



Maagjesbolwerk

Regional Design: Form & Function

Karsten de Groot | DUS2VC

Maagjesbolwerk

The Maagjesbolwerk is a shopping mall located in the east of the city centre. For the Maagjesbolwerk, the main purpose of the design efforts were motivated by the desire to create a new balance between the east and west side of the centre. The development of the Maagjesbolwerk as it is today finished in 2003. The architecture clearly refers to the history of Zwolle. And the development recovered the old form of the bulwark from erosion. Throughout the years a number of incorrect estimates have been made by property owner Annexum. And nowadays the Maagjesbolwerk has

to deal with vacancy. The mall requires something refreshing to stay competitive. (Van den Berg, 2018) Even though the Maagjesbolwerk contains all the necessities for a modern shopping centre. For example, it has for instance, an underground parking garage, enough space for shops and a good connection to the centre & areas around the centre. This building is crying out for new development. That is why I'd like to do further research about it to come up with good design proposals. Enjoy reading!



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Image 1

Historical Analysis

The main goal of the Maagjesbolwerk was to have a new development that doesn't lose its connection with the rich history of Zwolle. But what is this history exactly?

Because of the amount of time we have for this research, I will only focus briefly on the history of the bulwarks in Zwolle.

Bulwarks in Zwolle

Throughout the history of Zwolle the bulwarks had a very important function for the city. When Zwolle received its city rights in 1230 and the permission to build defence works, the city started to grow. This was probably because of the safety it now could provide for its citizens. Back then it was only a hill with a wooden or stone reinforcement. Later, during the The Eighty Years' War or Dutch War of Independence (1568–1648), they started strengthening the defence of Zwolle. After thirty years the whole surrounding of the city was fortified. Two ages later there was already little use left for the defence function of the bulwarks. (Van Zanten et al., 2012) But this wasn't really a problem for the city.

During the nineteenth century the city was growing, mostly with poor people. Zwolle also wanted to attract more rich people. For them, living on an estate with lots of open green space was the ideal situation.

So what Zwolle needed to do, was to create more attractive green space in the city, luckily the fortifications could offer this space. At these bulwarks came a few new functions for instance, a bathhouse, mills and of course green parks. (Van Zanten et al., 2012)

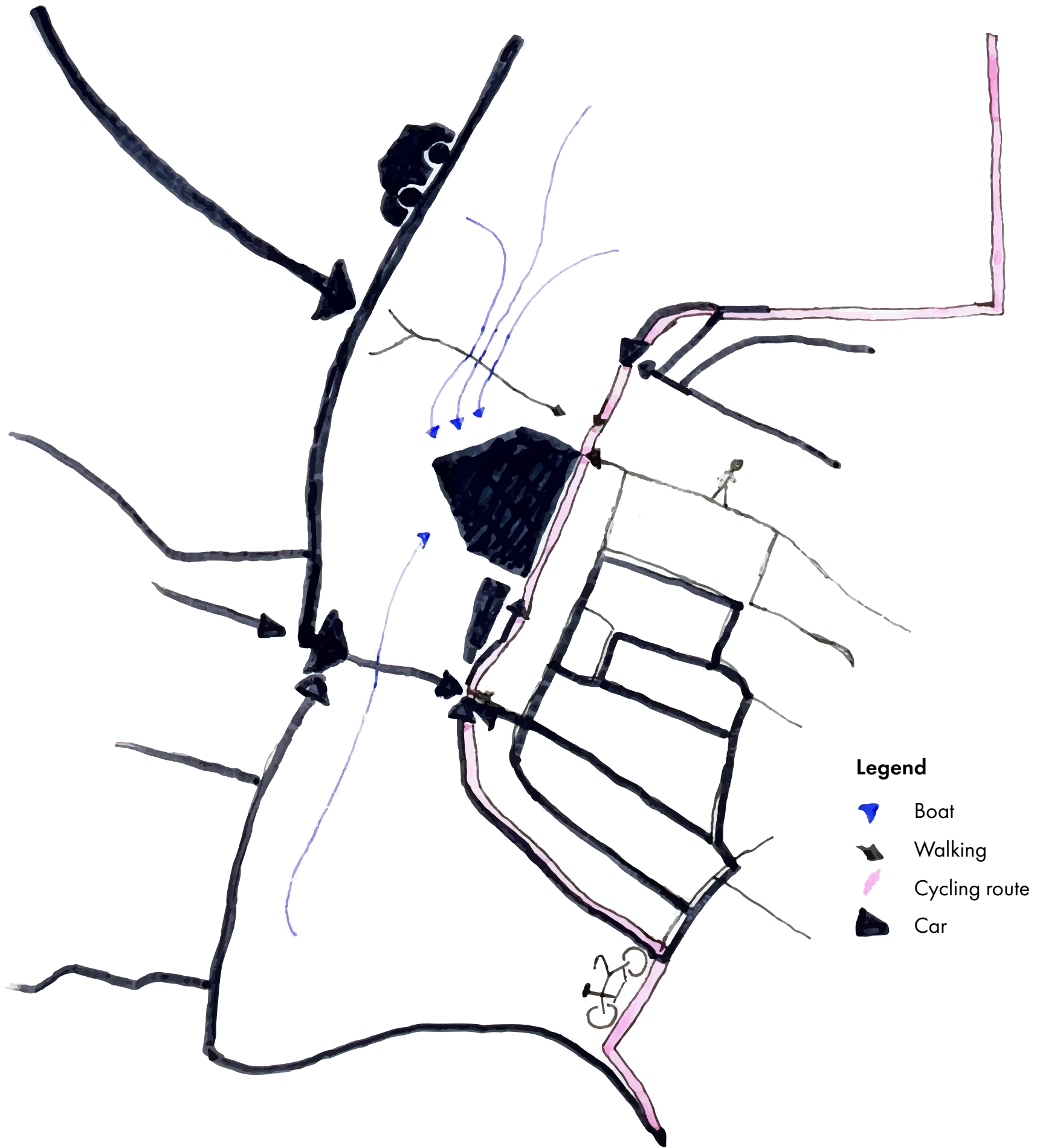
These bulwarks can have many different functions. Even today, the form of the strongholds is very important for Zwolle. It has given Zwolle a boost of liveliness for centuries. The large urban parks are very attractive to residents for recreational purposes, this can be seen in image 1.

