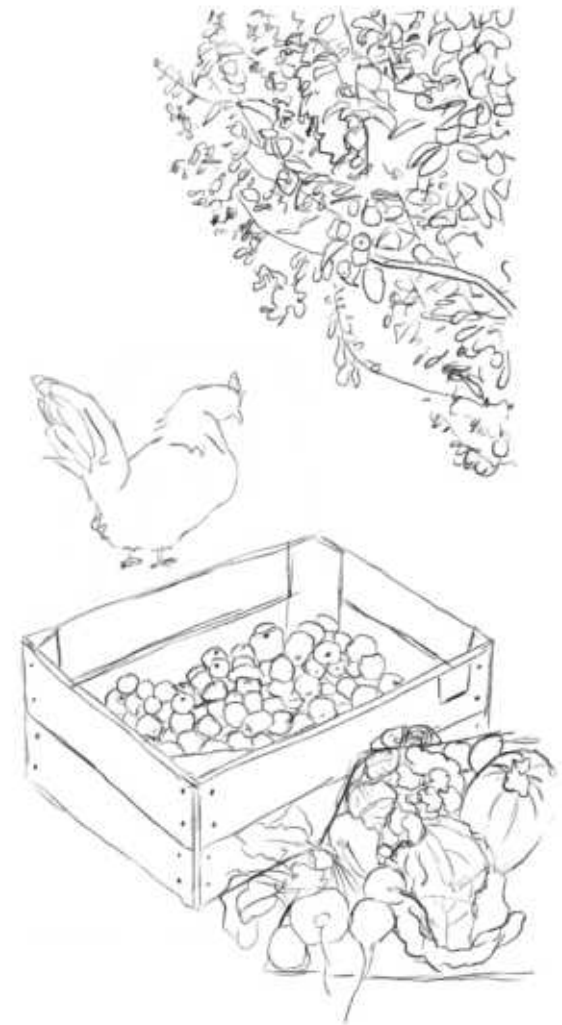


WOLDWIJK

Final Report



Growing a Permanent Future Together



Living Lab Sustainable Places
Semester 2b 2025/26
Master Society, Sustainability and Planning

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HOW IT STARTED...

Woldwijk is an experimental cooperative community located at the periphery of the village Ten Boer, in the province of Groningen. Since 2016, the place has developed incrementally - the first people got a permanent lease for the land, moved there in yurt tents and started to build tiny houses. Later, they laid out paths and infrastructure for electricity and water for new people to arrive. Today, the site consists of three residential areas (Landjegoed, Staatjevrij, and Tiny House Woldwijk), a self-harvesting garden, several acres of agricultural land, and a historical farmhouse (Hoeve Dijkshorn). Woldwijk currently covers about 7.5 hectares and coexists in the immediate vicinity of an elderly care centre called Innersdijk.

With the temporary residential permit extended until 2032, Woldwijk is actively negotiating with the Gemeente Groningen to achieve permanent status. This transition represents an opportunity to formally secure Woldwijk's existence as a place to live more consciously, more frugally, more quietly, closer to nature, with fewer possessions, and more together (Siebert, 2023). In 2027, the contracts between the residents and the cooperative are renewed, opening up a possibility to experiment with new agreements for co-living.

WHERE WE COME IN...

This work was developed throughout the master's course "Living Lab Sustainable Places" in the programme Society, Sustainability and Planning (SSP) at the University of Groningen. With this report we contribute to the ongoing debate on Woldwijk's future by presenting concrete proposals for organizing collective life and integrating community values into long-term spatial use. We were asked for proposals regarding 1) an image quality plan that shows the spatial and social values which the residents of Woldwijk created, 2) a land use plan as basis for calculating a landprice, and 3) ideas for rules and agreements that secure the flexible and democratic development of Woldwijk. Our research consisted of fieldwork and guided site tours, engagement with stakeholders from the cooperative and the municipality of Groningen, spatial mapping, and an analysis of key documents, like team reports from the cooperative Woldwijk, prior research, and comparable projects.

READING GUIDE

This report is structured along the three requests: In the first Chapter, we analyze the core values of Woldwijk and visualize them in seven **Value Maps**. Building on this, our proposal is divided into three sections: **Proposal 1** is a land-use map to assist in land price negotiations, while **Proposal 2** complements this with a co-creation plan that shows how land could be managed. Both sections include proposals for specific rules and advice on how to strengthen current core-values and approach current challenges. Lastly, **Proposal 3** explains broader strategic advice for residents, and the municipal and national governments to ensure a smooth transition and position Woldwijk as a pioneering model.



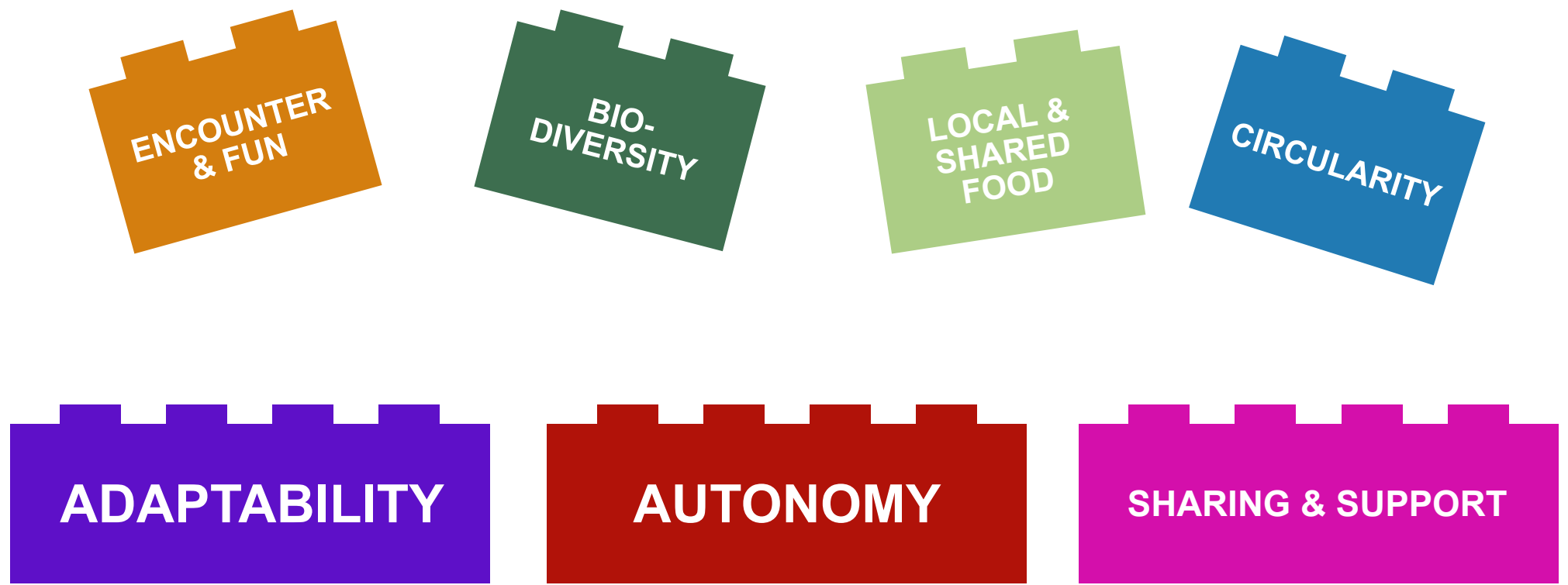
WELCOME!

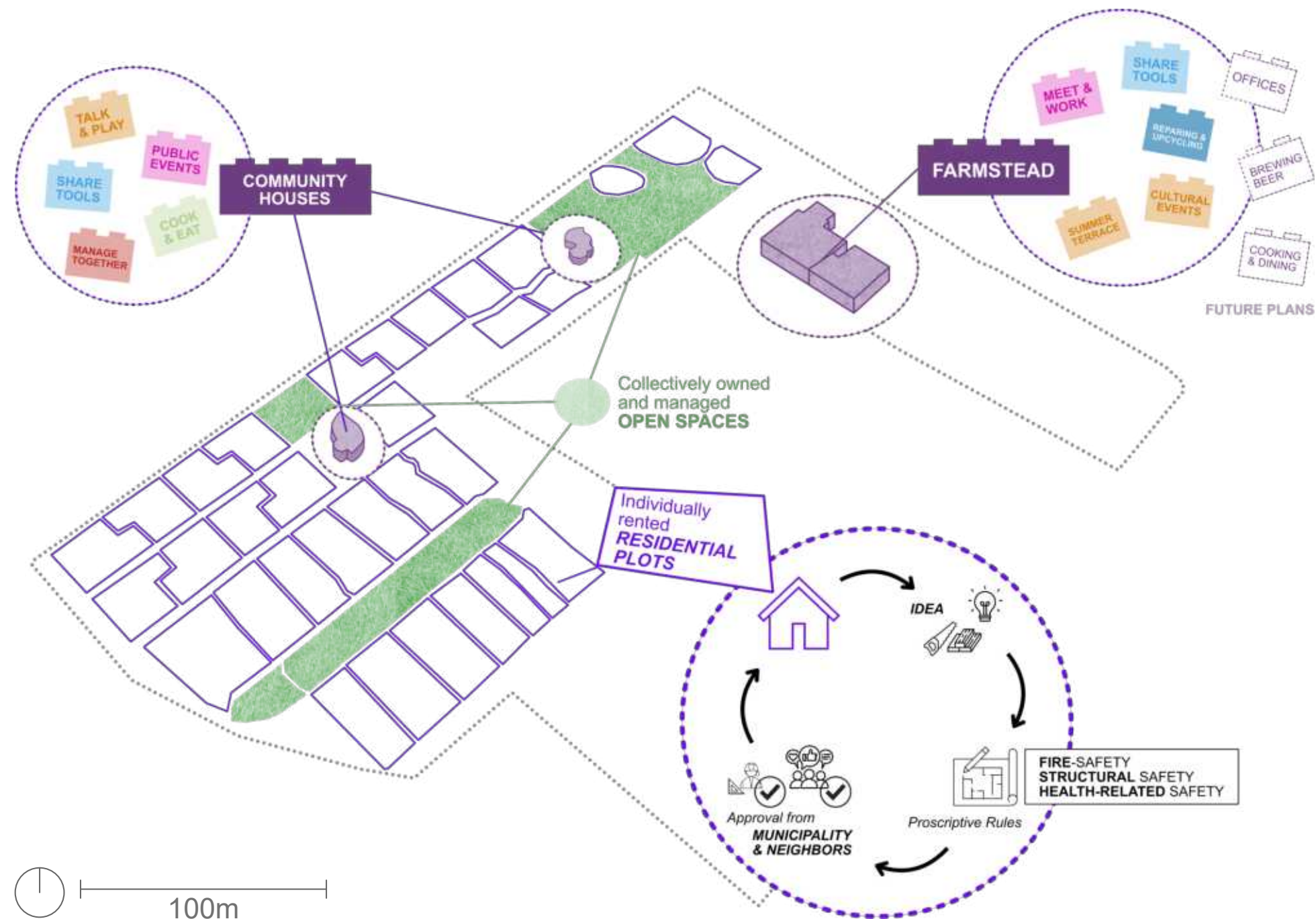
ANALYSIS THE VALUES OF WOLDWIJK

In Woldwijk, alternative ways of housing, working and living together are realized in a small community. This is only possible due to a high grade of **Adaptability** and **Autonomy** of the area: Residents are able to design their environment according to their own needs and wishes within their cooperatives. From the beginning, Woldwijk was created by people that **Support** each other and **Share** resources - not only by those who live there today, but also together with external supporters. Together, those three core-values are the basis, on which during the last years, new projects grew. Today, the area provides values not only for its residents, but also for a broader public and the municipality Groningen: Opportunities for **Encounter and Fun**, approaches for more **Circular resource loops**, high **Biodiversity** and innovative ideas to make **Local, Healthy Food** available for more people.

