Graduation Plan: Quarantine area, Rotterdam

1. Personal information
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2. Studio
Theme: Heritage & Architecture Graduation Studio: Rotterdam Harbour Heritage
Tutors:
Architecture W. L. E. C. Meijers
Building technology F. W. A. Koopman
Cultural value S. Fischer

Argumentation of choice of the studio:
The studios of Heritage & Architecture are dealing with the existing built environment. I would like to join the debate and the assignment of dealing with our current building stock. Personally I am most interested in the fact that heritage and existing buildings (and the sites) already have a story and are part of a collective memory. Researching and designing in this field is complex, but interesting. I would like to research the past and think about which significance these heritage projects could/should have in future. I would like to work with the tectonics and sincerity which older buildings can have.

3. Graduation project
Title of the graduation project
The quarantine ensemble as an enclave for care.

Location
The former quarantine area is located on the south side of the river Nieuwe Maas, on the Beneden Heijplaat, lying opposite of Schiedam. Situated at the border of Rotterdam the quarantine area feels quite far from the city centre. Although the quarantine area was originally built in 1934 for in quarantine treatment of unknown infectious diseases brought in by ships from sea, it nearly has been used for this function. Up until now it served different uses and now it is in need for development.

The quarantine area consisting of different separated pavilions has developed during time into a green 'oase'. The spaces around the buildings form a sequence of experiences. The quarantine ensemble is
currently still surrounded with industrial/harbour landscape and water. Characterized by its green atmosphere the quarantine area is a little bit an alienated piece of history in a still active industrial surrounding, what it makes function as an enclave.

The quarantine ensemble currently consists of nine buildings. Three buildings of the original situation are demolished.

Problem statement
Urban/context scale:
The area Eemhaven-Heijplaat-Waalhaven, where the quarantine area is part of, will in future presumably gradually redevelop from hard industrial activity to a knowledge area focused on harbour innovation. How does the transformation of the quarantine area, and its value, relate/find a role in this future urban transitions. What will happen with the special enclave feeling when its surrounding context is changing.

The relation or connection with the surrounding context and the boundaries/edges of the ensemble are currently not clear. How does the ensemble relate to the contrasting surrounding? Is the enclave feeling positive and should it be intensified or is a better connection with the surrounding needed?

Ensemble of buildings:
The pavilion setup of the buildings can be complex when thinking about a new function. The buildings are positioned quite far from each other and some of them have relatively few square meters. Although the pavilion structure with its interesting outdoor space can add value to the new function.
Currently the buildings do not meet the technical building regulations, for example energy and thermal insulation.

Research question
Research question analysis:
What was and is the meaning/character of the outdoor space in the quarantine ensemble in relation to the buildings and what can it be in future?

Research questions design:
How can I intervene in the outdoor space and the buildings of the quarantine ensemble to serve a new care function but with respect for the current situation and valuable layers of the past?

How can I create a coherent ensemble by adding a new layer to the existing ensemble, where outdoor space and interior space have a meaningful relation?

Design assignment:
The assignment is to transform the site and buildings to meet the requirements of the function and current regulations, but maintain, respect or use current valuable elements and layers left from the past (landscape and buildings). In order to make a successful transformation the outdoor space should get equal attention as the buildings and interior space. Contextually redefining and reconsidering the edges of the ensemble and relations with the surrounding is needed.

Function:
The proposed new function is a rehabilitation/revitalizing care ensemble. A quiet place close to the city Rotterdam to rehabilitate, with staying, therapy and day care. The idea is to make the outdoor space
contributing to the program. The intervention and the existing must be in balanced relation. The intervention or new buildings should add a new layer to the existing but not remove old valuable layers. Search for potential improvements and the possibilities of addition within the existing structure. A challenge of the design is to divide the function in different separated building volumes. Maybe functional, spatial or architectural connection between the buildings are needed or desirable?

4. Process

Method description
To be able to tell a comprehensive story about the quarantine area and to think about a new future, during the P1 and P2 period an analysis has been done. Different scale levels and subjects has been studied, divided in urban, architectural, cultural historical and building technological analysis. Conclusions are drawn and a value assessment has been made, from which starting points are formed for the design. The p3 and p4 period will consist of designing a transformation based on findings of the analysis. Further research can be done if necessary, for example in order to obtain information about the function.

During designing I want to use a phenomenological approach, focusing on the way architecture and buildings are perceived and experienced, a sequence of experiences. The phenomenological approach fits the character of the quarantine area, a sequence of different outdoor spaces and architecture/interior spaces. Movement and experience are strong related with the character of the quarantine area.

Tools I want to use during designing are maquettes, sketches, perspectives and 2d drawings, literature and studying and visiting references (transformations projects or related to function). Designing in different scale levels will show the impact of the intervention.

literature and general practical preference
Literature:
Subjects for literature: rehabilitation care, light, edges, relation inside-outside

Precedents:
Rehabilitation centre Klimmendaal, Arnhem, architect: Koen van Velzen

Interview/tutoring:
- Gerdy Verschuure (subject: researching and redevelopment of heritage sites)

5. Reflection

Relevance
Reuse of cultural heritage is a main topic in the current architectural debate. The main focus of the discussion is on built heritage, but buildings are inextricably connected with valuable outdoor spaces/landscapes. The landscape contains qualities that can serve the identity. Although the outside space surrounding these heritage objects is sometimes underexposed compared to the attention for the architecture. The assignment of the quarantine ensemble is both about buildings and the sites.

Rehabilitation and health care is an actual topic, a sector in transition. Also the importance of nature and green (inside and outside) gets more attention in the research.

Time planning
See next pages