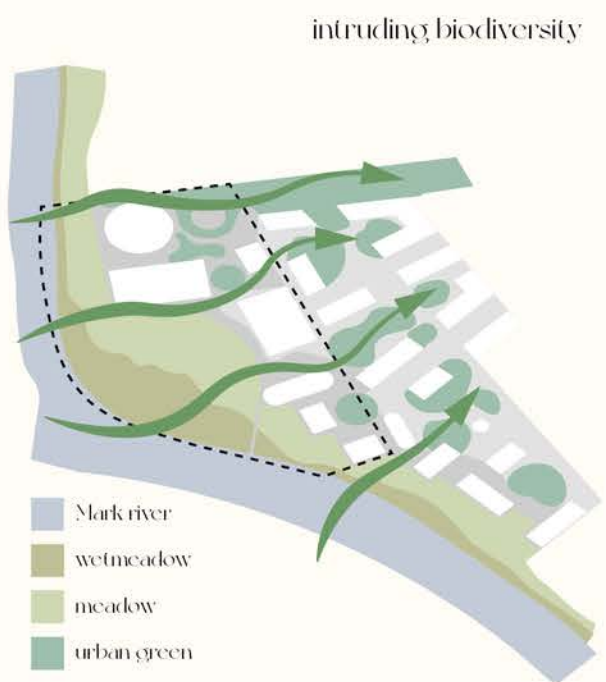
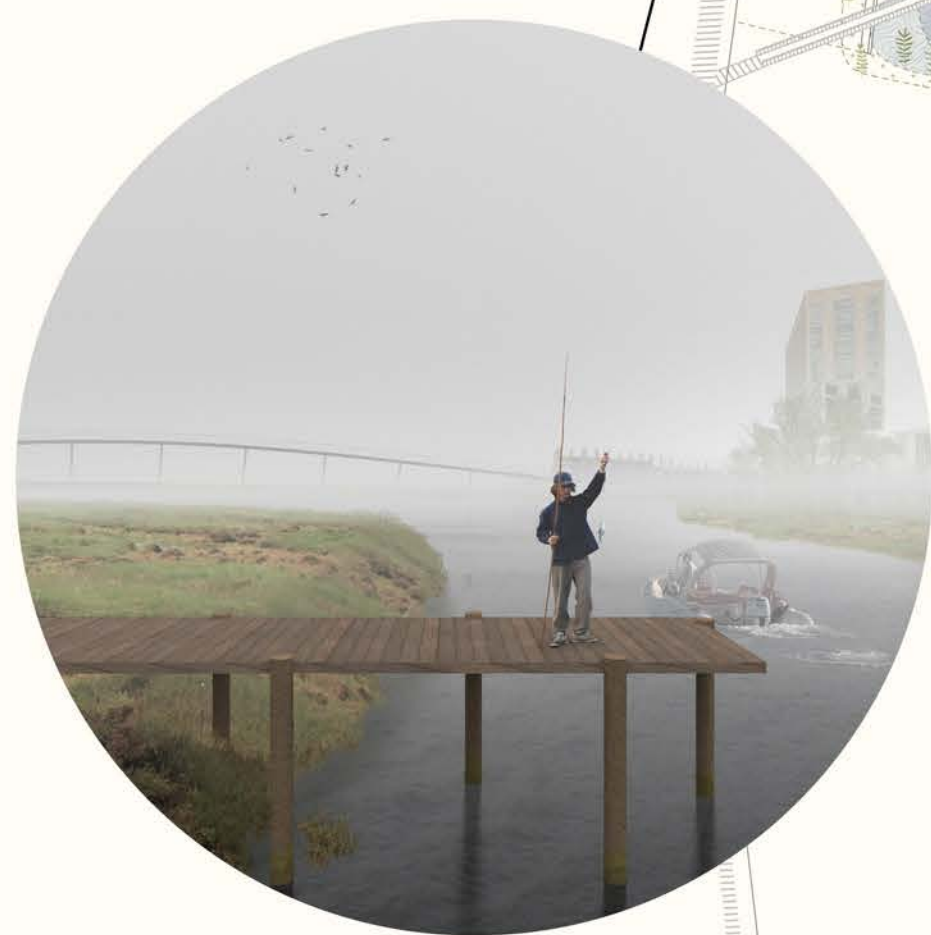


Vincent van Gogh painted several scenes of life in the North Brabant region where this coexistence between human and non human, rural and urban, productive areas and living environments. With the 'aim' is to explore the regenerative capacities of living milieus amidst new architectural, urban and landscape ecologies', the project investigates the possibility of a new urban paradigm based on the symbiosis between humans and non humans, between production and nature, to achieve the resiliency that a territory needs to face the challenges of climate change and the continuous economic productive and health crises that we have faced in the last two decades.



