LULU SONG

PROJECT BOOK

02



URBAN PLAN 53

INTRODUCTION

Volume 01: CITY explores the wider social, historical and political context in which the thesis project is situated. A variety of research methods are utilised to gain an understanding of the character of the city as well as some of the issues it currently faces.

The second half of the volume showcases our urban proposal for the chosen site, demonstrating how it connects to the urban tissue of Maastricht, and how the design relates back to the city.



llective researc

l open house

e | VOL 0

4

COLLECTIVE RESEARCH

n house | VOL @

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIES OF URBAN RENEWAL

Maastricht is one of the oldest cities of the Netherlands, with a long history dating back to the Roman times. It is also the first industrial city in the Netherlands. Both the valuable historical background of the city, and the strategical geographical location of the settlement has triggered Maastricht to be a favourable location for urban transformation.

During the P1 study period, my research group were assigned the theme of *Architectural Histories of Urban Renewal*. We selected three case studies which we felt best represented the most significant changes in the city's urban tissue, and would tell us more about the identity of Maastricht - these are: Stokstraat, Hoog Frankrijk, and Céramique.

For the P1 exhibition we prepared a 1:500 model and accompanying booklet of building stories for each case study, as well as a short film with the voices of invited speakers and archival interviews playing over moving frames of each of the case studies.

A key takeaway from our research was that each approach to urban renewal was heavily influenced by the political landscape of its time, resulting in different ideas about how to deal with the past and different ideas about collectivity.

We came to realise that 'urban renewal' not only applies in the physical sense, but also in the social sense. Not only were the neighbourhoods that we studied architecturally renewed, but the people and communities that inhabited them changed too.

This is particularly noticeable in the studies of Stokstraat and Ceramique, It could be argued that both of these projects perpetuated gentrification, and that may be the result of the municipality's intention to create a shiny modern image of Maastricht with these urban renewal projects.



CASE STUDY #1 STOKSTRAAT

Directors: Jacques Van de Venne Bob Sweering

1957 - 1973 Renewal period:

Case study building 127 m2 footprint:

At the start of the 20th century, Stokstraatkwartier was a district with appalling housing conditions, social deprivation, crime and prostitution. The neighbourhood was composed of the working class and people with low education, who lived in crowded conditions as families typically had around 10 children. Nevertheless, the neighbourhood fostered a sense of community as the residents were united through their experience of the same harsh living conditions.

The bad reputation of the area in the 1950s led to the idea of bringing new order to the 'architectural chaos'. The pre-war plan related to Stokstraatkwartier was to demolish the area and rebuild. However the 'monumental architectural quality' of the area was eventually recognised by the municipality and for that reason, the decision related to the development of the area was changed to the renovation and cleaning up of the area, preserving much of the existing physical structure,

The municipality displaced the local residents who they deemed to be 'unsocial', sending them to neighbourhoods outside the city centre in which they were educated on how to live 'properly'. After the renovation of area was finally completed in 1973, Stokstraat became an area occupied by exclusive, luxury shops, 'qualified people', and institutions whose 'allure is partly determined by the charm of its restored or renewed old facades'. The upper floor apartments are now some of the most expensive in the city.

The way the renewal of Stokstraat was handled resulted in a project that created an asset for the municipality at the expense of displacing existing communities; there was a significant social cost.







1:100 section model, Stokstraat 16-24

URBAN PLANS STOKSTRAAT







Insides of the blocks are 'carved out', by demolishing the backs of houses whilst preserving the front facades, bringing light and open space to the interior.

Renewal approach: Renovation

STORIES - VOICES - INTENTIONS STOKSTRAAT

"It certainly took a lot of courage to start clearing houses in 1957, when there was a particularly large housing shortage."

- Jacques Van de Venne, director of public works



Left: The crosspoint at Stokstraat, Eikelstraat and Morenstraat, 1950s

Below:
Backs of houses are
demolished to create the
Op de Thermen square in
the centre of a tightly
packed block, 1967

In principle, you had to move a thousand people. If you look back on it, do you think that operation was successful?

"No, definitely not, definitely not. The operation was not done systematically, which also results in relocation difficulties which causes delay. If we had to do it again, we would do it differently.

- Bob Sweering, director of public works





"Stokstraat is very quiet usually. We would average maybe 10 visitors a day - that's not too bad. Many of the clientele are international. We have clients from Gernany, Sweden, United States..."

- Kaan, shop attendant at no 24



A conversation with the shop attendant inside luxury jewelry shop, Heleven Boutique, at Stokstraat 24

Right:

The crosspoint at Stokstraat, Eikelstraat and Morenstraat, 2021



"It has now become so neat and clean, the neighborhood is no longer old at all. But the soul of that time has disappeared and without that soul it is so cold."

- Johnny Blenco, former resident of Stokstraat

CASE STUDY #2 HOOGFRANKRIJK / CHARLES VANDENHOVE

Architect: Charles Vandenhove

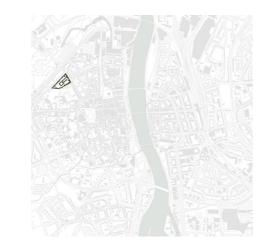
Renewal period: 1993 - 1994

Urban footprint: 3070 m2

In the centre of a renovated, existing residential block, old garages and storage sheds were demolished to create a new housing project of 93 homes, a mix of social and private dwellings. The often so rigid division in the Netherlands between public and private is hardly present here.

In place of the formerly closed building block, this renewal aimed at creating a democratic, nonprivatized public space in its centre. Vandenhove, despite inscribing into the already dense city fabric, managed to find a way of crafting an openly accessible public square, flanked by housing and a centerpiece residential tower of 7 storeys, whilst still providing the apartments with private gardens to the rear.

Vandenhove's signature architectural style is apparent in the design of Hoogfrankrijk, which is characterised by its red brick facades, semicircular zinc roof structure and classicist concrete ornaments. Vandenhove shows that modern, functionalist ideas can go hand in hand with respect for the historical fabric of old cities.





