

CONTEXT

The Middlesex Street Estate was built between 1650 and 1970, therefore it only has a short history. The building is not part of any conservation areas and it is not listed, therefore it allows freedom regarding design interventions.

The mapping of the Middlesex Street Estate and its surrounding area revealed, that the area lacks green spaces which need improvement to increase physical health, mental wellbeing and allow people to relax. Besides, there are several train stations from where the Estate can be approached. There aren't any bicycle lanes around. However, there are many roads that could allow these. The area seems like a great place for a new start-up, there are many different local businesses.

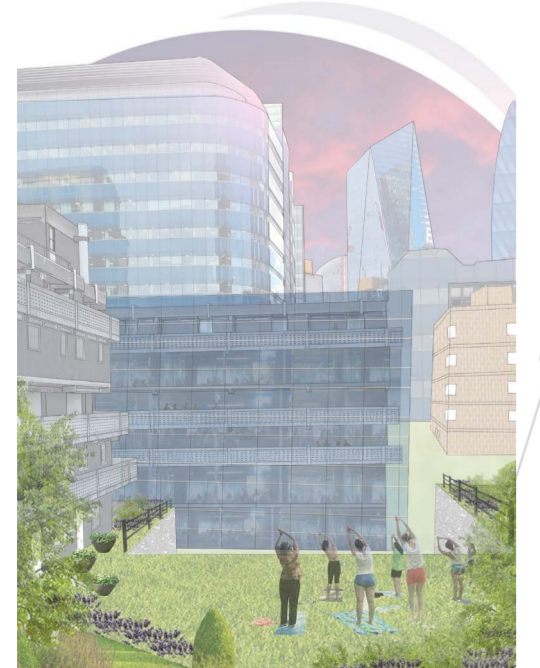
The City of London borough is the primary financial district of London. It has 25 wards, the one that houses the Middlesex Street Estate is Portsoken. 70% of residents are employed, mostly in full-time jobs. This borough has the highest salary rates in London. The statistics show that most people are of working age, they also work hard (and long hours) to earn a lot of money. Most people work in financial activities and for large companies, but there are also many smaller businesses. Regarding ethnicity and religion, the population lacks diversity. The Middlesex Street Estate is exactly on the border of two entirely different boroughs: The City of London and Tower Hamlets. The Estate belongs to the City, however the rich culture and atmosphere of Tower Hamlets have a huge impact on it.

CONCEPT

We have experienced a time that changed our working practices. The pandemic resulted in people working from home, which drastically reduced our emissions, noise pollution, and vehicle use. This has encouraged authorities such as the City of London corporation to push forward with their future plans, reducing access to cars, widening pedestrian and cycle pathways and developing more green spaces for the neighboring communities to enjoy.

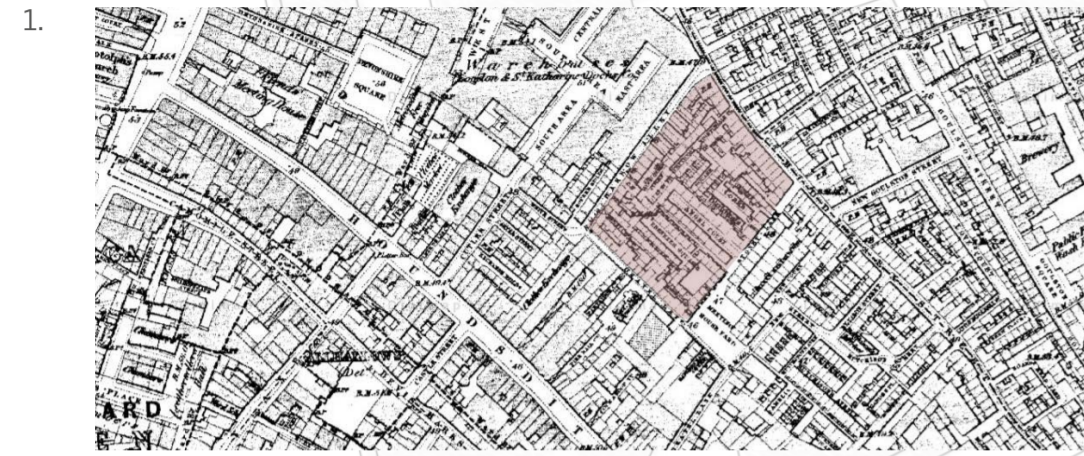
On the other hand, businesses and practices need to work as a team, which requires coming together. Also, people have a need to make friends, communicate, discuss topics that are not work-related. Working remotely has proven to be effective, but we also need spaces to work together and connect with others. New, mixed-use buildings emerge that accommodate both work and leisure. Therefore, it is possible that it is not worth creating only office buildings from now on.