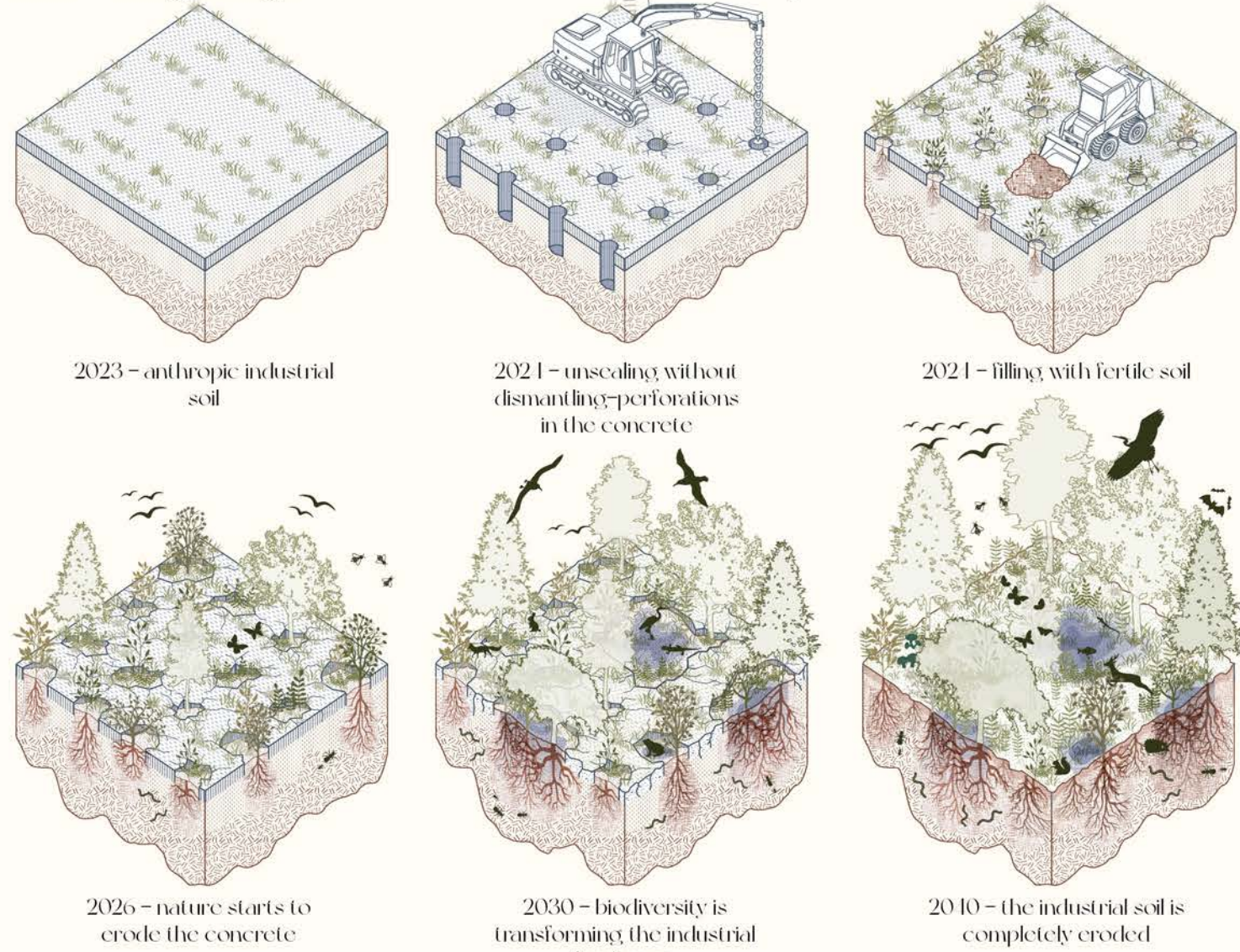
living together

One of the most important aspects is to reach a new coexistence between humans and nature, exploring forms of human habitation that do not stifle other forms of life or other lifestyles, therefore understanding that it is necessary to take a step back and make room for a freer and more independent development, while at the same time creating meeting points. In this sense, it becomes key to acknowledge what human beings can do to restore the damages that they have created in the past, in order to establish a new balance, a new cooperation and harmony with non humans. This holistic approach can contribute to rebalance the metabolism of the site and the near territory, restoring the water cycles, the damaged soil, the biodiversity, the wildlife and the human life, preparing the "foundations" for a new regenerative urban landscape that, thanks to its resilience, will evolve autonomously over the next few years.

