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Foreword

Workplace for scholars

The University of Groningen was founded in 1614 by the Regional Assembly of the City of Groningen and the Ommelanden. The underlying reasons are stated in the deed of foundation, in which mention is also made of the accommodation for the new university:

‘...Over the last few months, we have spent a considerable sum of money on building lecture halls and other buildings for this school, which we now refer to as ours. They are ready and waiting, in a part of the city that we consider most suitable for this enterprise, this training school for the Muses, or perhaps we should say this workplace for scholars,...’

In the first year, the University had 6 professors and 82 students, 30 of whom came from abroad. The University of Groningen has since developed into a top-100 research university with more than 6,500 employees and 30,000 students. Even today, the quality of our accommodation and facilities is a crucial aspect in attracting talented researchers and students from across the world. Our buildings are a means to an end; they create the conditions in which our international university community can thrive. They are intended as a workplace for scholars, just as they were in 1614.

Lecture halls, laboratories, offices, restaurants and study rooms are all essential to good teaching and research, so we regularly take stock of the available accommodation and think carefully about the space and quality we will need in the years to come. Our analysis is at the heart of this Accommodation Plan. The current plan covers the period 2015–2024. It is an ambitious plan, detailing the University of Groningen’s intention to renovate or build more than 150,000 m² of floor area over the next 10 years. All in all, an investment of more than €380 million. But it is an investment we are happy to make because at the end of the day, it is all about providing a workplace that is worthy of our students and researchers.

Jan de Jeu
Vice-Chair of the Board of the University
Facts & Figures:

› founded in 1614
› 30,000 students
› 6,300 first-year students
› 6,500 employees
› 11 faculties
› 110,000 alumni
› annual turnover of €614 million
› 432,500 m² floor area
Accommodation for a world-class university

The University of Groningen is among the top 100 international general research universities in the world. The University aspires to top-class teaching and research, an ambition that makes high demands on the quality of the organization and its accommodation. The Accommodation Plan 2014-2024 was devised to guarantee the required quality of accommodation, both now and in the future.

Growth and development
The University was founded in 1614 in the Menolda and Sywen convent, on the very site of the current Academy Building on the north side of the Broerstraat. During its first three hundred years, the University grew slowly, reaching a total of around 1,000 students. The years after 1945 saw an explosive growth in the number of students, eventually reaching today’s impressive total of 30,000. The University was forced to expand to cope with this growth in student numbers. Although there was initially enough room in the city centre, by the end of the 1950s, the University was occupying new areas: the Hortusbuurt in the city centre, a site close to the Teaching Hospital and one to the north of the city, which was part of the new Paddepoel urban development plan. The University of Groningen had become a serious party in the urban development of Groningen.

Future need for space
The University will continue to leave its mark on the urban development of its home city into the future. The focus has shifted from growth and development to the quality of the buildings and the surrounding areas. Future growth will probably be confined to certain sectors (including green and technology), and an increasing influx of international students. The requirements regarding work, research, study space and surrounding areas are changing, as is the nature of providing accommodation. New teaching methods, the digitization of education and digital assessments are just a few examples of developments that will affect the demand for space in the years to come.

The University of Groningen is also keen on community-forming. Students are encouraged to spend more time in their own faculty, surrounded by like-minded students as well as lecturers. To promote this concept, we need study and resource centres with high-speed internet, generous audio-visual equipment and a range of different workstations where students can concentrate on their individual studies or meet as groups to discuss assignments.

The University’s focus areas – Healthy Ageing, Energy and Sustainable Society – also play an important role in the future need for space. But these themes require more than high-quality research in state-of-the-art facilities. New institutes, the buildings attached to them (Healthy Ageing Campus, University College Groningen, Energy Academy Europe) and the way that new projects are realized, have brought a new dimension to the accommodation remit. The University of Groningen is working towards the future, and sustainability in strategy, concept, materials and energy consumption is the key. We need buildings that last.

Accommodation plan
The impetus for this Accommodation Plan stems from the need to develop the University in every respect, to take account of the age of its buildings and keep abreast of the ongoing demand for a digital working environment. The accommodation remit has therefore been translated into projects whereby, alongside a number of new building projects, existing stock will be developed and renovated. The long-term aim is to provide enough high-grade space for students and staff into the future.

