BSc. H&HA – VI Semester Accommodation Management

**HOTEL DESIGN**

**Chapter Outline:**

1. Design Considerations
2. Public Areas
3. Room Plan
4. Special Needs

A successful design depends not only on what the building looks like and the effect that it creates on the user, but also on practical considerations. Since each hotel type targets at dif­ferent kinds of clientele, its planning requirement will vary by the location selected, size, image, space standards and other characteristics.

**DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

Convention hotels require closeness to airports, while vacation villages and ski lodges do not. Airport hotels and motels need high visibility sign ages, while country inns, vacation villages seek seclusion. Super luxury hotels must be small to  create  an intimate atmosphere, while luxury hotels must be large enough  to justify  the  large number of restaurants,  lounges  and  banquet rooms  required by first class or five star  international stan­dards.

Design considerations also vary by type.  For example, resort hotels require larger rooms, closets and drawer space than down town hotels. Roadside motels may require larger restaurants than other hotels for peak periods, such as breakfast, but no room service. Casinos require a glittering design, while conference center decor needs to be understated. The social pastime of people watching, in the downtown hotels are accommodated by its lobby or atrium space. In a resort the same purpose is served by the pool deck, the sun deck at the ski lodges, the common area at the conference centers, and a tea lounge of the super luxury hotel.

Many hotel operators believe that the guest room makes a more lasting impression than the public areas. During the architectur­al planning of the room structure, the designer should establish the following

1. The type of clientele - the market mix. And the room mix. This influences the hotel's ability to let out 100% of its rooms and to generate maximum revenue. The transient business person needs single accommodation; conven­tion markets need twin beds and tourist market rooms to sleep for two or more guests.
2. The type of furnishing can be determined by analyzing the guestroom functions - sleeping, relaxing, working, entertaining, and dressing.
3. Flexibility to accommodate different types of clientele.  For example a studio room attached to a double room can be sold as a single unit or as two units.
4. Durability  - This is particularly important  as  guests  are seldom  as  careful about furniture or furnishings  as  in  their homes.
5. Ease of maintenance.
6. L PLANNINGDecor which pleases a large section of the clientele.
7. Comfort
8. Budget.  To combine function and comfort in a design within realistic budgets; use fewer individual pieces of furniture.
9. Space utilization: Since space is at premium, scale furni­ture slightly smaller to give the perception of larger and more luxurious rooms. Queen size beds instead of king size. Lounge chairs designed to be used at the work surface eliminate the straight desk chair. Mirrors enlarge space visually. Wall mounted bedside lamps permit a smaller bedside table. Convertible sofa or bed. Adequate luggage/ clothes space will reduce the clutter of clothes throughout the room. Armoire - combining drawer space with a television cabinet and possibly a pull out writing ledger in a single unit eliminates the need of two or three separate pieces.

In the bathroom designs should expand the countertop mirror and lighting as much as possible and compartmentalize the tub/WC

1. Security both of guests and staff. For example the  reception counter  must  be positioned in such a way that  the  front  desk staff  can  keep an eye on all guests entering  and  leaving  the hotel.
2. Meeting fire and safety requirements.
3. Energy conservation - Use of sensors to switch off electric supply automatically, when the guest leaves the room.
4. Sound insulation.
5. Environment friendly. For example recycling of water for horticulture and laundry.

**PUBLIC AREAS**

**Lobby and Lounge**

It is a principal focal point of most establishments and its design and decor should make an immediate impression. Atriums and glass lifts (gives a spacious feeling), lavish use of foliage; water fountains and waterfalls. It must also be totally functional. The flow of traffic must be studied to provide ample space, storing luggage, meeting friends. Ideally guests must be able to see when transport has arrived. It is also important for security reasons that staff are able to see who is entering and leaving the establishment.
The furnishing  though  elegant must be able  to  withstand  the considerable wear and tear. The circulation area must be clearly signposted. Lounges must cater to a large number of guests while at the same time providing privacy and intimacy. When these areas are rela­tively empty, a guest should not feel uncomfortable and exposed.

**Cloak Rooms**

Cloak  rooms comprise of several WCs, washbasins in the  form  of vanitory  units, large mirrors with good lighting,  coat  hanging space,  hand  driers and sometimes even a small seating  area  is provided.  Supplies such as tissues, soaps are provided.  Where individual towels are provided , a soil towel receptacle  should also be provided.