The Middlesex Street Estate (the five blocks on the South facade) will house the new Lavender Estate offices. The start-up company specialises in environmentally-friendly household items and products, and their goal is not only to sell these, but to encourage locals to change their habits and live a more sustainable lifestyle. To achieve this, the Lavender Estate organises many different workshops and activities for the public. Additionally, to improve mental health and wellbeing, the herb garden that serves the products of the Lavender Estate will be situated at the podium, opened for the public to use for yoga and relaxation. As a result, a mixed-use building will emerge, that accommodates offices, production, shop, herb garden and many workshops. The company will work together at the site and connect with residents, city workers, customers and each other directly. The area will go through an improvement, thankfully to the new bike lanes, introduction of sustainable heating system, recycling station, activity and relaxation opportunities for the local community (including sustainability workshops to spread the word). Additionally, the building will get a new, inviting appearance, that will change the streetscape and connect the building to its context. Regarding internal spaces, the design will sustain and expose the existing construction of the building and bring it to life with the addition of new natural materials.



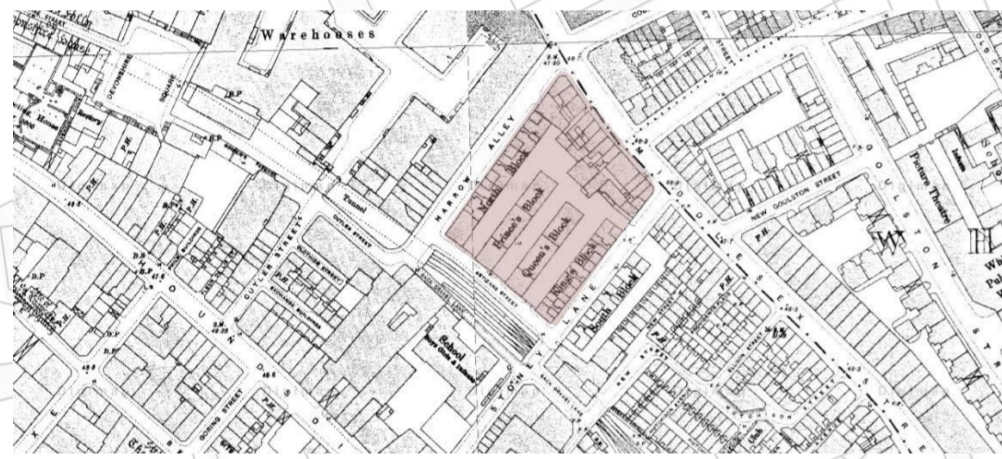
MAIN FOCUS: CREATING RELATIONSHIPS

1. Connect the present with the past: reopen the building to the public and continue its improvement.
2. Connect the floors of the Lavender Estate building: create a visual connection between floors.
3. Connect existing and new materials: retain and emphasize existing building materials and introduce new materials carefully.
4. Connect boroughs: bring the community of the City of London and Tower Hamlets together by creating a space everyone needs.
5. Connect the building to its context: the addition of a new facade that connects the building better to the streetscape.



1880

The site of the Middlesex Street Estate was completely different in 1880 - it had smaller blocks of houses made of brick or stone (masonry), surrounded by streets accessible to the public.