Access & Linkages

How well is the Maagjesbolwerk connected to its surroundings, both visually and physically? Access & Linkages is about how conveniently the place is reached by foot, bike and car and in the case of the Maagjesbolwerk also by boat.

The drawing on the right shows the connections to the Maagjesbolwerk, and also a cycle route which runs straight past the building.

It's easily accessible for the car, by bike, for pedestrians and even for people moving by boat.



The main entrance

The Maagjesbolwerk has two entrances for pedestrians. Entrance 1 is the main entrance of the shopping mall. Entrance 2 is the main entrance for the people coming from the south.



1



The main entrance of the Maagjesbolwerk is tucked away in this cove. Right next to the entrance there is the possibility to park your bike.



From both sides, this entrance looks like a dark hole.

2



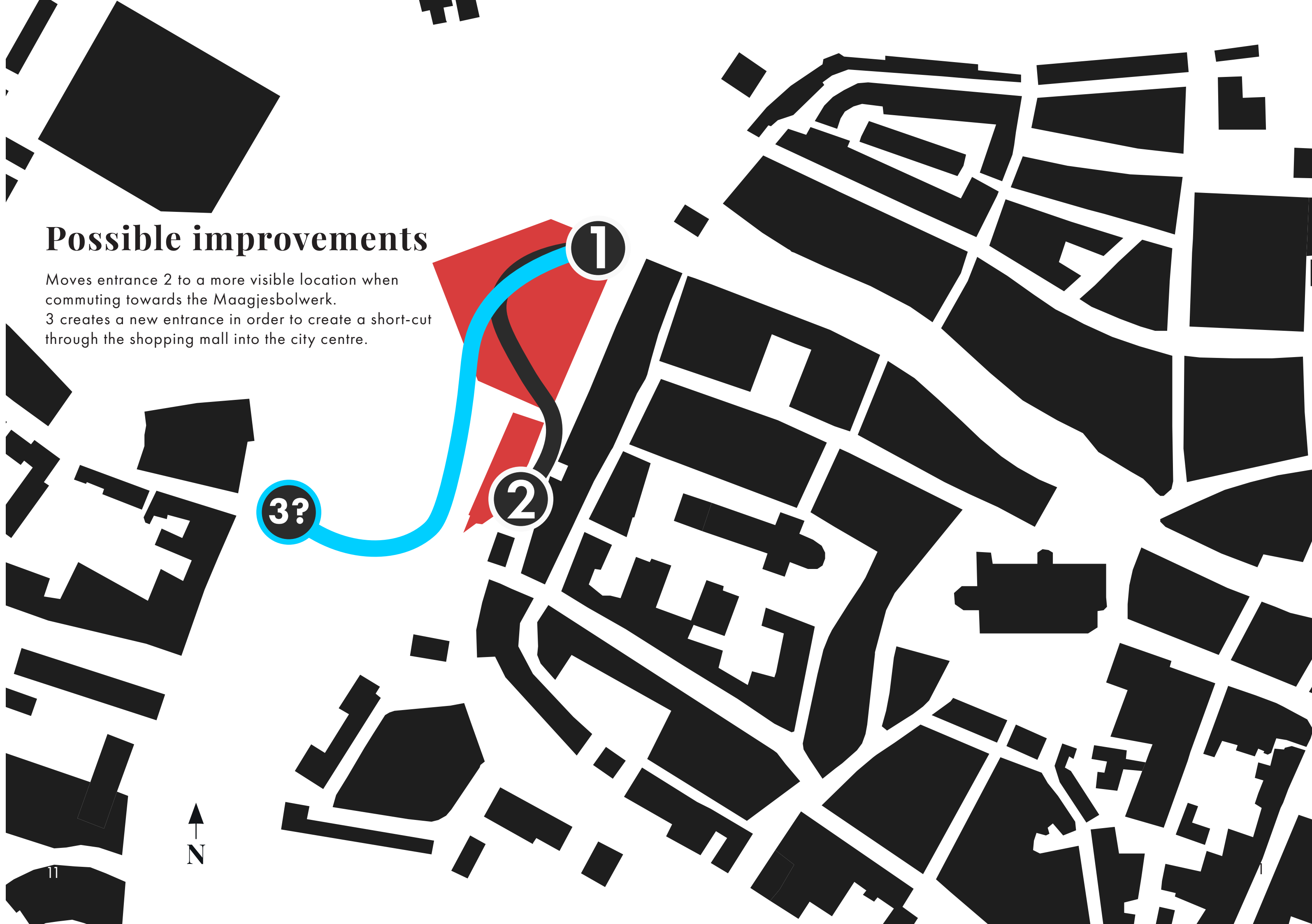
The other entrance is also not clearly visible, because it's also tucked away in the building. Furthermore, it's not in the viewing direction of the walking direction so you won't be able to see it when you casually move through the city.



