
Parameterising Participation

An explorative mixed-method approach towards the potential of parametric design within participatory practices

presented by

Lászlo Gonzalez Serrano



A4 Presentation

Monday 15th of June

2026

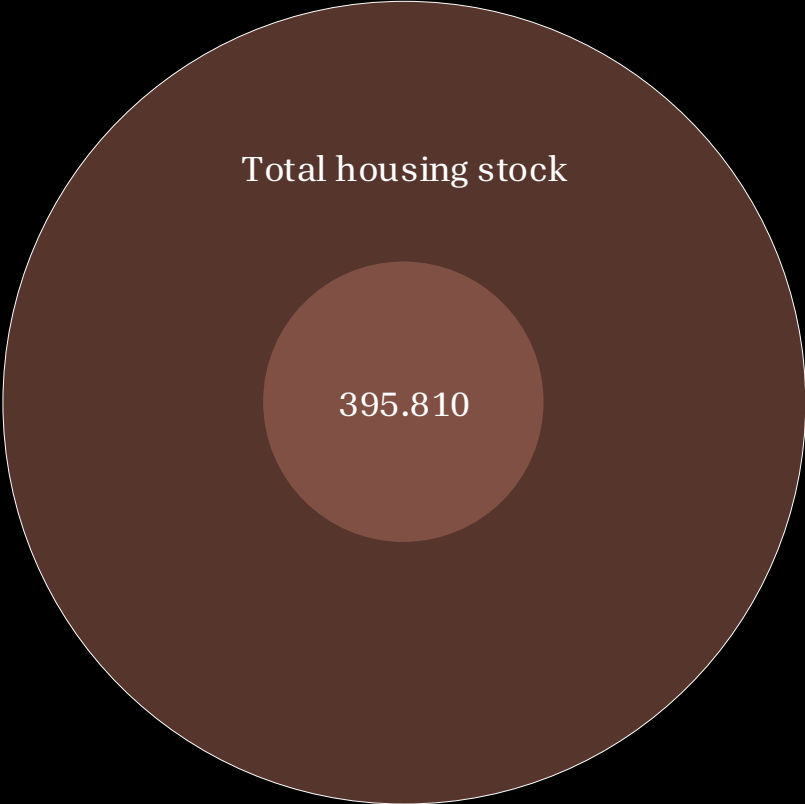
Agenda

1. Context
2. Problem statement
3. Research questions
4. Cases
5. Discussion
6. Conclusion
7. Closure

Context



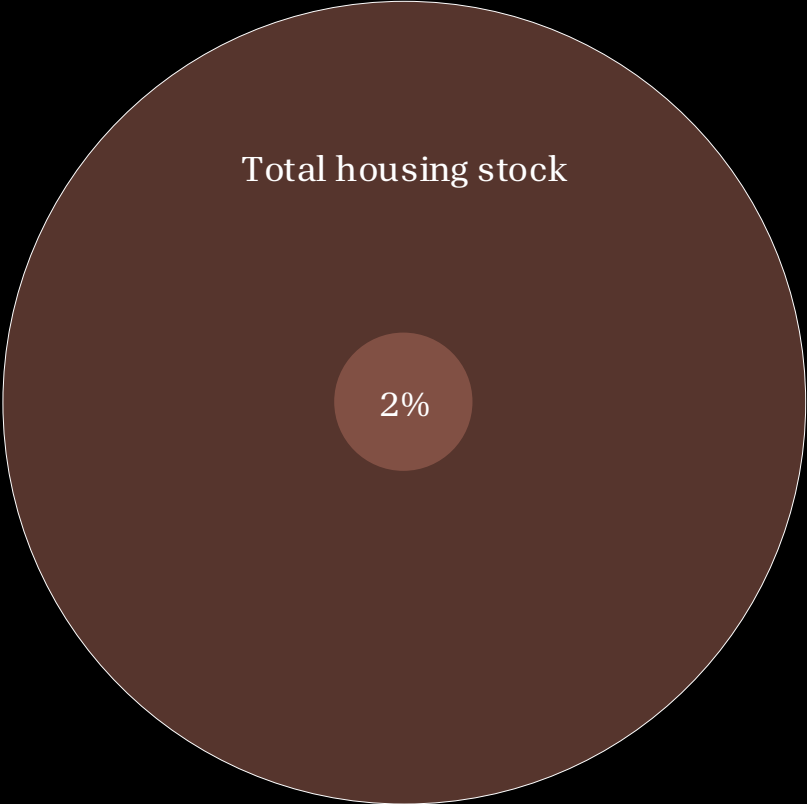
395.810



Context

395.810

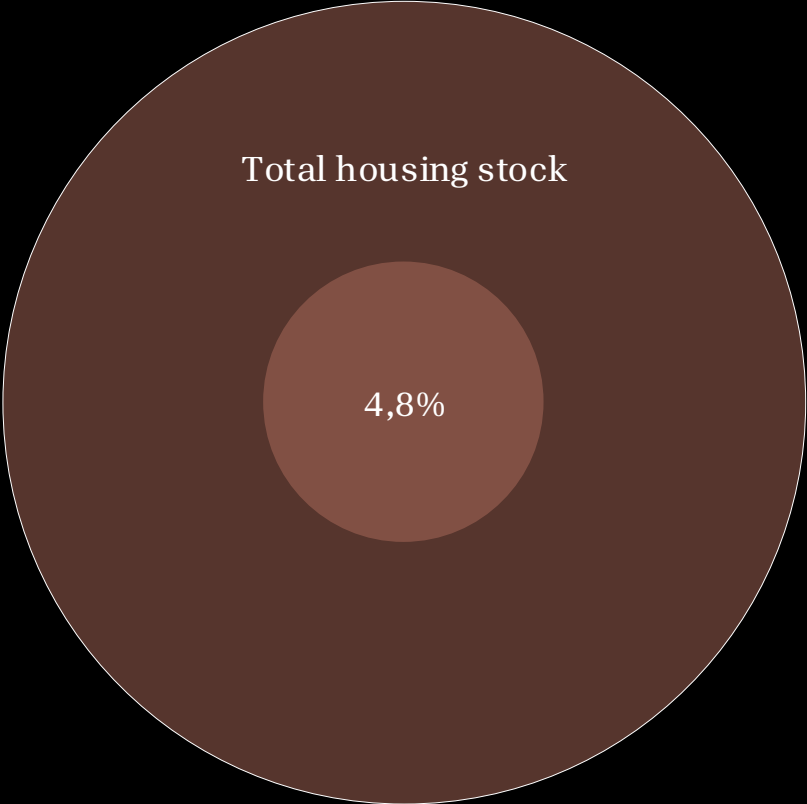
2%



Context

395.810

4,8%

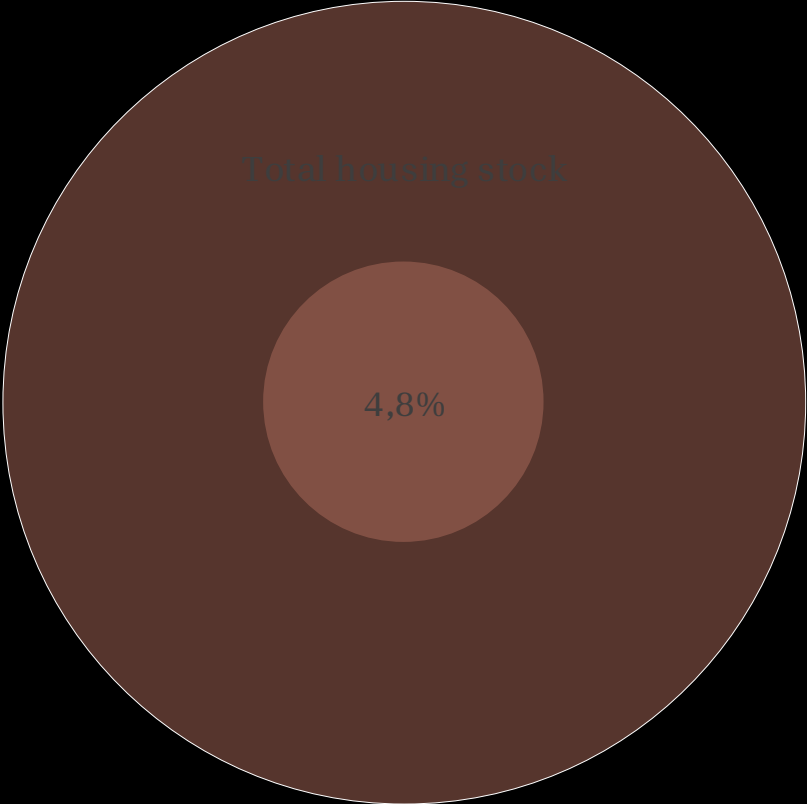


Context

395.810

4,8%

100.000



Context

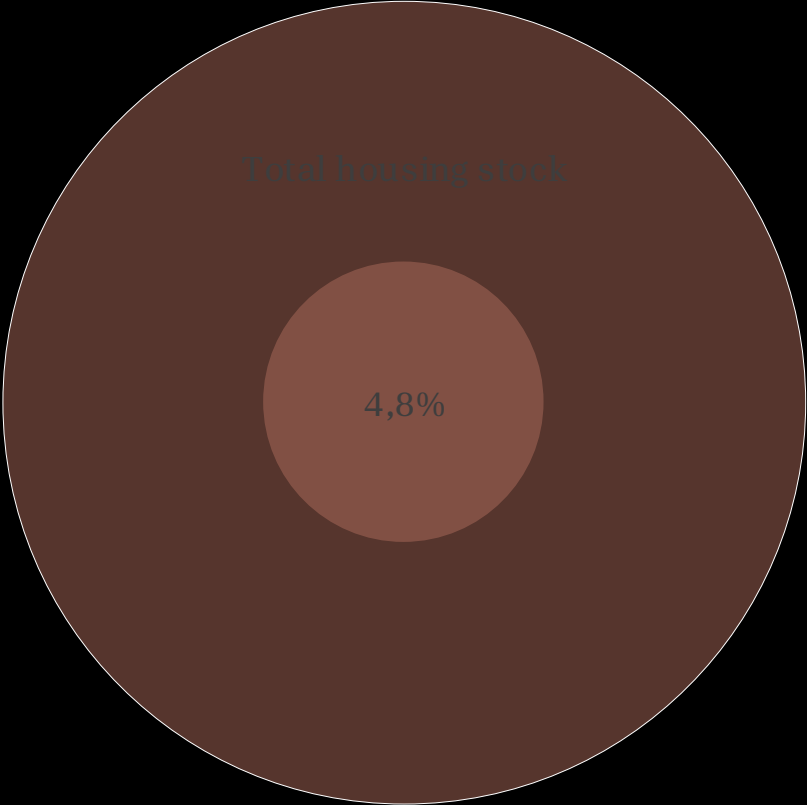
395.810

4,8%

100.000

Transformation

