



SWOT ANALYSIS

We consider “Urbanism” an integrative area of research and practice, gathering urban design, spatial planning, data analysis and modelling, urban studies and sustainable technology, among others. Each area of knowledge asks different (but complementary) questions anchored on different ontology and epistemology. Different questions demand different methods to answer them. Sometimes, the same question can be answered from different perspectives. The Method Sheets give an overview of methods, approaches, and concepts used in Urbanism.

WHAT DOES THIS METHOD ‘DO’?

SWOT: Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat.

The analysis phase of an urban or regional design project often reveals the pros and cons of a plan area. These are often viewed separately, but what do the combinations of these properties mean to the project? And with what strategies can you approach these?

The SWOT analysis is an analysis technique that enables designers and planners to move smoothly from the data collection and analysis phase to the design phase. The result of the SWOT analysis is a schematic representation and confrontation of the most important Ss, Ws, Os, and Ts. These confrontations give directions and strategies for how

the project could develop.

The input of the SWOT analysis are the results from the data collection and analysis phase. The output of the SWOT analysis are starting points, objectives and strategies for the design phase.

WHY DO WE NEED THIS METHOD?

This method will help to:

1. Provide conclusions and/or syntheses of all your analytical research findings.
2. Gather your thoughts and organize them in a useful way.
3. Enhance collaboration within design teams. Everyone can express their thoughts in the same diagram, promoting mutual discussion and consultation.
4. Justify design choices transparently. The diagram is therefore not only a tool during the process, but can also serve as a clear means of communication.
5. Establish starting points, objectives or principles for your design on which you can act by adopting a strategic position with regard to weaknesses or threats, while making use of existing strengths and opportunities.

All in all, using this method gives direction to the design phase.

GIVES DIRECTION TO DESIGN PHASE

LIMITATIONS & PITFALLS

Producing the confrontation matrix is the most crucial step in this method. Instead of simply listing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, use them as a framework. Examine how they interact and determine the most suitable strategy for this confrontation.

In addition, be aware that the input from the analysis phase ultimately has a great impact on your design. However, not all combinations in the confrontation matrix provide suitable starting points. It may be wise to initially focus broadly on a limited number of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and then use a sketch diagram to see which combinations lead to useful principles. It is always possible to be more selective afterwards.

Lastly, confusing Weaknesses with Threats and Strengths with Opportunities is a common error. Keep in mind: strengths and weaknesses are internal, while opportunities and threats are external (see step 2 on the backside of this sheet).

CONFRONTATION IS KEY!

HOW DO YOU DO IT?



Step 1 Define the design area boundary

This can be done in any scale you're working at.

Step 2 Determine the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities en Threats.

Strengths and weaknesses are internal properties coming from within the design area.

Due to the arena and the sports facilities available in the Kuip Arena Area, everyone associates this area with sports. This sporty identity is an example of a **strength**.

On the other hand, the Kuip Arena entails peak crowds and traffic congestion at certain times, creating dangerous traffic situations. This could be an example of a **weakness**.

Opportunities and Threats are external forces that could have an effect on the design area from outside its boundary.

The increasing attention to a healthy lifestyle is a societal trend that could have a positive effect on the design of the area. This is an **opportunity** to the development of the Kuip Arena Area.

The pressure on the river Maas as a result of global warming can have a negative effect on the area. There are risks of floodings and more space might need to be allotted to the river than in the current situation. The **threat** of flood risks might have an effect on the design.

Step 3 Create the diagram with the Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat as a frame

Name the Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat in the frame of the diagram. In the early exploration of this exercise, it might be useful to expand the amount of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to later determine which combinations result in useful design strategies.

Step 4 Start the confrontation

What scenarios occur when two different properties meet?

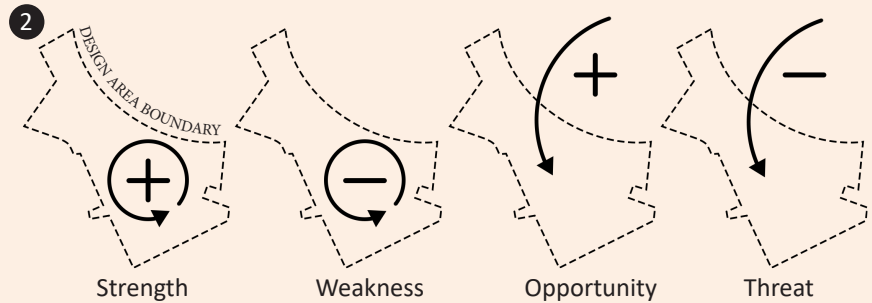
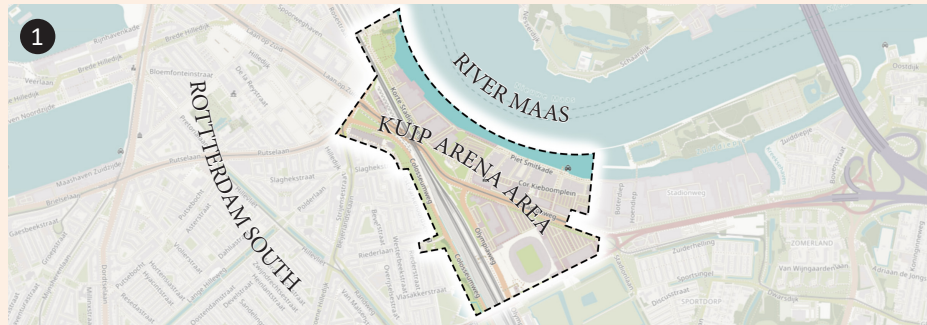
Step 5 Define the strategie

For each confrontation there are certain suitable strategies:

- S + O > utilize/strengthen/further develop
- W + O > neutralize/dissolve/reverse
- T + S > resist/contain/protect
- T + W > turn around/eliminate

Step 6 Depict and draw

It serves as a communication tool too. A drawing can tell more than a thousand words, but keep it schematic. It might even be just symbols, a collage or an impression.



3 4
5 6

Strength:
sports identity

Weakness:
peak crowds arena

Opportunity:
attention to health

further developing the identity into the sports center of the city, region or even the entire country

neutralize peak traffic by reorganizing infrastructure from cars to bicycle and pedestrian areas

Threat:
flood risks

resist flood risks by using the space for sports on, in and around the water

eliminating pressure on space by absorbing peak pressures above the water using bridges etc.

FURTHER READING



TBD

Source: work by Tejon Tomas Kraan