

Mirage.

A sensory celebration of the natural world's hidden heroes.

Mirage is not only about appreciating the natural world, it's a response to the climate emergency, using education and storytelling to highlight the importance of ecology and biodiversity. By revealing the vital role even the smallest species play, *Mirage* shows how their loss can trigger cascading effects across entire ecosystems. To confront the climate crisis, we must live within the Earth's natural limits and protect the species we unknowingly depend on.

Mirage is an experiential journey through our essential ecosystem.

Be curious, explore, listen, touch, move, dance, breathe, feel regenerated and relax. This Immersive experience makes new connections, breaks boundaries and creates shared memories inspired by nature.

TROPHIC CASCADE;

A trophic cascade occurs when the removal or addition of a keystone species significantly effects the population and behaviours of multiple other species within the ecosystem.

"The greater the biodiversity, the more secure will be all life on Earth, including ourselves. Yet the way we humans are now living on Earth is sending biodiversity into a decline."

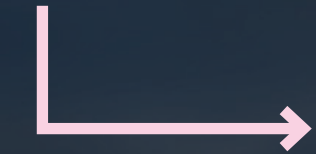
-Sir David Attenborough

"Without massive and immediate change, we face the possibility of cascading environmental collapse, as Earth systems pass critical thresholds and flip into new and hostile states."

-George Monbiot

Rendered walk through video of Mirage.

Scan me!



<https://youtu.be/5q9VCSGsyyk>



Mirage, rendered section

Concept

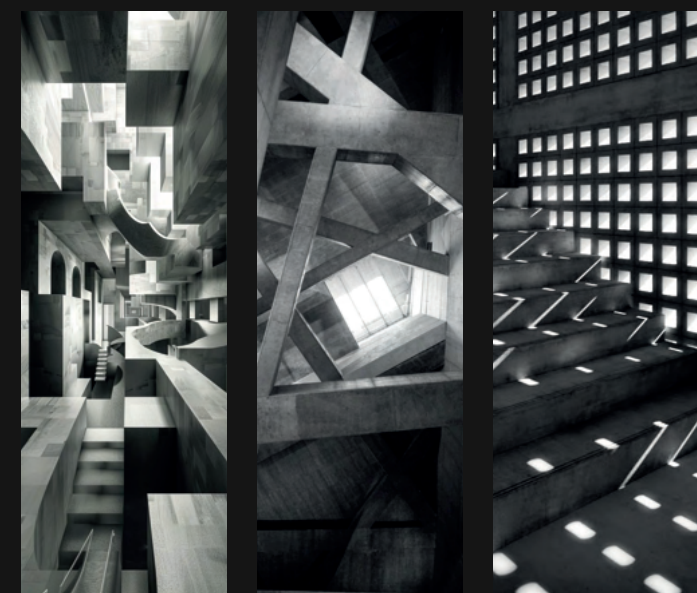
What if burrowing could help save the Earth?



Termites, key role:

Breaking down dead plant matter, supplying nutrients for new plants. Their tunnels provide crucial soil aeration.

What if listening was the only escape?



Bats, key role:

Vital in controlling insect and pest populations, reducing the need for pesticides. They're key pollinators and seed dispersers.

What if pollination was a dance?



Bees, key role:

Pollinating plants, they pollinate 70% of human food sources globally.

What if the room inhaled when you exhaled?



Sphagnum moss, key role:

Capturing an immense amount of carbon and a crucial role in wetland biomes, due to its water retention properties.

What if you could dine within fungi's dynasty?



Fungi, key role:

Decomposition and nutrient recycling of dead organic matter.

What if bioluminescence could lull you into a dreamlike drift?



Krill, key role:

Crucial in the majority of marine food chains. Sea creatures from tiniest fish up to the largest whales rely on krill.

Project overview

Mirage is the debut installation of *The Lost City*, a permanent immersive structure based inside the Depot Mayfield, Manchester. *Mirage* is a sensory-led experience that explores the often-invisible connections between humans and the natural world. Through playful education and sustainable design, *Mirage* invites audiences into a new festival space, one that encourages climate awareness, connection, and creativity.

Concept

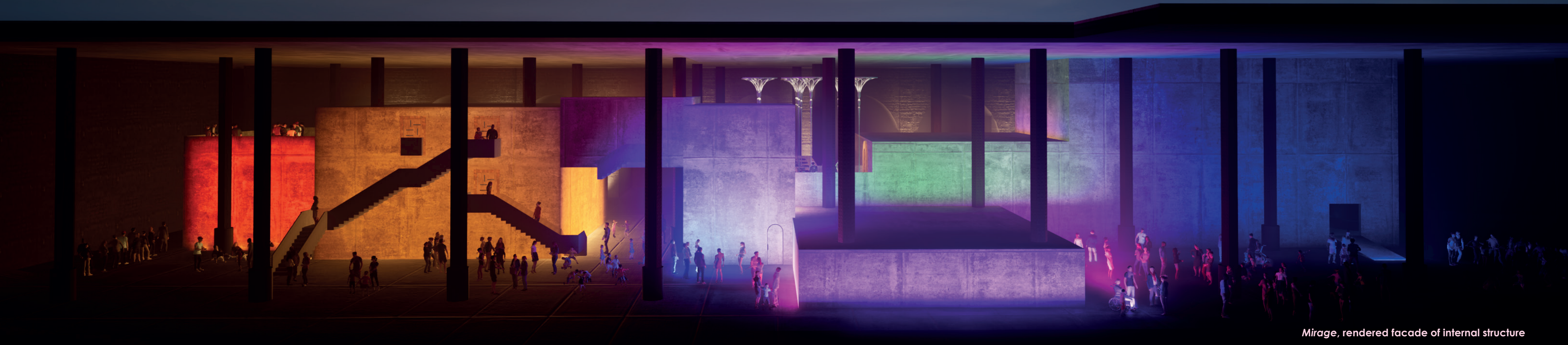
Mirage, housed within *The Lost City* at Depot Mayfield, is an immersive installation of sensory-rich rooms. Each space reimagines an overlooked species, revealing the hidden networks that connect us to nature. Through playful design and storytelling, *Mirage* brings climate awareness to life in an engaging, light-hearted way.

Experience

Mirage promotes healthy escapism; inviting visitors to slow down, connect, and be present. Designed around accessibility and well-being, it aligns with the circadian rhythm to offer a safer, more inclusive alternative to nightlife. Appealing to those seeking meaningful, sober, or wellness-focused experiences, *Mirage* is joyful, grounding, and socially engaging.

Importance

Education on biodiversity and climate awareness is central to *Mirage*. It responds to the urgent need for sustainability in the creative industries by embedding Circular Economy principles from the outset. The project prioritises disassembly, reuse, low-impact materials, and local sourcing. Its touring format reduces waste and extends both the life and reach of the installation redefining cultural spaces as platforms for connection, creativity, and environmental care.