The reuse, repurposing or upgrading of an existing building for a new function



Context

395.810

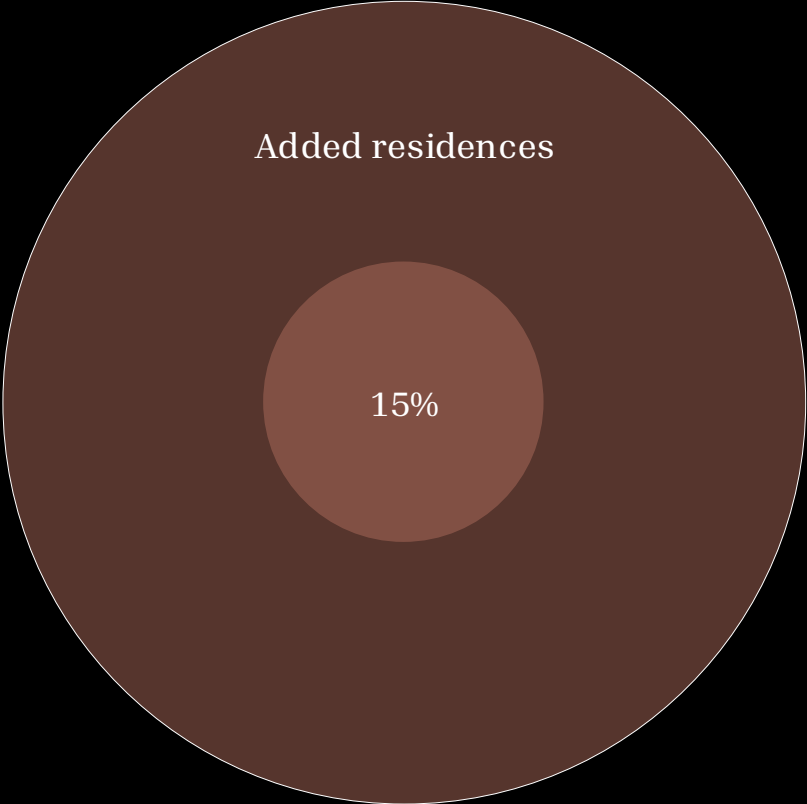
4,8%

100.000

Transformation

The reuse, repurposing or upgrading of an existing building for a new function

15%



Context

395.810

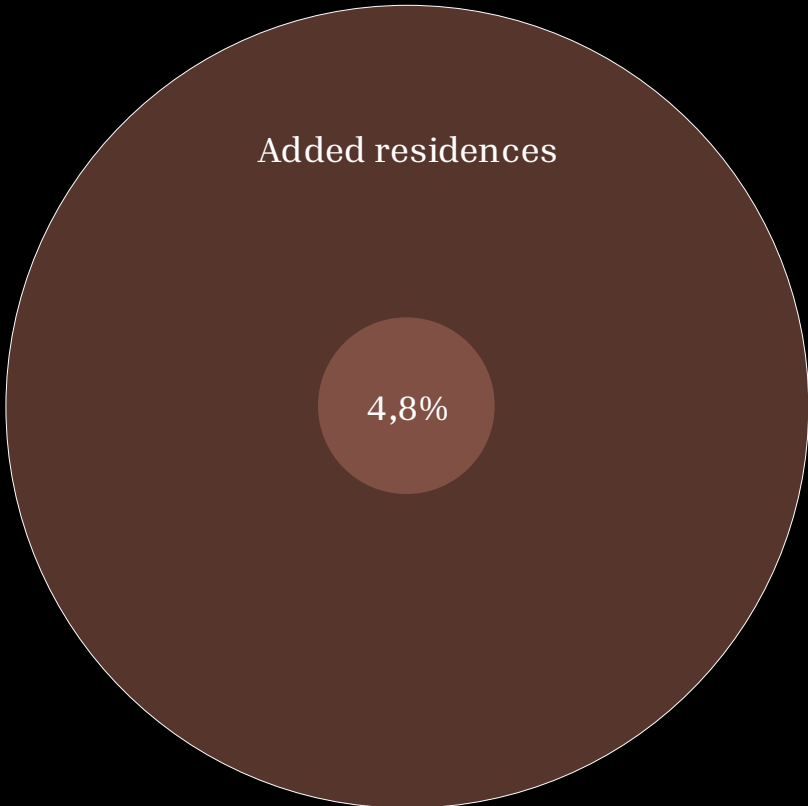
4,8%

100.000

Transformation

The reuse, repurposing or upgrading of an existing building for a new function

4,8%



Context

395.810

4,8%

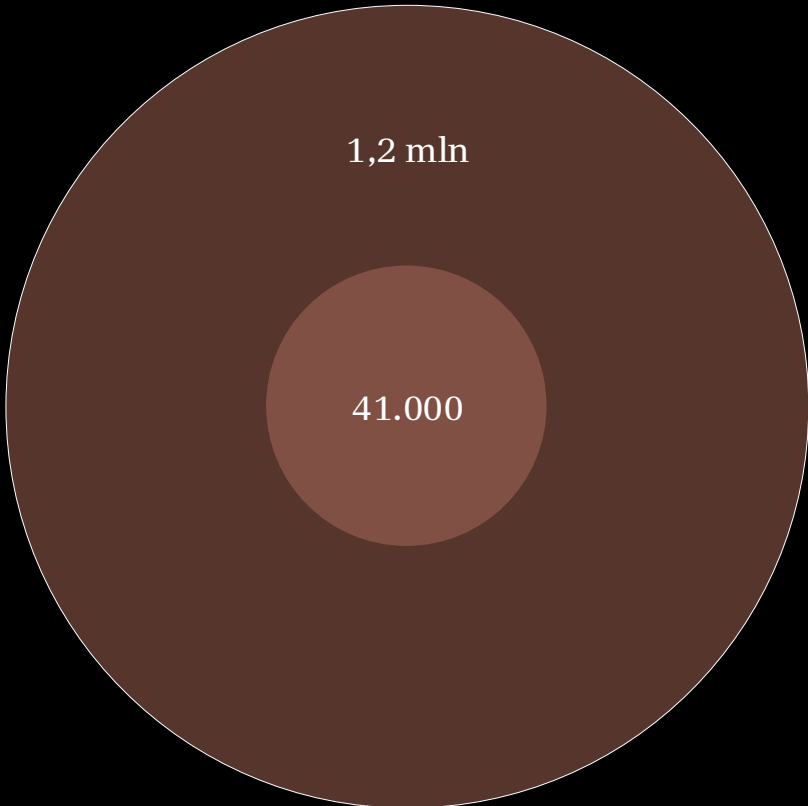
100.000

Transformation

The reuse, repurposing or upgrading of an existing building for a new function

4,8%

6,2%



Context

395.810

4,8%

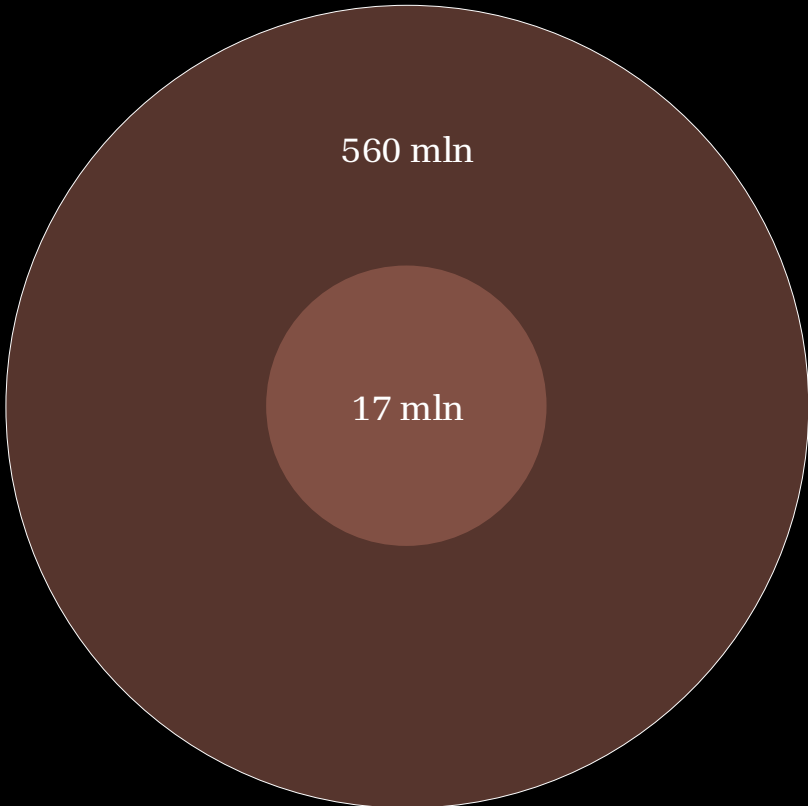
100.000

Transformation

