

FOOD ANGEL SHATIN CENTRE

Industrial buildings often prioritize utilitarian needs. Located next to a rural village in Shatin, Food Angel's new home required a different approach, one which reflected their social mission and engages with the community.

How do you design an industrial building balancing utilitarian demands with humanist needs? Ultimately, can an industrial building be part of the community?



A HOME FOR FOOD ANGEL

Creating a home with a social purpose

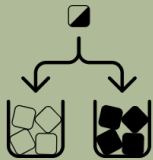
Food Angel began in 2011 producing just 20 meals a day. That has now grown to 20,000 daily, with a further intent to increase to 50,000. When the opportunity came for them to move to a new site adjacent to Chap Wai Kon Village, they took the opportunity to create **a new home** to suit their operations.

Education plays an important part in Food Angel’s mission and the new building should promote the virtue of **cherishing food** and **caring for the community**.



COLLECTING

Edible surplus food is collected from different sectors of the food industry that would otherwise be disposed of as waste.



SORTING

Collected food are sorted following strict safety protocols.



COOKING

Rescued food are prepared as nutritious meals in central kitchens.



PACKING

Cooked meals are packed in various formats for people with different needs.



DELIVERY

Meals are distributed to communities throughout Hong Kong.

BUILDING DISPOSITION

*A design driven by the
site context*

Located between the **fast-paced Sha Lek Expressway** and the **tranquil Chap Wai Kon Village**, the design responds contextually to both.

Noisy, infrastructure-heavy components like the transformer room and cold storage face the expressway side, while quieter, human-centered areas like operation rooms and offices are located on the village side, shielded by an aluminium grille that provides both sun-protection and privacy. The building is uniquely positioned to respond to its **site context**.



SETBACK

The building is setback to reduce the visual massing from the street and pedestrian level



PROGRAMMATIC DISTRIBUTION

Mechanical plants and back of house are placed towards the expressway with human scale functions located towards the village



PASSIVE SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

Feature screen shades building from southern exposure and acts as a screen with neighbouring villagers





TREE AS DESIGN FEATURE

The building wraps around the tree and integrates with the street at pedestrian level



EDUCATING THE COMMUNITY

An integrated visitor path introduces Food Angel's mission without affecting the kitchen's operations



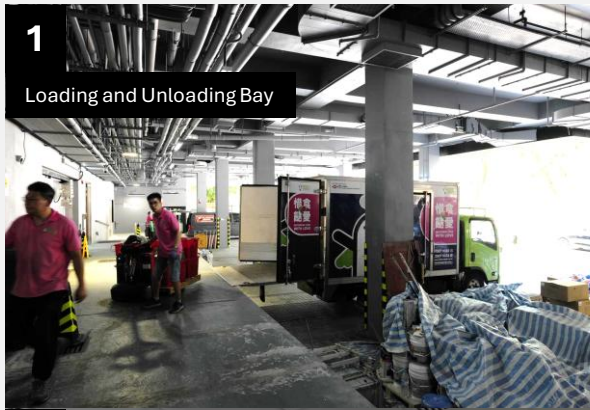
User design review

HUMAN-CENTRIC DESIGN PLANNING

*Design as a social
process*

Working together with Food Angel to understand their operational requirements, we devised a **continuous operational loop** to **maximise efficiency** and **reduce cross contamination**.

Detailed consideration of **how Food Angel operates** such as the elimination of level differences from the unloading process all the way to the cooking and reloading for delivery highlights the design's human-centric approach.



