

Amsterdam-Noord

The development of and the liveability in the north side of Amsterdam

Reflection
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 **URBANISM**



COLOFON

Reflection
Master thesis

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REFLECTION

The methodology I composed at the start of the graduation project more or less work out as I imagined. Some elements I skipped during the process because they were not as relevant as I thought they would be and some were added because they got my attention during research. However the end product is what I expected at the beginning. Comparing the methodology I made at the start with the methodology I made at the end reveals the differences (figure 1 & 2). Over the year some elements in both the literature and resources as the steps changed due to new insights, these changes were already taken into account because such a project cannot be precisely planned in advance. The changes I made in the methodology improved the outcome. I wanted to design an intervention somewhere in Amsterdam-Noord which would be underpinned by a well-considered research contributing to both local as regional goals. Despite some changes in the methodology the outcome is what I aimed for, however I did not exactly know what it would look like of course.

In figure 2 the arrows show the way I went through the methodology, as shown at some point it was kind of chaotic but that is part of my way of working and even part of a creative process. However the methodology helped me with planning and time managing which are not my strongest points. I think this methodology worked out for me and for my project because it showed a linear process, but I already knew that it would not work out that linear whereby I was able to go back in steps sometimes and that I was able to add or skip some elements.

The relationship between research and design

There is a strong relationship between research and design in my graduation project because the design is a result of in depth research. The location for the interventions and the design assignment where determined during the process. The only thing I choose beforehand was to explore the city district of Amsterdam-Noord, because I wanted to learn about this upcoming part of my hometown which I did not know well.

The research had different layers, the most important

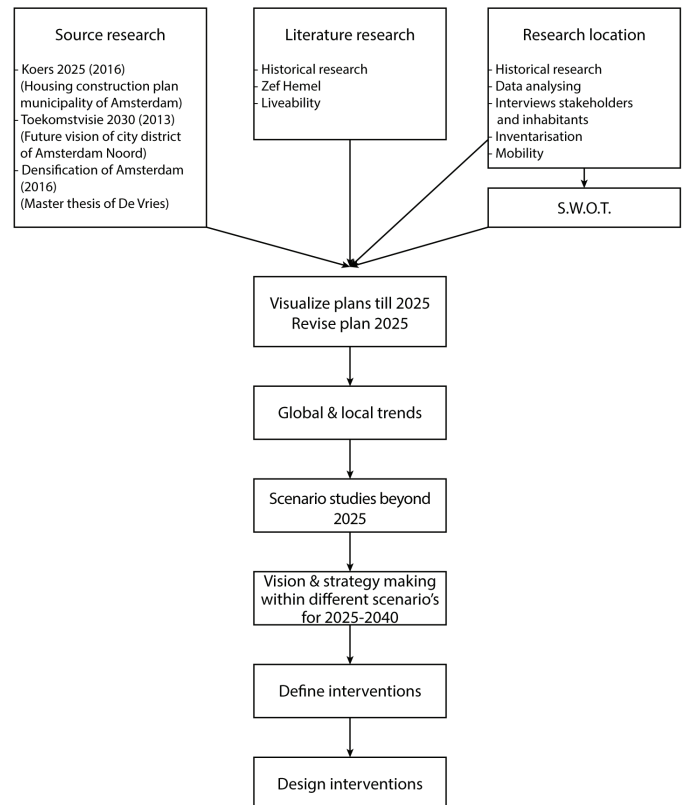


figure 1 *Methodology at the beginning of the process*

REFLECTION

subjects: the problems and goals of Amsterdam in policy documents, the history and structure of Amsterdam-Noord, a theoretical underpinning of multiple concepts and research of Amsterdam-Noord and Buikslotermeer. The outcome of the various studies influenced each other and moreover formed the basis for choices in the formation of the identity, the program and the design. The design is further underpinned by case studies, trend studies and current new Amsterdam urban designs.

