

DRAFT

Values of Post 65 Housing

MAY 2021

Research Project
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Voorwoord/ Preface

“Kunnen we de Post 65 bouw beschouwen als Nieuw Erfgoed?”

Deze vraag staat centraal in het ontwerpend onderzoek dat de TU Delft met Ymere de afgelopen periode heeft uitgevoerd in de H-buurt. Een onderzoek waarin vanuit de waarden zoals ervaren door gebruikers, makers, eigenaren en de gemeente, gekeken is naar de H-buurt in Amsterdam Zuidoost, een plek met veel gebouwen uit de jaren 80.

Voor Ymere is dit onderzoek van belang omdat ongeveer 25% van ons vastgoed uit deze periode stamt. Dit vastgoed is deels gebouwd in groeikernen als Almere en de Haarlemmermeer en deels binnenstedelijk toegevoegd middels stedelijke vernieuwing. Door te begrijpen wat gewaardeerd wordt aan dit vastgoed en de stedenbouwkundige opzet waar dit vastgoed in ligt, kunnen we bij onderhoud en renovatie de komende jaren, bewaren, verbeteren of terugbrengen wat van waarde is.

Ik heb in mijn jaren bij de Key en Ymere veel ervaring opgedaan met de Gordel '20-'40, waar brede consensus is over de waardering ervan en er handvatten zijn voor aanpak of behoud. Deze waardering ontbreekt echter nog voor de Post 65 architectuur en stedenbouw.

Het onderzoek naar de waardering vanuit verschillende perspectieven, heeft geleid tot dit handboek dat handvatten geeft voor aanpak van deze wijken.

Met dit handboek onder de arm, kan Ymere enerzijds op zoek gaan naar de 'quick wins'; wat zijn maatregelen die kosten efficiënt zijn en die een positieve impact hebben op de leefbaarheid van de woonomgeving van onze huurders? Anderzijds vormt dit onderzoek een bijdrage aan het antwoord op de onderzoeksvraag omtrent nieuw erfgoed. Ik daag alle collega's, die zich bezig houden met onderhoud en aanpak van de buurten van Ymere uit deze periode, uit om de waarden en mogelijke oplossingsrichtingen, zoals beschreven in dit rapport, mee te nemen als uitgangspunt voor de ingrepen.

Tot slot, veel dank aan de studenten en begeleiders van de TU Delft voor het onderzoek, maar ook aan diegenen die bijdragen hebben geleverd (bewoners, gemeente en ontwerpers).

Veel leesplezier.

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Photos and images are produced by the TU Delft team, unless stated otherwise

Content

Research Project	6
Introduction	7
Post 65 Housing	8
Case studies	12
Research Methods	16
Values in H-Buurt & Bijlmerplein	18
Stakeholders	19
Values	22
Values-based Design Strategies	36
Conclusions and recommendations	70

Introduction

Ymere is one of the largest and oldest social housing corporation in the Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam (MRA) and our aim is to provide qualitative and affordable housing in the MRA for residents with a modest income. Ymere's portfolio consists of nearly 80,000 housing units, of which an estimated 35% was built in the period between 1965-1980.

As we need to renovate or -in some cases- redevelop the building stock from this period in the coming years, we wanted to strengthen our knowledge and our understanding of the characteristics of this substantial part of our portfolio. We like to build a better understanding of the values and characteristics of 80's residential neighbourhoods and buildings, as perceived by its residents. We want to explore how residents, and also experts, define and value the qualities of these assets of Ymere in order to show awareness and respect for these qualities when we renovate and/or redevelop these neighbourhoods and buildings from the 80's.

The case for this joint research-by-design project with Delft University of Technology, Heritage & Architecture, is the H-buurt and Bijlmerplein in Amsterdam

Zuidoost. An important area where Ymere owns roughly 1,000 social housing units in the area stretching from Bijlmerplein to Hoptille and Heesterveld. The building stock in this area is built in the 1980's and consists of a variety typologies, context, urban design and architecture. These three distinct areas each have a unique character, but should be considered as parts of a larger whole and as part of a larger context.

Through this research we like to strengthen our understanding of both the urban and architectural characteristics of the H-buurt and of what is valued and appreciated by our tenants. From the research in the H-buurt and through a comparative analysis of other 1980s examples, we also envision to replicate the lessons-learned and recommendations for other similar projects elsewhere in our portfolio. As we continue to develop our understanding of this "new heritage", we sincerely believe this booklet, as a summary of the research by design studio on the H-buurt, is not only another constructive step in this quest, but also one that sparks inspiration for and dialogue amongst its readers.



Post 65 Housing

The residential stock that was built between 1965-1985 makes up 31% of the total present housing stock in the Netherlands. For housing corporation Ymere, the 1965-1985 stock is 27% of the total property. The architecture of these decades is what is known as 'Post-65' architecture (i.e. built after 1965), which is not generally regarded as valuable architecture. The houses no longer meet today's demands and expectations, and will have to be renovated or redeveloped in the next few years. There is, however, a current lack of consensus regarding the value of these buildings and areas in both academic and public debate. This means that, with respect to renovations that are due to take place, there is no clarity regarding which qualities need to be preserved or improved.

This project concerns these Post 65 buildings and areas that are relatively young and usually not regarded as heritage. However, the assumption is that these areas can be seen as our future heritage. We think that exploration of their characteristics, assessment of values and problems—in combination with the education of academics, professionals and users—

is necessary to prevent a disregard of the qualities and values of this housing stock. Because this is not 'mainstream heritage' it also requires interrogation of the definition of heritage. This relates to various programs and initiatives such as the 2005 Council of Europe, 'Faro Convention', which emphasises the engagement of heritage communities in decision-making and development processes to ensure that heritage contributes to the social, cultural and economic dynamics of the communities. The societal relevance of the project is the contribution to design solutions for challenges in residential areas, such as deterioration, negative image and aesthetics, need for densification, mismatch of typologies and demographics.

The Post 65 developments can be divided as three separate programs; new towns (groeikernen), urban renewal (de stadsvernieuwing) and city expansions. The Groeikernen policy used the concept of 'bundled deconcentration'. 15 new towns (Almere and Lelystad) or major expansions of existing small towns (Spijkenisse, Zoetermeer, Houten etc) have been planned. The Groeikernen plan-



Blokjeskaart (1966) urban planning indicating different densities

ning concept was meant to prevent the cities from congestion and to preserve the 'Groene Hart'. Housing the overspill of their population enabled the 'donor cities' (like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Haarlem among others) to renew their old inner-city neighbourhoods. After decades of expansions and later because of the Groeikernen, the old neighbourhoods that had been ignored were facing social and safety problems.

The population that remained in the inner-cities were from the lower social strata, students, elderly or immigrants. In the late '60-ties, the living quality started to be a political topic and from the 1970's renovation slowly started. Examples of urban renewal neighbourhoods are De Nieuwmarktbuurt and De Jordaan in Amsterdam and De Leidsebuurt and Rozenprieel in Haarlem. Expansion areas like the H-buurt and Bijlmerplein are not part of a similar national policy but as a continuation of older developments, albeit in a new architectural style. Many similarities can be observed in the urban concepts and architectural modes of the three types of areas. Especially the Groeikernen and the expansions like in the Bijlmer

share the same characteristics and problems.

The first neighbourhoods of the Post 65 period were designed according to the concepts of functionalism. A Groeikern like Zoetermeer, that was one of the first and has been developed over a longer period, shows several stages in architectural fashion. The first neighbourhoods Palenstein and Driemanspolder, that were built in the 1960's and early 1970's, consist of big galleried flats and repetitive linear strips of terraced housing. The neighbourhood Meerzicht started off in the same way but shows the transition to a new ideology, that rejected high-rise. This same shift of ideas is characteristic for the Bijlmer and the areas of this project, where the mid-rise and low-rise blocks of Hoptille express a clear reaction to the high-rise pattern of Rechte H-Buurt.

Also architecturally, there was a rather sudden turnaround of ideals, described in his thesis by Noud de Vreeze: 'Until 1972, the high-rise [based on CIAM ideals] was dominant, surrounded by long straight blocks of multifamily houses and

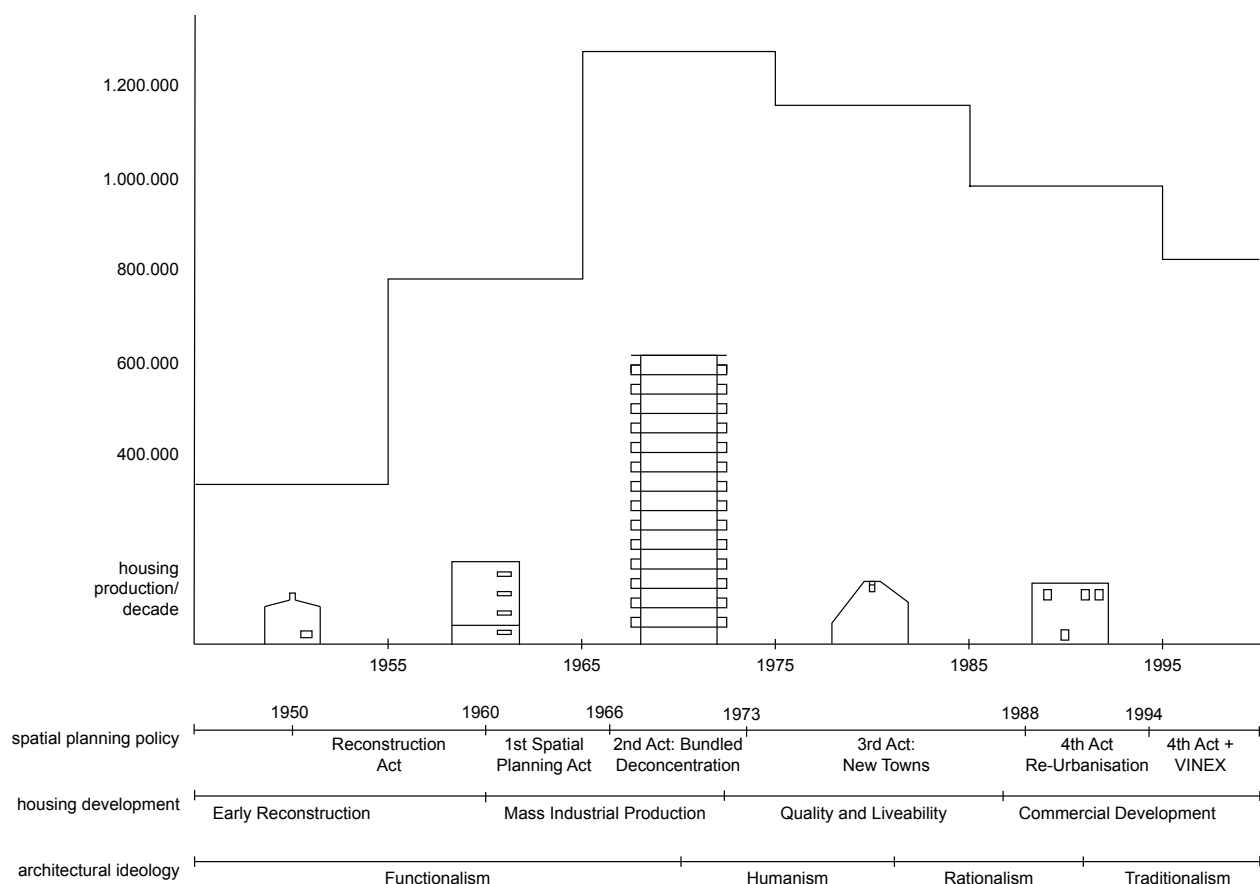


Bergenbuurt, Capelle a/d IJssel.
Shift of ideology, showing highrise and midrise

terraced houses, following the tried and tested schemes of the successive collections of standard floor plans. Then suddenly, in every neighbourhood or even every street, an enormous variation appears in the composition of housing types, the form of streets and squares, planting schemes, the shape of building blocks, facades and materials, but predominantly low-rise!'. This movement was strongly influenced by the Forum-group of architects, under the inspiring leadership of Aldo van Eyck. As the new board of Forum-magazine in 1959, they accused architects and planners of making The Netherlands 'unliveable' and pleaded for a new architecture that would create 'liveable cities' and coherence between people and things. Important and innovative themes were flexibility, participation, shelter, appropriation, the 'in-between', duo-phenomena, industrial production, and interconnected repetitive structures. In later years, leading design ideas changed again. In 1979, the urbanist and

architect Carel Weeber advocated the rehabilitation clear urban design, based on formal principles. When financial support for Groeikernen was reduced in the 1980s, Weber's plea for simple straight-line urban structures suddenly received a great deal of support in practice.

The majority of the production of the Post 65 stock has been realised after this shift to a smaller scale architecture. The low-rise suburban living environment, has become a main identity of this period, also characterised as 'woonerf' or 'bloemkoolwijk'. Although single family houses are an important typology throughout the whole country, in larger cities also mid-rise apartment blocks were developed in a woonerf-layout. Apart from a desire for a variety of forms, the aim was to give residential quality to the street, so the car was driven out and pedestrian areas could become meeting places again.



Timeline of post-war housing development in The Netherlands (Spoormans, 2020)



Almere



Capelle



Almere



Almere



Zoetermeer



Spijkenisse

Case studies

For this project, two case studies have been investigated. A one-week explorative research in Almere Haven and a more thorough research in H-Buurt and Bijlmerplein. The two case studies represent different types of areas of the Post 65 stock. Almere is a new town (Groei-kern) build from scratch and predominantly low-rise. Amsterdam Zuid-Oost is an expansion area of the capital, with a midrise character. Studying these two locations gave us the opportunity to compare and find similarities and differences. The following introduction of the two cases studies provides some background information.

Almere-Haven

Almere was created as a new town on new land, the Flevopolder. Almere was developed in the 1960s and 70s to house the 'overspill' from Amsterdam. Almere had fewer than 150.000 inhabitants in the year 2000, but has grown to more than 200.000 today. The city is now planning to build 60.000 more homes before 2030 to grow to a population of 350.000 inhabitants. This poly-nuclear city struggles with the choice to either further expand the suburban area, or to densify its existing neighbourhoods. The location for the reference case is Almere Haven (or simply Haven), the first 'core' of Almere, that was built in the late 1960s and 70s with a centre inspired by traditional Dutch towns.



Almere Haven centrum, photographer Koen Suyk, © Nationaal Archief, 1979

Almere Haven



Amsterdam Zuid-Oost

The capital city of the Netherlands, Amsterdam, currently houses 872.779 people. (dd. 01.01.2020) Within the city borders, there are 99 large neighbourhoods and 479 smaller neighbourhoods of which the H-Buurt is one. (<https://allecijfers.nl/gemeente/amsterdam/>). The focus of the research is on three different areas in the H-Buurt; Bijlmerplein, Hoptille and Heesterveld. However, the research studies these neighbourhoods in the larger urban context. The aspect that the three locations have in common is the predominantly 1980's architecture. The area consists of offices, shops, schools etc, but the housing complexes are regarded as central in our study. A main question for the project is: "Can we consider this architecture as New Heritage?" and "How could renovation, replacement and/or densification strengthen the qualities and help solve current problems without compromising heritage values and identities, where these exist?"

Bijlmerplein, Hoptille and Heesterveld

The Bijlmerplein location is closest located to the city centre of Amsterdam and with its direct connection to the Bijlmer station, the soccer stadium and a variety of stores, this neighbourhood feels most urban and vibrant. The Hoptille location consists of a long mid-rise residential building, low-rise residential blocks and in between them a green public space. At the street side, along the mid-rise building, the area has a closed off character. The bicycle path and pedestrian route passing Hoptille function as a transit route. The high crime rate that was a problem from the start was reduced drastically after large investments in both safety and building renovations over the years. The Heesterveld location has gone through a big transformation in 2013 when the facade was painted in bright colours. This changed not only the appearance of the location but also involves a shift in inhabitants and functions. A café and other small businesses are now located in the residential complexes. The bad reputation changed to a more positive vibe for most of the stakeholders.

H-Buurt and Bijlmerplein



The story starts from the famous image and ideology of the original Bijlmer, the principles of CIAM, the separation of functions and the high-rise building blocks. Soon after construction, the reality of the Bijlmer area turned out to be different than expected, leading to several challenges regarding safety, demographics etc. In later developments, the idea of high-rise was abandoned, moving from the conceptual Bijlmer to the 'Anti-Bijlmer'.. New design solutions in the H-buurt were sought in the more familiar, trusted 4-6 storey blocks and smaller scale. However, these new additions later seemed to be unable to withstand the colossal effect of the original Bijlmer. Part of these Anti-Bijlmer developments are Bijlmerplein, Hoptille and Heesterveld.