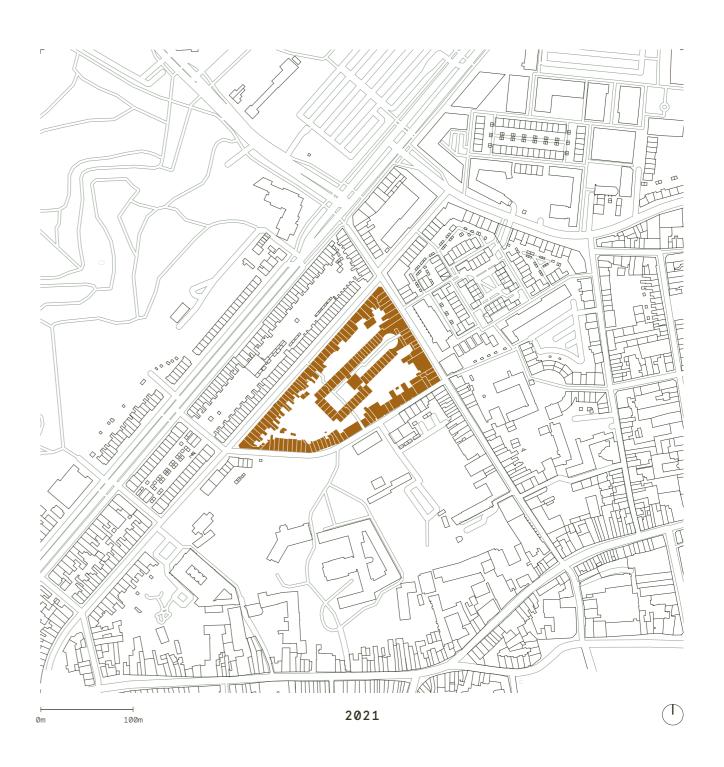


1:100 section model, Hoogfrankrijk

URBAN PLANS HOOG FRANKRIJK



Triangular residential block with plentiful inner space, occupied by storage buildings



Vandenhove 'gleans' the underutlised inner space of the block with the addition of a new housing block that integrates fittingly with the existing fabric

Renewal approach: Insertion

STORIES - VOICES - INTENTIONS HOOGFRANKRIJK



"I have a tendency to idealize things, make them more beautiful than what they are. This is what I try to do with my work"

- Charles Vandenhove



Right: Aerial view of Hoogfrankrijk block in Statenkwartier, 1982



"What we maybe dislike about this postmodern plan is that it's almost a comic, so all historical elements, they're exaggerated. So the arches are bigger, the columns are thick and fat. They are more a gimmick almost, than serious architecture... but it is serious architecture. At the time we were really wondering ourselves, should we like this or...?"

- Ninke Happel, Architect

Right: Hoogfrankrijk street view, today Below: Round entry square behind the gatehouse on Capucijnenstraat





"Vandenhove has his own autonomy, but also the dialect. His language is the language of the city. At that moment he tended to traditional, classical and geometrical approach to architecture."

- Fred Humblé, architect

"What I think is a good project is when they combine the private interest of good housing with the collective interest of good city, or good public space/non-privatised space. And I think this project has it all. That is the value of this project, in basis."

- Ninke Happel, architect

CASE STUDY #3 CÉRAMIQUE / JO COENEN

Architect: Jo Coenen

Renewal period: 1987-2003

Urban footprint: 6550 m2

Maastricht's city structure is highly influenced by the medieval fortifications which are now more than 500 years old. Early industrial sites were built within the fortifications, however, starting from the early 20th century, the industrial areas began to lose their importance, becoming abandoned brownfield areas loacted in the heart of the city.

The Céramique district was built on such a disused industrial site on the eastern riverbank, formerly occupied by the Royal Sphinx factory which ceased production in the 1980s. The old factory buildings were almost all demolished to make place for a brand new mixed-use urban district that consisted mainly of highend residential and office developments. Only 90 out of 1600 new apartments were designated as affordable housing.

The redevelopment plan was intended to bridge the old inner-city district of Wyck and the more recently built district of Randwyck, developed in the 1980s. The project was financed by both public and private capital.

The masterplan was designed by Jo Coenen and many internationally renowned architects participated in its creation. Amongst the prominent designs are buildings by Aldo Rossi, Mario Botta, Charles Vandenhove, Alvaro Siza, and Luigi Snozzi.





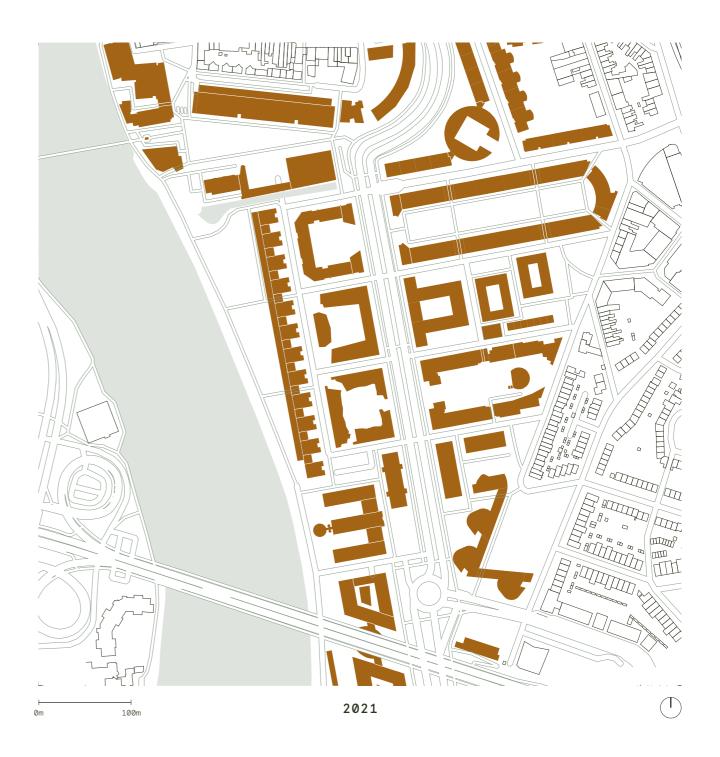


1:100 section model, STOA by Luigi Snozzi

URBAN PLANS CÉRAMIQUE



Factory site blocks the connection between Wyck, part of the historic city (to the north) and the new developments south of it



The heart of the new masterplan is a broad axis lined with monumental buildings in an almost classicist way.

The scale of the new blocks hints at the industrial scale of the former factory buildings.

Renewal approach: Rebuilding

STORIES - VOICES - INTENTIONS CÉRAMIQUE

"When you look at the size, scale and character of Maastricht, you can see that it is far more of a French or Belgian city than a Dutch one. I therefore wanted to ensure that Céramique didn't consist of northern Dutch architecture and so that meant I looked towards Southern European architects.

The architects needed to be independent with regards to developing architectural concepts. I was looking for people who had invented styles, not copied them. I wanted architects with a powerful signature of their own but who could fit in with one another."

- Jo Coenen, principal urban planner



Industrial setting of Céramique, 1986

"The principle of this kind of plan is: make it with one hand, one could say. And that happened - not more than five people made the decisions."

