

Guide To Space Planning & Rationalisation

2022 Edition



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2022

GETTING STARTED:

The mark of any successful business is its ability to adapt to changes within its industry and the environments it finds itself in. With the Coronavirus pandemic heralding in a drastic increase of flexibility across all aspects of business, it has never been as important to be able to react to these changes as and when they occur.

A great way to find the right balance is using **space rationalisation**. This is a programme that is designed to assess the needs of the business and its employees, providing decision-makers with all the information needed to identify workplace and operating strategies that will best support them. Ultimately, it will stand the business in a better stead to make adaptations going forwards – not just saving much in the way of time and money but improving all operational aspects too.

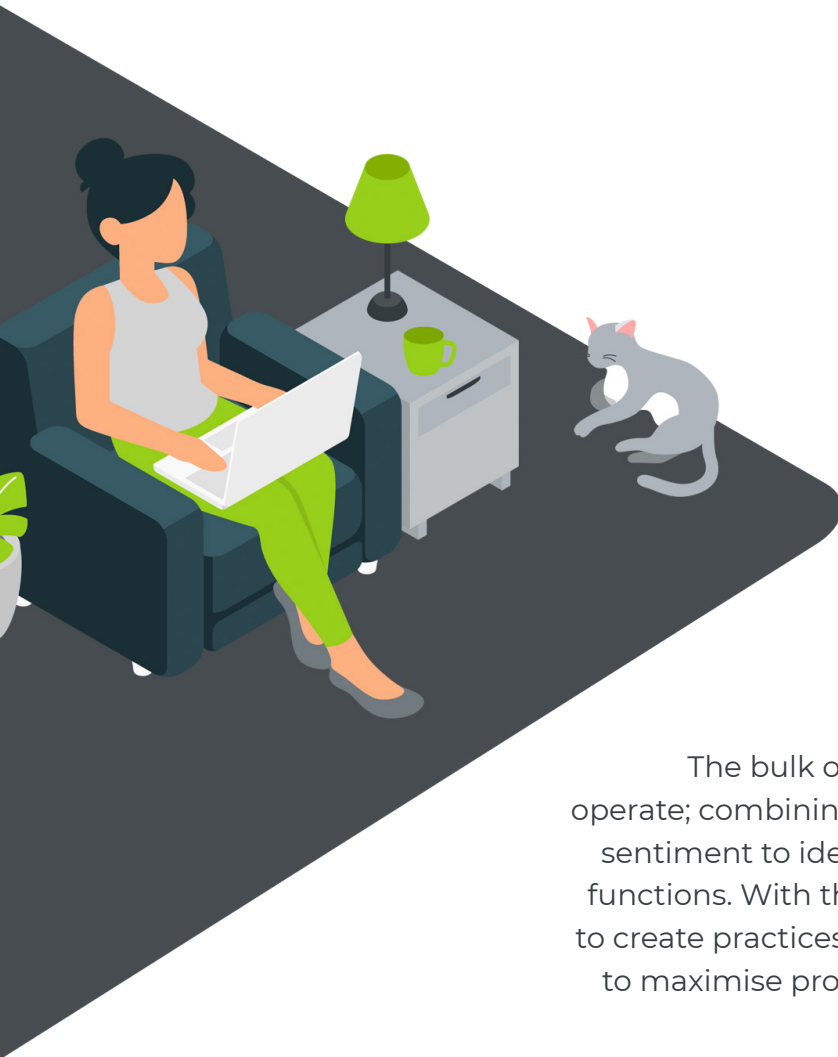
Helping firms to establish a strong foundation from which to grow is what we're all about here at Oaktree Interiors. We have been optimising workplaces for the best part of 30 years, creating bespoke solutions for clients seeking to create an environment that 'works for them' instead of them 'working for it'.

Drawing upon our experiences, we have created this guide to help you understand space rationalisation and how it may be applied to your unique requirements. As your workspace (and the people within it) are your company's most valuable assets, you need to be aware of how everything can operate more efficiently to ensure you're maximising your ROIs.



