

**Joint International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) / UN-ECE Workshop  
Athens, Greece - 10-14 December 2012**

# **Long term lease of public land for development: international cases of consequence to Greece**

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## **DEFINITION OF LONG-TERM LEASE**

Long-term leases are usually used for development in the commercial context, sometimes in the residential context.

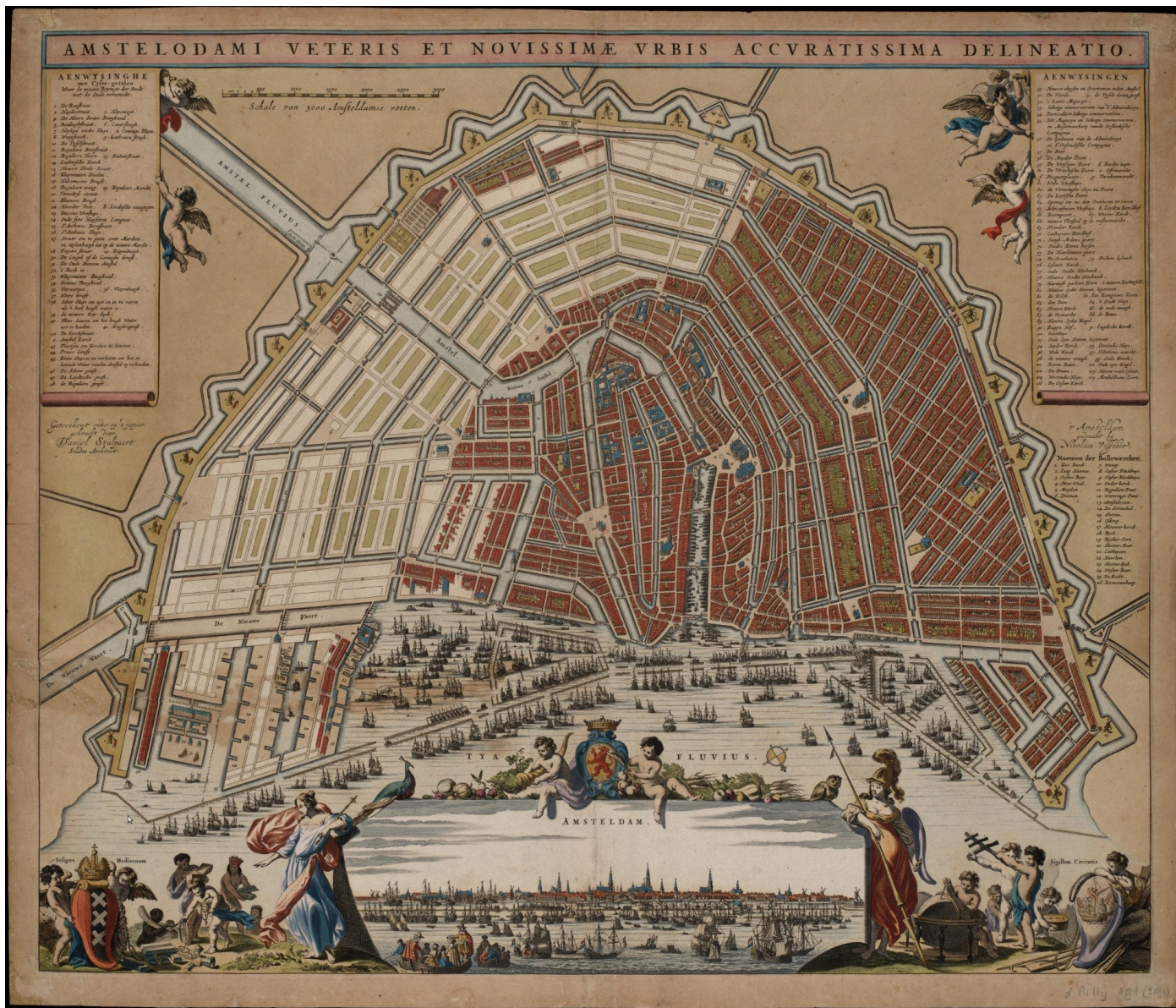
It allows companies/households the use of public lands at a lower cost than acquisition. For example, most ports are run by private companies, but the ports themselves are government property.