- Fred Humblé, architect

"Look at this enormous scale. It's quite something that you dare to propose something like that"

- Ninke Happel, architect





Above: Aerial view of Céramique district in present times

Left: Demolition of factory buildings

"Why is it that Céramique just doesn't come to life?

According to the theories, all the ingredients are present for a vibrant commuting-shop-cultural neighborhood with a lot of social interaction. However, the reality is that it is very quiet, some call it boring."

- Dennis Hambeuker, Archined

Each of the case studies shows a particular moment in the city when various circumstances came together to create extraordinary conditions - a moment when urban planners, investors, and other authorities found a common ground to approach the city and give it a new quality. Each renewal aimed to impart a specific identity to its place.





Hoogfrankrijk



Céramique



Belvedere Plan



1973 1994 2003 ????

Valuable lessons can be learned from the successes and failures of each of the case studies, how they dealt with the existing, how they shaped social dimensions. When we look to the future of urban renewal in Maastricht, and begin to work with the area around the Sappi factory ourselves, we have to bear in mind the policies, mindset and circumstances of the present. The project that we propose as the result of the graduation studio represents our vision for the next chapter of the city's urban renewal.

CONTEXT & SITE

30)

/OL 01 | open

CITY PLAN

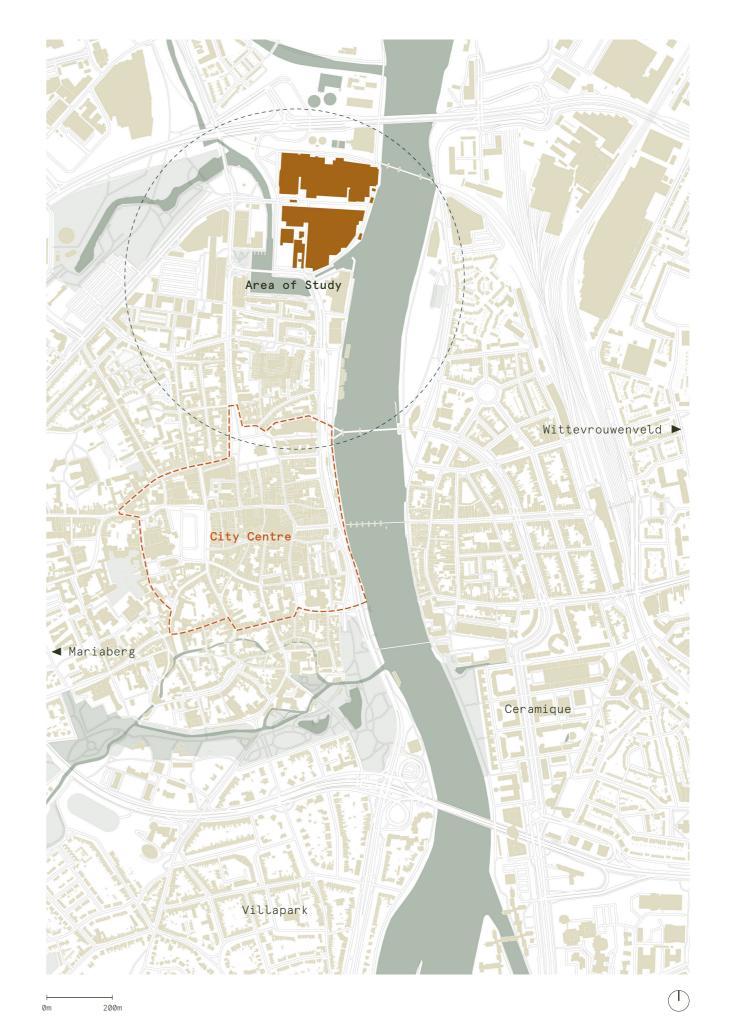
Maastricht is located in the Southernmost tip of the province of Limburg, bordered by the neighbouring countries of Belgium and Germany. The city has developed outwards from the banks of the river Maas, which is an important infrastructural route through the city.

The population of Maastricht has remained steady at around 120,000 residents since 2000. The city is rather socially segregated, with different social classes residing in different districts: for instance, Ceramique and Villapark to the south houses a wealthy upper class, and Mariaberg and Wittewrouwenveld are comparatively poor areas, with lower social and economic status.

The area of study for the Urban Architecture graduation studio is north of the city centre, encompassing the Sappi Factory and its surroundings in an area called the Sphinxkwartier, which is currently undergoing regeneration as part of the wider Belevedere Plan.



Location Map - Netherlands



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The historical industrial sites to the north of Maastricht were built within the city's fortifications during the industrial era, hence their surprisingly close proximity to the city centre. There is a drastic leap in scale from the tightly woven urban fabric of the historic centre to the vastness of the factory buildings which are within only a few minutes walking distance from each other.

The ceramic factories of the Sphinx company ceased operations in the area in 2006; these old factory buildings have since been renovated as part of the Sphinxkwartier Redevelopment project led by the municipality, with the aspiration to create a new lively and thriving "cultural and creative district" within an industrial setting.

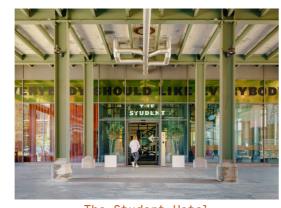
The Sappi paper factory is still in operation but the south western part of the site was purchased by the municipality. The Landbouwbelang is an old grain storage warehouse, which has been transformed into a cultural freezone by a community of squatters since their arrival in 2002. Both of these sites will be redevleoped as part of the municipality's future plans for the Sphinxkwartier.