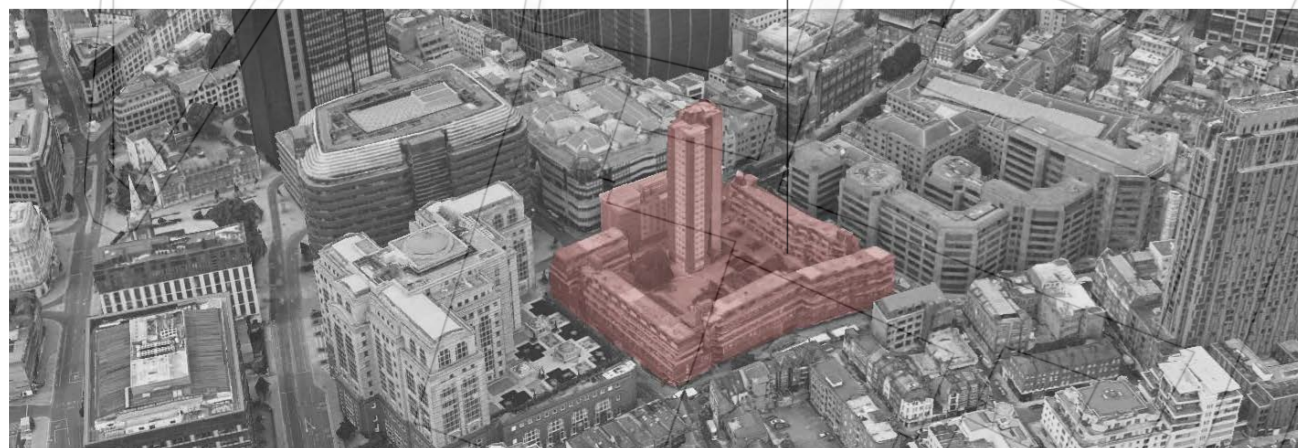
1910

Thirty years later, all of the small houses were replaced by four huge blocks. These had their own names, such as: Prince's Block, Queen's Block, North Block and King's Block. Ten years later, these were called Flats.

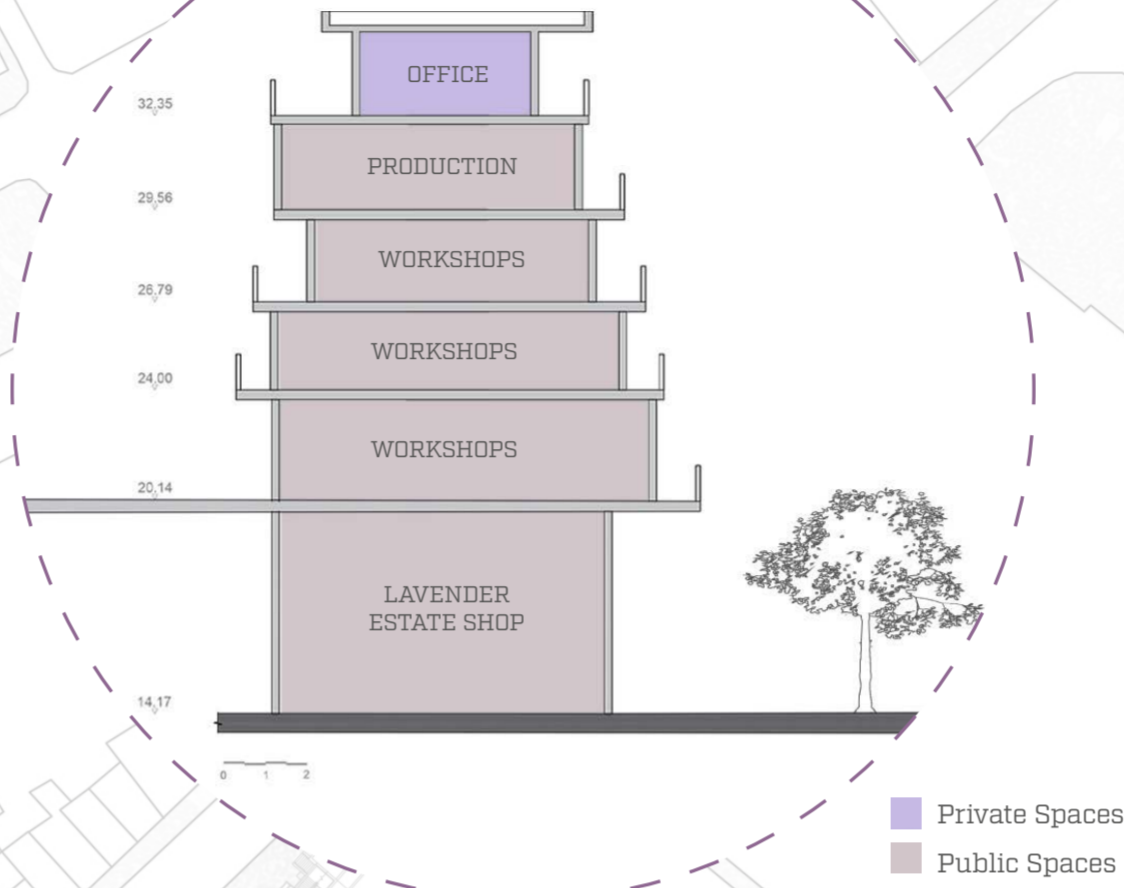


1950

Several smaller units remained on one side - one of these called Barnett's Mansions. By 1965 all of the blocks has been demolished (1960-65) to create space for the Middlesex Street Estate. The Estate was an improvement as it included bathrooms for each flat.



2.