The following pages show how those values spatialize in Woldwijk. This analysis helps to understand what aspects of this place need to be preserved and possibly translated into land use- or social rules.

We build this analysis on our field observations, discussions with representatives of the cooperative, a former student-led survey of the perceptions of residents of Ten Boer and Woldwijk (Sekuur & Ubels, 2024), and the current policy goals of the municipality Groningen (Gemeente Groningen, 2023).





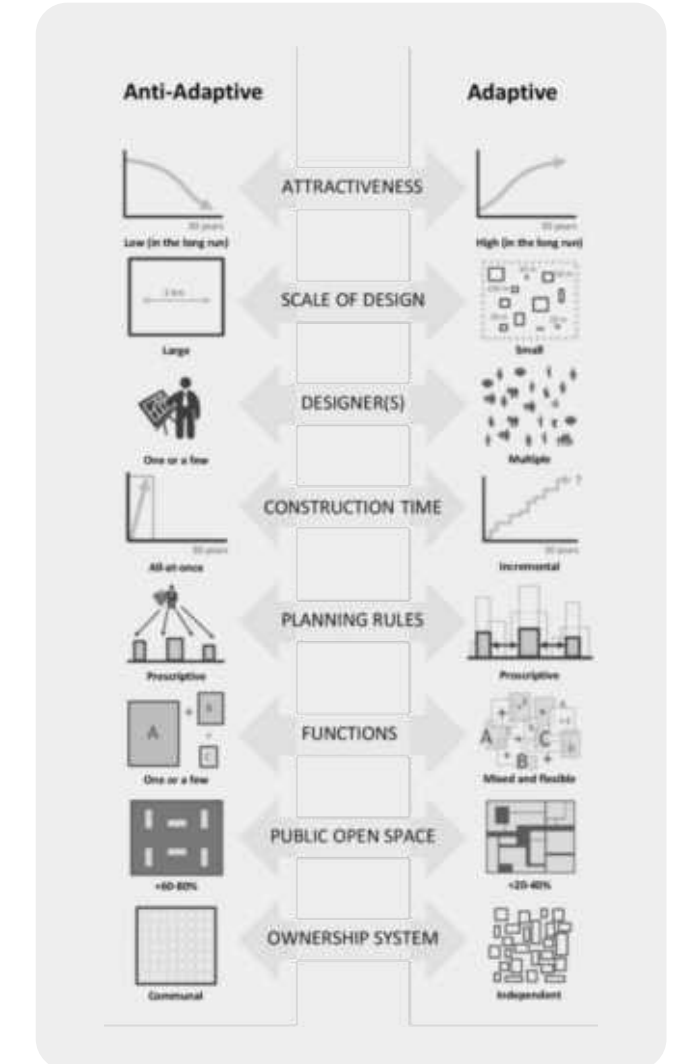
ADAPTABILITY

Woldwijk is highly adaptable to the varying needs of its residents, because of its proscriptive and unbureaucratic rules for building on plots and the collective management of shared spaces.

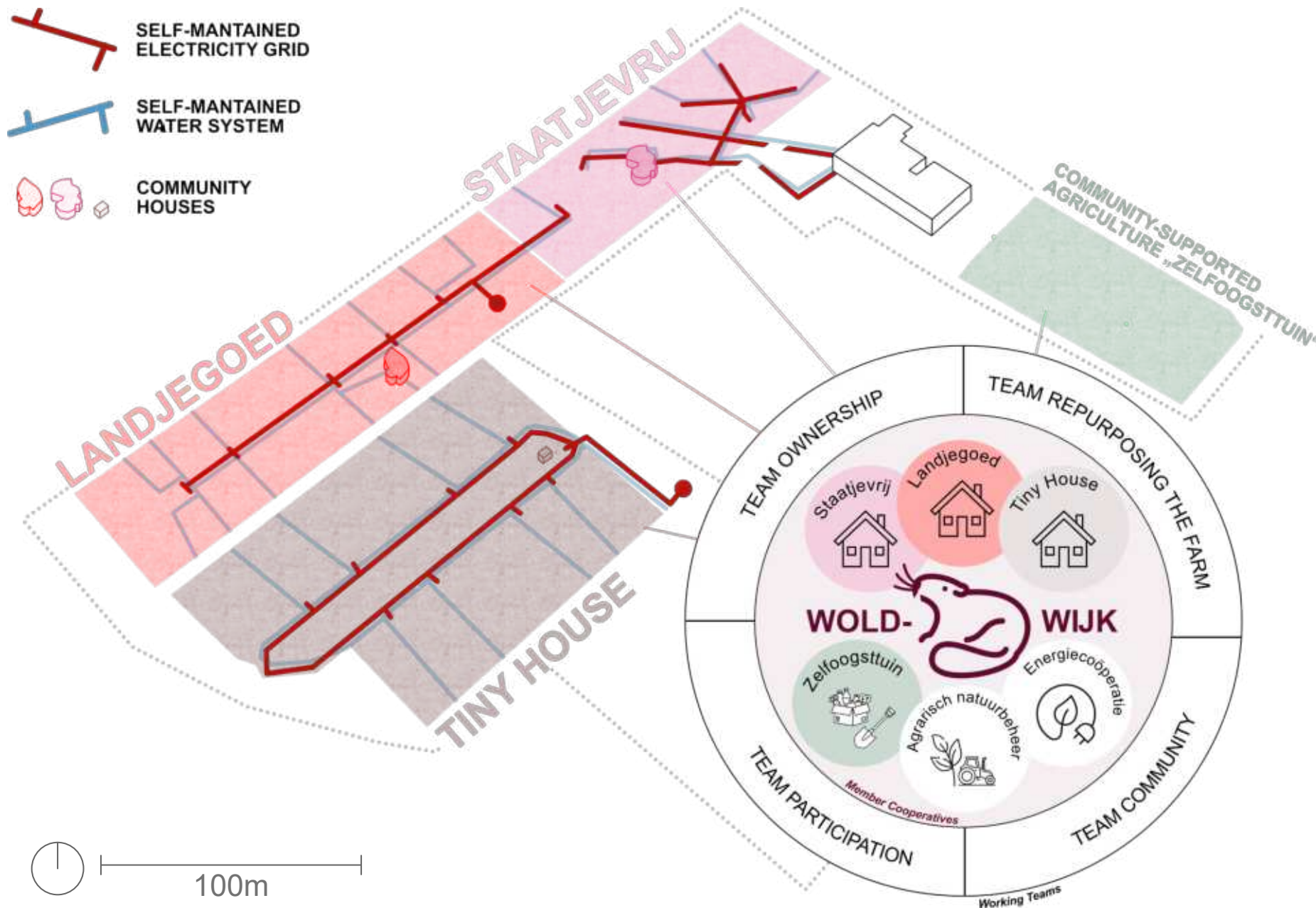
The incremental development of the area over time and organic adjustments to contextual needs or changing circumstances are key characteristics of adaptive spaces (Cozzolino, 2019). For individual members of the cooperative the entire area can be determined as highly adaptable. Due to minimal rules about buildings or expansions, contrary to the common practice in typical land use plans, individual homes can be freely modified to changing tastes or needs (like a growing family). The current agreement between Woldwijk and the municipality includes that changes in the built environment need to be fire-safe, healthy and structurally safe - a proscriptive agreement that allows for diverse developments and is currently reflected in a multiplicity of small houses, often with personal creative touches. Instead of a bureaucratic application process, the approval depends on an architect visiting the area and verifying that the changes adhere to the safety rules. The neighbours in the community also get informed about planned changes and have the opportunity to object.

The highest degree of adaptability exists in Staatjevrij as the majority of the land is collectively used and not compartmentalized in private plots. Thus, there is room for experimentation and innovative projects like unique domes for horticulture. Community-wise, public spaces play an important role for adaptability as public buildings can be multifunctional and adapted to the current needs of everyone.

Stefano Cozzolino (2019):
The (anti) adaptive neighbourhoods



Picture: Cozzolino (2019, p. 8)



AUTONOMY

The residents of Woldwijk co-create their environment autonomously from state and market logics by organizing themselves in living, agricultural and energy cooperatives. This secures decision-making on comprehensible scales while the residents also work together in the whole area through a uniting cooperative and project-related teams.



Building the community houses together (Woldwijk, n.d-e)

