

# PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT FOR FREE THINKERS

JANUARY 2021 • \$4.00

**UNLEASH**  
**YOUR**  
**LADY**  
**POWER**

**EXCLUSIVE!**

**HOW TO CASH IN**  
**ON THE MIDLIFE**  
**CRISIS!**

**SNEAK**  
**PEAK:**  
**OUR NEW**  
**MANSION**  
**ACROSS**  
**THE POND**

**NEW YEAR,**  
**NEW US**  
*(SERIOUSLY,*  
*YOU'RE NOT*  
*GONNA*  
*BELIEVE IT)*

**MEET**  
**PLAYBOY'S**  
**NEW HEAD**  
**CREATIVE...**



# CONTENTS

**Introduction 6**

**Brief 10**



**INTRODUCTION**



**CRITICAL  
POSITION**

**Critical 18  
position**

**Exploratory 32  
question**

**Key readings 34**

# ITS

Research conclusions 87

Game plan 89

Design starting points 91



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Client 38

Site 51

User 70

Women 76



## CONCLUSION



## FORMALITIES

Confirmation statement 104

List of figures 105

Bibliography 112

Fig. 2 - Caution tape.









# CANDAL

Scandal... It often stems from a negative story. It commonly causes harm or upset to at least one party and can even create divisions within society. Nevertheless, the public love it! The press thrives on it and in the end, the parties involved regularly receive some sort of gain; be it financially, socially or publicity.

In his book *Deciphering... Advertising, Art and Architecture*, Graham Cairns describes how in the 90s, ad agencies actively worked to create campaigns which would be banned, as this generated a stir and gave the brand more publicity than a legal one (2010: 11-25). This indicates that not only are consumers attracted to naughtiness and controversy, but these features can work in a brand's favour.

Success through scandal cannot be easy though, or else everyone would be famous and impropriety would no longer be scandalous. Which leads me to infer that there is a formula, or rule book, to handling such situations.

Kim Kardashian - Originally rose to fame after a sex tape was leaked online. Within the same year, reality TV show Keeping Up with the Kardashians aired. The Kardashians recognised the window of limelight and took advantage of the public's interest. Kim's net worth is reported to be approximately \$780 million (Forbes 2020).

Elon Musk - CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, Musk is the topic of great controversy due to the juxtapositional nature of the two companies. Tesla aims to make sustainable transport the norm (Tesla 2020) whilst SpaceX has been created to facilitate transport to Mars (SpaceX 2020). SpaceX undermines what Tesla is designed to do, putting Musk under hot debate and suspicion... Which, he has been known to address in TV interviews - stoned! His net worth sits at \$1.45 billion (Forbes 2020).

Nike - In the last five years, Nike has been implicated in facilitating doping of Olympic athletes (Ingle 2019), reducing the pay of their







*Fig. 4 - Kardashian, Musk, Tesla and Nike.*

pregnant athletes (The Economist 2019), and still using sweatshops (McVeigh 2017).

The brand is currently valued at \$34.8 billion (Shahbandeh 2020).

These examples of scandalous brands and personalities have a few key things in common. Firstly, they have a strong brand identity. Almost anyone you ask will know of all three of these people/companies. Secondly, they have a considerable presence on social media. At the time of writing, Kardashian's, Musk's and Nike's following on Twitter are 68 million, 40.8 million, and 8.3 million respectively (Twitter 2020). Lastly, they know when to strike. With a clear understanding of their customer base, any new product or publicity 'stunt' is timed cleverly to have the biggest impact.

If being controversial is lucrative and leads to success... Why has it not been adopted into the design of physical spaces?



*Fig. 5 - Marilyn Monroe from the front cover of Playboy's first issue.*

## **FINAL BRIEF:**

Create a space hosted by Playboy, that confronts the women's midlife passage in a new way.

# GAME T

## Can you work out the brief breakdown?

The collage overleaf represents:

1. Which brand
2. The end user
3. Where it will be
4. What they will do

### Clue:

5. Why?

(2) are the overlooked generation. They are wealthy, loyal to brands and crying out for attention.

Answers:  
1. Playboy  
2. Women experiencing their midlife transition (35-55 year olds).  
3. Notting Hill  
4. Confront, and experiment, with the itches of unsettlement felt during the midlife passage (most widely understood as 'The Midlife Crisis').

# TIME!



Fig. 6



Fig. 7 - Brief challenge collage.

# BRIEF



# SCD

## 3 key functions



### **CONNECTION**

(social space)

### **CONFRONTATION**

(personal conflict  
resolution space)

### **EXPERIMENTATION**

(creativity and  
freedom space)



# SCHEDULE

**comfort amenities**



**REJUVENATION**

(sleep, spa and sport)

**REPLENISH**

**STATION**

(dining and kitchen)







*Fig. 9 - Author at Pleasure & Treasure,  
Milan Design Week 2019.*



# CRITICAL POSITION

What intrigues me about working on a commercial project is the delicate balance of designing for two users. Typically, the key goal of opening a commercial space is to make money for the brand. However, without providing the right experience for the customer, the space will most likely not be a success financially. This creates a complex situation which requires tailoring to both the end user and the brand.

Human behaviour and psychology have been a special interest to me. Knowledge of the workings of human behaviour - in both the broader sense of consumers, but also specifically the target individual - can help to craft an ideal space which will illicit the desired reaction toward the brand.

Fig. 10 - Hunter.



Fig. 11 - Gatherer.



Fig. 12

Another key insight is the power of **distraction**.

A study conducted by UCLA, which looked at how we make purchase decisions, found that brief distractions lead consumers to take the

“goal-orientated, price sensitive” choices, over the ‘hunter’ attitude of the “detail-orientated and price conscious” ones (cited by Yarrow 2014: 27). This begins to suggest that the interior can be designed to manipulate the consumer response and encourage costumers to be more ‘gatherers’.



When looking at this through the lens of retail, there are various strategies and theories to implement - a personal favourite is the **psychology of selling.**

According to Cymera in Hybrid Food Retail, consumers can be split into two types: Hunters and Gatherers (2020: 120-121). Imagine 'Hunters' are those with a list; they shop efficiently, whereas 'Gatherers' wander and are open to inspiration and persuasion. The author goes on to explain that most of us flip between the two depending on situational circumstances (2020: 120). This means that as a designer, I need to accommodate both types of shoppers within the space.



How we feel affects the way that we shop. Light can have a profound influence on atmosphere (Camera 2020: 233), therefore I aim to utilise lighting within my designs to harness control over the consumers' experience and feelings.



## **BRAND/USER RELATIONSHIP DESIGN PRECEDENT**

Engineering the encounter and perception of the brand to every last detail will allow me to fulfil a commercial space to its complete capabilities. A famous example of a branded space which does just that are Apple Stores...

In the US alone, there are 271 Apple stores, although the brand prefers to refer to them as “town centres” (Madrigal 2017). This slight change in wording depicts a place which creates a sense of community and a relaxed atmosphere to spend time in.

By renaming the store a town centre, Apple have told consumers that they are all welcome, and the experience is not a transactional relationship. This is translated into their physical environment. With the inclusion of features such as:

- The Genius Bar
- Skills sessions to learn new techniques
- Guided walks to connect the local community
- Repair stations

... Apple have transformed the store into a local hub which offers play, education and growth.

This approach boils down to how the brand wants to be perceived. There is a constant play to make the customer feel valued and their experience to be the priority over the product being sold. Apple have dipped into the world of psychology to allow them to control their brand identity and in-store narrative.

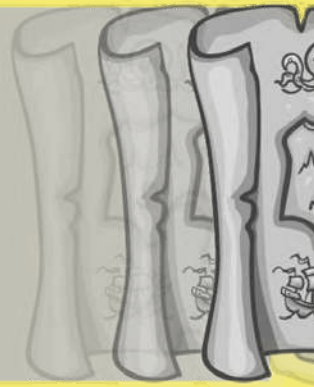
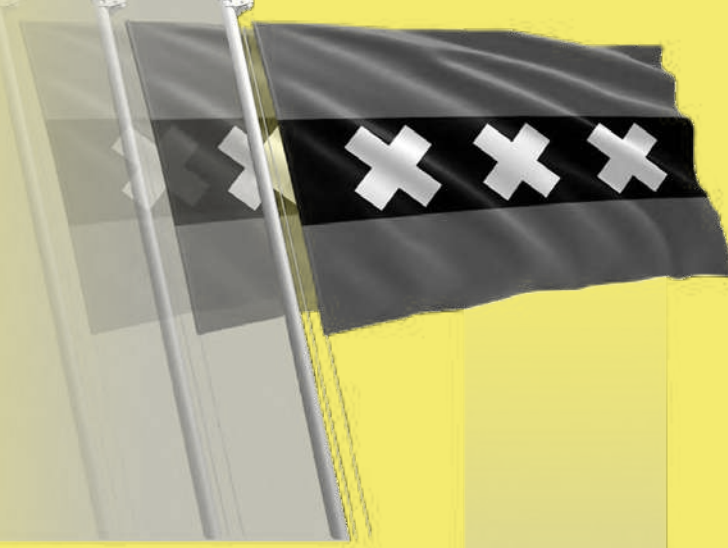
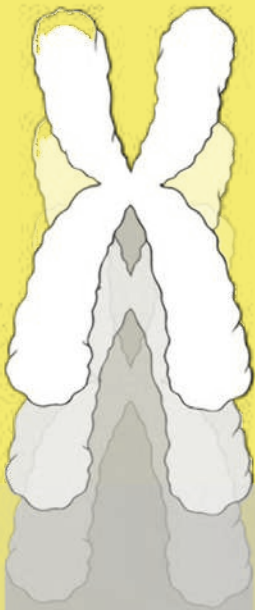




**Design conclusions:**

Customer experience extends beyond the decorative elements of an interior. Brands can use physical events advantageously to enhance their relationship with their user.

Fig. 14 - Apple store, Regent Street.



THE MOTION PICTURE CODE AND RATING ADMINISTRATION

Has Rated This Motion Picture



NO ONE UNDER 17 ADMITTED  
(Age limit may vary in certain areas)

Fig. 15 - Connotations of X.

## Semiotics

It could be argued that semiotics falls under the category of psychology, however within commercial interior design, it can enhance the power of branded messages.

Looking at the letter X is a good starting point to explore the vast power that semiotics can have, and also its possible significance when undertaking a project on scandal.

There are many associations with 'X':

- X chromosome: Every human being has one. It creates the basis of one's biological sex.
- Generation X: People born approximately in the years of 1965 - 1980 (after the baby boomers and before millennials).
- X marks the spot: Treasure.
- X-rated: A film for over 18's, now classified as '18', but in 1951 when the classification was named 'X' it would more likely have stood for extreme, or excluded.

There are many insinuations with 'X':

- Vitamin X: Ecstasy pills.
- XXX: A pornography film.
- X: \$10. Still used on the streets today for drug prices. It also signifies danger. The coat of arms of Amsterdam has three X's; one myth says each represents one of the dangers to the old city (Van Kesteren 2018).

A singular letter can have many meanings, which suggests that within an interior project, it is not enough to employ semiotics through a single angle only.



Cairns suggests architecture to be a key semiotic cue and an “integral part of brand identity” (2010: 2). Regent Street in London is a great example of the seniority that retail architecture brings to a brand.

Due to its famous architecture, rich history and protected Portland stone façades, it is one of the most iconic and sought after shopping streets in the world (Luebke 2019). These features mean the entire street is listed (Historic England 2020), adding further prestige to it, and therefore to the brands that are

housed within. This explains why Apple have a flagship store on Regent Street as opposed to the adjacent Oxford Street.

### **Why is semiotics important?**

In The Brand Handbook, Olins explains...

“The fundamental idea behind the brand is that in everything the organisation does, everything that it owns, and everything it produces should project a clear idea of what it is and what its aims are.” (2008: 23).

Considering consumers prefer to buy a brand or lifestyle rather than a specific product (Stephens 2017: 132-136), this quote emphasises the value of reiterating the brand’s

message at every opportunity, to convince the customer that it is the right choice for them.

This is supported by Klein who describes a commercial space where everything is an ad for the brand (2010: 16). She goes on to specify that employees become “team members” or “training champions” rather than just a worker.

Fig. 16



With the understanding that messages from all aspects of the commercial space contribute to building a customer/brand relationship, I can deduce that the best way to tackle such project is through a holistic approach. This means considering many mediums of design and experiences within the space.

Such considerations could include:

**Location and its relation to the branded message**

(Figure 17).



**Products & services**



**Visual merchandising**



Left to right: Figures 18 - 22.

Fig. 17 - Virgin money store in Wick.



Architecture



Advertising



Senses



## HOLISTIC APPROACH DESIGN PRECEDENT

COS is a company that takes a holistic approach to the presentation of their brand.

The mission statement of their website reads:

“We want you to be wearing our clothes ten years from now. Buy better, keep forever.” (2020).

Looking at their clothing, the pieces are minimal and transitional, with new collections released only twice a year. This shows that their product reflects their ethos very clearly, but what about their built environment?

When examining COS’ retail architecture, it becomes evident that stores are chosen selectively to reflect the brand. The façades and buildings have a calmness to them, and tend to involve natural or soft materials.

These deliberate choices work to insinuate to passers-by that this is a brand about intentionality

*Figure 23 - Cos store, Coal Drops Yard, King’s Cross.*





and functionality.

Inside the store, the visual merchandising is a freestanding flexible design which sits on wheels, without any destruction to the building fabric. It provides the freedom to change the store layout depending on stock levels and collection displays. Typically

the products are organised by colour, replacing the fast-fashion approach of a trend driven display. This approach in their interior design of form with function shows that the brand internalise their ethos to the deepest level.

### **Design conclusions:**

The brand extends beyond their products. They are a personality, and have values, and these should be communicated visually in their space. This could be through materiality, sensory elements, visual merchandising techniques etc.



With the research on the psychology of selling, the known power of subliminal branded cues, and the proof of profitable scandal... It is time we investigate:

# HOW CAN AN INTERIOR BE SCANDALOUS?\*

**\*(WHILST KEEPING IT LEGAL).**

When undertaking further research and developing a response, it would be worth considering:

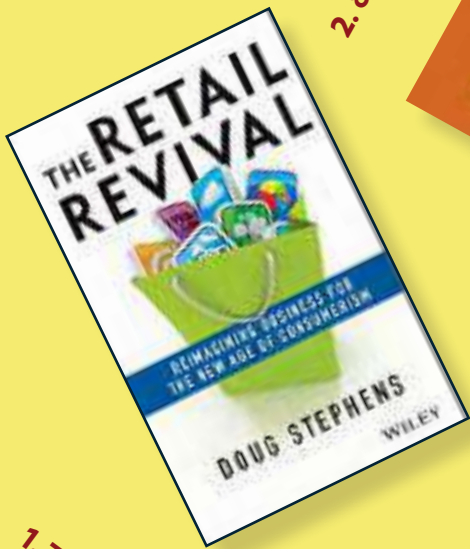
What makes an interior unethical? And when and how do we draw the line for controversial behaviour by brands?



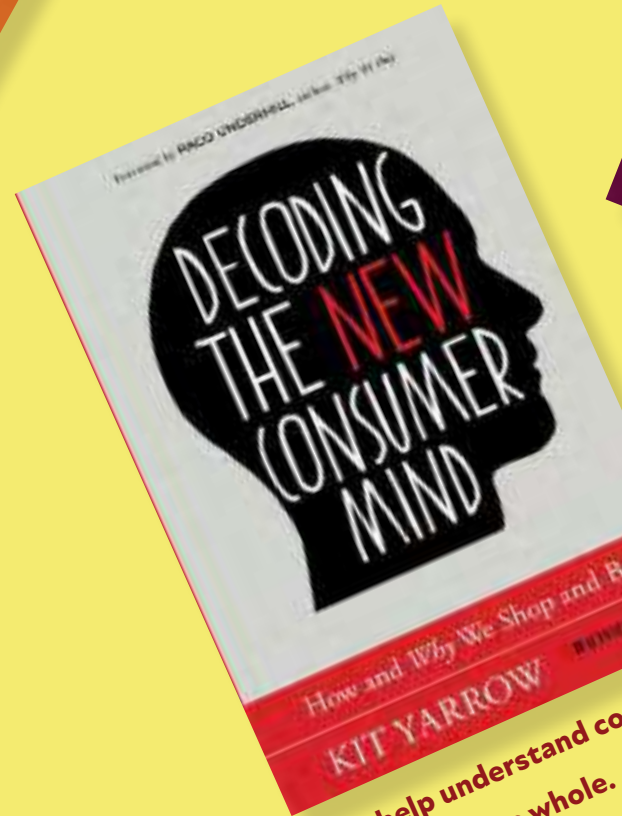


# INTERIOR BE

# KEY READINGS



2. & 3. To gain insight into the retail industry.

