POTENTIALS AND COMPLEXITIES OF NEO-TRADITIONAL URBANISM: CASE STUDIES FROM EUROPE AND TÜRKİYE

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ABSTRACT

POTENTIALS AND COMPLEXITIES OF NEO-TRADITIONAL URBANISM: CASE STUDIES FROM EUROPE AND TÜRKİYE

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Neo-traditional urbanism has emerged as a significant methodology in contemporary urban design discourses, as an indicator to the spatial, social, and environmental constraints resulting from modernist planning approaches. It proposes tradition not as a nostalgic reference, but as a productive resource for contemporary city-making. Hence, urban history is considered to be an essential foundation for design, the purpose of providing context-specific understandings rather than generic paradigm. This thesis examines neo-traditional urbanism as a context-sensitive and design-led urban practice, focusing on how historical urban references can inform contemporary urban design without direct replication. The research asserts that every urban context carries its own distinct historical depth and spatial knowledge; serves as inspiration for design methodologies which are motivated by tradition. The research combines a historical analysis of traditional urbanism with a comparative examination of four case studies: Poundbury, Weespersluis, Sulukule, and Angora Houses. Through this comparative framework, the thesis investigates how neo-traditional urban principles are interpreted, adapted, and constrained under different socio-spatial and governance conditions. The research involves qualitative and

comparative analysis, which encompasses urban history, urban design theory, and spatial analysis, in order to evaluate the design goals and the urban outcome which the relevance of neo-traditional urbanism lies on its capacity to cultivate a coherent urban structure when it is interwoven with the historical context, social continuity, and governance frameworks. This thesis contributes to a nuanced and context-aware tradition-inspired urban design; offers insights for developing inclusive, adaptable urban environments by repositioning neo-traditional urbanism as a learning framework.

Keywords: Neo-Traditional Urbanism, Urban History, Urban Design, Urban Sociology, Comparative Urban Analysis.

ÖZ

YENİ-GELENEKSEL ŞEHİRCİLİĞİN POTANSİYELLERİ VE KARMAŞIKLIKLARI: AVRUPA VE TÜRKİYE'DEN ÖRNEKLER

Aktürk, Hüma Sevde
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Yeni-geleneksel kentleşme, modernist planlamanın mekânsal, toplumsal ve çevresel sınırlılıklarına bir alternatif olarak, çağdaş kentsel tasarım tartışmalarında önemli bir yaklaşım haline gelmiştir. İnsan ölçeği, yürünebilirlik, sokak temelli kamusal yaşam ve tarihsel kentsel biçimle süreklilik gibi ilkeleri merkeze alan yeni-geleneksel kentleşme, geleneği nostaljik bir referans olarak değil, çağdaş kent üretimi için üretken bir kaynak olarak ele alır. Bu bakış açısında kentsel tarih, evrensel modeller sunan bir geçmişten ziyade, bağlama özgü tasarım bilgisi sağlayan eleştirel bir temel olarak değerlendirilir. Yeni-geleneksel kentleşmeyi bağlama duyarlı ve tasarım odaklı bir kentsel pratik olarak incelemekte; tarihsel kentsel referansların doğrudan kopyalamadan çağdaş kentsel tasarıma nasıl aktarılabileceğini araştırmaktadır. Çalışma, her kentsel bağlamın kendi tarihsel derinliğine ve mekânsal bilgisine sahip olduğu ve bu birikimin gelenekten beslenen tasarım yaklaşımları için zengin bir kaynak sunduğu varsayımından hareket etmektedir. Araştırma hem tarihsel hem de geleneksel açıdan kentleşmeyi; Poundbury (Birleşik Krallık), Weespersluis (Hollanda), Sulukule (İstanbul, Türkiye) ve Angora Evleri (Ankara, Türkiye) örneklerini kapsayan karşılaştırmalı vaka analizleriyle birleştirmektedir. Bu

çerçevede, yeni-geleneksel kentsel ilkelerin farklı sosyo-mekânsal ve yönetsel koşullar altında nasıl yorumlandığı, dönüştürüldüğü ve sınırlandığı incelenmektedir. Nitel ve karşılaştırmalı bir yöntem izleyen çalışma, kentsel tarih, kentsel tasarım kuramı ve mekânsal analiz araçlarını bir araya getirerek tasarım niyetleri ile ortaya çıkan kentsel sonuçlar arasındaki ilişkiyi değerlendirmektedir. Tezin bulguları, neo-geleneksel kentleşmenin değerinin biçimsel taklitten ziyade, yerel tarihsel bilgi, toplumsal süreklilik ve yönetim yapılarıyla uyumlu olduğunda ortaya çıktığını göstermektedir. Bu çalışma, yeni-geleneksel kentleşmeyi öğrenmeye dayalı bir çerçeve olarak yeniden konumlandırarak, daha kapsayıcı ve uyarlanabilir kentsel tasarım yaklaşımlarına yönelik kavramsal bir zemin sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yeni-Geleneksel Kentleşme, Kentsel Tarih, Kentsel Tasarım, Kent Sosyolojisi, Karşılaştırmalı Kentsel Analiz.

to my beloved mother and father…

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, neo-traditional urbanism has emerged as a prominent design approach within debates on contemporary urban development, particularly as a response to the spatial, social, and environmental shortcomings of modernist and post-war planning paradigms. Advocating principles such as human-scale development, walkable neighbourhoods, street-oriented public life, and continuity with historical urban form, neo-traditional urbanism positions itself as an alternative framework for creating more liveable and socially coherent urban environments. Yet despite its growing influence in Europe and North America, the interpretation, application, and implications of neo-traditional urbanism remain highly context-dependent and contested.

This thesis examines neo-traditional urbanism not as a model that can be universally replicated, but rather as an approach that is design oriented and historically contextualised, and which is impacted by local urban histories, governance frameworks, and socio-spatial dynamics, hence, rather than asking whether neo-traditional urbanism works in a general sense, the research investigates how and under what conditions tradition inspired urban principles are mobilised, and what kinds of spatial, social, and institutional outcomes they produce in different contexts.

A central motivation for this research lies in the observation that neo-traditional urbanism which is generally draws inspiration from specific historical periods, most notably the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, during which urban environments were shaped by compact form, mixed use, and socially embedded public spaces. In European and Anglo-American contexts, these historical references are often rooted

in local urban traditions. However, in non-Western contexts such as Türkiye, the translation of neo-traditional principles raises critical questions such as; which historical periods and urban traditions are being referenced, how are they interpreted, and to what extent do they align with local urban histories and contemporary realities?

To address these questions, the thesis situates neo-traditional urbanism within a broader historical framework by examining traditional urbanism and urban values of Türkiye from foundation of the late Ottoman urbanism as unique urban history and values of Türkiye. This historical approach performs not as a nostalgic recreation of the past, but as a theoretical basis for comprehending how traditional architecture and urbanisation worked as adaptive, socially rooted processes, additionally, the research challenges the predominance of Western-centric references in neo-traditional urban discourse and proposes a more context-sensitive basis for interpretation by foregrounding Türkiye's urban history.

Methodologically, the thesis adopts a qualitative, comparative research approach that combines historical analysis with design-led case study examination. The research is structured around four case studies; Poundbury (Dorchester, the United Kingdom), Weespersluis (Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Sulukule (İstanbul, Türkiye), and Angora Houses (Ankara, Türkiye), selected for their differing relationships to neo-traditional urban principles. These instances were not selected as direct counterparts for one another; rather, they were selected as complimentary reference points that demonstrate how comparable design concepts function under different socio-political and institutional situations.

Firstly, Poundbury is examined as one of the most explicit and influential neo-traditional urban projects, offering insights into the possibilities and limitations of highly controlled, ideology driven design. Secondly, Weespersluis represents a contemporary example of tradition-inspired urbanism applied at the scale of a newly developed town, allowing for the analysis of incremental planning and integration

with an existing historic context. Thirdly, Sulukule is explored through a design-led reading of the post-renewal Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, highlighting the tensions between heritage-inspired form, governance, and social continuity. Finally, Angora Houses is analysed as a hybrid and evolving experiment within the Turkish context, illustrating how traditional references and neighbourhood-scale planning intersect with market driven housing production.

In order to strengthen how the case study knowledge was developed, the research combined secondary sources with systematic field-based observation. While the broader comparative framework relies on academic literature and document-based analysis, two case studies, Weespersluis and Angora Houses, were additionally examined through on-site visits. With an emphasis on particular urban design factors, the site visits were conducted as systematic spatial and local level observations. Design elements, dwelling typologies, façade views, street hierarchies, urban morphology, public-private transitions, pedestrian experiences, and the interplay between the built environment and everyday activities were some of the variables that were considered. Rather than serving as anecdotal impressions, the field observations were recorded through photographic documentation and organised as primary empirical material supporting the design-led interpretation of each case. This approach allowed the analysis to incorporate direct experiential evidence and to evaluate how neo-traditional design intentions operate at the level of lived urban space.

The thesis provides a comparative analytical approach centred on urban form, spatial organisation, design intention, and governance, instead of focussing solely on stylistic or aesthetic assessment which leads to this method facilitates a detailed analysis of the implementation or limitations of neo-traditional ideas, including street-based urbanism, human size, architectural coherence, and mixed use.

The research is guided by several interrelated questions:

- How is tradition conceptualised and operationalised within neo-traditional urbanism?
- In what ways do historical urban references shape contemporary design decisions?
- How do governance structures and socio-economic conditions influence the outcomes of tradition-inspired urban projects?
- And what lessons can be drawn for the development of contextually appropriate neo-traditional urban approaches in Türkiye?

Importantly, the thesis acknowledges that there is currently no fully articulated neo-traditional urban project in Türkiye, as a result of this, rather than treating this absence as a limitation, the research approaches it as an opportunity for critical interpretation. By analysing projects that engage with neo-traditional principles implicitly or partially, the thesis seeks to extract transferable insights that may inform future urban design practice without advocating direct replication.

The purpose of this research is to improve the understanding of neo-traditional urbanism by considering tradition not as a static aesthetic reference but rather as a dynamic and challenging resource for the construction of contemporary urban settings. The thesis positions neo-traditional urbanism as an area to be researched at the meeting ground of urban design, urban history, and urban sociology, providing significant insights for academic research and professional practice so that allowing the interpreters of the discipline to create multi-facet, interdisciplinary design foundation.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Before delving into the details of the thesis, it is going to be examine what has been discussed and interpreted in the literature regarding neo-traditional urbanism. In this way, it can be helpful for answering the questions such as where the topic originated and how it developed.

2.1 Theoretical Background

In the last several decades, people have become more conscious of the physical and moral structure of cities. This has caused specialists to rethink the long-lasting link between history, architecture, and community. Among the movements aimed at re-establishing this relationship, New Urbanism, which will be detailly focused on neo-traditional urbanism sub-concept, holds a notably intricate position. The late 20th century movement draws emphasis on the development of suburbs and attempts to restore back the traditional ideals of pre-modern city planning. There are a lot of different ideas about architecture, society, and new policies all confounded up. However, the four principal works under examination, Karl Besel and Viviana Andreescu's Back to the Future: New Urbanism and the Rise of Neo-traditionalism in Urban Planning (2013), Larry R. Ford's 'Lynch Revisited: New Urbanism and Theories of Good City Form' (1999), Anna Maria Colavitti's 'Urban Heritage Management: Planning with History' (2018), and Luca Zan's 'Managing Cultural Heritage: Evolving Research Agendas and Global Challenges' (2017) highlights the theoretical and practical aspects of neo-traditionalism differ significantly. These studies demonstrate that contemporary urban theory fluctuates in between form and method, tradition and new concepts, government and development. Although each of these works implements a distinct academic method, they ultimately converge on

a common inquiry, how can the city reconnect with its cohesiveness, significance, and sustainability following years of fragmentation.

Besel and Andreescu situate this perspective within the American setting, asserting that New Urbanism primarily signifies a revival of neighbourhood developments characteristic of the pre-automobile period (2013, p. xiv). In contrast, Ford examines the concepts that the movement promotes by contrasting them with the five standards that Kevin Lynch has established for determining whether or not a certain urban form is desirable. These five standards are as follows: vitality, sense, fit, access, and control. This is an account of the phenomenon that combines idealism with facts from everyday life (Ford, 1999, pp. 252-253). Colavitti and Zan's discourse provides a more in-depth examination of the urban heritage, organisational management, and ethical aspects of preservation. Additionally, it addresses subjects that go deeper than morphological aspect and urban design. According to Colavitti (2018, p. vii), the assertion that urban planning alongside heritage in mind necessitates that the historical city be regarded as a dynamic composite of characteristics in comparison to being regarded as a rigid structure. Zan (2017, p. 5) asserts that legacy ought to be regarded as a process of compromise among multiple stakeholders. In the process of bringing together a variety of perspectives, a considerable comparative domain is produced. Colavitti and Zan highlight on the interpretative and institutional aspects that comprise neo-traditionalism, whilst Besel & Andreescu (2013), and Ford (1999) analyse its developmental and geographical rationale. In order to address the philosophical and ethical consequences that are associated with preserving continuity with the past, they want a synthesis that goes beyond creative revivalism. This comparative study illustrates that neo-traditional urbanism, when stripped of its aesthetic reductions, may be re-contextualised within a broader theoretical paradigm of historical urbanism. This is a way of trying to make the uniformity of form fit with the variance of cultural value.

The discussion over design for urban settings that eventually evolved to neo-traditionalism was first a reaction to what some considered were flaws in modernist

planning. Neo-traditionalism was finally developed as a result of this discourse. The principles of functionalist development and efficiency served as the foundation for the developing of the contemporary urban environment. This indicates that, in some contexts, the concepts of identity, memory, and social cohesion are not given the level of attention that they must receive. According to the findings of Ford's research, this tendency may be traced back to the significant changes that occurred in the suburbs following the conclusion of World War II, developers replaced builders during this time period, and the boundaries of urban districts were clearly delineated by codes, covenants, and restrictions that favoured homogeneity and isolation (1999, pp.249-250). An ethical and aesthetic response to this setting gave rise to the concept of new urbanism, which aimed to foster communities that were suitable for walking, mixed-use projects, and a revitalised feeling of their location. However, as Ford notes, the movement's achievements in sense and fit have not consistently resulted in vigour or governance (1999, p. 254).

Besel and Andreescu highlight the vagueness by situating New Urbanism within a wider American reformist discourse that ranges from Lewis Mumford's regionalism to Jane Jacobs's neighbourhood activism. Both individuals are considered forerunners of New Urbanism, although their differing views on order and spontaneity. They say that New Urbanism is not a new idea, but a return to the civic virtues that used to make the pre-industrial town lively (Besel and Andreescu, 2013, p. 15). The authors laid out the material according to correspond with Mumford's idea of the organic city, which is a location where the built environment, social interactions, and the environment all function together in a morally acceptable way. Besel and Andreescu, on the other hand, concur that the movement's biggest problem is that it can't transcend beyond solely decorative interpretations to completely reconfigure the basic structure of urban design (2013, p. xiv).

The inquiry of whether neo-traditionalism may effect structural transformation or only persists as an aesthetic ideology drives much of the critical discourse. Ford's methodological accuracy, reflected in Lynch's phenomenon of urban form, provides

a structure for evaluating both ethical and practical dimensions of this study. On the other hand, Colavitti and Zan's study takes the attention away from the layout of the urban setting and towards the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that are responsible for developing and regulating the significance of the urban environment. Colavitti posits that the valorisation of the landscape is not an introductory phase, but a permanent critical readout of the planning activity (2018, p. 15), therefore redefining planning as a mode of historical interpretation. Zan's assertion that heritage is not a resource to be administered but a relationship to be maintained (2017, p. 89) articulates the ethical obligations of neo-traditional design in terms of governance and participation. The precedence of evaluating these perceptions do not lie in the fact that they are academically diverse; rather, it lies in the fact that they collectively reject the idea that the concept of urban design ought to be separated from history. Each and every author offers their own distinct perspective in arguing against the reasoning of tabula rasa modernism. They maintain that the authentic identities of places are affected by the factors of chronological continuity and communal memory. On the contrary, it is understood by the history shouldn't be merely copied; it has to be considered concerning in an innovative manner.

Colavitti says that every project must interpret the past without reproducing it (2018, p. 49). The notion of critical continuity functions as the conceptual connection between the preservation of heritage and neo-traditional design, due to either seek to reconstruct meaning in the context of spatial and cultural disparities. This synthesis will examine how each of the four sources contributes to a holistic understanding of neo-traditional urbanism. The chapter examines how Besel, Andreescu, and Ford together clarify the philosophical and geographical underpinnings of the movement. It also examines at how Colavitti and Zan redefine it's meaning to include questions of management, cultural heritage, and sustainability. The assertion views neo-traditionalism not simply as an idyllic nostalgic return to the past, but as a controversial arena for the endeavour of harmonising traditional values with contemporary contexts. Neo-traditionalism will be discussed more in the following sections.

2.2 The Dialogues of Form and Ethos: Besel, Andreescu, and Ford

The theoretical foundation of neo-traditional urbanism is in its endeavour to harmonise form and ethos, physical structure and moral intent, by reviving old urban patterns. The contributions of Karl Besel and Viviana Andreescu (2013) and Larry R. Ford (1999) exemplify two complimentary yet fundamentally divergent methodologies on this subject. Besel and Andreescu place New Urbanism in the context of American planning history, while Ford adds a more critical and judgemental aspect by using Kevin Lynch's ideas on how people see and identify cities. The sources together delineate the conceptual ambitions and factual inconsistencies of a movement that aims to revert to traditional paradigms of civic life while operating within modern socio-economic frameworks. Besel and Andreescu put emphasis more than just a record of architectural ideas; it is also an intellectual exploration of an urban planning. Their primary argument asserts that New Urbanism is not entirely new, representing largely a revival of the neighbourhood developments that defined the pre-automobile era (Besel and Andreescu, 2013, p. xiv). By situating the movement within the extensive lineage of reformist urbanism, the editors contest the prevalent fallacy that New Urbanism is simply a stylistic response to modernism. They attribute the establishment of this concept to the fundamental urban humanism that is espoused by Lewis Mumford and Jane Jacobs, two learned persons who, in spite of the fact that they have differing opinions on the subject of urban planning, both maintain that cities ought to emphasise civic participation and spatial coherence in order to encourage the formation of significant relationships between people. Mumford's regionalist concept of the organic city and Jacobs's advocacy for eyes on the street exemplify two opposing yet complementary perspectives that persistently influence New Urbanism.

New Urbanism aims to restore formal legibility via conventional street layouts, town centres, and public squares; yet, it frequently has difficulties in replicating the spontaneous sociability that Jacobs memorably lauded. The authors recognise this

paradox, presenting the essential inquiry of whether New Urbanism's influence will remain predominantly stylistic, or if the new urban design movement will genuinely alter the fundamental pattern of suburban development (Besel and Andreescu, 2013, p. xiv). The instance examinations of Besel and Andreescu demonstrate the inconsistent application of theory in practice. Despite the fact that the visual harmony and fulfilment of locals who live in specified urban settings are enhanced by the implementation of conventional urban planning ideas, such as walkability, mixed uses, and human scale, these notions do not necessarily promote the development of heterogeneity or practices of collaboration. This can be seen in examples such as; the Village of West Clay and Park DuValle. Indeed, housing prices limited the accessibility of the development to upper-middle-class families (Besel and Andreescu, 2013, p. 88), underscoring that form alone cannot rectify broader socio-economic dynamics. The discussion of projects like Seaside and Celebration further reinforces this critique their carefully curated aesthetic and architectural codes (Besel and Andreescu, 2013, p. 10) produce visual harmony but risk social homogeneity. This ongoing contrast between the market's exclusivity and the rhetoric of community democratisation is one of the most distinguishing tensions of ongoing debates through the topic.

Larry Ford enters this debate from a different view point. Ford shares Besel and Andreescu's scepticism toward the myth of stylistic redemption but grounds his analysis in a methodological framework drawn from Kevin Lynch's A Theory of Good City Form (1981). Ford argues that Lynch's five criteria dimensions, vitality, sense, fit, access, and control, offer a reasonably objective way to evaluate the potentials of both standard and new urbanistic communities (Ford, 1999, p. 247). The general framework being proposed enables a methodical approach to assessing the ethical and physical assertions of the movement, despite its ideological conformity or aesthetic attraction. Applying Lynch's criteria, Ford finds that New Urbanist communities often excel in creating a strong sense of place through legibility and coherence (Ford, 1999, p. 254). Lynch defined these characteristics sense and fit, which help people comprehend, navigate, and connect with their

surroundings. They include grid-like layouts, pedestrian circulation, and architectural continuity. Ford, on the other hand, says that these geographical gains rarely lead to the social vigour or independence that the movement's founders had in mind. The codes, covenants, and restrictions governing such developments, designed to preserve visual order, frequently suppress the spontaneity and diversity that sustain urban life (Ford, 1999, p. 250). Ford's criticism is in alignment with Besel and Andreescu's disclaimer; while the built environment of New Urbanism might appear like conventional urban areas, its administrative and socioeconomic structures often continue the private reasoning that led to suburban isolation in the first place. Ford's utilisation of the cul-de-sac that exists in the suburbs as a representation of contemporary isolation is especially remarkable. He writes that in contemporary suburbs, the neighbourhood, a cherished ideal for many Americans, has become a myth because the spatial linkages that sustain it have been severed (Ford, 1999, p. 248). In light of this insight, New Urbanism is both characterised and challenged. For all its attempts to reconstitute the spatial order of pre-war towns, the movement often fails to regenerate the social networks that made those forms meaningful. Ford concludes that while New Urbanism has at least reintroduced to planners and developers the notion that design can influence behaviour, its transformative potential remains limited by the deeper economic and cultural patterns that shape development (Ford, 1999, p. 255). Neo-traditional urbanism is a design approach and an ethical effort, but it is constrained by the situations that it functions in, according to the research conducted by Besel, Andreescu, and Ford.

Neo-traditional urbanism has two different sides, as indicated by their work. The outcomes of their research demonstrate that the core foundation of New Urbanism, which posits that urban design may act as a catalyst for societal revitalisation, is likely to fail if it considered without any supportive elements such as traditional and cultural background. This is due to their outcomes illustrate that spatial design, no matter how important it is, can't replace structural transformation. Both texts, however, confirm the lasting significance of urban structure as a medium of values. As Ford's dialogue with Lynch and Besel and Andreescu's engagement with

Mumford and Jacobs show, the quest for a good city form remains inseparable from the quest for a good society. This framework, which is both intellectual and ethical, lays the groundwork for a comprehensive investigation into the concepts of preservation, legacy, and legislative authority. Anna Maria Colavitti's (2018) and Luca Zan's (2017) works broaden this discourse to encompass the institutional and epistemic aspects of planning, in addition to design morphology. While Besel, Andreescu, and Ford examine the material and perceptual attributes of form, Colavitti and Zan investigate the interpretative mechanisms by which past and present are assimilated into the urban project. The importance of their contributions is that they represent a crucial accomplishment in the flourishing of neo-traditional thought. The exploration initiates with the social effects of heritage and ends with the aesthetics of resurrection.

2.3 History, Heritage, and Planning: Colavitti and Zan's Contributions

Anna Maria Colavitti and Luca Zan widen the scope of the discussion by including questions of historical continuity, cultural governance, and institutional responsibility, whilst Besel & Andreescu, and Ford study neo-traditional urbanism from a conceptual, morphological, and sociological perspective. The built environment was regarded by both scholars not as only one spatial entity but rather as an expression of communal identities that were yet in a phase of development. They expand the conversation about neo-traditionalism from form to meaning, as well as from design to management by making use of frameworks that are different from each other but that eventually come together. Colavitti investigates planning in connection to history, whereas Zan considers the administration of cultural assets to be a process that is adaptive and negotiated. Anna Maria Colavitti's Urban Cultural Management: Planning with History (2018) is a significant modern effort to integrate urban design with cultural protection. Her central premise, that the acquisition of a meticulous and up-to-date historical picture cannot be considered as a preliminary

work, but as a bearing line for every territorial project (Colvatti, 2018, p. vii), is both epistemological and operational.

Colavitti holds the view that history functions as an ever-changing tool that moulds spatial arrangements and functions as the basis for intellectual design. The mainstream interpretation of modernist functionalism generally held that settings that have historical significance were to be considered as frames that were active and of relevance, rather than impediments that needed to be overcome. The perspective discussed here is in contradiction with this traditional interpretation. Colavitti positions her study within the historical framework of European urbanism, referencing extensively historians such Camillo Sitte, Charles Buls, Gustavo Giovannoni, and Alois Riegl. The concept of a morphological awareness, which refers to the notion that the shape of the city is a mosaic made up of social, cultural, and environmental processes, was originally proposed by these pioneers. This is the perspective that she holds. The historic city, she writes, is the result of stratified processes whose reading must not end in preservation, but evolve into an operative knowledge (Colvatti, 2018, p. 21). The emphasis on operative knowledge is crucial. It shows that Colavitti is leaving the preservationist model and moving towards a critical humanism approach to planning. This indicates that past ought to shape the built environment of the future by way of interpretation rather than by imitation.

The normative foundation for her argument is established in the Italian Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio, which Colvatti considers to constitute a document of central importance in the redefinition of the link that exists between landscape and identity. The code explicitly recognised the landscape as both a cultural and a perceptible manifestation of collective identity (Colvatti, 2018, p. 12). Colavitti expresses the notion that this recognition results in a transformation of the terrain from a category that is aesthetic in nature to one that is moral and community in nature. Urban planners/designers are required to view the landscape as a continually evolving narrative that combines memories, environment, and social interaction within its structure. Accordingly, she asserts, the valorisation of the landscape is not

an introductory phase, but a permanent critical readout of the planning activity (Colvatti, 2018, p. 15). Colavitti makes a criticism of the persistent duality that exists between conservation and innovation by framing heritage as an active feature of planning. Modernist urbanism, she argues, reduced design to technical functionality, ignoring the historical, aesthetic, and symbolic dimensions of the urban structure (Colvatti, 2018, p. 27). Rather than romanticising the past, her response to this reductionism is to rediscover the interpretative possibilities that it contains. Every project, to be authentic, must interpret the past without reproducing it, she writes (Colvatti, 2018, p. 49). This basic theoretical connection that exists between Colavitti's work and neo-traditionalist rhetoric is characterised by a discrepancy between imitation and interpretation as well as between critical continuity and nostalgic rebirth.

New Urbanism typically copies the look of old cities, but Colavitti wants a deeper look at the methods that made them. Her focus on interdisciplinarity, the integration of archaeology, architecture, ecology, and governance within co-planning perspectives of action (Colvatti, 2018, p. 33), changes the way people think about urban designers. Instead of being a stylist, they are now a keeper of information that changes with time. This change in the epistemological framework appears in Luca Zan's book (2017) extends the conversation from the design and planning disciplines to the sphere of institutional management and global policy. Zan's central argument is that heritage cannot be treated as a static entity to be protected but must be understood as a process of meaning-making that requires negotiation between multiple stakeholders and scales (Zan, 2017, p. 5). Heritage management is point outed by him as a collaborative and dynamic process that is characterised by the ongoing debate which leads to a redefinition of cultural, economic, and social values. Like Colavitti, Zan rejects the reduction of heritage to monumentality or aesthetic nostalgia. Rather, he positions it inside the intricate structures of government and money that serve to define the current global situation. Cultural heritage institutions, he writes, now operate within complex organisational and financial environments that require both accountability and adaptability (Zan, 2017, p. 7). This remark

underscores an essential truth of twenty-first century urbanism: the preservation of cultural value relies equally on managerial innovation and design quality. Zan argues that good legacy management must balance the conflicting demands of preservation, use, and community benefit (Zan, 2017, p. 28). The three key elements that are pointed out demonstrate that New Urbanism can be defined by the contradictions that arise among reliability, liveability, and involvement. Zan's commitment to plurality and context sensitivity challenges the universalist tendencies of both modernist and neo-traditional planning. The claim he and his colleagues put up is that rather than a single standard of cultural heritage management, there is actually a synthesis of approaches that have been formed through local histories, institutions, and power relations (Zan, 2017, p. 23). This pluralism aligns with Colavitti's call for co-planning approaches but extends it into the realm of transnational governance.

