

GENERATION GENERATION ALPHA ALPHA

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EXEGESIS

How can spatial design of cultural centres enhance social cohesion within the youth of Bristol?

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I declare that this report is my own work and has not previously been submitted for assessment.

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05 April 2021

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary urban growth excludes the need for accessible public spaces, which are the catalysts of social interaction between people of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. The lack of public space has led to social exclusion and higher crime rates, within areas of high deprivation levels. The social decline has been the most noticeable in cities of the UK, such as Bristol, where there is an abundance of people living in poverty.

The younger populace suffers the greatest from the lack opportunities to socialise in a public setting. They are a crucial part of childhood and help children and adolescents alike, form supportive relationships and place attachments. Those who live in poverty tend to have a disorganised attachment to their home, due to personal circumstances; negatively impacting their cognitive development. They are unable to develop a healthy mentality, without the necessary support, putting them at a higher risk of county lines.

Cultural centres can be the solution to the current public space crisis. By placing new centres around a city, either by transforming an existing building or rising a new structure. It can help reduce the rates of child victimization, by giving them opportunities to get off of the street and learn life skills. This type of public setting appears particularly advantageous to a person's well-being, as it provides a space to socialise as well as pass on cultural teachings. Learning about the cities and others culture can be a great way of promoting social inclusion and enhancing the social cohesion of a city's communities. The UK can learn much from Europe's efforts to put more funds towards the cultural sector, to improve their citizens quality of life.

It is evident that there are already thousands of young people who have become a victim of gang violence, in Bristol. Accessible public spaces need to be provided to all residences of the city, so that they can gain essential skills and seek help if needed. There are far too many vulnerable children being victimized due to their socio-economic background. When it can be as simple as providing safe places for them to go and interact with like-minded people. At what point will cultural centres be recognised as important tools of community welfare in the cities of the UK?

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1 INTRODUCTION

In the UK, the way our cities are being developed has been revolutionized by contemporary ideas of economic growth. The demand for public spaces has seen a decline, due to their importance not being acknowledged as essential. Those who live in areas of deprivation rely on accessible public spaces, to escape the hardship they may be experiencing and connect with others in similar circumstances. They are the catalyst of social interaction between different social groups and is the sole contributor to the social cohesion of a city's communities.

Children and adolescents, between the ages of 12-21 years, are at a crucial stage in their life where morals are tested. Cultural/public settings are a part of every person's childhood and allow young people to form place attachments, for a sense of belonging. Children, who live in deprived areas, experience the most impact from the lack of accessible places as it denies them the right to create attachments to a certain place. It can have a detrimental effect on a child's cognitive development, causing their mental well-being to decline. Their personal circumstances can make them more vulnerable than others to criminal activity such as, gang violence as they are limited on where they can choose to hang out. It is important that there are places for this target group to seek assistance as the reduction in public spaces risks excluding them from the same chances as other children living in more desirable areas.

There is an abundance of dis-used industrial heritage sites around the UK. Many have been laying dormant for decades. Architects and Urban planners have the opportunity to make good and revitalise these types of buildings for the public gain. They can be re-purposed into an enclosed public setting, including cultural centres. It can showcase the existing history of the building as well as offer youth a place to socialise and learn from their environment. It is recognised that there are many implications that are associated with a building with such a rich history with the country's development. However, adapting historical sites could help prolong their existence and allow people to learn from its history.

The project is based in Bristol, as the Cultural centre intends to investigate the impact it will have on the rate of child victimization, in the cities most deprived areas. If successful, the project hopes to influence urban planners to recognise the importance of cultural institutions, in providing accessible spaces for those who are disadvantaged. It can set up a framework for other designers to follow, when designing a public space to bring people together for social purposes. It will encourage future design approaches to take on a more inclusive stance, to expand a project reach. The reach will determine how successful it is at promoting the social cohesion between different socio-economic and ethnic collectives.

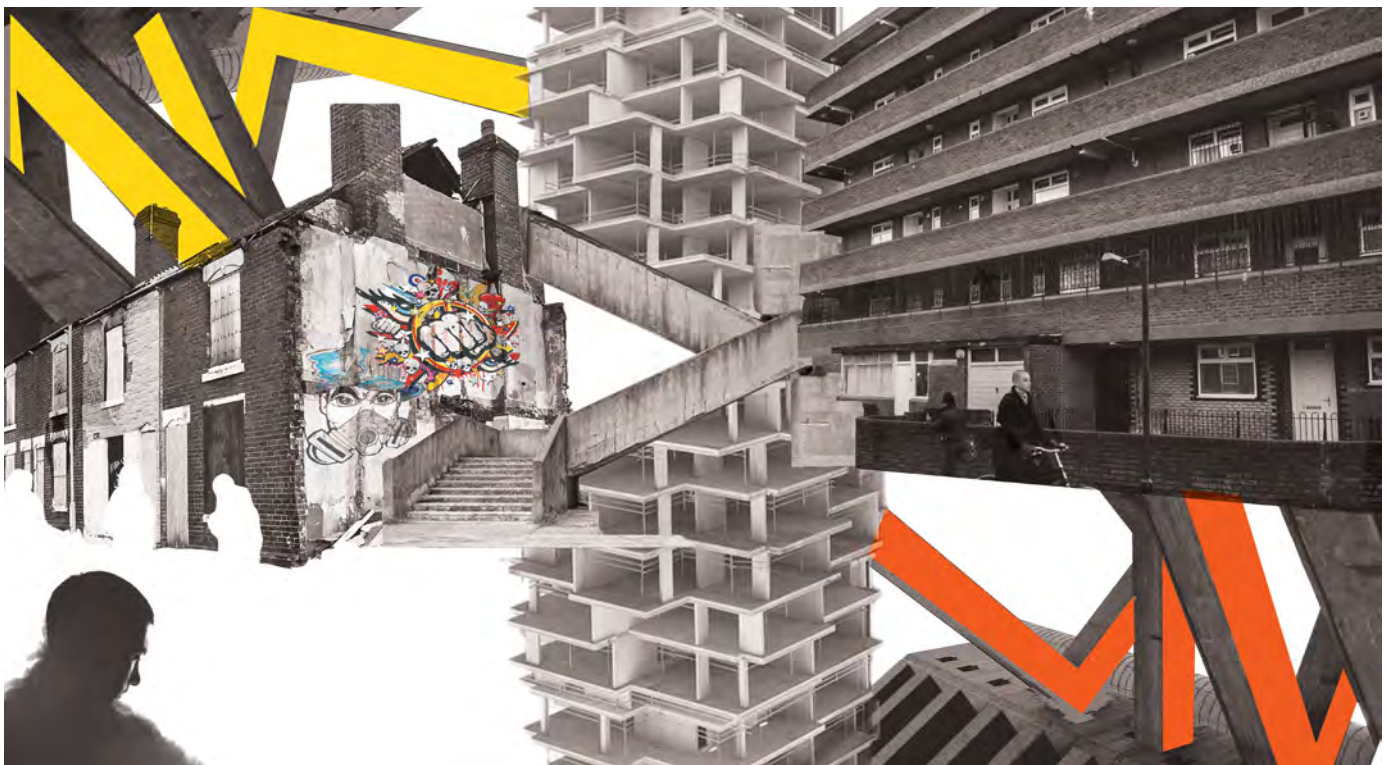


Figure 1: Collage representing an adolescents perception of cities (Rose, 2021).

2 INFLUENTIAL LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The section critically analyses a variety of text to inform us of the theories surrounding the treaties. The treaties that will be discussed throughout the article are: youth, cultural settings, public spaces, well-being and safety, social inclusion/cohesion, and interactive wayfinding.

Most of the theories presented in the sources are very informative and think outside of the box, bringing new thoughts and ideas. It also highlights gaps in research, where ideas contradict one another, creating conflict within the field of study. The inconsistencies give an opportunity to research the topic further and create an artefact inspired by the outcome of the project. It will hopefully provide answers to why public settings such as, museums or art galleries are crucial to a young person's welfare.

2.2 HOUSE AS A MIRROR OF SELF

The author, Clare Cooper Marcus decides to investigate the stigma that surrounds people's emotional attachment to the built environment. She supports all of her points with personal stories of what a person regards as their home. All the stories come from people with all sorts of backgrounds, such as different educational levels, gender, age, and socio-economic status. We are reassured there is no bias and can see various perspectives and experiences.

Marcus states that those who are user-based workforces, such as architects, often overlook issues relating to the community's social attachment to a particular place. They never consider the local resident's preference on how they would like their 'home' to be developed, which sometimes leads to a reduction in social capital. During her interviews, she noticed that those from low income households are particularly effected due to having limited options on where they can live (Marcus, 1995).

Throughout our lives, we strive to have a successful life, however the journey is not always straight forward. Along the way we may make mistakes, cause mishaps, or receive good fortunes these are all perceived as life lessons, which we develop ourselves from. The

“places we live in are reflections of that process, and indeed the places themselves have a powerful effect on our journey” (Marcus, 1995: 10).

They become artefacts of past mistakes and memories, which multiple generations learn from, so they are not repeated.

In Chapter 2, Marcus goes into detail on how children perceive the built environment as she believes their views of the world change due to our psychological development being “punctuated ... with a number of significant physical environments” (Marcus, 1995: 4). However, children from deprived backgrounds are limited to a small group of places and often never get to experience particular situations. This is believed to slow down their development of social skills; negatively impacting their emotional well-being. Therefore, the points in this chapter are very relevant and can support my point to why we need more public spaces for children of all backgrounds. This will give everyone equal opportunities to be able to develop skills, needed to survive the worlds stressors.

2.3 ARCHITECTURE AND NARRATIVE: THE FORMATION OF SPACE AND CULTURAL MEANING

In the book 'Architecture and Narrative: The Formation of Space and Cultural Meaning', Psarra explains her beliefs on how culture is formed; within the built environment. Her contextual language is difficult to understand, however with further analysis you can start to depict the points and arguments within her text.

Psarra argues that culture cannot be created through architectural forms, instead it is socially constructed by people undertaking activities within a particular place. When observing people's movement through space you can start to examine “the repertory of logical forms” (Psarra, 2009: 235). In these ‘forms’ we can study how society behaves in certain spatial configurations and discover social patterns based on mutual awareness. She believes our unconscious minds can recognise these complex spatial patterns, which tells us what must happen and where. However, she states that buildings do “not impinge directly on human behaviour” (Psarra, 2009: 236) therefore it cannot change who we are. Instead, it unknowingly produces patterns of social co-presence, which affects how we act around others and in society.

2 INFLUENTIAL LITERATURE

Over time, the way we move around interiors adapts and changes to new social norms. An interior 50 years ago is not compatible with today's mode of living (Psarra, 2009: 235) as the way people move around space has changed. Historical buildings are beginning to be adapted for new uses, so they fit within modern culture.

The book has enlightened me on how people are able to learn from a space, based on its geometric layout. To some extent, I am hesitant on the truthfulness of the information in this book. The knowledge seems outdated and is not supported by any scientific studies. Nonetheless, the information will inform my design strategy when considering certain spatial configurations ;to try and teach children important life skills and how to fit in with the rest of society.

2.4 MUSEUM AND ART GALLERIES AS PARTNERS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

The source provides evidence-based research on why buildings in the cultural heritage sector, such as museums and art galleries, should be incorporated into public health related planning. According to the article, the main role of museums within society is to act as a social hub and learn about their needs and interests. There are currently 19,300 museums within Europe, making it a suitable place to reach out to those living in urban and rural settings (Camic and Chatterjee, 2013: 66). Statistically, they are more likely to suffer from mental health. They provide “non-stigmatising settings” (Camic and Chatterjee, 2013: 66), which is important especially for children and adolescents, who may find healthcare settings daunting.

This article is closely linked with ‘Eyes Of The Skin’ and ‘The Five Senses Of Architecture’ books as it supports some of the points about the “neuroscientific aspects of touch and tactile interpretation” (Camic and Chatterjee, 2013: 67). However, it goes into more specific detail on how touch is incorporated into museum interventions, to benefit a person’s mood and ideas of self-worth (Camic and Chatterjee, 2013: 67).

The writers go on to explain that museums can offer more health benefits than the health sectors as they “trigger a variety of emotional and sensory responses” (Camic and Chatterjee, 2013: 67). The three senses that are being used during the user’s experience is: touch, auditory and visual. Touch being classed as the most important sense as “vision reveals what touch already knows” (Pallasmaa, 2005).

Museums offer a hands-on approach. Participants interact with the content of the museum, whether it is a form of art or an artefact. The idea is that the objects “contain stories of civilisation” (Camic and Chatterjee, 2013: 67) and that triggers memories or cognitive association.

This source is essential to my argument as it addresses why it is important for cultural buildings to be involved with public health activities, as it provides more health benefits than if they were held in healthcare settings. They have the ability to reach out to people, who do not have access to high quality services. Although, in its research they only cite some ethnic and socio-economic groups which could potentially cause a bias.

2.5 THE ROLE OF URBAN MOBILITY IN PROVIDING ACCESSIBILITY

In this article, it enlightens us on the problems of urban planning and how it “amplifies, and consolidates the inequalities of society” (Souza, 2019). It also tells us how architects can help to remove barriers and make the opportunities of living in a large city accessible to all social backgrounds. The information will add in-depth knowledge to my arguments.

Movement around cities is regarded as a basic right of all citizens, yet it is sometimes not made possible for all social strata’s (Souza, 2019). This is due to cities following the centre-periphery model, where buildings/businesses such as: workplaces, urban centres, retail and service areas are placed in areas that are considered well connected and socially desirable; to generate more opportunities in the central areas of cities. People from disadvantaged background cannot always choose where they live, therefore more often than not cannot get access to these opportunities due to living in areas that are not considered ‘desirable’ by local authorities.

The source numerously points out that mobility problems are signs of social inclusion issues within society. However, issues of mobility cannot be solved without the consideration of how our cities are developed.

“the architect draws the city” (Souza, 2019)

Architects/designers have a chance to make a change and improve the inequality of urban planning. The author recommends doing this by including more public, educational, and cultural spaces in the outer parameters of cities. By doing so it spreads out the opportunities throughout the city, making it fairer and more accessible to everyone.

2 INFLUENTIAL LITERATURE

The arguments stated in this source emphasize the importance of my project, to bettering the lives of people living in rural areas. It is very different compared to the other sources; however, it shows us the wider context of how the placement of buildings can have a detrimental effect on a person's welfare.

2.6 THE ARCHITECTURE OF SOCIAL INTERACTION

The article discusses architecture's role as a social mediator and explores how certain design strategies can encourage the interaction between people from different social strata.

Architecture can help create social cohesion by promoting social justice and combat mental health - in relation to loneliness. The source states that bringing people together is in the "programming of the building than the spatial form itself" (Cutieru, 2020). A space's function provides a reason for a user to move and interact with objects or people. This point is contradictory of those in 'Architecture and narrative', which states that the form of space influences the user how to react to stimuli rather than the function itself. However, the information in this article is more relevant to modern contexts as Psarra's theories were developed in 2009, when interior spaces were very different to how they are perceived today.

In addition, the author of the article includes many examples of projects, which have successfully created a new kind of typology; that encourages social interaction. The project 'House of Culture in Movement' blends three different types of spaces, all with diverse activities. It creates "stimulating links between people who wouldn't otherwise contact" (Cutieru, 2020), encouraging relationships between different social groups. This is important to improve social cohesion as people will have the opportunity to share their values, beliefs, and reciprocity.

2.7 RESPONSIVE ENVIRONMENTS: ARCHITECTURE, ART, AND DESIGN

In this book, it discusses how technology has been incorporated into the built environment to create an experience, that interacts with the inhabitant's values and beliefs. The author draws off of her own familiarity and interviews many artists who have successfully designed an array of 'responsive environments', within cultural contexts.

According to the source, two-thirds of the UK's population has access to some form of technology, whether it's a phone or a computer (Bullivant, 2006: 6), it is typically used as a way of communication between our peers. Nevertheless, it is beginning to change the way we

perceive urban spaces, the

"concept of connectivity has literally seeped into the skins of the building" (Bullivant, 2006: 12).

It allows us to learn more about the user, by understanding their personal character, behaviour, and contextual backgrounds.

In cultural settings, such as museums and art galleries, interactivity has always been a key element of their user experience. It guarantees that all visitors receive "a wealth of unique experiences for international and domestic visitors alike" (Bullivant, 2006: 106). Digital interfaces can be customised to meet individual needs. For example, if a person has limited English, they are able to change it to their preferred spoken language, making their experience more pleasant. This is very relevant to my user group, as some who are visiting the site may have English as a second language.

The points in this source are very informative and signifies further why cultural settings are crucial to improving social inclusion between authorities and the local communities. It ties in closely with the article 'Museum and art galleries as partners for public health interventions'. However, this book offers a different perspective and deeper understanding on how modern museums can use technology to interact more directly with the consumer's needs, creating emotional connections beneficial to one's welfare. The source will be a positive addition to the production of my design strategy.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Each text has its own unique theory, which will help to justify the design strategy established in the cultural centre; to make sure it is well-informed. The contradiction between the two texts, 'The Architecture of Social Interaction' and 'Architecture and Narrative' gives a window of opportunity to investigate the subject further; to determine how the built environment can truly influence the behaviour of the user for a desired outcome. The aim of the project is to successfully create setting that encourages social interactions between different social groups. That will hopefully give them the chance to develop their social skills and learn from other people's values.

3 USER & CLIENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The project is intended for children and adolescents, between the ages of 12-21 years, but it will prove beneficial to all social categories. Young people within this age range are statistically more susceptible to child victimization crimes in major cities (Fitch, 2019). This is a consequence of a variety of personal circumstances such as, poverty, abuse, or neglect within a household. All of which are evident by the levels of deprivation and gang activity amongst the young population of Bristol.

The chapter will investigate reasons why it is important for there to be more sheltered public spaces for young people to go as a means of escape from troubling circumstances. It will act as a safe haven; making it possible for them to seek the help they need to flourish. In doing so, it will hopefully prevent further damage to a child's cognitive development, by reducing their risk of becoming a victim of organised crime or similar situations.

3.2 USER

In Bristol, the child population is consistently rising exponentially and is at its highest level since the 1980's (JNSA, 2014, 1). Compared to other core cities in England such as, Manchester and Nottingham; Bristol has the 3rd highest population of children between 0-19 years, which is 3.5% higher than England's average (JNSA, 2014, 2). As the city is "well-connected internationally" (Baker, 2019), the majority of people who migrate to Bristol are young internationals seeking asylum. It is believed that the rich culture and art scene act as "a magnet for many young people" (Baker, 2019) as it makes the place appear attractive, fun, and creative. In reality, a city is a very daunting place especially for children and adolescents. Some may lack emotional support bubbles or be living in poor conditions due to education and a nice home being low on their priority list (Baker, 2019). Their personal circumstance makes them textbook victims of county lines as they are more impressionable and vulnerable than others to gang activity (Fitch, 2019).

Child poverty is higher than 15% of the population, in the UK (Adamson, 2007). Those "who grow up in poverty are more vulnerable" (Adamson, 2007: 5) due to poor health, low aspirations, and behavioural problems. All these are linked with their current state of mental health, as it has a vast impact on their cognitive development.

In particular, adolescents tend to act out by bullying, abusing, or fighting with their peers. These behavioural problems are often overlooked as a reflection of their current "circumstances, pressures, and self-perceptions that undermine well-being" (Adamson, 2007: 27), as people do not understand that it is more difficult for them to control their emotions. Ideally, schools should be providing extra support to those students, who have behavioural disorders, but tend to be neglected.

Unfortunately, troublesome students are more likely to be excluded from mainstream education to protect others, especially if they live in poorer postcodes. By refusing to acknowledge the underlying causes, it can "reinforce behaviour due to collective sense of injustice" (Fitch, 2009: 24). Their chances of economic and social developmental potential is thwarted (Kieling et al., 2011: 1516), causing them to turn to other means of achieving their "aspirations for material wealth and social status" (Fitch, 2009: 12), such as joining gangs.

The term 'gang' is often used to describe a group of youths who wander the streets. However, this could be due to personal circumstances, where they do not feel safe or welcomed in their own home. The misuse of the term encourages them to "engage in criminal activity" (Fitch, 2009: 12) to fulfil the expectations bestowed upon them.

According to the NSPCC, secure attachments between a child and their parents is important to their social and emotional development as "most people are born with tendency towards violence" (Fitch, 2009: 15). These 'tendencies' are controlled by behaviour learnt from having good role-models and a stable environment. However, the majority of children living in poverty do not have a good upbringing, due to the stress put on relationships, when a family is experiencing hardship. In the long run, it has detrimental effects on the child's psychological well-being, increasing their risk of offending (Fitch, 2009: 12).

In 2017/18, 8,650 cases of children being deemed at risk of gang violence was reported, compared to the previous year when it was only 6,570 (Gouk and Weatherby, 2018). The majority of cases reported have been of vulnerable children, who "have been victims of abuse or neglect" (Fitch, 2009: 4), as a result of coming from unstable backgrounds. They are increasingly being seen as a target of by gangs, because of their difficult circumstances and not knowing any better.

3 USER & CLIENT

Bristol in particular has recently been having a “spate of attacks on children” (Gouk and Weatherby, 2018), related to gang violence. Recent figures released by the government, have unveiled the shocking statistics of children deemed at risk of gang activity in Bristol alone. Out of 3,667 children, 78 were either in a gang or at-risk of violence as a result of gang activity, in 2017/18 (Gouk and Weatherby, 2018). In 2016/17, the figure was only 36, meaning they have more than doubled in the past year (Gouk and Weatherby, 2018).

Action is needed to combat the raising statistics of child victimisation, to make Bristol a safer place for all residences in the long run. The proposed outcome won't be able to prevent exploitation entirely but will hopefully be able to provide vulnerable/at-risk groups a safe place to prevent/recover from traumatic situations.

