THE EVOLUTION OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

&

THE VAN GENDTHALLEN

Graduation research and design report

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Studio
Heritage & Architecture
redesign of the Van Gendthallen
Delft University of Technology
February 2015 – January 2016

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Introduction

This document is a product for the Heritage & Architecture graduation studio from the faculty of Architecture at Delft university of Technology. This studio concerns the issue of transformation with the aim to let buildings adapt to future developments of the city (Zijlstra 2015).

The Heritage & Architecture studio started in February 2015 and concerns the redevelopment of the van Gendthallen, a former industrial complex at the edge Amsterdam’s city center.

In the first semester the studio made an in-depth analysis of the van Gendthallen and its context, which provided information about the historical, cultural, and technical information of the Van Gendthallen.

Simultaneously we started a research that would form the theoretical framework/ background for the (re)design assignment. This report contains the research and starting points deriving from the theory, and will later be complemented with the design.

The first part of this document contains a theoretical framework about public domain and public life of Amsterdam. The second part intermediates between the theoretical framework from the first part and the actual redesign as described in the third part. It contains an analysis of the design location, brings forward design goals, and sums up the starting points deriving from the theories on public space. These starting points will be a set of rules which will guide the design process. The final section shows the proposed urban plan of the Island and the redesign of the van Gendthallen.
Chapter 1: Introducing the Research Topic

This chapter introduces the topic of public space and raises a problem statement concerning public space and the van Gendthallen. This will be followed by a research question accompanied by secondary research questions. The final section will present the strategy how I’ll approach the research and design assignment.

1.1 Introduction

On a hot Sunday afternoon, somewhere in July last year, a friend and I were sitting in the grass of the Vondelpark in Amsterdam. The park was crowded with people walking their dogs, barbecuing, running, or just sitting down. There was an empty bench under a tree that took our attention. After a while we noticed that nobody sat down on that particular bench, while the rest of the park seemed overly crowded with people looking for seating area. The bench wasn’t damaged, filthy, or next to a trash-can covered in flies. This was one of many situations that made me want to understand what the influential features of successful public places are. Later on we noticed how this bench was the only one situated with its back facing the walkway. When walking by people are able to have a detailed look at the person sitting down, while this user, sitting on the bench, can only see a rather uninteresting part of the park.

Another situation took place a few months ago when I found myself with my mother and aunt in a small and crowded lunchroom in Amsterdam. There was only room for us at a bar table in the center of the place. After settling down I noticed how my mother and aunt were regularly looking around and behind themselves. They appeared not exactly comfortable. Could it also be because of the arrangement of the seating places? It was the busiest place in the area. It might have been the result of different social behaviors, although the composition of all users was very diverse: locals, teenagers, families, tourists, and elderly people. Our spot would have otherwise being used by any random group. What characteristics of this place or situation made some of its users feel awkward and others not. Was role do the atmosphere, the architecture, the physical arrangement, the cultural backgrounds of people, play in these public places?

1.2 Research Topic and Goals

This literature review explores the characteristics of the public domain. What is the essence of public domain and how is this developing? Design location is integrated into the assignment by researching how the van Gendthallen can be made part of the public domain of Amsterdam.

The combined research question is as followed:

“How can the van Gendthallen give answer to the evolving nature of the public domain of Amsterdam?”

At the end of the graduation studio this question will have a theoretical answer and a physical answer in the form of a design proposal for the redevelopment of the van Gendthallen. In order to make this rather broad topic more manageable I have unraveled the research question in the following sub-questions:

- What are definitions of public places, the public domain and the public realm?
- What is successful public place?
- What lies at the root of successful public places?
- What urban design tools or strategies play a role at the development of public space?
- What socio-economic aspects play a role in the success of public places?
- Are tools and strategies regarding the development of public space universal or site specific?
- How is the public realm developing?
- What is the character of the public domain in Amsterdam?
- What is the nature of the van Gendthallen?
- How can the van Gendthallen contribute to the public domain of Amsterdam?

With the research and design assignment I want to achieve the following goals:

- mapping the factors that contribute to successful public domain. This can be design tools and design strategies for the development of public places.
- investigate trends and expected future developments of the public domain.
- grasp the cultural and morphological identity of the van Gendthallen.
- combine the knowledge of the points mentioned above into a design proposal for the van Gendthallen.

1.3 Relevancy and problem statement

The van Gendthallen and her surroundings are situated in the heart of Amsterdam. Because of its scale, industrial character, and its current partially unused state the halls are not decently integrated in the urban development. Furthermore, the inner city of Amsterdam is changing. The postmodern city is used differently by its citizens than the old inner city was designed for. A relevant question is where and in what shape the public domain will be situated in the future city of Amsterdam. Seeing the location of the van Gendthallen they will, sooner or later, be getting involved in future redevelopments. How can the van Gendthallen be integrated and contribute to the shifting public domain of Amsterdam?

1.4 Strategy

The approach of the graduation project is to combine the theoretical research, the analysis of the design location and its context, and my own vision on the redevelopment of Heritage. When it comes down to designing, I, like most designers, adopted my own method and way of structuring during the previous design semesters. One of the most helpful tools I’ve been thought to guide and structure a design process is the use of starting points. After a vision on the approach of the assignment has formed I often draw the ‘story’ of the development of the design into schemes, pinpointing the major steps. After this conceptual part, the actual design or intervention is written or sketched out into starting points per-element. These starting points, or rules, are only useful when the opposite also contains a workable statement. (For example: the design of the library must offer decent access to its users”. The opposite of this would be a very unlikely starting point for a public building.) For this graduation assignment I will define several sets of rules deriving from the theory, the input of the location, and my vision on the redevelopment. If not already directly usable as such, these starting points will be further elaborated into design tools.
Chapter 2: the public domain

This chapter contains the literate review and aims to describe and explain the essence of successful public places. The first paragraph explains the approach and perspective on the topic. In paragraph 2.2 I’ll then try to make a definition of public space and related terms and elaborate on the use of public space. This will be followed by an exposition of relevant influences and patterns for the development of public space in paragraph 2.3. This contains design interventions, planning strategies, but also more abstract notions of the public domain. These elements all have their share in the discussion whether certain public spaces are being actively used or considered ‘good’ or ‘successful’. Is it possible to appoint one or several factors being responsible to successful public spaces? Or does it depend on specific local circumstances?

2.1 Approaching public space

In order to relate the approach of this exploration on public space, I’ll first put down a theoretical framework of perspectives on the discourse of public space.

In Total Landscape Mirosad Mitarosinovic argues that the discourse on public space can be classified into three categories: the aesthetic approach, the technocratic approach, and the naïve approach (Mitarosinovic 2006). Admittedly these terms all sound rather lousy but they do clarify the broad discourse on this topic. Played down, the first primarily operates from the viewpoint of the user and sociological aspects. In Mitarosinovic’s words: “…public space is an urban artifice designed to simultaneously satisfy cultural, social and particularly political concerns and it often idealizes the processes of its social production while it emphasizes the theatrical character of public space” (Mitarosinovic 2006), the aesthetic perspective approaches public space on a comprehensive way without being blinded by varying political motives.

Where the aesthetic views public space from below, the technocratic perspective approaches public space from the political “top” and stresses its instrumental power. The naïve approach offers a romanticized view on the social behavioral patterns by using anecdotes of specific social groups. While this method often helps to clarify a particular aspect or situation, it often appears biased and lacks objectivity.

Since this research is primarily meant to use as input for a practical design assignment, the aesthetic perspective best approaches my goals of the design assignment a user’s perspective on public space. Ideally the perspective on public space should be integral but, for example, to incorporate local politics would make the research too extensive for the available timespan. A division into three perspectives is, on the other hand, rather superficial and, as to be seen in the next two paragraphs, is not always suitable.

2.2 What is public space?

There are many terms regarding the same concept: public space, public place, public realm, public domain, the public, and more. They all overlap each other and there are no official definitions. For this reason I will try to define my own definitions of public space, public places, and the public domain. The most basic explanation of public spaces says that all space which is not privately owned is public space. An elaborating statement made by de Boer (Boer and Kockelkoren 2012) says that public domain is not privately owned and thus covered by the rules of the law and the government is in control. This however solely concerns ownership of land and doesn’t say much about the actual use of space. A lot of places controlled by the (local) governments, like highways and gas stations are not conceived as public space since they are places of low interest, sometimes called leftover space.

The actually used public space like squares, parks, café’s or train stations are examples of spaces people refer to when talking about public space. As Maarten Haje writes in op zoek naar nieuw publiek domein, the public domain can be seen as a network of combined private and public urban places (Haje and Reijndorp 2001). Within this network of the public it is less relevant whether places are public or privately owned. In addition Nancy Fraser (Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht 2009) states “The public/private distinction seems decreasingly accurate because public and private actions intertwine and spaces mean different things for different people.” When talking about the public domain or public realm I refer to the actually used public places. These places can be either public or privately owned, which is also less relevant for the users of those places.

Matthijs de Boer has dedicated a research to public places. He uses the term public interiors and refers to all relevant and vibrant public places of urban cities (Boer and Kockelkoren 2012), which is in line with the relevant used public spaces I mentioned above. The Physical characteristics of these so called public interiors can concern any type of enclosure or spatial zoning of a place, whether this is defined by walls, by roofs, lines on a surface or other types of border. With interior de Boer aims for the notion of an enclosed space and not a place per se inside any building. The term contains some ambiguity, since an interior
refers to private characteristics, but at the same time lies in the public network. A public interior can be embedded in a bigger public entity, but can also lie in private space with only an access via the public.