The fact that heritage is always situated within its political and economic environment is made evident by the comparative case studies that are presented in the book. These studies range from public-private partnerships in Europe to participatory frameworks in Latin America. For example, while Italian models emphasise institutional continuity, Latin American examples treat heritage as a common good rather than an institutional property (Zan, 2017, p. 48), revealing alternative conceptions of stewardship that privilege collective agency over bureaucratic control. Zan also identifies what he terms the economisation of heritage; whereby cultural assets are reframed through the logics of performance indicators and market efficiency (Zan, 2017, p. 75). This phenomenon brings with it new kinds of sustainability, but it also runs the danger of diminishing heritage to a managerial commodity. To manage heritage is to manage uncertainty, cultural, financial, and ethical, he concludes (Zan, 2017, p. 105). The idea that the field of heritage studies is characterised by a discussion of the diverse perspectives about legitimacy, identity, and usage rather than being a domain with a predetermined value is supported by both of the academics. The reflexivity that is included in this phrase reflects the critical self-awareness that is present in Colavitti's paradigm. Together, Colavitti and Zan offer a vital counterpoint to the design-oriented perspectives of Besel,

Andreescu, and Ford. While the former emphasises the physical reconstruction of community via form, Colavitti and Zan highlight the institutional, epistemological, and ethical aspects of that reconstruction. They highlight that form and governance are two sides of the same coin, and that neo-traditional values can only survive if they are supported by both spatial architecture and the value and management systems that support them.

As a consequence of this, both scholars interpret neo-traditional urbanism as an activity that involves a continuation of culture and that necessitates interdisciplinary cooperation, a critical examination of historical contexts, and governance that is adaptable. Their opinions show that the conversation has moved forward a lot, from how to construct a normal city to how to run a cultural city. This change shows that people know that urban design, no matter how good it is, needs to be built into buildings that stay important and lively throughout time. The ethical and social objectives of neo-traditionalism, which include walkability, community, and identification, are not really realised by simply imitating historical forms; rather, they are attained via the creation of institutional structures that are capable of maintaining them.

2.4 Continuity, Governance, and the Future of Neo-Traditional Urbanism

There has been a notable revival in the field of neo-traditional urbanism, according to the broader narrative around Besel and Andreescu (2013), Ford (1999), Colavitti (2018), and Zan (2017). The emphasis is being shifted away from the only concentration on physical form and towards the consideration of a more extensive variety of elements, which include the ethical, historical, and administrative facets of existence in urban settings. Research that originates from a variety of various fields, such as planning theory, urban design, heritage studies, and cultural management, is included into these works. In spite of this, they all attempt to provide an answer to the same basic question: in what ways are cities able to achieve continuity without becoming stagnant, and innovation without a lack of awareness?

Their approach, which is defined by its emphasis on collaboration, is based on a framework that positions the issue of form within the context of a more complete structure that evaluates its significance from an ecological standpoint. The future of architecture in urban areas will be defined by the establishment of paradigms that emphasise history and institutions that stimulate social interaction, rather than relying on the repeating of tradition, according to this perspective. Continuity that is essential, a word that represents the ideas integrating neo-traditional design with traditional power, is the key premise of this synthesis. Besel and Andreescu provide the historical and cultural foundation of this ethos. They contend that New Urbanism is a strategy to re-establish civilisation's scale, the capacity to get around on foot, and the social nature that were diminished by contemporary planning and the growth of suburbs. Yet, as they caution, it remains uncertain whether the movement's impact will go beyond its purely stylistic manifestations (Besel and Andreescu, 2013, p. xiv). Their scepticism is rooted in actual reality; while the architectural lexicon of ancient cities may be rebuilt, the socio-economic and cultural ecosystems that formerly supported them cannot be readily restored.

The paradox that this insight demonstrates is a fundamental one for neo-traditional urbanism. It is based on the idea that communities may be revitalised via built environment, however it is also based on the idea that design alone is not sufficient to develop neighbourhood which might be directly connected to the local community sense. Larry Ford's engagement with Kevin Lynch's A Theory of Good City Form provides the analytical tools to unpack this paradox. Ford finds that New Urbanist developments succeed in achieving a clear sense and fit, two of Lynch's key dimensions, but struggle with vitality and control (Ford, 1999, p. 254). According to his argument, the outcome is a type of curated urbanism in which visual order is preserved at the price of both serendipity and heterogeneity (Ford, 1999, p. 250). Ford's diagnosis is consistent with Besel and Andreescu's observation that many neo-traditional communities, despite their aesthetic appeal, remain socially exclusive. In contrast, the method that Ford utilises demonstrates that design may have a long-lasting impact. Even if they don't ensure it, the capacity to give spatial

comprehension and coherence is necessary for social life. In this respect, Ford helps us see neo-traditional urbanism not as an endpoint but as a necessary but insufficient condition for urban renewal. Colavitti's contribution to the subject involves reframing the link that exists between history and design. Her insistence that every project, to be authentic, must interpret the past without reproducing it (Colavitti, 2018, p. 49) captures the intellectual maturity that neo-traditionalism must achieve if it is to evolve beyond nostalgia. Where Besel, Andreescu, and Ford address the what and how of urban form, Colavitti addresses the why. Her framework for planning with history (Colavitti, 2018, p. vii) transforms the act of design into an act of cultural interpretation. Rather from simply being a physical backdrop that has to be created, the urban environment transforms into a narrative that must be comprehended. This approach has a striking resemblance to the original modernist perspective that is put out by Aldo Rossi in The Architecture of the City (1966). Rossi asserts in his work makes the claim that the city's structure functions as a reservoir of communal memory. By basing itself on transdisciplinary, administrative, and legislative approaches, Colavitti's argument avoids the theoretical abstraction of Rossi. She says that the historical urban area is more than simply a monument; it is an ever-changing ambiance that has meaning. Luca Zan's Managing Cultural Heritage advances this process by redirecting focus from the design of urban space to the regulation of cultural worth. Zan's primary assertion, that heritage is not a resource to be administered but a relationship to be maintained (Zan, 2017, p.89), introduces an ethical aspect that transcends mere planning. Where New Urbanism seeks to design community, heritage management seeks to sustain it. In their fundamental nature, both are initiatives of stewardship; yet, Zan's focus on negotiation and adaptation places this guardianship within the boundaries of the reality of globalisation and government that is based on neoliberalism. Cultural heritage institutions, he notes, operate within complex organisational and financial environments that require both accountability and adaptability (Zan, 2017, p. 7). These two needs emphasise the challenging situation that is now facing the modern

planning and architecture fields; the imperative of maintaining originality in an environment that is governed by metrics of competitiveness and efficiency.

The four works, when considered as a whole, provide the impression that the true future of neo-traditional urbanism is not found in a resurrection of style but rather in the combination of government, design, and history. The urban designer is required to mediate across various fields in order to establish a satisfactory equilibrium between flexibility in terms of the organisation, continuity history, and coherence in terms of aesthetics. Besel and Andreescu demonstrate the necessity of historical awareness; Ford offers a methodology for evaluating urban quality; Colavitti provides a hermeneutic of planning that reinterprets the past as a source of operative knowledge; and Zan introduces the managerial and ethical dimensions required to sustain that knowledge over time. These observations indicate that a fresh type of integrated urban humanism is emerging. In order to create a cohesive whole, this is an approach to management that incorporates creativity in design, a comprehension of history, and responsibility to the organisation. However, the synthesis that has been offered here also draws attention to important issues that are subject to dispute and therefore require an in-depth analysis. The conflict that exists between authenticity and simulation is the first.

Neo-traditional urbanism often risks aestheticising the past, producing environments that mimic traditional towns without reproducing their socio-economic diversity. As Besel and Andreescu note in their discussion of Seaside and Celebration, the result can be a carefully curated aesthetic (Besel and Andreescu, 2013, p. 10) that substitutes symbolic inclusion for actual social participation. The phenomenon is addressed by Colavitti's claim that heritage should be interpreted rather than directly duplicated (Colavitti, 2018, p. 49); the true value of urban form is not in its outward similarity but in its structural resonance, which represents the harmony between spatial logic and real-life lived experience. Another source of conflict is the relationship that exists between local governance and global government. The comparative case studies conducted by Zan provide evidence that the circumstances

of institutions and politics will necessarily influence the way in which heritage management is conducted. The management of urban heritage does not depend on one particular paradigm; instead, it is a process encompassing several tactics influenced by power dynamics and the historical context of the associated community (Zan, 2017, p. 23). The perspective expressed here is in opposition to the universalising inclinations that are characteristic of modernism and New Urbanism. It is proposed that every endeavour to urbanise should find its own equilibrium between maintaining the status quo and implementing change. This perspective is supported by Colavitti's (Colavitti, 2018, p. 33) emphasis on co-planning and multidisciplinary cooperation, which emphasises the need for participatory frameworks that are accessible to wide networks of knowledge and policy while still grounding heritage in local agency. The third and possibly most important conflict is when economic concerns and moral values clash. All four authors, in different ways, confront the pressures of neoliberal development. Ford recognises that the deeper economic and cultural patterns that shape development (Ford, 1999, p. 255) often undermine New Urbanism's communitarian goals. Besel and Andreescu similarly note that market logics constrain the inclusivity of neo-traditional projects, as housing prices limited the accessibility of the development to upper-middle-class families (Besel and Andreescu, 2013, p. 88). Zan sees this criticism as a conceptual insight; the economisation of heritage (Zan, 2017, p. 75) has both a possible advantage and a possible risk. Although they constitute a danger to the commercialisation of cultural value, economic frameworks have the potential to foster sustainability.

Consequently, the modern urban planner is faced with the issue of creating governance models that approach legacy and community not as assets but as dynamic commons. The synthesis of the four works mentioned above indicates that there is a way forward in the direction of a post-neo-traditional urbanism, a kind of urbanism that incorporates the moral and morphological insights of New Urbanism while also resolving its constraints by incorporating institutional and historical self-awareness. Such an approach would acknowledge, in the same way as Colavitti does, that the

landscape is both a cultural and perceptible manifestation of collective identity (2018, p. 12), and it would also adopt Zan's pragmatic perspective that government must be pluralistic and flexible (2017, p. 101). It would bring together Besel and Andreescu's moral sensibility with Ford's analytical accuracy, so bringing together the language of institutions with the geometry of streets. In the broader discourse of urban design, this synthesis repositions neo-traditionalism within the continuum of urban humanism. As is evident from the observations of all four of the authors, the city transcends the boundaries of a mere physical creation and assumes the qualities of a moral environment. It is a manifestation of how different civilisations perceive their own histories and how they want to go into the future. The health of cities is more dependent on the advancement of temporal intelligence, which is the capacity to derive lessons from history without being limited by it, than it is on the simple replication of antiquated patterns. This is the most enduring subject that is found in these works.

Neo-traditional urbanism is a framework that is both essentially intellectual and practical in nature. The subject at concern is not limited to the consideration of aesthetics; rather, the goal is to maintain continuity during changes and to achieve coherence in the midst of complexity. The creation of a thorough foundation for the reinterpretation of modern urbanisation practices is achieved through the combination of Besel and Andreescu's socio-spatial critique, Ford's evaluative rigour, Colavitti's historical hermeneutics, and Zan's institutional reflexivity. When taken as a whole, these perspectives need a transition from romanticising urban life to emphasising moral principles in designed environments in connection to the tradition and heritage of the local population. This transformation could be achieved by putting greater priority on the design of interactions than the design of merely form. The phrase return that is suggested by the term Back to the Future (Besel and Andreescu, 2013) in this case has a new meaning; rather than representing a regression to a glorified past, it represents a reorganisation of planning with the intention of rekindling memories of the future.

CHAPTER 3

TRADITIONAL URBANISM VALUES AS A CONCEPTUAL BASE FOR NEO-TRADITIONAL URBANISM: PRINCIPLES, TRANSLATIONS, AND THE TURKISH CONTEXT

Having established a conceptual understanding of neo-traditional urbanism in the preceding chapter, it becomes necessary to examine the historical foundations from which such an approach may draw inspiration. Neo-traditional urbanism does not emerge in a cultural vacuum; rather, it consistently refers back to specific moments of urban history, most commonly the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when cities were shaped by compact form, street-based public life, and socially embedded architectural practices. In European, British, and North American contexts, these periods are frequently invoked as references for walkable neighbourhoods, mixed-use environments, and human-scale urban form.

Traditional architecture and traditional urbanism, in this sense, are not defined solely by stylistic features. According to Kazimee, traditional environments are formed through a process that continues and takes place throughout many years. The outcome is impacted by values of society, climatic conditions, traditions, and social norms instead of by autonomous design goals (Kazimee, 2010, p. 133). This process-oriented understanding aligns closely with neo-traditional urbanism's critique of modernist planning, which often prioritised abstract functional zoning over lived spatial experience.

In Anglo-American and European literature, traditional urbanism is frequently associated with pre-industrial or early industrial cities characterised by clear street hierarchies, dense block structures, and strong public-private spatial gradients. Hernandez and Brebbia note that traditional urban patterns are valued for their human scale, mixed uses, and continuity of urban fabric, qualities that contemporary

neo-traditional projects seek to reinterpret rather than replicate (Hernandez & Brebbia, 2010, p. 5). Similarly, Jarvis and Bonnett argue that neo-traditional urbanism often relies on a form of progressive nostalgia, in which references to the past are mobilised to imagine alternative urban futures rather than to retreat from modernity (Jarvis & Bonnett, 2013, p. 2349).

Although these discussions offer an adequate conceptual framework, they are mostly based on Western urban histories. If neo-traditional urbanism is to be meaningfully explored within the Turkish context, it becomes essential to identify the corresponding historical periods and spatial traditions that shaped local urban development.

The municipal organisation, infrastructure, and aesthetic expression of Ottoman cities underwent significant changes over these times; yet, these changes did not result in the elimination of the neighbourhood structures and cultures that were already in place. Instead, they often operated through selective integration. Traditional neighbourhoods, courtyard-centric housing, and street-oriented spatial arrangements remained integral to daily urban life, despite the development of new public projects, boulevards, and institutional reforms.

According to Kazimee, tradition under these conditions serves to improve the quality of life by conveying crucial knowledge, rather than just portraying an unchangeable historical instance (Kazimee, 2010, p. 134). The idea that tradition is an entity which is always evolving is the foundation of his argument. Traditional surroundings are able to cultivate a sense of belonging by means of the eternal link that links place, community, and memory (Kazimee, 2010, p. 133). These qualities form the conceptual foundation upon which neo-traditional urbanism seeks to build.

This historical condition makes the Ottoman urban transformation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries particularly relevant for neo-traditional urbanism in Türkiye. The era demonstrates how the layout and appearance of urban areas has changed over time while keeping traditional aesthetic, social links, and architectural

consistency. Rather than demonstrating an obvious distinction between traditional practices and modernity. Castello considers traditional urbanism for being an interpretation of utopian thought is an intriguing component of his perspective. He says that traditional urbanism used to offer a vision of unity and community life, but now it needs to be reinterpreted critically instead of romantically (Castello, 2010, p. 13).

This historical grounding also prepares the analytical terrain for the subsequent case-study chapters. By clarifying what traditional architecture and urbanisation meant within the western and eastern context, the chapter may also establish a necessary reference point against which later neo-traditional or tradition-inspired projects can be evaluated.

3.1 Why Traditional Urbanism Matters?

Traditional urbanism has reinstated as an essential guide in modern discussions about urban design. This is not due to an idealising past, but rather a historically established spatial logic that creates spaces that are viable, adequate for activities of people, and significant to the community, hence, neither a stylistic categorisation nor an aesthetic predisposition is considered to be associated with traditional urbanism within the context of this thesis. A differentiation of this kind is crucial because it is considered to be a fundamental urban language. It is a compilation of spatial connections, lifestyle patterns, and public-private interactions that have historically facilitated cities to operate as cohesive social and infrastructures, if, traditional urbanism is reduced to architectural imagery, neo-traditional urbanism risks becoming an exercise in visual imitation. If, however, it is interpreted as an urban logic, grounded in street-based morphology, incremental growth, and everyday accessibility, it becomes a productive base for contemporary urbanism, particularly for contexts seeking alternatives to fragmented, automobile-oriented, and socially polarised development.

A key reason traditional urbanism remains relevant is that it offers a consistent explanation of what makes a settlement urban beyond the presence of buildings. Historically, traditional surroundings established a permanent relationship between architectural form and public space in such this link exists till this day therefore, streets, parks, thresholds, and gathering places were not indulgences instead they were vital parts of city life. The ability of traditional urbanism to provide spatial coherence via the use of relational form is the most important contribution that it makes. Rather than being viewed as only an aesthetic centre of the urban environment, the public realm is viewed as an organisational framework that facilitates movement and social engagement, hence, this point is strongly echoed in critical discussions of new urbanist precedent-making, where it is argued that the defining characteristic of urbanity lies in the relationship between public and private (Veregge, 1997, p. 52) which this statement is particularly significant as it redirects focus from façade aesthetic to the spatial circumstances that facilitate ordinary urban lives.

Traditional urbanism did not arise as a polished design; it evolved via gradual processes which create its incremental essence of it, also, influenced by local climate, physical conditions, social conventions, and economic transformations as well as many other elements to consider, hence this reveals its multi-layered characteristics. Consequently, the most meaningful lesson for neo-traditional urbanism is not the replication of historical form but the translation of historically grounded principles into contemporary planning and design. The danger of tradition, as multiple authors emphasise, is that it can be misused as a static image. The critique of precedent-making highlights that extracting traditional qualities while denying change resembles early preservation approaches that sought to freeze environments in time (Veregge, 1997, p. 53). In the context of neo-traditional urbanism, this is a significant cautionary note that a design approach asserts which it will recover urban coherence must avoid transforming tradition into an aesthetic system that is restrictive and exclusive.

This contradiction between tradition as an evolving phenomenon and tradition as an idealised representation elucidates why neo-traditional urbanism has remained contentious. A significant portion of the literature on neo-traditional urbanism is contextualised by enquiries into governance, exclusion, and social effects. Even when the literature is negative, it seldom refutes the spatial intelligence inherent in conventional urban designs. It emphasises the necessity to differentiate between urban form as a design instrument and urban form as a social assurance. Jarvis and Bonnett offer a sophisticated analysis of nostalgia in modern urbanisation. They argue that nostalgia can be hopeful, creative and transformative, a force for change, rather than as merely or simply conservative and backward-looking (Jarvis & Bonnett, 2013, p. 2350). The significance of this claim lies in the fact that it alters the way in which individuals perceive the appealing prospect of traditional urban settings. Interested in traditional urban characteristics may not mean seeking a journey to the past, but rather attempting to bring back parts of ordinary urban life feature of history, like walkability, sociability, and legibility, that contemporary development patterns often undermined.

Traditional urbanism might improve community and social life; however, it cannot substitute and/or guarantee for inclusive government, affordability, or cultural continuity. This distinction becomes especially important in non-ideal contexts where redevelopment or tradition-inspired projects may reproduce social exclusion even when they succeed in producing coherent spatial form. Therefore, the contribution of traditional urbanism to neo-traditional practice lies in offering design principles that support urbanity, while acknowledging that these principles must be embedded within broader systems if they are to produce socially resilient outcomes.

Within this thesis, these debates are especially relevant because the research is not solely concerned with defining neo-traditional urbanism as a concept; it seeks to evaluate how tradition-inspired design principles can be interpreted across different contexts and outcomes. The selection of case studies; Poundbury, Weespersluis, Sulukule, and Angora Houses, which will be detailly handled in the next chapters,

reflects this intention. Each case studies illustrates a distinct interaction among tradition, design regulation, governance frameworks, and socio-spatial results. Yet before these cases can be analysed meaningfully, it is essential to clarify what traditional refers to in a design and urbanism sense. Traditional urbanism in this thesis therefore functions as an interpretive baseline: a conceptual tool through which neo-traditional projects can be evaluated not by only stylistic resemblance but by their capacity to reproduce the spatial logics that historically supported urbanity.

This methodological framework is especially significant for Türkiye, compared to the UK or the Netherlands, where neo-traditional urbanism has been explicitly established through planning discussions and design practices; Türkiye presently lacks a widely acknowledged or self-identified neo-traditional urbanism model. This does not imply that tradition-inspired urbanisation is absent, instead, it indicates that the discourse is fragmented, frequently emerging indirectly through urban revitalisation, gated communities, or heritage-themed residential projects. Therefore, the theory does not see Turkish examples as flawed replicas of Western neo-traditionalism. Rather, it regards them as localised experiments, some successful and some challenging, that demonstrate how tradition might be utilised in modern urban development, hence, traditional urbanism serves as a crucial link, prompting reflection on the interrelation between Türkiye's urban history, vernacular settlement patterns, and modern design interpretations.

Neo-traditional urbanism projects draw their referential strength from local histories that are most legible in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the era when many European and North American towns developed compact street structures, fine-grained blocks, and coherent civic hierarchies before being reshaped by modernist planning and automobile dependency. The comparable period of urban transformation is similarly located in the late Ottoman and early modernising era, when urban form, governance structures, and architectural typologies underwent significant change for Türkiye. By examining the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries might establish a historically grounded reference framework for

what tradition can mean in Turkish urbanism, beyond surface imagery. This does not imply that Ottoman urbanism should be copied as a model; rather, it clarifies which spatial logics, neighbourhood structures, and public-private relationships historically supported urban life. In doing so, it strengthens the conceptual consistency of the thesis: if neo-traditional urbanism elsewhere often relies on eighteenth and nineteenth century precedent, a Turkish neo-traditional interpretation must similarly be rooted in the period of Türkiye's own urban transformations.

It is contended that traditional urbanism is significant not for presenting an ideal answer, but for offering a cohesive design vocabulary to assess modern urban fragmentation. As such, it introduces neo-traditional urbanism as a way of thinking about how to make cities more readable, continuous, and accessible by arranging streets, buildings, thresholds, and public-private places in a certain way. Simultaneously, it fosters critical awareness: tradition may be misappropriated, oversimplified, or utilised in discriminatory manners if it gets disconnected from social diversity and governance realities. The significance of traditional urbanism resides in its twin function as both an inspirational spatial reference and a critical framework for re-evaluating current urban design. This conceptual grounding prepares the thesis to move forward into a design-led interpretation of neo-traditional principles and their translation into contemporary case study outcomes.

3.2 Traditional Urbanism as a Design Logic (Morphology, Public Life, and Everyday Urban Performance)

For traditional urbanism to be a strong base for neo-traditional urbanism, it needs to be seen as a spatial system instead of merely an aesthetic choice. One of the primary organisers in this system is the street, which operates according to a limited collection of common values that are applicable at a variety of scales and environments. A comprehensive block and plot layout, layered public-private transitions, civic anchors that promote community identity, and a strong relationship between mobility, public life, and the built environment are some of the other ideas

that are included. While these principles are often discussed separately, traditional urban environments historically produced them as an integrated whole. It is not the individual architectural components that constitute the essence of traditional urbanism; rather, it is the cumulative impact of interconnected spatial linkages that define the essence of urbanism itself.

A central design logic in traditional urbanism is the prioritisation of the street as a social and morphological framework. In addition to being a corridor, the street is also a community hub that helps people arrange their daily interactions, have better awareness, and get a better sense of the area around them which most of the time, roads are the major way that private and public life are connected in traditional settings. This is why the public-private interface becomes the most defining element of urbanity. The regional critique of new urbanist precedent-making explicitly frames this relationship as foundational, stating that the relationship between public and private defines what is urban (Veregge, p. 53). The assertion is important from a methodological standpoint because it sets a design criterion that can be measured and used to judge and comprehend traditional urbanism. Neo-traditional urbanism that works well often keeps this lively quality by using careful structure layout, interesting frontages, minimal setbacks, and spatial boundaries that encourage interaction while protecting private privacy.

Closely related to the street is the logic of fine-grained block and plot structure. Through the course of history, traditional urbanism has developed through a process of gradual development, which has been marked by the extension of neighbourhoods through the use of small lots and a variety of building types hence, this particular incrementalism resulted in variance while also preserving consistency. For the purpose of maintaining both order and diversity, contemporary study on traditional architecture and urbanism places a strong focus on the relevance of plot arrangement as a key mechanism. It is argued that new development should begin with a coherent plot structure linked to the wider settlement, supported by a framework that ensures compliance while allowing diversity in building outcomes (Hermida, 2025, p. 262).

This approach is particularly relevant for neo-traditional urbanism because it clarifies how traditional qualities can be achieved without relying on superficial historic imitation. Having a street and plot base that is stable enables for a variety of architectural and design interpretations to exist alongside one another while yet preserving the intelligibility of the public space.

Another key design logic is the hierarchical organisation of urban form across scales. Traditional environments are not flat systems but a multi-layered entity, they contain recognisable transitions from neighbourhood to street, from street to block, from block to plot, and from plot to building which contains interlinked connections of planning elements. Jarvis and Bonnett summarise how new urbanist thinking often relies on a hierarchical pattern language structured through region, metropolis, neighbourhood, corridor, block, street and building (Jarvis & Bonnett, 2013, p. 2356). Although their work later critiques the tendency of such frameworks to overstate design's ability to generate community, the hierarchy remains useful as a design tool. It suggests that traditional urbanism cannot be reduced to architecture alone: neighbourhood identity is produced through the coordination of multiple spatial scales which for neo-traditional urbanism, this has direct methodological implications so that means that a project's success cannot be judged solely by its building language. A visually traditional façade does not produce urbanity if the street network is disconnected, if public space is residual, or if land-use patterns prevent everyday accessibility.

Traditional urbanism also tends to support walkability not as an isolated goal but as a consequence of spatial organisation. Throughout history, walking has been the most prevalent mode of transportation owing to the presence of compact block designs, short distances to community facilities, and public space networks that are continuous which create the full circle of accessibility. Current traditionalist literature interprets this rationale as a reaction to the disintegration of contemporary development. Municipalities, it is argued, often struggle with project-by-project development, especially when landowners develop plots in isolation (Hermida,

2025, p. 266). The relevance of this evaluation may be attributed to the fact that it offers a structural foundation for urban dysfunction which is the very reason why this evaluation is particularly significant. In addition to having an impact on the identity of the community, fragmented expansion makes it more challenging to move around and to keep social cohesiveness intact across the community, hence, traditional urbanism, on the other hand, gives a paradigm of cohesive settlement growth. According to this approach, the streets and squares are structured as a cohesive system, and the organisation of the requirements that are required on a daily basis is centred on how close they are to one another. It is argued for modern village-style living supported by shared amenities within walking or cycling distance (Hermida, 2025, p. 267). This statement functions as both a design objective and a planning critique within neo-traditional urbanism which is urban quality depends on spatial coherence and the quotidian rhythms of communal life.

Traditional urbanism also offers a logic of climatic and environmental responsiveness. The traditional patterns of settlement were not at all arbitrary; rather, they arose as a result of adaptation to local characteristic features such as; topography of the area, the predominant winds, the amount of sun exposure, and the availability of resources. In modern discussions, this environmental intelligence is being redefined through sustainability frameworks. The significance of traditional urbanism is both cultural and ecological a compact layout diminishes infrastructure requirements; walkability decreases transportation energy consumption; and local material customs facilitate low-carbon building techniques. Importantly, this strengthens the thesis' broader argument that neo-traditional urbanism is not inherently opposed to modernity. Tradition-inspired urbanism can be future-oriented when it is treated as an adaptive knowledge system rather than a fixed image.

Jarvis and Bonnett emphasise that nostalgia, despite the fact that it may be constructive, is naturally contradictory and suggests cautious control in order to avoid simplicity or limitation (Jarvis & Bonnett, 2013, p. 2351). This information makes it hard to fit tradition into only one style of architecture because it reveals how

tradition is historically varied, adaptable, and complex, hence, the Ottoman case illustrates how tradition was historically diversified.

Additionally, Veregge mentions the regional critique warns that precedent-making often denies regional variations in cultural tradition and cultural diversity within a particular city or town (Veregge, p. 60). This constitutes a significant methodological caution for the Turkish setting which Ottoman and vernacular urbanism were not monolithic; they exhibited regional variations influenced by climate, terrain, and local social frameworks due to the multi-cultural background and wide size lands of the empire. Therefore, any Turkish neo-traditional interpretation must avoid producing a single Ottoman image as a universal design language. It must instead derive spatial principles such as street networks, thresholds, neighbourhood organisation, and enable these principles to be interpreted through regionally particular configurations.

When tradition is regarded as a static model to be replicated, it risks becoming exclusive and inflexible to adapt local characteristics. The critique of precedent-making makes this point indirectly by noting that extracting traditional characteristics while denying change resembles preservation practices that freeze environments in time (Veregge, p. 52). Not only does the interpretation of tradition in neo-traditional urbanism mean reinterpreting historical forms, but it also means appropriating the mechanisms that permitted the adaptation of traditional contexts that mechanisms include gradual development, detailed parcels, mixed-use accessibility, and multilayered thresholds.

The framework that is provided by traditional urbanism allows for the interpretation of historical form as a spatial system rather than only as an aesthetic inheritance. It allows the Ottoman period to be understood not only through architectural typologies but through the organisation of neighbourhood life, street networks, and public-private interfaces. Concurrently, it provides a framework for evaluating contemporary instances using criteria that go beyond surface resemblance. The

thesis' case studies exhibit significant diversity in setting and consequence, although each address, either openly or implicitly, the difficulty of reconciling tradition with contemporary urban growth. Some cases demonstrate high spatial coherence but weak inclusion; others reveal the tension between governance and design intent; and others illustrate how tradition-inspired urban form can be produced in contemporary planning environments without collapsing into imitation. It is not only a theoretical framework, but also a methodological instrument that helps assist the comparative structure of the thesis, hence, traditional urbanism, as a design concept, serves not only as a framework but also as an instrument to create on.

