

Colours of Thames Street: Designing a community hub



The Colours of Thames Street is a community-based space that aims to reintroduce colour, creativity, and energy into the lives of members from local community groups that deal with mental and physical illnesses, domestic abuse, financial and food insecurities, as well as the elderly and people of diverse ethnicities. This project addresses the need for a space where members feel joy after visiting, transforming a place that might, due to its purpose, evoke unwanted feelings of **embarrassment** or **shame**, into a space that encourages feelings of **belonging**, **community**, and **kindness**.

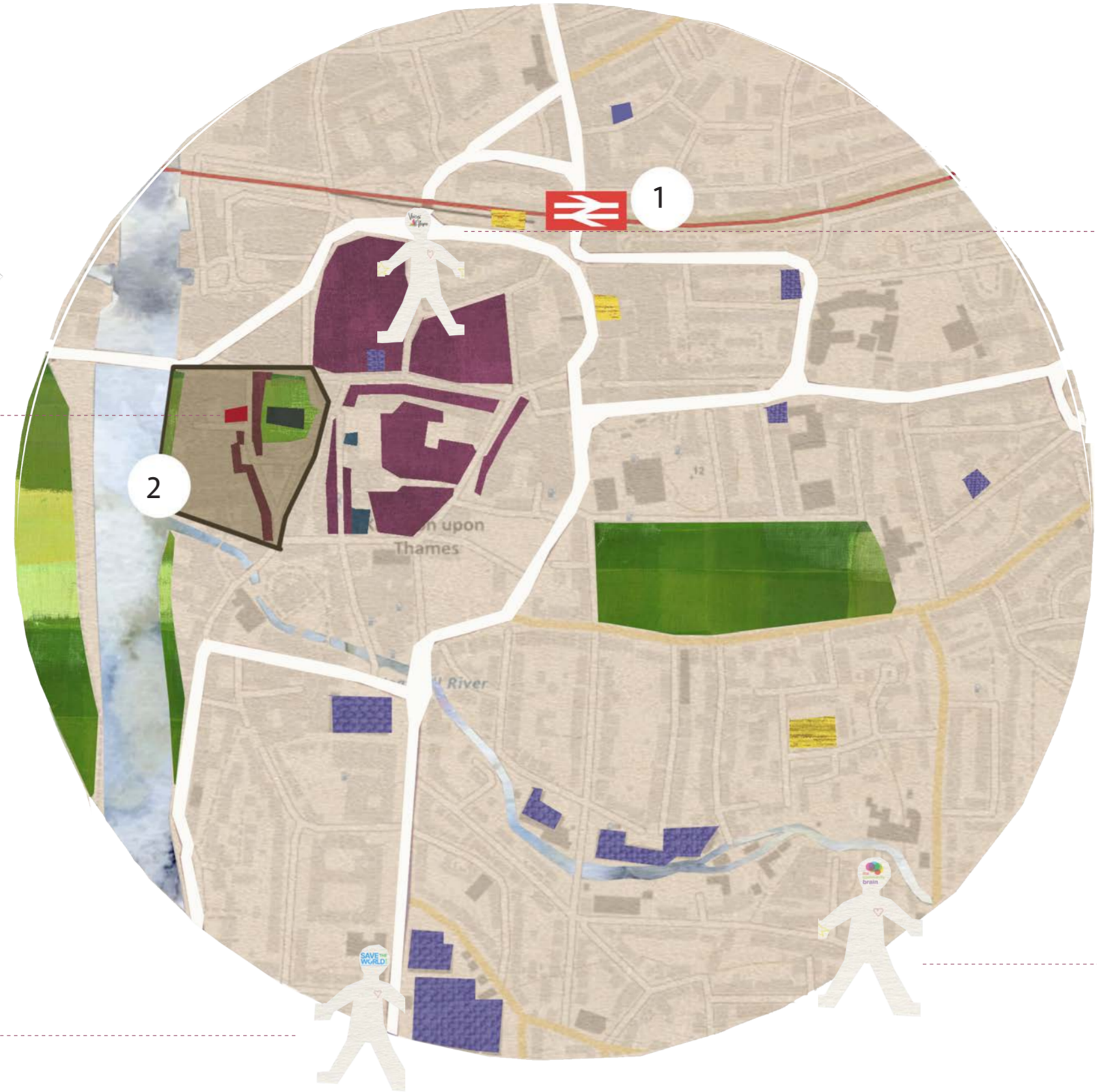
In this project, it was important for me to investigate the contrast of the outside world to a space that must be designed with diversity and community in mind. I found that many of the people visiting a community hub will have already experienced the black-and-white world, where life difficulties may weigh on their shoulders, surrounded by monotonous buildings and indifferent people. The developed design aims to relieve the members of their worries and allow them into a colourful community.