Muziekgieterij



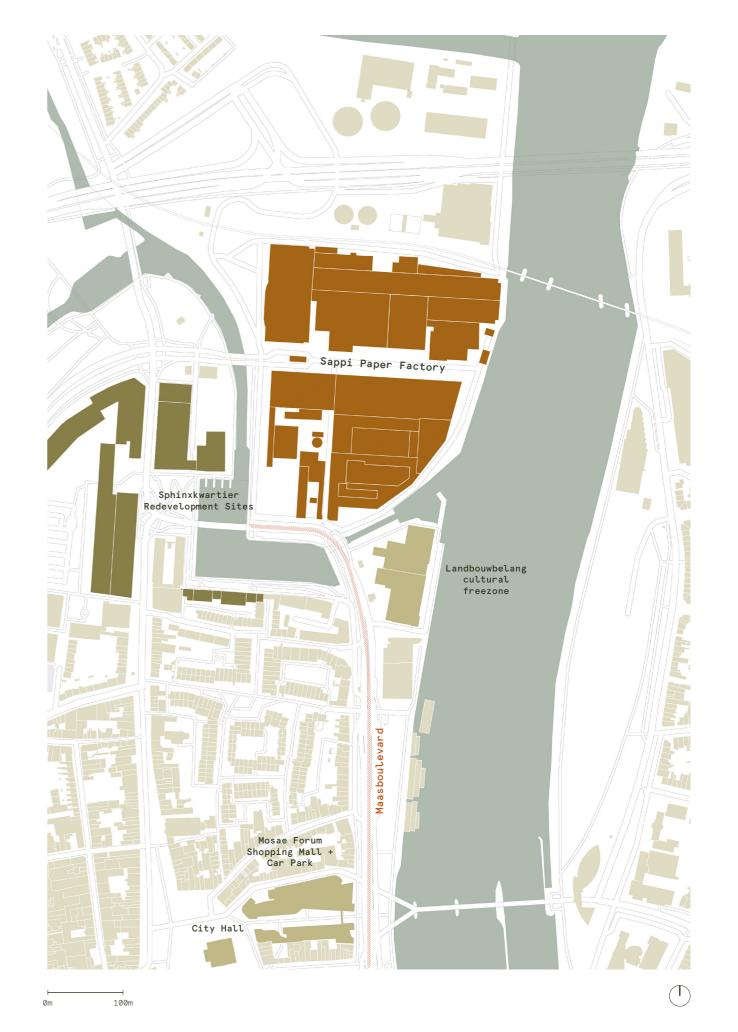
Lumiere Arthouse Cinema



The Student Hotel



Loods 5



"DESTINATION CULTURE" - BRANDING THE SPHINXKWARTIER

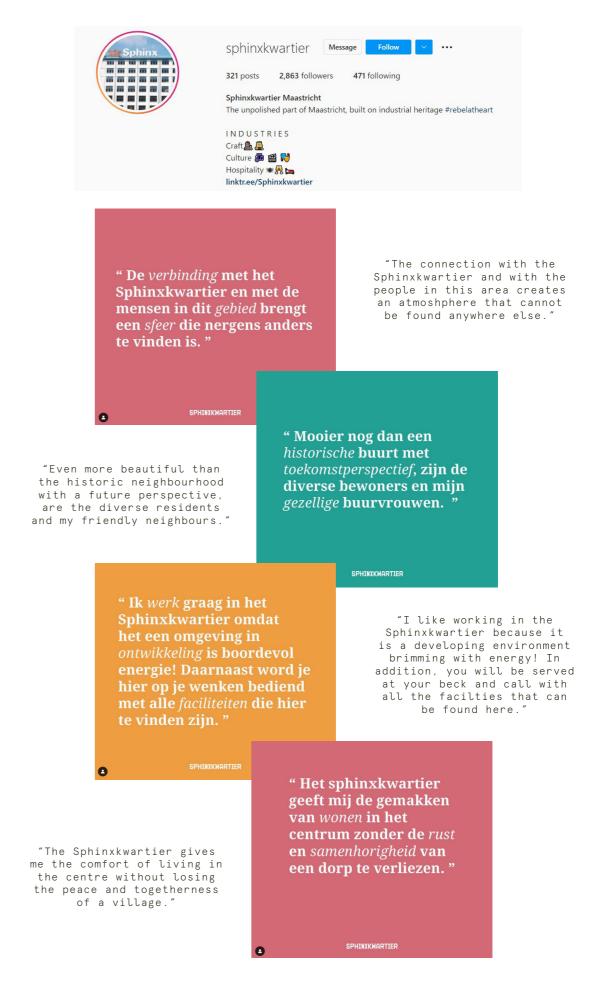
The development of Sphinxkwartier so far has been heavily marketed and branded. It even has its own website and Instagram account dedicated to selfpromotion.

The poster below introduces Sphinxkwartier as the "stubborn and unpolished" part of Maastricht. However, in reality, the developments are in fact quite polished and upscale; the rugged and industrial character of the urban fabric is reduced to a trendy aesthetic.

Sphinxkwartier is saturated with spaces for consumption, but the paywall for these experiences excludes certain groups of people.



"Discover a stubborn and unpolished Maastricht!" - Sphinxkwartier's website



Marketing Quotes from the Sphinxkwartier's instagram feed

OVER-PRESENCE OF CONSUMERIST ACTIVITIES



public functions

There are many opportunites for retail, leisure and dining in the area; vistors and tourists from Belgium and Germany have a choice of several car parks, situated conveniently close to the city centre



public functions which do not require capital

When you take away all of the activities that require or involve money, little remains aside from the Landbouwbelang, historical archive centre, and city hall. There is also a lack of public space and green space.

VS SPACES FOR CREATION

SPACES FOR CONSUMPTION...



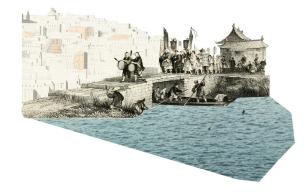
Catering towards tourists and visitors, the built environment of Maastricht in general encourages a consumerist culture; the city is packed with shops, cafes and restaurants at every corner - all spaces of consumption. In many squares, like the one pictured above, outdoor space is turned into a commodity, utilised for financial gain.



The city is in need of more spaces for creation and experimentation. It therefores comes as a huge blow that the Landbouwbelang, cultural freezone of the city and one of the more authentic spaces within Sphinxkwartier, is going to be shut down by the municiaplity to make way for a new commercial development.

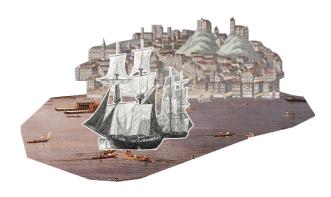
presents an opportunity to create a public connection from the city centre to the river, which would also facilitate a flow of

people to the Sphinxkwartier.



ANCIENT ERA - MIDDLE AGES Early days of Settlement

Throughout history, people have always lived and settled near water sources in order to sustain their life. The first civilisations grew and developed along the water bodies, be it river, lake or sea.



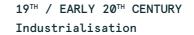
POST-MEDIEVAL/RENAISSANCE ERA Establishment of Ports

With the elimination of various forms of the fortification, cities opened up to the water and to the rest of the world. The waterfront became dominated by ports and portrelated activities.

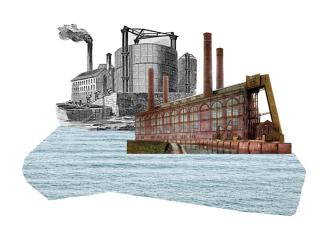


17[™] / 18[™] CENTURY Monumentalisation

Some cities began to visualise the waterfront as a place for palaces, not warehouses. Efforts to monumentalise the waterfront brought in non-port activities such as public spaces, public buildings and residential buildings.



