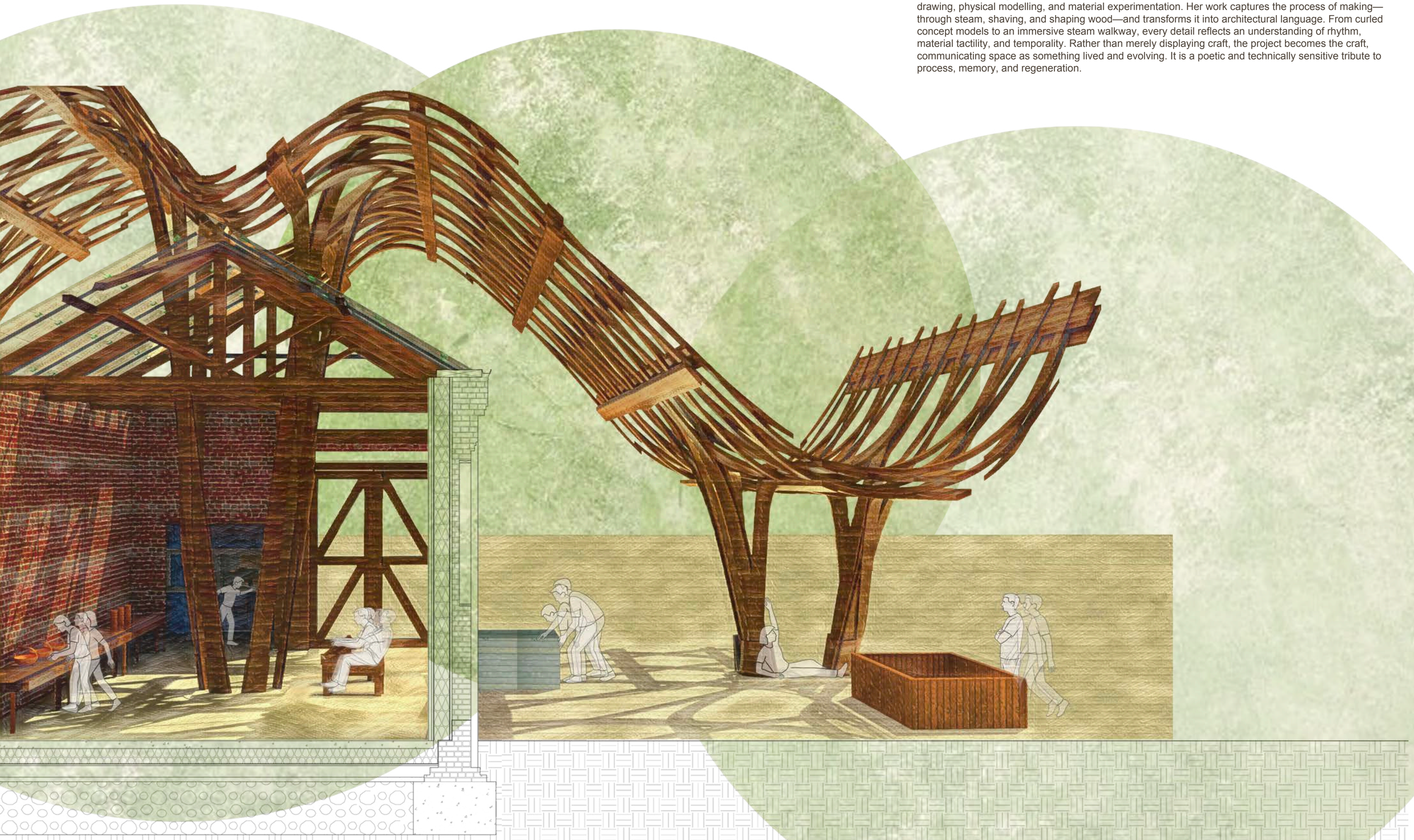
Held in the Making
Amanda Petersen

Held in the Making is a deeply considered spatial narrative that honours the disappearing tradition of Sussex Trug making. Amanda Petersen's project demonstrates exceptional care and skill across hand drawing, physical modelling, and material experimentation. Her work captures the process of making—through steam, shaving, and shaping wood—and transforms it into architectural language. From curled concept models to an immersive steam walkway, every detail reflects an understanding of rhythm, material tactility, and temporality. Rather than merely displaying craft, the project becomes the craft, communicating space as something lived and evolving. It is a poetic and technically sensitive tribute to process, memory, and regeneration.