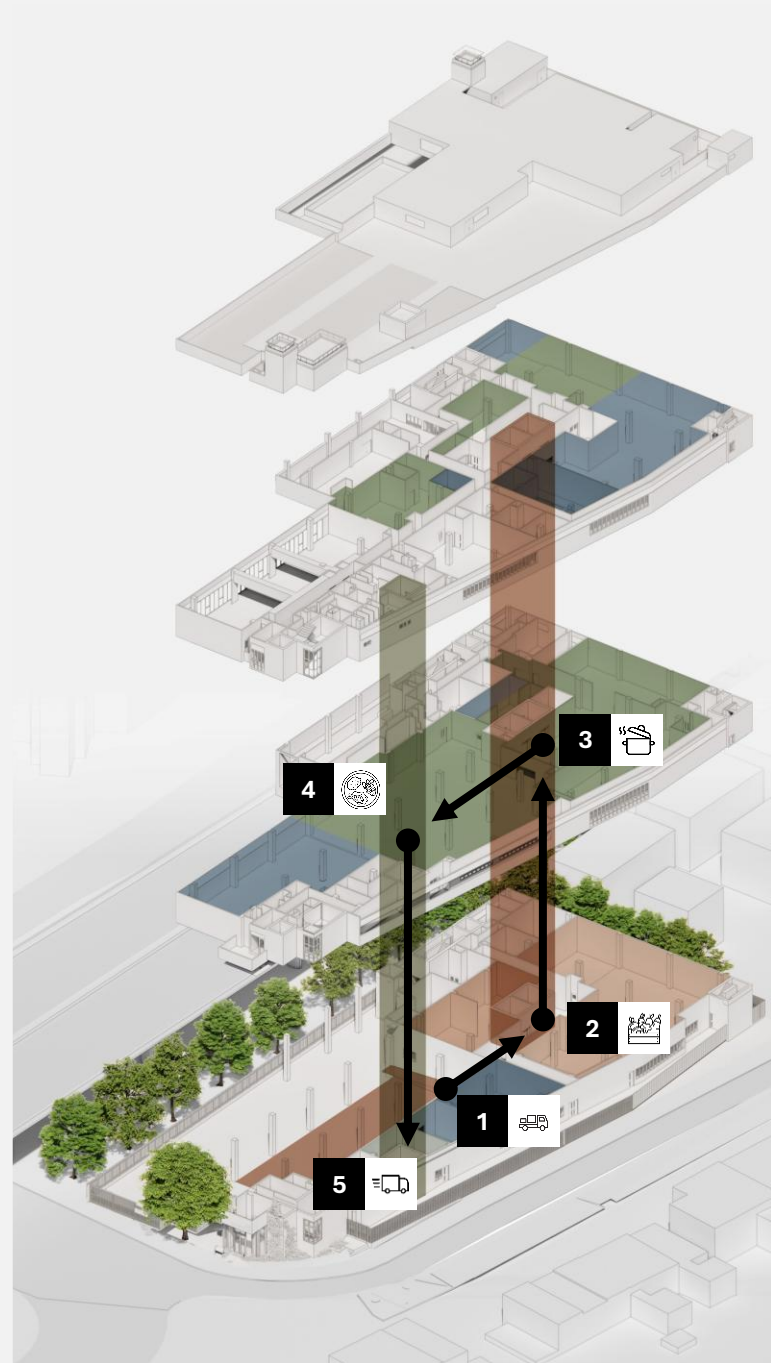
1
Loading and Unloading Bay



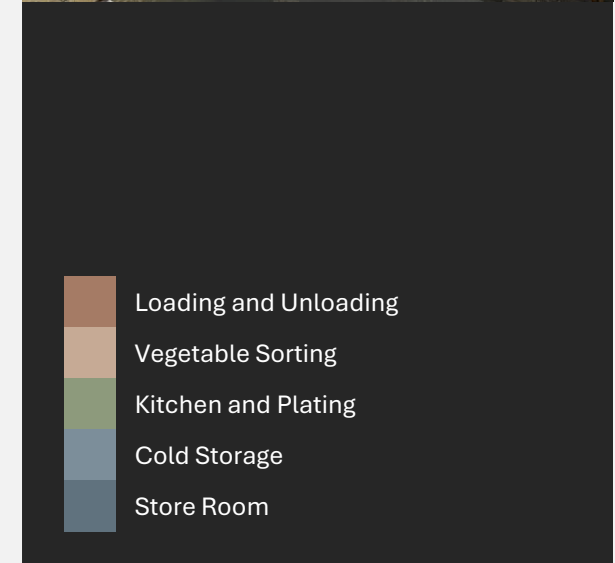
2
Vegetable Sorting Room



3
Kitchen



4
Plating Room



5
Delivery Bay

- Loading and Unloading
- Vegetable Sorting
- Kitchen and Plating
- Cold Storage
- Store Room

ACCESS TO NATURAL LIGHTING

Ensuring access to basic elements in planning and design

While Food Angel's existing facilities made do with what space there is in existing buildings, **accessibility to natural lighting** was a key part of the design for their new home. To connect the building with the site, south-facing windows line the operation areas, **creating brighter working environments** to improve the **well-being of users**.



1

Food Portioning



2

Rice Cooking



3

Vegetable Sorting



BUILDING AS SHELTER

Finding solutions in spatial arrangement

Vehicular traffic is a key part of Food Angel's operation but a source of concern for the local villagers. We purposely placed the loading unloading bay to the side of the building facing Sha Lek Expressway and used the **building to shield the noise** from the village, especially as the vehicular bay would be used mostly in the early morning.

By utilizing the building massing as a noise barrier, **passive design** measures help reduce the impact to local residents while also **reducing the operational costs** for Food Angel.

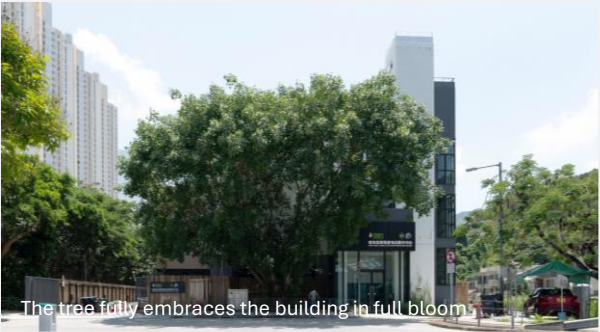
The four elevations of the building respond to their adjacent context