What makes public places interesting and typical is the presence of an un-imposed informal way of use. These conventions can be part of social common sense, or implied as rules by the operators of the place. The danger of the latter is that they may affect the informal use of a place. When a sign in a park says “don’t walk the grass” it encounters our desired idea of how to use the park. The social implications of a place can differ for every citizen. Whether a place is conceived as interesting or pleasant depends on the meaning and value of a place. There are differences between public place in the open and public interiors. This often concerns privacy and intimacy which comes along with different type of behavior and also need specific design focus/attention. According to de Boer the use of the public domain cannot be planned or steered as such. However, we can give shape to the conditional terms of this public life (Boer and Kockelkoren 2012). This forms the crux of the upcoming paragraph, in where I’ll try to determine the patterns, characteristics, and predominant conditions of successful public places.

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 1: public space, private space (Spencer and Dixon) actually used public places (purple) and public interiors (right purple area)*

### 2.3 Aspects and patterns of public spaces

“Successful cities are in part shaped by the relationship of built form to space, and the range, variety and characteristics of the spaces made available: outdoor rooms, civic spaces, promenading routes, high-streets, quiet gardens, little corners to rest awhile, favorite meeting places. This is not simply a question of quantity or setting space standard, but a rather more complex understanding of the attributes of spaces, their delineations, psychology and symbolism” (Montgomery 1998).

The following section will show a listing of characteristics aspects and patterns of public domain as I found them in various contemporary literature. The listing starts with rather theoretical and abstract aspects. As the lists progresses the issues become more practical and can be perceived as design tools. It is important though to understand that there is no crystallized recipe to design and develop successful public places. The following findings should be conceived as a set of tools relevant for the understanding and developing of public places.
People

"What attracts people most, it would appear, is other people" (Whyte 1980).

The most relevant precondition of great public places is the presence of people. Without people a place is not interesting. Nothing happens, nothing to see, nothing to laugh, discuss, think, or disapprove upon. Humans are the key ingredient of the public-domain. Most topics related to public life regard the conditioning or influencing of human behavior. Analyzing a public place from a user’s perspective gives the most valuable understanding. The situation with the empty bench in the Vondelpark (see chapter 1.1) became clear when analyzing the people and looking at the situation from a user’s perspective.

Public places are a theatre where human are the performers and at the same time the spectators. To see and be seen is one of the key features of going into town. The library of the university this text was written is a good example. The primary functions appear obvious, but the amount of people dressing up pretty much exceeds this function of ‘just reading and studying’. The change of getting noticed by unknown others is way higher than in the students’ ‘own’ faculties. All these unknown others play an important role in how people behave in public areas.

People reflect upon themselves by relating to others. These ‘others’ offer a perspective with their particular and different behavior. Furthermore, public places often have a dominant group determining the general behavior of the place (Boer and Kockelkoren 2012), and the changes that you are not part of that group lies above average. However, most of the people are often familiar with the behavior of the dominant group, which makes for a comfortable co-existence.

The strength of public space is hidden in the power of enabling contact between people. This is often not to be found in the form of a direct conversation between strangers. Contact between people can be expressed in many different ways. Based on this, Montgomery describes an even more interesting and, again, ambiguous feature of successful public places. He explains how public places host the possibilities to let people connect and interact with each other, while in those same places people can remain unnoticed if desired (Montgomery 1998). This also relates with the theory of the dominant group and the coexisting others as explained above.
The same way that people are a precondition for vibrant urban public life, a diverse program is a precondition for these people. Without a primary reason to come near a place most open places like squares and parks would be far emptier. A diverse program surrounding a public place will almost automatically result in the presence of diverse people. Less successful places often appear to be single focused (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). Hajer stresses the need for mixed function for a lively public domain. ‘Non-places’ like airports or motorway restaurants, are often overly programmed and designed with a focus on crowd-handling. These ‘zero-friction’ places actually work quite well for their intended goal but show a low dynamic public vibe. Less obvious examples are shopping malls. Their mono-functional approach is almost doomed to fail as successful public space.

As stated earlier, the primary reason often hosts evenly important secondary activities. This can also be achieved by composing a certain program. On a more smaller scale, many fixed elements intended for a purpose can easily serve another (Whyte 1980). William Whyte showed in a study how any object ranging between 20cm and 1.2 meters can become a place for sitting. Additionally, a certain amount of physical disorder can encourage new and inventive uses, not only because it indicates lower surveillance and lack of regulation but also because it provides spaces that expand the potential scope of actions (Franck and Stevens 2013). This argues to not fully plan all available square meters of a place. However, leaving parts intentionally open for unplanned use still comes down to planning the unforeseen. Instead, besides a clear primary use, there should be room for interpretation.

De Boer labels public interiors as second public space, where streets and squares are the first public spaces. The former can only be a success when the latter is of decent quality (Boer and Kockelkoren 2012). Following, he claims that these interiors will only work as a successful completion to the first public spaces when the offer in facilities is bigger than first public spaces can handle.

In practice it is also relevant to be aware of current market forces and strategies which actually develop the public functions in the city. For instance, top-down and bottom-up strategies are crucial to the degree of interest put into places by the landowners and thus the potential success of a public space. However for the scope of this research this is neglected.

The compositions of a balanced program of requirements will be further elaborated in chapter 5.
Combining landscapes

One of the most broad goals or definition of the essence of public space describes how it is capable of merging and joining groups with different social and cultural backgrounds. “The public domain is the sphere of social relations going beyond our own circle of friendships and family or professional relations. The idea of the public realm is bound up with the ideas of expanding one’s mental horizons, of experiment, adventure, discovery, surprise” (Bianchini and Schwengel 1991). In a similar way Hajer explains that the public domain is a surrounding in which we are confronted with new behaviors and ideas. We have to relate to those new ideas. Before the physical capabilities of a place are able to merge groups it is relevant to organize an interesting program surrounding the public place, as explained in the previous section.

The urban realm is getting more segregated. Users interact less with other groups. Successful public places create opportunities for interaction between groups. With interventions concerning public space designers and planners can trigger shifts in the cultural geography of places. Maarten Hajer states that a dynamic cultural geography can provoke informal events (Hajer and Rejindorp 2001). An acceptable and minor form of clashes can occur and create the desired interesting public environment.

Jack Burgers groups our post-modern urban life into so-called landscapes. A shopping street in an upper class area can be part of the exhibited landscape, and the marginalized landscape contains groups who are viewed as subordinate as for instance homeless or ethnic minorities. He explains that all these landscapes obviously have the least mutually reverence (Burgers 1999). He, as well as Hajer, (Mitrasinovic 2006) and (Banerjee 2001), argue that public space has to steer upon creating common ground between these landscapes. Instead of leveling between their differences, it is more fruitful to seek for similarities and develop those into the public realm. This may result in user groups finding themselves surrounded by others without the otherwise expected friction. Hajer states that the neutral public spaces limit the actual creation of the public realm. He pleads upon the combination of, at least slightly, related perspectives instead of a totally combined use.

The experience of urban life is often defined by the presence of a dominant group. This other group determines the rules and behavior of that specific public realm, but doesn’t exclude other groups. When places are implicitly planned for certain groups, other groups are because of social expectations (Wu and Plantinga) intentionally being excluded. Montgomery and Mitrasinovic illustrate how this leads to the explicit denial of other groups. More than once groups related with problematic social issues are excluded with the idea of creating a safer, protected or pleasant environment. This creates an artificial environment which neglects the accurate and relevant issues of friction within every society.
When trying to bring users together it is relevant to look for shared interest. In order to achieve this, a place should be able to be interesting for different groups at the same time. This does not have to be found in one shared issue. A fitting combination of topics is often more natural. The different groups should be able to find an interest in the place and therefore partially ‘claim’ it their place. (This differs from the previous strategy, where the overlap between landscapes still leaves room for an own space for a specific landscape).

In order to achieve a certain degree of recognition with the users a specific language of the place is needed. In that way users can attribute symbolic significance to the place (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). However, when the language or atmosphere is too explicit it can easily repel people. It is quite a challenge to, on the one hand, make a place interesting for users, while at the other hand, making it neutral enough so that it won’t repel others; a rather ambiguous but interesting duality within the design of the public realm. This ambiguity of public places is also explained by Montgomery. He states that public places host the possibilities to let people connect and interact with each other, and in that same place people can remain unnoticed if desired.

“Whilst the public realm is a precondition for public social life, it also provides the opportunity for people to perform private as well as public roles. This certainly means that public space is multi-functional, and also, by implication, that there are many different types of space and purposes to which it can be put.” (Montgomery 1998).

A relevant topic for the creation of interest in the public realm is the discrepancy between space (ruimte) and place (plaats). Where the concept of space is often a more clearly defined area, the idea of place also contains values related to history and stories relevant to its users. Places can have additional cultural values which can add to the personal values of users. This can be used when trying to look for shared interest.

Christopher Spencer reassigns similar attributes to spaces and places by using the terms identity and image.

“Whilst ‘identity’ is an objective thing (what a place is actually like), image is a combination of this identity with how a place is perceived. To individuals, the image of a place is therefore their set of feelings and impressions about that place” (Spencer and Dixon 1983).

