

Life is a Beach! @the Office?!

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Abstract

My thesis project involves infusing the playful and informal nature of the beach experience into a work setting and its extensions into the realm of leisure and living. The purpose is to investigate how employing the various types of play occurring at the beach can stimulate interaction with the body, object, individual, social group and imagination within the context of a 21st century creative knowledge-based workplace and its new generation of young professionals in North America. It is necessary to create a new workplace model that supports the contemporary trends of mobility, work modes, and lifestyles with the understanding of effectiveness of leisure and play in a workplace. By engaging in the dialectic relationship between work and leisure mentioned in Henri Lefebvre's '*Critique of Everyday Life*', the relationship between work and life can transform our previous assumptions of the workplace based on efficiency and functionality.

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PROLOGUE

My initial interest in creating a work, play and live environment comes from personal background and experience. As my parents were immigrants to Canada, they followed the North American dream of owning a house with a garage and backyard in the suburbs. Unlike my parents, I strongly prefer the urban lifestyle over suburban one. In contrast, the urban setting is more sustainable with all the amenities within walking distance while also providing a more vivacious atmosphere. This change in my expectations resides in the shifting social, cultural and economic trends along with the environmental awareness in the 21st century. Although my appreciation for the urban context is great, my personal economic situation as a new addition to the workforce prevents me from living in the desirable downtown core. Thus, I am forced to live at my parents' house and endure the hassle of a daily long commute from the suburbs to downtown where I work. It is evident that if I merely find a job in the suburbs, it would eliminate the possibility of 10+ hours/weekly commute. However, I refuse to give up on the pleasurable experience offered by the urban environment. Being wedged in-between the two places, I want to create a workplace that accommodates my personal and generational needs. Thus, this thesis gives me the opportunity to design a workplace that links the realm of work, leisure and living.

Introduction

The creative knowledge industry is becoming a new global economic trend. According to the publication, '*New Work: Office Work in Global Networks* (2002)' by Wilhelm Bauer and Peter Kerns who are both specialists in the fields of office engineering and work design, it forecasts that the global economy is in a gradual transition to a knowledge-based society. With the new information technology and knowledge developments, it indicates that the ratio of people working in the creative knowledge industry (telecommunication, information technology, design, media and entertainment) will grow to 60% in 2010 on a global scale.¹ In response to this global movement, the conceptions of the workplace and workforce must also adapt to the 21st century creative knowledge industry.

As the work model has shifted to the generation of ideas, the workers have become the primary economic resource, especially in the creative knowledge industry. It is essential that the workplace is conceived as a more stimulating and productive environment. This intention is inherently linked to the enhancement of the worker's welfare and the creative process. Given that the creative knowledge workers are part of the new generation; their expectations on lifestyles, workplaces, and modes of working differ from previous generations. In a survey on workplace preferences for more than 15,000 employees across different generations by Mike O'Neill, the director of workplace research for Knoll, an office-furniture firm, the new younger generation is identified with a strong preference to work within informal settings, especially at home, and to live within close proximity to amenities.

With these contemporary trends of mobility, work modes, and lifestyles, the physical design of current office spaces do not account for these new requirements. The current office paradigm is driven by the notions of maximum profit through efficiency, productivity and standardization from

¹ Wilhelm Bauer and Peter Kerns, "*New Work: Office Work in Global Networks*," Ed. Rainer Hascher, Simone Jeska, and Birgit Klauck, *Office Buildings: A Design Manual*, Basel; Boston: Birkhäuser, c2002, p.29.

the industrial age. Thus, it is predominantly characterized with the monotonous uniform appearance, operational inflexibility, lack of human interaction and place-dependency which inhibit knowledge work. These poorly designed workspaces can have negative psychological, physical and, health impacts on the well-being and performance of workers as seen that Canadian employers are paying as much as \$10-billion a year in rising absenteeism, lost output, lower productivity, missed deadlines and grumpy customers, according to business professors, Linda Duxbury of Carleton University and Christopher Higgins of the University of Western Ontario.² As a result, this paradigm proves to be insufficient for the new ways of working.

A new work environment must be envisioned to address the needs of the contemporary workers and the creative process. Demonstrated in an experiment performed by the psychologist, Alice Isen, in 1990, the physical environment has the capacity to reduce stress and to stimulate creative problem solving. In the experiment, she discovered that increasing the positive mood in an environment can enhance mental processing.³ When people are in positive moods, they are more creative and effective at solving problems as the implications of difficulty or danger are dissipated. Fundamentally, a happier workplace equates to happier workers. The rising popularity in informal environments such as a coffee shop, or lounges as a temporary workplace is not a coincidence. In fact, these settings give people the feeling of comfort and security to have the courage to take risks. Several contemporary creative workplaces have employed devices or symbols to reinforce a carefree and playful nature. For instance, the Google Headquarters in Mountain View has a massive dinosaur skeleton with pink flamingos on it in its front yard. This gesture, along with others within an informal environment, can translate into effective tools in the creative process as well as benefit workers on psychological and physical levels.

² Barrie McKenna, "Part 2: Why Your Boss Should Care about Work-Life Balance," *Globe and Mail*, 31 Oct. 2010, <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/time-to-lead/work-life-balance/part-2-why-your-boss-should-care-about-work-life-balance/article1779810/>>.

³ Sally Augustin, and Jay L. Brand, "Impact of the Physical Environment on Knowledge Worker Performance," Haworth: Collaboration White Paper, September 2009, <<http://www.haworth.com/en-us/Knowledge/Workplace-Library/Pages/Topics.aspx>> p. 3.

The beneficial aspects of informality can be drawn from the qualities of leisure. The concept of leisure can be an appropriate proponent to mediate between the creative knowledge industry and the conception of a workplace. Since an informal environment primarily occurs within the context of free leisure, its various qualities can reinforce a consequence of freedom. Similarly, the theoretical framework found in '*Critique of Everyday Life (1947)*' by the French sociologist Henri Lefebvre, proposes an analogous dialectic relationship between leisure and work. He suggests that the qualities in leisure can be integrated into the realm of work in order to remove its negative connotations. In the same way as Isen's experiment, this framework can be used to test the implications of leisure within the parameters of the workplace.

To examine this progressive relationship between leisure and work, the thesis investigates the new generation of young middle-class professionals working in a hypothetical advertising agency. As North America is currently ruled by the conventional model of the workplace, it is an appropriate context for the study. Likewise to a worker's everyday life (work, leisure and living), the workplace must become a hybrid environment to effectively facilitate the functions of working, playing and living. This approach intensifies the use of space and time enabled by flexibility and mobility of knowledge work. In addition, it adopts the face-to-face interaction necessary for the creative process. Regardless of the advantages of mobile working and new technologies, it cannot replace the need for face-to-face interaction. In the Third Founders' Lecture in 2005, Steven Smith, director of Urbanism at DEGW, emphasizes the fact that the quality of face-to-face interaction is impossible to reproduce in the virtual world.⁴ The physical experience of meeting and socializing is the most effective way of communication, just like the experience of having breakfast or lunch together with co-workers can result in an effective and informal dialogue.

⁴ Steven Smith, "Transforming Places: Design for Continuity and Change," The Founders' Lecture, DEGW, 17 November 2005, <www.degw.com> p. 14.

In order to define the leisure component of the hybrid work environment, it is important to consider it from the perception of North Americans. For the intended demographics, the indispensable experience of leisure is the beach. Indicated in a Canadian research study on Global Tourism Opportunities in 2009 by Deloitte, an international consulting, and financial advisory firm, the beach is an increasingly popular travel destination. Despite this rise in popularity, the beach experience has always been prompted to be the indispensable place of play, pleasure and hedonism, irrelevant of time period or changing social circumstances. It surpasses the other types of leisure in terms of its ability to stimulate various forms of play. In addition, its experience introduces variability through the flexibility and diversity of interactions, as demonstrated by its versatility in accommodating individuals or groups, as well as its promotion of both active and passive activities.

Can the workplace embody the analogous playful experiences of the beach? Can the contemporary workplace be a manifestation of the informality, interaction, and diversity available at the beach? To mediate this new framework of the work environment, I propose to blur the boundaries of work, leisure and private life using the idea of a beach as an intervention. By fusing the experiences of fantasy with reality, the basic stereotype of the uniform and monotonous office design is questioned. It is necessary to create a new workplace model that supports the contemporary trends of mobility, work modes, and lifestyles with the understanding of effectiveness of leisure and play in a workplace. In sum, the thesis is an investigation to re-interpret the physical environment of work in the 21st century.

ANALYSIS #1 –The Workplace

[1.1]-History of the Workplace and its Typologies

The architectural model for a workplace has constantly transformed in history according to political and social conditions as well as economic and technological developments. Originally in history, the workplace was not a standardized building until the 18th century when the industrial era sought more cost effective ways of production and operation. In ancient Egypt (3200-525 BC), the first representations of a workplace were the state administrative authorities that controlled infrastructure, water supply, civil engineering, the military and the economy. These administrative authorities consisted of numerous departments that carried out various tasks from bookkeeping and accounting to administrating, registering and archiving of documents as seen in the ruins of the Middle Egyptian city of Amarna.⁵ During this time, none of these ancient workplaces in the royal court in the city centres or countryside were standardized building types, even though they were organized in a strict hierarchical manner.

In the past, the ancient Greeks and Roman operated as democratic city-states; thus, their administrative complexes consisted of more public institutional buildings (councils, people's assemblies, supervisory committees, and jury courts) gathered at the political and social centres in the cities. Even in Cosa around 180 BC, the office complexes for civil servants were villas with atriums adjacent to residential buildings around the forum (see fig. 1).⁶

The current conception of the contemporary office space originated from the industrial age of the eighteenth century. With the

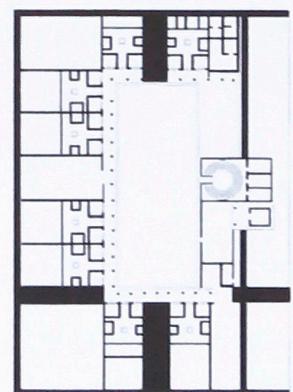


Fig. 1: Reconstructed plan of forum in Cosa in 180BC where civil servants worked in the atrium

⁵ Simone Jeska, "From Ancient Times to the Twentieth Century," Ed. Rainer Hascher, Simone Jeska, and Birgit Klauck, *Office Buildings: A Design Manual*, Basel; Boston: Birkhäuser, c2002, p.13.

⁶ ibid. p.14.

establishment of private banks, insurance companies and professional groups, their field activities of processing paper-based information shaped the foundation of office work. As industrial, commercial and transportation enterprises (railway) grew during the mid-19th century, the increasing need for financing led to the development of limited companies. In turn, the organizational structure and configuration of workplaces also became more hierarchical, in which the size of a workspace or the potential occupancy of an individual closed office directly depended upon the level of power associated with each worker.

Subsequently, the rising need for office space saw a wave of building speculations in Chicago in the 1880s, for these buildings were solely driven by maximizing profit. Along these lines, they were built soaring as high and dense as possible since there were neither height restrictions nor regulations on the depth of the rooms (see fig. 2 and fig.3).⁷ The floors of these office buildings were often partitioned into several office modules rented out to single or group enterprises. This flexibility offered maximum occupancy and use. Floors without partitions, usually rented out to larger enterprises, became known as the *American open-plan layout*.⁸ As a result, in the beginning of the twentieth century, America met skyscraper mania with the developing construction, building technology and aesthetics.

⁷ Simone Jeska, "From Ancient Times to the Twentieth Century," Ed. Rainer Hascher, Simone Jeska, and Birgit Klauck, *Office Buildings: A Design Manual*, Basel; Boston: Birkhäuser, c2002, p.16.

⁸ ibid. p.16.

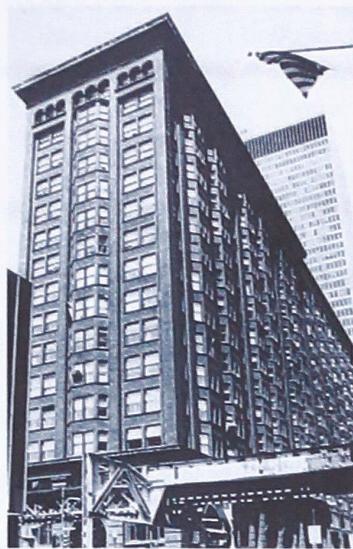


Fig. 2: Elevation of a typical office building in Chicago in 1890s

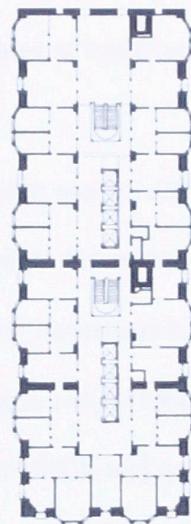


Fig. 3: Typical American floor plan in 1890s

Simone Jeska, an architect focused on office design, describes office work during the 20th century as the “specialization and standardization of tasks, the systemization of work processes and the optimization of workforce to increase efficiency.”⁹ At the end of 20th century, the workplace became a place ruled by hierarchical organizational, economic, ecological and functional conventions. The repetitive and routine nature of work activities intensified as the economy was driven by the notion of efficient production. In effect, according to the opinion of Jeska, the design and practice of the workplace suppressed social competence, the ability to communicate, and flexibility while commanding diligence and obedience.

This office model was primarily based on the principles outlined in the book ‘*The Principles of Scientific Management*’ (1915) by Frederick W. Taylor who was one of the intellectual leaders of the Efficiency Movement. Taylor ascribed to standardizing human labour to become equivalent in efficiency to that of machines, in order to maximize productivity. Thus, he believed that “work could

⁹ Simone Jeska, “From Ancient Times to the Twentieth Century,” Ed. Rainer Hascher, Simone Jeska, and Birgit Klauck, *Office Buildings: A Design Manual*, Basel; Boston: Birkhäuser, c2002, p.17.

be standardized- manpower optimized.¹⁰ As a result, the design of office buildings instigated a disregard of the worker's welfare being motivated by the theories of Taylorism to maximize profit and efficiency.

One important milestone in the 20th century office design was the 1907 Larkin Building by Frank Lloyd Wright (see fig. 4 and fig. 5). It was the first attempt to create a modern office interior in hope to gain the optimization of the workforce. This innovative stance was achieved through the open-plan configuration of workstations, new office technologies, natural lighting, furniture arrangement as well as the integration of lounges, libraries, the YWCA, and bathrooms.¹¹ Although the design emphasized the concern for the welfare of workers, the modifications were only in aesthetics, for it still asserted the theories of Frederick Taylor. The hierarchical organization and space consumption primarily remained the same.

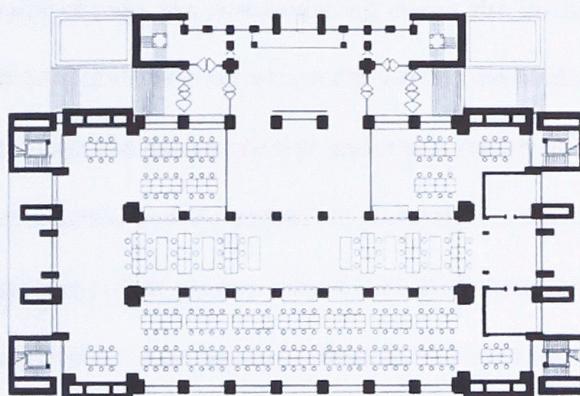


Fig. 4: Ground floor plan of the Larkin Building

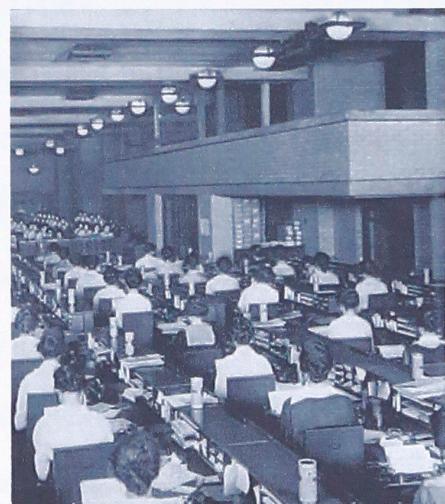


Fig. 5: Typewriter Operators' Department in the Larkin Building

¹⁰ Simone Jeska, "The Effects of Information Technology on Corporate Structures," Ed. Rainer Hascher, Simone Jeska, Birgit and Klauck, *Office Buildings: A Design Manual*, Basel; Boston : Birkhäuser, c2002, p.25.

¹¹ Andrew Laing, "New Patterns of Work: The Design of the Office," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.30.

In 1963, the *Bürolandschaft* (office landscape) layout emerged in Germany as another attempt at optimizing efficiency of an organization by promoting informal interaction between workers (see fig. 6).

Developed by Quickborner Team, a management consultant firm, the *Bürolandschaft* layout combined the benefits

of the American open-plan office with the importance of human relations.¹² This approach attained a certain openness and clarity of working processes, creating a collaborative group setting with its multipurpose areas. It encouraged informal communication exchanges through quiet zones, meeting facilities, and refreshment points that were arranged in close proximity to the workstations. Besides spatial change, the *Bürolandschaft layout* also instigated a social and organizational change. The workers could interact informally without the hindrance of physical or hierarchical restrictions. However, the *Bürolandschaft layout* was quickly abandoned after the economic oil crisis of 1973, partly because of the political conservatism in Western society, but also because of its drawbacks, including lack of privacy, lack of individual environmental or daylight control, and visual and acoustic disruptions, which were not offset by the need for informality.¹³

The current North American workplace model is the consequence of the recovery from global economic crisis and the Second World War. Due to the economic upturn, office space configurations and typologies completely assimilated to the Taylorist ideals of efficiency and maximum profit. As a result, the office tower has become the ultimate Taylorist representation and thus, the global iconic workplace. To increase the efficiency of the design, the service core, entrance

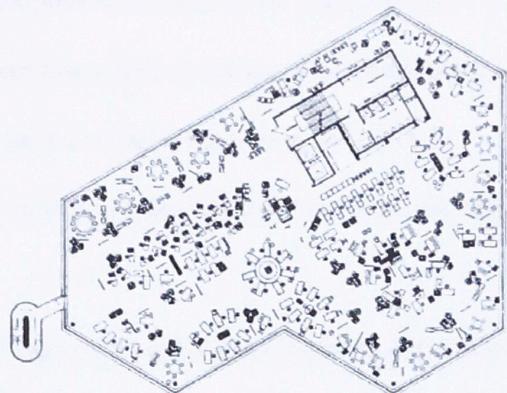


Fig. 6: The Ninoflax building (1963) with the *Bürolandschaft* layout

¹² Thomas Arnold, "From the *Bürolandschaft* to the Cityscape in the Office," Ed. Rainer Hascher, Simone Jeska, and Birgit Klauck, *Office Buildings: A Design Manual*, Basel; Boston: Birkhäuser, c2002, p.19.

¹³ ibid. p.19.

lobby and building envelope were the only defined components in the design. Independent of its surroundings, the interior spaces followed an open plan that adapted cubicles and office furnishing systems in an efficient and economic manner. Although the movable partitions and cubicles presented a certain spatial flexibility for work reorganization, it completely removed the architect's role in designing space.

Moreover, the current office model presents a growing health and environmental concern as research by Toni Meixner in 1995, identifies the hazards of "Sick Building Syndrome" (SBS) and "Building Related Illness" (BRI) in the workplace. According to Meixner's report, "Sick Building Syndrome (SBS) occurs when building occupants experience acute health and comfort effects that are apparently related to the time they spend in the building, but in which no specific illness or cause can be identified."¹⁴ He indicates that the Sick Building Syndrome (SBS) symptoms can consist of headaches, nausea, dizziness, respiratory problems, coughing, wheezing, and eye, nose or throat irritations. Meixner also expresses that Building Related Illness (BRI) causes more severe symptoms than SBS. "BRI is brought on by exposure to the building air where symptoms of a diagnosable illness are identified (e.g. certain allergies or infections) and can be directly attributed to environmental agents in the air. BRI accounts for a 69 percent increase in requests for investigation by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health over the last fifteen years."¹⁵ It is understood that the source of these illnesses as a consequence of the current office building construction. "Energy problems, first encountered in the early 1970's, necessitated a re-evaluation of construction practices and materials. The effort to reduce dependency on foreign oil resulted in more energy efficient building practices. Unfortunately, the new buildings were no longer able to 'breathe'. As the recirculation of the inside air increased, so did the ever-growing list of contaminants. Gradually, the

¹⁴ Toni Meixner, "The Air You Breathe: Sick Building Syndrome" and Building-Related Illness," Baltimore Resource Journal, Vol 9, No. 2, Summer 1995, Baltimore Maryland, p.1.

¹⁵ ibid. p.1.

air has become a breeding ground for a number of ailments resulting in Sick Building Syndrome.¹⁶ Sick Building Syndrome (SBS) and Building Related Illness (BRI) inhibited worker health and performance, especially for those who were more chemically sensitive segment according to Meixner.

Furthermore, the increasing levels of stress caused at home and at work have brought about serious physical and psychological health concerns, from Alzheimer's and depression to obesity, diabetes and heart disease according to an article titled "Stress: Public-Health Enemy No. 1?" in the Globe and Mail. The article by Siri Agrell indicates that "In Canada, hypertension is the No. 1 reason people go to the doctor, and last year accounted for almost 20.7 million medical appointments."¹⁷ Therefore, the workplace needs to find a new approach to office buildings that improve the well-being and performance of workers.

[1.2]-The New Office Trends and Work Modes in the 21st Century

When the use of the Personal Computer (PC) became widespread in the 1980s, it revolutionized office work and the design of office space. This technological intervention started a gradual movement towards an information- and knowledge-based society and economy. As a result, information technology and knowledge are becoming the new emerging economic resource and subsequently the substitute of manual labour. The previously routine repetitive work such as banking or mass production is either slowly being replaced by automation or outsourced to developing countries with lower wages. The nature of work has also transitioned from 'paper-based

¹⁶ Toni Meixner, "The Air You Breathe: Sick Building Syndrome" and Building-Related Illness," Baltimore Resource Journal, Vol 9, No. 2, Summer 1995, Baltimore Maryland, p.1.

¹⁷ Siri Agrell, "Part 1: Stress: Public-Health Enemy No. 1?," Globe and Mail, 29 Oct., 2010, <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/time-to-lead/work-life-balance/part-1-stress-public-health-enemy-no-1/article1778188/>>.

information processing' to the 'generation of ideas (see fig. 7).'¹⁸ Unlike the highly repetitive work of the industrial age, knowledge-based work relies on certain qualities that are subdued by the standardized work principles of Taylorism. They include decision-making, creative problem solving, interactive teamwork, the ability to communicate, and flexibility.¹⁹ In particular for creative knowledge industries, the operative process directly depends on the combination of effective exchange of knowledge through collaboration and interaction between workers as well as highly focused individual work. Besides independent workspaces, the layout must facilitate informal contact and increase social interaction as part of the process in stimulating creative ideas. For example, breakfast or lunch meetings are socially crucial as a platform for informal knowledge exchange. The office space can also achieve informal and unpredictable encounters through clever architectural configurations such as less predictable paths and designing support amenities (kitchens, lounges, and libraries) as a place of relaxation and a temporary workstation.

Office organisations have changed <i>how they work:</i>	
From	To
routine processes	creative knowledge work
individual tasks	groups, teams, projects
alone	interactive
<i>where they work:</i>	
From	To
places	networks
central	dispersed
transport	communication
office	multiple locations including the home
<i>They are using space over time in new ways:</i>	
From	To
one desk per person	multiple shared group work settings
hierarchical space standards	diverse task-based space
nine to five at one place	anywhere anytime
under-occupancy	varied patterns of high-density use
owned	shared

Fig. 7: Changing Organizational expectations

¹⁸ Lora Nicolaou, "Emerging Building Forms and Accommodation Solutions: New Building Typologies or Distinctive Place-Making," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*, Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.207.

¹⁹ Simone Jeska, "The Effects of Information Technology on Corporate Structures," Ed. Rainer Hascher, Simone Jeska, Birgit and Klauck, *Office Buildings: A Design Manual*, Basel; Boston: Birkhäuser, c2002, p.27.

The modes of working, organizational structures, work environment, and office forms must also change accordingly to adjust to this new work approach. In 1996, new definitions for the work modes of the knowledge economy emerged from the research titled, "New Environments for Working" by DEGW and the Building Research Establishment. Operating for over 30 years, DEGW is a leading architectural practice who specializes in the research of workplace design and performance in Europe, Asia Pacific, and the Americas. Building Research Establishment (BRE) is an independent research-based consultancy that offers expertise in the built environment based in Europe. The study identifies certain work patterns and spatial concepts that contribute to improving organisational performance (see fig. 8 and fig. 9). Firstly, there are four basic organizational types: "(1) *Hive*- standardized clerical work by individuals; (2) *Den*- group processes and interactive teamwork; (3) *Cell*- designated monastery/convent with cells where individuals can work in a concentrated fashion; (4) *Club*- place of communication."²⁰ Each of these has subsequent modes of working (individual process work, group process, concentrated study and transactional knowledge work) and functions or activities (logistics and information, tasks, projects, and discussions and meetings), which inform certain spatial usages and workplace configurations.²¹ In terms of the creative knowledge economy, it requires a complex combination of highly concentrated individual work alongside interactive teamwork supported by the '*Club*' organizational type. The concept of *Club* alludes to the idea of a Gentleman's Club where several diverse settings are present for various social and individual activities. In turn, this new knowledge workplace relies heavily on the tension between employee interaction and the flexibility of office occupancy. As a result, this calls for a social change within the office culture to accommodate the need for informal social interactions.

²⁰ Thomas Arnold and Birgit Klauck., "Principles of Project Selection and Classification," Ed. Rainer Hascher, Simone Jeska, and Birgit Klauck, *Office Buildings: A Design Manual*, Basel; Boston: Birkhäuser, c2002, p.83.

²¹ ibid. p.83.

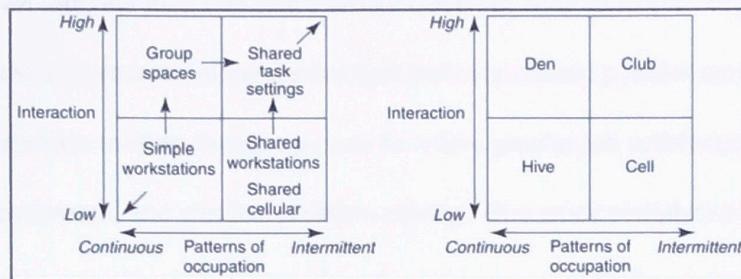
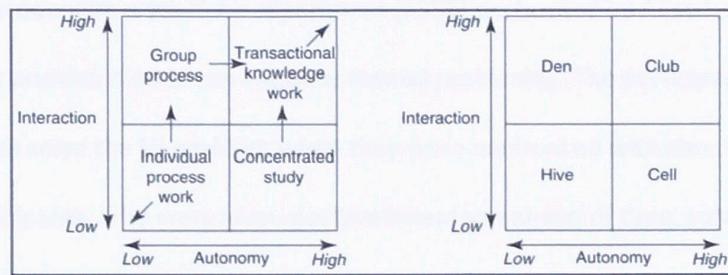


Fig. 8: Patterns of space occupancy



▲2.1 Fig. 9: Patterns of work: four major types

The previous office archetypes such as cell-like offices, open-plan layouts, and group offices have been slowly replaced by other spatial combinations that are inside as well as outside the office building such as in the car, in a coffee shop or even at home. On account of the miniaturisation and mobility afforded by computing and communication technologies such as laptops and mobile phones, workers can be liberated from the confines of the workstation or office building. It also has a significant consequence on the physical design of workspace, with the potential for smaller workstations and furniture systems. Work can occur at home, on a train, in an airport lounge, at a street corner, in a classroom, library and café – everywhere. The appeal of these new spatial scenarios is the informality and comfort that they offer people. Even though it is evident that these informal environments are emerging as the new work environments, in the article titled “The End of the Office” published in *Your Business Magazine* (2010), Frank Duffy, a British architect and founder of DEGW, a celebrated practice for its office design in the eighties and nineties, expects that the future development of office design will involve more casual meeting areas and unstructured spaces. Duffy further insists that this emerging trend is proven by the rising popularity in the Starbucks Coffee culture in North America.

It is a known fact that effective office design can contribute to employee productivity and creativity. In fact, there have been many studies that indicate relaxed positive work atmospheres can lead to improved decision making, better memory function, greater job satisfaction, increased organizational commitment, and creative problem solving. One study completed by Robert Sagot (1997) in Office Systems confirms that relaxed work environments actually produce higher employee morale and more productive work.²² An experiment (1990) performed by Alice Isen, a psychologist demonstrated that positive moods can enhance mental processing. The participants in the experiment failed to solve the IQ problem when they were confronted with stressful circumstances. However, the participants, who were given positive incentives ahead of time, solved the problem successfully.

An effective work environment can also generate productivity and creativity through the organizational structure of the office culture. Google Inc., an American corporation known for its Internet-based services and products, implements an office policy called 'Innovation Time Off' or commonly known as 'Google 20%.' As a motivation tool, Google employees are persuaded to spend 20% of their work time on projects of personal interest. Some of Google's most popular services such as Gmail, Google News, Orkut, and AdSense are products from these endeavours.²³ The outcome of these experiments along with the example of Google 20% establishes the effectiveness of informal atmospheres on improving the workers' performance.