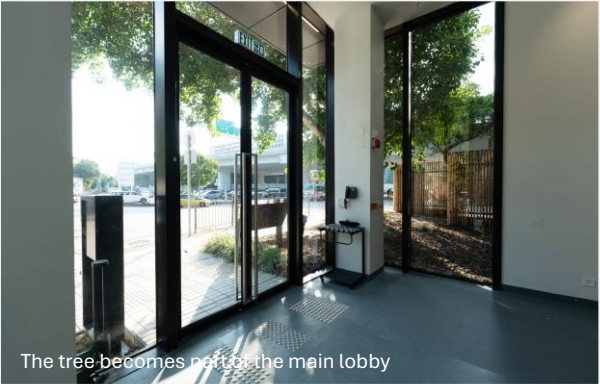
SITE CONTEXT

Respecting and giving back to the locality

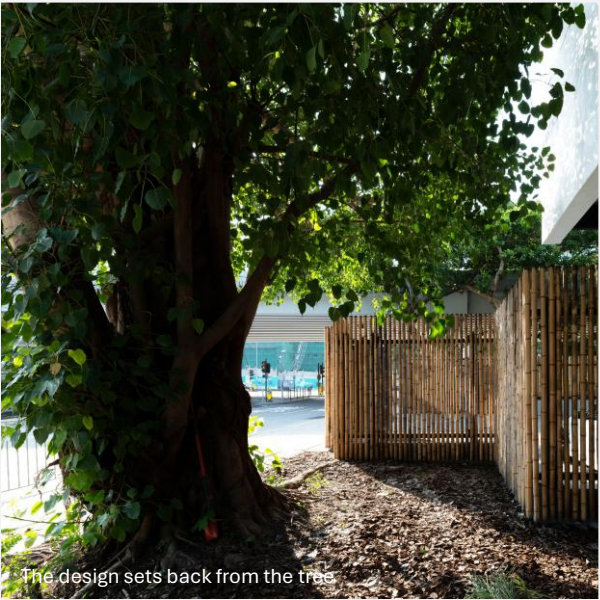
Approaching from To Shek Street, the entrance lobby is set back beneath an existing large, **mature tree was retained** throughout the design and construction. The design **embraced this tree as a central feature**—shaping the layout around it and **integrating it into the entrance experience**. This sensitive approach creates a softer, more **natural arrival sequence** that helps **de-industrialize** the building's appearance and **connect it with the existing urban fabric**.



The tree fully embraces the building in full bloom



The tree becomes part of the main lobby



The design sets back from the tree



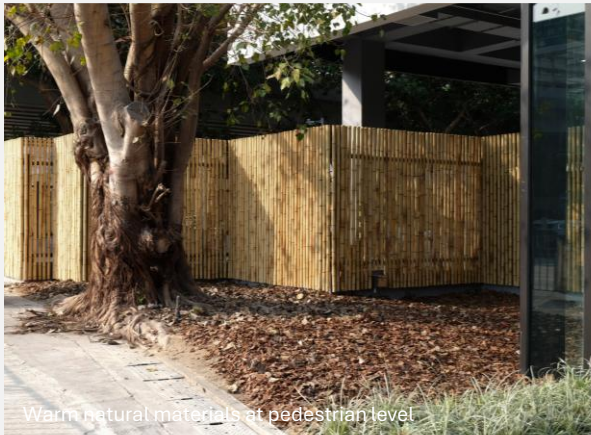
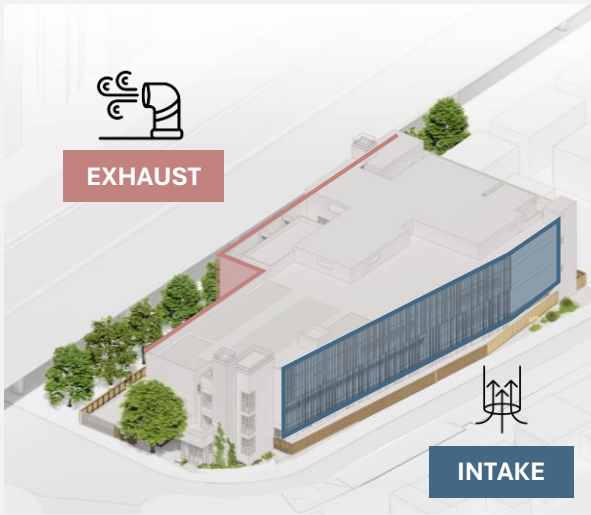
The main entrance sits harmoniously with the tree by setting back from the street

AS A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

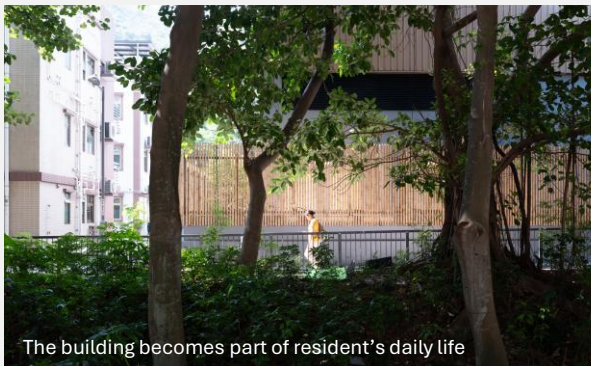
Responding to the local context

Owing to the proximity of the building to the village, careful design details were incorporated to ensure the building would remain a **good neighbour throughout its operation**. Exhaust vents were designed to vent out onto the side facing the expressway, with only intake positioned toward the village.

Understanding the villagers used an adjacent footpath for access, the building's fence wall **adopted the use of bamboo** which softened the impact on the surrounding, creating a more natural environment and setting for villagers.



