

# Revitalisation of old industrial sites, a case study of the Suikerterrein in Groningen

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## Summary

This paper is a qualitative research about the process of revitalisation of Suikerterrein in Groningen. Formulated in the following main research question:

*Which factors determine if industrial buildings are revitalised? A case study of the Suikerterrein/sugar manufacturing site in Groningen.*

The aim of this research is to find out what can be done to promote revitalisation, from the perspective of both public as private actors. This has been done by way of a literature study about already existing cases of revitalisation, and the role of different actors in this. These actors are both from the public and private sector. After this interviews with both the municipality of Groningen, as well as various organisations located at the Suikerterrein. The results from these interviews has been compared to existing cases, to see how the case of the Suikerterrein compares. From this the following conclusion can be drawn.

The municipality has provided taken the bottom up government approach. By providing possibilities for private actors, by helping the revitalisation in the early stages, as well as provide loans, and by keeping intervention minimal in the later stages. The organisations located at the Suikerterrein were all able to adapt, and improvise well to the challenges that have come up. Something which is necessary on a site such as the Suiker terrain, as it has minimal utilities. Because there are a lot of different organisation, who are all given the freedom to do what they want, the Suikerterrein has been given its own unique appearance. This unique appearance, provided by the organisation ,has been what has made the revitalisation possible. Making it not only economic revitalisation, but also cultural revitalisation.

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## Chapter 1- Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The Suikerunie factory, (translation Sugar union) Set up in 1913, has been around almost a 100 years. Many people have vivid memories of the so-called beet campaign in the autumn, the import of sugar beets from the countryside and through the city (Beukelman, 2019).

Next to these memories installed in the minds of the people of Groningen, the factory is also part of the history of Groningen. Its meaning can be seen in light of the social and cultural historical history of the city of Groningen and its surroundings, being its economic motor of Groningen for years. The cooperation between the province of Groningen and Friesland is an important part of this. That cooperation is another reason that the Suikerunie factory has roots in both the city and the province of Groningen (Beukelman, 2019). Hundreds of works from Groningen and its surrounding areas, often multiple generations used to work here during the season (Stichting Hanzehogeschool Groningen, 2016). Considering all of this, it is safe to say that the Suikerunie factory was more than just another factory for Groningen

The Suikerunie industrial site, which I will be referring as just the Suikerterrein in this research. This was until 2007, when the factory closed its doors. After this part of the factory was torn down. Luckily the municipality of Groningen recognized the historical value this factory has for the people of Groningen. They gave orders to the department of Living and Monuments to do an investigation. Which resulted in part of the factory to be left intact (Beukelman, 2019). All that remained was the chimney, the factory hall, the workplace and the brownfield located next to the factory (De Suiker Events, 2019). Today, the Suikerterrein is used in a variety of ways, both the building and the outside areas. Be it music festivals, the Dutch knitting days, or just as a hall rental service. As this is a useful way to give new life to an area in decay, why it this not done more often. As it is a good way to re-use an old building and it certainly gives the Suikerterrein, as events location, an unique character.

For this thesis the reasons for the success of the revitalisation of the former Suikerterrein will be investigated. And the place specific components that made this revitalisation possible. If it can be made evident what made this revitalisation possible, this can be transferred to similar cases in other cities. This should have useful policy implications for planners. As decay is an issue, not only with regards to industrial sites, but with cities in general. Or as Oswalt (2005) put it: *'today it is becoming increasingly evident that growth is no longer a possible (or even desirable) future for all cities'*. Also, attractiveness of the urban landscape is a decisive factor for foreign investors. So revitalising these so called brownfields, is also important in creating an attractive urban landscape and thus positioning in the global investment scale (Lorber, 2014).

Revitalising might also compensate an area for the economic activity it lost with the closing of its industry. So using local opportunities to give an economic boost to an area, or as put by Iammarino et al. (2007): *'The solution needs to be place-sensitive, that is policies that are informed by theory and empirical evidence but that, at the same time, respond to the structural opportunities, potential and constraints of each place'*. So making use of the opportunities that a place provides, something which has been done well with the revitalisation of the Suikerterrein.

