

Overview

J E T T Y
P A R K
Pause & Reflect

Draw in, draw out – connect to the natural rhythm beneath your feet, take stock, centre and find your voice again

Butler's Wharf tells a familiar story of London's changing fortunes through trade, migration, art and reinvention. Creative spirit links the madness and the wane: from the pioneering signwriters

swinging in the breeze above the jetty's 19th century cargoes of tea and spice; through the energy of the dancers and filmmakers of the artists' studios of the seventies; to the visionaries and developers behind its eighties' transformation into a space for living and a new design district. Today, however, the jetty lacks purpose and identity.

Meandering routes through naturalised planting enhance the jetty's subtle appeal and bring this London landmark and its history to life

In 1873 George Stairs watched his father apply some of the world's first sans serif fonts on to a new tea warehouse

In 1977 Terence Conran was at a boat party on the Thames when he saw the potential of Butler's Wharf for a new way of living

By 1989 the Design Museum had opened but in 2008 it left the wharf for Kensington. The jetty had lost its anchor and was adrift

In 2020 residents formed the Butler's Wharf Riverside Trust and envisioned a naturalised park creating the space to pause and reflect

By 1971 the warehouses had closed to trade but were filling with artist studios. 2B was a key venue for early UK video and performance art and was used among others by Derek Jarman, The Sex Pistols and Philip Jeck

cause and effect
reflect and pause



Concept

Design Evolution

In reimagining a naturalised, resilient landscape of plants and weathered piers, contained within a playful meandering of recycled decks and planters, we create a framework that celebrates the views and activities of the jetty and integrates the riverside restaurants into the landscape. This biodiverse backdrop softens the boundaries between river and city, and celebrates what came before and what lies beneath.

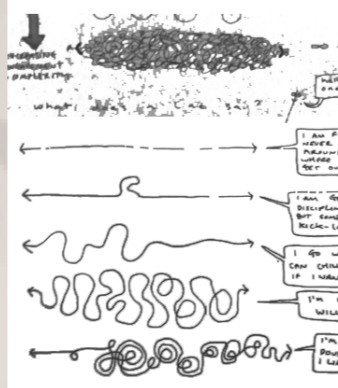
Playful reflection
The iconic ripples of David Hockney informed our evolving design as we began to break up the space and create a hierarchy of routes, meanders, nooks, quiet spots and meeting places.



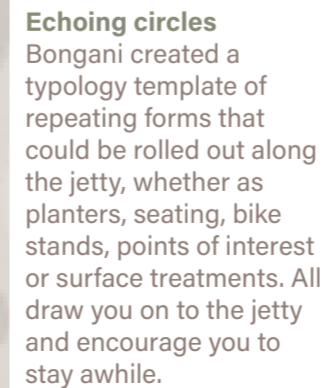
Fonts for the future
Matthew and Jason investigated the typography echoing the jetty's history.



A meanderscape
Bongani and Steve carried out multiple studies around shape and form and massing. There are direct routes for those that need to get somewhere, but the space encourages meandering – it is about the journey rather than the destination.



Echoing circles
Bongani created a typology template of repeating forms that could be rolled out along the jetty, whether as planters, seating, bike stands, points of interest or surface treatments. All draw you on to the jetty and encourage you to stay awhile.



Scaled up
A collage of the entire jetty aided an appreciation for the scale and placement of planters and furniture, ensuring views were retained and the space worked as a whole.