In reality, these children should be provided with counselling and a place to go to deal with their disorganised emotions, that cause them to be more vulnerable to gang activity. The majority of “young people raised within a hostile ... environment is less likely to learn alternatives to aggression” (Fitch, 2009: 16) causing bad behaviour, which gets them excluded from mainstream education. Therefore, it is our responsibility as citizens to act and teach them that there are alternatives. In most cases, these children could be helped by treating underlying mental health issues such as, anxiety and PTSD, that have resulted from the emotional detachment to their home. As Marcus stated previously (in section 2.2) “places themselves have a powerful effect on our journey”

(1995: 10) and who children decide to become as they grow up into young adults. Providing a shelter that offers them the same support as a ‘Home’ can rebuild broken barriers and give them the same chances as others to succeed.

3.3 CLIENT

The intended client for the project is, Create Charity. They aim to “provide the creative arts to those who are the most disadvantaged and vulnerable” (Create, n.d.: 1) to improve their well-being and skill set. The key groups they work with are: school children in areas of deprivation, children whose parents are in prison and young carers. Approximately, 72.3% of their participants are aged between 0-18 years, 40.1% of them require free school meals (Create, n.d.: 14).

The charity runs a variety of art-based programmes that promote confidence, self-esteem, and supportive relationships. Many professionals within the company are passionate that “creativity can have tangible benefits on mental health” (Create, n.d.). All programmes are sponsored by multiply independent businesses such as: Deutsche bank, First state investments, Prudential, Ashurst and so on. This allows them to provide free services to those who may not be able to afford traditional health services, making it easily accessible to everyone. As the client relies upon sponsors, the budget for the project will be tight, due to their income not being sourced directly from the community.

In the past, the charity has worked with street art organisations, to create murals that promote awareness of the physical and mental well-being of children in our cities. The murals were very affective at reaching out to people, leading to an increase in donations and media coverage up to 300% (Create, n.d.). Therefore, the client hopes that by making their centre of operation a cultural hub of street art within Bristol. It will help to raise awareness and give out support to those who need it in the surrounding areas of deprivation. By using the medium of graffiti, it aims to attract the interest of the younger generations and encourage them to visit the site. The client cannot force the user to seek help, therefore will have to use persuasive factors to spark their interest; if it expects to be successful at tackling the growing mental health crisis associated with poverty and gang violence.

Graph showing the rates of child victimisation in the UK's most deprived areas.
(Based on 1256 boys and 1150 girls).

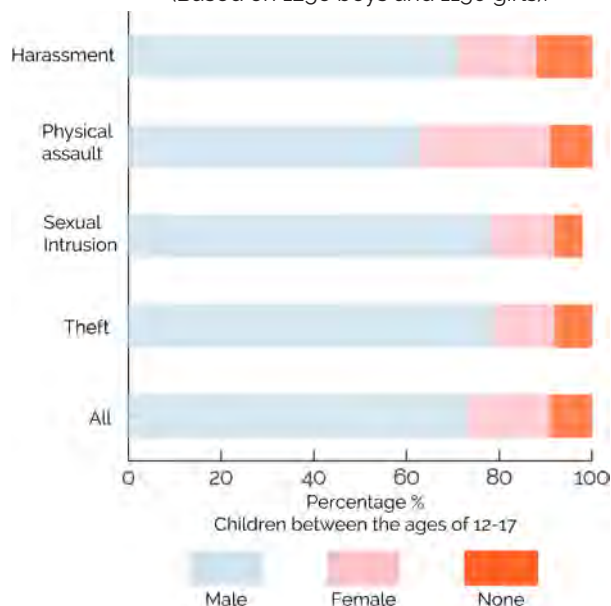


Figure 2: Graph showing rates of child victimisation in the UK (Rose, 2020).

3 USER & CLIENT

3.4 CONCLUSION

In short, Children and adolescents, especially those between the ages of 12-21 years, need access to free public spaces that truly represent them as individuals and cater for their needs. By doing so, it will create a friendly environment that will encourage them to seek non-intrusive counselling sessions, that they desperately need. It is recognised that not all users will want to talk about their feelings and experiences, therefore creative solutions such as, graffiti workshops and creative counselling session will provide a fun and engaging activity for those who don't want to talk directly to a person. The combination of free-will and fun activities aims to encourage the user to return to try and resolve their underlying mental health issues, so they feel more empowered and regain their confidence.

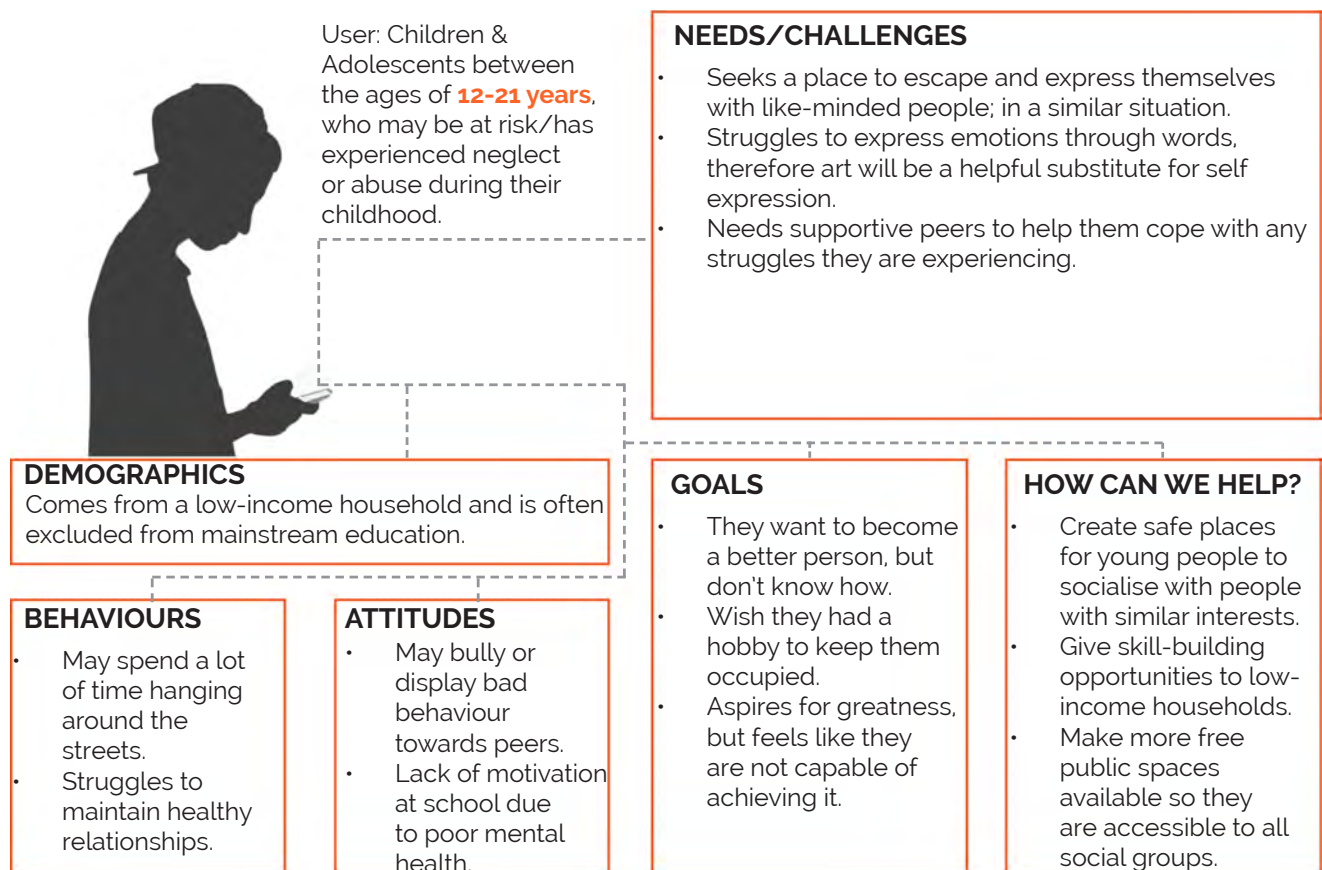


Figure 3: Diagram of the Users persona (Rose, 2020).

4 SITE SURVEY



Figure 4: The Generator building aerial view (Baker, 2018).

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The chosen building for the project is, The Generator Building. It is located in central Bristol, near some of the residential areas with the worst deprivation levels. The location of the building is crucial to the project as it will impact how many users are able to access the facilities. To make sure the cultural hub is accessible to all users, especially the targeted audience (12-21 years) it was essential it was located near an array of transportation methods. This will enable those who live in the outskirts of the city to access the building if they desire. It is recognised that the building will not be able to help every residential area, but if the project is successful in the areas with the highest rates of deprivation, then the charity will be able to expand or inspire others to create more accessible public spaces.

The project is heavily influenced by the current cultural movements of Bristol, that has been adapted by the younger population over the years. Graffiti being one of the most prominent elements of the city has always been frowned upon but has a direct link with the citizens and the history. By embracing the cities culture, it allows people from different social groups to come together with a common interest, breaking the divide between the rich and poor. Therefore, it is important that more public spaces are made available to everyone in the public, where they can interact with the art informally.

4.2 THE GENERATOR BUILDING

My chosen site is the Generator building (see figure 4), which is located within the central area of Bristol. The building has a rich history dating all the way back to 1899, when it was first built to supply power to Bristol's first electric tramway system (Baker, 2018). It was listed as a grade II building, by Historic England for its aesthetic heritage qualities and historical value, which demonstrates the eras advances in steel framework construction technologies (Guy, 2019).

In 1941, the St. Philips bridge was bombed during the Bristol Blitz, cutting all the power cables sending electricity to the trams (Baker, 2018). Nevertheless, the building was unharmed and became derelict for the foreseeable future. The surrounding area was not so lucky, as the majority of buildings were damaged beyond repair. The buildings that were left standing were deemed protected for their historical significance in WWII (Guy, 2019). It is now known as the Redcliffe conservation area.

For a while, the building was left unchanged and became a brewery for a short period of time, in 1980 (Baker, 2018). The brewery did not fit in with the building typology of the Redcliffe area, which resulted in it being transformed into a block of offices. The new proposal plans to adapt the historical building for a new use, that 'generates' new opportunities to the residents of the local area. There is already an abundance of office blocks and businesses in the conservation area, that do not suit everyone's needs. By adding a new type of building, it will hopefully attract new social groups to the historical site, promoting social cohesion and enhance the areas tourism industry.

Even though, the project doesn't relate directly to the building's historical significance. It is still important that it acknowledges its contribution to Bristol's timeline, by incorporating interventions that do not hide its history but expresses it.

4.2 ACCESSIBILITY

The accessibility of the building is a key factor of the project as the target user (12 – 21 years) needs to be able to get to the site comfortably; so, they are able to reap all of the benefits. As Souza mentioned in her article, those from disadvantaged backgrounds get limited choice of where they live, causing them to be excluded from a variety of opportunities that comes from living in a big city (2019). This can include high quality: education, networking options, medical care and working salary, which are all vital and basic human rights.

4 SITE SURVEY

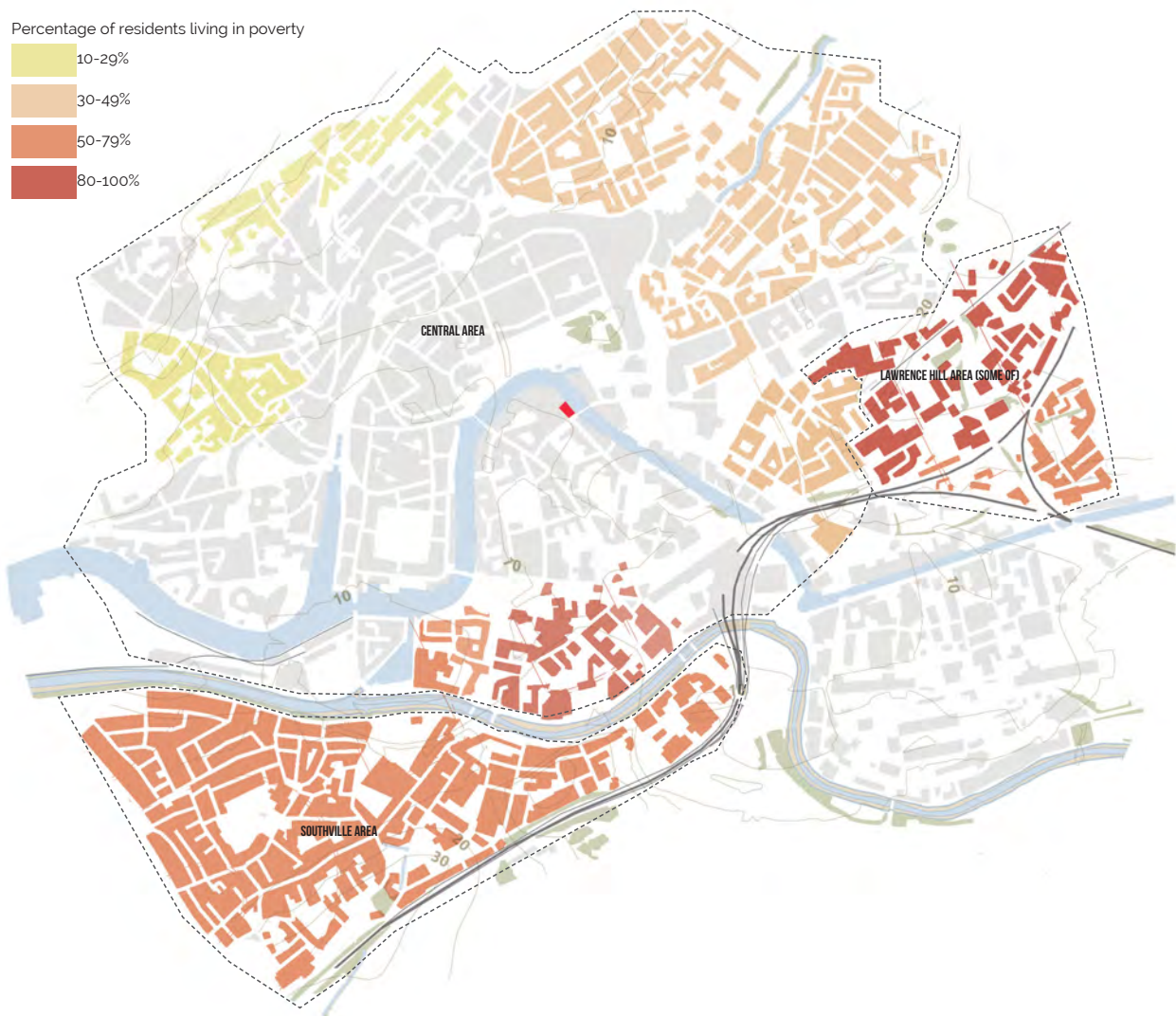


Figure 5: Map showing the most deprived residences' surrounding the site (Rose, 2020).

The site is situated near a variety of different residential areas, all with varying degrees of deprivation levels (see figure 5). The Two main ones that are being focused on in this project are: Lawrence Hill and South Ville. Each area is within walking distance to the site, therefore if the user cannot afford/is afraid to take public transport, they are not limited on options. The time it takes to walk to the site varies between 10 – 20 mins, depending on where you are based in the city. There are also numerous public transport options such as a: ferry, bus, taxi, or train, which are all closely located to the building – under a 5 min walk. If those who live further away from the site still want to access its facilities, there are options available.

4.3 NEIGHBOURHOODS OF DEPRIVATION

Bristol has many hot spots of deprivation scattered throughout the city. However, the two that are the closest to the site and the most relevant to the project are: Lawrence Hill and South Ville. Lawrence Hill is classed as having the “greatest levels of deprivation” (Mills, 2019: 3) compared to other areas in the city. Therefore, it will increase the chances of the project having a greater impact on the local community's crime rates and welfare.

When choosing the location of the building for the client's base of operation it was important to consider two factors, to make sure the project is offering support to the most vulnerable children. Deprivation/poverty levels of the surrounding areas and its distance from the city centre were the two most important factors identified. As the population of children and adolescents in Bristol, is not evenly distributed throughout the city and tend to be drawn to the city centre for its vibrant atmosphere and culture. Although, this is not the case for every young person as not many have a choice where they get to reside. It is found that the majority populate the east-central side of Bristol, which is where some of the most deprived neighbourhoods is situated, such as Lawrence Hill. The Generator building was ideally located as it sits in-between the two areas listed above offering support to the most youth.

Furthermore, many children in the central areas of Bristol are at risk of experiencing some form of street conflict relating to gangs according to Bristol City Council (2020).

4 SITE SURVEY

This is due countless factors that include: mental health issues, previous experience of abuse/neglect, economic status, and a lack of a stable home. Realistically, a child of any background has a chance of being exploited, however all the elements listed above are common with those living in poverty. Therefore, they are more likely to be affected by gang activity than others. There is currently a 9.3% chance of someone living in poverty, becoming exploited at some point during their childhood (Mills, 2019: 11). Considering the population of children living in deprivation is now at 17,200. 1,599 children will be targeted by gang violence/activity at some point (with no intervention), having devastating effects on their mental well-being and future aspirations.

The reason the site is not located within the areas of high poverty is because there is evidence that moving children “from high-poverty to low-poverty neighbourhoods enhances the ... psychological health of children and reduces violent crimes committed by adolescents” (Shonkoff and Philips, 2000: 336). It moves the user away from the dangerous environment and any stimuli, that could trigger mental disorders. Giving them time to heal and re-cooperate.

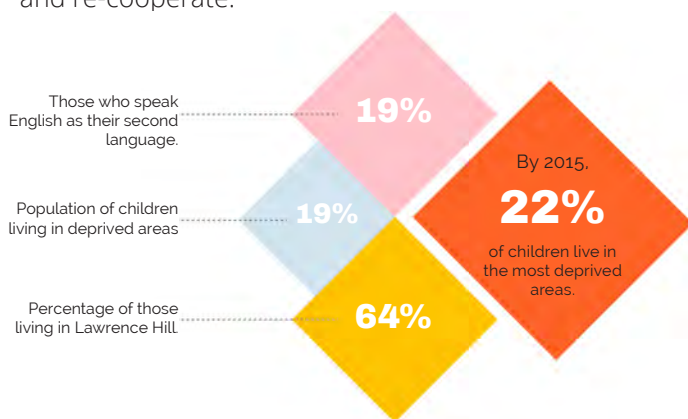


Figure 6: Info-graphic showing the statistics of children living in the deprived residential areas of Bristol (Rose, 2020).

4.4 BRISTOL'S CULTURAL CONTEXT

A lot of the culture in Bristol has been heavily influenced and altered to how it is perceived today by young internationals mixing and matching the existing culture with their own heritage (Manchester, 2015). However, their relationship with the city is complex as nowadays the younger generations, particularly from poorer postcodes or minority-ethnic backgrounds, tend to not participate in the formal arts or cultural resources provided to the public (Manchester, 2015). This includes: museums and art galleries. According to the research paper conducted by Teenage kicks, many have said they don't feel comfortable attending public displays of formal culture as they are not provided with opportunities to express their views on how the culture is represented (Manchester, 2015).

Bristol is classed as a multi-cultural city. “To say it's a melting pot of diversity is an understatement” (UWE Bristol, n.d.). It has residents from over 187 different countries, that speak over 87 different languages (UWE Bristol, n.d.). Many Caribbean immigrants, who made Bristol their home, have influenced many of its art movements such as: punk, reggae, hip-hop and new age music. There is “no denying that Bristol has a rich multitude of cultures” (Odunlami, 2016), but there is still a strong sense of cultural segregation throughout the city. It has the potential to become an inter-cultural landscape but has yet to establish links between its diverse heritage (Odunlami, 2016). For example: Stokes croft is known for its hipster/fun atmosphere and vibrant street art, whereas Southville remains an area for the working class, filled with council housing estates.

Over the years, there have been many cultural movements that have attempted to intertwine their culture with Bristol's history. Art activists formed the British underground scene when their cultural expression was denied by the city. It led to crews being assembled to play Hip-Hop in disused venues. The ‘multi-culturalism political activism’ (Cathcart-Keays, 2015) shaped Bristol's culture today and now has connections with a variety of different types of music and visual art, such as graffiti.

Throughout Europe, Bristol is known as the capital of street art as it is the home of many famous artists, such as Banksy, Massive attack, and Robert Del Naja. The form of art is still not widely accepted by the rest of the country, but that has not stopped it being a big part of the city's cultural identity. A variety of guided walks accompany the street art, to enhance its tourism industry so the council is able to give back to the community.

Bristol's history has taught it not to oppress art, but let it roam free on its streets. In recent years, it has supported many festivals, that allow its residents to express their beliefs and culture. For example: the ‘See No Evil 2012’ festival, which was organised by Inkie, a famous graffiti artist who emerged from the 1980's graffiti scene. During the festival, a whole street was given to the people to turn “one of the most depressing, ugly, and run-down streets” (Cathcart-Keays, 2015) into a piece of art, that would boost the cities moral. It ended up being very successful event and attracted 50,000 viewers and participants (SeeNoEvilBristol, 2012). It was very beneficial for the local economy and tourism industry and brought many different social groups together.

4 SITE SURVEY

The project aims to achieve a similar outcome to the 'See No Evil 2012' festival, by using a medium that is popular and loved by the younger generations, it hopes to encourage them to visit the public setting so they are able to interact and express themselves in an informal setting.

4.5 UK AND EUROPEAN CULTURAL FUNDING

According to Public finance, the UK spends approximately 0.6% of GDP on recreation, culture, and religion, which is mediocre in comparison with Europe's average of 1.2% (Brady, 2019). This has led to the country being ranked one of the lowest for inequality, poverty, and child poverty rates, when compared with 11 different European countries, which include: France, Italy, and Germany (Brady, 2019). Europe has always invested more into the public services and has seen a positive outcome to the social cohesion and welfare of its citizens as a result (Brady, 2019). The article argues that there is a need for more funding in the public and cultural sector so it is able to provide high-quality services to people from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds and make sure they have a "social safety net" (Brady, 2019). A 'safety net' is crucial so people are not excluded from society and can access the same services as others. Having sufficient funds towards culture, can enable public spaces to become more readily available to all social groups so they are able to interact and promote social inclusivity.

