

open house

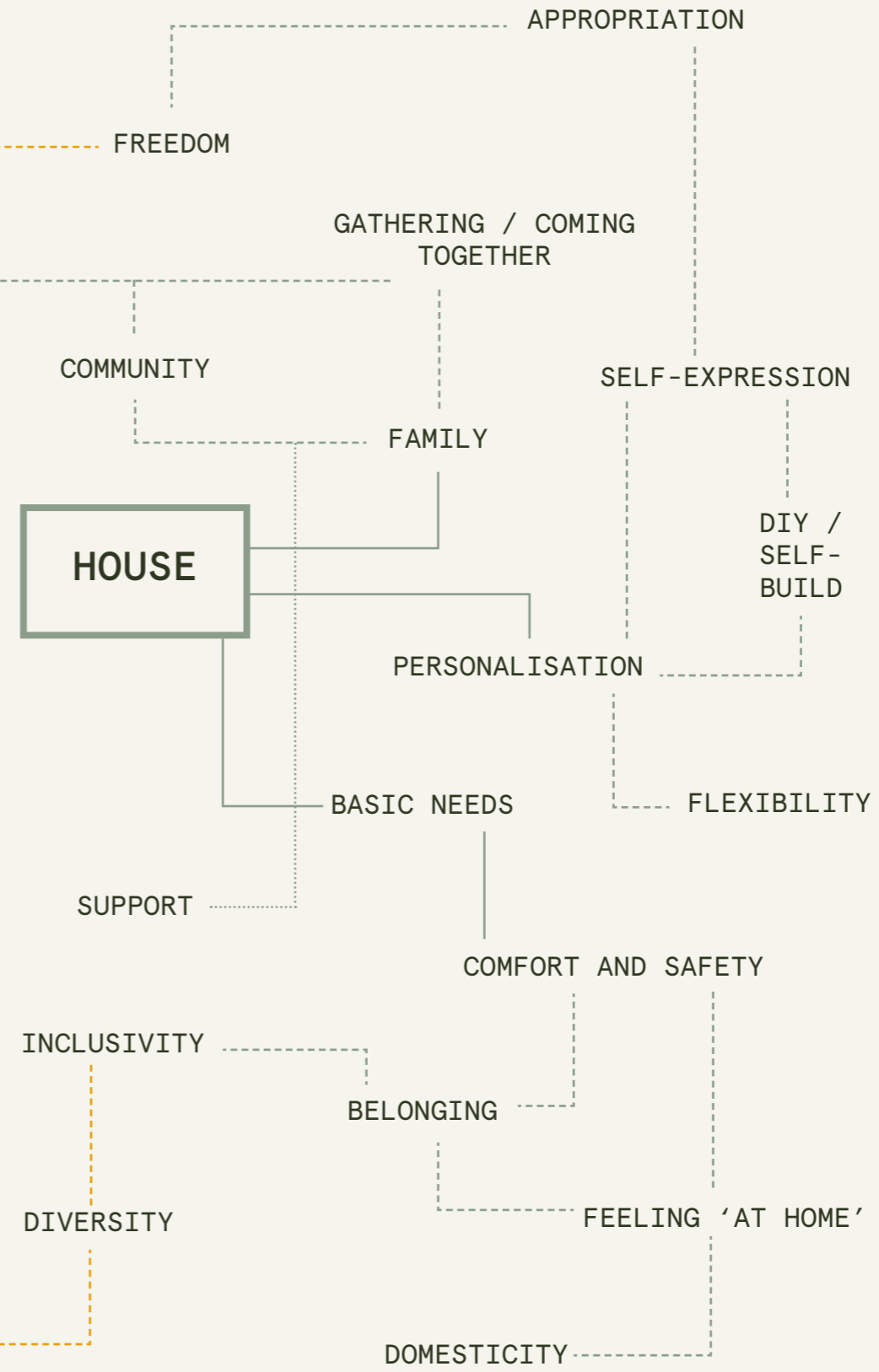
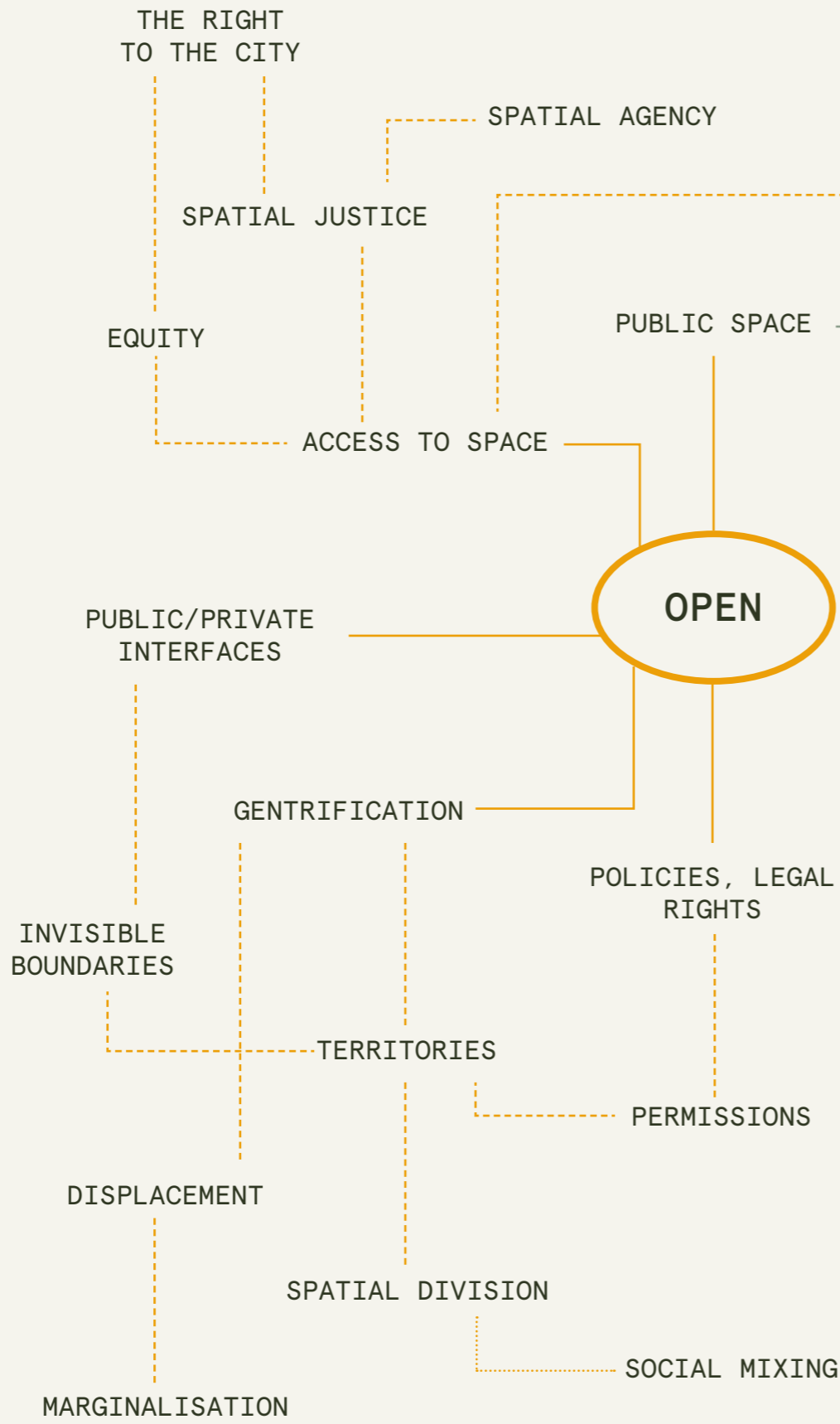
[,əʊpən 'haʊs] *noun*