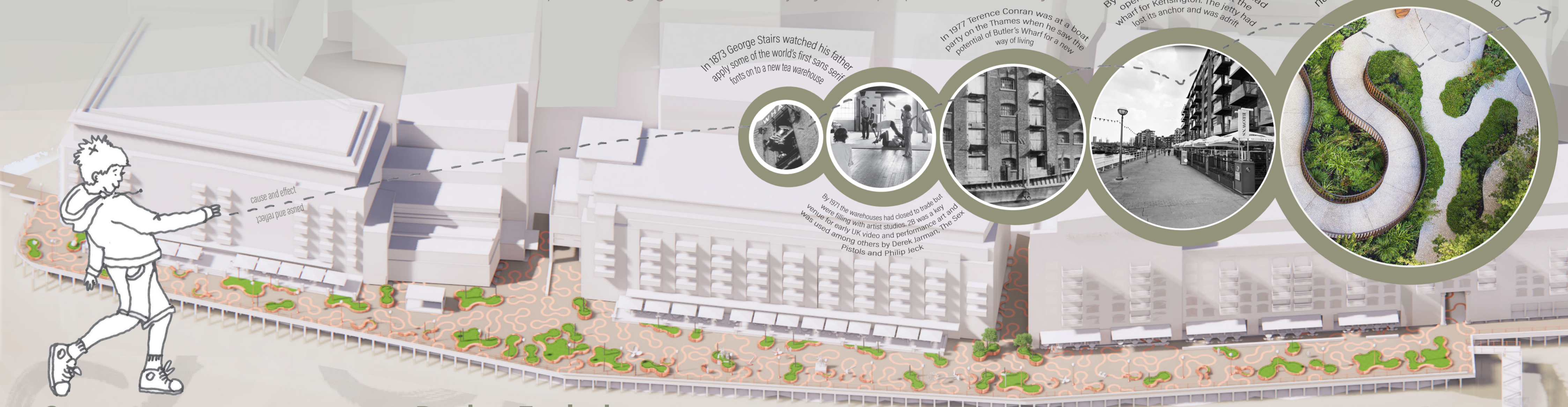
On location
The team trialed new ways of working to explore the site and test concepts.



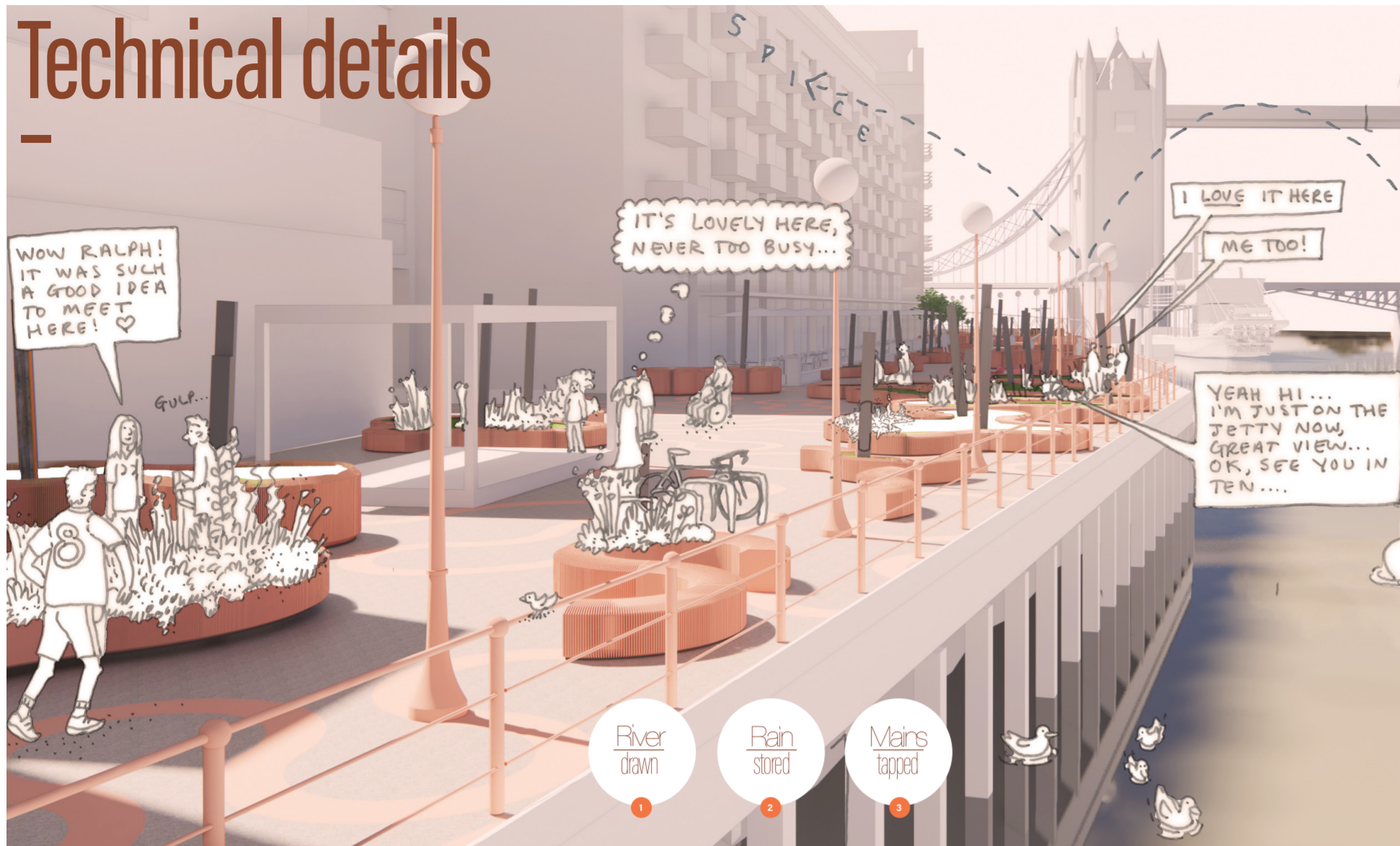
Cross pollinating
Rosie and Anna Rose hopped from Dungeness to the Barbican, via the High Line, in their planting research.



