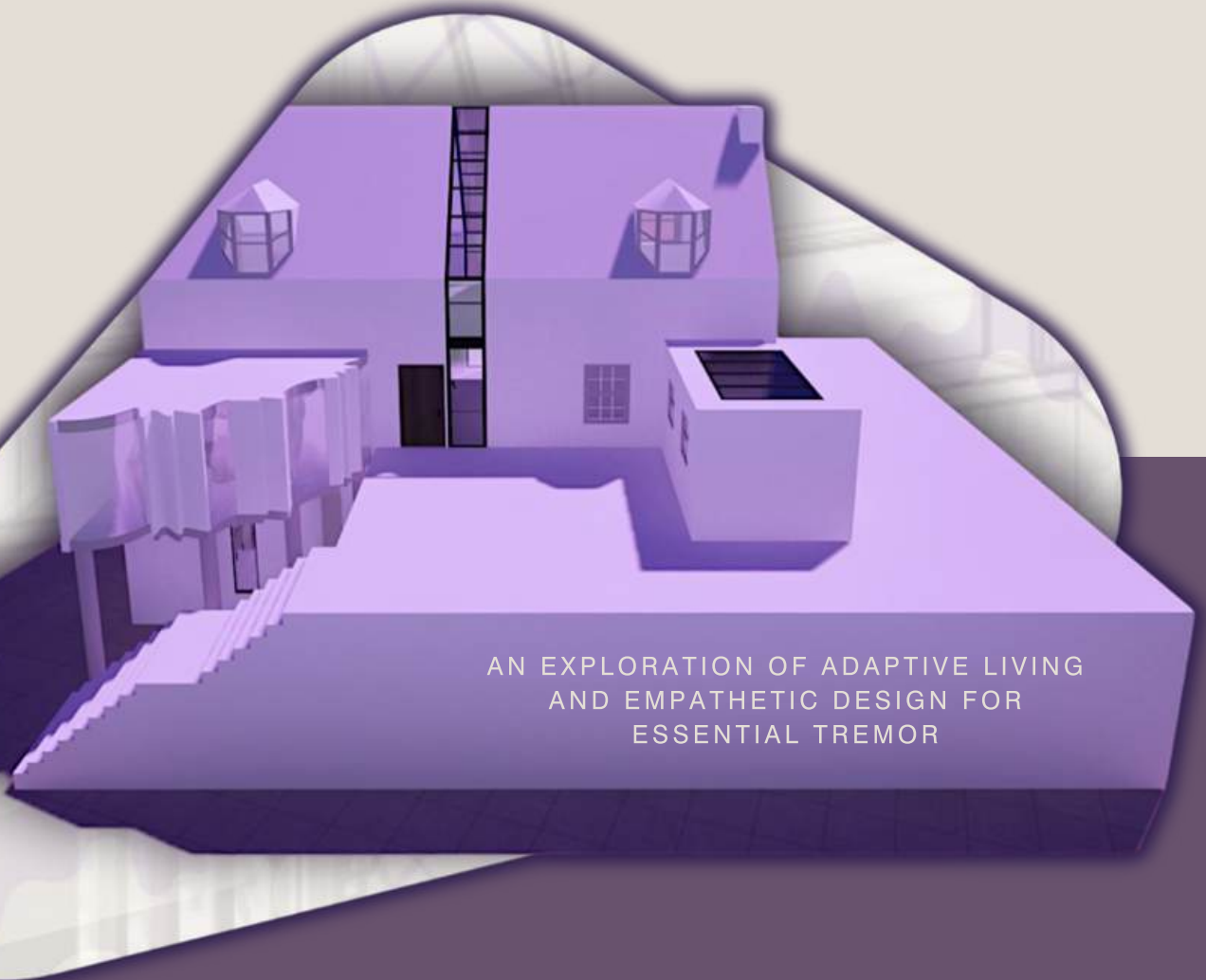


04/2025

A PLACE FOR MOVEMENT

The Layers of Living



AN EXPLORATION OF ADAPTIVE LIVING
AND EMPATHETIC DESIGN FOR
ESSENTIAL TREMOR

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I. DESIGNER STATEMENT



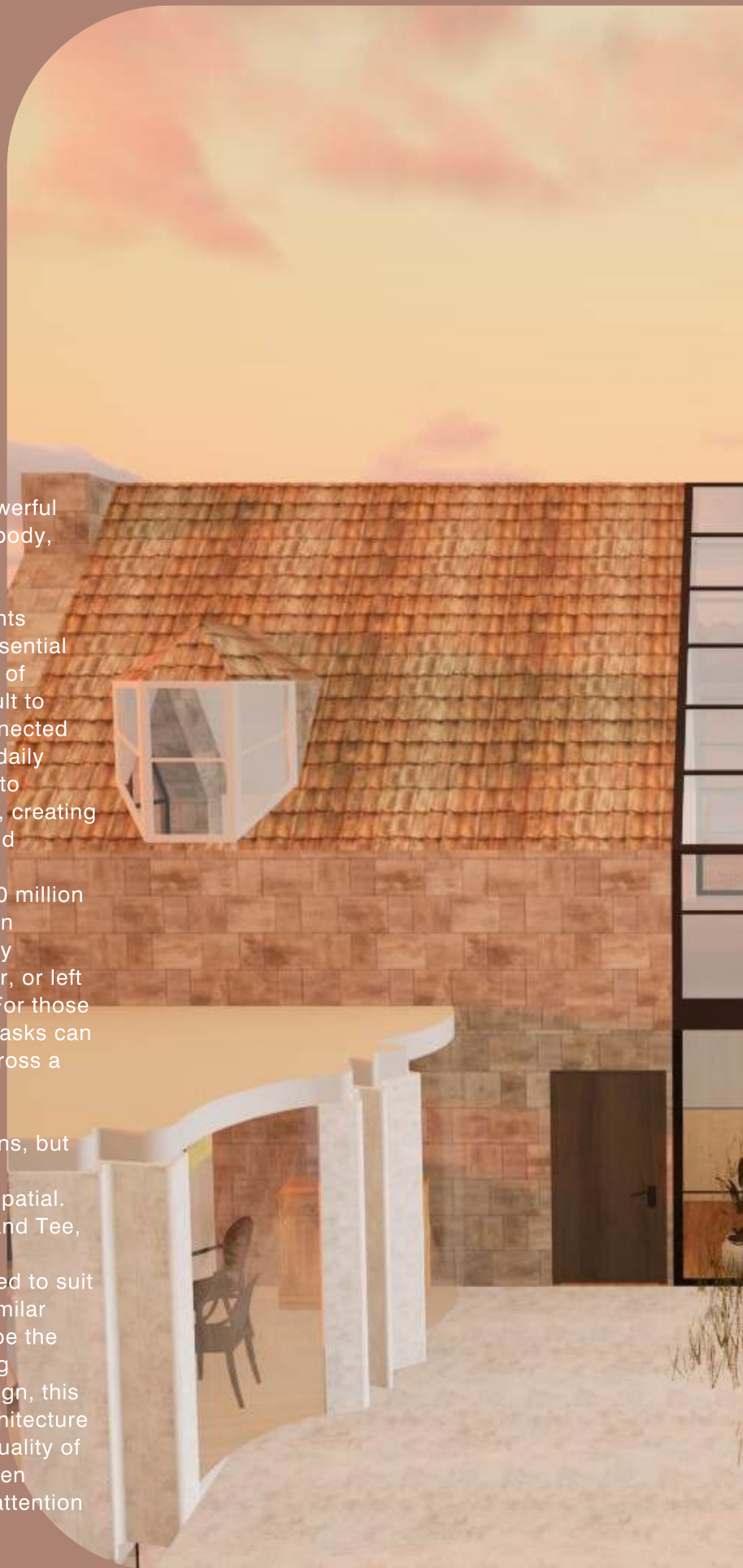
My thesis project has allowed me to explore my passion for designing emotionally responsive spaces that adapt to the real needs of people. I am particularly drawn to the transformation of existing buildings - not just to preserve their character, but to give them new life with purpose and empathy.

This project became a reflection of how design can act as a quiet form of care- where everyday challenges are met with dignity, and lived experiences are translated into meaningful special decisions. I believe that at its best, design is not only functional or beautiful, but deeply human.

2. THE BRIEF

This project began with a simple yet powerful question: how can a home support the body, rather than challenge it? The aim was to redesign an existing hillside cottage in Gardenstown to better serve its occupants particularly Nigel, who has lived with Essential Tremor since childhood. The house, full of history and memory, had become difficult to navigate, with narrow doorways, disconnected levels, and moments of strain built into daily routines. The design responds not only to physical barriers, but to emotional ones, creating a space that offers calm, confidence, and continuity.

Essential Tremor affects an estimated 10 million people worldwide. It is the most common movement disorder, yet it remains widely misunderstood often dismissed as minor, or left unaccommodated in domestic design. For those living with tremor, even the most basic tasks can carry anxiety: placing a cup, walking across a room, opening a cupboard. This design reimagines the home as a supportive environment not through clinical solutions, but through thoughtful, beautiful, everyday interventions. It is an act of care made spatial. While this proposal is specific to Nigel and Tee, its principles extend far beyond a single household. The approach can be adapted to suit others living with Essential Tremor or similar conditions where small instabilities shape the way space is experienced. By combining empathy, research, and responsive design, this project demonstrates how domestic architecture can improve not just functionality, but quality of life. It shows that meaningful change often comes not from big gestures, but from attention to the quiet details of everyday living.







3. SITE ANALYSIS

Gardenstown, once known locally as Gamrie, is a fishing village nestled along the dramatic Moray Firth coast. Its roots trace back to the 18th century, when it was formally established by Alexander Garden in 1720, though the surrounding parish has records reaching into medieval times. The name “Gamrie” is thought to derive from Gaelic, possibly meaning “the rough hollow,” reflecting the terrain’s rugged, sea-bitten beauty.

The village’s growth was shaped by the fishing industry and the religious spirit of its people. Herring and whitefish boats lined the coast, and the rhythm of daily life was closely tied to the sea. Alongside this livelihood was a deep religious tradition Gardenstown had strong links to the Free Church, and the village once held three different congregations. The presence of both spiritual dedication and practical craftsmanship shaped a unique architectural and social character.

Much of the town’s charm comes from its unplanned structure. The steep, narrow lanes and tightly packed houses evolved organically over time built to follow the contours of the cliff, protect from winds, and maximise sea access. Houses were built gable-end to the sea, many with external staircases and boat stores below. The historic core retains this irregularity, preserving a lived-in, layered feeling of time.

Throughout its history, Gardenstown has remained fiercely local yet outward-looking. The sea connected it not just to trade, but to cultural exchange. Visitors and artists have long been drawn to its raw, authentic character. This blend of tradition and subtle adaptation makes it not just picturesque, but deeply meaningful as a place of heritage, resilience, and memory.



“Old Gardenstown is not made of stone alone — it is shaped by salt, prayer, and the pace of the tide.”

— Kay Beaton, *Old Gardenstown with Crovie and Pennan*

Crovie and Pennan, smaller villages to the east and west of Gardenstown, share similar fishing-based roots, but Gardenstown was always the central settlement larger, more socially active, and religiously intense. The book recalls moments when storms would batter Crovie and families would be taken in by Gardenstown residents, illustrating the deep interdependence of these coastal communities. The book also notes the survival of old trades like coopering and net-mending, now mostly memories woven into the identity of the place.



Image reproduced from Kay Beaton's Old Gardenstown with Crovie and Pennan.

The site lies at the upper edge of Gardenstown, just before the village tapers off into farmland and open hillside. It overlooks both the sea and the rest of the town, with long views to the east and west. This positioning allows for dual exposure, morning light from the east and warm sunset from the west, which directly informed the extension design and placement of key interior spaces.



Photo courtesy of a local resident.

Architecturally, the area features rough-stone facades, rendered gables, and a mix of slate and pantile roofs. While many homes have been modernised inside, their external presence still follows the traditional rhythm narrow widths, tall chimneys, and gable-end orientation to the sea. These elements guided the material palette and proportions used throughout the redesign.

SITE ANALYSIS





The site is a threshold, between hill and harbour, past and present. This project seeks to honour that position, creating a home that holds its history gently while opening to new movement and meaning.



“The houses were often altered as needs changed — rooms added, doors moved, walls thickened — not for style, but for survival.” — Kay Beaton, Old Gardenstown with Crovie and Pennan

The semi-detached property at 146 and 147 The Green reflects the layered history of Gardenstown’s vernacular architecture. Originally a single dwelling, later divided into two separate homes, the building sits at the upper edge of the village, facing the sea. Constructed in traditional stone with rendered facades and a pitched slate roof, its structure has aged with character, showing signs of both weathering and adaptation over time. The asymmetry between the two halves hints at their evolving functions and the informal way homes in the village were often extended or divided based on need rather than plan.

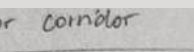


Internally, both houses reveal the constraints of older layouts: narrow staircases, small enclosed rooms, and limited natural light in deeper zones. While full of charm, these conditions pose challenges for contemporary living, particularly for the needs of the current occupants. The project seeks not to erase this historic character but to work with it — opening the space through light-oriented extensions, improving flow, and creating zones that accommodate daily routines with dignity and ease.

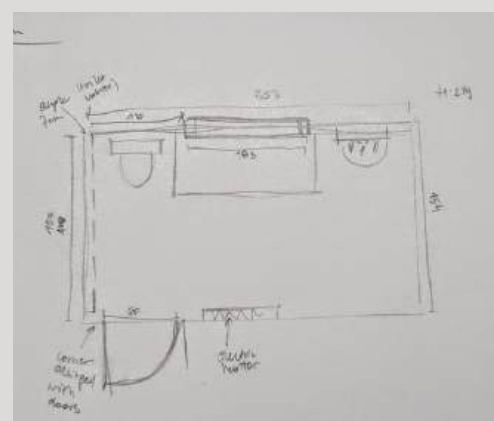




EXPLORING PERSONALITIES



A hand-drawn sketch of a mechanical part, possibly a bracket or a base, with various dimensions and labels. The drawing is oriented vertically on the page. The main body is a horizontal rectangle with a total width of 170 and a height of 25. On the left side, there is a vertical section with a width of 20 and a height of 120. A curved line, likely a fillet or a transition, connects the bottom left corner of the main body to the vertical section. The radius of this curve is labeled as R. The top of the vertical section has a width of 15. On the right side of the main body, there is a vertical section with a width of 20 and a height of 25. A curved line, likely a fillet or a transition, connects the bottom right corner of the main body to the vertical section. The radius of this curve is labeled as R. The top of the vertical section has a width of 15. The overall height of the part is 120. The overall width is 170. The drawing is labeled with 'H. 120' and '170'.



This hands-on approach not only provided accurate spatial data, but also shaped a more empathetic connection to the building — allowing the design to grow from direct experience, not assumption.





SPATIAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH OBSERVATION



Beyond the measurements, the manual survey allowed for a richer spatial reading: how light entered the rooms, where the sounds of the sea echoed, and how movement flowed through each level. These observations influenced both the zoning strategy and the placement of key interventions. The process reinforced the idea that design begins with seeing — not only with the eye, but with attention, care, and time spent within the space.

4. DEVELOPMENT



The development process began with abstract explorations rooted in the engagement task. Early models and forms were inspired by the trace marks left by tremor, a translation of movement into shape, instability into structure. These raw concepts set the emotional and spatial tone for the entire project.

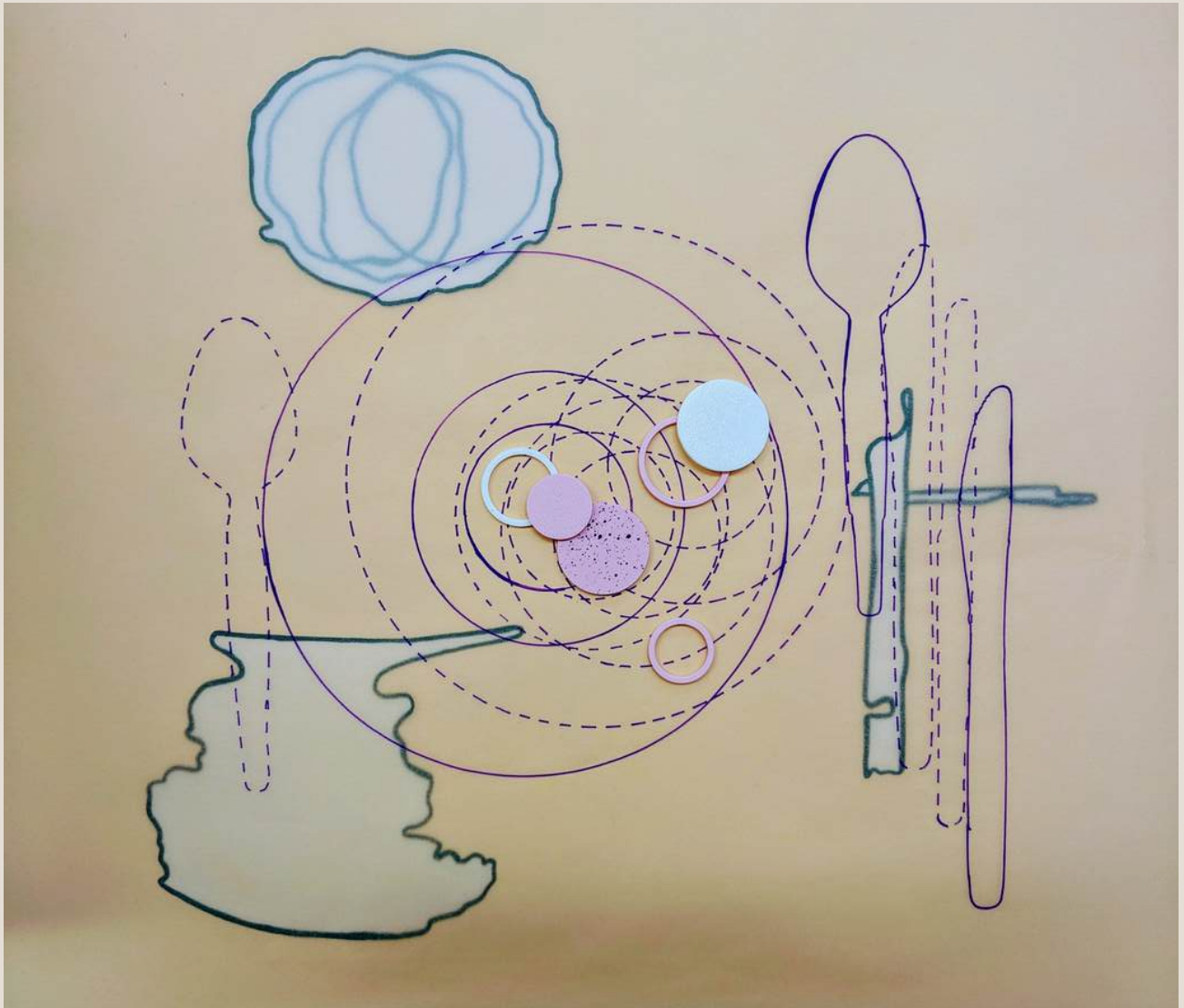
As the process evolved, these initial forms were refined through layering, tracing, and material testing. The zig-zag motif emerged as a key design language expressing both rhythm and resistance. Shapes were softened, adapted, and applied across scales, from architectural extensions to object design.

SKETCH MODELS STUDY: TRACING THE TREMOR



This sketch model is a direct abstraction from the engagement task. The form was generated by tracing the physical mark left on the bowl during Nigel's interaction, then digitally reinterpreted and 3D printed as a layered, spatial object. The composition reflects the unpredictable motion of tremor - scattered, layered, and deeply personal.

By transforming a moment of instability into a physical structure, the model becomes a metaphor for the project itself: turning challenges into form, and movement into meaning.



The body moves. Design should move with it.



This engagement task was designed to gain deeper insight into the physical experience of living with Essential Tremor. Nigel interacted with everyday objects- plates, cutlery, cups- all painted in mauve to highlight the contrast with his black-painted hands. As he used the items, his natural tremor left visible marks and fingerprints, creating a personal record of touch, effort, and movement.



ENGAGEMENT



The hands leave more than a marks- they leave the stories.

These traces revealed the difficulty of holding objects with stability, and offered a physical map of his daily challenges. The impressions became both a symbol of his presence and a source of inspiration, informing the spatial forms and tactile considerations throughout the development of the project.



INTERVIEW

This informal interview with Nigel and Tee offered an intimate glimpse into their daily life, values, and the emotional relationship they share with their home. Sitting beside their fireplace, we spoke about comfort, frustration, memory, and what 'home' really means when movement and routine are impacted by Essential Tremor.



Nigel's reflections on small, everyday actions making tea, holding a pen, climbing stairs revealed the subtle barriers hidden in a traditional layout. Tee, in turn, shared her perspective on caregiving and spatial flow, emphasising the need for intuitive, warm, and dignified spaces that support rather than isolate.

Their stories directly informed the design direction not just in terms of accessibility, but in tone, atmosphere, and rhythm. This conversation became a foundation for translating real-life needs into spatial empathy, where the house adapts to its occupants rather than the other way around.

It's not about making things easier it's about making them feel normal again.

— Nigel, during interview

"I do all the cooking in the house, and I enjoy it but now it is a problem. I can no longer chop vegetables and I am not really good with sharp knives."

"I had Tremor my whole life. It is Tremor and I am human being so I am not going to interfere with my life. I am still planning to do all travelling I used to do."

"The most important start of the day is to make a cup of tea."

"In the morning I am doing some sort of crafting work like cross-stitching or crotcheing blankets. I am also attending various craft groups in the village."