**Conference rooms**

They vary  in size from rooms to accommodate a group of  two  to ten, to rooms large enough to accommodate 500 or more people. Some large rooms can be used for two or three functions  by  pulling across  partitions which run on tracks in the floor  and  ceiling and fold away when not required. Ideally a meeting room should not have pillars, which  may  re­strict viewing. A  platform  may be required, a lectern,  large  display  boards, suitable chairs and tables, latest technology in audio and visual aids. Chairs must  be comfortable enough for delegates to sit  in  for long periods. Chairs may be fixed to the floor or may not.  Ample leg space must be given between rows of chairs. Seating may  be tiered to give the audience a better view of the stage. If chairs are separate, they must be light, easy to stack and give a good appearance from the back when arranged. Tables must be foldable and table tops must be able to take different sizes and shapes. Good ventilation and acoustics must be provided. The room  must be well lit but not too harsh. Lighting must  be controlled by dimmers. If there are windows, the curtains must be able to cut off light whenever necessary. Sufficient power points for all the electrical equipment must be provided. The doors should be high and wide enough to get large items in. Washroom  and toilet facilities must be provided. A pantry and a store room ( for furniture and equipment) are also necessary.

**Corridor And Room Positioning**

It  is  usual  for rooms to be on either side  of  the  corridor. Primarily  the location of the guestrooms must be  considered  in relation to the other areas of the hotel. The guest rooms must be away  from  the  public areas ( for security  and  privacy),  yet easily  accessible  to the Front office and  parking  facilities. Time saving  advantages for service should  be considered  thus saving operating costs. Elevators, Room Service and housekeeping pantries,  staircases  must  be  considered.  Schematic diagrams indicating the flow of service and guest service is desirable. Corridors must be wide enough to enable the use of wheel  chairs, trolleys  and to prevent any feeling of claustrophobia. To over­come the monotony of a long corridor, create a patterned break on carpets, walls etc. Avoid steps, instead use ramps if  necessary. Many  corridors do not get natural light (unless if they face an atrium);  hence sufficient artificial lighting must be  provided. Fire  doors or fire breaks in the corridors can help prevent  the spread of fire.

**ROOM PLAN**

Designing  a guest room is rather complex since the designer  has no  single  person  to design but a variety of  people  who  have different tastes, likes and back grounds.

The guest room must be designed around the needs of the guests. For this, one must keep the activities of the guests in mind whilst allotting space, furniture, fittings, lighting and other components. The largest space is dedicated to Sleeping - the comfort of the bed ( mattress, pillows, duvet), the functionality of the bedside tables, light, darkness, (window and its treatment, natural and artificial lighting), sound insulation (floor, wall, ceiling, windows), the room temperature (air conditioner, heater)

Relaxing – the sofas, television, music, radio, mini bar, lighting.

Working – table chair

Dressing – Mirrors, Wardrobe, Luggage Rack

Bathrooms include shower/tub, watercloset, vanity unit. Safety is of paramount importance – separate wet and dry areas to prevent slipping; electrical safety must be taken into account. Ventilation must be included. Luxury hotels include fittings and amenities to pamper the guests.

The minimum space requirement for various types of rooms in five star category is as follows:

**Single Bed Room: 180 sq.ft.**

**Double Bed Room: 200 sq.ft.**

**Twin Bed Room: 220 sq.ft.**

**Bathroom with tub: 45 sq.ft.**

**Bathroom without tub; with shower: 35 sq.ft.**

Entrance: Doors are usually 76-90 cms ( 3 ft) wide, usually simple in  design (for ease of maintenance). Room numbers are  fixed  to identify  the rooms. Locks are designed for security and  privacy of the guest at the same time, they can be opened by the  manage­ment in case of emergency. Door locks are usually self  locking, when  shut. A metal shield may be provided under the  keyhole  to prevent  the key tag from scratching the door. Computerized  card keys  are much more secure. A safety chain and a peephole may  be provided  inside the door for additional security. A door stop  is necessary to prevent the wall from being marked. Sometimes a long mirror is fitted on the back of the door.