Conversely the public owner keeps the long term control on the use of land.



The Mayfair Neighbourhood in London is mostly owned by the Duke of Westminster. All buildings were developed on long-term lease. Other large areas are owned by the Crown Estates.

The Rockefeller Center in New York is owned by and leased from Columbia University.



The "Singel" Canal Area of Amsterdam (World Heritage) was planned 400 years ago and gradually developed by the City Government through long-term leases.



The City keeps full control of the planning process and plot by plot reconstruction.

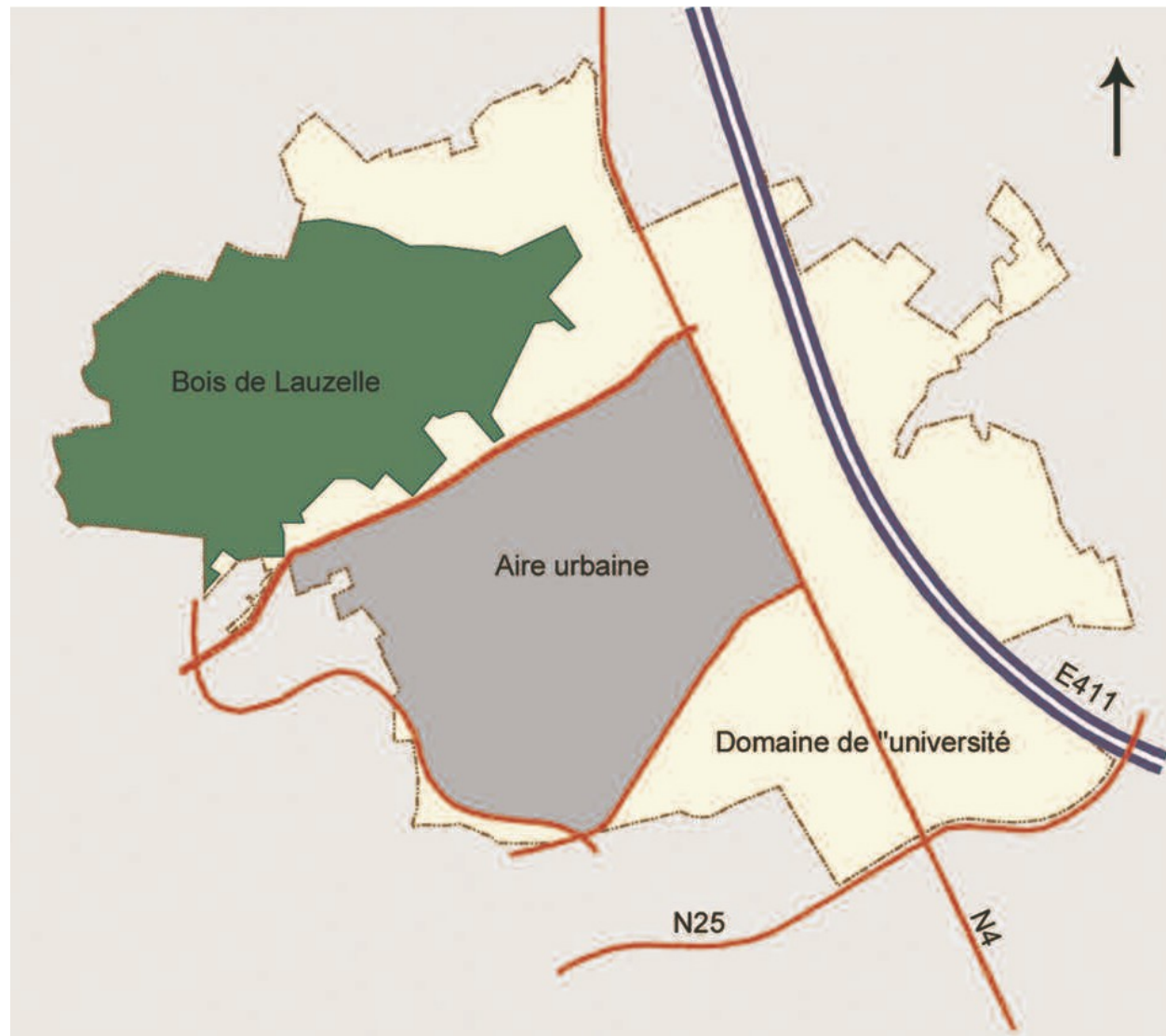


The coastal resort town of De Haan in Belgium was developed from 1880 on long-term leases.



More recently the new university town of Louvain-la-Neuve, 25 km south-East of Brussels was entirely developed through long-term leases. The map shows the dense urbanisation both North of Brussels (Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges) and South of Brussels (Charleroi, Nivelles, Ottignies and Wavre).

The Catholic university of Louvain bought ca 1.000 ha agricultural and forest land in Ottignies: the central part was set aside for urban development; forest land in the North was preserved. The overall master plan and architectural coordination was entrusted to the Groupe Urbanisme-architecture (R. Lemaire, J-P. Blondel and P. Laconte).

