How can a fairBnB project be developed and what does it require on a political, economic, social and technological level?

A.F. Mooi
9580396
P2 Graduation Plan

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**Personal information**

Name: Alexander Frederick Mooi  
Student number: 9580396  
Address: Haarlemmerdijk 23E  
1013 KA Amsterdam  
Telephone number: +31624272443  
E-mail address: A.F.Mooi@student.tudelft.nl  
alexander@ikbenmooi.com

**Studio information**

Project Title: A fairBnB?  
Studio name: Explore Lab 18  
Teachers/mentors:  
- Robert Nottrot (Coordinator)  
- Olv Klijn (Design)  
- John Heintz (Research)  
- Jan van der Voort (Building Technology)  
- Alijd van Doorn (Extra mentor)

Argumentation of choice of the studio  
The fairBnB project requires an mixture of sustainable development, housing typology, urban fabric design, public sphere design, building methodology and finding a unique balance between them all. Such a mixture would be hard to develop within a conventional architecture studio.

Theme: Unsolicited, sustainable mixed-use housing
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Product

Problem Statement
Many popular holiday destinations require more and more tourist sleeping arrangements, while the local population is forced to move away to make room or because of the lack of affordable housing. In affluent Amsterdam for instance, hotel space is increasingly in high demand and constantly being developed, while affordable housing production lags behind or is concentrated along the less desirable periphery.

In the meantime, interaction with the local population is becoming a added attraction for these holiday destinations: social media house exchange groups or staying at someone’s house through initiatives like airBnB, are proving to be a much appreciated way of experiencing a new environment through the eyes of the locals.

City councils are nonetheless not amused. More and more cities fear becoming fair grounds, emptied during the off-season; lacking in services because the actual population supporting them is moving away, letting out its houses to tourists or not being to able afford any housing the desired areas.

A possible solution for this problem could be a mixed dwelling typology consisting of affordable housing combined with B&B accommodation within an existing housing project, allowing the tourist to pay for the development of such affordable housing. The so-called fairB&B housing complex could act as a socially and architecturally sustainable solution, combining the demands of locals and tourists, offering an economically viable alternative through an architect initiated example of unsolicited architecture, hopefully resulting in added value for society as a whole.

To create such a combined programme sustainably, one would first need to investigate whether or not the proposed mixed programme could be feasible, both economically and socially. For this an assessment has to be made on the levels of policy, economics, social issues and technique, a so-called PEST analysis, on what a successful strategy for development of a fairBnB could be. Specifically, if one desires to develop such a programme without relying on slow processes like policy changes or institutional investment, credible arguments should be formulated on how to proceed without having to tackle the before mentioned processes. Subsequently, research can provide a basis for how such a design can be successfully developed within those parameters.
Research questions
Consequently, the main research question to answer is:

*What are the political, economic, social and technological requirements for a fairBnB project to succeed?*

In order to answer this main question, additional research questions have been formulated:

- What are the options for developing a mixed-use housing project like a fairBnB?
- What are successful mixed-use housing and/or architect initiated projects?
- What are the demands for the fairBnB project on a political, economic, social and technological level?
- What are the benefits or drawbacks of the fairBnB project, on a political, economic, social and technological level?

Design assignment
The main assignment is thus to design a fairBnB as an example of unsolicited, sustainable architecture offering a mixture of affordable housing and B&B accommodations within the urban context of Amsterdam. The proposed site is the Haarlemmer Houttuinen area in Amsterdam. Already an area filled with social housing, it has long been considered a failed project; the housing seems to be inadequate and, after with years of neglect, pressures keep mounting to renovate the mini slum and move in more affluent inhabitants. Within the Haarlemmer Houttuinen, the EGM Complex in particular appears to be a failed social housing project, both architecturally and socially. The aim therefore is to reuse and redesign this complex into a fairBnB pilot project thus offering a feasible development solution for such areas and projects.

Goal
The proposal is to offer a better plan, combining the desires of both tourists and locals, thus providing a richer and more varied urban fabric for all to enjoy. The aim is to do so in a sustainable way, in accordance with the TiDO appendix ambitions, resulting in the so-called fairBnb project. The main goal therefore is to design a fairBnB as an example of unsolicited sustainable architecture offering a mixture of affordable housing and B&B accommodation within an existing urban context.