The Berlin Wall (now known as The East Side Gallery) is an example of how investments in the cultural sector can have a beneficial impact on the wellbeing of a community. Berlin has had a complicated history and lost many "important cultural and symbolic institutions" (VisitBerlin, n.d.), which caused a large divide between the rich and poor. The wall split the city in half but has now become a mural to bring people together and interact.

When the Berlin wall fell in 1989, hundreds of artists reclaimed the wall by covering it in artwork - many commenting on the political changes during the time (VisitBerlin, n.d.). The wall became a recognised landmark and was later given a protected memorial status (VisitBerlin, n.d.) by the local authorities. The wall allowed residents to express their opinions of their present culture in an informal manner. As the wall is located in an outdoor setting, it is exposed to extreme weather conditions. The government recognised the importance of the wall to the community's welfare, therefore made the conscious decision to take "regular efforts to restore it" (VisitBerlin, n.d.). The project hopes to bring the same ethos to the UK, by showing local authorities the importance of having public spaces where people can interact with the culture in an informal setting- to improve social cohesion between the communities.

4.6 CONCLUSION

In Summary, the project is located within the iconic Generator building, which once powered Bristol's tramways. Now, it will be adapted to become a centre that expresses the culture of Bristol, so people are able to express themselves freely and break social barriers - to promote social cohesion. The space will allow young people to connect with others across the city who may have a different background, but also a common interest. The building is located near a variety of transportation connection, therefore is accessible from all over the city.

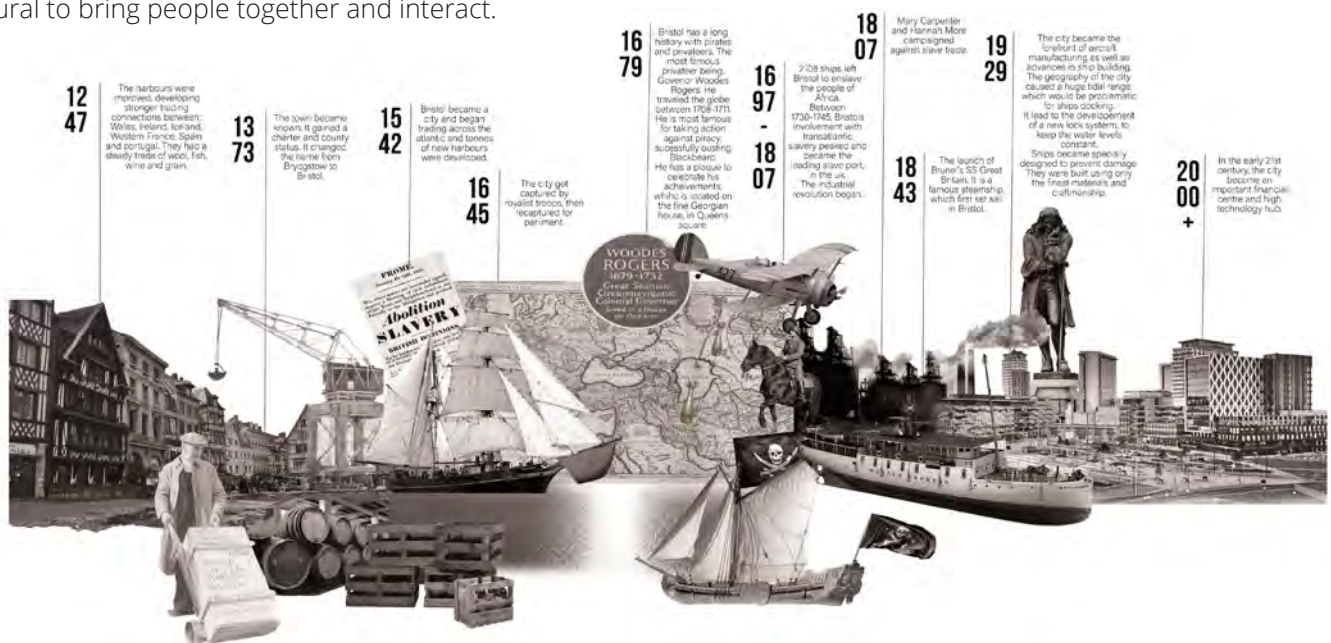


Figure 7: Time-line of Bristol's history (Rose, 2020).

5 DESIGN PROBLEM



Figure 8: Collage depicting the Industrial atmosphere surrounding the building in the past (Rose, 2020).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

When designing a cultural centre within a disused industrial building it can pose many challenges and limitations. It is important to follow the restriction, so the architectural qualities and history is not hidden or destroyed by the new work. The heritage must be considered at each stage of the renovation process, from spatial strategy to material selection. This is so the past use can be reflected in each design decision to show its recognition and importance, to the history of Bristol.

On the other hand, it is equally as important to consider the implications of creating a social structure, for various different social groups. Children and adolescents, between the ages of 12-21 years, can have varying levels of maturity, therefore will not react to the built environment in the same manner. Different spatial strategies need to be considered to determine the best one for encouraging social interaction between people of different ages and cultural backgrounds. It is a challenge to help every person but is crucial that the project helps as many youths as possible.

5.2 ADAPTIVE REUSE OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

In the project, the goal is to transform the Generator building, so it can address some of the social problems within Bristol, such as youth crime rates.

However, it is not possible to address the design problem without first addressing the research problem - the adaption of an industrial building. Repurposing a much-loved industrial asset can have its own issues among the public and affect social cohesion. The adaption of these types of sites has increased in popularity over the last couple of years and has led to a surge in research papers, to avoid causing conflict. They all attempt to answer the research problem, but none currently address the social issues surrounding it. By analysing official documents and reports conducted on the building, it can give a good insight on the current state of the building as well as the local authorities opinions on the building; to determine its status among the community. It can help with decisions relating to the design of the new intervention.

Adaptive reuse has become a common ground for architectural practice due to the ever-growing issues with climate change (Stone, 2019: 1). It has become a necessity rather than a choice. The result from reusing the existing structures/buildings has led to architectural designs being "more careful and considered" (Stone, 2019: 1); while employing through the use of an extensive research into the building and surrounding areas. However, there are still many issues and risk factors that need to be considered, especially when the chosen site relates closely to an important aspect of Bristol's lineage.

5 DESIGN PROBLEMS

Across England, Industrial heritage is the “most important cultural” (Cossons, 2008: 2) asset as it highlights the country's growth and development as a nation (Cossons, 2008: 2). Many citizens have expressed their concern with the number of industrial sites being altered as they believe that some are vulnerable and in peril (Cossons, 2008: 3) of losing their cultural significance. The document written by Neil Cossons (2008: 2) to English Heritage argues that the authorities related to the development of these buildings need more in-depth research and conservation methods as the original function of the building is often lost through the process. Unfortunately, his report is biased as it only mentions recommendations based on his own beliefs but is a valuable document as it gives an overview of individual feelings towards the adaptive reuse of industrial heritage.

Many professionals have previously admitted that there is still a lack of methodology on the preservation and reuse of industrial heritage (Vardopoulos, 2019: 791). Vardopoulos (2019: 791) goes on to explain that the reason for this is due to local authorities shifting their focus onto modern methods of conservation and that their main goal is the urban regeneration and sustainability of major cities (2019: 791). He is quick to point out that the majority of the industrial buildings that have been altered had already lost their previous function and by introducing new uses into the building it gives them “an important opportunity to salvage their history” (Vardopoulos, 2019: 791) for future generations.

Historic England and Cotswold Archaeology, two notable protectors of English heritage, conducted many documents concerning the Generator buildings' historical significance. Even though the industrial building is Grade II listed, Historic England recognises that “change to a significant place is inevitable” (Guy, 2019) whether it's due to time or an action. They make it clear that even though change is ‘inevitable’, it can either benefit the heritage asset or be harmful to its significance (Davenport, 2019: 26). To guarantee the new work enhances the existing, it is important to also repair and preserve elements that are already present (Davenport, 2019: 26).

The Generator building no longer associates with Bristol's tramway system and has been dormant for a couple of decades, serving no purpose. By repurposing the space, it will prolong the building's life and better benefit the surrounding community. It is clear that the building still holds an important connection with the city from the in-depth site survey and numerous research documents dedicated to protecting the building's significance. Therefore, it is crucial that the new development respects the existing architectural and historical qualities, by

following the natural geometry of the existing structure. This sets the parameters of the project and limits what it can and cannot do, giving clear guidelines for the project to follow.

5.3 SOCIAL PROBLEMS WITHIN URBAN DESIGN

There are plenty of challenges that are associated with creating spaces for social interaction - between different social groups. The main one being: How to promote social inclusion within an interior without being forceful or obvious? A second point to consider, which is just as important, is the changing mentality of the user group as the rate of growth between the ages of 12-21 years is exponential.

Public spaces have continually proven to be effective advocates of social interaction, between people of different social and cultural backgrounds. They provide spaces “that are accessible to everybody and where difference is encountered and negotiated” (Cattell et al., 2008: 544). Their sole purpose is to foster social inclusion and to help promote community cohesion; so, citizens can live healthy lifestyles, benefitting their state of well-being. In terms of this project, the role of the cultural centre is to create an environment where young people are able to share their experiences between different, but like-minded people. It sets up the environment ideal for social interaction, so they have the opportunity to bond with others and create supportive bubbles.

The mixing of dissimilar social groups connects people who would not have done otherwise. This is known as ‘Bridging capital’ (Cattell et al., 2008). It creates weak ties between people as they have no reason to meet up other than fleeting chance. On the other hand, when people of the same or similar cultural background connect through social interactions, this is known as ‘Social capital’ (Cattell et al., 2008). It creates strong ties, that will develop into supportive relationships, which are essential to a person's sense of security. Incorporating “a range of ties ... appear particularly advantageous for well-being” (Cattell et al., 2008: 546) compared to environments that are fixed to support one type of social group.

“Architecture can't force people to connect, it can only plan the crossing points” (Cutieru, 2020),

it is not guaranteed that the project will help every sole person, but it sets the groundwork for people to learn about one another.

5 DESIGN PROBLEMS

Everyone has different upbringings, which is determined by a person's cultural background. The social rules people gain from their childhood "environment shape how they think and behave" (Huang, 2018) in different settings and around others. Therefore, everyone exhibits different behaviours when interacting with a certain space. Some people prefer to observe social interactions from a distance, whereas others would rather mingle in a busy environment. Therefore, it is important to offer different types of spaces to meet everyone's needs. It will make it more likely for a range of young people from different cultural backgrounds to visit the site, making the project more effective at helping the targeted user group (12-21 years).

By observing the differences in social interactions, you can start to compare the similarities between social groups. Observers and minglers both have the desire "to feel free from surveillance ... at times as threatening and uncontrollable" (Cattell et al., 2008), as an unfamiliar environment. Especially, when they have potentially come from a volatile environment, that has caused them to feel under constant pressure. Giving them the freedom to unfold without the feeling of being observed, will give them a positive experience, and increase the projects chances of making young people feel trusted and welcomed.

The spatial configuration of the building should involve a mixture of open and enclosed spaces, to control the flow of movement and define places of gathering. There should be.

**"spaces to linger as well as spaces of transit; spaces which bring people together and space for escape"
(Cattell et al., 2008: 556),**

as a designer it is a challenge to satisfy everyone's needs but is essential to make sure the space flows smoothly. Various circulation routes depending on the person reason for visiting the site will prove beneficial so they don't feel pressured to interact with others and can avoid the social aspect altogether.

Children tend to be less interested in the social aspect of public spaces and instead focus on the function of a room, to determine how to approach it (Marcus, 1995). This tactic may be incompatible with other users who are slightly older, such as adolescents. It could potentially cause conflict between the two groups and result in a negative experience. The conflict can make it difficult for a child to form place attachments, which are crucial to

a person's cognitive development and maintenance of relationships with peers (Marcus, 1995).

Between the ages of 12 and 21, a child's cognitive function changes drastically (Marcus, 1995). It is the stage, where morals are tested and are taught the difference between right and wrong, through stable relationships (Marcus, 1995). Place attachments can mimic the effects of supportive relationships, benefitting the development and wellbeing of a young person (Marcus, 1995). The user group potentially has a disorganised attachment to a stable home, due to personal circumstances. Therefore, it is important that the cultural centre provides the support they need to create these place attachments, by avoiding any negative experiences in the space. This can be done by providing a variety of spaces and multiple navigation options, to allows the user to avoid others if they desire.

5.4 PROJECT DELIMITATIONS

The intention of the project artifact is to provide a safe haven for children and adolescents (12-21 years) to visit if they feel overwhelmed with current issues or feel unsafe in their home/community. It gives them an opportunity to seek help discretely or socialise with people in a similar circumstance. The reason for visiting the site can range from extreme to mild cases, such as: household issues or being forced to participate in criminal activity by gangs. However, it is recognised that the space is only effective at helping those in need if they want to be helped. The space cannot force the user to participate as it risks them feeling unsafe and could retreat. The designed environment must be relaxed and offer options that are accessible to everyone's needs. The spatial arrangement can only encourage and set up an environment ideal for social interactions but cannot predict or force the desired outcome. It would be immoral and against the users freewill. As designers, it is our duty to provide accessible spaces that will benefit society, but it is up to society to actively engage in the activities provided.

As the chosen site is a grade II listed industrial building, it has set up the boundaries and limitations of design. It is important to recognise these boundaries so there is no risk of over-stepping them and damaging the existing structure. It could risk an uproar within the community, damaging any of the social good the intervention may have caused. It also protects the heritage of the site, so it is not hidden by the new work. The design must follow a structural grid and use suitable materials, that do not overpower the existing material palette. Therefore, the creativity of the design is limited but does not prevent the space becoming something unique and effective at what it is intended to achieve.

5 DESIGN PROBLEMS

5.4 PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS

Over 25 years, the intervention hopes to help reduce crime rates related to gang activity and child victimisation, in Bristol. By giving young people an opportunity, to get off the streets and learn essential skills through art-based programmes. The programmes will be related to street art, which has become the culture of Bristol. It will allow young people to practise graffiti in a dedicated space, where they have the freedom to create, without breaking the law. It will hopefully give the residences a better opinion of the art form by allowing them to see the positive effects it can have on a person's well-being.

The persona of young people living in poverty shows them as menaces of society, as they are seen as more likely to participant in minor crimes than others. Public authorities believe in the 'Broken window' theory, which states that petty crimes such as vandalism, could lead to much more serious criminal offences (Cathcart-Keays, 2015). However, many graffiti artists have protested this statement as they believe art does not lead to drug deals or robberies as the authorities suggest. Instead, it is a force that "pioneers of a new kind of visual arts" (Cathcart-Keays, 2015) that allows people to express their beliefs and values to others; with the intent to create a much more open-minded and pleasant society.

A great example of changing views of street art is when Tate modern displayed its first piece of graffiti for public viewing, in 2008 (artrabbit, n.d.). It is important to provide more spaces like this and to practise the art with no rules or regulations, to add social communal value and increase the tourism industry. By allowing people to practise the art freely, it reduces the chance of people rebelling and destroying public property, which benefits the whole city economically.

Furthermore, the skills gained from participating in the activities will improve the prospects of the younger generations and their likelihood of obtaining reasonable job opportunities in the future. This will give children of poverty the same chances to gain work experience as those who are classed as more prosperous. It will help prevent the poverty cycle from repeating for the next generation of children, which improves community welfare and equality.

Even though, the contribution to society seems small, in the long run it will allow public authorities to monitor patterns of social behaviour within the environment. This will be useful for urban planners to determine the best strategy for developing a city, so it addresses the cultural values of its citizens; to maintain social cohesion.

The project will also enlighten people on the importance of cultural centres as mediators of public well-being and give evidence why there should be more available across the entire country. It will establish new links between different industries, that would not normally work together such as, the local councils and architectural firms. To build a new kind of city, that listens to its people and involves them with the planning of their home.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In summary, to be able to create a public setting for a variety of people there must be different spaces for each person needs. For examples: there should be a range of open and closed spaces, to highlight places of social interaction. The closed spaces can provide comfort to those who wish to avoid social interaction altogether – due to personal reasons. The targeted user group may be in a vulnerable state, therefore might not be in the right mindset to mingle with strangers. It is important for them to have the choice, so they can feel secure and comfortable in the setting. It can also allow people to avoid situations, that may cause them even more stress. A positive experience is the key for visitors to return to the site as it will allow them to develop a healthy place attachment, to support their well-being.

Furthermore, it is clear that the governing body of The Generator building, recognises that change is inevitable. Even though, there may be some people that will disagree with the change, the new work can help to save the building from further deterioration. To make sure the intervention respects the existing structure, it must follow a set structural grid, so it mimics the old lines and geometry of the building.

6 DESIGN PROPOSAL

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, it will discuss the different concepts of the cultural centre and how it benefits the surrounding area. There are many different elements that have been incorporated within the building - all for different purposes. The goal of the centre is to provide an environment for youths (12-21 years) to socialise with their peers and participate in activities that can be beneficial for their state of well-being. Some of these activities include: Graffiti workshops and private creative counselling sessions.

It is important that the centre is designed with the intention of creating a mini community and considers everyone's differences. Inclusivity is key to the project as it will help make an impact. Bristol has a very diverse population with approximately 22.1% being non-'White British' (Bristol city council, 2020: 4). Therefore, the design needs to consider the differences the user may have and accommodate their preferences. The centre needs to bring change to the notion: one-size-fits-all.

6.2 COMMUNITY-CENTRED DESIGN

Some institutions state that it should be a standard practise to design buildings for individual beings (Brady, 2019: i) rather than the population as a whole. All communities are diverse, as everyone has different backgrounds and circumstances. People could be different in a variety of ways from their age to their spoken language. However, artefacts are often designed to meet the needs of a small proportion of the population (Brady, 2019: i). Design should always be about the wider community and embrace everyone's differences. It is what makes good design and should be the basic building block. Without an inclusive design approach, it risks the chances of creating an intervention without widespread accessibility and usability (Brady, 2019: i). These two factors are major influencers and determine who visits and uses the site, without them it reduces the range of the project and how many young people it will have an impact on.

It is clear that the benefits of having an inclusive design approach is endless. Some of these benefits include: financial and social gain, increased revenue, brand reputation and recognition and a reduced cost in construction - if an inclusive design was implemented at the beginning (Brady, 2019). So, why is it not being used in traditional design methods, when it concerns public spaces?

According to Matthew Carmona, the way we design public spaces needs to be improved. Public space can range from a street corner to a purpose-built centre, where its main goal is to promote social interaction. He goes on to state that previous "experience suggests that often our ambition is not met by the reality" (Carmona, 2018: 1), resulting in spaces that are not recognised for their good intentions. However, there are a couple of successful examples that have proven to increase a city's economic, social, and environmental benefits of its communities. The common factor between the success of these types of spaces is, Inclusivity. They recognise the need to create a setting that suits a range of preferences rather than one group within society.

A study, which was conducted in London found that the majority of public settings were designed for a set user group. It is recognised that not "every public space will, or should, cater equally to every citizen" (Carmona, 2018: 1), but it should not exclude certain groups. Urban populations require diversity and public settings have the opportunity to accommodate a variety of different lifestyles in one place. They should be planned strategically so there are parts of the space that provide for each social group and are placed in areas that are, inviting, safe and convenient for all; to avoid any conflict.

Some of the ways the cultural centre has taken on an inclusive approach towards the design, is by making sure all the features meet potential user's needs. For example: the way finding system uses QR technology, so the user can select their own preferences, such as their preferred language. It is recognised that not all of the visitors of the site, would like to rely on technology. Therefore, the site includes traditional methods of way finding such as, signs and colour-coding. To keep the same inclusive language the signs, consist of symbols so they can be understood by anyone, removing any language barrier.

Furthermore, where the site of the centre is located is accessible from most regions, in Bristol. It has strong transport links (as stated in section 4) and the circulation in the space has been designed to accommodate a range of disabilities. A series of ramps, lifts, stairs, and walkways allows the visitors to access a range of ways to navigate the building so they are not restricted and can have the same experience as others. It is design decision that think about all the possible users of the site, rather than only considering the needs of the targeted user that are the most successful. As, it shows consumers that the space can be assessed by anyone.



Figure 9: Collage of the graffiti workshop that is proposed to take place in the centre (Rose, 2021).

6.3 ART PROGRAMMES FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Young people are the most affected by mental health. Approximately 10-20% of children worldwide experience mental health problems at some point during their life (Kieling et al., 2011: 1515). Even though, there is plenty of awareness about the issue, the needs of many “children and adolescents are neglected, especially in low-income” (Kieling et al., 2011: 1515) settings, due to the lack of resources and funding available to them. The cultural centre wishes to provide opportunities for children to participate in activities that will improve their well-being and help them cope with difficult situations.

Art is progressively becoming more recognised as a tool to aid children “in the release of unconscious repressed emotions and conflicts” (Kelly, 2009: 9) that are normally too difficult to communicate verbally. It has been proven to be an effective counselling and treatment for mental health issues. Those who are regularly involved with art-based programmes find they are better prepared for life and appear much happier than those who do not (Kopnina et al., 2019: 1). Therefore, it is often recommended by therapists, to those who have behaviour and emotional disruptions. In a study of 1,492 students, 45% said that the arts have helped them to de-stress (Kopnina et al., 2019: 2). In light of this evidence, graffiti workshops have been

incorporated in the centres’ scheme as a form of art therapy.

The programmes are run by Create, the charity as they are experienced in providing creative counselling sessions for the vulnerable.

Sometimes, the only chance a child has to participate in the arts is during school-time. Yet, children who under-achieve are denied access. Those who are disadvantaged, often miss out on the same opportunities as other children, therefore never learn valuable skills for future prospects. Kopnina et al. states that the arts are the biggest drivers of success in young people as it develops skills that are in-demand for employers, such as: decision-making, teamwork, and originality (2019). If they are continued to be denied access, then they will be excluded from opportunities of employment due to a skill deficit. Making sure every child has “access to and participation in the arts, culture and heritage is an aspect of social justice itself and a powerful weapon against poverty” (Kopnina et al., 2019: 2).

The cultural centre prioritises providing youth art-programmes that are “beneficial to all youth populations ... specifically to at-risk youth populations” (Kelly, 2009: 9), as there are many health benefits to providing art education to all groups of children.