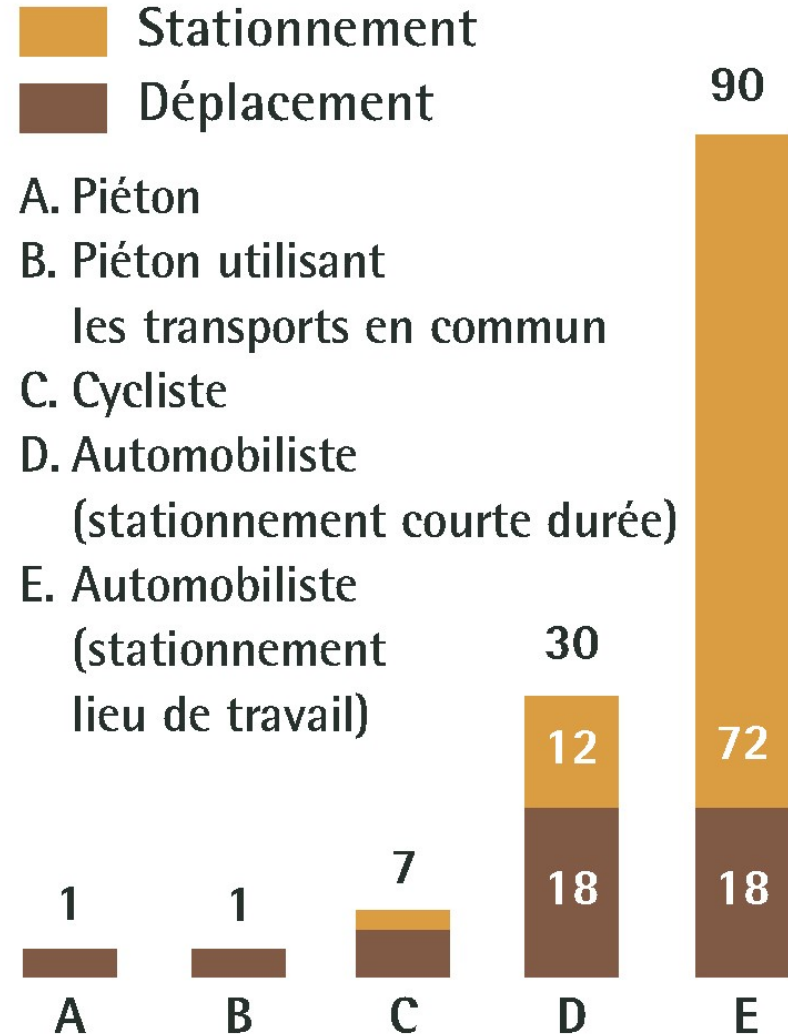




# Planning for pedestrians

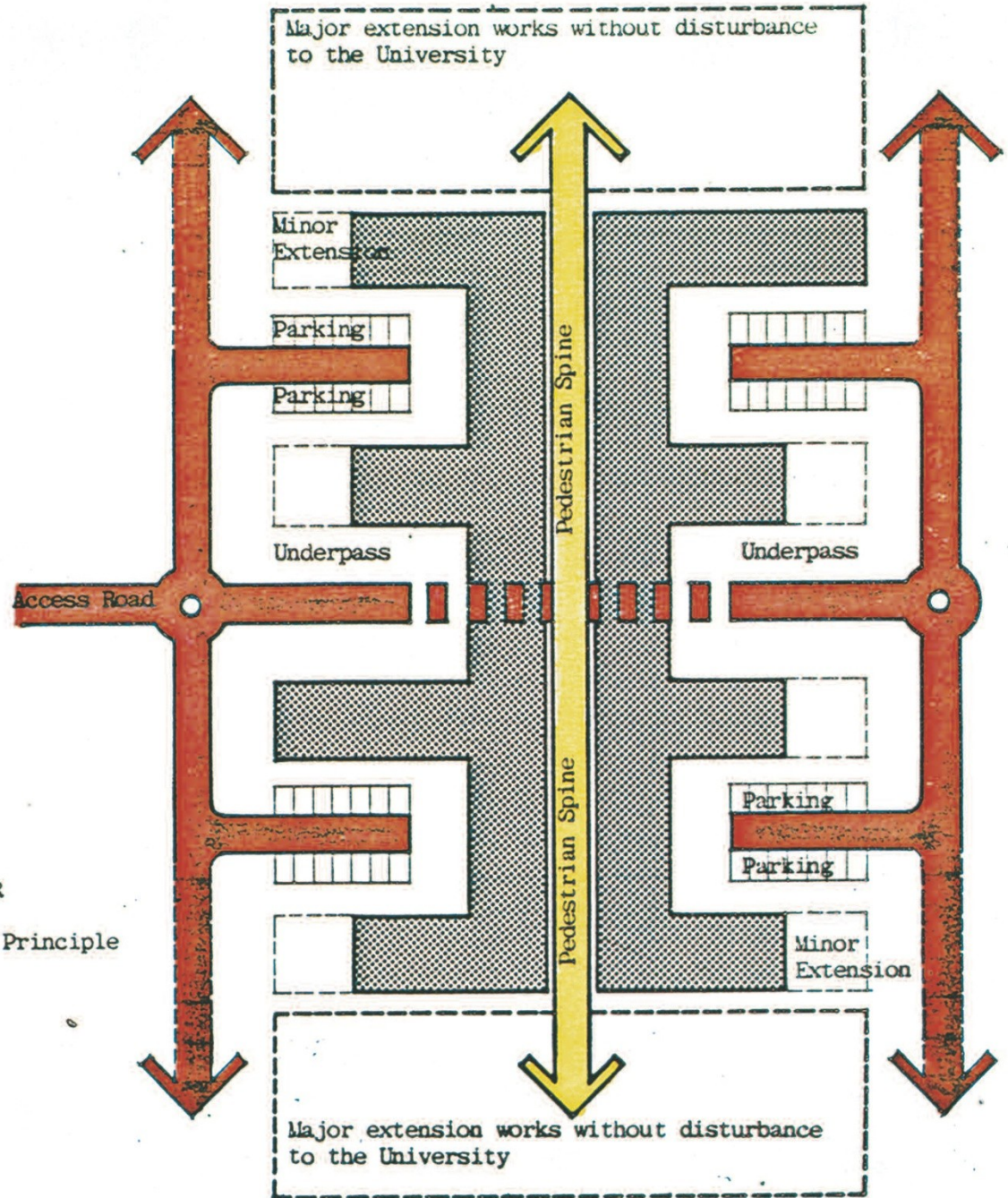
The pedestrian option was taken to save land and costly front transport infrastructure investment. The diagram shows the multiplier of land consumption generated by automobile transport and related parking as compared to pedestrian and public transport.

