

## brief

To design a future-focused home away from home dedicated to foster connection and collaboration among local middle-aged and older professionals who have dealt with difficult conditions during pandemic, such as isolation, depression and low mood.

## users

Middle-aged and older professionals who are in search for a place where they can socialise and put an end to the urban loneliness – the ugly result of the pandemic crisis.

## research target users

The research finds that some middle-aged and older people are coping with the pandemic, but a sizeable minority are finding life incredibly tough, enduring increased and sometimes devastating levels of anxiety.

## objective & concept

Knowing that design and architecture are about rights, about equal access to the necessities of life, including clean air (especially in a post-pandemic future), the design of the space will aim for something bigger, something more like an environment that protects(through innovative, durable and sustainable solutions) and inspirits its inhabitants (by providing them with small, yet whimsical details that will entertain). It will rethink the co-living space and will incorporate social, domestic and infrastructural necessities of a highly professional, yet currently depressed society into a single structure.

## context

A brutalist building, previously used as a rowing club, is located in London, on the Isle of Dogs and has a serene riverside setting looking across Greenwich.

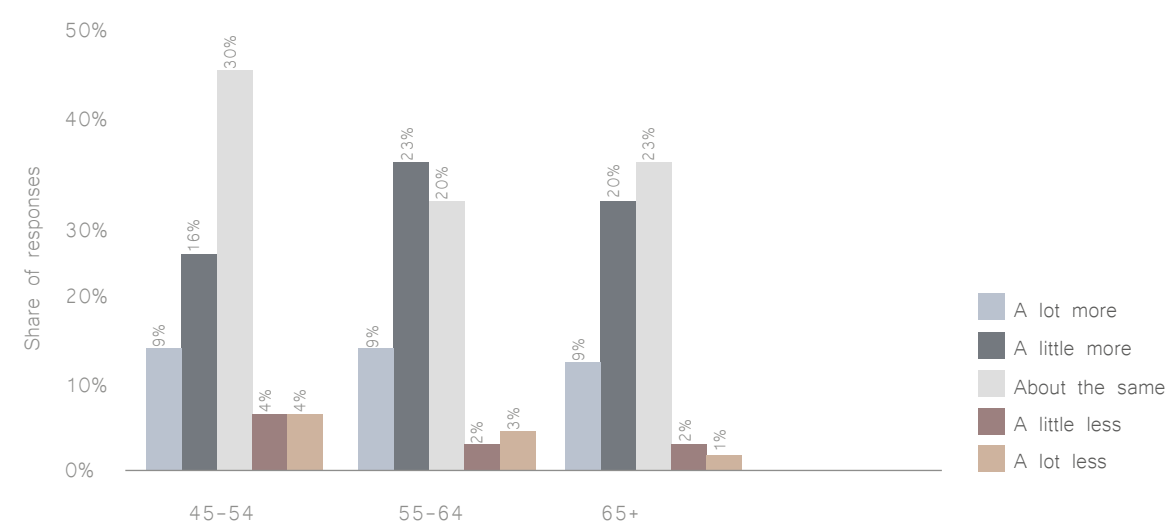


6PM – highest tide: around 7m height

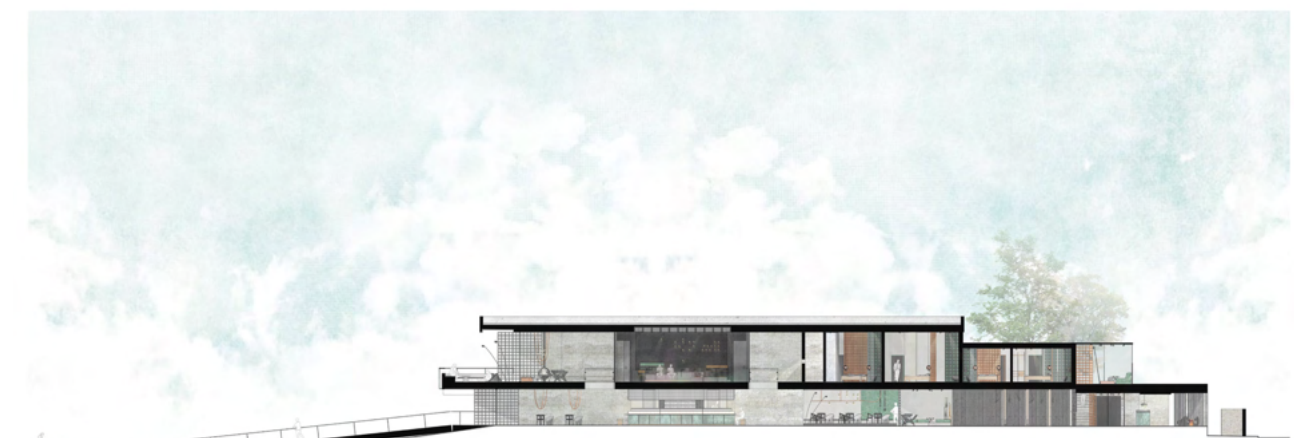
Section view of the proposed club for middle-aged and older professionals users



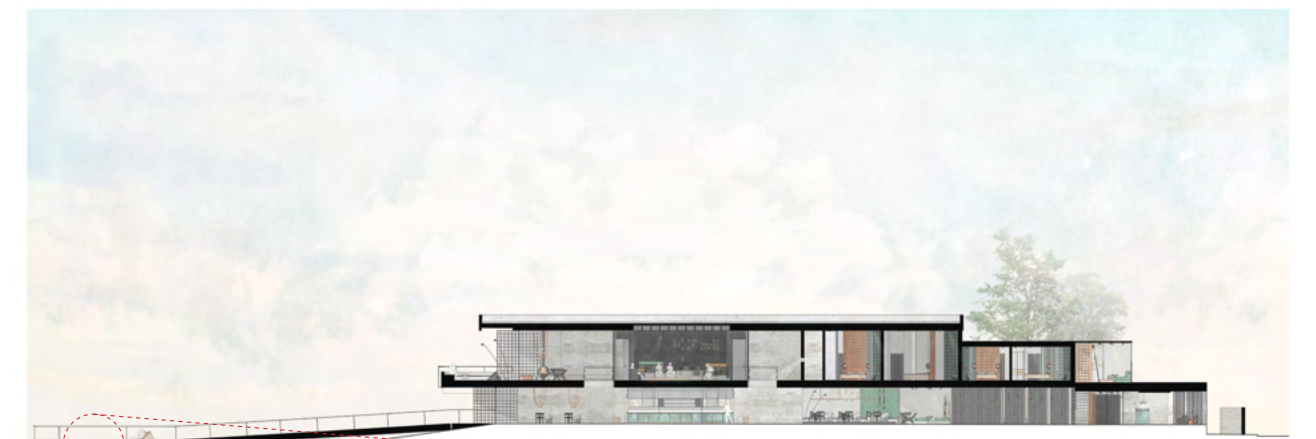
Middle-aged and older professionals – target users



Distribution of changes in loneliness feelings during the lockdown in the United-Kingdom, as of April 2020, by age.



