

DESIGN BRIEF

Short-Term Accommodation for
Solo Travellers

AD6501
EMMA NORBURY



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
LOCATION	5
History	
Attractions	
Maps	
Sun Mapping	
Local Materials	
USER	17
User Research	
Tourism, Housing, & Modern Travel Needs	
Designing for the Modern Solo Traveller	
Who Why & When	
User Research Conclusion	
TYPOLGY	27
Hotel Research	
Key Design Considerations	
Research Analysis	
Spatial Requirements	
Existing Floor Plans	
Service & Operations	
Proposed Schedule of Accommodation	
Spatial diagrams/zoning	
Spatial Requirements	
Characters & Features	
Atmosphere	
Thoughts	
OBJECTIVES	X
REFERENCES	X

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This project focuses on designing a hotel in Chester, a city rich in history. The goal is to create a unique and memorable hotel experience—one that attracts guests, encourages repeat visits, and earns strong recommendations.

The design is centered around understanding the user—their behaviours, values, and expectations. Key considerations include evaluating the feasibility of the concept within the space and determining its suitability for Chester's city center. This involves analysing local attractions, accessibility, transportation links, and environmental factors such as sun paths to optimize room placement and enhance guest comfort. Additionally, assessing the building's structure, atmosphere, and potential will help shape functional and well-utilised spaces. A primary objective is to design a versatile, comfortable space that functions as a “grown-up hostel”—offering the affordability and sociability of a hostel but with a more refined, comfortable, and private experience suited to an older market. Many hostels cater to a younger demographic, but this concept will appeal to solo travellers and professionals who want a stylish yet budget-friendly stay. The focus is on providing essential amenities—sleep, hygiene, and storage—without unnecessary excess.

This design will strike a balance between functionality and efficient space usage. By addressing evolving traveller needs, embracing industry trends, and respecting Chester's unique character.

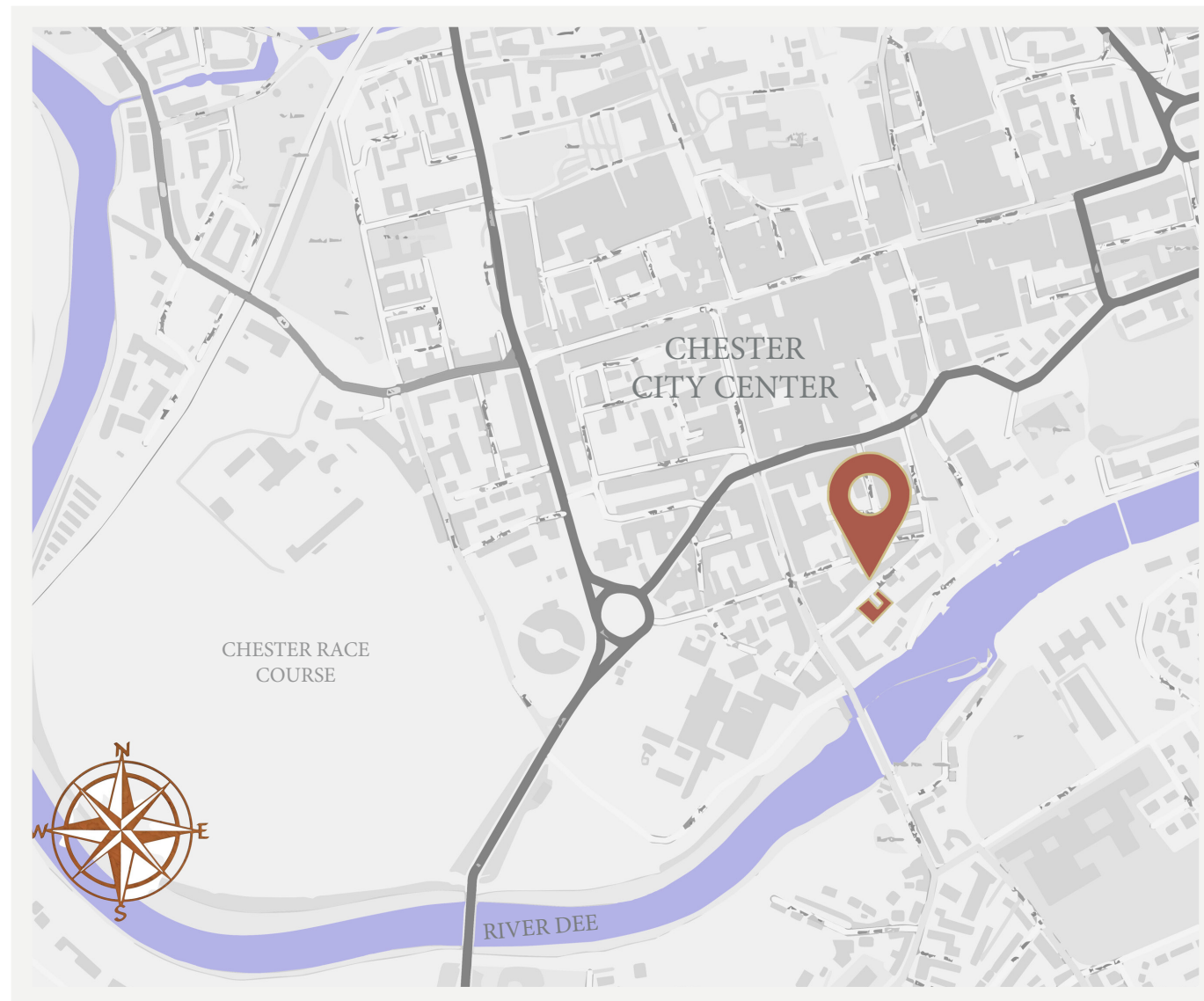
LOCATION

LOCATION
LOCATION
LOCATION

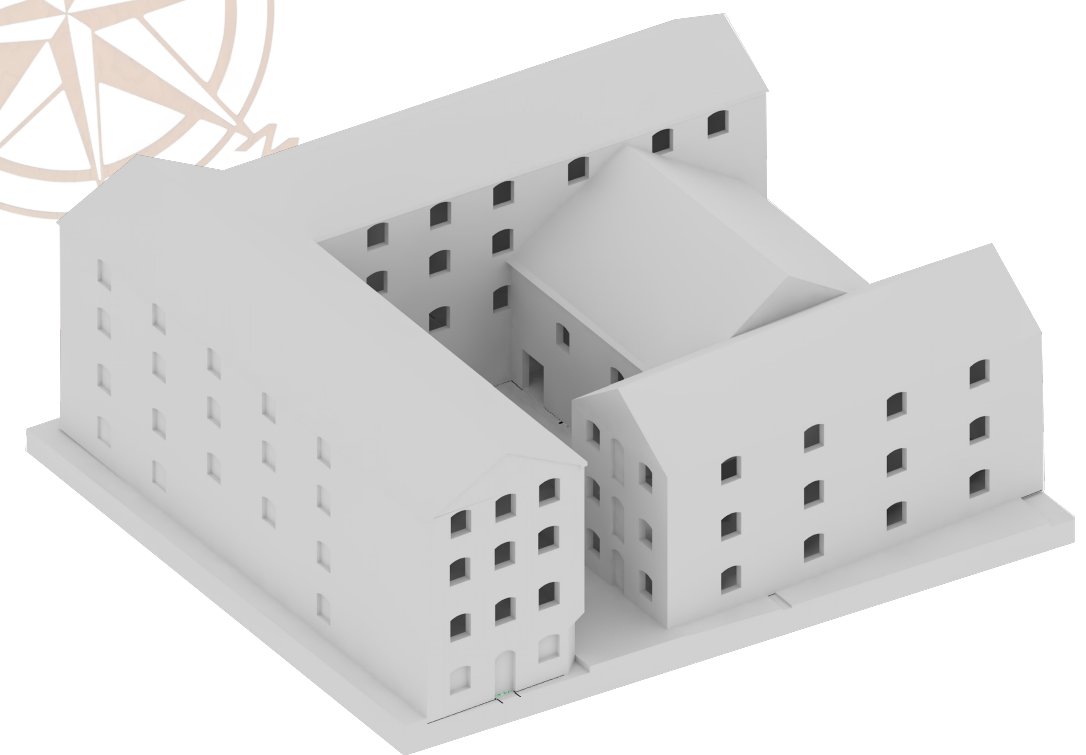


PG 5.

LOCATION



THE CHESHIRE ARCHIVES & LOCAL STUDIES , DUKE STREET. CH11RL.



HISTORY

PREVIOUS USES

The building on Duke Street in Chester was once the storage space for Browns, housing goods and inventory that supported the main store's operations. Browns of Chester, established in 1780 by Susannah Brown, was a department store that sold high-end fashion, home-ware, cosmetics, and other quality goods for over two centuries. Browns also had a massive influence on the train connections into Chester making it a more accessible and thriving city.

EXISTING USE

The Cheshire Archives & Local Studies service is responsible for identifying, collecting, and preserving archives and publications that document the history and lives of Cheshire communities, both past and present. Following planning approval in March, Kier Construction has been appointed to construct the new history centers in Chester and Crewe.



Council of the CITY OF CHESTER

Town and Country Planning Acts 1971 and 1972

To: Mr. P. McCreesh, 2 City Road, Chester.

For: The Barton Group

Particulars of Development

Demolition of existing building, Browns Warehouse, Duke Street, Chester

In pursuance of their powers under the above Acts, the Council hereby grant listed building consent and/or PERMIT the above development to be carried out in accordance with the application and accompanying plans submitted by you, subject to compliance with the conditions specified hereunder:

- The development must be begun not later than the expiration of: First years beginning with the date of this consent and/or permission.
- No demolition of any buildings which are the subject of this application shall take place until the developer has agreed in writing a programme of demolition with the District Planning Authority.
- Before the demolition hereby permitted is first commenced the Local Planning Authority shall be allowed access to the site to draw up a schedule of materials which shall be carefully removed during, or prior to demolition and shall be set aside and stored to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, and the Authority shall then be offered reasonable opportunity to negotiate with the contractor or agent for the acquisition of such articles or materials.

The reasons for the Council's decision to grant listed building consent and/or permission for the development subject to compliance with the conditions hereinafter specified are:

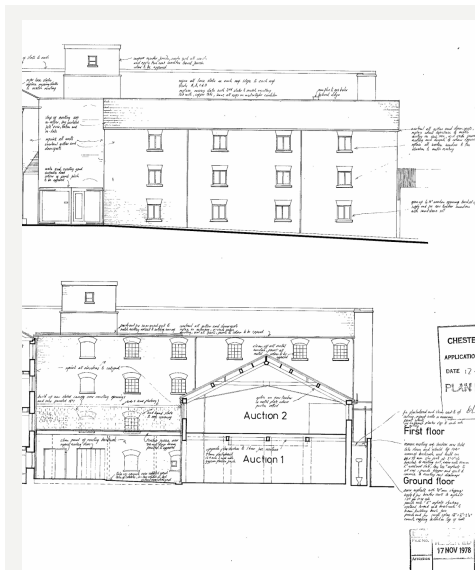
- To comply with the provisions of Section 41 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971.
- In order to prevent unsightly gaps appearing in the Conservation Area as a result of demolition well in advance of the actual date of commencement of the redevelopment of the site in the interests of visual amenities.
- In order to ensure that articles and materials of traditional building construction are available for re-use.