The concept of this project explores the influence of colour introduced into the blank existing building. The design focuses on visual complexity and repetition through materiality and shape. The colour theory is applied to each space in mind of the program, purple for creativity, Red for courage, blue for calmness, and yellow for warmth.

Additional topics that I found important to solve in this design were: 1. The accessibility entrances are usually not as visually appealing as the main entrance including stairs. 2. The importance of sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

SITE AND CLIENT:

- Green Spaces
- Retail
- Charity and Community groups
- Churches
- Schools, nurseries and education intitutions
- Site
- 1 Kingston Train station
- 2 Area of the site



“We work with people struggling with complex physical and/or mental health issues, families experiencing food insecurity, women who have experienced abuse/domestic violence, and the elderly. We see those we reach as people who need support, encouragement and empowerment – not as problems which need solving.”

“At Save the World Club, we are dedicated to uplifting and empowering the community. Our work and activities are designed to include all members across the community and approach local humanitarian issues with the environment at the forefront. We do this through facilitating eco-friendly use of spaces, redistributing fresh foods to vulnerable communities, and promoting sustainable lifestyle choices.”



“The Community Brain uses the widest range of the arts, local history, social enterprise and community-led regeneration in order to give places renewed importance and pride. We help people to imagine and command their own story – instead of following those written for them by others.”

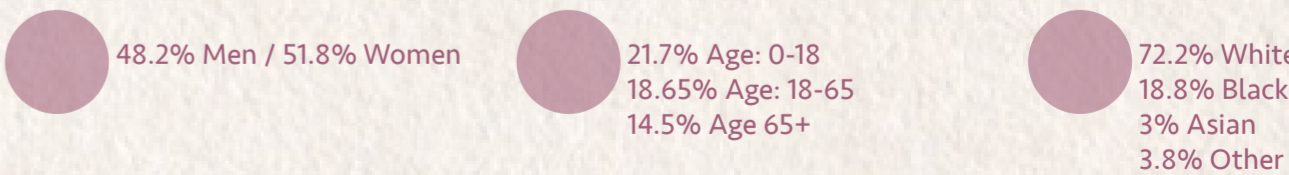


Kingston upon Thames is a borough in London. It was important to investigate the location to understand the demographic and local area.



- Individuals with physical and mental disabilities
- People with diverse ethnical backgrounds
- Single mothers
- Elderly

Population statistics:



AUDIENCE:

PROGRAM:





1. **Office and meeting room:** essential for event planning, research and group meetings



2. **Art club:** Allowing people any age to be social through art.



3. **Communal Kitchen:** can host educational cooking classes, and is open to people that don't have a kitchen or supplies at home to make nutritious meals.



4. **Food Bank:** Sustainable way of recycling food which is rejected by supermarkets. As well as, a support system for individuals that are financially insecure.



5. **Theatre:** It is important to allow people to be creative through music and acting both as a activity as well as socially. It allows people to enjoy their community.



6. **Communal Garden:** an area that is both an educational- as well as social activity..

1. Interior view: Theatre.



2. Interior section A-A



As you enter the building you are welcomed by the vibrance of the colour that surrounds you within the tunnel. This tunnel leads you through the whole program, with openings in the tunnel that are entrances to each of the spaces.