WHAT EXACTLY IS SPACE RATIONALISATION?

Space rationalisation and planning is the process of looking at your current office space requirements and aligning them with your overall business strategy. What works, and what doesn't? How can things be changed for the better? Is futureproofing and expansion part of your plans? All these questions and more can be answered with space rationalisation.



Out of
520

**business leaders, half
expect workers to remain
remote at least five days per
week even post-COVID**

LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
JUNE 2021

The bulk of the process involves reviewing how you operate; combining data on the use of space and occupant sentiment to identify inefficiencies in the way your space functions. With this information, plans can be put in place to create practices that would increase efficiency – helping to maximise productivity, creativity and ultimately, profit.

WHY SHOULD MY BUSINESS CONSIDER SPACE RATIONALISATION?

It is important to understand that space rationalisation is an ongoing process, not simply a 'build it and it will happen' scenario. It should be considered a core aspect of your operating model going forwards; a platform to use as and when time and trends dictate new ways of working. Therefore, it is vital to constantly monitor the performance of your office to ensure you're seeing the maximum return on productivity, innovation, and investment.

Reasons why you should consider space rationalisation within your office design, include:

- **Improve your outdated workplace design**

- **Adopt new ways of working**

- **Reduce fixed costs and overheads**

- **Make more efficient use of space you pay for, but don't use**

HOW SPACE RATIONALISATION WORKS

To streamline the process, we have broken down the main steps of space rationalisation – from concept to carrying out the refurbishment and monitoring of its performance.

Here is how a typical space rationalisation process works:



Identifying Objectives



Collecting Data



Identifying Inefficiencies



Planning Changes



Conceptualising Space



Design & Build



Monitoring Progress



STEP ONE: IDENTIFYING YOUR OBJECTIVES

It is vital to identify exactly what your business needs to succeed; objectives should be outlined by the way you want your workspace to support them. You should pair what you want to achieve with some key performance indicators to monitor the degree to which your workspace supports them.

The KPIs to think about, include:

- **What are the ways in which you currently work?**

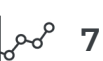
- **What do your employees need to attain success?**

- **What currently works well and what doesn't?**

- **What sort of tasks do your employees perform each day?**

- **Are they in the right environments for each of those tasks?**

- **Have you got the right technology to support everything?**





STEP TWO: COLLECTING DATA FROM YOUR EXISTING SPACE

To understand how your existing space works and what inefficiencies there are in the overall office design, you should gather and analyse data that reflects space use. Undertaking a workplace study is the best way to collect this data – it will typically involve monitoring space over time, as well as holding regular internal communications to understand how your employees use the space and what they want from it.

Data gathering can happen by you physically walking through your workspace to periodically record how many people are using each part of it at any given time, or automatically, with the use of sensors. As many businesses are still split between the physical and virtual office, a workplace consultancy will involve examining staff numbers, the existing workspace, potential growth, opportunities to save money, the changing role of the workplace, different ways of working and how employees may like to use the space in the future.

Conducting surveys, interviews and workshops with your employees is a great way to understand their sentiments. It will provide valuable insight into how the workplace should support staff while ensuring that your people feel a part of the workplace journey – providing them with a sense of ownership over their working days; potentially growing a sense of attachment to your company.



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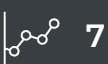
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STEP THREE: IDENTIFYING INEFFICIENCIES WITHIN YOUR EXISTING SPACE

With the collected data, you'll be able to identify any inefficiencies in your workspace. Identifying workspace issues will give you the ability to support your preferred operating model, driving business success.