Additionally, the flexibility and mobility of the new work model have lead to many new notions of de-territorialized workspace such as the Virtual Office (1994).²⁴ The idea of a paperless and virtual office was implemented in 1994 by an adamant CEO, Jay Chiat of the ad agency TBWA\Chiat\Day's. The experiment turned out to be a disaster. Because of the strict ban on paper

²² Matthew J. Stoessel, The Impact of the Workplace on Effective Employee Performance in Corporate America, Thesis, New York: Seton Hall University, 2001, p.11.

²³ Julie Bick, "The Google Way: Give Engineers Room," 21 October 2007, The New York Times, 5 Jan 2011 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/21/jobs/21pre.html>>.

²⁴ Warren Berger, "Lost in Space," *Wired magazine* 7.02, February 1999, <<http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/7.02/chiat.html>>.

and storyboards, employees were forced to hide their files in cars and hidden compartments.

Another daunting aspect was that employees had no personal desks. Every morning, it was a race to check out a laptop and a scramble to claim a seat. The failure in this experiment would be the lack of personalized space, access to people, and the feeling of comfort, all of which contribute directly to the success of creative knowledge work.

Although the new information and technology developments give contemporary workers the flexibility of where and when to work, they seem to prefer work environments with an informal and relaxing atmosphere (see fig. 10 and fig. 11). In fact, these new work trends are proven to be more effective work conditions for productivity and creativity as they enhance the worker performance and provide a valuable stimulating setting for communication. In sum, the 21st century workplace must integrate a change of organisational structure, work patterns and business priorities if it is to progress.

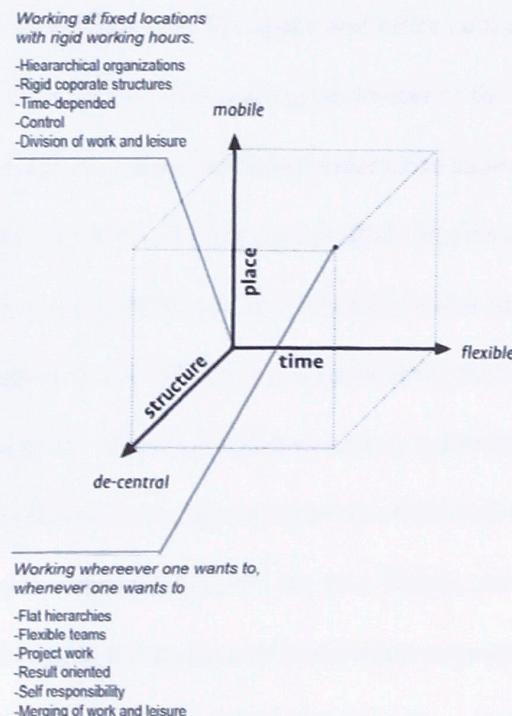


Fig. 10: Changing relationship between structure, place, time at work

	Pre-War	1950s	1980s	2000s
Workplace	Production line Labour intensive Task oriented Hierarchical	Data processing Departmental Corporate	High specification Extended hours Large, open floors Cellular space	Mobility Core/periphery Hotelling Flexitime/place
Systems	Simple lighting Simple heating Natural ventilation	Mainframe Data processing Typewriters	The workstation BMS PCs and networks Fax/teleconference	Individual control Integrated BMS Natural ventilation IT convergence
Culture	Small scale Uniformity Task oriented	Multi-layered Corporate identity Large scale	Delaying Outsourcing Individualistic Meeting space	Flexitime/place Group areas Employee welfare Networking
Finance	Owner occupiers Long leaseholds Large estates	25 year, FRI lease Mortgage finance Debentures	Non-recourse Off balance sheet Debt finance	REITS Management Flexibility

Fig. 11: Long-term changes in office

[1.3]-Contrast between the Ideal and Practical Workplace

Despite the fact that the paradigm of work is dramatically changing according to the new knowledge-based economy, the basic office typologies in North America have remained quite consistent over the last fifty years. Although there are certain innovative workplace examples in advertising media firms such as Chiat Day and in information technology firms such as Google, the overall workplace fabric continues to be dominated by rigid Taylorist ideals. These 20th century office archetypes still feature the ideas of visual uniformity and banality, operational inflexibility, lack of human interaction and place-dependency. This resistance is due to the inertia from existing structural organization, office culture, globalization, standardization, existing office infrastructure and market conditions.

'Soft' resistances originate from the structural organization of a company and its office culture. Hierarchical organization has always been a prevalent tradition extended to the configuration of office space and office culture. Often, management-level staff is allocated spacious private closed offices at the perimeter of the building, while other employees are set up in the middle of a deep floor plan under close supervision, creating a feeling of hostility. The physical environments of these earlier office models are analogous to a prison with its dreary monotonous interiors prohibiting social interaction and contact. As this hierarchical office culture has been the legacy of the 20th century, people in the management level have a strong reluctance to sacrifice their spacious offices for a shared desk in a universal footprint. A person's strong attitude toward privacy is reflected through the eagerness for personalization and territorialisation of space as demonstrated by the Virtual Office of Chiat Day. Hence, the idea of a neighbourly office environment persuades change in the traditional hierarchical organizational structure. Furthermore, it suggests a social change in the relationship between the employers and employees as well as among the employees themselves. Given the situation, it does not imply that open and universal workplace concepts are meant to fail; instead, more energy and effort are required to implement them.

Aside from psychological, social and cultural obstacles, 'hard' resistances are also present.

Currently in North America, the office building specifies two primary shell typologies due to the fluctuating market drivers of commercial real estate.²⁵ The first typology involves high-rise office towers with deep floor plans located in the downtown area, and the second typology describes cheaply constructed low-rise buildings in suburban office parks.²⁶ Both scenarios have resorted to being merely design exercises of the building skin with no direct correlation to the interior design or the work activities and users within. Additionally, the construction presents the lack of concern for the welfare of its occupants and the long-term environmental sustainability of the building. This divorce is also ruled by the standardized conventions and efficiency imposed by Taylorism. To accommodate designs driven by cost reductions, the office has become a dull, quickly and cheaply-built, uniform environment. The workplace emerges as an inhuman and isolating place with cubicles and low suspended ceilings only suitable for highly routine office work.

To address these deficiencies, office culture needs to retreat from standardization and uniformity and turn towards a more diverse and creative integration of spatial configuration and organizational structure. Above all, North American office spaces must focus on connecting employers to employees, employees to each other, workers and activities to office space design, and the interior design of the building to the exterior design. These relationships have been non-existent or strained because of the value placed on Taylorist notions of efficiency. This demands the invention of new conventions and approaches to work space design. Therefore, the progression from a service to a knowledge economy must entail radical changes in social, cultural, economic, and geographical expectations that re-interpret the issues such as security, safety, flexibility, organisation, office aesthetics and appearance.

²⁵ Andrew Laing, "North American Office Design at the Start of the New Millennium," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.238.

²⁶ ibid. p.238.

[1.4]- CHAPTER CONCLUDING IDEAS-The Workplace

The current workplace typologies are insufficient or ineffective for contemporary creative knowledge industries in the 21st century. As the nature of this kind of work engages in the ‘generation of ideas,’ it involves highly concentrated individual work alongside interactive teamwork. Hence, the work environment must encourage the qualities (decision-making, creative problem solving, interactive teamwork, the ability to communicate, and flexibility) that support these activities. Currently, the workplace is based on Taylorist ideals, featuring the ideas of visual uniformity, standardization, operational inflexibility, lack of human interaction and place-dependency. In effect, this office approach fails to connect employers to employees, employees to each other, workers and activities to office space design, and the interior design of the building to the exterior design. Therefore, the 21st century creative workplace must replace the Taylorist office layouts with more diverse and stimulating spatial environments. In addition to changing the spatial configurations, the organizational structure needs to adapt a flat hierarchical office culture in order to effectively reinforce the creative work mandate.

ANALYSIS #2—Work and Leisure

[2.1]-Understanding the Importance of Work and Leisure in *Critique of Everyday// Henri Lefebvre*

As contemporary creative knowledge workers' relationship with the workplace evolves to become more flexible, informal and 'free,' it is essential to find a way to reconcile this change within the contexts of work and personal lifestyles. By expanding these new conditions of work to the notion of informality, it leads to the analogous theme of leisure. Its influence can be understood with the book '*Critique of Everyday Life*' (written in 1947) by French sociologist and philosopher, Henri Lefebvre (1901 – 1991). In this book, Lefebvre's analysis on the concepts of work and leisure presents many parallels to the premise of study - the reciprocal relationship of leisure and work, the need for interaction between people, and the dependence on qualities in leisure to make people feel positive.

According to Lefebvre, leisure and work are in a dialectical relationship. An individual's everyday life involves two major components- work and leisure- which are respectively ascribed to the notions of necessity and freedom. Both leisure and work are inseparable from each other because "necessity (work) does not disappear in freedom (leisure), and freedom relies upon necessity."²⁷ This reciprocal practice of work and leisure is essential to sustaining life ecologically, and psychologically.

In Lefebvre's book, he identifies '*alienation*' as a phenomenon of isolation of the individual from others and society due to an over-exposure to either work or leisure activities. He emphasizes the need to communicate and connect people. Similarly, the creative work processes and new contemporary work environment call for face-to-face interaction as means for the generation of ideas as well as psychological well-being of its workers. The intentions of Lefebvre's proposition and of the thesis investigation are very alike in terms of using social interaction as an inherent and necessary link to merge work and leisure.

²⁷ Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*. New York: Verso, 1991-2005, p 39.

As a solution to this dilemma of 'alienation', Lefebvre proposes an *illusory reverse image* to reconcile work and leisure:

*"Since sometimes there is no escape available, we wish to have the illusion of escape as near to hand as possible. An illusion not entirely illusory, but constituting a 'world' both apparent and real (the reality of appearances and the apparently real) quite different from the everyday world yet as open-ended and as closely dovetailed into the everyday as possible. So we work to earn our leisure, and leisure has only one meaning: to get away from work."*²⁸

It is understood in the passage above that this illusory reverse image appeals to the nature of happiness and freedom found in leisure to temporarily remove the negative connotations of work. In a sense, the integration of leisure improves the context of work since leisure can compensate for its shortcomings. Seeing that leisure is the representation of the workers' desire, it activates the operations of seduction and the unconscious. In order to achieve the same effect, the physical environment of work must trigger the unconscious happiness, and positive feelings. Consequently, the contemporary informal environments such as coffee shops re-create the apparent freedom and are analogous to the idea behind the *illusory reverse image*. Using Lefebvre's philosophical stance on combining the concepts of work and leisure, the architecture can draw out positivism in people and exposes unreserved ways of acting and thinking.

²⁸ Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*. New York: Verso, 1991-2005, p.40.

[2.2]-The Definition of Leisure and its Changing Relationship with Work

After the introduction of leisure from Lefebvre's argument, one must consider: what is leisure? In general, leisure is understood as the release from work activities and of obligations, yet some other people see it as "an instrument of social control, a status symbol, an organic necessity, a state of calm, quiet, contemplative dignity, or a spiritual, aesthetic, cultural condition."²⁹ Thus, leisure has no distinct form. Activities may vary from playing a game of basketball, to reading a novel or enjoying music. It may involve activities of rest, or physical, mental, or emotional action which are all necessary at different occasions. In fact, the possibilities of leisure are boundless, depending on personal preferences, needs and desires. Aside from the different types of activities, time (*when*) is also quite a significant factor of leisure. A person's daily life is separated into three sections: sleep, work, and leisure. Apart from the time spent on sleeping, working, and other biological necessities (eating, cleansing, and resting), the remaining time is used for leisure and for play.

Having briefly defined the parameters of leisure, it is important to understand its changing relationship with work in history, culture and society. How does it affect people's lives? How has the conception of work and leisure, as well as their physical settings, altered over time? The ancient Greeks believed that "*We are unleisurely in order to have leisure (Aristotle).*"³⁰ This quotation from the writings of Aristotle, who was one of the founding figures in Western philosophy, represents the fundamental ideals of western society during that era. In this instance, '*unleisurely*' in the Greek understanding refers to everyday work. Thus, this leisure is only attained through the outcome of work which makes it the foundation of living and well-being. In other words, as explained by Charles Kestner Brightbill, in his book, *Challenge of Leisure* "leisure is the foundation of culture beyond the utilitarian world."³¹ Besides this social and philosophical understanding of work and leisure as a unified existence, the physical setting that the ancient Greeks occupied also exemplifies this notion.

²⁹ Charles Kestner Brightbill, *Challenge of Leisure*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall., 1960, p.3

³⁰ Josef Pieper, *Leisure: the Basis of Culture*. London: Faber & Faber, 1952, p.4.

³¹ Charles Kestner Brightbill, *Challenge of Leisure*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall., 1960, p.6.

During that time, Greek society operated mainly as city-states with most of its political and social core located in the middle of the agora. The residential area was situated in close proximity at the periphery. The administrative authorities, the marketplace and entertainment areas were all located in the agora, reflecting the overlapping relationship of work and leisure.

With the arrival of the industrial age and the invention of the car, work and leisure have become separate existences physically and psychologically. As suburbs and infrastructure developed, urban sprawl in North America also became the dominant trend. Most workers commute long distances to work and find leisure in destinations to which they would access via car. Even in the modern dictionary, leisure is described as "freedom from occupation, employment, or engagement."³² Due to this physical and psychological separation, workers have become more isolated from other people and society. The urgency of this situation has gradually been emerging over recent decades. For example, North American workers have demonstrated little gestures for leisure at the workplace as seen in the emergent culture of congregating around the water cooler or in the participation of frequent coffee breaks. Not to mention the ideas of company sporting events, company vacations/retreats, potluck lunches, and other creative efforts to promote social bonding between employees (see fig. 12).

³² Charles Kestner Brightbill, *Challenge of Leisure*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall., 1960, p.3.

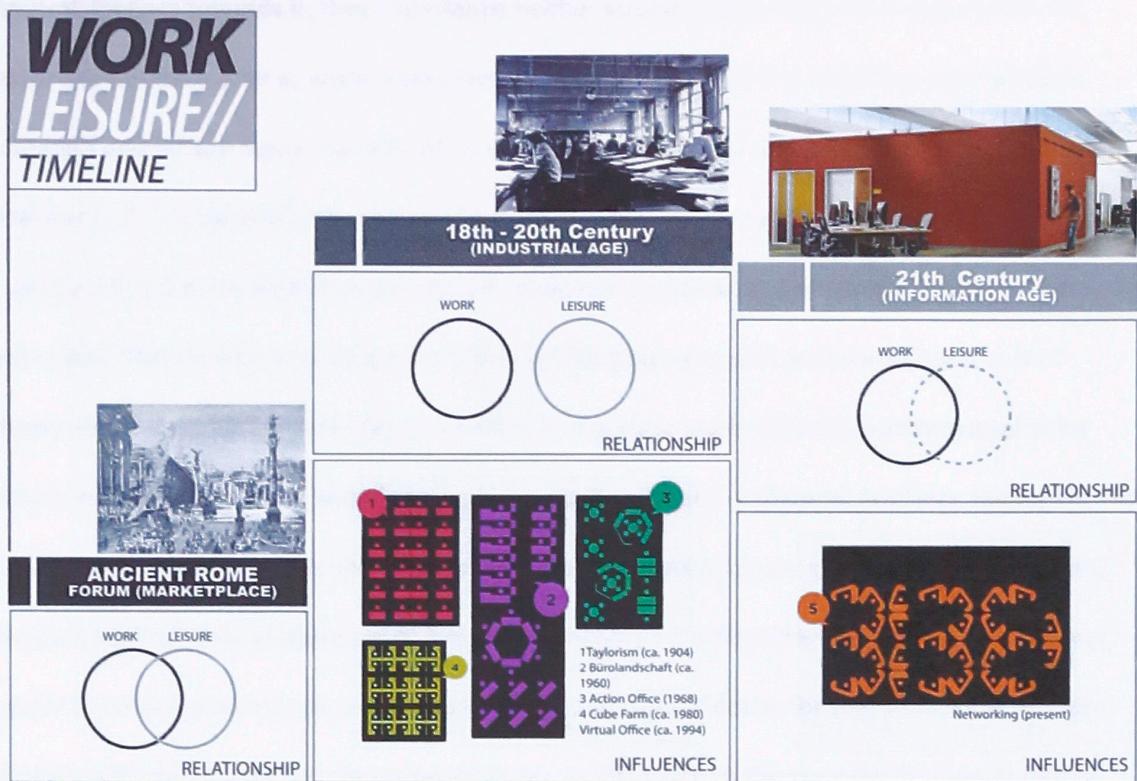


Fig. 12: Leisure and Work Relationship Timeline

How is leisure relative to the idea of work being that they are reciprocal in nature? In the publication '*The Future of Work and Leisure*', Stanley Parker, a sociologist on the topic of leisure, identifies three patterns of work and leisure. Each type defines different relationships between the two based on the intensities of the given activities. The first pattern describes the 'opposition' of work and leisure; this is often associated with intense manual labour work or absence from home for extended periods, such as the work patterns prevalent for deep water fishermen or oil-rig drillers.³³ Following is the second pattern of 'neutrality,' where work and leisure intensity levels are at a neutral state.³⁴ Alasdair Clayre in his book, "*Work and Play: Ideas and Experience of Work and Leisure*," writes, "As work becomes physically lighter and economically less of a struggle, without necessarily becoming any more rewarding or interesting in itself, people may develop increasingly

³³ Alasdair Clayre, *Work and play: Ideas and Experience of Work and Leisure*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974, p.196.

³⁴ ibid. p.196.

'neutral' feelings towards it; they experience neither strong attachments nor a violent need to restore themselves after it, while work gives them neither a set of interests that can readily be extended into leisure hours, nor a level of attention that requires absorbing activity to sustain it afterwards.³⁵ Accordingly, the choice of leisure activities is also neither strenuous nor demanding. Examples of this neutral pattern are typically people in industrial and office jobs. The third pattern is 'extension.' People who are engaged in highly challenging work seek to have a similar sort of absorption in their leisure activities or an extension of their work. Often this pattern applies to people in professions in the knowledge industry such as artists, craftsmen, teachers, managers, some nurses, doctors etc.³⁶ Despite these three identified patterns, they are still merely classifications. People's interests and preferences differ; thus, they may act differently than expected. However, people in contemporary society seem to have a pre-dominant desire for the "extension" pattern lifestyle, although it may not always be achieved. In reference to the knowledge-based industry, contemporary workers are involved in more intellectual and creative work considered highly challenging and stimulating. Hence, they fall within the classification of "extension" pattern of work and leisure.

In support of Lefebvre's proposition that leisure can extend into work, the sociological research on leisure by Parker has demonstrated that workers in the knowledge industry also operate within these parameters. Hence, the application of leisure to work as an extension corresponds to the social and psychological condition of contemporary workers in this investigation. As a result, the changing 21st century knowledge industry intends to re-instate the unified relationship of work and leisure. Contemporary workers seek to dissolve the physical and psychological separation inherited from the previous economical, social and cultural conditions. Therefore, architecture and society also have to evolve with the changing situation of work and leisure.

³⁵ Alasdair Clayre, *Work and play: Ideas and Experience of Work and Leisure*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974, p.197.

³⁶ ibid. p.197.

[2.3]-Looking at Work-Leisure Offices and Learning from them

After the establishment of the philosophical, social, cultural, and historical context of work and leisure, it is necessary to see how the dichotomy operates architecturally, contributing to creative knowledge work processes and the welfare of its workers. Many information and technology (IT) and advertising companies have already started a trend in creating 'leisurely' workplaces to stimulate its staff and improve their work performance. By exploring how the philosophy of leisure informs the program of work, this section specifically looks at the strategies employed in three precedents that achieve this effect. The study investigates the Google Headquarters in California and in Zurich, 'another.com', an internet company in London, UK, and Beacon Communications Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. This examination will identify the different types of work and leisure-induced activities, and behaviours that contribute to more effective functional spaces.

Google is one of the world's most used and recognized Internet search engines. Nicknamed the Googleplex, its headquarters have some of the most dynamic workplaces embodying their office culture, creative work mandate and employee appreciation. As a place of innovations, it ensures its workspaces exemplify this concept through its various seemingly outrageous designs of spaceships, slides, igloos and firemen's poles (see fig. 13 and fig. 14). These dynamic and unconventional fixtures in the work environment are not gimmicks, but actually effective devices for working and generating creative ideas. The converted ski gondolas provide effective private/temporary workstations and meeting spaces. These practices are not arbitrary gestures; they are instead derived from environmental needs.³⁷ A slide can be fun, but it is also an effective way to descend to another floor. Using a bike inside the workplace is an efficient way of travelling around the office. Google aspires to adapt an informal and fun work setting that is both physically and psychologically comfortable. Only in a place where people feel comfortable or secure can they attain the courage to take risks or to

³⁷ Kursty Groves, *I Wish I Worked There!: A Look inside the Most Creative Spaces in Business*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2010, p.76.

play freely. Furthermore, provisions of clean air, natural light, food and laundry facilities are provided to satisfy the basic needs of the workers.³⁸ According to the Google mandate, no employee should ever be more than 150 feet away from food. As a result, they conceived food facilities known as microkitchens. This ensures that workers are healthier and happier.



Fig. 13: Photo of Slide at the Googleplex in Zurich



Fig. 14: Photo of igloos meeting pods at the Googleplex in Zurich

Designed by Nowicka Stern, the ‘another.com’ internet company in London, UK, literally incorporates a piece of lawn in the centre of the workplace as part of their analogous metaphor of ‘Surf’n’Turf (see fig. 15 and fig. 16).³⁹ Surrounding this of turf, the office consist mainly four teams of workstations without any additional furniture or spatial hierarchy. The piece of turf brings leisure and leisure activities into the office as it offers an ‘another place of recreation’ to meet, talk, eat, rest, and play synonymous with real urban neighbours. Therefore, the lawn becomes a space for work and leisure at the same time. The sensations of natural grass help to stimulate the visual and haptic senses, resulting in a state of delight and surprise. Simultaneously natural and artificial, the lawn is mown ‘twice a week, irradiated with ultraviolet light at night and provided with an ingenious watering system serving the roots directly, so that it always stays dry on the surface.’ The concept of a hospitable neighbourhood is further re-iterated with a set of swings in the reception to greet the

³⁸ Kursty Groves, *I Wish I Worked There!: A Look inside the Most Creative Spaces in Business*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2010, p.76.

³⁹ Jeremy Myerson, and Philip Ross, *21st Century Office: Architecture and Design for the New Millennium*. New York: Rizzoli; London: Troika, 2003, p. 138.

visitors. Through the use of varying and contrasting colours, transparencies and materials throughout the office, different permeabilities of public, privileged and private spaces are created for the different activities of the workers.



Fig. 15: Floor plan of 'another.com'

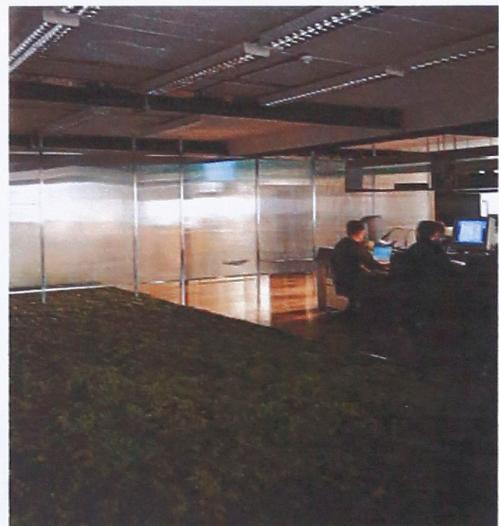


Fig. 16: Photo of lawn next to workstations at 'another.com'

In the same manner, the Beacon Communications Headquarters, designed by Klein Dytham Architecture pursues the theme of 'okarinasaï' (welcome home) to create a stimulating setting for creativity and collaboration (see fig. 17).⁴⁰ The open-concept office eliminates any level of hierarchy while offering the potential for interaction among the staff at every possible situation. Even the six directors and the company president work at an oversized dining table of 12 metres long with 20 dining chairs (see fig. 18). At any time, employees can easily approach them for a quick chat.⁴¹ The design employs oversized furniture and colourful undulating ribbons with distinct profiles that provide a variety of functions from meeting rooms to the common areas. . Every floor also has its own theme, with correlating material and colour choices and leisure activities. For example, the family floor uses a wood textured ribbon that revolves around a full kitchen with cooking and

⁴⁰ Jeremy Myerson, and Philip Ross, *21st Century Office: Architecture and Design for the New Millennium*. New York: Rizzoli; London: Troika, 2003, p. 168.

⁴¹ ibid. p.168.

laundry facilities. Meanwhile, the ribbon on the women's floor is made from pink snake skin, with hair salons and beauty centres inside the ribbon construction. Utilizing free flowing ribbons to establish contrasts of space (e.g., closed/open, public/private, familiar/unfamiliar, conceptual/real), the office creates a narrative filled with obstacles and distractions. The treatment of the 'ribbon' as a ceiling, wall, screen, and sometimes seating reveals a seamless fusion of program, use and function. By using the theme of home/work, the project suggests blending the activities of work and leisure together. The workplace is neither authentically a workplace, nor leisure since it becomes a median between the two.



Fig. 17: Photo of family floor at Beacon Communications Hqs.

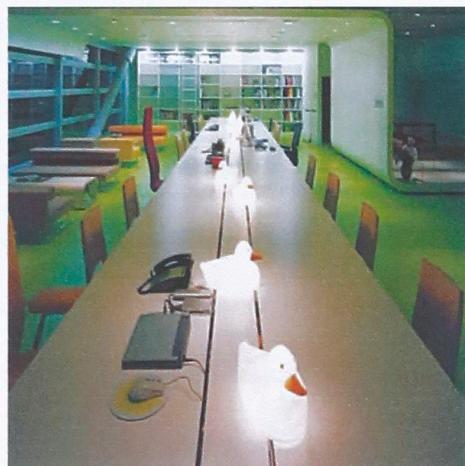


Fig. 18: Photo of President and directors' 12m long dining table

Each case study adopts a different work mandate on the concept of leisure, yet offers similar approaches to the idea of public/private, individual/collective place, flat hierarchy, individual workstations, informal meeting places, networking spaces, and breakout spaces. All three precedents have successfully created different types of spaces that are unique to nurturing the creative process. In particular, Kursty Groves, a design consultant specializing in sourcing, designing and managing creative spaces for businesses, classifies four specific facets in the creative work environments in her book, "I Wish I Worked There!: A Look inside the Most Creative Spaces in Business." The four facets that enrich creative activities include: "*stimulation*, where the mind is

inspired or a thought process triggered in some new way; *reflection*, a period of uninterrupted focus; *collaboration*, where ideas are shared and built; and *play*, where experimentation occurs.⁴² These spaces vary in all shapes and sizes to make the physical setting an instrument to encourage communication allowing the exchange of ideas and knowledge in an open environment. Spaces for *stimulation* are intended to inspire unconventional creative thoughts by appealing to different senses, such as touch and sound. Either premeditated or random, these instances can be engaged through a sensory aesthetic provided by the unique interpretation of the given leisure theme. An example is the use of natural grass in the ‘another.com’ office space. The second facet, *reflection* involves “the filtering of information into the brain, allowing it to make [clear] connections.”⁴³ Essentially, these instances provide an undisturbed moment of time to relax and to organize thoughts. These reflective moments can be achieved through private spaces of quiet contemplation, such as Google’s water lounge or other devices intended to slow people down (see fig. 19). *Collaboration* spaces are crucial for the operation of meetings as well as the effective exchange of information and knowledge. Unlike conventional meeting environments, creative meeting spaces facilitate an informal attitude for open social interaction among colleagues. Additionally, these informal meeting places serve as unpredictable meeting generators such as Google’s ‘microkitchens’ (see fig. 20).’ The final facet of *play* enhances work through numerous forms, from active play, social play to explorative play. Each type of play draws upon freedom and ease of communication, which appeals to the individual and to the collective group, either directly or indirectly. These different types of play can come in the form of leisure facilities such as a swimming pool.

⁴² Kursty Groves, *I Wish I Worked There!: A Look inside the Most Creative Spaces in Business*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2010, p.12.

⁴³ ibid. p.13.



Fig. 19: Photo of Google's water lounge



Fig. 20: Photo of Google's 'microkitchens' at the Googleplex

It must also be noted that all three case studies are retrofits of existing spaces in developed urban locations. This approach contributes to the re-adaptive use of existing buildings, reinforcing more sustainable lifestyles for workers since the location already has a developed infrastructure providing easier access to amenities and transportation.

In an interview with Katie Churchman, an employee who works at the Barcelona office branch of Softonic, a leading internet services and sales company in Europe and Latin America, expresses the effectiveness of the leisure component at the workplace (refer to Appendix A). Seeing that workers are considered the primary resources of the company, her office attempts to provide all the necessary tools such as free food and refreshments to work comfortably, healthily, independently, creatively and efficiently. In fact, the work environment creates a relaxing social atmosphere with a flat hierarchy and many leisure components such as a massage room with an onsite masseuse, chill out room, games room, onsite cafeteria and library which help to motivate its workers and reduce the amount of stress. Churchman strongly emphasizes that "Knowing you are trusted to do your work and you are appreciated for what you do has a direct impact on the work process and tasks."