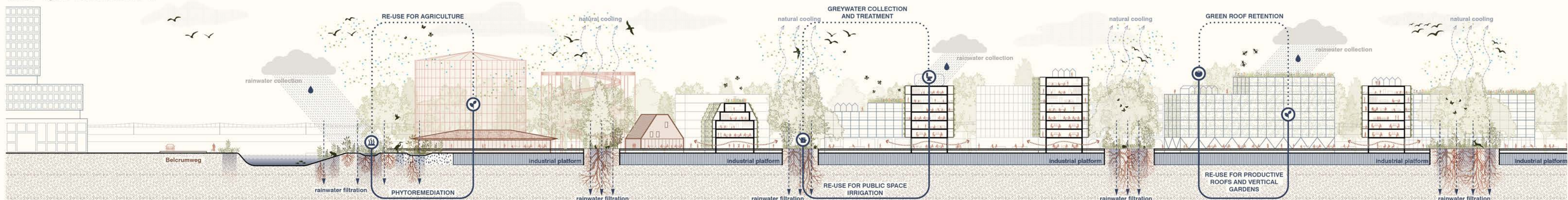


re-generated and re-naturalized waterfront

soil de-sealing strategies



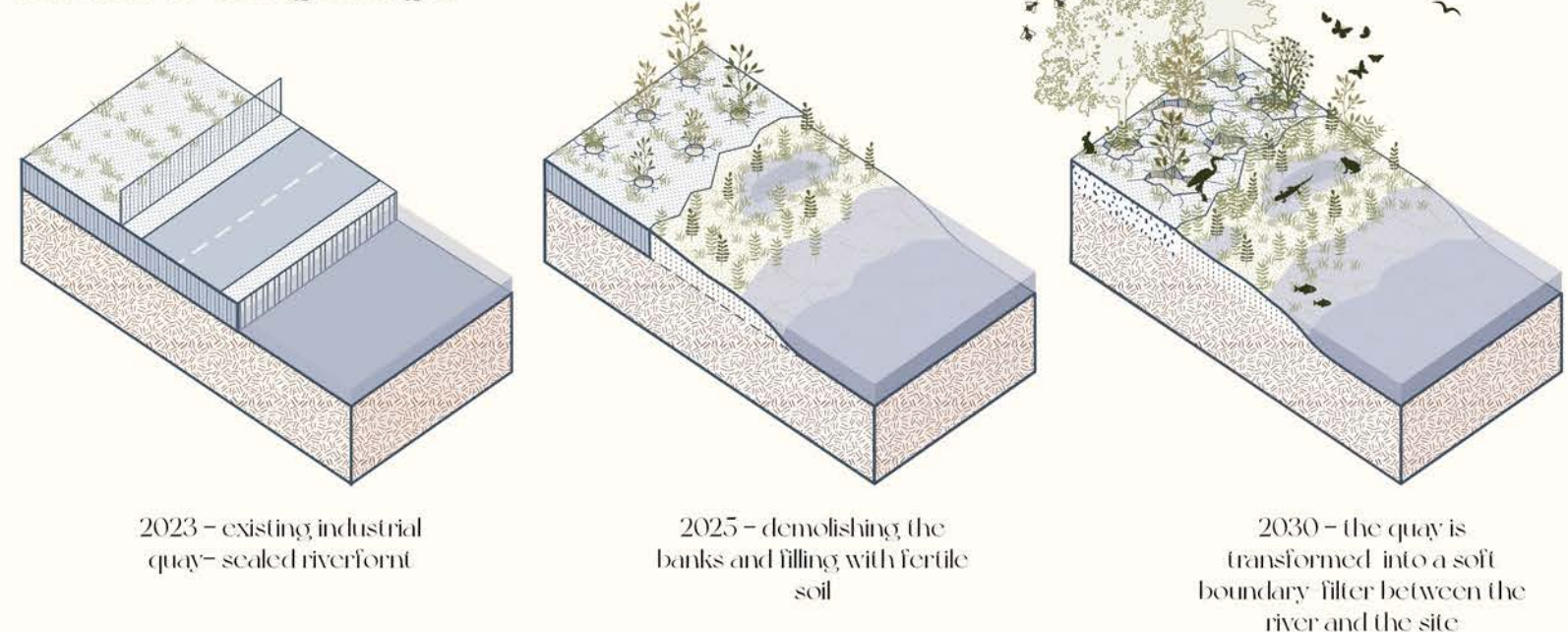
water-cycle section in 2040



cognitive landscape

The transformation of part of the industrial quay into a natural area beyond human control brings "Back to the Future" into ecosystemic connection with the various natural areas in the proximity of Breda. In this sense, the landscape represents a cognitive system, whose conceptual dimension goes beyond and transcends the techniques and design of ecological, vegetal and soil systems to aspire to organise or better structure the city and the territory, acting both physically in the conformation and transformation of places and in intangible social and economic processes.

riverfront de-sealing strategies



a new urban paradigm

In the last century, human beings have built their living environments establishing a strong dichotomy between human and non human, rural and urban, productive areas and living environments. With the 'aim' is to explore the regenerative capacities of living milieus amidst new architectural, urban and landscape ecologies', the project investigates the possibility of a new urban paradigm based on the symbiosis between humans and non humans, between production and nature, to achieve the resiliency that a territory needs to face the challenges of climate change and the continuous economic productive and health crises that we have faced in the last two decades.