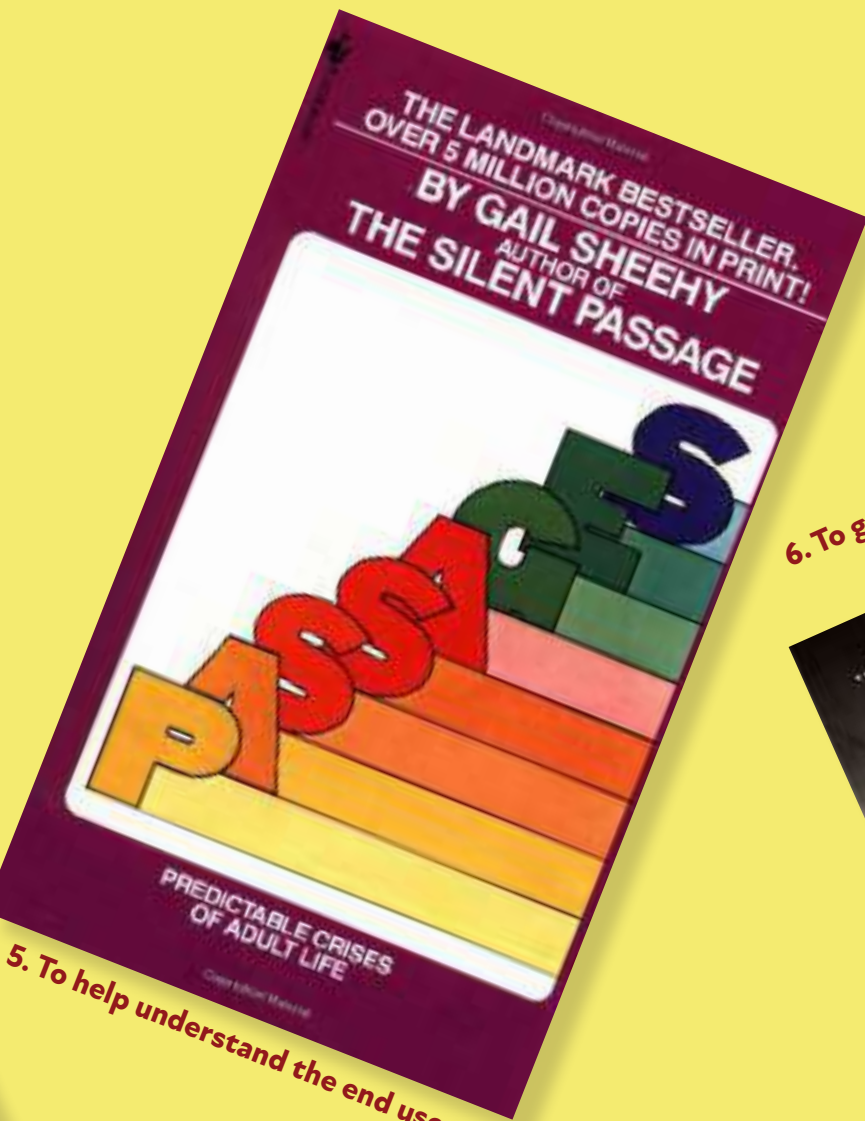


4. To help understand consumers as a whole.

1. To appreciate the power of branding.



Left to right:  
Figures 25 - 31.



5. To help understand the end user.

6. To guide the path on semiotics and creating a holistically branded space.



Consumers







Fig. 32





# THE CLIENT

## **What is Playboy?**

The name is associated with the magazine which took the world by storm for its open depiction of the dream bachelor lifestyle. A large focus within the pages was nude women.

Actually owned by media and lifestyle company Playboy Enterprises Inc., the success of the magazine, which was established in 1953, lead the company toward expansion into casinos, members clubs, resorts and hotels. At present day, many of the franchises have closed down.

The company has been fighting with diminishing magazine numbers: in 2018 the circulation was just over a dreary 200,000 compared to five years earlier, when it was at 1.2 million (Watson 2019). The magazine is no longer in print. Recently, Playboy have been collaborating with an array of fashion brands - prioritising their merchandise over other business avenues.



### Who is it for?

According to Amber Batura in her piece on Playboy and soldiers in the Vietnam war, “the magazine’s combination of girls, gadgets and social/political critique endeared itself to a vast and diverse readership” (2015: 223). However, this refers to a readership exclusively within the male demographic. In the first issue, a piece written by founder Hugh Hefner read “If you are a man between the ages of 18 and 80... Playboy is meant for you.” (1953). He proceeds to say: “We want to make it clear from the very start, we aren’t a ‘family magazine.’ If you’re somebody’s sister, wife or mother-in-law and picked us up by mistake, please pass us

along to the man in your life and get back to your Ladies Home Companion.”

This statement, plus the derogatory depiction and treatment of women (Bindel 2017) made it very clear that it was exclusively for men. Considering that the culture of the brand has remained the same since its birth, the current demographic of Playboy is the same as it was since the magazine was first published.



Fig. 33 - Hefner with Playboy club waitresses.

First Playboy magazine was published, with Marilyn Monroe as the covergirl.

Magazine circulation hits its peak at 7.1million copies (Chemistat 2015).

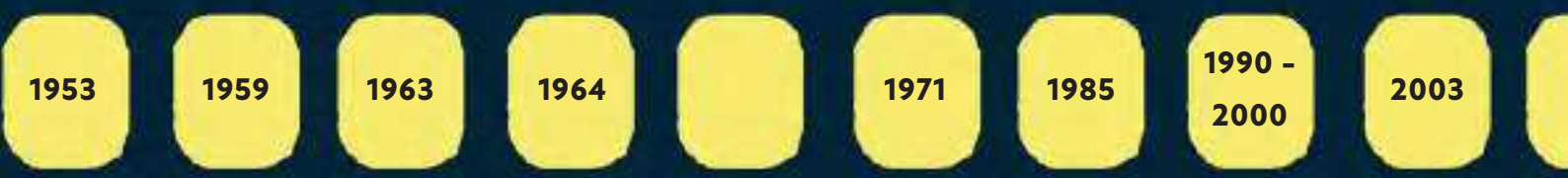
The reality show The Girls Next Door (about Hefner's three girlfriends) is launched.

Hefner founded the Playboy Foundation to fund research into human sexuality, and fight censorship (BBC 2010).

The Playboy franchise has expanded to TV series, clubs, resorts, hotels and casinos by this point.

Now in his seventies, his time is spent focused on his second wife, young family and local philanthropist work. He has reduced down from seven to three girlfriends.

Playboy mansion opens in Chicago. A year later, the first Playboy club opens in the same city.



Hugh Hefner is arrested on obscenity charges for the captions under images being too suggestive.

Hefner has a stroke, and consequently begins to slow down his lifestyle - cutting down his usual four parties per week.

Fig. 34

Playboy magazine stops publishing nudity (website visits quadruple (Barford 2015)).

Playboy mansion in LA is sold, on the condition that Hefner stays until he passes away.

2016

2017

Following declining sales, nudity is re-introduced back into the magazine.

Hefner dies, aged 91.

# KEY PLAYBOY CONTROVERSIES:

Journalist Gloria Steinem goes undercover as a bunny working at the first Playboy club in 1963. In her book she describes that “women were wage-slaves for the lewd and abusive customers” (cited by Redden 2017).

Hefner often gave the girls drugs including weed and Quaaludes to encourage sex (Madison 2015: 36).

Holly Madison, Hefner's "main girlfriend" (2015: 82) and resident at the mansion for seven years, wrote an expose of her time there. It revealed Hefner to be controlling, manipulative, and abusive (2015).

Hefner's lobbying for the pill and abortion can be interpreted two ways: female empowerment or shrewd business stance. Elizabeth Fraterrigo described it as "merely serving the best interests of Playboy, promoting more sex for women while reducing male responsibilities for unwanted pregnancy." (Cited by Ingram, 2017).



### PLAYBOY CLUB DESIGN PRECEDENT

The first Playboy Club opened in Chicago in 1961. Examining this case study is less about the space itself, and more about the branded detail that the company executed when opening their first physical public space.

Despite opening over sixty years ago, the brand had already embraced the idea of using a holistic branded approach whereby every detail was engineered.

It could help to inform the considerations I need to make as the designer for this upcoming project.



Fig. 40 - Playboy Club view from street.





### **Entrance**

The front was brightly lit and heavily branded - *proving Playboy wanted to be the centre of attention.*

Guests needed a Playboy key (Breen 2020) which gained them access into the club - *people are reminded from the very beginning of the exclusiveness of the party.*

A billboard showcased the names of attendees - *this made guests feel important, but also echoed the message of exclusivity.*

### **Interior**

Brand reminders everywhere: lighters, napkins, walking bunnies - *the logo would have been visible at every blink, in various mediums.*

Velvets, dark woods, and many floors and separate rooms - *the option of multiple rooms and materiality reflect a space which is suggesting discretion, privacy, and... exclusivity.*



### **Customer service and experience**

All waitresses were named, and dressed as 'bunnies' - *the outfit was essentially a walking, living, breathing denotation of the Playboy logo.*

The service required by the staff was listed in the 26 page "Bunny Manual" - *behavioural features were specified down to the way they should sit and stand (known as the "Bunny perch" and "Bunny stance" (American Playboy: The Hugh Hefner Story 2017)).*

At the time, the line-up seemed controversial including black female singers - *Aretha Franklin sang on stage at the start of her career, aged 18 (Handy 2011). Although some performance choices raised eyebrows in the still segregated era, the club hired people which would reflect their attitude of challenging conformity and pursuing pleasure.*

"Big Bunny", a private jet used to fly high profile guests in to attend the club - *the experience of the club extends limitlessly beyond the event itself, even the journey there was Playboy themed.*

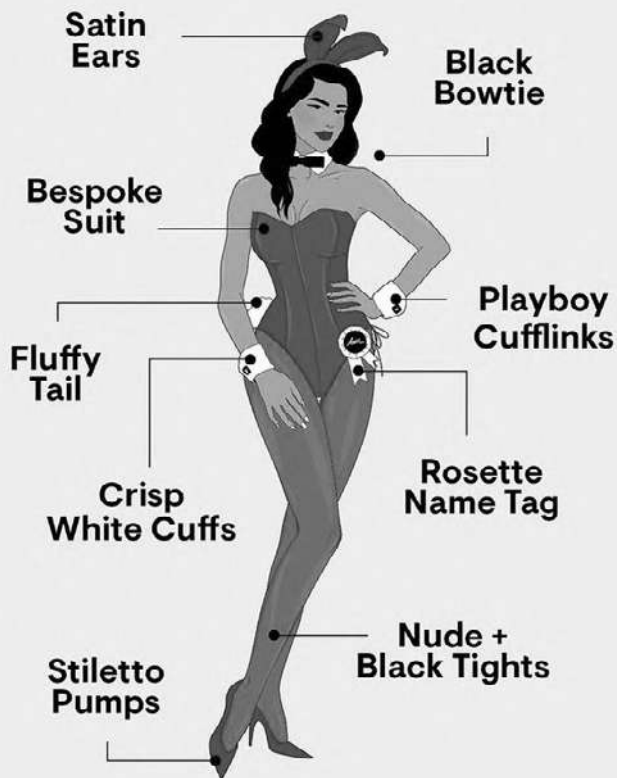


Fig. 44 - Bunnies waving off the Bunny jet.

**Design conclusions:**

The constant reminder of the brand - whether in graphic, experiential or aesthetic form - is as relevant today as it was in the 1960s. However looking at the choices of materiality... at the time, it may have looked classy and sophisticated, but recreating the same look today would have the opposite effect. Therefore if the project wants to radiate similar messages, the interior specifications would have to change to suit modern day's tastes.

# The Playboy Club Bunny Manual

## Introduction

## Bunny Benefits

- Insurance
- Vacations
- Leaves of Absence
- Complimentary Playboy Products
- Reemployment
- Finder's Fee
- Incentive System
- Good Service
- Mug Incentive
- Transfers

## Bunny Behavior

- Absenteeism
- Breaks
- Bulletin Board
- Bunny Council
- Bunny Meeting
- Bunny Photo
- Dating Employment
- Dating Keyhole
- Dressing Room
- Eating and Drinking
- Hours
- Inspection
- Lockers
- Meals
- Merit/Demerit
- Mingling
- Outside Model
- Personal Information
- Personal Meetings
- Phone Calls
- Promotions
- Off Duty Hours
- Salaries
- Income Tax Deductions
- Schedules
- Reserve
- Replacement
- Signing Out
- Shopping Service
- Smoking
- Suspension
- Time Cards

## Appearance and Grooming

- Costume
- Hair Styling
- Jewelry
- Laundry and Dry Cleaning
- Make up
- Personal Hygiene
- Helpful Hints

## Supervisory Personnel

- General Manager
- Bunny Mother
- Shift Manager
- Room Director

## Co-Workers

- Seamstress
- Wardrobe Mistress
- Other Bunnies



Fig. 45

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### What has the brand done well?

It is easy to conclude that the expansion over many branches of the entertainment and lifestyle sector is largely due to Playboy's strong brand identity. Their logo, their personality and their ethos has been reflected within all branded spaces, and considered to a detail level so minute; it can only be registered on an unconscious level.

### How will the brand evolve?

Playboy's ethics and portrayal of ideals have remained the same since the company's establishment almost 70 years ago, but their ratings and success have diminished in the recent years. This indicates that their brand needs updating.

As Olins succinctly explains: "To remain relevant to your customers, the brand cannot stay still - it must grow.

Rebranding the entire company is not always needed, sometimes it just requires a refresh." (2008: 56).

Considering the recent developments for women empowerment, such as the Me Too movement, it seems time for Playboy to move on from their misogynistic history, toward a refreshed target market and purpose.

Fig. 46



Royalty Studios

**ROYALTY STUDIOS**

105-109, Lancaster Rd, Notting Hill, London W11 1QF

# THE SITE



## History

Part of a selection of independent cinemas in west London, The Royalty Cinema opened in 1929. (Serial killer John Christie allegedly worked at the cinema as a projectionist (Walker 2017)).

Closed down in 1960.

Re-opened as a bingo club in 1965.

The cinema building was demolished in the 1980's, exact date unknown.

The Royalty Studios, designed by CZWG Architects, was built in 1986. (Designed specifically to be studio space, "the frustrations of working with existing buildings [as repurposed studios] were the lessons that wrote the brief" (CZWG 2020).

