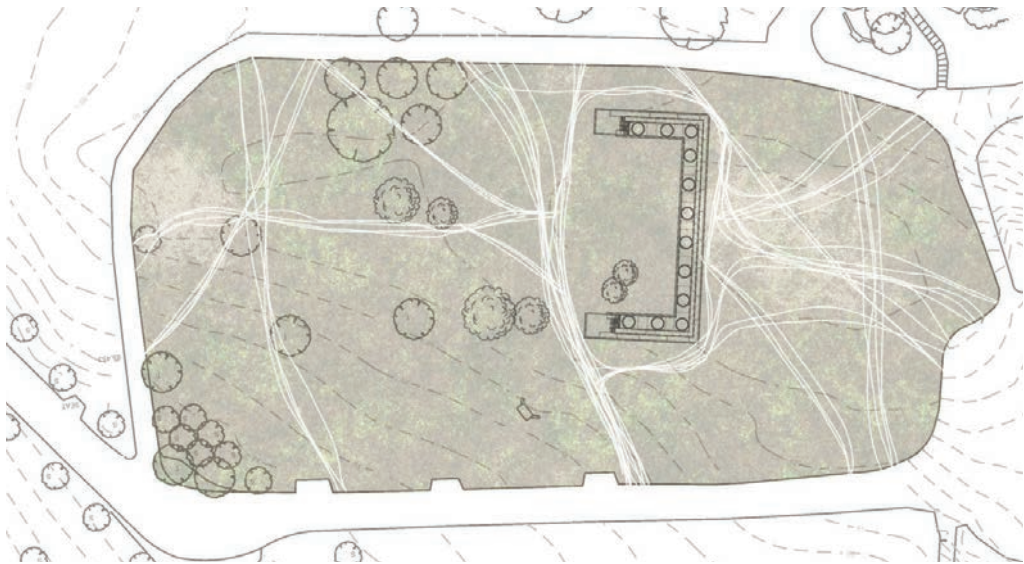
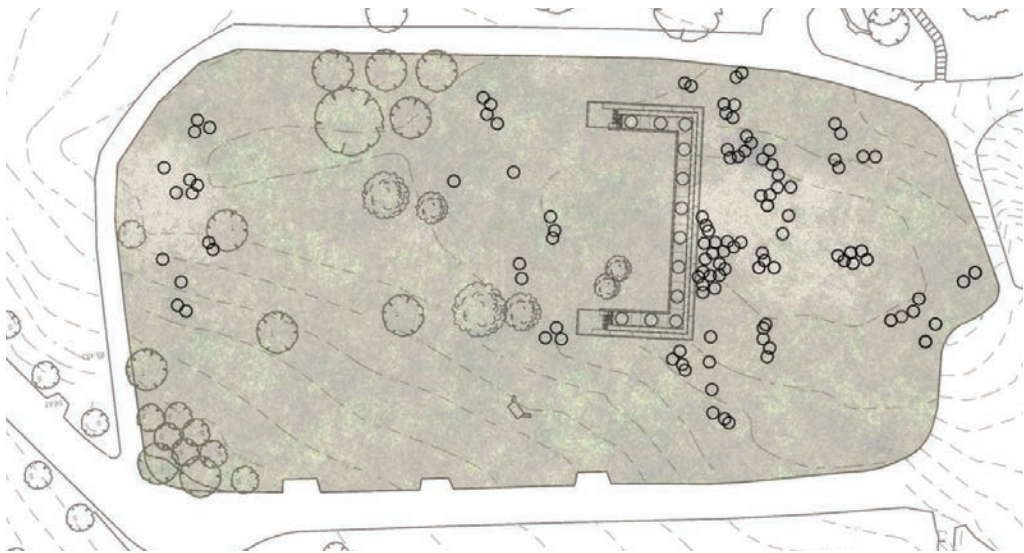


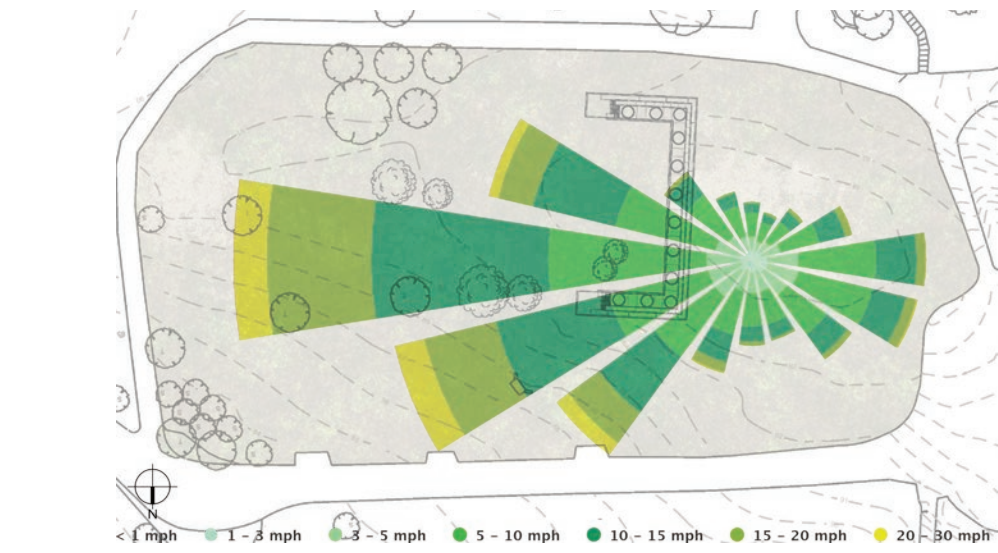
AGORA ALBA



COMMON PATHS



STATIONARY VISITORS -O



WIND ANALYSIS

Agora Alba re imagines the National Monument of Scotland as a public space, offering opportunities for quiet reflection, informal gathering, and focused study. Situated within the footprint of the incomplete National Monument of Scotland, the design introduces a series of stepped pavilions and open landscapes that encourage both movement and thought.

