

DESIGN SCHEME

A Design Exploration of Short-Term
Accommodation for Solo Travellers

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS
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CONTENTS

PG 1.

INTRODUCTION	3
DESIGN STRATEGY	5
Sustainability Research	
Sustainability Considerations	
SPATIAL EXPLORATION	11
Building Zoning	
Room Essentials	
Exploration of Layouts	
Design Response	
Spatial Concept	
DESIGN IDENTITY	21
Branding	
GUEST ROOMS	
Case Study	
Features	
THIRD SPACE	
Precidents	
Features	
LOBBY	
Precidents	
Features	
FINAL PROPOSAL PLANS	43
Ground Floor	
First Floor	
Second Floor	
Third Floor	
Fire Safety Requirements	
Section - Block A	
REFERENCES	59

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION
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Building on the initial concept established in Stage 1, this phase of the project focuses on developing and refining a spatial organisation scheme. The aim is to evolve the original ideas into a well-considered, functional, and characterful interior.

This stage places a strong emphasis on how spaces are experienced, connected, and utilised, considering both individual zones and the overall flow of the guest journey. Alternative layouts and spatial strategies were tested and evaluated to determine the most effective use, ensuring both practicality and atmosphere are addressed.

Through process-driven design development, this stage will help resolve the core layout while enhancing the project's spatial qualities. The result bringing together concept, comfort, and coherence, while continuing to support the project's overall goal: a grown-up, sustainable hostel experience tailored to modern solo travellers and professionals.

PG 3.

DESIGN STRATEGY

FORWARD STRATEGY

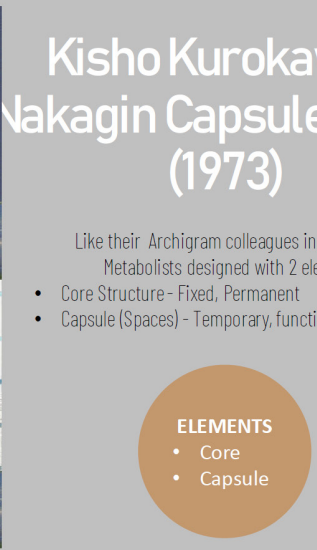
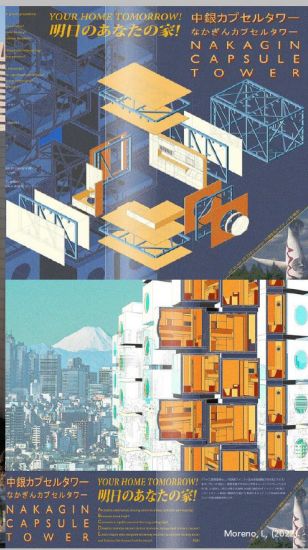
Focusing on one room layout to begin with, this project is designed to be scalable, allowing it to be replicated in different buildings with only minor adjustments. Rather than spending excessive time designing for each individual space, this approach creates a flexible yet distinctive concept.

Later on, the project will explore third spaces designed to reflect and complement the character of each location, ensuring they are sympathetic to the surrounding area while maintaining the overall brand identity. This approach allows for a consistent room layout while incorporating creative design elements in each hotel, ensuring that if this were to become a chain, every location would have its own unique character while still maintaining a cohesive brand identity.

SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH

DESIGN DRIVER

Building on previous studies in sustainability, this project takes inspiration from Kiyonori Kikutake’s Metabolist architecture, Kisho Kurokawa’s Nakagin Capsule Tower, and Stewart Brand’s Shearing Layers theory to develop a compact, pod-style guest room. The design focuses on essential needs—sleep, hygiene, and storage—creating a private, functional space without unnecessary extras. Influenced by Kikutake’s modular thinking and Kurokawa’s idea of replaceable living units, the guest room is designed to be easy to assemble, maintain, and adapt over time, supporting a more sustainable, long-term use. Brand’s Shearing Layers model helps shape the overall approach: the existing building is seen as the permanent outer shell, while the pod is a flexible inner layer that can evolve as needed. Starting with one standardised layout, the concept is designed to be scalable and simple to replicate across different sites with only minor adjustments. Further detail on the structure, materials, and sustainable features of the pod will be explored in Stage 3 of the project.



Kisho Kurokawa's Nakagin Capsule Tower (1973)

Like their Archigram colleagues in Britain, the Metabolists designed with 2 elements:

- Core Structure - Fixed, Permanent
- Capsule (Spaces) - Temporary, functional, renewable.

ELEMENTS

- Core
- Capsule

A rare example of experimental architecture from a post-war Japan -yet it is currently being dismantled.

Nakagin Capsule Tower - Previous study

EXISTING INTERIOR



SHEARING LAYERS MODEL

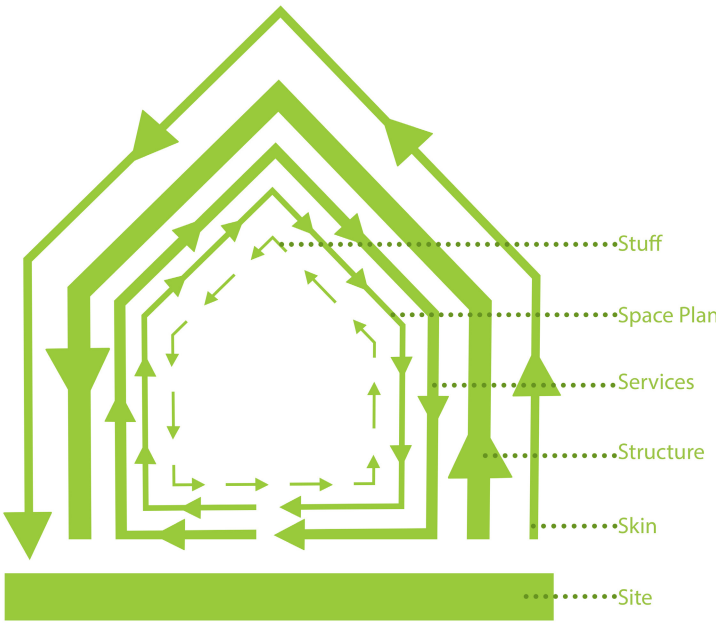


Figure1.Shearing Layers. Authors Own. (Information sourced from Van den Heuvel, 2023).

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

PURPOSE

Fully understanding the user’s needs is essential, as every purpose comes with specific requirements. This includes conducting thorough site analysis, research, and clear briefing. Key considerations include acoustics, fire safety, accessibility, and maintenance. Ensuring factors like lighting controls, heights, and other features are tailored appropriately. Materials must be fit for purpose, durable, and able to withstand wear and tear.

The hotel design targets solo travelers, professionals, and older guests, ensuring their needs are met through research, surveys, and case studies. Site analysis will assess accessibility, transport links, and nearby attractions while also evaluating environmental factors and structural potential.

Fire regulations, acoustic considerations, and accessibility are important areas to address for the design.

The layout will prioritize efficiency, comfort, and style, using durable, easy-to-maintain materials suited for high-traffic areas.

TIME

Understanding how long an interior will be in use allows designers to plan effectively, whether it’s temporary, long-term, or flexible. Each requires a unique design approach to ensure a successful project. No project is truly permanent; it is simply classified as long-term. This highlights the importance of investing in the correct materials and incorporating efficient energy and water usage into the design.

The hotel’s design will be a long-term project, ensuring durability, efficiency, and adaptability over time.

High-quality materials will be selected to withstand frequent use while maintaining aesthetics and sustainability.

A cost-effective strategy will focus on investing in key areas, balancing initial expenses with long-term savings to create a sustainable and future-proof hotel model.

ENERGY & WATER SYSTEMS

Site analysis is key to identifying efficient energy and waste solutions. Optimising natural light in frequently used spaces and placing less-used areas in darker zones helps reduce energy use. Features like timers, motion sensors, and separate lighting circuits further enhance efficiency. Accessible heating and ventilation systems ensure easy operation, while designing to encourage eco-friendly behaviors, such as incorporating recycling areas, supports effective waste management.

Site analysis will identify energy-efficient and sustainable solutions. By optimising natural light in frequently used areas, such as the lobby and dining spaces, and placing less-used areas like storage or utility rooms in darker zones.

Features like timers, motion sensors, and separate lighting circuits.

Heating and ventilation systems will be easily accessible and adjustable. Water-efficient fixtures and energy-saving elements will help reduce operational costs.

MATERIALS & FINISHES

The choice of materials is vital to achieving sustainable interiors. Balancing durability, flexibility, weight, texture, color and reflectance, with sustainability factors such as embodied energy, VOC emissions, renewability, and recycled content. Sourcing materials locally reduces transportation emissions and strengthens community ties. Use of reflective, light-colored materials in darker spaces can enhance natural light, reducing the need for additional lighting. New material technologies, renewable resources, bio-based materials, and recycled products to meet the demand for eco-friendly interiors.

Choosing durable, low-maintenance materials such as stone, concrete, and high-performance fabrics that resist wear and reduce replacement needs.

Opting for low-VOC, non-toxic finishes improves indoor air quality, while natural, bio-based materials promote a healthier environment.

Recycled, upcycled, and local materials minimize waste.

Acoustic treatments ensure guest comfort.

Additionally, using biodegradable and reusable amenities, such as compostable packaging and refillable dispensers, along with modular furniture, contributes to a flexible, eco-friendly design.

CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The choice and appropriate approach to a construction method depends on the purpose of the project and its specific requirements. Some elements may need to be dismantled easily or hidden for safety, requiring more solid and robust fixing.

The choice of construction methods should consider both functionality and ease of maintenance.

The design should ensure that spaces are flexible, secure, and easily adaptable to accommodate guests’ needs, while also providing a comfortable, safe, and welcoming environment for short or long stays.

FUNCTION

Understanding how occupants will use a space is essential. Modular furniture, movable partitions, and multipurpose elements allow spaces to evolve with their users’ needs, reducing material waste and extending the life cycle of interior components. Modular systems can enhance flexibility and reduce resource consumption.

User research will allow for a better understanding of the function and use of the hotel space that meets the needs of the guests. By gaining insights into traveler behaviors, preferences, and expectations, the design can focus on spaces that prioritize comfort, flexibility, and convenience.

