GRADUATION PLAN

Graduation Studio: Heritage and Architecture
Housing Heritage Amsterdam

Title: Amsterdam Vision 2040 in Merkelbach Buildings

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ARGUMENTATION FOR THE CHOICE OF THE STUDIO

One of the main reasons I chose to pursue my graduation project in Heritage and Architecture Amsterdam Housing is that I have always found working on monuments and other historic buildings extremely interesting. After valuable experience of MSc1 and MSc2 of Heritage and Architecture, I decided to deepen my knowledge and find out more about transformation and restoration of housing, which I have not experience yet. As far as I am concerned this issue constitutes one of the most important nowadays, in times of the housing shortage in the country, especially in Amsterdam. The design project of Landlust is located within an interesting urban context, which is also appealing. Housing blocks on Juliana van Stolbergstraat and Louise de Colignystraat were built in 1937 and constitute the first example of functional architecture in the city.1 I want my future activity to be a response to problems people face in Amsterdam. Moreover, I would like to work on a development of it, because of its high potential and value. I believe that my graduation project would be a good step towards my future career related to heritage and I would benefit from my choice.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Landlust is a residential area, built according to CIAM (Congres Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne) principles.2 After some time, negative effects of those solutions started being visible. One could argue that it is not a part of Amsterdam, due to its different character, architecture and urban layout. Despite the lack of facilities and liveliness it has a huge potential for further developments, because of the close location to the city centre. Amsterdam Vision 2040, the document prepared by the Municipality of Amsterdam, aims to change the character of that area, activate it and structurally connect Bos en Lommer and other districts within the A10 ring better with the centre.3 However, such changes have an impact on architecture and its evolution, which could be a threat, especially for monuments.4 Moreover, the historic valuable urban structure might be lost. For these reasons it would be challenging to make the area more active without any sacrifices. However, I would like to find the best solution how to implement the Amsterdam Plan 2040 into Landlust and that will be my design task. To propose a successful design, which connects city centre and Landlust, first of all, the profound knowledge about urban designs of the city centre and Bos en Lommer is indispensable. Also, to get there, an essential step is to find out how the implementation of Amsterdam Vision 2040 will influence architecture. This constitutes an important aspect, because the building on Juliana van Stolbergstraat, which is the case of the project, is a monument. Therefore, my research question is how would the evolution of the neighbourhood character, due to the implementation of Amsterdam Plan 2040, influence architecture in Landlust. Bos en Lommer has the potential to become an integral part of the city centre of Amsterdam and a place worth visiting attracting a lot of tourists from all over the world.
The goal of this project is to find a way to make Landlust, and Bos en Lommer in general, an integral part of the city centre or its well functioning extension, however of an innovative, different character, which attracts people. The design consists of two parts. The first one is the implementation of the Amsterdam Plan 2040 into Landlust by creating a street with various public facilities in street plinths, like start-ups, cafes, restaurants and bars. The aim of that is attracting people, locals and tourists who look for different and more quiet places than in the centre of Amsterdam, to visit Landlust and get to know its unique history. The second part of my design is creating an open green space in-between housing blocks, which is a more quiet area of a semi-private character. It constitutes an upgrade of the current state of the garden. It will make it more accessible and lively. What is more, all entrances to flats will be situated on the side of the semi-private garden, which helps people intergate with each other. People from two housing blocks will know each other better, which also improves a feeling of safety, that is one of the problems in the area. My project will solve problems of the isolation of people and the complex, the accessibility of housing blocks and the whole area, will improve safety and upgrade the area increasing the number of public facilities by the implementation of the Amsterdam Vision 2040.
- Exploratory research
In order to be familiar with a character and an atmosphere of the neighbourhood, one guided tour was organised. Next to that, after all research and design steps I went to individual visits to make sure that all my ideas for the district are suitable. Moreover, via e-mail and during site visits I got in touch with the neighbours association BoLoBoost, which takes care of the area and organises several activities for residents. The first visits make me create the first impression of Landlust.

- Literature research
The second method used is a literature study, which was selected on the basis of the first impression of the neighbourhood and tutors’ advice. I researched and analysed the urban history of Amsterdam and its extensions over years with a special focus on the General Extension Plan (AUP). Analyses are based on a strong theoretical framework that was gained by doing intensive research to understand the area completely.