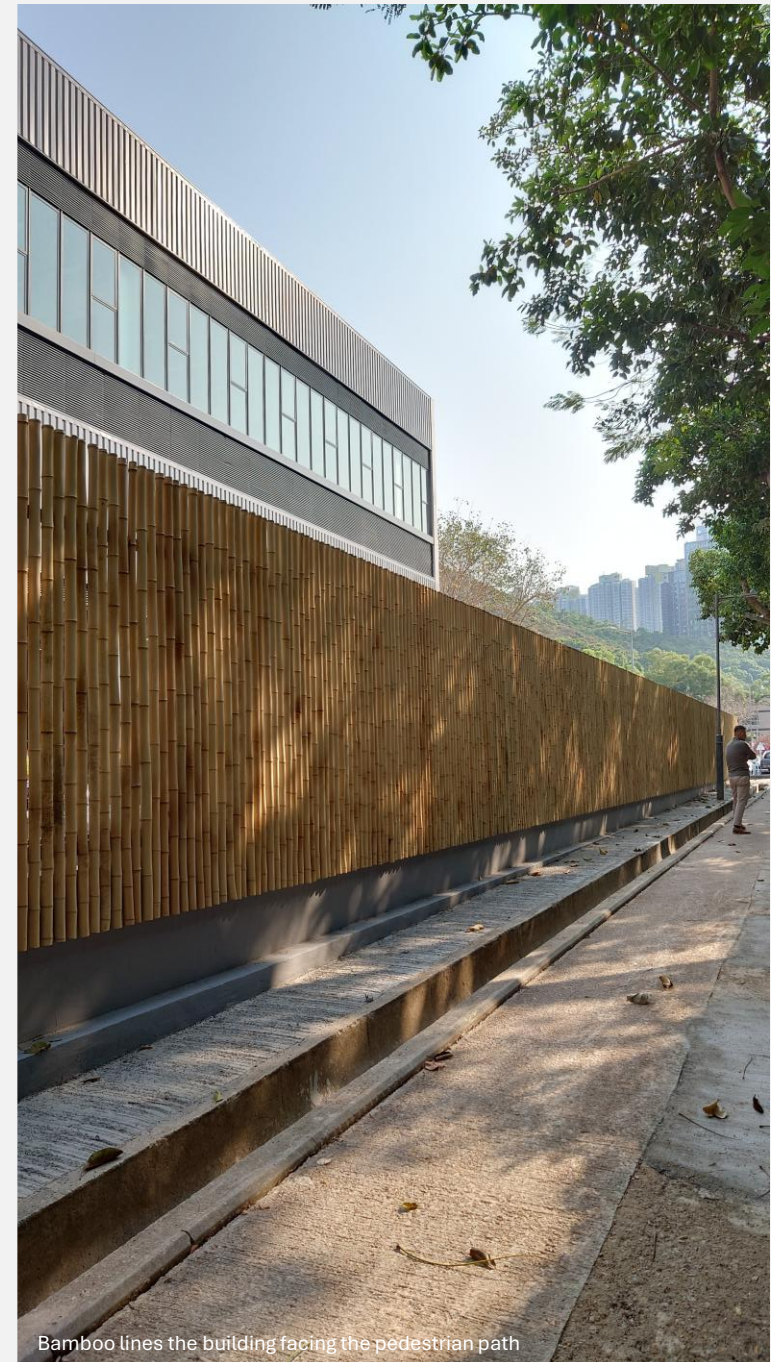
Warm natural materials at pedestrian level



The building becomes part of resident's daily life



Facing the village road, the building sets back from the street

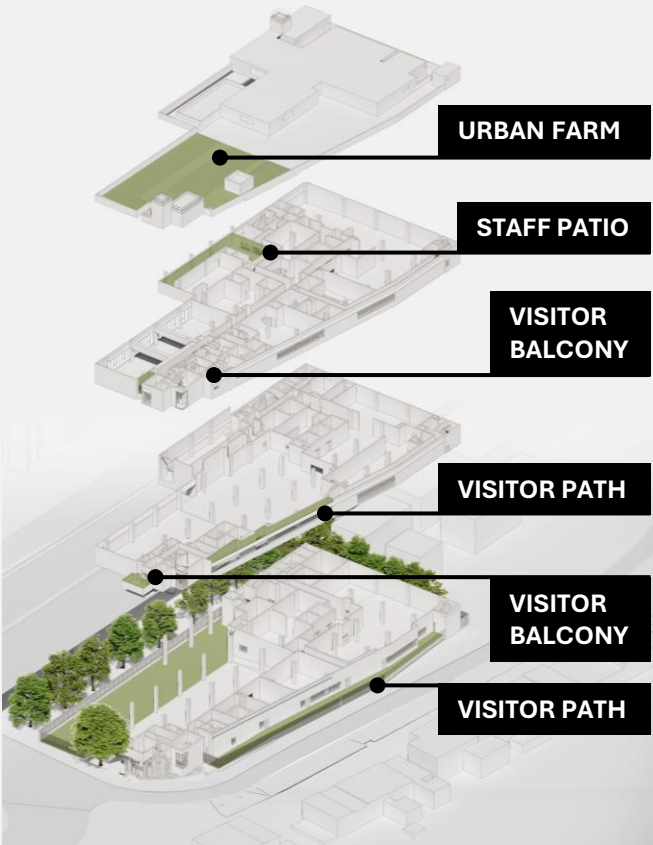


Bamboo lines the building facing the pedestrian path

ACCESSIBILITY TO
OUTDOORS

*Injecting breathable
spaces into the design*

To provide **break out spaces** for people working inside the kitchen and food factory, outdoor spaces were incorporated into all floors of the building, allowing staff and occupants to step out from the kitchen for a **moment of calm**.