Mirage, rendered facade of internal structure

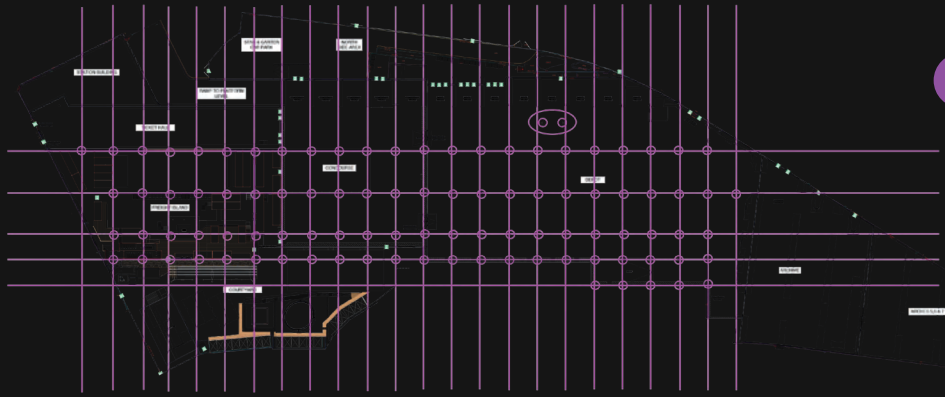
Site analysis

A site rich in culture and history,

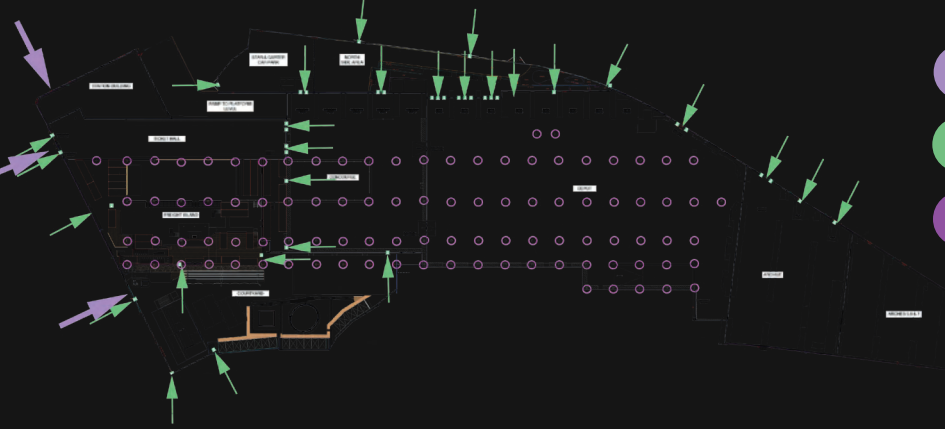
The Depot Mayfield, Manchester.

The Depot was once one of Manchester's major train stations. It boasts an impressive capacity of space for up to 10,000 people, making it an ideal location for a festival.

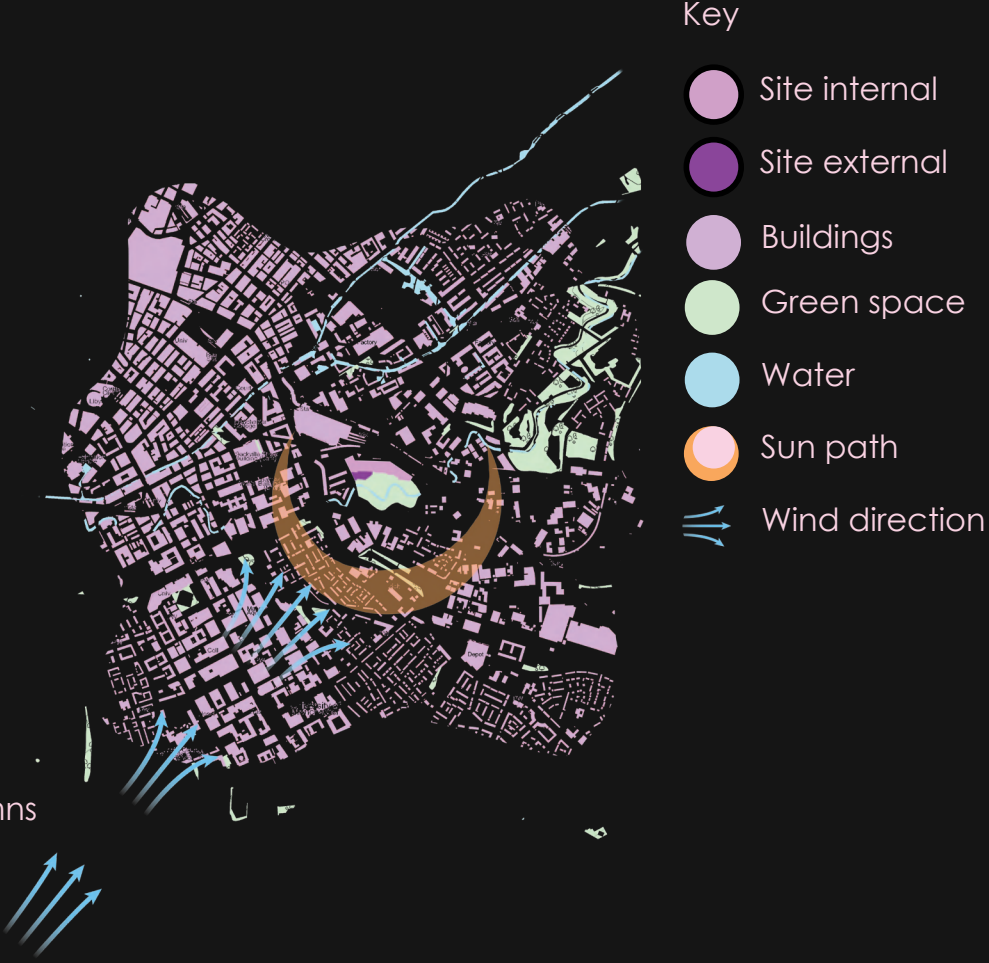
Internal site analysis diagram 1: Grid format of structural columns.



Internal site analysis diagram 2: Existing built elements and fire escapes.



External site analysis diagram 2: Natural factors.



Sustainability strategy

Mirage is a sustainable festival setting a new standard for environmentally conscious event design. It encourages healthy escapism while playfully educating attendees about climate change and biodiversity, guided by UN Sustainability Goals: Sustainable Cities and Communities, Good Health and Well-being, Life Below Water, Life on Land and Climate Action.

Rooted in Circular Economy principles, *Mirage*'s permanent structure *The Lost City* is built for disassembly and reuse. Touring with partner festivals, it reduces waste through shared design. Materials are low carbon and locally sourced where possible. The host building's rooftop will support solar panels, greywater harvesting, and a kitchen garden for the on-site restaurant.

Attendees are encouraged to explore neighbouring Mayfield Park, linking the installation's themes to real species like bees, bats, fungi, and sphagnum moss. Construction waste will be repurposed to support biodiversity through bee bricks, birdhouses, and similar initiatives.



User journey

Let's take the journey through *The Lost City* together.