The playfulness of leisure and the seriousness of work is a crucial dichotomy, which intensifies the effectiveness of knowledge work. Hence, this leisure and work approach relies more on the idea of effectiveness (business performance) instead of efficiency (cost reduction) to appeal to better work performance and happier workers. The previous conventional model of the Taylorist

office space is no longer applicable to the new ways of working or to the perception of added-value cost. In the opinion of Andrew Laing, a workplace strategist, for DEGW offices in North America, unlike before, capital expenditure must now be allocated to satisfying the needs of employees while maximizing creative output. He considers that "Effectiveness augments efficiency as a measure of workplace performance."⁴⁴

[2.4]- CHAPTER CONCLUDING IDEAS- Work and Leisure

The dialectic work-leisure relationship is the necessary missing component in the current workplace model of the creative knowledge-based industry. Studies in philosophy, history and sociology suggest that maintaining the dialectic relationship between work and leisure encourages more effective performance from creative knowledge workers. Given the nature of creative work, the work environment needs to be more stimulating in order to encourage the generation of unconventional ideas. Thus, the application of leisure in a workplace opens up the individuals to unreserved ways of acting and thinking. As leisure is commonly associated with the notion of freedom and desires, its qualities can be extended to the realm of work to improve the emotional, social, and psychological status of the environment for the workers. Leisure entails boundless possibilities of activities from rest to action; the project attempts to demonstrate some of this range with the analysis of four specific facets: *stimulation, reflection, collaboration, and play*. As seen in the three leisure workplace studies, spatial environments can combine with concepts of leisure and work to draw out these four facets in a variety of effective ways. Using the physical and psychological qualities extracted from leisure, the workplace should facilitate the notion of effectiveness instead of efficiency to optimize the workers' performance and well-being. In addition, these qualities can remove the previous negative connotations of work by creating a casual and playful atmosphere.

⁴⁴ Andrew Laing, "North American Office Design at the Start of the New Millennium," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.237.

Thus, the concept of leisure can contribute consciously and unconsciously to enhance the aesthetics and operations of work, in particular to that of the creative knowledge industry.

ANALYSIS #3 – The Leisurely Beach

[3.1]-Seeing the Beach as a Leisure Hotspot

Given that the intended demographic is the new generation of young professionals in North America, their perception of an indispensable leisure experience is the beach. As seen in a Canadian Government research study on '*Global Tourism Opportunities*' in 2009 by Deloitte, an international consulting, and financial advisory services, the beach is identified as an increasingly popular travel destination in the 21st century. This is not surprising since North Americans are engrossed by the image of beach vacations provided by travel agencies, airlines and luxury resorts to tropical locations, such as Cuba, or the Caribbean Islands, especially during the winter holidays or spring breaks.

Corresponding to the idea of escape, the beach has a long standing reputation as a place of play, pleasure and hedonism. In Europe, beach landscapes represented a paradise rooted in utopian fantasies stripped of any allusions towards labour.⁴⁵ According to the Tahitian travelogue of Louis-Antoine de Bougainville (1771-1772), the beach had already gained reputation as a hedonistic pleasure zone when he described the Tahitian villagers' readiness to exchange sexual favours for cargo on the island in 1768.⁴⁶ Continuously, the beach experience has evolved as a place of leisure with the emerging development of beach tourism, beach clubs, hotels, ocean front homes, sea baths, urban beaches and art installations. Consequently, the beach has remained a place for escape from reality, irrelevant of the time period, or the changing social circumstances - higher incomes, longer holiday entitlement, and cheap air travel. While some people enjoy holiday homes or permanent seaside residences, others take pleasure in visiting commercial and recreational facilities on the beach such as seaside resorts, waterside attractions and special events. As a matter of fact, there is even a book titled "*Beachlife: Interior Design and Architecture at the Seaside (2008)*." It presents an

⁴⁵ Mimi Sheller, and John Urry, *Tourism Mobilities: Places to Play, Places in Play*. London; New York: Routledge, 2004, p.13

⁴⁶ ibid. p.45.

entire collection of 115 beach endeavours around the world categorized from leisure, hospitality, art, residential and products, dedicated to the persistent fascination with the beach experience.

"The beach is the only place of enjoyment that the human species has discovered in nature. Thanks to its sensory organs, from the sense of smell and from sexuality to sight (without any special emphasis being placed on the visual sphere), the body tends to behave as a differential field. It behaves, in other words, as a total body, breaking out of the temporal and spatial shell developed in response to labour, to the division of labour, to the localizing of work and the specialization of places. In its tendency, the body asserts itself more (and better) as 'subject' and as 'object' than as 'subjectivity' (in the classical philosophical sense) and as 'objectivity' (fragmented in every way, distorted by the visual, by images, etc.). Its opposite - total passivity on the beach, mere contemplation of the spectacle of sea and sun. // The space of leisure tends but it is no more than a tendency, a tension, a transgression of 'users' In search of a way forward - to surmount divisions: the division between social and mental, the division between sensory and intellectual, and also the division between the everyday and the out-of-the-ordinary (festival)."⁴⁷

In the passage above extracted from the book, "*The Production of Space*" by Henri Lefebvre, which investigates the reproduction of social relations and space, conveys the beach as an experience stimulating the senses, the mind and body. This insightful depiction describes the function of leisure as an important generator of fantasy in contrast to reality. Sylvia M. Tunstall and Edmund C. Penning-Rowsell, researchers at the Flood Hazard Research Centre, School of Social Science, at Middlesex University, further discuss the resilient values and the perceptions of beach experience based on a decade of research supported by 4000 interviews at 15 different beach locations in Britain. Published in the *Geographical Journal*, the research paper, "*The English Beach:*

⁴⁷ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991, p.384.

Experiences and Values (1998)," expresses that the notions of naturalness, nostalgia, and the versatility of social and individual activities at the beach as part of its primary appeal. Specifically, the promenade, the cleanliness of the beach, the quietness and the different type of beach materials such as sand, pebbles etc. present the visitors with a closer contact with nature. In the research, beach visitors found that the beach offers a more secure tactile and sensory experience compared to other natural settings such as national parks. Often visitors have to be highly alert of the potential dangers in parks, especially with children.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the beach can encourage a diverse range of leisure experiences in social or independent settings from active activities such as beach volleyball, Frisbee throwing, and running to passive activities such as sunbathing, reading under an umbrella, and gathering at a picnic. Hence, the beach represents an invaluable leisure experience as seen in the insights into its different associations and perceptions.

[3.2]-The Desire for the Beach Experience and its Versatility

"The playfulness of place is in part about the urge to travel elsewhere, the pleasure of immersing oneself in another environment, and the fascination with little differences in the materiality of the world. What is it that provokes a fascination for other places? What makes a place desirable to visit? Even if we desire that other place, why do we actually go through the trouble of physically visiting it? Why be in another place? What are the pleasures it can give that are only available though our physical presence?"⁴⁹

In this passage taken from the book '*Tourism Mobilities: Places to Play, Places in Play,*' Mimi Sheller, Senior Lecturer in Sociology and John Urry, Professor of Sociology, who are both co-Director of the Centre for Mobilities Research at Lancaster University, suggest that possibly it is the specific qualities in the experience of a place instead of the physical environment that appeals to people.

⁴⁸ Sylvia M Tunstall, and Edmund C. Penning-Rowson, "The English Beach: Experiences and Values," *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 164, No. 3 (Nov., 1998), p. 329.

⁴⁹ Mimi Sheller, and John Urry, *Tourism Mobilities: Places to Play, Places in Play*. London; New York: Routledge, 2004, p.1.

The questions lead to the inquiry about the possibility to reproduce the desirable experience of a physical place in another physical environment. Within this thought, can the experience of the beach be re-produced without necessarily visiting its physical place? Similar to the reference of Lefebvre's *illusory reverse image*, can the illusion of escape be as near as possible?

Sometime, it is impossible to visit an actual beach, so the experience of the beach is re-created in another place. Many cities all over the world have introduced manmade urban beaches, giving its citizens the chance to frolic in the sun. Some of the top urban beaches in Europe include the Amsterdam Beaches, Spree River in Berlin, Copencabana in Copenhagen, Žluté lázne in Prague, and Dublin's Urban Beach at Docklands.⁵⁰ North America also has its share of manmade urban beaches in New York City (Long Island City, South Street Seaport and Governors Island) and Toronto (HTO Park, and Sugar Beach) (see fig. 21 and fig. 22). New York even ensures that locals and tourists can easily beach hop between the three locations with the service of water taxis. By bringing together sand, palm trees, pools, beach chairs and umbrellas, these cities have constructed an atmosphere that fulfils every possible whim of play and pleasure. Some of these urban beaches such as Toronto's HTO Park and Sugar Beach even integrate urban landscaping features - promenade walks, water sculptures, gardens, islands, and outdoor furniture. During the summer, all these hotspots offer various leisure activities from dance and musical performances, food fairs, workout classes, and picnics to kayak rentals, mini golf, other outdoor games and sports for people in a range of activity levels. Unfortunately, some of these urban beaches have serious limitations, such as polluted waters, which prohibit physical contact.

⁵⁰ Crislip, Kathleen. "Urban Beaches in Europe: European Manmade City Beaches Mean City Fun in the Sun." *About.com Guide*. Dec. 4, 2010. <http://studenttravel.about.com/od/coolbeachesnudebeaches/tp/urban_beaches.htm>.



Fig. 21: Photo of Toronto's HTO Park



Fig. 22: Photo of Toronto's Sugar Beach

Beach lounging is not limited to actual beaches or permanent manmade urban beaches; one can also temporarily have the experience of a beach day. In July 1999, the artist Eric Rudd dumped 250,000 pounds of sand onto the entire historical block of Eagle Street in North Adams, Massachusetts and held the 'Eagle Street Beach Party (see fig. 23).' On that day, hundreds of families came out to build sand sculptures and the best ones were rewarded prizes. Since then, this special urban beach event has remained an annual tradition for the city of North Adams.⁵¹



Fig. 23: Photos of 'Eagle Street Beach Party' in North Adams created by artist Eric Rudd

The theme of 'Life is a Beach' also inspires two fake-beach festivals in Europe. One is Paris Plage ("Paris Beach") where from every mid-July to mid-August, sand, palm trees, deckchairs and parasols are placed on the banks of the Seine from Ile St. Louis to the Jardin des Tuileries (see fig.

⁵¹ Joe Manning, "BEACH PARTY (August 2000)," *Mornings on Maple Street*. Dec. 4, 2010, <<http://www.morningsonmaplestreet.com/northadams17.html>>

24).⁵² Here on this manmade haven, Parisians and tourists have fun in the heat while enjoying swimming pools, concert stages, and open-air activities (rollerblading, tai-chi, wall climbing, boules etc.). As a counterpart, Bruxelles Les Bains ("Brussels on sea") in Brussels has also achieved similar success as a beach party over its nine-year history (see fig. 25). The Willebroek canal is transformed into a waterside resort in the city. This beach scene is also filled with brightly coloured deck chairs, coconut palms, girls in grass skirts, and immense sandboxes filled with people of all ages under the sun.⁵³ With the profusion of parties and tourism, the beach experience demonstrates its important status as a place of leisure, play and pleasure. Although there are different re-interpretations of the beach, its significance remains in its capability to grant people the feeling of happiness and the security to act freely by losing formal structure.



Fig. 24: Posters for Paris Plage



Fig. 25: Posters for Bruxelles Les Bains

[3.3] The Beach is Leisure + Play

Recreating a beach-like atmosphere must be beyond simply putting in a sandbox or mini pool. From natural beaches to fake-beach parties, the appeal of the beach as a leisure and pleasure zone does not diminish. It has become the classic 'place to play' that evokes playful behaviour and atmosphere. Maybe by recreating this 'beach play', scaling the environment from macro to micro level, one can acquire the same stimulation in other places. A citation taken from the book '*Tourism*

⁵² Crislip, Kathleen. "Urban Beaches in Europe: European Manmade City Beaches Mean City Fun in the Sun." *About.com Guide*. Dec. 4, 2010.

<http://studenttravel.about.com/od/coolbeachesnudebeaches/tp/urban_beaches.htm>.

⁵³ Rose Kelleher, "Fake beach, real fun," *Babel* in Brussels, July 2, 2010, <<http://bruxelles.cafebabel.com/en/post/2010/07/06/Bruxelles-les-bains-2010>>

Mobilities: Places to Play, Places in Play,' by Mimi Sheller, and John Urry, explains an applicable scheme to break down the beach experience into a set of relationships. "Places are about relationships, about the placing of people, materials, images and the systems of differences that they perform. In particular, places are located in relation to material environments and objects as well as to human meanings and interactions."⁵⁴ By looking at this, the beach can be translated into relationships in association to the idea of play.

In an attempt to understand how this playful behaviour (mindset) and atmosphere can be abstracted, one needs to study the nature of 'play' that occurs at the beach. As explained by Stuart Brown in his TED lecture "Play is more than Fun," play exists in many forms from body play, object play, social play and imaginative play. 'Body play' implies the "spontaneous desire to get ourselves out of gravity."⁵⁵ Inherently, the beach setting permits a wide range of exaggerated static and dynamic bodily movements associated with leisure activities such as beach volley, Frisbee, paddling, and swimming. 'Object play' relies on the hand manipulation of objects.⁵⁶ This refers to the haptic contact with physical materials, and textures at the beach. However, the object has to offer open possibilities to engage in this kind of play. As an analogy, a regular chair is limited simply to the function of sitting, yet a foldable chair with an adjustable back support, gives more options. Social play is the 'by-product of the play scene.'⁵⁷ It occurs either during active or passive activities in a group setting, which in turn encourages social interactions between individuals. Imaginative play is the contemplative act involving the process of image-making/ imagination. For instance, the physical environment of the beach can stimulate the filtering of thoughts which contributes to the act of reflection and mental processing. These playful attitudes intermingle to promote interaction between individuals, social groups, materials and places while generating the beach experience. How

⁵⁴ Mimi Sheller, and John Urry, *Tourism Mobilities: Places to Play, Places in Play*. London; New York: Routledge, 2004, p.6.

⁵⁵ Stuart Brown, "Play is more than Fun," *Talks / TED Partner Series: Serious Play 2008*, May 2008, Nov 2008, <http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/stuart_brown_says_play_is_more_than_fun_it_s_vital.html>

⁵⁶ ibid. <http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/stuart_brown_says_play_is_more_than_fun_it_s_vital.html>.

⁵⁷ ibid. <http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/stuart_brown_says_play_is_more_than_fun_it_s_vital.html>.

are these relationships of play stabilized and assembled, and then how are they undone and surpassed in reference to the work setting?

All these relationships of play have common characteristics intrinsic to the context of work and leisure. Firstly according to Dutch historian, cultural theorist and professor, Johan Huizinga, "all play is a voluntary activity."⁵⁸ This indicates its affiliation to freedom. Thus, it is never seen as a chore. It is done at leisure, during "free time." This applies to the idea of leisure where one does not feel reluctant or stressed about the activity. Secondly, play appears to exist outside of 'real' life. Huizinga defines this as "stepping out of "real" life into a temporary sphere of activity" that is free of obligations and order.⁵⁹ The third characteristic of play is its limitedness of time and place served by rules.⁶⁰ All play has rules. In the lecture, "Creativity and Play," Tim Brown argues that the rules in play facilitate a code of negotiation, which 'leads to productive play.'⁶¹ For instance, if one were asked to sketch a portrait of a neighbour out of the blue, he/she would feel very uncomfortable. In contrast, if the same task was performed in a pub with the agreement that the worst sketch artist would buy the next round of drinks, the participants would feel perfectly willing. This is because everyone has accepted the framework of the rules. It presents the feeling of comfort or relaxation which is closely related to the idea of leisure contrasted with seriousness. There are also rules for the appropriate time to play. Players can transition in and out of the mode of play as required. Hence, can the framework of play contribute to the idea of leisure and work in the same effect as Lefebvre's *illusory reverse image*?

⁵⁸ Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: a Study of the Play Element in Culture*. London: Smith., 1970, p.7.

⁵⁹ ibid.p.8.

⁶⁰ ibid. p.9.

⁶¹ Tim Brown, "Creativity and Play," *Talks / TED Partner Series: Serious Play 2008*, May 2008, Nov 2008, <http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/tim_brown_on_creativity_and_play.html>.

[3.4]- CHAPTER CONCLUDING IDEAS- The Leisurely Beach

The beach is perceived as an indispensable experience of leisure, especially in North America, as people irrelevant of time period or changing social circumstances have persistently pursued it. Proven by the extents in which humans have attempted to reproduce the experience of the beach from urban man-made beaches to fake-beach festivals, its appeal must be beyond the simple collage of sand, water and sun. After an in-depth analysis of the settings and activities at the beach, it is evident that its value is inherently related to the idea of 'play.' In the same way as 'play' is associated with freedom, the different types of play with the body, object, individual, social group and imagination are also liberties offered by a beach experience. It even has the ability to accommodate multiple possibilities such as an individual or group setting, with either active or passive leisure activities. Aside from the type of leisure activities available, the beach addresses the freedom of when and where these instances can occur. Visitors are given a choice in participation and mobility unlikely found in a typical office setting. Yet, it is possible to translate these different types of beach-inspired 'play' and 'leisure' into architecture as a spatial experience. The architectural strategies are established through the use of environmental/spatial metaphors and proximities; sensory qualities; opportunistic casual individual and social spaces; informal body and movement. Thus, the design looks at recreating the playfulness, as well as the physical and psychological freedom that it offers an individual, which is typically absent from realms of work and living.

ANALYSIS #4 –Work, Play + LIVE

[4.1]-Needs of the Contemporary Workers

The contemporary workers of the 21st century creative knowledge industry have a completely different outlook on lifestyle and quality of life compared to the previous generation of workers. Mike O'Neill, a director of workplace research for Knoll, an office-furniture firm based in Pennsylvania carried out a survey on more than 15,000 employees across different generations from boomers, Gen Xers (who are currently in their 30s and 40s), Gen Yers, and even the workers who are a generation older than the boomers.⁶² It revealed that the boomers rated the importance of the formal office the highest. Additionally, they had a strong belief in maintaining separation between work life and private life. On the other hand compared to other demographics, Gen Y rated the formal office as the least important aspect and the traditional conference room as the least preferred design component. In effect, the Gen Y has a strong preference for informal/casual work and meeting environments such as cafés over the previous formal office. On top of that, Gen Y tends to work outside the office. O'Neill's surveys also uncovers that "26 per cent of Gen Y employees telecommute, and 17 per cent of them work at 'unassigned spaces' in offices" with their portable laptops.⁶³

Observed by O'Neill, another emerging trend in Gen Y workers is their distaste for commuting, unlike the boomers who see this activity as a necessity. These attitudes result from the environmental constraints on city forms and building types influenced by transportation (of physical goods); communications (of information), environment (availability of land and resources), and existing infrastructure (buildings, settlements and their services).⁶⁴ During the 18th and 19th

⁶² Clive Thompson, "The End of the Office," GLOBAL AND MAIL, Jun. 17, 2010, <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/your-business/start/location/the-end-of-the-office/article1607287/print/>>.

⁶³ ibid. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/your-business/start/location/the-end-of-the-office/article1607287/print/>>.

⁶⁴ Adrian Leaman, "The Logistical City," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.14.

centuries, industrial cities were the prevalent model of working and living as a consequence of improved communications, transportation infrastructure, cheaper energy and land without any environmental restrictions.⁶⁵ Sequentially, central business district/suburb growth of the 20th century emerged from cheap energy and higher density developments that brought about long daily commutes between the city and the suburbs. However, due to the rising prices of natural resources, concerns for sustainability, and the invention of wireless broadband and portable technology, Gen Y is opting to have shorter distances of travel. Additionally, they are more likely to travel using more environmentally-friendly modes of transportation such as walking, cycling, or the public transit system instead of driving long distances. To satisfy this, the workplace must put forth a greater emphasis on locations in a dense urban fabric, in close proximity to facilities (such as housing, lifestyle amenities, social services, etc.). This suggests the implementation of a hybrid building with a mixed-use and multi-functional environment as a solution. Therefore, it is evident that Gen Y has new expectations for the city and its architecture, with concerns directed at health, safety, comfort, energy efficiency, ease of management, cost of operation and especially flexible access by public transport.

With the intervention of portable technology and broadband network connections, knowledge workers are given more flexibility in working hours and in the choice of physical locations. Released from the heavy burden of a fixed 9-5 schedule, this new approach to work identifies more freedom. By the agency of these emerging tendencies, there has been a rising trend of home working, or tele-working.⁶⁶ These knowledge workers appear to be more satisfied and productive with the compensation of minimized travel, and the effective use of home and time. Despite these advantages, knowledge workers may work longer hours and may suffer isolation due to the lack of the social component from the workplace. Contrary to the belief that the physical office is obsolete,

⁶⁵ Adrian Leaman, "The Logistical City," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.15.

⁶⁶ ibid.p.15.

the setting actually performs a more significant role than before. Physical work environments offer opportunities for unpredictable interactions and collaborations necessary for the exchange and communication of ideas. Face-to-face interaction between workers is an essential part of the office experience and work processes. In response to all these needs of the contemporary worker, there is a demand for urban architecture to adapt to this new expression of living and working.

[4.2]-Working in Mix-Use/ Multi-Functional Environments

Due to the shifting needs of the contemporary knowledge worker, work environments have evolved into more complex models “characterized by the intensity of use of space and time as well as a shift from mono-use to *multi-functional* and *mixed use* environments.”⁶⁷ In other words, in consideration of making life easier and healthier for the worker, the design of the work environment should be a hybrid setting that integrates work, life and leisure into one complex. The three realms share a reciprocal relationship, compensating for each other’s inadequacies by blending uses and activities.

Ultimately, a successful workplace depends greatly on the convenience of its location and its proximity to housing, lifestyle amenities, and social services. As a result, the work setting should re-create these proximities and diversities that support the activities and functions for a better quality of living. One example is the Googleplex where the work environment provides the provisions of food, laundry facilities, and leisure facilities that satisfy all the fundamental needs. Another example is *Chiswick Park*, a 1.5 million square foot business park designed by Richard Rogers Partnership in west London (see fig. 26).⁶⁸ It is marketed as the ultimate work environment with its unique slogan

⁶⁷ Lora Nicolaou, "Emerging Building Forms and Accommodation Solutions: New Building Typologies or Distinctive Place-Making," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.207.

⁶⁸ Despina Katsikakis, "New Real Estate Models to Support Distributed Working," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.106.

'enjoy-work'.⁶⁹ Despina Katsikakis, workplace strategist at DEGW, in reference to Chiswick Park argues, "The premise is that if people enjoy work, they do better work; if they do better work, you have a better business."⁷⁰ In the scheme, shared amenities are located on the ground level of each building, and an on-site support team, Collaborative Planning and Event Management (CPEM) actively helps to fulfill the needs of living and leisure. They organize summer events, and provide a sports program and lifestyle-support program that includes delivery services for groceries, flowers, and dry cleaning. All of this contributes to the premise of making the life of a worker easier, which is reflected in the better performance of the worker.



Fig. 26: Chiswick Park Website

The relationship between the proximities and diversities extends to the premise of living (housing) and working. In the *Live-Work Institute*, Thomas Dolan, a live/work specialized architect, defined certain design principles for live/work hybrid typologies. Certain *proximity types* have been specified in regard to "the relationship of proximity between the work space and the living space within an individual live/work unit."⁷¹ He describes *live-with*, *live-near*, and *live-nearby* as proximity types which all are classified as *Zero Commute Housing* (see fig. 27). Each type differs from the others in terms of increasing separation between living and working spaces as well as in terms of

⁶⁹ Lora Nicolaou, "Emerging Building Forms and Accommodation Solutions: New Building Typologies or Distinctive Place-Making," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.214.

⁷⁰ Despina Katsikakis, "New Real Estate Models to Support Distributed Working," Ed. John Worthington, *Reinventing the Workplace*. Oxford; Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006, p.106.

⁷¹ Thomas Dolan, "Live/Work Institute," *Thomas Dolan Architecture*, 2010, <www.live-work.com>.

activities achieved through various physical configurations. At one end of the spectrum is *Live-with*. It is a conventional loft-like space with amenities that accommodate both “live” and “work” depending on the occupant’s needs. Following, *Live-Near* is equivalent to an apartment or townhouse where work and living space are divided either by a wall or a floor.⁷² Lastly, *Live-Nearby* entails a short walk separating the working and living space either –“across a courtyard, to a converted garage or other accessory structure, or up and down an exterior staircase”⁷³ Overall, these work/live typologies must also incorporate different intensities of separation. They can be implemented qualitatively and quantitatively through various forms ranging from thermal, physical, visual, psychological, to acoustic. They also support a system of contrasts, from open/closed, private/public, individual/group by mixing programs, proximities, and activities. In consequence, this variability and diversity within a hybrid environment enhances the experience of a space as well as evolves its purpose beyond necessity.

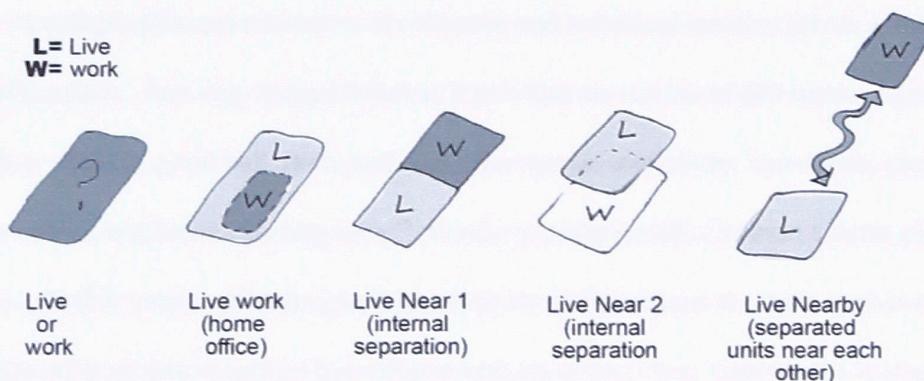


Fig. 27: Diagram of proximity types identified by Thomas Dolan

⁷² Thomas Dolan, “Live/Work Institute,” *Thomas Dolan Architecture*, 2010, <www.live-work.com>.

⁷³ ibid. <www.live-work.com>.

[4.3]- Multi-Faceted Experiences/Interactions

A multi-faceted building with a program of work, play and live must also inspire multi-faceted experiences and interactions. As a complex, the space must facilitate various experiences through unpredictable interactions of '*formal visiting, meeting at a common destination and crossing paths*' as identified by Thomas Dolan. According to Dolan, these instances can be choreographed through the design of common spaces and the spaces that open onto them. Certain typical pre-programmed settings such as the laundry, kitchen, and living room are accentuated as central meeting places for potential communal interactions. Within this context of collective living and working, different intensities of spontaneous encounters are created for social and leisure opportunities, yet participation must remain a voluntary act, because the informality and comfort of the occupants can only be preserved with the freedom of involvement.

Certain hybrid living buildings have effectively articulated these unpredictable interactions in a communal living context. One project is the Tietgen Dormitory in Copenhagen. This dorm-style precedent stimulates different intensities of collective and individual meeting places within a single unified configuration. As a ring-shaped building, it provides six-storeys of 360 residence units above a ground floor of cafés, great hall, study and computer rooms, workshops, laundrette, music and conference rooms, and bicycle parking area.⁷⁴ Besides plentiful public common spaces, the sense of community is further reinforced through clever program configurations around a central meeting place. By allocating private rooms on the exterior with appealing views towards the landscape, the semi-private common spaces such as circulation, recreation rooms, terraces, and communal kitchens are articulated as boxes projecting into the internal courtyard (see fig. 28 and fig. 29). The design strategies used in choreographing visual and physical connections between the public and private spaces strengthen the opportunities of interaction among the occupants. It enables the choice of participation while maintaining the integrity of a communal meeting place.

⁷⁴ Lundgaard & Tranberg Arkitekter "Tietgen Dormitory." Lundgaard & Tranberg Arkitekter. 2008. <<http://www.ltarkitekter.dk/en/projects/5>>.



Fig. 28: Photo of courtyard at Tietgen Dormitory



Fig. 29: Photo of laundry Facilities at Tietgen Dormitory

Another project is the innovative communal housing experiments of “Sargfabrik” (realized in 1996) by BKK-2 and the subsequent “Miss Sargfabrik” (realized in 2001) by BKK-3 in Vienna. They have demonstrated an outstanding feat in composing a coherent multi-faceted communal living experience. Both these residential complexes have achieved a sense of community living through the “programmatic connections between individual space and collective space, between places of privacy and places of sociability.”⁷⁵ Firstly, as opposed to merely repetitive residential units, “Sargfabrik” offers diversified residential typologies that accommodate a variety of lifestyles from teenagers, students, to disabled residents (see fig. 30). “They also enhance each unit with possible extensions into the collective sphere, offering easy alternatives to private life.”⁷⁶ On top of that, it puts forth rooms with specific communal functions such as the kitchen and the laundry room, with no obligation to participate.⁷⁷ The programmatic connections also extend to the public. It incorporates a cultural centre for the neighbourhood with large-scale facilities such as a café, seminar rooms, a day nursery, public baths, a swimming pool and a garden.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Marie-Ange Brayer and Béatrice Simonot, *ArchiLab's Future House: Radical Experiments in Living Space*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2002, p.82.

⁷⁶ ibid. p. 82.

⁷⁷ Rosemary Pitt, "Sargfabrik - Association for Integrated Lifestyles Austria's Largest Self-Governing Housing and Cultural Project," *Sargfabrik*, May 2004, <www.sargfabrik.at>.

⁷⁸ ibid. <www.sargfabrik.at>.



