

J A M E S
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T E C T S

Press Release

James Gorst Architects Completes Temple Complex in Rural Hampshire



ABOVE
Entrance elevation
Photograph: Rory Gardiner

James Gorst Architects has completed a new temple complex in the village of Rake, Hampshire, within the South Downs National Park. The practice was selected following a two-stage design competition in early 2017 with a brief to replace the existing dilapidated 1970s complex.

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The new building, which is open to the public, comprises a temple, library, chapels, meeting spaces, a public foyer and catering kitchen within newly landscaped grounds. The rationalised plan is organised as a series of orthogonal pavilions connected by a cloistered walkway, facing onto a central courtyard garden. The internal arrangement follows a progression from secular to ritual spaces, moving from a timber portico and social foyer at the visitor entrance in the east, through to the main temple space in the west.

With a brief to create a building characterised by peace and simplicity, the James Gorst Architects team developed a restrained palette of timber, brick and chalk lime mortar typical of the Hampshire context. The resulting spaces allow for quiet contemplation and encourage a spiritual connection to the surrounding landscape.

RIGHT

New Temple Complex, viewed across the newly landscaped gardens by McWilliam Studio.

Photograph: Rory Gardiner



The building demonstrates an exemplar approach to passive design and long-term sustainability. James Gorst Architects adopted a ‘fabric-first’ approach to the build, with the main structural frame entirely constructed off-site from glue laminated timber, engineered to eliminate the need for any steelwork. Underfloor heating is provided by a ground source heat pump that is buried in the landscape, with additional power provided by photovoltaic panels.

The inner temple’s pre-cast pendentive arches provide thermal mass. A raised floor slab naturally cools the internal spaces with fresh air supplied by an underground labyrinth ventilation system, while high level actuators in the temple clerestory allow warm air to escape.

“Our aim was to create balance between the landscape, building and interiors, to form one coherent and harmonious design, exploring the relationship of the architecture to the spiritual context,” said Steve Wilkinson, Associate at James Gorst Architects.

Collaborating with landscape architects McWilliam Studio, Wilkinson and the team undertook a wider reorganisation of the site, providing a series of gardens connected along pedestrian pathways, to allow for moments of contemplation and connection to the surrounding valleys. At the entrance to the building, two reflection pools animate the east façade and offer a moment of pause and meditation, while the central courtyard is sized to mirror the internal footprint of the temple.

David Roy, Director, James Gorst Architects, said: “Our design for this temple complex is the result of a very detailed journey of collaboration with our client. The process of listening and responding to their unique requirements over an extended period of time allowed us to create a building that is closely tailored to their needs, and which expresses our ethos of sensitivity, proportion, and purpose.”

Project Information

Architect	James Gorst Architects
Contractor	Beard Construction
Timber Frame	Pacegrade
Structural Engineers	Eckersley O’Callaghan
Landscape Architects	McWilliam Studio
Service Engineers	Skelly & Couch
Project Manager / QS	Jackson Coles
Acoustic Consultants	Theatre Projects
Planning Consultants	Dowsett Mayhew

About James Gorst Architects

James Gorst Architects provides a uniquely tailored service encompassing projects from listed townhouses to large, contemporary countryside residences. Through these varied projects, the practice has earned a reputation for its sensitive and highly crafted approach, producing built projects that are both technically sophisticated and rigorously detailed. The practice has longstanding relationships with a trusted network of highly skilled craftspeople. Considerable experience in gaining planning permission and consent for challenging sites has allowed the practice to produce some substantial new residences in the United Kingdom, alongside projects including the refurbishment of two Grade I listed Robert Adam houses in London, a new community hall in Framlingham, and the construction of an Orthodox chapel on the island of Mykonos in Greece.

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RIGHT
Reflection pools to east facade.

Photograph: Rory Gardiner



RIGHT
Public entrance foyer, constructed in Siberian Larch glulam.

Photograph: Rory Gardiner



RIGHT

Entrance foyer with planted central courtyard to left.