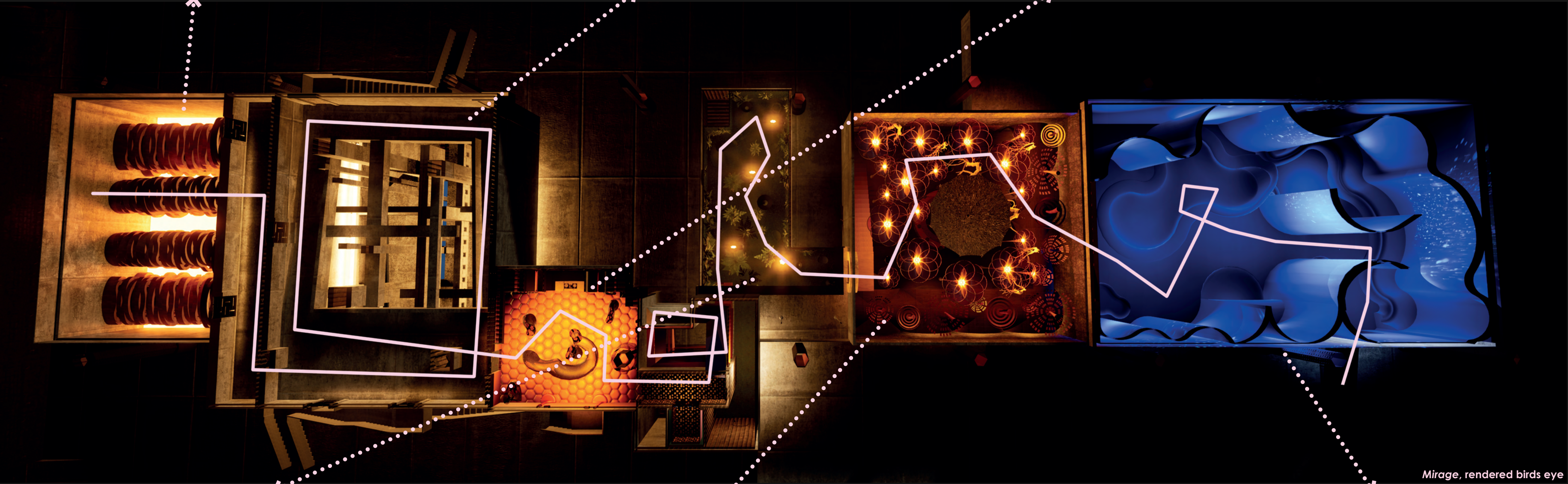
The Termite Tunnels
Explore the tunnels which aerate the earth.
Termites recycle dead plant matter into rich soil, helping forests store more carbon.



The Bat Cave
Use echolocation to find your way through the bat cave.
By controlling insect population and pollinating vital plants, bats protect our food chains.



The Bee Boogie
Can you learn the steps to the pollination dance?
1 in 3 bites of food we eat depend on pollination by bees.



Breathe out whilst the walls breathe in.
Peatlands hold more carbon than forests. Sphagnum moss can hold up to 20 times its weight in water, helping regulate ecosystems and drought.

Dine within the undergrowth.
Fungi connect forests underground. Without them, trees weaken, biodiversity shrinks, and carbon cycles stall.

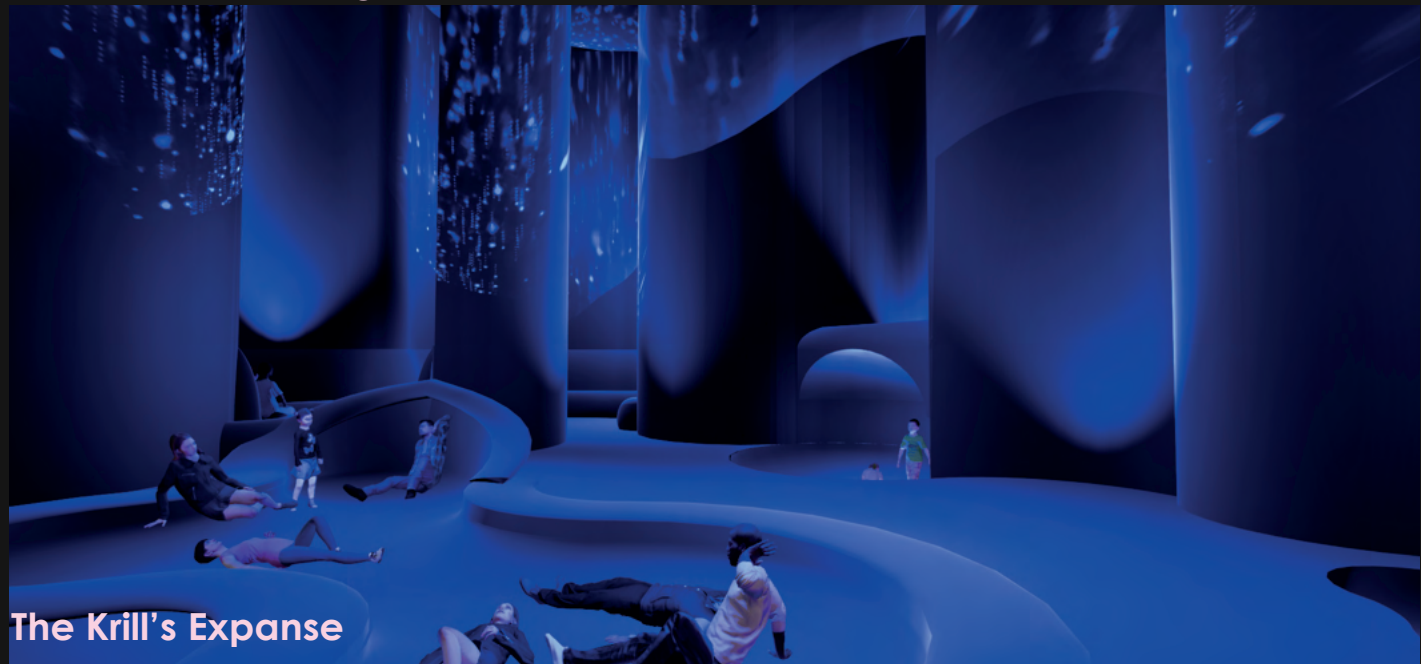
Experience the scale disparity of the ocean.
Krill are the ocean's tiny powerhouse, feeding everything from microscopic plankton to the largest whales.