The relationship between the theme of the graduation lab and the subject/case study chosen by the student within this framework

The relation between my graduation theme and the graduation lab Complex Cities is the complexity of the growth of cities. In my case the city of Amsterdam. The globalisation problems of the region of Amsterdam are scoped into a small neighbourhood in the north side of Amsterdam, where a new identity gives inhabitants the possibility to identify themselves with the area. In the past years there is a growing interest in local qualities and history. People are looking for their own roots and the roots of an area in counter-reaction to the trends of globalisation. Local forces put the processes of globalisation back in the perspective of unique site-specific shapes.

At the start of this graduation year my idea was to get from researching the regional problems into an intervention on a smaller scale. This worked out well, my design influences the region and contributes to the goals of the municipality as a whole. As shown in figure 3 I worked from Amsterdam via Amsterdam-Noord to the Buikslotermeer.

The relationship between the methodical line of approach of the graduation lab and the method chosen by the student in this framework

The methodical line of approach of the graduation lab corresponds to my approach at some point, but differs as well. The approach of the graduation lab is about trans-disciplinary approaches, internationalisation and planning methods and tools. I will now compare my project to these elements.

I used various disciplines during my graduation pro-

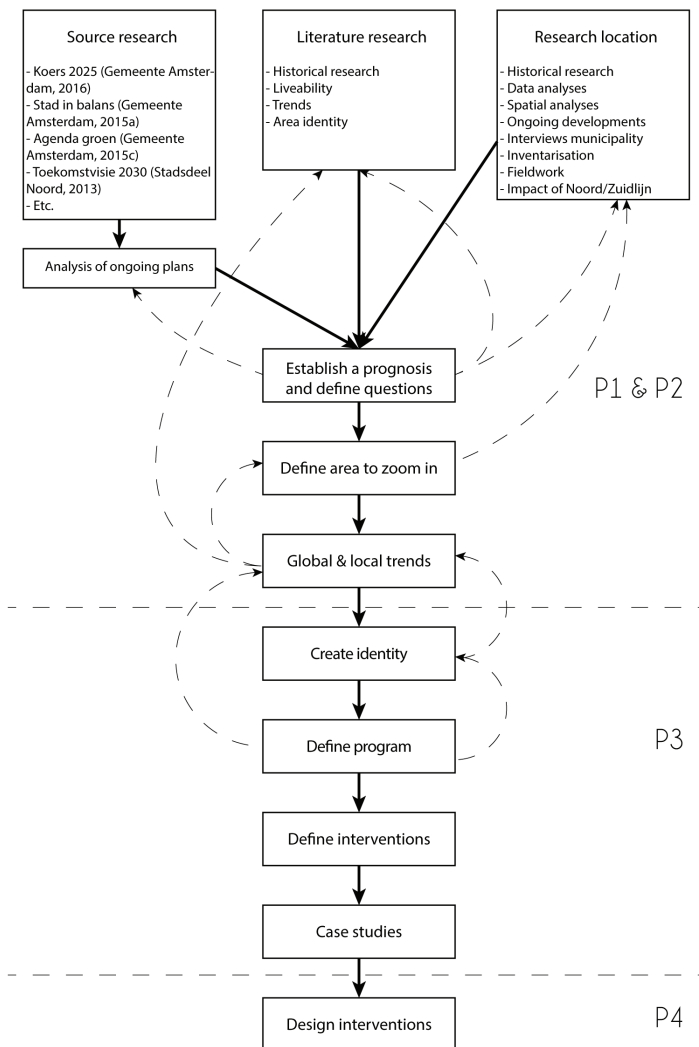


figure 2 Methodology at the end of the process

REFLECTION

cess. I looked into the history of the city and the city-district, I used political input in terms of policy documents, I used data and a social and economic input to create an interdisciplinary project.

In terms of using and investigating urbanisation and urbanism in regions around the globe, I mainly focused on case studies within Amsterdam because I wanted to create a strong Amsterdam identity. So I mainly focussed on regional and even local elements instead of international elements, in my project this was to strengthen the identity.

I used planning methods and tools in my project, I always kept the feasibility of the project in mind and tried to work in line with the policies of the government. However this could be more elaborated, I am still working on the phasing of the urban plan which is an important planning method which will be present in the final booklet.