Development for which listed building consent and/or permission is granted is subject to due compliance with the general statutory provisions in force in the District, except as may be modified in this permission and the Building Regulations.

Dated: 1st July 1976 Address: Kier Construction Ltd, 177-179, Duke Street, Chester, Cheshire, CH1 1RN

Director of Technical Services
TOWN HALL
CHESTER
CH1 1RN

© C.C. Planning Form B (1976)



Town and Country Planning Acts 1971 and 1972

TOWN AND COUNTRY AMENITIES ACT, 1974

To: James Brotherhood Reg RIBA, 33 Bold Square, Chester.

Particulars of Development

Change of use to storage, offices and sales rooms at former Browns of Chester Warehouse, Duke Street, Chester.

In pursuance of their powers under the above Acts, the Council on the 20/12/78 hereby GRANT BUILDING PERMISSION the above development to be carried out in accordance with the application and accompanying plans submitted by you, subject to compliance with the conditions specified hereunder:

- The development must be begun not later than the expiration of: First years beginning with the date of this consent and/or permission.
- Samples of the proposed brickwork and other external finishes shall be made available for inspection on site and shall be approved by the District Planning Authority before the use of any such materials commences.

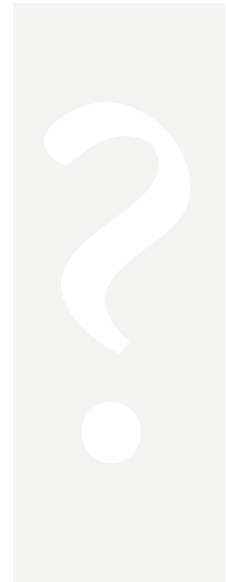
The reasons for the Council's decision to grant BUILDING PERMISSION for the development subject to compliance with the conditions hereinafter specified are:

- To comply with the provisions of Section 41 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971.
- In the interests of visual amenity.

Development for which BUILDING PERMISSION is granted is subject to due compliance with the general statutory provisions in force in the District, except as may be modified in this permission and the Building Regulations.

Dated: 22 December 1978 Address: Kier Construction Ltd, 177-179, Duke Street, Chester, Cheshire, CH1 1RN

Director of Technical Services
TOWN HALL



1970

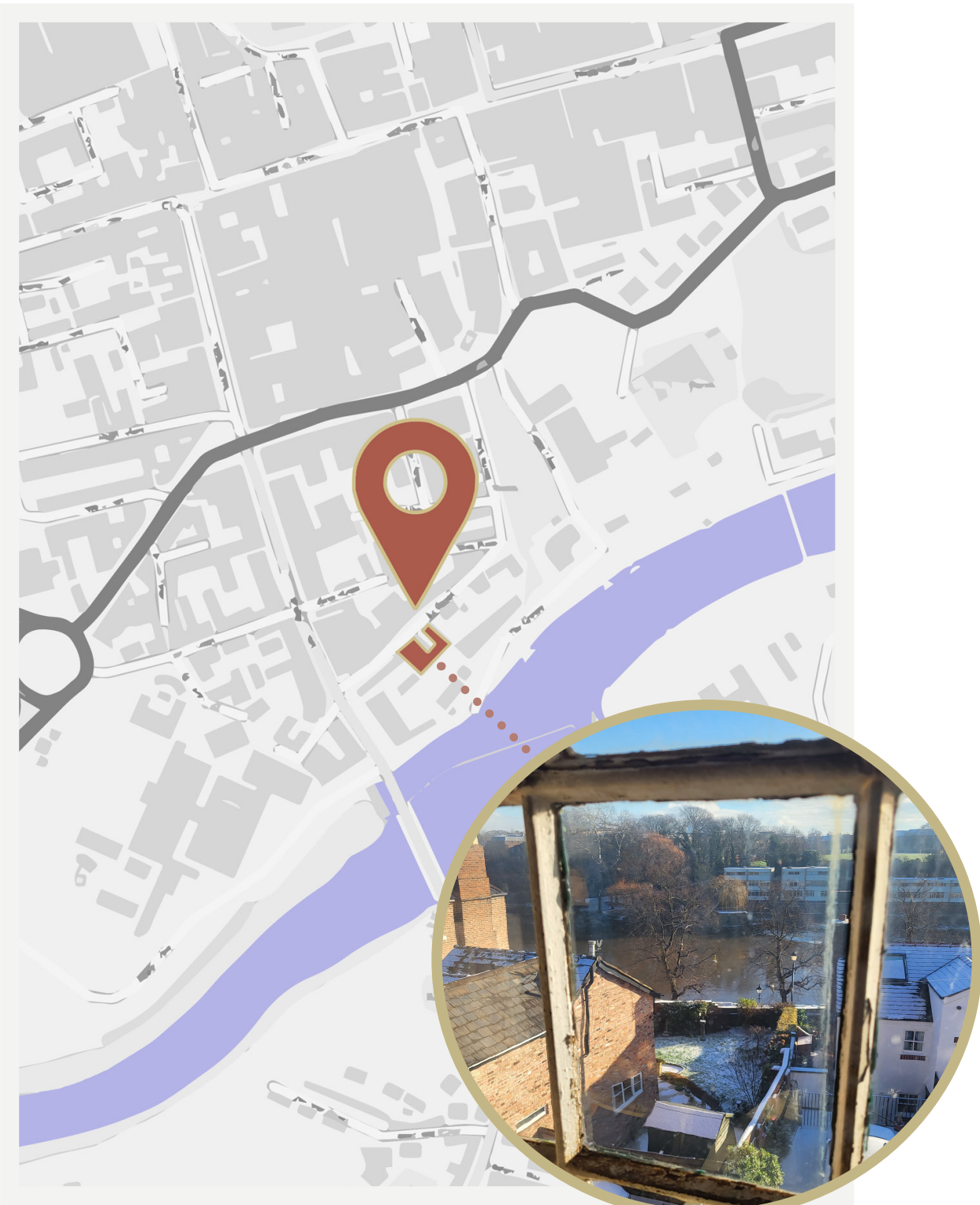
1976

1978

2025

SURROUNDINGS

Location & View



Attractions



MAPS

Ordinance Survey (OS) Map



Title Plan/ Land Registry Map

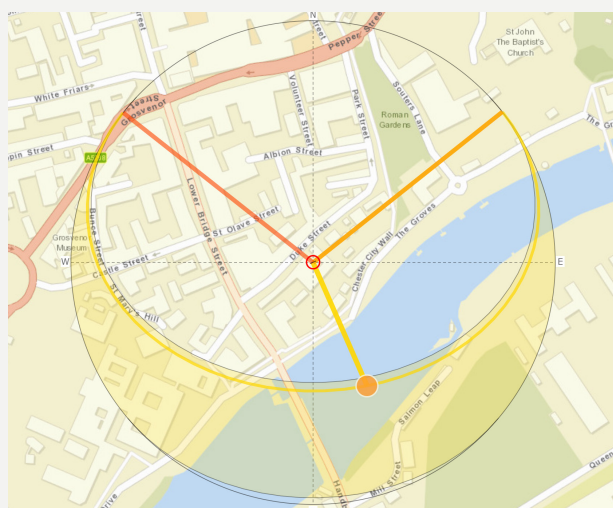
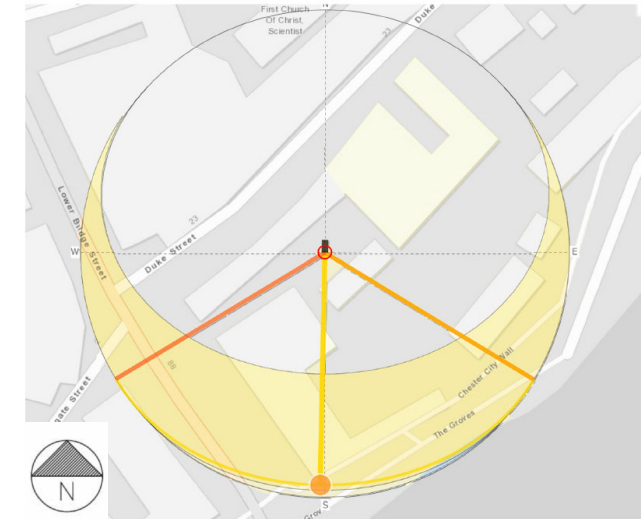


SUN MAPPING

Sun mapping to understand how the natural light interacts with the property. By observing when and where sunlight enters each room, to enhance the space's aesthetic, ensuring rooms are bright and inviting and minimising the need for additional artificial lighting. Beyond improving the overall look, this approach can also have a positive impact on guests' physical and mental well-being, as exposure to natural light is known to boost mood. Placing common areas in sunny spots can create vibrant, welcoming spaces. Thoughtfully considering how light flows through the hotel would transform guests' experience.



South-East view from Second floor January- noon



NOON - SUMMER



NOON - WINTER



USER

USER
USER
USER



PG 17.

USER RESEARCH

BALANCING TOURISM, HOUSING, AND MODERN TRAVEL NEEDS

There is an impact of increasing tourism on housing availability. A major issue is that too many residential properties are being used as holiday lets, limiting housing options for local residents. However, as regulations shift and taxes rise, some of these properties are returning to the residential market. This raises an important question: where will tourists stay?

At the same time, the cost of running hotels is also rising. Social media and influencers continue to promote the idea that we should travel more and experience more, but are hotels adapting to meet these changing demands? I want to explore alternatives such as hostels and capsule hotels, but with a focus on maintaining privacy while integrating technology to enhance adaptability and energy efficiency.

Travellers, whether for business or leisure, often prioritize affordability so they can spend more on experiences rather than expensive accommodation. Ultimately, what's most important to the modern traveller? Privacy, comfort, a place to wash, and just enough amenities to feel at ease—without excessive costs.

In addition to traditional travellers, the rise of digital nomads is also reshaping accommodation needs. More people are blending work and travel, requiring spaces that are not only comfortable but also functional for remote work. This has led to an increasing demand for hotels and accommodations that offer co-working spaces, strong Wi-Fi, and flexible stays that cater to people who move frequently. As work becomes more location-independent, hotels and temporary living spaces must evolve to support this lifestyle—providing areas that balance productivity, relaxation, and affordability.