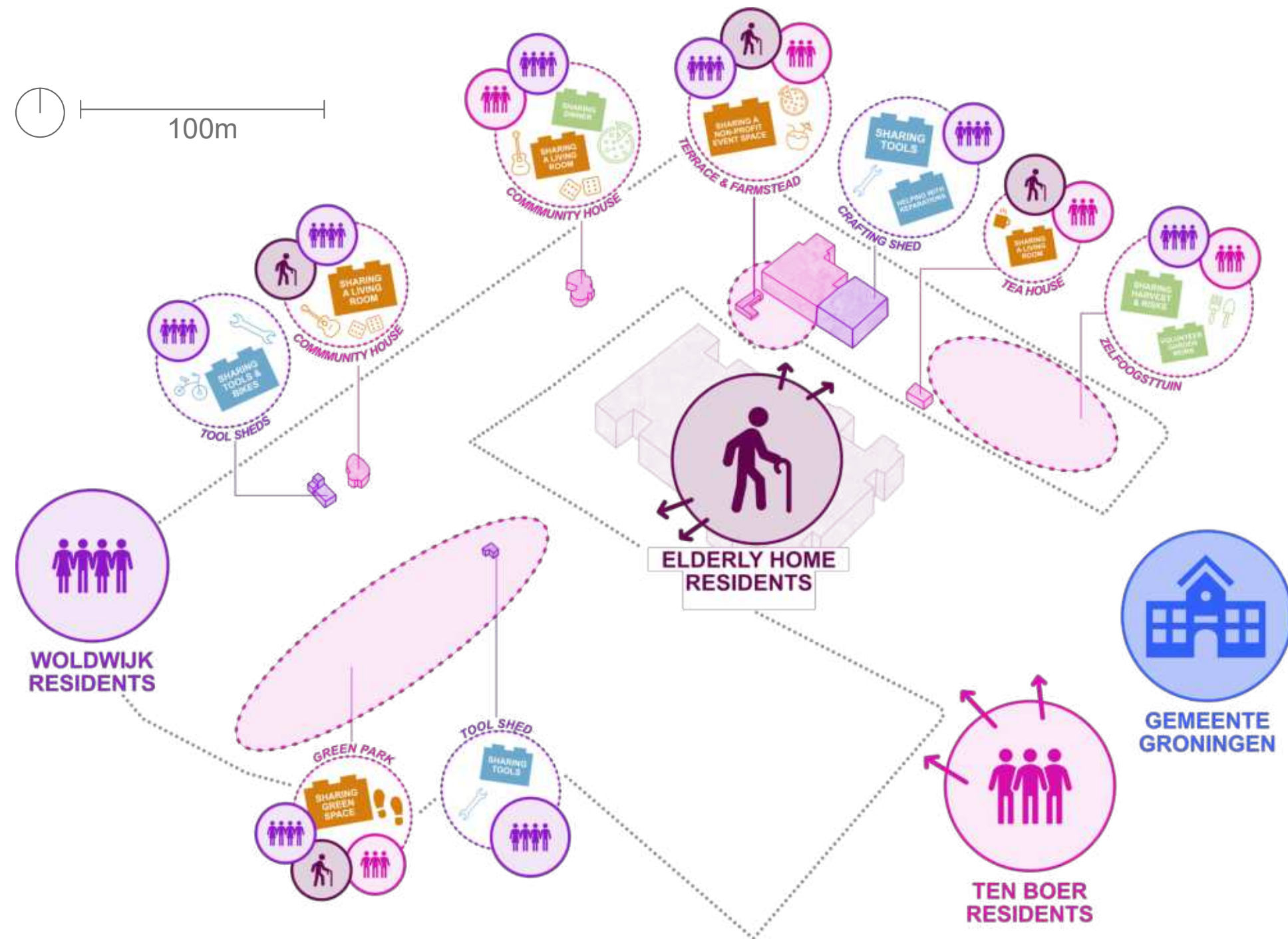


Small self-governed structures: solar energy & greenhouse



Meeting @Landjegoed (Postma, 2026)

Another core value that characterizes the Woldwijk cooperative is their autonomy in decision-making processes. The umbrella cooperative of Woldwijk is divided into three living cooperatives (Staatjevrij, Landjegoed, Tiny Houses) which consist of the residents. Other cooperatives, like the Zelfoogsttuin and the Agricultural Nature Management Initiative become part of Woldwijk by renting land and planning their activities in the area. Every year, different working teams that focus on specific topics are formed out of all the members and enable a type of heterarchy. While there is still a difference in the level of individual engagement, the cooperative structure builds the basis for allowing all residents and users of the Woldwijk area equal say in decisions about future goals and developments. This quality is directly linked to adaptability as the decision-making in Woldwijk is adaptable in itself through flexible working groups that can change according to current needs and interests within the community (like the usage and development of the farm) but also because autonomy facilitates self-adaptability. Since the members can decide on their own about ownership, land use and regulations on buildings, this structure enables the necessary freedom for individuality. Clear signs of the high strive for autonomy are the self-installed and maintained energy- and water infrastructure, which includes the liability in situations of malfunction.

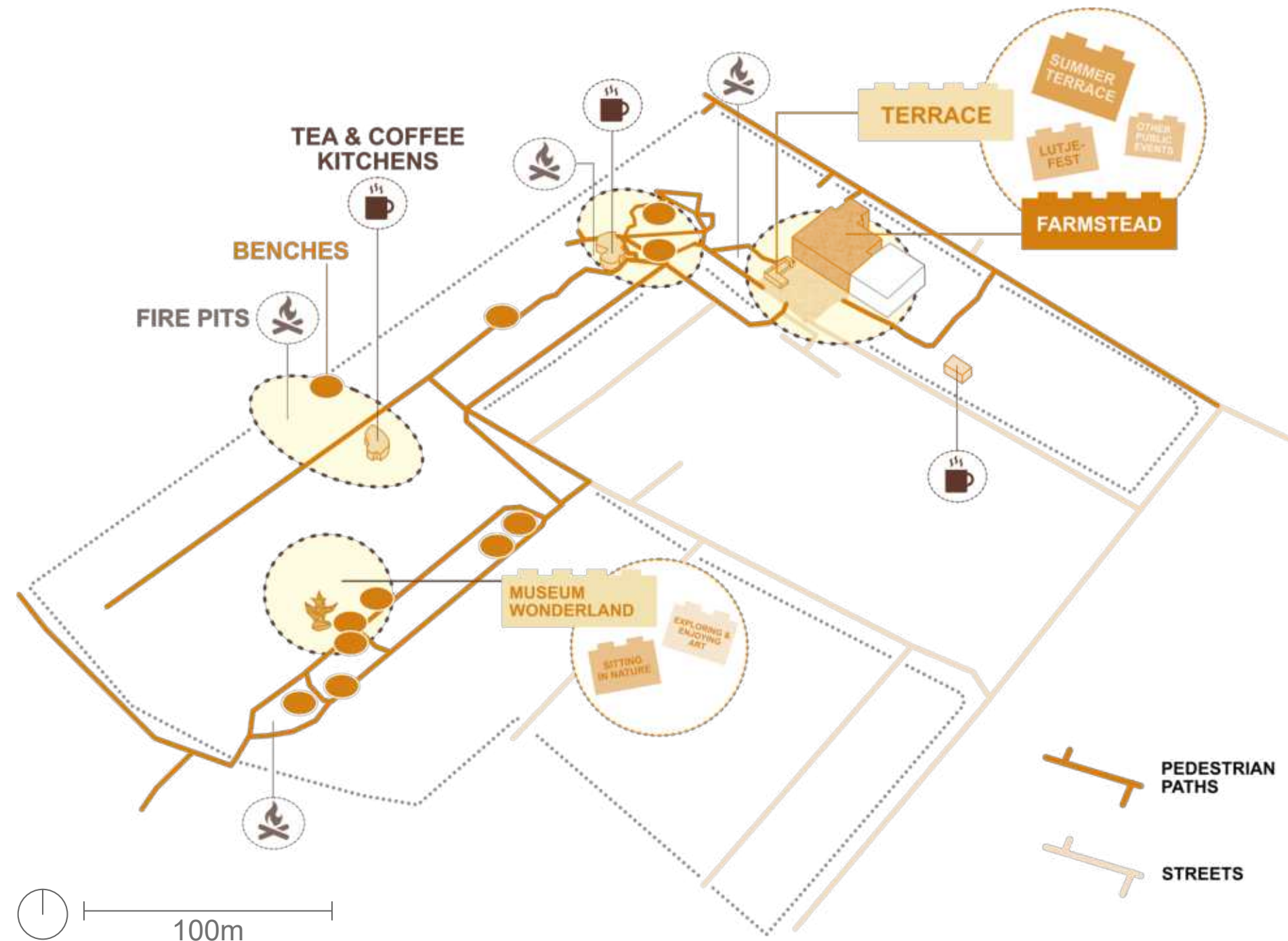


SUPPORT & SHARING

Co-creating supportive neighborhoods means not just building more cooperative housing, but embedding collective responsibility for shared spaces, inclusive access, and bottom-up community governance from the start.

Mutual support is a reciprocal relationship among all actors in which each person contributes according to their capacity and draws from the community in return, so that support flows in all directions and no one is left behind. In Woldwijk, a culture of mutual support and sharing is lived at multiple layers:

-  Amongst residents, support manifests in everyday life. This extends to active collaboration, where experienced members share knowledge and guide building projects, while others contribute through cooking, organising events, or maintaining shared spaces. A shared toolkit, from woodworking tools to a car ramp accessible through the workshop near the barn, further ensures that practical resources are available to all without requiring individual ownership.
-  Beyond Woldwijk's boundaries, the mutual relationship reaches the elders at Innerdijk. Innerdijk was once a shelter to Woldwijk residents during the early construction period, and Woldwijk now gives back by expanding what is possible for its elderly residents. Because Innerdijk sits in relative isolation from Ten Boer, and many residents live with dementia that limits their movement, Woldwijk offers a meaningful space for them to stroll, engage with nature, and socialise beyond the care home's walls. The same applies to residents from Ten Boer, for which Woldwijk opened up opportunities to share meals, volunteer, and participate in communal events (Sekuur & Ubels, 2024).
-  At a broader scale, Woldwijk contributes to the municipality's sustainability objectives regarding local food, circularity and sustainable energies, provides an innovative model for alternative housing, and helps ease pressure on the local housing market (Gemeente Groningen, 2023). In turn, the municipality offers Woldwijk openness and trust to develop on its own terms, while still sharing knowledge and advice to help develop a feasible plan. Without this enabling relationship, Woldwijk as it exists today would not have been possible.



ENCOUNTER & FUN

The spatial and social organisation of Woldwijk fosters spontaneous encounter and cultural participation by maintaining inviting, non-commercial shared spaces and creating community rhythms in everyday life and on seasonal occasions.



