

# TOWARDS THE INCLUSIVE VILLAGE

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VOLUME

"Towards the inclusive village"  
Volume V2- Essay, Research & logbook by Ron van den Heuvel

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## ESSAY

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# TOWARDS THE INCLUSIVE VILLAGE

WE ARE LIVING IN A TURBULENT TIME. A TIME THAT NO ONE HAD ANTICIPATED, A TIME WHICH REQUIRES THOUGHTFUL AND DECISIVE ACTIONS TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF THE INHABITANTS OF OUR COUNTRY.

Due to COVID-19 we suffer many consequences that effect our current way of living. A few weeks ago, our society was still enjoying the capitalistic and globalizing system. However, it became clear that this system is up for debate. At the moment it becomes painfully clear that the system is more vulnerable than ever. The virus is putting the economy at risk, jeopardizing our health and changing the way we work and communicate. But what do we learn from this situation? And what are we going to do to prevent a similar situation in the future?

The pandemic does not only have negative consequences, it also opened our eyes. Eyes that now focus on positive changes, changes that some experts have been striving for years, changes that could become reality. The virus has shown us how we could use our world in a better and more preserving way. Because of COVID-19, we became aware that; physical social contact is of great importance, loneliness is a bigger problem as we thought, working from home can reduce the level of air pollution, our global production processes are not as sustainable as we thought, we should not have cut back on healthcare, we must learn to value nature again and globalization has created a severely vulnerable monoculture.

Now we realize this, we have to take a critical look at what the experts have been saying for years; We have to change the way we abuse our earth and society, because it will not last forever. And it will come with dramatic consequences. Globalization may be justified on an economical level, but it comes at the expense of our living environment. Therefore, we can ask ourselves the following questions; Why do we consider the globalised (interchangeable) city relevant? And do we need to update our vision? For example, focus on the villages, small-scale settlements, each with their own identity, which ensure diversity. Settlements which have the ability to use the terrain in a sustainable manner and even be self-sufficient. Settlements which work together at a global scale and function independently at the scale of a small region. In other words: a local based settlement.

As a true village optimist, I believe we can get this done. Villages are going to play an important role in the new future of the Netherlands.

**“By changing villages into integral collective places which provide in the basic needs, villages can become attractive and livable again.”**

In this way, we not only create a sustainable society which is ready for the next virus outbreak, but also give the forgotten village a new imago.

## DON'T RUN TO TOWARDS THE CITY, BUT WALK TOWARDS THE COUNTRYSIDE

The numbers don't lie; the migration to the city has never been so widespread as it is right now<sup>1</sup>. Even at a global level, cities are expected to grow massively, and rural areas will continue to decline<sup>2</sup>. This does not happen without consequences. Where we emphasize the benefits of the city, we seem to forget the value of the villages.

Villages find themselves in a downward spiral, in which the quality of life continues to decline. Young people, facilities and social cohesion are disappearing. The overwhelming cities are swallowing their right of existence and transform villages into general living areas (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2017). Cities use the capitalistic system as their weapon; first by creating attractive environments for functions and later by taking the youth. Thanks to our money-driven system and globalizing society, hope for the villages is disappearing.

After a look at the available data from the CBS and the PBL, we discover that health and safety risks are considerably higher than in rural areas. Especially when we look at the feeling of happiness we see it ranks remarkably low in the urban environment<sup>3</sup>. So, if we want to focus more on a healthy and happy society, we should not continue to focus on the urban environments.

Even during the COVID-19 period it appears that an outbreak of a virus has major consequences for the city and less influence in the rural environment. Where the “relatively” hardest hit region (Uden) in Noord-Brabant has about 253 infected persons, Rotterdam and Amsterdam have an individual number of more than 1500. The urban humanbased monoculture has ensured enormous economic prosperity but at the same time created vulnerability and fragility, resulting in a danger to our health and our living environment.

One thing is certain when we start thinking about future developments and look for new opportunities for our society, it may be wise to look beyond the city and also to explore the possibilities of the village and the surrounding countryside.

## WHAT WE BASICALLY NEED

Of course, there are different types of people with different types of wishes. Therefor, The city will always have an appeal to certain target groups. Nevertheless, a new way of living can be created by transforming the image and unused potentials of the villages. A life which is not only interesting for the persistent villagers, but also for the urban hipster. To do so, we have to look for a shared interest or shared need. A need that can connect both worlds, is not easy to find. Perhaps a strange but correct comparison is our shared enemy the COVID-19 virus. This virus has functioned as a shared interest and brought people closer to eachother. Obviously, a new shared need should exert a positive influence and not be a new shared enemy.

Fortunately, I am not the only one who shares this opinion. Many others recognize the same. One of them is Richard Layard. Richard Layard explains in “Happiness: Lessons from A New Science”; Economic wealth does not equate to happiness. Happiness is more about being able to live without concerns and that is a shared need where everyone can relate to. Living without concerns in this case means all basic facilities are available in sufficient ways. Shelter, food, water, energy and health are the most important elements. We should not follow a money-driven system but a happiness-driven system.

1. *The Netherlands is expected to have 18.3 million inhabitants in 2035, 1 million more than now. The large and medium-sized cities in particular will grow, as will various peripheral municipalities surrounding the large cities. (CBS.nl)*
2. *Today, 55% of the world's population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 68% by 2050. Projections show that urbanization, the gradual shift in residence of the human population from rural to urban areas*
3. *De Stichting Atlas voor Gemeenten mapped out the feeling of happiness per municipality in the Happiness Atlas 2017. The most striking information is that residents of the four major cities often experience less happiness as the residents of small municipalities.(Geluksatlas 2017)*

Rutger Bregman (a Dutch historian) confirms this statement in his book “Utopia for realists”, which advocates the idea of a basic income. A good idea, but if you ask me there is more to it. In my opinion, the basic income is a way to create opportunities to support people in their basic needs. What if we skip the money part and just facilitate those needs? What if we could create an environment which provides in energy, water, food and resources for housing? Wouldn’t life be a better and easier for everyone if those elements would become self-evident?”.

This is where the village comes in handy, because if we want to fulfill our desire for basic needs, we need land, subsoil and a close community that maintains this new landscape. And especially those aspects can be found in a village.

Also, in the context of COVID-19 this appears to be an interesting approach. Instead of a centralization of facilities, functions and target groups, we aim for decentralization. The image of the unsurpassed city is over, because the city is one of the easiest and largest sources of contamination, pollution and other problems due to its densely populated structure. Concentration creates a monoculture, a hot spot which is easy to break<sup>4</sup>. By spreading these hot spots, risks can be reduced. This means that we can bring new life in our existing and declining villages and rural areas.

### SUBSOIL, GROWTH AND CULTURE

We always underestimated the value of nature in relation to our economy. It is time that we consider nature as a serious factor in our developments again. This way we not only prevent the start of new pandemics, but we can also meet our basic needs. Think about it; the subsurface can provide us with food, water, energy and raw materials, all the elements we need. Therefore, nature inclusivity has never been more important than it is now. That is the way in which we can organize our landscape in a sustainable manner. The subsurface and nature are KEY to set up such systems. The Herenboeren Nederland and Piet van Eyck have proven that nature and production can go well together. By creating a collective natural farm and a food forest, they proved that the subsurface can be used perfectly as base for a production landscape. To do so, we need to get a better understanding of what the subsurface has to offer and how it can be used in a durable way.

By revaluing and re-using the subsoil, the village can get over its loss and regain its allure. Especially, with the technological developments of today. The subsurface can become leading again for future developments in the rural area. It is possible to determine the growth of a location depending on what the landscape has to offer. In this way we respect the landscape (and nature) and use it in a responsible way<sup>5</sup>. If we take the subsurface and the provision of basic needs as a starting point, instead of economics and money, the Netherlands will look very different. Especially the available square meters of fertile lands and the diversity in soil types will determine the size of a settlement<sup>6</sup>.

The subsoil not only facilitates in the need for food, but also has the possibility to create a unique identity for the village again. It may sound a bit strange, but the subsoil has always had a direct relationship with culture. Like Peter Wohlleben described in his book “Het geheime netwerk van de natuur”; It is about time we get concerned with the relationships between species, the large and the small. The more thoroughly you explain the relationships between the species, the more wonderful things reveal themselves. Nature seems much more complex than a hourwork.”

Everything is connected with each other and also culture is part of the bigger system. Do think, for example, of the Kraplappen in Bunschoten, the Brabant sausage bread, the Amsterdam canal houses or the Limburg half-timbering. All cultural expressions that are strongly related to the underground. Who knows how the new relationship with the subsoil will be expressed?

### OUR URGE TO BE SOCIAL

As humans, we like to be part of something bigger, something important. We have an intense urge to make a difference or to do something that matters. This urge has not only developed in recent decades but comes from our primal instincts. Think about it; Hunters and gatherers felt the pressure to work together as a tool of survival. Everybody had their own share in a community. Nowadays, we do not feel the pressure in terms of survival, but we feel the pressure to be liked and make social contacts. As humans we have always been social creatures, only the means of social have changed. This is why we still feel this urge but in a different way. In fact, the sense of community only got stronger. The ultimate example of this is our technology. Instagram, Facebook, Hyves and TikTok are all prove; we are social creatures. We want approval for what we are doing, and we want it from the whole world #allesvoordefollow<sup>7</sup>. However, we noticed that this way of communicating is not real (it is digital) and our need for physical interaction is stronger<sup>8</sup>. This awareness has certainly increased during COVID-19 virus.

This does not mean that we cannot use our technologies and innovation. On the contrary, now is the time to act towards a different and more efficient purpose. We have been living in a 1.5-meter society for several months, it becomes clear that our technology is ready to be implemented and used. Changes in healthcare, education, our way of working and our way of communicating; everything seems to be faster and more efficient than ever before. These implemented technologies play an essential role in decentralization, because more and more can be organized from your own house or in the village. And that is interesting, because now we are no longer sitting in the office with colleagues but with neighbors in the flex house of the village. Which is even more interesting because the neighbor is from a whole other discipline, which leads to interesting discussions, different opinions and new insights.

A village which facilitates in the basic needs increases this sense of togetherness. Using the landscape for these needs creates a new shared interest namely “the environment”. An interest that also fits all layers of the population. Because of this environment is also shared it should be maintained (or at least be regulated) by the inhabitant of the village themselves. It should be part of a new village cooperative. This way the population gets control and determines what happens. One thing is certain if we destroy it, we also destroy the common interest and therefor our individual interest. As part of the village, you automatically become part of the cooperative, but you yourself determine the influence you exert. This is not something new; research by Nicole Estejé, Ralf Janssen and Wilma Kuiper (experts in the field of social cooperation’s) shows that cooperatives are the most efficient way to bring people together and to achieve a common goal; A better quality of life. One thing is certain... as an individual you will never achieve this.

Therefore we should listen to our urge of socialization and act like it as a group. The conditions of the village are more fit to achieve something like a village-cooperation simply because of the number of inhabitants, it is manageable. Again, the small-scale wins from globalization, because situations are more controllable, flexible and therefore more reliable.

4. *Agricultural monocultures makes crops more vulnerable to pests, plant diseases and natural disasters. (WUR.nl) And This does not only apply to agriculture.*  
5. *A clear calculation such as the one made by the Herenboeren, is a good starting point. In terms of food; we need approximately 20 hectares of land for 500 inhabitants (Herenboeren.nl).*  
6. *When we look at the geomorfological map of the Netherlands (WUR.nl), a ‘new’ Netherlands looks very different. The focus is not on the West Netherlands, but on East and South. This is due to the usable and fertile substrate.*

7. *Would you also like to have someone follow up on Instagram, but you don’t know how? Bram Krikke explains how to do this in “Alles voor de Follow”. (Tele2.nl) This became a new phenomenon and hashtag on Instagram*  
8. *In the book “Huidhonger” by writers Gemma Boormans and Esther Cohen they explain “When you are touched, stroked and caressed, it does something to your happiness. You can feel your body, you feel you are alive! Being touched is a primary necessity of life. It is one of the most important means of contact from our earliest existence. (socialelvraagstukken.nl)*

The catchy wisdom on the tiles knew it all along, and the COVID-19 virus confirmed it; It is better to have a good neighbor, than a distant friend. To put it in other words; it is ok to think global but act local!

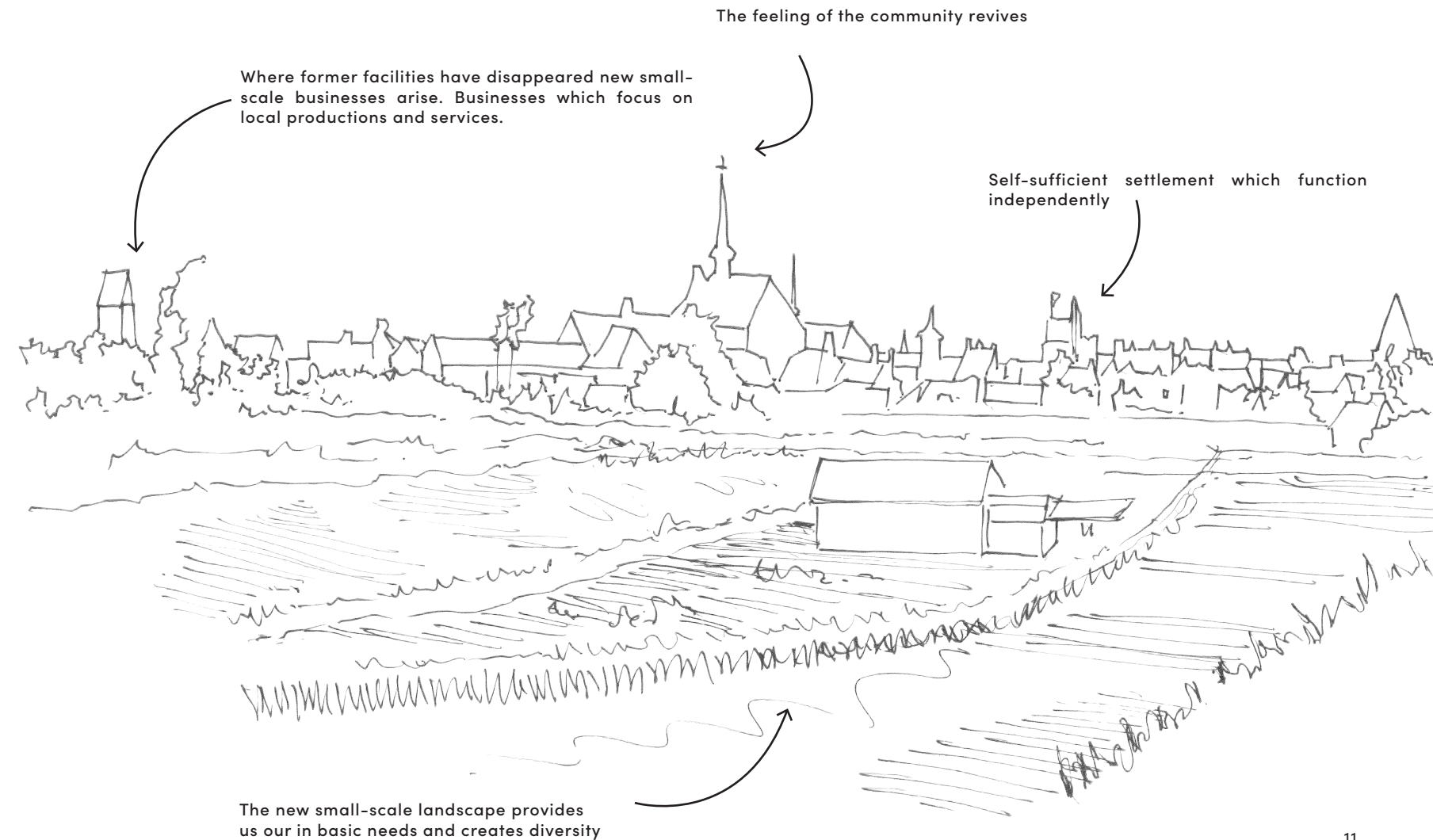
In the new villages we activate the subsurface and pay specific attention to what the subsurface can handle. Future developments have the obligation to use this as starting point. Instead of becoming part of the fragile global system, it is important to arrange the basics at a local level. This way we become less vulnerable and make use of local production.

The wisdom also refers to the possibility of improving mutual relationships in the village and making it accessible for everybody. Rather than approaching a distant friend to get a potential development started, it may be more convenient to look at your immediate environment. The reason for this; in the immediate vicinity we can reach a common goal, a goal that improves yours, but also your neighbors living environment. This ensures solidarity and bonding. Activating the subsurface is “what” we do which provides a social, spatial and perhaps at the end also an economic purpose. Thinking in a corporative way is “how” we do it, because transforming the landscape is in everybody’s interest.

Based on the USPs of the village, the activation of the subsurface and the connection between people as a new strategy is emerging on how to deal with villages. A strategy that re-activates the village and creates an attractive and livable environment. In terms of space this means that we re-activate abandoned places and landscapes and connect them with the underlying subsoils. We create a new culture.

#### A NEW STRATEGY WITH AN INTEGRAL SYSTEM






The subsurface is leading and consists of various systems which are connected with each other. By focusing on those local systems and the stimulation of diversity, an integral new ecosystem is created. An ecosystem that appreciates nature but also creates a useable landscape. A system that stimulates the interaction between people within a community. By focusing on a cooperation which provides a common goal, a new common denominator is created. An interest that benefits everyone. This new goal provides social cohesion, involvement and a sense of belonging. People become part of something bigger. This new goal, in combination with the qualities of the existing landscapes, translates into facilitating the basic needs; food, energy, water and raw materials. This is what the landscape can provide locally and almost for free, and what every human being needs. By providing inhabitants of the village in these needs a life without concerns arises. As the inhabitant of a village you are provided with everything you need and that gives the opportunity (or at least a little bit of space) to work for pleasure or do things that you really enjoy, instead of working to create certainty.



## RESEARCH



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# THE DOWNWARDS SPIRAL

Villages find themselves in a downward spiral, where the quality of life continues to decline. Young people, facilities and social cohesion are disappearing. The overwhelming cities are swallowing the right of existence and transform villages into general living areas (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2017). Cities use the capitalistic system as their artillery; first by creating attractive environments for the functions and later by taking the youth. Anno 2019; the city seems to be the only topic that we can talk about. The city is booming, especially in the field of developments and innovation.

But who cares about the villages, what is actually happening over there?

Thanks to our money-driven system and our changing society, the hopes for the villages seem to fade further and further. A world that is becoming more and more individualistic and follows the principle of follow the money, is destroying the once infamous drop life. The city is the place where it happens, that's where you have to be ... with all its consequences.

## CAPITALISM

The market, demand and feasibility are greater in the city than in the village.

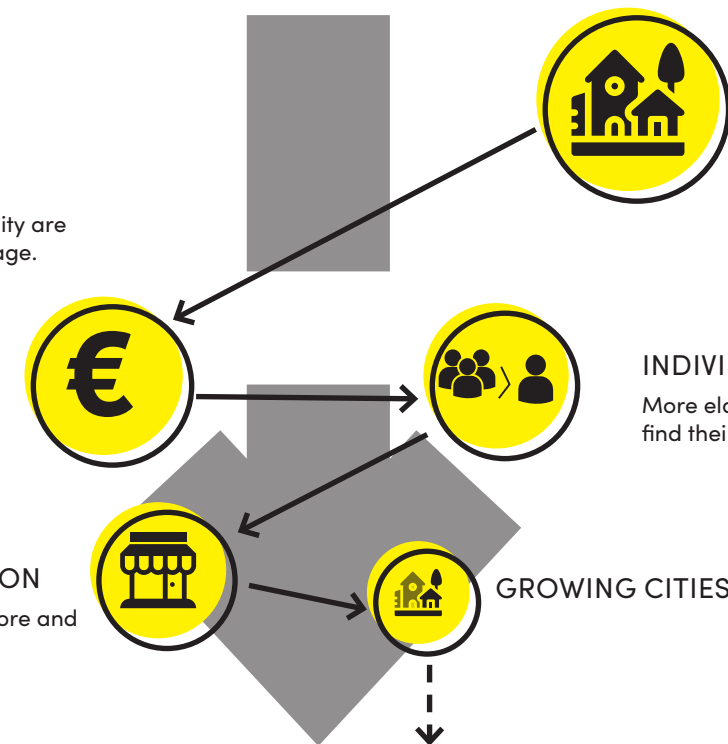
## NO CONTENT NO FUNCTION

Functions disappear because more and more people are moving

## INDIVIDUALISM

More elderly and singles are trying to find their place in the housing market.

GROWING CITIES, SHRINKING VILLAGES





# SITUATION IN VILLAGES

The changes within villages take place on a global level. And although the cultural differences are huge, the consequence of these changes is almost always the same, namely; daily facilities disappear, the population ages, dejuvenation takes place and social cohesion fades away (as does the original culture).

- First of all, the local industry (or employment) has disappeared from the villages. Industry that guaranteed a place of labor, a location from which a lot of inhabitants would get their income, but also a place where people met and had social interaction.
- Eventually, also the shops and daily facilities disappeared, such as the butcher, bakery and grocery store. This also effected the social balance in the village. Shops acted as locations where people had a small conversation with a fellow shopper. Because of the disappearing facilities the village also became an uninteresting place to live... imagine you had to cycle every day for more than 9 km, just to get your groceries.
- Finally (anno 2020), we see more and more social services disappearing. First healthcare, then religion and now even sports and schools. In the end, the village is nothing more than a place where a lot of houses were built within one compact location.

All in all, these developments in the villages are worrying. Not only in an economical sense, but especially on a social level. It affects the quality of life within these communities and damages the social cohesion.



VELP/RHEDEN/DIEREN/DE STEEG – Wat moeten we met al die leegstaande winkelpanden aan in onze dorpen in gemeente Rheden? Weet jij een ondernemer die misschien een pand zoekt?

## Zonder super leeft Oldehove niet meer

**De laatste winkel** Een supermarkt in een vergrijzend dorp met 1.500 inwoners, dat kan nauwelijks uit. Klandizie komt van ouderen, autozoen en mensen die 'nog iets' zijn vergeten. Eric en Christien Brands hielden in Oldehove negen jaar stand. Deze zomer sloot hun Attent-winkel.



## Dorp Ingen kampt met tekort aan voorzieningen voor jong en oud

INGEN - Iedere generatie in het Burense dorp Ingen kampt met andere problemen. Toch hebben de generaties een grote gemene deler: voor geen enkele leeftijdsgroep is plaats in het dorp.

## Basisscholen verdwijnen in rap tempo van Fries platteland

Het gaat hard met de sluiting van Friese basisscholen. In vergelijking met tien jaar geleden is voor bijna een op de vijf scholen het doek gevallen. De ontwikkeling gaat, afgaand op leerlingenprognoses, waarschijnlijk nog enkele jaren door.

Pieter Atsma © Geplaatst: 10 januari 2020 om 07:26



# THE UPWARDS SPIRAL (AMBITION)

The aim and ambition of this project is to get the village out of its downward spiral. And that is only possible when we no longer look at the village in an economical and individualistic way... It is time for change and time to show the world what villages are really capable of and what the value of being socially connected is about! Because, believe it or not, villages have the potential to set a new course when it comes to the way we live together. In order to do this, an optimistic attitude is needed, and the highest achievable goals must be pursued. For the village this means that we are going from money-driven to happiness-driven, from individualism to socialism and from supply-driven to demand-driven.

Villages find themselves in a unique position because they are currently standing still, almost finding themselves at rock-bottom. This means that the time has come to start new developments. The many vacant properties and landscapes offer the opportunity to start over again.

Keep in mind: Where there is nothing ... anything is possible!

## HAPPINESS CAPITALISM

The market, demand and feasibility are greater in the city than in the village.

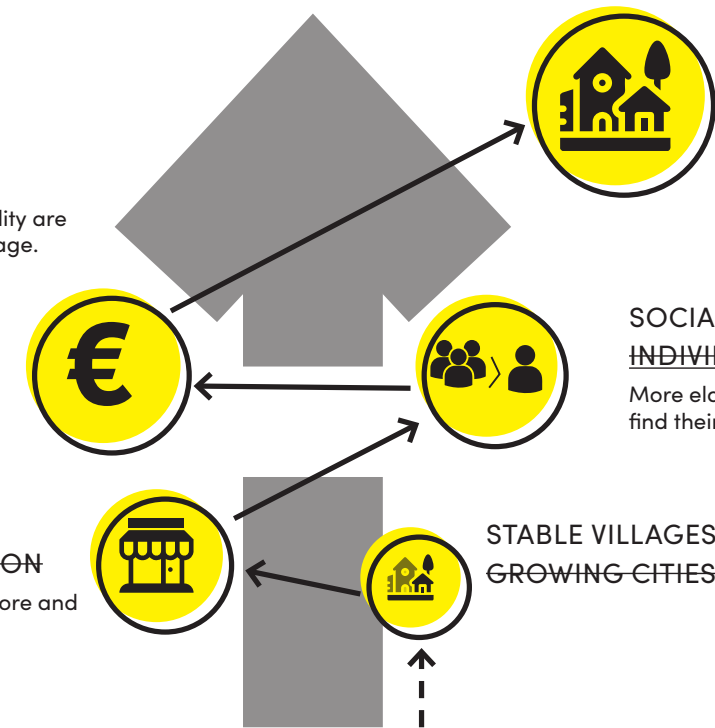
## FACILITIES THAT MATTER ~~NO CONTENT NO FUNCTION~~

Functions disappear because more and more people are moving

## SOCIAL COHESION INDIVIDUALISM

More elderly and singles are trying to find their place in the housing market.

## STABLE VILLAGES ~~GROWING CITIES, SHRINKING VILLAGES~~



## TRENDS & DEVELOPMENTS



# URBANISATION

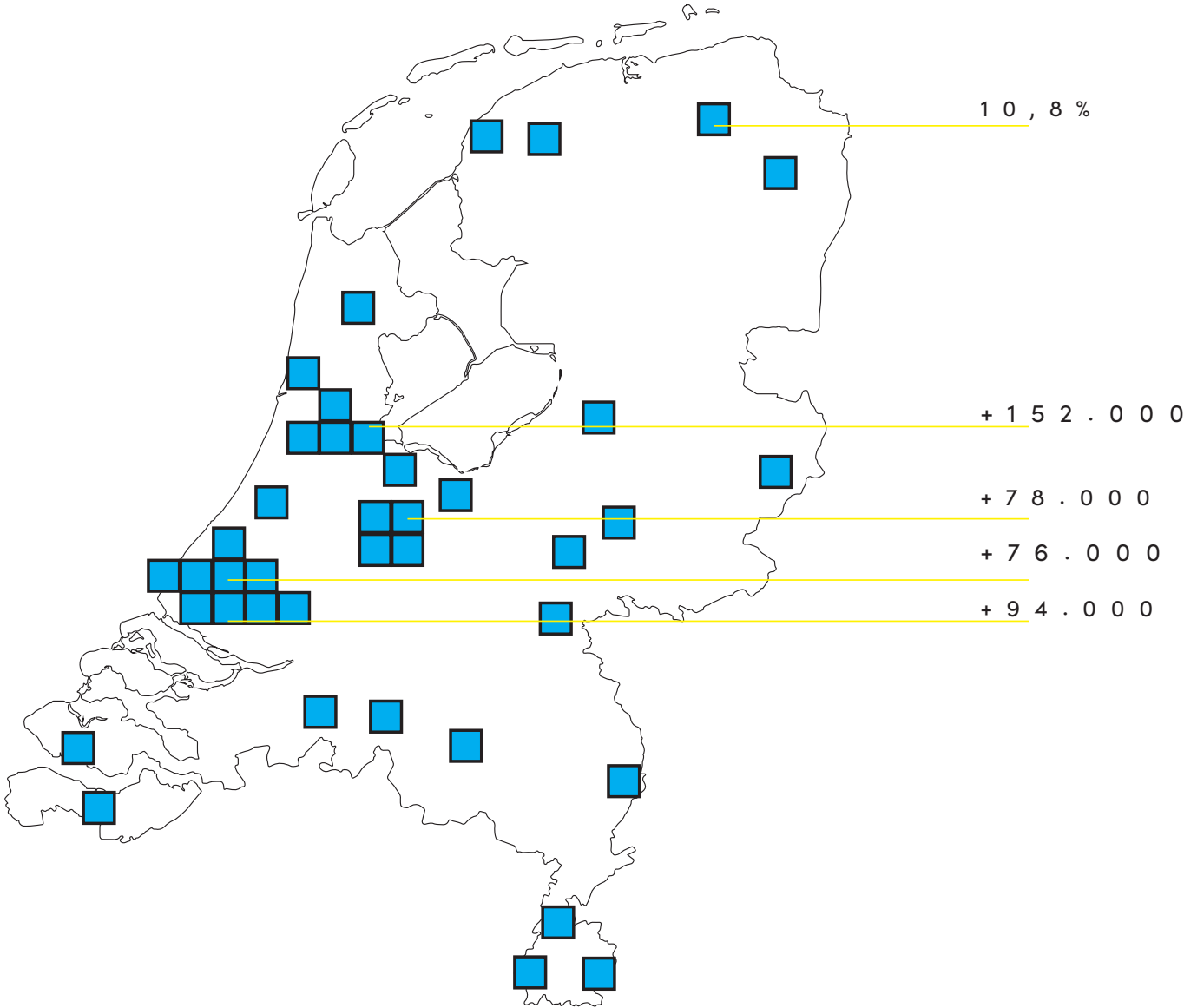
In 1800, only two percent of the world's population lived in cities. In 1950 this percentage had risen to thirty percent and in 2007 we reached a milestone; For the first time more than half of the world population lived in cities.

Today we even see a further acceleration of this urbanization: one and a half million urban residents are added every week. This means that by 2030, 60 percent of the world's population will live in urban regions. This trend not only relates to the Netherlands but for the whole of Europe, even the whole world. For example, the population of London is growing twice as fast as in the rest of the UK. We see a similar trend in the Netherlands. Till 2030:

- Amsterdam will grow to 152,000 inhabitants
- Utrecht will grow to 78,000 inhabitants
- The Hague will grow to 76,000 inhabitants
- Rotterdam will grow to 94,000 inhabitants

Even in the shrinking regions, we are seeing an increase in the population in the cities. For example, the population in Groningen will increase by 10.8%.

Cities are booming! And many experts are focusing on how to deal with the situation.



CITIES ARE BOOMING

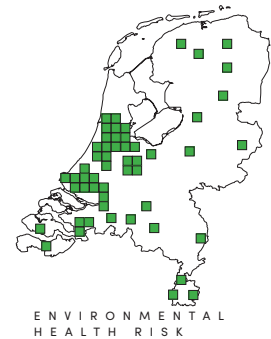
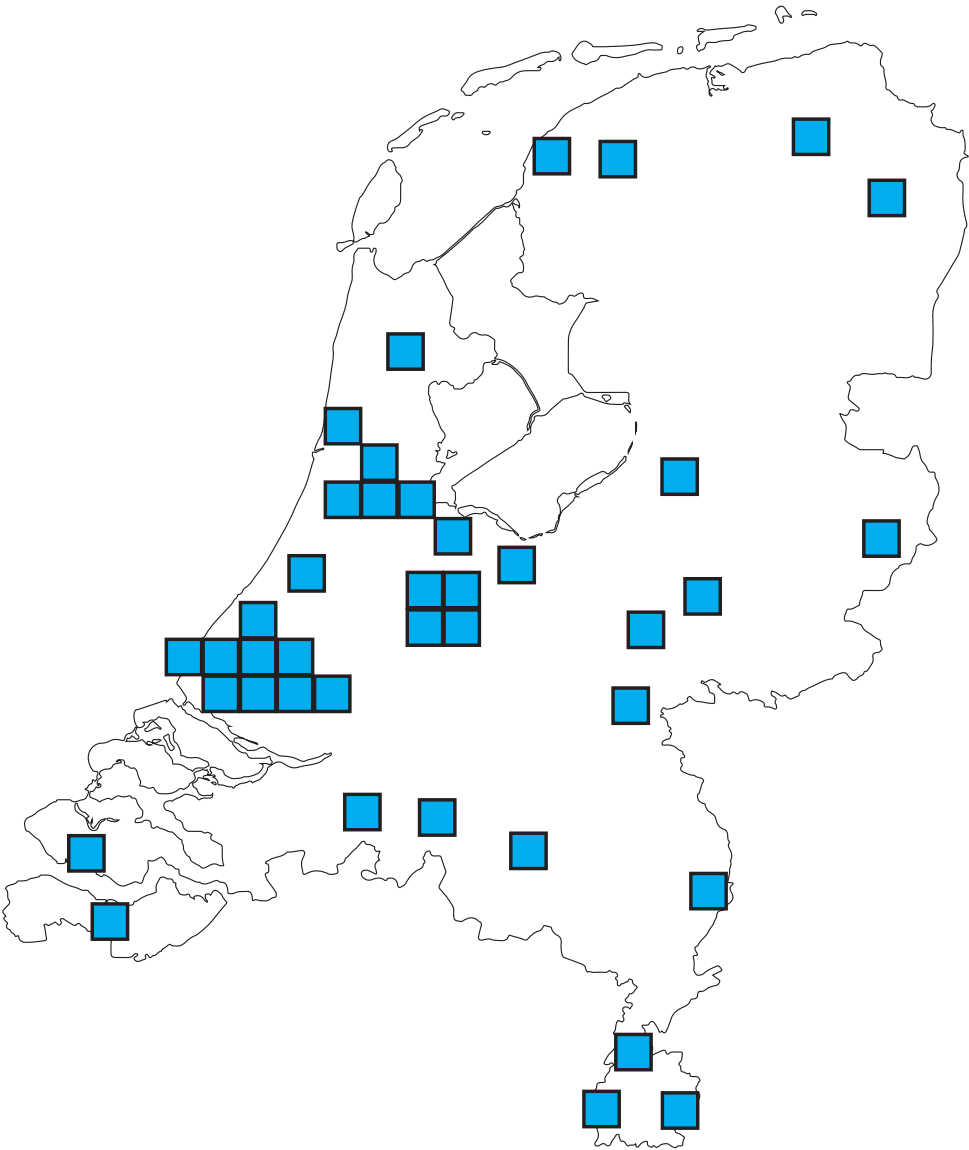
# NATIONAL PROBLEMS

However, the development of the cities does not come without a cost. When we take a look at where the national problems are located, we see a clear concentration in the highly dense urban environments. The air quality around cities is poor, the health risks are high and there are a lot of complains about noise. It makes sense, because this is where most people live and as long as they are happy it is fine. But that is where it really gets shocking. When we take a closer look at the feeling of happiness, it turns out that people in the cities often feel the most unhappy.

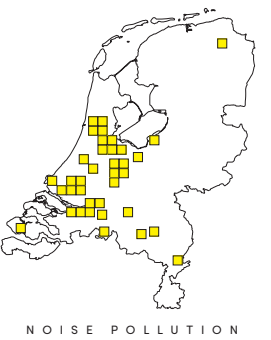
Knowing this, it seems that the city is not such a nice place to live. Perhaps we can organize the predicted urbanization in a different way and aim for happiness? Instead of stacking houses on top of each other in the city, and creating more problems, we can make the villages more attractive and spread the housing?

Of course, there are different types of people with different wishes. The city will therefore always have a certain appeal to certain target groups. Nevertheless, by changing the atmosphere and function of the villages a new way of life can be created. A life which is interesting not only for the persistent villager, but also for the urban hipster.

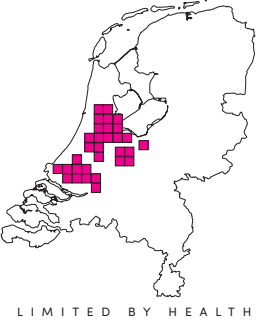
## FEELING OF (UN)HAPPINESS



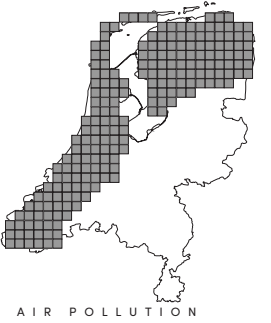
ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH RISK



NOISE POLLUTION



LIMITED BY HEALTH



AIR POLLUTION

# PROTESTS & ACTIONS

When we want to have a close look at what people really want, we can use the big protests and actions that have taken place as a good source. Especially, protests with a great number of protesters, where young and old people participated. When we look at these protests such as the climate protest, the farmers protest, the healthcare protest and the education protests, we quickly come to the conclusion that they are mainly about our basic needs. This is not surprising because in a globalizing world where the economy is always number one and money has to be earned, our basic needs seems less important. Of course we all know this is not true, but it is how our system is functioning.

In my opinion, we should take these protests very seriously. The protests show the voice of the people, a voice that wants to be heard. The special thing about these protests and actions is that the participation of young people is exceptionally high, and they are the ones who will continue to live on in this world. By listening carefully to these people, we can anticipate for what will become increasingly important in the future.



TROUW.NL



NCR.NL



ZWOLLENU.NL



NOS.NL

UNCERTAINTY ABOUT OUR BASIC NEEDS  
(Food, environment and self-development)



# INSPIRATION

Fortunately, I am not the only one who shares this opinion. Many others recognize similar patterns. One of my biggest inspirations for this project was Rutger Bregman. In particular, his performance “De meeste mensen deugen” let to new insights. As historic expert and researcher he scientifically describes how people have developed from barbaric animals towards social beings. We think of ourselves as bad humans but at the end you see a trend that shows that we are becoming more and more social & good.