Hoptille is a long housing block of 5-6 floors, combined with shorter blocks of single family homes. Originally, Hoptille was designed as if it was turning its back to the high-rise part of the Bijlmer (rechte H-Buurt). The design had a characteristic tower-like entrance with bridges, leading to one long internal corridor. Due to problems that arose from this typology, later additions have been made to the back

side. Additional 'portiek' entrances and new stairs created an alternative logistic system. The low rise of Hoptille and its single family housing was innovative in the Bijlmer area in that period. Hoptille has been designed by the architect Sjoerd Soeters working for the office of Kees Rijnboutt.

Heesterveld connects to Hakfort and Huijenbos, but has a completely different set-up. Heesterveld consists of mid-rise blocks of 4-6 floors around inner courtyards. The 317 homes, varying from studios to 5-room apartments, open onto the courtyards through porches. The design is by architect Frans van Gool and the flats were built in response to the high-rise buildings in the Bijlmermeer. The buildings of Heesterveld were to be demolished and replaced with new buildings, but due to the economic crisis in 2008 this plan was abandoned. The flat to the north of Bullewijkpad has been converted into an artist community and operates under the name Heesterveld Creative Community (HCC). Heesterveld got a new identity by the colored graphics used in the façade. The diagonal-coloured facades are home to the HCC.



Hoptille, photographer Randal Scobie

Bijlmerplein was a bit different from the Bijlmer principles. The current square was completed in 1986. Bijlmerplein already existed before, but was located at a different location. Shortly after the completion of the first flats in the Bijlmermeer in 1968, the Bijlmermeer 'Aanloopcentrum' was created on the site of the current Vogeltjeswei district, south of the Bijlmerdreef next to the Gooiseweg. It was experimental at that time with uninterrupted shopping streets where dwelling entrances were located at the side. Elevated decks were a unique feature, which provided some privacy for residents. A wooden emergency shopping center on ground level with a number of facilities such as a bank office, police post house, fire station, information center and a temporary sports hall awaiting a definitive shopping centre. This mix of functions was unique for the Bijlmer and brought more life and activities for the neighbourhood.

Also in the final complexes, a mix of housing and shopping was introduced, going against the CIAM ideas of separation of functions. It was an experimental typology. Housing above shops, with the entrance on elevated decks on the back façade, accessible via the corners of the building blocks. This provided a continuous shopping street in the plinth. Bijlmerplein has been mentioned positive when it comes to function mix, but

challenges lay in the area of feeling safe on the decks, social control and a lack of vitality in the area. Many architecture offices have been involved in the design of the residential blocks, among which Atelier Pro, Ton Alberts, Van de Broek en Bakema and Loerakker Rijnboutt Ruijsenaars.

Also this part of the Bijlmer has a disputable identity, referring to crime, lack of housing quality, social issues, vacancy, abandoned places and generally a poor living environment. Opinions or prejudices, helped by the media, are that buildings are ugly and all look the same, and the residents are disadvantaged. On the other hand, there is change. On a physical level there are reconsiderations and improvements. A strict separation of functions is not leading anymore and different facilities and mixed programs appear. Buildings have been renovated such as Heesterveld, creating different ambiances. The elevated decks at Bijlmerplein have been improved with new planters and dividers. And in future years, more developments in the area are planned. But also the image is starting to change from 'ghetto' to 'hidden gem'. Outsiders are slowly beginning to discover the qualities, like diversity, space, green quality and accessibility. It is the challenge for the future to retain and enhance these qualities.



Bijlmerplein, © Stadsarchief Amsterdam, photographer Doriann Kransberg, 1991



Bijlmerplein, © Stadsarchief Amsterdam, photographer Bart Molendijk, 1987

Research Methods

In line with the aim of the project to explore the values of New Heritage from a wide perspective, the team was divided into four groups studying different stakeholder perspectives. These stakeholder groups, that are expected to have a different view and interest in present qualities and future developments, are defined as: Makers & Academics, Governments, Owners, and Users (including residents, people working in the area and visitors). A collective strategy was used, leading to comparison of results from all four stakeholder groups. The groups used different sources and methods to reach out to participants and gather information.

Exploration

The first step for all stakeholder groups was to explore the research field and to get a grip on the opinions of the stakeholders. Both online and on-street methods to collect data have been explored.

Interviews

A set of photos was set up, representing all three neighbourhoods and including various elements, like buildings, public space, amenities, green etc. The same set was used by all stakeholder groups in the interviews, enabling comparison of results. The photos are composed as panoramas, being rich in elements, providing many possible discussion topics in the interviews. The goal of the total photo

set is to cover the different areas within the research case: Bijlmerplein, Hoptille and Heesterveld. With each photo, interviewees were asked to describe the photo, mentioning attributes. Moreover, they were asked to evaluate positive and/ or negative aspects and explain why.

Analysis

The data of the collective method of photo-aided interviews and the data of the research per stakeholder collected for coding. Coding is a process to break down the various sorts of data into meaningful parts, enabling focus and comparison on specific issues (codes) for analysis. A code can be any topic, element or theme that seems relevant. The analysis was done with an open mind, without pre-set classifications, to explore what in this 'New Heritage' is regarded as valuable by the different stakeholders. The software program Atlas.ti was used for the coding process.

By a comparative analysis of data and codes from the different stakeholder groups similarities and contradictions have been found, leading to main themes based on the H-Buurt cases study. These themes hold positive evaluations, regarded as values that should be preserved or strengthened. They also hold negative evaluations that are interpreted as challenges for future developments.

The highlights of the evaluation per photo, used in the interviews, are briefly discussed here.

Photo 1 Bijlmerplein

In this photo of the Bijlmerplein, mainly social values are mentioned. Regarding the amenities available, stakeholder groups are divided. The presence of stores is appreciated, but people are worried about vacancy. The aesthetics of Bijlmerplein from this perspective are less appreciated. Architectural incoherence is mentioned and paving of the public space is seen as very monotonous. However, the square is identified as an important meeting place. The street furniture is generally appreciated.

Photo 2 Bijlmerplein

In this photo of Bijlmerplein, representing the deck at the back of the building complex providing access to the homes, the emphasis of participant responses is more on the surroundings and objects. The aesthetics are perceived in different ways, either stony, gray and monotonous, or neat, beautiful and clear. On the social level, mainly problems are mentioned, like the unclear responsibility for the space and the (assumed) lack of responsibility by residents for the living environment.

Photo 3 Hoptille

The discussion on the photo picturing the midrise block of Hoptille and part of the rechte H-Buurt, seems controversial. The shape of the very long housing block is perceived as a wall, separating two areas. Problems with drugs and crime are also mentioned, in addition to the problematic identity of the Rechte H-Buurt. The historical value of the Rechte H-Buurt is mentioned by makers group (architects) only.

Photo 4 Hoptille

The inner street of Hoptille, between mid- and lowrise blocks, has a bad reputation. Stakeholders do not agree on its aesthetic quality. The midrise is seen negative, offering too little social activity. The architecture is labelled as boring and incoherent. The typology of this area is said to provide diversity as a positive aspect, but apparently also easy tracing by the police.

Photo 5 Heesterveld

In Heesterveld most comments regard the aesthetics. In general, the renovation of Heesterveld is evaluated as positive. The colours and atmosphere are seen as added value. However, also architectural incoherence is mentioned several times.



PHOTO 1 | BIJLMERPLEIN



PHOTO 2 | BIJLMERPLEIN



PHOTO 3 | HOPTILLE



PHOTO 4 | HOPTILLE



PHOTO 5 | HEESTERVELD

Values in H-Buurt & Bijlmerplein

Stakeholders

So, what are the values of the H-Buurt and Bijlmerplein?

Based on the data collected from online interviews, and street encounters, social media platforms, reports and literature, nineteen values have been identified. It should be noted that the selected values address the contemporary evaluations of people of the area. The values apply to the researched case study locations, but might have a wider relevancy for areas that share the same characteristics.

For every value presented, the evaluation by the different stakeholder groups is explained. Their opinions sometimes correspond, but in some cases are opposite or show different interpretation of the same theme or term. Moreover, not all stakeholders have mentioned each of the themes which also illustrates the importance for particular groups.

As explained in the methods chapter, four stakeholder groups have been consulted.

Makers and Academics

As representatives of the group 'Makers and Academics', the following people have been interviewed:

- Sjoerd Soeters, architect of Hoptille
- Pi de Bruijn, architect of Heesterveld
- Khoi Tran, architect of the Heesterveld Renewal
- Hans van Beek, architect of Bijlmerplein
- Frank Wassenberg, researcher of Bijlmermeer & Hoptille
- Marie-Therese van Thoor, architectural historian TU Delft
- Leo Oorschot, researcher 1Million Homes, TU Delft
- A journalist & residents of Bijlmermeer

Governments

The information about the group representing 'Governments' applies to local governments only and is retrieved from:

- Demographic data from both Zuidoost and Amsterdam
- Municipal reports on policies/ visions about Zuidoost and H-buurt
- Interview with Marnix van der Dussen, projects manager at municipality of Amsterdam
- Interview with Paul Chin, neighbourhood coordinator of H-buurt



Owners

The stakeholder group representing 'Owners' is limited to employees of Ymere. Although Ymere owns the majority of the real estate in the researched areas, there are other owners, like CBRE, private homeowners etc. Unfortunately it was not feasible to include them in the research. The data is based on interviews with:

- Anneke Verhagen, concept developer
- Jean-Paul Hitipeuw, concept developer
- David Stalpers, area manager
- Herman van Lambalgen, neighbourhood manager at Bijlmerplein
- Bianca van Leent, real estate developer

Users

'Users' as a stakeholder group is most comprehensive, both in quantity and diversity of respondents. Different types of interviews have been conducted:

- questionnaire (27)
- interview with photoset (31)
- in-depth interview (6)
- online survey (9)

From all street interviews 26 were held at Bijlmerplein, 19 at Hoptille and 13 at Heesterveld.

The percentage of male-female interviewees was almost equal (men 48% to women 52%).

Most of the interviewees were residents (53%), some workers (25%) and also visitors (19%)

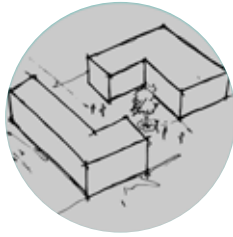
Also many user evaluations have been found by social media research, with 200 posts analysed:

- images on Instagram (58)
- images on Flickr (133)
- posts on Facebook (37), often Facebook community groups





80's Aesthetics



Public space



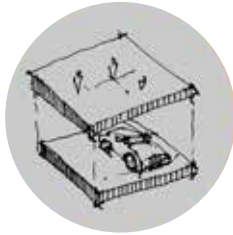
Dwelling
sizes and types



Mono-/
Multifunctionality



Cultural diversity



Elevated
roads and decks



Businesses



Greenery



Low-/ mid-rise



Sense of ownership

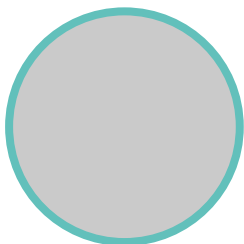


Colour and art

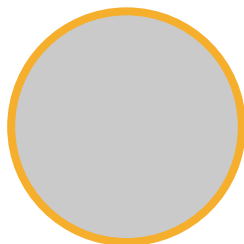


Distinctive identities

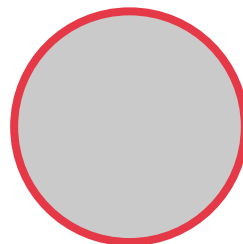
Overview of values in H-Buurt & Bijlmerplein



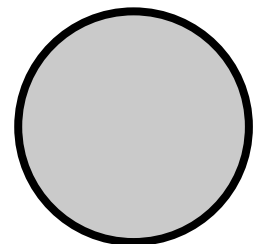
Green: High value
= mainly positive



Yellow: Mid value
= Indifferent or mixed



Red: Low value
= mainly negative



Black: Differs per
neighbourhood

Method of notation, indicating the evaluation by stakeholder groups

Values

1| 80's Aesthetics

Makers

80s architecture in Bijlmer is the result of the Anti-Bijlmer (anti-CIAM) movement. Academics did not see 80s architecture as an architecture with style, but a pure architectural reaction to the failure brought by modern urbanism. Although academics did not agree that there is a style in them, makers pointed out that some of the architectural expressions are still being recognised as the products of the 80s. For example, the use of brick in Bijlmerplein, the prefabricated concrete panels in Hoptille, the more intimate courtyard typology in Heesterveld. They generally mentioned that the quality of 80's architecture is generally low due to the lack of financial means during that period.

Government

Not addressed

Owners

Owners pointed out the clear structure of the buildings, which is especially mentioned within the context of Bijlmerplein. The lay-out is characterised by shops on the ground floor with housing on top (typical for 80s architecture). Therefore, the mix of functions (economical use) is valued. However, the execution of this lay-out has been lacking. The lay-out contributed to unsafe corners and narrow corridors. Owners have seen many opportunities for change considering a clear division between housing and shops. However, alterations seemed to be difficult due to technical problems, like the central heating system.

Users

Most of the users that were interviewed didn't mention anything in particular about the architecture of the 80's. Only the "Zandkasteel" building at Bijlmerplein was occasionally mentioned as a building with a 'nice' architectural appearance. Few users find that the mid-rise building of Hoptille is very ugly. However, most respondents don't mention the architectural characteristics and aesthetic appearance of the housing blocks in Bijlmerplein and H-Buurt.



Makers



Government



Owners



Users



2 | Public space

Makers:

The general opinion of makers and academics is that the public space is lacking design quality, regarding connections and sense of scale. Makers mentioned the square in Bijlmerplein as a positive attribute. However, they pointed out the room for improvement, such as the articulation between green and pavement, the sense of design and the surrounding supporting programs. Besides this, they also identified the public space of Hoptille as 'confusing' due to the choice of switching the front and back facade. The idea behind designing a long residential block with single family housing was aiming for social interaction within the shared public space. The enclosed block in Heesterveld offers more intimate space. However, the housing complex requires a better connection to the public realm on ground floor level.

Government:

The government appreciates the benches and the playground in the public space. The presence of shared spots in the public space is seen as a positive aspect. For example, they mentioned the square next to Karspeldreef. These types are indicated as important elements which should be preserved and updated in future developments. However, they also indicate the public space as monotonous and minimal street lighting and lack of social control are noticed as issues. Some parts in the H-Buurt are perceived as uncontrolled public spaces. For example, parking garages or squares with dark corners, have proved to be ideal for all

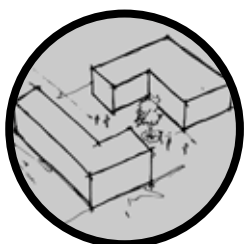
types of shady activities. But sometimes unintended use is positive, like the gardening initiative at Hoptille that connects residents by social activity.

Owners:

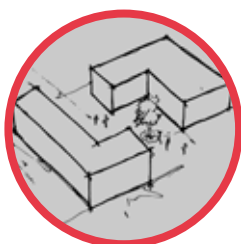
The owners think that the public space should be improved. They are concerned about the public space, even though they have no direct influence nor responsibility as most of the public space is owned and maintained by the municipality. The public space has a huge impact on the living comfort of their residents. There are no easy solutions. Seating and playgrounds for example improve the neighbourhood by providing opportunities to meet other residents. But on the other hand, there is the risk of unintended use like hanging around by 'unwanted' or intimidating groups.

Users:

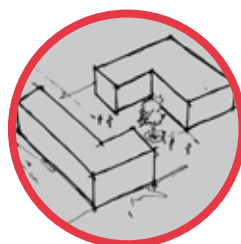
The users mainly appreciated the benches, playgrounds and the collective green. They like to sit and socialize on the benches and the playgrounds for children. It is remarkable that many residents are not familiar with public spaces in their own neighbourhood. For example, most interviewees were unaware of the playground behind the residential building at Bijlmerplein (shown in one of the collective photos). In Hoptille, there is a little playground behind the mid-rise building, but residents mention that is not used anymore. In other interviews, it was also noted that there is not enough opportunity for sitting, making it difficult for people to socialize.



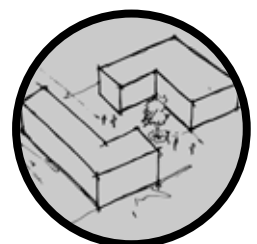
Makers



Government



Owners



Users

3 | Dwelling sizes and types

Makers:

The housing units from the 80's are considered as being very large when comparing it to nowadays standards. In particular, single family housing is mentioned, in which often only one single elderly person lives. The background can be found in the original development of Hoptille, in which residents have been involved. Then, the single-family house was the most desirable type. Makers mention that the social problems in these single-family housing types are less prominent than in the midrise blocks.

Government

The government would like to create more diversity in housing, referring mainly to the balance in rental and owner-occupied housing. They would like to move away from the dominance of social housing. For certain areas they aim for a 30-50-20 mix; 30% social, 50% middle segment, 20% high segment. On the other hand, they have seen problems occurring in which social housing units were privatized. A possible risk is, for example, that the owners' association (VVE) takes over the maintenance of a block, leading to poor management.