The absence of fully formed and executed neo-traditional urban projects in Türkiye reflects not a lack of historical context, but rather an inadequate level in continuous engagement with that heritage and socio-cultural legacy. Castello asserts that modern urbanism should go beyond idealised utopias and concentrate on a utopia of place grounded in tangible social and geographical realities (Castello, 2010, p. 13).

3.3 Design Inspirations from Urban Values of Türkiye; Late Ottoman Urbanism

While mainly all literatures about the subject approach to topic from the Western perspective which leads to create a Western code, if it can be perceived as a design code, for the neo-traditional urbanism; it is crucial to also look from the Eastern perspective and create code directly from the own culture and history which enrich the prospect towards the subject with unique style. To be able to create the reference point for the Turkish context the subject inquires through the five Turkish source that handle the design period which create base for the neo-traditional urbanism's historical foundations for the Türkiye.

Maurice M. Cerasi highlighted creating dynamic urban spaces had always been integral towards sustaining efficient living standards for society in Ottoman urbanism. Across the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, the Ottoman urban

environment offers a set of spatial and architectural logics that can be interpreted as neo-traditional design codes for contemporary Turkish contexts, particularly because these logics were not merely aesthetic, but embedded in governance, daily life, and socio-spatial organisation.

A first key principle is the neighbourhood (*mahalle*) as the primary socio-spatial unit, where the city is understood not as a homogenous field but as a network of legible, semi-autonomous communities. Bayartan described the Ottoman city as being built upon neighbourhoods, and the *mahalle* is framed as a scale at which the most basic social needs were assumed and managed (Bayartan, 2003, p. 96). A social and administrative unit that possesses its own resources and internal solidarity, the *mahalle* is not only a spatial form but also an institutional and community structure (Bayartan, 2003, p. 96), as the *mahalle* is a social and administrative entity. From a neo-traditional perspective, this supports the argument that traditional urbanism in Türkiye historically operated through socially meaningful micro-scales, rather than through mere abstract planning grids.

A secondary design code may address street morphology and the aesthetics of embodied complexity, whereby pedestrian-scale surroundings are influenced by the interaction of residences, gardens, private-public courtyards and meandering street layouts. Bayartan explicitly notes that the defining feature of the neighbourhood system is dead-end and winding streets combined with gardened houses and courtyards existing in a certain harmony, producing an urban condition where the neighbourhood is almost like a miniature of the city (2003, p. 97). It is suggested that permeability and legibility in Ottoman urban settings were not achieved via contemporary openness meanings, but rather through hierarchies of accessibility, gradual transitions, and spatial sequences that harmonised privacy with connectivity which is allow people to choose the level of privacy that they acquire and give possibility of sensibility towards locals' choices.

A third inspiration emerges from the relationship between urban form and civic meaning, particularly the way Ottoman reform-era thinkers linked ordered urban environments to civilisation and progress, an argument that can be reinterpreted today as a call for spatial coherence without assuming that coherence must mean uniformity.

Bayram quoted statement-thought and emotional civilisation can only prevail in minds living in civilised, orderly cities (2017, p. 229) reveals how urban order became a moral and political project during reform. However, Yaylı and Pustu clarifies that the Ottoman city was historically a cultural synthesis, with a new city type emerging through accumulated cultural layers (Bayram, 2017, p. 229). This is an indication of a neo-traditional approach: the goal is not to conserve a certain true Ottoman form; rather, it is to encourage continuity via multifaceted adaptation, taking into account the fact that Ottoman urbanism itself arose through layers and synthesis with its wide range of multi-cultural backgrounds.

The fourth design code addresses the concept of the city centre as a civic core that functions comprehensibly which is comprised of religious, commercial, and administrative components that work together to form a coherent system and environment. The nineteenth century reform text notes that classical Ottoman cities were structured around a core zone including a temple (mosque), a school, a central state office, and a *bedesten* surrounded by a bazaar of craftsmen and tradesmen (Bayram, 2017, p. 230). This core periphery logic can be translated into neo-traditional practice through the emphasis on mixed-use centrality, civic landmarks, and walkable daily-life economies, rather than residential enclaves detached from commerce and public life.

A fifth lesson comes from the seventeenth-nineteenth century Anatolian urban analysis, which underlines that the Ottoman city's physical form must be understood as a reflection of socio-economic organisation, not simply as architectural taste. The author defines spatial structure as the distribution of urban actions and relationships,

and states that the physical structure and/or urban form emerges from the location choices of these actions in space (Aktüre, 1975, p. 101). This offers a crucial neo-traditional insight: design codes cannot be reduced to façade language, because the urban morphology is fundamentally tied to the socio-economic and institutional system.

According to Aktüre, an aristocratic neighbourhood did not form in the Anatolian-Ottoman city as it occurred in other types of Islamic cities. This is because palaces and mansions were often dispersed across the interiors of communities (1975, page 124). An observation that may be used to challenge modern gated typologies that physically separate wealth is that this dispersion shows that status and hierarchy traditionally coexisted with neighbourhood continuity rather than generating entirely segregated quarters which this observation can be utilised for contemporary neo-traditional projects.

Ertuğrul's study presents an extra array of design ideas for neo-traditional urbanism, specifically highlighting the Ottoman city's ability to integrate modernity via new public building forms while retaining older organisational principles. The article indicates that following the reforms and constitution, several previously unrecognised building kinds emerged, serving not only as physical manifestations of evolving lifestyles but also as instruments for societal transformation (Ertuğrul, 2009, p. 303). Ertuğrul observes that, while functional diversity, there was no significant transition towards varied functional planning; rather, a symmetrical planning methodology and corridor-oriented designs were consistently employed (2009, p. 303).

This duality can be interpreted as a neo-traditional lesson in institutional continuity: modern programmes can be integrated into traditional urban cultures when spatial organisation remains legible and coherent. Taken together, these five sources suggest that a Turkish neo-traditional approach to urban design and planning might have benefited from Turkish heritages. In such forms, the *mahalle* served as both a social

and spatial unit, street layouts allowed for multiple levels of privacy, religious beliefs, commercial activity, and administration were all centralised in the civic heart, and city design has always been about synthesis rather than disruption or seclusion. This would be an alternative to modelling a Turkish urbanism after European models from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Rather than being a model that is nostalgic in character, the background of the Ottoman Empire is a framework that is historically grounded and might serve the aim of generating coherent, culturally understandable, and socially structured urbanism in modern design concerns. This framework is a framework that serves the purpose of developing urbanism that is socially structured.

3.4 Translating Tradition Without Copying It

Traditional urbanism functions as a dynamic urban concept influenced by incremental gradual expansion and local modifications, while neo-traditional urbanism in addition to those also relies on deliberate interventions, regulations, and development models. The critical question is therefore not whether neo-traditional urbanism should incorporate tradition, but rather how it should translate tradition into a contemporary design language without reducing it to image-making.

The dependence of neo-traditional urbanism on tradition necessarily prompts an inquiry into nostalgia. Nostalgia is sometimes regarded as a deficiency in critical study, linked to conservatism or societal regression. Jarvis and Bonnett provide a different perspective, proposing that nostalgia may be hopeful, creative and transformative, a force for change, rather than merely conservative and backward-looking (2013, p. 2350) which this argument considerably strengthens the thesis by seeing tradition not as a step backwards from modernity but rather as a cultural catalyst for imagining alternate ways of doing things. The goal for historical and traditional urban characteristics may be regarded as an exploration for legibility, walkability, and neighbourhood-scale identity in environments where rising

urbanisation results in spatial segregation. This is in contrast to the typical understanding of the aspiration, which is simply an attempt to imitate the past.

Neo-traditional urbanism works most effectively when it refrains from mandating architects to make the same style or characteristic buildings, but when it makes design that allow for diversity and flexibility while maintaining consistency. This method is particularly pertinent for Türkiye, where the creation of an urban settings with neighbourhood identity is frequently compromised by uniform dwelling types and extensive gated communities without any sense of belonging. A neo-traditional interpretation grounded in plot structure and street coherence could offer a more adaptable alternative.

The question of interpretation becomes central. Neo-traditional urbanism cannot be treated as a direct transfer of Western precedent to the Turkish context. Instead, it requires a process of local translation grounded in Turkish urban history; neo-traditional urbanism projects frequently reference the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the period in which their own urban traditions were consolidated. For Türkiye, the comparable period of accelerated transformation and evolving urban typologies is similarly located in the late Ottoman and early modernising era. The thesis therefore argues that Türkiye's neo-traditional references could be located not in abstract images of heritage, but in historically specific spatial logics: neighbourhood organisation, public-private thresholds, street-based connectivity which this framing prevents tradition from becoming superficial. It also enables neo-traditional urbanism to function as a design method rather than a style.

Ultimately, neo-traditional urbanism's most significant contribution is methodological rather than nostalgic. Tradition may become simplified when regarded as a sole portrayal, while design may become socially restrictive if it is detached from inclusive governance. The challenge is therefore not to import neo-traditional urbanism but to develop a context-sensitive translation grounded in the country's own historical urban logics for Türkiye. This translation may need seeing

Ottoman and vernacular urbanisation as sources of spatial cognition instead of just aesthetic models. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to consider neo-traditional design as a proactive practice that is capable of combining modern environmental goals, technical frameworks, and social diversity, all while maintaining the coherence and clarity that are usually supplied by traditional urbanism.

A primary methodological obstacle in implementing traditional urbanism in Türkiye is the understanding of tradition. Unlike contexts where neo-traditional urbanism is explicitly framed through recognised planning movements, Türkiye does not currently have a widely established body of projects or policies that self-identify as neo-traditional urbanism. This absence creates an opportunity for the thesis to develop a context-sensitive reading: rather than assessing Türkiye through the expectation of finding direct equivalents to Western neo-traditional projects, the research focuses on how tradition-inspired spatial logics emerge indirectly through renewal, housing developments, and neighbourhood-scale projects.

A second transferable principle is the importance of coherent neighbourhood structure as an antidote to fragmented development. This diagnosis resonates strongly with Turkish urban development patterns, where large-scale parcel-based housing production often results in disconnected enclaves. Traditional urbanism offers a counter-logic: it begins with an integrated street and plot framework that supports coherence over time. The same journal proposes that development should begin with plot structure and streets and squares, supported by rules that ensure compliance while allowing variation (Hermida, 2025, p. 262). This insight is particularly beneficial for Türkiye, since it indicates that design excellence does not necessitate strict stylistic regulation; rather, it demands an adequate spatial framework capable of accommodating diverse both structural and environmental design outputs while preserving urban coherence which is one of the critical insights from the fully articulated neo-traditional enquiries.

A third concept refers to the function of tradition as a source of inspiration rather than a visual limitation, as one of the most productive theoretical contributions in the literature is the argument that nostalgia can be hopeful, creative and transformative, a force for change rather than merely conservative (Jarvis & Bonnett, 2013, p. 2350). This perspective is valuable for Türkiye because tradition-inspired design often emerges as a response to the perceived loss of neighbourhood life, street culture, and local identity, however, this need for tradition ought not be conflated with a mere desire for historical depictions. On the contrary, it may be seen as a demand for spatial characteristics that make everyday life more convenient, such as the walkability, accessibility, the presence of accessible centres, and the continuity of public places for the locals, therefore, the thesis regards neo-traditional urbanism as a progressive method that harnesses tradition as a design asset while incorporating contemporary environmental objectives, technology infrastructure, and modern lifestyles.

This is also where the thesis' case study selection becomes methodologically significant. The cases are not chosen to represent a single type of neo-traditional project; they are chosen to represent different translation pathways. Poundbury demonstrates the strengths of coherent neighbourhood-making under strong design control, while also revealing the limits of prescriptive frameworks. Weespersluis illustrates how neo-traditional principles can be applied in a contemporary planning context through flexible interpretation and incremental development. Sulukule (Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods) exemplifies how tradition-based urban design may be promoted via revitalisation, sparking enquiries on governance, displacement, and the societal significance of recreated tradition. Angora Houses demonstrates how tradition-inspired architecture and neighbourhood-scale design ambitions can emerge in Türkiye, offering spatial coherence and comfort while revealing socio-economic limitations. Collectively, these case studies enable the thesis to assert that neo-traditional urbanism is not a static model but rather a collection of design principles that results are contingent upon context, governance, and socio-spatial factors.

3.5 Traditional Values: What Do One Look For?

It is necessary to clarify what is meant by traditional values within the discourse of traditional and neo-traditional urbanism. In the context of this thesis, the term traditional values refers to a set of spatial, morphological, and social characteristics that have historically supported the development of urban areas, as opposed to fixed period aesthetic which also reveals neo-traditional urbanism is not only a nostalgic replica of the past; instead, it strives to reincorporate urban forms and spatial concepts that have continuously proved durability, clarity, and social relevance across the course of many historical periods.

Besel and Andreescu clearly delineate the main principles as walkability, connectivity, mixed-use and density, mixed housing, quality architecture and urban design, traditional neighbourhood structure, increased population density, green transportation, and sustainability, underscoring that the ultimate objective is to enhance residents' quality of life (Besel & Andreescu, 2013, p. xvi). This term indicates that neo-traditional urbanism is not only an aesthetic attempt. Even though these all can be appeal to the world-wide examples, it is undeniable that this perspective is more of an Eastern-referenced code.

European instances like Poundbury demonstrate how these ideas are often put into practice through clear design governance and codification. The Poundbury Design and Community Code emphasises that the initial design and construction of each building must adhere to the Poundbury Code, with the primary objective being to ensure that the development operates within the parameters of the masterplan (Poundbury Design & Community Code, 2019, p. 8). This highlights a major neo-traditional value: not only creating building that echoes tradition, but also maintaining coherence through laws that shape urban form throughout over the years. The text emphasises the need of regulatory control by stating that the code aims to preserve architectural harmony from being disfigured by the type of insensitive alterations which have occurred elsewhere (Poundbury Design &

Community Code, 2019, p. 9), which leads to the result of, traditional notions are rethought in the context of modern urban management, where aesthetic uniformity is seen as an asset of the city rather than just a stylistic decision.

The research indicates that neo-traditional projects acquire credibility when they are not strictly historicist, but rather rooted in local architectural culture and adaptive design principles. It is argued that contemporary traditional architecture should begin with a plot structure with streets and squares, followed by a rule set and ideally a resident-led design guide that both respects local building tradition and enables variation (Hermida, 2025, p. 262). In this way, tradition is conceptualised as a spatial grammar that includes plots, streets, and rules as well as regulations, as opposed to as an embodiment that is stayed like locked in time.

Despite Türkiye lacks a completely stated neo-traditional urbanism project such as Poundbury, the thesis illustrates that several Turkish examples may still be analysed within this framework. This interpretative method is particularly advantageous as it redirects attention from just categorising projects as successful or failed to deriving transferable design information. The subsequent Turkish examples, Sulukule and Angora Houses, demonstrate that certain neo-traditional characteristics may manifest even in scenarios not designated as such. This research's comparative framework illustrates that Angora Houses reference tradition primarily through architectural language inspired by mainly vernacular housing, while simultaneously achieving visual coherence and identity. Similarly, Sulukule, particularly in its post-renewal state, exemplifies an effort to reconstruct a historical urban image through design language and planning intent, despite ongoing disputes regarding social and governance outcomes, which will be addressed in the following sections of the thesis.

Within the context of contemporary planning and urban design, this theoretical framework outlines the focus of the thesis in subsequent chapters. The focus is not on the exact replication of the past, but rather on the effectiveness of projects in revitalising and adapting essential traditional values to the contemporary planning

and design environments with respect to the values include human scale, discernible public-private gradients, walkability, cohesive urban form, and civic spatial identity.

The analysis of traditional values' meanings reveals that tradition, viewed as a dynamic spatial and social dynamic, provides essential lessons for contemporary utilisation of neo-traditional urbanism.

3.6 Analytical Overview

Neighbourhood structures, street-based social interaction, and courtyard-centred housing were not formal design strategies but lived spatial practices of traditional urban value of Türkiye. According to Kazimee, traditional surroundings are able to cultivate a sense of belonging by means of the eternal link that links place, community, and memory (Kazimee, 2010, p. 133). These qualities form the conceptual foundation upon which neo-traditional urbanism seeks to build.

This chapter emphasises the need of thoughtfully reviewing tradition concept. Jarvis and Bonnett emphasise that nostalgia, despite the fact that it may be constructive, is naturally contradictory and suggests cautious control in order to avoid simplicity or limitation (Jarvis & Bonnett, 2013, p. 2351). This information makes it hard to fit tradition into only one style of architecture because it reveals how tradition is historically varied, adaptable, and complex, hence, the late Ottoman period illustrates how tradition was historically diversified.

It is offered a culturally and locally rooted alternative to Western-centric narratives by contextualising neo-traditional urbanism within the Ottoman urban development of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The shortage of fully developed neo-traditional urban initiatives in Türkiye indicates not an absence of historical background, but a deficiency in ongoing interaction with that heritage and socio-cultural heritage. Castello contends that contemporary urbanism must transcend

idealised utopias and instead focus on a utopia of place based on actual social and geographical realities (Castello, 2010, p. 13).

The upcoming sections that follow are built upon the base that is established by this historical context. The analysis of Poundbury will examine one of the most influential and explicit neo-traditional projects, highlighting both its achievements and criticisms. Weespersluis will be explored as a contemporary and relatively successful example of a newly constructed town grounded in traditional urban principles. Sulukule will be analysed as a historically rich area where renewal inspired by traditional urban form produced contested outcomes, while Angora Houses will be examined as a case that evolved from a gated development into a semi-open neighbourhood with neo-traditional ambitions. The purpose of the thesis is to go beyond merely replicating a style instead cultivate a more thoughtful as well as sceptical, contextually aware understanding of neo-traditional urbanism. Tradition is seen not as a destination, but rather as a base and inspiration for creative, innovative, and socio-culturally relevant urban futures of Türkiye through the recognition of tradition.

CHAPTER 4

POUNDBURY AS NEO-TRADITIONAL MODEL

Poundbury is analysed as an explicitly articulated example of a neo-traditional urban project, wherein design ideas are manifested in a cohesive and meticulously regulated urban structure. The case study represents an essential resource that may be used to evaluate the achievement of spatial coherence, architectural continuity, and public-private gradients through the implementation of rigorous governance systems; hence, it provides an essential foundation for assessing the limitations of prescriptive design control with regard to the flexibility and inclusivity of the design.

Poundbury is an experimental planned community on the western outskirts of Dorchester in the county of Dorset, South West England, United Kingdom. It was initiated in 1987 when the West Dorset District Council identified the Duchy of Cornwall land for urban extension, and construction commenced in 1993 under the guidance of architect and planner Léon Krier, Poundbury was first built in phases from 1993, with Phase-I (Figure 4.1) completed around 2001; full completion is forecasted circa 2025. At full buildout, Poundbury extends approximately 400 acres (about 162 hectares), with 250 acres (101.1 ha) dedicated to mixed-use buildings and 150 acres (60.7 ha) to open and landscaped spaces. The development seeks a mixed-use, mixed-income model incorporating residential, commercial, civic, and light industrial uses rather than conventional suburban zoning, and is designed to increase Dorchester's population by several thousand residents with estimates around 4,500 to potentially 6,000 residents by 2025 at maturity and census figures around 4,100 inhabitants in 2021. Poundbury's urban design reflects traditional town form principles and a human-scale mixed environment derived from vernacular contexts.

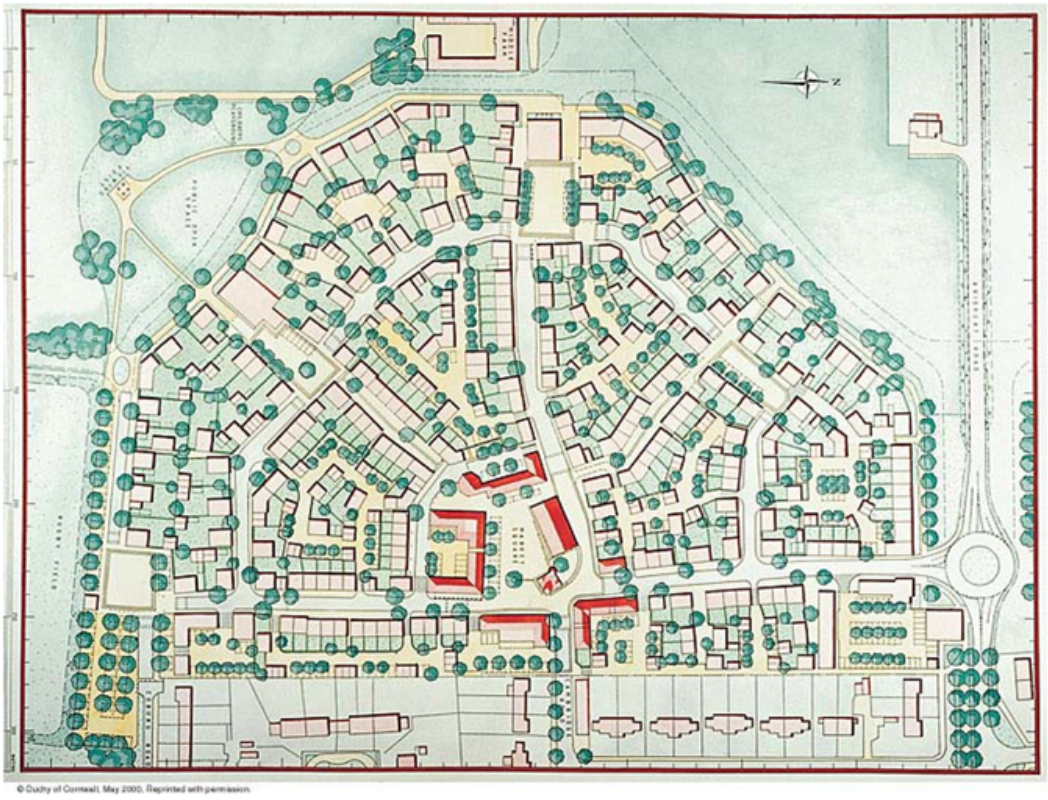

Figure 4.1 Site plan of Phase-I, Poundbury (Design and Community Code 2019).

Poundbury has become known as one of the most often referenced and contested urban projects in modern time urban development and design discourse. Sociological, political, and ideological issues have mostly shaped academic talks about the project. These have often included issues of administration, centralised control, social classes, and represented nostalgia. Although these viewpoints provide significant insights into the socio-political consequences of the project, their predominance has also led to a constrained characterisation of Poundbury as typically controversial and challenging project. This interpretation may obscure the project's significant contributions to urban planning and architectural practice, especially when examined from the perspective of neo-traditional urbanism.

Poundbury represents one of the most comprehensive attempts to translate neo-traditional urban principles into a large-scale, long-term development. The concept deliberately disregards modern suburban norms, including functional zoning,

automobile-centric designs, and spatial disintegration, in favour of a compact urban structure, pedestrian-friendly streets, mixed-use developments, and a well-defined as well as characterised public space. These attributes restore the spatial principles of traditional settlements while integrating modern lifestyle culture and infrastructure. In this respect, Poundbury should not be understood merely as a stylistic exercise, but as a deliberate spatial experiment in re-establishing urban continuity and everyday urbanity. Streets are designed as core social areas rather than just urban corridors, with buildings continually orientated towards the public places. By carefully adjusting building heights, plot widths, and exterior designs, a human-scaled environment emerges that is comfortable and visually appealed for pedestrian circulation around the urban setting. Poundbury does an effective attempt of creating a clear and coherent urban design that is very different from the discontinuities in ordinary modern suburban development.

Poundbury is an important example of the need to understand historical and traditional architectural shapes instead of just copying them. The plan uses a lot of classical and vernacular styles of architecture that have been updated to fit current building rules, methods, and home standards. The building is not just a copy but a flexible platform that can be used for contemporary needs so in a way it illustrates how traditional design ideas about architecture, harmony, rhythm, and material consistency and integrity, can be used without forgetting what modern people expect from an urban setting (Figure 4.2). The integration of social infrastructure and mixed use of the neighbourhood level has been implemented in the area. Residential areas are interwoven with workplaces, local shops, civic buildings, and public spaces, supporting everyday activities within walking distance which create the liveliness and dynamics of social life of locals. This functional proximity reinforces the neo-traditional emphasis on neighbourhood completeness and reduces dependence on private vehicles. Although the social structure of Poundbury has faced much criticism, its design creates an environment that fosters daily interactions and localised urban living circumstances typically lacking in modernist and suburban projects.

The researches look at Poundbury through the lens of critical sociology, focussing on issues of government, land ownership, and institutional power which are the main critical points that are open to wide discussion rather its design approaches. These arguments are valid and necessary, and they will be looked at in more detail in the next parts of this chapter to be able to understand what is criticised and what is appreciated about it. Nonetheless, a sole emphasis on these characteristics risks confounding design purpose with governance results. Numerous obstacles related to Poundbury not from its urban planning ideas, but from the complicated nature of administering an innovative project inside a distinctly defined institutional and cultural framework. The establishment of new regulatory frameworks, design standards, and management structures is a long process, especially in the United Kingdom, where planning practices are influenced by established institutional traditions and existing monarchical authority that shapes many administrative approaches, hence, these obstacles should be perceived as components of the learning curve fundamental in an experimental initiative, rather than as indicators of a solely design failure.

Therefore, it will be approached Poundbury not as a case defined solely by its criticisms, but as a design-led urban development attempt with significant experimental value. Its flaws and inconsistencies need to be examined closely; however, it still makes important contributions to urban planning history by building coherence, and the practical use of neo-traditional urbanism values. Its openness to critique, far from diminishing its significance, underscores its role as a fertile reference point for the ongoing development of human-scaled, place-based urban design.

Figure 4.2 Poundbury landscape master plan (Design and Community Code 2019).

4.1 Methodological Orientation of the Poundbury Example in the Literature

In contemporary discourses concerning architectural traditionalism, neo-traditional urbanism, and the politics of the built environment, the ongoing academic and public discourse surrounding Poundbury, which is King Charles III's primary experimental urban project, has a distinctive position. While Poundbury was conceived as a real-world manifestation of a human-scale urban alternative to late twentieth century planning orthodoxy, its reception has ranged from enthusiastic endorsement to sharp critique. In order to develop an awareness of Poundbury that beyond its status as a

distinctive project and acknowledges it as an intellectual and urban phenomenon at the junction of architecture, politics, heritage, and governance, a systematic and comparative critical approach is essential. This is particularly true in the case of an analysis that seeks to examine the project in this manner. The reason for this is since the debate is both intricate and vast in scope. This chapter approaches Poundbury through a synthesis of five key texts: Hebbert's review of The King's Ten Principles of Traditional Urbanism; Rajaniemi and Koponen's chapter A Vision of Britain as Populist Retrotopia; Laura Clancy's Let Them Have Poundbury! Land, Property and Pastoralism; Jim Hargan's King Charles' Poundbury: Creating a Built Environment on a Human Scale; and Alistair Barr's Behind the Façade. These works collectively provide a comprehensive yet complementary variety of work that enables a multifaceted critical examination to be carried out.

The five sources, when considered in conjunction with one another, are able to substantiate the claim that Poundbury is not only a matter of urban architecture; it is also a profoundly ideological structure, which is the reason why it is so critical to analyse them collectively. Each article focusses on a different part of the concept, such design theory and architectural principles, aesthetic and nostalgic urges, populist arguments, heritage politics, socio-economic structures, and how well the concept operates in a city. Hebbert's study emphasises Poundbury as the concrete manifestation of Charles's ten principles, so reinforcing the traditional architectural and urban development vision that underlies the project. Rajaniemi and Koponen analyse the political background of this vision. They say that Charles's statements are an example of a kind of nostalgia that comes from tradition. This nostalgia makes an idealised picture of the past to deal with the world's current status, which is one of no development. Clancy redirects the analytical emphasis to issues of landownership, neo-feudal government, and the socio-economic influence of the Duchy of Cornwall, raising problems of class, whiteness, and the pastoral ideal. Hargan provides a more sensitive architectural interpretation, contextualised within heritage arguments and the historical story of planned English settlements. While understanding criticisms of aesthetic conservatism and social exclusion, Barr

evaluates the present significance of Poundbury in policy discussions on mixed-use development, design standards, and housing. In order to have a comprehensive knowledge of the goals of Poundbury, the disputes that have arisen, and the overall consequences of urbanisation, it is required to carry out a critical synthesis of the several views.

Methodologically, this chapter adopts a critical interpretive synthesis grounded in urban design theory, architectural historiography, and socio-political analysis. Instead of looking at each work as a separate commentary, they are looked at as a whole in order to show the conceptual conflicts, methods and procedures, and structural dynamics that are important to Poundbury's concept and comprehensiveness.

