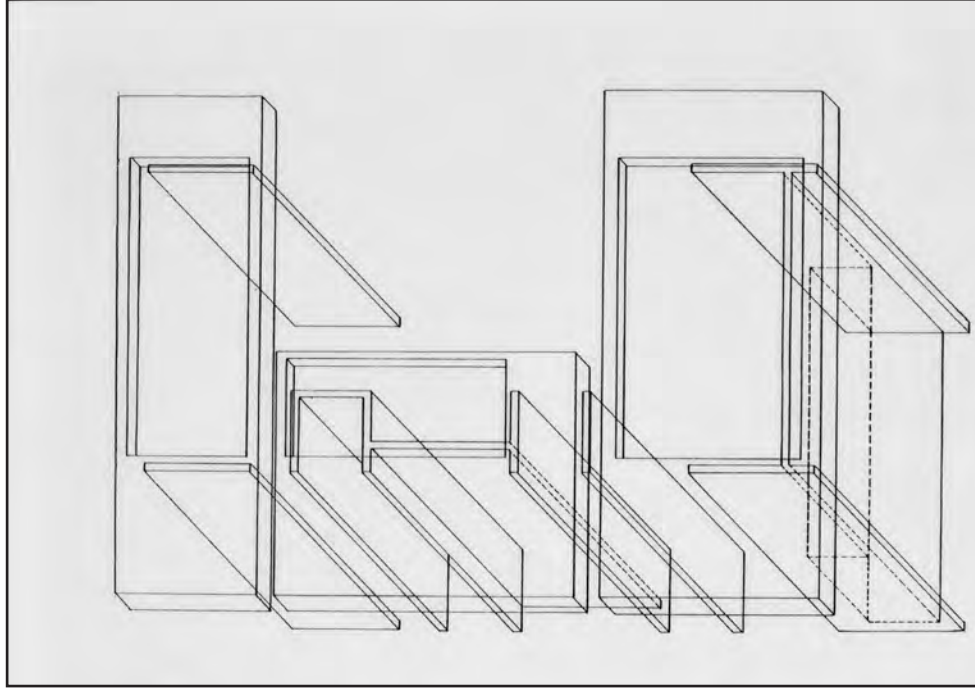


under the radar

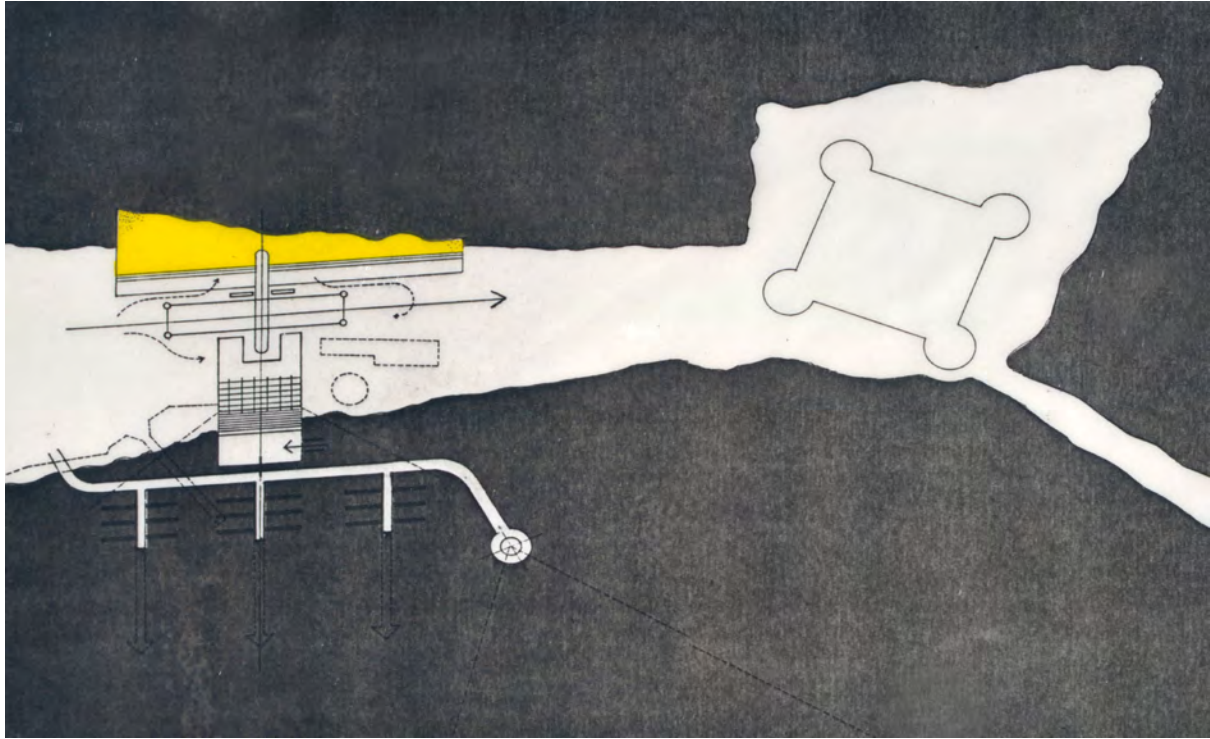
1977 - 88

flat 1 - 88 greencroft gardens NW6 photo dave king



*then suddenly - everything changes... I leave arup associates for the uncharted waters of teaching at the **liverpool school of architecture** (they had hitherto refused me as a student!) the idea being that I would somehow be able to return to liverpool, get a regular salary, set up my own practice and realise the inherent grumbling ambition common in architects of a certain age - success! not being beholden to others etc. trouble was - I had a very steep slope to climb...*

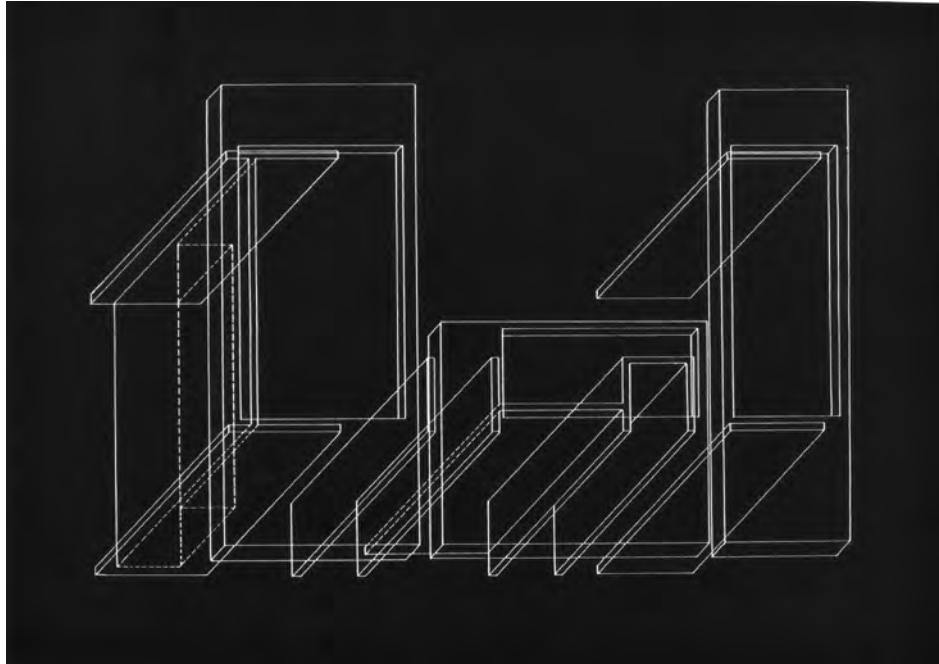
sunday morning sketch for the alexandria yacht club



