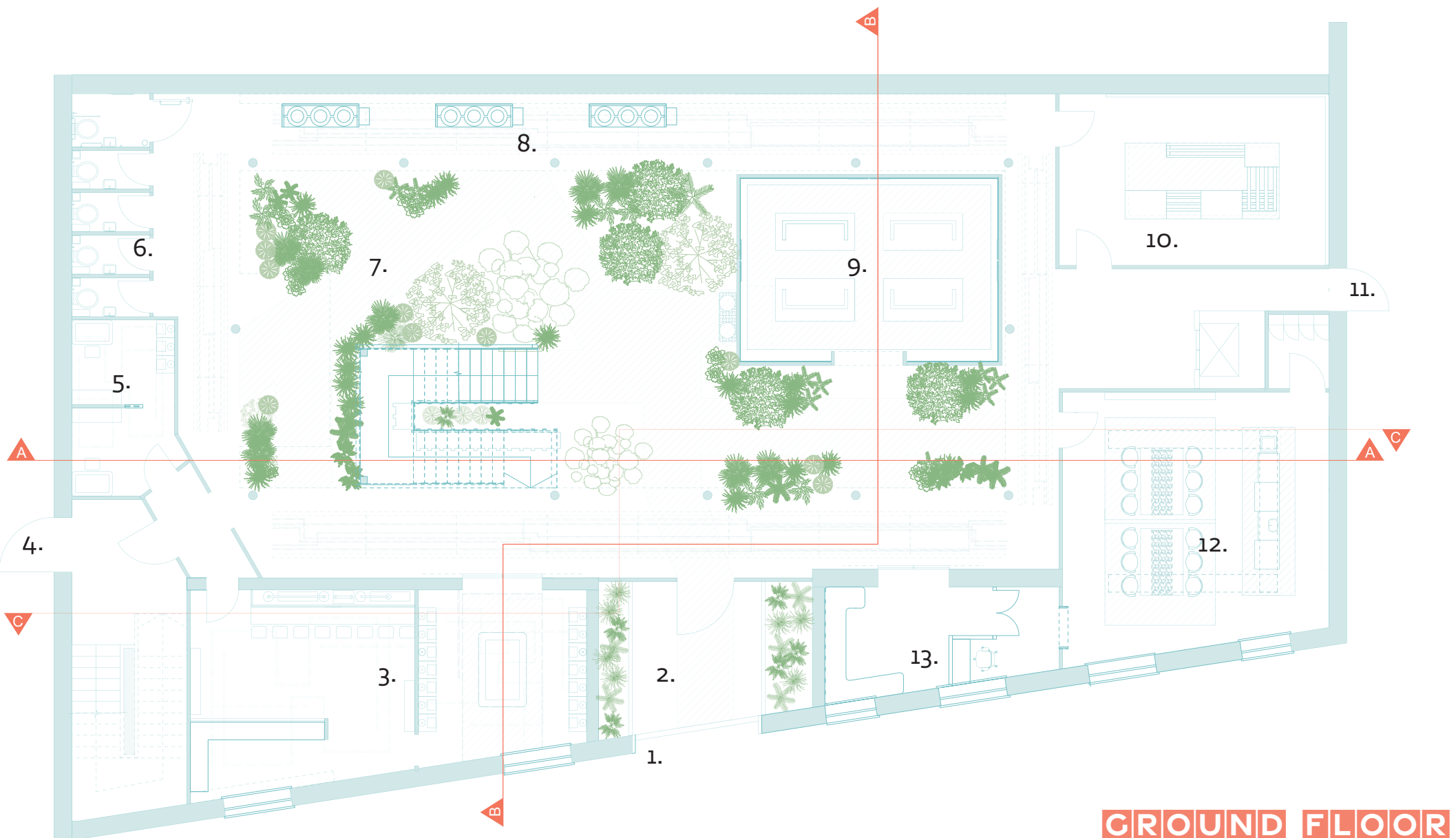


Communal Private

This axometric diagram presents the circulation of the private and communal areas within the Limbic Passage.