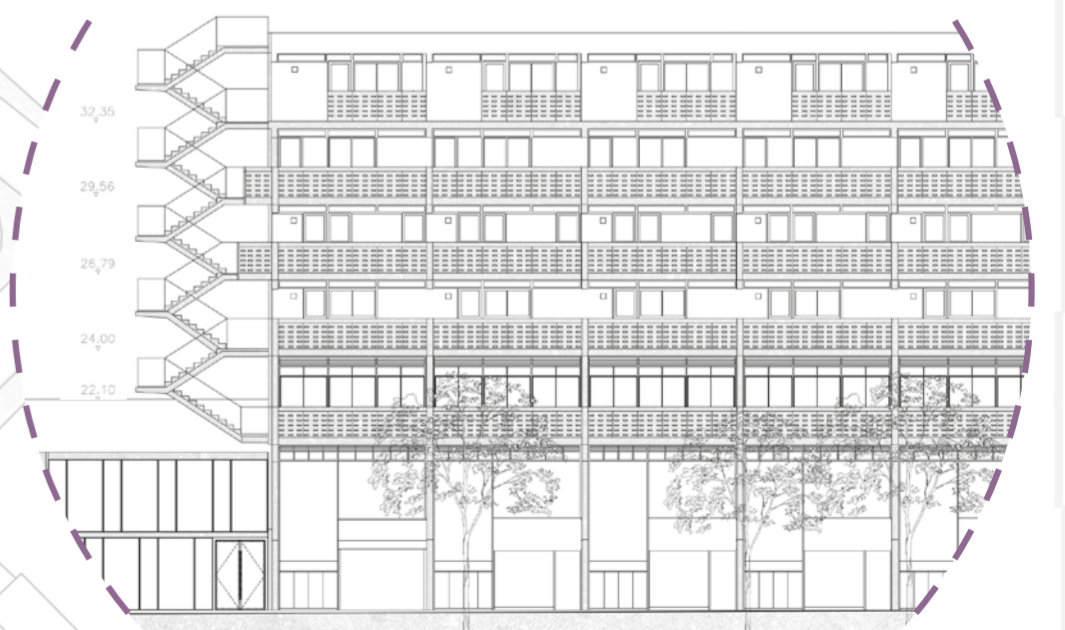
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4.



5.

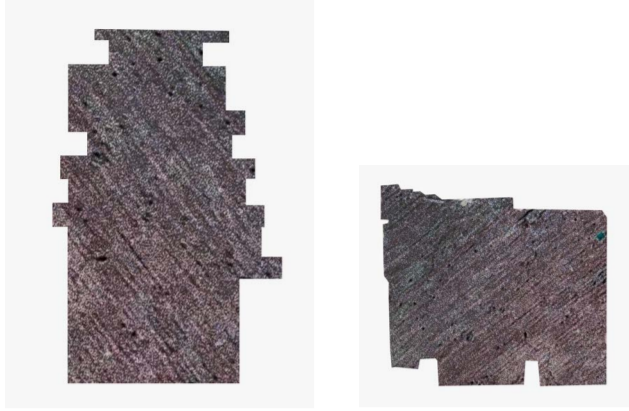


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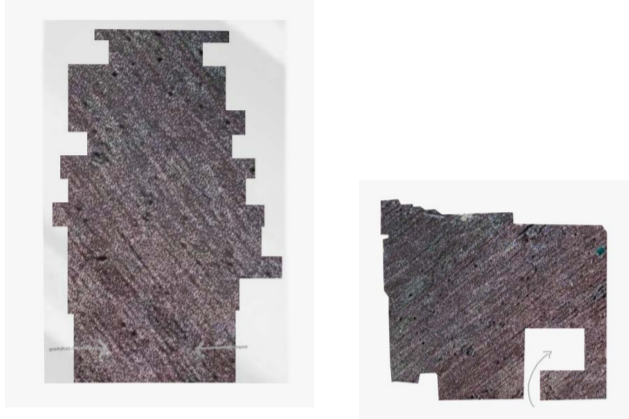
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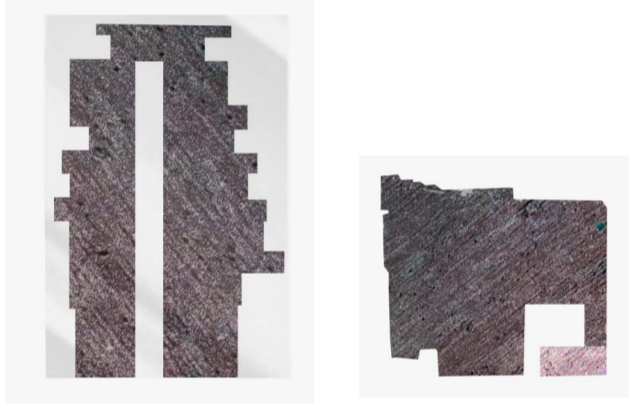
DESIGN STRATEGY



