

Birmingham School of Architecture & Design
BA (Hons) Architecture 2024/2025

Beyond Austerity



BSoAD BA ARCHITECTURE

This publication is a catalogue of the work of the BA Architecture L6 Studios in 2024.

Students:

Saja Al Dulaimi
Maria Andrukonis
Ali Arat
Emily Arnold
Kamran Asif
Araba Asihene
Klaidi Bala
Saima Begum
Salima Benachi
Rosie Bissell
Sakinah Bouterse
Harley Broadfield
Asher Brookes
Irina Chiriac
Mahnoor Choudhary
Nikkita Coleman
Ben Crumpton
Renia Downes
Angelique Edwards
Lewis Evans
Maaria Faruki
Micheas Ferlito
Milca Gennuso
Aiden Goode
Sanjeeve Gunaratnam
Georgina Hitchin
Zlatka Ilieva
Juwayriyah Kausar
Lila Khairula
Aaqib Khan

Furqan Khan
Hania Khan
Maria Lozano Vasquez
Ashley Maburutse
Szymon Malicki
Souwaila Mamou
Lauren McKenzie
Evans Miti
Aleksandra Mostowa
Gurkeerat Nijjar
Haniyyah Obaidullah
Edwin Okyere
Jasmine Oliver
Alexander Packham
Stefan Paronikyan
Edyneusa Pereira So
Razvan-Constantin Precupet
Ateeq Rahman
Yasir Raja
Vaishnvi Rajput
Safwaan Raqeeb
Wastah Rizwan
Saffiyullah Shazad
My-Anh Simkiss
Gursharanjit Singh
Stefania-Ioana Sterian
Lucy Trett
Harry Wilding
Bisma Zahid

Tutors:

Robert Annable
Ollie Chapman
Dr Yazid Khemri
Virginia Polignano

Paul Beatty-Pownall
Dr Hocine Bougdah
Dr Sana Malik
Ian Shepherd
Emma Widdop
Max Wisotsky
Dr Jielsing Xiao

Beyond Austerity

As cities grow in scale and complexity, they become exposed to a wide range of challenges, from climate change to natural disasters to uncontrolled urbanisation and social isolation

In the meantime, cities' spatial structures undergo pressures to accommodate current needs, adapt to new emerging ones and enable urban systems to survive and thrive. Birmingham like many other cities, is constantly changing and will need to adapt to current and emerging challenges.

Birmingham is considered a dynamic force as the UK's second largest city and the financial, commercial and cultural hub of the midland region. Once known as "the city of a thousand trades" and the birthplace of the industrial revolution; Birmingham has become a superdiverse city, thanks to its rich history and culture reflected in its varied neighbourhoods and environments.

While Birmingham has many great strengths, it also faces many serious challenges. At the local level, Birmingham suffers from high levels of deprivation in different parts of the city. Residents suffer from many problems such as high energy costs, unemployment, overcrowded accommodation, poor health, homelessness, among others. At the global level, Birmingham faces similar challenges to the UK and the rest of the world such as climate change, air pollution, biodiversity loss, social isolation, growing mental health concerns.

Furthermore, in September 2023, Birmingham City Council declared bankruptcy caused by unprecedented financial challenges. This crisis forced the council to impose austerity

measures, and make drastic costs cuts and reductions across its services, making key employees redundant, closing community centres, scrapping all arts and culture fundings and reducing many other "non-essential" services.

As a consequence, disruptions in the lives of residents of Birmingham has impacted their well-being and quality of life, as the costs cuts made by the council resulted in unemployment, lack of cleanliness in streets and parks, a rise in taxes, and little to no support for children, young people and families. Many neighbourhoods in Birmingham are now in crisis, where shops and community facilities are closing, loneliness and isolation is increasing, mental health is worsening, and life expectancy is declining owing to unhealthy lifestyles.

Within the overarching theme of "Beyond Austerity" students have explored various urban and architectural approaches to envision a scenario for the future of the neighbourhoods of Birmingham.

Students have asked themselves important questions like: What kind of city do we want for ourselves and future generations to live in? What do we believe is important for a good quality of life? Which creative and radical solutions can we envision in response to local and global challenges to enable Birmingham city to thrive?

Students we asked to react to the current crises and propose innovative and radical design solutions to enable communities in Birmingham to adapt to austerity and thrive for a resilient and sustainable future: Responding to real life problems caused by the council's bankruptcy with an aim to improve residents' quality of life.

Studio 1: Urban Makers
Tutor: Yazid Khemri
Location: Stirchley, Birmingham

Known in the Victorian era as "the city of a thousand trades" and the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, today Birmingham continues to be a dynamic force as the UK's second largest city and the financial, commercial and cultural hub of the region. Its rich history and culture are reflected in its varied neighbourhoods and environments, and it is home to world class arts, dance, music, food and cultural heritage. Birmingham played an important role in the development of the UK's economy by being home to factories, workshops and various businesses. It has relied heavily on its manufacturing industry, making it an economic and industrial hub of the country.

Today, the city is going through austerity due to financial challenges faced by the city council. Furthermore, in recent decades the city's manufacturing industry has declined which in turn caused unemployment, making many buildings vacant and abandoned. Recently, there is a renewed interest in integrating manufacturing into city in a new and improved aspect, as much manufacturing has moved away from large-scale production, heavy machinery and massive infrastructure towards smaller, bespoke companies.

The integration of manufacturing into the urban fabric is referred to as "urban making". This is usually linked to the maker movement which puts emphasis on physical exploration, making, creating...and DIY. It is also important to think how making can be less polluting and disruptive to urban dwellers, can we think of new production methods that respond to today's challenges? This studio asks you to rethink, innovate, adapt, and design neighbourhoods to be resilient and sustainable economically, ecologically and socially.

Studio 2: Exhibit A
Tutor: Rob Annable
Location: Ladywood, Birmingham

"The ultimate, hidden truth of the world is that it is something that we make, and could just as easily make differently." -- David Graeber

Birmingham's arts funding is under threat of complete extinction, with investment in the cultural sector expected to be cut by 60% in 2024 and 100% in 2025, prompting the publishing of a joint statement by major arts organisations in the region under the banner # CultureMatters. Although some opportunities for support remain, such as the recently announced fund offered by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), its remit covers a large geographic area and benefits will undoubtedly be spread thin.

Against this backdrop of diminishing state support and its failures of imagination, other questions include: How can a city's residents continue to ensure a thriving arts and cultural environment? What is the scale or nature of a neighbourhood sufficient to offer an identity for artistic self-determination, organisation and mutual aid? What cultural infrastructure must it adopt, create, steward and maintain to facilitate creativity and recreation in the community for multiple generations without risk of systemic failure?

Exhibit A examines how architects and urban designers can address these questions on behalf of communities to foster archetypal spaces and forms ready for occupation and appropriation through the creation of neighbourhood Expos. By taking inspiration from precedents supporting exhibitions, festivals, fairs and pageants we will explore how to create '...positively shaped HULLS of public space' to be filled with the arts and culture of its assembled residents.

Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter
Tutor: Virginia Polignano
Location: King's Heath, Birmingham

There is an increasing view of cities as a mere context where 'the practice of everyday life' takes place. Their growth rate seems to urgently require more attention not only to their design and planning but also to deeper questions of meaning and purpose: their *raison d'être* is more than a simple mechanical approach of addressing the city's needs.

The challenge is how to develop that sense of place capable of generating a strong impact on the human experience within a city and consequently, how this would affect the perception of ourselves in it.'

Shelters have often been used for refuge throughout history and in times of disasters, but they also represent the idea of a place capable of providing warmth and protection: the starting point for defining a space and establishing a sense of place/ home.

When associated with the term "spirituality," their context changes and elevates to a refuge to reconnect with one's spirit or soul: a place, whether physical, mental, or emotional, where people find support and understanding to overcome the difficulties of daily life.

A spiritual place should inspire to be a place where one can sit and be reminded of all the things that are important outside their individual lives. An 'open-minded' space needs to be accessible physically, intellectually and spiritually: in its design, it should evoke freedom and inclusivity rather than the opposite.

But how and in what ways can these refuges help people in Birmingham when material resources are scarce and financial hardship is widespread?

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall
Tutor: Ollie Chapman
Location: Lifford, Birmingham

The wealth and anthropological ideals of Birmingham's industrialists were used to establish many of the central institutions and wider transport infrastructures that still define the landscape, in addition to the development of supporting recreational and residential facilities to keep the working classes engaged, healthy, and nearby. To the south of Birmingham, screw manufacturers built athletic grounds in Stirchley a Chocolate Factory was the centre of model villages in Bournville Paper Mills provided boating ponds in Wychall Clay works fired tiles next to allotments in Kings Norton and Chemical and Refuse Works nestled into fishing reservoirs in Lifford.

When Koolhaas describes a new urbanism as a hybrid, providing a stage for uncertainty – the shift is far less a novel concept than initially appears: The long history of the city is already that of permeable transitions between one entity and another – shared spaces where ideas are shared and beliefs founded. Invariably, common spaces and activities are political contested, challenged, and ideally re-formed: the very basis of cooperation and sociality.

There are, of course, still some messy/ hybrid spaces throughout the city: spaces that cater for multiple social groups and offer an architectural intervention between the zones of domestic and labour – not driven solely for financial profit, but for social value. However, the financial situation at Birmingham City Council and the bankruptcy notice issued in September 2023 have then been followed by a government initiated process of deep cuts to community facilities and asset sales that raise concerns about the sustainability of such spaces in the future.

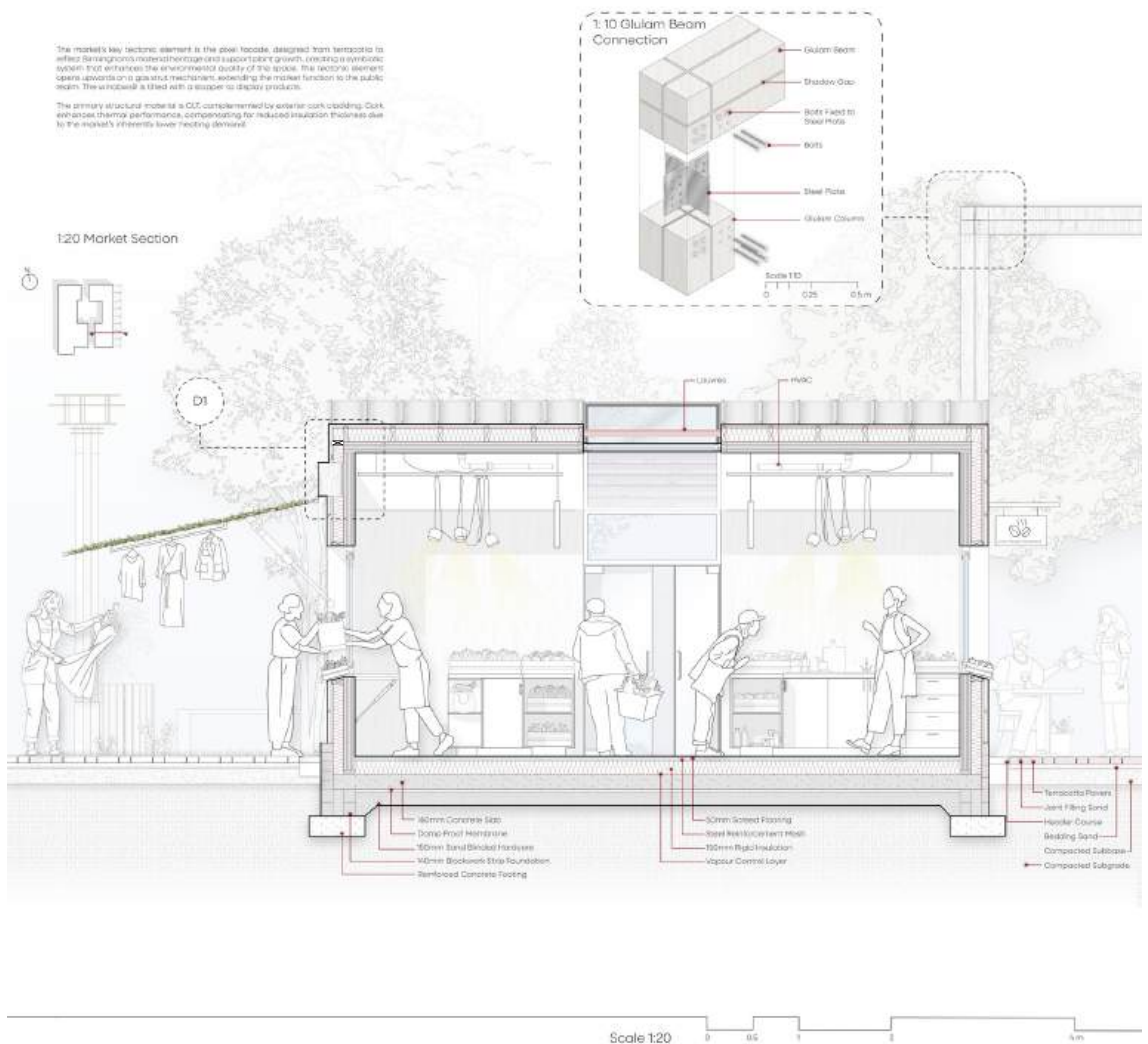


Saja Al Dulaimi

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

The *Commons Workshop* is a proposed community hub situated at the quieter end of Pershore Road in Stirchley, Birmingham, an area known for its independent spirit but currently experiencing a decline in local activity. This project aims to revitalise the area by introducing a multi-functional space that brings together glass fusing workshops, flexible community rooms, and an open outdoor area for informal gatherings and events.

Rooted in Stirchley's creative identity and strong sense of community, the design promotes both making and social interaction. Using locally inspired brickwork, open thresholds, and passive environmental strategies, the space is designed to be inclusive, accessible, and embedded in its context. By blending craft, community, and place-making, The *Commons Workshop* acts as a catalyst for regeneration and long-term neighbourhood resilience.

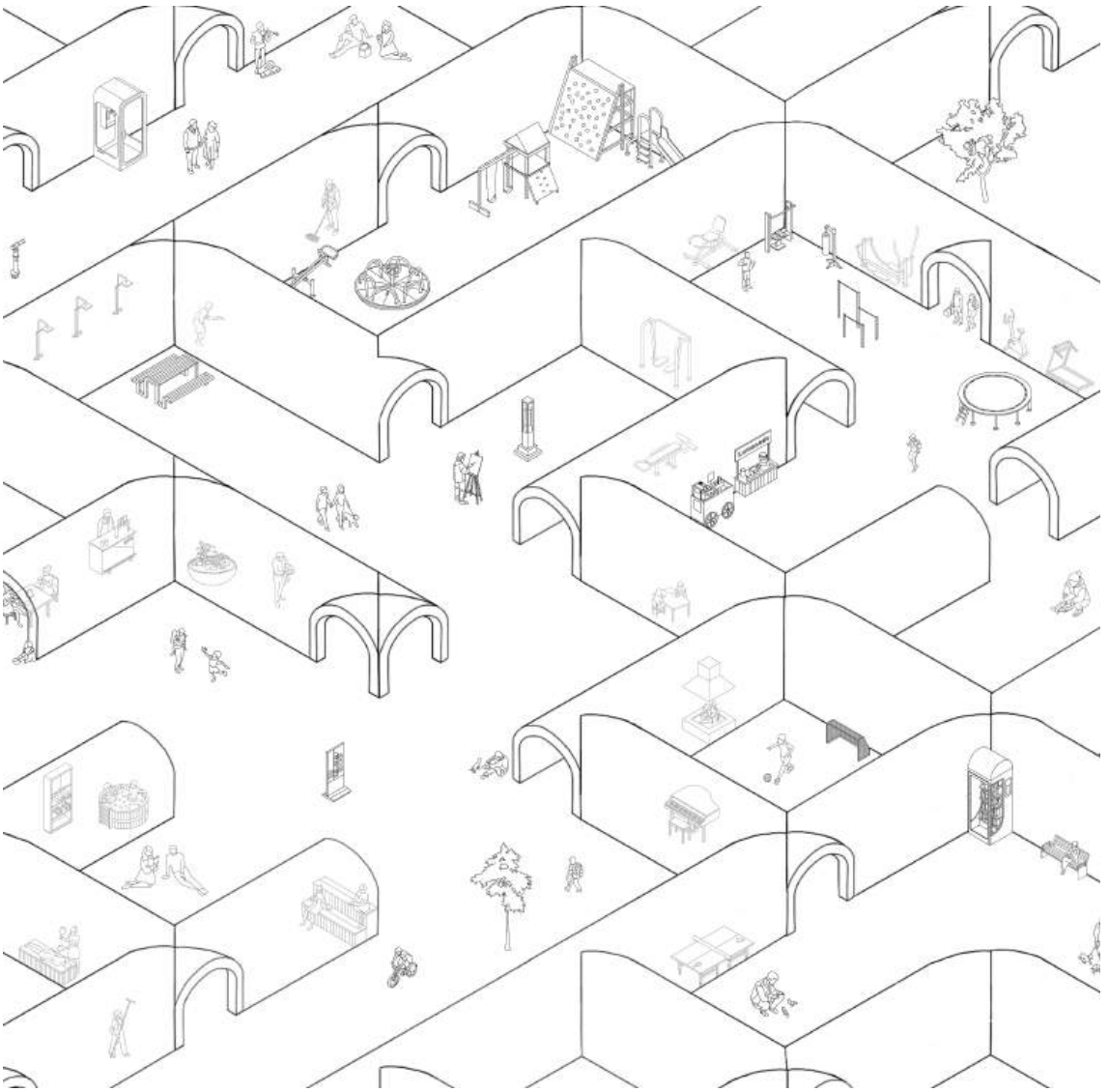


Maria Andrukonis

Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

The *Urban Refuge Marketplace* proposes a community-driven and sustainable market space in Kings Heath, addressing the displacement of independent businesses and the environmental degradation of the High Street. At the heart of the design is a pedestrian-orientated urban short-cut, guiding users through the biophilic courtyard, offering a pause point and reconnection with nature within the densely built environment. Openings from the markets form a 'pedestrian drive-through' concept, creating an experience through the journey of the short-cut. The east facade consists of a modular terracotta 'pixel' element, which open via a gas strut mechanism, spill the market program into the public realm and activating the pavement edge.

The project is supplied by an integrated hydroponic greenhouse, reinforcing transparent, healthy, and self-sufficient food production. Rainwater harvesting, on-site composting, and the use of CLT, cork, and terracotta respond to the project's circular, low-impact ethos.

