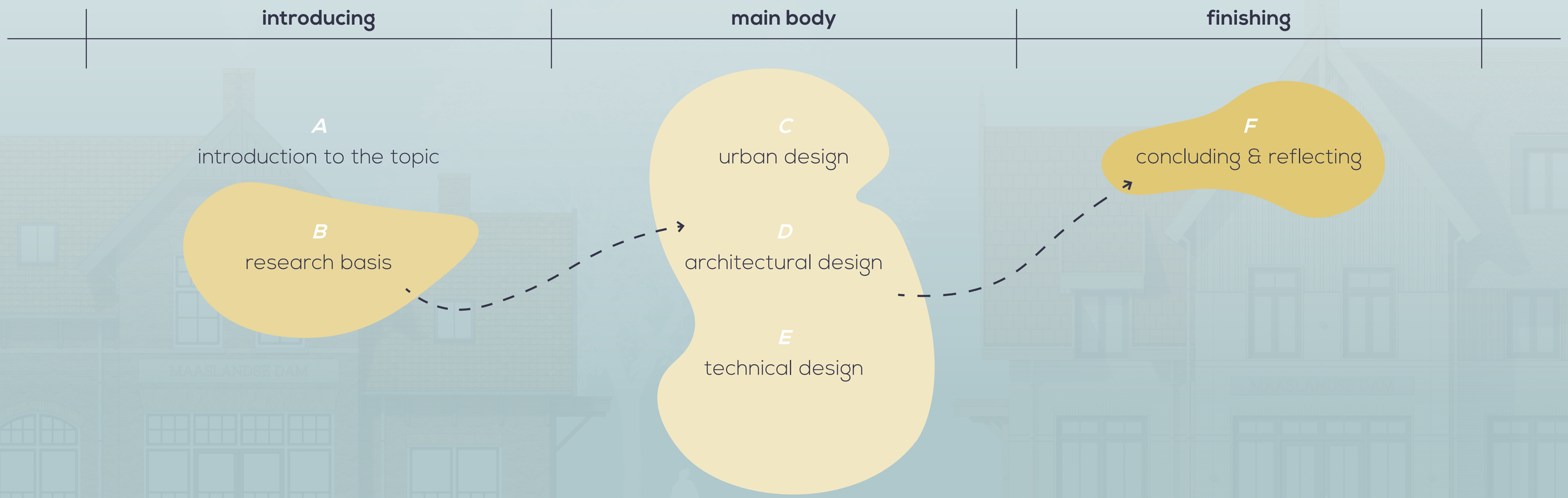
TU Delft

To be conti · NEW · ed

Balancing heritage and innovation in the Dutch polder dwelling architecture

WHAT TO EXPECT?



WHY THIS TOPIC?

fascination & frustration

architecture

non-vernacular architecture

source: MAPS, Midden Delfland

municipal redesign issues

source: Private Collection, Midden Delfland

modern dwellings

source: MAPS, Midden Delfland

urban design

nearby unsuitable urban example

source: Maaslandse Dam

monotony in typology

source: Maaslandse Dam

polders are being infiltrated

source: Nieuwe Rede

WHERE TO START?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

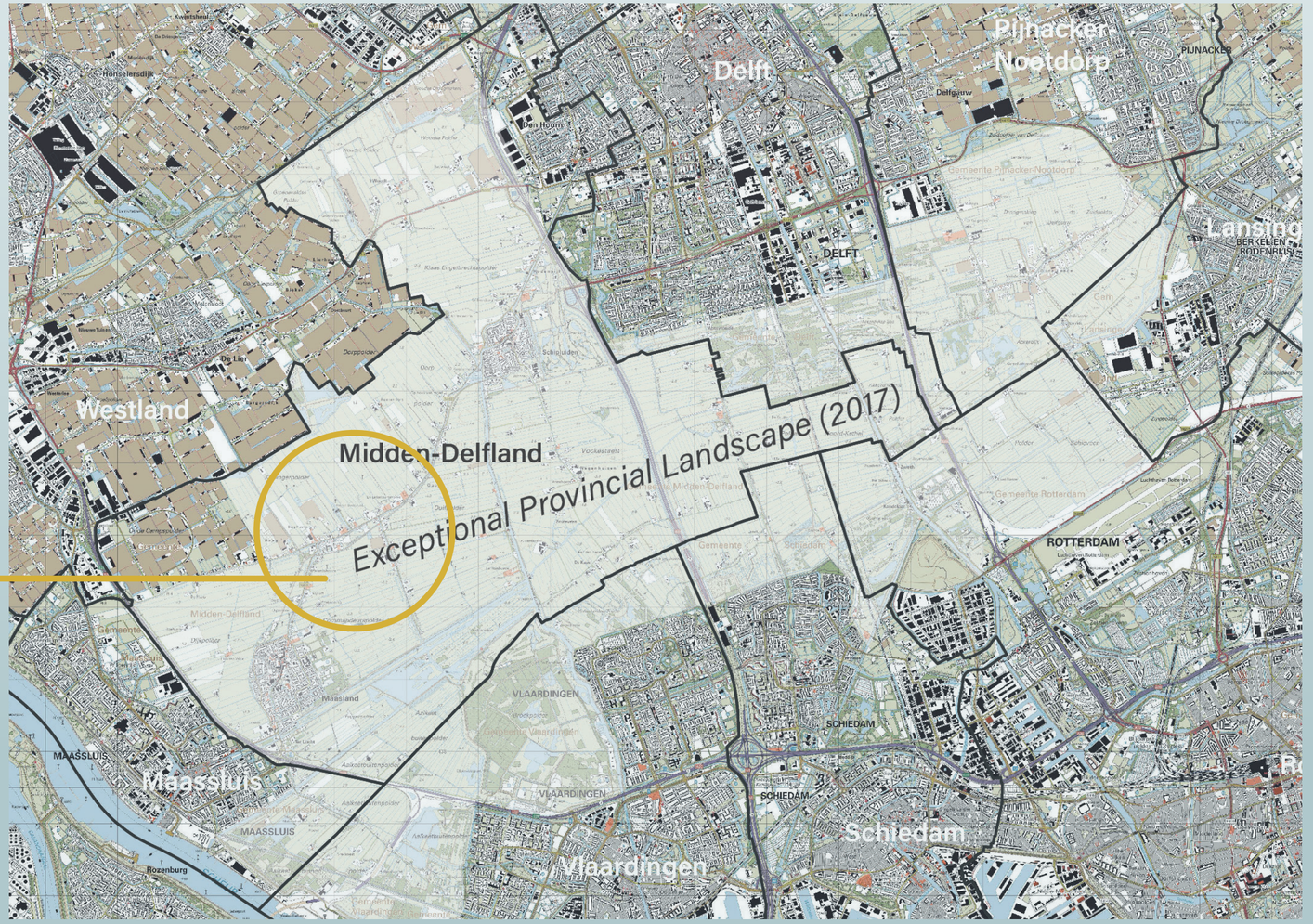
fascination & frustration

a design assignment

a context: Midden -Delfland

MIDDEN-DELFLAND?

area of focus



WHERE TO START?