Sphagnum Moss Room

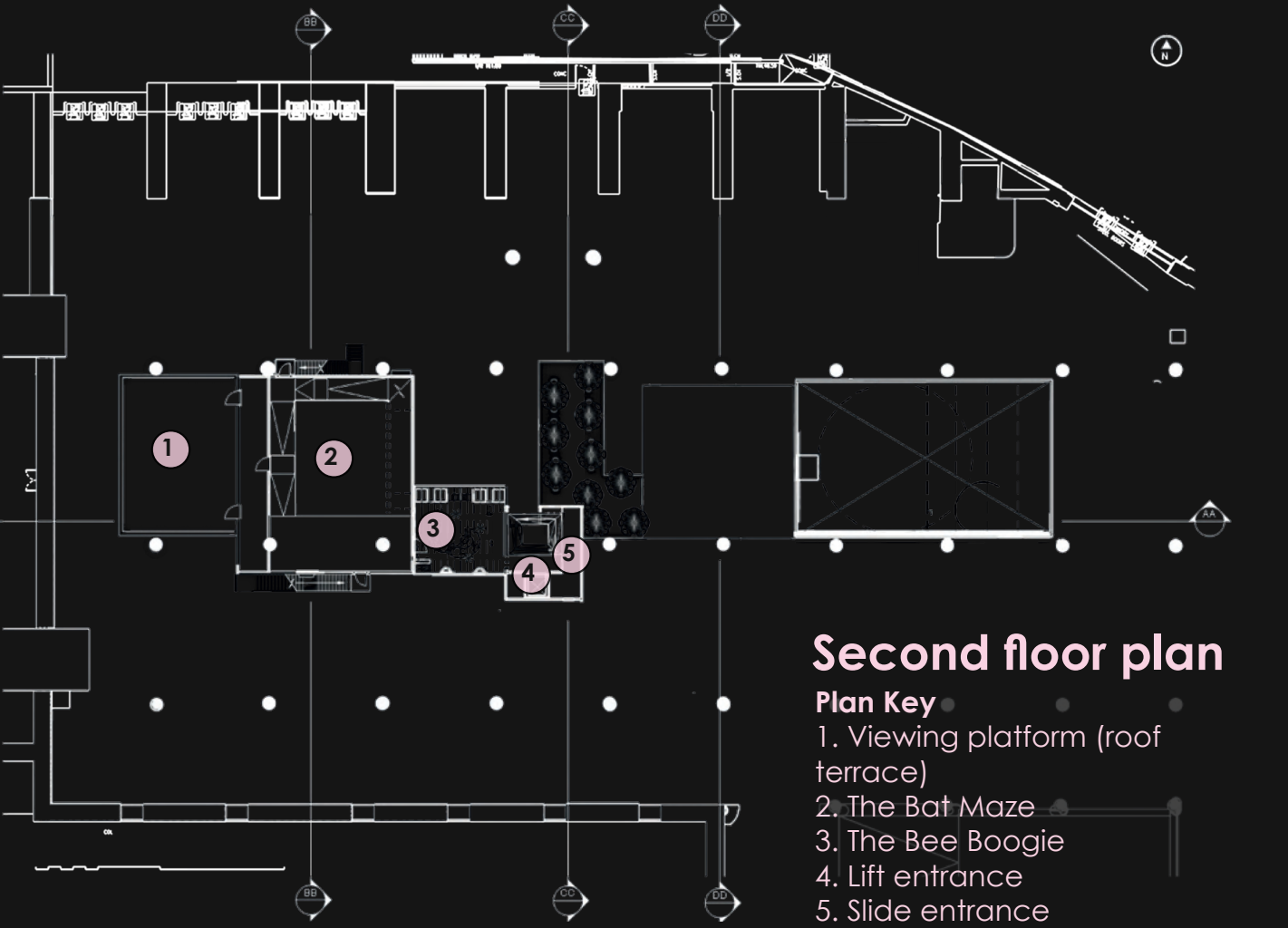
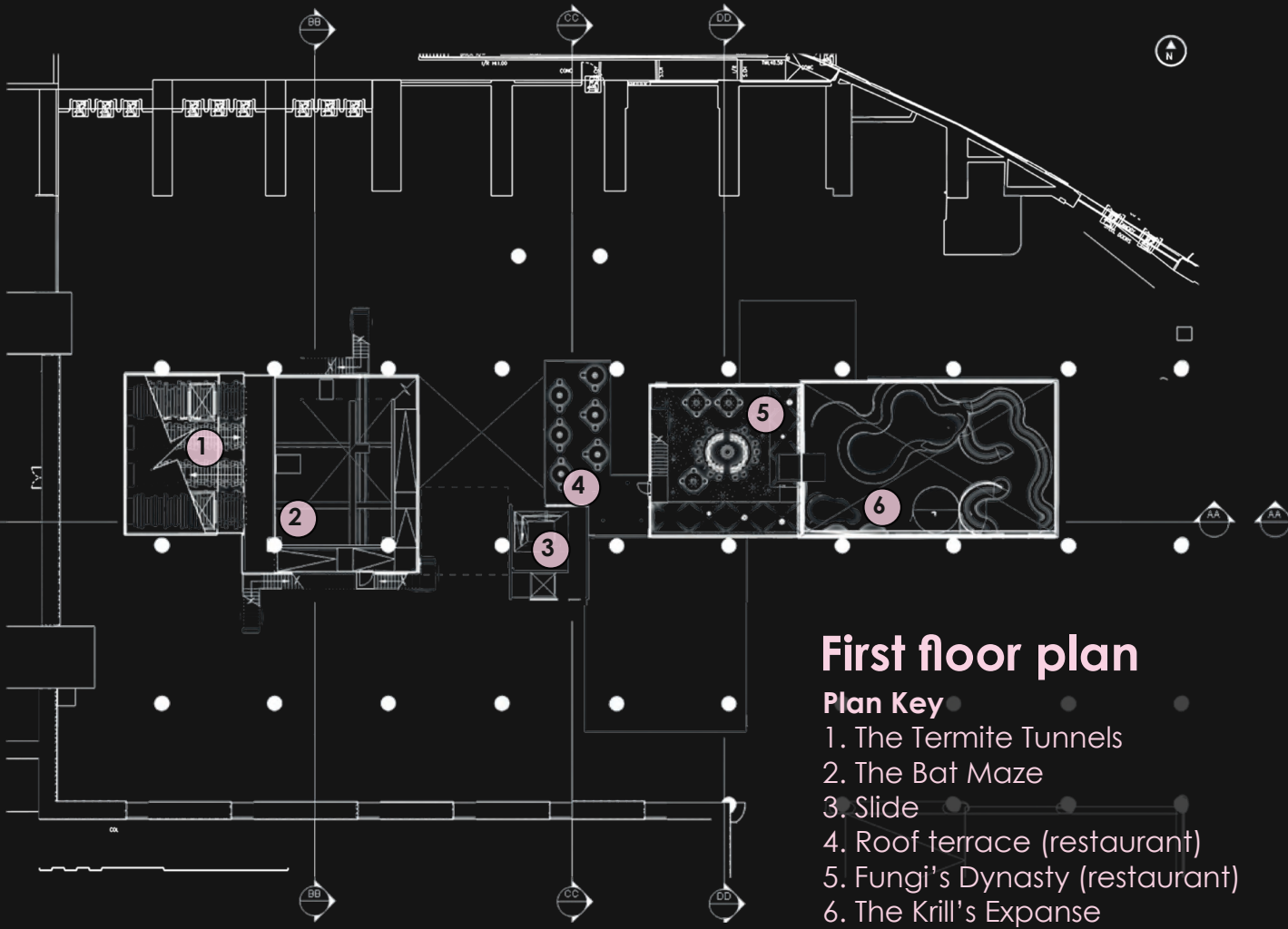
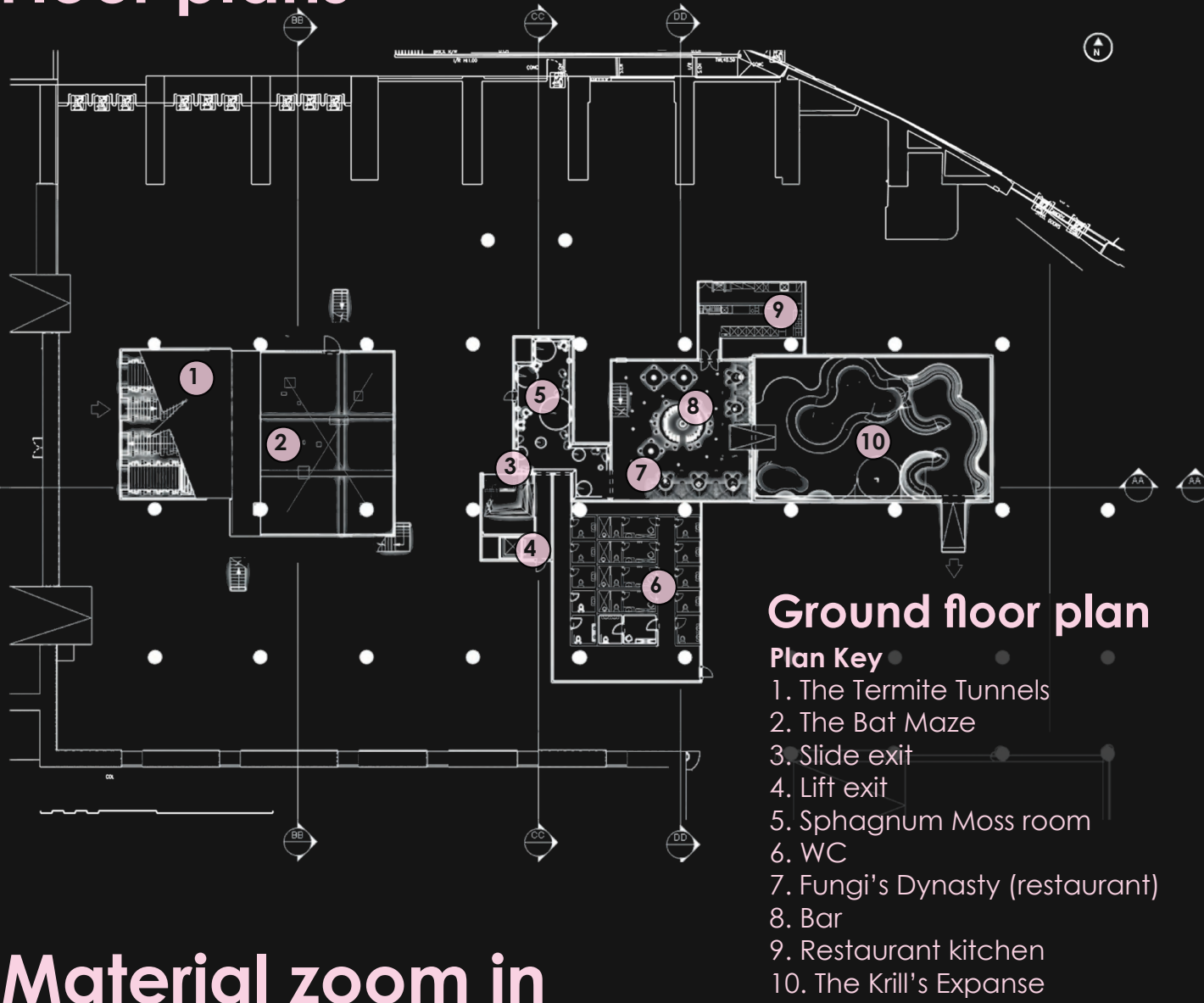