10AM – Low tide



2PM – higher-tide: around 5m height

Close-up view of a person swimming in the river, whilst being surrounded by the pontoon;



## concept & development

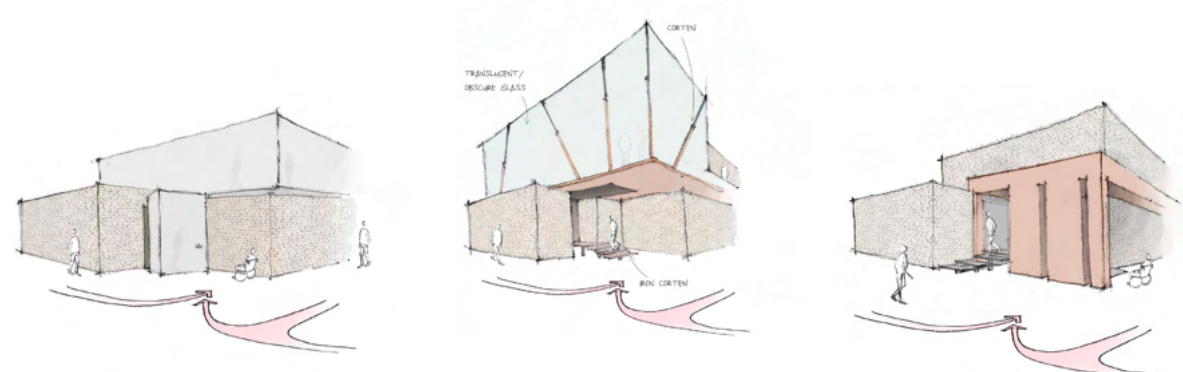
With 'whimsical' as concept, the host building gradually transforms into a home away from home, a co-living space where both middle-aged and older professionals seek to socialise and unwind into a safe post-Covid environment.

The hand sketches and the 3D model iterations show the development process of some key spaces within the club. The aim was to create contemporary, safe to navigate areas where people can meet; thereby the final design allows the users of the space to easily navigate each area by using the one-way system (the two entrances heighten this proposal).

Although the overall building seems hidden, the necessity of clean air was an important aspect which was successfully brought into the space: wide pivot doors provide the space with good ventilation, each room has windows and bi-fold shutters, and the pontoon – the club's attraction transforms into a swimming pool during the summer, enabling users to better relax and forget about stress and depression.

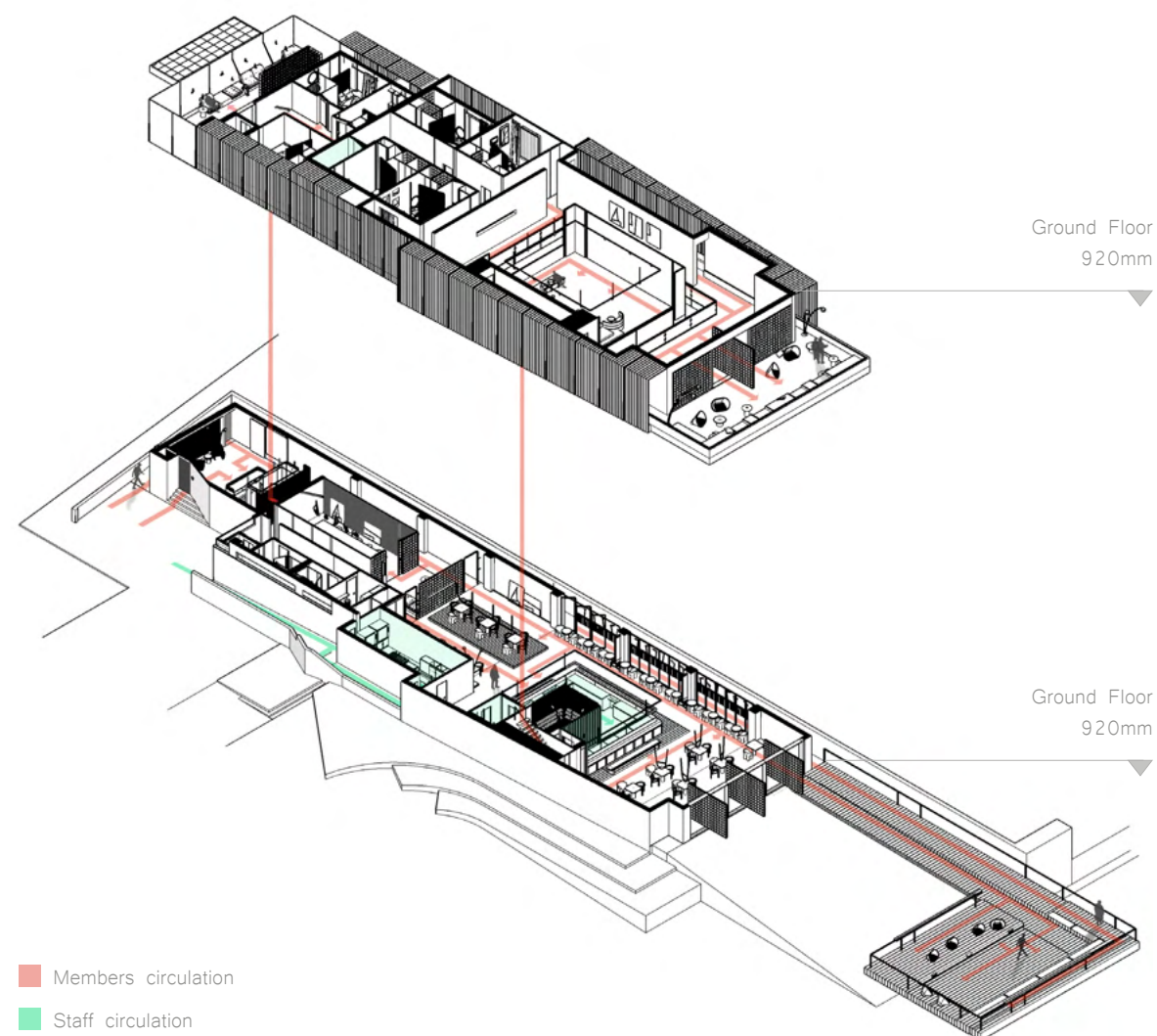


Three conceptual sketches representing some of the whimsical details proposed for the space.

