

final report

group 8



7 April 2022

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m³ [em·cubed]
**mobile meeting modules
and a unit of (meeting) space**

group 8

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1. introduction:

neighbourhood & change



The Hague South West

Housing corporation Staedion, the municipality of the Hague and developer Heijmans are working together to improve and rebuild various areas in the Hague Southwest. Among the strategies of housing stock densification, diversification and greater social mixing is the ambition to improve the quality of public spaces in the neighbourhood, which serves as a point of departure for our analysis and potential strategies.

The focus on improving the neighbourhood lies in improving the quality of the housing facilities. However, in order to improve the quality of the entire neighbourhood, attention should be given to those facilities that enhance the character of the space besides housing facilities and which engage people in active participation in the life of the neighbourhood. Therefore, we focus on creating social meeting spaces in the Gaarden. Together with Dreven and Zichten, they are part of a joint redevelopment project in the Hague Southwest. These neighbourhoods are located in the area of Bouwlust and Vrederust. According to the project document (den Haag, 2022a), some houses in these areas will be kept, others will be demolished. Ambitions for this neighbourhood are to either refurbish or demolish the houses that are there, build 3,500 extra houses, add services and greenery, as well

Figure 1. De Gaarde canal.

as enhance the mobility of the area. During the redevelopment and after, there is a need for more space for sitting and gathering. Therefore, we have created an intervention that adds meeting space to the neighbourhood that can be used both during and after the demolition.

the need for social meeting places

Bouwlust and Vrederust are located at the border of the Hague. The neighbourhood mainly consists of post-war tenement flats. The area is very green and spacious. In 2021, the neighbourhood consisted of 29.228 residents (Den Haag in Cijfers, n.d.). In comparison to the Hague’s average, there are more younger residents. 26,3% of the residents of Bouwlust and Vrederust are between 0 and 19 years old, compared to 22,3% in the Hague. 58,1% of residents are between 20 and 64 years and 15,4% are older than that (Den Haag in Cijfers, n.d.).

Of these residents, 73,6% has a migration background, in comparison to 56,2% of residents in the Hague in total (Den Haag in Cijfers, n.d.). The term migration background is used by the Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek (CBS) for someone of whom at least one parent was born outside the Netherlands (CBS, 2022). This term is also used by other governmental institutions, such as the municipality of the Hague. Remarkably, as shown in Figure 2, the migration balance in Bouwlust/Vrederust was negative in 2020, after being positive since 2014.

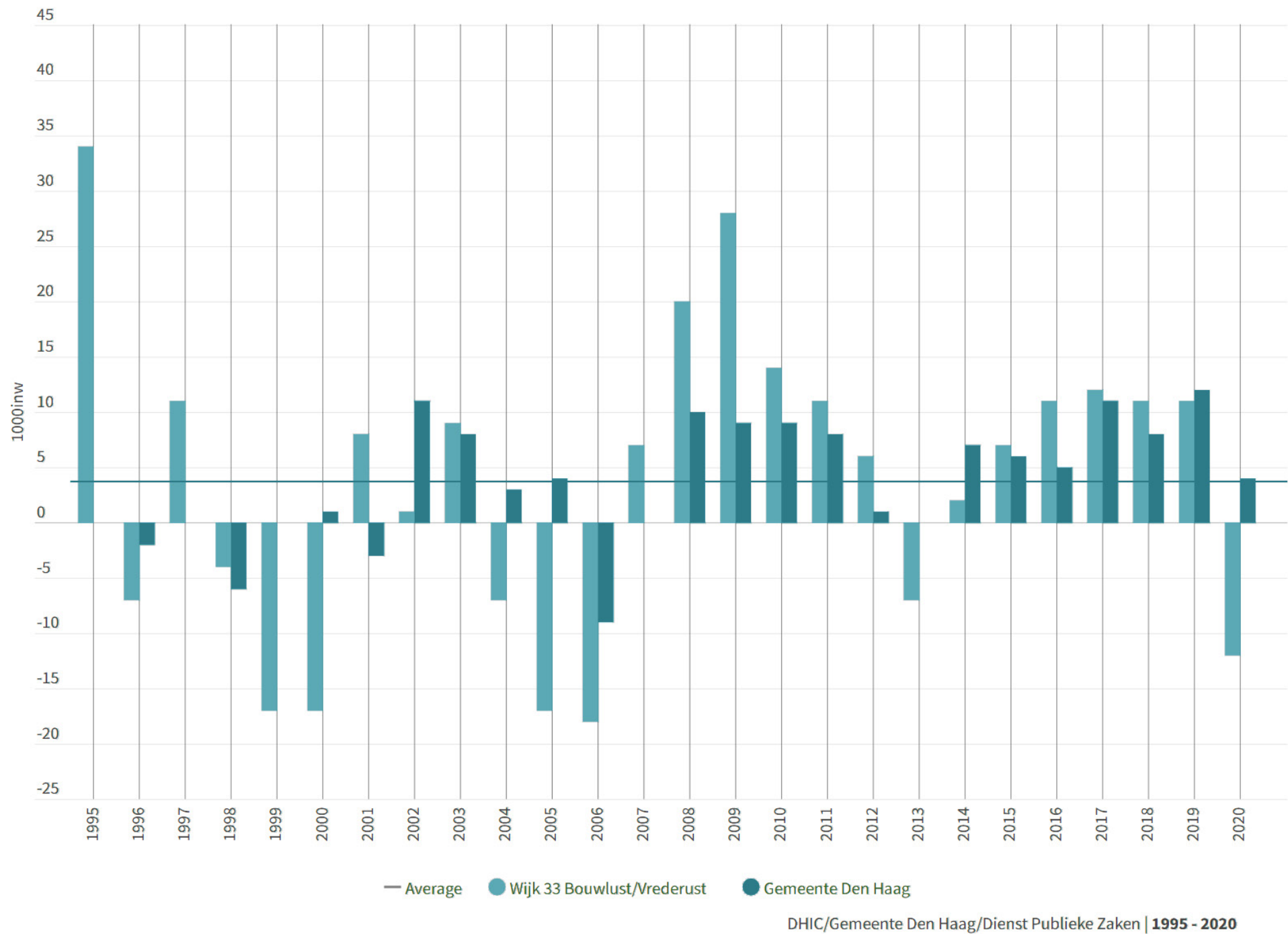


Figure 2. Migration balance per 1.000 residents. source: Den Haag in Cijfers (2020).

Of all households in Bouwlust and Vrederust, 62,8% are low-income. 28,9% are middle income and 8,3% are high-income households (Den Haag in Cijfers, n.d.). In comparison to the Hague average, there are more low-income households. 14,7% of households receive unemployment or social assistance benefits (Den Haag in Cijfers, n.d.). 60% of all residents live in good health, in comparison to 70% in the Hague (Den Haag in Cijfers, n.d.).

Data from the Health Monitor (Gezondheidsmonitor) for adults conducted by the Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en Milieu (RIVM) in 2020, shows the importance of new social meeting places that will increase social cohesion in the neighbourhood and encourage residents to go outside, as this indicator in Bouwlust and Vrederust is lower than in the rest of the Hague. The social cohesion score in Bouwlust and Vredelust is 5,3 out of 10. On average, this grade is a 5,7 in The Hague (Den Haag in Cijfers, 2019). This grade is made up of scores on questions such as “The people in this neighbourhood barely know each other” and “I would give the key of my home to my neighbours during a period of longer absence”. Bouwlust and Vredelust thus score a bit lower than average.

The Health Monitor shows that 64,2% of residents of Dreven and Gaarden are lonely, compared to 56,8% in the Hague and 47% in the Netherlands. 24,5% of all residents experience a lot of stress, in comparison to 23,9% in The Hague and 17,9% in the Netherlands. Meeting places can reduce these numbers by increasing the spatial

opportunities for social interactions between residents.

Furthermore, social meeting places can stimulate residents to go outside. Certain designs can stimulate residents to move. This can also increase the health of residents of Dreven and Gaarden. Right now, 67% of all residents experience their health as good, as compared to 75,3% in The Hague and 78,4% in the Netherlands. 59,7% of residents in Dreven and Gaarden are overweight, as compared to 49% in The Hague and 50,8% in the Netherlands. 40% adhere to the exercise guidelines, as compared to 49,1% in The Hague and 49,9% in the Netherlands. This data shows that creating meeting places that both promote higher social cohesion and stimulate healthier behaviour or more movement can make a difference in the neighbourhood.

structure of the report

As has been shown above, it is necessary to add social meeting places to the Gaarden to stimulate residents to meet with each other and go outside. Taking into account the near future of the physical neighbourhood, the interviews we conducted and the theories of community ties (Bellman and Wortley, 1990; Sennett, 2019), we have decided to problematise how a (design) intervention can strengthen the existing community bonds. Given the risk of these relationships dissolving with the demolition of the houses and relocation of the residents, through our design of the meeting spaces, we would like to offer the opportunity to strengthen and uphold

them. Additional requirements are that the meeting place can be kept in place during both the demolition and afterwards and that it is movable.

The report firstly describes our approach to the context of the neighbourhood, the underlying policy mechanisms and our design process responding to the site and its requirements. Secondly, we outline the context for our intervention, which consists of the theoretical background and an analysis of our experience in the fieldwork. In the third chapter, we describe our design proposal together with the surrounding policy framework and management strategy. In this chapter, we will analyse whether our intervention meets our design requirements and leads to what we have envisioned as our goal. Finally, we reflect on our process.

Figure 3. Meeting space outside of one of the apartment blocks





Following Carmona et al.'s (2008) argument, “to understand the multiple drivers and barriers confronting public space decision-makers in their attempts to improve the quality of public space”, whereby we understand quality as the opportunity for gathering and mixing (Sennett, 2019), we followed a mixed-method, interdisciplinary approach between architecture, ethnography and sociology. As Rucks-Ahidiana and Bierbaum (2015) state, mainstream discourses on urban sociology have disregarded the spatial dimension in their method leading to a lack of acknowledging individuals’ embeddedness in their spatial environment. Thus, employing a mixed-method approach allows for a more thorough analysis of the interplay between residents’ interests and the notion of space. Firstly, by making use of secondary data and exploring the municipality’s proposal on social mixing as well as foreseeable neighbourhood changes, the social dimension at play was interrogated. The spatial dimension was further examined through a site analysis which consisted of reviewing satellite images, maps, and images

of the neighbourhood. This helped to understand the local infrastructure and destination points to gain insights into residents’ movements. As a result, a plan of action was formulated with a special focus on the ideas of movability, temporality, and decentralisation. The plan of action informed the fieldwork as it consisted of a questionnaire as well as points of attention such as visible neighbourhood demographics. The fieldwork was further supported by a mapping activity with the aim to narrow down the geographical focus of the intervention. Furthermore, residents were interviewed based on the formulated questionnaire and participant observation took place. Additionally, civic organisations were identified as key stakeholders which resulted in phone interviews to collect further data on residents’ interests. The data gathered from the fieldwork allowed for a revision of potential locations for the intervention and the identification of residents’ sentiment towards neighbourhood changes. By issuing an invitation to mix, rather than impose mixing (Sennett, 2019, p. 211), our design intention to work with simple means and allow the residents

to decide which spaces are important and attractive to them, who do they want to meet with, and how they would like to do it was constructed. Case studies of urban interventions that follow the idea of communal gathering through simple approaches were conducted and used to inform the design process. By making use of demographic data, government reports and policies, and data on municipal programmes, were used to provide background information for the stakeholder analysis. This enabled an extensive overview of the intervention’s possible societal impact. The subsequent stakeholder analysis gave insights into how the design needed to be adapted to fit the needs of different societal groups, as well as private and institutional partners. The design process was ongoing during the different stages of the research and consisted of sketching, creation of mood boards, and graphic visualisation. Lastly, throughout the research process, secondary literature was used to provide the theoretical foundation for the intervention with a focus on theories of community building and placemaking.

Figure 4. Infrastructure such as roads or rubbish bins often hinders interaction.

2. the approach

neighbourhood changes

On February 10th 2022, the Hague municipality council made the final decision to start implementing a ten-year construction plan for the areas of Dreven, Gaarden, and Zichten (Den Haag, 2022). What can be observed is that the municipality mainly aims at attracting new residents with higher socioeconomic status to 'diversify' the area due to a current 'predominant share of social housing' and a 'one-sided population composition' (Merx and van Zanen, 2020, p. 3). In that regard, the municipal secretary and the mayor state the following: 'Adding homes for people with more purchasing power will contribute to improving the level of facilities and increasing social interaction. This makes the neighbourhood livelier and more liveable. To achieve an inclusive and diverse neighbourhood [...], it is necessary to add a significant share of market houses and commercial space (Merx and van Zanen, 2020, p. 3)'. Thus, the notions of diversification and inclusion can be seen to be linked to the idea of social mixing - meaning the presence of a variety of different socio-economic statuses.

By employing a strategy of social mixing, the municipality hopes to engage in identity-building, whereby

the residents of the neighbourhoods feel a sense of belonging to the place they reside in (Merx and van Zanen, 2020). To achieve this, several changes will take place in the neighbourhood. Firstly, a general densification approach is being followed as social housing units will be demolished but rebuilt entirely and residents have the possibility to return in a similar renting category (Merx and van Zanen, 2020). However, this is subject to the regulation of so-called 'appropriate allocation' (Merx and van Zanen, 2020, p. 5). Thus, it remains open whether all residents will be able to return accordingly. Secondly, there is the general intention to foster commercialisation of the area and promote entrepreneurship (Merx and van Zanen, 2020). Besides the densification and commercialisation approaches, in De Dreven there are plans to urbanise the area with a focus on bringing in families and by reducing the protected nature area (Merx and van Zanen, 2020). In de Gaarden, all existing homes (with the exception of 2017-built portico flats for status holders) will be demolished and new housing will be built for people 'looking for comfort and peace' (Merx and van Zanen, 2020, p. 7). In Zichten, there is argued to be an opportunity

for positive urban transformation due to the district's convenient location with access to public transportation and sports facilities (Merx and van Zanen, 2020). Moreover, there will be a centre that should act as a meeting point for residents as well as facilitate entrepreneurial endeavours (Merx and van Zanen, 2020). All in all, 'a mixed neighbourhood is created with a total of more than 5,500 "new" houses. Of which 51-56% social housing, 18% medium-priced rent, 17-19% affordable purchase, 5-8% private sector rent and 4% private sector sale' (Merx and van Zanen, 2020, p.8).

theoretical framework

In this paragraph, the documents produced by the municipality of The Hague concerning the ambitions and action plans for the Dreven-Gaarden-Zichten neighbourhoods (DSO/2020.275) are analysed from a theoretical viewpoint, to help us understand the mechanisms, assumptions and potential strategies implemented.

Firstly, an element that is emphasised in all records is the process of involving inhabitants, which in theoretical jargon can be defined as a participatory

process. The underlying question in this kind of strategy is: who gets involved? How do we move towards community control of design processes and practices? To get an idea of how participation processes are constructed and directed, it is helpful to use Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969; Figure 5). The ladder is a guide to understanding who has power when important decisions are being made: it is still relevant today as many decision-making processes struggle to move from the lower rungs, although major stakeholders (e.g. local municipalities) want to convey a different message. In fact, purely top-down approaches are often 'softened' with small, usually superficial, citizen involvement actions, to avoid possible future protests and to show sensitivity to the opinions of those directly concerned.

In our case, in the available documents, the administration describes multiple actions to involve the residents of the Dreven-Gaarden-Zichten neighbourhoods. Specifically, in the document 'Communication and participation approach, Restructuring the Dreven, Gaarden and Zichten' (2021), issued by The Municipality of The Hague, Staedion and Heijmans,

3. the context: theoretical background

they state that ‘we put residents and entrepreneurs at the centre of the entire participation process’. A list of actions that have been implemented since 2016 plus those planned for the future is detailed. Some examples include personal conversations, kitchen table conversations, development of specific sub-projects in collaboration with the residents’ committees and online sharing of inhabitants’ stories and testimonies. Through the lens of the Ladder of Citizen Participation, it could be argued that the municipality of the Hague has tried to involve the inhabitants on a consultation or placation level. However, this type of participation is still considered ‘tokenism’ and does not include a real power shift. Whether this is true or not can only be established through an analysis of the specific experiences of the citizens, as the documents available online show only the point of view of the administration. This issue was, therefore, investigated in our fieldwork in the neighbourhood, in an attempt to problematise the participatory processes in the Gaarden and have a broader overview (see Chapter 3: Fieldwork).