Fig. 30: Photos of Sargfabrik

Like its predecessor, “Miss Sargfabrik” has the housing units complemented with several communal areas and facilities such as kitchen, refectory, library, multimedia room, laundry room, offices (for working at home) etc.⁷⁹ Both of these projects have successfully created a variety of common meeting places either in the realm of leisure or necessity for an assortment of lifestyles. The projects embody all three types of interactions (*formal visiting, meeting at a common destination and crossing paths*) specified by Dolan. They have created successful mediations between ‘work, play, and live’, in their accommodation of the idea of flexible time and living within polyvalent spaces, allowing for random moments of interaction while encompassing public, private, and semi-private spaces for individual and community activities.

[4.4]- CHAPTER CONCLUDING IDEAS- Work, Play + LIVE

Given that the new generation of workers in the 21st century creative knowledge industry are a relatively young, educated middle-class demographic, their expectations on lifestyles, conception of workplace and work are quite different than the previous generations. Due to the nature of their work, they are not restricted to the physical settings of the workstation or workplace.

⁷⁹ Marie-Ange Brayer and Béatrice Simonot, *ArchiLab's Future House: Radical Experiments in Living Space*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2002, p.82.

Instead, they are given more mobility and flexibility in terms of where and when to work. However, they have the tendency to work in informal environments such as at home or in a café instead of the conventional office. Being more educated, they also express the preference for a more sustainable lifestyle and a greater emphasis on locations in a dense urban fabric in close proximity to amenities. To address these preferences and the needs for face-to-face interaction between the workers, the design of a creative knowledge workplace must generate diverse settings that satisfy mobility, flexibility and informality. In support of this intention, the design must combine the functions of working, living and playing into one hybrid environment. Similar to how the creative process depends on the combination of highly focused individual work and collaborative teamwork, the design should also assimilate this characteristic into the living aspect. Appealing to the concept of collective living, the design encompasses a range of public, semi-private, and private spaces for both individual and group activities. In effect, this mix-used, multi-functional complex promotes multi-faceted experiences by using specific types of unpredictable interactions (*formal visiting, meeting at a common destination and crossing paths*). To mediate between the functions of 'Work, Play + Live,' the design needs to incorporate polyvalent spaces that promote random moments of interaction as well as the accommodation of flexible time and living.

HYPOTHESIS –Life is a Beach!@the Office?!

[5.1]-Contrasting the Beach and the Working/Living Setting

Can the workplace embody the analogous playful experiences of the beach? My thesis project investigates the concepts of informality, interaction, and diversity attributed to the beach and how they may inform the creative knowledge-based work environment of the 21st century. The value of a beach experience and its intrinsic qualities can extend beyond the realm of leisure and into the realms of working and living in order to address the needs of people for stimulating spaces. Along these lines, the basis of my thesis design is formed from the combination of conceptual methodologies mentioned in the section below.

CONCEPTUAL METHODOLOGY

>MIXING PROGRAMS/FUNCTIONS/ACTIVITIES >PEOPLE

In favour of the premises of informality, interaction, and diversity, the project is a microcosm saturated with connections between WORK+PLAY+LIVE through the mixing of programs, functions, activities and people. This mediation between workspaces, living spaces, and leisure spaces inspires essential unpredictable and diverse interactions among the individual and the collective group. This open system of convergence/divergence creates variability in interactions (*crossing paths, gathering places, and formal visiting*) within the contrasts of open/closed, movable/fixed, individual/collective, private/semi/ public. By blending instead of separating these relationships, the space becomes a unified experience where necessity blurs into freedom (desire) and vice versa.

>SPATIAL CONFIGURATIONS TO INCREASE/REDUCE INFORMAL INTERACTIONS

While studying leisure workplace precedents, creative knowledge work spaces are found to accommodate activities in the four facets of *stimulation, reflection, collaboration, and play*. These conceptions of informal interactions can be broken down into different architectural operations based on the intensity of separation between people, activity and physical space (see fig. 31). For

independent work activities, the design of individual workstation configurations can take on an open or closed configuration where the workers can experience a direct, partial or complete removal from the surroundings physically or psychologically (see fig 32). For example, changing the amount of eye contact due to the body orientation of one to another individual can inform the level of intimacy and the level of informal interaction. For informal meeting situations, the physical separation between individuals can be facilitated through varying the connections of contact surfaces, such as creating separate benches, designing one continuous bench around a table, to even recreating a booth-style with low-walls, or continuous recessed seating similar to a Jacuzzi (see fig. 33). These variations of seating assemblies, despite being primarily applied with simple horizontal gestures, can influence the effects of physical separation, allowing workers to establish a code of conduct within a given setting.

Another subtle gesture to increase informality involves changing the vertical orientation/position of an individual in space through reducing/increasing the height of the seating or back support of a chair. Similarly, this approach can be applied to the relationship of an individual to the ceiling, floor and wall configurations. An open/closed sensation can be achieved by varying the elevation of the floor, wall, or ceiling to increase/reduce the level of separation. The opacity/permeability, thickness or lightness of these elements can also affect the appearance of raised/compressed elevations. All these operations combine to alter the perception of the individual by changing the 'typical' physical and visual proportions of space. Thus, it encourages informality and diversity in the experience of space.

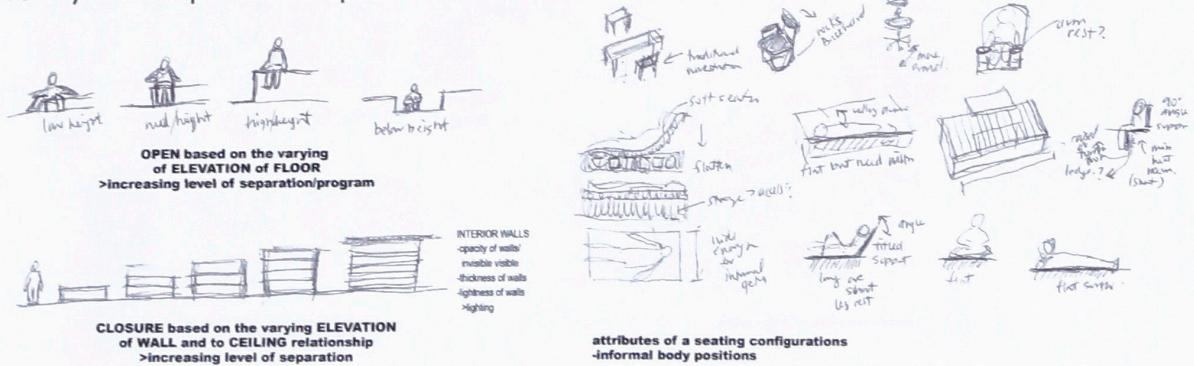
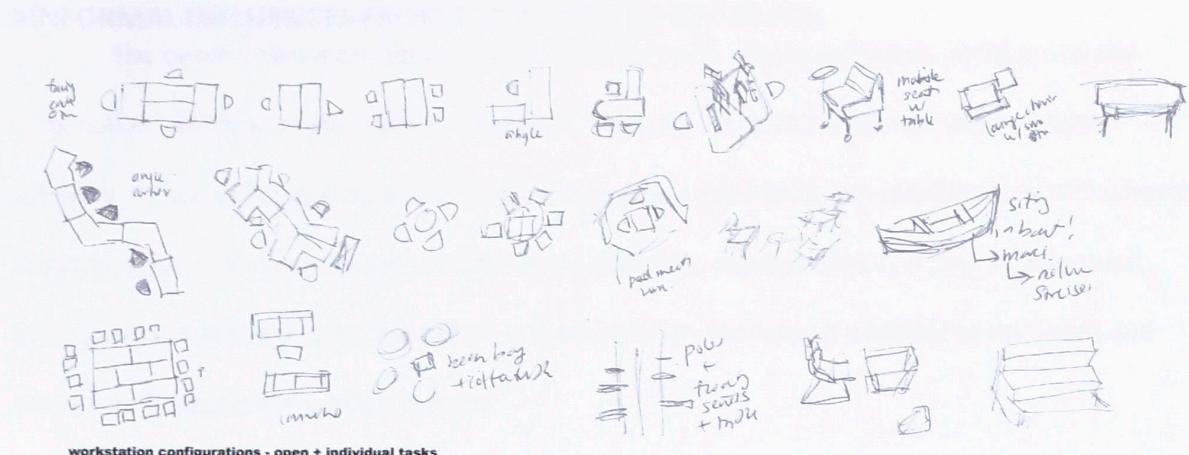
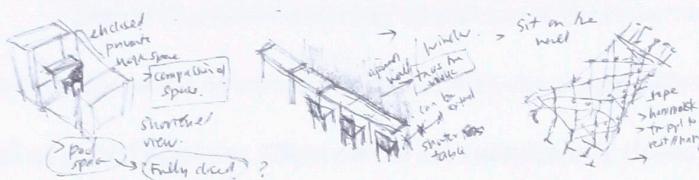


Fig. 31: Spatial Configurations to Increase/Reduce Informal Interactions



workstation configurations - open + individual tasks



workstation configurations - closed + individual tasks

Fig. 32: Informal workstation configuration study

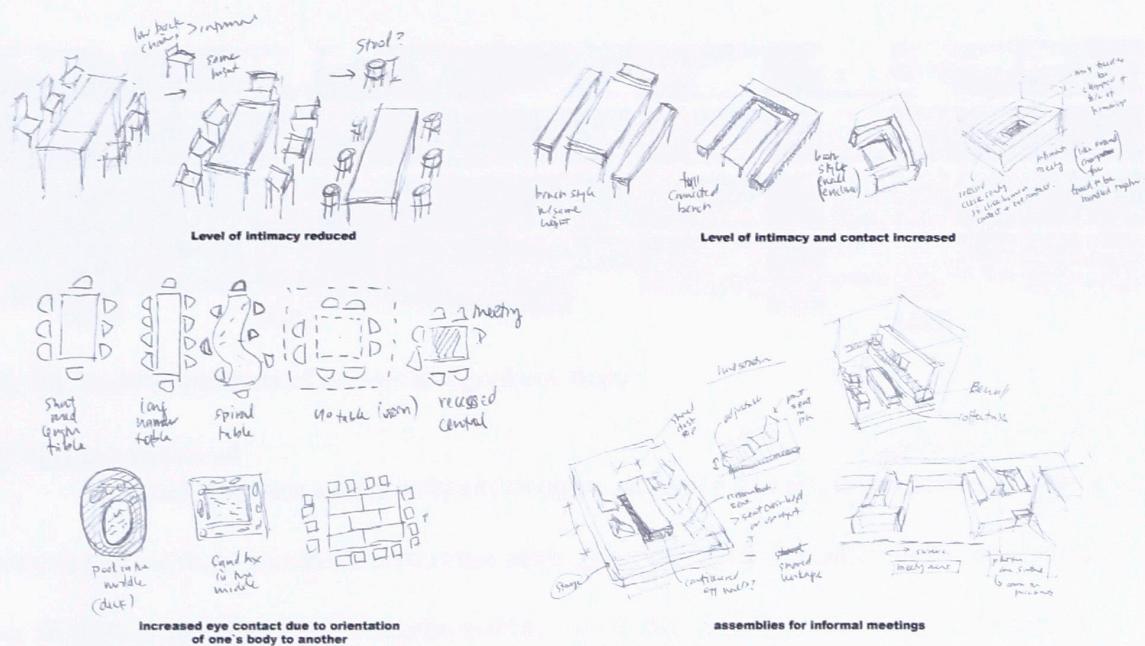


Fig. 33: Informal meeting configuration study

>INFORMAL INFLUENCES FROM THE PLAY(S) OF THE BEACH

The beach offers many forms of play, from the body, object, individual, social group and imagination, which all evoke a sense of freedom. Thus, the design attempts to capture a similar sensation by appealing to certain architectural operations inspired by the playful nature of the beach, in combination with the activities of *stimulation*, *reflection*, *collaboration*, and *play*. Architectural strategies established through the different types of 'play' and 'leisure' available at the beach and unlikely to be found in the office include:

[A]-Environmental/Spatial Metaphors and Proximities

The various environmental/ spatial metaphors (such as the horizon, sky, boardwalks, promenade, sand and water) and proximities can create different visual and physical stimulation as well as spatial densities. Often offices are exceptionally closed spaces in contrast to the beach, which represents a majestic openness. Thus, the design attempts to engage in this elongation of visual and physical distances in the density of arrangements, colour, and surface qualities. Furthermore, the design uses varying depths in elevations and dimensions relative to the human body and environment to add diversity and variability to these spatial proximities.

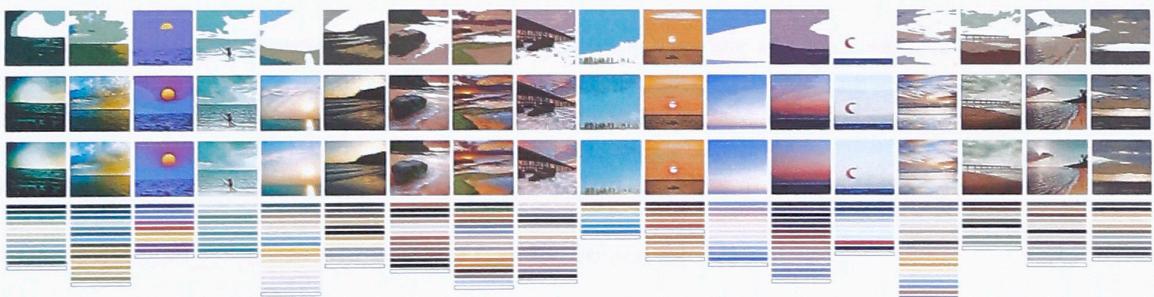


Fig. 34: Sensory spectrum of colours and gradient study

[B]- Sensory Spectrum

The beach provides a constantly enriching visual, tactile and sensory experience. A sense of gradient and variety is always present at the beach given the sensory qualities in the temperatures (hot to cold), material surfaces, textures, tactility, colouration etc. Thus, the design attempts to obtain a similar richness in experience of space (see fig. 34 and fig. 35).

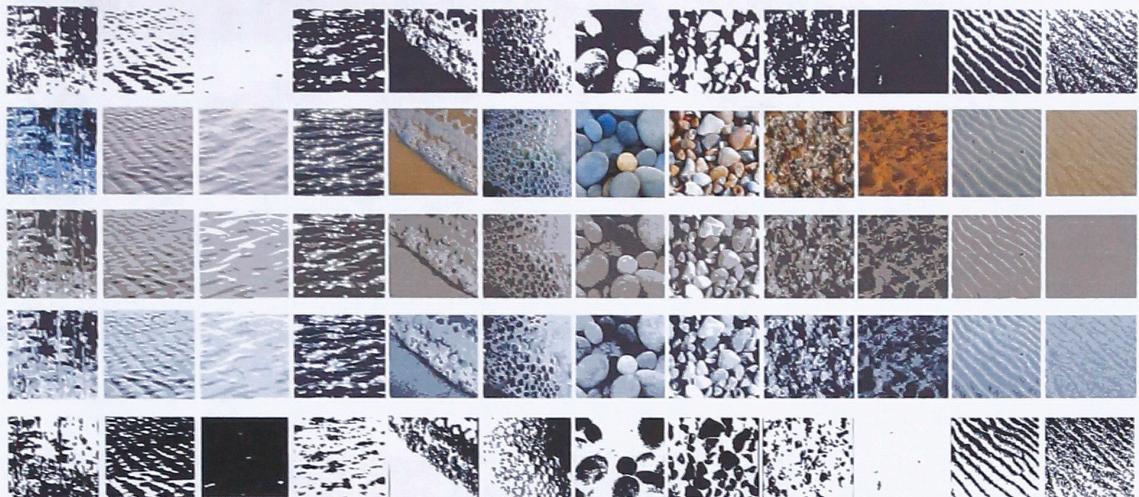


Fig. 35: Beach material and texture study

[C]-Opportunistic Casual Individual and Social Spaces

As a setting of diversity and flexibility, the beach is a casual place that accommodates both individual and social activities. On top of that, an individual or group has the freedom to participate in either passive or active activities within the environment.

[D]- Informal Body and Movement

In office space, people are restricted to mainly small movements, as well as sitting and standing positions. In contrast, people at the beach have a variety of grand informal and casual body gestures such as running, lying down, etc. Because of the different informal body positions, their eye levels are positioned differently relative to standing up or sitting at a desk. Hence, their experience and perception of space are also changed (see fig. 36 and fig. 37).

(For further explanation on the development and analysis of each strategy, refer to Appendix A)

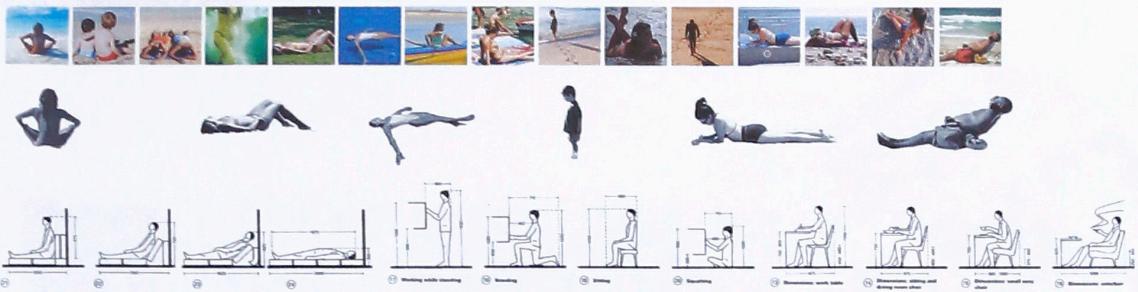


Fig. 36: Informal Body and Movement Study: Individual

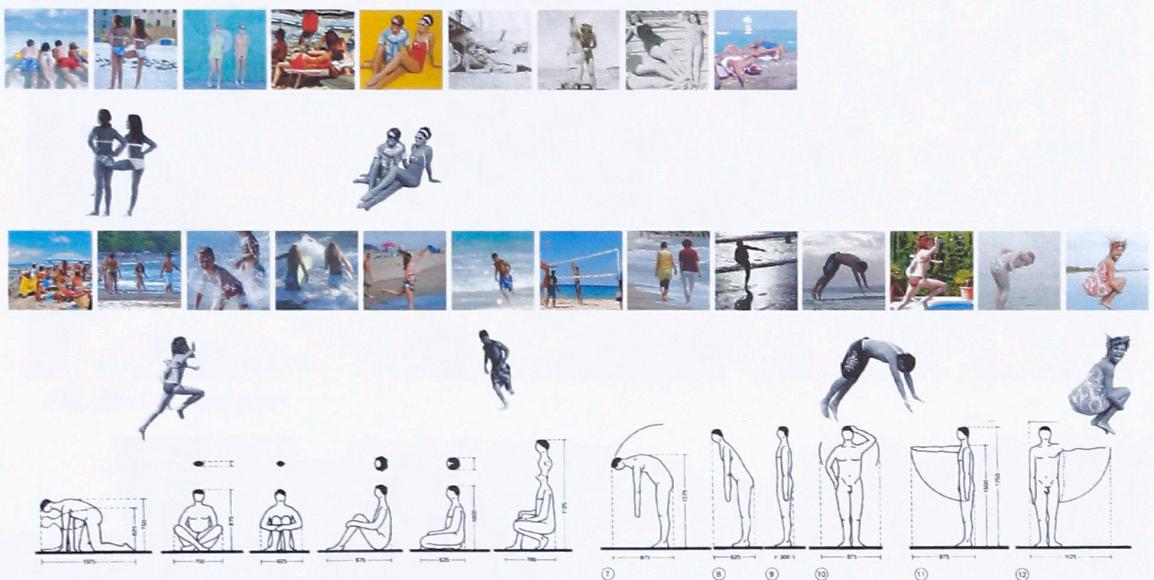


Fig. 37: Informal Body and Movement Study: Group

[5.2]-Proposed Site



Fig. 38: Context plan



Fig. 39: Photo panorama front view from York St.



Fig. 40: Photo panorama looking at the side of building from the parking lot

The proposed site for the project is a five-storey existing office building on 126-130 York Street in Ottawa (see fig 38-40). Known as the 'Major Building' constructed in 1913, this building accommodates a local organic market and pharmacy on the ground floor and four floors of office spaces above. As an addition and renovation project, this site provides an optimal opportunity to examine working and living within the city. Besides being adjacent to a large parking lot, it is also situated at the perimeter of a residential area and the edge of the Byward Market, one of Ottawa's busiest tourist and retail centres. This vibrant neighbourhood offers all necessary housing, lifestyle amenities, and services at a close proximity and convenience. Furthermore, occupants have an amazing view of the Parliament library and Byward Market.

By using the existing shell of an office space as the site of my project, the thesis challenges the present stereotype of an office design. By means of adaptive re-use, the workplace can reach its latent potential through re-interpreting the existing space. As a result, this site helps to reinforce the interplay between leisure and work at a programmatic and psychological level.

[5.3]-Program List

The program consists of a WORK+PLAY+LIVE environment for an advertising agency of 30 employees: (see fig 41-42)

- >1-2 floors of office space
 - >reception area
 - >workspaces> workstations, informal/formal meet spaces, kitchen, reference library, storage, w/c
- >3-4 floors of housing and amenities
 - >various living unit types
 - >communal kitchen, laundry room, work studies, library, informal/form dining area, living area, storage, w/c, separate foyer areas
- >5-roof floors of leisure facilities
 - >fitness facilities
 - >outdoor pool area
 - >change rooms, support spaces, storage, w/c
 - >multi-purpose facilities
 - >bar lounge
 - >roof top terrace space
- >circulation as required, separate entrances with bike storage, parking

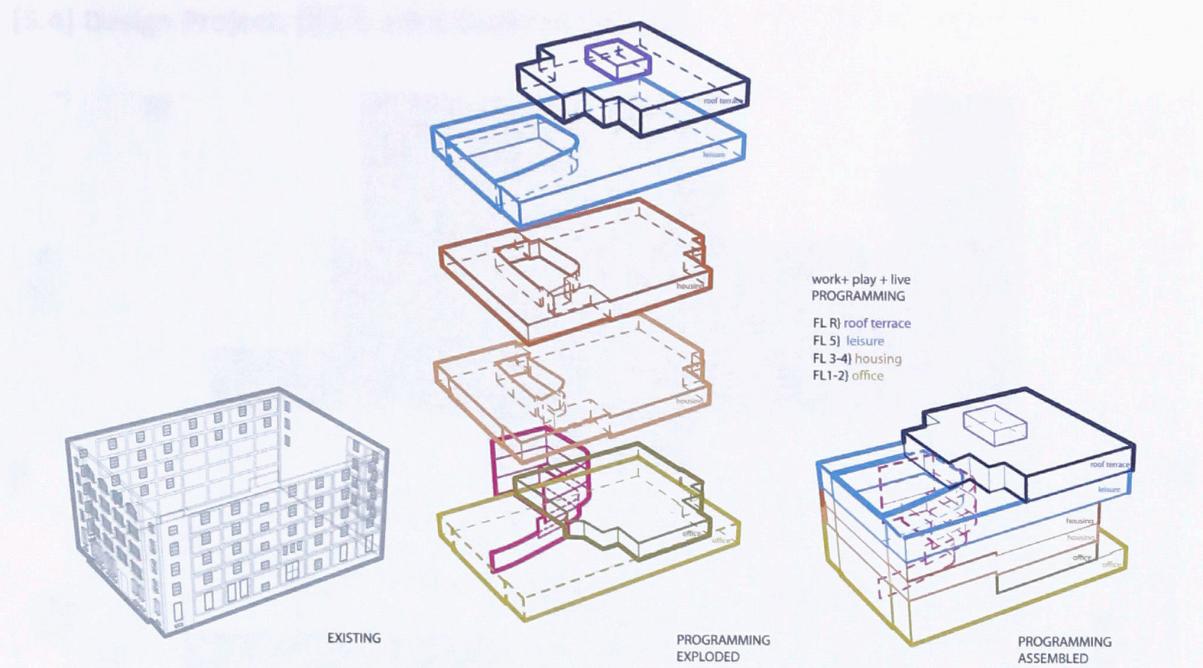


Fig. 41: Proposed Program distribution

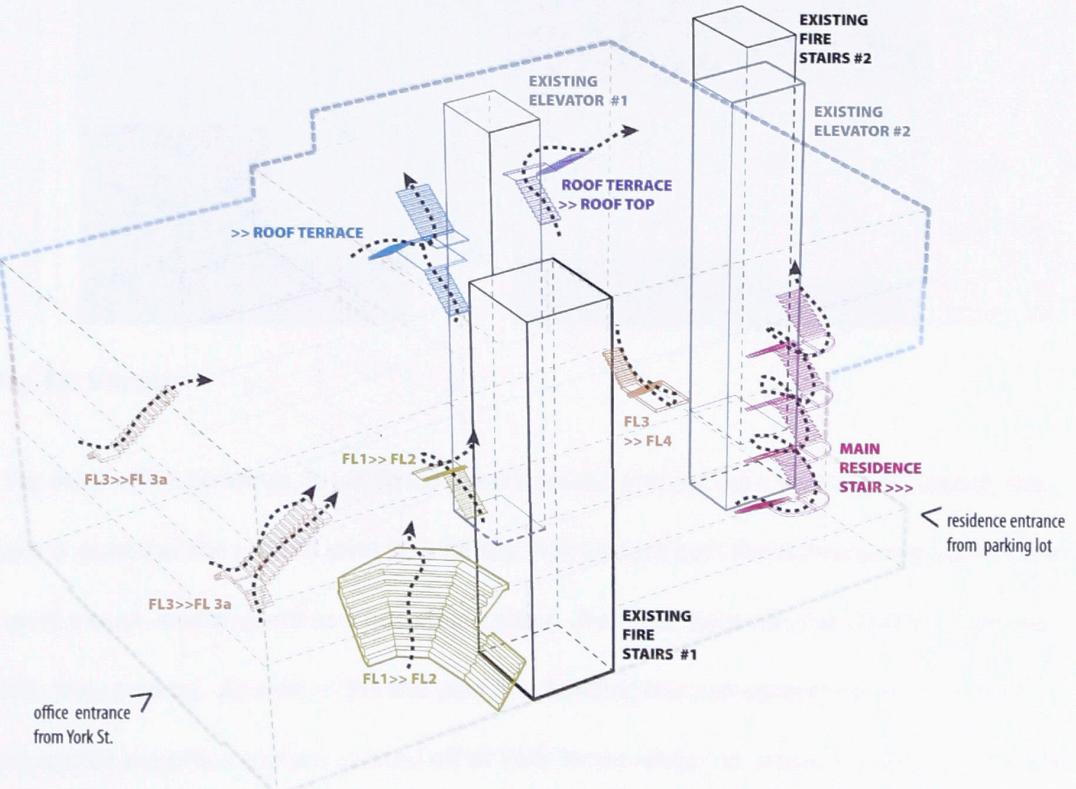


Fig. 42: Proposed Circulation Diagram

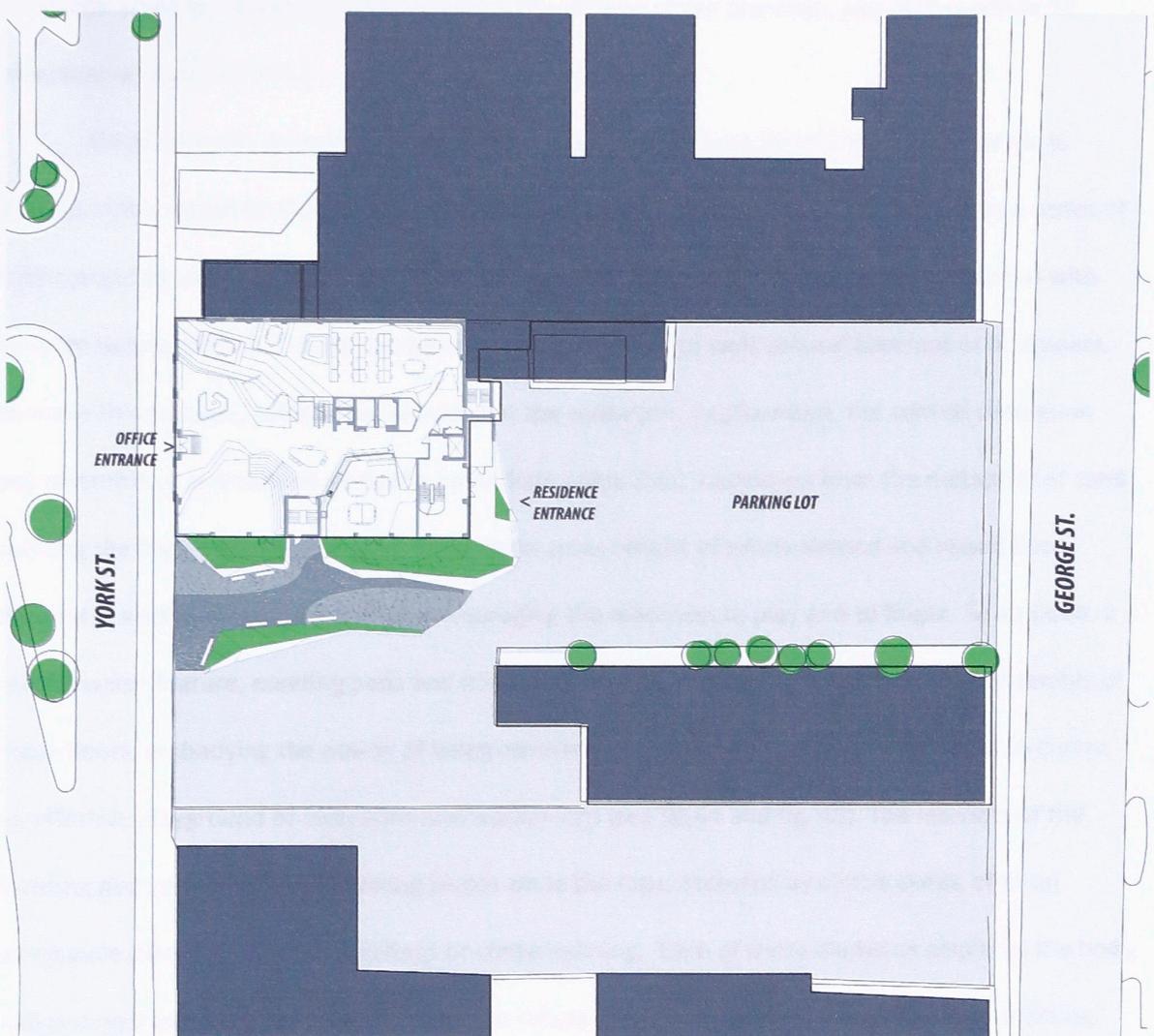
[5.4] Design Project: Life is a Beach!@the Office?!