### 1.2 Research problem

Based on the literature from the previous chapter, and looking at the Suikerterrein and the different actors involved the following research problem has emerged: What has made the revitalisation of the Suikerunie a success? Can this be attributed to the municipality or should private organisations take credits. And would the pattern being followed in the case of the Suikerterrein be applicable to sites in

other cities, or is the something which would be only possible for Groningen. This translates in to the following main-and sub research questions:

### 1.2.1 Main research-question.

Which factors determine if industrial buildings are revitalised? A case study of the Suikerterrein/sugar manufacturing site in Groningen?

### 1.2.2 Sub-questions:

- What are the public components that promoted the revitalisation of the Suikerterrein?
- What are the private components that promoted the revitalisation of the Suikerterrein?
- What are the place-specific components of the Suikerterrein? looking at both the industrial site and the city of Groningen.

## 1.3 Structure of thesis

In the theoretical framework the main subjects that are relevant to this research will be investigated. In the theoretical framework similar cases to the Suikerterrein will be examined as well. In order know what investigation have already been done regarding this subject, a literature study will be conducted. This will cover topics such as revitalisation, temporariness and the role of the government in the process of revitalisation.

In the methodology the research methods will be described, and the choice for this kind of research will be elaborated..

After which the results will be presented, which will be done in the same order as the sub-research questions. This way a clear separation between the different components that have attributed to the revitalisation of the Suikerterreincan be made.

At the end a conclusion will be made about this revitalisation, which will answer the main research question, with the help of the answers that thesub-research questions have provided. After which a reflection of the research will be made.

## Chapter 2- Theoretical framework

### 2.1 Revitalisation

Revitalization is not only a matter of bringing more economic activity to an area. Revitalisation has to be seen in the broad sense. To further clarify this a definition of revitalisation by the Oxford dictionary; *'The action of imbuing something with new life and vitality in the broad sense'*. So this imbuing of new life does not only have to come in the form of newly generated income.

As stated before, revitalisation of industrial sites, or brownfields, is important. This has become important after the *deindustrialisation*. All over Europe (and the US) a process of deindustrialisation has taken place since the 1950's. Which meant the movement of employees from the secondary to the tertiary and quaternary activities (Lorber, 2014). In reaction to this shift in economy, a lot of industrial sites were no longer of use. The US were the first to implement structural change, in way of the 'threefold strategy'. This strategy was based on the bottom-up principle. Which meant local communities had to come up with restoration plans, while higher levels of government provided them with funding and legislation (Lorber, 2014). So not government intervention, but local communities who are responsible for the plans. So what is evident for policymakers, is that in order to revitalise area local response is needed.

Public initiative and integration of locals are important components of sustainable revitalisation. These kind of bottom-up initiatives are called an urban activator. (Pogačar, 2014). An urban activator is a physical manifestation, so an architectural intervention in the urban space, which stimulates development.

And according to Pogačar (2014), this development is not only an economic one. She states that this will also stimulate social impact, and enhance the social fabric and therefore helping the process even more. One of the keys for these urban activators, is participation of the community. Which means including a wide scope of actors, which makes evident both problems and opportunities from different perspectives, and also more creativity. This public participation, from different actors, before, during and after the development is essential. Since this generates more identity with the place, and forms some kind of responsibility towards the area. So with the help of local participation and connecting, even with interventions that carry little economic value, can create something of high social value.

Culture can also prove to be a vital part of the revitalisation of an area. In fact many commentators have already jumped to the conclusion that culture may provide some sort of alternative for the 'post-industrial world' (Bailey, Miles and Stark, 2004). According to this article the success of these culture based revitalisations may be successful. It may actually prosper most effectively in a context in which local and regional identities can be incorporated as a key part of the post-industrial future. So in an age where globalisation is at hand, it is necessary to return to the local, in order to compete. This can be best described by the following quote by Baily and Stark (2004):

*'In other words, culture-led regeneration perhaps provides a framework within which, given the right conditions, local people can re-establish ownership of their own sense of place and space and, perhaps more importantly, of their own sense of history'*