Photograph: Rory Gardiner

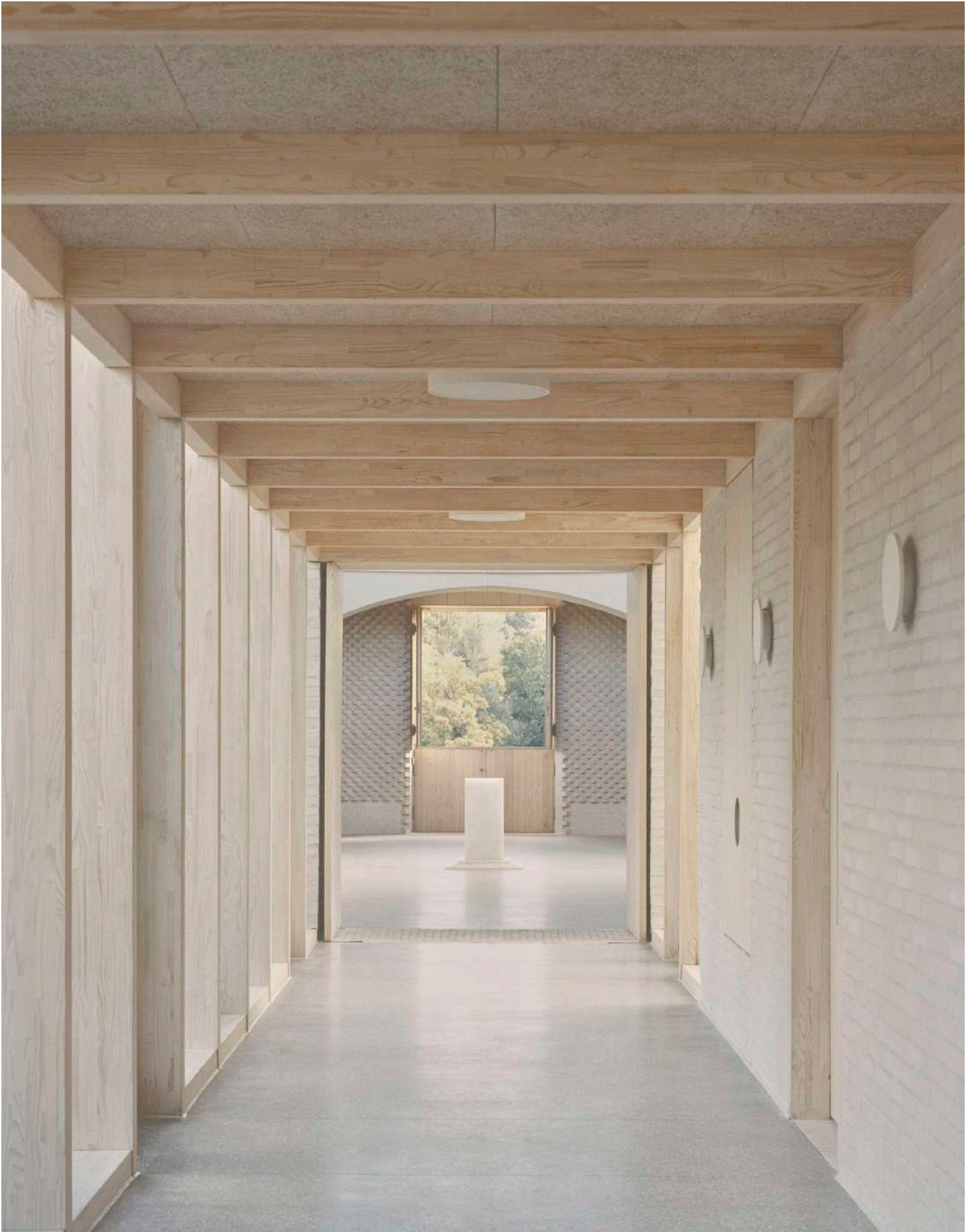


RIGHT

View through north cloister towards library, with integrated bench overlooking the central courtyard.