1977 - 88

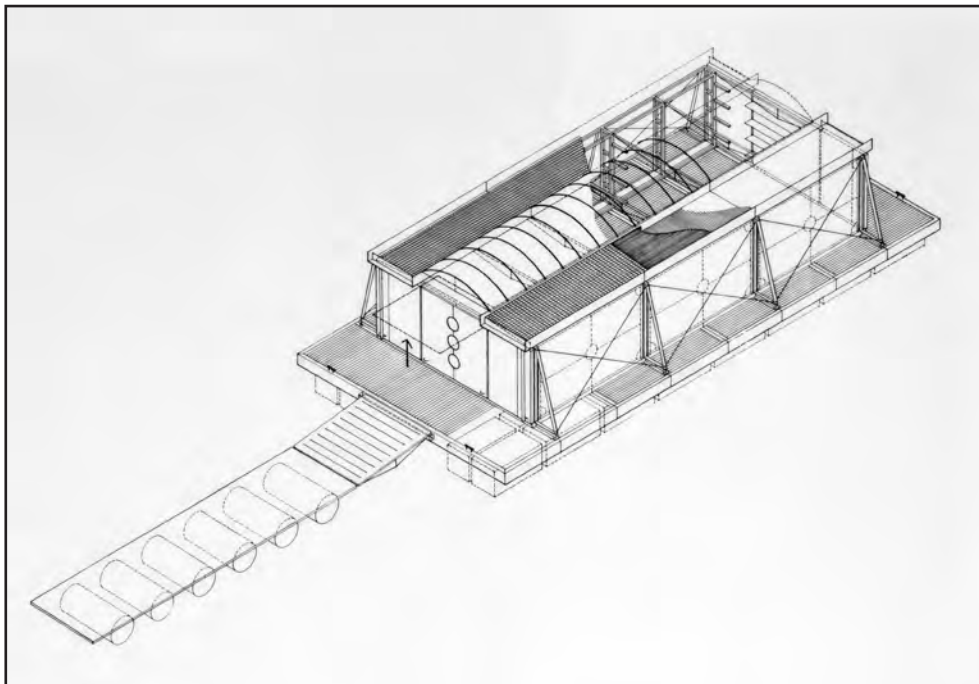
*first things first then - get some creative work, sort out a travel regimen (I had decided not to move out of london), see how teaching panned out and keep my options open... in the meantime schemes like the one above came my way - this for an old boss, **ben naylor** from early days in liverpool, now on his own in ormskirk. 'just a little scheme for alexandria dave' - a hotel, a beach, a marina - quick job, can't pay as yet... and so the change from the lasdun & arup ethos now began!*

schematic for flat 2 - 88 greencroft gardens



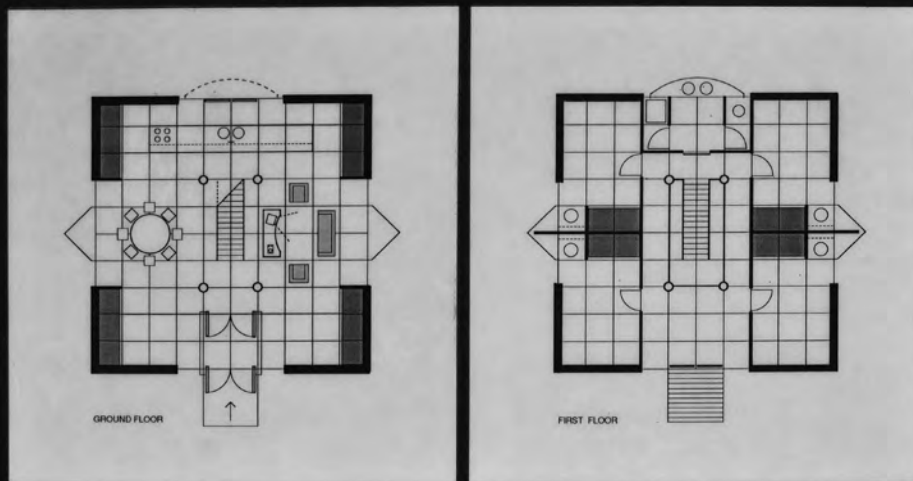
*and as the teaching process became more familiar - new friends, new schemes to look at and sometimes admire, I followed my design instinct in the number of small ways familiar to the itinerate lone architect treading the path of academia on one hand, and the law of a projects jungle on the other. so in my 'spare' time (there was plenty of it), I built another flat interior, did small extensions, worked for others (**foster & ABK**). 'many and various', that was the way it had to be...*

floating rowing club - ink on tracing



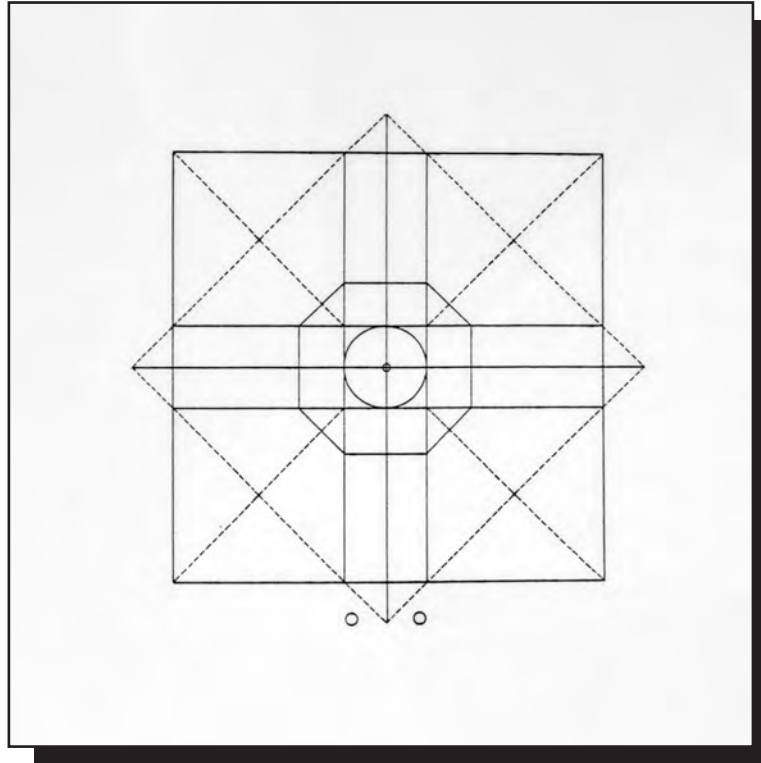
there were therefore a series of schemes, designs and initiatives that from time to time came my way - this, a floating rowing club in liverpool's south docks was to replace a rusty container and to be capable of moving site. as it happened, I couldn't get the **MDC** (merseyside development corporation) interested and the job ironically went to a london practice! nevertheless I enjoyed this last pen and ink drawing I ever produced - using a rapidograph & a specially bought ellipse curve.