This Accommodation Plan does not include the facilities of the future 11th faculty of the University of Groningen, the Faculty Campus Fryslân in Leeuwarden. Nor does it include our recent plans for an international branch campus in China: University of Groningen Yantai.
From rooms to space

The explosive growth in student numbers seen in the past few decades is set to slow down. With the exception of a few projects currently underway, there is no need for major expansion. A different type of space is needed for the future: flexible, high-quality and sustainable.

Tailor-made accommodation
The Accommodation Plan has reviewed all the buildings and space used by the University of Groningen. The analysis shows that the University of Groningen has accrued enough space to meet its needs, but it is not necessarily in the right locations or of the right quality. Building users were consulted to identify the main problem areas and help devise appropriate measures.

Tailor-made solutions are the key. The best solution to each separate problem area was sought: building, renovating, purchasing, developing, renting, selling, replacing or a combination of these strategies. The same basic premise applies to every measure: they must comply with the criteria on sustainability, flexibility, efficiency and quality.

Quality in buildings and surrounding areas
The University of Groningen has high standards when it comes to the quality and ambience of the space in and around its buildings. A pleasant workplace generates creativity and satisfaction.

Blending with the surroundings is an important aspect of all new building and renovation work. The University endeavours to improve the quality of the local public space. This is achieved on a small scale around the buildings, but also on a larger scale, such as on the Zernike Campus Groningen, where the University of Groningen and other parties on the campus have joined forces to establish a lively, green, shady and attractive campus.

Sustainability
Sustainability is one of the University of Groningen’s main focus areas. Sustainability in property not only means sustainable development, building work and usage, but also includes sustainable demolition at the end of a building’s lifespan.

Sustainable materials, future-proof concepts and flexible layouts are the mainstay of all new building and renovation work. In the long term, sustainable building will reduce the overall running costs. Designing buildings that can withstand earthquakes has recently become part of sustainable building in Groningen. The University of Groningen is careful to incorporate the latest findings on safe and responsible building in earthquake areas (such as Groningen) into its designs for new buildings and large-scale renovation projects.

Flexibility: responding to the latest developments
The best way to make buildings future-proof is to make them flexible. Flexibility also means making sure that a building can be adapted in line with changing needs and requirements in areas where future developments are difficult to forecast, such as digitized learning, new teaching methods, far-reaching digitization of offices and new demands made on workplaces.

More efficient use of space
Space with multiple potential uses can be deployed so as to maximize the efficiency of the overall space, and reduce the organization’s footprint in line with the spatial standards that were renewed in 2014.

In future, teaching rooms, study and resource centres, project areas, conference rooms and restaurant facilities will be more closely intertwined, and areas will blend into each other. This is a more relaxed and smarter way to use the available space.

The use of office space can be streamlined. The traditional personal desk concept will be adapted where possible to create flexible, activity-based workstations that can be used more efficiently and by more people than the traditional office cells.

The total stock of teaching rooms is adequate for the time being. Rooms are sometimes empty but there are also peak periods in which there are not enough rooms to go round. This is compensated for by hiring space externally during the busiest periods. Serious thought must therefore go into making smarter, more efficient use of existing teaching rooms in the future.
2014 // Arts – Oude Kijk in ’t Jatstraat 28:
The Harmony Complex will undergo
extensive renovations once the Faculty of
Law has moved out.

2014 // Behavioural and Social Sciences –
Library area:
The library area will be refurbished once
the book collection has been moved to the
University Library.

2014 // Behavioural and Social Sciences –
Grote Rozenstraat 31:
Building to be renovated and restored to
its former glory.

2016 // Behavioural and Social Sciences –
Library area:
The library area will be refurbished once
the book collection has been moved to the
University Library.

2018 // Philosophy –
Oude Boteringstraat 52:
Quality impulse attic floor.

2017-2020 // Law –
Oude Boteringstraat 18:
The old Public Library will be renovated to
house the Faculty of Law.

2014 // Theology and Religious Studies –
Library area:
Theology collection has been moved to
the University Library. Realization of study
areas and flexible working environment.