1 fascination & frustration

2 a design assignment

3 a context: Midden -Delfland

4 **start of the urban design**

5 **the problem occured**

6

7

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

In contemporary urban design, the push for modernization and efficiency is increasingly **overshadowing the historical and cultural significance** of traditional polder landscapes and dwellings. Modern architectural visions and ideologies often prioritize sleek, uniform designs that neglect the unique identity, soul, and heritage of these regions.

This emphasis on contemporary design approaches poses a significant threat to the historical value and essence of polder architecture, leading to a gradual **erosion of their distinctive identity**.

Decisions made or imposed by municipalities often fail to integrate the cultural and historical context of these areas, risking the loss of the specific and recognizable architectural heritage that defines these regions.

If left unaddressed this trend could, over the course of a long time, result in the **permanent disappearance** of the cultural legacy embedded in these landscapes and dwellings.

WHERE TO PROCEED?

1 fascination & frustration

2 a design assignment

3 a context: Midden -Delfland

4 start of the urban design

5 the problem occured

6 **start of the research**

7 **interative design process**

WHAT IS THE AIM?

To explore how contemporary architectural design can integrate

modernization and efficiency

while preserving

the historical value, cultural identity, and unique essence

of traditional Dutch polder landscapes and dwellings.

TRADITIONAL

dialectical memory

Walter Benjamin

symbolic complexity

Robert Venturi

critical regionalism

Kenneth Frampton

traditional urbanism

Leon Krier

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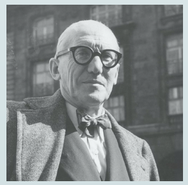
functional modernism

Le Corbusier



timelessness

Frank Lloyd Wright

crafted modernism

Walter Gropius

less is more

Mies van der Rohe

form follows function

Louis Sullivan

THE CHALLENGE

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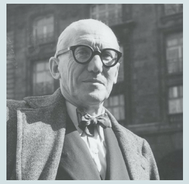

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UNIFIED PROPOSITION

for contemporary design principles

temporal continuity & evolution

principle

Architecture should embody a dialogue between past, present, and future, maintaining a layered historical engagement, adding advancements.

design approach

Integrate historical architectural motifs and material techniques with contemporary design language, allowing buildings to evolve as a living continuum of history and innovation.

symbolism & functional expression

principle

Architectural design should communicate cultural narratives while maintaining purpose-driven functionality.

design approach

Incorporate historical references and symbolic elements into the form, spatial organization, or façade treatment without compromising the efficiency and adaptability of spaces.

balanced complexity & simplicity

principle

Design should harmonize intricate traditional detailing with modern minimalism to create depth and visual balance.

design approach

Utilize ornamentation and symbolic elements in a restrained manner, allowing craftsmanship to coexist with clean lines and functional clarity.

human-centric & community-oriented

principle

Architecture should prioritize human experience, fostering spaces that encourage social interaction, inclusivity, and well-being.

design approach

Design pedestrian-friendly environments, mixed-use spaces, and adaptable interiors that promote community engagement while ensuring accessibility and comfort.

flexibility & longevity

principle

Architecture should be adaptable to future changes, ensuring longevity without losing its connection to historical and cultural identity.

design approach

Design open, modular spaces that can evolve while maintaining core architectural values, allowing buildings to accommodate shifting functional demands over time.

sustainable synergy with nature

principle

Built environments should harmonize with natural surroundings, combining ecological responsibility with aesthetic and functional excellence.

design approach

Use biophilic design, passive cooling, green roofs, and natural ventilation while integrating traditional site-planning principles that respect the landscape.

contextual harmony & environmental integration

principle

Architecture should respond to its physical, cultural, and social context, seamlessly blending with its surroundings while utilizing contemporary sustainability practices.

design approach

Use regionally inspired forms and materials while integrating passive design strategies, sustainable energy systems, and climate-responsive solutions.

structurcal honesty & expressive form

principle

Exposed structures should celebrate both craftsmanship and contemporary construction techniques, showcasing the beauty of both worlds.

design approach

Highlight raw materials, visible joinery, and expressive structural elements while integrating modern engineering solutions to create visually and functionally compelling spaces.

material authenticity & innovation

principle

A fusion of craftsmanship and modern materials should create structures that respect heritage while embracing technological advancements.

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Combine local materials like stone, wood, and brick with advanced materials such as glass, steel, and composites to achieve both authenticity and structural efficiency.

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Abstract and modernize vernacular forms, proportions, and spatial arrangements while utilizing current design methodologies and technologies.

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URBAN VISION

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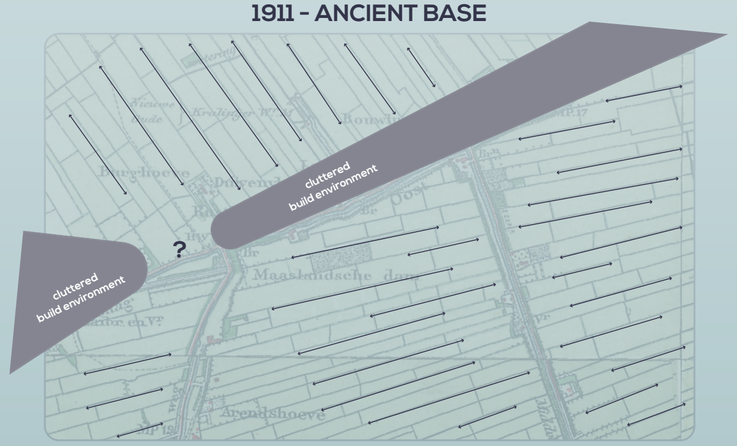
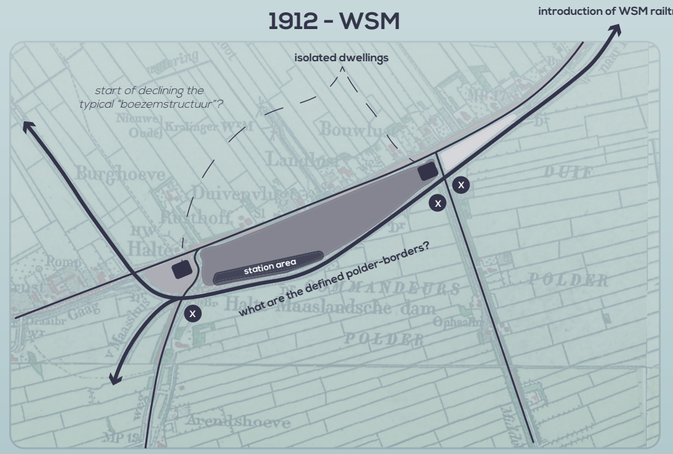
CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