The reuse, repurposing or upgrading of an existing building for a new function

4,8%

6,2% or 3,2%



Context

395.810

4,8%

100.000

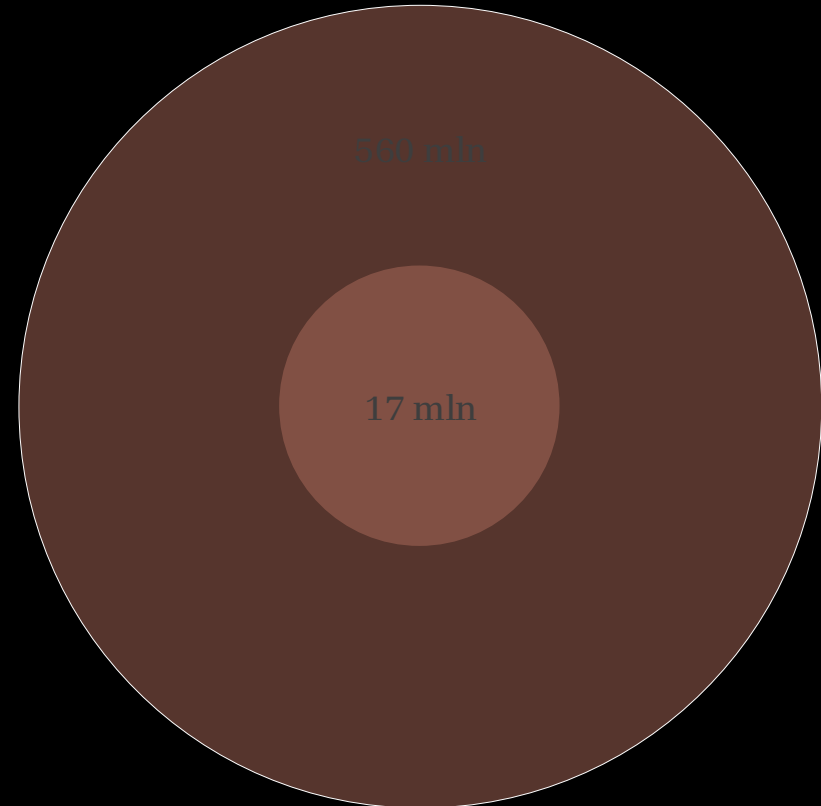
Transformation

The reuse, repurposing or upgrading of an existing building for a new function

4,8%

6,2% or 3,2%

Financial, technical and procedural challenges



Context

395.810

4,8%

100.000

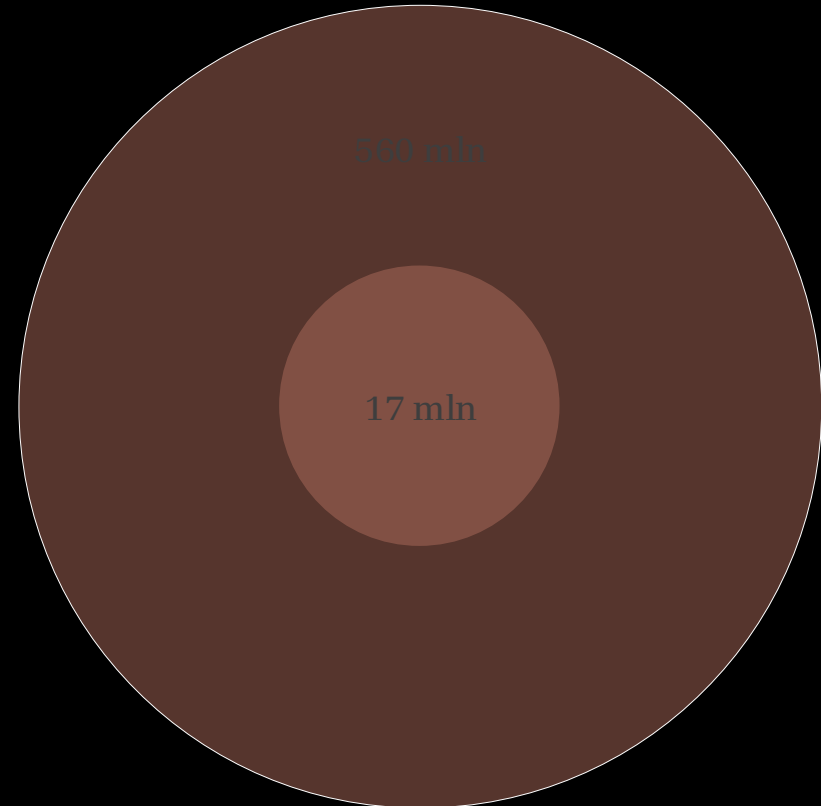
Transformation

The reuse, repurposing or upgrading of an existing building for a new function

4,8%

6,2% or 3,2%

Financial, technical and procedural challenges



Problem statement

Procedural challenges

Permit procedure

Obstruction and opposition

Delays

Problem statement

Procedural challenges

Permit procedure