Despite the downsides of influencer culture and the pressure to do and see more, having an affordable, comfortable place to stay could make travel more accessible. It's about creating spaces that help people feel more connected to the world without the financial strain.

DESIGNING FOR THE MODERN SOLO TRAVELLER

For the purpose of this project, I will focus on a specific user, though the concept would ultimately have a broader appeal to various types of travellers.

The chosen user is a solo traveller who wants to explore more and spend a couple of days in Chester as a tourist. Their trip will include discovering the city's history, shopping, and experiencing the local atmosphere. However, their priority is having a respectful and comfortable place to stay—somewhere that makes them feel welcome the moment they step into the lobby.

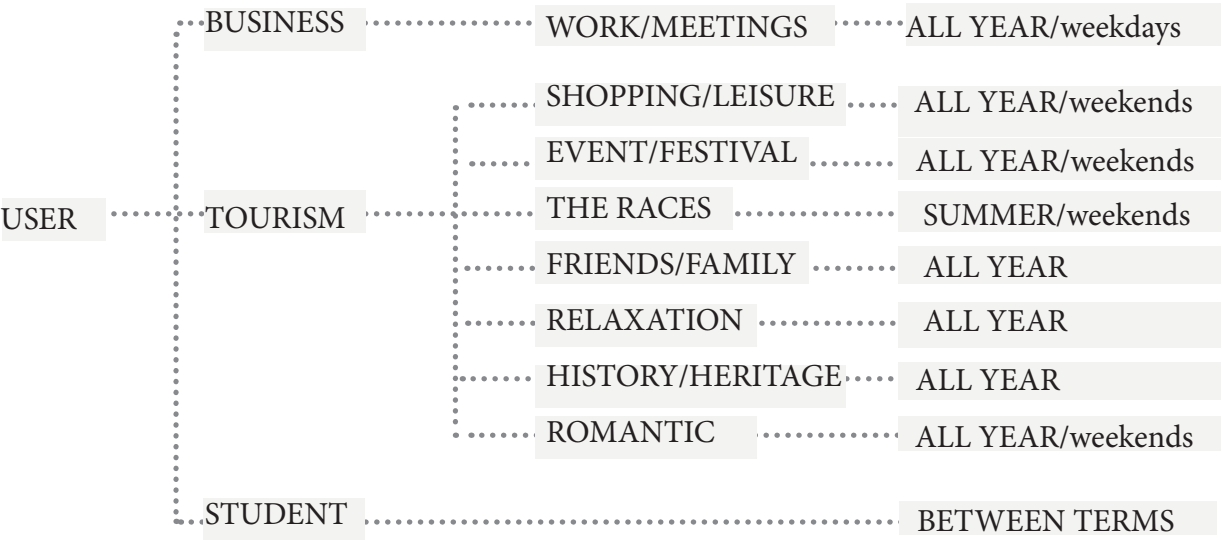
Given the dynamic nature of modern travel, this person will also be working during their stay. They need a space where they can spend a few hours making calls or catching up on work but also move around freely without feeling confined.

I will research and analyse the journey of a similar traveller, mapping out their behaviours and needs. And later this will then be cross-examined with the operational rhythm of a hotel to identify how these spaces can better adapt to evolving travel habits.

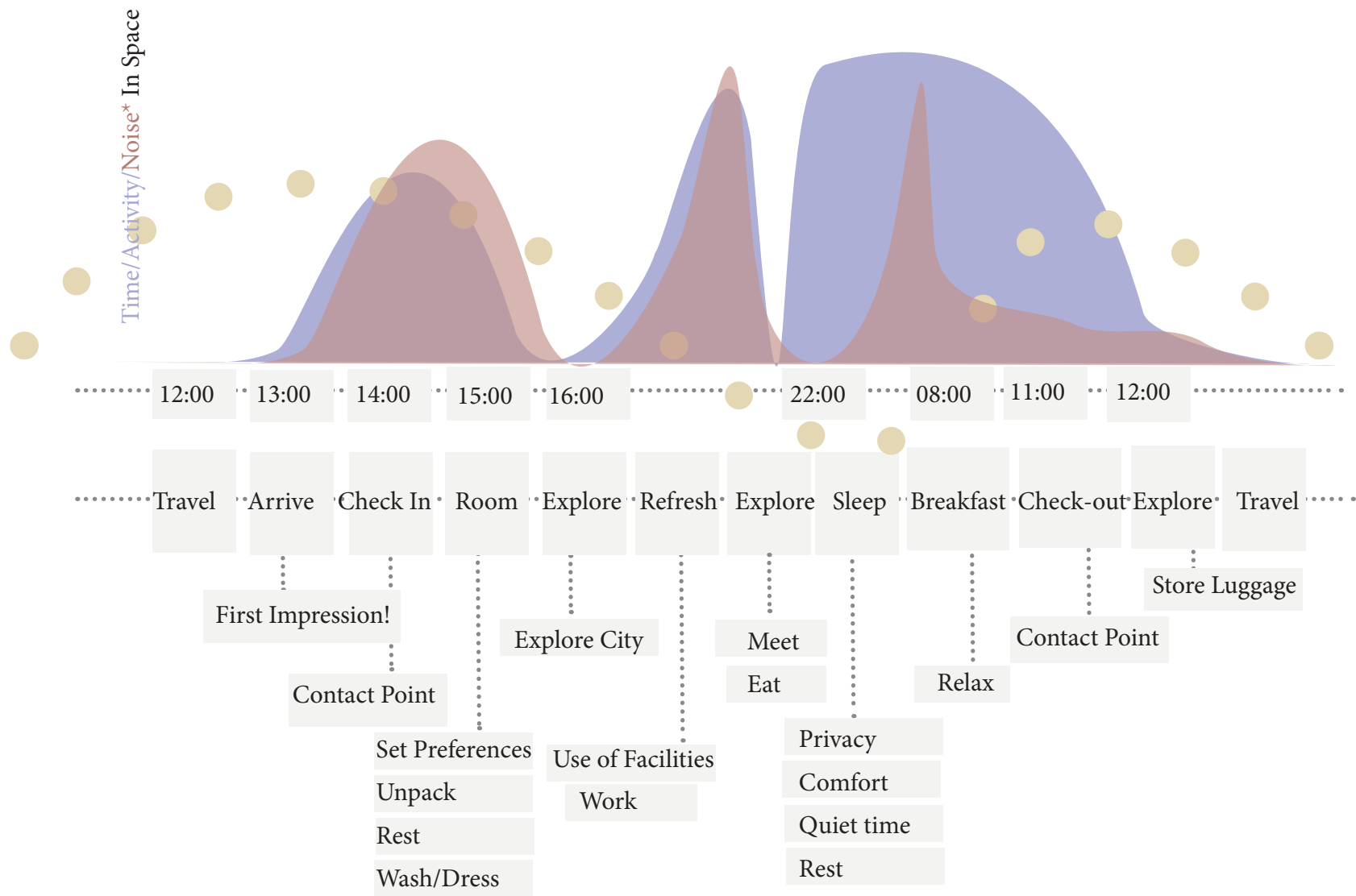
I believe this type of space would not only suit the needs of modern travellers but also be a successful business in Chester. As a city rich in history, culture, and shopping opportunities, Chester attracts a diverse range of visitors.

USER RESEARCH

WHO, WHY, WHEN



USER JOURNEY



*Noise levels will become an important consideration later in the project, particularly when exploring spatial zoning and how different areas interact

USER RESEARCH

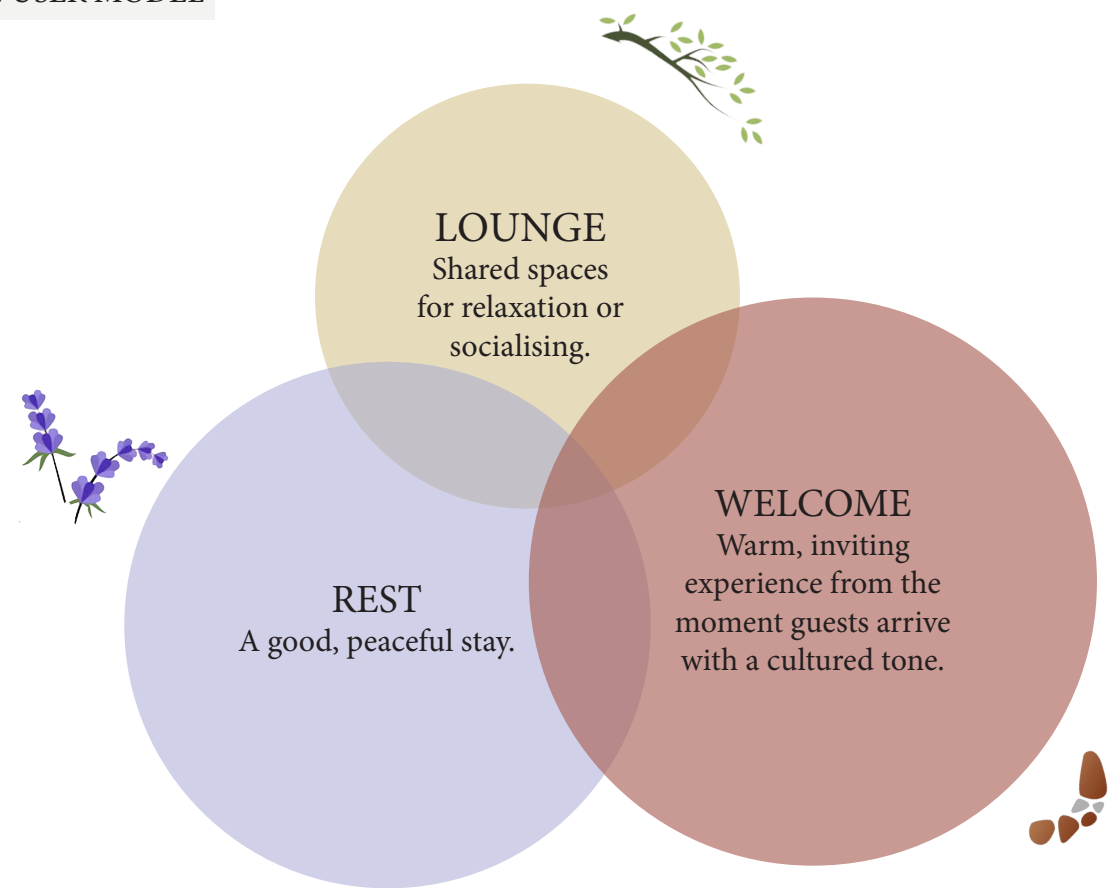
CONCLUSION

Solo travellers often use their rooms primarily for basic needs—sleeping, washing, and storing belongings—while spending the majority of their time exploring or in common spaces. These common areas will be designed to accommodate a range of activities, whether for socialising, working, or relaxing. These adaptable spaces provide flexibility and the freedom to move, offering an alternative to the confines of the private room. Solo travellers will need spaces where they can work comfortably for a few hours, make calls, or unwind without feeling confined.