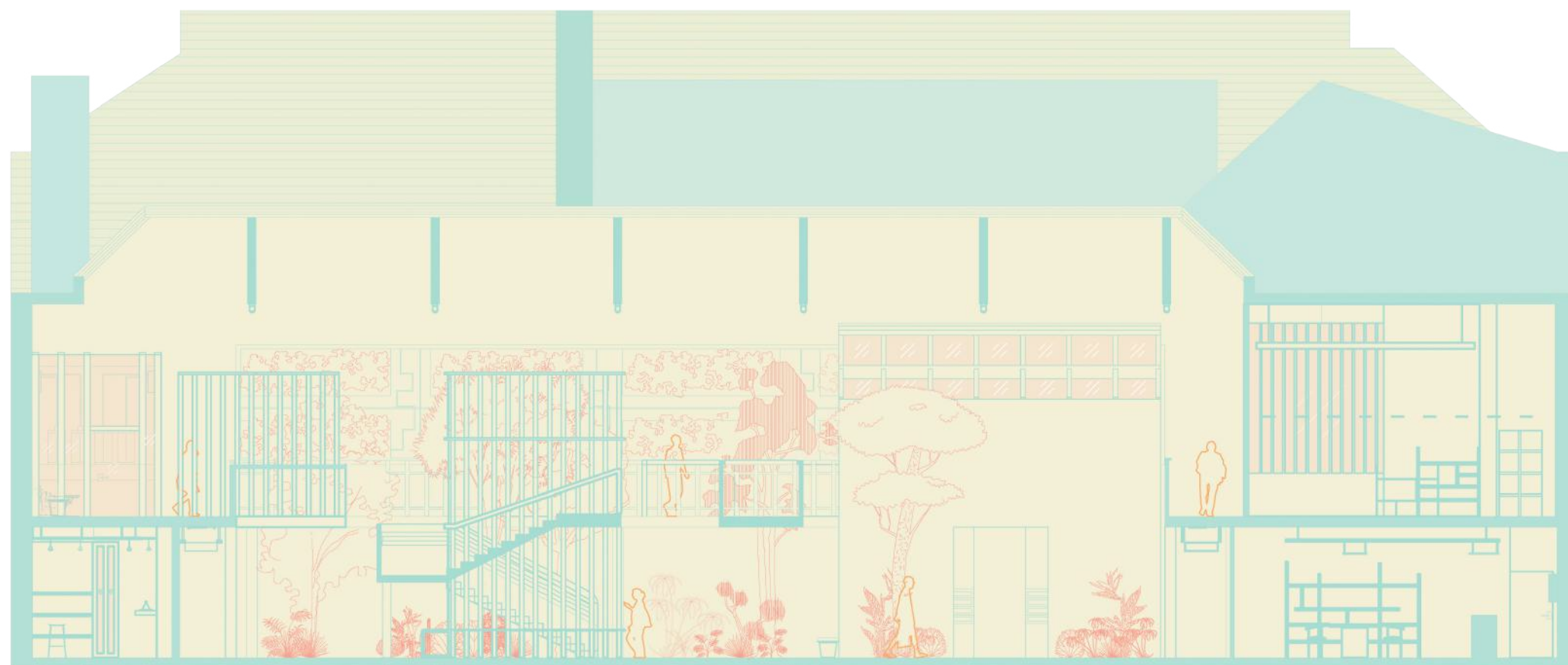


FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

- |   |                                  |                          |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Shutters                               | 8. Moss Way                      | 17. Moss Wall            |
| 2. Entrance                               | 9. Reflection Hall               | 18. Viewing platform     |
| 3. Olfactoria (Scent Lab)                 | 10. Stillpoint (Reflection room) | 19. The Unburdening Room |
| 4. Fire Exit                              | 11. Fire Exit                    | 20. Linger Point         |
| 5. Private Olfactoria (Private scent lab) | 12. Chiyu Tea Room               | 21. The Woven Voices     |
| 6. Public Toilets & WC Restroom           | 13. Chiyu Tea Room Reception     |                          |
| 7. The Evergreen Haven (Memorial Garden)  | 14. The Passage Archive          |                          |
|   | 15. Canopy                       |                          |
|   | 16. Aroma Nook                   |                          |