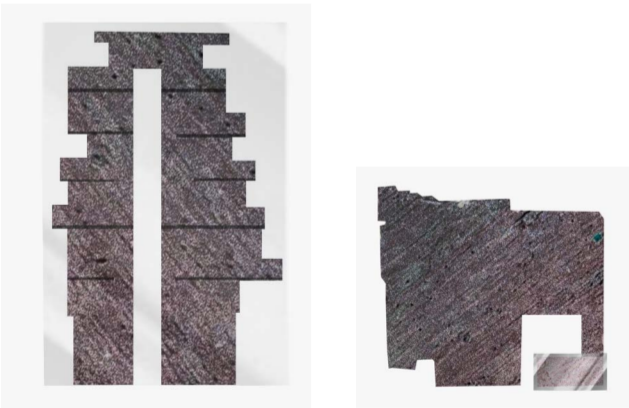
1. Existing five blocks currently residential flats, dentist and a restaurant.



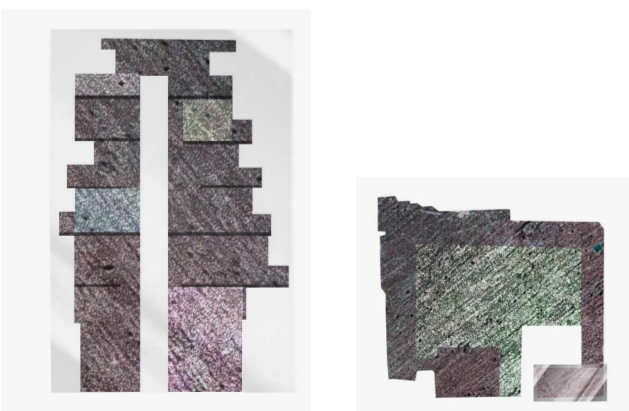
2. Demolishing, adding new glass facade and new materials. New entrance to open the building up for public.



3. Void to cut through all floors, creating a vertical connection.



4. Propose different floor sizes and locations around the void.



5. Place different activities to each area in the mixed use building: herb garden, shop, offices, workshops.



- 1.: Microcement (grey concrete effect)
- 2.: Dark engineered brick (existing)
- 3.: New grey concrete
- 4.: Terrazzo floor tiles
- 5.: Cherry wood
- 6.: Mixed recycled wood

DESIGN PROPOSAL

The Lavender Estate is a complex, mixed-use building, where several different activities work well together every day. Each floor serves a particular function: there are shop, office, production and a few workshop levels. The Lavender Estate creates a connection between the inside and the outside. What is more, it creates a connection between its internal floors with the openings between them and the decorative central staircase running through.

The transparent quality of the building applies to the exterior and the interior as well. Openings between all floors (except at office level for privacy) allow occupants of the building to see and hear activities on other floors. Visitors and employees work together within the same overall open space, therefore there is no distinction between people with different duties. The goal of the extremely open plan arrangement is not only to connect floors, but to connect people with each other as well.





The ground floor features a large relaxation area with a collection of books, indoor vegetation and unique furniture made of bioplastic - this is in line with the message the Lavender Estate wishes to convey. This area has an extraordinary atmosphere, thankfully to the curved glass facade of the building. Sunsets and sunrises are especially beautiful and relaxing when spent in this space.

The Lavender Estate shop is located on the ground floor, selling herbs for decoration and cooking, products made using these (eg. soaps, perfums, oils) and gifts packages. The shop works with omnichannel retailing, which means that it features workshops as a tactile experience - this also benefits networking (maker culture). The furniture of the shop is made of sustainable materials (mostly wood). The till/desk here functions as a reception as well.

The consultation spaces/workshops on the second floor are to encourage adults to change or improve their lifestyle, and be more sustainable.

At the third floor, visitors can learn about how to cook with herbs during interactive workshops. They learn how to bring these into their lives with food and drink preparation for a healthier life.

At the children's workshops at the fourth floor, older kids can play interactive games and make different decorative objects, drawings and so on. This is a great opportunity for parents can attend other workshops or consultations, or just relax or shop downstairs.

The fifth floor is the production level, where some of the goods for the ground floor shop are made, or packed.

The Lavender Estate offices are located on the sixth floor of the blocks. This floor is private, to be used for the Estate's office workers. The existing elements of the building inform the spatial layout of this space.