## Consommation d'espace selon le mode de déplacement et le temps de stationnement



# Planning for uncertainty

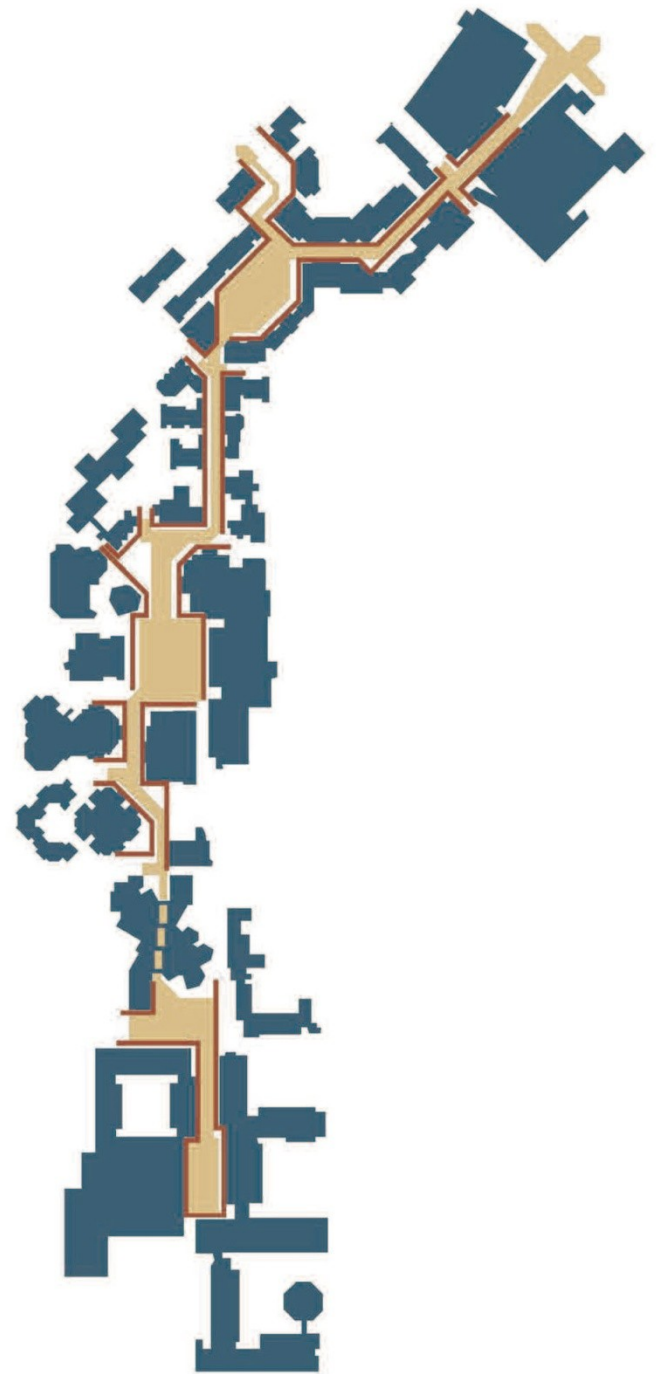
In general a linear pedestrian central spine – in this case the University of Lancaster - allows a step by step (stop and go) mixed urban development, automobile access to buildings and parking being placed outside of the spine, with occasional underpasses.



UNIVERSITY OF LANCASTER

Diagram of Development Principle

The application of this linearity principle is shown in the main pedestrian street of the first phase, starting from the existing road East of the site in 1972 (below), later extended to the Railway Station opened in 1976 (above), to the centre of the city and to the other side of the valley towards the west.





