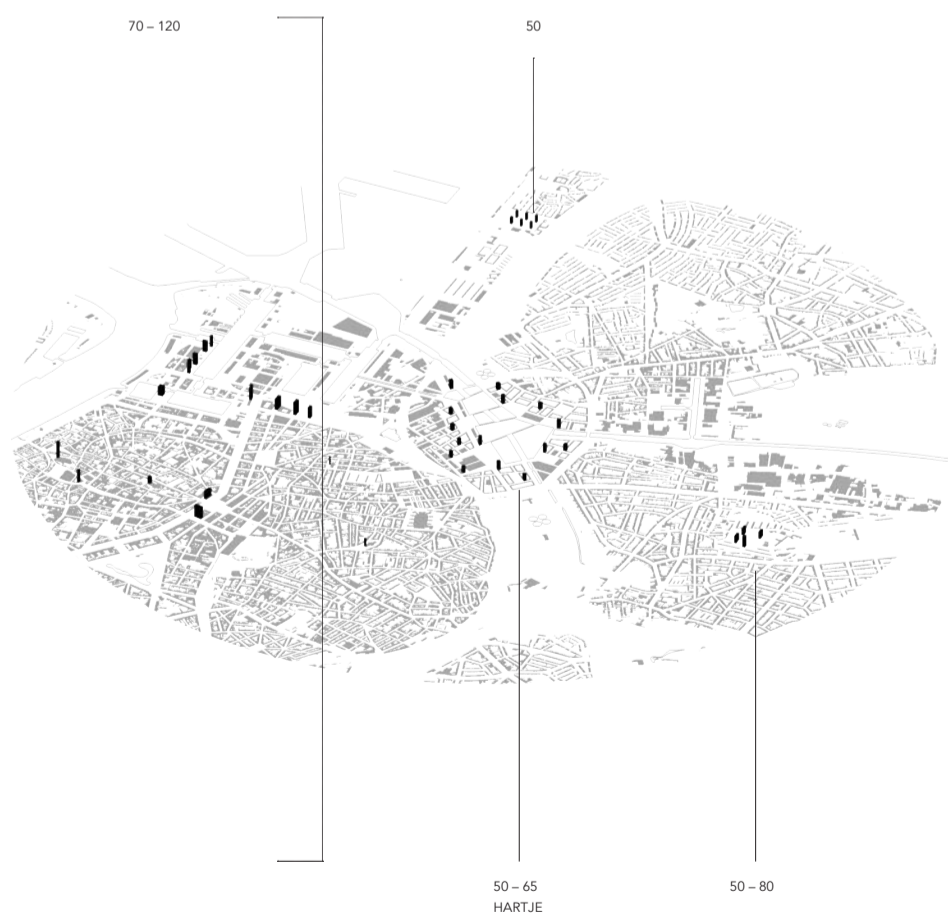




HARTJE

Shaping a new urban hub → Antwerp



As one of the most important cities in European history, Antwerp's urban development is clearly connected to the river Scheldt and its port activities. From the narrow medieval and picturesque streets to the large urban projects of the 1960s, the city grew from one fortification to another up until the dismantling of the *Brialmont* rampart, making way for an enormous high-way belt.

These large, planned, infrastructural projects separated the center from the rest of its merging populated districts and faced several issues with the landscape and the intra- and extramural urban network. The large, abandoned, and old port areas, combined with the vast and underestimated pollution which was not even taken into account at the time, kept the separation between the center and its suburbs swelling. After a lengthy collaboration with the Italian designers Secchi and Viganò, the city initiated a strategic spatial and structural plan to tackle the difficult urban spaces. The designers' proposal was a rigorous layering of the city consisting of making the space very readable as various, "images," such as water-city, eco-city, railway-city, mega-city, port-city, etc...

After visiting Antwerp and studying the historical context of the planning area, Secchi and Viganò's scheme and other city and citizens' programs, we aimed to develop an urban space which suggests a porosity between *DAM* – our planning area – and the neighboring districts of *Eilandje*, *Merksem*, *Deurne*, *Borgerhout* and *Centrum*.

Noticing the large body of water in the area, formed by the Albert Kanal and the Lobroekdok, it is ineluctable to make the water a connecting element between these districts and to shape a new urban hub for this part of the city. In addition to this, the arrangement of small spaces in the center of the city, which is a typical characteristic of Antwerp, kept our attention.

