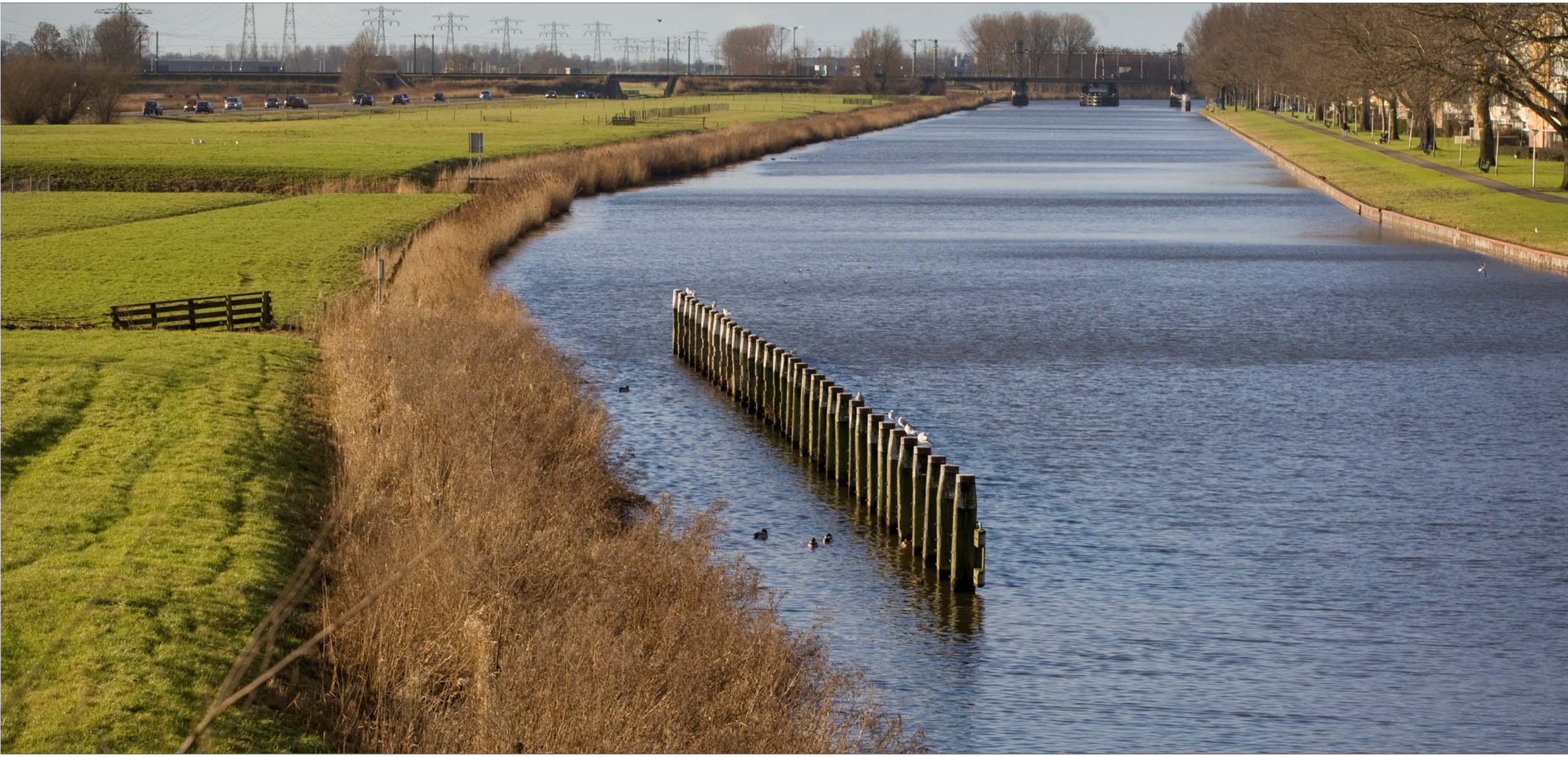
Leeuwarden - Nederland - europan 11

LIVING WITH WATER



CATEGORY Urban design/architecture

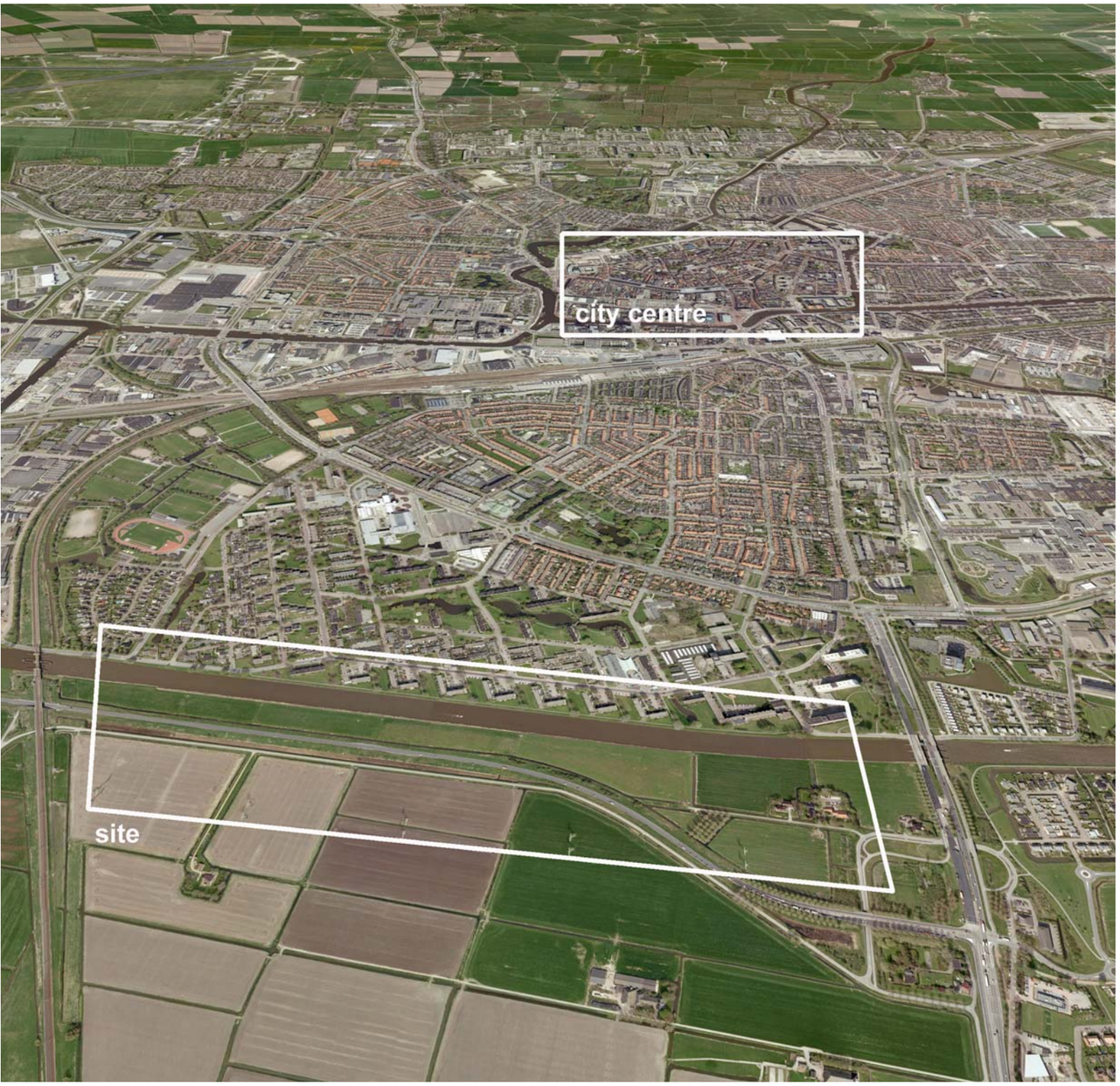
LOCATION Leeuwarden - Kanaalzone
POPULATION 94,000
STRATEGIC SITE 49 ha. **SITE OF PROJECT** 19 ha.
SITE PROPOSED BY corporatie Elkien and Municipality of Leeuwarden
OWNER OF THE SITE Municipality of Leeuwarden