This participatory process is at the base of placemaking, an all-embracing idea and a hands-on approach for enhancing a specific neighbourhood, based on people’s collective effort in reimagining and reinventing their common spaces (Project for Public Spaces, 2007). Placemaking pays particular attention to the physical space, the cultural meanings and the social identities present in a given community. The inhabitants are involved in a process of human

capitalization of the local community’s skills, inspirations and potential. This community dimension is strongly emphasised in the plan for Dreven-Gaarden-Zichten and concepts such as social identity, cohesion and sense of community are mentioned as pillars of the project. This specific point might be controversial for several reasons. First of all, we might question if such a sense of community already exists or not in the area and could be reproduced, transformed and amplified in the new upcoming neighbourhood. The demographic composition of the area, with 73,6% of people with a migration background, could pose questions regarding social cohesion. Some sociological investigations have shown that residents of all ethnic groups could experience a ‘hunker down’ effect in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods, with diminished trust, social help and general interactions (Putnam, 2007). This is taken into account in our case study, since the planned project involves the construction of several new dwellings and the introduction of different social groups, mainly with a higher socio-economical power than the existing population. The ‘forced’ mixing is indeed not a guarantee of success. Social segregation could still happen inside the neighbourhood itself, especially if some inhabitants are still facing social inequalities (e.g. economic, educational, racial).

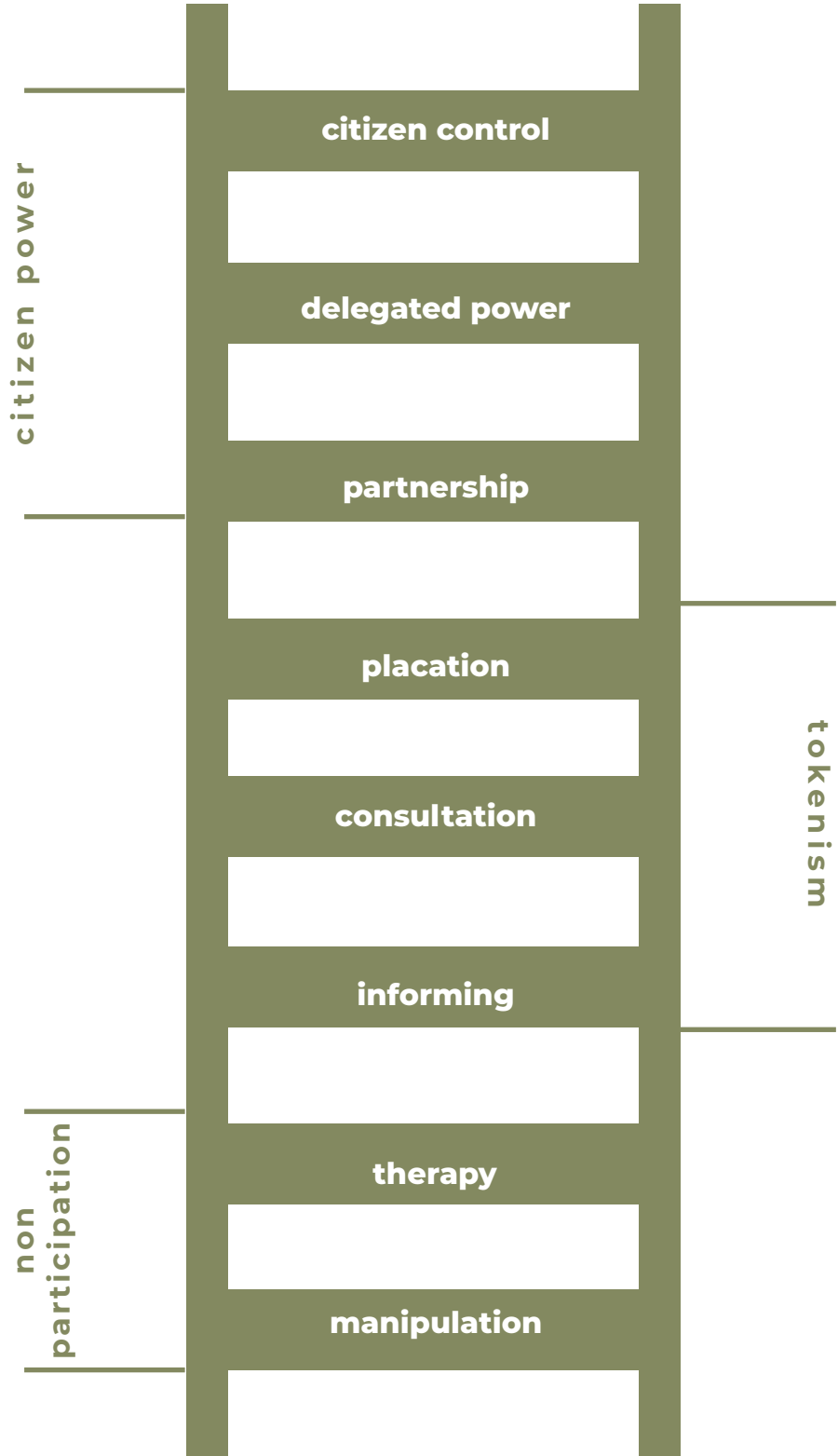


Figure 5. Ladder of Citizen Participation. source: self-made after S.R. Arnstein (1969).



Figure 6. Site analysis. source: self-made annotation, Google Earth base

The neighbourhood of the Gaarden spans between De Gaarde street and the canal to the North West and Erasmusweg to the South East. It is framed by plenty of (mature) leafy trees and canals on three sides.

The area is quite densely built up but the buildings are max. 4 storeys tall, so there is plenty of sunshine throughout the day, even in the winter. Nevertheless, some public areas, especially between the apartment blocks, tend to stay in the shadow.

The dashed line in Figure 6 represents the area that will undergo redevelopment. The new planning, shown in transparent white, suggests taller and bulkier buildings, with potential public space concentrated in the courtyard spaces. The ambition document describes a 'building wall' ('stevige bebouwingswand') (Den Haag, 2022a p.7) which implies more storeys to the South East, potentially overshadowing the courtyards.

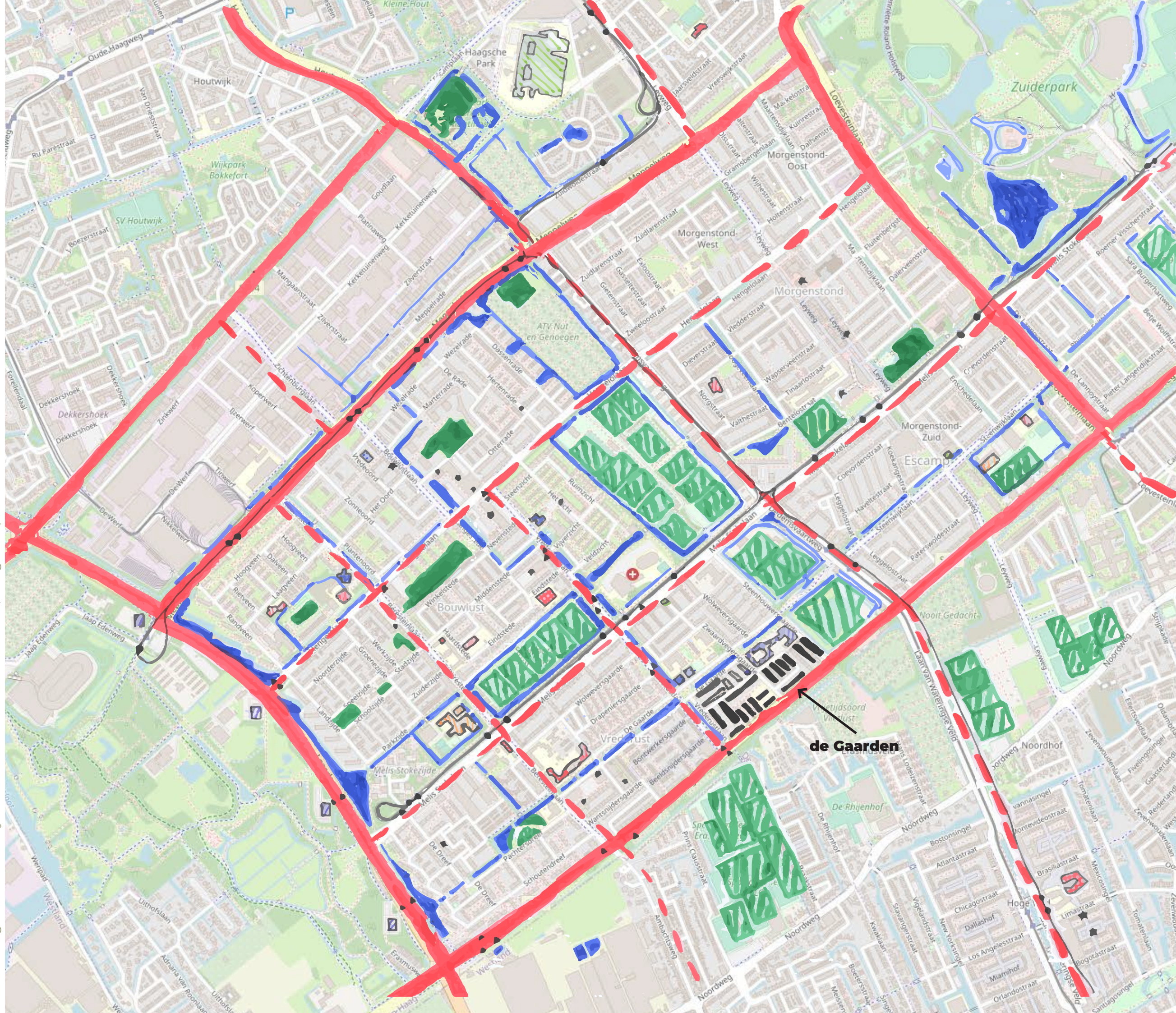
What is interesting and important in the spatial analysis of the area is the temporal and transitional quality of its built environment. The first phase of the demolition and new construction is due in 2024. The meeting spaces we designed aim to accommodate these changes, as well as the challenges, uncertainty and worry the residents are facing because of it.

site analysis

key:

- ▲ Bus stop
- Tram stop
- ★ Supermarket
- ⋮ Mosque
- ✙ Church
- ⋮ Elderly home, nursing agency, 55+
- ⋮ Health center, hospital
- ⋮ Islamic elementary school
- ⋮ Public elementary school
- ⋮ Christian elementary school
- ⋮ High school

Figure 8. Site analysis. source: self-made annotation, Google Maps base



building a mobile meeting space:

points of attention

Prior to the fieldwork, we identified some key points that informed the research, analysis and design of the meeting spaces for the neighbourhood. They served as a framework within which we evaluated the potential strategies:

- **seating/resting space** is the first and most obvious requirement for a meeting space, especially for older people, persons with reduced mobility, or those taking care of family members or carrying groceries
- **choice** - possibility to sit alone, next to, together?
- **safe & welcoming** space - well-lit, accessible and comfortable
- (neighbour) **control vs. privacy**
 - negotiating between enclosure (from traffic, sun, wind, noise) and visibility (safety, vandalism)

Figure 9. Points of attention. source: self-made annotation, Google Street View base

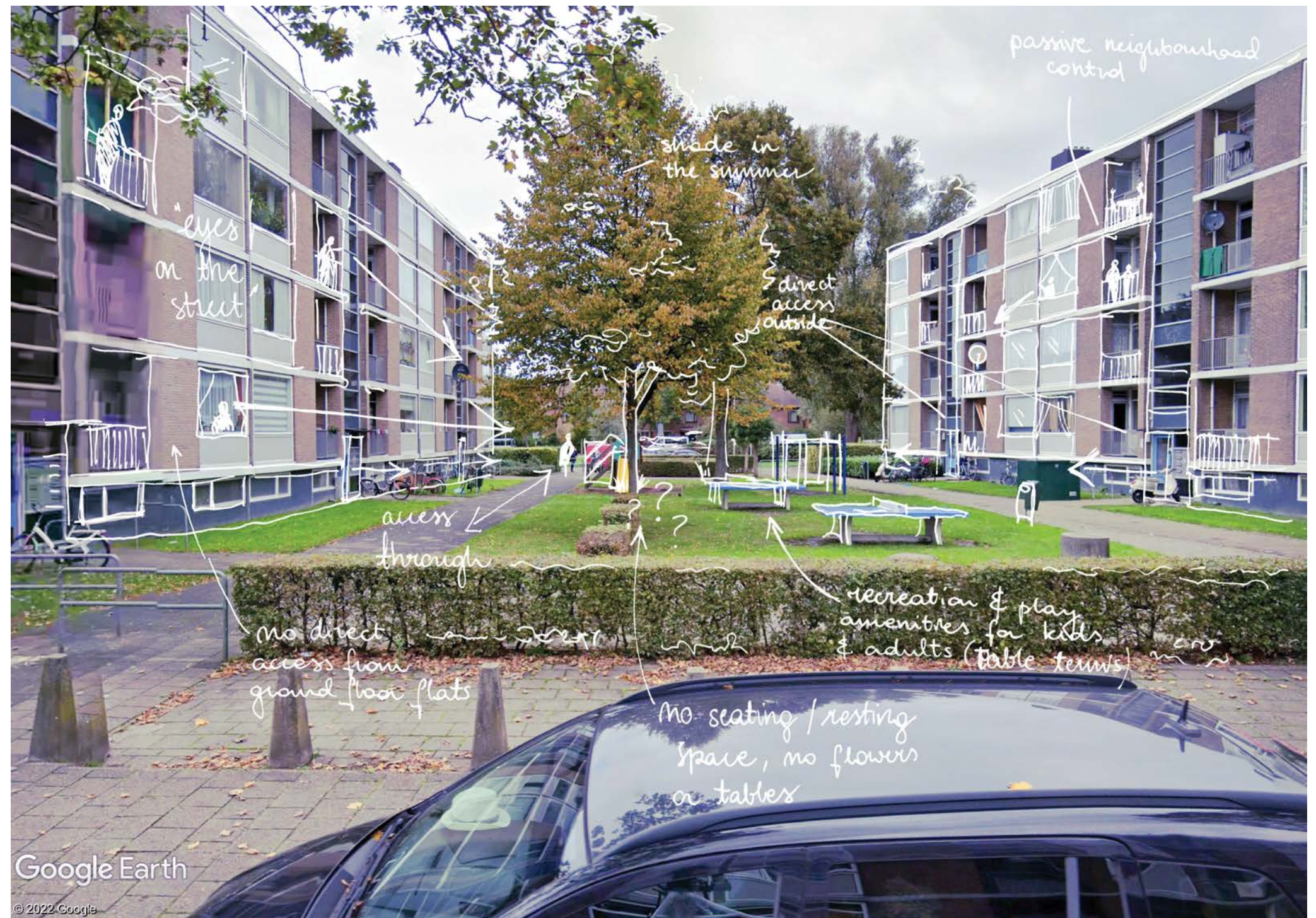


Figure 10. Points of attention. source: self-made annotation, Google Street View base



- **recognisability** - (e.g. colour) easy to spot, reduces the probability of theft
- need for **storage**
- let the **residents contribute** with labor and/or elements. How can people get motivated to build? Bottom up, rather than municipality. Where is the incentive?
- **maintenance** who takes care of the repairs? How weatherproof is it?
- **decentralised**, or one **central intervention**? Brings everyone together, or here and there?
- **bring together** age groups, elderly home + younger residents
- **temporality** designing for different lifespans

- the use during a day, week, month, year. How does it **change**?
- is it easily **moveable** by one person or a group?



Figure 11. Points of attention. source: self-made annotation, Google Street View base

first ideas & strategies

Taking into account the points of attention and a preliminary analysis of the neighbourhood, we have developed a few strategies that can serve as a point of departure for further development. These ideas will assist us when talking to the residents or conducting observations to better visualise the potential of creating various types of meeting spaces.

Table 1 compares the different strategies in terms of possible functions and features. This matrix was helpful throughout the design process, taking into account what we found out from the inhabitants and discarding ideas that turned out to be irrelevant or not appropriate.

The final design proposal draws from a combination of the below strategies for a stronger, more holistic scheme. Nevertheless, the summary of the initial ideas, illustrated with sketches, shows the contextual background with which we set out for the fieldwork.