2015-2016 // Office of the University –
Academie Complex:
New layout will improve the collabora-
tion within the Office and raise its overall
profile, while reducing its footprint.

2014 // Theology and Religious Studies –
Library area:
Theology collection has been moved to
the University Library. Realization of study
areas and flexible working environment.
City Centre Campus

The traditional heart of the 400-year-old university is in the centre of Groningen. This collection of largely historic buildings comprises the City Centre Campus.

Background
The way that the City Centre Campus has evolved means that it lacks cohesion and any logical structure. The locations are spread around the city centre, so the campus is somewhat disjointed. As a result, many buildings are not immediately recognizable as being part of the University of Groningen and the potential to use the space efficiently is limited.

The number of students using the locations in the centre is not expected to grow to the extent that faculties will be short of space. In other words, there is enough in terms of quantity. However, the age and location of the buildings is causing problems regarding the quality, flexibility, efficiency and potential for use.

Over the last few years, a lot of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences buildings around the Hortustuin have been renovated or extended.

The main problem areas are in the Harmonie Complex, the Usva, the University Library and the Academy Building Complex, including the Office of the University. These problems will addressed over the next few years.

Harmonie Complex: arts programmes hub
The Harmonie Complex is home to two separate faculties: the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Law. Both faculties also use other buildings in the city centre. This close intertwining combined with their dispersal around the city centre prevents either faculty from developing its own clear profile and restricts opportunities for cooperation within the faculties.

The purchase of the Public Library on the Oude Boteringestraat is a chance for the University of Groningen to disentwine these two faculties. The Public Library is set to become the new ‘home’ to the Faculty of Law. Once the Faculty of Law has moved out, the Harmonie Complex will undergo extensive renovations to transform it into the new headquarters for the Faculty of Arts. It will also provide space for joint teaching facilities.

Smart use of space and present-day standards for workplaces will reduce the number of square metres needed by these two faculties and the ‘spare’ buildings they currently use will become vacant. The University of Groningen has not yet decided what to do with these premises.

University Library: more workstations
The University Library has been in use for 30 years and is in dire need of renovation. More efficient use of the space in the Library will create 30% more workstations, more daylight and a better indoor climate. The technology in the building will be brought up to date: a high-speed wireless network and an innovative, more sustainable ventilation system will be installed. Renovation work started in 2014 and will be carried out in phases until completion in 2018.

The Office: greater efficiency
The Office of the University is the collective name for a number of support services. It is a dynamic part of the university organization, which requires a high level of office flexibility. The old, disorderly, remote buildings are restricting the Office’s leverage. The focus is therefore on improving routing inside and between the buildings and introducing activity-based workstations suited to the work carried out by the Office. This will stimulate cooperation among staff, while also reducing the office’s footprint. The project will start in 2015 and work will be carried out in phases over a period of 2 years.
2015-2016 // University College Groningen - Bloemsingel 1:
Renovation of possible final location for University College Groningen.

ERIBA
The European Research Institute for the Biology of Ageing (ERIBA) is an important part of the campus.

UMCG
The hospital and the Faculty of Medical Sciences have worked closely together since the foundation of the Nosocomium Academium (teaching hospital) in 1797.
Healthy Ageing Campus

The University of Groningen wants to become the Healthy Ageing Campus in the next few years. A place where academics, students and businesses work closely together to develop innovations for healthy ageing.

Development
The University of Groningen and the University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG) are doing their best to ensure that the young Healthy Ageing Campus develops into a mature campus offering top-class research and education, and functions as a place where people want to live, work or simply spend their time. They are devising a joint urban development master plan to explore and demonstrate the spatial potential of the area and attract external parties. After all, this area cannot be developed to fulfil the ‘living’ and ‘business’ functions without help from outside the University of Groningen and the UMCG.

ERIBA
In 2013, the completion of the ‘European Research Institute for the Biology of Ageing’ gave the campus a huge boost. The University of Groningen and the UMCG use the ERIBA to conduct joint research into the causes of ageing. The ERIBA building is generally seen as a shining example of the building of the future: high-quality, flexible, sustainable and featuring top-class architecture.