The narrowness and permeability of the circulation network makes the urban space very lively, enabling the development of a variety of metropolitan areas, featuring different spatial identities and properties. One clear characteristic of our planning area is the Highway passing through, making the site an important part of the *Singel*.

As a result, we kept the Highway as an inherent element of *DAM*, used the water as the primary connection between our site and the neighboring districts and utilized our concept of the sequence of spaces. First of all, we merged the Albert Kanal and the Lobroekdok forming the new heart of *DAM* and connected the various districts to the planning area, thus forming a transition zone connecting to the center.

Furthermore, we formed large squares around the water landscape and accentuated them with towers to highlight the center of the area.

As a cultural heritage for the identity of the site, we preserved the *Schlachthuis* and an old brick-layered factory in the north-eastern part of the other side of the Albert Kanal in *Merksem*.

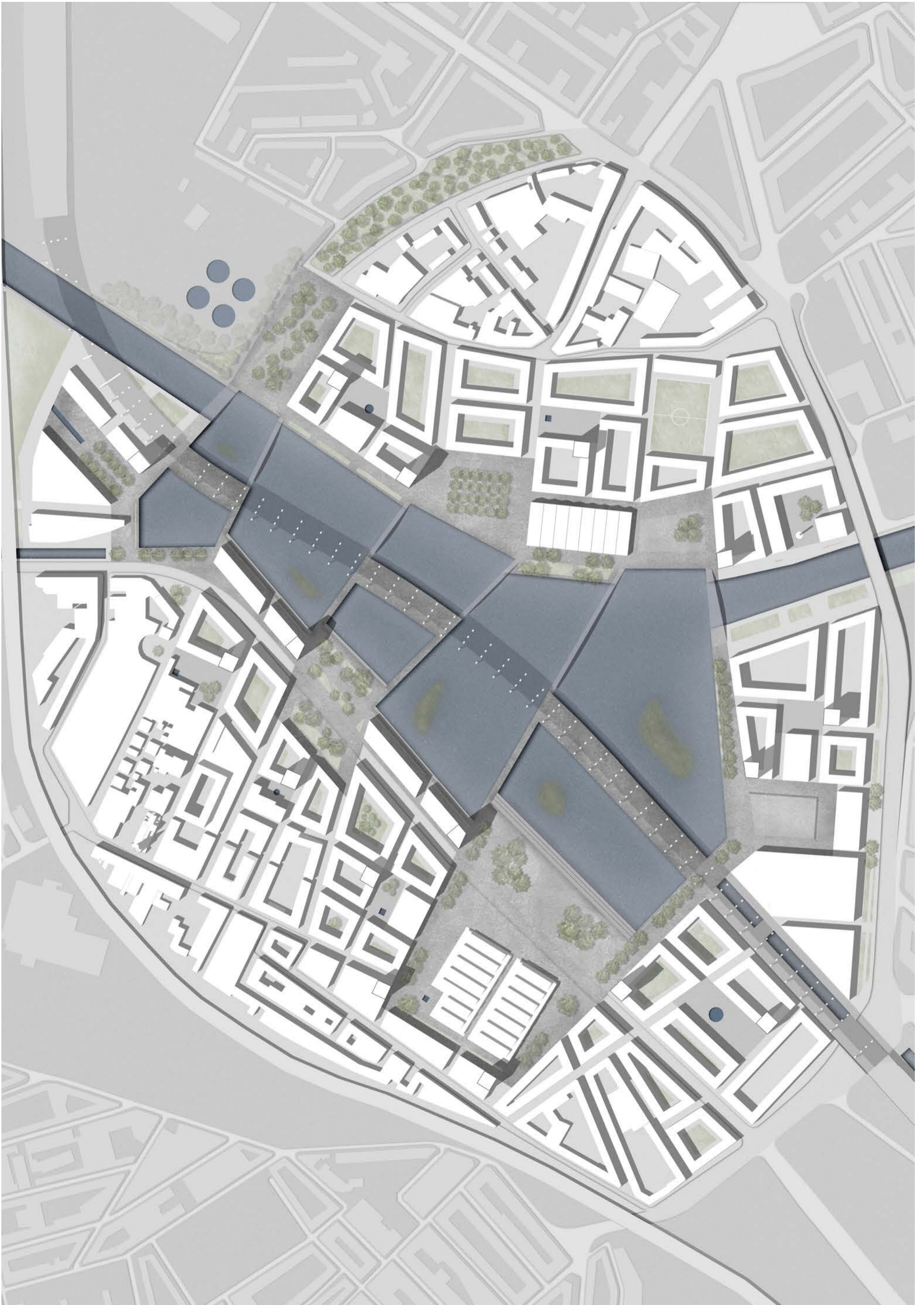
Two Buildings seem to have their legitimacy and are accepted by the inhabitants as part of the planning area: the *Schlachthuis* and the *Sportpaleis*. Therefore, we considered them as the existing landmarks and placed another one as a pendant on the side of *Merksem*: the *Burger Orangerie*. In order to emphasize the sequences of spaces in this urban context and to give a balance to this industrial area, we nestled little squares with minor towers behind the large squares and the major towers.