The relationship between the project and the wider social context

Amsterdam is growing rapidly in number of inhabitants. Due to the financial- and real estate crisis the housing construction and-market almost came to a complete stop. Now that the economy revives, people have more money and confidence to buy and sell houses. The problem is that due to the lack of new built real estate and the popularity of the city, there is not enough housing for everybody. This creates an overheating market, which has insufficient supply for the demand. Real estate prices are going through the roof and people have to wait for almost ten years in the region of Amsterdam to be in the running for social housing and within the city borders even longer. The rising prices and waiting lists make the city inaccessible for certain people, especially in the middle class. They earn too much for social housing and cannot afford the rising real estate prices.

Furthermore the shortage of affordable housing will create a gap in the housing market for starters. While the city is already in shortage of affordable housing in the middle segment for both owner-occupied- and rented houses. This brings the city in need to build new houses to enlarge the supply to reduce prices. So densifying the city is of big social relevance to keep the city accessible for different kinds of people.

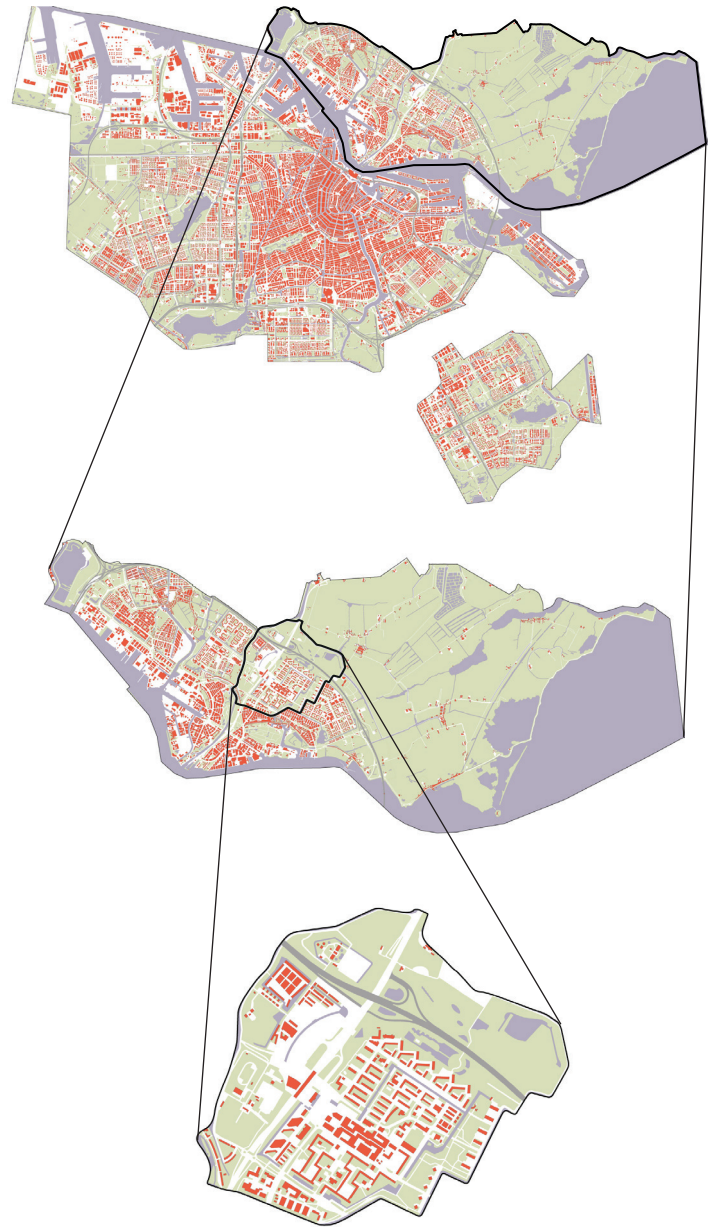


figure 3 *From Amsterdam via Amsterdam-Noord to Buikslotermeer*



figure 4 *Urban plan*

