



Re-play:

Breathing Life into Empty Spaces

Transforming forgotten urban
land with recovered
materials into playful,
inclusive spaces for
youth connection and
activity

CONTENTS

01 INTRODUCTION	1	04 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT	33
Brief		Construction Drawings	
Proposal		Colour/Material/Finish	
		Furniture/Fixtures and Equipment	
03 CONCEPT DESIGN	16	05 USE	46
Project Idea			
Site		06 CONCLUSION	53
Schematic Design			
Time			

01

INTRODUCTION

The building environment where we grow up and then lead our life is affecting our personal development more than we realise.

After the Covid-19 emergency, people began to be aware of the importance of having access to outdoor space, and how it is important for our mental and physical well-being.

The research that I conducted delves into topics such as environmental psychology and social justice, taking in consideration the stress and social boundaries that are affecting young individuals lives in low-income communities, like Peckham.

Through the pages of my portfolio you will discover my journey through the urban environment of South London, and how it can be reshaped to encourage teenagers to use it in an unconventional way, in order to improve their well-being and social connections.



Eugenia Liut - Peckham Car Boot Market - 20.05.2024

URBAN ENVIRONMENT → Public space
 - issues: this space is divided by social boundaries

(where does it needs to be improved?)

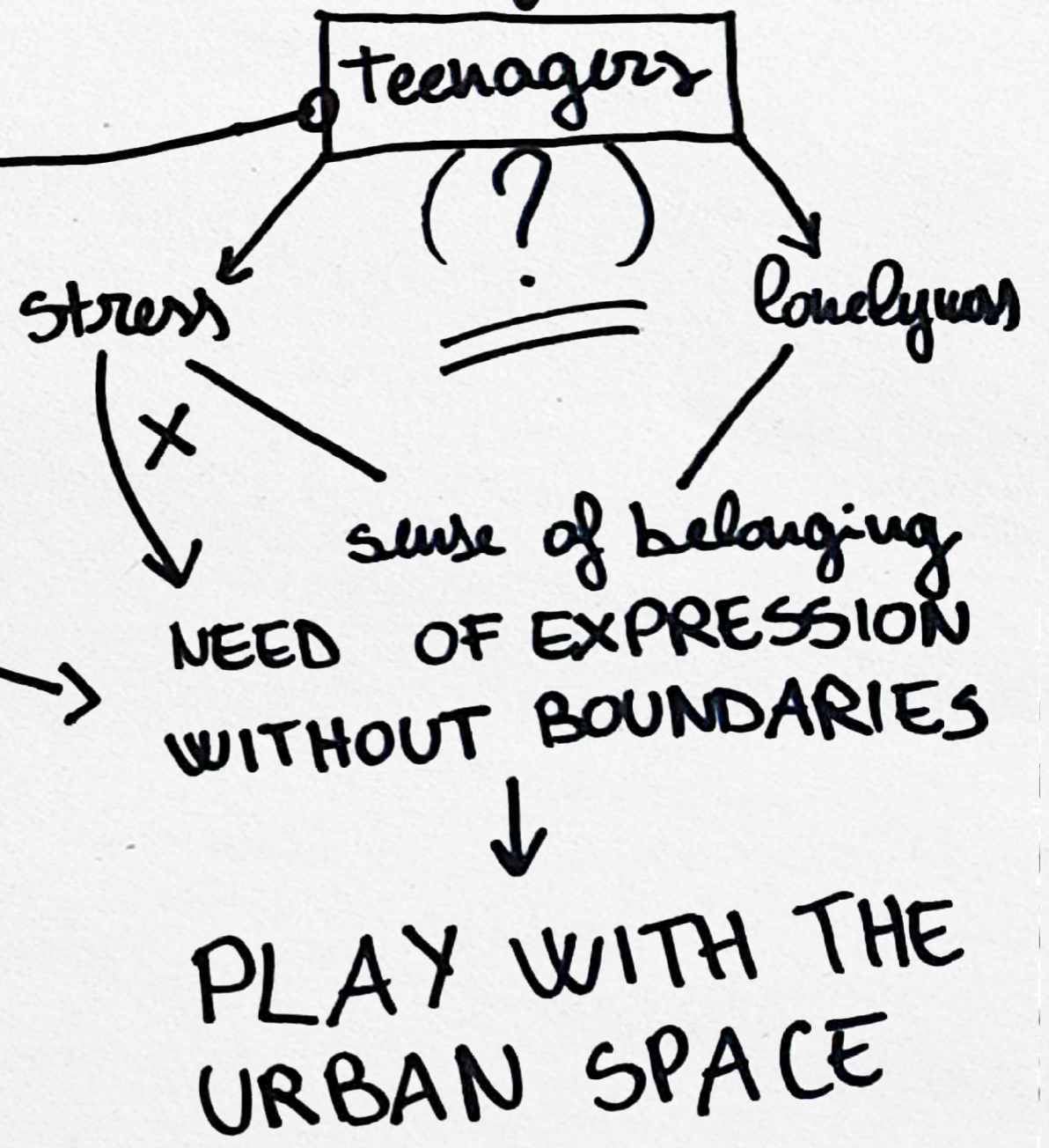
London low-income community
 - issues: crime, vandalism, poor public services. (gangs)

children (Playground) → teenagers → adults (Park / Sport)

The public leftover sites are still empty of social boundaries

RECOVERED NEGLECTED URBAN AREAS
 - RECLAIMED MATERIALS FROM THE STREETS (construction sites - markets)

TEENS → NEGLECTED GENERATION



CRITICAL
RESEARCH
PAPER

PORTFOLIO

THE ELEMENTS
OF MY PROJECT

PROJECT
PRESENTATION
VIDEO

MATERIAL
MAKING
VIDEO

02

PRE-DESIGN

During my street photography practice, I discovered two abandoned sites that could serve as dedicated spaces for the young community of Peckham and Camberwell. The first was a garden within the UAL campus on Vestry Road, while the second was the Camberwell Bunker Garden, an abandoned public lot once used as a community garden by local residents.

I chose the second site for my project due to its easy street access and the intriguing history hidden beneath the ground. I conducted a site analysis, which I will present in detail in the following chapter.

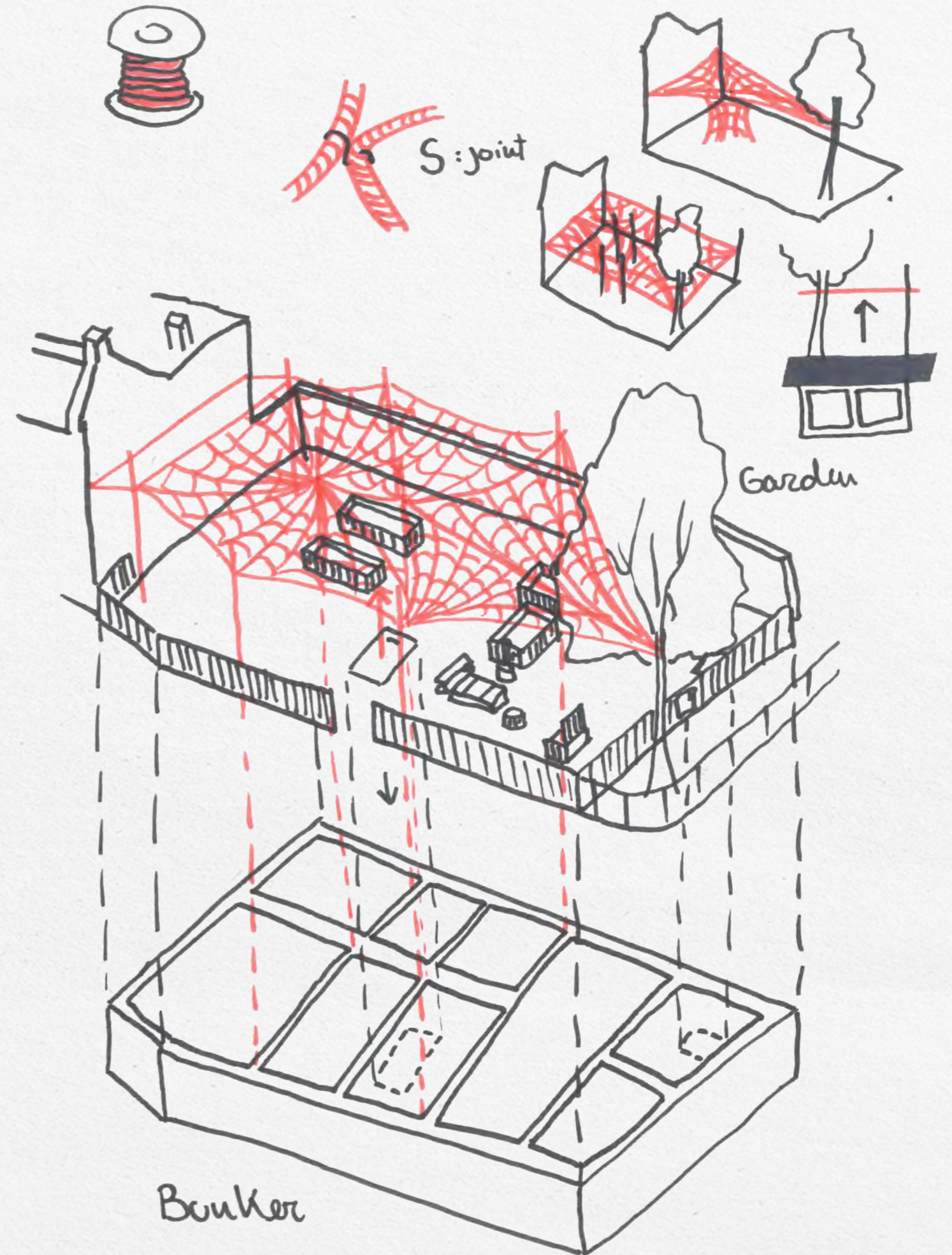
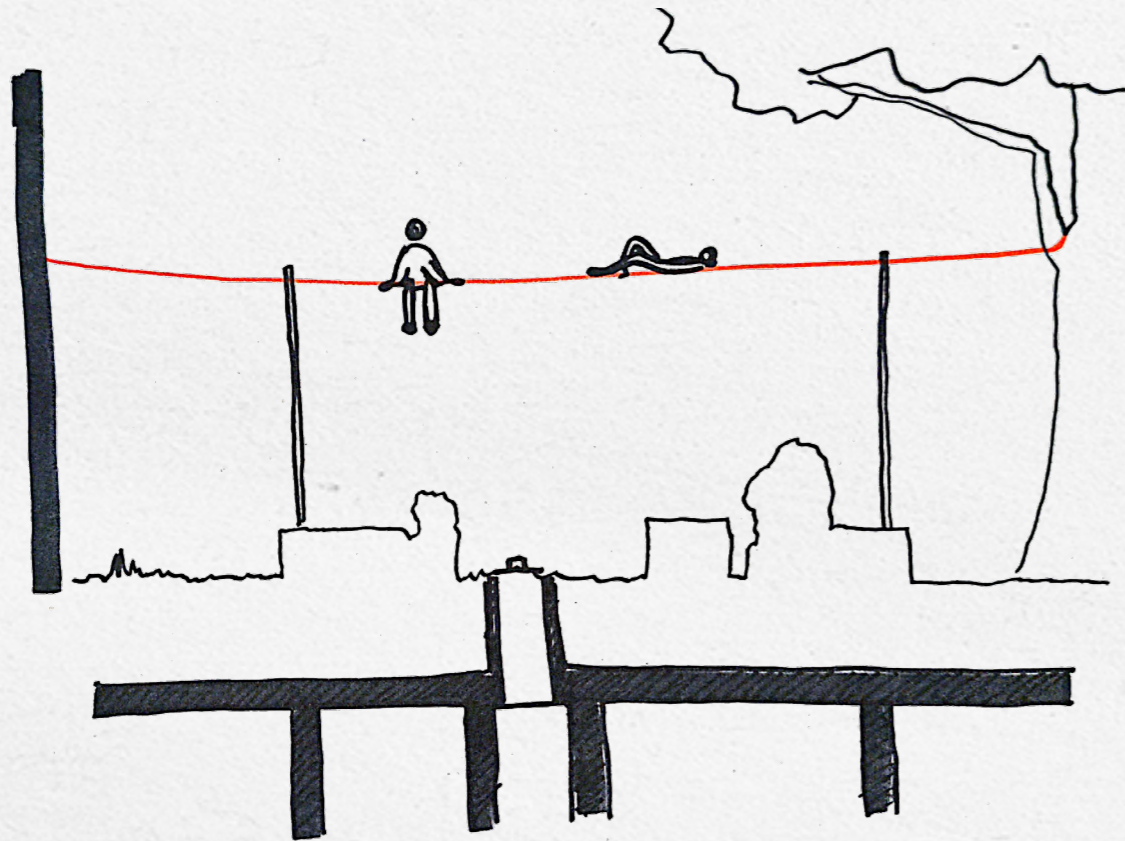
In the Pre-design phase of my research practice, I experimented with models and sketched different shapes and techniques, aiming to use materials reclaimed from the street in a playful and effective way.

This phase allowed me to use my drawing and design skills to shape the core concept behind my project. The outcomes of this practice were then presented at the Work in Progress Exhibition, where I displayed the design proposal through materials, a model, and several visuals.

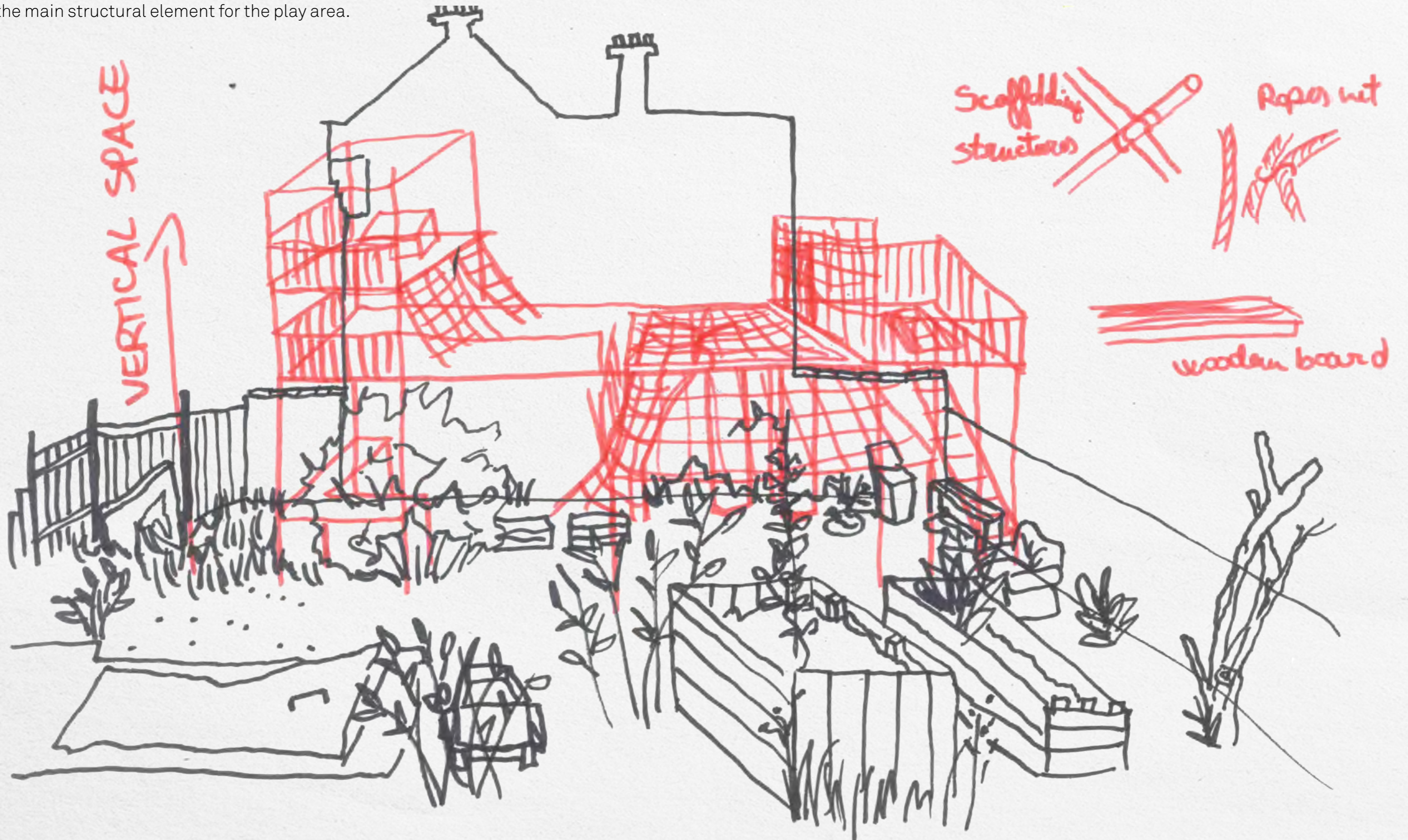
What space can
improve the
well-being of
people growing up
in an urban
environment?