A second methodological guiding this chapter is the recognition that traditionalist and neo-traditionalist urbanism are not neutral categories. Historical readings that they pursued, aesthetic preferences, and subscribed political beliefs contribute to their perspective. The word tradition is employed in a way that is continually filtered by memory of society and cultural, and it is frequently used as a rhetorical and moral instrument. In their research of A Vision of Britain, Rajaniemi and Koponen contend that Charles intentionally creates tradition as a basis that is secure and ethically superior. He does this in order to strategically position himself as the defender of a supposed national architectural essence. Meanwhile, Hebbert's critique of Poundbury's architectural language as nostalgically derivative illustrates the tension between tradition as continuity and tradition as aesthetic replication. This conceptual distinction plays a vital role in the contemporary debates of Poundbury and provides the foundation for the analytical technique that is employed in this research. Equally essential is the socio-political lens offered by Clancy, who situates Poundbury within the historical and material structures of the British monarchy and aristocratic landownership. Her attention on the authoritarian governing structures of the Duchy of Cornwall and the project's correspondence with a naturalistic, neo-feudal vision provides an essential counterpoint to architectural interpretations that predominantly

emphasise urban form. The study she conducted demonstrates that there is a direct relationship between the built environment and the governmental and institutional frameworks that are responsible for developing and controlling it. This research does not only look at Poundbury as an address where people could see a representation of exemplary design for its kind or as a place to testing policy making with regards to new urban development; instead, it views it as a location where objectives related to progress in social environment, stimulation, and dialogues of power take place.

This chapter also acknowledge the contribution of more empathetic perspectives, such as those offered by Hargan and Barr. Walkability, mixed-use development, various housing typologies for different requests, integrated design criteria (Figure 4.3), and long-term management are among the practical features of Poundbury that are emphasised in the work. In a planning process that is typically characterised by conceptualisation and fractured suburban settings, the integrated organisational framework and open space design of Poundbury propose both tangible and intangible environment alternatives. The synthesis remains unbiased and is precluded from undergoing a process of rejection that is too simple by these opinions. Although Poundbury has its obstacles, the results of the study help to clarify why the site has been intriguing for so long, both personal and professional level. Finally, the paper acknowledges the broader urban-theoretical relevance of Poundbury. The project sits at the crossroads of debates about New Urbanism, Neo-Traditional Urbanism, heritage planning, sustainable development, and the politics of place-making. Poundbury has had an effect that goes far beyond just British curiosity. It has changed the way people think about traditional urban planning, initiated discussions on an international level concerning the connections between design codes, community development, and the aesthetics of place identity, and altered the people's way of thinking and discussing about urban planning in Europe and North America which leads to create new perspectives towards urban development and design. For these reasons, this paper seeks to produce a multi-layered and cohesive interpretation of the Poundbury discourse. The next sections present a critical synthesis of all five texts, drawing extensive critical response to topic and the

relevant sources. This is followed by two analytical chapters that examine, respectively, why Poundbury is an important case study and how its criticised aspects might be constructively improved. The chapter ends with an examination of at how Poundbury continues to impact discussions about planning principles, heritage, and urban design which will help to sum up the Poundbury case study.

Figure 4.3 Street view from the town (Design and Community Code 2019).

4.2 Critical Synthesis of the Poundbury Literature

The five works that were analysed together provide a comprehensive and multi-faceted conceptual subject that demonstrates how Poundbury can be regarded not only as an architectural project but also as a phenomenon that is politically, culturally, and ideologically multifaceted. Taken as a whole, they give a thorough description of Poundbury as an urban setting that is characterised by the interconnectedness of popular nostalgia, ideal pastoral surroundings, picturesque, and socio-economic power. This chapter presents their arguments to show how

Poundbury both corresponds with and goes contrary to contemporary concepts about urbanisation, history, and traditional design.

A predominant subject matter throughout all five sources is the influence of nostalgia and past inspiration on King Charles's architectural philosophy. In A Vision of Britain, Charles deploys an explicitly moralised dichotomy, contrasting the inhuman modernist landscape with the human qualities of traditional urban form (Rajaniemi & Koponen, 2023, p. 73). His motivation is articulated as a reaction to the wanton destruction of British towns since the 1960s (2023, p. 7). This narrative underpins what the authors call a populist retrotopia, defined by its orientation toward an idealised, undead past that serves as a normative benchmark. The retrotopian dimension is echoed in Hebbert's critique, where he describes Poundbury's aesthetic as indulging nostalgia addiction to the full (Hebbert, 2007, p. 255). Poundbury is portrayed by Clancy as a fantasy past (Clancy, 2021, p. 143), which is a selective reconstruction of British heritage that smoothes over historical violence. This is most evident in Charles's romanticised defence of enclosure, which he describes as producing privacy, beauty, and a feeling of total safety (2021, p. 115). On top of that, Clancy says that this nostalgia framework is useful not only for art, but also for politics. Rajaniemi and Koponen identify Charles's rhetoric as populist, highlighting his claim that most people know the sort of buildings they like (2023, p. 153), which he mobilises to delegitimate modern architects as cultural elites disconnected from popular taste. Yet this position is paradoxical, since Charles himself belongs to one of the most elitist social segments in Western society (Rajaniemi and Koponen, 2023, p. 10). This switch is very important to the authors' argument that Charles interprets the architectural establishment as an elite group, while the monarch is regarded as the genuine representative of the public. This cautious reconsideration is a big part of making Poundbury's ideas appear such that they make explanation.

Clancy's analysis intensifies this critique by locating Poundbury within the long-standing political economy of aristocratic landownership. She characterises the Duchy of Cornwall as a multi-million-pound business empire (Clancy, 2021, p. 118)

and argues that Poundbury's paternalistic governance mechanisms, such as highly restrictive covenants regulating extensions, satellite dishes, and shrubbery (p. 130), echo the moralising oversight of Victorian model villages like Saltaire and Bournville. She argues about how this system of government limits the freedom of residents, similar to how landlords used to control not only the buildings but also how renters behaved in public. Her framing of Poundbury as a pastoral, neo-feudal imagination (Clancy, 2021, p. 118) intersects with critiques noted by Barr, who quotes Oliver Wainwright's description of Poundbury as a feudal Disneyland (Barr, 2023, p. 42). These similarities show how Poundbury is connected to past social structures. This makes its nostalgic urbanism linked to issues of class, power, and land.

Though, the research also shows that Poundbury's ideas can live with practical, even creative, goals for urban planning. Hargan, for example, emphasises Poundbury's departure from car-oriented planning, describing its streets as a lively, happy jumble filled with pedestrian activity (Hargan, 2007, p. 48). He notes that planners laid out the building lots, then fitted the streets in between them (2007, p. 46), reversing the traffic-dominated logic of conventional suburban development. Barr similarly argues that Poundbury demonstrates the value of mixed-use, mixed-income neighbourhoods (2023, p. 40), presenting it as a viable alternative to the fragmented mono-functional estates produced by mainstream British housebuilding. The affordability strategy is highlighted in Barr's claim that 35 percent of homes are tenure blind, that is, affordable and market housing are indistinguishable in design (2023, p. 40). This gives the impression that Poundbury is more than just an initiative about nostalgia, as the narratives give the perception. They show that the project was planned with real-world planning issues like walkability, tenure segregation, and public space fragmentation in mind.

Nevertheless, even supportive accounts such as Hargan's and Barr's inadvertently expose deeper tensions in Poundbury's design rationality. While Barr urges and approach to reconciling traditionalist and modernist design (2023, p. 40), his

endorsement of the Design Code, governing paint colours, front door ironmongery and signage (p. 41), reveals the project's heavy reliance on aesthetic regulation. This regulatory strictness, which draws from Georgian models (Barr, 2023, p. 41), undermines Barr's plea for stylistic pluralism by reasserting the primacy of classical forms. Moreover, while he acknowledges critics who find Poundbury's styling unsettling, e.g., Rowan Moore's remark that the architecture made his flesh creep, (2023, p. 42), Barr ultimately frames resistance as superficial aesthetic discomfort rather than as a substantive critique of the socio-political structures embedded in the project.

The most significant discussion topics which professions of the field put emphasis are authenticity and simulation. Clancy documents examples of architectural disguising, such as a nostalgic peristyle concealing a chain supermarket and an electricity substation built as a Greek temple (2021, p. 126). The conflict that exists between Poundbury's claims of historic authenticity and its considerable dependence on theatrical façadism, which also could be named as Disneyfication, is demonstrated by these incidents (Figure 4.4). This critique aligns with Hebbert's assertion that Poundbury's architecture has nothing new to say (2007, p. 255), a charge that resonates with broader disciplinary debates about pastiche in neo-traditional planning. The theme-park analogy, explicitly invoked in Clancy's comparison to The Truman Show (2021, p. 127), suggests that Poundbury's aesthetic cohesion may come at the cost of architectural honesty.

Figure 4.4 Street and façade views from the town (Design and Community Code 2019).

A prominent subject throughout the studies is to race, social inclusion, and demographic equality. Clancy's observation that 97 per cent of Poundbury residents were white (2021, p. 141) highlights the racialised imaginaries embedded in pastoral traditionalism. She analyses research linking rurality to whiteness, demonstrating how Poundbury unintentionally promotes a limited conception of British identity. This is a dimension absent in Hargan's and Barr's accounts, which focus primarily on architectural and planning concerns. The racialised dynamics illuminated by Clancy demonstrate that Poundbury's inclusive design rhetoric does not address deeper socio-cultural forces that shape settlement patterns. Another contradiction

develops at the point of collision between monarchical authority and market dynamics. Clancy describes a duality between feudal provincialism and financial neoliberalism (2021, p. 119), pointing to profitability mechanisms such as the Duchy extracting 10 percent of earnings from the Poet Laureate pub (p. 139). This contradiction undermines the representation of Poundbury as a community-minded initiative, indicating that it both sustains past power imbalances and engages in modern landlord capitalism. The market effects noted by Barr, specifically that Poundbury properties have risen 29% more in value than surrounding areas (2023, p. 41), further underscore how the project contributes to upward pressure on housing costs, challenging claims of long-term affordability.

The five texts collectively illustrate Poundbury as an urban planning attempt that both repudiates and perpetuates modernity. It rejects modernist architectural language, traffic engineering orthodoxy, and speculative developer-driven homogeneity (Figure 4.5). Nevertheless, it perpetuates hierarchical authority, land consolidation, aesthetic homogeneity and, in certain aspects, class and ethnic exclusivity. Poundbury is thus best understood as a hybrid; part neo-traditional model village, part ideological performance, part planning experiment, and part commercial enterprise. Their popularity is attributed not to general application but to their capacity to reveal conflicts in modern urbanisation about aesthetics and ethics, community and control, past and present, as well as inclusion and hierarchy. The primary aim of the Poundbury was not for creating mere replicas yet challenge and inspire the urban planners, designers, and architects as well as policymakers to reconsider how might traditional urban environment and socio-cultural atmosphere of the place affect the built environment. The research indicates that Poundbury has effectively influenced public debate, irrespective of the acceptance or rejection of its classic aesthetic or monarchical administration. What Poundbury does is not only serve as an example for urban planning environment, but it also starts debates, which shows that it is still helpful throughout the urbanisation process.

Figure 4.5 Street view from the town (Design and Community Code 2019).

Poundbury significance extends far beyond its role as a royal initiative or an architectural curiosity; rather, it represents a rare full-scale experiment that tests the viability of neo-traditional urban principles under real-world conditions. Looking at its importance helps us understand the cultural and political context of traditional architecture and urban design additionally answers bigger questions about the enhancement of communities, management, and how national identity is reflected in the built environment. One of the most important reasons Poundbury has attracted sustained scholarly attention is that it materialises theoretical principles often discussed abstractly in planning discourse. King Charles's published vision articulated a desire for mixed-use, mixed-income neighbourhoods within walking distance of shops, leisure and community facilities (Barr, 2023, p. 40). While many planning documents pay lip service to such aspirations, few developments achieve this level of integration. Poundbury exemplifies the outcomes when walkability, permeability, density, and land-use variety are seen as essential fundamental concepts rather than mere potential enhancements.

Relatedly, Poundbury's significance stems from its role in challenging post-war planning orthodoxy. As Hargan notes, the development reverses the guiding logic of road-dominated suburban layouts; planners laid out the building lots, then fitted the streets in between them (Hargan, 2007, p. 46). This inversion marks a clear break from the twentieth-century engineering-led approach that prioritised vehicular circulation above pedestrian needs. Such ideas may be used on a large scale without leading to disorganisation or inefficiency, as shown by Poundbury's adherence to small, irregular, and interconnected streets. In this regard, Poundbury holds pedagogical value for planning practitioners who seek alternatives to the low-density, mono-functional template that has dominated suburban expansion in the UK. Poundbury is also significant for its emphasis on mixed-tenure housing deployed in a tenure-blind manner, meaning that the physical design of affordable units is indistinguishable from market-rate dwellings. Barr records that 35% of Poundbury homes fall under the UK government's affordable definition, priced at 80% of the market price, and crucially that there is no visual difference between tenures (Barr, 2023, p. 40). This strategy addresses the discrimination and spatial segregation mainly linked to inexpensive housing. A model for inclusive community planning is exemplified by the implementation that took place in Poundbury. This implementation demonstrates how spatial integration may encourage social peace despite the fact that different individuals in community are classified or categorised systematically. At the same time, Poundbury's importance lies in its demonstration of continuity-based stewardship models, which operate in contrast to the short-term cycles of speculative development. Barr's analysis shows that the Design and Community Code, although restrictive in some respects, ensures architectural coherence and sustained quality through rules governing extensions, alterations, paint colours and signage (Barr, 2023, p. 41). Through the implementation of these techniques, sustainable land management has the potential to assist cities in their planning for the future by minimising the patchwork environments that are the result of unregulated markets.

Beyond planning performance, Poundbury holds symbolic significance as a counter-narrative to modernist and postmodernist urban paradigms. Hebbert's observation that the development is the flagship project of neotraditional urbanism in Europe (2007, p. 255) underscores its role as an ideological exemplar. Poundbury demands discourse on the role of tradition in modern architecture. It asserts that the past possesses both artistic significance and practical insights for creating compassionate, comprehensible, as well as social orientated urban environments. Poundbury create an open area for public discussion and interpreting on architectural aesthetics, national identity, and the monarchy's impact within the urban environment as well as cultural identity and heritage. As Rajaniemi and Koponen argue, Charles's rhetoric draws upon an idealised national past, appealing to a supposedly shared architectural preference for human tradition over inhuman modernism (2023, p. 73). The project has therefore influenced political discourse about what constitutes good design, shaping public policy through Charles's long-standing advocacy. Finally, Poundbury's importance emerges from its role as an international reference point, particularly within debates on New Urbanism and neo-traditional planning. Its similarities with US developments such as Seaside, Florida, highlighted by Clancy's comparison to a faux theme-park (2021, p. 127), connect it to a wider movement that attempts to revive walkable, mixed-use settlements. Yet Poundbury distinguishes itself from these examples through the moral and political framing provided by the monarchy, which introduces questions of authority and heritage absent from purely market-driven developments abroad. In summary, Poundbury is significant because it provides a comprehensive, real-world laboratory that brings together ideas from urban design theory, traditionalist architecture, heritage discourse, and socio-political critique (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6 Aerial view from Poundbury (Design and Community Code 2019).

4.3 Critiques of Poundbury, Directions for Improvement

Poundbury, while recognised as a significant alternate to late 20th century planning practices, has also attracted considerable criticism regarding its aesthetic viewpoint, socio-economic framework, racialised perceptions, governance methods, and

connection to modern urban issues. Poundbury's goals for human-scale traditionalism and the complicated conditions of the project's social, political, and aesthetic repercussions are brought to light by the criticisms, which show the underlying contradictions that exist between the two. Addressing these critiques not only clarifies the limitations of Poundbury but also illuminates productive directions for improving neo-traditional developments more broadly. A prevalent critique of Poundbury is to its aesthetic conservatism, which some experts perceive as a type of architectural pastiche. Hebbert's incisive observation that Poundbury's architecture has nothing new to say (2007, p. 255) captures the frustration of critics who view the development as stylistically retrogressive. While Poundbury's façades consciously emulate classical and vernacular forms, this strategy often results in what Clancy describes as a faux theme-park simulating history (2021, p. 127), rather than a genuine continuation of local vernacular tradition. Her illustrations, such an energy substation covered as a Greek temple and a chain supermarket concealed behind a nostalgic peristyle (Clancy, 2021, p. 126), exemplify the performative essence of Poundbury's aesthetic unity. Such adaptations create reason for concerns regarding the authenticity and dependability of architectural simulation, as well as the ethical results of such simulation.

The inflexibility of the Design and Community Code, while praised by some for fostering a unified urban aesthetic on the other hand has faced criticism for limiting originality and innovation in architecture and imposing visual consistency. Barr notes that the Code regulates everything from extensions, alterations, paint colours to front door ironmongery and signage (Barr, 2023, p. 41), extending aesthetic authority into the intimate domain of residential expression. Such strictness, although beneficial for sustaining a coherent urban environment, shows a contradiction between community coherence and individual independence. When combined with the Duchy's long-term role as landlord and steward, these regulations evoke historical precedents of aristocratic paternalism. Clancy's observation that Poundbury's governance structure resembles neo-feudal provincialism intertwined with financial neoliberalism (2021, p. 119) reveals how aesthetic control is

inseparable from broader dynamics of land power. A second line of commentary addresses social uniformity and issues of inclusivity and exclusivity. Poundbury's presentation as a socially integrated community is challenged by Clancy's demographic findings that 97% of Poundbury residents were white (2021, p. 141). The predominantly white population of the town, along with the idyllic images advocated in Charles's architectural philosophy, has elicited apprehensions over the underlying cultural and racial standards inherent in neo-traditional aesthetics. Scholars have connected English rurality to whiteness, indicating that pastoral environments frequently represent cultural purity and solitude which may create an unintentional seclusion from the local people. Thus, even though Poundbury is tenure-blind and includes affordable housing, its social composition suggests that the project tacitly reinforces racialised and class-inflected notions of Englishness.

Economically, Poundbury's claim to be an inclusive community is also complicated by market dynamics. As a result of the building's attraction and visual uniformity, the real estate prices in Poundbury have climbed by 29% more than those in comparable surrounding districts, according to Barr (2023, p. 41). This suggests that the development has resulted to considerable investment growth. This increase advantages the Duchy and individual homes, although it jeopardises long-term affordability and raises apprehensions over the project's influence on property markets. Moreover, Clancy's documentation of the Duchy extracting financial returns, such as 10% of the takings from the Poet Laureate pub (2021, p. 139), illustrates the alignment of Poundbury with rentier logics rather than purely altruistic stewardship. This reinforces the criticism that Poundbury, for all its emphasis on community, participates in a broader system of wealth concentration through landownership. A further complaint related to Poundbury's governance structure, which some claim limits residents' freedom and promotes unnecessary inspections. The system of contractual restrictions on landscape and urban design, alterations to building exteriors, and land-use reflection the historical operation of British model towns, when landowners and elites dictated not just the residences of workers but also their behaviours. Clancy's argument that Poundbury reproduces this tradition

(2021, p. 130) suggests that the project's commitment to civility and orderliness is maintained through top-down control, raising concerns about democratic accountability. Even Barr, generally supportive of Poundbury, acknowledges these concerns, citing Oliver Wainwright's characterisation of Poundbury as a feudal Disneyland (2023, p. 42). This statement reflects the conflicting objectives of Poundbury's effort to promote a socially harmonious society with methods that some critics consider historically retrograde.

Despite these criticisms, Poundbury provides potentially adaptable ideas that might improve modern urban development if implemented cautiously, additionally, not only improving but also give potential to create alternatives. For instance, its tenure blind integration of affordable housing (Barr, 2023, p. 40) could help mitigate stigma and promote everyday social mixing in new developments. Similarly, its prioritisation of walkability and public realm quality, elements often marginalised in developer-led suburban estates, provides a compelling argument for rebalancing design priorities toward pedestrian experience. The governance approach, in spite of the authoritarian concerns that it presents, shows the significance of ongoing administration and integrated long-term planning. This contrasts strongly with the fragmented settings generated by unregulated real estate markets. A reformed, more democratic form of this management model might enhance community agency while maintaining the advantages of synchronised growth. To mitigate aesthetic objections, Poundbury's design standards might be adjusted to permit more stylistic heterogeneity. Requirements should emphasise architectural coherence, including height, composition, rhythms, and materials applied in urban design instead of restricting themselves to a formal classical aesthetic which this allows for reinterpretations of urban heritage within a modern context open space for creativity and reconsiderations for what to enhance. This approach would align with Barr's own call for future developments to allow for greater flexibility in style and dilute the classical bias (2023, p. 43). Similarly, the problem of simulation identified by Clancy could be mitigated by encouraging architectural honesty; where

contemporary infrastructure or commercial uses are present, they need not be concealed behind stylised façades.

Finally, addressing socio-cultural critiques requires strengthening inclusive design and community outreach. Considering Clancy's results on racial homogeneity (2021, p. 141), further versions of neo-traditional planning must account for how aesthetic indicators, cultural narratives, and governance structures influence perceptions of inclusivity within these communities. Affordable housing is only one requirement for inclusion and cohesion; other requirements include creating a place where various cultural groups actively participate. In addition to implementing development strategies that strengthen rather than restrain a community's sense of belonging, the establishment of open spaces and landscape designs that are accessible to all members of the community without any classification and one's supremacy. Its strengths, walkability, mixed-use planning, integrated tenures, coherent public realm design, and long-term stewardship, demonstrate the practical viability of many neo-traditional principles. However, its constraints, formal rigid style, aesthetic replication, social uniformity, authoritarian rule, and association with elite landownership emphasise the necessity for a more reflective and multifaceted methodology where people can be free to enhance and develop new approaches which is with respect to the heritages and traditions of the place. The studies that comprehend through this chapter indicates that Poundbury functions as a hybrid area where contemporary planning principles exist in conjunction with conservative traditional urban planning approach. Poundbury's fundamental significance may lie in its tendency to inspire constant dialogue on the subject of tradition, community, and identity within the contemporary built environment. The history and heritage encourage planners, designers, and researchers to construct urban spaces that effectively evoke the traditional planning perspective rather than merely idealising it as well as encourage people without imposing authority, and uphold aesthetic continuity while creating opportunity for creativity.

CHAPTER 5

WEESPERSLUIS AS CONTEMPORARY NEO-TRADITIONAL URBANISM

Weespersluis has been chosen as a contemporary large-scale urban development that exemplifies the use of neo-traditional concepts via progressive planning instead of strict stylistic regulations. This example offers a process-oriented viewpoint, enabling the thesis to analyse the interaction among urban morphology, landscape integration, and long-term adaptation. This continual development offers insight into the potential evolution of neo-traditional urbanism, rather than evaluating it as a static result.

The Weespersluis case study is approached as a contemporary and highly instructive example of neo-traditional urbanism, particularly because it demonstrates how tradition-inspired urban design principles can be translated into a newly developed environment without relying solely on historic reconstruction. In contrast to the other case studies analysed in this thesis, Weespersluis is not only among the most recent developments but also one of the most spatially cohesive instances regarding neighbourhood configuration, street hierarchy, architectural continuity, and landscape integration. For this reason, it provides a particularly valuable perspective for evaluating neo-traditional urbanism as an adaptive and forward-looking urban practice. One of the most important aspects of this chapter is the fact that the analysis of the case study is primarily foundational on direct field observation. It was feasible to analyse Weespersluis not as a conceptual project or as a depiction in planning reports, but rather as a living and developing urban environment because of the possibility to visit the region in person. The site visit involved a systematic examination of the environment and community from a design perspective, focusing on the morphology of the blocks, design of the residentials; in terms of both façade designs and planning layouts, the street arrangements, neighbourhood walkability,

transitions between public and private areas, and the relationship between built form and landscape which are fundamental design elements to accomplish well-structure urban development. The fieldwork was further supplemented by comprehensive photographic documentation, which served as primary empirical material to corroborate spatial observations and to record design features that cannot be fully captured through text-based sources. In addition to spatial observation, informal qualitative input was also gathered through brief conversations with local residents and users in both Weesp and Weespersluis. Although these interactions were not conducted as formal interviews, they contributed contextual insight into daily experiences, perceived neighbourhood identity, and the link between the new development and the historical centre. The observations and unofficial conversations informed the case study interpretation by providing a concrete grasp of the project's perception and engagement.

It is important to note that, due to the relatively recent development of Weespersluis, there is currently limited academic literature, peer-reviewed research, or thesis-level work directly focused on the project. As a result, this chapter does not rely primarily on existing scholarly interpretation but instead presents an original reading based on field-based evidence. This methodological condition should not be understood as a limitation alone; rather, it enables the thesis to contribute a timely and design-focused interpretation of a contemporary neo-traditional project that is still in formation. In this regard, Weespersluis serves both as a case study and as a prospective reference for the implementation of neo-traditional urbanism within contemporary planning frameworks influenced by sustainability objectives, technological infrastructure, and changing lifestyle trends.

Weespersluis is a contemporary urban extension and neighbourhood development near the historic city of Weesp, situated just outside Amsterdam in the province of North Holland, Netherlands. It originated as a planned expansion of the Bloemendalerpolder area and construction began around 2017, with projected completion in 2027 (Figure 5.1) as part of the broader Weesp Environmental Vision

planning framework. The master plan includes a network of residential areas, recreational areas, water landscapes, and green open spaces covering an area of over 330 hectares; only around 1/3 of that space is reserved for urban architectural contexts that actually illustrates a project area should not be approached as only profit-oriented but also giving importance the natural sensibility and environmental needs of place. Weespersluis will ultimately comprise around 3,550 housing units, accommodating diverse housing typologies and neighbourhood sub-areas such as Lanenrijk, Vechtrijk and Waterrijk that are distinguished by varied traditional architectural character and planning concepts reflective of Dutch settlement patterns. Its proximity about 10 minutes by train to Amsterdam and strategic integration of nature and water elements are defining features that anchor the project's identity, making it an important example of neo-traditional urban design principles applied in a Dutch context.

Figure 5.1 Development of the Weespersluis over the years (Google Earth Images).

Weespersluis's development is an exemplary instance of the Dutch planning frameworks that are currently in operation, these frameworks integrate landscape-conscious urbanisation, ecologically conscious design, and historically as well as traditionally aware place-making. Despite the challenges that arise with respect to large-scale urban development projects in the region as a result of the need to accomplish a balance between density and the maintenance of cultural and ecological continuity, Weespersluis serves as an exemplary project (Figure 5.2, Figure 5.3). It

is based on three key values that serve as the foundation for its design; planning that is guided by the landscape, architectural consistency that is thematic nature as well as traditional urbanism, and accessibility that is multi-modal.

Figure 5.2 Connection point of Weespersluis and Weesp; towards Weesp side. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

Figure 5.3 Connection point of Weespersluis and Weesp; towards Weespersluis side. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

The Bloemendaler Polder is a reclaimed peat landscape that has long been connected to the management of water in the Netherlands. Weespersluis is located inside this polder. The planning process adopted a landscape-first strategy, in which water systems, ecological corridors, and existing polder structures provided the primary framework for determining built zones. This approach mirrors national tendencies toward water-robust planning, wherein climate adaptation is embedded into spatial design rather than added retroactively.

Three structural landscape elements guide the project:

1. A park and nature system occupying over two-thirds of the area, ensuring continuity with the Vecht river landscape (Figure 5.4).

2. A new network of water that includes locks, retention basins, and canals will be designed to serve as an arrangement for controlling flooding as well as an aesthetic continuation of the historic canal environment of Weesp (Figure 5.5).

3. While increasing biodiversity, the creation of green buffers and environmentally friendly zones has the effect of generating transitions between areas that have been built up and open polder fields.

Therefore, rather than functioning as a conventional suburb, Weespersluis presents itself as an inhabited landscape, a spatial composition where natural and built components are co-constitutive.

Figure 5.4 Green buffers in the Weespersluis. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

Figure 5.5 Residentials with green, water landscape elements; Vecht river.
(Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

5.1 Why Weesp Became a Suitable Location for Weespersluis?

- Institutional Maturity:
  Its long-standing municipal governance, rooted in medieval city rights, allowed it to handle complex planning processes and multi-stakeholder coordination.
- Heritage-Based Urban Identity:
  The preserved historical centre made Weesp (Figure 5.6) highly attractive as a residential environment, strengthening political and market support for adjacent, high-quality expansions.