6 DESIGN PROPOSAL

It can provide an improved overall sense of well-being as well as develop essential social skills such as, tolerance and empathy. It teaches children to appreciate people's differences and "show significant improvement in social cohesion, cooperation and pro-social attitudes" (Kopnina et al., 2019: 3). These values cannot be taught in school and will help children develop a new perspective of life. Sometimes, children just need support and opportunities to express emotions without judgement, to help them cope with the overwhelming feeling of stress.

In addition, Create (the client) intends to provide a public space for children to practise graffiti in a safe and controlled environment. It will act as a form of art therapy, to "enhance self-esteem and deter youth from crime" (Kelly, 2009: 10). There have been many examples in the media, showing the benefits of graffiti workshops and how they have helped vulnerable people overcome difficult situations. For instance, in the show 'I May Destroy You', Arabella took part in a graffiti workshop, to help overcome the emotional distress she was experiencing from a recent sexual assault. It helped her communicate her inner struggle, without having to verbally express how she is feeling.

Recently, there has been debate whether graffiti is good or bad for community moral. City leaders have always condemned graffiti as a legitimate form of art, as it gives people cause to vandalise public property. It is currently illegal to practise it in outdoor settings, as it is classed as anti-social behaviour and could potentially led to prosecution. Therefore, we have to question whether it is wise to teach impressionable children about the art that is so frowned upon by society?

The idea of incorporating numerous graffiti workshops to support vulnerable youths has good intentions but can have negative consequences as a result. Hence, why it is important to consider the implications of teaching them the art. Instead of teaching them to control their behavioural tendencies, it could lead to children freelancing graffiti on public buildings whenever they feel like they need to express their emotions. It is wise to consider the negative implications the intervention can have on the reputation of street art as well as the positive, so preventive strategies can be put in place to ensure the art is practised responsibly. It can provide a chance to educate young people on the etiquette of street art.

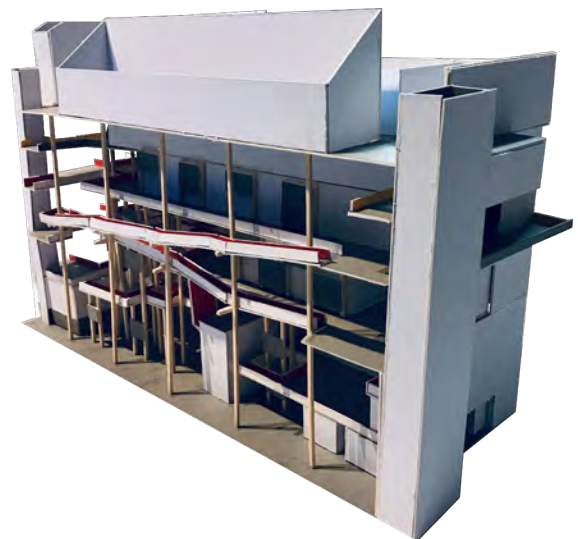


Figure 10: Model of proposed intervention, right angle (Rose, 2021).

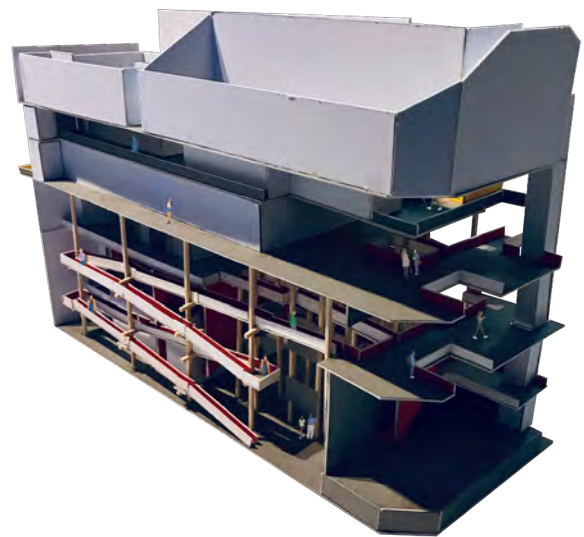


Figure 11: Model of proposed intervention, left angle (Rose, 2021).

6.4 ART & CULTURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE

The main artefact of the project is the creation of a Cultural centre, which displays the iconic street art of Bristol. The spaces purpose is to become a safe haven for children and adolescents (12-21 years), who find themselves in difficult circumstances as a result of poverty. The intervention intends to be a social structure, that will break barriers and encourage different social groups to connect and form supportive bonds. When you pair the social aspect with the well-being side of the building, it creates an environment, that supports and nurtures the cognitive state of the children in emotional distress. The types of facilities that will be available to them are: an exhibition of graffiti, retail shops, food stalls, health clinic, graffiti workshop, creative counselling rooms, prayer rooms, dedicated study rooms and an emergency accommodation. All are carefully considered and deemed beneficial to the age range.

6 DESIGN PROPOSAL

It is evident that the number of youths living in poverty, have a much higher risk of developing cognitive development issues than people who live in a much more desirable sector of Bristol. This is down to an array of factors that seem to correlate with the deprivation levels of an area, such as:

- Levels of exposure to violence, abuse, or neglect, either by the parents or other members of society.
- The quality of education received and whether the curriculum was varied to allow the students to develop all the essential skills needed for employment. Often, children who live in deprived areas find themselves excluded from opportunities at school, due to under-achieving, when this could actually be a sign of emotional distress.
- Lack of access to public amenities, causing the person to feel isolated from society. This may be due to money, public transport, or religious restraints.

The Generator building will transform into the new hub of cultural expression, where anyone can visit to socialise and build/learn new skills. The facilities will be aimed towards young people, but will still be accessible to the wider public, to promote social inclusivity. It will hold activities such as, graffiti workshops and an art exhibition, to demonstrate collections of the users work as well as famous graffiti artists from around the UK. The collection will rotate on a weekly basis, so the space is not always the same - to spark people to return.

The art-programmes, which intend to run through-out the centre, will allow children to practise street art and connect with the city; to learn the values developed overtime by past generations.



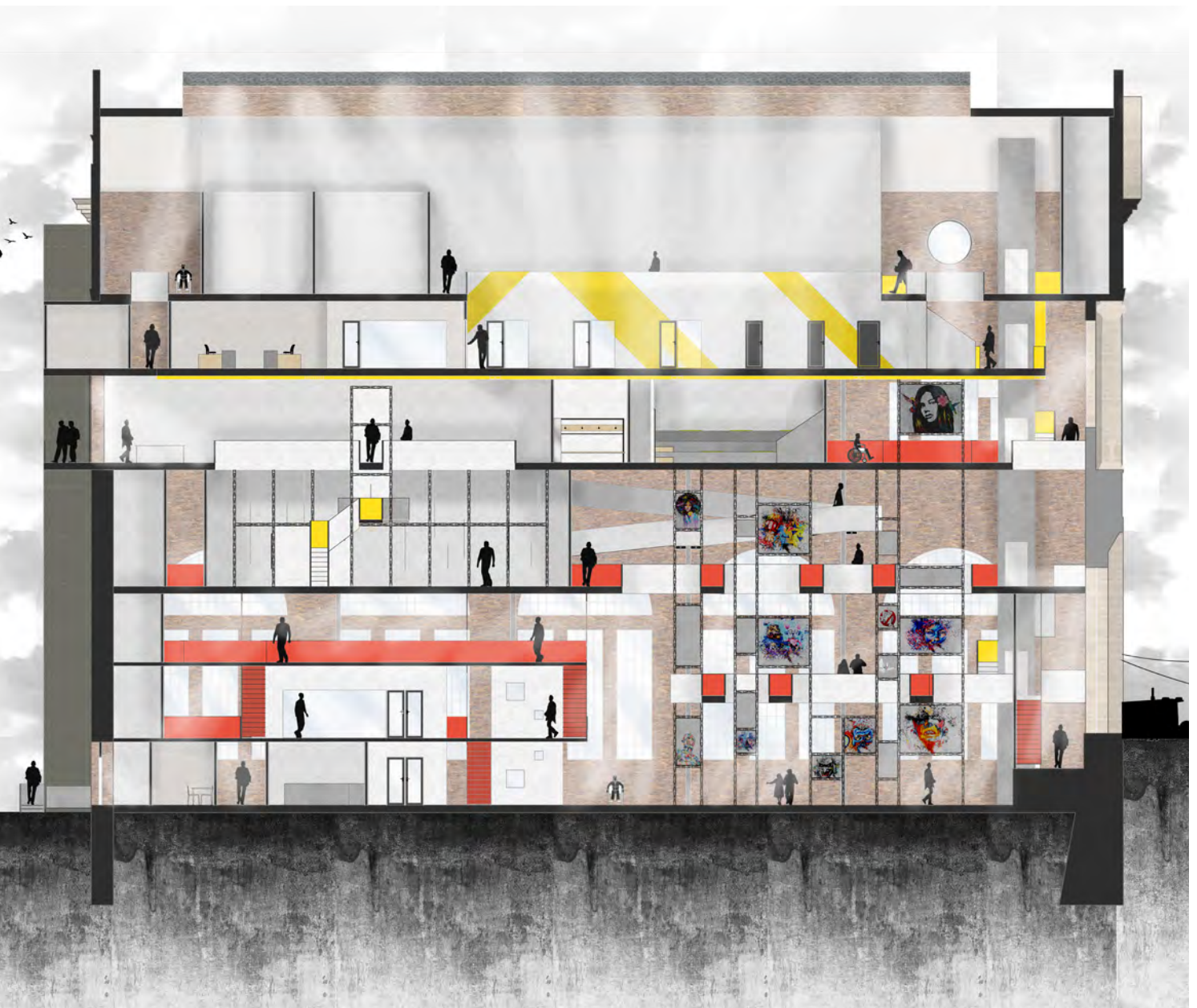
Figure 12: Proposed sections & elevation of the cultural centre for troubled youth (Rose, 2021).

6 DESIGN PROPOSAL

The concept of the project relies heavily on providing the user with a mixture of open and enclosed spaces for a selection of different user preferences. It gives them the choice to interact with others or avoid social contact altogether. It will help reduce their levels of stress, when visiting an unfamiliar environment. Inevitably, the combination of spatial modes shall affect the way people move and interact with the space, creating patterns of social existence. These patterns can be studied, to evaluate how different social groups experience the built environment. The results will benefit all industries in the cultural heritage sector, but in particular those who deal with urban planning. The results can further inform the best design approach of public spaces, for better social inclusion.

6.5 CONCLUSION

In short, the project wants to create a cultural centre that will promote social cohesion, between the youth of Bristol. The centre will be placed near areas of high deprivation, so it can have an impact on the rates of child victimisation and gang activity. It will offer those who feel vulnerable, a chance to express their emotions, through the medium of street art. Many design decisions have prioritised inclusivity, to expand the projects reach and popularity. It hopes it will encourage more people to visit the site.



7.1 INTRODUCTION

When designing a Cultural centre for vulnerable children and adolescents, it is important to analyse different case studies to get a good understanding of how the space should accommodate their needs; as well as respecting the heritage of the site. The chosen studies were selected based on several similarities that were identified. These included the: spatial arrangement based on user experience, theory/motivation, adaptive reuse of industrial heritage, typology, user and use of materials. It was important to analyse a range of similarities so it could inform a variety of design decisions and the reasoning behind them.



Figure 13: Image of the contemporary staircase placed within 50 Martin place (Shumyatsky, n.d.).

7.2 NUMBER 50 MARTIN PLACE

FUNCTION – Bank/Offices

DESIGNER - Johnson Pilton Walker, Clive Wilkinson architects, BVN, Tanner Kibble Denton architects and HE Ross & H Ruskin Rowe

YEAR CONSTRUCTED – 2014

LOCATION - Sydney, Australia

50 Martin place was intended to become a self-sustaining environment that promoted the health and welfare of its inhabitants (Brooker and Stone, 2018). The intervention and adaptations of the old bank promotes the idea of community, fellowship, and social structures (Brooker and Stone, 2018) within an office setting. However, according to Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone, social structures are an important aspect in all settings, but particularly in commercial typologies (2018), as it encourages interactions between people who would not normally connect.

The existing structure was built in 1928 but was later adapted to add contemporary fixtures for a more

sustainable build – keeping its original function (Brooker and Stone, 2018). The majority of the changes made to the existing, were intended to increase the levels of natural daylight entering the building, for production levels. The floors were cut back by 50%, which allowed room for the intervention to be placed within the atrium (Brooker and Stone, 2018). The changes made allowed 150% more light to enter the space (ARUP, n.d.). The enlarged atrium, also known as the “symbolic heart of the building” (BVN, n.d.), allows you to make visual connections between the floors as the decreased floorspace gives a greater field of view.

At the time, the interior was being constructed, contemporary theories of community were intertwined within the existing structure, which meant that the new adaptations encouraged social interactions and deterred solitary behaviour. It was believed that it would help the productivity levels of the workers by supporting their overall health and morale (Brooker and Stone, 2018). Some of the elements that were incorporated in the design were: gathering points, social hubs, and meeting places (Brooker and Stone, 2018).

7 CASE STUDIES

All these design decisions were focused on making sure the workers spent time in the communal spaces, so they can share and communicate ideas amongst their co-workers. The number of independent workspaces were reduced so it was possible to incorporate more spaces for informal activities to take place.

The main intervention of the design is a large orange staircase that wraps around the central atrium. The stairs have been carefully placed so the workers pass specific points along their journey. The circulation begins and ends at common places, where people tend to gather such as, a coffee station or café (Brooker and Stone, 2018). It forces staff to mingle with people from different floors/departments, instead of staying within their designated space. The design is thought-through but is an inconvenience for the workers. The circulation is organised in a way that disrupts the work flow as they have to take a less direct route to their destination.

The theory and concept of creating a self-sustaining community within an enclosed space, follows the same principle as my project, but for different purposes. Instead of increasing the productivity of the workers, a social setting can be used to bring different social groups closer together, by giving them opportunities to mix and share common experiences about their trauma. By doing so, it should promote a healthy environment for the user to heal.

The design is effective at what it was proposed to do as it addresses both the physical and social aspects of a working environment. Using the idea of having the circulation as the main intervention, to encourage casual encounters; it can create an environment for connecting with others that does not feel forced. Some of the ideas that were collated from this case study are as follows:

- Incorporating a continuous circulation that runs between multiply spaces, to connect them together.
- Include passing points and common places to gather along the circulation, so the user has an opportunity to interact with others along the same journey.
- It is important to have a balance between spaces for informal activities to take place as well as purpose-built rooms, so young people are able to interact in an unsupervised setting.



Figure 14: Birds eye view of the atrium (Shumyatsky, n.d.).

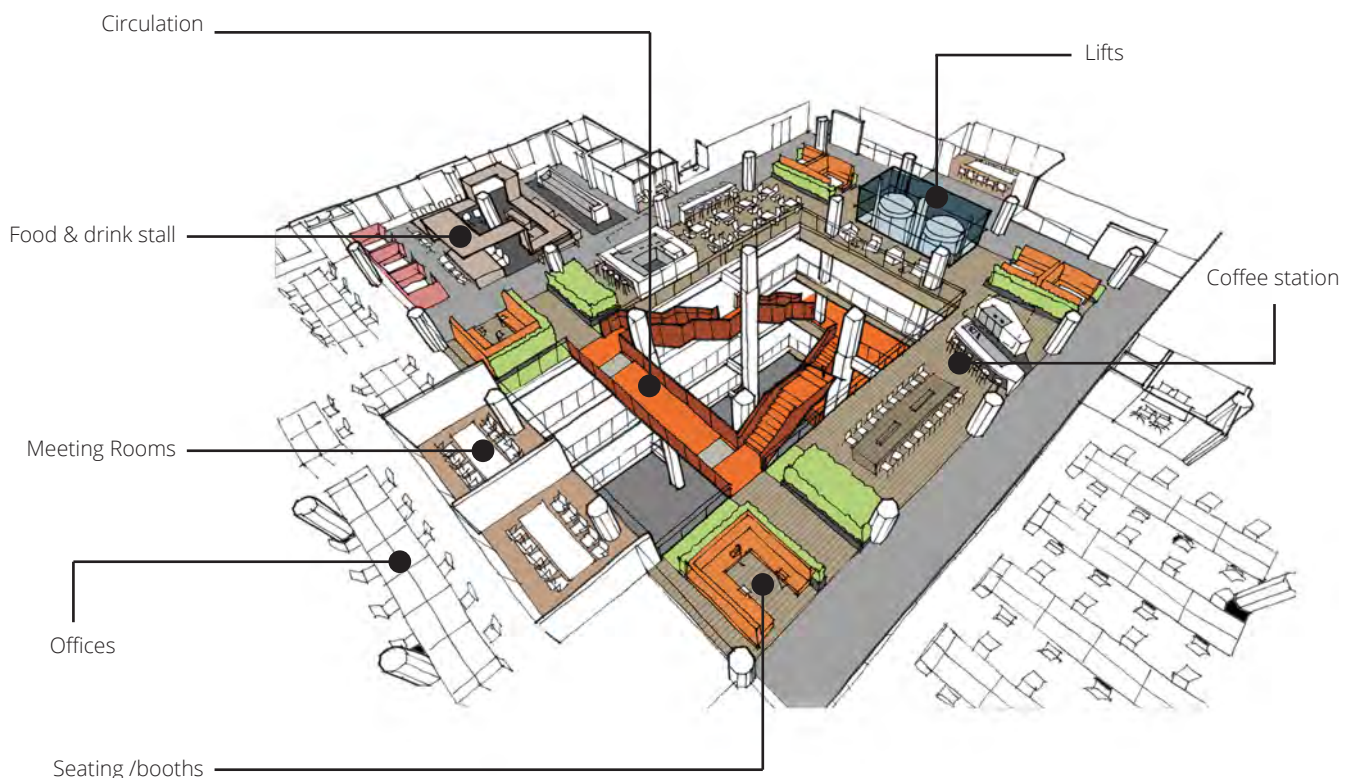


Figure 15: Sketch of the interior structure and layout (Shumyatsky, n.d.).



Figure 16: Image of the centres ramp circulation (Kon, u.d.).

7.3 SESC 24 DE MAIO

FUNCTION – Cultural centre

DESIGNER - Paulo Mendes da Rocha, MMBB Arquitetos

YEAR CONSTRUCTED – 2017

LOCATION - Sao Paulo, Brazil

Sesc 24 De Maio was originally known for being a Barrel factory, in 1986 (DETAIL, 2018: 1). However, the adaption has meant it has become a monument to represent the projects socio-economic success, as it combines a number of different functions that would not mix effectively in normal settings (DETAIL, 2018: 1). This was supported by the architectural review who said, it “stands as a defiant and provocative statement of power of collectively, social aggregation and cultural exploration” (Beaumont, 2019). Some of the functions include: education, leisure, culture, and health.

The building is run by a non-profit organisation, who choose programmes that focus on social inclusion and “the common good” (DETAIL, 2018: 2). The designer’s goals were to improve the urban planning of the local area, Sao Paulo. The area had become a victim of violence and criminal activity, which led to the reduction in the number of public spaces available. As a result, the building introduced a new type of public space, that could bring people together and create harmony amongst the community; whilst providing a sense of security. In this sense, the theory and motivation behind the design has some similarities to this project as they both wish to provide a space for people to take a break from a volatile environment.

Furthermore, the same design strategy (as Number 50 Martin Place) of using the circulation as the connecting factor between the different activities/levels has been used to create a seamless journey through the space. The circulation has allowed the designer to organise the building so all the activities can be stacked vertically, without the risk of the building becoming disjointed. Another design element that has been used to enhance the concept of connection is, double height spaces. They have been scattered throughout the building to overlap different activities so people would have a chance to connect with those on a different programme.

The users journey starts at street level, where a series of ramps create a continuous circuit up 14 levels, creating a “lively public urban landscape” (DETAIL, 2018: 1). The intervention considers the urban space surrounding it, connecting the circulation with the exterior pathways. It allows the rArquitamps to draw people in, to explore the public areas. The designers believed forcing people to participate in cultural activities could “lead to inhibition or traumatised dullness” (Archdaily, 2018). They thought it would be more productive to give the user a choice, so they can decide whether they want to participate or not.

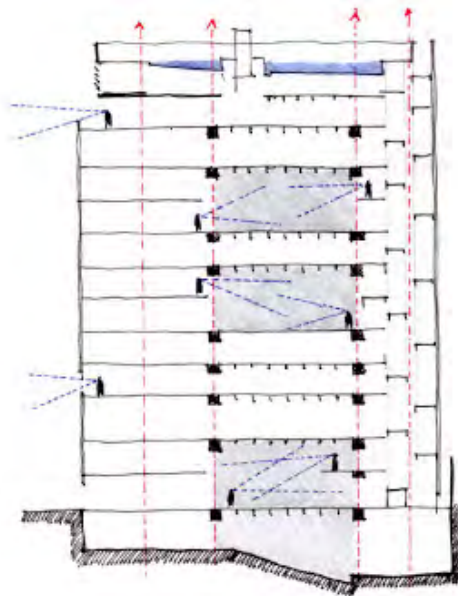


Figure 17: A diagram showing the different viewpoints (Seegerer et al., 2017).

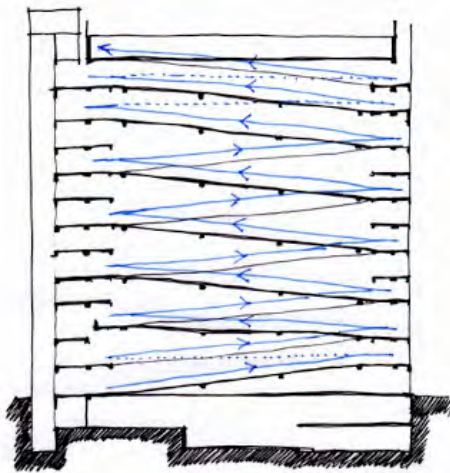


Figure 18: Diagram of circulation through the vertical space (Seegerer et al., 2017).