In addition to that performance, Rutger also wrote the book “Utopia for realists”, which advocates the idea of a basic income. A good idea if you ask me, but there is something more to it. In my opinion, the basic income is a way to desire creating opportunities to fulfill people’s needs. If you have some money you can buy what pleases you... But what if we skip the money part and just facilitate in what everybody really needs? And then, if you want something extra you can use your money. The question or interest has emerged from this; “What if we can meet within our basic needs? Wouldn’t everything be a little better and easier for everyone?”

Combine this with various developments such as the Internet of things, which means that more and more things can be arranged at home, or the concept of the Herenboeren and various other cooperatives, and a whole new world is emerging.

A world that could cause a paradigm shift where not globalization, but localization is taking over.



**ALL-IN ON THE VILLAGES**





# USP'S OF THE VILLAGE

The trends and developments that are currently active and the answer to the question of how we can be met in our needs, seem to fit better with the characteristic of the village than of the city.

Bonding to the subsurface / contact with the earth  
Instead of living at a height of 20 meters without any connection to your environment, people in the village live almost directly in the rural landscape. The bond with and appreciation of the landscape is therefore bigger, as are the healthier living conditions. It seems and feels more local, but also more responsible.

Part of something bigger  
You can get lost in the crowd in the city and stroll through the shopping streets as an individual. The world is at YOUR feet and YOU can do whatever you want. But when we ask you who YOUR neighbor is, you cannot answer the question. In the village it is the other way around. You are NEVER ALONE and EVERYONE knows EVERYONE. People pay attention to EACH OTHER and you become part of a community. As social being, you are part of something bigger. You are part of a group.

Small-scale and independent  
In the village, the mentality of independence is strong, although it is not recognized by the city. They just ask themselves the question whether you are still driving horse and carriage or already have a car. They think the village is depending on the city. But it actually is the other way around. Because of the small-scale settlements, a manageable situation is created. A situation that is flexible and adaptable.

ON TOP OF THE WORLD



DOWN TO EARTH



A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS



INDIVIDUALS THAT FORM A GROUP



CLUTTERED



MANAGEABLE





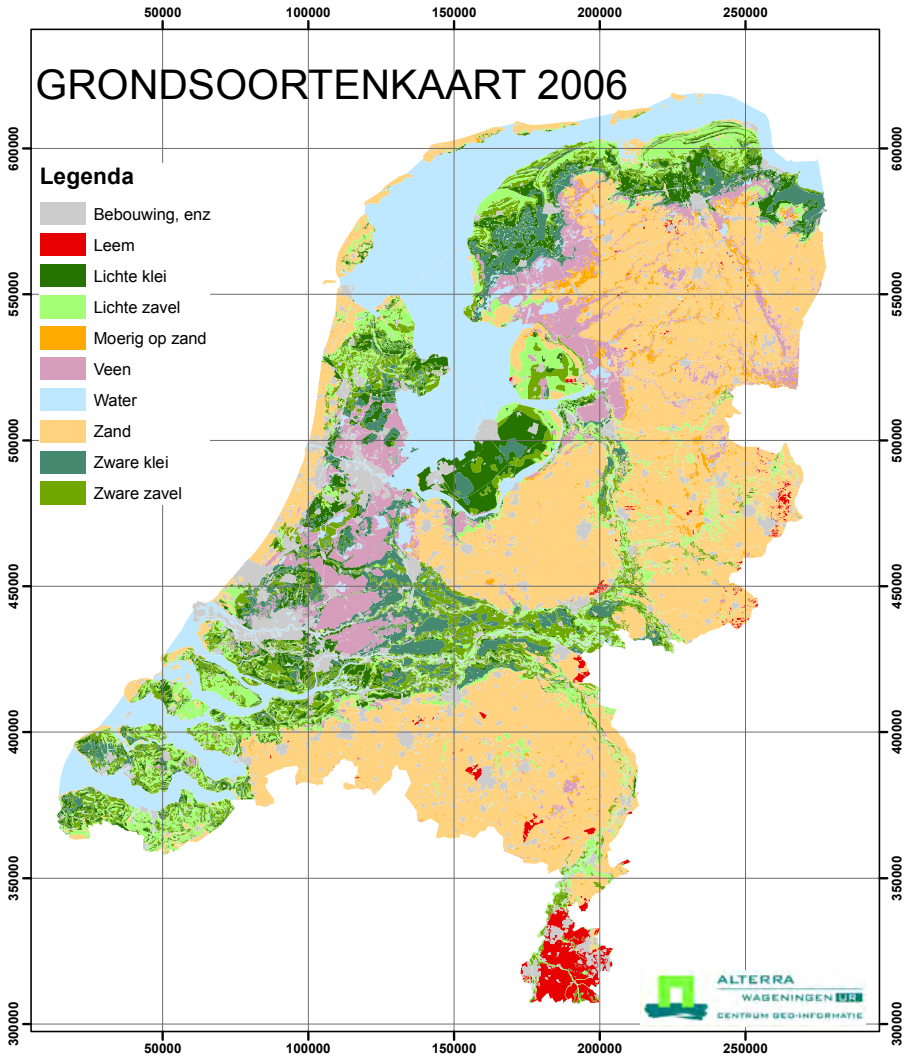
# BACK TO THE ROOTS

The most important USP of the village is the connection with the subsoil. Because the village did not know big developments and has been kept small, the connection with the landscape has remained. However, we still have a connection, but the question is: “Do we still know how to use it”. We used to have great respect for the landscape because it provided us with food and all kinds of things. But since globalization took place our value for the landscape became less and less. For this reason, the characteristic and identity of certain settlements have also declined. Think of the kraplappen in Spakenburg.

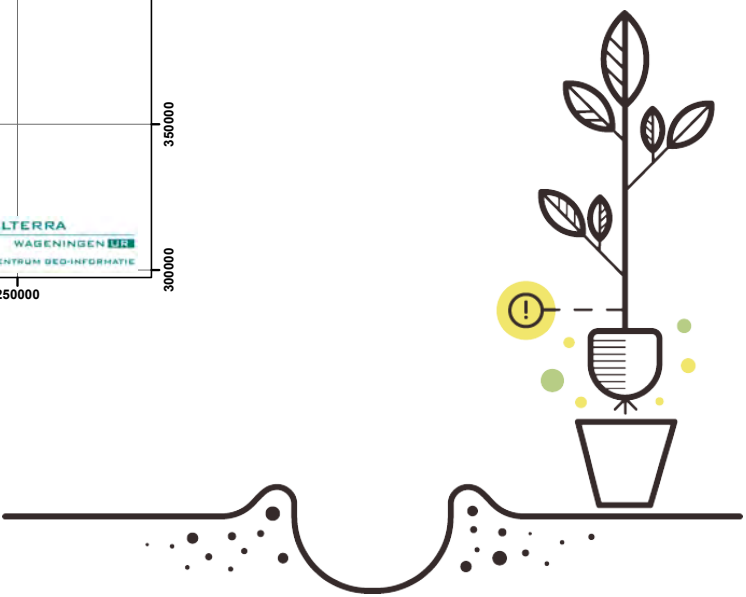
When taking this into account, the city is right: “What is the village’s right to exist?”

By valuing and using (or activating) the subsoil again, the village can get over its loss and regain its allure. After all, the subsurface offers the possibility to meet basic needs, just like it used to do. Certainly, with the technological developments of today. The subsurface can become leading again for future developments at each village and/or settlement. It is possible to determine the growth of a location depending on what the landscape has to offer and can handle.

If we take the subsurface and the provision of basic needs as a starting point (instead of economics and money), the Netherlands will look very different. Especially the available square meters of fertile lands and the diversity in soil types will determine the size of a settlement.



- FOOD**  
20 HECTARES = 500 PEOPLE
- ENERGY**  
12 SOLARPANELS = 1 HOUSEHOLD  
1 WINDMILL = 2000 HOUSEHOLDS  
1 SMALL WATERTURBINE = 200 HOUSEHOLDS
- WATER**  
HELOFYTEFILTER = 3 A 4 M2 P. INHABITANT  
WILLOWFILTER = 40 M2 P. INHABITANT
- RESOURCES**  
DEPENDS ON THE CONDITION OF SUBSOIL



## GLOBAL VS. LOCAL

The catchy wisdom on the tiles knew it all along!

By valuing and activating the subsurface, specific attention is paid to what the subsurface can handle. Future developments are planned with this as starting point. Instead of becoming part of the fragile global system, it is important to have things in order at a local level. Once this local system is in place, further cross-pollination can be examined. First with the immediate environment and then on the international level.

In addition, this wisdom also refers to the possibility of improving mutual relationships in the village. Rather than approaching a distant friend to get a potential development off the ground, it may be more convenient to look at your immediate environment. In the immediate vicinity there is a common goal, the goal to improve your own living environment. This ensures solidarity and bonding. Activating the subsurface therefore provides a social, spatial and perhaps at the end also an economic purpose.



# FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

By using the landscape to meet the basic needs, an interesting new financial model can be created. A model that benefits the residents and the village. Instead of paying profits to large commercial companies, money that we will never see again, the villagers can also choose to arrange everything themselves and therefor create a system that finances itself. The profits can then be used to upgrade the village, where before the profit would have gone to large commercial companies.

Existing model: Currently, an average household pays approximately € 26,628 annually for their daily needs. The outliers in this model are; food, energy, healthcare and the use of a car. These are the highest cost and the profit ends up in the companies without getting hardly any added value out of it for the local community.

New model: When we transform this system into a local system like a village cooperation, a much more interesting model is created. By providing the daily needs as a cooperative, we have € 26,628 p. year p. household available to realize facilities that provide in the basic needs. They ad value to the village and create independence.

General costs household Netherlands			bron Nibud 2019							
What	For	Risk	Week	Monthly	Year	1000x	Profit	p year	p. person	x1000
Health care insurance	Health	avarage	€ 31,25	€ 125,00	€ 1.500,00	€ 1.500.000	6,1%	€ 91,50		€ 91.500,00
Energy costs	Electricity	low	€ 37,50	€ 150,00	€ 1.800,00	€ 1.800.000	8,3%	€ 148,50		€ 148.500,00
Water costs	Water	low	€ 3,75	€ 15,00	€ 180,00	€ 180.000	0,0%	€ 0,00		€ 0,00
Life insurance	Life	low	€ 5,00	€ 20,00	€ 240,00	€ 240.000	20,0%	€ 48,00		€ 48.000,00
Funeral insurance	Death	low	€ 5,00	€ 20,00	€ 240,00	€ 240.000	20,0%	€ 48,00		€ 48.000,00
All costs (avarage)	Car	low	€ 197,00	€ 788,00	€ 9.456,00	€ 9.456.000	4,0%	€ 378,24		€ 378.240,00
Home insurance	House	high	€ 4,00	€ 16,00	€ 192,00	€ 192.000	4,0%	€ 7,68		€ 7.680,00
liability insurance	Juridical	avarage	€ 3,96	€ 15,83	€ 190,00	€ 190.000	10,0%	€ 19,00		€ 19.000,00
Travel insurance	Travel	avarage	€ 1,25	€ 5,00	€ 60,00	€ 60.000	8,0%	€ 4,80		€ 4.800,00
Supermarket	Supplies	low	€ 45,00	€ 180,00	€ 2.160,00	€ 2.160.000	4,0%	€ 86,40		€ 86.400,00
Totaal					€ 26.628,00	€ 26.628.000		€ 832,12		€ 832.120,00

What	Jaar 1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20
Health care insurance	€ 91.500,00	€ 183.000,00	€ 274.500,00	€ 366.000,00	€ 457.500,00	€ 915.000,00	€ 1.372.500,00	€ 1.830.000,00
Energy costs	€ 148.500,00	€ 297.000,00	€ 445.500,00	€ 594.000,00	€ 742.500,00	€ 1.485.000,00	€ 2.227.500,00	€ 2.970.000,00
Water costs	€ 0,00	€ 0,00	€ 0,00	€ 0,00	€ 0,00	€ 0,00	€ 0,00	€ 0,00
Life insurance	€ 48.000,00	€ 96.000,00	€ 144.000,00	€ 192.000,00	€ 240.000,00	€ 480.000,00	€ 720.000,00	€ 960.000,00
Term life insurance	€ 48.000,00	€ 96.000,00	€ 144.000,00	€ 192.000,00	€ 240.000,00	€ 480.000,00	€ 720.000,00	€ 960.000,00
All costs (avarage)	€ 378.240,00	€ 756.480	€ 1.134.720	€ 1.512.960,00	€ 1.891.200,00	€ 3.782.400,00	€ 5.673.600,00	€ 7.564.800,00
Home insurance	€ 7.680,00	€ 15.360,00	€ 23.040,00	€ 30.720,00	€ 38.400,00	€ 76.800,00	€ 115.200,00	€ 153.600,00
Legal insurance	€ 19.000,00	€ 38.000,00	€ 57.000,00	€ 76.000,00	€ 95.000,00	€ 190.000,00	€ 285.000,00	€ 380.000,00
Travel insurance	€ 4.800,00	€ 9.600,00	€ 14.400,00	€ 19.200,00	€ 24.000,00	€ 48.000,00	€ 72.000,00	€ 96.000,00
Supermarket	€ 24.000,00	€ 48.000,00	€ 72.000,00	€ 96.000,00	€ 120.000,00	€ 240.000,00	€ 360.000,00	€ 480.000,00
	€ 832.120	€ 1.664.240	€ 2.496.360	€ 3.328.480	€ 4.160.600	€ 8.321.200	€ 12.481.800	€ 16.642.400

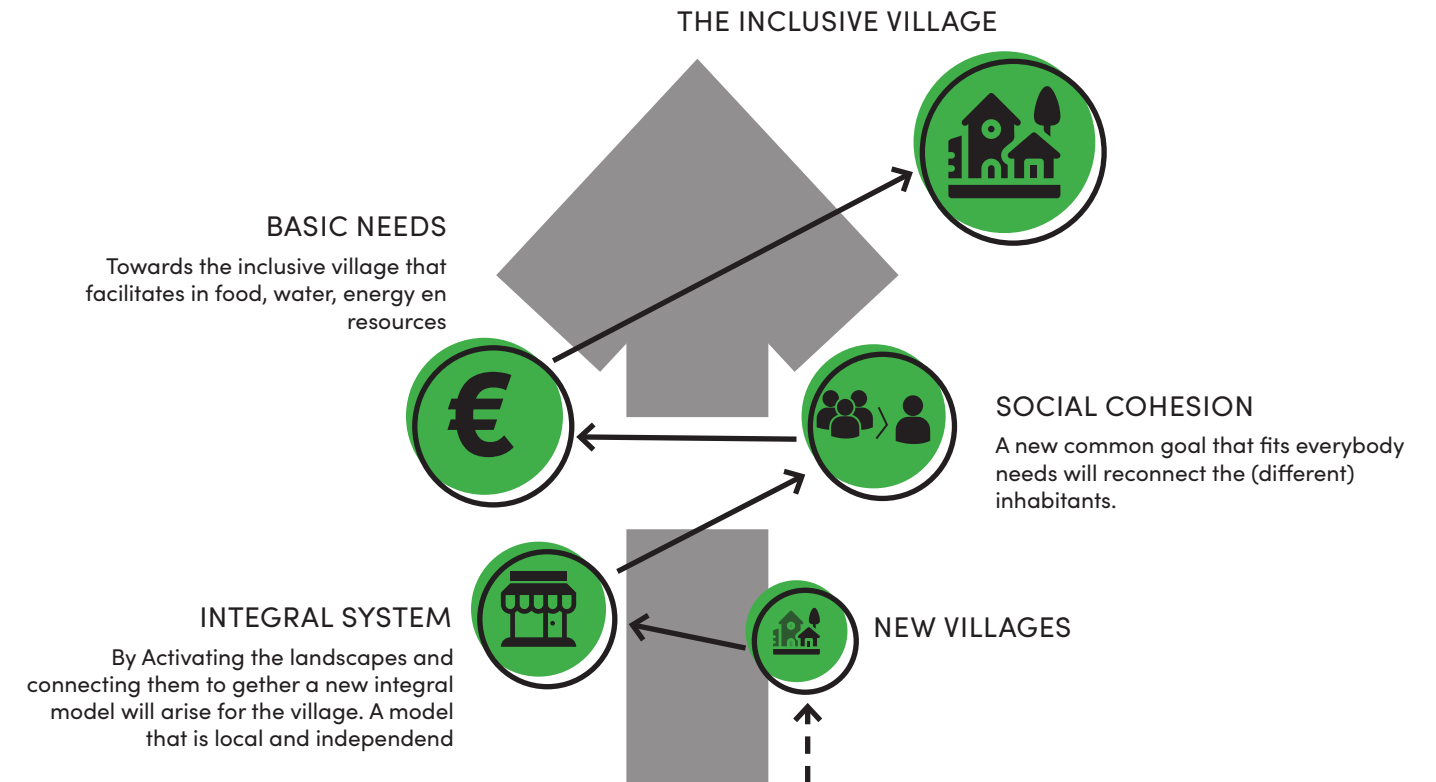
# CONCEPTUAL STRATEGY

Based on the village's USPs, the activation of the subsurface, the connection between people and the financial possibilities, a new strategy is emerging on how to deal with the villages.

**An integral system:** The subsurface is leading and consists out of various systems that are connected with each other. By focusing on those individual systems, the overarching integrality and the stimulation of diversity, an integral new ecosystem is created. An ecosystem that appreciates nature, the landscape and the identity of the place and at the same time stimulates the interaction and organizing ability between people.

**Social cohesion:** By focusing on a cooperation and providing in a common goal, a new common denominator is created. An interest that benefits everyone. This new goal provides social cohesion, involvement and a sense of belonging. People become part of something bigger. It is not an individual system but a social system.

**Basic needs:** The new goal, in combination with the qualities of the existing landscapes, translates into facilitating the basic needs; food, energy, water and raw materials. This is what the landscape can provide and what every human being needs.



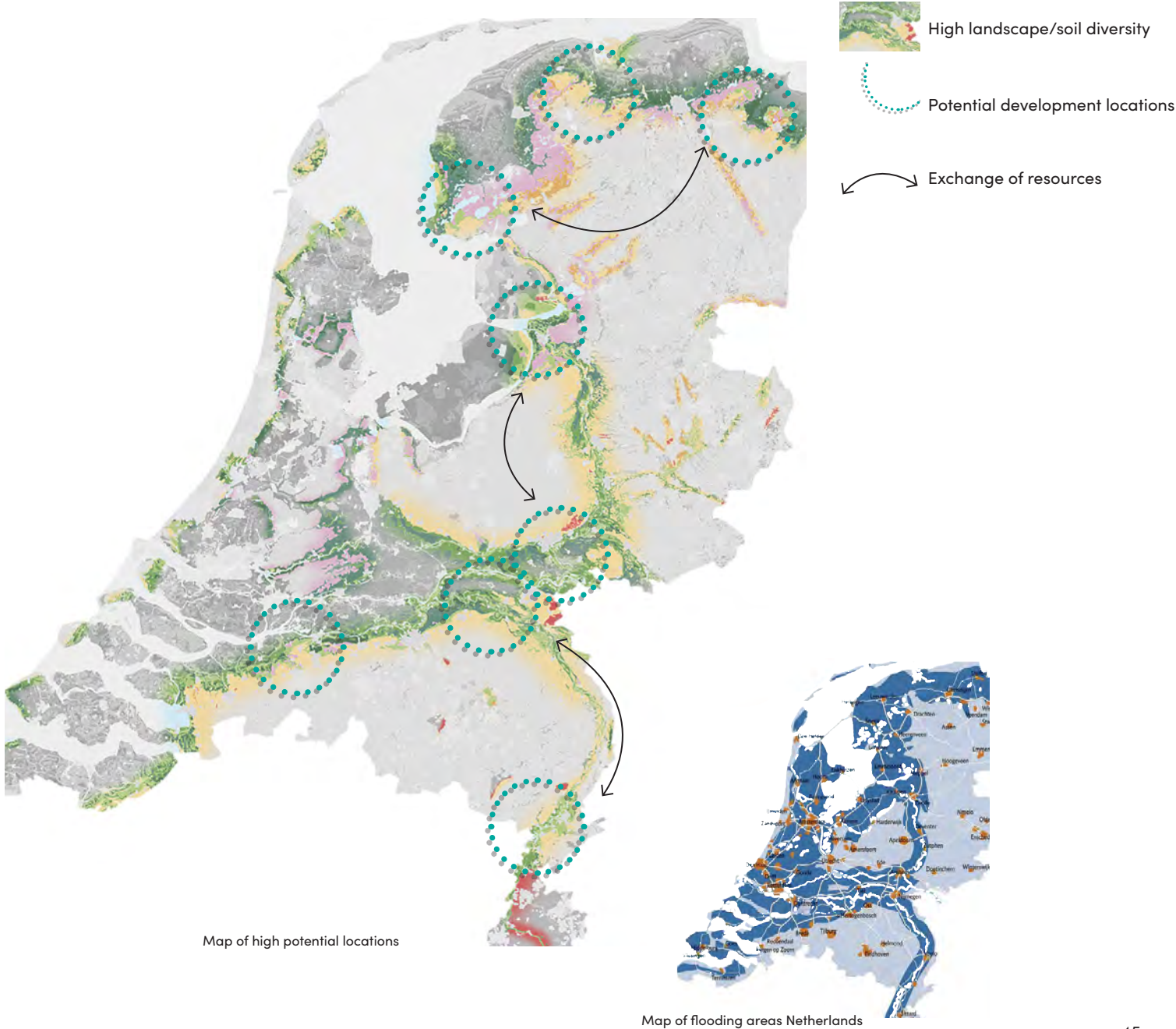


# VISION ON THE NETHERLANDS

When we roll out such a system over the map of the Netherlands, an interesting perspective arises. By taking the subsoil as a basis and aiming for diversity, various hotspots-locations emerge. At these locations we are perfectly capable of developing a self-regulating system. A system that determines the maximum number of people who can live in a certain area. It will therefore come as no surprise that there is still plenty of room for growth. Only not in the dense urban areas.

The most suitable locations in the Netherlands are near the rivers. Here the soil is most fertile. When this gets combined this with another type of landscape in the vicinity, new hotspots are created: opportunities arise where the differentiation is greatest. However, not every landscape is the same everywhere. Therefor collaborations between the different areas will be necessary.

A bonus is, that the chosen locations find themselves on the edges of the floodplains in the Netherlands. This does not only mean that the new settlements are self-sufficient, but they are also relatively well protected when the water comes.



## CASE STUDY

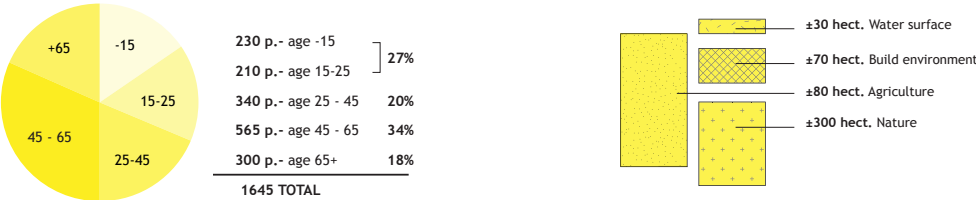


# INTRODUCING MEGEN

The village of Megen was chosen as case study. We could have chosen any other village, because the problems are almost the same everywhere. The only thing that differs per village is the identity and the culture. And that is what makes Megen so interesting. Megen also has my personal interest, because I recently moved to this village. This is how I became 'import' and realized that the village has a lot of potential but does not use it. By doing this project, I can improve my own environment and at the same time integrate into the village, by talking to its inhabitants by providing insides for its inhabitants.

Megen is a village located next to the Maas, with Oss, including its facilities, as the closest city. Between the village and the city there is a distance of approximately 9 kilometers, with agricultural fields as a buffer zone. Because of this buffer on one side and the spatial barrier of the Maas on the other side the village is located as an enclave in the landscape. It has a distant attitude to the city.

The settlement has approximately 1645 inhabitants, with a ratio of 50/50 of young and old people. We could state that Megen is well balanced in terms of demographics. Because the landscape is going to be leading in the new development, it is good to know what we are dealing with. Megen counts 80 hectares of agricultural land, 300 hectares of nature and 30 hectares of water, being the river. The total number of inhabitants is between 2000 and 2500 people. In this case the agricultural land is leading.



# DISAPPEARING FACILITIES

The decreasing level of facilities also applies for Megen. Many daily facilities have already disappeared, and others are currently being questioned.

Megen has known a relatively large number of facilities. This is because of the city rights that the village gained in 1357 A butcher, baker, grocery store, brewer, post office, fishmonger, carpenter, clockmaker and a supermarket where located in the village. However, at this moment the village only has a snackbar and some cafes/restaurants. And the future doesn't look good. The football club, the school, the church and the ferry are also under discussion. Even the farmers and the monasteries are struggling with their existence.

All the vacancies due to the disappearance of the program feel like an attack on the identity and livability of the village. When we ask the inhabitants what they think of these developments they agree that the livability is going downwards, but there are no solutions.





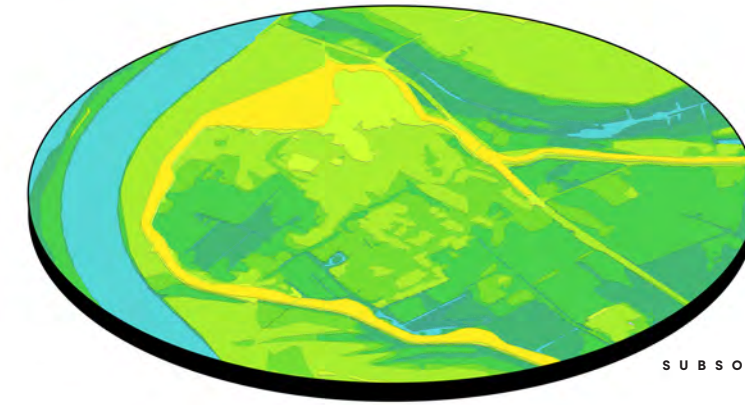
# LANDSCAPE FEATURES

What is being preserved in the village is the landscape and the accompanying subsoil. This subsurface was formed centuries ago and can still be recognized in the present situation by the flora & fauna, the altitude lines and the soil compositions. The Maas, the floodplains, the dike and the historical settlement form the basis of the local identity.

By valuing and using the landscape as a base, the identity can be secured in future developments.

When we look at the landscape of Megen, we see that it consists out of many layers. Height differences are big and the soil is rich in nutrients. This combination ensures that the landscape is diverse and useable in many ways.

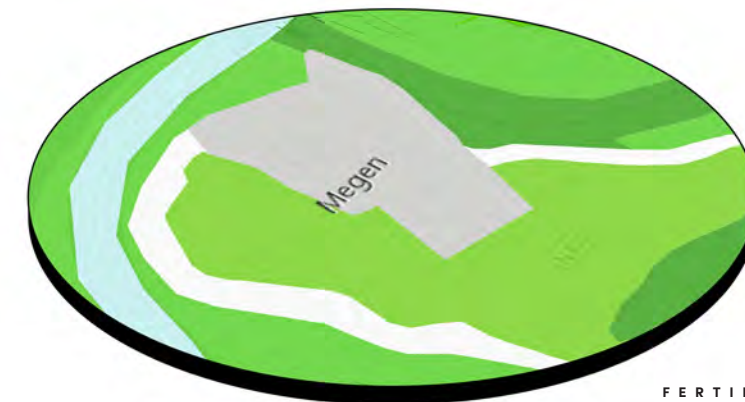
The Maas, dike and floodplain are the main carriers of the area and have shaped the landscape over the years. Man made his entrance at a later stage and made grateful use of the landscape because of the fertile soils which are created because of the deposits from the river.



SUBSOIL, DIVERSITY



MAAS, FLOODPLAINS, DIKE



FERTILE GROUNDS

# INHABITANTS

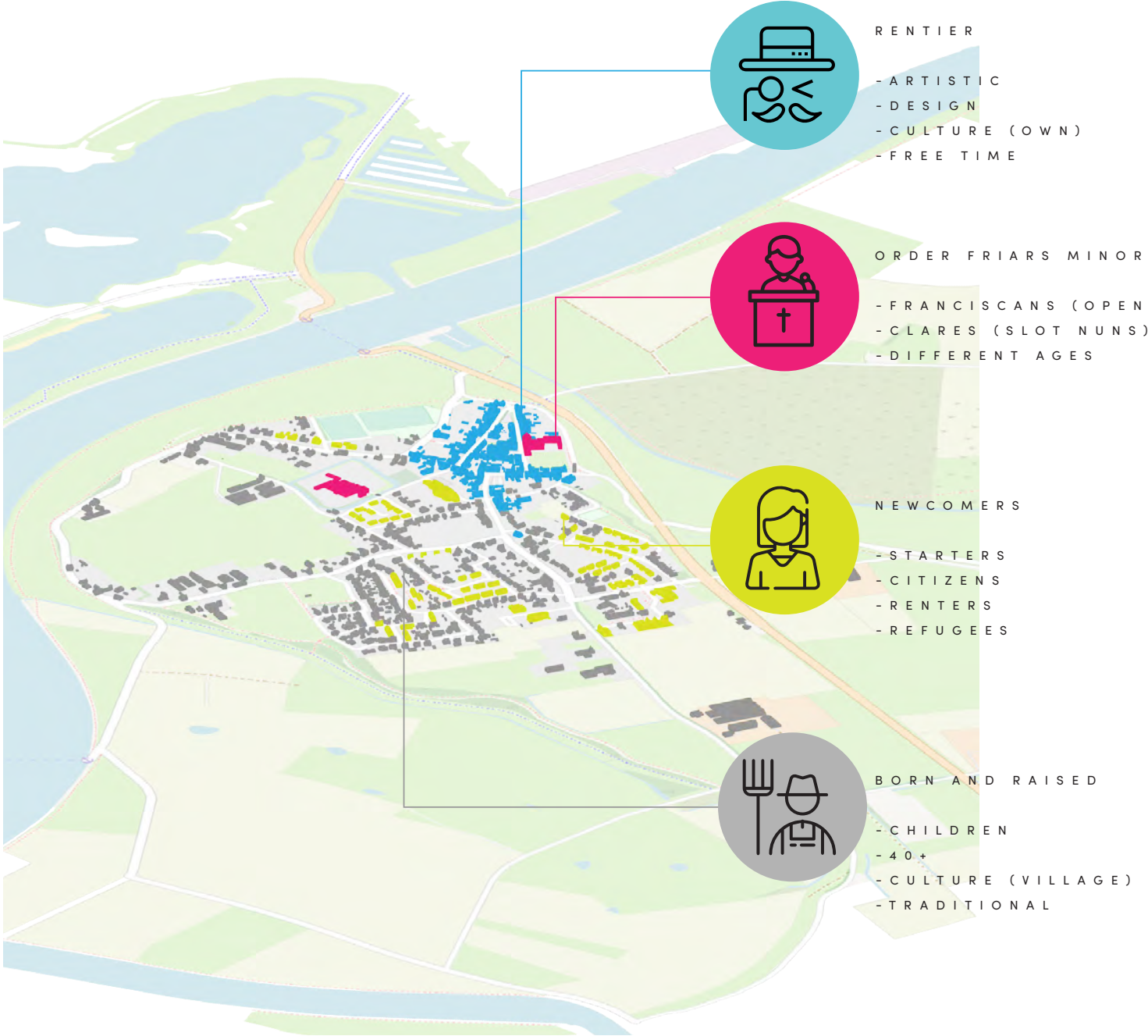
In addition to the diverse landscape, Megen also has a great diversity in types of inhabitants. The remarkable thing about those inhabitants is that we can easily point out where the target groups are located on the map. In Megen group formation is taking place and those groups are claiming more and more parts of the village. This group formation does not benefit the social cohesion. Everyone stays on their own isolated island, which means that there is hardly any cross-pollination between the target groups and the feeling of being a community is vanishing. The differences in interests per target group are large and there is hardly any common interest to be discovered.

The rentiers: This target group has claimed its place in the historical center. They have a lot of free time and are mainly interested in art and culture.

The Franciscans and Clares: This target group is located in both monasteries. They have always integrated a lot into the village but are now an extinct breed. Survival is priority number one.

The local population: This target group has lived in Megen for years and know all the ins and outs. They are part of the local culture but have difficulties with change and other cultures.

The newcomers or 'import': Newcomers still have relatively little connection with the village. Some of them are looking for ways to integrate, others simply enjoy the peace and space, without showing any interest in integration. This target group is differing a lot in cultures and interests.





# SPATIAL QUALITIES

When we look at the village in a purely spatial way, we can detect some great qualities. Megen has a well-preserved cultural history and a rich landscape that is located around the village as a ring. The green environment, the endless dike, the various (religious) towers and the historic center are striking elements that form the identity.

Despite these spatial qualities, the experience value is low. One can only experience the qualities by looking at it. By activating the built environment & rural area and making them accessible by linking programs to them, the experience value can be increased and thus the appreciation.

The activation of the different landscapes should match the environment and stimulate cross-pollination between the different landscapes. This creates a new ecosystem that makes optimal use of the qualities of the environment.



# WHAT DO THE INHABITANTS THINK?

“But how do you activate the landscape? And with what program?”

As described in the paragraph target groups, the village lacks a sincere shared interest. An interest that connects the different groups together. A new program to activate the landscape and the village will therefore have to contribute to this interest.

By going into a dialogue with the residents, special insights about the village have been gained. Actually, there is relatively unanimous agreement about what that the village needs.

In short:  
Almost everyone agrees that there is group formation and sees this as a problem. In spite of this group formation, the association life is active and there is a true do-mentality. That is the charm of the village. When we ask what is missing, the answer is almost immediately related to facilities that contribute to the daily needs and social connection.



Anouk & Joost  
25- 35, living together, “Import” with barely any connections

Keywords: Hospitality, Authentic, Small scale life  
Missing: A supermarket or some place where we can buy our daily stuff



Toon  
65+ , living together, “Local” connections

Keywords: Hospitality, History, Culture, Losing social balance  
Missing: Reconnection with the villagers, one community



Miriam & Patrick  
45- 65, living together, “Local” family

Keywords: Hospitality, Religion, History, To much individual groups (no mix), individualism  
Missing: Dynamics and interactions in the public space



Gea  
35- 45, Single, “Import” with close connections with local villagers

Keywords: “Ons kent Ons”, Active club life, Characteristic city center  
Missing: Facilities for the elderly and younger people



Iris  
45- 65, Single, “Import” with a few connections

Keywords: Hospitality, Friendly, Do-mentality, To much dependence  
Missing: Ways to integrate into the culture of Megan



# TAKING INTO ACCOUNT

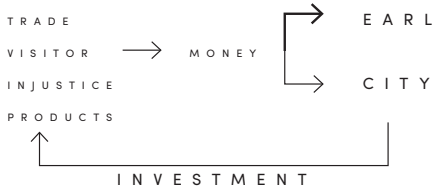
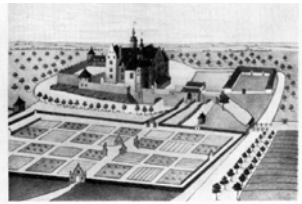
In addition to the vacancy, the landscape and the target groups, there are also events and developments in Megen that must be taken into account for the future development. They will have to be included in the new plan for Megen.

**More space for the rivers:**  
Megen is located next to the Maas and is therefore part of the “ruimte voor de rivieren” plan. For Megen, this means that parts of the historically meandering Maas will be brought back, including nature development and tourism.

**City of Megen:**  
Megen has always served as a core for surrounding villages. This was the place where people came together and shared stories. The rich history and local stories can still be recognized in some places. This is what makes Megen unique. Linking up with cultural history is therefore very important.

**Old furniture factory:**  
Many local people still know the factory like the back of their hand. Half of the inhabitants of Megen worked in the factory which was previously located on the outskirts of the village. Due to the extension of the village, this strange building has become the middle of the village. As a vacant object, a unique opportunity to start a redevelopment.

**Agriculture:**  
Over the years, agriculture has experienced an enormous increase in scale, where agricultural fields and farms have increased considerably in size. This increase in scale has left its mark in the environment. Many old farms became empty and the landscape monotonous, which has also reduced the biodiversity in the landscape. Downscaling and transformation are therefore necessary to revive the landscape and farmyards.



