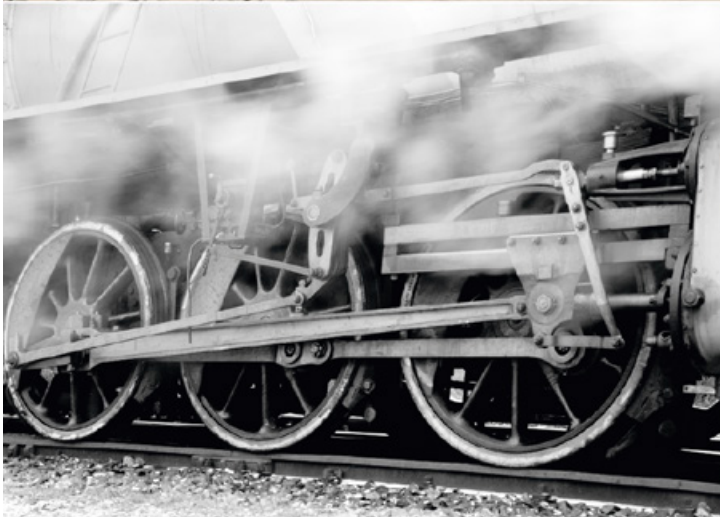
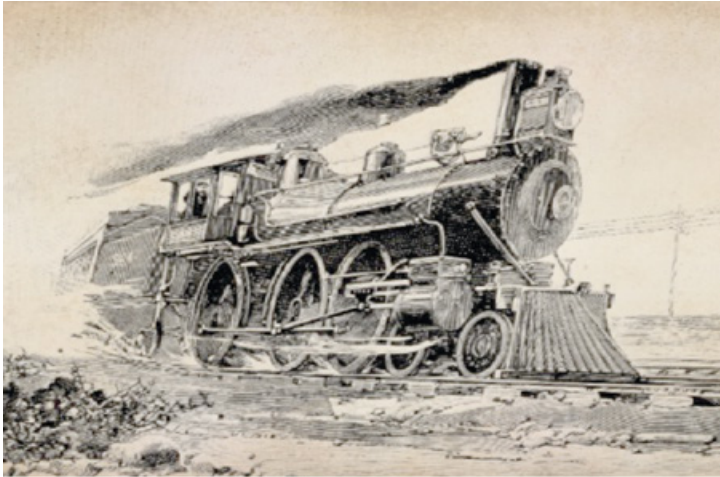