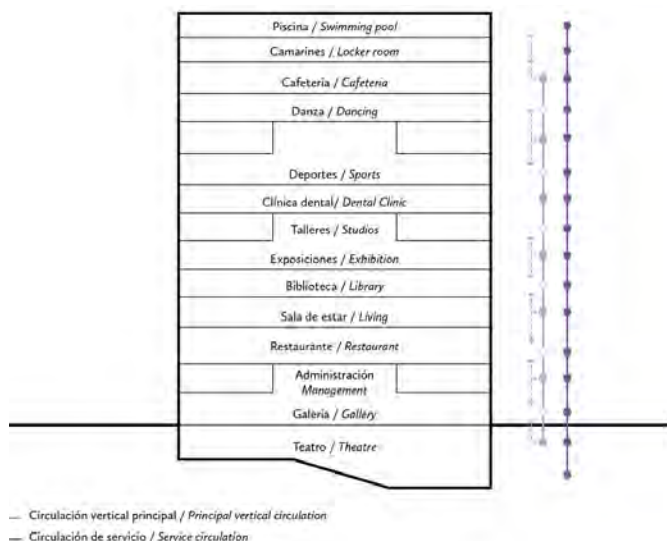


Figure 19: A diagram showing the vertical organisation of the different activities (Mendes Da Rocha, 2019).



Figure 20: An example of how the design has incorporated double height ceiling, to increase views of the activities (Megson, 2018).



Figure 21: The ground floor that connects seamlessly with the street, to encourage visitors to pass through (Schapochnik, 2019).

In summary, the design elements used within the space are inspirational and effective resources, to emphasize the idea of feeling connected with others in the community. Some of the key elements that have stood out and informed my design include:

- The use of double-height spaces to mix different functions and removing barriers that will allow people to connect.
- Using the circulation to bind different levels together so the various functions within the cultural centre become seamless.



Figure 22: Centre Pompidou's exterior facade (Ravenscroft, 2020).

7.4 CENTRE POMPIDOU

FUNCTION – Cultural landmark

DESIGNER - Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano

YEAR CONSTRUCTED – 1977

LOCATION - Paris, France

Centre Pompidou is “one of Paris’ more important cultural landmarks” (Crook, 2019) as it became part of a movement that involved revitalising parts of the city that had been in decline. The building demonstrated a vibrant and social atmosphere, that shows its success at becoming an icon for urban regeneration within the social sector. The public space was intended to provide the citizens with a space they could roam freely and socialise. The structure only occupies half of the site, to provide space for the public to congregate outside of the exhibition hall before they enter. The designers recognised that visitors of cultural institutions do not always visit for the art, but also the social aspect of meeting like minds.

The majority of the design decisions were focused on the exterior of the building rather than the interior, but the elements included relate to the creation of a social structure. All the essential components of a building such as: building services, corridors, lifts, and structural members were all left exposed on the exterior façade. This was purposeful to allow more floorspace in the interior and to make the exhibitions flexible. One of the main concepts of the building is flexibility, so it is able to adapt and change to the user’s needs. According to Crooks, the designers had no vision of where they wanted the internal spaces to be placed, it is a place where anything could happen (2019), such as unplanned encounters. This type of

optimism arose from the 1960’s, where the majority of designers did not see why a space needed a specific function (rsh-p, n.d.). The idea was that people are able to determine what they wanted the space to be rather than it being decided for them.

The external services emphasize the movement throughout the space. To make sure the different types of services stood out from the steel façade, they have been colouring coded (see figure ?). The beginning of the circulation starts at the ground floor, near the entrance of the building. Users were able to access all the levels separately from a series of diagonal escalators, so there was no need to experience the entire building. It guaranteed that the internal events spaces were uninterrupted by the circulation.

The new build was unpopular with the local residences as it did not match the style of the surrounding area. Rogers and Piano pushed negative comments to the side and was “adamant that this shock-factor is a sign of good architecture” (Crook, 2019), that could spark change. It could be argued that the design was of the designer’s own creation and what they believed the area needed, rather than what the current generations required. Is this good architecture or a desire to express their own views? ... Unlike ‘The New Generation And Youth Centre’, Rogers and Piano did not ask the users opinion and what they hoped the new structure would achieve, therefore cannot be certain. The reason I choose this study was because I believed it was an influential piece, that shows both the good and bad views of a new public space.

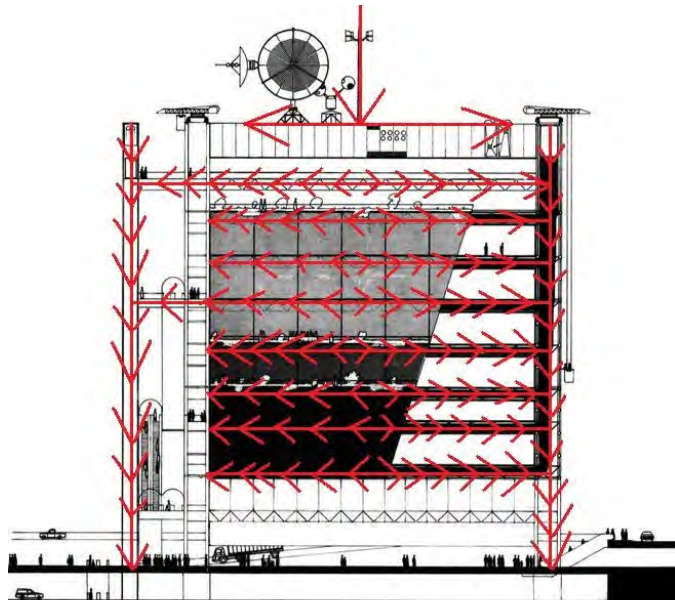


Figure 23: A diagrams showing the movement throughout the structure (Google sites, u.d.).



Figure 24: The colour-coded services on the exterior of the centre (Spiral Architects Lab, 2018).



Figure 25: The zig-zag escalators on the exterior (Perlson, 2017).

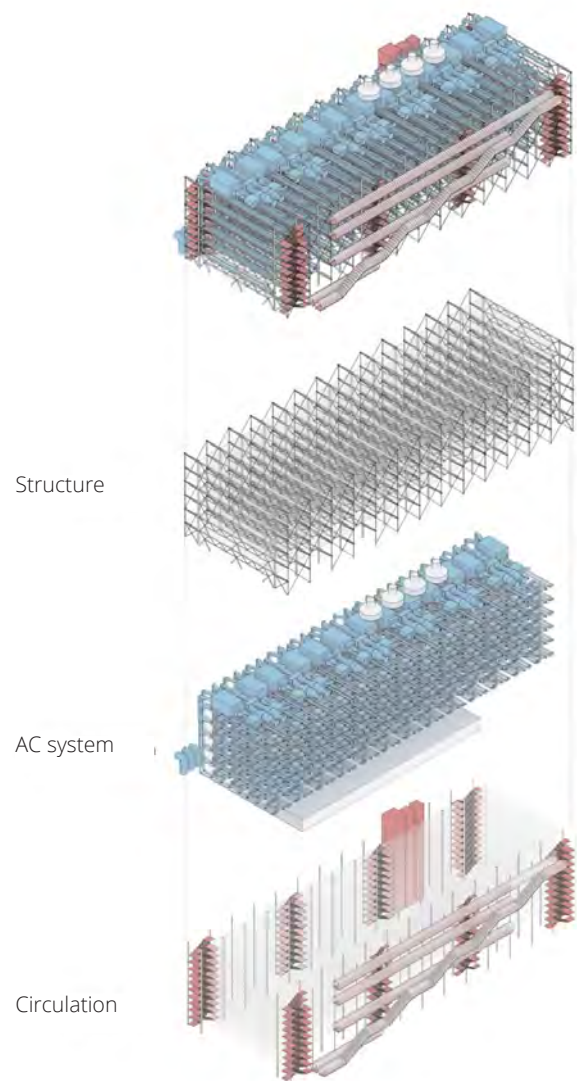


Figure 26: An exploded axonometric, showing the different layers of the building (Flaa and Ryan, u.d.).

The design of the building has proven to be a symbol of change and how cultural institutions are perceived in Europe. The same ethos should be applied to this project, to bring the same thought-process to the UK. In a previous chapter, it was stated that Europe spends more funds on cultural spaces than England and as a result they have a stronger relationship with public settings. Some of points that can be learned from are as follows:

- Essential building elements (lifts, services, beams, etc.) are important, but the circulation and how the user moves around the space should take priority.
- It should be expected to get backlash from the project as change is not widely accepted, especially if the local residences were not informed of the rejuvenation. Graffiti is not widely accepted by all generations; therefore, some will disagree. However, the project has the chance to change people's negative views for the better.



Figure 27: A visual of the interior of the centre showcasing the former factory in the background (Arch daily, 2011).

7.5 ART-QUEST CENTRE AT STEEL STACKS

FUNCTION – Visual arts centre

DESIGNER - Spillman Farmer Architects

YEAR CONSTRUCTED – 2011

LOCATION - Bethlehem, US

Art-Quest centre at steel stacks focuses on building an institution that successfully represents the existing culture and history of the site, through the use of materials and colour. The building was built on an old Bethlehem steel factory, which was the most powerful during the industrial revolution (Arch daily, 2011). In 1995, the plant closed but the 285-foot blast furnace remained (Archdaily). A new centre was placed next to the dis-used factory to try to create a liveable, mixed-use community, where tourists could visit and learn (Arch daily, 2011). The building houses a number of different functions including a: performance space, exhibition, art cinema, education centre and acts as a cultural landmark (Arch daily, 2011).

According to Archdaily, the design of the building was inspired by regionalism and the history of the former site (2011). The concept takes into consideration the “raw elegance” (Arch daily, 2011) of the materials used by the workers to make the industrial revolution possible. It has created a user-centred design, where they are able to connect and interact with the former factory in a contemporary setting. The original factory can be seen from floor-to-ceiling windows that face the old furnace; to act as a “backdrop for activities” (Arch daily, 2011).

Concrete panels have been used throughout the exterior and interior to form part of a hybrid structural system (Arch daily, 2011).

In the interior, the panels create an acoustic barrier to separate the different functions of the spaces. A “robust skeletal steel frame” (Arch daily, 2011) completes the second part of the structural system and brings the history back into the building. The steel used is the same as the one produced in the original factory. It was coloured a vibrant orange to indicate its connection with the golden gate bridge, which was constructed from the same Bethlehem steel (Arch daily, 2011). Moreover, when natural light hits the colour from the large windows, it creates an effect similar to the interior of the steel furnaces, which are made from firebrick. The user almost gets to experience what it would be like inside the factory.

Wooden elements are used to further warm up the interior and highlight the difference in thickness levels of each material. It creates a tactile experience for the user, where they can experience a variety of different textures that would have been present within the factory. Nonetheless, the architect’s magazine questions the authenticity of the experience to the real site, due to it being closed to the public. The majority of the forms found through the space intend to mimic the factory, but the author of the article feels as if the experience is under-exaggerated. For example: the steel catwalks and bellows are meant to represent the rusty pipe organs but is not obvious to the user unless stated otherwise.

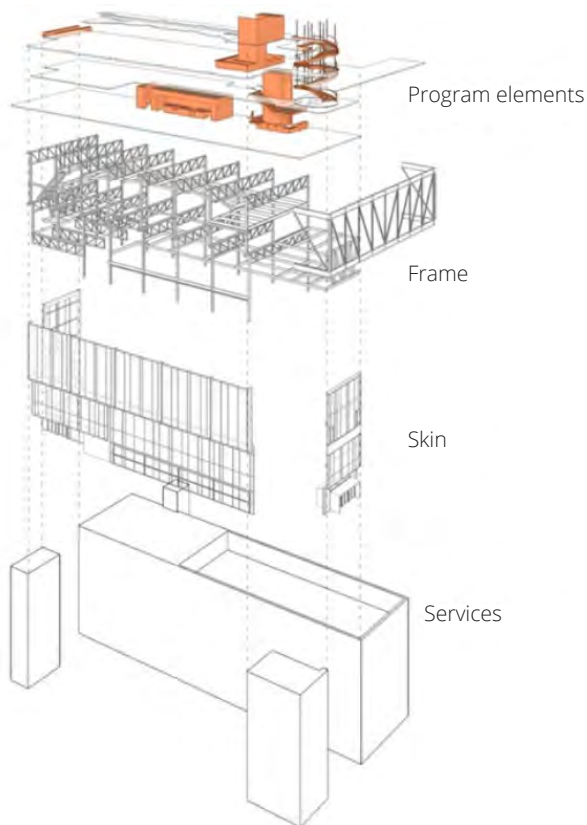


Figure 28: An exploded axonometric showing how the hybrid structure fits together (Arch daily, 2011).



Figure 29: A view of how the contradicting materials work together in the space (Arch daily, 2011).



Figure 30: Orange staircase made from the famous ethlehem steel (Bustler, 2012).

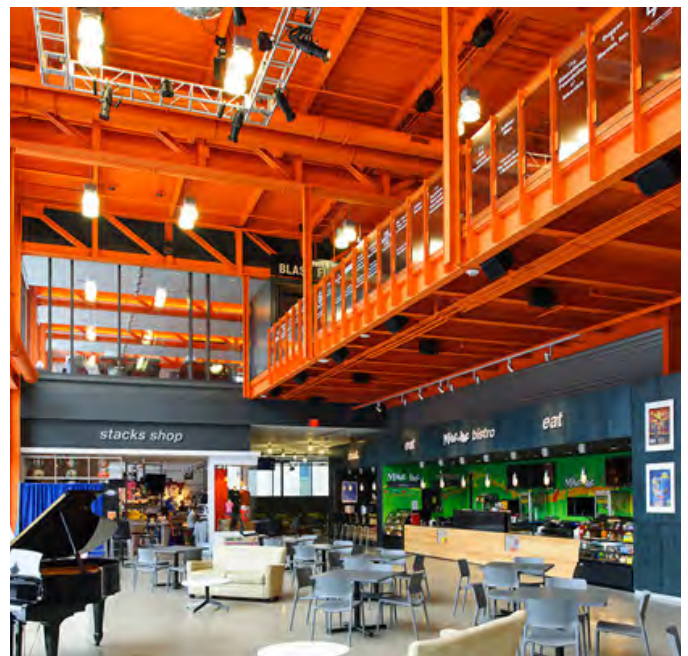


Figure 31: Image of the different facilities, which are available to the public (Bartholomew, u.d.).

I have chosen this case study as it shows how materials can be used to give the user a similar atmosphere to how the building/site was previously used. It is important that the new intervention respects the history of the existing building, by hinting at its past use. The use of material can play a key role in achieving this aim. Some of the ideas that have been extracted from this study are:

- Using materials similar to the ones that would have been present in the building, so the new intervention fits in with the existing seamlessly and replicates a similar atmosphere.
- Exaggerating design elements so it is obvious to the user how they mimic the buildings original function.



Figure 32: A visual of the interior of the Forge (Pintos, 2019).

7.6 THE FORGE

FUNCTION – Exhibition space and offices

DESIGNER - Emrys Architects

YEAR CONSTRUCTED – 2017

LOCATION - Tower Hamlets, UK

The Forge is a great example of how a grade II listed building can be adapted to support the local community. The building is an industrial building formerly known as the Millwall ironworks and was originally built in the 19th century (Pintos, 2019). The site is one of the last buildings to remain in good condition, since the area was bombed during WWII (Pintos, 2019). Therefore, it was crucial the new use would respect its history. The new installation had to work around a magnitude of protected features, which included: the brick walls, high roof, steel girders, columns, and overhead cranes (Pintos, 2019).

The biggest challenge discovered, according to the designers, was creating an economic space that did not compromise the existing fabric (Ravenscroft, 2018). The designers overcame the obstacle by introducing a new installation, that did not interact with the building directly. They placed a two-story timber structure within the centre, that hosted an array of spaces for, studios, workshops, and an exhibition (Pintos, 2019). The structure allowed the new features to respect the heritage, whilst introducing contemporary uses. It was inexpensive and flexible so it could be adapted and used for different purposes. The timber frame was constructed from birch plywood and galvanized steel, which echoes an industrial aesthetic (Pintos, 2019). However, it does not create a link with the existing material palette, causing the two structures to become completely independent of one another.

The designers created the space for a charity called, Craft Central (Ravenscroft, 2018). They wanted to make the space their headquarters so local businesses could advertise their wares (Ravenscroft, 2018). The space was not only designed for small businesses to support one another, but to also support the social aspect of trading (Ravenscroft, 2018). A set of bleachers and the void between the old and new became the dedicated area for trading and socializing. A set of bleachers became the crucial part of “unlocking the whole plan” (Ravenscroft, 2018), to create a social atmosphere. It became the central forum for all activities. Consumers were able to use them to sell their products, participate in the exhibition or craft workshops. It also acted as a transitional space, between the lower and upper level of the timber structure, creating crossing points of the users’ journey.

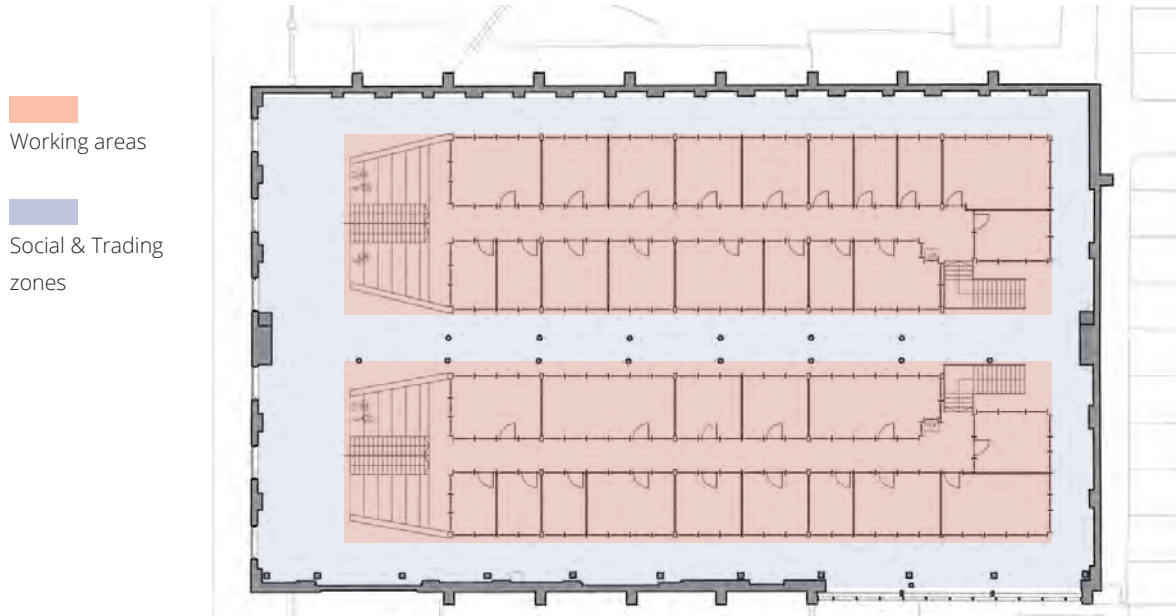


Figure 33: A diagram highlighting the different zones of the space, plan view (Astbury, 2018).



Figure 34: An image of the building before the new work was installed for comparison (Craft Central, u.d.).

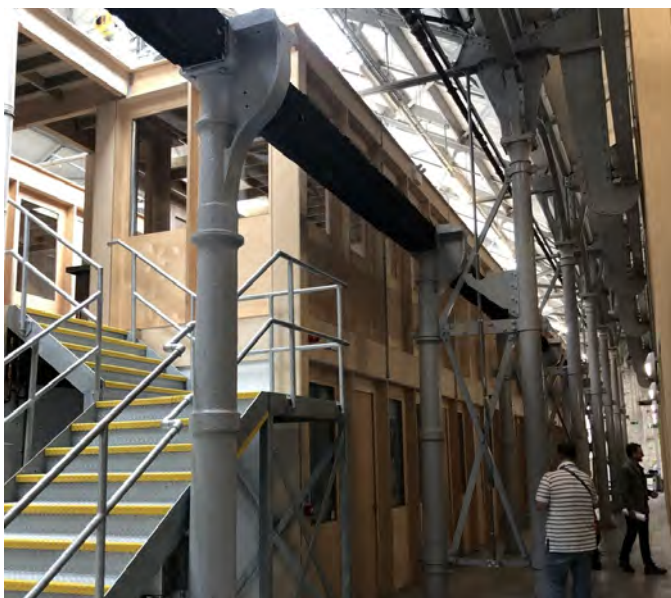


Figure 35: The gap between the installation and the original structure, which intend to create a space for social interaction (Parnell, u.d.).

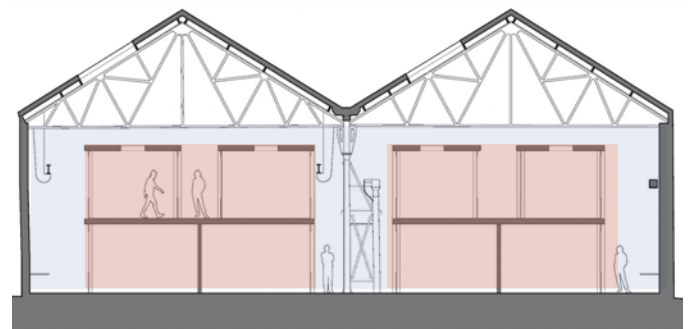


Figure 36: A section of the forge highlighting the gaps between the installation and the original structure (Pintos, 2019).

The case study has a few similarities to the project and by exploring the context behind the design, it has given a clear insight to how others have tackled a grade II listed industrial building. Even though, the new structure respects the existing heritage, it creates a strong contrast between the old and new. It can be a good thing to create a contrast as it makes the original structure stand-out, but it can also be dangerous. It could risk the old structure becoming overlooked. Some things that can be taken from this study are:

- When introducing a new material make sure it does not overpower the existing structure.
- Creating a stand-alone structure can be an effective of introducing new spaces, that does not risk the integrity of the building. This is also a good tip, when creating a space, that wishes to showcase the existing building as a monument.



Figure 37: A visual of the interior of the Innovation powerhouse (Merjoin, 2018).