A relevant difference is that these two notions of a place coexist as part of one place. Parallel with Hajer and Spencer, Montgomery explains how the image of a place is created by perceptions based on individual values and ideas, combined with groups and cultural conception. Besides the tangible physical world, this perception is largely influenced by the informal and emotional factors such as the openness, friendliness, causality, influencing the perceived atmosphere (Montgomery 1998).

When designing a place the creation of an image can be a goal on its own, in order to let users relate to that place. This is, of course, a rather subjective precondition in the appreciation of an architectural design.

When concerning city design and public realm Montgomery argues that architecture by means of individual design and appearance of buildings is less essential than “designing the form of the city in such a way as to achieve city diversity, activity and urbanity”. This predominantly goes for the development and planning of city blocks. For the design brief of the van Gendthallen I would like to allocate more relevance to architectural style, since it has the ability to create meaning, identity, and image. Furthermore, the aspect of the human scale influence the way humans relate to a place. As Montgomery explains that scale is relative to building height or street width, but also defined by permeability or the degree of intimacy of a place. When dealing with redevelopment of heritage all these factors can be steered with interventions (Montgomery 1998).
Network of places

In ‘Architectural composition’ Rob Krier stresses the importance of public places being part of their surrounding networks. He explains how the urban space is often being ignored in city planning: “Our new cities are a conglomeration of freestanding buildings. Five thousand years of city planning history has taught us that complex matrices of streets and squares are successful communication networks and means of identification and orientation” (Krier, Schnerider, and Vorreiter 1988). Likewise, besides findable and readable for the citizens, the contemporary public buildings or hybrids with integrated public places should be integrated with the surrounding public network. However, the modern urban realm is altering; new typologies of buildings emerge with new public/private relations. Even more interesting is the changing use of the modern urban realm.

One of the most vibrant pleads reflecting on our modern lifestyle comes from Maarten Hajer. He explains how citizens of the contemporary network societies, as a result of the age of mobility, create their own city (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). All relevant places for a single citizen are being connected to his or her personal network. People can create their own reality in their own city. A city that nobody has designed. Similar with previous theories on the public, people can live in the city without being city dwellers. They can actively profile themselves in a place or choose to remain in the background. Not only can we choose where to go, we can actually choose a desired way of life. The requisites are offered in all its diversity in the public (and private) realm of urban life. With this new ‘lifestyle’ questions arise, like how to deal with these increased social and cultural dynamics? What new forms of public realm does it create?

A consequence of this ‘network city’ is that the urban realm is getting more segregated. A negative effect of this is that there is less interaction between groups. Successful public places create opportunities for interaction between groups. This can be achieved by creating attraction values where diverse citizens can relate to. Since users combine their personal favorite places into ‘their city’, places should make an effort to be part of this personalized public domain. As already discussed on the previous pages, the attraction value of the total design should be relevant to various groups.
Dynamic use and friction

We’ve seen how modern urban citizens have their own specific needs and preferences considering urban space. In this network city where people with similar backgrounds and interests go to the same places the urban realm can become separated into enclaves. In order to prevent unilateral use, dynamic patterns and certain amount of friction needs to be created. A dynamic use prevents predictability and one-sided use of places. Of course this needs to be in balance with the readability of a public place. As example, dynamic use can be given shape by a multifunctional program or by offering varying possibilities for the use of a place. A successful public place can host the unforeseen.

Friction between user groups is another aspect which increases the dynamic use and behavior. Different user groups use the same place in different ways. People react to this and are influenced in their behavior by this new input. Even more friction occurs when the issues of society are manifesting themselves in public places. According to Maarten Hajer it is mistakenly thought that (planned) entertainment is more significant than commotion or tumult. The tourist industry slowly develops cities into frictionless places in order to smoothly process the big amount of tourists (Hajer and Rejindorp 2001). This prohibits the dynamic use of public realm. Nancy Fraser (1992) tells us that societies that provide opportunities and places for contestation and conflict come closer to ‘the ideal’ than those that seek a homogenized public sphere. A dynamic place contains an interesting amount of friction and offers changes in perspective.

Similar with previously discussed contradictions between characteristics (as neutrality and contemporaneity) a successful public place demands an optimum between dynamic use, friction, readability, and the ability to let users integrate without assimilating (Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht 2009).
Framing

Typologies used to indicate the relations between form and meaning of buildings. Contemporary architecture shows a decrease in this relation. This has consequences for the readability of the built environment. Furthermore, the age of mobility increasingly dilutes the relation between form and space (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). Hajer stresses how vague definitions of boundaries of places lead to an unclear use and responsibilities. To prevent the necessity of imposing rules it becomes relevant to make a place readable and evident to use. When people are clear on how to use a place it becomes evident on how to behave in it. This has consequences for the way of use, but also in the way a place is maintainable and manageable (Boer and Kockelkoren 2012) and (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). As an example, in the ‘80’s places were often defined with soft terms like ‘green space’ instead of just calling it a park. This made it unclear what the possibilities and, more important, the responsibilities were. Who is responsible for cleaning the trash and mowing the grass? Designing clear boundaries of a space increases the readability and comfort. Also, the need of signs should be reduced to a minimum. A clear understanding of a place should be given shape by the design. Framing ‘the physical’ leads to framing ‘the social’.

The previous part explained how a provoking a dynamic use improves the qualities of a public place. Too much dynamic and variable input can lead to vagueness and even chaos. The (physical) framing of space can be used as a guide to set the degree of possible interpretation.

Again, it appears that the essence of public space is filled with ambiguity as it can be characterized by a compromise between a clear definition of (the use of) space and leaving room for interpretation. The book Loose Space, by Karen Franck and Quentin Stevens, is dedicated to the ‘openness’ of public space (Franck and Stevens 2013). In this book they describe the possibilities and diversity of urban life. Loose space is characterized by its many possible interpretations. A telling example of this looseness is illustrated by skaters. Skaters interpret their environment through action and stretch the use of the urban physical environment. They create a new understanding of a place by combining this environment with a unique approach (Franck and Stevens 2013).

“The design of modern urban spaces is dominated by the framing of spectacular imagery set at a distance from the viewer, but skaters come to know space primarily through the other senses, up close, through the body and in motion through space. Against the spectacle of well-managed, “functional” urban space and its passive, sedate patterns of use, skating illustrates the potential of the human body to perceive, imagine and act in original and unintended ways” (Franck and Stevens 2013).

These unplanned ways of use challenges the intentions of places and create the desired dynamic use. The design of a public place should be well-defined and at the same time host enough room for interpretation.
Designing transitions & connections

The previously explained network of places demands for carefully designed transitions between those places. This goes for all levels, from the transition between cities to the transition between the sidewalk and the adjacent square. These transitions have the potential to attract and seduce citizens, making them curious to discover the unknown world (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). Transitions can also interlude a room or place when there is, for instance, a high contrast between two places.

Furthermore, the transitions can play an active role in the principle of meeting and interaction. They can be designed to create friction and (minor) clashes between users. An increasing amount of public places is designed as zero friction areas (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001), but as mentioned earlier, the public realm should host interaction and offer perspective. Transitions can create interaction by, for instance, narrowing down a traffic area or by attracting people with a distinct atmosphere.

An interesting example of a useful connection came forward by a study on the squares in New York led by William Whyte (Whyte 1980). In the related book called The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces, they wrote that most meetings between users of public places occur on corners of intersecting sidewalks. Steps bridging a difference in height often form the transition between the sidewalk and a plaza. The shape of the steps and its corners can offer room for sitting and meeting. The people grouped at the steps then make the transition smoother by filling up the emptiness. Again, people prefer to walk in between other people then taking a quiet detour.

Another example derives from the analysis of the Covent Garden Market in London. A detailed analysis can be found in chapter 5. A summarizing scheme is shown below and shows the essence of the transition between inside and outside. Before entering the arcades of the public building there are parasols lined up, creating a shed. Secondly there is the arcade combined with a small step. Behind the arcade is the entrance formed by doors, columns, and another small step.

scheme of transition between interior and exterior
Covent Garden Market in London

“Anxiety and possibility intertwine in urban public spaces. Opportunity among unknowns has drawn people to cities. If we seek security to such a degree that we remove the possibility of chance encounters, spontaneous interaction with strangers, and conflict, we dimmiate a quality for which we turn to public spaces” (Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht 2009).
Creating places in between the program

People in their ordinary everyday activities occupy and use spaces that allow for a variety of actions. These particular actions are not always directed or intended to take place. A lot of interesting spaces in public areas are carefully designed places in between a primary program. A good example is the Covent Garden Market in London, which will be further elaborated upon in chapter 5, page x. As visible in the scheme above, this in between space has similarities with common 'solid/void' theories. In between the program (solids) public places need to offer open space. There is no fixed ratio between the amount of open space and program, but city planners tend to forget the importance of open space. Karen Franck and Quentin Stevens refer to these open public spaces with the term 'loose space'. They write that this type of space has to be undetermined and appropriated by the activities citizens pursue (Franck and Stevens 2013).