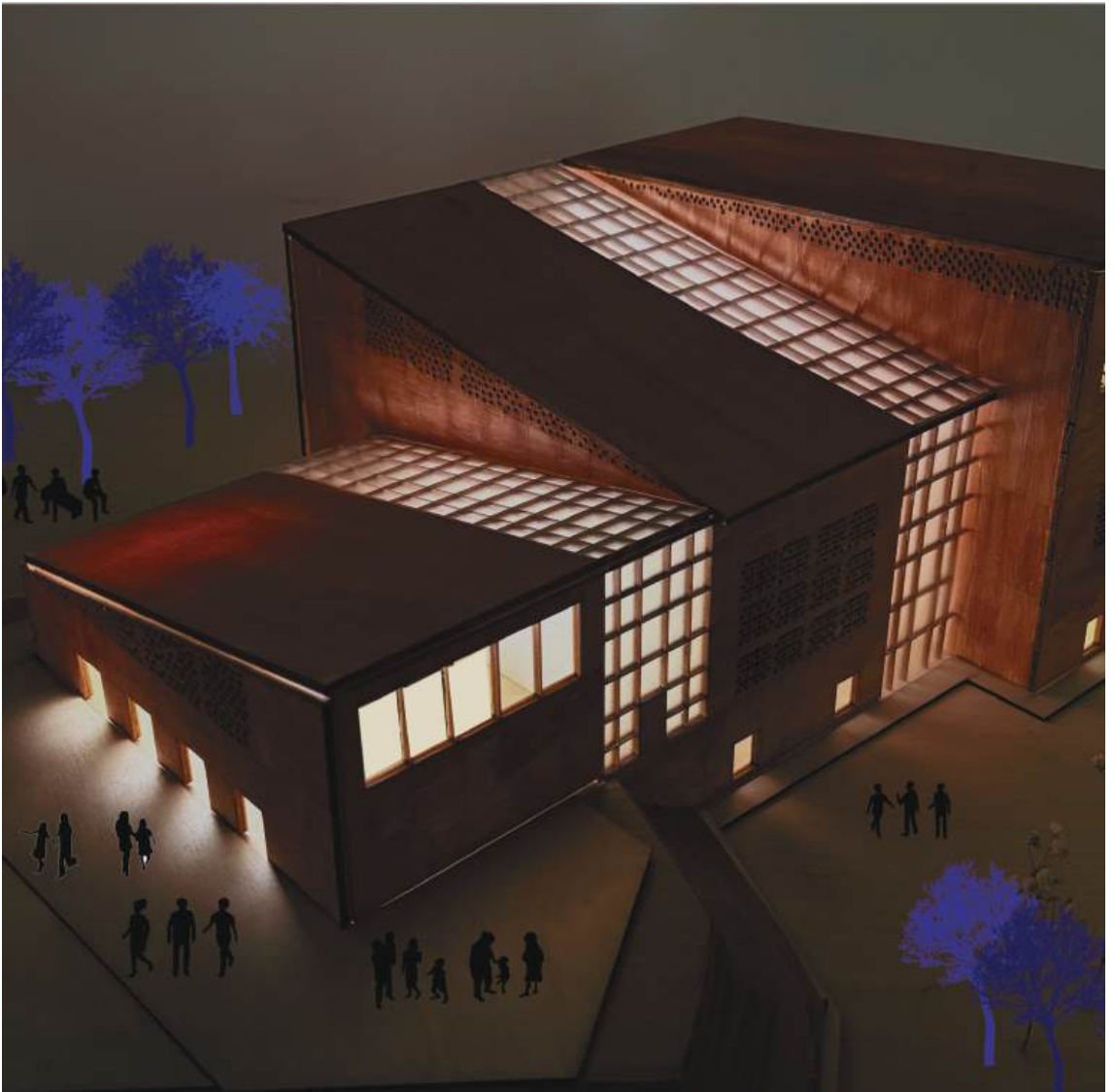


Emily Arnold

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

Located adjacent to Kings Norton Speciality Minerals, an area of relaxation and rehabilitation was required to combat joint and muscle pain experienced by the factory workers, hence the program of my building being a spa and therapy space. The project redefines the ratio of green space to industry, and creating a new identity with this -- local visitors can view into the factory and the conditions of the workers, workers can view towards the canal and reservoir to create a connection to nature; and a symbiotic relationship can be formed between the two.

A key feature that was explored was the environmental conditions and impacts. Sustainability was explored; materials already available on site were utilised, such as calcium carbonate and building materials available from the recent demolition of the previous warehouse and boiler house. The ever-changing weather conditions of England were also considered; levels of sunlight can be adapted through louvres and reflectors, with rainwater creating movement through gutters built into the walls.



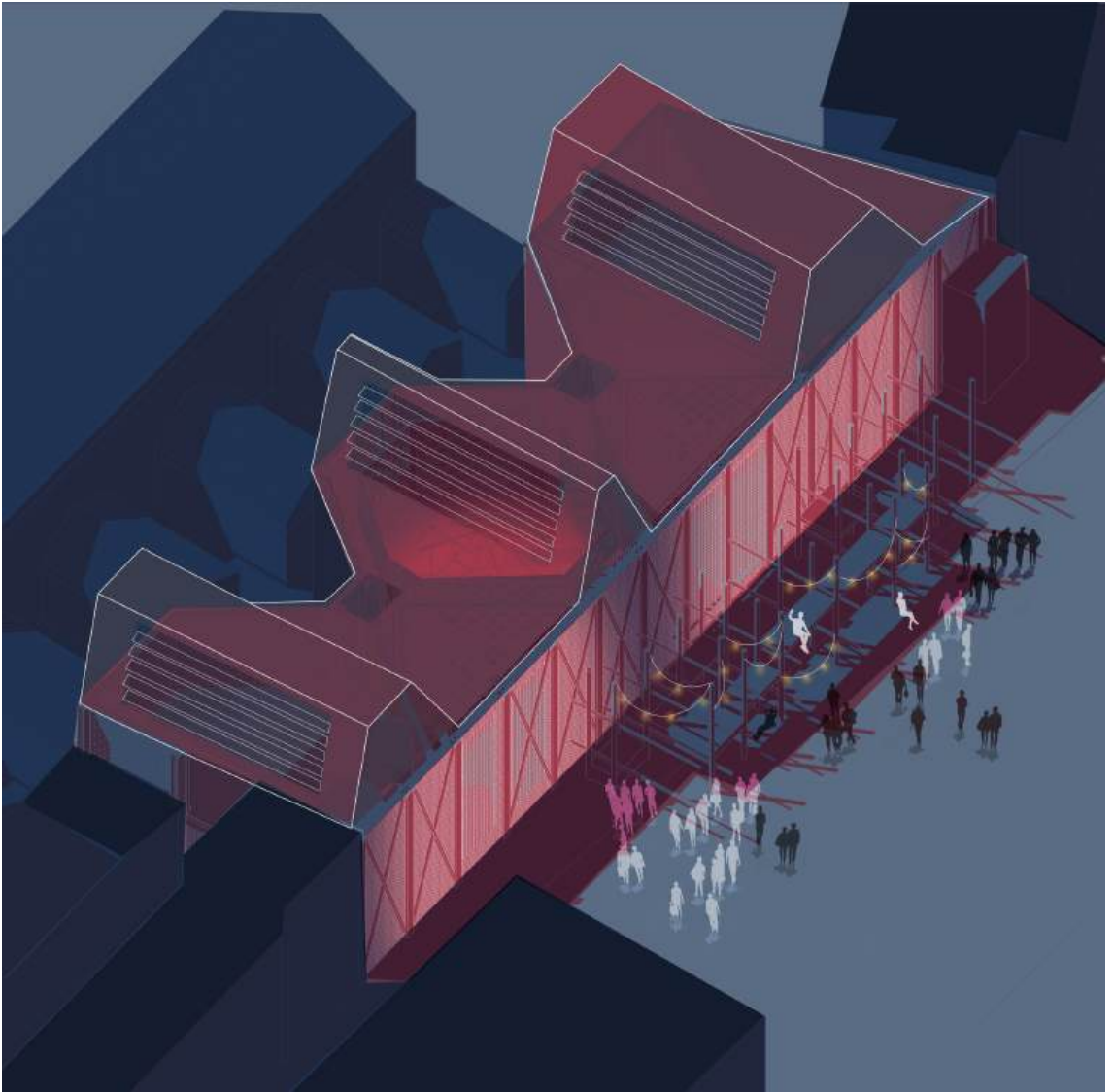
Araba Asihene

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

The Meridian Dance Hall is a dynamic cultural beacon, rooted in Birmingham's rich industrial heritage yet embracing a contemporary spirit of light, movement and community living. The name stems from the bringing together a constellation of spaces designed to inspire connection, creativity and celebration amongst the people of the community. It is a cultural crossroad, where history and modernity meet, and where community, art and movement are harmoniously aligned.

At its heart is the Grand Dance Hall, where rhythm and elegance converge beneath the soaring ceilings and refined industrial details. Within this building complex, are luminous breakout spaces with translucent polycarbonate facades, inviting natural light and framed views that dissolve boundaries between inside and out.

The Canopy Cafe also serves as a warm social hub, fostering conversation beneath its airy, light-drenched canopy. Beyond the doors of the dance hall is the drift terrace, which extends the indoor experience to the outdoors.

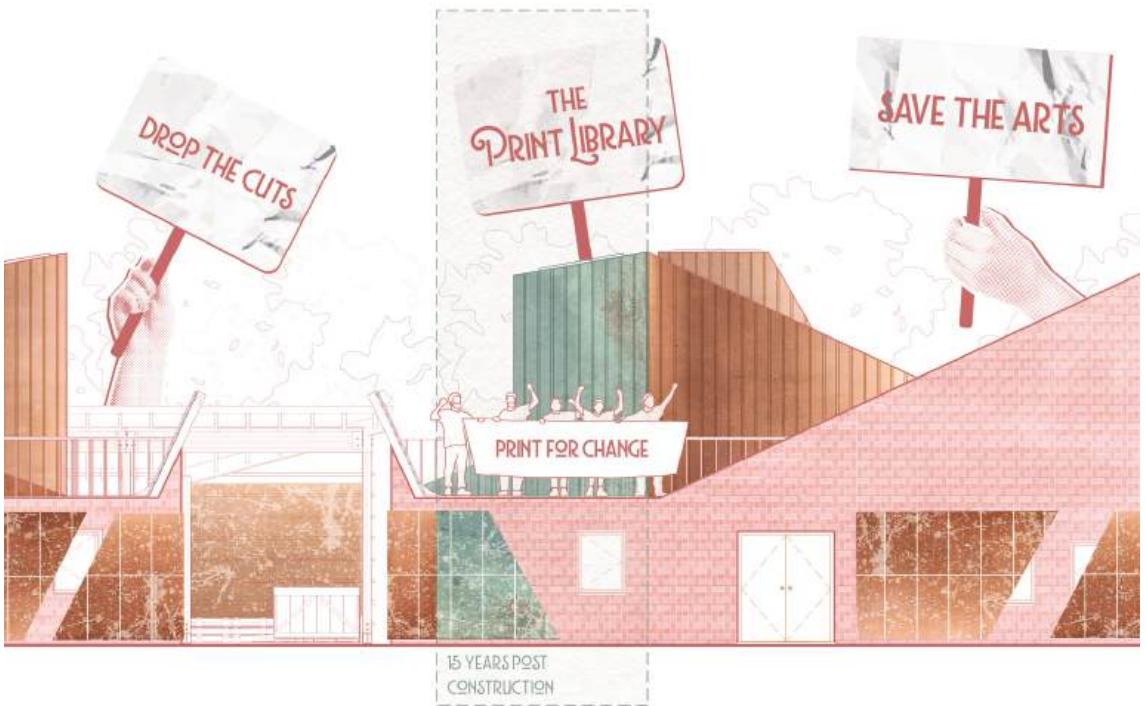


Saima Begum

Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

The Forgotten and Found project seeks to rejuvenate the neighbourhood of Kings Heath by reactivating its neglected and overlooked spaces along the High Street. Central to this initiative is *The Token Fair* – a community-led gaming arcade designed to transform the disused alleyways and in-between spaces that weave through the area. Once viewed as unsafe and uninviting, these alleyways carried a stigma of neglect. By retrofitting an abandoned warehouse at the end of Kings Court, the project brings familiarity and warmth back to the site, reimagining these forgotten paths as vibrant connectors within the urban fabric.

Through public engagement, *The Token Fair* restores a sense of purpose to these passageways, replacing fear with curiosity and creating a new social energy within the neighbourhood. The arcade not only offers a playful public space but also harnesses sustainable energy-harvesting technology through kinetic floor tiles, which generate and store energy to power the building's lighting, improving Kings Heath's night life.

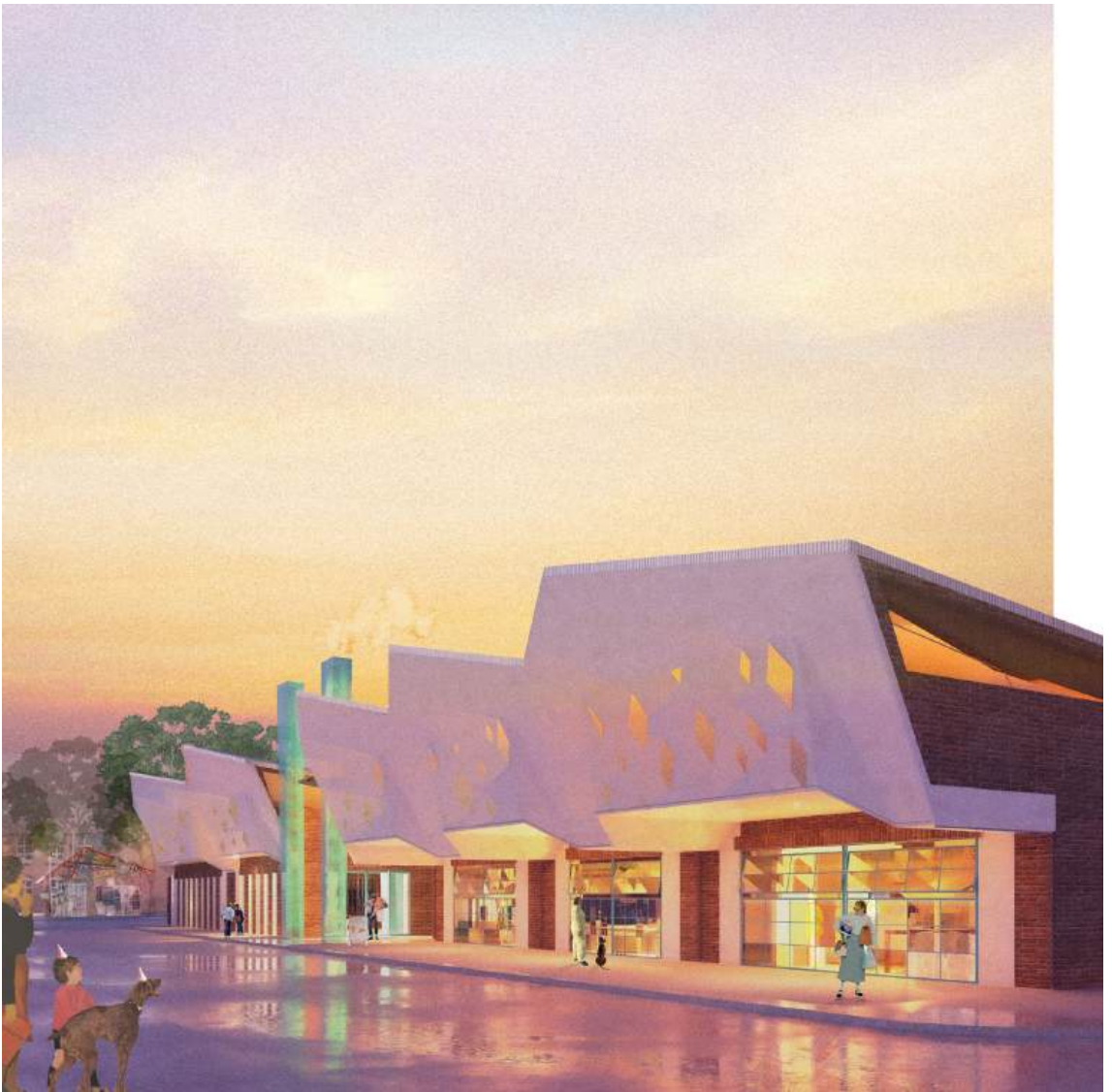


Salima Benachi

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

The *Print Library* is a response to the austerity measures set by the council in 2024. This has notably alerted the Starchley community in regard to the impact this would have on their everyday lives as inequalities would arise such as cultural deprivation. The residents are keen on being vocal and protesting inequalities affecting them, as earlier this year, protesters were alarmed by the library closures announcement which led them to unite and protest via different forms and media such as protesting, signing online petitions, writing and making art.

Through printmaking, the residents can communicate their message and protest, allowing their opposition to be seen and live on with their prints being hung and attached to the roof. The *Print Library* includes two buildings framed around an alleyway-inspired corridor; a cafe-library, considering the possible loss of community libraries, and a printmaking workshop to protest. The physical appearance of the copper roofs transforms over time, embodying a statement of change, a metaphor expressed through protest.



Rosie Bissell
Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

Back in Business is a community-led architectural intervention that aims to revitalise Stirchley High Street by celebrating its unique identity and supporting local makers and independent businesses. The proposal draws inspiration from Stirchley's layered character, incorporating references to nearby landmarks and the rhythm of alleyways. The design features a striking diamond-cut stone facade with a cantilevered form that encourages curiosity, while internal courtyards and arcade-like passages invite people to wander, pause, and engage with the space.

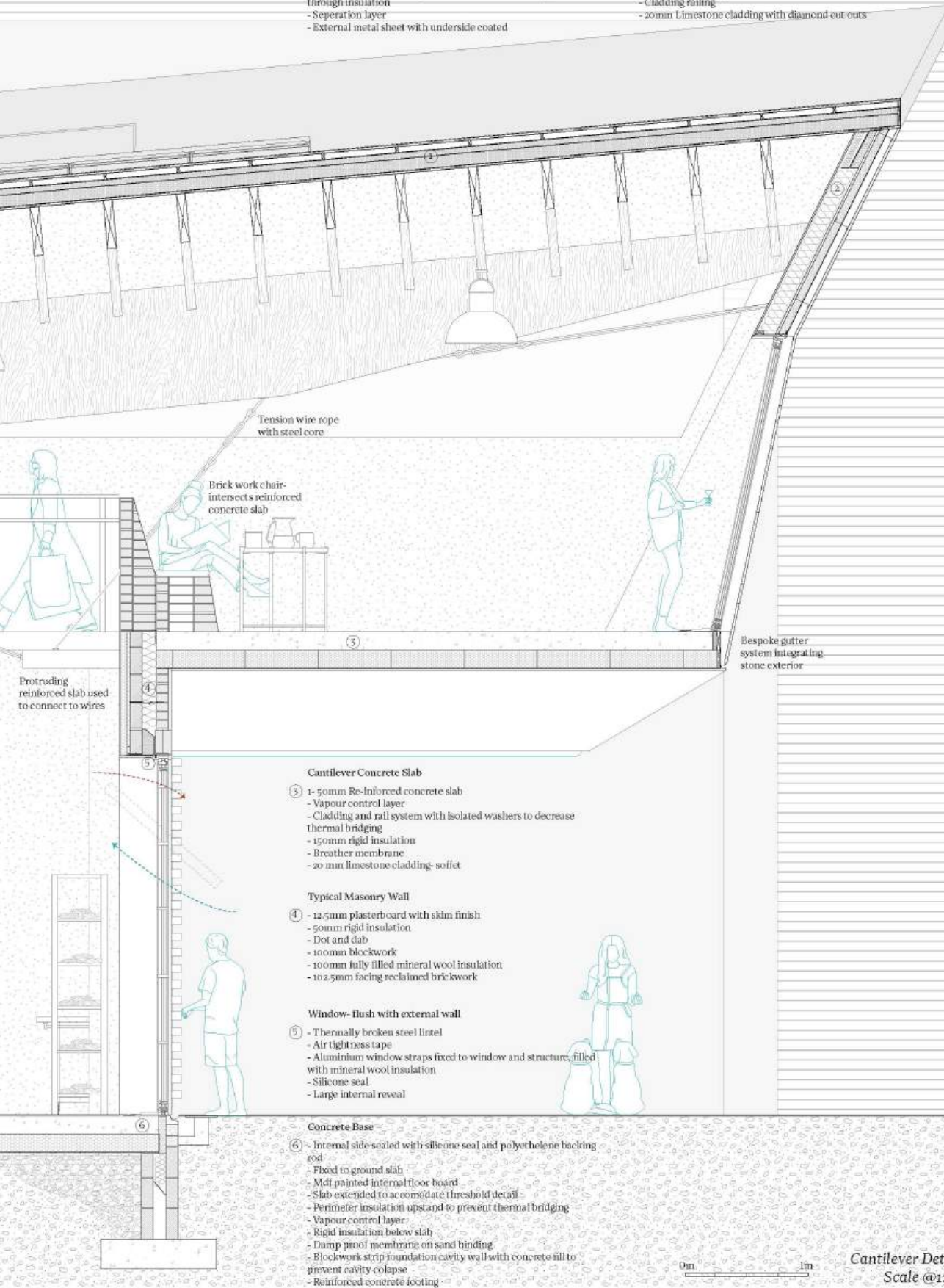
The scheme includes a bakery, brewery, workshops, and exhibition spaces, combining traditional craftsmanship with elements of high-tech architecture to reflect the evolving nature of making and working. Material choices and detailing are rooted in the local context, with a focus on durability, tactility, and adaptability. By promoting visibility of craft, fostering collaboration, and offering flexible, accessible spaces, *Back in Business* helps re-energise a declining high street and reinforces Stirchley's community-focused spirit.