### Site features

The 4 studios on the third floor have parquet strip timber floors (dance studio style)

Painted exposed brick walls

High-pitched ceilings

Open plan

Fitted kitchen and utilities including water, AC, lighting, heating

Views across London

Garden at front of building

Private car park and cycle bays at rear

C rating of energy efficiency (Pope 2010)

Unlisted

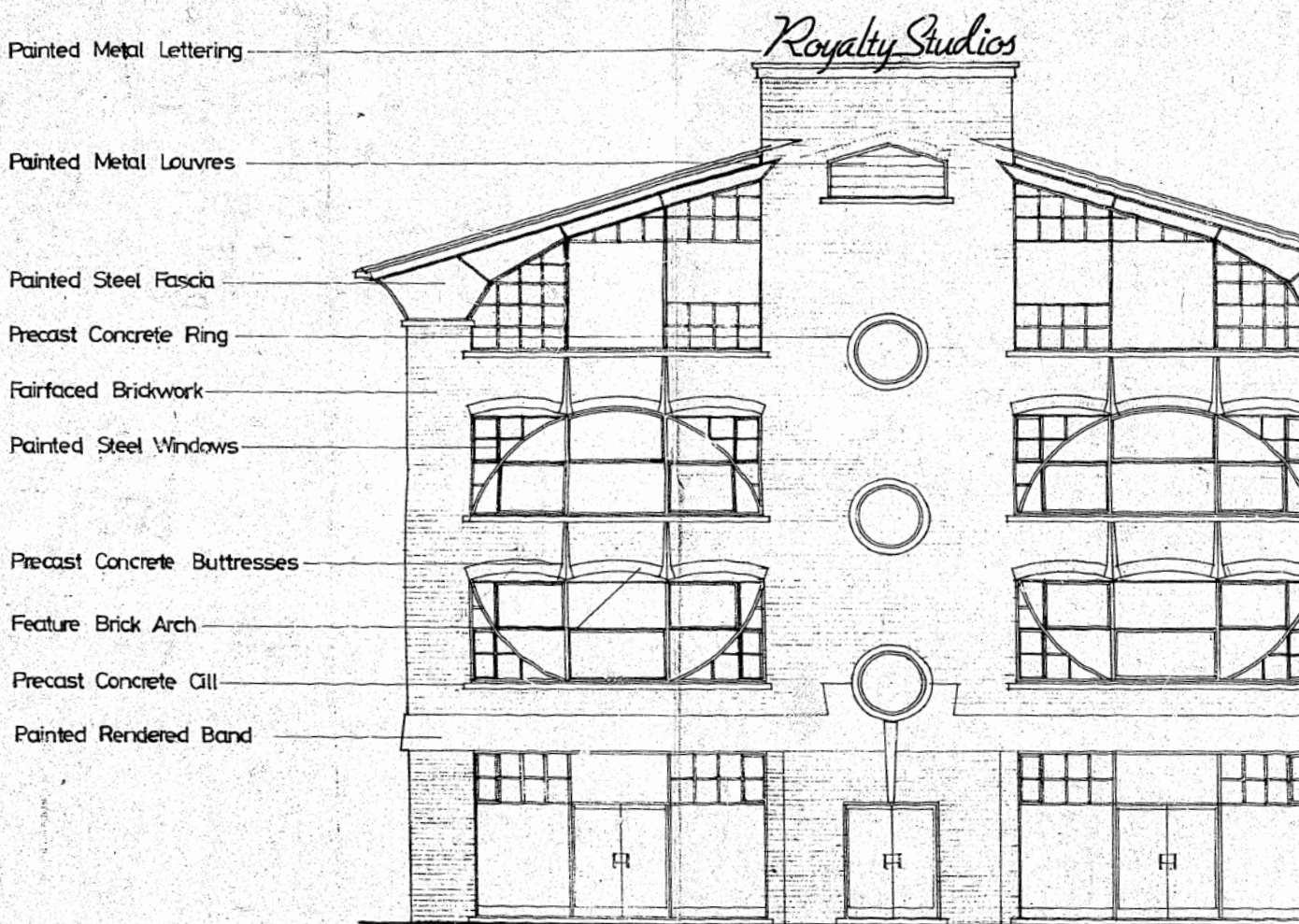
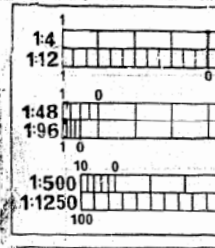
North facing. Big front windows but narrow road and aspect mean low levels of natural light during the day.



Left to right: Figures 49 - 52. Interior images of site.

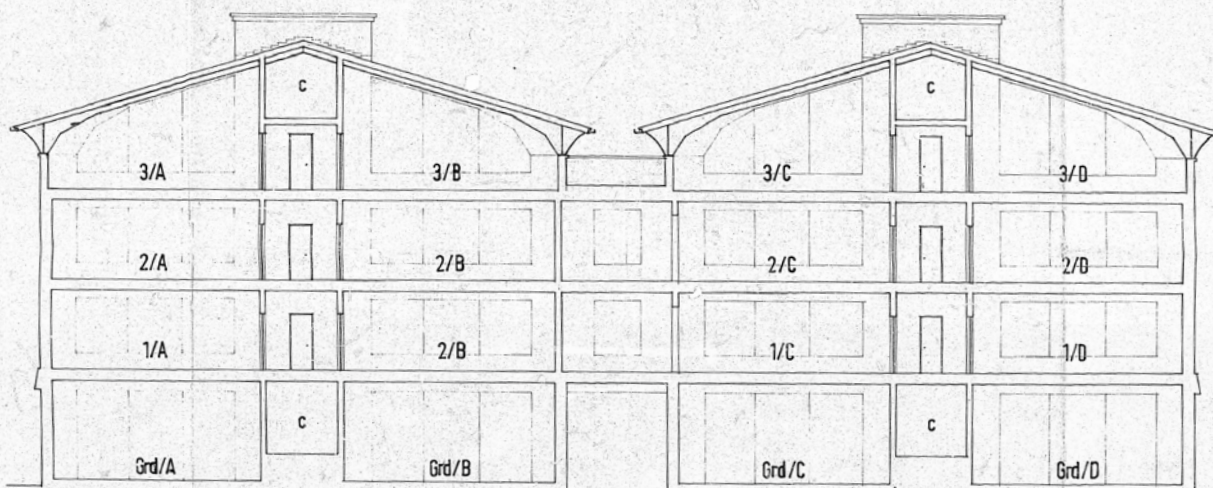






**Fig. 53 - Front elevation**

**Fig. 54 - Long section**



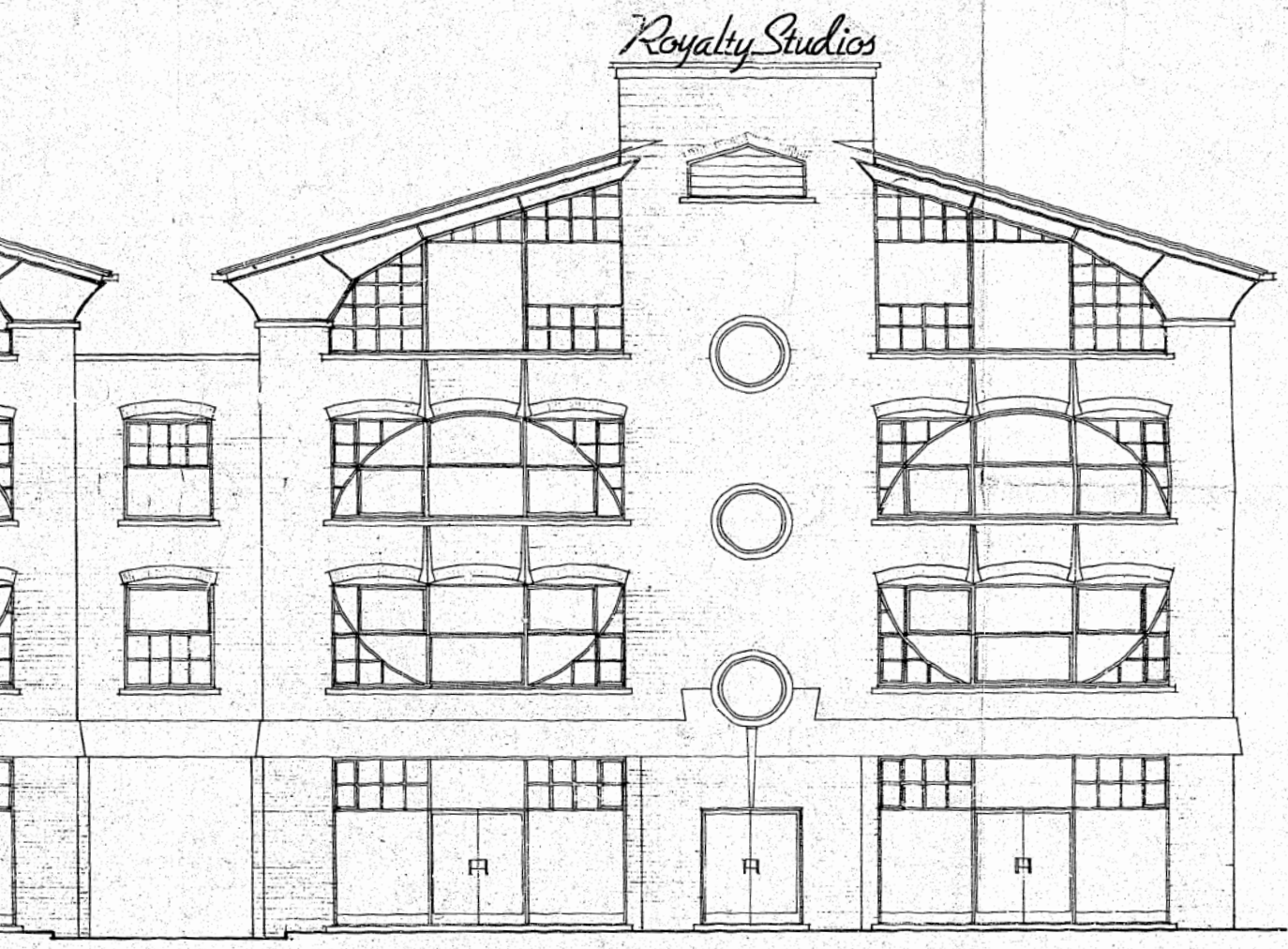
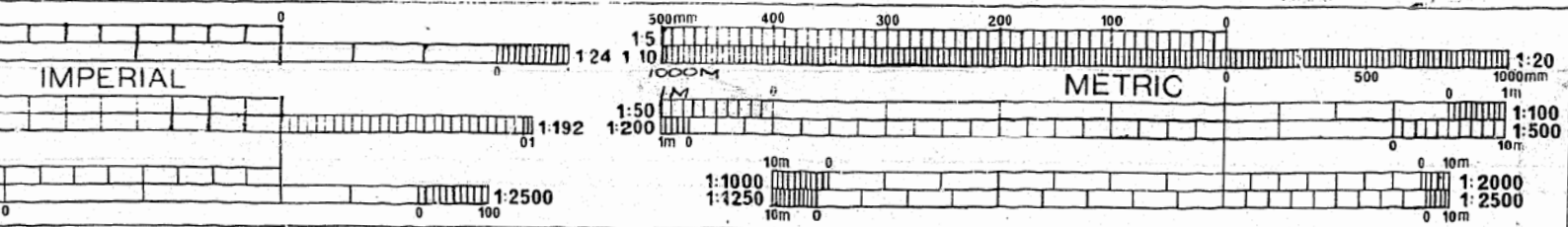
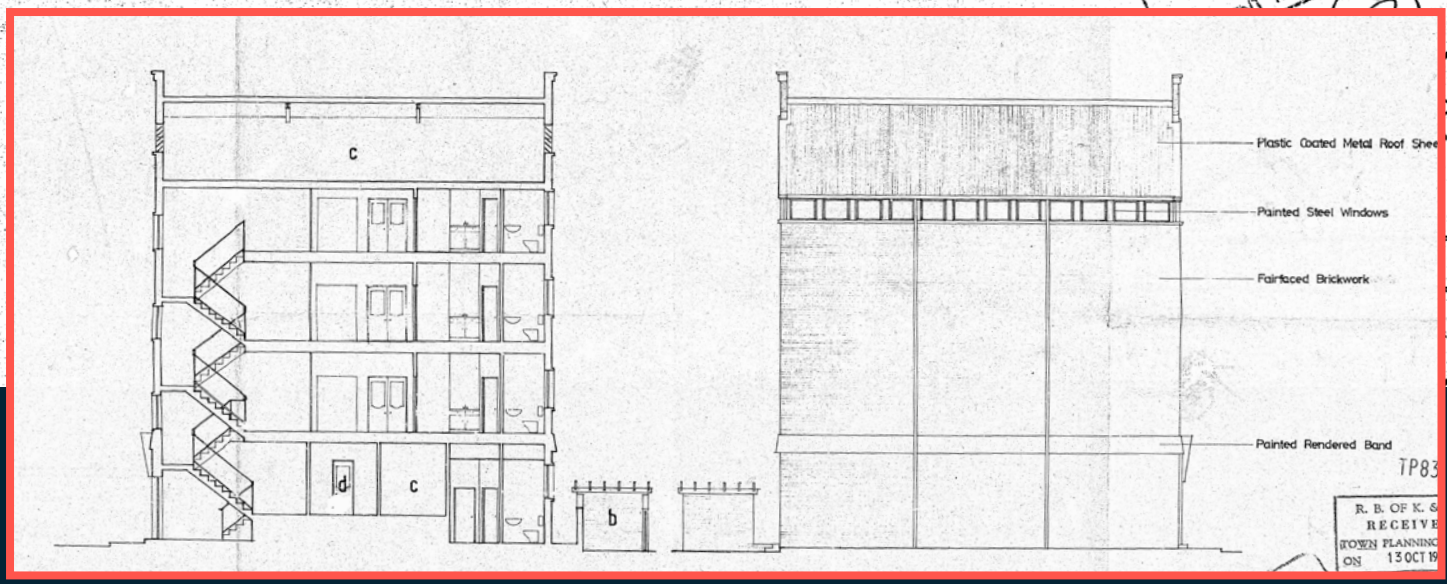
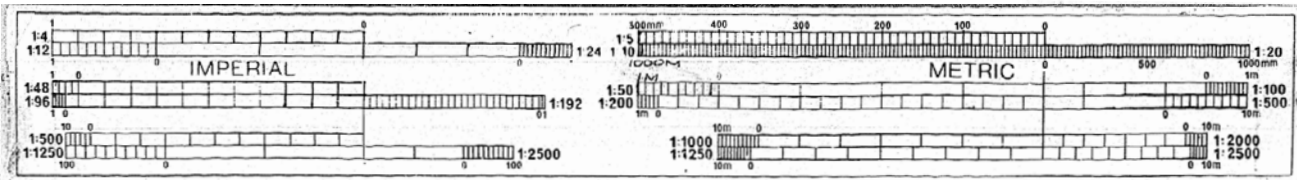