Owners:

The owners appreciate the diverse typology in Hoptille. Especially the single-family homes are valued, for social reasons mainly. Moreover, the dwellings are considered to have a nice size. They mentioned that the people live in the dwellings

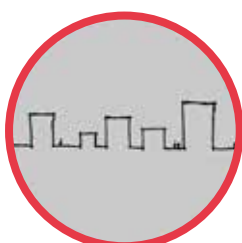
for a long period of time and that there are few mutations across the area. From a development perspective, the owners are worried about the fact that it is 100% social housing. A mix in price ranges would be preferable, to resolve social issues in the area. But from a social perspective, owners are hesitant interfering with the current mix too much. Indicating that current problems will not be resolved by a mix, and there is a risk that mixing will lead to a social division, by e.g., placing high segmented housing units in the area.

Users

Multiple residents pointed out that they like the relatively large size of the apartments. At Hoptille, a few people even considered their apartment as being huge. This conflicts with the outsider's image, illustrated by a visitor saying not wanting to live here because she had the feeling that the apartments were tiny in this area. At Bijlmerplein, less people pointed out the sizes of the apartments.



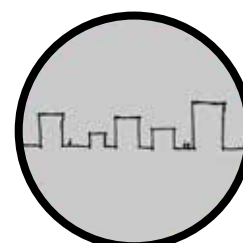
Makers



Government



Owners



Users

4 | Mono-/ Multifunctionality

Makers:

The separation of functions was part of the manifestation of CIAM back in the 1950s in the Netherlands. However, ideologies changed. In the eyes of the makers, mixing functions created better neighbourhoods and shops and grocery stores should be more accessible from the dwellings. The attempts of mixing functions at Bijlmerplein is perceived as positive, which is also suggested for the other neighbourhoods.

But the paradigm shift in consumption behaviour should be considered when mixing functions, particularly under the impact of the pandemic.

Government:

The government envisions to make the area less monofunctional. They mentioned that the main focus of the past was only on producing houses without integrating the functions people needed. They also link this to safety issues. The presence of shops or terraces would improve social control, especially in the evening.

Owners:

The monofunctional character has been mentioned by the owners, but is necessarily seen as important to preserve. A connection between housing and different uses would definitely improve the neighbourhood, which would also impact the housing itself. Therefore, owners seem to be interested in change, but they are limited in influencing this change as an organisation. The existing struc-

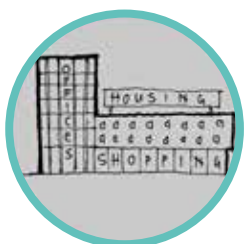
ture in Bijlmerplein with housing on top of the shops is highly appreciated by the owners. But this relation between housing and facilities is lacking in other areas of H-Buurt. It seemed to be disconnected and thereby resulted in (social) urban challenges. There are redevelopment plans for Heesterveld to introduce other functions into the neighbourhood, such as office spaces.

Users:

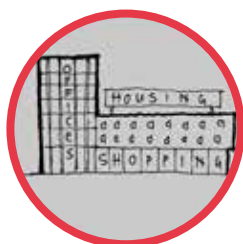
According to the users, Bijlmerplein serves as a centre where all amenities can be found. The increase in vacancy is noticed by the users and considered as seen as a threat. The addition of catering and clothing stores would boost the area. Residents of Bijlmerplein are pleased with all the functions close to their homes. Users of Bijlmerplein, who do not live there, did not feel any connection with these apartments. They were not even aware of the housing above the shops.

Hoptille is a monofunctional residential area. The residents are happy with this set up, because they are able to find all the amenities which they need at Bijlmerplein which is close by.

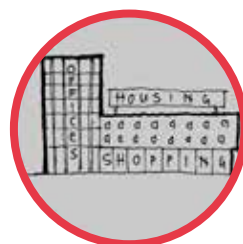
In Heesterveld, residents feel a weaker connection to Bijlmerplein. Residents of this predominantly residential area seem more focussed on their own environment. The current facilities boost the area and residents would like to see more of these non-residential facilities.



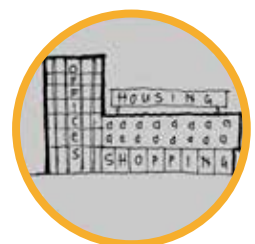
Makers



Government



Owners



Users

5 | Cultural diversity

Makers:

Cultural diversity is mentioned by the academics as a special value of the Bijlmer. It creates a “Caribbean atmosphere”, referring to the Bijlmer back in the days, which is valuable for the area. Shops and markets were run by the Surinamese inhabitants, which created a close relationship among single cultural groups. However, the local Dutch community could barely mix with the Caribbean community. Cultural diversity is recommended, but the exact mix and articulation requires deeper thoughts.

Government:

The cultural diversity in the area is seen by the government as a challenge, but at the same time as the main identity of the area. Problems can arise when different groups mix, like the large groups of Surinam immigrants who arrived in a largely Dutch community back in the days.

Owners:

The owners mentioned little about cultural diversity. For them, the diversity lies in the different neighbourhood characteristics within the urban environment, such as the public space and housing units.

Users:

Cultural diversity was frequently mentioned by users as an aspect that makes the neighbourhood unique. Users appreciated it, because they got the feeling, they can be themselves. One interviewee even chose to work here because of the multiculturality. However, in Hoptille some people also mentioned that residents tend to only interact with people within their own cultural group.



Makers



Government



Owners



Users

6 | Elevated roads and decks

Makers:

Makers and academics think that the elevated roads created traffic safety, as intended, but also contributed to the lack of social safety. This applies especially to pedestrian routes because of the lack of surveillance from car drivers. However, the idea of an elevated level is integrated in e.g. the design for Bijlmerplein area, creating a seamless connection from elevated road to the elevated deck as entrances for the residential area on top of the shops.

Government:

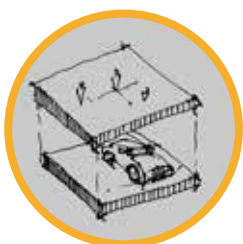
According to the government, the separation of traffic flows mainly impacted safety. The underpasses are seen as dangerous. The government does not want to get rid of the elevated roads, mainly because of the high costs to change it. For them, the money is better spent on improving street lighting and general maintenance.

Owners:

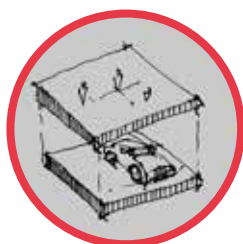
The owners mentioned the separation of the two levels between the public space, the private spaces and the transportation. These aspects created mainly spatial issues resulting in social problems. Since the elevated decks create a distinction between the flow of movements, these have two different characters: one for housing and one for the commercial area. The owners see opportunities for improvement in the aesthetics and function of the elevated decks.

Users:

Something that was really remarkable about the elevated level in the Bijlmerplein area is that a lot of users didn't even realize that elevated decks exist. A lot of the users are positive in their evaluation and think the decks look quiet and peaceful. But others are less positive in their opinion and mention the decks don't have a 'gezellig' (cosy/nice) atmosphere. One resident said that people think it's too difficult to take a bike or scooter up to the elevated deck, leading to a lot of bikes and scooters on the street level, which is unpleasant to look at according to the users.



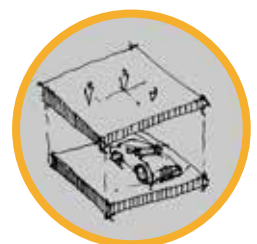
Makers



Government



Owners



Users

7 | Businesses

Makers:

Makers and academics mention that the local businesses, like the shops at Bijlmerplein, contribute to the liveliness of the neighbourhood. They are part of the multifunctional urban setup. Unfortunately, there are more and more stores being vacant today which creates a deserted atmosphere around Bijlmerplein. Although the makers and academics pointed out the areas known for drug dealing, other informal economies were not mentioned.

Government:

The governments also observe informal businesses, but generally not in a positive way. Drug dealing e.g., is mentioned as something that is sometimes the only income for residents. When given the choice of working in a supermarket or working in the criminal circuit, young people might choose for the 'quick and easy money'. The municipality aims to tackle this through education and social programs.

Owners:

The owners evaluate the businesses around Bijlmerplein and the creative businesses in Heesterveld as very positive. They also see the criminal 'informal' businesses and mention that the structure of some urban elements in Bijlmerplein create opportunities by lack of surveillance.

Users:

The users generally appreciate businesses in the neighbourhoods. They disliked the amount of vacancy on the Bijlmerplein. It has been mentioned that the businesses are key for the liveliness at Bijlmerplein. For areas that are lacking liveliness, adding business such as eateries has been proposed by interviewees. The small businesses at Heesterveld, such as the business hub that allows small companies to grow, are also appreciated.



Makers



Government



Owners



Users

8 | Greenery

Makers:

For the makers, greenery is important in housing neighbourhoods. They think there is an abundance of greenery in some areas. However, the greenery between neighbourhoods is said to have lost a sense of scale. More articulated 'human scale' greenery is needed within and between the neighbourhoods. Plain and cosmetic greenery meant to look at that was created under the CIAM principle, is now regarded as anonymous green without articulation of design and scale. Makers think that social elements like benches or other more varied objects should be placed in the green areas to enhance communal sense and use.

Government:

Abundance of greenery is mentioned with positive evaluation. The perceived lack of qualitative greenery is seen as a maintenance problem, mainly. In the past, the budget for maintaining greenery was cut back. The government now realises that this led to large, open spaces, where people do not feel at ease.

Owners:

The owners indicate a general lack of green spaces. But more important than quantity, it is a lack of quality that is also their main concern. The main aim therefore, is the improvement of greenery. This theme seems very relevant to the owners, relating to all areas of H-Buurt and Bijlmerplein. Owners highly value the presence of greenery in general, but they are very critical when it comes to the responsibility of the maintenance of the greenery. It is considered as a lack

of action and vision. In the eyes of the owners, this responsibility lies with the government. The lack of vision resulted in green areas without any usage, due to safety issues and a general lack of quality. Owners mention that the green spaces do not seem to be appropriate for current users and their needs.

Users:

Especially for Hoptille and Heesterveld, some residents greatly appreciate the greenery in the area, which is often identified as a quality of the neighbourhood. Users mention the Nelson Mandela park that is nearby, the trees and the greenery. In Hoptille, people also mentioned the grass fields and gardens. In Heesterveld, people appreciate the water and planters. However, there is also a group of users that think there is a lack of qualitative greenery. In Bijlmerplein and Heesterveld, people think there is too much stone and brick and they miss greenery. For example, on the square of Bijlmerplein, on the elevated decks in Bijlmerplein and inside the creative community block in Heesterveld.

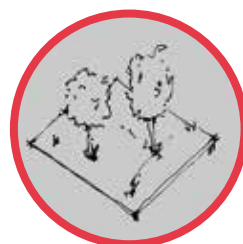
In Hoptille, a few people mentioned the grass as being useless.



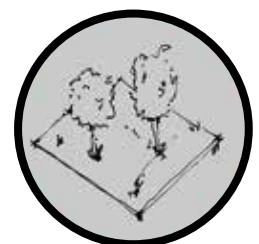
Makers



Government



Owners



Users

9 | Low-/ mid-rise

Makers:

The makers and academics agree that the idea to create mid-rise and low-rise housing complexes in Bijlmerplein, Hoptille, and Heesterveld must be regarded as an anti-CIAM ideology. The famous high-rise flats in Bijlmermeer with high density, an abundance of green and the idea of separating functions contributed to the social problems of Bijlmer in the past. In their opinion, the mid-rise and low-rise created a more pleasant ambience and addressed the human scale. Heesterveld especially, also aimed at creating intimacy with its inner courtyard. The makers believe that the combination of mid-rise and low-rise is a proven concept for the creation of valuable and liveable neighbourhoods.

Government:

The mid-rise of Heesterveld is seen as an effective catalyst for social progress. This might be an effect of the composition of residents, apart from the building typology. The mix of building characteristics (mid-rise, courtyard, human scale), interventions (opening up the closed plinth) and this recent act of Placemaking by artists and entrepreneurs help create ownership.

The low-rise part of Hoptille is said to provide opportunities for crime, because of the diffuse public space around the short housing blocks.

Owners:

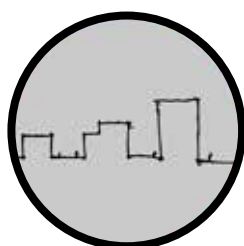
Generally, the high-rise in the area is not favoured. The owners mention the human scale of mid-rise and low-rise as positive. This human scale is more prominent in Heesterveld and Hoptille, because the buildings do not exceed six stories. However, they feel that the human scale is lacking in other parts of the H-buurt.

Users:

The users had strong opinions about the differences between the low-rise, mid-rise and high-rise buildings in the H-buurt. Surprisingly, the most positive feedback related to both the low-rise and the high-rise. Users like how the low-rise buildings serve for bringing in families in the area. Interviewees often said that the high-rise buildings are very typical for the Bijlmer.



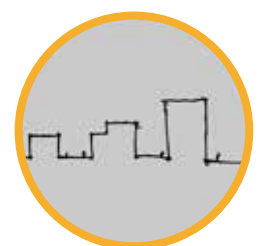
Makers



Government



Owners



Users

10 | Sense of ownership

Makers:

Academics mentioned that the lack of ownership is reflected in a visual way. In Hoptille, the public spaces do not seem public and the private spaces does not seem private. This mismatch of ownership and character causes misunderstanding resulting in non-use of private space. For example, the gardens in front of the housing units at Hoptille are not used as private gardens because they lack a private atmosphere. This low level of appropriation is perceived as a negative feature among both makers and academics. In their opinion, the sense of ownership could contribute to safety as well. Bijlmerplein has improved over time. Here, on the contrary, the replacement of individual fences by collective solutions is evaluated as positive. The elevated decks now have uniform planters and fences.

Government:

According to the government, people don't maintain their gardens. This can be observed in Hoptille mainly. It is not clear whether this is due to a lack of money, to a general lack of care for the residents' environment or a combination of both.

Owners:

The owners consider lack of ownership as an issue throughout the whole neighbourhood. This is illustrated for example in the littering at Bijlmerplein, the unused flower pots and the lack of participation in the public space. For Hoptille, this is visi-

ble by the lack of maintenance of the private gardens. This is due to intrinsic aspects of the 80s architecture like e.g., the unclear transitions between public and private, the poor design of public space, the limitations of surveillance (eyes on the street) etc.

Users:

Although not many users brought up the topic of sense of ownership, it was mentioned that ownership is not easy because most houses are rental. One interviewee pointed out that in cases houses are sold, in most cases the new owner rents out the property, which makes it difficult for the tenants to feel a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood. In this case the legal ownership influences the feeling of ownership.



Makers



Government



Owners



Users

11 | Colour and art

Makers:

In the eyes of the makers, the added colours and art on the buildings are negative additions. The colouring of Heesterveld's facades is both seen and designed as a 'sign making'-process. People can identify with a certain building or community. But architecturally, it is seen as a bad thing. The verticality, plus the materiality of the building panels with balconies and architectural details, are said to be totally lost by the diagonal lines painted over them. Both academics and the makers involved in the original development, agree about the loss of architectural quality.

Government:

The government identifies art as a strong binder for the area; people identify with it. On the one hand, graffiti is seen as a negative but on the other hand, organized art is seen as positive. The colours of Heesterveld are appreciated. The artistic community there is greatly valued, and the government would like it to become more permanent.

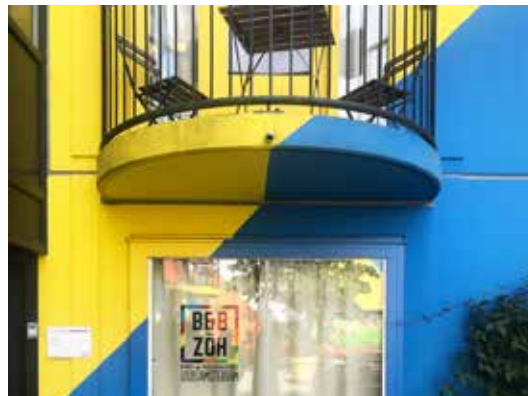
Owners:

Art is mentioned mostly in connection to Heesterveld, due to the accomplished redevelopment. Owners assess a big part of Heesterveld's identity connected to the colourful facade and wall paintings. The colourful stairwells in Hoptille are mentioned as well, but don't seem to play a very important role for the identity of Hoptille. Some owners indicate that the colourful transformation of Heesterveld

should be kept in mind for future redevelopments.

Users:

Users have different perceptions of colours and art in the three different neighbourhoods. In Bijlmerplein, only the huge graffiti painted on a specific shop's wall was mentioned. As for the Hoptille area, both social media posts and street interviews indicate the wall art painted on the stairs. Generally, the opinions are positive about the art on the stairs. The most frequently discussed street art is located at Heesterveld. Especially visitors, not living in the area, are interested in the colour and graffiti on the walls of the building and make pictures. Generally, users positively evaluated the street art and colour of this place. Still, on the other hand, there were several opinions that the colour was too excessive in terms of living space. Many social media users post about art, reflecting the positive expressions. Many people perceive art as a significant element of Heesterveld as a guide tour program takes place about street art in the surrounding area.



