

Common-Housing of the *Ancien Régime* in Lisbon: São José Neighbourhood

Bianca Videira Pires Sequeira Cordeiro

Instituto Superior Técnico

Departamento de Engenharia Civil, Arquitetura e Georrecursos

Av. Rovisco Pais, 11049-001 Lisboa

bianca.p.cordeiro@tecnico.ulisboa.pt

Abstract

The city of Lisbon, as one of the oldest capitals in Europe, had its morphology and dynamics transformed over the centuries. Currently, when walking through the streets of the city, it is possible to observe elements in the buildings that make up the various temporal layers that constitute it. However, these historic architectural elements are at risk of disappearing, jeopardizing the identity of the neighbourhoods and the city as a whole.

It is in this context that the relevance of this work is based on, recognizing the need to catalogue, make known and safeguard the architecture of buildings, in particular multifamily buildings of the *Ancien Régime*, due to their significance to the city's identity. To this end, the São José neighbourhood was chosen as the study site. The choice of this neighbourhood is based on its abundance of buildings built before 1834 (before the end of the *Ancien Régime*), as well as on the interest and need to analyse a neighbourhood that has been subject of few studies to date, so that its characteristics, qualities and transformations are clear.

1. Introduction

This dissertation aims to shine a light to the housing patrimony of the *Ancien Régime* in Lisbon. This housing patrimony includes multifamily buildings built paired in the Pombal era outside its area of influence.

The São José neighbourhood is located between Avenida da Liberdade and the Santana Hill, and is a traditional Lisbon neighbourhood, facing difficulties in maintaining its identity in contemporary times. The origin of this conglomerate of housing is linked to the construction of the São José Church in 1545, followed by the creation of the São José d'Entre as Hortas parish in 1567.

The choice to analyse this neighbourhood comes from the lack of thorough studies made about its history, buildings, and characteristics.

Method

The working method was divided into three strands: the bibliographic research, the consultation of archives and the field work. The bibliographic research allowed for a deeper understanding of the origin and evolution of the neighbourhood, as well as for a contextualization of the subsequent

analysis. The archive research, paired with the field work, served as the base for the analysis of the buildings and the construction of their hypothetical original states.

Firstly, a photographic documentation of the facades served to identify the buildings inserted in the contemplated timeline. After that first selection the field work became more focused, the priority being the entrance and documentation of the interior state of the buildings, which constituted a difficult task due to the pandemic and the natural hesitation of the residents. Parallel to this process was the analysis of the technical drawings obtained in the Municipal Archive of Lisbon. These drawings were crucial for the understanding of the buildings in their current and original state, providing an interesting look into the transformations they went through along the years.

With all the information in hand, the case studies were divided into three categories regarding their state of conservation of the original characteristics. The category “A” corresponds to the buildings that show characteristics more faithful to the original construction, the category “B” corresponds to buildings that visibly suffered alterations but still have their original characteristics recognisable, and the category “C”, which includes buildings that have been deeply altered.

This analysis culminated in the division of the case studies in three types, based on the similar characteristics among them, in regard to the original construction. These characteristics include the internal organization of the homes and the type of stairs. This analysis allowed for a reflexion on how the different housing types are distributed in the neighbourhood.

2. The São José neighbourhood: genesis and evolution

The São José neighbourhood originated between the Santana hill and the old Valverde stream. The proximity to the water provided the means for the occupation of this territory since at least the roman era. This territory is located outside the walls of the medieval city and its origin is connected to an important axis in the outskirts of the city of Lisbon: the Santo Antão – São José – Santa Marta – São Sebastião road. In this road was located one of the most important entrances to the city, making this road busy with merchants and travellers. Despite the significance and affluence in this road, the urban consolidation of the neighbourhood was slow, presumably due to the poor sanitary conditions at the time. The Valverde stream was used as a sewer (Macedo, 1962, vol. I, p. 268), receiving residue from the multiple vegetable gardens in the area (Alvarez, 1970 [1625]).

In the XV and XVI centuries the Valverde stream was piped as part of the Rede do Cano Real plumbing system. This was an important step towards improving the conditions of the neighbourhood and ensure its consolidation as one.

The São José church was built in 1545 as a result of the growing population in Lisbon, as well as the counter-reform in the Catholic Church. The counter-reform stipulated a change in the relationship between the church and the individual, implementing stricter rules and an increased presence in the day-to-day life of society.

The urban consolidation happened throughout the XV century, in the context of the growing population until the XVIII century, when the last trace of the vegetable gardens in the blocks were surrounded by buildings.