During the Industrial Revolution, waterfront areas were dominated by heavy industry and port activities. Dockland areas expanded; railways and later highways were constructed to transport incoming ship freight, seperating the waterfront from the rest of the city. Many cities lost their waterfronts as public spaces.



LATE 20TH CENTURY Abandonment & Decline

The rise of containerisation and rail and airline transportation made ports unprofitable and eventually redundant. In conjuction with industrial decline, this resulted in urban waterfront areas falling into dereliction.



1970s - PRESENT Rediscovery & Renewal

Urban waterfronts have become central to post-industrial city development strategies: they are being reconnected to the city and reclaimed for public recreation. In many cases, they are used for place marketing with a focus on consumption and the attraction of capital.



Taking a walk along the water's edge, and capturing the journey in a sequence of photographs allowed me to investigate the current state of the Maas riverfront. The existing spaces along the West Bank are not particularly attractive or inviting. Key observations include:

- physical barriers such as walls, fences and steep slopes which prevent people from interacting with the water.
- narrow and constrained pedestrian paths, which are, in some areas, adjacent to busy traffic on the Maasboulevard.
- a lack of public seating which would allow for moments of pause; as a consequence the waterfront walk feels like a continuous thoroughfare.













As we go further north along the West Bank, you will notice that attempts have been made to create public space along the waterfront, but these are poorly designed and maintained:

- In figure 8, benches along the promenade face a wall which togther with the presence of commercial boats, blocks the view to the river.
- In figure 9, the expansive steps down to the waterfront level face to the dark junction of Wilhemina bridge, and are overrun by huge crowds of pigeons, making them an undesirable place to
- In figure 10, the Maaspromenade provides a generous amount of open space; nevertheless it shows little sign of public activity or life.

The walk along the waterfront terminates at a dead end just before reaching the Sappi factory, which is private terrain.













The East Bank of the Maas exhibits a greater variety of spatial conditions. The absence of the Maasboulevard creating a physical seperation between the city and the river is noticeably felt; buildings face onto the water and shape the space along the waterfront.

Some parts of the East Bank are quite successful. Stepped seating down to the water in figure 15 is always populated in good weather.

Further to the south, in front of the STOA apartment blocks in the Ceramique district, large areas of green space and benches facing the river create an attractive public space.

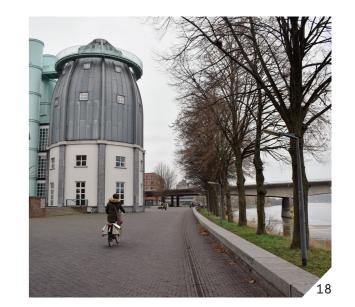












VOL 01

50

51

n house | VOL @

URBAN PLAN

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN THE LANDBOUWBELANG

In order to create a socially conscious urban plan, we believed it was important to hear from the people of Maastricht to gain an understanding of their needs and concerns. We therefore engaged in participatory design exercises with several local people and organisations.

We prepared a model of our site, and asked people to pin their comments and suggestions for design intervations onto the model.

The first group we reached out to were the residents of the Landbouwbelang, since their building is located within our site. Speaking with them, we learned that:

- our site is prone to flooding, and this should be taken into consideration with any new buildings that we propose.
- the redevelopment of the Sphinxkwartier up until this point has not been as successful as the municipality would like to admit; the restaurants around the Bassin are going out of business due to low footfall in the area and the LBB still remains the main attractor of visitors to the industrial district.
- the community within the LBB is struggling to communicate with the municipality over plans to redevelop the building. They do not feel like their voices are being heard or acknowledged.

The main concerns of the residents relate to issues of social justice, freedom of expression, and anticapitalism.







PARTICIPATORY DESIGN THE MASTERS

Another organisation we reached out to were The Masters, where we got to meet with the founder of the organisation, Sheila Oroschin.

The Masters is an organisation that helps people 'on the sidelines' of our society (for instance those with disabilities, or behavioural problems, or those on welfare), by offering them affordable accommodation and teaching them skills that will help them to reintegrate into society and find employment.

Sheila is an advocate for the principle of reciprocity. At The Masters, the residents who benefit from the services that are provided to them are asked to give something back in return, for instance by doing tasks to help the everyday running of the facilities, eg. cleaning, cooking, or working at the reception desk or the bar. This creates a self-sustainable community - "people support what they help to create".

Sheila believes that the municipality undervalues social return on investment, but social satisfaction can in fact drastically improve the mental health of residents and generate huge healthcare savings for the municipality.

Her main concerns for the urban development of Maastricht are social inclusivity and community building.







PARTICIPATORY DESIGN THE CIRCLE OF US

Another exercise we did was called the 'Circle of Us', where we asked people to write on a poster what they felt to them were the most important aspects regarding the future of urban development in Maastricht.

The aspects that the participants felt most strongly about should be in the centre of the circle, and the aspects that matter less can be placed towards the outer rings.

The most common suggestions that we found were:

- a car free city
- more greenery
- affordable housing
- more social events and activities





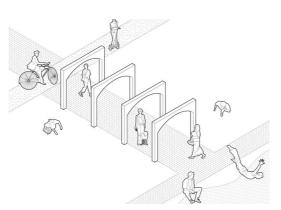


DESIGN MANIFESTO POINTS

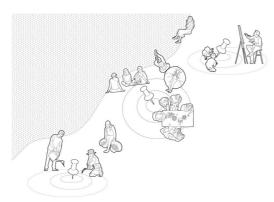
Motivated by our findings from the participatory design process, we wanted to create an urban plan that would be based on the principles of spatial justice and that would deviate from the Sphinxkwartier's current trajectory of gradual gentrification.

Our ambition is to transform the waterfront into a lively and thriving public space that can be enjoyed by people from all walks of life. The focus is on inclusivity, rather than exclusivity.

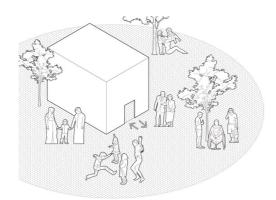
From this, we defined 4 key manifesto points that would guide our design: connectivity, activation, accessibility, and culture.