Fig. 43: Site plan

For most office buildings, retail space dominates the ground floor, but for my project, the office space is placed at the ground level (see fig 43). This gesture puts the primary emphasis of the building on the work environment as a hospitable place. The office becomes the storefront for the public when they pass by. As seen in the site plan, the building has two separate entrances. The main entrance for the office space is located off of York Street while the secondary entrance for the

residence is placed at the back of the building next to the parking lot. This is a response to the occupants' need for privacy. It also maintains the existing street presence, and access points for pedestrian and vehicle flow.

Once someone enters the building from the main entrance off of York Street, he/she is greeted with a reception that is situated on a central circulation axis. Here, it is flanked by a series of informal and formal work settings. In the same manner as at the beach, the visitor is inspired with the urge to take off one's shoes and be comfortable enough to walk around barefoot or in slippers. To make this possible, cubbies are provided at the reception. Furthermore, the central circulation axis resembles a promenade while the immediate areas draw inspiration from the metaphor of sand. Utilizing the haptic qualities of sand, these open areas consist of subtly slanted and raised floors covered in a softly textured material, encouraging the readiness to play and to linger. In addition, a central water feature, meeting pods and a recessed seating area are integrated into the assembly of these floors, embodying the notion of being embraced by sand. These elements combine to create an effective playground of diversions and workspaces (see fig 44 and fig. 45). The interiors of the meeting pods provide closed meeting places while the tops, accessed by a little climb, offer an alternative place for informal meetings or contemplating. Each of these elements displaces the body and re-orientates the eyes higher or lower, in relation to the typical position of standing or sitting, through varying the elevations of the ground plane.



Fig. 44: Meeting pods and water feature beside the receptions

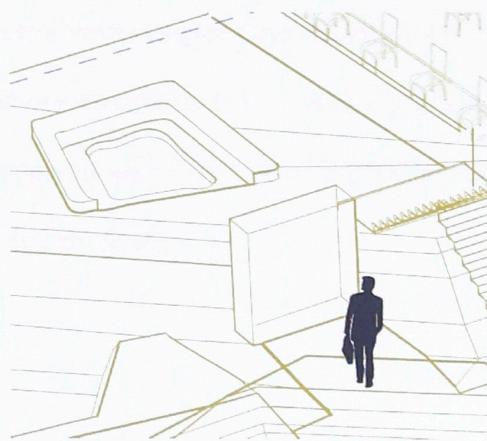


Fig. 45: Cubby area with recessed seating

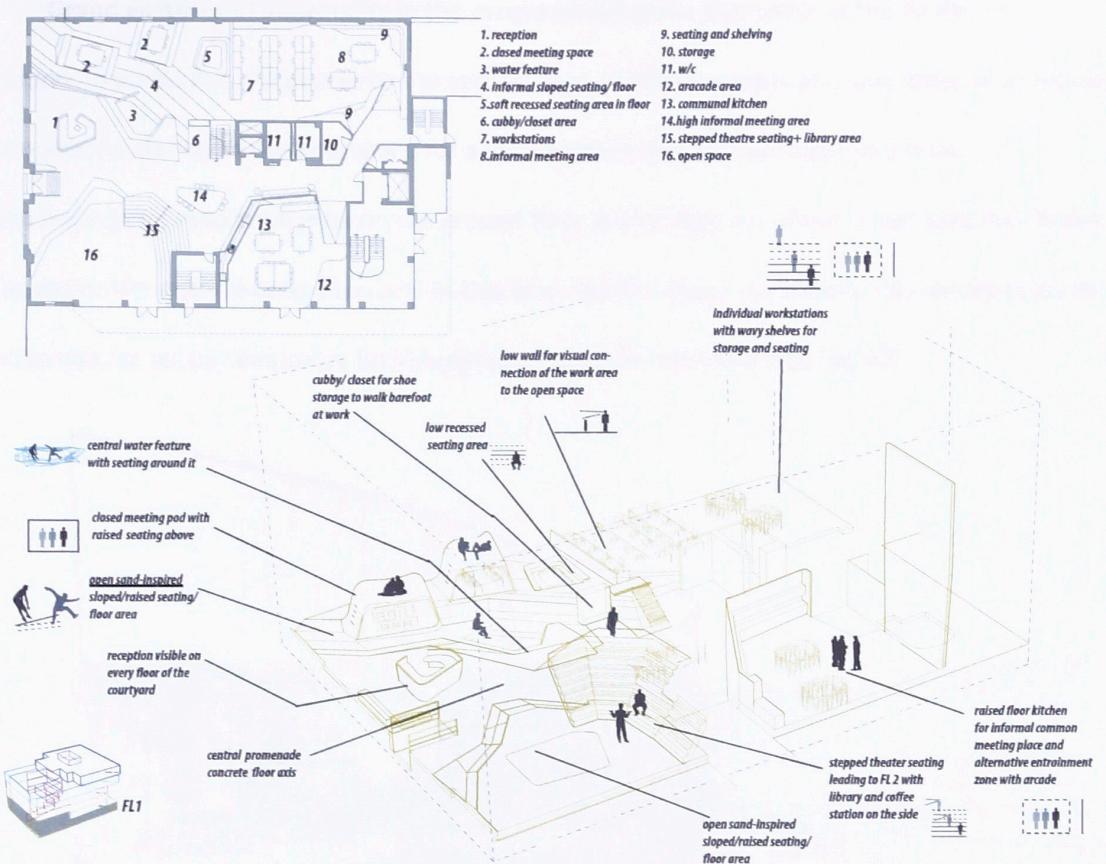


Fig. 46: Axo diagram of Fl1- office space (refer to Appendix C for enlarged illustration)

Moving past the open space, one reaches a more private work environment. This area combines flexible individual workstations and informal meeting stations at bar-stool height with a wave-inspired seating and shelving units in the background. The workers at the company are assigned individual workstations since personalization and territorialization remain important attributes in the workplace. The ground floor also accommodates a grand communal kitchen that acts as a secondary informal meeting place and temporary workspace. This casual atmosphere is equipped with entertainment systems and an arcade, devices used to relieve people's stress by temporarily removing them psychologically from reality (see fig 46).

Grand gestures of informality in the programmed space also occur in the design of circulation. In particular, a staircase to the second floor of office space is also purposed as a stepped theatre seating and open shelving space for a library where people can linger and relax. Accompanying this relaxation area on the ground floor is an extension of the raised sand-like floors that opens to the outside onto a terrace. In this area, workers have the freedom to simply enjoy its spaciousness, or set up temporary furnishings as needed for activities (see fog 47).

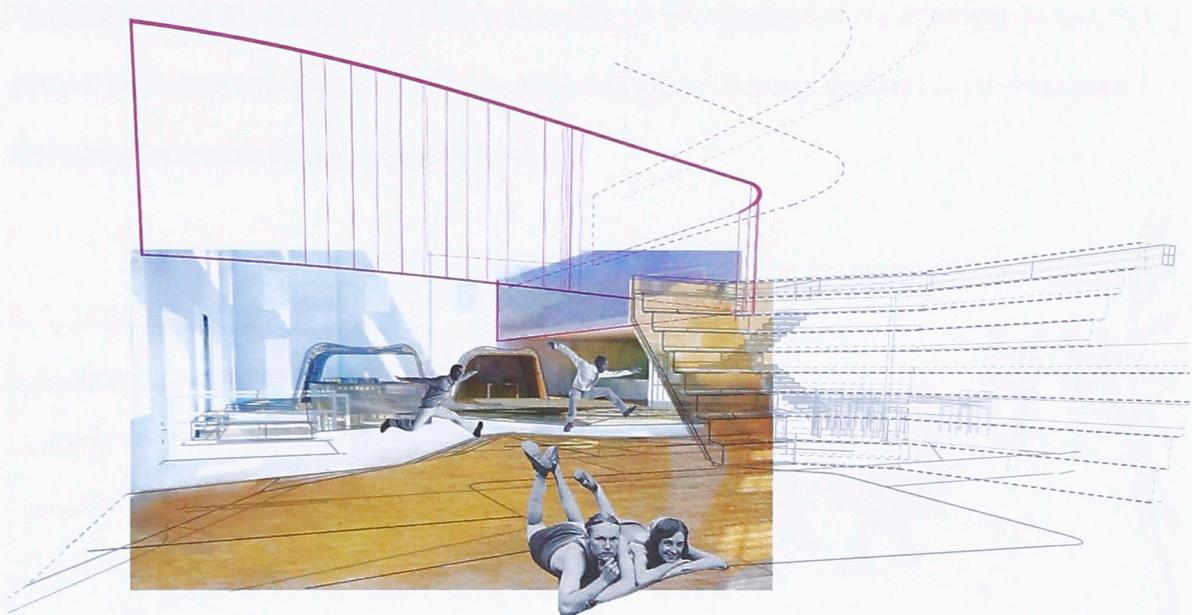


Fig. 47: Theatre seating and circulation

On the second floor of office space, informal and unpredictable interaction between the workers is attained with a diverse collection of work environments. Varying in strategies of visual and physical separations, they range from closed meeting rooms, closed work rooms, to shared meeting areas and open personalized workspaces. Placed at the perimeter, the closed meeting rooms and work rooms create immersive environments with its acoustic separations while providing the necessary privacy needed for certain activities such as client meetings. Meanwhile, the other work environments express more openness through changing textures and opacities of the materials, as well as varying heights of walls and floors.

One particular detail is a panorama image on film inserted into the low and high curved walls at different eye levels, where the individuals at workstations or onlookers have a visual sensation of the beach (see fig 48-49). Furthermore, the second floor integrates a range of seating types and arrangements from soft to hard, closed to open as well as amenities, including a reference library and coffee stations in close proximity to the workstations. Another important aspect to note is that the company practices a flat hierarchy; thus, the management level staff members do not have separate closed offices. Instead they share the same workspace as the other employees. This gesture emphasizes the changing attitudes in the workplace, but also operates to facilitate more interaction between colleagues (see fig 50-51).

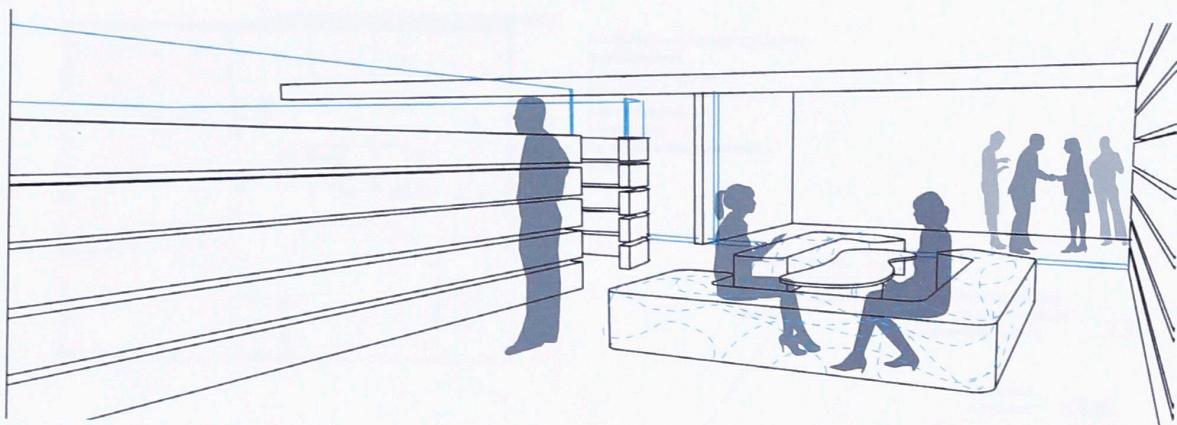


Fig. 48: Perspective of office space 1

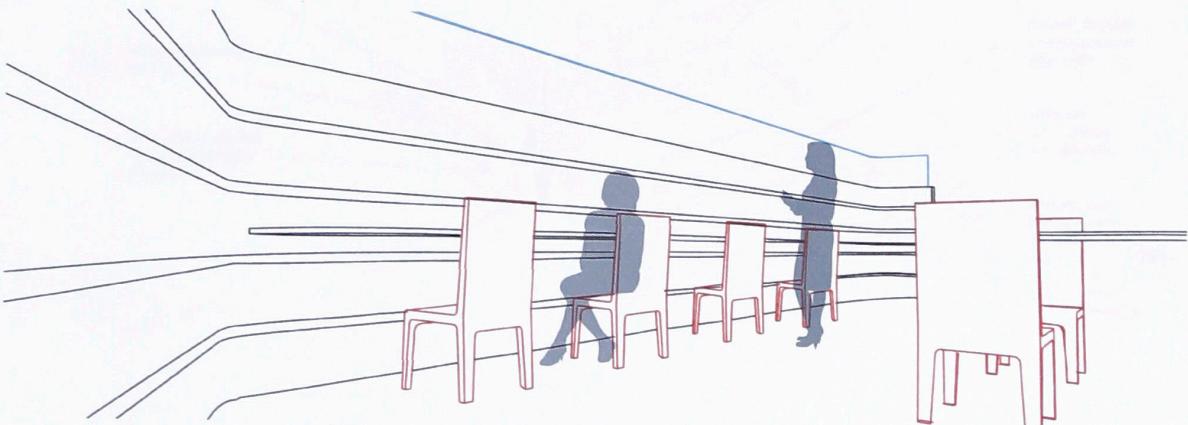


Fig. 49: Perspective of office space 2

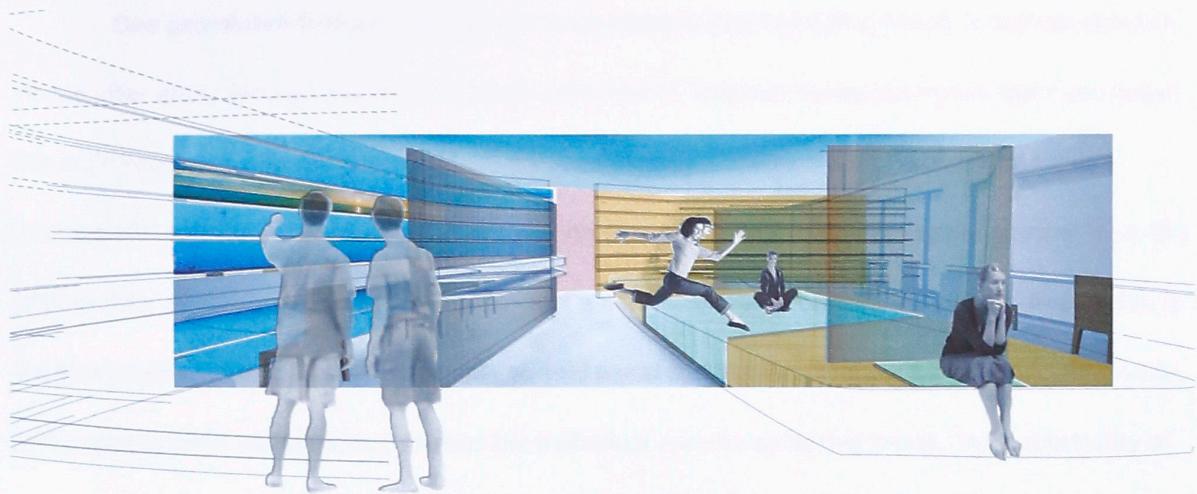


Fig. 50: Perspective of office space 3

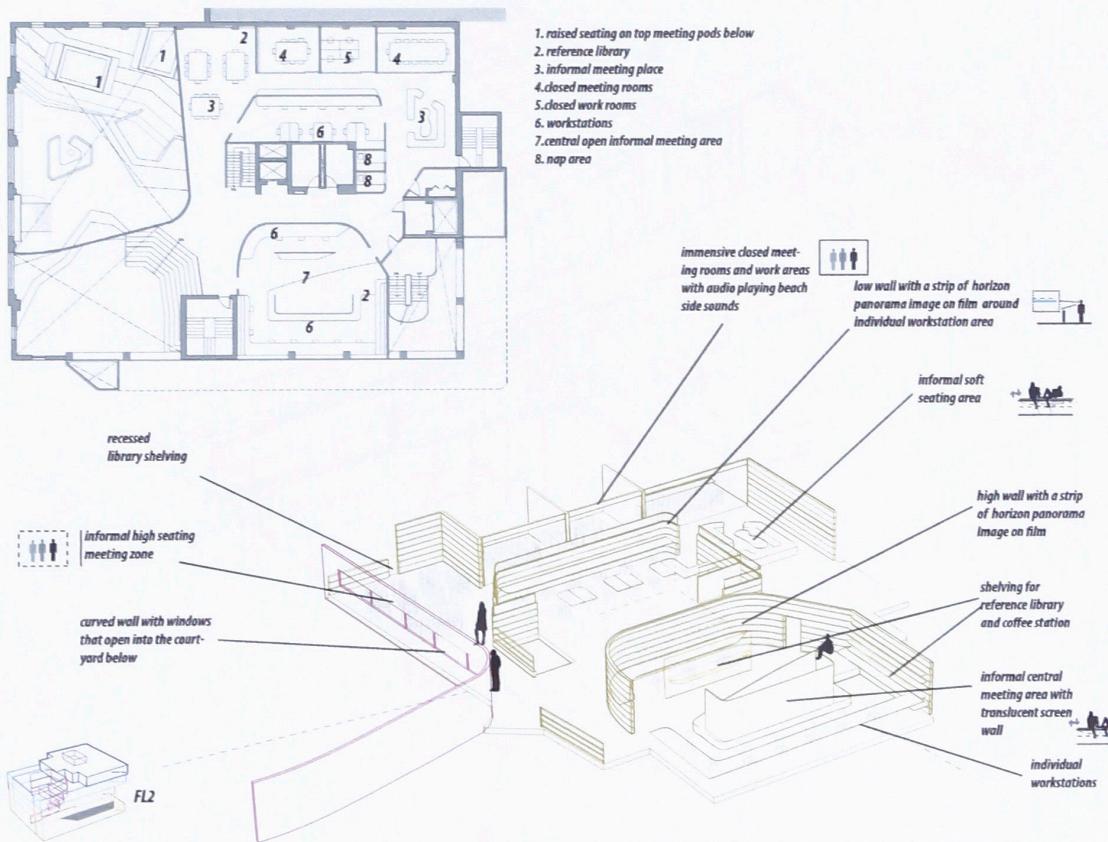


Fig. 51: Axo diagram of Fl2- office space (refer to Appendix C for enlarged illustration)

One prominent feature of the design is the central courtyard and atrium space immediately visible after entry through the main entrance (see fig 52). This five storey courtyard space overlooks the main reception and the water feature encased by sand-inspired floors. As a central social meeting place, it is a point of convergence and divergence between the occupants. Starting from the second floor of office space, it takes the form of a curved wall with operable windows. Above this, it becomes tapered balconies with movable tri-fold panel partitions that allow for continuous, flexible, and unpredictable interactions between the individual and the collective group. The opportunity of open and closed separations offers visual and acoustics advantages. Additionally, the courtyard and atrium brings more natural lighting into the space.

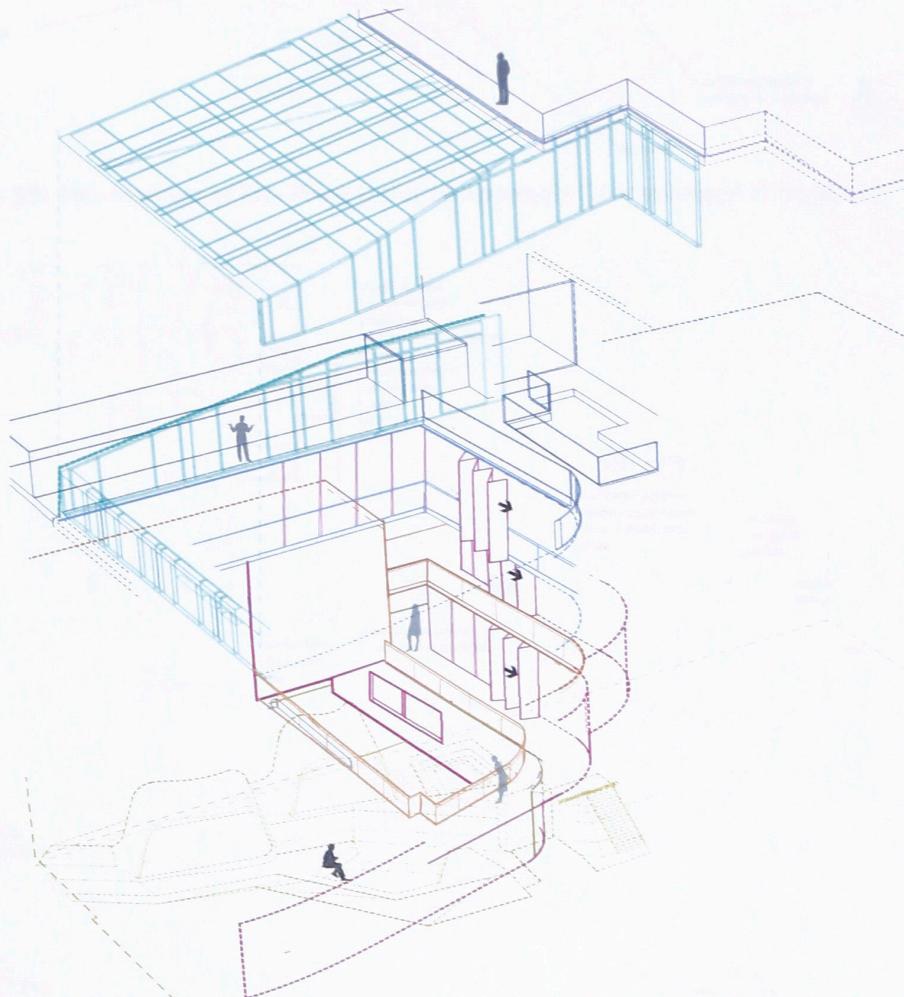


Fig. 52: Exploded axo of central courtyard concept

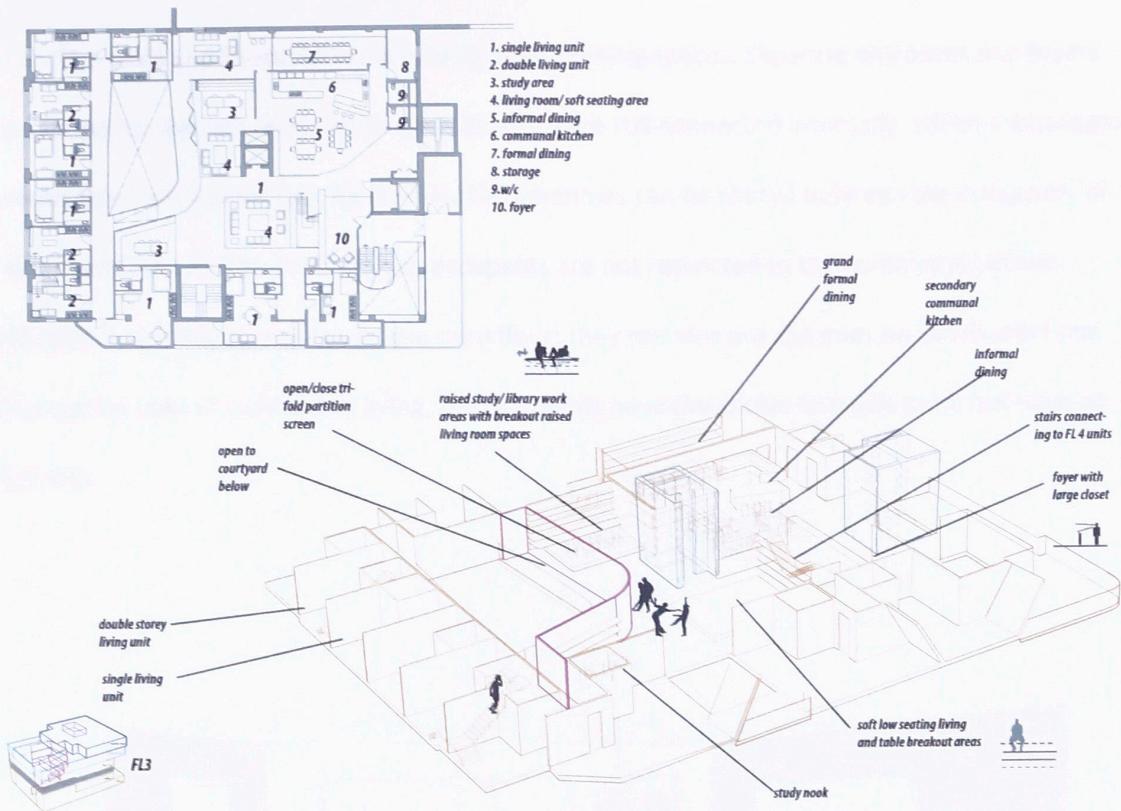


Fig. 53: Axo diagram of FI3- living (refer to Appendix C for enlarged illustration)

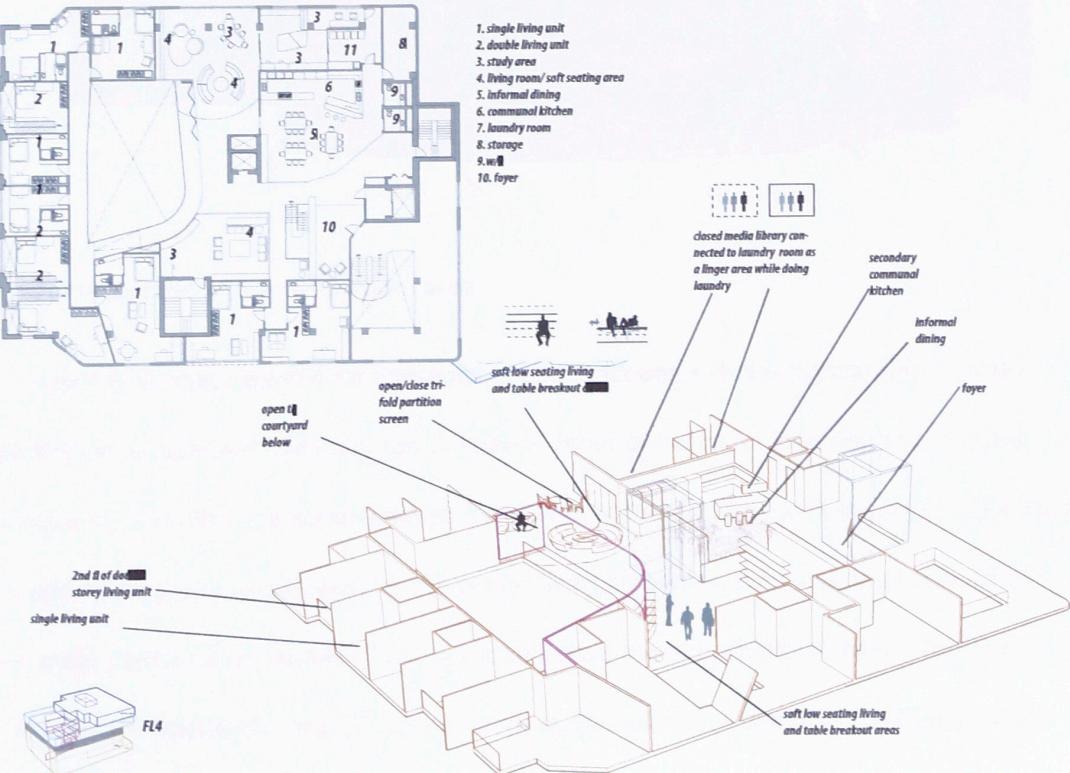


Fig. 54: Axo diagram of FI4- living (refer to Appendix C for enlarged illustration)

The third and fourth floors are designated housing spaces. Separate entrances and foyers are provided for the two levels of housing, but they are still connected internally, which encourages unpredictable interactions (see fig. 53-54). The amenities can be shared between the occupants of the two floors (see fig 55). For instance, occupants are not restricted to the communal kitchen, dining area, and living room area on the third floor; they can also use the ones on the fourth floor. Employing the idea of community living, the occupants have the choice to participate, but have no obligations.