MOVEMENT

As I started thinking about how the space could come together, I kept going back to the making process itself. Steam is such a big part of Trug making, it's what allows the wood to bend. I began imagining a kind of steam walkway, a space you move through that feels soft and transitional, almost like walking through a moment of heat and motion.

One of the shavings from my concept model really stuck with me, so I tried scaling it up. It became this large curling form in the space, almost like a sculptural structure you can walk around or through. It feels light, but grounded in the making.

I've also been thinking about movement, how the body is always involved in craft. That led to the idea of a rotating door, inspired by the shaving horse. The idea is that entering the space becomes physical, like a small echo of the work itself.

There's also space here for a live workshop, where visitors can see each stage of Trug making as it's happening. It's a slow, careful process that takes days, and I like the idea of people walking through not just the final pieces, but the whole life cycle, from raw wood to finished Trug. It's all about showing the rhythm, labour, and beauty of a biodegradable craft, in real time.

1.Coppiced woodland to harvest material

2.Season and Cut to size coppiced wood area

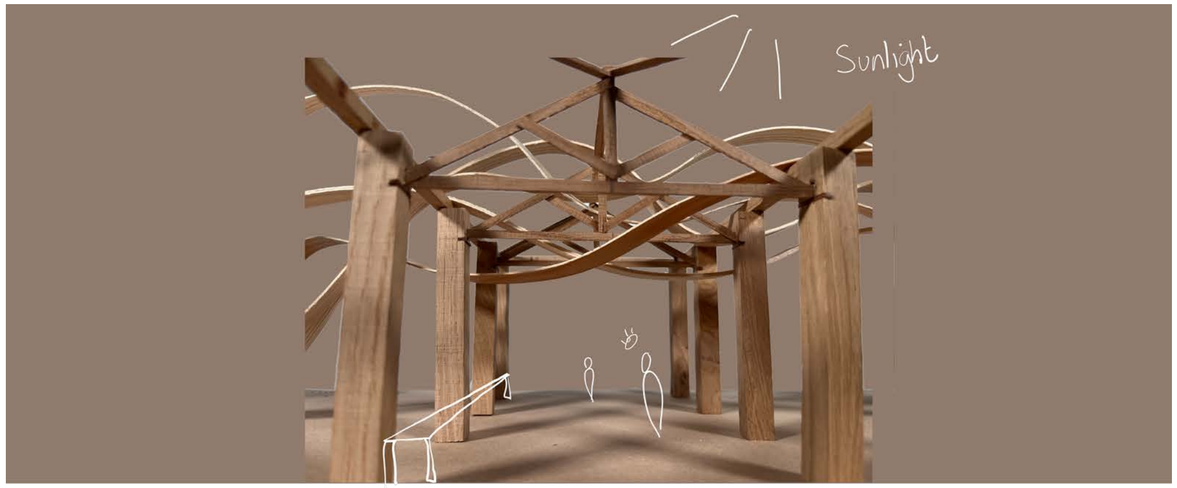
3.Giant Wood shaving display

4.Steam walkway as display

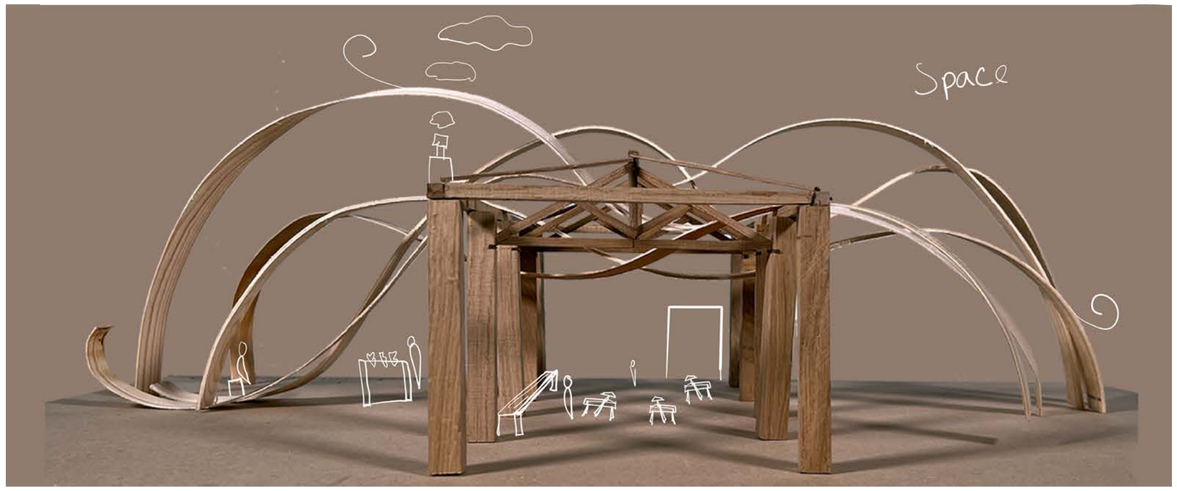
5.Shave horse rotating door display

6.Life use vegetable patch

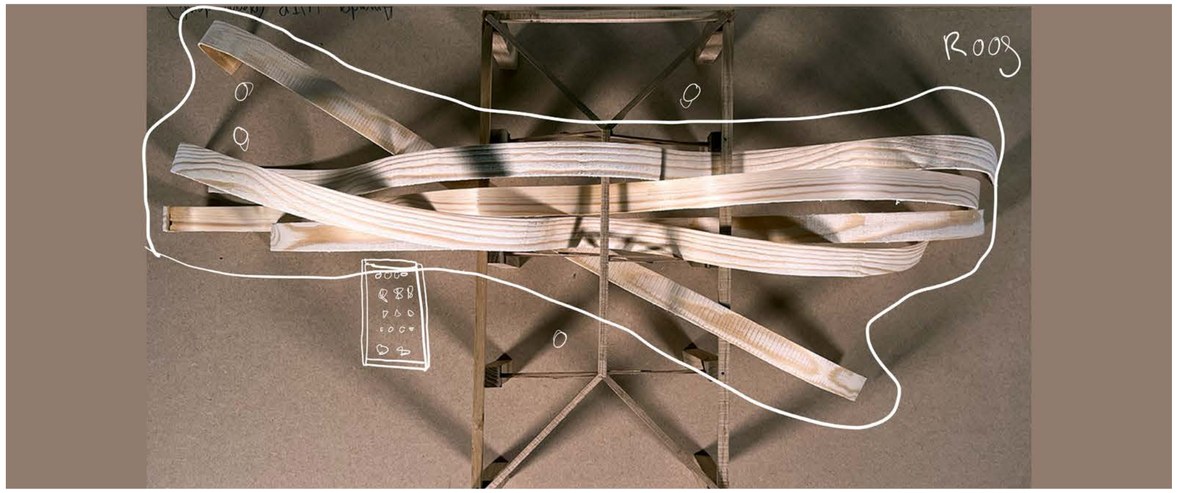
MAQUETTE



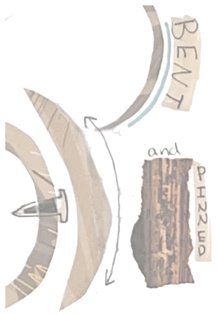