This is why a smaller guest room, designed for essential needs at a more affordable rate, would work well for solo travellers. Guests can enjoy a comfortable and private space to rest without paying for unnecessary amenities, which they may not use. The savings from the smaller room can then be redirected towards experiences and activities, which are often the main focus of their trip. By offering this budget-friendly option, the hotel ensures that guests can still enjoy a high-quality experience, while shared spaces like lounges and work areas provide opportunities to socialize, relax, and work, enhancing the overall hotel experience.

By focusing on functionality that caters to both the privacy of the room and the social potential of shared spaces, the hotel will offer an environment that meets the needs of modern travellers. This approach ensures both comfort and flexibility while creating a sustainable business model.

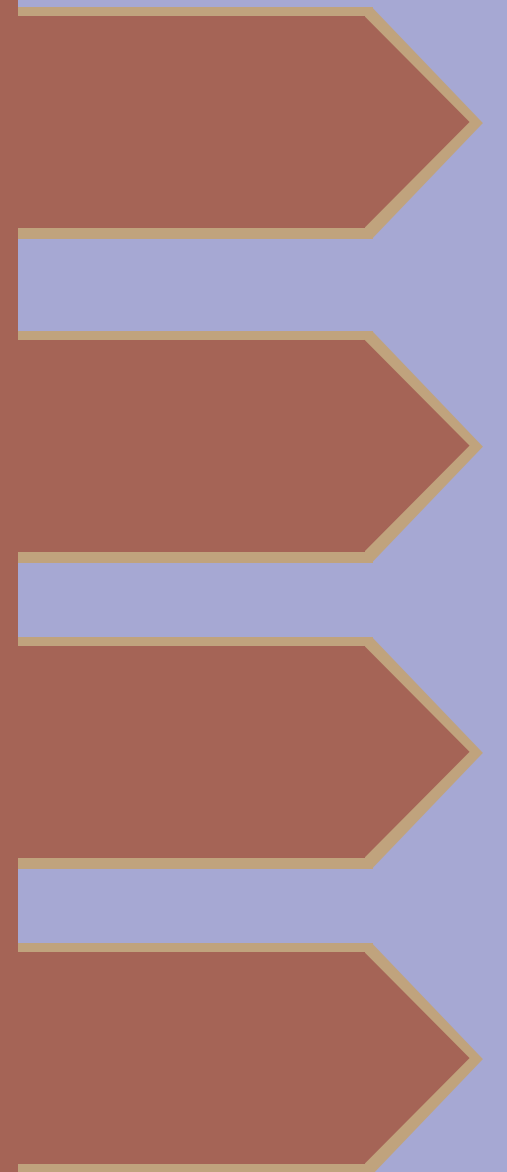
BASIC USER MODEL



TYPOLGY

TYPOLGY
TYPOLGY
TYPOLGY

PG 25.



HOTEL & HOSTEL TYPOLOGY

MARKET ANALYSIS OF LOCAL HOTELS

TYPE			PROPERTY ACCESSIBILITY		
Entire homes & apartments	13		Toilet with grab rails	3	
Apartments	12		Higher level toilet	2	
Hotels	11		Lower bathroom sink	2	
Bed and breakfasts	3		Emergency cord in bathroom	2	
Guest houses	1		Visual aids: Braille	1	
			Visual aids: Tactile signs	1	
MEALS			CERTIFICATIONS		
Self catering	13		Sustainability certification	3	
Breakfast included	8				
FACILITIES			ROOM ACCESSIBILITY		
Parking	10		Entire unit located on ground floor	3	
Restaurant	7		Upper floors accessible by elevator	4	
Pets allowed	8		Entire unit wheelchair accessible	3	
Room service	6		Toilet with grab rails	2	
24-hour front desk	6		Roll-in shower	2	
Fitness centre	2		Walk-in shower	12	
Non-smoking rooms	21		Raised toilet	2	
Airport shuttle	1		Lowered sink	2	
Family rooms	8		Emergency cord in bathroom	2	
Spa and wellness centre	2		Shower chair	2	
Free WiFi	26				
Adult only	4				
Wheelchair accessible	3				
Swimming Pool	1				

£55



Room

Private bathroom

Minibar

Free WiFi

Room size 65 ft²

1 double bed 

Comfy beds, 8 – Based on 238 reviews

Offering free toiletries, this double room includes a private bathroom with a bath, a shower and a hairdryer. The double room offers a minibar, a tea and coffee maker, heating and a TV.

In your private bathroom:

✓ Free toiletries

✓ Toilet

✓ Bath or shower

✓ Hairdryer

✓ Toilet paper

Room facilities:

✓ TV

✓ Refrigerator

✓ Linen

✓ Minibar

✓ Iron

✓ Heating

✓ Fan

✓ Ironing facilities

✓ Tea/Coffee maker

Smoking: No smoking

£170



Private bathroom

Flat-screen TV

Free WiFi

Size 12.25 ft²

1 double bed 

Comfy beds, 8 – Based on 1,745 reviews

Double Room with historic, original touches.

In your private bathroom:

✓ Free toiletries

✓ Toilet

✓ Bath or shower

✓ Towels

✓ Hairdryer

✓ Toilet paper

Facilities:

✓ Linen

✓ Socket near the bed

✓ TV

✓ Heating

✓ Flat-screen TV

✓ Fan

✓ Carpeted

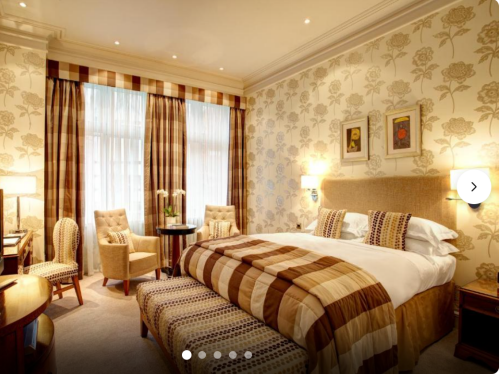
✓ Electric kettle

✓ Wardrobe or closet

✓ Upper floors accessible by stairs only

Smoking: No smoking

£259



Air conditioning

Private bathroom

Free WiFi

Room size 215 ft²

1 double bed 

Comfy beds, 9.3 – Based on 839 reviews

With a queen-size bed, air conditioning and free Wi-Fi

In your private bathroom:

✓ Free toiletries

✓ Bathrobe

✓ Toilet

✓ Bath or shower

✓ Towels

✓ Slippers

✓ Hairdryer

✓ Toilet paper

Facilities:

✓ Air conditioning

✓ Safety deposit box

✓ Linen

✓ Tile/marble floor

✓ Desk

✓ Seating Area

✓ Pants press

✓ TV

✓ Telephone

✓ Ironing facilities

✓ Iron

✓ Heating

✓ Carpeted

✓ Cable channels

✓ Wake-up service

✓ Wardrobe or closet

✓ Upper floors accessible by elevator

✓ Clothes rack

✓ Air purifiers

Smoking: No smoking

KEY DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

HOSTEL OVERVIEW

A hostel is a budget-friendly accommodation that offers shared sleeping spaces, communal facilities, and a social atmosphere. Traditionally aimed at younger travellers, hostels prioritise affordability and interaction, often featuring dormitory-style rooms, shared bathrooms, and common areas.



A standard hostel layout featuring rows of bunk beds in an open-plan dormitory, with minimal separation between sleeping areas. Privacy is limited, as beds are typically exposed. The open design can make the space feel crowded and noisy, with shared areas lacking clear boundaries between personal and communal zones. The absence of soundproofing and the close proximity of beds can create an environment where guests feel a lack of personal space.



Interlocking spaces provide a balance of privacy and openness, ensuring solo travellers feel comfortable without feeling isolated. An open ceiling prevents the space from feeling claustrophobic, while staggered layouts, partial walls, and built-in furniture create natural divisions without fully enclosing areas. Here it looks like sound-dampening materials such as acoustic panels and soft textiles are used to maintain a quiet atmosphere, enhancing the sense of personal space. Adjustable curtains offer guests flexibility in controlling their privacy, with layered lighting—combining warm ambient lighting with focused task lighting.

COST ANALYSIS - ROOMS

200Sqft SPACE

This research explores how much comfort and privacy can be offered within a compact 200 sq ft space. With no hostels currently operating in Chester, there’s a clear gap in the market for budget-friendly, well-designed accommodation. This project suggests an opportunity to create a space tailored for solo travellers and small groups who value both privacy and the option to connect with others.

A 200 sq ft space for a hotel-style accommodation with a focus on extra privacy.

Hotel - Average Double Bedroom in Chester

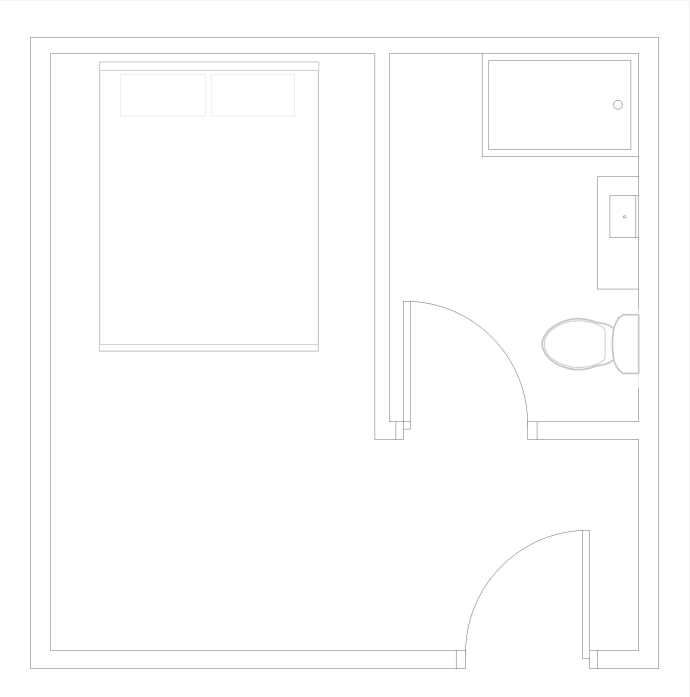
Price: £55 - £259 per night (weekends)
Average Size: 200 sq ft

Hostel - PH Hostel Manchester NQ1
(No hostels currently exist in Chester)