My first idea after visiting the site was to use a single material, the rope, to connect the trees and create a playful space where children could climb and view the area from a fresh perspective.

However, given the characteristics of the trees in the garden and the lack of high anchor points for the ropes, I decided to explore a more practical approach to designing the space.

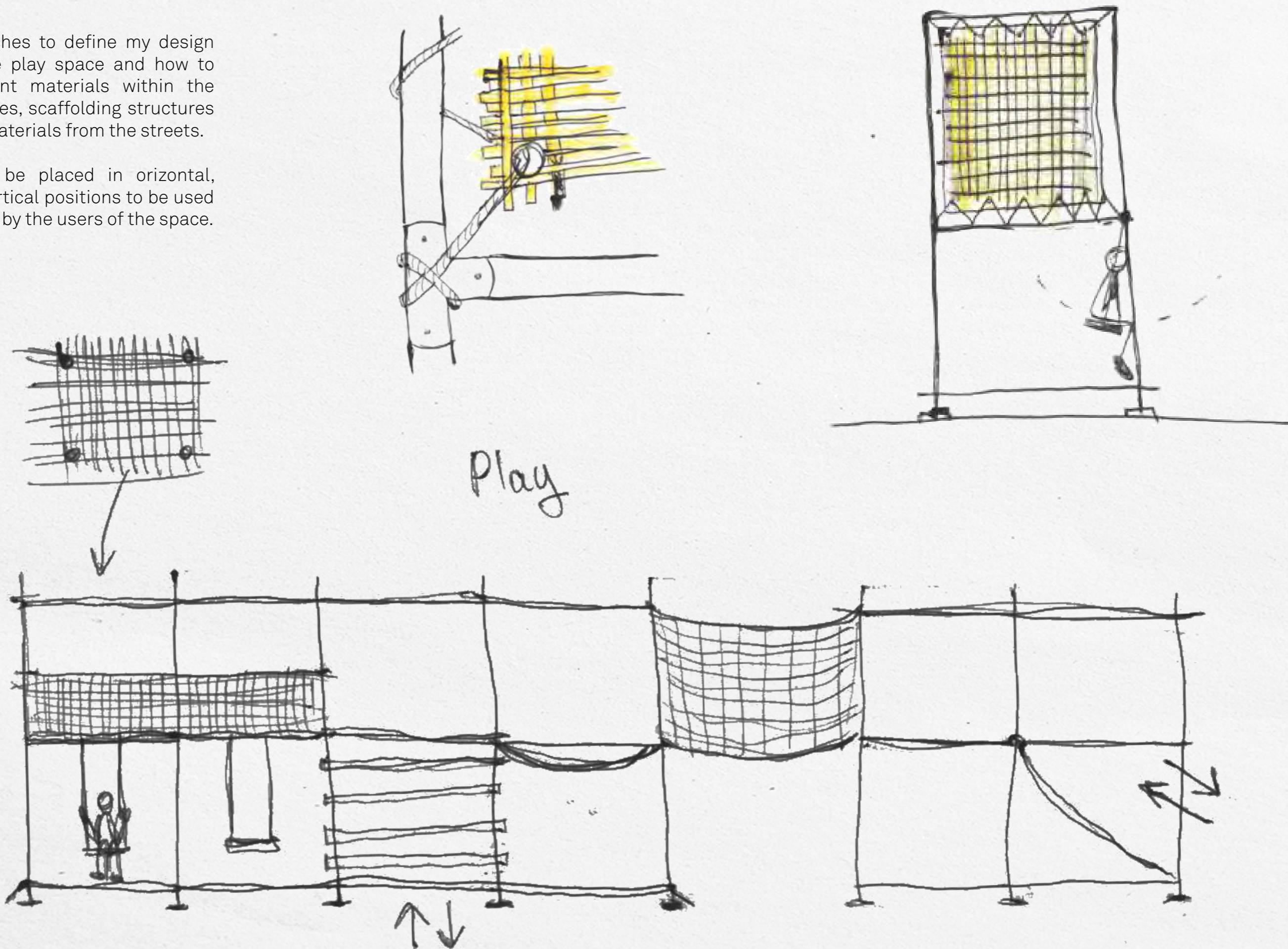


During one of my site visits, I sketched an idea to make use of the vertical space alongside the facade wall facing the garden. I considered the existing elements on site, such as greenery and garden plots. This design option involves using scaffolding as the main structural element for the play area.

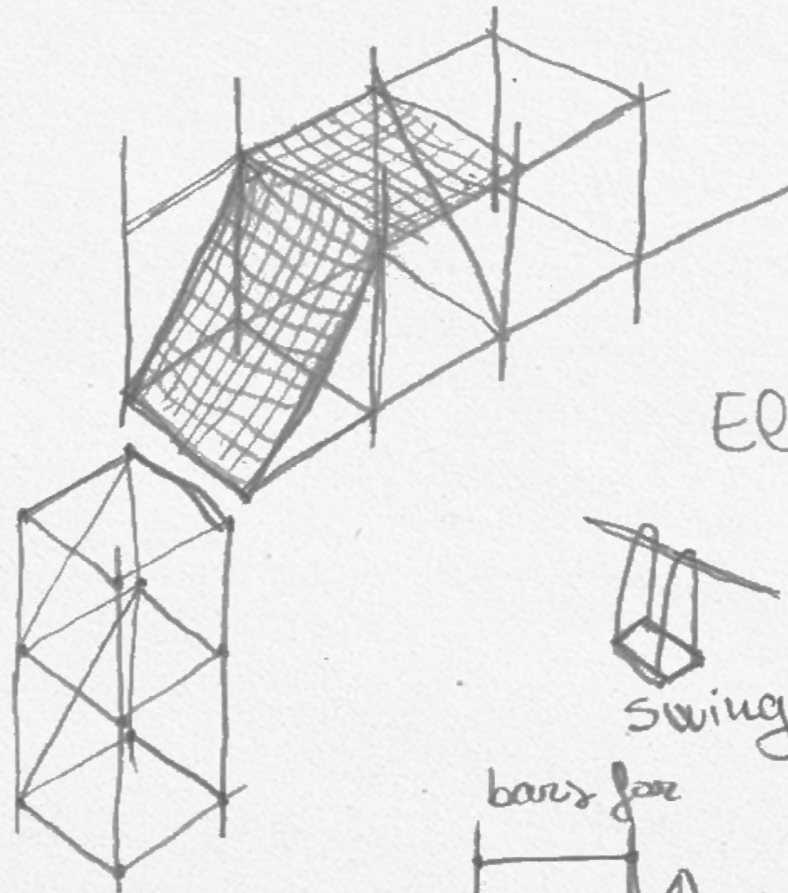
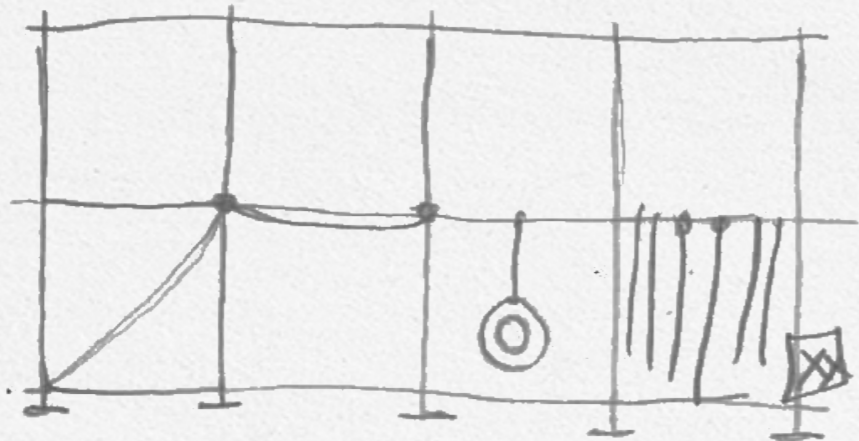
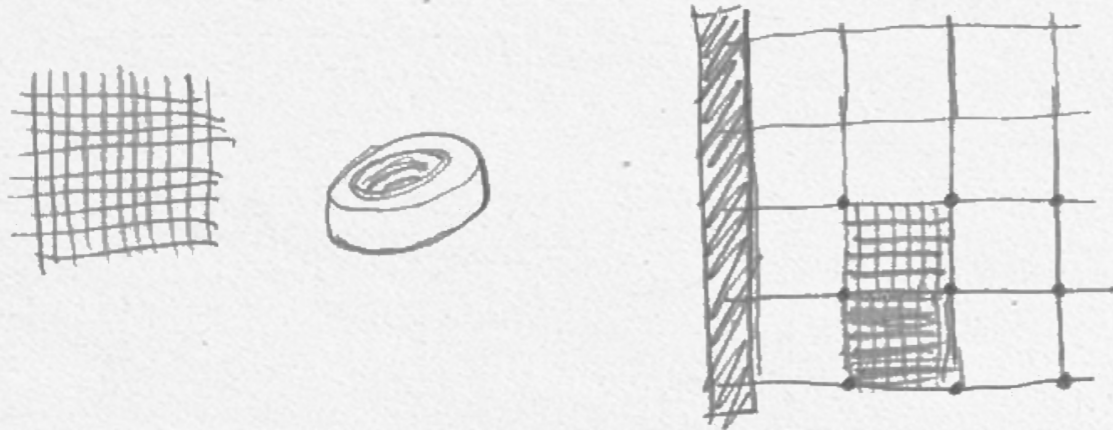


I used my sketches to define my design proposal for the play space and how to combine different materials within the same space: ropes, scaffolding structures and recovered materials from the streets.

The ropes will be placed in orizontal, dyagonal and vertical positions to be used in different ways by the users of the space.



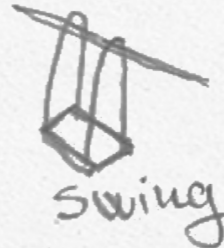
Adventure playground



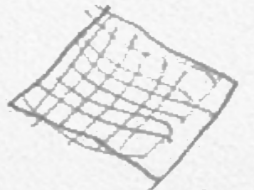
|||||
 Rope = Social bonds / connections
 La corda delle navi è una metafora delle connessioni tra persone che vengono dall'estero (UK è un'isola) ogni adolescente è nella sua isola

Elements:

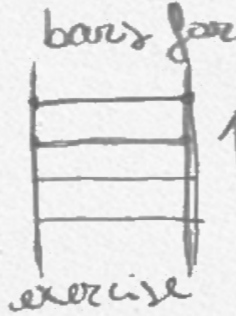
Rope to 2^o floor



Swing



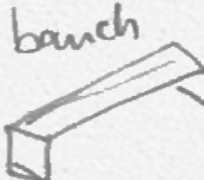
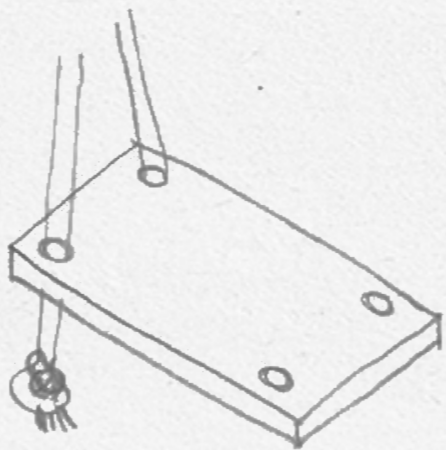
Horizontal Rope web



bars for exercise

vertical

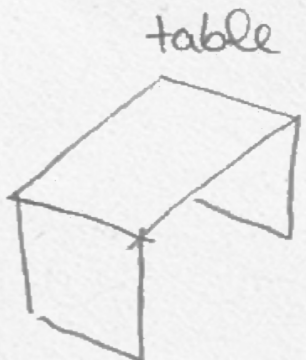
horizontal



bench

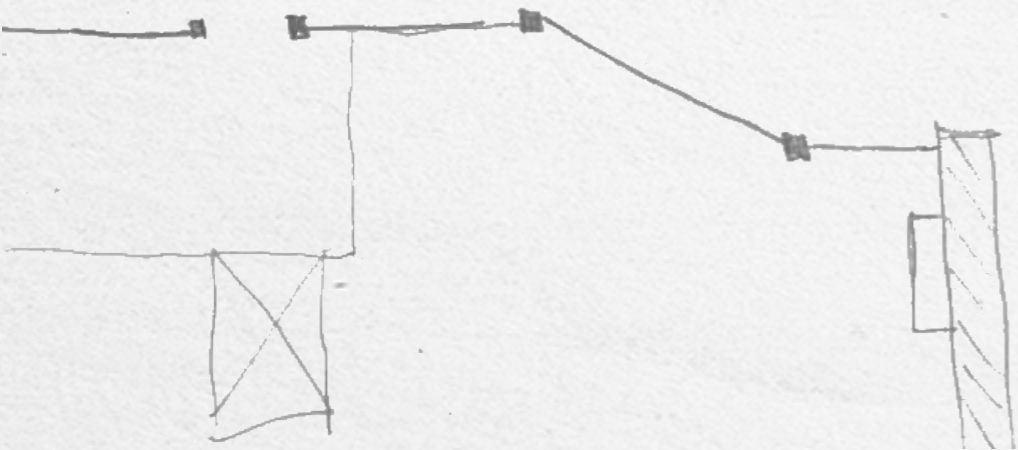
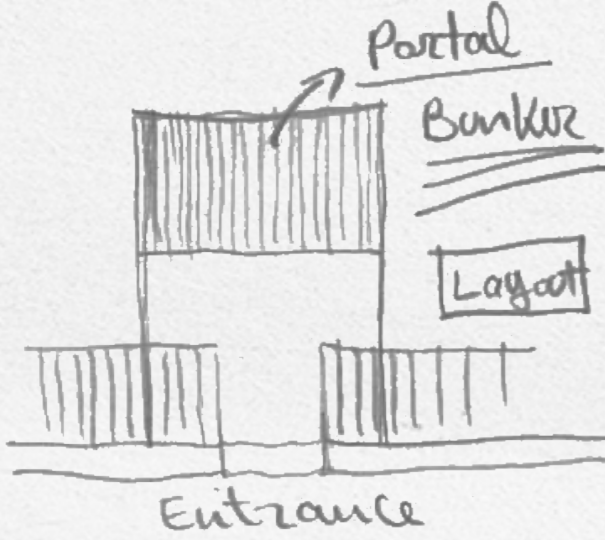


stool



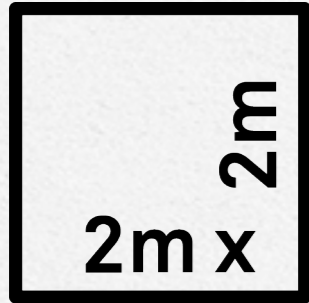
table

Zip line



Note translation:
 The ropes its a metaphor of the social connections between people from different cultures. The United Kingdom is an island and every teenager feels confine in its own personal island.

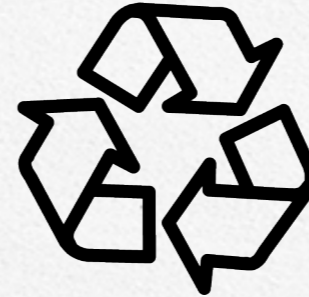
Brief



MODULAR STRUCTURE



FREE TO USE



**MADE WITH RECOVERED
MATERIALS FROM THE
STREETS**



**FOR THE TEENAGERS OF
MARGINALISED
COMMUNITIES**

Proposal

I presented my design proposal during the work in progress exhibition, hosted the 7th of July in the Design Studio of the Camberwell Collage of Arts campus.

The indications for the exhibition personal display were to provide a text of no more than 150 words which included the project brief, an image and a drawing to communicate the project graphically and finally a model and some material samples. All the elements must have been layout within a square space of 21x21cm.

In the first page I included four QR codes to show my portfolio and my project video. I also decided to include a digital version of the illustration that I displayed as drawing to communicate my design proposal and a link for my personal contacts. Since my project is about community and connections.



Work in Progress Exhibition, MA ISD. Camberwell College of Arts, Design Studio, 7.07.24.

Re-play

Eugenia Liut

My project aims to revitalise overlooked urban spaces by transforming them into temporary playground structures made from recovered materials for socialising, exercise and play. Leftover sites are a metaphor for society's disinterest in teenagers, which is why my project focuses on these spaces. By repurposing these neglected areas, the initiative fosters a sense of belonging and connection among young people in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods, encouraging healthy social interactions, relationship to the environment and physical activity!



