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Our Hoptille – Preserving and future proofing a community.
Exploring possible transformations for the Low-rise at Hoptille

The New Heritage graduation studio is an architectural design studio offered at the Technical University in Delft. This research based approach gives the opportunity to develop on a more abstract level as an architect and tries to help the designer to substantiate design choices.
The graduation studio is build up gradually using P1-P5 as indications in the steps one must take to successfully complete an architectural design process.
In this reflection paper the P1-P5 steps will be elaborated on more from my own perspective.

The main reasons for choosing this new heritage design studio were the social approach on architecture and the flexibility for development within my own project based on my own fascination. The redesign of Hoptille will provide the opportunity to learn from the past, while simultaneously looking at ways to improve the area. The project aims to present a respectful and worthy redesign for Hoptille so that in the future the building ensemble can be observed as being of high value. Even though it is not considered to be of value at the moment.

To address the issue of How to preserve and future proof a community occupying 1980's social housing. The project will focus on the existing low rise family housing blocks of the Hoptille area, so that the conducted research can be applied and tested.
As was stated by Koster (1982), Hoptille was one of the first projects executed as an inclusive design and the aim of the project had an important social origin. Part of the history of Hoptille is that it has always been a social housing project.

The research is be based on the broad research question; How can the residential area of Hoptille be transformed into a sustainable future proof housing complex, by strengthening the present social community and preserving its architectural values?
The research conducted for this studio starts from a collective and broad research and narrows down to personal specific research
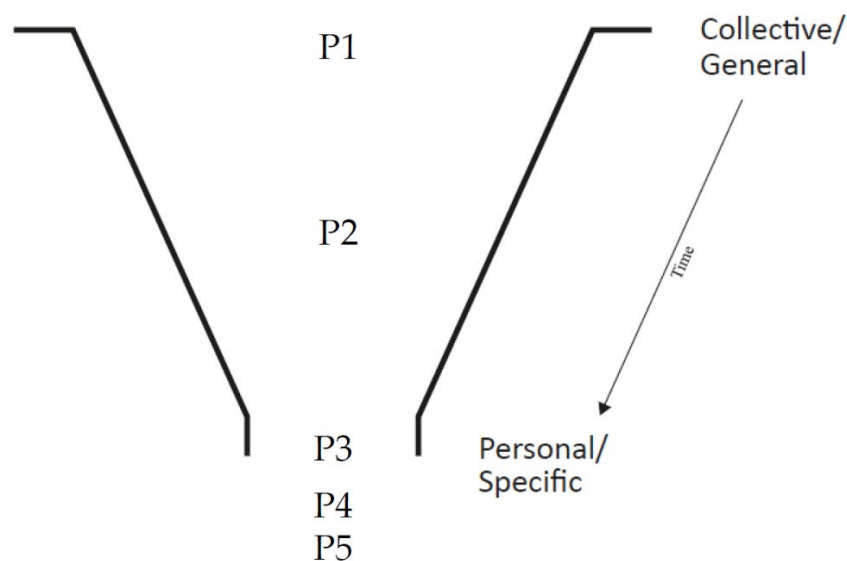

Image 1. . Transition from collective to individual research (adapted from collective to personal, 2020)

P1

At the start of the P1 the whole group conducts a bigger scale research together. The goal of the P1 is to get to know the project and to explore different possibilities of doing research. Because all the research is done collectively a large amount of data will be collected and a broad scope can be explored.

There was a 'test run' in Almere Haven where the initial ideas for street interviews were explored. Besides the street interviews online research was conducted.

After this 'test run' the research in the H-Buurt started. Besides the improved versions of street interviews, conducted amongst the users, another set of interviews was conducted with the owners, designers and the government.
This data contains valuable information because it is based upon opinions by people closely involved. All interviews were translated into codes so they could be compared.
The outcome of the collective research gave a codebook. After analysing the research done by the stakeholders it was noticed that there are some discrepancies.
For instance when focussing on social interaction; users of all sites feel unsafe at night and experience a lack of interaction with other residents.

P2

Personal conclusions drawn from the collective research narrowed down to three main starting points for personal in-depth research.
-   Preservation; Specifically in safeguarding current qualities and preserve them for later generations.
-   Community; Specifically in the Community feeling as being a present value and using the community to deal with the safety feeling issues.
-   Future Proof; Specifically the anticipation on the future housing demand of the aging population and the future net zero energy demand.

There where also challenges emerging from the collective research data proposed 5 main challenges to focus on more.
-   Social surveillance
-   Use of public space
-   Connection of space
-   Quality of space
-   Enablement of user interaction

At the P2 presentation one of the feedback points was to make it more abstract by asking questions while doing research. What do I want? Why do I want that? How can this be achieved and why is that the best option?
During the P2 period the research was broadened by adding literature research and case studies.