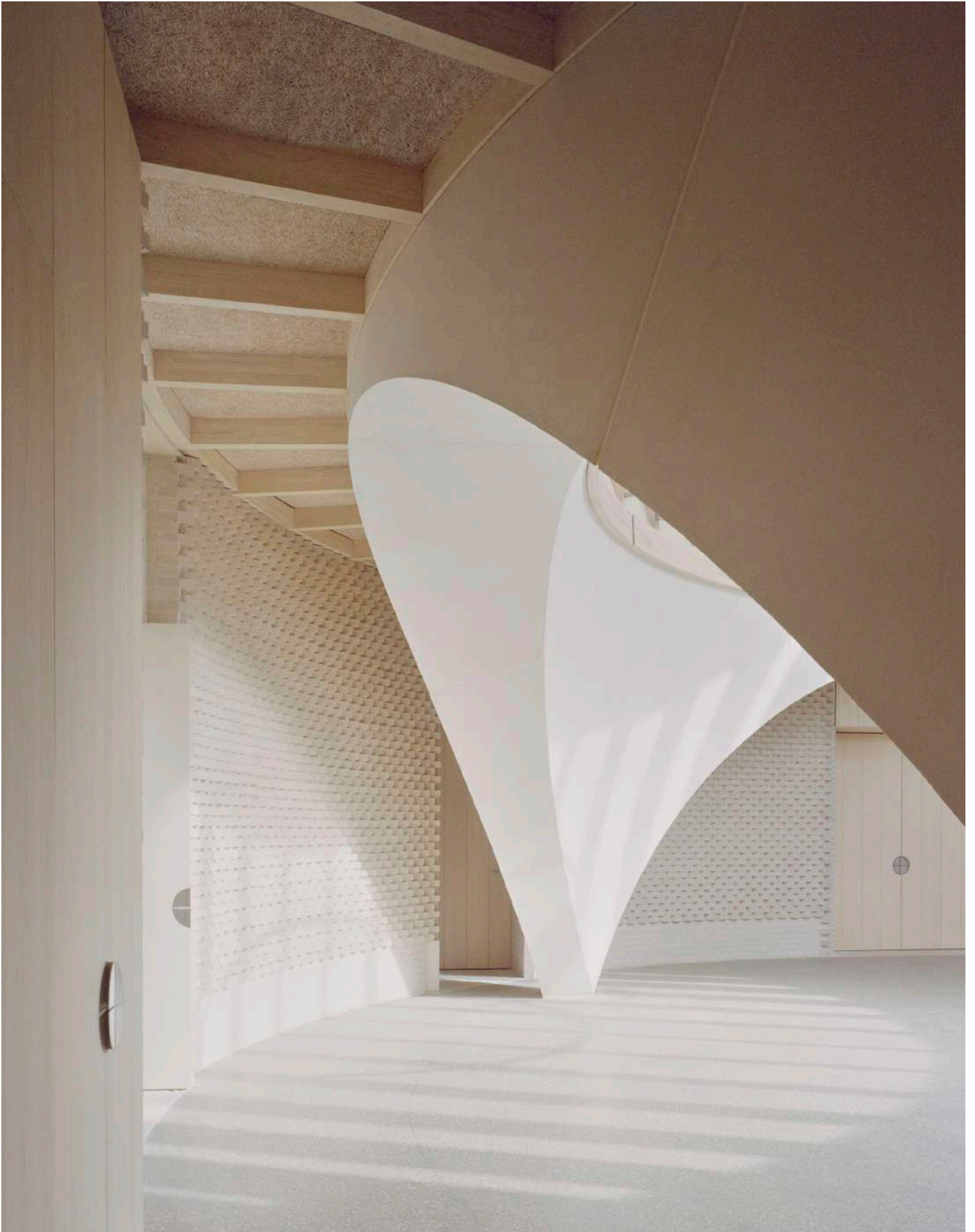
Photograph: Rory Gardiner





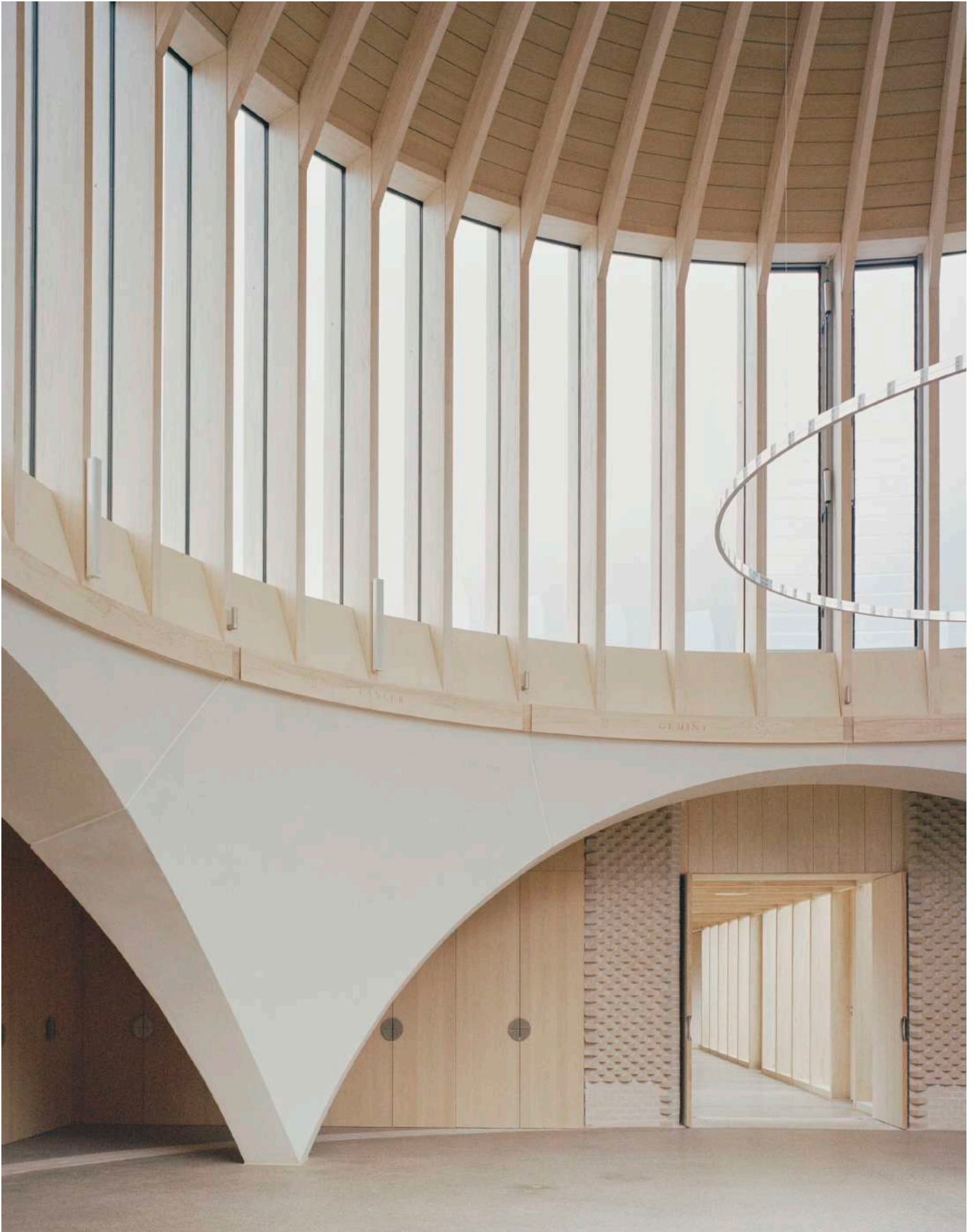
ABOVE
Cloister to main chapel, with central altar and south stable door with view to the South Downs.