The different types of use that occur in the public domain illustrate how social and cultural differences influence the possible interpretation of open space. In this way undefined open space mediates between the different ideas of groups. Furthermore, Franck and Stevens explain how any space can become 'loose space' by spontaneous and unforeseen ways of use (Franck, 2013 #113). The users of a place can make a place become loose, even though it may have been carefully designed with other intentions. This touches the essence of public space. The constraints and ingredients for interesting public spaces can be carefully designed and planned, at the end it are the citizens of public places who determine the final shape of a place.
The entrance of a building is the physical connection between the architecture and urbanism. Decent visibility adds to the readability of the public realm. Entrances can have diverse appearances. It can be a hardly noticeable transition between inside and outside or a distinctively designed gate. The appearance of an entrance should reflect the public nature of the place. For example, a classical museum can be introduced by a monumental entrance. A more modest entrance achieves a gradual and casual appearance. Ching appropriates two conditions to create a good entrance: clear visibility and a high space behind the entrance (Ching 2010). The high interior space behind the entrance strengthens the feeling of entering a place.

Entrances should be carefully designed on the outside and inside. Since entrances are often used as meeting points it is useful to create a ‘place’ next to or surrounding the entrance. This can be helpful when the entrance is situated directly to a street (Boer and Kockelioren 2012).

When several entrances are present, routes through the building are automatically formed. These routes can have a strong relation with the public network surrounding the place. Ideally entrances are placed in line with the external routing system.

The number of entrances determines the open character of a building or place. The more entrances to a place, the better it can be connected with the surrounding network. Opposing accesses are automatically creating a route in between and through the building or place. A clear routing system adds to the readability and feeling of safety. However, the more entrances a place has, the harder it will be to control. When ‘needed’, the security check is often found near the entrance of a building. The closer the security check comes towards the exit of the building the smaller, and thus less inviting, the public space becomes (Boer and Kockelioren 2012).

The mentioned ambiguity of urban interior (public place with private characteristics) can make the manageability and responsibility for the safety and access vague. Gates and closed doors are undesirable, and with a large number of entrances a place becomes hard to manage. A balance has to be found between the manageability, openness, and accessibility of the building. For the intended goal for the redesign of the van Gendhallen, it is essential to let citizens feel invited to use the public spaces without restrictions.
Safety

The appearance of a public place and the type of entrance(s) are related with safety. When a public accessible space does not look safe citizens are unlikely to use it. The appearance of safety is in this regard as relevant as the actual safety. Actual safety can be improved by natural means, like sunlight, and organized safety, like access gates or guards. The organization of security can range from natural surveillance by citizens to guards protecting gates. The latter may provide a high level of actual safety, it devalues the welcoming character of public buildings. Of course the needed type of safety depends on the program. Retail shops need to protect their goods but a small plaza may comply with a watchful eye of an employee. Places with a large amount of users and certain anonymity social security acts as an (unintentional) natural control system. Montgomery writes how local business surrounding a public place can greatly improve the public safety by extending their shop/café/lunchroom into the adjacent square. This will provide activity and eyes on the street and thus causing natural surveillance (Montgomery 1998). In their book Sidewalks Loukaitou-Sideri and Ehrenfeucht describe how forced control of public space can be counterproductive:

"the processes used to justify state action might weaken our sense of well-being by amplifying incompatibilities among activities that ultimately we cannot and do not necessarily want to control" (Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht 2009).
Traffic patterns

In his book *form space and order* Francis DK Ching makes a classification of routing systems (Ching 2010). The division concerns three principles of combining the routing with the adjacent function. The first option combines the traffic with the program, as for example with squares and markets. The second concept is based on a route going through the program with a certain distinction, as can be found at modern food markets. The third principle describes a classical division between route and function and can be compared with typical shopping streets. This classification will be used in the design stage to differentiate in between the program.

Similar with entrances, routes can be used to distinguish places by making them explicit or implicit and gradual. When routes are combined with multiple entrances citizens have possibilities to leave a place via different ‘exits’. This creates a relaxed and permissive atmosphere.

As Whyte discovered in his research, people prefer walking in between others than taking detours (Whyte 1980). The most efficient route is not the most popular one.
Sitting & resting points

Successful public places host people who are making the space. People are likely to stay in spaces when the secondary functions are interesting enough. They actually will stay for a longer period of time when there is enough and pleasant amount of sitting space. These sitting places strongly related to resting points and the availability of open spots in public places. These two conditions make citizens comfortable in residing in public places without having to fulfill the primary use of the place. The presence of good quality sitting places invites to a series of other activities, which increase the attractiveness of public places.

Together with a research group, William Whyte, examined 30 squares in New York which ended up in a set of recommendations to improve the livability and quality of public squares and places in general (Whyte 1980). A lot of recommendations are about sitting areas. Where one would predict that the sun would probably be of big relevance with the use of urban public places, Whyte explains that most key features concern the actual use of places. Accordingly, the project for public places also analyzed some sitting aspects of public places. The follow lists some of the interesting rules for sitting, deriving from the research done by Whyte (Whyte 1980) and the Project for Public Places (PPS and Spaces 2015):

- When making surfaces sittable, you can enlarge the choice for use. Objects can function as table, and slopes can be designed to sitting objects.
- When doubling the width of sitting areas, the amount of choice for citizens is greatly increased. A double depth means users can sit on both sides. "The human backside is a truly important dimension—one that many architects ignore. Not often will you find a ledge or bench that is deep enough to be sittable on both sides. Some aren’t sittable on one".
- The minimum depth ledge we come across that was consistently used on both sides was 30 inches deep (76cm). The benefit of the additional space is social comfort. There will be more room for groups and individuals to sort themselves out, more choice, and more perception of choice.
- Seating height appears to be hardly relevant, anything in between 20 centimeters to over a 1 meter in height is usable for sitting.
- People don’t like sitting in front of each other but fancy sitting at an angle. People will rather turn a few degrees to prevent staring at opponents.
- When people are given the opportunity they tend to sit at angles of 45 degrees.
- Steps are suitable for sitting when in between depth of 14 and riser of 6.5 inch.
- Corners of steps are important since they offer space where people can sit perpendicular to each other. This invites groups. Linear is only suitable for couples or singles.
- “All things being equal you can calculate that where pedestrian flows bisect a sittable place that is where people will most likely sit”

With the aim to simplicity, the modernist architects unknowingly adhered most of the aspects mentioned above and therefore designed easy accessible and inviting spaces. A good example is the Seagram Plaza underneath van der Rohe’s Seagram Building. While the plaza doesn’t host a single bench, all its ledges and steps make it eminently suitable for sitting. The plaza is a well-used area in downtown New York.
2.4 Recapitulation

The design of a public place has to find a soothing relation between a sense of security, public openness, and accessibility. Reasons for staying in a place don't have to be related to the primary occasion of being in that place. Diverse qualities of a place can be decisive in determining whether users stay or not. When safe from external factors as rain, wind, and traffic, the design of a place decides if people reside. Features like an interesting view, trees and grass, water, pedestrians, sun or shade, they are all physical qualities which can make a place interesting to stay. Then there are also psychological features such as the appropriation of a place, intimacy, and feeling safe (which differs from actually being safe). The contradiction between natural laws concerning people's personal territory and the forced nearness inherent to city life creates the typical interesting tension of the urban public realm.

Now let us go back to the situation in the lunchroom. I started this chapter with In that place all other users and employees were moving around our centered table. From our spot there was no clear overview, but only some of us appeared to be affected by this. The differences with the dominant audience were noticeable, but not that peculiar or uncommon.

Since I moved to an urban living environment eight years ago our cultural and social references altered. The situation in the lunchroom illustrated that social and cultural frame of references determine how we conceive and thus use the public domain. All aspects of that place, ranging from the physical arrangement of the space, the contemporary atmosphere, the people surrounding us, the type of seats, the surrounding street life, they were all part of the conception of that same lunchroom.
Chapter 3: The Future of Public Places

This chapter will discuss recent developments in and around the public domain and the possible future of the public. The second part will elaborate on the particular characteristics of Amsterdam. The goal of this chapter, together with the knowledge of the previous chapter, is to provide a comprehensive foundation in order to establish starting points for the design assignment in the following chapters.

3.1 Trends of Public Places

There are several (political) aspects influencing the changing essence of future public domain. Firstly there is an increasing responsibility of private organizations on the public domain, due to the fact that local governments are downsizing and thus providing less goods and services. Also, the global aspirations for market liberalism add to these state of affairs (Banerjee 2001). This explains the growing amount of public places which are privately owned. However, as already stated in the previous chapter by defining the public domain, this doesn’t say anything about the private or public essence of these places.

Secondly, a seemingly more demanding characteristic of our contemporary society prevs upon the way traditional principles are manifested within the public domain. This is fueled by the rapidly emerging technologies influencing our information and communication methods. Besides changes in social relations Banerjee explains how this revolution also alters the existing ideas of places and communities, how global distances are getting more local, how the identities of persons and persons in groups are altering, and the changing routines of retail influenced by online shopping (Banerjee 2001). Hajer predicts that a further increase in mobility will pull the social characteristics of modern cities apart. The character and meaning of places for working and meeting will alter. It may seem that modern communication technology and automation causes less physical interaction with people in the public realm. Digital communication superficial the actual need to meet each other and automation at stations or grocery stores seem to reduce the amount of small talk.