First, you are welcomed by the yellow colour that on the right side opens into an office/meeting room, then it changes to a purple, which stands for creativity, that leads you on one way into the art club and on the other into the communal kitchen and Foodbank. However, if you head forward the tunnel turns red and opens into the theatre (fig. 1). You will also notice that on the opposite corner, there is a blue tunnel, that leads outside into the communal garden, the blue is added to encourage calmness when entering or exiting.

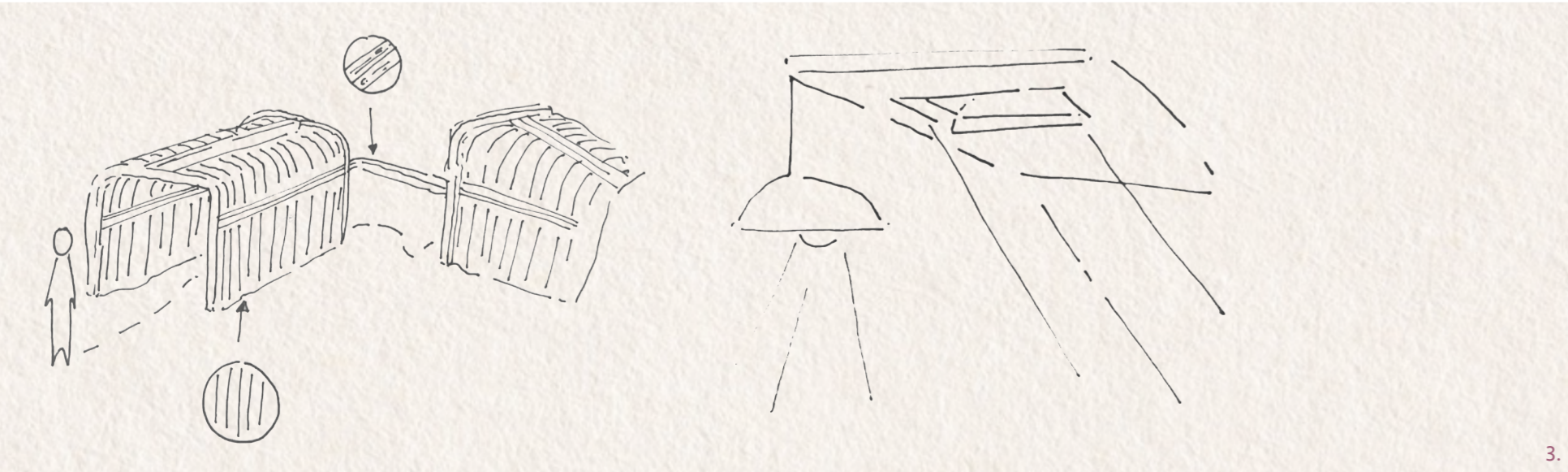
PROPOSAL:



1.



2.



3.

- 1. Interior collage
- 2. Interior section B-B
- 3. Process sketches that inform the structure and influence of natural light.
- 4. Exploded final digital model showing existing, primary and secondary structure
- 5. Proposal Plan
- 6. Proposal section A-A

Key list for plan:

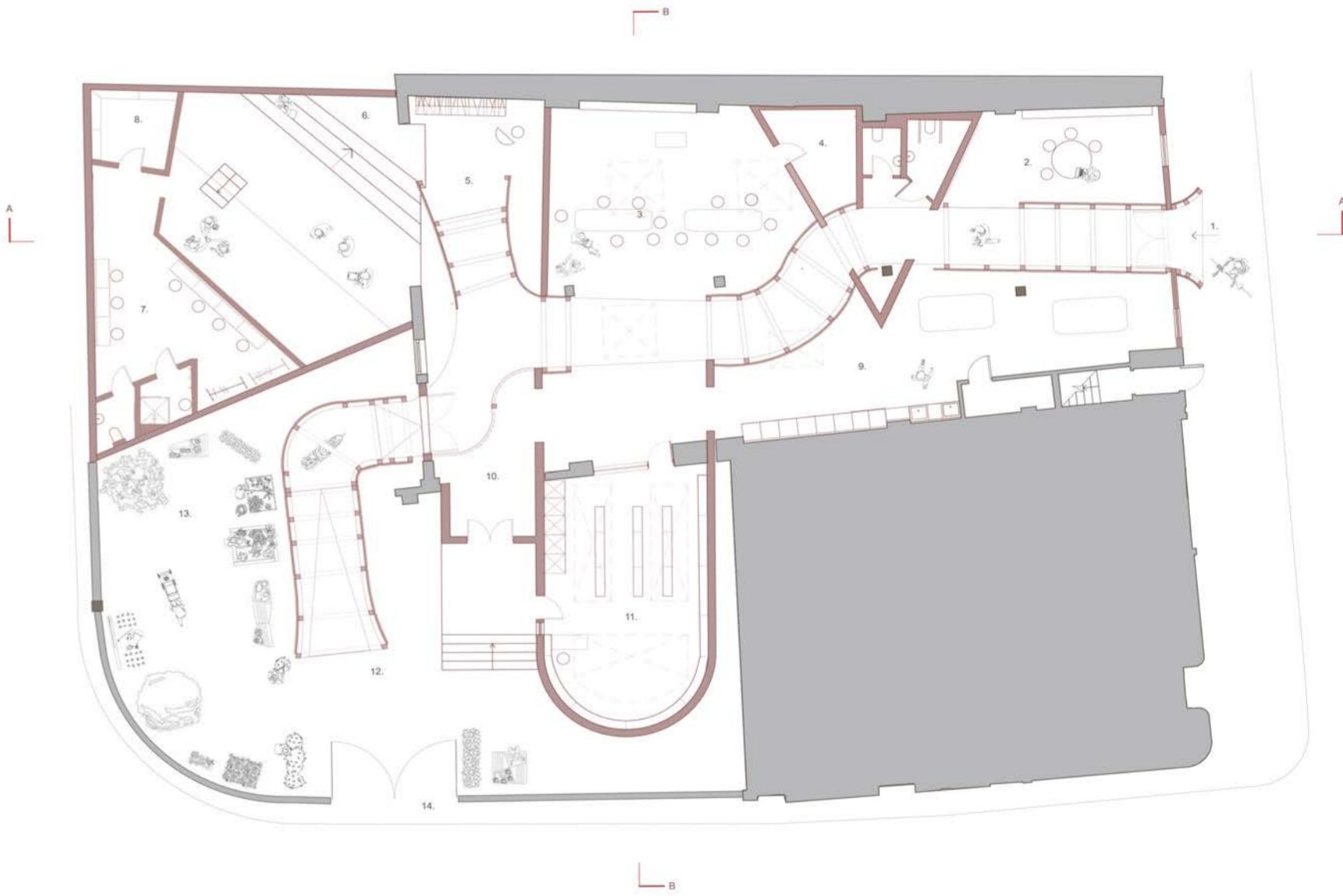
- 1. Entrance
- 2. Office/ Meeting room
- 3. Art club
- 4. Storage
- 5. Entrance to theatre with cloakroom
- 6. Stair seating
- 7. Backstage: Make-up room
- 8. Storage
- 9. Communal Kitchen
- 10. cloakroom with exit to the foodbank
- 11. Foodbank
- 12. Ramp tunnel entrance
- 13. Communal garden
- 14. Back entrance to the building

