

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: Track Architecture

Personal information	
Name	
Student number	5612179

Studio	
Name / Theme	AR3AH105 - Graduation Studio - Adapting 20 th Century Heritage / The modern Mall
Design mentor	Lidy Meijers Chair of Heritage and Design
Research mentor	Lidwine Spoormans Chair of Heritage and Design
Building Technology mentor	Frank Koopman Chair of Heritage and Technology
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>When I was younger, following my piano lessons, my parents often took me to the nearby <i>Karstadt</i> department store in the old town of Berlin Spandau in Germany. In this store, I was allowed to choose a little something to eat or sometimes a toy as a reward. As I became more independent and older, this <i>Karstadt</i> was the first place for me to go shopping. A department store that offers everything from furniture and clothing to food and everyday necessities. Today, however, I can hardly remember the last time I stepped into this department store. In fact, many other people feel the same way about it.</p> <p>I grew up in a generation in which digitalization has accompanied and in part replaced a large part of everyday life. That also applies to the area of retail, where online shopping and the change in people's buying behaviour are leading to an increasing number of vacant retail spaces. This vacancy in turn has a negative impact on the image of our cities and their identity. In order to find solutions to this problem, I decided to participate in the graduation studio <i>Adapting 20th Century Heritage - The modern Mall</i>.</p>



Fig. 1: Former thriving department stores in their current appearance: Empty, Daunting and Dead

Graduation project

Title of the graduation project | Rethinking of a Typology

Goal

Location:

Most of the written part of the Graduation Project relates to the general situation of malls throughout the Netherlands. However, the findings of the research are applied in the design project of the mall *Bogaard Stadscentrum* in Rijswijk.

Problem Statement:

The loss of a city's identity caused by vacancy and the rising crime rate in the vicinity of a vacant mall form a vicious circle that needs to be stopped at the very first sign by revitalising the mall. According to Ramlee et al. (2015), revitalisation is about giving new life, new strength and new vitality to a building or an entire neighbourhood. "The idea of revitalisation is to balance the current rapid development in urban areas through the preserving urban identity, culture and traditions." (Ramlee et al., 2015, p. 362)

However, as the literature and case studies show, a large number of revitalisation projects face problems in their ability to be carried out smoothly and according to the time schedule. This derives from the fact that a revitalisation process involves many different stakeholders, which are conflicting in their "[...] public concerns, interest-based objectives and individual constraints [...]" (Innovationen Für Innenstädte - Nachnutzung Leerstehender Großstrukturen, 2015, p. 31) and are therefore difficult to coordinate. In the decision-making process about the functional, physical, strategic and financial future of a mall, these various ambitions and goals create a high potential for conflict between the different parties, an increased need for conversation, a delay in decision-making and thus a longer-lasting revitalisation process. As a result, there is an increase in costs (Skitmore et al., 2012), a deterioration of the building's condition over time, and an extension of the problems associated with vacancy already described.

To avoid this cycle of problems, it is necessary to improve the coordination of the different stakeholders involved in the revitalisation process and the decision-making process about the future of a vacant mall. Coordination and decision-making are the responsibility of the decision maker/project manager who, however, "[...]often face challenges in the processes of identifying stakeholders and their needs, assessing stakeholder impacts and their relationships, and formulating appropriate engagement strategies." (Mok et al., 2014, p. 447) This is because they often do not have the right tools and strategies to analyse the stakeholders and the general conditions of the building (Heijer, 2011). As a result, they lack the mandatory information base for making time-efficient, informed and optimal decisions about the future of vacant shopping malls.

Systematic approaches are needed to generate this information base (Mok et al., 2014). Therefore, this thesis will focus on providing decision-makers with an information base about the physical and functional conditions of Dutch malls and their stakeholders as well as a tool in the format of a step-by-step plan that guides the decision-maker through the decision-making process of a mall revitalisation. In this way, time-efficient, informed and optimal decisions about the future of vacant shopping malls can be made, thereby preventing delays and the associated deterioration of the building and its surroundings.

The step-by-step plan is based on the combination of the theory of Designing an Accommodation Strategy (DAS) - Frame and the theory of Corporate Real Estate Management (CREM) perspectives of the stakeholders as well as on the dissertation of Alexandra Cornelia Den Heijer *'Managing the university campus - Information to support real estate decisions'* (2011).