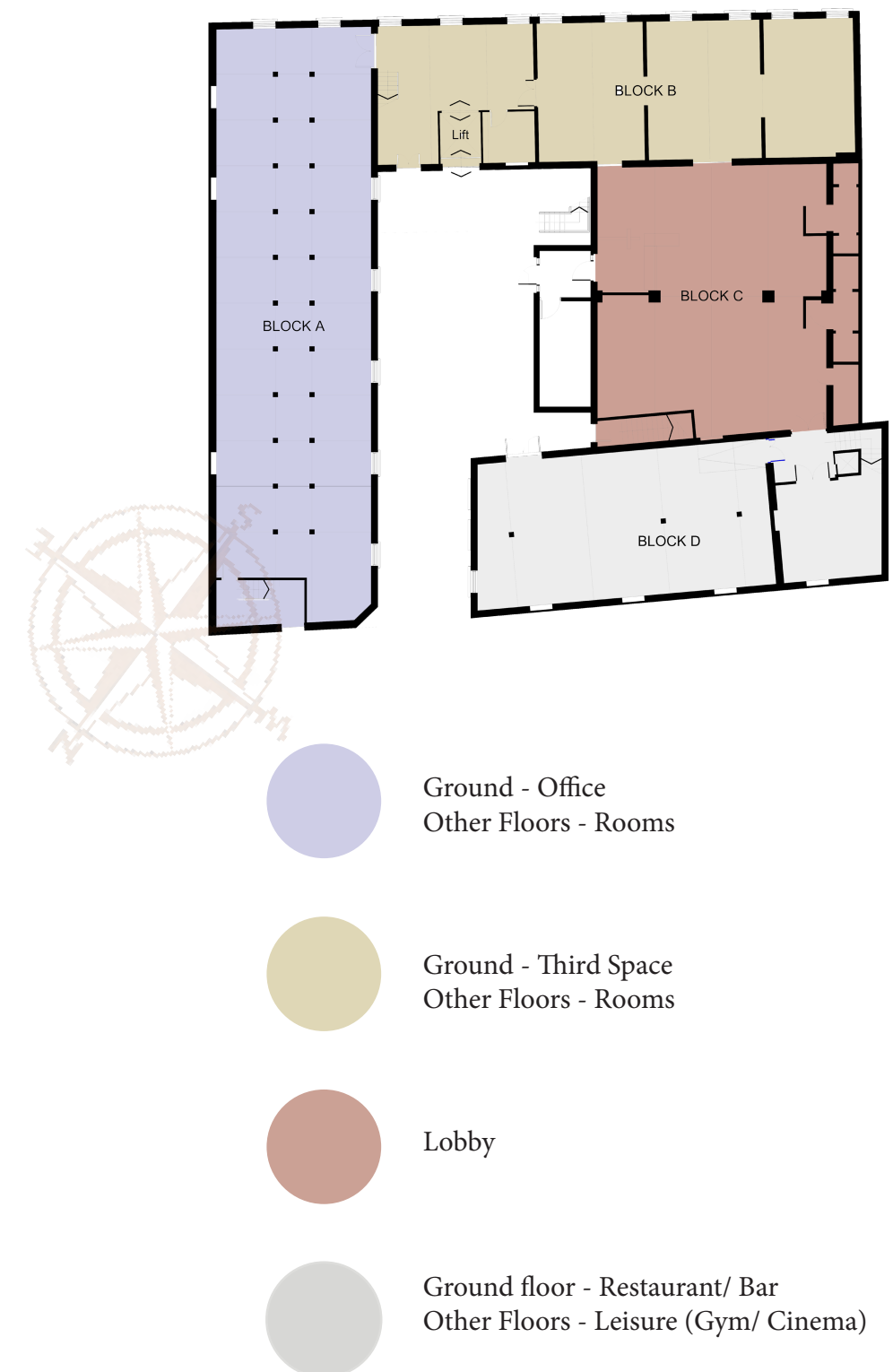
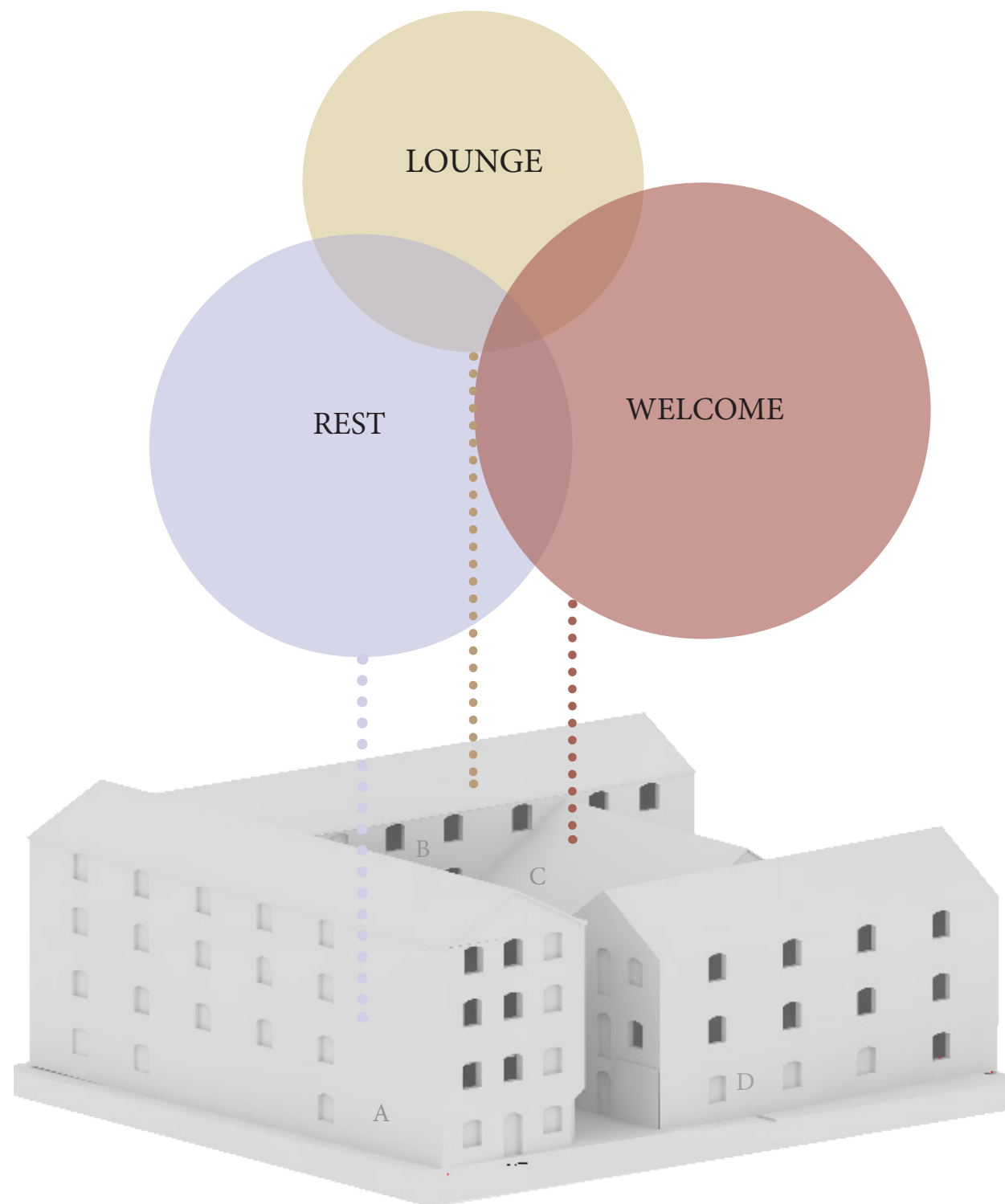
Space allocation and material usage will then align with guest needs, minimising waste and optimising resources.

SPATIAL EXPLORATION

PG 11.

BUILDING ZONING

BASIC USER MODEL



ROOM ESSENTIALS

A ROOM TO A GUEST

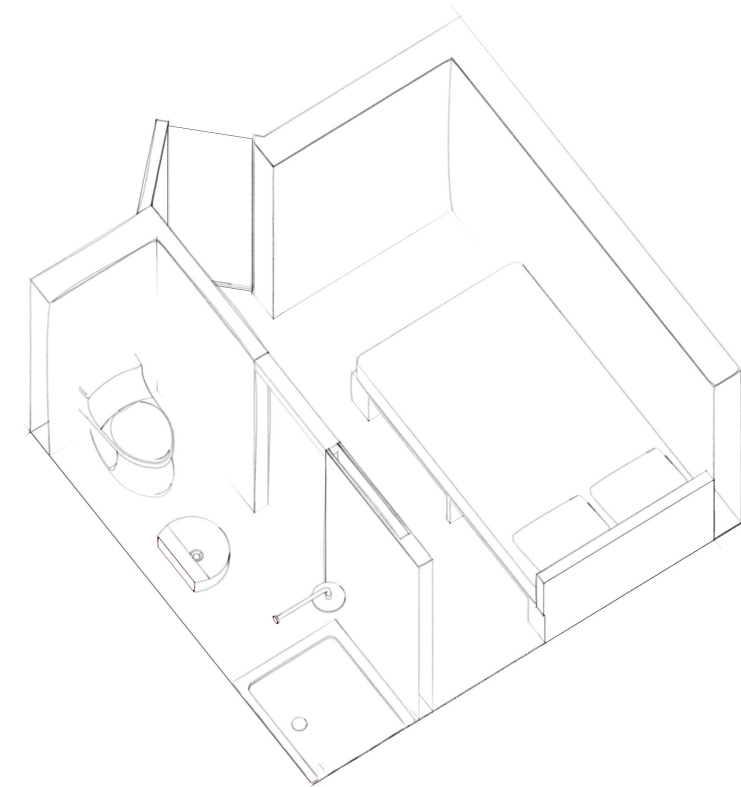
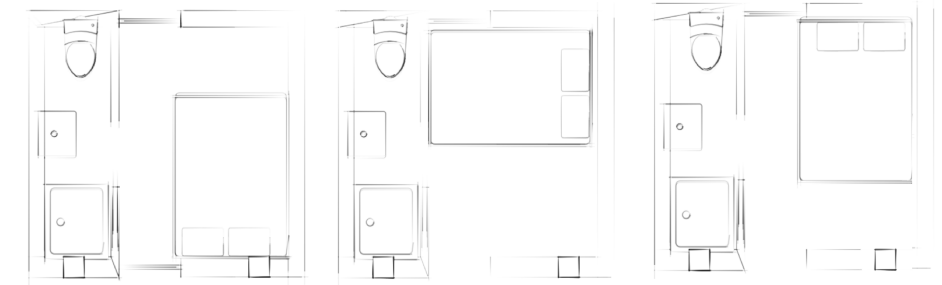
Arrival: Guests can enter the room and have a spot to place their bag and unpack.

Unpacking and Changing: There needs to be enough space for guests to unpack their clothes and get changed.

Washing and Drying: The bathroom will have everything needed for a quick wash and dry. Space near the sink for toiletries, and a well-designed shower area with shelves or ledges to hold products. A towel rail or heated towel rack would keep things dry and comfortable.

Hair Care and Grooming: A mirror with good lighting is key for this part of the journey.

Valuables: For safety and peace of mind, there will be a discreet, secure place for guests to store their valuables. This could be a small lockable cabinet or a secure drawer.

