

# Polderweggebied

Amsterdam

## Introduction

**borders** The site is a part of a clearly demarcated area Polderweggebied. On the south side bordered by the Ringvaart, a 15 m wide canal, on the east side and north side by railway embankments. The connections across these borders are made by passages through the railway embankments and by a bridge across the canal. On the west side the area is limited by the Linnaeusstraat, an important traffic-artery and shopping street. On the other side of the various borders the urban tissue is mainly formed by traditional housing blocks.

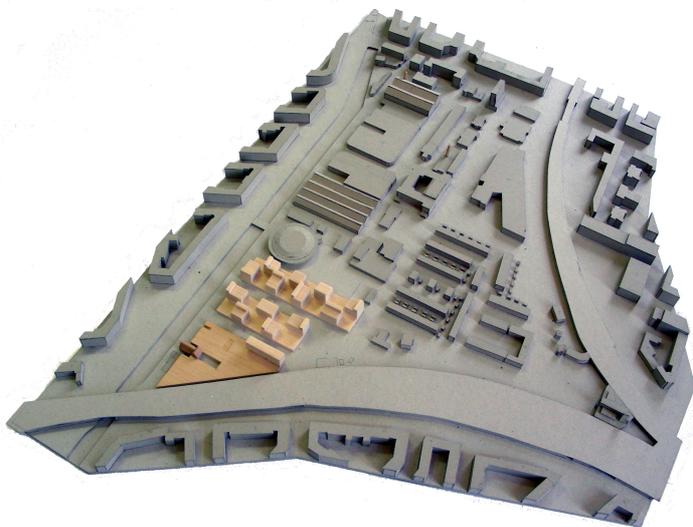
**history** The name of the area refers to the fact that it is a part of a polder. The main direction in the urban grid is determined by the direction of the former canals and ditches.

Between 1885 and 1923 the Polderweggebied was used by the Oostergasfabriek, a gas factory, which in addition to leaving behind a number of industrial monuments also left polluted soil.

**noise problems** The noise produced by the trains that pass by is a restricting factor, due to the fact that it is not legally permitted to develop housing in an area in which the noise level rises over 70 dB(A).

**characteristics** Polderweggebied is still not extensively used, mainly because of the inherited pollution and the noise problems. It appears to be a site that one might expect in the periphery rather than in the heart of a city. However some of the remaining buildings of the gas factory can be considered as industrial monuments. Their scale, appearance, and their position in the specific urban landscape, are a source of inspiration for future developments.

**future developments** The Polderweggebied would probably have been developed long ago if the soil pollution would not have been a restrictive factor. The close vicinity of the Muiderpoortstation; its central position in relation to the surrounding service areas; public transport and bicycle connections, afford the area in the coming years promising prospects, on both local and regional level.



## Design

3 big buildings The design is characterized by three big buildings that match with the scale and typology of the industrial monuments. By making big objects, in which the entire program has been solved (including gardens), the special quality of this part of the city is maintained. This typology makes a clear distinction between public and private space, and makes it possible to manipulate built an unbuilt surface. Doing so the public space generated makes people feel save and give them the possibility to meet, or avoid each other.

What's in a name? The three objects are naturally anchored in the urban context by respecting the morphology of the Polderweggebied and having each of them reacted on the different urban borders.

In the south part of the scheme, the buildings are lining up with the big industrial monumental buildings situated along the canal, extending the characteristic of the quay zone.

