

REFLECTION PAPER
 LANDBOUWBELANG MAASTRICHT
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This paper consists of a personal reflection about the design project of the Landbouwbelang building in Maastricht. The Maastricht graduation studio, part of the Heritage and Architecture track, focusses on the redevelopment of a (partly former) industrial area called Belvédère. From the several buildings available, I have chosen the Landbouwbelang; a former grain elevator that is currently being used as a cultural freezone by squatters.

Summary of the project - The building

The building was built in 1939, and was part of a larger agricultural network supplying several grain and animal nutrition products. The industrial building of the Landbouwbelang Maastricht is designed as functional building, divided into three parts. The larger shed was designed store animal nutrition that was transported by ships on the water. The highest part of the building houses 18 silos that stored several types of grain. The middle part supports the both storage spaces, this is a warehouse with spacious floors that could house several machines that processed the raw products. The Maas has an important relation with this building, which expressed in the parallel allocation of the building to the water and the industrial artefacts placed there. The construction of the building mainly consists of solid reinforced concrete walls, column and beams. The outer shell of the building is a solid brick facade with openings representing the functions inside.

Summary of the project - The current situation

Due to changes of the allocation in the agricultural industries, the building became redundant for its use. After years of abandonment, the building was squatted in 2002. Nowadays, these squatters profiled the building as a cultural freezone, housing many public events related to art, food, music, work and sports. For them, this building is not only their home, but it is a relatively small and open community that is open for visitors. So, for a certain group of other inhabitants of the city Maastricht, the Landbouwbelang provides cultural needs. Not far from the building, there are more formal cultural functions housed in former industrial buildings, like the Timmerfabriek, Lumière Cinema and Pathé Cinema. This area is not far from the center of Maastricht.

Project Landbouwbelang Maastricht

Total floor space: 6518 m²
 Total building volume: 33.700m³

Program end phase

Coffee bar (public part):	400m ²
Coffee bar (working areas):	240m ²
Restaurant:	400m ²
Event venue:	350m ²
Workshops-, meeting-, and other spaces	850m ²
Working spaces (flexwork):	850m ²
Working spaces (project modules):	100m ²
Exposition spaces:	40m ²
Workshops-, meeting-, and other spaces	850m ²
Shed space (One Company)	1200m ²
	Total 5280m²
Inner garden:	+/- 200m ²
Roof garden:	+/- 1200m ²

The city of Maastricht, with about 120.000 inhabitants is currently facing the problem that the number of inhabitants is decreasing. As an important university city, it is incapable of attracting many starters and young professionals, due to high prices of housing facilities and lack of (creative) jobs.

Summary of the project – Design starting points

One of the most important aspects of the building that inspired me is the creative and cultural use by the squatters. This cultural and creative environment has the capability to attract many more people than it currently does. Therefore, the main focus of this project is to preserve what the squatters have started, but making the building and its functions more inviting to more types of people.

‘making the irrational rational’

The current cultural functions of the squatters are randomly organized through the building. To refer to the original industrial process, the aim is to structure their functions in the building and make it more profitable. Also, to make the building more inviting for others, the building should become slowly more formal and public.

Summary of the project – Gentrification

Compared to other big cities in the world, like Amsterdam, London, Berlin or New York, Maastricht is not experiencing the current trend that more people are moving into the city. In popular cities, this influx of inhabitants sometimes results in the phenomena of gentrification. Gentrification is the process where deteriorated urban neighbourhoods become more popular among (new) citizens, and stimulate higher property values and renovation. From the point of view of redevelopers and the new citizens this process can be seen positive, creating more value and a more well kept neighbourhood. Gentrification on the other hand can be seen as something negative, changing a neighbourhood and displacing entire communities due to higher rents.

Gentrification therefore, provides an important inspiration for me, and this design project. For the design project, I want to stimulate gentrification in Maastricht. In a more theoretical approach, the new design of the Landbouwbelang building will be about all the phases of gentrification. Hopefully attracting more people to the city of Maastricht, creating better economical grounds, but also displacing the ones who started to make a neighbourhood more interesting; the squatters.

Summary of the project – The main design

The design of the project will consist out of several phases. In the first phase, the interventions will mainly be about structuring the current cultural events of the squatters and about placemaking, to create more value to the building and make the building more interesting for other inhabitants. With this first phase, the aim is to use these values, to make investments more possible in the future. With larger investments, this building will be more formal and interventions can be more radical. The first phase provides a ground for the redevelopment of the building (later phases). More information about the phases can be found below. The new architectural interventions are based on different inspirations. The use of the squatters, with local and temporary materials provide an inspiration, aswell as their way of make new openings in the facade. The current constructive atmosphere will be remained, where certain constructive shapes will be highlighted throughout the building. The materials will be chosen in order to give a good contrast to the prominent original spaces, construction and function.