Because of the pillars and the shops being hidden away, it isn't clear that this is a shopping centre or even where the entrance is located.

Possible improvements

Moves entrance 2 to a more visible location when commuting towards the Maagjesbolwerk.
3 creates a new entrance in order to create a short-cut through the shopping mall into the city centre.



Comfort & Image

The building has a unique appearance. The bricks and style that is used refers to the history of the place. It has a the looks of a stronghold which is even more clear from waterside of the building, this can be seen in image 2.



Image 2

The waterfront of the building offers the possibility for boats to moor. The building takes up all the space from where the stronghold used to be, but it does leave room for pedestrians to walk around and enjoy the water. There are no benches around.



Inside central hall of the shopping area it offers places to sit and relax. But it doesn't really offer more than that, for example there aren't any plants to admire, and there is no decoration around.



Due to the low roof and few windows in the corridor, it feels very dark and oppressive. Right now it functions as a place to walk through as fast as possible.



A lot of natural light enters through the glass roof. Because of the construction the space appears very cluttered. This fairly large space looks rather narrow. Eliminating and modernizing the construction could be a solution for this.



The parking entrance has a basic appearance. Even though it's a very important entrance for the shopping centre.

Uses & Activities

The Maagjesbolwerk is mainly used as a shopping centre. It's also a big apartment block and there is an underground parking garage. This parking garage also provides parking space for people visiting the center of Zwolle. As of today there is lots of empty space inside the Maagjesbolwerk, shown in image 3. Luckily, the space around the

Maagjesbolwerk is heavily used and there are also regularly events going on.