## CONCEPT

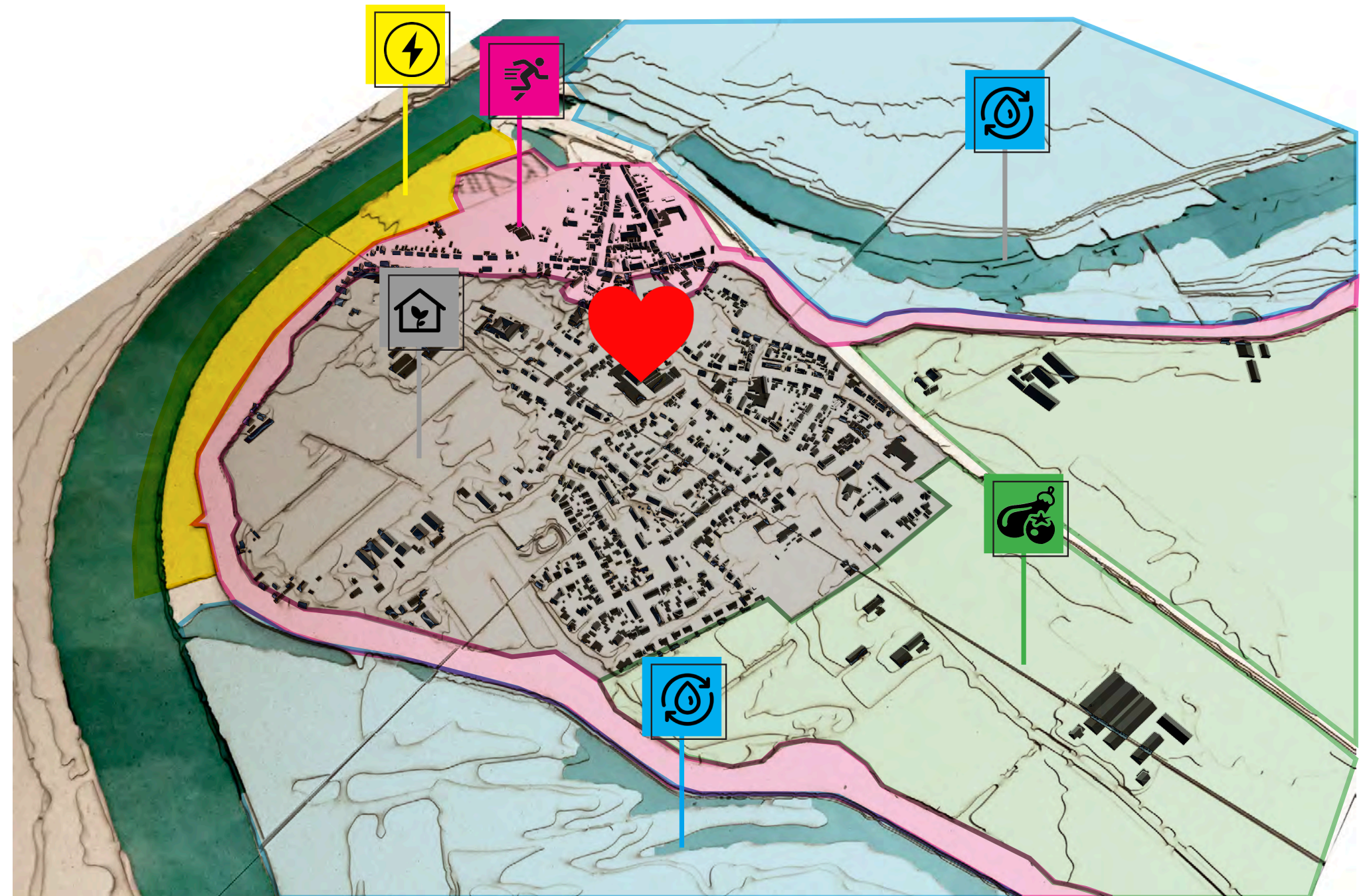




Making a landscape functional is in the nature of man and this is not different in Megen. Where people previously cultivated a lot of land for economic interest, it is now time to do things differently. From now on, we listen to the landscape and use the existing qualities to activate the subsurface.

Not with an economic interest this time, but for social and natural benefits. The landscape will provide in our basic needs with the yield of food, water, resources and energy and will facilitate our leisure activities and therefor create a new common denominator for the Village. Megen listens to the landscape and searches for beneficial opportunities without harming the substrate, nature and ecosystem. The new program and the growth of the village will depend on this.

In this way, a new ecosystem is created in which people and their environment are complementary to each other and social cohesion is stimulated. The fun thing is that the local inhabitants arrange everything themselves and take over control. They decide what is going to happen. The village becomes almost independent.



**LOGBOOK**





## PERSONAL TOUCH

3 statements have occupied me more and more in recent years:

1. I'm studying urban design and should have a deep interest in urban environments. However, I actually despise the URBAN part.... Lucky for me urban design is about more than creating urban environments, it's about creating pleasant places where people can stay, grow and play. "Every" day a "Happy" day that should be the aim!
2. We live in a world where the economy and capitalism are number one. The distance between rich and poor is getting bigger and bigger, even though we are all just human! Is the economy really that important or is there an even greater importance?
3. In the field of demography, social interaction and technology a lot has changed in recent years and this has repercussions in the field of urban planning. These changes have led to a more individual world, while our need for social contacts is growing. How can we deal with this issue in our build environment?

HOW  
VILLAGES  
CAN COME  
OUT OF THEIR  
VICIOUS  
CIRCLE BY  
FOCUSING  
ON SOCIAL  
IMPORTANCE,  
ECONOMIC  
FEASIBILITY,  
TECHNOLOGY  
AND IDENTITY



# PERSONAL TOUCH

I recently moved to Megen (2 years ago). This step opened my eyes. Instead of being part of the locals, I became import. This has been one of the motives for choosing the village as the main theme.

In addition, I lived in the city of Maastricht for 4 months, this period also contributed to the theme of the village. During my time in Maastricht I realized why I preferred the village live. This led to the question: why do people not see the added value of the village? why does everyone want to go to the city?



Oijen: 1200 inhabitants (child)



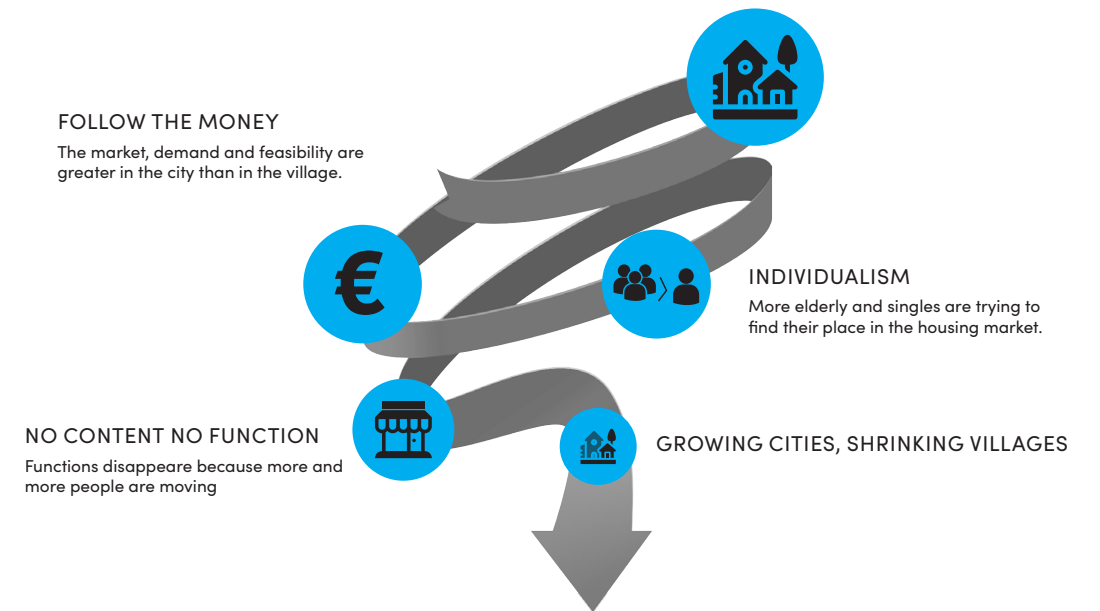
Maastricht: 122.000 inhabitants (student)



Megen: 1650 inhabitants (adult)

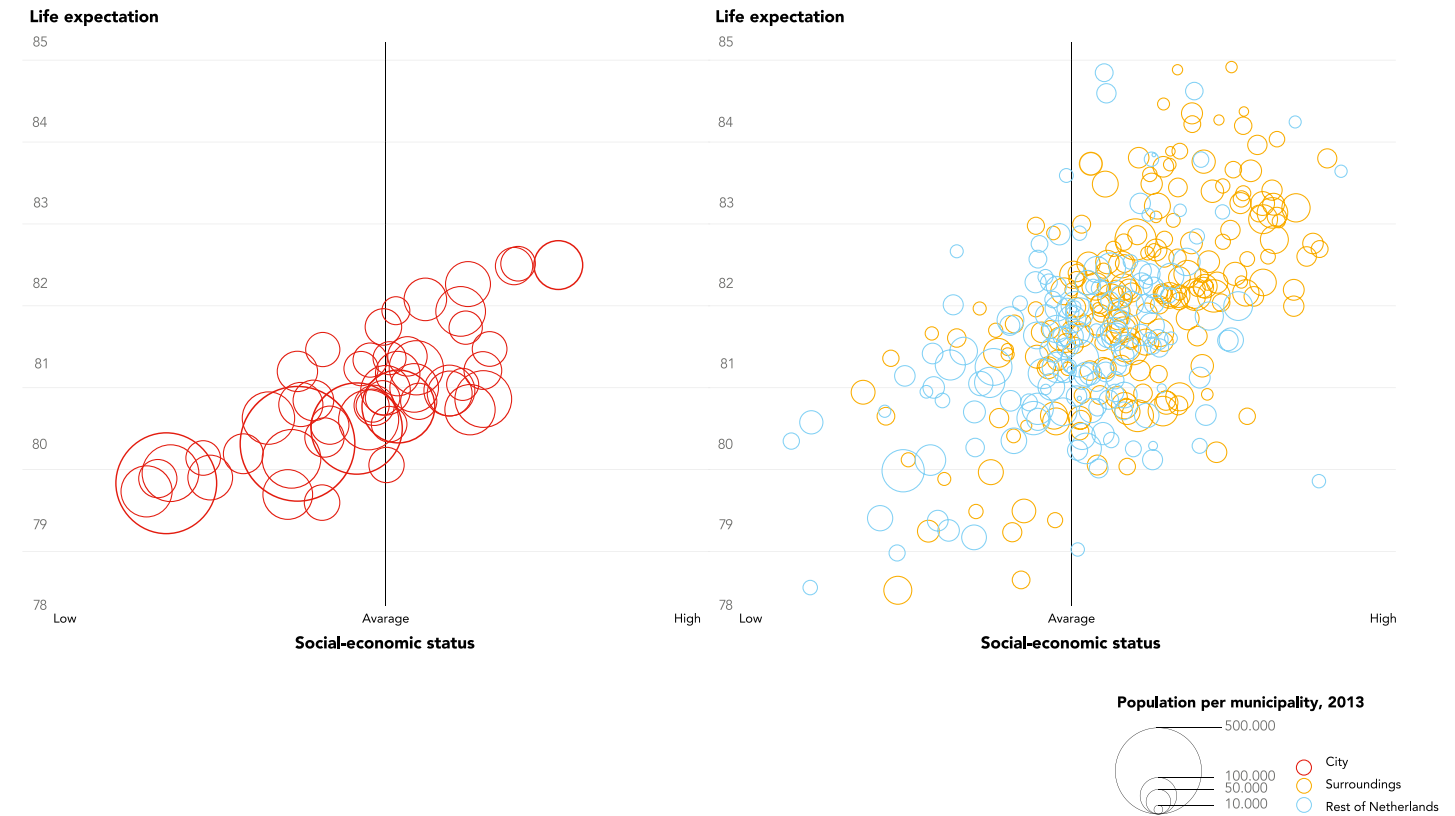
## ORIENTATION (1)

Villages find themselves in a downward spiral where the quality of life continues to decline, people are leaving and therefor the right of existence disappears. The overwhelming city is swallowing the villages further and further. First by taking their functions and now by taking the youth.



## ORIENTATION (2)

However, the growth of the city is a strange development when we look at the figures from the (CBS). The larger the settlements, the lower the life expectancy and the socio-economic status. Which makes you wonder...





## ORIENTATION (3)

*Richard layard explains that an important aspect of being happy is being able to live without concerns.*

*According to Rutger Bregman another important part of happiness is the feeling of being part of something bigger.*

Happiness is about being able to have social contacts and being able to do something meaningful. It is about living without a concern. Therefor providing within in our basic needs like food, water, shelter, clothing and energy is key.



NE  
XT IDEA

Rutger  
Bregman  
over  
*De meeste  
mensen  
deugen*

Di. 17|09|2019  
Aanvang: 20.15 uur  
Oss, Theater  
De Lievekamp

Entree: € 12,50

www.bibliotheekoss.nl

de Bibliotheek

Foto: Stephan van Gorkum

*Rutger Bregmans theatre @ Lievekamp in OSS*



## What's the problem?

*Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content.*  
LADY MACBETH

**T**here is a paradox at the heart of our lives. Most people want more income and strive for it. Yet as Western societies have got richer, their people have become no happier.

This is no old wives' tale. It is a fact proven by many pieces of scientific research. As I'll show, we have good ways to measure how happy people are, and all the evidence says that on average people are no happier today than people were fifty years ago. Yet at the same time average incomes have more than doubled. This paradox is equally true for the United States and Britain and Japan.<sup>1</sup>

But aren't our lives infinitely more comfortable? Indeed: we have more food, more clothes, more cars, bigger houses, more central heating, more foreign holidays, a shorter working week, nicer work and, above all, better health. Yet we are not happier. Despite

3

*Richard Layard - Happiness 2011*

# ORIENTATION (4)

NIBUD provides a clear list of basic needs which show what we are looking for in terms of basic requirements. These needs stand in direct connection with our monthly costs. To my surprise, the sum of all elements shows a substantial amount at the end of the month. Multiply this by the number of people from a village and you end up with a big amount of money. Money that could also be invested in our direct surroundings. Why do we give it to people we don't know? ... What is wrong with our system?

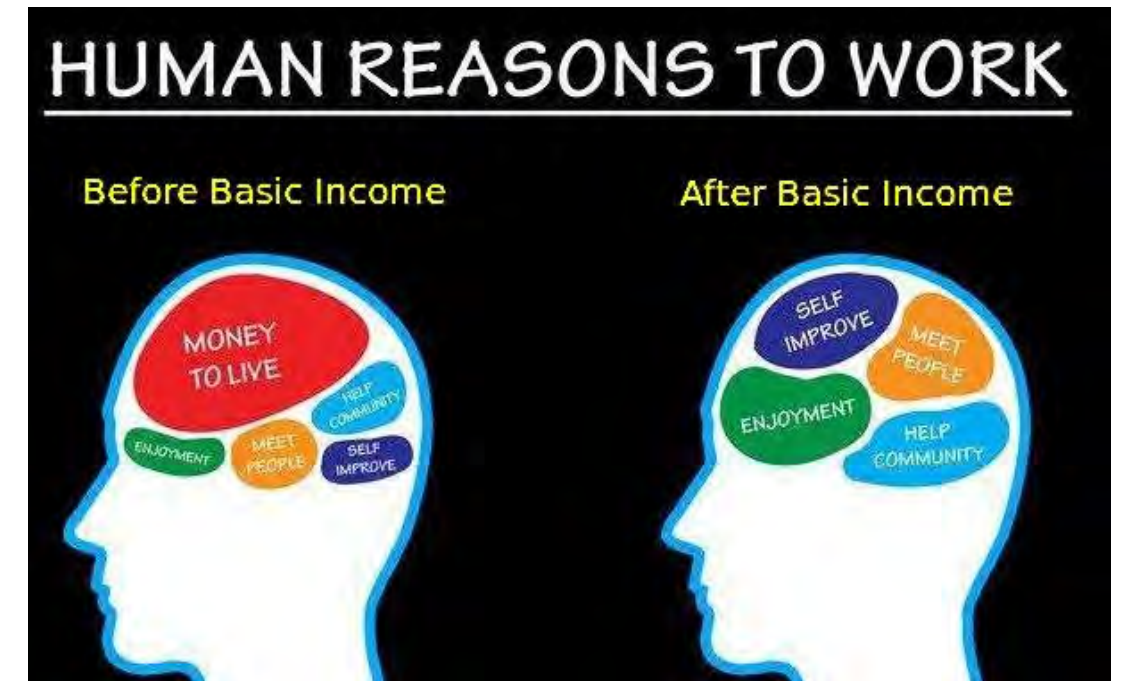
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			Totaal		€ 26.628,00	€ 26.628.000		€ 832,12	€ 832.120,00
			Totaal excl. High risk*		€ 14.266,00	€ 14.266.000			

## ORIENTATION (5)

ALL LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES BELONG TO ALL OF US. IT IS NOT A FAVOR, NOT A BENEFIT. IT IS JUST A DIVIDEND. EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO A SHARE IN THE COUNTRY. CALL IT "VENTURE CAPITAL FOR THE COMMON MAN. BECAUSE IT REALLY IS A BASIS THAT GIVES YOU THE FREEDOM TO START A BUSINESS OR TO TAKE A NEW DIRECTION.

-Rutger Bregman- (Gratis geld voor iedereen)

From this point of view the basic income is actually not a bad idea. The basic income offers the possibility to be able to provide in the basic need and thus to lead a carefree life. Put in other words a happy life.



deeconometrist.nl- Het basisinkomen: gratis geld maakt vrij

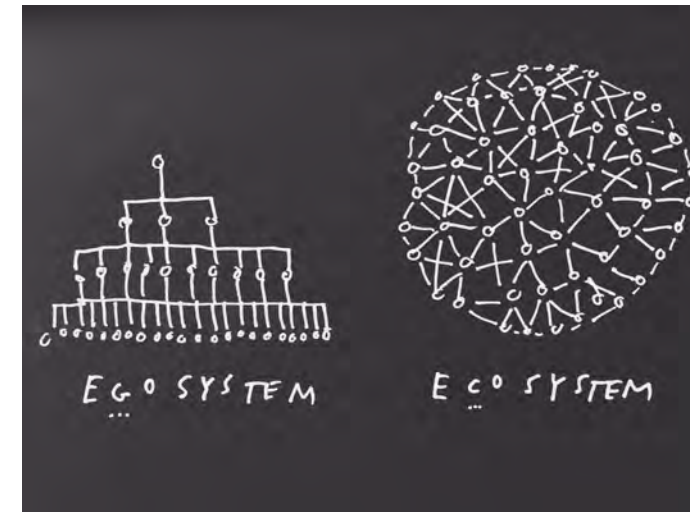


## ORIENTATION (6)

"IT IS ABOUT TIME WE GET CONCERNED WITH THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SPECIES, THE LARGE AND THE SMALL. THE MORE THOROUGHLY YOU EXPLAIN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SPECIES, THE MORE WONDERFUL THINGS REVEAL THEMSELVES.

-Peter Wohlleben

And that is precisely what is going wrong in the city. Individualism, the distance to nature and the focus on abstract money and self-interest. However, there is less sense of this trend in villages. These trends have had less impact. Villages therefore offer the potential to change the system from an ego-system to an ecosystem.



Peter Wohlleben - Het geheime netwerk van de natuur

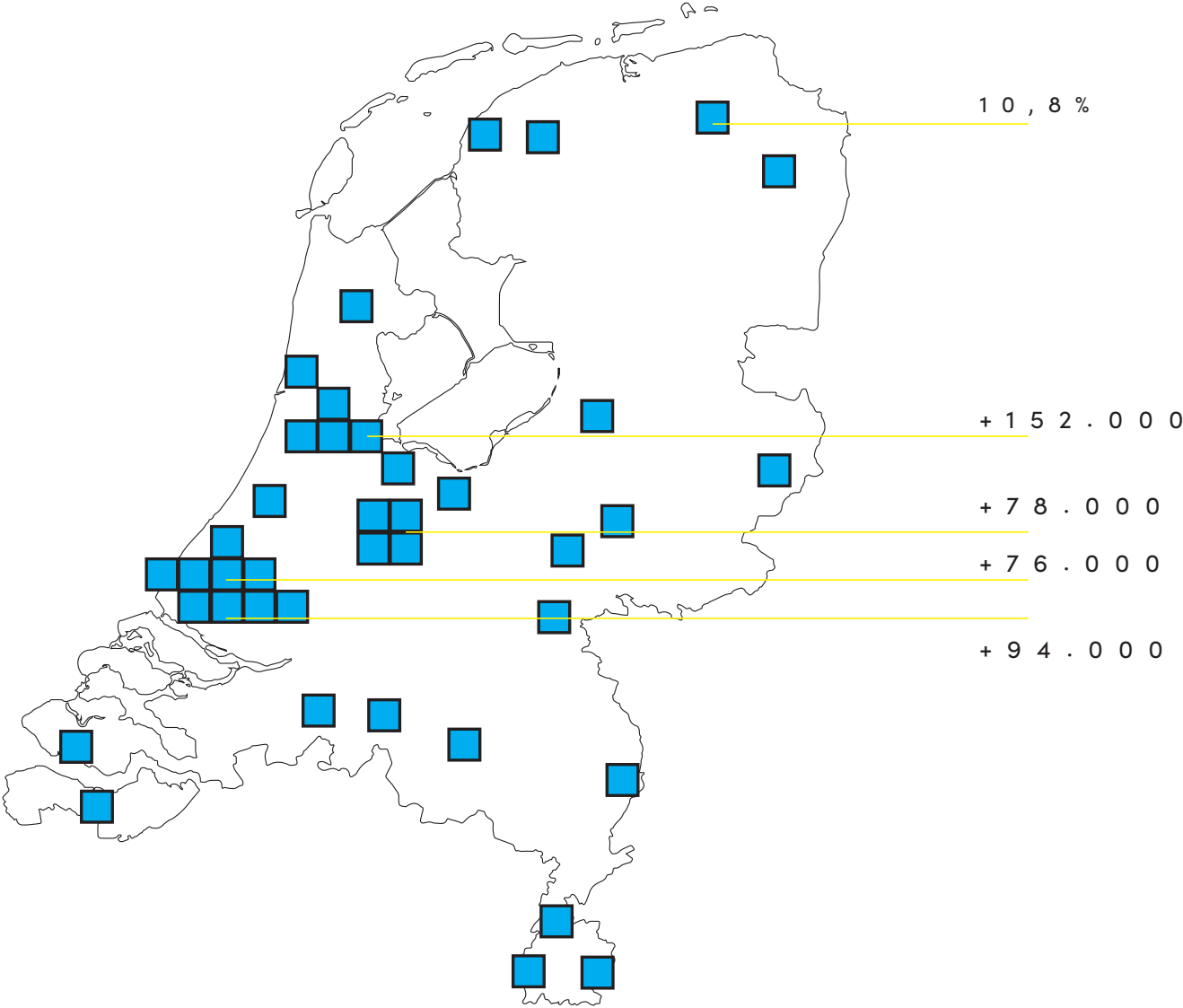
# ORIENTATION (7)

In 1800, only two percent of the world’s population lived in cities. In 1950 this percentage had risen to thirty percent and in 2007 we reached a milestone. For the first time more than half of the world population lived in cities.

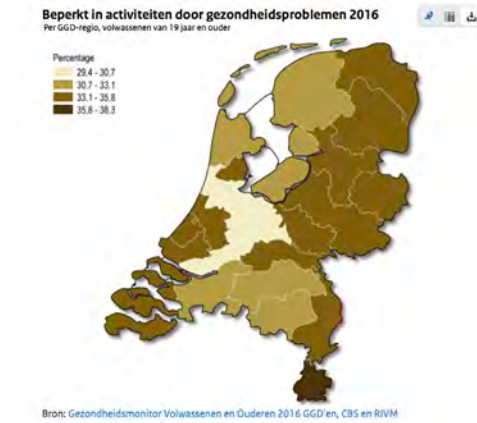
Today we even see a further acceleration of this urbanization: one and a half million urban residents are added every week. This means that by 2030, 60 percent of the world’s population will live in urban regions.

This trend not only relates to the Netherlands but for the whole of Europe, even the whole world. For example, the population of London is growing twice as fast as in the rest of the UK. We see a similar trend in the Netherlands. Till 2030:

- Amsterdam will grow to 152,000 inhabitants
- Utrecht will grow to 78,000 inhabitants
- The Hague will grow to 76,000 inhabitants
- Rotterdam will grow to 94,000 inhabitants

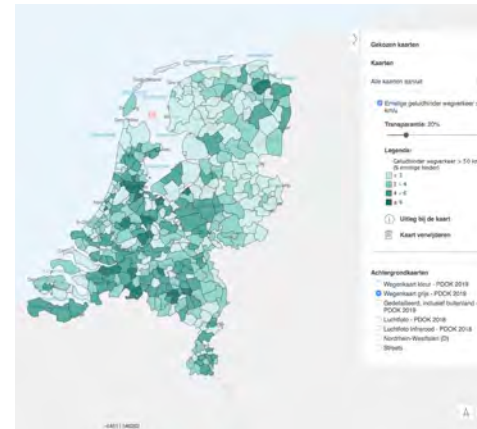


C I T I E S   A R E   B O O M I N G



## ORIENTATION (8)

However, the development of the cities does not come without a cost. When we take a look at where the national problems are located, we see a clear concentration in the highly urban environments. The air quality around cities is poor, the health risks are high and there are a lot of complains about noise. It makes sense, because this is where most people live, as long as they are happy it is fine. But that is where it really gets shocking. When we take a closer look at the feeling of happiness, it turns out that people in the cities often feel the most unhappy.





## ORIENTATION (9)

When we want to have a close look at what people really want, we can use the big protests and actions that have taken place as a good source. Especially, protests with a great number of protesters, where young and old people participated. When we look at these protests such as the climate protest, the farmers protest, the healthcare protest and the education protests, we quickly come to the conclusion that they are mainly about our basic needs. This is not surprising because in a globalizing world where the economy is always number one and money has to be earned, our basic needs seems less important. Of course we all know this is not true, but it is how our system is functioning.



TROUW.NL



NCR.NL



ZWOLLENU.NL



NOS.NL

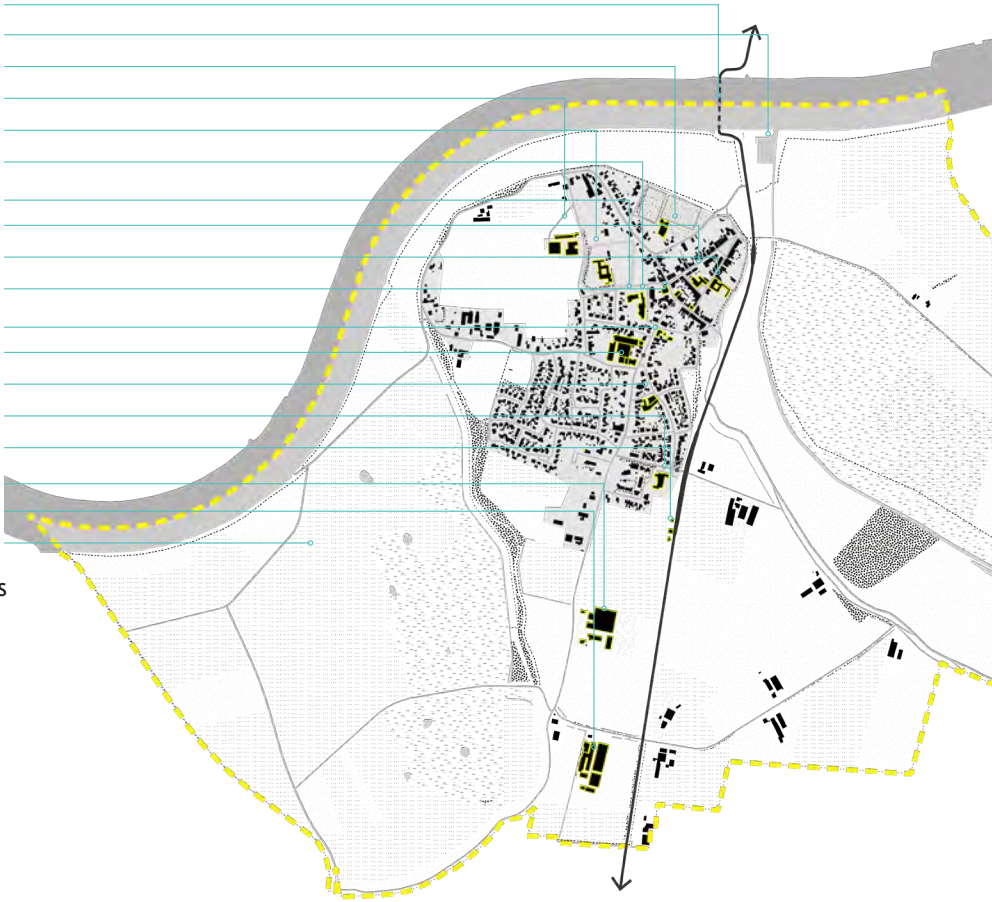
# LOCATION (1)

Megen is one of the villages that has seen many facilities leave. It is a historic village next to the Maas, where it borders with the province of Gelderland. As an enclave in the landscape, the village is secluded from the city, which providxe the village with its own identity. The former facilities functioned as meeting places, which ensured a high social cohesion. Due to aging, hazing and the disappearance of the facilities (bakery, supermarket, butcher etc.) the quality of life has deteriorated and the dependence on the city has increased.

Yet vacancy does not only have to be seen as a problem according to Frans Thissen Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences, department of Geography, Planning and International Development. Think of it; Everything is possible in a place where there is nothing. At villages we can start overagain and implement a new system.

- Ferry - in discussion if it should be preserved
- Small harbor - still in use
- Soccerclub - in discussion about conservation
- Farm - not in use
- Clarissen Monastery - declining in number for now, still in use
- Elderly home - Partly in use half is vacant
- Elementary school - declining in number for now, still in use
- Former Latinschool & Gymnasium - in use as art centre
- Fransiscanen Monastery - declining in number for now, still in use
- Former Shop/Retail - not in use
- Former Farm - not in use
- Former Factory - not in use
- Former Mill (used 1x a Month)
- Former elementary school - not in use
- Gasstation - declining in number for now, still in use
- Intensive livestock farming - in use
- Intensive livestock farming - in use
- Agricultural fields for large-scale agriculture - in use

ALL KIND OF POTENTIAL LOCATIONS





## LOCATION (2)

By a few walks around the village and by making pictures, I really got to know the spatial qualities of the village.

When we look at the village in a purely spatial way, we can detect some great qualities. Megen has a well-preserved cultural history and a rich landscape that is located around the village as a ring. The green environment, the endless dike, the various (religious) towers and the historic center are striking elements that form the identity.



# LOCATION (3)

I interviewed the residents with an open mind, before the factual investigations started. the group exist out of several type of villagers. A questionnaire was drawn up, in order to be able to ask specific questions. The most important conclusions from the interview were:

Positive:

- Megen is a hospitable village. Everybody is welcome.
- Megen has a rich history and that is what we are proud of.
- Megen has a special landscape and a special location, that's what makes the village different.

Negative:

- New people or Import, is nice but they have to integrate.
- Group formation is taken place which does not come in advantage of the social cohesion.
- There is little room for young people and seniors. I want to live here all my life.
- A lack of facilities for our daily needs



P R O F I L E 1

25- 35, living together, "Import" with barely any connections

Motivation: Housing possibility (space, location, price), Cozy atmosphere, local events

Intergration: Sports, Small talk, Local shops/events > But still not a real Megenaar.

Worries: Level of facilities, Extention of the village, disconnection from the environment/nature

Independence: To a certain extent

Keywords: Hospitality, Authentic, Small scale life



P R O F I L E 3

45- 65, living together, "Local" family

Motivation: Housing possibility, Children, chairman of various organizations, Roots

Intergration: Born & raised, Getting involved in organisations, Music, Culture.

Worries: Level of facilities (not shops), To much individual groups (no mix), individualism, not to much tourism.

Independence: Dependence is important but there are opportunities to be more self-sufficient.

Keywords: Hospitality, Religion, History



P R O F I L E 2

35- 45, Single, "Import" with close connections

Motivation: Housing possibility, Social network, Organisations

Intergration: Sports, Activities, Local shops/ bars/ events

Worries: Level of facilities, attractiveness for youth and seniors, Social housing (integration)

Independence: Yes in combination with other villages

Keywords: "Ons kent Ons", Active club life, Characteristic city center



P R O F I L E 5

65+ , living together, "Local" connections

Motivation: Housing possibility, Roots, Work

Intergration: Born & raised, Getting involved in organisations, Music, Culture, Small talk.

Worries: Social housing (integration), attractiveness for youth and seniors, individualism and loneliness.

Independence: Dependence is important but there are opportunities to be more self-sufficient.

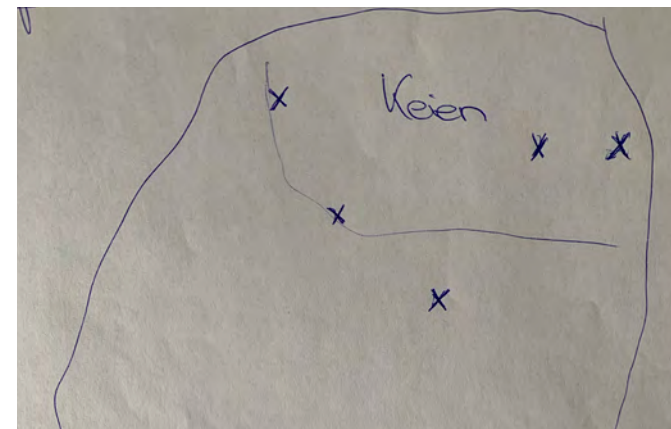
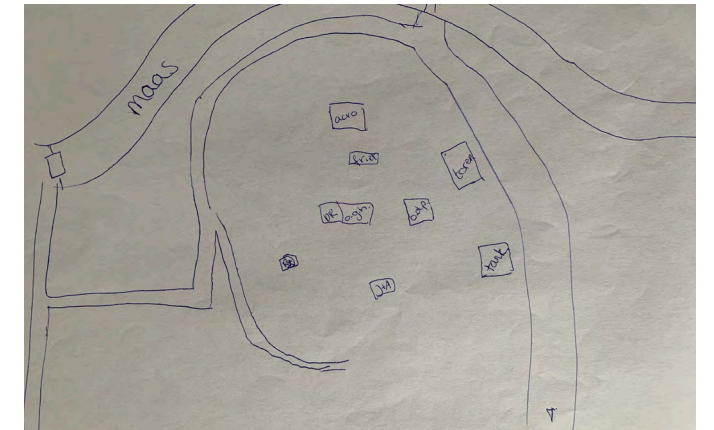
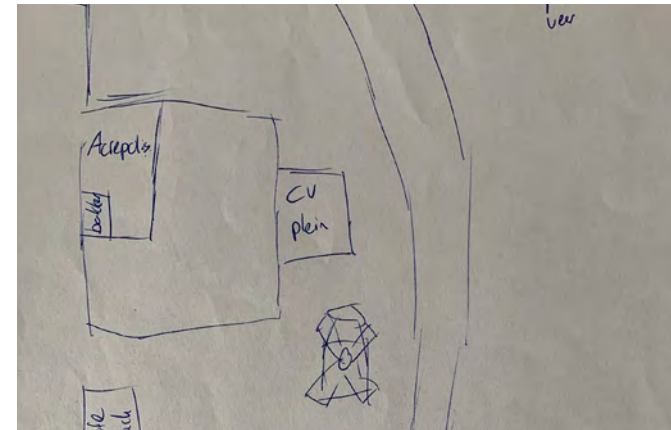
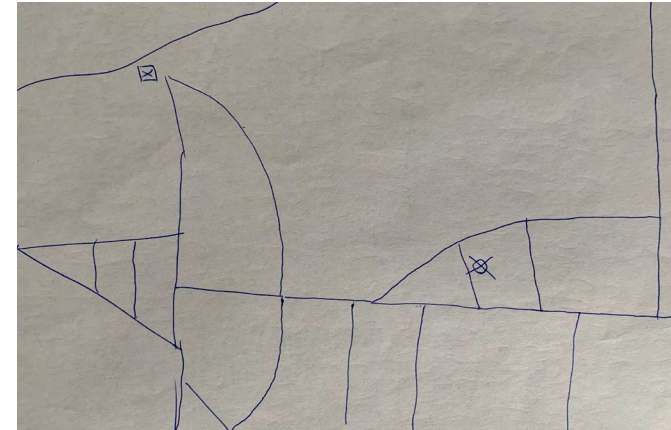
Keywords: Hospitality, History, Culture



## LOCATION (4)

Before the interview with residents started, I asked if they would make a mind-map of the village. The idea behind this was to see where people relate to (when they think of their own village). What are the main elements that make Megen, Megen.

This research has clearly shown that many people value the historic character and facilities. However, the story behind the drawings has yielded more information than the drawings themselves. The stories have shown that there is a certain emotion behind it, which cannot be recorded on paper.



## LOCATION (5)

*Various stakeholders were visited during the research. By talking with them (teacher - school & president - local history club) interesting topics have been touched. Especially in the field of history and collaborations with the environment.*

Megen has a rich history that is still emphatically present at various places in the village. The times of the earldom, the religious freedom and the time when the village gained city rights are still clearly recognizable. From these times we learn that Megen has always been a hospitable town and city and in this way could keep its facilities.

I learned from the teacher that schools do not necessarily need a fixed location, as long as the facilities are available. A flexible school building is already something they use.



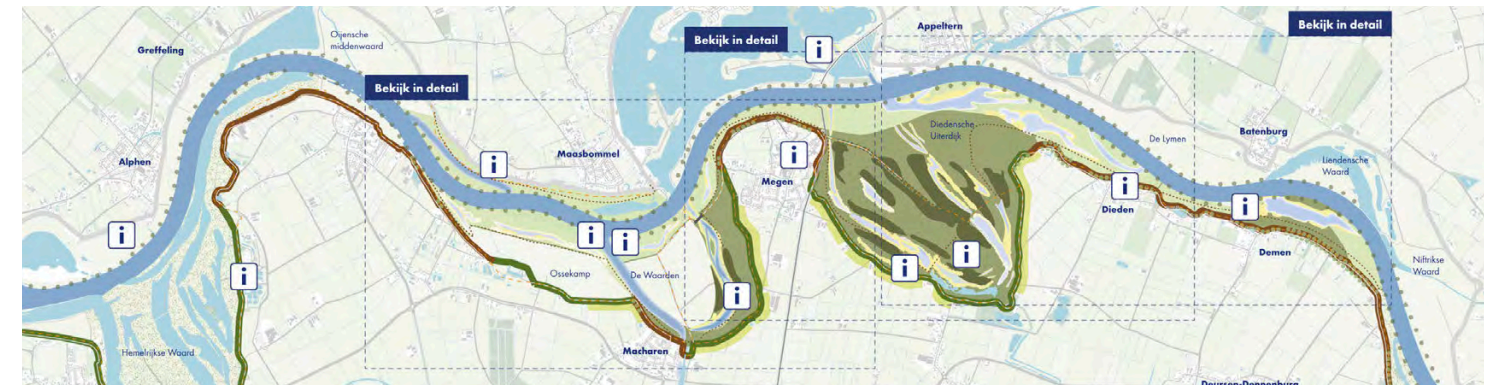


## LOCATION (6)

There are some historical and future developments in Megen that must be taken into account for the new plan.