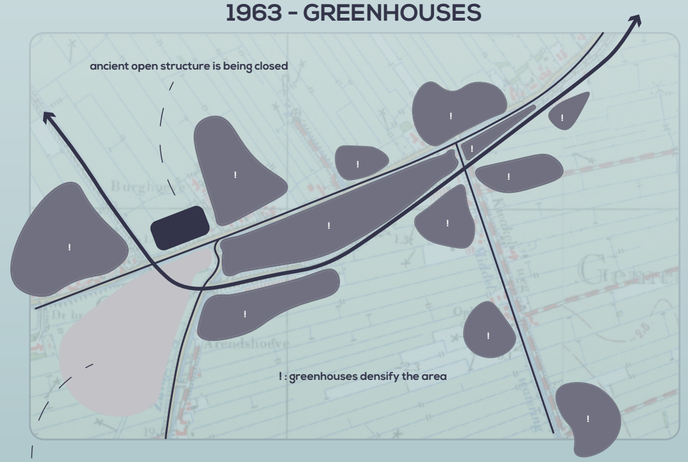
1911 - ANCIENT BASE



1912 - WSM



1963 - GREENHOUSES



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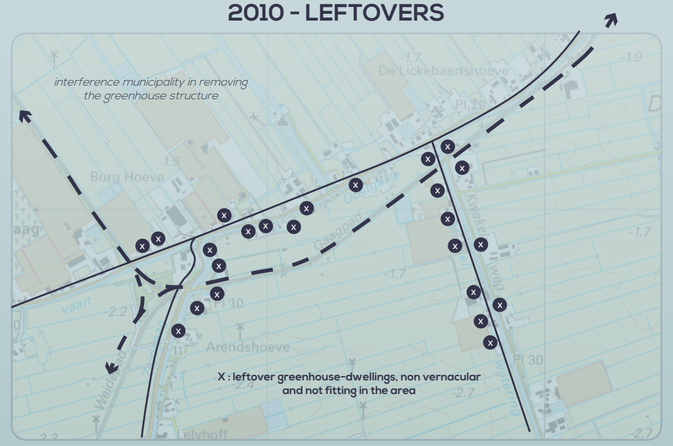
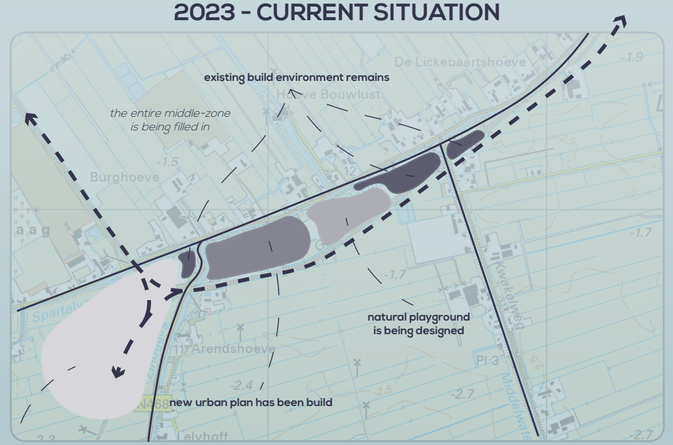
CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

2010 - LEFTOVERS



2023 - CURRENT SITUATION



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CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Midden-Delfland 2050

[Noordermeer, 2024]
[Gemeenteraad Midden-Delfland [2023]

SCENARIO A
“contemporary living”

SCENARIO B
“natural living”

SCENARIO C
“rural living”

SCENARIO D
“village living”

RESIDENTS VISION:
- Focus on a mix of young, middle age, and old
- Young and old should be evident, to accommodate the problematic groups
- Families should be accommodates
- Focus on small, local entrepreneurs [start-ups]

ARCHITECTURAL VISION:
- Homes with a historic appearance, authentic and social character
  - Preservation of atmosphere and identity
- Farms with multi-use:
  - Care homes
  - Age-friendly apartments
  - Social communities
- Environmentally friendly building methods
- Green roofs, facades
- Water retention within the parcels of land
- Green energy [e.g. solar panels

NATURAL VISION:
- Nature should be included in the designs
- Green landscape designed as a park-like structure
- Water retention swales
- Shared green facilities

URBAN VISION:
- Not many more roads to add in the natural areas, preferably not more than one

[ZUS et al., 2022]

AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY:
The plan emphasizes integrating advanced agricultural practices within the urban framework, promoting sustainable food production that coexists with urban development.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENT:
It proposes the enhancement of green spaces and ecological networks, aiming to increase biodiversity and improve the quality of life for residents. !

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND WATER MANAGEMENT:
The design includes strategies for effective water management, addressing challenges such as flooding and drought, and enhancing the area’s resilience to climate change. !

CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION:
The proposal seeks to preserve and celebrate the region’s cultural and historical identity, ensuring that development respects and enhances the area’s heritage. !

SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT:
It advocates for a balanced approach to urban growth, incorporating sustainable building practices and renewable energy solutions to create a livable and environmentally friendly urban environment. !

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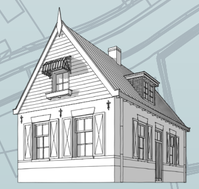
DUTCH VERNACULARITY

ancient farmhouses [pre - 20th] century]



ancient linth- and water dwellings [pre - mid 20th century]

site-specific tram station architecture [1882 - 1970]

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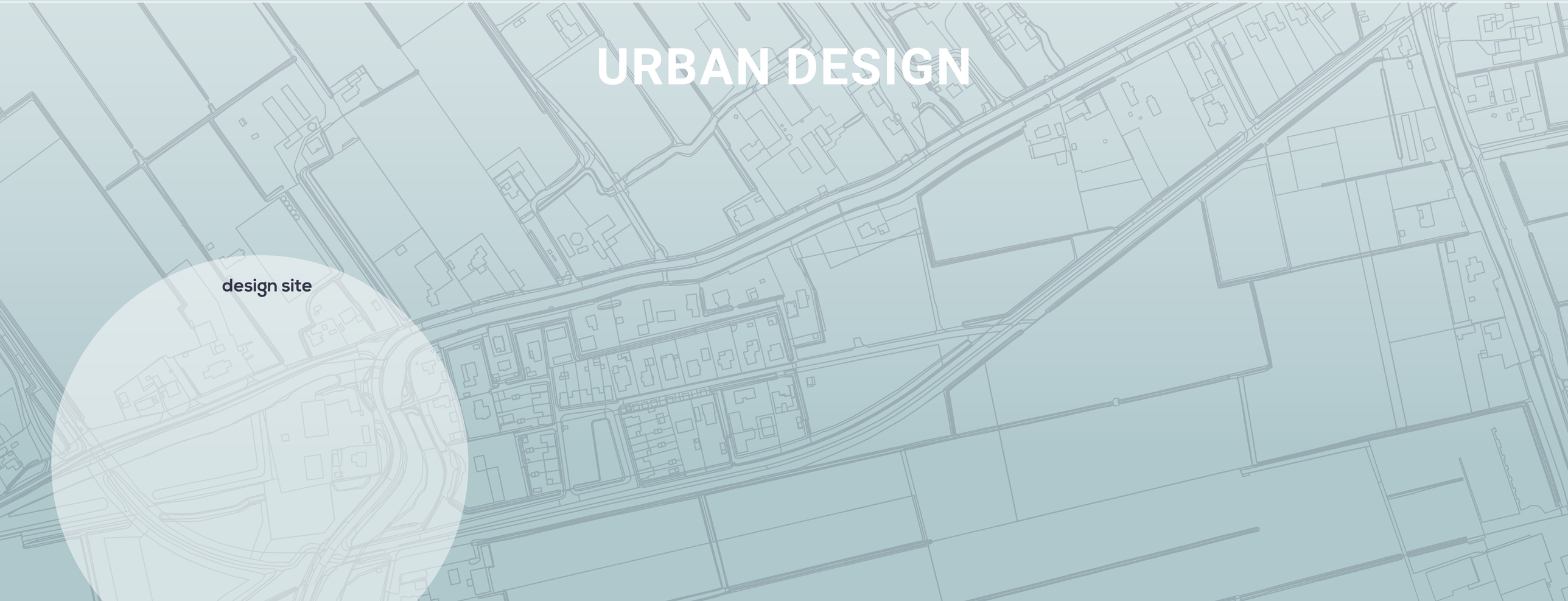