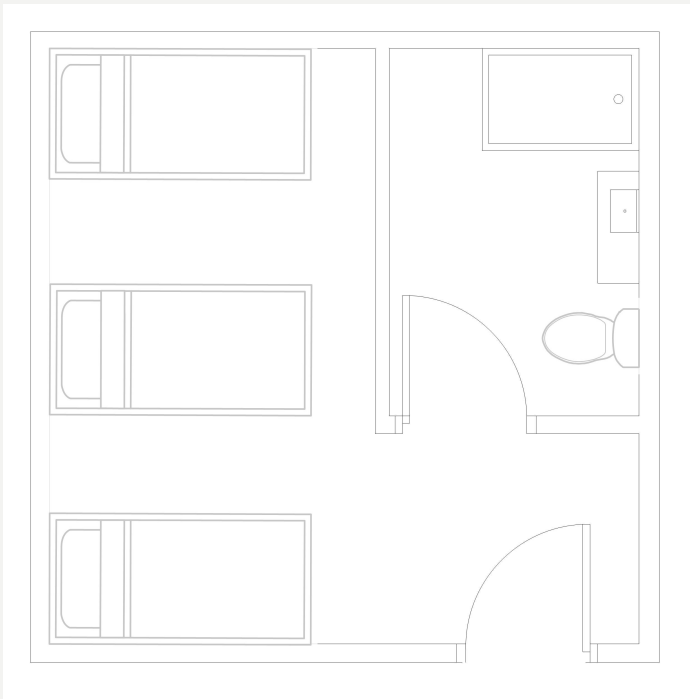
6 Single Beds in a Shared Space

Average Rate per Bed: £46

Basic Hotel Room
200 sq-ft/18.5m2



Basic Hostel Room
200 sq-ft/18.5m2



SPATIAL CONSIDERATIONS

SPATIAL CONSIDERATIONS & LAYOUT

Bed width: 1200mm (compact single for comfort without wasted space)

Wall thickness: Designed to buffer sound between corridors and neighbouring rooms. Existing structural posts will remain in place and wall widths will align with these to create a clean, streamlined layout.

Clear floor space: 900mm from the foot of the bed to the bathroom wall, allowing ease of movement.

Bathroom access:

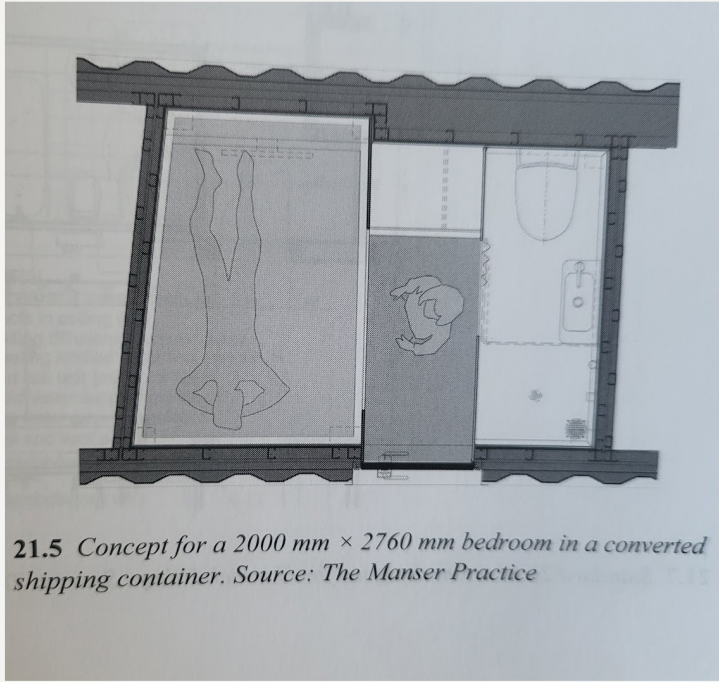
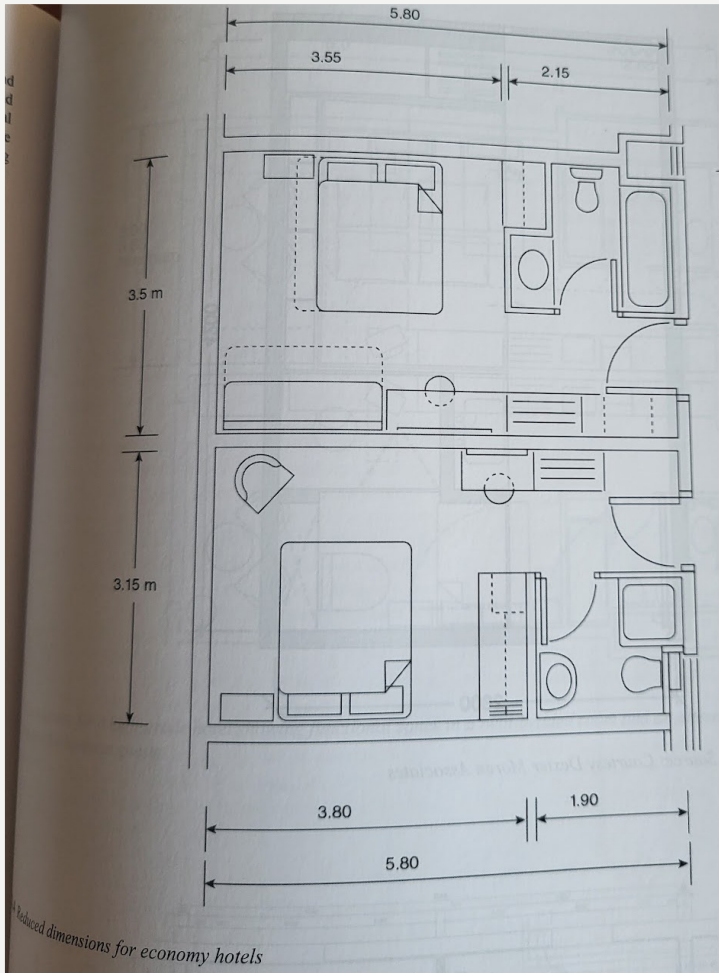
A pocket door is proposed to maximise usable space.

Shower: 800mm x 800mm — efficient footprint without compromising comfort.

Sink: A compact round basin is specified to reduce sharp edges and enhance flow in a tight space.

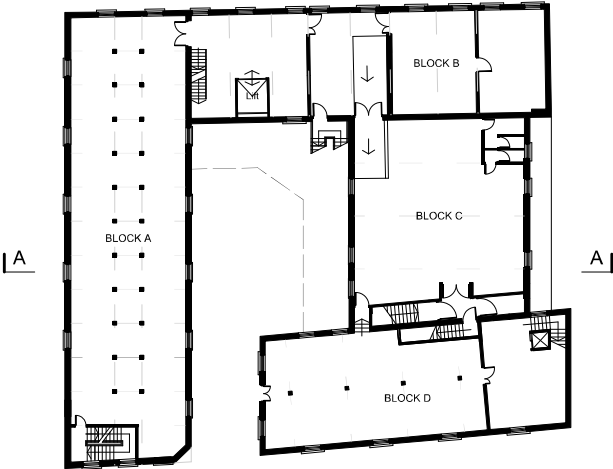
Mirror placement: Positioned directly opposite the window to reflect natural light and offer a visual connection to the outdoors from the bed.

Window access: The bed is positioned to ensure the guest can comfortably open the window, maintaining ventilation and connection with the exterior environment.

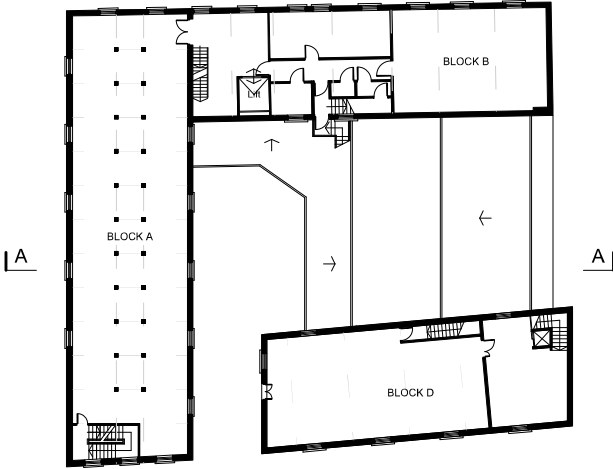


EXISTING FLOOR PLANS

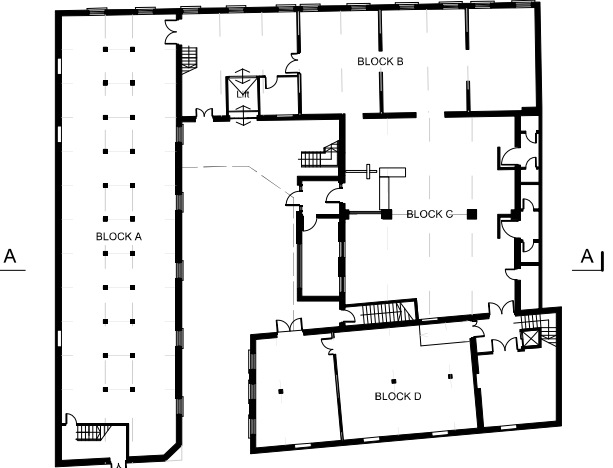
GROUND FLOOR



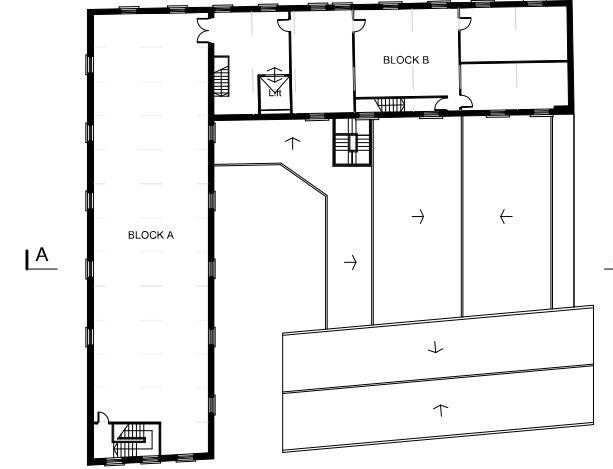
SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



