
Reflection

Project: Adaptive reuse of campus buildings towards a living campus
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Architectural Engineering Studio

Within the Architectural Engineering track of the Master of Architecture of the TU Delft, the focus of the studio relates to 'flow', 'stock' and 'make' within the field of architecture. This scope of topics includes sustainable, societal and technical challenges and combines them into an architectural context. The studio offers me to explore topics, such as sustainability through the scales and thereby establishing a wider view of a topic within its context. This matched my project and its design route towards the P4.

Research and design

Where the period between the assessment of the problem statement and the writing of the research paper was more in depth research on a certain specific topic with a specific question, after the P2 this changed. Research was the basis for the design, where there groundwork for adaptability and flexibility became clear, but the direct implementations were still unknown.

Within the period between P2 and P4 the design of the EWI building became prominent and the research was in the first period more linked towards the unknowns of the building. Via research into building documents, site visits and conversations with people involved with the building, the EWI building became more clear and the question of what to design thereby also.

From there on the research and design element became more directly linked. Research gave inputs to the design, and the design gave inputs to research. This coexistence continued throughout the whole period. If within the design a certain unknown or question became prominent, the answers were found within research. If it were building technology, architecture or ever materiality, the questions from the design were made clear via research.

This research wasn't another elaborate paper or thesis, but quick and easy searches in literature or online. But input from the teachers/mentors or even experts for climate design was indispensable throughout this phase, and can also be seen as a way of getting information and thereby research. Via questions and discussions shared the knowledge and gave me new insights.

The value of the project

Within the project, the boundaries of the academic and societal value are especially made clear within the technical range. The proposal of an ever changing interior space, made possible by self-building and combining elements in order to establish a living environment can therefore be seen as rather new. And the inclusion of collective student housing brings back a social factor within an ever individualising society that can impact the lives of many other people directly.

This project can be seen as a source of inspiration towards firstly the TU Delft and the Real Estate Management of the campus area, as this project proposes something in that contrasts to the current reality of the TU Delft campus buildings. But it is not limited to the TU Delft nor campus buildings, the implementations can be made broader and be applied towards a wider variety of buildings. And even within one building, this project proposes something that is not final, that changes over time and evolves. Instead of calling an architectural project as finished once it is build or realised.

This project can therefore be seen as a starting point for further investigation and design, mainly based upon the workability of the self-build system and the implications of the prefabrication. The social aspect of the effects of using a similar system is also yet to be investigated.

Think about the economical implications of rent in relation to the use of materials and thereby available space within the building, or the cost of maintaining such a structure. The boundaries between project and product become vague and therefore the contemporary structures within society become too.

I'm not suggesting this is the way to go, or that this system must be the future, but the main idea behind this project is based upon the question of sustainability of the current use of buildings. Whereas this project is an investigation towards adaptability and flexibility in the build environment, two concepts which can benefit the search for sustainability from a different point of view than maybe the current way of thinking is focussed upon. Therefore the value of transferability of this project can be seen as an invitation towards the world of architecture to think differently about the use of existing buildings and the role they can play within the world of tomorrow.

Towards P5

In the period between the P4 and P5, the elaboration of the building system is to be investigated and detailed further. The combination of system and user, of building technology and people and thereby the kind of architecture that is to be portrayed can be worked upon. Bringing the architecture to life and portraying this by creating renders or eye level insights into the design of the spaces and the building. But also the project itself within its context is important and needs more depth, but the generalisation of the project as a concept can also be made clear.

Between the P4 and the P5 the architecture of the EWI building and the new functionality has to be the basis, but what this project can bring further, or what can be taken towards another building is important to acknowledge and make clear. The question of what is product and what is project is maybe a theme to discuss in this period.