Megen is located next to the Maas and is therefore part of the project “ruimte voor de rivieren”. For Megen, this means that parts of the historically meandering Maas will be brought back, including nature development and tourism.

Because of this river there is a lot of clay in the surrounding area. Clay from which they used to make brickworks and vowels. The new excavation could mean new local products.



## LOCATION (7)

There are some historical and future developments in Megen that must be taken into account for the new plan.

Many local people still know the factory like the back of their hand. Half of the inhabitants of Megen worked in the factory which was previously located on the outskirts of the village. Due to the extension of the village, this strange building has become the middle of the village. As a vacant object, a unique opportunity to start a redevelopment.



## LOCATION (8)

There are some historical and future developments in Megen that must be taken into account for the new plan.

Over the years, agriculture has experienced an enormous increase in scale, where agricultural fields and farms have increased considerably in size. This increase in scale has left its mark in the environment. Many old farms became empty and the landscape monotonous, which has also reduced the biodiversity in the landscape. Downscaling and transformation are therefore necessary to revive the landscape and farmyards.

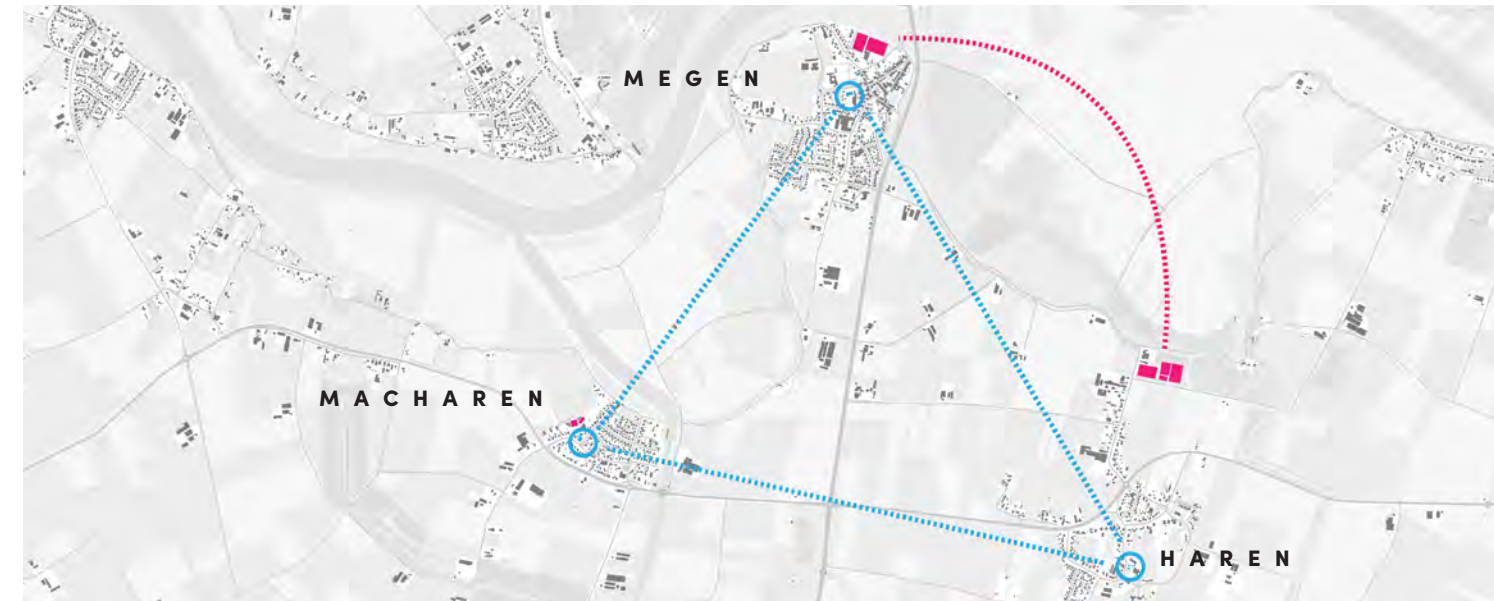




## LOCATION (9)

There are some historical and future developments in Megen that must be taken into account for the new plan.

In Megen and the surrounding villages, schools and sports fields are currently under discussion. This is causing division in the villages and mutual conflict about which function should land where. Spatial opportunities that provide insight into a shift/ collaboration between functions create all kinds of potentials for all villages. Instead of 3 football fields, one could suffice. If we approach the issue in this way, space is can be created to introduce a new sport, for example... Paddle, Tennis, Hockey, Surfing, Parcour, Boxing etc. everything is possible.

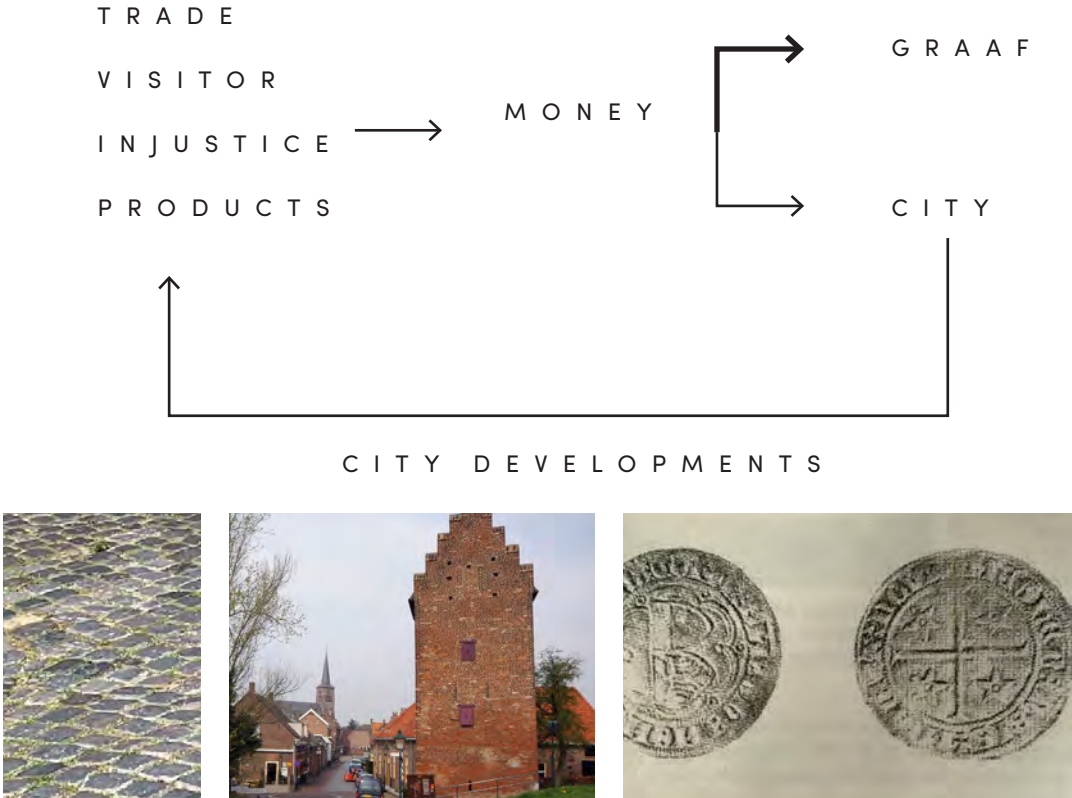


# LOCATION (10)

There are some historical and future developments in Megen that must be taken into account for the new plan.

Megen has always served as a core for surrounding villages. This was the place where people came together and shared stories. The rich history and local stories can still be recognized in some places. This is what makes Megen unique. Linking up with cultural history is therefore very important. Also the historical system of dividing the money could be an interesting system for the future.

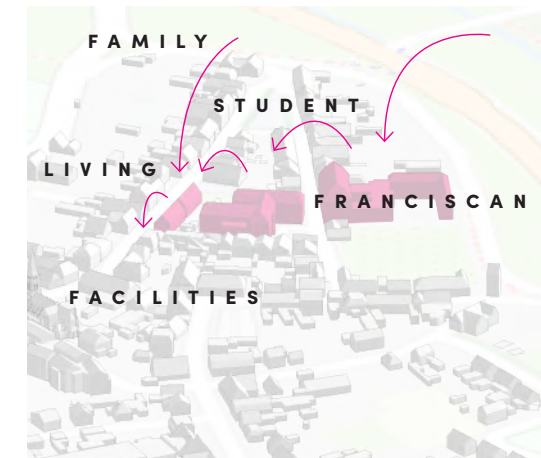
This information comes from the local history club



## LOCATION (11)

By reading about the history a lot of details about a part of the identity of the village is explained.

The monastery, just like the settlement Megen, has a long history. Since 1645 Franciscan friars have lived and worked here. After the Eighty Years' War, the monastery in Megen was the only house of the order in the Netherlands (for a century and a half). In Megen there is also another centuries-old monastery; that of the Clares. Because of the long presence of these two Franciscan monastic communities, Megen gained the nickname 'Assisi aan de Maas'. The priests and nuns always contributed to the village. Because of the Latin school many people from other places came to Megen, which benefited the local facilities.



# LOCATION (12)

By looking at property maps and talking to the locals, I came to some interesting conclusions about the people who live in the village.

Megen also has a great diversity in types of inhabitants. The remarkable thing about those inhabitants is that we can easily point out where the target groups are located. In Megen group formation is taking place and those groups are claiming more and more parts of the village. This group formation does not benefit the social cohesion. Everyone stays on their own isolated island, which means that there is hardly any cross-pollination between the target groups. The feeling of a community is vanishing. The differences in interests per target group are large and there is hardly any common interest to be discovered.

## POTENTIAL - DIFFERENT PEOPLE



- RENTIER
- ARTISTIC
  - DESIGN
  - CULTURE (OWN)
  - FREE TIME



- ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR
- FRANCISCANS (OPEN)
  - CLARES (SLOT NUNS)
  - DIFFERENT AGES



- NEWCOMERS
- STARTERS
  - CITIZENS
  - RENTERS
  - REFUGEES



- BORN AND RAISED
- CHILDREN
  - 40+
  - CULTURE (VILLAGE)
  - TRADITIONAL



## REFERENCE PROJ.

For inspiration I went to the Herenboeren. This turned out to be a very interesting visit, because they have a lot of knowledge about new ways for farming. Especially the facts and figures, concerning each type of agricultural land helped me a lot.

10 hectares for crops, 8 hectares for livestock, 1.5 hectares for orchards and 0.5 hectares for other items can provide food for 500 people.





## REFERENCE PROJ.

For some new inspiration I went to a special farm for people with disabilities which is located in Oijen. The interesting information I discovered from this farm; The way how they created an ecosystem, that not only benefitted themselves but also the local community. For example, the people with a disability maintained the public green areas and used the waste materials to create new products (like birdhouses and giftboxes).



## REFERENCE PROJ.

Another inspiring project is the project (Dommelstroom) along the river the Dommel, where energy is extracted from the water and the sun by means of a cooperation. In this project the people made use of the opportunities that the landscape has to offer. this way they provide in energy for 170 households.





## REFERENCE PROJ.

De Tuinen van Appeltern also served as a reference for this project. By visiting this place, it became clear that a public space can also be used in a more informal way. The great diversity of the gardens and innovative applications show that a space by itself can also tell a story and provide in an experience. In addition, de Tuinen van Appeltern made a smart combination between the design of public space and tourism.





## CONCEPT HOTEL

I made 3 extreme concepts for Megen, in order to show the possibilities for the village. This is the concept that focusses on hospitality.

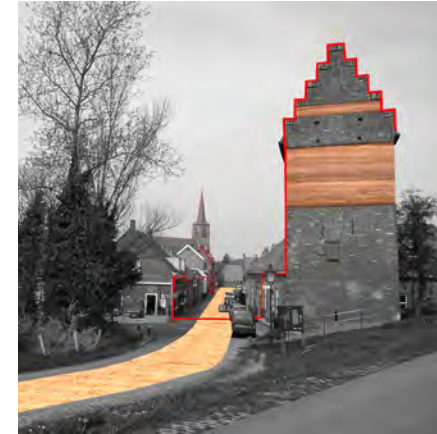
The hospitality concept is a concept that connects people with each other by making a touristic program possible. By organizing a hotel-like function with all inhabitants (or at least the ones who want to join) in the form of a cooperation, residents become part of something bigger. Something that takes place in the entire village, but accents the existing qualities and culture.



## CONCEPT HOTEL

Right now there are different cultures within the village. These differences separate people from each other and deteriorate the communal feeling. However, within thoughts of the village hotel these differences will contribute to the diversity of the area. Because of the differences there is always something new to experience and always a new culture to explore.

Despite the accents on the differences, the hotel also has a connecting function. Just like the bigger chain hotels people can recognize the connection and unity in the look & feel. The difference disappears because there is a strong brand identity, services are combined and there is one overall organization.



THE ENTRANCE GATE TOWARDS THE HOTEL



NEW CABINS THAT FIT WITHIN THE LANDSCAPE AND SHOW THE BEAUTY



CLARES MONASTERY RETREAT - A PLACE TO UNWIND AND ENJOY THE SILENCE



WELCOME @ HOTEL MEGEN, HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?



## CONCEPT GARDEN

I made 3 extreme concepts for Megen, in order to show the possibilities for the village. This concept focusses on the unused public spaces.

Villages become large experimental gardens where history, nature and beauty go hand in hand in the field of greenery. This will be reflected in the public space which is will function as a central area for the village. It brings people together and offers everything in the field of nature and gardening. It becomes the entrance, exit and stay of the village. It connects different routes and gives the possibility to discoverable the story of village.



## CONCEPT GARDEN

In the future the public space of villages is not just some public space, it is a public space that facilitates in the needs of its inhabitants. There are no more useless areas like empty fields of grass, unmaintained greenery and unused left-over places. Instead there will be Picnic areas, sports routes, relaxation areas, ice skating / fishing ponds, communal gardens, orchards, experience gardens and an arboretum. All these facilities will land in the villages and make the entire village more exciting and inviting, but most important active and useful.

Transforming the public space effects everybody and by opening it up it becomes useable for the inhabitants. Everybody can get involved and relate to nature in their own way.





## CONCEPT HOUSE

I made 3 extreme concepts for Megen, in order to show the possibilities for the village. This is the concept that focusses on sharing.

The development of the shared house is financially organized with a payback model. By developing the shared house, all kinds opportunities are created for the social facilities in the surroundings to join. The potential for those social parties lies in the capability of double use, low rent and short lines with other businesses and people. By allowing the social parties to land at this location, space is created in the village to develop new homes (homes that meet current demand: young people and seniors, but also meet the principles of the sharing). This generates money and therefor the possibility to payback for the new center.





## CONCEPT HOUSE

The shared house will provide in spaces and products for; Living, working, learning and relaxing. It comes with the all-in package. For example: there is a shared garage with the newest tools, there are flexible workplaces with a plug and play system, there is a shared laundry service and a shared kitchen with the best kitchen gear. In this way savings are not only made on private costs (private) but also the quality of materials goes up.

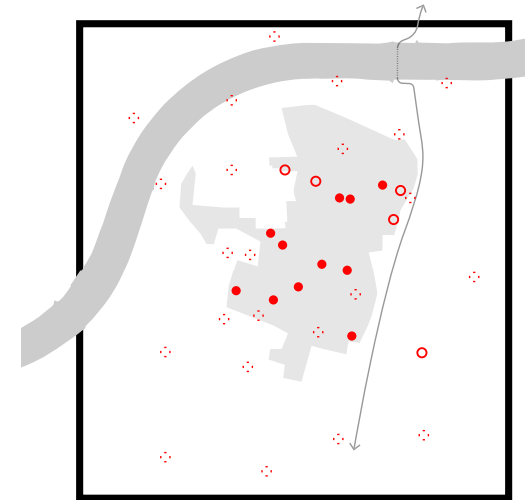
The shared house is not just a house. It is a house where all layers of societies come together. From rich to poor, from Christian to Islamic and from young to old everyone is welcome. Because products and services are shared private costs get lower (in the sense of purchase and maintenance). Not everyone has to buy a lawnmower and a hammer anymore, it is all available in the shared house.



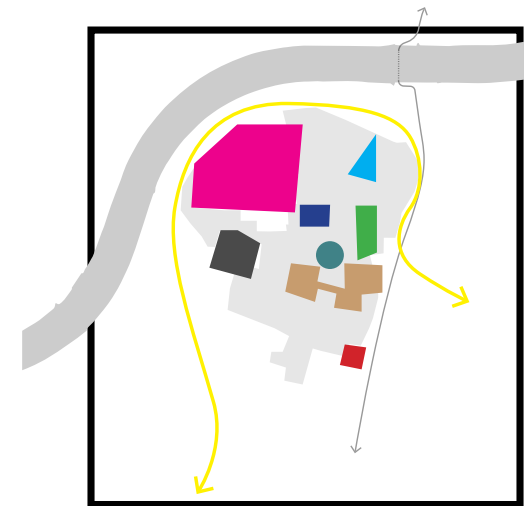
## CONCEPT TOTAL

Because the focus of the concept-fase was primarily on create extremes, we could conclude that all 3 concept could work. However, in the context of integrality, it seems sensible to combine the various concepts with each other and therefor use the public space, the touristic program and the central facility. By combining them, a system is created that facilitates on different layers. The unity of the village gets restored.

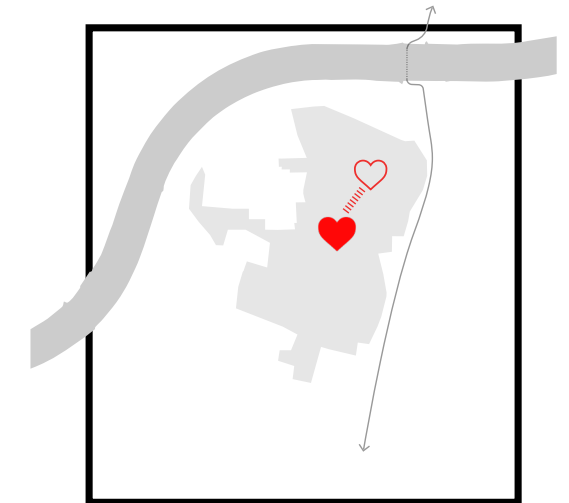
The public space serves as the main connector throughout the village, the touristic program forms the financial catalyst for possible investments and the central location provides within a new function and seeks connection within daily necessities. If we can make this combination we can really speak of the village as an integral collective entity that contributes to social interaction, quality of life and spatial quality.



A TOURISTIC SYSTEM  
CONNECTED TO THE  
LANDSCAPE



BASIC NEEDS  
MOSAIC



THE NEW NON-CULTURAL  
HEART

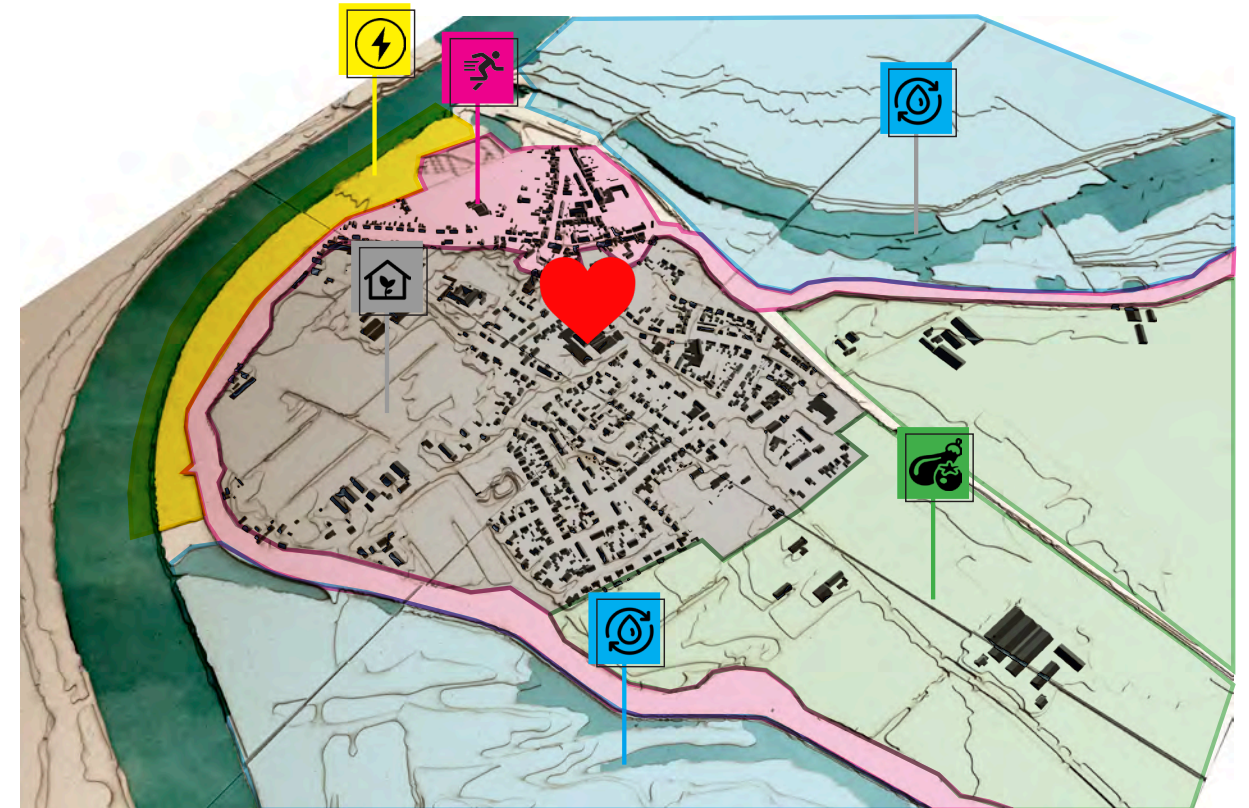


## CONCEPT TOTAL

Making a landscape functional is in the nature of man and this is not different in Megen. Where people previously cultivated a lot of land for economic interest, it is now time to do things differently. From now on, we listen to the landscape and use the existing qualities to activate the subsurface.

Not with an economic interest this time, but for social and natural benefits. The landscape will provide in our basic needs with the yield of food, water, resources and energy and will facilitate our leisure activities and therefor create a new common denominator for the Village. Megen listens to the landscape and searches for beneficial opportunities without harming the substrate, nature and ecosystem. The new program and the growth of the village will depend on this.

In this way, a new ecosystem is created in which people and their environment are complementary to each other and social cohesion is stimulated. The fun thing is that the local inhabitants arrange everything themselves and take over control. They decide what is going to happen. The village becomes almost independent.

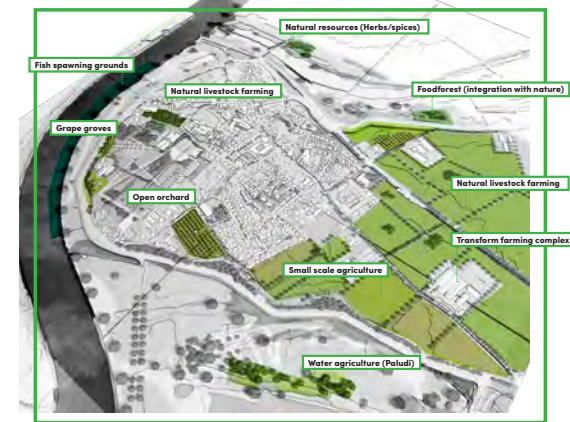




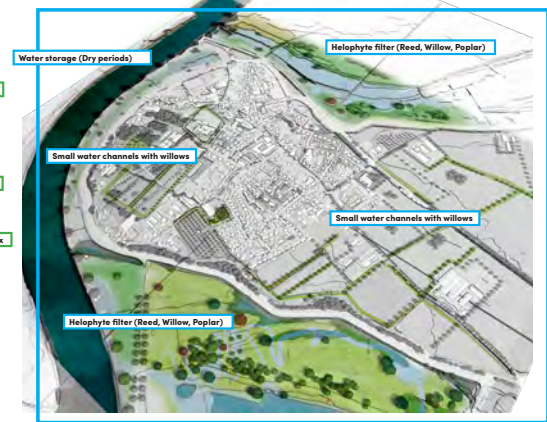
# PRELIMINAIRY

After developing the concept, it was time to implement it on location. To be able to do this, I started with looking at the area more thoroughly. Therefor I was able to discover all kinds of potential. These potentials where translated to different application. The elaboration on these application will become the final plan. All in all, many ideas for Megen to activate the landscape.

Food landscape



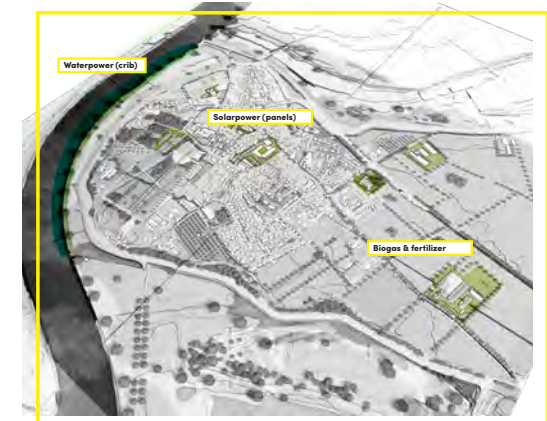
Water landscape



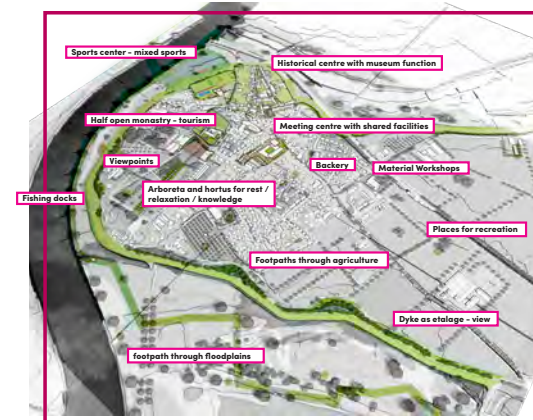
House & Garden landscape



Energy landscape



Exploration landscape



Housing landscape



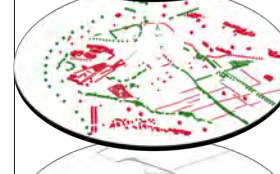
# PRELIMINAIRY

All these ideas eventually translated into one plan. But to explain the plan I needed 24 maps. This has led to an unstructured story with way to much details. The conclusion; My way of thinking and detailed explanation where hard to follow and did not make any sense. As learning point for myself; It is good to zoom out, let it rest for a while and let other people explain your story. By doing those things, you can start with a fresh mind and work with a new focus.

Impact buildings



Impact trees



Impact streets



Impact public space



Impact water



Total axonometric



In- & outside



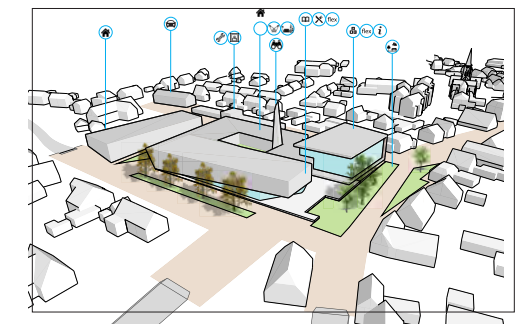
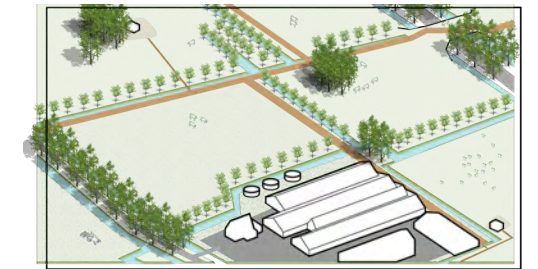
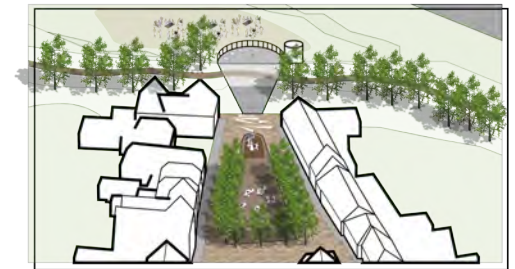
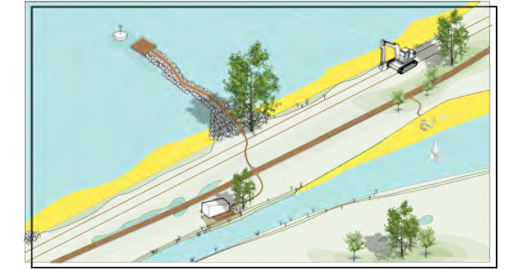
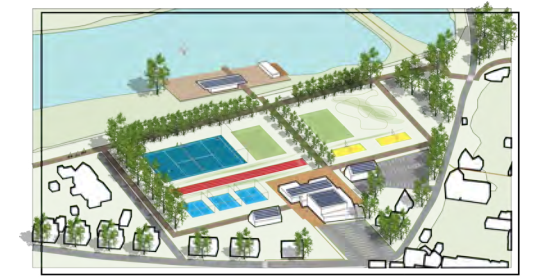
Mainroads



Slow traffic



Living streets





## WORKSHOPS

Because of the many ideas about the village, I went back to the residents to ask their opinion about the plans. Fortunately for me, the presentation went well, and I was able to gather a lot of information about their wishes. The plans were well received and with some minor adjustments / additions I was able to continue.



## WORKSHOPS

In search for the essence to bring more structure to the story, I went to various experts to present the plan. The story became more powerful with every presentation and feedback moment. The main conclusion of all these presentations was that the subsoil has always been leading. As extra result, the project has opened eyes for multiple parties. Especially how you could approach a village by not looking at the economic interest but by putting the pursuit of happiness first. This led to some interesting discussions.



Phidias  
community innovation



## VISION

Before starting with the new plan for Megen, I started with zooming out. By focussing on the substrate of the Netherlands a new vision for developments emerged. New hotspots become visible by looking at closely at the qualities of geomorphological structure. And Megen is part of one of the hotspots

By taking the subsoil as a basis and aiming for diversity, various hotspots-locations emerge. At these locations we are perfectly capable of developing a self-regulating system. A system that determines the maximum number of people who can live in a certain area. It will therefore come as no surprise that there is still plenty of room for growth. Only not in the dense urban areas.

The most suitable locations in the Netherlands are near the rivers. Here the soil is most fertile. When this gets combined this with another type of landscape in the vicinity, new hotspots are created: opportunities arise where the differentiation is greatest. However, not every landscape is the same everywhere. Therefor collaborations between the different areas will be necessary.



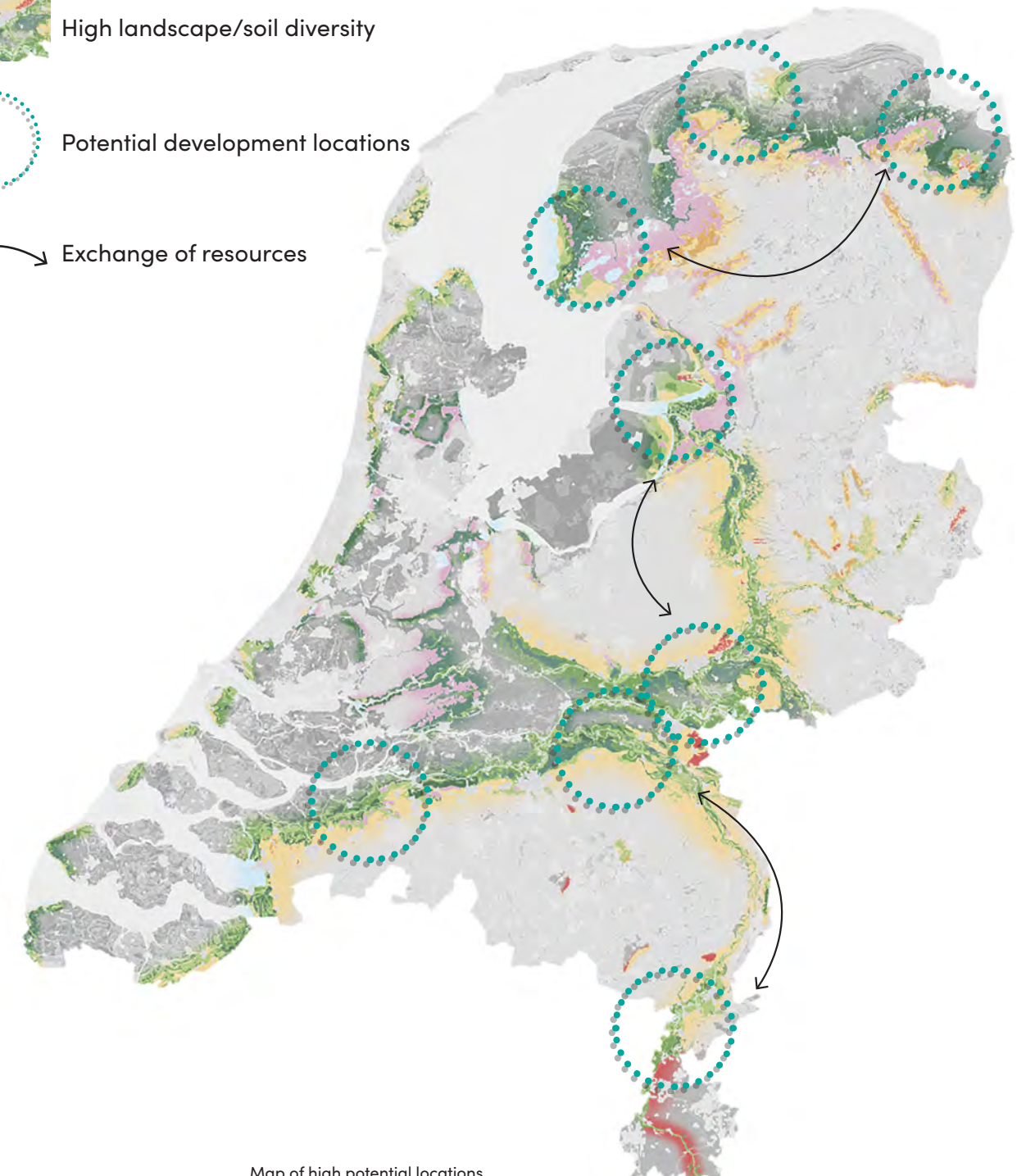
High landscape/soil diversity



Potential development locations



Exchange of resources



Map of high potential locations

## VISION

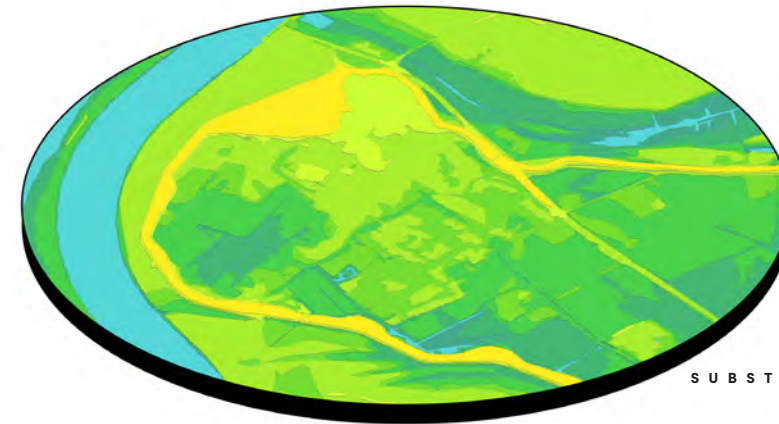
After creating this vision on a big scale i started to research at the subsoil of Megen, because i realized that the soil was leading in the identity and structure of the village.

This subsurface was formed centuries ago and can still be recognized in the present situation by the flora & fauna, the altitude lines and the soil compositions. The Maas, the floodplains, the dike and the historical settlement form the basis of the local identity.

By valuing and using the landscape as a base, the identity can be secured in future developments.

When we look at the landscape of Megen, we see that it consists out of many layers. Height differences are big and the soil is rich in nutrients. This combination ensures that the landscape is diverse and useable in many ways.

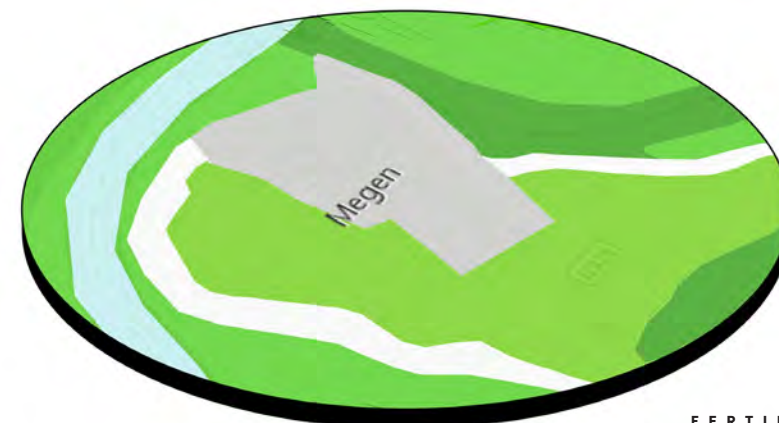
The Maas, dike and floodplain are the main carriers of the area and have shaped the landscape over the years. Man made his entrance at a later stage and made grateful use of the landscape because of the fertile soils which are created because of the deposits from the river.