Warm Ventilated Roof

- ① - Purlins slotted into tapered glulam rafter (d. 1000mm, w. 250mm)
 - 18mm deck on top of purlins
 - Air and vapour control layer- foil self-adhesive bitumen sheet
 - 150mm rigid insulation
 - Breather membrane
 - Counter battens forming ventilated void. Fixed into purlins back through insulation
 - Separation layer
 - External metal sheet with underside coated

Stone Cladding Wall

- ② - 12.5mm plasterboard and skim finish
 - 150mm insulation
 - 18mm sheathing
 - 50mm rigid insulation
 - Breather membrane
 - Treated 12.5mm ply
 - Cladding railing
 - 20mm Limestone cladding with diamond cut outs



Tension wire rope
with steel core

Brick work chair-
intersects reinforced
concrete slab

Protruding
reinforced slab used
to connect to wires

Bespoke gutter
system integrating
stone exterior

Cantilever Concrete Slab

- ③ - 1- 50mm Re-inforced concrete slab
 - Vapour control layer
 - Cladding and rail system with isolated washers to decrease thermal bridging
 - 150mm rigid insulation
 - Breather membrane
 - 20 mm limestone cladding- soffit

Typical Masonry Wall

- ④ - 12.5mm plasterboard with skim finish
 - 50mm rigid insulation
 - Dot and dab
 - 100mm blockwork
 - 100mm fully filled mineral wool insulation
 - 102.5mm facing reclaimed brickwork

Window- flush with external wall

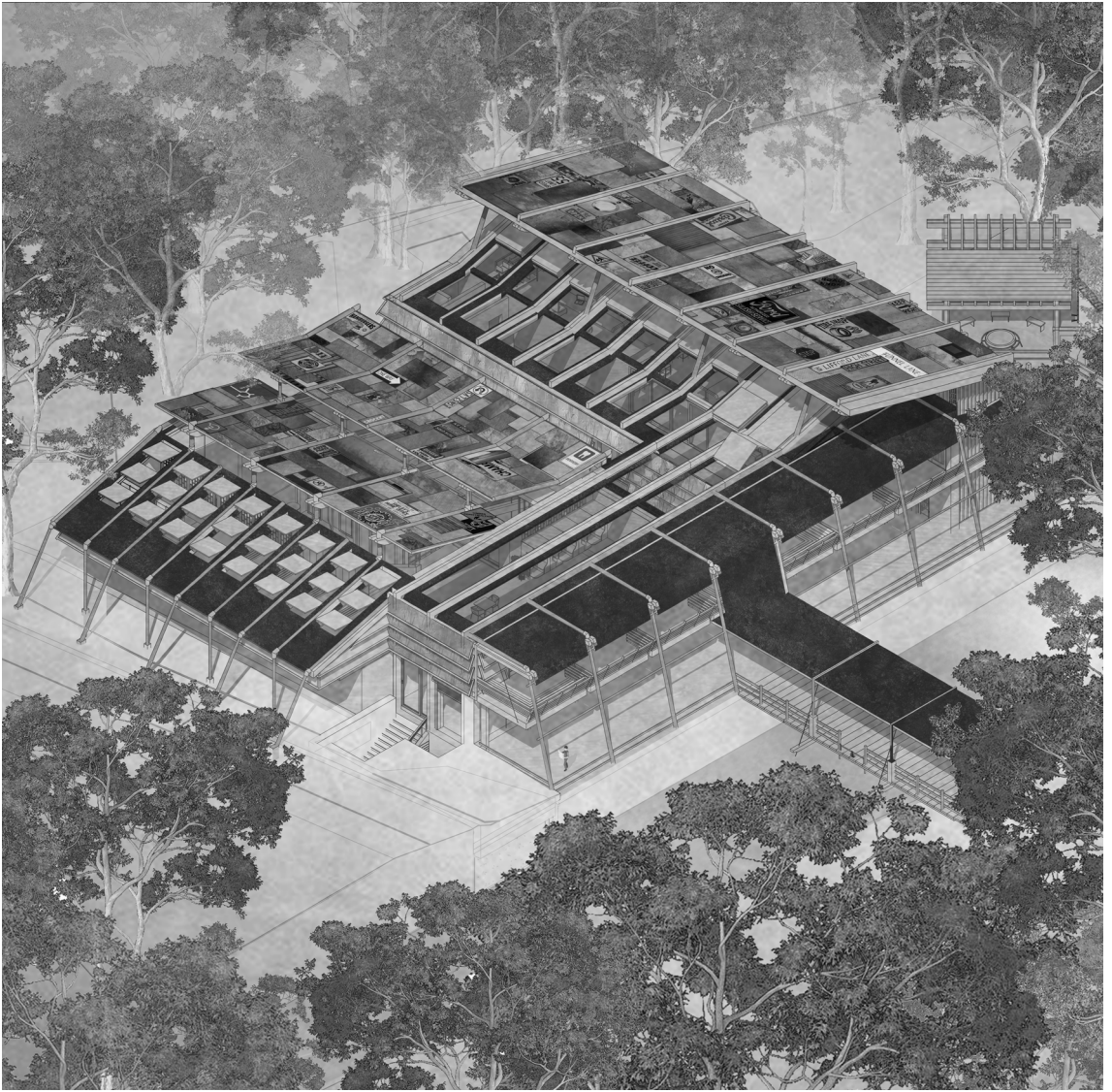
- ⑤ - Thermally broken steel lintel
 - Airtightness tape
 - Aluminium window straps fixed to window and structure, filled with mineral wool insulation
 - Silicone seal
 - Large internal reveal

Concrete Base

- ⑥ - Internal side sealed with silicone seal and polyethylene backing rod
 - Fixed to ground slab
 - Mdf painted internal floor board
 - Slab extended to accommodate threshold detail
 - Perimeter insulation upstand to prevent thermal bridging
 - Vapour control layer
 - Rigid insulation below slab
 - Damp proof membrane on sand binding
 - Blockwork strip foundation cavity wall with concrete fill to prevent cavity collapse
 - Reinforced concrete footing

0m 1m

Cantilever Det
Scale @1:



Sakinah Bouterse

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

From Waste to Worth proposes a community upcycling studio at Lifford Reservoir – a site identified as a liminal space due to its transitional nature between residential and industrial zones. The ambiguity inherent in this in-between state allows for unconventional behaviours to emerge; however, it also contributes to the site's neglect, antisocial behaviour, and environmental degradation, particularly as a result of fly-tipping and unmanaged waste. Informed by Jan Gehl's theory of *'Lively and Lifeless'*, the project aspires to reinvigorate the site by transforming it from a disregarded state into a lively environment that prioritises human design.

The upcycling studio introduces a circular reuse system, whereby salvaged and discarded materials from the site are reclaimed and re-purposed into functional artefacts and bespoke objects. These creations accommodate the 'loose' activities already present around Lifford Reservoir, without imposing a predetermined or prescriptive programme.

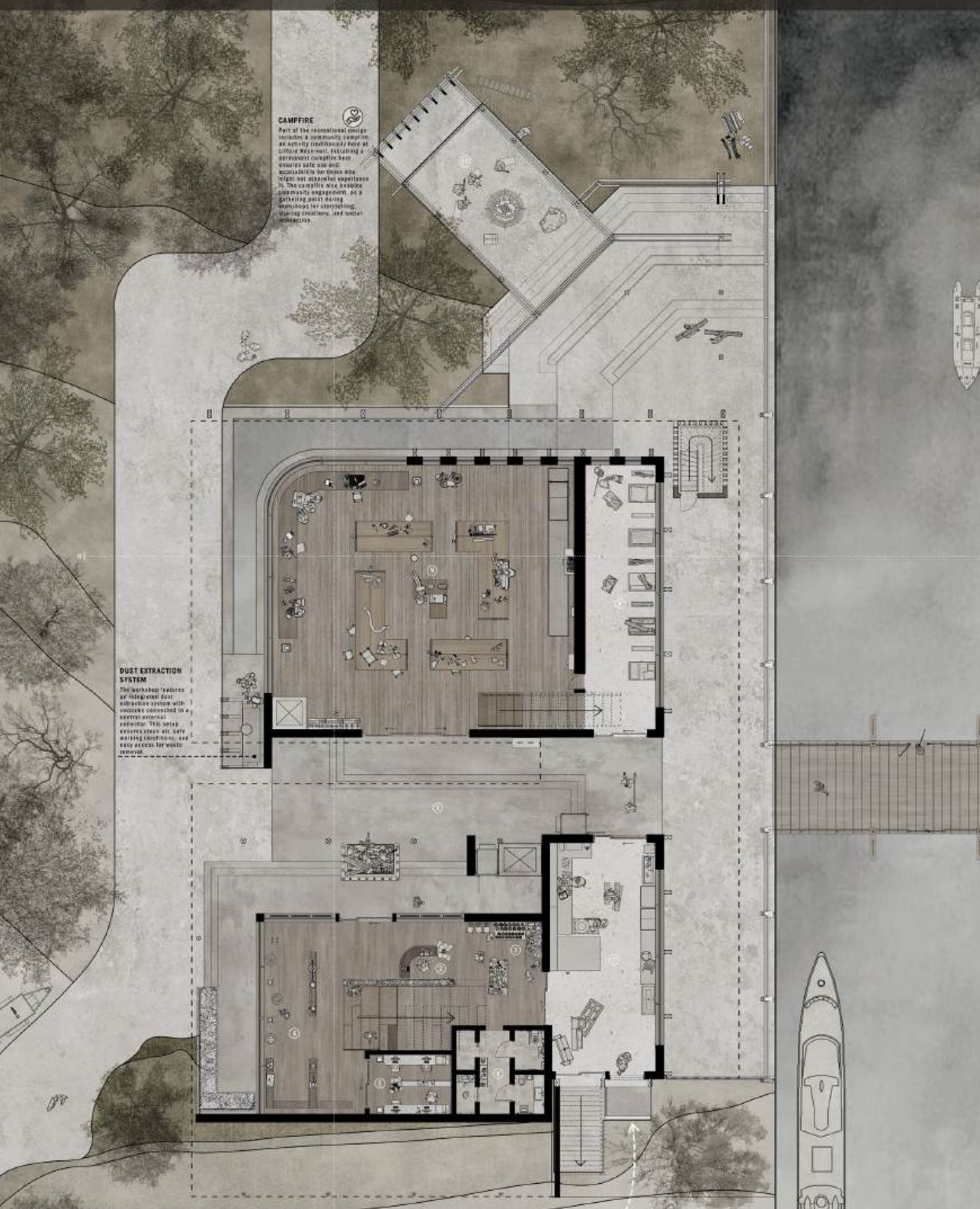
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

1:100



SCALE 1:100

0m 5 10 15



CAMPFIRE

Part of the recreational design includes a community campfire area, an activity traditionally held at Little Westport, facilitating a community campfire here. The campfire will provide a safe use and opportunity for those who wish to experience the outdoors. The campfire will provide a safe use and opportunity for those who wish to experience the outdoors. The campfire will provide a safe use and opportunity for those who wish to experience the outdoors.

DUST EXTRACTION SYSTEM

The workshop features an integrated dust extraction system with nozzles connected to external extraction. This setup ensures dust is safely removed, and easy access for waste removal.

SPACIAL ARRANGEMENT

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 OPEN AREA | 7 MATERIAL MANAGEMENT |
| 2 RECEPTION | 8 SORTING & STORAGE |
| 3 REUSE SHOP | 9 MAKER WORKSHOP |
| 4 EXHIBITION & GALLERY | 10 CAMPFIRE & RECREATIONAL SPACE |
| 5 ADMIN OFFICE | 11 DOCK & TRANSFER STATION |
| 6 RESTROOMS & CHANGING | |



The docking station is situated 3000mm below ground floor level and serves as the primary interface for receiving materials delivered via the canal. Materials are offloaded from boats and transferred into the facility for subsequent sorting, storage, or direct allocation to workshop areas. The space is designed to ensure safe, efficient, and secure access for staff involved in material handling.

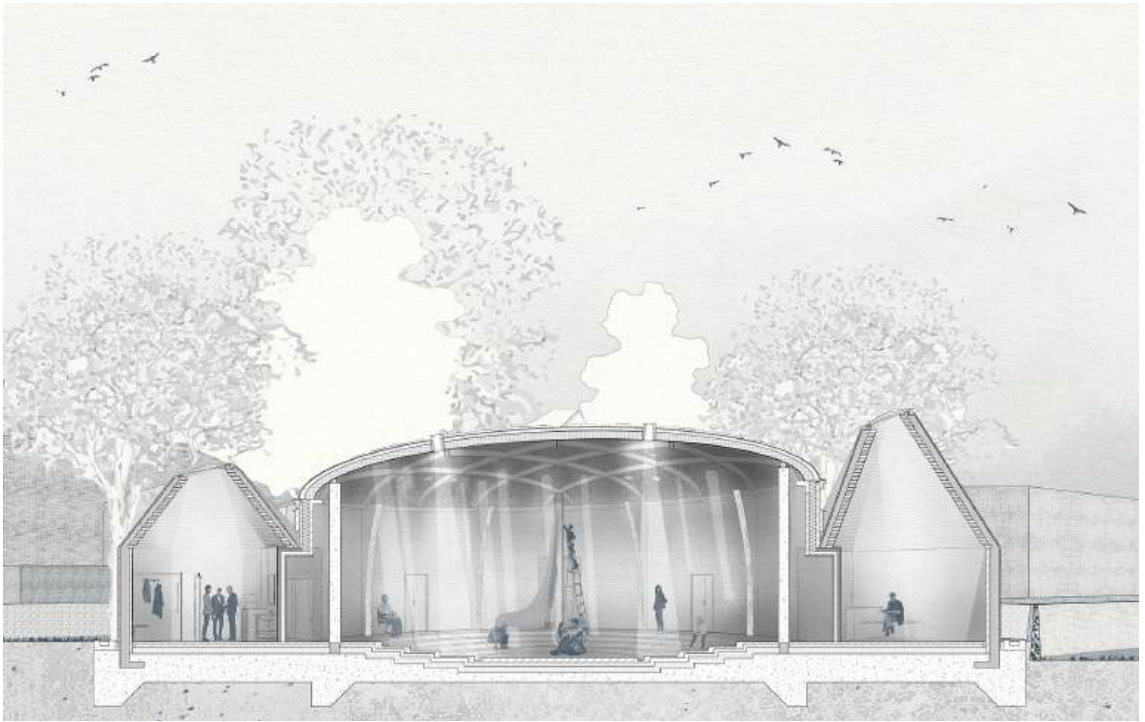


Harley Broadfield

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

ArtSpan aims to combine an art studio space, aimed for young children and teens in Edgbaston, with an open air walk through art gallery. The project aims to reduce arts education poverty within Edgbaston by providing a safe space to play, explore and learn.

The gallery space allows for a permanent exhibition space for the artwork produced by the children who attend the studio. The project also aims to restore connective routes across the site by literally bridging the gap across the canal linking the reservoir to the East. *ArtSpan* aims to benefit the community as a long standing institution whose goals are to support, aid and educate.

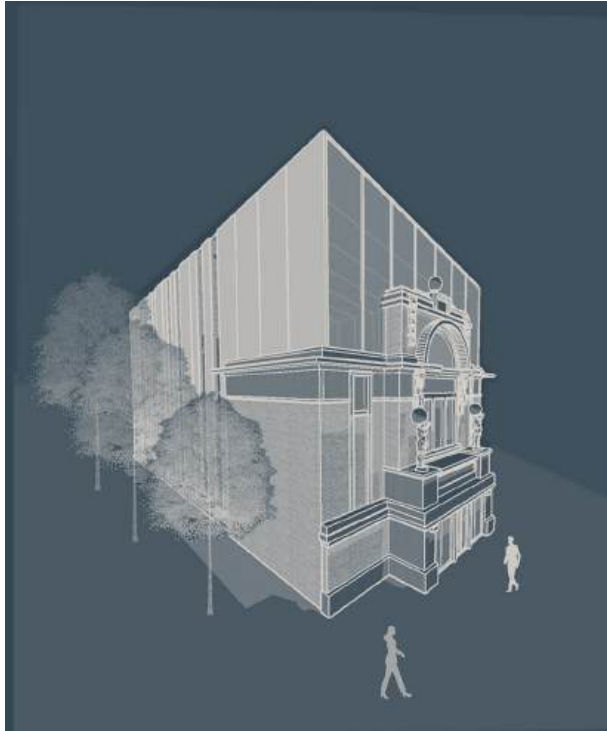


Asher Brookes

Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

Fragments for the Future (FFF) transforms the burnt shell of the Kingsway Cinema in Kings Heath, Birmingham, into a public sanctuary of gardens and an intimate theatre in the round. The project responds to the effects of austerity and neoliberal fragmentation, where spaces become profit-driven, and local culture is pushed aside, by creating somewhere people can return to, dwell in, and make their own.

Drawing on philosopher Edward S. Casey's idea of the Arc of Embodiment, the design is grounded in the belief that identity is formed through repeated, sensory experiences. Reclaimed materials from the original cinema, bricks, tiles, and terracotta, are woven throughout the scheme, from fountains and facades to the concrete of the theatre's buttresses, turning fragments of the past into the foundations of the future. More than a building, FFF is a spatial counter to cultural erasure, where architecture becomes a process of remembering, and a quiet but vital act of rebuilding collective identity.

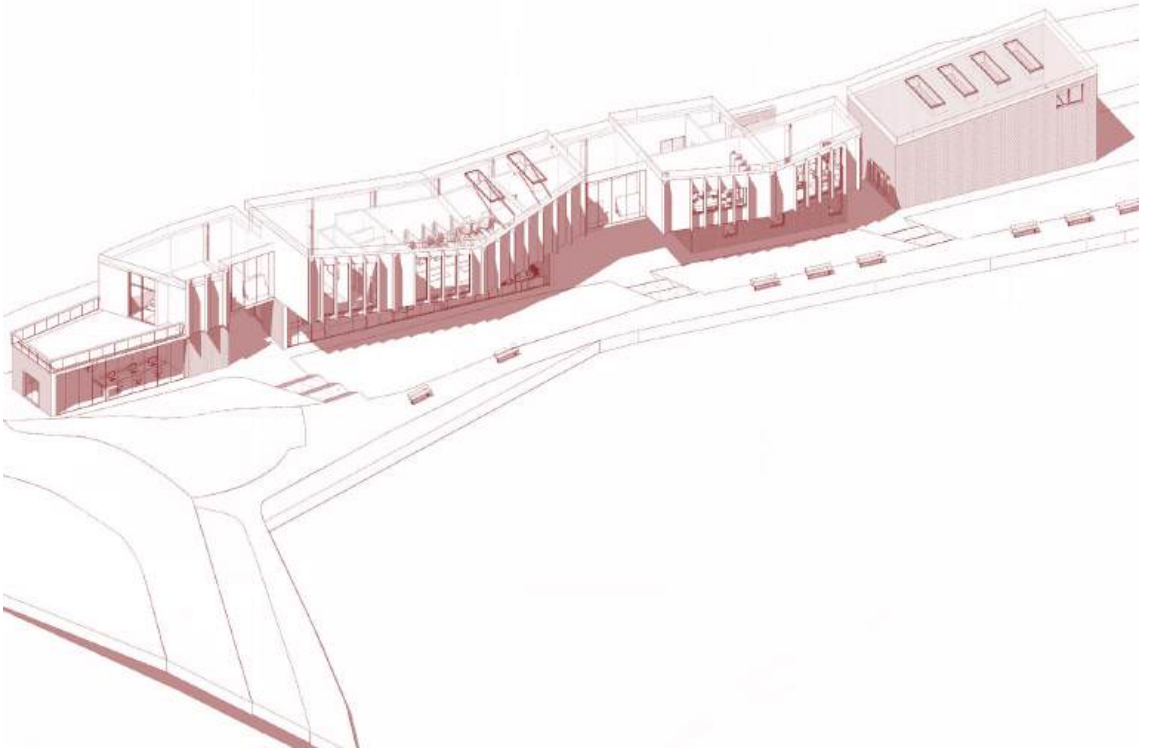


Irina Chiriac

Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

The Kingsway project is a transformative urban regeneration initiative centred around a former fire-damaged cinema. Preserving the original historic facade, the project re-imagines the space as a vibrant museum and creative hub aimed at engaging young people and addressing issues of antisocial behaviour and crime in the community. By integrating the old with the new, the design honours the site's cultural heritage while giving it renewed purpose.