Obstruction and opposition

Delays

Participation

Mitigation tool

Public support

Meaningful involvement

Current approach

Problem statement

Procedural challenges

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Delays

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Meaningful involvement

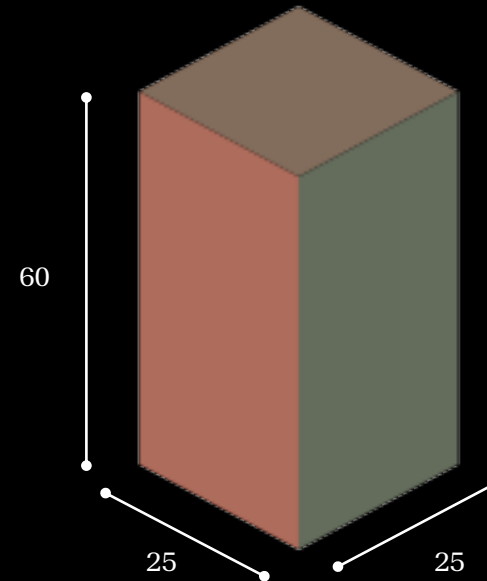
Current approach

Traditional design

Manual

Sequential and linear

Non-adaptive



Problem statement

Procedural challenges

- Permit procedure
- Obstruction and opposition
- Delays

Participation

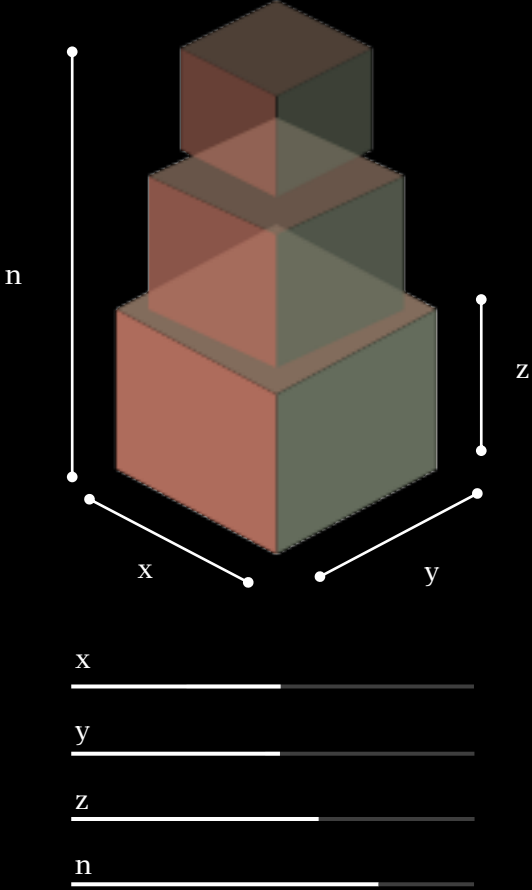
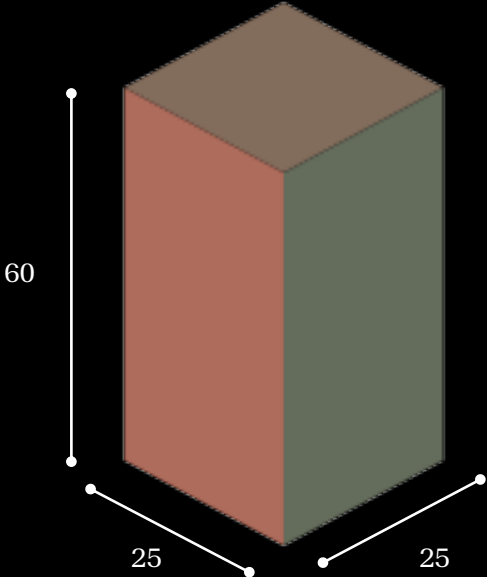
- Mitigation tool
- Public support
- Meaningful involvement
- Current approach