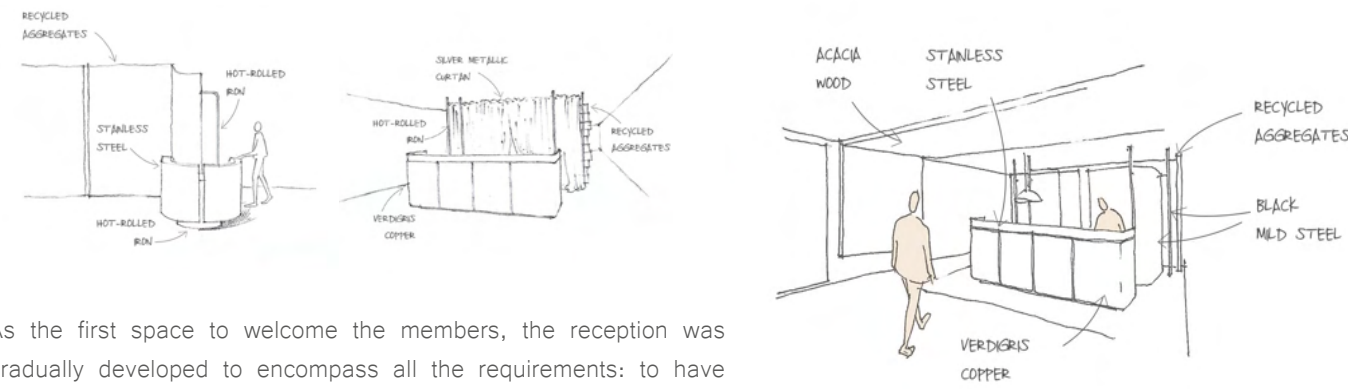


The facade's development comprised choosing materials that give privacy to the space, all the while enabling the users to get closer to the surrounding nature – trees and the river Thames, as well as providing good ventilation necessary to keep everyone safe.

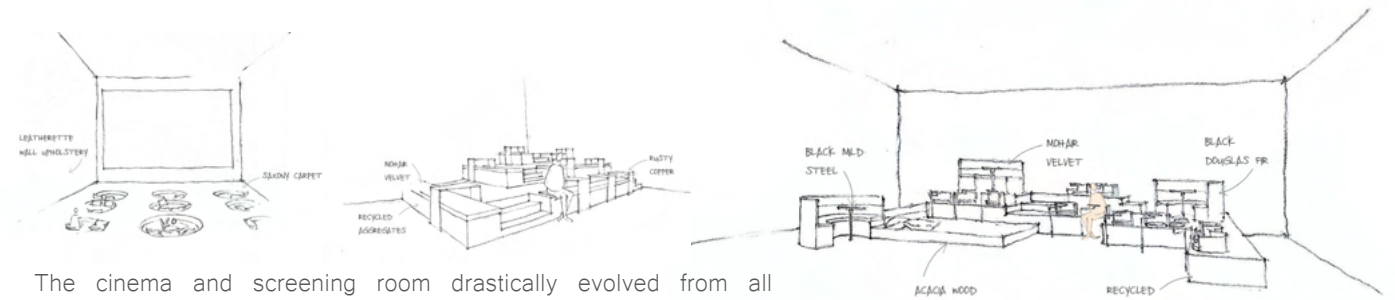
The aim was to create a one-way system, and at the same time allowing the visitors to feel welcomed upon arrival (the bottom right 3D hand sketch depicts the final design of the facade).



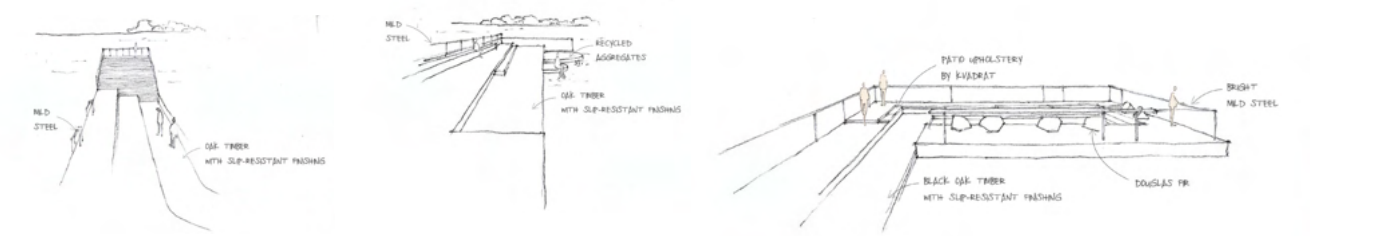
The members club layout is linear, at times segmented, has narrow corridors in order to encourage forward movement, as well as opens up into large areas where guests get to choose where to head in. As a post-pandemic space, the club adopts the one-way system in order to keep its members safe.



