

Reconfiguration of main reception to 20 Bedford Way

Institute of Education
London

Design and Access Statement

September 2012

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Architects + Designers

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Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by BGS Architects Ltd as part of the Planning and Listed Building Consent Application for the Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London.

This report will aim to provide a greater understanding of the building at Bedford Way through three distinct and different phases of its life.

- 1) The original Denys Ladsun design
- 2) Level 4 as a reception space
- 3) The proposed design

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Entrance Reception Layout and Design

Bedford Way, London

| Institute of Education

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The Process

In January 2012, BGS were invited to submit an entry for a competition to redesign the reception desk at Level 4 of the Institute of Education. In our submission we considered not only the desk but the context of the entire entrance hall as we felt it was important to engage with the users throughout the Level 4 entrance experience. This entry was submitted on the 20th February.

Our design approach is based on an interrogation of the original building as conceived by Sir Denys Lasdun and developing an understanding of its 'grain'. The proposed design responds to the language of the existing building and, where possible, returns it to its original intent. By revealing what we know to already be there, it will be possible to reinforce the big impact of Lasduns Architecture. Where new interventions are proposed these are in clean, highly durable materials and are clearly conceived as pieces of furniture within the space.

Camden Council Advice

We have sought advice from both the Duty Planner and the Listed Building Consent officer at Camden Council, who have both provided very positive feedback. With their input BGS have finalised a design which we believe is not only a move back towards Denys Lasdun's original scheme, but an enhancement of the reception space; an informative and welcoming area to be used by staff, students and visitors to the Institute alike.



Institute's west elevation

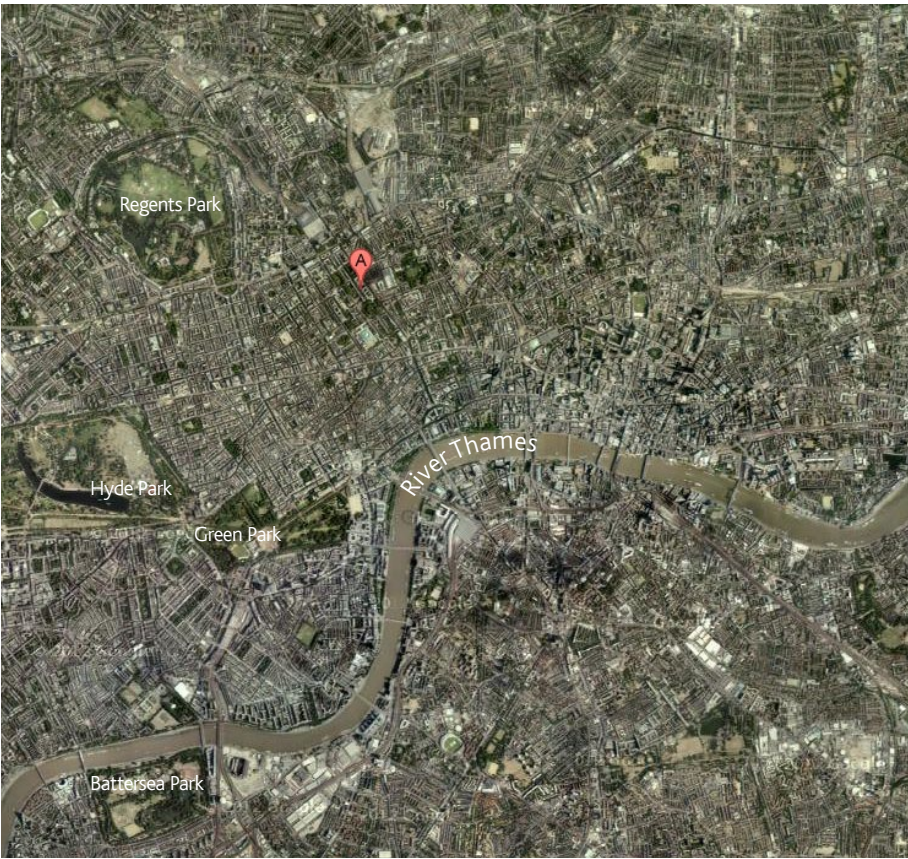
The Building- Appearance and Location

The Institute building is located in the heart of London, just to the north of Russell Square at 20 Bedford Way, London, WC1H 0A.

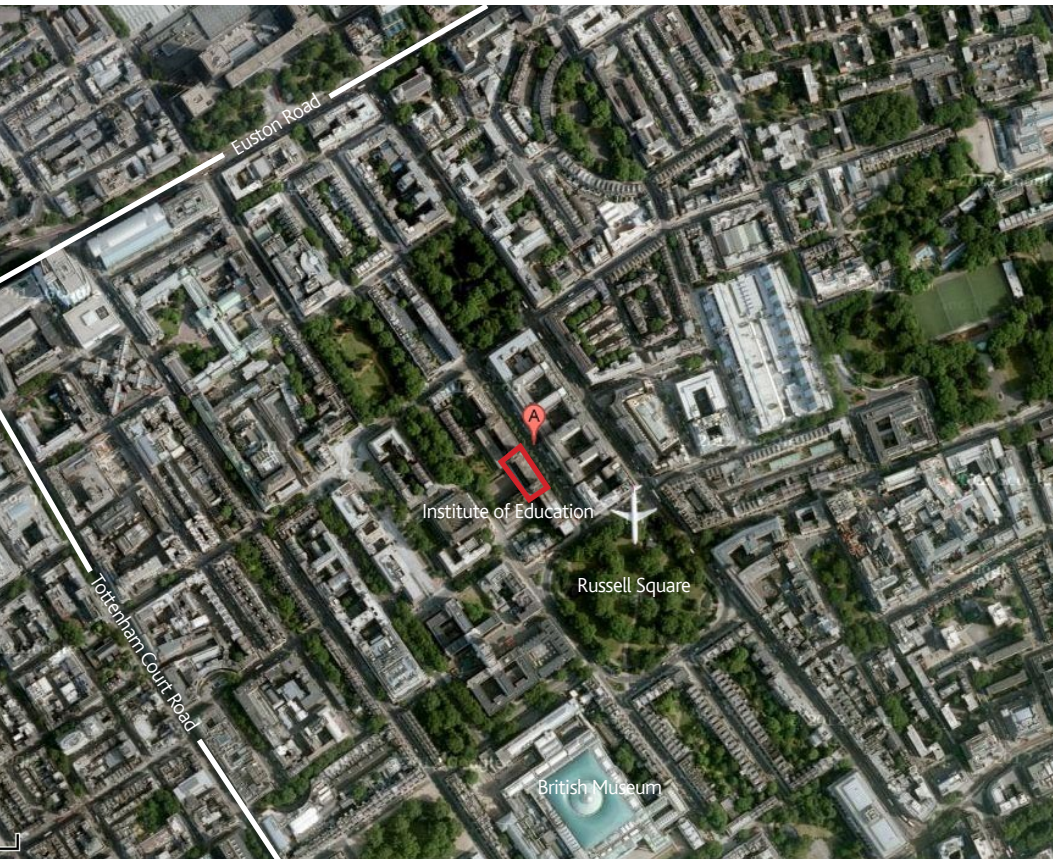
The building is a Grade II listed building originally designed by Denys Lasdun in 1976.