Rather than competing with the historic structure, the intervention engages in a respectful dialogue with it—preserving the monument’s unfinished character while introducing a new layer of public life. The project embraces a sense of ambiguity and openness, allowing each visitor to form their own interpretation and relationship with the space.

Through sensitive consideration of scale, context, and materiality—predominantly using stone to echo the original structure—Agora Alba transforms a long-static landmark into a dynamic environment. It invites contemporary use without erasing historical intent, fostering a renewed sense of connection, reflection, and civic identity atop Calton Hill.



PATHS ERODED ON SITE

Research into how people use the site was key when developing an informed approach for the placement of pathways and pavilions, as well as identifying areas where movement should be gently redirected to prevent further erosion and support the landscape’s natural regeneration. Observations of common paths, where people spent the most time, and prevailing weather conditions all informed key design decisions throughout the process.

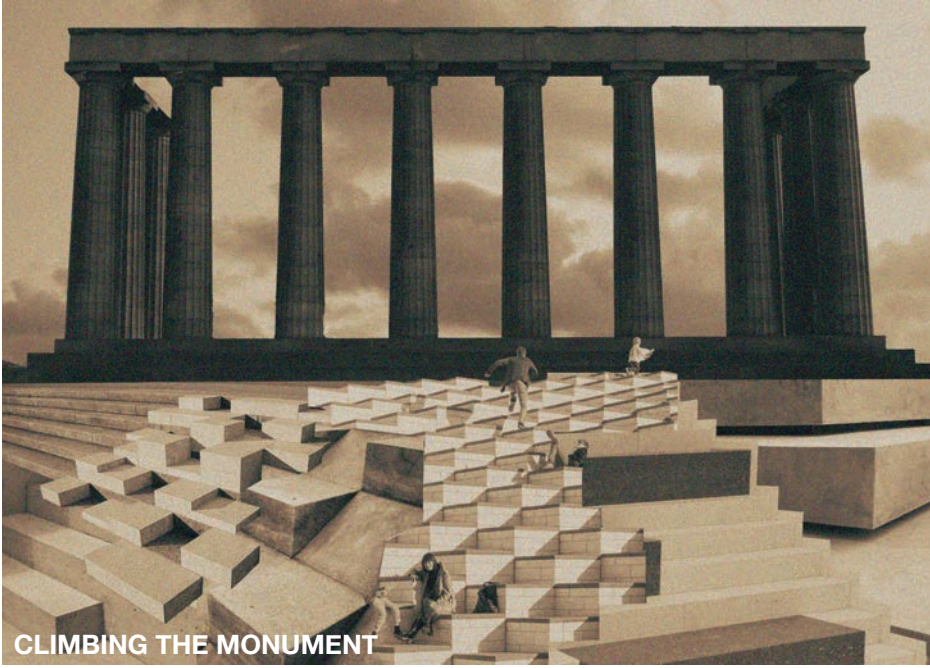


HIGH USE AREAS



EXISTING UNFINISHED SITE

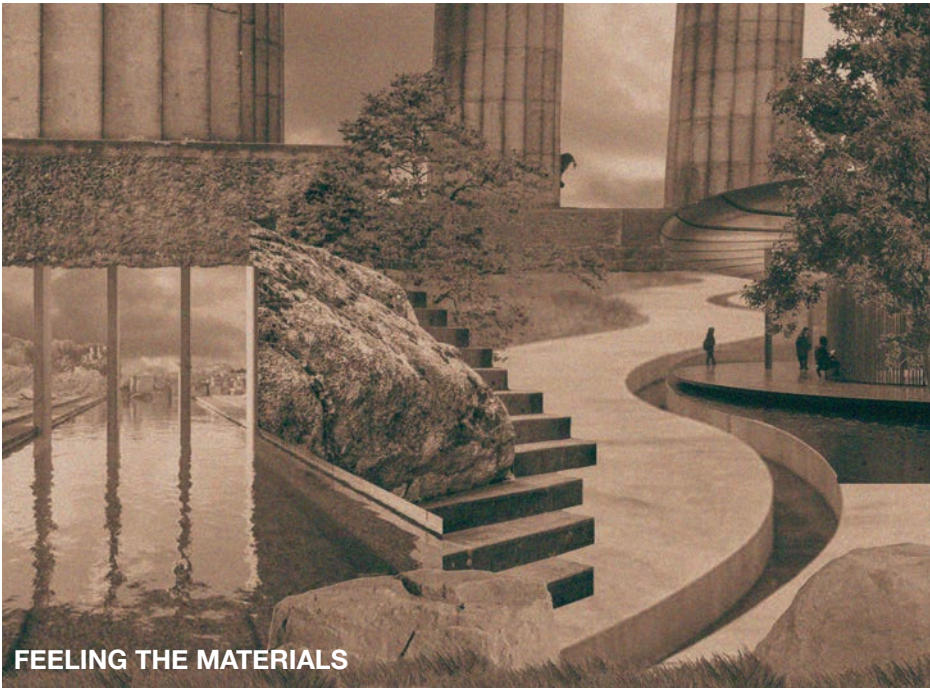
VISUAL MONTAGES EXPLORING EXPERIENCES WITHIN THE SPACE



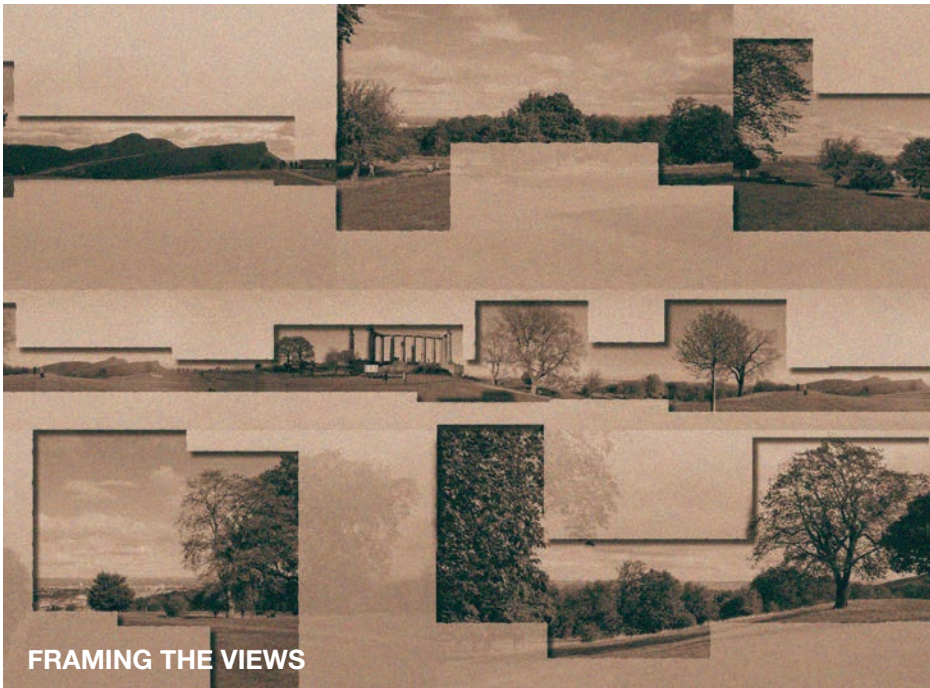
CLIMBING THE MONUMENT



MOVEMENT THROUGH THE SITE

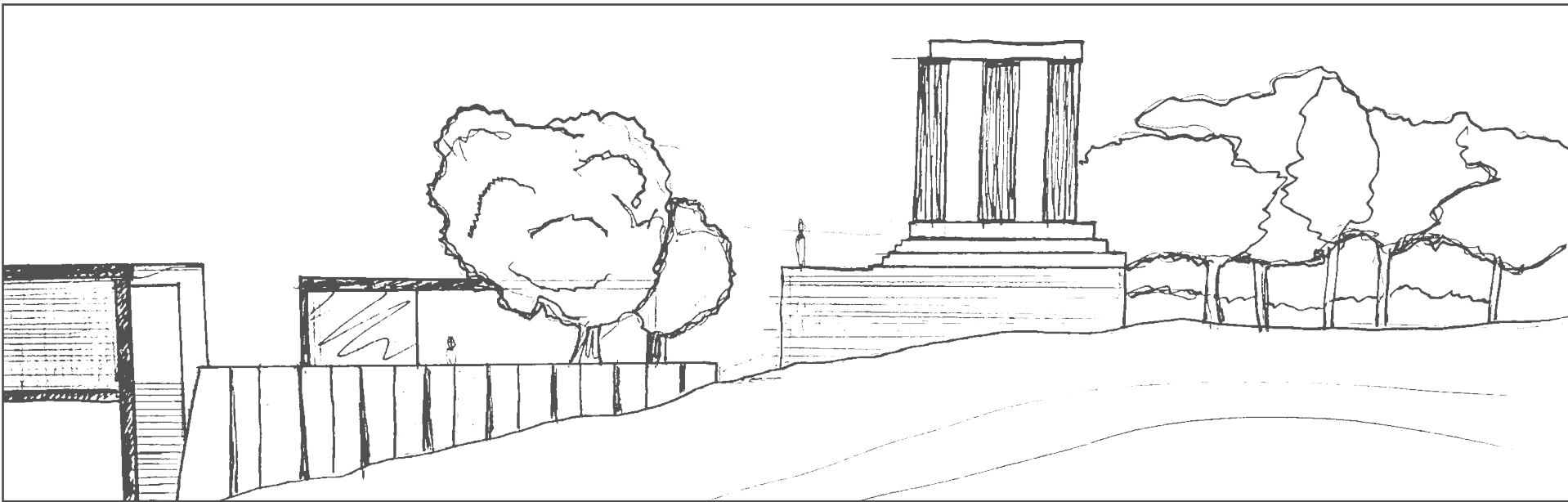
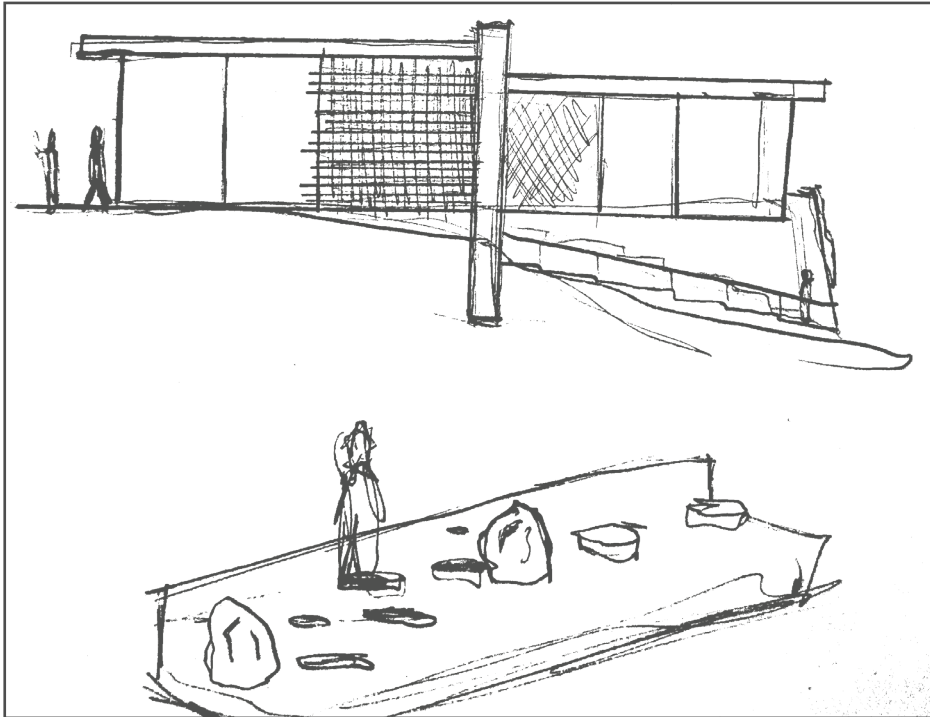
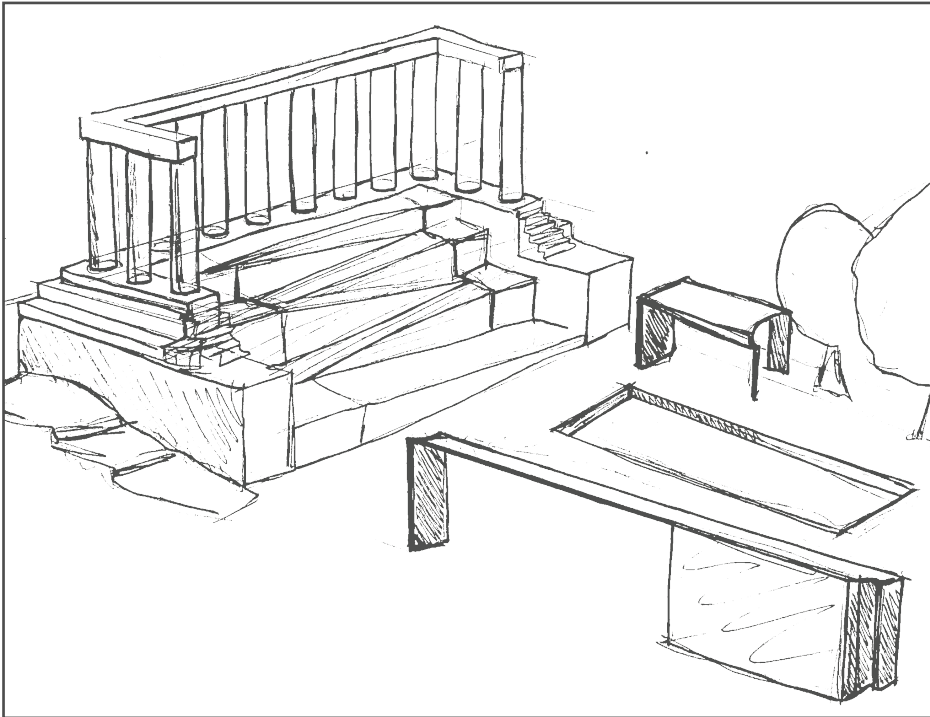