Final sketch of the reception and cloakroom

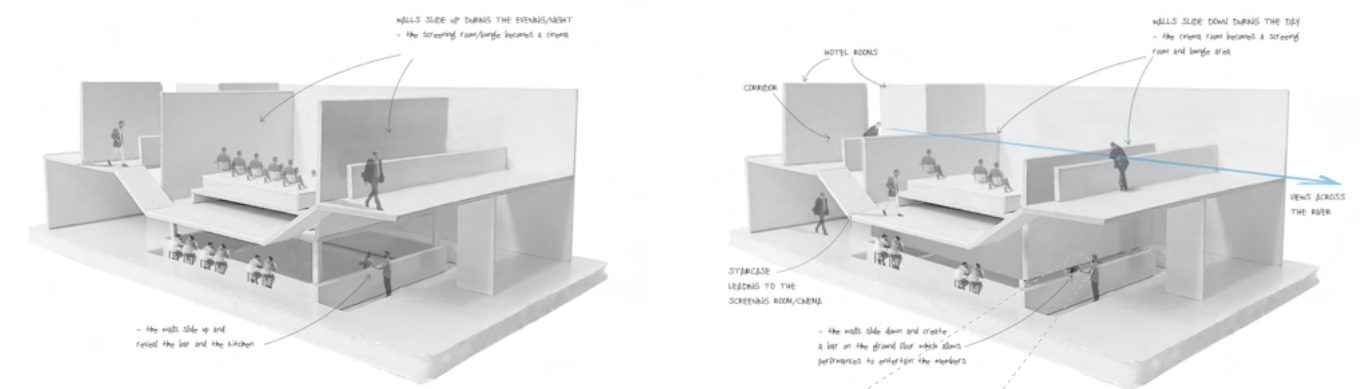


Final sketch of the cinema/screening room



Final sketch of the pontoon

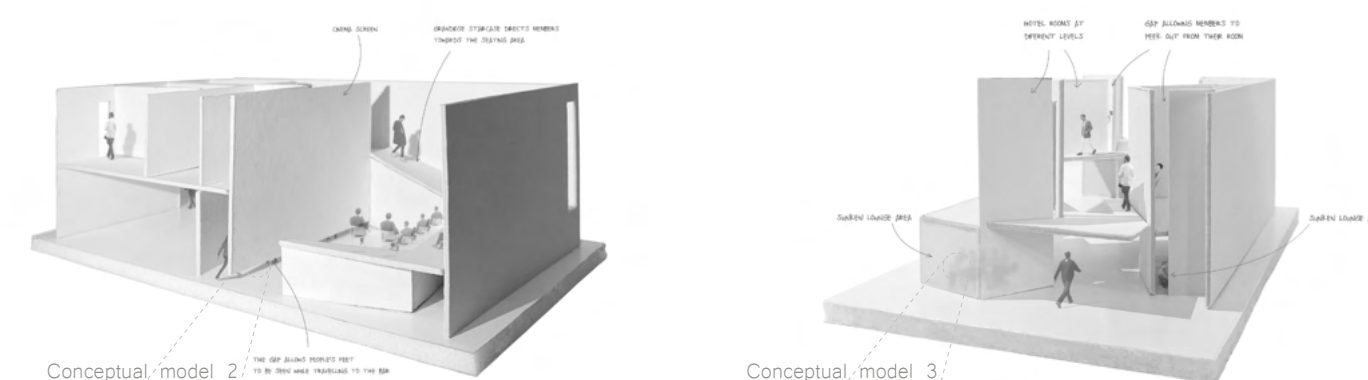
The aim for the pontoon was to help visitors interact among themselves, therefore the final option (right hand sketch), through its layout, enables people to face each other, as well as uses the one-way system and provides clean air.



Conceptual model 1a

Hybrid & whimsical: The walls that slide down allow cocktail performances to entertain the members, while creating a more flexible space which adapts for the specific needs during the day and night.