SUBSTRATE, DIVERSITY



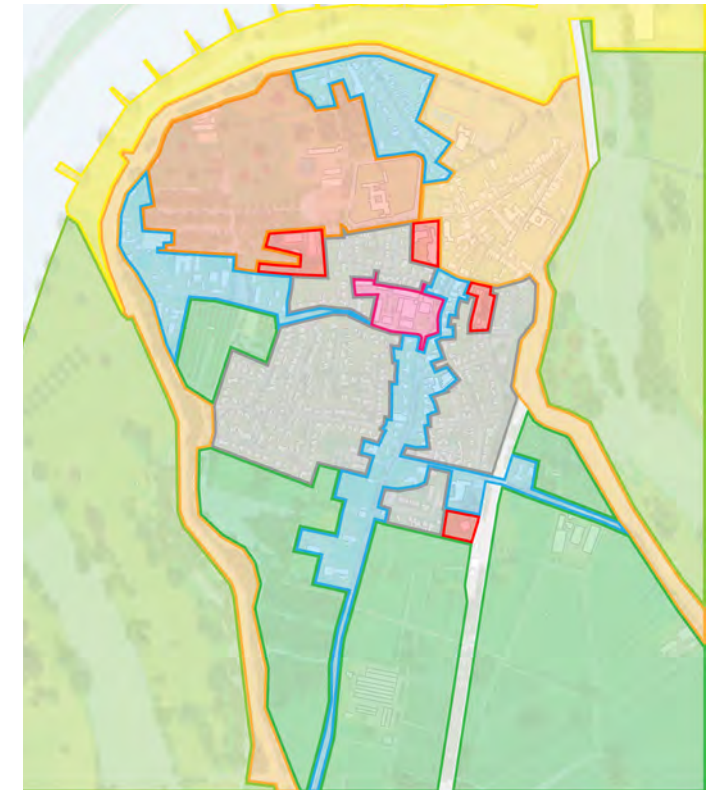
MAAS, FLOODPLAINS, DIKE



FERTILE GROUNDS

## MASTERPLAN

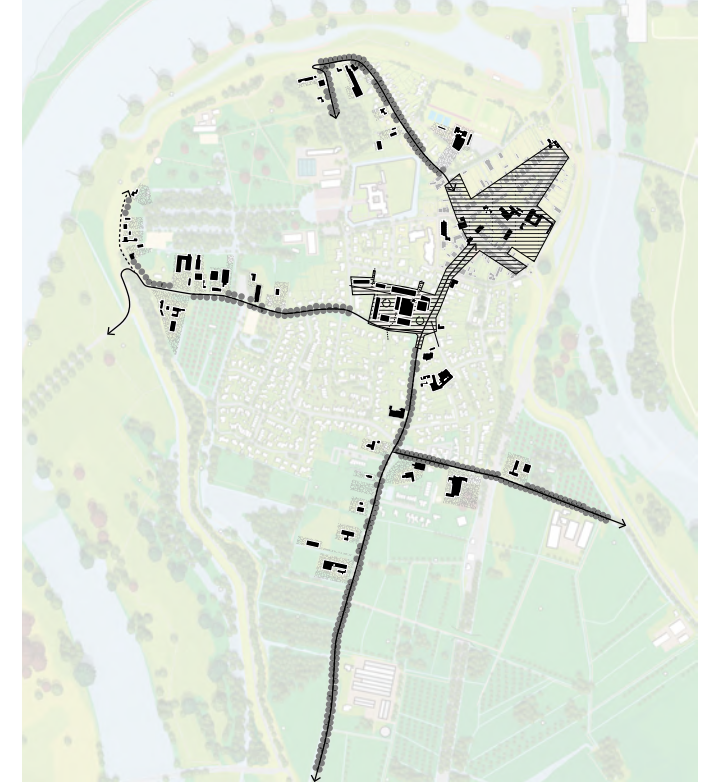
Subsequently, I continued to build up the Master Plan. Various sub-areas could be discovered from the underground. These sub-areas all have their own potentials and qualities that are still unused. By activating these, each area retains its own identity, but the village is activated.





## MASTERPLAN

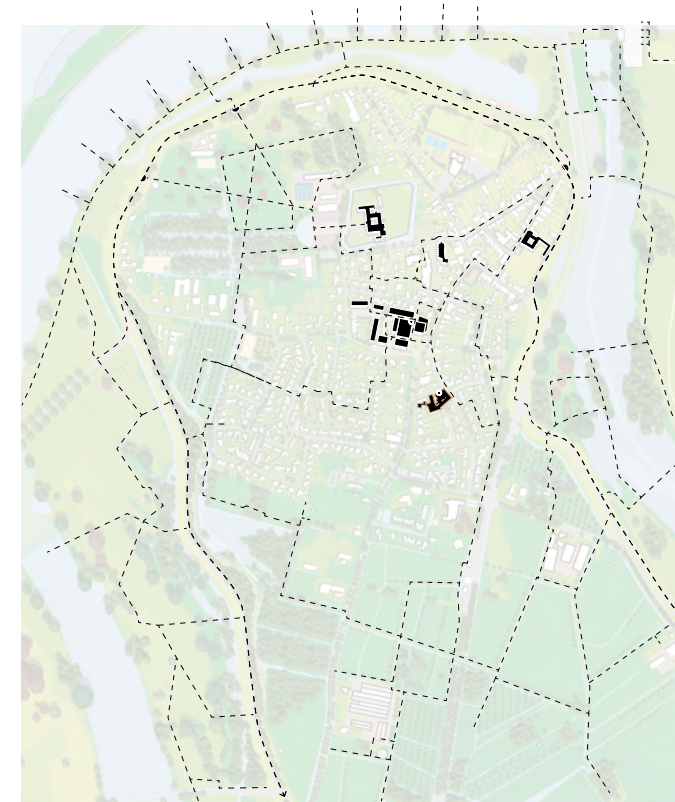
The areas are very different from each other, but I have also been able to find some lines/structures in the landscape that have a connecting effect. These connections ensure coherence and connectivity but are also the most historical ones. The adjustments that are made to these structures mainly focus on increasing connectivity and cultural history.



# MASTERPLAN

Despite the connections of the main structures, a connection on a lower scale is still missing. For this reason I have chosen to further expand the recreational network of the village. This makes the various thematic areas / landscapes accessible and experienceable. This new structure ties together the cultural history of the village.

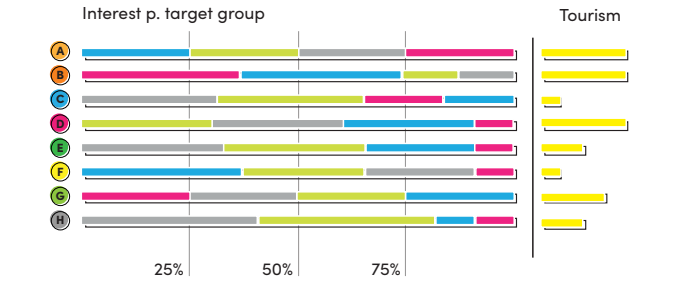
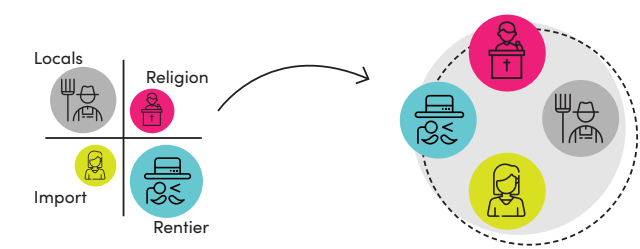
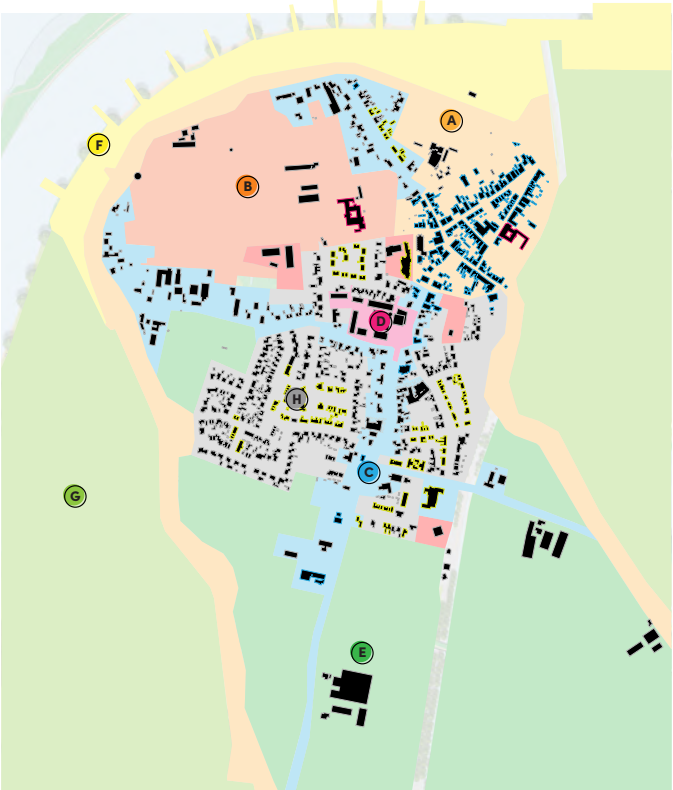
As an extra, I created in the entire village hotel rooms. This way not only locals but also tourists can enjoy the new beautiful landscapes. At the same time a new financial model is created which stimulates investment in the village, but also re-connects people together (because they al are part of the hospitality exploitation).



# MASTERPLAN

The activation of the landscape not only leads to more dynamics and possibilities for use in the village, but also to more social cohesion. By re-arranging the landscape in such a way that everyone can benefit from it, new meeting opportunities between the different target groups arise.

The group formation that is currently taking place will be broken, because the villagers organize things together. In the form of a cooperative where everyone can be part of, the most important matters regarding the village are discussed.





## MASTERPLAN

Megen's new master plan dovetails seamlessly with the proposed concept. The masterplan got its shape in collaboration with local residents and stakeholders. By working in this way, support is created, and the village can contribute to people's basic needs. During the workshops various parties have walked through Megen with the proposed masterplan in their hands. During these walks small adjustments were made. This masterplan is therefore not just some plan, it is a plan that has literally been drawn up IN and WITH the surroundings.



# THEMATICS

This part of the document (see attachment 1) is flexible and can be looked at with your own interpretation. It only gives an indication of the intentions. The idea behind it is to inspire the future users of the area, not scaring them of. The final decision-making will take place by an appointed team; “Team Spatial Quality”, which will include members of the cooperation. They direct the developments and assess whether future developments fit the site. This document serves as a basis for decision-making. When developments fit the requirements as written in the document, the plan will be approved. If not, we can always go in discussion.





## THEMATICS

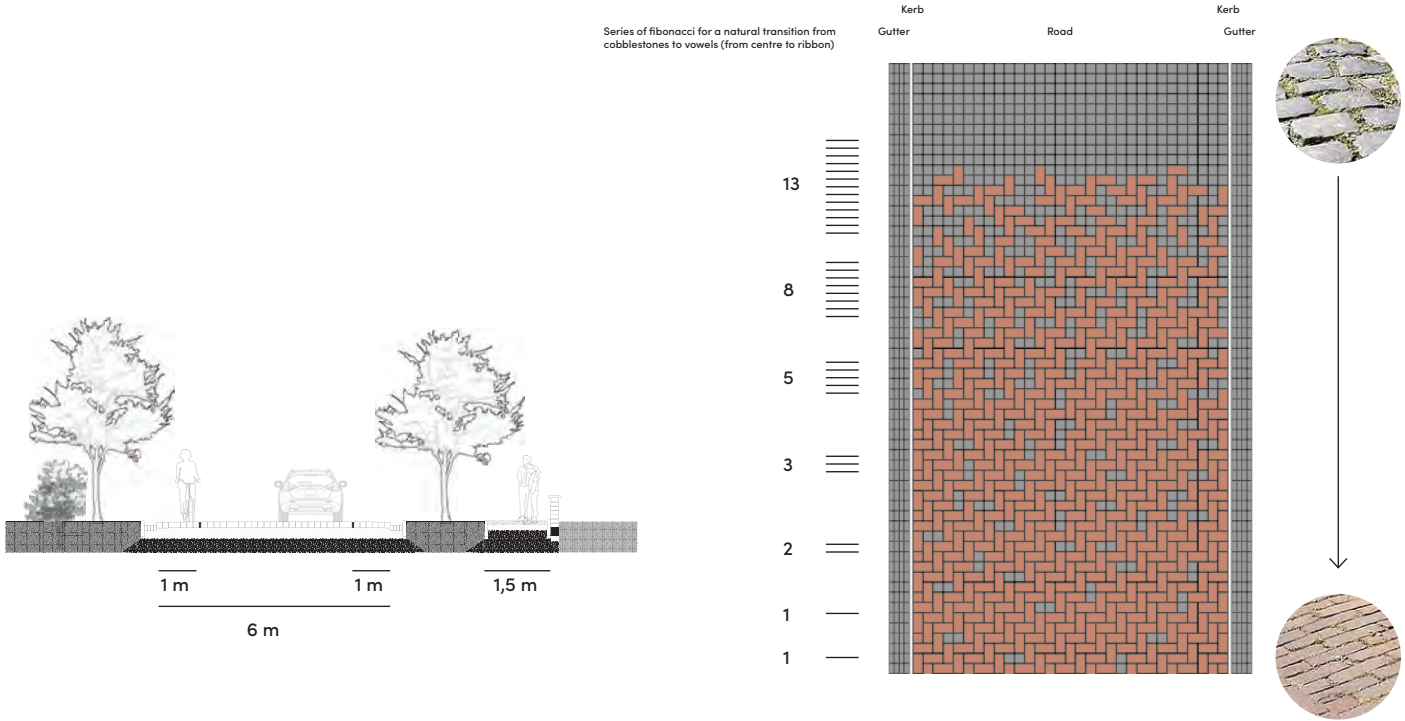
In order to make appropriate elaborations for the sub-areas, I walked around in the area with the masterplan map in my hand. By entering the area with the map in hand, I was able to immediately visualize the new situation. Based on this performance, I started to draw up rules for each sub-area. This guarantees not only an appropriate plan but also the right atmosphere which fits within the environment.





# THEMATICS

Sometimes, I made even a more detailed elaboration for some areas. The reason for doing this is because the subject in question is important for the future development of the village. The further elaborations were made in close consultation with the appropriate experts.



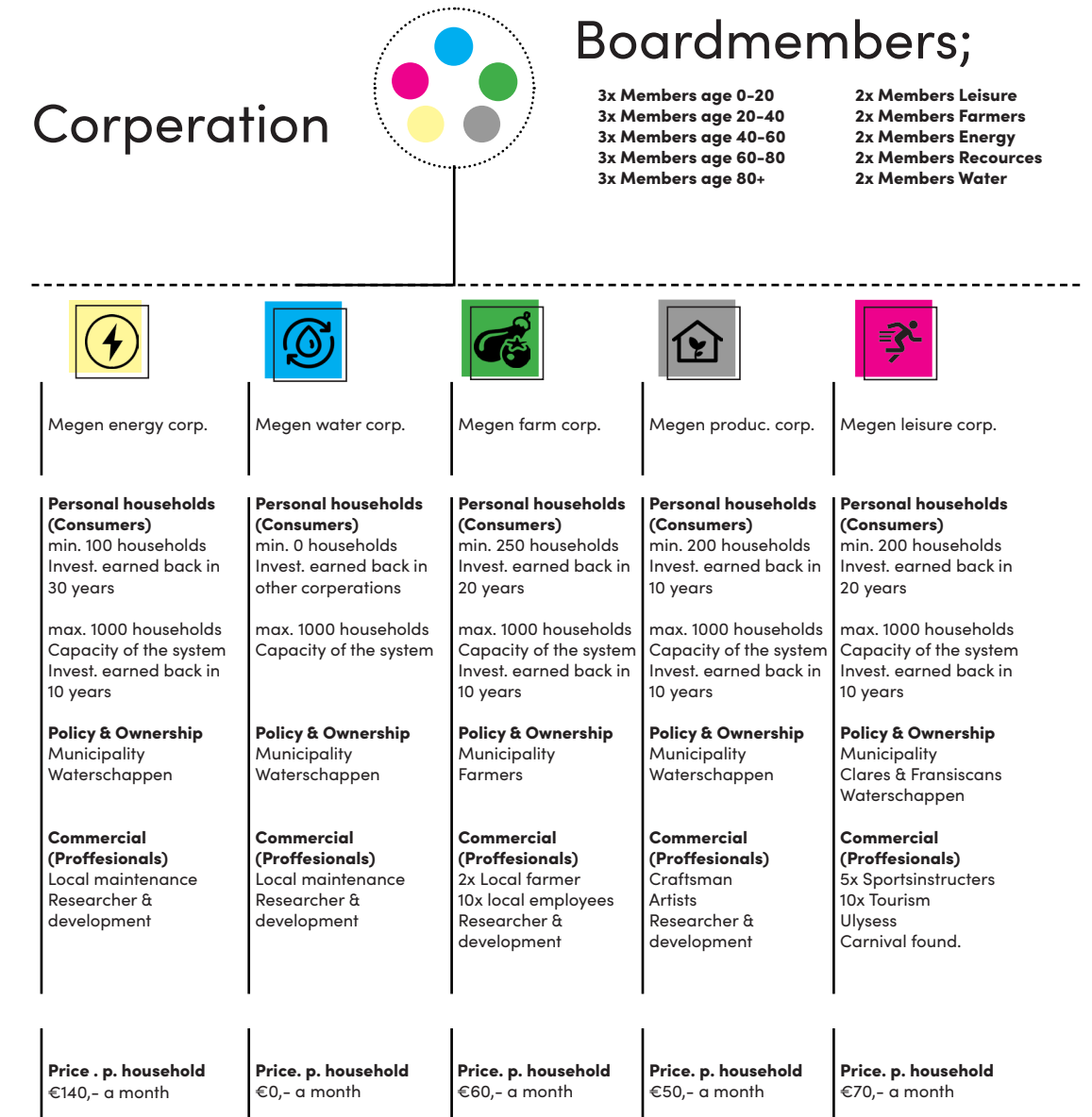
**NEXT-UP**



## COOPERATION

The cooperative is a form of enterprise where quick profit is not the goal; in which the needs of members are paramount; in which administrators tend to think of long-term interests and in which the human dimension is always paramount.

The main importance of the new village cooperative in Megen is; Increase the quality of life, promote the feeling of happiness and stimulate social cohesion. However, this approach also creates something else interesting at an individual level. The new jointness and self-organization also creates independence from third parties, which offers the opportunity to develop fair (profit-free) systems. In this way we cannot increase individual income, but we can reduce costs, which is also a kind of profit.





## CONVINCE

During the process I gratefully made use of the knowledge from the environment. Through workshops, mind maps and consultations I have been able to include residents from different age groups, family compositions and origin in my story. Because they were involved in the proces, I convinced them that a village can mean much more than it does now. Although these residents have already spread the word, the majority of the population of Megen still needs to be convinced to make a real impact. That is the next step in the process. Nevertheless the basis stands.

I learned that being open and transparent helps to create trust. When people trust you and understand your purpose, they will help you were ever they can.

By explaining the process to the people, they often came with additions and advices to talk with others who could help me or are important stakeholders.

Due to the inclusion of the inhabitants, I was introduced in a meeting with the president of the footballclub to have a brainstorm about how to transform the existing soccer club into a multifunctional sportsclub.



## POLICY

In order to get the project started at a political level, the project can take the form of a Pilot. By choosing this form, it is possible to deviate from existing regulations (such as zoning plans, policy documents, etc.), if properly substantiated.

In addition, it is a good way to get all kinds of financing or subsidies for the project. To get a status of pilot-project, I will have to convince the local municipality of the ideas. Support from the inhabitants will contribute enormously to this.





## FINANCES

There are different ways of financing, but crowd funding and social financing are the most interesting. This is because we create direct support through crowd-funding and can invest heavily through social-financing (at relatively low interest rates). The interesting thing about social financing is that the government also gains interest in the project, which means that the idea of the inclusive village be can spread very quickly, when te project is a succes. Both options are complementary to each other and can reinforce each other. One does not exclude the other.

When external funding is not in place, the project is still not lost. Then the first project of inclusive Megen should aimed for tourism and generate an income. An income which will be used to start with the rest of the project.





# COMMISION

The theme’s as mentioned before should be started in parallel. Yet there is a certain priority in the steps because one can strengthen the other.

Step 1:  
Start up the village cooperation with the involved residents of the workshops. By starting the cooperation the project becomes tangible and serious.

Step 2.1:  
Recruiting members by making villagers more enthusiastic and convincing them of the ideas (through presentations and workshops).

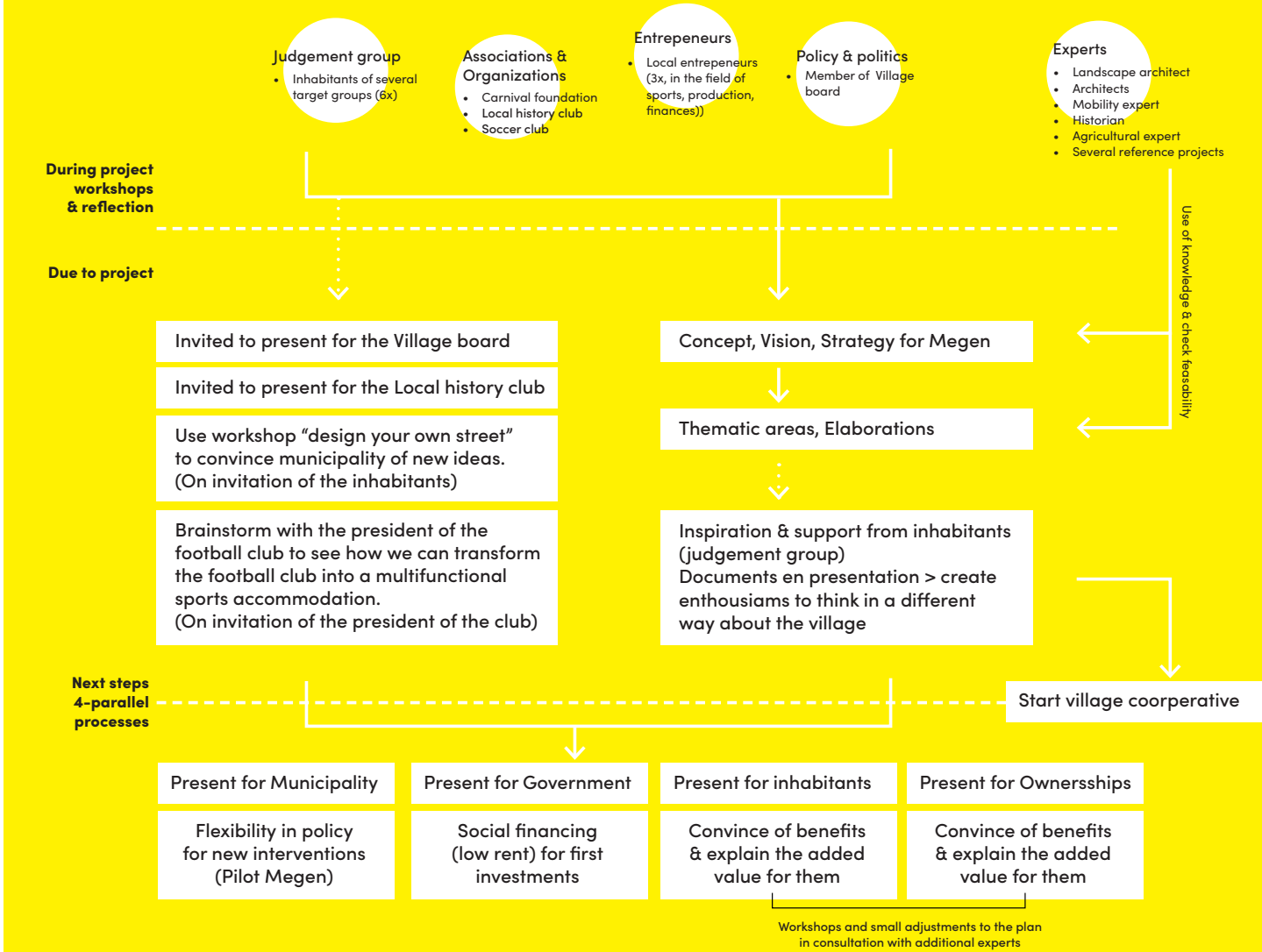
Step 2.2:  
Recruiting members by having village entrepreneurs and organizations / associations sign a letter of intent (LOI).

Step 3.1: Approach the municipality; request to start a pilot project “the inclusive village”. The number of registrations and the signed LOI’s show that there is public support.

Step 3.1: Investigate the subsidy options for starting the project. Although I am not in favor of working with subsidies, it seems to be a good way for this project to have a flying start.

Step 3.2: Parallel to the process of the pilot project, we can start with investigating other financing options. For the social fanancing we go to the province/government and convince them of the social impact (MKBA). And to create some extra support we start with a CROWD fundng action.

# FOLLOW-UP



## REFLECTION

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**The process of an urban design project** can be compared with the way a Jazz band plays their music. The players determines the rhythm, which has a certain base but still is open for improvisation. They look closely at the environment and the audience. Their reaction towards the music is of great importance... because when the interest disappears or the melody does not catch on, the band is has to be able to adjust it. They can shift in melody and play a complete different song, a song that does fit the audience its need. In addition, the world of Jazz offers the possibility of solos (or try-outs) where a certain instrument or vocal can take the lead if it is necessary. Jazz music is music of the moment, it is music which is not afraid to try something new, it is music of just doing and it is music that can create memories.

#### **In comparison with the spatial design:**

An urban design process is not about the designers or the expertise. It is about the outcome and the reaction of the users. They are the ones who use the area and that is where the expertise's should respond to. As soon as something changes (with social impact), the team should be able to respond without forgetting the main goal; creating a good spatial environment. Sometimes this means that it is necessary for one expertise to step-back or step-up in the process. An environment should be created that touches people, an environment to which people commit themselves and an environment that offers the possibility to create memories.

#### **What is my role as the urban designer?**

My role as the urban designer can be compared with the role of the drummer or bass player in the band. These are the people who control the rhythm of the final play. They take care of the base-line that keeps everything together and creates a direction for others to anticipate on. As soon as a process or song has to change or has to go in a completely different direction, the urbanist or bass player will have to act and initiate these changes. They act as the directors of the play, but leave plenty of room for the others to do their thing.



# Overall reflection

In general, I am very satisfied with the end result. Not so much because the end visualisations are beautiful or the design is successful, but because the ideas are picked up by the residents of Megen. I consider this as the greatest compliment you can get on a design. Besides the positive results, I learned a lot from the project which is also very valuable to me. I will therefore take these learning moments with me and use them when I start a new project.

#### **Find projects that are close to your own principles**

In my case this means projects that are meaningful and contribute to our society. For me, there is a strong preference for projects where integral ways of thinking are asked about how man and nature can survive together and a sustainable system way. For the graduation project, this has led to the revitalization of the village, but maybe a relevant question in the near future could be (certainly after COVID-19) "Natuurlijk de stad". Which would be a good follow-up on this project, because then you can look for new ways of how we should deal with cities.

#### **Stay critical of the results**

As an optimist it is sometimes difficult to take a critical look at certain statements and conclusions. Where I first blinded myself with the positivity about Rutger Bregman's basic income, I made a switch at a later stage. I switched from basic income to basic need by looking critically at the goal behind this income. Taking a critical look is essential to gaining new insights. For this reason, I believe it would help (at least for the optimists among us) to build in some critical moments (or moment to reflect) into the process.

#### **Let participation always be part of the process**

In addition to building in critical moments, I have also learned that involving the end users is extremely important. If they are involved in the process at an early stage, you increase the chance of the project succeeding. Not because they feel heard, but because you as designer can really listen to them and enrich the plan with useful design elements.

#### **Constantly switch between layers and reflect between abstraction levels**

After this project, I dare to say that a good plan is an integrated plan. A plan that looks beyond its own plot or expertise but also tries to make a positive impact in a wider area. You can achieve this goal by constantly reflecting and switching between different layers and abstraction levels. That is the only way a certain design or elaboration fits seamlessly within its context and environment.

#### **Urban design is more than a spatial design**

And last but not least ... Urban planning is about much more than just designing a specific space on a certain scale. The spatial design will be the end result, but the process towards the results and the ideas behind it are perhaps even more important. If you ask me, urban design is about designing something bigger .. something intangible, something called "society". And when you become aware of this, you realize that we are the ones who facilitate in the contemporary problems of today. Fortunately for us, this also means that we are the ones who can solve these problems by changing our living environment (physically and mentally). And that is exactly what urban design is about... creating maintainable living environments by using design as a tool and happiness as end result.

The first step is to start to reflect on yourself. Change the way you are living, be an example and prove to others what can be achieved. This is also why I stongly believe in the combination between entrepreneurship and urban design, that is where the real change starts.



## SOURCES & EXPERTS



# SOURCES

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## Data

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# VISITS

Heemkunde Megen  
Herenboeren Wilhelminapark  
Zorgboerderij de Burgthoeve  
Tuinen van Appeltern  
De meeste mensen deugen - Rutger Bregman

# WORKSHOPS

Workshop 1 - Interviews - inhabitants Megen  
Workshop 2 - Conceptdevelopment - Joop Petit (Phidias)  
Workshop 3 - Reflection preliminary design - inhabitants Megen  
Workshop 4 - Tour de (new) Megen - inhabitant Megen

Reflection preliminary design - Phidias  
Reflection preliminary design - LOSstadomland  
Reflection preliminary design - Liselore Brugmans (landschapsarchitect gemeente Oss)

# EXPERT TALKS

Bouwdewijn van Tooren - Herenboeren Nederland  
Joop Petit - Innovator  
Foke de Jong - Urbanist  
Toon van den Heuvel - Civil engineering  
Kees van der Wiel - Cultural historie Megen  
Miriam van de Camp - Entrepeneur Megen  
Patrick van de Camp - (former) Entrepeneur Megen  
Joost Koopmans - Entrepeneur Megen  
Bas Driessen - Fire brigade and member of the local carnival foundation  
Remi van de Camp - Volunteer several organisations  
Jack van de Coolwijk - Member of the footballclub

## APPENDIX 1





# QUALITY GUIDELINES







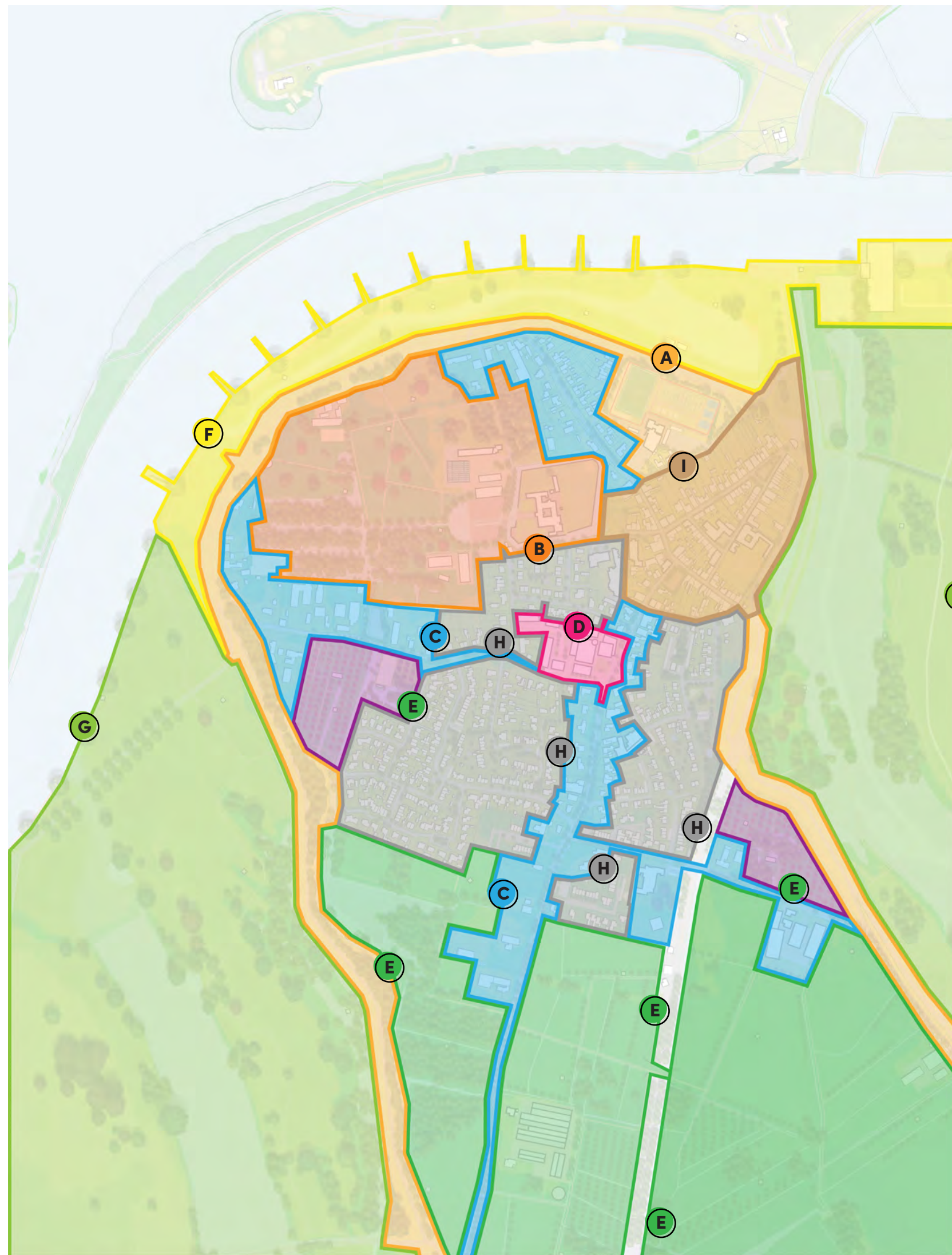
Megen's new master plan dovetails seamlessly with the proposed concept. The masterplan got its shape in collaboration with local residents and stakeholders. By working in this way, support is created, and the village can contribute to people's basic needs. During the workshops various parties have walked through Megen with the proposed masterplan in their hands. During these walks small adjustments were made. This masterplan is therefore not just some plan, it is a plan that has literally been drawn up IN and WITH the surroundings.

The spatial translation of Megen as an inclusive village can be seen in the image on the right.

The principles that are used:

- The subsurface/soil contains essential elements of the identity and therefor forms the basis for the plan;
- Reuse and transformation are used as much as possible (buildings, land, structures, trees, heights, etc.), this contributes to a sustainable and responsible development;
- The accessibility and usability of the landscapes are drastically improved;
- New innovative programs are created, which fit in the surroundings and enhance the spatial qualities;
- The focus lays on diversity which increases experiential value, biodiversity and value of nature;
- New programs strengthen each other in terms of positioning and cooperation;
- Everything is connected by a local slow traffic/recreational network;
- Strengthen the green structure by improving existing wooded banks and introduce new wooded banks;
- Reinforce the wet landscape by means of nature development in combination with water purification;
- Use existing programs and knowledge, improve their business.





- A** Showroute (dike)
- B** Cultural - landscape
- C** Ribbon - landscape
- D** House of Megen
- E** Food - landscape
- F** Resources - landscape
- G** Water - landscape
- H** Housing - landscape
- I** Historical - landscape

The masterplan gives an indication of the spatial interventions on a high scale level, but says little about the actual implementation. Through the construction of the plan from the subsurface it becomes clear how the area is going to develop and meet within the basic needs.

Whereas the master plan only focuses on the main lines, the quality guidelines (which will be shown on the next pages) zoom in on specific locations “the theme areas”. For each thematic area a description will be given about which principles should be followed to guarantee the spatial quality of the area.

This part of the document is flexible and can be looked at with your own interpretation. It only gives an indication of the intentions. The idea behind it is to inspire the future users of the area, not scaring them of. The final decision-making will take place by an appointed team; “Team Spatial Quality”, which will include members of the cooperative. They direct the developments and assess whether future developments fit the site. This document serves as a basis for decision-making. When developments fit the requirements as written in the document, the plan will be approved. If not, we can always go in discussion.

The thematic areas, as shown on the right, are described in more detail on the following pages. They are explained on the basis of:

- Design principles (design thoughts);
- Terms & conditions (preconditions);
- Impressions/inspiration (materialization&atmosphere);





#### Current Qualities

An organic elevation in the landscape, this is how we could describe the dike in its current state. The Megense dike has been there for years and still refers back to times when the Maas had its original meandering character. As the higher part of Megen; the dike forms a spatial boundary (but also protection) between the Maas and the village. Therefore a disconnection from the river and its floodplains has taking place.

The elevation of the landscape is not only limited to the dike, but also contains the historical center and the sports fields. These two elements are spatially part of the dike structure.

#### Future vision

The new masterplan focuses on maintaining the existing structure and exploiting its potential as organic route that overviews the landscape. The use of the potentials of the dike means that the lines of sight into the landscape will be improved and that the dike structure is activated by adding programs. Because sport and culture are already an important part of the dike structure, this program will be extended over this location at crucial points; viewpoints will be created, small-scale sports facilities will be added and the possibility will be created to exhibit art on a temporary basis. At the same time, a walk around out Megen (which is now interrupted) will be completed by making a strong east-west connection (slow traffic structure) on the south side of the village.

The dike will also be provided with information points, because the dike functions as the new show route from which all landscapes can be seen.