a place or situation in which all
visitors are welcome

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KEYWORD MINDMAP



INTERPRETATION OF THEME: GLANEURS/GLANEUSES

The biblical concept of gleaning is first found in Leviticus 19:9.

'Now when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not glean your vineyard, neither shall you gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the needy and for the stranger...'

- King James Bible, Old Testament, Leviticus 19:9-10.

The act of gleaning the fields was, at one point in history, a biblically derived right reserved for the poor; an entitlement, enforceable by law, that continued in parts of Europe into modern times.

When watching Agnes Varda's 2000 documentary, *Les glaneurs et la glaneuse*, we discover that now in modern times, the practice of gleaning is sometimes prohibited, as land becomes privatised and inaccessible to the public. In the scene portrayed below, Varda comes across a fig farm which closes its gates to the public, and burns their leftover produce.



[FIG 1] STILL FROM *LES GLANEURS ET LA GLANEUSE* (2000) BY AGNÈS VARDA

The themes of rights, distribution of resources, equity and accessibility, which relate to modern practices of gleaning, are also highly topical in architectural discourse. There are questions which could apply to both scenarios:

Is it fair that available resources are not distributed to those who have less? ... How can we make resources available to everyone, without discrimination?

This leads us on to the concept of Spatial Justice in architecture, which refers to 'the fair and equitable distribution in space of socially valued resources, and opportunities to use them' (Soja, 2009). Spatial Justice is currently challenged by contemporary issues of commodification, privatisation of public space, and gentrification, which all contribute towards 'lasting spatial structures of privilege and advantage'.

How do we resist the production of spatial injustice? One approach is through Spatial Agency, which refers to ways of doing architecture which move away from top-down design models which promotes the figure of the architect as an individual hero, instead shifting towards more collaborative approaches. There is the belief that 'a building is not necessarily the best solution to a spatial problem'; space can also be gleaned from existing fabric and appropriated by its users.

The concept of the 'Right to the City', first proposed by Lefebvre in his 1968 book *Le droit à la Ville* is a nice conclusion to the themes of Spatial Justice and Spatial Agency.

As a result of capitalism, urban life in cities is becoming downgraded into a commodity, and urban space and governance are turned into exclusive goods. Lefebvre advocates for 'rescuing the citizen as the main element and protagonist of the city that he himself has built' (Lefebvre, 1986).

His concept centres around giving ownership of the city back to the people; reclaiming the city as co-created space; empowering people to glean spatial resources and use it as they will.