house for sue - drawn on her macplus



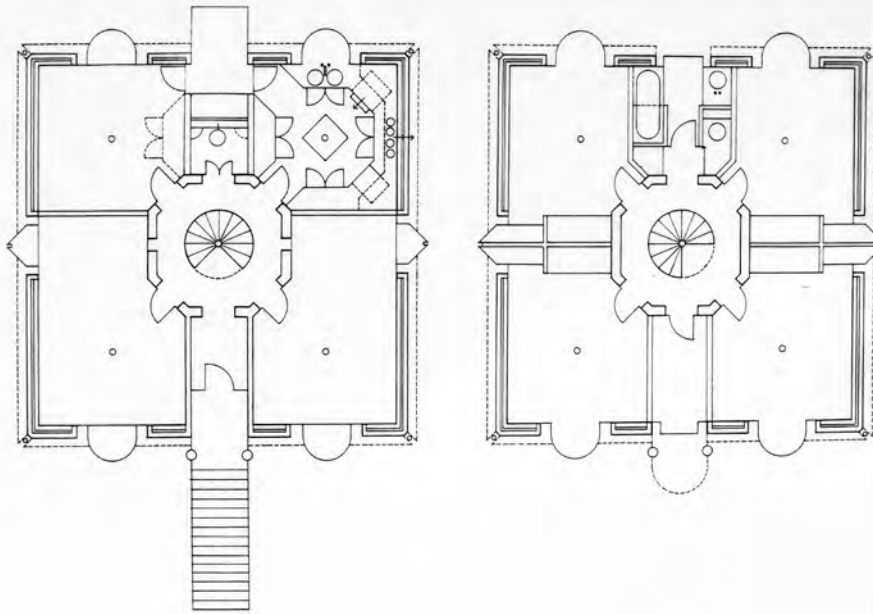
and to mark the most significant change in my drawing technique (probably EVER), this is my very first computer drawing - '**house for sue**', was drawn over a christmas break on sue's little macplus. it seemed to take forever - I'd not heard of creating rectangles, I did not know how to duplicate or make dimensions, I had to phone the software architects in california in the early hours to sort some problem - but it was a fascination... ushering in a whole new era of draughtsmanship and design.

mcavery house - plan diagram

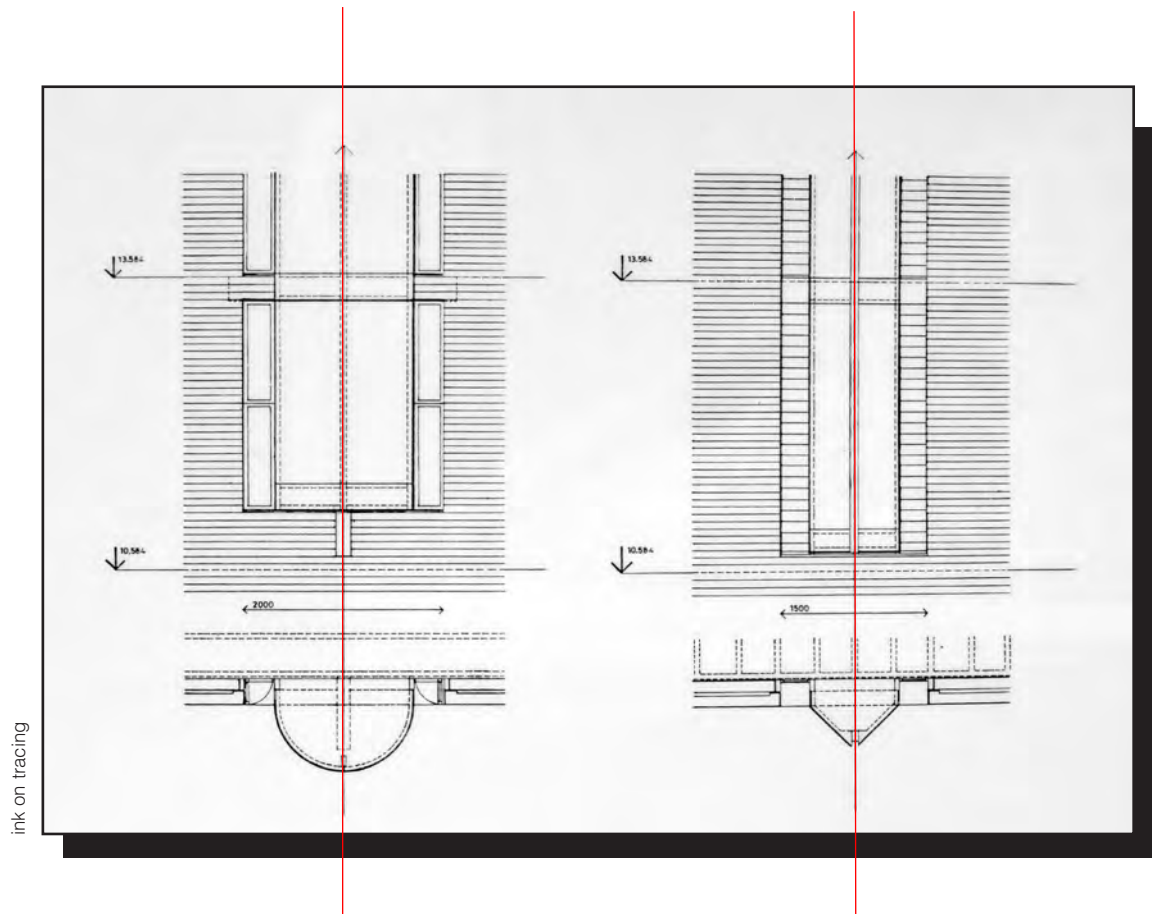


but before 'house for sue' and the floating rowing club came a series of the kind of jobs that maybe are not worth recording - and yet... there is something here - they took time, they lived for a while and some of them actually happened (although almost never 'as designed'). this was a diagram of a house for a flooring contractor. 'a room in each corner please' he said. "and a BIG central stair. the result? almost post modern... certainly 'classical'. there's a familiar church plan here I think!