Photograph: Rory Gardiner



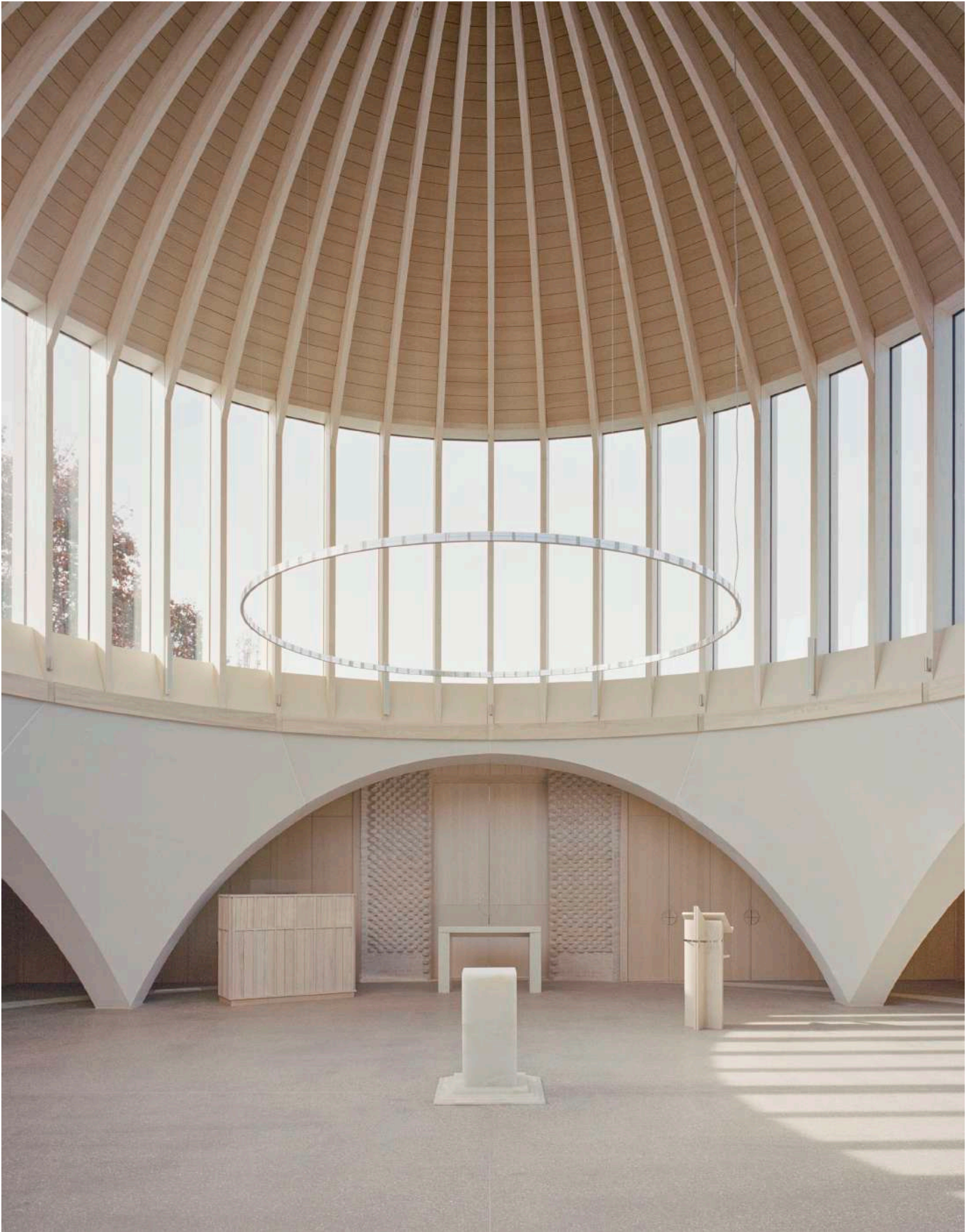
ABOVE
Underside of the pendentive dome,
forming the principal structural frame
of the inner temple.

