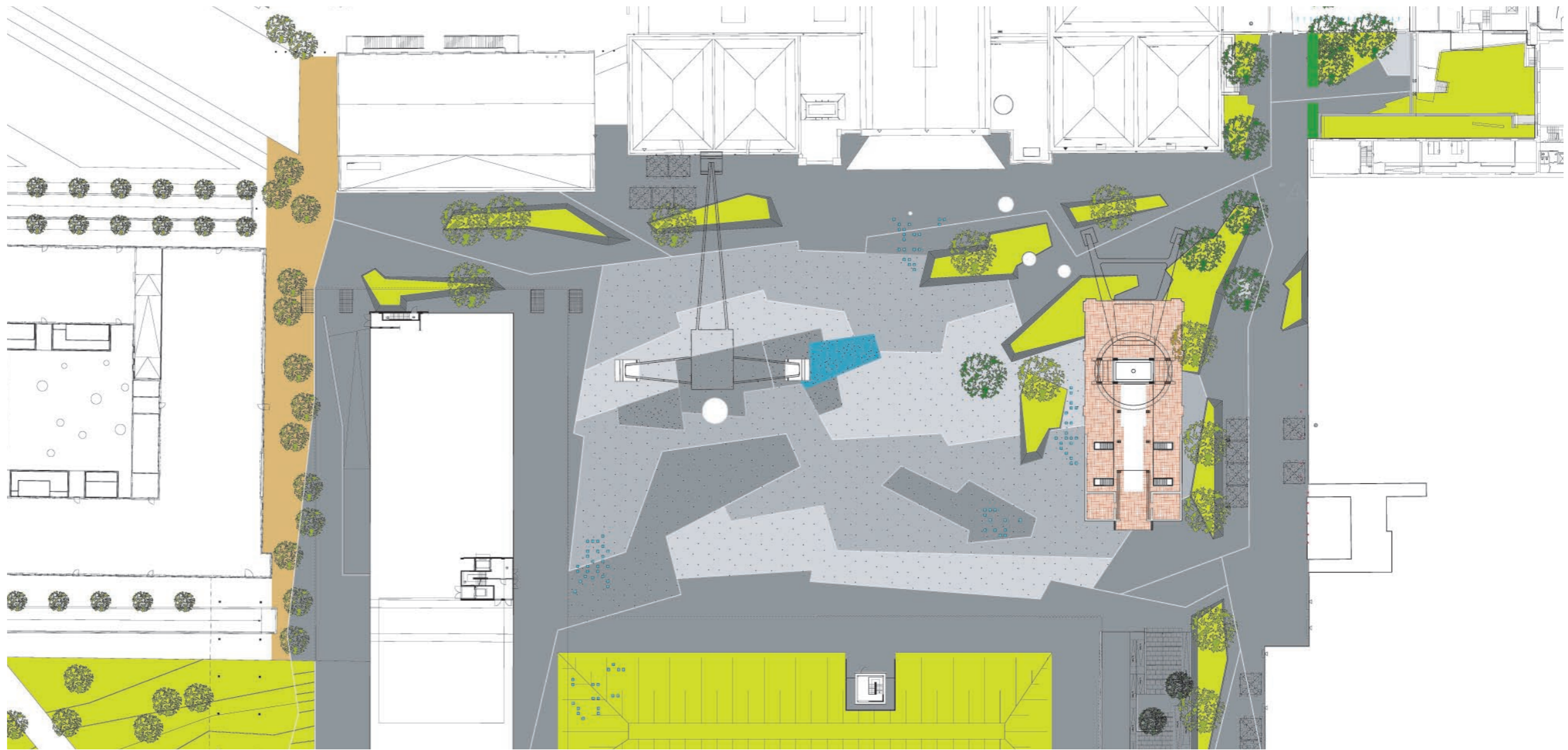


Aim of the intervention

The city of Genk wanted the square to be the vibrant cultural heart of Genk, with possibilities for all sorts of events and activities. Of course, at times of activities and a large number of visitors, the square will be lively and marvelous. However, the aim was also for the square to remain a square with a dynamic and lively character even when there aren't any events.

HOSPER was asked to design the square and its surroundings, taking the new functions and the strong identity of the site as former coalmining complex into account. HOSPER designed the C-mine square as "space for the spectacular". To accommodate all possible events the square was designed as a one level surface, as is usual in a theatre; as an obstacle-free surface with removable seating. At the same time the square was designed to be interesting and spectacular without an enormous crowd on it, by using all design tools of the public realm for this purpose.

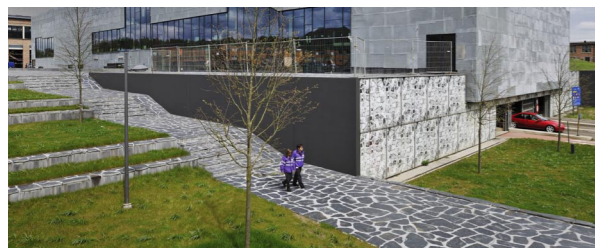
Under the square the C-mine expedition was planned by the city: an attractive route that follows the former mining corridors under the square and ends with a fantastic view on top of the tallest shaft tower. Elements of this C-mine expedition were to be placed on the square, as well as certain safety measurements for the exhibition route.



plan

Description of the intervention

The strong identity of the site was of course taken as the bases for the design. The square is paved with Belgian black slate as a reference to the "black gold" of the former mine. It is the same stone type as the waste material that ended up on the terrils (cairns) of Genk during the reclamation of the mines. The slate is used in big sized flagstones and much smaller chips of slate. The floor gets a lively character due to the integration of a water surface, mist fountains, removable seating and lighting elements. The chairs and stools, made of folded stainless steel, shine as glittering diamonds on the dark square floor.



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Belgian black slate, grass islands, new and old trees and scattered steel and red furniture