In this model, I was really focusing on how light interacts with the roof form. The overlapping timber pieces started to mirror the way Trug's are layered and assembled, delicate but strong. I was thinking about how these overlaps could allow light to filter through softly, while also hinting at possibilities for passive ventilation or drainage. There's something poetic about the gaps, though I know it wouldn't be fully weatherproof, it's more about atmosphere here.



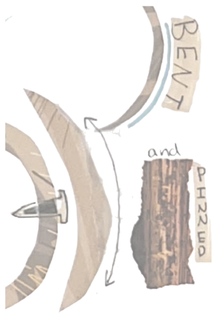
I was originally thinking about placing a steam feature right in the centre of the space, as a kind of sculptural anchor, referencing the trug-making process. But the more I considered it, the more it made sense to keep it by the existing chimney. That's already where steam lives on site, and practically, it keeps heat and moisture away from the timber, avoiding any risk of warping the materials. It started to define a logic for the rest of the layout, the steam zone stays tucked into the edge, letting other areas open up for working, resting, and movement. This felt like a more sensitive and grounded approach, responding to both the making process and the site's history.



From above, the roof started to feel like it could tie everything together. It stretches out past the main structure, creating these transitional outdoor pockets, covered but still open. I'm imagining this as a way to bring the inside out, to hold space for growing, resting, even teaching. You can see where I've placed the veg patch, it's a soft addition, but feels rooted in the same idea: craft, care, and time.



