Thesis Project Proposal Plan

Student: Hsoc Mathai George
Thesis examiner: Daniel Rosbottom
The project seeks to identify seven key moments in the Irelands Housing- past, present future. This is narrated through the story of an Irish family and is examined through the drawing of a family tree. Though the tale of this family, various issues are discussing ranging from household events like – birth, inheritance, marital unhappiness etc; as well as larger issues like economic crisis, reducing family size, ethnic diversity etc. Seven generations are identified, and variations in generation gaps are explicated. Each generation has a unique trajectory, while some get richer and richer others fall into crisis. Trajectories overlap between one generation and the next. Simultaneously, seven key house types are identified to discuss significant changes of housing in each generation. These houses set the stage for the seven key moments. From father, to son, to grandson and so forth....

The first four generations, house types, moments are historical; from the late 19th Century till today. The protagonists are born in years 1840, 1880, 1910 and 1940. The first house type is the Irish Agrarian House, to discuss poverty in Rural Ireland. The second is the Anglo-Irish Big house to discuss the severe inequality introduced the plantations. Third, the Semi-detached suburban House arrives with the idea of the healthy suburbs. Fourth, the detached bungalow is selected to discuss the Bungalow Blitz during the Celtic Tiger years. These four moments establish the evolution and shaping of housing today in Ireland.

The current housing crisis, the aging white-Irish population, and the expected 1million new inhabitants establish the conditions for the next three moments which are projected in the future. Here three anticipated types are designed and corresponding issues are discussed. First, the fully-furnished rented house is a common type of rental housing. Short-term leases spanning 11 months, necessitate a nomadic movement from one house to another, thus the provision of a house with furnishing and appliances, generic and pre-decided. These conditions of generic domesticity for the nomadic life are examined in the 5th moment. The design will address the furnishing of one rental property, addressing the scale of the interior.

The 6th moment examines the rise of an aging population. 65% of the population by 2040 will be above 85 years of age. At the same time, 183,000 homes (excluding holiday homes) lie vacant due to a lack of refurbishment; many are 3- to 4-bedroom semi-detached houses. What if these houses were refurbished under a government scheme, allowing for leases specifically for this age bracket until "death does part" the tenant and the house. Could this be a new form of social housing? The twin unit (ground +1) is subdivided into 4 sub-parts, a compact and retrofitted unit with everything within arm’s reach, anti-skid, garb bars, convenient toilets, cutouts for a double height lounge etc. will be introduced to produce a convenient, spacious and affordable option for the Irish aging. The design focuses on the scale of a single unit.
Finally, the 7th moment examines the multi-storied apartment block. The historical study reveals an Irish preference for the "ground". Houses have a linear relationship with the street, and settlements lack clustering and social spaces. The fundamental transformation in the demographic (ethnic and age) composition calls for the design of spaces to facilitate social interaction. Simultaneously the greenbelt as an urban design action immediately alludes to a future of multi-storied (higher density) residences. The design here is a multi-storied resident at the edge of the green belt. Here the design will focus on the scale of the unit, the access system, the "lobby" and the morphological relationship to shorter house types around. The new building will be located on an empty plot and will provide houses for the council assigned 130 new families, establishing a relationship to the existing village.

Relevance to architecture
This project examines housing in Ireland by developing a comparative structure based on the family tree and overlapping household trajectories. It will consider the forces and events that cause individuals and families to move from one household to the next, between the city and the country, between one country and another, and considers how these events feed back into the design and provision of housing (at a regional and a national level). Projective designs—for houses, furnishings, neighborhoods—will be layered within this framework and subject to the same analyses and presentation techniques as their historical precedents. Placed alongside one another, the method of the project seeks to collapse, or at least interrogate, traditional divisions within the production and representation of architecture: technical and narrative; as-built and as-used; historical and contemporary; global and local; etc.

Relevance to the site
The Irish countryside consists of a dispersal of large towns (ie. Letterkenny, Donegal etc) and numerous small villages. The non-agrarian villages have an average population ranging between 200-400 inhabitants. These villages have a mix of various house types built at different moments. The overall settlement lacks structure and definition; the primary governing logic is the presence of vehicular access extending the size indefinitely. The County of Donegal has issued 37- mini plans to address its “rural” (categorized by size) population. A common feature is the introduction of a green belt- limiting growth, encouraging densification and enclosing the settlement from other uses such as industries and manufacturing that may emerge. Carney a village of 395 contains all these key ingredients and will be addressed both as a specific as well as a symptomatic case to address changing housing needs through the calibration of existing rental systems (moment 5), the restructuring of exiting types (moment 6) and the construction of new types (moment 7).