Fungi's Dynasty



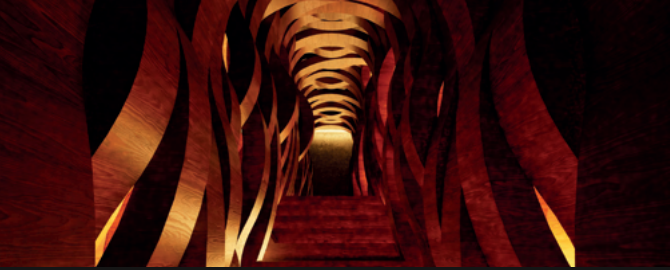
The Krill's Expanse

Floor plans



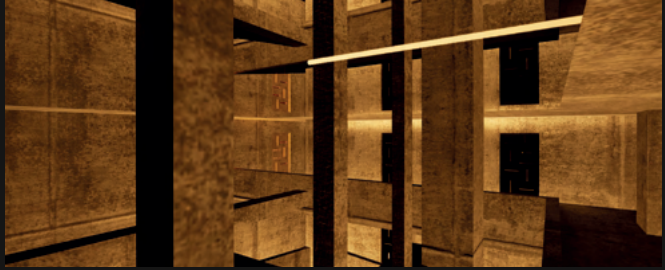
Material zoom in

The Termite Tunnels
Key Materiality



Black cherry wood grown in the UK.
Black cherry wood is a fast-growing hardwood known for its high rate of carbon sequestration, which helps offset the carbon footprint in fixture production.

The Bat Maze
Key Materiality



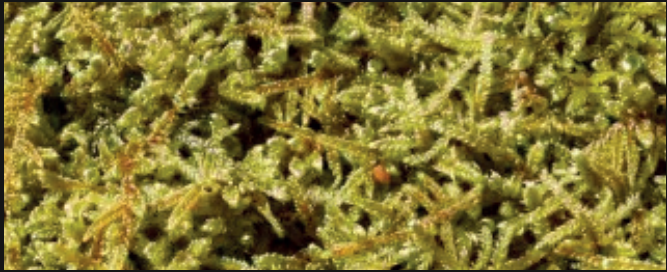
Clayworks Natural Clay Plaster
Clayworks is a sustainable alternative to concrete finishes. *The Bat Maze* is entirely clad in *Clayworks*, creating an endless, alluring, monochromatic environment.

The Bee Boogie
Key Materiality



Sustainable plywood
Sustainably sourced plywood is used throughout *The Bee Boogie*. To create visual contrast, some elements are left raw, while others are coloured using a natural, fungi-based stain from *Fungi Force*.

Sphagnum Moss Room
Key Materiality



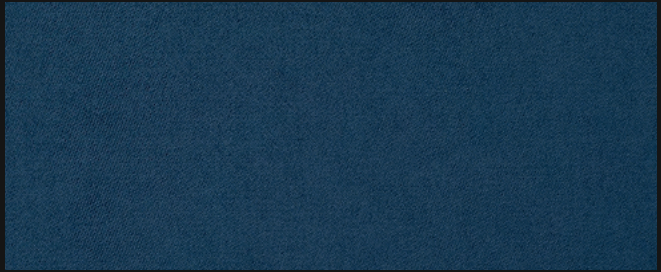
Sphagnum Moss
The Sphagnum Moss Room will feature walls entirely covered in living sphagnum moss, chosen for its exceptional natural water retention. To support its growth, a layer of breathable cork will be used over a hydroponic backing system.