Examples of benches along the paths

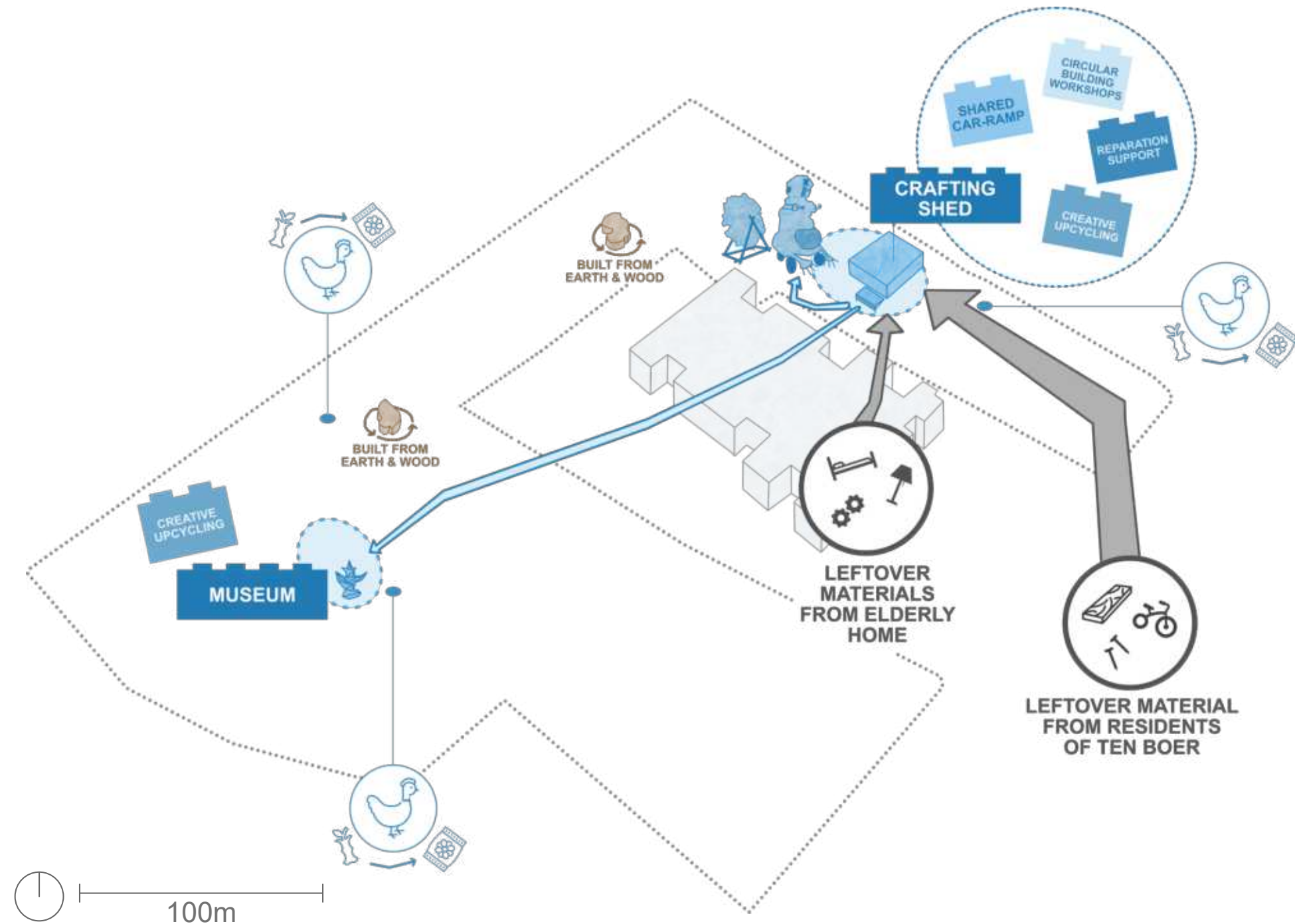


Living room in the community house @Staatjevrij



Concert during the Lutjefest
(Coöperatie Woldwijk, 2023)

Space for encounter and having fun refers to the addition of physical and social spaces where people can meet and interact spontaneously, without any particular agenda. Woldwijk embodies this vision through its evolving landscape of shared spaces and cultural events. This value emerged over the years and presents opportunities both for the residents and external visitors to connect. This connection includes several levels and frequencies: Big annual events like the Earth Beaver Festival and the Lutjefest, or summer programs for children, create shared memories and collective rituals. Monthly smaller gatherings, like pizza parties, build habits of togetherness and collective anticipation. In the Staatjevrij community, residents can eat dinner together every evening, which creates a daily ritual for catching up and meeting one's neighbors. Finally, supporting the event-based activities, are physical incentives to spend time together, like many benches, a tea-and-coffee spot, an open tea house or fire pits that invite people to linger and connect. This activities closely link to - and can be an inspiration for how to reach - the municipal goals to create more room for „greenery, sports, play, and social encounter“ (Gemeente Groningen, 2023, p. 21).



CIRCULARITY

Through sharing knowledge about circular building practices and fostering a culture of mutual help with reparations, Woldwijk shows how circular thinking can be integrated into the everyday life of people. By providing space for creative and crafty people, creative upcycling became a crucial part of Woldwijk's aesthetic character and helps to connect people via collective building projects.



Beds from the elderly home, ready for upcycling



Shared workshop in the farmstead

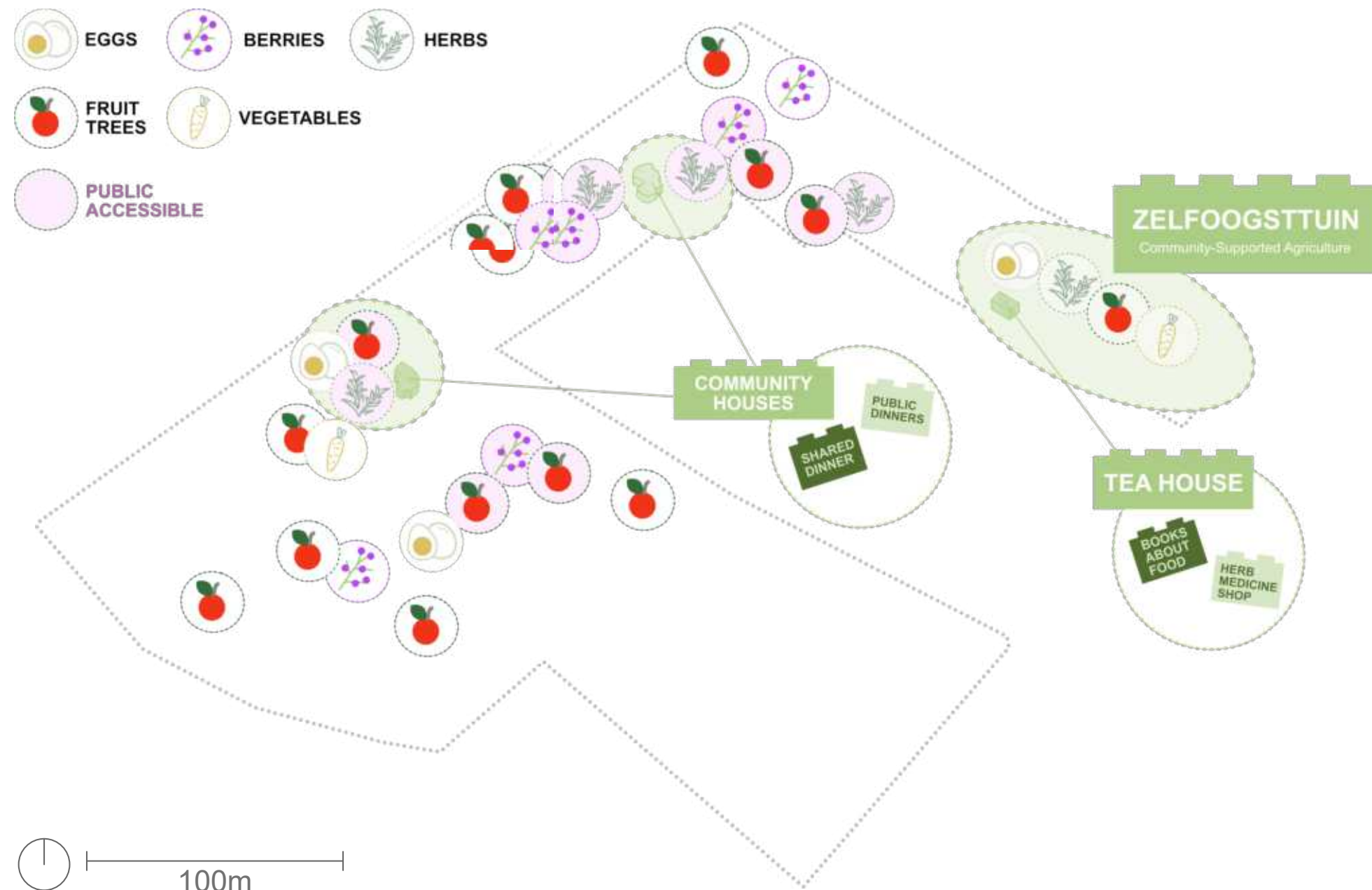


Art from scrap metal



Museum Wonderland @Tiny House

In line with the national ambitions, the municipality strives to create a fully circular economy by 2050 (Gemeente Groningen, 2023). This requires reducing material usage to the minimum, increasing the time materials are used to a maximum and preventing waste as best as possible (Nußholz et al., 2023). The residents of Woldwijk, grounded in personal expertise, created a culture of slow and circular building, which reduces the consumption of material and hence their ecological footprint. Especially the experiences of the Mas Con Menos collective (Mas con Menos, n.d.) residing in the crafting hub spread throughout Woldwijk, as they guided for example the building of both community houses with natural materials, or the construction of a big shed with recycled materials. By upcycling old items from the elderly home, residents of Ten Boer into artworks and new building material, those materials get repurposed and have a longer usage-period. Woldwijk slows resource loops by living a culture of repairing their houses, facilities and infrastructure together - with the crafting hub in the farmstead working as point of contact, where residents can seek help from their experienced fellows and share tools, like a car ramp or wood tools (see [Value Support & Sharing](#), p. 12).



SHARED & LOCAL FOOD

By combining local cooperative food production, edible landscapes, and meal sharing practices, Woldwijk shows how, on a small scale, people can form more intentional and sustainable relationships with food and with other people.

Woldwijk's localized food initiatives provide Ten Boer residents with practical opportunities to access sustainable, locally grown vegetables, fruits and herbs. The residents of Woldwijk planted edible berry bushes, herbs, and fruit trees in their gardens and community spaces, making them available to all residents and guests. In the cooperatively managed Zelfoogsttuin, residents of Ten Boer can become "harvest partners" and, during harvest seasons, pick produce weekly. (Coöperatie Woldwijk, n.d.-d). Additionally, the ecovillage serves as a local distribution hub for the "Ons Eten" (Our Food) network, allowing regional residents to easily pick up organic groceries near the Theehoes (Ons Eten Groningen, n.d.).



Zelfoogsttuin



Herb Shop @Tea House



Edible Landscape @Staatjevrij



Shared Dinner @Staatjevrij

Crucially, by transforming passive consumers into active harvesters, these shared food systems offer a direct learning opportunity that triggers behavioral changes and raises localized awareness for sustainability. This hands-on participation prompts residents to support regional initiatives, reconnect with seasonal agriculture, and recognize their active role in alternative food chains (Rogge et al., 2020). By significantly shortening the geographical distance between producers and consumers, this model reduces "food kilometers" to a cycling radius, directly minimizing food transport-related carbon emissions (Zelfoogsttuin Ten Boer, n.d.). Consequently, these accessible systems support the municipality of Groningen's broader strategic goals of promoting healthy diets, integrating edible greenery, and fostering short agricultural supply chains in the rural area (Gemeente Groningen, 2023; 2026).



BIODIVERSITY

After transforming former flat grassland into a connected ecological landscape, Woldwijk offers a home for diverse local plants and animals. Instead of subordinating green space to residential usage, the tiny houses leave room for nature to thrive on its own terms.