The spine of the building occupies the full length of the western side of Bedford Way. Three of the nine floors are at or below ground level. The area BGS are focussing on is the Ground and First floor entrance (which are named Level 3 and Level 4 at the Institute). The entrances to both of these levels are located on Bedford Way. BGS are addressing the issue that the entrances are not immediately obvious to the Institutes users and the public.

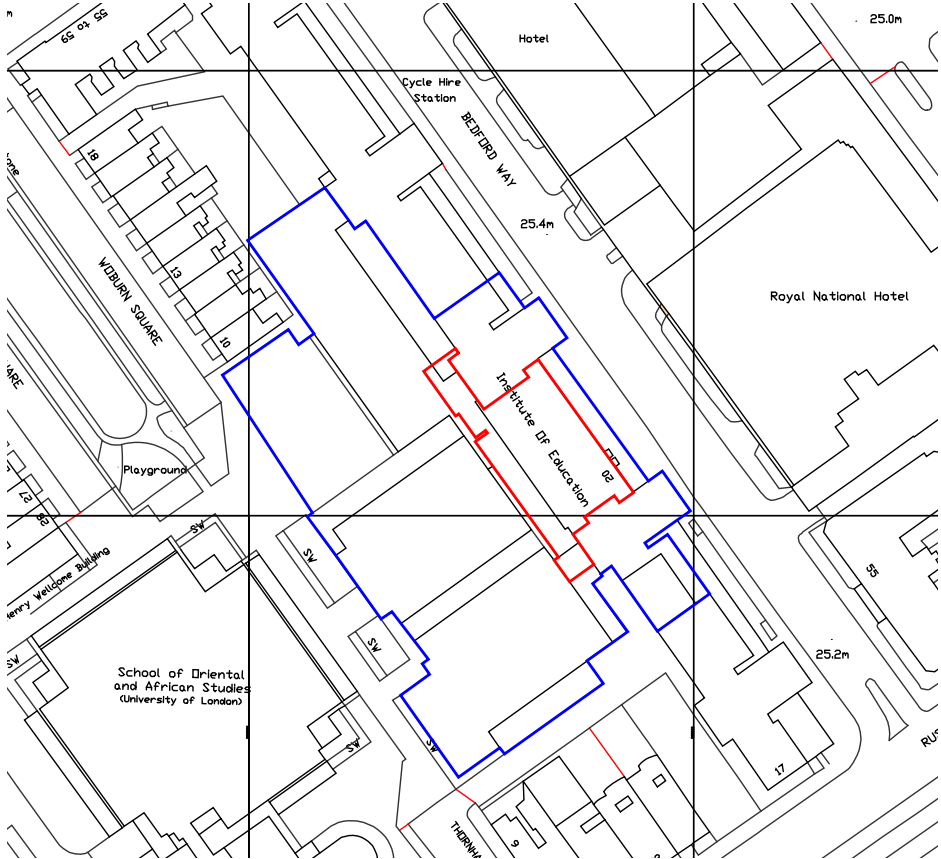
- Ownership Boundary
- Site Boundary



Location Map

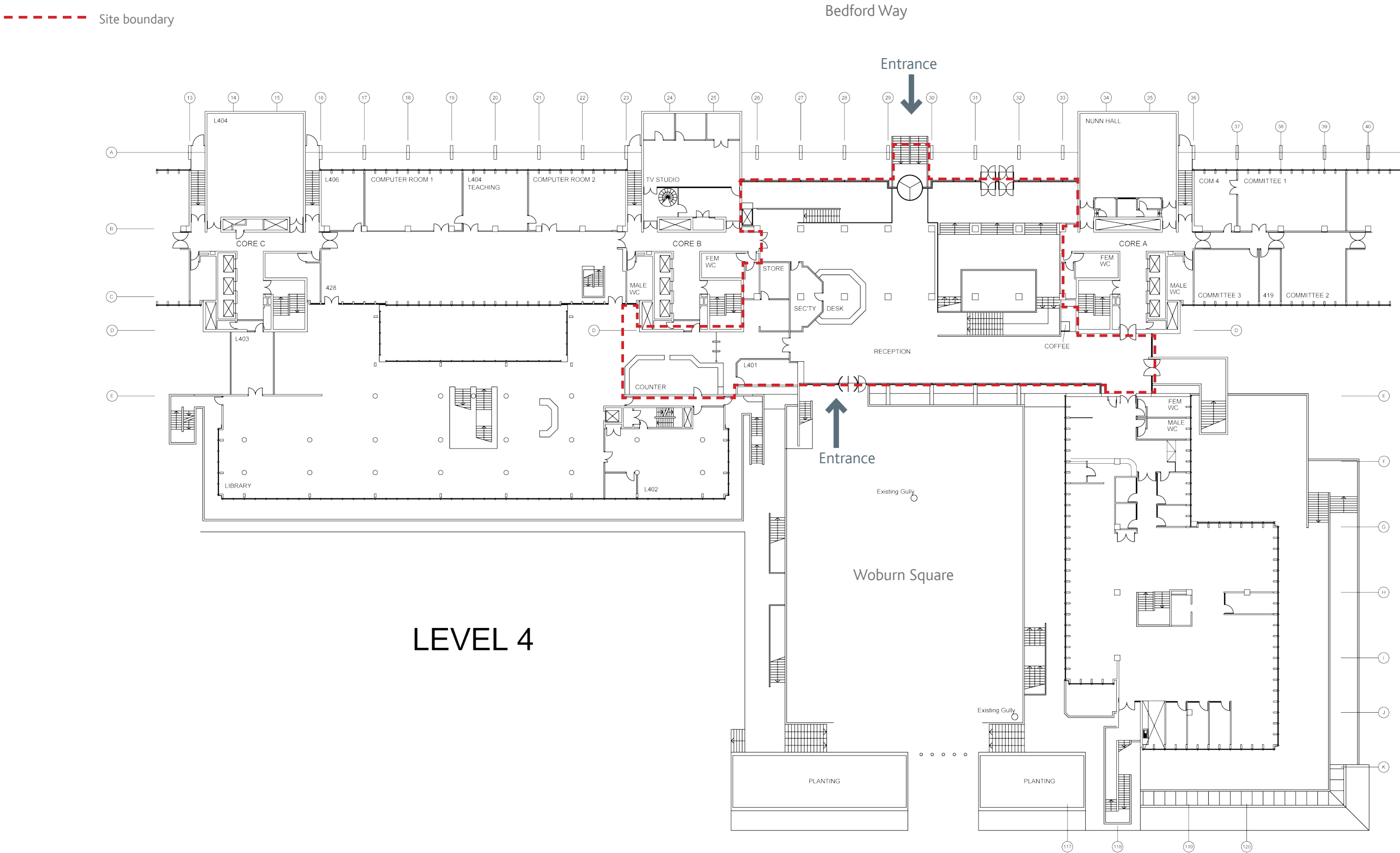


Location Plan



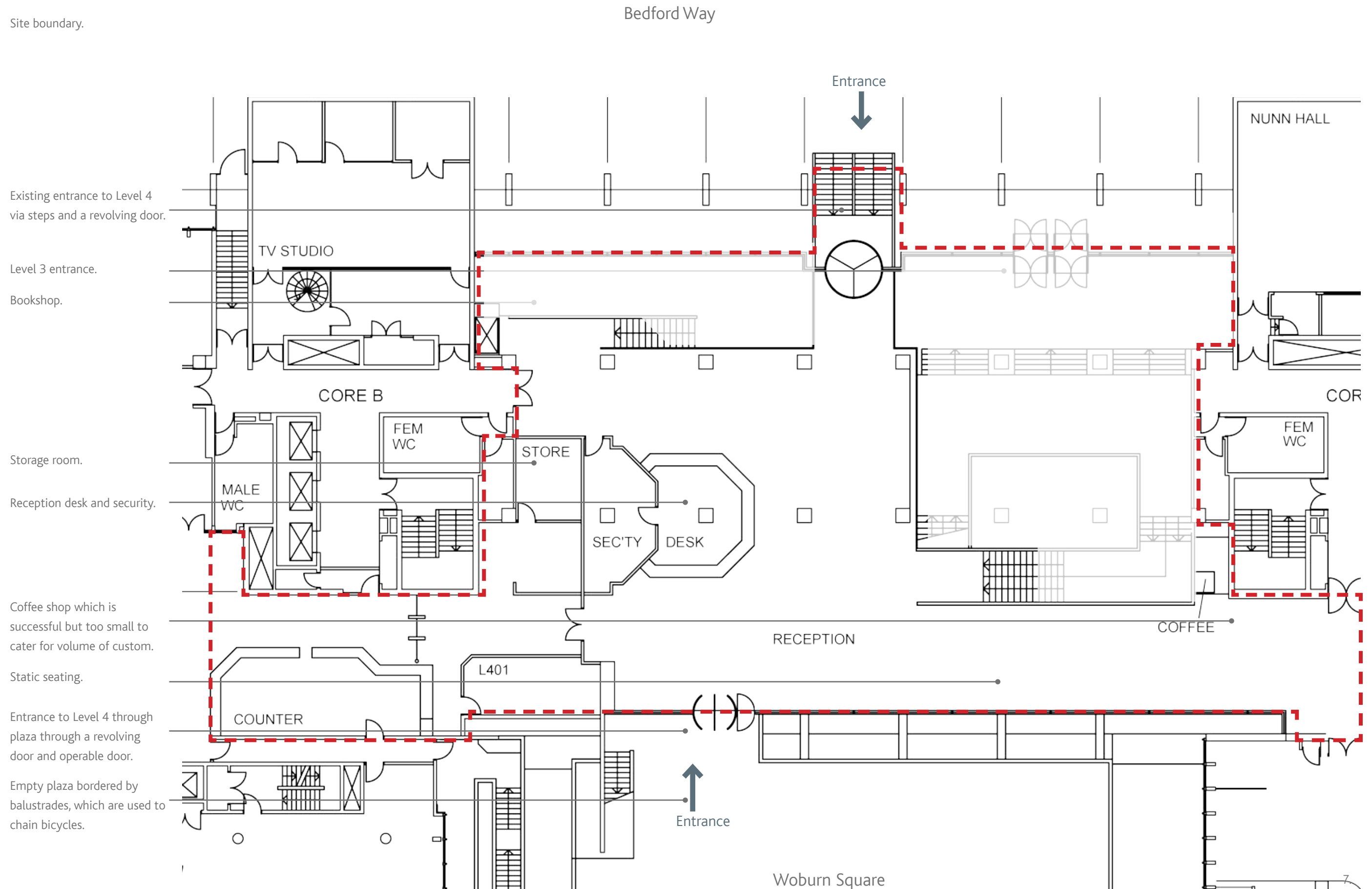
Site Plan

Amount- Existing Plan in Context



Layout- Existing

--- Site boundary.



Original Appearance

This fine example of Brutalism originally boasted a large entrance hall featuring exposed concrete throughout but over time this finish has been hidden behind layers of plaster. The impact of the space has been significantly reduced from Lasdun's original design.