### 2.2 Government role

One way the government can take action is with the help of policies. Traditionally intervention measures of the government were: price instruments like taxation and subsidies. Or regulation, for example prohibitions and incentives, or by way of public works under government responsibility (Nijkamp, van der Burch and Vindigni, 2002). But as was evident, sustainable development needs to come from opportunities created by a place itself, based on the qualities possessed by a place itself:

place sensitive (Iammarino et al, 2007). Governments should, as Porter (2005) put it assume a more effective role. This has been done in the last years by decentralizing responsibility and authority. Bringing decisions at to the lowest possible governmental level can improve the relevance of services and goods to local needs (UCLG, 2016). It can also and give local residents greater opportunities for participations in decisions, which as stated by Pogačar (2014) necessary to create sustainable development.

This can be done by supporting the private sector in economic initiatives. Instead of focussing on direct involvement, governments have to create a favourable environment for business and local initiatives. So in a way help set up the previously mentioned urban activators (Pogačar, 2014).

### 2.2.1. Good governance

So to say what kind of role the government should take in this process might be not as clear. Since on the one hand governments should let development come from the area itself, but it should also provide opportunities. What the government can do however, is to ensure to certain principles. The principles stated below which have been widely accepted, are considered to be key in a good public-private relationship (Interreg Central Europe, 2019):

1. Participation: the degree of involvement of all stakeholders.
2. Decency: the degree to which the formation and stewardship of the rules is undertaken without harming or causing grievance to people.
3. Transparency: the degree of clarity and openness with which decisions are made.
4. Accountability: the extent to which political actors are responsible to society for what they say and do.
5. Fairness: the degree to which rules apply equally to everyone in society.
6. Efficiency: the extent to which limited human and financial resources are applied without waste, delay or corruption or without prejudicing future generations.

## 2.3 Temporariness

Temporariness is a way to counter vacancy. By fulling in spaces when building or spaces have lost their function and there is no development re-use of the land is the start of planned or wished re-use (Compier and Cevaal, 2011). So temporariness can mean the end of one function, or it can be the start of a new one.

On example of temporary re-use of land is the city of Nijmegen. In June 2013 the city passed a proposition that made it easier for these temporary initiatives to get started (Bouwstenen, 2017). But this proposition was more than just about temporary use of space. It was also meant to promote entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation and in that way improve citizen participation. With these temporary spaces the inhabits of Nijmegen are provided with a place to come up with initiatives. Someone from the municipality of Nijmegen put it as the following: 'we support these initiatives, give space, and lay connections' (Bouwstenen, 2017). From this statement it becomes clear that the municipality has more of guiding role, then a steering one.

According to the European Regional Development Fund (2018) there are a numerous supporting services that can be set up by a governmental agency. Subsidies are of course always welcome. Second there needs to be single point of contact within the administration of the municipality, to help guide these projects, and to provide a temporary use toolbox. This can mean contract templates, licensing tips, etc. Thirdly, temporary users also expect a certain amount of services, which could mean things like electricity and sewage. Concluding, it is crucial that all temporary users are clear what the timeframe of their projects are, so that in that way they do not meet unpleasant surprises. And

from the point of the governmental agency, helps them to avoid a legal battle with people unwilling to vacate the space (European Regional Development Fund, 2018). So transparency is once again important.

## 2.4 Hypothesis

The Hypothesis, based on the conceptual framework, is as followed: The revitalisation of the can be attributed to a number of factors. First the government agencies involved have provided private organisations and local initiatives, in order to participate in this process. They have done so accordingly with the six principles of a good private-public relationship (Interreg Central Europe, 2019).

The private organisation consist of a wide range of sectors, making it an revitalisation in the broader sense. Which makes it a real place of culture. Reason for people coming here is the freedom provided by temporariness of the project. This gives much more possibilities then in a regular business park, making it an attractive site. As well as the unique character of the old Suikerterrein, that gives it a distinguished character.

## Chapter 3- Methodology

### 3.1 Qualitative data collection

For this research the success factors of the revitalisation of the Suikerterrein will be investigated, by way of a qualitative research. The goal of this is to get reasons and motivators of different organisations for choosing the Suikerterrain. As well as different opportunities and obstacles posed by the Suikerterrein.