Table 1. Idea matrix. source: self-made.

		strategy			
		1. re-meubil-air	2. bridges	3. seats on wheels	4. Gaarden lego
function	seating	.	.	.	.
	table	.	.	.	.
	surface treatment		.		
	cooking		.	.	
	lighting	.	.	.	
	deck/platform		.		.
	shading	.		.	
	play		.		.
	plant	.		.	.
	modular/stackable			.	.
feature	mobile/on wheels			.	.
	reclaimed/recycled/repurposed	.	.		
	cheap (new) materials		.	.	.
	easily executable		.		.
	indoor	.	.		.
	outdoor	.	.	.	.
	requires management			.	.
	involves residents	.	.	.	

strategy: re-meubil-air

using reclaimed building elements
to create outdoor urban furniture
(can be combined with 2):

- + low cost
- + creates sense of identity
- + potential for a bread/pizza/grill oven
- + involves residents in collecting and manufacturing
- + gives new purpose to materials which otherwise would be discarded
- requires workshop space
- labour intensive and difficult
- potentially heavy and difficult to move (by one person)
- may prove more difficult than buying new materials
- easy to break/vandalise

'Together with residents and entrepreneurs, beautiful memories will be made to say goodbye in a dignified way to the house where they have lived for years or the building where they have had their business'

(Communicatie
participatieaanpak, 2021 p. 12)

Figure 12. Potential strategy: reusing building elements. source: self-made annotation, Google Street View base



strategy: Gaarden lego

*modular & stackable box units that
can be put together to create seat-
ing, tables, stage... else? (can be
combined with 2 and 3)*

- + infinite possibilities of use,
depends on the creativity of users
- + easily customisable
- + very mobile
- + easy to manufacture
- + can be made by repurposing
food crates or from cheap new
materials
- + from individual to big group use
- risk of vandalism/theft
- requires some management
strategy (maintenance, sign-up
sheet?)
- will most likely need external
company to manufacture



Figure 13. Potential strategies. source: self-made annotation, Google Street View base

fieldwork analysis

With the content of the official documents in mind, the data from the RIVM and a preliminary site analysis conducted through Google Maps, we went for a fieldwork in De Gaarden to analyse if and how new meeting spaces might promote higher social cohesion, resulting in healthier behaviours.

On a sunny day in March, we went to the neighbourhood to do some field observation and collect first-hand accounts from the inhabitants. It was the warmest spring day so far, cloudless sky inviting some residents, mainly children and seniors, to catch the last rays of the sun outside - on balconies, playgrounds and the few benches dotted around De Gaarden. This field-work developed in two distinct moments: a free exploration of the area and the 'Buurtbakkie activity', organised in cooperation with Staedion. These two activities had different structures and methods, which allowed us to collect diverse data and formulate some hypotheses.

In the **free exploration phase**, we walked around the neighbourhood, seeing, for the first time live, the streets and houses we had previously explored with Google Street view. We moved around spontaneously, without a precise structure, following the elements that attracted our gaze and attention (e.g. specific areas, people using a space, particular shapes and objects). We walked around the whole area, noting the differences and peculiarities of the different places that characterise the neighbourhood. At this stage, we talked informally with some people standing in front of their



Figure 14. A family we spoke to in front of their row house.

houses, who were curious, or even slightly suspicious about our presence (Figure 14). We introduced ourselves as students from TU Delft, which put people at ease, allowing us to have an exciting and natural conversation. From this exploration, we gathered some significant elements for our investigation:

where is the buurt #1?

Administratively, De Gaarden is recognised as one neighbourhood, but the overall impression is that people often consider 'de buurt' to be the street they live on and its immediate vicinity, rather than the entire area. There are some signs of internal division, such as metal bars and signs 'Forbidden to non-residents' (Figure 15). It seems that younger children tend to play near their homes, in areas visible from the windows. It also seems like there are specific sites where many children gather; these tend to be the larger ones, while others are left empty (see Figure 29 - Mapping afternoon activity). Events such as the ice cream car driving around the neighbourhood seemed to create a sense of togetherness and community within the residential areas. The social cohesion score in Bouwlust and Vredelust is 5,3 out of 10. On average, this grade is a 5,7 in The Hague (Den Haag in Cijfers, 2019). This score is calculated on questions such as 'People in this neighbourhood barely know each other' and 'I would give the key to my home to my neighbours during a period of longer absence'. Bouwlust and Vredelust thus score

a bit lower than average. Based on our interviews during the free exploration and the Buurtbakkie, residents living in row houses have a closer social cohesion than the residents in the apartments. There seem to be stronger bonds between children and youth than between parents and adults who mainly stay inside.

Figure 15. Sign reads Access forbidden for non-residents.



Figure 16. The ice cream truck attracted a lot of attention.





Figure 17. Playground in front of one of the apartment blocks.

sitting as a challenge

There is a general lack of sitting facilities: some of the central blocks of apartments have a designated green area, mainly composed of some grass and some scattered pieces of a playground, looking isolated and slightly melancholic, with no sitting space around them (Figure 17). Other areas look more open and have a wider green

space, with very few benches or seating solutions (e.g. logs) close to the kids' playground. In the absence of a place to gather, some people have created meeting places in front of their houses, using recycled materials (e.g. concrete blocks, old plastic stadium chairs) (Figure 18). The lack of sitting facilities might be part of the reason why we did not see many adults spending time outside in the residential areas. However, we did observe one couple spending time on their balcony and the grass beneath it. This choice of sitting outside resulted in social interaction with a family coming home from school. The mother and one child quickly went inside after saying hello; however, the other child stayed outside and talked with his neighbours (Figure 28). The scarcity of facilities is reflected in the Safety Monitor (Veiligheidsmonitor) of 2015. Within Bouwlust and Vrederust, 55,8% of all respondents agreed that there were enough playing facilities for children, and 25,4% agreed that there were enough facilities for young people. In comparison, the average percentages in The Hague were respectively 65,9% and 30,8% (Veiligheidsmonitor, 2015).

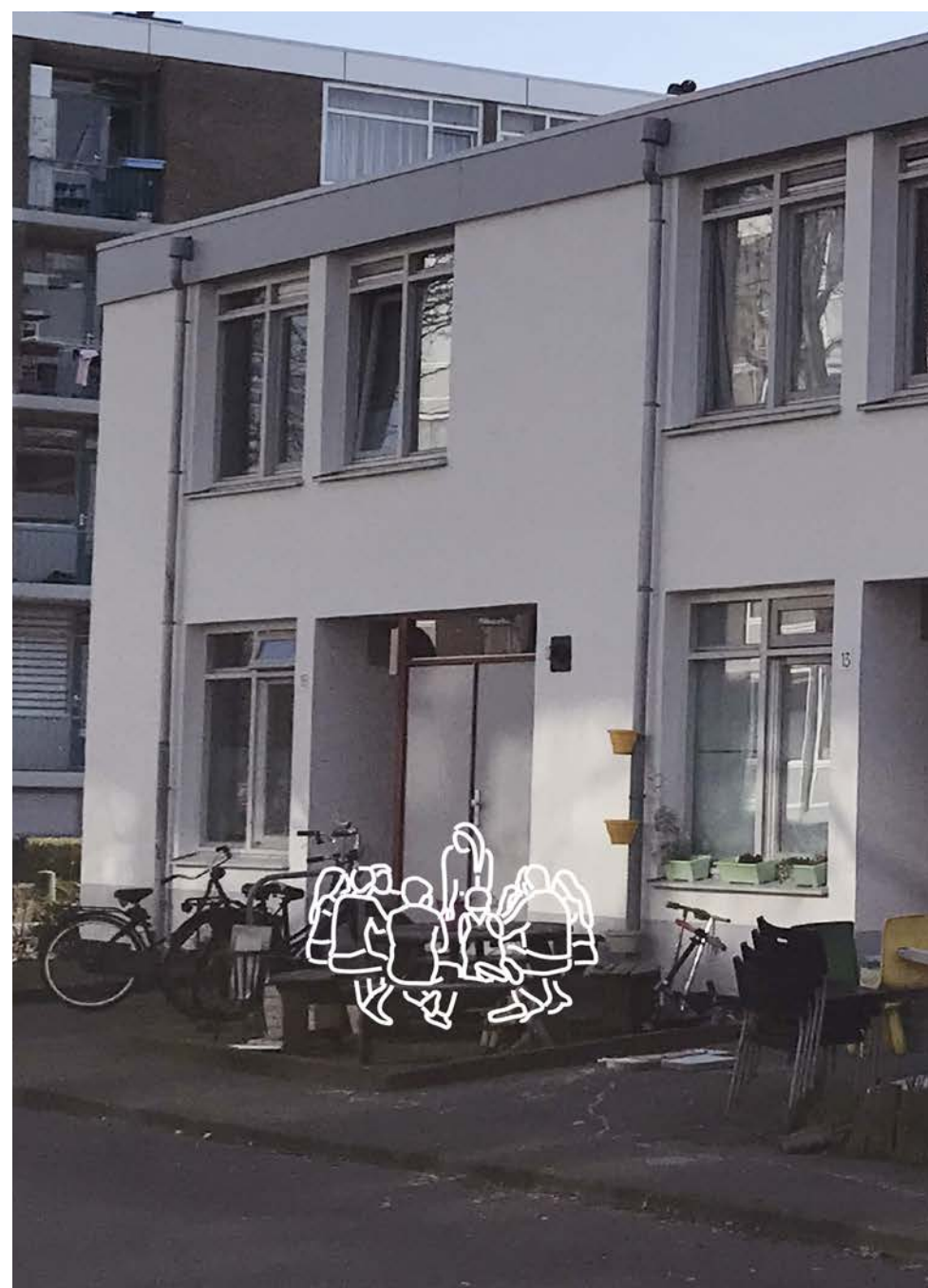


Figure 18. Meeting space in front of one of the row houses.



Figure 19. Resting in the sun, between bins.



Figure 20. Benches facing away from each other do not support interaction.

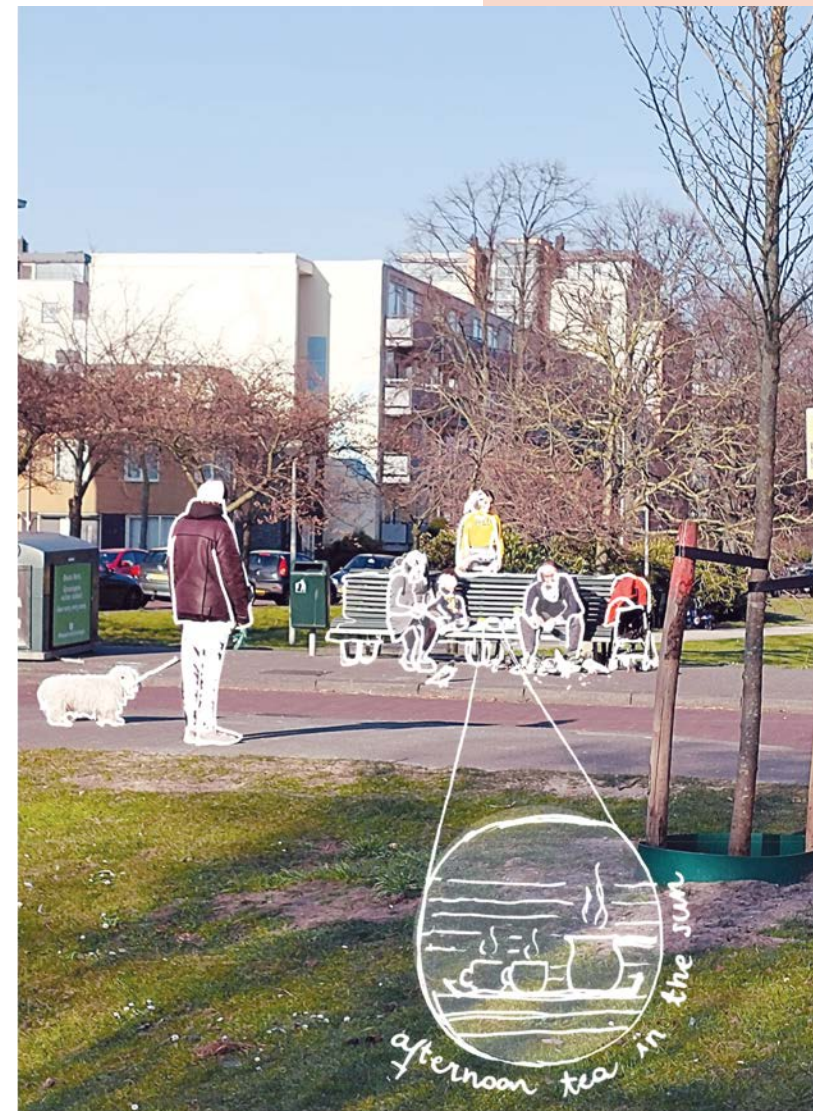


Figure 21. Afternoon tea in the sun.

Furthermore, some of the few seating solutions are placed in unpleasant areas, such as next to rubbish containers or facing the street (Figure 19) or positioned in such a way that contact between people is made difficult (Figure 20). Nevertheless, especially in the area around the central canal, which is sunny and pleasantly green, people use these benches for sitting, relaxing or spending time with their families (Figure 21).

These benches seem essential for the health of elderlies living in the care home next to the canal. We observed them walking multiple rounds in the sun and using the benches as resting spaces. (Figure 22). However, at the same time, the view of parents standing along the fence in the skate park suggests a need for seating places here (Figure 23).

Figure 22. Enjoying the sun.



Figure 23. Parents have nowhere to sit at the skatepark.



Children & space appropriation

Around the neighbourhood, it is possible to observe traces of creative interventions realised by children. Those elements reflect the extreme flexibility with which kids can shape their environment, despite the surroundings' lack of appropriate equipment or a general unwelcoming feeling (Figure 24). Some innovative solutions are put in place to appropriate the space and create improvised and temporary playgrounds (Figures 25 & 26).



Figure 24. Spaces for children.



Figure 25. Appropriating the neighbourhood.



Figure 26. Finding spaces to play.

The second phase of the fieldwork consisted of the **Buurtbakkie activity**. In collaboration with Staedion, we entered the neighbourhood with a bakfiets transporting teas, coffee and cookies. The main goal of this activity was to connect with the inhabitants and collect valuable information for our analysis. Firstly, it is helpful to critically assess the activity itself and how its structure may have influenced the outcomes of our investigation. If we compare the Buurtbakkie with the precedent free exploration, we can observe some differences: when presenting ourselves as students of TU Delft, people usually reacted with openness and collaboration. In contrast, when our presence was associated with Staedion, people were more reluctant to answer our questions, suspicious or generally more closed. This could be explained by some inhabitants' negative feelings about the demolition and renovation plan. On the other hand, presenting ourselves as students facilitated a more relaxed and sincere conversation and greater collaboration. The way we approached people also made a difference: entering apartment buildings, knocking on doors and standing in front of the entrance to their houses created a generally tense and uncomfortable atmosphere. Some people seemed almost frightened, partially opening the doors and having a body language of closure and constraint. Approaching people on the street worked the best because it created an informal and open environment, with people feeling free to leave the conversation at any time. Very few people agreed to have coffee or tea at the Buurtbakkie, which was

located on a fixed spot, sometimes far from the people we were talking with, and therefore did not fulfil its role as a gathering place. A few teenagers walking and skating past agreed to have a cup of tea or coffee but did not interact beyond the drinking.

Between the free exploration activity and the Buurtbakkie, we collected 17 testimonies. Demographically, ten people were identifiable as women and seven as men. Regarding age (estimated), we have four young people between 16 and 25 years of age, four people between 25 and 45 years of age and nine people over 45 years of age. Of the respondents, 11 were members of families and five lived alone. Regarding the origin, nine were Dutch, five were Dutch with a second cultural heritage, and three were non-Dutch (Morocco, Kurdistan and Turkey). Most of the respondents live in houses that are part of the demolition project (N:14), ten of which are flats in apartment buildings, and seven are row houses. From the testimonies collected, we can highlight some significant themes or elements.

Different houses, different opinions

We talked to people living in diverse dwellings, mainly row houses with gardens and flats in multi-storey blocks. These dwellings are in different conditions: the row houses are described as newer and still in good condition. Some inhabitants are unhappy about the demolition plan because they know that the following solutions will not be to their advantage (e.g. flats in apartment blocks without gardens or apartments with fewer rooms than the current house). On



Figure 27. Impressions of the neighbourhood.

the other hand, some flat dwellers complained that the condition of their apartments is poor, especially in winter with the appearance of mould, due to inadequate insulation. Another possible contribution to the different opinions is that there seem to be more interactions among the residents in the row houses than in the apartment blocks, resulting in a higher level of awareness of the demolition plans.

Where is de buurt #2?

Our initial assumption during the free exploration was that the canal on De Gaarde could be an area that all residents like and use; however, no one we interviewed in the Barbiersgaarde area mentioned it. It could be that it lacks attractive facilities (seating, tables) for the residents who do not live in its immediate vicinity to think of it as a 'destination' in the neighbourhood. What seems to be a more critical factor is the perceived distance. The residents prefer to stay in proximity to their homes when spending time in their neighbourhood - using the toilet, grabbing a sweater, or watching after their kids playing outside while cooking. For this reason, we hypothesised that a few smaller interventions in the neighbourhood would be more appropriate than a single central one.

Staedion and the participation process

From their website, it is clear that Staedion emphasised describing how the neighbourhood inhabitants were involved in the renovation project. We, therefore, wanted to collect information directly from the inhabitants on this issue during

our fieldwork. Opinions were mixed: some people have expressed their total disappointment with this participatory process, describing it as a façade and stating that Staedion and the local government are the only ones making decisions. Specifically, citizens' opinions have been heard but not taken into account. In addition, all communications were given in Dutch, and therefore a portion of the inhabitants could not understand it. In the opinion of some, this matter was used as a ploy to positively 'sell' the project and hide less beneficial consequences. Some interviewees were not fully aware of the demolition/renovation plans: everyone has heard about it, but some do not believe that it will actually happen, others are not aware of their rights (e.g. the fact that the government has to provide subsidies for relocations, or that the residents can choose where to be relocated to) and, in general, there is much confusion about the process.