Existing Appearance

The Level 3 entrance space has since been rendered and painted blue, with only the stair-railing section remaining as exposed concrete. The columns now house posters and the space has become somewhat cluttered with flyer stands, bins and furniture.



The entrance steps to Level 4 are a more recent intervention dating from the 1980s. Visitors now enter directly into the level 4 space missing the impact of level 3's double height space. The new reception hall aims to reinstate the lost impression that the level 3 entrance once provided. As this intervention was also by Denys Lasdun, it is appropriate that it is retained. New installations should seek to bring clarity and cohesiveness to the entrance experience.



Existing Appearance



'The space feels claustrophobic'

'It's a space to walk through, not to stay in'

'if it was more comfortable and larger it would be far better'

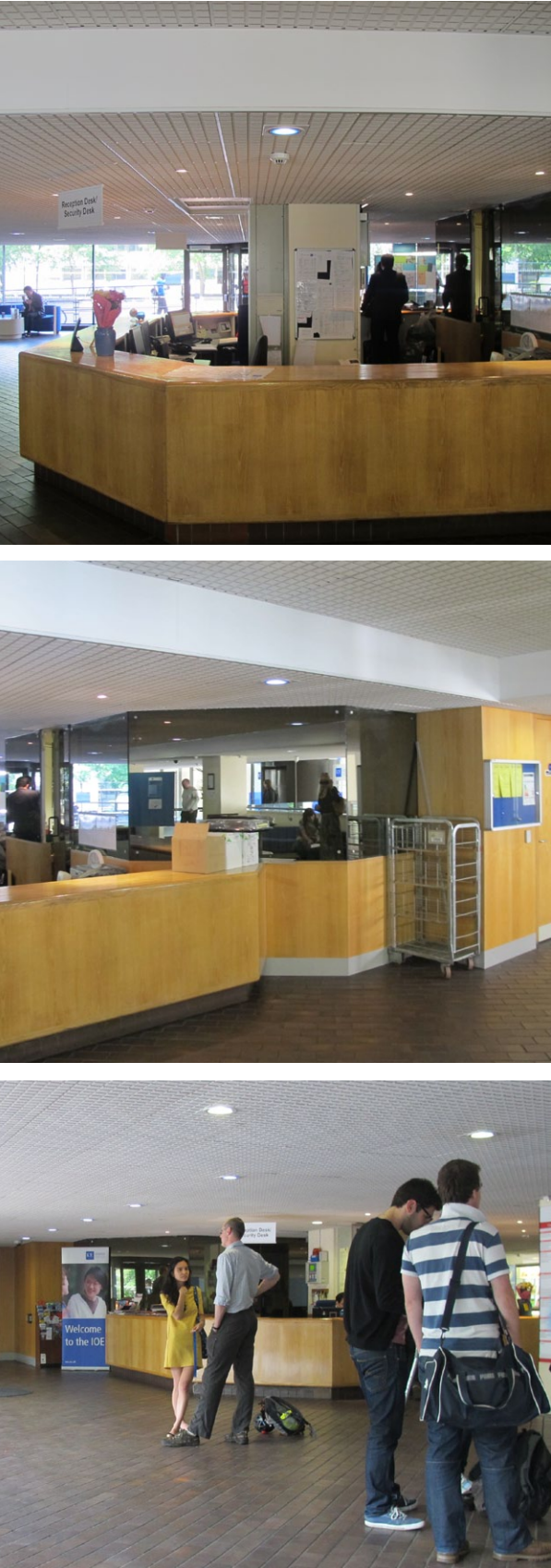
'It's a really unhelpful space and it should be more of a social space'