Fungi's Dynasty
Key Materiality

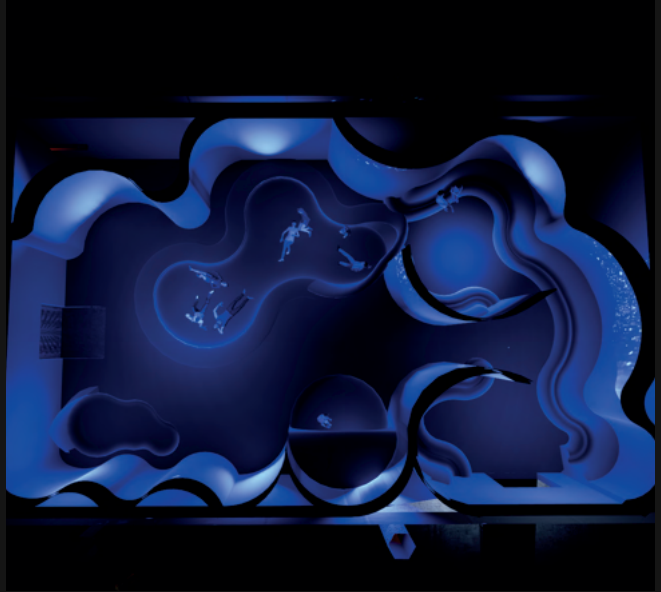
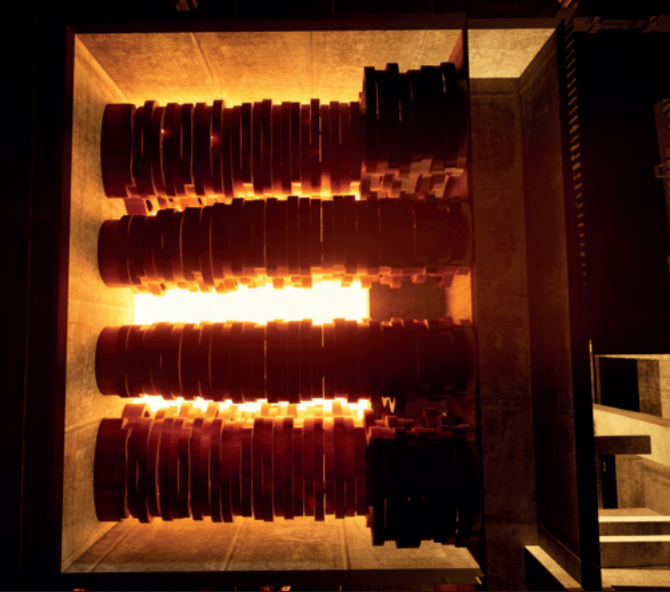


Clayworks Rammed Earth
Fungi's Dynasty is all about immersing visitors deep in the undergrowth among the roots and soil. *Clayworks Rammed Earth* range provides the perfect biophilic connection to the ground beneath us.

The Krill's Expanse
Key Materiality

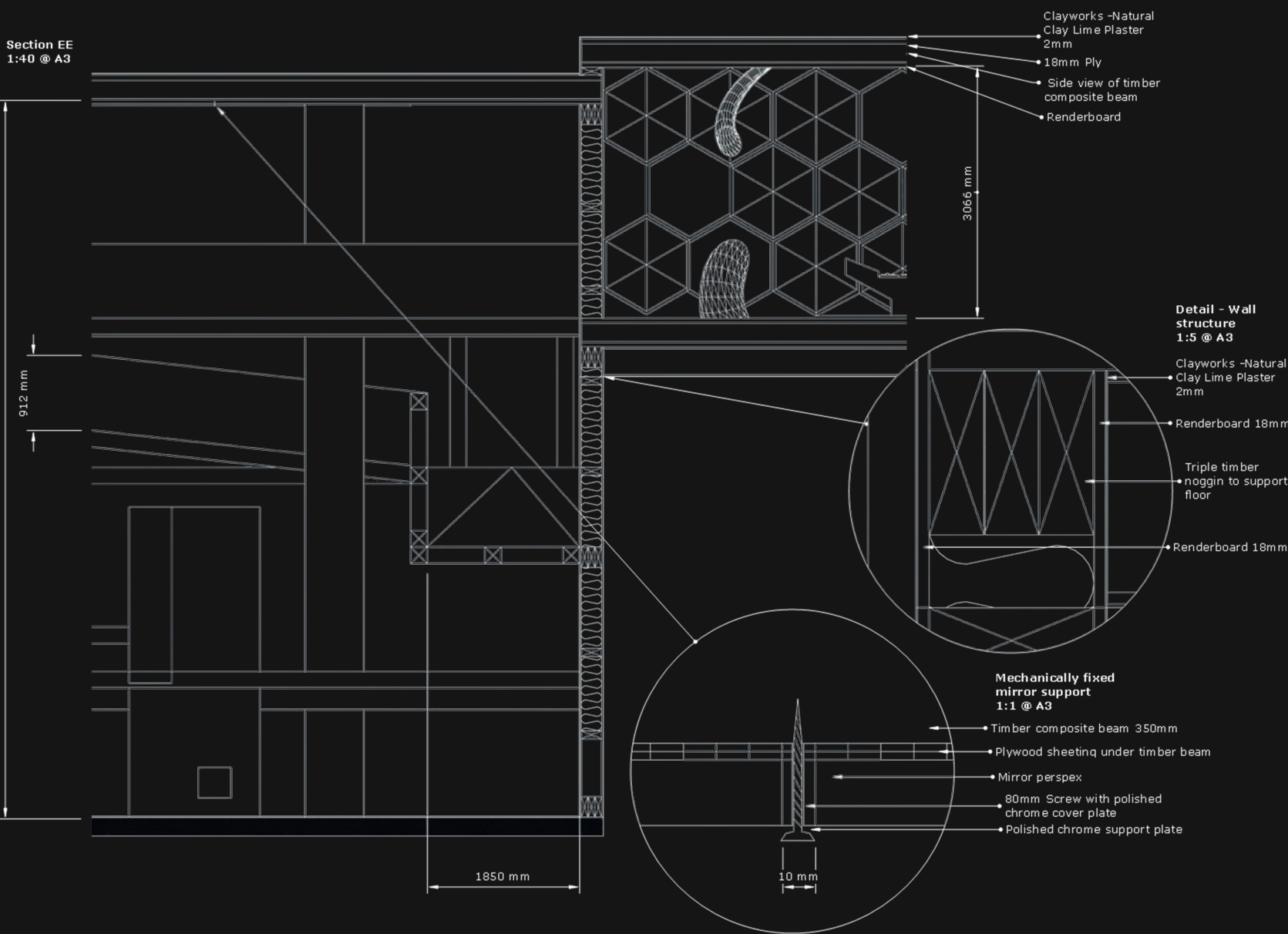


Sorsdal FR Recycled Velvet
Sorsdal's velvet is crafted from recycled polyester yarns derived from waste plastics, while maintaining the durability of a commercial-grade material. It's soft, rich, single-toned texture evokes the depths of the sea.