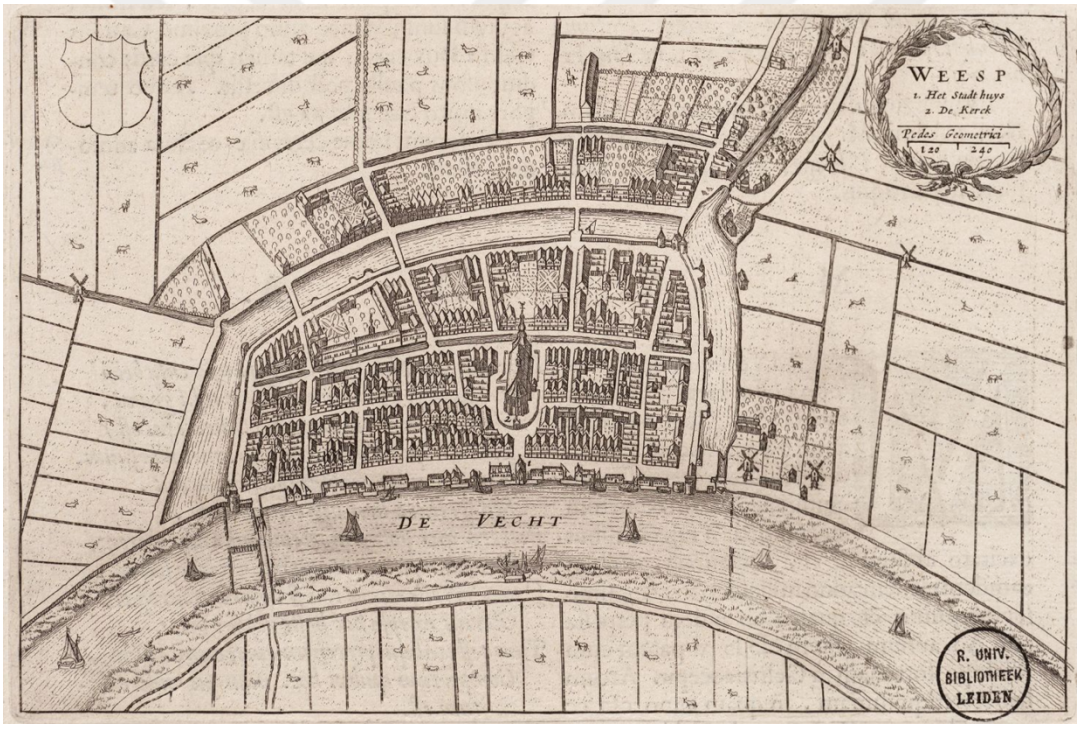

Figure 5.6 Historical map of Weesp (Leiden University Library, Date of Digitisation: 2009, Last Accessed: August, 2025)

- Transportation Capacity:
  Direct rail access to Amsterdam, rare among small towns, made large-scale commuter-oriented housing feasible as well as alternative transportation

elements and road network which connect the near town and cities (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7 Transportation alternatives. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

- Proximity to the Bloemendaler Polder:
  Large tracts of developable polder land adjacent to the town provided an opportunity to create a major new residential district without intruding on protected natural areas or disrupting historic fabric (Figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8 Bloemendalerpoldersingel residential area near the Bloemendaler Polder. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

- Integration with Landscape History:
  The region's long history of water management and inundation systems offered a conceptual and practical foundation for landscape-rich design, which became central to Weespersluis (Figure 5.9).

Thus, Weesp's historical development, economic, institutional, and infrastructural, built the foundations that enabled the area to become contemporary urban extensions.

Figure 5.9 Fort Ossenmarkt one of the historical water management elements from the Weesp. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

5.2 Neo-Traditional Architectural Strategies and Morphological Coherence

The urban development of Weespersluis makes a conscious attempt to incorporate the traditional architectural and morphological uniqueness of the old city of Weesp. The development has been divided into three distinct sub-areas: Lanenrijk, Vechtrijk, and Waterrijk. Each of these sub-areas has its own design elements that are distinguished from one another but still refer back to history and socio-cultural environment of the old city centre (Figure 5.10). The architectural palette includes:

• brick façades and pitched roofs recalling 17th-19th century Dutch towns;

• articulated gables, dormers, bay windows, and verandas;

• street-facing façades with rhythmic vertical proportions to maintain the spatial enclosure typical of historic Dutch streetscapes.

Figure 5.10 Architectural and design elements of Weespersluis with reference to traditional heritage of Dutch Architecture. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

This method is consistent with the more thorough contextual neo-traditionalism assessment that have been executed in the Netherlands. The objective of this approach of conceptualisation is to develop contemporary communities that are distinguished by their harmonious continuity with traditions and cultures, as well as by the fact that they do not rely on the immediate copying of previous forms. The objective is not to reproduce the past in a precise way, but rather to make it culturally legible; that is, to guarantee that the recently developed area has an identity that is unmistakably characteristic of the region.

In order for harmony to occur, such design awareness is absolutely necessary. By ensuring morphological coherence, Weespersluis avoids the visual and spatial rupture that often characterises suburban expansions.

5.3 Multi-Modal Accessibility and Transit-Oriented Expansion

Weespersluis is designed to be a transit-oriented expansion that will be supported by the current Weesp train station (Figure 5.12). The overall strategy focusses a significant amount of on developing networks for walking and cycling, which involves building walkways underneath the railway line in order to provide support for permeability. Although the neighbourhood is able to handle vehicles, the street hierarchy has been constructed with the intention of reducing the amount of through-traffic and reinforcing mobility patterns on a local scale (Figure 5.11).

Figure 5.11 Transit-oriented environment. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

Figure 5.12 Weesp railway station. (Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weesp_railway_station#/media/File:Station_Weesp_(2023).jpg, Last accesed: August, 2025)

The emphasis that is placed on multiple transportation options allows for the establishment of Weespersluis as a metropolitan satellite that is well integrated, as opposed to a peripheral suburb that is dependent on vehicles, and it also promotes sustainable mobility as a central component of the community.

5.4 Spatial and Social Integration Between Weesp and Weespersluis

Rather than being viewed as a separate community, Weespersluis is regarded as a continuation of the extensive urban, cultural, and infrastructural structure that has been in place in Weesp. There are three main stages where integration could be performed, and each of these levels is dependent on the others in order to be effective. The following are the stages that are being referred to: continuity in terms of place, permeability in terms of infrastructure, and coherence in terms of socio-cultural factors. The Weespersluis has the objective of purposefully extending this urban-landscape transition instead of causing it to be interrupted.

The three neighbourhoods are positioned to create gradual transitions (Figure 5.13):

• Vechtrijk mirrors the urban scale and spatial rhythm of central Weesp, forming a semi-urban bridge between old and new.

• Lanenrijk operates as a mid-density transition zone, echoing the tree-lined streets and mixed morphologies of Weesp's late 19th century expansions.

• Waterrijk integrates directly with open landscape and new water bodies, maintaining polder openness and providing ecological continuity.

Figure 5.13 Vechtrijk, Lanenrijk, Waterrijk areas representation on the information board in the Weespersluis. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

The multi-layered urban design not only promotes the development of a harmonious urban fabric that corresponds to historical development patterns and traditional Dutch architecture, but it also aims to reduce the significant disparities among distinctly different features. This is particularly apparent in places where people have built homes close to natural features like source of waters and natural environment.

The approach to integration is not restricted to the spatial dimension; in fact, it is basically of a social and institutional nature. There are elements strengthen the public relationship between Weesp and Weespersluis:

1. Shared institutions:

Educational institutions, sports facilities, medical centres, and cultural amenities are situated in such a way that they may provide services to both communities (Figure 5.14). This avoids the fragmentation common in purpose-built new towns.

Figure 5.14 One of the shared institutions in the area; regional medical centre. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

2. A complementary rather than competing centre:

The compact centre planned within Vechtrijk does not aim to replace Weesp's historic core. Instead, it provides daily amenities (e.g., supermarket, cafés, pharmacies) while relying on Weesp's existing centre for broader cultural, commercial, and social functions (Figure 5.15).

(Weesp)

(Weespersluis)

Figure 5.15 Daily amenities from the both sides. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

3. Heritage-based identity formation:

Street names, water infrastructures, and design details reference Weesp's water defence history and polder heritage. The symbolic layering helps to strengthen the common historical narrative that exists between those who have been residents for a long time and those who have been inhabitants for a shorter period of time (Figure 5.16).

Figure 5.16 Urban design details from the site. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

4. Demographic integration:

The integration of a diverse range of demographic groups is facilitated by the availability of a broad spectrum of housing alternatives, which may include social housing, mid-market housing, and property that is owner-occupied (Figure 5.17). This integration might beneficial in that it assists in averting the socioeconomic segregation that is commonly seen in newly established residential areas Figure 5.18). As a consequence, the process of integration is believed to be a multi-scalar process, which is a process that establishes linkages between physical form, everyday activities, public life, and collective identity.

Figure 5.17 Different housing typologies of the area that appealing to people from different backgrounds. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

Figure 5.18 Different housing typologies of the area that appealing to people from different backgrounds. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

Weesp - Weespersluis exemplifies a contemporary metropolitan expansion model that diverges from 20th century suburbanisation. The general view among the planners and designers was that, rather than establishing a peripheral residential area, it would be more feasible to keep moving with an urban expansion that is based on

past precedent, rooted in environmental concerns, and weaved into the social fabric of the local area. The sense of cohesiveness that is present in the project is determined by the interaction that occurs between the design principles and the techniques that are employed to integrate the two.

• The landscape-led approach ensures that growth reflects the region's ecological logic.

• The neo-traditional architectural palette creates visual and cultural continuity.

• The multimodal transport and landscape design integration embeds the new district within regional flows (Figure 5.19).

• The institutional and social integration cultivates a shared urban identity.

• Supporting and elevating designs with modern technological infrastructures and products to support contemporary needs of daily lives (Figure 5.20).

Figure 5.19 Pocket park and playground example. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

Figure 5.20 Houses powered and supported with new generation energy sources. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

Weespersluis functions as an organic progression in the development of Weesp's environmental and socio-cultural domains, which have persisted for many centuries, rather than as a mere adjunct in this sense.

5.5 The Planning and Design Logic of Weespersluis

Weespersluis adopts the formal vocabulary of neo-traditional urbanism, with canal-side housing, fine-grained blocks, pitched roofs, and a walkable street network. The following is a list of the several advantages that are connected to this language of design:

• Place-making through recognisable, historically inspired typologies

• Enhanced walkability supported by compact urban form

• Market appeal, as environments resembling historic Dutch towns often command high demand

The endeavor's objective of extending Weesp's historic urban character by means of visual consistency is tactically successful, but it also brings up important problems. Neo-traditional urbanism is frequently critiqued for simulating heritage rather than fostering authentic urban evolution. In the context of Weespersluis, the risk lies in reproducing a curated, sanitised version of Dutch townscapes that may obscure the socio-economic and historical complexities that shaped them. Additionally, such environments frequently attract higher-income groups, potentially limiting diversity and generating forms of socio-spatial exclusivity.

5.6 Reflections on the Contemporary Reinterpretation of Dutch Urban Traditions in Weespersluis

Field-based observation reveals that Weespersluis incorporates several spatial and architectural characteristics commonly associated with Dutch urbanism, yet adapts or amplifies them in ways that reflect the conditions of a newly planned environment. The residential fabric, for example, appears to build upon the long-standing Dutch emphasis on diverse housing forms while extending this logic through a broader spectrum of typologies arranged within a coordinated masterplan. The rowhouses, detached houses inspired from classical Dutch style, residences positioned next to the canal, and apartment complexes of medium-sized provides confirmation that there has been an attempt to reconsider traditional residential patterns in a manner that takes into consideration the shifts in demographics and lifestyle that have taken place in contemporary times.

A similar tendency can be observed in the treatment of water infrastructure. The canal system appears to redefine past forms rather than just referring to them, since it appears to do so in accordance with contemporary demands for recreation and hydrology. The circulation patterns, as well as the widths and dynamics of the boundaries of the canals, appear to have been altered in such a way that it was made feasible to both sustain the natural landscape and allow for the travel of small boats. As a direct consequence of this, the water network is able to retain its historical relevance in addition to serving its purpose as an amenity that is relevant to the present day.

The distribution of green space likewise reflects an adaptation of familiar Dutch landscape principles. They don't put all the plants in isolated parks or outlying areas. Instead of confining all of the green spaces within a single, specific location like city or regional parks/woods which are seen in the Dutch cities, they are distributed over a variety of distinct locations in the area, in the form of wide streets, open areas, and continual green corridors. This pattern suggests an intention to embed everyday access to greenery within the urban fabric, thereby supporting child-friendly environments and promoting proximity-based recreation. The new landscape doesn't copy the broken-up green structure of earlier neighbourhoods. Rather, it brings to a more harmonious environment by integrating elements of both the natural surroundings and recreational components into its design (Figure 5.21).

Figure 5.21 Green space design example from the site. (Personal archive, 30.07.2025)

The mobility infrastructure further solidifies this trend of reinterpretation. Cycling facilities, which are central to Dutch mobility culture, are integrated into nearly all circulation routes, not only along primary axes but also within secondary streets and local connectors (Figure 5.22). The urban plan appears to be meant to promote the use of bicycles as the most practical means of mobility inside neighbourhoods, all the while reducing the likelihood of disagreements with automotive traffic (Figure 5.23). This may be determined based on the transparency and uniformity of these paths. At the same time, parking solutions appear to be organised in a manner that addresses the limitations observed in denser historical areas, where spatial constraints often create tension between private car use and public-realm quality. In Weespersluis, parking seems to be incorporated with more spatial flexibility, enabling residents to maintain private vehicle access without significantly compromising the pedestrian environment.

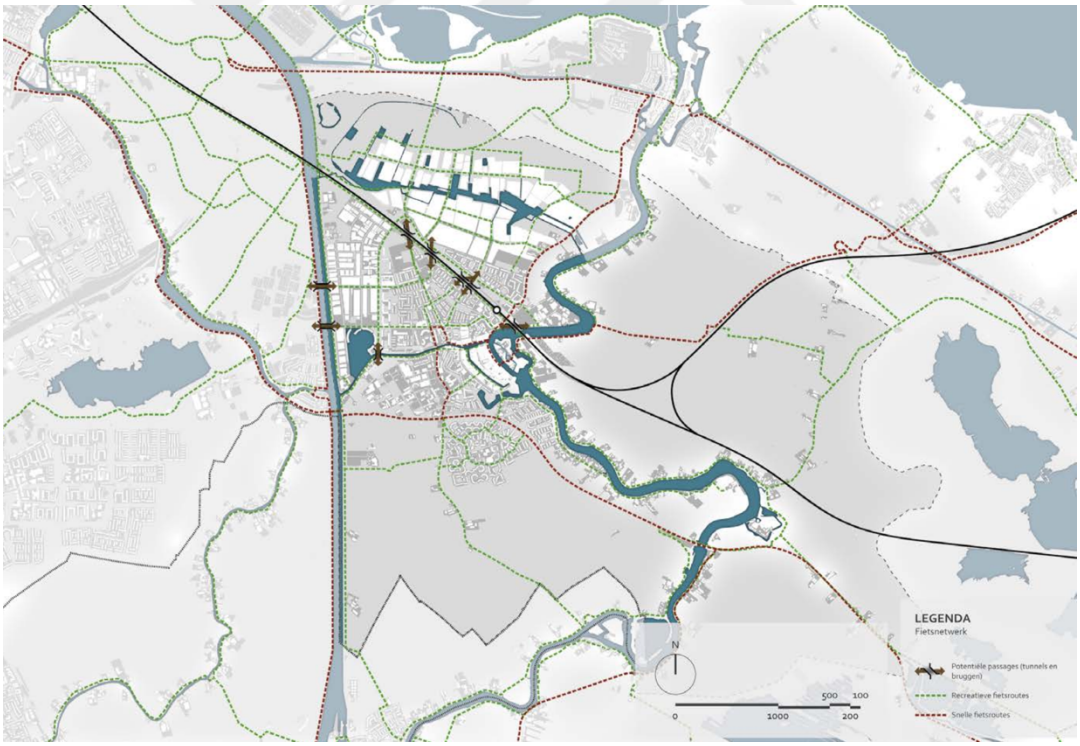

Figure 5.22 Cycling network map showing existing and planned routes. (Weesp Environmental Vision 2050)

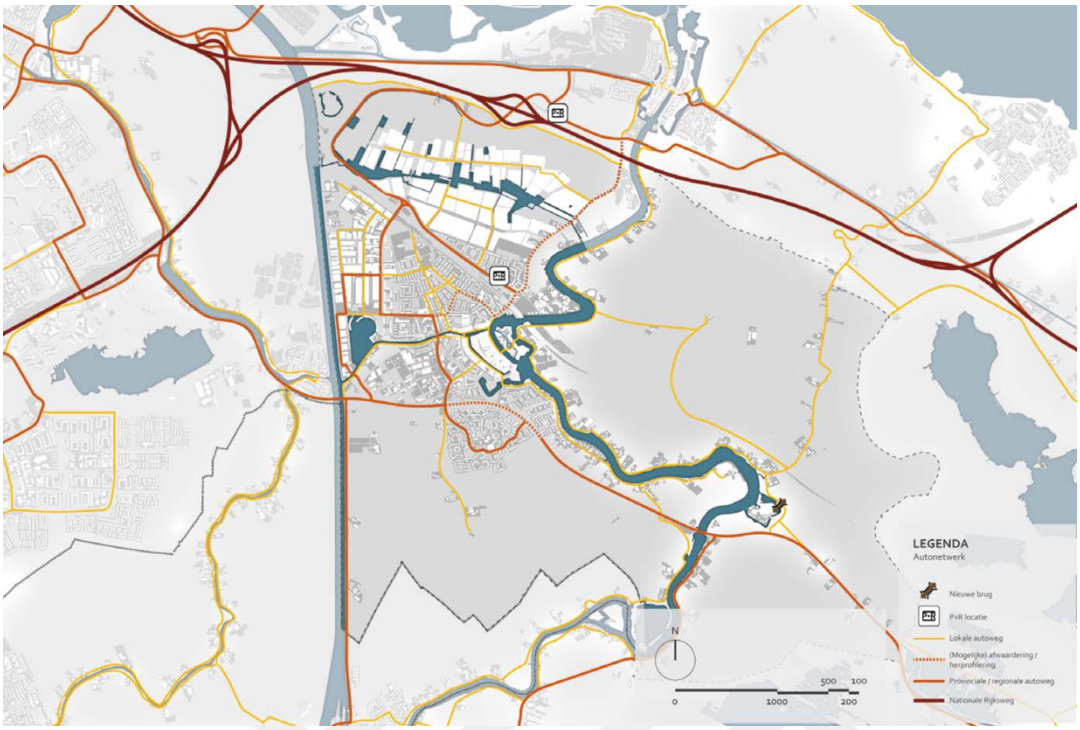

Figure 5.23 Road network map showing the ring road around Weespersluis. (Weesp Environmental Vision 2050)

The progress that is reflected by these spatial trends as a whole goes beyond just replicating the historical architectural and urban traditions of the Netherlands. Rather, it adopts a contemporary perspective in order to rethink these traditional practices. The different components that constitute architectural diversity centred on canals, integrated greenery, cycling-focused transit, and practical vehicular facilities are not permanent historical paradigms. Instead, they are components that have been specially created to take into consideration the size, expectations, and planning freedoms of a territory that has just been constructed. The Weespersluis is an example of a particular manner of translating Dutch urban characteristics into a modern-day setting. Due to the current constraints and opportunities that are presented by the environment of urban growth, this method is controlled by the standards that are already in place.

5.7 Critical Remarks

Weespersluis represents a distinctive fusion of historical continuity, landscape-led planning, and neo-traditional form-making. It has a very solid base for growth since it is next to Weesp, a town that has had a strong infrastructure, economy, and culture for many years. The design of the project is based on the advantages of both neo-traditional urbanism (legibility, walkability, and identity) and landscape urbanism (ecological integration and climatic resilience). It is also firmly grounded in the institutional traditions of Dutch planning culture. On the other hand, the advancement is still subject to obvious hazards. The dependence on stylised historical aesthetics poses the risk of creating an idealised setting that does not possess the organic complexity of communities that are older. Socio-economic exclusivity may challenge diversity and long-term social resilience. Even if the waterways have been rigorously planned, they are nonetheless sensitive to the unpredictable character of the environment because of this. Ultimately, the interplay between a historically inspired urban form and a landscape-driven ecological system will shape the long-term adaptability of Weespersluis. In this regard, Weespersluis serves more as an experimental paradigm for modern Dutch urbanisation than as a simple extension of Weesp. It embodies both the benefits and the difficulties that are present within a planning culture that is making an effort to strike a balance between the expectations of the past, the pressures of the market, and the actual circumstances of the climate. As a consequence, it gives a valuable viewpoint that can aid in acquiring a more comprehensive knowledge of the shifting trajectories that the process of urban development in the Netherlands has followed.

The Weespersluis case study demonstrates that neo-traditional urbanism can operate as a contemporary and highly effective urban design approach when it is treated as a spatial framework rather than as a stylistic programme. Among the cases examined in this thesis, Weespersluis stands out as the most convincing example of neo-traditional urbanism in current practice, not because it attempts to replicate historical form directly, but because it successfully reinterprets the structural logic of

traditional urbanism, street-based morphology, legible neighbourhood hierarchy, and coherent public-private gradients, within a modern planning and development context.

The project's spatial success, from a design standpoint, is contingent upon its capacity to create a walkable, human-scale environment that preserves a robust connection with landscape and water systems witth reference to place's own history and traditional architecture as well as design bases. This integration is notably important, since it implies that neo-traditional urbanism is not inherently at odds with modern ecological initiatives. On the other hand, the study demonstrates how contemporary technology and environmental planning techniques may be utilised to improve historical urban design expertise, compact morphology, multifaceted networks, and spatial continuity. In this respect, Weespersluis provides an important model of how tradition-informed urbanism can be aligned with present-day needs without becoming nostalgic or visually imitative. Additionally important is the setting in which the project is being carried out. As a result of the development's incorporation into an environment that is characterised by a rich cultural and historical heritage, the new community is able to create continuity not by re-creating the past but rather by enriching an inherited urban identity. This link lends credence to the thesis's assertion that, apart from external contexts, deeply embedded urban knowledge is where tradition is most essential.

The case study already provides significant evidence that neo-traditional urbanism may work as a proactive planning and design approach, despite the fact that the project is still in the process of being developed and its long-term socio-spatial results cannot yet be completely quantified. Weespersluis stands out as the most concise demonstration of how neo-traditional principles can generate spatial coherence, daily liveability, and contextual integration at scale within the comparative framework of this thesis. As a result, it establishes actually as one of the most dependable contemporary references for future tradition-inspired urban development project.

CHAPTER 6

THE INNER-CITY RENEWAL: SULUKULE (NESLİŞAH AND HATİCE SULTAN NEIGHBOURHOODS)

The Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods of Sulukule are analysed mainly as a post-renewal case in which historical urban references were utilised within an urban transformation context. This case study enables a critical analysis of how traditional urban forms may be revitalised while also revealing the socio-political issues that affect the relationship between spatial design and social continuity. It thus offers a significant contribution to the thesis by demonstrating the limitations of form-based projects when governance and inclusion mechanisms are deficient.

Sulukule is a historic quarter in the Fatih district of İstanbul, Türkiye, located adjacent to the city's historic peninsula and ancient city walls, recognised for its longstanding Romani community. The area, including the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhood, was officially designated an urban renewal area in 2005 under Law No. 5366, with demolition and regeneration works accelerating after 2006-2007 compulsory expropriation decisions. The combined neighbourhood renewal footprint is approximately 90,000 m² according to municipality and UNESCO data, situating it within the historic and protected fabric of İstanbul's old city. While the original settlements possessed organically grown historical morphology and social networks, the implementation of renewal led to demolition and relocation rather than preservation (Figure 6.1), with displacement processes intensifying especially between 2006 and 2008 and continuing into the subsequent decade, resulting in significant reduction of resident population on site as houses were cleared. It is frequently discussed in academic literature that the Sulukule renewal project as a case instance of intended gentrification and controversial regeneration. The multifaceted socio-spatial impacts of the project have influenced discussions on subjects such as heritage, displacement, and urban policy in İstanbul.

Figure 6.1 View of the old city wall separating Sulukule from a major road. (Retrieved from: https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulukule, Last Access: December, 2025)

6.1 Reframing Sulukule: Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods

The Sulukule urban renewal initiative is frequently referenced in scholarly discourse as an emblematic instance of displacement, socio-spatial inequity, and governance inadequacy in modern İstanbul. According to the vast majority of the research that has been conducted on the topic, Sulukule has been defined as a failed urban renewal project, it is highlighted that the forcible displacement of Romani people, the deterioration of Romani cultural life, and the misappropriation of heritage identities within neoliberal urban development systems. Although these objections are essentially correct, their prevalence has resulted in a predominantly one-dimensional narrative that characterises Sulukule as a uniform and definitively failing solution. This chapter adopts a more differentiated and design-oriented approach by focusing specifically on the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, which constituted the core residential fabric of the Sulukule renewal area. Rather than rejecting the critical literature, this chapter builds upon it while arguing that the exclusive focus on failure obscures both the urban qualities of the pre-renewal fabric (Figure 6.2) and design outcomes observed in the post-renewal environment, particularly in Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods.

Figure 6.2 Before renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://www.fatihhaber.com/sulukule-projesi-tekrar-iptal-edildi/2865/, Last Access: December, 2025)

Existing scholarship provides substantial evidence that pre-renewal Sulukule functioned as a socially embedded urban neighbourhood rather than an urban void. Uysal describes Sulukule as a Romani neighbourhood with a unique urban culture, emphasising its long-standing role as a centre of music, entertainment, and collective social life (Uysal, 2012, p. 1). According to this interpretation, Sulukule is more than a peripheral settlement; rather, it is a dynamic urban environment that is defined by the daily routines and actions of the local people which highlight the reason why Sulukule is crucial in terms of the lively and engaging urban environment. Similarly, Baş stresses that dwellings in Sulukule were much more than a place for sheltering or being an investment object, instead forming spaces of social production rooted in kinship and cultural relations (Baş, 2008, p. 93).

From an urban design perspective, these observations suggest that the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods (post-renewal Sulukule) possessed spatial characteristics closely aligned with key principles of neo-traditional urbanism, including fine-grained morphology, layered public-private transitions, and street-based social interaction. Karaman documents that streets were an integral part of social life and that domestic spaces frequently opened onto shared courtyards connected to streets via narrow passages (Karaman, 2010, p. 102). Such descriptions

indicate a neighbourhood structure organised around human-scale movement, permeability, and social proximity, qualities often cited as central to traditional urban environments. Despite this, the renewal process reframed Sulukule primarily through narratives of physical decay and poverty. Karaman notes that municipal authorities justified large-scale demolition through the proposal of a historic Ottoman neighbourhood' project, which entailed the removal of nearly all existing housing stock (Karaman, 2010, p. 103). An observed urban practice that is engrained in everyday life has been transformed into a representational model that worth reconfiguration, as demonstrated by this technique, which reveals a fundamental alteration in the overall conceptualisation of tradition. Dinçer contextualises this transformation within a wider neoliberal framework, contending that historical urban sites in İstanbul are increasingly seen in terms of their sales value rather than as community urban resources (Dinçer, 2011, p. 17) that are important collective urban memory and values.

While much of the literature rightly critiques the social consequences of this transformation, less attention has been paid to the post-renewal spatial outcomes themselves. The renewed Hatice Sultan neighbourhood, for instance, introduced low-rise, street-oriented building typologies and a degree of architectural coherence that distinguish it from many contemporary mass housing projects. As Safdari and Işık observe, the renewal area was restructured through a formal planning framework covering 12 islands, 378 lots within a designated historic zone (Safdari & Işık, 2014, p. 7). While these interventions do have major social and cultural implications, also require a comprehensive review from a design perspective in order to be adequately implemented, hence, in this chapter it is going to be argued that Sulukule case. Examining through the lens of Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, where there is a visible implication of the proposals can be seen (Figure 6.3), should not be understood solely as a failed urban renewal project. It represents an experiment that was both explosive and inconclusive, in which certain neo-traditional spatial principles were partially implemented, while others were undermined due to relocation, limits imposed by government, and socio-economic exclusion. By

engaging both pre- and post-renewal conditions, this chapter seeks to extract critical design lessons relevant to future neo-traditional urban projects in Türkiye, moving beyond condemnation toward a more productive and reflective understanding of urban transformation.