The building now functions as a dynamic space for artistic expression, education, and entrepreneurship. Young people are encouraged to explore a range of creative practices—from visual arts to crafts—and are provided with opportunities to highlight and sell their work. This not only builds skills and confidence but also fosters a sense of ownership and pride within the community.



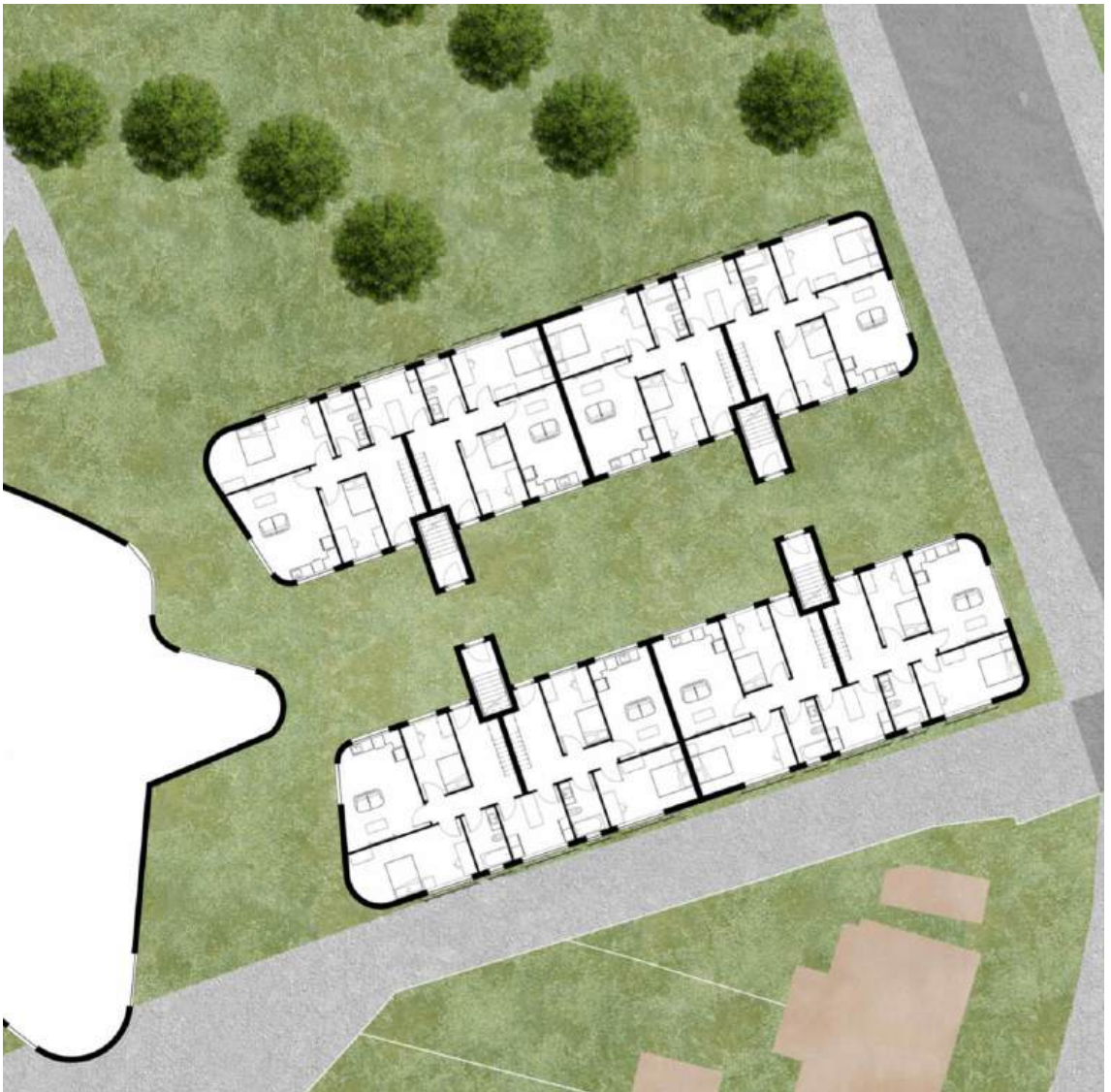
Mahnoor Choudhary

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

The Lifford Haven is a dementia day care centre is designed to enhance well-being and memory using a site-responsive approach.

Situated beside the Lifford reservoir, it takes advantage of the site's 3m elevation which restricts ground floor views in order to prevent the users from wandering, a symptom of dementia. Four separate buildings on the ground floor house essential facilities such as the main entrance, cafe and staff room, medical facilities and a games room. The separation of the rooms provides ease of navigation for individuals with dementia and helps reduce their confusion.

The first floor connects the first three buildings with therapy rooms overlooking the reservoir, providing peaceful views of the reservoir while maintaining privacy through the carefully positioned louvres. The herb and scent garden integrates memory stimulating scents such as lavender, rosemary, mint and honeysuckle which foster emotional connection and encourage recall and engagement.



Nikkita Coleman

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

This project focuses on creating a safe, supportive environment for women escaping abuse in Kings Norton, addressing a critical lack of crisis housing and assistance centres. The design includes *The Haven* – 16 semi-independent accommodations prioritizing privacy, control, and healing, with dual bedrooms for mothers and children, communal laundry/social areas, and self-pollinating fruit trees for year-round sustenance. Inspired by Walker's Yard, adjustable louvres offer light and privacy control, empowering residents.

Adjacent is *The Open Arms Centre*, offering therapy, legal aid, and holistic support through nature-integrated spaces like a therapy garden and child-friendly semi-public playground. The architecture uses defensive Portinia stone and warm timber finishes, symbolizing strength and restoration. The project aligns with sustainability goals for gender equality, health, and justice

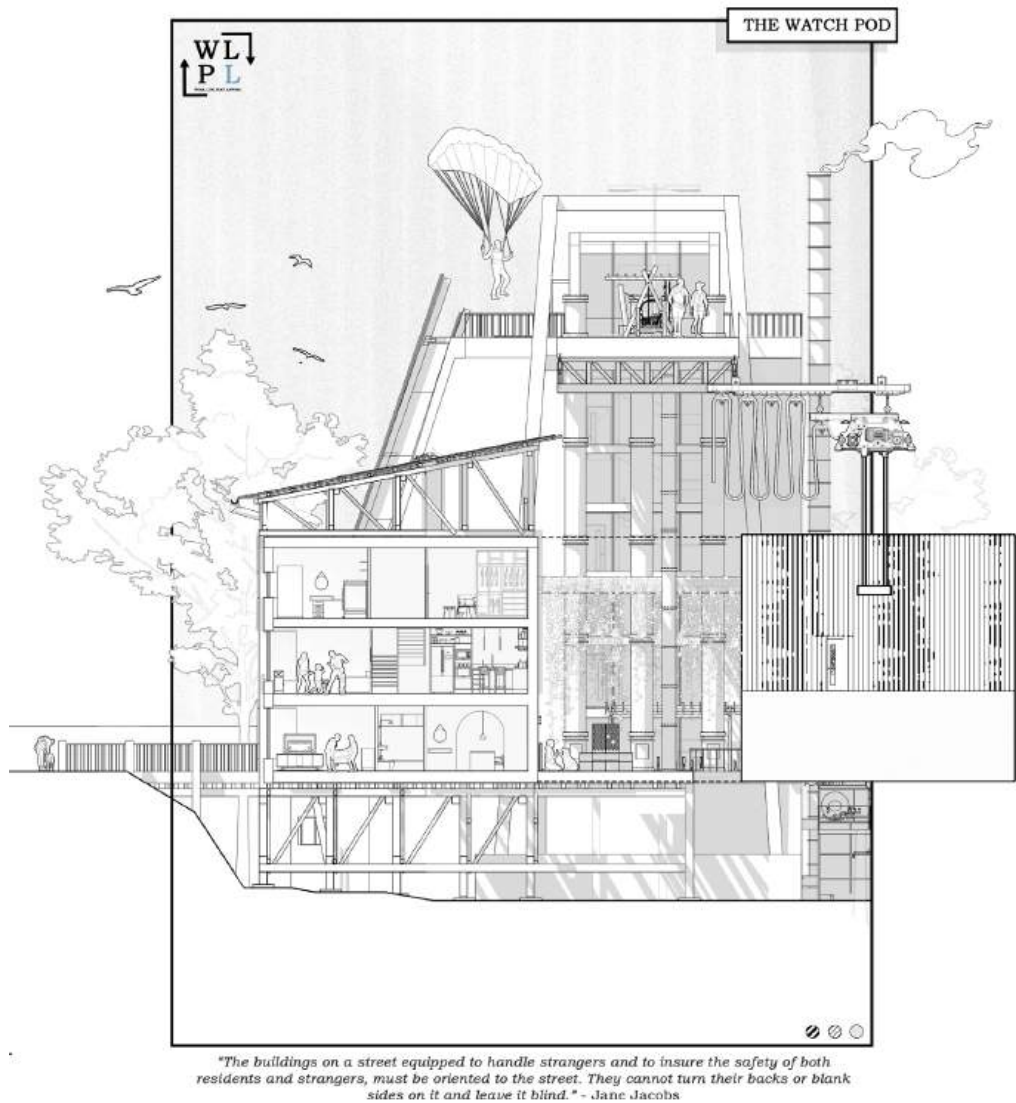


Ben Crumpton

Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

The Kingsway theatre, is a derelict site in Kings Heath with the potential to be a flourishing site of public expression and looseness. My vision for the project was to create a harmonious building that flowed with the external landscaping allowing for individuals to appreciate and express themselves within the revitalised space.

The project, *The Kingsway Archive*, embodies the concept of loose space, transforming its facade into an ever shifting canvas for community creativity and social cohesion. The archive offers a rich history of Kings Heath alongside holding classes within its internal workshop to create and make artefacts using the ceramic studio and workshop.



Renia Downes

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

Work, Live, Play at Lifford is a housing scheme inspired by Constant's *New Babylon* and Jane Jacobs' theory of "eyes on the street." The scheme encourages autonomy, visibility, and collective responsibility. It transforms Lifford from a forgotten heterotopia into a vibrant place of self-sufficiency. The scheme proposes a new circular model for housing and infrastructure: prefabricated pods, elevated on post-and-beam frames, are positioned opposite the reservoir to enhance passive surveillance.

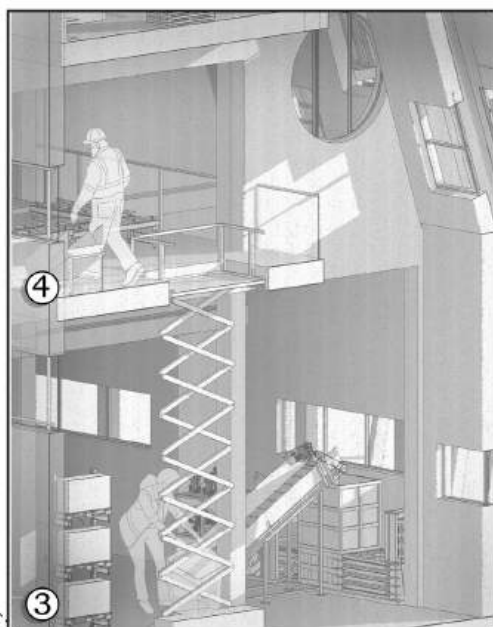
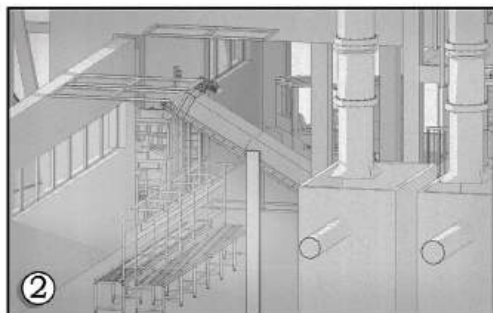
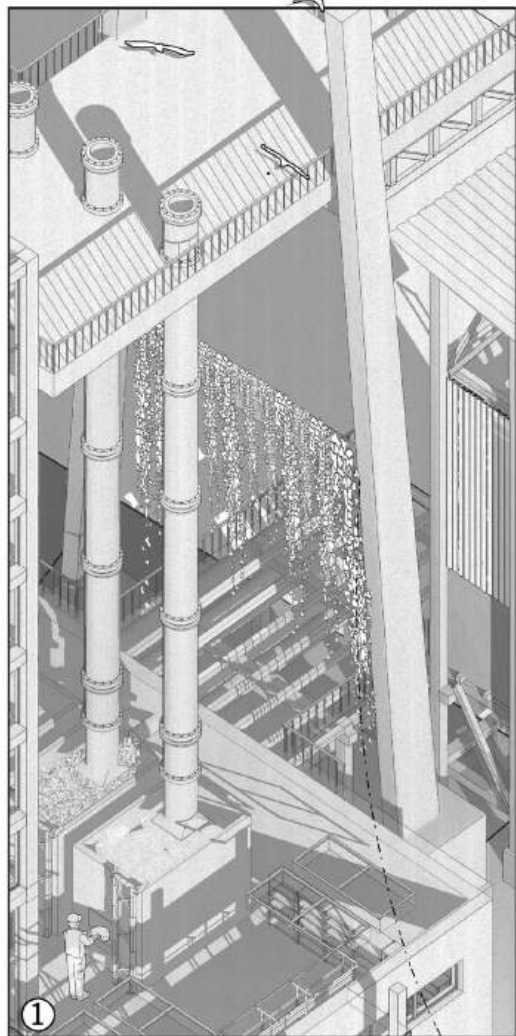
Each pod integrates a daylight tunnel and natural materials to create passive, comfortable living environments that reduce reliance on artificial energy. A central recycling centre processes local waste, generating value and employment while reducing the community's environmental footprint. With the site's original tennis courts lost, WLPL reintroduces recreation through a raised public walkway, community centre, and rooftop playgrounds, establishing Lifford's renewed identity, rooted in reuse and visibility for the people by the people.

THE PROCESS

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



The waste collection and processing system is a key part of the WLPL housing scheme and directly influences the structure's circulation and composition. The collection tubes for plastic, aluminium, and general waste are exposed and visible, transforming what was once a heterotopic space into one with a strong identity. WLPL values resources and respects the landscape. Residents are active in the system, as their waste helps fund and sustain the scheme, reducing the effects of austerity measures. This approach supports SDG 11 & SDG 12.

PUBLIC



PRIVATE

Vines draped over the threshold form a soft, natural boundary, marking the transition between public circulation and the private residential zone, subtly reinforcing the divide between public and private space.



Lewis Evans
Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

This project is a must have in every major city, every generation we are losing valuable skills that need to be taught, most people nowadays must pay someone to carry out the most basic of tasks that could easily be done themselves. DIY is a skill that is rapidly declining and it needs to stop. The idea of the *DIY Haven* is for young families/the next generation to go and learn all the different skills of DIY and maintenance. This scheme is there to teach the public how to do certain DIY activities which inevitably they will have to do on their own house eventually.

There are three distinct aspects to the DIY centre, there is the household area which would teach things like how to paint a wall, or hang a door, everyday maintenance jobs that must be done on a house. Then there's the mechanical area, this will teach you how to carry out basic checks and maintenance on your car or other related vehicles. And lastly there is the garden DIY area, this area is where you learn how to do different garden DIY activities like putting a fence up or repairing a tool.



Maaria Faruki

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

This *Keynote Collective* envisions a vibrant community music and performance hub in the heart of Stirchley, designed to address the area's lack of accessible cultural spaces.

Located on a prominent high street site, the building integrates recording studios, music classrooms, and a theatre, creating opportunities for people of all ages to learn, rehearse, perform, and engage with the arts. The building is a cultural landmark, celebrating Stirchley's creative identity while supporting health, inclusivity, and sustainability. It stands as a space where architecture, community, and music intersect to foster collaboration, expression, and local pride.

Ultimately, this building is not just a music centre, it's a platform for community voices, a place that celebrates collaboration, sustainability, and creativity in architecture.



Micheas Ferlito

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

The Beacon, is a memorial to Birmingham's lost buildings. The building calls all to pay remembrance to significant buildings which were abandoned or destroyed over the years in Birmingham. The memorial's exhibition halls showcase visual tapes of the lost buildings and their significant events alongside physical remnants creating an alive and tactile reminder of their history and culture.

Every aspect of the memorial aims to create a reflective and poetic experience with light, circulation and structure carefully manipulated and exposed to create an air of remembrance and thought.

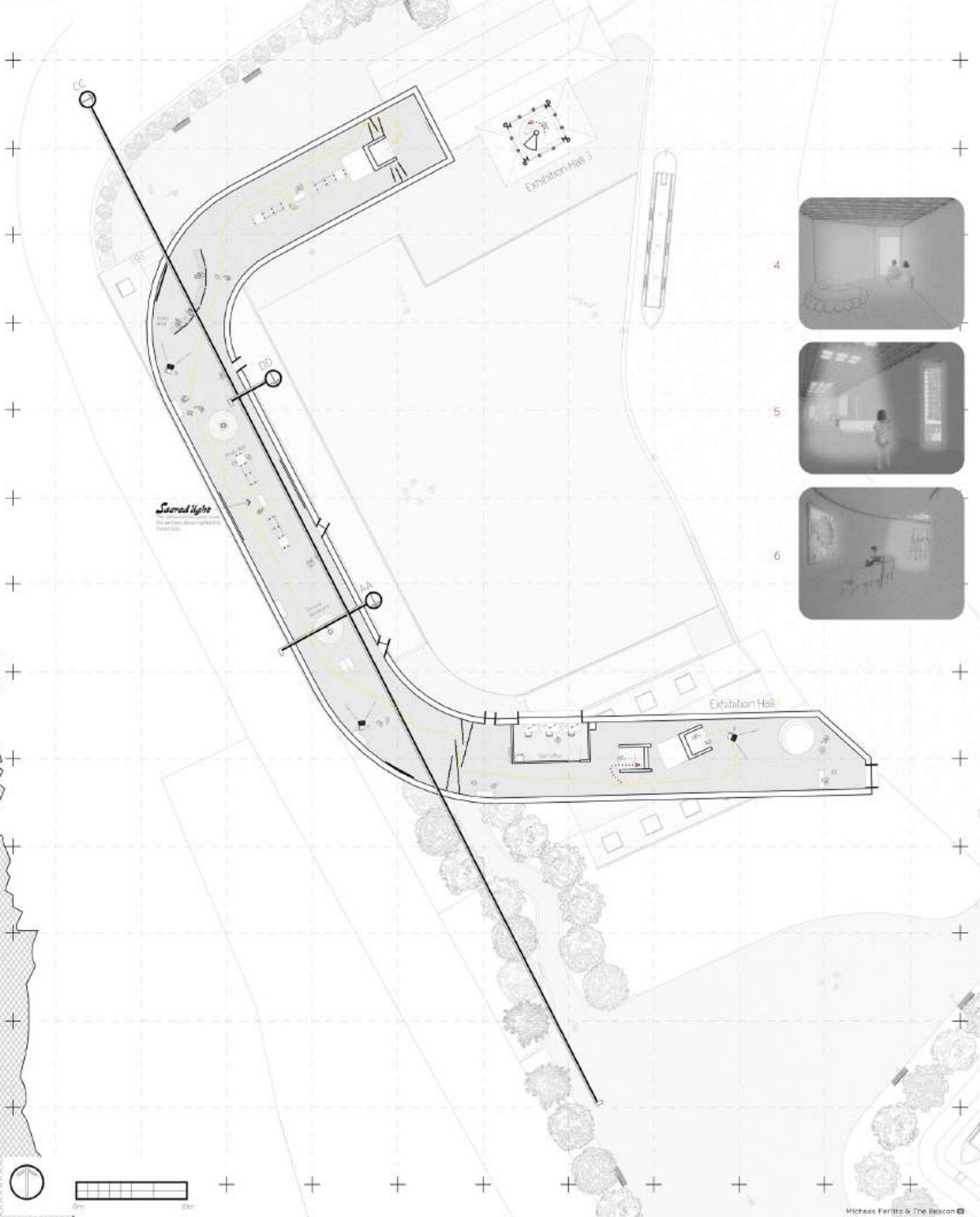
The building is imagined as a blueprint of how to prevent further dereliction, aiming to show the value of the culture and architecture which is taken from a city when a building comes down. When this importance is seen by enough people, I hope that it will inspire us to value these buildings and prevent Birmingham from losing other historic sections of its fabric.