But the urge to meet and travel is not reduced. Travelling has actually increased because of the higher mobility. At the same time the growing hospitality industry and crowded downtowns during the weekends show that actual get-togethers are not decreasing, indeed increasing. The essence of living in the city is about the spontaneous feeling of nearness of urban elements, which define the urban experience. The physical nearness used to be more relevant. The essence of urban life is embedded in the desired interaction between humans. Our urge to interact with others is a key principle which is deeply rooted in the wellbeing of mankind. We flourish by the appreciation of others. Level our our opinions with others and get feedback on our lives. Urban citizens will keep looking for interaction and recognition. The city accommodates the meeting between people and between wares and people.

Hajer and Reijndorp explain how the almost permanent availability or accessibility to transport and all kinds of other services influences the agenda of the public realm (Hajer and Reijndorp). This is a superficial statement is rather understandable. The interesting question is what the consequences are on public life? And what are the consequences for the development of the public realm?

Well know patterns fade. Places for working and leisure are becoming more flexible. Everything becomes more available. Or maybe optional is a better term, since we can choose from a larger and broader offer. People reside were they want to. Not solely in private living rooms or public cafes, but everything in between. From libraries to airport lounges to unknown living rooms via airbnb. Conventions are slowly fading and new ones will emerge, which is inherent to social patterns. History repeats itself and this time it is driven by mass communication technology.

More and more we can chose were to go and how our own city looks like. As stated earlier in the second chapter, modern citizens create their own city. The social and physiological distance one has to overcome is decreasing rapidly. Connections and appointments are easily made. The social limits in making contact and getting in touch have a very low threshold. This same goes for the opposite behavior of keeping off contact. This is also increasingly manageable. This means that ‘only’ our conventions of meeting and getting together are changing to a less strict behavior. The biggest impact of mass communication is that it provides our world with more low profile possibilities. It stretches our (Bach et al.)Conditions for interaction. The essence of the interaction is however the same.

Planners and developers should give form and meaning to the new desired flexibility of public places. Without defining how it should look like, Hajer stresses that planners and designers should create a new view on space. The assignment of the future is based on giving shape to the new relations between places (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). Matthijs the Boer also explains how the economical motives and individualism of our contemporary society makes the connecting aspects of public places less relevant. He also stresses how this may lead to the impoverishment of public places (Boer and Kockelkoren 2012).
I would say the notion of a public space even stresses wider than it already did. The former city centers are no longer the exclusive hotspots of spatial, cultural, and social integration. The old downtown areas are nowadays more work and leisure combinations, and the former residential area's become more multidisciplinary. The new urban field offers possibilities to create places on new locations with different characters (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). This offers an interesting perspective on locations as the island of Oostend where the van Gendthallen are situated. In this context it makes sense to redevelop the van Gendthallen with a strong characteristic atmosphere.

Of course the halls and surrounding location already have a strong character, but it has to be translated for the new demands of the growing middle class culture which dominates the 'new' urban realm. Citizens should be given the opportunity to create their own city by making use of (parts of) the program in the van Gendthallen. The creation of an iconic place can be decisive within this new use. The iconic building can become a reflection of the local residents, and at the same time a chaperon in the story of the modern network city. This should become an place of stories and atmosphere deriving from the multitude of meanings the place can partake for all citizens. It can make citizens attribute symbolic significance. Relevant preconditions are the characteristics of successful public places as described in the second chapter, as for instance: giving room for interpretation, offering 'empty' areas, creating combined identity, make some friction, and of course safety.

As previously explained, popular public places host a rather informal way of use. This informality is often derived from the fact that the place lends itself good for other types of use in addition to its primary function. It is generous in its appearance and way of use. With characteristic (former) public buildings which lost their primary function, like post office or churches, it is key to get a grip of the character of the place and use this for the redevelopment. A part of the former generation of public buildings have become obsolete and left open a chance to redevelop the rich public atmosphere of the building. To fill this gap, the developers in the retail industry/business who are defining the new public realm can have a serious cooperative role concerning the development of the city’s future public places (Boer and Kockelkoren 2012). More than once, a commercial approach converting public places into privately owned places resulted in a more user friendly atmosphere (PPS and Spaces). These two notions can be relevant with the redesign of the van Gendthallen.

Two other current trends are the conscious consumption of cultural experiences and the avoiding confrontation with others. According to Maarten Hajer the combination between these two is a result of the mass mobilization and forms a serious risk for the 'placemaking' in the public realm. Big chain companies with uniform public interiors don’t evoke the desired interaction or the appropriation of space.

The way we buy goods has changed since the vast development of the internet. Shopping streets are still as crowded during the weekends but the amount of stuff sold ‘offline’ is shrinking. Retailers respond to this by offering an experience. Also, concept stores and slow shopping are terms which indicate similar developments: spending more time than needed to just buy something. Furthermore, concept stores can cooperate with online shopping, as products still need to be smelled, tasted or felt. Shopping is more often advertised as a leisure activity and the built environment combines leisure with commercial business.

A danger in the commercializing of these majestic buildings is that they can become a victim of chain stores. Chain stores have their own corporate identity, where these buildings already have their own strong ambiance. Corporate identities are to mainstream to let users identify themselves with it. Shopping malls and warehouses host the danger of sucking in all the inner cities life, at the expense of the small diverse ‘cozy’ business.

We’ve seen that the amount of people in public places didn’t decrease. The new digital realm does not affect the public realm in a negative way as some may claim. People go actually in town while tapping their phones and laptops in lunchrooms and cafes. This hasn’t caused an actual decrease in interaction. What has changed is that services are being automated and companies offering services are disappearing. More relevant: citizens have the choice to go anywhere at any time. The quality of public places has become more critical since people can choose whether they integrate them in their personal urban realm or not. People can pick places with their preferred qualities, or just stay at home. They want to work or meet where they prefer. This means the quality of the public realm has to meet these demands of high quality and flexible public places, and the connection between places has become more important.
3.2 Public space in Amsterdam

At the end of the nineteenth century the city of Amsterdam developed quickly in which the old city became the new core inner city. This led to a transformation into a social-economic center of the old core with dynamic and exciting functions in the old city. The structure of this old city was not ready to cope with the accompanying organizational and traffic issues of this development, making redevelopments to these systems necessary. Together with these structural adjustments came a renamed attention for the historical beauty of old Amsterdam, which more often contributed arguments for the carefully redevelopment and expansions plans (Deben, Salet, and van Thoor 2004). The development of the old city was done with diverging visions of ‘harmony with the existing. This development explains part of the urban essence of Amsterdam’s city center. A highly adaptable and vital city with diversity of urban structures present in its historical yet modern core. The older city patterns have proven to be quite flexible and are carefully adapted to contemporary use. Furthermore, although Amsterdam has to cope with quite some suburban growth, the inner city is still the leading centreum of the region (Randstad). The pressure on the housing market is high and the urban centers are more intensively used than ever.

Almost all of downtown Amsterdam and much of ancient Rome fits into one square mile. This makes Amsterdam’s downtown one of the more dense and intimate (Montgomery 1998). Most successful urban places operate at several scales, are more rather than less intricate, are capable of being walked in under 10 minutes, and have a large number of intersections. (Amsterdam has nearly 600, Toulouse has 330, Mayfair (London) 420 (Jacobs 1993). According to this study by Alan Jacobs it seems that deliberately planned places have fewer intersections per square mile. The amount of intersections of course reflects the amount and size of building blocks within a fixed area. The amount of intersections has to be combined with a fitting amount of public places. Apparently the logic of the canal district in Amsterdam provided the city with a grid which was very capable of handling the evolution of cities.

Besides the appearing flexibility of the structure of the old city, this aspect, combined with an urge for modernity, also goes for the citizens of Amsterdam. Public realm in general should offer spaces for local traditions such as festivals and carnivals, and represent meaning and identity. Meaning and identity of citizens of Amsterdam can be described as lively, outspoken, flamboyant, hip, direct, and proud.

The attractiveness of the capital of the Netherlands makes the city an attraction for tourists. Where in the city of Rotterdam post offices, market halls and town halls are being redeveloped or integrated with public functions, most of the dismissed public buildings from downtown Amsterdam are redeveloped into hotels. The developers are focusing a lot on the tourist industry. Zoning laws offer some protection to former public buildings. The post offices in most big Dutch cities are developed into a commercial hub like shopping centers and hotels. Fortunately this causes that most of the former public halls are still public places.

According to Peter Veenstra the power of the attractiveness of Amsterdam is derived from its plurality and intertwining of so-called urban landscapes. These landscapes, as described by Jack Burgers (Burgers 1999), are mentioned earlier in the second chapter. Examples are landscapes of power and statements, landscapes of seduction and entertainment, and the marginalized landscape. Especially the flourishing city center derives its success from the fine-grained network of all the diverse landscapes.

Recent developments are directed by economical drivers such as tourism industry. In the last decades a lot of the former public buildings are being redeveloped into hostels, hotels, and retail industries targeting the tourist industry. This (inevitable) evolution is already taking place on big scale in the core inner city and is being amplified by the contemporary movements of our modern information society driven by mass communication. The rapidly changing needs of our contemporary society make public buildings such as postal offices and banks become a redundant part. Were they used to be essential drives of the public sphere in the 19th century vital city they are now becoming part of the growing tourist and retail industry.