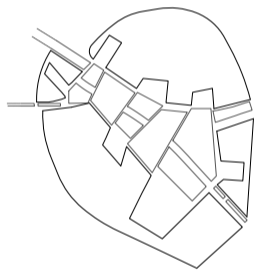
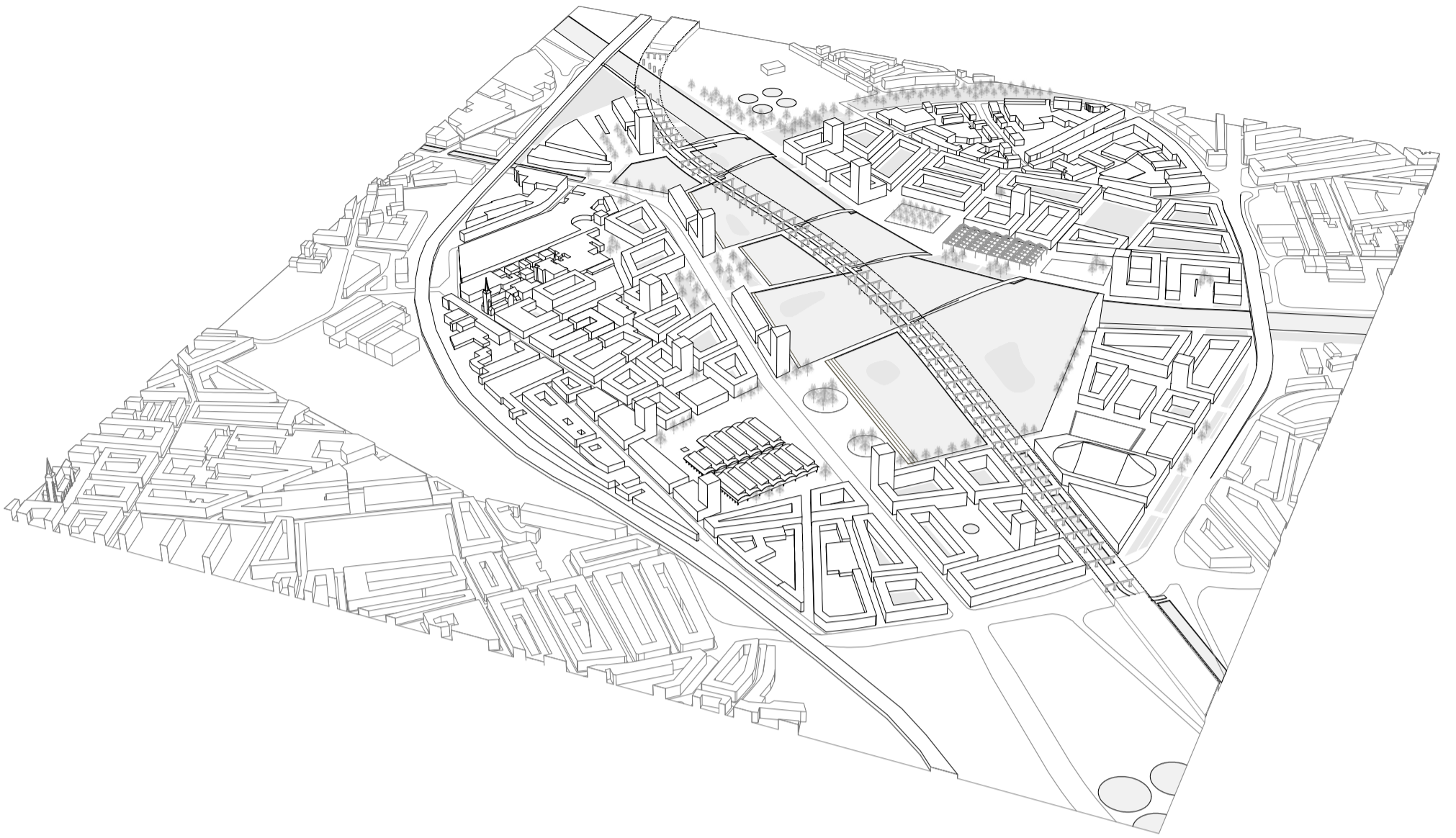
This hierarchy of squares, each with a specific identity through landscape design, and the three landmarks articulate a logical orientation towards the heart of this new urban hub, *HARTJE*.