Vestibule: The main switch is fitted near the entrance. Wardrobe and the luggage rack is usually placed here.

Beds: Average sizes of beds:

Single - 6'6" length, 3' width, 1'3" height.

Double - 6'6" length, 5' width, 1'3" height.

Mattress may be 4" to 6" in height.

Beds  usually consist of a headboard but no footboard.  Headboard should be 12" inches above the mattress height and 1"  thickness. Castors are provided so that the beds can be moved for  cleaning; but should not move when the guest is in it! Mattress  can be of spring, foam rubber, cotton. Pillows  can  be filled with foam rubber, kapok or feathers.

Bedside table/console: houses the telephone, channel music,  controls for the room lighting, TV, and  ventilation.  It should  have ample space to place guest's personal items such  as glasses,  books etc. The top of the table should be in line  with the top of the mattress. Width 15 to 24". Height 24-30".

Bedside lamps may be fitted on to the wall to save space. If  placed  on the table, it must be screwed on to the  table  to prevent accidents, thefts.

Dressing table/ Desk: Dimensions - 30" height, 21"depth. Stool or chair - 18" height. Dressing tables are provided with drawers. Drawers should preferably have recessed grooves to make  hardware unnecessary;  should slide out smoothly; laminated to  avoid the use  of  lining papers. The table itself could be  laminated  for durability and ease of maintenance; must have rounded corners  to prevent  accidents.  The dresser mirror should be  positioned  in such a way that the guest can view the mirror while sitting down. Adequate lighting must be provided to light up the face.

Luggage racks : Dimensions - length 30 -36"; depth 1'9"; height 18-24". Luggage racks may be cantilevered or may stand  on legs. It should be sturdy enough to take the weight of suitcases and  people sitting on it. If made of wood, strips of  rubber  or brass  studs can prevent the surface from getting  marked. Drawers under the rack can add on to the storage space.

Wardrobe: Dimensions - depth 2' ( deep enough to accommodate the hanger) Height  6' ( 3" clearance must be given above the rod, to  remove hangers).  It should be high enough to hang long dresses  without creasing them. In resort hotels, larger wardrobes may be necessary. The door  of the  wardrobe can be of the sliding type to save space.  It  must preferably  be  slatted for adequate ventilation. A door  may  be avoided  in motels. Light can be provided in the  wardrobe  which can  be  operated by a door switch. However the light  must  not damage the clothes. Drawers may be provided; but avoidable  since guests normally tend to forget things in there. Hangers can be of the theft proof type.

Seating: One or two armchairs with a two seater sofa and a coffee table is usually provided near the window. a floor  stand­ing lamp may also be provided .

Television: is usually positioned in such a way that it can be viewed both from the bed and the seating area. It is  normally placed  on a swivel stand. A remote control is advisable. The  TV can  also double up as a VDU with a keyboard catering  for  elec­tronic  shopping, settlement of guest accounts  from  the  room, guest information system etc.

Windows: should as far as possible be of standard size as this avoids the need for many spare sets of curtains and  sorting curtains of different lengths. The ease with which windows can be

cleaned  both  from the inside as well as the outside  should  be given due consideration. Windows may be double glazed to  provide sound and heat insulation.

Soft furnishing: like drapery and upholstery must be durable, easy to maintain, comfortable, enhance the appearance of the room and help in acoustics. In all rooms a full length mirror may be fixed to some convenient place on the wall or even fixed to the inside of the door.

Accessories: Waste bins, ashtrays, wall pictures, foliage,  some­times even curios in suites.

Ceiling, wall, floor : Acoustical properties, safety, appearance  and insulation are the factors which  are  considered when  choosing  walls,  floors and ceilings . There  are  a  wide variety  of ceiling surfaces and wall coverings available in  the market today. Paint is by far the most common. Vinyl wood  panel­ing,  wall paper, tiles are some other options. Skirting boards, while  essential  to prevent wall damage, should  not  present  a ledge  which  needs dusting; they may be  slightly  recessed  or coved.  Carpets are the most common floor covering and  they  are available  in different varieties. Hotels close to sandy  beaches should preferably avoid carpets as the sand brought in can pose a problem. Tiles, stones, vinyl are other options.

Central air conditioning system or heating system is normally  provided and they should be regulated from the  bedside also.