Traditional design

- Manual
- Sequential and linear
- Non-adaptive

Parametric design

- Parameters
- Iterative
- Adaptive
- Social parameter



Problem statement

Procedural challenges

- Permit procedure
- Obstruction and opposition
- Delays

Participation

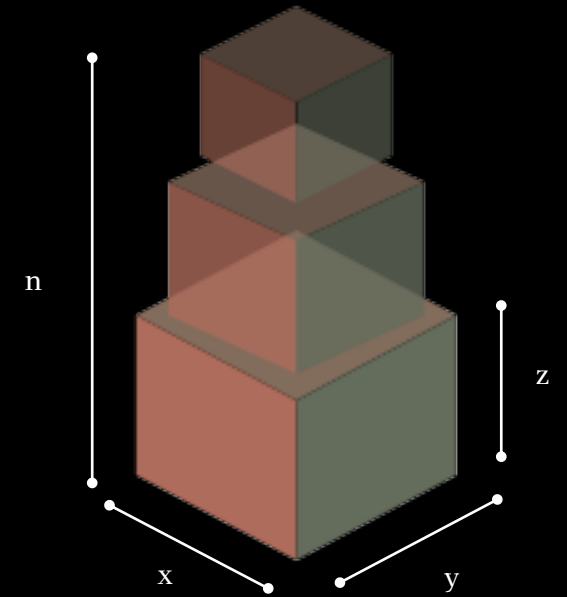
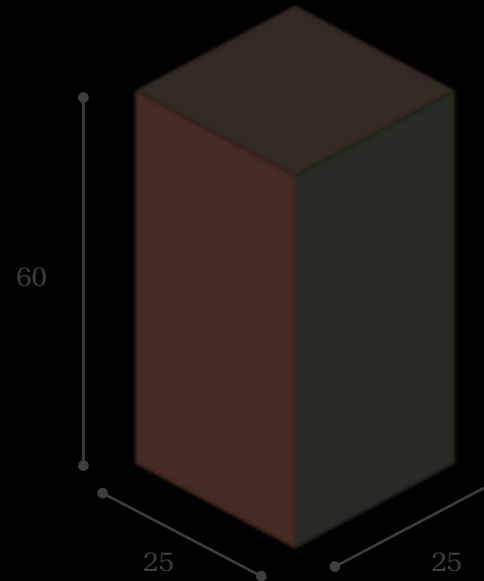
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Research

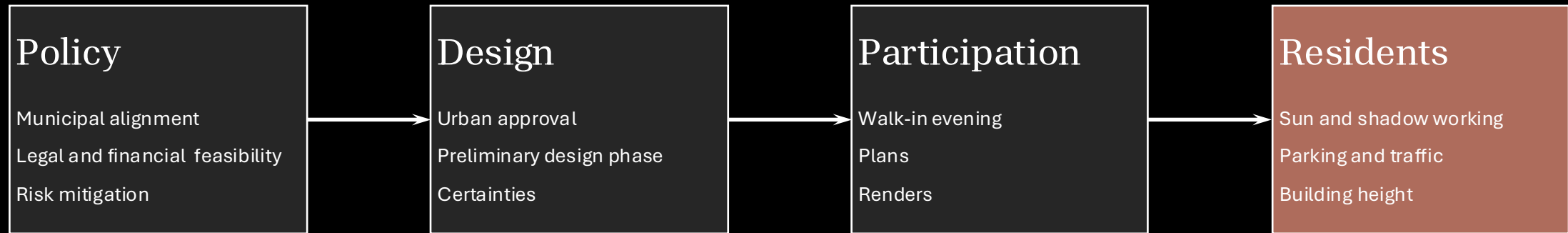
Under what conditions could parametric design be employed to improve participatory quality?

1. What defines participatory quality?
2. What are the organisational and procedural differences between traditional and parametric design-based participation?
3. How do residents experience parametric design-based participation?
4. Expert panel

Eindhoven | Case study 1



Eindhoven | Process



“You make sure that what you bring to the neighbourhood is something you know: what we are showing here is very close to what it will ultimately become.”

An architect at En-En Architecten, 17th of April 2026.

“I think there is also a kind of fear among developers and owners about sharing things too early, before they have been properly resolved.”

A senior developer at Boelens de Gruyter, 24th of April 2026.

Eindhoven | Mismatch

“The whole purpose of consultation has become to get people informed and to mitigate potential risk. Everything is solved first and then people are talked to.”

An associate architect at Mecanoo, 6th of May 2026.

“We might be the experts, but to be comfortable with the knowledge gap and present a question openly, that’s not something we are used to in society.”

A placemaking specialist at Hadley Property Group, 6th of
May 2026.