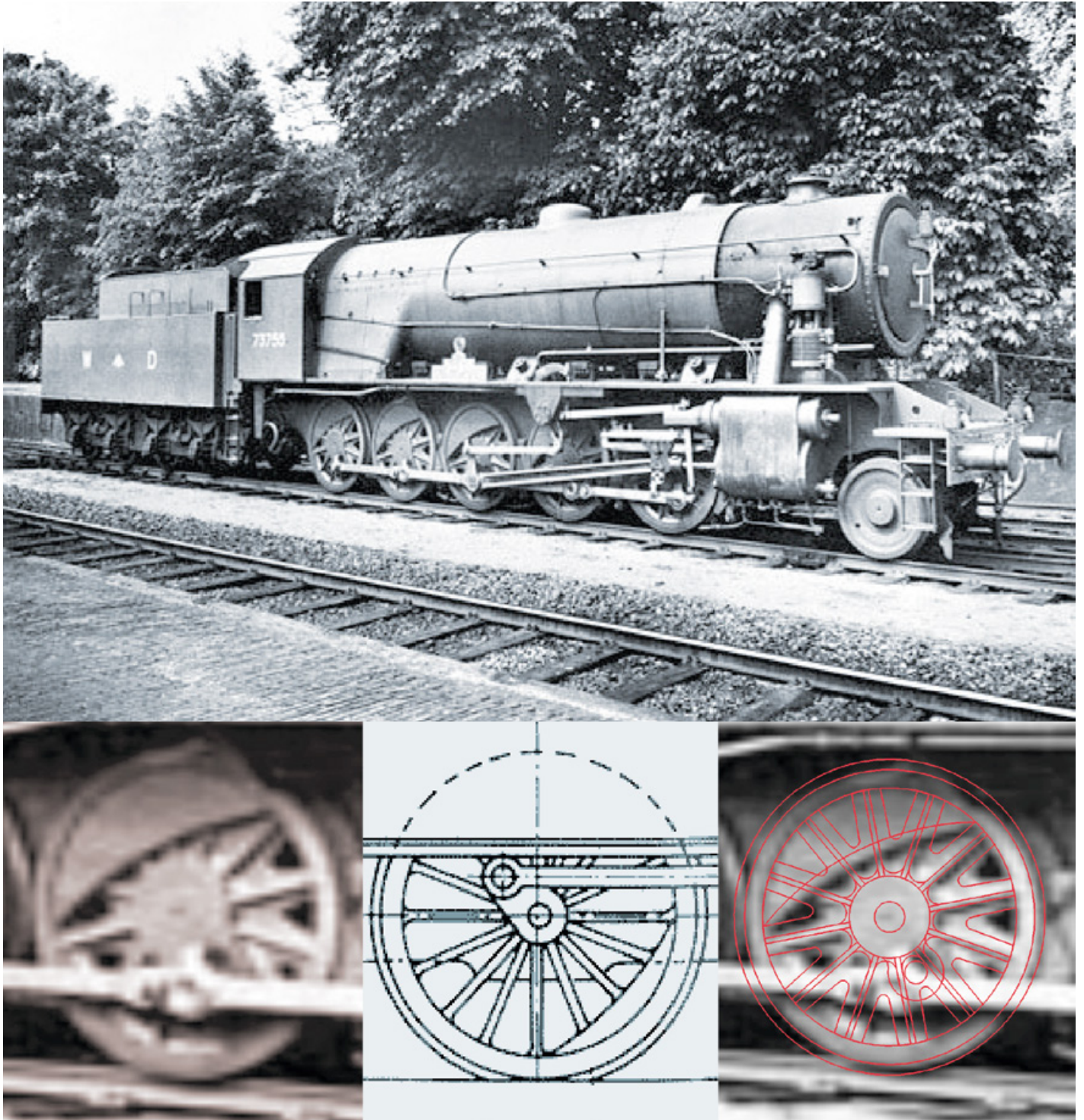
Right through the province of Brabant, a line can be seen. It's straight as an arrow. It is a former railroad, made in the late 1800's, to give local industry a boost by connecting this region to the port of Rotterdam. After years of decline, it recently became a scenic - albeit very straight - path for walking and biking. In 2015, I designed a large scale sculpture as a contribution to a scheme to liven up the route with works of art. The brief asked for a sculpture that would refer to the history of the path and the railroad it once had been.

REFERENCES



A railroad was a symbol of progress. A thing of speed and cutting edge engineering, that opened up areas for freight and passenger transport. Not only did the railway literally put whole areas in motion, they lifted the 'spirit' of the people into a new momentum - one became included in the march of civilization! The speed of the train in pictures is always emphasized by the dynamic oval shape of the wheels. The raging monster 'leans' into the future. The oval shapes of the wheels also had another cause: the early cameras of the industrial revolution required long exposures, and because of this, moving wheels were captured as ovals; the imagination-connection was made between speed and the oval deformation of circular wheels.

THE WHEELS



Different types of locomotives travelled on this line. I focused on the early steam locomotives, partly because these locomotives were the first symbol of speed and progress for the region, but also because the wheels of the steam locomotives are so gorgeous. Supplied by the War Department in England, these steam locomotives were made by the firm of Beyer Peacock & Co. Ltd. in Manchester. What makes these wheels so interesting are the points of engagement with the driving rods, and the counterweights in the wheels - necessary because of the asymmetrical point at which the power of the steam engine drove the wheels.

