Over the course of the year, I have been recording my thoughts regarding architecture in a journal. This entry on the 13th November 2020 was interesting as it really depicts my thought process when designing or even merely observing space.

_Journal excerpt 13_11_20_

I am interested in the impact architecture has on people. Rather fancily I have entitled it the symbiotic relationship between people and place but my interests are much simpler than that - of course the outcomes are complicated and obscure but I want to know the role of the architect and the impact they could have on people's daily lives. Does it work?

I am sat in my mother's empty office – partly due to Covid-19 and the nationwide lockdown in the UK and partly due to the time of day. I am reading Sennett's Building and Dwelling (Ethics for the City) book which introduces us to the idea of the scale of the city and the complexities that come with architects and/or planners designing for improvement. He starts with some captivating quotes.

- _The built environment is one thing, how people dwell in it another._
- _Buildings are Seldom isolated facts. Urban forms have their own inner dynamics, as in how buildings relate to one another or to open spaces, or to infrastructure below ground, or to nature._
- _The built environment is more than a reflection of economics or politics; beyond these conditions, the forms of the built environment are the **product of the maker's will**._
- _Will plans to pedestrianize a street do anything about the housing crisis? Will the use of sodium borosilicate glass in buildings make people more tolerant of immigrants?_
- _One result of this social recoil appears in the gated communities which are today, throughout the world, the most popular form of new residential development. The urbanist should go against the will of the people, refusing to build gated communities; prejudice should be denied in the name of justice. But there is no straightforward way to translate justice into physical form – as I discovered early on in a planning job._
- _Should urbanism represent society as it is, or seek to change it?_

…and in all honesty, that is a big question. I think it questions the role of designers in the built environment. I wonder if the important thing is to really steer people in the 'right' direction rather than a form dictation. However, considering the situation with the Smithsons and Robin Hood Gardens, when does guidance turn to dictation? How much should you guide before you allow the users to rule, adapt and personalise?

I think this thesis will be interesting to see what people have been saying about the topics regarding ownership, people and circularity.

There is also the notion of learning from children and how they perceive space and an opportunity to learn from their unique reading of the city.

The demarcation people public and private is simpler. The built environment is their platform to enjoy and explore. There is nothing too complex or convoluted about their understanding of thresholds. Could we design with in mind?

This is just the beginning and there is so much to learn.

The candid tone of my thoughts I found quite comforting. The obsession with providing an alternative to the status quo is something I had forgotten about and the origins of the thought. The past couple of weeks have led me to reflect. Reflect on my project, where it sits in the grand scheme of the built environment and its essence. It was never solely about the facade's aesthetics, but really about what emotions the façade would evoke. Whether it be positive or negative, I wanted to explore the role of the architect in having such an impact on the built environment.

Over the past six months, I have spent a considerable amount of time observing people's routines and rituals as they move from public spaces to private spaces. Herein lies the interest in the entry sequences. My aspiration on the research of this topic was to create something that added to the body of work by Francis Holliss. Unfortunately, the pandemic meant there was a change in societal norms of approaching people randomly and even entering people's private spaces to conduct interviews – it was all too uncertain to plan. However, the use of technology and the ability to film meant that I was still able to observe peoples' routines and the beauty of it was that they were also able to pay close attention to the reason behind their routines and rituals.

The starting point for the design for me really looked at the demographic of Nijmegen of which I found a high percentage of young people were living with a single parent. This notion that the contemporary family no longer consisted of 2 parents and 2 children at all times was something to consider.

As I continue to critique the existing housing stock, I find that it is increasingly important to understand who my target group may be and the amenities needed for them to live in fulfilment of their environment.

My target market. The single parent family was a topic close to my heart. My parents are separated and have been since I was 3 years old. So, digesting the childcare necessities that came with being a single parent was something I grew up understanding living with my mother. I attempted to embed the needs of being a single parent into the design of the working home. By creating a project that focuses on community and passive surveillance, single parents can get on with their activities and responsibilities with the assurance their children are exploring and playing in a safe environment.

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The issue of the gate was something I struggled with as I understood the need to safety when dealing with children but also morally was against the status quo of designing these segregated economic spaces that continued to the diminishment of the wider community attitude birthed in cities.

Nevertheless, I put a gate.

Maybe it is acceptable to compromise as long as the overwhelming design speaks to the depth of the core issues that the project has been birthed from. Well, that's what I'm telling myself anyway. Welcome to the Working Home residential neighbourhood of Nijmegen, we hope you like it here.