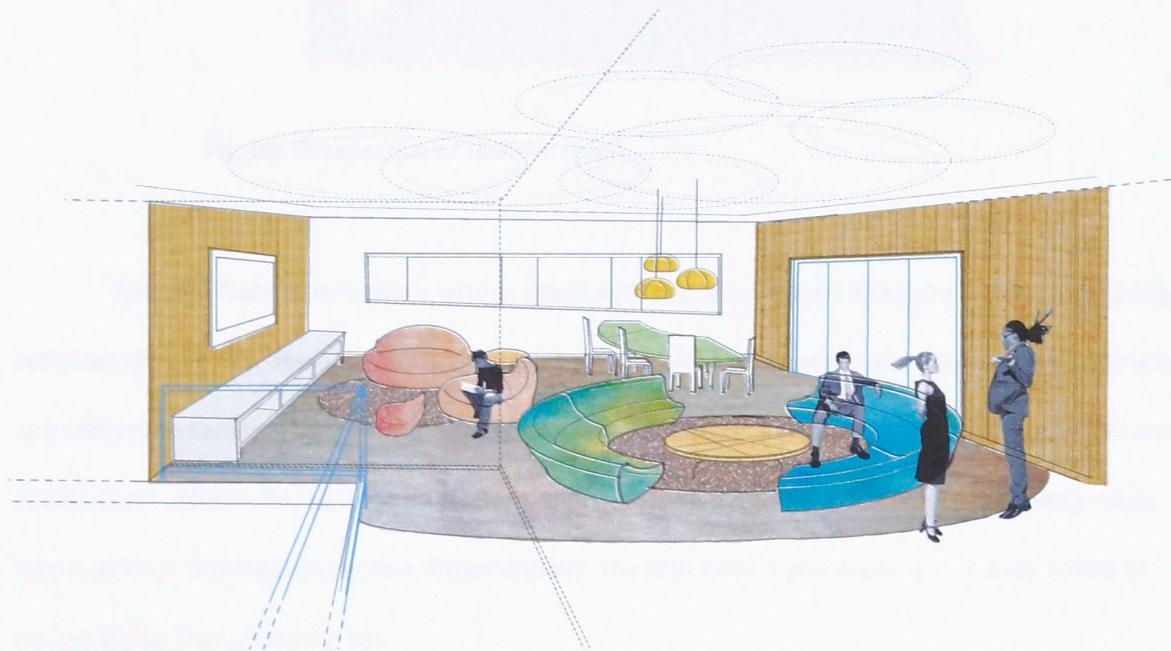


Fig. 55: Perspective of Fl4- living room area

Another strategy applied for unpredictable interactions includes highlighting typically neglected spaces, such as the laundry room, to be another occasion for lingering and mingling. This involves placing a multimedia library next to it and making the laundry room visually stimulating with colours and lighting (see fig 56). Besides the typical living amenities, the space integrates little leftover areas used as work studies. Thus, occupants have the opportunity to have a mixture of functions and activities within the living environment. Overall, these two floors have the shared amenities centralized while more private (closed) activities are enclosed in the living units assigned to the perimeter. Diversity and variability are further emphasized by the availability of different living

configurations, from single-storey to double-storey. This addresses the potential for a wider range of occupants, from single professionals to couples.



Fig. 56: Perspective of laundry room

The fifth floor is primarily a leisure space with opportunities to integrate working and living activities (see fig 57). Here the occupants can be physically and mentally re-invigorated with fitness and relaxation facilities that permit a range of active to passive activities, occurring in individual and social zones. Within this casual atmosphere, there is also a bar lounge and plenty of seating areas that motivate informal interaction. Experientially, the fifth floor is physically and visually linked to the roof level above (see fig 58).

As one ascends to the roof, there is a spacious multi-purpose area equipped with flexible furnishings for quick re-configurations. One unique piece of furniture is an adjustable grand conference and chairs that have the capability to change heights to match the needs of informality of the activity. For instance, half of the table can adapt to the typical seating height or can be raised to bar stool height. Immediately adjacent to the multi-purpose area is the large skylight of the atrium flanked by two terraces that offer a stunning view of the city and the market. One is a smaller open terrace with lawn chairs and tables for enjoying the outdoors. The other contains an outdoor pool which gives people the chance to play and swim.

Above the multi-purpose area, there is another larger terrace with a wooden floor that emulates the subtle textures and elevations of the water. Here people can sunbathe or play directly under the sun and sky, and admire the horizon, sunsets and sunrises. The design of the roof level strives to inspire an openness and majesty attributed to the beach with direct exposure to the sky, the horizon, and its views (see fig 59-60).

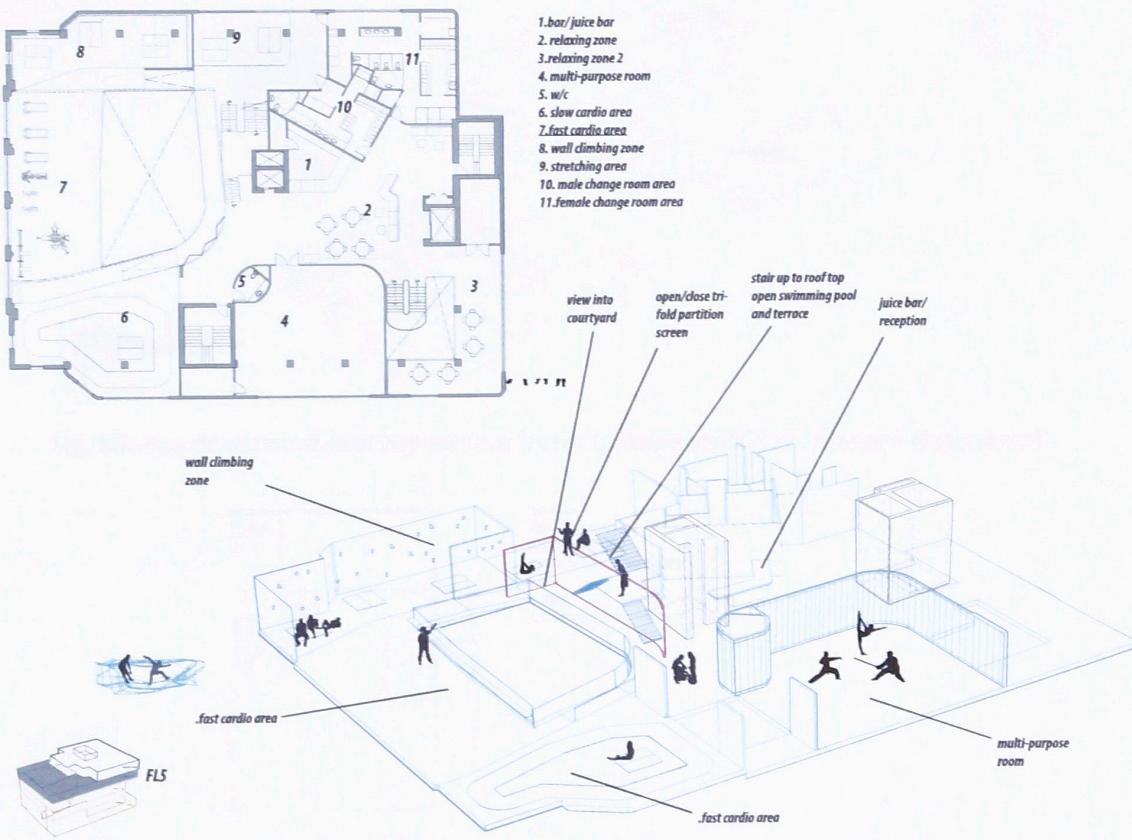


Fig. 57: Axo diagram of FI5- leisure (refer to Appendix C for enlarged illustration)

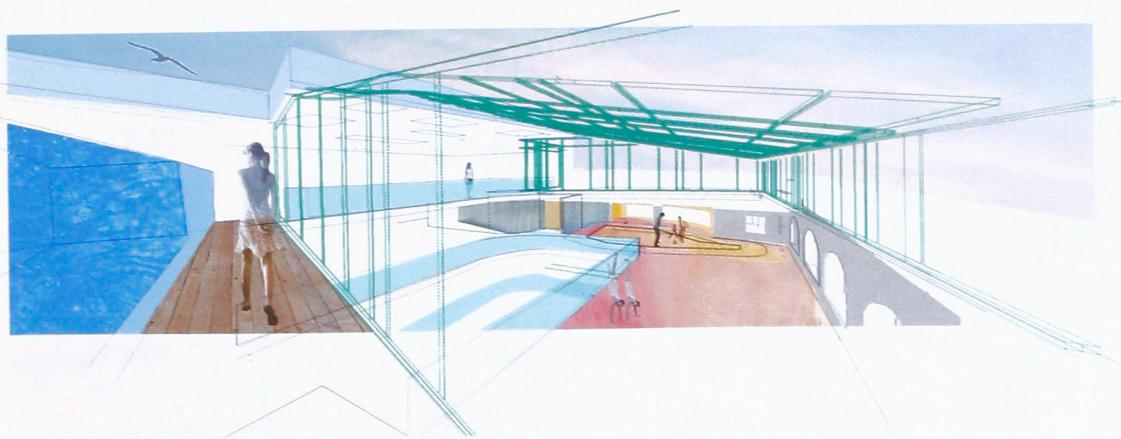


Fig. 58: Perspective from Roof Level looking into the fl-5 leisure

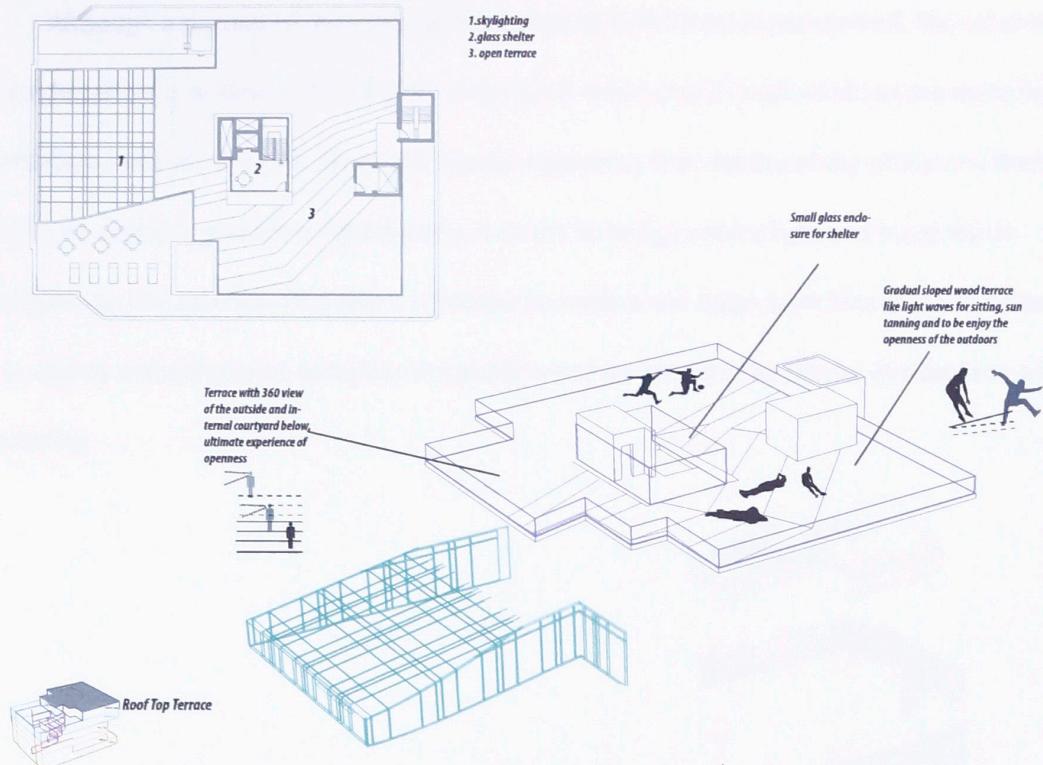


Fig. 59: Axo diagram of roof top terrace (refer to Appendix C for enlarged illustration)

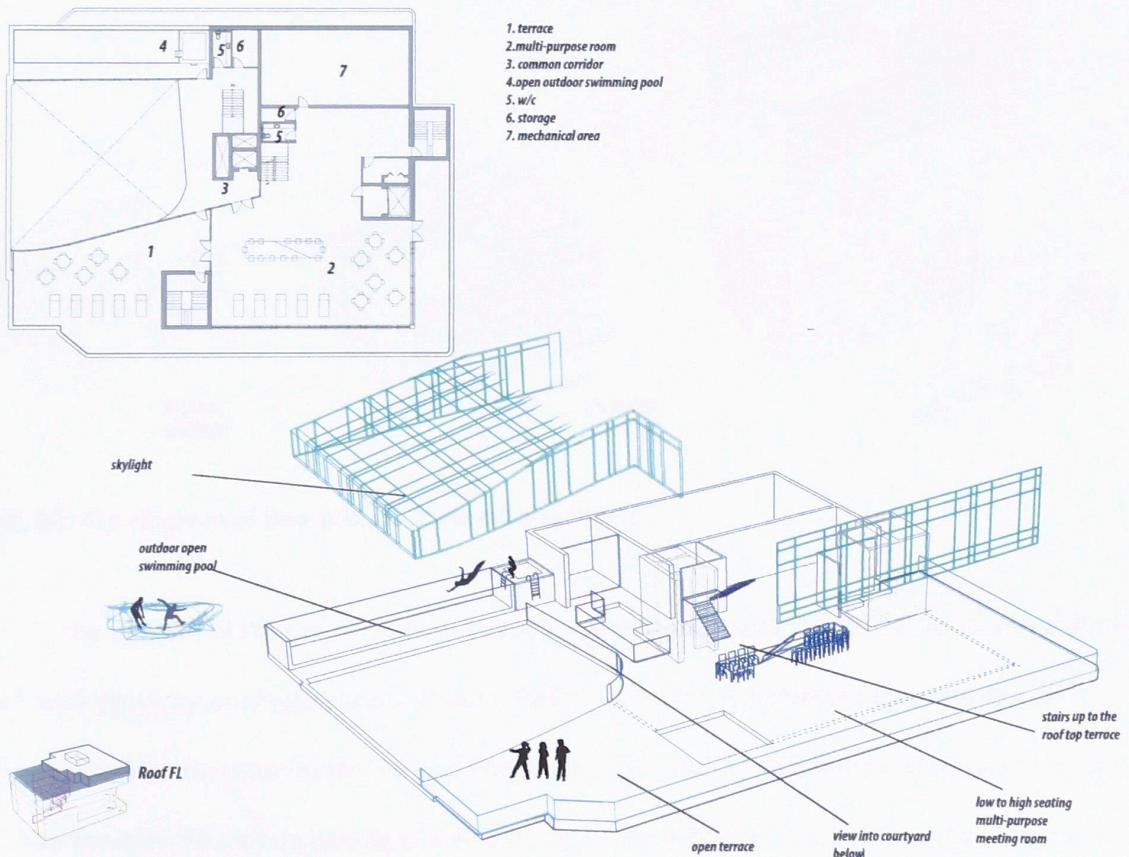


Fig. 60: Axo diagram of roof level (refer to Appendix C for enlarged illustration)

Although a portion of the existing façade facing York Street is maintained, the other sides of the façade call for a re-design, for its plain beige brick exterior and small windows are quite lacking in presentation and performance. Since the façade represents the identity of the office and the building, it requires a stronger presence. Additionally, it needs to bring in more light and more visual connections to the exterior. Therefore, I propose to replace the beige brick facades with a new skin that is visually more dynamic and gives the public more insight into the playful atmosphere within the building.

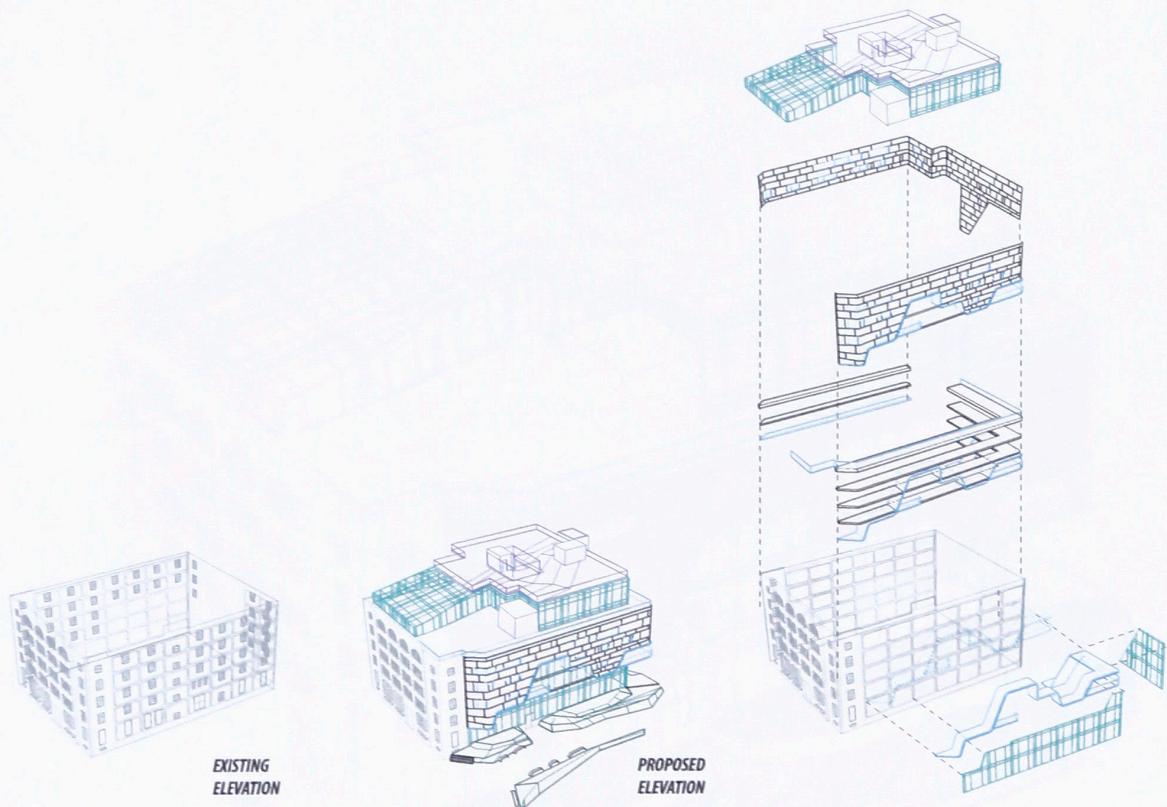


Fig. 61: Axo diagram of new proposed elevation scheme

The concept of the new elevation is based on the spatial metaphor of the iconic scene at the beach with open sky, cool water and soft sand. Hence, its volume is subjected to protruding, and recessing profiles analogous to the horizon that appears to extend into infinity and the water waves that flow towards the visitors (see fig 61). As a result, the new façade incorporate a glazed curtain wall on the lower recessed portion and Trespa, a composite panel facade system with embedded

LED strips on the upper protruding portion. On top of the irregular silhouette, a vivid magenta colour and the dynamic composition of LED strips utilized in the Trespa façade system captivate viewers (see fig 62-67).

In addition, a landscaping feature is introduced beside the long elevation in order to create a small park for the occupants as well as the public. The elevated mounts of grass and a large open space with paving inherit the concept of protruding volumes from the new elevation. Like a front yard, people can enjoy exterior activities such as picnic or play soccer in this small open space.

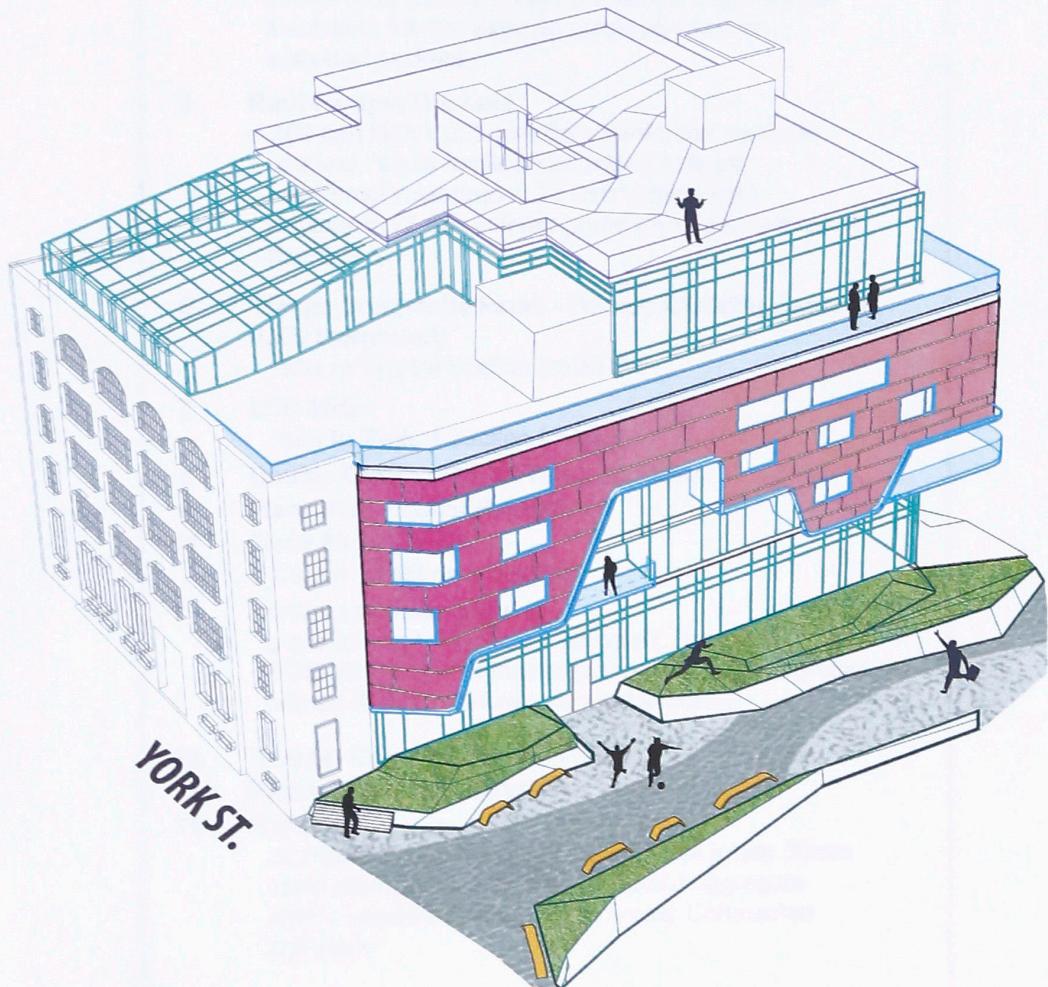
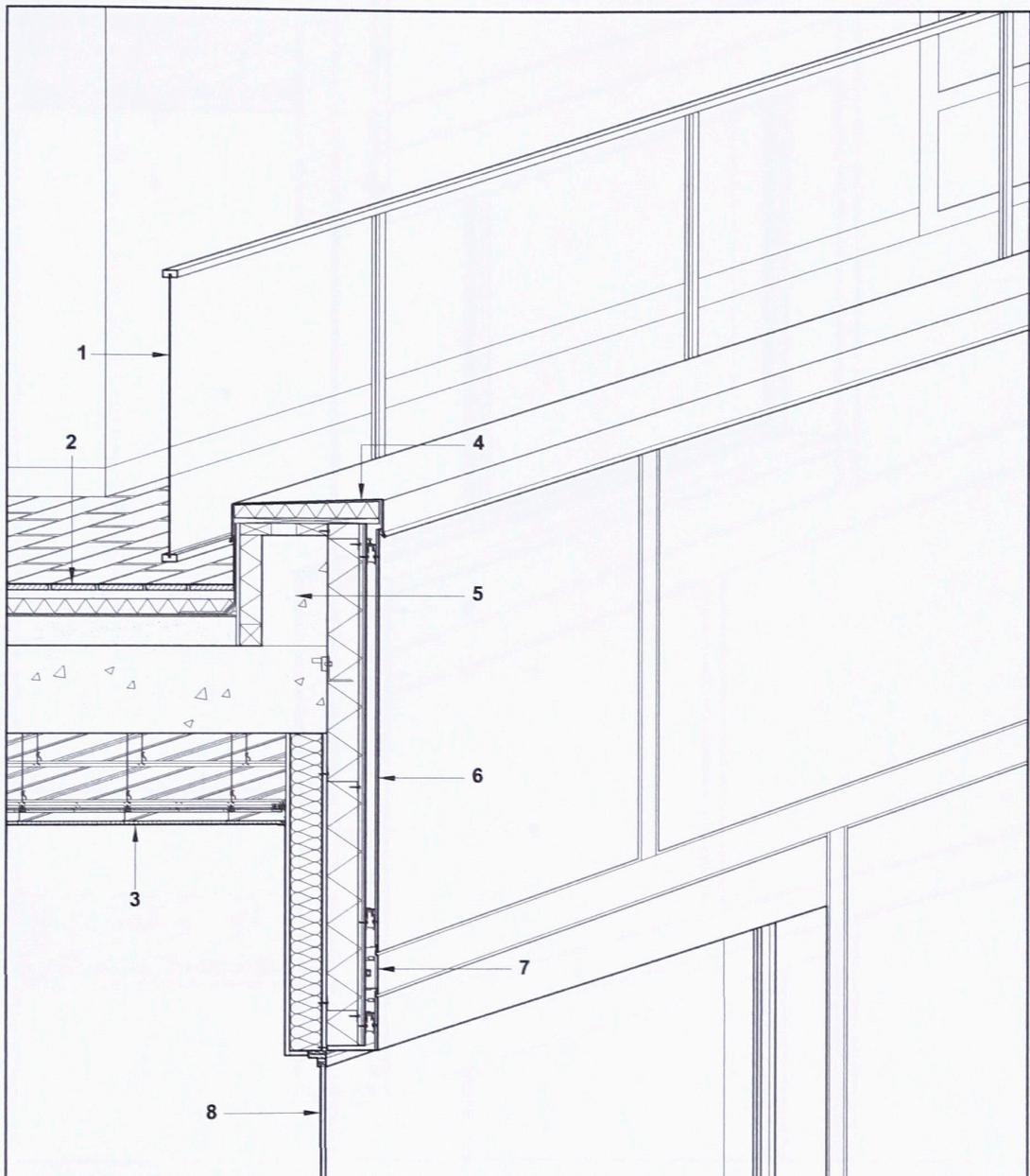


Fig. 62: Axo of new elevation

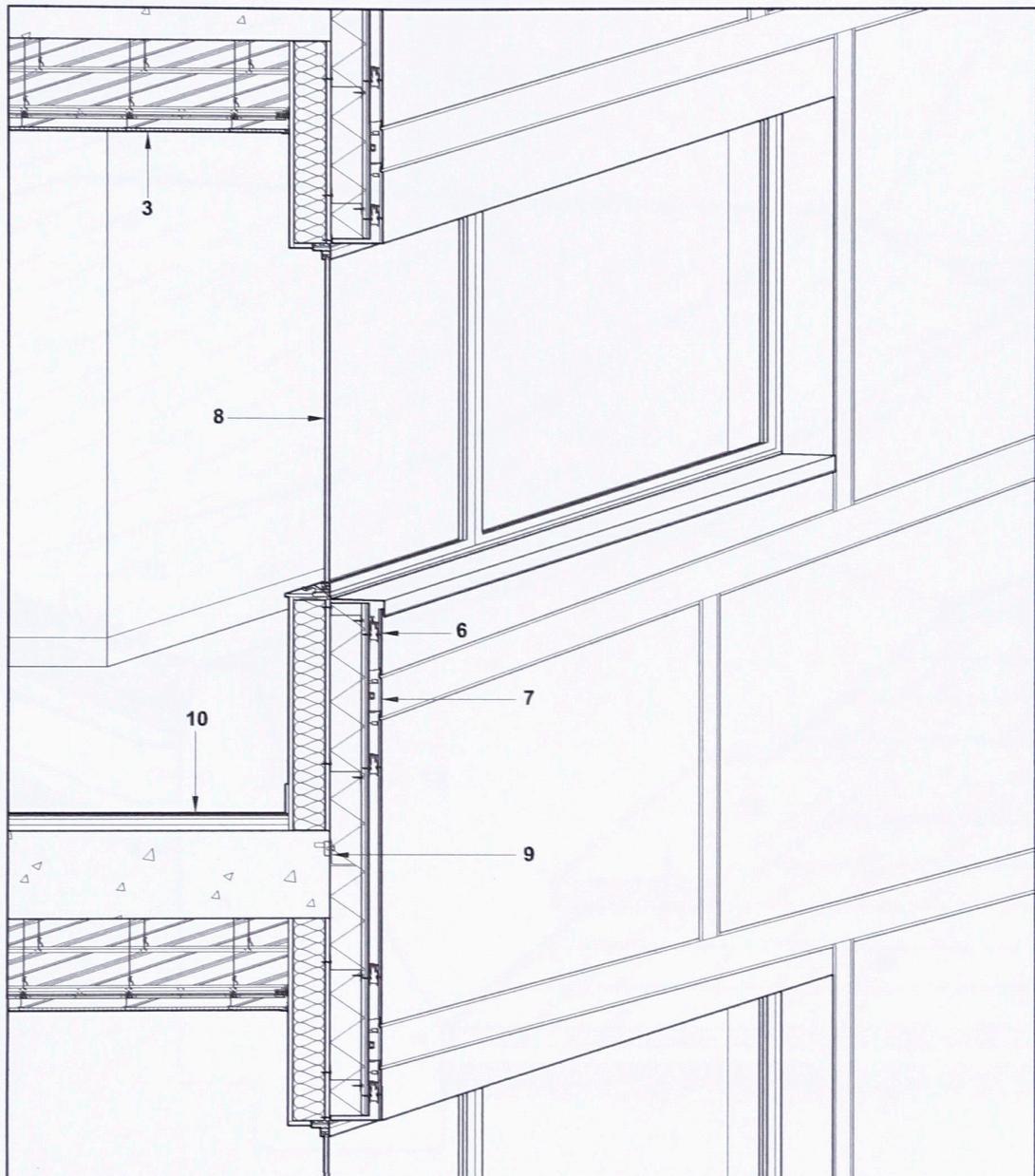
LEGEND	
No.	Description
1	Glazed Railing Detail
2	Roof Terrace Finish Detail cement tiles; protection layer on rigid insulation 50mm thick; water proofing membrane; screed; concrete roof slab
3	Armstrong WoodWorks Panel Ceiling Suspension System
4	Roof Parapet Coping 3 mm Kynar coated folded aluminum; 30 mm rigid insulation; 18 mm external grade plywood on softwood packers
5	Roof Parapet Upstand 380 mm high x 225 mm thick reinforced concrete upstand; liquid applied rubberized asphalt waterproof membrane; 75 mm vertical rigid insulation; 12 mm exterior grade plywood; waterproof flashing
6	Trespa Composite Panel - Facade Cladding System (LED Integrated) refer to Typical Section Detail D-F
7	LED Strip refer to Typical Section Detail F
8	Double Glazing Metal Frame Windows
9	Floor Slab Anchor System
10	Floor Finish Detail Cotton carpet pad; backing
11	Landscape Assembly grass and soil vegetation; Mircofab; Sopradrain ECO-VENT; 50mm insulation; cap sheet; base sheet; primer; 200mm concrete support structure
12	Precast Concrete Planter Wall
13	Painted Concrete Bench
14	Pavers unit pavers with handtight sandpswept joints; 50mm sand setting bed; 100mm compacted aggregate where required for high traffic areas; Compacted subgrade