FEELING THE MATERIALS



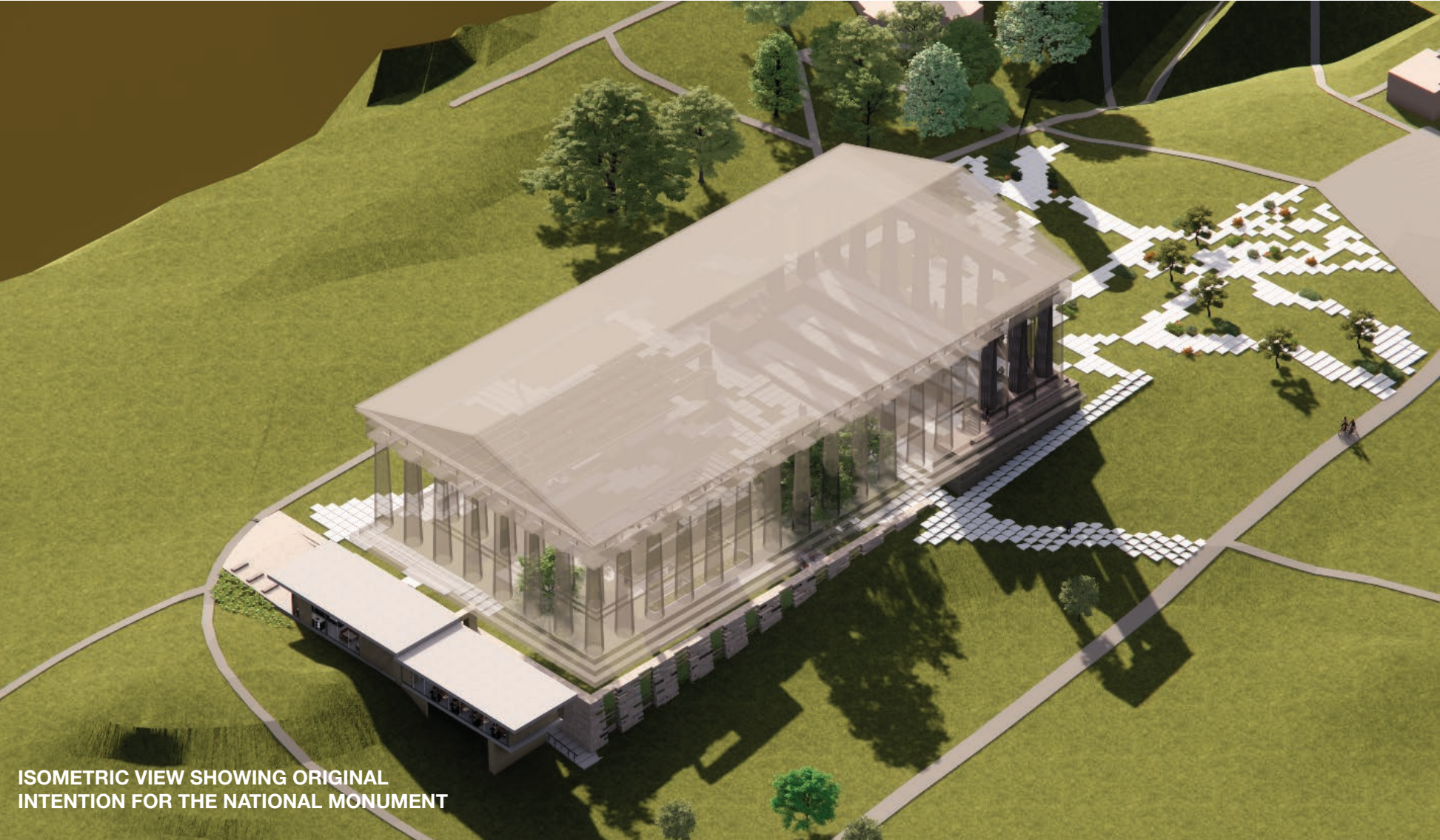
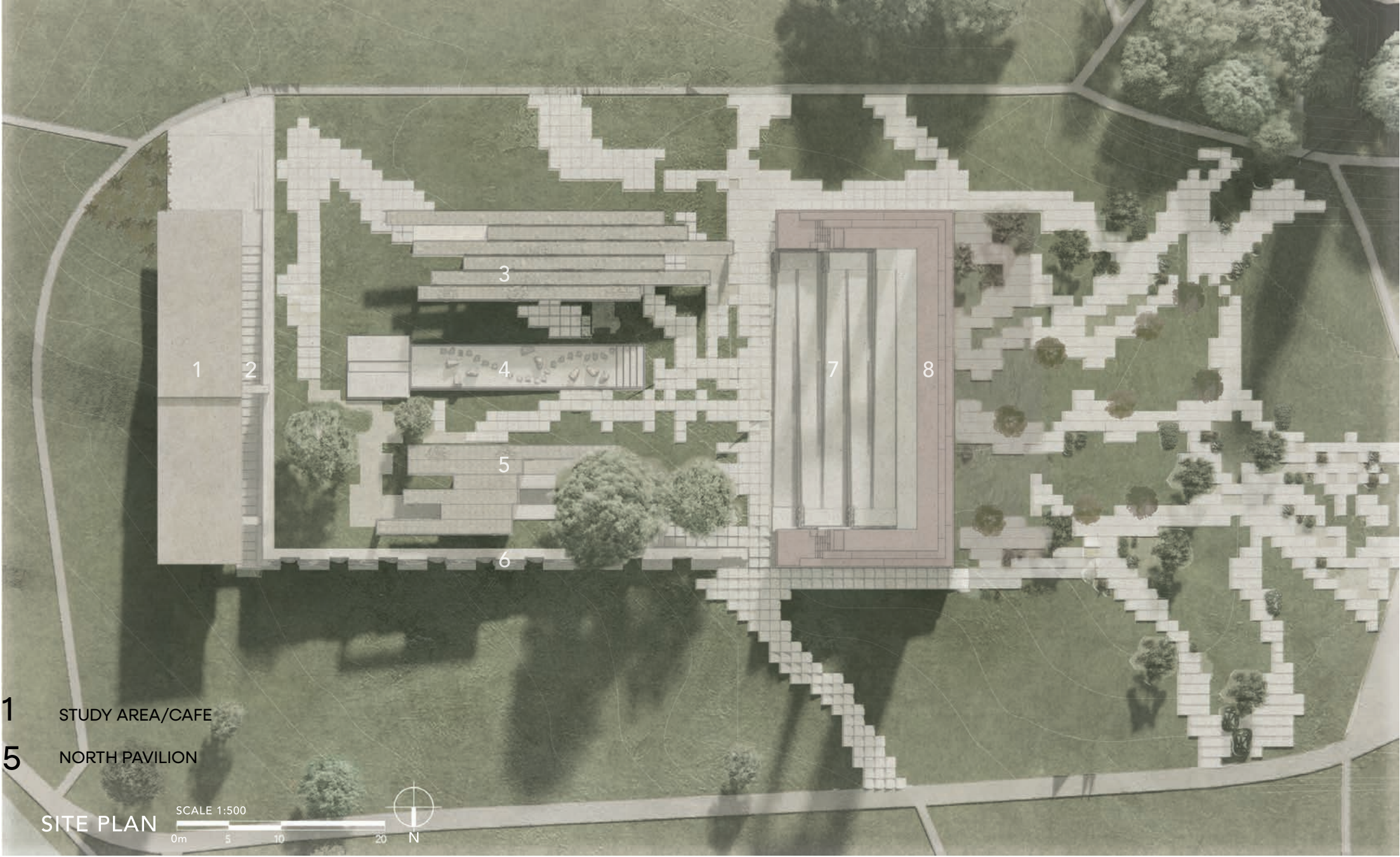
FRAMING THE VIEWS

CONCEPT SKETCHES



Designing predominantly within the original footprint of the monument served as a continual reminder of the building's original intent, while also respecting and working within the proportions of the existing structure of the National Monument.

Although the erosion of the hill has resulted in the new public space sitting significantly lower than the monument itself, this lowered profile preserves the iconic view that so many have come to admire, allowing the monument to remain a distinct and independent presence on the skyline.





The predominant material is stone, maintaining a strong visual and tactile connection to the existing monument while evoking a sense of continuity and permanence. The monument's architecture has been a consistent source of inspiration, guiding both the form and intent behind the new additions to the space.

The water feature (ABOVE) serves as a place marker, indicating where the internal space would have existed according to the monument's original plans.

Open pavilions (ABOVE) with stepped roofs take their cue from the ascending steps that lead to the monument's pillars. These structures extend eastward along the datum lines that the original floor would have followed if the monument had been fully realized.