ecological connections

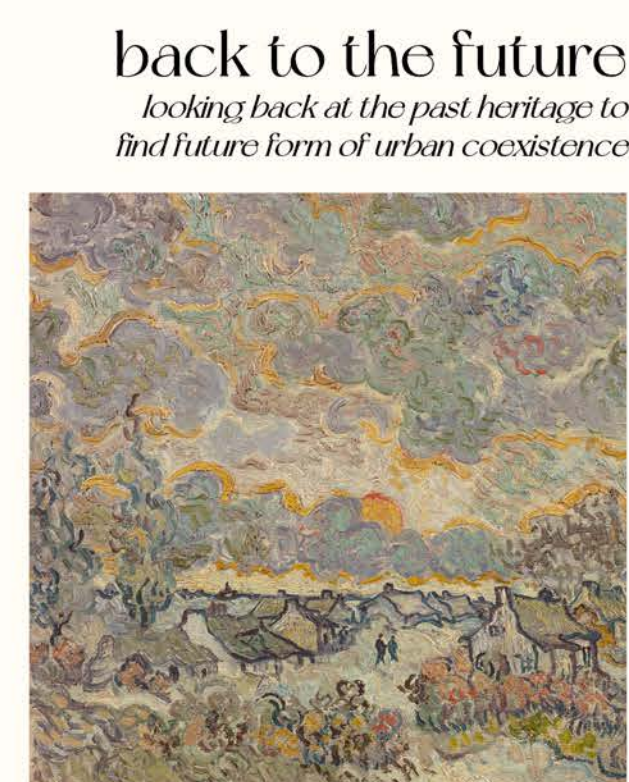
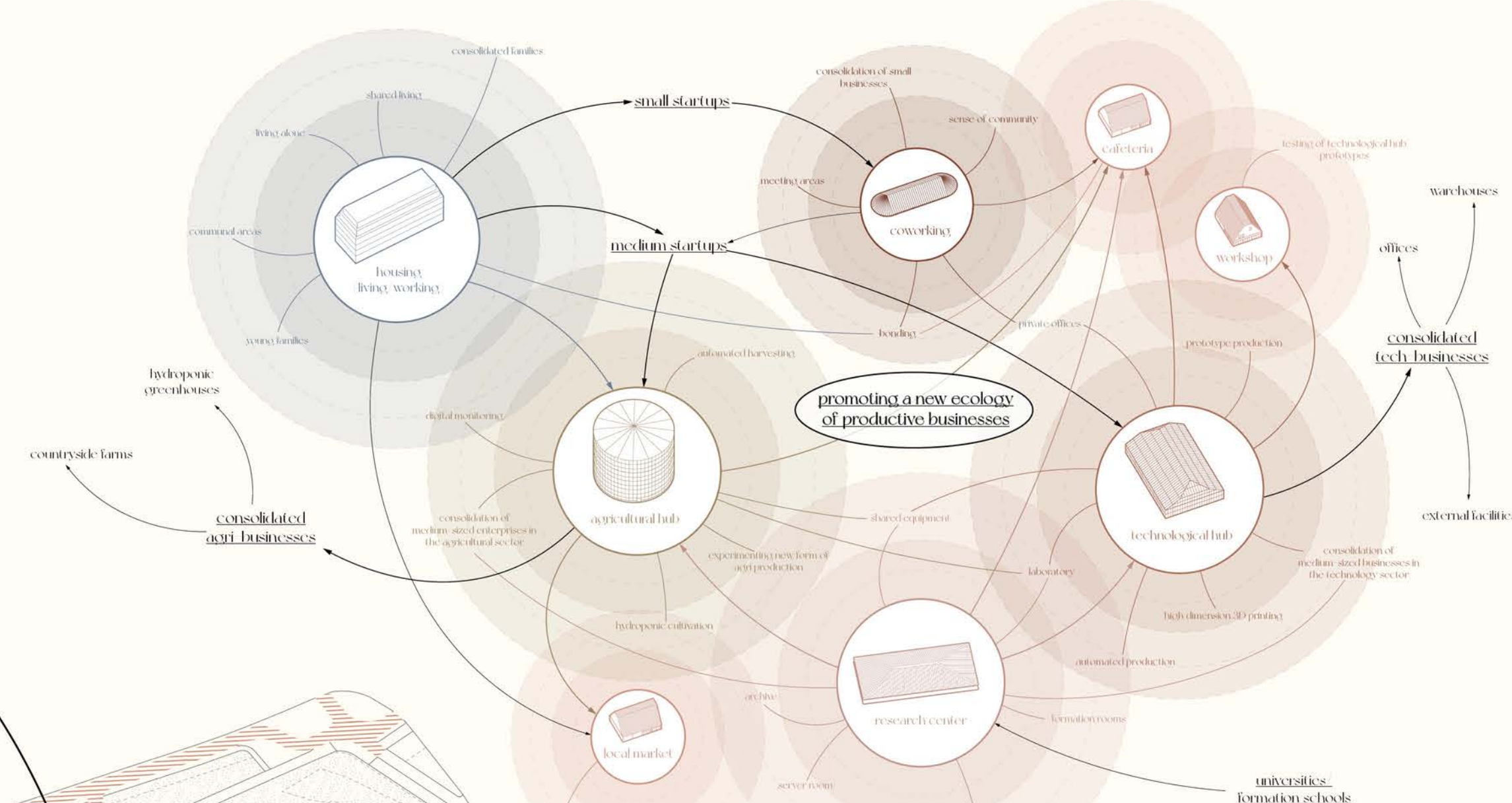
In the context of the project site and the whole Breda urban Area, the Mark River has the potential to become again a rich reservoir of biodiversity, an ecological connection with the countryside, which, through its water fluctuations, is capable of activating a new landscape. In order to allow the river to overflow, the industrial concrete quay that characterises 'T Zoet has to be modified to allow the creation of floodable areas to manage eventual heavy rainfalls. The general strategy is to demolish as little as possible, fostering a natural erosion over time, thus respecting the European guideline of 'think tabula non rasi'. The part of the quay adjacent to the waterfront is the only one that is actually being demolished by human intervention to create a softer side that 'accommodates' water level changes instead of fighting them. The residue of this demolition will then be reused for the paving of the urban areas of the project.

natural erosion

The rest of the quay is instead subjected to systematic drilling, which encourages the insinuation and growth of local animal and plant species and at the same time significantly reduces demolition operations and costs; the variation of river water levels is also expected to bring in new fertile sediments that enhance biodiversity. The drilling and the constant growth of flora itself weakens the hard surface of the quay, which in time will eventually completely erode and turn into the typical wet meadow of the Mark River. In this way, the nature is free to develop independently, without human control, and find its own balance with the nearby productive and residential activities.

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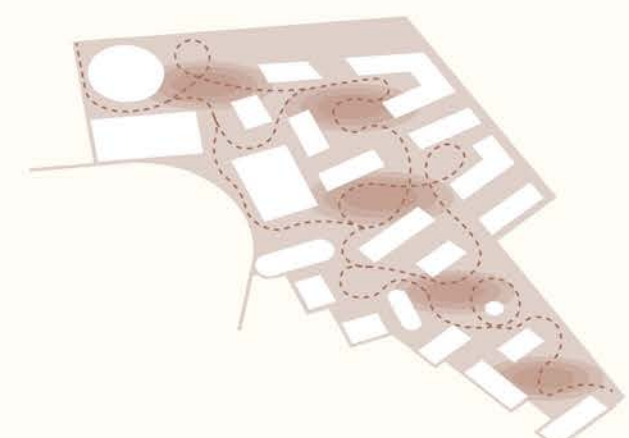
the agricultural hub



V. van Gogh. "Reminiscence of Brabant".
1890

During a difficult period van Gogh painted scenes of his native region. A region in where the urban environment was integrated with the context, where the productive was starting to be industrial, but it was also "cottages with mossy roofs and beech hedges on an autumn evening with a stormy sky, the sun setting red in reddish clouds".