Fig. 63: Legend for section details



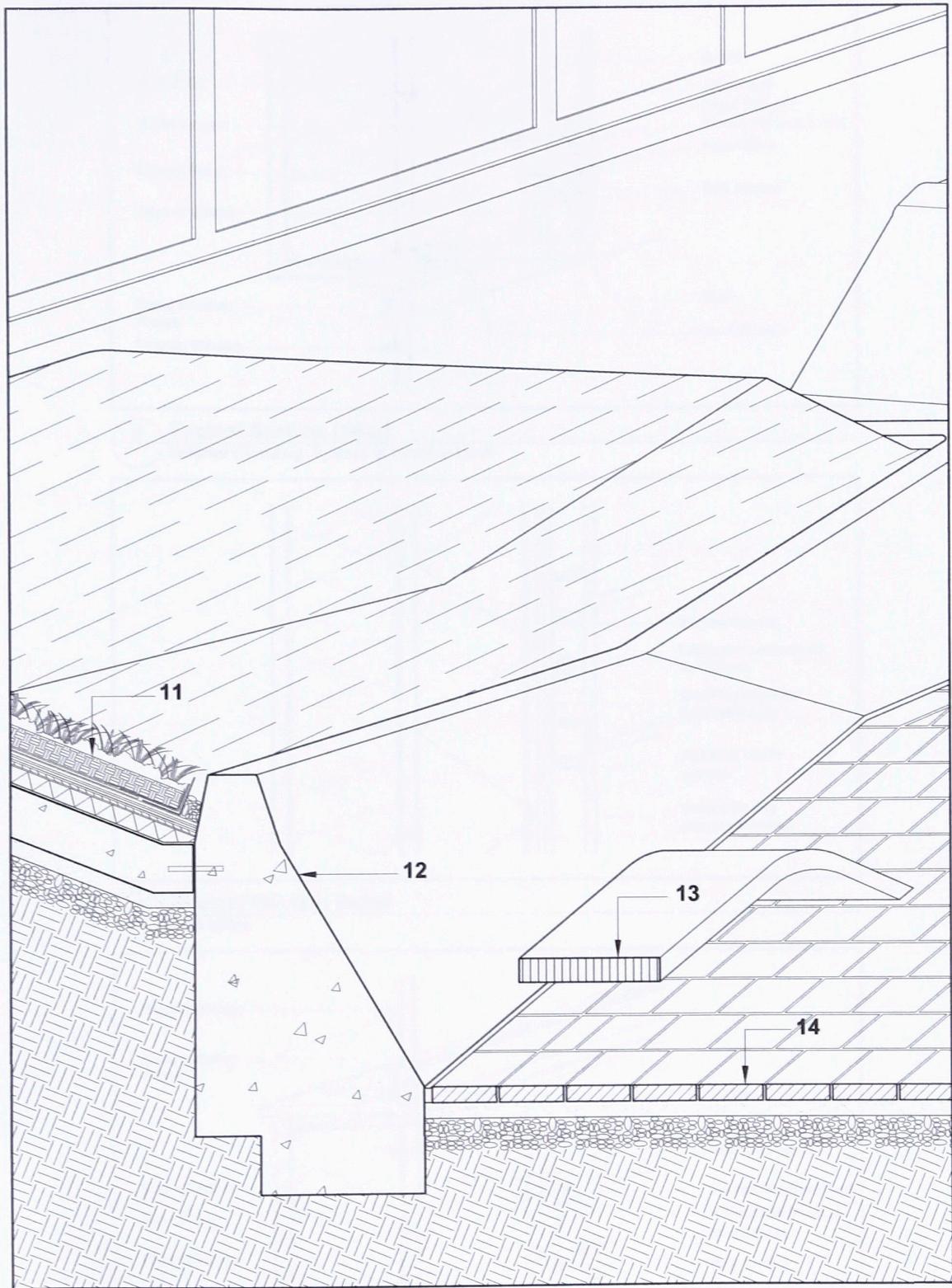
A **Section Detail**
Roof Parapet (scale 1:25)

Fig. 64: Section detail at roof parapet (refer to the legend in fig 63)

**B Section Detail**

Exterior Cladding at floor junction (scale 1:25)

Fig. 65: Section detail of exterior cladding at floor junction (refer to the legend in fig 63)

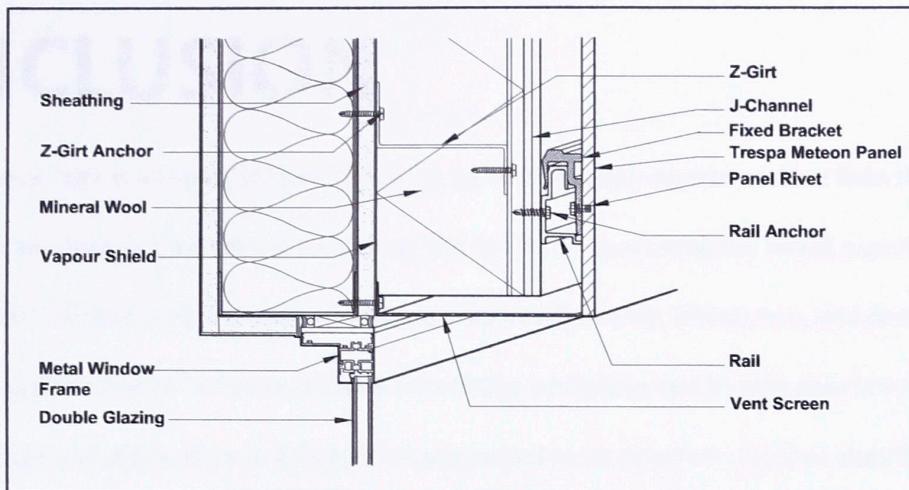


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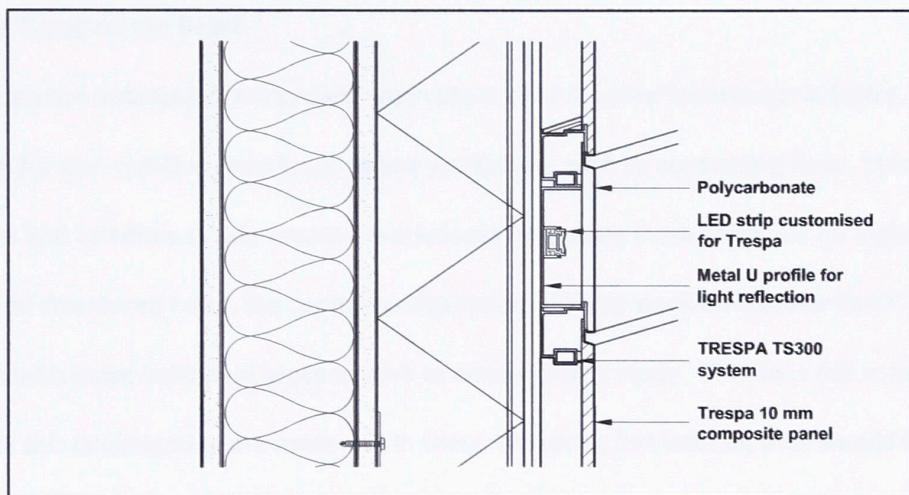
Section Detail

Landscaping (scale 1:20)

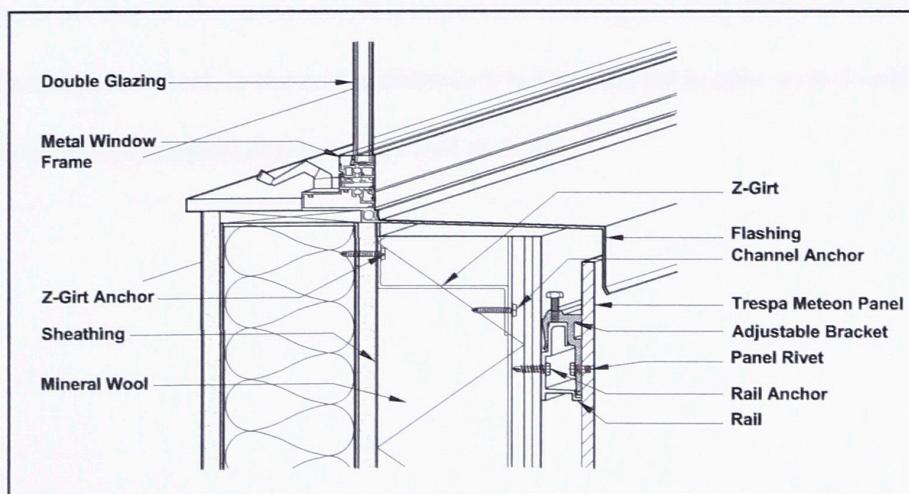
Fig. 66: Section detail of landscaping (refer to the legend in fig 63)



D Typical Section Detail
Exterior Cladding System at Window Head



E Typical Section Detail
LED strips



F Typical Section Detail
Exterior Cladding System at Window Sill

Fig. 67: Typical section details

CONCLUSION

My thesis “Life is a Beach!@ the Office!?” is an architectural experiment that links the realms of work and leisure through the concept of the beach. By examining the beach experience, it looks at potential architectural operations in the notions of informality, interaction, and diversity, and how they apply to the 21st century creative knowledge workplace and its new generation of workers. Thus, the paradigm of a workplace is re-interpreted as an effective tool that contributes to creative work processes while improving the workers’ lives through the embodiment of the same ‘playfulness’ as found on the beach.

Although the outcome of my project may support the creative knowledge industry, it may not be suitable for non-creative knowledge-based workplaces such as accounting firms. Since the work processes and activities at non-creative workplaces may place more emphasis on logistics and information, and structured tasks, the spatial configuration of these work environments should engage spaces with more individual process work or concentrated study. This does not mean that the concepts in this investigation are irrelevant in these instances, but instead, they should be adjusted accordingly to respond to the given needs. Similar to the idea of playing games, each game has a different set of rules. In the same way, it is important to recognize that different situations of work have different parameters. In the end, architecture is designed for people, so it should respond to both physical and psychological necessities as well as desires.

[-] Appendix

[A] INTERVIEW WITH KATIE CHURCHMAN, EMPLOYEE AT SOFTONIC (By Author)

What sort of business is your workplace involved in?

I work for an Internet Company which is the leading company in Europe and Latin America for the sale and downloading of software.

How much sq ft/ sq m would you say it is? What is the size of the company? Location? Neighbourhood?

The company takes up 3 floors of the building in which we are in. There are approximately 200 people in the office in Barcelona, however there are more employees all over the world – Madrid, San Francisco, Toronto and Shanghai.

The offices in Barcelona are in the neighbourhood of Fabra i Puig which is approximately 20 minutes by metro from the centre of Barcelona. It is very easy to get to and is surrounded by cafes, bars, restaurants and shopping centres.

Why did they decide to integrate the leisure component into the design? Is it part of the company's philosophy?

According to the welcome pack provided to new joiners, the company considers its main quality to be its human resources and it tries to create a workforce which is solid and stable, providing its employees with the necessary tools to work comfortably, independently, creatively and efficiently. The company strives to create a pleasant working environment and encourages active participation in the activities and projects of the company.

I therefore believe by integrating leisure components into the design of the building, they are meeting their objective of putting people and the team first, which seems to be the company's philosophy.

What did they integrate exactly?

In the office in Barcelona they have made the following leisure facilities available to staff:

- **Massage room with onsite masseuse.** The masseuse works Mondays to Thursdays and appointments are made via diary appointments on Outlook. Each massage lasts approximately 25 minutes, is free, and generally people have a massage once every 2 weeks.
- In addition to the onsite masseuse there is a separate room with **two leather massage chairs**
- A **chill out room** with four ergonomically designed seats and two fish tanks
- A **games room** complete with **flat screen TV, playstation, Xbox, Kinect** and a variety of controls for various players to play at the same time, a **futbolin table** and a **pinball machine**

- Adjacent to the games room there is an **onsite cafeteria and library**. All tea, coffee and hot chocolate is free. All books may be taken out by the employees at any time, as well as any video games.
- There is an **onsite canteen** with 4 fridges for people to store their food. All tea, coffee, hot chocolate, water and milk is free. There are also 7 microwaves which employees can use to cook their food and 3 sinks where they can wash up any **cutlery and crockery** used (also provided by the company). **Condiments** (salt, pepper, oil, vinegar and spices) are also provided. In addition to providing **free refreshments**, twice a week there is a delivery of **fresh fruit** (apples, oranges, bananas, peaches and grapes) which are available to the employees free of charge. There are also two **vending machines** – one with drinks and the other with snacks, if the employees wish to buy something additional. The canteen has 4 rows of tables, seating approximately 15 people, plus two **sofas**, two **chill out chairs** and one **swing chair** in the corner.
- **Newspapers** are also provided in both the canteen and the cafeteria.
- There are **panoramic views** of the city from anywhere in the building, providing instant relaxation and giving you the opportunity to rest your eyes after working at the computer screen.

How do you feel about this leisure component(s) of the workplace personally?

What are your favourite aspects of this leisure component(s)?

I think it's brilliant the company integrates these types of components into the workplace. Being an internet company it is inevitable that the employees are working many hours at the computer. As research has shown, this can be damaging to both your eyes and your posture. Softonic gives its employees the opportunity to have breaks away from this type of environment, providing them with free food and refreshments for any breaks they have. I think this is extremely important. The games room also gives people the chance to disconnect and to socialise a little bit with their colleagues, which is also a good way to let off steam. Due to the type of working environment, it is very easy for people to go all day without talking to their colleagues – the games room, cafeteria and canteen give them the opportunity for social interaction.

My favourite aspects are the onsite masseuse, the cafeteria and the free newspapers. Personally, I like the fact I am able to relax and get away from my desk whilst reading about what's going on in the world.

How would you compare this workplace with possibly other more conventional workplace you might have worked at or visited?

The atmosphere is better. People are friendlier and more sociable. There is a more honest working environment. People are extremely motivated. There appears to be less stress. People are happier. The morale is better.

Physically the building looks exactly the same as any other workplace I have worked at. It is a 18-storey glass building and is in an excellent location. To an outsider visiting the building the leisure components aren't immediately obvious –they have been very cleverly designed and integrated,

they have been strategically placed in the building to cause minimum distraction to those seated near them and are integrated so they are not obvious.

For example, the onsite masseuse, chill out room and massage room with chairs are all located on the 13th floor at one end of the office. To an outsider they look like three normal offices and are separated so those who sit closest to them are not distracted when they are being used. The canteen is located at the other end of the building – again away from the workers. The door remains closed so the noise does not distract others and any smells from the kitchen do not reach the working area.

The games room and cafeteria are located on the 12th floor and, again, are separate from the employees. There are signs up reminding you to be quiet once leaving the games room; however, due to their position and the double doors between the room and the working area, people are not distracted by these components.

I have never worked in a workplace which integrates leisure components into the workplace; in fact, I have always worked in a very stressful environment where everything needs to be done yesterday. I have, however, worked in companies where they provide free refreshments and I really think this is an extremely important component to integrate.

Before working at the company I was very excited about all the leisure facilities they had to offer and this is one of the reasons I took the job in the first place. For me personally, it has been quite difficult to relax and use these components to their full advantage. I have had a couple of massages and I use the canteen regularly, however I have never been in the games room or the chill out room. For me, when I am at work I am very focused and, due to the fact I'm not used to this type of environment, I find it difficult to take time out and chill. I still have the feeling that I am doing something I shouldn't be. However, the more time that passes, the more comfortable I am becoming with the environment and I think it's going to be very difficult for me to go back to working in a more conventional workplace.

I think the benefits this type of workplace offers are extremely important for the company. Generally, in all companies I've worked in there are always people who like to complain about something. However, at Softonic, nobody complains about anything. I think these components reduce, if not completely eliminate, the stress factor of the job. I am not saying that people do not get stressed, however, the difference with this type of workplace and a more conventional one is that people are able to let off steam easily (by playing playstation, by going to the chill out room, by having a massage, or simply eating some fruit). These things have a massive impact on employees personally and have a positive impact on their performance.

Does it contribute to working more effectively or improve the work atmosphere?

I think it definitely contributes to working more effectively. There have been times when my eyes have begun to hurt or my contact lenses have become dry as I've spent too much time working at the computer. On these occasions I simply get up, go to the canteen, eat a piece of fruit and look out of the window across the city and within a few minutes I feel much better. I don't need to take a half an hour break, 5 minutes is enough to disconnect, relax and then go back to my desk. If my back begins to ache or my arms hurt I simply go to the room with the massage chairs to relax.

The working atmosphere is much better as well, as you meet people in the canteen or the cafeteria that you wouldn't meet through the normal course of your daily work. You get to know more people,

you feel part of the team and you create better relationships and therefore a better atmosphere. In addition people are less stressed. If things are going wrong or they are starting to get stressed out, they go to the chill out room and get their thoughts together to come back to the task in hand. They are given the opportunity to walk away from what they are doing, get some perspective and come back.

Does it help directly or indirectly with the work process/ tasks?

I think it helps directly with the tasks. Every morning my team will go for coffee together and, without realising it, we will talk about the tasks for the day, what everyone's working on, what else needs to be done and the next steps. We are having a team meeting without all the formalities. Not only does this create a better team spirit amongst the team, people are more relaxed and explain things honestly and clearly, which helps to deal with the tasks ahead.

On many occasions, many teams or colleagues, when dealing with a problem will discuss it 'over coffee' or 'over a piece of fruit'.

In addition, when a task has been completed or a job has been done well, employees will go to the games room to celebrate. It's a good way to feel good about the job you've done...motivating you to keep working harder. I also think it boosts morale in the company.

Each employee knows they are trusted to get on with their job and they know that no one is watching their breaks or watching their time – as long as their work is done on time and to the standard required, they are free to spend their time how they like.

In addition, the company regularly provides lunches as a means of thanking employees for the hard work they've done. For example, when a 3 month project has been completed successfully, all employees working on that particular project will be treated to lunch (either in the company, in the canteen, or outside, in a restaurant).

Knowing you are trusted to do your work and you are appreciated for what you do has a direct impact on the work process and tasks.

Are there any negatives of your workplace or particular positives you might like to comment on?

To be honest I can't think of any negative aspects of the workplace. The building is in a good location, the views from all sides are amazing, all components employees could need are integrated into the building and the atmosphere created as a consequence of these components is fantastic. Even toothpaste, face wipes and intimate wipes are provided in the ladies toilets in case needed.

It's a very good place to work and I feel that more companies should aim to integrate leisure components into their workplace. I think the basics should be: free refreshments and an area within the building where people can meet and socialise during their breaks. I think even just these two things would make a massive difference to any workplace. A free onsite masseuse is also an excellent leisure component to have and, in my opinion, vital in a company where most of the day is spent working on computers. However, I can also appreciate that this may be too much of an expense for a company.

I think the positive aspects of this workplace speak for themselves: a healthy working environment, with happy, rested, motivated employees and a company that continues to thrive and expand.

[B] ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BEACH AND THE CONVENTIONAL TAYLORIST OFFICE (by Author)

LACK OF VARIETY AND TEMPERATURES>>NEED TO ADD GRADIENT OF LIGHT, TEXTURES, COLOURS

Investigating the tactile and sensory experiences offered by the textures of the beach setting, I discovered the important contrast of haptic and visual effects compared to our typical furnished interiors of an office. When one studies beach materials such as sand, pebbles, and the moving water, one finds that people's sensations are often disrupted. Firstly, the natural environment consists of several constantly changing physical and visual temperatures that can dramatically or subtly shock your senses. For instance, the radiating heat from the sun makes people warm, and when they decide to play in the water, they are temporarily shocked by its subtle cool temperatures. Typically, high durability and low maintenance interiors often use only neutral colour schemes such as an eggshell white, off white or beige paints paired with possibly a navy blue coloured carpet. Becoming conventional decorating schemes, these bland colours have been overused and lack surprise. Thus, as one sees the vivid changing colours offered by the natural setting of the sky, water, and land, one cannot be helped but feel very happy and excited. Moreover, the previously defined visual relationships can be altered if one adjusts conventional texture or colour. Most office chairs have black covers, but if one changes it to a semi-transparent-net bold orange texture, it would stand out. Another problem in generic spaces is that everything is consistent and exactly defined, so that it leaves little to the imagination. Most of the materials used lack opacity and feel closed off. Every component other than the window is solid and opaque. To emulate the openness of the beach front, the new space should employ various transparencies in materials that divide or enclose space, so that boundaries are blurred and the space 'appears' continuous.

SHORT VISUAL AND PHYSICAL DISTANCES>>NEED FOR OPENNESS >> Density of arrangements, colour, surface qualities

Due to efficient spatial planning, people are physically and visually restricted to short finite distances. The distance between our eyes and the computer monitor is no more than 600 mm, while the distance of the door varies from 5-7 metres and the size of a cubic unit is usually 1.5 metres by 1.5 metres. In contrast, the beach scene visually offers an infinite horizon between the water and the sky. Thus, to counteract this issue, the space should give the visual impression of elongated space in a compact area. In order to create this illusion, one must appeal to either unobstructed views that capture a horizon (possibly a skyline in the city) or create ambiguousness that implies space beyond, through the use of reflective devices.

NEED FOR NON-LINEARITY, NATURAL, MALLEABILITY >> inconsistency of shapes >> organic material

Even the streamlined shape or size of the pebbles, the fluidity of water or malleability of wet sand at the beach are situations that alter the consistency of interior colour textures and temperatures. Unlike the typical rigid and prefabricated surfaces in an office, these natural materials are things that can be played and shaped as desired. One can easily pick up sand, unrestricted by any rules. Putting some of these organic elements into the proposed space can change the impression of a place. The 'Surf and Turf' internet office is a good example, where they installed a real piece of lawn into the office. Materials tend to be hard and rigid inside offices, so the soft textures (mushy, malleable, non-linear, soft textures) of organic materials can introduce an element of surprise.

VARYING DEPTH IN ELEVATIONS, AND DIMENSIONS IN RELATIVE TO THE HUMAN BODY AND ENVIRONMENT

The interfaces/transitions between water, land, and sky reveal the varying physical and visual depths available at the beach. Nothing is completely flat. Moreover, depending on a person's relationship with the elevation of the ground, the physical and visual separation can create different outcomes of intimacy with place. For example, if someone is sitting at the edge of the pier that face the water and staring at the sky, this moment involves the person feeling elevated to a position that is neither land nor water. Fundamentally, one is lifted off the floors on a raised plane to be a step closer the sky. At this ultimate viewing spot, everything around oneself is erased except for the sky. This proposes a fabulous moment of contemplation. Some beaches also have cliff tops that overlook the horizon, which is similar to the overlooking position the end of the pier, accompanied with a rigorous climb to the top. At these lookout points, people usually linger to think or enjoy the view. The possibility of changing perspective and eye level helps to change the way one thinks. Brainstorming at a point overlooking the entire office would make an interesting experience.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF SEPARATIONS: VISUAL AND PHYSICAL SEPARATIONS

Wooden boardwalks are usually placed over the sand on a beach as a separation. People like sand, but not everyone wants to touch it permanently. Sometimes, people like to maintain the visual contact yet remove the physical contact. As a result, people can either submerge themselves into the central space or remove themselves as they find necessary. Another instance of separation would be the constructed promenades along the beach. They are often very colourful with highly ornated ceramic tile patterns. People can walk on them barefoot, ride bikes on them, and they are usually very long, spreading across the length of the shorelines. Although these separations are expressed through the manipulation of the ground that one walks on, it can also be demonstrated with the structure above, such as the shelter provided by umbrellas or canopies from the heat.

VISUAL MOVEMENT>PLAY WITH EYES

Visual movement might involve dynamic patterns, which moves one's eyes to a rhythm, or gives depth in varying lighting conditions. Basically, the patterns would 'pop out' of the wall, removing the feeling of flatness from vertical planes. It does not mean that physical flatness is taken away, but that the placing of accents enhances the ordinary viewing plane. This is important since overexposure to one particular element can dull one's visual stimulation in a given setting. Therefore, the use of graphic patterns/ 3d wallpaper might appeal to one's eyes, in order to inspire attentiveness to the office surroundings.

PHYSICAL OBJECTS, SETTINGS, QUALITIES OF THE BEACH THAT CAUSES INTERACTION WITH THE SURROUNDINGS

The playful characteristics of these beach materials/objects help bring out the dynamic and impulsiveness of the free spirit. It releases the occupants from highly regulated modernist spaces that feel static and full. The mood of the space directly influences the mood of its occupants. As a result, the occupants have physically and mentally become dulled modernist spaces.

PHYSICAL BODY GESTURES> INFORMAL, CASUAL

Besides the sensory disruption given by natural settings, the beach offers the potential to stimulate 'action'(another word) in the mind and body and with other people. Why mould only to the predetermined position of bodies, like the arrangement of a chair paired with a desk? Is it not possible to change the sitting position or lay down to work? There need to be spaces that provide the options of different body positions, as most office spaces lack movement in general or are restricted to small gestured movements.

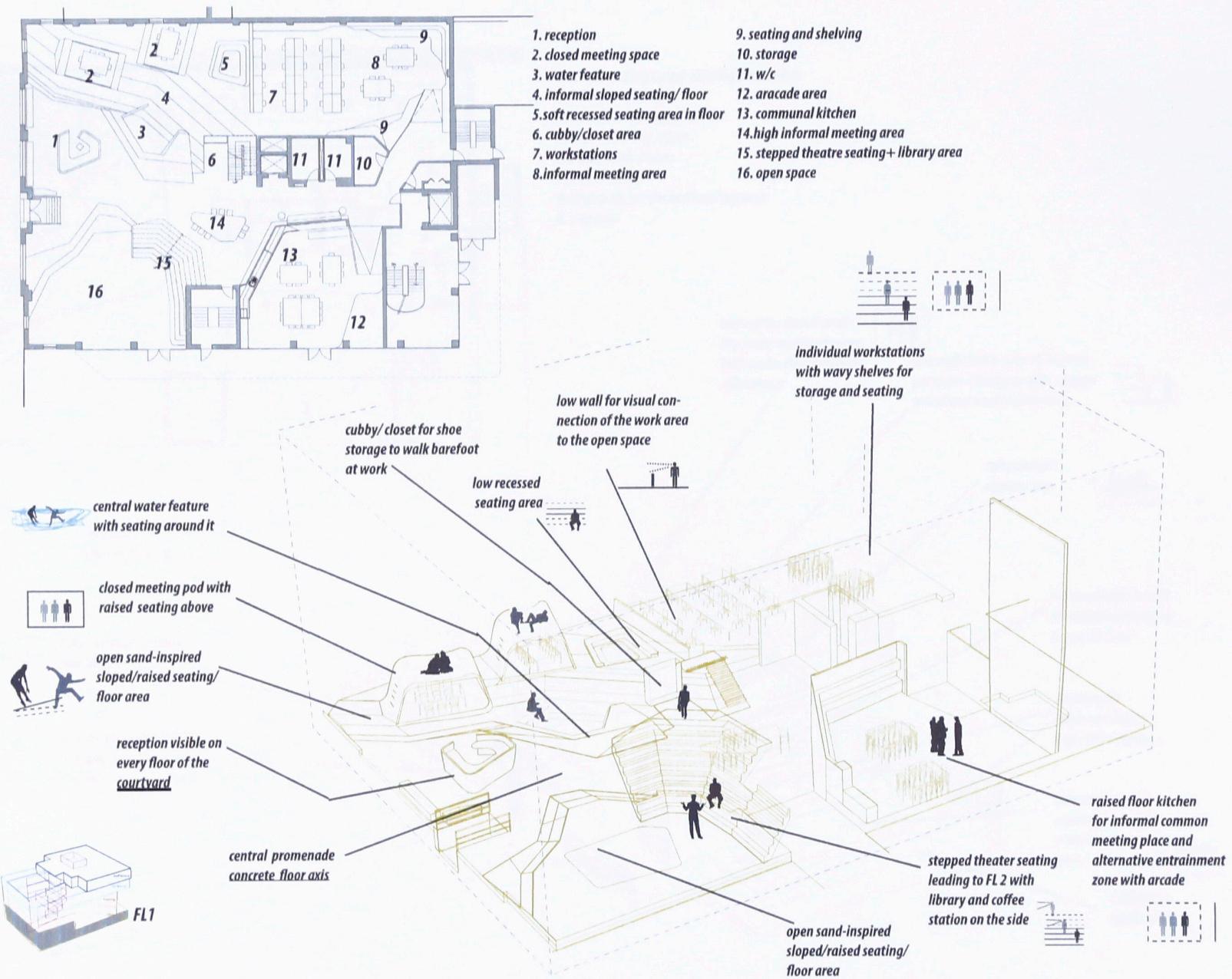
BECAUSE OF DIFFERENT OR INFORMAL BODY POSITION, ONE CAN EXPERIENCE DIFFERENT P.O.V.