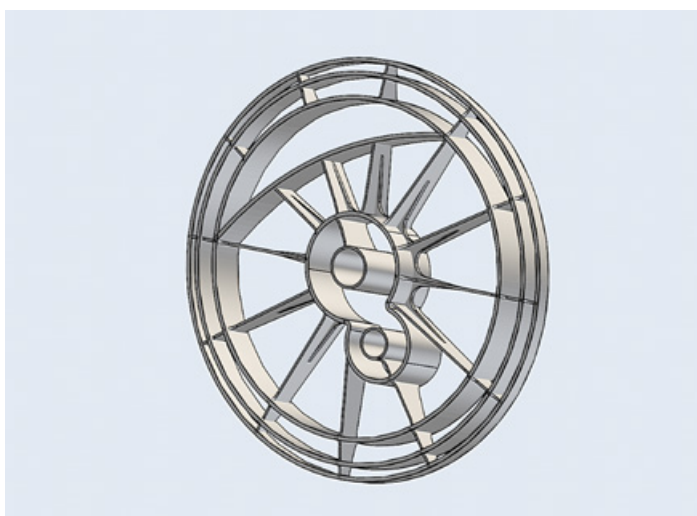
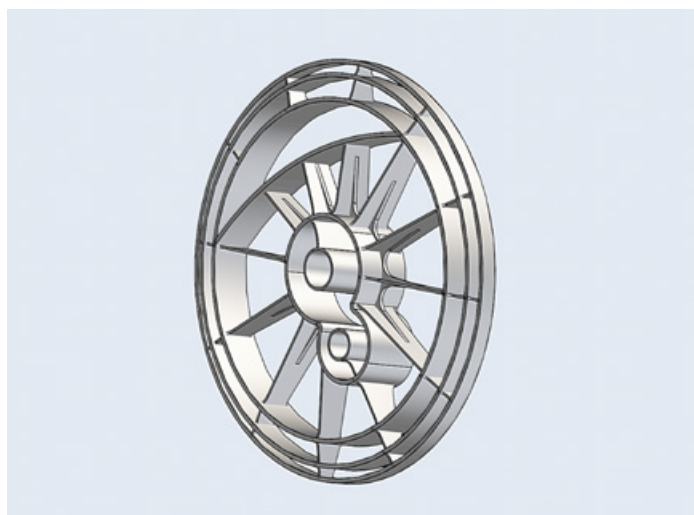
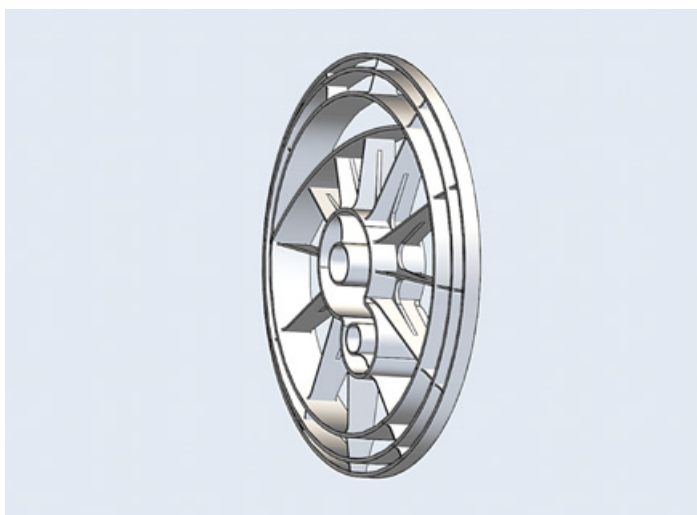
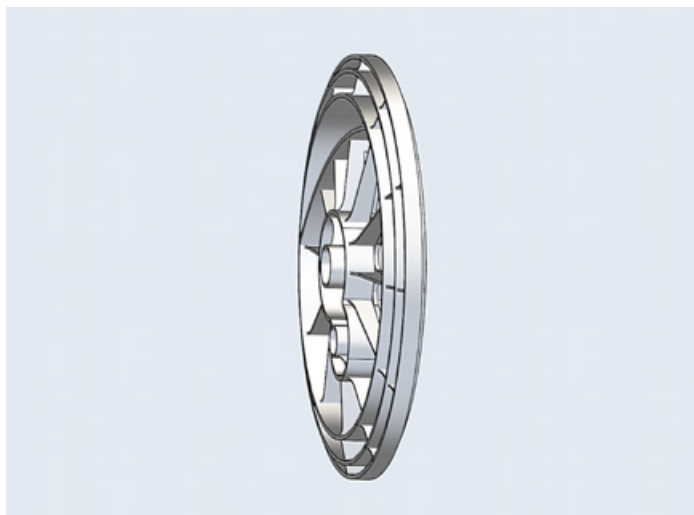
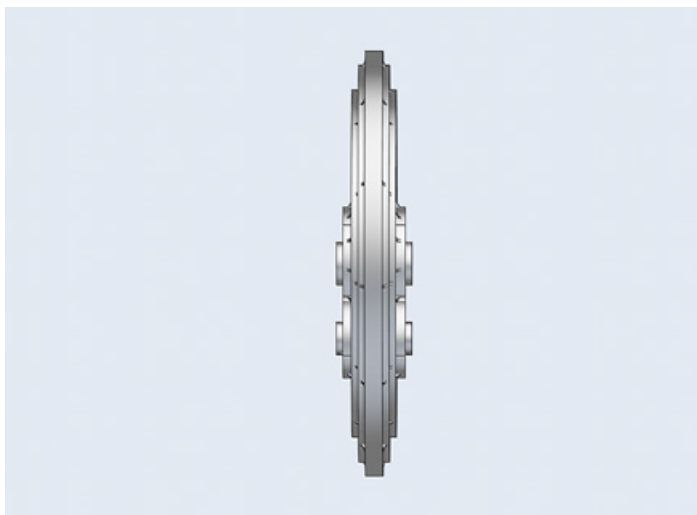
DRAWING



A first sketch was made, addressing the basking light of a brand new future waiting on the horizon (if only the relentless wheel driven by hopeful expectations would be given free reign), submitting the landscape to power and speed.