macavery house - ink on tracing

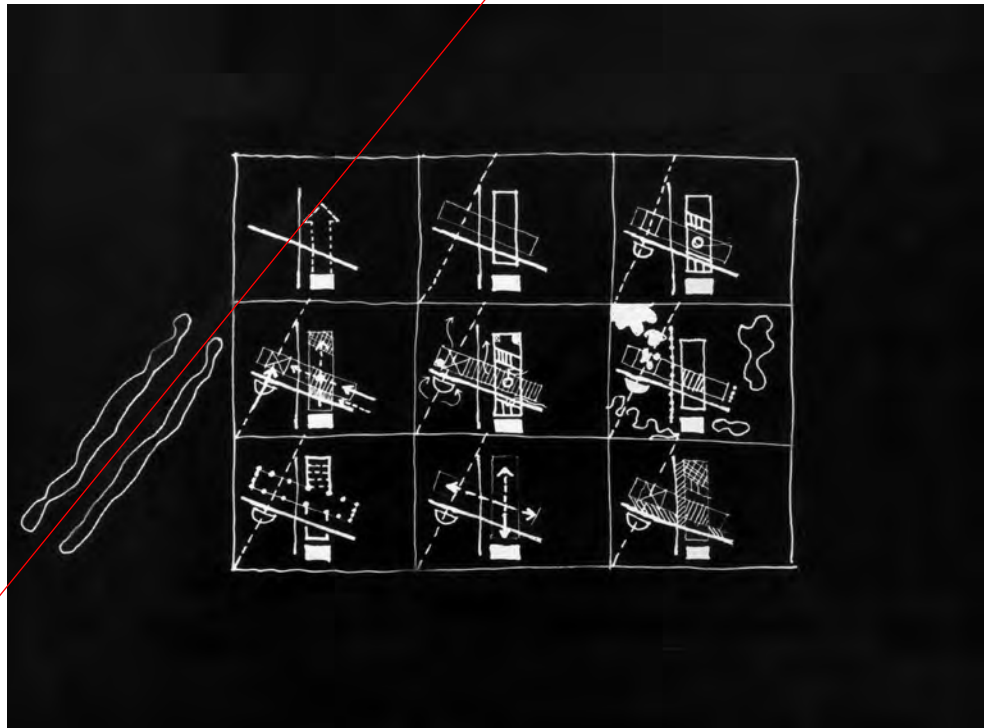


john macavery's house was to be in crosby (north liverpool) near to the dunes and beach. the plan was uncompromising - he liked it, but planning considered it to be 'ultra modern', and gave it a very hard time. I had to back away from the project due to the nature of the build, but the plan remained much as drawn except the whole central stair was enlarged. I upscaled the it from 10m to 20m for a student show... 'a classical villa for sefton park'. **professor tarn** was not amused!



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was this house an aberration? - post modern neo-classicism, or part of a continuum bringing to bear a series of influences - **kahn, stirling, lasdun?** arup associates gave me a fine **palladio** book when I left, but also a 'curved' T square... somewhere there lurks a love of classicism which is quite difficult to reconcile with the modern movement. even in 2016 I was re-visiting symmetry through a new 'villa' design for **shedkm**. a lifelong design conundrum as yet nowhere near resolution.....



kew competition first diagrams (freehand) -dave king

another mid '80's initiative was the international **kew competition**. my generative diagrams (above) formed the basis of an entry with students **colin leisk & nik suslak**. the wall, the hedge - a contrapuntal theme - gradual breaking down of structure into landscape gave us a joint winner with 3 other entrants. everyone who was anyone entered but a contract was never awarded! instead, a firm already working for kew bagged the job against all the rules... hmmm - what value competition?

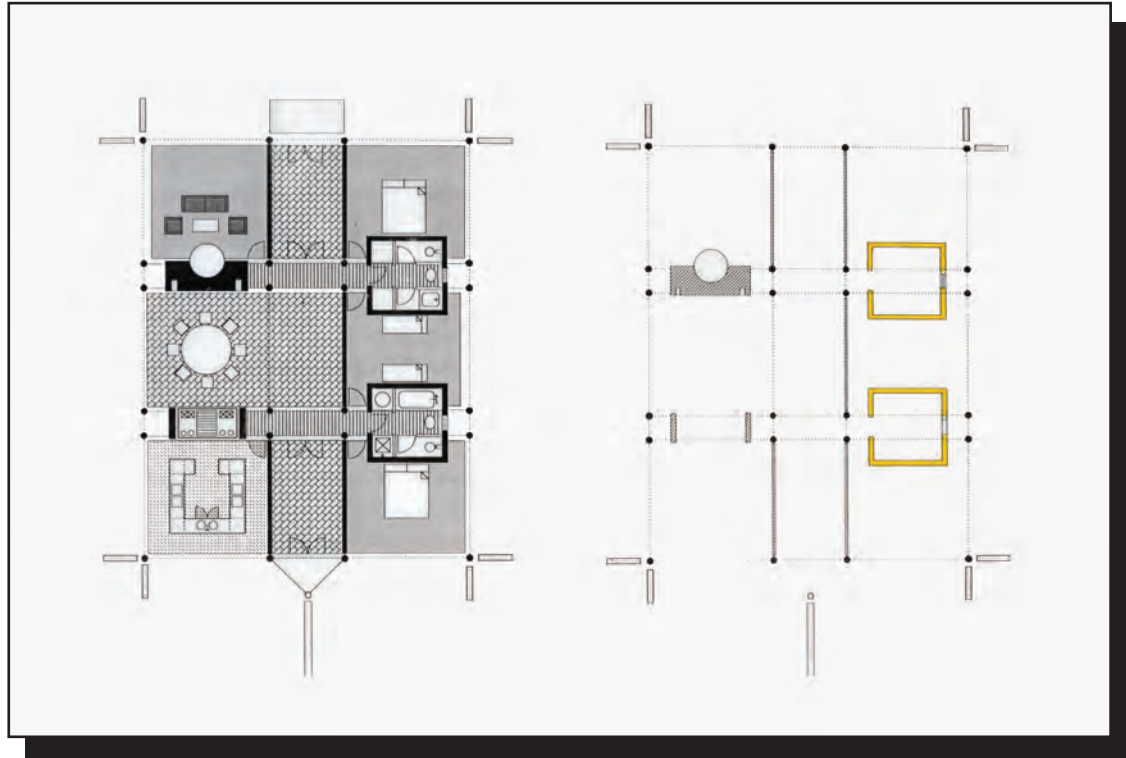
kew competition plan- drawn by nik suslak