Image 3
14

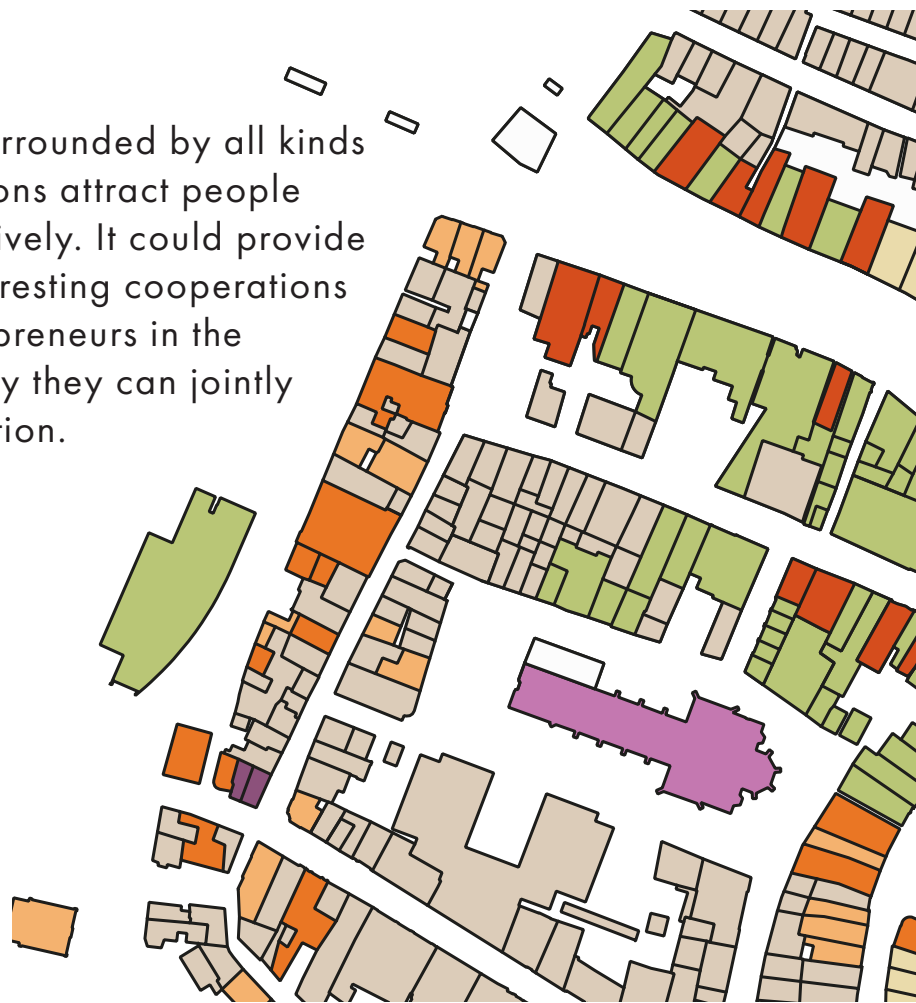


In the north of the Maagjesbolwerk is the Rodetorenplein. This is an event square that (during events) attracts many people. Here are events located such as Kingsnight or popup-horeca.

Functions

The shopping center is surrounded by all kinds of functions. These functions attract people and thus make the area lively. It could provide the Maagjesbolwerk interesting cooperations with the hospitality entrepreneurs in the neighborhood. In this way they can jointly benefit from the top location.

- = Shops
- = Houses
- = Offices
- = Restaurants
- = Mixed



At the other site of the street the there are lots of catering facilities. Also there is a catering facility in right in front of the entrance of the Maagjesbolwerk.

Sociability

The Maagjesbolwerk itself doesn't offer much for sociability. The mall is not really attractive to linger mainly because not much has been done about decoration. There are some places to sit inside the mall. The corridor at the street side can provide people a shelter when it's raining which could lead to more sociability. Also shown in the previous chapter, the surrounding does offer lot's of opportunities for sociability. There are many terraces, bars and restaurants around.