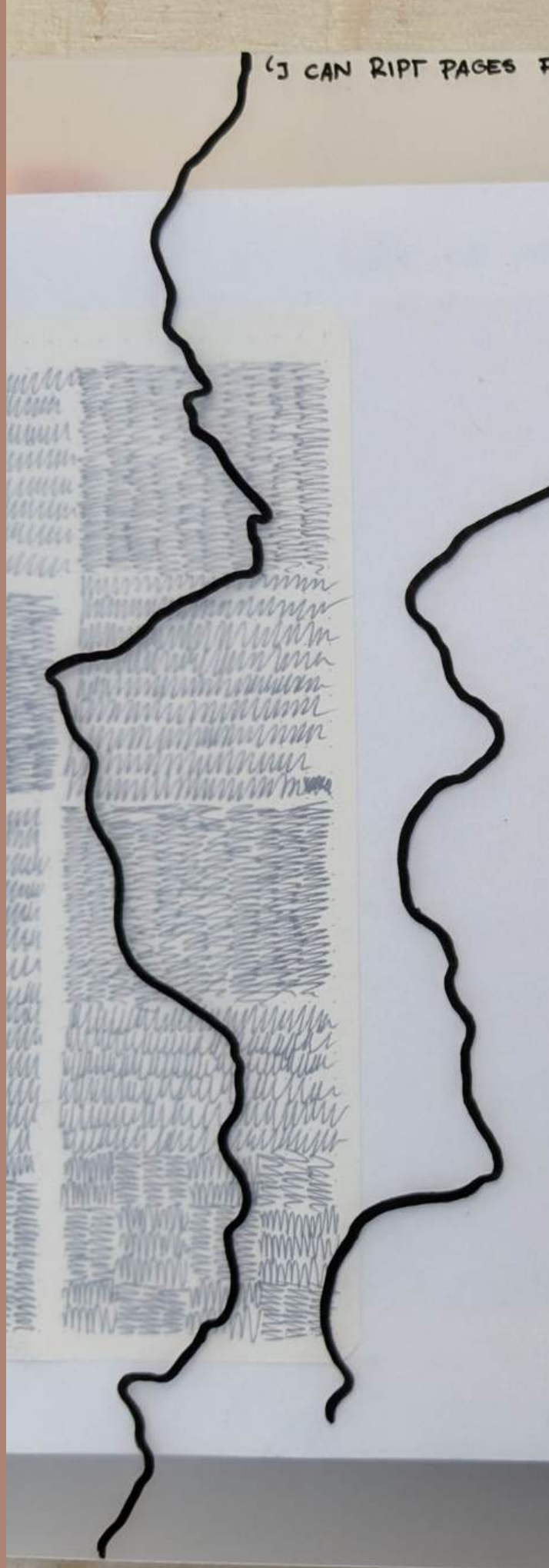
"It's always there — even when I try to forget it."
— Nigel

LIVING WITH TREMOR

Essential Tremor is more than a medical condition, it shapes how someone moves, interacts, and experiences daily life. For those like Nigel, it's not always the visible shaking that's most challenging, but the mental strain of trying to stay in control. Every object becomes a calculation, every routine a test of steadiness. Tasks others perform without thought holding a glass, writing a list, locking a door become moments that demand focus, patience, and adaptation.

This project was born from the desire to understand those moments more deeply. Through direct engagement, conversation, and observation, it became clear that good design must respond not just to how a space looks, but how it feels to live in it especially when the body doesn't always cooperate. Ergonomic thinking, soft transitions, and tactile clarity became key design drivers not to "fix" the tremor, but to support comfort and reduce frustration.

Living with tremor is a quiet, continuous negotiation between independence and adaptation. This project aims to honour that reality with empathy turning insight into architecture, and personal experience into purposeful design.



JUSTIN PHILLIPS

JOSEY WALES

Y WALES

553

...er is a user.
...from as early as '75, ...rino's on *Welcome Back, Kotter*.
...Now him smokin'ed him—hunter's instinct. Smokes,
...in a man do good build nothing else, just went around to
...in me know in the rave let him blow me there, but shit
...uth. Back then thie hotels were becoming a major
...usiness. Every s... don't travel. I said, Well get the
...hold a single ... and said drive me someplace
...stuck it behind his ear. I'm
...what to sell and ... bed or this kid would get
...When you see Wee...
...up crack and ... well ...
...is a r'asscloth crackhead, and ... was Rocky. Even with
...nd down, I thought
...e thought we did. If
...sofa because on the
...because the mem-
...then you just have to make
...bullshit rules don't apply. Well,
...some crack
...I had put to bed years ago has been staging
...head these past few days. Fuck if I know why, I've
...Here, it's like this, see, suck my finger and suck and
...see, like when you suck on a plastic bag till all the
...Suck so hard that I can't pull my finger out—I
...told me NYC was a place overrun by ghosts.
...John. I never meant to push the boy. Yeah I did.
...to get hurt. Yeah I fucking did. I never meant to
...mean? When he landed facedown on the train
...st to position his head over the beam so that his
...en kicked him hard at the back of his head
...he crunch, all I could think about was sum-
...All the way in? Uh-huh. Fourteen, back from
...go eat second-
...with Cheese?

“My hands have always had a mind
of their own — it’s not the shaking
that gets to me, it’s when they won’t
do what I need them to.”

— Nigel, during an interview



“It’s not just holding the cup —
it’s wondering if today I’ll spill it
before I even sit down.”

— Nigel, during interview

Drawing of Nigel's everyday objects



HANDS IN FOCUS
STILL TRYING
FOCUS BEHIND EVERY MOVEMENT
SMALL ACTS, BIG EFFORT
WHEN CONTROL SLIPS
QUIET FRUSTRATION
EVERY MARK MATTERS

Essential Tremor is the most common movement disorder, affecting around 1 in 25 people over the age of 40. It causes involuntary, rhythmic shaking most often in the hands and while not life-threatening, it significantly disrupts daily routines. The condition is often misunderstood or mistaken for nervousness or Parkinson's, yet its impacts are both physical and emotional: from difficulty in eating and writing, to anxiety in public or social settings.

In this engagement task, Nigel was asked to perform a simple motion placing a spoon on a table. What emerged was not just a trace of tremor, but a moment of focus, fragility, and adaptation. His hand hovered, adjusted, and corrected itself repeatedly, the spoon tapping lightly against the surface before resting. These movements, though minor to an observer, are constant negotiations for someone with tremor, revealing the unseen energy required for even the most ordinary actions.





QUIET FRUSTRATION

MORE COMMON THAN PARKINSON'S

RHYTHMIC
SHAKING

OFTEN MISDIAGNOSED

PROGRESSIVE, NOT CURABLE

"INVISIBLE" DISABILITY



1 IN 25

Essential Tremor (ET) affects an estimated 1 in 25 adults over the age of 40, and its prevalence increases to 1 in 5 for those over 65. Despite being the most common movement disorder globally even more widespread than Parkinson's it remains frequently misunderstood. Often hereditary, with a 50–70% genetic likelihood, ET typically presents as involuntary, rhythmic shaking, most commonly in the hands, but sometimes extending to the head, voice, or jaw.

Unlike resting tremors seen in conditions like Parkinson's, Essential Tremor is most visible during intentional movement pouring a drink, buttoning a shirt, or placing down a spoon. While not life-threatening, the condition has a profound impact on independence and daily functioning. Its subtle yet persistent nature means that many live with ET in silence, adapting constantly to retain dignity and control in routines that most take for granted.

"The doctors say it's just tremor — but there's nothing 'just' about it when it's in your hands every day."

— Nigel, during interview

EXTENSION DEVELOPMENT

The extension proposal began with an exploration of form, driven by the idea of movement. Inspired by the tremor traces left during the engagement task, early sketch models focused on translating those gestures into spatial language overlapping, curving, and unfolding to reflect the lived rhythm of the house's occupants.

As the design evolved, the extension was shaped not only by movement, but by light and orientation. It stretches across both levels of the home, opening sea views and aligning the interior with the natural cycle, morning sun in the east, soft evening light in the west. The architecture becomes a daily experience of time, light, and connection.

The final form balances function with feeling, soft, organic, and deeply intentional. It unifies two formerly divided houses and creates a central moment of openness, flowing with empathy rather than force. More than added space, it's a gesture of care made visible through architecture.



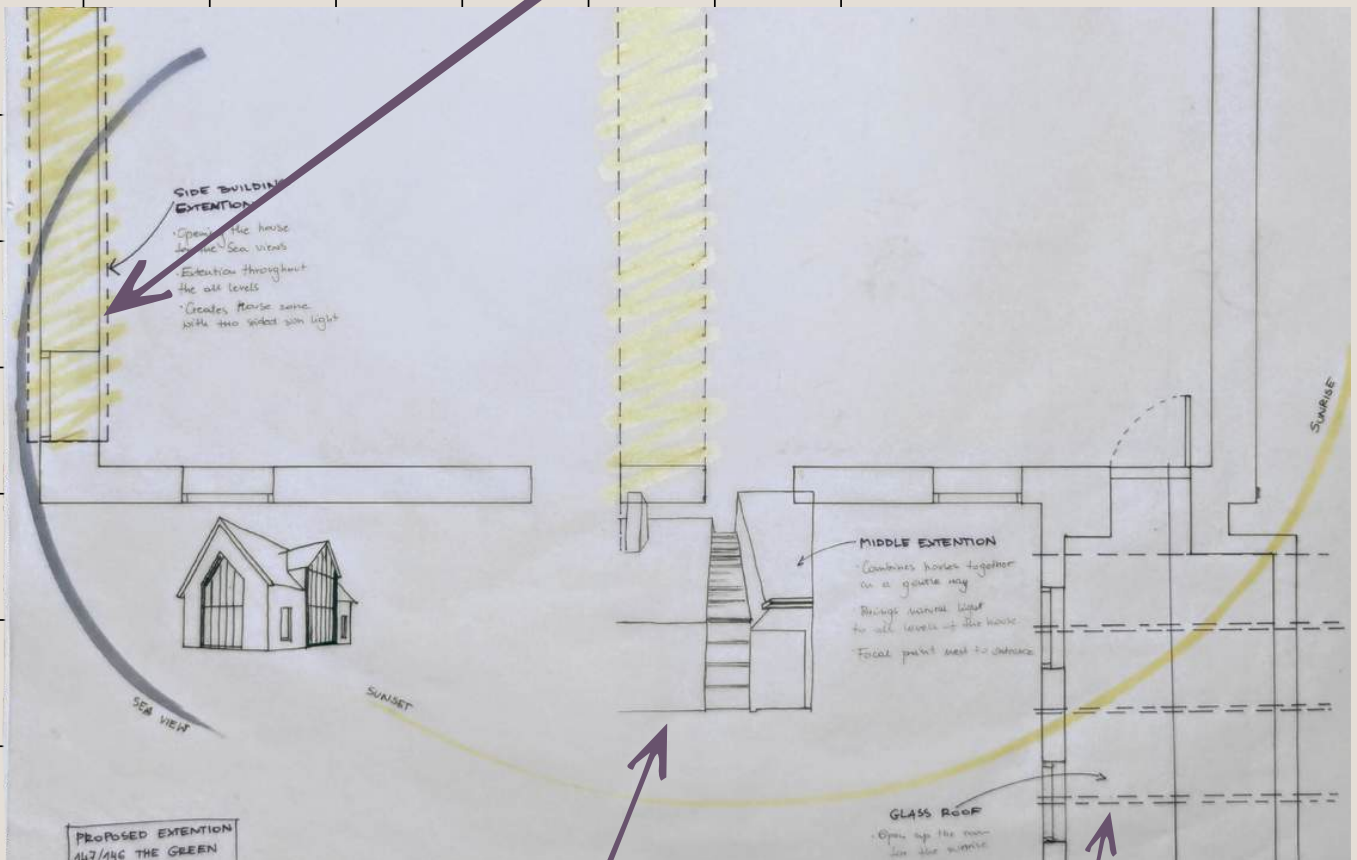


SKETCH MODELS STUDY: MOVEMENT IN TREMOR

This abstract sketch model visualises the unpredictable rhythm and flow of shaking hands. The circular forms, scattered angles, and suspended elements express the dynamic and sometimes fragmented motion experienced in daily tasks. It captures the essence of tremor not as flaw, but as pattern - a unique movement language that inspired the spatial choreography of the final design.

Side Building Extension

Opening the house for the sea views
Extension throughout the all levels
Creates house zone with two sided sun light



Middle Extension

Combine house together in a gently way
Brings natural light to all levels of the house
Focal point next to entrance

Glass Roof

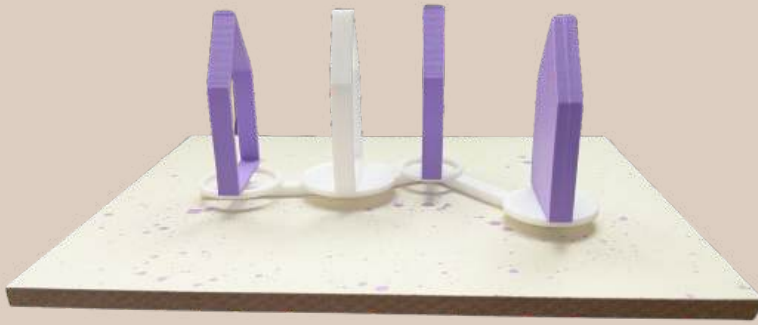
Open up the room for the sunrise



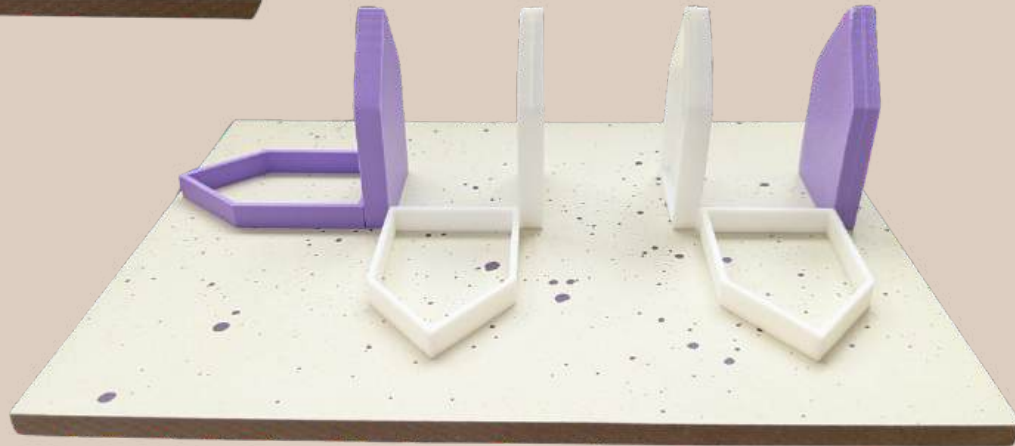
This full-height extension opens up the existing structure to expanded sea views while connecting both levels of the house. Oriented to capture the sunset. The intervention not only increases interior space, but also introduces a greater sense of openness and. Connection to the surrounding landscape.

This gentle central addition connects the two originally semi-detached house, forming a soft architectural bridge. Positioned as a focal point near the entrance, it introduces natural light through all levels of the house, enhancing both spatial flow and visual connection across the home.





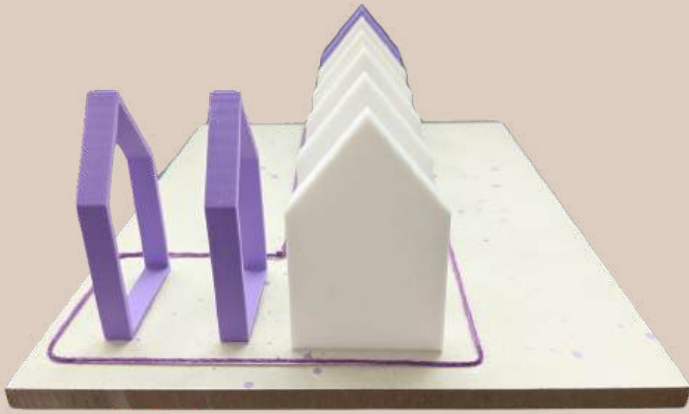
These abstracted sketch models explore the conceptual transformation of two semi-detached houses into one unified yet sensitive living space.



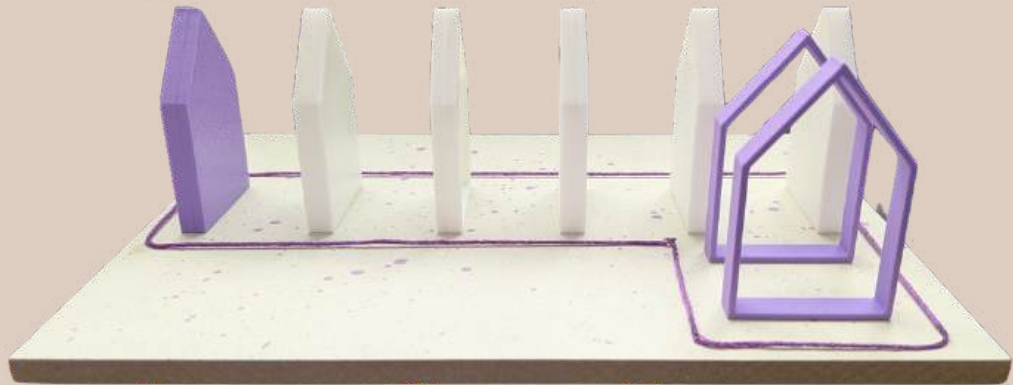
The purple forms represents the bold, directional window openings, framing new light paths and views. The negative space between them signifies the emerging connection, a shared axis of movement, light, and interaction - bridging both sides of the home. The fragmented ground plane suggests the braking of boundaries and the soft merging of what was once divided.

SKETCH MODELS STUDY:
OPENINGS AND CONNECTION



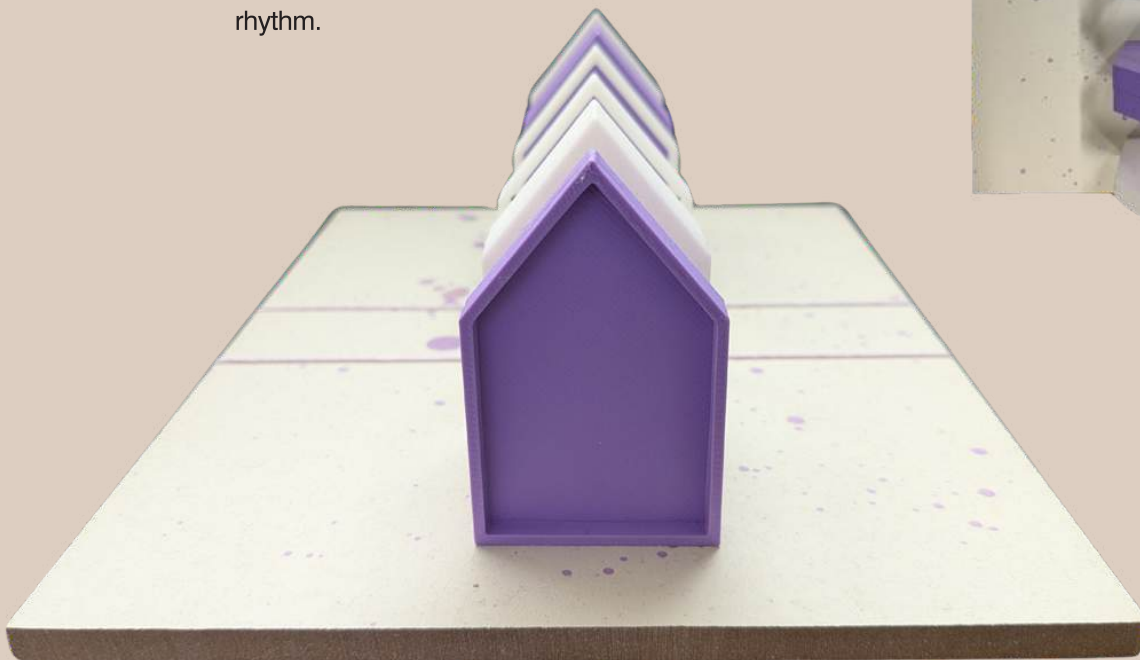
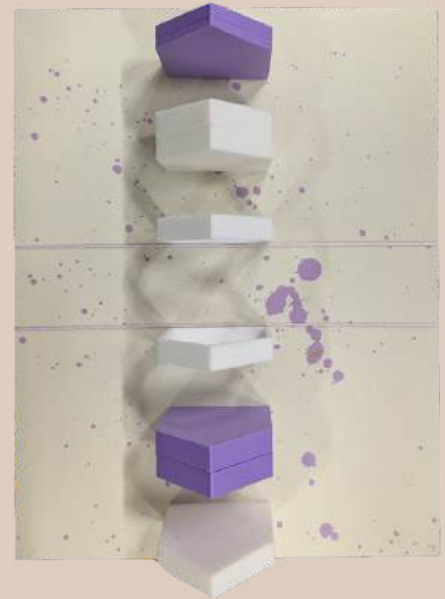


These conceptual models investigate the movement of sunlight through the proposed extension, examining how new openings can shape the interior atmosphere throughout the day.