University College Groningen
The new University College Groningen (UCG) faculty started up in September 2014 in a former school building on the Hoendiepskade, rented and renovated for the purpose. As UCG has incorporated the Healthy Ageing, Energy and Sustainable Society focus areas into its teaching programme, accommodation on the Healthy Ageing Campus, possibly in Bloemsingel 1, would seem to be a logical step.

Teaching facilities
The Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Medical Sciences both have problems with teaching rooms. The possibility of realizing new, shared teaching accommodation on the Healthy Ageing Campus is being explored as a means of reinforcing the collaboration between the two faculties.

Student facilities: sport and culture
Facilities for students, staff and other campus residents, including amenities for sports and cultural activities, are also important aspects in developing the Healthy Ageing Campus.

At present, the University of Groningen’s cultural activities are still concentrated in the Usva cultural centre on the Munnekeholm. This building is old and no longer fit for purpose. In order to realize its ambitions, the Usva would benefit from moving to premises on or close to the Healthy Ageing Campus, where a lot of cultural partners are already based.

The sports centre wants to expand close to the city centre. Links with other student accommodations on the Healthy Ageing Campus would make it easier to manage and encourage more students to join.
Accommodation Plan 2015-2024

2015-2016 // University Services – Blauwborgje 8: Building in need of extensive renovation or replacement new building work.


2020-2023 // Sports Centre – Blauwborgje 16: Renovation and possible extension of the sports centre (including on Healthy Ageing Campus location).

2020-2022 // Mathematics and Natural Sciences – Blauwborgje 16: Phased demolition of Nijenborgh 4, Chemistry and Natural Sciences building.

2021 // Kapteynborg – Landleven 12: After SRON and the Kapteyn Institute have relocated to the Zernikeborg, the Kapteynborg will be converted to provide teaching rooms and general amenities.

2016 // University Services – Blauwborgje 9: Building in need of extensive renovation or replacement new building work.
The third key area is the Zernike Campus Groningen. Student numbers in this area, which houses the faculty for exact sciences and several faculties of social sciences, are expected to grow. Several major building projects are already underway.

Green, shady campus
The Zernike Campus Groningen has undergone major changes since it was first built in the 1960s. The spirit of the times is reflected in the buildings. Many of the original buildings have been renovated more than once. The most recent were the Duisenberg Building and the Mercator Building for the Faculty of Economics and Business and the Faculty of Spatial Sciences, respectively.

The current Zernike Campus Groningen has characteristic high-rise, contemporary architecture. Over the last few years, the University of Groningen has added a large number of new teaching, research and faculty buildings to the campus: the Smitsborg (Centre for Information Technology), Bernoulliborg and Linnaeusborg. Several large-scale, ambitious projects are also on the agenda for the years to come: the Energy Academy Europe (EAE) and the Zernikeborg (to replace Nijenborgh 4).

The plans to develop this area are not restricted to the buildings. The open spaces (some of them public) will also be given a facelift. The campus will become a lively, open, green park, with space for cyclists and pedestrians and room for teaching and research, as well as for people to live, work or simply spend time.

Energy Academy Europe
The Energy Academy Europe was established as a location where northern partners could join researchers from the University to work on energy of the future, one of the University of Groningen focus areas. The new EAE building is itself a shining example of sustainability: it makes innovative use of renewable energy sources and operates a low-tech strategy (optimum usage of the natural elements earth, water, air and sun) to save energy and minimize operating costs, while offering high-grade facilities including various laboratories.

As a zero-emission building, the EAE was designed to inspire forward thinking in energy. It has set a very high standard, in fact so high that it is by far the most sustainable (teaching) building in the Netherlands. The EAE is aiming for the highest BREEAM assessment for sustainable buildings: ‘Outstanding’.

New Zernikeborg building
The Zernikeborg for the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences covers approximately 53,000 m², making it the largest new building project that the University of Groningen will undertake in the near future. The new building will replace the outdated building at Nijenborgh 4, which houses world-famous top-class institutes for the sciences. The new building will provide room for some 850 staff and 1,400 students.

In addition to offices and lecture rooms, the new building will also house a wide variety of laboratories, including vibration-proof labs and clean rooms for physics, chemistry and biochemistry.

