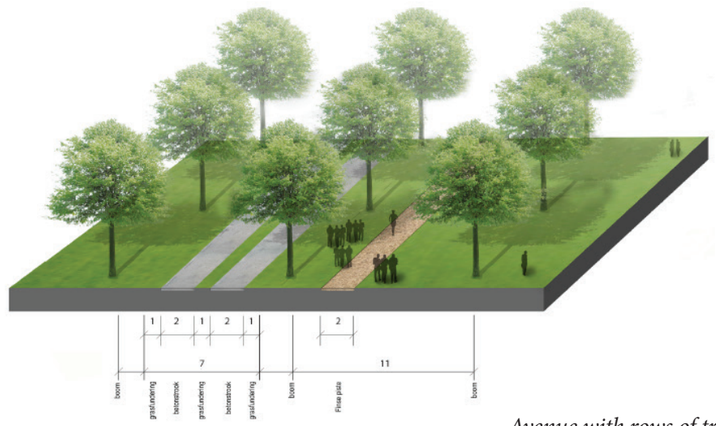
Landscape Park Rock Werchter

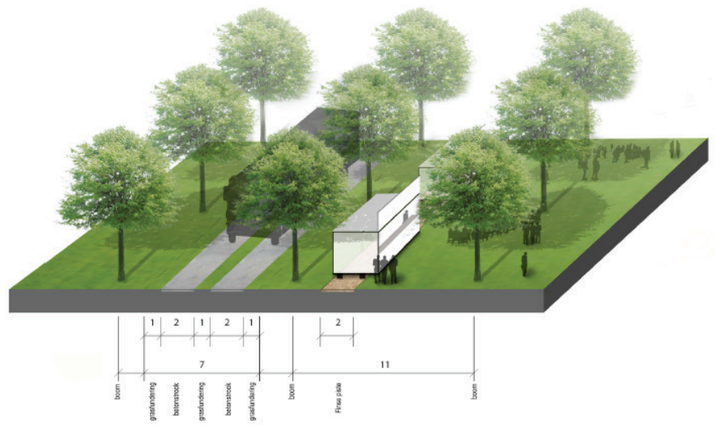
CLUSTER Landscape and Urbanism
Location: Werchter (Belgium)

Aerial view of the old landscape park Rock Werchter

New situation for landscape park Rock Werchter



Avenue with rows of trees



Avenue with rows of trees with catering facilities

Avenue

Introduction
Werchter is a small municipality at the confluence of the rivers Demer and Dijle. The village is internationally known for the pop/rock festival Rock Werchter, which attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year.

Rock Werchter celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, and therefore wants to redesign its festival terrain. Festival organizer Live Nation, the province of Vlaams-Brabant, and the Werchter municipality share the ambition to transform the current festival terrain into a fully-fledged landscape park that can host festivals, and other forms of passive recreation and youth activities as well. By means of a design competition, several design teams were selected to develop a vision on the future of landscape park Rock Werchter. CLUSTER won the competition, and is currently working on the elaboration and implementation of the landscape park.

Design
The design challenge consisted of the combining of two different programs - a landscape park and festival grounds - in a spatial way. A landscape park has a low-dynamic character, and is aimed at local recreational use. A festival terrain on the other hand, has a high-dynamic character, with temporary public utilities, safety measures, service roads, sanitation, and commercial activities, and is aimed at supralocal use. In the landscape design, the duality between landscape park and festival terrain is solved by means of a clear and legible landscape framework that effortlessly accommodates the requested programs.

Landscape park
The design consists of robust, tree-lined avenues, which can accommodate various forms of park and festival infrastructures. These avenues form a spatial carrier for walking and bicycling networks throughout the year, and demarcate different open spaces. Consequently, a formal landscape park is formed, that comprises straight avenues, open pastures, and an orchard.

Festival terrain
During festivals, the park is turned “inside out”. The avenues with triple and quadruple tree rows that provide access to the landscape park form the spatial structure for the installation of the catering facilities. The backsides of the catering facilities are situated towards the paved paths, which serve as service roads during the festival. The total width of these paths allow for two lorries or service vehicles to pass each other. The avenues mark the border between festival ground and a walnut orchard is planted at the site of the resting field.