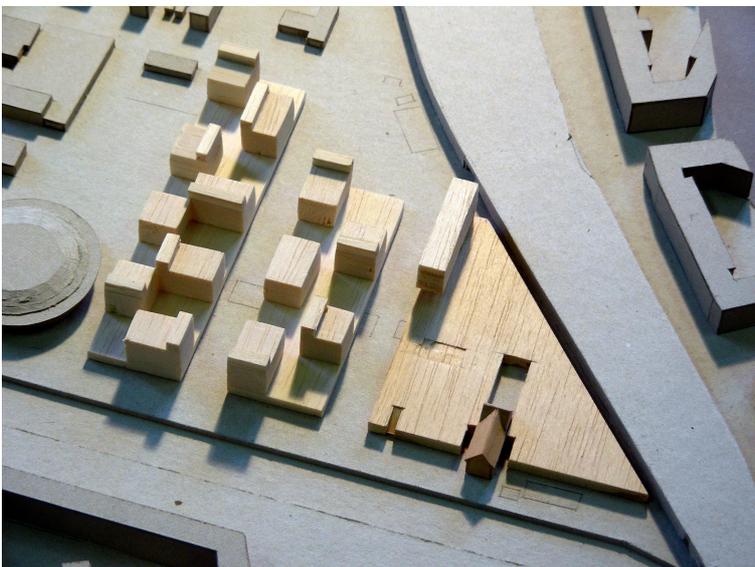
The north facade is lining up with the building-line of the street Polderweg.

The west facade keeps sufficient distance to the existing round sports hall. Although it is very likely that in future developments the latter might disappear, its appearance is not inflecting our scheme.

In the east part, a triangular building with a school on its top is completing the scheme. This triangle incorporates the former ammonia factory which is part of the actual animal shelter. Between the building and the railway embankment a void is maintained.

## Program

communal green Incorporated in the three big buildings, upon a level of 4,2 m above the street, gardens are introduced. These gardens combine qualities of urban and suburban living. At the same time the elevated gardens respond to the polluted soil problems of the area. The level of the gardens is related to the adjacent railway embankment, which is part of the city green structure. Doing so, the dike is not only a brutal element cutting through the urban tissue, but also becomes a part of the urban environment.



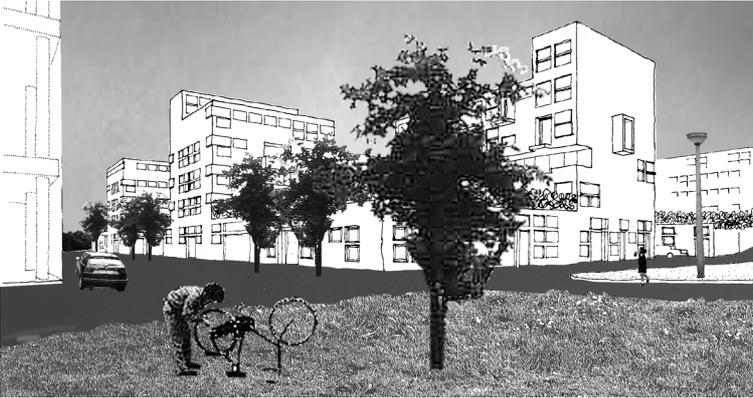
Each garden within the big apartment buildings is related to a specific common staircase. Above the level of the gardens buildings and voids alternate. The conjunction of various types and numbers of apartments, result in a diversity of profiles: Garden - facade, garden-garden, facade-facade. In the street, next to the elevated gardens, trees are planted in order to give the gardens a more intimate character.



housing The alternation of voids (gardens) and volumes provide to the houses a favorable positions towards the sun and various wide views. In each volume the houses are designed to have more than one orientation. At the end of each building, special apartments support the public space. Most of the housing types proposed are accessible by common staircases. Apartments on the 1st floor have their access directly towards the street. Some of the patio apartments have a additional entrance in order to provide a flexible structure. The common staircases are spaciouly proportioned. A lot of attention is paid to the relation between staircase and common garden. The occupants can choose whether to use or neglect the common space. The housing program has been developed in such a way that the noise level on the facades remains within the legal limits of 70 dB(A). That is also the reason why the apartments which are close to the railway embankment only reach until the third floor (within the 70 dB(A) borderline on 10 m height), and are topped by commercial space with a separate access on the higher levels.

commercial space The commercial space is positioned as a consequence to the noise restrictions. Small commercial spaces are positioned into the two rectangular big buildings with mainly housing program. realized within the apartment buildings. This creates the possibility of combining living with working space. The triangle contains a certain diversity of commercial spaces. Along the street studios are made in order to stimulate activity.