The extinction of the religious orders in 1834 transformed the nearby Santo António dos Capuchos and the Santa Marta convent into hospitals, making the São José church the last religious equipment remaining in the neighbourhood today.

3. Typological analysis of the São José neighbourhood

This chapter is a synthesis of the analysis made on the buildings and their characteristics. Of the 70 samples initially collected, 14 weren't possible to visit but had their technical drawings analysed, and 13 of them were visited and had their technical drawings consulted. The difficulty in getting access to the homes posed an obstacle to this work, and it is acknowledged that some of the results were obtained through extrapolation.

At the urban level, the São José neighbourhood has a relatively regular mesh, with two streets following the north-south direction and serving as the east and west boundaries of the conglomerate. The remaining twelve streets are approximately perpendicular to these two streets. The streets have similar widths among themselves, and don't seem to have suffered a lot of transformations through the years. The lots are mostly rectangular and have between 5 and 10 meters of width and 10 to 14 meters of length. Even with the changes made throughout the years, namely the construction of storage spaces and bathrooms, almost every lot has a good exterior area, a trait linked to the neighbourhoods agricultural past.

The buildings contemplated in this work were mostly found to have been built around the XVIII century, when the urban consolidation of the neighbourhood took place.

The facades of the buildings present as sober, with little decoration and a clear intention of regularity of the windows and doors. The width of the buildings varies from 1 to 7 windows, but most of the cases presented a width of 2 to 3 windows. Generally, the main facade (where most living room were located) presented a more attentive composition than the back facade, often including balconies with wrought iron rails. The back facades usually served the kitchens, exhibiting smaller windows and simpler compositions.

The access to the homes at street level was usually made through independent doors. The access to the upper floors is made by a door which leads to the stairs. In some cases, the access to the homes can be done through two doors, one that serves the kitchen and the other that serves the living room.

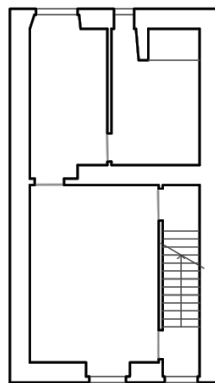
There were three different types of stairs identified: straight flight stairs (and stairs in "L" shape), the overlapping flight stairs and the opposite flight of stairs. The straight flight of stairs is the simplest solution. Due to the depth of the lots this type of stair is found on buildings with 2 to 3 floors in height. The stair in "L" shape comes as a variation of the straight flight of stairs, prolonging itself along the back wall of the building to surpass the limitation of depth. The overlapping flight

stairs is characterized by overlapping flight of stairs connected by a parallel corridor and is usually close to the main façade, sometimes having a window on each floor for better illumination. Often, to decrease the length of the stairwell, this corridor has steps. Lastly, there is the opposite flight of stairs which corresponds to two flights of stairs separated by a wall or half wall. This type can develop close to the main façade as well as inside the lot, as it offers a smaller stairwell when compared to the previous types.

From the 70 buildings contemplated, 56 have 2 to 3 floors, with interventions of addition of floors recognized in a lot of cases. This intervention can be seen by changes in the type of stairs used as well as with changes in the facade.

The internal organization of the buildings and homes is the most crucial characteristic to the analysis of the case studies. This element determined the division of the buildings into different types. Still, similar characteristics can be found across most of the buildings, namely the distribution of living spaces in the home into 3. The living room is usually located near the main facade, the bedroom is usually interior and the kitchen in close to the back facade. In bigger lots, a larger number of bedrooms can be found.