Dead wood hedge

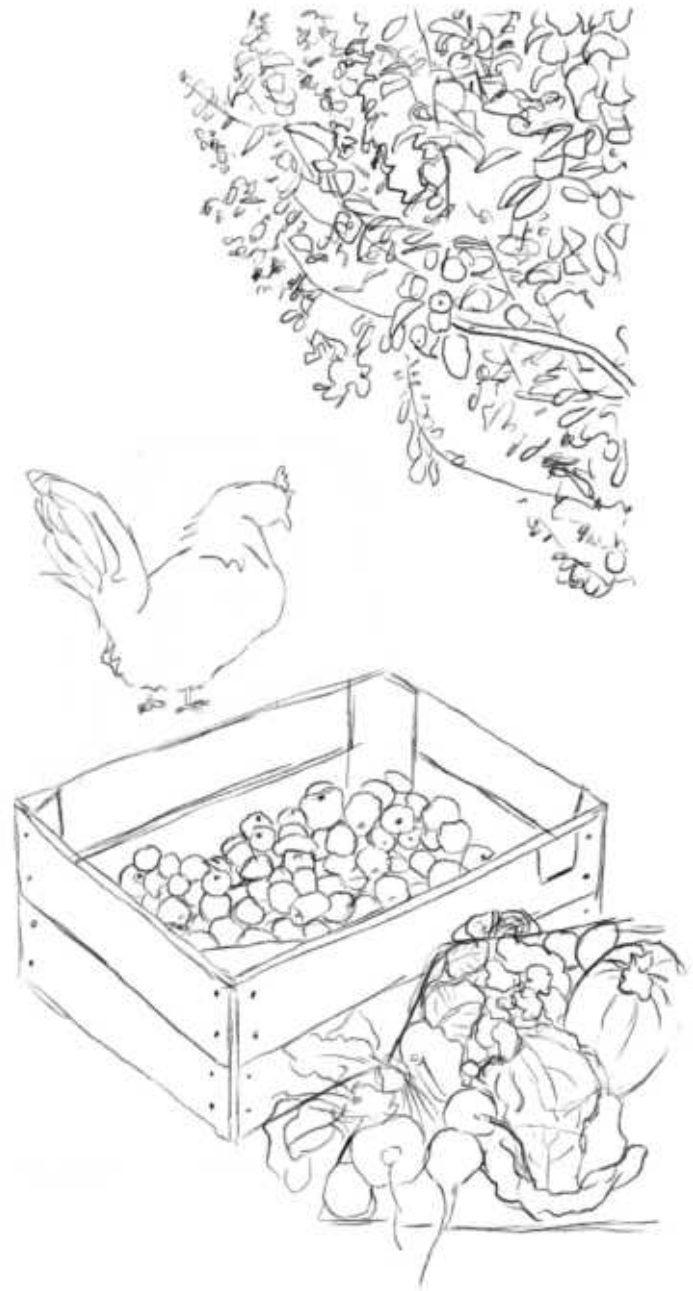


Greenery along the pathways



Riparian green

At the Woldwijk cooperative, biodiversity is actively fostered through a spatial layout that integrates ecological habitats directly into the living environment (Siebert, 2023). Its value comes from a clear transformation: before Woldwijk, the 39-hectare site was mainly flat agricultural grassland with few trees, shrubs, or diverse planting; since 2016, residents and Woldwijk farmers have shaped it into a varied ecological landscape (Coöperatie Woldwijk, n.d.-a, n.d.-c). As shown in the biodiversity map, Woldwijk now consists of green grassy areas, flower margins, trees, hedges, shrubs, plants along the waterways, deadwood hedges, and nature-inclusive agricultural land. These elements are spread across residential and agricultural areas, creating connected habitats for insects, birds, fungi, and other local wildlife. Vegetated waterway edges strengthen Woldwijk's ecological network by serving both water management and biodiversity functions. The 5-metre unbuilt buffer keeps space for maintenance while creating connected habitats for pollinators and other wildlife. These habitats link residential green spaces with nature-inclusive farming practices, such as agroforestry, herb-rich grasslands, green manure, and organic fertilization (Coöperatie Woldwijk, n.d.-b). Together, the water buffers, diverse farming methods, and residential green spaces make Woldwijk a small climate-adaptive refuge within a wider landscape of uniform agricultural fields. Guided tours and educational project days also help residents, visitors, and school classes understand the area's biodiversity.



INTERLUDE LESSONS LEARNED FROM WOLDWIJK

All the values we analysed in the last section are proof that through self-organization and high engagement people can transform spaces into places that accommodate practices of sustainable food-production and circularity, mutual help and collective responsibility. This does not follow a linear process, but is the outcome of collaboration, negotiations and learning processes - currently we can clearly see how different values evolved in the area: Staatjevrij is based on a strong communal idea with much shared community space where they created an extensive ecological edible landscape. The plots of Landjegoed are more clearly divided, because they were prepared by the Staatjevrij community for new residents to move in. The new residents in Landjegoed cultivated a high ecological value in this area. The core space in the Tiny House area is especially important as a public space for elderly people and other visitors. However, all values are embodied in all areas of Woldwijk, only in different intensities and forms. Planners like us can learn a lot from the way of organizing space and people in Woldwijk. As a basis for future projects aiming at similar values, and to guide the creation of rules for a land-use plan in this report, we summarized the lessons that we could derive from our analysis on the right:

Decide together, then trust each other: Set shared goals and ground rules collectively, then give people the freedom to pursue their own ideas and projects.

Talk to each other: Prioritize personal communication and mutual consent instead of following a uniform procedure and static rules.

Consider your fellows: The plot is yours to shape but seek the dialogue with people that your plans might affect, seek a compromise if necessary.

Carry responsibility together: Share tools, material and everyday tasks wherever possible.

Grow together: Experiment with new ways of living and working together, share knowledge and make room for learning from mistakes.

Connect through action: Bring people together, not only with physical incentives like benches, but with a diverse range of possible activities people can join and co-create.

Create space for community needs: Design, maintain and change collectively used space according to the (changing) needs and wishes of the community from bottom up.

Welcome All: Actively invite people in and stay open for new perspectives and ideas.

Repair what is worn, repurpose what remains, and waste nothing in between.

Be stewards for nature: Create and safeguard spaces in which nature can flourish on its own terms.

Connect with and through nature: Connect residential and public areas through interesting, walkable, and edible green spaces in which people can interact and learn.

Grow vegetables, fruits and herbs for everyone to share.

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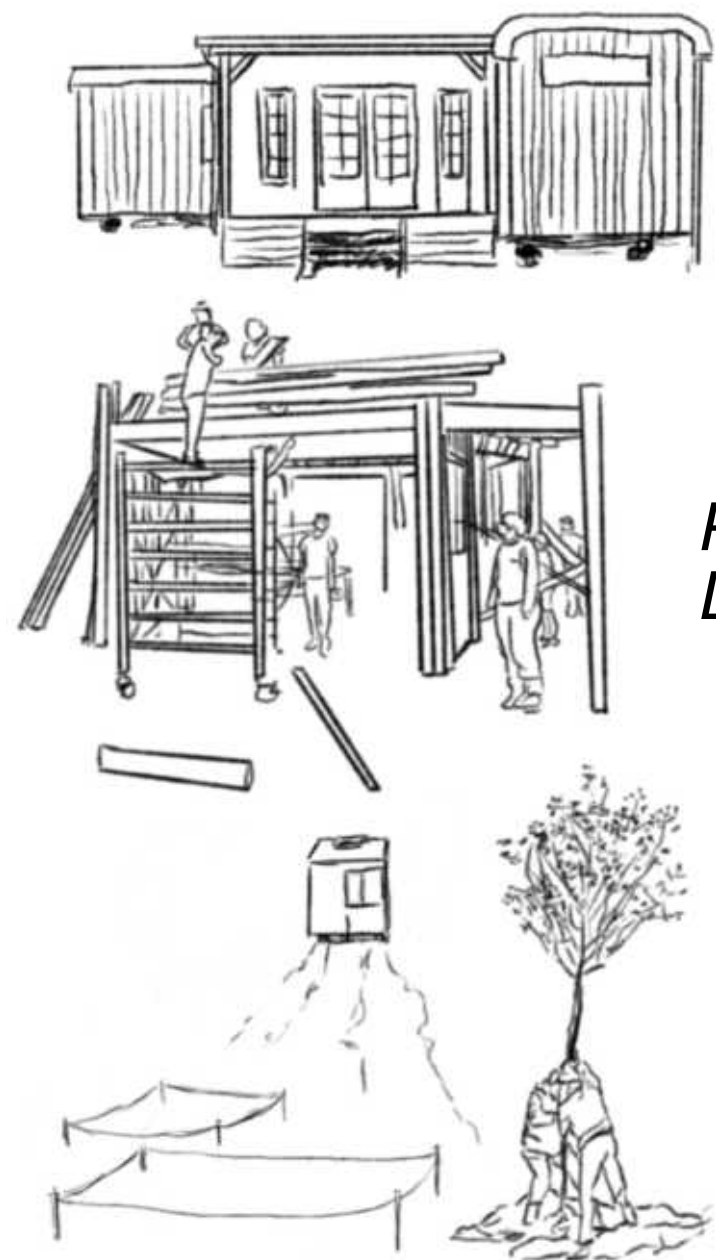
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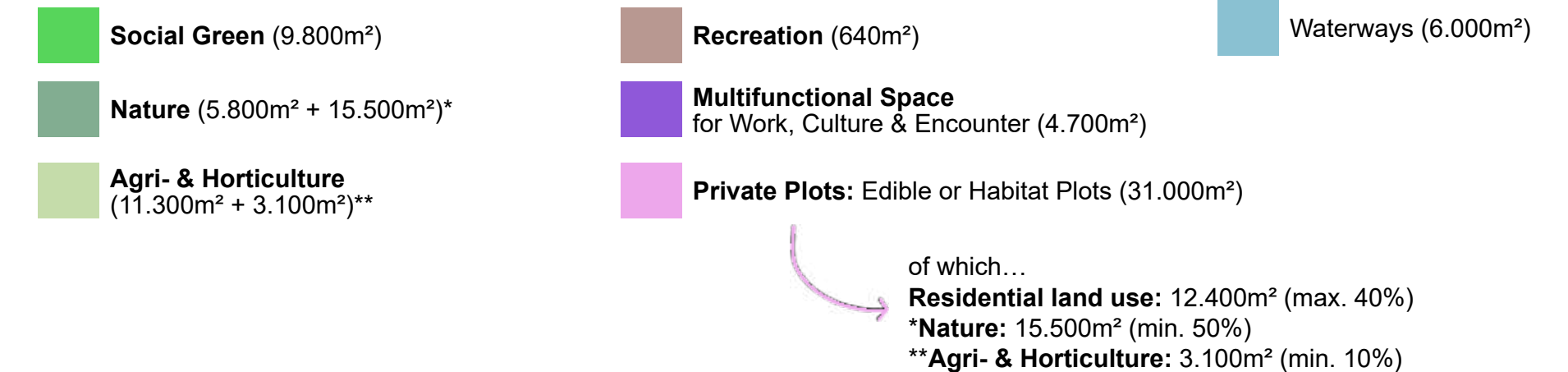
*PRESERVING VALUES AND
LEAVING ROOM FOR NEW IDEAS...*

PROPOSAL I LAND USE PLAN



LAND USE PLAN

This chapter translates Woldwijk's core values into land use plan. Instead of treating land use only as physical zoning, we incorporated the values that emerged from the analysis to define how different spaces should be used. In this way, the smart map is a value-based spatial proposal for Woldwijk's transition toward permanence and can be used as a basis to negotiate a land price for either a permanent lease or the acquisition of the Woldwijk area. Inspired by the categories currently depicted in the land use plan of the former municipality Ten Boer (Gemeente Ten Boer, n.d.), we developed a system with seven different land use categories. On the following pages we propose **rules** for these spaces and give **advice** on how to foster sustainable and community values, sometimes together with further literature recommendations (📖).