A clash of cultures?

In some interviews (N:3) with Dutch people, tension emerged regarding the different cultures in the neighbourhood. In their opinion, the area has significantly deteriorated over the years. Some allusions (more or less explicit) were made that this impoverishment was caused by the presence of 'other' people, not identifiable as Dutch. One example given by an interviewee was the need to put up signs banning the feeding of geese because 'some people' kept giving them bread. The same person used the word racism to describe his point of view. Another person

expressed her wish to move to an area with more Dutch people. At the same time, however, we noticed that different cultures are no longer a problem when people get in touch. Some Dutch inhabitants stated that they have an excellent relationship with their neighbours from diverse backgrounds.



Figure 28. Impressions of the neighbourhood.



key:

● children & teenagers

● adults

→ walking routes

mapping afternoon
activity
Thursday, 10th March
warm & sunny weather

'do not enter'
residents only

skatepark

focus site

bruitbakke
location gr. 2

ice cream
truck

chatting
across
balconies

makeshift football pitch

bruitbakke
location gr. 1

mapping
afternoon activity

Figure 29. Mapping afternoon activity in de Gaarden. source: self-made annotation, Google Earth base.

4. the proposal: lessons learned

The fieldwork allowed us to verify some of our hypotheses and those connected to our understanding of the community living in the Gaarden. As concluded in the fieldwork analysis, we decided to focus our (design) efforts on strengthening the existing community bonds. As much as neighbourly networks of reciprocities and friendliness are present between direct neighbours, the interviews also revealed tensions between some groups, often based on ethnicity, migration background or simply the perceived differences between 'us and them'.

The strong, voluntary ties are crucial elements of community resilience,

providing a network of reciprocity, companionship, childminding, etc. (Bellman and Wortley, 1990, p.568) We saw them present in Gaarden, not only through the words of our interviewees but also in action. Given the risk of these relationships dissolving with the demolition of the houses and relocation of the residents, through our design of the meeting spaces, we would like to offer the opportunity to strengthen and uphold them. Already now, in the processes preceding the demolition and the following confusion, residents expressed the need for meeting places where information can be shared. A large number of inhabitants emphasised covered spaces when asked about

what types of meeting spaces are needed in the area, which is something we also decided to address through our intervention. Moreover, taking into consideration the territorial limits of place attachment in the neighbourhood which are bound to one's own street, the area visible from the window or front door, the idea of several smaller, more localised interventions fits both the spatial and social logic.

The friendly interactions revolve around the daily life of the inhabitants, concentrating on small, mundane interactions and habits rather than big events or shared hobbies. This is partly due to what emerged from some of

the residents' testimonies or their lack of interest - they very often work long hours in physically demanding conditions to provide for their families and concentrate their scarce spare time and energy on their children rather than engage in active socialising in their neighbourhood. Taking into account the tensions mentioned in some conversations, we aim to issue an invitation to mix, rather than impose mixing (Sennett, 2019, p.211). Our design intention is to work with simple means, acknowledging the cultural differences to allow the residents to decide which spaces are important and attractive to them, who they want to meet with, and how they would like to do it. By placing a number of smaller, modular



case study 1

U-Build System by Studio Bark

U-build is a flat-pack kit of parts that Studio Bark designed for self-built houses. Each box weighs five kilograms, can be put together with hand tools and has a handle on two sides. They can be built by novices and have a simple bolt system. This method was adapted by the studio's architects involved in Extinction Rebellion (XR) to construct towers, stages and benches during an XR Protest in London. (Block, 2019)

Key points:

- + easy to assemble, modular system
- + 'hackable' - can be used for other needs than the original purpose
- + cheap and easily reproducible
- plywood is prone to weather damage
- requires tools to assemble more complicated structures
- once built, it is difficult to reuse the modules

interventions in strategic locations chosen in cooperation with the residents and by identifying potential stakeholders, we aim to challenge the typical 'therapeutic' approach to improving the quality of public space in disadvantaged communities. Instead of working with solutions that convey a message that the citizens are the problem and should adjust their habits to those of the larger society (Arnstein, 1969, p.27), we intend to create a system of modular '**plug-and-play**' (case study 1) solutions that can be used in different configurations by various groups according to their wishes and needs.

We believe that the low quality of public space and little infrastructure encouraging social interaction are both a symptom and a partial cause of the tensions between different groups. However, we also recognise the limits of singular spatial interventions in the broader context of upcoming area demolition. Aiming to avoid romanticising the idea of meeting space in an underprivileged community, we focus on catering for the daily use of public spaces in the Gaarden with the possibility of accommodating more defined programming by residents or stakeholders we identify in the



Figure 31-3. U-build system adapted for an XR protest. source: J. Giddings, A. Whatty (2019) via Dezeen.

plug-and-play

case study 2

Share Chairs by Gehl

Share Chairs are inspired by ergonomic furniture, such as loungers and hammocks. The chairs are made with roto-molded plastic for durability and mass production. They can be rotated into four different positions: a beach chair, a regular chair, a lounger, a hammock and even a table. Easily moved by one or two people, the Share Chairs can sit individually or interlock into larger configurations across the site (Gehl, 2015).

Key points:

- + bright colour - branding & recognisability
- + durable & light
- + ergonomic design encourages longer use
- require sophisticated production
- used in controlled public space (national park), probably stored away at night



Figure 34-5. Share Chairs in action. source: Gehl (2015)

following section (*the proposal: policy framework* - page 82). Emphasising the everyday, we aim to create an intervention with serious concern for life at the street level, inspired by Ismail Farouk's and Usha Seejarim's art projects (Minty, 2011, p.154) and Momoyo Kaijima's interest in 'architecture and urban space from the viewpoint of the people who use it, rather than the architects and planners who are involved in its construction' (Kaijima, 2018, p. 9). According to Sennett (2019, p. 216) simple additions to public space, such as a street bench, a planter, or simply colour, can become **arbitrary markers** of value communicating 'this is a nice place'. With our design intervention, we hope to achieve a similar goal, adding 'this is a nice place to meet' (case study 2).

urban markers

case study 3

repurposed urban furniture

Creative repurposing of materials was something we have already observed in the Gaarden. The best results are achieved with simple means which aim to improve the quality of the piece. Comfort, accessibility and safety need to be considered, alongside the balance between final effect and the amount of time and resources needed.

In adopting this strategy for design purposes, it is crucial to keep in mind the balancing act between originality and (perceived) value for the residents.

Key points:

- + sense of identity
- + cost efficient
- + use of colour
- may turn out to be more labour- and resource-intensive than using new materials
- can appear shabby and cheap
- limited range of available materials
 - risk of low perceived value

The tension between programming and simply 'letting things happen' will be mediated by recognisable design and the reuse of building elements in the construction of the meeting spaces. The **creative reuse of materials** (case study 3) is already present in the neighbourhood; it stems, however, from necessity rather than trends. Continuing this approach results in positive sides from the perspective of costs, use of resources and materials, and the aforementioned placemaking. An important aspect to consider here is mediating between the recognisability of the elements, such as window frames, and a high quality finish, showing value in the intervention.

Figure 36-8. Creative reuse ideas. source: self-made (bottom), Pinterest (top)



creative reuse



mobile meeting modules and a unit of (meeting) space

Our proposal for the inhabitants of the Gaarden are small-scale interventions placed in several strategic locations in the neighbourhood to enrich daily practices, creating different possibilities for social interaction.

strategy

Our strategy is largely connected to the initial ideas about reusing materials in the neighbourhood and building a form of lego pieces (see *first ideas & strategies*, p. 28-33); however, these ideas have morphed and developed after weeks of literature research and the fieldwork.

Our final strategy consists of three modules, small, medium and large, that can easily be separated or put together, moved and stacked by inhabitants. Participation does not become an end goal; the aim of the intervention is not a final, finished product, but rather the continuous process following the lives and changes in the neighbourhood. This strategy can also be extended into making benches from railings along the fence by the skate park, like the 'Mozambican benches' project by Ismail Farouk (C. Newton, 2022). Research performed on pop-up interventions identified modularity, flexibility, speed, simplicity, affordability, reversibility, and second

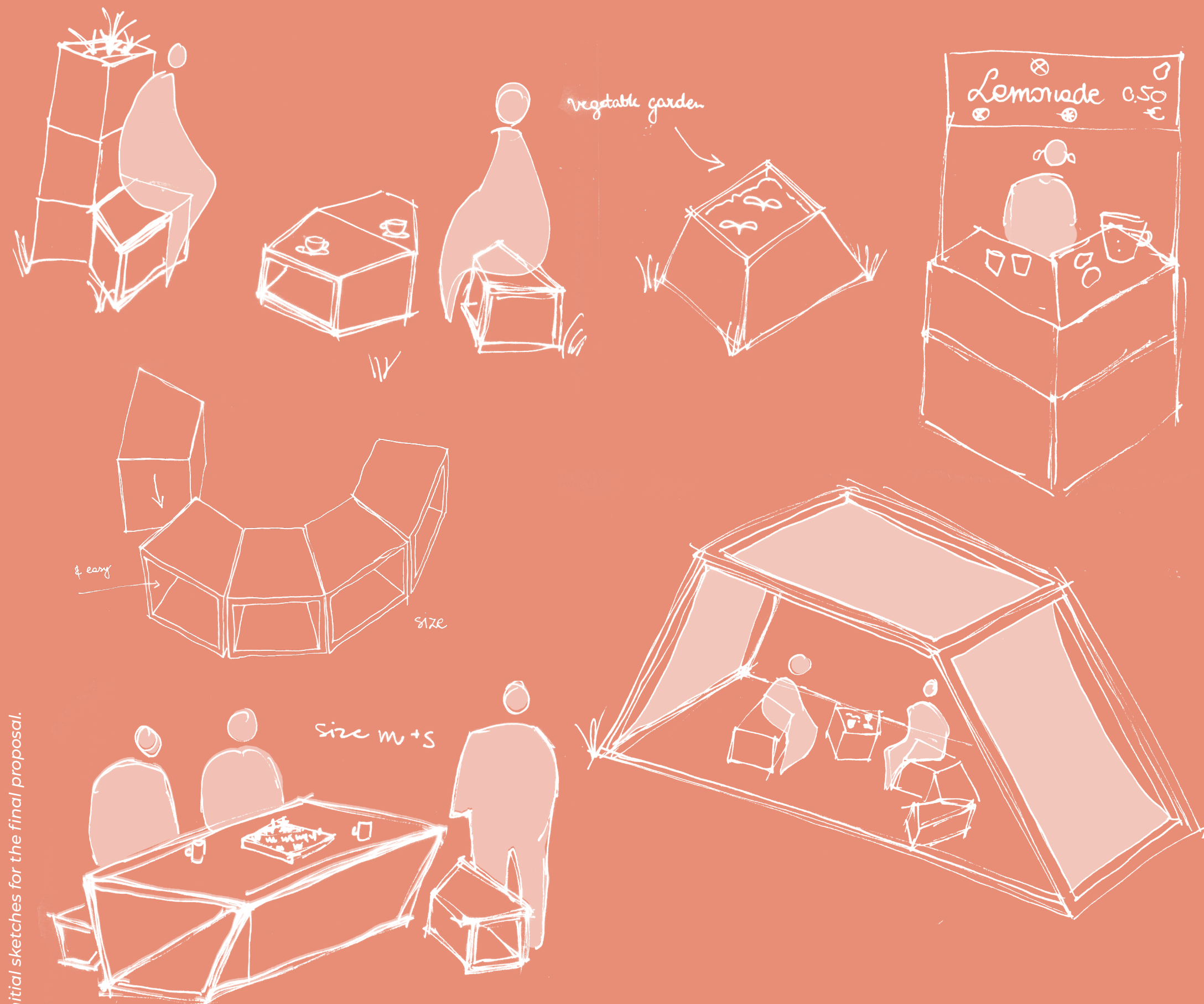


Figure 39. Initial sketches for the final proposal.

design proposal

life management as requirements of temporary pop-up environments (Bertino et. al., 2019, p.11). Temporality must also be considered, as relationships require time to develop and flourish, and commitment and collaboration require time to materialise (Alpalhão, 2017, p. 2 and 16). Alpalhão argues that time should be the starting point of any collaborative conversation if long-term social and transformation - impact beyond the immediacy of the events - is the aim, and look at it through the four topics process, participation and legacy. She sees incremental growth as vital to create a shift from being the architect's project that fades quickly, to instead becoming a collective and collaborative process (Alpalhão, 2017, p. 2 and 16). Everyday use is our main focus, however, an inauguration festival or a monthly event attached to the interventions can catalyse further encounters.

For this to be used by residents and not abused, e.g. by dislocating elements into the canal or stealing parts, a sense of ownership or identity is paramount. It is the biggest challenge and opportunity of our design; the several locations and the connections between them are seen in relation to this. The project is identified as an integrated proposal, although there is no central, or most prominent, location. Instead, it is multiple and simultaneous. The recognisable brand of the intervention consists of the trapeze shape of the modules across scales, as well as the reuse of materials with a high-quality finish. The same type of objects with uniform materiality and colour identity make it easily understandable that the

elements are part of the same strategy, and it has the potential to become a symbol for the neighbourhood even after the demolition and rebuilding. Although reusing materials is part of our strategy, these will not have a shabby look. Building materials will be resized, sanded and repainted to have a consistent expression, and protected from outside conditions to remain robust and resilient. The symbolic dimension is important but does not compromise spatial quality.

In addition to the recognisability, each module is given a serial number to be kept track of. The monitoring of the S modules could go one step further, with GPS trackers attached for several reasons. A clear goal is to help prevent dislocation. However, equally important is the opportunity created for potential research on how mobile meeting spaces are used by citizens once they are implemented in public space. Many great interventions and visions are currently being, and have in previous years been, realised, yet shockingly little data exists on the long-term success and effects of the interventions. Tracking the s modules would provide data on how people use the modules, such as how often they are moved and whether they tend to be used while dispersed or in groups. The research opportunity also facilitates the possibility of additional financial resources, as well as the direct answer to whether the intervention is actually sustainable. This would be a great asset to evaluate whether the intervention should be scaled up, be implemented in other neighbourhoods or maybe even other cities.