When the municipality decides on restructuring the city center towards this monotonic focus, it is very likely to weaken its own lively urban heart. As Paul Meurs describes in Cultural heritage and the future of the historic inner city of Amsterdam (Deben, Salet, and van Thoor 2004), this might put the power of Amsterdam’s city center to risk, namely that “all its residents identify with the city’s stratafication, despite all its frictions and discrepancies”. Besides the scenario where Amsterdam’s plurality is at risk, it’s residents are still in need of a certain amount of public space. Where the city center is becoming less capable of fulfilling the rule of vibrant public space for local residents, this space is most often found towards the outskirts of the canal district.
PART II     THE VAN GENDTHALLEN
Chapter 4: Analysis and value assessment

This chapter will unravel the morphology/ dna, cultural historical, sociological, and technical values of the van Gendthallen. I will use the data gathered from the analyses made by the group and summarize its relevant outcomes.

-What is the morphology/dna of the building complex
-What are the cultural, sociological, historical and technical values of the van Gendthallen?
-How can this data be used for the design assignment.

While the content of this chapter is present and used in the design, it stills needs further elaboration. This will be done after the P4

4.1 Introducing the van Gendthallen

The van Gendthallen are situated on the edge of the inner city of Amsterdam. The island Oostenburg is part of the eastern islands, see image on the next page. These islands have adapted over time to the changing environment. The construction of the eastern islands began in the 17th century. This was a century of massive industrial and economic development. From the emergence on the island where home to the VOC (Dutch East-India Company) and the admiralty of Amsterdam. After the French occupation in 1813 the steam engine technology gradually changed the face of the islands. Large factories and industrial halls were built to accommodate the shipping industry. After the construction of the railway network in Amsterdam, the Island was no longer connected to the important waterways. The shipping industry plummeted and made place for the production of locomotives and carriages. The Islands were initially built at the border of the city of Amsterdam, but due to the vast expansion of the city, the Islands are now situated in the heart of city. On the south side of the island the new JJ-runnel caused the Islands to get enclosed from the rest of the city center. In conclusion the Oostenburger Island has a rich history, got enclosed by from the rest of the city center and is now ready for redevelopment.

The construction of the ‘van Gendthallen’ began in 1898 after the design of A. L. van Gendt. The building consists out of five giant halls and was an important part of Werkspoor/Stork. It was initially built to fulfill the delivery of 40 locomotives and 400 railroad carriages to South Africa. The ‘van Gendthallen’ and the Oosterburger Island had a great influence on Amsterdam and the Netherlands. The building consists out of five giant halls which were built pragmatically and in different phases between 1898 and 1910. The phased construction provides a historical layering of the building. This layering is clearly visible in the different building components of the halls.

The complex of the Van Gendthallen is a listed monument, because of their historical, architectural and urban value. It is within Amsterdam a rare example of factory buildings of a century ago.

In the following chapters we will give a technical reproduction of the building. We do this by highlighting the buildings components per chapter, while at the same time try to incorporate the adjacent building parts in the drawing and analysis. The analysis tries to highlight all the technological aspects of the building, to provide guidance during the design project.
4.2 Context of the van Gendhallen (analysis context)

In order to give a proper analyze the building complex I will first elaborate on the context of the van Gendhallen. This will be approached on two/three scales: the inner city of Amsterdam, the Oostelijke eilanden, and the Island of Oostenburg.

**inner city Amsterdam**

Function of a metropole over seeds the daily urban score” (bron: analyse context, presentative p1 Sven?)

3 clusters die antwoord kunnen bieden op visite Oostenburg.

Morphology of the city is essential to former use (open deur, uitleggen hoe, meer dan oriëntatie grid?)

  Nog verwerken:
  -weergave essentie tekst Paul Meurs over Amsterdam uit vorige hoofdstuk
  -conclusies analyses (groep Job/Sven en van gendt 1)

**oostelijke eilanden & oostenburg**

-essentie van het eiland: grid of the island as remaining factor to reveal its former use and the type of residents.
-ontwerp onderzoek varianten voor urban plan (p2) en gekozen variant.
-waarderstellingen op eiland niveau (zie schema).

  Nog verwerken:
  -conclusie analyse deel Muriel en
  -essentie analyse context vanGendt 1
4.3 Analysis van Gendthallen and value assessment

The analysis of the van Gendthallen generated the following knowledge:
- kern van de analyse op gebouwniveau Jesper, Maurice Mark
- kern van eigen analyse op technisch niveau

Based on this knowledge I have set up value assessment based on the theory on value assessment as described in "Richtlijnen bouwhistorisch onderzoek" (Hendriks and van der Hove 2009) and strategies to reclaim derelict industrial area’s (Loures et al. 2006) and (Zijlstra 2009)

The value assessment is used to get a grip on the essence of the van Gendthallen. The essence of the van Gendthallen will be put into schemes and listed below.

schemes to make:

- repetition
- pragmatic building
- van Gendthallen = covered factory
- spatial qualities of factories suitable for urban interiors
4.4 Conclusions

-Iceland: Van Gendthallen serving the Island of Oostenburg, the Oostelijke eilanden, and the inner city of Amsterdam. Grid of the island defining its boundaries and working principle of the past into the future.

-Building zie waarderingschema.

The characteristics of the van Gendthallen (wide open spaces, yet divisible, more/better) appear very suitable to turn the complex into a public interior. Considering the scale it might make more sense to speak of a ‘network of public interiors’; an urban interior.

The data of this chapter are put in a scheme of value assessments. These values are developed into starting points. This will be further elaborated in the final version of this report (P5)

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<td>4. Essemble waarde</td>
<td><strong>Exterieur</strong></td>
<td>****</td>
<td>a. Verwerving beursinstituten en pragmatisme (35%)</td>
<td>Inverwijing van een dynamisch publiek</td>
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<td>b. Zichtbare gelegenheid van 35%</td>
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<td>c. Interns omlijstingen (中外い)</td>
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<td>5. Bevoorleidingswezen (fysieke entourage)</td>
<td><strong>Exterieur</strong></td>
<td>****</td>
<td>a. Verwerving beursinstituten en pragmatisme (35%)</td>
<td>Inverwijing van een dynamisch publiek</td>
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- table 1: value assessment and argumentation (overige kolommen verwijderen uit tabel)
Chapter 5: composing a public program

This chapter will describe the search and considerations for a fitting program for the design location.

5.1 Theory on program

In order to compose a fitting and balanced set of programs into the van Gendthallen complex I’ve analyzed the most common public functions. I have found some contradictions in the essence of these public programs.

- Public versus private (this concerns landownership)
- Select versus random visit
- Public versus private/secluded (this concerns how private or public a place is (a sports club or field might by public area but is often rather closed for non-members)
- Community versus individualistic sphere
- Hidden/intimate versus open places (accessibility)

The most interesting contradictions are put in the schemes below
The analysis and value assessments gave information on possible functions that would fit with the atmosphere of the van Gendthallen. Together with that input, these schemes are used to define a balanced program. The first scheme shows that I looked for an even combination between select and random visits. This will increase the dynamic use of the total complex. The second scheme deals with the essence of public places. More modern functions are often based on a rather individualistic approach. The city life used to be mostly a community experience, but as described earlier in the first part of this research, modern citizens create their own city of places. When integrating a few more individualistic places I try to make the design proposal fit into the modern city life.

The third program scheme shows a distribution between open and hidden places. When regarding the van Gendthallen as a small city district on its own, the more hidden and intimate places correspond with small streets and alleys. Some functions are obviously present while others are more intimate and discovered while walking through the complex.
5.3 From market to retail

Based on the previous part the market function became one of the key features of the new program. This is why I did a separate research on the typology and working principles of (food) markets.

General

The Persian and Arabic bazaars were the first build or partially covered public interiors. The first and less permanents markets were typically located at the outskirts of cities and led by nomads. The bazaars where located in the city centers and have therefore a strong urban character.

Originally the retail industry took place on markets where, due to safety and hygiene, the higher class people didn’t go themselves.

Since the medieval ages and onwards salesmen started to display goods and merchandise on open counters, which later on moved into open galleries and the actual ‘production shop’. From the 17th century big halls emerged which hosted retailers and their public. The final step of the evolution into the shopping street as we know them these days exists since the 18th century.

The internal streets of the van Gendthallen look similar with the classic passage. A Passage, as covered shopping street, is part of the public network of pedestrians and has a clear distinction between facades of shops and the pedestrian route. Unlike market halls, where this distinction between route and function is far more ambiguous.

The passage developed into shopping mall. The typology of a shopping mall is however unwanted in this research/redevelopment assignment. This is because shopping malls have a closed off atmosphere, use doors to manage visitors, don’t have open places to sit or hang around without being aware of the fact you are in a commercial center. Closing of the place for control of safety and climate.

Modern street markets operate year-round and are focusing more on local, sustainable, and organic products, fresh produce and artisanal goods.

Next to fresh foods, handmade art and crafts, and flowers or fish, modern markets increasingly introduce cultural and community resources as enjoying artwork and entertainment by the musicians and performers.

Food markets have become a culinary and cultural mecca. Contemporary conscious citizens focus on a healthy lifestyle, from which nutritious food is a core part. The combination with a strong social character and high levels of interaction make public food markets an increasingly popular part of contemporary urban societies.

