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### GRADUATION PROJECT

My graduation project focuses on designing housing and care facilities for victims of domestic violence in the Maasland area. This project aims to create a safe, healing, and supportive living environment for this vulnerable group.

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

I chose to address the issue of domestic violence victims because I've witnessed individuals in my community who have endured such experiences but did not feel safe or empowered to seek help and break free from these cycles. Eight percent of the Dutch population aged sixteen and above has been a victim of domestic violence. Around 13,000 victims use women's shelters annually and every month, a child or adult dies from the consequences of domestic violence. Every year, there are 200,000 victims of severe domestic violence. Almost half of the total Dutch population above 18 has been a victim and 58 percent of the cases occur in family situations with children under eighteen. Due to the enormity of the problem, it is crucial to give victims a voice and provide proper support. This led to the following question: *"HOW CAN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS BE OPTIMIZED TO ENHANCE THE RECOVERY AND WELL-BEING OF VICTIMS IN WOMEN'S SHELTERS?"*.

### METHODOLOGY

Through literary research, case study analysis, and qualitative analysis, I investigated the needs of domestic violence victims. To gain a good impression of the living environment of women in shelters, I visited an 'Oranje Huis' in Amsterdam and interviewed a staff member. Additionally, the book 'Van Huis en Haard' by Minke Wagenaar served as a foundation for my literary research.

The described methodology was helpful and sufficiently contributed to choosing the appropriate housing typologies for designing high-quality and comprehensive care facilities and housing for this target group. However, interviews with the target group could have provided deeper insights into whether the design meets financial feasibility. The design is mainly based on wishes rather than affordability. This human-centric perspective could lead to a better understanding and provide insights into the background of these women.

### DESIGN

By focusing on different levels, the built environment (enclosed block, intermediate block, and open block) is integrated into the natural environment (public, buffer zone, and private zone). Furthermore, attention is given to the movement of victims between their residences and the external environment, facilitated by transitional areas like a front yard or sidewalk.

### FEEDBACK

The feedback from the teachers provided me with insights into various aspects. Below are some points explained.

#### Architecture:

- Initially, my design was divided into two parts: a closed building block with one main entrance through a reception and rowhouses (open block) with individual front doors. Based on the feedback, I added an intermediate building block where the houses are accessible via individual front doors and connected through a communal garden on the first floor.
- Additionally, I favor straight lines and symmetry, but this was not fully reflected in my design. The feedback helped me to translate this in my project and stay true to myself, resulting in a coherent design.

#### Building Technology:

- From previous project experiences, I initially used concrete tunnel formwork for the load-bearing structure of my houses, because they are easy to stack and available in various sizes. However, considering the non-sustainable nature of these materials and the feedback received, I moved away from this idea and chose a timber frame construction.
- Furthermore, feedback on my different details contributed to a sustainable design that includes foundation beams, prefab timber frame elements in the walls, sun shading and triple glazing.

### OWN WORK

I had the ambition to create an autarkic and CO2-negative design disconnected from the sewage system. Because I focused entirely on the ambition of designing proper housing for my target group, my first ambition disappeared. From my own work, I learned how important the connection between the built environment and the natural environment is, using transitional zones. This results in a subjectively safe environment without the need for technologies or physical security measures.

### REFLECTION QUESTION

*“DOES MY DESIGN SUFFICIENTLY MATCH THE LOCATION OF MAASLAND AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT?”.*

Thanks to the good accessibility to Maasland, residents enjoy a natural environment and the amenities available in the city. Additionally, an urban problem is solved in a natural environment, which can be beneficial for the women's healing process.

### THE GREEN HAVEN AND ARCHITECTURE

The relationship between my graduation project, the master track Architecture, and the Dwelling studio is that my project responds to the themes of sustainable thinking, inclusion, housing needs, and living with water. It has a direct societal impact by solving a problem currently occurring in the city in a natural environment. Additionally, it creates housing and employment opportunities, thereby promoting social inclusion. My project can serve as a model for similar initiatives in other regions. Due to the concrete goals and a logical layout of the floor plans, the transferability of my project outcomes is high.

### TOWARDS P5

In the final part of my graduation period, I want to focus on 3D modeling and building physical models. Throughout the year, I mainly worked in 2D which I want to translate into a three dimensional project.