Makers



Government



Owners



Users

12 | Distinctive identities

Makers:

The makers stories explain that the 'Anti-Bijlmer', as mentioned before, resulted in three strategies: the four-to-six story building block around a courtyard at Heesterveld, the elongated building at Hoptille turning its back literally towards the old Bijlmer and finally, the mix of shopping and housing with their unique deck-entrances at Bijlmerplein.

For the makers and academics, the separate identities gained more strength by their materiality. Where Heesterveld consists of prefab concrete slabs, Hoptille has a mix of concrete and bricks, and Bijlmerplein has a high-quality white brick highlighted in the facades.

Also, the entrances give a distinct character to each of the three identities. At Heesterveld the entrance is situated in the corners. Hoptille (after renovation) has 'portiek' entrances along the block. Bijlmerplein has the entrances hidden at the corners of the block as well, like Heesterveld, but lead to an upper deck with 'portiek' entrances.

Government:

According to the government, the three identities mean different approaches

in management. Because they all have such a strong identity, they should be seen as separate neighbourhoods.

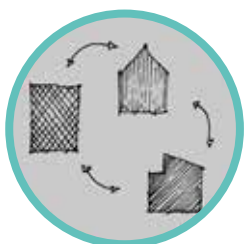
Owners:

The owners also mention that the locations have three very different identities. This is due to differences in typologies, appearances and social issues. Heesterveld is evaluated most positive of the three and Hoptille as worst.

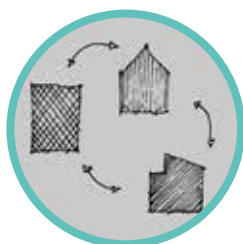
Some ideas for improvement, have already been implemented at Heesterveld, like an alternative function in the plinth. The owners mention that this could be a strategy for other areas in the H-buurt too.

Users:

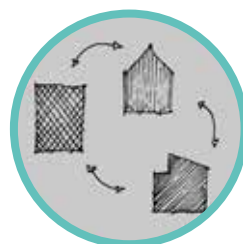
In all three locations a sense of community identity is present, albeit in different ways. The Bijlmerplein is regarded as most lively, although there aren't as many community activities as in the other locations. The community sense in Hoptille is evaluated as strongest by employees of the community centre, relating to the activities they organize. Similarly, community activities are organized in Heesterveld, but the more important for their sense of belonging seems the coherent group of like-minded people.



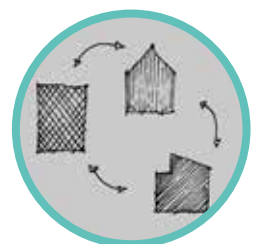
Makers



Government



Owners



Users



Bijlmerplein



Hoptille

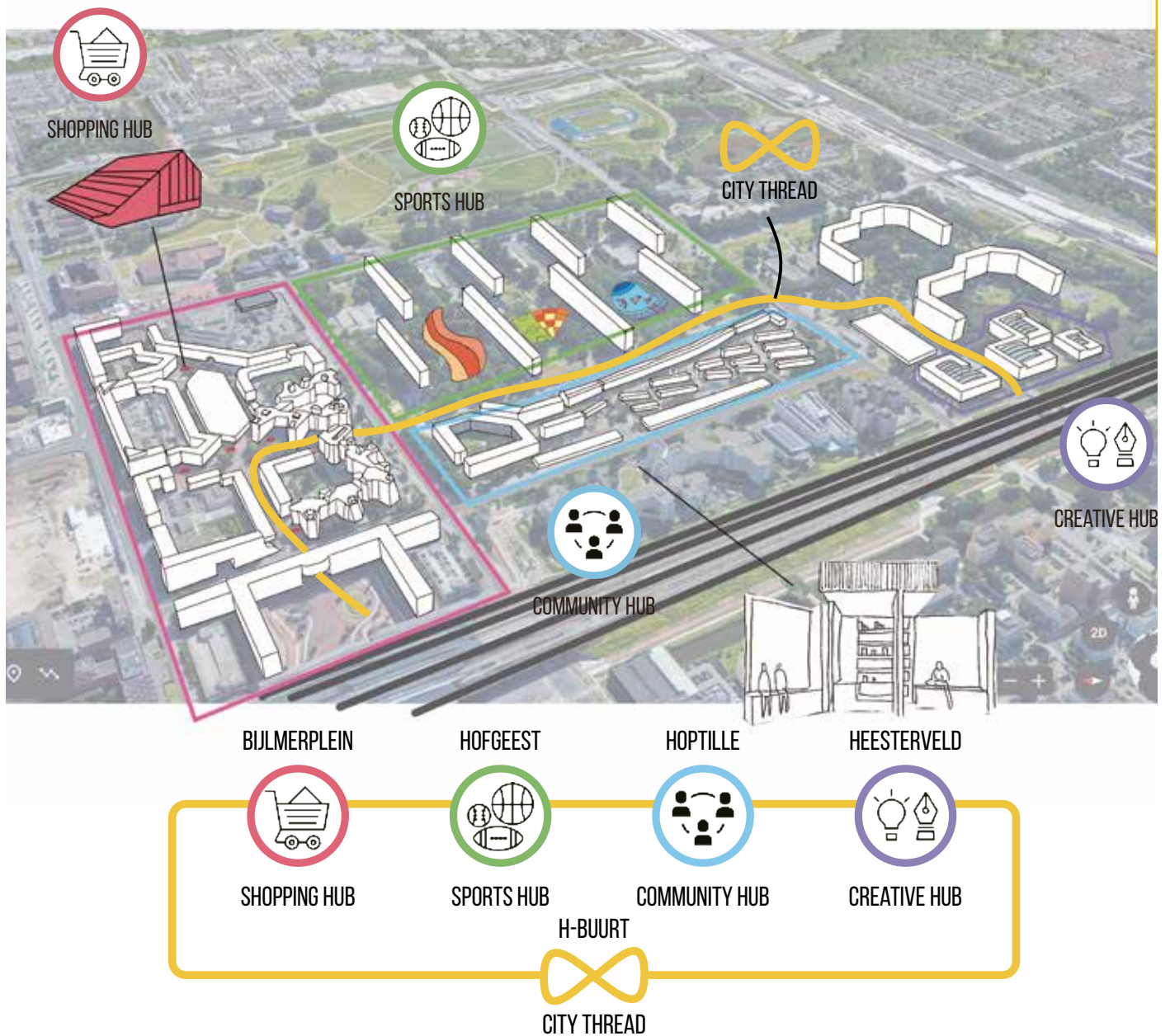


Heesterveld

Based on the values found in the research, design strategies are developed. Every strategy creatively links one or more values to a specific location or application. As already indicated, the values described before sometimes are positive qualities, according to all stakeholders. The values 'three distinctive characters' or 'street are assessed mainly positive by all groups. Then the design strategy studies this value and proposes how to preserve it for the future, expand it to other elements or areas or strengthen its quality. Sometimes we received mixed messages about values. Stakeholders can have different opinions, like in the values 'elevated level', 'lack of qualitative greenery' or 'diversity in dwelling scales and types'. Or a certain value was positive but is now fading or changing, due to new circumstances. In that case, design strategies formulate the challenge and propose to balance or revitalize the value and position it in a new way. In other cases, a value has a negative assessment like the 'unintended use of public space'. These negative values are to be improved.

Collectively, the students created a toolkit of strategies for different scale levels, types of values, future perspectives, based on the H-Buurt as a case study. From an educational perspective, the strategies serve as the basis for individual design development in the context of the graduation projects. 17 strategies have been developed, that are illustrated in this chapter. The related values are indicated and some risks or point of attention are formulated. The strategies mostly combine several challenges and values, coming to integrated solutions. On the other hand, a 'real' design should be more comprehensive and solve 'everything'. The proposed design strategies should be understood as concepts that could be inspirational for future developments, in H-Buurt and Bijlmerplein, but also in other similar areas.





Bijlmerplein

- Add small store unit
- Urban thread
- Activate shopping area

Hoptille

- Add community hub
- Urban thread

Heesterveld

- Add covered courtyard
- Community activity in courtyard

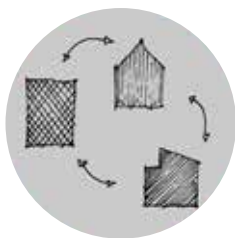
Rechte H-Buurt

- Add sports facilities + playscape

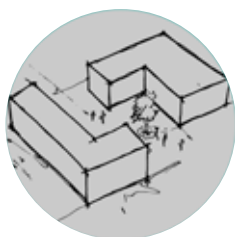


1 | Identity-based Hubs

The three neighbourhoods have a distinctive identity but in the same time all lack diversity in public space. This strategy uses the diverse identities to enrich the functionality and quality of public space. The creation of a hub in every neighbourhood, based on the existing strengths, distinct its identity. Linking the hubs by a physical route helps connecting the neighbourhoods and providing a rich diversity of facilities to a wider public. The hubs serve as social connectors for different users that can come together for public programming or informal hangout. A shopping hub can have various small (pop-up) stores or food stalls, provide opportunity for sitting and could be movable constructions. A community hub can include a small library, educational activities, artistic workshops, community program etc. A sports hub can be created in neighbourhoods with large open (green) spaces. A combination of sport and play facilities can be installed ideally integrated in the landscape design. The main base for this strategy is enhancing the existing (maybe latent) identity of a neighbourhood to create a stronger identity and community feeling by a more activating and attractive public space.



Distinctive identities



Public space



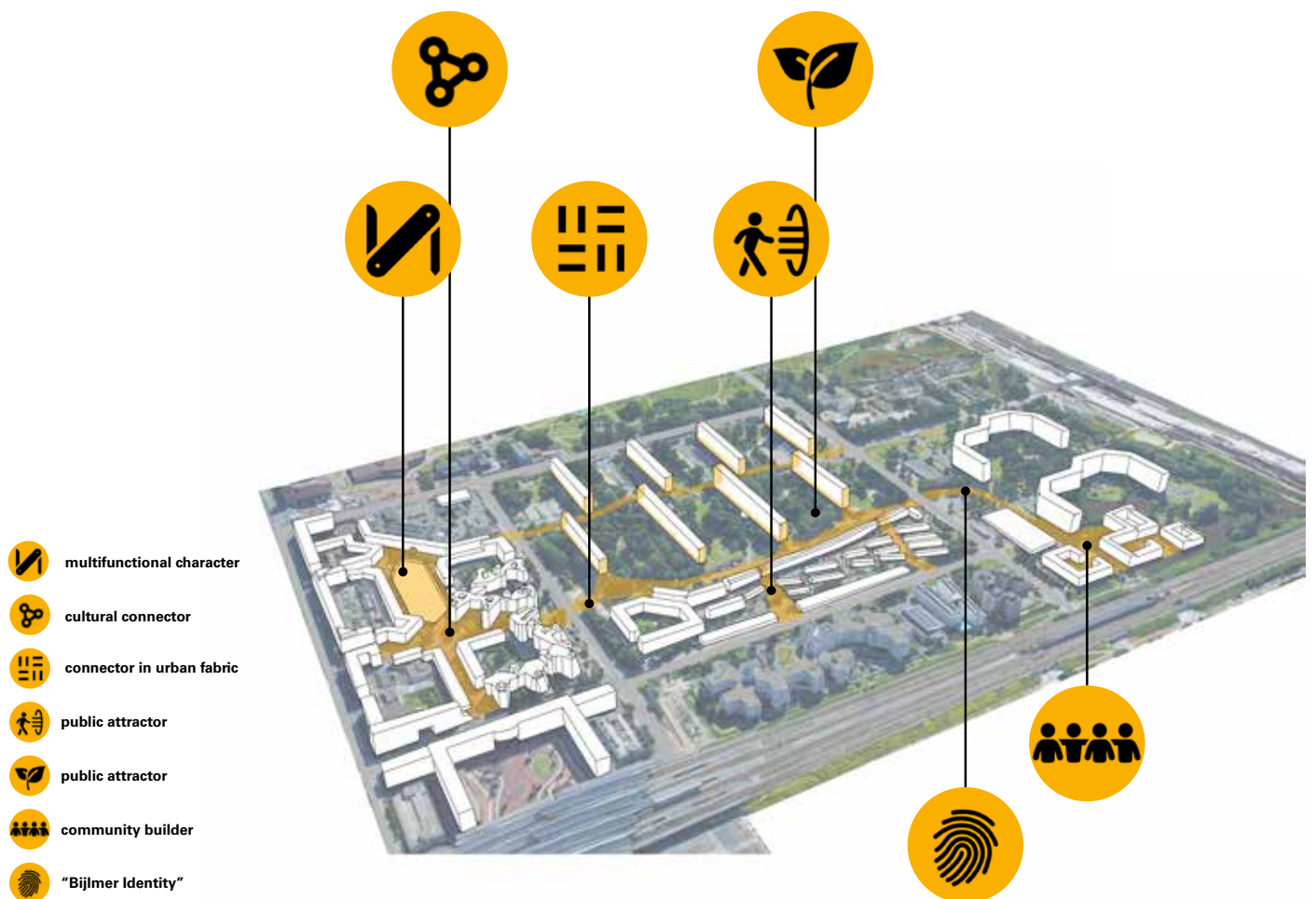
Mountain on the Moon, Madrid Spain, by Enorme Studio



Story Pods, Toronto Canada, by Atelier Kasteli Buffey



Linear park, Melbourne Australia, by ASPECT Studios



2 | Introducing colour concepts

Most stakeholders value the colourful graphics that were recently added to Heesterveld (although the original architects have their doubts). It gives this neighbourhood a strong, cheerful and artistic character that attracts activity and visitors' attention. This colour concept could be expanded and applied on the other neighbourhoods, too. Differentiation of the graphics or maybe another materialisation of the add-on new identity should be considered. One can think of 'coloration' by other means than painting, for example using wooden cladding, green plants etc. Colour concepts can be applied to building complexes, but can also play a role in urban design to improve wayfinding and identification. A benefit of a colour strategy is the combination of low cost - big visual impact. An important risk is the possible loss of architectural articulation and the fact that it is not easily reversible.

The generally idea behind the strategy is copying a positive attribute, the colour concept in this case, to extrapolate its success.



Comfort Town, Kiev Ukraine, by Archimatika



Hufeisensiedlung, Berlin Germany, by Bruno Taut



Luchtsingel, Rotterdam The Netherlands, by ZUS



Colour and art



Cultural diversity



80's Aesthetics



AESTHETICS



SOCIAL



HEALTH



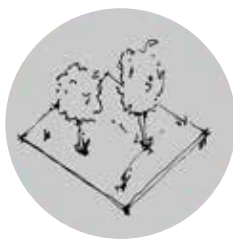
SAFETY



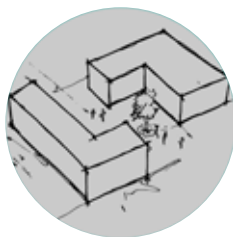
3 | Blue-Green infrastructure

Although many expansion areas and new towns originally have been designed as green neighbourhoods, the assessment of the greenery nowadays is often negative. Moreover, we are facing sustainability challenges that set new requirements for the natural environment. This strategy proposes an integrated blue-green infrastructure that improves green quality and connects the building complexes and the surrounding public areas. Blue (water) and green (flora and fauna) have proven positive impact on human wellbeing. Also, they can help reducing the urban heat island effect and flooding, improve biodiversity, saving energy by reusing water and energy flows. Inspiring references in other cities are already available (e.g., Potsdamer Platz and Block 6 in Berlin, the High Line in New York, Bosco Verticale in Milano).

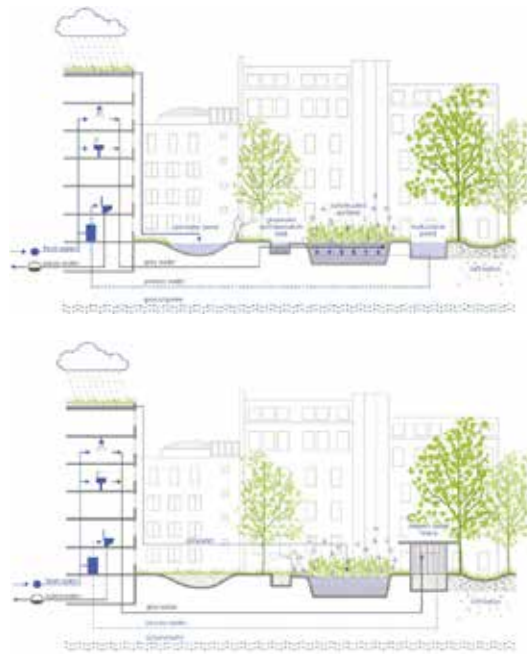
To come to feasible solutions, it is important to develop an integrated design that uses the characteristics of these specific neighbourhoods. In that way the blue-green infrastructure can offer more attractive and differentiated public space without losing the urban and architectural character.