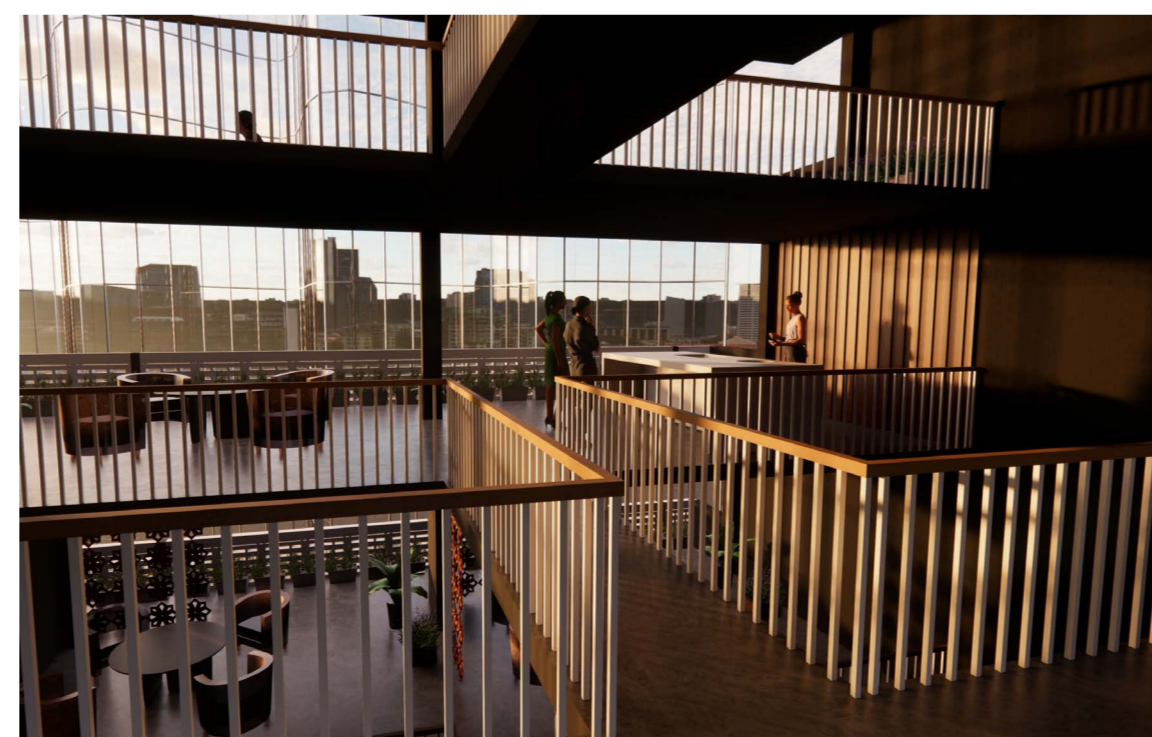
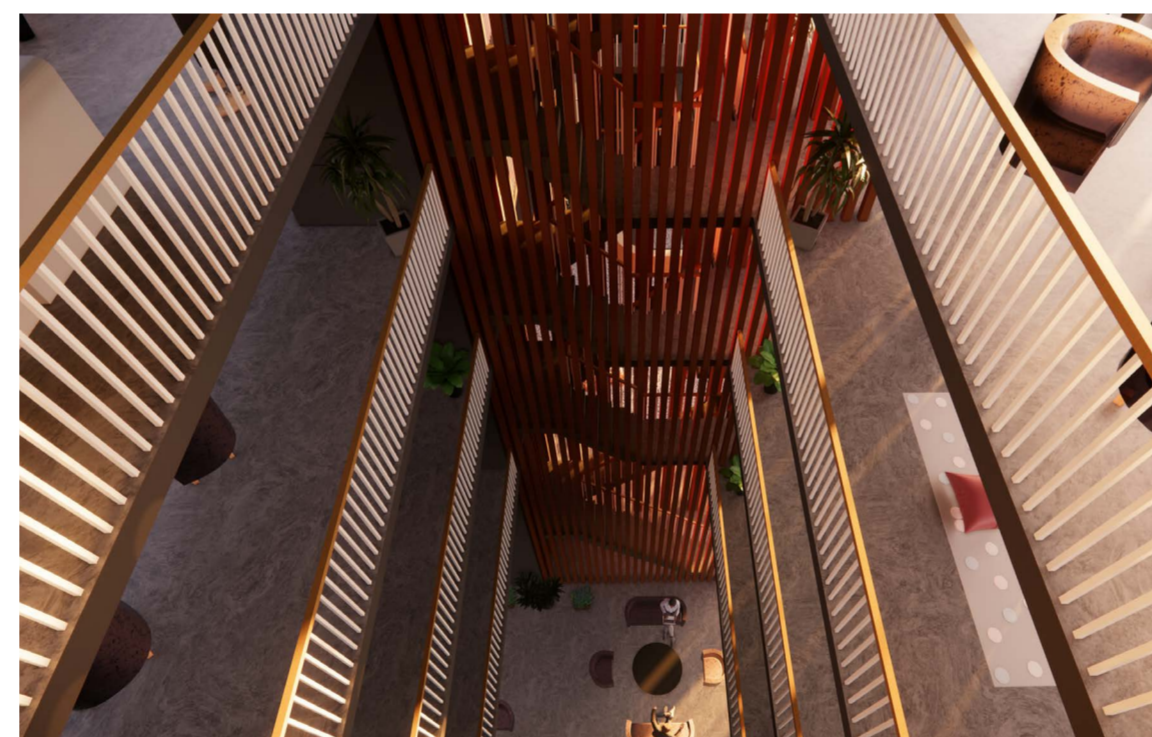
PRODUCTION



