

Zaaneiland >>>



Zaaneiland

project
urban public space design
supervision

location
Zaandam

designers
Alle Hosper
Peter de Ruyter
Arjan Karssen

partners
Bureau B+B

client
V.O.F. Peterswerf

size
12 ha - 500 dwellings

year of design
1992 - 1997



Redevelopment of the Zaaneiland industrial area

The redevelopment of industrial areas in cities has become a well-known phenomenon in recent years: mammoth projects such as Battery Park City in New York and the London Docklands have received a great deal of attention. Dutch examples include the Oostelijke Havengebied in Amsterdam and the Kop van Zuid in Rotterdam. Although the Zaaneiland in Zaandam is a project on a smaller scale it is no less special. The former woodworking industry on the island has made way for housing.

Zaaneiland, 1939

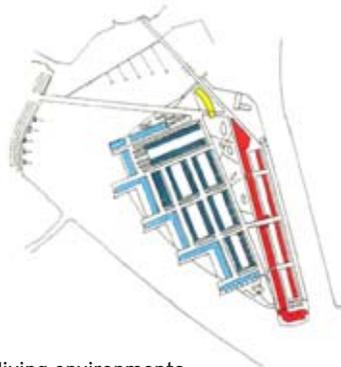




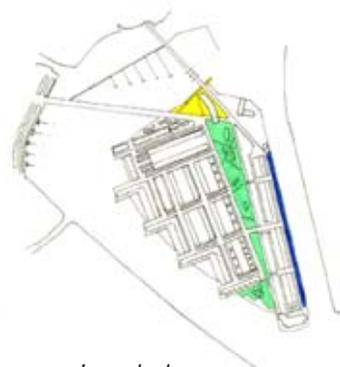
entranceroad to the island



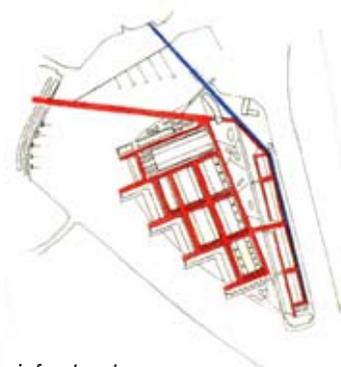
green wedge



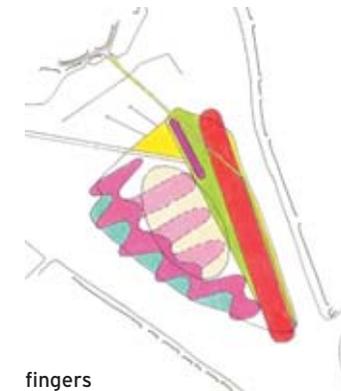
living environments



square's en dock



infrastructure



fingers

Unique location

The Zaaneiland is unique for a number of reasons. The island is at the southern tip of Zaanstad, a fascinating water city that stretches many kilometres along the banks of the River Zaan. A marvellous 'water square' between the centre of Zaandam and the northern end of the island constitutes, together with the water on the western side, an ideal location for a wide variety of recreational uses. The water to the east of the island is the domain of a lively shipping industry. The southern tip of the island offers a view of Amsterdam's intriguing port.





westside island



eastern edge



dwellings

Water is the island's most important quality

The island's most important quality is its relationship with water. The water surrounding the island needs to be 'palpable', not just on its banks but also at its centre. The Zaaneiland opens to the quiet water to the west. Houses on piers are built at right angles to the bank so that the heart of the island is linked via sightlines to the open water. A virtually closed block of buildings on the eastern bank responds to the shipping route on this side of the island. The heart of the island possesses its own specific quality: an open, green wedge that enhances the longitudinal dimension of the island and emphasises the view of Amsterdam's port to the south.





steps main complex



details quay



bench on the southern strip of the island

Restrained design with accents

The Zaaneiland exhibits great cohesion between the urban plan, the architecture of the buildings and the layout of the public spaces. As a result, the urban plan's intended ambiances are worked out to the very smallest detail. The various locations have a clearly identifiable character as street, square, park, quay, etc. The public area is of a restrained design with a great deal of attention for high-quality materials and carefully-considered detailing. A number of crucial locations in the plan are accentuated, such as the majestic steps that connect with the main complex at the entrance to the island and the almost 23-metre wide bench on the southern tip of the island. Passersby resting on the bench gaze at the design's ace: the openness and space of the water.