These opportunities and obstacles will be different for each organisations, as each organisations is different. Therefore qualitative research, interviews to be more specific, are best suitable, as this can better cope with personal opinions, and how people from different organisations have different views about the Suikerterrein.

These interviews will be conducted with numerous organisations located at the Suikerterrein (see table 1). As well as an interview with Ploegid3, the organisations charged with the development of the Suikerterrein. An interview has also be conducted with one of the project leaders for the Suikerterrein from the Municipality of Groningen. By interviewing different organisations a picture from multiple perspectives will be given regarding the challenges and opportunities posed by the Suikerterrein. This way the eventual conclusion of this research will applicable to organisations from different backgrounds.

This way it can be made evident in what regards the case of the Suikerterrein aligns with other cases of revitalisation and temporary use, so what are 'general success factors'. But also of course in what regards the Suikerterrein has been unique, so what the place-specific components of the development have been. The third and final goal is to see where there is room for improvement, which of course there always is. By doing this an attempted will be made to provide an even better framework for future similar plans.

Name organisation	Type of organisation	Goal
<u>Broedplaats de campagne</u>	Arts & Innovation organisation	Have a joint place for them to make their arts, do experiments and work on varies other projects
<u>Suikerevents</u>	Events agency	To provide a unique place people hosting their event in the old factory.
Rebel <u>Rebel</u> Hostel	Hostel	Introducing people to Groningen and everything it has to offer. And let people stay in a unique and sustainable container hostel
Ploegid3	A development agency	Redevelop the <u>Suiker</u> terrain until 2030, and make it a place for creative, sustainable companies and events
Municipality of Groningen	Government agency	Give the <u>Suiker</u> terrain a temporary new purpose and provide opportunities for the creative, sustainable sector.

Table 1- organisations interviewed.

### 3.2 Ethical considerations

Within this research, there are certain power relations at play. Between the municipality and Ploegid3, between Ploegid3 and the organisations located at the Suikerterrein. During these interviews their might be opinions or complaints about one party about another. So being careful what can, and cannot be put into the thesis. Since this could seriously harm the relationships between the different parties. Good relationships and communications between different stakeholders is important as has been seen in other cases, so leaving them intact is crucial. By making sure of this each of the different organisations interviewed will be given to opportunity to read parts of the thesis regarding their interview, and indicate if certain information should not be put in the thesis.

The interviews will be semi-structured. This way some general question can be asked, but participants are still able to tell things they deem important. These important topics can then be discussed further. The questions will be open ended, so that the participants are not put in a certain direction.

Each of the participants has been guaranteed that the information gathered in the research will be used only for research purposes. Each of them has been handed a consent form (see appendix). In which it states that the interview is completely voluntary and that they are free to stop at any time.

### 3.3 Analysing the data

The transcribed interviews are analysed. These are coded with the coding scheme made in advance (see table 2). In this coding scheme a number of different main codes have been made. These codes have been made based on sub-questions of this thesis, and on the initial information gathered on the Suikerterrein (Ploegid3, 2019). Relevant quotes have been marked with different colours. These markings as well as added notes are then compared to see if the information gathered from the different organisations have similarities, so what can be applied to everyone. Or of course, what are things that are generally thought to need improvement.

The results of these interviews will then be compared to the secondary data gathered in the theoretical framework. Which will eventually lead to a clear answer on both the main- and sub research questions.

Code	Label	Sublabel	Explanation
Infrastructure	Basic utilities	Electricity	
		Gas	
		Running water	
	Roads	Accessibility	How well is the accessibility on the Suikerterrein. (so on the terrain itself)
		Bike lane	
Internet			
Place specific	Location itself	Factory	
		Distinguished location	
	Rent price		
	Free use of space		
Spill over effects			
Sustainability	Green energy	Wind	
		Solar energy	
		Bio-mass	
	Re-use		
	Long-term		
Sector	Music		
	Education		
	Entertainment		
	Science		
	Arts		
Public-private components	Participation		
	Decency		
	Transparency		
	Accountability		
	Fairness		
	Efficiency		
	subsidies		

Table 2- coding scheme

### 3.4 Quality of the data

Different organisations have been interviewed, from both the private sector as well as the public sector. By doing this information has been gathered from different perspectives regarding the Suikerterrein. This way the risk of having a subjective story about the Suikerterrein is minimal. Finding interviewees has been done by e-mailing different organisations located at the Suikerterrein, as well as the municipality of Groningen. During these interviews no problems have arose with particular questions. Furthermore it is expected that all the interviewees have answered truthfully.