1. New Farmyard

new design & preservation

design principles

connection to the historical farm structure

ridge direction in a fitting orientation

filling in the gap left in history

spacious plots, like typical farmyard

privacy focussed

references

2. Natural Court

new design & the linth

design principles

continuing the linth structure in a modern way

ridge orientation fitting

integrating nature

changing setbacks

room for varying architecture

less clear plot boundaries

natural water drainage

references

3. Ancient Farmyard

new design & preservation

design principles

connection to the historical farm structure

ridge direction in a fitting orientation

filling in the gap left in history

spacious plots, like typical farmyard

privacy focussed

references

4. Station Area

new design & adaptation

design principles

new orientation

adapting orientation of the existing road structure

all-sided volumes

entrepeneureal zone

privacy focussed

car-focussed, but bike orientated

natural water drainage

references

5. Public Space

new design & adaptation

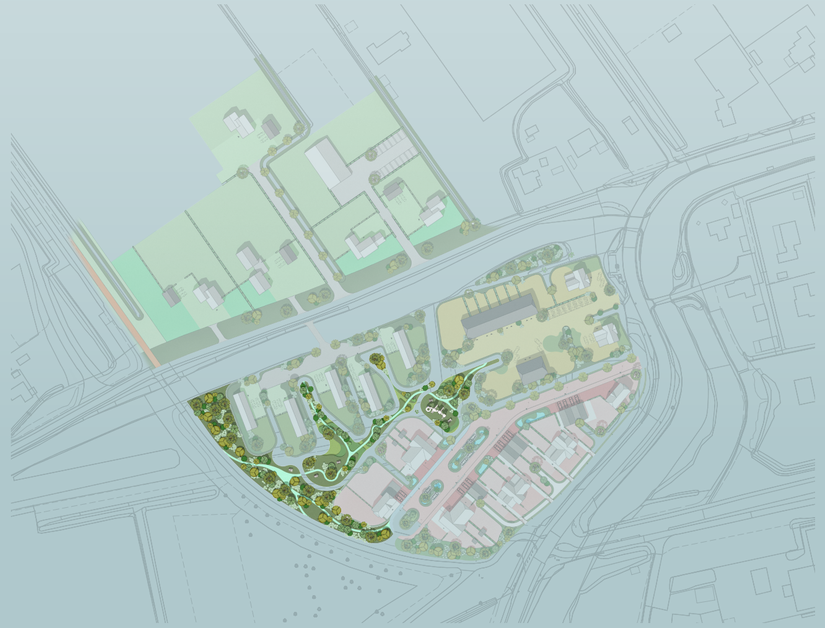
design principles

integrated nature

educational

water-driven

connecting the different