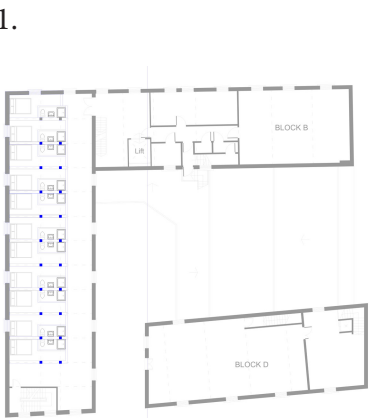


EXPLORATION OF LAYOUTS

EXPLORING SPATIAL LAYOUTS THROUGH VARYING ROOM ORIENTATIONS

GOAL:

Ensure that every guest room includes a window with access to natural light, while maximising the number of rooms within the available footprint to support a budget-friendly, higher-end hostel model.



10 Rooms

Some rooms to not benefit from a window.
Easy fit out.



10 bedrooms

Central corridor
All rooms with a window
Split window in bed/bath - solution needed for this.



14 Rooms

Smaller rooms.
Not all rooms have natural light.



14 rooms

Some bathrooms not back to back but this allows to each room to have a window.



16 rooms

Smaller layout.
Sink outside bath-room/ for room for vanity space.
Window issue.



16 rooms

Small basic layout.
Vanity space/sink inside bathroom. wet/dry.
Window issue.

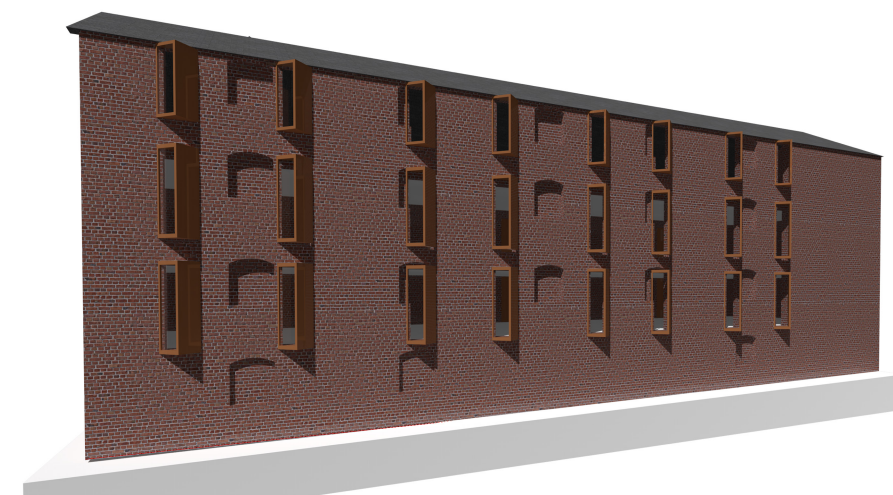
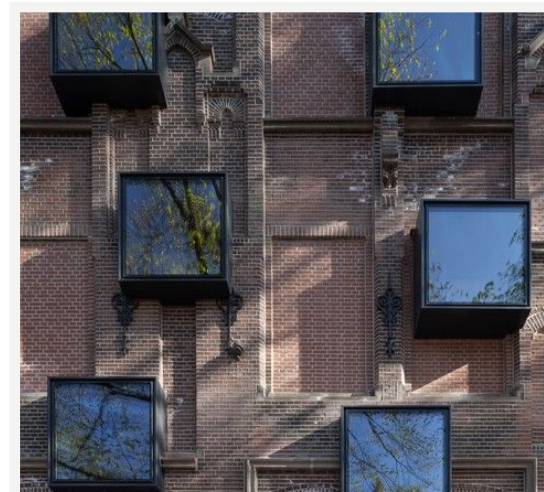
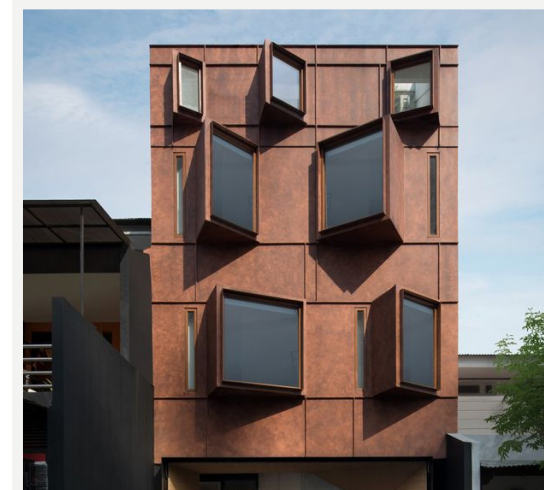
DESIGN RESPONSE

DESIGN RESPONSE TO LAYOUT CONSTRAINTS

CURRENT BUILDING



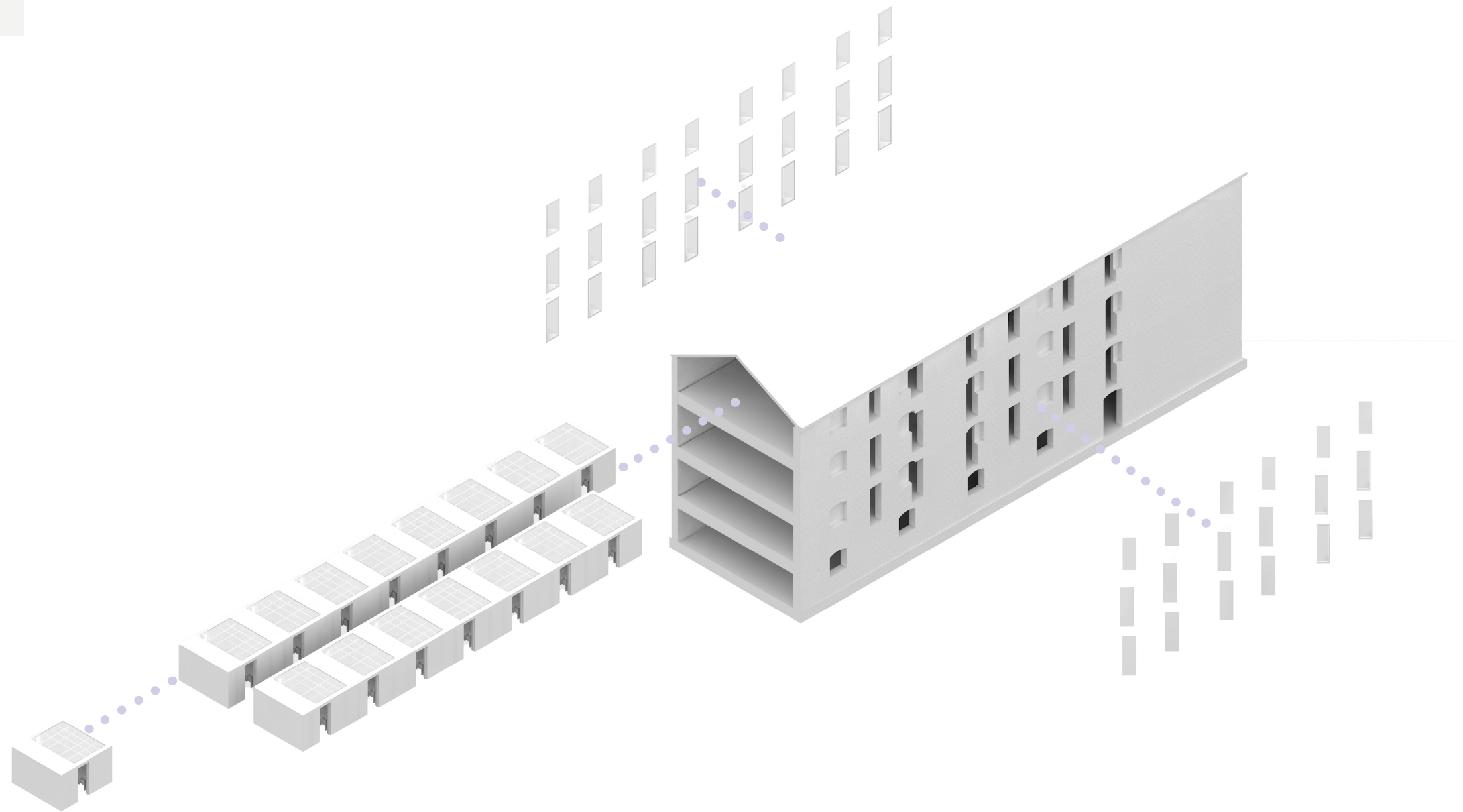
WINDOW SOLUTION



This unique window feature would serve as a recognizable element of the brand across multiple locations.

SPATIAL CONCEPT

ROOM CONCEPT - BLOCK A

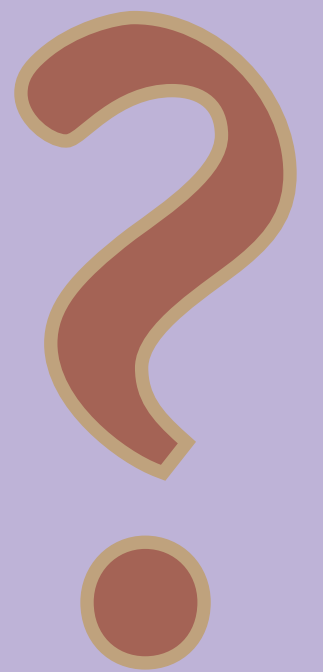


PG 19.



DESIGN IDENTITY

DESIGN IDENTITY
DESIGN IDENTITY
DESIGN IDENTITY



PG 21.

BRANDING

INFLUENCE

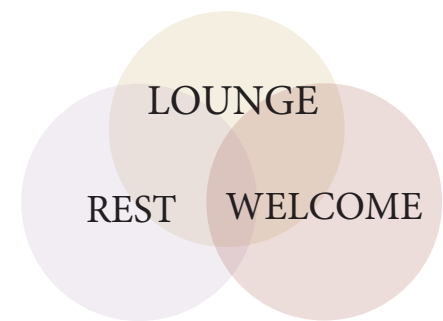


LANTERN

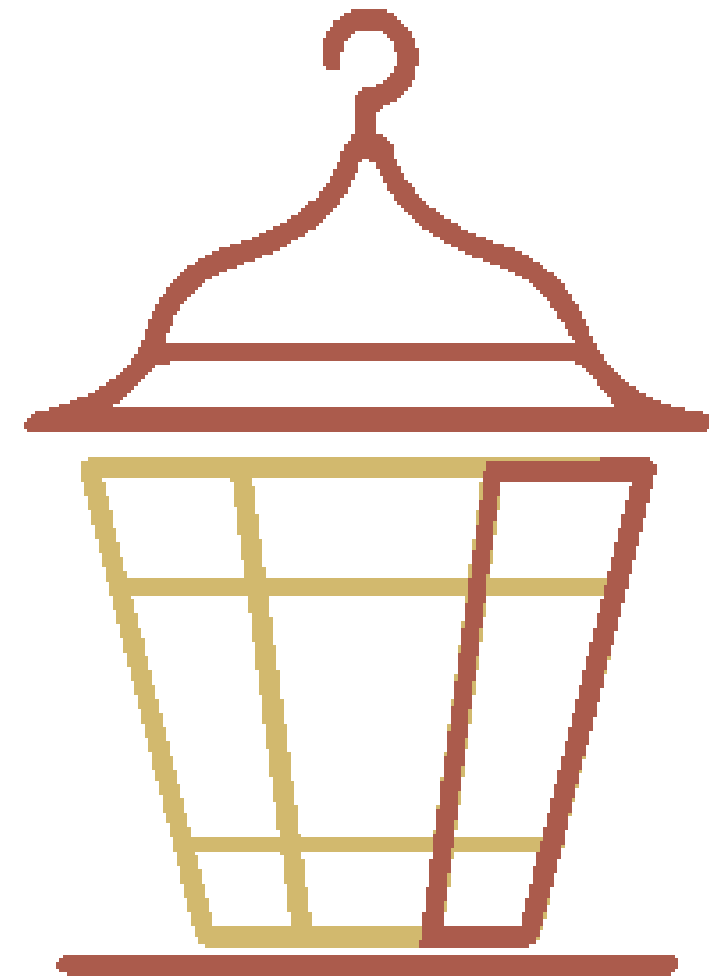
Symbol of Guidance & Safety

Lanterns have historically symbolized guidance, much like a lighthouse. Naming a hotel The Lantern evokes the idea of a warm, safe place that helps travelers find their way — both literally and emotionally.