Research Question:

Accordingly, the developed research question of this thesis will be as follows:

How should the theories of Den Heijer's dissertation 'Managing the University Campus - Information to support real estate decisions' be applied in the analysis and revitalisation process of malls to make time-efficient, informed and optimal decisions about the future of vacant shopping malls?

The application of this step-by-step plan can be divided into two levels. Applied to the Netherlands, it generates an information base on the physical and functional condition of the malls, allowing time-efficient, informed and optimal decisions to be made about the future of vacant shopping malls. However, by applying the step-by-step plan to individual projects, it is possible to find an optimal new use concept for the vacant mall - one that is tailored to the needs of the environment and adequately satisfies all stakeholders - the optimal solution.

Design Assignment:

The steps of the step-by-step plan are as follows:

- Assessing the original mall (Step 1)
- Exploring changing demand of the original situation (Step 2)
- Accessing the current mall (Step 3)
- Exploring changing demand of the current situation (Step 4)
- Generating future Models (Step 5)

In the written part of the Graduation Project, the step-by-step Plan is applied to the area of all malls in the Netherlands. This makes it possible to create an information base about the original typology of a mall, its development, its current state and its possible future developments. After each of these steps, conclusions are drawn about what can be learned from each step. These will inform the development of a concept for the design case *Bogaard Stadscentrum* in Rijswijk. At the same time, the step-by-step plan is applied to the Design Case. Through the different analysis tasks of each step, an information base is created. Based on this, a new use concept can be developed, which will be designed in depth in the second semester.

Process

Method description

The previous literature review has shown that the existing literature on revitalisation strategies for vacant shopping malls is incomplete and has problems in its practical implementation. Therefore, this thesis focuses on facilitating the decision-making process within mall revitalizations in order to make time-efficient, informed and optimal decisions about the future of vacant shopping malls. The limited existing theoretical research is complemented by the development of a step-by-step plan and an information base on malls through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research provides the foundation for many of the steps by analysing non-numerical data of literature and establishing an information base. The quantitative research serves to extend this information base to the level of all Dutch malls and to substantiate it numerically. This thesis is an explorative research, as the theories consulted are applied to the typology of the shopping mall for the first time. As a result, it forms the beginning and a foundation for further research in this area.

It is divided into five sections: Studying the existing theories, creating hypotheses and applying them to the development of a step-by-step plan adapted to the malls, data collection, data analysis and conclusion drawing.

In the beginning, theory-based deductive research is applied. This means that the key theories of this thesis (DAS Frame and CREM Perspectives), Den Heijer's dissertation as well as the state of shopping malls and the definition of heritage are examined through a literature study.

On the foundation of that literature research, theory-based hypotheses are established. Part of these hypotheses will be used to adapt the step-by-step plan to the typology of the mall and to extend it in the heritage context. The final product is a scheme that illustrates the step-by-step plan and thus makes it easier to apply.

This is followed by the data collection, which mainly takes place through an extensive literature study. The collected data refers to the original situation of malls (Step 1), developments concerning the original demand (Step 2), the current situation (Step 3) as well as future developments (Step 4). For this purpose, books of the TU Delft, as well as through Google Scholar accessible reports, journal

articles, working papers and dissertations, along with governmental publications and interviews with project managers are used.

The analysis of the data is based on a qualitative content analysis, a method that allows the analysis of social science data (Mayring & Fenzl, 2019). The analysis focuses on data and characteristics that are most influential on the steps of the step-by-step plan and thus provide important information in the decision-making process.

Step 1-3 is followed by a conclusion divided into strengths and weaknesses. Step 4 is concluded with an overview of future developments and their potential negative and positive impact on malls. This information is incorporated into the strategy and scenario planning according to De Jonge et al. (2008) in step 5 and leads to a general conclusion on how vacant malls should be dealt with in the future and how strategies for revitalisation should be used.

The data analysis and the conclusions are divided according to the extended DAS frame with its individual steps. Within this, it follows the further subdivision by the CREM perspectives (strategic, financial, physical, functional).

How the Research Leads to the Design

The information provided in the step-by-step plan refers to the level of the entire Netherlands and thus represents a cross-section of it. However, the same step-by-step plan can also be applied at the project level. For that purpose, each step shows additional information that is needed in the evaluation of an individual property in order to be able to decide on the optimal use concept for the future.

It is therefore possible to transfer this research to the *Bogaard Stadscentrum* design project and to create an information basis that leads to a sustainable use concept. Accordingly, the individual steps are carried out prior to the design process and the findings of the research are incorporated into the design.