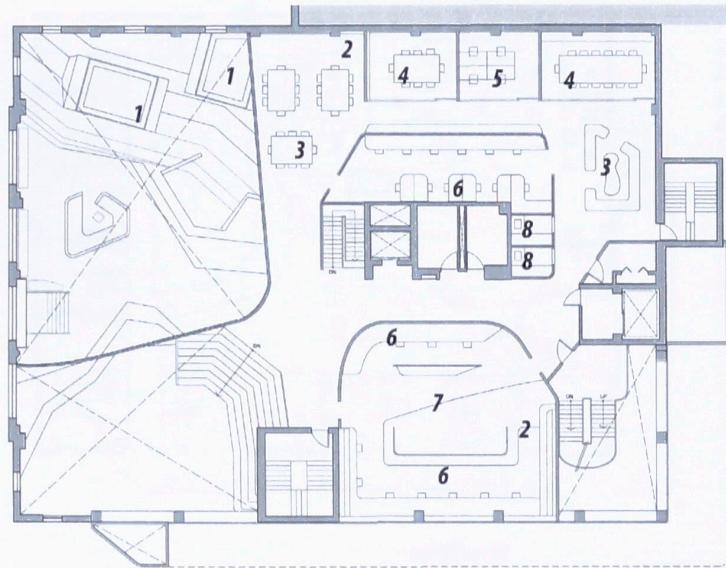
Passive activities at the beach include lying down or facing up changes the point of view or orientation of one's eyes and bodies. These situations include looking down at the ground or upward at the sky, sitting cross legged, sitting with half body up in lawn chair position, sitting at the edge of a pier (pier is like a long bench, that is static and lengthy with legs lifted off the ground), or lying down on a bed-like surface. Sunbathing, bathing in the water, floating in the water, sitting on a rock, swimming are all instances where the body is interacting with the physical environment directly or indirectly, which is not normally available in office settings because it is not required in the conventional work 'program.' Why not integrate improper and informal positions of the body that are typically unseen in office settings? It calls for creating an opportunity for different body gestures besides sitting upright in a chair or standing up giving a presentation, walking slowly, remaining static and small movements of the body. Instead, there should be exaggerated grand gestures.

TRANSITION/ ALTERNATION

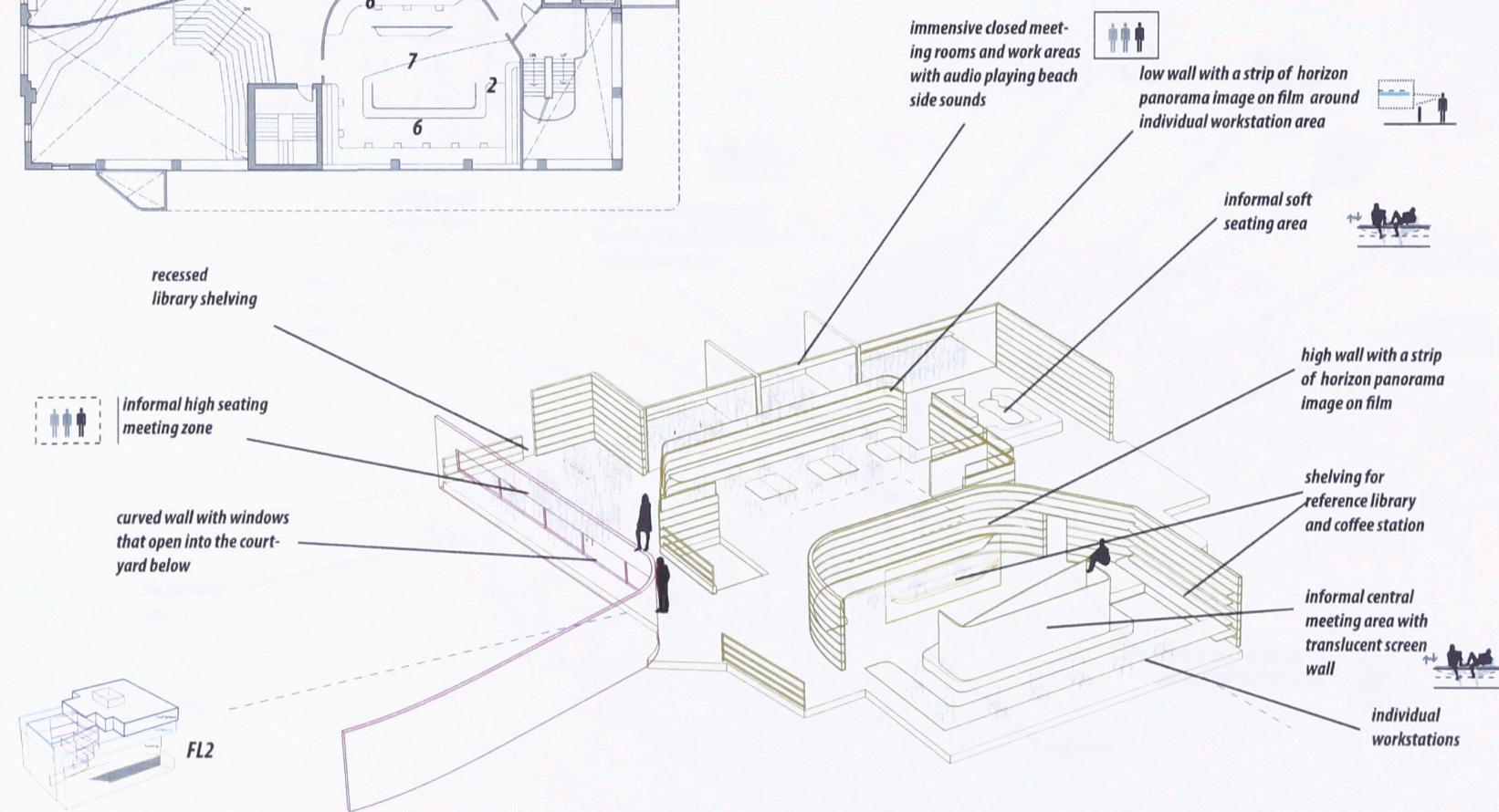
What aspects need to remain, and what can be changed to resemble the experience of the beach (leisure)? The need for an individual workplace consisting of a desk and chair cannot be replaced, but meeting rooms, shared staff amenities and the reception area can be altered to incorporate these playful beach-like characteristics. However, alternate places for work can be provided as a breakaway from the usual. The thresholds between two different experiences can also mean a contrast of interpretation of space, such as emerging from a compressed space to an uncompressed space. The goal is to create a certain coherent disjunction in experiences of space.

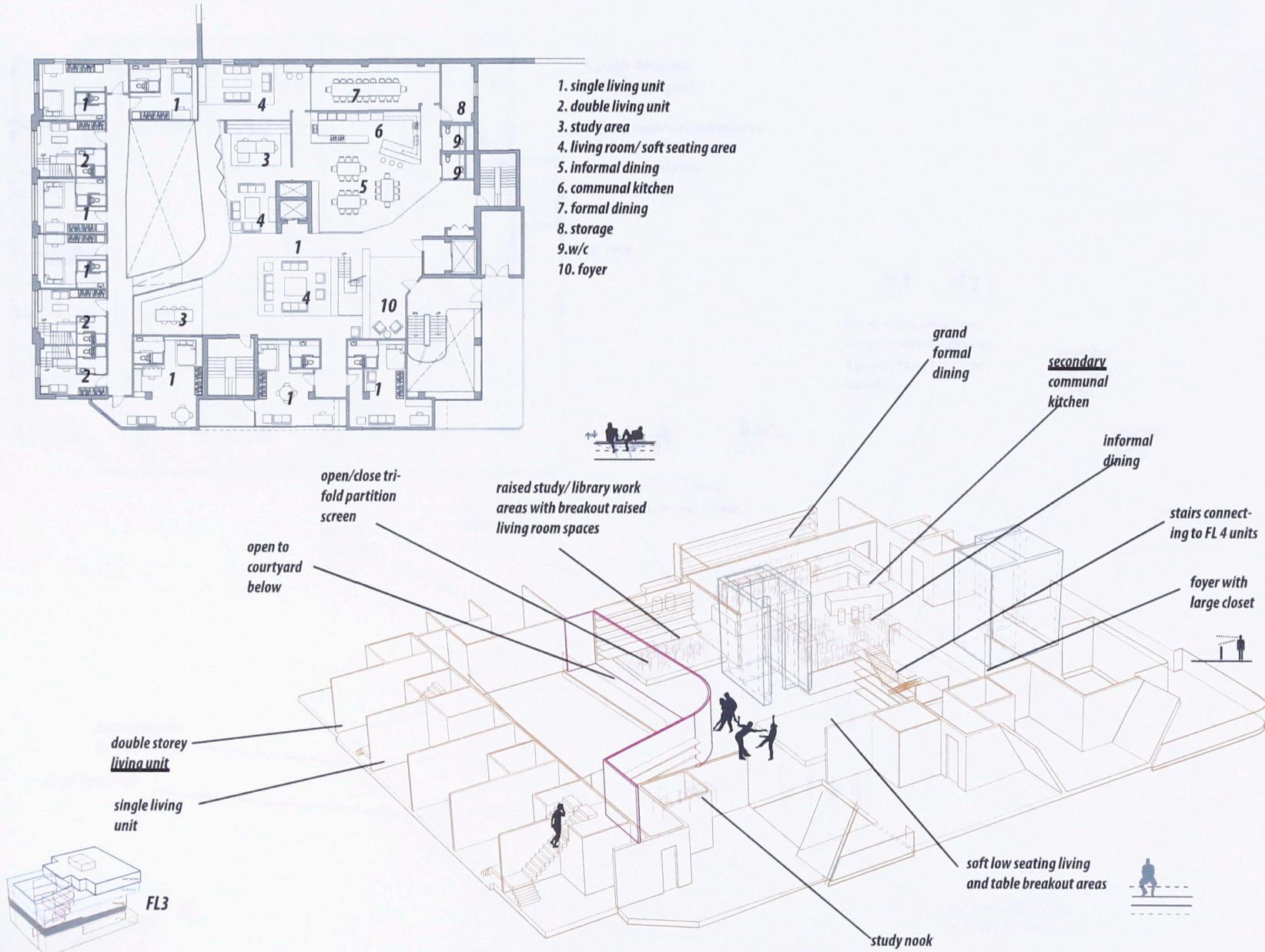
[C] Enlarge Illustrations of Design Project

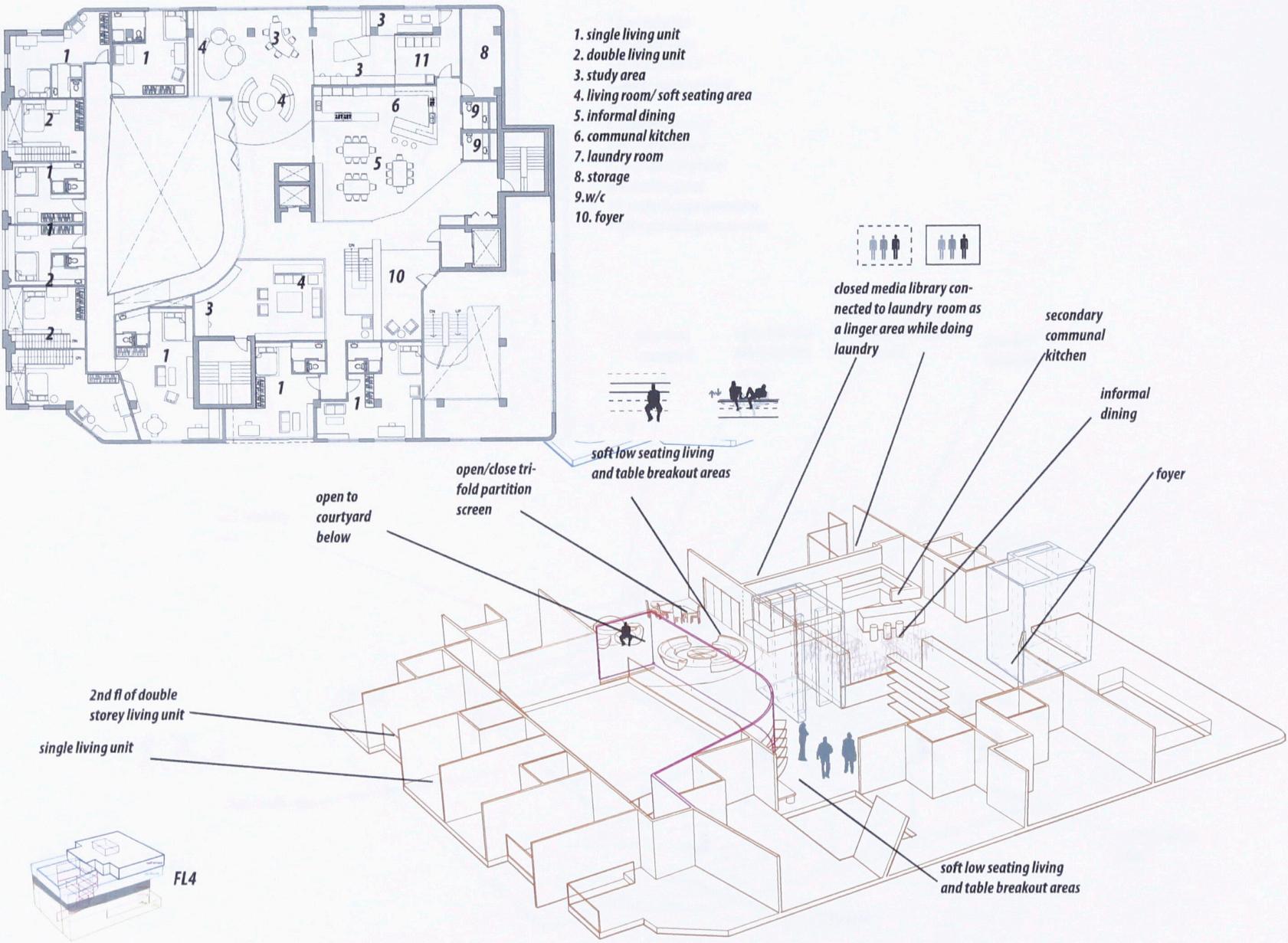


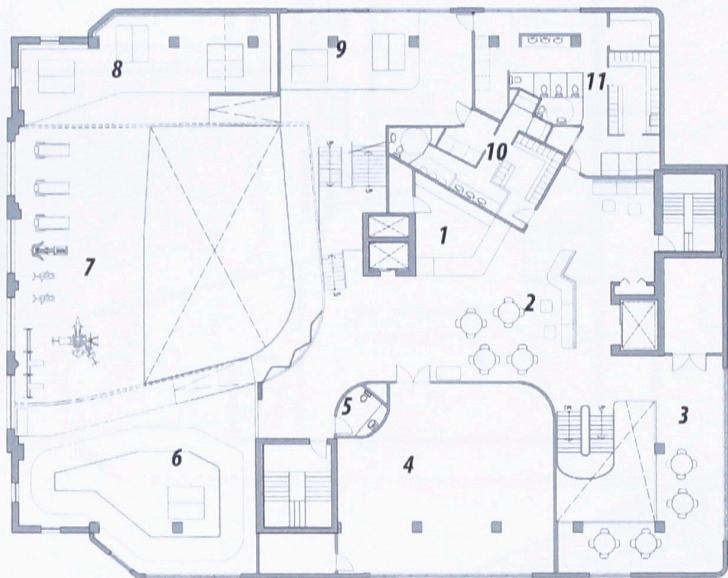


1. raised seating on top meeting pods below
2. reference library
3. informal meeting place
4. closed meeting rooms
5. closed work rooms
6. workstations
7. central open informal meeting area
8. nap area

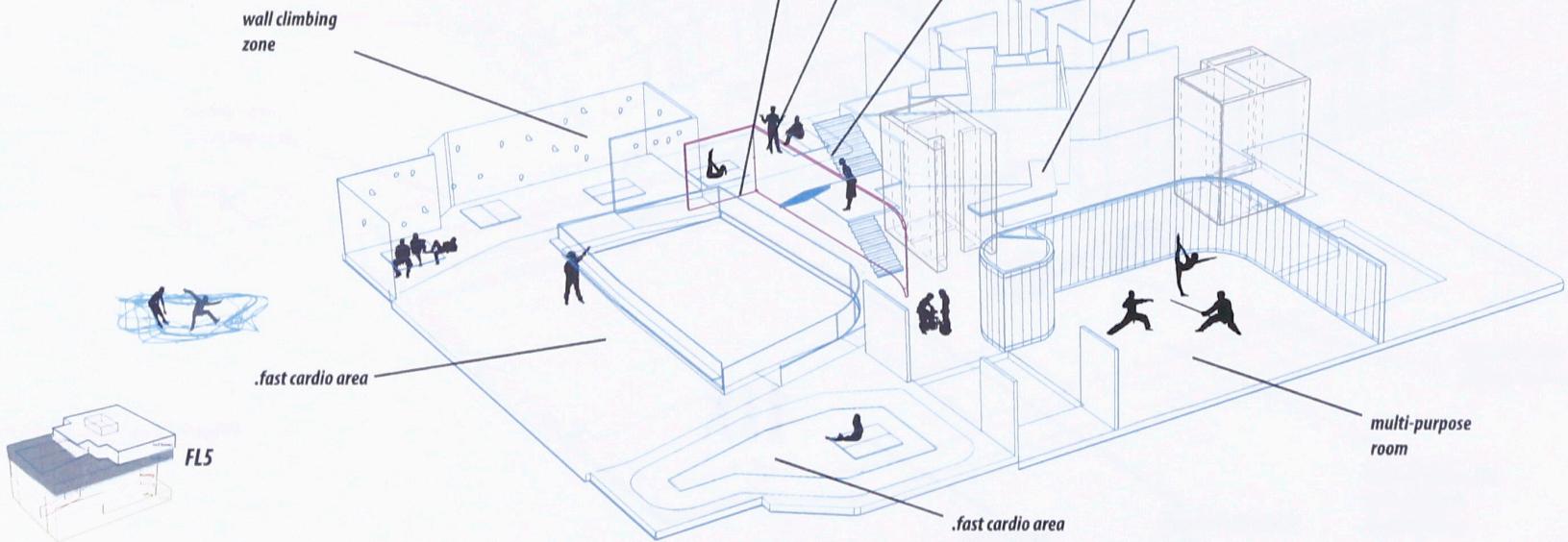


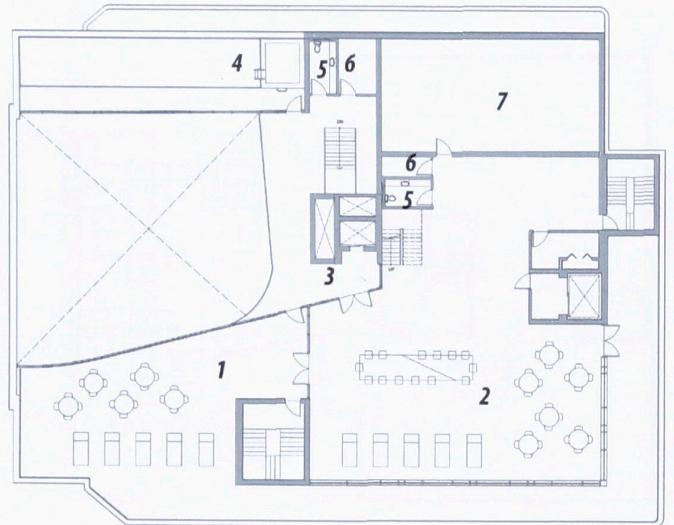




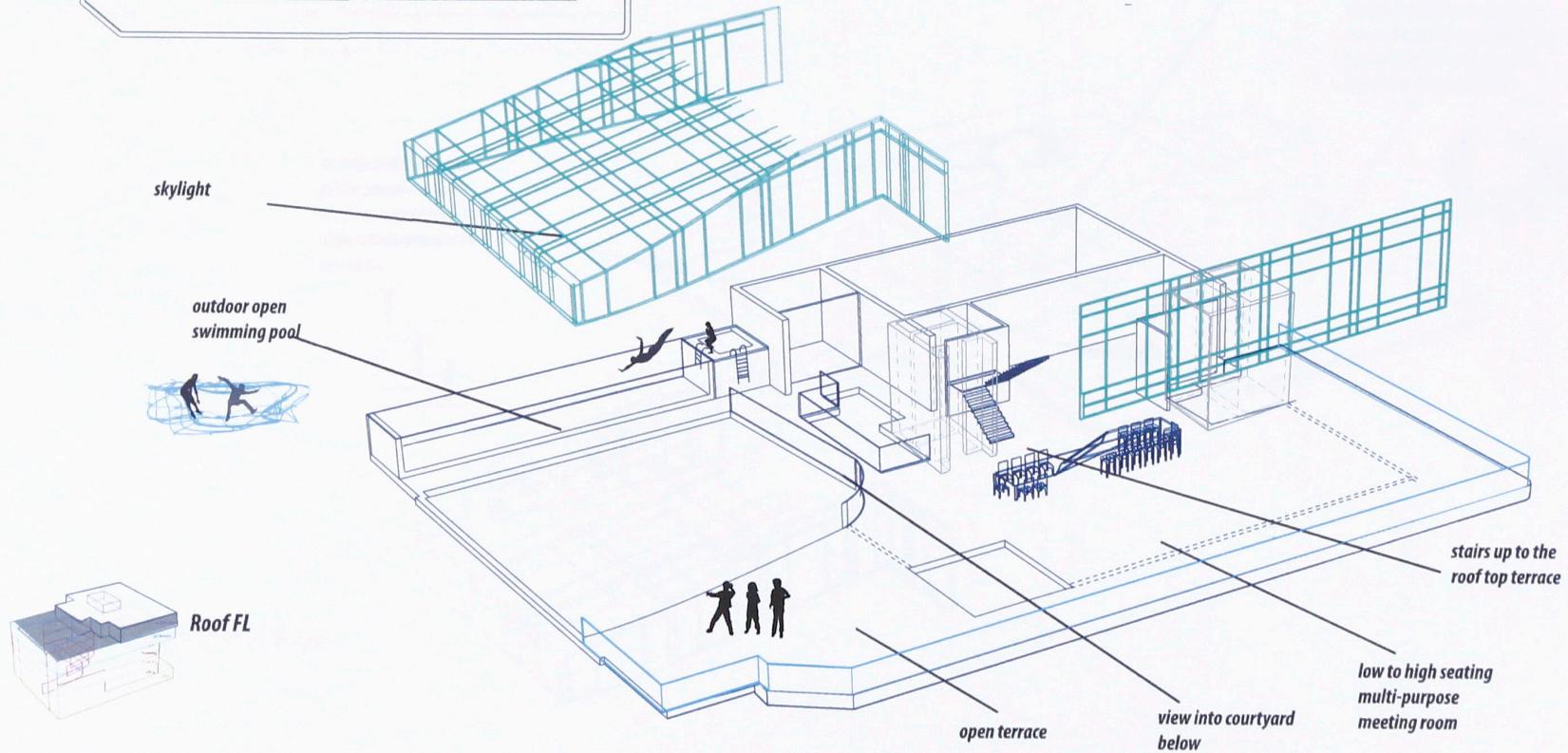


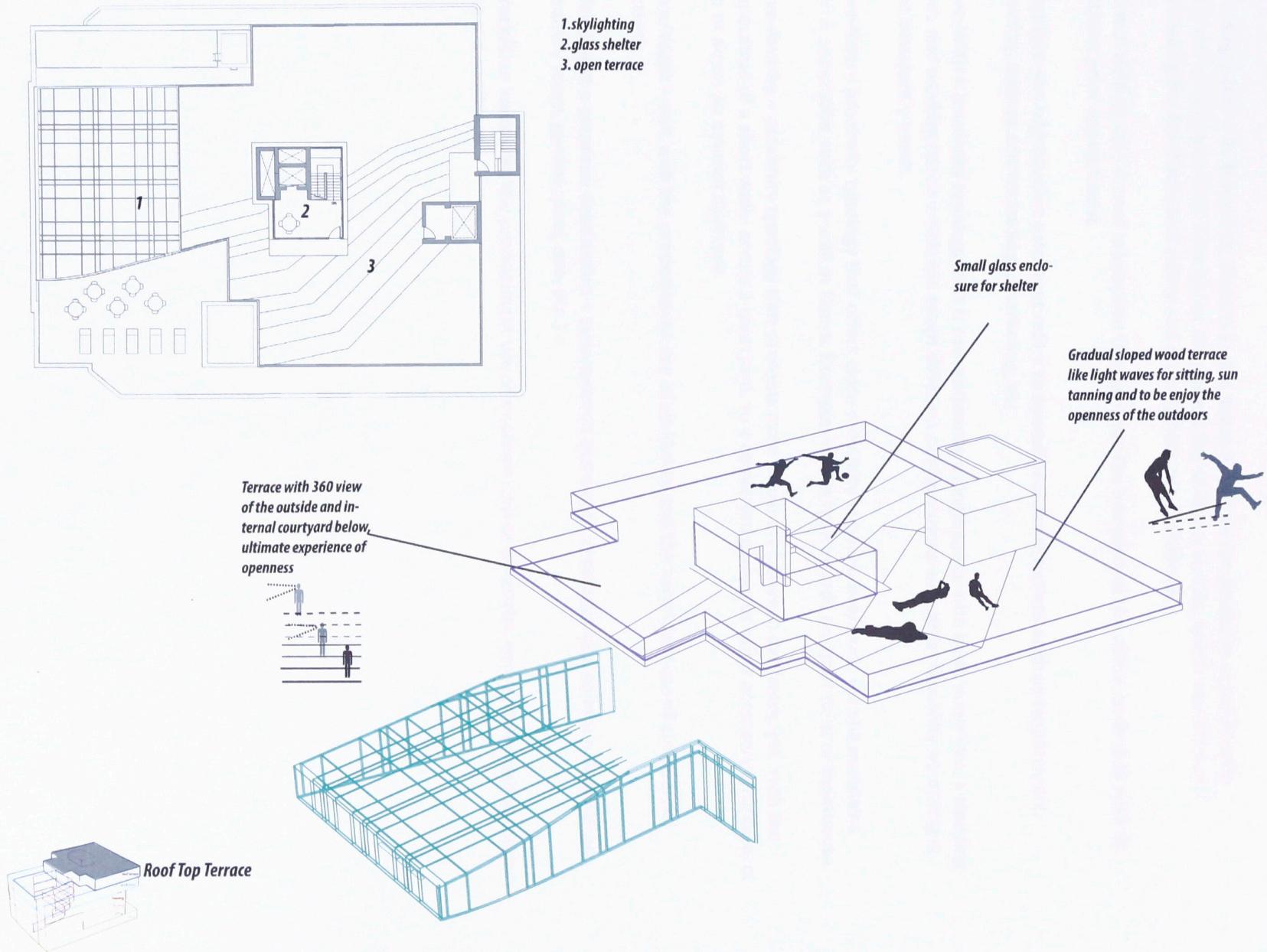
1. bar/juice bar
2. relaxing zone
3. relaxing zone 2
4. multi-purpose room
5. w/c
6. slow cardio area
7. fast cardio area
8. wall climbing zone
9. stretching area
10. male change room area
11. female change room area





- 1. terrace
- 2. multi-purpose room
- 3. common corridor
- 4. open outdoor swimming pool
- 5. w/c
- 6. storage
- 7. mechanical area





[-] Glossary

Crossing paths = As termed by Thomas Dolan, these instances can generate unpredictable interactions and meetings throughout the normal day-to-day activities, which contribute to increasing the familiarity and safety and security between individuals.

Formal visiting =the formal interaction that involves the intention of the visitor to drop in with or without prior appointment.

Function =an organization term that refers to operational classifications such as employment, training, science and technology, marketing, etc.

Live-With = proximity typology that is conventionally a single space with basic amenities, a sleeping area and working space which can adapt different configurations with great flexibility according to the occupant's needs.

Live-Near= proximity typology that offers close proximity between live/work, yet still maintains some separation such as a wall or floors. Examples of this type include an apartment or townhouse.

Live-Nearby = proximity typology that presents close proximity between live/work, yet with the separation of a short walk- across a courtyard, to a converted garage or other accessory structure, or up or down an exterior staircase.

Live/Work = unit with the predominant use of residence and the secondary use of commercial activity.

Meeting at a common destination = spontaneous and casual encounter at a common destination (laundry room, garden, pool, spa, etc.)

Work/Live =unit with the predominant use of s commercial or industrial work activity, and secondary use is a residence.

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