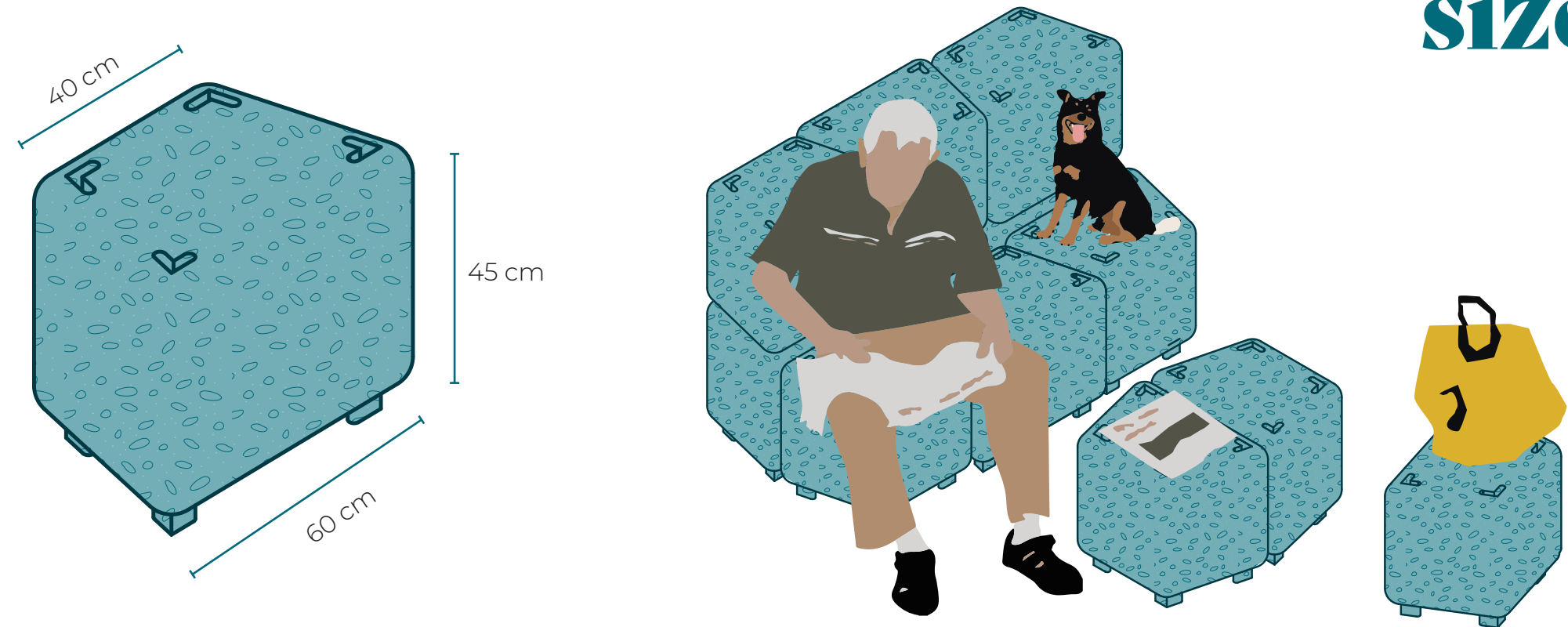
Figure 40. Combined s, m and l modules could host an outdoor language class.

size s

module s

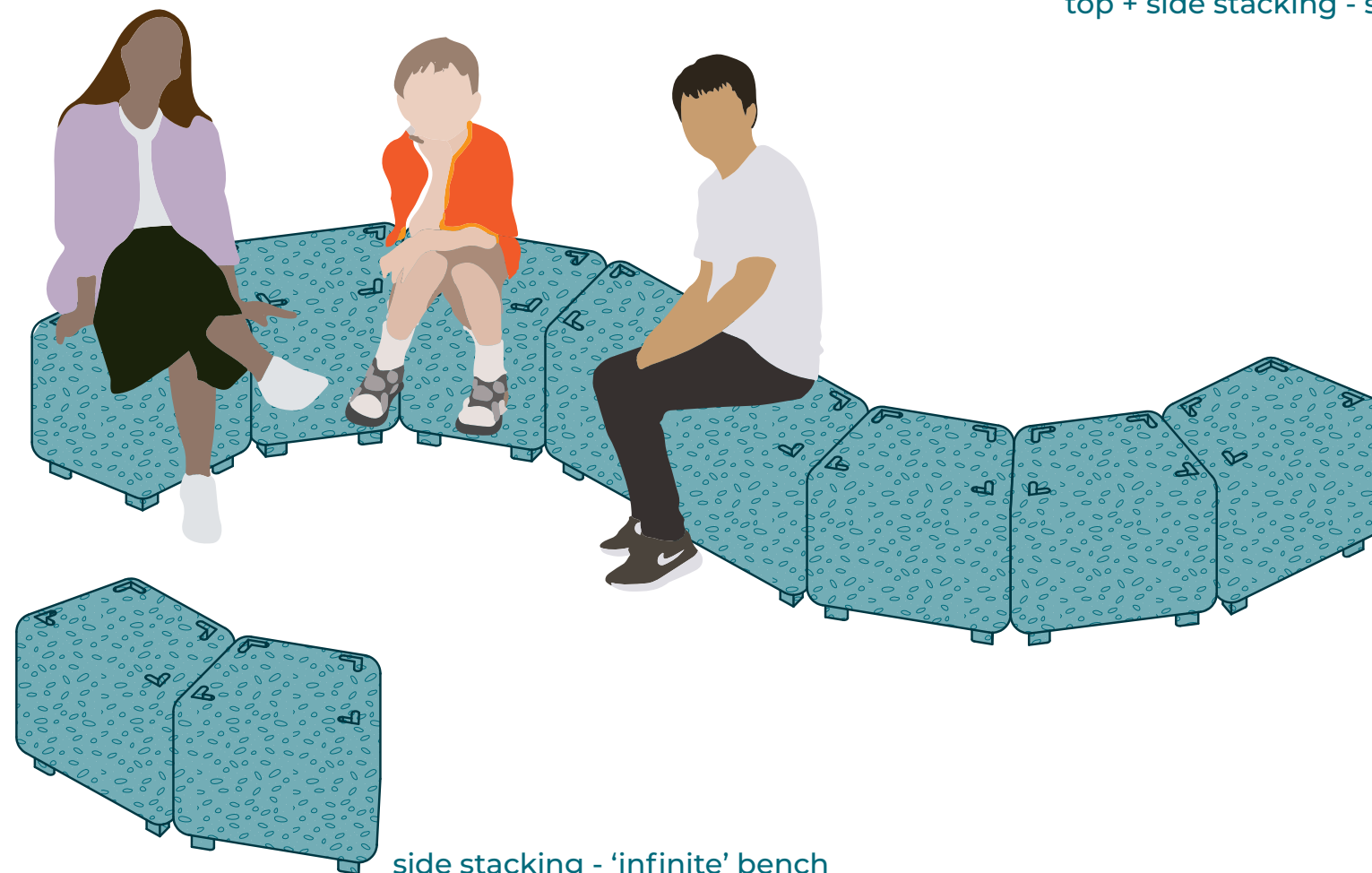
Throughout the neighbourhood, the modules of the size S provide an invitation to sit, climb, grow and shape the environment. The distinct trapeze shape of the modules results in a faceted circle where the repetition of modules occurs, rather than a straight line, encouraging interaction.

These elements are made entirely from recycled plastic. A lego-like system will enable the users to temporarily lock them together, either vertically or horizontally, to construct backrests, side tables or counters, and to insert signage or supports. The modules are equipped with a QR code to explain possible ways of use, as well as with a little drawing on the module for those without a smartphone. They are partly hollow to facilitate transport and encourage 'hacking', perhaps even [vertical] gardening, which facilitates events such as gardening workshops. Module S will be the most numerous and widespread in the neighbourhood. It has a distinct blue colour and rounded shape to instantly become recognisable in the neighbourhood. These elements will be visibly connected to the size M and L in colour, finish, and shape but are not linked to the poetic reuse of materials as the larger modules because of their size and amount needed.



module s: dimensions

top + side stacking - sofa + coffee table



side stacking - 'infinite' bench

Figure 41. Module s.

top + side stacking (+signage) - lemonade stand



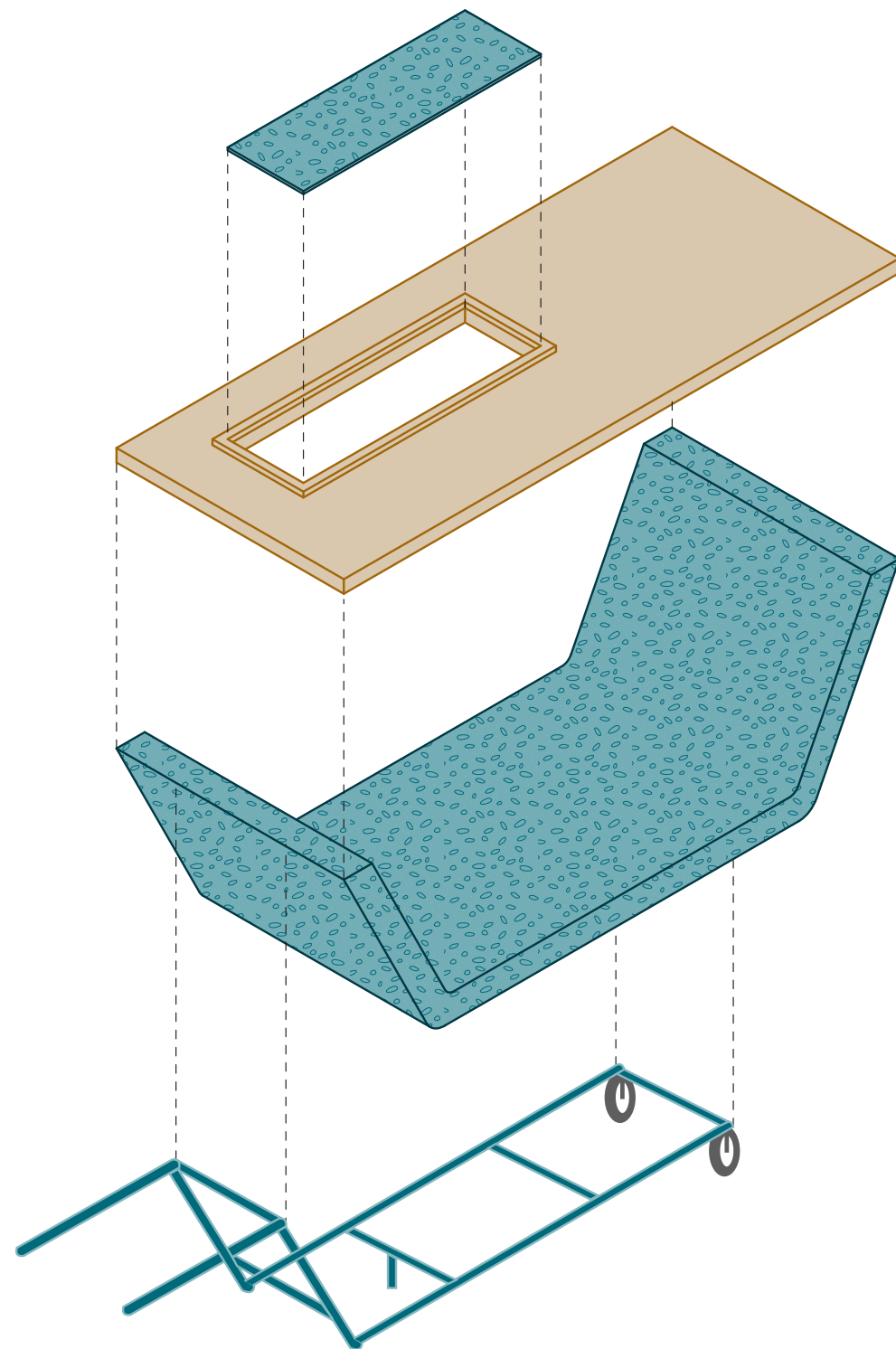
inverted - herb garden



vertical side stacking (+product) - street vending (with storage)



Figure 42. Module s - stacking ideas.



module m: construction using recycled plastic, reclaimed doorframes and metal frame



module m + s (+ chess board and pieces) - game time

modules m & l

These units are thought to be located in several strategic locations where residents have expressed desires for meeting spots. The units can be moved and placed next to each other in order to create the size and conditions desired for the activity performed. The modules come with a simple and easily readable booklet to explain how the modules can be adapted.

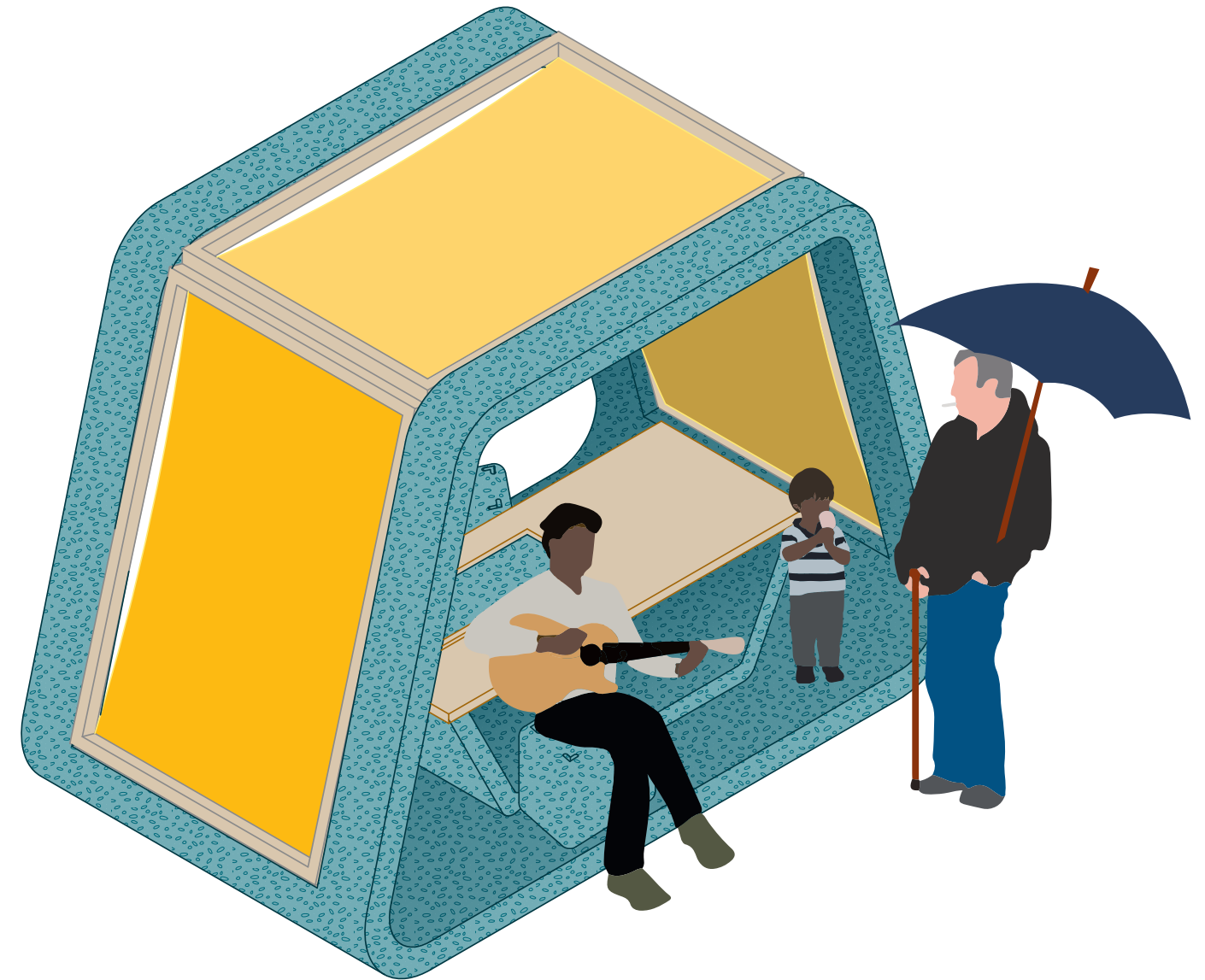
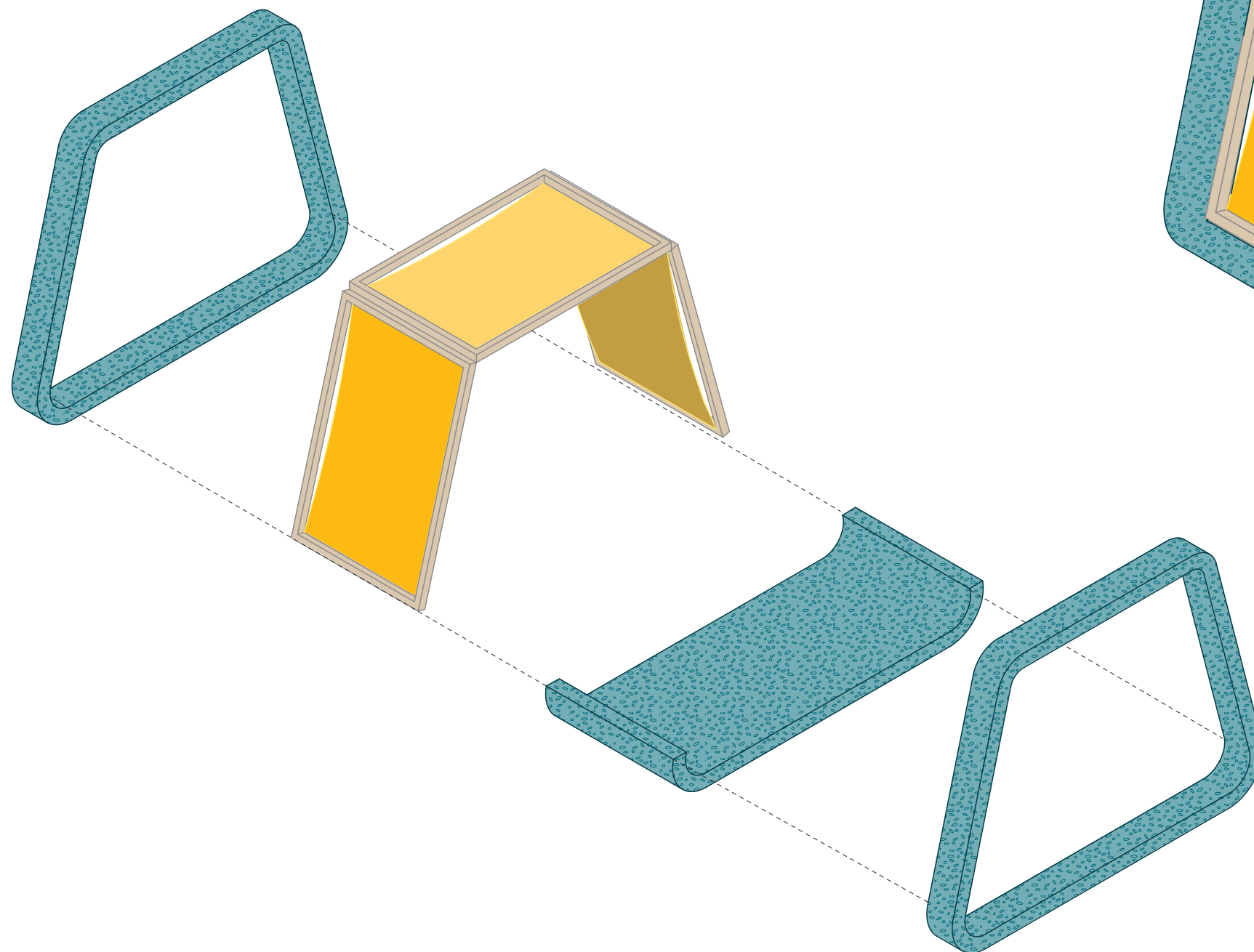
The tables are an important part of the design, as it broadens the opportunities for use. We observed groups of people actively using the table in front of their house (see Figure 18) and others that could use a table to ease the process of eating or drinking outside (see Figure 21). A predefined activity can be an incentive to join for residents who usually do not leave their homes often, however, by providing a space and not a time schedule, we hope to make room for things to happen that we cannot even predict. The tables will be spacious enough for (spontaneous) board games, food or workshops for the residents or for organisations nearby wanting to bring their activities outside. Modules m feature a cartwheel-like metal frame to facilitate moving it around.

size m

Figure 43. Module m.

size 1

module I: construction using recycled plastic,
reclaimed window frames and truck tarp



module I + m + s (+ guitar) - singing (sheltered) in the rain

The cover is also something residents wished for, and that lacks in the existing urban areas in the neighbourhood. Module I is created with a floor and rounded frame made of recycled plastic, in which a waterproof textile, such as a truck tarp that is no longer needed, is stretched between reclaimed window frames (Gaarden is the last neighbourhood in the demolition phase). The timber elements would be coated with a weatherproof top coat.