INSIDE

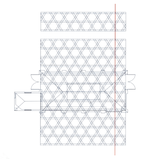


1:20 SECTION

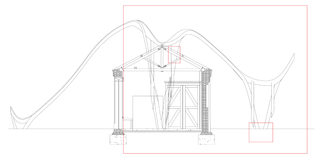
Sun Path and Workspace Orientation

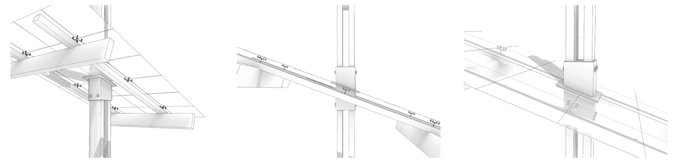
The south-facing roof glazing is angled to capture consistent direct sunlight at a precise point along the solar path, aligning with the workstation below. Throughout the year, the sun's trajectory intersects this glazing angle at approximately the same position each day, delivering concentrated daylight onto the workbench. This passive lighting strategy enhances visibility and supports a stable, productive workflow without reliance on artificial lighting.

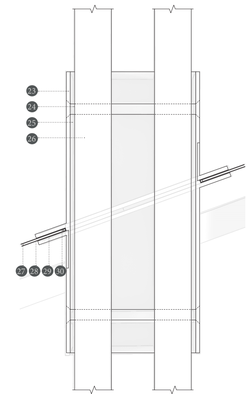
Roof plan with section line

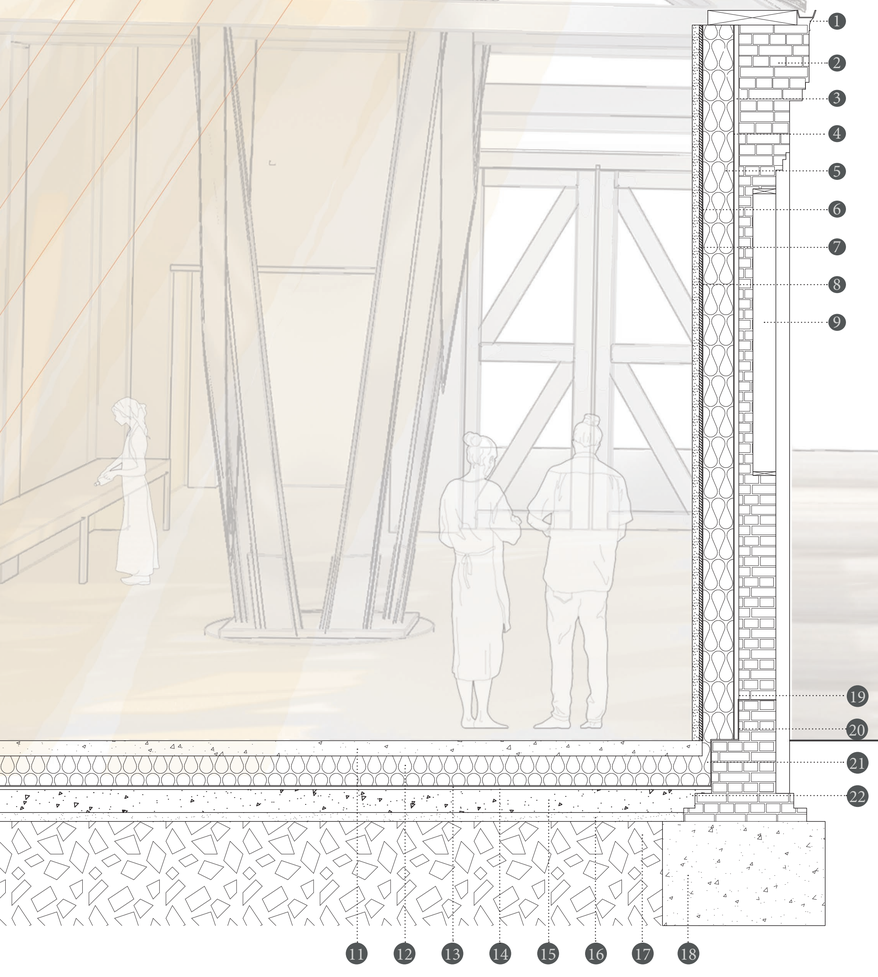


Section Elevation

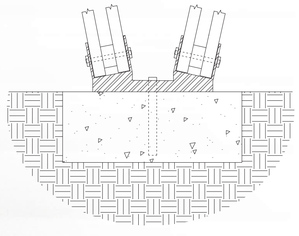








Steel foundation structure



Wall section

1. Cast iron guttering, Original eaves-mounted rainwater system, retained for functional and heritage value.

2. Lime concrete pargeting, Breathable external render applied over brickwork, allows moisture movement while protecting the facade, approx. 15–20 mm.