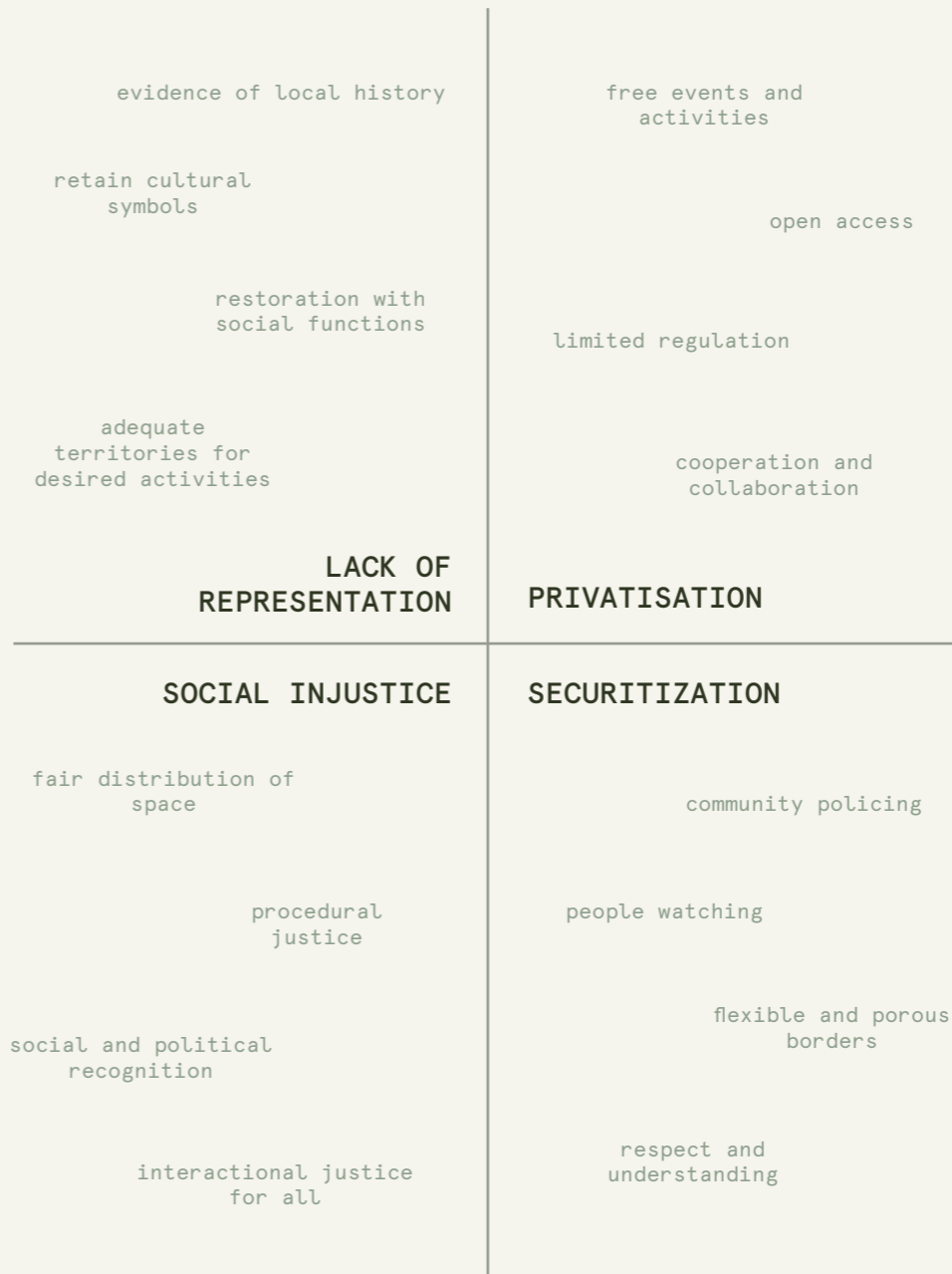
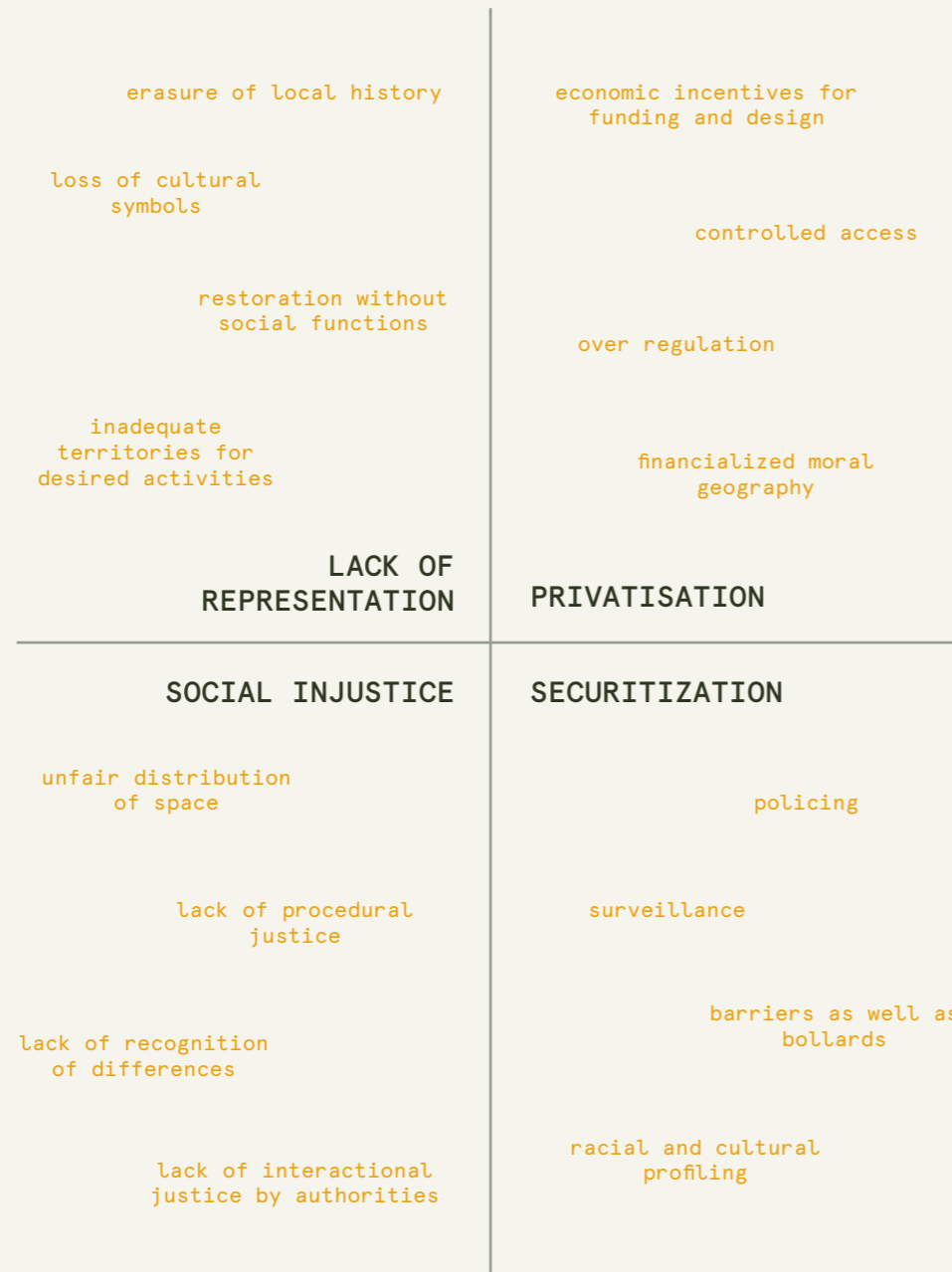
"The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city... the freedom to make and remake our cities"

- David Harvey, 2008

THREATS TO PUBLIC SPACE AND CIVIC LIFE

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC SPACE AND CIVIC LIFE

Research Plan | Theme



Theme | Research Plan

[FIG 2] THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO PUBLIC SPACE AND CIVIC LIFE, DRAWN FROM SETHA LOW'S LECTURE, SPACE MATTERS: JUSTICE, DIVERSITY AND DEMOCRACY (2019)

FIELDWORK/SITE

Our group research on the theme of 'Architectural Histories of Urban Renewal' challenged us to decide on specific locations within the Maastricht that would best represent the most significant changes in the city's urban tissue, but also the ones that would tell us more about the identity of Maastricht.

The research led us to construct a timeline of the major urban renewal projects of Maastricht since the 1950s. We identified a recurring theme of **gentrification** in some of the case studies that we analysed.

The first example is **Stokstraatkwartier**, a district in the city centre of Maastricht which in the 1950s was essentially an overpopulated slum. The neighbourhood was composed of the working class and people with low education, living in poor conditions. Nevertheless the neighbourhood fostered a sense of 'community' as the residents were reunited through their experience of the same harsh living conditions.

In 1973, Stokstraatkwartier underwent renovation and experienced a complete 180 degree transformation. The municipality displaced the local residents who they deemed to be 'unsocial', sending many of them to the purpose built neighbourhood of De Ravelijn in which they were educated on how to live 'properly'. Stokstraat became an area with exclusive shops, 'qualified people' and institutions whose 'allure is partly determined by the charm of its restored or renewed old facades'.

Stokstraat is now one of the most expensive luxury shopping streets in the Netherlands, its's gritty history almost entirely eradicated: an insidious example of social engineering.



[FIG 3] THROUGH THE WINDOW OF A SHOP IN STOKSTRAAT



[FIG 4] STOKSTRAAT IN THE 1950'S (ABOVE); STOKSTRAAT IN 2021 (BELOW)

Whilst the renovation of Stokstraat was a win for the municipality and for the tourism industry, there were the previous residents who lost out. In a documentary by Andere Tijden, Roos Damen, a previous resident of Stokstraat exclaims:

“It is nothing but empty shells, all Maastricht wants is prestige. Nonsense. If you look here, there’s nothing anywhere that lives. They’ve taken life out of it and that’s a shame.”