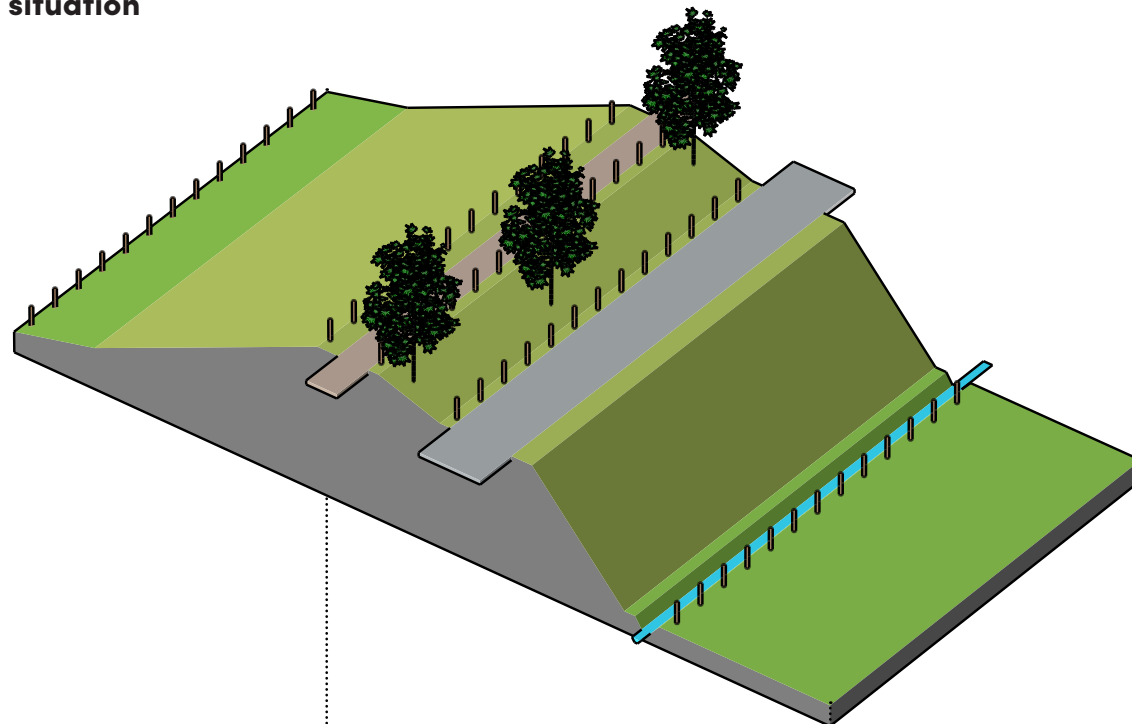
#### Requirements

The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

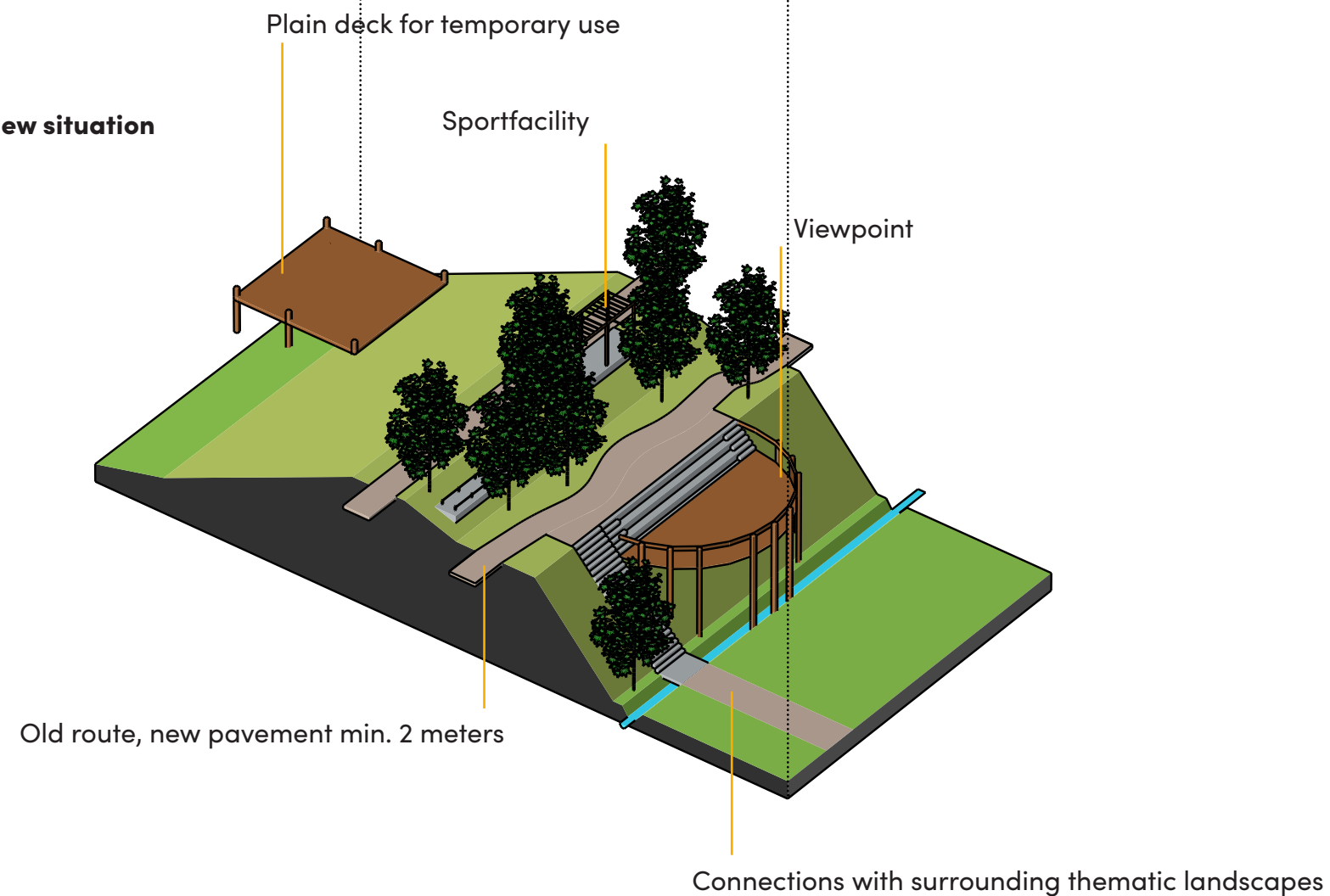
- **Subsoil:** The existing dike structure will be retained. No extensions or narrowing will take place. The characteristic appearance of the organic structure must be preserved. Spatial additions must match the structure of the dike. (Think for example of the capes that could easily function as viewpoints)
- **Activation:** The experience should be increased by adding a program in the field of sports & culture.
- **Accessibility:** The area is focused on slow and recreational traffic. The continuous structures for motorized traffic are interrupted and cut-off. This means that only local traffic with a destination on the dike is allowed to enter the area.
- **Connection:** It is possible to enter other landscapes/subareas from the dike. The connection with the surroundings will be increased by means of sightlines and connections with the recreational network.
- **Landscape:** The existing grass landscape on the slopes of the dike will be preserved as well as the existing tree structures.



## Existing situation



## New situation



### Program guidelines

- Provide space on the dike for adding objects that do not (or minimally) effect the underlying landscape:
- Objects should be executed by using natural materials, preferably from the nearby surroundings;
- Objects are max 2 meters higher than the highest point of the dike;
- Objects must be demountable or removable;
- Objects serve in the field of culture, art or sport;
- Objects have a maximum surface area of 40 m<sup>2</sup>;
- Objects are never completely closed off and always have several open surfaces;
- Objects are accessible for everybody.
- Provide space on the dike for information about the nearby area, the nearby facilities and the relevant cultural history;
- On the dike, permanent fences (with the exception at the location with housing) are not permitted.

### Traffic guidelines

- The existing traffic structure (car) over the dike is minimized and is only intended for local traffic;
- The route for the local traffic contains a speed-limit that matches the requirements for a pedestrian area (15 km/h);
- The existing paved road will be replaced with a semi-paved material (Los) with a minimum width of 2 meters and a maximum width of 3 meters;
- The existing slow-traffic route on the upper part of the dike will be maintained and will serve as a sports/hard-traffic route;
- The lower part will serve as a culture route;
- Other paths will be seen as informal paths and are not paved (elephant paths).

### Guidelines Material

- Objects & information boards: Mainly natural materials from the environment (or a composition of natural materials)
- Slow traffic routes: Semi-pavement (Los)



ACTIVATED SITUATION





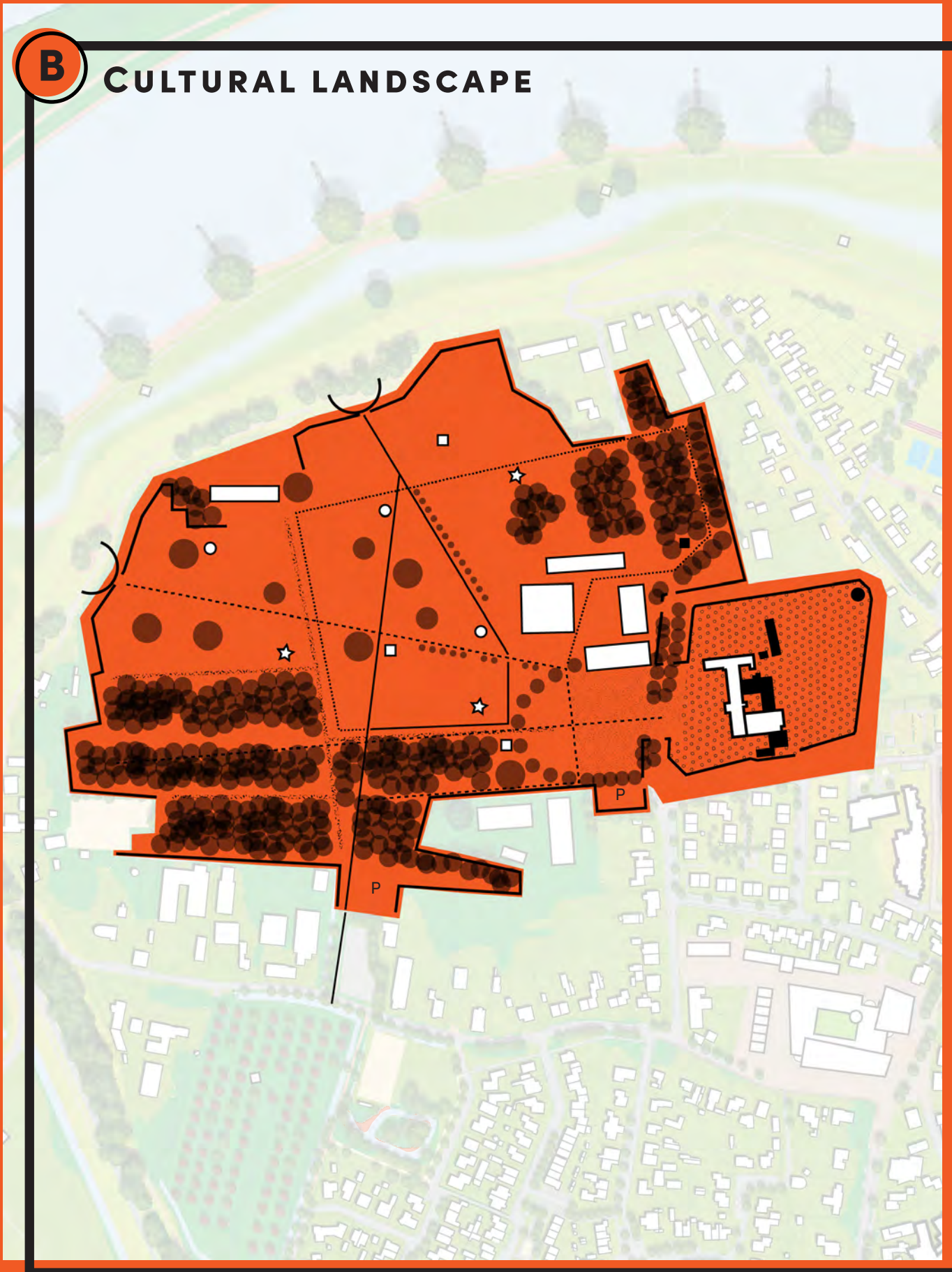
ACTIVATED SITUATION





**B**

## CULTURAL LANDSCAPE



### Current Qualities

On the west side of the historic centre is an unexplored piece of land. The Maasdijk makes a bend which creates a kind of horseshoe shape environment. It creates an area that functions as a special “secluded” piece of agriculture, nearby is the historic Clares monastery which is built on the foundations of the old castle. The relationship with the monastery and thus the former castle is hardly recognizable. The area has never been developed and therefore contains some beautiful views from the Maasdijk into the open inner area. Those views not only show the landscape but also accentuate several characteristic buildings of Megen, which can be seen in the distance.

### Future vision

The masterplan focuses on maintaining openness and sightlines. In addition, a link will be made with the monastery and the former castle. In this way, the area will not only have beautiful views but also gain an identity that can be used to reactivate the grasslands. By developing the area as Arboreta/Hortus, a link is made with the past. The area will regain its historical function as a castle garden. A garden where everything in the field of special flora & fauna can be discovered. It is a garden that shows power, wealth and infinite dreams. Because of the unusual flora & fauna the area also supplies in special products such as wood, fruits and / or vegetables.

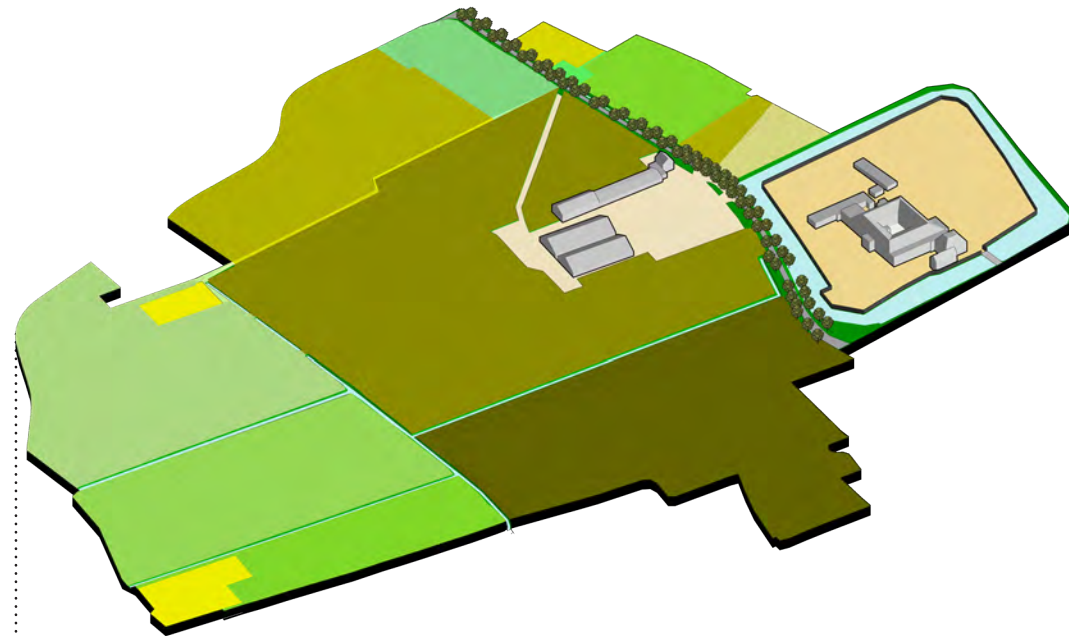
In order to emphasize the monastery, we gratefully use the existing landscape. In the wet parts of the terrain, broekbossen are planted. In this way an automatic focus towards the monastery is created. Subsequently, a strong reference to the baroque gardens / castle gardens is made by the new layout of the area. The lines in the landscape are linked to the existing sightlines so that the current qualities are retained and the characteristic buildings of Megen will still be visible from the dike.

### Requirements

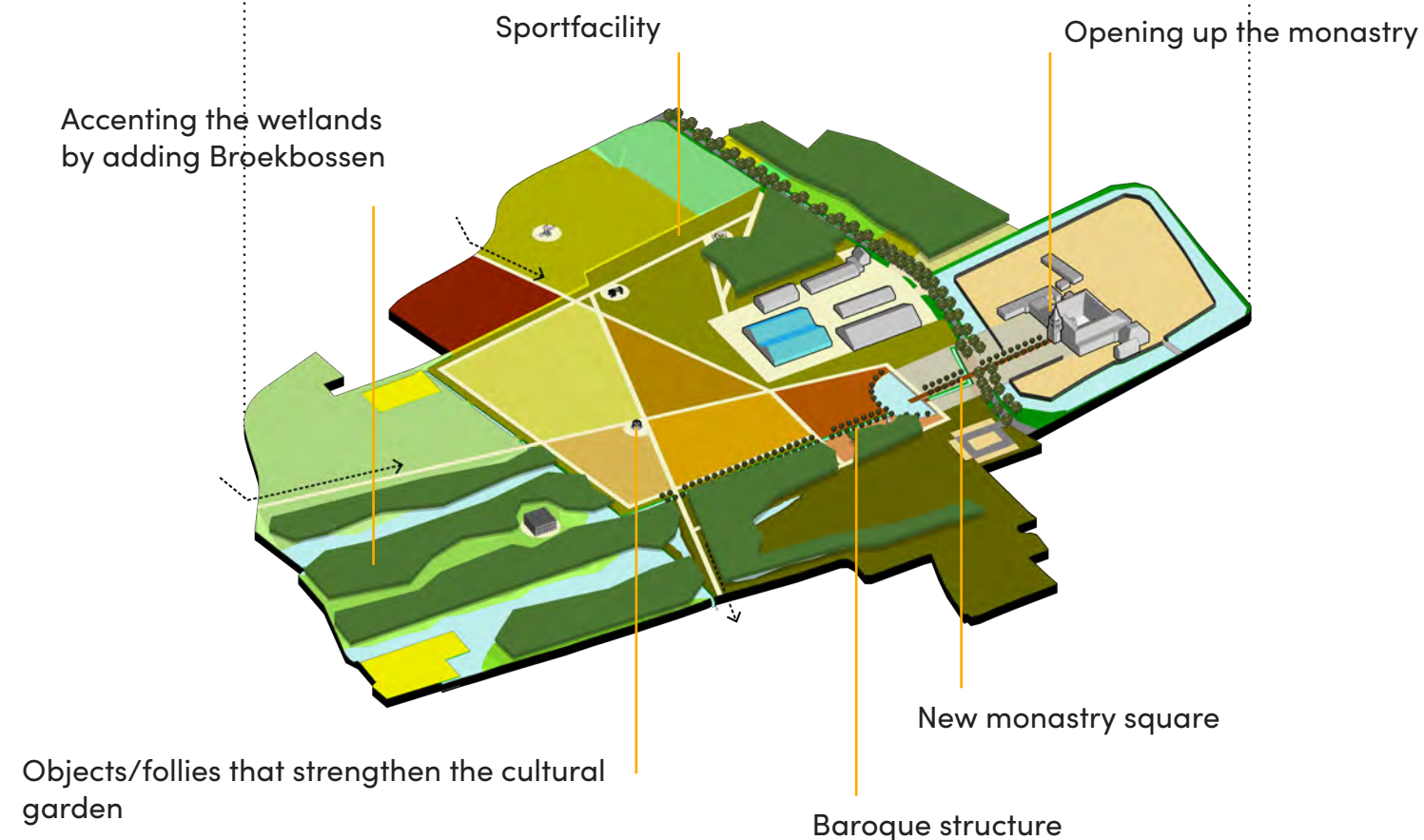
The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

1. Subsoil: The existing structures in the area will be preserved. The wetlands will be transformed into Broekbossen and the dry parts will be rearranged in the style of the baroque to emphasizing sightlines, the open character and the relation with the castle;
2. Activation: Experience will be increased by focusing on knowledge and culture. The combination of knowledge, culture and gardening provides interesting new insights, which will make the garden function as a kind of Arboreta/Hortus;
3. Accessibility: Part of the existing monastery will be opened up. This way the monastery can attract other functions and therefore remain their existence. The existing farm in the area will be retained and will be given a new interpretation in line with the culture/knowledge garden;
4. Connections: Various recreational routes run through the area, which are connected to the other themed areas. In addition, a direct link will be made with parking in this area, this way visitors from outside can also visit the location. The parking spaces are hidden in the landscape;
5. Landscape: The existing grass landscape makes way for new flora & fauna. Indigenous but also exotic species. The landscape will be a knowledge garden with special features in the field of art and religion.

## Existing situation



## New situation



### Program guidelines

- The existing monastery will gain a new interpretation as a visitor center/group accommodation. A small part of the monastery will be set up to create a link with the cultural garden:
  - The existing building will be maintained, extensions are not possible, only renovation.
- The existing farm is in service of the cultural garden and functions as a extension of the Arboreta/Hortus. This is the place for workshops and (garden) shopping:
  - The existing buildings will be maintained as much as possible;
  - Creating a new building or starting a transformation is possible, taken into account that the existing building surface will not increase;
  - New building (volume & mass); maximum gutter height is 3 meters, maximum total height is 9 meters;
  - New building style; Farm (barn)/glasshouse.
- The cultural garden offers space to add special objects into the landscape, objects that enhance and differentiate the underlying landscape:
  - Objects can be executed in all kinds of materials as long as they are not harmful to the subsoil (local materials are preferred);
  - Objects have a maximum height of 3 meters and are publicly accessible;
  - Objects must be demountable or removable;
  - Objects are in service of culture, art or knowledge;
  - Objects have a maximum surface area of 20 m2.
- The cultural garden offers space for keeping a small amount of cattle (hobby).
- Special flora & fauna are allowed in the area.
- The diversity of the landscape should be increased, for this reason adjacent fields are never designed and planted in the same style and with the same plants.

### Traffic/public area guidelines

- The existing traffic structure (car) is maintained and interrupted at the monastery.
- The square in front of the monastery will be designed according to the principles of shared space, where the car is a guest.
- The existing speed of 50 km/h will be maintained with the exception of the shared space area, here the speed of 15 km/h will be introduced (the pavement of the public space contributes to this).
- The new recreational network will be semi-paved with a minimum width of 1.5 meters and a maximum width of 3 meters.
- Fences and hedges are permitted but have a maximum height of 1.2 meters (with the exception of the fences at surrounding houses).
- The parking facilities are located on the edge of the area and should be hidden in the landscape, packed with greenery.

### Guidelines Materials

- Objects: A free use of materialization.
- New construction: Natural materials from the environment (clay, brick, wood) and glass
- Slow traffic routes: Semi-paved.
- Monastery square: Cobblestones in combination with gravel.

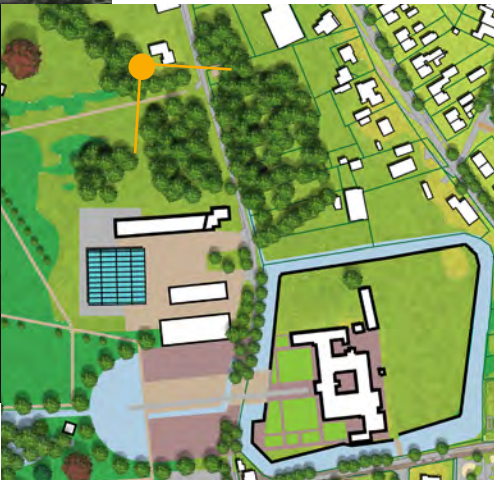


ACTIVATED SITUATION

Special flora and fauna spread throughout the landscape

Retain existing structures

Possibility to keep hobby cattle





ACTIVATED SITUATION



Addition of a tree landscape (Broekbossen) into the wetlands as finishing of the backside situation

Water feature as a reference to the imposing castle gardens

Cobblestones and gravel as a monastery square. With a relation to the pavement of the old historical centre

Additions of art, knowledge and special objects that function as a reinforcement of the cultural garden



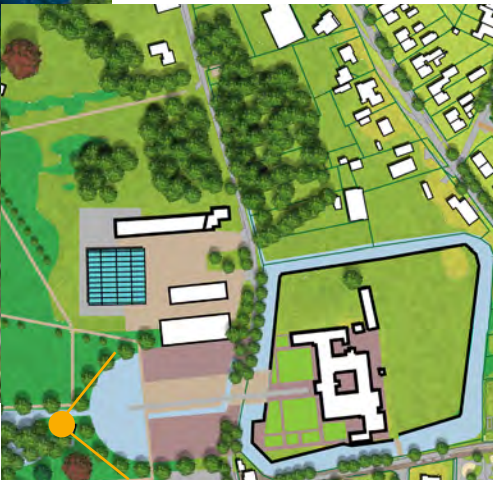
ACTIVATED SITUATION



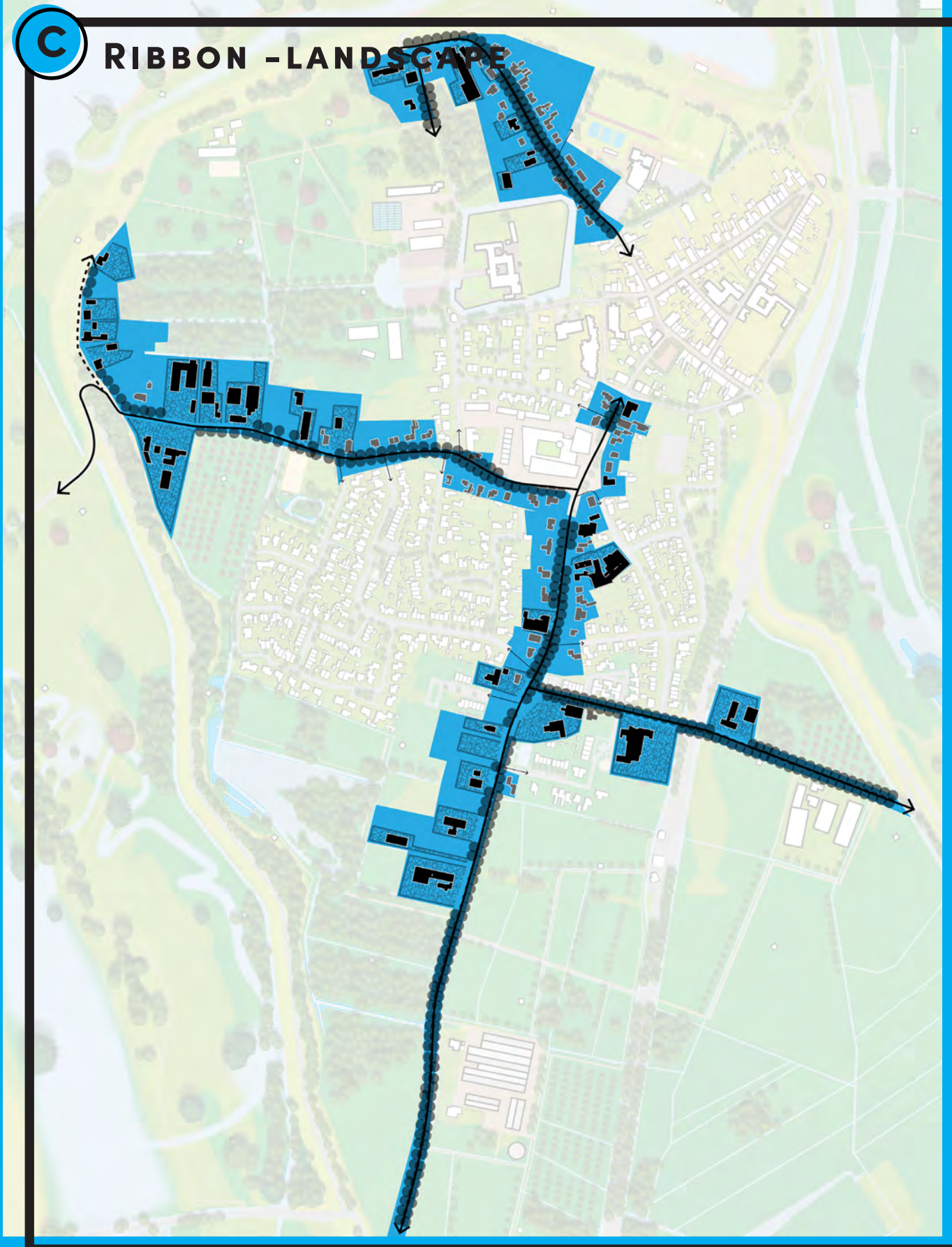
A new accent towards the monastery and the former castle in style of the baroque

A new development at the garden centre by using natural materials and building in the style of a modern barn

The culture garden can be used in many ways. Think of acquiring knowledge, admiring arts & culture or just relax underneed the trees. It is a place for everybody.







#### Current Qualities

The historical ribbons form the main routes of the village. Along these ribbons the village has continued to expand and therefore they function as a spatial storyline that connects the rural area with the built environment. Through these structures visitors and residents enter the village. Mainly detached houses and old farmhouses are located along the ribbons. In combination with the avenue structure, the ribbon has a certain grandeur. This is how people know that this is the main route.

However, a large part of the old farmhouses is empty, which does downgrade the atmosphere. And because of the new pavement (asphalt), the feeling of a historical street is damaged.

#### Future vision

The ribbons currently have many qualities. These qualities will be retained and strengthened in the new plan. The avenue structure and connection with the landscape will be retained, but the layout of the street will gain a new look. Instead of the functional asphalt, the relationship with the historical center will be increased (reference to the historical cobblestone pavement). This will be done by introducing a new pavement. The paving will be executed mainly in baked bricks and will be alternated with cobblestones. The cobblestones will be placed at each driveway and therefore accent the buildings along the street. In this way, there will be a gradual transition from the historic center to the outlying area (the number of driveways decreases when we move towards the rural area, therefore the proportion of cobblestones will also decrease). The vacant buildings will get the opportunity to initiate a programmatic transformation, whereby new programs such as housing and business activities in relation with surrounding landscapes will be made possible.

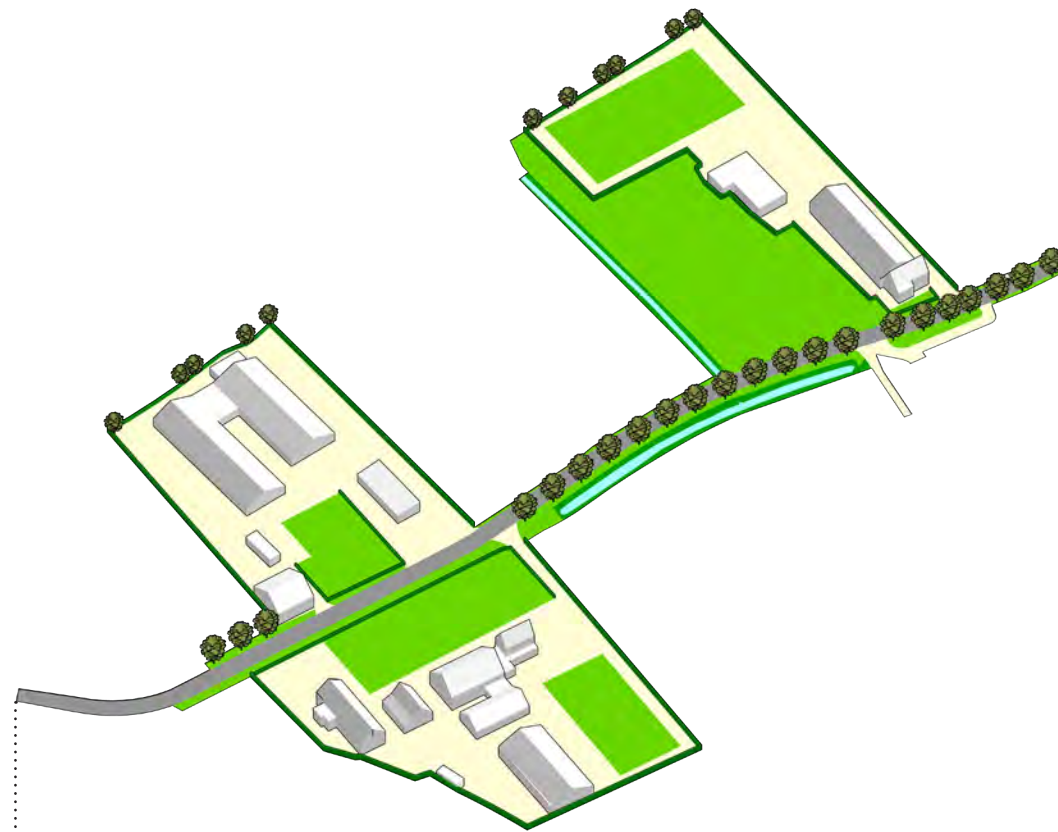
#### Requirements

The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

1. Subsoil: The existing ribbon structure will remain, only the pavement will be replaced by materials that are typical for Megen;
2. Activation: The experience is increased by allowing new programs into the vacant buildings;
3. Accessibility: The area becomes more accessible for slow traffic due to changes in the street pattern. The slow and fast traffic will be separated from each other and the new materialization will slow down the fast traffic. Therefore a new and safer environment is created;
4. Connection: The ribbons serve as the main structure and are automatically well connected to the surrounding landscapes. The ribbons come together at the former industrial building. This is the reason for that location to develop as the new facilitating hub;
5. Landscape: The existing landscape will be retained only a transformation at the adjacent buildings is possible.



## Existing situation



## New situation

Barn transformation to housing

Respecting the farmyard structure

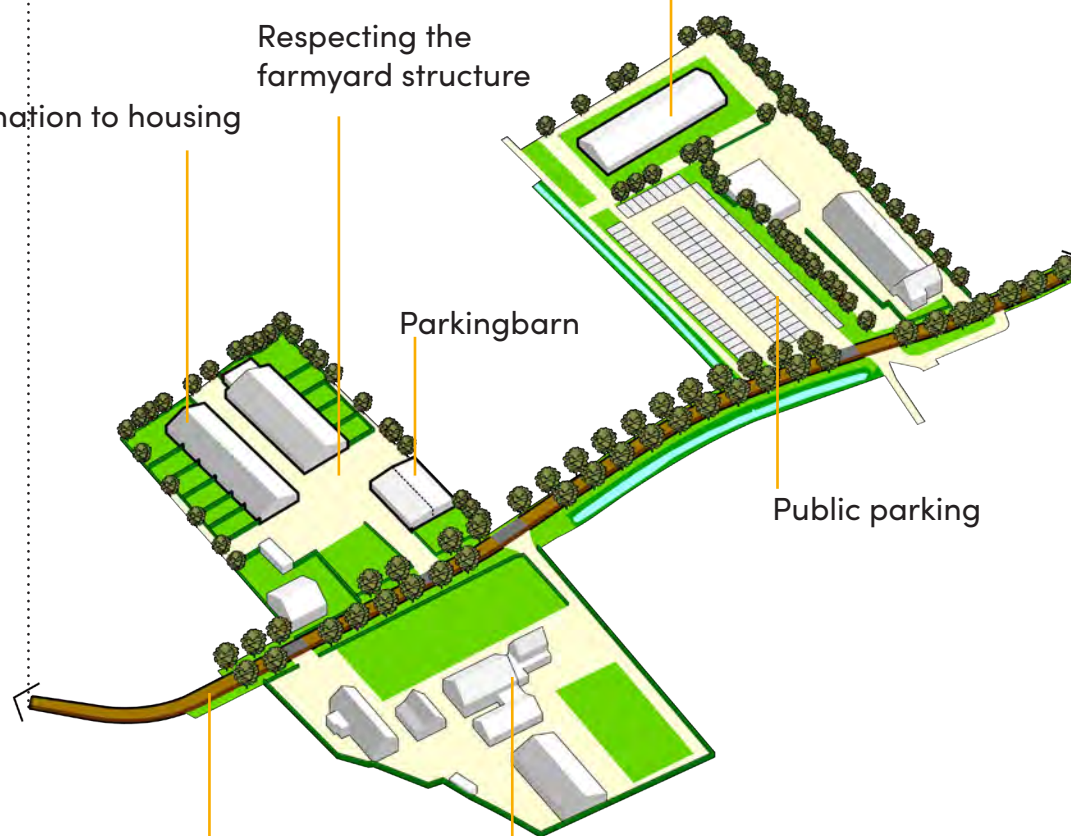
Parkingbarn

New landscape business

Public parking

Transformation of the ribbon

existing situation is kept



### Program guidelines

- The buildings on the existing ribbon will have the opportunity to transform into housing or small-scale businesses linked to Megen's new landscapes.
- The guidelines for the transformation are:
  - The existing buildings will be maintained as much as possible;
  - New constructions and transformation is possible, taken into account that the existing building surface does not increase;
  - New building mass; maximum gutter height is 3 meters, maximum ridge height 9 meters;
  - New building style; Farmyard (farmhouse or barn).
- On the yards, the construction of multiple dwellings is allowed, taken into account that the total of 2100 inhabitants is not exceeded.
- Facilities for living are provided on site (parking, sheds, garbage disposal etc.).
- Fences in the direction of the landscape are not allowed, because the relationship with the landscape needs to be optimized. Tree lines in the form of a willow row are allowed as they enhance the landscape quality.

### Traffic/public space guidelines

- The existing traffic structure (car) is maintained, the speed-limit will not be reduced, but because of the changes in materialization the speed will also decrease.
- Within the contours of the existing roads, space is created for cyclists and pedestrians (if necessary).
- The new recreational routes will be provided with semi-paved roads with a minimum width of 1.5 meters.
- The avenue structure will be completed in its entirety by planting trees. Only at the driveways and gardens the avenue structure will be interrupted.
- Parking is mainly on site, preferably in a parking shed otherwise hidden behind greenery.
- A communal parking lot will be created for visitors. On this parking several spaces will be reserved for (electric) car sharing.