Balconies create outdoor places of rest



Access to outdoor spaces



Outdoor garden at GF



Pocket garden at 2F

VISITOR PATH

*Educating the community
while meeting
operational needs*

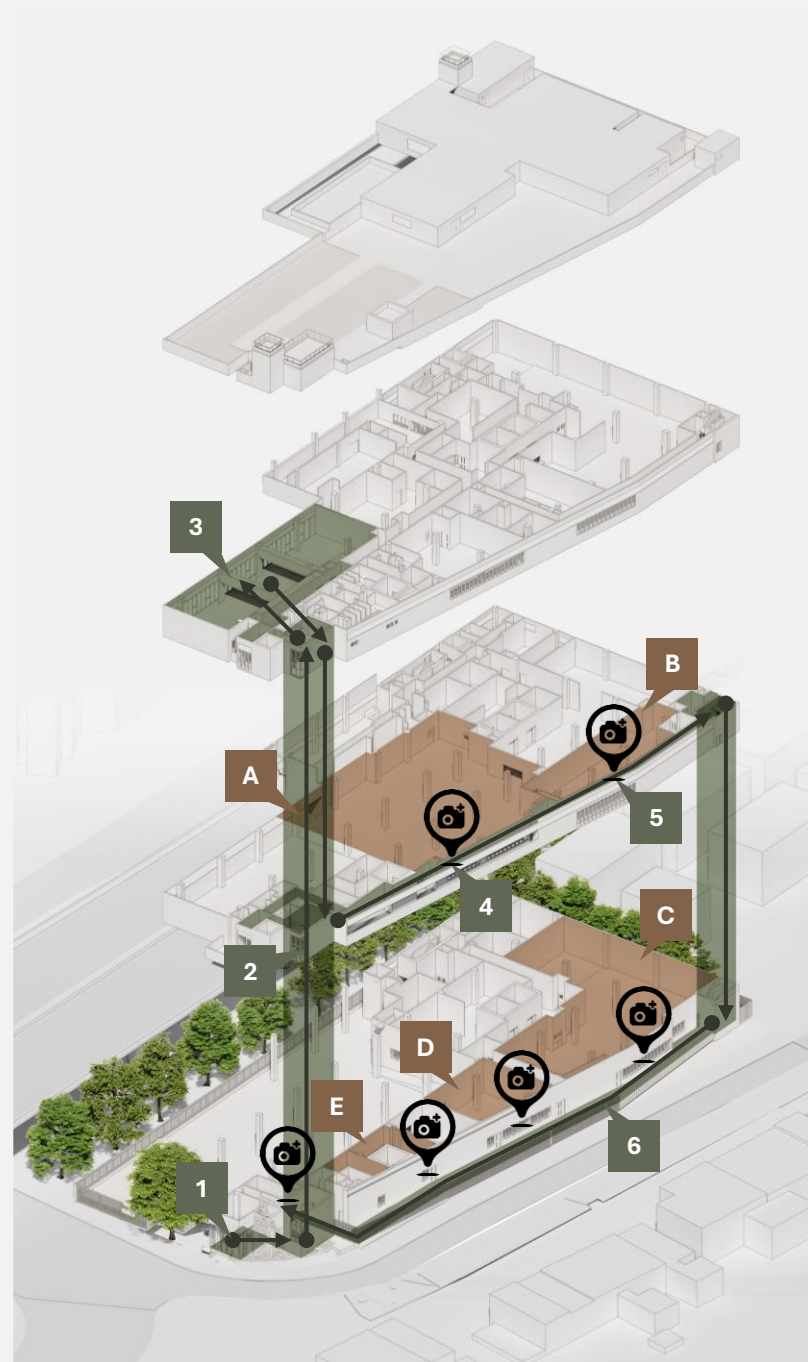
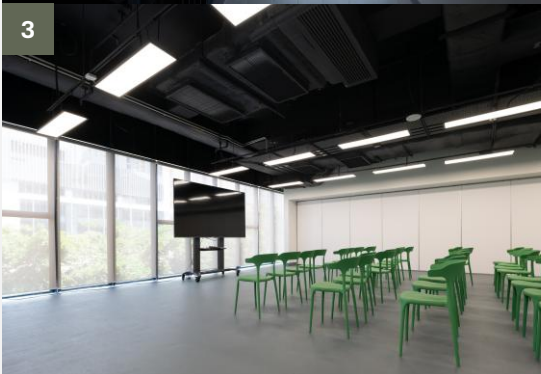
To address Food Angel's **commitment to education**, a visitor path which offered views into the operation areas without actually entering the clean spaces was designed, allowing a **firsthand look** at the need to cherish food and what is being done to **address food waste**.

Lowered windows

encouraged small children to peek into the operation areas, while the visitor path itself is designed as an intermediate space between the building and village.