WORKSHOP



OFFICE



Thyme



Chives



Mint



Camellia



Abelia



Pansies



Palm Plants



Split Leaf



Gardenia

ALL SEASON TREES, BUSHES, HERBS, FLOWERS AT THE PODIUM

PLANTS IN NEED OF SPECIFIC CONDITIONS AS INDOOR PLANTING



LAVENDER PLANTATION AT THE PODIUM



Lavender

FAST HARVEST HERBS ON TERRACES



Coriander



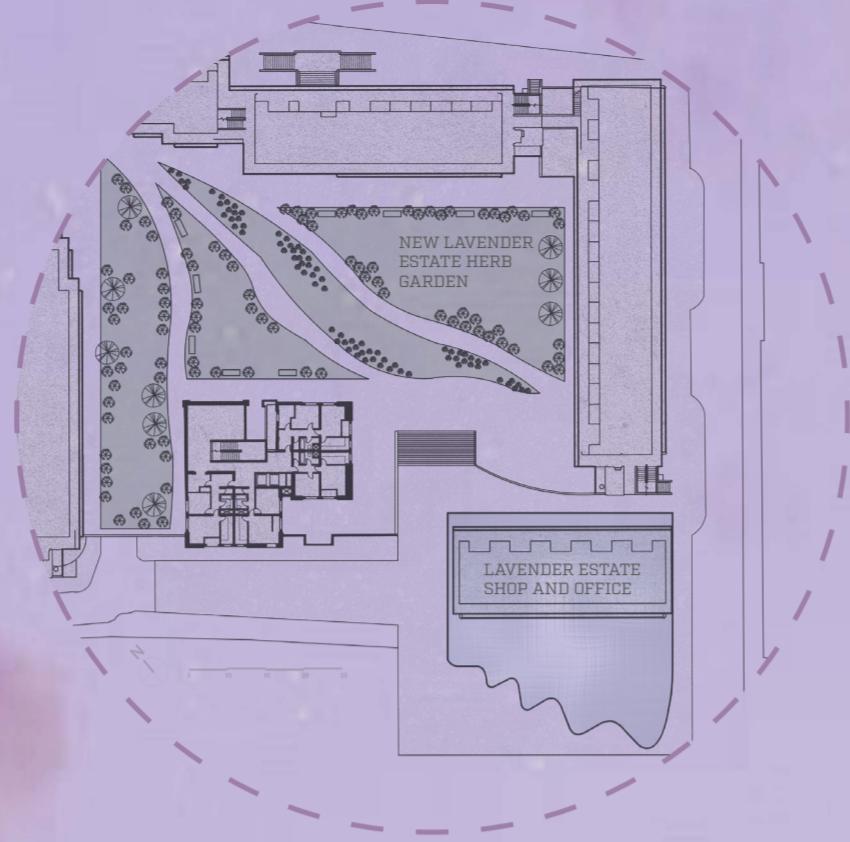
Dill



Oregano



Sage



The streetscape at the Artizan Street, White Kennett Street and Gravel Lane changes radically with the new design intervention. The new curved glass facade connects the Middlesex Street Estate to its modern surroundings at the South side of the building. The unique external appearance of the new Lavender Estate shop and office drives pedestrians to the interior.

Glass is the most suitable material for the new facade, because it is strong, aesthetic, resistant to weather, and can be made into any shape (therefore making organic shapes are possible). It transmits up to 80% of available natural daylight, which is needed for the indoor painting, and it is also environmentally friendly (saves artificial light). Its translucency is in line with the aim of the project: transparency, opening the building up and creating connections.