Figure 6.3 After renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulukule, Last Access: December, 2025)

6.2 Pre-Renewal Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods as a Neo-Traditional Urban Environment

Prior to the implementation of the urban renewal project, Sulukule exhibited a spatial and social structure that can be productively interpreted through the lens of traditional urbanism. Although these neighbourhoods were not consciously designed according to any formal urban design doctrine, the literature consistently describes a lived urban fabric shaped by long-term inhabitation, social practices, and incremental spatial adaptation. This condition stands in contrast to later representations of Sulukule as a physically deteriorated and functionally obsolete area. One of the most frequently emphasised characteristics of pre-renewal Sulukule

is the centrality of the street as a social space. Karaman explicitly notes that streets were an integral part of social life in the neighbourhood and that they functioned as extensions of domestic space, particularly in response to the limited size of private dwellings (Karaman, 2010, p. 102). This description aligns harmoniously with the traditional urban theories, which consider streets to be more than just components of the infrastructure; rather, they are the essential setting for everyday social interaction and the cohesion of the community as well as a place where people can constitute sense of belonging (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 Before renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://mimdap.org/haberler/sulukuleden-bathbakanyn-ilgisine-bilgisine/, Last Access: December, 2025)

The connection among streets, courtyards, and residences further supports this viewpoint. Karaman describes how private living spaces open to communal courtyards, which open to streets through very narrow passageways, creating a layered spatial system characterised by gradual transitions between public and private realms (Karaman, 2010, p. 103). These communal courtyards acted as semi-

private places, making it possible for households to participate in social and cultural activities together while yet maintaining a sense of privacy amongst themselves (Figure 6.5). Viewed through the lens of neo-traditional theory, these spatial layouts illustrate how enclosure, permeability, and thresholds play an essential role in maintaining neighbourhood-level social relationships with supporting tangible values what makes a space to place, hence, possible design contributions that might be protect for the future designs. Baş similarly emphasises that the spatial organisation of Sulukule cannot be reduced to physical form alone. She argues that dwellings in the area were much more than a place for sheltering or being an investment object, instead operating as spaces of social production shaped by kinship, culture, and everyday practices (Baş, 2008, p. 93). This observation is particularly relevant for neo-traditional urbanism, which often seeks to recover the social functionality of traditional neighbourhoods. The social life of the community was a tangible phenomenon that was carefully intertwined into the layout of the streets, courtyards, and houses as well as building styles in Sulukule.

Figure 6.5 Before renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://www.fatihhaber.com/sulukule-projesi-tekrar-iptal-edildi/2865/, Last Access: December, 2025)

Another defining feature of the pre-renewal neighbourhood was its fine-grained morphology. Small plots, constricted roadways, and dense building configurations were all elements that contributed to the urban layout of Sulukule which these elements made it easier for circulation of locals in the area and encouraged social interaction among them. This sense creates the connection to the place and cultivate the socially and culturally interaction. Safdari and Işık later document that the renewal area comprised 12 islands, 378 lots within a relatively limited spatial extent (Safdari & Işık, 2014, p. 7), indicating that the pre-existing fabric already operated at a scale compatible with neighbourhood-based urbanism. This fine grain stands in contrast to the large-block configurations typical of modernist housing estates and aligns with neo-traditional principles of human-scale urban form. Crucially, the literature highlights that this spatial structure supported a form of informal mixed use embedded within everyday life. Uysal describes Sulukule as a neighbourhood historically associated with music and entertainment, noting that these activities were organised within domestic spaces rather than segregated into specialised commercial zones (Uysal, 2012, p. 1). Entertainment houses, often connected to family residences, allowed cultural production and economic activity to coexist with dwelling. This is an example of a mixed-use strategy that fundamentally contrasts with conventional retail or commercial goals. It suggests that the vitality of a community may be dependent on culturally particular activities rather than generic planning, from a neo-traditional point of view.

At the same time, none of the authors deny the material limitations of the pre-renewal environment. Karaman points out that private living areas were frequently compact and that amenities like kitchens and baths were occasionally communal, illustrating wider circumstances of impoverishment and marginalisation (Karaman, 2010, p. 102). Material deterioration and strong social and spatial cohesiveness coexist, highlighting an important analytical distinction; physical criteria solely could not characterise urban vitality and social integration, many places with better urban both structural and infrastructural environment does not have similar level of sense of belongings to a place. Neo-traditional urbanism, when critically applied, would

recognise that spatial quality emerges from the interaction between form, use, and social relations (Figure 6.6). The long-lasting nature of this urban environment is further demonstrated by the historical persistence of Sulukule despite several interventions. Referencing previous studies, Baş observes that Sulukule underwent several instances of demolition and relocation over the twentieth century; yet, the neighbourhood's social and spatial patterns endured (Baş, 2008, p. 36). It is clear that Sulukule's spatial cohesiveness was not easy to commutable of because of this. This exemplifies the value of this approach for seeing traditional urbanism as an evolving process that advances over the course of time, as opposed to something that is permanent since it contributes for the development of the soul of the location.

Figure 6.6 Before renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://www.cnnturk.com/yasam/diger/sulukule-nereye-gitti-233893, Last Access: December, 2025)

From a neo-traditional urban design perspective, the pre-renewal condition of Sulukule thus offers several critical insights. The neighbourhood demonstrated how fine-grained morphology, layered public-private transitions, and street-based social life can sustain a strong sense of place without formal design intervention. These qualities were not the product of architectural aesthetics but of long-term social use

and spatial adaptation. Recognising this distinction is essential for evaluating both the losses incurred through renewal and the partial successes of the post-renewal environment. Understanding the pre-renewal neighbourhood as a living neo-traditional structure does not imply an idealisation of poverty or informality. On the contrary, it provides a strong foundation for exploring how regeneration may have engaged with established spatial patterns in a more effective manner. This perspective also sets the stage for a more balanced evaluation of the post-renewal Sulukule, who are Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, where certain traditional design principles were reintroduced, albeit within a radically altered social and governance context.

6.3 Post-Renewal Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhood: Design Achievements, Spatial Qualities, and Unfulfilled Potential

The post-renewal spatial configuration of Sulukule, as the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, reflects a deliberate attempt to reintroduce certain formal and morphological characteristics associated with traditional urban environments. In contrast to the pre-renewal fabric, which evolved incrementally through everyday practices, the renewed neighbourhood was produced through a comprehensive and centrally planned intervention. Nonetheless, the design results of this process necessitate thorough analysis, as they disclose considerable design accomplishments and structural constraints from a neo-traditional urbanism viewpoint. One of the most evident achievements of the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan renewal project lies in its rejection of high-rise, freestanding housing blocks, which dominate many contemporary urban transformation schemes in İstanbul. Instead, the project adopts a low-rise, perimeter-based building typology organised along defined street edges. Yıldırım notes that the renewal area was designed with a maximum building height of three to four storeys, explicitly aiming to reconstruct a human-scale urban environment compatible with the historic context (Yıldırım, 2009, p. 64). The decision closely adheres to neo-traditional concepts that emphasise human size, street enclosure, and consistency of the urban boundary (Figure 6.7).

Figure 6.7 Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods urban renewal implementation project master plan. (Retrieved from: http://www.groupaarti.com/portfolio/sulukule-kentsel-yenileme-alani/?lang=tr, Last Access: December, 2025)

The renewed street network further reinforces this approach. In order to create a sense of containment which can be essential to pedestrian circulation and spatial clarity, streets are readily identifiable by building façades that are continuous with one another. Safdari and Işık describe the renewal project as one that introduced a regular street pattern and defined urban blocks within the designated renewal area (Safdari & Işık, 2014, p. 169). Compared to many large-scale housing developments, this represents a significant shift toward street-oriented urbanism and contributes to the formation of a recognisable neighbourhood structure. Architectural coherence constitutes another notable strength of the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods. Deliberate standardisation of façade treatments, roofing arrangements, and material selections was implemented to create an impression of uniformity and aesthetic harmony that is important due to an attempt to maintain and

enhance the pre-renewal urban atmosphere of the site. Yıldırım observes that the architectural language employed in the renewal sought to reference traditional Ottoman residential architecture through proportions, roof forms, and façade articulation (Yıldırım, 2009, p. 66). Despite the fact that these references may appear to be superficial, the constant application of them throughout the site helps to build a harmonious urban style. This distinguishes Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods from other reconstruction attempts that are more disconnected or visually inconsistent.

From a neo-traditional perspective, these formal qualities are not insignificant. It is possible to establish an urban framework that is capable of supporting community life by putting an emphasis on low-rise structures, street alignments that are unbroken, and aesthetically coherence. As Dinçer argues more broadly, renewal projects that engage with historic urban form, however imperfectly, still retain the potential to reconstruct a sense of place when compared to purely tabula rasa developments (Dinçer, 2011, p. 18). In this respect, the area demonstrates a partial recovery of urban form that merits recognition. In spite of this, the limitations of the regeneration emerge apparent when one examines the utilisation of space and the liveability of the area. Although the community features established streets and open areas, it demonstrates a significant deficiency in activity variation. Ground floors are mostly residential, leading few opportunities for daily economic or social activities to extend into the public realm. As Uysal notes in her broader assessment of Sulukule, the renewal process resulted in an environment where daily life was spatially re-organised but socially disconnected from previous practices (Uysal, 2012, p. 16). This lack of interaction undermines the ability of the revitalised streets to serve as dynamic social environments where locals live both inclusively and coherently in a vivid urban environment (Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.8 After renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulukule, Last Access: December, 2025)

The issue of typological rigidity further constrains the neo-traditional potential of the project. There is a limited selection of traditional designs that have been used to produce housing units, and there is very little variation in terms of the proportions or the spatial arrangement of these units that create the main restraint of the case. Safdari and Işık emphasise that the renewal process prioritised financial feasibility, resulting in housing typologies that were uniform in both size and layout (Safdari & Işık, 2014, p. 171). This homogeneity constrains socio-economic variety and restricts people' capability to modify or personalise their living spaces over time as an important aspect of traditional neighbourhood development. Moreover, while the project introduces open spaces and courtyards, these areas tend to be formalised and weakly integrated into everyday routines. Yıldırım remarks that shared spaces in the renewed area often lack clear functional definition, reducing their role to visual amenities rather than active social settings (Yıldırım, 2009, p. 68). This signifies a squandered opportunity, the spatial form has been reconfigured, while the social and functional mechanisms that revive it remain inadequately developed, from a neo-traditional perspective (Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9 After renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulukule, Last Access: December, 2025)

Significantly, these constraints should not be perceived as indications of fundamental design inadequacy. Rather, they reflect the constraints imposed by broader governance structures and socio-economic transformations, which will be examined in the following section. The Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods' renewal demonstrates that neo-traditional form can be reintroduced within contemporary planning frameworks. Nevertheless, it also indicates that a just formal uniformity cannot produce an authentic urban life since it lacks residential variation, functional diversity, and social continuity. In this sense, the post-renewal Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods occupies an ambiguous position within neo-traditional discourse. It neither replicates the organic vitality of the pre-renewal fabric nor collapses into generic mass housing (Figure 6.10). On the contrary, it functions as a transitional urban model, demonstrating both the potential and the restrictions of design-driven revitalisation when it is separated from inclusive community and administrative contexts.

Figure 6.10 Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods urban renewal implementation project street elevations. (Retrieved from: http://www.groupaarti.com/portfolio/sulukule-kentsel-yenileme-alani/?lang=tr, Last Access: December, 2025)

6.4 Governance, Displacement, and the Structural Limits of Design-Led Neo-Tranditionalism

The partial successes and evident limitations of the Hatice Sultan neighbourhood renewal project cannot be adequately understood through architectural or urban design analysis alone. It is for them to be positioned inside the foundational

administrative framework and displacement dynamics that affected the process of renewal. The Sulukule case demonstrates with particular clarity that neo-traditional urban design principles, however carefully articulated, are fundamentally constrained when detached from inclusive governance structures and socio-economic continuity. A central issue identified across the literature is the top-down nature of the renewal process. Uysal characterises the Sulukule renewal as a project in which local residents were excluded from decision-making processes, despite being the primary stakeholders of the neighbourhood (Uysal, 2012, p. 15). This lack of participation significantly undermined the capacity of the renewal to build upon existing social networks or adapt spatial interventions to local practices. It prioritises incremental development and societal continuity, such exclusion signifies a structural imbalance rather than a mere defect.

Karaman likewise places Sulukule in the context of neoliberal urban management, claiming that regeneration projects in İstanbul are more and more reliant on dispossession than on rehabilitation and restoration of social and cultural heritage of a traditional urbanism. He notes that Sulukule exemplifies a process whereby urban renewal becomes a means of removing low-income populations from valuable inner-city land (Karaman, 2010, p. 97). This process directly affected the design outcomes of the Hatice Sultan neighbourhood, as the displacement of former residents severed the social foundations upon which traditional urban life depended. The literature also highlights how property relations and tenure restructuring constrained design potential. Safdari and Işık argue that the regeneration project predominantly depended on dispossession and property consolidation, leading in a residential space paradigm that emphasised market value rather than social inclusion (Safdari & Işık, 2014, p. 170). This restructure prioritised uniform dwelling units intended for selling later on, hence restricting chances for incremental adaption or typological variety. In this setting, the primary function of architectural ties to tradition was to serve as just strategies for legitimising what had been carried out, instead of as fundamentals for the maintenance of social life.

This instrumentalisation of tradition is further critiqued by Dinçer, who argues that historic urban renewal projects in İstanbul often deploy heritage discourse selectively, detaching built form from its social and cultural meanings (Dinçer, 2011, p. 18). In Sulukule, the invocation of an Ottoman neighbourhood aesthetic did not correspond to the preservation of social practices or community structures. Tradition was reinterpreted as an artistic language, apart from the everyday applications and modifications that had traditionally characterised the area for the contemporary world. Importantly, this governance-driven detachment helps explain why the spatial framework of Hatice Sultan, despite its formal qualities, struggles to generate active street life. As Baş observes, social life in Sulukule was historically produced through dense kinship networks and shared domestic practices, which were inseparable from the spatial organisation of dwellings and courtyards (Baş, 2008, p. 94). Following the disruption of these systems, the revitalised urban structure became devoid of the social processes essential for enlivening its streets and public spaces.

The findings emphasise an important issue from the perspective of neo-traditional urbanism that is architecture cannot solve social rupture in urban areas on its own. The failure to retain or reintegrate former residents did not merely produce social injustice; it also rendered the neo-traditional spatial framework functionally incomplete. As Uysal notes, the renewal resulted in a neighbourhood without its historical users, raising questions about the viability of place-making strategies detached from social continuity (Uysal, 2012, p. 17). It is crucial to differentiate between design purpose and administrative consequence. The limitations observed in Hatice Sultan should not be interpreted as evidence that neo-traditional principles are inherently incompatible with renewal contexts. On the contrary, they demonstrate that these ideals require institutional frameworks that are promoting of them. A variety of tenancy types, participatory planning, and continual supervision should all be part of these frameworks. Without these conditions, neo-traditional design risks being reduced to a static image rather than an evolving urban process. The case of Sulukule shows that governance frameworks fail to create the right conditions for neo-traditional urbanism to be successfully implemented, not that neo-

traditional urbanism is a bad design technique in and of itself. This differentiation is essential for deriving valuable insights from the instance, especially for forthcoming urban revitalisation initiatives in Türkiye.

6.5 Neo-Traditional Design Lessons from Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods as an Experiment

Analysed via the framework of neo-traditional urbanism, the evolution of the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan communities uncovers a multifaceted array of insights that transcend the prevailing narrative of in a way failure. While the Sulukule renewal process has justifiably been criticised for displacement, governance failures, and socio-spatial injustice, a design-oriented reading demonstrates that the case cannot be reduced to a singular or definitive outcome. Instead, Sulukule represents an incomplete and constrained urban experiment, in which certain neo-traditional principles were partially realised, while others were fundamentally undermined by institutional and socio-economic conditions. A crucial lesson derived from this instance is to the contrast between urban form and urban living. The post-renewal Hatice Sultan neighbourhood illustrates those neo-traditional spatial elements, such as low-rise construction, street enclosure, and architectural coherence, can be reintroduced within contemporary Turkish planning frameworks. As Yıldırım observes, the renewal project explicitly aimed to reconstruct a human-scale urban environment compatible with the historic character of the area (Yıldırım, 2009, p. 64). This objective, while only partially fulfilled, challenges the assumption that renewal projects in Türkiye must necessarily rely on high-rise, inward-oriented housing typologies.

At the same time, the Sulukule case demonstrates the limitations of form-driven interpretations of tradition. Due to its reliance on similar housing types and little functional flexibility, the revitalised community was unable to completely embrace frequent social contacts. This prevents the society from fully embracing social interactions. Safdari and Işık underline that the renewal prioritised standardised

housing units shaped by financial feasibility rather than social diversity (Safdari & Işık, 2014, p. 171). From a neo-traditional perspective, this typological rigidity stands in sharp contrast to the adaptability and incremental change that characterised the pre-renewal neighbourhood. Analysing the pre- and post- renewal conditions helps to shed light on the relevance of appropriation and the persistence of society. In the pre-renewal Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, spatial practices such as shared courtyards, domestic spillover into streets, and informal mixed use were not design outcomes but social processes. Baş emphasises that dwellings in Sulukule functioned as spaces of social production rather than isolated residential units (Baş, 2008, p. 93). The renewal process, however, disrupted these practices by displacing long-established residents, thereby severing the relationship between spatial form and social use.

This rupture highlights a fundamental outcome for neo-traditional urbanism which is design cannot substitute for community. As Uysal argues, the Sulukule renewal resulted in a neighbourhood without its historical users, rendering place-making strategies largely symbolic (Uysal, 2012, p. 17). Even where neo-traditional spatial elements were introduced, the absence of social continuity limited their effectiveness. This finding reinforces the argument that neo-traditional urbanism must be understood not as a stylistic or morphological model, but as a process-dependent approach that relies on long-term social embeddedness. Governance emerges as another critical dimension shaping neo-traditional outcomes. The Sulukule renewal illustrates how top-down planning, expropriation, and market-oriented housing production can constrain the adaptability and inclusivity required for neo-traditional neighbourhoods to function. According to Karaman, who interprets this dynamism within the context of comprehensive neoliberal urban policies, renewal projects typically work as tools of dispossession rather than as catalysts for social improvement (Karaman, 2010, p. 97). In this setting, neo-traditional design language may be exploited as a legitimising aesthetic, however, disconnected from its social underpinnings.

Yet, to frame Sulukule solely as a failed renewal would be to overlook its latent design potential. The Hatice Sultan neighbourhood demonstrates that certain spatial principles, street-based urbanism, human-scale form, and architectural continuity, remain viable starting points for future projects. The drawbacks of the case study are not due to the fact that neo-traditional urbanism is not feasible in Türkiye's urban settings; rather, they are the result of the absence of enabling mechanisms such as housing variety, involvement in governance, and incremental development strategies which built an urban environment from on top of what the place is rich for; tangible and intangible heritage. Sulukule should be also seen as a pivotal reference instance rather than a paradigm or an exception. It reveals how neo-traditional urban principles can be selectively adopted yet fundamentally compromised when detached from social and institutional contexts. Simultaneously, it provides critical insights into how forthcoming urban regeneration and revitalisation initiatives might overcome similar challenges by incorporating design objectives with inclusive administrative structures and socially sensitive urban development policies.

In conclusion, the transformation of Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods illustrates that neo-traditional urbanism cannot be evaluated through binary notions of success or failure. It necessitates a multi-facet understanding to recognise partial achievements within the Sulukule project, structural constraints, and unrealised as well as unfulfilled potential, lessons must be learned to be able to any further success can be built upon them. The importance of Sulukule is in its complexity offers a crucial basis for envisioning more inclusive, flexible, and socially rooted neo-traditional urban initiatives in the future.

Figure 6.11 Before renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://www.fatihhaber.com/sulukule-projesi-tekrar-iptal-edildi/2865/, Last Access: December, 2025)

Figure 6.12 After renewal process. (Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulukule, Last Access: December, 2025)

CHAPTER 7

ANGORA HOUSES AS A HYBRID URBAN EXPERIMENT

Angora Houses is chosen as an early Turkish instance of tradition-inspired residential development that aimed to integrate architectural references with urban planning aspirations at the community scale. This case research provides valuable insights into the interpretation of new urbanist design aims within the context of Türkiye, notably with regard to spatial coherence, the comfort of everyday residential life, and the changing degrees of permeability over the course of time. It further substantiates the concept by illustrating that the primary constraints of such initiatives frequently arise from socio-economic targeting rather than from the design framework itself.

Angora Houses (*Angora Evleri*) is a large residential development located in the southwest corridor of Ankara, Türkiye, in the Beysukent/Mutlukent area of Çankaya district. Initially conceived in the late 1980s as a cooperative housing scheme, the *Angora Evleri* project was formally developed beginning in the early 1990s (Figure 7.1), with primary construction and settlement phases occurring from around 1992 onwards. The planning area comprises approximately 203 hectares and has about 1,929 dwelling units. These housing units include detached villas, point blocks, and row houses in addition to residential areas the site includes key urban services like as schools, parks, and commercial centres that are designed to serve the local population. Originally a gated or highly delineated residential enclave, in later years *Angora Evleri* has evolved towards more semi-public neighbourhood uses in practice (Figure 7.2), reflecting wider shifts in its socio-spatial role within Ankara's urban mosaic. The project stands out for its early integration of varied housing typologies and neighbourhood-oriented spatial planning in the Turkish context.

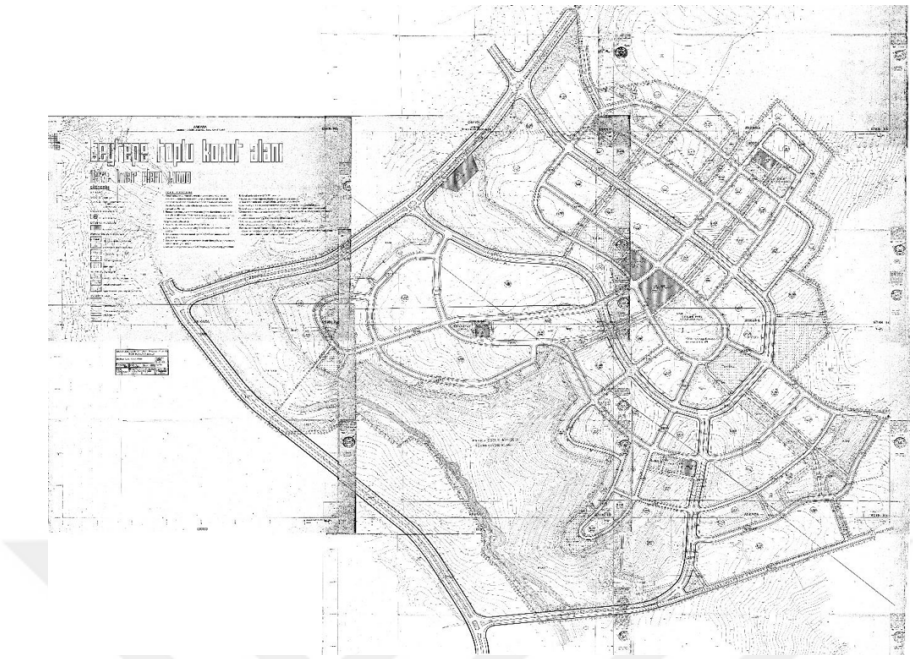

Figure 7.1 The first zoning plan for Angora Houses, approved in 1990 (Retrieved from: https://www.angorakoop18.com/faaliyet-detay/angora-kooperatif-18-tema-planlama-mimarlik-angora-evleri-planli-tarihi, Last Accessed: 13.01.2026).

Figure 7.2 Angora Houses Current Zoning Plan (Retrieved from: https://www.angorakoop18.com/faaliyet-detay/angora-kooperatif-18-tema-planlama-mimarlik-angora-evleri-planli-tarihi, Last Accessed: 13.01.2026).

7.1 Conceptual Framework and the Significance of Angora Houses

Neo-traditional urbanism and New Urbanism emerged as critical responses to the spatial, social, and environmental consequences of post-war modernist planning. The contemporary city, characterised by functional zoning, dependence on automobiles, and a fragmentation of daily activities, became more linked to a disjointed urban layout, diminished public life, and the decline of community-oriented social connections. In reaction to these outcomes, neo-traditional approaches sought to recover historically informed principles of urbanism, emphasising walkability, mixed uses, human-scale streets, architectural continuity, and the spatial centrality of public space. These principles were not only designed as deliberate techniques; they also evolved into instruments that foster connections among people, cultivate a sense of belonging within a community, and enhance collaborative cohesion among locals. New Urbanism, which is closely related to neo-traditional urbanism, set up an institutional structure that identified the form of cities as an important factor in the way people behave. Compact communities, distinctly characterised public and semi-public areas, permeable street networks, and a cohesive architectural style were advocated as mechanisms for revitalising community life. Neo-traditional urbanism fundamentally contend that urban design may shape social interactions and that historic spatial patterns provide important insights for modern urban development. This assumption has made both approaches particularly influential in contexts where dissatisfaction with modernist and suburban forms has converged with demands for higher-quality living environments.

At the same time, critical scholarship has repeatedly cautioned against an uncritical acceptance of neo-traditional urbanism's normative claims. While the recovery of traditional urban form offers an important corrective to the excesses of modernist planning, the translation of these principles into practice has often occurred within market-driven development frameworks. As a result, neo-traditional design elements, such as traditional architectural references, neighbourhood rhetoric, and public-space-oriented layouts, have sometimes been mobilised to enhance the

symbolic and economic value of residential developments rather than to advance social inclusivity. The contradiction between form-based objectives and underlying socio-economic conditions is a principal subject in contemporary urban discourse and functions as a crucial analytical framework for evaluating real-world situations. In this extensive theoretical framework, Angora Houses has a notably crucial part. The settlement presents itself as an urban environment inspired by traditional architectural language and shaped by neighbourhood-oriented design principles commonly associated with New Urbanism. In addition to being key topics in neo-traditional discourse, the spatial arrangement, architectural look, and advertising descriptions all stimulate ideas of community, structure, and quality of life from the audience. Simultaneously, Angora Houses is situated inside an environment of gated communities, upscale residential segregation, and disconnected planning methodologies. Because of its dual character, it is neither a straightforward illustration of neo-traditional urbanism nor a straightforward departure from it; rather, it is an urban experiment that is hybrid and involves a great deal of discussion.

Angora Houses is therefore important to the neo-traditional urbanism literature precisely because it exposes the limits and potentials of design-led approaches to community-making. The urban setting demonstrates the way traditional architectural references and designed urban planning may be used to create environments that appear to be harmonious and are easily understood on the inside. On the other hand, it provokes essential enquiries on whether such spaces authentically replicate the social and communal features linked to traditional urbanism, or if they just imitate these attributes inside a confined physical and social context. In this respect, Angora Houses offers a valuable case through which to interrogate the gap between neo-traditional intention and urban outcome. The theoretical significance of Angora Houses is demonstrated through a multi-layered examination that brings together architectural, urban design, planning, and socio-spatial viewpoints. Not only analytical perspective is suitable for considering the detailed nature of the settlement. Architectural study alone may excessively highlight stylistic connections while neglecting institutional contexts. Urban design analysis may identify

neighbourhood-oriented layouts without fully accounting for governance structures (Figure 7.3). Planning-focused critiques can reveal regulatory fragmentation but may underplay the symbolic power of design.

Figure 7.3 Angora Houses view towards the Entrance-1. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

Ertuna investigates in Gated Communities as a New Upper-Middle Class “Utopia” in Türkiye: The Case of Angora Houses (2003) the utilisation of design principles, social contexts, and community ideologies in the creation of an exemplary urban environment, emphasising the cultural and symbolic dimensions of cities where people can live harmoniously. This perspective is essential for understanding how neo-traditional imagery operates at the level of representation and identity. Balta et al. redirects attention in their paper Urban Development Process of Built Environments in Metropolitan Areas in Türkiye: Case Study of Angora Settlement, Ankara (2012) to planning procedures and institutional dynamics, elucidating how incomplete plans, plan modifications, and cooperative-led development influenced the built environment. This analysis is crucial for situating Angora Houses within broader debates on neoliberal urban governance and the limits of form-based planning. Erişen places Angora Houses in Suburbanization in Türkiye within the Process of Integration to Global Development and a New Life-Style Settlement (2003) within the wider transformation of Turkish metropolitan regions under conditions of global economic integration. By framing gated settlements as lifestyle-

oriented suburban environments, this work connects Angora Houses to structural processes of class formation and spatial polarisation. Şanlı and Özdemir Sönmez presents in *Üst Gelir Grubunun Sosyo-Mekânsal Ayrışımı* (2016) a comprehensive experimental analysis of how planning decisions and residential preferences foster socio-spatial segregation, providing essential insights into the lived impacts of projects such as Angora Houses.