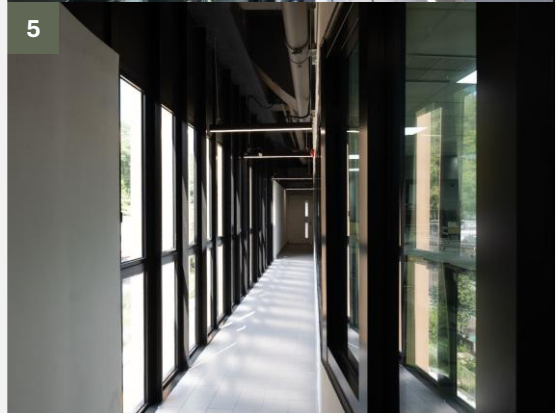
VISITOR PATH

1. Lobby
2. Healthy Staircase
3. Multi-Purpose Briefing Room
4. Visitor Path (1F)
5. Visitor Path (GF)



OPERATIONS (CLEAN ZONE)

- A. Cooking, Plating and Packaging
- B. Rice Cooking
- C. Vegetable Sorting and Washing
- D. Storage
- E. Loading and Delivery



DE-INDUSTRIALIZED COMMUNITY

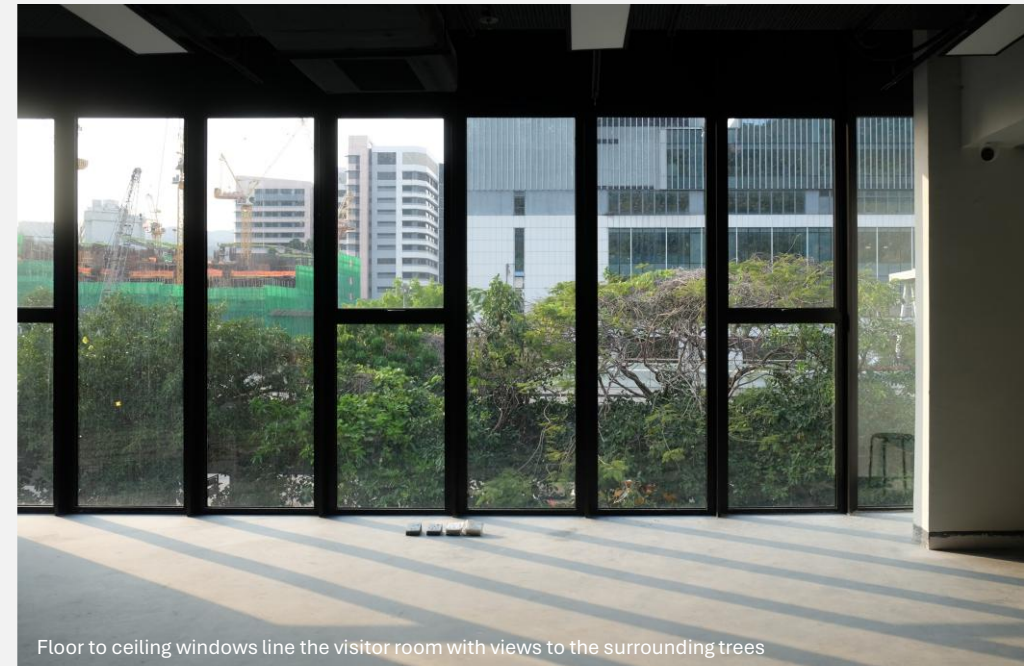
Opening the factory doors for a social purpose

Contrary to a typical industrial building, the design incorporates various elements which aims to open the factory to the surrounding to create an inviting environment.

Large picture windows connect the lobby and visitor room with the trees outside, creating a **visual connection** between the occupants and the site. Meanwhile, **setbacks** on the **façade** reduce the massing of the building, especially on the side facing To Shek Street and the adjacent village. The integrated Visitor Path further **invites the public into the building**, allowing people to learn about Food Angel's mission.



The lobby is integrated with the pedestrian context



Floor to ceiling windows line the visitor room with views to the surrounding trees



The design embraces the tree as a key feature

URBAN FARMING

*Landscape to connect
with the community*

In collaboration with Food Angel and the landscape architect, a **rooftop urban farm** has been integrated into the building design, cultivating herbs, ginger, and even pineapples. This not only **mitigates solar heat gain** through its green coverage but also echoes Food Angel's **ethos of honoring food**—an ethos that challenges the often-overlooked value of nourishment in highly developed societies like Hong Kong.



Pineapples grown on site



An urban farm enhances Food Angel's mission to raise awareness of food waste



The urban farm also acts as a green roof for the building



The greenery echoes the surrounding natural context

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Finding solutions through strategic planning

With a limited budget, the building adopts **passive design** approaches to **reduce energy usage**. The visitor path and aluminium screen along the southern-edge of the building acts as a **sun-shading device**, reducing direct sunlight into the interior spaces.

To **protect the building from flooding**, critical infrastructure of the building are raised 1m above the adjacent ground level. **Permeable paving material** is also adopted at vehicular driveway.

The building holds a PA of **Platinum under BEAM Plus NB 2.0**.



URBAN FARM
An urban farm allows Food Angel to grow their own crops as well as serve an education purpose for visitors



ELEVATED ESSENTIAL SERVICES
Essential services are raised 1m above ground level to protect against potential flooding



LAYOUT PLANNING
By arranging plantrooms to the side facing the Expressway and the rooms with occupancy towards the south, the design passively protects the building from noise pollution while allowing natural lighting into the interior spaces.