'the hall should not look somehow intimidating, it should look inviting'

- Student Feedback Forum

Existing site features

Reception Desk



Cafe



Information



Bookshop



Architectural Proposal

The Process- Preparing the canvas

It is important to BGS to return the finish of the space to Lasdun’s original intentions as far as possible. Once this stage is completed the reception space can be seen as an enhancement of the original design rather than a mutation of an already altered space.

The existing reception desk and security room encroach on the reception hall significantly. By stripping these back and making the space more open not only will it feel larger and more airy, it will also feel more welcoming as users can interact with the entire space.

- 1. Remove the current reception desk and security
- 2. Demolish unused storage room behind reception desk
- 3. Remove suspended ceiling to reveal original ceiling finish

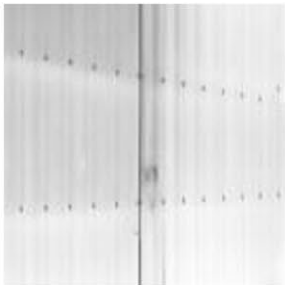
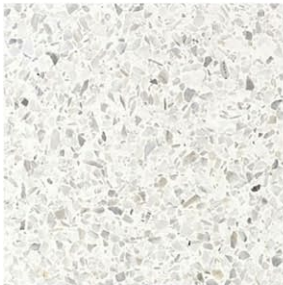
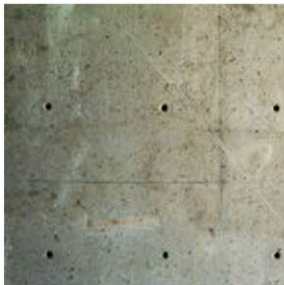
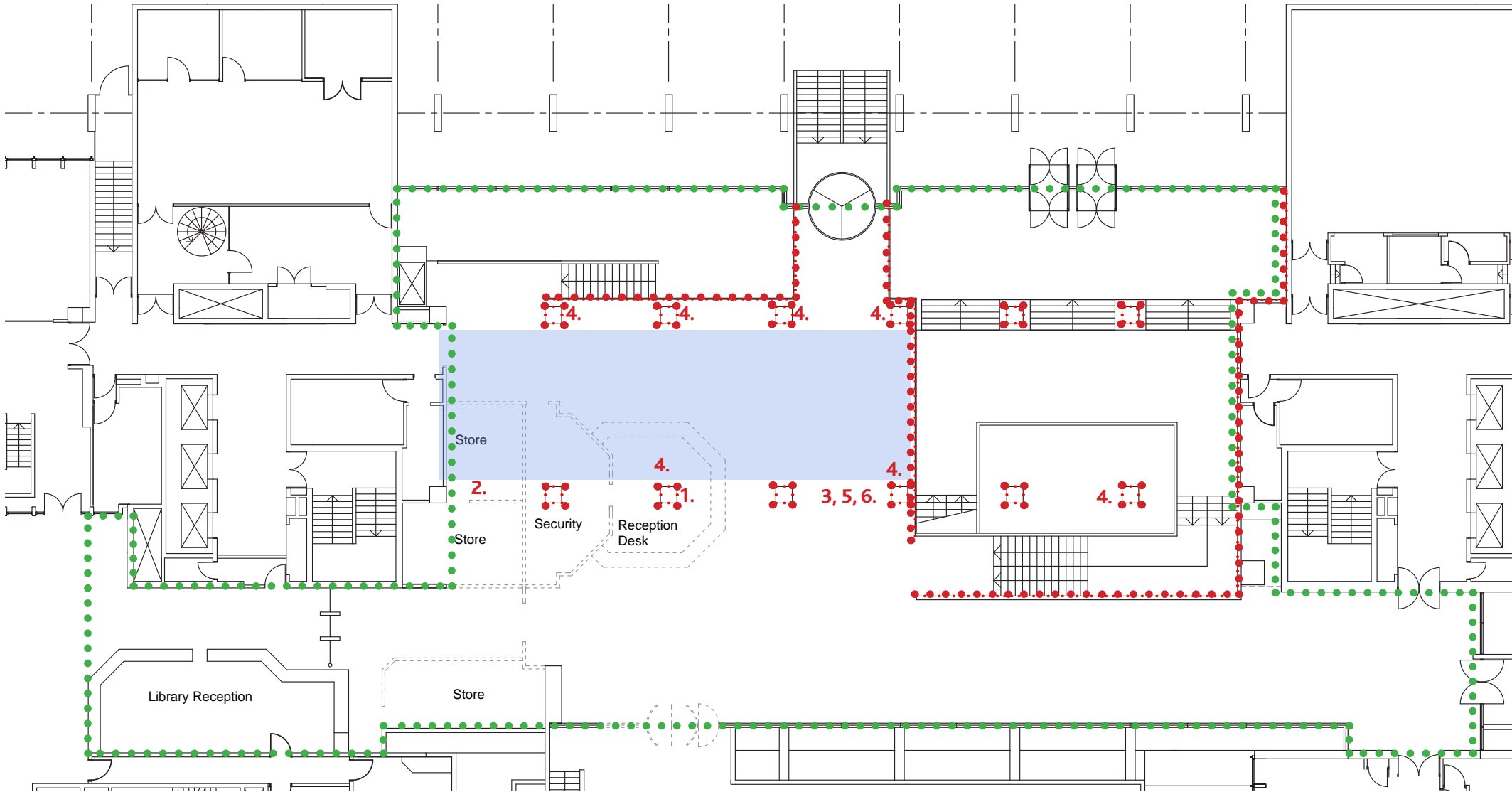
in this section only ceiling height will be raised by 670mm

Existing suspended ceiling also to be removed ready for replacing

suspended ceiling to be removed

- 4. Strip back the plaster coating on the staircase to reveal original concrete finish

- 5. Add strip lighting with integrated spotlights



4.