Existing Theories

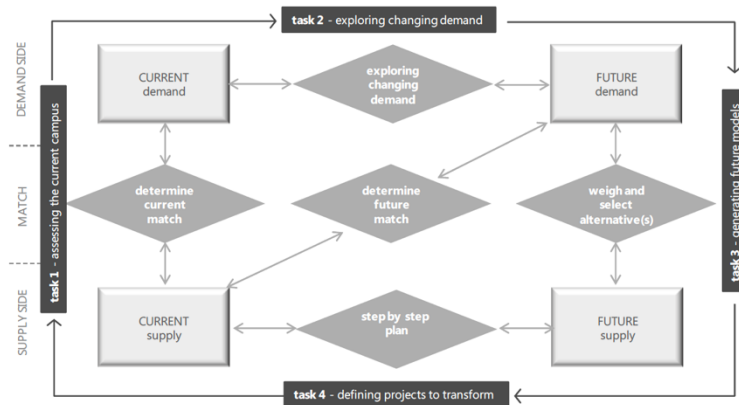


Fig. 2: The DAS-frame (Den Heijer, 2011, p. xv)

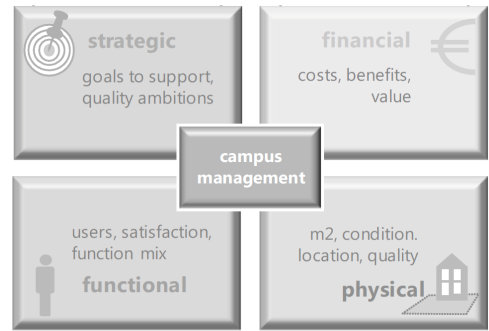


Fig. 3: CREM perspectives (Den Heijer, 2011, p. xiv)