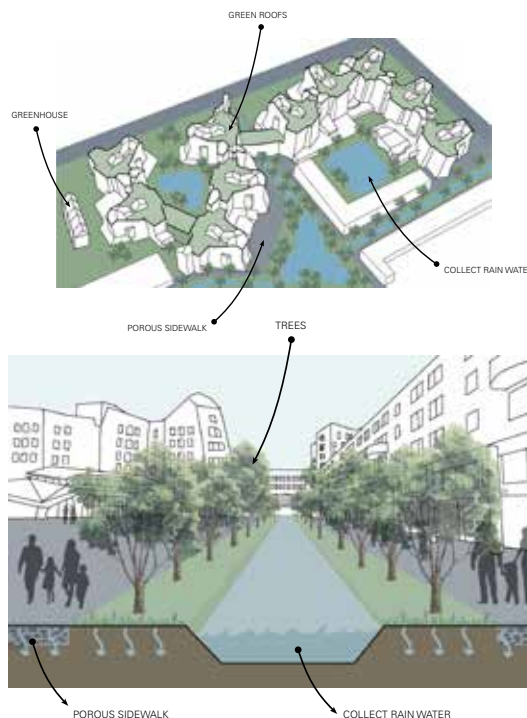
Greenery



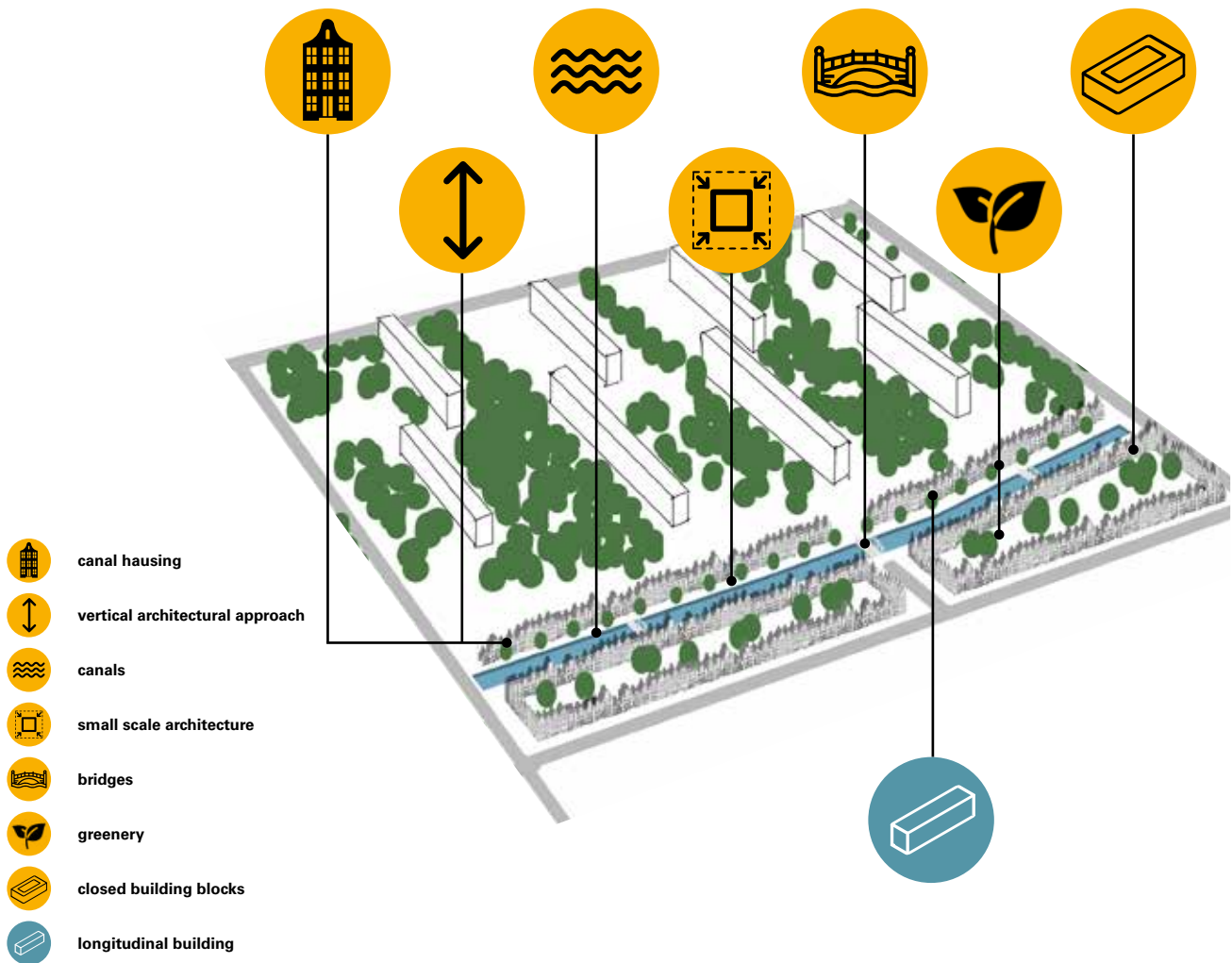
Public space



Block 6, Berlin Germany, by Team Block 6



Visualisation of the strategy, around Bijlmerplein



4 | Adding proven characteristics

New towns or new neighbourhoods are often not perceived as 'New Heritage' but, conversely, as dull, ugly and lacking identity. This copy-paste-strategy proposes the use of successful attributes of another well-known historic city to improve the identity and appreciation. In this example, characteristics from the city centre of Amsterdam, like canals, narrow street profiles, boats and bikes are copied to the H-Buurt, resulting in a surprising, somewhat confusing image. However, reusing known and successful concepts is own to our history in architecture and urban planning. Many new developments are based on traditional concepts that hold proven qualities in terms of comfort, functionality or economically feasibility. Applying aspects of the 'Dutch waterfront city', including canals, has proven to be a successful model for the New Town Almere-Haven, offering the new citizens a recognizable and comfortable living environment.

When working with this strategy, haphazard copying of stylish elements should be avoided. The focus should be on the finding the essence of successful historic attributes and their applicability and relevance for the case of intervention.



Almere Haven, The Netherlands



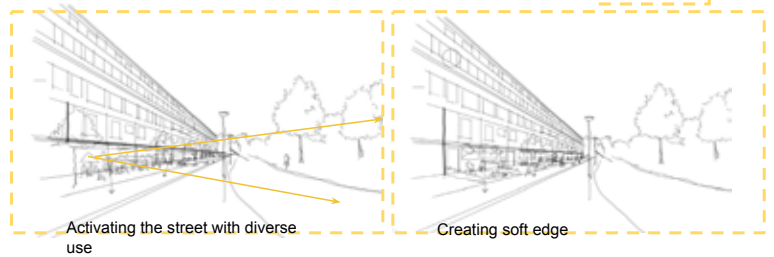
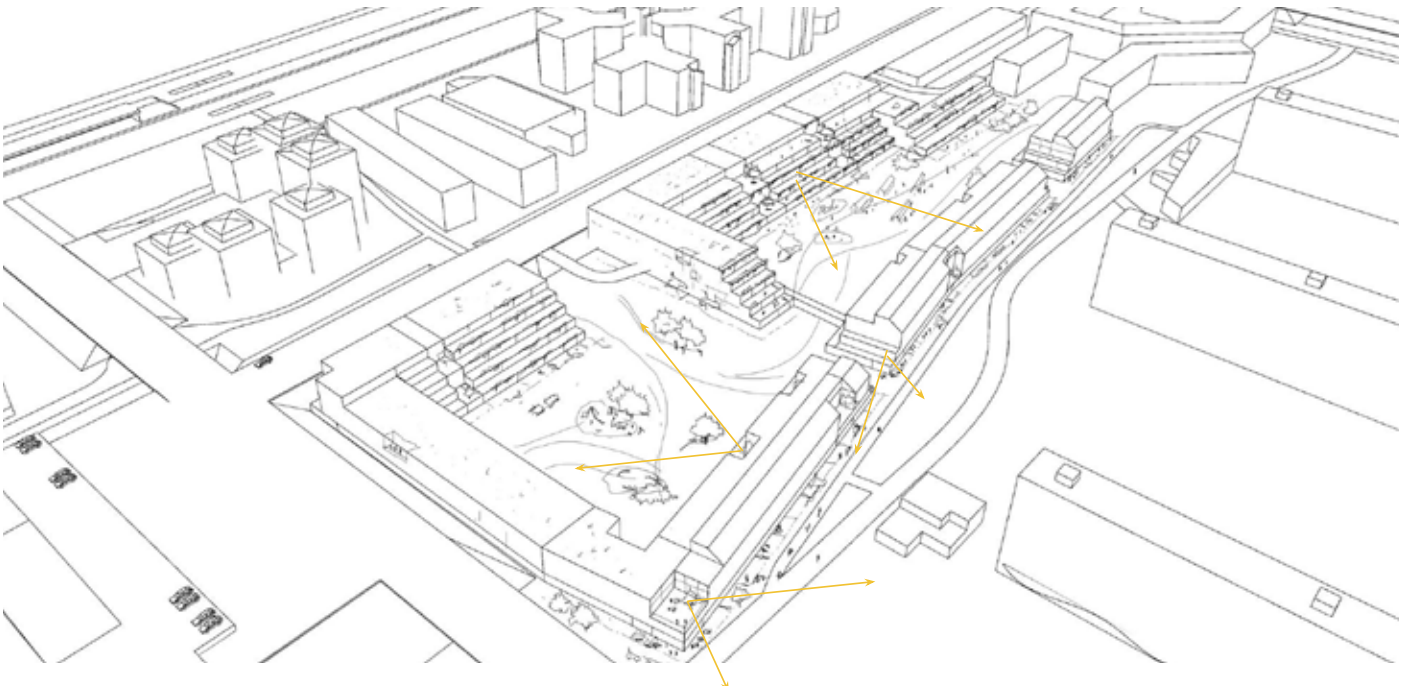
Holland Dorp, China



80's Aesthetics



Distinctive identities



5 | Creating Natural Surveillance

'Eyes on the street', the famous concept by Jane Jacobs, can improve social bonding and discourage crime. Adapting the housing complexes according to this principle could diminish the present feelings of unsafety by many residents and could prevent the 'unintended' use of public space. This strategy means intervention on several levels. Regarding the architecture, this could be e.g., additional windows positioned in high-traffic areas looking out onto public spaces. Creation of 'soft' building edges with front gardens, stoops, stairs and porches could provide surveillance by use. A related aspect advocated by Jacobs is a diversity of use, inviting people outdoors and increasing natural surveillance by vibrant public space. On an urban level, different degrees of territoriality could be created by gradual changes in public, semi-public, semi-private and private space. Transforming the open urban structure in Hoptille to a courtyard is an example to make a transition from public to private as an enclosed space the community can relate to.

The essence of the strategy is the use of architectural tools to create spaces that are easily visible, inviting use and as a result provide natural surveillance.



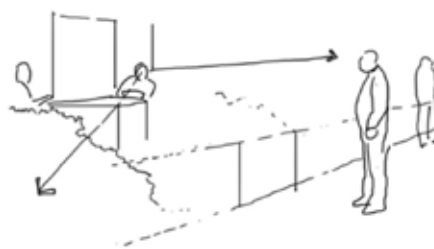
Solbjerg Have, Frederiksberg Denmark



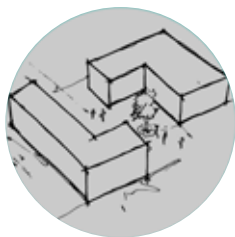
New Copenhagen, Denmark



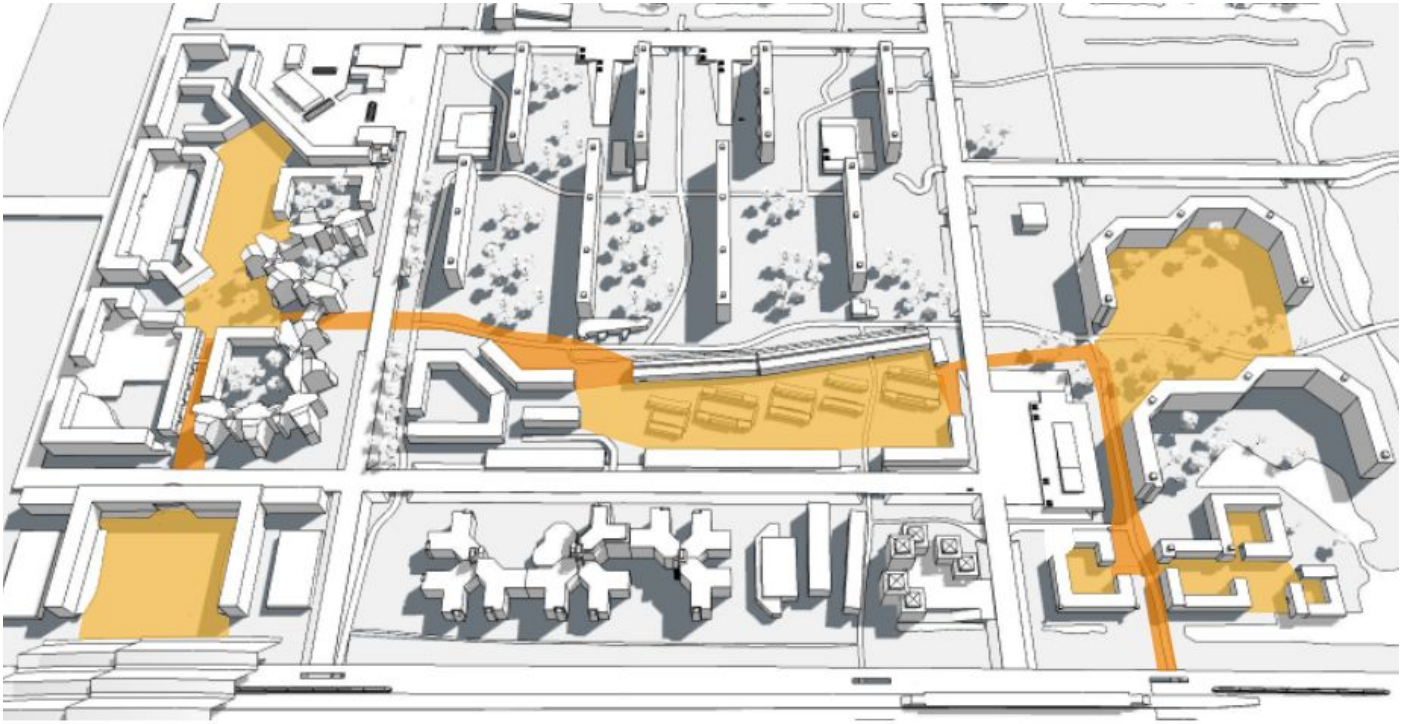
Sense of ownership



Sketch expressing the strategy



Public space



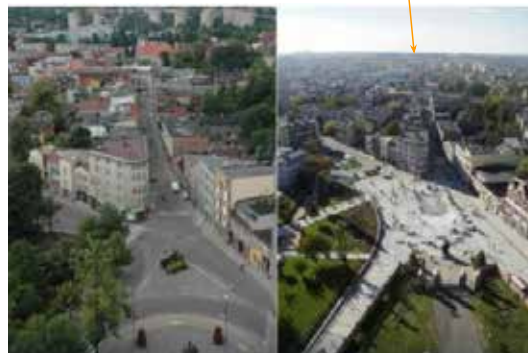
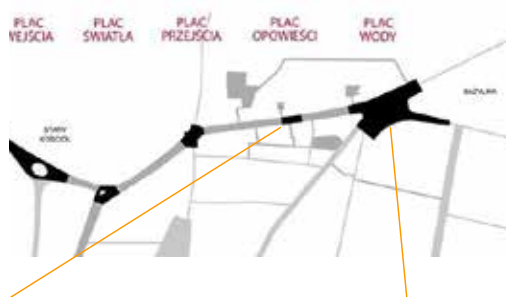
6 | Creating networks of public space

The current neighbourhoods in H-Buurt and Bijlmerplein hold various large open spaces and squares. However, they are hidden, fragmented or unrecognisable. The 'Bijlmer-plein' for example does not provide the qualities you would imagine for a plaza. This strategy proposes the transformation of present large spaces to grand plazas. The indicated areas on the map could have an improved design and densification of program, by for example small pavilions, well designed green spaces including seating and playing areas. Additionally, ground floors of adjacent buildings could be re-programmed by societal or commercial facilities.