Concerning the use of the spaces, we assigned the major towers, the landmarks and some strategic buildings a public use, however in the upper levels of the major towers a few apartments are planned. For the use of the other buildings, we believe that the characteristic of the old districts as *Borgerhout* or *Centrum* could be taken as examples for *Hartje*: a combination of habitation, commercial and gastronomy spaces.

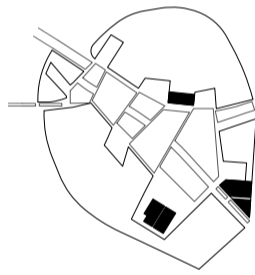
Hartje may be a model for the rest of the development of the *Singel* area and give an input for the city to establish a dialog between the past and the future. It is an opportunity for the area to nurture the social and cultural participation of the inhabitants through an urban design based on social cohesion and providing the use of public spaces.



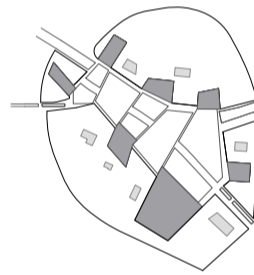




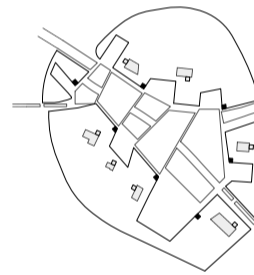
Fassaden Front und erste städtebauliche Entstehung der Raumfolge



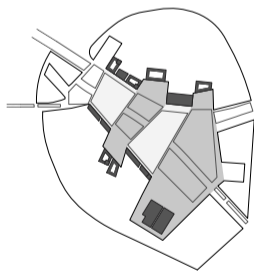
Landmarken



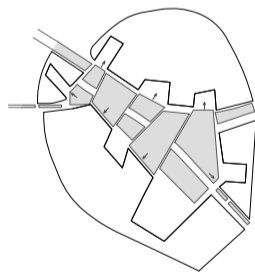
Hierarchie der Plätze
Positionierung und Proportion



Hierarchie der Plätze und Vertikalität
Türme



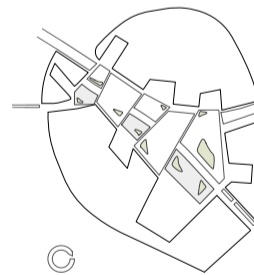
Vis à vis der große Plätze
Verbindung durch die Wasserlandschaftv^



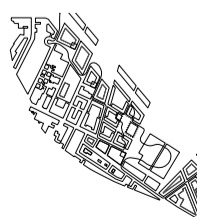
Verschiebung
Entstehung der Wasserlandschaft



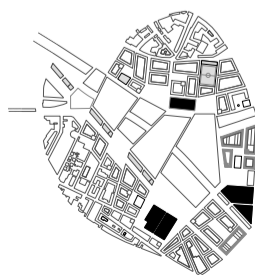
Bodenbelag
Betonung der Raumfolge und der Hierarchie im öffentlichen Raum



Fauna und Flora
Renaturalisierung und Wasserlandschaft
Pendant zur Industrie-Stadt



Parcours
Eine mögliche Raumfolge



Nutzung

- Freizeit und Sport
- Landmarken
- Kulturhaus
- Produktion
- Bildung und Business
- Mischgebiet – Wohnen und Kommerz