COMMISSION AFTER THE COMPETITION commission for the elaboration of the first block of social housing, approximately 25 housing units

TRANSFORMATION OF SITE
Water is an important element in the Kanaalzone area. A waterway connection to the residential area can be realised at two places. The objective is a unique residential area adjacent to the water in the tradition of waterside housing in Leeuwarden. Kanaalzone is situated along the Van Harinxmakanaal on the southern side of Leeuwarden. The site forms the transition area from the existing town to the new residential and working area, De Zuidlanden. The spatial relationship with the northern bank is part of the assignment. The programme for the study area comprises an urban assignment for 400-500 residential units. The site is adjacent to open water, and at two places an opening can made into the area. A short-stay harbour with small-scale catering facilities is an optional part of the programme. For the intervention area the first phase of 100 housing units requires architectural elaboration.

CITY STRATEGY
Leeuwarden is the provincial capital of Fryslân (Friesland), the province that boasts the most water in the Netherlands, is the economic and administrative centre of Friesland and has high ambitions in the field of sustainability. The municipality wants to be fully climate neutral in 2020: a fully-sustainable city. There are important facilities in the field of housing, working, culture, recreation, education, justice and health care. This makes Leeuwarden the residential town and the employment hub of Fryslân with approximately 56,000 jobs. In order to tempt these people to live in the municipality, Leeuwarden is developing attractive new residential environments in De Zuidlanden district. The municipal policy is to build 400-600 housing units per year, some half of which in De Zuidlanden. The structural concept of De Zuidlanden aims to protect the cohesion of the individual sub-districts.

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SITE DEFINITION
Kanaalzone is part of the large De Zuidlanden housing development. The development of De Zuidlanden commenced in 2008. The area consists of sub-districts comprising 350-400 residential units, each with an individual character. The first sub-plan –Techum – is under construction and has the appearance of a traditional Frisian village. A structural concept for De Zuidlanden was recently drawn up ensuring the cohesion in the sub-plans. The competition site is situated on both sides of the Van Harinxmakanaal, on the boundary of the existing town. This canal – certainly in the summer – is a busy navigation route. Commercial shipping, the route for sailing boats with a mast higher than six metres from the Frisian lakes to the Harlingen/Lauwersmeer seaports, and small-scale pleasure craft make the canal a lively and interesting waterway. The southern boundary is formed by a high-voltage electric cable line. No construction is permitted under this line, but the space can be included in the public area. At present a busy traffic route runs through the intervention area. Once the ring road round Leeuwarden is completed in 2015 the through traffic function will fall away. The throughway can be partially or wholly removed. There are no natural height differences.

NEW MOBILITY
The site links up directly with the main access route from the south to the town centre. The distance to the centre is three kilometres. The cycle routes through the area are important. The assignment includes a high-quality route for cyclists on both the eastern and western side of the intervention area to the town centre. In the coming years De Zuidlanden can develop into a valuable extension of Leeuwarden, with urban facilities including a train station.

NEW WAYS OF LIFE
The new inhabitants share a preference for living alongside water. Some preferably with their own boat moored to a jetty in the back garden, others in a more urban residential environment. A home and garden of one’s own are important, as is privacy.
Motto: “Out-of-town waterside housing but with the town centre nearby”. The question then is: how can both banks become an entity?

NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
The brief is the design of housing with low energy consumption heating, for example incorporating a fully-insulating shell. This involves paying particular attention to the siting of the housing and the windows. The winter sun should have maximum access in the homes, while the summer sun should be kept out as far as possible. Good ventilation is important in this context.

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View from the site to Nijlân



Nijlân housing


Van Harinxmakanaal


Stern-wave reaches the bank of the Van Harinxmakanaal