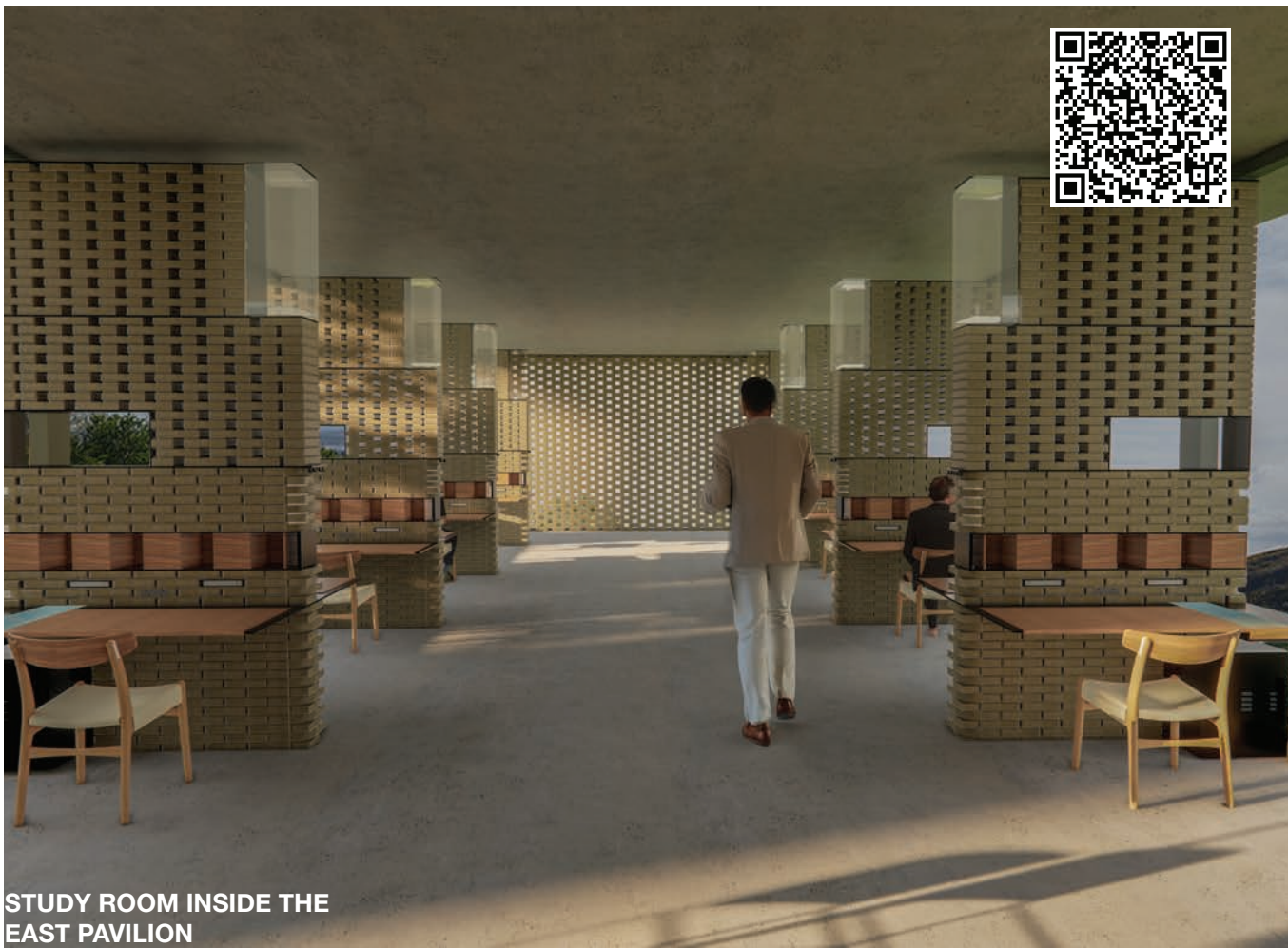
The monument ramp (RIGHT) provides an accessible route to the summit, designed for ease of use by all visitors. Integrated seating and planters are included along the path, allowing the front of the monument to regenerate naturally while still accommodating the popular practice of souvenir photography.