Conceptual model 1b

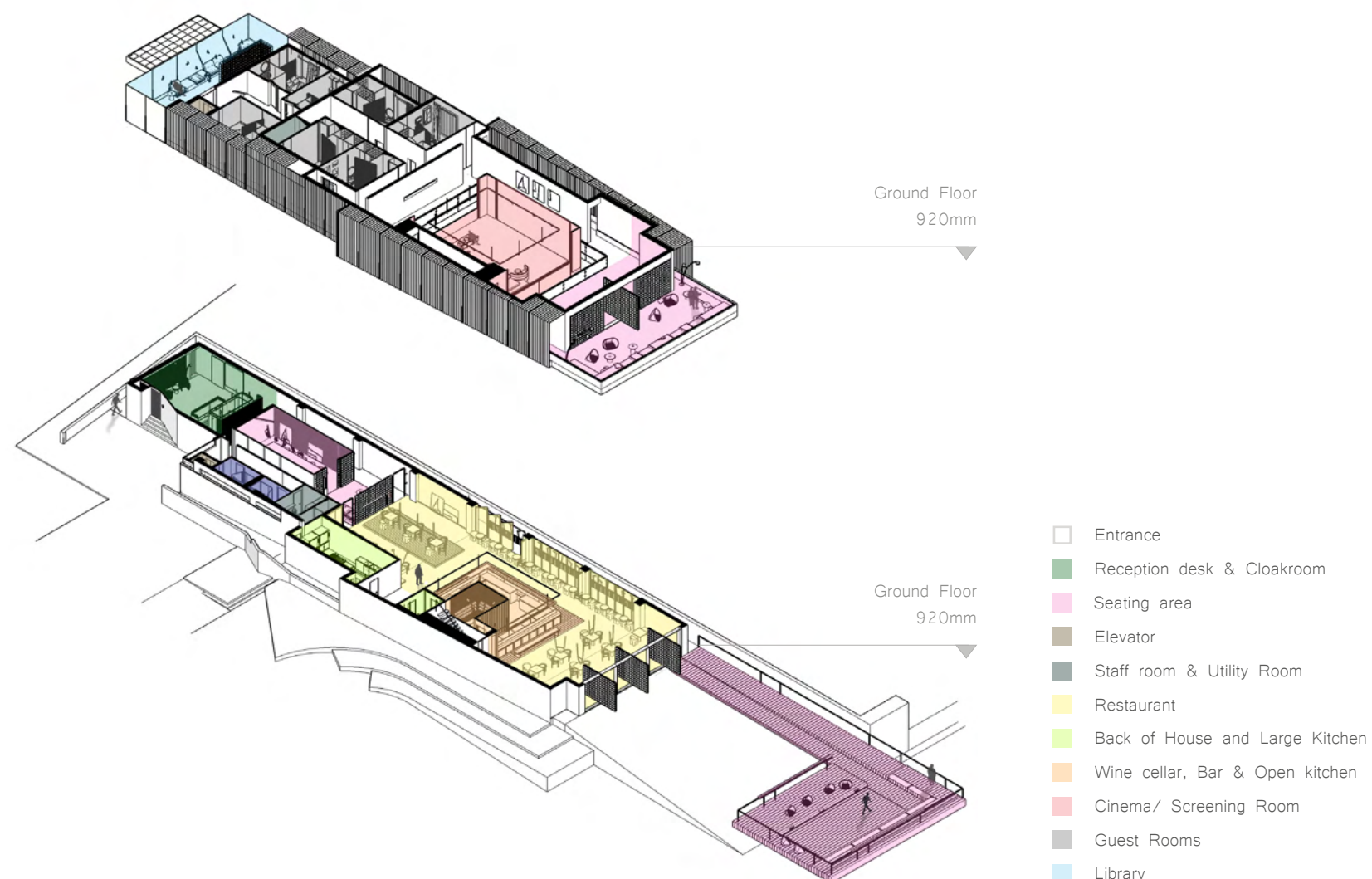


Conceptual model 2

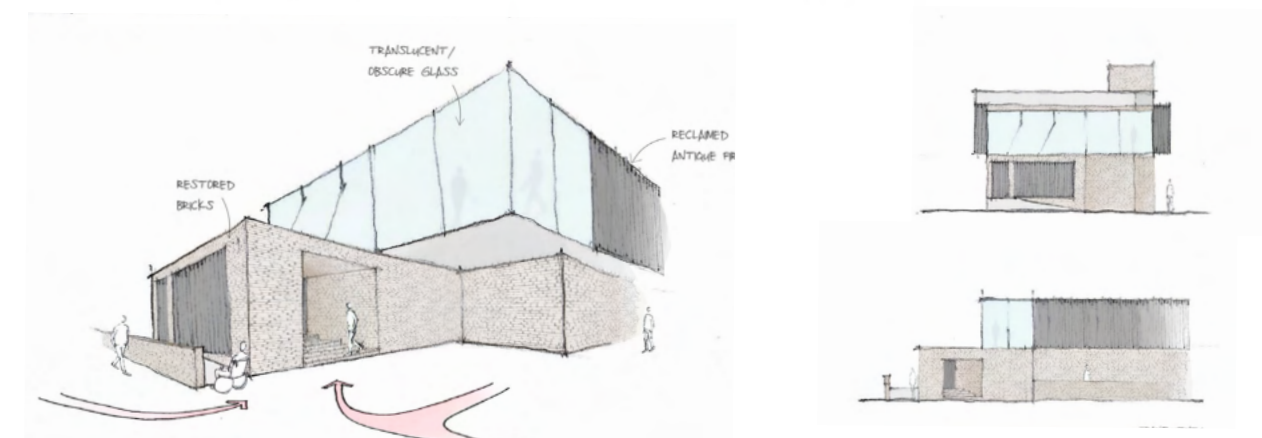
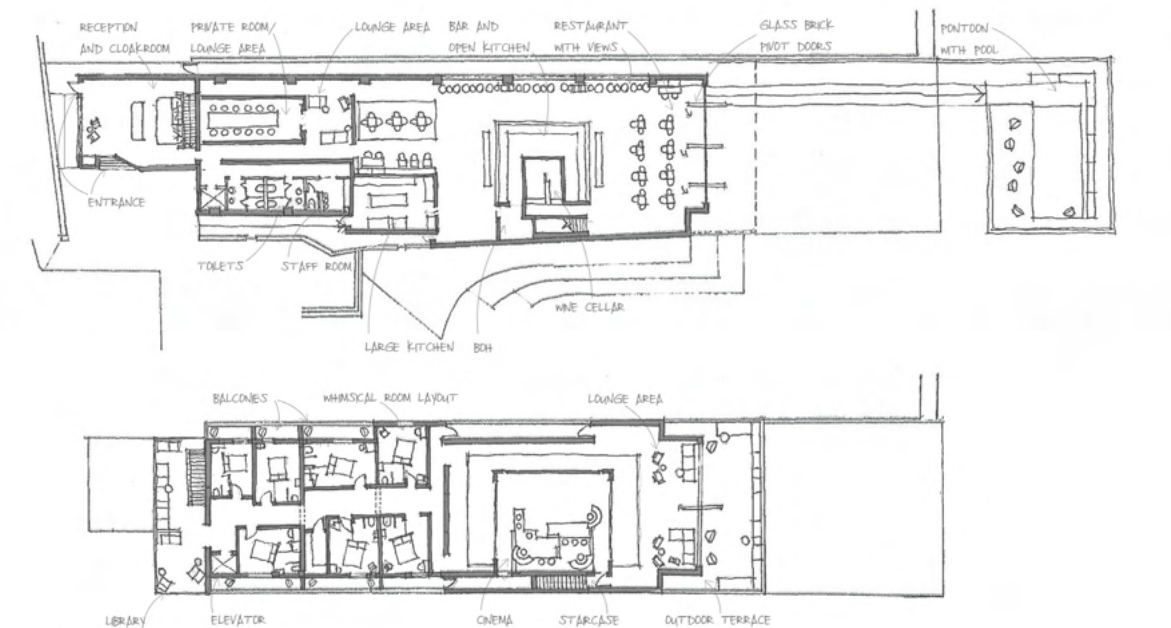
The gap between the floor and the wall enables visitors to see the legs of those passing by without knowing who those people are is both whimsical and intriguing.

Conceptual model 3

Fun details, such as blurred walls, which limit the visibility, or gaps that allow views from rooms toward the corridors, and funny angles, sneak throughout the space making it more whimsical.