WHEEL / WAALWIJK

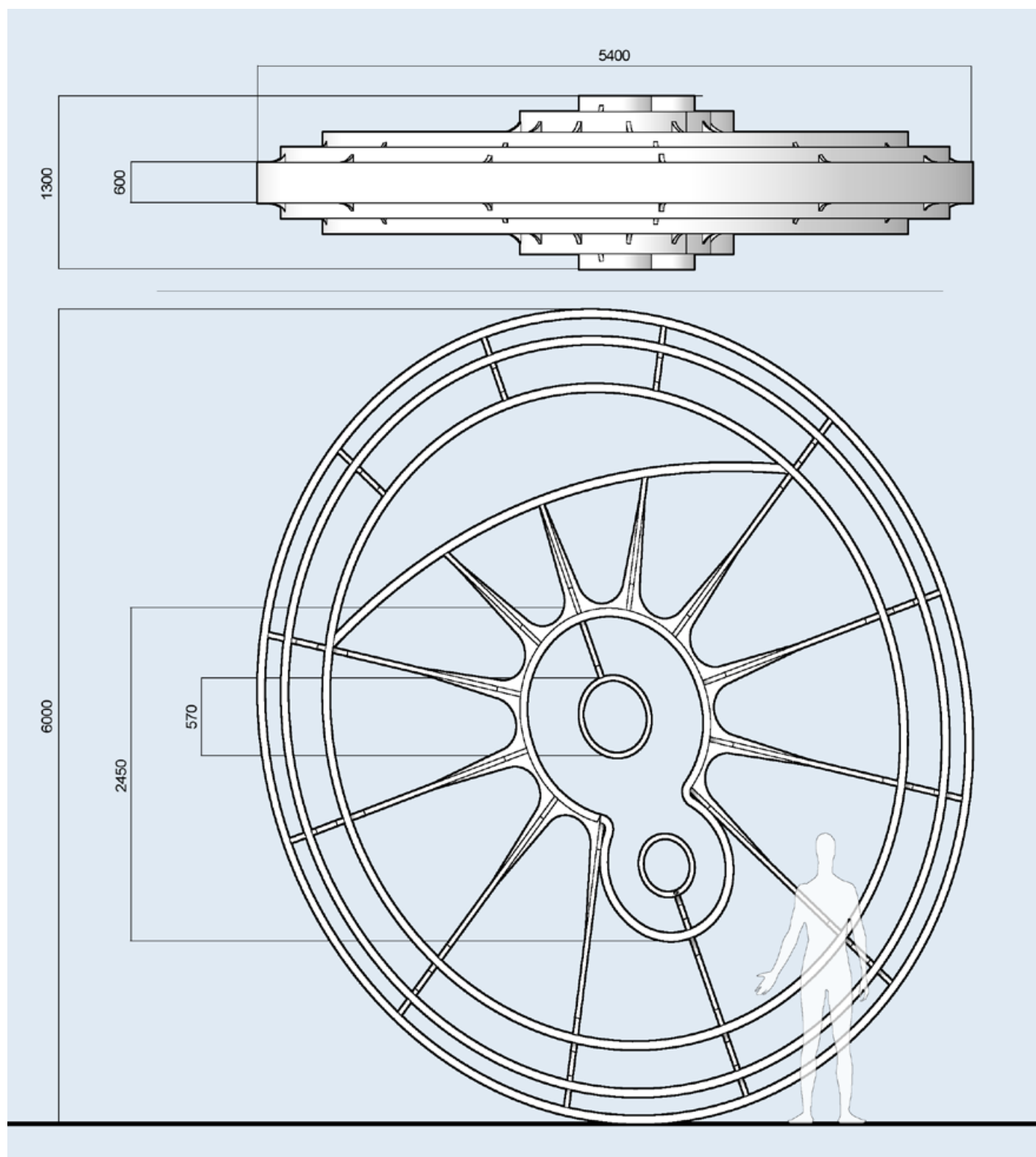
DESIGN



It resulted in an oval wheel-sculpture loosely based on that of steam locomotive. It's not anatomically correct, it's more like a drawing of a speeding wheel in galvanised steel, the normally sturdy spokes reduced to depictions of sun rays.

