

What makes a city? Planning for 'quality of place'

The case of
high-speed train station
area redevelopment



Jan Jacob Trip

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What makes a city? Planning for 'quality of place'

The case of high-speed train station area redevelopment

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To my brother Hans

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Preface

This thesis is the result of several years of research, but it is also, for the present, the destination of a fascinating and often surprising journey. When the issue of a PhD thesis was first raised, three months after my arrival at OTB, I had only recently become deeply involved in a study on the feasibility of automated container terminals. During the next few years, regional development and planning issues gradually took over, and most of all my interest in the functioning and the development of cities. Still, the exact subject of what was to be my thesis remained rather elusive for some time. It all started to become clear on a sunny afternoon in the early spring of 2003, when my supervisor Robert Kloosterman suggested that I read the recent book by Richard Florida. The way in which Florida's ideas, less popular than they are now, could give a clear focus to my research only occurred to me some time later, however, during an evening trip on my bike (which is quite appropriate, since Florida himself says he gets his brightest ideas when he is cycling).

The Habiforum and NWO-Connekt programmes provided other starting points. In particular the focus on HST stations partly defined the selection of case studies. Indeed, one of the main challenges of the project has been to connect the two worlds of 'transport' and 'urban', of networks and places. Nonetheless, in spite of my personal affinity for high-speed trains the thesis is ultimately less about transportation than about 'what makes a city'.

Finally, it is worth remarking that many chapters or fragments from the thesis have been, or will be, published in journals or presented at conferences, although mostly in a slightly different form from how they are included here.

Of the people who supported me during the writing of this thesis, I would like to thank in particular my supervisors, Hugo Priemus, Robert Kloosterman and Erik Louw. They were always there to provide me with advice or feedback on my work, often during lengthy and pleasant discussions: Robert with his enthusiasm and his inspiring broad view, Hugo with his no less wide-ranging approach and his pragmatism, and Erik with his sharp eye for methodological issues.

Furthermore, I wish to thank my former roommates at OTB, Martin Veentjer, Bart Lambregts, Rob Konings and Paul Metzmakers, for their pleasant company – writing a dissertation can at times be a lonely job – and for the inspiring discussions we had on our work and on numerous other subjects.

During my work on the thesis I had many stimulating discussions about the research. Many people provided me with very helpful advice and valuable information on particular aspects of the project, or in other ways showed their interest in my work. I would therefore like to express my gratitude to, in particular, Arie Romein, Marjolein Spaans and Andreas Faludi from OTB, Dion Kooijman and Bert van Wee from the TU Delft, Luca Bertolini and Stan Majoor from AMIDSt, Piet Rietveld, Eric Pels and Frank Bruinsma from the VU Amster-

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Writing a PhD thesis involves more than just doing research and writing it down. Therefore I would also like to thank Truus Waaijer, Martine Lansbergen and Hans Ruigrok, whose support has been indispensable in completing the project and making a proper publication out of my crude manuscript.

I also wish to thank my parents and my friends Jeroen de Vries, Yvonne Bontekoning, Frans Schuurmans and Sjoerd Hiethaar for their continuous interest in my work and their support, sometimes at difficult periods. And, finally, I would like to thank all others who contributed to the completion of this thesis.

1 Introduction

Cities with a long history may be called “deep” or “thick” cities in the sense that they are the historical product of a vast number of people from all stations (including officialdom) who are long gone now. It is possible, of course, to build a new city or a new village, but it will be a “thin” or “shallow” city, and its residents will have to begin (perhaps from known repertoires) to make it work in spite of the rules (J. Scott, 1998:256).

1.1 What makes a city?

For a large part of the twentieth century there was a tendency to disentangle transport and other urban functions. However, with current urban development focusing strongly on transport nodes, it is virtually impossible to separate the two; least of all in the case of railway station areas, where many transport modalities come together and closely intertwine, mostly in existing urban areas and often in or close to densely built inner cities. As a consequence of all this, station development projects are among the most complex of urban development schemes in terms of design, planning and organisation. These are the projects I will focus on in this thesis.

I should make clear straightaway, however, that while I deal with station area redevelopment, my primary focus is on urban quality rather than transport issues. Urban quality, a somewhat ambiguous concept, is nevertheless considered to be of increasing importance by a wide range of authors and practitioners in urban geography, planning and design. Focusing on the role of urban quality in current large-scale urban redevelopment, I deal with the redevelopment of the areas around high-speed train stations as an illustration – a prominent case – of processes that take place much more widely; as a test case of current urban planning practice.

