

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Ella Gerstenkorn
Student number	5609003

Studio	
Name / Theme	Architecture and Dwelling, Advanced housing design
Main mentor	Harald Mooij Advanced Housing Design
Second mentor	Robbert Guis Advanced Housing Design
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The main aim of the studio is increasing density in an existing residential area, while also maintaining social inclusion, biodiversity, and increasing livability. A new housing market that might influence how we look at future residential projects. In this studio we specifically deal with post war neighborhoods, an existing built environment with specific architecture typologies and complicated social structures.

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Where architecture meets society
Goal	
Location:	Groot-IJsselmonde, Rotterdam
The posed problem,	Densification strategy to post war neighborhood, for a specific target group.
research questions and	How to enhance the sense of community in post-war neighborhoods, focusing on shared and semi-public spaces.
design assignment in which these result.	Investigating the role of semi-public spaces, as the transition spaces between the outside and the inside, the public and the private. My hypothesis is that architecture can provide a platform for enhanced social interactions.
The housing situation in the Netherlands is the main topic of discussion of our graduation studio in the context of the Dutch government`s decision to build one million homes by 2030, mainly by densifying big cities.	

Groot IJsselmonde, is an example of a neighborhood that was built to low standards due to circumstances. The period it was constructed in, after the second world war, brought an urgent need for cheap housing projects

In my perspective, the general problem is composed of three main aspects: architectural, sociological, and economical. In my research I discovered that the economic aspect is the connecting part between architecture and society. Architecturally, it manifests itself in the quality of the building and its maintenance, and socially in the characteristics of the population.

In my design I am working in three main scales, the unit, the building, and group of buildings. In each of them I provide spaces that are undefined, following the theory of Bernard Tschumi. These spaces are meant to encourage self-expression among the residents. I believe that through self-expression in public spaces, lies the solution for social connection with neighbors. And through that, a greater sense of belonging that directly influences satisfaction of the residents.

Process

Method description

The research process has begun with a collaboration between the graduation studio`s participants. We gathered the general data about three main topics- the housing crisis in the Netherlands, post war neighborhoods, and different target groups that are relevant to housing projects. After this phase, I continued individually to research and collect information mainly to enrich my knowledge of the context. I am using plan analysis and flows mappings, to understand how people use the space and in the current state of the built environment, while developing a master plan for the area. I use gap analysis to understand what steps I need to take in order to achieve a residential project that will increase the sense of community between current residents and future ones. I plan on continuing developing by using mainly the method research by design, in order to test concepts in floorplans and volumetric studies in order to achieve the best spatial solution possible.

Literature and general practical preference

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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)?

For me, one of the most interesting aspects of the graduation studio is that we get to work with an existing neighborhood. The connection between past decisions and today`s residents, and our role as planners. As architects, we are trained to use our creativity in providing solutions, while considering the constraints. We are committed to the people for whom we are designing and aim to predict how their future needs will be met to the fullest.

The solutions I look for will be sustainable, scalable, and socially integrative. First, the design will incorporate a redevelopment plan that reuses the existing structures. Then, due to the repetitive characteristics of the buildings in that area, the solution I design will be repeatable in more parts of the neighborhood. The focus on communal spaces in post-war residential buildings, enhancing the sense of community, will help integrate new residents in the area.

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

In today's era there is a severe housing shortage and the open spaces we have left on the planet are in constant decrease.

Therefore, the research I am investigating, of innovative densification solution, is not only relevant to the area I am focusing on, but the result can be applied anywhere in the world, with local changes.

In my research I focus on the tenants, the current, and the future ones.

I'm looking for the connection between space and society. Mainly, I'm interested in discovering which spaces encourage a thriving community, that gives, receives, and preserves.

The relationship between community and neighborhood could be interesting for future residential projects. In focusing on designing spaces that drive the sense community, lies the solution to a prosperous neighborhood and well-kept and active spaces, and the architecture design fulfills its purpose.