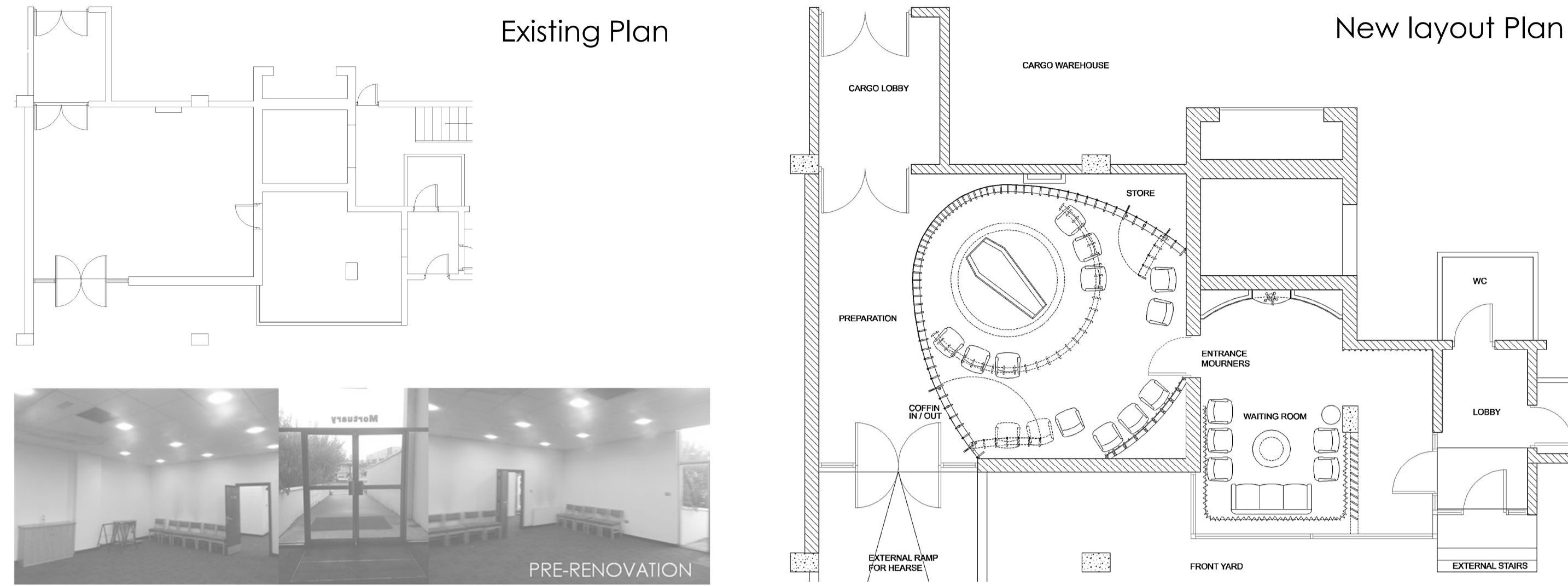
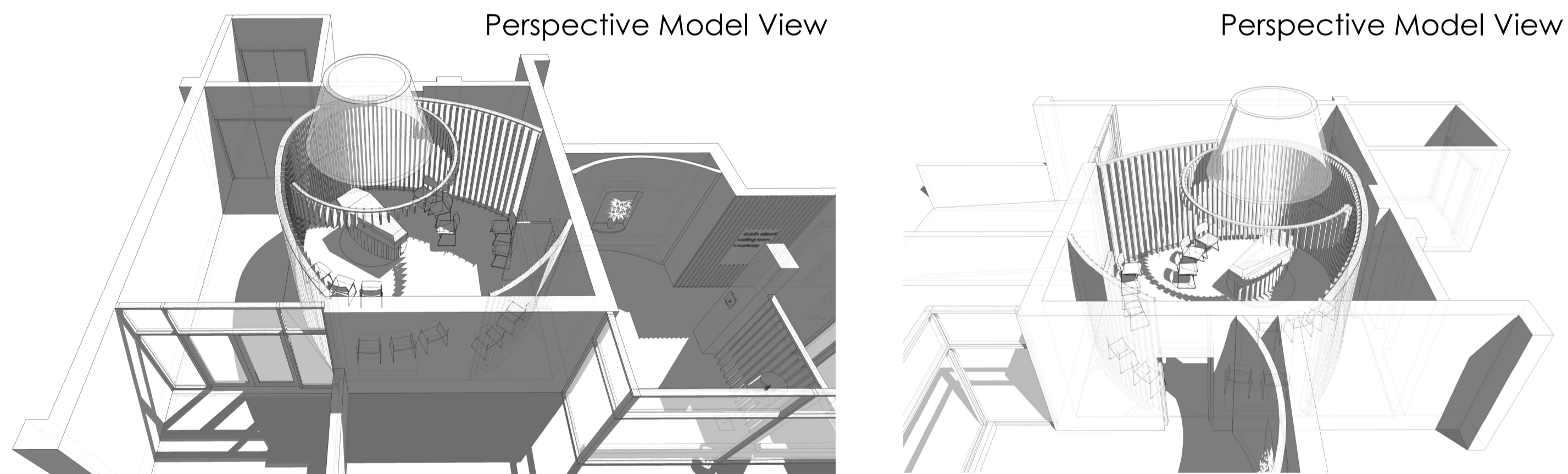


# Mortuary Chapel Dublin Airport



## THE CHALLENGE

I approached the client about the airport mortuary facility after a close friend lost his life abroad and along with his family, we met his remains in this room. This mortuary plays a unique role as relatives welcome home their deceased loved ones from abroad. It is here where the reality of a loved one's death becomes real. The room was in a far from ideal state to support those affected or respect the dead. There was no obvious order, direction or design to the room regarding where the coffin should be positioned or mourners should be seated. The room seemed 'non-purpose-built' and its position at the corner of a large cargo hangar meant associated noise levels left a lot to be desired. While it enjoyed good natural daylight through large glazing, the views of car and cargo yards were not appropriate and the set-up lacked any privacy and dignity.



## THE SOLUTION

My approach was to build a room within a room; this 'cocoon' would shut out the outside world and focus all senses. The mourners' attention concentrates on the room's 'centre of gravity' in which the coffin takes a meaningful position. Vertical solid oak fins form walls in a soft parabolic curve, each spacing between the fins gradually reducing towards the centre. Translucent screens between the fins allow daylight in but block any views to the outside. The half circle of full height timber fins that 'cradles' the coffin is continued by a half circle of fins suspended from the ceiling. Carefully crafted cut-outs inscribe a tilted circle into the space. This geometry symbolises the circle of life, death and eternity. Centre piece is a tall gold-painted cylindrical ceiling coffer. It connects the room to another 'boundless' space and therefor to the idea of an 'afterlife', common to all major religions.