Photograph: Rory Gardiner



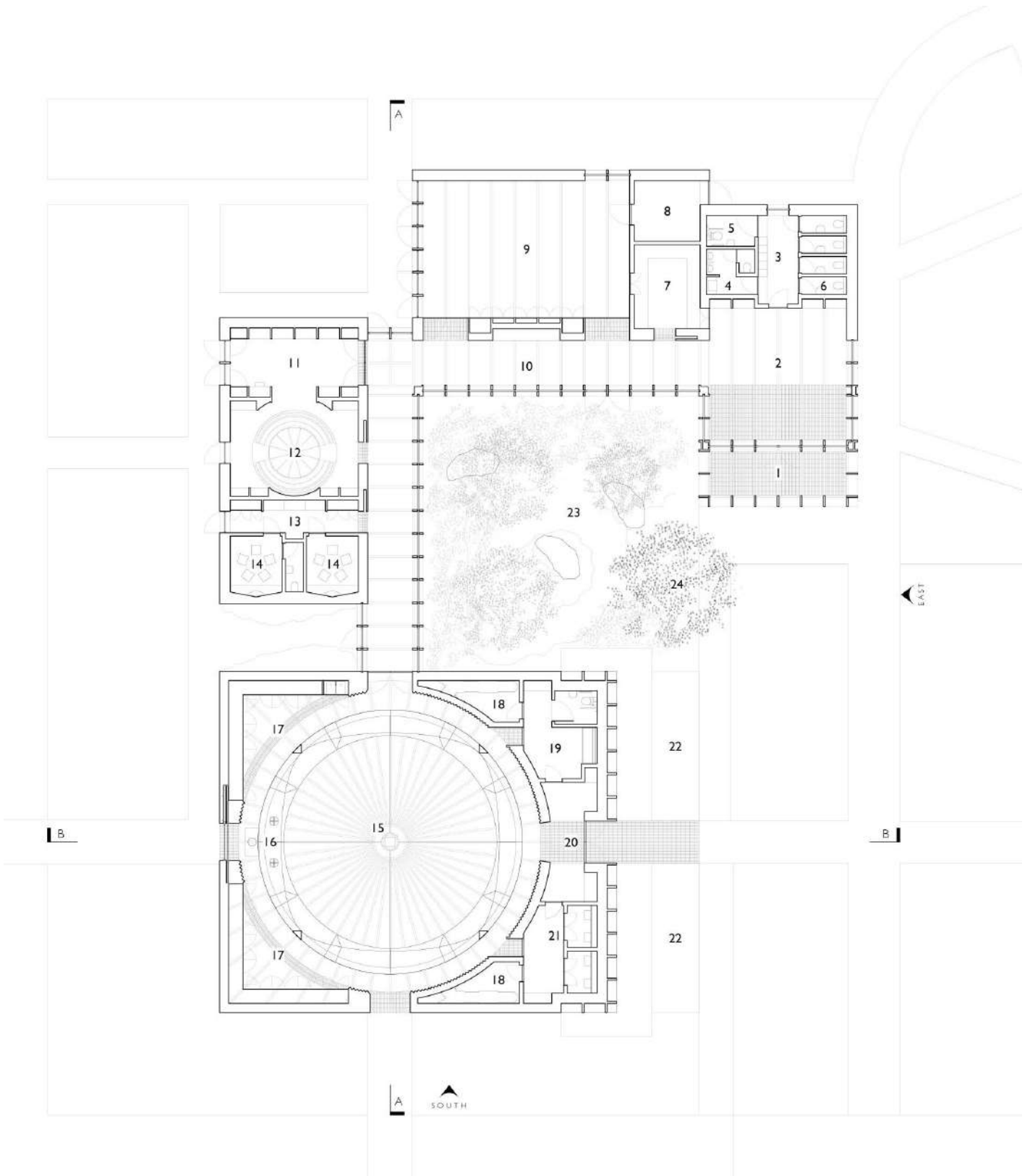
ABOVE
Temple view looking north, showing the cloistered entrance with ventilation louvres above, located in the clerestory window.

Photograph: Rory Gardiner



ABOVE
Temple view looking west, with
furniture designed by James Gorst
Architects.