Figure 44. Module I.

in total:
 80x module s
 16x module m
 10x module l

Droogscheedersgaarde
 4x module s
 1x module m
 1x module l

skatepark / canal
 10x module s
 2x module m
 2x module l

school
 10x module s
 2x module m
 2x module l

mosque
 8x module s
 2x module m

church
 8x module s
 2x module m

Vrederustlaan
 4x module s
 1x module m
 1x module l

Zwaardvegersgaarde
 8x module s
 2x module m
 1x module l

Schrijnwerkersgaarde
 8x module s
 1x module m

care home / canal
 10x module s
 1x module m
 1x module l

Barbiersgaarde
 12 module s
 2x module m
 2x module l



Figure 45. Potential site locations. source: self-made annotation & photos, Google Earth base.

locations, seasons and temporality

The selected sites aim to address the daily mobility of the residents, rather than solely accentuate the areas to which visitors are often attracted, such as the canal in De Gaarde. To prevent the risk of being too dispersed, several I modules will be stacked together to form a sense of temporary stability. To avoid losing social momentum created during the summer and spring months, and the new, fragile

relationships breaking during the winter months, the modules will be in use the entire year - not stored away out of sight and mind of the residents. Instead, some modules will remain urban markers in the area, possible to use for winter markets, handing out hot chocolate during walks, or as places to jump from or climb on. A number of the modules will be given to the religious and educational institutions

to use in these months, in exchange for space provided to continue weekly or monthly events hosted by Allekanten or other stakeholders.

Gaarden is an area in transformation. It is therefore vital that the intervention takes into account the changing situations and caters for different needs at different stages of the demolition process. On the following

page, we have outlined four scenarios for the context of our intervention: Before demolition, during building phase one and two in Gaarden, and two scenarios to paint a picture of what can happen after the process is over.



Figure 46. Module s, m and l used for a neighbourhood winter market.

Before demolition

The modules are spread around the neighbourhood to spark curiosity and gather attention, with the highest density in religious and educational institutions, as well as known meeting spots like the skate park.

Due to their light nature, the S modules are easily moved around from day to day. M and L require more effort to move, but it is possible. These are located in thought temporal and permanent locations. Those placed within the areas of demolition will naturally be moved and provide more ephemeral atmosphere, whereas modules located near structures which will remain can obtain an atmosphere of stability within the uncertainty of the changes.

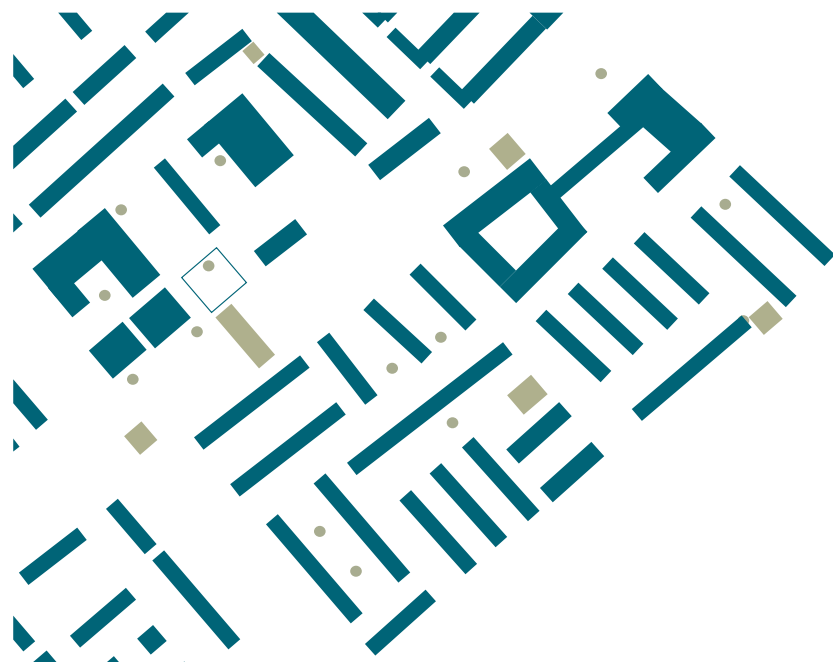


Figure 47. Distribution of modules before demolition.

During the process

When phase one of the demolition starts, the modules located here are moved to the remaining neighbourhood if this is desired. The remaining modules can be added to the “structures of stability”, like the canal, religious and educational institutions and the skate park.

As area one is finished and demolition starts in area two, a similar procedure starts here.

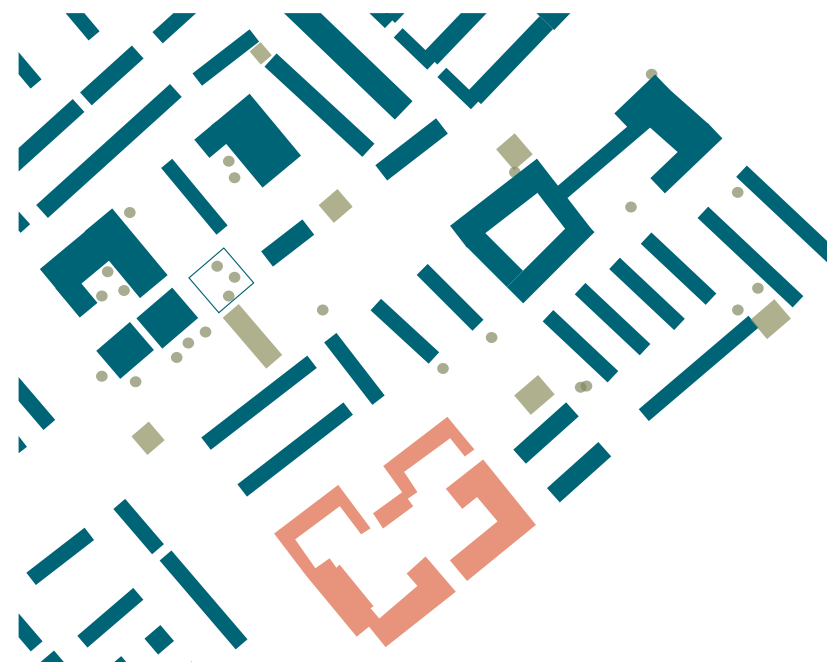


Figure 48. Distribution of modules during restructuring.

After demolition

As De Gaarden has been transformed, we are imagining two different scenarios.

If the elements have been a successful part of the residents daily lives and original residents move back and desire the identity and community the intervention stands for, they can be moved back and distributed according to the residents wishes.

Another possible scenario is that De Gaarden has been transformed into an area with sufficient public space amenities, and the intervention is moved to another area in transition in The Hague, after careful research into that neighbourhood's needs.

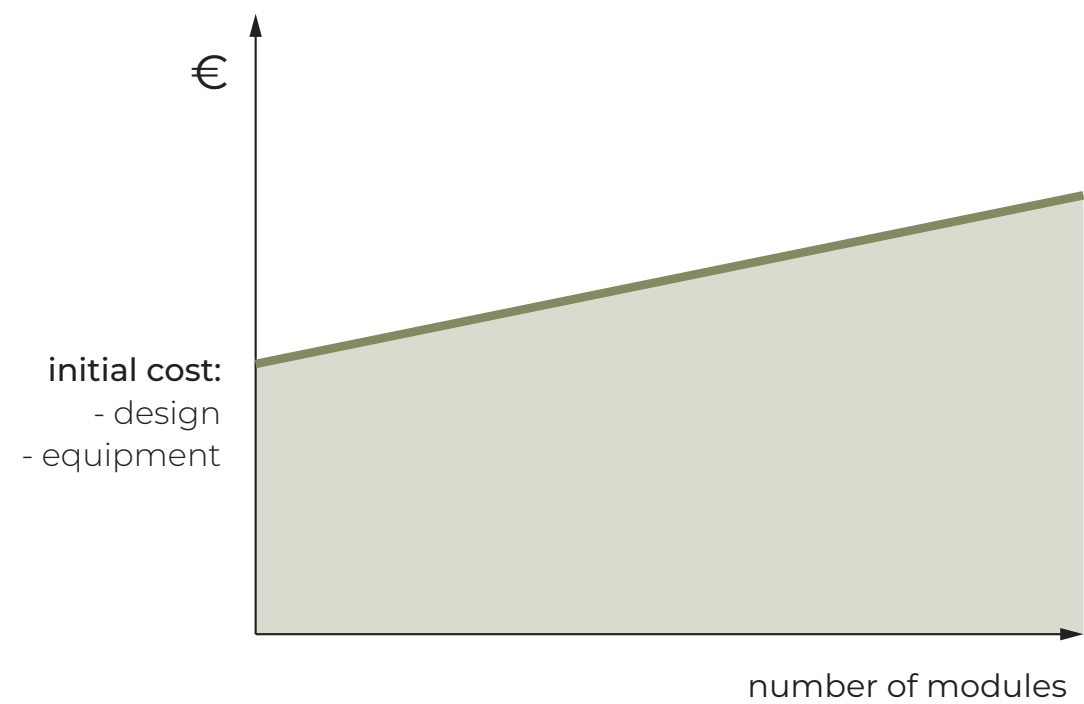
The elements in the institutions can remain as a symbol of what once was.



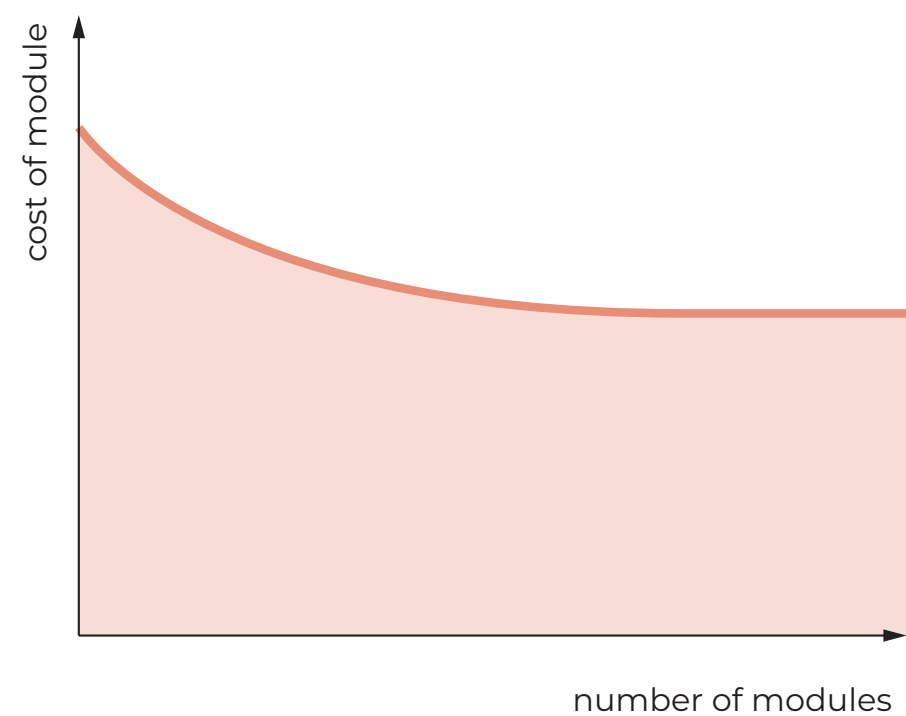
Figure 49. Distribution of modules after restructuring.

cost estimation

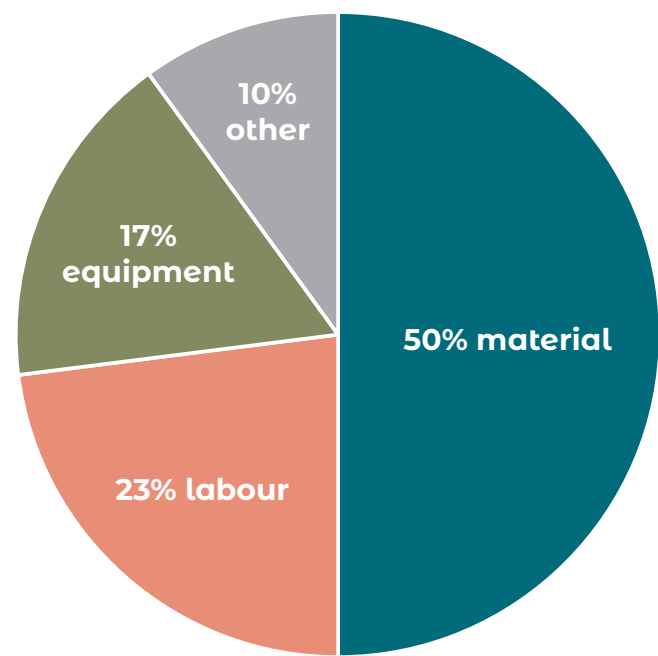
cost per module



module cost vs number of modules produced



simplified manufacturing cost breakdown

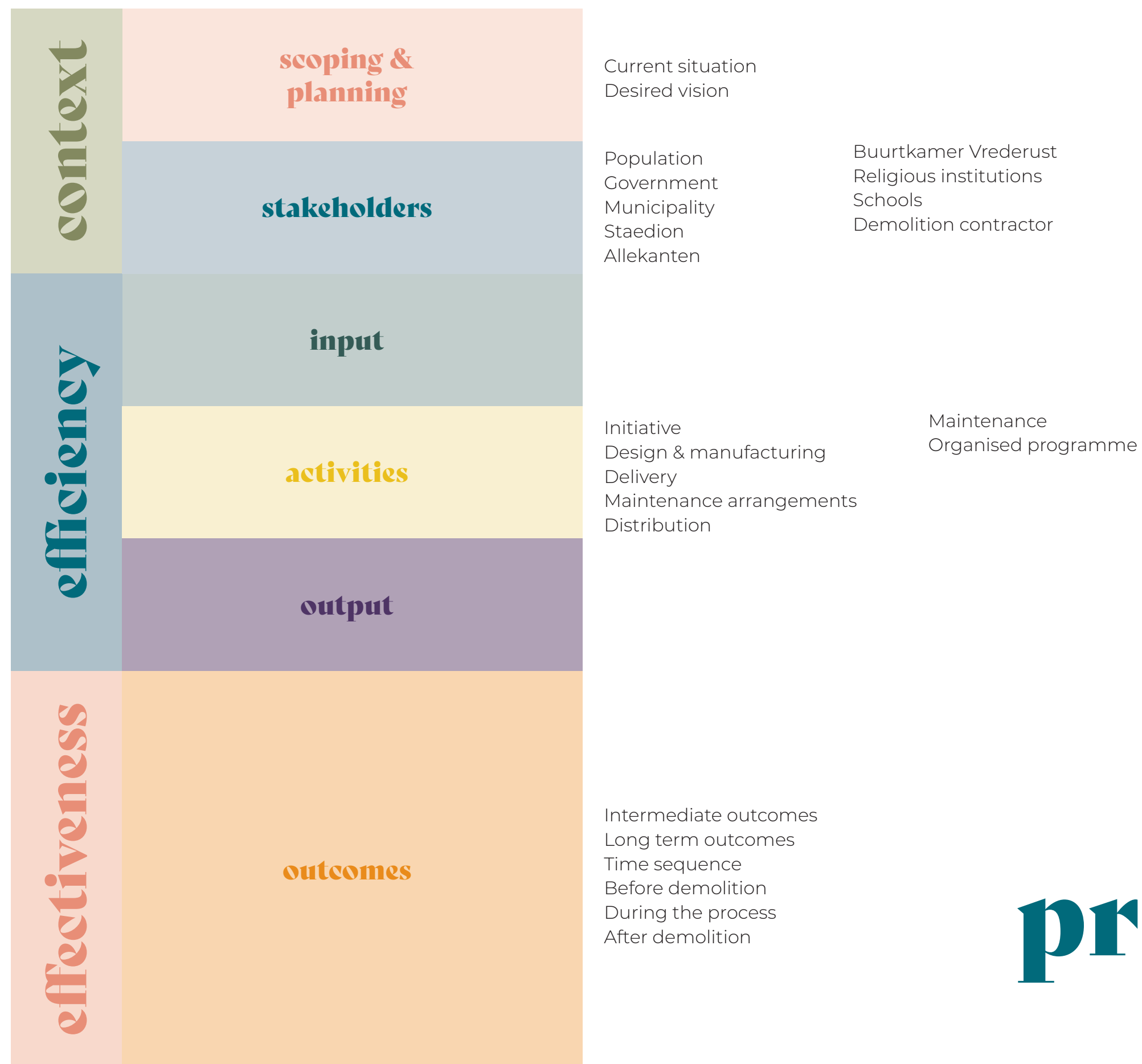


The estimation of the manufacturing cost of the modules is based on the initial quantities of 80 s modules, 16 m modules and 10 l modules. The cost per module, as seen in Figure 52, would decrease with the number of items produced, due to the relatively high starting costs of the necessary equipment. It would therefore be useful to plan for large-scale manufacturing of the modules after the pilot phase, for example by making similar modules for several neighbourhoods or by commercialising the design.