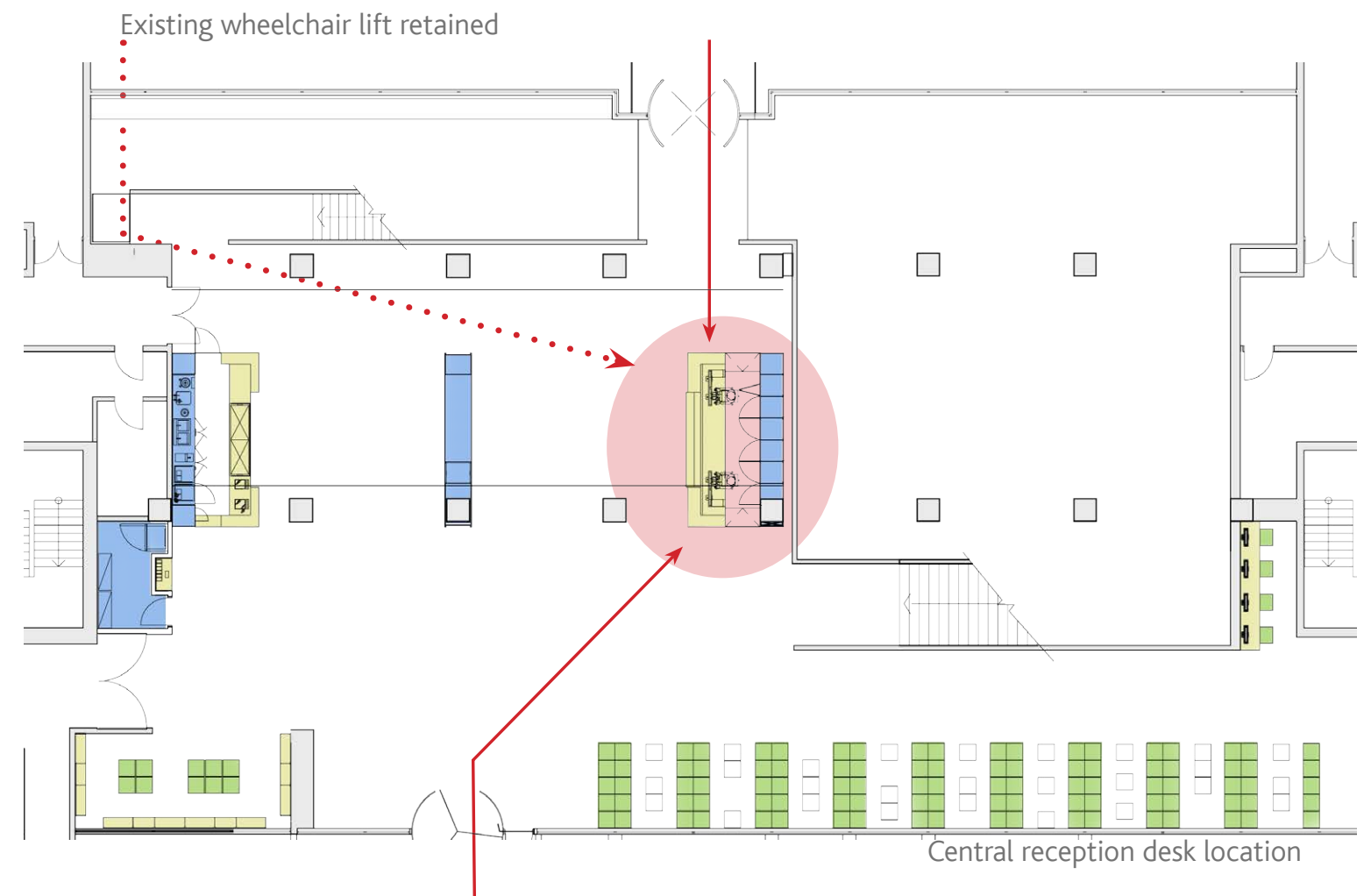
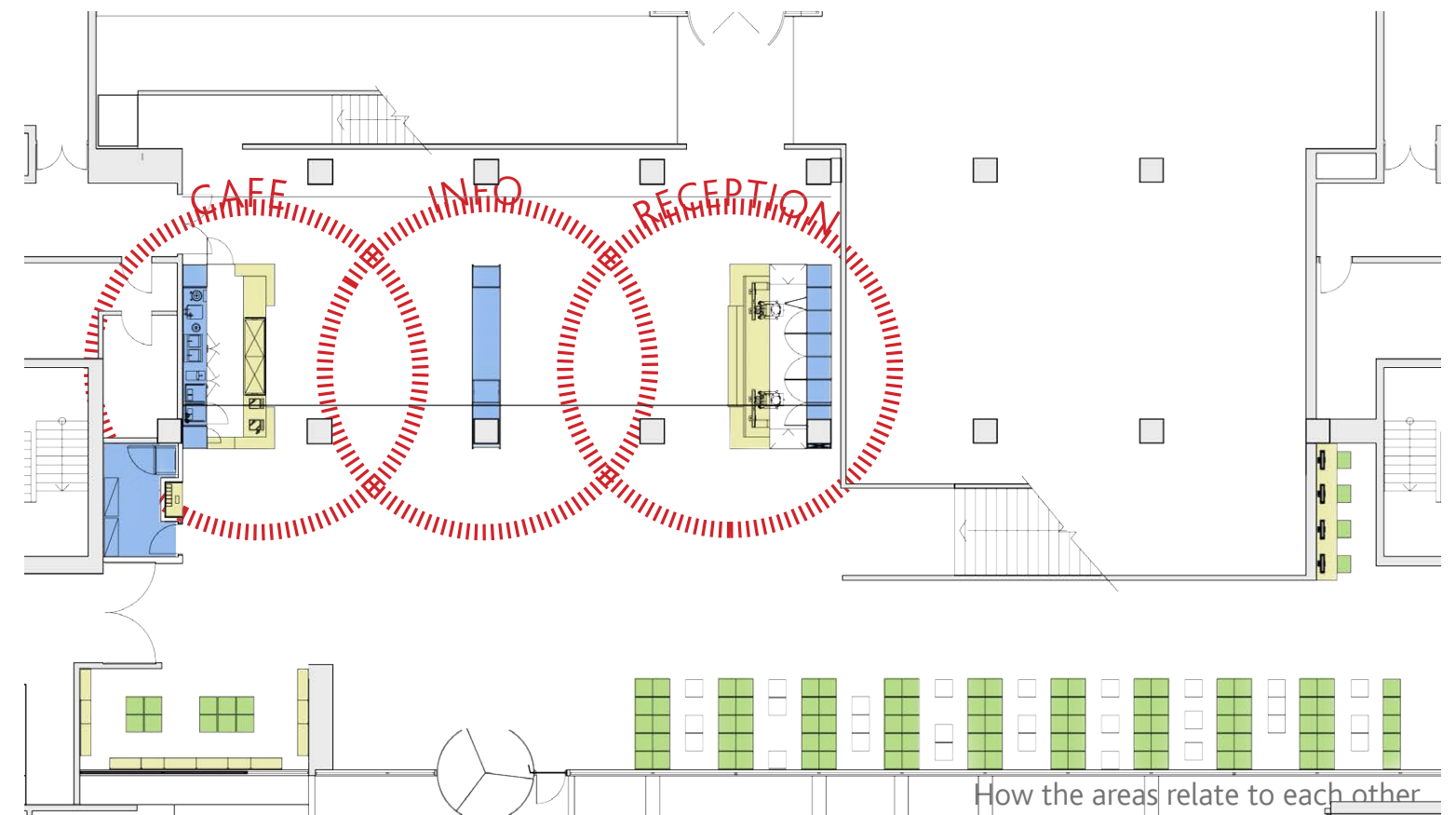
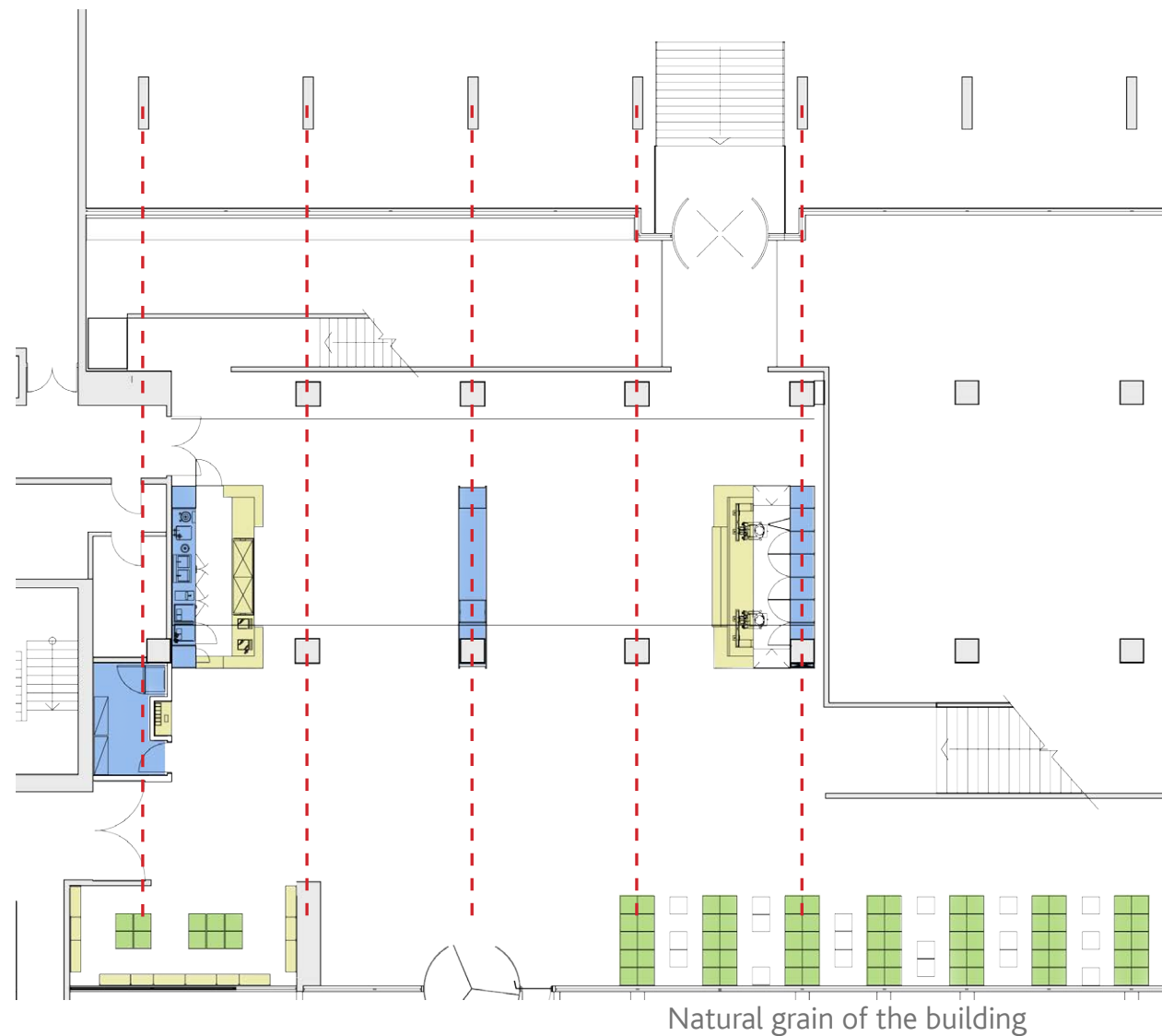
3.