P3

During the personal design process there are weekly online atelier meetings with the architecture tutor and the building technology tutor. Due to the global COVID-pandemic atelier meeting where not possible.
Although the online meetings are less effective than the in person ones it helps to send work in advance. In this phase of the design process the literature studies was deepened and linked to the ambition set out for the design.
The approach in the P3 is relevant as it focussed more on the current social issues such as the feeling of safety within the existing community, but needs translation into special qualities (this is the next step in the design process) Wondering how and why. Approach on all scale levels, not yet a coherent

proposal, now separate ingredients. There are tremendous opportunities but they are not yet interacting. A little more evidence based is needed.

Feedback during the P3 presentation was given from 5 different perspectives; the architect, the building technology, the researcher, the urban designer and a representative of Ymere

P4

The last fase of the design process has been the most challenging for me personally. Translating the ambitions and research into a design that suffices the three personal approaches but also the social approach, the technical demands and the future demands of the municipality and ambitions formed based upon the research.
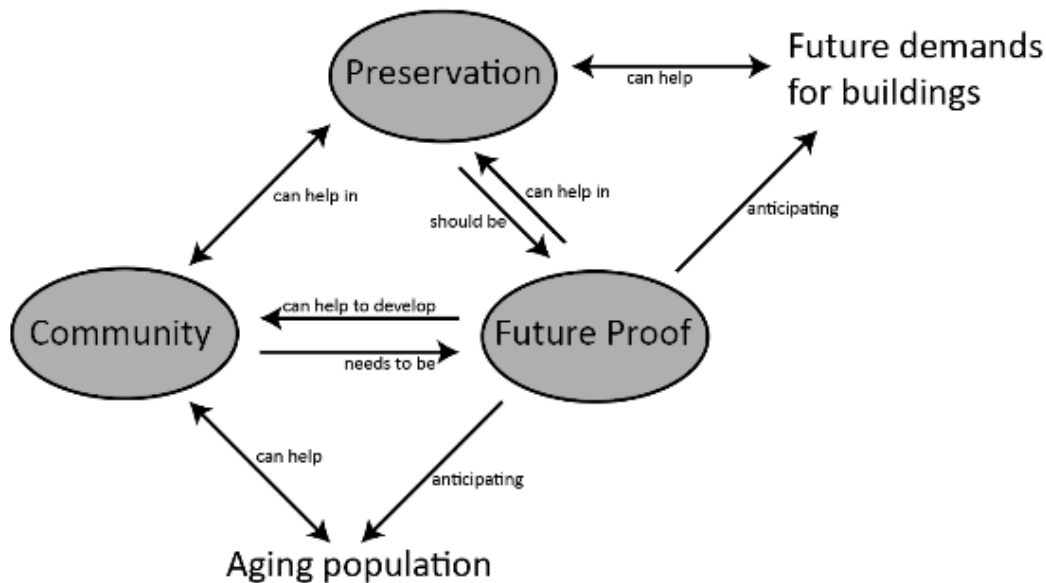

Image 2. Research scheme (Own drawing, 2021)

I can say that I really love designing for the people. Especially the people society labels as the outlaws, and nowadays that is a lot of people. It breaks my heart to see documentaries like 'Uitgewoond' where a whole building with elderly people is ripped apart and forced to live elsewhere just to make space for richer people in new luxurious buildings.

Or de Tweebosbuurt in Rotterdam where a whole neighbourhood with social housing is demolished to make space for the city to grow. Offering only 32% of that new build to social housing and doubling rents for the social housing. It is ripping apart communities.

In my opinion the People make the identity of a city, a happy, good functioning community can only flourish if the people that live there love living there.

So instead of building new, grand and luxurious apartments to accommodate the rich people desperate to live in Amsterdam, invest in the actual existing qualities of a city and its people.

P5

After the P4 presentation the focussed on the visualisation of the project. With elaborative drawings I will show how the newly configured public and semi-public spaces in the building blocks will improve the social interaction within the building and strengthen the existing community. Alongside the visualisations, a booklet was made to show the full graduation process. I aimed to further address the previously discussed dilemmas on housing shortages, moving of the inhabitants, reasons for demolishing and other elements that might be questioned at the P4 presentation.

Literature

Koster, E. (1982, May 11). Hoptille Amsterdam en Gerdesiaweg Rotterdam door Kees Rijnboutt. Retrieved 2 December 2020, from https://www.dearchitect.nl/projecten/hoptille-amsterdam-en-gerdesiaweg-rotterdam-door-kees-rijnboutt

Images:
Image 1. Transition from collective to individual research (adapted from collective to personal, 2020)
Image 2. Research scheme (Own drawing, 2021)

Documentary:
Schonewille, M. (2020, January 27) Uitgewoond: Achter gesloten deuren. Viewed on 12 July, https://www.vpro.nl/programmas/uitgewoond.html