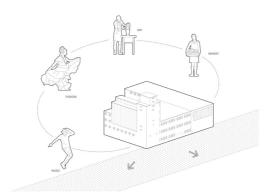
Connectivity



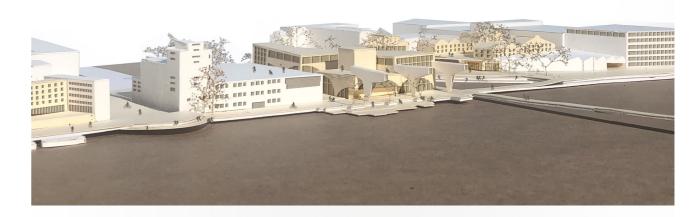
Activation



Accessibility



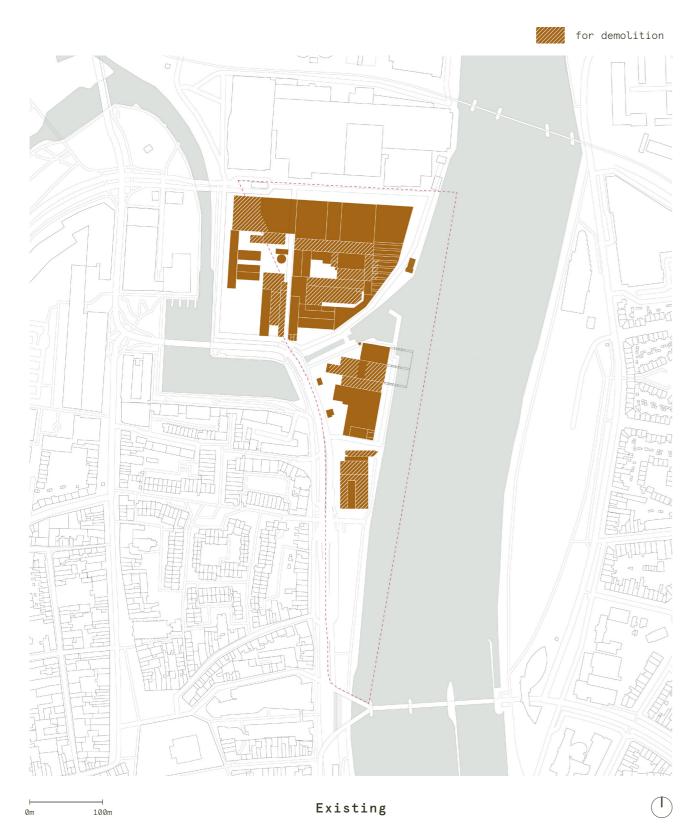
Culture





1:500 urban plan model at P2 presentation stage

URBAN PLAN PROPOSAL



The industrial urban fabric towards the north of the site is dense and complex in contrast to the empty southern part.

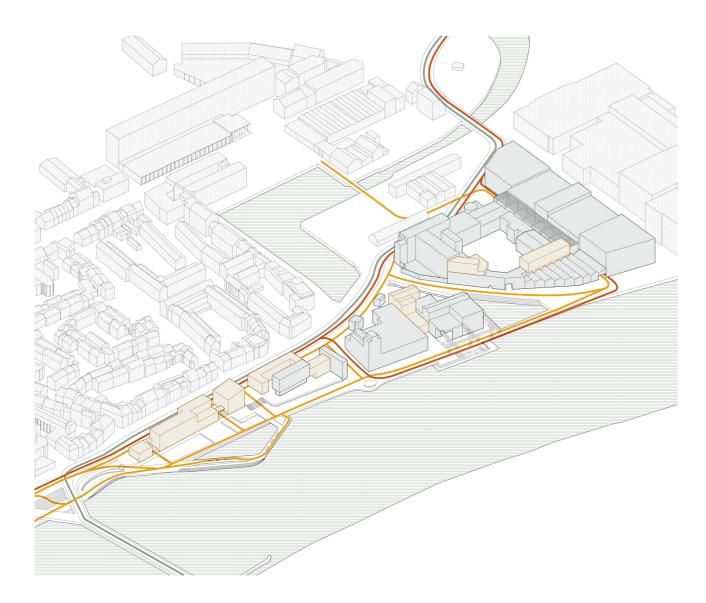


New landscaping breaks the linearity of the waterfront, and a new bridge over the lock creates a continuum to the Sappi site. Space is created in the northern part of the site, whereas the southern part of the site, towards the city centre, is densified.

62

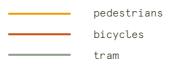
6.3

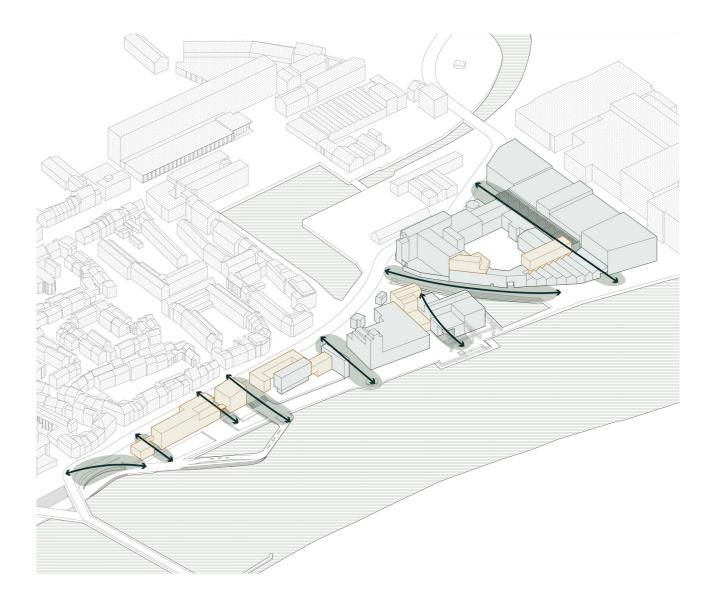
URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES CONNECTIVITY



In order to create a better connection between the waterfront and the rest of the city, we propose that the Maasboulevard, the highway bypass through the city centre, is to be replaced with a smaller road for trams and bicycles only. Existing traffic would be diverted to the ring road around the city.

Pedestrian movement throughout the site is prioritised by widening the pavements and creating a street with a more human friendly scale in the place of the main road.