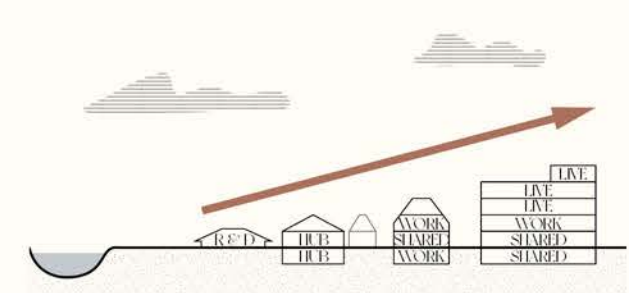
continuity of public spaces



a solid ground

While part of the quay is eroded through natural processes, the other part of the foundation of the CSM factory is maintained as stable ground to place the human sphere and its new architecture. Given the area's manufacturing past, 'Back to the Future' lays the foundations to create a neighbourhood capable of attracting new productive businesses to the area, in accordance with Breda's development plans for the future. The project site is then designed to be an interconnected hub of practices.

gradual rise of the buildings



the productive village

With the will to find a better coexistence, while also wanting to respect the Dutch cultural heritage, the human sphere of the project area takes the shape of a 'productive village'. This is a place with the size, quality of life and human and non-human scale of the traditional Dutch peri-urban contexts mixed together with the area's industrial past and functionality gaining from their strengths and qualities to foster a better contemporary urban life. The "project site" is dedicated to research and development of new production practices in the technological and agricultural sectors, while the "urban site" hosts live work solutions, offices and social solutions. The production village is structured starting from the consciousness of having to relate to a natural context in a more effective way: therefore the heights, distances and geometries of the buildings are designed to accommodate the new third landscape and enter into symbiosis with it.

human scale

At the same time, proportions, internal distances and uses of the buildings are studied to ensure that production and cultural activities respond to a human scale, thus allowing the project to promote vitality, care, sharing, and inclusiveness. The buildings are in fact designed to be all in relation with each other and to create the most welcoming environment possible for new businesses, new citizens and new workers as well as new nature.

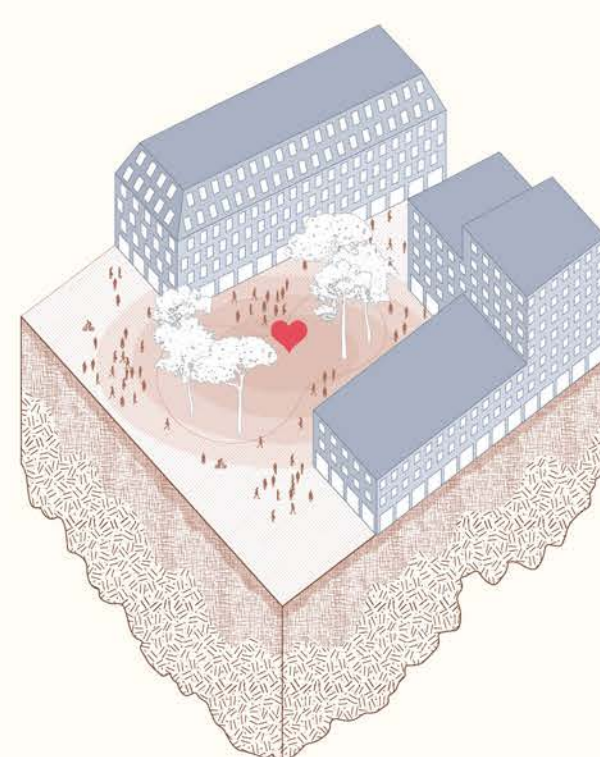
business hubs

Small and medium-sized start-ups can grow in the Technological Hub and the Agricultural Hub, depending on their sector, where they can find well-equipped and modern facilities that enables them to develop their business models and consolidate.