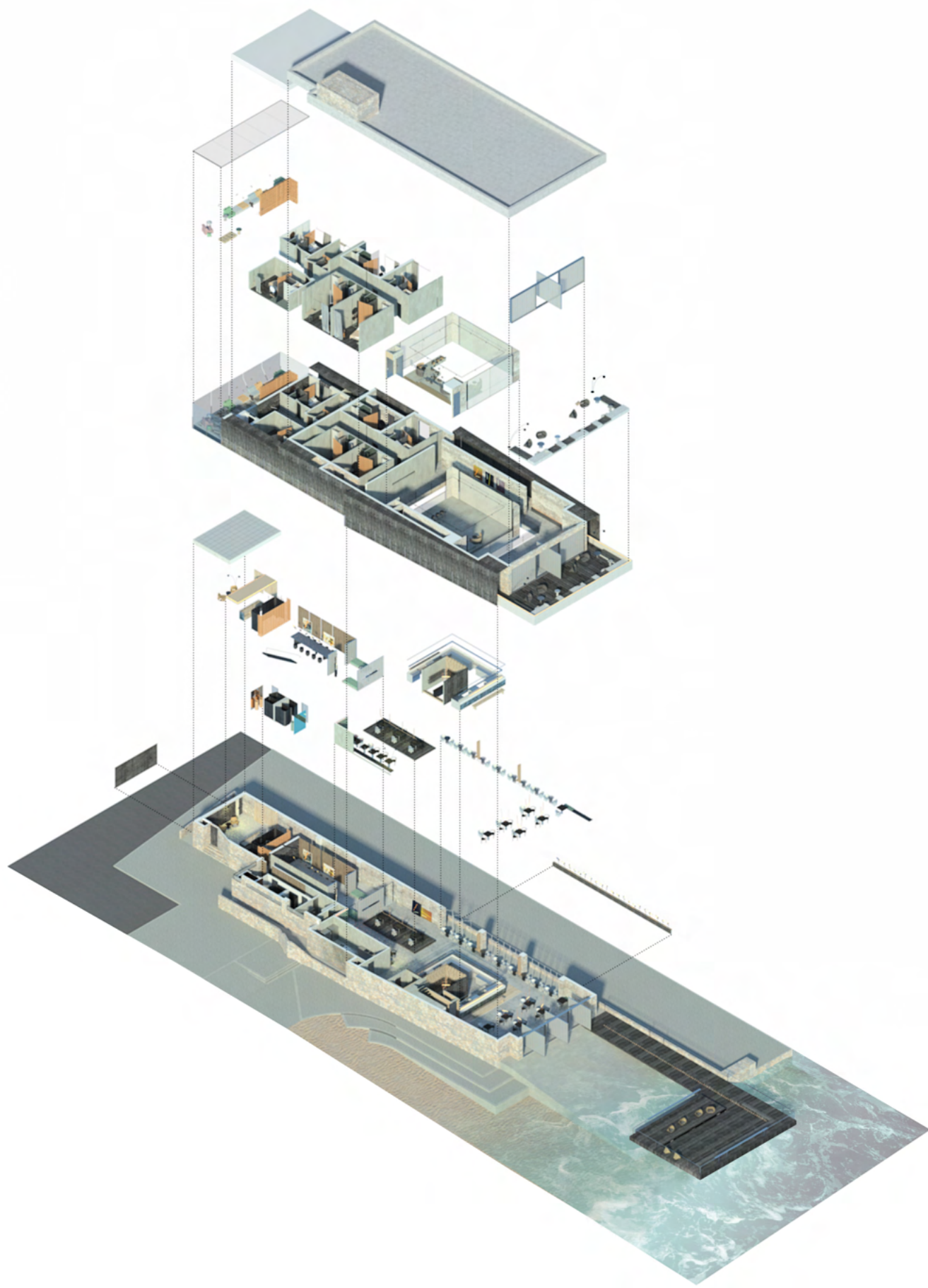


- Entrance
- Reception desk & Cloakroom
- Seating area
- Elevator
- Staff room & Utility Room
- Restaurant
- Back of House and Large Kitchen
- Wine cellar, Bar & Open kitchen
- Cinema/ Screening Room
- Guest Rooms
- Library



The facade has been readapted to the building's new function – of a home away from home. The two slightly hidden entrances are part of the one-way system that helps the users remain safe whilst visiting the club.





Exploded axonometric view of the entire space



Pontoon - seating area and swimming pool during the summer



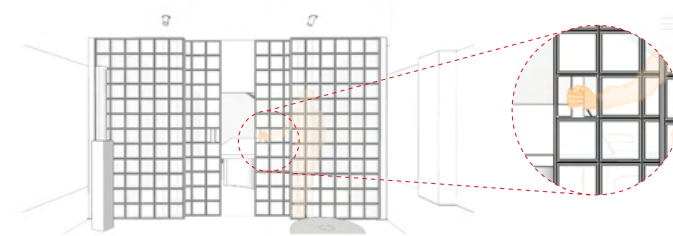
- 1 Entrance
  - 2 Reception
  - 3 Cloakroom
  - 4 Elevator
  - 5 Toilets
  - 6 Staff room
  - 7 Private room - lounge area
  - 8 Restaurant
  - 9 Back of house - large kitchen
  - 10 Bar & open kitchen
  - 11 Wine cellar
  - 12 Pontoon - lounge/ swimming area
  - 13 Library
  - 14 Guest rooms
  - 15 Cinema/ Screening room
  - 16 Lounge are
  - 17 Outdoor terrace
- One way glass gap looking outside the rooms (see D7)
- GROUND FLOOR AREA:** 850m<sup>2</sup>
- TOILETS:** Four (for members)  
One (for staff)
- STAIRCASE:** Two
- FIRST FLOOR AREA:** 750m<sup>2</sup>
- GUEST ROOMS:** Seven

Ground floor - the pontoon provides visitors with a seating space whereas during the summer the core floating deck slides underneath the pontoon and becomes a swimming area;

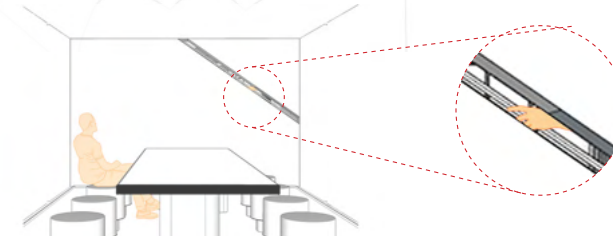


First floor

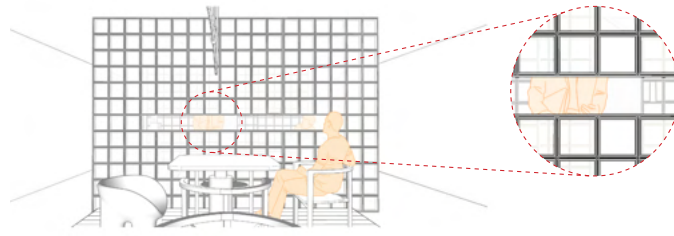
The whimsical details (below) found throughout the club are small moments meant to bring a grin on the face of the stressed middle-aged and older professionals, as well as to create a visually engaging space.



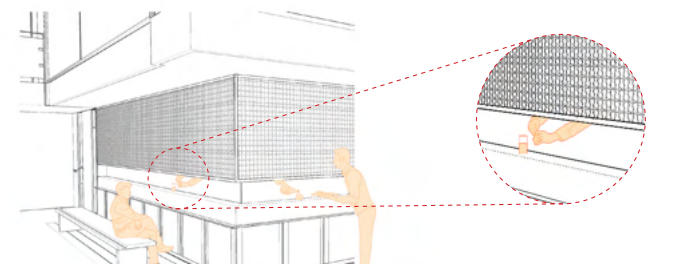
D1 - Intriguing door handle - allows only the hand to be seen, whereas the translucent glass provides a faint image of the body;



