

"HER PLACE" WOMEN'S CENTRE

CONCEPT
The Circle is a universal symbol, representing an impression of totality, strength, protection, and inclusion. Circular forms send positive emotional messages of security and harmony; they are graceful and complete due to their enclosed curved line. Curves can be viewed as feminine in nature, and evoke powerful notions of the womb and its purpose to serve as a warm and protective safeguard. They shelter what is within and keep danger out.

The circular forms proposed in this project are driven by several factors – providing safety to the users, encouraging a sense of strength and protection, and inspiring feelings of unity and inclusion within its inward facing walls.

PROGRAMME
The functional spaces of the women's centre have been split across the site into separate pavilion spaces which are articulated by curved and circular forms. Building materials have been carefully selected in response to the area's seismic conditions. Single-storey buildings comprising of compressed earth bricks with a reinforced concrete core are raised above the site on stone plinth structures to not only provide a physical threshold between public outdoor spaces and private interiors, but also to protect the buildings from floods in the monsoon season. One lightweight overarching roof covers every pavilion as a unifying gesture and is supported by a bamboo structure which is expressed internally and externally. The roof facilitates passive and natural environmental conditioning by allowing natural air movement and diffusing north light into the spaces.

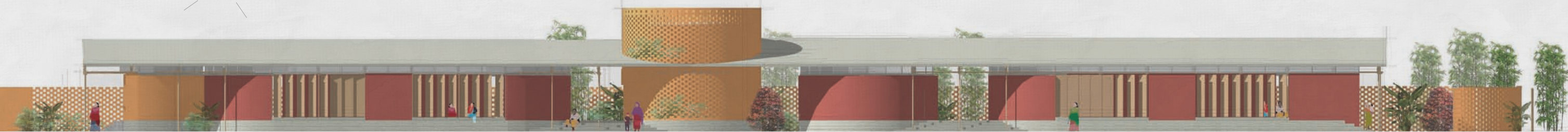
Entry to the centre is from the main road, where allocation is provided for vehicle and bicycle parking. Main public circulation routes through the site are on the southern (sunny) side and are at ground level which provides a distinct spatial separation from the more private interiors, which are accessed via raised decks and terraces at higher levels.

A training pavilion is located at each end of the site, with offices, accommodation and bathroom amenities situated in between in the centre. The last training hall opens out onto an outdoor courtyard space with terraced seating which may be used for training and giving presentations. These spaces are flexible and are also intended to serve the community as temporary shelter in the event of a disaster.

Private guest accommodation is located at the top level of the site's only two-storey pavilion, which extends itself through the main roof, offering views out beyond the site. A crescent-shaped skylight is provided above the stair, conjuring the notion of the moon and its archetypal form. This is intended to offer a connection to sky, the world, the universe, and its cyclical presence.

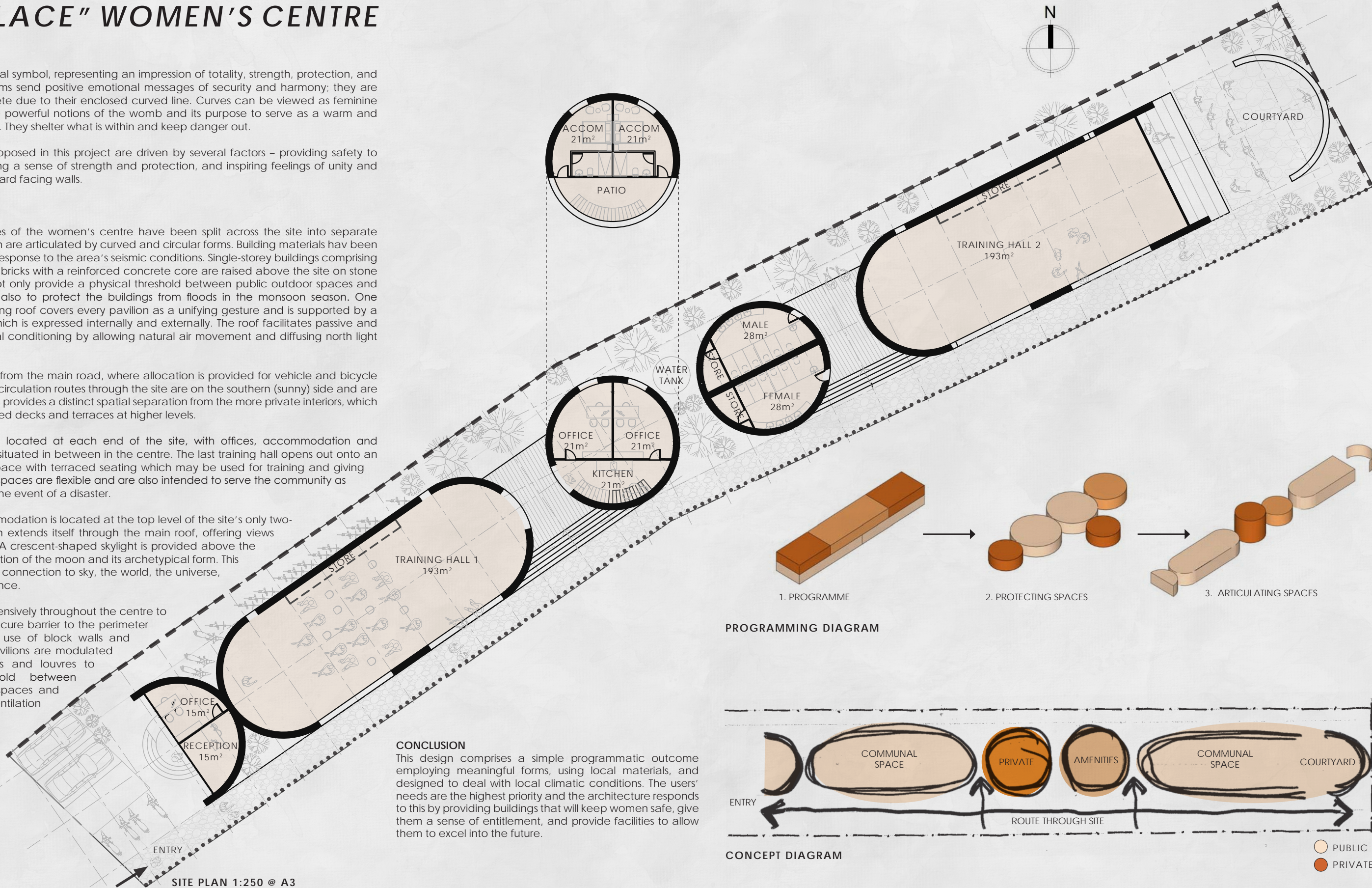
Screening is used extensively throughout the centre to provide a physical secure barrier to the perimeter of the site with the use of block walls and bamboo fencing. Pavilions are modulated by movable screens and louvres to define the threshold between public and private spaces and offer natural cross ventilation through the buildings.