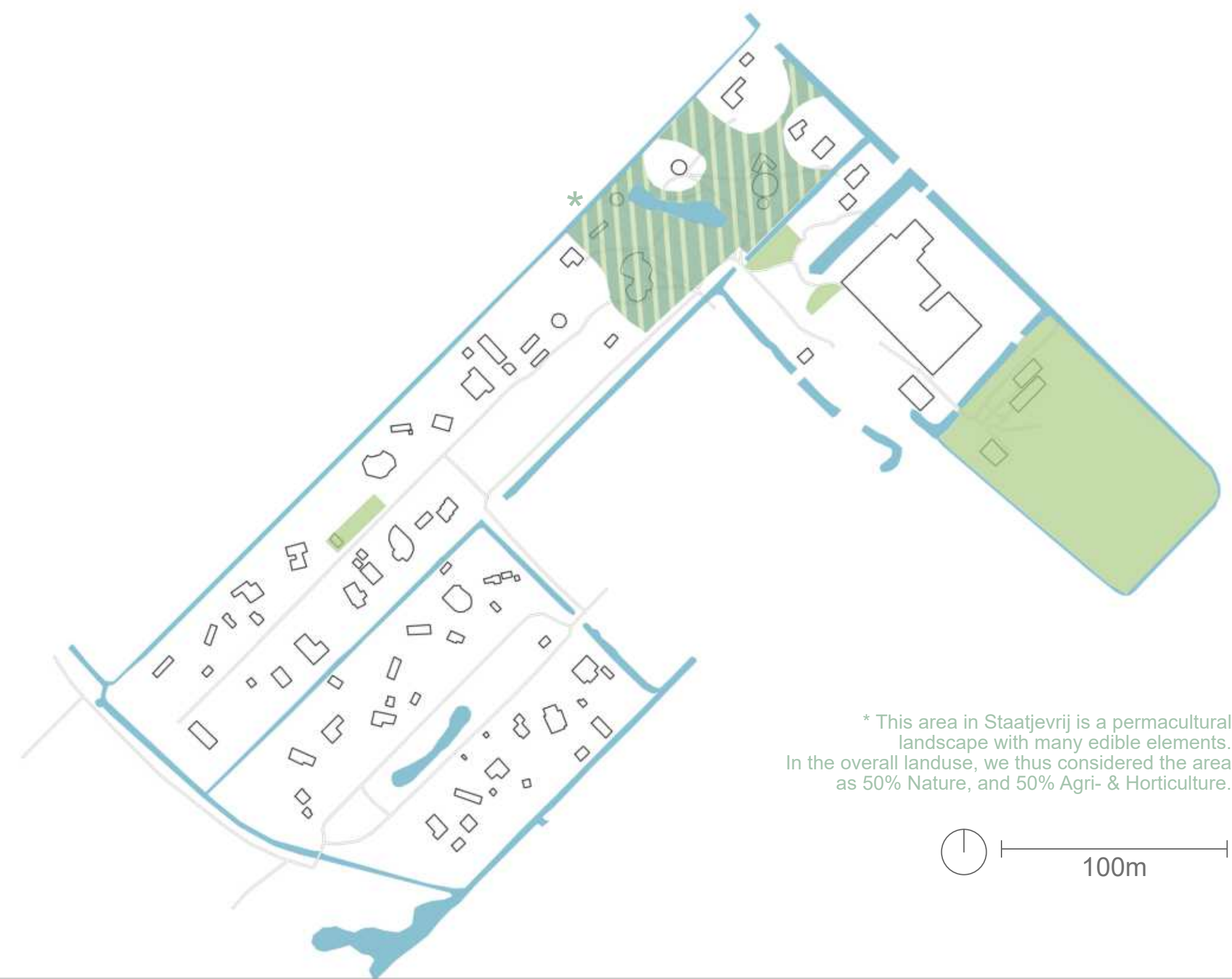


NATURE

Definition: Green areas used for landscape preservation and ecological stewardship, including habitat connections, permacultural cultivation, biodiversity support and opportunities for human & non-human interaction and learning.

RULES

- 1 All nature areas are subject to landscape preservation rules set out in the Kavelpaspoort (DAAD Architecten, 2017). These rules are binding for all activities and decisions within these areas.
- 2 Vegetated edges along waterways shall be maintained as ecological buffer zones with riparian vegetation for water quality protection and habitat connection.
- 3 Care and maintenance of ecological areas shall be organized collectively by the members of the Woldwijk cooperative, either within the distinct living cooperatives or as an overarching team across the whole area.
- 4 Future development must not fragment ecological corridors or reduce biodiverse areas.
- 5 Without agreement within the Woldwijk cooperative, permanent buildings or impervious pavings are not permitted within designated nature areas.



* This area in Staatjevrij is a permacultural landscape with many edible elements. In the overall landuse, we thus considered the area as 50% Nature, and 50% Agri- & Horticulture.



AGRI- & HORTICULTURE

Definition: Green areas used for growing and harvesting edible plants, including related structures and facilities.

RULES

- 1 Agricultural and horticultural areas are managed by the communities that are directly associated with each space (see [Community Co-creation Map](#), p. 50).
- 2 Each community is encouraged to collectively decide who may harvest from their shared growing areas.
- 3 Communities should apply nature-friendly land management. The use of chemical pesticides is prohibited.

ADVICE 1

Guidelines for integrating edible plants into social green areas or public space could be created by the municipality and the Staatjevrij living cooperative, drawing on their insightful experience in designing the edible nature landscape.

ADVICE 2

Shared gardens and the community-supported agriculture (zelfoogsttuin) do not only produce food, but can also be informal learning environments where residents can learn about and engage with edible plants. **Adding small signs to the (edible) plants in Woldwijk** would help external people to identify edible plants and understand what can be cultivated locally. Signs could indicate the name of plants, which plants are edible and available for everyone to eat.



Denver Urban Gardens (2024): New Identification Signs at DUG Food Forests



Xiaoying Shi (2021): The urban food forest: Creating a public edible landscape.



SOCIAL GREEN

Definition: Green areas for encounter and outdoor leisure, including related structures and facilities.

- 1 All pathways in social green areas shall be accessible to wheelchair users. There should be a pedestrian way connecting this area with the rest of the village Ten Boer.
- 2 Social green areas are managed by the communities that are directly associated with each space or in cooperation with the public (see Co-creation Map, p. 48).

ADVICE 1

Currently, there are some **benches** along pathways, but they are clustered in certain areas. The placement of benches should be adjusted to the needs of people with limited mobility, especially residents of the retirement home. To create more opportunities to rest while walking through the area, benches could be placed more decentral and in shorter distances along the paths.

ADVICE 2

Underused or empty lots (for example the lot marked on the map) can be used as **sports and play areas**. Equipment, like balls, badminton rackets, picnic blankets or books, could be shared through a community storage.

ADVICE 3

Currently, the **Verlaatweg, the street connecting Woldwijk with Ten Boer**, does not have a pedestrian way. To secure a safe and inviting access to the area, this street should be transformed by creating a shared-use street (Woonerf), or adding visible sidewalks.



Example of a possible adjustment of the Verlaatweg (Authors own work, picture of raised garden by Holz Kastenmüller, n.d.)



MULTIFUNCTIONAL SPACE for Working, Culture and Encounter

Definition: Multifunctional Spaces that are used for different types of craftsmanship, working, cultural activities, events, and other projects.

RULES

- 1 All multifunctional spaces apply an Open-door principle: When the doors of the farmstead are open or the museum is visibly open (for example through an OPEN sign) visitors are welcome to enter. Each space shall display signage, both on-site and online, informing external people about the possibilities and rules for using different facilities within the spaces, contact information, and regular working hours (where possible).

For example, for the crafting area in the farmstead, the sign could give information about what is inside, who you need to ask in order to use tools or services, and usual working times.

ADVICE 4

To secure development and management according to local needs, the farmstead should be operated by a new cooperative within the Woldwijk cooperative, consisting of all future users. Of course, such a cooperative might rent out spaces temporarily to third parties for work, projects or overnight stays.



RECREATION

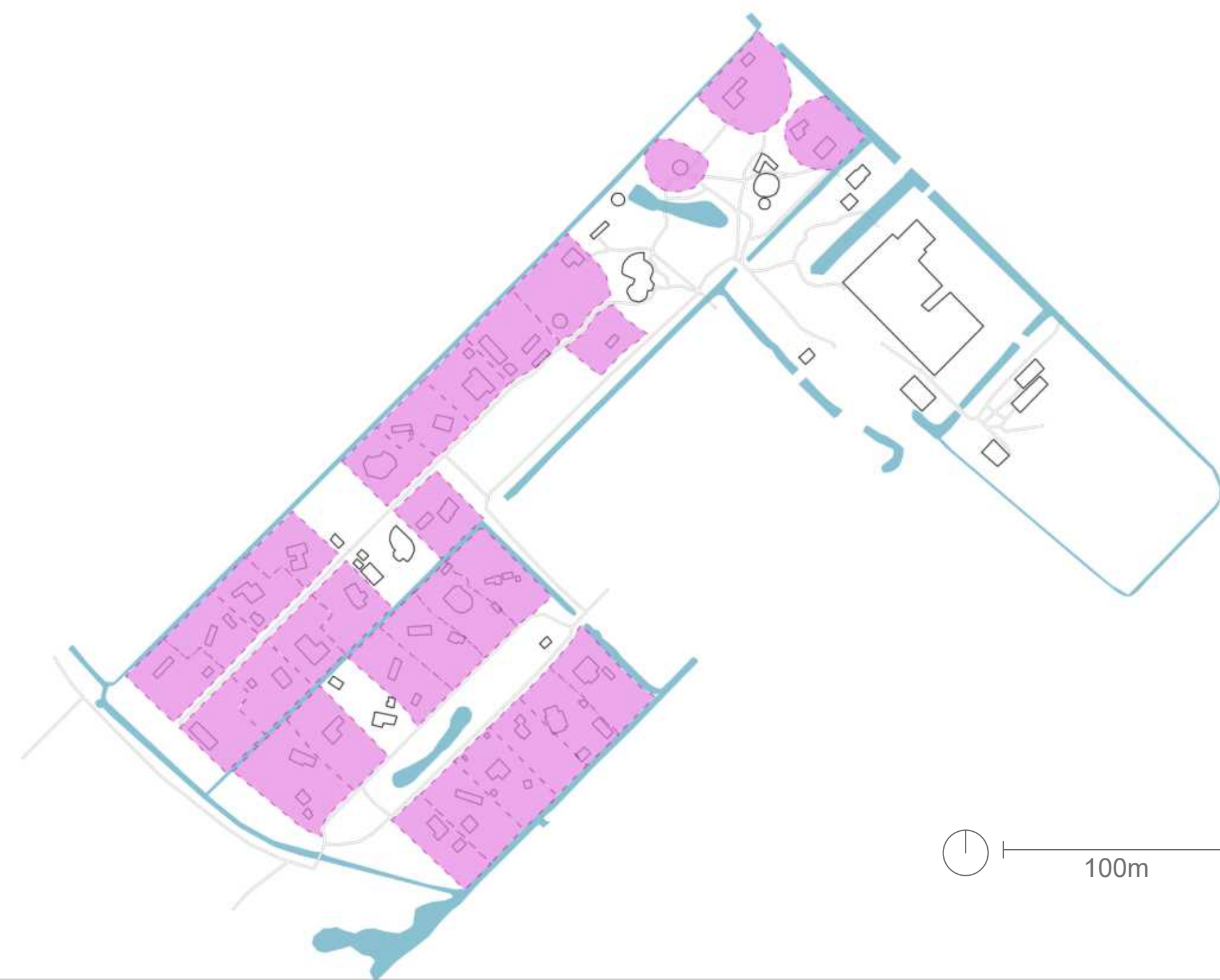
Definition: Green areas that accommodate temporary stays and overnight visits in mobile shelters.