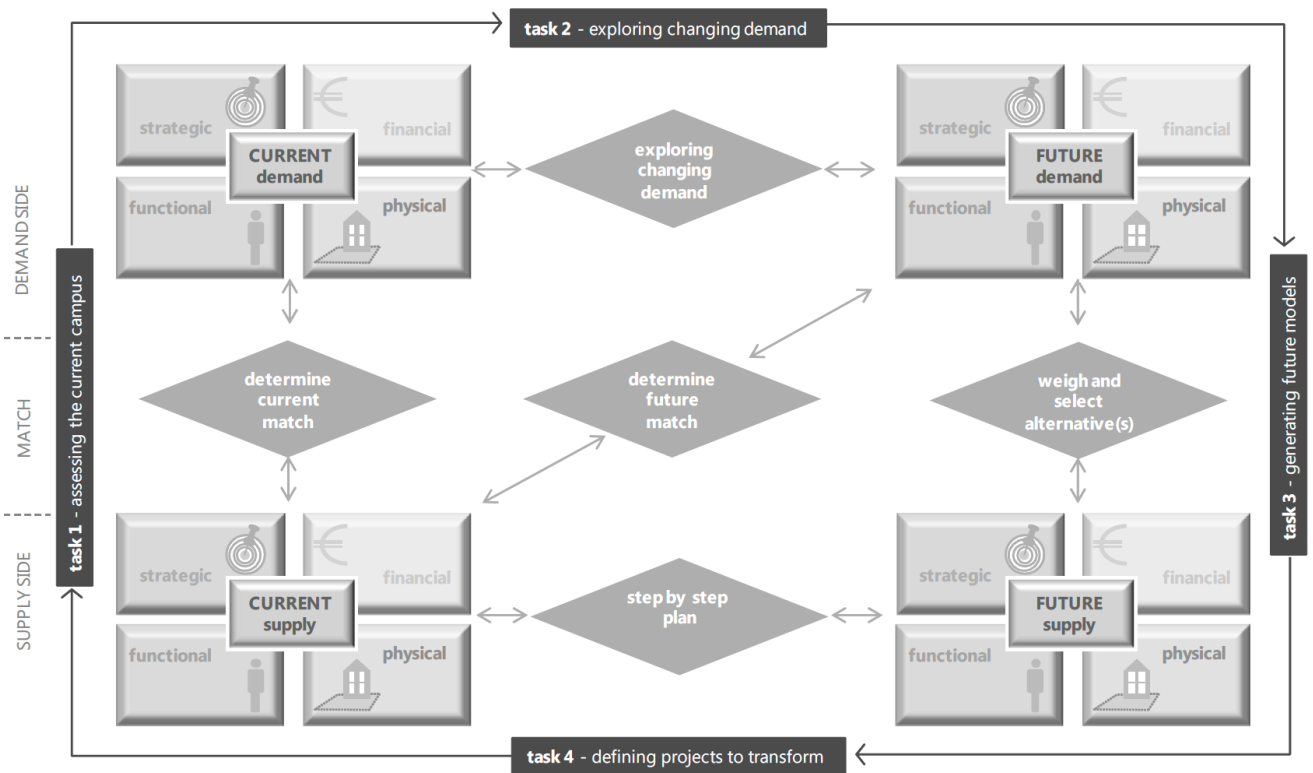
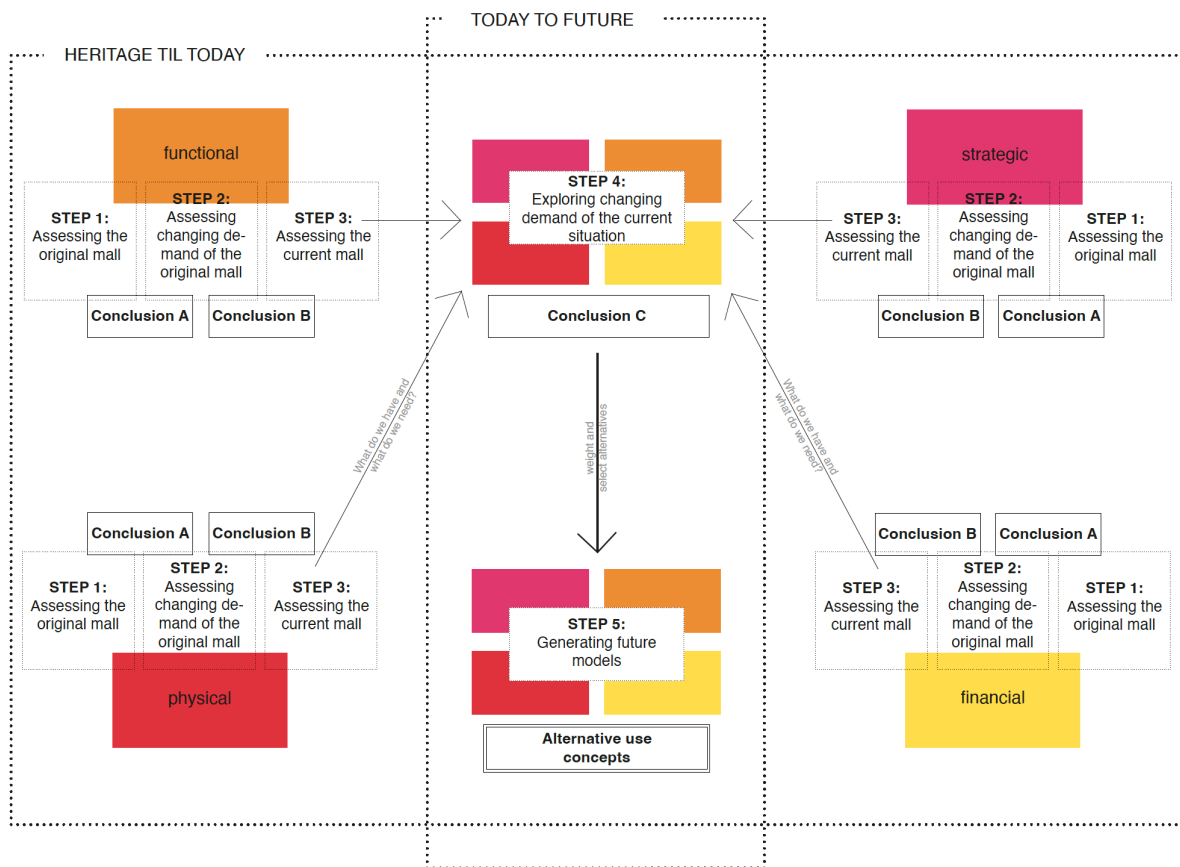


Fig. 4: The combination of the DAS-frame and CREM perspectives applied to the campus management (Den Heijer, 2011, p. 105)

Step-by-Step Plan for vacant Shopping Malls



Conclusion A = original success and failure factors of the original Mall after those developments
 Conclusion B = current success and failure factors of the Mall
 Conclusion C = potential effect of the developments on malls

Fig. 5: The combination of the DAS-frame and CREM perspectives applied to vacant shopping malls and the heritage context

Literature and general practical preference

Most important Literature Paper:

- Cook, C., & Hammond, G. (2022). *The rise, fall and rebirth of the shopping centre*. Financial Times. <https://www.ft.com/content/1f024fd8-ade5-4468-9cb0-0a73d2a66364>
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- Heijer, A. C. Den. (2011). *Managing the university campus - Information to support real estate decisions*. Evuron Academic Publishers.
- Howard, P. (2003). *Heritage - Management, Interpretation, Identity*. Continuum.
- Moons, I. (2020). *Managing Religious Heritage - Designing an accommodation strategy for dutch churches*. Delft University of Technology.