The retaining wall on the northern elevation (RIGHT) features recesses that align precisely with the positions where the monument's pillars would have stood, had the original vision been completed.





STAIRS TO EAST PAVILION



STUDY ROOM INSIDE THE EAST PAVILION



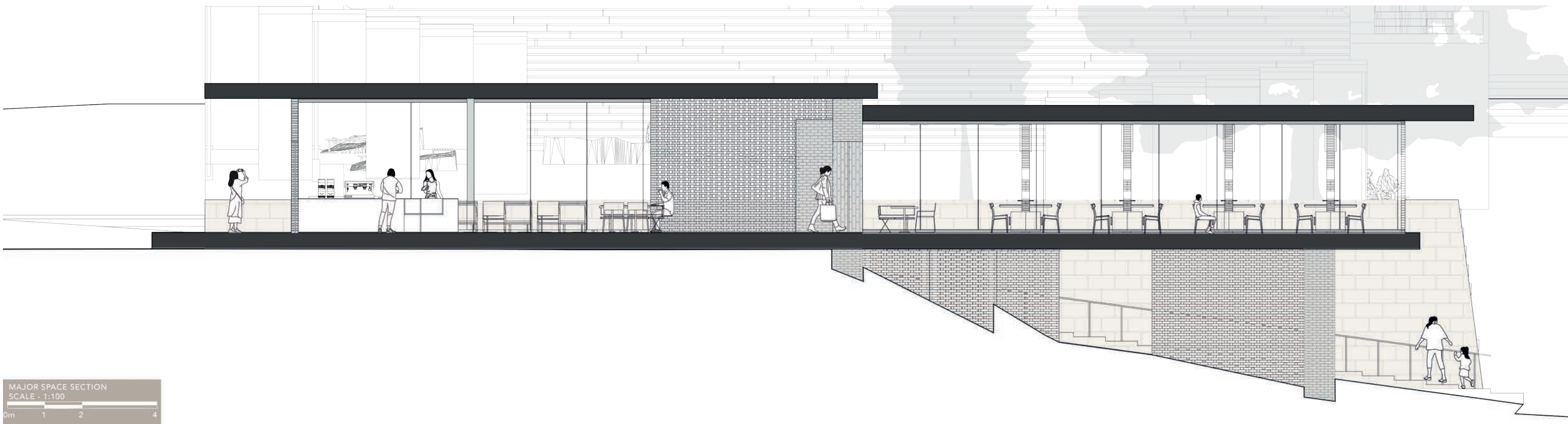
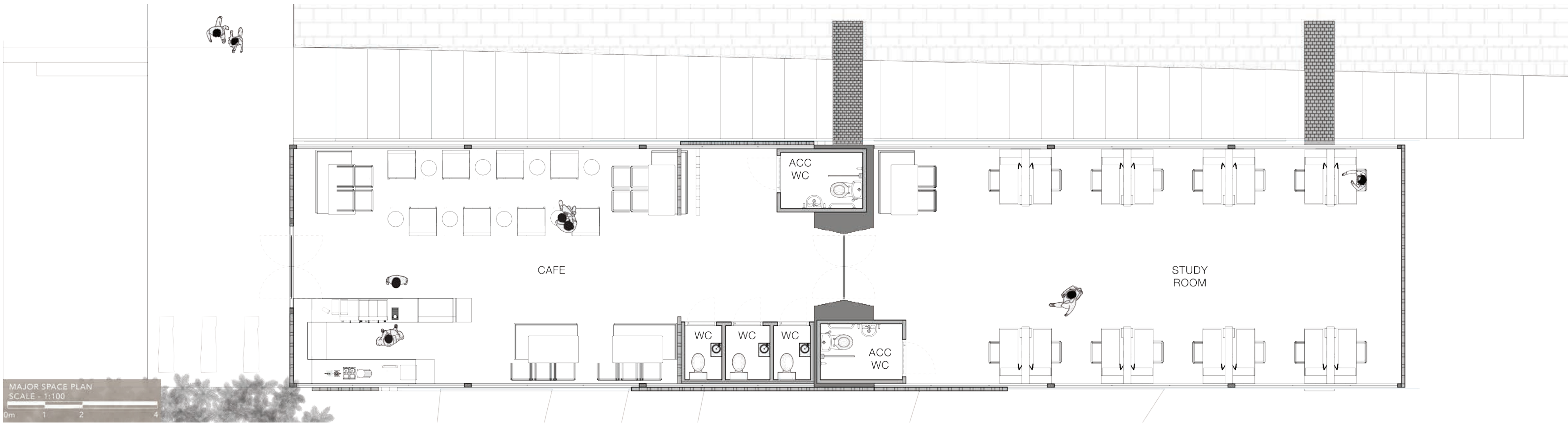
MODEL SHOWING EAST PAVILION