1. Project video



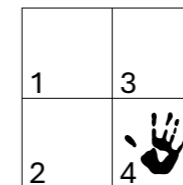
2. Project illustration



3. Portfolio

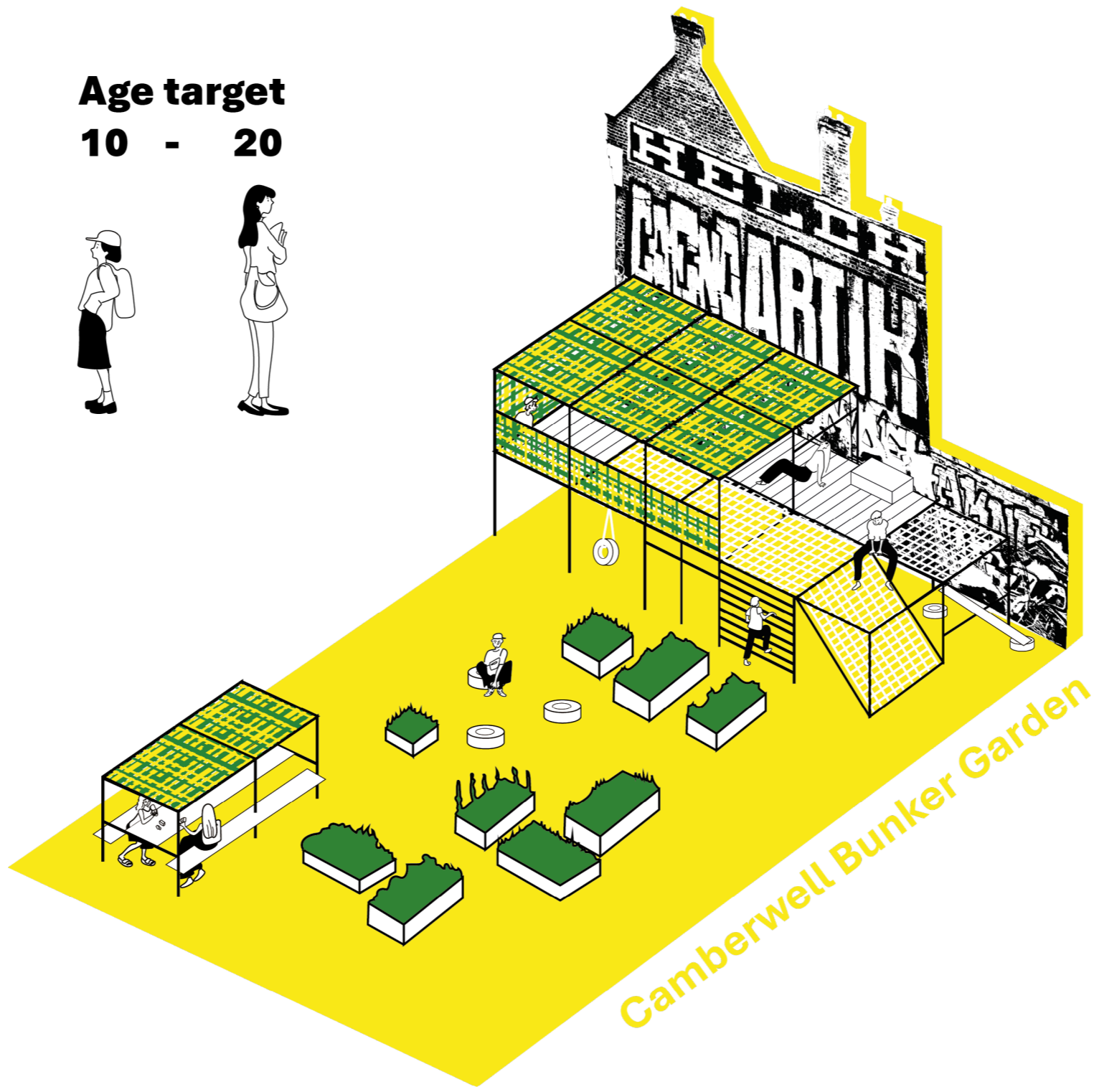
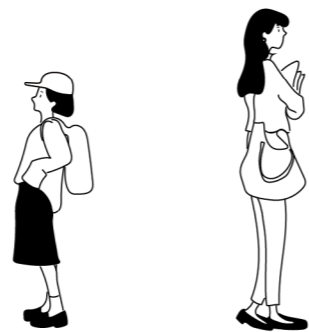


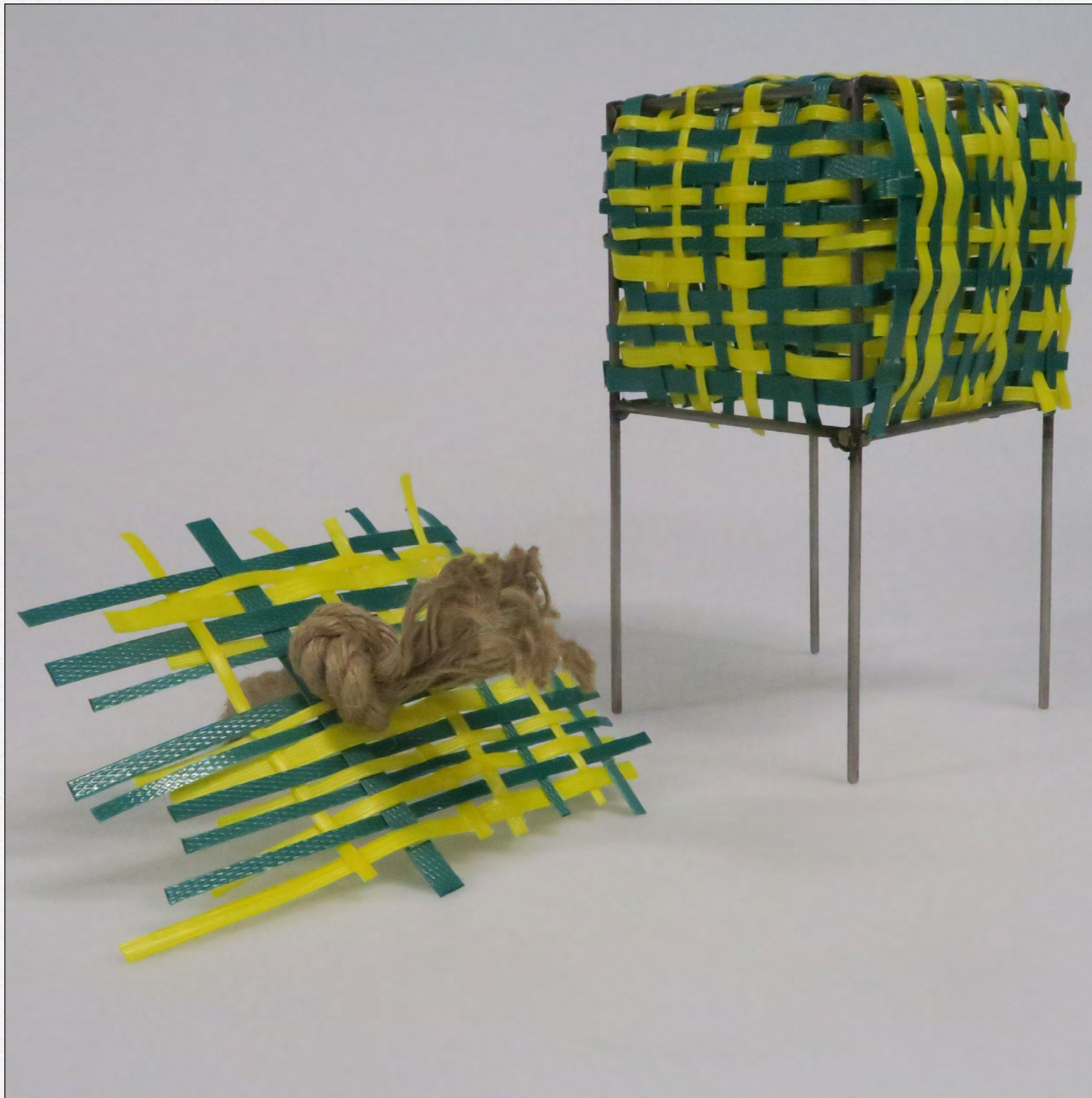
4. Contacts





Age target
10 - 20





03

CONCEPT DESIGN

After the Work in Progress Exhibition, I began refining the details of my urban intervention. This involved researching the materials that would form the modular scaffolding structure and identifying sources for them.

A key event that influenced this phase of my project was a conference I attended at Camberwell Space, a gallery within the university campus, which sparked the idea of involving stakeholders in my project.

In this chapter, you will find the site analysis of my chosen project location, the Camberwell Bunker Garden, an abandoned space with the potential to unite the teenage community of the Peckham area.

To complete this project phase, I also developed a proposal for the garden's graphic communication.

This includes using hand-spray writing for the site name and playfully reimagining construction site signs to indicate the various activities that can be enjoyed within the community space.

Unlocking the
potential of
leftover sites

I attended a conference at the Camberwell Space Gallery hosted by Resolve Collective, a multidisciplinary group involved in community projects.

During the event, Rebecca Gremmo, a curator for the Design Museum of London, discussed how many scaffolding companies in London are struggling with the cost of renting storage space for their materials. This issue has led some art galleries to use scaffolding elements as exhibition displays in exchange for providing free storage for these companies.

This insight greatly influenced my project. It sparked the idea of involving scaffolding companies as stakeholders for my modular playspace, offering them a practical storage solution while benefiting the community. The conference highlighted the creative potential of using recovered materials, aligning with the approach of practices like The Material Store, which is connected to Camberwell College of Arts.

In the following pages, I will illustrate how I plan to integrate this scaffolding system into my design for the play space, as well as present the site analysis for the Camberwell Bunker Garden.

31/07/2024

The material store:

Architecture and engineer practice that launched an initiative about sharing recycled material in Camberwell, Bristol and Croydon.

- We should pay more attention to the materials that surround us.

• book → "Why materials matters?" (Material bible)
People - Place - Material

- Materials represent a culture, a tradition a sense of place. (they are also political).

• Material Atlas → project online.

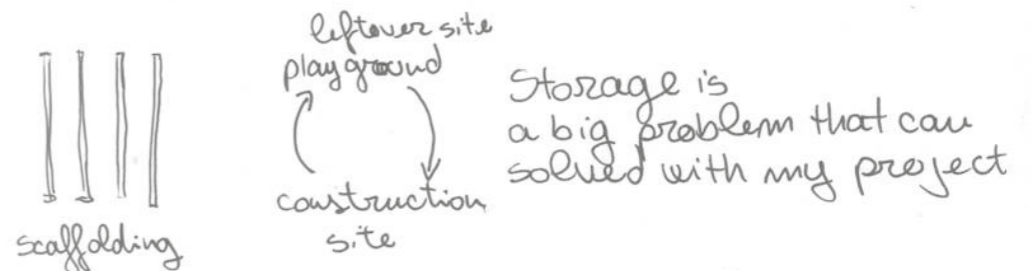
- "Material Cultures" practice; plant based materials. They use natural reused materials, like wood and clay for the floor and elements.

• research → materials and agriculture.
They collaborate with a lot of institutions.

- "We can make" practice based in Bristol. Community housing project (involve the neighbours) with the aim of involving local artisans and resources in building affordable houses. Sense of ownership towards your house. (Micro-Factory)

"Restore material mapping" Design Museum practice. (Soma Architects) there is an exhibition about reused materials. Curators and producers within galleries. Islands → exhibition with material circularity in mind.

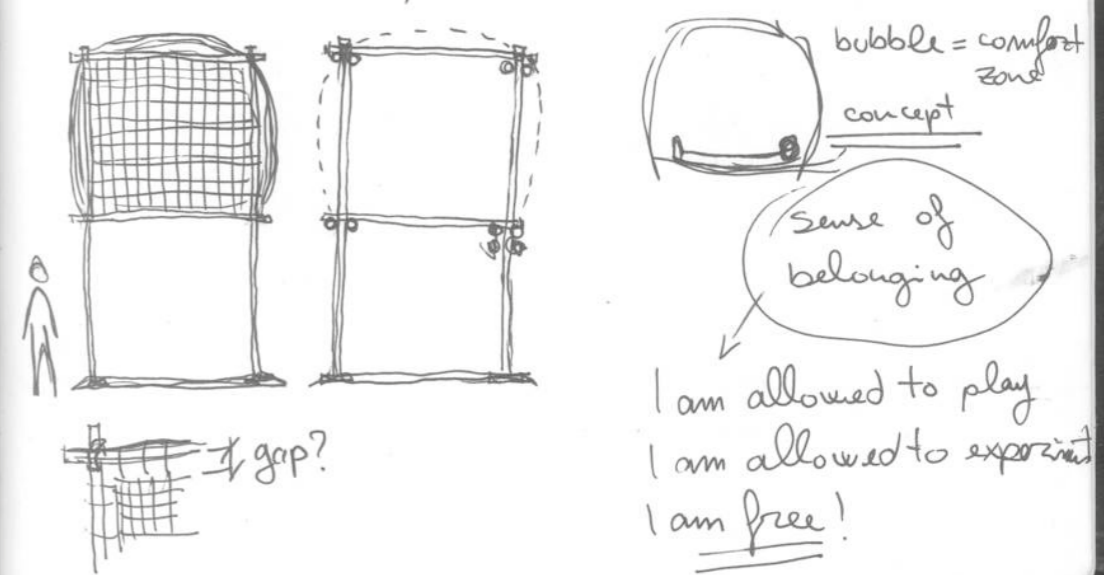
Store materials is a big problem in London.



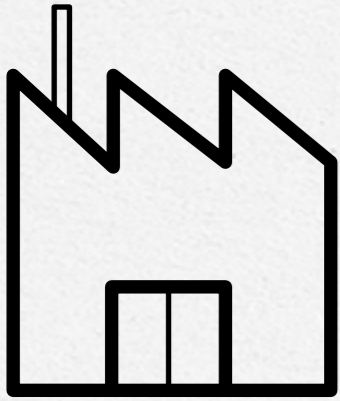
• Let the materials talk for people:

- Social justice

Two small sketches are shown: one of a fence with diagonal lines and the word 'Fence' next to it, and another of a grid pattern.



Project idea

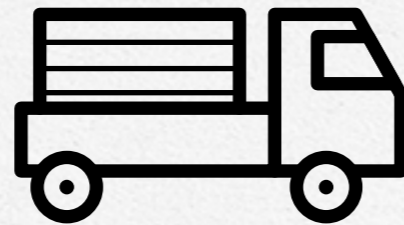


1

Involve Scaffolding Companies as Project Stakeholders.

They will become so material suppliers and assembler.

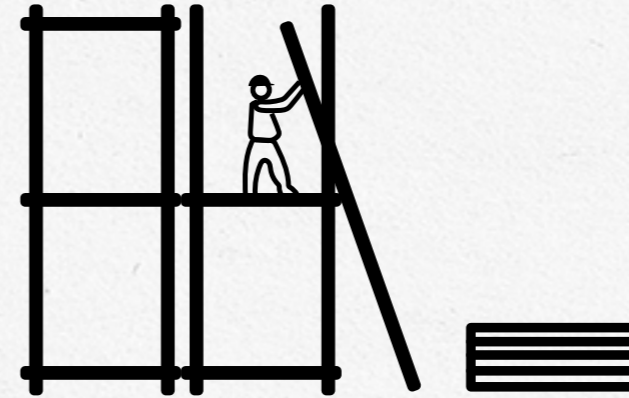
In return they will be offered a space where to store their products for free!



2

Just one flatbed truck will be required to transport the materials from the company to the project site.

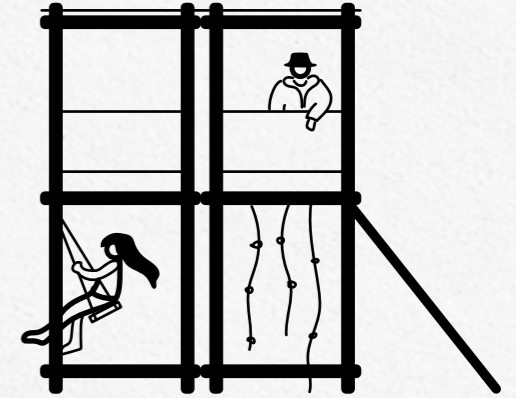
Which will be a public neglected space .
For this project I selected an abandoned public garden.



3

The scaffolding structures will be assembled in three working days.

With a team of four to six experienced scaffolders.






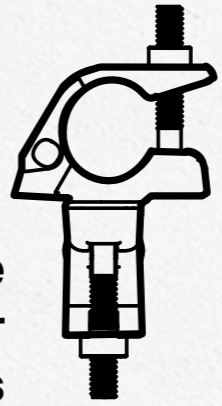

4

The nimble play structure will then stay on the site for a limited period of time.

From three months over the summer to one year.

In this way when the suppliers will need the materials back they will be able to recover them.

Materials required for the project modelos:

ITEMS	2m 	3m 	5m  Aluminium Scaffolding Pipes	 Double Coupler Joints	 Wooden Planks 35x200 cm
QUANTITY	415	30	380	386	168



Site : Camberwell Bunker Garden

Over the last five months I have been exploring the neighbourhood of Peckham and Camberwell. I was looking for abandoned sites to use as space for my project.

One day I came across this community garden between Peckham Rd and Vastry Rd. It looked abandoned at the first sight.

I walked in after a moment of hesitation...the wall covered in graffiti was the element that captured my attention.

The rest of the garden was used as junk yard, there were bins and litter left in multiple areas. However, I could tell that the garden was once used to grow vegetables due to the several lots placed at the centre of the space.



Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, Camberwell Bunker Garden, Peckham Rd - 07.05.24



Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, Camberwell Bunker Garden, Peckham Rd - 12.04.24



Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, Camberwell Bunker Garden, Peckham Rd - 20.10.24



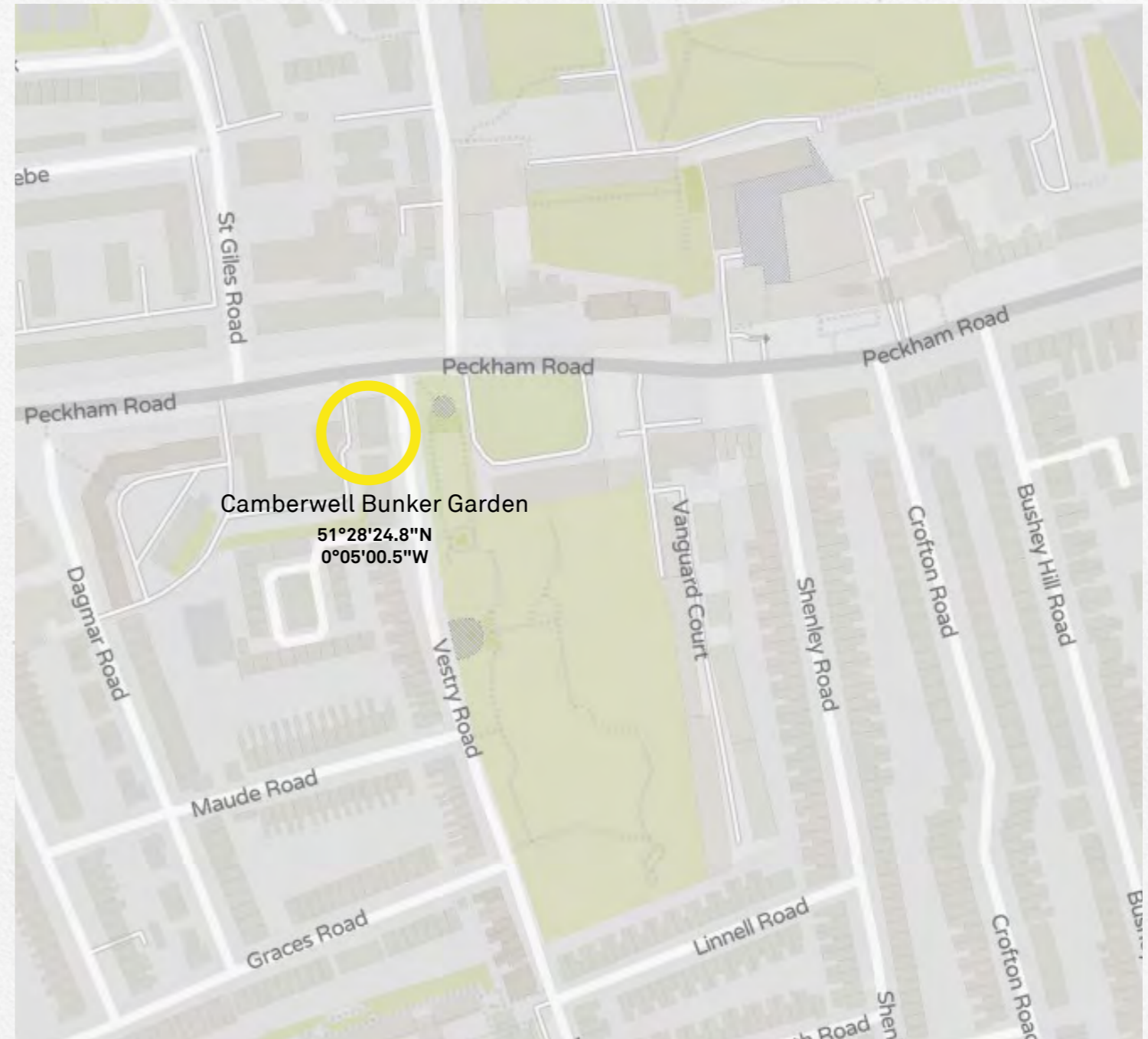
Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, Camberwell Bunker Garden, Peckham Rd - 07.05.24

Camberwell Bunker Garden 1945



The community garden, now abandoned, was originally a health centre for children, damaged during the bombing of 1945. During the Cold War the space under the building was converted into a nuclear bunker, with a control and radio communication centre for the UK army.

Camberwell Bunker Garden 2024



Bomb Damage (1945).
Available at: <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/overlays/bomb-damage-1945>.

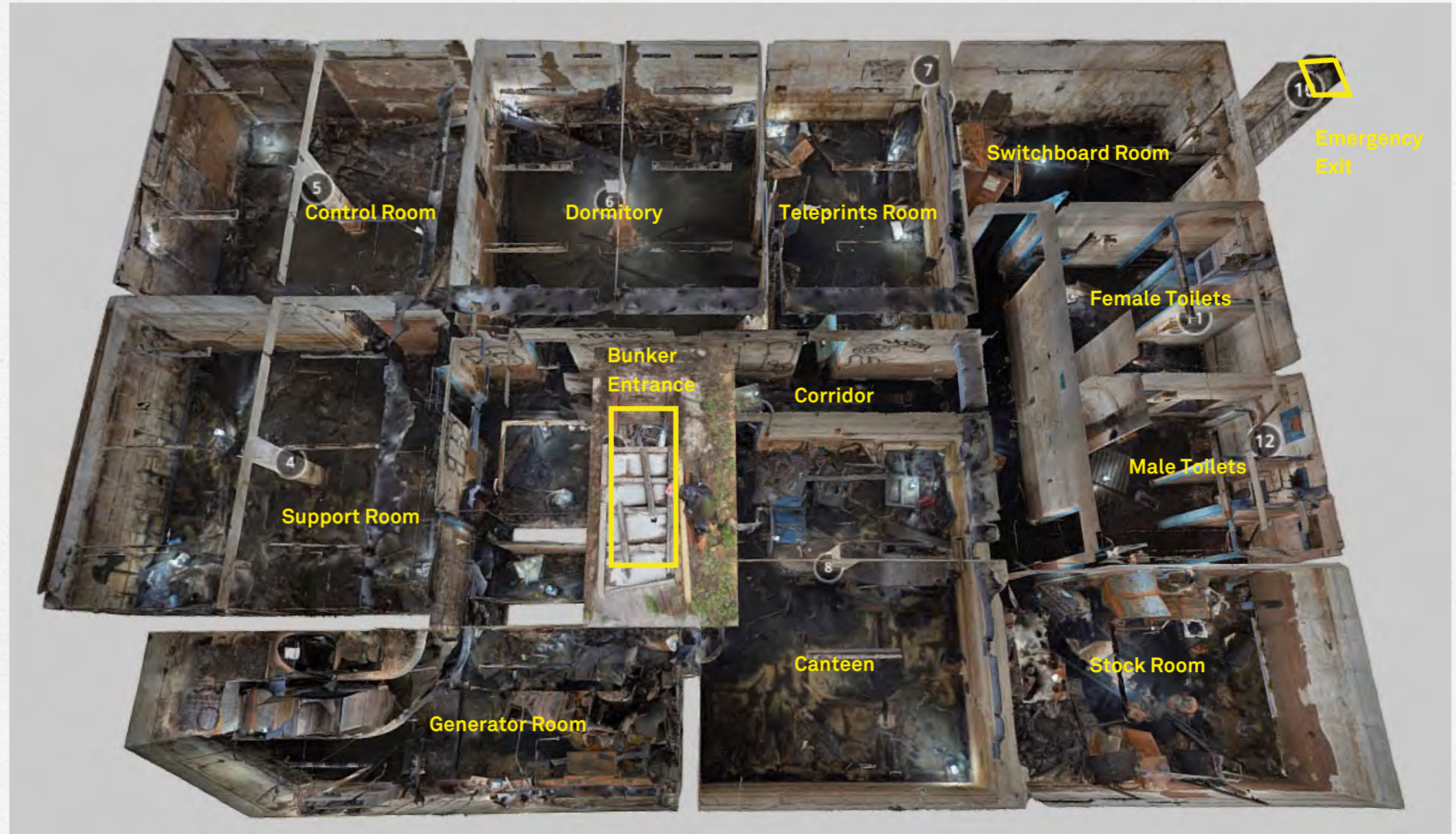
Site History

The Southwark control bunker, designated 51C5, was part of London's Cold War civil defence network, located beneath a health centre between Peckham Road and Vestry Road, SE5. After the health centre's demolition in the late 1990s due to security concerns, the intact bunker remained accessible only through a securely locked stairway. Inside, the bunker features a 'T' shaped corridor with various rooms.

The Generator Room houses a lister generator, ventilation systems, and control cabinets. The Control Room contains decaying maps and message boards, while the Communication Centre includes acoustic booths for different communication networks. The Switchboard Room has office equipment, and the Canteen retains some fixtures.

The unidentified 'Room No. 6' likely served as a dormitory and now holds filing cabinets and an emergency escape shaft. The bunker also has intact male and female toilets, a storage room with various supplies, and several inches of water on the floor due to rainwater ingress.

Despite being abandoned and littered, the bunker shows minimal vandalism.



David Fletcher scan, available at the link: <https://skfb.ly/o6xQU>

“My project aims to use the Camberwell Bunker Garden as a symbol of urban regeneration for the local community of Peckham and Camberwell”.

I have chosen this site for three key reasons:

-Historical Significance: The space conceals an important part of South London’s historical heritage. While local residents have been striving to reclaim the site, my intervention seeks to support this effort by encouraging the community to engage with it more actively. By acknowledging its past, the project aspires to bridge the gap between history and modern-day community needs.

-Legacy of Creative Autonomy: Although now abandoned, the site has been informally used by residents, much like how adventure playgrounds once provided young people with spaces for autonomous play. This legacy of creativity and freedom inspires my vision to design a playful, flexible space that embrace the same narrative, an environment where teenagers can explore, imagine, and create on their own terms.

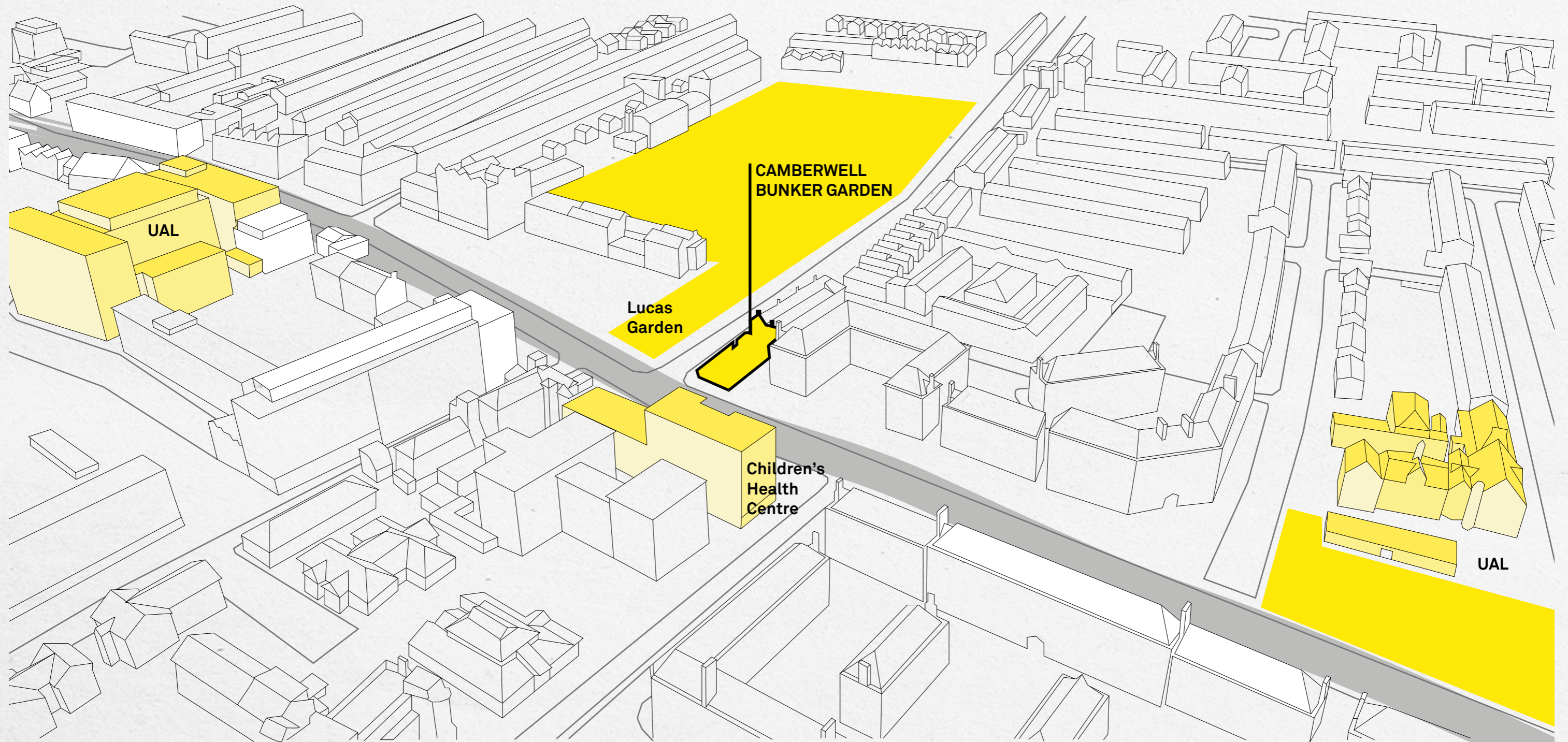
-Strategic Location: The site is surrounded by schools, parks, and youth facilities. On Peckham Road, there are two university campuses and the Sunshine House, a children’s health centre. Additionally, Lucas Gardens, a park frequented by teenagers and children, faces the site across Vestry Road. This proximity to key community spaces strengthens the potential for the site to become a meaningful place of interaction and growth for local youth.

My project is based on the principles of autonomy and creative play, drawing inspiration from the history of adventure playgrounds. By revitalising the Camberwell Bunker Garden, I will provide the community with a space they can freely use, shape, and adapt according to their needs.

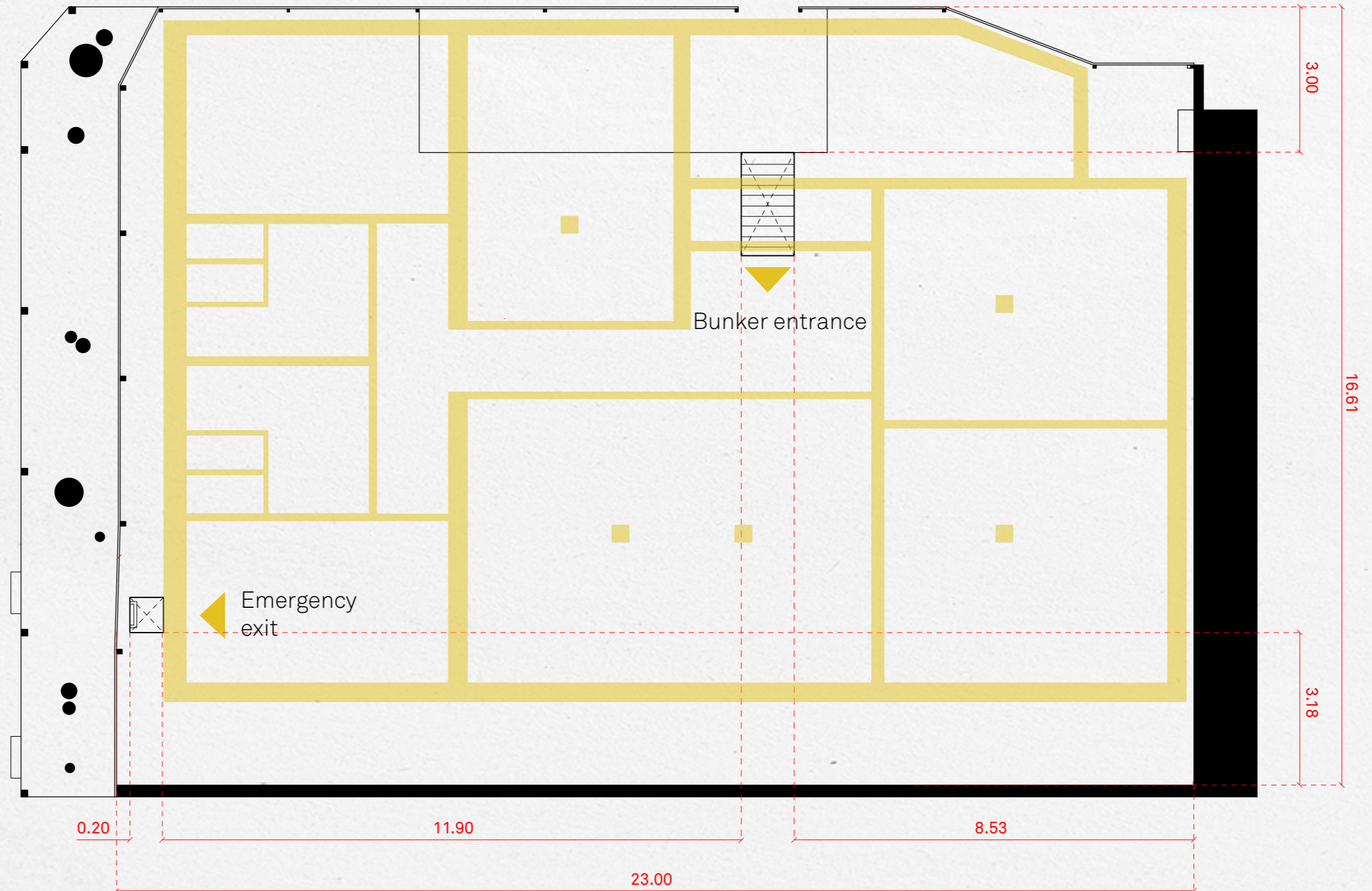


Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, Camberwell Bunker Garden, Peckham Rd - 05.10.24

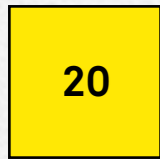
The site is located near two University of the Arts Campuses and in front of a Children's Health Centre, which is another element that made me select this space for a project for young people.



