

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Fig.: Aerial image of WoensXL, source.: Google Maps

Graduation Plan: Master Track Architecture

Personal information	
Name	Alan Willem Dolieslager
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Studio		
Name / Theme	Adapting 20 th Century Heritage	
Main mentor	Lidy Meijers	Heritage & Design
Second mentor	Frank Koopman	Heritage & Technology
Research mentor	Marie-Therese van Thoor	Heritage & Value
Argumentation of choice of the studio	A love for the nitty gritty side of working with old structures, experience in the field through work and a desire to explore heritage of a more recent type, in this case the mall.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Revitalising Winkelcentrum Woensel (Woensxl)
Goal	
Location:	Woensel, Eindhoven
The posed problem,	Woensxl, previously winkelcentrum Woensel, designed by Broek & Bakema in the 60s, was greatly expanded just before the financial crisis of 2008. This crisis and the recent covid-crisis has led to a high rate of vacancy, especially with the gradual shift towards online shopping. To protect the mall as post-war heritage will require adaptation.
research questions and	<p>How do interventions affect the authenticity of heritage, and post-war Dutch malls in particular? (Research plan)</p> <p>→ This leads to possible intervention strategies to preserve Woensxl as Broek & Bakema Heritage. Preserving maximum authenticity of the object as heritage would mean refraining from intervention altogether.</p> <p>How can the program of Woensxl be adapted to suit the needs of the</p>

	<p>surrounding neighbourhoods, which are generally low-income? (Design question)</p> <p>How can this new program, together with the possible intervention strategies, act to preserve Woensxl as a functioning heritage object? (Design question)</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>The complete assignment is then to adapt the Woensxl Mall to an up-to-date program which works to serve the community using it, while preserving the heritage aspect of the (60s) modernist mall as an object.</p>

Process

Method description

Preliminary Research

While conducting research for the set-up of the research plan, it became clear that the various charters on preserving heritage, formulated and adopted by ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) emphasized protecting the *Authenticity* of sites. This has led to the research plan focusing on getting a grip on the concept of authenticity and asking the question whether or not it should be the main goal of the design case.



Fig.: Winkelcentrum Woensel, Just after it was finished in 1971-2. Source: Beeldbank Eindhoven

This inquest has led to the proposition of 3 different "actions" which formed the basis for 3 different scenarios, one of which was chosen. These three actions were: Abstain, Adapt, Re-instate. These are based on the common actions described by pre-ICOMOS authors and the more formalized documents by ICOMOS. Under the rules of ICOMOS, to Abstain would be preferable, since it avoids affecting heritage values and thus the authenticity of the object. The other two actions are more contentious as they risk damaging valuable historic fabric or affecting social customs and cultural values surrounding a building.

Three scenarios were then produced based on these three actions – one where the original Broek & Bakema design was restored and reconstructed before the 2008 renovation, downsizing in the process (Re-Instate), one where the structure was left as – is, with only a change of program (Nearest to Abstain) and one where the structure was Adapted to suit the needs of the community, but would require careful downsizing and protecting historical elements (Adapt).

As it was concluded that a mall is inherently impossible to keep as a unified whole due to changing cultural associations and fashion of brands and economic processes, it was judged improper to return the mall to a state before the proliferation of brand identity, seasonal displays and fashion, especially as the function of the mall has come under pressure from economic forces and the internet. This same reasoning was applied to the Abstain-scenario, where it was compared to actual plans for the site, which preface the need for the removal of at least 15.000 m² of floor plan. Therefore, the third option of adaptation was deemed most appropriate for WoensXL.



Fig.: Winkelcentrum Woensel, renamed WoensXL, just after the renovation of 2007. Source: Engelman Architecten.

Design and Research Methods

Since the Mall of WoensXL is at the centre of the north-Eindhoven city quarter of Woensel, surrounded by various lower-income neighbourhoods of predominantly social-housing stock, care should be taken to avoid turning WoensXL into a catalyst for expensive developments and exacerbation of inequality.