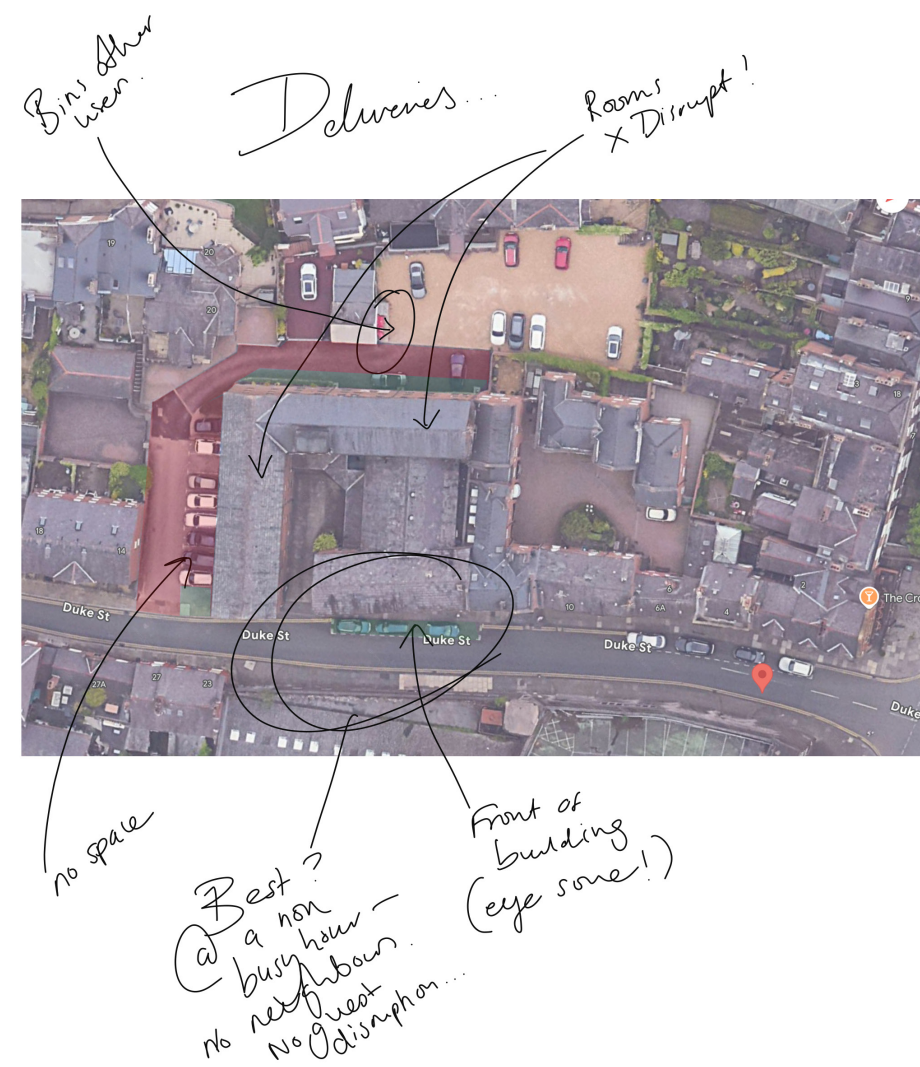
THIRD FLOOR



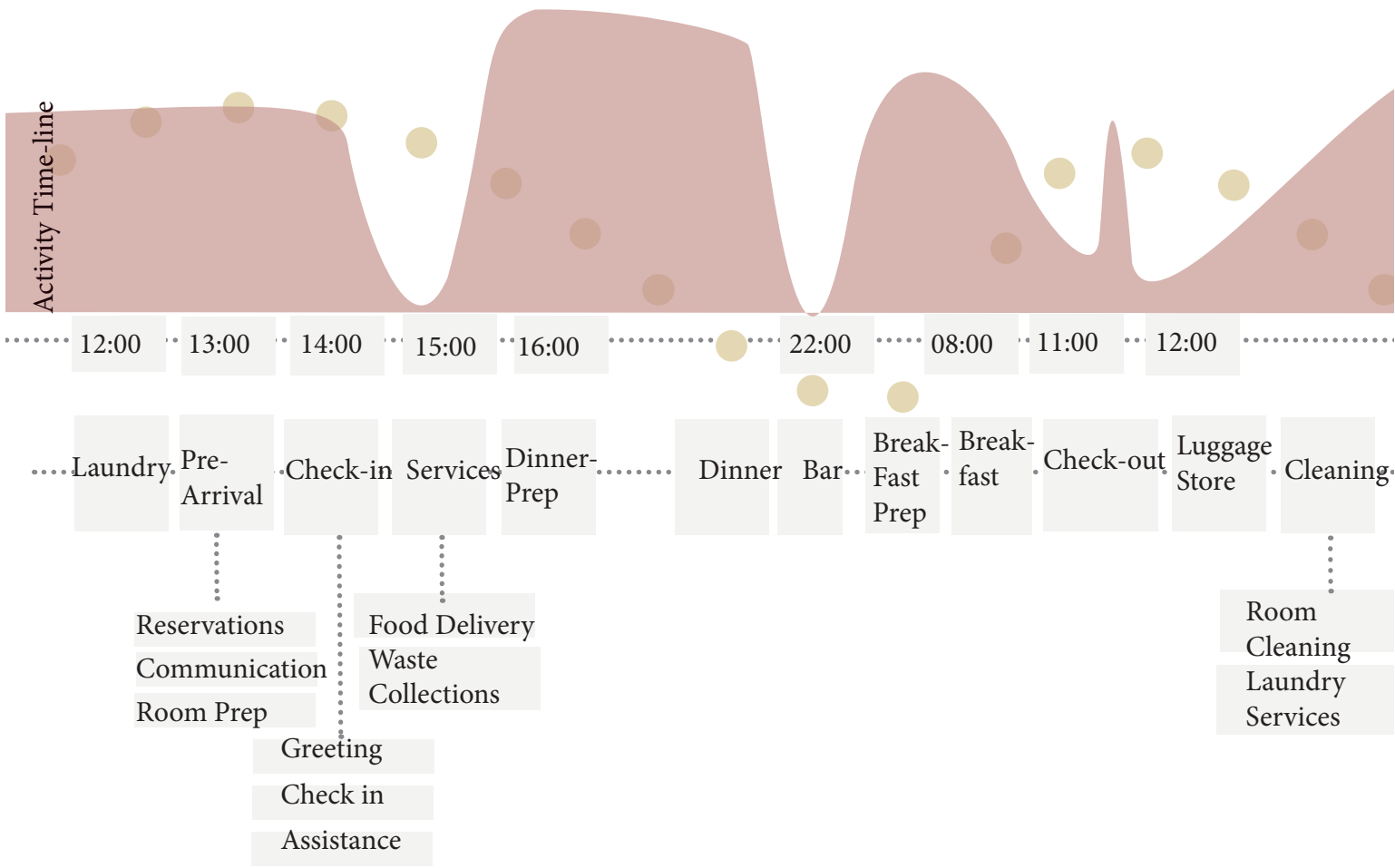
SERVICES & OPERATIONS

HOTEL OPERATIONS

The hotel will be zoned to work with existing plumbing, service routes, and potential noise sources—ensuring the layout supports the building’s constraints while creating a more comfortable, quiet experience for guests.



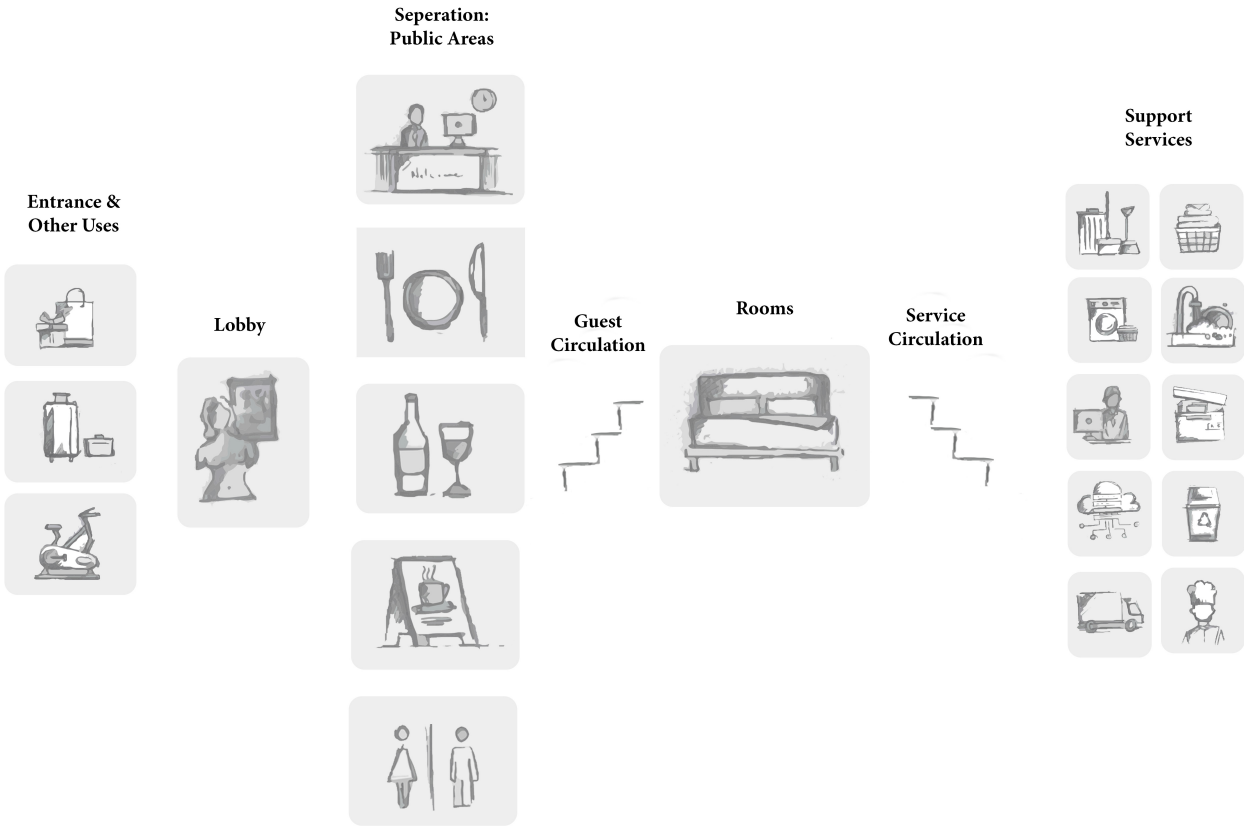
SERVICES & OPERATIONS



SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS

SPATIAL STRATEGY & REQUIREMENTS

From the research, considerations are needed around how the hotel operates throughout the day, which can be supported by dividing the space into distinct zones or blocks. Key areas include the entrance and lobby, where first impressions are created, and the separation between public and private zones to guide the guest experience and protect personal space. Circulation routes must also be addressed—ensuring that guests and service staff have clearly defined pathways to reduce crossover and improve operational flow. Guest rooms should be located with comfort, quiet, and accessibility in mind, while support services need to be discreetly integrated to ensure the hotel runs smoothly behind the scenes. This layered, strategic approach allows each space to serve its function while contributing to the overall rhythm, experience, and identity of the hotel.



SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATIONS

SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATIONS

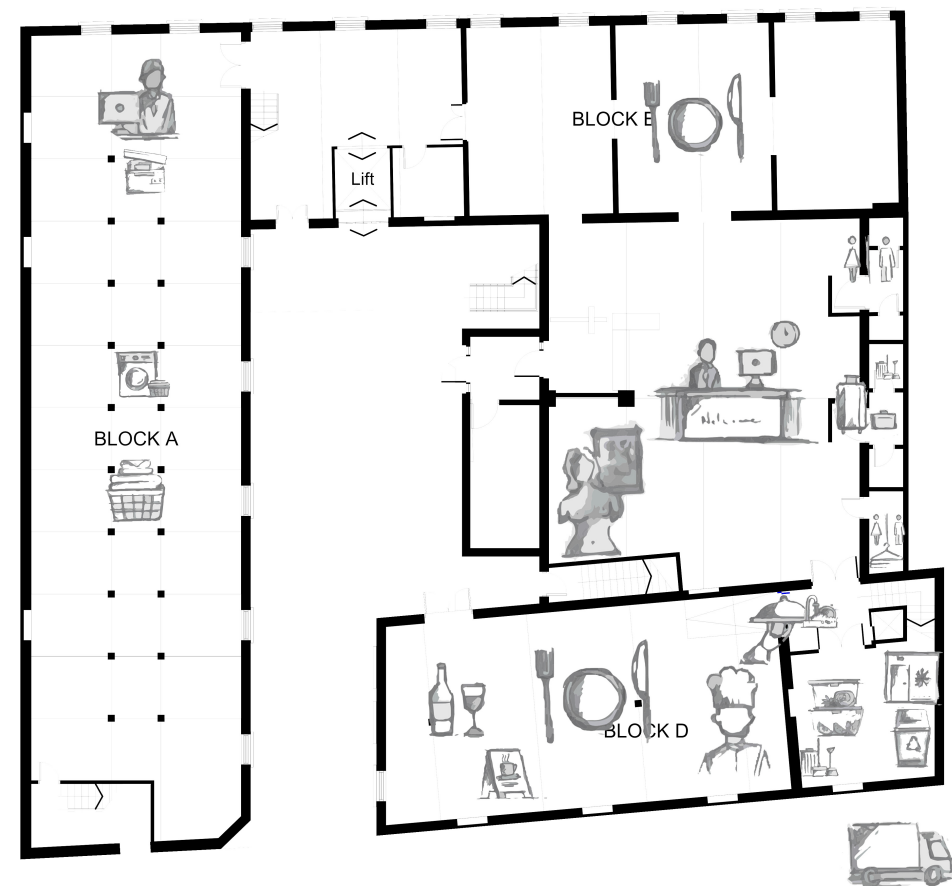
A Schedule of Accommodations outlines the spatial requirements and functional needs of the project, facilitating the effective zoning of spaces and ensuring that all necessary functions are appropriately allocated.

STAFF & USERS

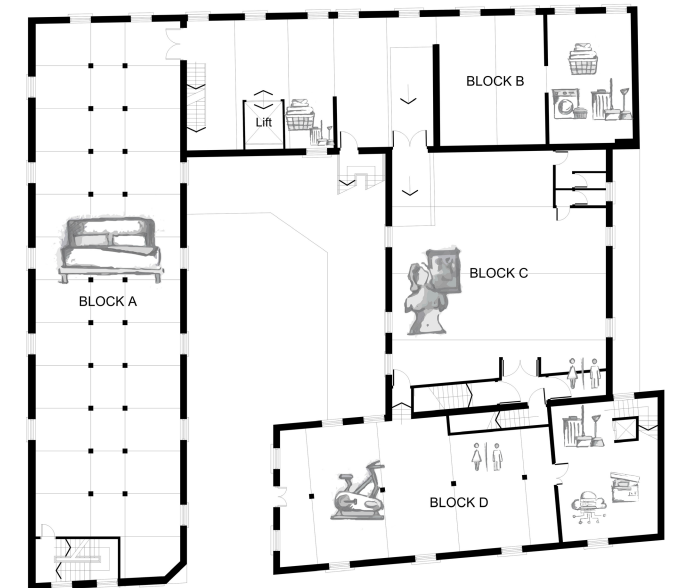
	Guest Access	Natural Light Desired <i>Low/High</i>	Noise Levels <i>Low/High</i>	Activity <i>Low/High</i>	Sq Footage	Plumbing Y/N
Kitchen					1600	Y
Chef Office/Managers Office					100	N
Staff Toilets					120	Y
Staff Cloak Room					120	Y
Food storage (pantry) cool room/ freezer					650	Y
Prep Area					Kitchen	Y
Cooking Area					Kitchen	Y
KP Area					120	Y
Service Area					200	N
Delivery Area					180	N
Front office/Management /Marketing /Accounts/Finance/Security					150	N
Staff room/Break out space					200	Y
Luggage Storage					100	N
Cleaning (storage and laundry room and services)					7/rm	Y
Storage					2.5/rm	N
Plant room					6/rm	N
Waste/Recycling					2.5/rm	Y
Lobby					10/rm	N
Cafe/Restaurant					1.5/seat	Y
Bar					300	Y
Business areas					10/user	N
Check in and out					150	N
Drop off point					2 cars	N
Leisure					10%	Y
Shop					300	N
Guest Rooms					200	N
Guest Bathroom					50	Y
Communal toilets					120	Y
Lift/Stairs					5%	N
Fire escape					see regs	N

SPATIAL ZONING

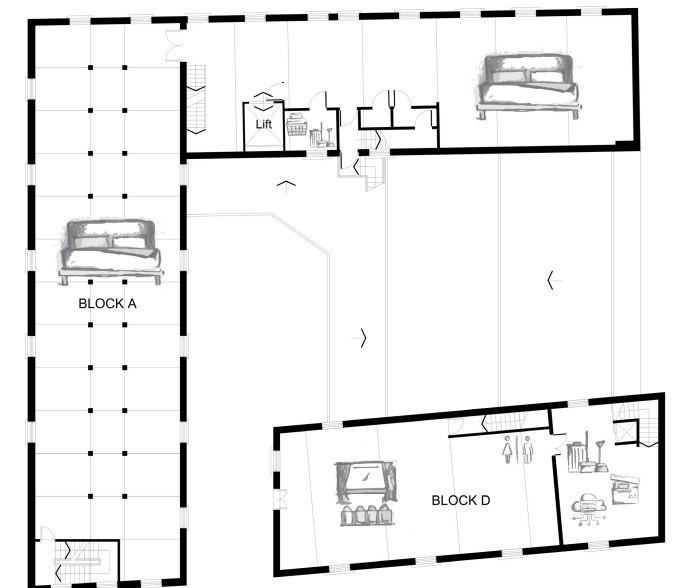
GROUND FLOOR



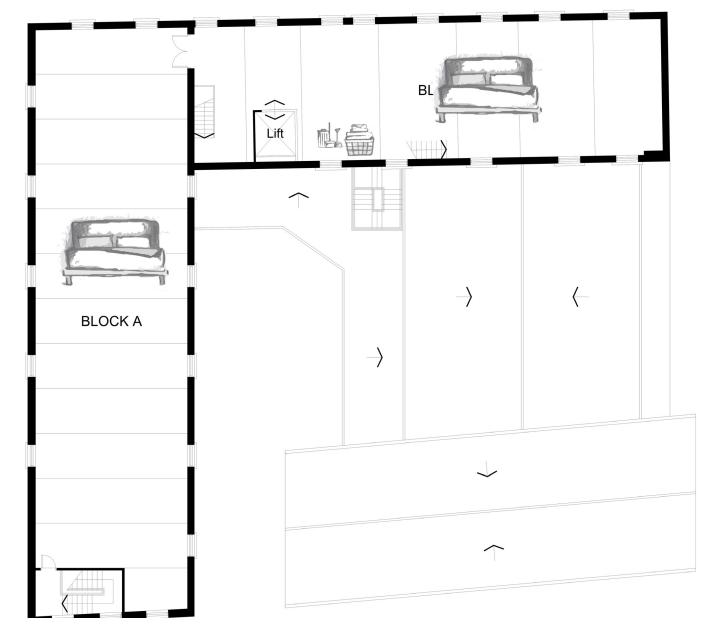
FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