Bearing the load
David looked at the structural loading and irrigation options.

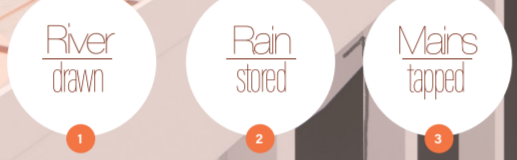


Technical details



Mudlark's found objects add depth, personality and character to the weathered vertical framing boards and plant supports

Banks of planting form a green corridor, enhancing the river views and creating a path for people and pollinators



Technical considerations

- Modular components create decks, planters, benches, bars and bike stands.
- Lights and handrails are retained but the colours are coordinated with the overall design.
- Existing 'nautical junk' is enhanced by new vertical structures that provide support for planting and architectural framing for the jetty's views.
- Meandering routes allow access for all and encourage a wide range of uses and activities while influencing an overall slowing of pace and renewed focus on surroundings.
- Vehicle access routes are retained.
- A biodiverse, naturalistic planting scheme will withstand the brackish conditions with minimal irrigation and maintenance needs.

Reuse, upcycle, save energy

- Lighting – existing lights are incorporated through colour; LED bulbs installed for efficiency improvement.
- Recycled materials – used in innovative ways to extend their lifespan.
- Solar-powered irrigation – we have identified several locations for a modest array of solar panels that would power a pump and timer system.

Irrigation solutions

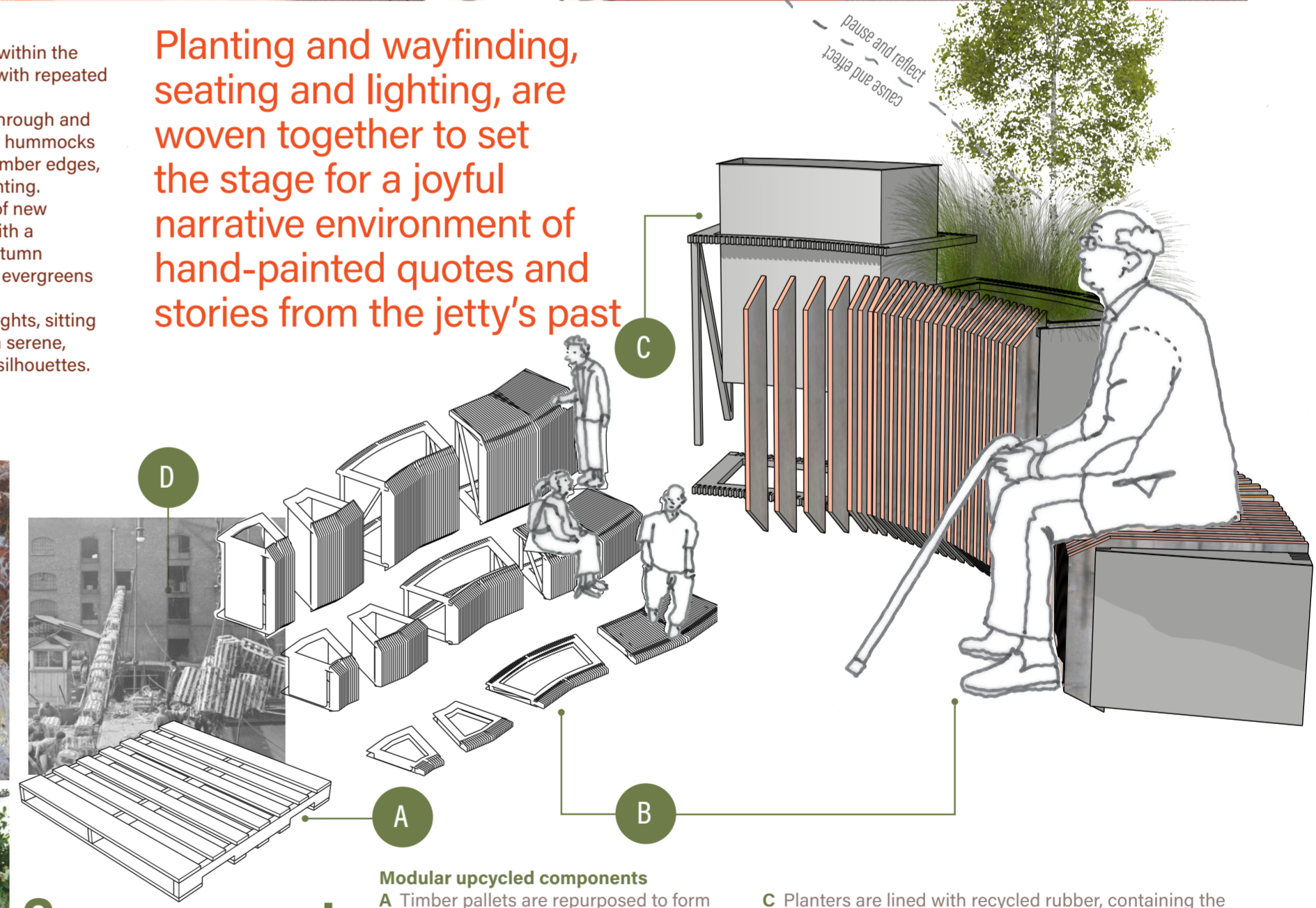
- 1 Water is drawn from the river at low tide at its least brackish and desalinated through solar power before use in the planters.
- 2 Water run-off from hard surfaces is stored in containers beneath the jetty and pumped up into the planters.
- 3 A dedicated mains water connection is created.