3. Existing English bond brickwork, Retained load-bearing structure, provides thermal mass and historic continuity, approx. 215 mm thick (standard solid wall).

4. Vertical timber stud frame, Creates space for insulation and services, non-load-bearing, typically 50–75 mm deep.

5. Breathable hemp insulation, Vapour-open and sustainable, packed between timber studs for thermal and acoustic performance, thickness follows stud depth, approx. 50–75 mm.

6. Vapour control layer (VCL), Positioned on the warm side of the insulation to manage internal moisture and protect the fabric, 1–2 mm film or membrane layer.

7. Service batten layer, Slim cavity for cable runs or fixing zone behind finishes, approx. 20–30 mm.

8. 12.5 mm plasterboard, Smooth internal lining with fire and acoustic resistance.

9. Coppiced timber cladding, Locally sourced interior finish, expressive, renewable, and warm in tone, approx. 15–20 mm.

Floor section

11. Floating polished concrete flooring, Durable polished surface finish, providing wear resistance and thermal mass, approx. 20–30 mm thick.

12. Ridged insulation layer, High-performance rigid insulation reducing thermal bridging and heat loss, approx. 50–100 mm thick.

13. Damp proof membrane (DPM), Continuous polyethylene membrane preventing moisture ingress from the sub-base, approx. 0.2–0.5 mm thick.

14. Thin levelling screed, Fine mortar layer providing a smooth, level surface and protecting the membrane below, approx. 10–20 mm thick.

15. Reinforced concrete slab, Structural slab with embedded steel reinforcement providing strength and load distribution, approx. 100–150 mm thick.

16. Sand blinding layer, Fine sand layer creating a level and protective surface beneath the membrane, approx. 50 mm thick.

17. Composite rubble or hardcore, Compacted sub-base of mixed aggregate offering drainage and stable foundation, approx. 150–300 mm thick.

18. Exsisting concrete foundations

Floor meets wall joint

19. Damp proof membrane (DPM) upturn, Floor DPM turned up at the base of the brickwork and sealed to the wall vapour control layer (VCL) to prevent moisture ingress and ensure airtightness.

20. Movement allowance, Flexible sealants or compressible foam installed at slab-to-wall interface to accommodate thermal and structural movement, preventing cracking.

21. Thermal insulation continuity, Ridged floor insulation and hemp wall insulation aligned or overlapped at junction to minimize thermal bridging and maintain energy performance.

22. Structural interface, Existing English bond brickwork bears on concrete foundations; reinforced slab finishes flush with wall base to provide structural stability.

Timber frame meets roof glazing section

23. Fabricated steel cuff, A steel sleeve that lets the timber glulam frame pass right through the double-glazed glass, holding everything steady without stressing the glass.

24. Steel bolt, A strong bolt that goes through both the steel cuff and the timber to lock the timber frame securely in place.

25. Gap with compressible gasket, There's a small space between the timber and the steel cuff to allow for movement—like timber expanding or warping—and it's filled with a squishy gasket to keep it airtight and stop dust or moisture getting in.

26. Glulam timber beam, The engineered timber that goes through the cuff and is fixed in position by the bolt, providing solid support.

27. Double-glazed unit with UV protection, Two glass panes sealed together, with the outer 8 mm layer having UV protection to reduce sun damage. Gas inside the glass. The space between the panes is filled with argon or krypton gas to keep heat loss down.

28. Structural silicone sealant, A high-performance, neutral-cure silicone adhesive that bonds the glass panes to the spacer bar, providing structural integrity to the sealed unit. It remains flexible to accommodate movement and prevents moisture ingress.

29. 12 mm spacer bar, This keeps the glass panes exactly 12 mm apart and is made from a material that helps reduce heat loss and condensation.

30. Retractable steel fixing, A steel fixing mechanism that sits inside the fabricated cuff and slots underneath the glass once installed, securing the glass in place and allowing for easy removal or adjustment if needed.