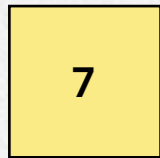
Bunker Plan



u.m. cm scale 1:50

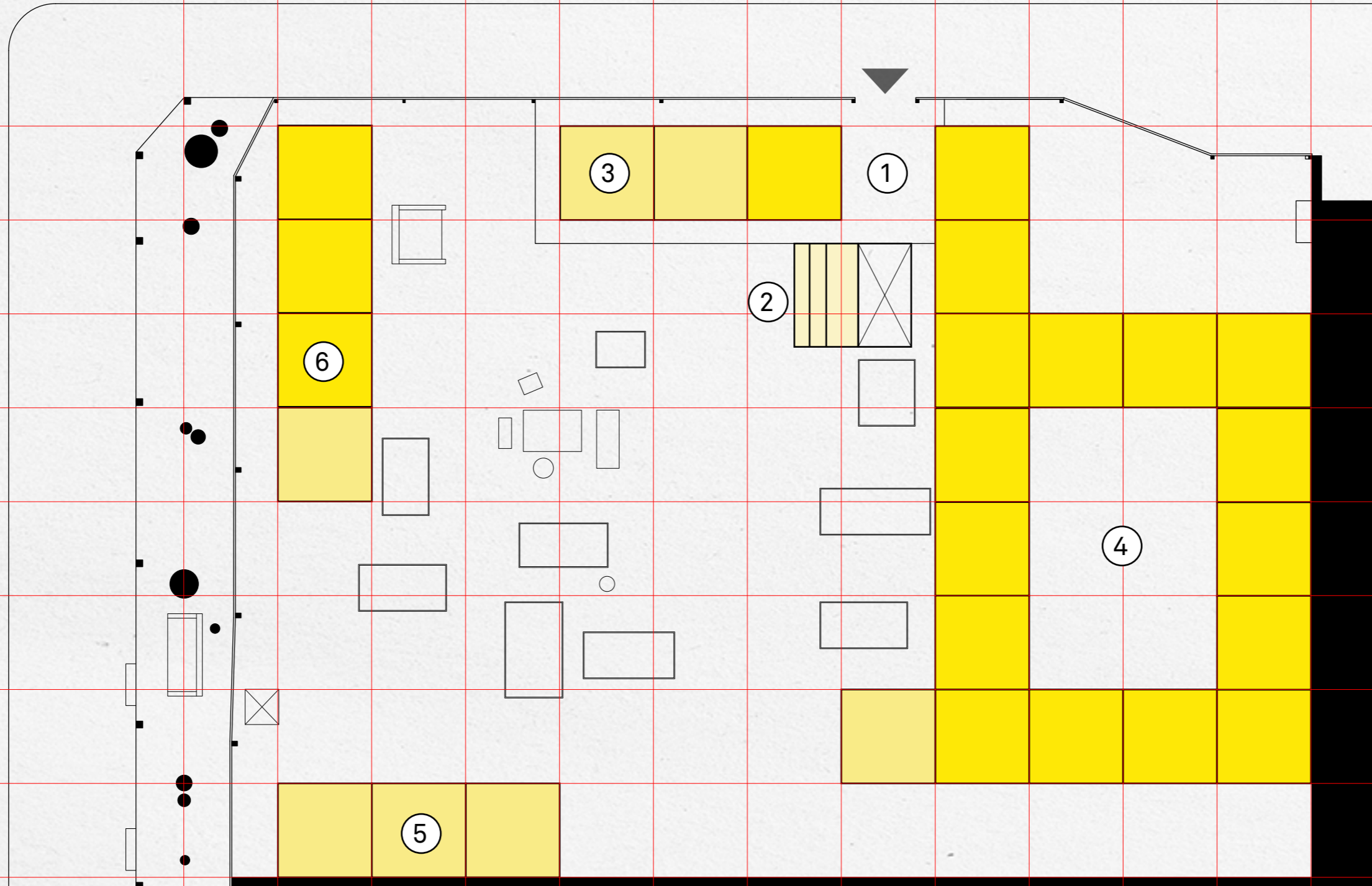


200x200cm
h 500cm



200x200cm
h 250cm

- ① Entrance portal
- ② Bench next to the bunker access
- ③ Meeting area
- ④ Play area
- ⑤ Tables area
- ⑥ Relax area



2.00 m

scale 1:50

For the graphic communication related to the name of the location, I chose to use handwriting with spray paint to evoke the style of graffiti already present on the site, as well as the concept of autonomy that defines the project itself.

The yellow colour chosen for the sign is the same as that used by the council for street signs, also featured in many urban design interventions for graphic communication.



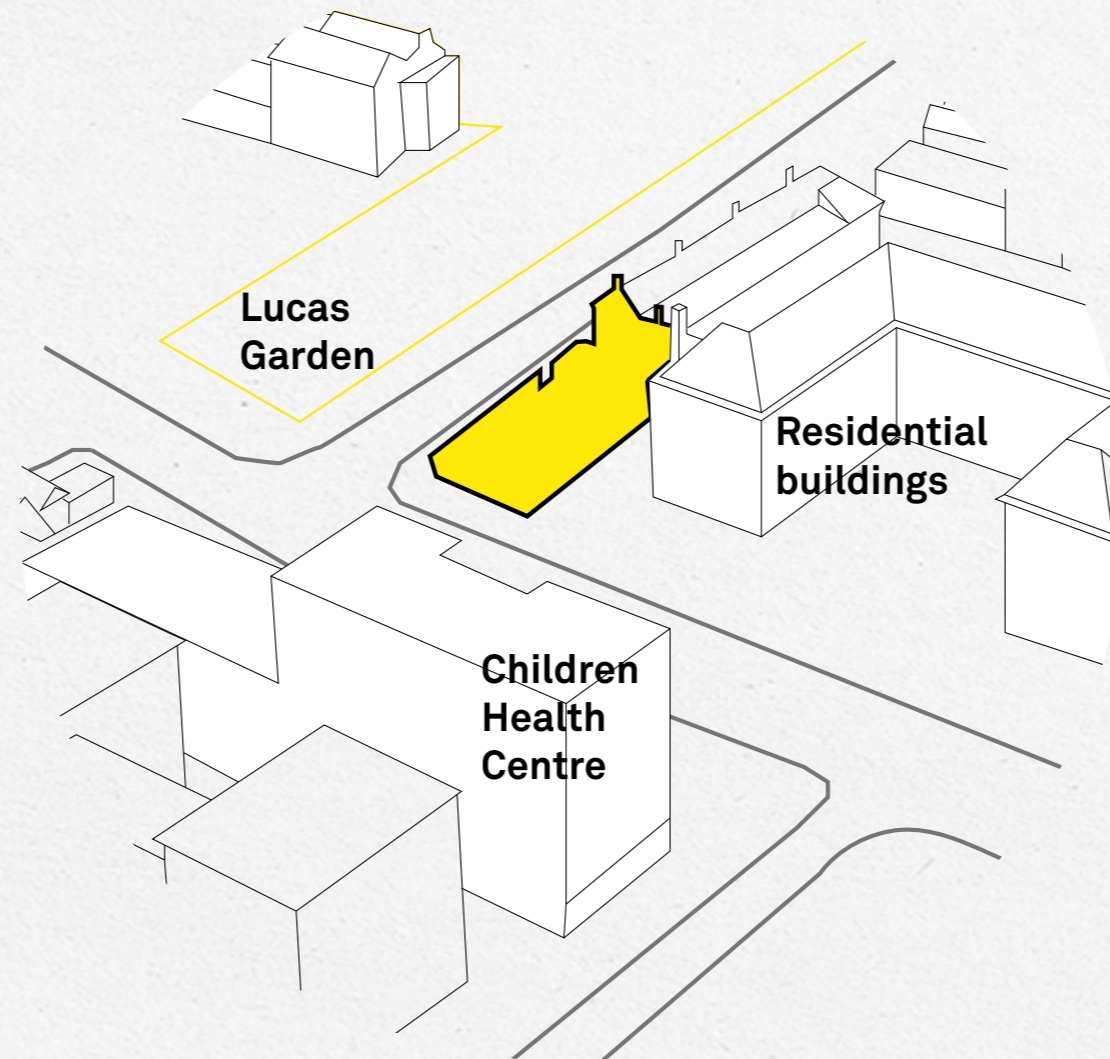
Black spray paint
RAL 9005

Canary Yellow spray paint
RAL 1023

Time

Day time

The presence of schools and the Children's Health Centre on Peckham Road gives the site strong visibility and ensures a steady flow of people in the area. Additionally, the nearby park acts as another draw for young people, contributing to a lively and active atmosphere around the Camberwell Bunker Garden.



Night time

At night, the garden will remain open, illuminated by public lights and warm LED light chains powered by solar panels. Moreover, the site is surrounded by residential buildings with direct views into the space, ensuring that the area benefits from natural vigilance provided by the neighbours.

04

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

After the summer, I began defining the technical aspects of my project. To achieve this, I created a 3D model using Rhinoceros, which allowed me to visualise the site dimensions and the scaffolding module that would shape the play structure.

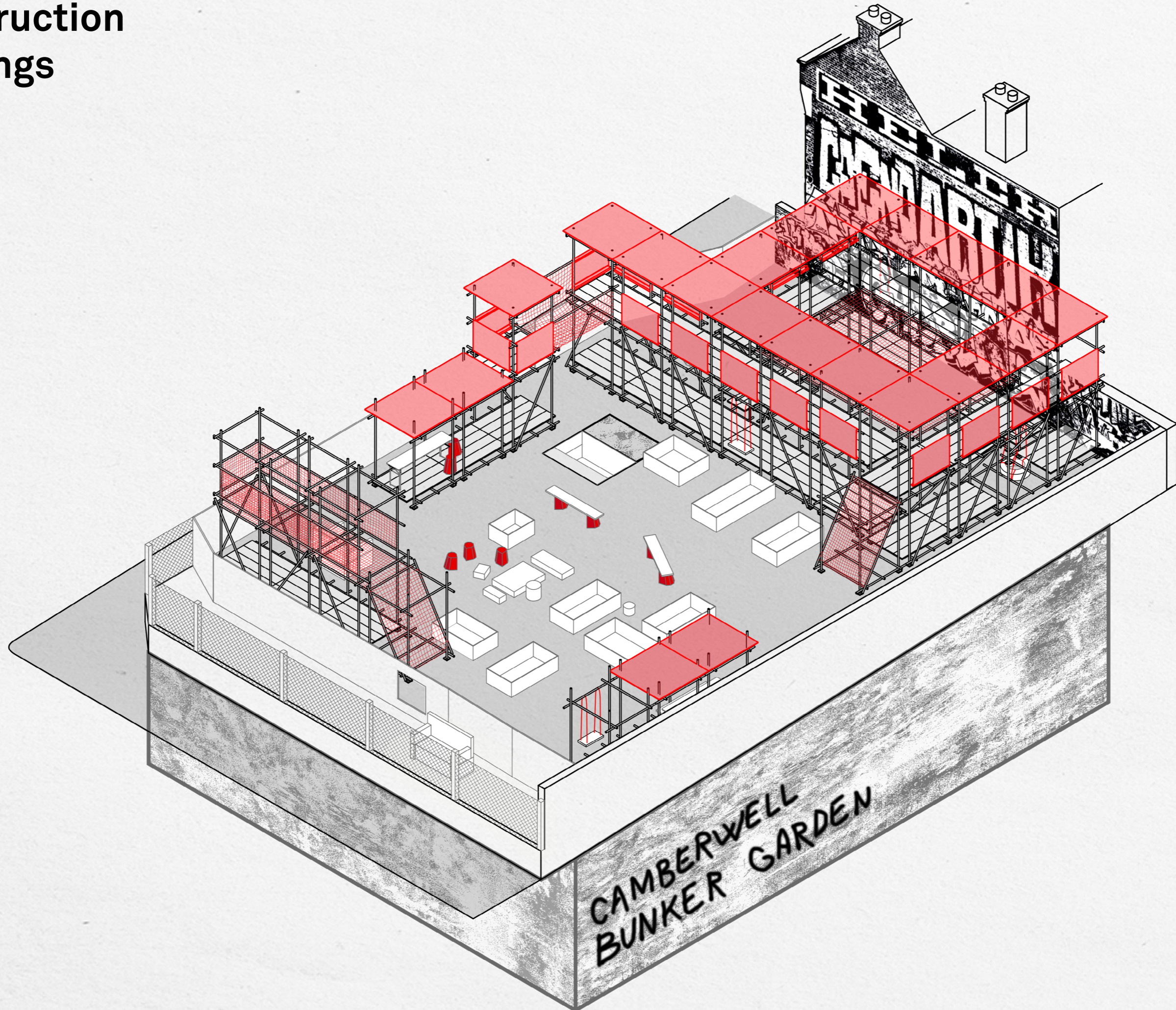
This 3D model was essential for extracting my technical drawings, including the axonometric view that follows, which shows the space in its entirety, as well as detailed elements like the sunken bench at the garden entrance.

My experience in 3D modelling, gained from two years of working as an interior designer, where I was responsible for producing renderings of the spaces I designed, proved invaluable. However, for this project, I chose not to use renderings, as I believe they can often misrepresent the true appearance of a space. Instead, to present the final vision of my community space, I combined a photograph of the Camberwell Bunker Garden with technical drawings of the structure. I also added figures as stickers to evoke the playful nature of the space.

An important section of this chapter is dedicated to my material experimentations. Here I will show the process of how I selected the recycled materials and then applied them into my project.