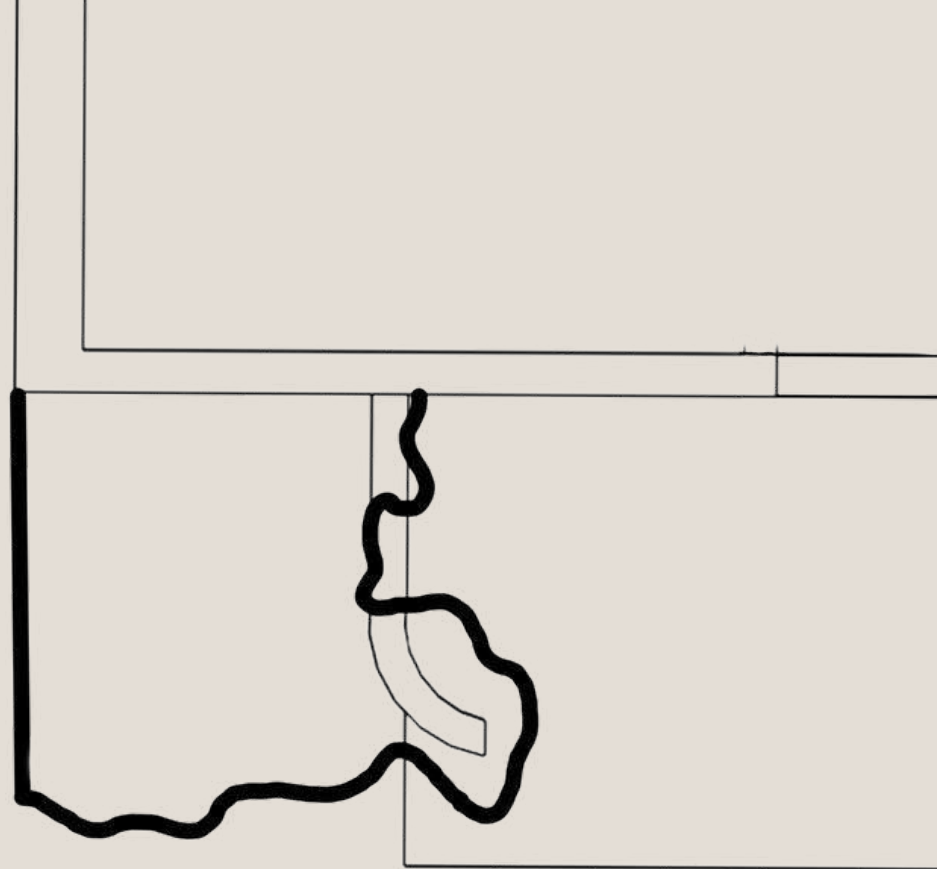
SKETCH MODELS STUDY: SUN PATH AND FLOW

The frames and solid forms represent varying levels of light permeability, while lines geometry maps the sun's trajectory across the house. The arrangement highlights the aim of bringing natural light into deeper zones of the home, connecting sunrise to sunset through form, shadow, and spatial rhythm.

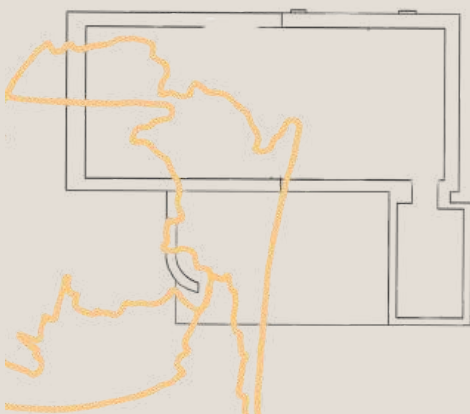


Using the engagement task as a foundation, this study traces the mark left on a bowl and reinterprets it within the architectural context of the existing building. By scaling, overlapping, and abstracting the shape, an organic form emerged - one that breaks away from rigid geometry and instead reflects the movement and emotional texture of Essential Tremor.

The resulting Extension proposal is not only spatial, but symbolic: a design born from empathy, shaped by human touch, and integrated with care into the flow of the home.



Extension Proposal on Plan



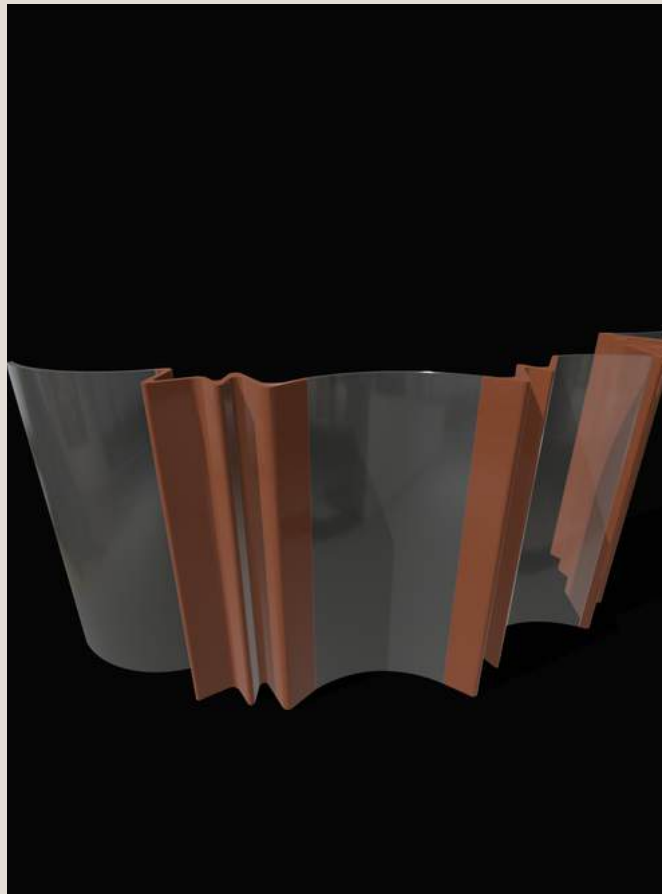
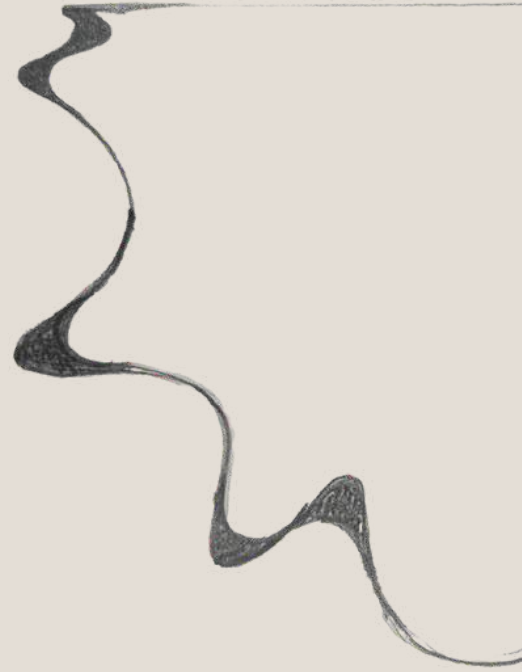
This extension is not just an addition - it's a translation of touch into architecture.



FORM EXPLORATION: ZIGZAG GEOMETRY

This series of models continues the formal exploration of the extension, drawing inspiration from the physical language of tremor. Using the zigzag motif as a visual and conceptual reference to shaking hands, the forms are both angular and curved, representing instability, tension, and flow.

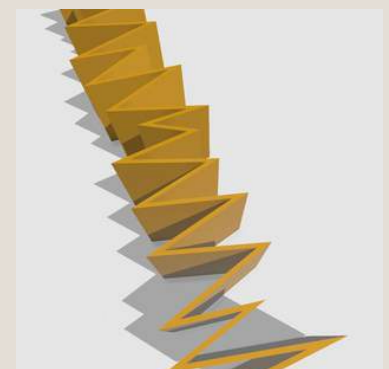
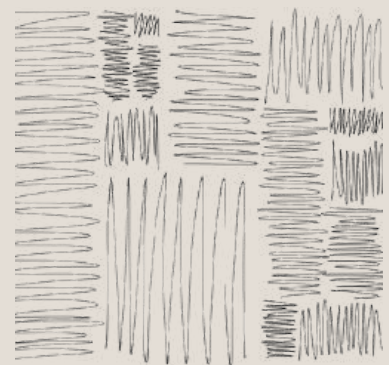
Glass is proposed as a primary material for its ability to bend light, reflect movement, and soften sharp edges. The undulating, folded forms suggest a structure that is not rigid, but responsive and expressive one that echoes the body in motion and turns tremor into architectural rhythm.

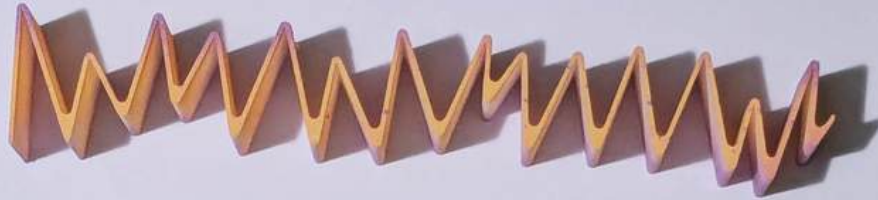
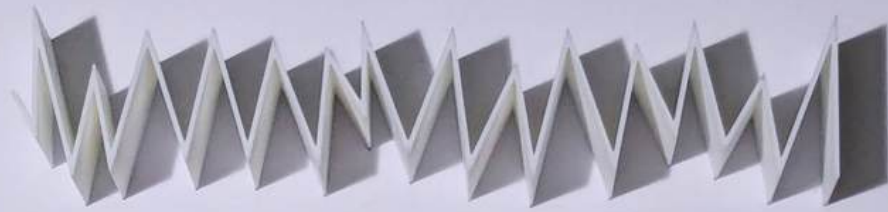




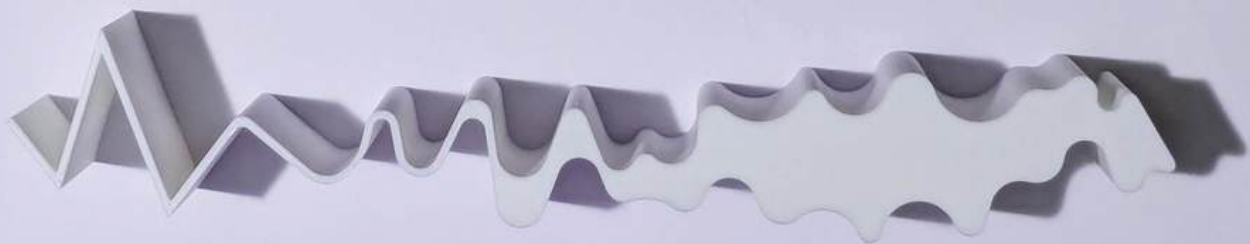
ZIGZAG STUDY PROCESS

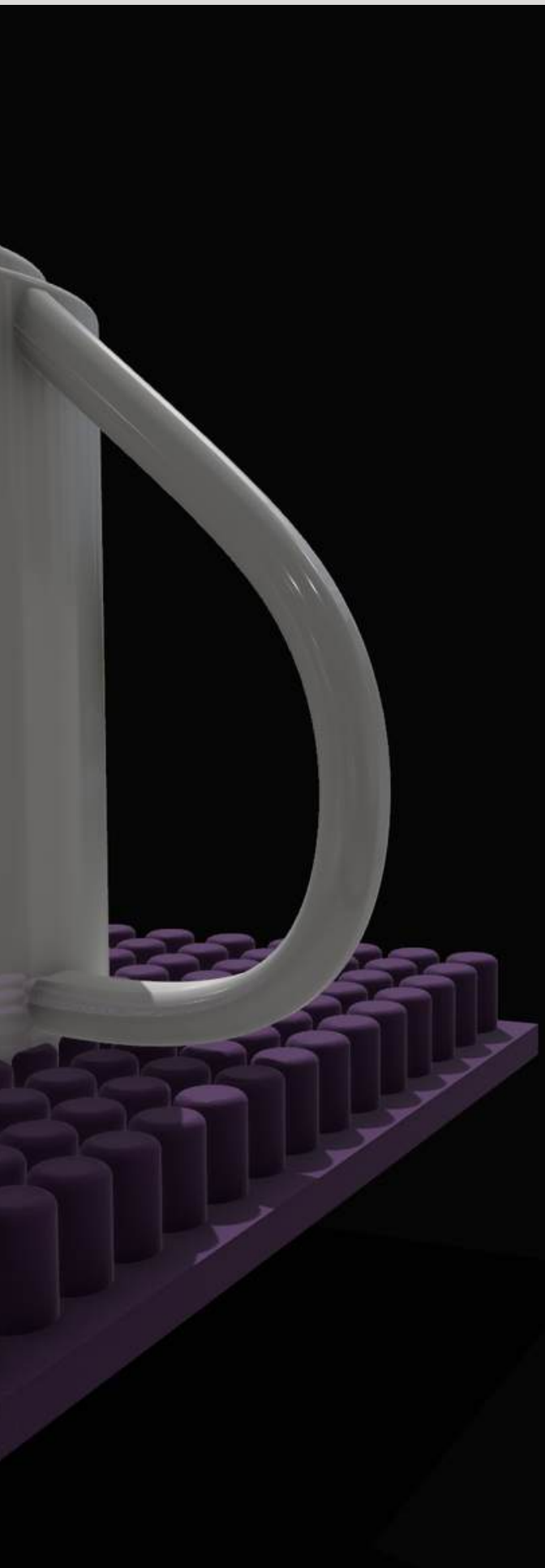
The Zigzag was developed as a visual and structural response to tremor - capturing its rhythmic, unsteady motion. Through folding and repetition, it became a key design element, evolving from sharp tension into softer, more fluid language.



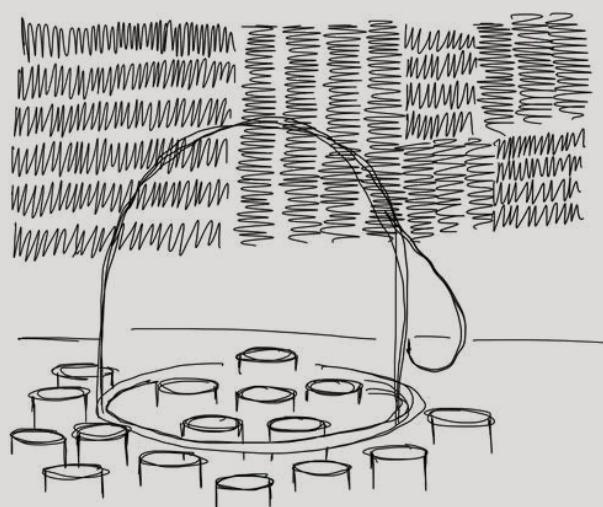
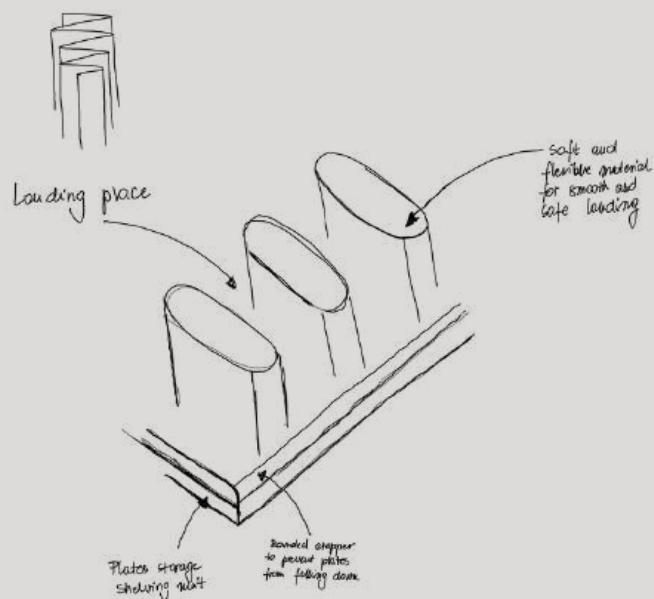


FORM BECOMES FLUID: 3D PRINTED MODELS





LANDING

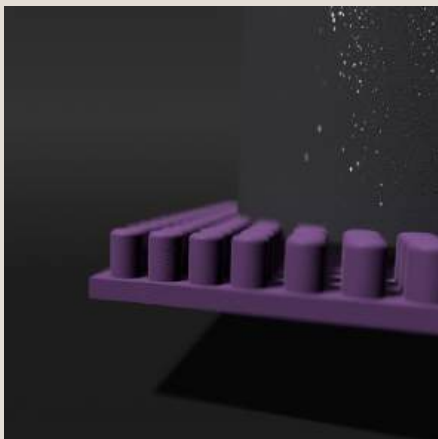


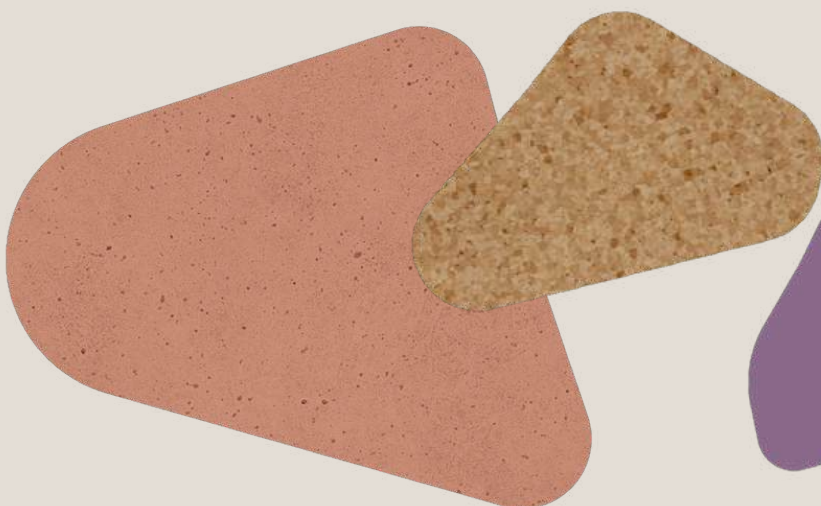
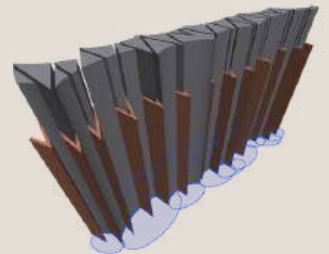
This landing surface is designed to stabilise objects like cups or plates for users with tremor, using flexible nodules to absorb movement and reduce slip.

It transforms a small everyday action into a moment of ease and control.

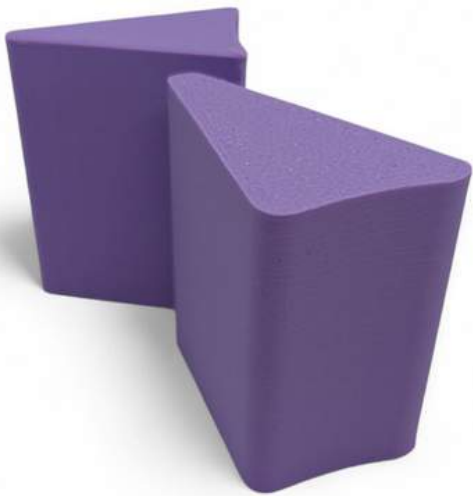


DETAIL VIEW





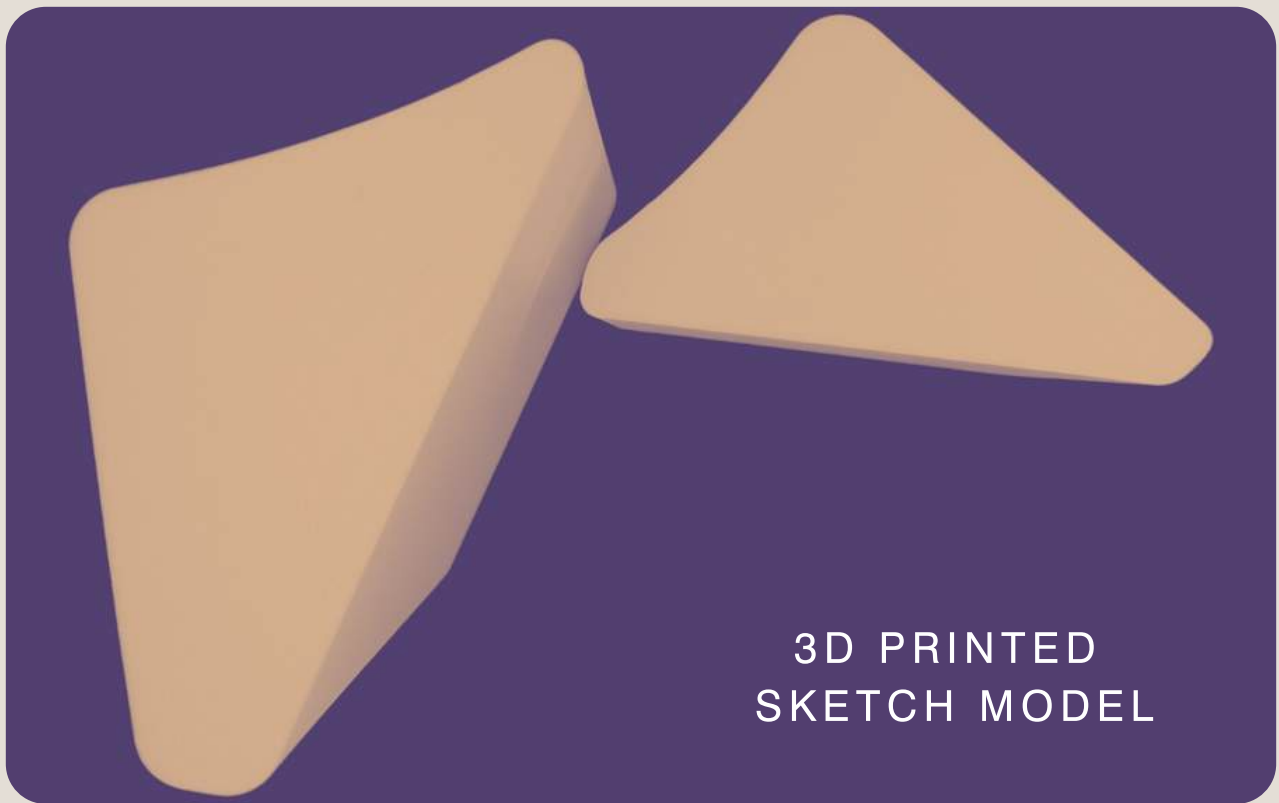
This stage explores the transformation of the zigzag motif into softer, more ergonomic shapes. The evolving geometry balances sharpness and flow, leading toward forms that are tactile, supportive, and rooted in the language of movement.



FORM EXPLORATION SKETCH MODELS

These sketch models explore modular forms derived from earlier zigzag studies. Each arrangement experiments with proximity, rhythm, and balance, transforming the movement-inspired geometry into functional, tactile shapes. The rounded edges reinforce the project's empathetic design approach.



