Living solo in Rotterdam

Improving the living quality of one person households by urban interventions
“We worry about friends and family members who haven’t found the right match, even if they insist that they’re happy on their own”

Eric Klinenberg (2012)
A housing demand arises

The amount of Dutch solo dwellers grows
A housing demand arises

The amount of Dutch solo dwellers grows

Houses and neighbourhoods are not designed for solo dwellers

Low living quality

Design

Result

2015
37%

2060
44%

A housing demand arises
The amount of Dutch solo dwellers grows

A housing demand arises

Houses and neighbourhoods are not designed for solo dwellers
The amount of Dutch solo dwellers grows

A housing demand arises

Houses and neighbourhoods are not designed for solo dwellers

Low living quality
“The amount of one person households is growing in the Netherlands which turns living solo into a popular urban lifestyle. Meanwhile the urban living environment is still focussed on the traditional family. As a result solo dwellers have a lower living quality caused by a lack of suitable housing and their unsatisfied needs for the living environment.”
How can the living quality of one person households in Rotterdam be improved by re-thinking the urban living environment of its neighbourhoods?
Social context  Living quality  Urban context  Design
Methodological Framework
CURRENT DESIGN \rightarrow CURRENT USER ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION \rightarrow PAST CONTEXT

NEW DESIGN \leftarrow NEW USER ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION \leftarrow FUTURE CONTEXT

Design & detailing

Concept

Design qualities

Human environment
relation

Statement

Context factors

Context structure

Social and historic context

Deconstruction

F.I. amenities, housing

Hekkert and van Dijk (2011)
Deconstruction

CURRENT DESIGN → CURRENT USER ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION → PAST CONTEXT

NEW DESIGN ← NEW USER ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION ← FUTURE CONTEXT

Design & detailing

Concept

Design qualities

Human environment relation

Context factors

Context structure

Social and historic context

Deconstruction

F.I. amenities, housing

Hekkert and van Dijk (2011)
Current Design → Current User Environment Interaction → Past Context

New Design ← New User Environment Interaction ← Future Context

Design

Hekkert and van Dijk (2011)
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
A person who lives alone, not sharing his/her house with friends, roommates or children. This person is not primarily without children or single, they might be in a living-apart-together relationship.' 

Solo dweller

Labour force

Eric Klinenberg (2012)
Solo dweller

City oriented. Prefers to live in dynamic environments close to amenities, culture and other centralities, where meeting others is facilitated and a mixture of housing typologies as well as good public transport network can be found.

Solo dweller

Eric Klinenberg (2012)
Living quality

‘The relation between a person or community and the environment as well as their appreciation of this environment’
The appreciation is influenced by the possibilities for social interaction and the presence of an active street life. This can be facilitated in transition zones, a mixture of functions and a permeable urban structure.

Social context

“The way of life, customs and life cycle standards of people living in a country, area or city.”
Urban context

‘The typomorphology of a city or neighbourhood, regarding its urban composition in which public space and the building block are important’

Vernez-Moudon (1994)
Deconstruction phase
CURRENT DESIGN \rightarrow CURRENT USER ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION \rightarrow PAST CONTEXT

NEW DESIGN \leftarrow NEW USER ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION \leftarrow FUTURE CONTEXT
The city of Rotterdam wants to attract families by focusing on child-friendly neighbourhoods.

The city of Rotterdam is against small housing.
Design phase
Rotterdam should be an inclusive city which naturally focusses on the needs of solo dwellers, especially in high density neighbourhoods, which turns solo dwelling into a standard household type.
Katendrecht should be a dense neighbourhood reflecting the needs of solo dwellers, especially of those who are part of the labour force, by focussing on public social places to meet others as well as creating a centralities with a mixture of amenities.
Centrality

Mixture of housing typologies

Social places
Active street life

Observing passers-by

Destinations

Transition zone around the house can max be 2 m

Transition between different types of publicness

Centrality

Social places

Mixture of housing typologies

Active street life
Social places

Active street life

Centrality

Mixture of housing typologies

Destinations

Observing passers-by
Active street life

Observing passers-by

Destinations

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Transition between different types of publicness

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Destinations
Active street life

Observing passers-by

Destinations

Transition zone around the house can max be 2 m

Centrality

Transition between different types of publicness

Mixture of housing typologies
Mixture of amenities

High density

Social places

Centrality

Mixture of housing typologies

Food Shop Bar

Mixture of amenities
Social places

Centrality

Mixture of housing typologies

- Social places
  - Mixture of amenities
  - High density

- Centrality
- Mixture of housing typologies

- Food shop bar
  - Mixture of amenities
  - High density
Social places

Centrality

Mixture of housing typologies
functions in plinth resulting in centrality
How can the living quality of one person households in Rotterdam be improved by re-thinking the urban living environment of its neighbourhoods?