Give new life
to leftover
materials

Construction drawings



Exploded Axonometry

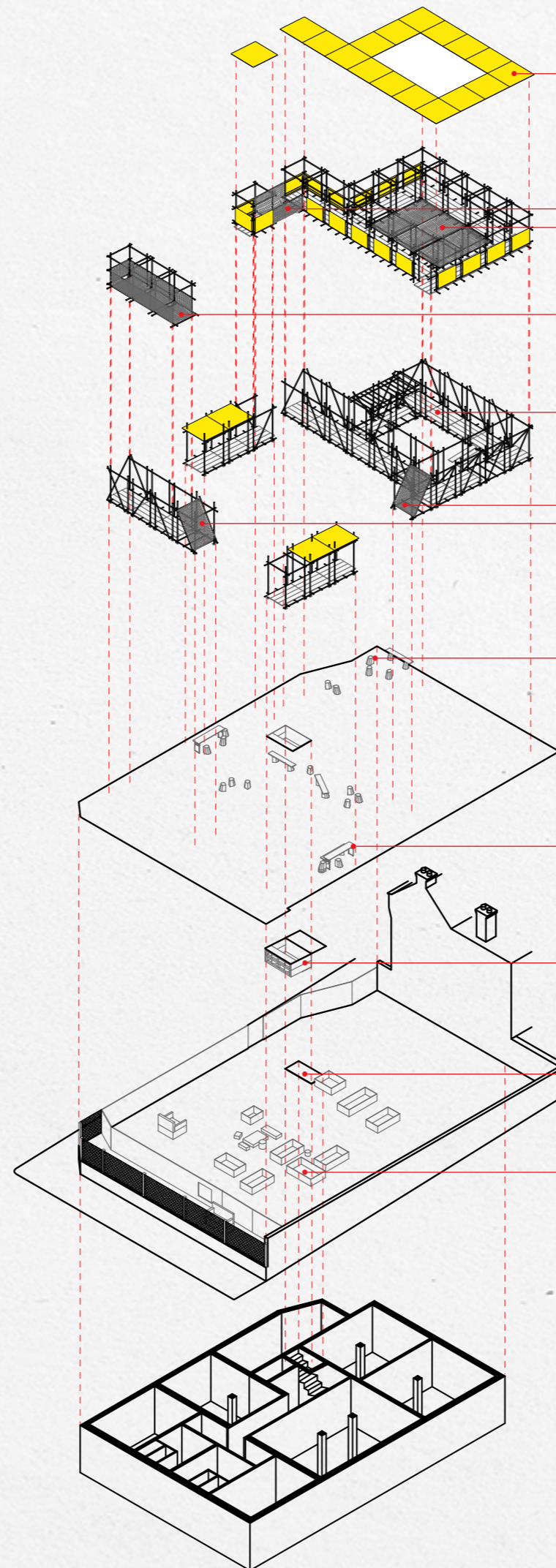
First Level

Ground Level

Mobile Elements

Existing Site

Bunker



Roof pannels made from recycled plastic

Rope nets used as connections between the structure

Rope nets used as banister and floor

Wooden boards used as structure floor

Climbing rope nets to acces to the First Level

Arnold Circus Stools used as benches or coffee tables

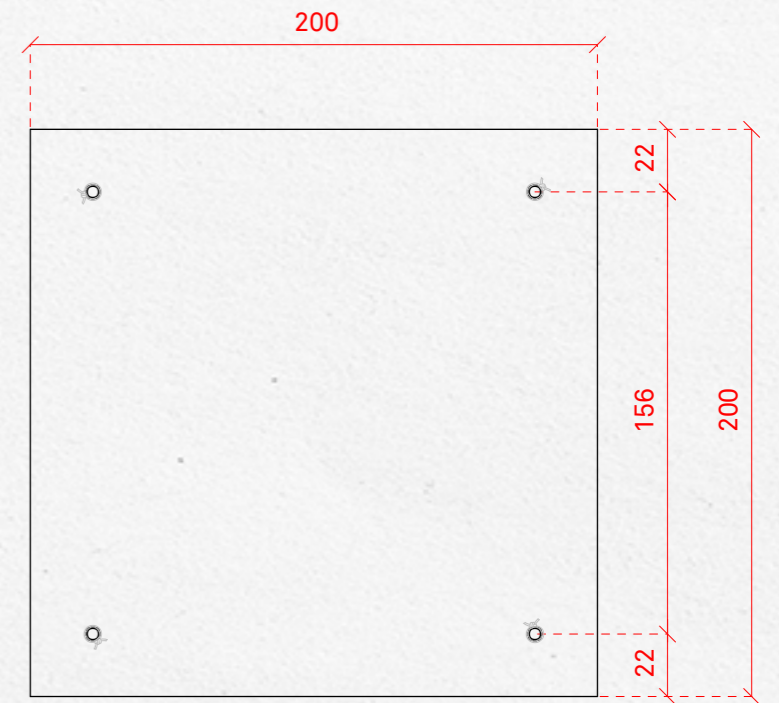
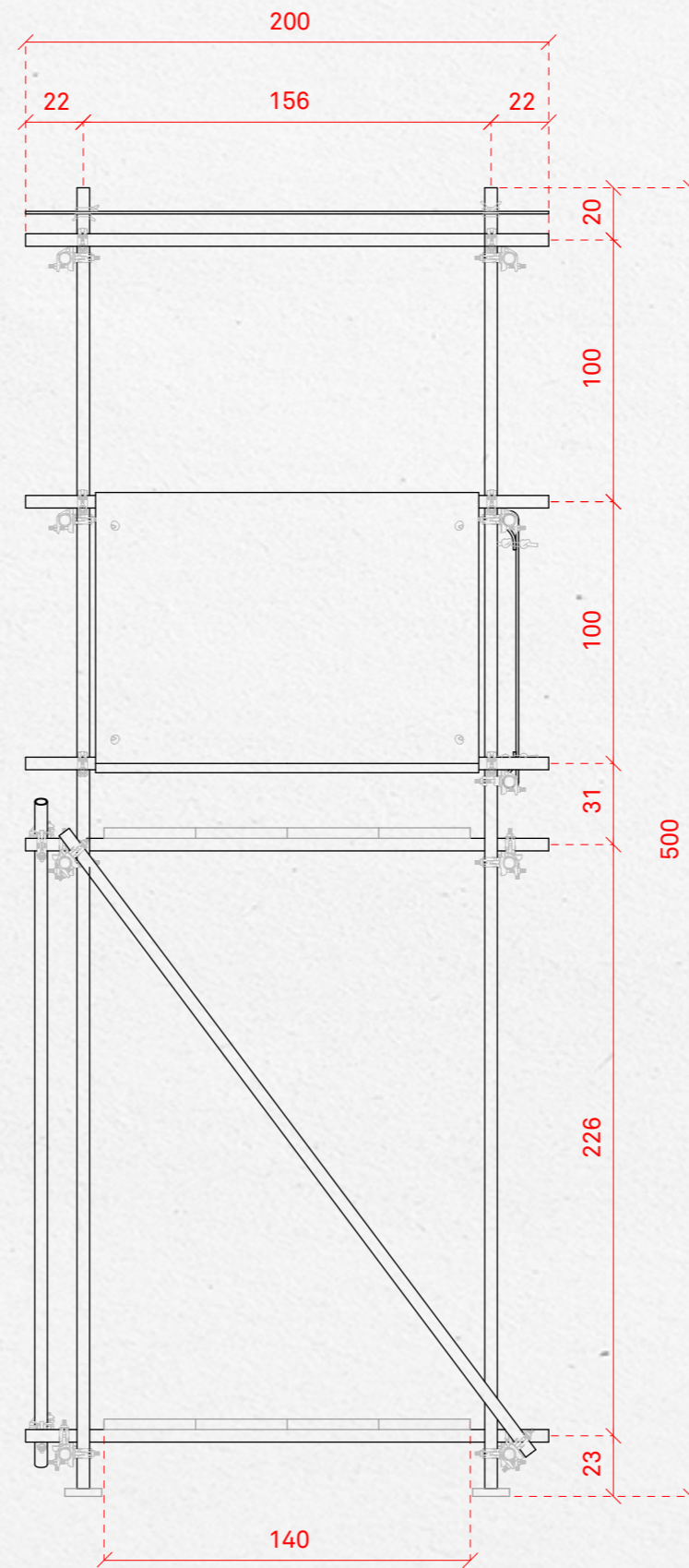
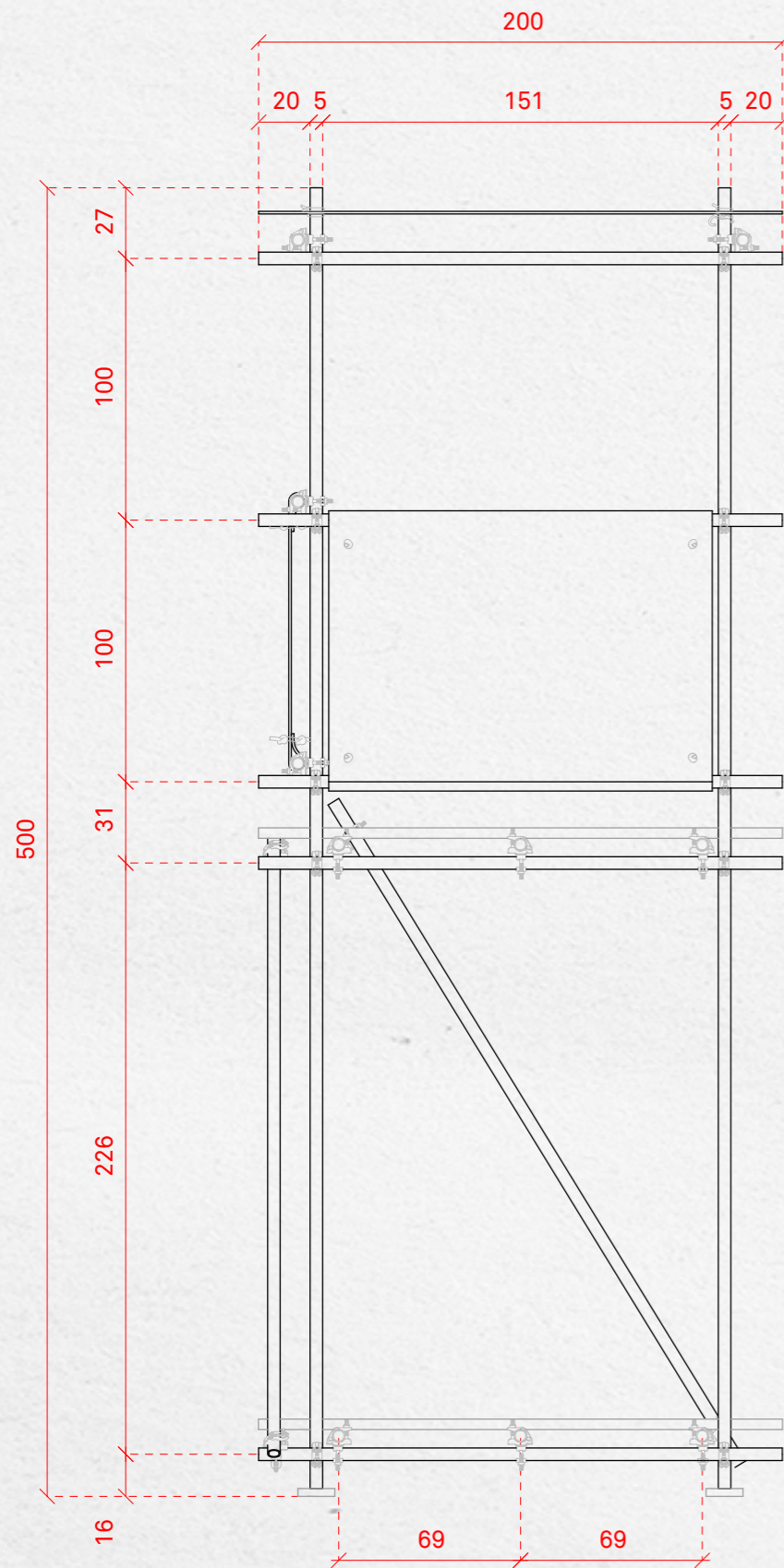
Wooden outdoor tables found in the garden during the site visits

Sunken garden bench with bunker history metal pannel

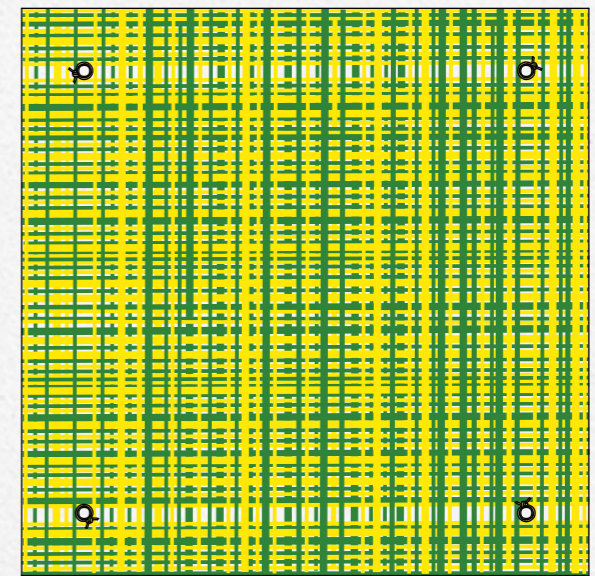
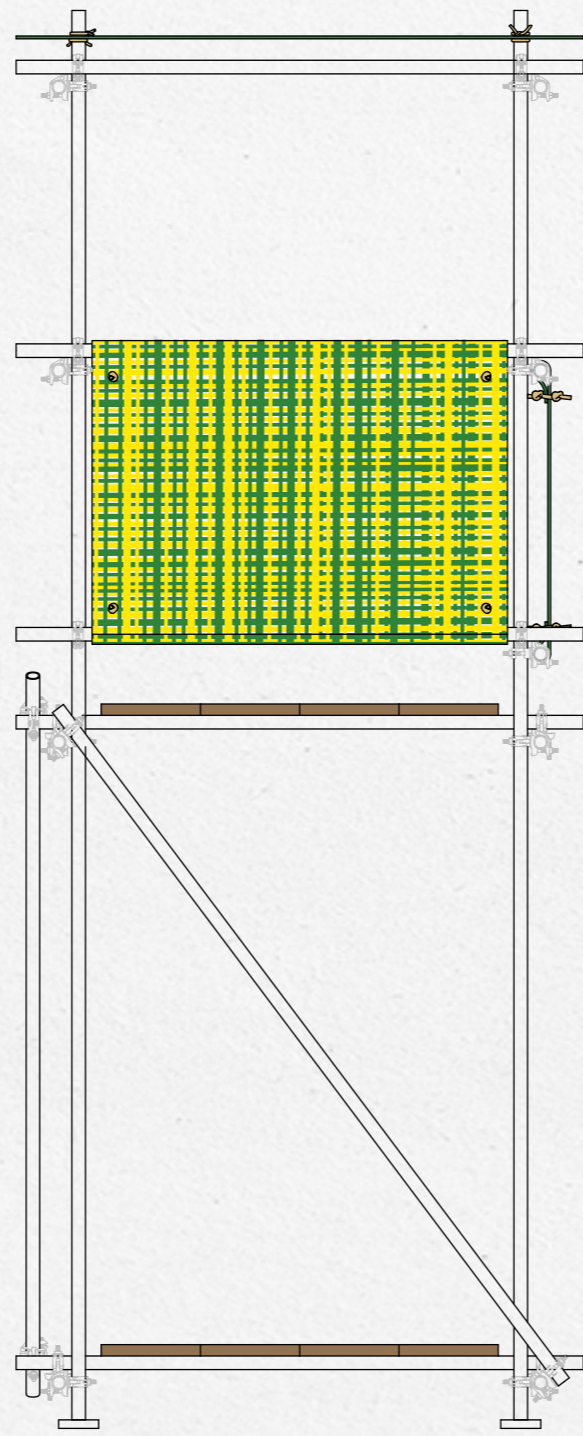
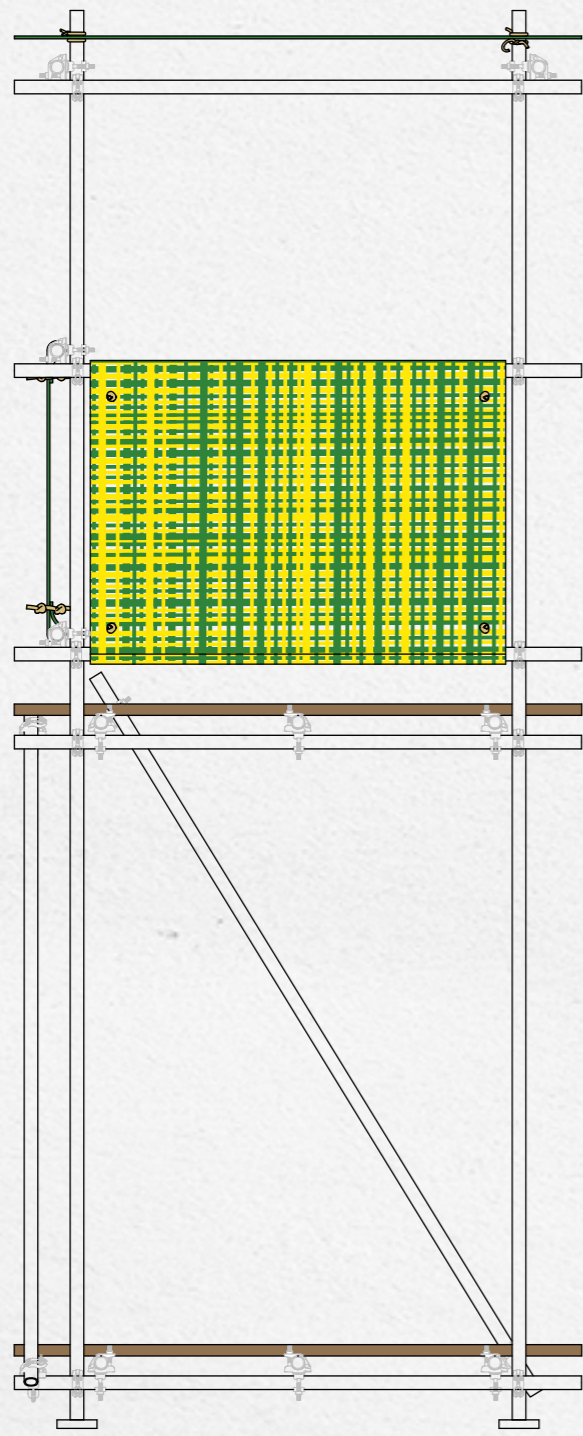
Bunker entrance