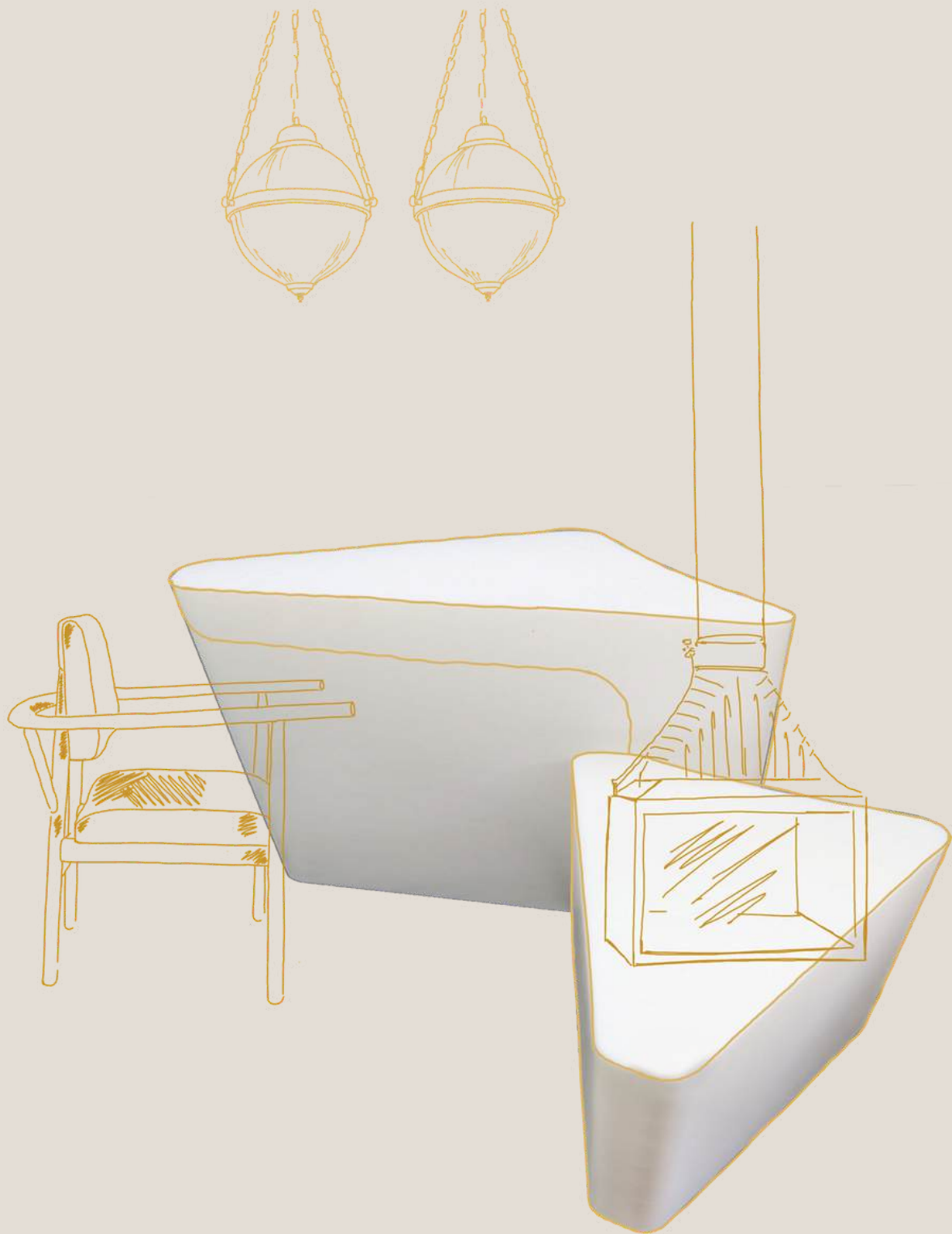


This final arrangement refines the earlier forms into a stable, interlocking composition that balances visual simplicity with functional support. The angled edges and soft intersections are designed to guide placement and interaction, echoing the subtle adjustments someone with tremor makes throughout their day. These pieces are more than objects, they are a response to movement, uncertainty, and the quiet resilience of routine.

**“Nothing in my day moves
in a straight line”**

— Nigel, during interview





This visual explores the integration of form development into interior elements, combining custom-designed furniture and lighting. The organic, softened geometry is derived from earlier tremor-informed studies.

The Victorian era served as a visual and emotional inspiration for this project - a time marked by ornate details, craftsmanship, and the celebration of domestic rituals. Elements such as carved wood, deep upholstery, and layered textures informed the atmosphere of comfort and nostalgia, weighing the design. While reinterpreted in a more contemporary way, these references helped anchor the space in warmth, memory, and quiet elegance - a fitting backdrop for a home shaped by care.



Photograph of Nigel and Tee, dressed in Victorian attire.

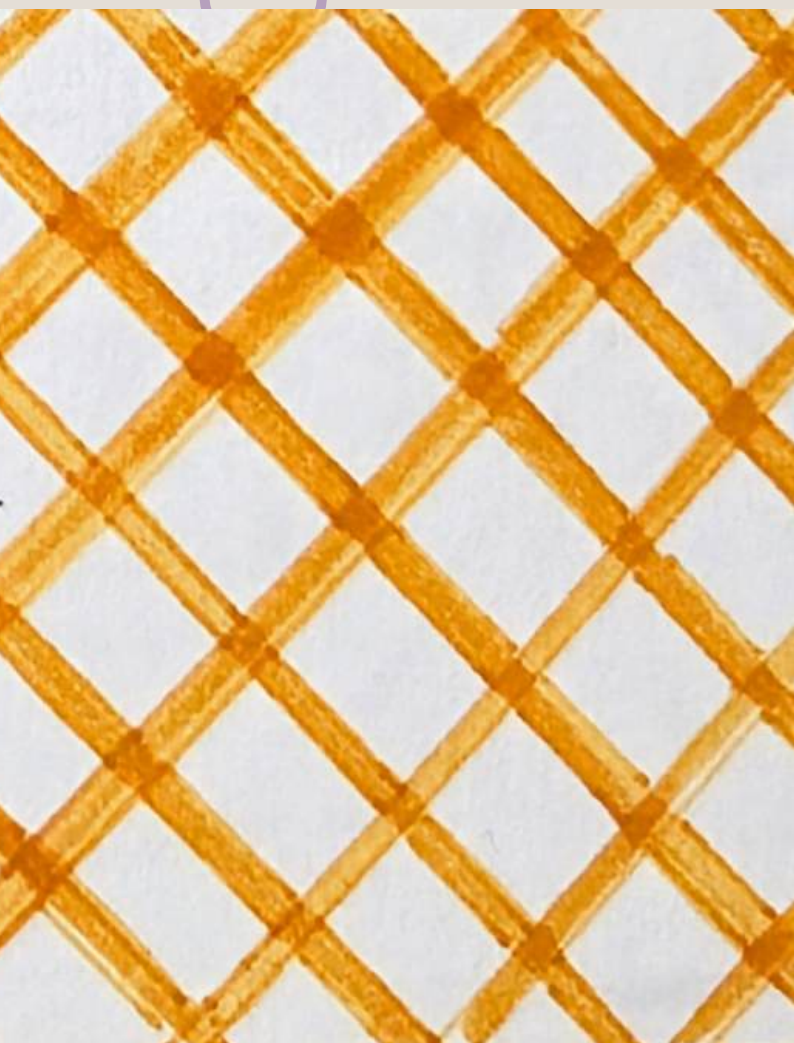
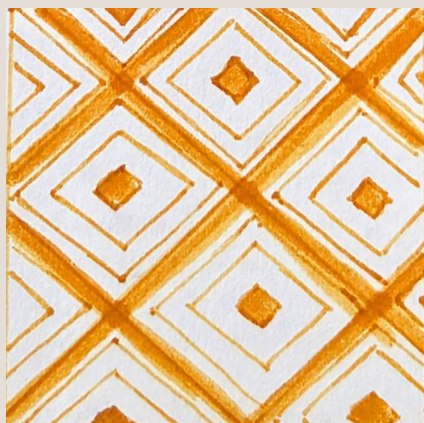


ARTS AND CRAFTS INFLUENCE

The influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement in this project is shaped not only by its design values, but by the occupants own appreciation for its philosophy. Fascinated by the movements Nigel and Tee shares a deep passion for heritage objects and the stories they carry. Rather than replicating historical styles, the design takes cues from this ethos - prioritising thoughtful details, tactile materials, and a lived-in sense of meaning that honours both past and presence.

Inspiration

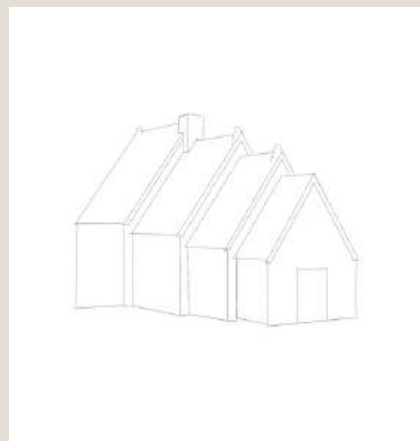




THE PALACE OF MEMORIES

Perak, Malaysia

Build in 1926, it served as a temporary royal residence. It was also used as a mausoleum for royal family members. The palace is constructed from wood and bamboo, featuring woven diamond patterns and no metal nails. Currently, it functions as the Royal Museum of Perak.

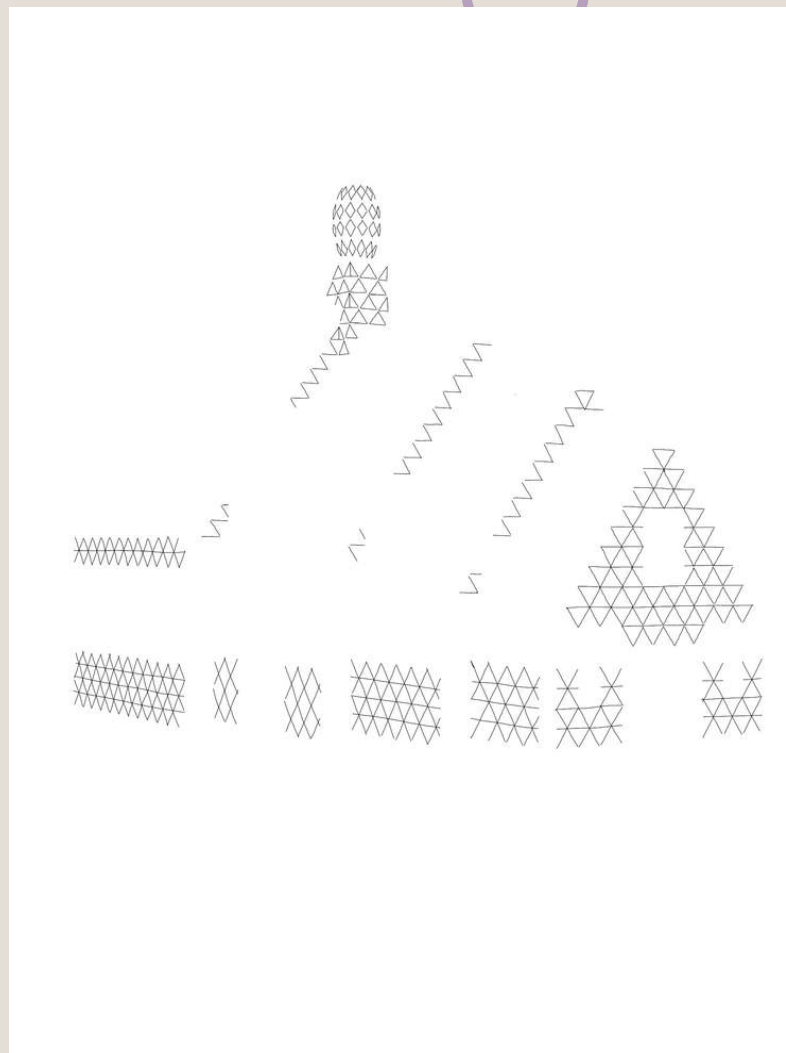


CASE STUDY

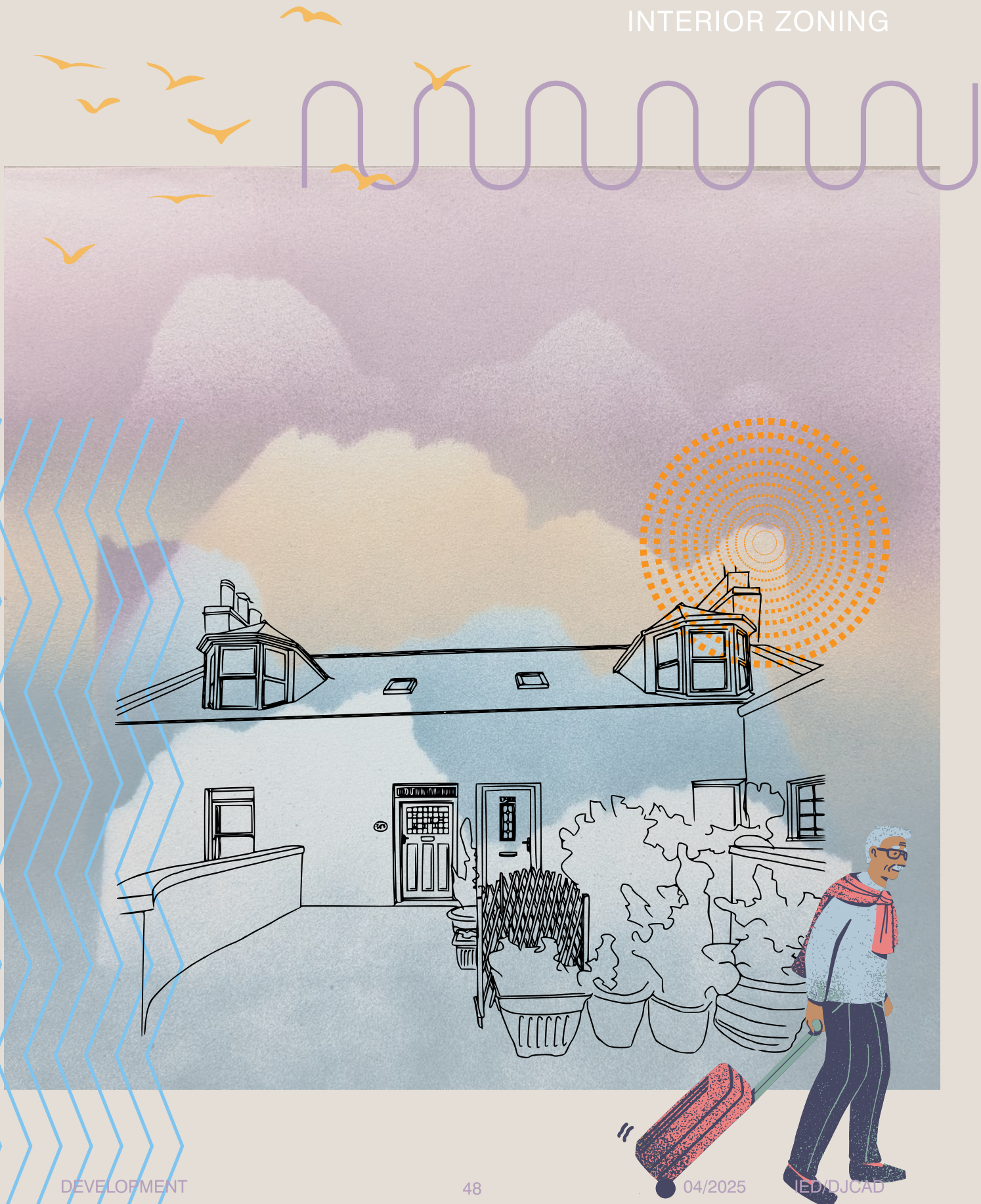
A HOUSE FOR ESSEX

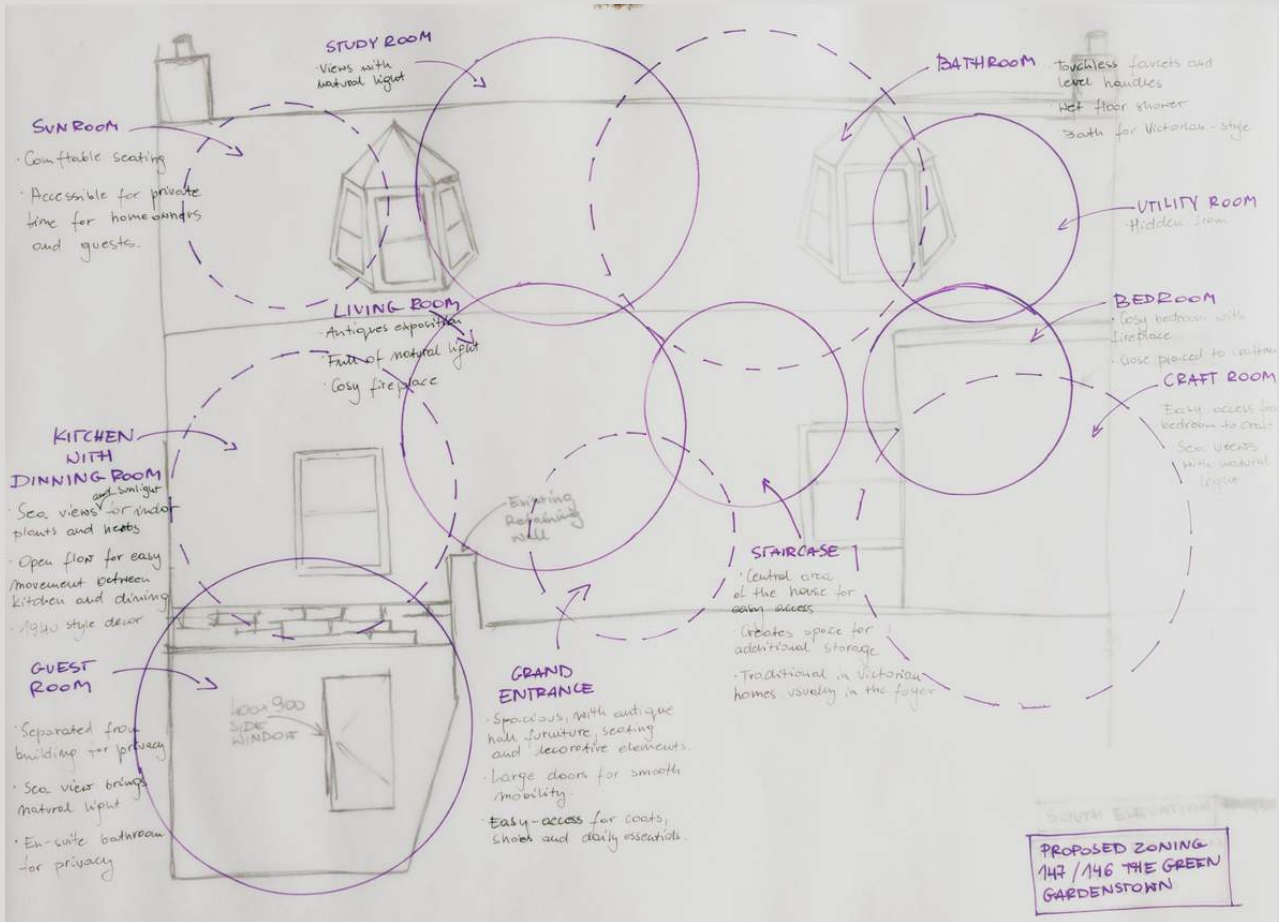
War news, North Essex, UK

Function as both a work of art and a holiday home. Serves as a tribute to the fiction character Julie Cope, an “Essex Everywoman”. Features a design inspired by wayside chapels, Russian stave churches and follies. The exterior is adorned with approximate 2000 handmade tiles.

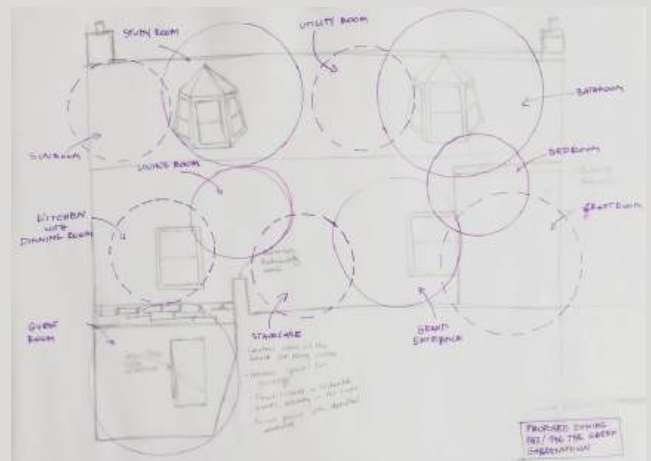
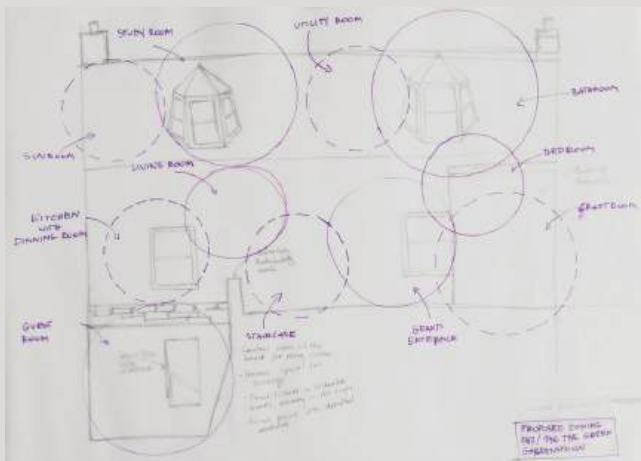


INTERIOR ZONING



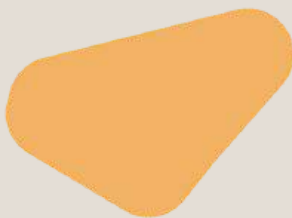


This zoning sketch reflects the needs and routines discussed with Nigel and Tee. Each space is mapped according to function, comfort, and movement, creating a layout that supports how they truly live within the home.