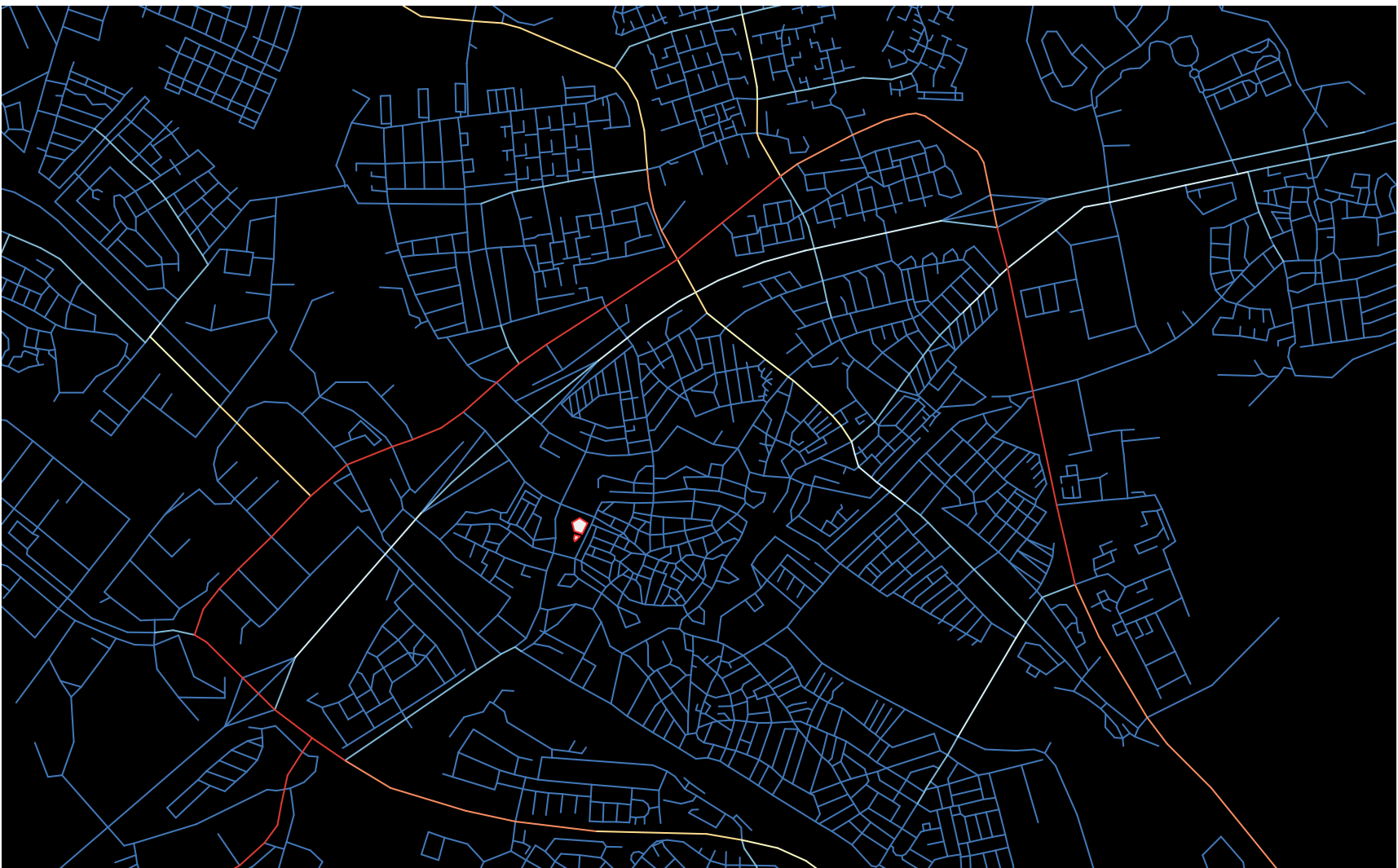
Space Syntax

Space syntax is pc software that urban planners can use to analyse the city. It's a science-based method. It uses all kinds of data to calculate how the streets are being used for example by cars, bikes and pedestrians. With this data urban planners

can make substantiated design choices, and thus make their design of better quality. They can use it to analyse which functions are possible or to which areas more attention is desirable.



Screenshot of Space Syntax



Integration Rn

Integration Rn is about how convenient a function is to visit by car. And therefore if it's a logical decision to have a shopping mall on the spot of the Maagjesbolwerk.

Important to know when looking at these maps is: the warmer the colour (red), the more convenient it is. It's less convenient when the colour is more cold (blue). According to space syntax the Maagjesbolwerk is relatively very easy to visit by car. Especially when you take into account that it's inside the city centre. Most other spots in the centre aren't that convenient.