[FIG 5] STILL FROM DOCUMENTARY ON STOKSTRAAT, BY ANDERE TIJDEN

The next key example is the **Ceramique district**, a former industrial site where the old factory buildings were largely demolished to make place for a new residential district for the affluent class. The masterplan was designed by Jo Coenen and many internationally renowned architects participated in its creation. As a result, it attracts many lovers of architecture and urban planning every year.

Personal first impressions of the Ceramique district were that it was quite a sterile and lifeless environment, with its wide roads and multiple gated residences. Having done some further research on public reaction to the Ceramique district, it appears that this sentiment is also shared with others. Dennis Hambeuker writes in a critical review for Archined:

'According to the theories, all the ingredients are present for a vibrant commuting-shop-cultural neighborhood with a lot of social interaction. However, the reality is that it is very quiet, some call it boring. Contrary to the good intentions of the designers, the district is difficult to come to life.'

NAiM/Bureau Europa conducted research into the social capital of the district through conversations and meetings with the residents of Ceramique. The residents brought up complaints about possibilities for social activities and interaction.

Attempts by a group of elderly residents to organize a social activity in the semi-public spaces of the building had fallen through due to the opposition of the other residents and Vesteda, the owner of the building: *"the other residents do not like it that strangers come into the building and Vesteda does not want the building to be damaged."*



[FIG 6] PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION ON THE INVISIBLE INSIDE WORLD OF CÉRAMIQUE - ITS RESIDENTS, THE INTERIORS, THE INNER GARDENS - MAKING THE INACCESSIBLE, ACCESSIBLE.



[FIG 7] SIGN ON THE GATES OF PATIO SEVILLA BY CRUZ Y ORTIZ, CERAMIQUE



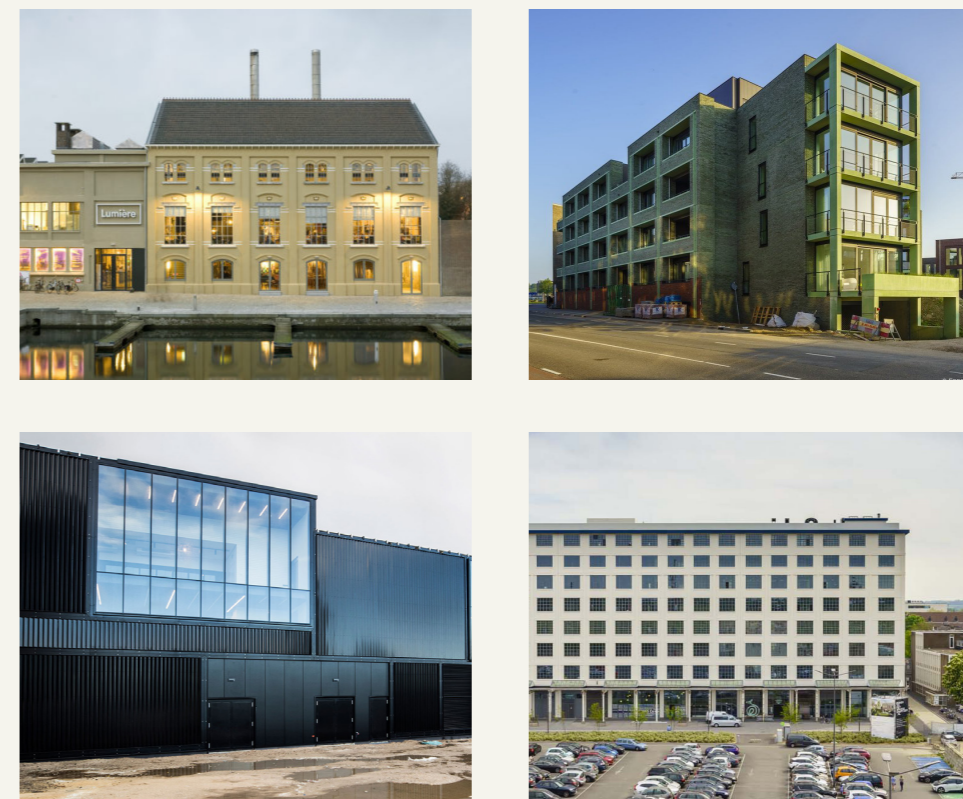
[FIG 8] MASTERPLAN OF THE BELVEDERE DEVELOPMENT AT THE BELVEDERE INFORMATION CENTRE

The most recent, and currently ongoing, major urban renewal project in Maastricht is the **Belvédère plan**, a large area redevelopment in the northwest of Maastricht which encompasses the **Sphinx Quarter**, the area in which our studio's site is located.

We spoke to Erwin Gerardu, communications advisor of the Belvédère Information Centre, who explained that the vision for the Sphinx Quarter is to create a district in Maastricht that contrasts with the historical and 'pretty' city centre. It is to become a place for "culture, creativity, innovation and experimentation"; it is to be "hip, trendy and young".

"We want to make it a 24/7 community," Erwin explains. There is to be a mixture of work, living and entertainment so that the district is lively and bustling at all times during the day.

Several redevelopments have been completed in the Sphinx Quarter in recent years. These include private student accommodation and offices in the Eiffel building; an arthouse cinema, the Lumière; a large scale music venue, the Muziekgieterij; and several high-end residential CPO projects, funded by the residents themselves.



[FIG 9] FROM TOP LEFT, CLOCKWISE: THE LUMIÈRE CINEMA; SPHINXTUIN RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX; MUZIEKGIETERIJ; AND THE EIFFELGEBOUW.

Erwin also tells us that the Landbouwbelang, an abandoned industrial building on our site which is currently occupied by squatters, is up for tender for at least € 18 million. An architectural competition for the renovation or redesign of the building will be held in the coming years, with the proposed programme being housing, with public spaces on the ground floor level. The proposals will apparently gain 'extra points' if they take into consideration the squatters of the building. The municipality has engaged in negotiations with the squatters to relocate them, however an agreement could not be reached as the squatters refuse an alternative location.

The case of Landbouwbelang somewhat exhibits several parallels with the story of Stokstraatkwartier. The municipality seeks to regain control of a building that has accumulated considerable cultural value over time, in the same way that Stokstraat accumulated architectural value over time with its monumental facades.

The Landbouwbelang has been occupied by the squatter community since 2002; over the last 19 years they have appropriated the abandoned spaces and turned the building into a vibrant cultural freezone. Freedom, community and equality are words that encapsulate their ethos and beliefs.

"Nothing that takes place here was done for the purpose of self-enrichment: we received the building from the society, and we're happy to give something back in return."