COLOUR



SHAPE



THE
LAN'TERN
ROOMS

SIMPLE STAYS, THOUGHTFUL SPACES

GUEST ROOMS

GUEST ROOMS
GUEST ROOMS
GUEST ROOMS

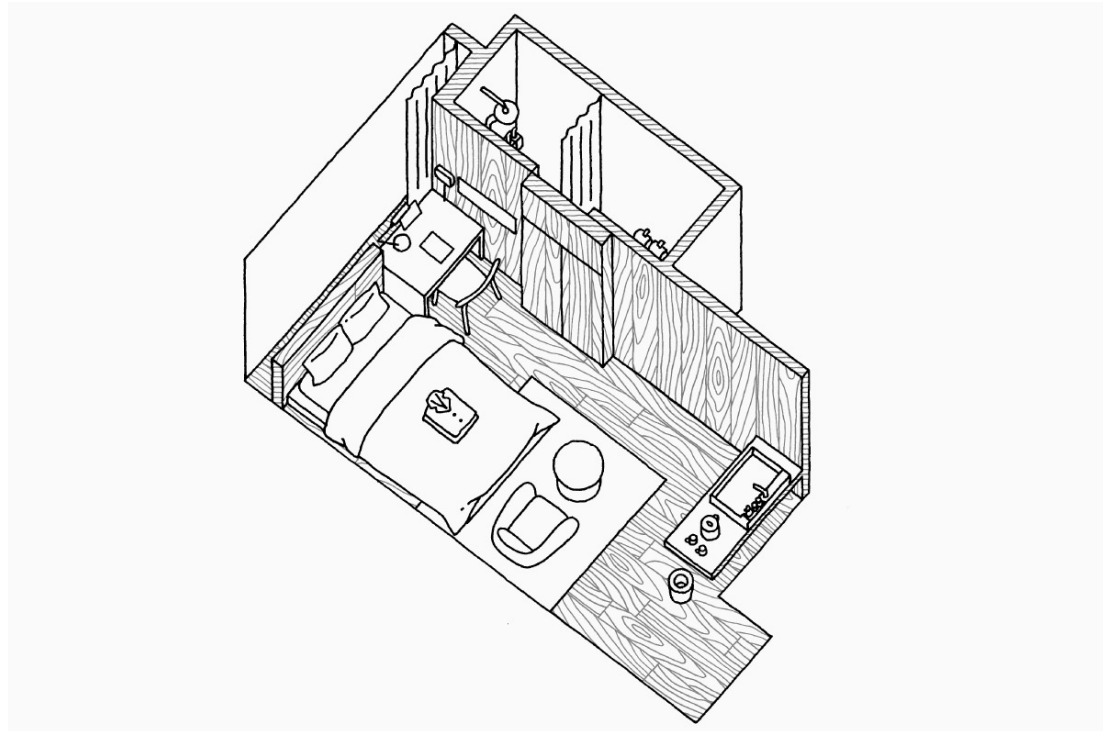


A good, peaceful stay

PG 25.

CASE STUDY

MUJI HOTEL



The Muji Hotel as a good reference for this project it caters for solo travellers and is calm, comfort, and flexibility. The design is minimalist but warm, using natural materials like wood and stone alongside soft, neutral colours to create a peaceful space that feels uncluttered and restful. The rooms are compact, but thoughtfully designed. The MUJI also has shared areas like quiet lounges and reading nooks, guests can choose when to be social, or just unwind on their own. This kind of layout really supports independence and wellbeing, which is something this project is focused on.

Even with the small room sizes, nothing feels cramped because everything's so well thought through (Frameweb, 2019). It's a great example of how simplicity and thoughtful design can meet the real needs of solo travellers (MUJI Hotel, n.d.).

PG 27.

Room Type A
14-15m²

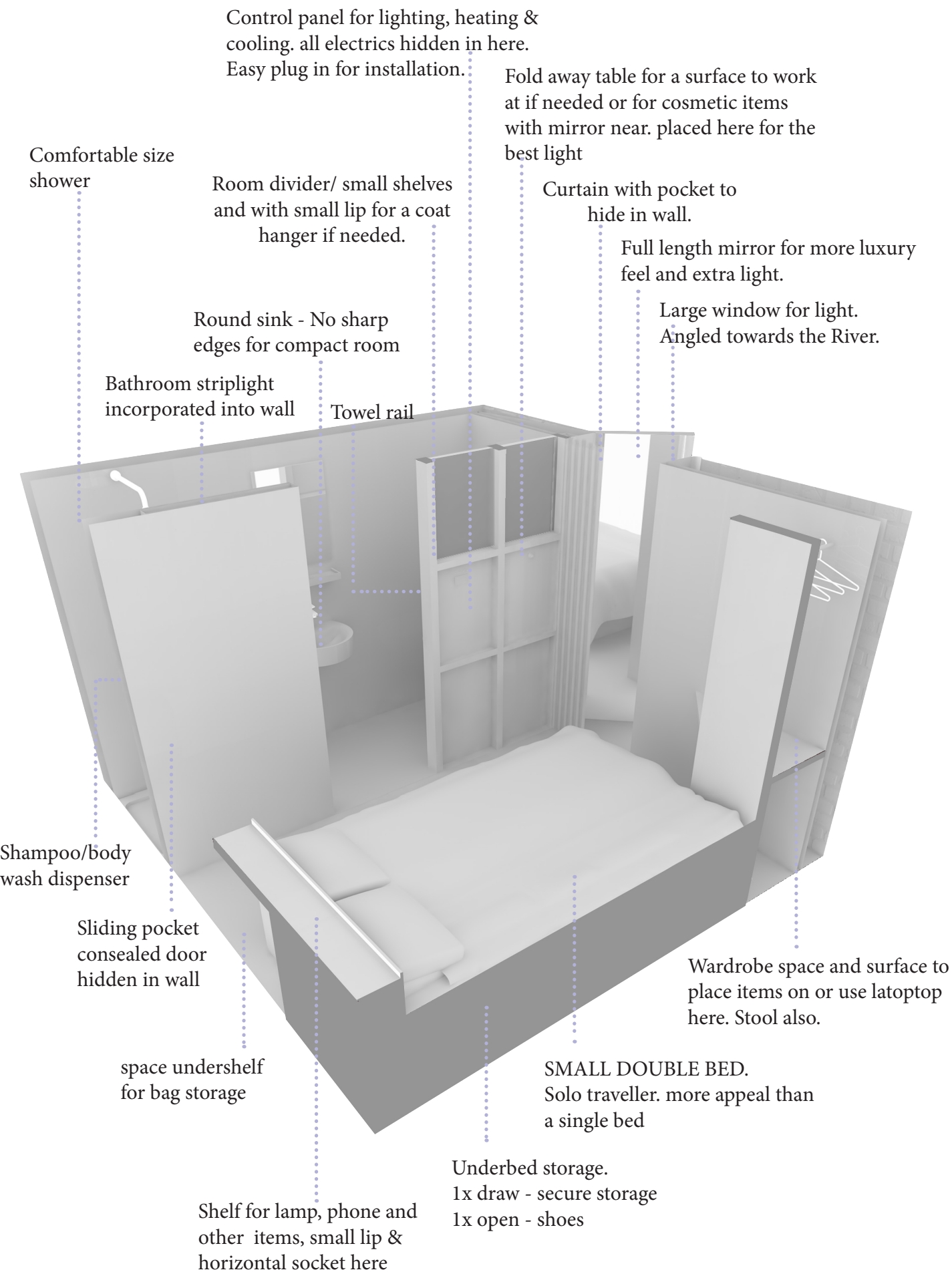
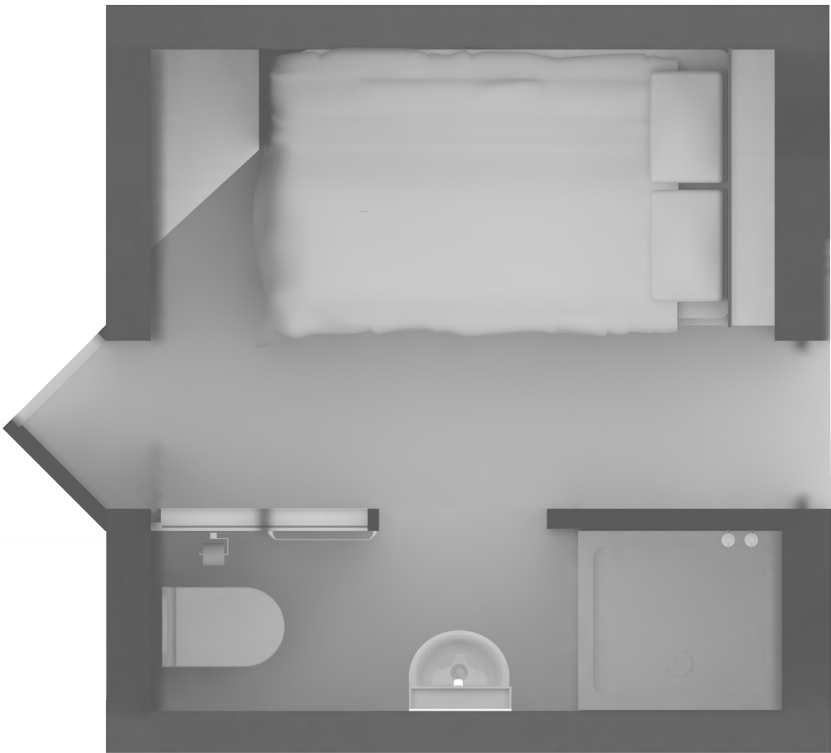


Images are sourced from MUJI Hotel's official website (MUJI Hotel, n.d.).