VISUAL RESEARCH BOARD



#F1B263



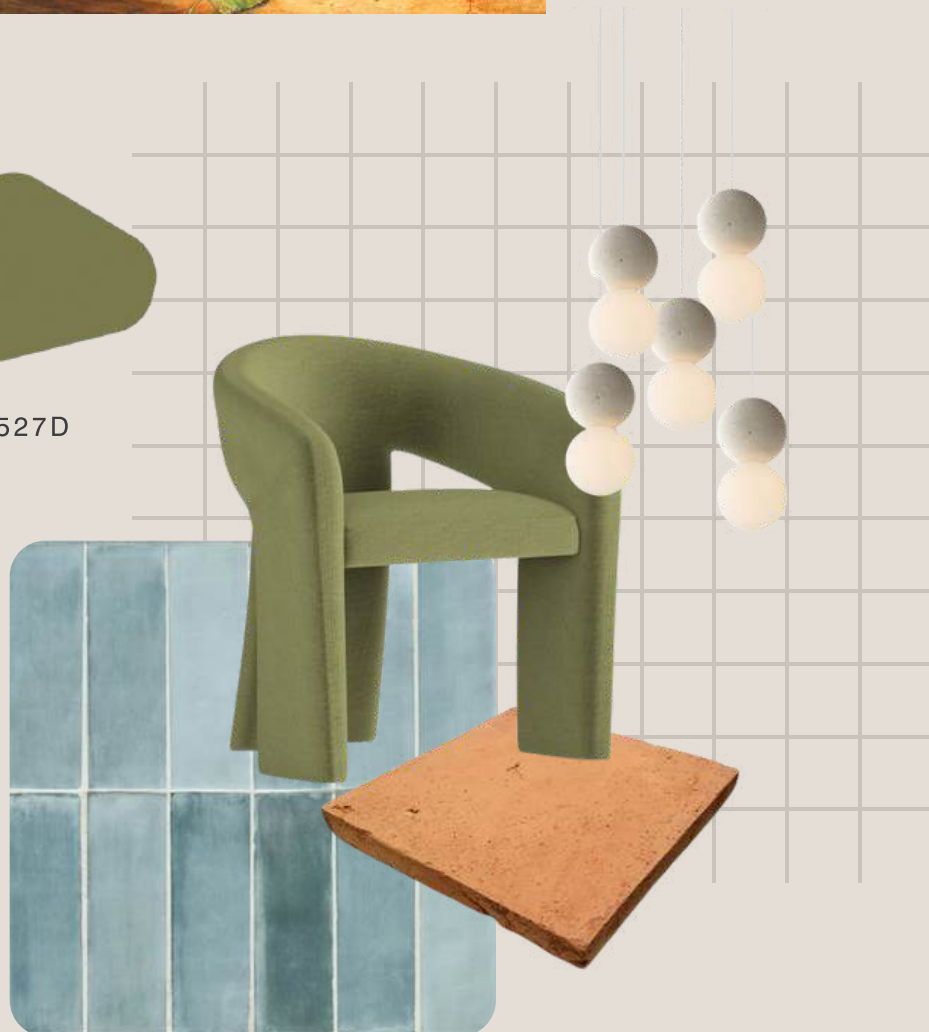
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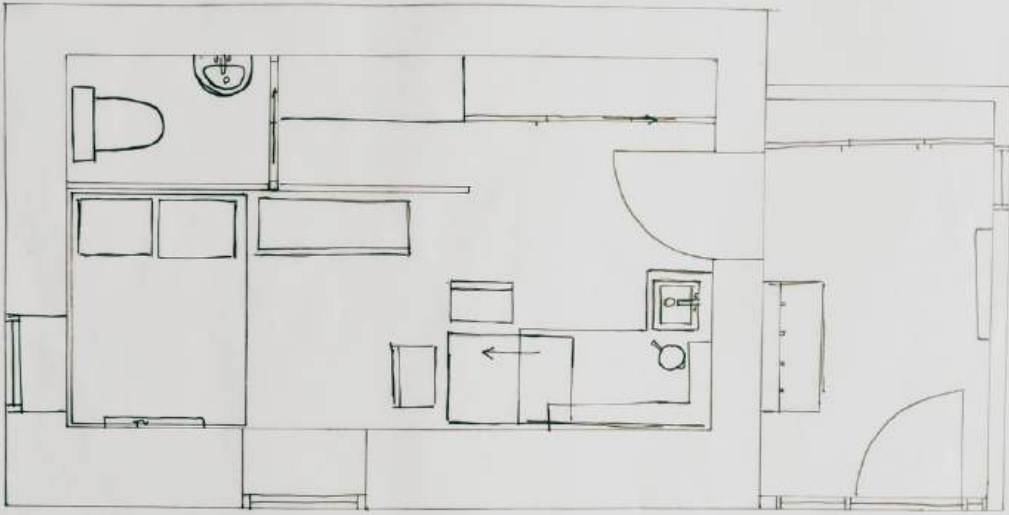
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03



02

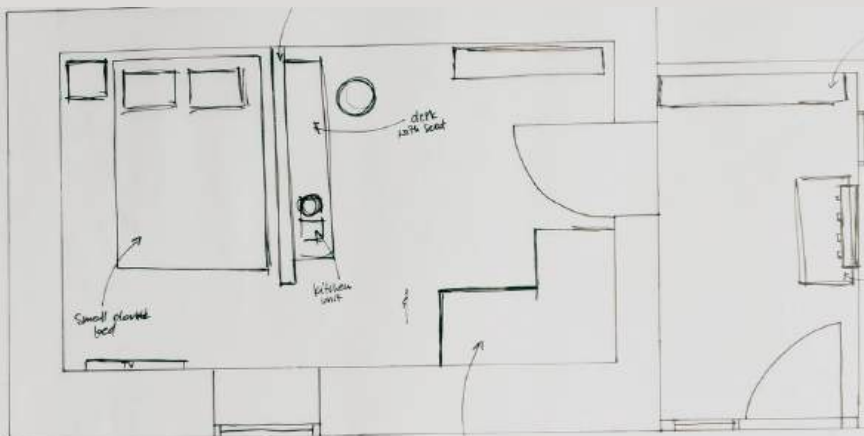


Guest Room Essentials

- Bed (whatever fit best)
- Nightstands (smaller or smaller shelf for personal items)
- Lighting
- Storage (Shelves on the wall or door, small dresser or a few drawers, space in the closet for luggage rack)
- Mirror with small sink
- Power Access (Easy-to-reach outlets or power strip)

PROPOSED PLAN
LOWER LEVEL

01



Guest Room Essentials

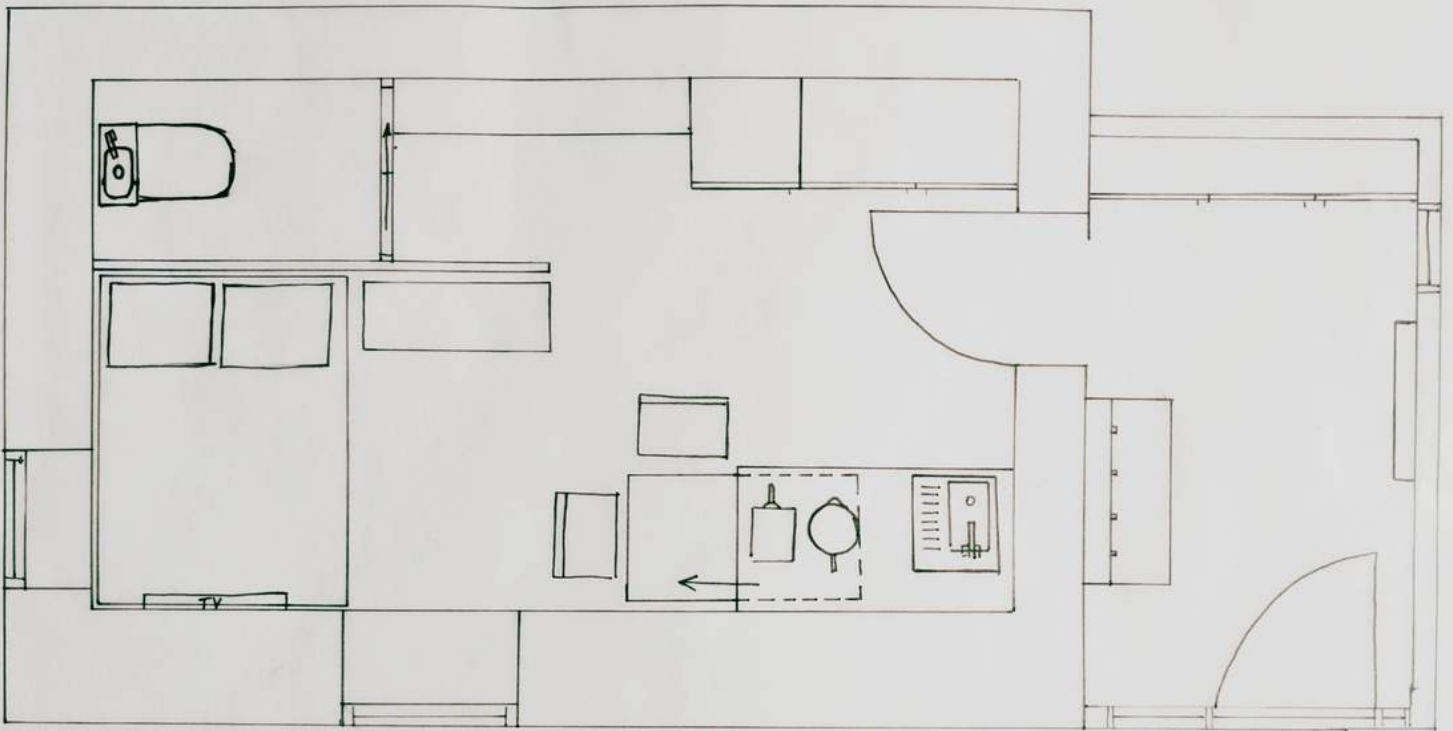
- Bed (whatever fit best)
- Nightstands (smaller or shelf for personal items)
- Lighting
- Storage (Shelves on the wall or door, small dresser or a few drawers, space for in the closet or a luggage rack)
- Mirror with small sink
- Power Access (Easy-to-reach outlets or power strip, phone charging station with USB)
- Phone/Travel Storage
- Waste with small trash can

Wardrobe
Porch Bench
Coffee Table

PROPOSED PLAN
LOWER LEVEL
PROPOSED PLAN
147 MAP THE GREEK
GARDENSTOWN

04. Final Floor plan proposal

Scale 1:25, A2



LOWER LEVEL

This lower level of the building is designed as a self-contained guest space, offering privacy and functionality. Inspired by hotel-style living, it includes a dedicated sleeping area, kitchenette, and bathroom allowing visitors to stay independently within the home.

Sunrise

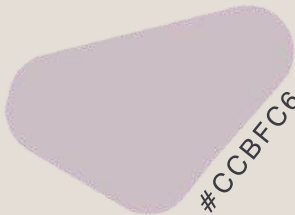


Sunset

Plan zoning *Water for Sea View*



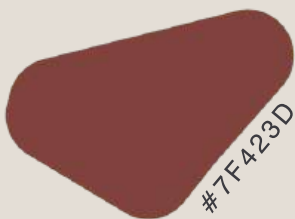
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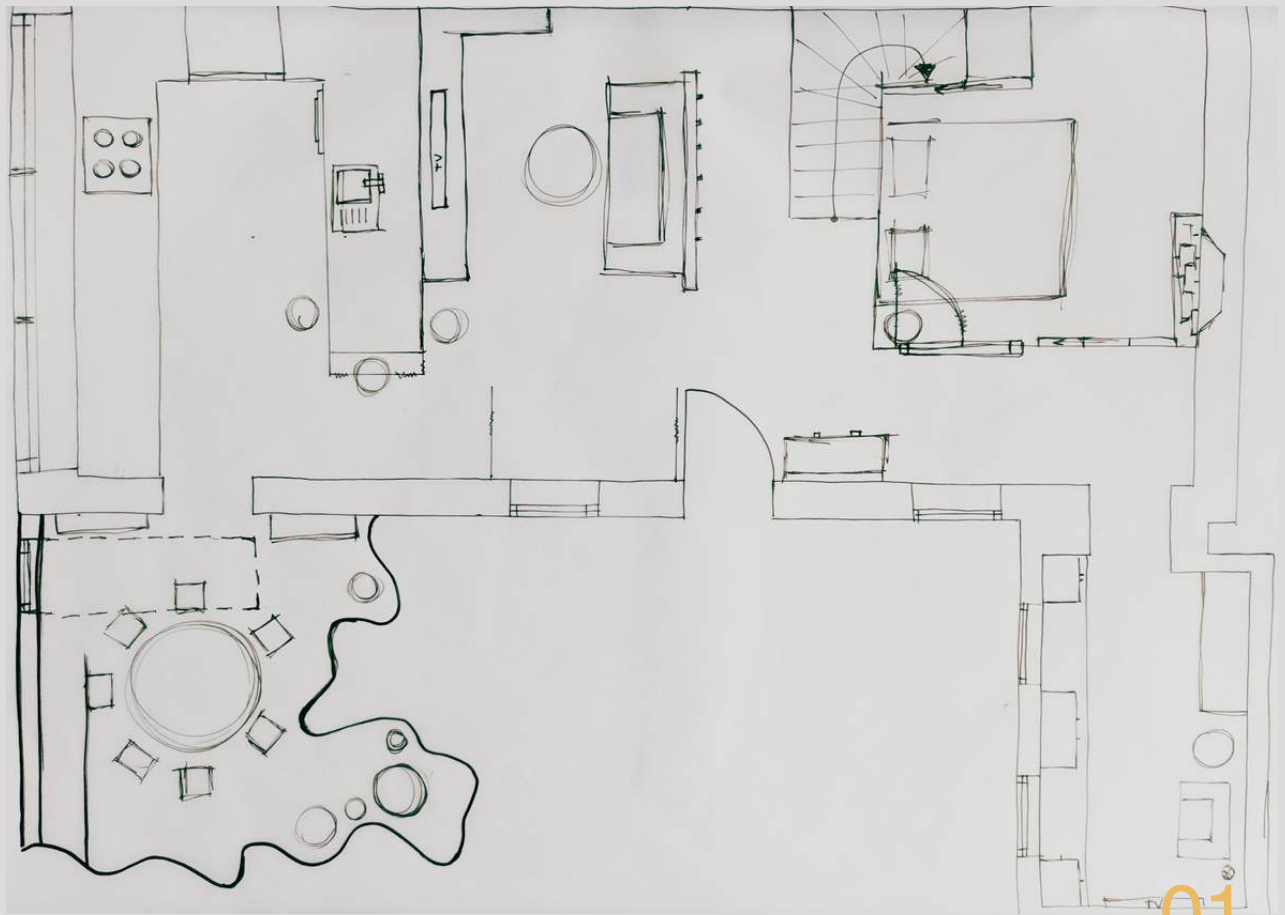


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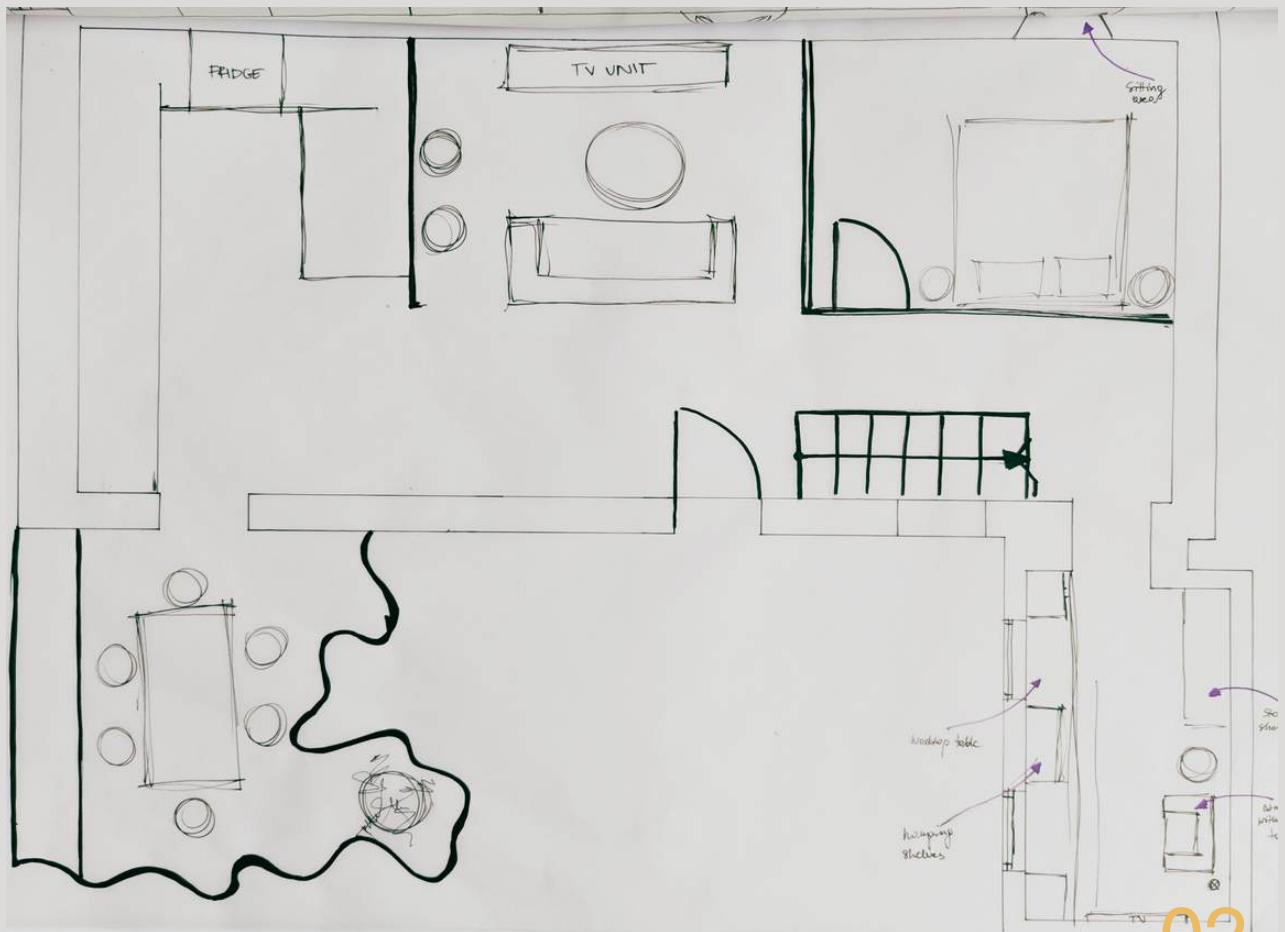


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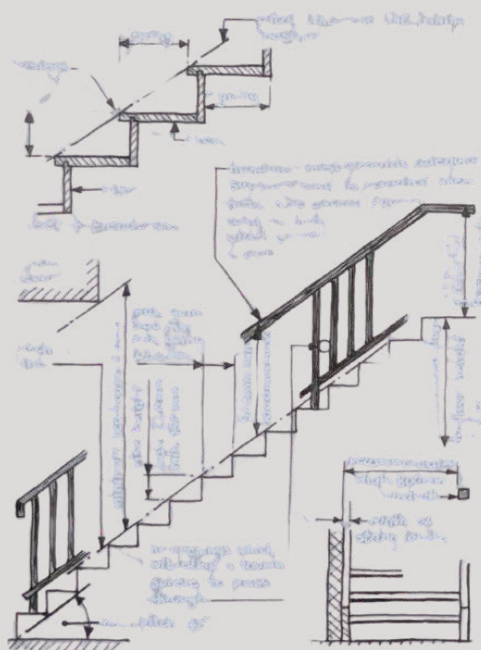