Proposed Section A

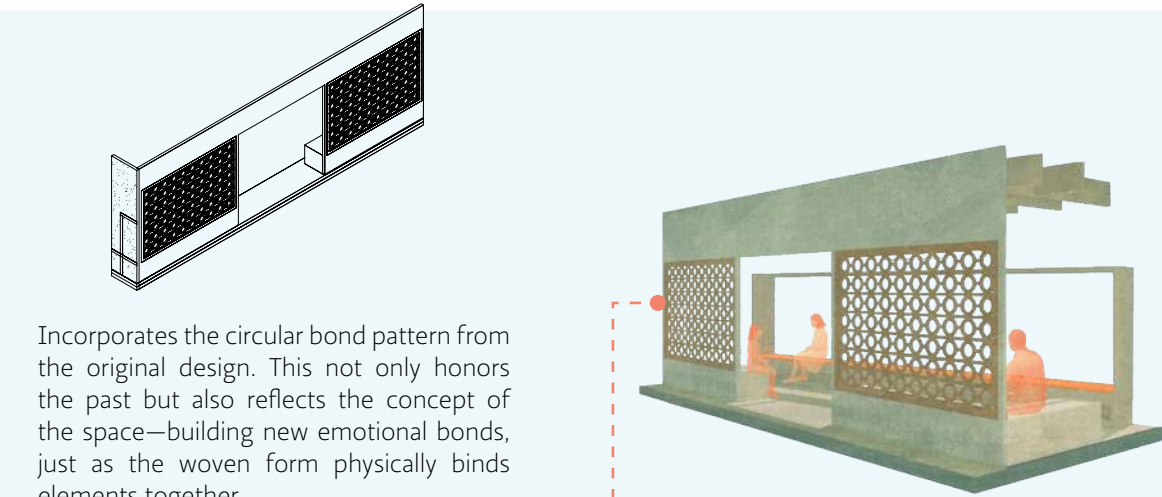
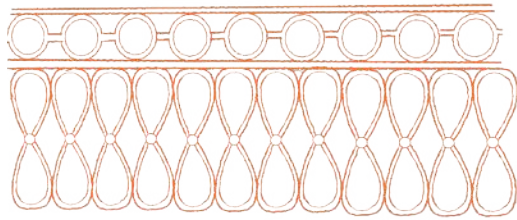


DESIGN REFERENCING

The design draws directly from the original architecture of the Hulme Hippodrome, using its rich detailing and decorative elements as inspiration. Patterns found in the building's interior—such as mouldings, arches, and stage ornamentation—have been **abstracted and reinterpreted** into the new design, creating a visual and emotional link between past and present. These patterns are **subtly integrated** into walls, flooring, and furniture to honour the building's history while giving it new meaning. This approach ensures that the **memory** of the space is not lost, but carried forward through **materiality and form**.



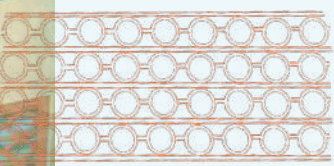
Wall partition as part of the historic Hippodrome. Pattern is now being used as inspiration in the Limbic Passage



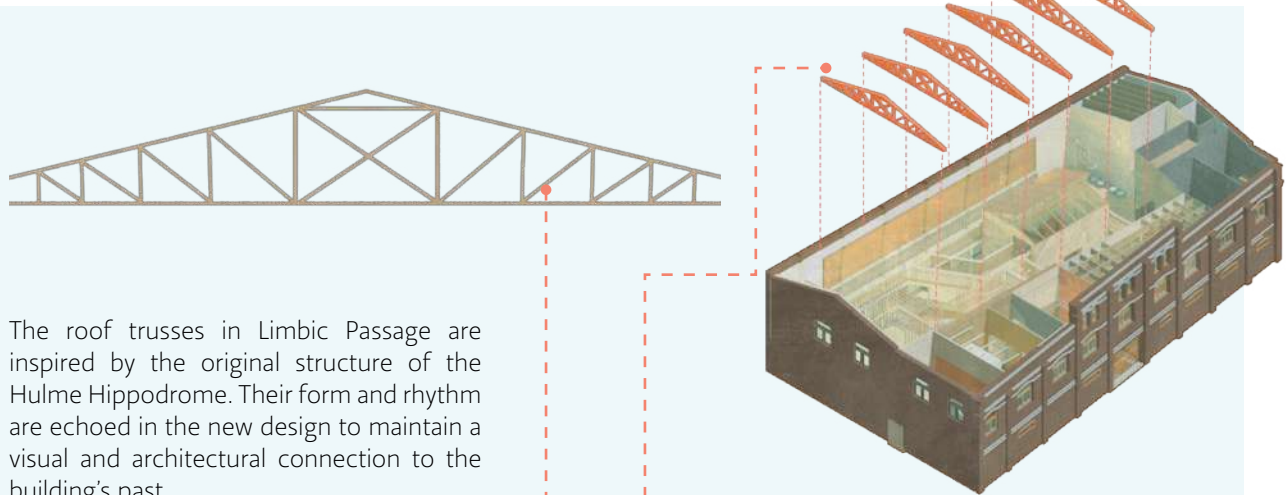
Incorporates the circular bond pattern from the original design. This not only honors the past but also reflects the concept of the space—building new emotional bonds, just as the woven form physically binds elements together.