To achieve the goal of sustainable, community focused development, it was and will be necessary to adhere to existing, tested guides on the subject, written by experts. One of these guides contains a step-by-step process on developing such sites, for which data will need to be gathered. A walk-through of this process has been used as a method for producing, and in MSc4, refining a new program and master-plan. For this, data has been gathered from pre-existing reports on community council meetings listing neighborhood requests and ideas. This will form one angle of the design concept.

Secondly, through comparative analysis of existing drawings and photographs a map was produced which allowed for oversight of any remaining historical material from the original structure as built in 1971 and other remains, and elements which were added later. By comparing this map to the masterplan from the first step, a scenario can be produced which aims to preserve as much historical fabric as possible while also adapting WoensXL to suit the needs of the community.

Thirdly, through analysis of details and other drawings from the 2007 renovation of the building, critical areas were identified which would require short-term redesign to upgrade the structure to a higher standard with regards to environmental performance. This includes the identification of dated detailing standards, lack of insulation and thermal bridges. To update the performance of the structure will require reworking these details, either through redesign based on experience or study of similar renovations.

Limiting the Design Scope

Because the Mall is anything but small (dubbed the largest mall in the south), with the main building encompassing a footprint of 50.000m², on a plot of 150.000m², one part of the structure will be chosen specifically to detail and redesign to fit the required level of detail at P4, alongside the masterplan for the whole area. This choice will be discussed at the P2 presentation.

Literature and general practical preference

Practical and precedent:

- Own experience with upgrading structural details of heritage structures through job-related projects.
- Step by step guide to inclusive redesign (The Community First Toolkit): The Highline Network. (2018). *The Community First Toolkit*. Retrieved January 14, 2023, from <https://toolkit.highlinenetwork.org/> (Only those steps achievable within the confines of a theoretical redesign.)
- Precedents of equitable redesign present on the Highline Network website.
- The Lokhalle redesign by MEI-Architects
- The Lijnbaan redesigns in Rotterdam
- A compiled list of around 11 malls chosen by fellow students, researched and analyzed in the first weeks of MSc3

Theoretical

On Heritage and Authenticity

Accessed through the ICOMOS Website

(<https://www.icomos.org/en/resources/charters-and-texts>):

- ICOMOS charters (Venice 1964, Washington 1987, Burra 1979)
- Nara Document on Authenticity
- San Antonio Declaration

-Ruskin, J. (1894). *Seven lamps of architecture* (Digitized ed.) [Website transcription]. <https://victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/7lamps/2.html> (Digitized in 2010)

-Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. (2018, May 15). *The SPAB Manifesto*. Retrieved October 20, 2022, from <https://www.spab.org.uk/about-us/spab-manifesto>

Intervention strategies

Pereira-Roders, A. R. (2007). *Re-architecture: Lifespan Rehabilitation of Built Heritage*. Basis [PDF] (Digital edition). Technische Universiteit Eindhoven, Faculteit Bouwkunde. <https://doi.org/10.6100/IR751758>

Petzet, M., & Heilmeyer, F. (2012). *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Architecture as Resource : German Pavillion, 13th International Architecture Exhibition : La Biennale Di Venezia 2012* [PDF] (Digital Edition). Distributed Art Pub Incorporated.

Plevoets, B., & Van Cleempoel, K. (2019). *Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage: Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline* [PDF] (Digital edition). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315161440>

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)?

The relation between the topic of the studio and the project itself is directly linked to the title of the studio – the goal is to adapt 20th century heritage, while also keeping it "heritage". In the MSc2 my studio choice was also that of heritage, which followed a similar question but related to modernist ecclesiastical architecture. The topic should then fit in well within the master-track of architecture with a focus on heritage and could provide me with valuable ways of thinking for use in practice.

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

Since these types of post-war structures in general are now reaching an age where they could be considered heritage in the public mind and the concept of the mall is facing pressure from online shopping, having to reinvent it self yearly, this could serve as an example of one of the solutions to anchoring the mall in future society.