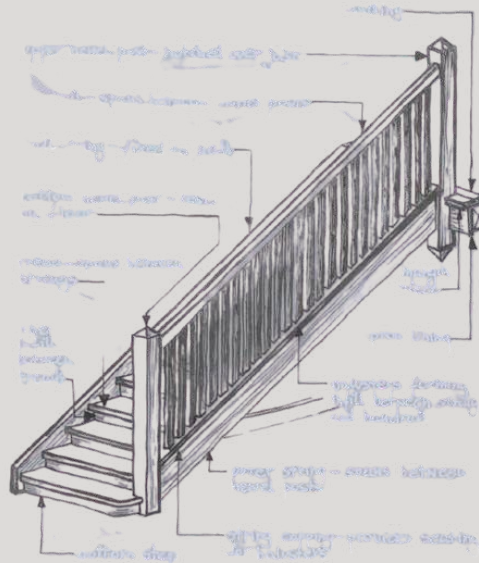
01



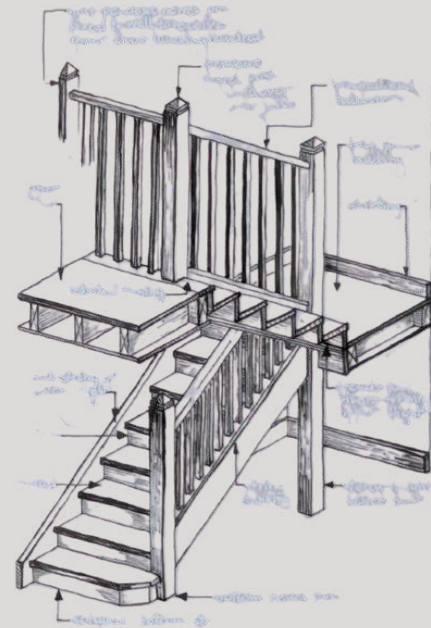
02



Stair terminology

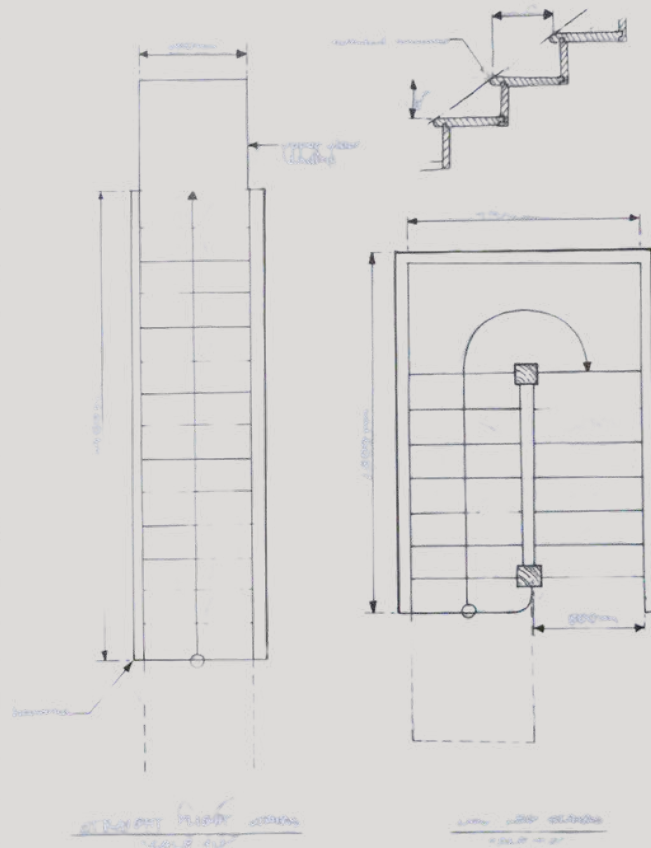
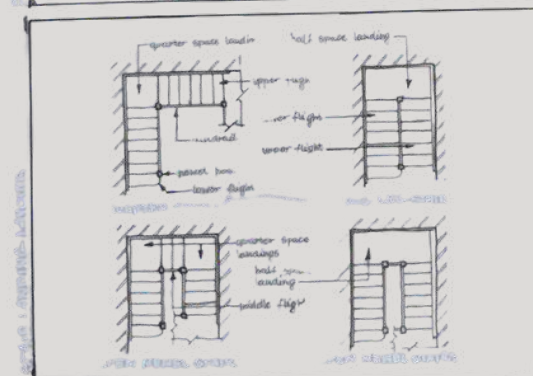
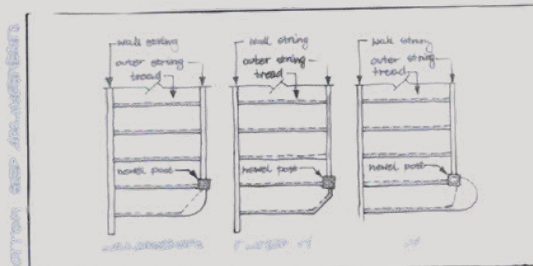
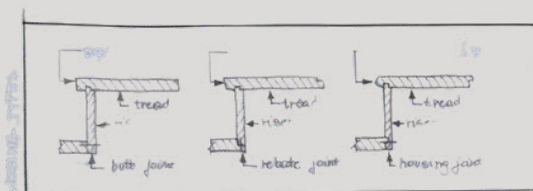


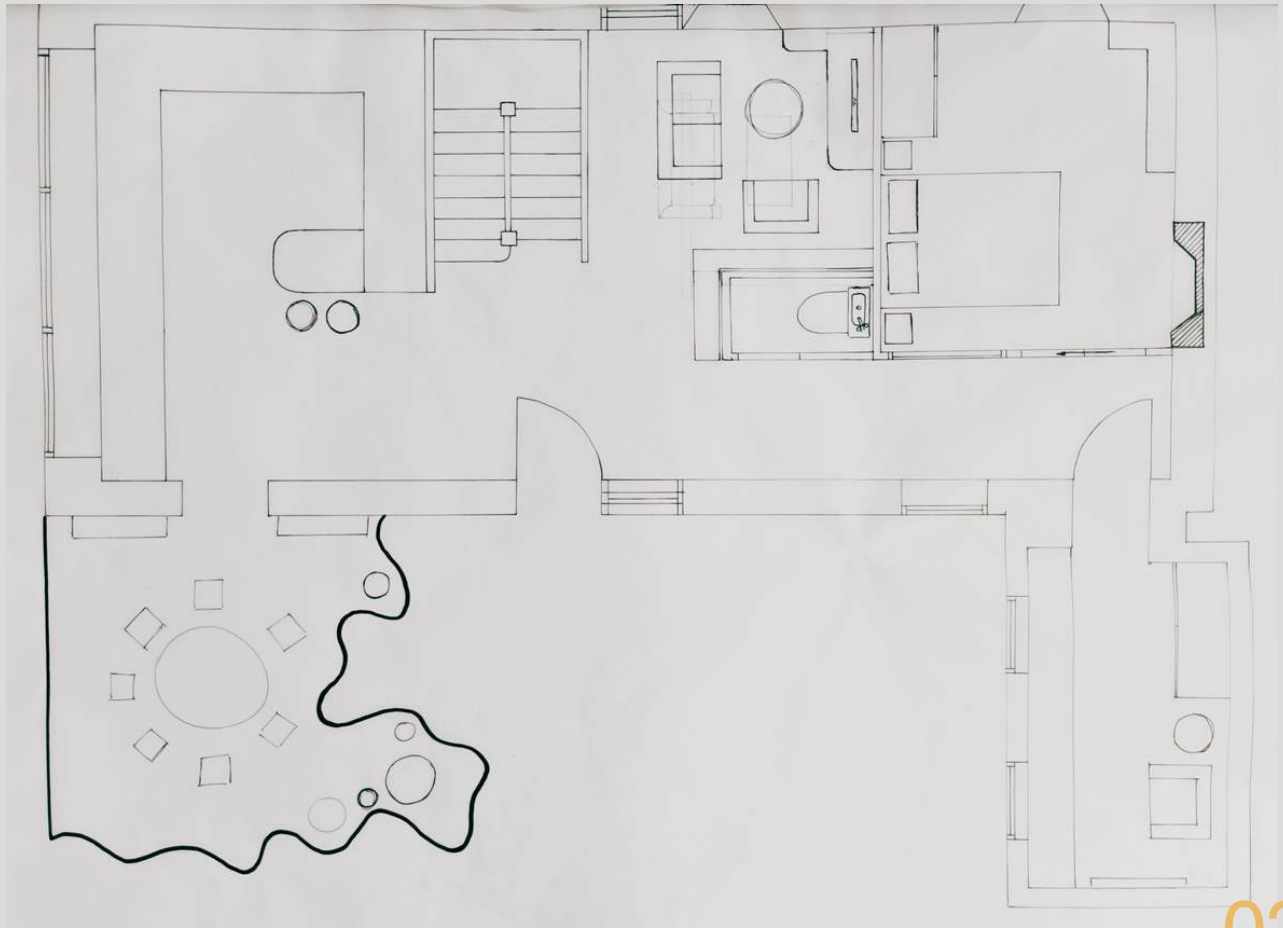
typical straight flight stairs



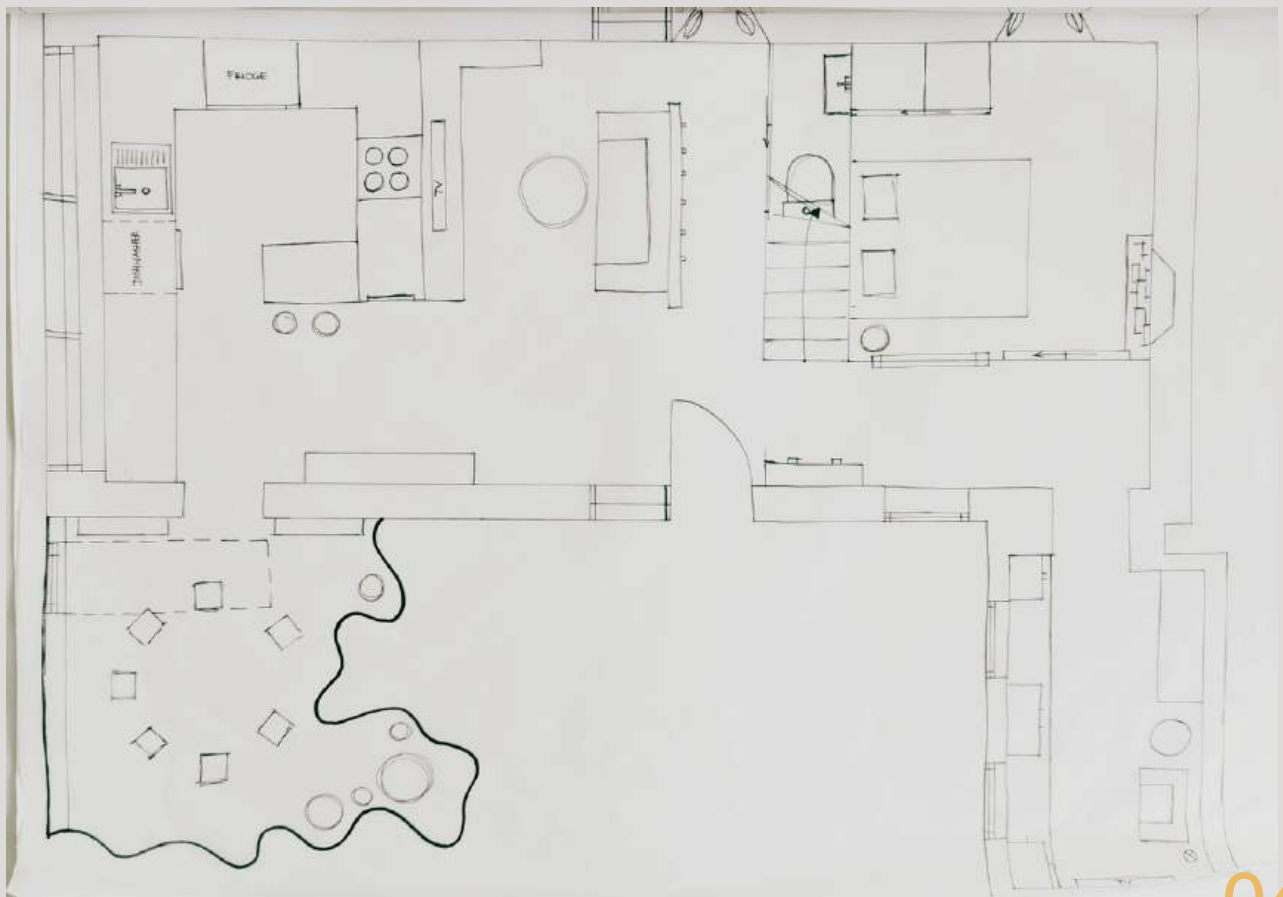
typical dog leg or string over string stairs

Timber Staircase analysis and definition plan drawing, Scale 1:25, A3



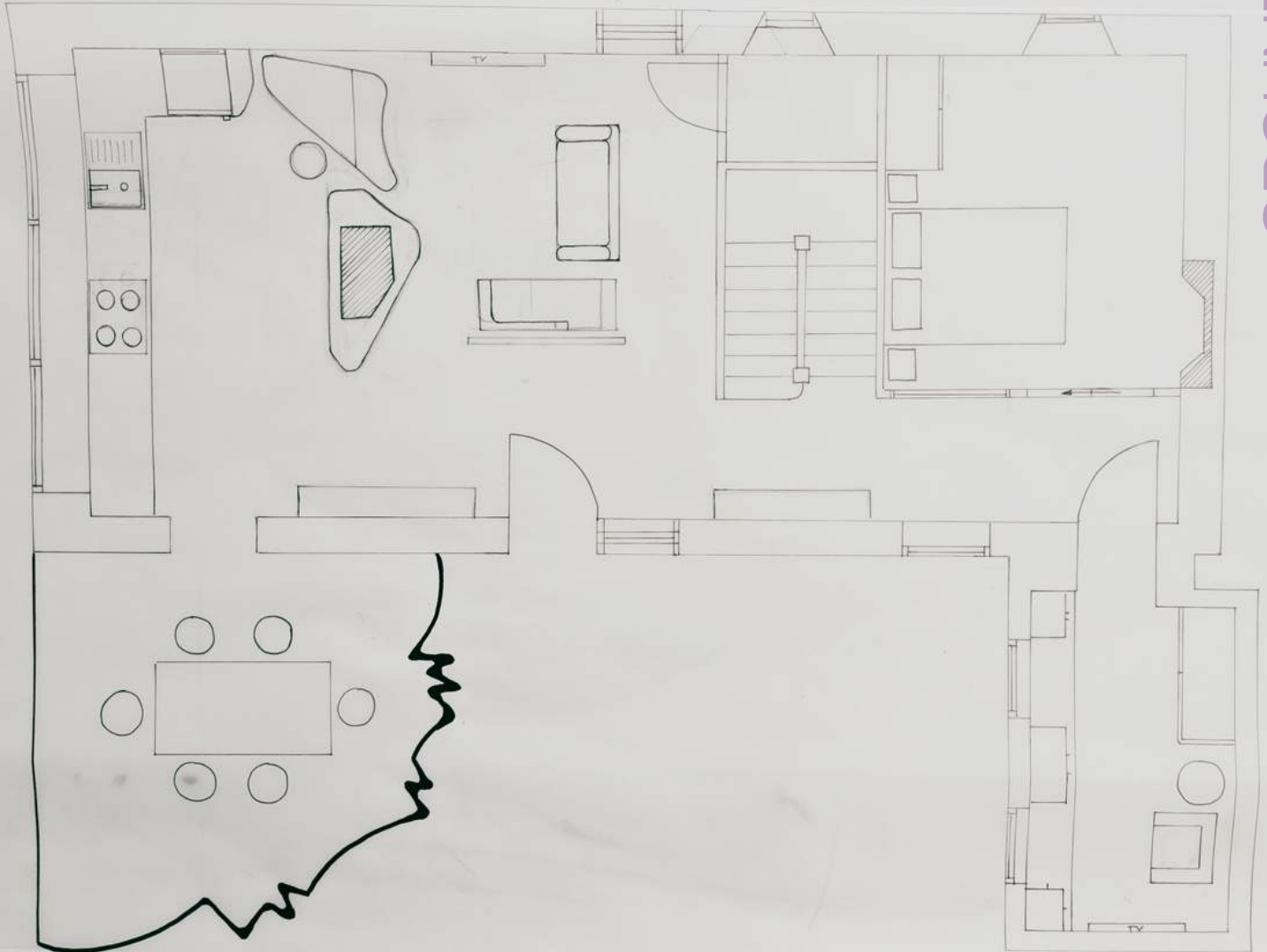


03



04

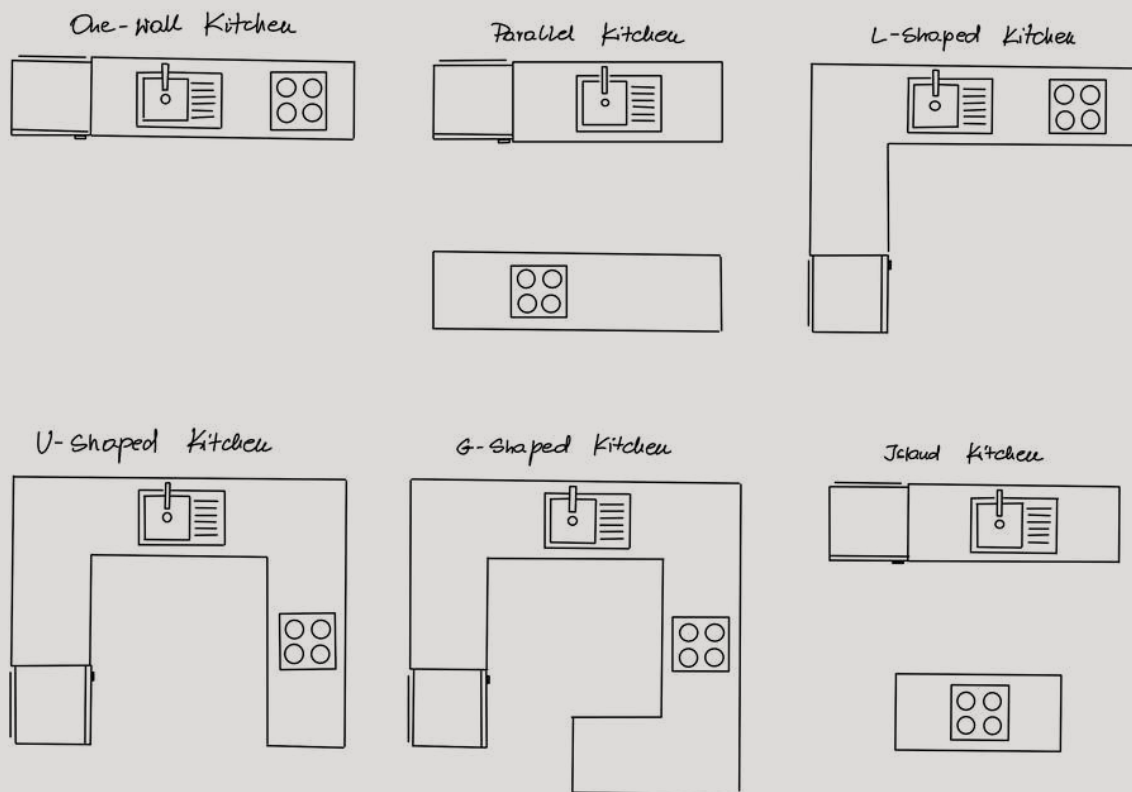
05. Final Floor plan proposal
Scale 1:25, A2



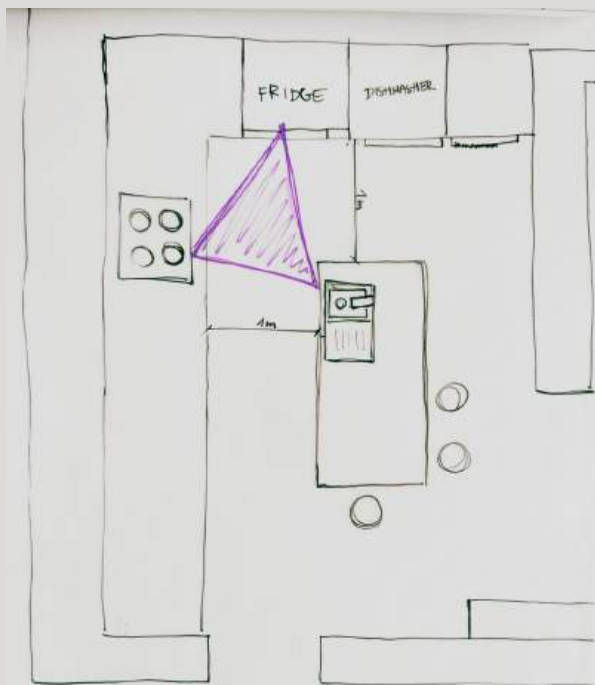
This ground floor plan highlights the newly designed extension and integrated fireplace feature. The layout improves flow between existing spaces while introducing warmth, light, and softness through architectural and spatial intervention.

Plan zoning

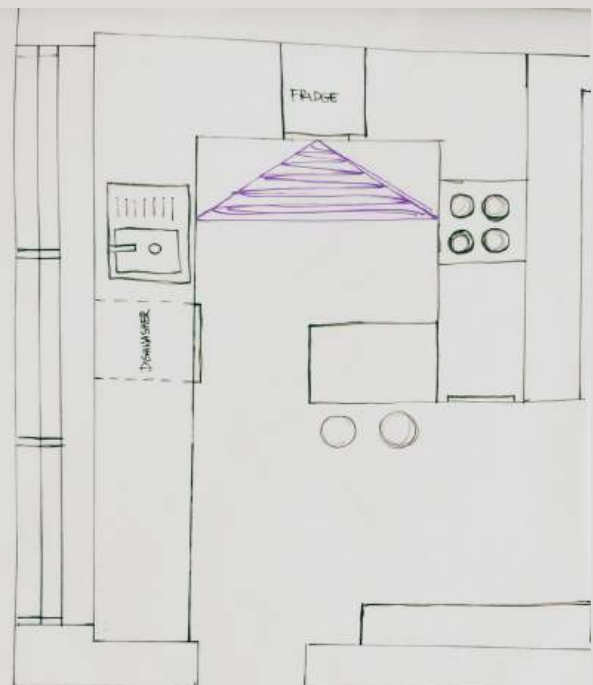




Kitchen Layouts: Digital Drawing



01



02

Kitchen Layout Proposals Based on Ergonomic Work Triangle Principles

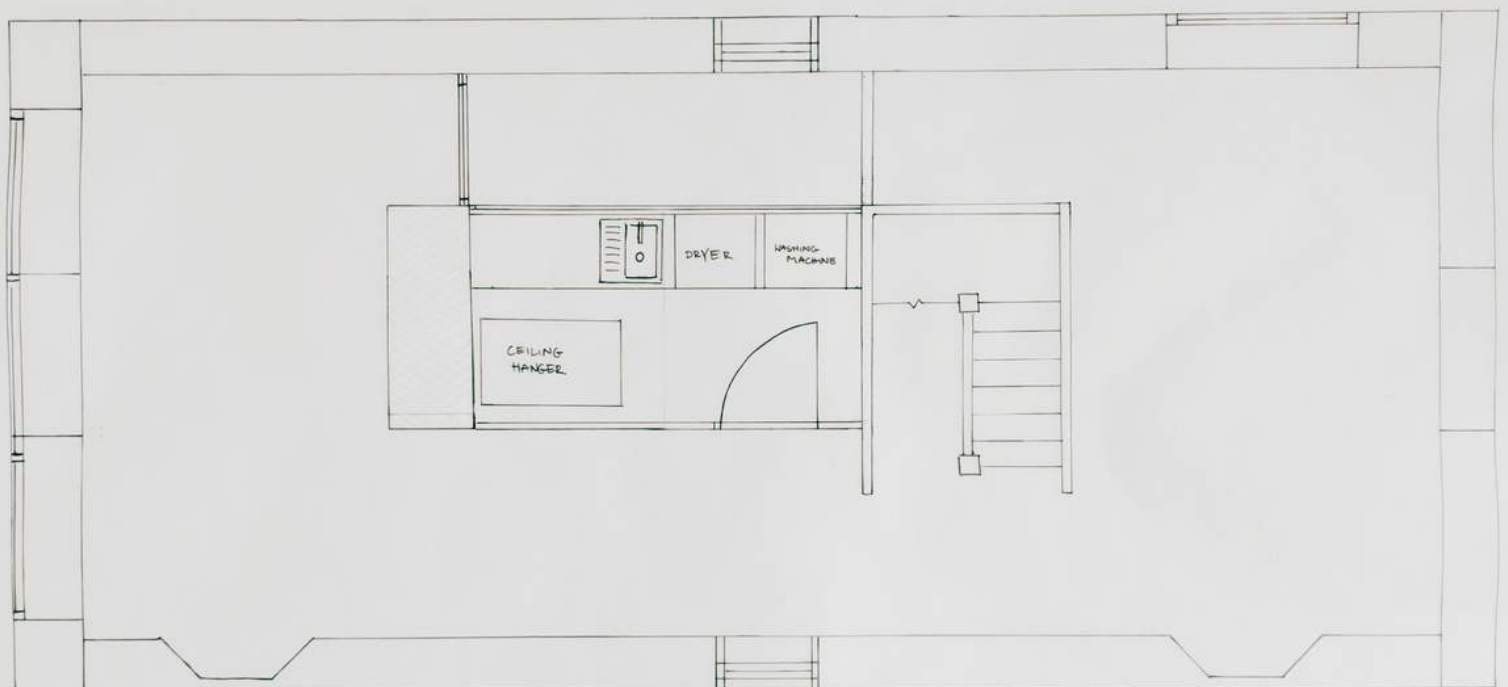
The kitchen is designed as a safe and supportive environment, tailored for someone living with tremor and balance difficulties. A discreet handrail is integrated alongside the worktop to provide stability during movement, while soft rubber flooring adds comfort and reduces the risk of slipping.