Phases

1. Placemaking (+/-20.000,-)

Placemaking by making a small temporary roofgarden and creating structure in the current use by adding temporary routing facilities

2. Temporary use of the shed (+/-80.000,-)

Replacing the overhead crane in the shed, placing sewage- and climate facilities in the shed and placing small container offices.

3. The main intervention (+/- 4.000.000,-)

In the warehouse about 4000 m² will be transformed into a more formal and public structure of functions.

4. Use of the shed by a bigger company (+/-1.200.000,-)

When the value of the property is gained enough, hopefully the building attracts larger creative companies. In the big shed, one bigger company could house up to 70 employees. The bigger company has the option to represent itself in one part of the building, but forms a symbiosis with the other parts of the building.

5. A completely new building

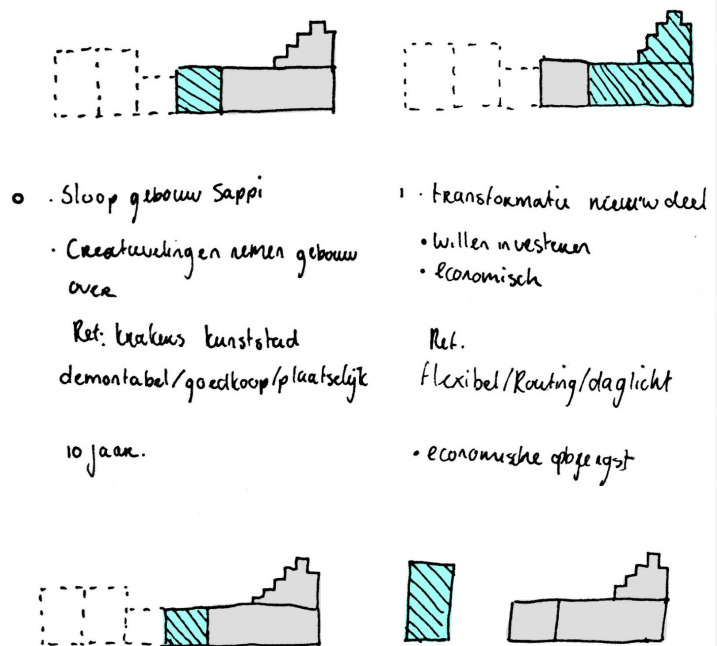
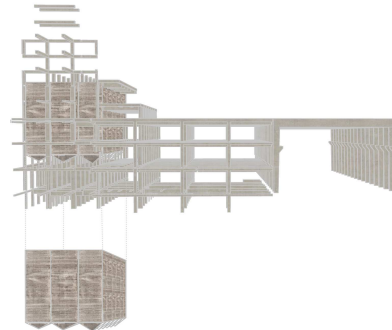
As a final phase, a new building could be build on the terrain of Sappi.

Although not part of this design project, this is part of the of the gentrification approach on a longer term.

Sustainable approach:

Phase 1 & 2: The use of temporary materials and small circular networks

Phase 3 & 4: A more energy neutral building and a small circular networks



- Sloop gebouw Sappi
- Creatievelingen nemen gebouw over
- Ref: bakkers kunststad
- demontabel/goedkoop/plaatselijk
- 10 jaar.
- transformatie nieuw deel
- willen investeren
- Economisch
- Ref.
- Flexibel/Routing/daglicht
- economische opzet