## Chapter 4- Results

### 4.1. The public component

The public component, which was in this case the municipality of Groningen. The role of the municipality in the case of the Suikerterrein has changed over time. The municipality recognized that the historical value of the Suikerterrein should be kept, as it can give identity and character to a place. (Prajnawrdhi, Karuppannan and Sivam, 2015).

But after buying up the land, income needed to be generated. Since housing projects were not an option, as it was in time of the crisis. So they needed to find a way to temporarily redevelop the land, as they still needed income.

What the municipality also wanted, was a place for temporary initiatives, a place for creativity. With temporary use they also provided a looser legal framework for construction on the site itself. Since buildings do not have to stay permanently, safety permits do not have to be as strict as they normally would. The municipality thus gave a place for creative initiatives, and provide looser rules, to give also give the room for these creative initiatives. Being located at the edge of the city, having plenty of space, the Suikerterrein seemed a good place to fulfil this purpose.

After a first not very successful attempt to redevelop the land, the municipality recognized that the redevelopment could better be outsourced. The municipality decided to call together a number of development agencies, and outsource the project. This way the municipality was looking to get someone who could invest full-time in this project. They came up with a number of criteria, and the company with the best idea, was given the job. This in the end was Ploegid3. This was because they saw a solution to the main problem: Making investments in infrastructure. Their solution was to lay the infrastructure in a way that it could be used for future development as well, making it a sustainable investment. The municipality themselves paid for part of this infrastructure.

#### 4.1.1. Creating a favourable environment

The municipality effectively outsourced the project, recognizing that they might not be the right ones to develop the Suikerterrein. The role of the municipality is that of supervisor, checking if the development of the Suikerterrein is still running smoothly. In the first years of the project they also provided credit for Ploegid3, when no returns could be made. So providing a safety net, you could say. This way the risk for Ploegid3 was reduced.

What the municipality has also done is provide people who had an idea for an initiative at the Suikerterrein with credit at the Triodos bank. The municipality recognized well that it might be difficult for organisations to get credit a bank for a temporarily developed building/ business case stated. So in order to give these initiatives a boost, the municipality to stand credit for a quarter of the loan for those companies. The municipality has thus done a good job of providing opportunities for both the developer, as the organisations located at the Suikerterrein itself.

Plenty of room for participation has been given, both for citizens as well as for the different development companies. The municipality has mostly played a supportive role. Providing both Ploegid3, as well as local initiatives, with opportunities, in form of credit and the 'basics needs' so to speak. And making sure everyone with a good idea had the possibility to realise this, by way of providing credit as well as a place to do it. This aligns well with Ubaydulla (2015), who stated: *'Its (local governments) functions include taking initiative of developing better conditions for businesses, preventing them from possible obstacles and encouraging fair competition as well as creating favourable entrepreneurial environment'*. By doing all this well, the municipality has provided the possibility and opportunity to let the Suikerterrein become the place it is now.

A point of improvement has been clarity from the municipality to the different actors in the beginning of the project. The municipality, which is of course not one person, but consists of lots of different people from different departments, and different agendas. Which lead to different people giving different opinions. In the beginning this caused difficulties in communication, and in making agreements, with both the organisations located at the Suikerterrein, as well as Ploegid3 (van Bussel, 2019) (Moesker and Soepboer, 2019). Of course a p

municipality as well, so one can not expect everything to run smooth from the start.