The layout follows ergonomic principles, allowing clear circulation and easy access between preparation zones. On the plan, the custom table design and the centrally placed fireplace are clearly visible — anchoring the space with warmth and functionality.



05. Final Floor plan proposal

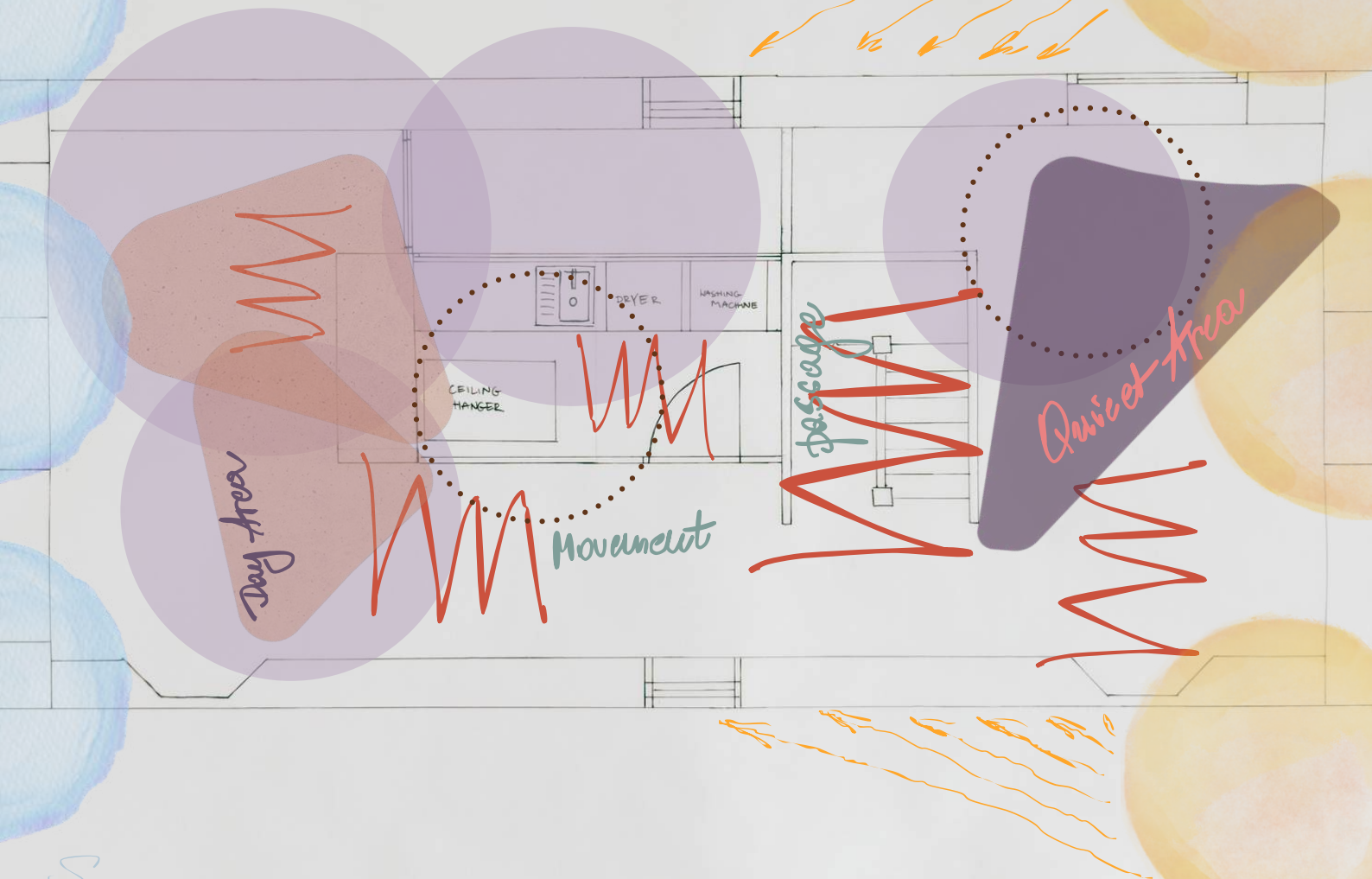
Scale 1:25, A2



UPPER LEVEL

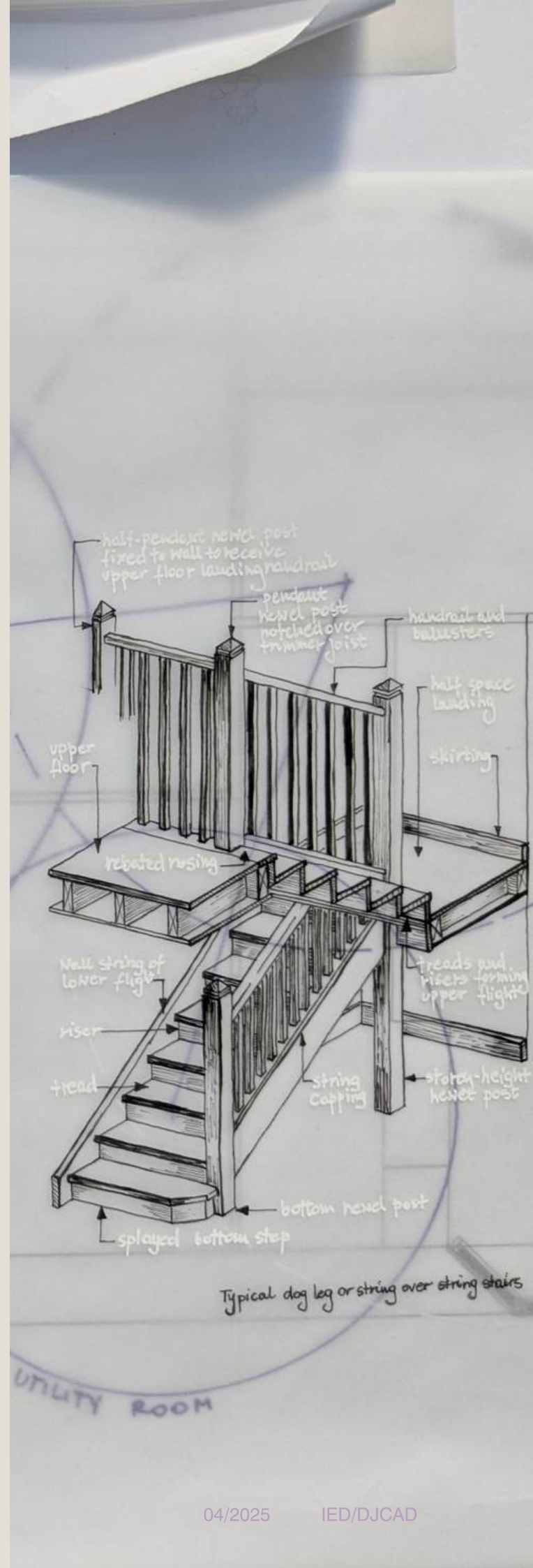
This upper-level layout introduces a series of light-filled, functional spaces, including a sunroom, study room, bathroom, and utility area. The arrangement is designed to offer both privacy and purpose, supporting focused activity, quiet retreat, and daily routine, all while maximising natural light throughout the day.

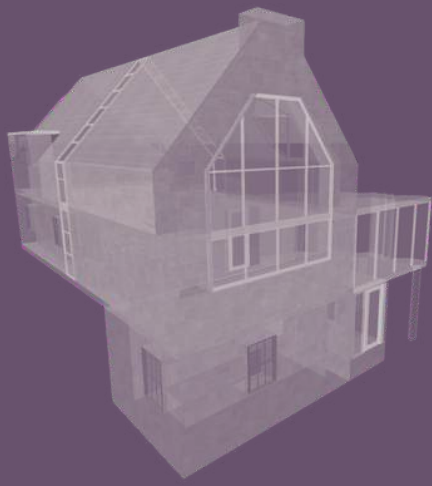
Plan zoning



05. FINAL OUTCOME

The final design reconfigures the traditional cottage layout into a more open, functional, and supportive living environment. Key interventions, including spatial zoning based on daily routines, the introduction of a stabilising landing area, and a centrally placed fireplace, were guided by both ergonomic needs and emotional insight. The once compartmentalised house is now opened up to improve flow, visibility, and ease of movement, reducing physical and cognitive strain for Nigel. Each decision was made to support independence and comfort, transforming the home into a space that responds to its occupants, rather than asking them to adapt.





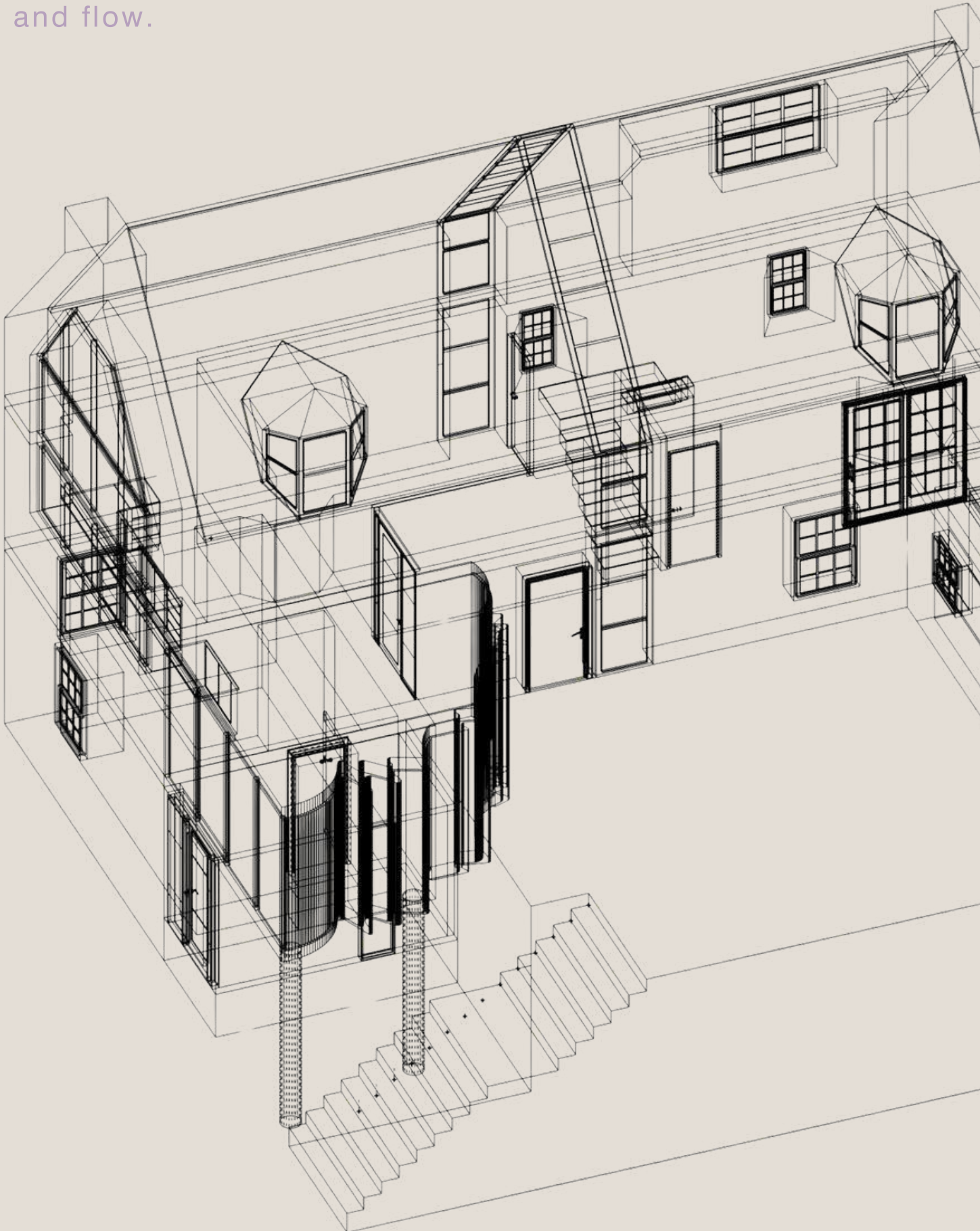
This set of exterior perspectives presents the final architectural form of the redesigned home. The extension is expressed as a soft and respectful addition to the original cottage, shaped to capture both morning and evening light while improving spatial flow. Its presence opens up the rear of the house to sea views, while the overall composition balances the heritage of the building with a new sense of movement, comfort, and accessibility.

This project responds to lived experience, not just spatial problems. Nigel's daily routines and physical challenges shaped the entire proposal, from the zoning layout to the smallest details. The goal was never to make the home clinical, but to make it intuitive, soft, and adaptable. Every movement informed a decision, and every decision aimed to offer more confidence, comfort, and care.





stability, light, calm,
and flow.





"It's all about the small things, the light, the view it makes the space feel alive."

— Nigel, during interview

These exterior views highlight key architectural interventions rooted in both practicality and empathy. At the centre, a fully glazed connection unifies the once semi-detached houses, creating a light-filled core that supports movement and visibility across levels. The curved glass extension engineered using a 2m radius bendable glass system draws from zigzag studies developed during the project, offering both structural rhythm and softness in form.



The craft room is topped with a transparent roof to invite morning light, while a newly placed side window on the existing structure captures evening sun and opens sea-facing views, enhancing daily sensory experience.

This modern reinterpretation of the traditional cottage pays homage to Gardenstown's vernacular heritage while integrating new architectural elements for contemporary living.





The original pitched roof and stone textures are retained, but extended through modern additions such as the glass connector and curved sunroom, echoing the organic coastal forms of the village. The result is a balanced composition that supports daily rituals and adapts to changing physical needs without compromising the character of place.

HOUSE AREAS

Exploded axonometric showing layers of movement, zoning, and house areas.



LIVING ROOM

The social heart of the home, connected to the fireplace and designed table/ book shelf. This space supports relaxed movement, soft seating, and evening routines.



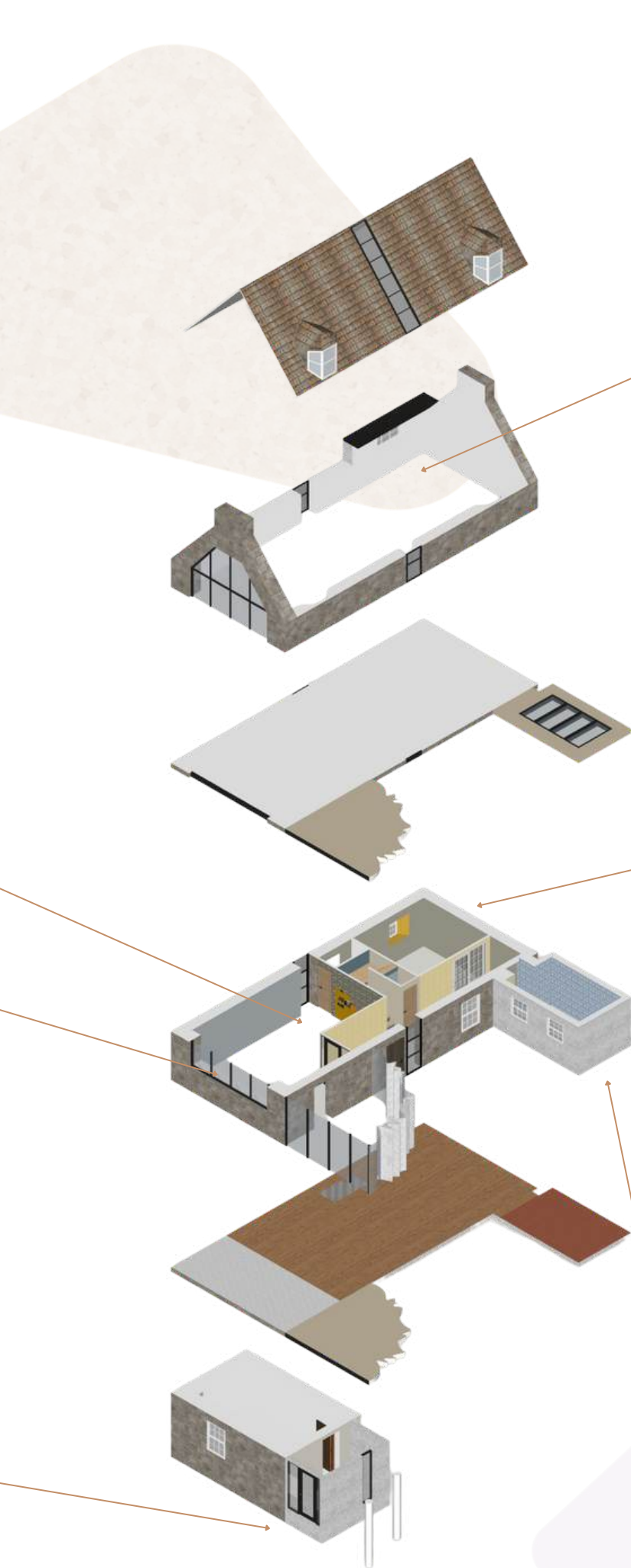
KITCHEN

An ergonomic kitchen featuring stabilising elements like a handrail and landing zones. Designed to ease movement, minimise reach, and support safe, confident cooking.



GUEST ROOM

A self-contained space on the lower level, designed to offer privacy and independence for visitors. Its hotel-style layout supports comfort and accessibility.



BATHROOM

Compact and functional, with consideration for balance and reach. Fixtures are arranged for ease of use, comfort, and daily routine support.



BEDROOM

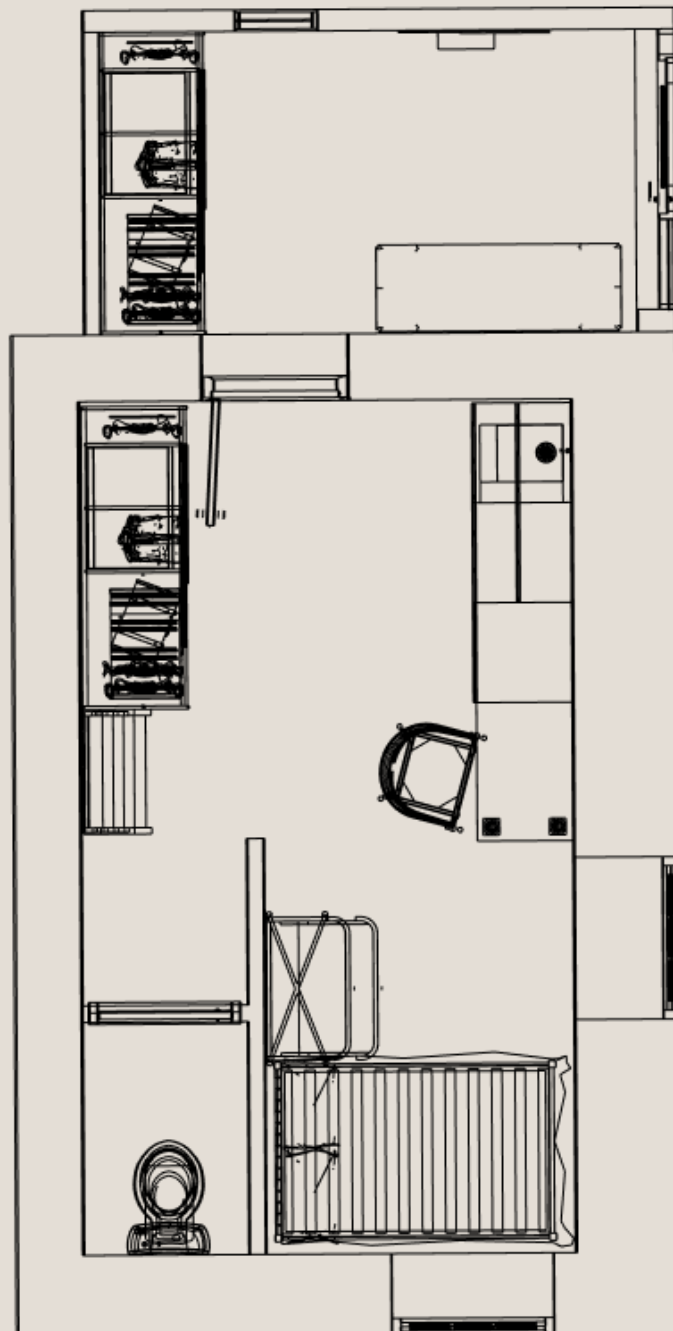
A calm and uncluttered private space, placed away from circulation flow. It offers a restful environment with natural light and minimal visual noise.