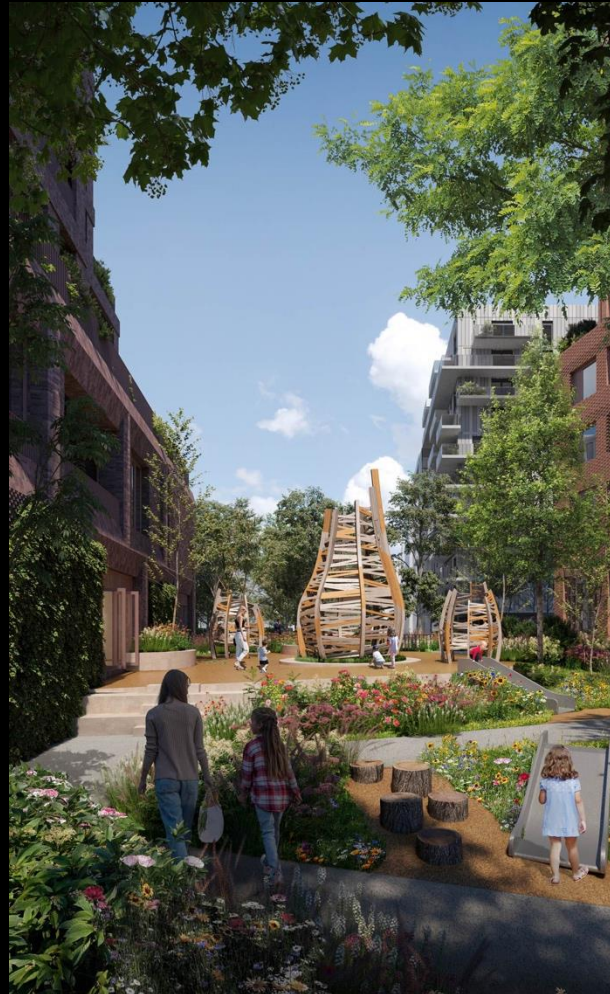
Initiator

- Disclosure restraint
- Selective openness
- Risk management

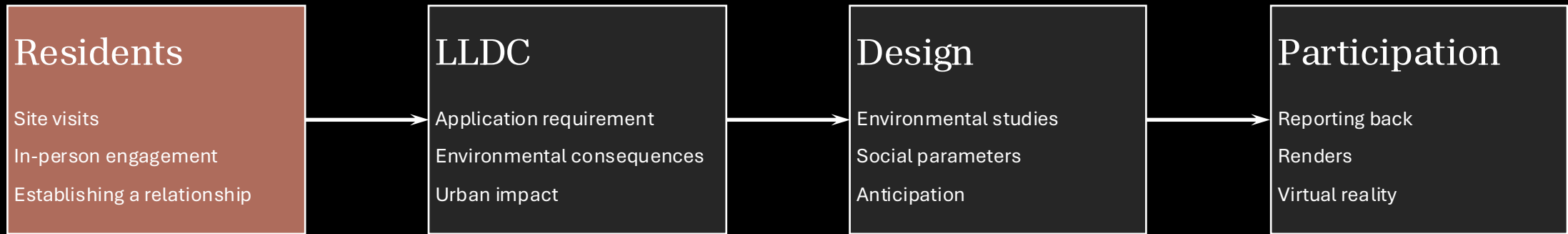
Community

- Urban scale
- Neighbourhood impact
- Expectation management

London | Case study 2



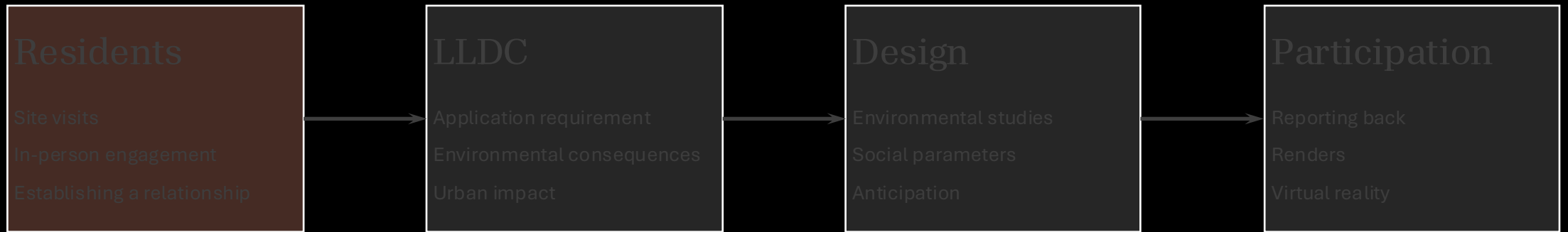
London | Process



“What matters to residents is very personal and very specific. Where do I live, on which floor, what will the impact be? And you can almost only demonstrate that with parametric design.”

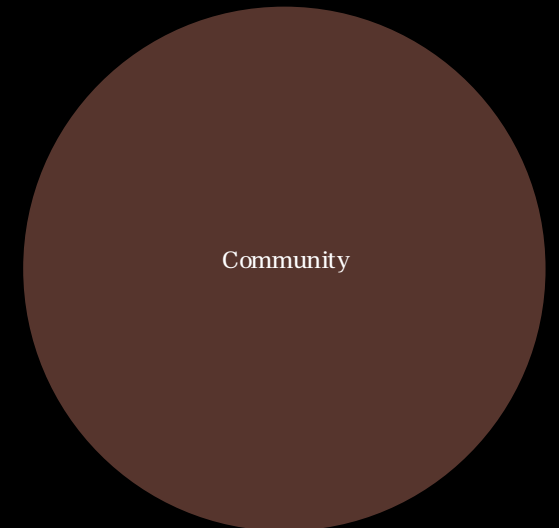
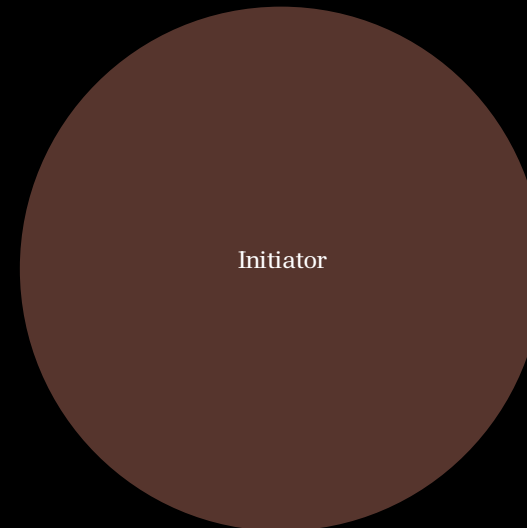
An associate architect at Mecanoo, 15th of April 2026.

London | Process

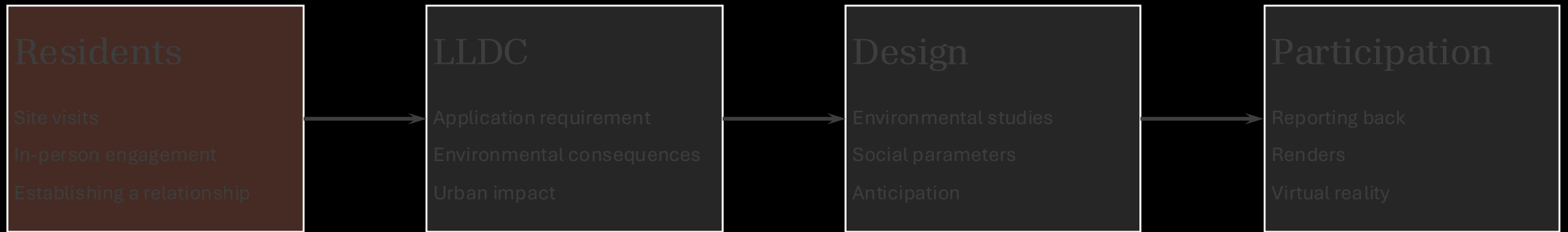


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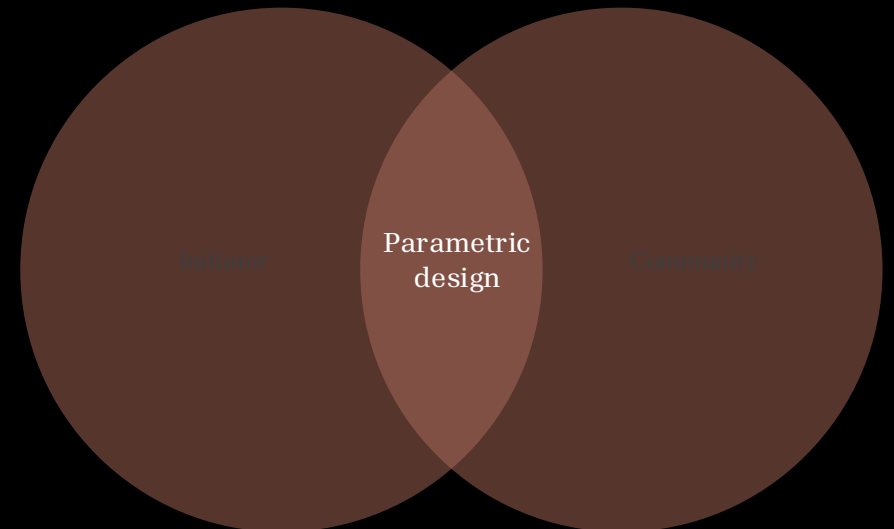