Existing first & second floor

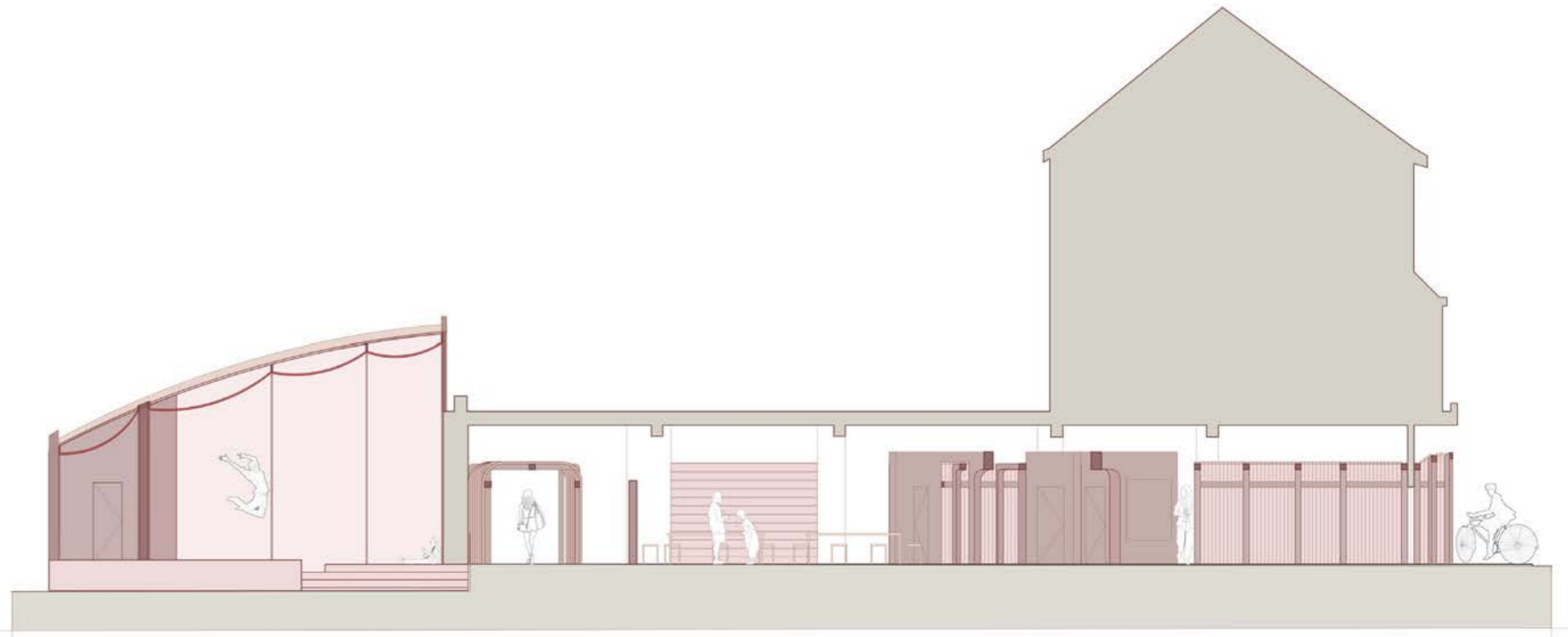
Secondary tunnel structure

Primary structure

Existing ground floor



5.



6.

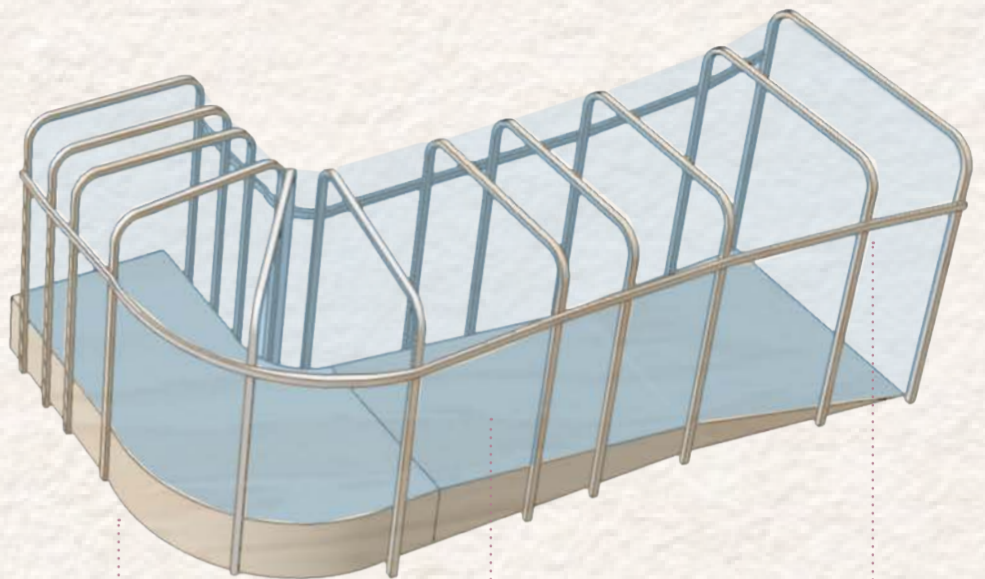


1.

