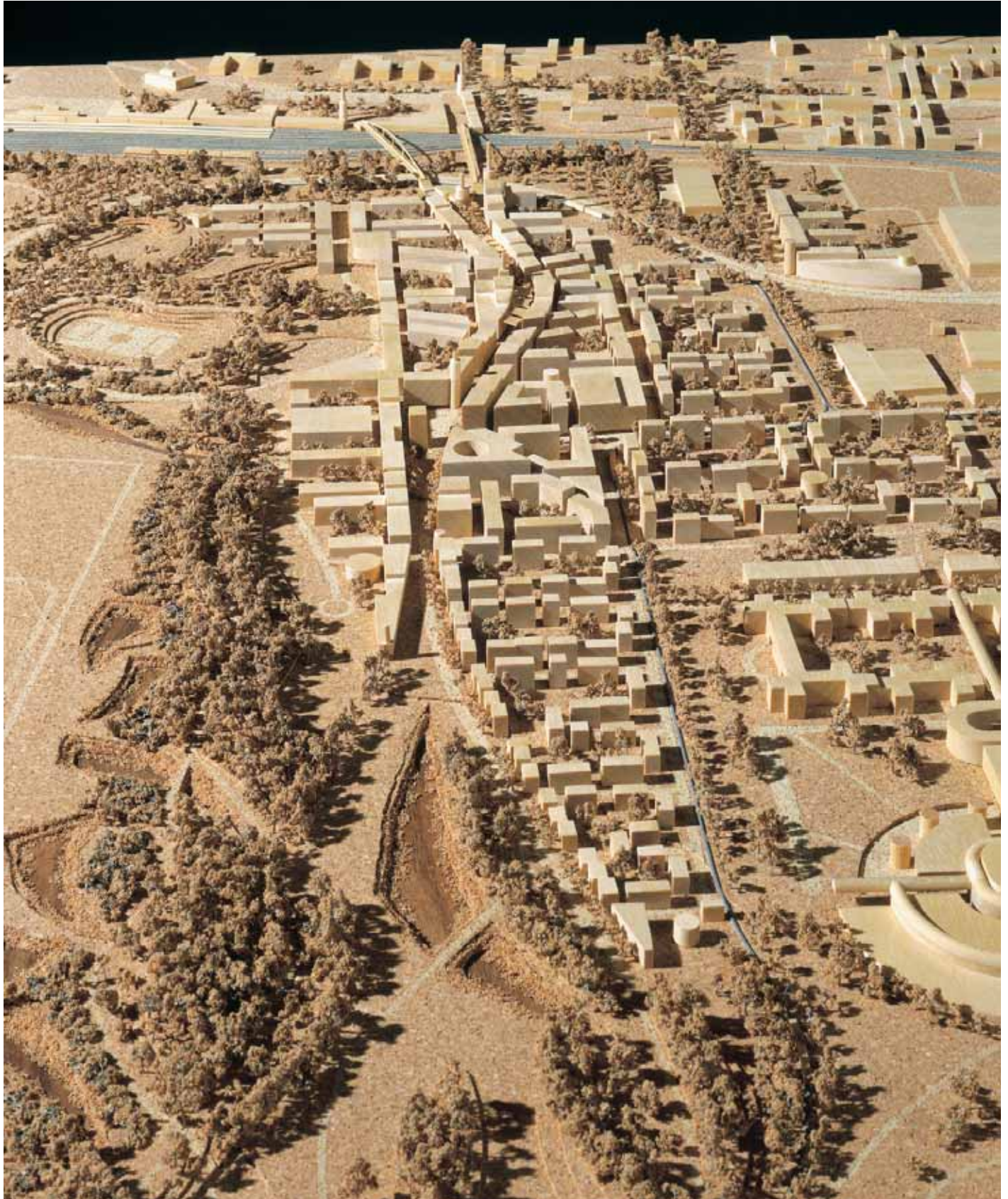


Piana di Castello



Place/Date
Florence, Italy 1995

Client
Comune di Firenze

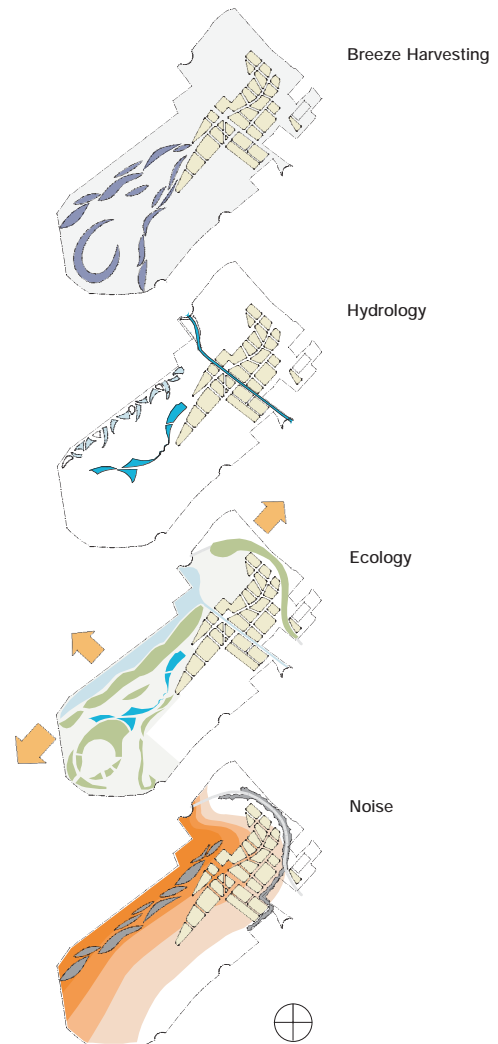
Site Area
80 Hectares

Proposed Built Area
1,400,000m²

Architect
Richard Rogers Partnership

Environmental Engineer
Battle McCarthy

Landscape Architect
Battle McCarthy



Outside the heavily protected historic centre of Florence, the Piana di Castello site is an edge of city development – an ideal location for a new mixed-use urban quarter, a positive and well-ordered alternative to the uncontrolled sprawl that has extended along much of the Arno valley, west of the city. Piana di Castello is close to the airport, with excellent transport links (mainline train station and tram/bus routes) – a natural gateway from the west into Florence and also to the industrial region extending to Prato and Pistoia.

The masterplan, commissioned by the city authorities, includes the proposed new headquarters for the regional government of Tuscany, which will itself be a major source of employment, generating activity across the site. Half of the 160 hectare site will be devoted to a public park. The associated mixed-use, residential and commercial development (with a maximum population of 23,000) would total around 1.4 million square metres, a significant extension to the city.

As in previous masterplans by the practice – for example the scheme for the Potsdamer Platz quarter of Berlin – dense concentrations of buildings responding to wind, sun and the high water table are woven into a landscape that combines areas of green space (providing an acoustic barrier and a degree of flood control) with urban squares and streets in the Italian tradition.

Within the site, the emphasis is on pedestrian circulation, with a central circulation axis connecting the three main squares. Car access from east and west respects this pedestrianised central zone, with primary distributor roads running parallel to the main spine. Residential neighbourhoods are largely arranged around the quieter perimeter of the site. With its woodlands, lakes and wildlife habitats, the landscape contributes strongly to the environmental quality of the site and is in tune with a low-energy servicing programme aimed at long term sustainability.

A pedestrianised central zone created a hierarchy of public spaces linked by a network of green pedestrian routes.