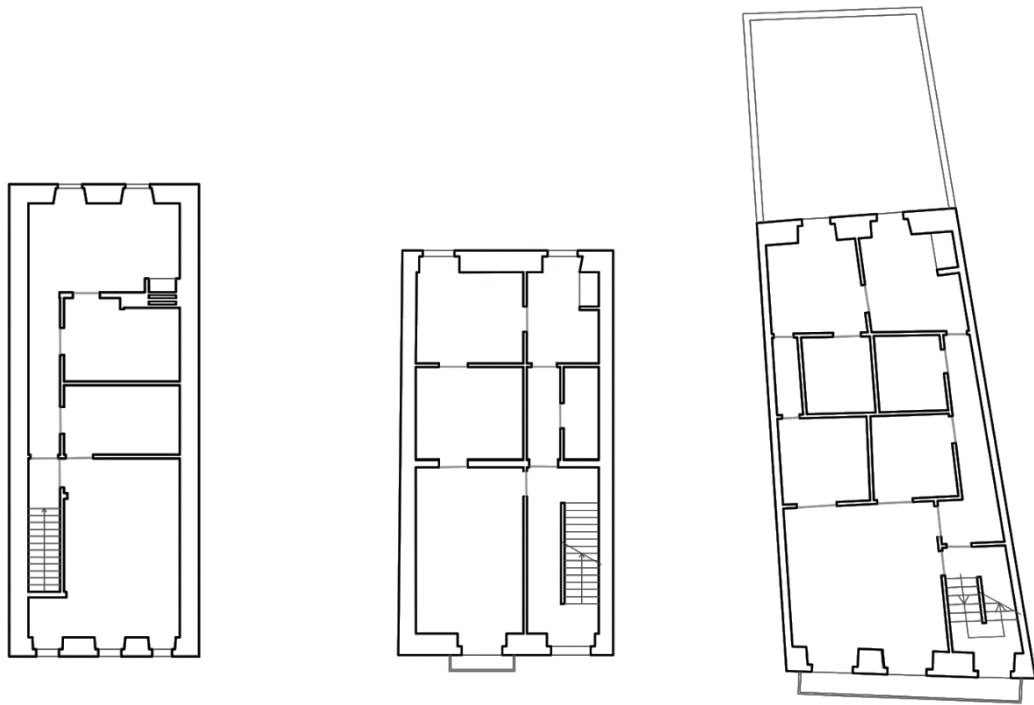
After the analysis, the case studies were divided into 3 types and one category of exceptions.



F1

F1. Example of a Type 1 building.

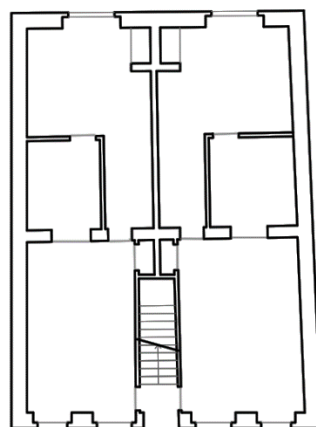
Type 1 reunites the buildings with not very deep lots, 1 dwelling per floor, 2 floors and a straight flight of stairs. The internal organization is divided in 3 compartments, a living room close to the main facade and the kitchen and bedroom close to the back facade, side by side. The access to the dwelling is made either through a door in the living room and/or a door in the kitchen.



F2

F2. Examples of Type 2 buildings.

The Type 2 is the most common type of building found in the neighbourhood. This type is characterized by rectangular lots with some depth, 2 to 3 levels in height, 1 dwelling per floor and 3 windows of width. The internal organization differs from the previous type, with the living room close to the main facade, interior bedrooms and the kitchen close to the back facade. It is also in this type that internal corridors appear, as a consequence of the larger lot sizes. Larger lots can also make way for 2 rows of compartments in the dwelling.

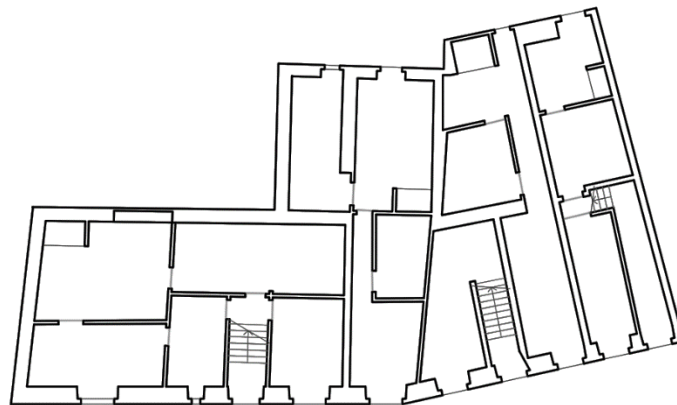


F3

F3. Example of a Type 3 building.

The Type 3 is also a common solution found in the neighbourhood. This type is characterized by having 2 dwellings per floor, and having the stairwell at the centre of the plan. The type of stairs that can be found in these buildings vary from the straight flight stair, the overlapping flight stair, and the opposite flight stair.

An important trait of this type of building is its symmetry, which can be seen in the facades and more importantly in the interior organization of the dwellings. The division of compartments in the homes follows the same rule as the previous type, and all cases include a corridor which follows the length of the bedroom compartment. The left and right dwellings in each floor are “mirrored”.