5.

Use and Access- Circulation and User Habits

By widening the space and giving it additional uses we feel Level 4 will become more of a social hub to enjoy while being informed of the Institute and all it has to offer.

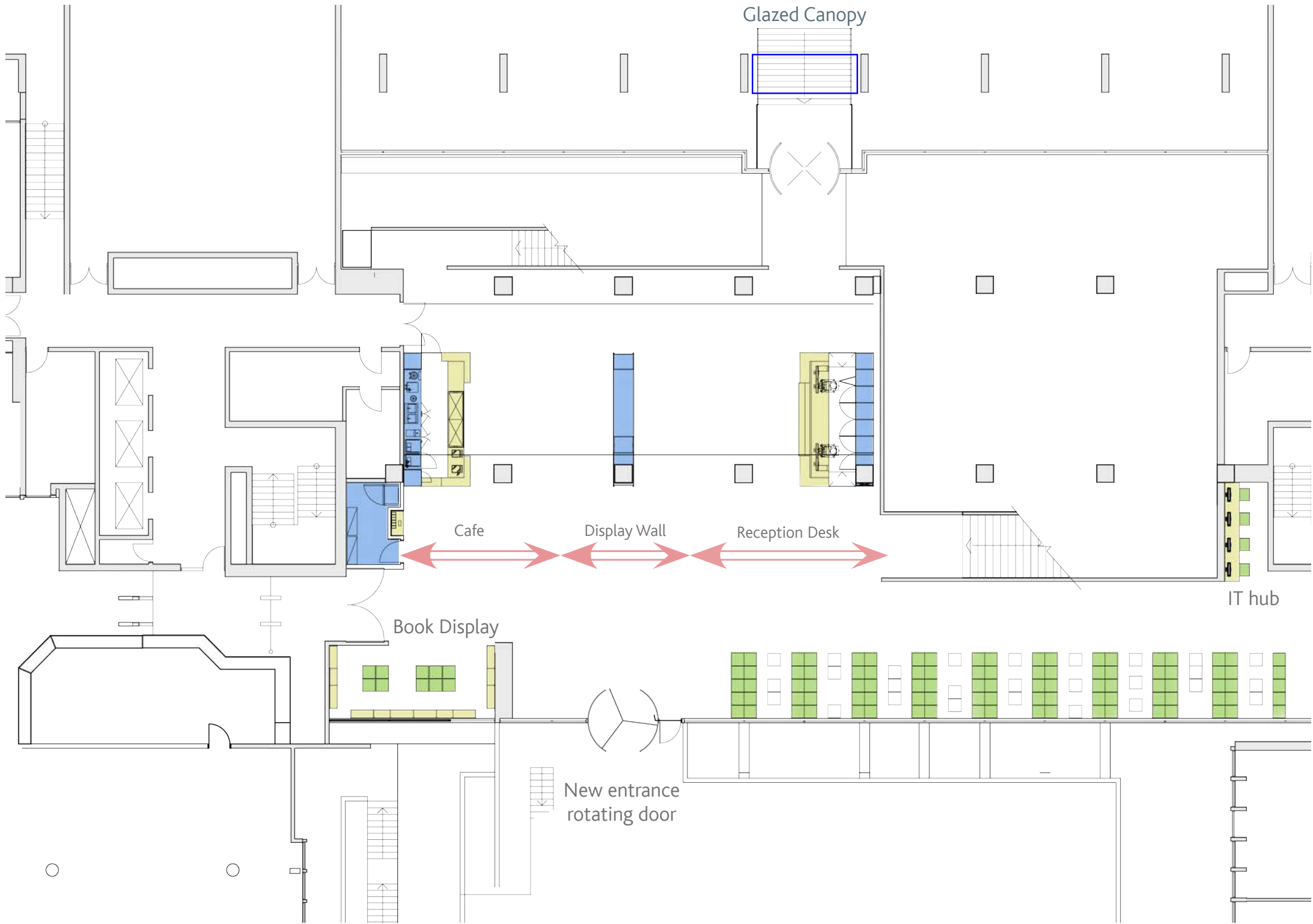
The reception desk and cafe become book ends, both following the same architectural language. These statement pieces frame seating to be used by people waiting, people having a coffee, or people meeting. A display wall incorporates digital information for users while they are in the space.