Visualisation of Woven Voices



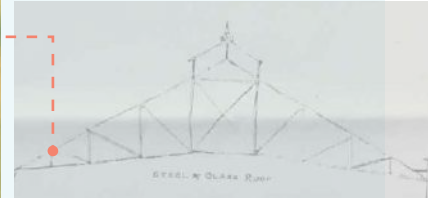
Hippodrome design reference



The roof trusses in Limbic Passage are inspired by the original structure of the Hulme Hippodrome. Their form and rhythm are echoed in the new design to maintain a visual and architectural connection to the building's past.



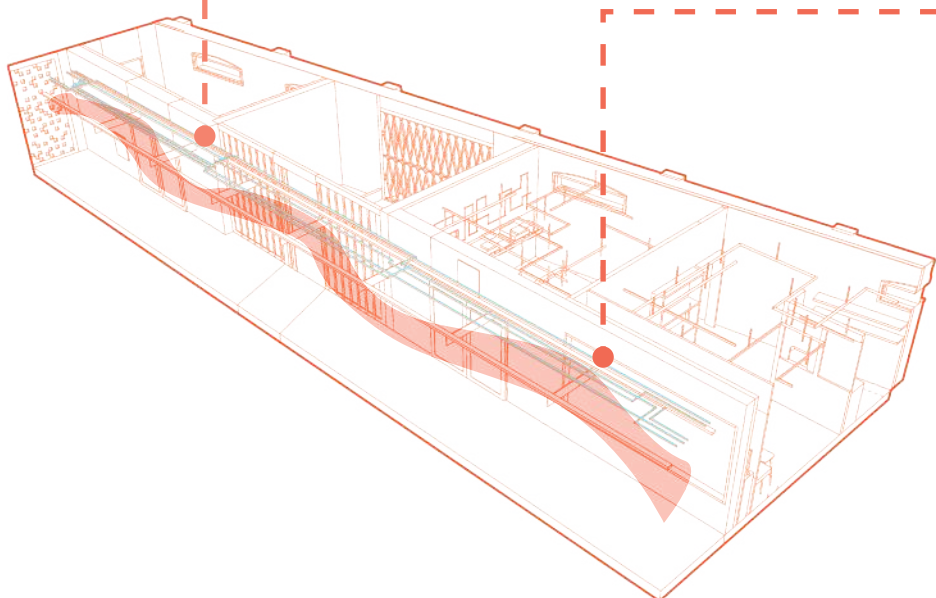
Visualisation of the Canopy view



Hippodrome design reference



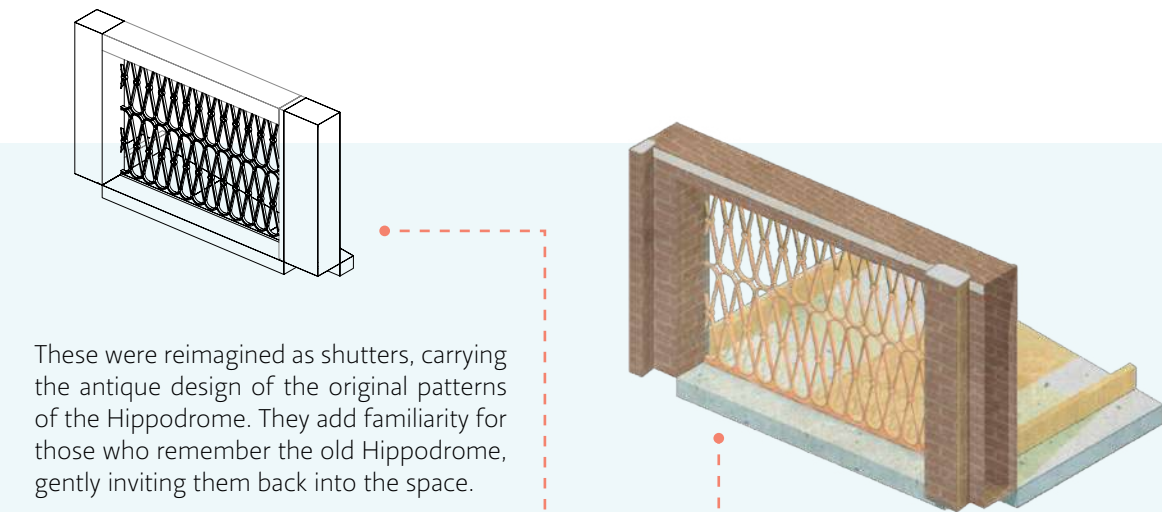
Visualisation of the outside Olafactoria Lab



Axometric Drawing of Copper ceiling pipes

● Signage for directions hung on ceiling for accessibility within space.