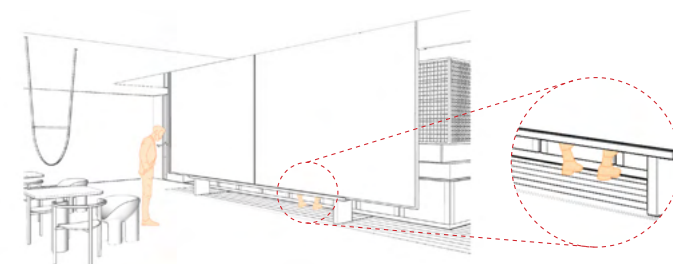
D2 - Hand on handrail - the inclined wall gap provides views of the people's hand on the handrail, while travelling to the first floor;



D3 - Horizontal clear glass at eye level (when sitting) allows members to see each other whilst in different rooms;



D4 - Cocktail performances & Food serving - the mesh screen hides the staff bodies, while allowing their hands and the beverage/food to be seen;



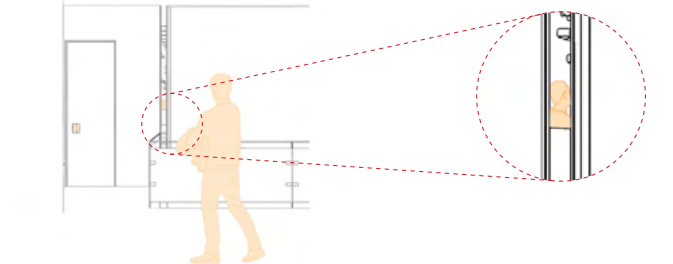
D5 - Privacy wall - during cocktail performances the viewer gets privacy to enjoy the moment; the outsiders will know to not disturb it by noticing their legs;



D6 - Door Handle - the guest room unique door handle along with the angled door are fun details suggesting whimsicality;

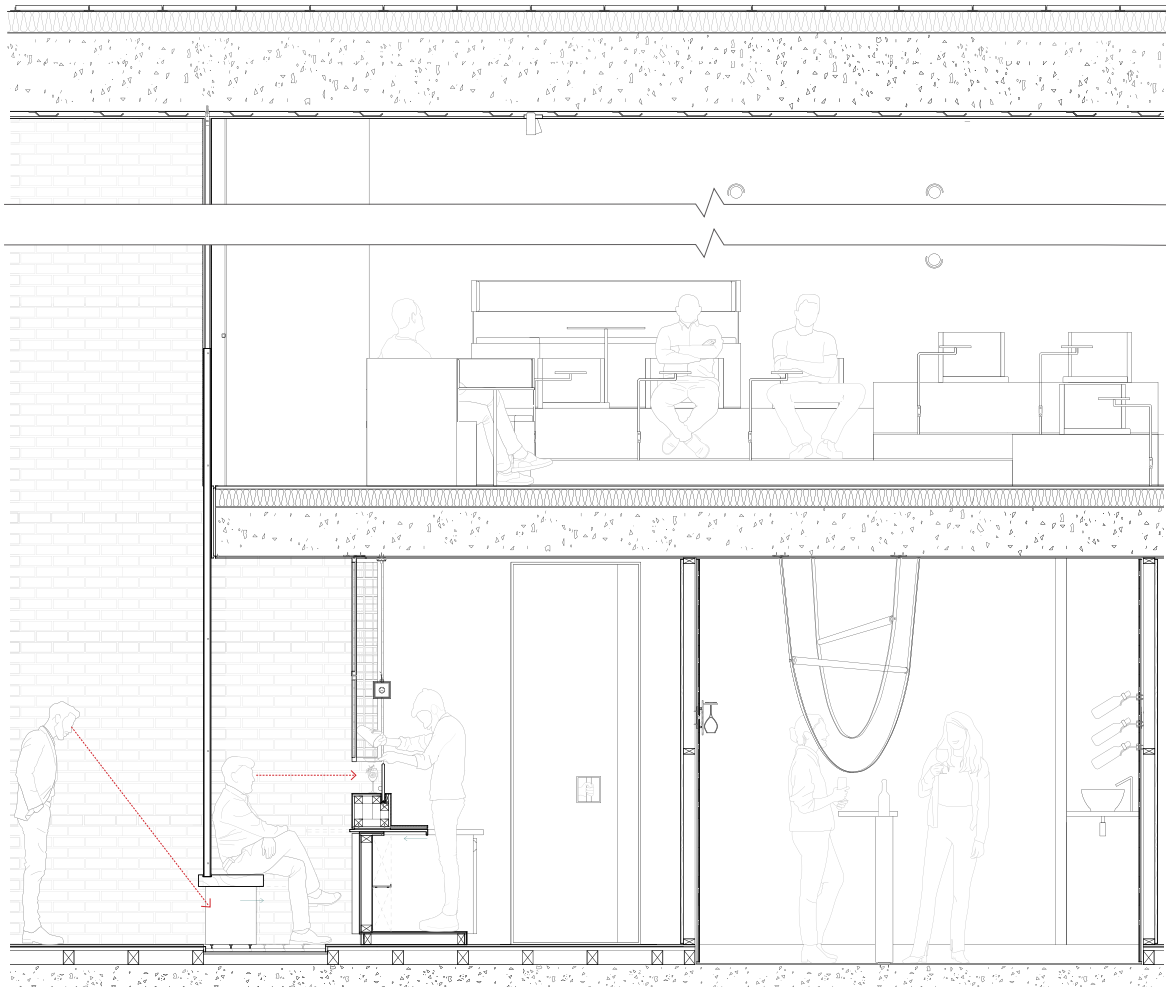


D7 - Wall gap - each guest room has a one-way glass narrow gap which allows those inside to see outside their room;



D8 - Vertical gap - the clear glass gap provides glimpses of what happens both inside and outside the cinema room;





Detailed section shows both the ground floor (bar area with cocktail performance & secluded wine cellar) and the first floor (cinema/ screening room)