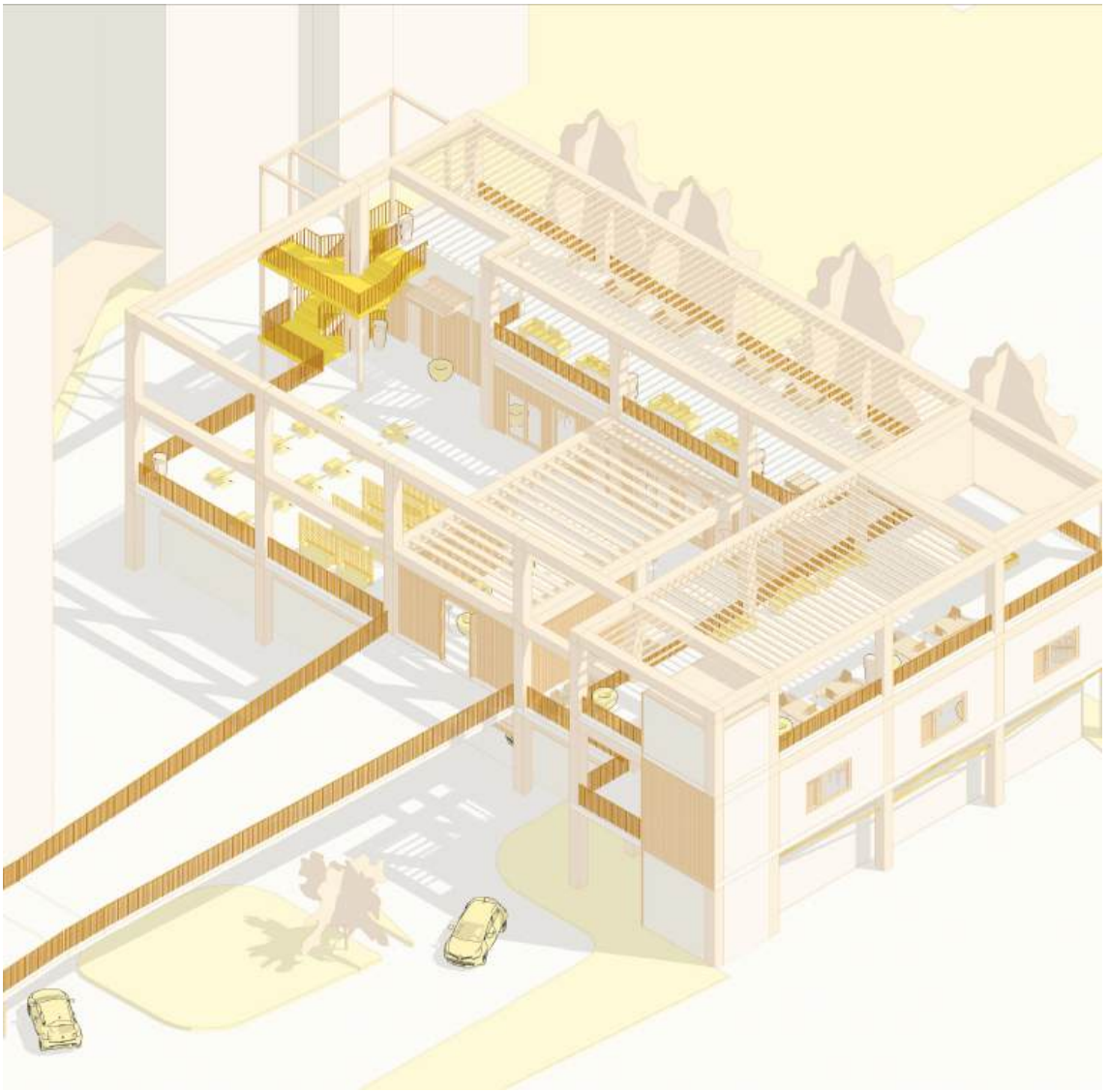
Level 01 1:150 @ A1

Exhibition Circulation
 00: 01: 02: 03:

Key

- Exhibition Hall 1
- Exhibition Hall 2
- Photo Hall
- Physical Research
- Start Office





Milca Gennuso

Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

This project proposal is dedicated to elderly people, students, and residents of King's Heath & Brandwood. The local area lacks community centres that aim to help people's well-being in general, despite all the greenery existing in the site, which should be useful, but lead the area to emptiness with no connection and strive. My chosen site is mainly residential with a lot of schools around and two 12 storey towers housing only retired people.

The project transforms an old flat indoor car park into a gardening centre -- a spiritual shelter where generations cultivate not only plants but also connections and inner peace responding to the Austerity of the city of Birmingham. The entire building is sustained by modular glulam wood with indoor workshops made of sip walls and a complementary space at the top which a louvred terrace. In this centre people learn to be resilient and cultivate plants in planters with a sustainable goal that keeps everyone responsible and improve institutional capacity on climate change mitigation through the introduction of SDG12.



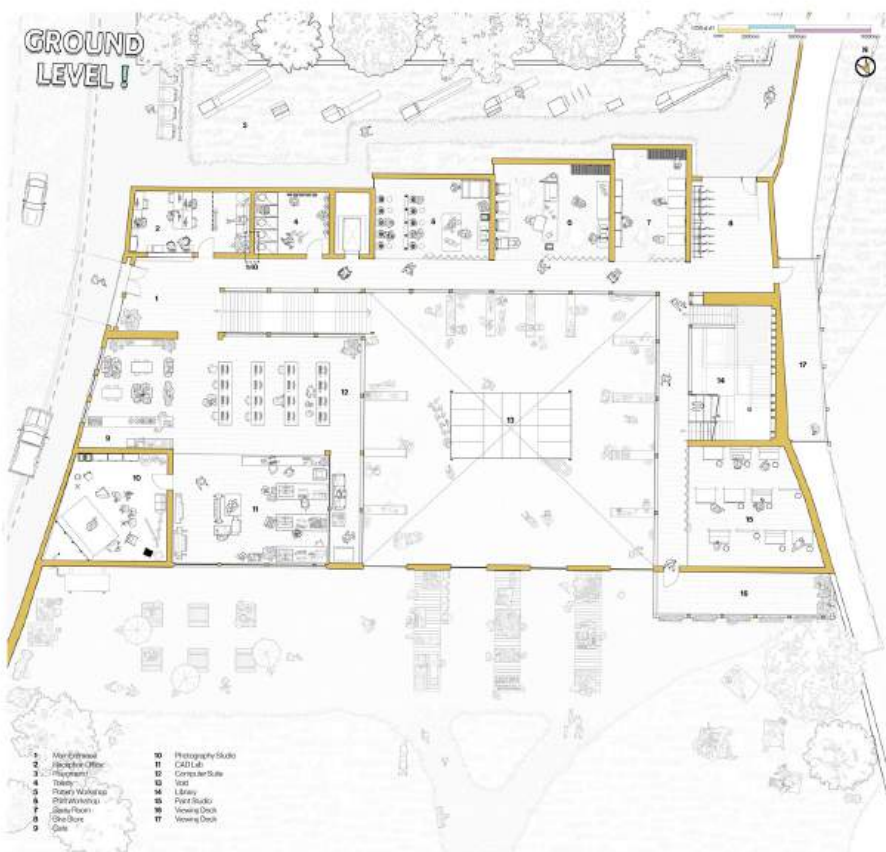
Aiden Goode

Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

My project is located in a residential area in the north west of Kings Heath, on a site currently used as car parking, with the Kings Heath Railway and Highbury Park at the back of the site. It is designed to act as a bridge across the railway to connect the local community to Highbury Park, allowing them to access this important greenspace with more convenience, improving the sense of place of the community and allowing local people to easily connect with nature.

The building itself uses reclaimed bricks from the nearby railway construction sites as the main material and uses automated louvres and solar panels to control the internal climate and power the building. The program of the building is a community centre with a library, cafe, study space and public gardens. The gardens are planted using the Miyawaki planting method since this method of planting is designed to quickly establish dense, biodiverse forests in urban and degraded areas with minimal maintenance needs. This allows the garden to reflect the nature of Highbury Park and brings it into the neighbourhood.

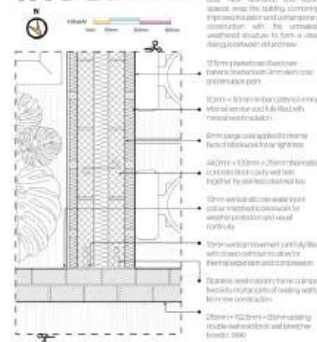
GROUND LEVEL !



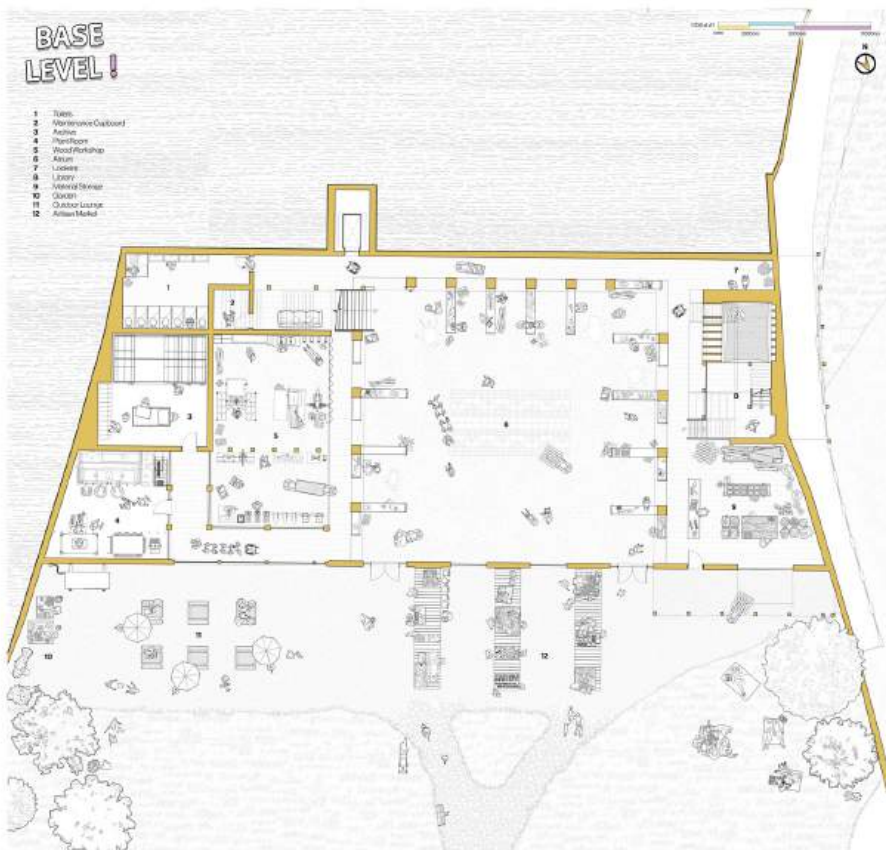
COMPONENTS !

- 1 Work Station**
Designed to support the workflow of the studio, providing a workspace for the staff and clients. The station is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the studio.
- 2 Gallery Wall**
A large wall designed to display the studio's work. The wall is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the studio.
- 3 Stage Display**
A stage designed to display the studio's work. The stage is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the studio.
- 4 Market Tables**
A series of tables designed to display the studio's work. The tables are designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the studio.

1:10 DETAIL !

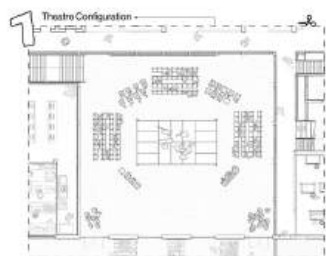


BASE LEVEL !



CONFIGURATIONS !

The building is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the studio. The building is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the studio. The building is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the studio.



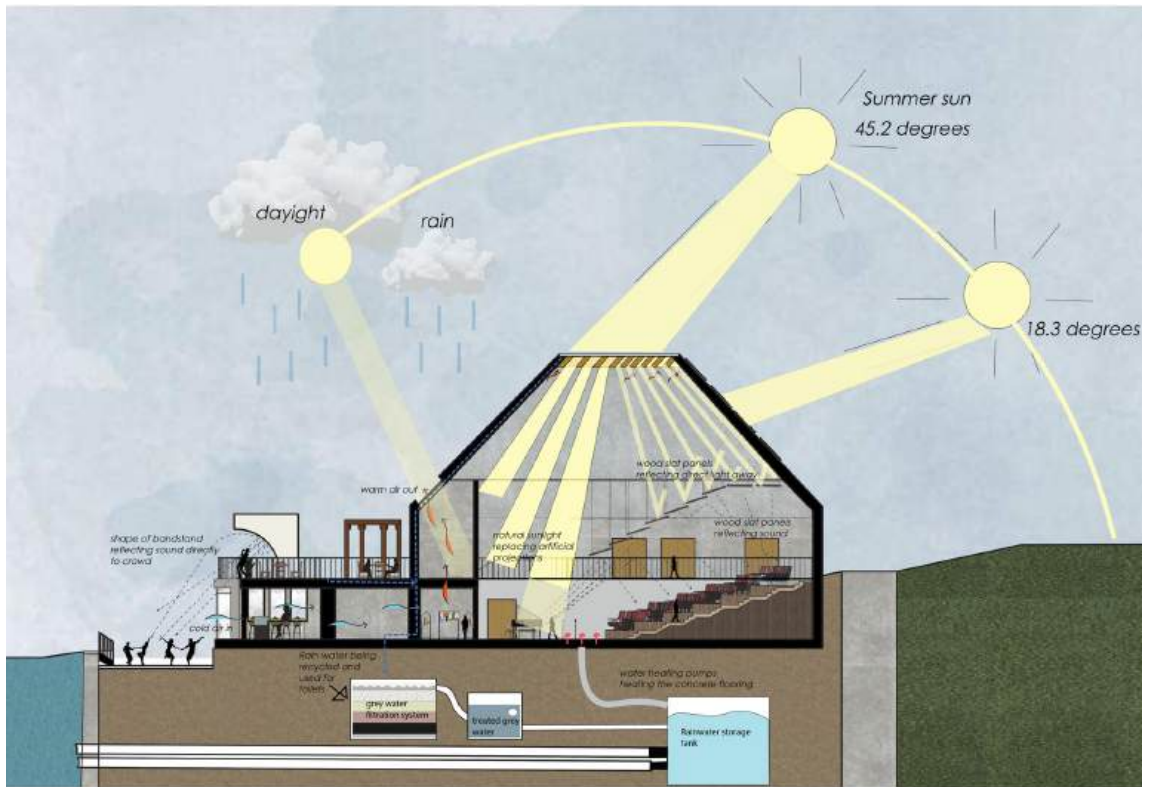


Georgina Hitchin

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

The Cornmill Collective is a travelling community festival which makes use of Birmingham's extensive canal network to celebrate Lifford through its industrial heritage, with a heavy focus on the Corn and Paper Mill. It uses a more sustainable approach by using corn grown alongside the collective to fund and develop the structure in a circular economy system. The cafe, cinema and factory are designed to be disassembled and relocated in order to make an impact on locations wider than Lifford, whilst leaving little trace of where they have been.

The humble corn forms the basis for all the activities taking place in the collective. The factory, as the icon of The Cornmill Collective, creates tiles from the cores of the corn. These panels form the walls of the infrastructure to build the collective. The stalks are used as the floatation device for the buildings to sit upon and the kernels are used to make flour sold in the factory alongside popcorn for cinema-goers.

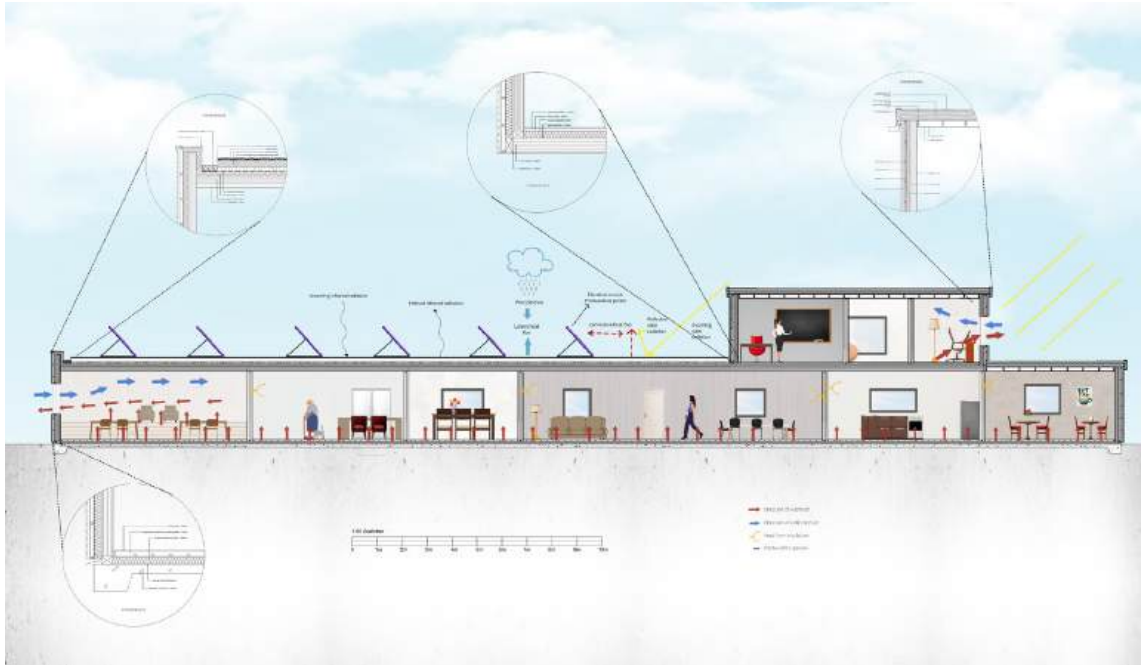


Zlatka Ilieva

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

After thorough analysis, I learned that language barriers and limited social interactions are one of the key issues in North Edgbaston and its community. Music is a tool for cultural expression and, inter-cultural learning and helping the community appreciate diverse traditions and values, making it easier for the community to communicate and interact with one another, allowing them to express themselves culturally whilst simultaneously learning about each other as a community. My project, the *Edgbaston Music Conservatory*, responds to those issues through its design consisting of three bandstands next to each other as a symbol of social cohesion. Its design allows music to be shared creating a dialogue between the people playing the music as well as the people who are listening, to bring people together.

My aim was to create a lively and dramatic atmosphere essentially imitating what the nearby Tower Ballroom once achieved long before it was demolished, therefore making the same exact site a perfect place to preserve what was once there.



Juwayriyah Kausar

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

My project in Lifford, *Connecting Generations*, is a multifunctional technology and community hub, which is designed to bring people of all ages together through purposeful spatial design. Lifford's community has impacted by austerity and the closure of local facilities, this project responds to the social need for inclusive, engaging spaces that support connection, creativity, and well-being.

At the heart of the proposal is the quiet zone, which is a calm, elevated retreat surrounded by natural light and centred around a symbolic tree. It offers a peaceful contrast to the lively ground floor, where the cafe, workshops, and gathering areas encourage spontaneous interaction and shared experiences.

The design integrates social and environmental responsibility through compact form, adaptable programming, and contextual sensitivity. Ultimately, this project is about architecture as a social bridge, creating a space where children, adults, and elders can connect, learn, and belong.



Lila Khairula

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

The *Download Centre* is a community workshop that supports small online businesses in transitioning and growing beyond their original safe space – the home. The building embodies values such as professionalism, reflected in its contemporary and continuous facade lines, double height co-working spaces, and hallways filled with natural light.

Through thoughtful design, entrepreneurs are encouraged to collaborate and welcome potential investors, as well as family and friends, who can provide the financial and emotional support needed to develop their projects into sustainable business models.