The information you should collect should relate to the following space rationalisation questions:

- **Where is there unused space? Can it be repurposed to suit something else?**

- **How much of your workforce wants to work from home, the office or a combination of both?**

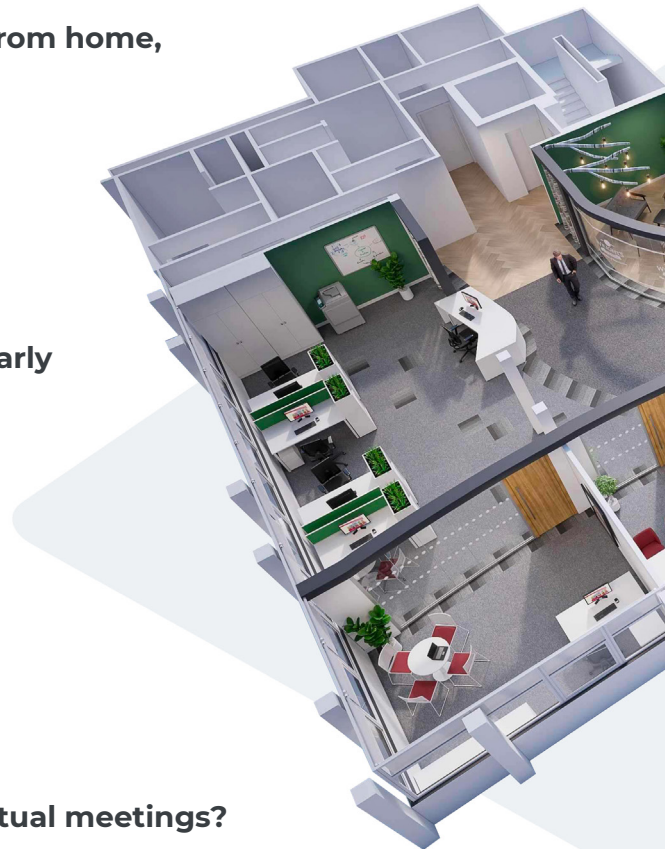
- **How much desk space is used, and at what time of day? Can the employee/desk ratio be changed?**

- **How are meeting rooms used? Are they regularly booked up or do they usually operate at low occupancies?**

- **Where do your employees gather? Is there enough amenity and breakout spaces?**

- **Are there enough private workspaces for concentrated work?**

- **Is there enough private space for calls and virtual meetings?**



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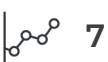
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STEP FOUR: PLANNING CHANGES TO THE WORKSPACE

Changing the workspace is an opportunity to introduce culture changes or to shift to new ways of working. These are things that, if done right, will support your employees; providing them with everything they need, making the workplace somewhere people want to work. To achieve this, you need to develop a strong 'change management strategy' to ensure that your reasons behind you making changes is communicated clearly.

Beyond this, it is possible to build flexibility into your workspace for any future changes. Measuring flexibility is based on individuals and will also need to suit your model and resources – it is only by having a clear idea of what your ways of working and objectives are, can you balance all these aspects together. Therefore, we highly advise you work with a professional office design team before planning any changes.

Some examples of how flexibility can be built into your workspace, include:

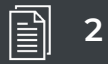
- **Open plan workspaces with modular furniture – these spaces are multi-purpose and can be changed to accommodate a wide range of activities.**

- **Adopt agile working practices and other behavioural changes (such as hot-desking) to free up existing space and improve efficiency.**

- **Creating coworking space is a great short-term solution for firms that require more workspace.**



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STEP FIVE: CONCEPTUALISING THE NEW SPACE

Space plans and designs are a vital part of the whole space rationalisation process. Aside from helping you to understand your new space, the plans can be used as a tool to test out several layouts and scenarios.

Your office fit out partner will provide a selection of plans, along with visual renderings of your new workspace – from hand-drawn sketches, through to 2D and 3D models to give you a total understanding of how your ideal space would operate before it is built.



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STEP SIX: DESIGN AND BUILD OF YOUR NEW SPACE

Your office design specialist will use all the gathered information to finalise the design and delivery of the new space. Whether you're refurbishing your existing space, updating certain aspects of it, or are moving to a new one entirely, they will work with you to create a programme and timeline that puts your needs at the forefront.



