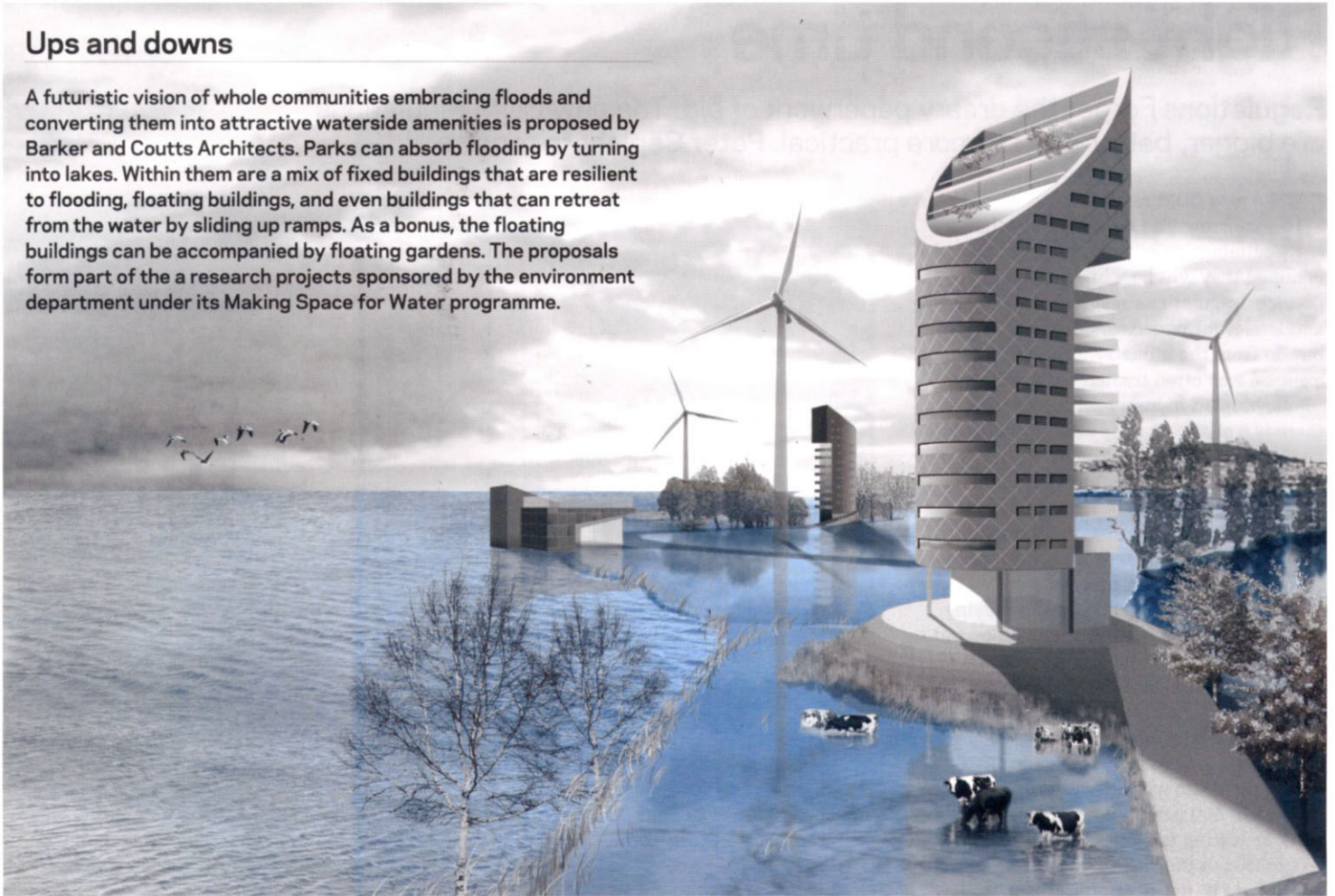


## Ups and downs

A futuristic vision of whole communities embracing floods and converting them into attractive waterside amenities is proposed by Barker and Coutts Architects. Parks can absorb flooding by turning into lakes. Within them are a mix of fixed buildings that are resilient to flooding, floating buildings, and even buildings that can retreat from the water by sliding up ramps. As a bonus, the floating buildings can be accompanied by floating gardens. The proposals form part of the a research projects sponsored by the environment department under its Making Space for Water programme.



habitable spaces to first-floor level, above car parking or other spaces that can withstand flooding.

### Amphibious cities

But looking decades ahead, long-term climate change is likely to demand more radical flood protection. Barker and Coutts Architects is carrying out a research project: Long-term Initiatives for Flood-risk Environments, for the Department for Environment's Making Space for Water programme. Robert Barker and Richard Coutts propose floating or demountable homes and high-rise apartments, so daily life can continue while encircled by floodwaters.

The future has already arrived in the Netherlands, where 70% of the land is below sea level. Here developer DuraVermeer is devising an "amphibious building" that rises and falls with the tide like a houseboat but can rest on concrete piles when the water completely recedes (see page 43).

Kees van der Sande of London-based Kiran Curtis Architects, which works closely with the Environment Agency, doubts such radical amphibious solutions will ever reach the UK.



## The higher you build the defences, the bigger the catastrophe you face

DAVID RAMSBOTTOM, DIRECTOR,  
HR WALLINGFORD

He dismisses such visions of the future as "a blind alley because there isn't that pressure on land in Britain, and a waste of money because they take no account of developers' risk".

Cities floating like lily pads may be a fantasy, then, but the revised planning guidelines provide developers and architects with a lot of fish to fry.

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