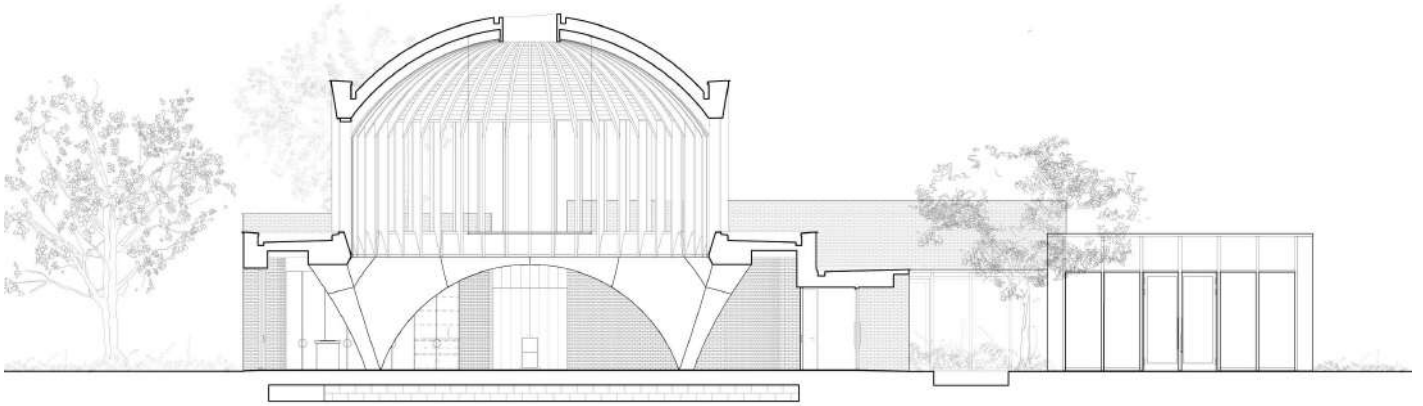
Photograph: Rory Gardiner



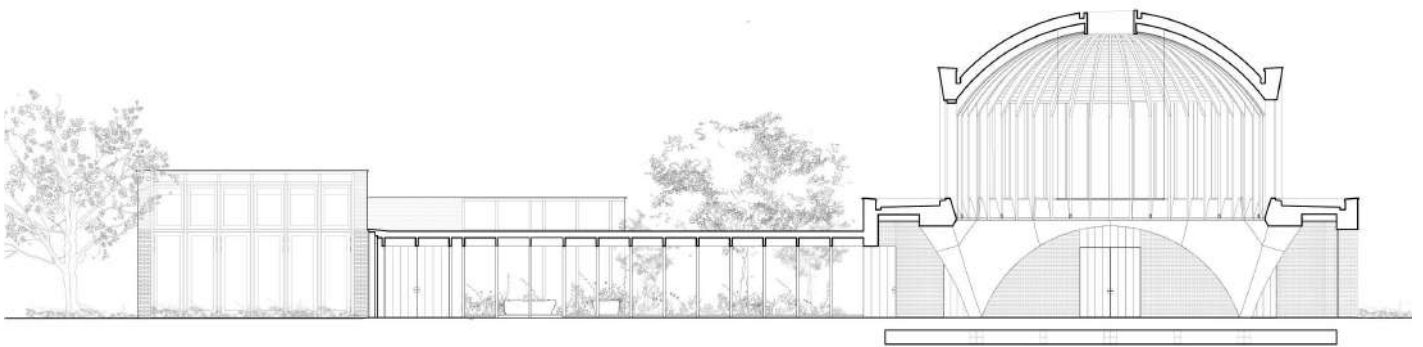
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1 | Covered entrance portico | 13 | Chapel vestibule |
| 2 | Entrance foyer | 14 | Prayer chapels |
| 3 | Toilet vestibule and lockers | 15 | Temple |
| 4 | Male WC | 16 | West altar |
| 5 | Accessible WC | 17 | Transept storage |
| 6 | Unisex WCs | 18 | Plant rooms |
| 7 | Kitchen | 19 | Changing area |
| 8 | Plant room | 20 | Temple vestibule |
| 9 | Lecture room | 21 | Interview rooms |
| 10 | Cloister | 22 | Reflection pools |
| 11 | Library | 23 | Planted courtyard |
| 12 | Meeting room | 24 | Retained cherry tree |