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The design and build of your new space will be unique to your business and most likely include several different design solutions. Some of the most common include:

Agile working

Including agile work practices in your office design will help to increase the efficiency of your workspace by changing how it is used. This needs careful change management as it can be difficult to adjust many people's way of working.

ⓘ **Benefits of agile working include:** *More efficient use of space, increased collaboration and productivity, a higher degree of flexibility and stronger internal communications.*





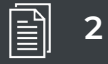
Refurbishment or Relocation

Refurbishments and relocations are a great way to give your business a fresh start and can spark a cultural and operational change. These changes will have the biggest impact on space efficiencies and performance.

① **Benefits of an office refurbishment or relocation include:** A transformational change, a great increase in space efficiency, a bespoke/branded environment and a workspace that is tailored to the requirements of your employees.



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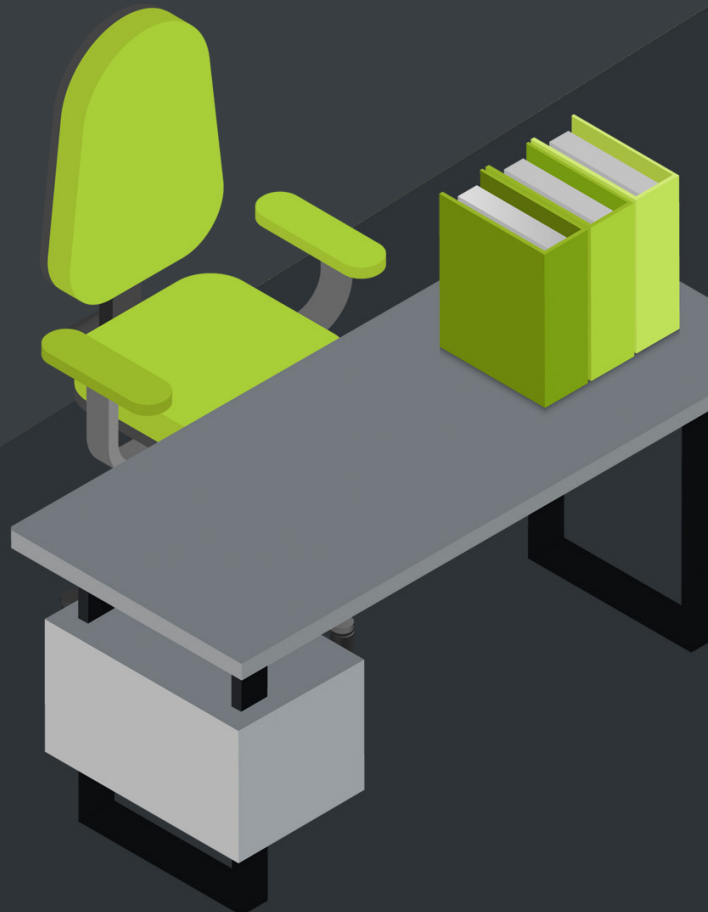


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Office Furniture

Updating your furniture will have a massive impact on your workspace and is a cost-effective way to update the space without necessarily carrying out a full design or refurbishment.

① **Benefits of updating your office furniture include:** Support of agile work practices, built-in flexibility (when using modular furniture) and socially distanced layouts.





STEP SEVEN: MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF YOUR NEW SPACE

Once the project is carried out, delivered, and opened for use, the KPIs that were outlined in the identifying objectives stage will be monitored to see if their performance is as you envisaged. Anything that isn't quite working out can be amended or changed completely without it costing much in the way of money or disruption.