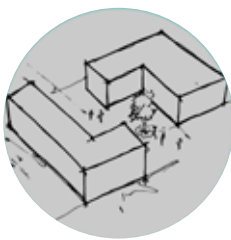
The crucial aspect of the strategy is connecting public spaces, creating a network. The research showed that many users are not familiar with public areas and facilities in their own living environment. A clear and attractive route connecting the plazas would improve way-finding, connect neighbourhoods and provide attractive public space for residents and visitors. Moreover, walkable neighbourhoods improve comfort, activity and public health.



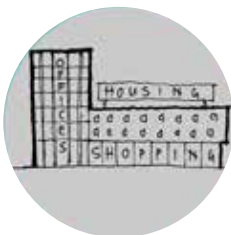
Mill Hill, London UK



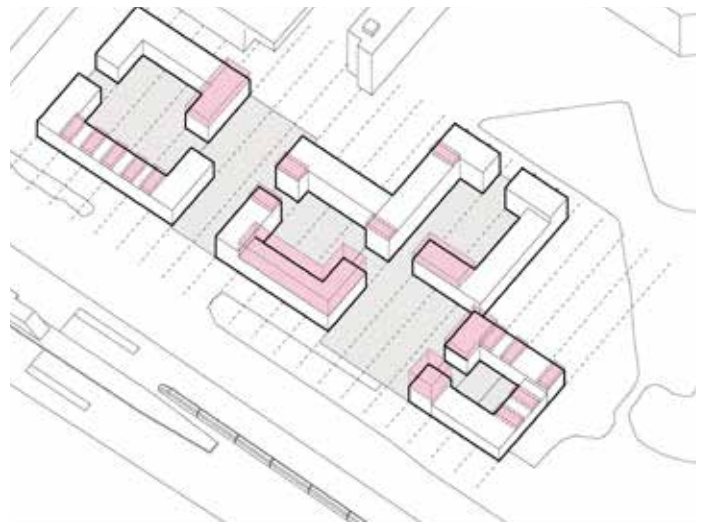
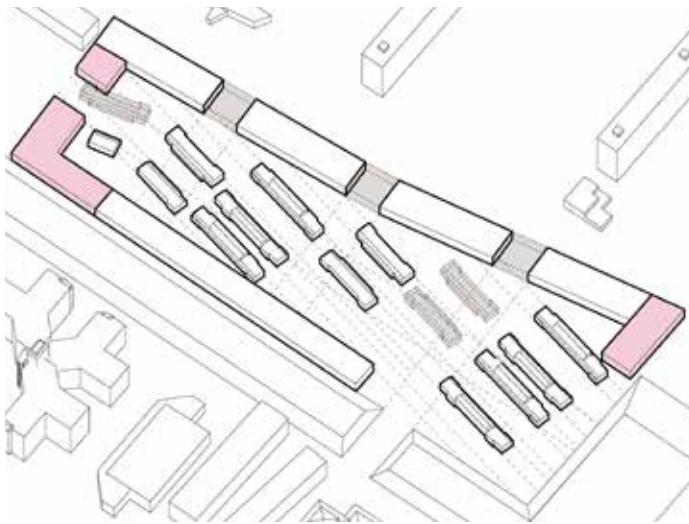
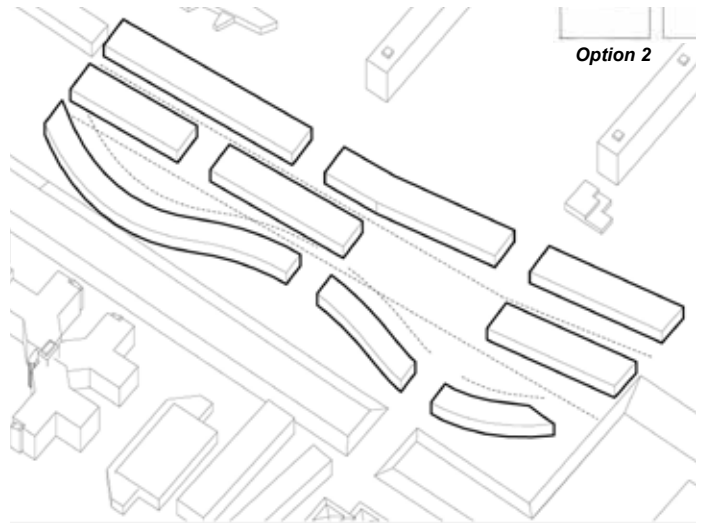
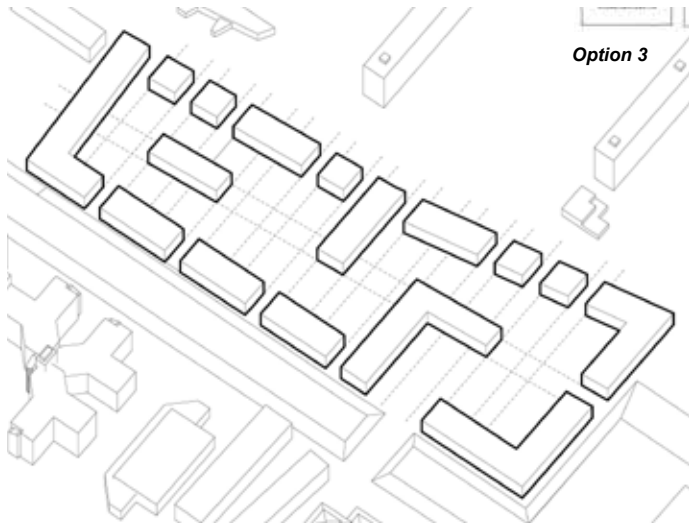
Powstańców & Sobieskiego streets, Poland



Public space



Mono-/ Multifunctionality



7 | Redevelop building blocks

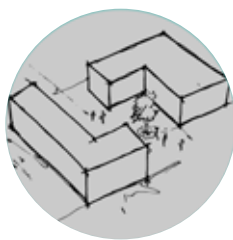
The length of the mid-rise building complex in Hoptille was mentioned for several disadvantages. Some stakeholders experience that the building turns its back to the neighbourhood or front and back orientation being mixed up in the renovation. Also, maintenance and social safety issues are mentioned as negative, leading to plans for demolition. This strategy proposes an alternative for the long Hoptille block by opening-up and redevelopment. The block is split up in several smaller blocks. The reduction of housing units is compensated by new additions. The different models illustrate the opportunity to avoid total demolition and improve the quality of the block by a diversity of housing types, possibility for windows and balconies on corners and ends. Splitting the long block also has benefits for the surroundings. Shorter blocks offer more pedestrian choices and more variety in public spaces. Moreover, shorter building blocks, if well-designed, can decrease hidden corners and improve social control. Prioritising diverse quality over repetitive quantity is the essence of this strategy, applicable to many post-war residential housing neighbourhoods.



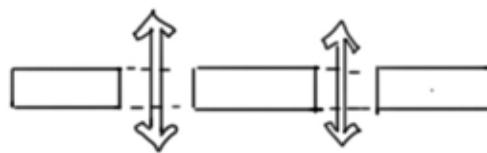
Leinefelde Germany, original building (top) and re-design (bottom) by Stefan Forster architects



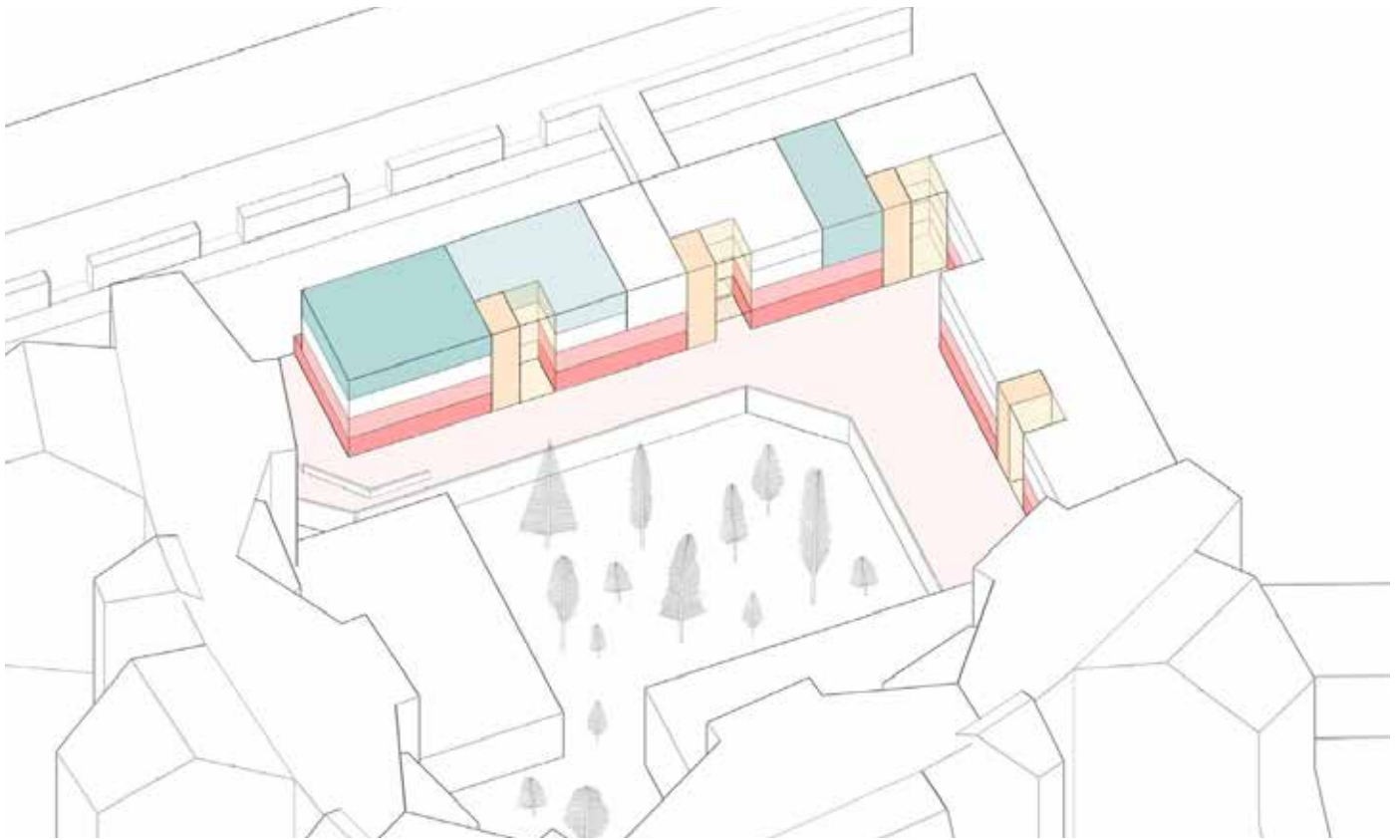
Dwelling
sizes and types



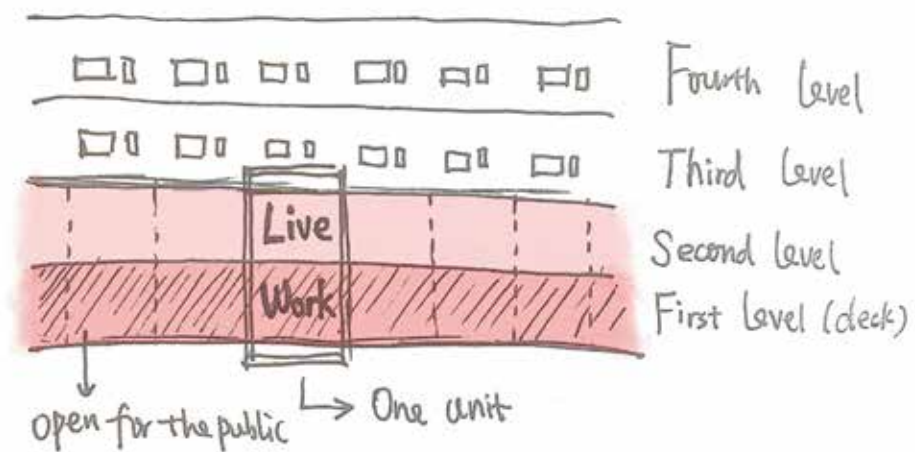
Public space



Sketch expressing the strategy



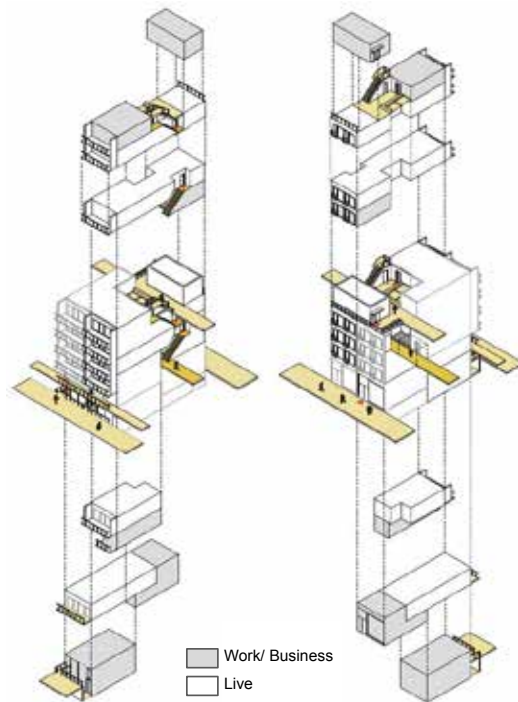
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ■ <i>Entrepreneurs' unit- work</i> | ■ <i>Inner circulation</i> | ■ <i>Living unit A</i> |
| ■ <i>Entrepreneurs' unit- live</i> | ■ <i>Inner public zone</i> | ■ <i>Living unit B</i> |
| | | ■ <i>Living unit C</i> |



8 | Revitalise the deck

The elevated deck as a safe and vibrant living environment was a strong concept in the 1970's and 80's. Although some decks function well, in many cases and also in Bijlmerplein, the decks suffer from various problems, like feelings of unsafety and criminal businesses. Residents mainly use the decks as transition space to access their homes. Moreover, the dwellings on first floor, directly connected to the deck, lack privacy and comfortable outdoor space. This strategy aims to solve these problems by redefining the function of the elevated deck and the units in the building block. The scenario proposes working-living units for entrepreneurs on the first and second level. The deck is transformed into a lively public interior, giving access to the small businesses. The upper floors can provide various housing types, like merged existing units for bigger families, lofts, regular apartments etc.

The strategy enlarges openness and activates the vitality of the public zone on the deck and inside the residential building block and increases opportunities for mixed use and small businesses.



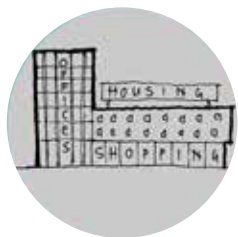
IBeB project, Kreuzberg Berlin



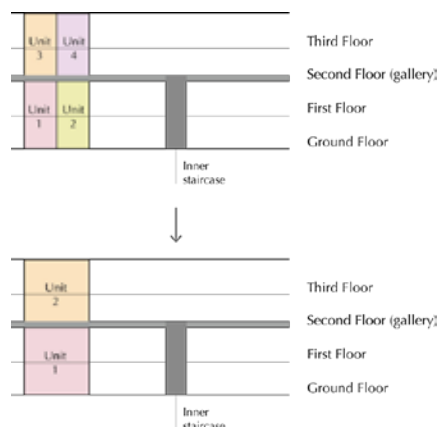
Elevated roads and decks



Businesses



Mono-/ Multifunctionality



Justus van Effen complex, Rotterdam, NL



9 | Activating the roof

This strategy explores how to generate profit from existing buildings. It uses the unspoken value of flat roofs that are common for 1980's multi-family housing. In this example, greenhouses are placed on top of social housing complexes. This idea does not evolve out of solely economical gain alone. It also reduces the carbon footprint of the neighbourhood and active citizenship. Also, it provides an opportunity to be partly self-sufficient in production of vegetables and fruits and stimulate a healthy diet for residents.

Economic benefits of adding economic activity to the roof, could be the creation of extra jobs and income for residents and more rent income for the real estate owner. Socially, the profit could be a stronger community feeling and more attractive neighbourhood. The capacity of the buildings in terms of structural strength and building physics should of course be studied. The new business on the roof, in this case a greenhouse, could create a new identity to the architecture, which can be both an opportunity or a risk.

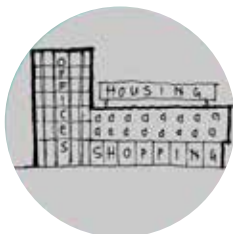


Source: Divisare

Altmarkt, Oberhausen Germany



Businesses



Mono-/
Multifunctionality



10 | Activating the plinth

Similar to the previous, this strategy activates the lower floors of the housing block for economic activities. A negative value of many post-war housing complexes, from the 1950's until the 1980's, is the unattractiveness of the ground floor. Often storages dominate the ground floor program resulting in closed 'dead' plinths. In other cases, dwellings are situated on the ground floor level, causing a lack of privacy for these homes. This strategy proposes an alternative program replacing the typical homes or storages. In this example the number of housing units is reduced by 50% and transformed into offices. Opening up the facade with large windows adapting to the existing facade grid, the design both fits housing and offices under one roof without enlarging the existing footprint.