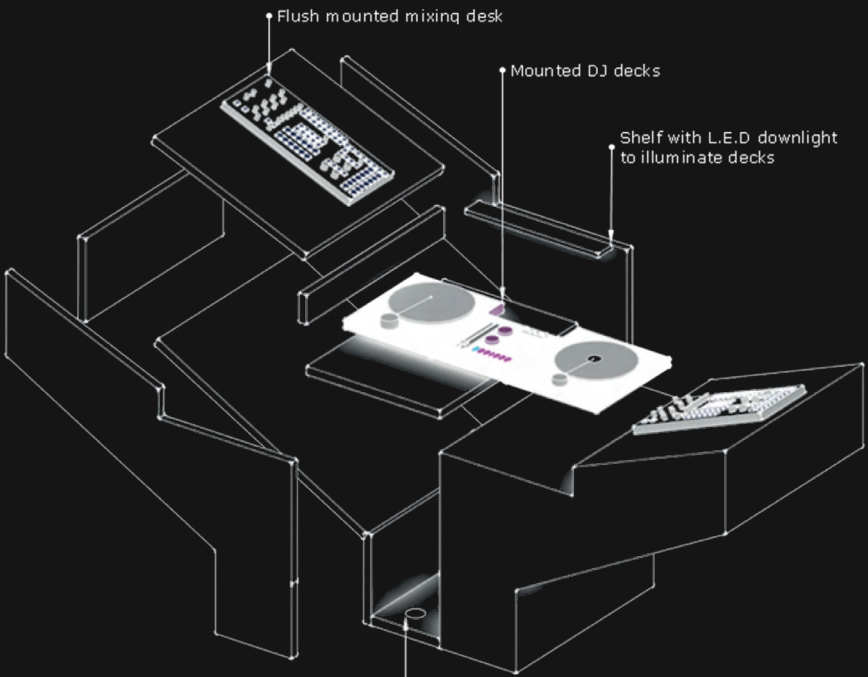


Technical design

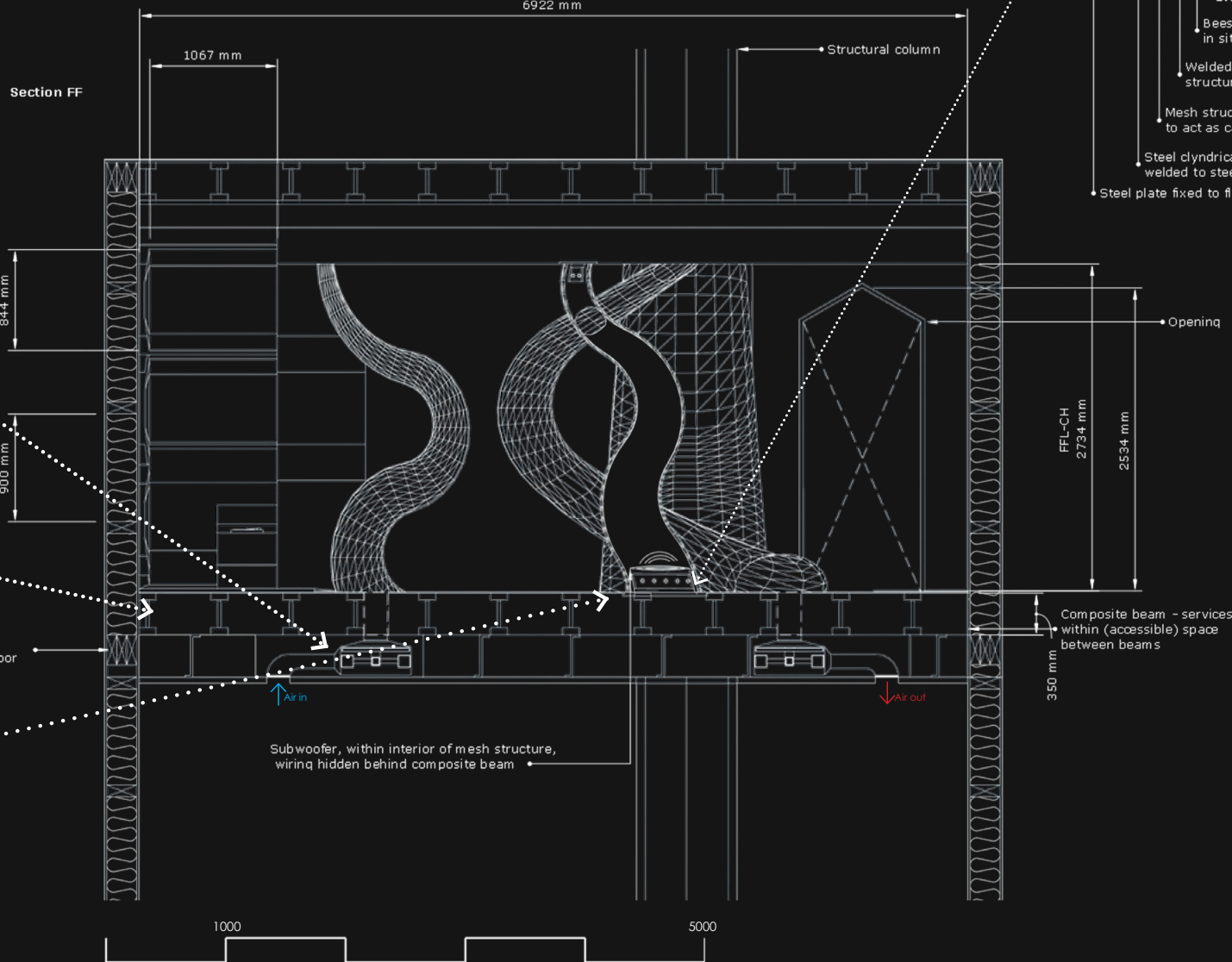
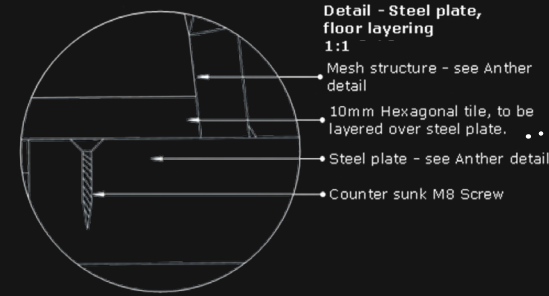
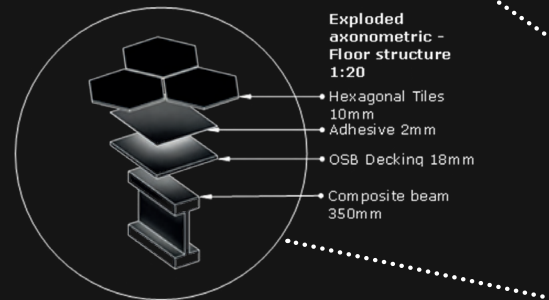
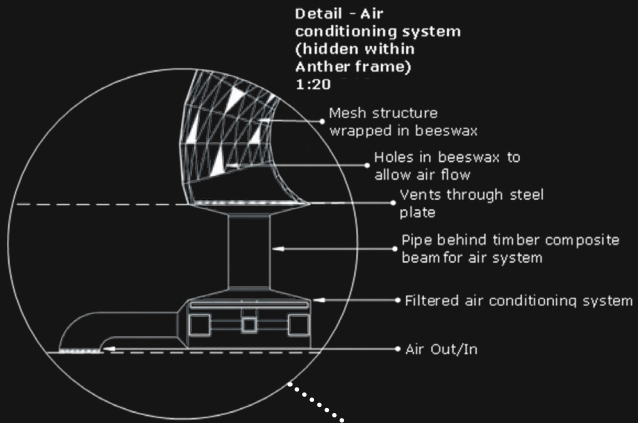
Technical design
The Bat Maze and
The Bee Boogie.