BRICK STUDY DIVIDERS

Bringing a sense of comfort to a hilltop public space, the east pavilion—the project’s major space—offers a setting for quiet reflection and study, while also accommodating a café and rest rooms.

Its materiality and interior design are inspired by the nearby monument, always visible through full-height windows. These windows are partially shaded by hit-and-miss brick walls, echoing the rhythm of the monument’s pillars. Beyond these physical references, the monument also inspires contemplation through its philosophical history, being a replica of the Parthenon in Athens, Greece.



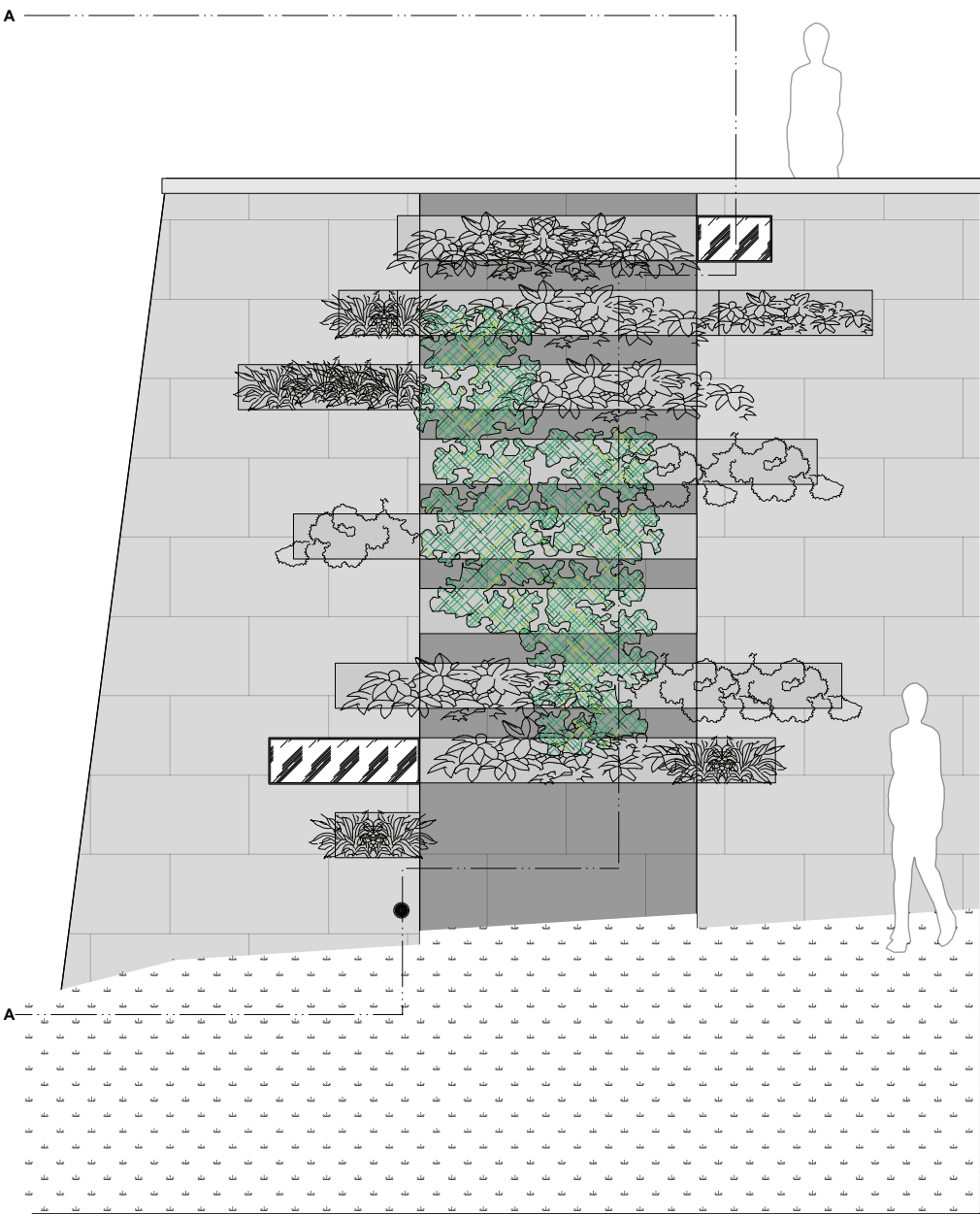
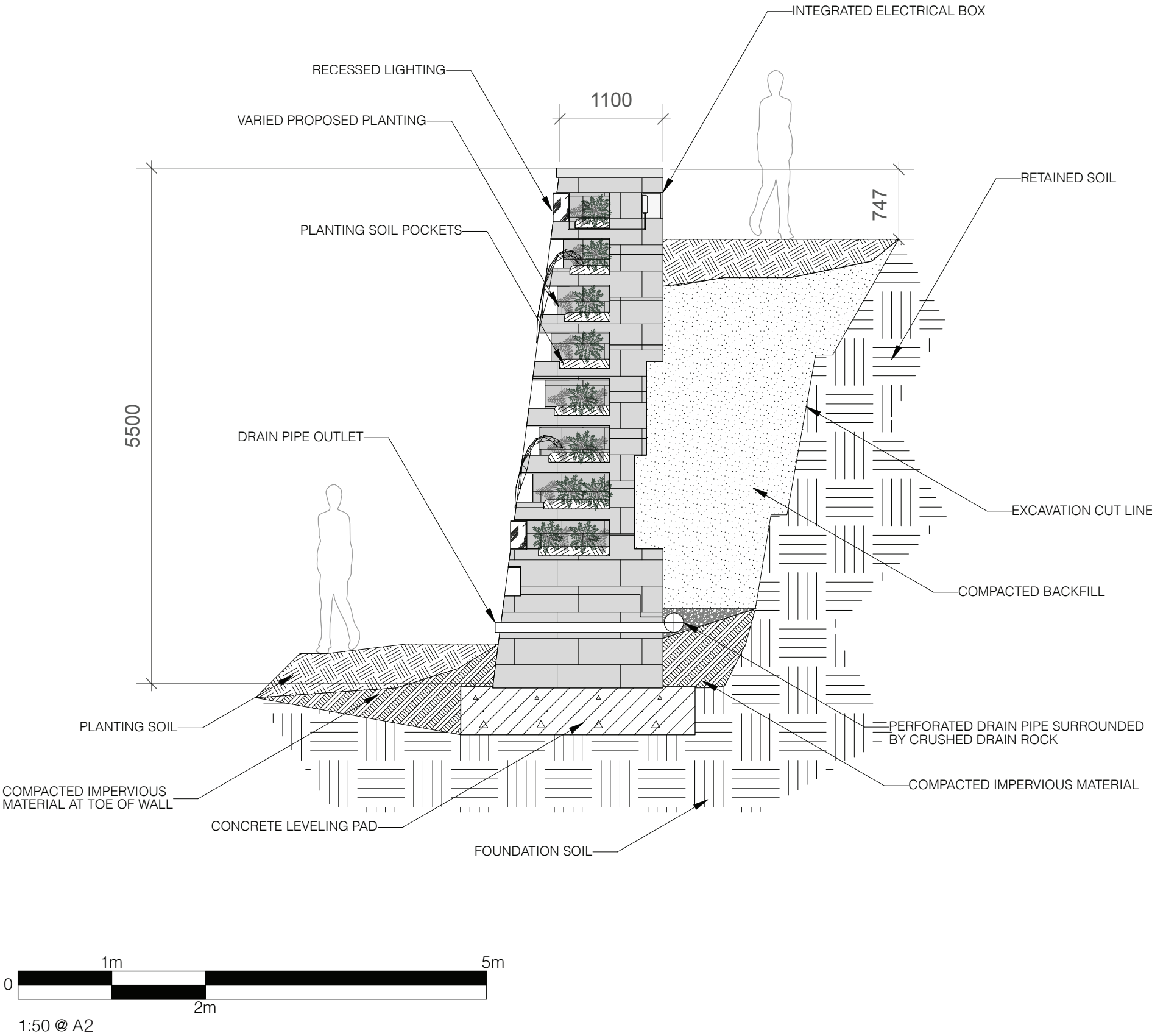
The retaining wall plays a multifunctional role within the project and serves as a quiet homage to the stone craftsmanship for which the original monument is renowned.

Its form draws directly from the unfinished outlines and the intended placement of the original pillars, subtly echoing the monument's incomplete state.