5. SPACE DETAIL

The presented detail shows the tunnel ramp that leads out of the building into the garden. This ramp is located at the back facade of the building. I decided that the ramp would take the same form as the tunnel structure on the inside of the building. This was because I aimed to make a **visually appealing accessible entrance** that enhances the experience for a person who is used to taking the lift or a side entrance because accessibility is not visually prioritized in the design process of mundane buildings.

The tunnel ramp draws attention to itself by the vibrant blue textile skin that is draped over the tunnel structure. The structure is made of timber joinery, into an organic shape that curls out of the building. The ramp has recycled cement and material waste from the removed elements from the existing building on its inside, the outer skin of the ramp is plywood planks. Plywood was chosen due to its **sustainability** and **cost-effectiveness**. The draped textile skin of the tunnel is recycled from a charity shop that donated their textile waste to make strips of coloured textiles for the tunnel. The choice of materials was important because the clients are non-profit charities and therefore cost-effectiveness and sustainability were factors that were prioritised.



Reused cement ramp with plywood skin



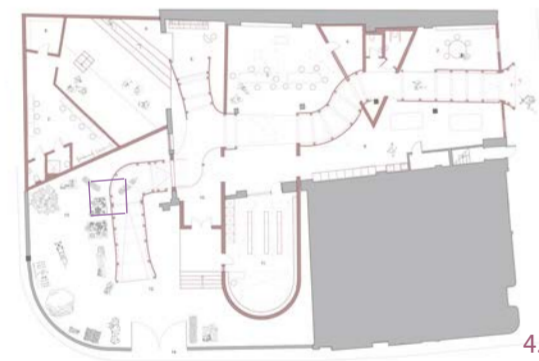
Recycled textile strips



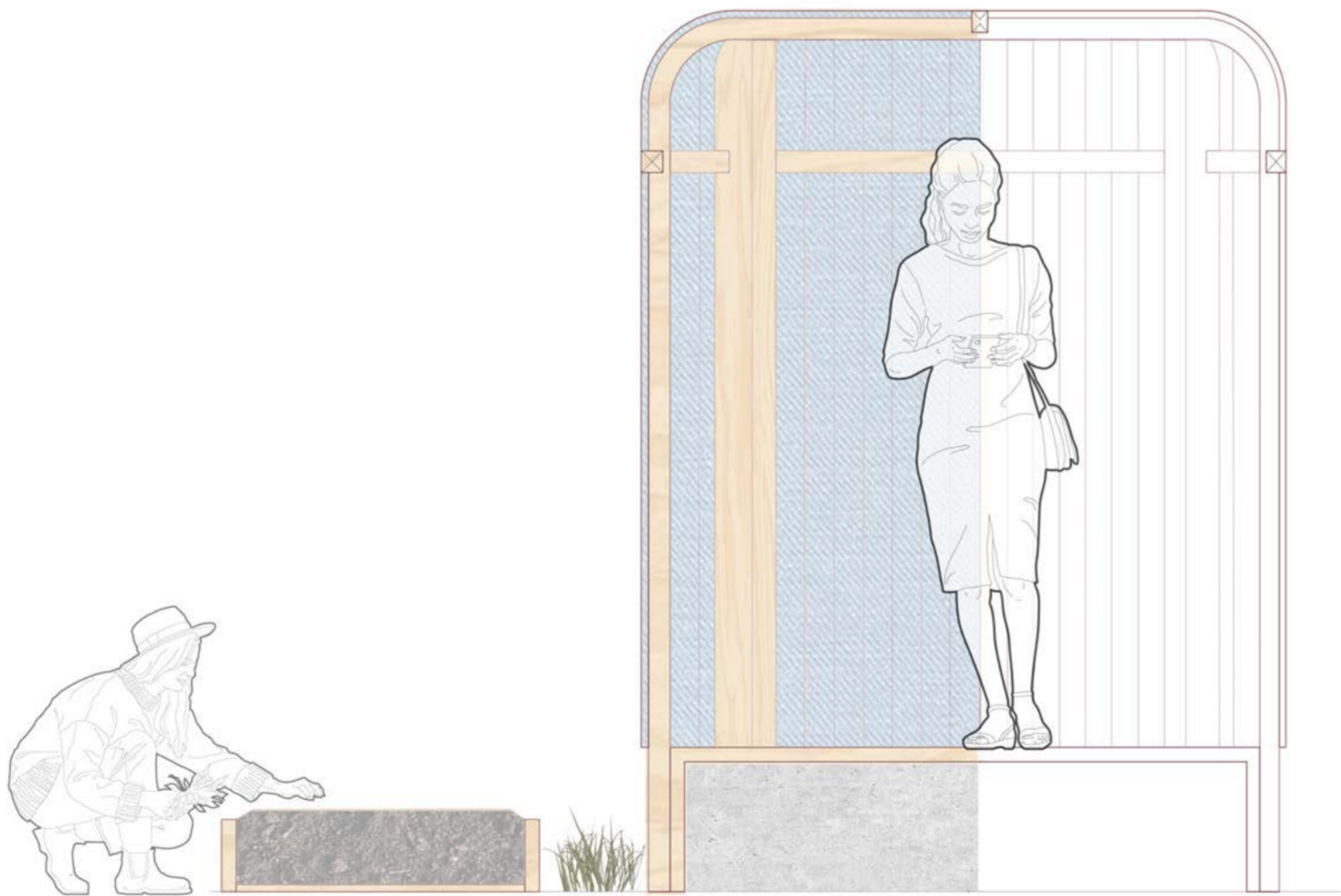
Timber structure/ Joinery



5.



4.



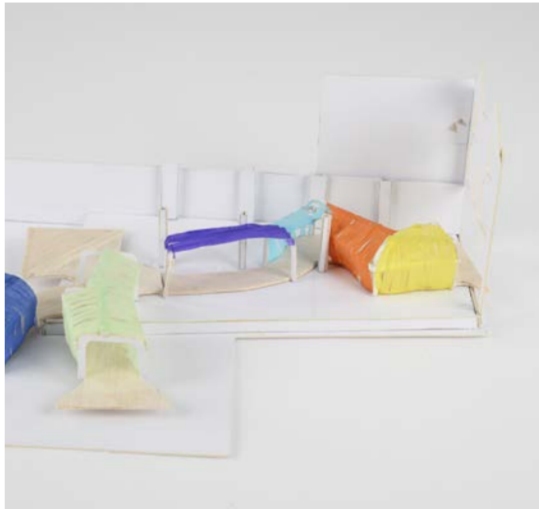
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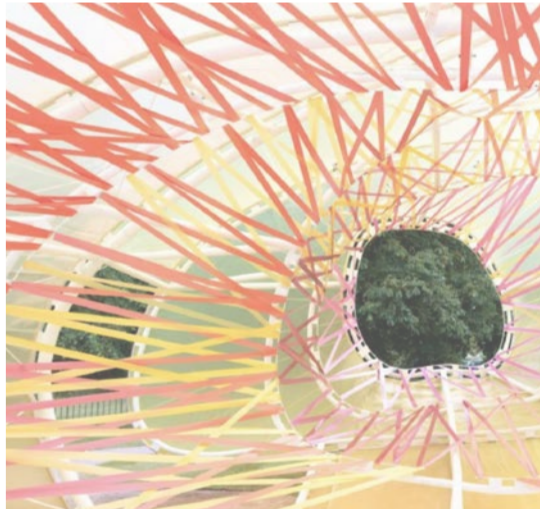
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6.



7.



8.

The design went through a multiple iteration process. Starting with concept collages/ precedent research and developing into physical models and interior visuals.



9.

1. Exterior view: Garden
2. Detail drawing: Ramp
3. Colour palette
4. Key plan
5. 3D detail model showing materiality
6. Interior view: Tunnel
7. Physical model in site
8. Precedent study
9. Concept collage