Conflicts between the municipality and the squatters calls the intentions of the Sphinxkwartier redevelopment into question. Is Maastricht trying too hard to portray a certain kind of image? Who is the Sphinxkwartier being designed for? Is it for the local people, or is it trying to attract and impress a certain crowd (tourists, expats and students)?



[FIG 10] RESIDENTS OF THE LANDBOUWBELANG



[FIG 11] THE DOORGEEFWINKEL, A SWAP SHOP RAISING AWARENESS OF OVERCONSUMPTION IN SOCIETY - ONE OF THE MANY SOCIAL INITIATIVES HOUSED IN THE LANDBOUWBELANG



[FIG 12] TEENAGERS HANGING OUT AT THE BASE OF THE CRANES OUTSIDE THE LBB

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The Belvedere plan will determine the next chapter of Maastricht's history of urban renewal. The Urban Architecture studio offers the opportunity to challenge the direction that the development is heading in.

To explore the solutions to the problems outlined by the previous chapter, my research begins with the following main research question (below), and addresses multiple sub-questions (next page):

LOOKING TO THE
FUTURE, HOW CAN
THE URBAN RENEWAL
OF SPHINXKWARTIER
BE GENERATED IN A
WAY THAT RESISTS
GENTRIFICATION?

/ How can we produce spaces that unite, rather than divide?

/ In what way can architectural elements facilitate social interaction and collective activities?

/ What are the architectural elements that contribute to invisible boundaries, and how can we design to be as open and accessible as possible?

/ How can the ethos and spirit of the LandBouwBelang be manifested in a physical architectural form?

/ How can we create a architecture that can be appropriated by its users and absorb many different types of programmes?

/ What is the role of the architect in designing social architecture? How can they act as an agent rather than a top-down authoritative force?

/ Can we construct a financial framework that would help to fund the running costs of a open access public building?



[FIG 13] APPROACH TO THE SAPPI FACTORY SITE FROM ACROSS THE BRIDGE

DESIGN AGENDA

The intended outcome of this research is to create an architectural proposal that addresses the issues of privatisation and commodification, by producing a design which should be able to facilitate appropriation, should be open and accessible, and could even encourage social mixing.

The public square is a good example of a space in which all occupiers (from the elderly, to teenage youths, to the homeless) are equal and have the same rights of access. Can this urban typology somehow be recreated in a building form?

Another source of inspiration was taken from the documentary *When We Live Alone* (Giovanni Borsa, Daniel Schwarz), which recently premiered at the most recent Architecture Film Festival of Rotterdam. This documentary generated the interesting concept of the city as an extension of your home; it fills in the gaps of the parts of your life that you miss particularly when living alone or in poor living conditions.

This is especially relevant in relation to Maastricht's continually increasing student population and its active squatting community. Can the concept of home be applied to a public building at a larger urban scale? Can we create a piece of home in the city?

Combined together, these two strands of thinking form the overarching thematic of **OPEN HOUSE**.

METHODOLOGY

1 / Literature Review

In order to gain a better theoretical understanding of my topics of interest, I will study relevant literature including:

Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture by Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider and Jeremy Till

Seeking Spatial Justice by Edward Soja

Architecture of Appropriation by Het Nieuwe Institute

Naked City by Sharon Zukin

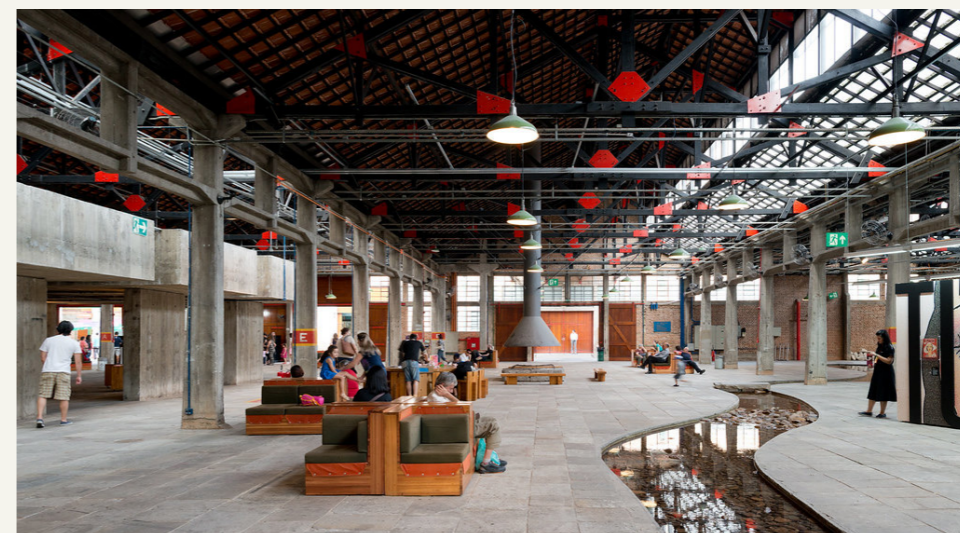
Freedom of Use by Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal

2 / Precedent Study

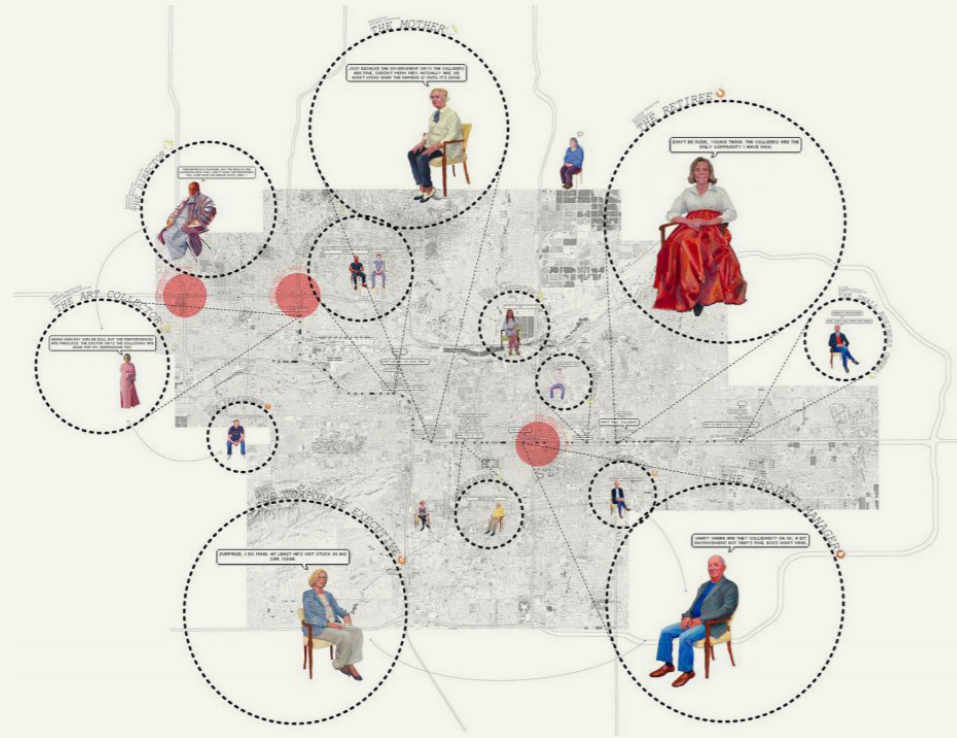
Analysis of precedent projects will give an insight into how the issues mentioned in this research plan have already been tackled. These precedents will be used as a constant frame of reference throughout the research & design process; I will identify the successes and failures of each case and learn from them.