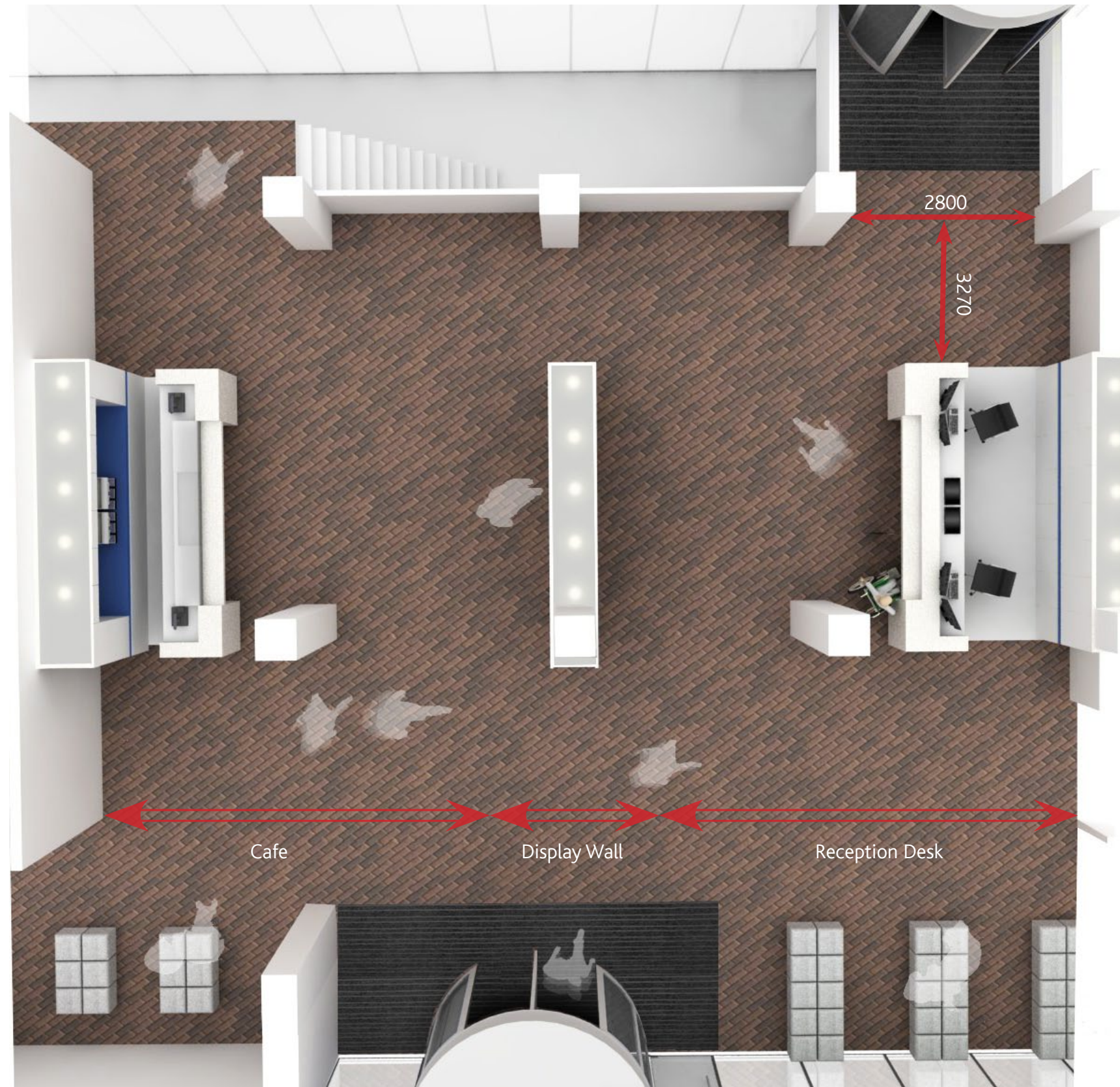


Proposed Plan Level 4

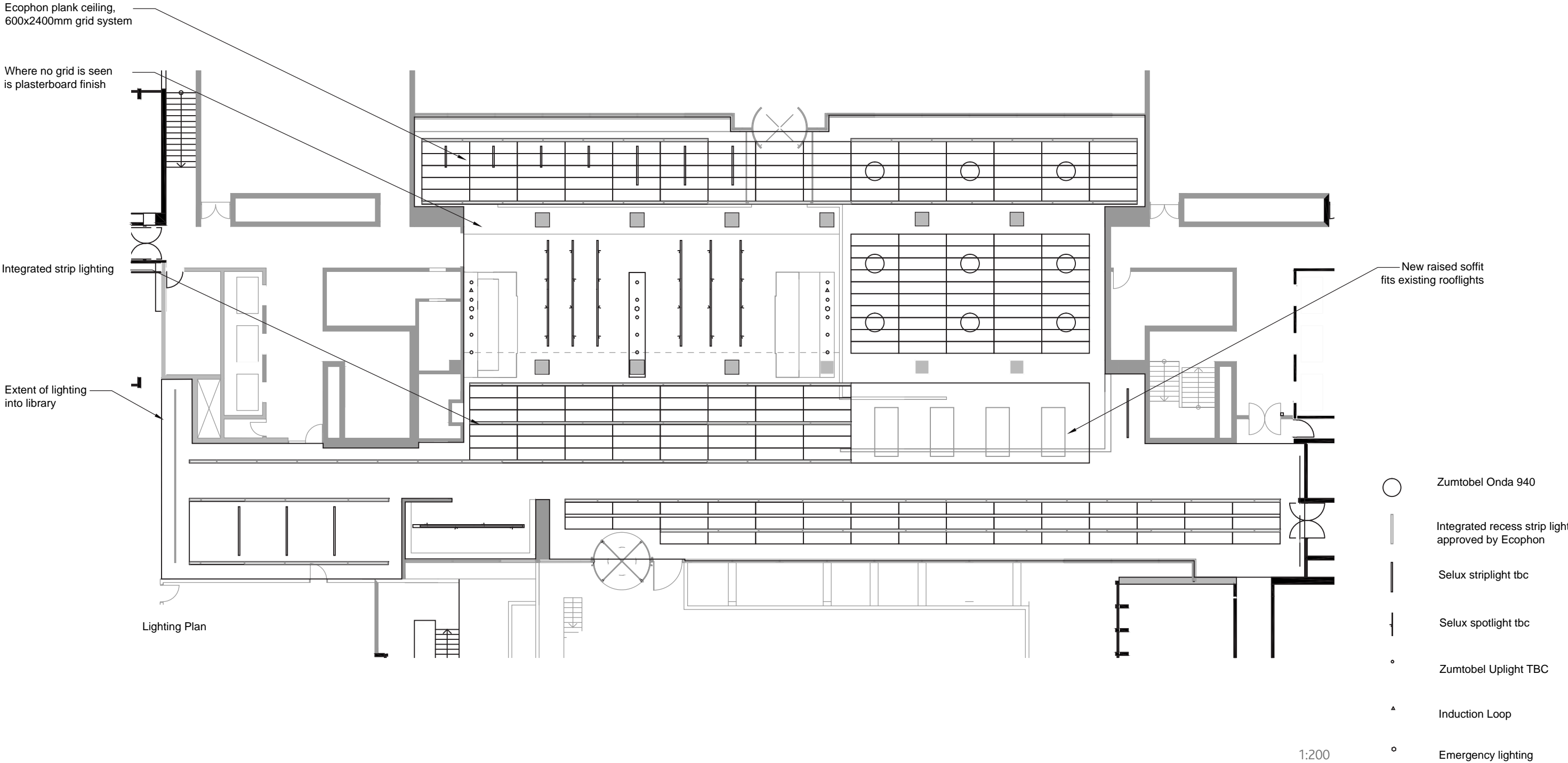
- Working element
- Service zones
- Seating

The reception hall is, essentially, divided by three pieces of furniture- the cafe, display wall and reception desk. These pieces of furniture are designed to enhance the space using durable, attractive materials and integrating lighting. Each