FEATURES

KEY FEATURES

By keeping the rooms minimalist and functional, the focus can remain on providing a calm, restful space for guests. The third space elsewhere in the building can then be a dedicated area where guests can make tea/coffee, socialize, or use it for other activities, offering a sense of community and flexibility outside their rooms. This approach helps create a clear distinction between private, restful areas and communal spaces, enhancing the guest experience.



THIRD SPACE

THIRD SPACE
THIRD SPACE
THIRD SPACE



LOUNGE

Shared spaces for relaxation or socialising.

PG 31.

PRECEDENTS

Precedents for an open, inviting space with an accessible communal kitchen and a warm, home-like atmosphere. More of a traditional, country, feel.

WORKINGFROM_



‘A coworking space that feels like home.’

WorkingFrom_ by The Hoxton - This space looks and feels more like a home than a workspace. The lounge is soft, layered in materials, and inviting. The focus is on personal choice, with different seating options, quiet or open areas, warm lighting, and domestic textures.

MENDO STORE - AMSTERDAM



The lounge takes a bit of inspiration from the MENDO store in Amsterdam — a place that feels like a cozy hideaway filled with carefully chosen books and warm lighting. It’s a spot where guests can slow down, get comfortable, and maybe lose themselves in a good read. The lounge is layered with soft textures, flexible seating, and a calm atmosphere

ETT HEM



Ett Hem, is place designed to feel like a home away from home. It’s warm and inviting, guests can easily make their own lunch or enjoy a cup of tea, creating a sense of retreat and comfort. This space feels like you could walk in and instantly relax before heading out to explore. This idea of effortless comfort and homeliness is key to shaping a third space where guests can recharge.

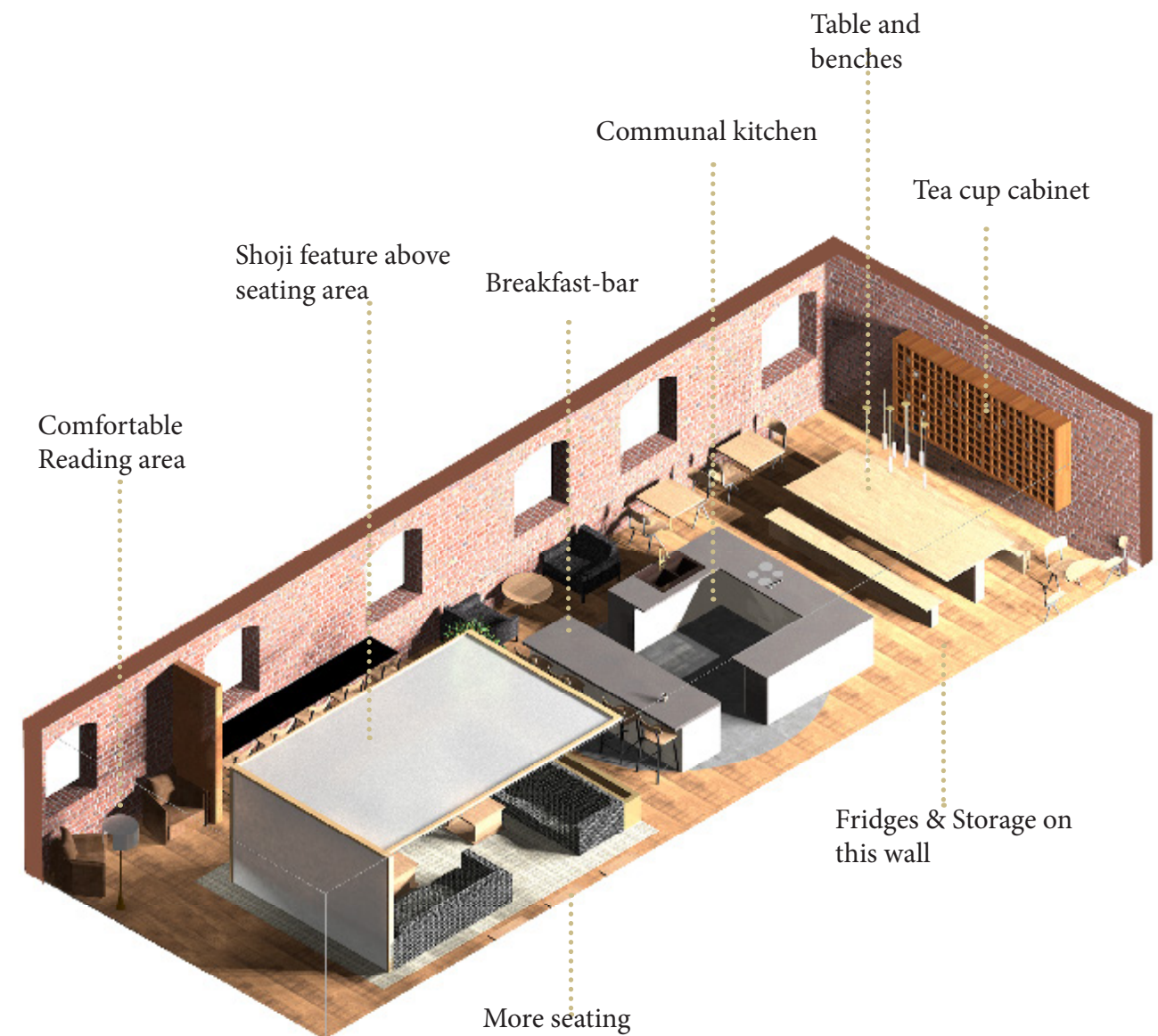
FEATURES

KEY FEATURES

This open-plan kitchen and lounge area - a relaxed, communal space where guests can feel at ease. Taking cues from domestic settings. Large windows along one wall, allowing lots of daylight.

The kitchen side should feel informal and practical - a small cabinet feature filled with different mugs, allowing guests to choose their own and feel at home. A long bench encourages conversation and interaction. Smaller tables offer quieter spaces for eating alone or working.

The lounge side to include deep sofas, a mix of armchairs, and low tables grouped to invite rest, reading, or gentle conversation. A lowered ceiling feature made from Japanned-style paper adding a subtle glow and a hint of the guest room design, also improving acoustics. Exposed brickwork, layered textiles, and varied lighting should give the area depth and reflect the buildings character.



LOBBY

LOBBY
LOBBY
LOBBY

WELCOME

Warm, inviting experience from the
moment guests arrive with a cultured tone.

PG 37.

PRECIDENTS



This workshop in Milan uses different lamps and fixtures creating pockets of warmth and focus throughout its space. This inspires an idea of incorporating a mix of lantern-style lights within a bookcase, not only to highlight key books and artefacts but also to create a layered, atmospheric glow.



This large frosted glass wall gives off a soft, diffused light. Using something similar in the design could help divide areas gently while keeping things light and atmospheric, tying in nicely with the idea of lanterns and warm, layered lighting throughout the space.



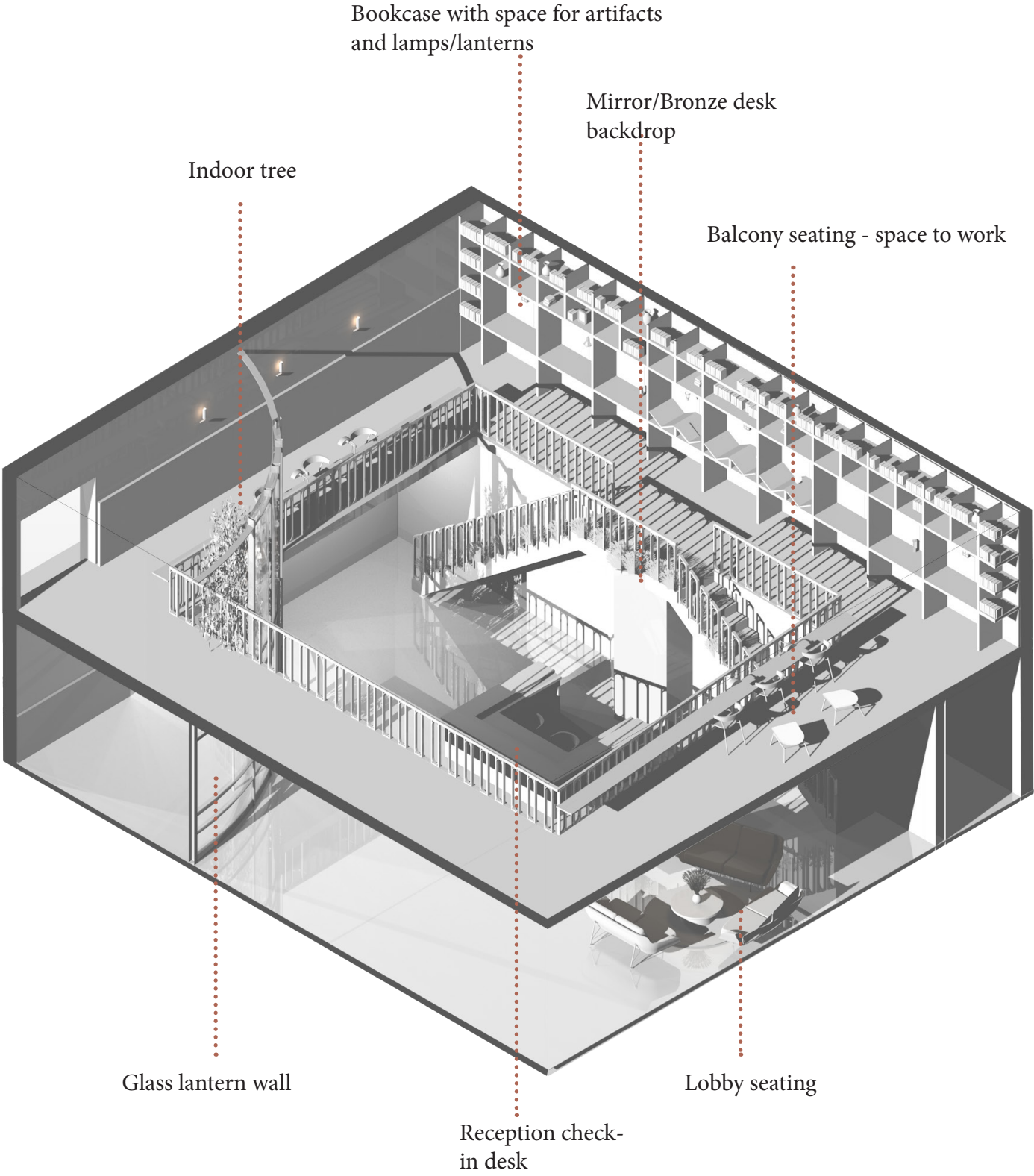
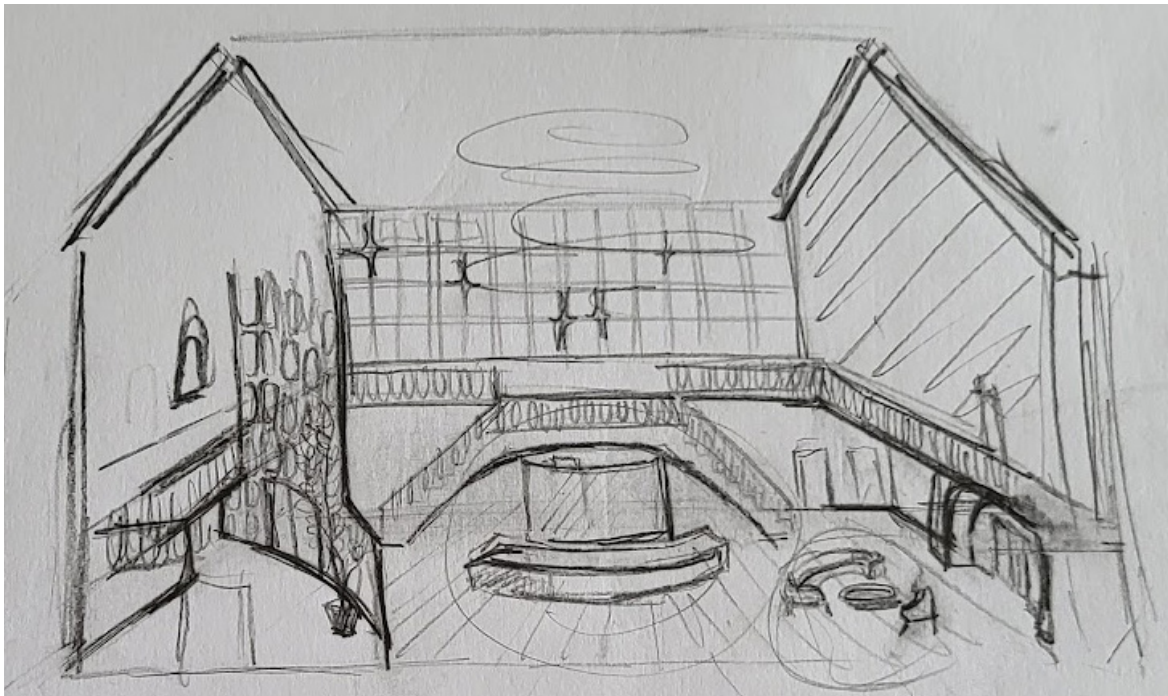
During a visit to the Design Museum, the ambient night lamp by Alexandra Deschamps-Sonsino stood out — a gentle, connected light designed to help people feel close, even when far apart. Originally created for those living alone, the lamp allowed friends or family across the world to connect through shared glows of light. This quiet idea of emotional connection feels especially meaningful in a space designed for solo travellers. Lighting becomes more than functional it introduces a subtle sense of shared presence for guests.