theme areas



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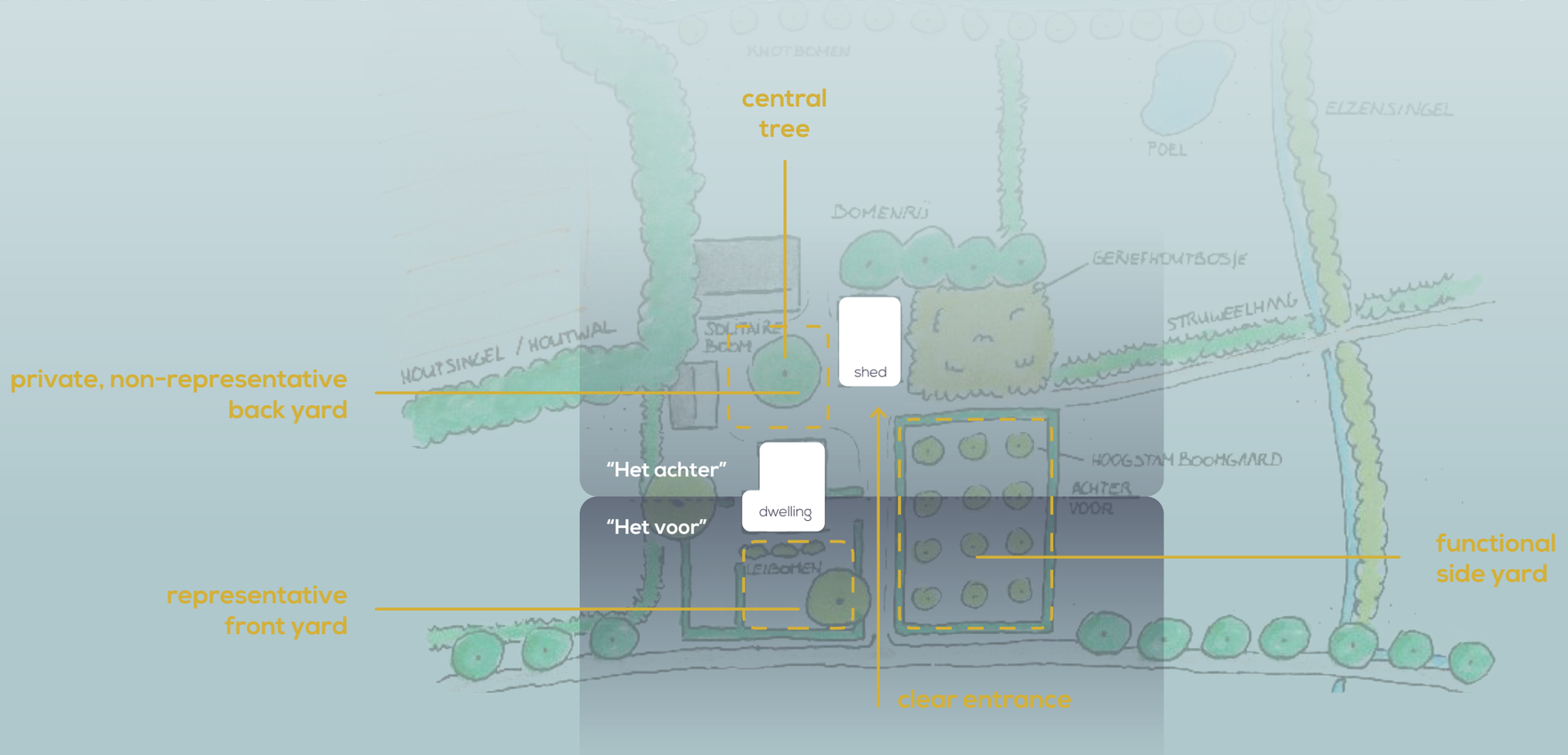
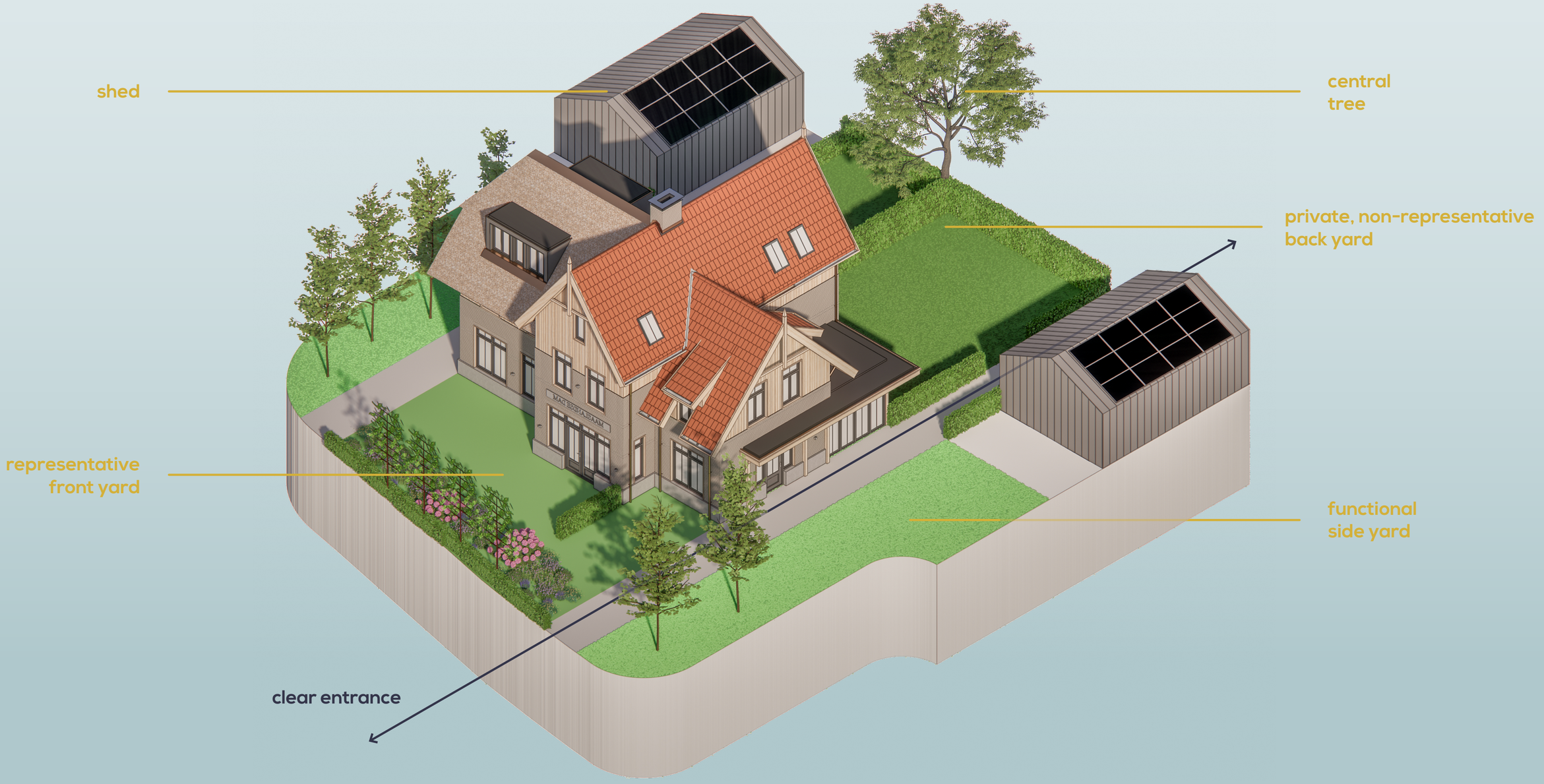
WHAT DOES THE HISTORICAL FARMYARD LOOK LIKE?



[Reference photo: Gemeente Beuningen]


shed
central tree
private, non-representative back yard
representative front yard
functional side yard
clear entrance

C

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ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

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TECHNICAL DESIGN

ARCHITECTURAL VISION

temporal continuity & evolution

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THE ROLE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP?

knowledge integration

material interaction

concept of adequacy

character in architectural design

[Photo: Bouwkunst & Vakmanschap - Hollands Bouwen, 2016]

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THE FUTURE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP?

rethink craftsmanship

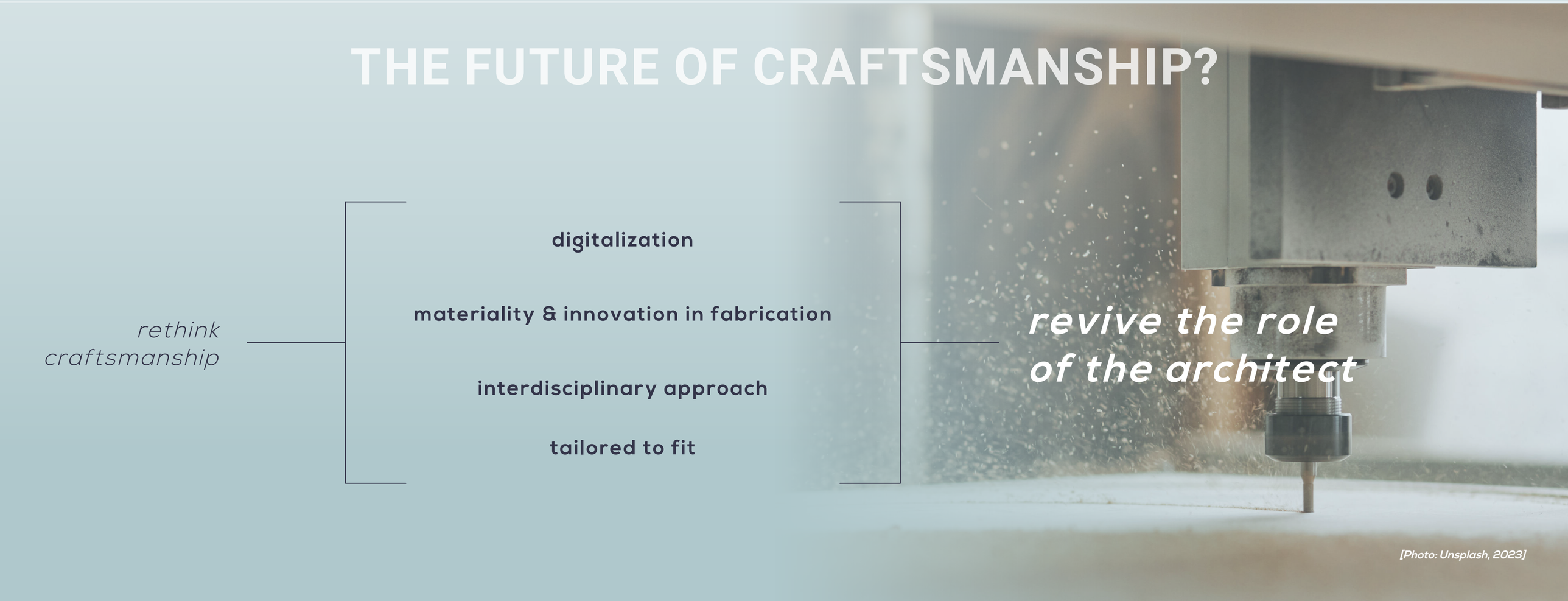
digitalization

materiality & innovation in fabrication

interdisciplinary approach

tailored to fit

revive the role of the architect



[Photo: Unsplash, 2023]