BALCONY SHADING
Passive design features such as the balcony Visitor Path provide shade for the kitchen inside while still allowing natural light



SUN SHADING GRILLE
The grille services multiple functions; as sun shading on the south facing façade as well as a screen between the building and the village



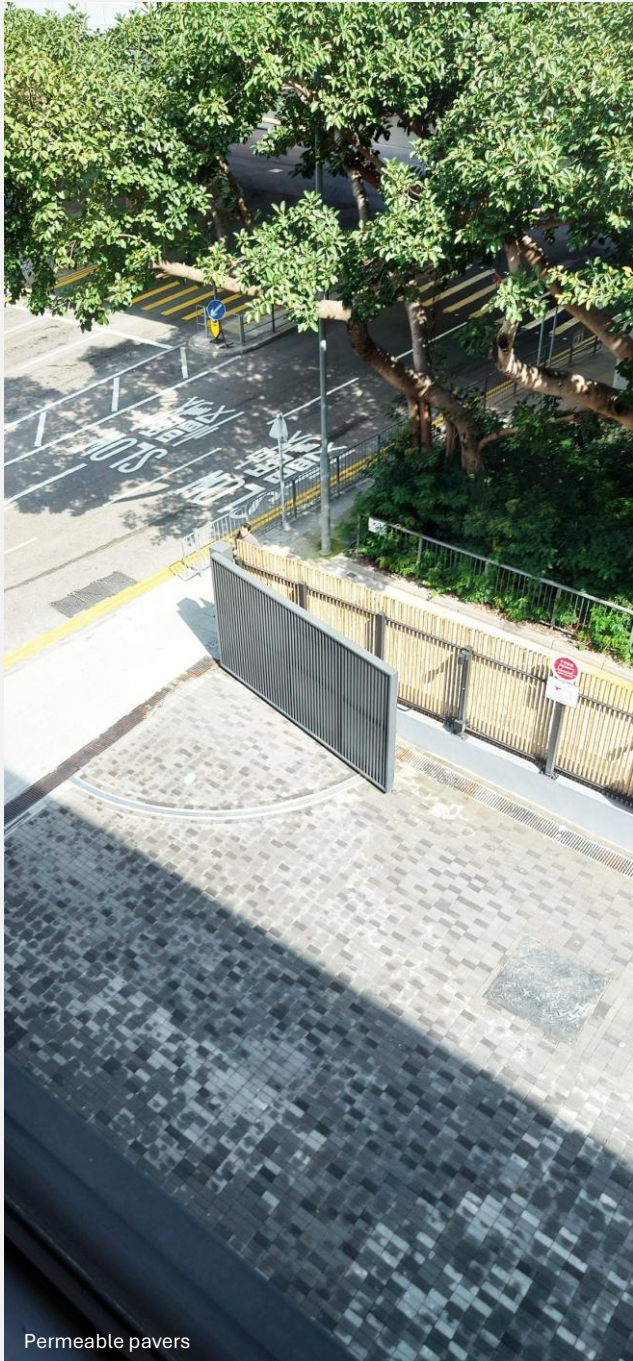
HEALTHY STAIRCASE
Healthy staircase with natural lighting to reduce use of lift