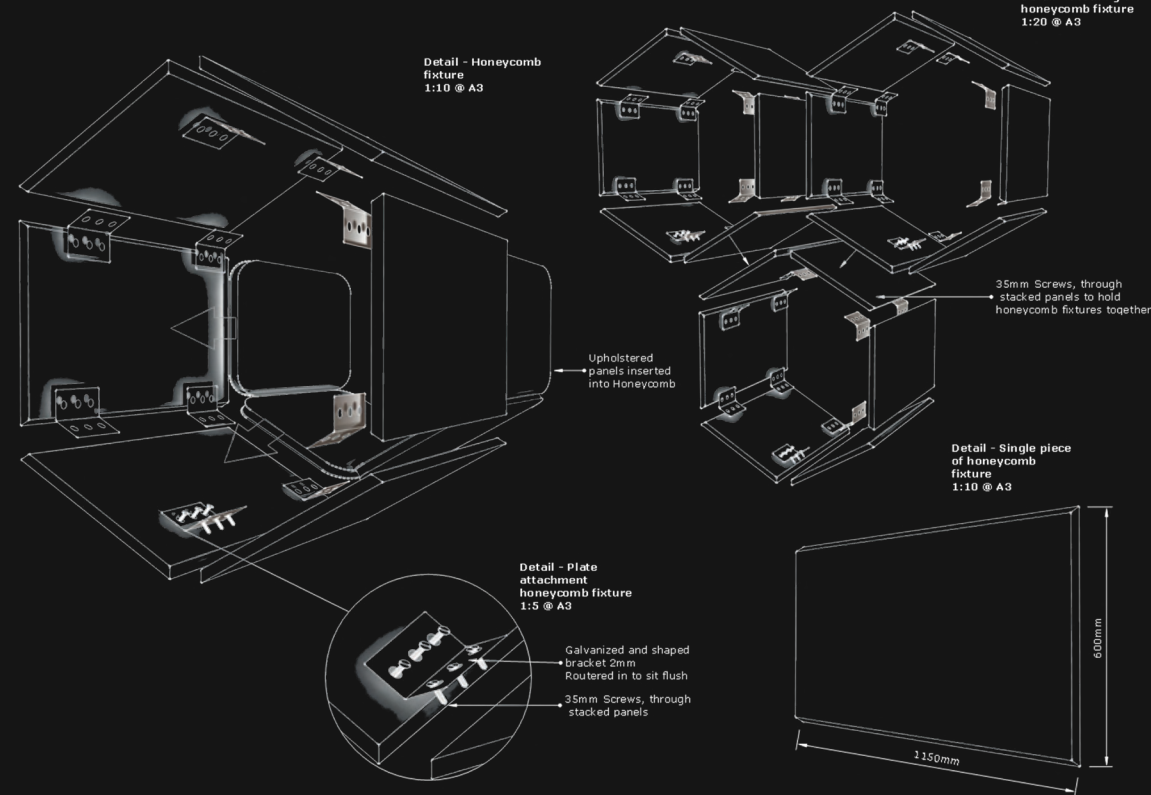
Bespoke furnishing - DJ Table.
Incl. Edge assembly guide.



Technical design
The Bee Boogie.



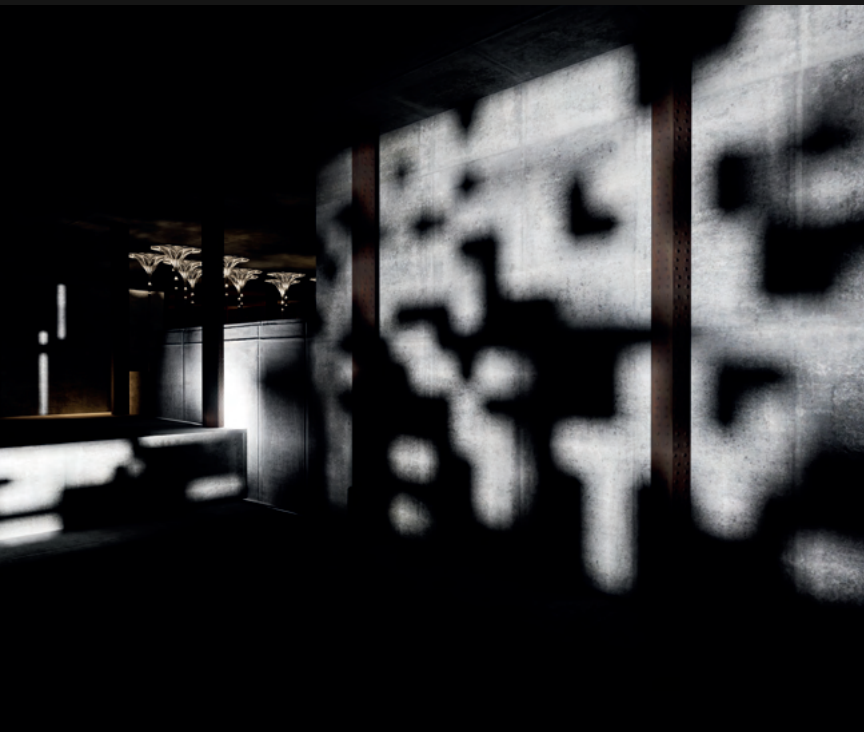
Bespoke Honeycomb fixture (The Bee Boogie technical design).



Lighting design

Lighting plays a crucial role in shaping the atmosphere of *Mirage*, both inside and out. Each room features meticulously designed lighting that transforms the space into an immersive 'new world,' enhancing the sensory experience.

Externally, the facade lighting is dynamic and multi-layered, shifting between colour washes that blend the structure into the festival environment and projection mapping sequences. Every half hour, the projection creates the illusion of *The Lost City* crumbling away, turning the exterior into a captivating spectacle of its own.



To view the lighting scheme for *Mirage* please watch the rendered walk through video.

Scan Me!



<https://youtu.be/5q9VCSGsyyk>