FEATURES

KEY FEATURES

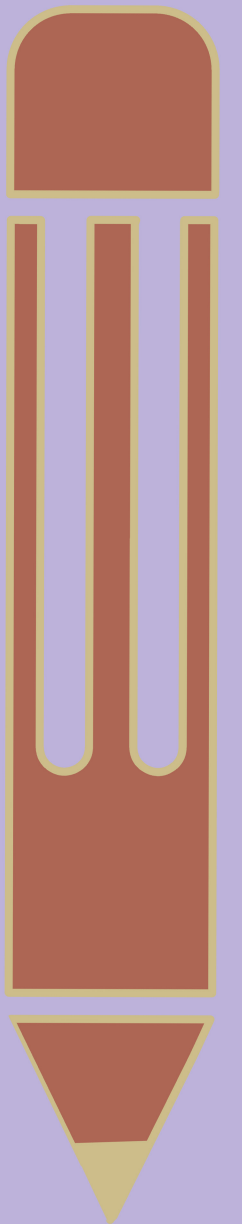
The lobby design to take inspiration from the building’s history, aiming to feel both warm and quietly grand. Materials like stone flooring for a natural long-lasting base, while reclaimed wooden furniture and touches of aged brass to bring character and depth. A curved glass lantern-style screen to offer a soft divide between the entrance and an open communal kitchen.

One of the key features is a large built-in bookcase, filled with old books, small artefacts from local archives, and a collection of lanterns that tie into the identity of The Lantern Rooms. The reception desk will have its own sculptural element — something inspired by local architecture or earlier design features, making it feel personal and part of the story.



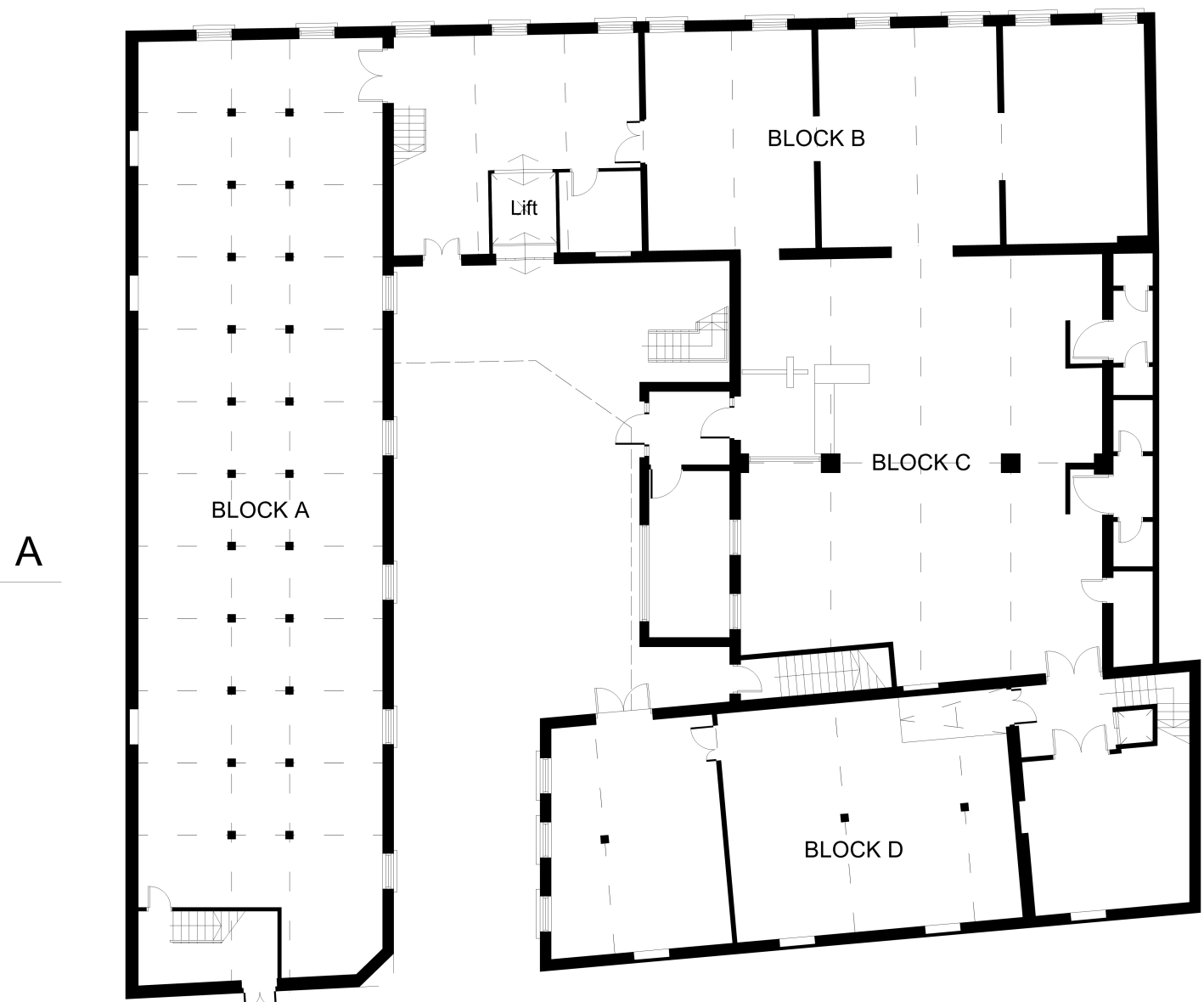
PROPOSED PLANS

PG 43.



