

Gaza 'Learning Room'

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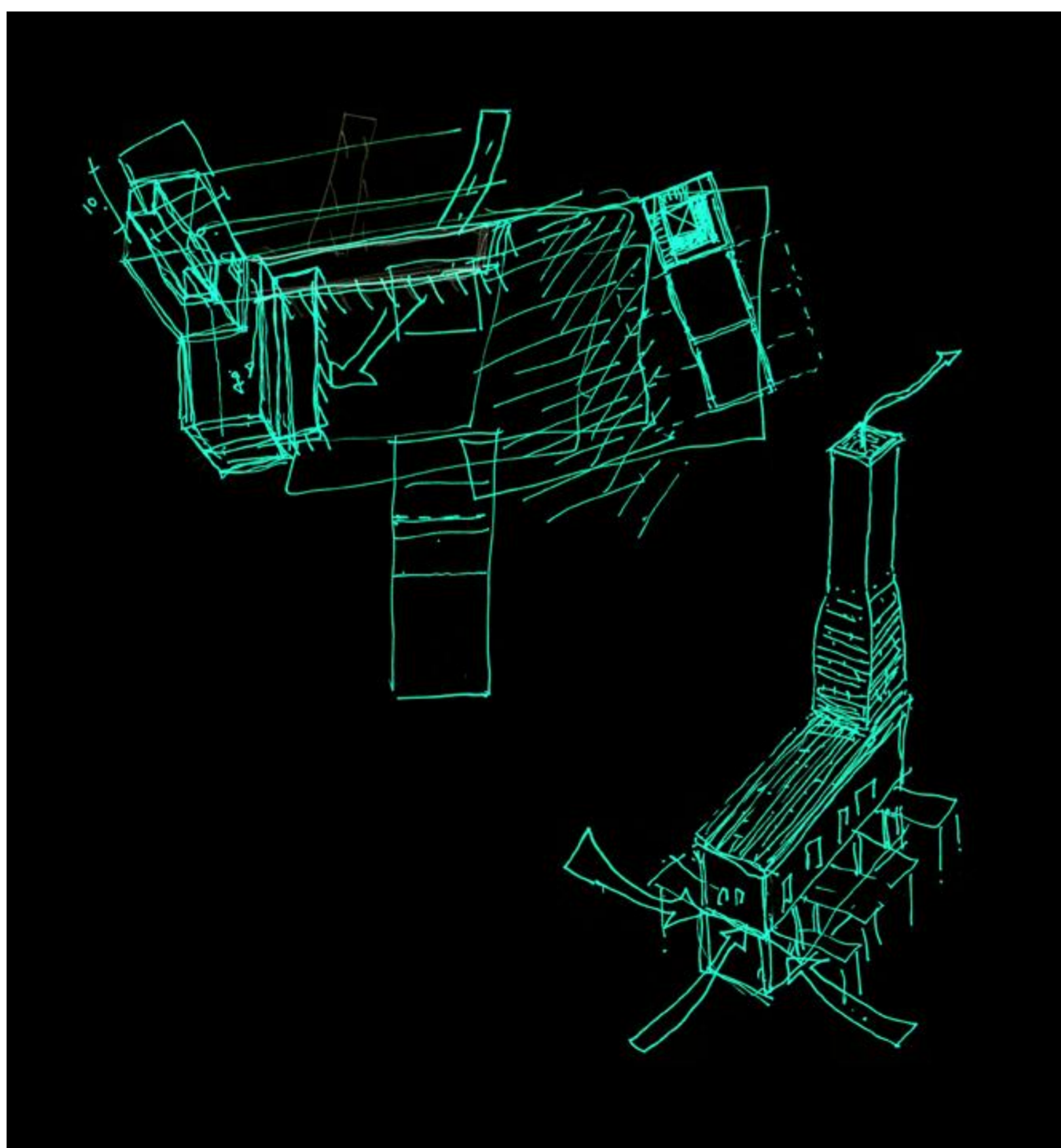
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Aims and Objectives

The project is to design an innovative self-help prototype as a new annexe to schools in the Gaza Strip that could then also be used for other countries. The twin purposes of the 'Learning Room' are to provide a community centre for local residents and also a knowledge base / testing site to spread methods of low-cost sustainable construction.

Activities

An initial design workshop was held in late-October 2011 at UCL with follow-up sessions this year. These sessions involved the project team, Palestinian representatives, and leading architects / engineers working together on a variety of design options.



One of the workshop designs for the 'Learning Room'



Typical urban landscape in Gaza City

Outputs and impacts

A finalised design prototype has been agreed, and is now being developed in greater detail by the project team. The next stage is then to get final approval for the proposed 'Learning Room' from the local community in the Zaytouna area of Gaza City, where the first iteration is planned to be built, subject to financial / political realities. This process of consultation also involves Gaza University, Islamic Relief, UN Habitat and other local groups.

Conclusions

The 'Learning Room' project offers a useful means to disseminate low-energy passive building techniques that Gazan citizens could use when they erect new houses within a situation of severe economic scarcity. Whether it eventually gets built in Gaza City is still in the balance, yet there is strong local support for the idea.