Potential case studies could include:

- Bauhäusle, Stuttgart, Germany
self-build student housing scheme, participatory design
- Viaduto Santa Tereza, Belo Horizonte, Brazil
reclaiming democratic public spaces through music
- Ecole d'architecture, Nantes, France
freedom, flexibility of use
- Le Grands Voisins, Paris, France
community, social & cultural value, appropriation
- SESC Pompeia, Sao Paulo, Brazil
culture, inclusivity, diversity, financial framework
- Lesezeichen Salbke, Magdeburg, Germany
community, social regeneration, public access, reuse



[FIG 14] FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: VIADUTO SANTA TEREZA; SESC POMPEIA; LESEZEICHEN SALBKE



[FIG 15] REFERENCE EXAMPLE OF PEOPLE MATRIX

3 / Interviews

Interviews will allow me to gain knowledge and opinions from various different perspectives and viewpoints. They will be primarily conducted with the residents of the Landbouwbelang in order to understand their aspirations for the organisation, and what kinds of spaces they require to meet their needs. If possible, it would be nice to also interview project stakeholders, representatives from the municipality and academics such as Dr Jeroen Moes, who is currently researching gentrification, identity and social class in Maastricht.



[FIG 16] REFERENCE EXAMPLE OF ADJACENCY DIAGRAM

4 / Adjacency Diagrams & Relationship Mapping

Drawing adjacency diagrams will help me to understand the spatial requirements of my project through mapping of the relationships and connections between different spaces and activities. This will help me to formulate the design programme.

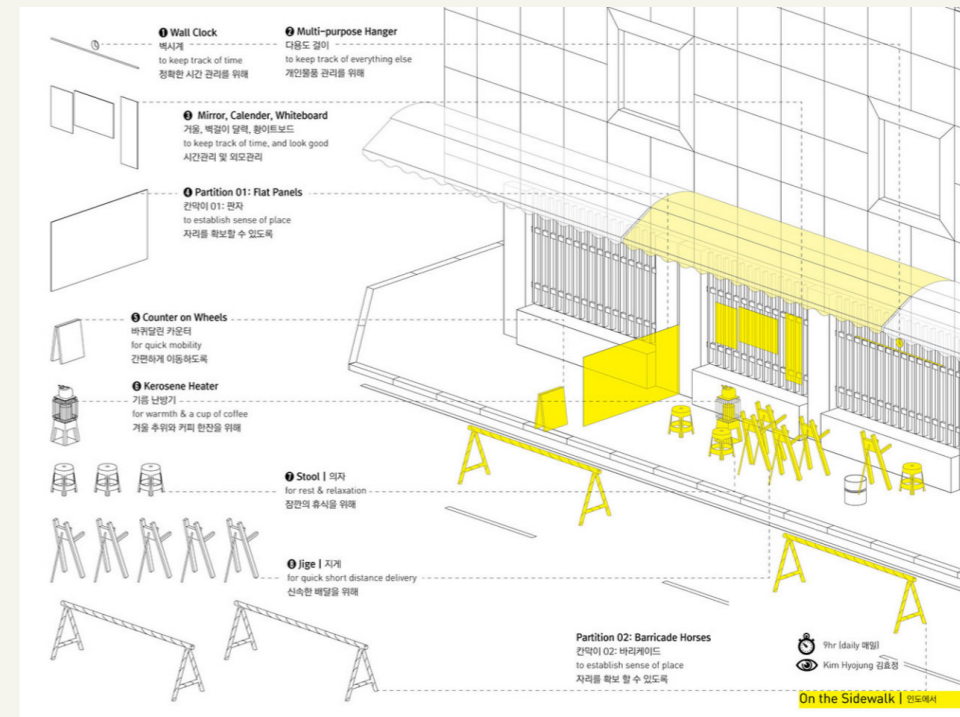
The same method can be used to create relationship maps of people and actors related to the site, studying how they might interact with one another, and building up a picture of the site's demography.

5 / Socio-spatial Analysis

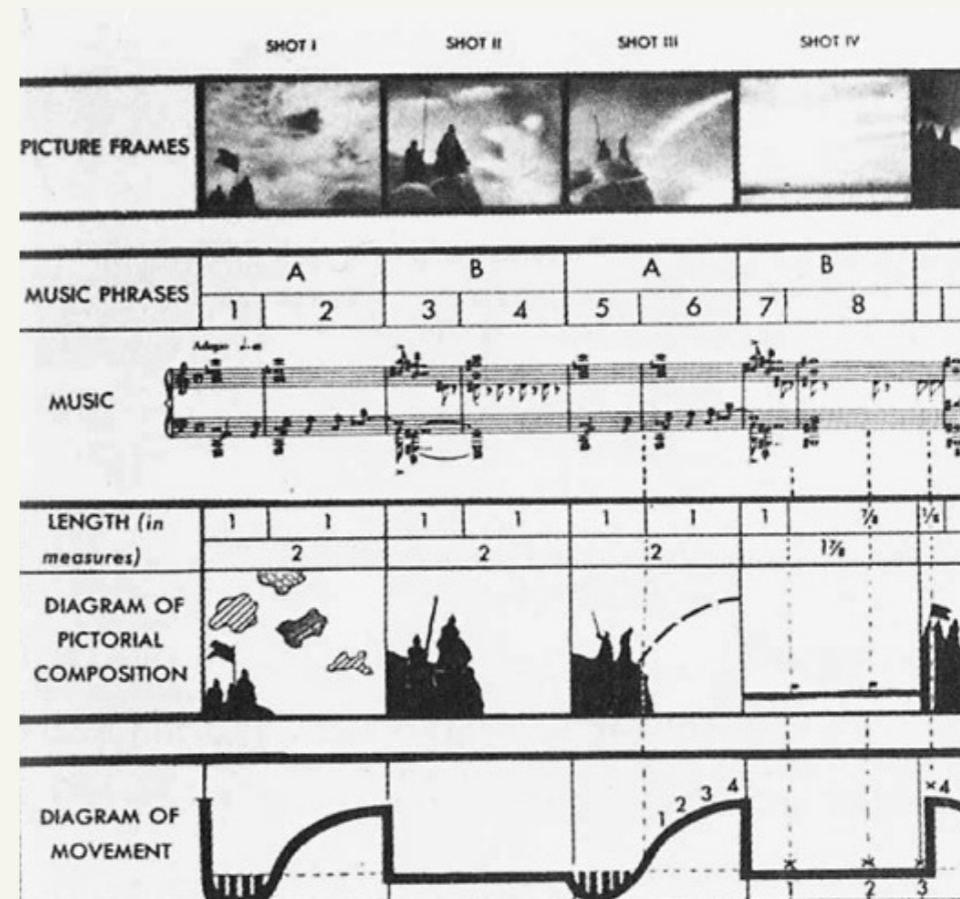
A key part of my research involves studying the social functions of spaces. I want to create a map of public spaces within Maastricht, and analyse these spaces to see what sorts of activities they facilitate. I also want to analyse existing spaces in the Landbouwbelaag to understand how residents appropriate the space and what architectural elements are important to them. Finally I want to study public/private boundaries - how they are expressed and how transitions occur.