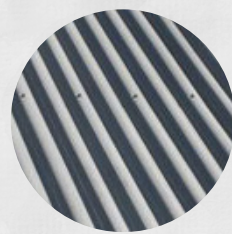
CONCLUSION
This design comprises a simple programmatic outcome employing meaningful forms, using local materials, and designed to deal with local climatic conditions. The users' needs are the highest priority and the architecture responds to this by providing buildings that will keep women safe, give them a sense of entitlement, and provide facilities to allow them to excel into the future.



SOUTH ELEVATION

HP2113

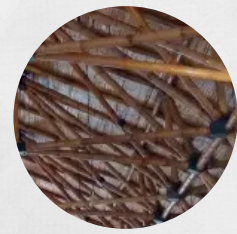




1 METAL ROOFING



2 THATCH INSULATION



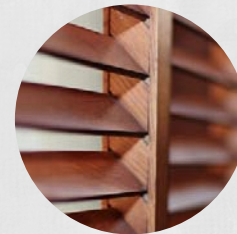
3 BAMBOO STRUCTURE



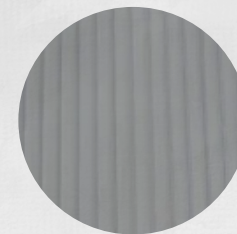
4 COMPRESSED BRICKS WITH REINFORCED CORE