Fig. 55 - Cross section

19 DEC 1983  
 REF. ....



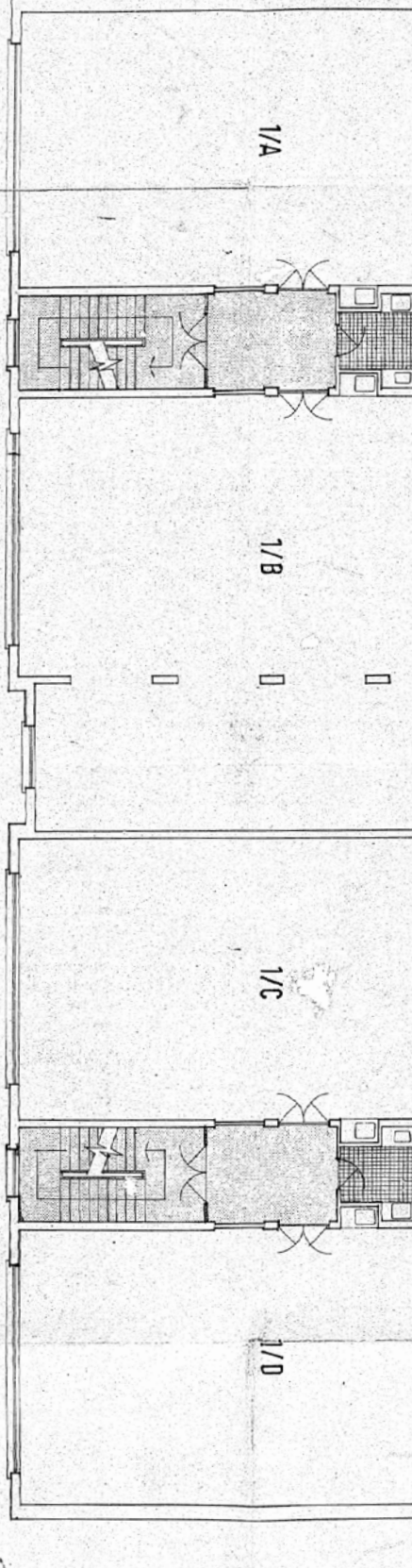
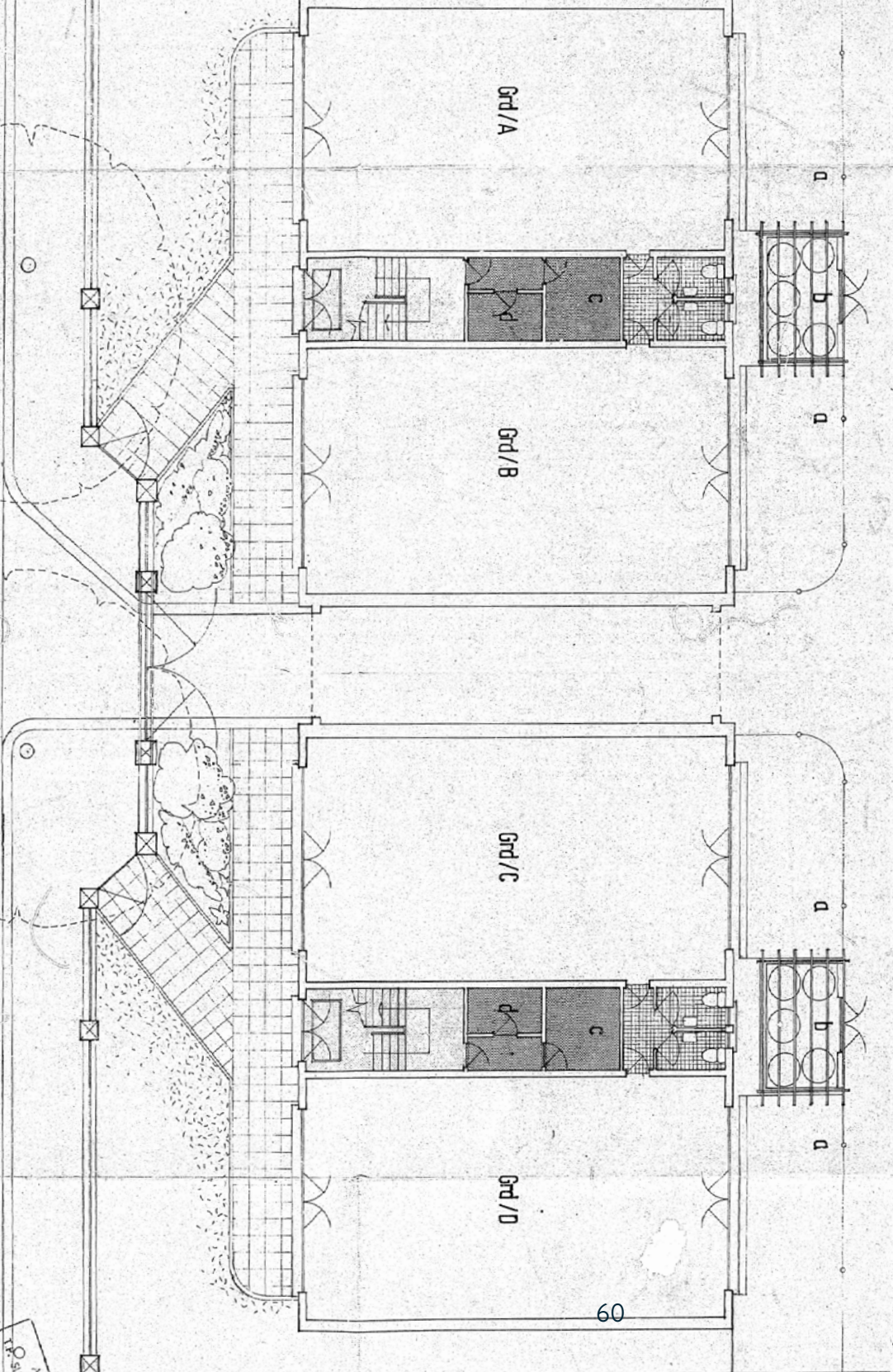


Drawn by CZGW Architects, 1983.



**Fig. 56 - Ground floor plan**

**Fig. 57 - First floor plan**



1:500  
1:1250

Fig. 60 -  
Context plan

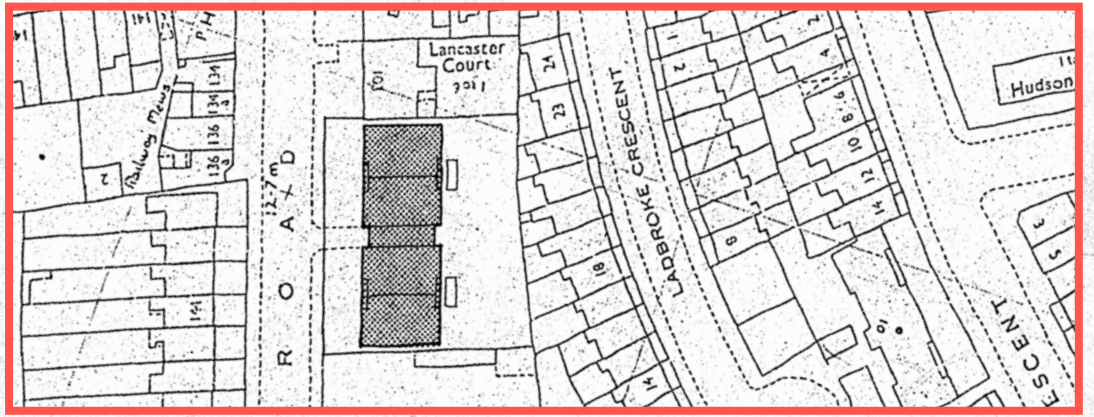


Fig. 58 - Second floor plan

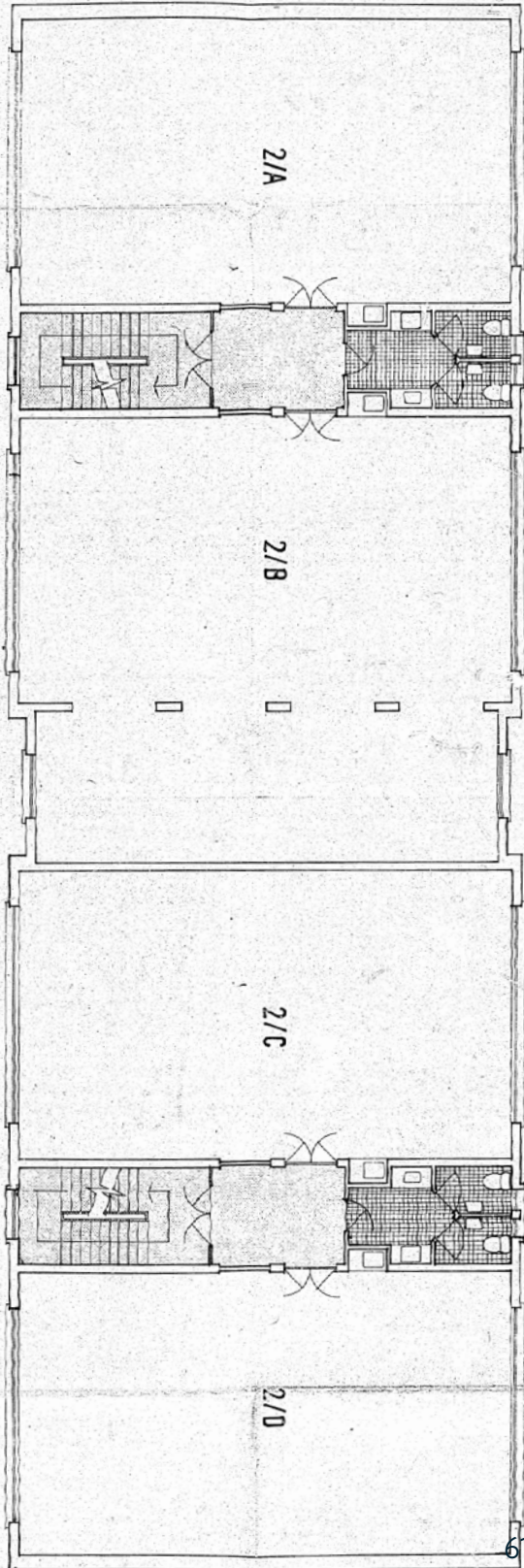


Fig. 59 - Third floor plan

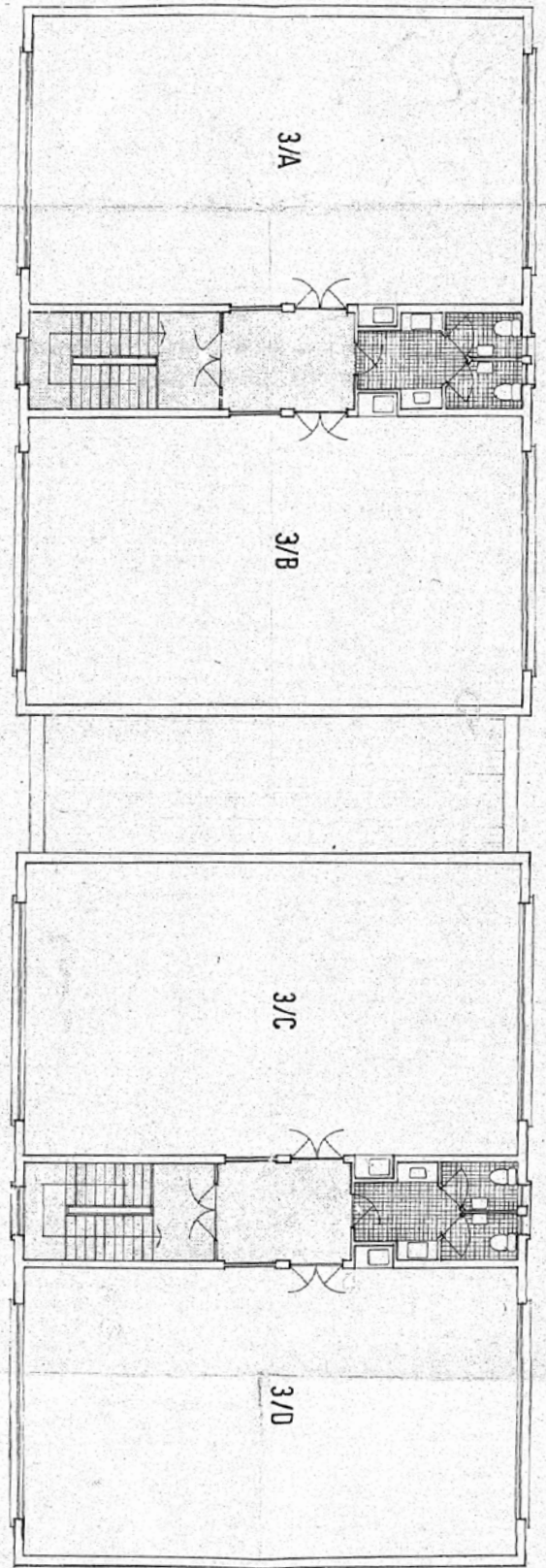


Fig. 61 - Sqft breakdown.

4

WORKSHOP UNITS

	<u>Nett</u>	<u>External Yards</u>
Grd./A	1,000 sq. ft.	200 sq. ft.
Grd./B	1,000 sq. ft.	200 sq. ft.
Grd./C	1,000 sq. ft.	200 sq. ft.
Grd./D	1,000 sq. ft.	200 sq. ft.
<b>TOTAL NETT</b>	<b>4,000 sq. ft.</b>	<b>(TOTAL GROSS 4,815 sq. ft.)</b>

↓  
447 sqm

DESIGN STUDIOS

	<u>Nett</u>	
1/A	1,010 sq. ft.	
1/B	1,500 sq. ft.	
1/C	1,010 sq. ft.	
1/D	1,010 sq. ft.	
2/A	1,010 sq. ft.	
2/B	1,500 sq. ft.	
2/C	1,010 sq. ft.	
2/D	1,010 sq. ft.	
3/A	1,010 sq. ft.	
3/B	1,010 sq. ft.	
3/C	1,010 sq. ft.	
3/D	1,010 sq. ft.	
<b>TOTAL NETT</b>	<b>13,100 sq. ft.</b>	<b>(TOTAL GROSS 15,760 sq. ft.)</b>

TP831621

= 16!

↑  
1464 sqm

NOTE

Possible Sub-division of Units : 475 sq. ft. and 525 sq. ft.  
 18 no. Car Parking : 18 no. Cars  
Total Building : 20,575 sq. ft.

TOTAL  
SQM  
1910

**TOTAL  
SQM:**

1910m<sup>2</sup>

**USAGE FOR  
PROJECT:**

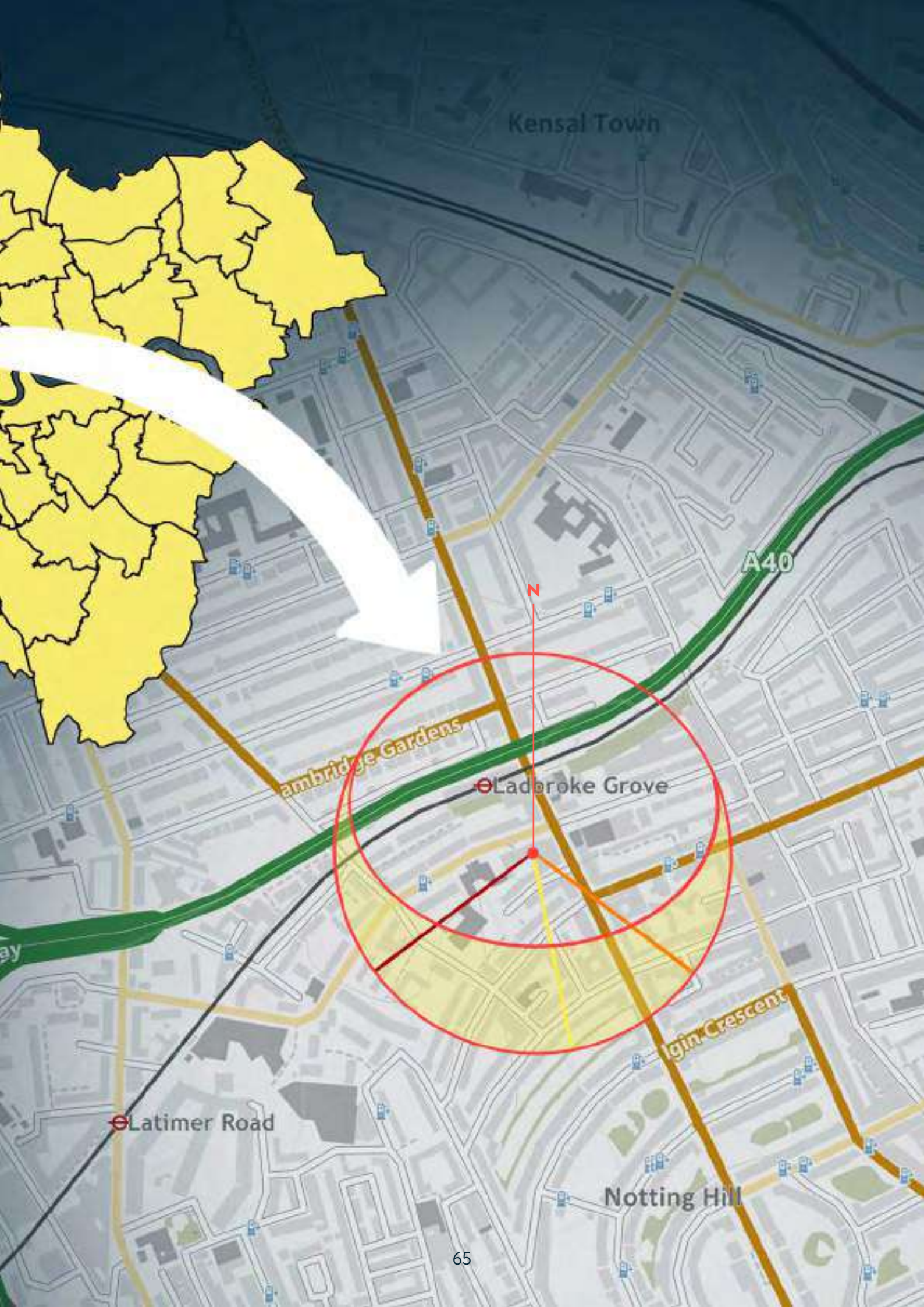
Entire space

# LOCATION

Fig. 62 - Site location visualisation.