inclusive living/working environment

fostering an active urban environment



attracting businesses

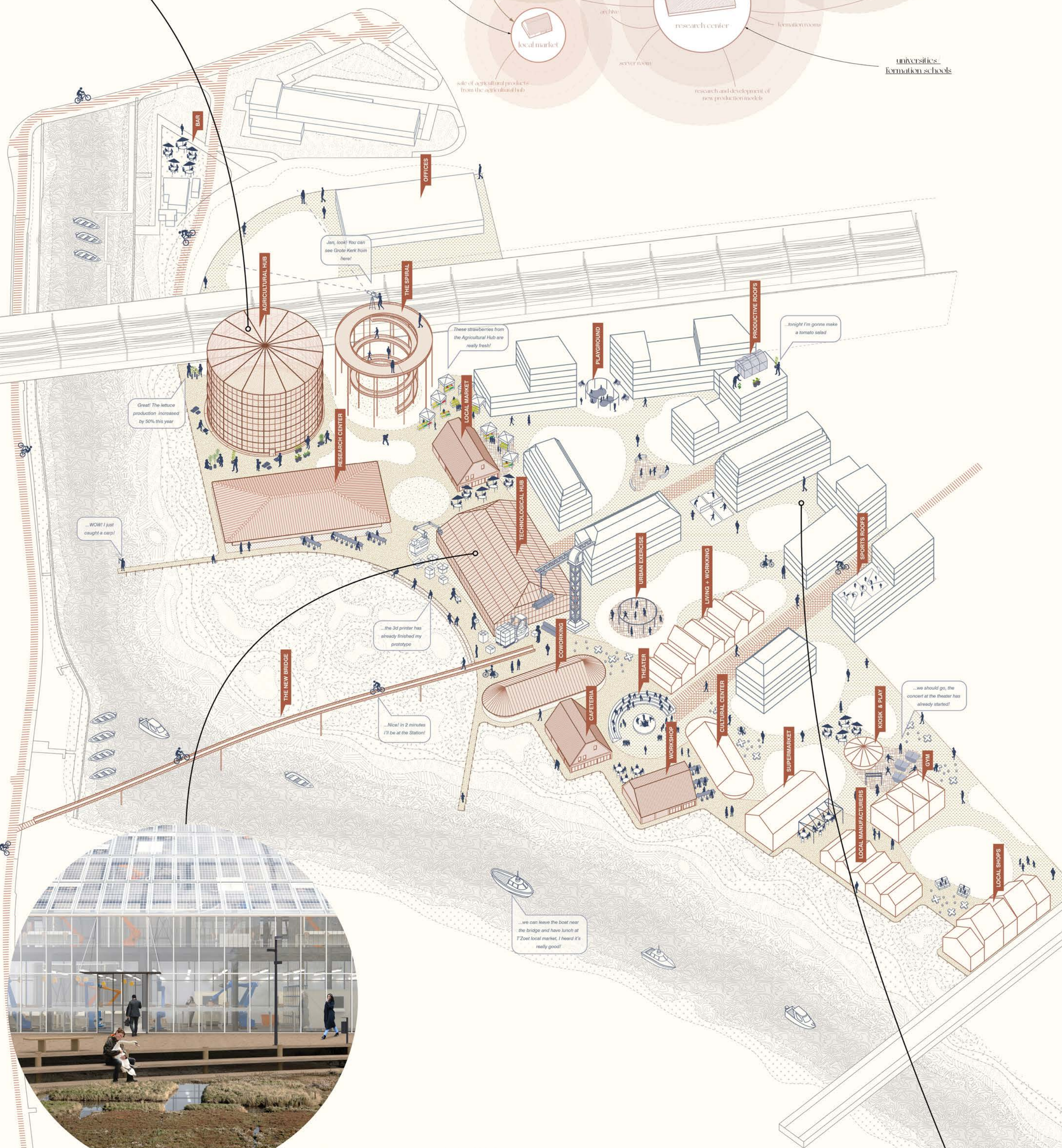
Tech Hub and Agri Hub are continuously upgraded in processes and equipments through the Research Centre; the latter attracts researchers from universities and training centres and it is responsible for developing new production techniques and technologies that can then be made available in the two hubs. The relationship between each building allows businesses to grow and consolidate, creating an ecology of resilient and sustainable tech start-ups in the 'T' Zoet's area, which in turn attracts investors interested in fund and promote this whole process in exchange of an heads-up of new productive possibilities.

housing

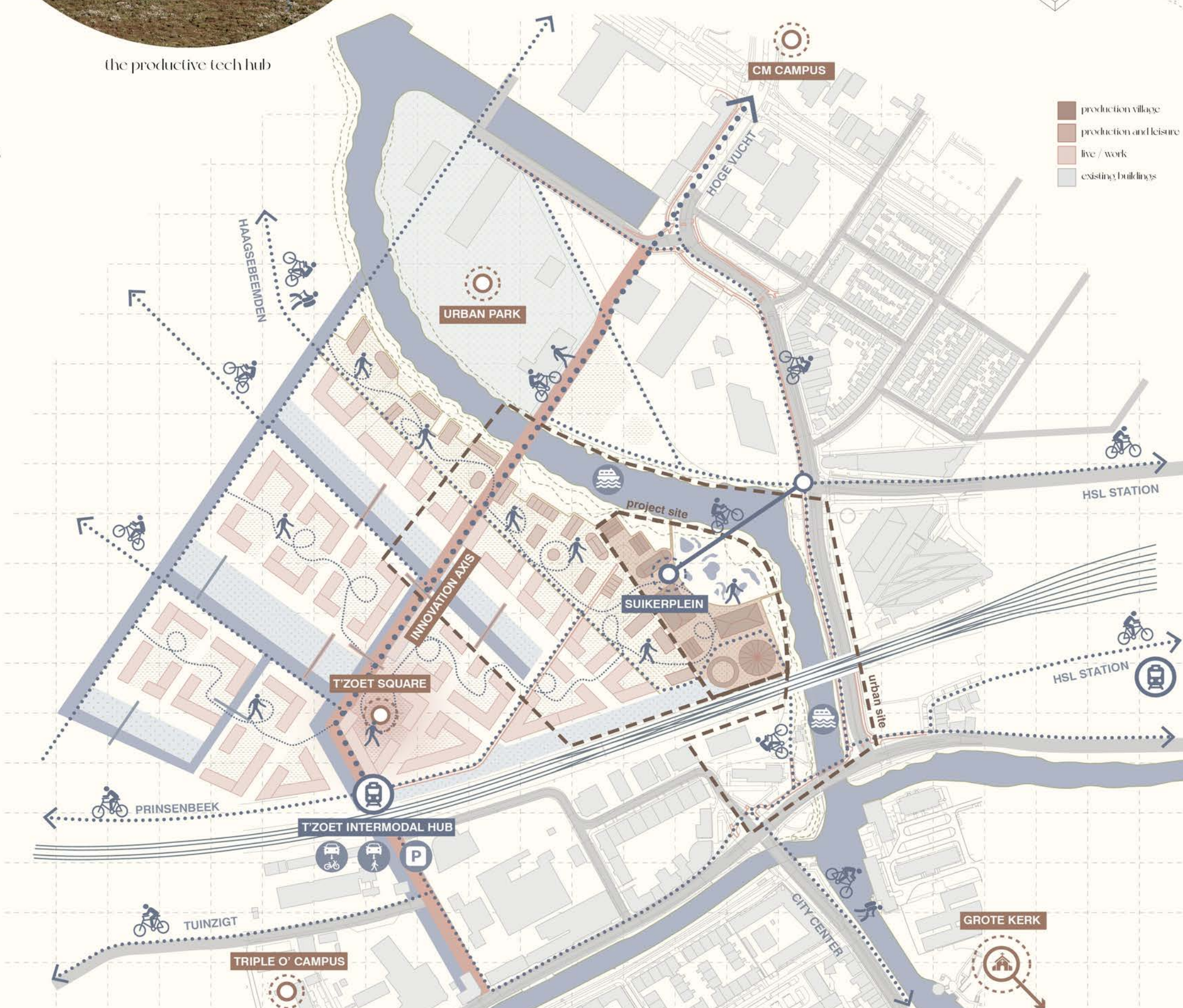
The allure of new businesses and T'Zooet's strategic location in relation to Breclja also makes it possible to develop the entire area with a strong residential character capable of accommodating different contemporary lifestyles. Solutions that meet the needs of home living, living alone, young families, consolidated families, students, as indicated in the New European Bauhaus guidelines. The different needs of these lifestyles can be satisfied both at the building scale, i.e. at the intermediate scale through the presence of collective and dedicated uses, and at the neighbourhood scale. In fact, the ground floors of the buildings will all be available to the community, with collective kitchens, kindergartens, shops, bars, restaurants, gyms, etc.