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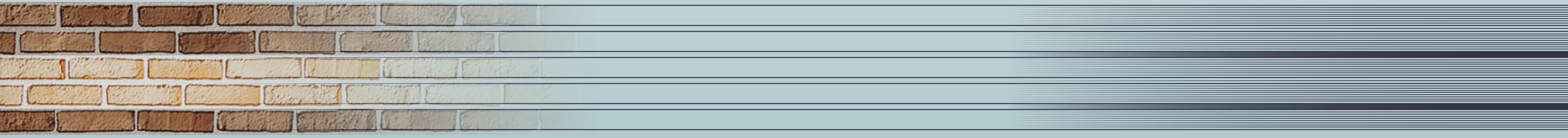
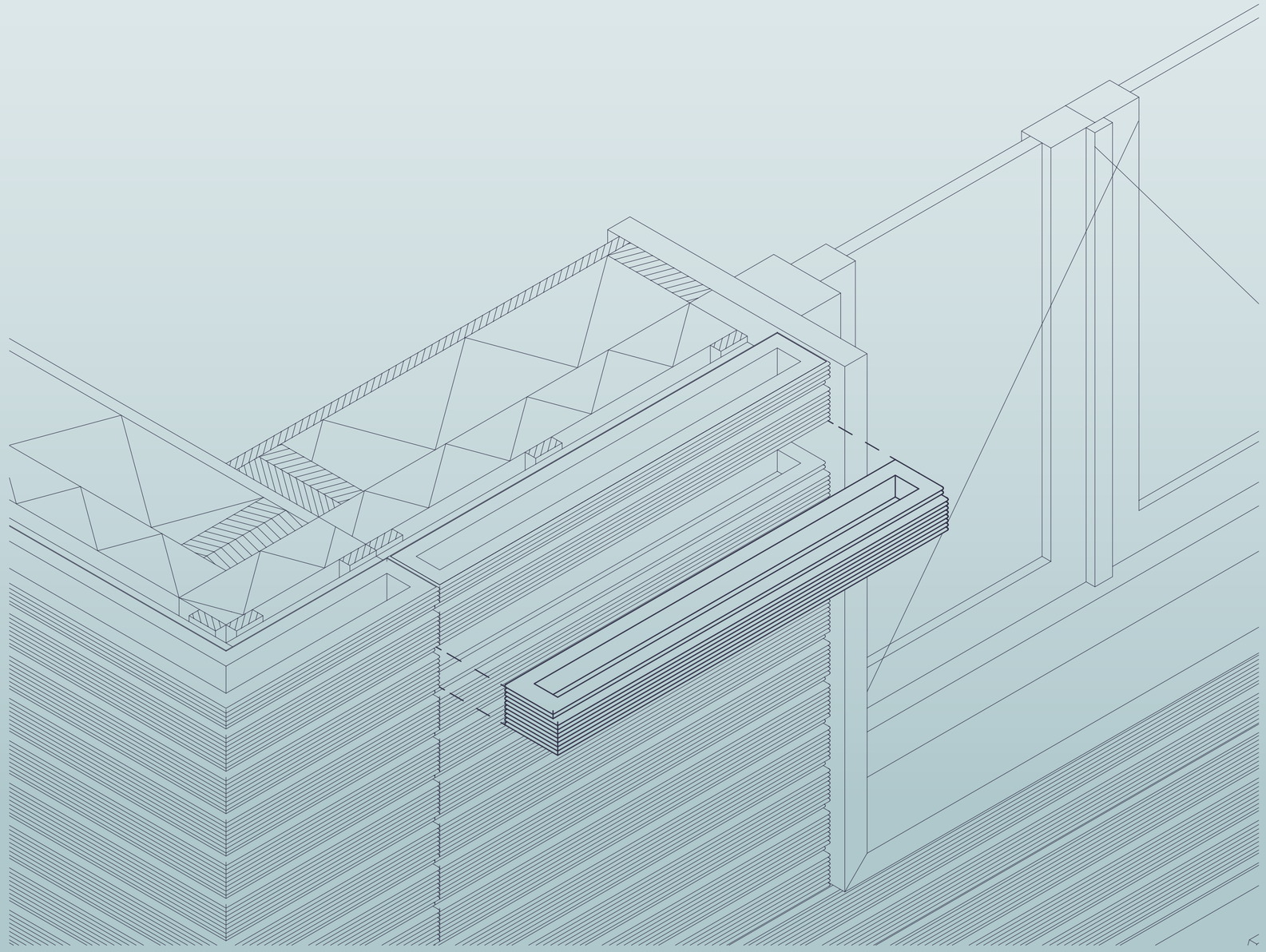
SO, NOT MERELY NOTICING... BUT REINTERPRETING