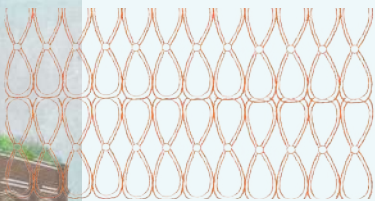
● The copper pipes secrete calming scents from the Olafactoria into the rest of the space to allow users of the space to feel at ease and be able to regulate their emotions.



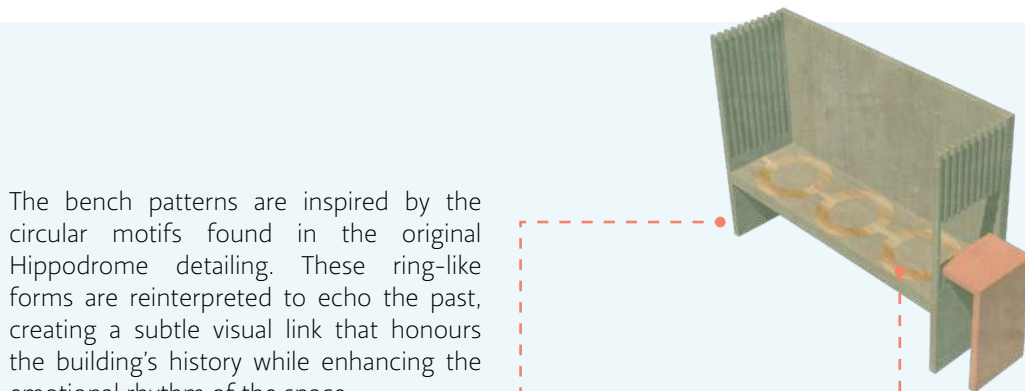
These were reimagined as shutters, carrying the antique design of the original patterns of the Hippodrome. They add familiarity for those who remember the old Hippodrome, gently inviting them back into the space.



Visualisation of the exterior of the Hippodrome



Hippodrome design reference



The bench patterns are inspired by the circular motifs found in the original Hippodrome detailing. These ring-like forms are reinterpreted to echo the past, creating a subtle visual link that honours the building's history while enhancing the emotional rhythm of the space.



Visualisation of the Evergreen Haven (Bench area)