Kensal Town

A40

Ladbroke Grove

Notting Hill

Latimer Road

Ambridge Gardens

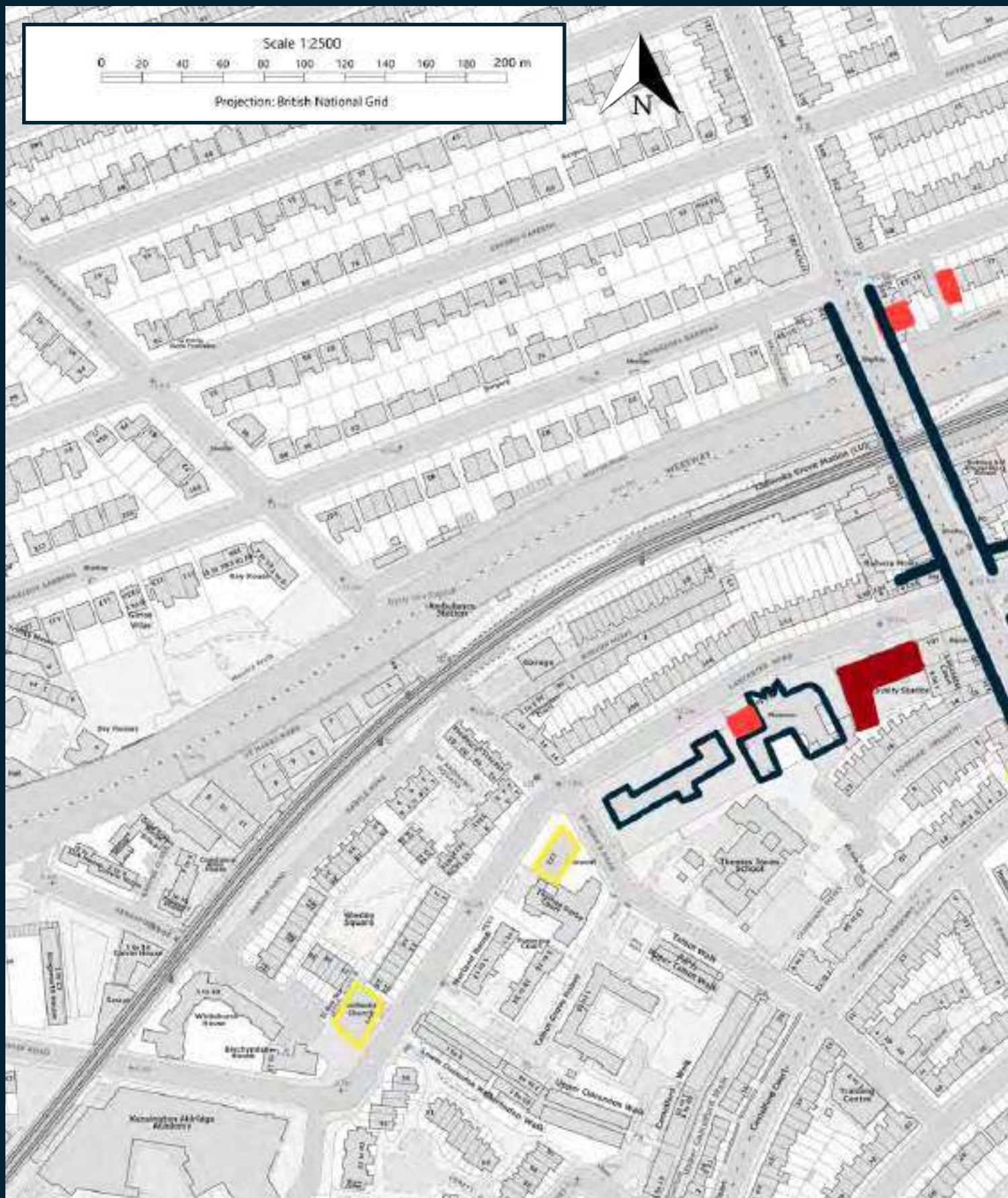
Ligin Crescent

N

65

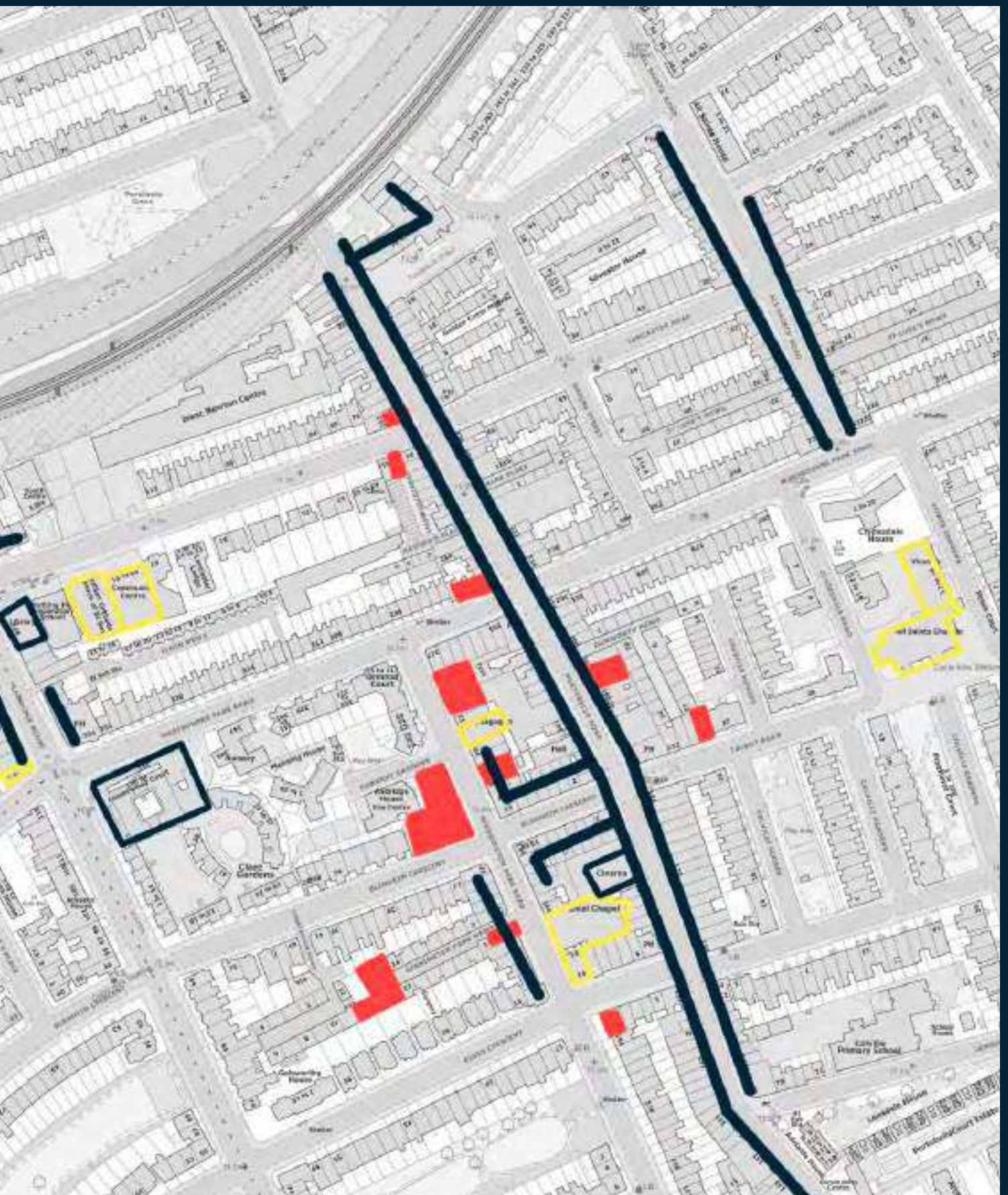


Fig. 63



## CONTEXT MAP

-  The site
-  Religious sites
-  Retail & recreation
-  Clinics (medical and beauty)

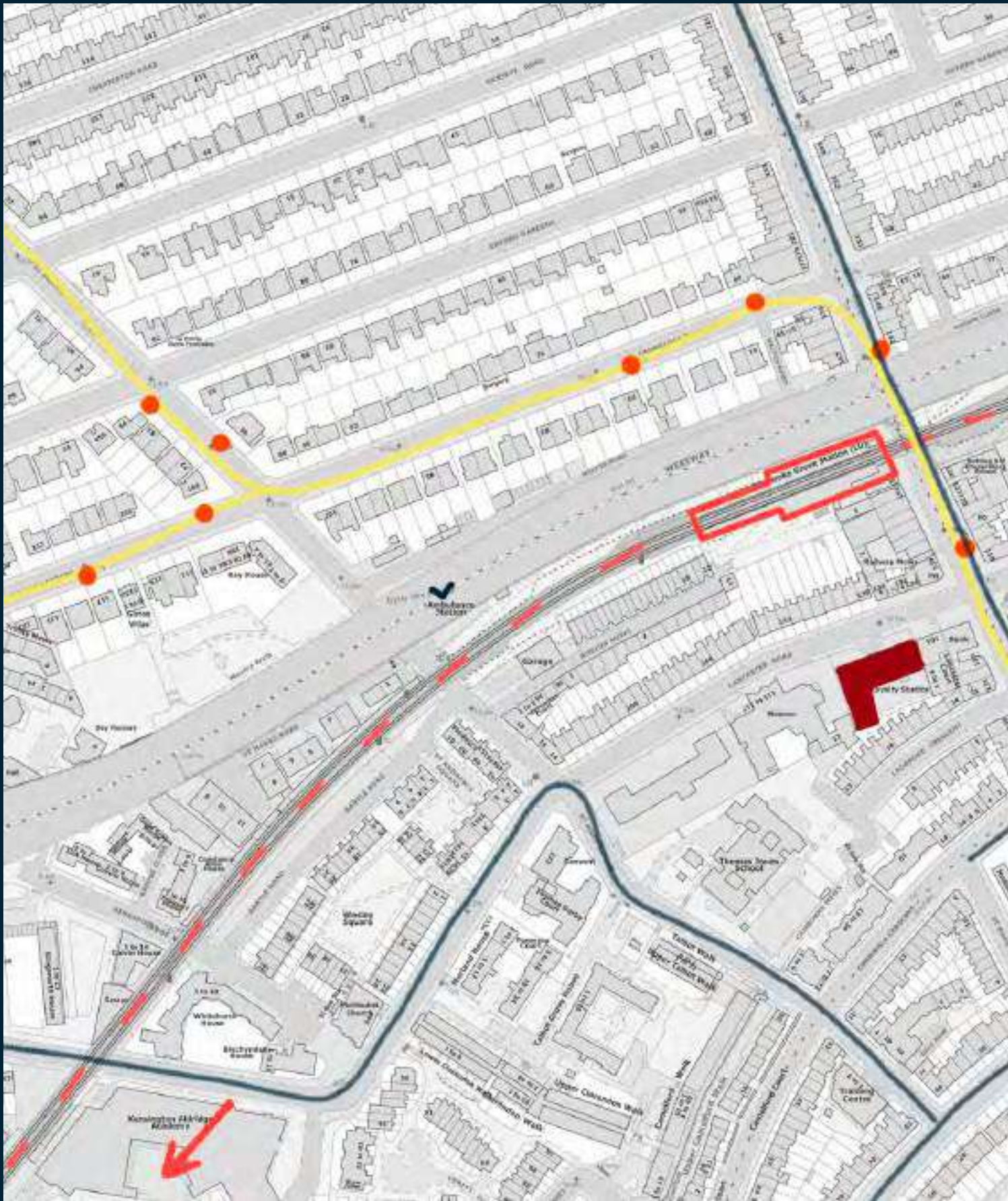


The site sits on Lancaster Road which finds itself on Secret London's Prettiest Streets list (Landon 2020). It's desirable

location boasts close proximity to famous landmarks including Portobello Road, and lies within the Notting Hill Carnival

boundary. In 2013 there were 417 reports of theft from person, being the highest recurring crime in the area (RBKC 2013).

Fig. 64



# TRANSPORT MAP

-  The site
-  Bus routes
-  Bus stops
-  Cycle lanes and routes
-  Tube route and stations
-  Santander cycles sta



The new Elizabeth line (currently in construction) will pass through the area, with a new stop named Kensal Portobello Road (RBKC

2019). This will increase the transport connections further, due to be running by 2022 (Crossrail 2020).



Fig. 65 - Notting Hill Carnival, 1976



Residential demographic:

73% aged 20-64

25% social housing

39% rented (15% higher than the London average).

Health - Residents “report much lower levels of bad/very bad health and limiting long- term illness than typical of Kensington and Chelsea and London. This is a reflection of the general affluence of the area and the young age structure of the population” (RBKC 2013).



## WHY IS NOTTING

Notting Hill has a rich affinity with controversy - both historically and in the present day.

The year 1958 saw intense riots following an attack by 'Teddy Boys' on a Swedish woman for being married to a black Jamaican immigrant (Kelly 2020). This inspired the Notting Hill Carnival; a celebration of the "cultural richness of the area" (Crabtree 2019), which lives on to this day.

In 2017, Notting Hill was home to the Grenfell Tower tragedy. The fire was a big scandal as investigations found many contributing factors were avoidable, including implicating the local council and London Fire Brigade (BBC 2019). It has shed light on the unsafe, unregulated cladding of high rise social housing and been the catalyst of change for similar buildings (Wainwright 2019).

*Fig. 66 - Police man carries boy on his shoulders at Notting Hill Carnival.*



## NOTTING HILL RELEVANT?


In relation to the target market for this project, Notting Hill was one of the hippest places in London during their youth. In 1999 (when the target demographic would be aged 20-35) the film Notting Hill, starring Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts, was released which flooded the area with popularity (Gee 2018). In the film, the local vicinity is depicted to be arty, creative and trendy. Having this existing association with the area, as well as its links to scandalous stories makes it a top choice for a project based on a scandal for Gen X'ers.



*Fig. 67 - Women dancing at Notting Hill Carnival.*



Fig. 68 - Stereotypical Gen X couple.



# THE USER

In Chapter One, the brief synopsis states the project is for people experiencing a midlife crisis. What exactly does that look like?

## **The victim**

‘The midlife crisis’ statement narrows down the demographic cleanly to one generation - Gen X. This is people born roughly between 1965 to 1980, making them aged 40 - 55.

Studies have found that middle-aged people are least happy (Gayle 2016), with average life satisfaction dropping to it’s lowest at age 46 (Setiya 2017: 20).

## **Why them?**

Firstly, according to the financial data from 2018/19, people aged 45 to 54 had the highest amount of disposable income (Duffin 2020). This fact alone makes them an attractive target market for a commercial project.

Secondly, according to Parmar, “Older women and men are an under-exploited and ignored audience” (cited in Tesseras 2013), insinuating that they are a ripe target. This is supported by interviews conducted by the author, which found that two thirds of Gen X’s cannot name a space primarily targeted for them. Lastly, the midlife passage can be a turbulent time for those experiencing it, and the people around them. Considering the project is based on the investigation of a scandalous space, it would seem natural to involve a market with personal ties to scandal.



**What comes to mind when you think about a midlife crisis?**

Is it the middle aged teacher with a new sports car, wearing clothes designed for his son... Or perhaps the mother with empty nest

syndrome who moves to India to become a yogi?

The film industry have portrayed mid-life crises endlessly - think Steve Carell and Julianne Moore in Crazy Stupid Love (2011), and

it can be a lucrative sector if marketed correctly - think anti-aging skincare.

The issue is, these stereotypes seem to be missing an explanation behind the tumultuous times that the protagonist is experiencing...



*Fig. 69 - The midlife crisis stereotype consists largely of men making drastic life changes.*

## What is a midlife crisis?

The term “midlife crisis” was coined by Elliot Jacques in 1965 (Druckerman 2018), however it had been investigated long before that.