GROUND FLOOR

EXISTING



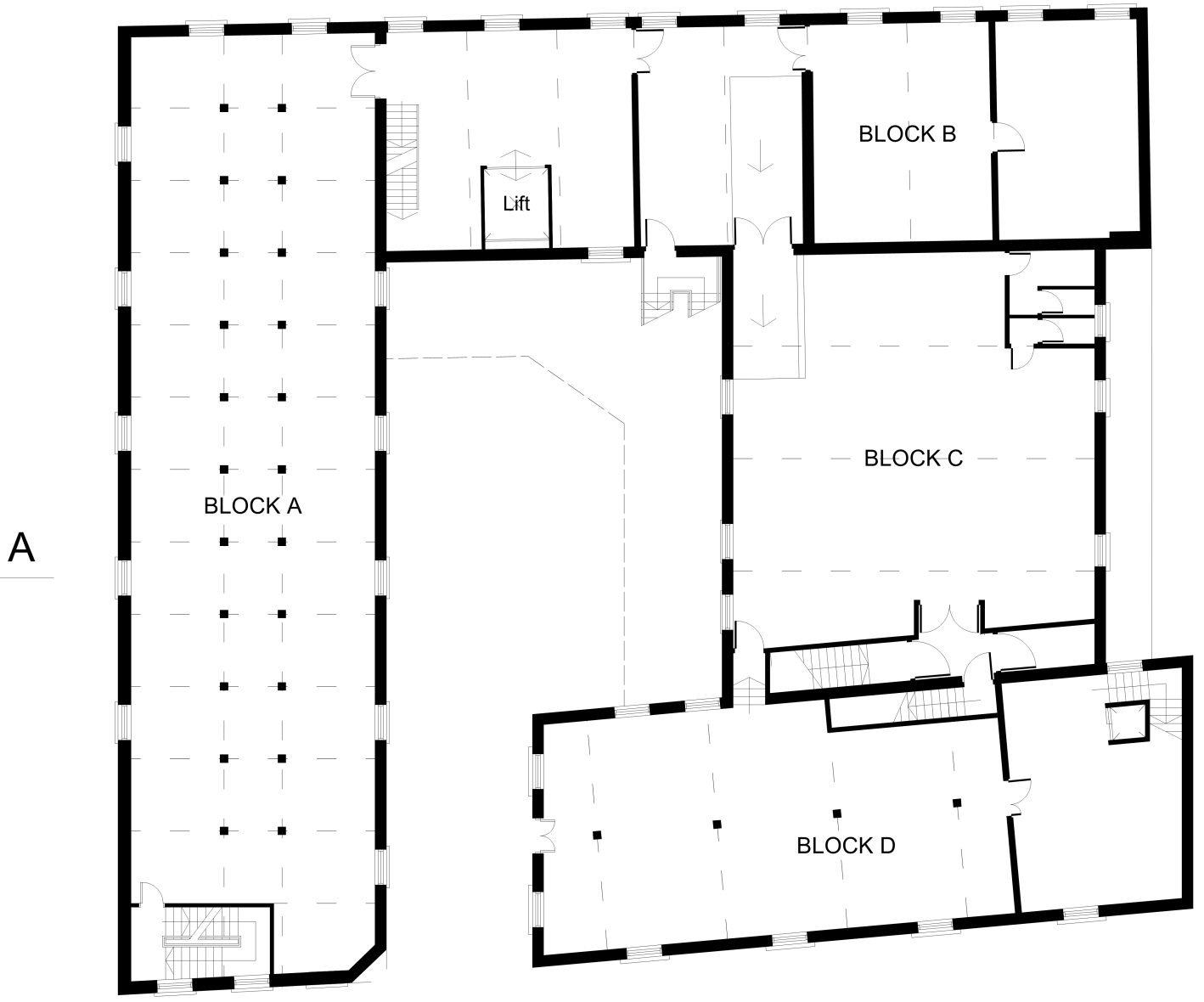
PROPOSED



SCALE 1:200

FIRST FLOOR

EXISTING



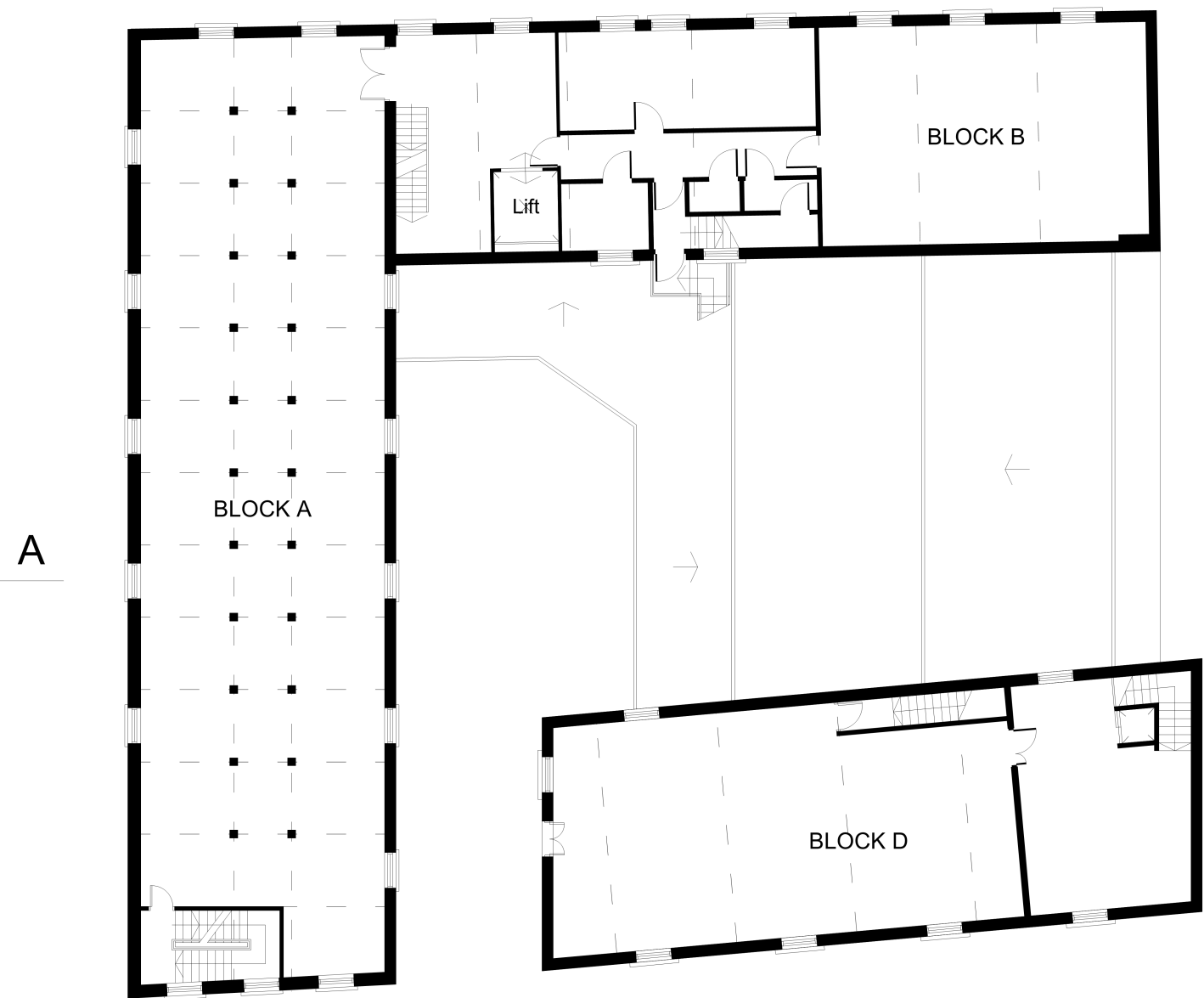
PROPOSED



SCALE 1:200

SECOND FLOOR

EXISTING



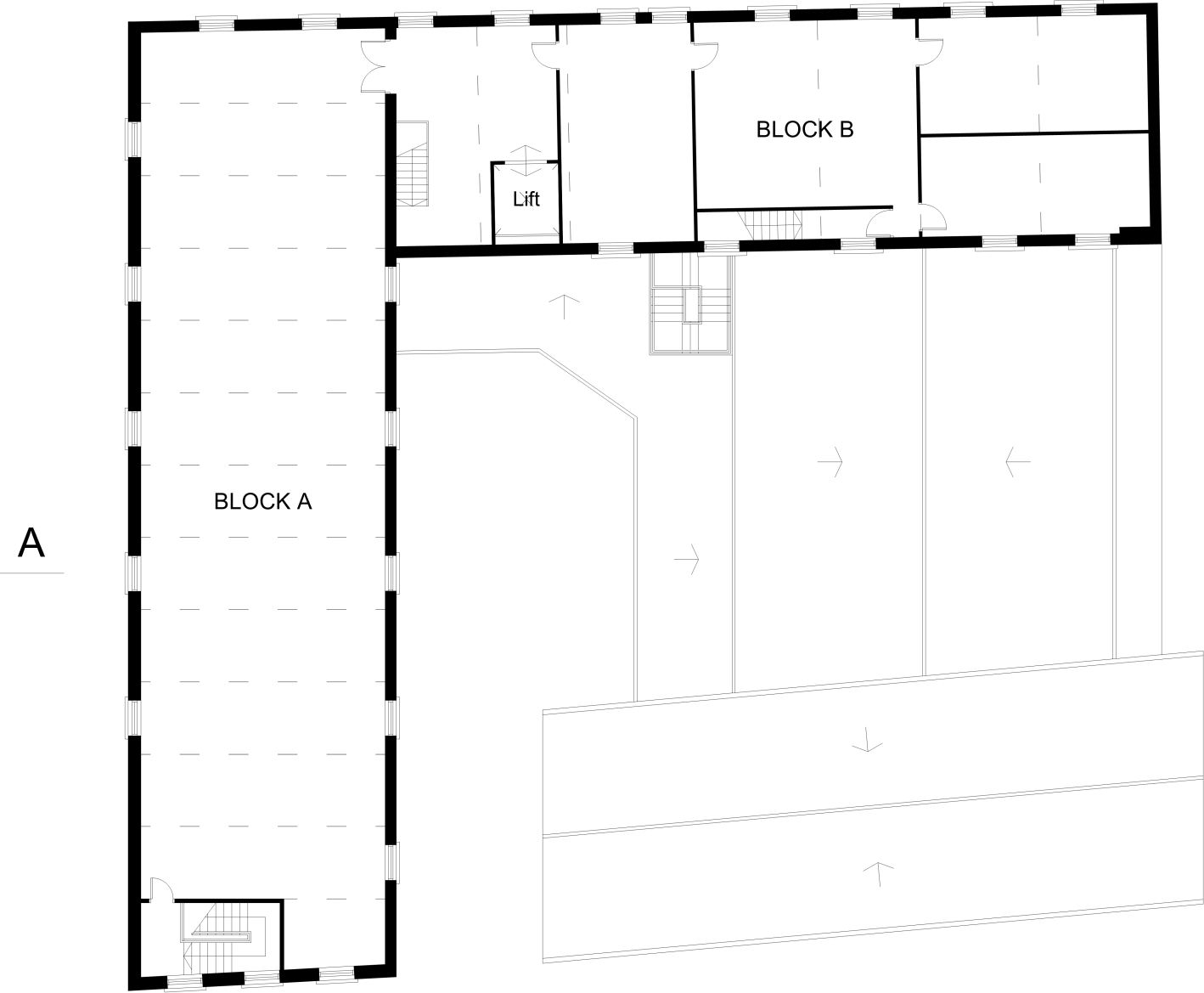
PROPOSED



SCALE 1:200

FIRST FLOOR

EXISTING



PROPOSED



SCALE 1:200

FIRE SAFETY

FIRE EXITS

According to Approved Document B (HM Government, 2020), escape routes in non-residential buildings must meet specific travel distance limits to ensure safe evacuation.

Travel distance to a fire exit depends on the building type, use, and risk level. For spaces such as hostels or hotels:

45 metres: Maximum travel distance to a final exit on the ground floor when there are two or more escape routes.

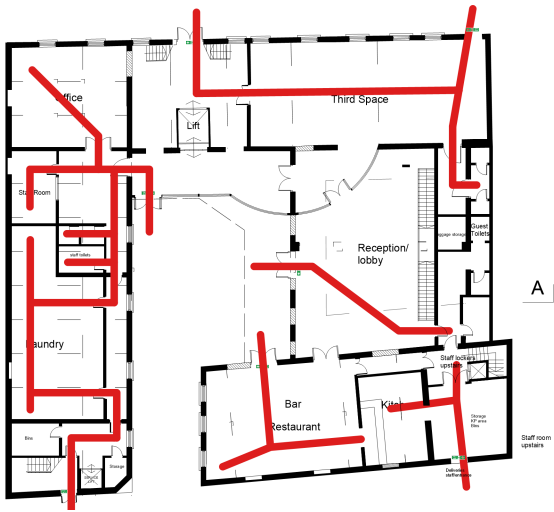
18 metres: Maximum travel distance to a protected stairwell or final exit from upper floors, also assuming multiple escape routes.

Where only one escape route is available, the distances are shorter — typically 25 metres on the ground floor and 9 metres from upper levels.