F5

F5. Example of an exception.

Lastly, there is the category of exceptions. These are buildings that show a particular interior organization and are usually either corner buildings or a result of conjoined lots. These case studies have multiple points of access, and their dwellings don't necessarily share rules of coherency among each other. These were interesting and challenging case studies as their original state was not clear.

4. Rehabilitation

The rehabilitation done in these buildings was divided into three chronological categories based on their occurrence. Firstly, there are the interventions done until the XX century which were mostly the addition of floors. This is explained by the increase in population in the area, as well as the fact that the São José neighbourhood was not gravely struck by the 1755 earthquake. Usually, only one floor was added to each building, and its access was ensured by either prolonging the existing stair or implementing a new type of stair. Normally the facades and the internal organization of the new floors followed the metrics of the original.

Between the XX and the XXI centuries, the archive of alteration projects became mandatory. At the same time, many buildings of the neighbourhood were two centuries old, which made some degree of rehabilitation necessary to guarantee habitability. It is also on the XX century that great advances in construction technology (namely the emergence of reinforced concrete) and in the lifestyle of the population takes place. Thus, the main intervention made in the buildings during this period was the construction of bathrooms. This was made, in most cases, through the construction of a reinforced concrete volume, connected to the existing building by the back facade.

Finally, in the last few years, transformations in the city of Lisbon such as the rapid growth in tourism impacted the type of intervention made in various parts of the city. Therefore, the most common interventions in this time are the rehabilitation of dwellings to increase comfort and, many times, transform them into temporary accommodations for visitors of the capital. This can increase the risk to the integrity of the architecture and identity of the buildings and their neighbourhoods.

5. Conclusion

This work aimed to contribute to the record and analysis of a group of buildings of patrimonial value in a current context of depreciation. Through the analysis of the case studies, it was concluded that the São José neighbourhood is an *Ancien Régime* neighbourhood, conserving till this day an important number of buildings original to its construction.

It was concluded that most of the buildings in the neighbourhood would have two to three floors at the time of their construction, and it was verified that many of them grew in height over time, with subsequent alteration interventions. This type of intervention was easily identified in several case studies, especially due to the stairs whose type was changed in the added floors. When walking through the streets of the neighbourhood, it is recognized that the facades, for the most part, remain faithful to their original characteristics, with some regularity between the windows, expressive stonework, and balconies with wrought iron rails. The most frequently observed alterations to the facades were the addition of platbands and the replacement of the traditional sash windows with sliding or double-leaf windows, with wooden or aluminium frames. Additionally, changes were observed in the railings of the balconies, with some cases of replacement of the original wrought iron by cast iron.

It is recognized, of course, that the needs and requirements that housing must meet have undergone changes over the centuries, and certainly differ profoundly from the 18th century to the 21st century, making interventions in the buildings necessary. However, these interventions can be carried out respecting the original characteristics of the dwellings, taking advantage of their qualities, not only in relation to their facades, but also in relation to their construction and spatial organization. In addition, a less intrusive intervention results in a more sustainable construction as opposed to more profound interventions.

It is also necessary that the authorities and technicians can recognize the spatial and constructive qualities of these buildings in case of rehabilitation. Finally, it is assumed that the patrimonial

classification of the São José neighbourhood would be of great use and interest, especially for the creation of regulations on interventions in its territory and buildings.

6. Bibliography

AGUIAR, José, APPLETON, João, CABRITA, A. M. Reis (1997) – *Guião de Apoio à Reabilitação de Edifícios Habitacionais*, 3a edição, Lisboa: LNEC.

ALMEIDA, D. Fernando de, [coord.] (1975) - *Monumentos e Edifícios Notáveis do Distrito de Lisboa, Lisboa*, Tomo II, Lisboa: Junta Distrital de Lisboa.

ALVAREZ, Antonio (1970 [1625]) - *Relaçam em que se trata e faz hua breue descrição dos arredores mais chegados à cidade de Lisboa & seus arrabaldes, das partes notaveis, Igrejas, Hermidas, & Conuentos que tem, começando logo da barra, vindo corredo (sic) por toda a praya até Enxobregas, & dahi pella parte de cima até Saõ Bento o nouo*, edição fac-similada, com nota explicativa de A. Vieira da Silva, SANTANA, Francisco; SUCENA, Eduardo (1994) – Dicionário da História de Lisboa, Sacavém: Carlos Quintas & Associados.

AUGUSTO, Clemente [coord.] (1993) – *Reabilitação Urbana*, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, Pelouro da Reabilitação Urbana dos Núcleos Históricos.