Central spot

Beside the core function of the trading of goods, markets provide a central place in cities. The central gathering place developed into centers of cities with other public functions surrounding a square. Until today the city market can be found on the most centralized places of cities. While the supermarkets are strongly competing the street markets, the social gathering of citizens around markets is still a key function of urban life. The function of traditional market can be combined with all modern variations of the market. Modern markets are often combined into foodmarkets, where the urban stage of wining and dining plays a major role.
Helen Tangerin (Tangires 2008) describes how markets developed from their most primitive trading spot along a street into a street market. From there the concept of market developed into several different types as markets enclosed by blocks with single entrances, markets under public buildings and markets on open squares. For the design assignment I combined two typologies, the street market and market under a public building.

Case studies

The online platform and research group called the Project for Public Spaces (PPS and Spaces) is “the central hub of the global placemaking movement, connecting people to ideas, expertise, and partners who share a passion for creating vital places.” (PPS and Spaces 2015). On their website frequently appear texts about public place theories, placemaking and analysis of markets or other public places. The following information contains a summary of analysis of markets

Covent Garden market London
Case study and analysis Covent Garden market London.

Old market redeveloped into a place for leisure shopping combined with a food market. The character of the place is derived from the historic atmosphere of the building. There is a lot of open space and a pleasant mixture of shops and sitting area. The central routes are actually open, and of course the location in the city center of London is optimal. A deeper analysis of the building shows us some more interesting essences. The outer facades of the building and most of the facades surrounding it have arcades on the ground floor. These arcades create a pleasant transition between the square surrounding the building and the interior. The transition between intermediate space and shops is also given shape carefully by slightly lifted planes and sidewalks. Also, the market has a straightforward internal network of crossing routes, which creates several stand-alone but connected places.

(pictures Covent Garden Market.)
Recurring aspects of other markets

- live music and performances (van Gendthallen: live broadcasting/TV studio)
- A promenade leads pedestrians from surrounding neighborhoods directly to the market.
- Food market with small kitchens and a big plaza for wining and dining in the center,
- In the mornings, an older crowd frequents the market, arriving early to purchase fresh groceries and flowers
- By noon, young professionals stop in for lunch.
- In the evenings, the market hosts a diverse crowd of shoppers and diners, as strangers and friends co-mingle while seated together at the gourmet food hall’s large communal tables.
- During the weekends, offer cooking and dance classes, making the market busy until late in the evening.


“This market is intended to serve as a hub from which money in the urban core is being channeled back into rural areas around the province. This is all tied to food security.”

When food and agriculture play an important role in local culture, a market becomes an easier sell. But with many cities disconnected from the greater food systems (as Adam) that serve them, ancillary uses become important for longevity. This bodes well for places; as Davies explains: “Great markets are created through the clustering of activity. They require the intentional aggregation of local food production, but also of other services and functions. The food is the central reason for why people gather, and that gathering creates a hub for community life.”
In this chapter will be the link between the theories from the first part towards the initiation of the design. The theory of chapter 2, combined with the input of the design location from chapter 4, led to a vision for the design assignment. This vision forms the base of a large set of starting points that will be guiding the design process.

6.1 From concept to starting points

Starting points can be seen as a set of rules for the design process, setting the boundaries for the end goal. When the starting points don’t give direct feedback for design related issues, they can be developed into design tools. This total set of self-imposed rules is combined in a tree of starting points (uitgangspuntenboom). This tree exists of three blocks. A block of starting points derived from value assessments. A second block derived from the studied theories on public space. The third set of starting points lays out the essence of the program. This third block is influenced by the first two and combines my vision on the building with the researched topic.

In the following parts I will firstly elaborate on how the value assessments are developed into starting points. This will be followed by the development of theories on public space into starting points. And lastly a block of starting points derived from the theory of the program.

6.2 Starting points based on value assessment

While giving the program shape it is key to maintain the meaning of a place. Redesigning often involves dispossession from the character of a place.

The Value assessments made as described in chapter 4 are further elaborated into starting points.
- Essentie van eiland verwerken in herontwerp (waardestellingen)
- Essentie van van Gendt verwerken in herontwerp (waardestellingen)


Tabel 1: starting points based on value assessments (argumentatie, indeling, en schaalmiveau verwijderen uit deze tabel)
The table above shows the starting points based on the value assessment of the van Gendthallen are shown. The last column represent the design tools.
6.3 Starting points regarding public domain

The following starting points are derived from the theories of chapter two

**people**
theory: people are key and determine success of public space
starting point: approach the assignment and the design from a user’s perspective

theory: people need others to relate to themselves
starting point: vision between the program/functions and theatre like settings to encourage interaction. Long sightlines, seating areas facing walkways.

theory: people want to blend in and remain unnoticed or they want to be in the picture
starting point: create places for both these extremes.

**program**
theory: leaving room for the unforeseen
starting point: incorporate soft borders for appointed areas and give space for interpretation

theory: a diverse program creates friction and makes for an interesting mix of users.
starting point: combine opposing contrasts. (hal 1 versus hal 5)

theory: to achieve the atmosphere of an urban interior the offer in facilities should be bigger than the first public spaces.
starting point: the program in the van Gendthallen should exceed the amount the outer facades can handle.

**combining landscapes**
starting point: ikgroep met meest brede acceptatiegraad kiezen en interieur voor die groep ontwerpen, vervolgens alle rakende overige groepen proberen te betrekken.

theory: Successful public places create opportunities for interaction between groups
starting point: This can be achieved by creating attraction values where diverse citizens can relate to.

theory: let people find others by combining overlap between the diverse landscapes
starting point: look for shared interest or overlap in factors of the landscapes (not user groups)

**Shared interest**
theory: look for shared interest between users, attract a lot of groups without repelling others.
starting point: look for the ‘perfect balance between a specific architectural atmosphere, and a neutral place

theory: let users relate to that place by giving them ground for the creation of an image.
starting point: creating an image (which is influenced by the subjective, informal, and emotional factors as openness, friendliness, and causality)

**network of places**
theory: create attraction value for various groups so diverse users can relate
starting point: develop a design language which intermediates between specific and neutral so it becomes interesting for a lot of groups

theory: offer a place for all citizens of Amsterdam and make it findable

**Dynamic use and friction**
framing the unforeseen, it’s about a change in perspective

theory: dynamic use makes public place interesting and successful
starting point: diverse program, overlapping program (in the same place), leave room for interpretation (considering the use of program and physical place/interior).

theory: create dynamic use by creating interesting friction
starting point: create friction by creating distance between diverse user groups

_framing_

framing the physical leads to framing the social
readable by clear definition of the use, readable by clear definition of the space
Unplanned ways of use challenges the intentions of places and create the desired dynamic use. The design of a public place should be well-defined and at the same time host enough room for interpretation.

theory: Framing the physical leads to framing the social.
starting point: define clear boundaries of the space, and on the use of a space

Creating places in between the program

theory: citizens reflect their behavior into activities and desired way of use in the public
starting point: plan open space in between the program to let citizens reside how they want to (be).

_entrances_

theory: visible entrance adds readability to public realm
starting point: design high entrances with distinct form language
theory: reflect the essence of the halls in the entrances
starting point: public, open, readable

reflect the difference of halls in the entrances
hal 1 versus hal 5 versus the frontface in the entrance by a arcade

In hall 1 there’s the arcade which functions as one long mediation between inside and outside. The entrances in between have a higher distinction to focus on the internal routing.
In hall 5 there are more distinct entrances since the place behind the façade has a different vibe. The retail area is more distinctly given shape and hosts more hidden, smaller, cozier places to reside compared to hall 1 (and everything in between).

Hal 1
The arcade combines several buildings with a share public space in front of them. In the van Gendthallen there are four areas created in hall 1, but the created arcade combines them into one appearance from the outside. There is no wanted distinction between the parts. The arcade is created within the existing façade. It both separates and connects the street to the interior.
Doors indicate that a public place can be locked of. For this reason any doors in the arcade of hall 1 must be sliding doors/elements which can be completely out of sight (also from the outside that is). (argument om paneel van boven te laten komen.) toegangen liggen vaak 'in de loop' bij hal 1 niet echt, dus vandaar arcade als entree.
The table above shows the starting points based on theories on public domain, as described in chapter 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory on the Public</th>
<th>Main Vision</th>
<th>Starting Points</th>
<th>Sub Starting Points</th>
<th>Design Tools</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Use of the building should be unpredictable and flexible.</td>
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<td>Create spaces that focus on interaction of groups.</td>
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<td>Use similar but distinctive languages to shape the different parts of the design.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Create spaces that provide dynamic use.</td>
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<td>Visible and not visible (partially hidden) viewing area.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In the building users are spectator and performer at the same time.</td>
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<td>Create fiction.</td>
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<td>The building should have multiple equal continuations.</td>
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<td>There should be a limited seating points in the building.</td>
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<td>Create space with a certain degree of distinctiveness (easily identifiable spaces).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Create spaces which doesn’t repel users (too specific).</td>
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<td>Connection between spaces should invite and seduce users.</td>
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<td>Connection should contrast (not provide optimum flow of users like airport).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Borders of spaces should be clearly defined.</td>
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nog toe te voegen: uitgangspunten en visie op het ontwerp aan de hand van gekozen programma: market to retail -sfeer, muziek geluid, ofwel public space theory maar dan stapje verder.... (tussentijdse analyse ontwerp A4tje, wat onbreekt nog.)
6.4 Starting points for the program

- combinatie van select en a-selecte visits > programma
- combination long stay= short stay

The table above shows the starting points based on theories on the program as described in chapter 4.

nog toe te voegen: uitgangspunten en visie op het ontwerp aan de hand van gekozen programma: market to retail
6.5 Starting points for the urban plan

The upscaling of all kinds are causing diverse functions (hospitals, universities, shopping malls) to move from inner cities to the outskirts of cities. They become more isolated (expect for cars) and less attractive as public place. When the network of roads crosses pedestrian routes, these public areas lose quality. This has to be taken into account when dealing with the van Gendhallen.