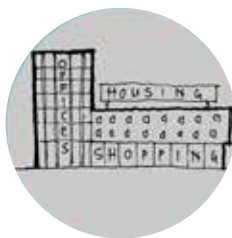
Repurposing the area on the lower floors is a strategy to provide multifunctional buildings instead of housing only, leading to more lively neighbourhoods. An active plinth can improve feelings of safety by 'eyes on the street'. Moreover, it is a strategy to transform the difficulty of a hard confrontation between public and private space into the advantage visibility for businesses.



King's Road, London UK



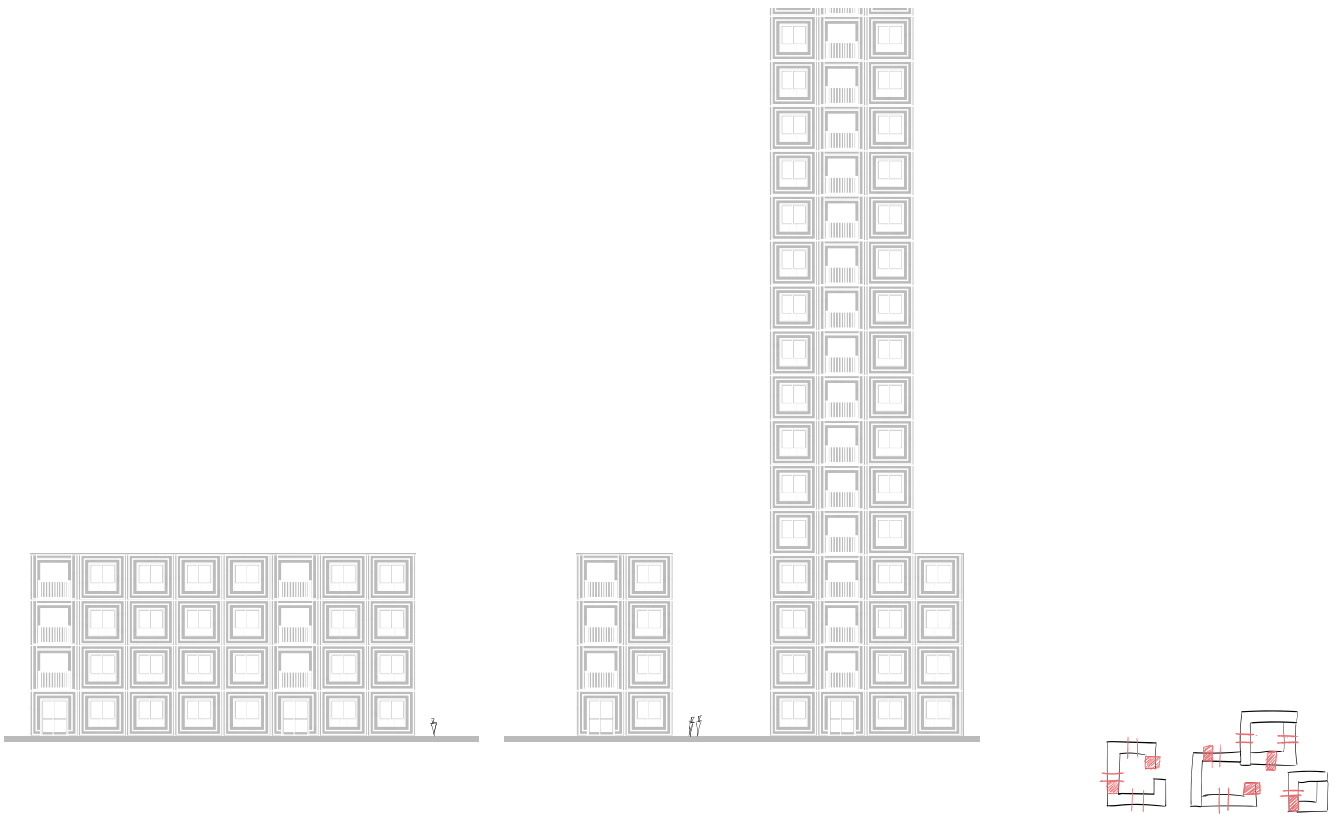
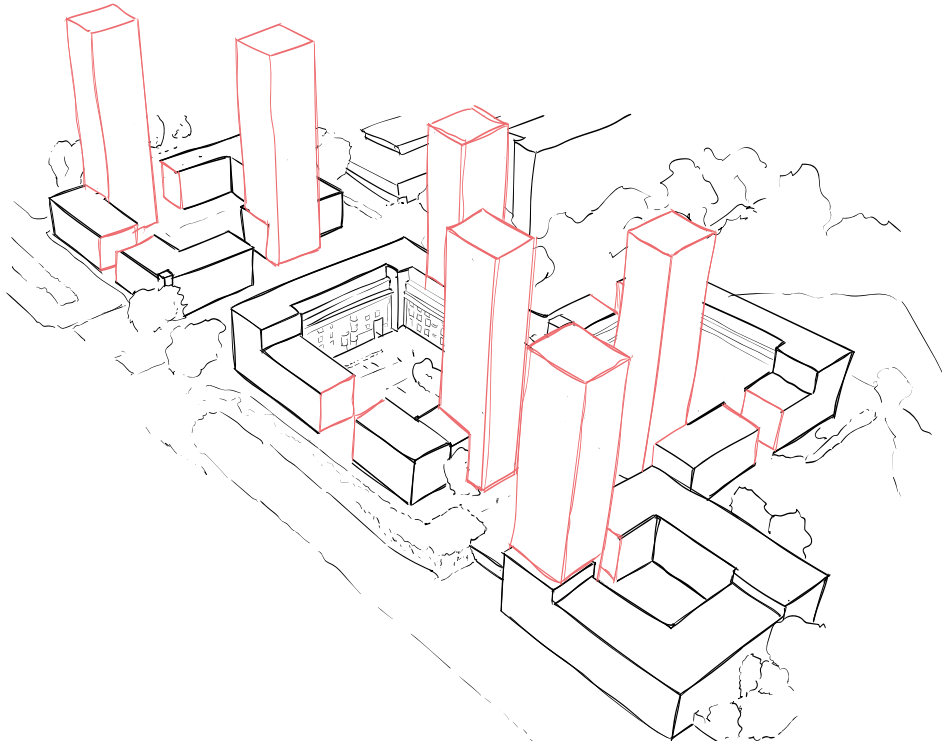
Knikflats, Rotterdam, biq architecten



Mono-/
Multifunctionality



Businesses



11 | Densification by adding buildings

This is a risky strategy. An important characteristic for the 1970's and 1980's neighbourhoods is the anti-movement to high-rise as the culmination of modernism and its progressive technical possibilities. The result is a mix of mid-rise and low-rise, like in H-Buurt and Hoptille, everything but towers. In the same time, Amsterdam and many other urban regions are facing housing shortage and have the ambition to densify within present city boundaries. Is this possible while respecting the urban heritage context?

Therefore, this strategy explores the densification by adding towers to the existing constructions, without enlarging the building's footprint. Apart from losing the historic value of anti-Bijlmer ideology, the risks are also a problem of human scale, increase of traffic and parking and structural feasibility. But the strategy also offers the opportunity to provide more homes, which is in line with the original social values of housing for all. Construction of towers hold a conflict of affordability. On the one hand a new housing program could increase the mix of users by mid or high-income target groups. Alternatively, the towers add to the stock of affordable housing to meet the current societal demands and to prevent gentrification.



Kabeldistrict, Delft The Netherlands, by Mei architecten



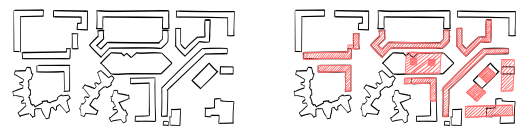
Kanchanjunga Apartments, Mumbai India, by Charles Correa



Low-/ mid-rise



80's Aesthetics



12 | Densification by adding floors

Similar to the previous densification strategy, also this proposal aims to meet the current demand for housing. However, this model accepts the mid-rise character that is typical for Post 65 urban neighbourhoods. Adding extra layers to existing housing complexes is done many times, mainly for early post war blocks. One of the issues is the accessibility of the added apartments. That would also be the case for additions on H-Buurt and Hoptille, that are predominantly walk-up typologies without lifts. On the other hand, it also brings the opportunity to improve the accessibility for all apartments or to add high-end or elderly housing on top. The appearance of added layers is a risk and opportunity and could be 'mitigated' by good design.

The strategy investigates the possibility for adding more homes in and on top of the existing blocks, without drastic changes to the urban layout. Also, left-over areas could be used for fitting in new buildings. Precise investigation of access, shadows, target groups etc is necessary to preserve social, functional and aesthetic coherence.



GV51 Penthouse, Belgrade Serbia,
by studio ENND



Ijzdoornlaan, Amsterdam The Netherlands, by
Hans van Heeswijk architecten



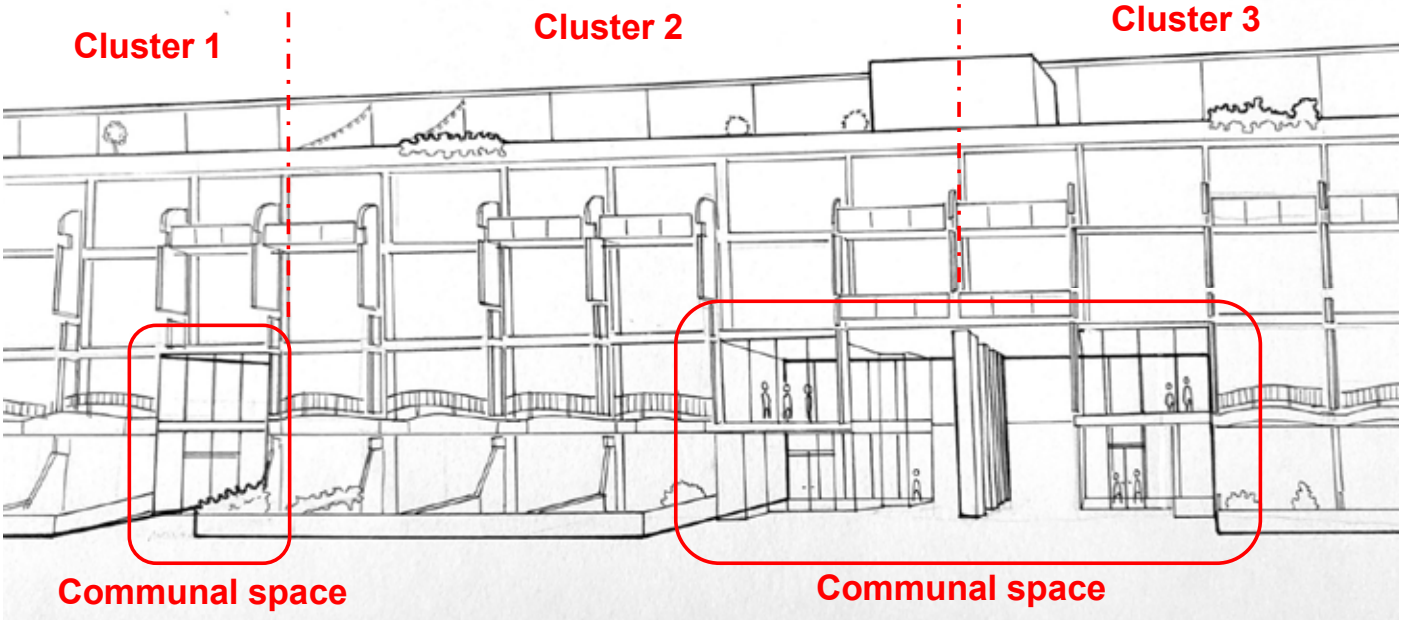
Dwelling
sizes and types



80's Aesthetics



Rauti-huus, Zürich Switzerland, by Spillmann
Echtle architekten



13 | Creating communities

This strategy is based on two complicated themes. The first in diversity in housing types. The 1970's and 1980's housing stock is known for the great diversity of dwelling types that was conditional for many developments. Although by some stakeholders this is appreciated, others mention a lack of diversity. This is often a call for more private ownership and high-income groups, but also for elderly apartments, small studios for starters and other types of living. The second theme is social connections. Some mention good community vibes, but others indicate loneliness in the neighbourhood as a big problem among and between different cultural groups.

This strategy proposes the creation of clusters to cope with both themes. The existing housing complexes could be compartmented and restructured, making room for larger, smaller and collective forms of living. Moreover, every cluster could have collective spaces, both indoor and outdoor, where people can meet. These spaces should be easy visible and accessible, for example located adjacent to the entrance or the gates. Diversity in dwelling types and household compositions and opportunities for all residents to meet informally will improve the sense of ownership and belonging.



Housing/ dorms, Münster Germany, by Kresings Architektur



Housing For All, Tübingen Germany, by SOMAA + Yonder (photo and scheme)



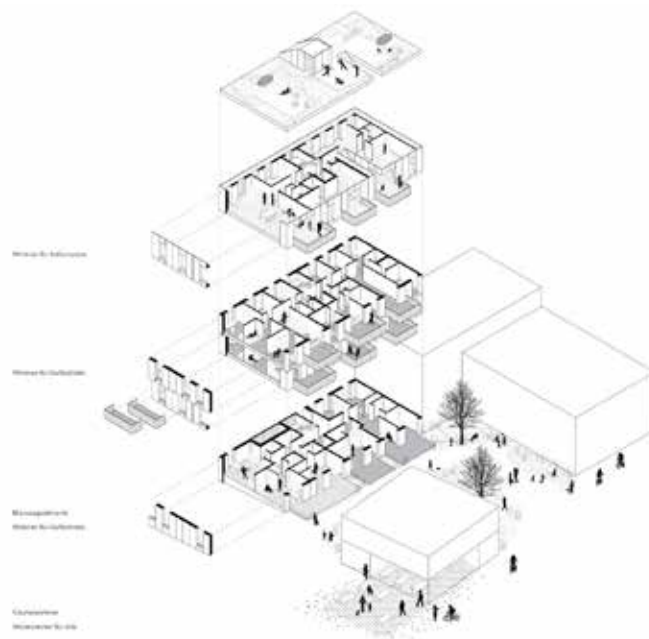
Cultural diversity

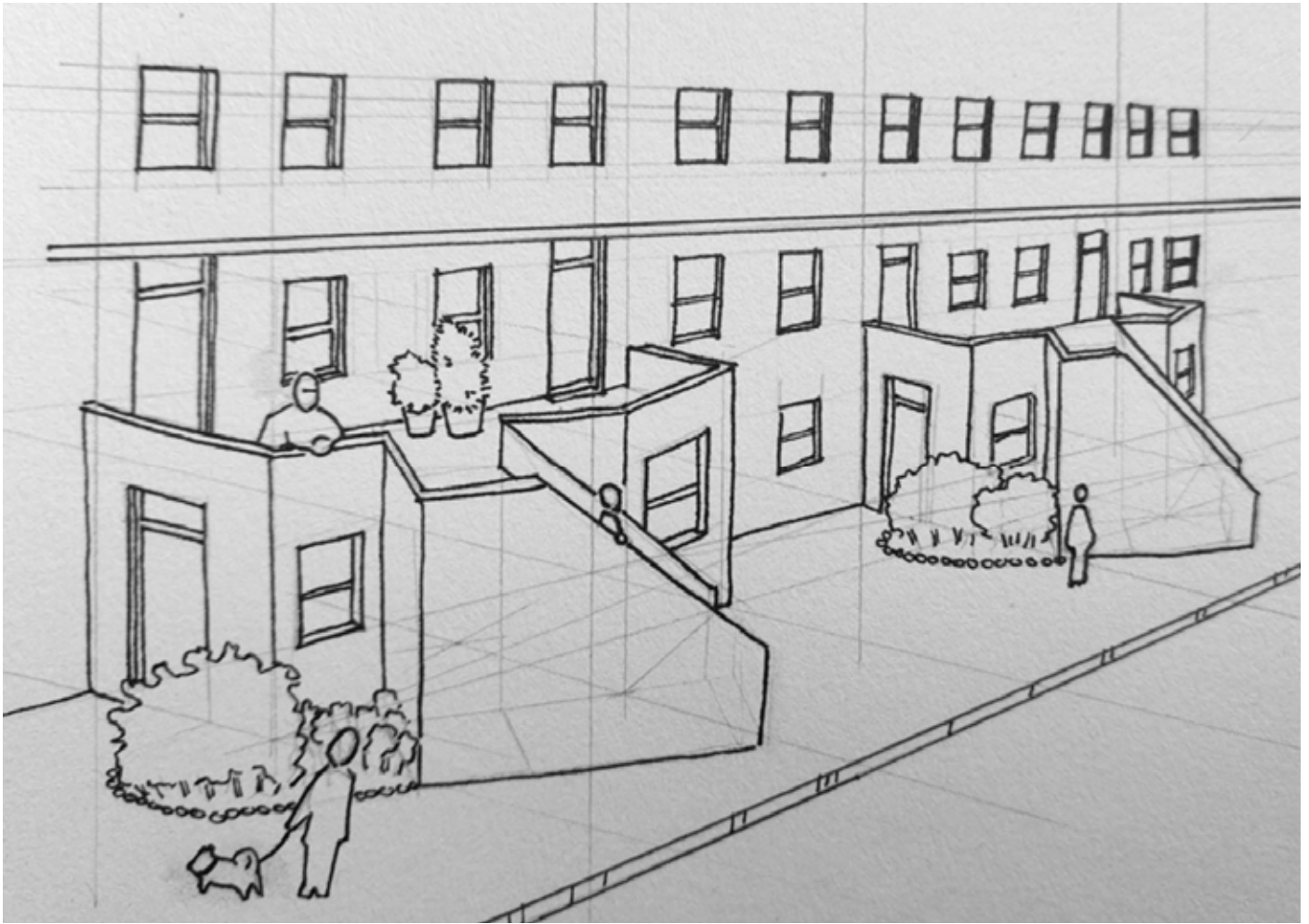


Sense of ownership



Dwelling sizes and types





14 | Coming home

An attribute of Hoptille that is assessed as negative are the entrances. Although the artworks on the later added stairwells give this block a distinctive image, the facade is perceived as chaotic. The access and logistics of this block have a complex history shifting the orientation of the block from one side to the other. In an early renovation, stairs have been added to the former backside. Both a complex infrastructure like in Hoptille and later additions and changes are often found in 1980's housing complexes, due to changed ideas about public access, safety and management.