BARREIROS, Maria Helena [coord.] (2001) – *Lisboa. Conhecer, Pensar, Fazer Cidade*, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

BARROS, António Augusto Salgado de (2014) – *Os canos na drenagem da rede de saneamento da cidade de Lisboa antes do terramoto de 1755* in *Cadernos do Arquivo Municipal*, 2ª Série, nº 1 (janeiro-junho 2014), pp. 85-105, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

BRITO, Carla Sofia Ferreira (2001) - *Reabilitação urbana dos bairros históricos de Lisboa*, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

CAEIRO, Baltazar Matos (1989) - *Os Conventos de Lisboa*, Lisboa: Districultural.

CASTELO-BRANCO, Fernando (1990) - *Lisboa Seiscentista*, 4ª edição, Lisboa: Livros Horizonte.

CARITA, Hélder (1994) - *Bairro Alto – Tipologias e Modos Arquitectónicos*, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

CASTILHO, Júlio de (1979 [1890]) - *Lisboa antiga*, Lisboa: Parceria A. M. Pereira.

MACEDO, Luís Pastor de (1955-1962) - *Lisboa de lés a lés, Subsídios para a História das Vias Públicas da Cidade de Lisboa*, 5 vols., Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira (1994), “A Cidade na Baixa Idade Média”, em Moita, Irisalva [coord.], *O Livro de Lisboa*, pp.89-114, Lisboa: Livros Horizonte.

MATOS, José Sarmiento de; PAULO, Jorge Ferreira (2014) – *Estudos históricos e patrimoniais: conjunto de propriedades selecionadas na Colina de Sant’Ana, Anexo a Colina de Santana: documento estratégico de intervenção*, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

MATOS, Alfredo de, PORTUGAL, Fernando (1974) – *Lisboa em 1758: Memórias Paroquiais de Lisboa*, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

MATOSO, António (2014) - *Hospital de Santa Marta*, Loures: Edigrafe.

OLIVEIRA, Eduardo Freire de (1906) – *Elementos para a história do Município de Lisboa*, Tomo XIV, pp. 17-18, Lisboa: Typographia Universal.

SANTANA, Francisco, (s.d) – *Lisboa na Segunda Metade do século XVIII, Planta e Descrição das suas freguesias*, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

SILVA, A. Vieira da (1943) - *As freguesias de Lisboa*, Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa.

SUCENA, Eduardo, [dir.] (1994) – “Convento e Igreja de Santa Marta”, in *Dicionário da História de Lisboa*, Lisboa: Carlos Quintas & Associados.

VILLAVERDE, Manuel (2006) – “Rua das Portas de Santo Antão e a singular modernidade lisboeta (1890-1925): arquitectura e práticas urbanas” in *Revista de História da Arte*, nº .2, pp. 142-176, Lisboa: FCSH.

Academic works

PINTO, Maria Rocha, (2013) - *A habitação corrente da época pré-industrial em Lisboa: O caso do Bairro da Bica*, Dissertação de Mestrado em Arquitetura, Lisboa: IST, UL.

RAMALHEIRA, Rui (2020) - *A habitação corrente da época pré-industrial em Lisboa: O Bairro das Trinas*, Dissertação de Mestrado em Arquitetura, Lisboa: IST, UL.

MARQUES, Patrícia (2017) - *A habitação plurifamiliar em Lisboa durante o Antigo Regime: Casos na orla da cidade do século XVIII*, Dissertação de Mestrado em Arquitetura, Lisboa: IST, UL.

ROSADO, Ana (2013) - *A habitação característica do Antigo Regime na encosta de Santana: Tipologias e Modos de Habitar*, Dissertação de Mestrado em Arquitetura, Lisboa: IST, UL.

MATOSO, Joana (2013) - *A habitação corrente da época pré-industrial em Lisboa: O caso do bairro da Madragoa*, Dissertação de Mestrado em Arquitetura, Lisboa: IST, UL.

GERALDES, Maria (2018) - *Habitação plurifamiliar corrente do Antigo Regime em Lisboa: O “Bairro do Pombal”*, Dissertação de Mestrado em Arquitetura, Lisboa: IST, UL.

SOUSA, Miguel, MATA Camila, DURO, Filipe (2022) – *Estudo de edifícios comuns de habitação multifamiliar da era moderna, na cidade de Lisboa*, Dissertação de Mestrado em Arquitetura, Lisboa: IST, UL.