## 4.2 The private component

### 4.2.1 Not only an economic revitalisation

Broedplaats de campagne and Rebel Rebel hostel or both companies that are not profit oriented. When asked A. Postma (2019) co-owner of Rebel Rebel Hostel she stated that her goal was not to make profit. She then said *'to make people happy, I do not know. We just really like when our guest from all over the world come into contact with Groningen.* So her goal is to give something to the people visiting and to the city of Groningen. To make it fun for her guest she hosts a lot of activities such as yoga, band night and a knitting club. So the private component of the revitalisation is more than only economic. And with being Groningen's first container hostel, she really adds something to the Suikerterrein. Further contributing to the reputations the Suikerterrein has of being a place of new initiatives.

Broedplaats de campagne an initiative, which consist of creative minds from all kinds of different sectors, is a creative organisation. Their goals is to get a place where they would be able to work on their projects, which they found at the Suikerterrein. So although these are not companies that attract economic activity, they still add a lot of cultural and creative value to the Suikerterrein. This revitalisation through culture and creativity is occurring all over the world. As was stated by Richards (2010): *'By moving creativity to the centre of the urban agenda, a new role was given to cultural events as the creators (rather than preservers) of meaning.'* So by although there might not be any added economic value, there is still cultural value added by these organisations. So one of the private components that has promoted the revitalisation of the Suikerterrein has been the wide range of organisations located there. Making it a cultural and creative revitalisation as well as economic.

### 4.2.2 Adapting to the challenges

A component that has also contributed to the success of these organisations able, was the ability to improvise. Since these companies were here in the beginning of the project, the basic infrastructure was not always there. This resulted in them needing to be creative. Rebel Rebel Hostel (2019) for example had to dig their own electricity line to the factory building, which did still have a working power grid. And the sanitation was all being disposed into a large container which had to be emptied out. Broedplaats de campagne tried to solve this problem by generating their own energy. This was done by way of wind, solar and biomass energy (Moesker and Soepboer, 2019). The fact that the Suikerterrein was a place that was waiting to be redesigned, had both its advantages, in terms of freedom for its users, but as is now apparent, also its disadvantages. Of course laying this basic infrastructure takes up time and capital, so it could not have happened right away.

But despite these challenges both organisations saw opportunities here, a place where they would have the room, and the freedom to make something. And were not held back by the fact that this site was a little unorthodox, and might not have all the benefits of a regular business park, but were able to adapt to the challenge. So resilience of the private organisations is also one of the components that has helped the revitalisation of the Suikerterrein.

### 4.2.3 A distinguished place

The other organisation which I interviewed was the Suikerevents. The Suikerevents is the company tasked with processing all the events at the old factory building. By using this factory as event location, Suikerevents is a really distinguished events location. In the interview with Suikerevents it came forward that companies that use the old sugar factory really like the amounts of space they have, and well as having such a special location. But companies looking to organise something, also need to like a bit of a challenge, since it is still a formal sugar factory. Of course investment were made to make the factory suitable for this purpose. But these investment have deliberately been kept minimal. This way the image of the factory, and the freedom it provides for own interpretation is still there.

## 4.3 Ploegid3

Ploegid3, the agency which is in charge of redevelopment of the Suikerterrein. As mentioned before, Ploegid3 found a way to incorporate the investments made in infrastructure for the Suikerterrein, in the housing development in 2030. With this idea, they were given the right to develop the Suikerterrein. With a solution to the problem of infrastructure, Ploegid3 started developing, and with success, as now 80% of the Suikerterrein is in use (van Bussel, 2019). This development has been done by way of adaptive development. Meaning that every initiative looking to locate at the Suikerterrein would be looked at individually, to see what location will be best suitable. As the Suikerterrein was a real open space in the beginning this way of planning, where each step sets up the next, was a good way to naturally set up the lay-out of the Suikerterrein. This way of development can not go on forever, as space is limited. And indeed with the biggest part of the Suikerterrein now occupied, there is now clear lay-out of the terrain. Here we see again, the success of keeping intervention minimal, and playing more of a facilitating role.