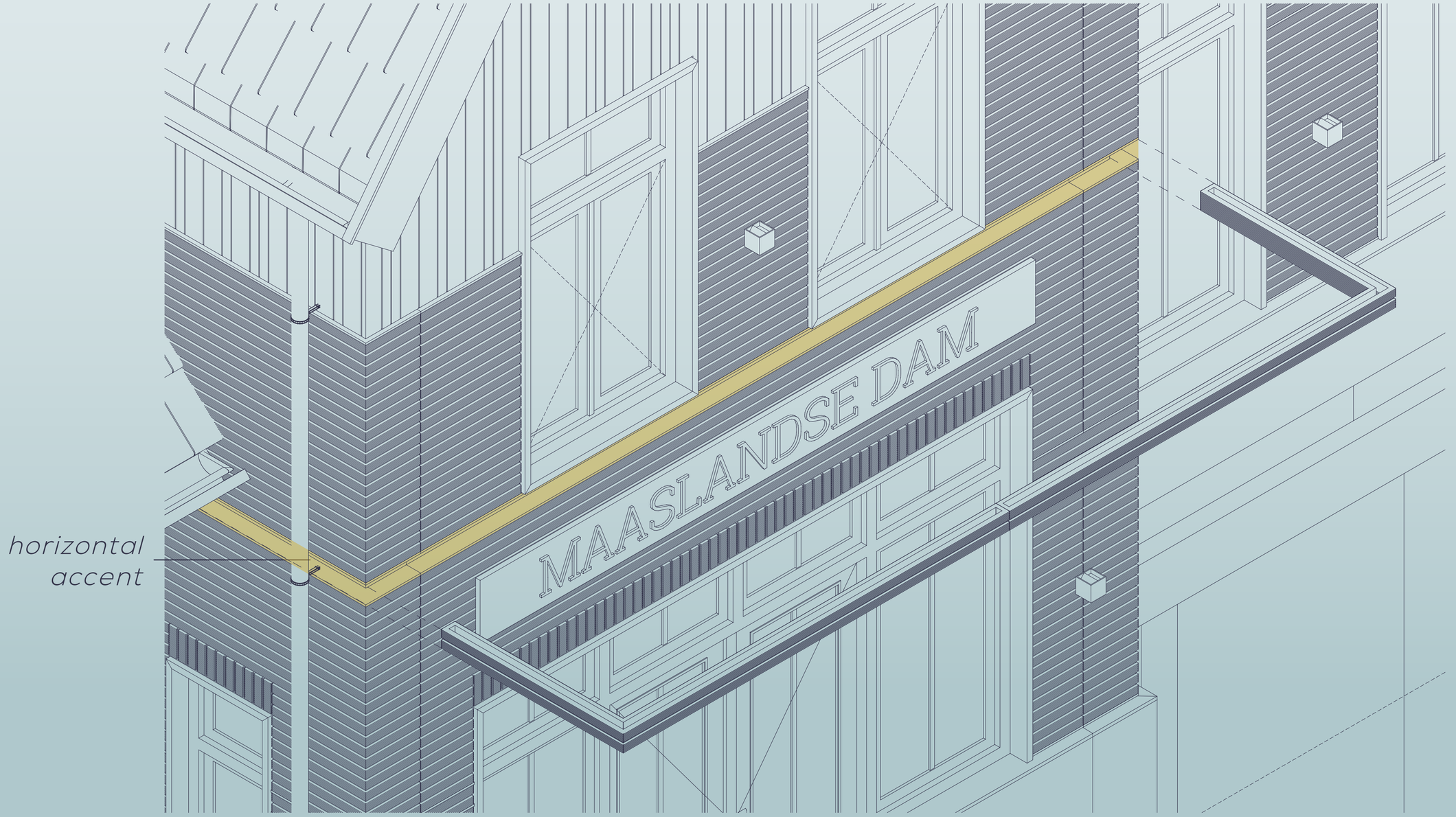
HISTORICAL MASONRY

DEFINITION OF VISUAL CHARACTERISTIC

MODERN TRANSLATION






MAASLANDSE DAM
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Architectural design should communicate cultural narratives while maintaining purpose-driven functionality.

design approach

Incorporate historical references and symbolic elements into the form, spatial organization, or façade treatment without compromising the efficiency and adaptability of spaces.

balanced complexity & simplicity

principle

Design should harmonize intricate traditional detailing with modern minimalism to create depth and visual balance.

design approach

Utilize ornamentation and symbolic elements in a restrained manner, allowing craftsmanship to coexist with clean lines and functional clarity.

human-centric & community-oriented

principle

Architecture should prioritize human experience, fostering spaces that encourage social interaction, inclusivity, and well-being.

design approach

Design pedestrian-friendly environments, mixed-use spaces, and adaptable interiors that promote community engagement while ensuring accessibility and comfort.

flexibility & longevity

principle

Architecture should be adaptable to future changes, ensuring longevity without losing its connection to historical and cultural identity.

design approach

Design open, modular spaces that can evolve while maintaining core architectural values, allowing buildings to accommodate shifting functional demands over time.

sustainable synergy with nature

principle

Built environments should harmonize with natural surroundings, combining ecological responsibility with aesthetic and functional excellence.

design approach

Use biophilic design, passive cooling, green roofs, and natural ventilation while integrating traditional site-planning principles that respect the landscape.

contextual harmony & environmental integration

principle

Architecture should respond to its physical, cultural, and social context, seamlessly blending with its surroundings while utilizing contemporary sustainability practices.

design approach

Use regionally inspired forms and materials while integrating passive design strategies, sustainable energy systems, and climate-responsive solutions.

structurcal honesty & expressive form

principle

Exposed structures should celebrate both craftsmanship and contemporary construction techniques, showcasing the beauty of both worlds.

design approach

Highlight raw materials, visible joinery, and expressive structural elements while integrating modern engineering solutions to create visually and functionally compelling spaces.

material authenticity & innovation

principle

A fusion of craftsmanship and modern materials should create structures that respect heritage while embracing technological advancements.

design approach

Combine local materials like stone, wood, and brick with advanced materials such as glass, steel, and composites to achieve both authenticity and structural efficiency.

adaptive reinterpretation of tradition

principle

Traditional architectural elements should be reinterpreted rather than replicated, ensuring cultural continuity in a modern form.

design approach

Abstract and modernize vernacular forms, proportions, and spatial arrangements while utilizing current design methodologies and technologies.

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REGENERATIVE ADAPTIBILITY

Architecture should not only reduce harm but actively regenerate its environment and remain relevant through time.

The design process embraces adaptability, material honesty, and circular thinking to create buildings that are **open to change**, **light in footprint**, and **rich in ecological value**.

Every design choice, from structure to skin, aims to **extend a building's lifespan**, **support material reuse**, and **foster a healthy indoor climate**. This approach does not treat sustainability as a technical add-on, but as an integral driver of form, function, and detail.

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CONSTRUCTION & SEQUENCE

WOOD CONSTRUCTION

CLT flooring & timber frame load-bearing walls

RENEWED CRAFTSMANSHIP

focus on pre-fabrication and minimalizing the craftsmanship on-site

ROLE OF THE ARCHITECT

pre-fabrication should be designed into the last detail, in which the architect can enlarge their role

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FACADE

MODES OF RECOGNITION

the architecture provides different stages of recognition in the facade, closeby or afar are total different.