Existing garden lots

Scaffolding Module

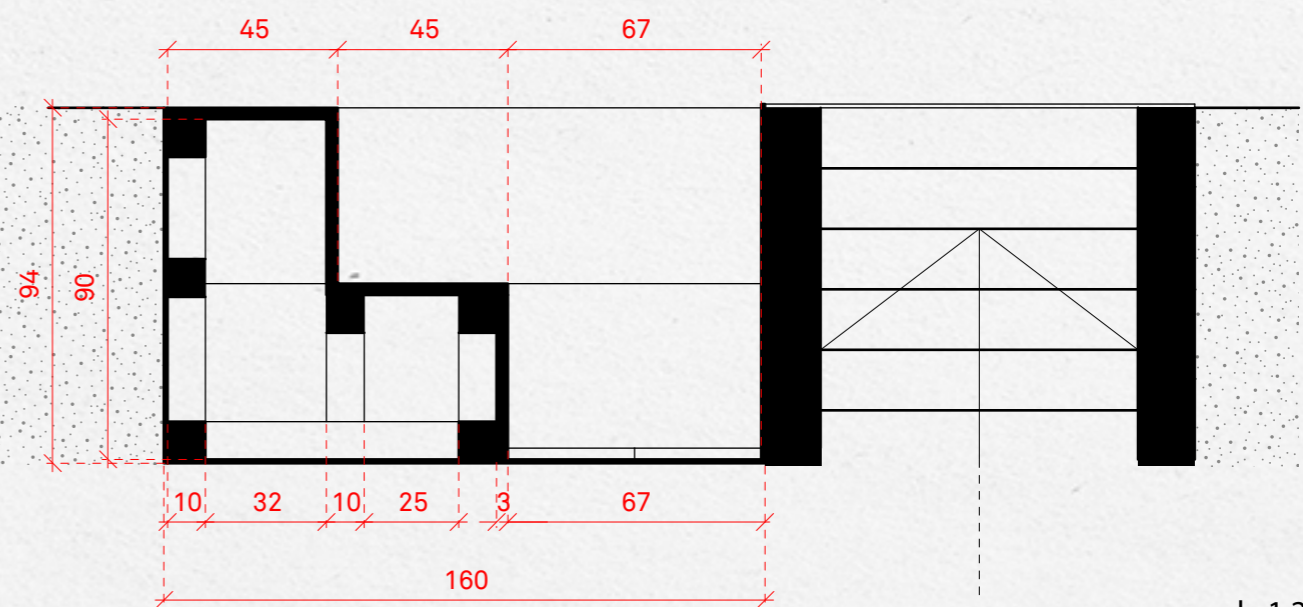
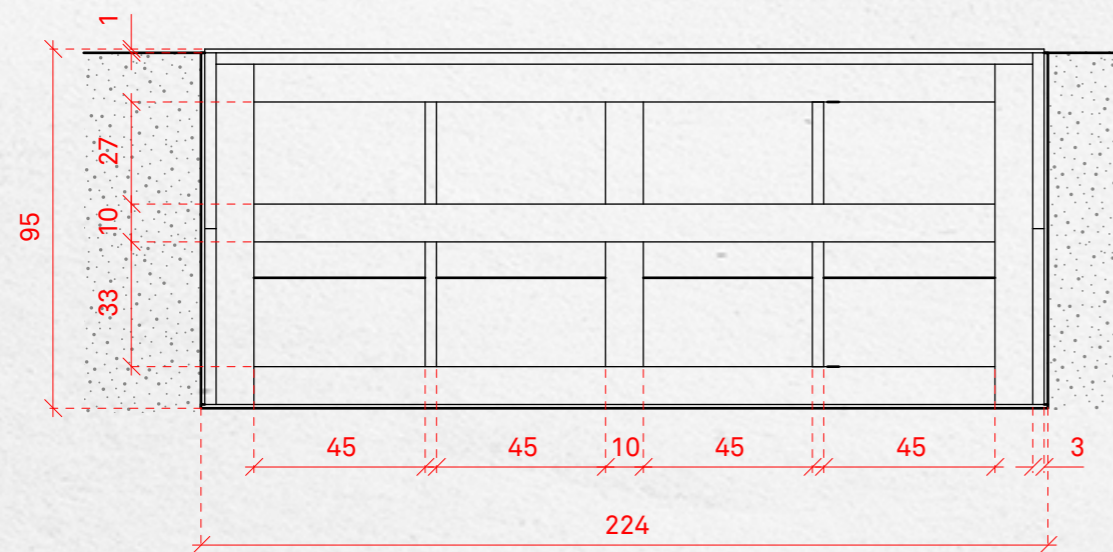
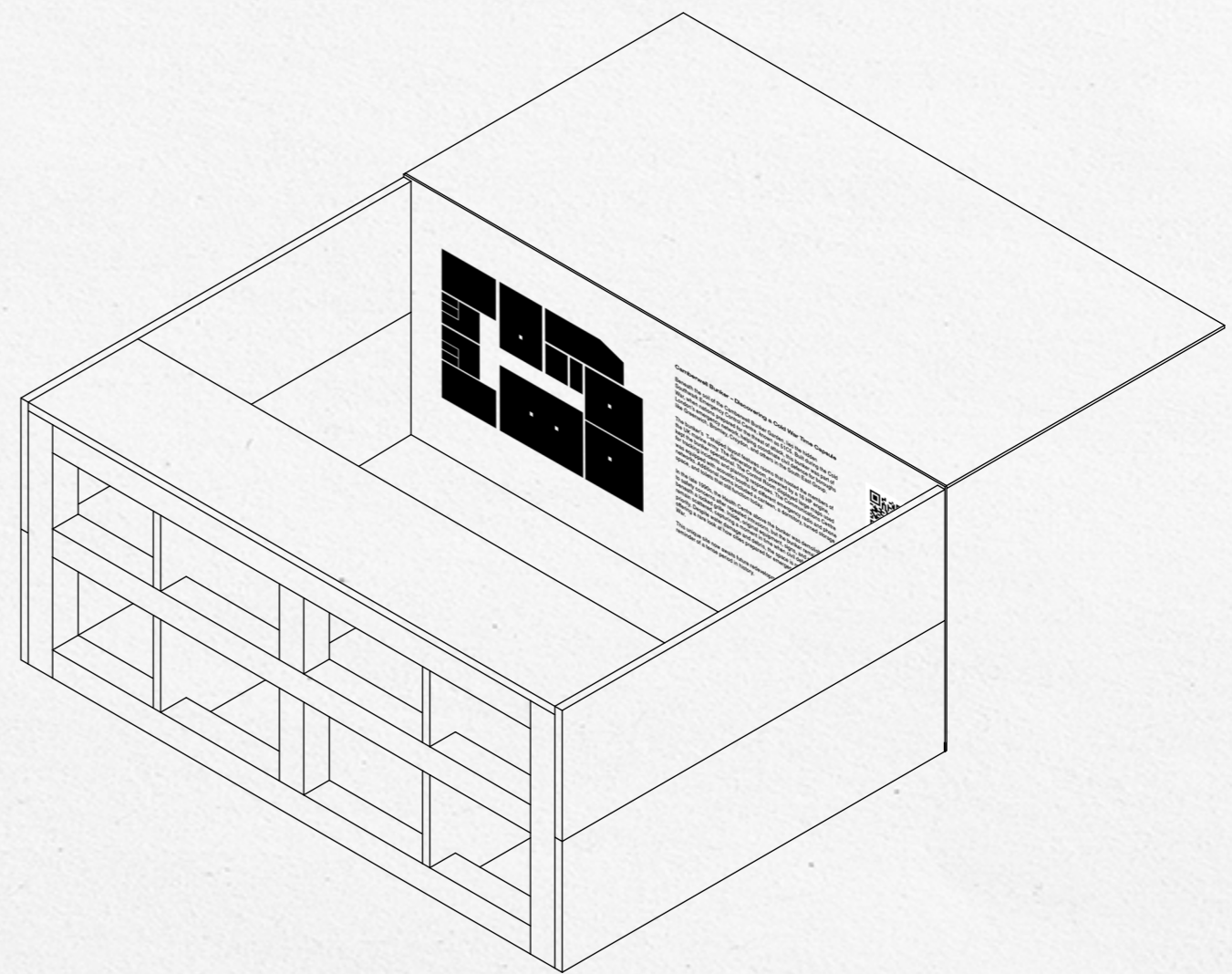
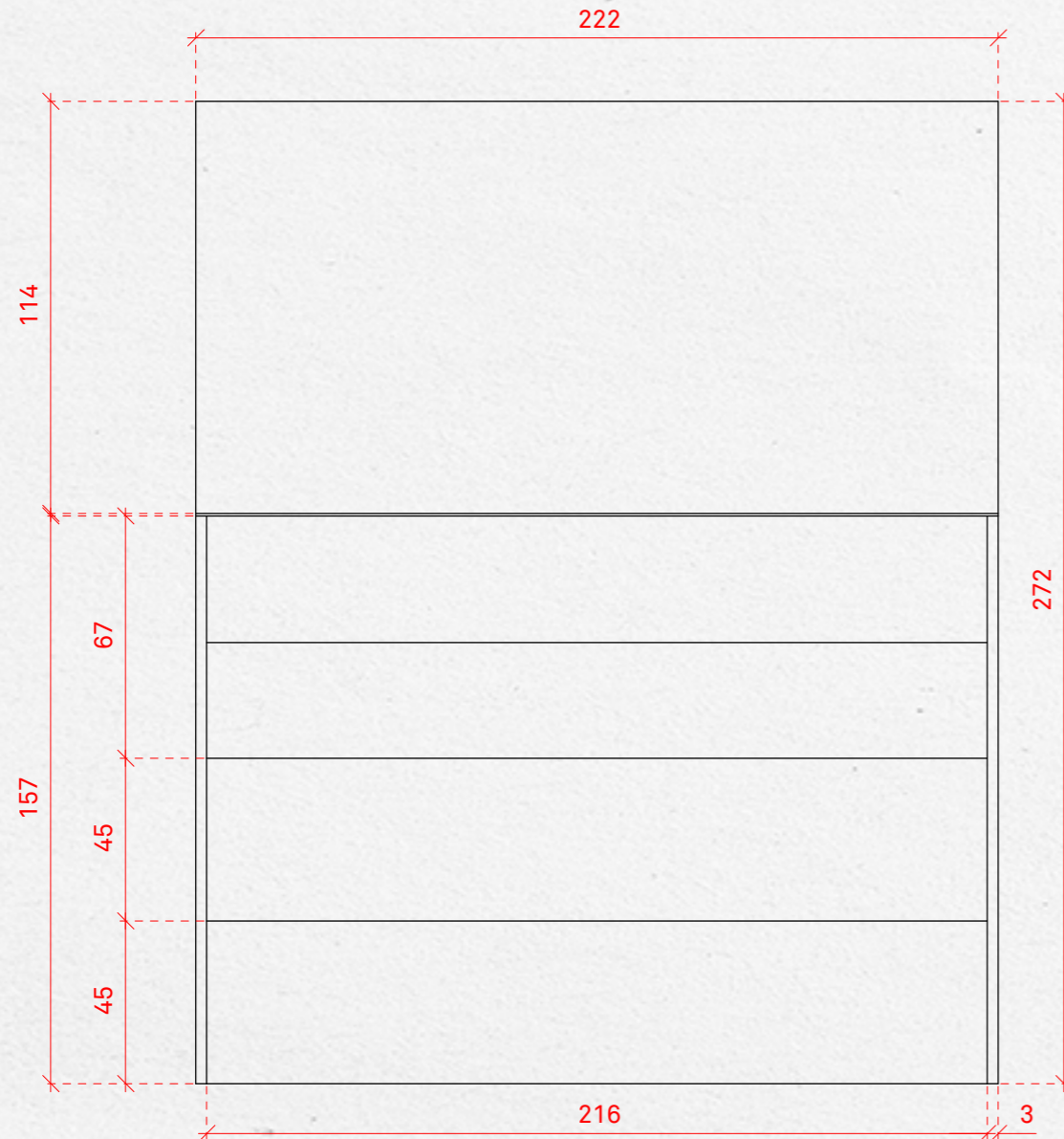


u.m. cm scale 1:20



scale 1:20

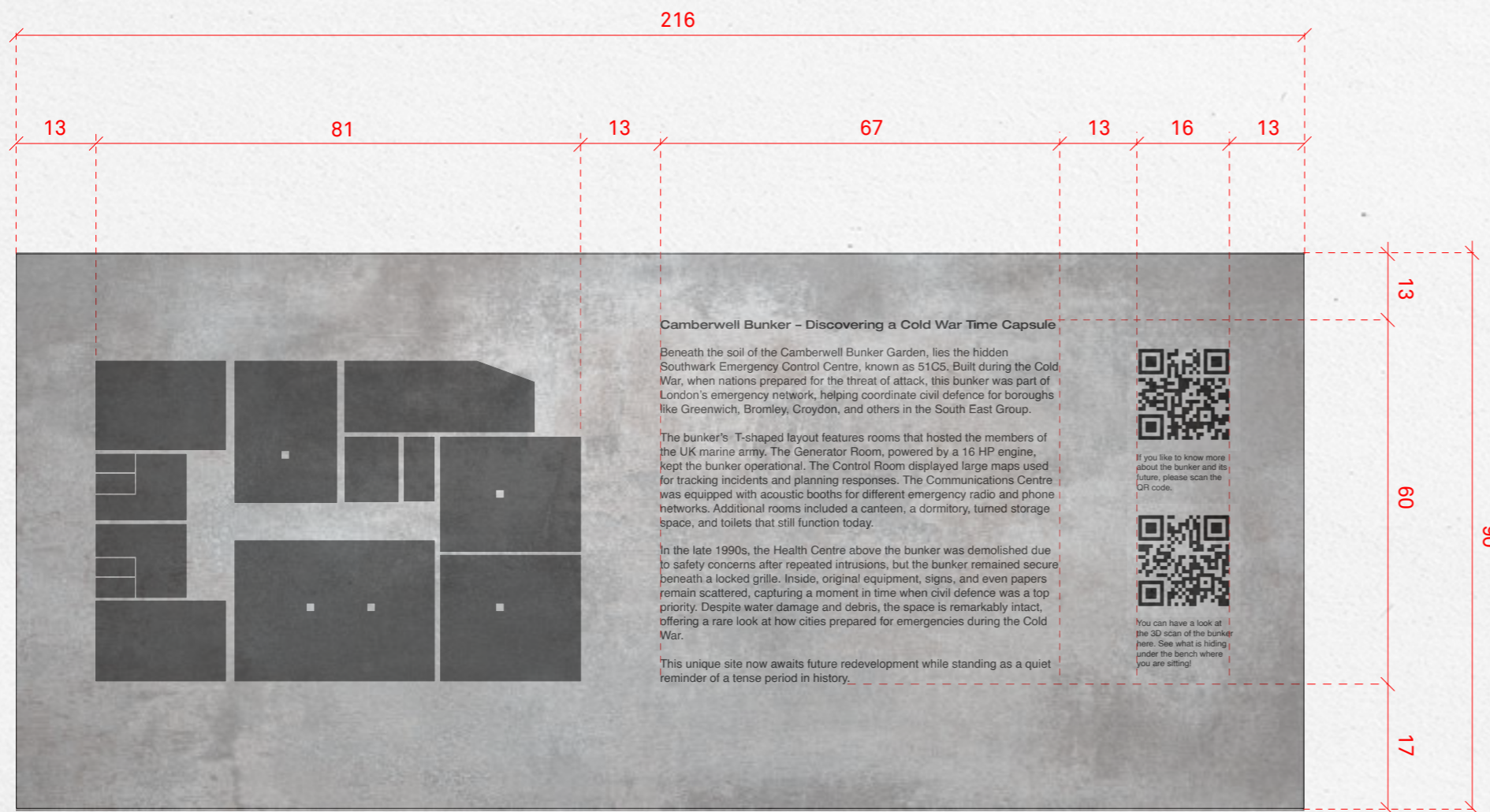
Sunken Bench



u.m. cm scale 1:20

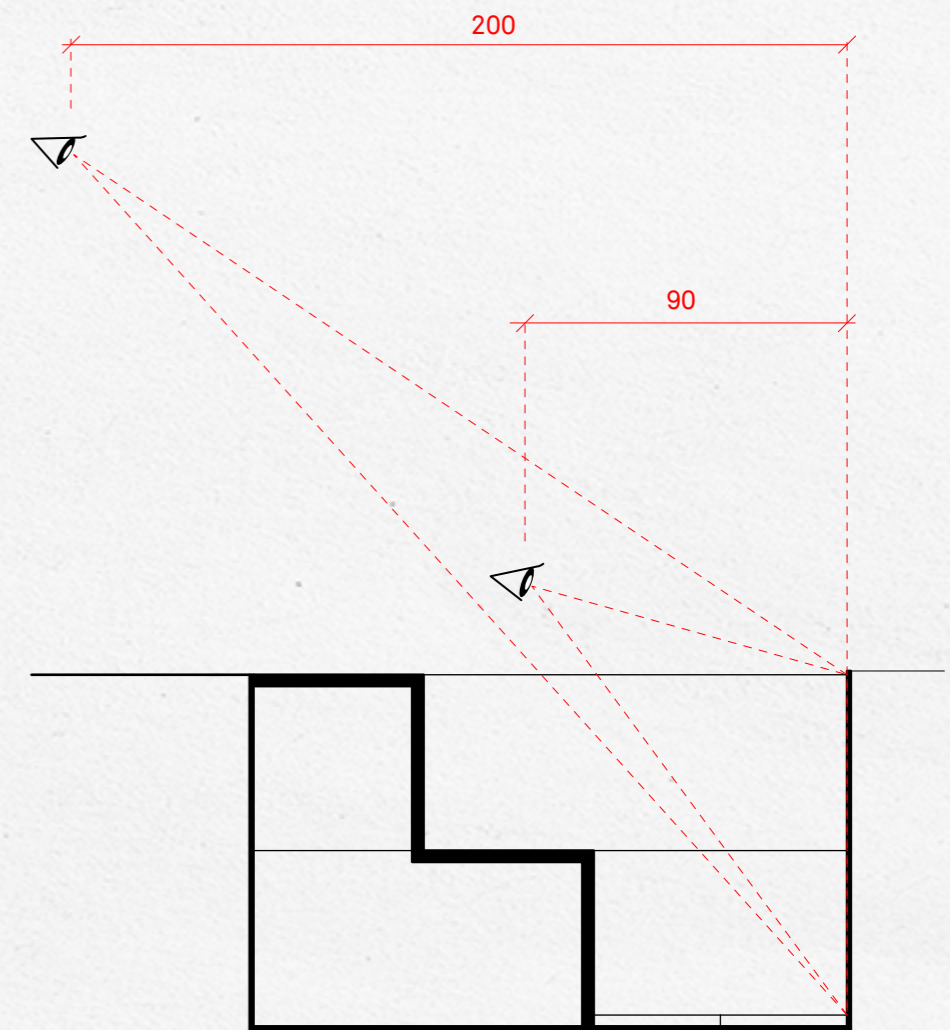
Graphic Details The Camberwell Bunker Garden represents an important piece of local heritage from the Cold War.