This socio-spatial analysis will take place in a variety of forms:

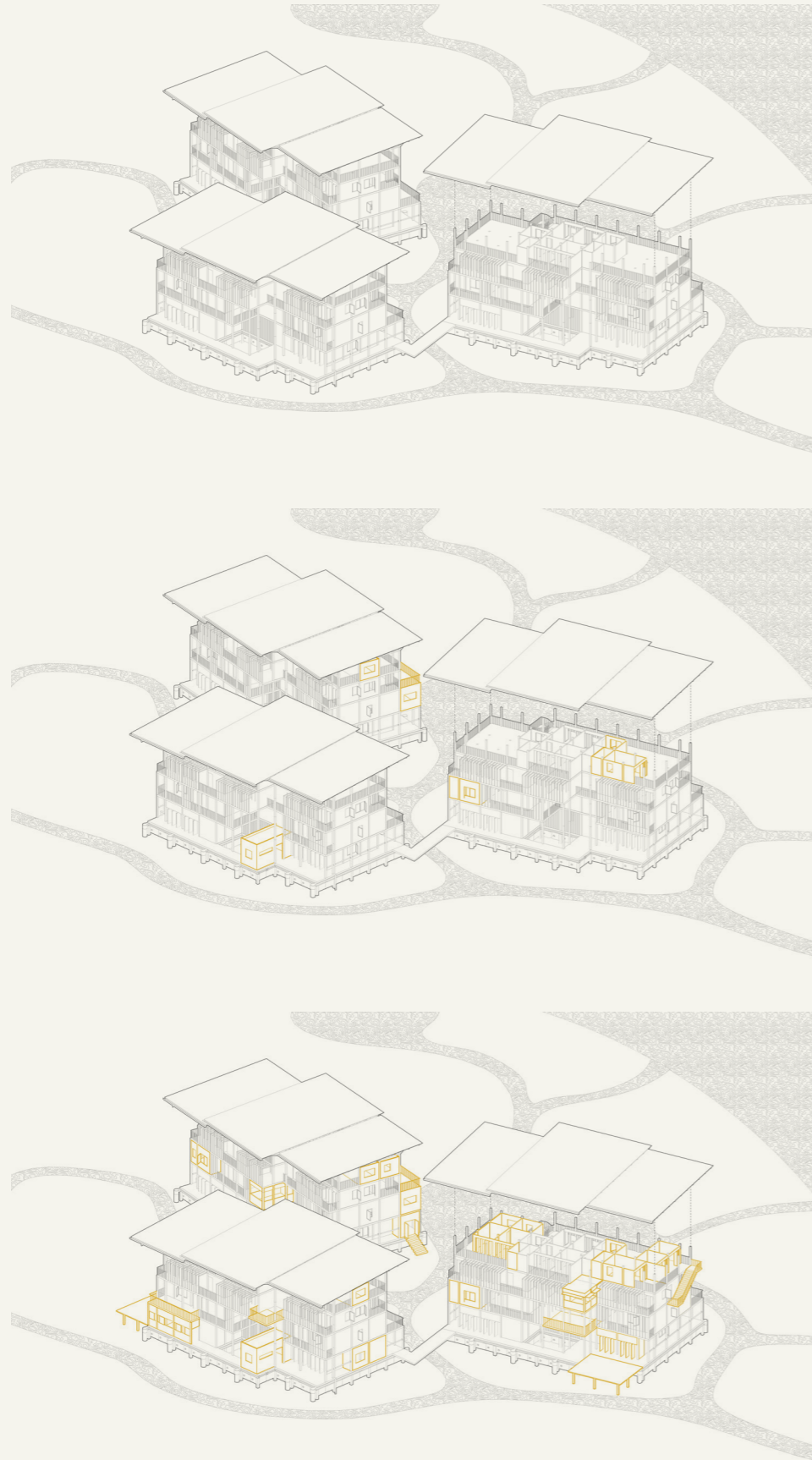
- Cartography (*Jan Gehl, How to study Public Life*)
- Soft mapping (*Jan Rothuizen, The Soft Atlas of Amsterdam*)
- Detailed analysis drawings (*Atelier Bow-Wow, Drawing Anatomy*)
- Spatial sequence drawings (*Bernard Tschumi, The Manhattan Transcripts*)



[FIG 17] ANALYTICAL DRAWING REFERENCE FROM BORROWED CITY PROJECT



[FIG 18] EISENSTEIN'S SEQUENCE DIAGRAMS FOR FILM, EXPLAINING THE SYNTHESIS OF SEVERAL ELEMENTS; AN INSPIRATION FOR TSCHUMI'S MANHATTAN TRANSCRIPTS



[FIG 19] AXONOMETRIC DRAWINGS OF INCREMENTAL GROWTH (OWN DRAWING)