Erik Erikson built his model of psychosocial development upon Freud’s psychosexual theory. He suggests that in order to grow into a well rounded person, we must overcome a crisis in each of the eight stages of development through our lifetime. According to his model, people aged 40 - 65 are faced with the “Generativity vs. Stagnation” conflict. In short, it leads to either finding a deeper meaning in life whereby one contributes back to others, or one feels a disconnection with other people and lack of self achievement (Blair 2020).

The seminal, yet controversial (Levine 1995) book, *Passages* by Gail Sheehy, changed the perception of the midlife crises to an optional, but positive growth. The overarching conclusion is that people who address and face their midlife crisis come out the other side (at 50 onwards) renewed, refreshed and happy with their direction. Those who do not act on it, will have a larger crisis later on (1977: 264).

*Clockwise from top right:  
Figures 70 - 73.  
Sheehy, Levinson, Erikson,  
Jacques.*





Ultimately, she suggests that the experience is split into two parts. Firstly, (typically found within the “deadline decade” of ages 35 to 45), we come to cross-roads. It is the realisation that we have reached the halfway mark and our youthfulness is finite (1977: 43). We begin to focus on lost opportunities and regrets about the past (Setiya 2017: 15), which leads us to “the gnawing sense that you’re not getting all out of life that you should be” (1977: 175) and “fantasies of breaking out” (1977: 16).

This explanation is supported by Levinson’s theory which states that at roughly the same age, individuals begin to re-evaluate previous commitments and feel an urgency about life (Blair 2020).

It is not until the second stage that we begin to take action. During the ‘refreshed 50’s’, those who confronted the feelings of discomfort move on to discover renewed purpose in their lives (Sheehy 1977). Again, supported by Levinson’s theory which stated at the same age, one sees a commitment to new choices (Blair 2020).





# WOMEN



## **Did you know?**

2 out of 3 divorces in couples aged 40 - 70 are initiated by women (Gibbs 2005).



During middle age, women are twice as likely to be hopeful about the future than men (Gibbs 2005).



Women, with overwhelming consistency, become more social and sexual, during middle age. (Sheehy 1977: 325)

In conclusion, women seem to grow into their own and flourish during the transition through midlife.

This is despite the stresses of:

Caring for children and  
Parents

Retirement

The environment

Menopause incl.

- hot flushes
- poor sleep
- hormonal imbalances
- weight gain / loss
- change in libido

Empty nest

Unhappy marriages

Career hurdles

e.g. the glass ceiling.

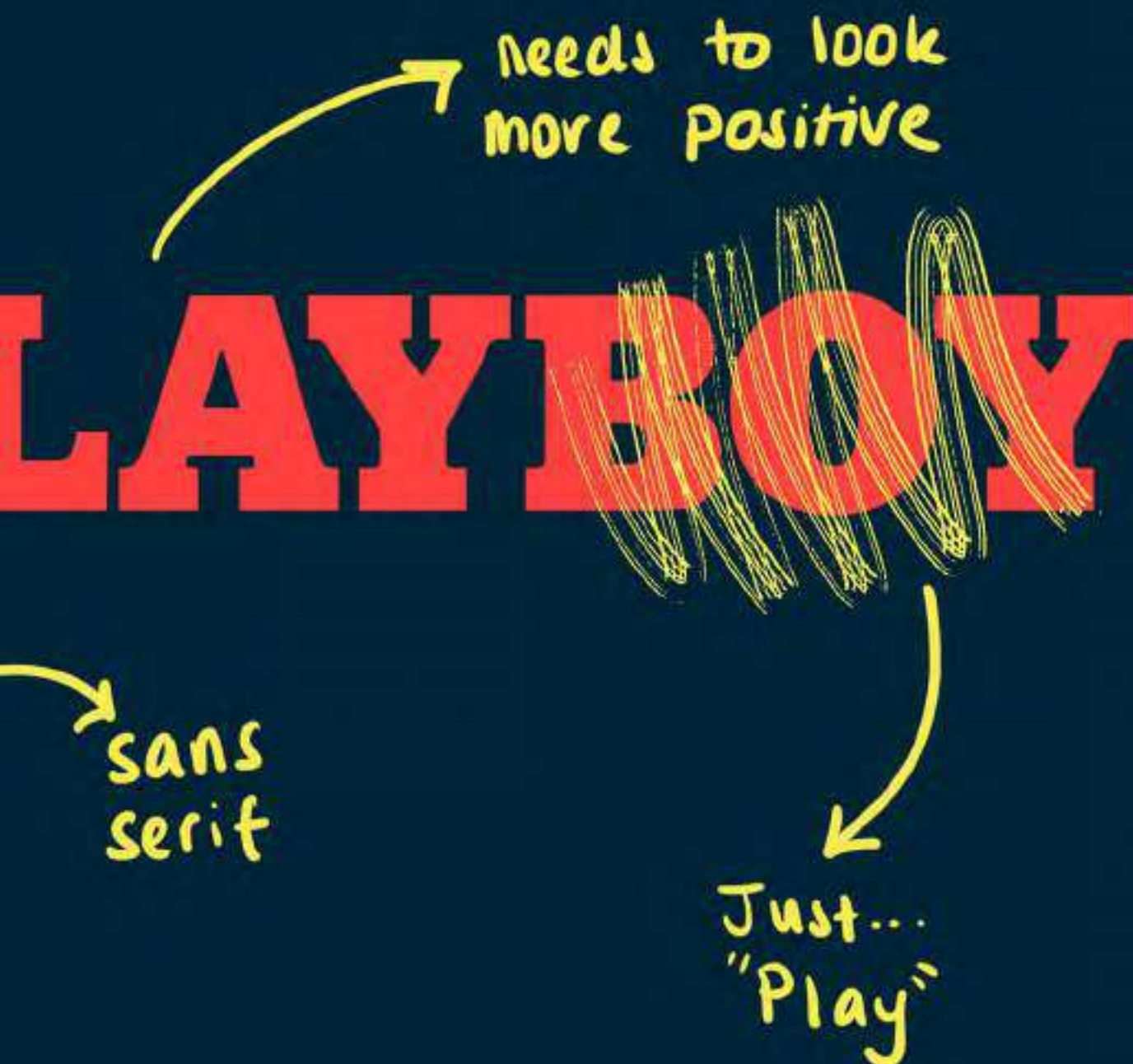
The list goes on, however these were the stresses which were repeatedly brought up in interviews with a selection of target users.



Considering the growth that women display during this period in their lives, paired with the situational stressors they encounter... This project should be focused towards them. Not to mention the irony and scandal associated with Playboy opening

a space for middle aged women! If Scott Flanders, CEO of Playboy, needed more convincing: it would be worth highlighting that Advertising Age critic, Bob Garfield, described middle aged women as the "largest, richest cohort of women in the histo-

ry of humanity" (2005), whilst Marketing Week labelled them a "goldmine of an audience" (Parmar 2013). Not to mention the steep decline of the Playboy brand over the past decade could be overturned with a brand refresh.







# CONCL

*Fig. 76 - Hugh Hefner, founder of Playboy.*



Time  
for me to  
the baton

# CONCLUSIONS



## Research conclusions

1.

Scandal is profitable - it should be manifested into physical spaces.

2.

Playboy needs a brand refresh and a new narrative.

3.

Gen X women are a sector ripe for targeting - they have the highest disposable income and experience a surge of independence at this life stage.

4.

The midlife crisis is a misunderstood and taboo subject.

5.

**There is a gap in the market for scandalous spaces, and women going through a midlife crisis... Why not combine them?**



Roger  
Hef, I'll  
take it from  
here.

*Fig. 77 - The author.*



# GAME PLAN

Create a space based on **EXPERIMENTATION.**

**Play with what is acceptable in a commercial space.**

**Encourage the confrontation and response to the uncertainties of midlife.**

**Probe public reactions and perceptions.**

**Flirt with the notion of drama (within the schedule, the customer experience, and the campaign)**

**DESIGN  
STARTING  
POINTS**

# CONNECTION



GIMMICKY



SARCASTIC

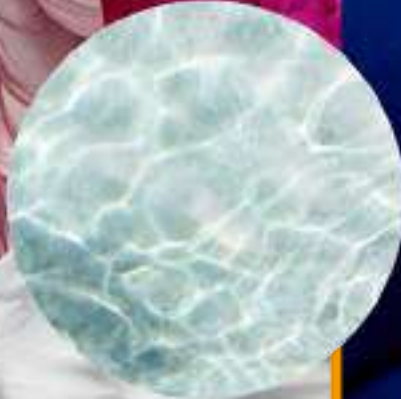


#GRL  
PWR



TONGUE-IN-CHEEK PLAY  
WITH STEREOTYPES

# CONFRONTATION



SENSORY

EMOTION



CATHARSIS



REBIRTH

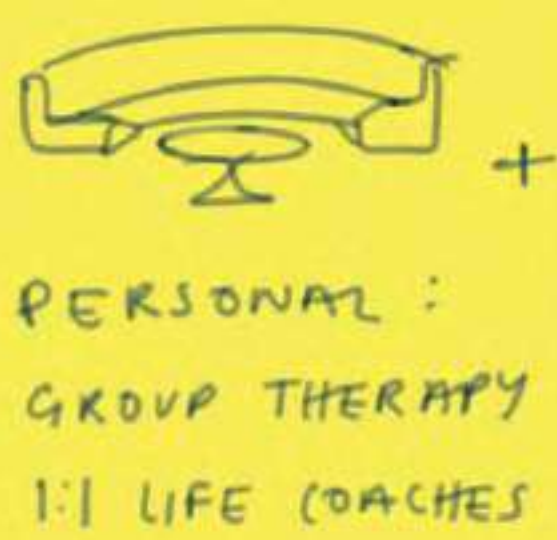
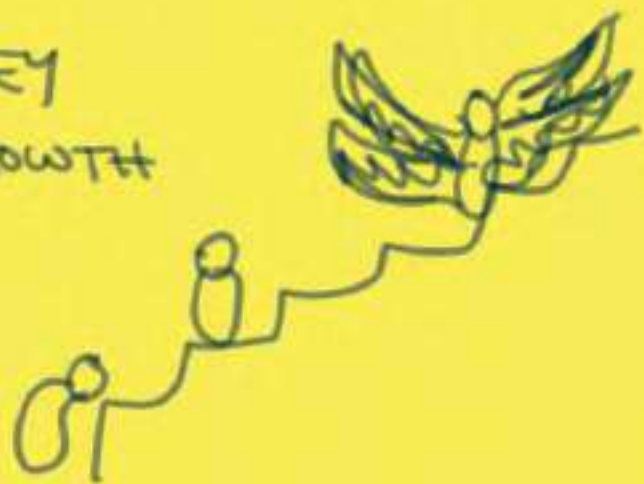


CLARITY



EXPERIMENTATION

# JOURNEY OF GROWTH

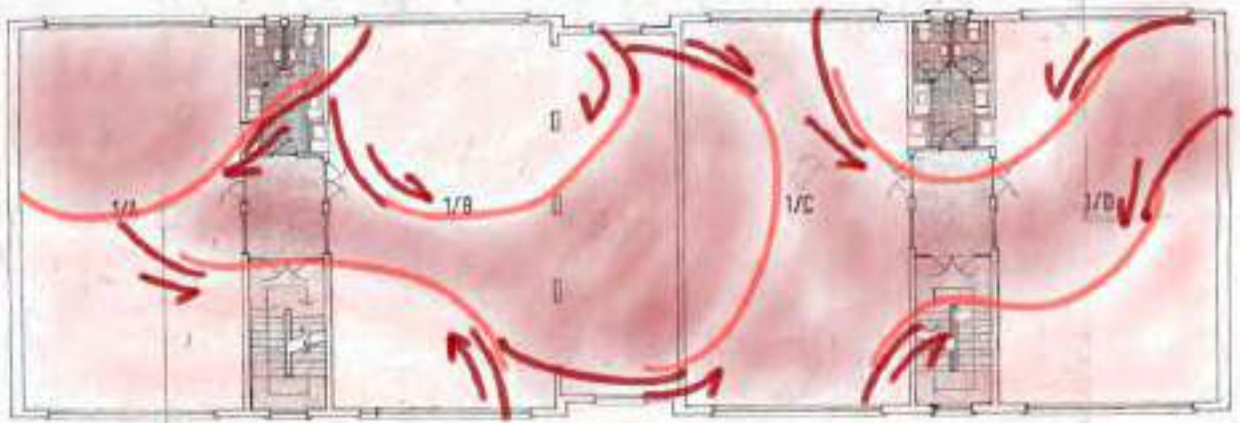


# WHAT IF

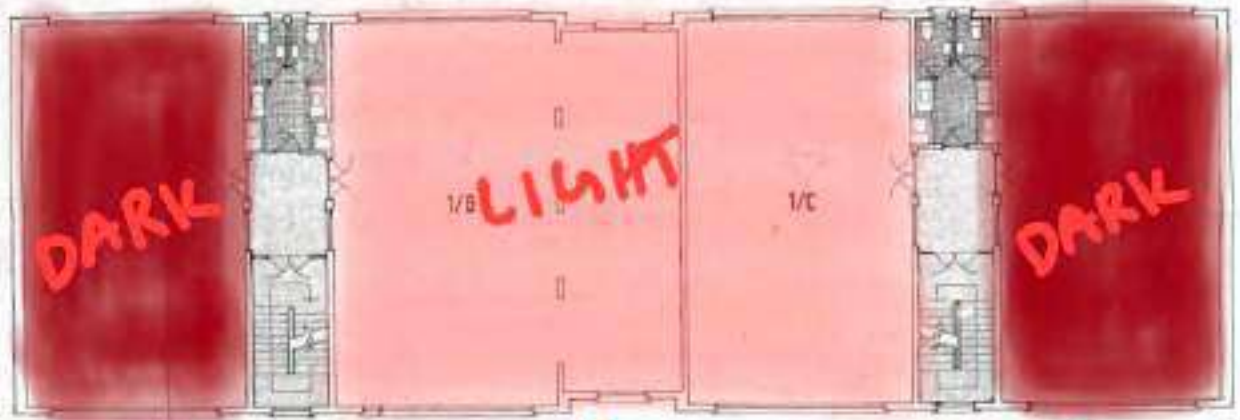
AN INTERIOR  
COULD SHAPE-SHIFT  
GUESTS?