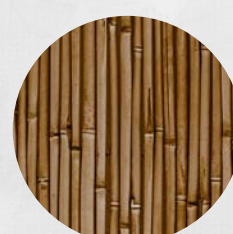
5 BREEZE BLOCKS



6 TIMBER LOUVRES



7 SUNPAL PANEL



8 BAMBOO SCREENS



9 STONE PLINTH



10 STONE PAVERS



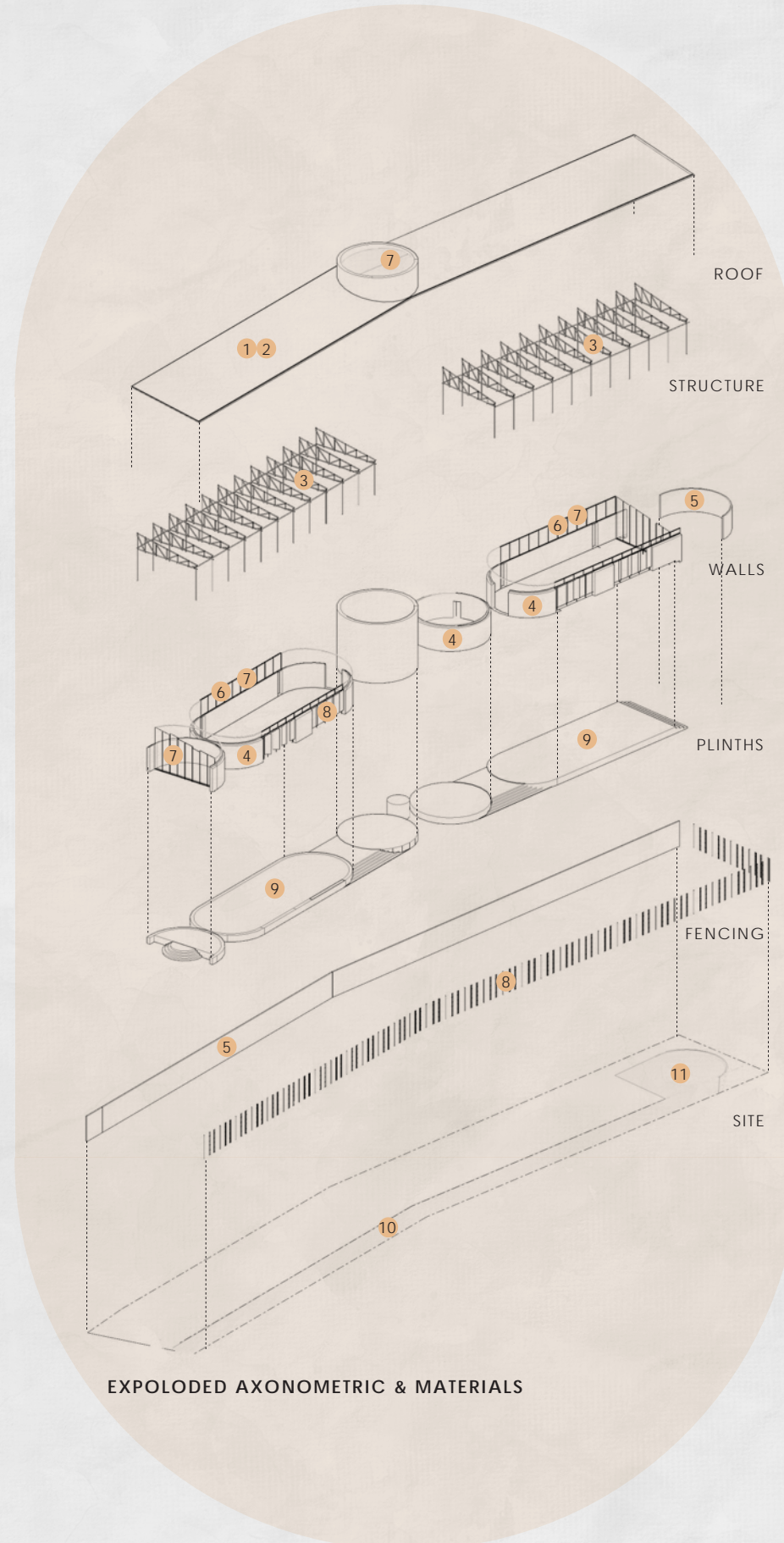
11 COURTYARD PAVING



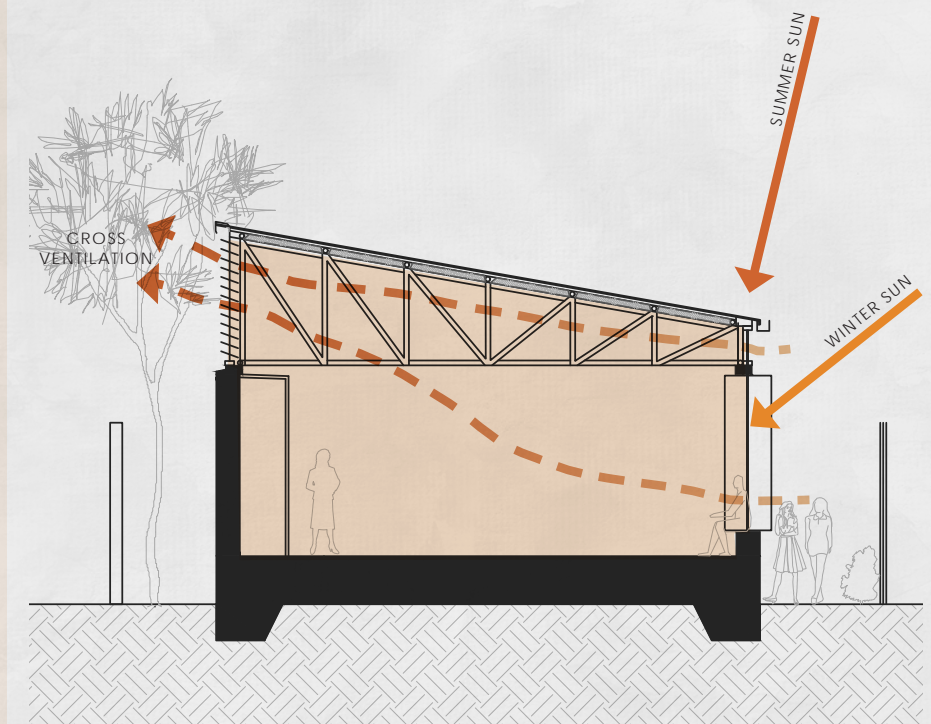
VIEW THROUGH TRAINING HALL 2



VIEW FROM SITE ENTRY



EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC & MATERIALS



CROSS SECTION & SUSTAINABILITY DIAGRAM