The finalized project would both provide a possible strategy on how to develop such a fairBnB and it would continue to offer a pilot project translated into an actual site and design within the city of Amsterdam. In fact, the project should demonstrate what can be achieved if an architect is allowed to offer and develop a possible solution.
Process

Method description
As a basis for the design both research and study will be in parallel lines of inquiry informing the process of design. Whereas research will focus of the methods of literature, case studies and interviews to answer the stated questions, study on the other hand will focus mostly on analysis of the site and the relevant regulations in an effort to develop the brief and the programme demands. Together they will inform the design on what is achievable and desirable for a successful project.

Research
The research methodology consists of two main elements:

• Literature and Case studies;
  In order to investigate the field of unsolicited architecture and architect initiated projects literature and case study research is required. Based upon their findings successful projects can be analysed for their common and/or determining factors. An analysis of what unsolicited architecture actually entails will provide a framework on how to proceed. Furthermore, from this basis a selection can be made of experts within this field of architect initiated project development.

• Interviews;
  Selected for their experience in initiating projects within the Dutch urban reality the following architects have been, or are to be, interviewed:
  o Hein de Haan, Architectuur Stedenbouw
  o Marc Koehler, Marc Koehler Architects
  o Tom Frantzen, Frantzen et al architecten
  o Marthijn Pool, space&matter
  o Anne-Wil Hop, ZUS [Zones Urbaines Sensibles]

  For clarity and comparison purposes all the architects are interviewed using a similar basis of questions:
  o What are your successfully initiated projects?
  o How did you convince and involve your partners in the project?
  o Did you make a business case?
  o What was your financial basis for the project development?
  o How would describe the role of the architect in this project?
  o When did you move on?
  o What were the main obstacles you encountered?

Study
The study element will mainly focus on the urban and architectural demands of the site and project. This will be done through:

• Historical analysis, including building archive visits
• Site analysis, emphasizing mainly on urban aspects the site demands
• Building analysis, investigating the structural possibilities the EGM Complex offers for a sustainable reuse and development of the structure
• B&B Regulation analysis, through interviews with the main actors in affordable housing and B&B organizations and researching council regulations
Design
As stated before, both investigations will inform the design process in:
- **Brief development**, i.e. the number of dwellings, their size in accordance to regulation and economical demands
- **Programme development**, based on the previous a programme is developed further
- **Structural concept**, given the possibilities of the EGM Complex
- **Dwelling typology**, given the requirements for the B&B function and open-ended design ambitions
- **Stating sustainable and social ambitions**, thus providing a way to measure whether or not the project achieves its main objectives

Literature
To provide a basis for the research and study processes within the project a literature, policy and case study is done using among others the following sources:


Oswalt, Philipp, Overmeyer, Klaus, & Misselwitz, Philipp. (2013). *Urban catalyst the power of temporary use*. Berlin: DOM.


Reflection

Relevance
Being from both Tenerife and Amsterdam, I have always been fascinated by the way tourism can enrich or destroy the urban fabric and society. Given the changing role of the architect in the possible creation of communities and structures, the architectural solution offered can provide a vision on how to use tourism as a force for improvement. The project aims as said to provide an economically viable strategy and pilot project, initiated by an architect, resulting in added value for society as a whole.

Time planning
The schedule on the next page shows the current planning schedule for the project: In bold are the main deadlines; underlined are the mentor sessions and interviews; in plain text are the main occupations for that week; in italic the other relevant activities that week. As is made clear, this schedule is aimed at graduating under the BEP timeframe, yet it takes into account the month delay possibly caused by a different pathway.
## Time planning schedule

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<td>Start Explore Lab</td>
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<td>BT Introduction Case Study research</td>
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<td>Vacation?</td>
<td>Design mentor session Final Draft Analysis</td>
<td>Extra mentor session Draft Case Study</td>
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<td>BT mentor session Final Draft structural concept</td>
<td>P4 Registration BEP* Design Mentor session</td>
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<td>Overrun P5 Fine-tuning design Model Building</td>
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