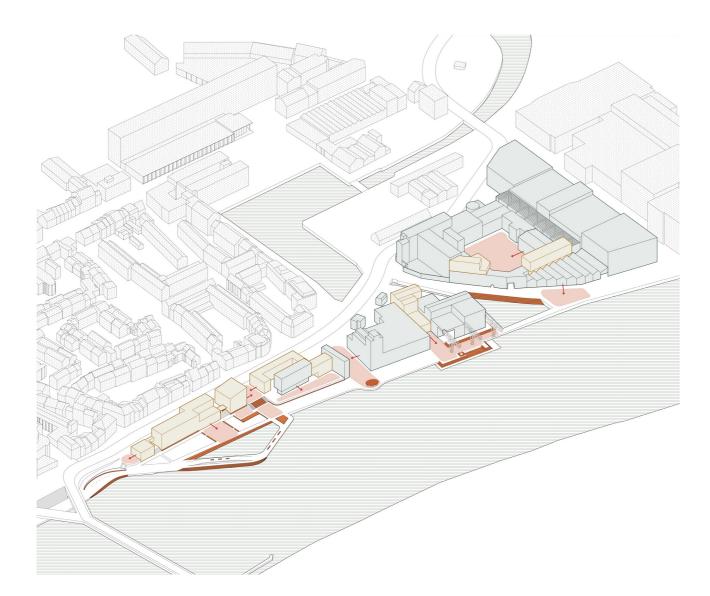


A series of thoroughfares at regular intervals along the proposal lead people towards the river and 'stitch' the waterfront to the rest of the city.

These throroughfares gradually increase in scale from the city end to the factory end, reflecting the progressive increase in scale of the surrounding context.

pen house | V

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES ACTIVATION



The urban plan proposes a sequence of open spaces that interact with buildings along the waterfront; these can become pockets for public activitity, hosting social functions such as markets and public performances.

Plenty of new public seating is introduced (highlighted in the darker colour), granting moments of pause along the waterfront - places where people can linger and enjoy the view of the river.

Areas which step down to the river allow people to come into contact with the water.

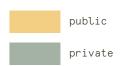
URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES ACCESSIBILITY



We want to make the waterfront as open and accessible as possible so that people from all different backgrounds and social groups will feel welcome in our scheme.

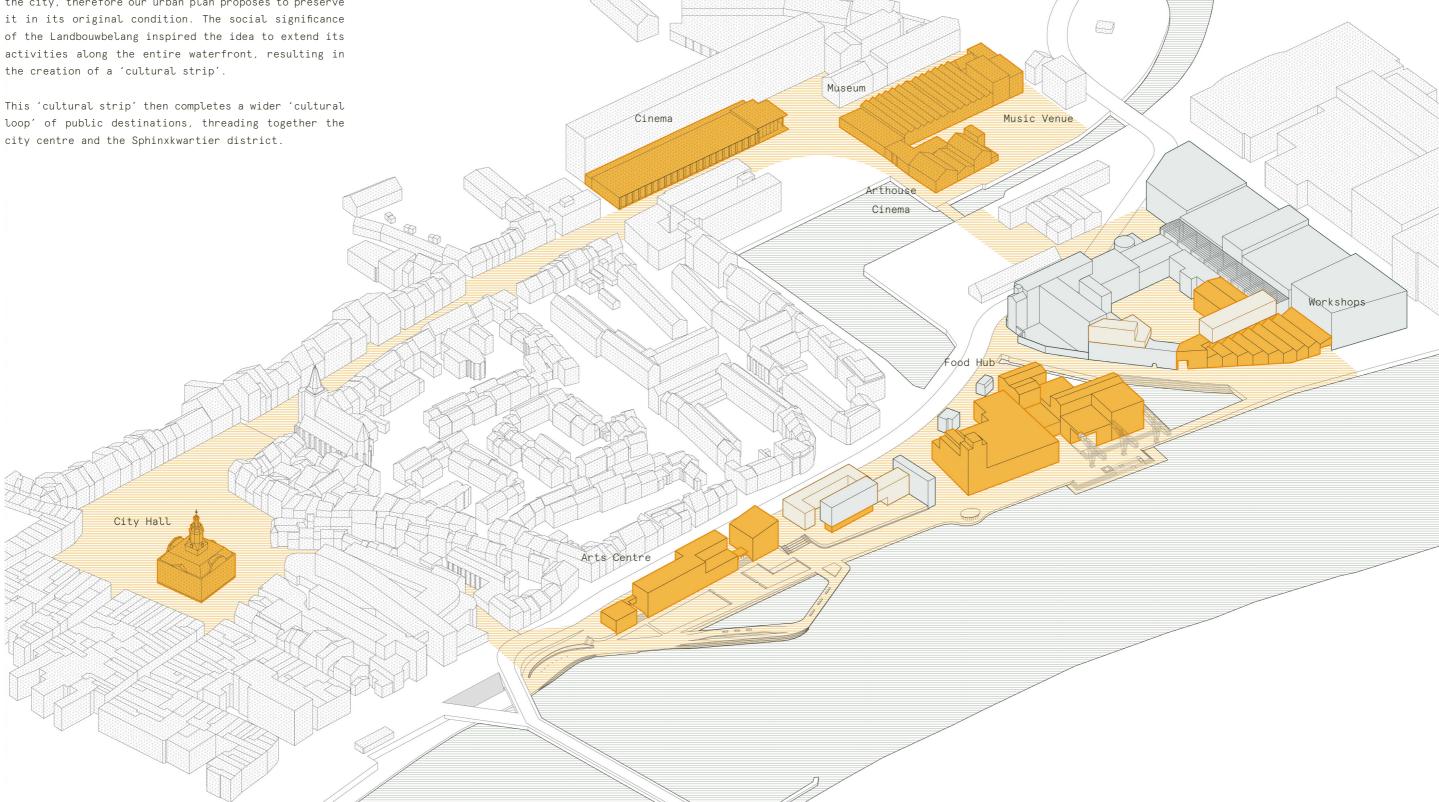
The majority of the buildings along the waterfront are thus designated as public buildings with free access, each including some community functions.