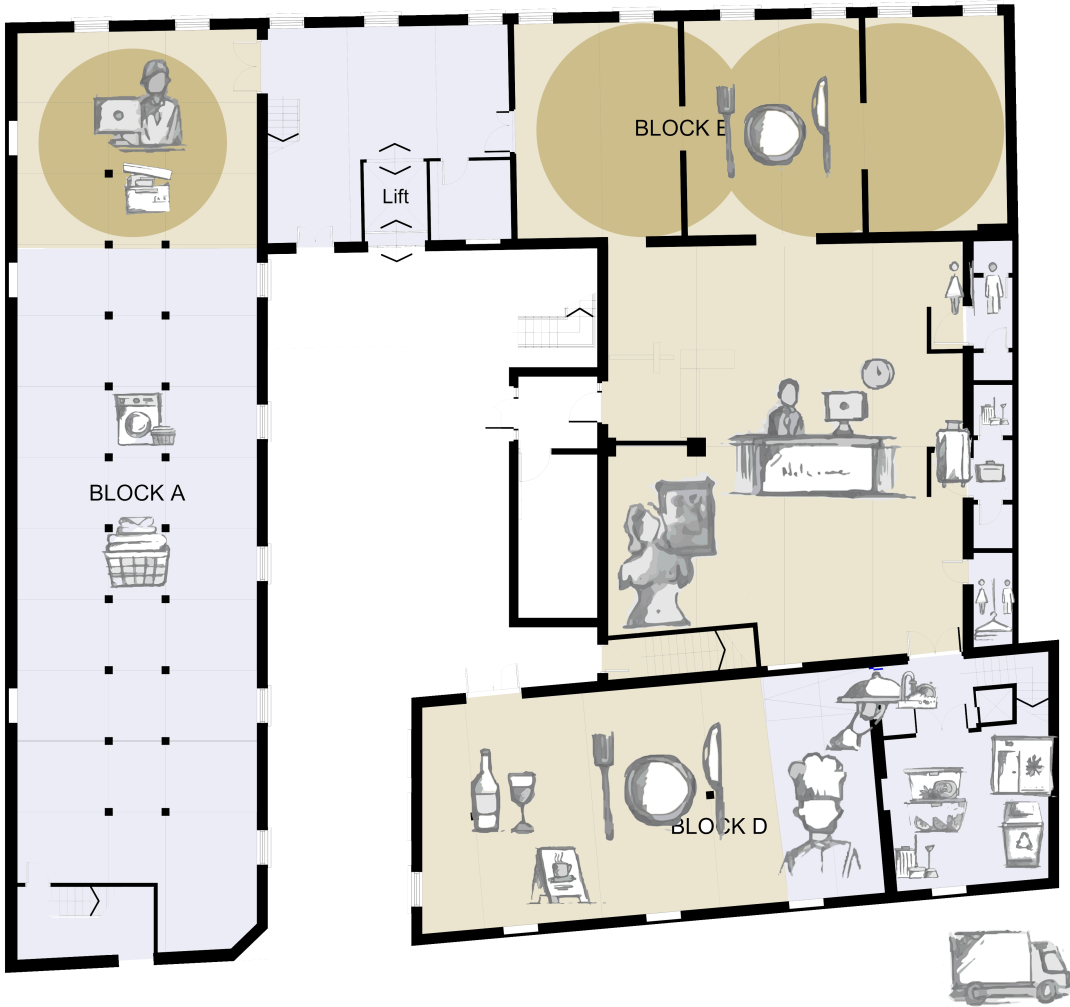


SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS

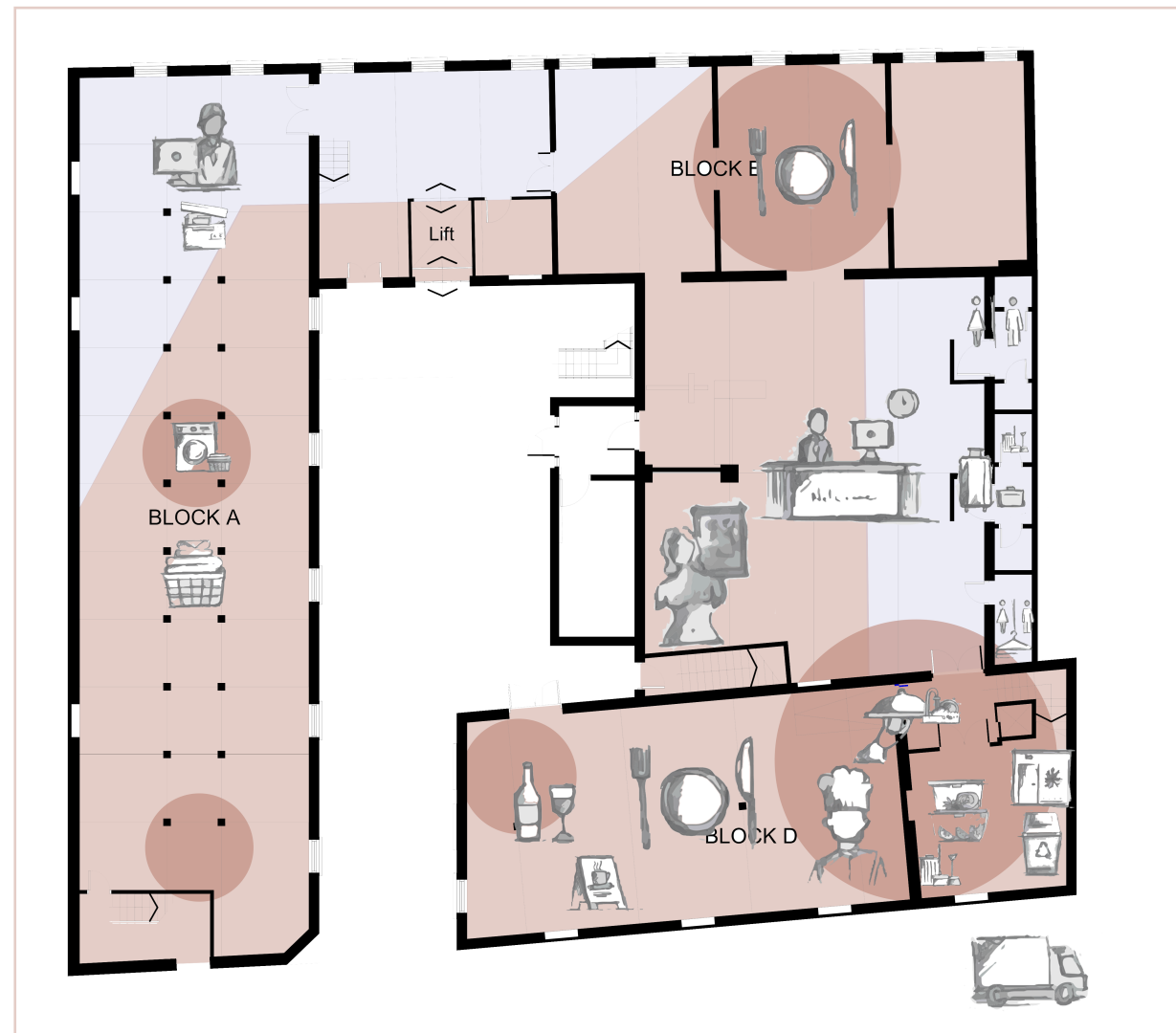
PUBLIC & GUEST/SERVICE AREAS



NATURAL LIGHT DESIRED



NOISE LEVELS



ACTIVITY



LOCAL MATERIALS



RED BRICK



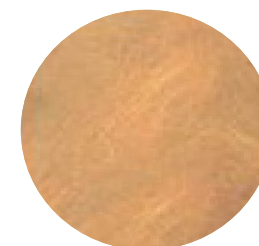
WOOD



SANDSTONE



SLATE



BRONZE



IRON

CHARACTER & FEATURES



ATMOSPHERE

SPATIAL

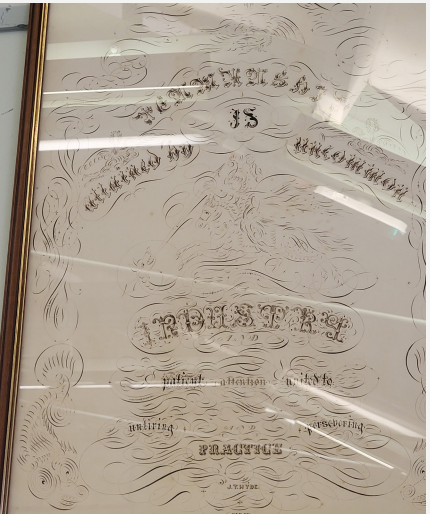
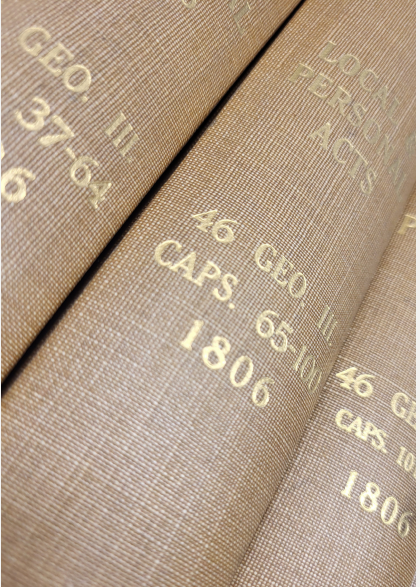


Linear, Low ceilings



High ceilings and Exposed beams

COLOURS & TEXTURES



SENSORY



Quiet, Calm



Warm, Bright

OBJECTIVES

CONCLUSION

Exploring hotel and hostel typology, this design focuses on the needs of solo travellers seeking both affordability and comfort. The aim is to create a hybrid typology that blends private sleeping with shared third spaces, drawing inspiration from Chester's cultural identity and material history. Moving forward into stage 2 - Design scheme, these design principles will be refined and expanded upon to create a more detailed spatial organization and functional layout.

OBJECTIVES

Create a hybrid hospitality model that is affordable and sociable tailored specifically for solo travellers.

Design compact, functional guest rooms that prioritise essential needs—sleep, hygiene, and storage—allowing guests to enjoy a private and comfortable space without unnecessary extras, supporting a more affordable stay.

Develop communal areas that support a range of activities such as socialising, working, and relaxing—encouraging guests to move freely throughout the space.

Draw inspiration from Chester's cultural and material identity to create a meaningful and memorable atmosphere that feels rooted in place, while embracing modern, sustainable design principles.

Support a sustainable and adaptable hospitality model by designing guest rooms that are easy to install, repeatable, and efficient. Supporting eco-conscious design, and allows for flexible application in different sites or contexts.

REFERENCES

ASHRAE. (n.d.). ASHRAE Handbook Series. American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers.

Ball, S. (n.d.). Hotel facility planning. Butterworth-Heinemann.

Booking.com. (2025) Hotels in Chester. Book your hotel now! Retrieved from <https://www.booking.com>

Briggs, c. (2019). Micro hotels: What they are and why they work so well. Retrieved from <https://www.apartmenttherapy.com/micro-hotels-36621302>

CIBSE. (n.d.). Guide M: Maintenance engineering and management. Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers.

DojoBusiness. (n.d.). Hotel space requirements: How much space is needed to open a hotel? Retrieved from <https://dojobusiness.com/blogs/news/hotel-space-requirements>

Ferguson, A. (2023). The department store which brought the railway to Chester. Cheshire Live. Retrieved from <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk>

Jones, P., & Lockwood, A. (n.d.). The management of hotel operations. Cengage Learning.

Mondal, D (2023) 21 different types of rooms in hotels. Retrieved from <https://www.hotelmanagementtips.com>

Kotobuki Seating. (2025). Global Cabin Yokohama Chukagai. Retrieved from <https://www.kotobuki-seating.com>

Elphic, D. (2024). Hotel room size: Average requirements for hotels. Retrieved from <https://www.siteminder.com>

SunCalc. (2025). Sunrise, sunset, shadow length, solar eclipse, and solar position calculator. Retrieved from <https://www.suncalc.net>

Google. (2025) Google Earth (Version 10.73.0.1) [Software]. Retrieved from <https://earth.google.com>

Nimbus. (2025). Nimbus property data platform. Retrieved from <https://www.nimbuspropertydata.com>

Buxton, P. (Ed.). (2022). Metric handbook: Planning and design data (7th ed.). Routledge.

Chester Tour Company. (2025). Chester attractions. Chester Tour Company. <https://chestertourcompany.co.uk/chester-attractions/>

Cheshire West and Chester Council. (Year). Change of use to storage, offices, and sales rooms at former Browns of Chester warehouse, Duke Street, Chester [PDF]. https://pa.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/online-applications/files/99D593E03E4CB9D9EBEBF760F8A4D-BE0/pdf/6_L2571--3441488.pdf

Design Anthology. (2023). All aboard the InterContinental Khao Yai. Design Anthology. <https://design-anthology.com/story/all-aboard-the-intercontinental-khao-yai>