The ambitions for the Zernikeborg in terms of sustainability are obviously high (BREEAM ‘Excellent’). Building work is scheduled to start in early 2017.

Kapteynborg
The relocation of the Kapteyn Institute and SRON (Space Research) to the Zernikeborg means that part of the Kapteynborg will become vacant. The central location on the Zernike Campus makes this building perfect for extra teaching facilities and central campus amenities, such as shops or restaurants.

Sports centre
The sports centre buildings are outdated. The quality and functionality of the buildings are currently under review. The measures that need to be taken to improve the sports facilities will be announced later in 2015.
Energy Academy Europe

**Energy Academy Europe: a shining example of sustainability**

Total energy consumption will be kept to a minimum by making optimum use of the natural elements earth, water, air and sun. Geothermal heating and cooling systems, solar energy and solar heat, rainwater, daylight and fresh outdoor air will all be used to minimize the energy consumption to just 51 kWh/m².

The building will eventually generate more energy than it uses: it will be an energy plant. Maximum energy will be generated in the building’s outer layer. The position of the solar panels will ensure plenty of daylight inside the building, while also generating solar energy. The possibility of earthquakes has been taken into account in the design for the Energy Academy Europe.

**BREEAM NL: Outstanding**

This highly sustainable building is unique in the Netherlands.

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐
Zernikeborg

Zernikeborg: functional, sustainable building for top-class institutes

At 200 metres long, the Zernikeborg building will cover around 53,000 m² of floor space. It will comprise five floors plus a separate technical layer. The choice of interconnected V-wings means that all the laboratories can be north-facing, preventing excessive heat from the sun’s rays. The large atrium, courtyard gardens and wide corridors with a view of the campus provide plenty of space for meeting places, adding to the campus community spirit.

The Zernikeborg will be built in two phases; the southern side will be built first. This part houses the main entrance, the main lecture hall, the atrium, the basement bike park, the workshop, logistics and several teaching rooms. The clean room and half of the research cluster (including a VC-F section) will also be completed during the first phase. The Zernikeborg has been designed to be earthquake resistant.

BREEAM NL: Excellent

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Conclusion

Everyone who contributed to this Accommodation Plan over the past twelve months did so with considerable pleasure and enthusiasm. This ambitious plan, endorsed by the Board of the University, sets out the strategic path and working agenda for the Department of Property and Investment Projects for the years to come. The Accommodation Plan was devised in close consultation with the other parties directly involved. In a short space of time, countless variables and uncertainties had to be taken into account, and numerous consultations with various users had to be arranged, making this a highly intensive project. Support for the general direction of the plan was generated thanks to the shared commitment and joint vision of all those involved. The importance of this aspect cannot be stressed enough. After all, this is the ‘workplace for scholars’, for the researchers, staff and students of University of Groningen. Setting a course together is one thing; keeping that course steady is another. Steadying the course is more than just implementing everything contained in the plan. The world will continue to change, opportunities will continue to arise and ideas about the future workplace or workstation for research, teaching and office staff will and must continue to develop.

So an integral part of implementing this plan will be working on the plan itself. To ensure that supply continues to match demand throughout the process, we will need a proactive attitude and close collaboration. Partnership and cooperation will be as important during the implementation phase as they were while the plan was being devised.

This Accommodation Plan is therefore a dynamic starting point rather than a static destination.

Collaboration must not only look inwards. In order to keep control while realizing major, challenging projects, we must make use of expertise from the construction sector. Innovative forms of tendering and professional clienthood will be success factors in the ultimate realization. Mobilizing and applying knowledge and experience of market parties is an important goal in this respect.

As well as focusing on collaboration, we also have an ongoing ambition to improve processes and implement innovations in area where ‘new’ and ‘proven’ technology meet. When utilizing technological innovations, the basic premise is to think in terms of ‘Total Cost of Ownership’. The emphasis has shifted from controlling the investment costs to managing the total cost structure of a building throughout its lifetime.

To the Department of Property and Investment Projects, the prospect of spending the next few years developing and implementing this marvellous Accommodation Plan is not only a challenge, but also and more importantly, an undeniable pleasure.

Erika Hepping
Head of the Department of Property and Investment Projects