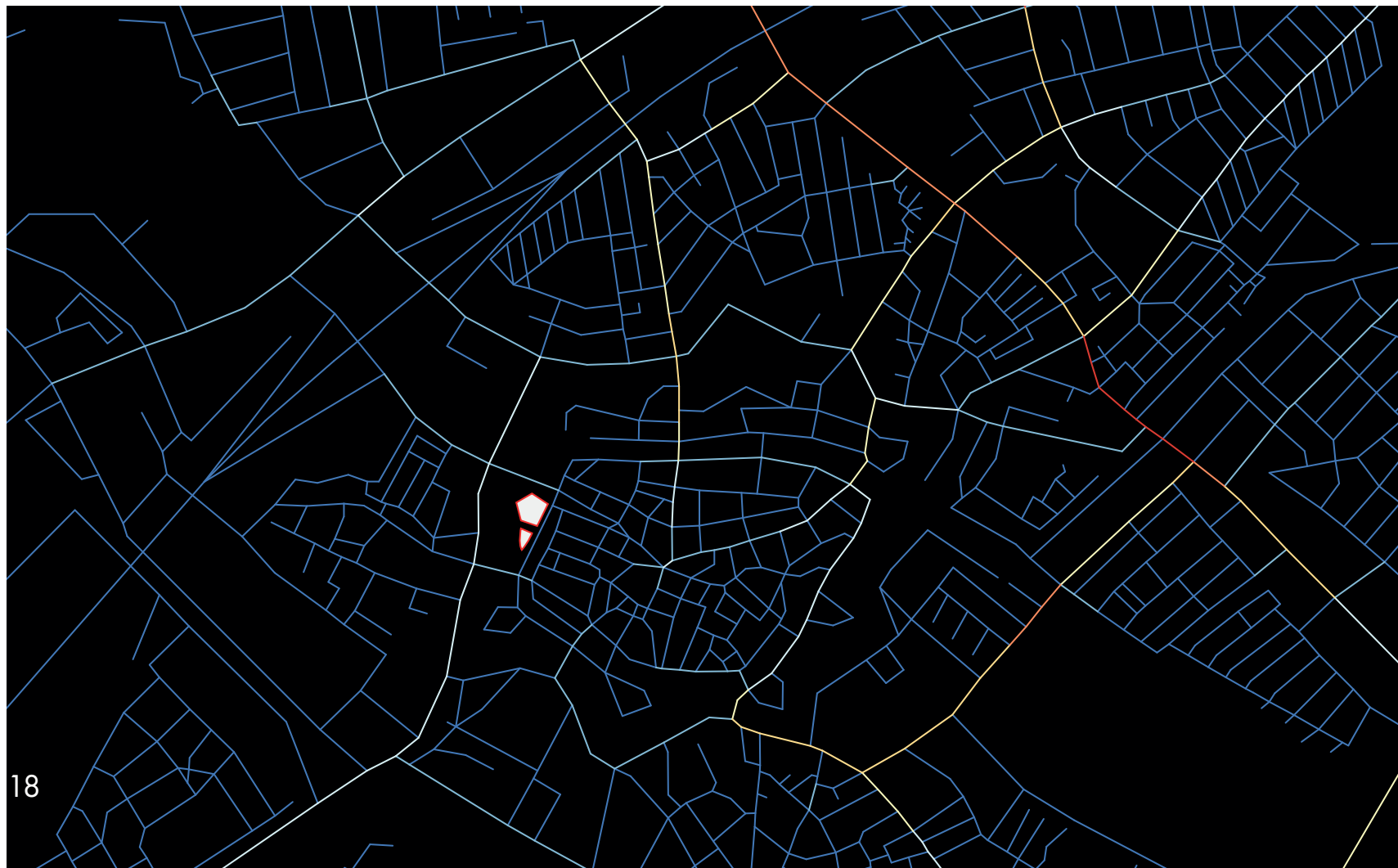
Choice Rn

Choice Rn is about how often a street used by car. Most people choose to drive the long ring road to get around in Zwolle. This is the large district access for most of the neighbourhoods in Zwolle. Also the highway is often used. The other roads are mostly blue. The smaller ring-road around the city centre of Zwolle seems not to be chosen often. From my own observations these roads are also quite busy.



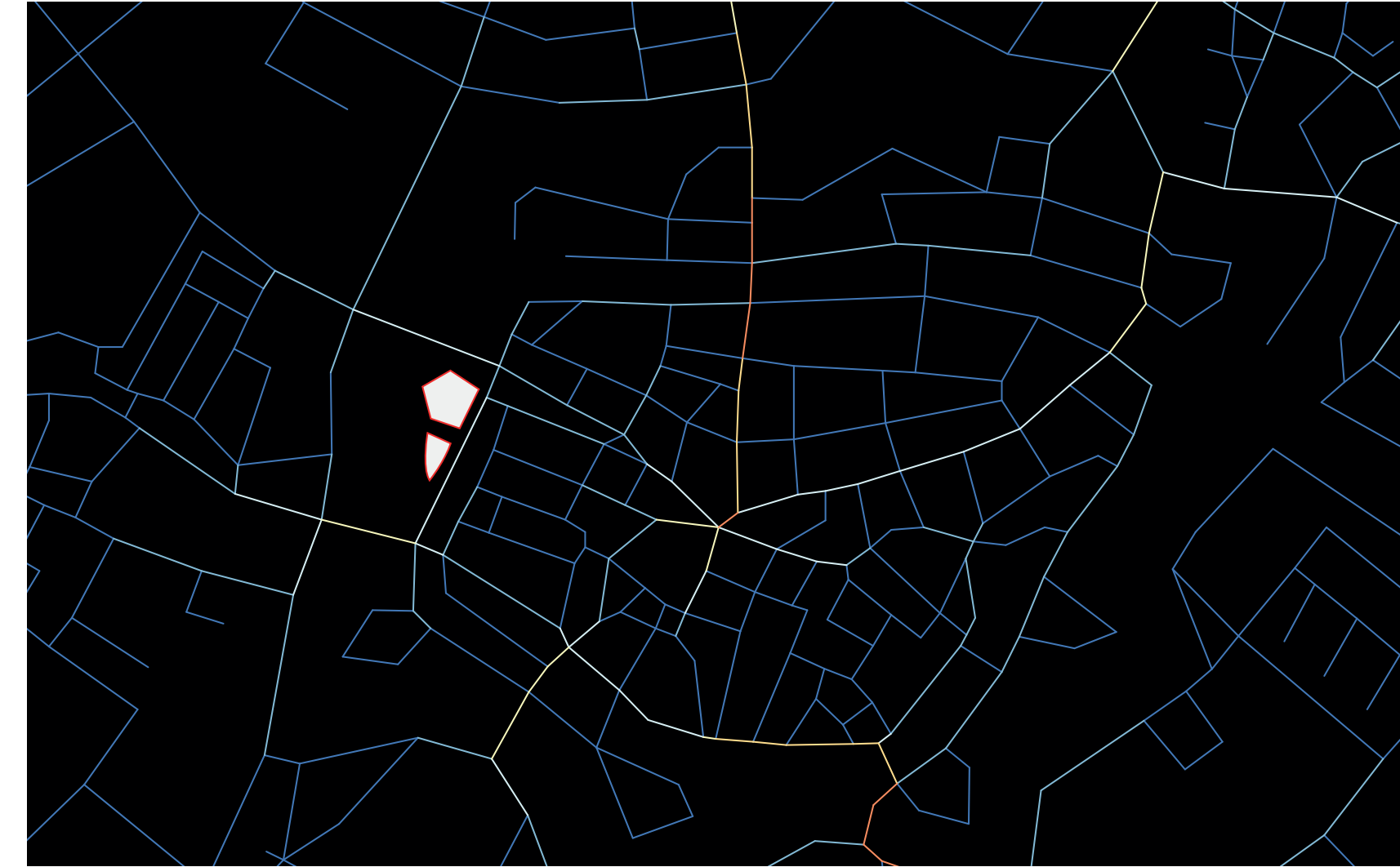
Integration R2500m

Integration R2500m is about how convenient a place/ street is to visit by bike. It shows which locations would be ideal to have a function which requires that. As you can see the two bridges right next to the Maagjesbolwerk are very important connections for cyclist and show that these are important for the shopping mall.