piece of furniture is described in this document as they are central to the overall feel of the scheme.

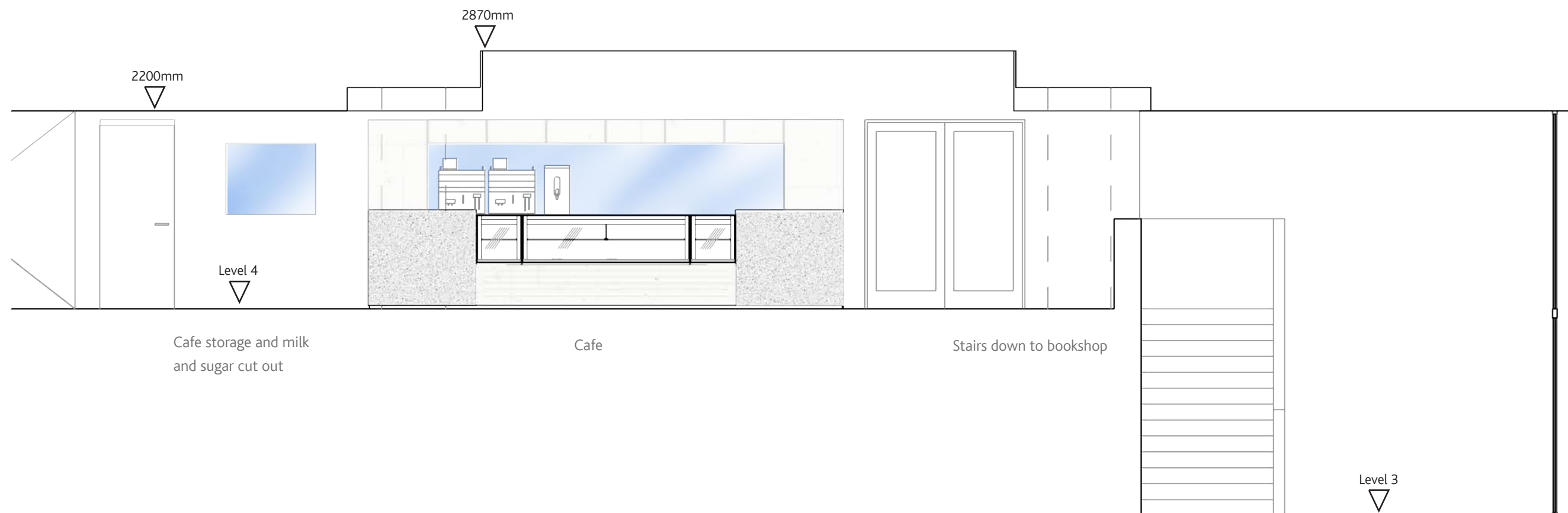
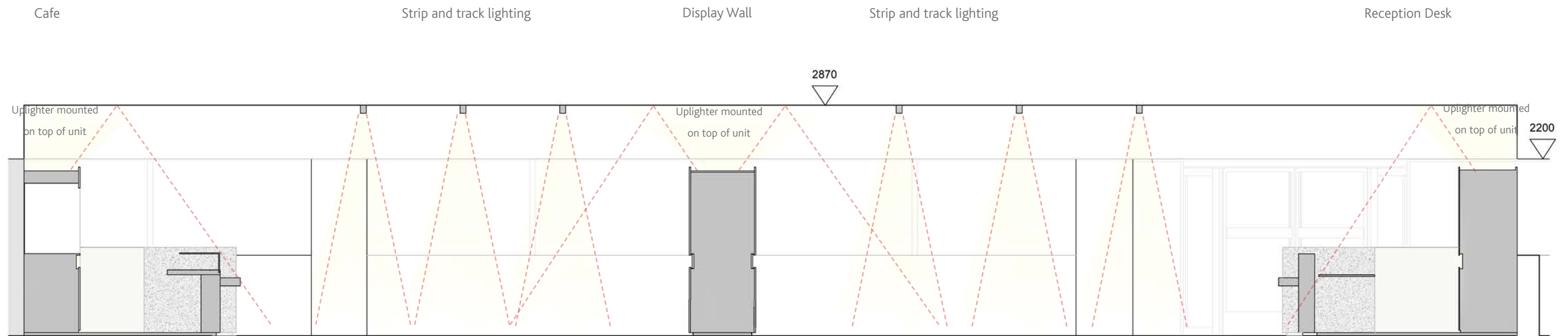




Reflected Ceiling Plan



Proposed Sections



Reception Desk



Terrazzo



Corian



Pantone 286

Terrazzo and Corian will be used for aesthetic quality as well as for their durability and permanence