RULES

- 1** Care and maintenance of the recreational area shall be organized collectively by the members of the Woldwijk cooperative, either within one living cooperative or from an overarching team.

ADVICE 5

The recreation area can be used for short-term guest during workshops or festivals, and potentially as a trial living space for prospective residents to experience the community.



PRIVATE PLOTS

Definition: Plots rented by individuals, used for residential purposes in accordance with the ecological and social goals of the Woldwijk community.

RULES

- 1** All new constructions and modifications need to be approved by the board and the municipality in accordance with the 3S-rules (structural, health and fire safety). The approval process follows the procedure: 1) Residents submit a (written or visual) proposal to the cooperative board, 2) the board reviews and forwards the proposal to the municipality, and 3) the final proposal is granted by the municipality after a site visit and in consultation with the direct neighbors of the plot.
- 2** Building height: New buildings may not exceed the height of the tallest existing building in the area (the farmstead).
- 3** To protect Woldwijk's affordability and collective values, an anti-speculation mechanism is to be developed and applied by the living cooperatives (see Advice 6).
- 4** Each residential plot is designated as either an Edible Plot or a Habitat Plot, each with distinct land-use requirements (see Plot Typology, p. 43). Two households may jointly occupy and manage a single plot together. Residents can coordinate their activities across adjacent plots, so that the overarching goals are met. The definition of the land use within the plots (Nature/ Agri- & Horticulture) follows the land use category definitions above.

For example, three neighboring plots could collectively distribute their required percentages of agriculture, nature, and building area as long as the combined total meets the minimum standards for all three plots (one person can have a bigger building if another leaves more room for nature, etc.). In principle, this may extend to full collective management of all residential spaces within a living cooperative.
- 5** New renters take over the plot type from the former renter and regularly keep the existing buildings and plants. Residents can then reshape their plot freely within the land use rules the community has agreed on. Rearrangements that fall outside these rules require coordination and mutual consent with the respective living cooperatives. A change in plot types or the cooperation with neighbors needs to be communicated to the board.

PRIVATE PLOTS TYPOLOGY

PRIVATE PLOTS OVERALL LAND USE		EDIBLE PLOTS LAND USE	HABITAT PLOTS LAND USE
10%	AGRI- & HORTICULTURE	Min. 15%* (including canopy areas) The harvest that exceeds personal needs is to be shared with the living cooperatives.	Min. 5%* (including canopy areas)
50%	NATURE	Min. 40%* Every plot adjacent to a waterway needs to cultivate and preserve sufficient riparian green in a 5m zone from the water.	Min. 60%* Every plot adjacent to a waterway needs to cultivate and preserve sufficient riparian green in a 5m zone from the water.
15%	BUILDING AREA (RESIDENTIAL)	Max. 15%*	Max. 15%*
25%	OTHER LAND USE (RESIDENTIAL)	Max. 30%*	Max. 20%*

This system of defining plot usages is based on a similar concept in Oosterwold, Almere:



Stefano Cozzolino et al. (2017): *Experimenting in Urban Self-organization. Framework-rules and Emerging Orders in Oosterwold (Almere, The Netherlands)*

PRIVATE PLOTS

ADVICE 6

To **prevent speculation** with built houses on the plot, we recommend a process similar to the Tiny House cooperative Westpark: When a member withdraws the plot should be vacated unless the member expresses that they wish to offer the house to a potential new member. If the withdrawing member is selling the home, they need to pay for an independent appraiser that will be appointed to determine the value of the building itself, excluding the value of the land. The resulting value is to be the fixed selling price and is non-negotiable. Furthermore, the selling process underlies the rule of priority for existing members. If there are no interested parties within the association, the home including the plot will be offered to persons on the waiting list.

ADVICE 7

To support the residents and provide them with the necessary knowledge for ecological land use, we suggest that a team of experts from the Woldwijk community creates a **guideline to cultivate edible plants and create ecologically valuable gardens**. Information could include what plants to use, what to look out for, what to avoid, how to care, and where to get help.

ADVICE 8

One board member of the Woldwijk cooperative should be responsible for **monitoring the plot usage and offering guidance**. This person could work together with a small team of experienced residents from all three living cooperatives. A first step must be to assess in detail how the plots are currently used, to allocate the typologies and help residents to adjust their plots if necessary. For such a task, (external) experts for ecology should be consulted.



SHAPING WOLDWIJK TOGETHER...

PROPOSAL II CO-CREATION PLAN



CO-CREATION PLAN

Private Plots
 Community-managed
 Public Space

The values of Woldwijk are not only connected to the physical use of space, but strongly anchored in collective, bottom-up decision-making and collaboration with different actors of the village Ten Boer and the Gemeente Groningen. Therefore, it is important to consider how land can be used, who makes these decisions, and how they are made. Land use and co-creation require two different maps, because they overlap in different ways: Sometimes land is used in the same way, but designed and managed by different groups of people - or the other way around.

In Woldwijk, due to the decentralized organizational structure in cooperatives and the incremental development of the area, these decision making processes are highly connected to personal, informal exchange and mutual consent. However, not all residents engage in the community and public participation processes stopped after the main building processes were done. With this plan, we propose a system that provides a clear, transparent and flexible structure for co-creation processes in the future, so that both residents and external people can easily grasp their possibilities to engage and co-create Woldwijk. It consists of three co-creation categories: Private plots, mainly designed by the individual renters in accordance to the plot-rules (p. 43), community-managed and public space. On the following pages we give further inspiration on how to organize and open up community- and public space.

ADVICE 9

communitylandtrust.nl

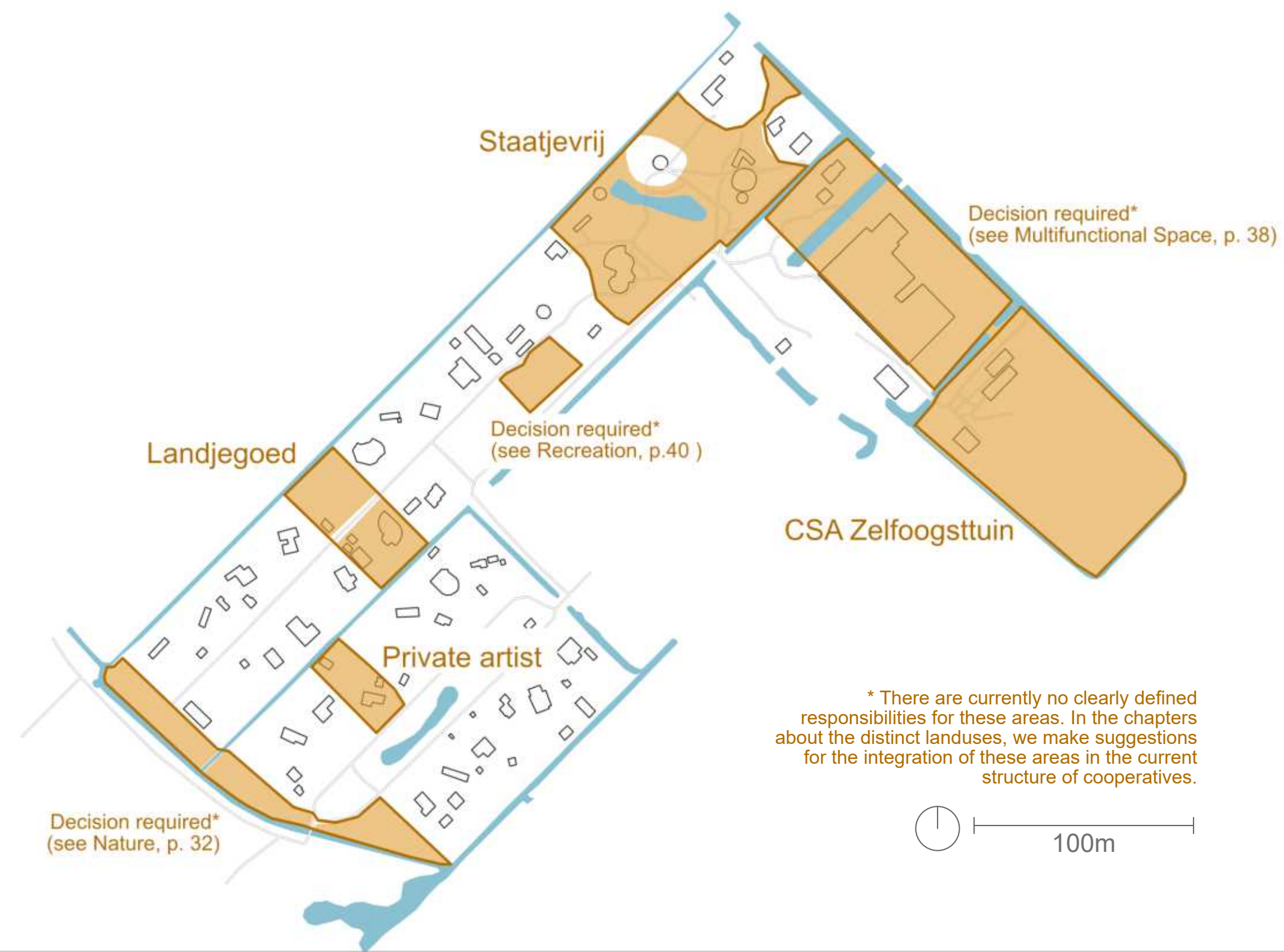


Overall, we advice to transfer from a lease to owning the land collectively in a **Community Land Trust** that involves residents, users, entrepreneurs, neighbors, and local governments in the ownership and management of land. They will form a community, similar to the existing umbrella cooperative Woldwijk; and the land will be removed from the market.



ADVICE 10

Make visible where visitors are invited to walk around, for example by putting colored stones or decorations next to the paths (on the picture: purple for public, yellow for community). Like this, residents that want to open up their plots for community or public use, can make that visible as well.