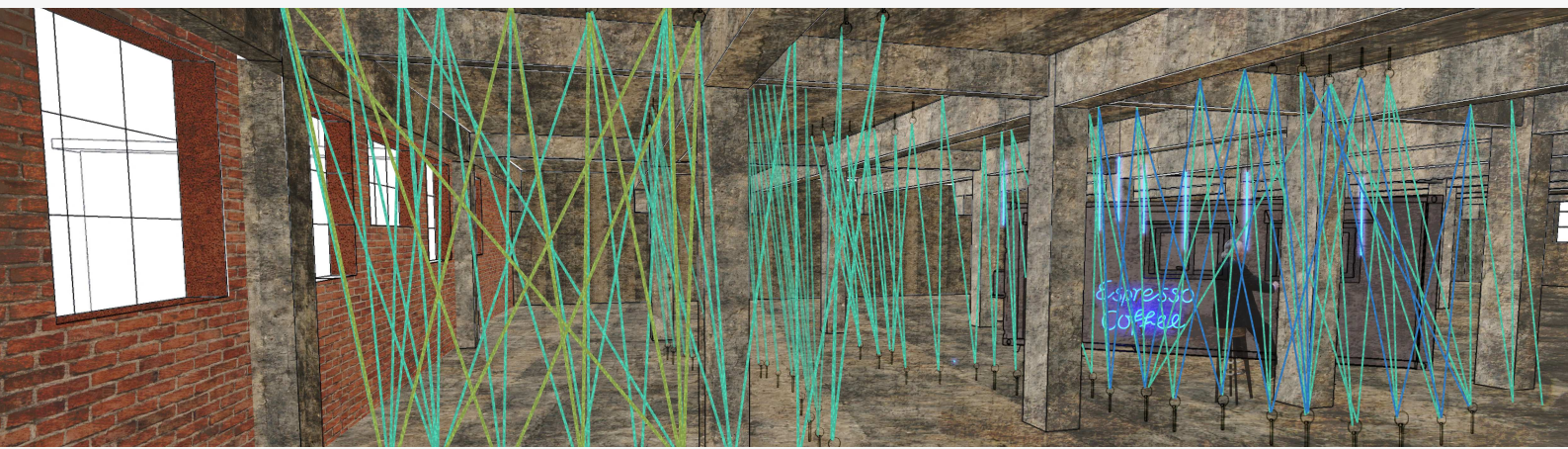


- 2 transformatie groot bedrijf
- Representatief
- Energie neutraal
- Aanpassing gewel.
- Ref: MHV
- duurzaam/energie neutraal
- ontwikkeling bouwct.
- 3 Bouw nieuw
- Nieuw nieuw
- Representatief
- Goede bouwct.
- Ref: Hema
- ontwikkeling stad/buurt

Above 1: an brief impression on the building an it's construction

Above 2: different phases of gentrification (NDSM warf as an example)

Right: Different impressions through the process of design



In the following part I will give a reflection of the design in relation to other aspects. These other aspects are research, in the context of the design studio of Heritage & Architecture, the methodology of Heritage & Architecture and the relationship with the wider social context.

Reflection - Relationship between research and design

The relationship between research and design, is an important aspect within architectural studies on a university level. In Delft there is a scientific approach on how to design. Next to that, the chosen subject within the project, is also relation to existing research.

First, an explanation to the research provided by the University of Delft. In Delft there is a method of first doing an analysis of the context, shaping a clear concept, making variants and choosing the best alternative. This path has been shaping my graduation studio, beginning with the analysis of the current building and the city of Maastricht. This had led to the knowledge what kind of challenges the city is facing and what is missing. Out of own interests and this analysis I shaped my concepts. Furthermore, I have worked with several types of studies. A research was done by making small models and next to that many visualizations and sketches are made on how spaces could possibly look like. The most difficult part of the design is making bigger interventions for the increase of daylight into the building. Herefor many renders were made, testing what amount of daylight would be sufficient.

Because the project is related to many subjects, like sustainability, gentrification, building techniques and other, literature is used. Next to the graduation studio, a position paper was written about our (future) position as an architect. I wrote this paper about how to deal with gentrification. Using existing literature, my choices regarding the gentrification aspect will be more grounded. Other literature about sustainability has helped me giving a profound statement on how to make my building energy neutral and how to make every phase of the project sustainable.

Reflection - Relationship between Heritage & Architecture, and the Landbouwbelaug in Maastricht

The graduation studio of Heritage & Architecture, compared to other architectural studios, is more related to an existing context and building. Within this studio of Maastricht Belvédère, we have worked with an industrial area close to the city center, that provides a lot of options for redevelopment. The Landbouwbelaug is part of this area, and offering options for the reuse of the building. Not only because the provided possibilities for reuse because of the shape, but also because the building has an cultural meaning to the city. The building used to be part of a big network of grain and fodder network, providing food and jobs for the inhabitants. The Landbouwbelaug is more than a building and plays an important role for the inhabitants of Maastricht. Because this building is not an unique type, the cultural aspect is especially important in relation to the studio of Heritage & Architecture.

Right 1: The position paper about gentrification

Right 2: View on all the values during the design process

Reflection - Relationship between the methodology of Heritage & Architecture, and the chosen methods

The general methods for the studies of architecture have been explained in the previous paragraph. The specific method for the studio of Heritage & Architecture is that during the analysis values are specified. These cultural values are personally determined by doing research and analysis on the context and the building. Also visiting the location helps to give an appreciation to several aspects of the building. The definition of the cultural values was assisted by a teacher. The values give an outline for the design of the project. All values will be expressed in the final design.

Reflection - Relationship between the Landbouwbelaug and the wider context

The relation between the Landbouwbelaug and the social context can be explained by several approaches. The main concept of the design is based on the theoretical phenomenon of gentrification, this represents a social context that can happen all over the world. London, Berlin, New York and Amsterdam are examples where gentrification found place in almost every part of the city. It affects all inhabitants by increasing housing and renting prices. At the same time a neighbourhood is changing, that can also bring positive aspects. Implementing this in the building of the Landbouwbelaug, could have an influence in the people living in Maastricht and especially in the neighbourhood and the inhabitants of the current building. The new building hopefully provides new energy and facilities for all the users and the inhabitants of Maastricht. For the city of Maastricht it will hopefully prevent a further outflux of inhabitants. The squatters play an important role in the redesign of this projects. The consequences of this design will be that they eventually have to leave the building. Because squatters are opportunistic and reject the idea of ownership, they will find another place to live. By continuing their cultural events, their heritage will be continued. These people have already started the process of gentrification that I want to continue.



VALUES