Taken together, these four sources enable a comprehensive examination of Angora Houses as an urban phenomenon situated at the intersection of neo-traditional design ideals, New Urbanist aspirations, and contemporary socio-spatial realities. A critical viewpoint that respects the complexities of Angora Houses is presented in this chapter. This chapter doesn't just label it either succeeded or failed; instead, it looks at them analytically which later on could help to enhance the intention and create better examples for Türkiye. The settlement is approached as a site where traditional architectural inspiration and neighbourhood-oriented design coexist with exclusionary practices, fragmented planning, and class-based spatial differentiation. This chapter therefore proceeds from the premise that neo-traditional urbanism must be evaluated not only through its formal characteristics but also through the institutional, social, and political conditions under which it is implemented. This chapter seeks to enhance the understanding of the practical application of neo-traditional principles in Angora Houses by analysing their successes, shortcomings, and potential reimagining to foster more inclusive and authentically urban lifestyles.

7.2 Architectural Interpretation of Tradition and Urban Design Intentions

One of the defining characteristics of Angora Houses is its deliberate attempt to construct a residential environment through traditional architectural references and neighbourhood-oriented urban design principles (Figure 7.4). Angora Houses carefully incorporates elements from the philosophical and aesthetic frameworks of Neo-Traditional Urbanism and New Urbanism, notably emphasising architectural

continuity, organised public spaces, and the concept of a cohesive community for the residents.

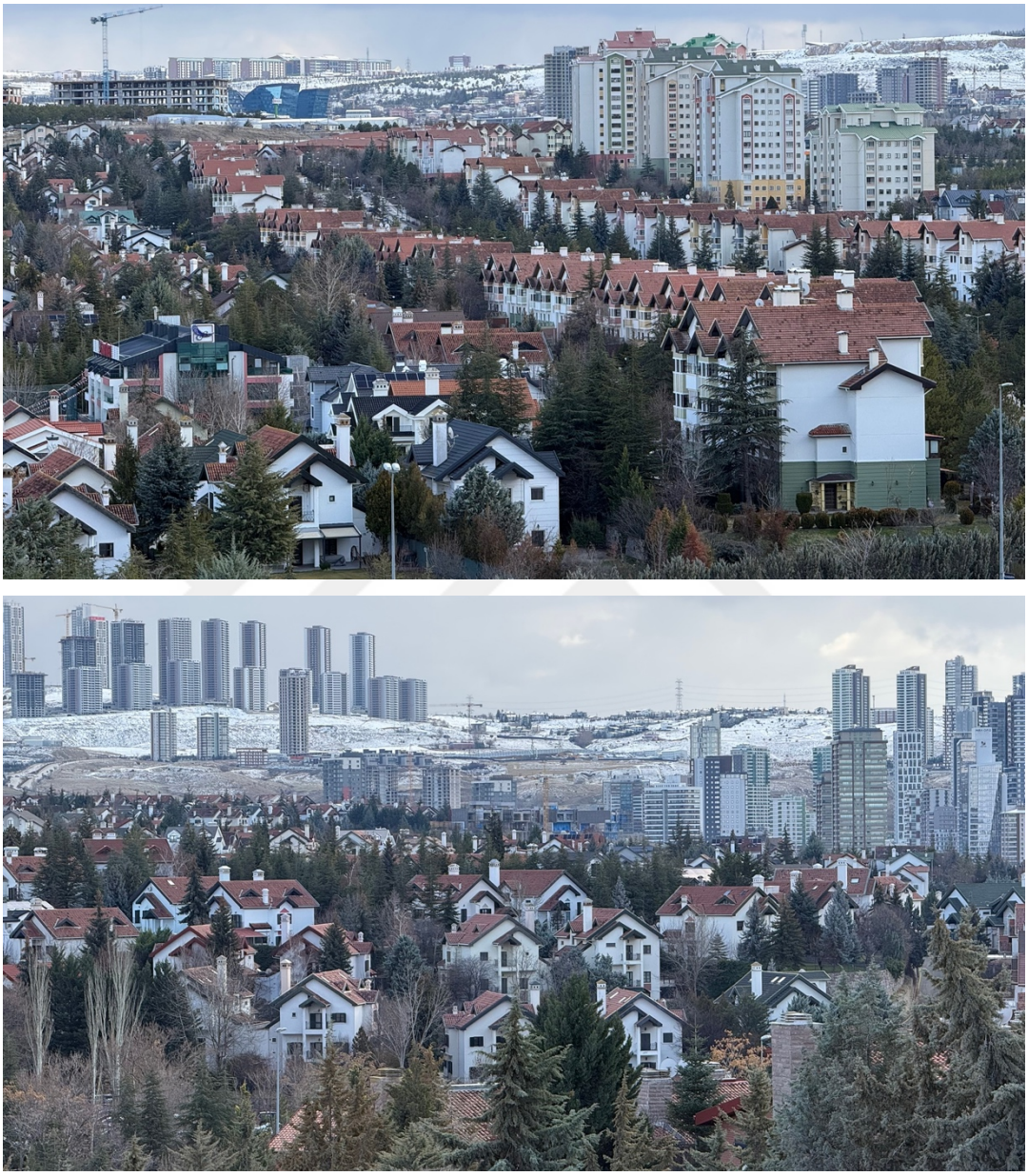

Figure 7.4 Different typologies of Angora Houses and their architectural continuity. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

A prevalent issue in the literature is the influence of traditional architectural language on the identity of Angora Houses. Ertuna explicitly note that the houses which are

built according to Ottoman architecture style have Ottoman names (Ertuna, 2003, p. 86). This decision was taken with a specific motive; it represents a deliberate approach intended to embed the project inside a conventional architectural style. The establishment of Angora Houses' place within the framework of consistency, tradition, and cultural reliability is accomplished via the usage of references to traditional architectural styles. Such strategies are closely aligned with neo-traditional urbanism's reliance on vernacular and classical forms to produce legibility and familiarity in the built environment.

Nonetheless, as the source indicates, these architectural parallels function less as authentic continuations of historical building traditions rather than as symbolic indicators of differentiation which all criticisers' target the same problematic incident rather than looking the successes of the project. It is the architectural style that acts as a cultural marker that differentiates Angora Houses from other urban districts. This finding contend that traditional forms may be utilised as aesthetic capital instead of serving as instruments for social integration. As the examples always criticise with this respect, rather than representing the projects' success towards design. This criticises generally focusing on mere objection of what was trying to aim in the project. It is not said that every project always accepted with their faults and errors but it needs to be justified for the attempts.

From an urban design perspective, Angora Houses incorporates several elements commonly associated with New Urbanist neighbourhood models. The neighbourhood is structured around internally designated roadways, landscaped public areas, and communal amenities designed to facilitate daily social interactions which help residents to live cohesive and comfortable living environment where social expectations from an urban setting satisfied. As noted by Balta et al., the development includes social and recreational facilities such as swimming pools, sports areas, cafés, and club buildings within the settlement (2012, p. 74). These facilities foster an internally cohesive environment, reflecting New Urbanism's focus on proximity, mixed-use functions, and less external reliance which this

inherent unity simultaneously exposes a significant challenge while inwardly creating unity and integration it leads contrary not allowing external entry to the place. While New Urbanism traditionally advocates integration with the wider urban fabric, Angora Houses's design logic prioritises self-sufficiency and enclosure (Figure 7.5). The availability of services inside the community diminishes inhabitants' necessity to interact with the outside community, so converting neighbourhood planning principles into means of spatial disengagement. As Erişen observes, gated communities are privatised, enclosed, and monitored exclusive spaces of residence, work, leisure, and consumption (Erişen, 2003, p. iv). This remark highlights the inherent contradiction that exists within the urban design of Angora Houses, which includes the appeal to communal values and the apparent alienation from the social life that was occurring in the surrounding area during the time that it was constructed, because, residents don't need any external demand all the things that they might need already supplied (Figure 7.6).

Figure 7.5 Roads with buffet area within the Angora Houses. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

Figure 7.6 Street and sidewalk view from the Angora Houses. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

The literature emphasises the integration of community ideology within the architectural and urban design concepts of Angora Houses. The possibility for a community way of life and a common identity is brought to light in marketing materials and interviews with residents. On the other hand, this idealised viewpoint is called into question by real-life experience. Ertuna highlighted residents themselves report that there had been no sense of belongingness to Angora community despite the development's strong emphasis on community imagery (Ertuna, 2003, p. 148). When converted into gated forms, this difference reveals a fundamental shortcoming of traditional urbanisation, which is that physical proximity and stylistic consistency do not inevitably promote social cohesiveness. However today Angora Houses worked more than a gated community, it is more permeable than it was first constructed which this eliminates the limitation of the gated forms. Architecturally, Angora Houses exhibits a high degree of visual order and homogeneity. For the purpose of preserving a uniform look over the entirety of the site, building typologies, façade designs, and landscape features are required to conform to standards that help the site present visually coherent environment. While

such coherence aligns with neo-traditional principles of harmony and continuity, it also raises concerns regarding architectural determinism where the main critics coming from this apprehension for this case study.

The street and public space configuration further illustrates this ambivalence. The streets and public spaces are designed to be peaceful, secure and visually appealing due to leading people to use them comfortably as well as aesthetically pleasing. Yet these spaces function primarily as semi-private realms accessible only to residents and their guests (Figure 7.7). From a New Urbanist viewpoint, streets have the potential of functioning as democratic social places that promote interaction and diversity. The locals' demographics are very similar, with economic levels and socio-cultural environments having a big impact on the place's community which this create both positive and negative aspects of the place. This condition aligns with the observation that gated communities facilitate living among people with similar social and cultural characteristics (Ertuna, 2003, p. 148).

Figure 7.7 View from street with parking spots in the Angora Houses. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

Despite the critiques, it is important to recognise the partial successes of Angora Houses from a neo-traditional urban design standpoint. Environments that are well-organised, pleasant, and visually beautiful may be created by giving close consideration to the aesthetic of buildings, landscape design, and spatial organisation, as this area shows. The avoidance of the fragmented, infrastructure-dominated layouts typical of many suburban developments represents a meaningful departure from conventional sprawl. In this sense, Angora Houses does succeed in translating certain New Urbanist and neo-traditional principles such as coherent streetscapes and pedestrian-friendly internal circulation into built form.

A reconfiguration of the architectural and urban design attributes of Angora Houses necessitates placing the project within its temporal context. A significant portion of the literature addressing Angora Houses most notably works published in 2003 inevitably evaluates the settlement through the lens of its initial phase, when its gated character, social exclusivity, and controlled spatial structure were more pronounced. Angora Houses has the risk of being confined inside a rigid interpretative framework that does not take into account its future progress, despite the fact that these first evaluations provide substantial insights. From an architectural perspective, Angora Houses represents one of the earliest large-scale attempts in Ankara to consciously engage with traditional architectural language as a design strategy, rather than as an ornamental gesture. As Ertuna observes, the houses which are built according to traditional architecture style have classical names (Ertuna, 2003, p. 86). A conscious attempt was made to include cultural elements into the design of traditional houses, as demonstrated by the choice that was made. This is related to the importance of identifiable form, continuity, and symbolic intelligibility in neo-traditional urbanisation. It is important to keep in mind that the design viewpoint focused on adapting concepts to meet contemporary requirements for housing, construction techniques, and desired levels of comfort, rather than producing precise copies of historical buildings and traditional urban settings, hence, the main point is creating places with the fundamental inspiration from the traditional buildings as well as

historical urban design and adapt them to the contemporary urban setting with its structural references and pleasing environmental.

This interpretative method represents a substantial beneficial contribution. The Angora Houses suggestion transcends mere imitation of historical residence styles by integrating classical architectural elements such as enclosure, size, rhythm, and material coherence within a contemporary urban context which crucial because the reason why this example is one of the important attempts for its time about new urbanism and now, it can be get inspiration and how to enhance next projects as a neo-traditional urbanism example. A comprehensive architectural character that is in harmony with the past and accords with present living is established by the idea, which goes beyond the superficial historicism that is commonly used. This characteristic is especially relevant when taking into consideration the greater backdrop of suburban growth in Türkiye during that time period, which was predominantly characterised by stylistic fragmentation. At the urban design scale, Angora Houses similarly reflects New Urbanist aspirations to structure daily life around the neighbourhood. Balta et al. note that the settlement includes social and recreational facilities such as swimming pools, sports areas, cafés, and club buildings within the settlement (2012, p. 74) (Figure 7.8). These amenities facilitate daily social and cultural activities and diminish dependence on far urban centres, hence enhancing neighbourhood-level efficacy (Figure 7.9). From a neo-traditional perspective, this internal completeness can be interpreted as a strength, particularly in contrast to monofunctional suburban housing estates.

Figure 7.8 Social centre in the Angora Houses. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

Figure 7.9 Angora Houses Naciye Aydogan Mosque as one of social amenity in the Angora Houses. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

In summary, Angora Houses' architectural language and urban design intentions reflect a complex engagement with Neo-Traditional Urbanism and New Urbanism. The settlement successfully employs traditional references and neighbourhood-oriented design to create a visually coherent and internally legible environment (Figure 7.10.). Nonetheless, these same techniques foster space confinement, social uniformity, and the commercialisation of community. Traditional forms have the potential to degrade into nothing more than decorative façade rather than foundations

for genuine urban existence if there is a lack of transparency, inclusion, and cohesiveness within the urban setting which this is the main criticism and fail points for the design attempts; it is need to delve into sociological and reflection of the urban daily life aspects from the urban design processes. This is an important reminder for neo-traditional urbanism, which is also highlighted by the Angora instance.

Figure 7.10 Some façades views from Angora Houses. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

Crucially, while early studies often interpret these internalised amenities as evidence of spatial withdrawal, a longer-term view suggests a more nuanced reading. Over the course of time, Angora Houses has undergone a process of change and extensive integration, which has led to increased interaction with the urban environment that is located in the surrounding area and extend the gated community identity. The rigid image of a fully closed enclave described in early 2000s literature no longer fully captures its current condition. This growth underlines the necessity of perceiving neo-traditional projects as continually evolving entities, capable of alteration beyond their original design objectives.

7.3 Planning Context, Governance Structures, and Socio-Spatial Outcomes

The architectural language and urban design objectives of Angora Houses selectively incorporate Neo-Traditional and New Urbanist concepts; yet, a thorough analysis of its planning procedures, governance structures, and socio-spatial results uncovers significant discrepancies. Continually illustrates that Angora Houses is not only the result of design decisions in this chapter; it is also profoundly influenced by fragmented planning procedures, neoliberal governance structures, and class-based spatial policies. When carried out without institutional coherence, democratic accountability, and a strong devotion to social inclusion, this settlement exemplifies the limitations that are associated with neo-traditional urbanism. A central concern highlighted across the sources is the piecemeal nature of planning that enabled the development of Angora Houses. Balta et al. observe that since the 1980s, urban development in Turkish metropolitan areas has increasingly relied on piecemeal implementation through partial plans and plan amendments rather than comprehensive planning frameworks (Balta et al., 2012, p. 70). This mode of development privileges short-term interests and land value maximisation, undermining the holistic spatial coordination that neo-traditional urbanism presupposes. In the instance of Angora Houses, fragmentary designs did not serve as impartial technical tools; rather, they became tools through which actors of place altered urban outcomes in their advantage when they were developed.

The design development of Angora Houses demonstrates the utilisation of institutional flexibility to validate elite residential construction. Balta et al. document that the area's development was initiated through a partial plan ostensibly prepared to meet local public needs, yet the actual content and location of the plan were determined by the demands of Housing Construction Cooperative 18 (2012, p. 75). This finding is significant because it reveals a reversal of planning logic, rather than development conforming to a publicly defined spatial strategy, planning instruments were retrofitted to accommodate a pre-selected project. Such practices fundamentally contradict neo-traditional urbanism's emphasis on deliberate,

community-oriented planning. According to Balta et al., land was expropriated for the public interest and for the prosecution of public services, yet subsequently transferred to a private cooperative for upper-income housing development (2012, p. 74). From a neo-traditional standpoint, which frequently emphasises moral accountability, management, and social responsibility, this process is profoundly problematic. It demonstrates how planning tools designed to serve collective benefit can be repurposed to consolidate socio-spatial privilege, thereby hollowing out the ethical foundations upon which neo-traditional discourse often rests. When implementation plans were annulled by administrative courts, development did not cease; instead, planning regulations were revised retroactively to legalise completed construction (Balta et al., 2012, pp. 75-76). This pattern shows a major management error, investment was given more significance than planning during the urban development process, which made business priorities the most important factor. These factors directly contradict the idea that urban planning principles, whether they are traditional or non-traditional, can have a significant effect on social results when strong institutional frameworks are not in place.

These planning practices are closely intertwined with neoliberal urban governance, a theme developed extensively by Erişen. She situates the emergence of gated communities within Türkiye's post-1980 integration into global economic systems, arguing that suburbanisation has become a spatial representation of social segregation rather than a neutral response to urban growth (Erişen, 2003, p. 1). In this context, Angora Houses represents a new life-style settlement shaped by the consumption patterns and spatial preferences of globally connected upper-middle classes. The settlement's dependence on private utilities, regulated access, and lifestyle branding illustrates a wider trend of urban space becoming more commodity-oriented and privatised which lead fragmentation upon the living environment. The research emphasises that upper-income segregation is not only a social consequence but a calculated geographical plan. Şanlı and Özdemir Sönmez identify the westward expansion of Ankara, particularly along the Eskişehir Road corridor, as a planning trajectory that facilitated the concentration of upper-income

residential areas (2016, p. 1145). Angora Houses thus emerges as part of a broader urban logic in which privilege is spatially organised and protected. The authors further argue that planning revisions explicitly supported forms dominated by upper-income settlements (Şanlı & Özdemir Sönmez, 2016, p. 1146). This statement is critical because it reveals how socio-spatial segregation is normalised within planning discourse. Segregation is a planning objective in an indirect manner, with the reasoning focussing on themes of high-quality life, natural suitability, and the desires of possible residents (Figure 7.11).

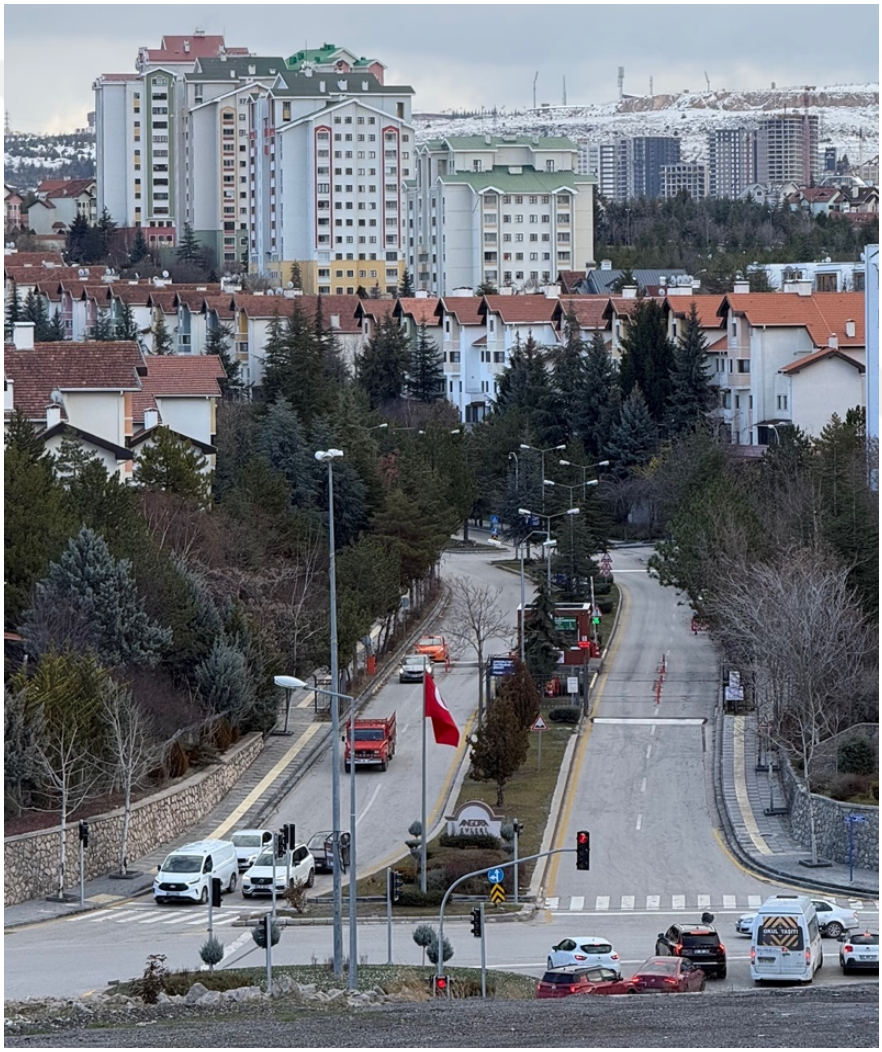

Figure 7.11 Angora Houses' entrance in a way of spatial segregation. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

Şanlı and Özdemir Sönmez solidified this viewpoint by identifying behavioural tendencies that promote separateness outside the areas. Survey results indicate that Angora Houses residents overwhelmingly rely on private vehicles, rarely use public transport, and avoid central urban areas, which are perceived as unsafe or undesirable (Şanlı & Özdemir Sönmez, 2016, pp. 1149-1151). These factors provide evidence that socio-spatial segregation is maintained by the participation in daily activities, decisions about mobility, and perceptions of urban environments. From a neo-traditional viewpoint, this is especially concerning, since it implies that neighborhood-focused architecture has failed to promote wider civic involvement and has conversely strengthened spatial withdrawal. The gated nature of Angora Houses further intensifies these dynamics with giving importance to social prestige of place. As noted in the literature, such features reinforce the hierarchy of wealth and power by visibly separating residents from the surrounding city (Ertuna, p. 145). Compared to the intended priority of neo-traditional urbanism on permeability, public accessibility, and the social value of public places, this situation stands in significant contrast to all of these aspects. Taken together, the planning and governance processes shaping Angora Houses reveal why the settlement constitutes a problematic case for neo-traditional urbanism. Although its architectural and urban design elements draw from traditional and New Urbanist discourses, the institutional framework in which these elements are executed profoundly compromises their social objectives. The dependence on incomplete plans, the misuse of expropriation, and the prevalence of private interests convert neo-traditional design principles into mechanisms of spatial difference instead of fostering social integration. In this sense, Angora Houses exemplifies a broader pattern in which neo-traditional urbanism, when decoupled from equitable planning frameworks, risks becoming an aesthetic overlay on neoliberal urbanism. Despite the fact that the community focusses a strong focus on layout, uniformity, and lifestyle consistency, it does not reintroduce the accessibility, diversity, and social dynamic that are characteristic of urban surroundings which residents who are affluent may be drawn to the settlement. This instance highlights an essential lesson; urban design cannot rectify discriminatory

governing frameworks. This part illustrates that the deficiencies of Angora Houses are not coincidental but rather systematically generated. The planning system's accommodation of elite interests, combined with gated governance and lifestyle-oriented development, has generated a spatial environment that contradicts many of neo-traditional urbanism's foundational claims. Understanding these contradictions is essential for moving beyond surface-level design critiques and toward a more comprehensive evaluation of how neo-traditional principles might be meaningfully reinterpreted within contemporary urban contexts.

Planning-related critiques of Angora Houses are likewise deeply shaped by the moment in which they were articulated. Early analyses, written at a time when gated communities represented a relatively new and rapidly expanding phenomenon in Türkiye, understandably emphasised issues of exclusion, governance, and socio-spatial segregation. Şanlı and Özdemir Sönmez, for example, identify Angora Houses as part of a broader planning trajectory that supported upper-income settlements (2016, p. 1146). Balta et al. argue that urban development in Türkiye during this period relied heavily on piecemeal implementation through partial plans and plan amendments (2012, p. 70). Rather than interpreting this condition solely as a project-specific deficiency, it is more productive to view Angora Houses as an early experiment operating within an evolving planning system. At the time of its development, institutional frameworks capable of supporting mixed-income, integrated neo-traditional neighbourhoods were still largely underdeveloped. The purpose of Angora Houses is to serve as one of the primary exploratory area, illuminating the limitations that are caused by the planning approaches that utilised, while simultaneously highlighting the potential accomplishments that may be reached within those limitations. The project's most persistent limitation its focus on a relatively narrow socio-economic group should therefore be understood less as a failure of design logic and more as a consequence of development strategy and housing typology selection. As Erişen notes, gated communities were conceptualised as new life-style settlements responding to the expectations of specific social groups (2003, p. iv). This creates great impact on the user profiles and demographic structure

of the project; however, it could not undermine the adaptability of the project's spatial arrangement. The lack of alternate residential typologies signifies an unused chance rather than a fundamental deficiency in the project's urban planning concepts.

It is clear that the layout of Angora Houses has a certain degree of natural adaptability. The neighbourhood-scale organisation, architectural coherence, and provision of shared spaces could, in principle, support a more socially diverse population if complemented by differentiated housing options and more permeable governance arrangements. Over the years, the site has slowly become less attached to its limiting closed features. This shows that its spatial consistency is in line with more openness and integration. In this respect, the tendency within the literature to focus predominantly on Angora Houses' early shortcomings risks obscuring its developmental potential. Ultimately, Angora Houses demonstrates that the value of neo-traditional urban projects cannot be assessed solely through their initial conditions. Their capabilities, the adaptability, and the potential of reinterpreting them are all equally significant aspects of their powers which represents the importance of the example. Viewed through this perspective, Angora Houses provides both a documentation of initial constraints and a basis for the future development of more inclusive, permeable, and socially responsive neo-traditional neighbourhoods (Figure 7.12).

Figure 7.12 Satellite view of Angora Houses, green connection layout. (Accessed date: 13.01.2026)

7.4 Critical Evaluation and Lessons for Neo-Traditional Urbanism of Angora Houses Example

It has been demonstrated in the preceding sections that Angora Houses is an urban attempt that is multi-layered and fundamentally divergent. It is situated at the intersection of neo-traditional architectural aesthetics, new urbanist design ideas, and neoliberal planning approaches. This concluding part provides a critical assessment of Angora Houses by highlighting the elements that render the village a significant, albeit constrained, illustration of neo-traditional urbanism, alongside the features in which it remains inherently problematic. The purpose of this section is to take a balanced analytical view on Angora Houses. It acknowledges both the contributions and weaknesses of the development, while also offering ways in which comparable developments may be revised to be more consistent with the normative ideals of neo-traditional urbanism. From a design perspective, Angora Houses exhibits several characteristics that resonate positively with neo-traditional and New Urbanist

principles. Most notably, the settlement departs from the infrastructural fragmentation typical of many suburban developments by prioritising architectural coherence and spatial order. Using traditional architectural references, identifiable building types, and open spaces complemented by natural design elements in an organised way can help to make a setting that looks consistent and visually harmonious. This coherence corresponds with neo-traditional urbanism's focus on continuity, identifiable characteristics, and a sense of place, providing people an alternative to the anonymity sometimes linked with modernist housing developments.

Angora Houses demonstrates partial success in creating an internally structured neighbourhood at the scale of urban form. The accessibility of public facilities, pedestrian-friendly internal circulation, and tranquil street settings demonstrates an attempt to evoke the spatial circumstances favourable to routine social engagement. Angora Houses arranges residential life around nearby areas that are both accessible and visually interconnected. In this respect, the settlement translates certain New Urbanist aspirations such as human-scale design and internal walkability into a built environment that residents perceive as comfortable and orderly. Despite the substantial criticisms directed at the project, Angora Houses should be recognised as an early and deliberate design experiment that sought to engage with ideas central to traditional urbanism and New Urbanism during its period of development. It is clear that the project was designed with the intention to establish aesthetic coherence, spatial structure, and a distinct feeling of community identity which it can be seen from the emphasis on a unified architectural language, human-scale environments, and internally organised public and semi-public spaces represents a departure from fragmented suburban development patterns that dominated much of Türkiye's urban expansion at the time. Angora Houses, in this setting, offered residents a cohesive and comfortable urban environment, which addressed the demands of daily life by way of their proximity to one another, moderate density, and the availability of social and cultural amenities, hence, this creates a good example of settled urban environment (Figure 7.13).

Figure 7.13 Visually coherent environment of Angora Houses. (Personal archive, 13.01.2026)

Angora Houses should not be dismissed outright as an irrelevant or failed experiment. Its importance lies precisely in its ambivalent position within the neo-traditional urbanism discourse. The settlement demonstrates that traditional architectural references and neighbourhood-oriented design can produce

environments that are perceived as orderly, aesthetically pleasing, and internally coherent. At the same time, it illustrates how these qualities can be co-opted by market-driven development models to reinforce exclusivity and spatial inequality. In this sense, Angora Houses serves as a critical case through which the limits of form-based urbanism become visible. The question, therefore, is not whether Angora Houses should be replicated, but how the lessons derived from it might inform more equitable applications of neo-traditional urbanism. Several directions for improvement can be identified. To begin with, it is critical to place a stronger focus on the permeability and cohesiveness of urban areas. Neo-traditional principles should be applied in ways that connect neighbourhoods to their surrounding urban fabric through accessible public spaces, transit-oriented design, and the removal, or at least softening, of physical and symbolic barriers. Without such connections, traditional form risks becoming an inward-looking aesthetic rather than a socially productive urban structure. Second, the governance framework of neo-traditional developments must be reconsidered. Long-term stewardship and design control need not entail paternalistic or exclusionary governance. Enhanced democratic management frameworks, resident involvement in decision-making, and openness in planning procedures should facilitate the alignment of design coherence with societal authority. It is likely that design standards and architectural principles may continue to support social structures rather than creating community ownership of the area, if these changes are not successfully adopted for the good of locals. Third, neo-traditional urbanism must confront the issue of social diversity more directly. Traditional urban areas have served as important for vast range of social groups from different backgrounds, activities, and business roles throughout history. Following just the visual aspect of tradition while excluding its social intricacies yields a lifeless replica. For developments inspired by neo-traditional principles to contribute meaningfully to contemporary cities, they must incorporate mechanisms that support mixed-income residency, diverse tenure forms, and public accessibility.