### Guidelines Material

- New construction: Natural materials from the environment (clay, brick, wood).
- Farmyards: Semi-paved/baked vowels.
- Slow traffic routes: Semi-paved (Los).
- Ribbon: Cobblestones in combination with baked (red/brown) vowels.
- Parking: semi-paved.



ACTIVATED SITUATION

Relationship with local materials and village characteristics by using baked vowels

Introduce accents at driveways  
Cobblestones as a link to history

Integration of semi-paved surfaces as part of the recreational network





ACTIVATED SITUATION

The more driveways, the more cobblestones  
(transition from village center to outer area)

Finishing the avenue structure where possible

Maintaining the existing recreational network  
structure (adjust with the same natural materialization)





# ACTIVATED SITUATION

transformation of the former barns into dwellings.  
Keeping the structure, making it fit to the function.  
In this case senior-housing

Hedges instead of fences to accent  
the gradation from landscape to build  
environment

New farmyard neighbourhood with different  
types of housing for Starters, Seniors & Singles

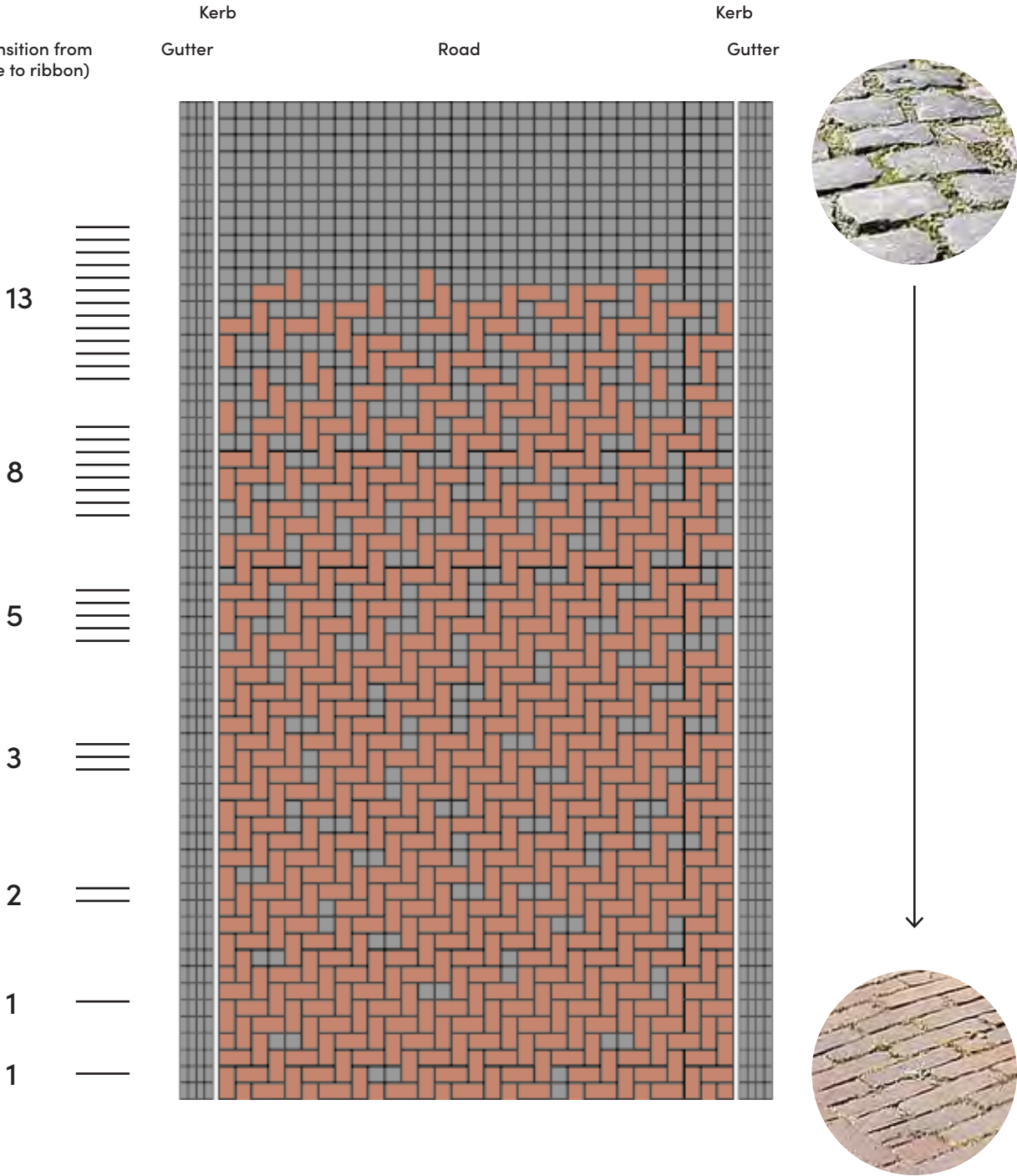
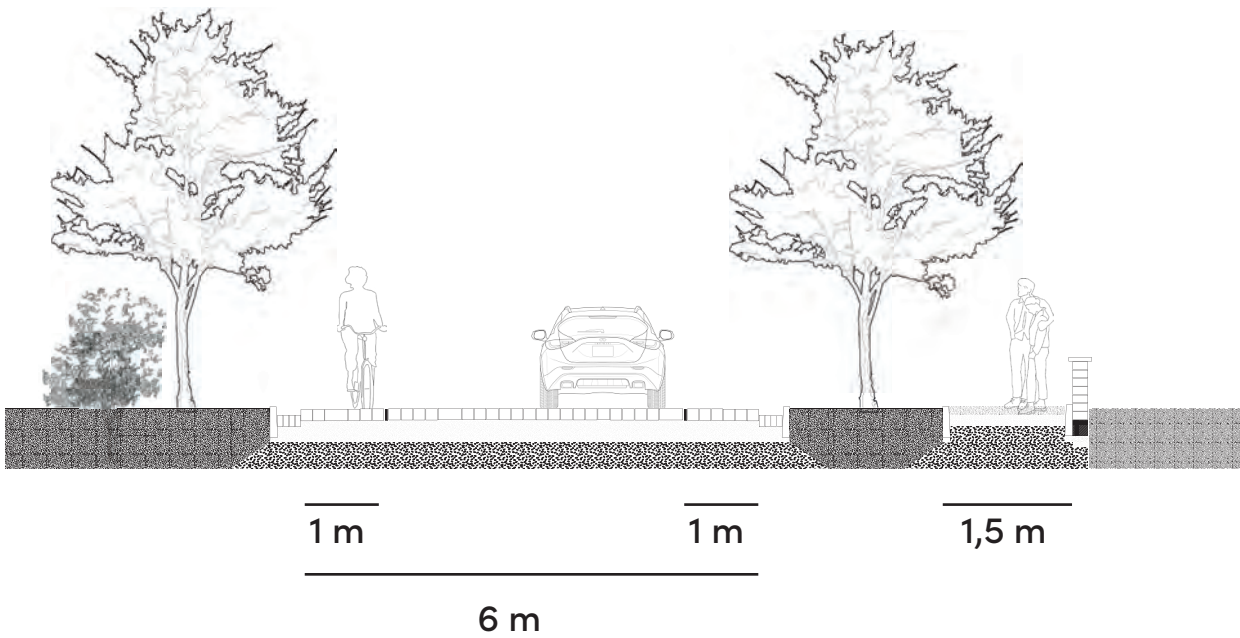




INTERMEZZO TRANSITION PAVEMENT & SECTION



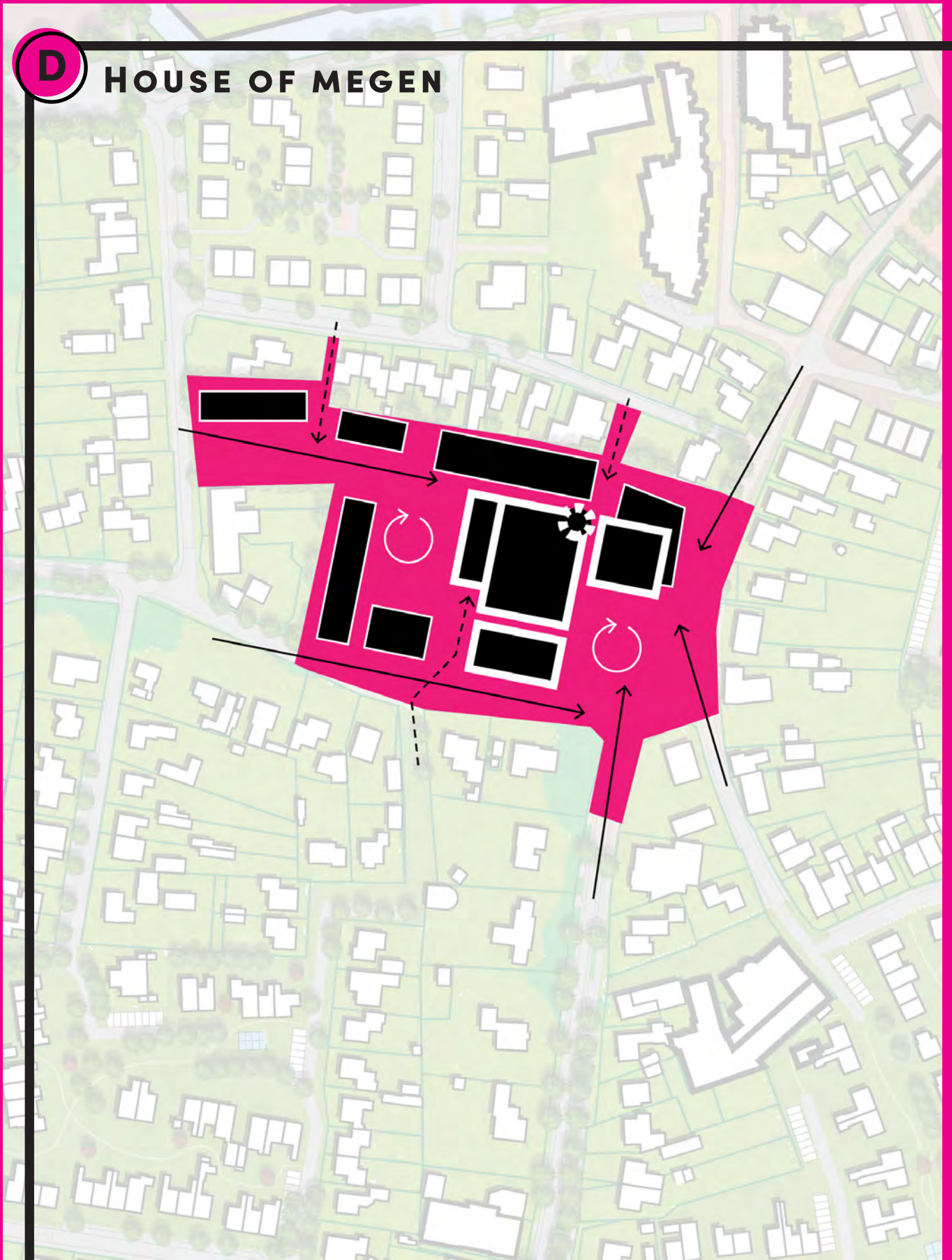
Series of fibonacci for a natural transition from cobblestones to vowels (from centre to ribbon)





**D**

## HOUSE OF MEGEN



### Current Qualities

The abandoned factory stands at a central location in the village and is linked to the historical ribbons. Currently the buildings manifest themselves at the location because of its accessibility, public space and appearance. The composition and appearance of the buildings are idiosyncratic in comparison to the rest of the village. Because of the industrial character, it forms a different ensemble within the existing structure. Constructively the complex is still in excellent condition, but the vacancy lowers the atmosphere.

### Future vision

Due to the condition of the buildings and the unique characteristics, redevelopment and transformation have been taken into account in this Masterplan. In the context of sustainability and preservation of the identity, the complex will be provided with a new function. Because of its central location, the good accessibility and the possibility to be connected with the historical center, the complex provides itself perfectly as a central house where all facilities come together. This becomes the melting pot of the village, the place where social interaction is at its best. This is the place where the cooperation and many other facilities are located. As a facilitating center, the complex will meet the needs of the landscapes due to the placement of activities as storage, sales, distribution and organization. By subsequently linking living, offices, study places, events and a communal kitchen to the complex, the location also meets within the social needs of the residents in every possible way.

Due to the large size of the building and its functional layout (as a former furniture workshop), some adjustments to the structure are necessary. The building needs to connect better with the surroundings and invite people to come in. These connections can be made by opening the buildings in various places, without damaging the total structure.

In addition, the complex will be provided with a height accent in the form of a tower. This accent makes the complex part of the series of prominent buildings in the village, only this time in a modern way.

### Requirements

The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

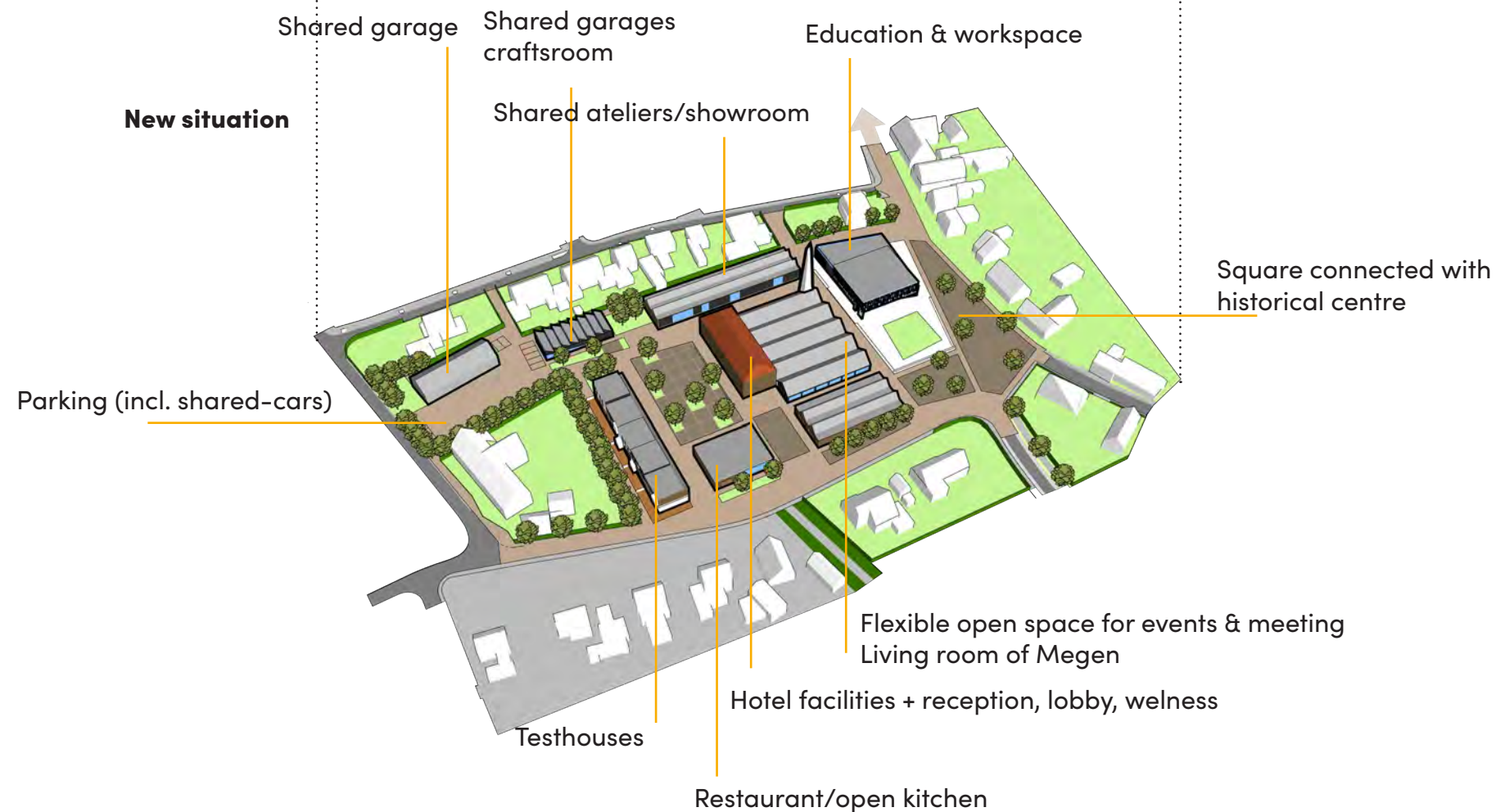
1. Subsoil: The complex will function as a new facilitating center of Megen due to the positioning in the middle of the village;
2. Activation: the complex will be activated by connecting programmatically with all landscape types;
3. Accessibility: The accessibility of the area is good because of its position as end destination of the ribbons. Nevertheless, the accessibility will be increased when the side is connected with the new recreation network;
4. Connection: The connection with the environ will be increased by the introduction of a height accent. The building will be visible from every location in the village;
5. Landscape: The existing pavement will be replaced by a new pavement. This new pavement refers to the historical center. In this way a physical connection is created.



## Existing situation



## New situation



### Program guidelines

- The house of Megen accommodates a large range of functions. The functions depend on the developments in the surrounding landscapes and the wishes of the local residents. However, the new program always aims for a flexible and shared use.
- The zoning of the area is mixed but the following facilities need to find a place in the area: living, flex-working, education, shared storage/garage, shared hobby rooms (business), a shared kitchen, a meeting/event location and facilities for the hotel.
- The new program will be integrated into the existing buildings, whereby transformation of the buildings is permitted.
- A few new buildings are allowed on the terrain to make living, education and working possible.
- The guidelines for the buildings are:
  - The existing building constructions will be maintained as much as possible;
  - New constructions and transformations are possible, taken into account that the existing building surface will be maintained;
  - New building mass; maximum building height 10 meters;
  - New building style; Industrial/contemporary.
- In addition, an observation tower will be built to mark the area and make it visible from a distance. This tower has a height of 30 meters and does not house any physical facilities.

### Traffic Guidelines

- The structure of the ribbons is interrupted at this location. The car is a guest and adjusts its speed according to the thoughts of a shared space (15 km/h). The layout of the terrain reinforces these thoughts.
- The areas around the buildings, not being the ribbons, are car-free zones. However, freight traffic will be allowed to load and unload at agreed times.
- Parking is provided at the edge of the area, especially on the west side of the site, linked to the shared garage and hobby areas.

### Material Guidelines

- Existing buildings: Bricks.
- New construction: Natural materials from the environment (clay, brick, concrete, wood).
- Square: Mainly cobblestones (connection to the center) interspersed with greenery and baked vowel pavements.
- Ribbon structure: Continuation of the ribbon structure in the shared space zone, by the use of wide bands in the street profile.



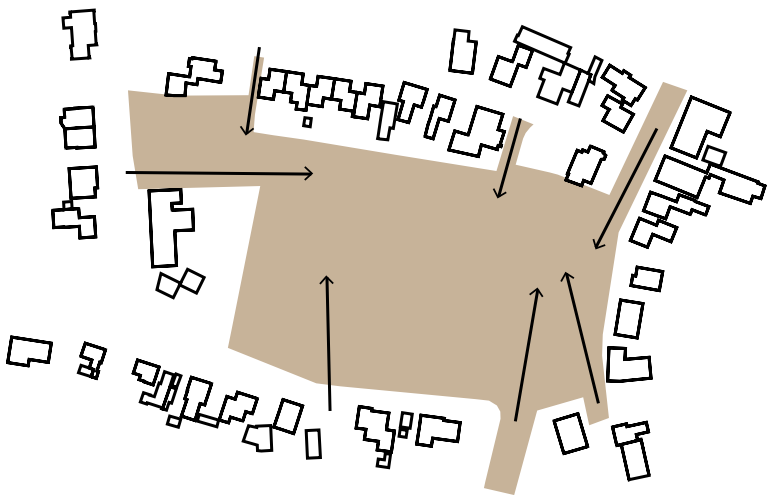




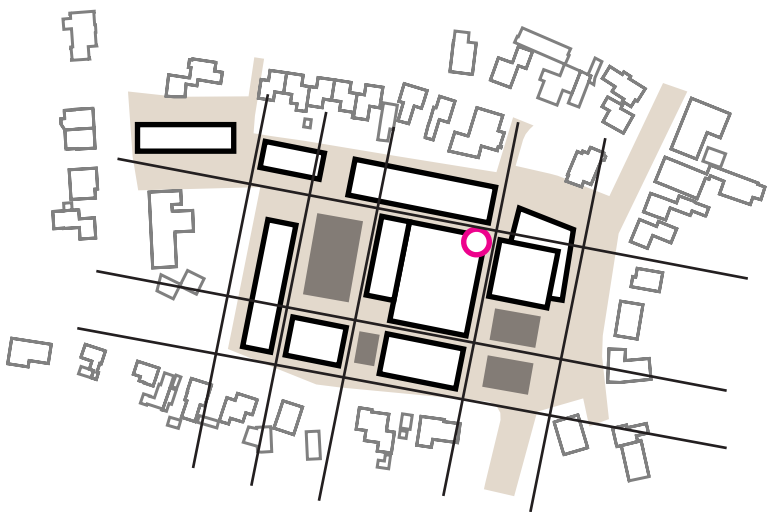




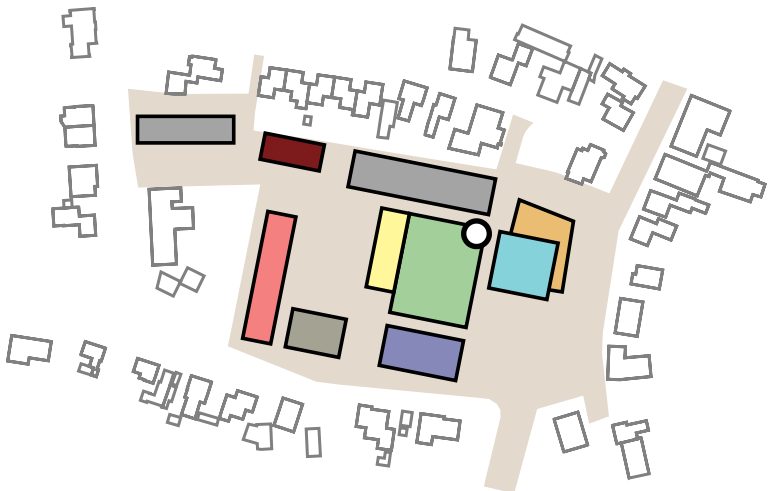
INTERMEZZO BUILDING UP THE HOUSE OF MEGEN



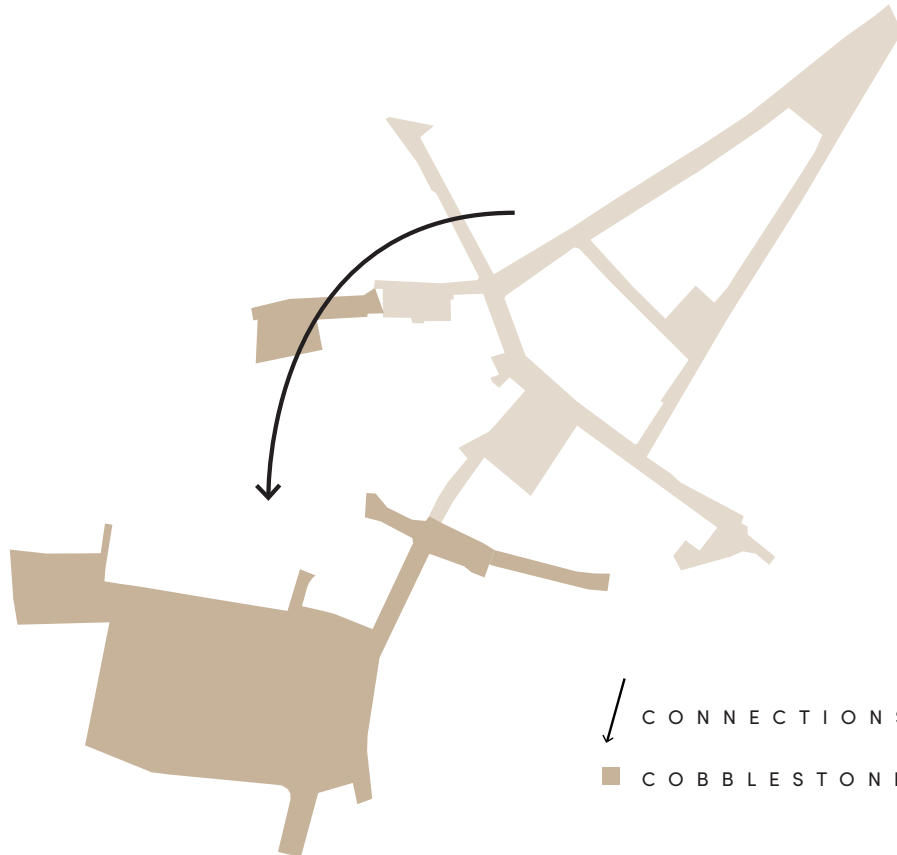
↓ SIGHT LINES/CONNECTIONS  
■ COBBLESTONES



↓ DEFINING STRUCTURES  
■ PUBLIC SPACES  
● CREATE A HEIGHT ACCENT



■ MEETING/EVENTS/FLEX  
■ LIBRARY/WORK  
■ EDUCATION  
■ ATELIER/GARAGE/WORKSHOP  
■ EXPOSITION  
■ TEST HOUSES  
■ RESTAURANT/OPEN KITCHEN  
■ STORAGE & COOLING  
■ HOTEL FACILITY

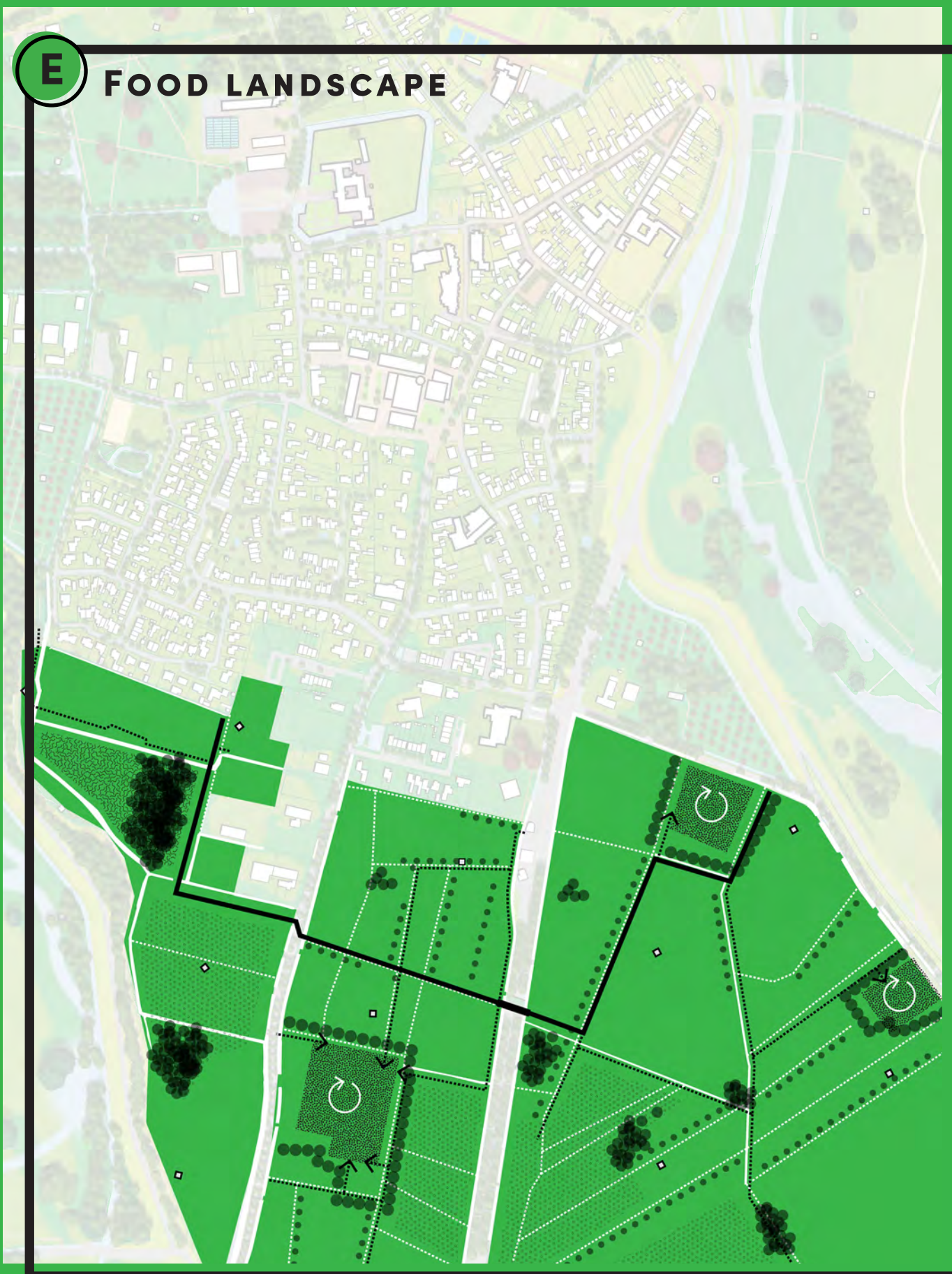


↓ CONNECTIONS  
■ COBBLESTONES



# E

## FOOD LANDSCAPE



### Current Qualities

On the south side of the village, situated on the fertile grounds, we will find a few large-scale agricultural plots that are still in use. Where in the past a smaller plot structure was maintained, there is now a more monotonous use of the land. This creates a clear but also flat landscape.

### Future vision

The agricultural landscape will be given a different character in the future, through the application of more diversity and small scale plots in combination with an increase in experience through the construction of slow-traffic routes. These changes will not only increase the amenity value but will also lead to an inclusive development of nature, with a focus on increasing the biodiversity. There is room for agricultural activity, with a focus on nature inclusiveness which takes the subsurface into account (Together with nature, rather than from nature).

The tree-rich landscape (as shown on the western side of the area) will be developed to strengthen the fusion between agricultural land and natural water purification. This creates a transition zone in which water is purified by the trees and plants and at the same time wood and food production takes place.

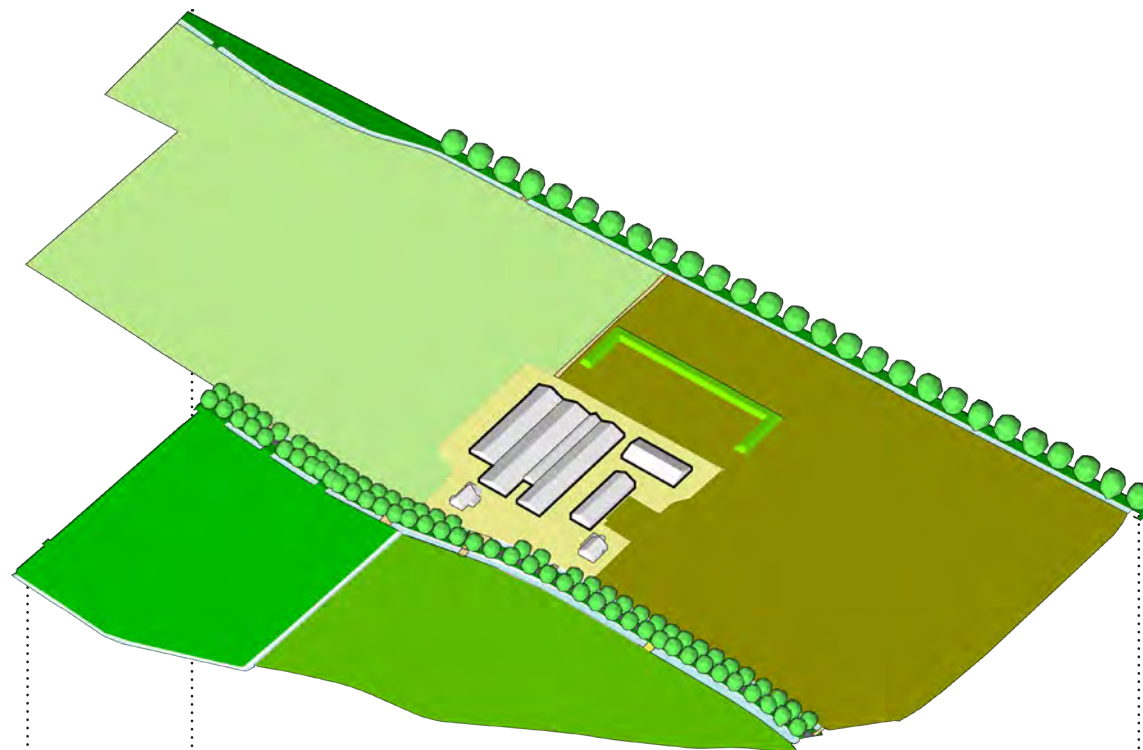
### Requirements

The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

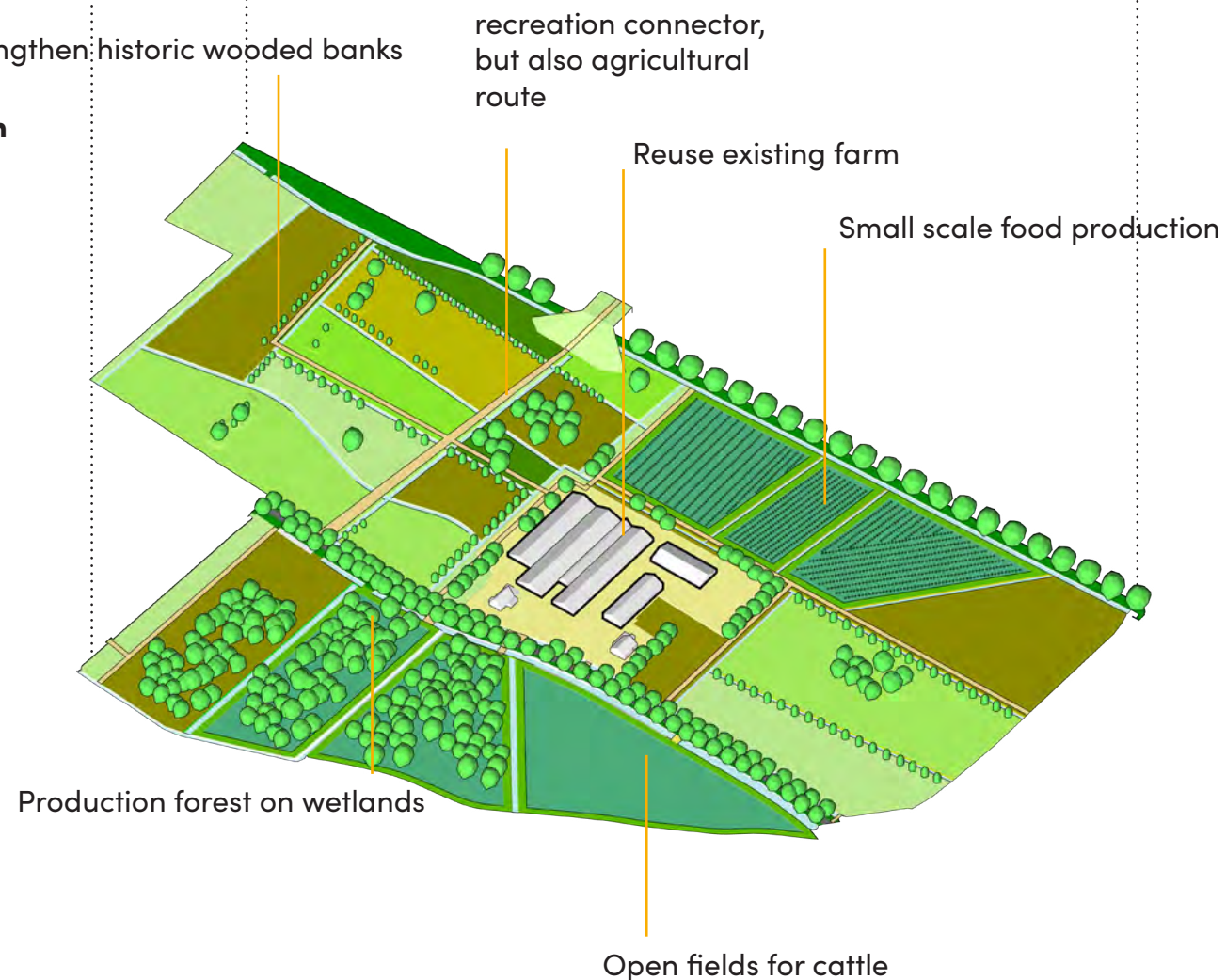
1. Subsoil: The former allotment structure will be brought back as much as possible, where the visible and existing structures in the underlying landscape are used as basis.
2. Activation: The activation of the landscape takes place mainly because the agricultural fields become public and are intended as food production for the entire village.
3. Accessibility: The accessibility of the area is increased by the introduction of a new recreational network. This network follows the historical plot structures. In this way, a direct link is made with the past. This same principle applies to the water structures.
4. Connection: Connections with the surrounding landscape take place mainly through the recreational network and water structures.
5. Landscape: The existing monotonous landscape should become more diverse by the use of small-scale agriculture. By the use of different plants and crops the biodiversity will increase.