As the material is the highest cost driver, it would be beneficial (also in social ownership terms) to organise a plastic waste collection in the neighbourhood to source the plastic directly from the residents and local businesses to significantly lower the cost of material supply.

module	material		labour	equipment + other	quantity	price per item	cost of modules
	recycled plastic	reclaimed elements					
s	20 €	none	24 €	36 €	80	80 €	6 400 €
m	50 €	door	60 €	90 €	16	200 €	3 200 €
l	200 €	window frames	240 €	360 €	10	800 €	8 000 €
total cost							17 600 €

Table 2. Estimated manufacturing cost breakdown.



policy programme overview

Figure 53. Policy programme theory diagrammatic overview. after Allen (2016) *Diagramming a theory of change*.

policy programme theory

scoping & planning

Current situation

From the analysis of the documents available online (governmental and produced by Staedion) and as a result of our fieldwork, we can analyse the current situation considering several aspects:

- 1) The De Gaarden area is undergoing profound changes that will distort the physical, social, economic and cultural conformation of the neighbourhood;
- 2) These changes are affecting the present life and will affect the future of the inhabitants;
- 3) De Gaarden is now in an intermediate situation, where work has not yet started but will start soon, so people's lives are, in a way, on hold;
- 4) Staedion is continuing the routine maintenance of the houses but in a reduced way, as they are aware that they will be demolished;
- 5) In general, during this transitional period, less attention is paid to the maintenance and improvement of the neighbourhood, as it will be drastically changed in a short time.
- 6) This situation of uncertainty leaves people in limbo and may

create a detachment from the neighbourhood.

Apart from these considerations regarding the neighbourhood renewal plan, our fieldwork identified some areas of fragility concerning the relationship between urban architecture and sociality/social cohesion. Specifically, there is a scarcity of places where people can sit and have social relations. In some spots, there are benches, but they are often positioned in unpleasant locations or oriented in a way that does not facilitate interpersonal contact. In addition, there is a scarcity (if not absence) of covered public spaces where people can meet in winter or rainy weather.

From the interviews conducted, it is clear that the inhabitants love their neighbourhood and consider it a nice place to live, but many of them are not actively involved in community life. Of course, there are exceptions. It is important to note that these exceptions are often generated by approaches of openness and shared public spaces (e.g. a table and benches positioned in front of one's house, available for everyone). However, traces of neighbourhood tensions could also be identified in some cases, especially on ethnic or migrant backgrounds.

Desired vision

Our desired vision is a neighbourhood equipped to enable people to continue maintaining and building meaningful social relationships during this period of significant changes. The fact that many will have to leave their homes, and may not return, should not be a deterrent to sociability and the strengthening of the local network of relationships between people. We want the residents, especially in this period of insecurity, to find spaces where they can share their experiences and fears, or simply spaces where they can relax and feel connected to the local community.

We want people to be free to express themselves, free to choose whether they wish to establish relationships or not. This freedom is provided by the presence and accessibility of meeting places. In our vision, these meeting places are built by people themselves, flexible and always available. They serve as an invitation to mix, without imposing mixing (Sennett, 2019) and encourage creative use, with the hope of facilitating micro-business opportunities and increasing the local offer and participation in workshops and classes organised by the municipality and social enterprises.

Concerning the assessment of the current situation, the main stakeholders are the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. It is only thanks to their testimonies that it is possible to get a precise idea of the neighbourhood's needs and create an action plan that respects and takes into account their needs. Their perception of, and participation in, the intervention will be key to its sustainability and long-term effects. The role of Staedion, the local government and the associations already present in the area is also crucial. They help us assess the project's feasibility (economically and materially) and maintenance in the long term, as well as the possibility of a more organised programme offer. Below are the stakeholders we have identified. We have identified these stakeholders based on the power and interest we understand they would have within our proposal, based on the existing situation. We define power as the ability to have an influence on the decisions made in the design process, such as defining the budget, as well as the contractual responsibility for the management and maintenance of the intervention. Interest is defined as a concern in the specific outcome of the design. Stakeholders with high interest are, for example, the users.

Population

The first important stakeholder is the population of the neighbourhood. Residents have high interest but low power. In creating our intervention, we have taken into account the different groups of residents. Within Bouwlust and Vrederust 26,6% of all residents are between 0 and 19 years of age. 58,1% are between 20 and 64 years old and

15,4% are 65 years or older (Den Haag in Cijfers). We have distinguished the different types of residents in order to take their different needs into account.

Children and teenagers

As can be seen above, children and teenagers make up a large part of the neighbourhood. For children, it is important that the intervention invites them to play and move. However, we have seen that children use almost any bench or physical item in the neighbourhood to play with. Therefore, it is important that the intervention is safe and that children can play on it, but we do not need to design something specifically for children to play with. In their hands, the s modules could become forts or lemonade stands, we, therefore, ensure that this size is light enough for them to carry.

Teenagers we interviewed admitted that they need a place to hang out in the neighbourhood. However, the biggest risk of creating a hangout spot for teenagers is that it would cause a nuisance. We realise that the open character of our proposal means that the modules can be prone to vandalism, however, we observed that the already available urban furniture was not broken or damaged. We think that providing meeting spots that can easily be moved away from the parents' eye will be beneficial to teenagers and adults alike.

Adults

For adults, the most desirable meeting space is one where they can sit and chat with their neighbours in the afternoon or early in the evening. Specifically for parents of children, it is

important that they can sit overlooking where their children are playing, for example near the skatepark, but not necessarily immediately close by, as the noises can hinder a conversation. This group in particular mentioned covered spaces, so the L-module caters especially for them.

Within this group, a distinction between employed and unemployed adults should be made.

Employed adults

We assume that employed adults would use the modules in their spare time. Most likely, this is during the evenings or at the weekends. The modules are designed in such a way that they can be stacked to form benches, sofas, or even armchairs, to invite extending one's living room outside. The modules can also provide an invitation to stop or make a pause in an otherwise tiring commute to or from work. Inverted s modules can be used as small garden beds to plant herbs or vegetables.

Unemployed adults

Within Bouwlust and Vrederust, unemployment is higher than in the rest of the Hague. 14,7% of all residents receive unemployment benefits or assistance, in comparison to 8,2% of the Hague. 6,4% of residents receive WIA benefits (work and income according to Labour Capacity Act), in comparison to 4,4% in the Hague (Den Haag in Cijfers, n.d.). These are residents whom we can assume will spend more time in the neighbourhood and could use the intervention more, also

appropriating it in different ways to test micro-business opportunities. For these residents, it could be beneficial to look into how the intervention will generate new jobs, for example, in the maintenance of the intervention. Furthermore, the modules can accommodate events, such as language classes or workshops, that might be interesting for this group to attend.

As the municipality of The Hague is responsible for providing so-called 'sheltered work' for persons that have an occupational disability, the intervention provides a good opportunity to help the reintegration of those persons (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). This can be executed by, for instance, including the maintenance of the intervention in the municipality's 'sheltered work' programme. According to the CBS (2022), reintegration programmes as executed by municipalities are fostering the socio-economic integration of the following groups "unemployed receiving benefits under the Work and Social Assistance Act (WWB), the Older and Partially Disabled Former Self-employed Persons Income Act (IOAZ) and the Older and Partially Disabled Former Employed Persons Income Act (IOAW), persons registered at a Centre for Work and Income (CWI) as unemployed jobseekers not receiving a benefit and persons receiving a benefit under the General Surviving Relatives Act (Anw)". In terms of practicalities, people may apply for 'sheltered work' and unemployment benefits via the public employment

service UVW which helps clients to formulate a reintegration plan and forwards candidates to the respective municipalities (Eurofund, 2022).

Elderly

For the elderly in the neighbourhood, it is most important that the intervention is a resting place within their daily walking route. Therefore, the intervention should be easy to sit on and easy to stand up from for elderly people (for example, it should not be too low) and it is placed within popular walking routes. It is important to take this group into account, as 24,8% of all residents in Bouwlust and Vrederust are retired (in comparison to 22,4% in the Hague) (Den Haag in Cijfers, n.d.). This group most likely spends more time within the neighbourhood and can feel the need for meeting places and activities surrounding them.

There are several elderly homes in the area and health facilities which arrange activities for the elderly together, e.g. WZH Carel van den Oever (WoonZorgcentra Haaglanden, n.d.), “Buurtfeest” (Haags Allerlei, 2018), and the rooftop of the Toon van Hagen senior citizen complex (Staedion, 2016). However, the intervention, with its decentralised location, presents an opportunity for the elderly that want to move and mix further into the neighbourhood.

National government

The national government is a stakeholder because it can exert some influence on the construction assignment for the Hague. The municipality has closed a ‘living deal’

with the government: ‘de woondeal Zuidelijke Randstad’ in which they have started a partnership to shape urban renewal and densification in the Hague Southwest (College van B&W Den Haag, 2020).

Furthermore, the government has honoured the application for a contribution out of the ‘woningbouwimpuls’, an arrangement that the government has instituted to foster the building of homes in the Netherlands (Van den Bergen, 2021). This shows that the government has had some influence on the renovations in the Hague Southwest, but their power is not as high as the municipality. Furthermore, their interest primarily lies within the creation of more homes, instead of more meeting places.

Municipality

The municipality has high power and high interest. In the coalition agreement of 2019, the ambition to use an integrated approach to convert the Hague Southwest to the G4 average in terms of housing, income and education has been expressed (Gemeente Den Haag, 2019). Furthermore, the municipality has acknowledged the need for meeting places, also for younger people and has expressed its worries about the number of residents with problems in the neighbourhood (College van B&W, 2021). The municipality has acknowledged that there is a large social challenge in the areas of employment, poverty, security, health and social cohesion (College van B&W, 2022). Their preference would probably be an intervention that is low

maintenance and costs little to create. However, recently, the municipality of the Hague is focussing on a policy surrounding health and prevention called ‘Healthy and Happy The Hague’ (Gezond en Gelukkig Den Haag). As the data in our last assignment has shown, 40% of residents of De Gaarden en Dreven adhere to the exercise guidelines, as compared to 49,1% in The Hague and 49,9% in the Netherlands (RIVM, 2020). For this reason, the municipality might be interested in an intervention that stimulates movement.

Staedion

Staedion is a housing association based in the Hague. They rent out more than 37,000 homes and 6,500 other spaces, such as shops, business premises and parking lots. Staedion is highly involved in the renovation process of De Gaarde/Dreven/Zichen: about 2000 homes will be demolished and they estimate that a total of 5,500 homes will be returned, of which approximately 3,000 are social rental homes. Staedion is the leading housing association in the area, and it was fully involved, together with the government, in the demolition and renovation plan. For this reason, Staedion has both high power and high interests. With the renovations, they aim to create a neighbourhood that satisfies both old and new residents and is a safe and healthy environment. Meeting places could help this process. Staedion should, therefore, be one of the main stakeholders. From their perspective, they aim for an intervention that does reach the desired outcomes but is not too costly and is low-maintenance.

Allekanten

From the interviews collected in the neighbourhood, we noted the presence of people involved as volunteers or workers in community services. One example is a man who was collecting rubbish around the area. One of the actors involved in organising these activities is Allekanten, a private company that receives funds from the local administration to employ people who are currently not working, are in an unstable socio-economic situation or have health or mental issues.

Allekanten has its headquarters in Bouwlust, just a few minutes from De Gaarde. At their headquarter, they organise different activities, such as Dutch language courses, sewing courses, sports and homework help for children. According to an interview with one of the managers, most users are adults, mainly women, from Arab countries. Their main goal is to bring people together and create interaction and social growth opportunities.

Due to the nature of our project, we felt it was necessary to have an institution that could take care of the maintenance of our installations. Therefore, we identified Allekanten as a potential actor, as they can both take advantage of the meeting spaces that will be created (e.g. by moving some of their activities outdoors) and employ people from the neighbourhood to maintain them. The collaboration with Allekanten thus creates a double benefit: increasing the usable space for their social activities, increasing the visibility of the project (bringing the project outside - reaching more

inhabitants) and creating opportunities for work, income and professional growth.

Buurtkamer Vrederust

De Buurtkamer Vrederust is seen as the living room of the neighbourhood. In the Buurtkamer, all sorts of activities are organised, such as homework support and sewing lessons. Their interest is high, while their power is low. For the Buurtkamer, a meeting place could be interesting because they could use it for their activities when the weather is good. They would be interested in meeting places where a few people could fit and that are located near them.

Religious institutions

A church and mosque are situated

right next to De Gaarde. Those who attend the church and mosque might want to use the intervention before or after service. The presence of the modules in a well-known setting can encourage the residents to familiarise themselves with the intervention and discover ways of using the modules. Furthermore, both the church and the mosque already organise events that could be organised using the modules. Finally, they can share the responsibility of the maintenance with Allekanten.

Schools in the neighbourhood

There are a few primary schools in the neighbourhood. The children of the schools are likely to live in the same area and use the intervention during their free time. Furthermore,

the school can stimulate the children to use the intervention in the correct way, by making them familiar with it. Finally, they could also use the intervention for certain events or to teach outdoors. By using the modules in a school setting, the children can discover creative ways of using them, replicating this approach also across the neighbourhood and showing their parents the possibilities of use.

Demolition contractor

The company responsible for the demolition of the building are also a stakeholder in this case because we want to reuse certain parts of the building. This should be taken into account when demolishing the building. For this, agreements should be made with the contracted

company. The doors and window frames must be taken out in advance of the demolition and remain in good quality.

The Police

The police are also a stakeholder because they are already present in this neighbourhood. Especially the community police officers will have an interest in the intervention. The police have little power up-front, but if the meeting place leads to trouble or nuisance, they do have the power to take it away. The police have a high interest because they would want a meeting place that uplifts the neighbourhood but does not cause a nuisance.

input

By developing our mobile-meeting modules, **m³**, we will invest several resources. The first key element to invest in this project is time. If you want to get meaningful results for a community, you need to spend time with that community to really understand its needs and demands. Based on that, the intervention could be designed.

Second, there is an economic investment on the part of Staedion and the local government. The production of the modules, their installation, promotion, and maintenance will involve allocating a budget that must be taken into account to obtain the desired outputs. Furthermore, the financial plan for this project must

consider its long-term effects, not just those that can be observed immediately. This will prevent the project from being discontinued before it brings real change, wasting financial and human resources. It is important for both Staedion and the municipality to remember that the budget is not only necessary for the creation of the modules, but also for the maintenance. There could also be a budget allocated to organise activities surrounding the modules.

However, the modules, by themselves, are not a sufficient element. This project requires the investment of social and community resources. Especially in the promotion and maintenance phase, it requires the

presence of people who will take care of it and who will be committed to maintaining and passing on its meaning and purpose. This is not only a financial question but also a social question. Residents have to feel responsible for the modules and recognize them as belonging to their neighbourhood. It requires promotion to ensure that all residents know about the modules and how to use them. Furthermore, special attention should be given to maintenance. All of these aspects will cost social and community resources.