CRAFT ROOM

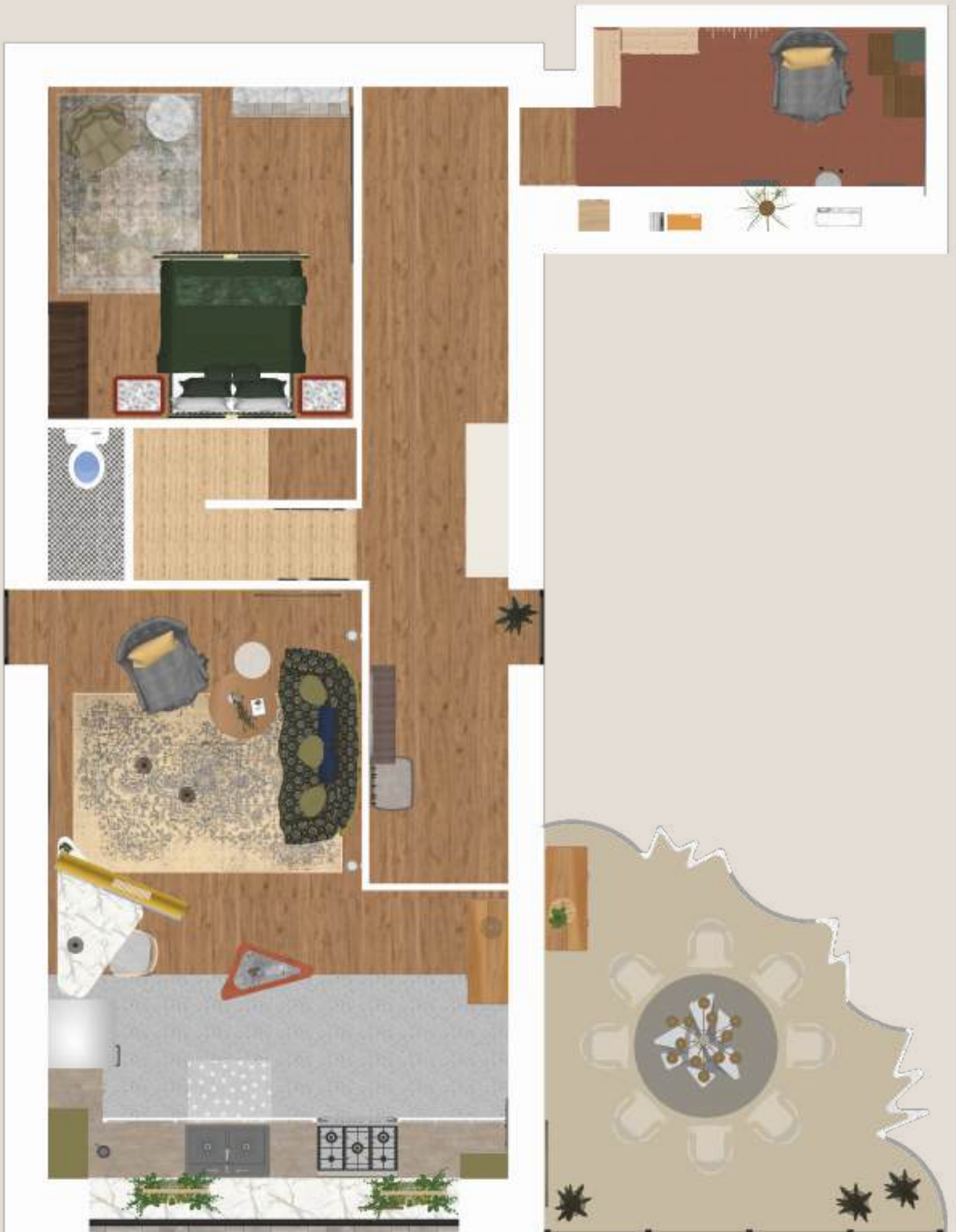
A flexible, creative space for focused activity. Designed with clear surfaces and supportive layout to reduce strain during hands-on tasks.

LOWER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN



The lower level of the building has been designed as a fully self-contained guest space, inspired by hotel-style living. This layout includes a private bedroom, bathroom, and compact kitchen area, all arranged to provide independence and ease of access. The design ensures that guests, including those with mobility challenges, can navigate comfortably with clear circulation and unobstructed zones. Its separation from the main living area also offers privacy and a welcoming retreat for short- or long-term stays.

GROUND FLOOR PLAN



Ground floor plan
showing the
redesigned layout
with the new
extension, kitchen,
fireplace with textures
and materials.

CRAFT ROOM

The craft room is a dedicated, light-filled space that supports creativity and routine through spatial clarity and calming design. Positioned to capture natural morning light through a curved glass extension, it fosters a sense of calm and inspiration. The soft flooring, open layout, and minimal visual clutter help reduce cognitive load, while the placement of furniture allows for unimpeded movement. Movable under-table storage offers practical, easy-access solutions for tools and materials, while a supportive, comfortable armchair provides a stable and relaxing spot for longer tasks. This space is designed especially for Tee, who finds joy in crochet and crafting, offering her a peaceful, accessible environment to pursue her passions.









BEDROOM

The bedroom serves as a deeply personal retreat, curated with antique furniture collected over the years through travel and meaningful encounters. Each piece reflects the clients' appreciation for craftsmanship and individuality. The space is anchored by its own fireplace, offering warmth and ambiance, an intentional detail based on their shared sentiment of enjoying the flickering firelight casting patterns across the ceiling at night. This intimate atmosphere honors their passion for timeless design while fostering comfort and emotional connection within the home.

The living room blends characterful antique furnishings and ornaments with contemporary features, creating a space that bridges tradition and modern living. At its heart is a specially designed open standing fireplace that adds both warmth and sculptural presence. Alongside it stands a multifunctional table/bookshelf unit, carefully placed to define the living zone while maintaining flow into the kitchen. Both bespoke elements draw inspiration from the zigzag motif, a recurring visual language throughout the project that symbolises movement, rhythm, and empathy key principles in designing for Essential Tremor.







This sculptural furniture piece merges a compact table with an integrated vertical bookshelf, offering a modern intervention within the reimagined interior. The form is derived from the project's zigzag development studies and translated into functional geometry. The design balances material contrast, powder-coated steel and soft-textured panels to create a striking visual identity, while optimising vertical storage and maintaining an open floor footprint. Paired with the custom-designed fireplace, both elements introduce a contemporary edge to the traditional cottage layout.

“It’s the little things that help when everything has a place, it feels easier to move, to think, to just be.”
— Tee during interview

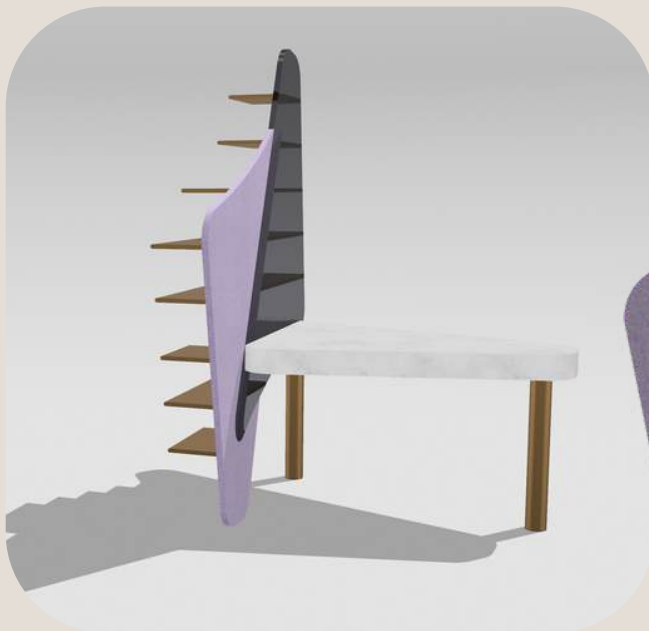
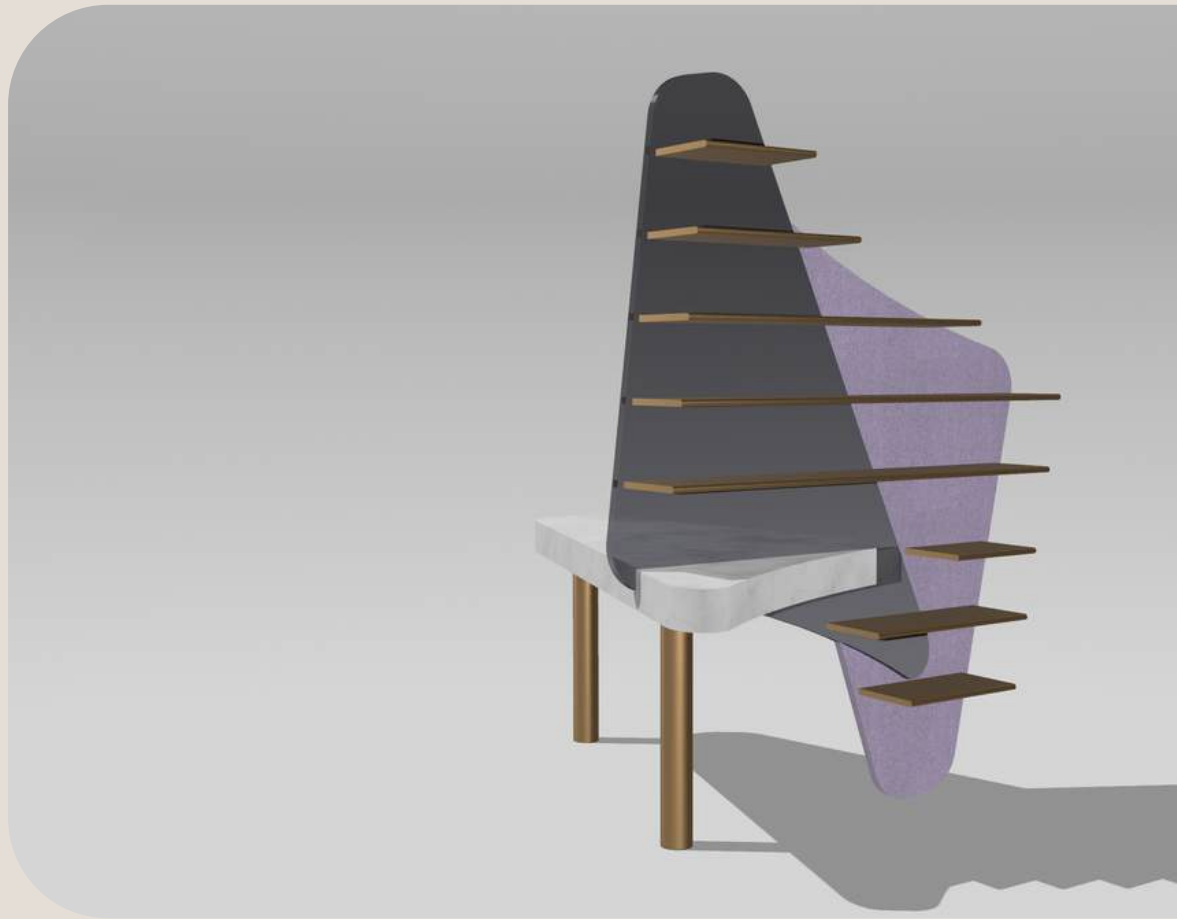


TABLE WITH BOOKSHELF

The kitchen is a central feature of the open-plan layout, designed to support independent movement with a clear and ergonomic flow. A stabilising landing mat is placed at the key working area to provide extra grip and orientation, while a continuous handrail runs along the countertop to assist with balance and security. Soft rubber flooring ensures slip resistance and physical comfort, reducing impact on joints and accommodating the needs of someone living with tremor. Positioned to face the sea, the kitchen allows natural light and calming views to become part of daily routines, enhancing both function and atmosphere in the space.

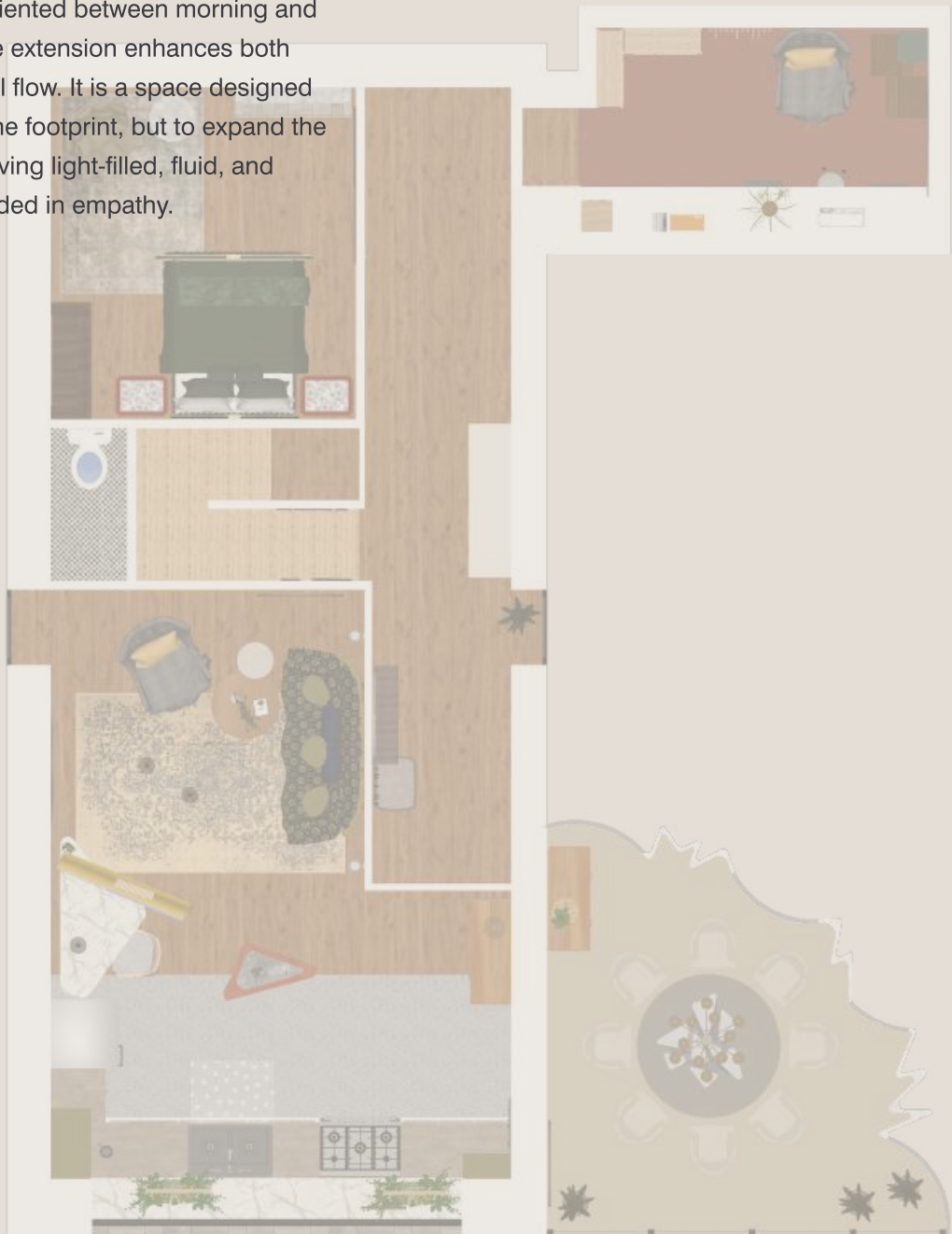
KITCHEN





The extension serves as the architectural heart of the redesign uniting the previously divided semi-detached houses and introducing a new sense of openness and rhythm to the home. Its curved form, inspired by the softened zigzag geometry developed through engagement tasks, reflects a sensitive approach to movement and balance. Fully glazed and oriented between morning and evening light, the extension enhances both visibility and spatial flow. It is a space designed not just to expand the footprint, but to expand the experience of living light-filled, fluid, and grounded in empathy.

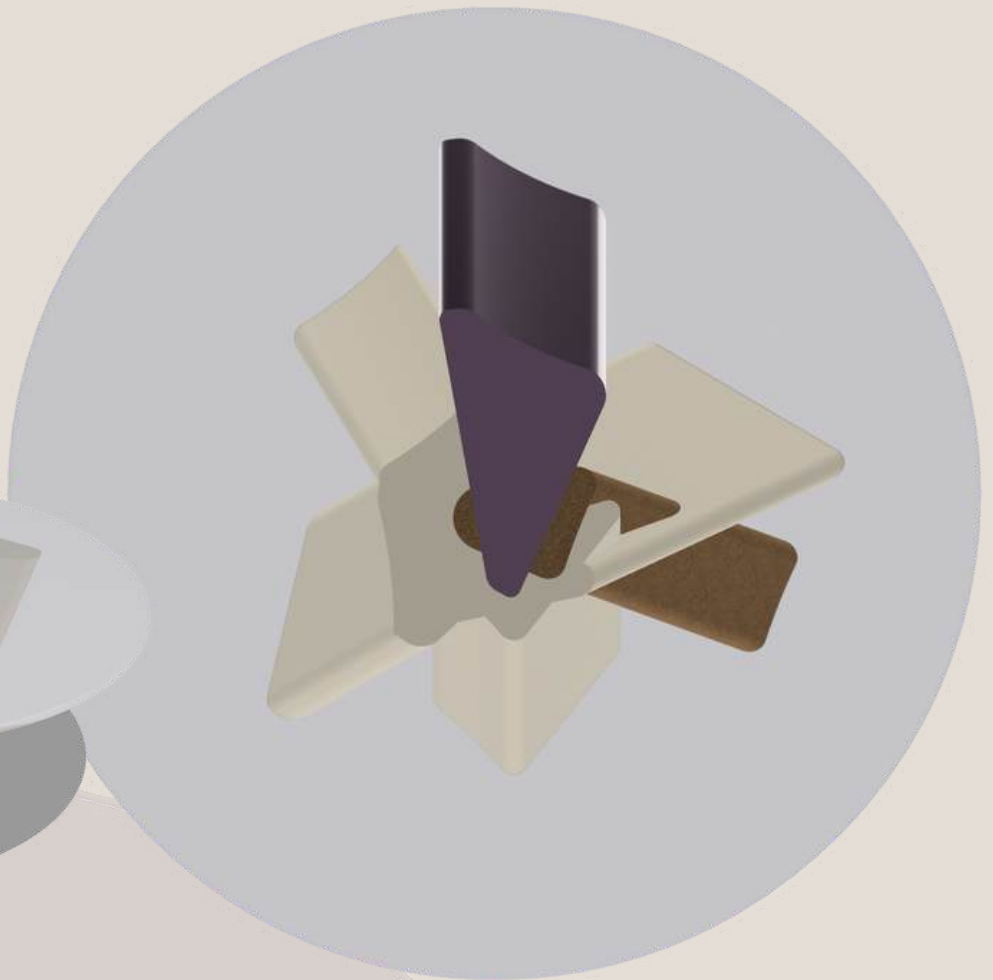
EXTENSION



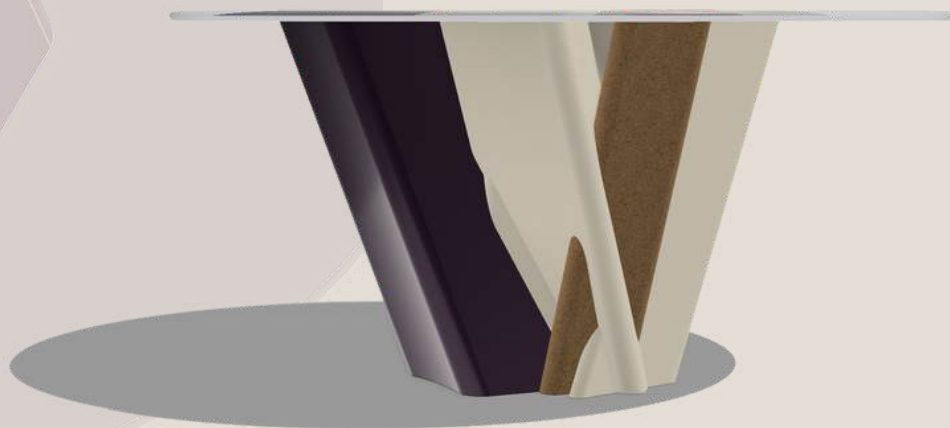




DINING TABLE



This dining table design is a sculptural translation of the zigzag form language developed throughout the project. With intersecting geometric planes and layered materials, the piece captures movement and rhythm while remaining grounded and stable. Its asymmetric legs echo the softened zigzag process explored during engagement tasks, offering both visual dynamism and structural integrity. Positioned centrally in the dining room, the table becomes a tactile expression of the design's core themes, balance, flow, and individuality, while serving as a practical, social focal point within the home.





With Heartfelt Thank You!

This project would not have been possible without the generous support and insight of many. Special thanks to Nigel and Tee for opening their home and sharing their story, which guided every aspect of the design. I'm deeply grateful to my partner Yakup for his unwavering support and technical feedback, to my family for their constant encouragement, and to my tutors at DJCAD for their guidance throughout this journey.

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