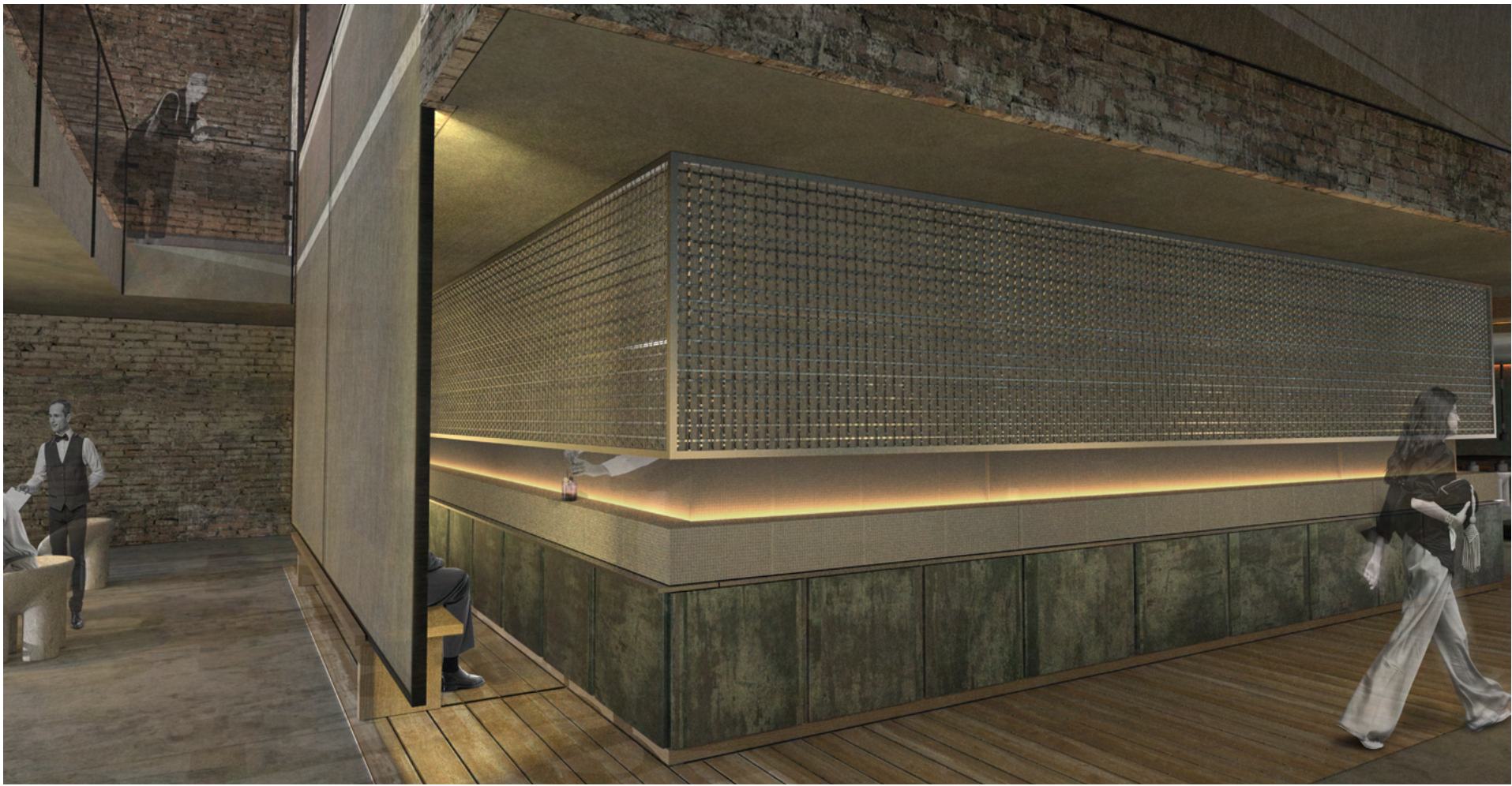
Wine cellar



2. Restaurant and open kitchen



3. Restaurant (with bi-fold glass doors for ventilation)



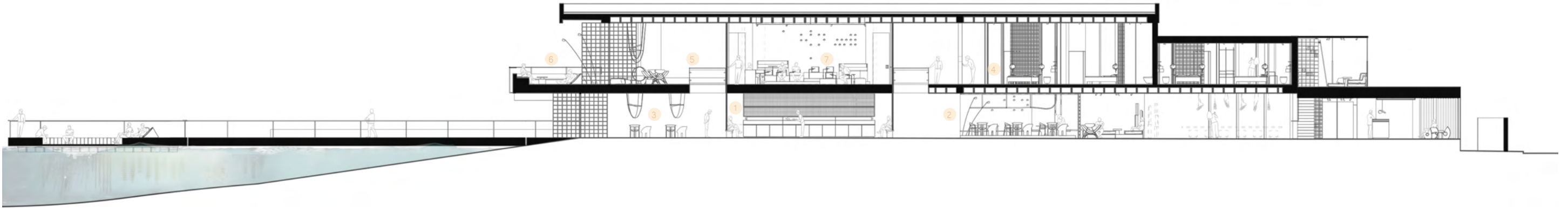
1. The slid down wall stops in the groove and gives privacy to those visitors wanting a whimsical experience, where they can see the entire process of making their drink, yet not the person that makes it. The lit glass, that follows the bar and hides the mixologist, acts as a backdrop to the drinks, adding a layer of importance and fascination to the performance.



During the morning, the open kitchen serves breakfast to club's members – the bench slides towards the bar, whereas the table is pulled towards the guest



During the day, or whenever requested, the metal mesh goes down, and covers the members of staff, yet it allows their hands and the food/beverages to be seen



Section drawing showing the overall space



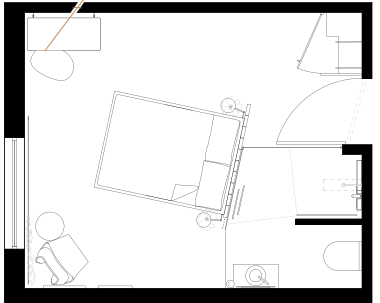
4. The guest room reinforces the idea of whimsicality from the use of colours, layout configuration, to the one-way glass gap (enables those inside the room to peek out towards the corridor)



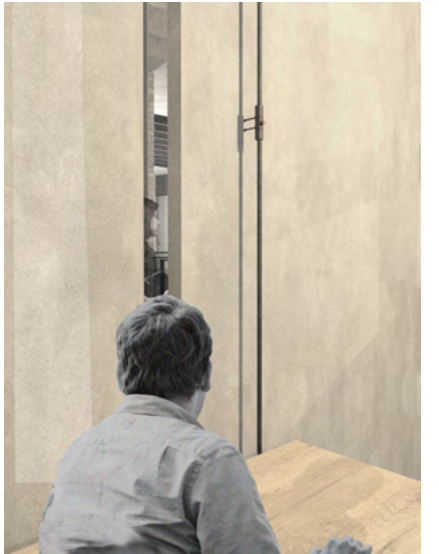
Dynamic corridor – guest room door design



Room number and unique handle



Guest room floor layout



Person looking through the narrow gap





5. Lounge area near outdoor terrace and the cinema on the right.



6. Outdoor terrace overlooking the river Thames



7. Cinema and screening room