1977 - 88

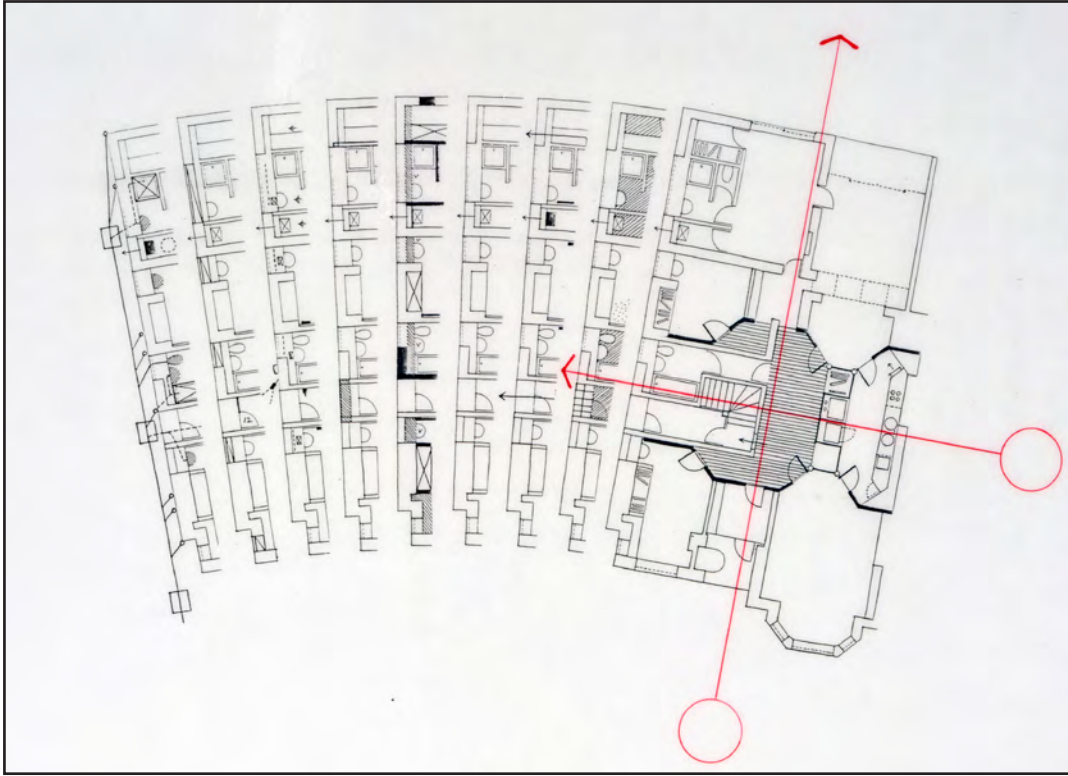
*I was working in **norman foster's** office at the time - others were entering too. **jan kaplicky, ian simpson, david morley**. our entry was different though - we reduced the scale to make the plans look better on the three A2 sheets! the judges had to go on site and measure ours out as a result. there was an exhibition in the AA (none of theirs got a result). I sent a letter to **peter cook** (then the head) offering to take part in the show. he never replied - should we have felt complimented?*

computer drawing no 2 - house for patrick



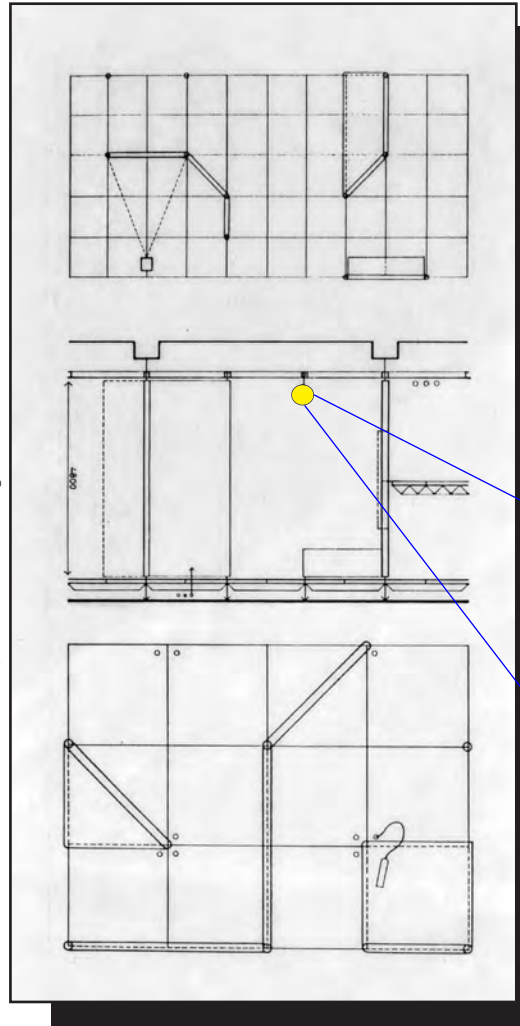
and this... a '**house for patrick**' meant to be self-build in killybegs NW eire. symmetry yes, but the grids came from patrick's insistence on using secondhand telegraph poles (of which he had many...) - published in the **BD**, the structure was to be stabilised by stone abutments reaching out into the landscape - it would be built section at a time and the client/contractor would live in a caravan. well naturally enough patrick's new wife thought otherwise (I don't blame her..) - so it never happened....

pack of freehand A3 working drawings

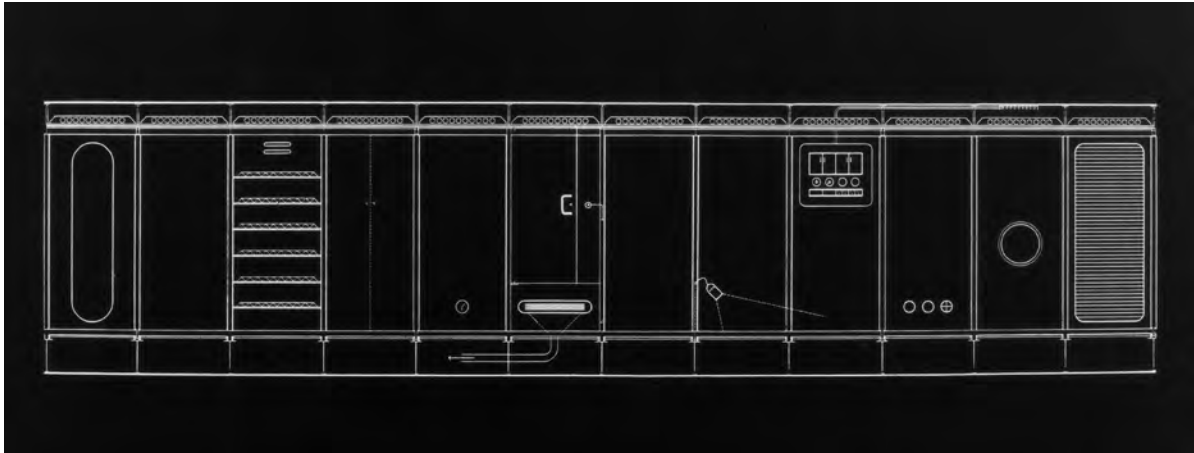


and as an example of the many 'can you have a look at this please' requests that are the bugbear of itinerate project starved university tutors, this is typical... how do you convert the ground floor of a flat for a famous child psychiatrist in 1 easy move (and not get paid for your trouble). well - a whole set of freehand working drawings done before sunday lunch is the answer! nevertheless nothing was in vain - a central core, symmetries - there's still a design continuum - even at this level...