7.7 INNOVATION POWERHOUSE

FUNCTION – Creative hub

DESIGNER - Janne van Berlo

YEAR CONSTRUCTED – 2018

LOCATION - Rotterdam, Netherlands

The precedent is an example of how a decaying industrial building, which was built between 1953 and 1972, can be restored to its original condition even with a new purpose (Griffiths, 2018). The site used to manufacture coal, gas, and oil for other factories, until the resources were no longer needed (Griffiths, 2018). Due to the change in fuel demand, the original building was never fully constructed. After a while, it “fell into a state of disrepair” (Griffiths, 2018) and was placed on a list to be demolished. Berlo saw the spaces potential, to become a hub of creative offices where individuals could communicate and share ideas (Griffiths, 2018).

Ironically, Berlo spent 4 years trying to prevent the buildings eventual destruction (Griffiths, 2018) but ended up stripping the interior of most of its industrial heritage. He believed that there were “already so many offices that are filled with old machinery” (Dunmall, 2018) and was not a unique factor of its culture. The designer believed by removing most of the machinery, it would not affect the character of the place (Dunmall, 2018). In a sense this was true, but to an extent. Most of the machinery was left in an irreparable state, therefore did not serve any sort of function, whether for functional or aesthetic reasons. When parts of the building were removed, he restored unfinished parts that were never completed; repairing any damage he may have caused (Dunmall, 2018).

Some of the mendable features remained, such as: the concrete ceiling with skylights and two coal chutes, within the new meeting room and auditorium (Dunmall, 2018). This highlights how you can showcase the past use of the building, through the structure alone. The structure is unique to how the building would have originally functioned. It would not be the same as any other industrial building, whereas the machinery would.

The two main components of the design are: maintaining the architectural qualities and creating a space for innovation. Berlo identified that navigation can be a major concern, when designing a space with multiply functions, therefore wanted to emphasize its openness and connections (Urban Next, 2018). The conceptual ideas were translated into the building, by providing large open spaces such as: a central passage, which connects all the spaces together and a communal area with double height ceilings (Dunmall, 2018). All the offices and studios surround the central spaces in a U-shape, with glazed panels to fill in the voids of the original structure (Dunmall, 2018). The vast amount of glazing does not offer much privacy but offers opportunities for businesses to be inspired by others (Griffiths, 2018). Furthermore, the transparency of the partitions allows the user to witness much of the original space and how it would have looked before the new work was placed inside.



Figure 39: An image of the central reservoir (Griffiths, 2018).

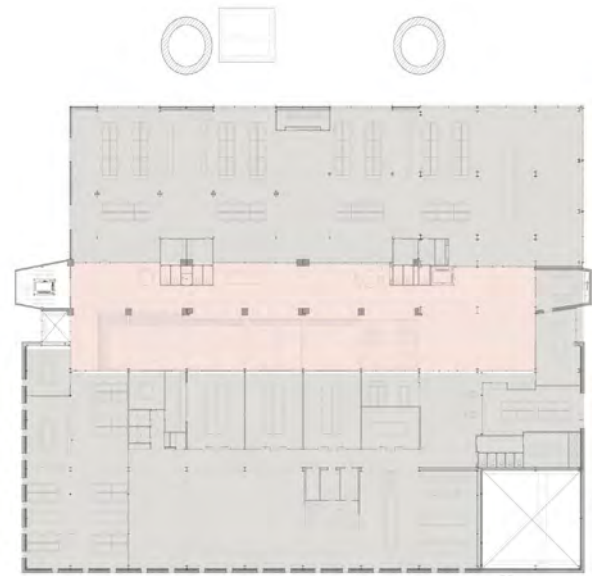


Figure 38: A diagram to show how the central reservoir has linked the surrounding rooms together (Griffiths, 2018).



Figure 41: A different part of the reservoir, that hosts meeting rooms (APR, 2019).

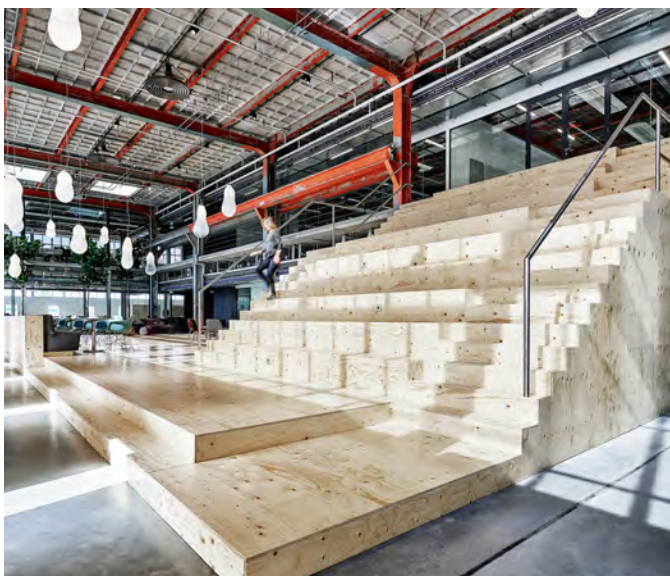


Figure 40: The bleaches, which is located in the communal space to create a social setting (Merjin, 2018).

The example is similar as it wants to create a collaborative environment but focuses more on the structure/form of the space as well as the industrial heritage. Some of the points to learn from are:

- The structure of the building is more important than historic objects placed within the space, as the spatial arrangement envisions the buildings past use. Therefore, when placing a new intervention within the Generator building it was important to follow a grid structure, so it respected the old heritage and followed the same geometry.
- It was clear from the results of this study, that buildings with a vast amount of functions can risk some parts of building becoming neglected. It was proposed that by having a common space, it would link the individual spaces together.



Figure 42: The exterior of the New Generation & Youth centre (Tebutt, 2014).

7.8 THE NEW GENERATION AND YOUTH

FUNCTION – Community & Youth Centre

DESIGNER - RCKA

YEAR CONSTRUCTED – 2014

LOCATION - Lewisham, London

The new build was constructed to provide the youth of Lewisham, between the ages of 13-19 years, a place where they can participate in various activities (Hunters, n.d.). In 2007, the area was overrun by disconnected adolescents starting riots (Tebutt, 2014). By giving them their own space, it hoped to empower and give them a voice to speak up about their concerns (Tebutt, 2014). The project is a great example of how a “community-centric design approach” (Tebutt, 2014) can help the local area, by providing opportunities to disorganised members of society.

The key difference between this study and the rest, is that the designers involve the user in the design process. They asked them what type of spaces they think would be best via a survey (Tebutt, 2014). Some of the suggestions that made it into the building are: a climbing wall, training kitchen, café, vocal booth, recording studio, meeting spaces, sexual health centre and an informal performance area (Tebutt, 2014). The result ended up being popular and accessible amongst the target user group and made it much more likely for them to utilise the facilities.

Overall, the design of the space is entirely centred around the user and has been built so it can quickly adapt to their changing demands (Arch daily, 2013). The flexible structure is formed around a central space, where visitors are welcomed and can participate in

activities. The majority of the structure is manufactured from exposed timber (Arch daily, 2013). The natural wood finish gives the place a sense of warmth and an inviting feel (Arch daily, 2013). The designer wanted to allow the timber to become scuffed overtime so the user had a sense of ownership over the place, giving them comfort that they can return anytime (Tebutt, 2014). The thought-process behind leaving the timber exposed is clever but is not practical in the long-run. After a while, the building will start to appear neglected, which could potentially make the user feel unwanted.

Furthermore, the flexible ability of the building is evident from the large amount of open spaces and standardized forms used during the construction (DETAIL, 2015). It allows the user to use the rooms for whatever purpose they desire, instead of suggesting what the space should be used for. Double and triple height spaces are used through-out, but all follow the same structural grid for consistency (Tebutt, 2014). The grid is responsible for determining where the openings and rooms are located, so they can be ordered by size and importance (Tebutt, 2014). The openness of the spaces creates a natural method of surveillance to safeguard the young people, but this can give them the wrong impression; make them believe they cannot be trusted (Tebutt, 2014).

7 CASE STUDIES

The similarities identified from this case study is the theory behind the project and the goal to create an environment that is user orientated. It is important to recognise what the younger generation wants/requires rather than presuming from stereotypical typologies. There are a number of ways you can do this other than surveys or interviews, which could risk ethical issues. One of them is learning from similar projects that have proven to be successful and identifying those reasons why. Some of the reasons this project succeeded was:

It incorporated a wide range of activities so there was something for everyone.

The materiality and colour use offers a warm and welcoming atmosphere, which is crucial to encourage people to return.

It offers break-out spaces, so people are not forced to participate in activities and can watch others from a safe distance. It allows them to stay within their comfort zone, but also feel included.

There are some adaptable spaces, that the user can use for a desired purpose.



Figure 45: A diagram to show how the double/triple height spaces connect the communal area with the other spaces (Tebutt, 2014).

7.9 CONCLUSION

In summary, the identification of similarities in other projects has highlighted how I can approach designing a cultural centre for troubled youths, in Bristol. Some of the key findings has shown the importance of creating a design that is user-orientated, using the surrounding environment to create a memorable and safe place for them. Materials, colour, and the spatial arrangement are crucial and should be carefully considered to create an experience that will make them want to return. All these finding will be considered when deciding how best to approach the industrial site. They will form the basis of the design, which can be built upon to make it stand out from similar typologies.



Figure 43: An interior visual of the youth centre (rcka, u.d.).



Figure 44: A visual to show the natural surveillance of the double/triple height spaces (rcka, u.d.).

8 CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, it will discuss the specific conceptual strategies implemented in the cultural centre, to create a social structure that would benefit the vulnerable children and adolescents of Bristol. It will show how the concept has been developed over the design process and the reasoning behind the decisions made throughout. It will highlight the connection between the research conducted in previous chapters and analyse how it has been transformed into a spatial strategy that could benefit all public settings. Some of the topics that will be covered are: concept development and application, circulation, way finding, materials, and colour use.

The concept of the project revolves around the idea of using void and functional spaces, to influence and provide information to the user sub-consciously. QR codes have become a running theme throughout the project and has allowed it to become more inclusive. The forms found within the code provide data to anyone who interacts with it. The same principle applies to the built environment, where the spatial configuration of a space informs people how to react and behave in a certain setting. By implementing a spatial arrangement, that has been carefully considered to make the user aware they are in a safe environment. The intervention should make an ideal space for vulnerable youths to socialise and open up about their personal circumstances.

8.2 CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

The sub-section will discuss how the initial research has informed the concept of the cultural centre. The conceptual approach orientates around the idea of creating a social network within a built interior.

The theory behind the idea originated from the book, 'Architecture and narrative: the formation of space and cultural meaning' (refer to sub-section 2.3). The authors main point concluded that the forms made by the placement of walls and other construction elements, can have an effect on the consumers psychological thought process. The spatial configuration in-turn passes on information sub-consciously, to advise how to use the space for its intended purpose. In this case, its purpose would be to encourage the user to socialise with others.

The site map, which was derived from the site analysis of Bristol, showed how technology can be used to create links between different sectors of the city on a large-scale (see figure 47). It can show peoples movement and pathway as they tour points-of interest. For instance, a graffiti tour will show you around different parts of the city, creating connections through a common denominator. As the city expands, it becomes increasingly hard for urban planners to provide accessible spaces that are available to everyone. It ends up excluding some social strata from certain social events.

During the review of, 'The Role of Urban Mobility in Providing Accessibility' (in sub-section 2.5), it pointed out how it is a architect/designers role to break barriers that affect the mobility between different communities and "consolidates the inequalities" (Souza, 2019). Using technology such as, QR codes, which are readily available, can allow a large city to appear more microscopic and inform people from different areas of a common interest. Incorporating the technology in the centre on a smaller scaler can make the site a point of interest on the user's 'tour' of the city, creating links between the city centre and the deprived areas of Bristol. This is evident from the interactive way finding system that is discussed in sub-section 8.5, as its purpose is to increase the mobility of the site and remove physical barriers, so it is accessible to all social groups.

This is evident from the interactive way finding system that is discussed in sub-section 8.5, as its purpose is to increase the mobility of the site and remove physical barriers, so it is accessible to all social groups.

Furthermore, the QR code was translated to support the theory of a spaces ability to inform the user of its intended purpose.

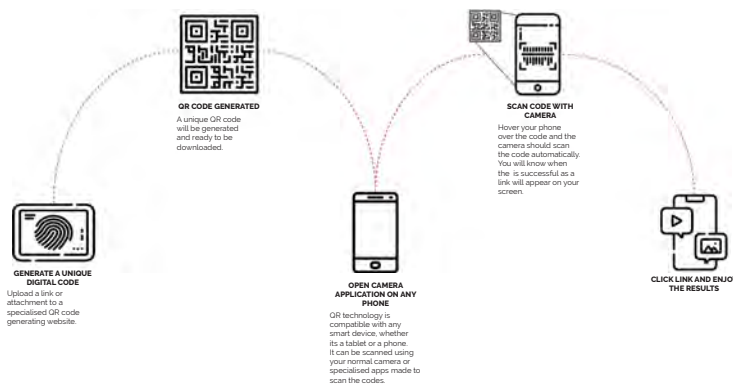


Figure 46: The process of QR technology (Rose, 2021).



Figure 47: Conceptual model displaying how an interactive way-finding strategy could be used to create links between different sectors of the city. (Rose, 2020).

8 CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

The black and white forms found within the code provide data to supply a consumer with information that may be useful. The same principle applies to the arrangement of an interior spaces, where the forms provide the user with guidance on how they should react to the arrangement. A block model of interior forms was created to convey this idea, it shows how a spatial arrangement can produce positive and negative space (refer to figures 48 and 49). The positive areas represent the functional spaces, which provide an enclosed space for certain activities to take place. Whereas, the negative space represents voids and open areas of the building, which do not have a particular function. The user is given freewill to determine, what they wish to happen in the space.

The points discussed above created the groundwork needed to adapt the conceptual approach into a design strategy. The concept can be used in the Cultural centre, to inform the user of its purpose and encourage visitors to interact with one another; promoting social cohesion between different communities. The approach is transferable, so it can be applied to similar projects in additional cities of the UK.



Figure 48: The spatial sequence obtained from the block model in figure ? (Rose, 2021).

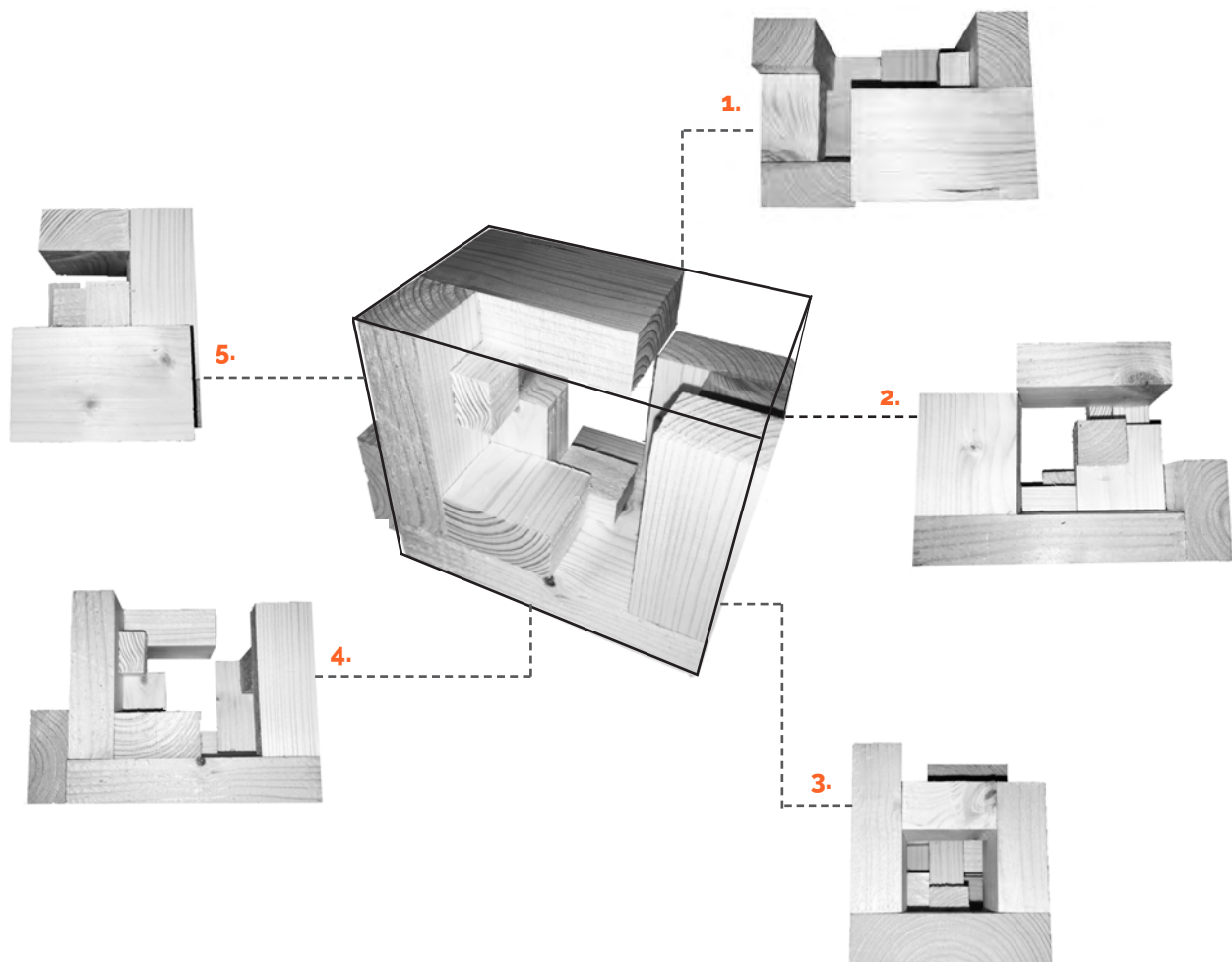


Figure 49: Block model demonstrating the concept of void and closed space (Rose, 2021).

8 CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

CONCEPT APPLICATION

The first stage of transferring the conceptual language of the void and function design strategy, was to determine how the intervention would work with the existing structure, of The Generator building. It was important to first consider how the research problem would be considered, to avoid any implications that may arise from altering an industrial heritage site. To prevent any history being destroyed, the intervention needed to follow a set structural grid, which was influenced by the existing openings and pillars. Only when the parameters of the building were established, could the design process begin to incorporate the concept. The structural grid helped to determine, where the voids would be able to be punctured through the different planes. The same design strategy was used in 'The New Generation And Youth Centre', but for a dissimilar reason. The project did not have the motivation of preserving the heritage, but used the grid to ensure the openings, were not placed at random. It resulted in the structure becoming streamline and run smoothly with the other compartments of the structure.

The spatial arrangement of the centre ended up being organised vertically, due to the narrow and tall nature of the building. It allowed the different sectors to be segregated, so it can avoid the social spaces interfering with the private zones.

To take advantage of the existing structure, the grade II listed mezzanine is used as a device to divide the space and inform the user of the separation between the public and working areas. On the mezzanine you will find: creative counselling rooms, offices, and a staff area. As the floor is elevated, it offers rooms that are private and free from the circulation of the lower levels.



Figure 50: Diagram showing the vertical organisation of the building (Rose, 2021).

Moreover, the sectors of the centre were arranged from public to private, so the private areas were away from the noise pollution generated from the social spaces (refer to figure 50 and 51). As a result, the spatial configuration appears to become more enclosed as you travel up the circulation.

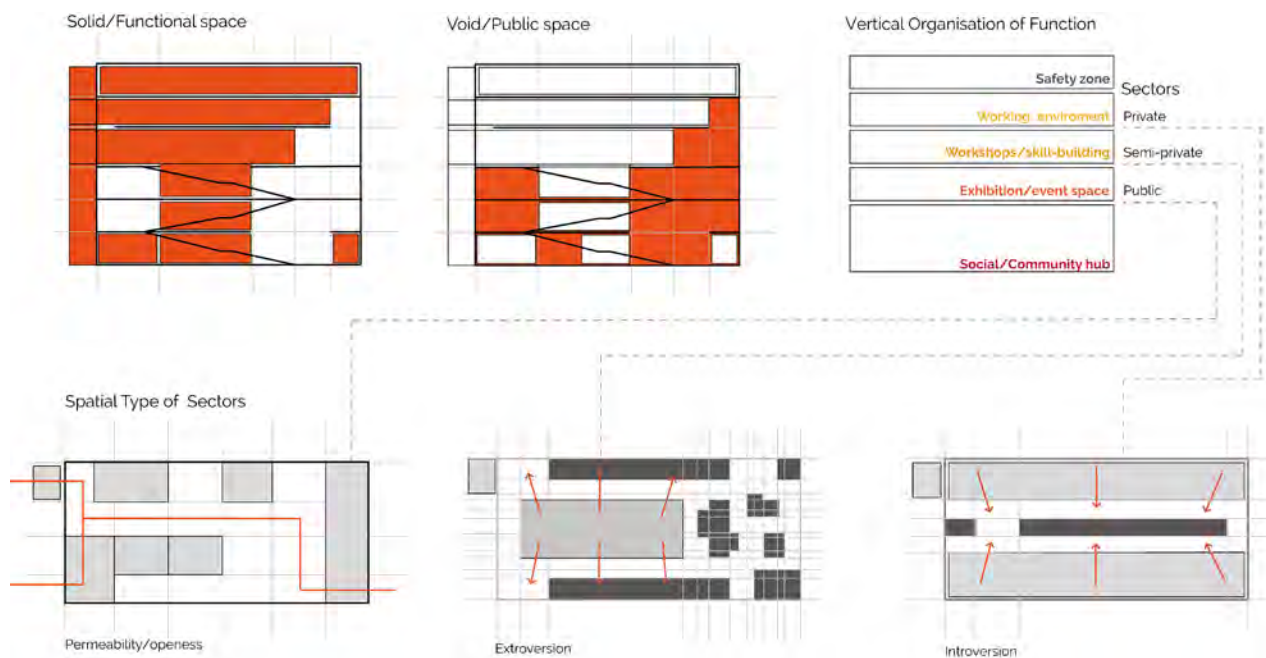


Figure 51: Diagram showing the conceptual language of the spatial arrangement (Rose, 2021).