The centre of the first phase was the Science Library, seen as the cathedral of a university town, with its plaza, above an underpass. It is a gathering place surrounded by university buildings, apartments, shops and restaurants (arch. A. Jacquain).



**Parking.** All parking spaces are planted with different tree species in order to attract different kinds of birds. They have become an ornithological reserve.




**The new station (1976).** It is entirely underground, in view of being covered at a later stage, what is presently happening through a lease extension of the shopping center opened in 2005.

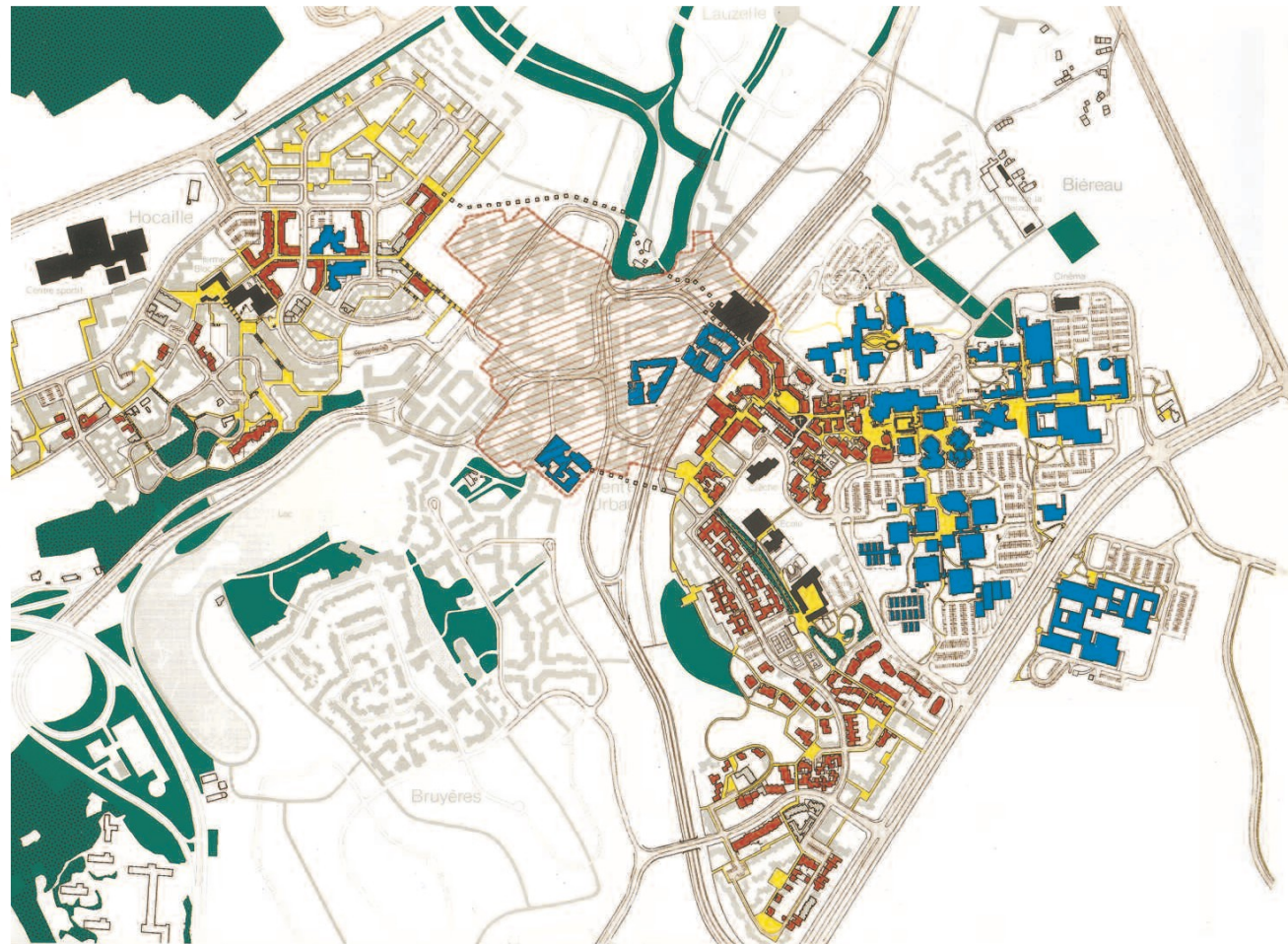


**The Station.** The arcaded entrance of the station (arch. Y. Lepere) on the pedestrian spine is the place where the slab starts.