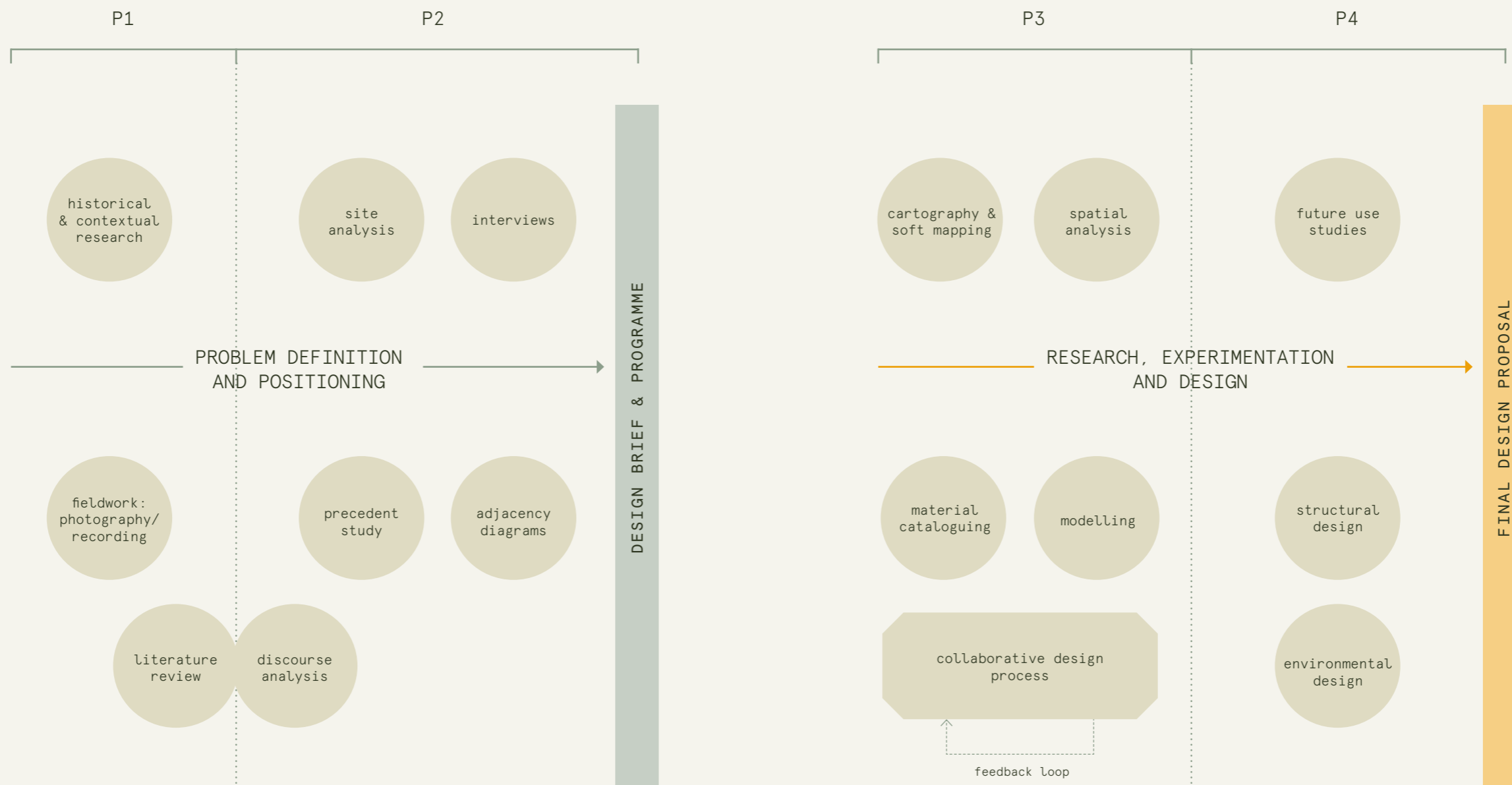
6 / Collaborative Design Process

The idea is that the design process will be collaborative and involve community engagement. I would like to include members of the Landbouwbelang in the design process by incorporating a feedback loop in which members are invited to comment on the design at different stages of progress. Comments and suggestions will be taken into account for future iterations of the design.

7 / Future Use Studies

The most sustainable architectural design solutions are ones which last a long time by being able to adapt to new uses and functions. Through prospective scenario drawings of imagined future use, I can test the flexibility, adaptability and resilience of my design. With detailed diagrams I can explore ways in which the design can grow or expand.

SUMMARY OF DESIGN & RESEARCH PLAN



[FIG 20] TIMELINE OF RESEARCH AND DESIGN

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[FIG 1] STILL FROM LES GLANEURS ET LA GLANEUSE (2000) BY AGNÈS VARDA
Screenshot from: Varda, Agnes, Director. *Les Glaneurs et la Glaneuse*. Ciné-Tamaris, 2000. 1 hr 22 mins.

[FIG 2] THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO PUBLIC SPACE AND CIVIC LIFE
Author's own diagram, with reference to Low, Setha. "Space Matters: Justice, Diversity and Democracy." Lecture, Athena Lecture Series from KTH, Stockholm, 2018.

[FIG 3] THROUGH THE WINDOW OF A SHOP IN STOKSTRAAT
Tatara, Oliwia. Photograph. 2021.

[FIG 4] STOKSTRAAT IN THE 1950'S (ABOVE); STOKSTRAAT IN 2021 (BELOW)
Photograph. Flickr. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wielschreurs/sets/72157674726293492/>.
Author's own photograph. 2021.

[FIG 5] STILL FROM DOCUMENTARY ON STOKSTRAAT, BY ANDERE TIJDEN
Screenshot from: *Stokstraat*. Andere Tijden, 2010. 27 mins.
<https://anderetijden.nl/aflevering/342/Stokstraat>.

[FIG 6] PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION ON THE INVISIBLE INSIDE WORLD OF CÉRAMIQUE
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[FIG 7] SIGN ON THE GATES OF PATIO SEVILLA BY CRUZ Y ORTIZ, CERAMIQUE
Author's own photograph, 2021.

[FIG 8] MASTERPLAN OF THE BELVEDERE DEVELOPMENT
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[FIG 9] FROM TOP LEFT, CLOCKWISE: THE LUMIÈRE CINEMA; SPHINXTUIN
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[FIG 10] RESIDENTS OF THE LANDBOUWBELANG
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[FIG 11] THE DOORGEFWINKEL.
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[FIG 12] TEENAGERS HANGING OUT AT THE BASE OF THE CRANES OUTSIDE THE LBB
Author's own photograph. 2021.

[FIG 13] APPROACH TO THE SAPPI FACTORY SITE FROM ACROSS THE BRIDGE
Author's own photograph. 2021.

[FIG 14] FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: VIADUTO SANTA TEREZA; SESC POMPEIA;
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[FIG 15] REFERENCE EXAMPLE OF PEOPLE MATRIX
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[FIG 16] REFERENCE EXAMPLE OF ADJACENCY DIAGRAM
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[FIG 17] ANALYTICAL DRAWING REFERENCE FROM BORROWED CITY PROJECT
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[FIG 18] EISENSTEIN'S SEQUENCE DIAGRAMS FOR FILM
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[FIG 19] AXONOMETRIC DRAWINGS OF INCREMENTAL GROWTH
Author's own drawing. 2021.

[FIG 20] TIMELINE OF RESEARCH AND DESIGN
Author's own diagram. 2021.