With the National Planning Framework 2040 and the Atlantic Corridor projects villages like Carney will encounter major transformation – formally, in terms of market value as well as demographically. Therefore, addressing the non-central settlements are pertinent.

Bibliography of literature, precedents, and references

Theory

History
Mc Manus, Ruth. “Suburban and urban housing in the twentieth century,” Geography Department, St Patrick’s College, Drumcondra Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy: Archaeology, Culture, History, Literature Vol 111C (April 2011)

Guideline Documents
Development Planning Unit, Sligo County Council, Ireland. “SLIGO County Development Plan 2017-2023 VOLUME 1, Consolidated Draft + Adopted Amendments” Sligo County Council, 2017

Housing Standards

Demographic data

Artworks

Film References
Boyhood, directed by Linklater Richard, (United States, Universal Pictures, 2014), Film.

Other Literature
Chapman, Dennis. The Home and Social Status. International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction.

Lectures

Structure, method, and deliverables
The project is constructed on the interrelations between the history of a Irish family and the history of their housing. Seven generations, seven ages of a man–childhood, adolescence, young adult, newly-married, middle aged, young-old, old-old. This narrative is used to superimpose key historical events as well as transformation in family structure and lifestyle. The project is primarily explored through ‘layered illustrations’. Artist Richard McGuire’s illustration is appropriated and extended with project-specific logics and in other formats – contract documents, construction details, plans etc. Through this drawing technique the project speculates on the recursive and transforming issues of housing in Ireland.

Drawings will be compiled as a narrative in the format of a Family Journal. A selection of which will be presented on the wall. The Journal will then be translated to a video, as a flip-through view with narrative reading. The narrative will be used to explain scenarios and various eventualities.

Miniature models of all seven moments – typological model - 1: 500.

Drawings:

1) Family tree drawing A2
2) Family movement drawing: Key plans of the following locations Donegal, Sligo, Dublin, Ireland, World Map, A2
3) Genealogy of the House A1
4) Location Plan Carney, Sligo A1 (1:1000)
5) Moment 1- Irish Agrarian House, Plan (1:200)
6) Moment 2 – The Big House, Interior view Living Room, A1 (NTS)
7) Moment 3 – The Suburban Semi-detached house, Detail of wall at fireplace cornice A1 (NTS)
8) Moment 4 – The Detached Bungalow, Areal view A1 (NTS)
9) Moment 5 – The fully-furnished rented house – Furniture Plan 1:75, Comparative
10) Moment 6 – The multi-storied apartment Block – View from Window
12) Moment 6 – The multi-storied apartment Block – Section through entrance lobby – A1 1: 50
13) Moment 7 – The Elderly-friendly House – Unit Plan A2 1:50
14) Moment 7 – The Elderly-friendly House – Site plan discussing changing nature of mobility with ageing A3 1:500
16) Cross moment comparative – possessions – Detail of Wardrobe A3 (1:50)
17) Cross moment comparative – neighbourhood space - Detail – Ground Section - A3 (1:20)
19) Cross moment comparative – Detail – Newspaper advertisement A4 (NTS)
20) Cross moment comparative – Detail – Building name board A4 (NTS)
Preliminary schedule and time planning
The design process relies on illustrative drawings both as means as well as an end in itself. The study is articulated into seven discreet moments – four historic and three projective. These moments are re-drawn, constructed and designed. Comparisons are set up across moments to discuss specific outcomes. These even moments will be presented in a journal (containing part drawings, scaled down) as well as an abridged video (10 mins) presenting the project through a narrative making explicit key learnings. Miniature typological models (1:500) will present key design interventions made during the design.

WK 30-34
Finalization of family history defining - important family events, key movements itinerary, financial trajectory and demographic transformation. Draft of Family tree and genealogy diagram.