school On top of the triangular big building a school for adult education is realized. The school is a dynamic and transparent screen, with activities after labour time, reducing the noise problem. The entree of the school is related to the public square and to the bicycle tunnel passage.



sports centre The triangular building accommodates a sports centre, that replaces existing sports facilities within the study area. It contains a sports hall; a swimming pool; squash courts; sauna and fitness areas. The entrance of the sports centre is related to the public house on the quay. Within the public house stairs lead up to the garden level. Over here an outdoor sport field and a outdoor swimming pool are created, face to face to the bypassing train passengers. The realization of this sports centre enables other developments within the Polderweggebied.

public house The old building of the former ammonium factory (part of the actual animal shelter) is incorporated into the triangle. The building will be turned into a public house. On both sides of the public house slots provide an independent entree to the sports facilities. A big patio is connecting the public house with the parking space. The parking space has a visual connection with the sport activities and is provided by daylight by a slot parallel to the railway embankment and the patio.

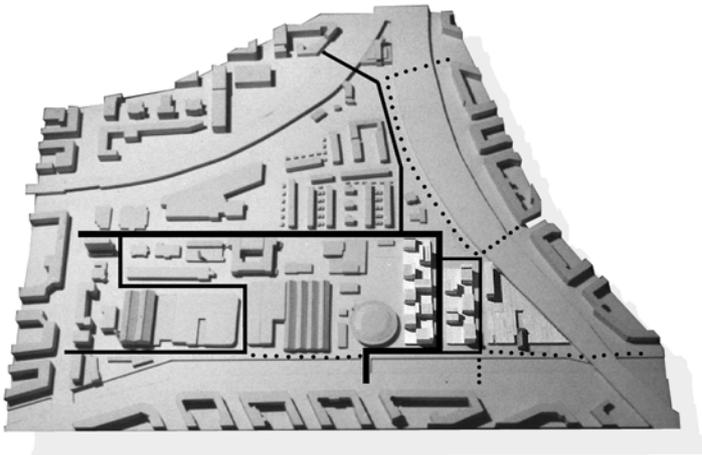


parking The required parking facilities for the apartments are realized on the 1st floor (street level), in the centre zone of the buildings. The parking space is provided by daylight and has a direct connection with the common staircases. Additional parking places have been made in the commercial building.

architecture The architecture of the blocks will be powerful and not fashionable. The materials to be used will be of high quality, like ceramic bricks, natural stone, glass and wood. The facades facing the street will have formal repetitive daylight perforations. The facades facing the common garden are less formal, emphasizing the private atmosphere. The apartments are developed on various grid systems. The 1st floor, with a floor to floor height of 4,20 m, is to be considered as a free space. It can be adapted for possible exchanges between commercial and living space.

## Traffic

motor traffic In our proposal we consider the Polderweg as a major entree, with traffic in both directions. The actual end of the road is extended into our scheme. Where crossing over the Ringvaart, a new bridge should be made providing more quality to this entree. This main access has been designed to serve local traffic. The parking zones of the housing buildings are accessible from this main road. The road in between the triangular building and the housing building provides access to the parking of the commercial space.



slow-moving traffic In the north the scheme anticipates the existing slow-moving traffic structure. The bicycle road between the tunnel and the railway station is extended in a evident way to the south to end up in a new bridge for slow-moving traffic. The other important bicycle connection is the east-west one along the quay. Although the actual rail road is crossing over the north side of the Ringvaart at a very low level, a new tunnel for slow-moving traffic should improve the accessibility of the study area.

## Paving

To emphasize the historical function of the former industrial area and in order to make car traffic of secondary importance in the character of the public space we create one plain level of pavement, that will incorporate both side walks and traffic roads. The buildings will appear as being positioned on a carpet, made out of ceramic street bricks. In order to create side walks, large open gutters will separate traffic zones from pedestrian areas. Specifically detailed spaces are made on the water along the quay in front of the public house, and on the square next to the tunnel.