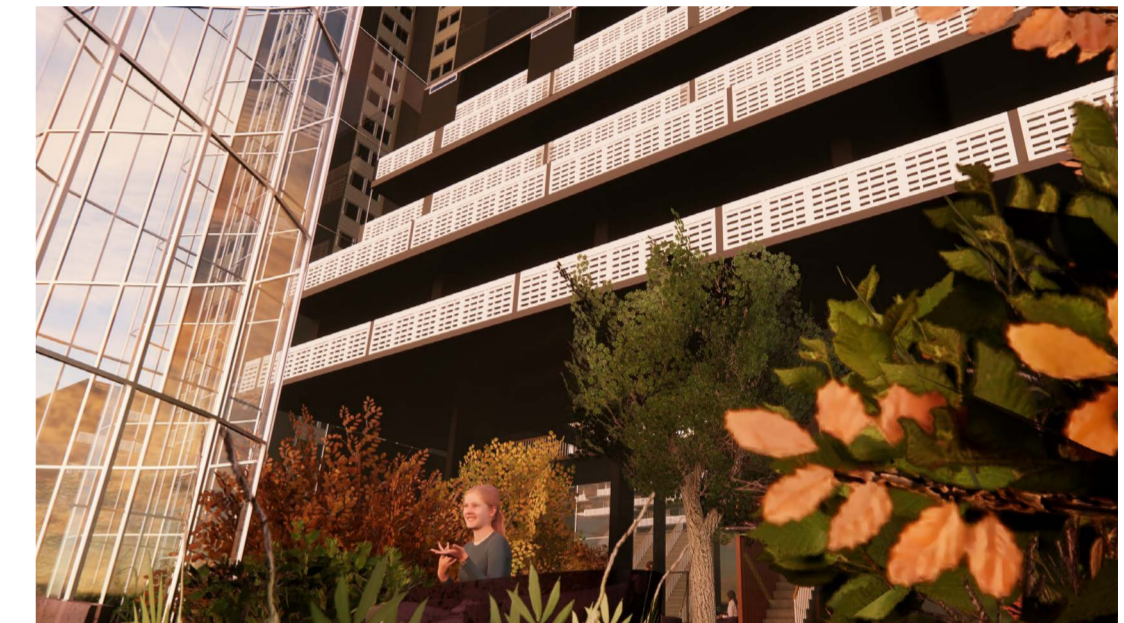
The proposed curtain wall system (structurally independent) is made of a steel support frame and solar control low e glass. The steel is strong and stiff, an elegant and minimally intrusive support for glazing. The glass blocks solar radiation and provides thermal insulation.

The Lavender Estate brand identity is present throughout all spaces/floors. Signages on the surfaces and information boards all have the same lettering and colours, in line with this identity.

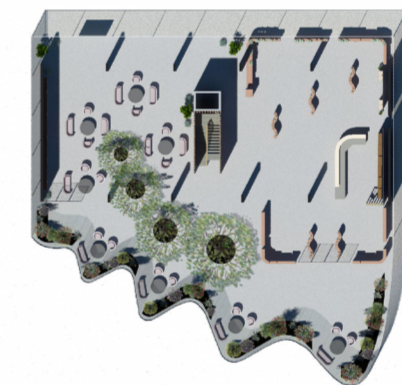
Elevator Buttons: each button has the graphic of the particular floor, so when visitors travel with the lift, they understand which floor they are allowed to enter, and what is the function of each level.

Views: when visitors are able to look outside, they can understand where in the building they are, compared to the neighbouring sites/landmarks. Within the Lavender Estate, this is achieved with the new glass facade. Long sightlines: showing people what is ahead causes curiosity and a will to explore further. Ramps clearly show visitors that they can continue their way that direction.

Change of floor finishes: indicates a change of purpose.



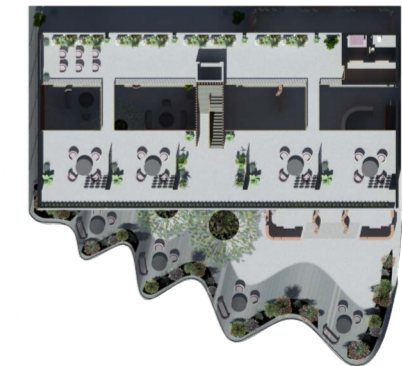
GROUND FLOOR



FOURTH FLOOR



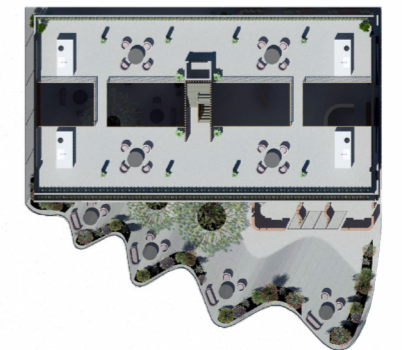
SECOND FLOOR



FIFTH FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



SIXTH FLOOR