London | Process

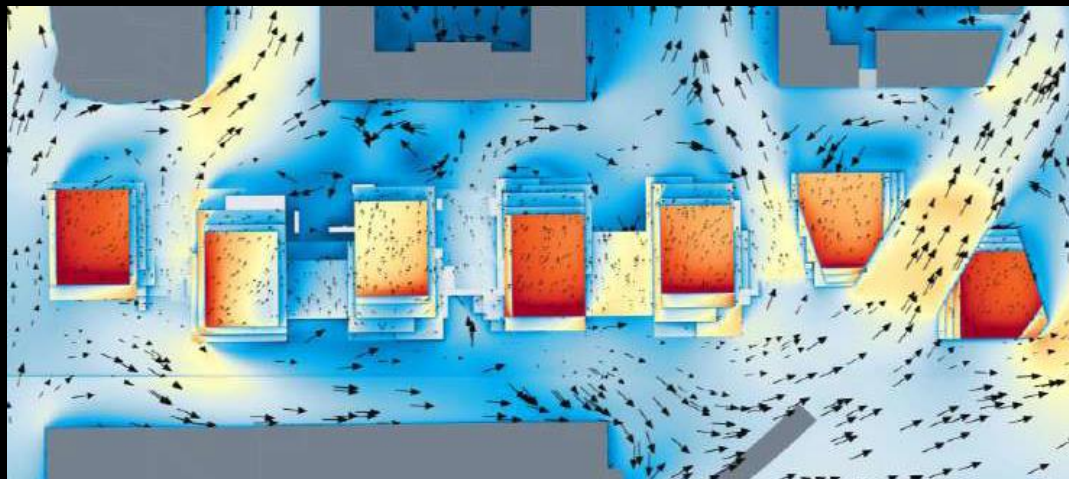
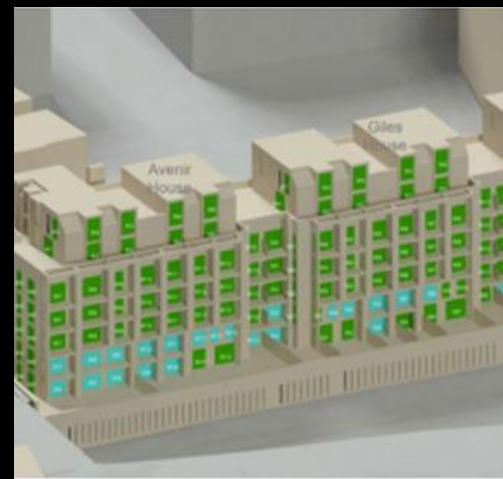
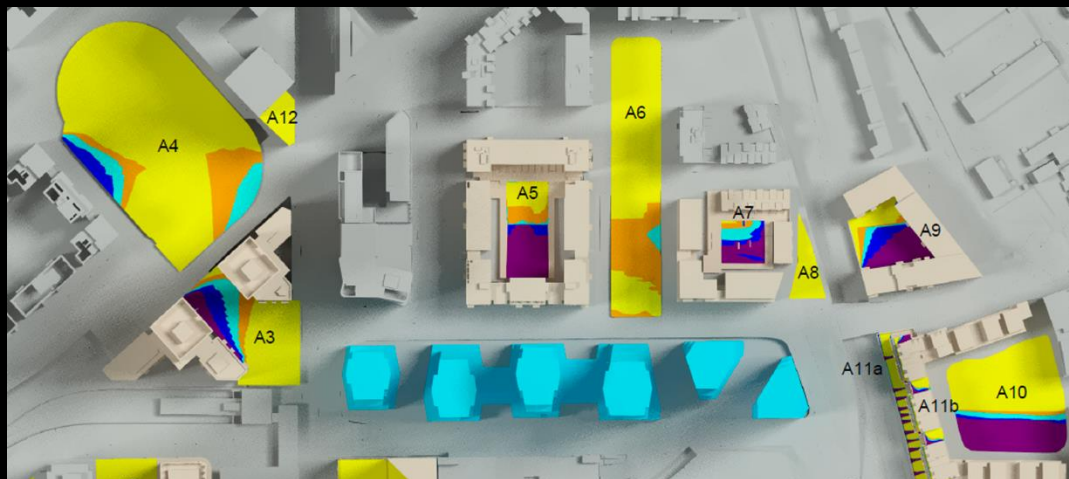


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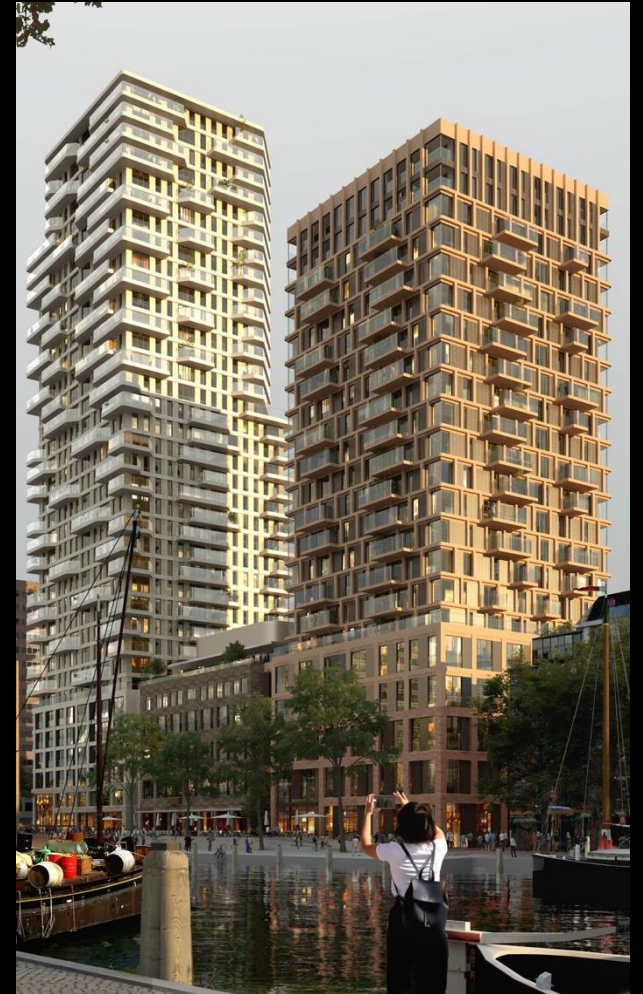
An associate architect at Mecanoo, 15th of April 2026.



London | Parametric design



Rotterdam | Case study 3

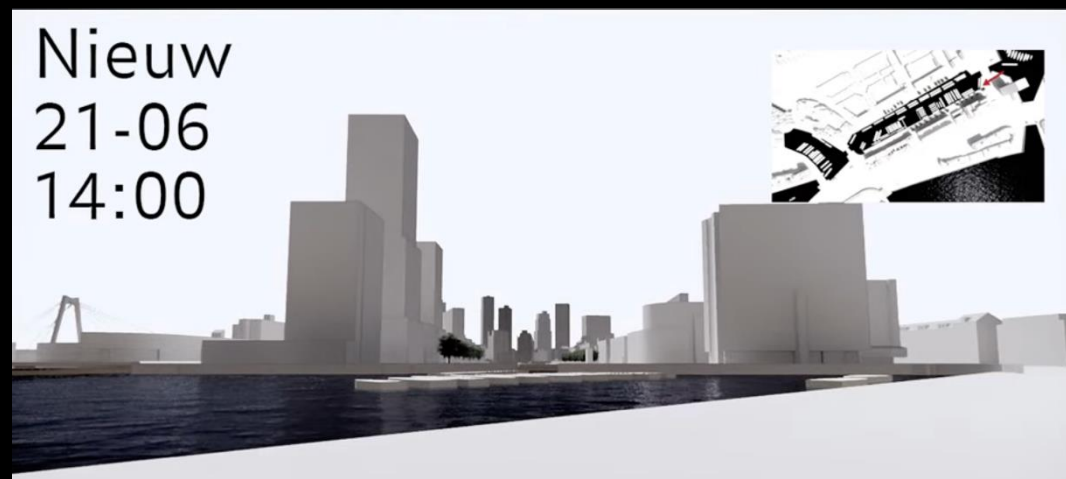


Rotterdam | Parametric design

Nieuw
21-06
14:00



Nieuw
21-06
14:00



Bestaand



Bestaand



Participatory quality | Parametric design

Advantages

“The digital version really worked with the young people. Their gaming knowledge meant that they were very much used to those spaces.”