This workshop nurtures ideas to a stage where they are ready to transition once more, this time into the Stirchley community, by establishing a presence on the ever-growing Pershore Road, where they will make their new home.



Aaqib Khan

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

Urban Metalworks is a workshop based in Stirchley near a junction between a busy high-street and a main road. The main concept of the workshop was to allow youth to learn how to make bespoke furniture from metal scraps as well as offering a standard workshop on the side that produces furniture that can be sold to residents of Stirchley as well Birmingham as a whole.

Through the architecture of the building, Stirchley's lost metal manufacturing culture has been brought back to life by utilising a bright red metal facade to emphasise its return. Its function being a furniture workshop seamlessly fits with its context as the high-street features several furniture shops. The workshop features a slanted sedum roof designed to avoid obstruction of the housing that sits behind it whilst also improving the building's overall sustainability. The building also has an exhibition space with bi-fold doors onto an outdoor space that can function as a car park and an outdoor exhibition space when needed.



Furqan Khan

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

Re-Clad Studios is a community-focused recycling centre located at Edgbaston Reservoir that transforms plastic waste into architectural cladding. Building on the themes of circular design from a previous project that repurposed aluminium cans, this new proposal shifts the focus to plastic. One of the most visible and persistent forms of urban litter. The project aims to tackle local environmental issues while addressing the lack of inclusive social spaces in the area.

Re-Clad Studios offers a hands-on, educational experience where the public can observe and participate in the recycling process. The design features a sorting area, workshop, cafe, and an exhibition space housed within a repurposed building. A conveyor belt system connects different parts of the facility, making the journey of the recycled material both functional and visible.

The architecture encourages community interaction, learning, and environmental awareness while activating an underused part of the Edgbaston Reservoir.

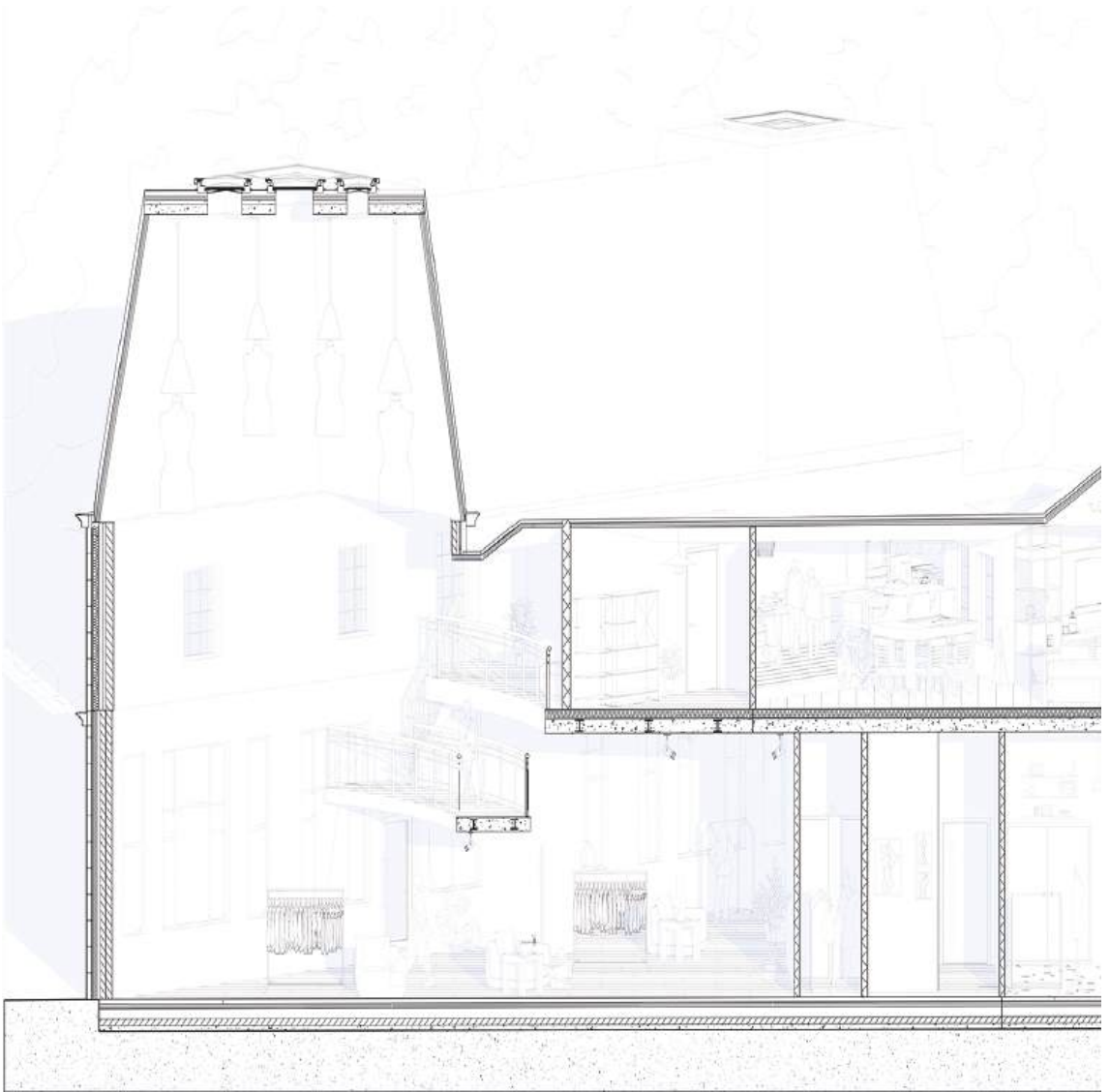


Hania Khan

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

The *Brandwood Hub* is a design prospect aimed at creating a multi-purpose community establishment with a unity of different essential & non-essential services that are subject to one easily accessible facility. The project's goal is to provide a space for both necessity and leisure in the neighbourhood to build a better community. Particularly for those who find it challenging to travel to specific places without a vehicle or assistance, promoting the use of physical activity to reach these zones by making them more convenient to travel to.

The hub is situated within an existing community building, with the design featuring an expansion including a market space, an outdoor courtyard and a farm, a pharmacy, opticians and a lounge. The zoning within the hub is subject to creating an improved community/neighbourhood to aid locals with their health, well-being and provide critical services.



Souwaila Mamou

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

Located in Stirchley, *Indigo Blue Studios* is a revival of a 1920s building into a creative ecosystem -- once a pub and hotel it has been transformed. This retrofit restoration project embraces the poetry of reuse.

Within its walls, recycled denim is reborn not only for fashion but also for insulation. Wrapping the building in its warmth while lowering the environmental footprint. A fashion workshop, exhibition gallery/shop, classroom, cafe and home. Each element is used to incorporate a multifunctional building. Where old fabric is recycled to find new forms. Conversation blooms over a coffee and lessons in upcycling ripple throughout. Inviting the public to shape their own creativity by finding the magic in reducing, reusing, and recycling. Proving that things once forgotten still hold beauty. Incorporating the UN sustainability goals so that the next generation can also be creative. Creating new garments from recycled fabric, mostly denim is the heart of my project. As recycling should for our society.



Reimagining York Road
City as a Canvas
Black Youth Foundation

Lauren Mckenzie

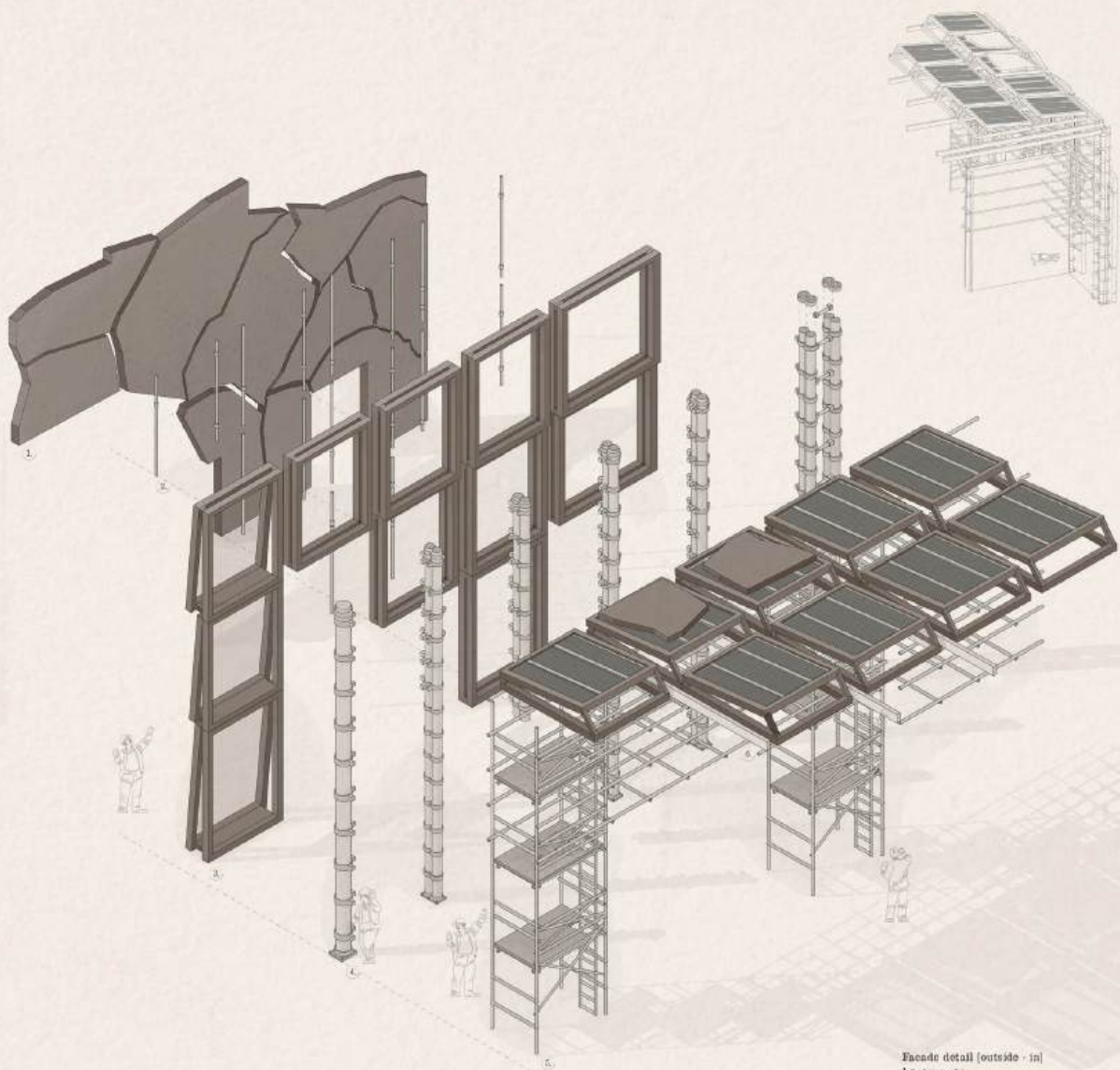
Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

The *Palimpsest* is a street art archive, factory and workshop that reimagines Kings Heath as a living canvas—where local identity is built through continual renewal. Salvaged street art walls are removed from sites at risk of government censorship, cleaned, and exhibited alongside mementos and personal stories. These rotating fragments, displayed across frames that form the building's structure, create a constantly evolving public record of the area's expression.

As each wall is archived, prefabricated replacements are made in the on-site factory and taught as a skill to residents—empowering the community to regenerate the urban fabric themselves. Inspired by the Ship of Theseus, the project asks whether a place becomes something new or stays the same when its parts are replaced over time. Here, the answer is both: the building becomes Kings Heath as it builds from it, the 'city' becoming the canvas.

Wall art external exhibition system

Exploded tectonic element - FACADE

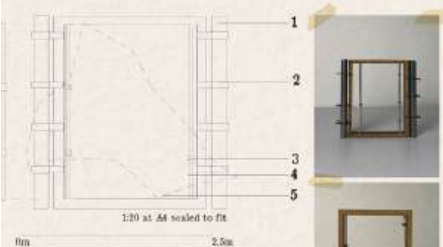


Facade detail (outside - in)

1. Steel beam (100x100mm)
2. Timber frame (100x100mm)
3. Timber frame (100x100mm)
4. Steel support structure (100x100mm)
5. Roofing frame (100x100mm)
6. Roof module (100x100mm)

0m 2.5m 5m

detail AA

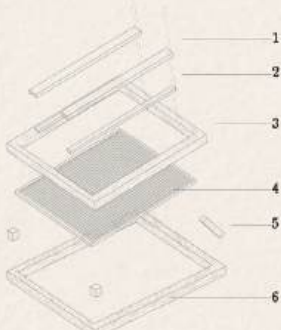


frames

Indestructible frames are fit to all in the organic and overhanging the facade tectonic system. The frame on the Art Wall can easily and safely be removed and can be secured at the scaffolding system. When rotated, moves from this front frame to the roof display.

- 1 - Steel beam (100x100mm)
- 2 - Timber frame (100x100mm)
- 3 - Timber frame (100x100mm)
- 4 - Steel support structure (100x100mm)
- 5 - Roofing frame (100x100mm)

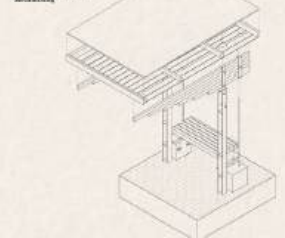
Roof module exploded iso



- 1 - 14mm x 5mm T-Slot Aluminum Extrusion
- 2 - Steel track receiver 5mm x 5mm
- 3 - Timber frame top 2200mm x 1900mm
- 4 - Metal sheet filter layer 15mm
- 5 - Timber connectors with joint hangers
- 6 - Timber frame bottom

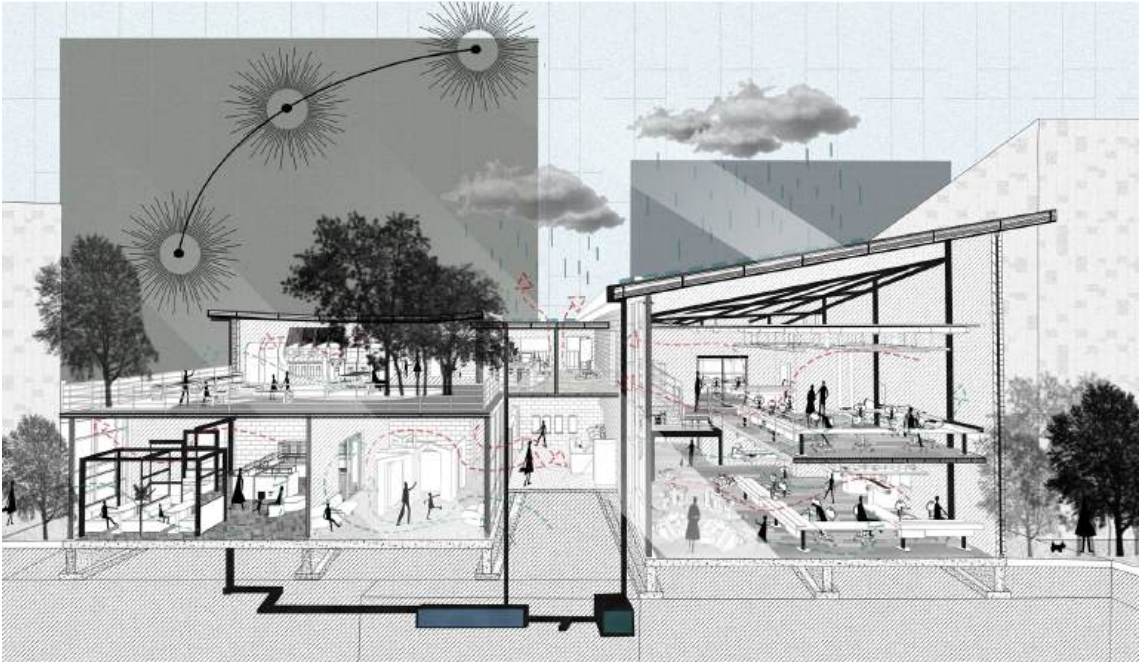
Case study

Project: Plaza - Atelier Architecture



1:10 at A3 scaled to fit

Temporary concrete block from 1:10 to 2:10 could've just been put straight onto the site. The light rod makes the whole structure feel light, the heavy/light interplay.



Evans Miti

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

This project, *Byte & Build*, is about creating an inclusive, interactive space that brings people of all ages together. It is a place where people can connect and feel the urge to explore new things, like technology & making. Here, members of the community learn how to construct and dismantle old tech and convert it into something new, and something that the community needs.

This futurist learning centre incorporates two zones: an open zone for the public to come and have fun, and a closed zone for the people to come and learn more intensely whether through digital workshops, gaming zones, or collaborative tech-based installations.

The aim is to evoke a sense of playfulness and energy reminiscent of childhood, while also fostering skill-building and social engagement. Furthermore, It is a response to the need for dynamic public spaces that evolve with the community designed for connection, powered by technology, and rooted in human experience.



Aleksandra Mostowa
Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

The Meeting Frames of Birmingham explores the art of framing the city's views. At the heart of this project are two focal points, the city skyline, and Edgbaston Reservoir, alongside other significant historical landmarks within the borough of Edgbaston. The aim is to create a versatile, community-focused space, which serves as a vibrant hub for artistic expression, exhibition, and community engagement. This space is envisioned as a platform for art-making, creative collaboration, and cultural dialogue, promoting connections between the community and the city's architectural heritage.

With sustainability as a guiding principle, this project seeks to contribute to a more resilient and environmentally responsible urban future. It incorporates sustainable design strategies that emphasize resource efficiency, low-impact materials, and green infrastructure, aligning with the broader goals of creating inclusive and environmentally conscious urban environments.



Gurkeerat Nijjar

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

Situated at the heart of Edgbaston Reservoir, the *Edgbaston Community Exhibition Centre* hosts rotating exhibitions, workshops, and public forums that highlight both challenges and opportunities within the area. It acts as a vital platform for dialogue, education, and collaboration, fostering a greater sense of belonging and collective action.

Through storytelling, interactive displays, and community-led projects, it gives voice to under-represented groups and fosters empathy across diverse demographics. It also celebrates Edgbaston's rich diversity through art which has been made by residents using a camera obscura installation.

Overall, the Edgbaston Community Exhibition Centre is a vital process for civic engagement and regeneration. It connects individuals, promotes awareness of local issues, and encourages community-driven solutions, making it an essential resource for shaping a more inclusive and sustainable future in Edgbaston.



Haniyyah Obaidullah
Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

This project explores the potential of Lifford Reservoir in Birmingham as a site of ecological restoration, community reconnection, and adaptive reuse. Interventions across the site include: a wood workshop and studio space, designed using sustainable timber construction and recycled materials sourced from nearby industrial waste and a Tree Preservation Learning Centre offers space for local schools and environmental education, reinforcing the project's social and ecological mission.

Throughout, the design embraces the principles of long-term adaptability, low-impact construction, and intergenerational relevance. Complementing this is a series of Weave Studio follies—delicate, expressive timber structures that offer moments of reflection, interaction, and shelter across the site. These follies use timber, reused scaffolding bars as structure and breathable construction methods to create spaces that are visually light yet structurally rich, blending into the landscape while inviting public use.



Edwin Okyere
Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

The *Museum through Making* proposes a community museum and maker's space in King's Norton, South Birmingham – a civic response to the loss of public cultural infrastructure caused by austerity. Rather than a traditional museum, the space invites people to make, learn, and share. It brings together a museum, community centre, workshops, and a nursery, forming a social hub rooted in participation and intergenerational creativity.

A timber-structured dome sits at the heart of the design acting as a spatial anchor for exhibition, circulation, and gathering. Arched forms echo local civic architecture, while reclaimed brick from demolished site buildings is crushed into terrazzo flooring, embedding memory into the material fabric. The museum is both reflective and active, structured yet open, it invites the community not just to observe culture, but to create it. Ultimately, the project asks how architecture can support social resilience through making, memory, and shared space.