MINIMALISTIC DETAILING

well thought through gutters, sunscreens, drain pipes, facade lining to reinterpret the architecture

NATURE INTEGRATION

green roofing, hidden birdsnest boxes creates a nature-adaptable facade

RECOGNIZABLE LOOK

the architecture still holds the trustworthy look of the history with wooden pinnacles and clay roofing as an example

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DETAILING

WINDOW- AND DOOR FRAMES

reimagined window- and door frames, to take control over the look and feel

RICH AND REFINED DETAILING

well though through details in the facade, like the metal horizontal lining and the window frameworks

SMART CONNECTIONS

in light of the pre-fabrication, the detailing has been designed in an efficient way

INTERIOR CLIMATE

a healthy interior climate has had the focus, in which a vapour-permeable construction was the goal

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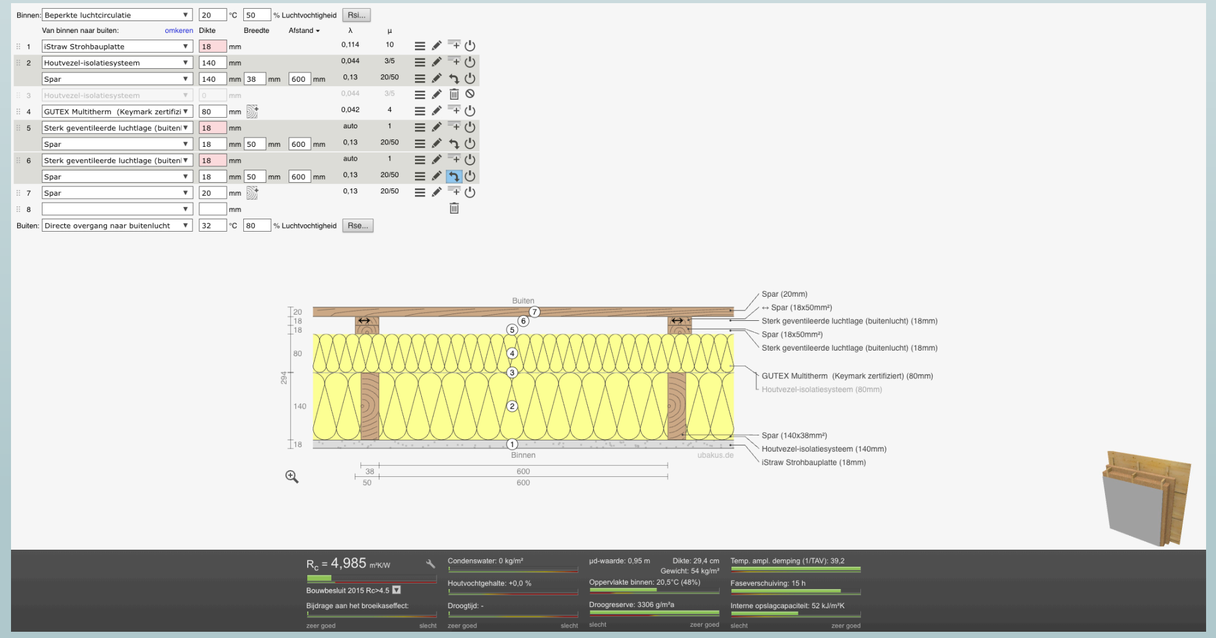
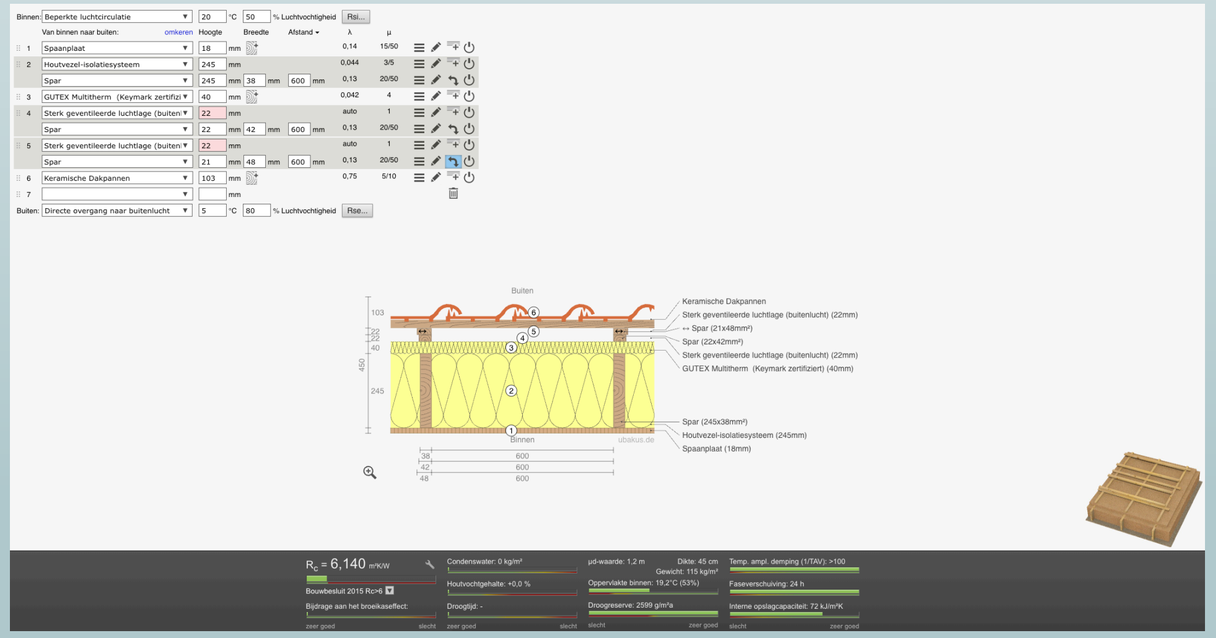
VAPOUR-PERMEABLE CONSTRUCTION





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CLIMATE

PASSIVE TECHNIQUES

Passive or low-energy sunshading systems integrated into the building elevations

PASSIVE FORM

cantilevers that functions as sunshades

PASSIVE MATERIALISATION

the use of biobased, wood fibre insulation, with a high heat capacity

→

extra info on climate

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CLIMATE

LIVING QUALITY

the indoor living quality has had the most important value, focus on how to stabalize the indoor climate

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING

the architectural vision has been used as part of the climate design

INCORPORATING NATURE

nature is not only taken as a guide in the way of climatizing, also as a usefull tool

TARGET-GROUP FITTING

the indoor climate systems has been chosen for the targeted group of inhabitants

WHAT CAN BE CONCLUDED?

In what way can contemporary architectural design integrate

modernization and efficiency

while preserving

the historical value, cultural identity, and unique essence

of traditional Dutch polder landscapes and dwellings?

URBAN VISION

connecting context & future

CONTEXTUAL HARMONY

Respect for historic water systems, parceling, and agrarian rhythms.

ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRATION

Landscape as an active design element.

TEMPORAL CONTINUITY

Designs reflect the past and enable climate/energy adaptation.

CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

Livability and spatial identity are central.

ARCHITECTURAL VISION

typology & materiality

FLEXIBLE & FUTURE-PROOF

Buildings adapt to changing needs.

TYPE REINTERPRETATION

Traditional forms reimagined.

MATERIAL AUTHENTICITY

Use of wood, brick, and reed in contemporary ways.

EXPRESSIVE MINIMALISM

Honest structure with restrained ornamentation.

TECHNICAL VISION

contemporary craft translation

BALANCED DETAIL

Historic craftsmanship meets modern clarity.

HYBRID CRAFTSMANSHIP

Merges traditional techniques with digital tools.

SENSORY, CULTURAL IDENTITY

Details connect people, place, and time.

FINAL VISION

Craftsmanship bridges past and future.

Through
contextual urbanism,
respectful form,
and **innovative detail**,
architecture in the polder becomes both
timeless and forward-looking.

Preserving and redefining Dutch heritage in
the polder areas.

To be conti · **NEW** · ed

The way I balanced heritage and innovation in the Dutch polder dwelling architecture