Hippodrome design reference



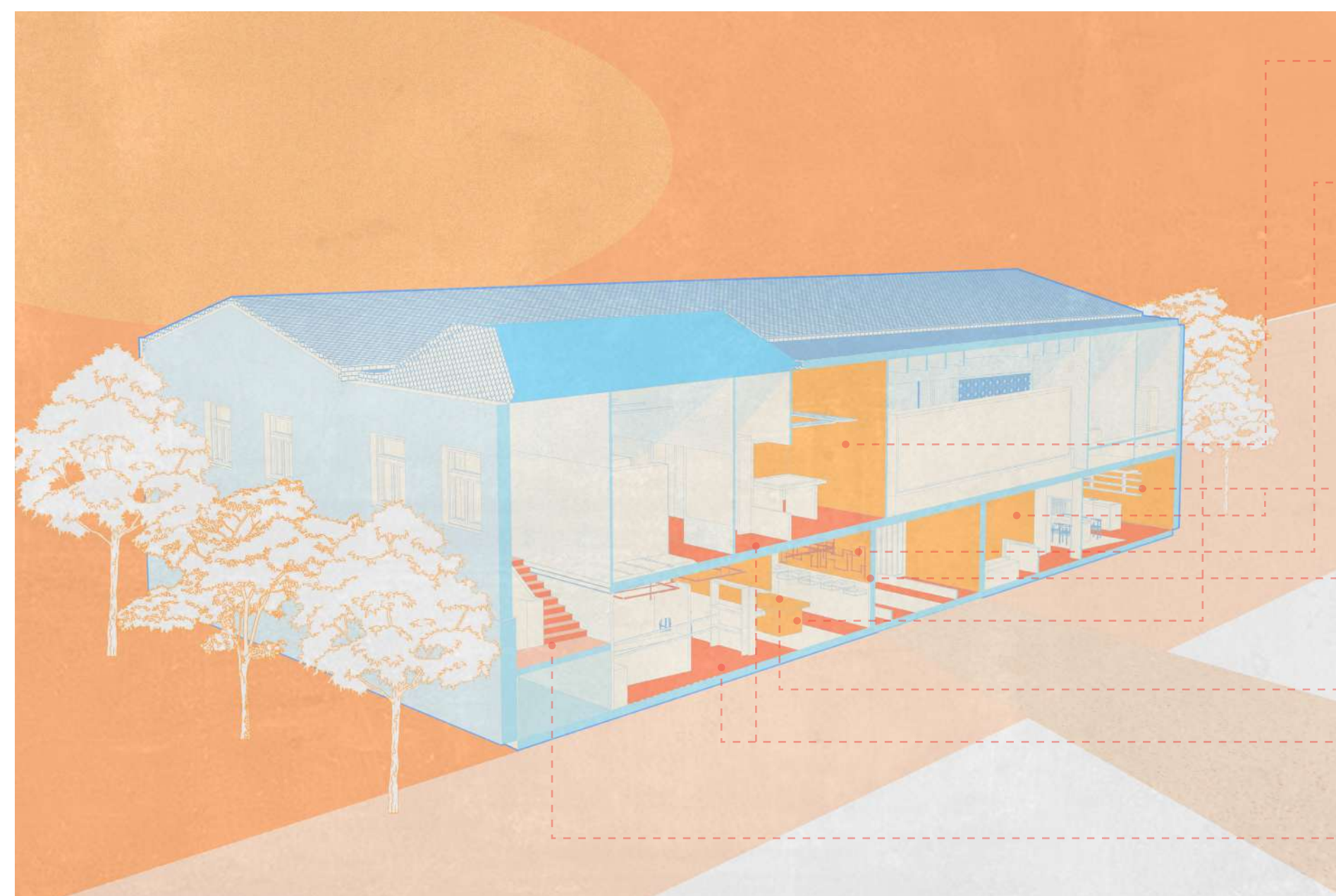
Visualisation of the Chiyu Team Room

A teaming room used to create herbal tea used for calming and less anxiety. This workshop brings different protagonists together to bond be socialable.





Concept Materiality Board



Visualisation of the materiality of the First and Ground Floor



As a recycled solid surface, Durat echoes the projects theme of continuity—just like grief reshapes, rather than erases, what came before.

Copper's recyclable nature reflects how grief reshapes, not erases—turning memories into lasting meaning, just like reused materials form something new.

Scented wallpaper from Organoid links to the concept of bridges by using scent as a sensory connector—bridging the gap between memory and emotion, the bereaved and the deceased—quietly reinforcing connection through atmosphere and materiality. Flowers are embedded from Hulme Garden Centre.

Made from wood chips from the old woodwork from the Hulme Hippodrome and resin, symbolizes unity through its composition—bringing together fragmented natural elements into a solid, functional whole. It metaphorically reflects how shared grief can unite individuals.