flexible system for the liver building competition-ink on tracing



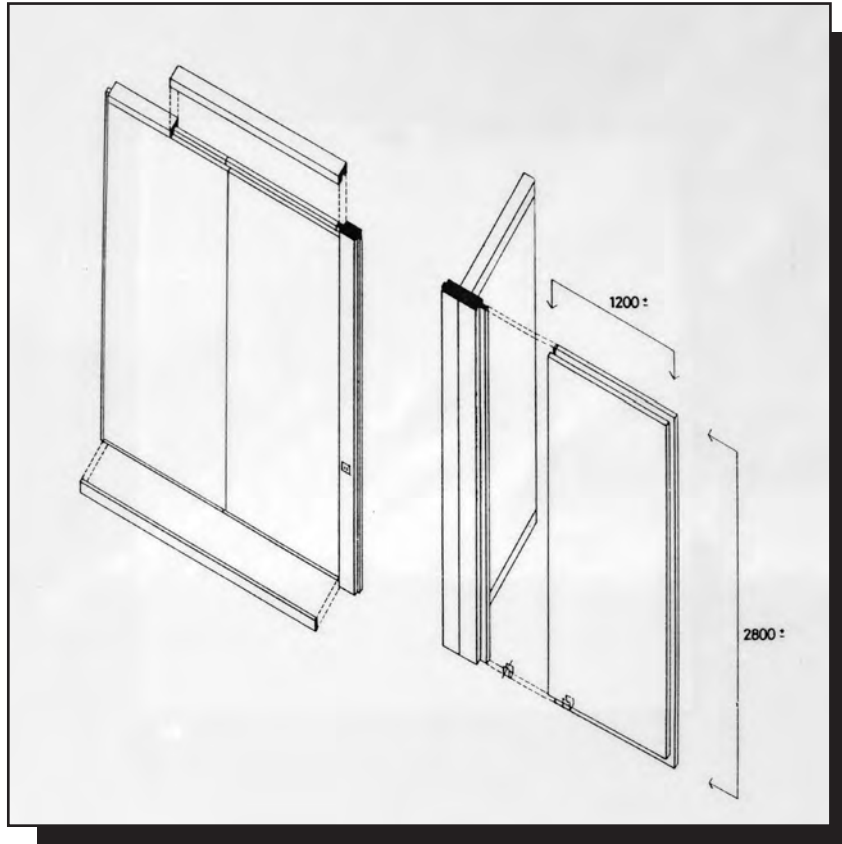
working on partition systems following the patrick house and the 3 basin office block at arups, led me from 'heavyweight' solutions towards a more adaptable approach. I'd admired **norman foster's** work - was tempted to take an offered job (associate) I'd done the kew competition whilst working a short spell on **stanstead airport**. my design ethos was therefore at a crossroads needing a definite project to bring it up to date whilst still retaining an ordered, almost 'neo' classical self...



partition system. ink on tracing for **INTEGRATION RVP**

another activity helped - running alongside the various home grown schemes for friends, was a growing interest in lightweight detail - partition systems and cladding. **dr alan brookes**, colleague and emerging expert in such matters, drew me in. integration RVP had completed a microprofile cladding system for fosters **renault building** in swindon. it was ahead of its time - **richard irvine** (CEO) & **ron fitch** invited me to be involved. I still collaborate with ron some 25 years later...

integrated partition system. ink on tracing



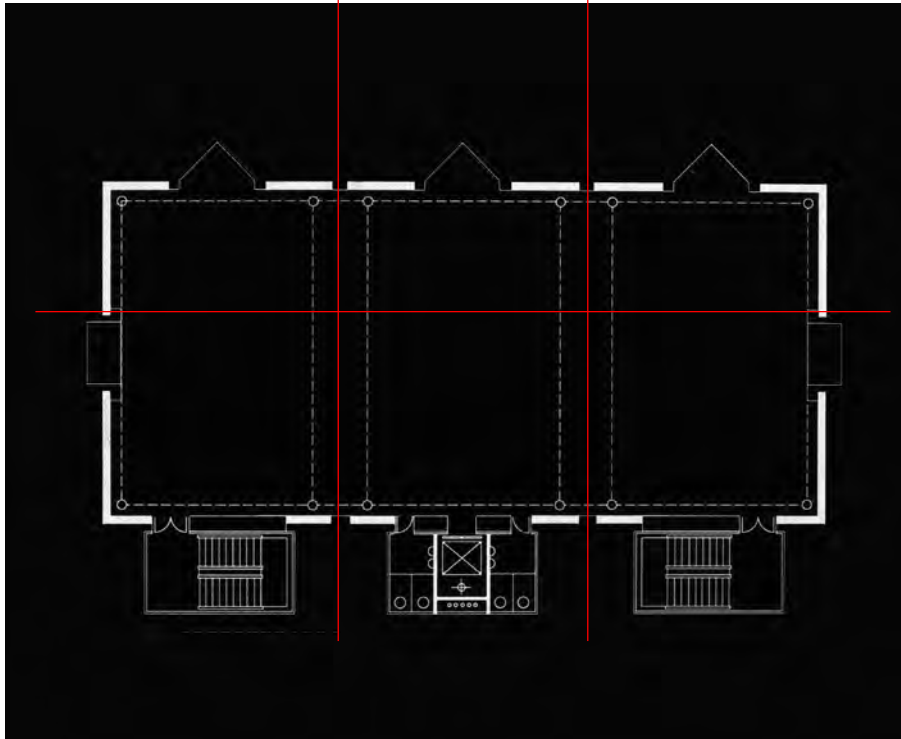
*still being in contact with **ron** - also **alan brookes** (it's now 2017) I'm amazed by how everyone who experienced the '80's still retains the youthful enthusiasm of that decade. does anything really change? this extremely simple drawing of a partition system could be something from 'grand designs' or a mockup for a SIPP constructed house. ideas are often born in enthusiasm, rejected through lack of interest only to re-emerge in another age. architecture does this to you.....*

liverpool marina sketches



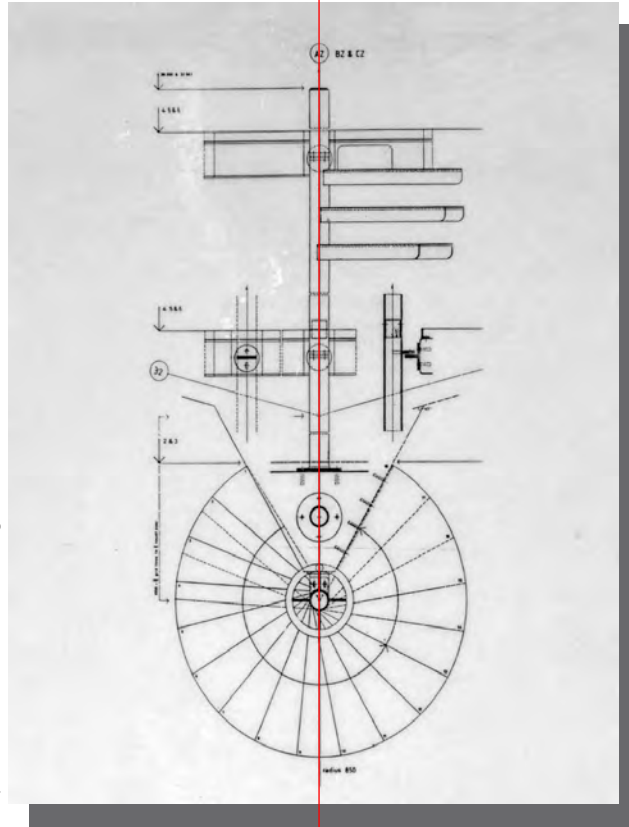
towards the end of the decade, as well as first attempts at computer drafting, the liverpool school of architecture **studio project** came my way (more later). in the meantime - or overlapping - there was the possibility of work at the embryonic **liverpool marina** - a sketch for some industrial units and a scheme for an office block. fees? - well some kind of arrangement where I could have a marina jetty that year. yet more procrastination, work at risk etc. these sketches are all I have left!

early MINICAD drawing

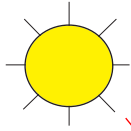


but them - almost... this, the 'wade hassan' building (an office block) was about to be instructed to go to planning when the developer 'disappeared' - moved out of the firing line - whatever... anyway this remnant remains. it was drawn around '91, when I'd got to grips with MINICAD having been instructed by 4th year student **howard porter** into its mysteries, and having by then a small office in lark lane with **rod mcallister**. this then was the birth of **KM** later to merge with **shed** in 1997.