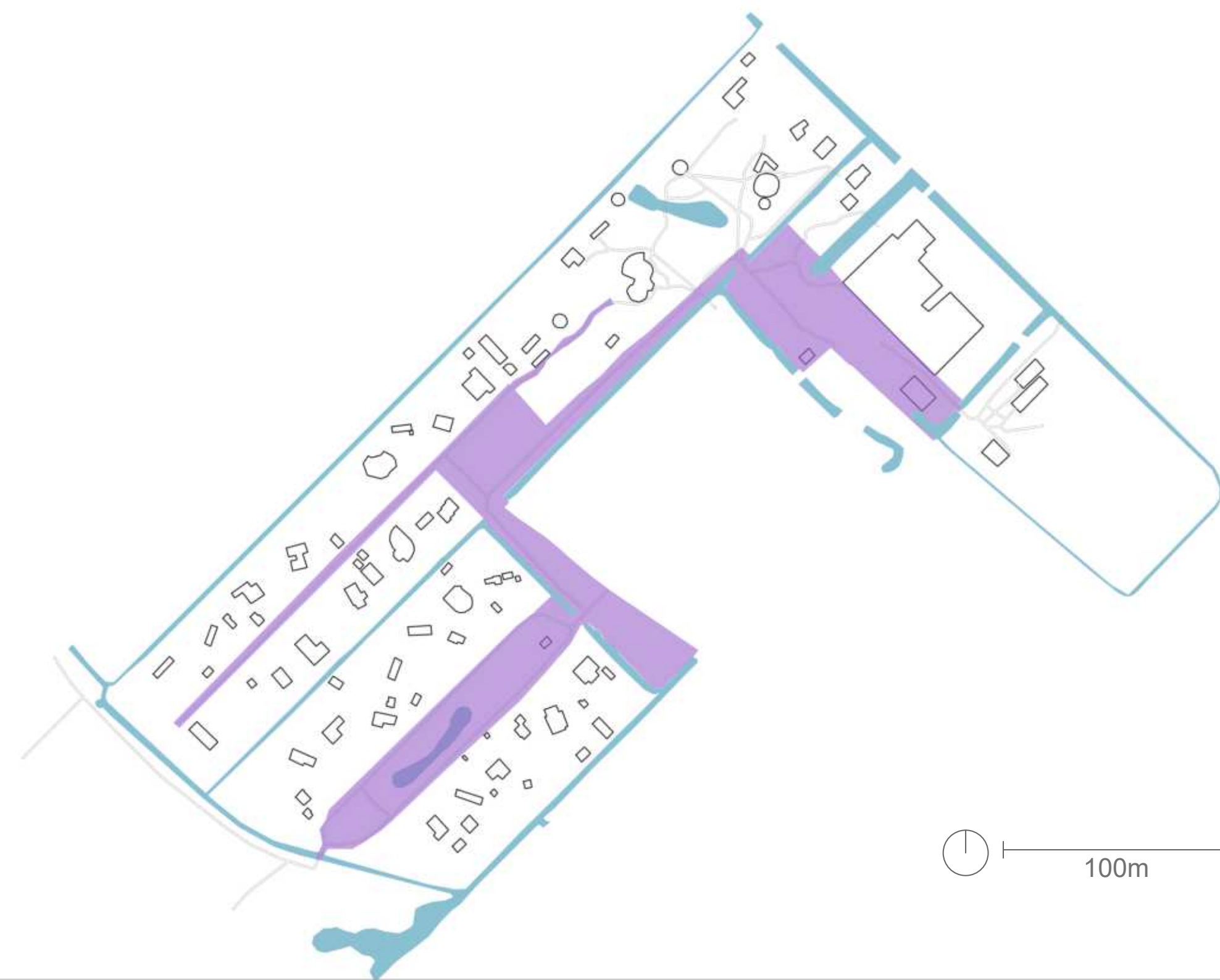
COMMUNITY-MANAGED

Definition: Spaces that are designed and managed by the communities that primarily use them, concretely by working teams within the Woldwijk cooperative, the living cooperatives and the other thematic cooperatives.

- 1 Each cooperative has the authority to determine the openness and usage of its collective spaces; including how, when, and to whom (including visitors) these spaces are allowed to be used. Such decisions should be made visible through an explanatory sign, similar to the signs for the Multifunctional Spaces (see [Multifunctional Spaces, p. 38](#)).

ADVICE 11

To foster connections between all the Woldwijk residents and engaged people in the cooperatives, once a year, there could be a **garden-tour**, where every community and plot holder shows what they are proud of or what they are working on. Such a tour, maybe connected to different meals in the communities (for example breakfast in Staatjevrij, lunch in Landjegoed and dinner in Tiny House), could offer a moment to revisit shared values and common goals, surface emerging tensions early, and celebrate the living, evolving character of Woldwijk. For residents that engage less in community activities, this could be a low-threshold opportunity to connect.



PUBLIC SPACE

Definition: Spaces that are designed and developed not only by residents of Woldwijk, but together with residents of the whole village Ten Boer.

- 1 Public spaces are managed by the local cooperatives, but ideas and wishes from residents of Ten Boer are welcomed and considered. Major changes and new plans require open discussion and mutual consent. For that, a participation group is the primary platform for community involvement in public space and consists of representatives from the Woldwijk cooperative, as well as interested residents from Ten Boer. The municipality has an observer role, but can be consulted by both parties and become actively involved in negotiations or consultation processes if explicitly required by the residents.
- 2 Public meetings on the use and development of public spaces should be held at least twice a year. At least one of these sessions takes the form of a structured walk-through of Woldwijk's public spaces, enabling participants to assess spatial conditions, identify emerging needs, and discuss potential improvements or changes directly on-site.
- 3 Any proposed changes in land use, new constructions, or significant physical interventions within public spaces shall be communicated to residents of Ten Boer in advance through a publicly accessible channel (for example a dedicated website, community mailing list, or physical notice board). When there is objection or a wish for discussion, meetings of the participation group can be held with short notice.

ADVICE 12

Actively **encourage visitors** to take part and take responsibility for activities in the future, for example by providing a contact list for interested people during events or personally approaching interested guests and asking them for support for upcoming events.



ADDITIONAL ADVICE

.. FOR WOLDWIJK

ADVICE 13

At least **one large-scale meeting** per year shall be held in which all households of Woldwijk are represented, for example during the garden-tour (see [Advice 11, p. 50](#)). Smaller follow-up meetings may be organised as needed, with attendance necessities determined by the scope of the issues.

ADVICE 14

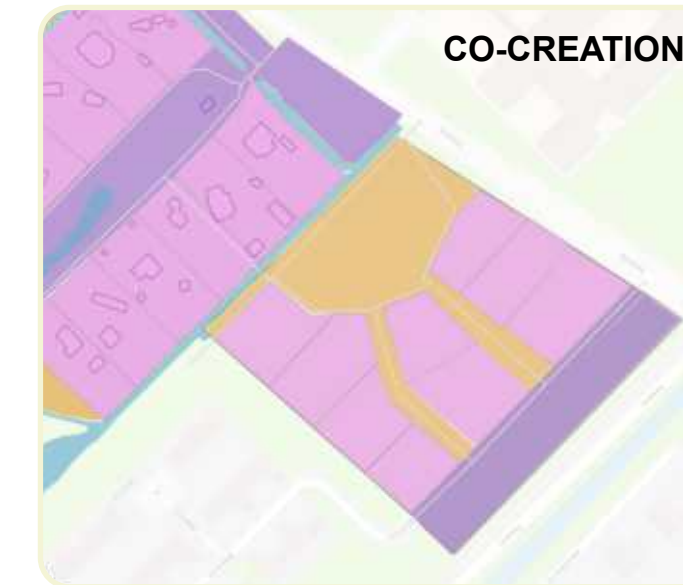
A culture of mutual support and the engagement of all residents could be fostered through **small, concrete requests issued directly at individuals** - whether for help in the garden, with a repair, or around a shared space or event. Something as simple as "can you help me for an hour with that?" can be the starting point for a culture of mutual care as people get to know each other through shared work and can take responsibility on a manageable and short-term scale before becoming involved deeper.

ADVICE 15

To support a healthy community dynamic, it is worth considering a small **awareness group**, consisting of two or three residents who do not hold any board or leadership positions. They can be approached informally with concerns, tensions, or any questions relating to social community processes and act as a connectors or mediators if needed.

ADVICE 16

Below, we propose a structure for the currently unused area in the South-East of Woldwijk: The plots have a similar size to the existing plots and are oriented towards a collectively used social green sapce. Here, new residents can design a place according to their needs, for example by building a community house or creating an appealing landscape for recreation and play. If the respective plot-renters in Tiny House agree, we propose to connect the two communities with with a bridge, so that the community space can work as connecting point. As the area is the one people first see when they drive or walk to Woldwijk from the rest of the village, we propose to use the strip of public space in the West as a „Welcome area“ where for example a big sign, an information board, and public bike racks could be located.



... FOR THE MUNICIPALITY

ADVICE 1

If the municipality wants to develop the land surrounding Woldwijk, after the temporary housing units leave, the principles for spatial design, nature inclusivity and democratic decision making in Woldwijk should be the departure point. The last years have shown that the activities in Woldwijk contribute not only to individual livability, but to broader political goals. Healthy and local food, circularity, eco-diversity support and support for people that „want to take greater control over how they live (or will live) and who wish to take care of themselves in their own living environment“ (Gemeente Groningen, 2023, p. 31) are all goals anchored in the current government program of the Gemeente Groningen (2023). Therefore, **considering the lessons learnt from Woldwijk paves a way to plan rural villages in a more sustainable, neighborly and democratic way** (see [p. 23](#)). Furthermore, residents of Woldwijk and Ten Boer should be included in the planning process for any new residential development in and around Ten Boer - similar to the participation group for public spaces (see [p. 52](#)). As we have experienced during this project and in the reports about Woldwijk's history, personal project-related meetings that bring together all relevant actors are incredibly important. Like this, different departments of the municipality could also come together and reduce bureaucratic communication efforts to coordinate between departments.

ADVICE 2

Further, the engagement of residents in Woldwijk to self-organize, take responsibility for the maintenance of technical infrastructure and social facilities that serve a broader public, or to create ecologically valuable spaces, should be reflected in lower rent prices. This requires a **consideration of the immaterial values that Woldwijk adds to Ten Boer and the Gemeente Groningen, for the estimation of the price** for a long-term lease or a permanent purchase by the Woldwijk cooperative. Anywhere where residents actively contribute to such goals and take up more responsibility for their environment, the municipality should consider this as grounds for reviewing and reducing the applicable land rent, recognising community effort as a form of public value creation.

... FOR THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

ADVICE 1

To allow such flexible application processes for changes in the built environment like currently applied in Woldwijk (see [Value Adaptability, p. 8](#)), the national building regulation law (Besluit bouwwerken leefomgeving) should be expanded to include an **experimental clause**. This clause should offer municipalities the legal flexibility to pursue experimental sustainability and collaborative living projects through adapted permit processes that only include relevant regulations, but at minimum the principles of fire, health and structural safety. This would allow regulations to be applied in a context-sensitive manner, ensuring that detailed building norms do not become barriers to innovative living arrangements while safeguarding resident's safety and wellbeing.

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