8 CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

The openness of the lower levels signifies that the space is accessible to the general public and has no specific function. It makes it an ideal space for social interaction as it can create random encounters with other visitors; there are no physical barriers to separate people participating in contrasting activities. With the exhibition being the focal point of the void space, it helps to spark conversation. The voids expand over the first 4 levels, allowing the exhibition to integrate itself with the circulation journey. The gradual sparseness of void space indicates the rooms are becoming less accessible to the public. The rooms start to portray fixed functions to separate users by their intention for visiting the centre; keeping those who are vulnerable away from the rest of the populace.

In multiply case studies (particularly case study 2), it was found that the use of double/triple height spaces helped to merge different activities. Its purpose was to create connections between people with mismatched interests, so they had the opportunity to learn from other people's interests and values. The theory behind using facilities with combined activities is supported by the review conducted on, 'The Architecture of Social Interaction' (refer to sub-section 2.6). Applying a similar design strategy to the cultural centre, would most definitely encourage different social groups to bond and improve social cohesion. By using the structural grid to create openings in the vertical and horizontal planes of the void spaces, it has allowed the numerous levels to form one large space, which is tethered together by the circulation system.

8.3 USER EXPERIENCE & CIRCULATION

The circulation is the most important part of the project and is the connecting factor, between all the different elements of the concept. It represents the idea of inclusivity and connection, by breaking the physical barrier between functions. It is constructed from a range of motions which includes: ramps, bridges, walkways, stairs, and lifts. By having multiply ways of accessing the space, it creates an inclusive design that is user-friendly.

Many of the case studies, which were investigated, focused on the use of circulation as a tool of social interaction. In particular, 'Number 50 Martin Place' used a brightly coloured staircase to bridge points of interest together. The result forced the consumer to pass through certain points, where people typically gather to socialise. An alike idea was translated into the space, but instead it intends to guide the user around the central exhibition, for viewing purposes.

Passing points and break-out areas, were strategically placed along the users journey up the building, to gather and encourage visitors to interact with people along the same tour; passing on individual opinions and beliefs influenced by the artwork. The type of interaction hopes to teach people about individual cultures, creating a greater social cohesion within Bristol.

The movement in the centre works by having the artwork move in the opposite direction to the user. The user moves along the horizontal plane, whereas the artwork moves vertically, creating a lively atmosphere that co-exists. Visitors are unable to interact with the artwork, until they reach the graffiti workshop. In the workshop, the dynamic of the movement switches and the user has the chance to connect with their art pieces, by moving on the same field of plane. Lifts and moving platforms allow them to move through the double-height space effortlessly, so they are able to reach the upper-level of the concrete canvas.

Along the walkways, which encapsulates the truss system running through the voids, are timed mechanical systems designed to change the position of the artwork. As the artwork moves place, it alters the course of the circulation creating an alternative route for visitors. It creates an exciting adventure for the younger generations, disorienting them and creating a maze-like experience. The journey is meant to mimic the experience of walking through the alleyways of the city. The activity may spark some unwanted emotions, which can be worked through during the workshop sessions. The complex arrangement of the circulation does not come without it challenges. Both direct and in-direct routes are provided, but without an effective navigation strategy the circulation can cause unnecessary stress on vulnerable characters. Therefore, in the next two sub-sections it will cover how colour and technology way finding works intrinsically with the circulation, to create a seamless experience.

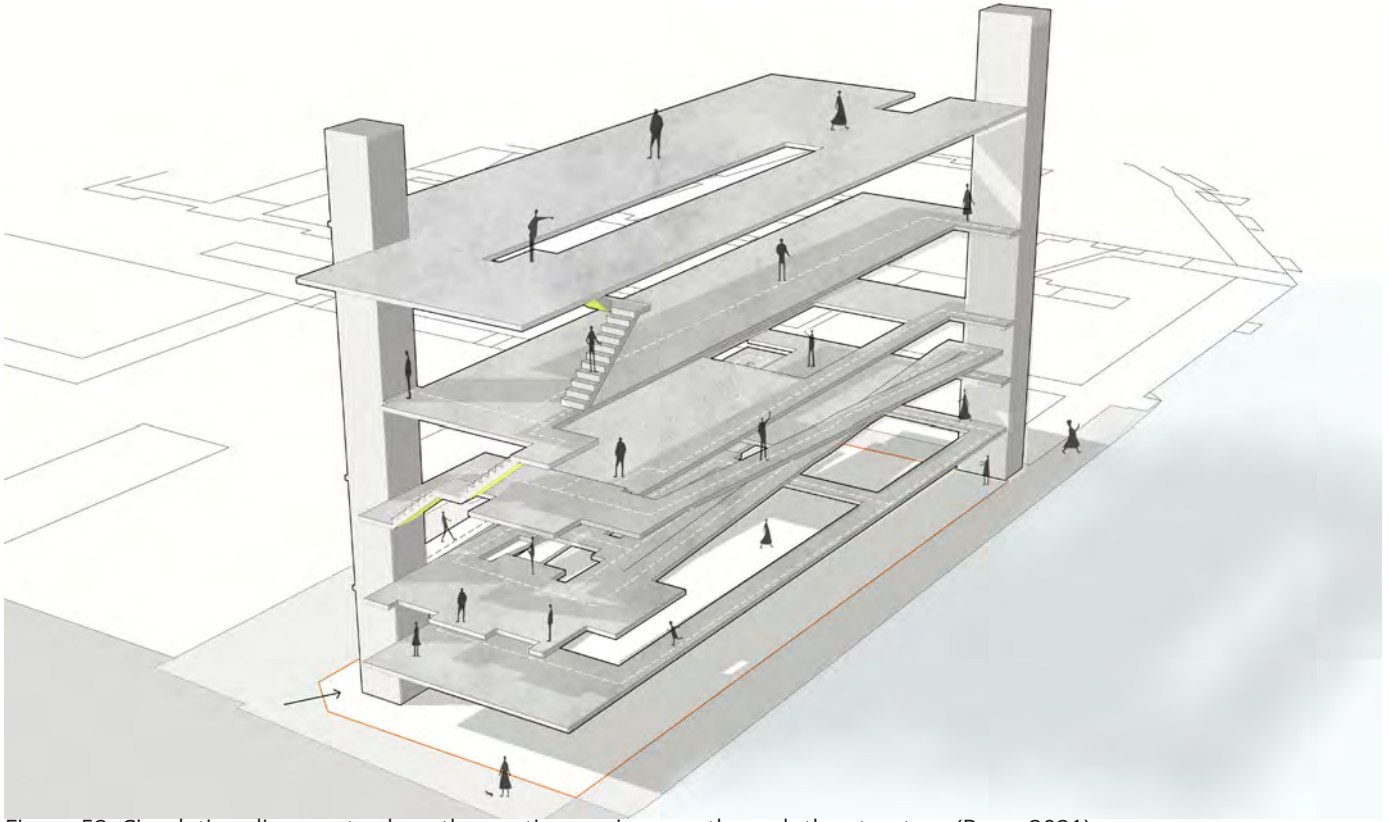


Figure 52: Circulation diagram to show the continuous journey through the structure (Rose, 2021).

8.4 WAY FINDING RESOLUTION

The project involves a myriad of different departments that all have their own function, depending on the persons reason for visiting the site. Young people can find it “challenging ... to recognise spaces with different functions” (Work Mind, 2018), which can add to the anxiety of trying to find their destination, in an environment that is unfamiliar to them. It is crucial for the consumer to be able to find where they need to go without stress, so it does not have a significant impact on their well-being. Otherwise, it could lead to a negative experience, which would make them less likely to return for additional sessions.

You can often find way-finding systems in environments that promote health and well-being as it allows the user to navigate around structure with little hassle. “way-finding strategies must passively guide even the most distressed of people” (Work Mind, 2018) as it allows them to become familiar and feel secure within an unknown space.

The targeted user of the cultural centre will often find themselves visiting the space to seek assistance in a time of need. They do not wish to be wandering aimlessly, therefore need to be able to find their destination with ease. Without a proper way-finding strategy in place, the intervention will not be effective at providing positive experiences for children, who want to improve their current situation.

Still, there was the issue on how to design a way-finding strategy that would be accessible to the wider population; to continue with the theme of social inclusion. The solution of using technology allows a person to select their own preferences and can assistance with language barriers or physical restrictions. The city of Bristol is very diverse; therefore, it is very likely that the project will attract people from many different cultural backgrounds, who may not have English as their primary language.

All visitors will have different reasons for visiting the site. Some may visit to see the exhibition, whether others may be there for a more serious reason. Therefore, one strategy will not be able to satisfy everyone’s requirements. It will need to be flexible and adapt continuously to different situations. Executing the use of technology and mobile devices can allow the experience to be a personalised experience for each individual. Approximately two-thirds of the population already have access to some form of technology, according to Bullivant (2006: 6).

Modern technology has allowed simple navigation methods to integrate to indoor settings, as the technology is already present within our hand-held devices. QR technology is replacing GPS as it is much more affordable and accessible to the public. It also possesses the ability to learn and develop an “understanding of pedestrian space-temporal behaviour” (Rodriguez-Sanchez and Martinez-Romo, 2017: 506) so it can execute the best possible outcome for the users set of preferences.

8 CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

Cultural heritage sites such as, museums and art galleries have been using technology as a part of their user experience for decades. It allows them to provide an interactive service that personalises individual experiences; to improve satisfaction. It can “compensate for the marginalisation of architecture as a cultural activity” (Bullivant, 2006: 7), by creating emotional relationships using the user’s personal values. It respects their values by recognising their individual behavioural patterns and contextual background. The importance of technology to create a more advanced cultural experience was realised during the analyse of the literature on, ‘Responsive environments: Architecture, art, and design’ (refer to sub-section 2.7). It discussed the advantages of using it in cultural settings and how it improved a visitor’s connection with the space.

Traditional methods of way finding do not have the same capability to create a personal experience but cannot be fully replaced. Technology as a tool of way finding can have many benefits but does not come without limitations. Not every user will want to depend on mobile devices as it could potentially distract from their experience. Therefore, traditional methods should be used alongside it. These include: signposts, the use of colour-coding and symbols. The additional strategies listed below act as a back-up method, but still provide accessible solutions that do not restrict the user in anyway:

- Clear signage, alongside generic symbols so that it is clear and can be understood by everyone. Symbols are a way of communicating a message if there may be a language barrier as they can often be understood by many.
- The use of colour coding can highlight clear pathways through the space, so the user can be reassured they are on the right track to their destination.
- Signs with writing as well as QR codes, for the interactive experience. Word can provide reassurance and comfort, so the user understands what the space is for without having to scan every code.

As a designer it is difficult to predict how the user will react to the surroundings, therefore it is important to consider the complex analysis of the movement of people in space” (Work Mind, 2018). Young people, who are in vulnerable states tend to not like being controlled so this will give them the freedom they need, to explore the space without restrictions. Nevertheless, it has the ability to monitor the users of the site in an informal manner, to make sure they are on track and keep order.

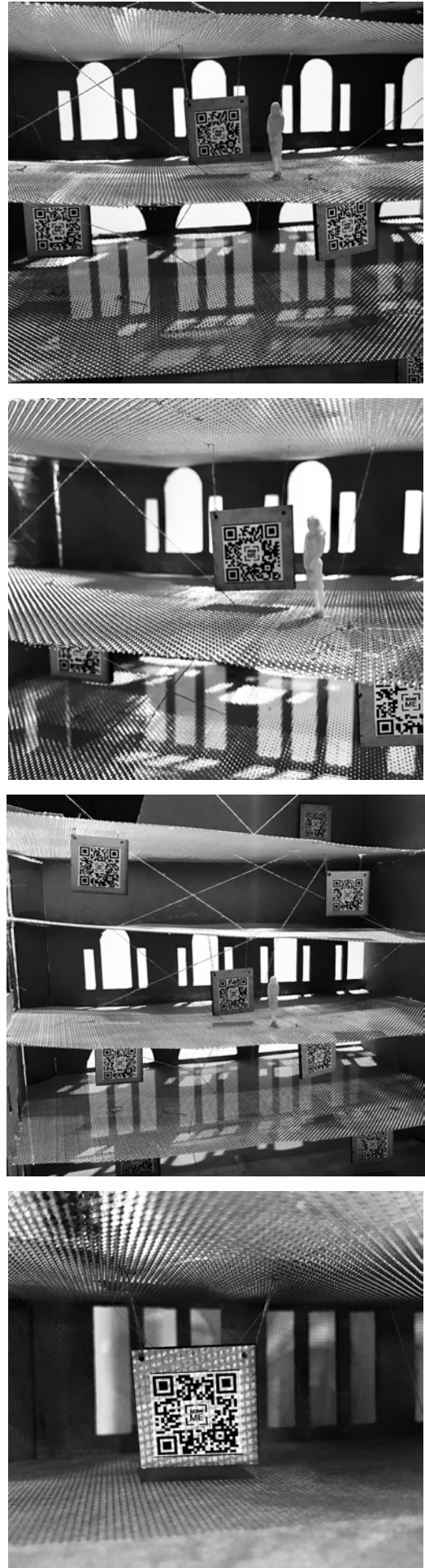


Figure 53: Model of interactive way finding concept (Rose, 2021).

8 CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

8.5 MATERIAL & COLOUR CONSIDERATIONS

The material and colour selection of the cultural centre has many applications, which includes the need to: preserve the industrial heritage, as well as promote a friendly and welcoming atmosphere - especially for well-being focused zones. The palette follows an industrial aesthetic to stick with the theme of the former use, but accents of vibrant colours has been used to break up the dull colours and add a fun and contemporary twist. The majority of the materials have kept their natural colours, except for the suspended perforated staircases so the circulation/way finding graphics stand out from the background. It is important the materials are not overpowering, so it does not distract from the architectural qualities of the existing structure. Additionally, it allows the street art to become the focal and talking point of the space. There are multiply activities happening in the building at a given time, therefore the space can easily become over-stimulating. A balance between colour and natural materials can create a suitable environment, that does not cause further distress in troubled youths.

Colour is an important component of any public space as it can provide easy ways to navigate around an unfamiliar space or create a desired atmosphere. For example: the circulation has been colour-coded either red or yellow. Depending on the users' reason for visiting the site, red indicates the route for the exhibition experience, whereas yellow shows the way to the dedicated well-being facilities. It allows the user to clearly distinguish the social spaces from the quieter areas, so it is possible for them to avoid interaction with others. The inspiration to colour-code the different functions came from the case study on 'Centre Pompidou', where the designer set apart the different services so the circulation could stand out from the busy façade. Hundreds of guests could be using the facilities, therefore brightly coloured way finding graphics "can promote faster assess ... reducing labour, frustration and wasted time" (Dalke et al.:345). Using colour alone can create limitations for some users with colour vision impairment, therefore there are other methods of navigation available (discussed previously in sub-section 8.4).

In addition, colour is often used as an advocate for promoting positive feelings, as it "can distract and alleviate tension providing visual interest or emotional outlet" (Dalke et al.: 348). The colour red sparks feelings of excitement and passion, by increasing a person's heart rate (Gremillion, 2019). However, it is advised to use it in moderation as it is a powerful colour that can become overwhelming (Gremillion, 2019). If used incorrectly, it can cause a person to feel danger or anger (Gremillion, 2019), which is the emotion the space hopes to eradicate. On the other hand, accents of yellow have been used throughout the well-being zones of the centre, as it can "help give your design energy and will make the viewer feel optimistic and cheerful" (Gremillion, 2019). It is important that the colour yellow is used sparingly, as the mezzanine is already painted yellow and could risk overwhelming the visitor's senses. In design, Yellow has always been used as a pop of colour, to grab attention and energize a space (Gremillion, 2019).

The materials selected for the project intend to give a mini-industrial city feel, by using materials traditionally found outdoors. When the visitors are spray painting in the workshop, it hopes to provide them with a similar impression as painting graffiti on a street corner. It can create an indistinguishable feeling of excitement to give them an authentic experience. Moreover, the artwork displayed in the exhibition is placed on thin slabs of concrete to mimic concrete walls of city buildings. The slabs can be as thin as 50.8mm, making it possible to dismount and change the collection regularly; they are light enough to be carried by staff. The community wall surrounding the graffiti workshop exterior, consists of the same concrete panels/system, so when they become saturated in paint, it can be swapped for a cleaner block. It eliminates the need to power wash the material, which can be difficult and time-consuming.

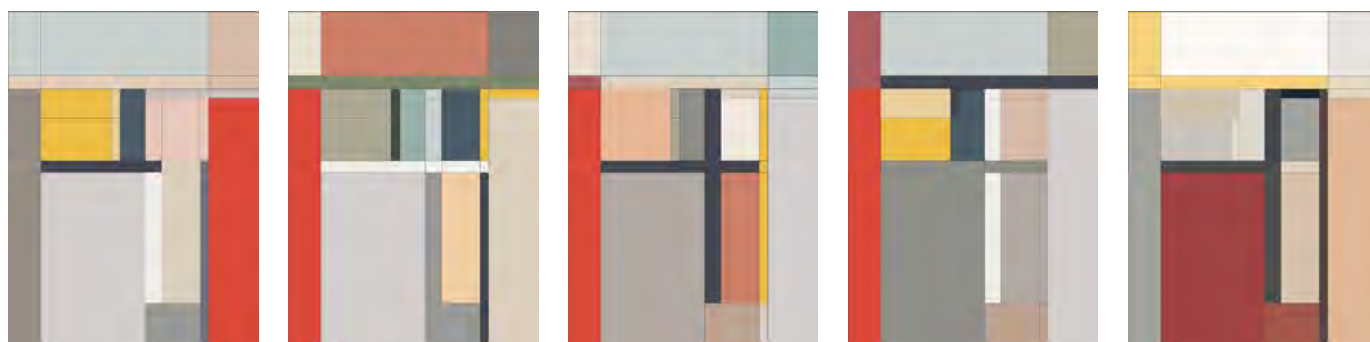


Figure 54: Examples of various colour palette ideas (Rose, 2021).

8 CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

One of the most important parts of the project is ensuring the new work does not interfere with the heritage of existing structure. The materiality of the intervention can have ramification on the quality of preservation if it is not carefully considered. Colour and texture of the materials were analysed to determine the best combination with the existing palette. In the end, the material palette consisted of: concrete, orientated strand board (OSB), variations of steel, porcelain tile, plaster, acrylic, wood wool tiles for insulation and recycled wooden palettes. Throughout the centre, the harshness of the materials would change depending on the function of the space. For example: in the main public spaces, where people are encouraged to keep moving around the space, it consists of hard materials that do not offer much warmth or comfort. In the enclosed spaces, such as the emergency accommodation, the materials create a strong contrast between the public and private areas. The materials take on a soft appearance to offer a warm and welcoming environment to comfort the user.



Figure 55: Proposed Material palette (Rose, 2021).

- A. Porcelain Tile
- B. Plaster
- C. Architectural mesh
- D. Steel
- E. Concrete (Smooth & Coloured)
- F. Wool wood tiles
- G. Acrylic (Clear & Frosted)
- H. OSB board
- I. Recycled rubber cladding
- J. Perforated steel (Powder-coated in Burnt Orange)

Overall, the material and colour selection of the centre work together to create a contemporary intervention for young people, that excites and engages their interest. The majority of projects that adapt an industrial site use plain materials, to avoid any distraction from the architectural qualities of the historic building, but this could risk creating an environment that does not appeal to the younger generations.

'Art-Quest centre at steel stacks' has inspired others to take on a different approach that uses vibrant colours and tactile materials to enhance the users experience and create a journey that mimics the former purpose of the factory. The colour way finding can be interpreted in many ways. Some may relate it to the former tramway system and seamless tracks, that used to navigate people around Bristol.

8.6 CONCLUSION

In summary, there are many aspects to the conceptual language, so it is important that they work together to enhance the effect it was made to achieve. The main theme of the cultural centre is social interaction, which can only be attained through the formation of a social structure. It was established during the research conducted on the case studies, that circulation can play a crucial role in influencing the movement and social patterns of the user. Therefore, the experience of the user is prioritised through the spatial configuration, to set up an ideal setting for socialising with other social groups. A combination of void and functional rooms creates an atmosphere that allows an array of activities to take place, so there is something to suit different peoples' preferences. The spatial arrangement/circulation is supported by the use of colour and technology, to further enhance the experience and connect with their personal values, breaking any physical barriers.

The research problem was taken into consideration by ensuring the new work follows a structural grid. The grid can make certain the forms and openings line up with the existing structure and are not placed at random. The materials and colour chosen, complement the existing palette and textural qualities; confirming they do not overpower any protected features of the building. Even though, there are pops of colour throughout the structure they are used in moderation, so the focus remains on the street art and the architectural qualities of the space. The cultural centre allows the heritage site to become a monument, where citizens (particularly young people) from different backgrounds can form a common ground.

9 REFLECTIVE PRACTISE

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, I will critically reflect on the project and evaluate key aspects in-depth. By doing so, it will help identify any weak and strong points in the design process. It will help me identify what I need to improve on, so I can calculate an action plan for after I graduate. The action plan will highlight what I need to improve about my own learning style and skills. When I finish my degree, I can graduate to become an effective independent learner. I will talk about my experience in a series of sections, to breakdown the journey into segments. These segments include: Brief/theory development, concept development, spatial planning, the final outcome and my learning experience.

In hindsight, my strategy for developing my proposal was not the best, but the end result turned into a well-informed brief for the next part of the project. I began with some initial ideas, but I was not certain on any, therefore I had no clear pathway of research. Instead, I discovered topics to follow up on through the analysis of the building and location. I felt I could connect more with the project by researching real life scenarios and problems and implying them to existing theories.

None of the points stated previously were necessarily bad as I was still able to achieve a good outcome, but I believe it was not the most effective way of learning. Ideally, I should have had an initial plan and outline of what I wanted to do before I started to do research.