THE SPACE PLAYS  
PART IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT  
REBIRTH OF  
USER



FLEXIBLE SOCIAL SPACES - FREEDOM



↑  
PERSONAL

↑  
GROUP / PHYSICAL  
GROWTH

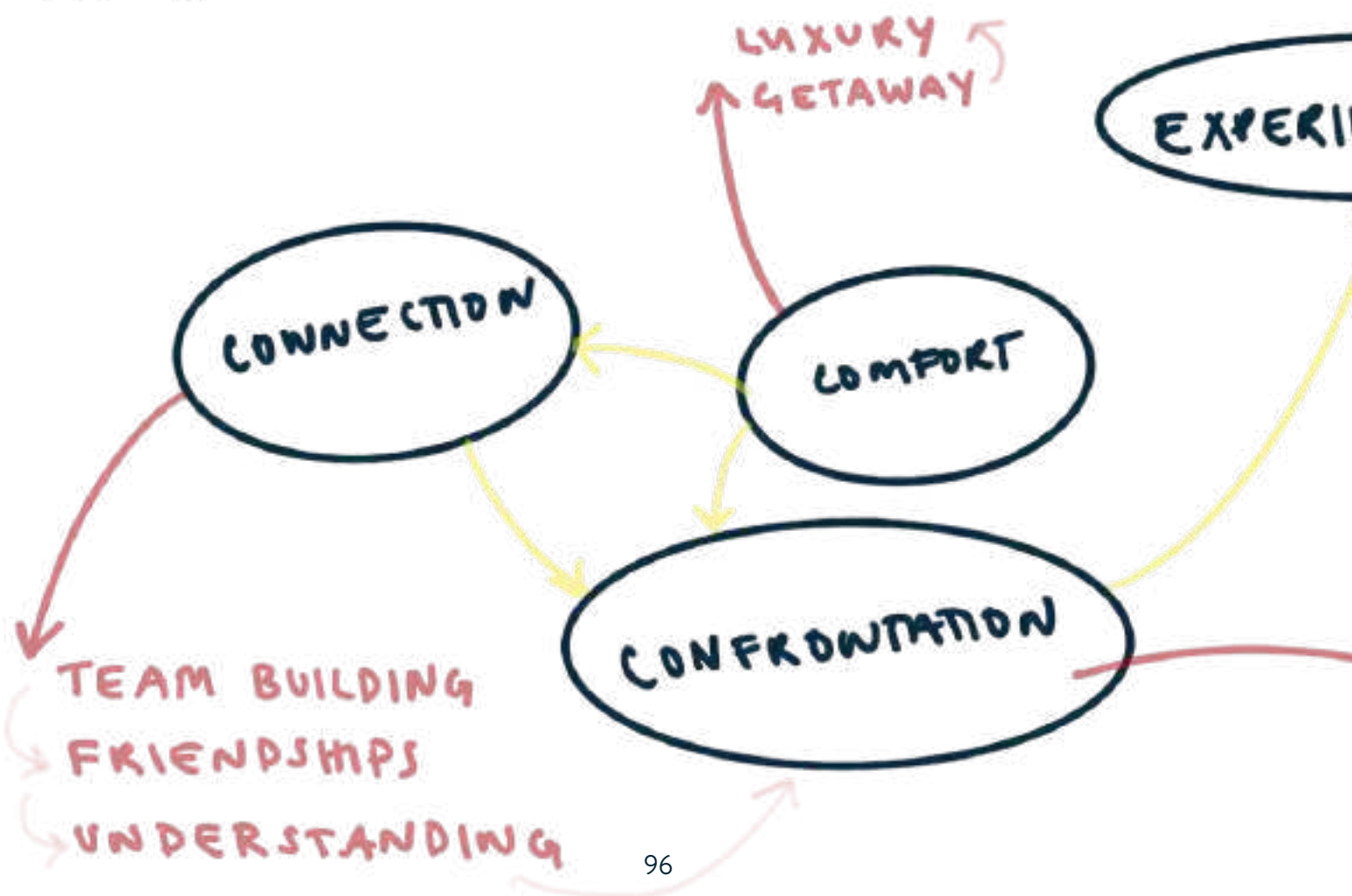
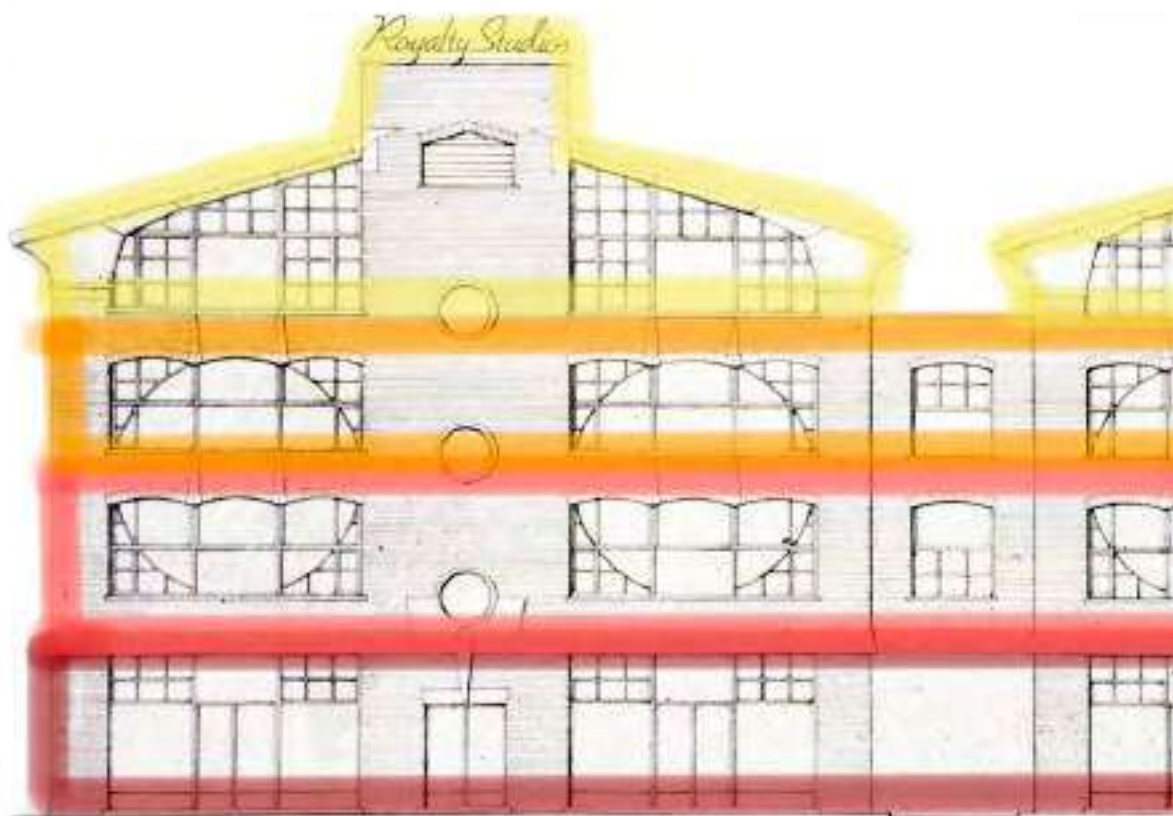
↑  
PERSONAL

CONCEPT :

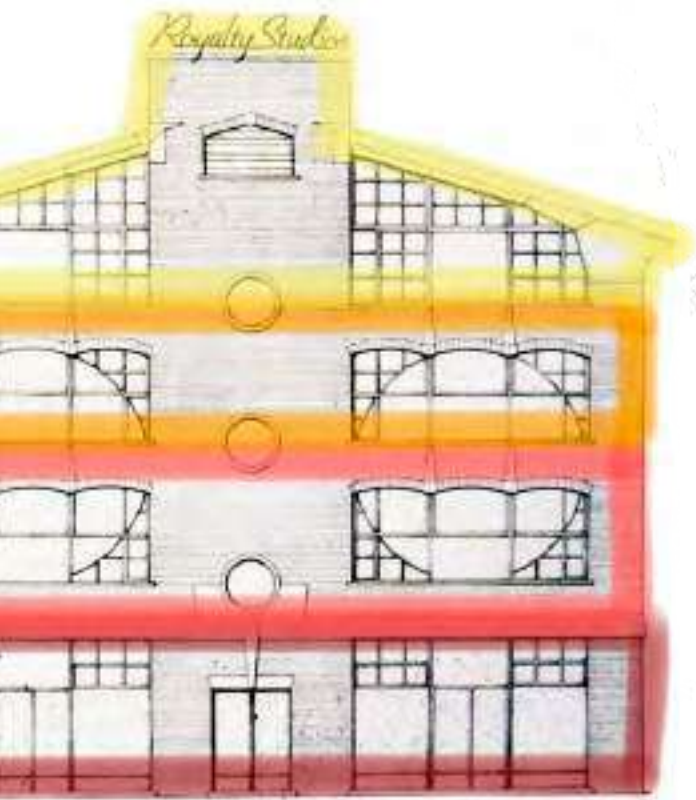
THE INTERIOR FACILITATES  
AN INNER PERSONAL  
CHANGE

IT'S  
AYS A  
T 4  
F THE

**GROWTH**  
(INTO TRUE SELF)







COMFORT  
(SLEEP / EAT)

EXPERIMENTATION

CONFRONTATION

CONNECTION

EXPERIMENTATION

ARRIVE:



ACCEPTANCE  
CATHARSIS  
THERAPY

LEAVE:



STRIP AWAY ALL

MATERIAL POSSESSIONS:



cloning  
overalls



BUNKS



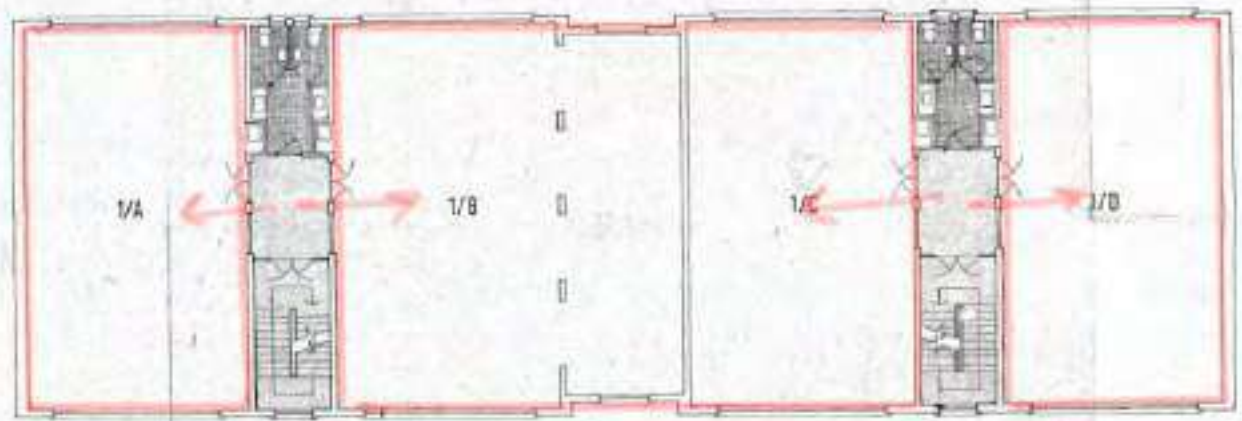
benches



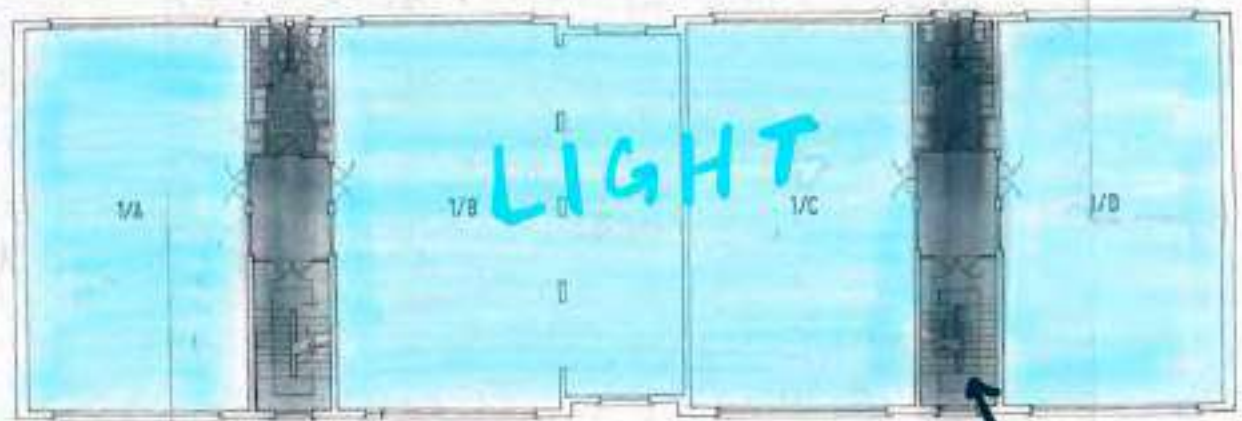
same food,  
no dietary  
requirements

WHAT IF  
WE LOST OUR  
IDENTITY

THIS ADDRESS  
THE CORE  
THE MIDDLE  
"CRISIS"



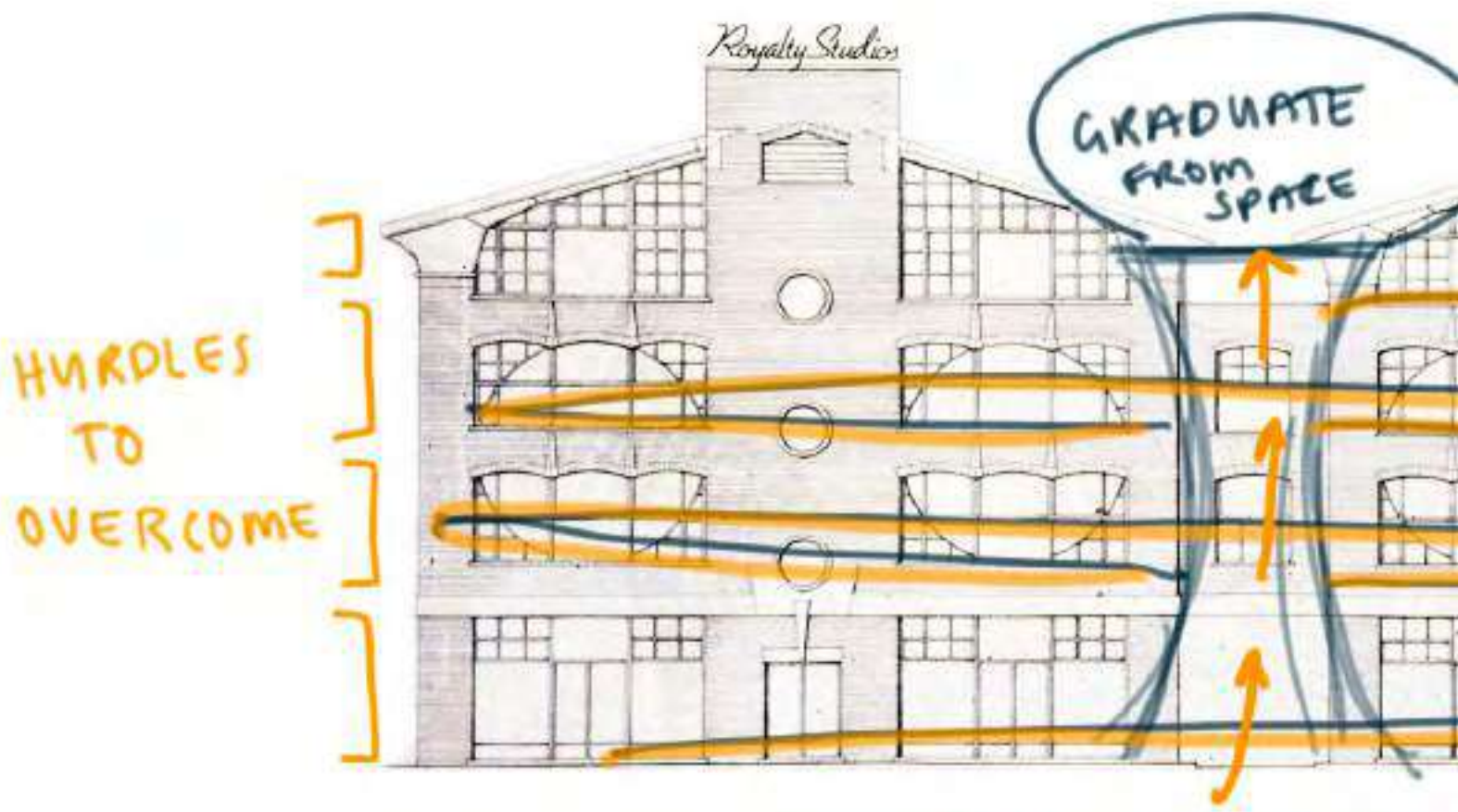
OPEN PLAN, COMMUNAL SPACES



BRIGHTLY LIT, NO PRIVACY

CONCEPT :