Figure 55 on the following page illustrates the roles, responsibilities and relationships between the main actors within the processes of design and implementation of the modules, further described below.

1. Initiative

Staedion, interested in such an intervention, prepares a proposal document in collaboration with TU Delft, outlining the feasibility, planning and cost estimation for the municipality. Appropriate municipal actors review the proposal and if there are no changes to the document required at this point, allocate appropriate funding and approve the project.

2. Design & manufacturing

External contractors (designer, manufacturer, etc.) are selected through public procurement. An alternative route is that the project continues in collaboration with TU Delft, with a supervised student team consisting of representatives from the Architecture or Urbanism, Industrial Design and Material Science departments responsible for the design and manufacturing of the modules (for example as a D:DREAM team or Honours Programme project).

3. Delivery

The modules are delivered to Staedion or directly to Allekanten. Staedion provides storage space for the winter and spare elements within the neighbourhood (e.g. a garage).

4. Maintenance arrangements

The municipality and Allekanten enter a maintenance contract,

whereby funding is provided for salaried employees responsible for the annual distribution, collection and maintenance of the modules. The delegated maintenance arrangements (with institutions or businesses) are within Allekanten's discretion.

5. Distribution

The modules are distributed in the selected locations by Allekanten. Most of them are placed in the public space within the neighbourhood. Some modules are given to institutions such as the school, mosque, church and care home who, in turn, take partial responsibility for the daily maintenance and storage of the modules. This can be a catalyst to familiarise the residents with the use of the modules in a well-known setting. A module-sharing scheme is put in place for local businesses; if, for example, a café is opening in the neighbourhood, it can use the modules as outdoor seating - the owner can order them from the municipality for free (with a small deposit) under the condition that they will maintain them, host events offered by the municipality and allow non-customers to use them.

6. Maintenance

The modules remain in the public space from March to October. Within this time they are regularly clean and checked by Allekanten employees. If they need repairing, they are taken away. If they are placed in inappropriate (inaccessible, dangerous, etc.) spots, they would be brought back to the initial locations. In the winter, they are stored away. The responsibility for the minor repairs, regular cleaning and winter storage of the modules

given to institutions and businesses lies within their discretion. We hope that with the long-term familiarity and use of the modules, the residents will partly take some responsibility for the cleaning, small maintenance or returning them to more accessible locations after use.

7. Organised programme

In addition to the daily use by the residents, the modules can also host a more organised programme, provided by the Municipality, Allekanten, institutions or resident groups. These can include, but not be limited to, language classes, craft workshops or legal advice drop-ins. Moreover, events can mark the launch of the modules (also showing the possibilities of use), as well as the annual inauguration and end-of-season.

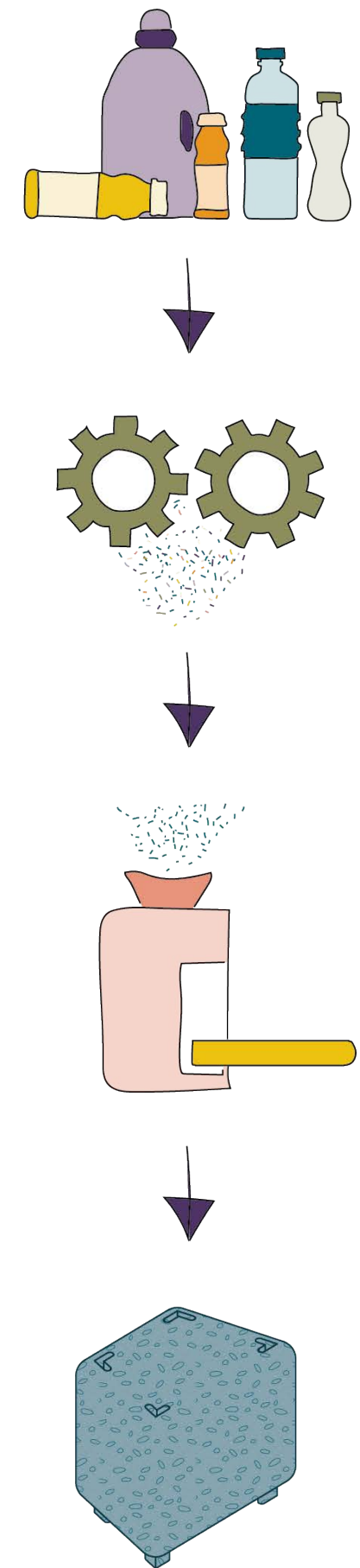


Figure 54. Diagram showing the material strategy using recycled plastic.

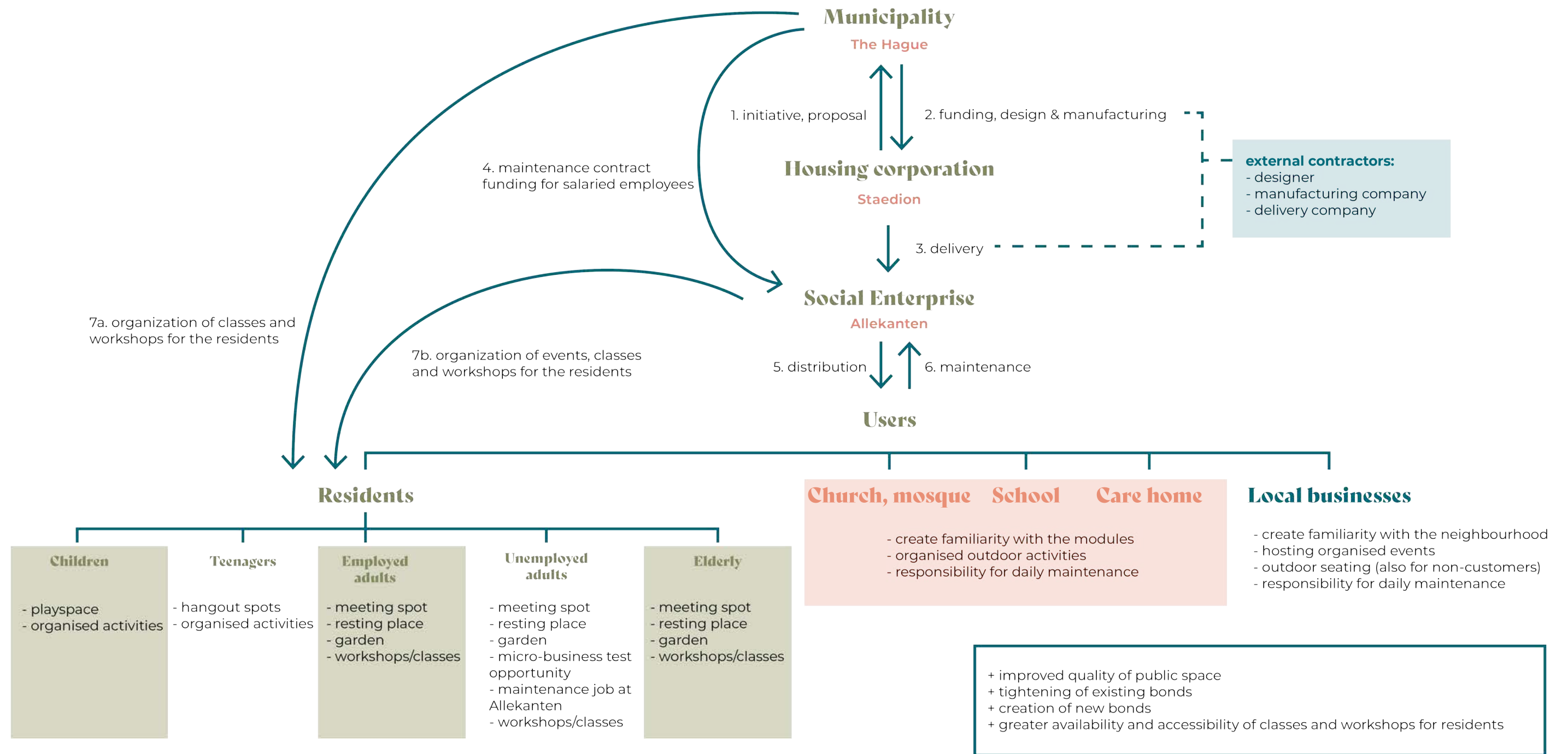


Figure 55. Stakeholder roles, responsibilities and relationships.

Materially, our project will produce 80 small modules that can be assembled into different conformations and useful for different purposes (e.g. sitting, lying down, leaning). In addition, 16 table modules and 10 large modules will be produced: these pieces are specifically designed for a more sheltered gathering place (e.g. from rain, sun) and can be used and combined together with the small modules. More modules can be manufactured if there

is a need for additional pieces after the first year of use.

The modules will be manufactured using recycled plastic (in cooperation with one of the Dutch recycled plastic furniture manufacturers or the Department of Materials Science and Engineering and Industrial Design Engineering of TU Delft) and, in the case of m and l modules, building elements reclaimed from

the demolition of buildings in the neighbourhood (De Gaarden is scheduled to be the last area to be demolished). Window frames and doors will be repurposed as tabletops and structure.

The installation of the modules will result in the production of certain services. First, as the modules require maintenance, a workforce will be produced and with it, an economic

benefit for the people involved. Also, it can be speculated that a 'virtual' service will be produced for the community. We might call this service accessibility or encounter possibilities. This service will be directed and used both by the neighbourhood inhabitants and by the associations in the vicinity, which will benefit from it for the improvement and differentiation of their daily activities.

outcomes

Gaarden is an area in transformation. It is vital that the intervention takes into account the changing situations and caters for different needs at different stages of the demolition process. On the following page, we have outlined four scenarios for the context of our intervention: Before demolition, during building phase one and two in Gaarden, and two scenarios to paint a picture of what can happen after the process is over.

The direct output of adding the modules into the area is that these will create meeting places. Residents have the opportunity to meet each other and local businesses, religious institutions and the school can organise outdoor activities, which the residents can attend. We believe that the modules also lead to intermediate and long term outcomes.

Intermediate outcomes

In the intermediate term, the modules can lead to more cohesion in the neighbourhood and more active

neighbours wanting to participate in activities organised near the modules. This might result in an active neighbourhood population that takes incentive to organise activities surrounding the modules themselves. Furthermore, the residents will recognise something out of their old neighbourhood in the modules.

Long-term outcomes

From 2027 onwards, an increase in the population of Dreven, Gaarden and Zichten is expected (College van B&W, 2020). This will result in a higher need for certain facilities, such as education and daycare. Two scenarios can be assumed. The first possibility assumes that the modules will be used more frequently, in more creative ways and by more residents. If necessary, more modules can easily be added. The Health Monitor of 2020 shows that 64,2% of residents of Dreven and Gaarden is lonely, compared to 56,8% in the Hague and 47% in the Netherlands. 24,5% of all residents experience a lot of stress, in comparison to 23,9% in The

Hague and 17,9% in the Netherlands (Gezondheidsmonitor, 2020). Meeting places can reduce these numbers in the long run by increasing the spatial opportunities for social interactions between residents.

The second scenario takes into account that the spatial changes in the neighbourhood will result in a higher quality of public space. The non-spatial outcomes are expected to change the profile of the population living in the neighbourhood. It may therefore occur that the modules are no longer needed in the Gaarden. They can then be moved and re-implemented in a different neighbourhood of Bouwlust/Vrederust, or elsewhere within the municipality, in need of meeting spaces.

During the Design Game experience, through its different phases, we learned and were able to reflect on multiple aspects.

First of all, it became clear that studying pre-existing documents is essential to fully understand the dynamics underlying such a large-scale project. At the same time, it is necessary to remain open and critical so that the different voices involved are considered. For example, it was clear from the Staedion reports that the neighbourhood inhabitants had been actively engaged in a participatory process. However, once in the field, we could see that some inhabitants did not share the same idea and felt 'cut off' from the decision-making processes. This shows us that specific stakeholders' political power and interests can often be preponderant, and those initial intentions of active participation can actually get stuck at informative or manipulative levels (Arnstein, 1969).

Secondly, we have learnt that our perceptions can also be wrong or inaccurate. For example, when observing a neighbourhood 'from outside', we tend to focus on strong elements, located in strategic positions. Often, those sites are not the favourite ones of the inhabitants. On the contrary, in our case, we noticed that the inhabitants made much more use of hidden areas closer to their houses

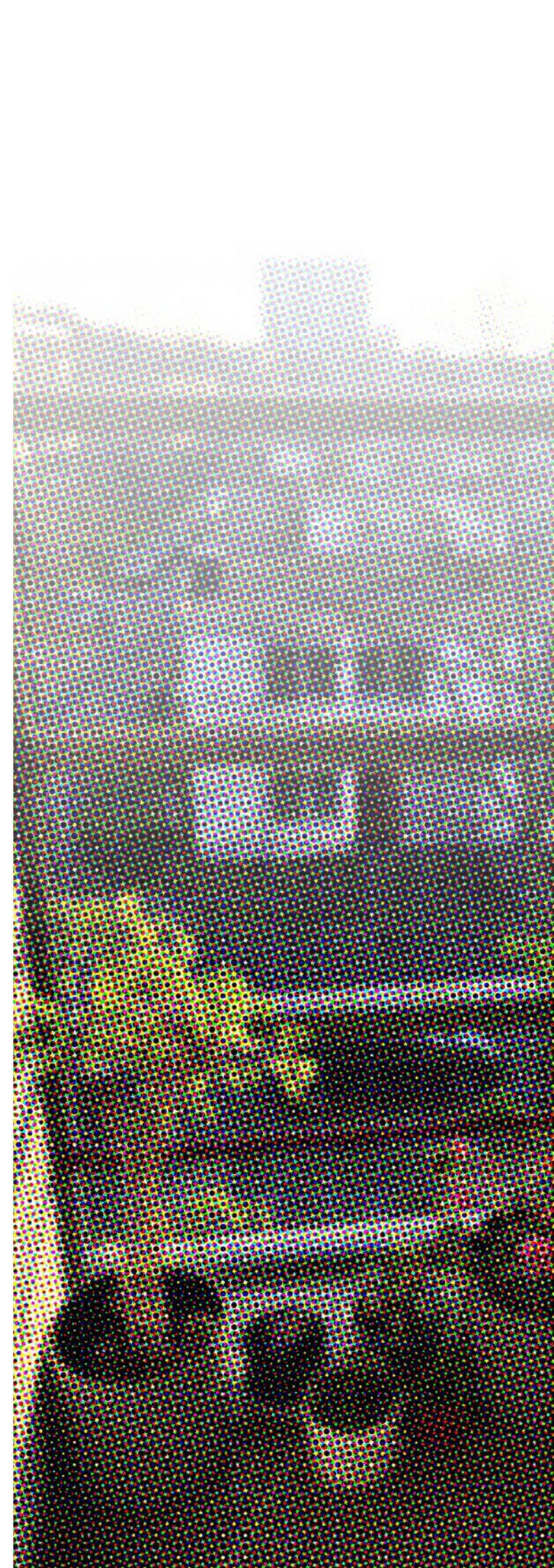
than, for example, the beautiful canal in the centre of the neighbourhood. Compared to our initial considerations, which were based on observations via Google Maps, the fieldwork was instrumental in discovering the best sites to position our design intervention.

Another element for reflection concerns the very structure of this project. Given its nature as an academic assignment, limited in time and resources, the outcomes it produces can also be considered limited. We have made every effort to operate openly and collect as much information as possible, but we are aware that many voices have gone unheard due to a lack of time and resources. For example, at the beginning of the project, we contacted the elderly home in the neighbourhood because we wanted to talk to residents about their needs. Unfortunately, we only received a response a few days ago, which is too late to incorporate this new data into our analysis. The question is: would we have structured our design differently if we had talked to them? Representing different groups in the area is crucial in the design phase because it can drastically change the analysis approach, the interpretation of the site and the issues to address. At the same time, in short projects like this, it is challenging to establish meaningful relationships with all the stakeholders.

Looking back at our first assignment, we analysed The Hague's ambition document concerning the area's revitalisation. In the part about public space, they insist on creating new spaces for sharing, and the expectations speak about robustness, great effort and a clear vision of the use of the new interventions. Furthermore, from the information deduced from the working documents, it could be assumed that the imagined gathering spaces are based on the idea of some central, prominent and "formal" locations where people can meet. With our design proposal, we have partially deviated from these visions. Remaining firmly convinced that more gathering spaces can contribute to the social cohesion of the neighbourhood, we have moved in a more fluid and less formal direction. Our **m³** project focuses on simple means and small alterations, by adding some furniture rather than physically transforming the space. We attempt to change the quality of public space not by restructuring the whole neighbourhood but rather by giving the residents simple tools to appropriate their immediate surroundings. By designing an open-ended framework that allows for different conformations of the modules, we give priority to the users, and we enable them to rearrange the space depending on their changing needs.

5. reflection

Figure 56. Photo taken during the fieldwork in one of the apartment blocks



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