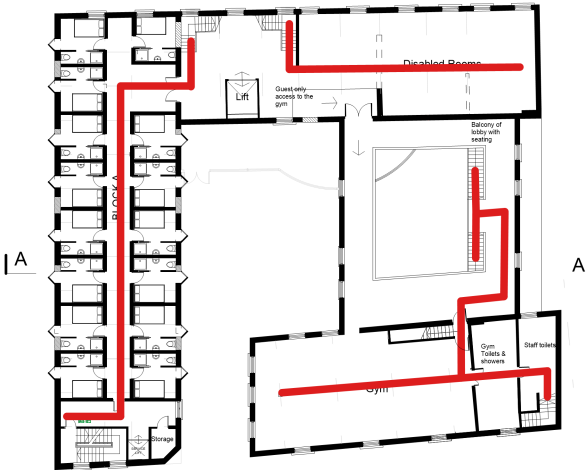
Escape routes must be kept clear, be well-lit, and lead to a place of safety outside. Fire doors, compartmentation, and smoke detection are also key components of a safe fire strategy (HM Government, 2020).



GROUND



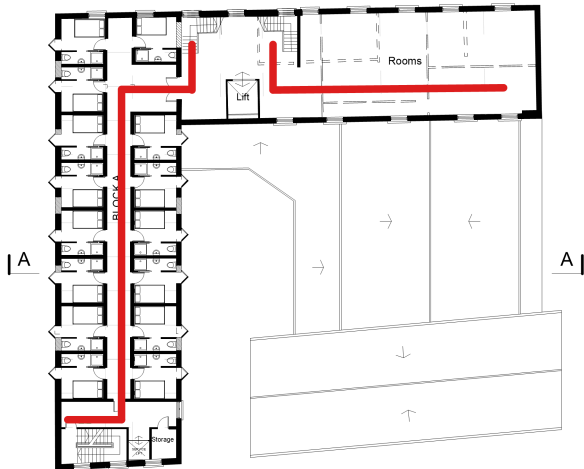
FIRST



SECOND

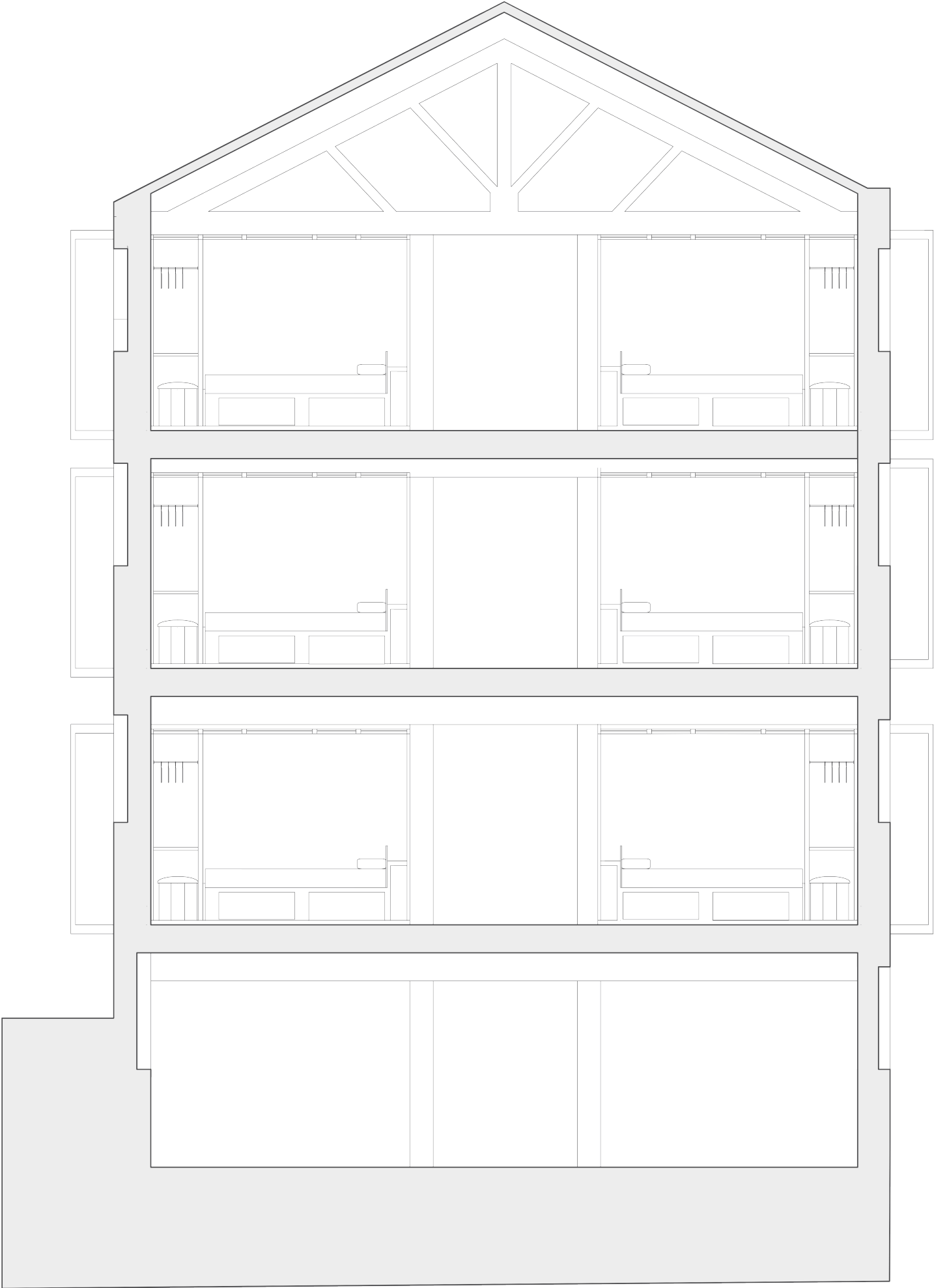
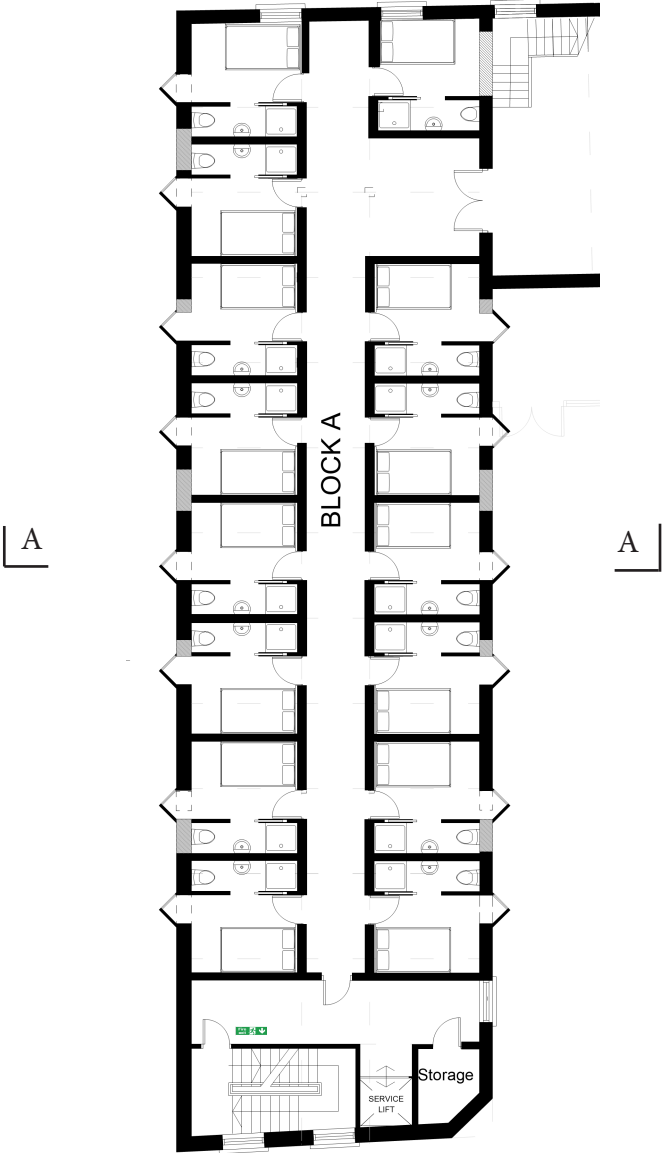


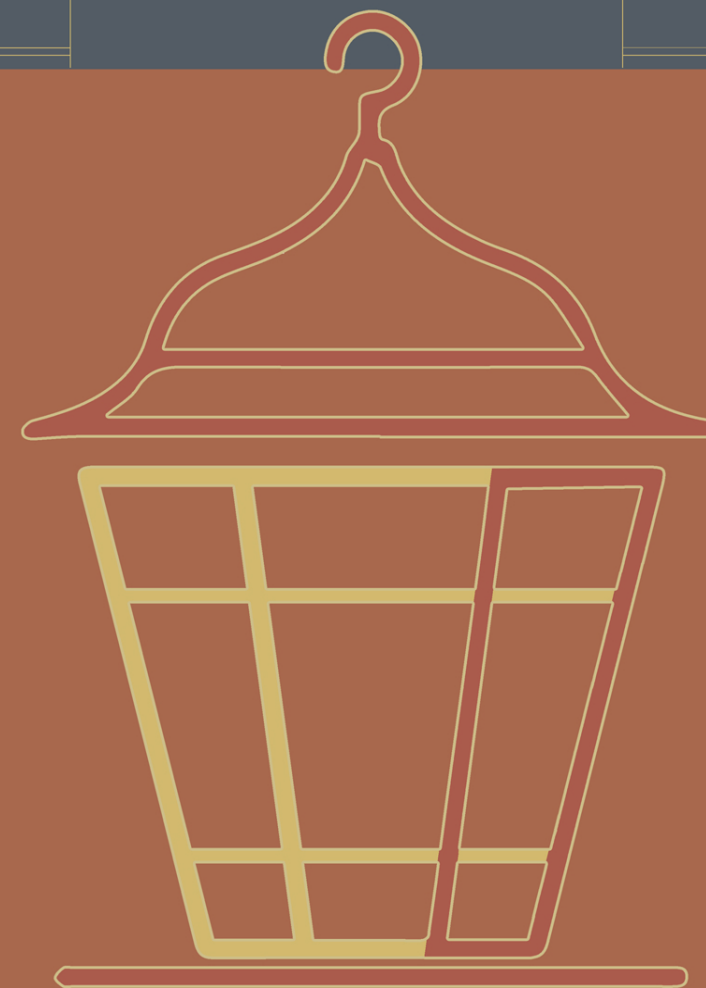
THIRD



SECTION - BLOCK A

SECTION A-A SCALE 1:50





THE LANTERN ROOMS

SIMPLE STAYS, THOUGHTFUL SPACES



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