The most substantial and persistent problem of Angora Houses, however, lies not primarily in its design intentions or spatial organisation, but in its restricted socio-

economic reach. The project was designed, executed, and promoted primarily for a limited upper-income customer base, leading to a socially homogenised residential setting. This constraint arises not from a fundamental defect in the project's design principles, but from the lack of alternate dwelling typologies and the choice of a development plan that excluded wider socio-economic groups. The lack of different housing typology alternatives which appeals to people from different background made it difficult for the project to improve accessibility, diversity, and social interaction, maybe not directly but indirectly due to the restricted user profiles of the urban setting. This finding indicates that the potential of Angora Houses was limited more by the context in which its architectural or urban design aspirations were implemented than by the aspirations themselves. It's possible that the project would have had much better and more inclusive results if it had included a wider range of housing types to suit people from different income levels and family setups and been established in a more socially diverse development context. In this case, the project's design ideas might have worked as tools for coming together instead of dividing people which one of the critical points that each scholars point out.

Concentrating solely on the project's deficiencies may obscure its unexplored potential. To dismiss Angora Houses as a failed attempt is to adopt a one-sided perspective that overlooks its contributions to architectural interpretation, neighbourhood-scale design, and early engagement with neo-traditional urbanism in Türkiye. A more successful strategy would be to critically advance the project's fundamental objectives, improve its design methodologies, and explore alternative models that expand its target demographic profiles, with the help of these it supports to establish more dynamic and vivid social environment by means of residential profiles. This would be preferable to the alternative of marginalising the project within the context of planning history. In this light, Angora Houses should not be considered as a mistake, rather, it should be regarded as a case study that elucidates both the promise and the restrictions of applying classical urbanism and New Urbanist ideals in a modern urban setting. An involvement with the endeavour that is more nuanced and fruitful is made possible by acknowledging this contradiction.

This opens the door to interpretations in the future that go beyond criticism in support of substantial modification and enhancement.

In conclusion, Angora Houses occupies a paradoxical position within the neo-traditional urbanism discourse. It exemplifies both the appeal and the limitations of traditional architectural inspiration and neighbourhood-oriented design. Although it effectively creates a visually cohesive and internally comprehensible environment, it fails to replicate the social, civic, and integrative attributes characteristic of conventional urbanisation. The gated nature, exclusive planning procedures, and socio-spatial selectivity compromise the revolutionary goals of neo-traditional urbanism, restricting it to an aesthetic and lifestyle-focused paradigm. In this context, Angora Houses should not be seen as unsuccessful. Instead, it should be seen as an instance of research that shows the benefits and drawbacks of using traditional urbanism and New Urbanist ideas in modern city planning. Having an understanding of this duality makes it possible to interact with the project in a manner that is both deeper and constructive. This, in turn, enhances the potential of developing interpretations that go over criticism and/or judgement in order to bring about improvements that are advantageous for the subsequent projects.

CHAPTER 8

COMPARATIVE BRIDGE AMONG CASE STUDIES

8.1 Comparative Bridge: Neo-Traditional Urbanism Across Four Cases

An analysis of Poundbury, Weespersluis, Sulukule, and Angora Houses demonstrates that neo-traditional urbanism is not a fixed or universally direct applicable template, but a context-sensitive design language that results are significantly influenced by location, their history, governance frameworks, socio-economic factors, and methods of application. Although these four instances vary considerably in political context, scale, and social makeup, they jointly highlight the contradiction between tradition as an inclusive urban actions in cities and tradition as a regulated, image-centric commodity.

At one end of the spectrum, Poundbury represents the most institutionally protected and ideologically explicit articulation of neo-traditional urbanism. Poundbury, established under the auspices of the Duchy of Cornwall, was shaped by a traditional ideal emphasising human size, mixed-use development, and architectural coherence. As The Prince's Ten Principles of Traditional Urbanism articulate, traditional urban form is understood as places designed to a human scale, encouraging walking, sociability, and a sense of belonging where they can interact with their surroundings and people around them (King Charles III, 1989, p. 3). This emphasis on everyday urban experience rather than formal monumentality is reinforced in later analyses, which describe Poundbury as seeking a coherent public realm based on streets and squares rather than traffic infrastructure (Clancy, 2021, p. 6).

Despite extensive sociological criticism, particularly regarding class composition and governance paternalism, Poundbury demonstrates how neo-traditional design principles can be materialised with spatial consistency when land ownership,

planning control, and long-term vision are aligned. Ford's re-reading of Lynch is particularly instructive here, as he argues that neo-traditional environments such as Poundbury consciously pursue good city form by reinforcing legibility, enclosure, and continuity (Ford, 1999, p. 247). It is important to note that numerous critiques of Poundbury derive not from its design principles but rather from their specific governance framework while this structure protected the project from fluctuations in economic conditions, yet constraining democratic participation which all of these objections are relevant due to the monarchical background of the development.

Weespersluis, by contrast, illustrates a more incremental and socially embedded interpretation of neo-traditional principles within a Northern European planning culture. Unlike Poundbury's top-down coherence, Weespersluis's neo-traditional extensions operate through a negotiated planning framework that integrates contemporary housing needs with historic urban morphology. As noted in Besel and Andreescu's edited volume, European neo-traditional projects often succeed where historical continuity is treated as a living framework rather than a fixed stylistic code (Besel & Andreescu, 2013, p. 41). In this sense, Weespersluis demonstrates how neo-traditional urbanism can function as a process-oriented approach, accommodating change while maintaining spatial legibility.

This distinction becomes crucial when juxtaposed with Angora Houses in Ankara. Angora represents a deliberate attempt to merge traditional architectural references with New Urbanist planning principles, producing a neighbourhood that sought to emulate the spatial and architectural characteristics of the traditional Turkish house and neighbourhood (Ertuna, 2003, p. 78). The design aesthetic was substantially inspired by traditional features, and the streets, low-rise residential structures, and controlled density were all developed with the intention of fostering a feeling of community as socially enable society is a key element of traditional urban environment. From a purely design-oriented perspective, Angora succeeds in establishing visual coherence, pedestrian-friendly environments, and a legible neighbourhood structure.

Sulukule, when approached through the reading of the post-renewal Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, enriched the comparative landscape further. The post-renewal environment, Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, introduces spatial strategies that resonate with neo-traditional urban form. Yıldırım notes that the renewal project deliberately employed low-rise building typologies and continuous street fronts in order to reconstruct a human-scale neighbourhood (Yıldırım, 2009, p. 64). Safdari and Işık similarly observe that the renewed area adopted a regular block structure and defined street network, distinguishing it from standard mass housing developments (Safdari & Işık, 2014, p. 169). These interventions indicate an implicit engagement with neo-traditional principles, even if they were not articulated as such. Hatice Sultan's spatial framework was intended to reinsert traditional urban form into a historic inner-city context, however, as the Sulukule chapter demonstrates, the effectiveness of these spatial strategies was significantly constrained by governance and displacement. Uysal emphasises that the renewal resulted in a neighbourhood without its historical users, severing the relationship between spatial form and social practice (Uysal, 2012, p. 17). From a comparative standpoint, Sulukule illustrates the limits of form-based neo-traditionalism when social continuity and housing diversity are absent.

However, the Angora literature consistently highlights a structural limitation, the project's exclusive socio-economic targeting. Ertuna explicitly describes Angora as a new upper-middle class utopia that reproduces social segregation despite its neighbourhood rhetoric (Ertuna, 2003, p. 112). This critique parallels, but is not identical to, criticisms of Poundbury. In Angora, exclusion is not an unintended by-product but a structural feature of the development model. Nevertheless, as later studies note, this limitation does not negate the project's design intelligence, particularly its reinterpretation of traditional forms for contemporary living (Balta et al., 2019, p. 54). Angora illustrates that urban planning and design success does not inherently result in social inclusion, particularly when housing typologies and user profiles are constrained which are the main criticism points of the project.

Comparatively, these four cases demonstrate that neo-traditional urbanism is neither inherently inclusive nor inherently exclusionary. When evaluating the outcomes of the process, factors such as the manner of how tradition is defined, the manner in the design interacts with governance, and the location where the project is developed all play a part. Poundbury and Weespersluis demonstrate that institutional stability may be a source of spatial and design perspective coherence, albeit with democratic constraints that might occurs due to the governmental perspectives. Angora illustrates how traditional design language can be successfully adapted to contemporary life yet remain socially exclusive. Sulukule is an exemplary illustration of the limitations that are inherent to form-based neo-traditional architectural design in the absence of social continuity and housing variation for people of diverse socio-demographic backgrounds.

Taken together, these cases suggest that the most productive future for neo-traditional urbanism lies not in replication, but in translation. It is important that design aspects like as walkability, privacy, mixed use, and human scale endure a foundation in the socio-cultural traditions of the local community and are supported by regulatory and administrative structures that are inclusive. Without this alignment, neo-traditional urbanism risks becoming either an elite enclave, as in Angora, or a probable symbolic façade masking displacement, as in Sulukule, in the Türkiye. Neo-traditional urbanism should not be regarded as only an aesthetic or decorative concept; rather, it should be regarded as a critical design process that must continually manage the interaction between form, practice, and authority. Only via such discussion can tradition serve not as nostalgia, but as a dynamic and adaptive foundation for contemporary urban developments.

Design Principle	Poundbury (UK)	Weespersluis (NL)	Sulukule (Istanbul, TR)	Angora Houses (Ankara, TR)
Understanding of Tradition	Tradition codified as an explicit design ideology, articulated through architectural rules and master planning	Tradition treated as a living framework, allowing contemporary interpretation within historic morphology	Tradition is reintroduced as a place-making framework, historic continuity is simplified, yet the intent is clearly legible	Tradition referenced primarily through architectural language inspired by vernacular housing
Urban Morphology (Streets & Blocks)	Compact blocks, defined streets, and enclosed public spaces intentionally designed	Fine-grained blocks integrated into existing town structure through incremental planning	A coherent low-rise street&block structure is re-established, morphology supports legibility and neighbourhood-scale identity	Hierarchical street network with pedestrian-friendly internal streets
Public-Private Gradients	Clearly articulated through streets, squares, and semi-private courtyards	Gradual transitions maintained through plot subdivision and frontage articulation	Threshold spaces rebuild public-private transitions, provide a spatial base for everyday social life	Semi-private residential streets and controlled communal spaces
Walkability & Human Scale	Strongly prioritised through short blocks, mixed uses, and reduced car dominance	High walkability embedded in urban fabric	Human scale reinforced by low-rise massing and street enclosure; walkability is spatially supported	Walkability encouraged internally, limited integration with surrounding urban context
Mixed Use (Functional Diversity)	Formal mixed use (residential, retail, civic) planned at neighbourhood scale	Functional diversity integrated organically within historic town structure	Mixed use remains limited, but the renewed fabric establishes a stable residential structure. This creates potential for gradual diversification over time	Primarily residential with limited, planned social amenities
Appropriability & Flexibility	Limited; strong design control restricts informal adaptation	Moderate; incremental change accommodated within planning framework	Fine-grained scale offers better long-term potential; incremental appropriation remains possible	Low to moderate; housing typologies largely fixed
Social Inclusivity	Partial; mixed tenure exists but socio-economic diversity remains limited	Relatively inclusive due to integration into existing town	Social continuity was disrupted, but the spatial framework itself is not inherently exclusive	Low; explicitly upper-middle-class targeted development
Governance Structure	Highly centralised and paternalistic (Duchy-led)	Negotiated, multi-actor planning governance	A top-down renewal process shaped the outcome, yet design quality demonstrates that human-scale form can be achieved through renewal frameworks	Private developer-led with municipal approval
Role of Design Language	Design language actively shapes behaviour and public life	Design language supports continuity rather than control	Architectural coherence supports place identity and street definition	Design language produces visual coherence and identity
Outcome for Neo-Traditional Urbanism	Demonstrates spatial coherence but raises governance and participation concerns	Illustrates adaptable and context-sensitive neo-traditionalism	The key limitation is not form, but weakened social continuity and policy support	Shows design potential constrained by socio-economic exclusivity

Figure 8.1 Comparative Evaluation of Neo-Traditional Urban Design Principles Across Case Studies

The comparative table (Figure 8.1) illustrates that neo-traditional urbanism functions not as a singular transferable model, but as a continuum of design objectives influenced by place, governance frameworks, and socio-spatial variables that it can be seen across all four cases, Poundbury, Weespersluis, Angora Houses, and post-renewal Sulukule, similar design principles are mobilised to achieve human-scale environments, legible street networks, and a renewed relationship between architecture and public space. On the other hand, the results are very diverse; this demonstrates that the accomplishment of neo-traditional design depends on more than just shape. It also depends on how consistent daily social interactions are and the legal frameworks that support and keep them working.

Poundbury represents the most formally explicit and ideologically coherent expression of neo-traditional urbanism among the cases. The compact urban blocks, well designated public-private gradients, and strict architectural design regulations provide a very comprehensible spatial framework. Poundbury exemplifies how design regulation may effectively create spatial coherence and experience of sense of place. However, the governance rigidity that ensures consistency also limits adaptation, supporting the notion that neo-traditional forms may become prescriptive when separated from incremental design processes. Weespersluis presents a divergent view by showcasing a more modern and process-focused approach to neo-traditional urbanisation. Although it also depends on detailed street configurations and community identity, its planning approach is gradual and interwoven with the landscape. As opposed to constructing tradition as a strict stylistic language, a dynamic spatial and aesthetic foundation is what Weespersluis considers tradition to be. The Weespersluis project is established as a powerful instance of how neo-traditional concepts could be applied to contemporary urban growth contexts as a result of this approach, which generates lasting adaptability and typological diversity.

An analysis of the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods, from a post-renewal standpoint of Sulukule, uncovers the advantages and constraints of neo-traditional

ideas in urban regeneration frameworks. The redevelopment reinstates a low-rise, street-oriented morphology, coherent blocks, and spatial thresholds that conform to conventional urbanist principles. The Sulukule exemplifies that human-scale community structures may be re-established via design-oriented revitalisation. However, the story also underscores the limitations of form-based restoration when social continuity is interrupted. Although the place-based framework is not intrinsically exclusive, the diminished socio-cultural foundation indicates that neo-traditional forms cannot replace inclusive governance, resident retention methods, and long-term affordability measures. Lastly, Angora Houses is a distinctive endeavour in early Turkish architecture that incorporates aspects of traditional style with the goals of contemporary urbanists for its time. The instance illustrates a significant degree of spatial coherence, pedestrian-friendly interior thoroughfares, and community-scale facilities that facilitate daily residential living. Their limits arise more from socio-economic targeting and restricted permeability than from design logic. This study exemplifies how such developments might progress over time, transitioning from a gated community towards more semi-public and neighbourhood-like environments. This time aspect underscores the necessity of viewing neo-traditional projects as dynamic urban environments rather than fixed results.

Comparatively, these experiences substantiate a fundamental conclusion of the thesis which is neo-traditional urbanism achieves its most significant results when tradition is perceived as a contextual and adaptable process, rather than as a visually-driven aesthetic objective. Despite the fact that these characteristics are crucial; the comparative study reveals that spatial coherence, walkability, and stylistic continuity are not sufficient prerequisites for socially viable communities which lead the interpretation of neo-traditional urbanism should be assessed via the integrated perspectives of design quality, governance coherence, and the ability of urban form to support daily living sustainably across time.

8.2 Results and Discussions

The intention of this research is to analyse neo-traditional urbanism not as a universal model which can be directly applicable anywhere and immediately, but as design technique and approach that depends on the place where it is used and is affected by locations' history, governmental framework, and the socio-spatial dynamics. By combining a historical urban transformation analysis of Türkiye's selected period with four contemporary case studies, Poundbury, Weespersluis, Sulukule, and Angora Houses, the thesis reveals both the potential and the obstructions of neo-traditional urbanism when applied across different cultural and institutional contexts.

One of the central findings of this study is that neo-traditional urbanism consistently draws its legitimacy from historical urban practices, yet its effectiveness depends on how tradition is interpreted. In the European cases, particularly Poundbury and Weespersluis, historical references are mobilised through distinct strategies. A strictly structured and intellectually clear interpretation of tradition has been demonstrated by Poundbury, which also provides a large amount of spatial coherence and clarity. This coherence is intricately linked to structured administration and long-term land management, prompting enquiries about inclusion and adaptation. In contrast, Weespersluis illustrates a more process-oriented engagement with tradition, where neo-traditional principles are embedded within incremental planning and integrated into an existing urban context. This contradiction indicates that neo-traditional urbanism may function either as a normative framework or as an adaptive technique, resulting in significantly different consequences.

A second key result concerns the relationship between urban form and social life. The research across all four cases reveals that spatial features often linked to neo-traditional urbanism, including human scale, street enclosure, walkability, and architectural continuity, are essential yet insufficient for fostering socio-culturally sustainable environments. In Poundbury and Weespersluis, these spatial qualities are

supported by relatively stable governance structures and socio-economic diversity, enabling everyday urban life to emerge. Conversely, Sulukule and Angora illustrate how parallel design aims can be abused when social continuity or inclusiveness is disregarded.

The reading of Sulukule, focusing on the post-renewal conditions of the Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods, is particularly instructive in this regard. While the renewal project reintroduced certain neo-traditional spatial elements, such as low-rise construction and street-oriented layouts, the displacement of the original population and the absence of housing diversity limited the effectiveness of these design strategies. This finding reinforces a core argument of the thesis; neo-traditional urbanism cannot function solely as a formal or aesthetic project without social continuity and participatory governance, spatial form risks becoming symbolic rather than lived.

Similarly, Angora Houses illustrates the tension between design ambition and market-driven housing production in the Turkish context. The project demonstrates that neighbourhood-scale planning, architectural coherence, and pedestrian-oriented layouts can be successfully implemented. However, its initial gated character and socio-economic exclusivity constrain its broader urban contribution. According to the findings of the research, these deficiencies are caused more by the limited demographic structure that the project is aimed at and the lack of typological variation to be appealed to people from different background than they are by the design infrastructure and framework of the project. This suggests that neo-traditional urbanism in Türkiye should not be dismissed based on such examples, but rather refined through more inclusive and permeable development models.

The historical examination of traditional urbanism and urban values of Türkiye from the late Ottoman urbanism as a part of Turkish urban history additionally clarifies these findings. The late Ottoman urbanism is not a firm historical model, but a dynamic urban framework capable of integrating innovation while maintaining

spatial continuity, additionally, the researched centuries should not act as direct example that might be applied to modern cities but a reference point where the inspirational element that extracted out of base soil. This historical viewpoint contests the desire to adopt neo-traditional urban patterns in all their aspects from Western contexts and emphasises the necessity of rooting modern design practices in regionally distinctive urban histories. The fact that Türkiye doesn't have a completed comprehensive neo-traditional urban project does not indicate that there is an absence of references from their own background, instead, it means that there is a gap between historical urban knowledge and contemporary city planning approaches.

Taken together, the results of this research suggest that neo-traditional urbanism is most effective when understood as a framework for learning rather than replication. Comparative case researches displays that satisfactory outcomes depend more on how effectively design goals, governance systems, and social dynamics all work together than on adopting traditional design patterns or just having an aesthetic desire to the topic. Neo-traditional principles such as human scale, mixed use, and street-based urbanism retain their relevance, but they must be reinterpreted in relation to contemporary socio-economic realities and institutional constraints. In conclusion, this thesis argues that neo-traditional urbanism offers valuable tools for rethinking contemporary urban development, particularly in contexts seeking alternatives to large-scale, standardised housing production. Nevertheless, its future relevance is based on beyond image-focused utilisations in order to foster a practice that is more analytical, inclusive, and contextually aware. Tradition is regarded that manner not solely as a nostalgic reference, but also as a critical means to make communities more aware of how to make places more adaptable and socially sensitive.

8.3 Evaluation

This thesis has approached neo-traditional urbanism as a field that benefits from careful interpretation rather than definitive categorisation. The research has intentionally taken a selective and exploratory approach, concentrating on the articulation, transformation, and limitations of tradition-inspired urban concepts within particular contexts, rather than serving as an extensive assessment of all neo-traditional urban activities therefore, this approach has to obtain a more adaptable and analytical engagement with the subject matter, as well as establishing certain methodological constraints.

The ability of the research to maintain conceptual coherence over a wide range of case studies without imposing a conventional approach to analysis is the fundamental quality that sets it apart from other similar studies. By rejecting direct equivalency among Poundbury, Weespersluis, Sulukule, and Angora Houses, the theory reduces the threat of oversimplification. Each example is permitted to disclose its natural logic, contradictory and spatial consequences. This comparison openness makes the study's analysis more solid, especially when it comes to showing how similar design ideas can have different effects in different political, social, and economic settings which create an objective interpretation and discussion ground for the who are interested in this area of topic.

At the same time, this approach necessarily limits the degree to which the findings can be generalised. The research does not claim to offer a universally applicable neo-traditional urban model, nor does it attempt to rank the case studies in terms of success or failure. While this may be seen as a limitation from a normative planning perspective, it is an intentional methodological choice aligned with the thesis's design-led orientation, by prioritising interpretation over prescription, the research maintains analytical clarity without overstating its claims.

The relationship between historical research and modern analysis is another thing that needs to be considered at. The thesis places considerable emphasis on traditional

urbanism and urban values of Türkiye from the perspective of late Ottoman urbanism as a means of grounding neo-traditional urbanism within a Türkiye's historical trajectory for design inspiration points. Later twentieth century urban developments, particularly those shaped by rapid industrialisation and mass housing, are addressed more selectively, this chosen period demonstrates a deliberate attempt to focus on the eras that were relevant to the development of traditional urban concepts as it can be also seen in the Western examples.

The dependence on secondary literature and documented case studies likewise influences the scope of the research, while this limits involvement with daily user experiences, it enables the thesis to concentrate on spatial arrangement, design aim, and planning theory. Given the design-oriented aims of the study, this emphasis is both appropriate and methodologically coherent, even as it opens possibilities for future research that might incorporate ethnographic or participatory perspectives.

The evaluation indicates that the thesis is more important for the questions it raises than for the conclusions it comes to. The research addresses about how neo-traditional urbanism should be used in different places and claims that it can't just be just praised or criticised without acknowledging and discussing it, hence it leads to an intricate and thoughtful debate, therefore, the thesis is not a final word, rather, it is an invitation and inspiration point for further inquiry.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

A comparative analysis of Poundbury, Weespersluis, Sulukule (Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods), and Angora Houses is covered in the thesis which provides assistance for the assertion that neo-traditional urbanism should not be considered as merely a nostalgic aesthetic and architectural inclination, but rather as a complex framework for navigating urban form, social dynamics, and governance, that, this position aligns strongly with the scholarly debates introduced in the theoretical background. Ford, for instance, notes that contemporary discussions on neo-traditionalism frequently become polarised, where both sides often take extreme stands and where there are few procedures for evaluating neo-traditionalist ideas in a reasonably objective way (Ford, 1999, p. 247).

The case studies analysed herein illustrate the necessity of an evaluative framework; although neo-traditional neighbourhoods can attain significant spatial legibility and a recognisable public realm, their enduring success is inextricably linked to institutional frameworks and social accessibility. Ford's caution that discussions frequently consist of meandering dialogues about authenticity without addressing its definition or practical application is empirically validated by the Turkish cases, where authenticity is often cited as a visual objective while underlying socio-spatial continuities remain questionable (Ford, 1999, p. 253). Besel and Andreescu similarly foreground the urbanistic intention of neo-traditional approaches by stressing that mixing uses within neighbourhoods makes for a better quality of life, and that such patterns, though frequently restricted by zoning, are spatially beneficial in both historic and new urbanist contexts (Besel & Andreescu, 2013, p. 39).

However, the comparative research indicates that the implementation of these principles in living urban settings is inconsistent, formal coherence does not

inherently ensure inclusion, and a walkable design does not always mitigate socio-economic segregation. The governance-oriented literature is crucial to the synthesis of the argument. Colavitti contends that the primary challenge is in selecting the proper instruments for the urban development plan to safeguard and enrich the concealed legacy, ultimately determining that planning regulation is the most suitable tool (Colavitti, 2018, p. 131).

The case studies support this claim, Poundbury and Weespersluis illustrate how regulatory continuity and coherent planning frameworks can protect urban form as a long-term system, whereas Sulukule and Angora Houses show that design intentions alone cannot secure continuity when social and planning conditions remain unstable. In conclusion, the thesis asserts that neo-traditional urbanism is neither intrinsically progressive nor conservative; instead, its ability to create enduring, comprehensible, and socially significant urban areas relies on the integration of its design principles within governance frameworks that can maintain continuity, facilitate transition and adaptation, along with avoid the degeneration of tradition to mere symbolism.

9.1 Original Contribution of Thesis

The original contribution of this thesis lies in its reframing of neo-traditional urbanism as a context-sensitive design approach rather than a directly transferable model, grounded in a comparative reading of historical urban transformation and contemporary case studies. While the research deliberately focuses on cases that can be examined from the closest possible neo-traditional urbanism perspective, it also explicitly acknowledges that there is currently no example in Türkiye that can be defined as a fully articulated neo-traditional urban project. These absences are not considered as limitations in this thesis; rather, they are regarded as opportunities for place to interpretation. By situating neo-traditional urban principles within the specific trajectory of urban history and values of Türkiye from late Ottoman urbanism, the study challenges Western-centric references in the field and proposes a locally grounded framework for interpretation. As demonstrated by the

comparative analysis of Poundbury, Weespersluis, Sulukule, and Angora Houses, the thesis points out that the significance of neo-traditional urbanism in Türkiye lies not in literal replication but rather in the critical evaluation of design objectives, spatial consequences, and administrative mechanisms which highlighted by the fact that the thesis uses the aforementioned examples. In doing so, the research contributes a design-led and interpretative perspective that extracts transferable lessons from existing cases, offering a conceptual foundation for the development of contextually appropriate and operational neo-traditional urban projects within the Turkish urban context.

9.2 Suggestions for Further Work

Building upon the findings of this thesis, future research could further explore how neo-traditional urbanism might be developed as an inclusive and socially responsive urban design approach, rather than as a form-driven or market-oriented model. This research indicates that the association of tradition-inspired projects with gentrification and socio-economic exclusion is not inherent to traditional urban principles, but rather a consequence of their implementation within prevailing political, economic, and governance structures which this difference presents a significant opportunity for additional investigation.

One potential direction for future work involves examining how neo-traditional urban design strategies can be mobilised without reinforcing class-based segregation or displacement. Not only should the studies investigate architectural forms, but they should also investigate the relevance of neighbourhood-scale spatial arrangements, street networks, public space hierarchy, service accessibility, and everyday mobility patterns in terms of fostering social interaction among people from an array of socioeconomic backgrounds. The incorporation of concepts from urban sociology is necessary in order to get an understanding of the dynamic relationship that exists between spatial design and social behaviours, power dynamics, and the processes that influence inclusion or exclusion.

Further research might also adopt a historical comparative perspective to examine how traditional urban environments functioned as socially mixed settings prior to contemporary processes of commodification. By revisiting historical neighbourhoods, both in Ottoman cities and in other non-Western contexts, future studies could identify spatial and institutional mechanisms that supported coexistence across social groups. This method would enable neo-traditional urbanism to be reconceptualised not only as an aesthetic reference, but as a historically orientated social concept.

Another promising path lies in design based research and speculative urban design, where neo-traditional principles are tested through alternative planning scenarios that prioritise affordability, tenure diversity, and public accessibility in this perspective instead of proposing idealised masterplans, these initiatives might consider gradual development strategies, collaborative ownership models, and participatory planning procedures that more accurately reflect the adaptive characteristics of traditional urbanisation.

Ultimately, further work in this field has the potential to shift neo-traditional urbanism away from its frequent association with exclusivity and nostalgia, toward a more critical, ethical, and context-sensitive urban practice. By integrating urban design with historical understanding and sociological insight, future research can contribute to the development of tradition-inspired urban environments that support diversity, accessibility, and long-term social resilience.

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