urban layout

Furthermore, the urban planning layout of the project area is based on the position of the Grote Kerk as a reference point for the area's main streets. These routes connect directly with the innovation axis, which in turn works as a connection to the other future development area of Breda. Finally, the project area is connected to the existing cycle path on the other side of the Mark River via a new cycle and pedestrian walkway, which decreases the time needed to reach the nearby high-speed train station. Moreover, thanks to the intermodal hub, it is possible to make the urban site completely pedestrianised, allowing the main services to be reached in less than 15 min.



the productive tech hub

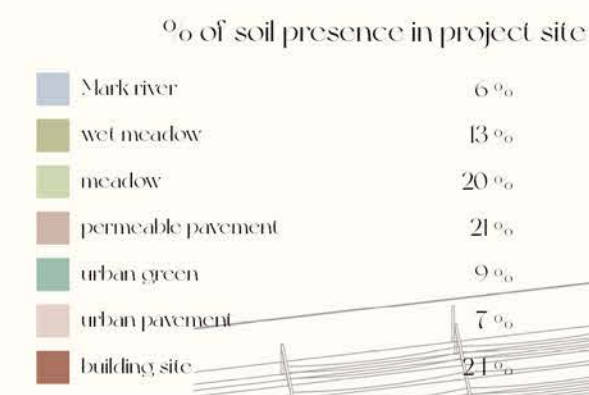


coexistence as key for the future

"Back to the Future" presents the search for biodiversity as a key element in defining future sustainable urban developments. Nature is no longer at the background of the city but is transformed into an identity element of the project together with the production activities and iconic symbols reminiscent of the old CSM silos. A complex symbiosis that acts on several levels and enriches the entire area, but makes the intervention resilient and adaptable to inevitable future changes, both environmental and social. The design process of the project follows two contemporary lines that end up merging to create an active, inclusive, productive, vital and interspecies urban environment: two strategies that work together to attract new tech companies and inhabitants on the one hand, and to attract greater biodiversity on the other.



the spiral as a viewpoint on Breda



public space

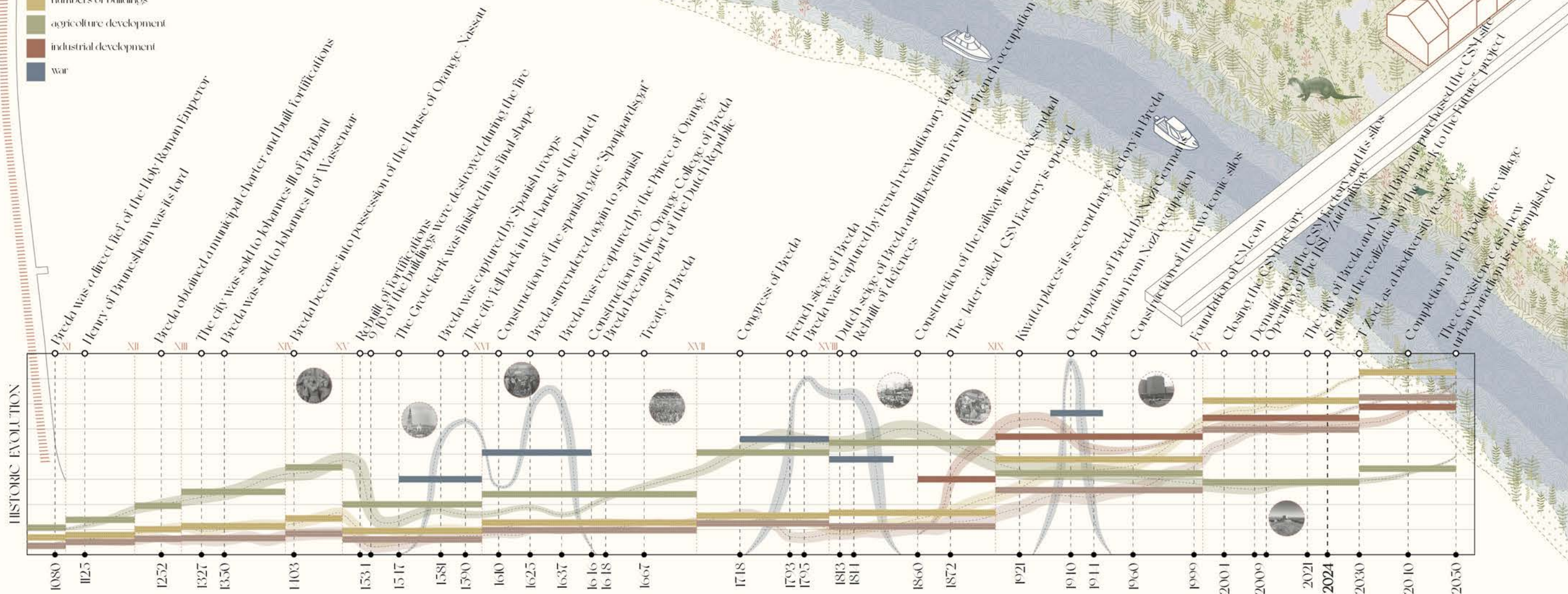
With the interest to working on the inter-species margin, the project area is predominantly pedestrian cycling, free from the idea of the street as a barrier. The public space is in fact articulated as a sequence of plazas of different dimensions and proportions, allowing distinct social situations to develop. The project's soft mobility is thus also fauna friendly, as the entire project is permeable and pedestrian. Moreover, in the pursuit of equal coexistence, land use is divided 50/50 between humans and non humans. As one enters the project site, nature infiltrates the new neighbourhood at the same time that architecture infiltrates the waterfront, triggering a symbiosis between humans and non humans based on learning to coexist.