WK 35
Monday, August 27–Friday, August 30: Compulsory kick-off workshop

WK 36
Monday, September 3–Friday, September 7: Workshop 1 with Olaf Gipser

WK 37
Monday, September 10: Presentation of collective work
Thursday, September 13 and Friday, September 14: Workshop 2 with Ido Avissar

WK 38
Monday, September 17: Submission of proposal for collective publication
Thursday, September 20 and Friday, September 21: Workshop 3 with Olaf Gipser
Sketch of Moments 5-7 (key drawings) Furniture Plan 1:75, Floor plan – comparative usage across several stages of occupation. The Elderly-friendly House – Unit Plan A2 1:50

WK 39
Monday, September 24–Monday, October 1: Excursion to the Poland [Exact dates TBC based on travel]

WK 40
Thursday, October 4 and Friday, October 5: Workshop 4 with Ido Avissar
Sketch of Cross -moment comparison. Study of the childhood bedroom. Plan view of Bed and surroundings A3 (1:20), Detail of Wardrobe A3 (1:50), Ground Section - A3 (1:20), Contract Document A4 (NTS), Newspaper advertisement A4 (NTS), Building name board A4 (NTS)

WK 41
Monday, October 8: Presentation of draft collective film for midterm presentation
Thursday, October 11 and Friday, October 12: Workshop 4 with Olaf Gipser
Friday, October 12: Submission of select midterm materials to thesis examiner and transcription of new conversation with expert
Re work Film Script and Film. Draft version of all drawings and sketch models 1:500.

WK 42
Monday, October 15: Presentation of draft proposal for thesis exhibition and event
Wednesday, October 17: Submission of final draft text for publication
Rework collective text for final draft.
Re-worked draft of drawings and models.

WK 43
Monday, October 22: Pencils down, submission of collective work
Wednesday, October 24: Pencils down, submission of individual work
Thursday, October 25 and Friday, October 26: Compulsory midterm presentations
Wednesday, October 24 and Thursday, October 25: Workshop 5 with Thomas Weaver
Final draft of collective text and film for midterm.

WK 44
Thursday, November 1 and Friday, November 2: Workshop 6 with Olaf Gipser
Preparation of 3d printed typological models 1:500. Drawings - All 7 Moments (Drawings listed in deliverables, at various scales)

WK 45
Monday, November 5: Submission of final draft images for publication
Drawings - All 7 Moments (Drawings listed in deliverables, at various scales), Sketch of Family Journal with resized drawings.

WK 46
Thursday, November 15 and Friday, November 16: Workshop 7 with Ido Avissar
Drawings - All 7 Moments (Drawings listed in deliverables, at various scales) Draft of Family Journal with resized drawings.
WK 47
Thursday, November 22 and Friday, November 23: Workshop 8 with Olaf Gipser
Drawings - All 7 Moments (Drawings listed in deliverables, at various scales) Draft of Family Journal with resized drawings.

WK 48
Monday, November 26: Pencils down, submission of collective work
November 28: Pencils down, submission of individual work
Thursday, November 30 and Friday, November 30: Workshop with Thomas Weaver; and dress rehearsal (including collective material, individual projects, draft publication, draft design for exhibition, and draft outline of final public event and presentations)
Friday, November 30: Submission of final project dossier to examiner
Drawings - All 7 Moments (Drawings listed in deliverables, at various scales) Family Journal with resized drawings.

WK 49
Monday, December 3: Pencils down, submission of all collective work
Wednesday, December 5: Pencils down, submission of all individual work
Thursday, December 6 and Friday, December 7: E2 (go/no go presentation)

Collective Film, Drawings - All 7 Moments (Drawings listed in deliverables, at various scales) Draft of Family Journal with resized drawings. Typological models 1:500

WK 50
Monday, December 10: Submission of all final collective and text for publication
Tuesday, December 11: Submission of final exhibition design
Wednesday, December 12: Submission of draft portfolio
Friday, December 14: Submission of draft final film and short. Book sent to graphic designer.

WK 51
Monday, December 18: Submission of all final individual drawings and text for publication
Wednesday, December 20: Submission of draft draaiboek for final event
Thursday, December 21 and Friday, December 22: E2 Retakes

WK 2
Monday, January 7: Dress rehearsal for E3 and submission of final portfolio
Friday, January 11: Dress rehearsal for public final event and presentations

WK 3
Wednesday, January 16: Send all individual panels to print
Friday, January 18: Send all collective panels and banners to print. Second dress rehearsal for public final event and presentations

WK 4
Monday, January 21: Submission of all final models for exhibition
Tuesday, January 22 and Wednesday, January 23: Exhibition build-up
Thursday, January 24: Exhibition installation
Friday, January 25: Submission of all required final materials to the TU Delft Repository.

WK 5
Monday, January 28: Dress rehearsal for public final event and presentations
Tuesday, January 29: Second dress rehearsal for E3
Wednesday, January 30: Final preparations for public final event and presentations
Thursday, January 31: Public final event and presentations
Friday, February 1: E3 with thesis examiner and graduation ceremony