Furthermore, the location of the van Gendhallen in the context of Amsterdam is too isolated to integrate into the network of downtown shopping area. The urban plan opens it up for local inhabitants of the eastern islands, integrating the van Gendhallen into the urban system. Overall the van Gendhallen will be more of a destination than go through

6.6 Visie op herbestemming

Naast uitgangspunten is er nog een afzonderlijke visie per onderdeel-elelement die deel uitmaakt van de totale benadering van de van Gendhallen als monument. Deze paragraaf gaat hier kort op in adhiv Theory van Re-arch – nieuwe ontwerpen voor oude gebouwen (Provoost and Wilkins 1995).

- expoeren; de historische ervaring.
- oud en nieuw worden gelijkvrij en gelijkwaardig naast elkaar geplaatst expoeren binnen de omhulling van nieuwe ontwerp.

Ankersmit: "De historische ervaring is een moment van intimiteit met het verleden, onbeheersbaar moment waarin de geschiedenis geveld en ondergaan wordt.

As seen in the theory of re-arch I can take a stance in the discussion of how to oppose to redeveloping monuments. Since the van Gendhallen will host several types of program it is irrelevant/impossible to adapt 1 certain position which suits all the different elements which will occur in the redesign of the van Gendhallen. It does make sense to take stance per element. The starting points and design tools

- contrast <- > analog
- Reconstruction
PART III: PRACTICE
Chapter 7 The urban plan

Chapter 8 the building (re)design

Content chapter 8
the design
- principe schema's opbouw ontwerp
  - hal 1 markt
  - hal 2/3 foodcourt
  - hal 4 open event space and galleries
  - hal 5 retail
  - bridges as intermediating element
- Materialisering/moodboard.
- Plattegronden
- Doorstneden
- impressies.
- Klimaat concept,
- draagconstr en bouwtechnische principes
- details
- vormtaal onderzoek
Reflection

Reflection on research

The project and its wider social context
The van Gendhallen and her surroundings are situated in the heart of Amsterdam. Because of its scale, industrial character, and its current partially unused state the halls are not optimal integrated in the urban development. The values of the van Gendhallen led almost directly to the topic of public space. The qualities of the interior appeared suitable for a public function. Furthermore, the inner city of Amsterdam is changing. The postmodern city is used differently than the old inner city was designed for. A relevant question is where and in what shape the public domain can be situated in the future city of Amsterdam. Seeing the location of the van Gendhallen they will, sooner or later, be getting involved in future redevelopments and play a role in the public realm. The research topic (how the van Gendhallen can contribute to the public domain of Amsterdam) is thus closely related to the current social context.

Besides the topic of public space, I wanted to incorporate another very interesting topic into the assignment. This concerned the subjective and altering attractiveness of the heritage. To exemplify, the van Gendhallen are built to function as a raw production unit in the industrial periphery. Despite its contemporary appreciation the buildings were hardly ’designed’ as such. Throughout the years the complex ’shifted’ from the periphery towards the edge of the inner city. The contemporary widely appreciated attractiveness didn’t use to be so obvious, as the building is clearly made with different intentions. How did this shift in the conception and appreciation arise? What is it that gives (industrial) heritage its modern gratitude? While this interesting topic actually concerns all redevelopment assignments, when studied upon it can be a graduation topic on its own. It appeared to be too much to incorporate with the research on public space.

Relating the research on public realm with themes concerning heritage and architecture
The goal of the studio Heritage & Design is to redevelop heritage concerns the issue of transformation with the aim to let buildings adapt to future developments of the city. A good redesign integrates the idea of the heritage for the redevelopment. In order to grab the essence of a building often a thorough analysis is made which unravels the characteristics of the heritage. Following, these can be translated into value assessments.

The theory deriving from the analysis of the location and building led to the chosen topic. The analysis brought forward that the location, scale, and openness of the existing building might be very suitable to transform into public interior. Accordingly a research followed on the characteristics and possible future of successful public places. Considering this, the covered topic is in a close and logical relation with the heritage. One of the credos of the studio is design by redevelopment. The design proposal tries to prove the possibilities of a public building for the heritage. The design proposal is mainly based on a theoretical framework of public places and less on a workable redevelopment plan in practice.
Reflection on the design process

The relationship between the methodical line of approach of the graduation lab and the method of starting points

The Heritage & Architecture studio concerns three aspects: design, cultural value and technology. These are supposedly the three recurring topics covering (almost) all redevelopment assignments. A widely used approach is the use of a value assessment of the heritage.

When relating these points to my design process it appears that the cultural values are thoroughly processed into the design. The cultural values are translated into starting points and via these starting points reflected in the design.

The approach of the graduation project is to combine the theoretical research, the analysis of the design location and its context, and my own vision on the redevelopment of Heritage. After the first conceptual part, the design interventions are written and sketched out into starting points per element.

For this graduation assignment I defined several sets of rules deriving from the theory, the input of the location, and my vision on the redevelopment. This used method of starting points and design tools often creates a close relation between theory and design. It relates practical design issues to the more general vision on the topic. However, the research on public space was often rather abstract. The theory could be translated into a scheme, but a direct translation between these theories and the van Gendthallen appeared to be harder than expected. Examples of abstract theories often concerned with the interpretation of a space by its users. When leaving room for interpretation, different groups of users can relate to a place and make it feel as ‘their’ place. This requires a sensitive and multi-disciplinary design intervention and design language, which at the same time is hard to measure. The same goes for the theories which steered to design a place which could fit into a larger network of the new public realm citizens create themselves. In order to fulfill this, the larger network of places has to be described. This however goes beyond the scope of this graduation assignment. The essence of the feedback on the P2 and P3 presentation also concerned the translation of theory into design. Although there was broad knowledge on the topic, the design appeared not related enough with the theories on public space.

Between the P3 and P4 I tried to involve the human scale and the actual use of the building into the design. Several parts kept developing in order to admit to the demanded requirements. This goes for the design language of the bridge, the entrances, and the arrangement of the foodcourt.

Relating the research to the design

It became clear which theories were possible to develop into the design. The starting points formed the actual link between theory and design, as also reflected into the division in the three parts of this document. Content on the research topic is widely available and could therefore be specified to usable theories for the design. Until the last weeks of the design process the research is being elaborated and concentrated to the design. The hard part however, as explained earlier, was to turn the theory into workable design tools. When most of the used theory is directly related to the design, it is not always directly applicable.

Reflection on the design

Throughout the design process I reflected upon the design by using a set of criteria as defined by Montgomery (Montgomery 1998) and Project for public places (PPS and Spaces 2015). Before the final step in the design process (after the P4 presentation) I will do a final reflection of the design with these indicators. After the P4 I will add the findings of this reflection in this chapter.

What makes a great place?
The scheme below is a set of attributes and measurements to evaluate the qualities of a public place as set by PPS project for public places. The “intangibles” give a good feeling of the qualities a public space should have, but these terms are rather abstract. The outer circle has attributes which are actually measurable, but which is harder to evaluate when dealing with a design assignment. When comparing this scheme with a similar division as discussed by Montgomery, it stands out that any notions of “form” are hardly present in this scheme.
Montgomery (Bach et al.) stated that places must combine qualities of three essential elements: physical space, the sensory experience (concepts) and activity. As can be seen, these three elements have a strong relation with the previous scheme of PPS.

The question, now, is how activity and image interrelate with form to generate a sense of place. Or to put it more precisely: can form be designed as to stimulate activity, create a positive image and therefore a strong sense of place?

The table below shows a set of tangible indicators. I will use this table as an addition to the PPS scheme for the evaluation of the design.

Table 1. Indicators of successful urban places

1. Planning will be invisible and the results will look natural, as though they happened of their own accord
2. There will be interesting and stimulating shapes
3. The ‘familiarity’ of streets and street life will be celebrated
4. There will be secret places which ensure discovered grow on you, making you look deeper to find more
5. There will be surprises, to keep citizens awake, provide topics of conversation, prevent ennui
6. Experiment will be encouraged, and there will be exciting things to do
7. There will be areas and opportunities for informal, casual meetings to take place, including warm and friendly bars and pubs
8. Food and drink will be a treat, and people will be able to purchase and consume it at varying prices and degrees of leisure
9. There will be a variety of comfortable places to sit and wait—a city worth living in has to be a city worth sitting in
10. There will be a good balance between the needs to prevent loneliness and to preserve anonymity and privacy
11. Changing seasons will not draw attention away from the sterner pursuits of daily life but rather will be an integral part of a continually changing city, and celebrated as such
12. The senses will be heightened: affection/friendliness/hospitality; a sense of belonging; historical and cultural continuity; a sense of fun/humour; opportunities for gossip; openness-mindedness; vitality; fantasy; flamboyance; colour; beauty/aesthetic stimulus
References


Appendix

Analysis of the building and building context.
Archive pictures of the technical building drawing, NAI archive.
Own pictures of the halls.