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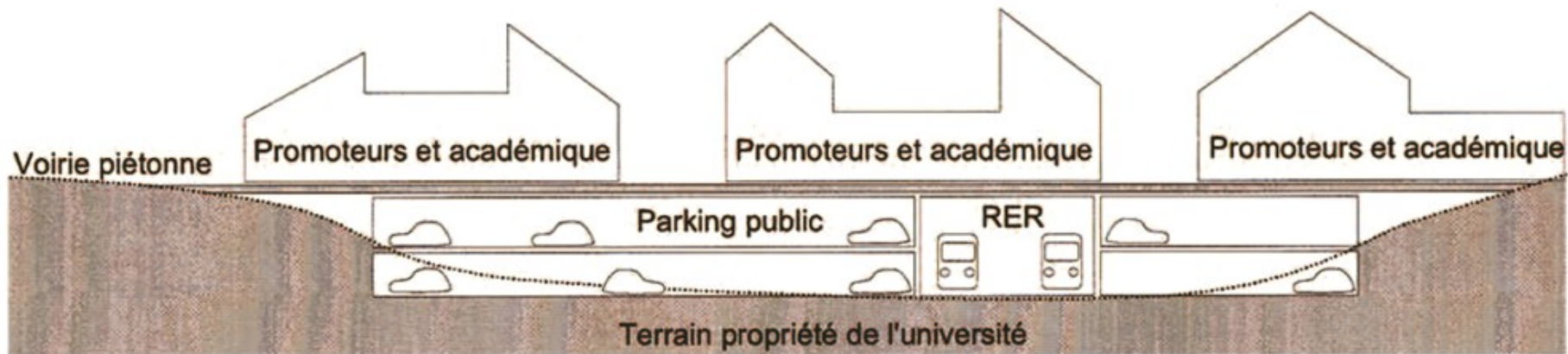
## Légende :

-  centre urbain en construction
-  équipement communautaire
-  bâtiment de logement construit
-  bâtiment académique
-  piétonnier
-  espace vert
-  projet
-  route (construite)
-  liaison piétonne provisoire



**The full development of the East-West spine.** It includes a slab on the lower part of the site, hosting the service, parking and underground access, in addition to the rail tracks.





**The functioning of the slab.** The diagram shows how the underground remains property of the university while the infrastructure and buildings are leased (leases of up to 99 years) to individual public and private investors.



Cafés and restaurants are occupying pedestrian spaces while automobile access and parking use the underground space.

# L'Esplanade

In 2005 a large shopping centre was opened, next to the station, together with a new residential street, on the slab. It met with immediate success (8 million visitors per year) and is to be extended above the rail tracks.





An aerial view of the city taken in 2003 shows the overall high-density low-rise urban form and the potential for further extensions close to the lake, which are presently under development.



**TOKMAKIA ISLAND**

Greece, Europe | EUR 4,000,000

**GREECE.** These international experiences suggest that Greek land in public ownership could be developed through long term leases rather than through sales that entail a permanent alienation.

Navy owns hundreds of islands, now empty, that could be developed on long-term lease, as proposed by former Finance Minister Yannis Palaiocrassas.



The former International Airport of Athens is unused since 2002, on one of the best stretches of the waterfront, surrounded by residential areas.



The Astir Palace resort in Athens is largely owned by Greece's privatization fund. The fund's policy of leasing properties instead of selling them outright has until now deterred potential investors. Foreign examples could be used to justify the fund's leasing policy.