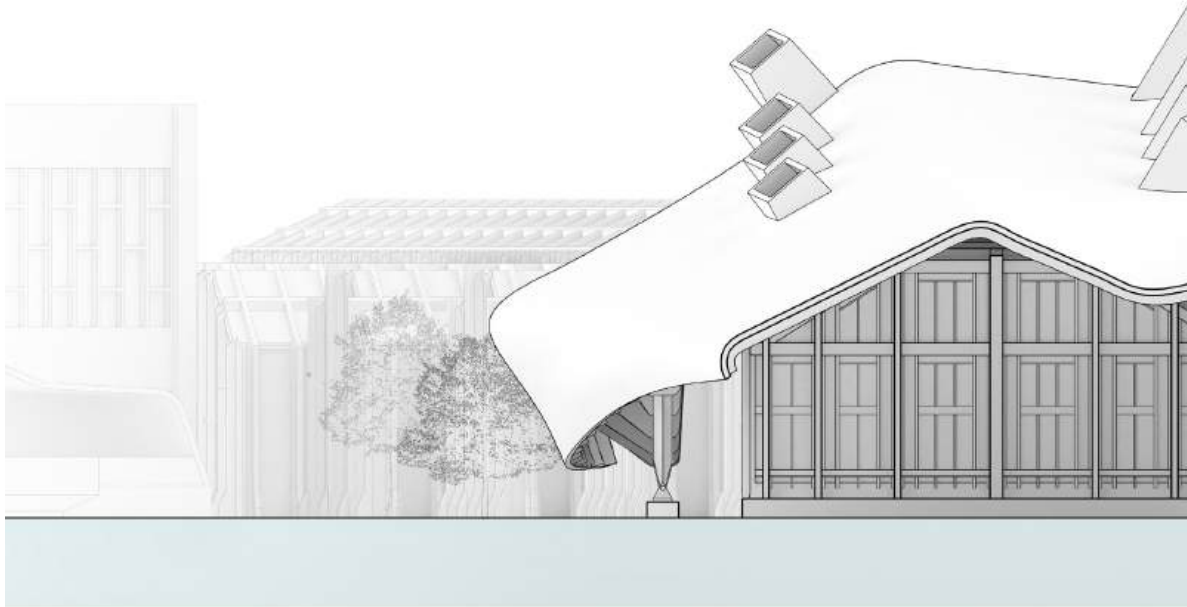


Jasmine Oliver

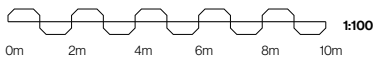
Studio 3: Spiritual Shelter / Tutor: Virginia Polignano

In response to the rising mental and physical detrimental effects of noise pollution heightened by austerity measures in Kings Heath, *Echoes of the Elements* introduces a meditation hotel offering a sanctuary of deep restorative silence, intending to heal by removing auditory chaos allowing guests to reconnect with their own rhythms and reset their systems. The design utilises the Japanese concept of *ma* - the space between, the pause that gives meaning through embracing the stillness modern life neglects.

Set alongside the busy high street of Kings Heath, the hotel also contrasts the surrounding buildings through its organically shaped architecture that curves and flows to encircle natural forms existing within. Guests indulge in various activities aimed to support their wellbeing such as nutritional eating in the restaurant, mind and yoga classes in the studio or individual private resting in the ensembles provided on the first floor. Every corner is a space whereby guests can find resonance, be it in birdsong, in breath or in the quiet company of trees.



Front Elevation



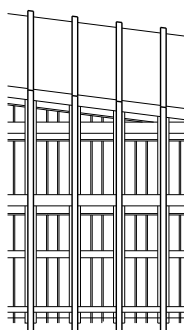
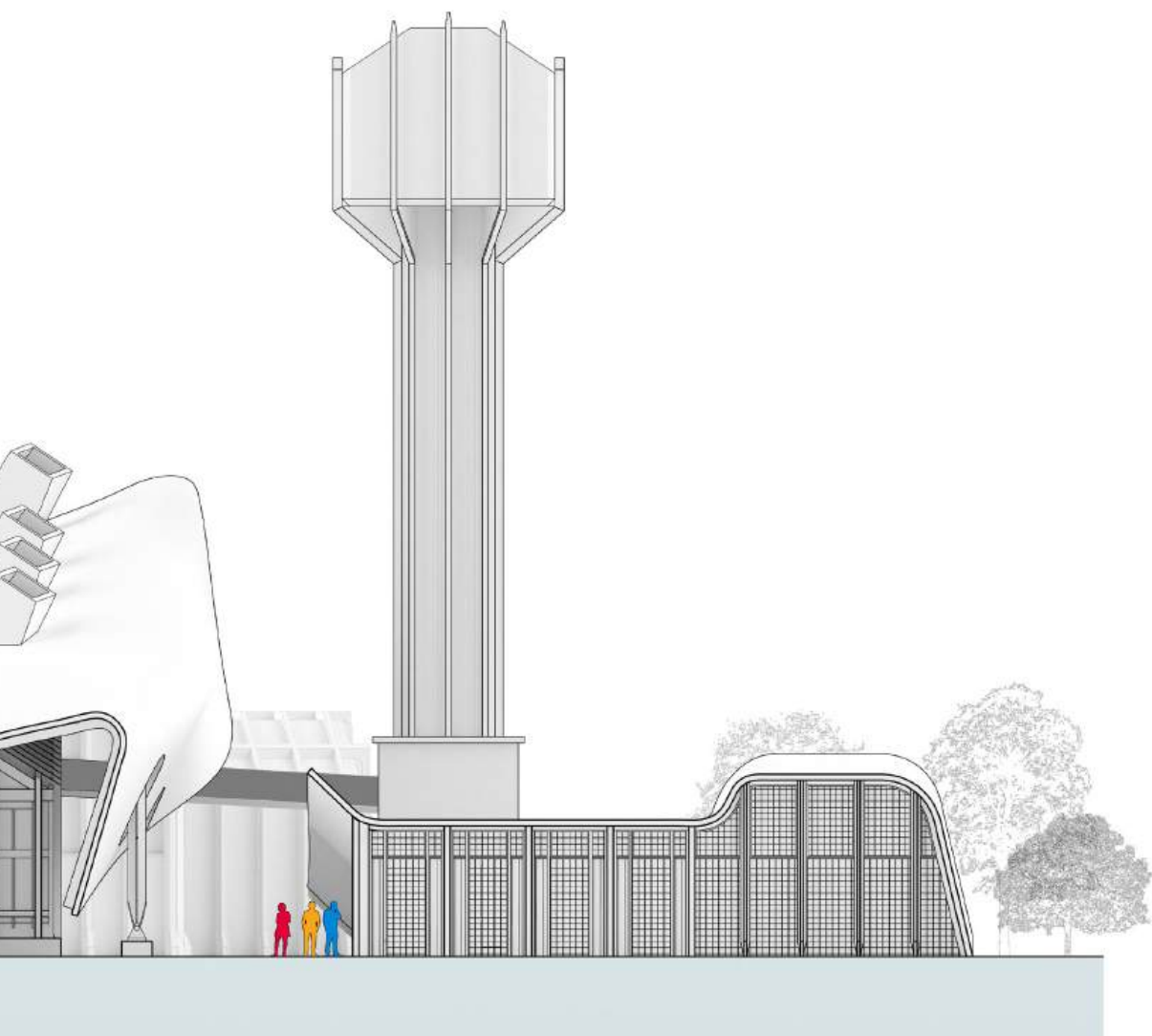
Alexander Packham

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

The *Theatre of Politics* is a proposed satellite House of Parliament on the site of the former Lifford waste processing plant, beside Lifford Reservoir. It forms part of a wider strategy for polycentric government, aiming to support greater devolution across the UK by giving more space for local voices to be heard.

The design reuses the site's existing infrastructure, transforming old waste bays into the 'yea' and 'nay' voting lobbies. These feature permeable walls, allowing MPs to move between them and encouraging votes based on constituents' needs rather than party lines. This reflects the project's belief that architecture can influence political behaviour.

Materials already on-site are reused, including corrugated metal cladding and crushed bricks and foundations mixed with lime to create a terrazzo-style lime-crete. This project combines reuse, symbolism, and civic intent to explore how architecture can support a more open, accountable form of democracy.



The facade design draws inspiration from the Gothic Revival style. Rather than imitating its heavy ornamentation, the new proposal uses key elements such as repetition and vertical hierarchy to express institutional power and permanence. In contrast to the Palace of Westminster's Anston limestone facade, this design uses timber, with a structural glulam frame that protrudes through the building to form simplified buttresses and express string courses.



1



2



3

1 - 3D printed facade development model showing both ends of the building. Demonstrates the repetition and hierarchy influenced by the Gothic Revival style.

2 - Initial facade development model, testing materials and form. Corrugated metal is reused from buildings currently on the waste management site, reducing the need for new materials to be brought in. The facade is elevated above the water on limestone plinths, and the downward columns are shaped to a point, inspired by the portcullis motif from the House of Commons logo.

3 - Internal development model exploring the layout of structural elements and ornamentation, and how these could be refined to create a space best suited for debate.



Stefan Paronikyan

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

Stirchley Continuum aims to reanimate Stirchley's cinematic and theatrical heritage by incorporating a fluid architectural language into Pershore road. The building sinuous form aims to represent and symbolise the continuity of film and entertainment. At street level a glazed cafe and informal seating terrace creates a social hinge, inviting passers-by to pause and converse creating a communal space both inside and outside. The auditorium incorporates sculpted acoustic discs inspired by the Royal Albert Hall and planted buffer zones to ensure impeccable sound and to be neighbourly quiet.

Flexible rehearsal studios, exhibition galleries and community workshop flank the auditorium. Phenomenological principles are applied to create the best experience for each user, the light sculpted canopy softens the light from outside creating a gentle transition into the light controlled auditorium. *Stirchley Continuum* offers the district not merely a new landmark but a living conduit between past narratives and future creativity, reigniting civic pride and cultural vibrancy.



Razvan-Constantin Precupet
Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

To Craft a Spine builds upon the concepts of modular architecture and user-led and directed designs previously explored through an intervention performed on the front yards of North Edgbaston's residential areas comprised of modular box components. This project maintains the box component as a key element; however, it is now implemented as part of a central hub for manufacturing, showcasing and distribution. Thus answering the emerged questions of where to obtain and how to learn to use these components.

The plan of the structure is split between the ground floor, a rigid open-plan arrangement which prioritises order and functionality, and the upper floors, which are unrestricted and reduced to a system of columns and beams to encourage a user-directed and flexible occupation of the space. Both levels are brought together through the boxed component, albeit in different roles, with the ground floor prioritising the manufacturing and distribution and the upper level showcasing through interaction. within boundaries and outside it.



Vaishnvi Rajput

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

By creating a project which not only sets a new environmental standard for North Edgbaston but also invests in the local community, the *Artist on the Roof* aims to reignite the maker culture back into area.

The centre has three workshops (messy, clean and in between) along with four artist residences above as they can overlook the activity below whilst having private reflection spaces. The balance between work life as well as community engagement has been accommodated to with free-flowing workshops with limited boundaries allowing activities to bleed into one another in the inner exhibition space. This space is covered by a large spanning timber grid which illuminates the area throughout the day encouraging collaborative working and allowing this collaboration to become an exhibit in itself. The main goal of this project was to design for the people, which is why by using Christopher Alexander's *Pattern Language*, the people of North Edgbaston have the 'Artists Language'; where they bring the building to life and inhabit and adapt the centre to their needs accordingly.

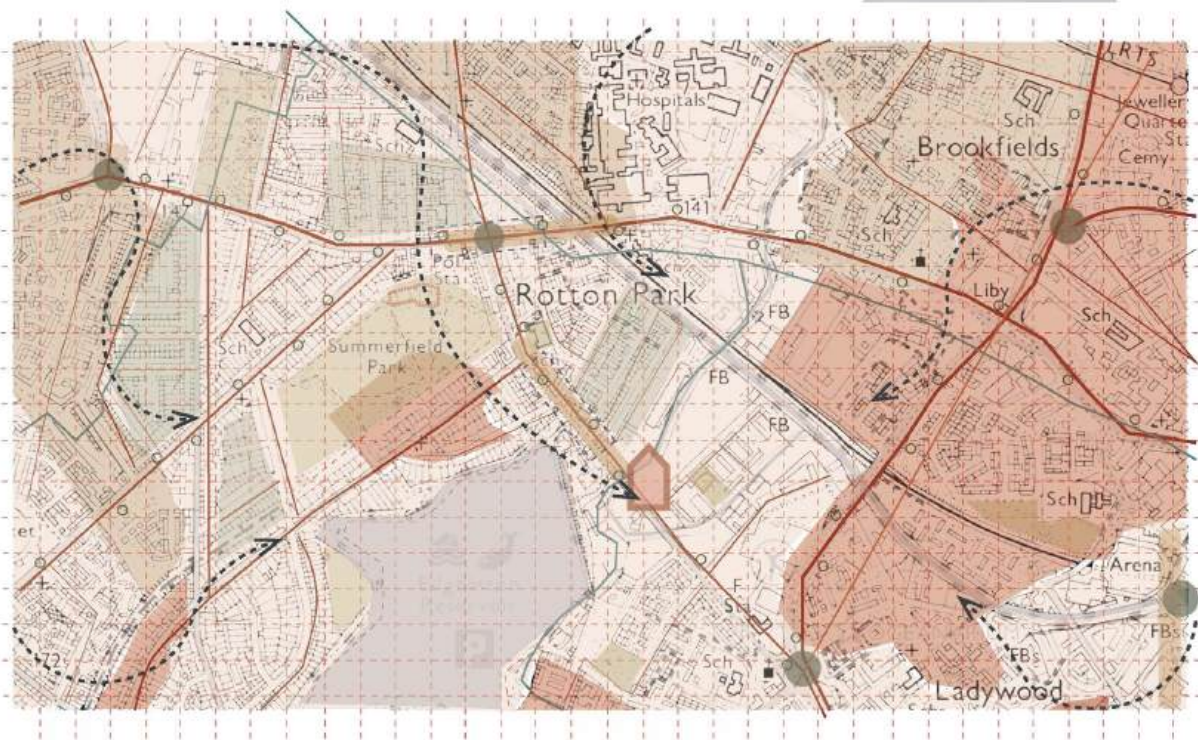
ARTIST ON THE ROOF

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

As an area with layers of history transitioning between labour and residential focused periods, North Edgbaston has been home to numerous different stories. Although compared to other neighbourhoods there is a lacking presence in portraying these characters or cultural actors. While there is a growing artistic presence with the V&A and Port Loop, there is a noticeable absence of community-led spaces where creativity can flourish.

In the area, artists are forced to head to other areas where they have those coveted spaces available. Without these spaces, the area risks cultural stagnation and the erosion of local creative identity.

With the Artist on the Roof building, it provides a welcoming entrance into the area coming in from city centre as an outward collective expression of the neighbourhood. The residency will bring an influx of different narratives locally and globally to provide a range of different skills to the demographics. The wider impact of the building plans to reflect onto the community.



- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Independent Housing | 35. New Houses |
| 2. Distribution of houses | 36. Housing in between |
| 3. House or extension | 37. Network of Public & Car |
| 4. Local Transport Areas | 38. Small Public Spaces |
| 5. Neighbourhood Boundary | 39. Connected Play |
| 6. Ring Roads | 40. House for a Small Family |
| 7. Access to Water | 41. Small Services w/ Red Tape |
| 8. Activity Nodes | 42. Bus Stop |

30 **ACTIVITY NODES**

Scattered from the hustle in city centre, there is an opportunity to create any distribution map in comparison with Port Loop. Ideally, it would create an influx of talent and welcome local talent to the community.

92 **BUS STOP**

Especially coming from the bus stops, the entrance into the area from outside Port Loop can be met with this network community expression being led into the journey through.

48 **HOUSING IN BETWEEN**

With housing not being seen as a thing, the area becomes a lot neglected, where the infrastructure can accommodate the activity to create a "Rich AF" portfolio.

THE ARTIST'S PATTERN LANGUAGE
#TAKEBACKEDGBASTON

52 **NETWORK OF PATHS AND CARS**

North Edgbaston is made up of 10,000 cars, residents, creating a possible network of subcultures taking up together key attributes the urban network diversity of its programs.

8 **MOOSAIC OF SUBCULTURES**

Although there are many other social, economic and cultural diversity of programs, which perhaps the library. There is an opportunity to add to this community awareness.

15 **NEIGHBOURHOOD BOUNDARY**

The release of a local community arts, culture and creative network where the area would need to accommodate in the nearest moving through the existing landscape.

WHY PATTERN LANGUAGE? In the book Christopher Alexander creates the specific patterns based on users and the lived-in experience. With North Edgbaston, there is a developing importance in community action, focus in terms of Port Loop and the Birmingham Settlement Seed. The collective in the area are in need of a space catered to their needs to accommodate to creative expression, where pattern language provides a series of patterns which combine to encompass an inspiring atmosphere in the Artist on the Roof building.

Although Christopher Alexander's methods are highly debated, the patterns encourages participatory design where each design aspect complements one another in a North Edgbaston artist centre approach hence the ARTIST'S PATTERN LANGUAGE.

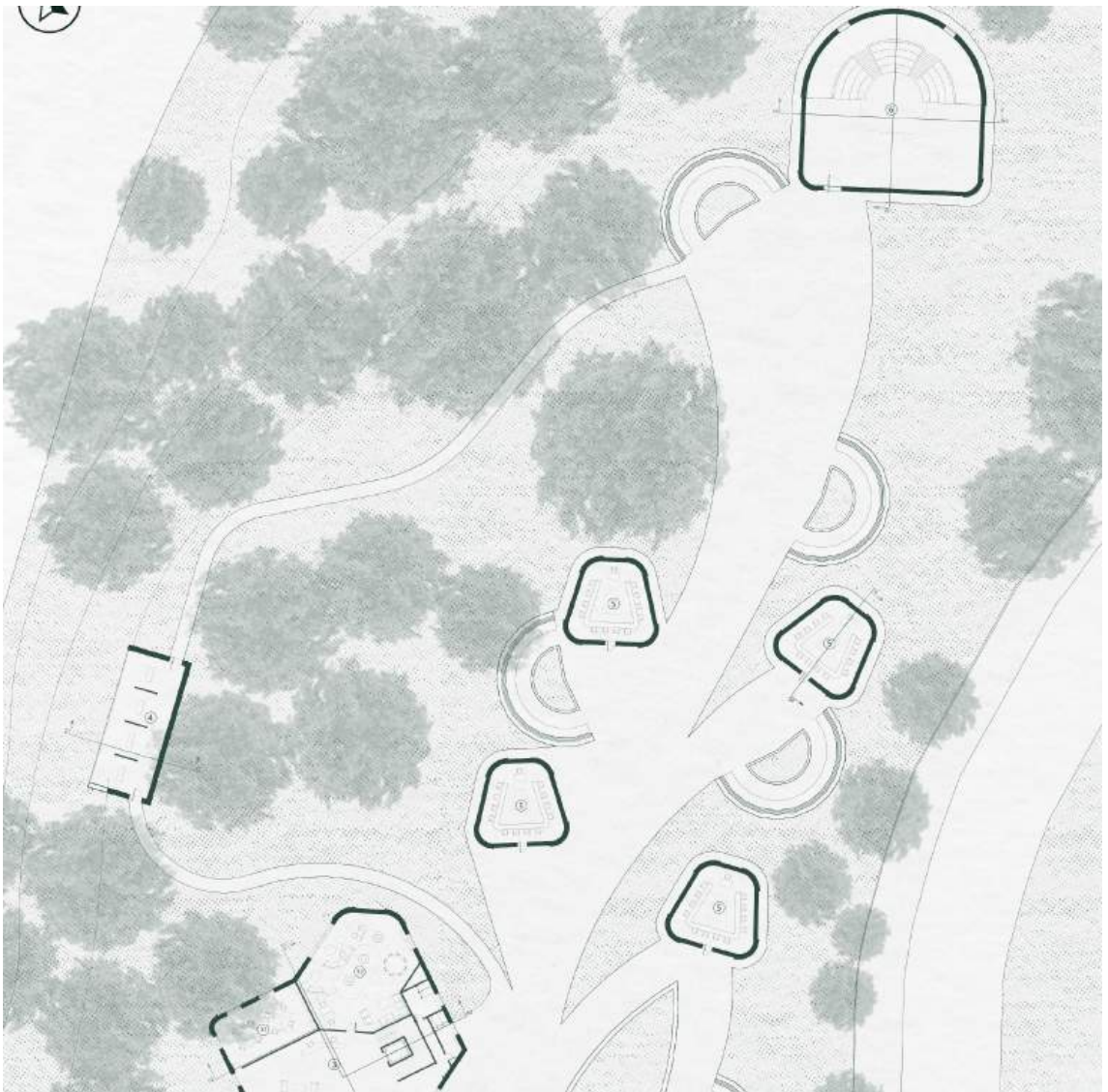


Wastah Rizwan

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

The *Living Loop* proposes a botanical garden within Birmingham's Icknield Port Loop, reimagining a disused industrial site that includes two existing brick buildings and the canal. The design transforms the area into a space for learning, growing, and connecting with the local community, with the larger warehouse adapted into a spacious greenhouse and maintenance area, taking advantage of its open interior and convenient access for growing, composting, and seed storage.