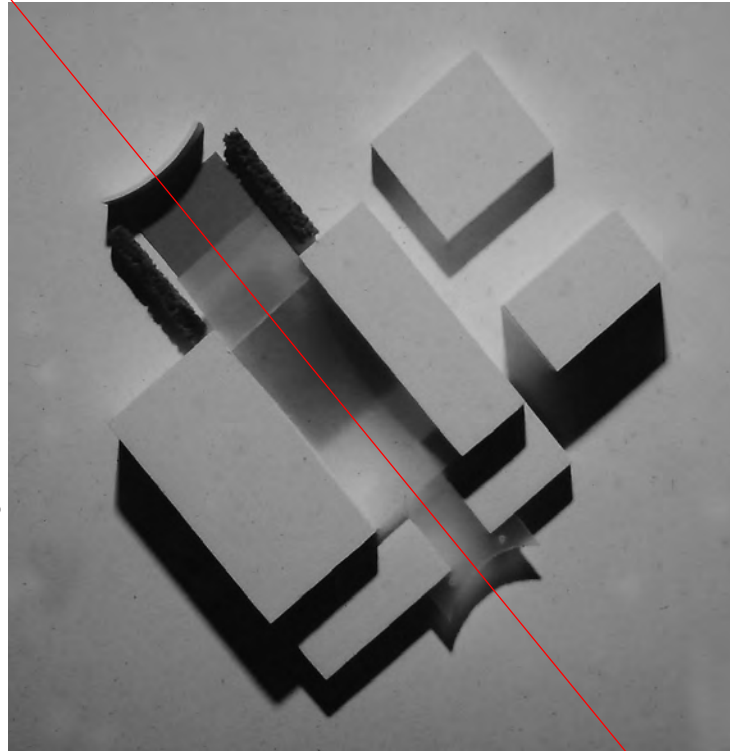
spiral stair at ABK - ink on tracing



*in advance of this though, the long vacations loomed, and there was only so much leisure that I could endure without a sense of architectural longing - indeed guilt at my lack of work and with it some creativity. there had been the 3 month spell with **norman foster**, a similar time with **ahrends burton koralek** and alongside building programmes in my NW6 flat, graphic work for a firm of engineers. above is a typical hand drawn stair for ABK (an interesting summer in 'utopia village')*

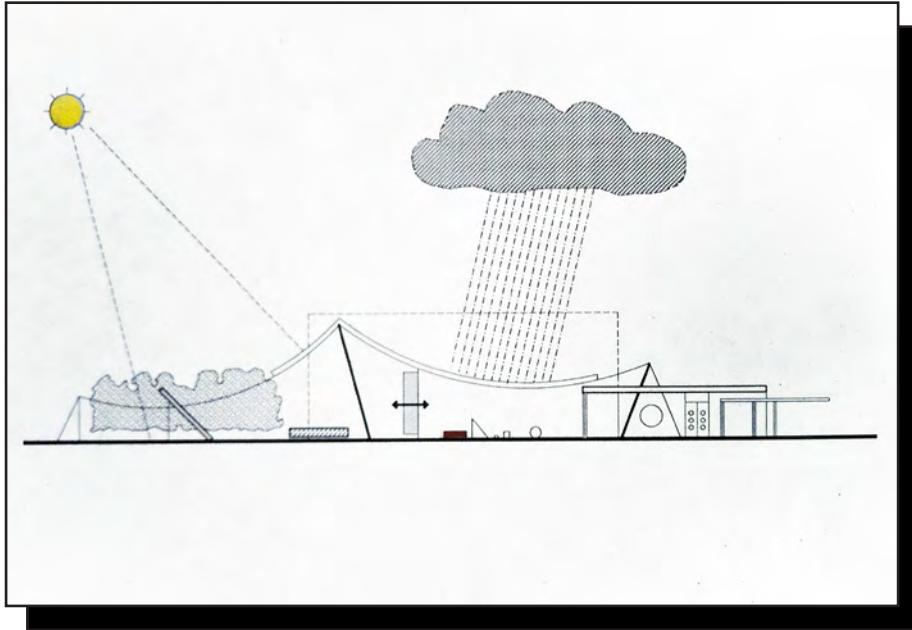


playschool model - dave king



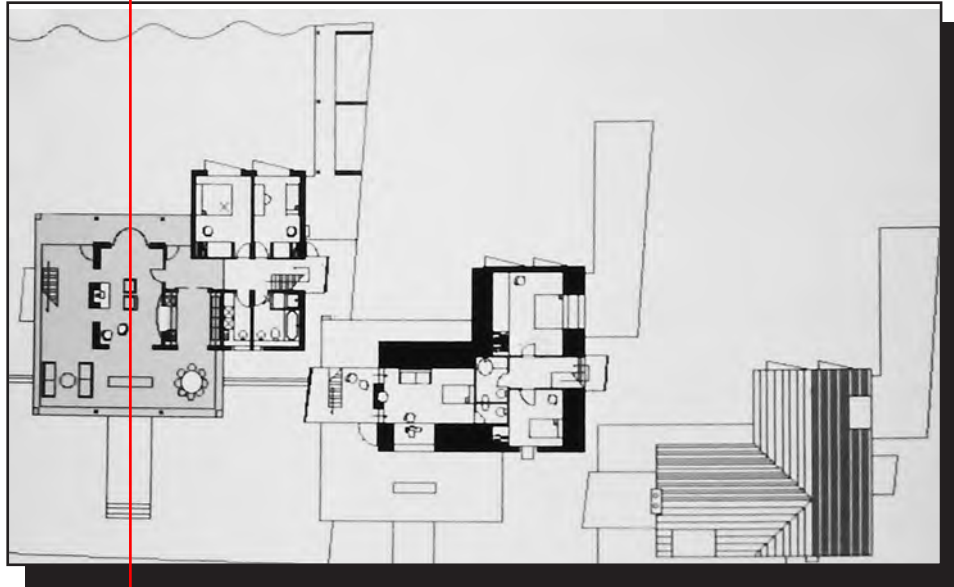
*looking over these various bits of ad hoc work I always pick up on some kind of axis leading to inherent symmetries. here in this mini competition for an **'early years'** playschool in an unused primary junior building, the inbetween space is an 'avenue' leading from shaded (N) to sunlight and outdoor space (S). the floor texture would go from hard tiles to grass. the children would therefore progress from mum to play then the other way at the end of the day - under a membrane sky...!*