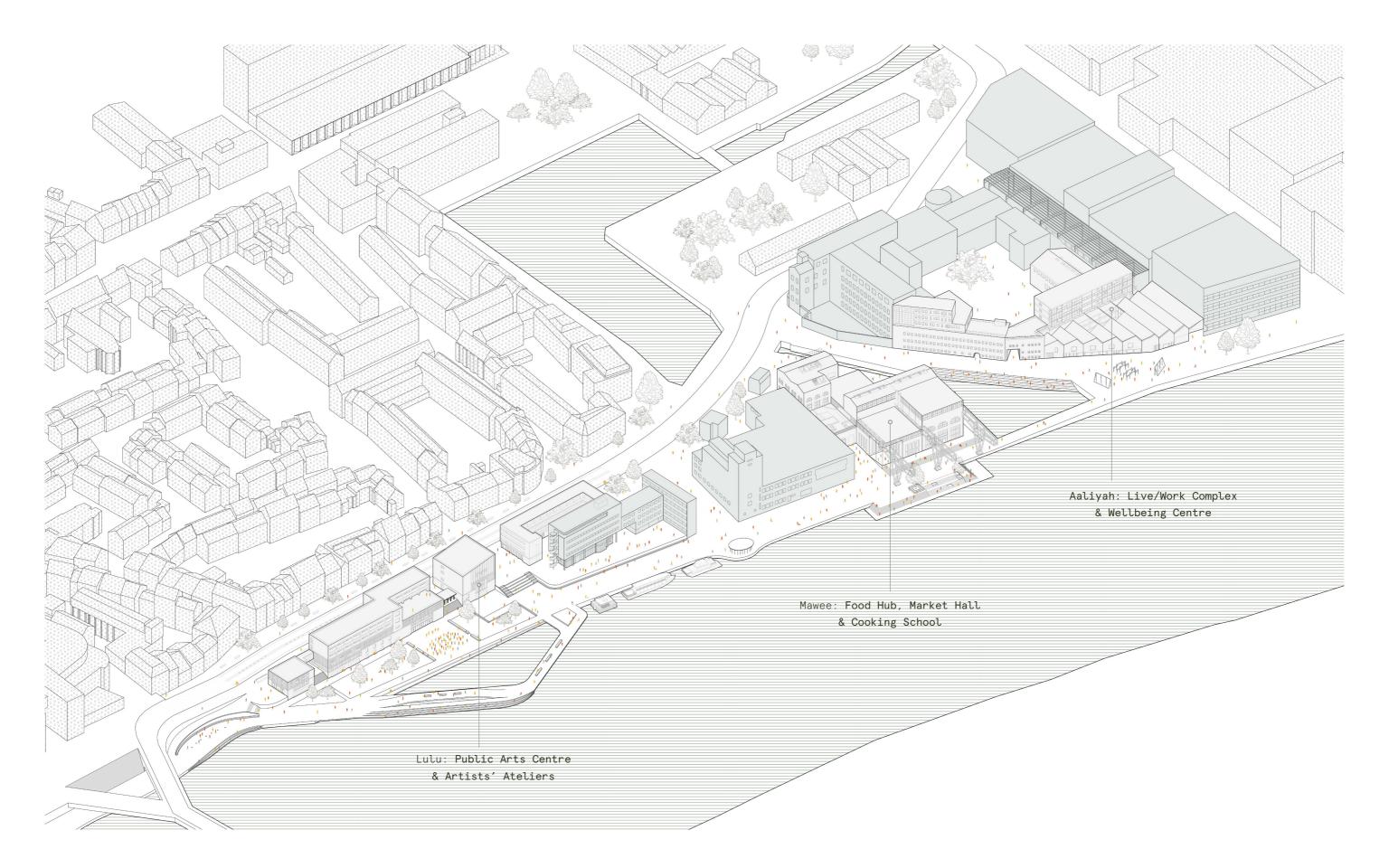
There is also a lot of focus on the design of the public realm, since the outdoors is perhaps the only place which feels truly public.

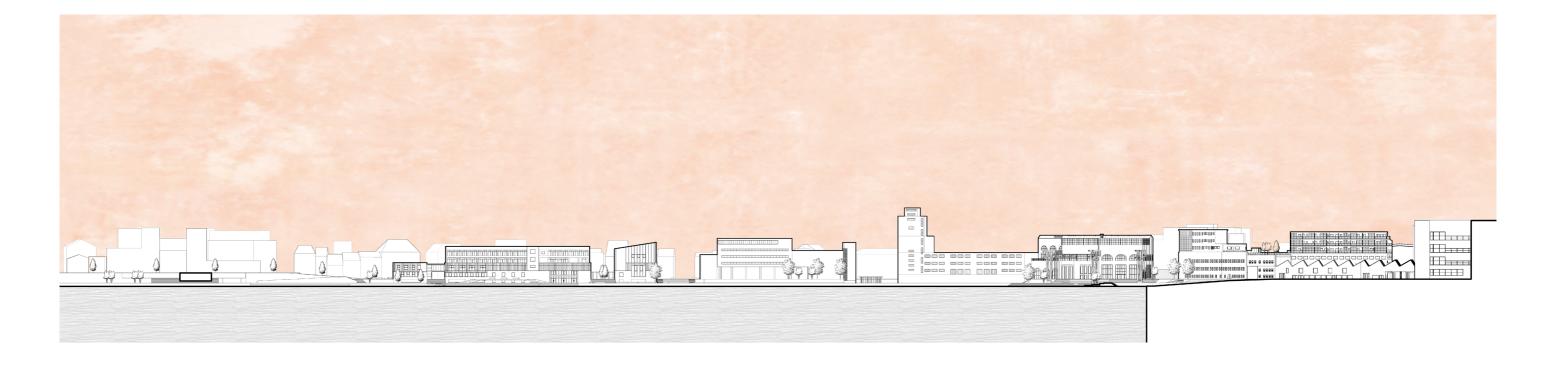


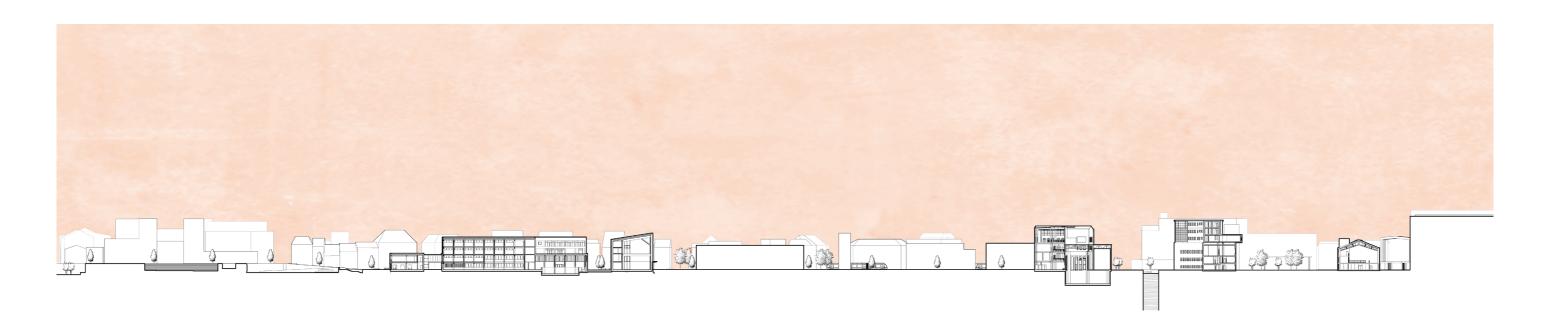
URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES CULTURE

The Landbouwbelang is an important cultural asset for the city, therefore our urban plan proposes to preserve













l open house

VOL 01



CITY | urban plan

VOL 01 | open house