This strategy proposes the upgrading of access areas in comfort and appearance, giving the feeling of coming home. By removing the later added outdoor stairs and porticos and replacing with a different architectural solution more quality can be offered to residents. These constructions should be designed as integrated solutions and offer a place to sit, have plants, meet the neighbour and welcome guests. It would add to the aesthetical appearance of the block as a whole, to social contact and surveillance and to the feeling of ownership and appropriation by individual residents.



Sense of ownership



80's Aesthetics



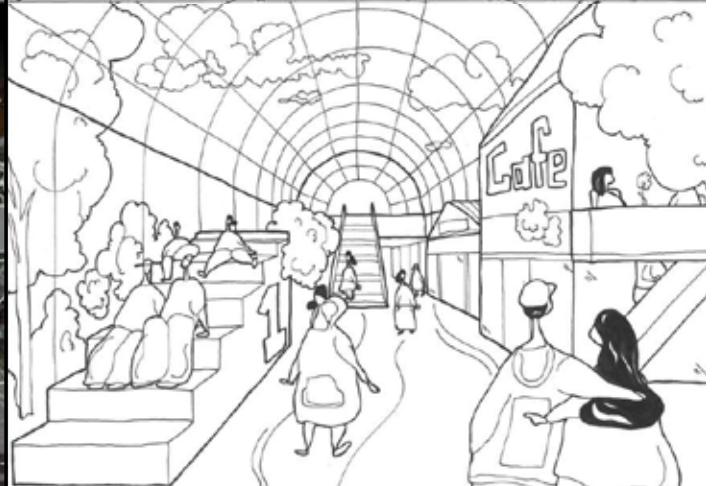
Villa Mokum, Amsterdam The Netherlands, by Kampman Architecten



Renovation Stedenwijk Noord, Almere The Netherlands, by Henk Reijenga



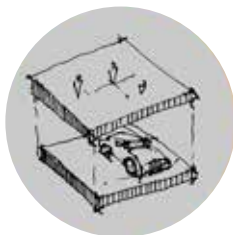
Present situation Hoptille



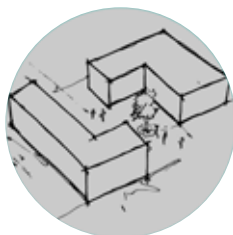
15 | Connecting the levels

The separation of traffic flows was an important concept in the neighbourhoods and new towns built in the 1980s. However, the goal of creating a comfortable living environment that was safe and comfortable to live in was not realised. Instead, the raised ground level, footbridges and decks are often abandoned. There is too little dynamism.

This strategy aims at revitalising the separate levels by intensifying the connection. Instead of one entrance and an isolated elevated space, the different levels are more interlinked. This way a more dynamic public space can provide for spontaneous encounters and can activate the public realm. An integrated structure of connected levels should be designed, enhancing the overall amount of accessible open space for all. Playful elements could be added like slides. Also, the traffic systems like public transport or sport facilities like athletics circuits could be integrated. Part of the strategy may be to reduce the total (elevated) surface area in order to harmonise use and public spaces. By making the elevated level more visible and more accessible, the public space will become more diverse, safe and pleasant.



Elevated
roads and decks



Public space



Qujiang Creative Circle, Xi'an China,
by Oval partnership



Justus van Effen complex, Rotterdam, NL
(before and after renovation)

1. Natural Borders

2. Wayfinding

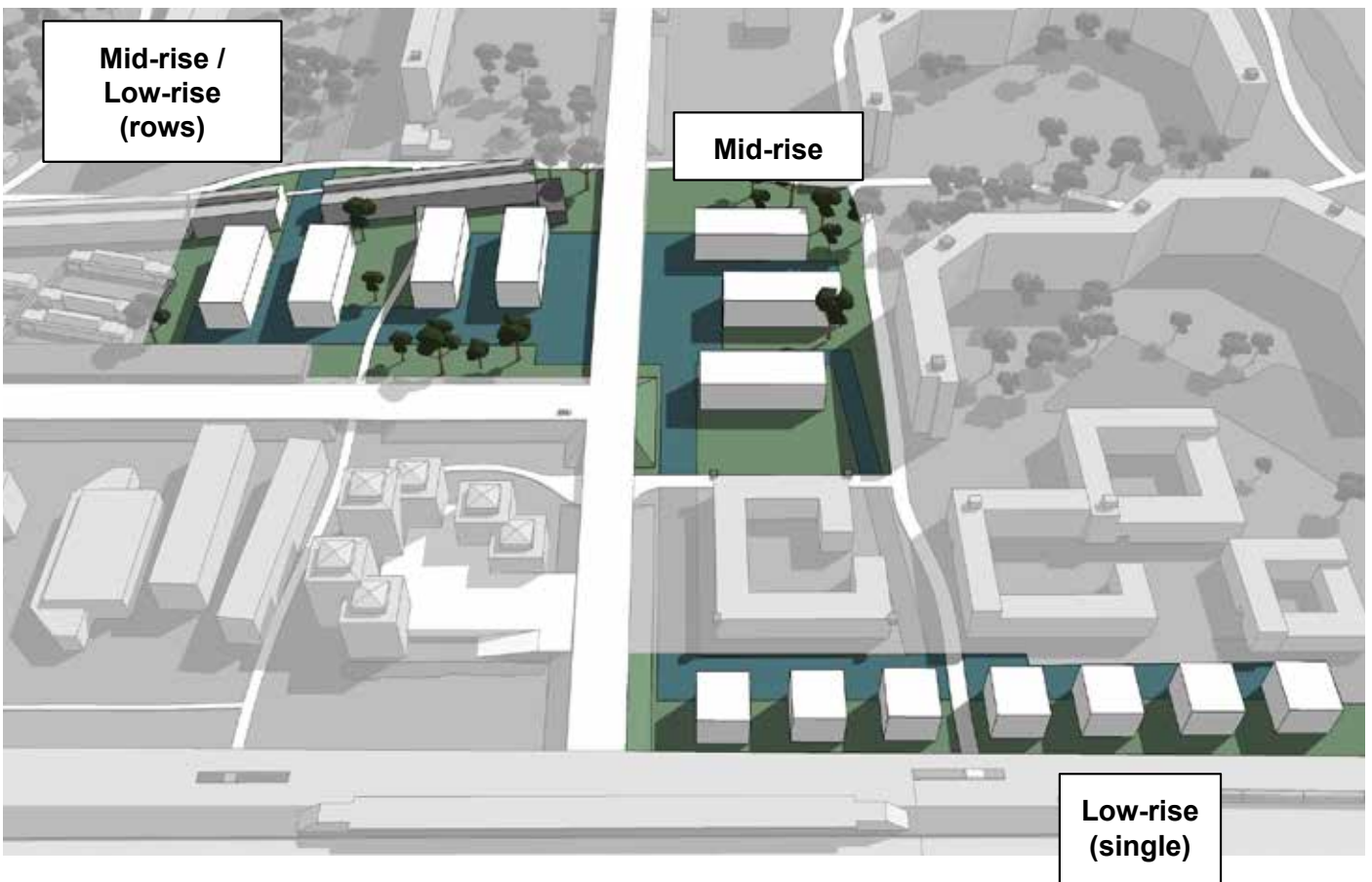
3. Serene Living Environment



Mid-rise /
Low-rise
(rows)

Mid-rise

Low-rise
(single)



16 | Waterfront living

Although there is open water in the neighbourhood, water is hardly ever mentioned as a quality by respondents in the research. Introducing more water surface in the area and giving it a more prominent role has several opportunities. This strategy can be related to the beforementioned 'blue-green infrastructure'. Apart from ecological and technical advantages like water storage, water in neighbourhoods also enriches spatial experience. It can be used for spatial zoning, creating neighbourhoods that are visually connected but spatially and functionally separated. Also, water can play a role in wayfinding and orientation. A system of pedestrian or bicycle routes along the water can guide visitors and residents towards different points of interests. From the metro station, Heesterveld, Hoptille to even the Nelson Mandela Park in this case. The second layer in this strategy is exploiting water for living. Water houses can offer a new way of living in the area. Also waterfront living, as is already present but hardly noticed in Heesterveld, can be a model to connect living to blue-green structures.



Brigantijnkade, Amsterdam, The Netherlands



Regenboogwoningen, Houten, The Netherlands



Businesses



Dwelling
sizes and types



Present situation, Heesterveld

Conclusions and recommendations

Values addressed

Considering the presented design strategies and the values they address, what are the issues and challenges taken up? The values that have been studied most and appear in many strategies are the ones in the architecture domain. This cannot come as a surprise, working in an architecture studio. The value '80's Aesthetics' and the revaluation or adaption of its characteristics is part of many design proposals, albeit in different ways. Also the diversity is 'Public space', 'Dwelling types and sizes' and 'Multi-functionality' are values that draw attention. As mentioned in the explanation of strategies, diversity was a major theme in the 1970's and 1980's development, as a reaction to the post-war repetitive housing neighbourhoods. But the perception and functioning of the designed diversity of typologies, scale levels and functions in contemporary society needs new interpretation. In the low-rise neighbourhoods in Almere-Haven we have seen a similar research result. Although many housing types are present, the areas are perceived as monotonous. The centre area in Almere Haven that was planned with lots of shops and facilities also faces vacancy, like at Bijlmerplein. So also today, there is a demand for diverse and multifunctional neighbourhoods, but the present situation is not satisfactory. Another common element in 1980's housing neighbourhoods are the 'Elevated roads and decks', that were an inspiration for several design strategies. The elevated decks at the back of residential buildings are part of a broader concept of separate flows of traffic and groups. Dividing the general public, on the street, from the local resident, on the deck, intended to create clear and comfortable zoning, but resulted in desolate spaces. This issue can be found in many housing-around-deck complexes in 70's and 80's neighbourhoods, from Capelle a/d IJssel to Lelystad.

The value 'Colour and art' can be regarded as very specific for Heesterveld and the recent intervention related to the creative community. However, bright colour schemes and art in public space were also mentioned in our research in Almere-Haven where its value or neglect was mentioned by many residents. Also, the three 'Distinctive identities' as a strong value appreciated by many stakeholders is quite specific for the researched location of H-Hoptille, Heesterveld and Bijlmerplein

The selection of values turned out to be a mix of architectural values and challenges with a strong relation to social and economic issues. That reflects the starting point of the project, regarding architecture not as a discipline on its own, but as a 'stage' for the everyday life. The value 'Sense of ownership' is a clear example of how architecture, among many other economic, legal, societal aspects, can play a role in the relation between physical attributes and social values. Apart from the values discussed, also negative aspects have been mentioned by respondents, like maintenance, nuisance and (mis)trust between stakeholders. These are not easily solved and are predominantly management issues, although they could be an integrated part of a design strategy.

	80's Aesthetics	Public space	Dwelling sizes and types	Multi-/ mono-functional	Cultural diversity	Elevated roads and decks	Businesses	Greenery	Low-/ mid-rise	Sense of ownership	Colour and art	Distinctive identities
> Identity-based Hubs		x										x
> Introducing colour concepts	x				x						x	
Blue-Green Infrastructure		x						x				
> Adding proven characteristics	x											x
Creating Natural Surveillance		x								x		
Creating networks of public space		x		x								
Redevelop building blocks		x	x									
> Revitalise the deck				x		x	x					
Activating the roof				x			x					
Activating the plinth				x			x					
Densification by adding buildings	x								x			
Densification by adding floors	x		x									
Creating communities			x		x					x		
> Coming home	x									x		
> Connecting the levels		x				x						

Post 65 strategies

From the strategies presented here, some are more specific for Post 65 neighbourhoods (marked with > in table). Some of these strategies address the architectural identity or the lack thereof. It is questionable whether the 1980's neighbourhoods do not have a clear identity, or if we do not recognise it yet. In general, many of these neighbourhoods are said to be dull and there is a call for more distinctive appearance. Strengthening the existing, sometimes latent, identity is also the base for the second strategy 'Identity-based Hubs', applied to the larger urban level. 'Introducing colour concepts' is a strategy that can be used in any housing neighbourhood. However, bright colours and striking colour combinations are a characteristic of some 80's architectures. The fact that these colours sometimes have disappeared, makes the strategy specifically applicable to 80's architecture. The strategy 'adding proven characteristics' is a way to add known successes or highlight the traditional characteristics hidden in the architecture.

Although not always clear at first sight, many 1980's brick buildings are inspired by Amsterdamse School architecture.

Strategies 'Revitalise the deck' and 'Connecting the levels' both aim at revitalising the decks, that are specific attributes for Post 65 housing. As mentioned before, the multi-level concept is both characteristic and problematic. Both proposals bring more life to the elevated level. The one by making more connections, physically and visually, trying to seduce people going up. The other is more decisive and proposes reprogramming of the units on the deck to small businesses. This proposal abandons the original concept of separate flows.

The strategy 'Coming home', although a universal theme, can also be considered as a specific issue for 1980's architecture. Due to the economic crisis and low construction budgets, the housing built in this period is often minimal in ornamentation, detailing, material quality etc. After 40 years, the architecture is regarded as

worn, lacking any luxury or comfort. The bare steel stair to the front doors in Hoptille is an illustration of this lack of individual quality. The proposal for an upgrade of this stair, offering a bit more space and everyday luxury when coming home, is a small-scale example of improvement for 1980's homes.

General strategies

Many of the design strategies have a general relevance for all housing neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, they are also appropriate for Post 65 areas. Some strategies, among which densification by adding buildings and by adding floors, address the need for more homes that The Netherlands is facing. The way how to approach this challenge can be specific for different neighbourhood typologies. It can be discussed, for example, if the typical mid-rise character should be sacrificed or preserved. A similar question came up in the Almere research, but then regarding the low-rise character of the city. Opinions are divided. Some respondents are in favour of adding high-rise, others think it does not fit the Almere village character.

The main topic of our time is, of course, sustainability. Some strategies address the ecological aspect, like 'Blue-Green infrastructure' and 'Waterfront Living' that illustrate new urban concepts. Architectural implications have not been integrated in the strategies, but are crucial for a durable future of this stock. In a follow-up of this educational project, we aim to focus on the sustainable renovation of 1980's residential complexes.

COVID

The COVID-pandemic had some implications for the project. In the collection of data, we partly shifted to online methods, like sourcing social media, using online surveys and online interviews. This might have an impact on the results, although we cannot exactly predict how. Also, the current situation in the area is not representing the 'normal' situation. However, nobody knows if this old 'normal' is the future we should prepare for. Apart from a difficulty to approach respondents respecting the COVID-measures, the possibility to visit buildings and dwellings was limited. The effect on the research is that the focus is on the urban level and public space. The building level, especially the quality of collective interiors and individual dwellings, has been largely disregarded. We are aware that this resulted in a discrepancy between the scale level of the research results and Ymere's interest, responsibility and power as a housing corporation (which is in the housing stock).

Recommendations

This publication could be interpreted as a snapshot. More research is needed. The assessment of the residential neighbourhoods from the Post 65 period has just begun. More different areas, types of architecture, stakeholder perspectives should be researched. More comprehensive studies are necessary to come to a good value assessment. This project does not provide final conclusions or solutions but is an inspiring start for investigation.

We approached the research for New Heritage with an open attitude, without preconceptions, and we invite all other parties to follow us on this journey.