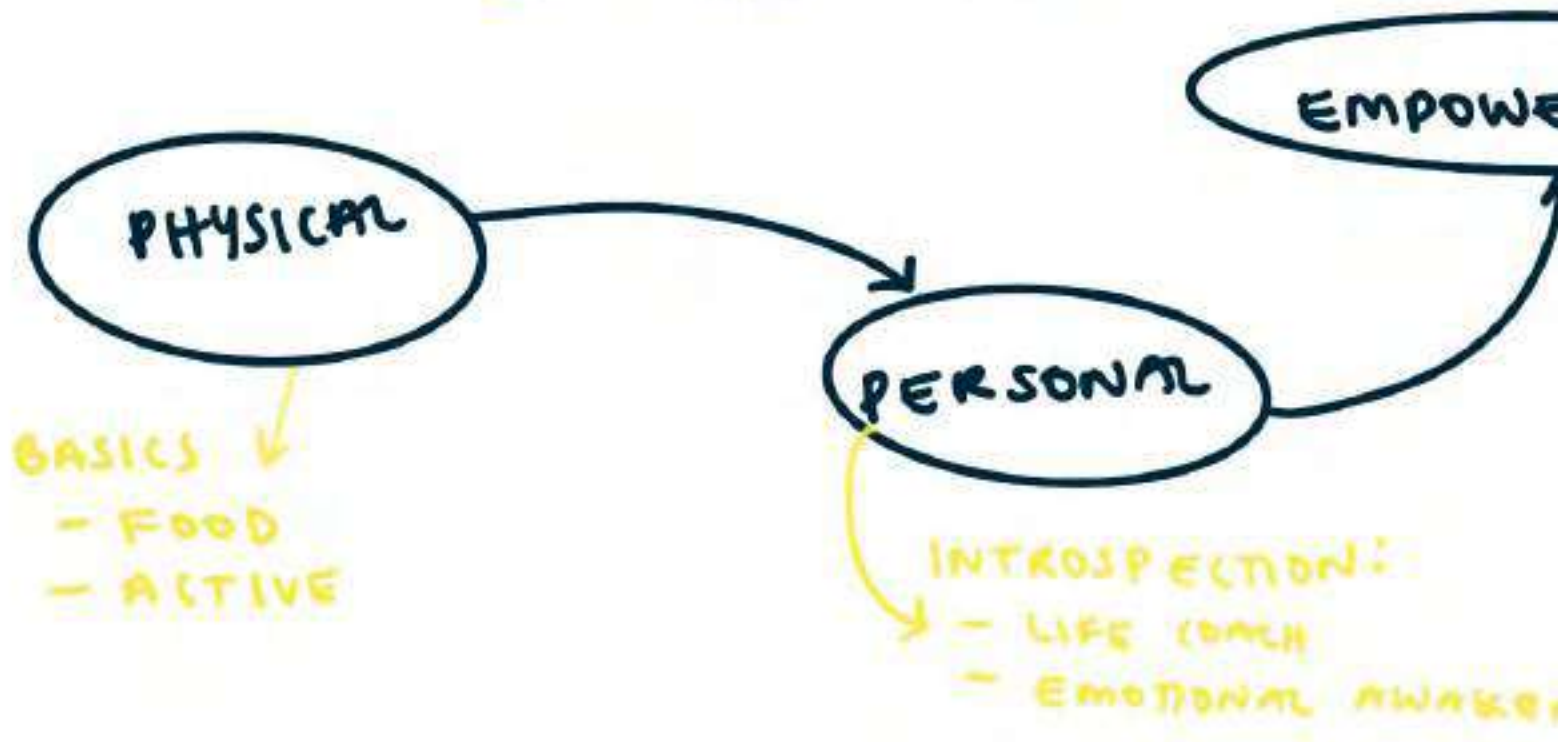
STRIPPING EVERYONE'S  
IDENTITY TO HELP THEM  
DISCOVER WHAT THEIR  
IDENTITY REALLY IS

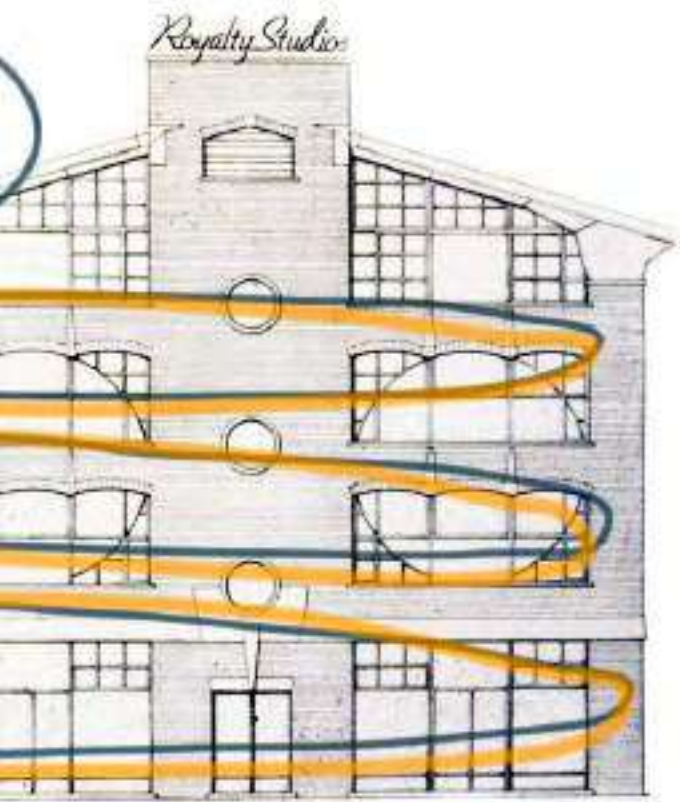


PATH OF PROGRESSION

SNAKES

BASED ON PHILOSOPHICAL OF THE MIDLIFE TRANSITION





& LADDERS?  
EXPLANATIONS

PERMENT

OTHERS:

- GROUP ACTIVITIES
- SUPPORT
- VALUE TO SOCIETY

NING



MAKE INTO WINGS

SANS SERIF

**PLAYBOY**

MINOR TWEAKS:



PLAY.  
*play*

PLAY

PLAY

P L A Y



SAME SHAPE,  
NEW MEANING.

PENCIL TEXTURE  
TO SUGGEST  
THAT WE  
CAN CHANGE

↓  
WMM



REBRAND CONCEPT:

DEMONSTRATE THE  
FEMINIST  
REDIRECTION



## CONFIRMATION STATEMENT

This report is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the award of BA (Hons) Interior Design.

I confirm that, except where other sources are acknowledged, this project is my own unaided work, and that its length is 5,419 words.

*Y Erensoy*

Yasemin Erensoy

08/01/2021



# FIGURES

Front cover - Asa DUGGER. 2018. *Woman Closes Her Eyes Raising Her Right Hand*. Pexels [online]. Available at: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-closes-her-eyes-raising-her-right-hand-1666073/> [accessed 2 January 2021]. Edited by author 5 January 2021.

Figure 2 - Yasemin ERENZOY. 2020. *Caution tape creation*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.

Figure 3 - United Colours of Benetton. 2011. *Unhate* [online]. Available at: <http://www.benettongroup.com/media-press/press-releases-and-statements/unhate-worldwide-campaign/> [accessed 27 Dec 2020].

Figure 4 - Yasemin ERENZOY. 2020. *Scandalous personalities collage*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.

Figure 5 - Tom KELLEY. 1949. Marilyn Monroe from the front cover of Playboy's first issue. From: Playboy. 1953. First Issue. Chicago: Playboy Enterprises Ltd.

Figure 6 - Yasemin ERENZOY. 2020. *Game poster*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.

Figure 7 - Yasemin ERENZOY. 2020. *Brief challenge collage*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.

Figure 8 - Miriam FISCHER. 2016. *Close-Up Photo of Feathers*. Pexels [online]. Available at: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/close-up-photo-of-feathers-2635098/> [accessed 5 January 2021].

Figure 9 - Kathleen BARNETT. 2019. *Yasemin at Pleasure & Treasure, Milan Design Week 2019*. Private collection: Kathleen Barnett.

Figure 10 - CHANEL. 2014. A/W show at Paris Fashion Week 2014. Photography by Francois Durand. Available at: <https://www.eonline.com/uk/news/517351/chanel-s-fashion-show-took-place-in-a-super-market-see-the-pics> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 11 - CHANEL. 2014. A/W show at Paris Fashion Week 2014. Photographer unknown. Available at: <https://luxuothailand.com/featured/events/chanel-supermarket-fashion-show.html> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 12 - Yasemin ERENZOY. 2020. *Dancer in martini glass illustration*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.

Figure 13 - Yasemin ERENZOY. 2020. *Spotlight illustration*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.

Figure 14 - Nigel YOUNG. 2016. Apple store Regent Street. Dezeen [online]. Available at: <https://www.dezeen.com/2016/10/13/apple-store-foster-partners-architecture-retail-interiors-regent-street-london-uk/> [accessed 28 December 2020].

Figure 15 - Yasemin ERENZOY. 2020. *X meanings collage*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.

Figure 16 - Unknown photographer. Regent Street. Regent Street [online]. Available at: <https://www.regentstreetonline.com/insider/regent-street-statement-of-care> [accessed 28 December 2020].

Figure 17 - VIRGIN MONEY. 2020. Virgin Money begins store rebrand programme in Wick. Photography by David Scott. Available at: <https://www.johnogroat-journal.co.uk/news/virgin-money-begins-store-re-brand-programme-in-wick-213256/> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 18 - Daniel LEAL-OLIVAS. 2019. No title. Forbes [online]. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2019/08/13/the-future-of-train-travel-is-here-with-virgin-trains-usa/?sh=2d35b0bd-3ede> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 19 - VIRGIN HOLIDAYS. 2019. VR rollercoaster in new Milton Keynes store. Available at: <https://www.promomarketing.info/virgin-holidays-creates-spa-vr-rollercoaster-bar-new-experience-store/> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 20 - VIRGIN HOTELS. 2016. *Virgin Hotels Dallas*. CGI by 5G Studio. Available at: [https://www.5gstudio.com/virgin\\_hotels\\_dallas.html](https://www.5gstudio.com/virgin_hotels_dallas.html) [accessed 30 December 2020]

Figure 21 - VIRGIN MONEY. 2015. There are bank ads and there are virgin money bank ads - the sloth. Campaign by CHI & Partners. Available at: <https://uk.virginmoney.com/virgin/about/about-our-tv-ads/> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 22 - VFESTIVAL. 2016. Vfestival headliners stage. Megabus [online]. Available at: <http://festivals.megabus.com/festival/v-fest/> [accessed 5 January 2021].

Figure 23 - COS. 2018. *Coal Drops Yard* store. Archilovers [online]. Available at: <https://www.archilovers.com/projects/240818/cos-coal-drops-yard.html> [accessed 27 December 2020].

Figure 24 - Miami Museum Archives. 2017. Remembering Miami's Playboy Club in the Wake of Hugh Hefner's Death. Miami New Times [online]. Available at: <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/arts/inside-hugh-hefners-miami-playboy-club-9707473> [accessed 27 December 2020].

Figure 25 - TECOVAS. 2020. *Large duffle*. Tecovas [online]. Available at: <https://www.tecovas.com/products/large-duffle> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 26 - Naomi KLIEN. 2010. *No Logo*. Amazon [online]. Available at: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/NO-LOGO-NAOMI-Naomi-Klein/dp/8817061778> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 27 - Doug STEPHENS. 2013. *The Retail Revival*. Amazon [online]. Available at: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Retail-Revival-Reimagining-Business-Consumerism/dp/1118489675> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 28 - Doug STEPHENS. 2017. *Reengineering Retail*. Amazon [online]. Available at: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Reengineering-Retail-Future-Selling-Post-Digital/dp/1927958814> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 29 - Kit YARROW. 2014. *Decoding the Consumer Mind*. Amazon [online]. Available at: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Decoding-New-Consumer-Mind-Shop/dp/1118647688> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 30 - Gail SHEEHY. 1997. *Passages*. Amazon [online]. Available at: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Passages-Predictable-Crises-Adult-Life/dp/0553271067> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 31 - Graham CAIRNS. 2010. *Deciphering... Art, Architecture and Advertising: selling to the sophisticated consumer*. Graham Cairns [online]. Available at: <https://www.graham-cairns-architecture.com/books> [accessed 30 December 2020].

Figure 32 - Yasemin ERENDOY. 2020. *Playboy front covers collage*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.



Figure 33 - Unknown photographer. Ca. 1965 - 1975. Top view of Hugh Hefner at a Playboy party. Flashbak [online]. Available at: <https://flashbak.com/jazz-mags-the-golden-age-of-playboy-clubs-46504/> [accessed 29 December 2020].

Figure 34 - Yasemin ERENDOY. 2020. *Playboy jet timeline illustration*. Private collection: Yasemin Erensoy.

Figure 35 - Nicholas KAMM. 2012. *Lightning strikes over Biscayne Bay, Fla., in 2012*. The New York Times [online]. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/18/us/stay-safe-out-there.html> [accessed 5 January 2021].

Figure 36 - Kent GAVIN. 1962. Playing Chemmy at a club in Barnet, North London. Flashbak [online]. Available at: <https://flashbak.com/jazz-mags-the-golden-age-of-playboy-clubs-46504/> [accessed 29 December 2020].

Figure 37 - Katie WARREN. 2018. *New York's Playboy Club*. Business Insider [online]. Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/playboy-club-new-york-city-lounge-bar-tour-photos-2018-10?r=US&IR=T> [accessed 5 January 2021].

Figure 38 - TERREN. 2007. *Playboy Club Bar*. Flickr [online]. Available at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/8136496@N05/2010343909> [accessed 29 December 2020].

Figure 39 - Richard SUTTON. 2020. *Vintage matchbooks c.1961*. Twitter [online]. Available at: <https://twitter.com/RichSuttonActor/status/1234597742363791360> [accessed 5 January 2021].

Figure 40 - Keystone Features. ca. 1975 - 1985. Playboy club in midtown Manhattan. Independent [online]. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/playboy-bunny-new-york-club-where-audition-apply-hugh-hefner-a8475216.html> [accessed 5 January 2021].

Figure 41 - BETTMAN. 1963. *Two Playboy Bunnies Resting at Playboy Club*. Eater New York [online]. Available at: <https://ny.eater.com/2017/1/24/14361896/playboy-club-nyc-opening> [accessed 5 January 2021].

Figure 42 - PLAYBOY. 2020. Anatomy of a Bunny suit. Instagram [screenshot by author].

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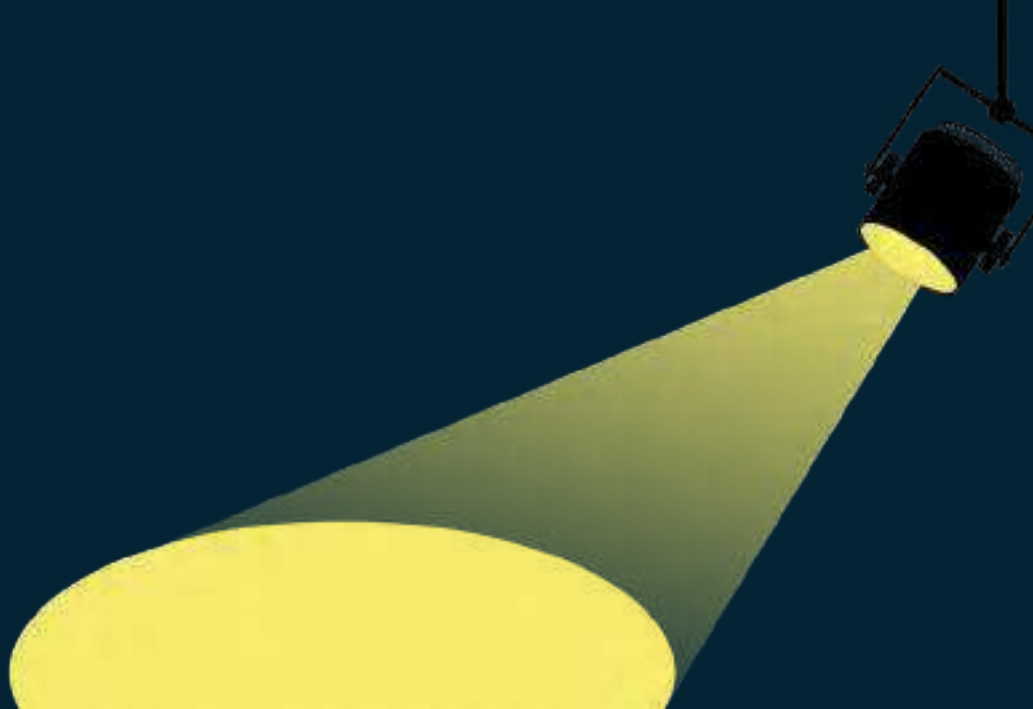
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Alright  
ladies, bed  
time