WHEEL / WAALWIJK

MEASUREMENTS



Measurements are in millimetres, it would be big enough to be seen from a distance, yet the wheel is not enormous for an outdoor sculpture. The wheel 'borrows' the vast scale of the ultra straight path to become monumental.

WHEEL / WAALWIJK

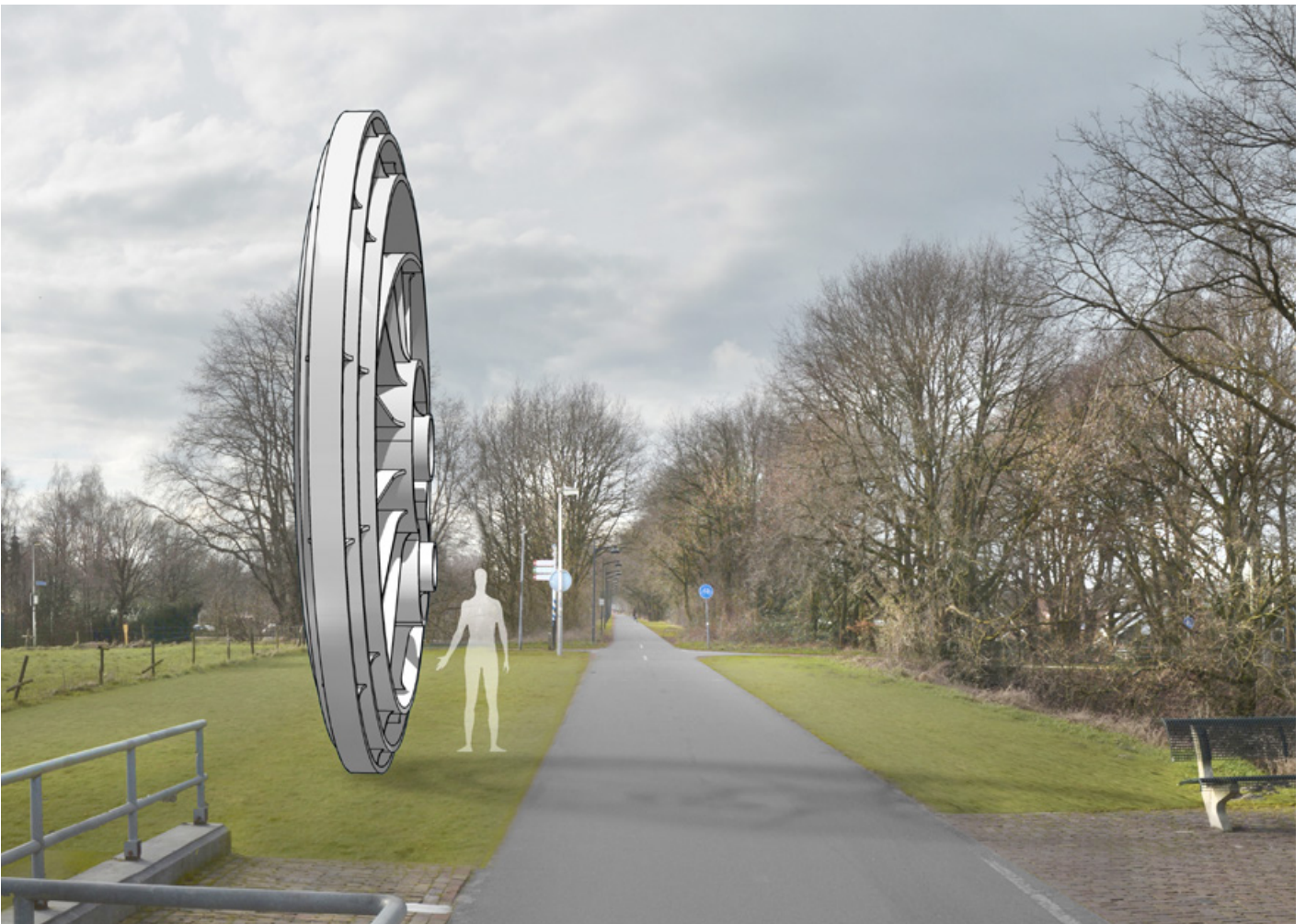
IN SITU



The location of the wheel is on a riverbank near a bridge. Both the bridge and the wheel are made of galvanised steel, creating a similarity in that texture of down-to-earth utilitarian rust prevention.

WHEEL / WAALWIJK

IN SITU



The wheel is best regarded from the biking path, but it can also be seen from the replacement of the railway - the nearby motorway.