- Policy, the Municipality documents and Amsterdam statistics research
The third method was used to find out more about the Amsterdam Vision 2040, the document prepared by the Municipality of Amsterdam, and how I could implement its principles into Landlust. The target groups of my project were based on the statistics and demographics of Amsterdam, which have an influence on sizes and characters of apartments in Merkelbach complex.

- Case studies
In my research I investigated how would the evolution of the neighbourhood character, due to the implementation of Amsterdam Plan 2040, influence architecture in Landlust. The case studies I have chosen (Kreuzberg in Berlin, Kazimierz in Krakow) made me indicate which alterations usually take place after development plans implementations. It will help me conduct the project in the best possible way. Knowing that these evolutions of architecture could take place, I have an opportunity to make them happen in a good way, so they are directed by my design and have a positive effect only on the district.

- Literature studies
In further stage of my work, I analysed theories of Jan Gehl on cities, as well as healthy and safe public spaces, which helped me propose design variants and choose the most promising one for the neighbourhood, which I elaborate on.
The project constitutes the first attempt to translate principles of the Amsterdam Plan 2040 into architecture. I strongly believe that the project could become an example for the Municipality of Amsterdam or other cities facing similar problems as Amsterdam, how to implement development plans extending city centres in areas with monuments or of high historic values, without making any harm to them, but upgrade the districts. What is more, through the design, it can be shown that such development plans do not mean a decrease of green or semi-private spaces within the area, but might improve their qualities. The design will be an example of how to extend the city centre, which is profitable for the city, but at the same time providing comfortable living spaces for current residents and new ones.
GRADUATION PLAN

January 2016
Week 19, 4/01-10/01 - Preparations for the P2 presentation (floorplans, sections and facades)
Week 20, 11/01-17/01 - Preparations for the P2 presentation (presentation, poster)
Week 21, 18/01-24/01 - Finalizing and submitting the Position Paper, P2 repairs
Week 22, 25/01-31/01 - Upgrading and finalizing the master-plan based on a feedback from the P2 presentation

February 2016
Week 23, 1/02-7/02 - Upgrading and finalizing the preliminary design based on a feedback from the P2 presentation
Week 24, 8/02-14/02 - Upgrading and finalizing the preliminary design based on a feedback from the P2 presentation
Week 25, 15/02-21/02 - Works on floorplans and sections (technical drawings)
Week 26, 22/02-28/02 - Works on floorplans and sections (technical drawings)

March 2016
Week 27, 29/02-6/03 - Works on a digital model
Week 28, 7/03-13/03 - Works on a digital model
Week 29, 14/03-20/03 - Works on a digital model - finalization
Week 30, 21/03-27/03 - Easter break, works on facades
Week 31, 28/03-3/04 - Works on facades

April 2016 (P3 presentation)
Week 32, 4/04-10/04 - Upgrading and finalizing the design based on the P3 presentation feedback
Week 33, 11/04-17/04 - Upgrading and adjusting digital drawings and the model according to the P3 presentation feedback
Week 34, 18/04-24/04 - Works on a site plan (urban scale)
Week 35, 25/04-1/05 - Works on an urban scale model

May 2016
Week 36, 2/05-8/05 - Works on a physical model (architectural scale)
Week 37, 9/05-15/05 - Works on a physical model
Week 38, 16/05-22/05 - Works on a physical model - finalization, diagrams, schemes
Week 39, 23/05-29/05 - Final renderings and visuals

June 2016 (P4 presentation)
Week 40, 30/05-5/06 - Final digital drawings (floorplans, sections, maps)
Week 41, 6/06-12/06 - Final digital drawings (renderings, perspectives), poster design
Week 42, 13/06-19/06 - P4 presentation
  - Final upgrading and finalization
  - P5 presentation
GRADUATION PLAN

LITERATURE

Jan Gehl, *Cities for People*, United States of America, 2010


Various authors, *Amsterdam. An architectural lesson*, Amsterdam, 1988


REFERENCES

1 La Cidad Vida, *Las Mujeres del Rey*, online access: http://www.laciudadviva.org/blogs/?p=14485 [21/10/2015]


4 J. Kregiel, Research Report, Research, 2015, 23-37