The irrigation system will allow the creation of atmospheric mist helping to blur the boundary between jetty and river

Planting design

- Lush naturalistic planting is contained within the curves, varying in height and intensity with repeated elements for continuity and calm.
- Trees frame entrances, offering views through and beneath their open structure, while low hummocks and spikes of evergreen spill over the timber edges, anchoring the billowing ephemeral planting.
- Seasonality is key: from the freshness of new growth in spring, to summer airiness with a lightness of touch, fading into dusky autumn softness before structuring winter with evergreens and seed heads.
- A smudgy tonal palette has zesty highlights, sitting effortlessly within the scheme to offer a serene, reflective atmosphere of shadows and silhouettes.

Planting and wayfinding, seating and lighting, are woven together to set the stage for a joyful narrative environment of hand-painted quotes and stories from the jetty's past



Modular upcycled components

- A** Timber pallets are repurposed to form the vertical structure connecting modular pressed-steel brackets.
- B** Together these can be configured in different radiuses, heights and orientations to create planters, decks, benches, bike stands, stools and chairs. The scope can be adjusted simply to suit varying conditions and budgets.
- C** Planters are lined with recycled rubber, containing the soil within.
- D** This vernacular reflects an assembly of unloaded goods across the jetty while the materiality is creatively upcycled from the wharf's previous uses. The strategy is high quality, situated, dynamic, environmentally considered and cost effective.

Component flexibility

Planting mood



Nick co-created the Peckham Coal Line and through Mesh Workshop brings together this team chosen especially to meet the needs of Butler's Wharf.



Matthew is a skilled New York graphic artist whose sensitive yet grounded approach to design shines a light on the wonder of the everyday city.



Jason is a space activist and connector at the Migration Museum, and brings together different disciplines and communities through the South East Salon network.



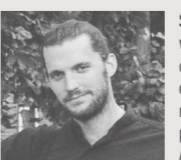
Anna Rose is a landscape designer and Peckham Coal Line activist whose acclaimed Chelsea Fringe garden demonstrates a passion for wilding and transforming urban spaces.



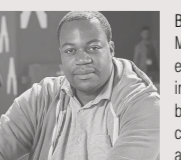
Rosie co-presented Channel 4's Inside Out Homes and was head gardener at Petersham Nurseries for more than a decade before setting up AR&RB with Anna Rose.



David brings his design perspective to play on engineering. Whether working on bridges or furniture, his technical skill is matched only by his creativity.



Steve is a process thinker with the skill to convey complex ideas in hand drawn sketches. When not transforming the public realm he works on Antarctic survey stations.



Bongani is one half of McCloy + Muchemwa - experts in creating joy in public space. Their beautiful street furniture creations are celebrated around the city.