Fire detectors and alarms must be provided in rooms.

Other amenities may be provided, like:

Tea and coffee making machines

Minibar (sales from the minibar can be automatically recorded)

Dumb valets i.e., trouser presses which also take skirts.

Shoe cleaning machines.

Intercom cum baby listeners.

Electronic safe.

**Bathrooms:**

The minimum size of a bathroom with a tub should be 45 sq.ft. If only a shower is provided, it should be 35 sq. ft.

Ventilation in bathrooms should be given careful consideration. Electric light switches should either be outside the bathroom or of the cord type.

Bathroom floors and walls should be hygienic, easy to maintain and unharmed by water. Marble, ceramic tiles, vinyl  are the options.

Bath tubs are available in various colors with soap dishes, grab bars and anti-slip devices sometimes incorporated. Baths are generally  6'2" in length and 2'4" in width; but vary  in depth. Showers are usually sited over the bath and their height, ifnot  movable,  should be given careful consideration.  The  water must be thermostatically controlled. A towel holder and a  shower screen  or  a  curtain should also  be  provided.  A  retractable clothes line across the tub can be a convenience to the guest.

Vanitory unit consists of a wash basin and a counter surrounding it. They match the bath in color. The vanity unit can be made of ceramic, acrylic or plastic laminate. A mirror must be provided above the unit and preferably fluorescent lighting  must be  provided  so that the guest's face is properly lit.  A  razor socket and a face tissue holder can also be provided.

The Water Closet is about 1'4" high, 2' deep and 1'8" wide. Toilet paper holders should be within reach.

A Bidet may not be provided in a standard size room; but usually  seen in suites. It is 1'3" in height, 1'3" in width  and 2' in depth.

Towel  rails  should be sufficiently far from the wall  to  allow ample space for the thickness of the towels. A clothes hook and a latch may be provided on the back of the door. A dustbin must not be forgotten in a bathroom. A telephone fixed on  the  wall, preferably at an easy reach from the WC  and  the shower can avoid a lot of irritation to the guest.

Suites are spacious and more luxuriously furnished. Livingroom  and the dining room are elegantly furnished. Bathrooms  may be provided with a bidet and a whirl pool bath.

**SPECIAL NEEDS**

**Designing for the Disabled:**

* Easy access  is very important; cars carrying  disabled  persons should  be able to stop just outside the main entrance.  Reserved parking should be provided for the disabled drivers.
* Doors should be wide enough for the wheelchairs to pass  through, and  open  automatically or by pressing  a  conveniently  located switch or by a gentle push.
* A section of the Reception counter should be dropped down so that a person on the wheelchair can easily check in.
* Where there is a change of floor levels, a ramp must be provided.
* Hand  rails should be designed to help warn the blind  and  those with poor vision of approaching corners and the start and end  of stairs. Elevator  floor switches must be easily accessible from a  wheel­chair.
* Signs  should  be  easy to read with large  lettering  against  a contrasting background. Wherever  possible warning signals should be visible as  well  as audible,  for  example strobe light alarms for the  deaf  and  a vibrator to alert them when they are asleep.
Dining  room tables should be high enough for the person to  not have to be transferred from a wheelchair.
* Room door should have an additional peephole at  the  wheelchair level.
* Wardrobe Hanger rod should be flexible enough to be brought down; within easy reach from a wheelchair.
* The room and the bathroom must be spacious enough for a person to move around in a wheel chair.
* The bathroom door must be wide enough and should be devoid of  a threshold.
* A shower cubicle with a stool is preferable to a tub.  Handrails and grab bars should be provided wherever necessary.  `Drop-down' arm supports can also be provided on approach side of the WCs.
* The vanitory unit may have to be adjusted to the height  of  the wheelchair.
* Fire exit plans and room service menu cards should also be  pro­vided in braille.
* Special bed head unit with light switches, message signal, door release for automatic opening of door, flashing fire alarm signal and bed frame vibrator for the hard of hearing.
* Sharp corners and edges should be avoided.

Women traveling alone will appreciate rooms near lifts. Since they are more concerned with safety, a good locking  system is  a must. Added amenities like a good flexible mirror to view the back as well, adequate lighting for make-up, hair dryers etc. will be appreciate