SECTION A

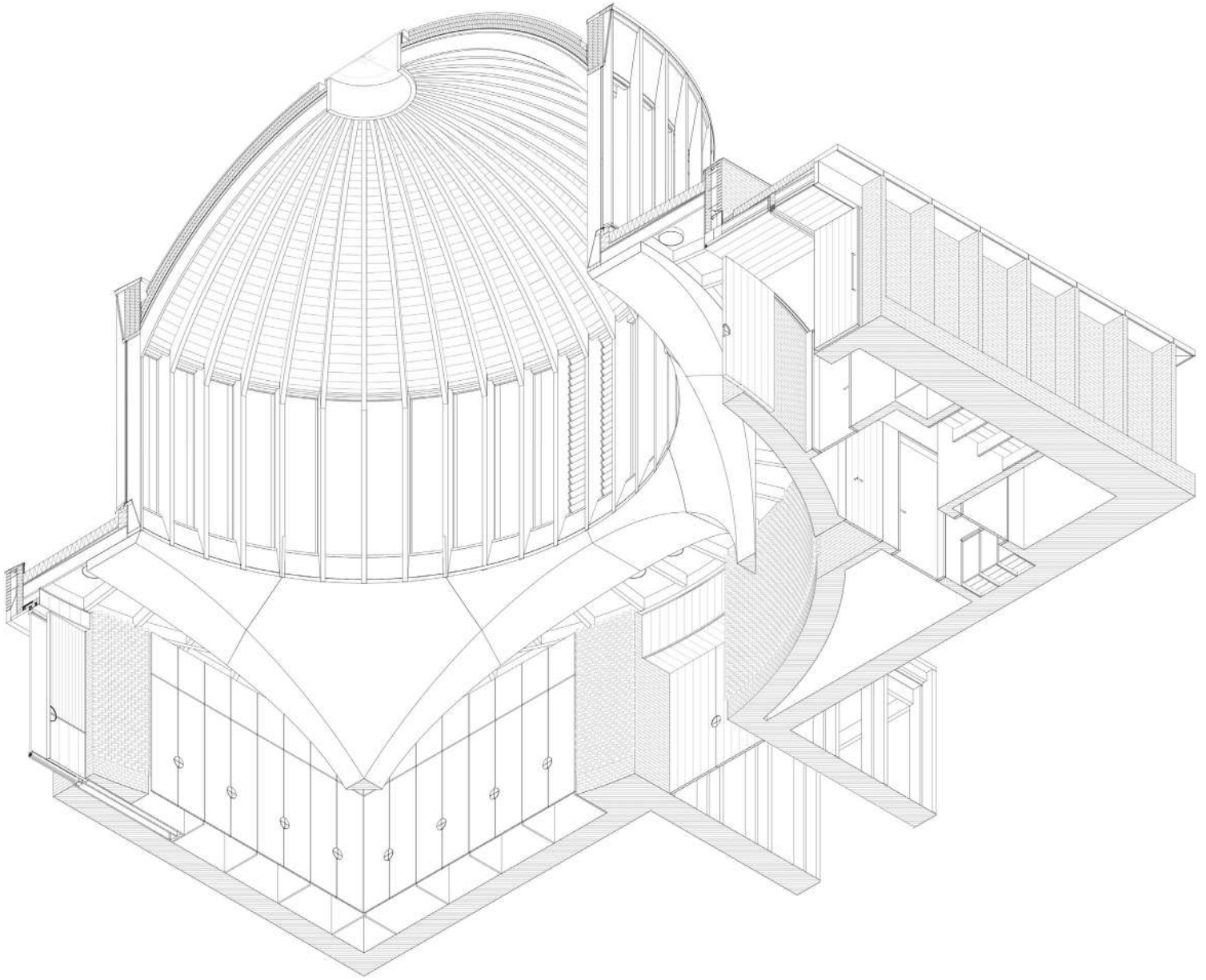


SECTION B



EAST ELEVATION





ABOVE

Worm eye axonometric drawing showing the internal temple structural arrangement.

RIGHT
1:25 section model.
Portuguese limestone
and Basswood.

Photograph: Sophie Percival



RIGHT
Site model, Basswood.

Photograph: Sophie Percival