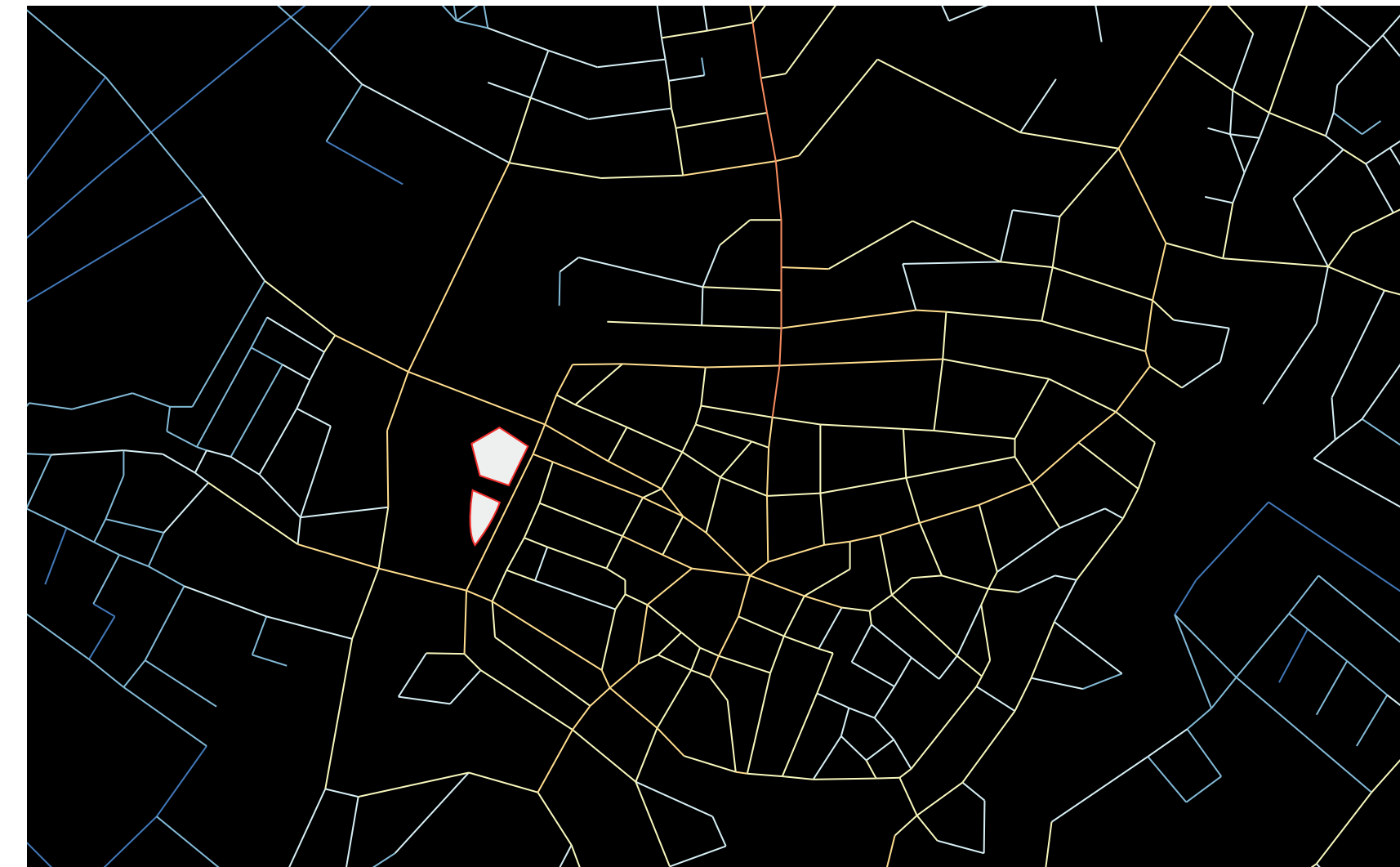
Choice R2500m

Choice R2500m is about how often a street is used by cyclist. Here also are the two bridges very important connections for the Maagjesbolwerk and also often used by cyclist.



Choice R800m

Choice R800m shows how busy the street is with pedestrians. Here also the bridges are very important. What is striking is that not many people use the streets between the Maagjesbolwerk and the heart of the centre, except for the two main streets. This implies most people coming from the centre walk straight towards the Maagjesbolwerk without using intermediate streets and detours.