A placemaking specialist at Hadley Property Group, 30th of April 2026.

“Those films really emphatically contributed to a more accurate picture of what residents could expect.”

Founder and former partner at De Wijde Blik, 24th of April 2026.

Participatory quality | Parametric design

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Limitations

“Sometimes it tends to accelerate the process, but participation is not always benefitted by acceleration. Sometimes you just need to take the time you have.”

Founder and former partner at De Wijde Blik, 24th of April 2026.

“Our ability to trust what we see on a screen is going to be absolutely trashed.”

A placemaking specialist at Hadley Property Group, 30th of April 2026.

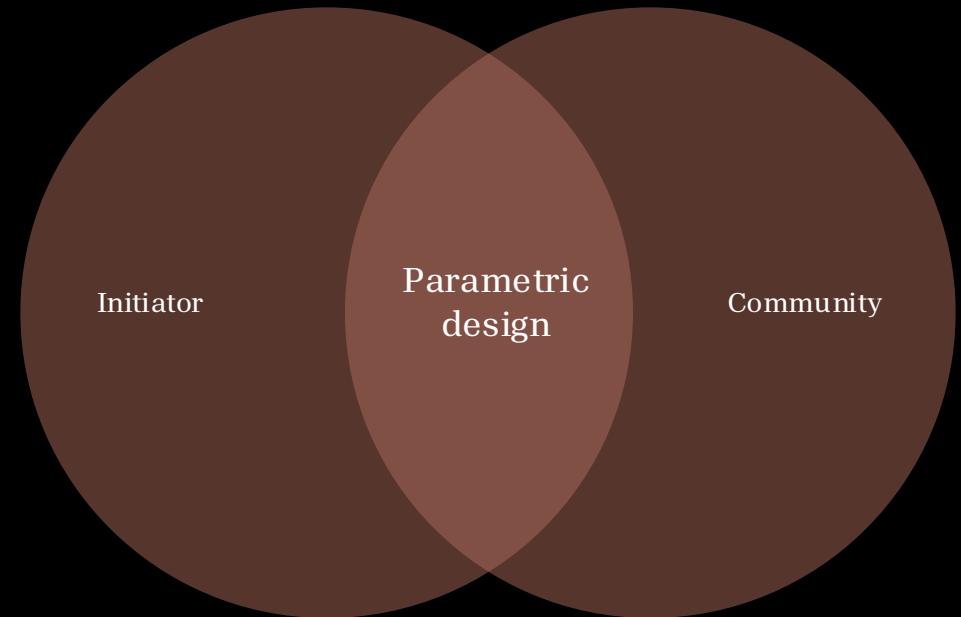
Participatory quality | Parametric design

“It is a relational, experimental journey that everybody is on. And that’s not just between us and the community members.”

A placemaking specialist at Hadley Property Goup, 30th of April 2026.

“The potential for fully integrating participation into the design process, parametric design has that in it. But whether that potential is realised depends enterily on the parties behind it.”

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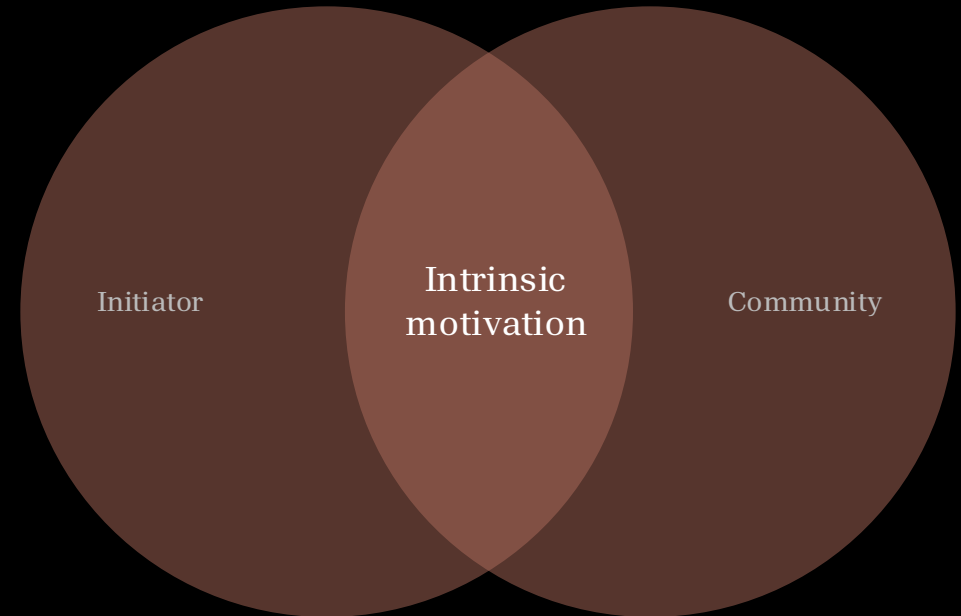
Participatory quality | Intrinsic motivation

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Discussion

Analytical frameworks

IAP2 Spectrum (IAP2, 2018)



Discussion

Analytical frameworks

IAP2 Spectrum (IAP2, 2018)



Arnstein's ladder (Arnstein, 1969)



Discussion

Analytical frameworks

Case study insights

Consultation

Design method

Strategy

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Arnstein's ladder (Arnstein, 1969)



Discussion

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Parametric design

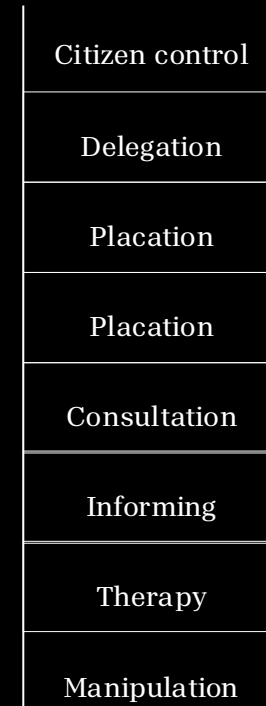
Degree of participation

Different design scale

IAP2 Spectrum (IAP2, 2018)



Arnstein's ladder (Arnstein, 1969)



Conclusion

Under what conditions could parametric design be employed to improve participatory quality?

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Parametric design provides the tools to employ.

Intrinsic motivation serves as the condition to build the relationship required to improve participatory quality.

Closure

Comments and questions