heritage

The Netherlands, and Breda in particular, historically developed a close relationship between the urban and natural context, turning it into a true cultural heritage, even before the intensive industrial and agricultural landscape began to characterise the Dutch lowlands. Dutch heritage is rooted in a symbiosis between human and non human, between social life and territory, between technological and agricultural production.

project identity

The heritage that is then taken into account to develop "Back to the Future" and the 'T Zoet area is therefore not only the immediately pre-existing one, i.e. the industrial legacy of the CSM Factory, but also the earlier rural one, present in Van Gogh's paintings and many other painters, as well as the pristine identity of the region's numerous riverfronts.

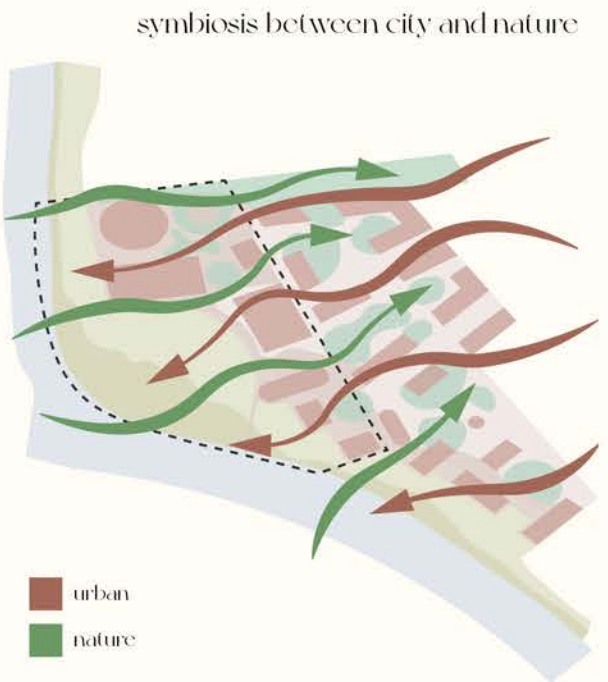


back to the future
looking back at the past heritage to find future form of urban coexistence



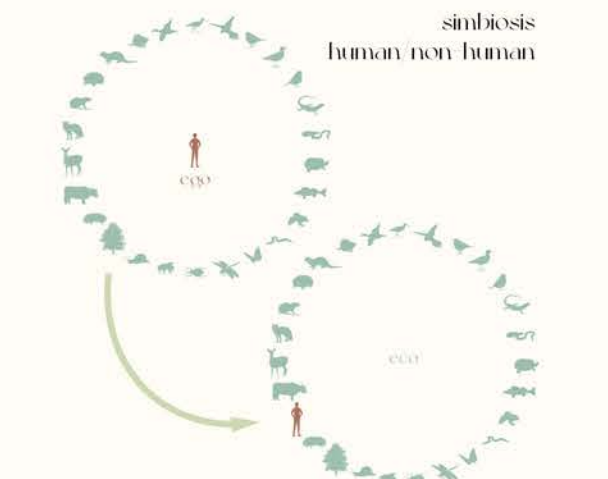
J.M.W. Turner, "Rain, Steam, and Great Bridges", 1825

The thatched peasants' houses in Nuenen and the surrounding area reminded van Gogh of his origins, and made him think about the Brabant where the human environment was in symbiosis with the non human one, highlighting how this is an heritage and landscape deeply rooted in history, which is just as important as the industrial one.



pedagogical landscape

"Back to the Future" is transformed into a pedagogical landscape where it is possible to experiment and learn hitherto inaccessible forms of urban coexistence, which focus on the necessary balance that human beings must have with the environment in a more general sense. Balance that is increasingly challenged by constant urban evolution and that is increasingly difficult to find in built surroundings, but which Breda has the opportunity to promote through 'T Zoet. A context where it is not only the human being who takes care of nature, but also nature itself that takes care of the human being.



working on the boundary

In order for the project to develop as a complete ecosystem, it was decided to work on the edge, on the boundary between what is human and non human. Due to the original spatial characteristics of the plot, the waterfront is the one that can most quickly develop an ecosystem. For that reason the waterfront and a large part of the quay are being regenerated to make way for the wet meadow and meadow that have characterised Breda throughout its history. This strategy follows the principles of the "Nature restoration law" issued by the EU in 2022, and moves away from the architectural call to turn this area into another place where the status quo is privileged revolving around just human needs as the environmental context doesn't exist.

pilot project

This scalability translates into a coexistence of several elements in an urban productive context in balance with the natural one in the form of a third landscape: i.e. a nature not subject to human restrictions that can spontaneously develop in its own territory. In order to do this, "Back to the Future" is understood as a pilot project, a possible alternative for a new sustainable, but at the same time highly urban, paradigm that can then be extended into more areas of the 'T Zoet development project.