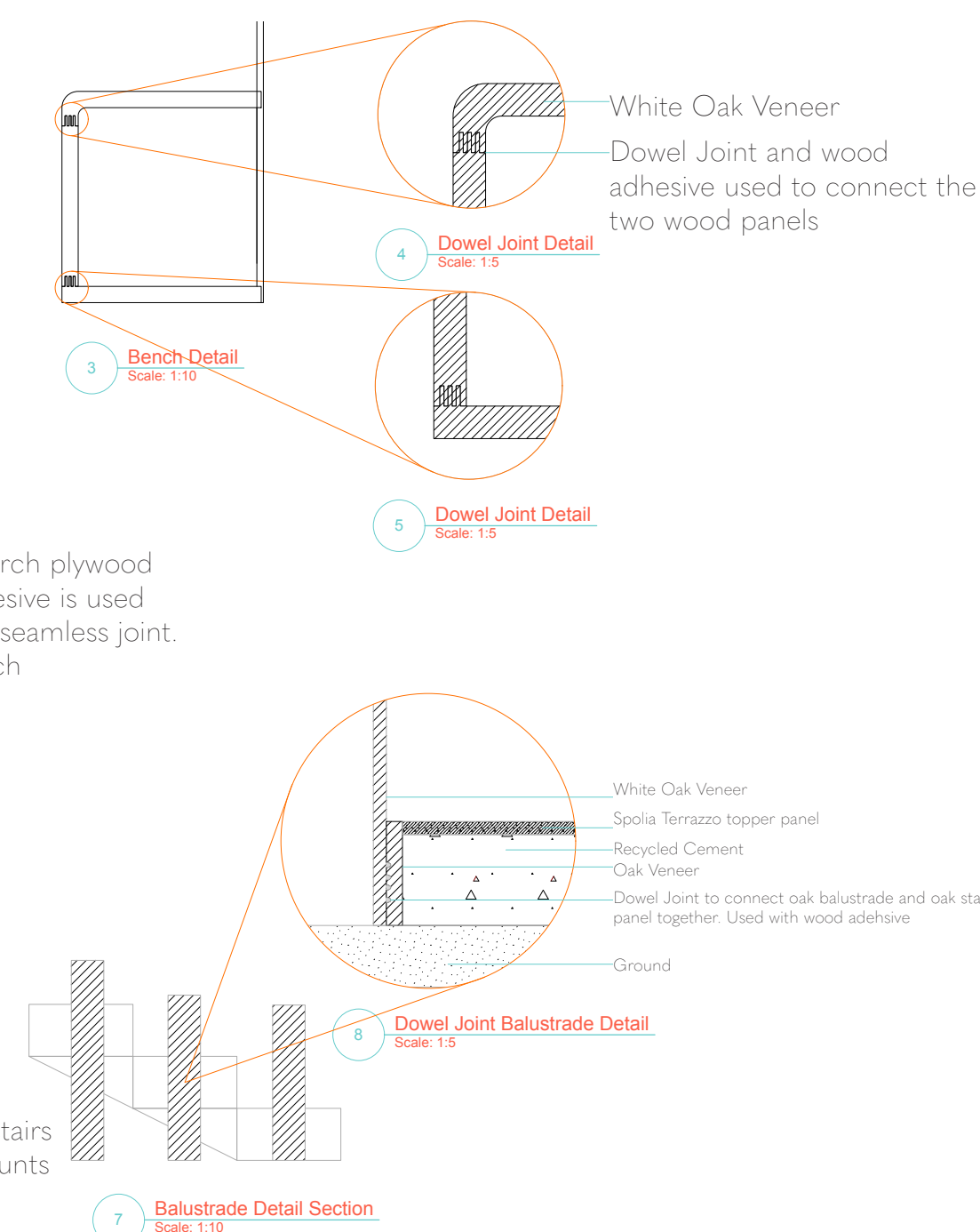
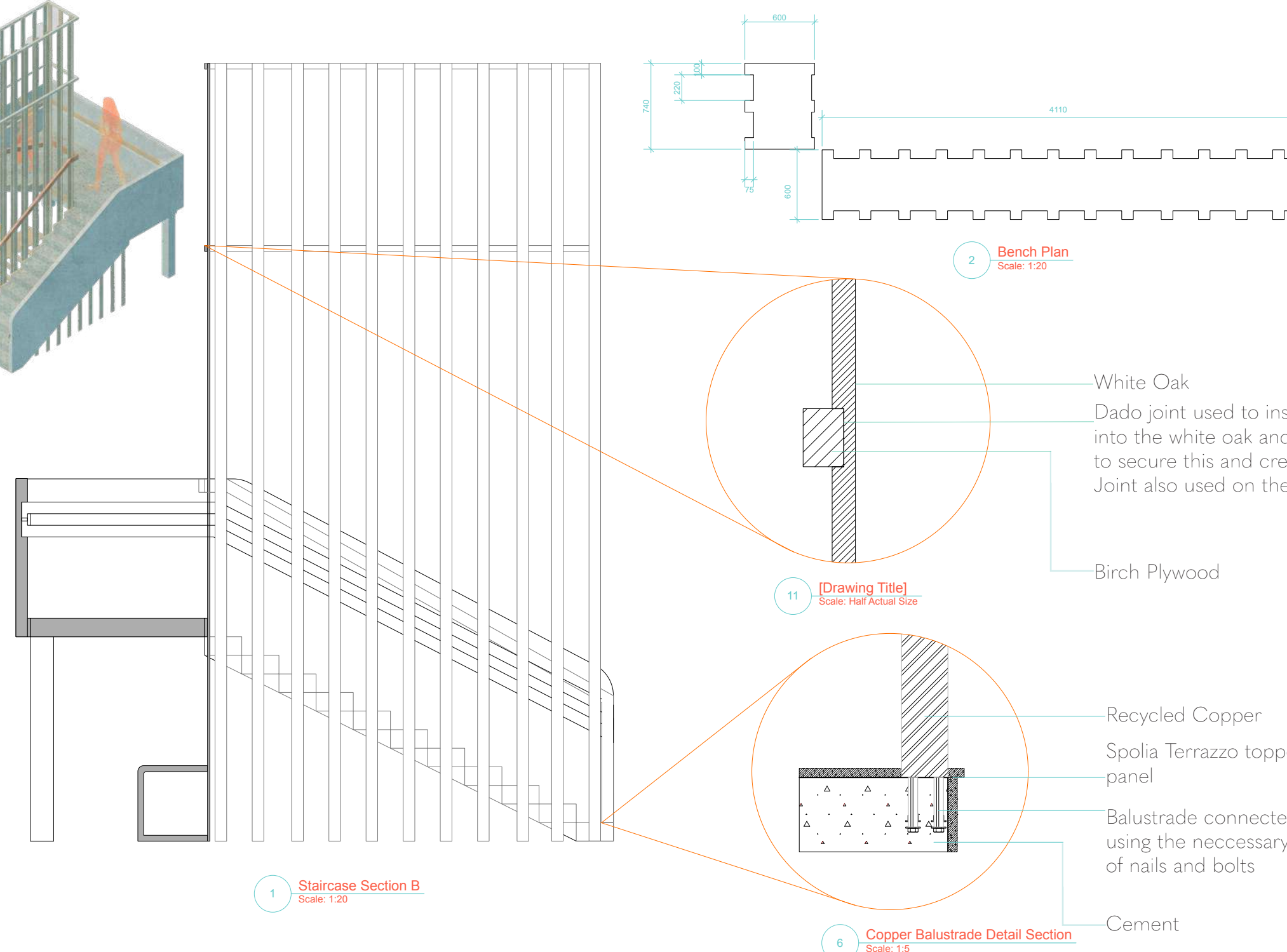
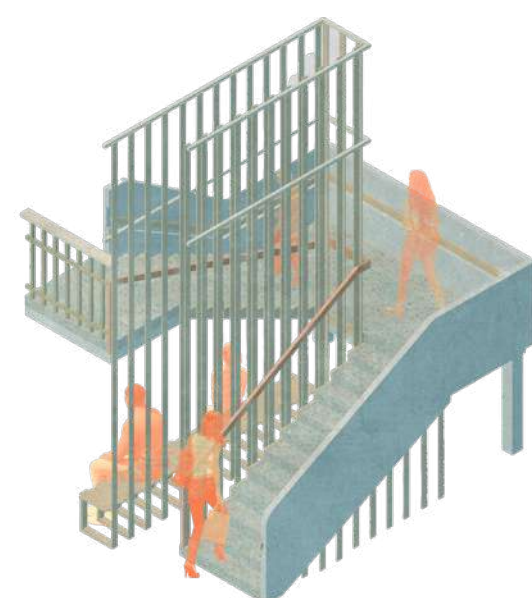
Embedded fragments of Hulme Hippodrome's brickwork into spolia terrazzo, symbolising memory and transformation. This recycled material ties the building's past to the present, reflecting how grief carries the old into something new.

## MATERIALITY

The material choices in the project are grounded in both **sustainability and emotional resonance**, aligning with the grief-focused concept of Limbic Passage. By **reusing original elements** of the Hulme Hippodrome—such as aged brickwork and timber—the design **preserves the building's memory** while reducing environmental impact. These reclaimed materials carry a tactile and visual history, creating a **sensory connection** that supports reflection and remembrance.

These materials are not only environmentally conscious but also emotionally resonant, carrying the visual and tactile presence of the past.

Natural materials like **raw wood and dried plant fibres** are integrated for their ability to hold and release subtle scents, creating a calming, grounding atmosphere. Elements such as herbal-infused surfaces help stimulate the limbic system, **encouraging reflection, soothing anxiety**, and gently reconnecting visitors to personal memories. This sensory layering deepens the emotional experience, making materiality an active part of the healing process—touch, smell, and sight work together to create a space of comfort, memory, and renewal.



Staircase Section detail drawing (NOT TO SCALE)