As this project is something that has not been done before, Ploegid3 struggled in the beginning. One part of this struggle was the legal system. In the beginning the Suikerterrein was still being tested against the regular legal system of the municipality. Which caused a lot of difficulty, as the whole idea of the Suikerterrein was supposed to be that of a place of freedom, where people could experiment. If the municipality were to use the standards of regular building permits, and other regulations, this would not be possible. Of course a project like this was also new for the municipality, so the fact that some problems have occurred is understandable. As the Suikerterrein is not a place where laws and regulation can be interpreted in a concrete way, as it would normally. This led to tensions between the different parties in the beginning. Fortunately the municipality has eventually given the Suikerterrein its own building permit. Which means that buildings constructed at the Suikerterrein are upheld to different, looser standards. Making it possible for Ploegid3 to develop the Suikerterrein.

## 4.4 Place specific components

### 4.4.1 A place for everyone

An advantage of Suikerterrein site is that Ploegid3 decided to go with proportional renting prices. Which means that depending on the income of the company, the renting prices are determined. In this way there is also room for the previously mentioned creative initiatives, who might not have that opportunity in the regular housing market. This was also confirmed by Broedplaats de campagne (2019) stated that for their initiative, the regular housing market was just too expensive. So affordability is on the place specific components.

Ploegid3 works with plots about the size of half a football field. In this way, every organisation has plenty of room to what they want, without causing the other occupants any harm. And in this way, the organisations do not have to plan what they are going to do as much, since there is plenty of space to experiment.

By giving also these companies a chance, a sort of breeding place can be created for all sorts of initiatives. When looking at the list of companies located at the Suikerterrein indeed the Suikerterrein is a place for organisations from a wide range sectors (Suiker terrein, 2017). This in turn also creates advantages, as a place with a lot of creativity, sort of a culture hub, also makes it a more desirable place. This was confirmed in the interview with Rebel Rebel Hostel, who saw the creative density as an advantage of the Suikerterrein. As well as in the interview with Suikerevents, where Stobbe (2019) stated that it are the organisations located at the Suikerterrein that give the Suikerterrein its unique image.

On other place-specific component that has been put to good use, is the formal factory. The Municipality of Groningen has done a good job in recognizing that there something they could do with the factory, and saving it before it got completely demolished. After which the Suikerevents has done a good job of keeping the character of the factory. By making the factory suitable for organising events, but at the same time keeping it minimal, they kept the identity of the factory and used it to their advantage.

#### 4.4.2 local initiative

On other place specific component, is the strength of all the local initiatives. All the organisations interviewed, are people from the city of Groningen, and its surroundings. So although the municipality and Ploegid3 are the ones who provided these people with a place for their initiatives, an urban activator, as previously mentioned (Pogačar, 2014). It still are these people that come up with the initiatives. And as we have now established, it are these organisations that give the Suikerterrein its unique look. So strength in local, social capital, can also be seen as a place specific component.

#### 4.4.3 Temporariness

The temporariness provided a loser legal framework. Due to this, the Suikterrein could become a place of experimenting and public innitatives. As now, people who want to do something at the Suikerterrein, are not as bound by all sorts of laws and regulations as they normally would.

### 4.5 Points of improvement

One point of the improvement the basic infrastructure. Both Broedplaats de campagne and Rebel Rebel Hostel did not have running water and electricity in the beginning, and had to come up with solutions on their own. They have eventually been plugged in to the electricity network. Hoeksma (2019) stated that in the beginning of the project everyone, including Ploegid3 needed to find out what did, and did not work, what might be a reasons for the prolonging of the infrastructure. And of course this was in the time after the economic crisis, so the funds to lay this infrastructure were also scarce. So being located at a place which has this little in terms of basic infrastructure and utilities, can prove to be a challenge. Both for the organisations located here, as well as the developer Ploegid3, for whom it has also been an process of trial and error in the beginning. Which is of course understandable, as this site is not your ordinary housing development project.

Another set-back In the beginning the Suikerterrein was portaited as a place of freedom, a creative breeding ground. But this was not always experienced as such, according to Hoeksma (2019), who stated that she still had to cope with a lot of laws and regulations. This was later solved, when the municipality created a special legal system for the Suikerterrein, in which a loser legal framework was set up.