Integration R800m

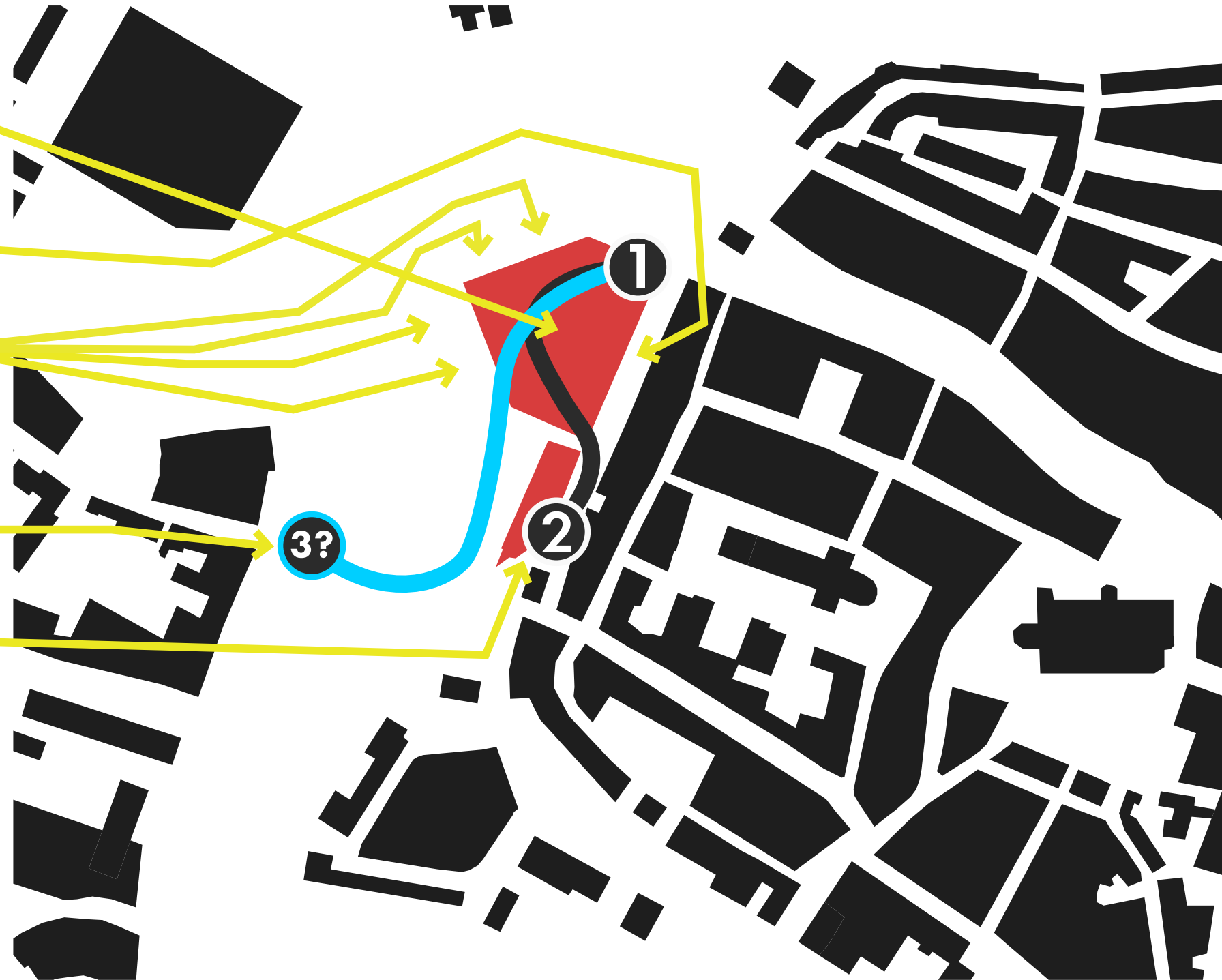
Integration R800m shows how convenient a street is for functions that attract pedestrians. Here you can see that the Maagjesbolwerk is in an ideal spot.

Design Proposals

The focus of this project is on the research part. That's why I've chosen to give design proposals based on the spacial research. This gives an idea of some interventions

I would make in order to make the Maagjesbolwerk pleasant & a successful place to be.

- 1. Raising the roof of the mall, creates **pleasant space to be**. In this case the gardens of the residents above should get a new spot on top of this higher roof.
- 2. **Eliminate clutter** inside through modernization.
- 3. Move facade advertising of the shops, to the front facade in an appropriate manner. This will **attract more customers**
- 4. Lighting and benches on the backside to **create more ambience** and attract more visitors. Add more green **inside and outside**.
- 5. Create a short-cut to the city centre through the Maagjesbolwerk in order to **get more traffic inside**. People walking from the bridge towards the centre will choose this path because it'll be faster.
- 6. Move the entrance to a **visible location**.



1 = main entrance 2 = moved entrance 3? = New suggested route / entrance



Bibliography

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