early yeras - drawn on a macplus

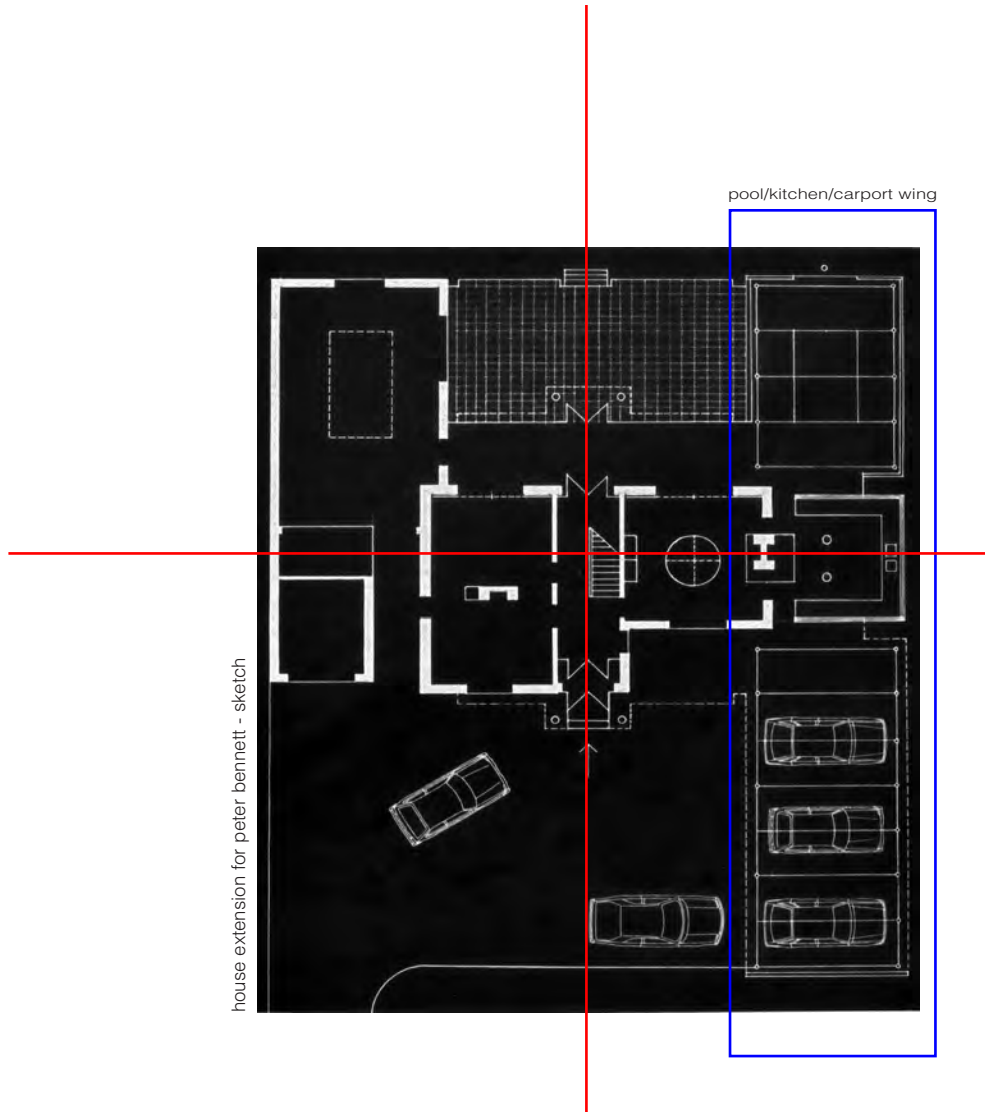


and somehow a small initiative like this had rewards over and above any prospect of an actual job. firstly the idea - something that seemed so obvious. then the drawing and the brochure that went with it. these were the very early days of **CAD** - this scheme was drawn on sue's **macPlus** in one evening on a makeshift desk in her flat in st michael's. it was an object lesson in simplicity of design and presentation - yet the strength of an idea shows through, providing inspiration for the future.

bungalow extension - macdraft drawing



but again back to 'never get paid' ideas for people's 'never get built' houses - here an adaption of a typical aigburth (liverpool) bungalow. I came across this at the sailing club bar - 'oh dave - here's so & so and they'd like a bit of advice... well OK but it will take a bit of time you know. the rest goes without saying so why did I put this in? well - for an architect virtually anything that you get the opportunity to design is worth it money or not - particularly as a rest from the sailing club bar ethos!



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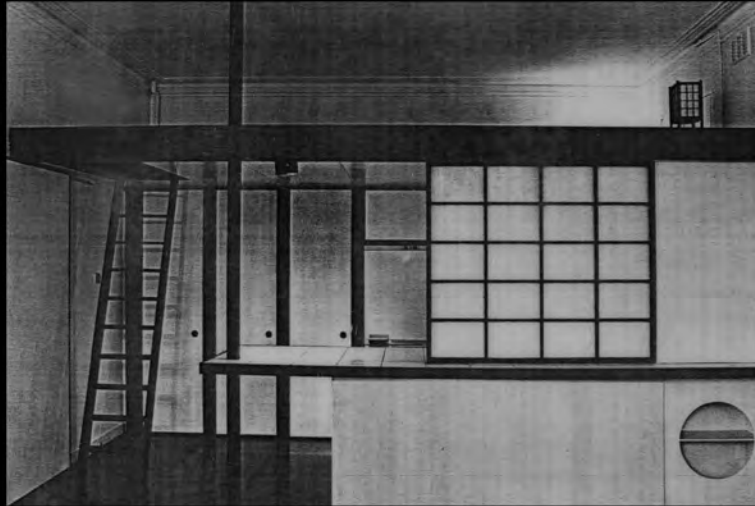
another example is this house extension - suggested to **peter bennett** owner of royden's, a local steel fabrication works. his pseudo jacobean house had been extended on one side for a snooker room and my solution was to replicate this wing bringing the whole into a formal classical country house typology. unfortunately my idea of using beautiful white steel was rejected by peter... 'what would his neighbours do he said 'laugh'?' another modern classical notion bites the dust!

kitchen for kimiko. photo -dave king



*so to complete this 'in between' section - where I was 'lost' between ambition, teaching at a university and working in offices during the inordinately long vacations, I did jobs for neighbours & friends - this, for a japanese girl **kimiko kambe** turned a rather ordinary west hampstead flat in my idea of the katsura palace in miniature! the kitchen, the translucent screen + the black & white opening party. here I met **yuji oki**, an artist who's work & philosophy I later came to admire.*

kimiko's flat - taken from a photocopy



*yes - kimiko's flat... an exercise in the art of the possible plus a good deal of trust on both sides. an expert carpenter friend **tim** who was teaching at hastings - took on the job. tim was obsessed with japanese design, but also with a girl who used to walk up and down the street dressed in long flowing robes. this created problems and with him then returning to his family, we had to get a firm of interior 'experts' in to do the bathroom. nevertheless fun and **kimi** lives there to this day....*

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