MATERIALITY

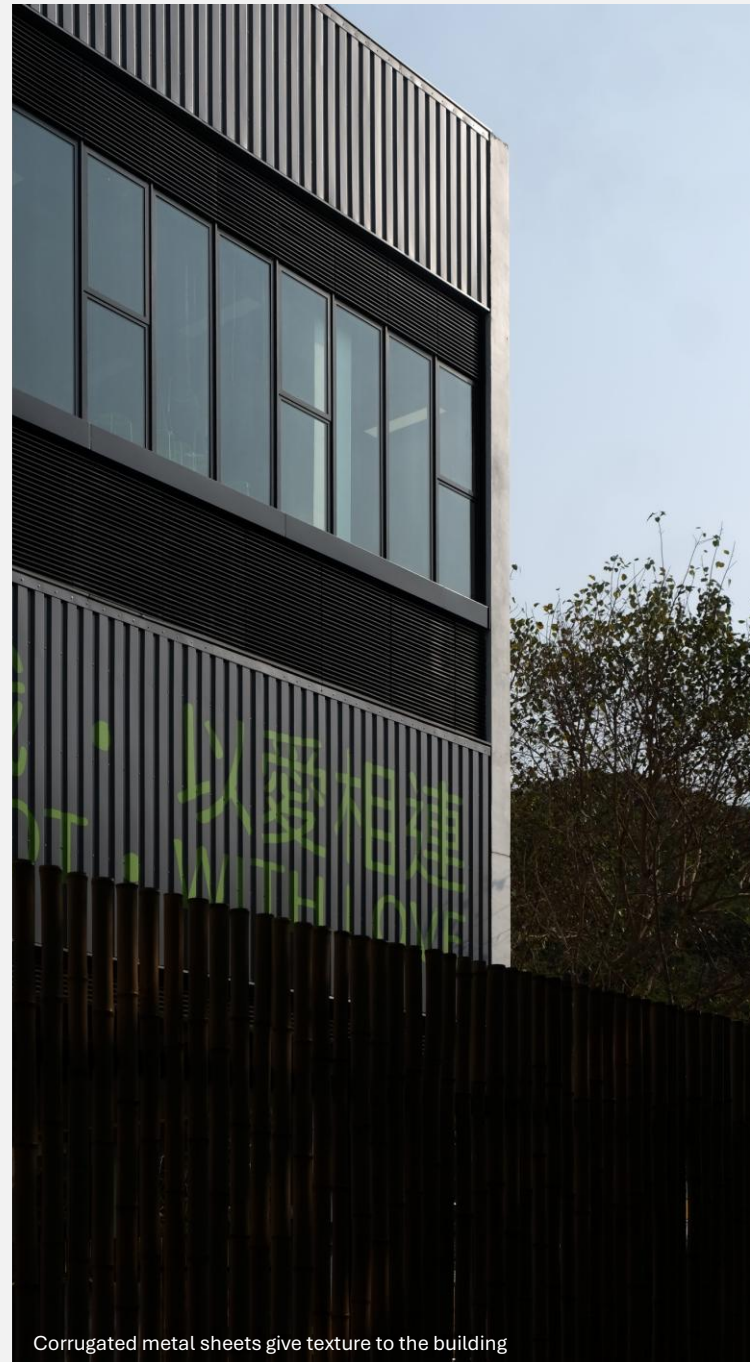
Character defined through materials

The materials used throughout the building are selected not only for their compatibility, but also for their contribution towards the **factory as community**.

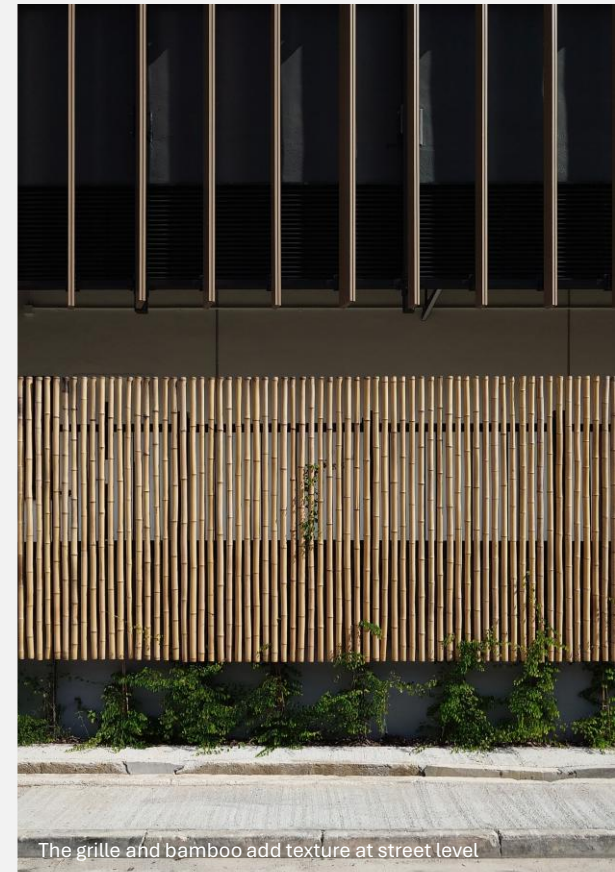
Bamboo is used on the periphery, creating a **warm interface at pedestrian level**. Corrugated metal sheets add texture on the building massing, **avoiding a monotonous design**.



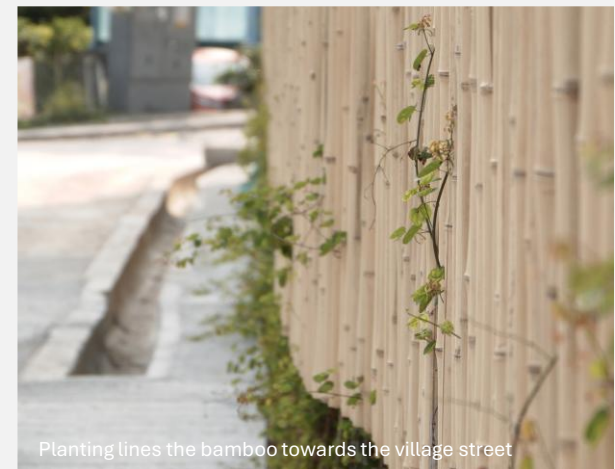
Permeable pavers



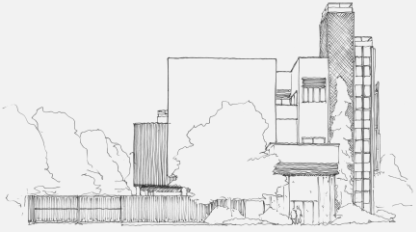
Corrugated metal sheets give texture to the building



The grille and bamboo add texture at street level



Planting lines the bamboo towards the village street



FACTORY AS COMMUNITY

*Creating a
deindustrialized
community building*

The building as built is a result of coordination amongst the various people involved, including Food Angel's management, operation, volunteers, as well as local villagers. Like Food Angel's mission, the building is not merely a place for food production but a **bridge between different sectors of society**.

The design ensures Food Angel is well-positioned to further its impact on Hong Kong's society, **transforming a factory building into a community**.



The factory becomes part of the community by integrating with and responding to the surrounding context