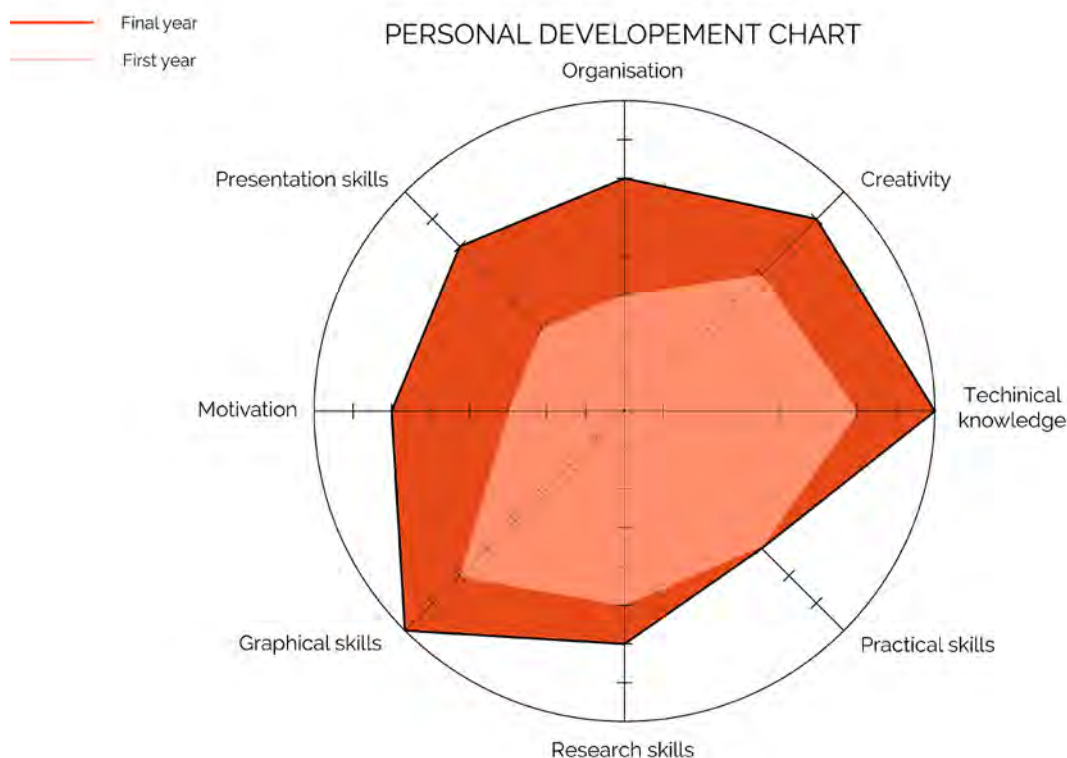


Figure 56: Chart showing how I have improved throughout my year at university (Rose, 2021).

9.2 BRIEF DEVELOPMENT

At the beginning of the project, we selected a suitable building and theory that interested us and developed it into a proposal for our treatise. Initially, I planned to create an art therapy institution that would explore colour theory and its relationship with a patient's mental welfare. However, this dramatically changed as I began to conduct research into Bristol - for the site analysis. I started to realise how much potential the building and city had and how it would be more beneficial to explore urban planning and how I could create an exciting public space for children and adolescents, who live in the most deprived parts of the city.

Some of the things I could have done were: a mind-map of ideas to explore, a timetable/Gantt chart or kept a design diary earlier on. It would have saved me time and allowed me to use it more efficiently.

In the end, I decided to create a cultural centre for vulnerable children and adolescents, who may have been subjected to violence or criminal activity, due to personal circumstances. I still kept some of the initial ideas I had at the start of the project, such as the graffiti workshop, which is a form of art therapy and wish to use colourful way finding in my scheme; to make it easier to

9 REFLECTIVE PRACTISE

navigate the building. I wanted to make sure I represented the culture of Bristol by including creative activities as I concluded (in section 3) that the art scene is an important aspect to the youth of the city. The design problem that arose was how I should approach adapting an industrial building, such as the Generator building, without doing irreversible damage to its heritage. Especially with a concept that is introducing a new/modern form of culture, that could potentially distract from the history of the existing.

9.3 CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

During the concept development stage, I had to apply all of my research to a design strategy/style that I wanted to carry throughout my project. At first, I was hesitant as it was unclear how my research would evolve into an abstract concept. However, as I started to visualise my research through a series of collages and models, it became clear that the QR code had become a running theme. From this information I had gathered, I decided to create a block model that would represent, void and functional spaces. The forms that were derived from the model were inspired by the patterns seen within the black and white code. The idea was the spatial organisation of the interior space, would inform the user how to behave and react; just as a QR code provides data.

As the concept was heavily influenced by the research, I had already conducted, I did not have many other ideas and my mind was closed to new ones - at this stage. I was dedicated to the first idea that I had explored and have always had a vision of how I wanted the project to turn out. Even though, it is good to know what you want out of a project, it is always beneficial to explore multiple avenues. I believe it would have been better if I looked into, at least one other option of how the project could have developed. It would have given me an opportunity to compare the two ideas and combine my favourite elements, to make a completely unique strategy.

If I re-did this project in the future, I would go back to the concept stage and experiment with different concept strategies, to see what works well and what does not. It will give me a better insight to the project and allow me to rule out strategies that I should avoid and what elements work well within the scheme. As I never did this, I will never know if there could have been a concept, that would have suited my project better. It would have set a strong foundation for spatial planning by reassuring that the design decision I have made thus far are the right ones, by considering different angles. It would have given me the confidence boost I needed to tackle the design block I encountered in the next stage. I was second-guessing my decisions and needed that reassurance.

9.4 SPATIAL PLANNING

At the beginning of the design stage, I had a strong starting point from the research I conducted. I was able to extract basic forms from the concept models and apply it to the interior to inform the arrangement of the space. From then, I started to plan out what spaces were required for the building to function correctly and the minimum square metre (SQM) needed; to make sure there was enough space available. I discovered that I had more SQM than I needed, therefore I was able to exaggerate the design elements.

Once the requirements were finalised, I moved onto sketching out my initial ideas, using the grid method for guidance. It was important that I used the grid, to make sure I was following the natural geometry of the existing structure so the new structure could co-exist with the old. As the existing building was grade II listed, it posed many challenges and limited what I was able to change. At first, I was very overwhelmed with the size of the building, but once I zoned out the spaces, the building appeared much more manageable. I found I had enough interior space, therefore saw no need to expand the intervention beyond the exterior shell - apart from the terrace to provide an outdoor space.

The main intervention of the space became the circulation. It was highlighted in a number of case studies that circulation can play a key role in the formation of a community. They proved to be a valuable source of research and inspired me to think creatively so I could begin the design process. I wanted to replicate a similar outcome to some of the chosen studies, by using a similar strategy towards the space.

At this stage, there were still elements that were unresolved. I still had to figure out, how I would display the way finding system and ventilate the graffiti workshop. The design formed an outline of how I envisioned the space would look and prepared me for the next stage, which was to start adding detail. I felt confident, compared to the beginning stages of the design process, and had a clear goal on how I was going to complete the project. Moreover, the feedback from the summative assessment flagged some issues, that I had yet to consider. This included: improvising the fifth floor so it communicated as a well-rounded design. I found the feedback very helpful and highlighted some mistakes, I did not think about. I took all the comments into consideration and applied them to my action plan, so I was able to finalise the design within the coming weeks.

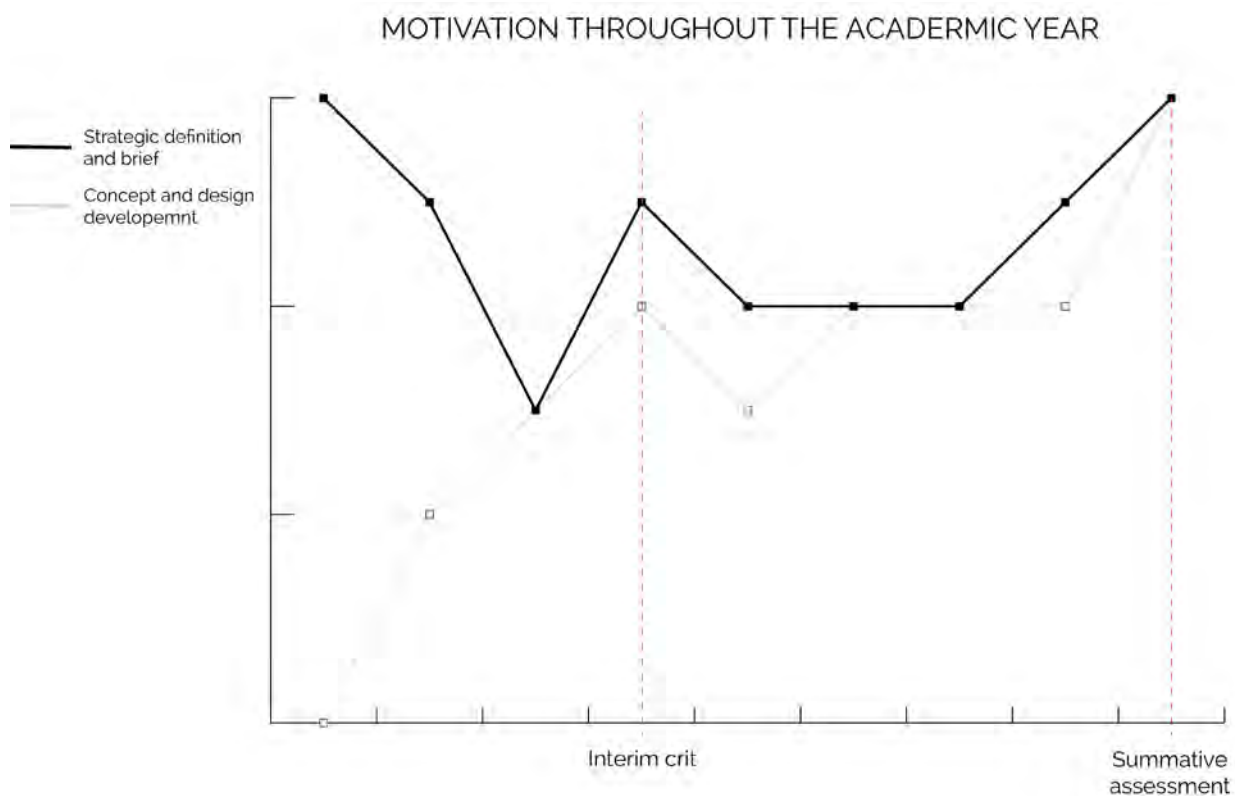


Figure 57: Diagram showing patterns of motivation throughout the course (Rose, 2021).

Initially, I found the design process hard to start. I had lots of ideas and could picture what I wanted for the space but was unable to put my ideas on paper. I believe wanting my sketches to be neatly presented limited my ability to communicate my design. Therefore, I have set myself the goal to practise more sketching to overcome this limitation as sketching will become a crucial skill within the design industry.

9.5 FINAL ANALYSIS & ASSESSMENTS

The final outcome of the project turned out to be a well-rounded design, with a strong contextual background. I am happy with the final result and believe it expresses its purpose; to create an environment that would support and encourage social interactions. Even though, I could continue developing the design further. I believe there is a certain point where you have to stop and evaluate what you have done so far and draw a line. Otherwise, you could end up constantly finding parts to change and the project would never be completed. This is a skill I need to work on, as a perfectionist I tend to not know where to stop and end up spending days on a task that should only take a couple of hours. In the industry, it is important to meet tight deadlines regularly and be aware of how much time is spent on one objective.

The feedback I have received throughout the project has been useful and has helped me see an outsider's perspective. Throughout, I always had a dedicated notebook for my feedback so I could keep track and refer back to it when I needed some inspiration. It really helped me to keep motivated and if I were stuck on what I should be doing next, it would give me some prompts to keep moving in the right direction. This is a habit I will continue to do after university as it proved to be very useful and prevented my mind becoming overwhelmed by the workload. By taking in the views of others, it allowed the design to develop into an artifact that was truly unique.

Before I graduate, it is important that I create an action plan so I can correct any mistakes or flaws; that I have discovered throughout my journey. It will allow me to practise self-awareness and focus on my weaknesses, so I do not repeat the same mistakes. I created a few along my project to assist with my progression, so I was constantly moving forward. I want to use a similar strategy to make sure: I achieve my aspirations and maintain a healthy mindset towards my work – it can become overwhelming if not kept on top of.

9 REFLECTIVE PRACTISE

9.6 STUDENT-TO-DESIGNER

I have identified my learning styles as being, accommodating and convergent. Both apply information by active experimentation (AE), but perceive the information in different ways (Kolb, 1999). AE suggests that I tend to focus more on the practical elements rather than the theoretical (Kolb, 1999). I will find myself applying information by doing and being more hands-on with projects, rather than thinking pragmatically (Kolb, 1999). This can sometimes lead to under-developed designs, but can also help with taking more risks, as you are not over thinking all the different aspects.

It is all about risk-taking and pushing the boundaries to discover new ideas, thoughts, and feelings (Kolb, 1999). A lot of the ideas will fail before they eventually come together to form a fully functional design, which can be a very time-consuming process. I previously mentioned (in the sub-section 9.2) that this type of learning style was evident in my brief development, where I had loads of initial ideas that ended up being pushed to the side. I did not have an action plan and was following my interests/emotions. It is something I need to be conscious of in the future so I can keep it in check; to make my work flow is more efficient.

As a practical learner, I can often find myself relying on other for information and to bounce ideas off of for clarity (Kolb, 1999). It can demonstrate my ability to work well as a team, but also signifies that I need to work on becoming more independent as I progress to a professional. The first step I need to take to be more independent, is to be more confident in my own abilities and trust that I am on the right track by being more organised with my work. By following a timetable, it would help reassure me that I am spending my time productively, so I do not have to rely on others for this information (refer to figure 58). It would also help me follow a logical pathway rather than one which is constructed by my own feelings – good or bad.

Accommodating and convergent perceived information in similar but different ways. Accommodating thinks about information through concrete experience (CE), whereas convergent learners think about data through active conceptualization (AC) (Demirbas and Demirkan, 2007, 348). Both suggest I am a learner who learns from experience but combined implies I mostly learn from my own experiences (Demirbas and Demirkan, 2007, 348). For example: visiting a museum and applying my own knowledge to projects, rather than relying on others experience and knowledge. This could lead to the information I use being subjective and biased.

My action plan for after I finish university is to consolidate all of the knowledge I have accumulated over the past three years. I have learnt a lot about myself as well as gained valuable knowledge on the subject. The reflective writing has helped me to summarise my learning style and what I need to be working on to refine my abilities. I hope to become an effective independent learner and designer. Plus, I aspire to work in a team of Interior architects, who strive to help communities improve.

9.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this past year has taught me a lot about myself as well as key skills needed to succeed. I believe I have changed a lot in the last year and now have a full understanding of my strengths and weaknesses. The action plan I have created shows that I recognise what I must do to improve my weaknesses, so I do not repeat the same mistakes in the future. I am happy with the outcome of my project and believe it showcases my skills well, however there is always room for improvement.

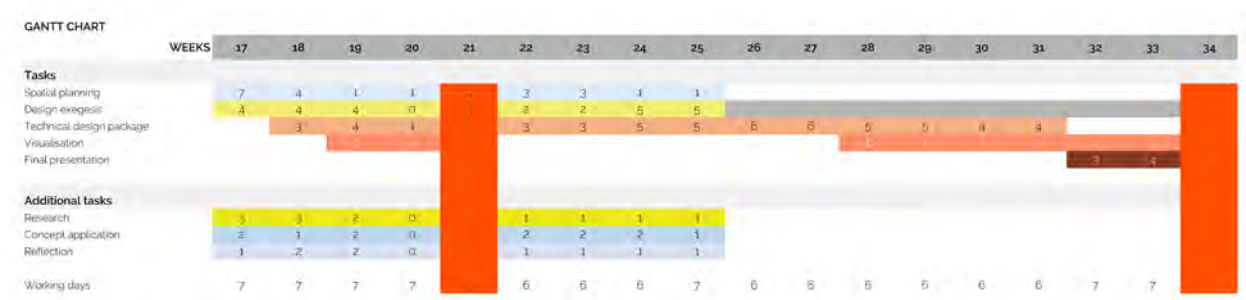


Figure 58: Gantt chart showing how time was allocated on the project (Rose 2021).

CONCLUSION

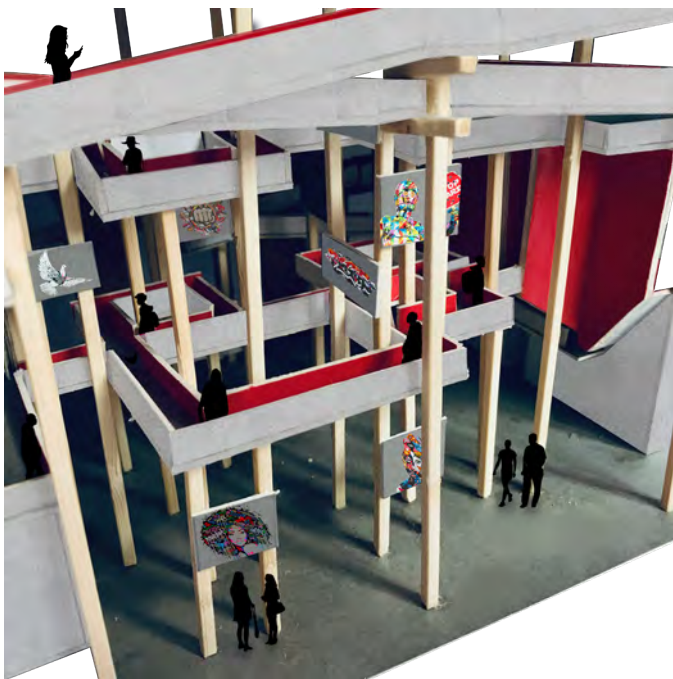


Figure 59: An internal visual of the proposed exhibition atmosphere (Rose, 2021).

"social ties between different population groups is likely to increase understanding and empathy and reduce feelings of threat both from and towards young people" (Hiscock and Mitchell, 2011: 9). It is important for the cultural centre to create an environment that is suitable for children and adolescents (12-21 years), so they can gain social confidence and connect with a variety of individuals within Bristol. Not only does it provide them with security, by promoting social cohesion but also allows them to gain positive experiences with other young people. It is established that the potential benefits towards a child's well-being outweighs any economic cost. Therefore, more public spaces should be made available to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The cultural centre was proposed for Create, a charity that assists vulnerable youths by using art-programmes as a tool to express their emotions. The centre intends to become their first base of operation to try and tackle the exponential rates of child victimisation in Bristol's most deprived neighbourhoods. The space will be inclusive to anyone in the surrounding area and will provide youth with opportunities to participate in graffiti workshops and creative counselling sessions. The activities relate to the city's current cultural movements so children can learn about the city's history with Graffiti and become familiar with the customs.

It was established that an important aspect of a public space is encouraging social interaction between different social groups, as it is the only chance young people have to interact with people they normally would not meet. Incorporating an inclusive design approach at the beginning of the design process, can help expand the accessibility and reach of the space. Inclusive features can include:

- Multiply navigation routes/methods to make sure there is an option that suits everyone's preferences.
- A range of spatial configurations that include open and closed spaces to inform users, which spaces are accessible to them and dedicated for social interaction. Closed spaces are important to provide security to those who do not wish to interact with others, but still want to escape from external stressors.
- The use of technology to personalise a user's experience so it connects with them on a personal level and respects their values.

Technology can be the way forward for Cultural centres, as it can give the user an experience, which is completely unique to them. It provides a positive experience, that cannot be achieved by traditional way finding or circulation methods. It can enhance the effects and feelings of connection and the experience can help create networks by removing physical and social barriers between domestic and international visitors.

The vast majority of heritage building available for alteration, explicitly industrial sites; gives local authorities enough opportunities to convert them into cultural centres to give local communities a place to socialise and learn about their area's history. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings provides an inexpensive alternative to developing new areas for public spaces and improves the areas economic success – by increasing the tourism industry. Cultural centres aid in creating connections between different social groups in cities and increases "empathy and reduce feelings of threat both from and towards young people" (Hiscock and Mitchell, 2011: 9). Defeating negative stigmas and painting a positive image of troubled youth. It is pivotal more informal cultural setting are made available to the public, so the social cohesion of a city can help enhance the welfare of young people living in poverty.

GLOSSARY

SOCIAL MOBILITY

The movement of individuals between social strata in a society. A change in social status from the one they adopted in their previous environment.

SOCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Consciously designing an environment that encourages a desired social behaviour in individuals. The design should have an end goal of what they wish to achieve.

ATTACHMENT THEORY

It is a psychological theory concerning the relationship between humans.

GANG

An organised group of individuals who intend to commit a crime.

POVERTY

It is the condition a person finds themselves in when they lack the financial support needed, to be able to buy essentials for basic needs.

GANG CULTURE

Young people are increasingly joining gangs, to protect themselves and to form a tough persona. Crime and violence is often a big part of a gangs identity.

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

It is a form of abuse, where a child is manipulated into committing a crime, whether it was consensual or not.

COUNTY LINES

A form of organised crime in urban areas, where criminals coerce vulnerable people and children to transport and trade drugs in smaller communities.

PREVENTION

Predicting a bad scenario and putting measures in place to stop it from happening.

GRAFFITI

A form of street art, where a person writes, draws, scratches or sprays illicitly on walls or any surface in a public setting. Some express a persons political opinion.

INCLUSIVE

A practice of providing equal access to opportunities and resources to those who are often excluded due to personal circumstances.

EMOTION

An instinctive feeling derived from ones own experiences and knowledge.

CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

Adopting of a cultural identity, which originated in minority communities, by people or communities with a privileged status.

CULTURAL SETTINGS

An environment relevant to ones beliefs, values and practices.

CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES

A safe haven for children needing emergency support and protection. It restores a sense of normality to a child's life, which may have been disrupted by a distressing situation.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

The way children think, explore and figure things out. Involves the development of knowledge, skills and problem solving, which are essential of a child's survival skills later on in life.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Exclusion from the social system and the rights and benefits of being apart of it. The reason why people are usually excluded is due to poverty or belonging to a minority social group.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Relationships between people in a particular society, to allow that society to function effectively.

CHILD VICTIMISATION

Different types of violence experienced by a child.

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