One of the key elements of the proposal is a distinctive overhead roof structure that ties the whole scheme together. It not only supports a floating boardwalk but also filters sunlight, harvests rainwater, and generates solar energy. A grid system was used to find the best column layout, keeping disruption to existing buildings to a minimum. This botanical garden serves as a living educational environment, promoting urban biodiversity, sustainable practices, and community engagement while breathing new life into Birmingham's industrial heritage.



Saffiyullah Shazad

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

In Birmingham, I in 5 people are living with disability and long term health condition. Growing up as a deaf person, I understand the struggles that we face in our everyday life. So using my personal experience, the aim of this project is to design a deaf community centre beside Lifford reservoir.

Supporting and connecting deaf and hard of hearing community. This centre is a welcoming environment for social interaction, learning and wellness. To become more confident and independent. The architectural designs is based on Deafspace, developed by Gallaudet University, making the space more suited to the deaf. Prioritising visual connectivity and sensory awareness, curved corners, open-plan, use of colours, wider space and strategic lighting design to support sign language communication.

Timber is used as a primary material, chosen for it warmth, sustainability and the relationship with relationship with the water and landscape promoting a calm atmosphere and support mental well-being.

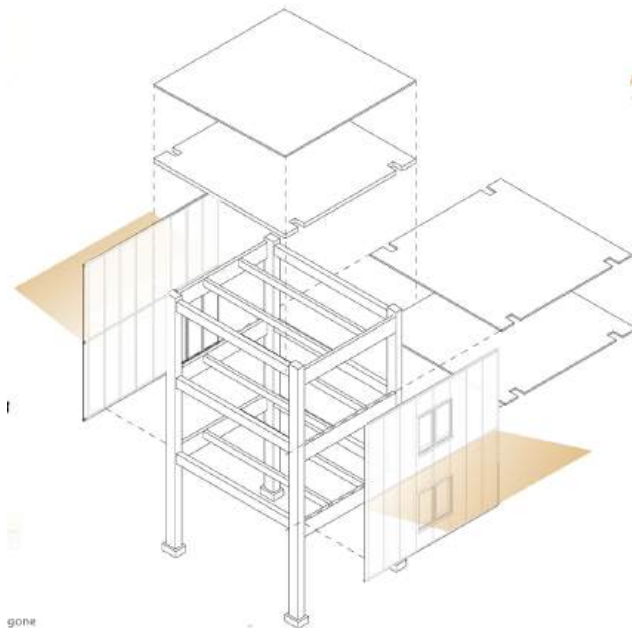


My-Anh Simkiss
Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

Cities and towns are successful when they facilitate interactions, encouraging us to immerse ourselves to activate the most, if not all, of our senses, leaving a lasting impression. Memorable architecture can be narrated for a desired outcome, compelling users to understand the issues, aims and goals that is relevant in our current space and time.

With a goal to amalgamate the presence of nature into a dense suburban town and reducing the segregation of activity between wildlife and humans-an immersive experience is required to understand the vitality of the local, natural environment that have been slowly encroached upon. In *A Wild Agenda*, an aviary aims to provide users with an experiential, contained micro-climate for the purpose of education, arts and restoration on to a suburban high street. A complete contradiction to its blocky urban image to gravitate peoples' attention to issues concerning biodiversity loss and disconnectivity from the natural world.

Visual to show bricks in use



gone



Students like bird houses can be interesting addition to the curriculum, inspiring the program relationship between students and birds.



Last semester log bird houses were micro-scale attempts for people to be kind and sustainable to their local environment.

This time, bird houses are integrated into the buildings facade, making the most of its footprint.

Bricks would be made first then casted to create molds. Two have been made with different sized holes as different birds prefer different sizes.

1:1 maquettes of brick bird houses



Visual shows house sparrow landing on box with 3.2cm hole

Visual shows starling flying out of box with 4.5cm hole

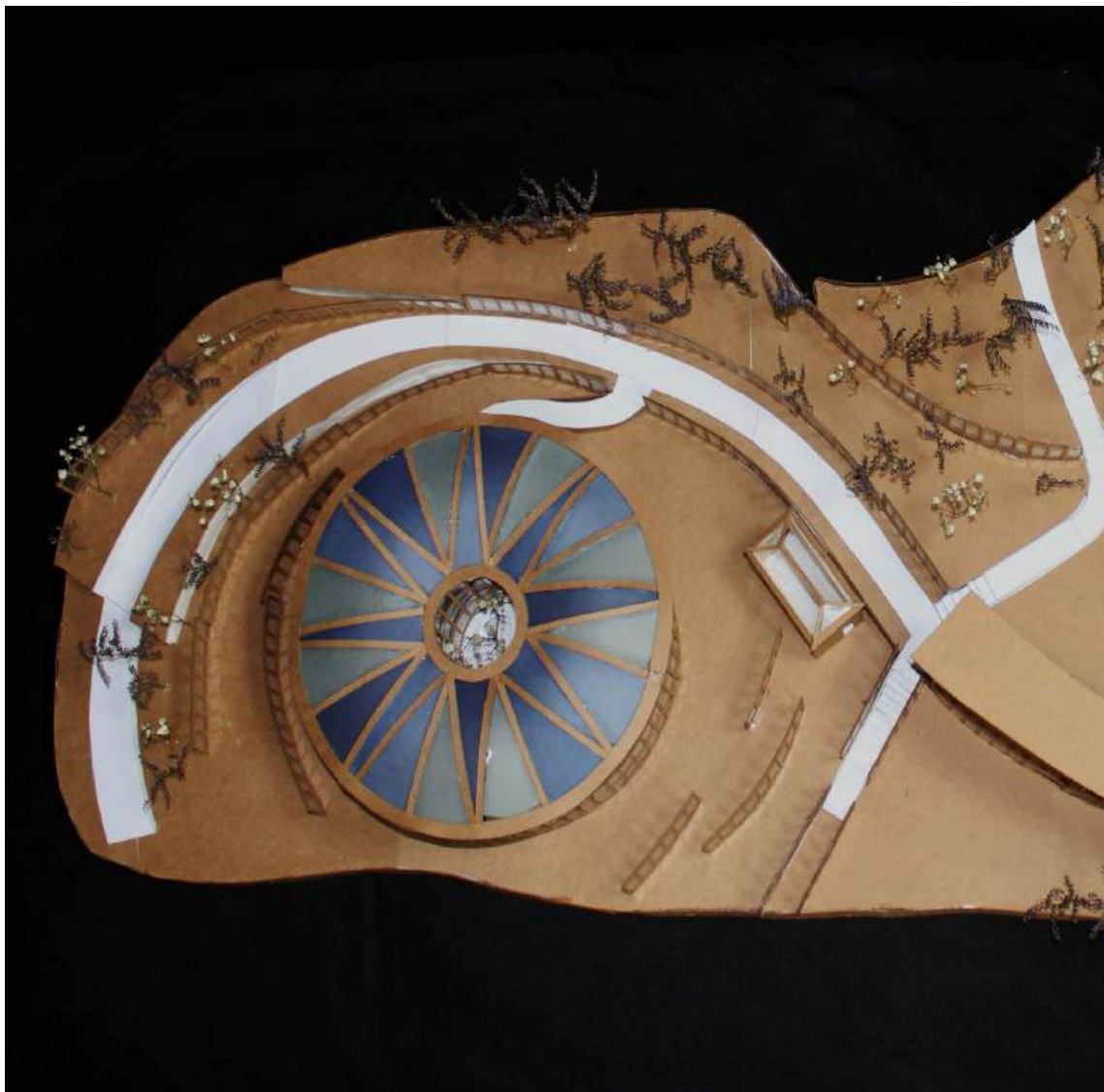




Gursharanjit Singh
Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

The *Story Exchange* is about how architecture can facilitate story telling, how it can exchanged through a variety of media like art, voice, etc. The aim of the project is to allow for this structure to bring the community together and give them a place to tell their stories through art and voice. Stories are something that should be shared and told as it will narrate something beautiful and teach people how sharing stories can make a huge impact on growing a community together,

Story telling is something that has been passed through generations and generations and this projects imagines itself as a place where the most caring, creative, emotional and dramatic stories for the community can be remembered, where people can look back and have a culture/ history of place. It becomes a place where they can remember together so their shared story will not be forgotten.



Stefania-Ioana Sterian

Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

This project envisions the revitalisation of the former Tower Ballroom site in North Edgbaston as a community-focused botanical museum and green hub. Rooted in sustainability and community engagement, the proposal supports ongoing local efforts to reclaim public spaces for communal use, ecological restoration, and education. The design aims to foster social interaction and biophilic living through inclusive, environmentally conscious spaces such as a botanical museum, welcome centre, orchard garden, gardening exhibit, and cafe.

The masterplan, structured around three symbolic zones—community, leisure, and learning—emphasises organic, minimal-impact design that follows the site's topography. The overall strategy empowers residents, especially the younger generation, to engage in sustainable practices and reconnect with nature. This project not only preserves but enhances the neighbourhood's environmental and cultural legacy, creating a blueprint for community-led, sustainable urban regeneration.



Lucy Trett

Studio 1: Urban Makers / Tutor: Dr Yazid Khemri

In Stirchley, was struck by the contrast between the decaying, graffiti-covered high street facades and the vibrant, independent businesses operating behind them. This disconnect inspired the proposal, a community-focused alternative to commercial redevelopment. Centered on a disused brownfield site and responding directly to the area's grassroots resistance to corporate expansion, envisioning a creative workshop and education hub that supports local skills, sustainable practices, and public engagement.

It incorporates adaptable maker spaces, teaching studios, and exhibition areas, all connected through a responsive green infrastructure and public garden. Drawing from studies of facade improvement techniques and sustainable design precedents, the scheme also includes green walls, rooftop biodiversity initiatives, and interchangeable panels showcasing local artwork. More than a building, the project acts as a tool for empowerment, celebrating local identity, promoting skill-sharing, and encouraging positive, community-led regeneration in Stirchley



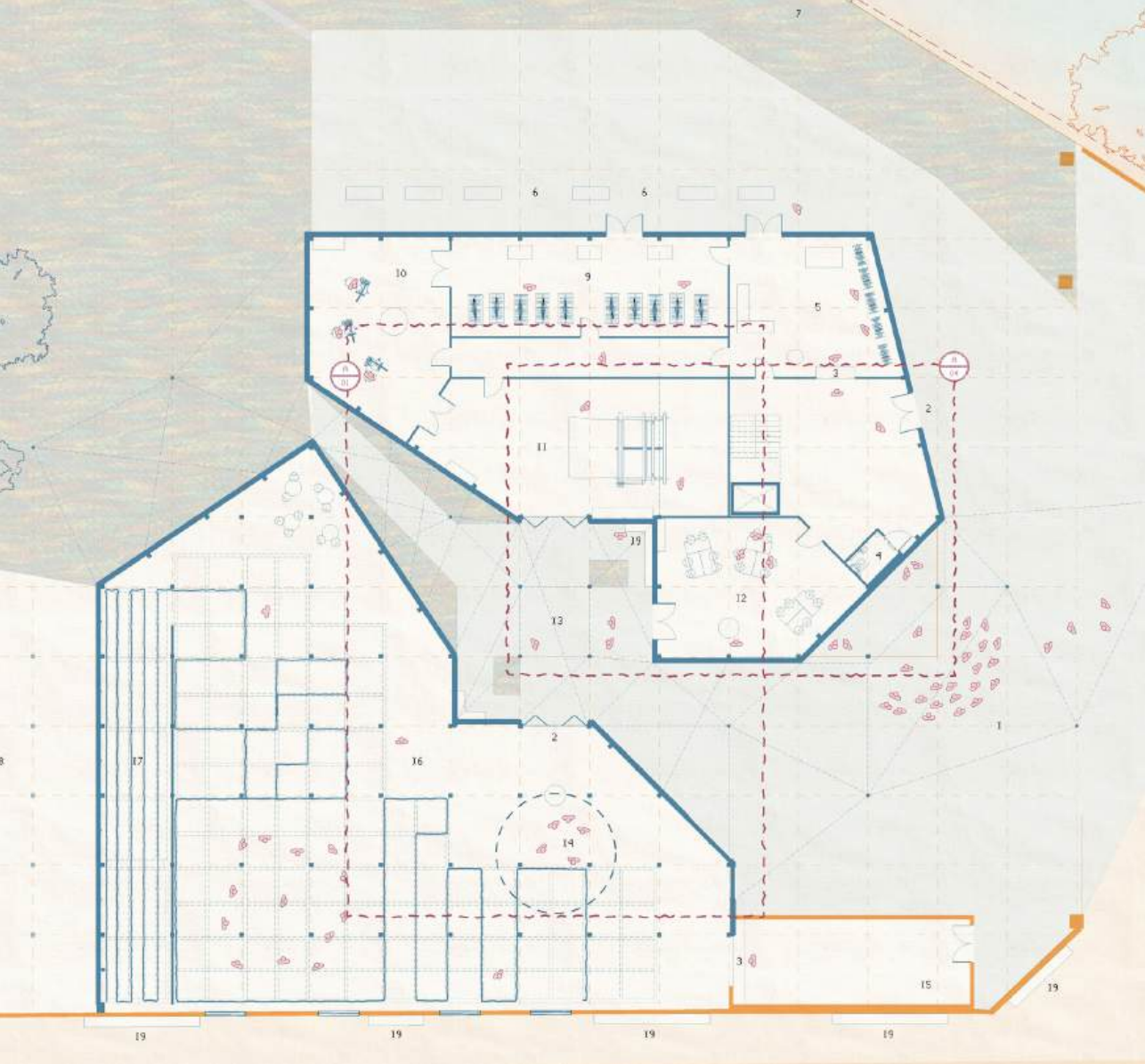
Harry Wilding

Studio 4: Post-Municipal Hall / Tutor: Ollie Chapman

Drawing formal inspiration from Roman baths and ideological influence from the historically decentralised power of England's parish churches, it reimagines these archetypes through a vision of self-governance, echoing the political spirit of the Roman Senate.

At its heart lies a reclaimed bastion of neglect, in Lifford Reservoir. A site shaped by austerity situated along the poetic "Mother of Birmingham," the River Rea. Here, the project marks the origin of a new devolution: a symbolic and spatial seizure of decentralised power.

Ultimately the proposal creates a steamy civic space for community gathering and political activation, portraying a revolutionary future for Lifford. Architecturally channeling the ethos of Lebbeus Woods, the design operates as a provocation, an embodied critique of government shortcomings and a spatial articulation of collective frustration.



Bisma Zahid
Studio 2: Exhibit A / Tutor: Rob Annable

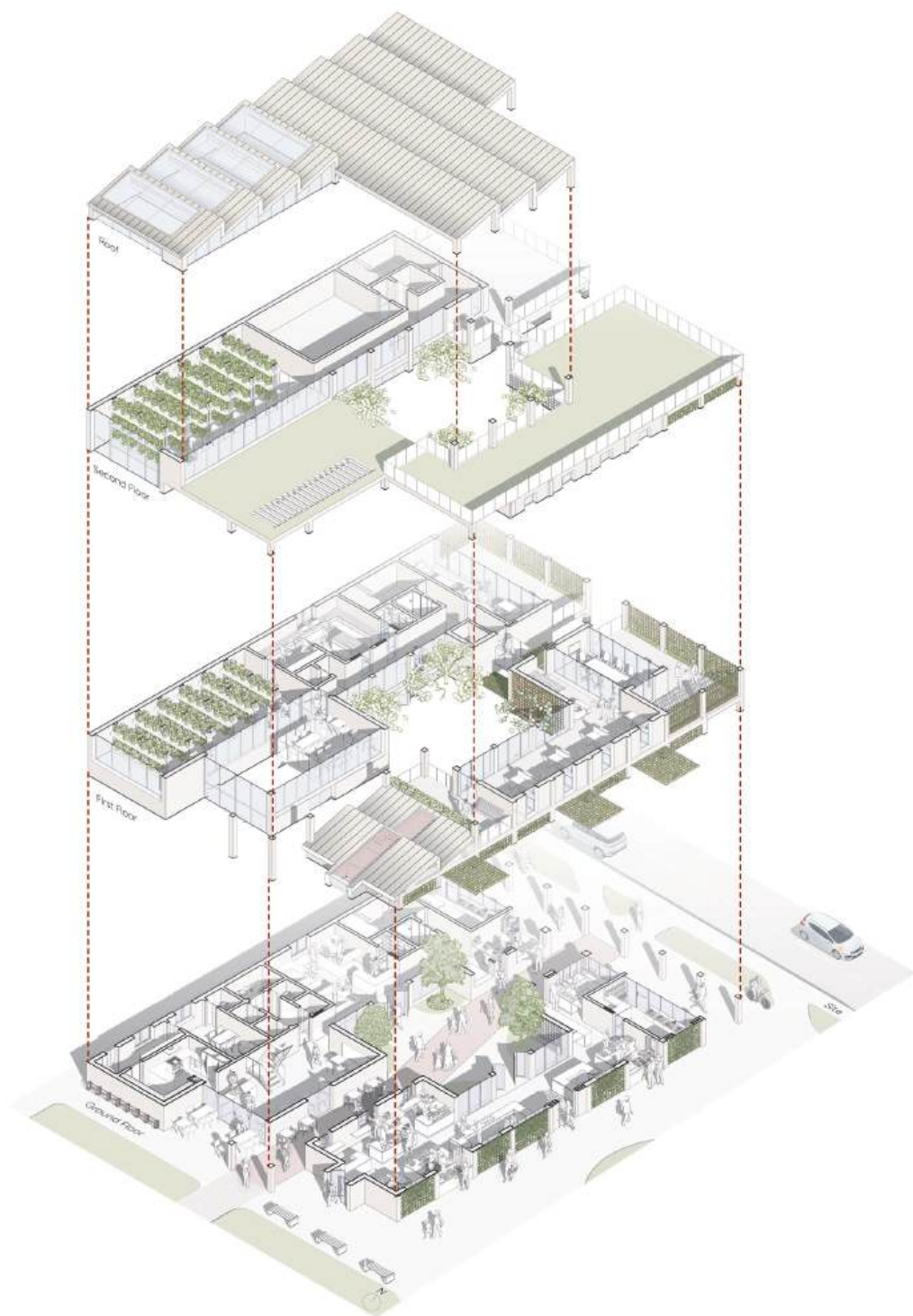
The *Neighbourhood Biotapestry* explores how architecture can support cultural and ecological restoration through the act of making. Using textiles as a form of protest against the loss of public property, the scheme invites the community of Ladywood and North Edgbaston to reclaim authorship over their environment and stories. At its centre is a collective, interactive tapestry that grows over time, recording the everyday lives of local residents. This participatory artwork is both literal and symbolic as an act of stitching together what has been lost. Artwork should not be hidden in a gallery, but embedded in public life and accessible to all. Made from reeds grown along the Port Loop canal edge, the tapestry represents the interdependence of cultural memory and ecological repair.

It offers a hopeful model for how architecture can be deeply rooted in place, shaped by the people it serves. It transforms the act of embroidery into a form of care, both for land and for community, and positions making as a form of resistance, repair, and renewal.





BIRMINGHAM CITY
University



All catalogue images credited to students of BSoAD.
Rear Cover Image: Maria Andrukonis