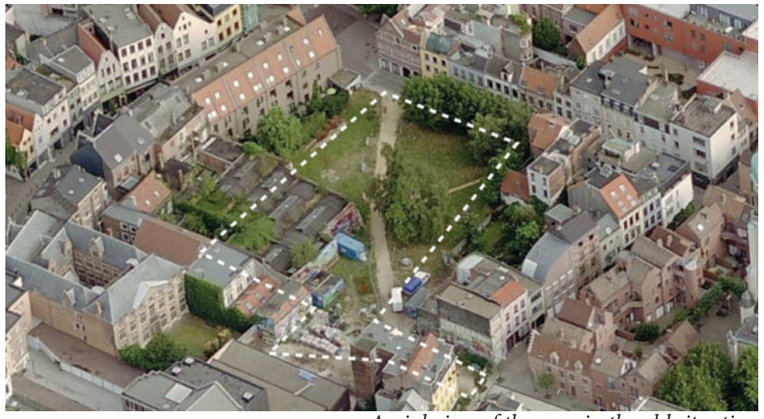
Munthof Park

CLUSTER Landscape and Urbanism + Atelier Ruimtelijk Advies
Location: Antwerp (Belgium)



Aerial view of the area in the old situation

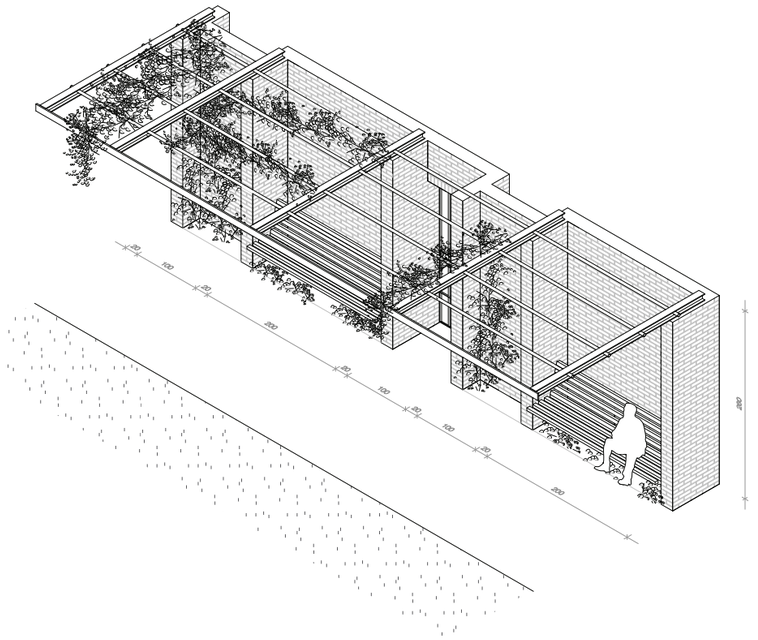
For years, Munthof square was an abandoned public garden in the historical city center, urgently in need of renewal. The place was known for its graffiti art works and notorious for its drug use and vandalism. After years of participation with the neighborhood, the City of Antwerp organized a competition for a new park design.

The new park design is based upon two principles: the creation of architectural edges for the park, and the differentiation of the use of public space.

All garden boundaries have been worked out as coherent architectural façades that are facing the park. The garden walls that separate the gardens from the park consist of three spatial components: large segments with sitting benches, small segments with garden doors and planting, and abutments that support the pergola structure. Together the components form a differentiated façade with a distinct recurrent pattern.

The park is divided into three complementary public spaces that each have a specific character: a slightly raised promenade between the two connected streets, an enclosed park space with solitary trees, and an urban square with terrace facilities for the adjacent pubs and restaurants. Two sides of the park are lined with a covered promenade with a pergola planted with Wisteria sinensis.

Nowadays, the park is intensively used. The vandalism and graffiti have not returned. The users of the park, nevertheless, are very diverse: youngsters, parents with children coming from the nursery, elderly people reading their book, tourists. Although the Munthof park is quite classical in its form and appearance, its use and the process by which it was established are not. Therefore, this park is exemplary as a next generation urban park of the 21st century.



Detail of the covered promenade

Photo of the covered promenade and edge of the park

Situation plan