Most important Literature Design Case Bogaard Stadscentrum:

- Gemeente Rijswijk. (n.d.). *Metamorfose van een winkelcentrum - De Renovatie van het winkelcentrum In de Bogaard in woord en beeld*.
- Gemeente Rijswijk. (2011). *Ontwerp-structuurvisie Prinses Beatrixlaan*. Kuiper Compagnons. <https://www.commissiener.nl/docs/mer/p25/p2539/2539-006ontwerpstructuurvisie-deel-a.pdf>
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Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

Due to the lack of space in inner cities and the increasing demands for sustainability in architecture, the building industry is increasingly concerned with the revitalisation and reuse of existing buildings. The aim is to reduce the proportion of new construction projects by using existing structures and thus protect the environment. (Schrami, 2021)

TU Delft has recognised the explosive nature and necessity of this topic and therefore offers the graduation studio Architecture and Heritage in the MSc Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences - Track Architecture.

According to P. Howard, author of the book *Heritage - Management, Interpretation, Identity* (2003), there is no limit to what can fall within the scope of heritage. So he asks: "[...] what do people wish to conserve or collect, to protect from the ravages of time? The simple answer is 'everything'." (Howard, 2003, p. 54) This is usually less about preserving the material and making it available to the public than about non-material motivations, such as the preservation of beliefs, feelings and events. (Howard, 2003)

The theme of this year's Graduation Studio Architecture and Heritage is called *Adapting 20th Century Heritage - The modern Mall*. Due to the advancing digitalisation and the changing shopping behaviour of the population, the number of empty malls is increasing. At the same time, the demographic change in the Netherlands is causing the demand for living space and other facilities to increase.

Therefore more and more project developers are being induced to revitalise vacant malls. However, many projects face difficulties and delays during the process due to the large number of different parties involved and the lack of information about malls. These delays and the growing problems of a vacant mall need to be prevented by improving the coordination of the different parties and the

decision-making process within the revitalisation. At this point, the subject of this thesis starts and develops a step-by-step plan, which can be of great advantage in the revitalisation processes of malls.

Almost all people experience shopping malls in their lives. It may be just a fleeting encounter or a close bond based on what they have experienced in the building. In both cases, the preservation, revitalisation or demolition of a mall always represents an emotional matter which is worth protecting and developing to the best of one's ability.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

The revitalisation of vacant spaces contributes to Europe's environmental goals. Germany, for example, wants to significantly reduce Co2 emissions from buildings by 2030. To achieve this, there must be increased sensible preservation and reuse of existing buildings. (Schrami, 2021)

Furthermore, it is important to mention that the debate on mall revitalisation has so far been conducted mainly in response to the ever-changing demands of consumers (Norddeutscher Rundfunk, 2020; Schmidtke, 2011). This paper, however, broadens the focus and aims to include all stakeholders, not only consumers, in future decisions on mall revitalisation. Before this can be achieved, more information and tools for the management decision-making process need to be generated and provided to decision-makers (Heijer, 2011).

The area of vacant former retail space is constantly increasing due to the possibilities of digitalisation and the changing buying behaviour of the population and is therefore currently in need of a lot of attention. So far, the DAS-Frame in combination with the CREM perspectives has not been applied to the building type and the circumstances of a mall. Therefore, it will be investigated how the strategies developed by Den Heijer can be used by decision-makers for the revitalisation of malls and the development of new use concepts for this typology. The new use concepts that will be developed at the end of this work may have nothing to do with shopping at all.

In order to make the analysis as comprehensive as possible and to place it in the heritage context, another temporal level was added to the DAS frame. With this approach, this thesis contributes significantly to science and practice. Besides architecture, there are also various possibilities to use this strategy in further real estate research. The step-by-step plan developed in this work represents a guideline that is of great benefit to all parties involved in the revitalisation of former shopping centres.

Sources of this Graduation Plan:

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