#### 4.5.1 Communication

Another obstacle is the revitalisation of the Suikerterrein, has been communication. The communication between different parties has not always run smoothly. In a number of interviews, it

has come forward that communication was, or is an obstacle. This has been, as mentioned before, from the municipality to Ploegid3 (see chapter 4.3). But this has also proved to be an issue between Ploegid3 and the organisations located at the Suikerunie. In the beginning not yet a clear agreements had yet been made, which lead to tensions. As the different parties had different expectations about the obligations and responsibilities of the other. These tensions have lead to a decline in communication between parties. Which is unfortunate, as good communication is important in any collaborartion. These different expectation might be caused by the inexperience with a project like this. Due to this inexperience, no clear agreements could be made, leading to these differences in expectation. Which has thus caused, a tension field.

This tension has led to a decrease in communications and trasparancy, which has a negative effect on the relationships between the different actors. This despite the fact that this transparency is something desired by all parties. Fortunatly, this is also being improved. As was mentioned by Hoeksma (2019) there has recently been a converence with all the different parties located at the Suiketterrein. In this converence the municipality informed them what future plans were, and what was to be expected. And the infrastructure, which was long promised, has been laid. So after an initial period of tensions, and finding out what works, and what does not work for the Suikerterrein, a better period might be at hand. To further improve this, better communications between the different parties is necessary.

## Chapter 5- Conclusion & reflection

### 5.1 conclusion

The main research question: *Which factors determine if industrial buildings are revitalised? A case study of the Suikerterrein/sugar manufacturing site in Groningen?*

First the municipality has done a good job providing opportunities for everyone who wanted to do something at the Suikerterrein, in terms of handing out loans. Which is in line with Pogačar (2014), who said it's the government jobs to provide local residents with opportunities to participate. And also by making it a temporary spot, which provided everyone that then did want to do something, with more freedom than they would get elsewhere. So the municipality has done a good job in playing a supporting role, without intervening too much.

Which was further helped by Ploegid3, who made the choice to make the rents proportional to give everyone a chance. And providing them with the basic utilities, al be it somewhat late. Which in the end made the place-specific components, that would attract a lot of people. Next to this the temporariness of this project has made more possible. Due to this temporariness, a looser framework could be created for people looking to build, or do something at the Suikerterrein, providing them with more freedom. This has Suikerterrein was able to attract a wide range of companies and organisations that are now located at the Suikerterrein. It are these urban activators. In short you could say, developing better conditions for businesses, and removing obstacles. This is very similar to what Ubaydulla (2015), believed what the function of local government should be.

And by providing these local initiatives with opportunity, as well as a place, to start up their initiatives and businesses, the Suikerterrein has been giving its current look. Which is that of breeding ground for organisations from a wide range of sectors. Be it art, innovation, entertainment, by which the revitalisation has become a cultural one, as well as an economic. Which confirms what was stated by Bailey, Miles & Stark (2004), who saw cultural revitalisation might be an alternative for the 'post-industrial world'.

The project has ofcourse had trouble. Since this is a project that can not be looked at through that of a regular development framework. Making it a learning experience for all the different parties involved. Fortunately, after the initial years, everyone is starting to find their ways. But there is still room for improvement. Communication between different parties is still an issue, as they have different expecatations of one another. Better communication might clear up this problem, and improve relations.

So in short: The success of the revitalisation of the Suikerterrein has been a successful interplay between the municipality and ploegid3, who provided the opportunities, as well as the place. This was then put to good use by the local initiatives, giving the Suikerterrein new life, in a cultural as well as economic sense. Which was all made easier by the looser legal framework created by the temporariness of the project. But, as always, there is room for improvement.

### 5.3 Reflection

The strong side of my research has been that I have done interviews with a wide range of companies. So I was able to get a variety of opinions. I think I linked my findings to existing literature and research very well. I did of course have the advantage that there is a lot research done about revitalisation, and all the aspects that come with it. A clear devide of themain research question into a public, private and a place specific component. With this it was possible get a clear picture of what exactly has made the Suikerterrein a success. What could have done better however, had been the order in which the interviews have been conducted. In hindsight it might have been better to do the interviews with

Ploegid3 and the Municipality first. Since they were able to provide me with a lot of illustrative information, which would help in interviews with the different organisations.

## Chapter 6- References

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