For this reason, I included a permanent intervention next to the bunker entrance to communicate the history of the bunker and connect the community involved in its restoration with those who will use the space during the duration of my project.



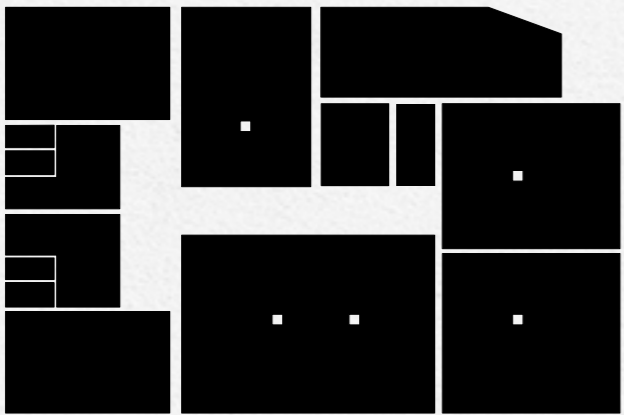
u.m. cm scale 1:10

I used a metal sheet to replicate the same material as the bunker gate, incorporating the layout of the bunker as a graphic representation of the space beneath the garden.



u.m. cm scale 1:20

To design the graphics, I considered the distance from the viewers and the height of the letters, applying the proportion 1/4.




Camberwell Bunker – Discovering a Cold War Time Capsule

Beneath the soil of the Camberwell Bunker Garden, lies the hidden Southwark Emergency Control Centre, known as 51C5. Built during the Cold War, when nations prepared for the threat of attack, this bunker was part of London’s emergency network, helping coordinate civil defence for boroughs like Greenwich, Bromley, Croydon, and others in the South East Group.


The bunker’s T-shaped layout features rooms that hosted the members of the UK marine army. The Generator Room, powered by a 16 HP engine, kept the bunker operational. The Control Room displayed large maps used for tracking incidents and planning responses. The Communications Centre was equipped with acoustic booths for different emergency radio and phone networks. Additional rooms included a canteen, a dormitory, turned storage space, and toilets that still function today.

In the late 1990s, the Health Centre above the bunker was demolished due to safety concerns after repeated intrusions, but the bunker remained secure beneath a locked grille. Inside, original equipment, signs, and even papers remain scattered, capturing a moment in time when civil defence was a top priority. Despite water damage and debris, the space is remarkably intact, offering a rare look at how cities prepared for emergencies during the Cold War.

This unique site now awaits future redevelopment while standing as a quiet reminder of a tense period in history.



If you like to know more about the bunker and its future, please scan the QR code.



You can have a look at the 3D scan of the bunker here. See what is hiding under the bench where you are sitting!

scale 1:10

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Helvetica Neue Medium Extended - Title

Camberwell 2 cm = 56,6 p

Helvetica Regular - Body

Camberwell 2 cm = 56,6 p

Helvetica Regular - QR code text

Camberwell 1,5 cm = 40,4 p



If you like to know more about the bunker and its future, please scan the QR code.



You can have a look at the 3D scan of the bunker here. See what is hiding under the bench where you are sitting!

The text will be engraved on a metal sheet using a deep pin stamping industrial machine. I chose this technique for its durability and historical significance, particularly due to its use in the military

Colour Material Finish

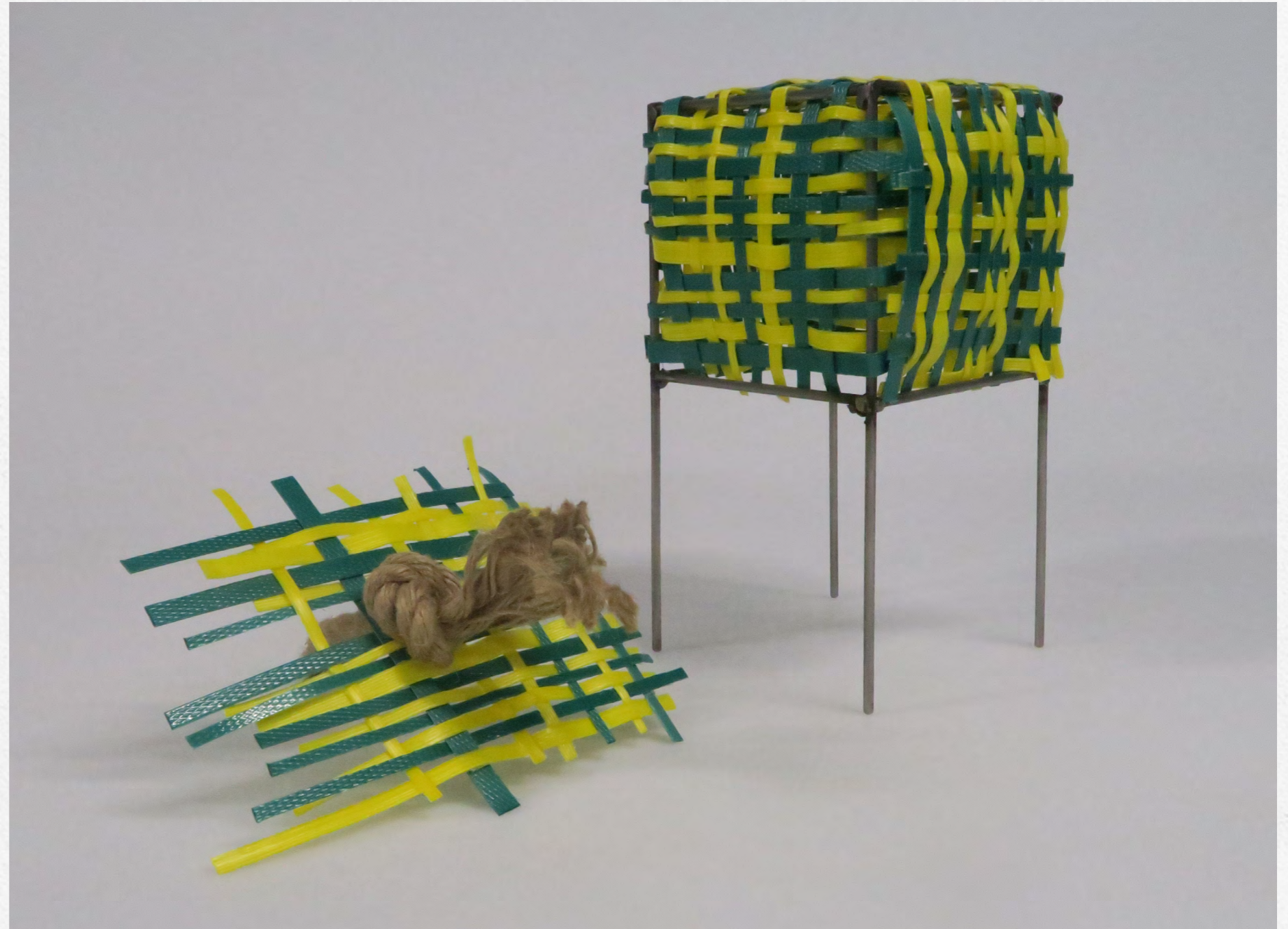
By taking inspiration from the streets of Peckham, I explored the use of recycled materials for my modular play structure.

I began to experiment with the plastic packaging straps recovered from the street markets of the neighbourhood in order to create a colorful pattern to use as landmark, by combining it together with the metal scaffolding structure.

The creation of this material was born from the collaboration of me and Eleida, a lady from the Peckham Assemble Community who offered to help me to give a second life to waste materials. She already uses this technique to craft hand bags as a small business, however, she spends more time in being active within her community in the Peckham Pelican estate.

In my video I documented one of our meetings where she taught me how to craft the ratan texture without the use of glue, in order to use less material as possible. We so crafted together the black and white material sample that I plan to display during my Graduation Exhibition.

The ropes are another important material that I have been experimenting with. By tying the ropes I have collected from the climbing centers around London, I found two knots that are ideal to design a climbing net to anchor to the scaffolding modules.



Eugenia Liut - Model and material sample - 25.10.24

Ropes

To find recycled ropes I contacted several climbing centers around London that might have leftover materials to dismiss.

I eventually reached The Castle Climbing Centre in Finsbury Park. Here I had to sign a form to declare what I needed the materials for and confirm that I will not utilize them as climbing usage, due to security reasons.

The staff from the centre gave me more than ten meters of rope of various materials, like natural fibers and plastic ones.

I then tested different knots to understand which ones were more suitable for my project. During the last Pin Up session I displayed the outcomes from my material experimentations.



Eugenia Liut - The Castle Climbing Centre, Green Lanes, London - 25.06.24

Plastic Straps

The recycle polypropylene plastic straps are commonly used for the packaging of cardboards and pellets. In London this material is often recycled from the packaging industry, however, in the street markets those strips can be found abandoned in a corner of a stand or directly on the street. Eleida guided me to use this waste material to give it a new life.

The pannels made from the rattan will serve as roof and banisters for the scaffolding modules. I intentionally decided not to colour the metal tubes of the play structure to highlight the colour from the pannels instead. In this way the space will become a vibrant landmark visible from the street of Peckham Road, where everyday all the students from the nearby Colleges walk.



Eugenia Liut - Material making meeting with Eleida - 25.10.24

Furniture Fixtures and Equipment

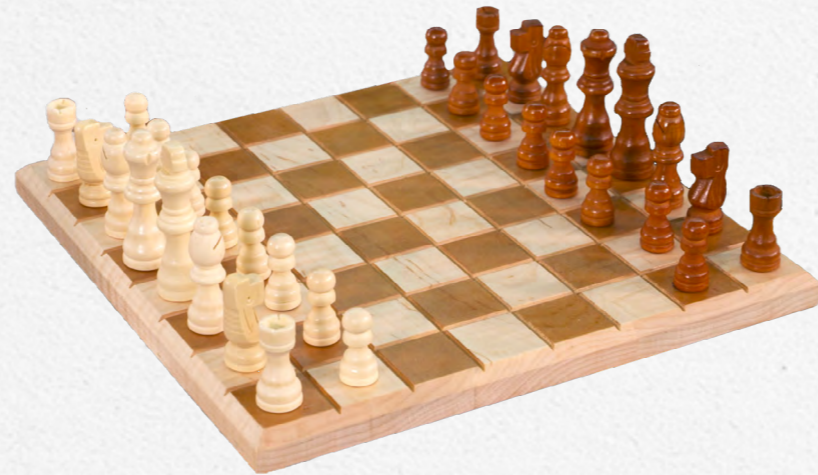
The Camberwell Bunker Garden embodies a space intentionally left open for users to shape according to their needs.

This philosophy drives the furniture, fixtures, and equipment chapter, emphasizing the unpredictability a designer faces when envisioning what the community may bring into the space. Rooted in the Bottom-Up design approach, the garden provides a platform for users to introduce their own elements, such as chairs, tables, trampolines, or anything else they wish.

To encourage creativity and play, I plan to leave extra ropes within the garden. These can be used by kids to craft their own nets, swings, or inventive structures.

The only piece of furniture I felt essential to include in the project is a versatile stool. This adaptable item can function as a table, bench, or be repurposed in other ways, aligning with the spirit of flexibility and autonomy that defines the space.

In the next chapter I prepared a little game: how many hidden objects will you be able to find in my illustrations?...You will also find me in one of them!



**FIND THOSE OBJECTS
IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS!**



Arnold Circus Stool by Martino Gramper

The Arnold Circus Stool by Martino Gramper is a famous piece of modern design. Originally conceived as part of a project to breathe new life into the Arnold Circus area in Shoreditch, London, this stool is a reflection of both function and community spirit.

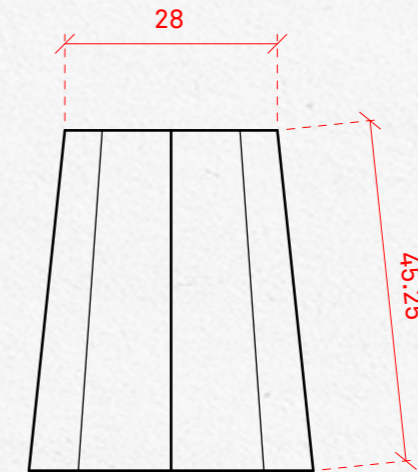
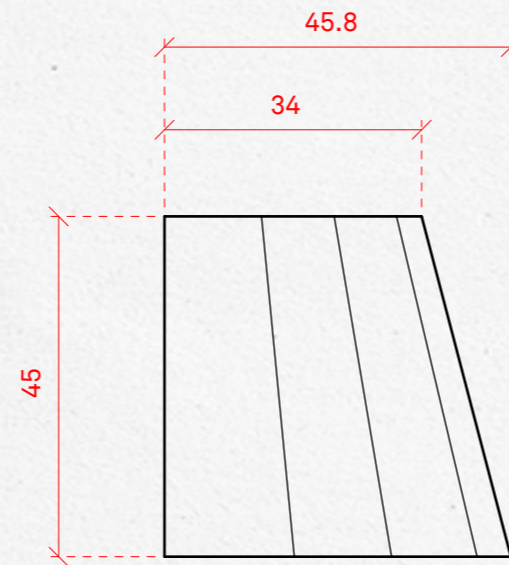
Crafted from molded polyethylene, the stool is both lightweight and sturdy, making it ideal for a range of uses, whether indoors or outdoors.

Martino Gramper's design ethic is grounded in the belief that design should be democratic, and playful. He is known for rethinking the traditional boundaries of furniture-making, approaching design with an experimental spirit that values spontaneity and innovation over conventionality.

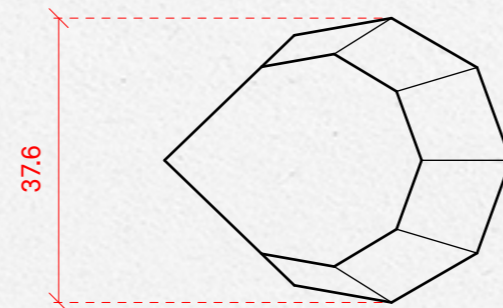
Gamper often repurposes found materials and objects, emphasizing sustainability and the beauty of imperfection.

Gamper's philosophy also emphasizes community and collaboration. He sees design as a tool for connection, whether through public installations, workshops, or projects that engaged directly with local neighborhoods.

My values as designer are completely aligned with the ones of Gramper, for this reason I chose this iconic stool for my community project.



u.m. cm scale 1:10



05

USE

This project is about urban reappropriation, local communities and, most importantly, giving back a neglected space to teenagers, where they can be free to organise activities together and spend time outdoors!

I designed this space thinking about the spontaneous actions that people might do in a public space, which are not allowed in a public park or other urban areas.

In my illustrations, I used the photos that I took during my visits to the Camberwell Bunker Garden and then edited them like a mosaic, in order to recreate the same perspective view that I set in the 3D software.

For the final touch, I included ropes and people using the space independently. Some of them are watching a film on the first level of the structure, while others are roasting chestnuts over a fire in the garden. Pay attention to the elements in the images, you can even play the hidden objects game on page 173!

Breathing
life into
empty spaces



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06

CONCLUSION

Working on this project was both a challenge and a significant opportunity for me to engage directly with people and push myself beyond my comfort zone.

My aim was to design a space that truly empowers teenagers to take action within their local community, even in a chaotic city like London. I hope this project will inspire other designers in urban design and architecture to think about the city as a place where we could express ourselves with more freedom and build a strong sense of community within our local area.

I would like to say thank you to everyone I connected with over the year, especially to Eleida, who took the time to meet with me and discuss the future of young people in Peckham. I am also deeply thankful to my classmates and tutors, whose incredible support helped me achieve this significant result, the conclusion of my Master's project!



Thank you!