## Existing situation



## New situation



### Program guidelines

- The existing buildings in the food landscape will be preserved as much as possible, as well as their function. But instead of producing for the globals (export), they now produce for the locals. The population decides what needs to be produced.
- The food landscape offers space for adding objects. Objects are necessary to exploit the food landscape and facilitate in the need of tourism:
  - Objects should be executed by the use of natural materials;
  - Objects are max. up to 2 meters high;
  - Objects must be demountable or removable;
  - Objects are at the service of the food supply or tourism;
  - Objects have a maximum surface area of 40 m<sup>2</sup>;
  - A maximum of 1 object per hectare of farmland is allowed.
- The food landscape offers the possibility to keep mixed cattle in a nature-inclusive way.
- The diversity of the landscape increases because adjacent fields are never grown with the same crop type. A mix in crops on one field is preferred.
- Grasslands will exist out of (wild) flowery grasslands.
- Drainage of the area takes place by means of a new ditch structure that fits accents the historical landscape. This structure is emphasized by planting willows near the ditches (for water purification).
- Fences, if necessary for livestock, is permitted unless it is carried out in a transparent or natural manner.

### Traffic guidelines

- Cars are not allowed in the food landscape. Agricultural traffic and non-motorized traffic is allowed.
- The new traffic structure will be constructed on the basis of the historical allotment structure.
- The new traffic structure is approximately 2 till 3 meters wide.

### Guidelines Material

- New traffic structure: Executed by means of semi-pavement (Stol).



ACTIVATED SITUATION



Renewal of the landscape reinforced  
by creating a production forests & natural water treatment

Trees in the landscape to provide natural  
shade for livestock

Limousin cows graze in a flowery landscape.  
Good for the cow and good for nature



ACTIVATED SITUATION



Public orchard,  
open to all

Different type of fruit trees at a location,  
creating a balanced system

Beehives as objects into the landscape stimulating the  
cross-pollination of fruit trees and therefor increasing  
the productivity harvests





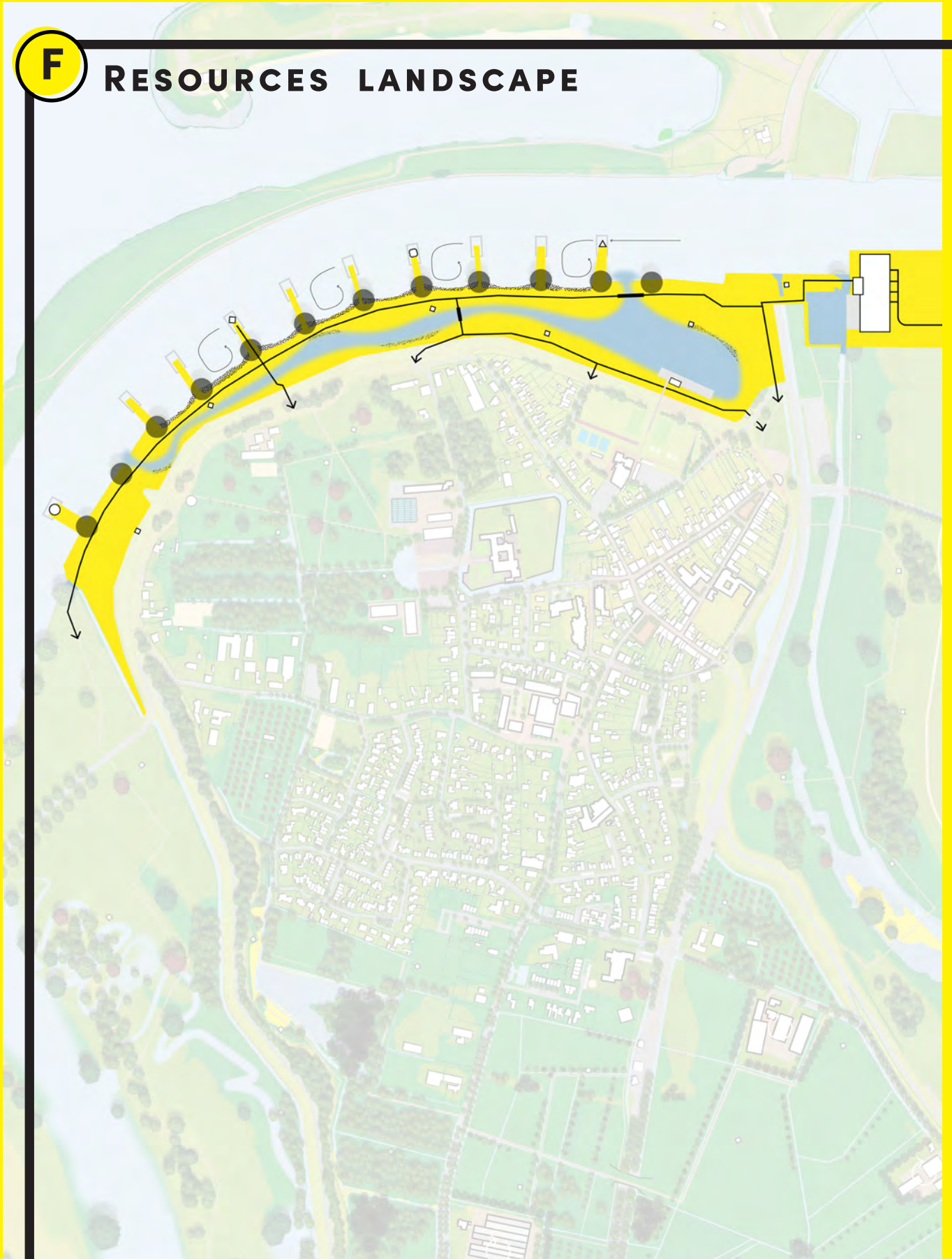
ACTIVATED SITUATION





**F**

## RESOURCES LANDSCAPE



### Current Qualities

The floodplains are located on the north-, east- and west side of the village, linked to the Maas. These plots are currently used as grassland. In the past, the Maas regularly overflowed and used these floodplains to expand its banks. Nowadays these floodplains are still protecting us, but there is no other function to it (because it is not allowed to do so), which makes these areas very monotonous and hardly experienceable. It is even that dramatic that we do not see the potentials which the river is providing us. The things we do admire about the floodplains are the striking views over the area and the open character which is accentuated by a big row of trees.

### Future vision

In the new Masterplan we will use the landscape next to the Maas in its full potential. The river is a unique element in the landscape that has many opportunities. The river brings all kinds of sediments, has a constant flow rate and offers the opportunity to be used in contribution to sports and recreation. These opportunities will be reflected in the Masterplan.

**Energy** - Groynes will be constructed from the banks to intercept the water flow and convert it into energy. Interesting places at the ends of the groynes will arise where visitors can be fully connected with the river and really experience its real power.

**Raw materials** - By building the groynes, a natural process of sediment deposit will start. Sediments like clay, sand and gravel. The groynes will be excavated once a year. The sediments will then be stored and processed in recourse sheds near the (small) harbor.

**Leisure** - Because of the groynes, closed off pieces of Maas arise along the river. Pieces with nice sand beds, but also a heavy stream. Esthetically these places invite you to relax and swim, but this is not safe. Therefore a small bypass is introduced. This bypass creates a calm stream which is safe to use and makes the landscape more attractive (space for the rivers). This bypass houses calm waters and natural banks. This will become the new recreational lake of the village and is connected with the new multifunctional sportsaccomodation.

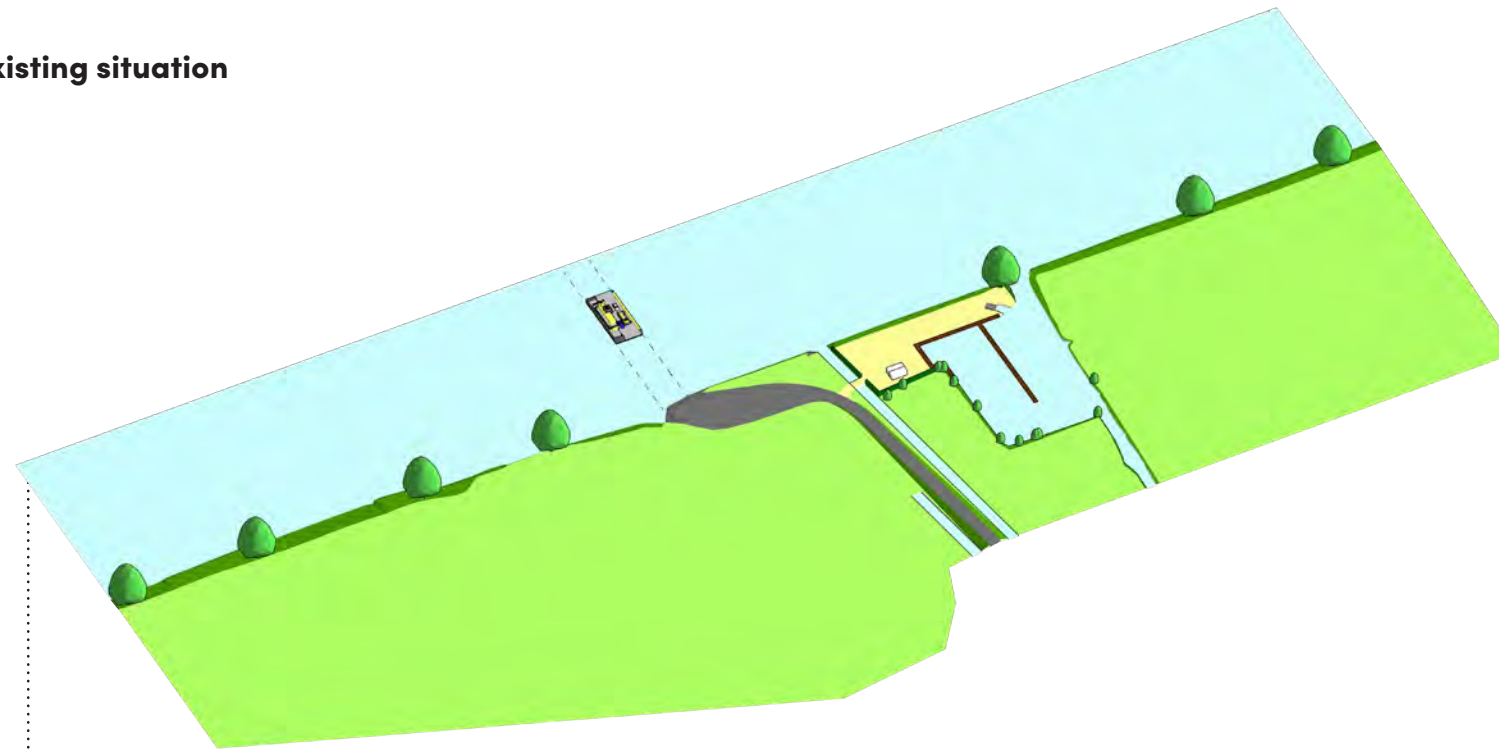
**Food** - The different interventions in relation with the river form all kinds of new interesting places for fish. We have fast running water, muddy soils, branches and calm water. In other words, the diversity of the area is increased and with it the biodiversity.

### Requirements

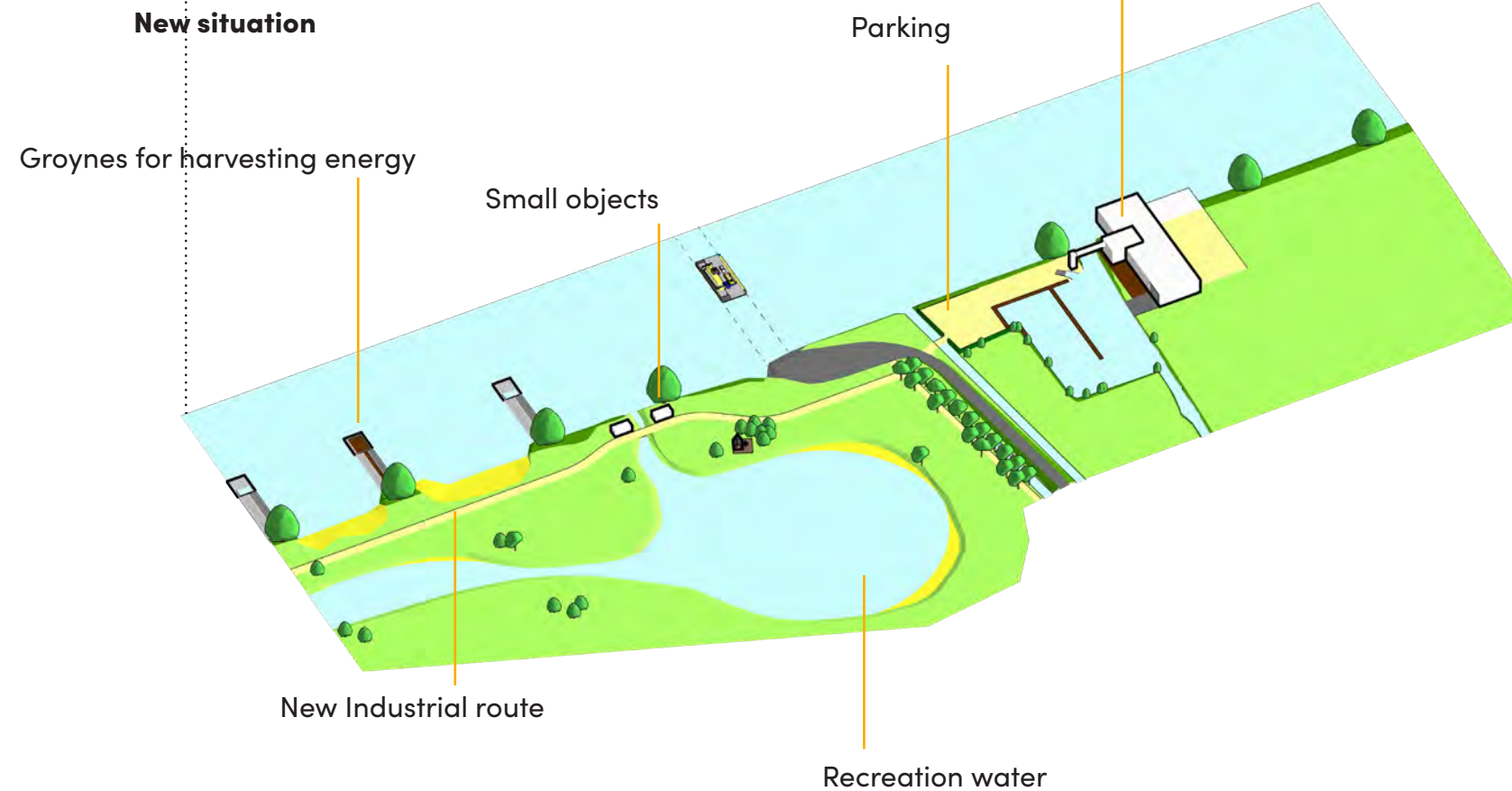
The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

1. **Subsoil:** The subsurface is arranged in such a way that the relationship with the water is restored. The aim is to achieve high landscape diversity by introducing water in different ways.
2. **Activation:** The activation of the landscape takes place by facilitating within the resources, energy and leisure.
3. **Accessibility:** The accessibility of the area is increased by the introduction of the recreational network. Also, a new industrial road is introduced to harvest the sediments.
4. **Connection:** Connections to the surrounding landscape mainly take place through the recreational network.
5. **Landscape:** The existing monotone landscape becomes more diverse by using the floodplains in different ways. However, It remains mainly an open landscape.

## Existing situation



## New situation



### Program guidelines

- In the resources landscape, space is offered to add objects that do not, or at least hardly effect the underlying landscape.
- Objects are linked to the groynes (beginning or end)
- Objects are max 3 meters high
- Objects must be removable
- Objects serve the resources landscape or tourism
- Objects have a maximum surface area of 20 m2
- The raw materials landscape offers space to realize an industrial building (linked to the storage and processing of the raw materials)
- The guidelines for the buildings are:
  - New building mass; maximum building height 10 meters;
  - New building surface; maximum 2000 m2
  - New building style; Industrial/harbor
- Fences (with the exception of the port and industry) are not allowed.

### Traffic guidelines

- Motorized traffic (with exception of industrial traffic) is not allowed on this landscape.
- The new traffic structure will be constructed on the basis of the existing plot structure.
- The new traffic structure is approximately 2 meters wide and equipped with semi-paved cart tracks.
- The recreational network also uses the new traffic structure.

### Guidelines Material

- New construction: Natural materials from the environment (clay, brick, wood)
- New traffic structure: Executed by means of semi-pavement in the form of a wagon track
- Bridges: Wood structure









New recreational water, a bypass of the Maas. Creating dynamics for leisure, recreation and sports but also improves the biodiversity in the area

Once or twice a year harvesting the sediments from the landscape.

One of the hotelrooms standing in the landscape. Its orientation is towards the river and bypass







## WATER LANDSCAPE



### Current Qualities

The flood areas on the east and west sides of the area also have a direct relationship with the Maas. This is where the river used to flow, before it was channelled. The old stream of the river can still be recognized (when you look closely) in the slopes in the landscape. Especially at high tide, the old memories on the Maas rise again, because the low-lying parts will flood. In combination with some wide vistas, a special landscape is created.

These special elements in the landscape are difficult to recognize and you can only see them if you have been informed about it on beforehand. The monotone appearance of landscape in the form of grasslands for modern agriculture have ensured that the original landscape has been gradually erased.

By bringing back and accenting the old structures we can create a new system that not only enhances the original identity but also contributes to the needs of the villagers.

### Future vision

In the new situation, the purification of light polluted water will find place in the floodplains, through the roots of new trees and plants. The water will be purified step by step. Each step is linked to certain plant or tree types that clean the water in their own way. By linking small weirs to new pedestrian bridges which block the water flow, we can regulate the water system and determine how long the water stays at one location. Eventually the clean water will be ready to be stored in the biggest water reserve of the village; "the dead arm of the former Maas" this will ensure the storage of enough clean water as a backup for dry periods.

Although the landscape is becoming increasingly diverse by adding all kinds of plants and tree species, we make sure that certain sightlines are preserved. These sight lines guarantee the grand feeling of the floodplains. A walk on the dike becomes a unique experience in which wide vistas and intimate green spaces alternate. In addition, it is possible to experience the landscape up close, by the introduction of a new recreational network in the area.

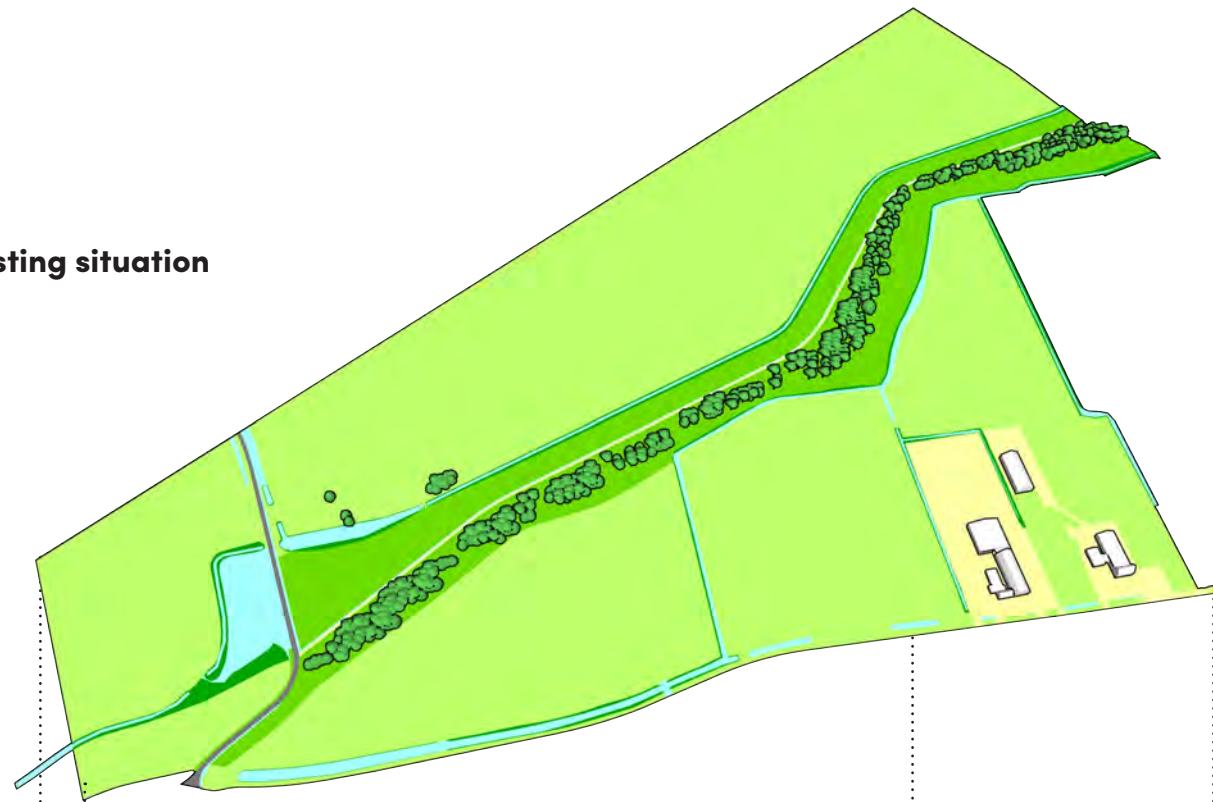
### Requirements

The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

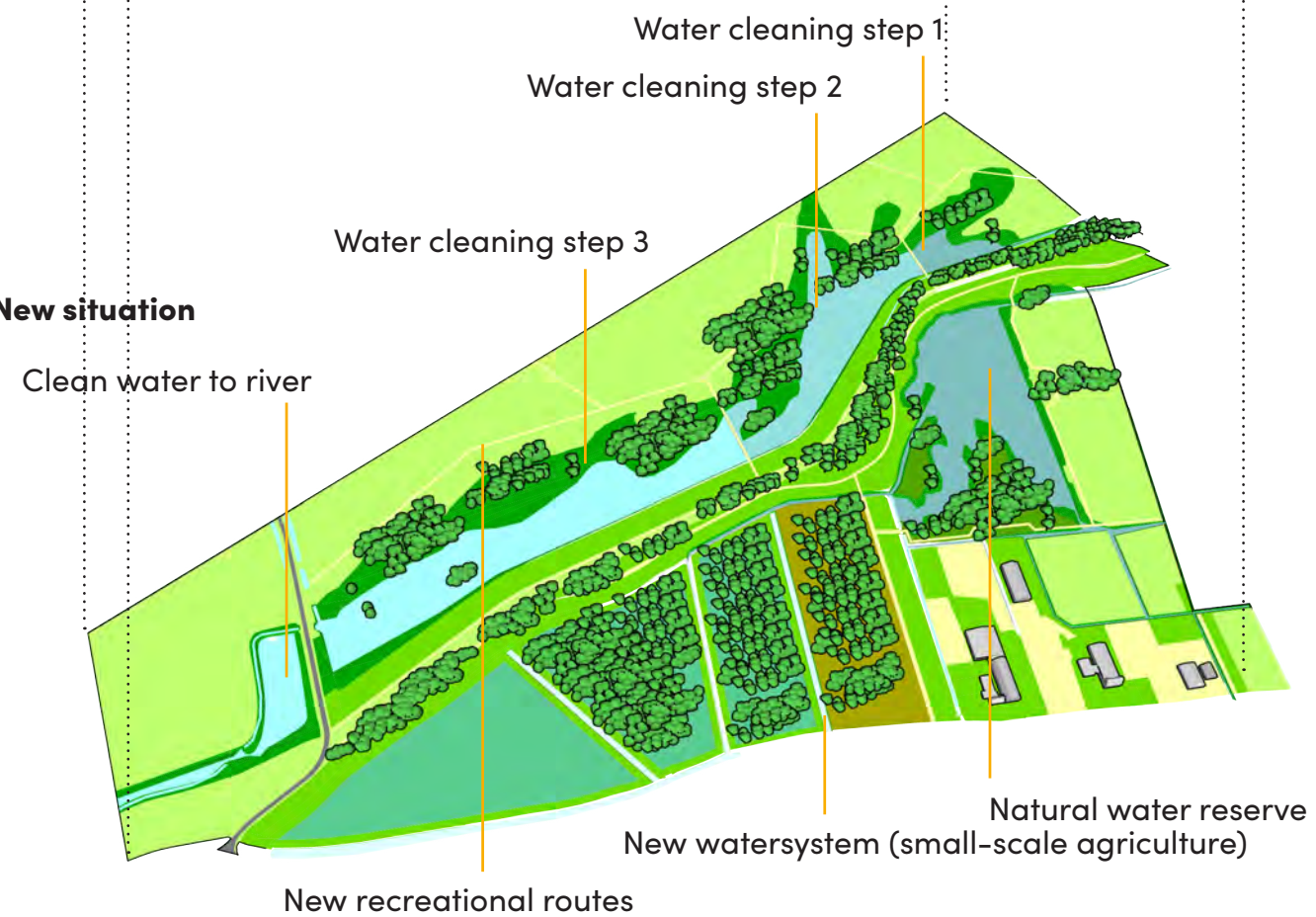
1. Subsoil: The subsurface is arranged in such a way that the relationship with the water is restored. The lowest areas will become the new water cleaning reserves which will gradually dissolve into the higher parts of the area. The aim is to achieve a high landscape diversity by the introduction of different ways to clean water.
2. Activation: The activation of the landscape takes place by facilitating within the resources and water cleaning. In addition, the new recreational routes ensure that the landscape can be experienced.
3. Accessibility: The accessibility of the area is increased by the introduction of a new recreational network. This network is wide enough so it can also be used as maintenance route.
4. Connection: Connections to the surrounding landscape are accentuated by sightlines and the recreational network.
5. Landscape: The existing monotone landscape becomes more diverse by accentuating the old stream of the river through the addition of native plant and tree species.



## Existing situation



## New situation



### Program guidelines

- In the water landscape, space is offered to add objects in relation to tourism, that do not affect the underlying landscape and accent the qualities of the immediate surroundings.
- Objects are linked to the water edges;
- Objects are a maximum of 3 meters high;
- Objects must be removable;
- Objects serve the water landscape or tourism;
- Objects have a maximum surface area of 20 m<sup>2</sup>.
- Fences are not allowed.

### Traffic guidelines

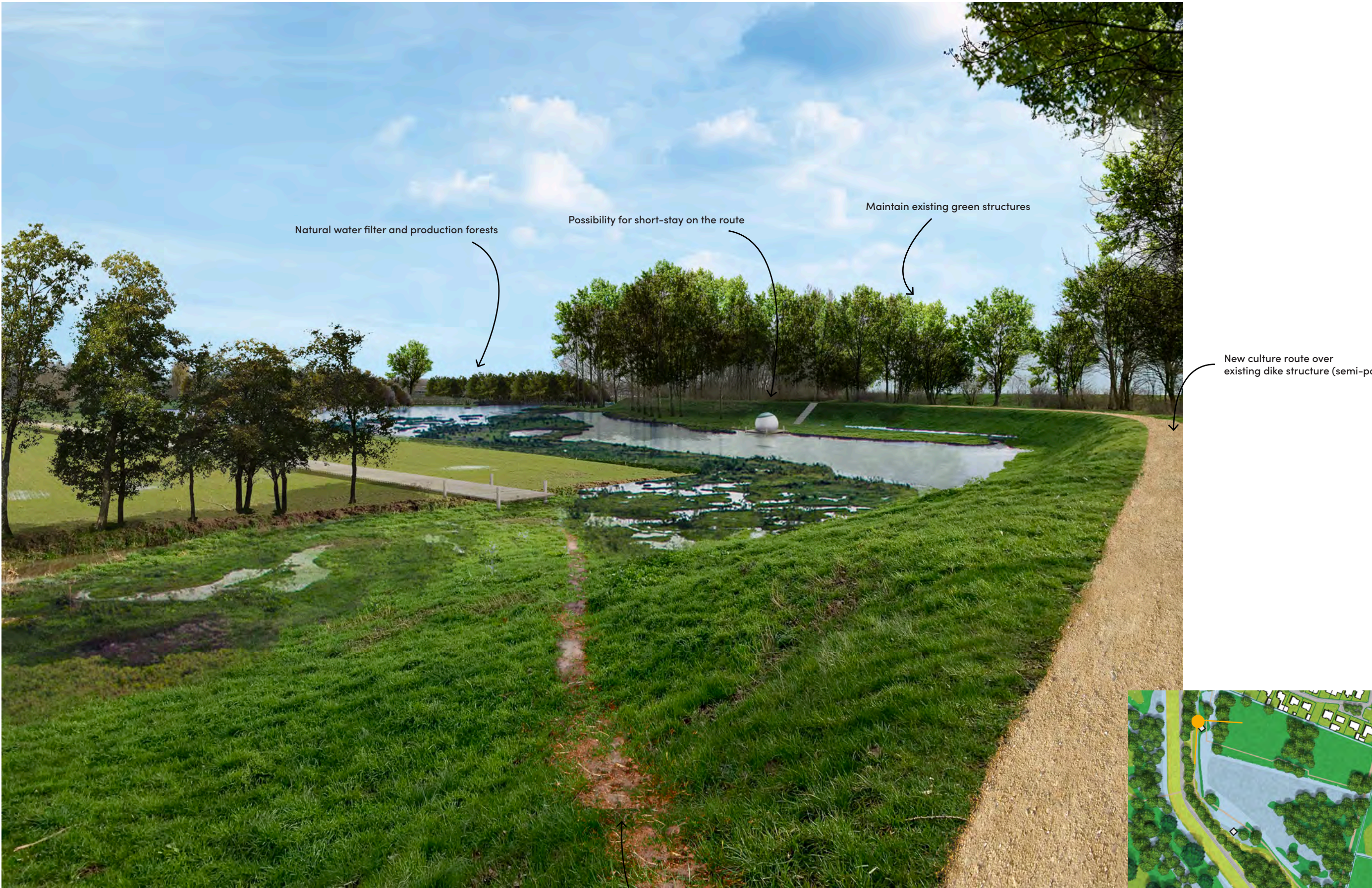
- Motorized traffic (with exception of traffic for maintenance) is not allowed on this landscape.
- New slow-traffic structures will be constructed to accent unique features of the landscape.
- The new structures are approximately 2,5 meters wide and equipped with semi-paved tracks.
- Bridges over the water facilitate in the need of water purification and have double function in the form of weirs.

### Guidelines Material

- New buildings: Natural materials from the environment (clay, concrete, brick, wood)
- New traffic structure: Executed by means of semi-pavement in the form "Los".
- Plants & Trees; Planted to facilitate in the need of water purification.



ACTIVATED SITUATION





ACTIVATED SITUATION



The new bypass facilitates in the need of leisure and sport, the calm waters are perfect to spend some free time

New inlet of the water in the floodplains by means of a bypass





# H

## LIVING LANDSCAPE



### Current Qualities

In the current situation the car dominates the street (through an abundance of parking facilities and unusable greenery) and the front gardens of the social rental homes are often unsolicited. The living clusters exist out of the newest housing type from after the 80's. Because the plans were made in the form of a top-down approach, residents were not able to give their opinion. This resulted in a mismatch between the needs and the final design of these areas. The streets are not owned by the locals and are therefore difficult to transform. Nevertheless, these places have a great potential because they connect all buildings together. If you think about these places without the street, the parking places and the unused greenery they become an interesting location which can strengthen the feeling a community.

### Future vision

In the new plan the private and public spaces in the residential clusters are being examined by the residents. Instead of providing these spaces with a new top-down layout, the location is given a new meaning by means of a bottom-up approach. The people of the residential clusters decide for themselves what happens at these locations. This creates an environment that suits the residents, because they make the final design decisions in consultation with a spatial expert. And that leads to a lot of new potential ... especially now that we (after COVID-19) realize how important our immediate living environment is.

In the new plan the living clusters and living street can be transformed into a green oasis during the coming years. The types of plants and furnishing are chosen by the local resident. Parking at the edges of a neighbourhood and minimizing the traffic structure creates new leeway for the houses. In addition, the opportunity arises to make create small scale shared facilities like a package letterbox, shared toolbox and a place to celebrate neighbourhood parties. In this way, there is an impulse in the field of housing pleasure, especially with social rent there are many opportunities to better attune the homes to the users. The fun thing is that these or not my ideas but the ideas of the inhabitants themselves.

### Requirements

The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

1. Subsoil: Make parks instead of streets. Reduce the pavement and bring the real surface back up.
2. Activation: The activation of the landscape takes place by creating shared facilitating that are selected by the inhabitants.
3. Accessibility: The focus in terms of accessibility is no longer with the car, but with slow traffic this way safe places are created for children to play and the elderly to meet. Parking will take place at the edges of a neighbourhood.
4. Connection: Connections with the surrounding landscape mainly take place through the recreational network.



## Existing situation



Parking at the edges

## New situation



Slow traffic routes

Shared neighbourhood garage/shed  
attuned to the wishes of the local resident

Public gardens

Private decks (transition private-public)

## Program guidelines

- The buildings on the existing living landscape will be kept as is. However, small adjustments can be added or removed.
- The guidelines for the transformation are:
  - The existing main-buildings will be preserved as much as possible.
  - New constructions and transformations on the existing main-buildings are possible, taken into account that the surface of the existing buildings does not increase;
  - Building mass; maximum gutter height is 6 meters, maximum ridge height 9 meters;
- Shared facilities in relation to living can be provided per neighbourhood (parking, sheds, garbage disposal etc.).
- Fences in the direction of the landscape are not allowed, because the relationship with the landscape needs to be optimized.
- Fences in the direction of the (former) streets are allowed with a maximum height of 1 meter.

## Traffic/public space guidelines

- Every neighbourhood has an entrance and exit route.
- Itinerant traffic must be able to arrive on site, including a free passage to the front door of each house.
- The new recreational routes will be provided with semi-paved roads with a minimum width of 1 meter.
- Parking is provided by parking lots at the edges of a neighbourhood instead of on-site parking.

## Guidelines Material

- New construction: Natural materials from the environment (clay, brick, wood).
- Living streets: Semi-paved/baked vowels.
- Slow traffic routes: Executed by means of semi-pavement in the form "Los"
- Parking: Semi-paved/baked vowels.



ACTIVATED SITUATION



Safer streets to play,enjoy  
free time and meet other people

Shared garage for the whole neighbourhood.  
Sharing materials, tools and knowledge

Instead of the traditional pavement there  
is more room for green in the streets.  
Higher quality of living, beter infiltration of water and  
richer biodiversity





i

## HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE



### Current Qualities

One of the most iconic places in Megen is the historical centre. This is the place where people used to organize (first a daily, afterwards a weekly) market, a place of dynamics and encounters. Nowadays, the place is used for parking, which is detrimental to the potential of the place.

The former market is situated on a unique location in the village. This place contributes to the authenticity of the village through a triangular square, a human scale, unique rows of trees and characteristic buildings. This is the place where culture and history come together, this the place where stories from the past come back to life.

By removing the car from the streets, by creating a car-free zone (on the north side of the historic centre), we can bring back the allure the place once had.

### Future vision

By diminishing the car and organizing parking for the houses via the back, many opportunities arise which allow the old market to function as a meeting place again. By making smart use of the height differences in the dike, we can develop the location as an open-air theatre, which ensures space for cultural events. This fits well with the wishes of the direct residents, but also with the needs of the other residents. A big plus at this location is that the theatre/dyke works in two directions. Direction 1 (towards the centre); This is for the smaller events which have a certain intimacy. Direction 2 (towards the floodplain); which offers space for larger festivities. All in all, it will be a place for everyone and no longer just for the car of the residents in the immediate vicinity.

By activating the square in this way and letting the car disappear from the street scene, it is also possible to introduce day catering establishments at this location in the form of a brasserie or grand cafe. The square can fulfil a terrace function, the theatre forms a beautiful backdrop and the human scale contributes to a pleasant atmosphere.

### Requirements

The following spatial requirements apply for future developments in this area:

1. Subsoil: The place regains its former function as a meeting place. In addition, grateful use is made of the height differences in the form of an open-air theatre (which emphasizes these differences)
2. Activation: The activation of the landscape takes place by facilitating within cultural and touristic events.
3. Accessibility: The accessibility of the area is reduced by transforming the traffic structure into place for recreation use.
4. Connection: Connections to the surrounding landscape mainly take place through the recreational network and sightlines.
5. Landscape: The existing cultural and historical landscape are being used which ensure a more dynamic place. This fits the qualities of the location.



## Existing situation



## New situation



### Program guidelines

- The historical centre accommodates the function as event location (on 2 sides of the dike). Small cultural events at the former marketplace and big events in the floodplains.
- Functions like restaurants and small cafeteria are also allowed at the former market.
- The new program will be integrated into the existing buildings, whereby transformation of the buildings is permitted.
- The guidelines for the buildings are:
  - The existing building constructions will be maintained as much as possible;
  - New constructions and transformations are possible, taken into account that the existing building surface will be maintained, and the historical characteristics are preserved;
- New temporary object can be placed at the former marketplace, in the form of removable installations.

### Traffic Guidelines

- The existing traffic structure and the existing parking spaces will be removed. Instead, the space will be used as a public square, where terraces can be placed, and events can be organized.
- Parking for tourists and visitors will be realized on the outskirts of the village.
- Parking and access for residents is organized through the back of the houses.
- The continuous traffic structure on the dike is interrupted so that the most iconic place of the village can be used by pedestrians. The quality of stay is increased.
- The existing widths of the structures will be maintained.

### Material Guidelines

- Existing buildings: Bricks.
- New construction: Natural materials from the environment (clay, brick, concrete, wood).
- Square: Mainly cobblestones interspersed with greenery and baked vowel pavements.
- Recreational network: Executed by means of semi-pavement in the form "Los".



ACTIVATED SITUATION

Preserve as much as possible of the greenery and integrate it into the plan. New dike structure becomes a place to stay

Room for talents, arts and performance. New central event location on the former market place

Using the landscape of the dike to create an Amphi theatre which accents one of the most iconic places in Megen