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CLIENT CASE STUDY

LEADING TECHNOLOGY MANUFACTURER

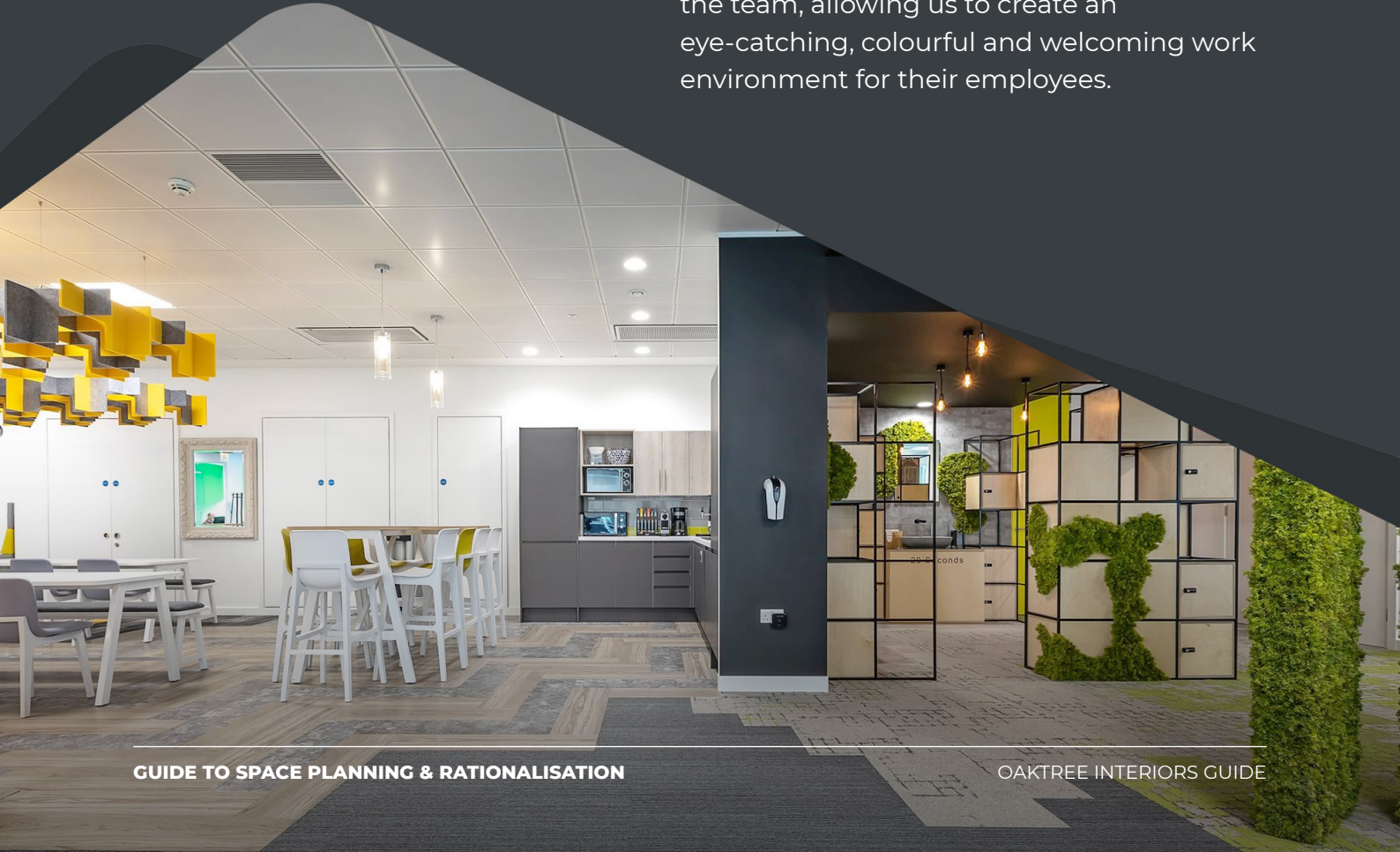
📍 Winnersh Triangle, Berkshire

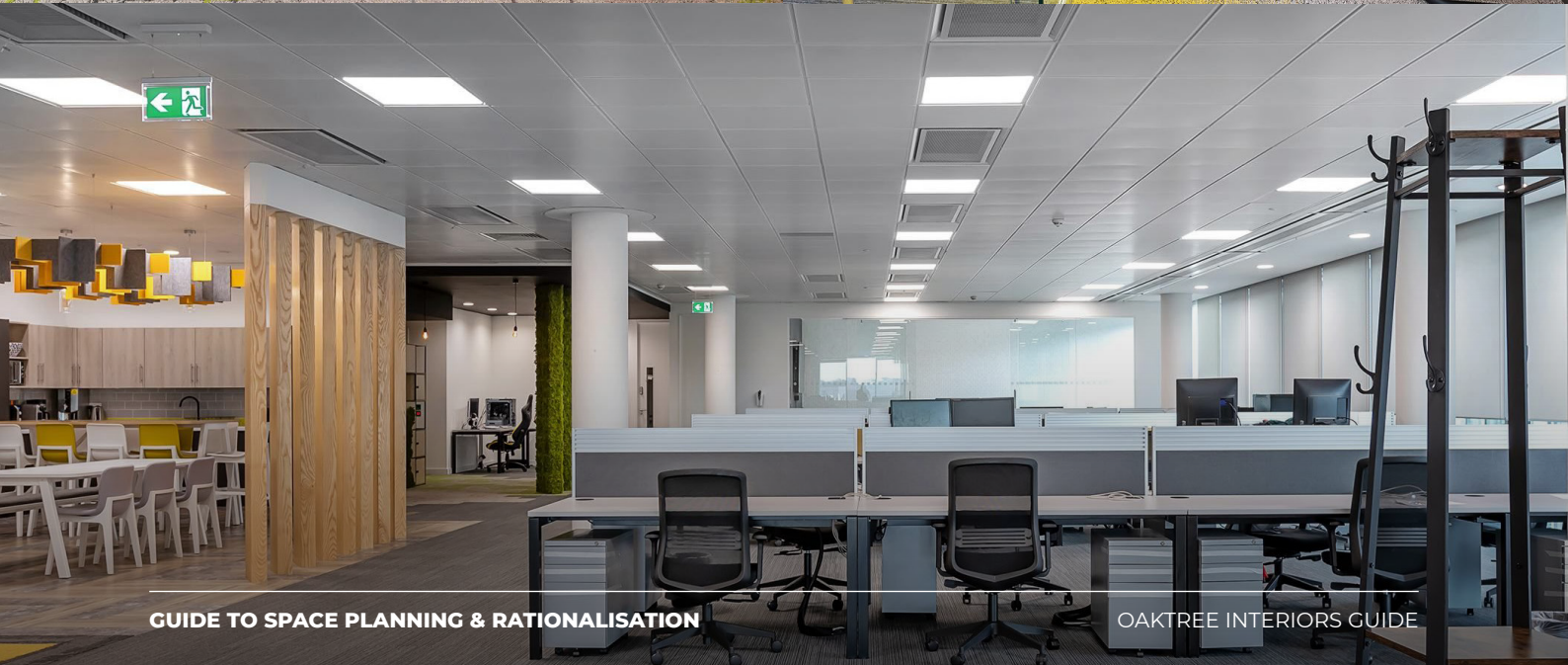
🏠 8,000 sq ft

🕒 14 weeks

When this business expanded their space to 8,000 sq.ft to accommodate their ever-growing team, they required a brand new office fit-out that was COVID-safety compliant & open plan. As this was a larger workspace, they needed to ensure that every sq. ft was optimised to it's highest possible efficiency, whilst maintaining the social distancing requirements & allowing for more growth in the future.

Carrying over the furniture from their previous office was a good cost-saving for the team, allowing us to create an eye-catching, colourful and welcoming work environment for their employees.





WHAT ARE MY NEXT STEPS?

Thank you for reading this guide, if you found it helpful, or it gave you the necessary steps to kick-start your fit-out project, we'd love to hear from you.

We have been delivering high-quality office design, refurbishments & fit outs for over 30 years, catering to specific needs & services, whatever the size of your business.

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