Integrated planters and lighting are woven into the structure, introducing a contemporary layer of material and use. The wall extends the usable space behind the monument, supporting increased movement and informal activity, while also mirroring the monument's own abrupt, unresolved edge. In doing so, it respects the monument's historic character while reinforcing the evolving civic purpose of the landscape.



SCALE MODEL SHOWING RETAINING WALL IN CONTEXT WITH LANDSCAPE



| DRAWING TITLE | | COMPOSITION | PROPOSED PLANTING LIST |
|--------------------------|------------|---|--|
| RETAINING WALL SECTION A | | PRECAST INTERLOCKING CONCRETE BLOCKS WITH NATURAL STONE FINISH. | 01. IVY - HEDERA HELIX 02. TRAILING ROSEMARY - ROSMARINUS PROSTRATE ROSEMARY 03. ROCK ROSE - CISTACESE 04. STONECROP - SEDUM 05. BRECKLAND THYME - THYMUS SERPYLLUM 06. MAIDENHAIR SPLEENWORT - ASPLENIUM TRICHOMANES |
| SCALE | DRAWING NO | | |
| 1:50 @ A2 | 1.0 | | |
| PROJECT | | IRREGULAR CUTOUTS FOR LIGHTING/PLANTING | |
| AGORA ALBA | | | |



RETAINING WALL