Consequently, I shall consider railway station area redevelopment primarily from an urban development perspective, focusing on the station as a *place* rather than a transport node, and on the station *area* rather than just the station building itself. High-speed trains in particular involve highly ambitious, large-scale urban redevelopment schemes in many cities. But how should we approach this urban development? Should we focus on real estate square meterage and the number of dwellings that are constructed, or rather on the functions developed and the number of jobs created? My argument here will be that urban development should be about the city as a whole, and that, physical structures aside, this involves other, more subtle characteristics; furthermore, that the latter are of economic importance and can, to a certain extent, be made operational. This inevitably leads to the more essential and perhaps even more difficult questions of what makes a city and, in particular, what makes a good city – and what makes the station area a good urban space. And, lastly, to what extent a good urban space can be planned.

How, then, to develop the station area in such a way that it becomes part of an attractive, vibrant urban space? A sceptic observer's point of view would be that deliberate planning tends to produce dull places at best and outright dreadful ones at worst. And many examples, particularly from the modernist planning era, would support his case. Attractive cities, it would seem, are not developed; they evolve over time. An urban planner, in contrast, might argue that perhaps this is too sceptical an approach. Do the designer's sketches not show vivid street scenes, with shops, terraces and happy people all around? Even the sceptic would admit that the plans look nice. Of course they do, almost per definition, or they would not be followed through in the first place. But the eventual results are likely to be disappointing. Attractive plans do not always result in attractive places; eventually it is social reality and not paper reality that counts.

From the perspective of the sceptic observer, then, one could say that most current large-scale development projects seem to be largely profit-directed, even with respect to the role of public actors; that they result in areas filled with office space, shopping centres and expensive apartments, empty and monotonous areas for at least a part of the day. The planner could do nothing but admit that these functions are certainly the most profitable in financial terms, and that they do not necessarily result in the most attractive, lively areas of the city. But perhaps we should be reasonable about this. Such functions at least provide sufficient funds. Without them, the redevelopment of the city would not have been possible at all. A railway station on its own does not develop a whole area.

Still, the presumed short-term interests of developers may conflict with the non-profitable elements that make an attractive area. The planner might add that quality will only become more important now that its economic value is increasingly being recognised. It is now acknowledged that urban quality may actually pay off; if perhaps not immediately, then certainly in the long term. The sceptic would not believe this either, nor would he believe that the location of many station areas in city centres or the prestige added by the high-speed train might increase the attention paid to urban quality. So much the worse, he would say, if these towering ambitions only lead to another series of monotonous office locations.

A fierce debate may arise, therefore, over the role of urban quality in the redevelopment of the areas around high-speed train stations. In the next sections I shall approach the issue from two perspectives: first, starting from the implementation of the high-speed train as an inducement and supposed generator of urban economic development; second, from the development of the station area itself as a part of the city. The objectives, approach and methodological details of the research are discussed in the remaining sections of the chapter.

1.2 The high-speed train

It is significant that not only have space values entirely changed to time values, now ready to form new standards of movement-measurement, but a new sense of spacing based upon speed is here. Mobility is at work upon man in spite of himself. And, too, the impact of this new sense of space has already engendered fresh spiritual as well as physical values (Wright, 1958:82).

The introduction of the high-speed train is probably the most important development in European passenger transport in decades, and certainly an important one with respect to the spatial economic development of Western European cities. Originally introduced in Japan in 1964 as the Shinkansen, the HST was first implemented in Europe with the development of the TGV (train à grande vitesse) and the opening of the Paris-Lyon line in 1981 (Figure 1.1). It was an instant success. The TGV competed successfully with domestic air transportation. Air passenger numbers between Paris and Lyon halved between 1980 and 1984, and rail passenger figures increased in spectacular fashion from 12.5 million in 1980 to 20 million in 1985 and 22.9 million in 1992, 18.9 million of which were TGV passengers (Vickerman, 1997:24). The TGV was also highly profitable almost from the start. The French railway company SNCF financed the first lines on the basis of an estimated yearly profit of 12 percent, but in reality the TGV Sud-Est (to Lyon) generated a net return of no less than 38 percent and the TGV Atlantique (to Bordeaux) returns of 22



Figure 1.1
Double-decker
TGV Duplex
high-speed
train at the
Gare de Lyon,
Paris

percent. This meant that investments in the Paris-Lyon line were recovered in only twelve years (Vickerman, 1997:26).

During the 1980s and 1990s the French network was expanded steadily. The *Tout TGV* policy envisaged the development of a high-speed network throughout the entire country, with 4,700 km of high-speed track, of which as much as 1,300 km was operational in 1997. Shortly afterwards this policy had to be abandoned, however, as it became clear that its costs would be enormous and the revenues of the soon-to-be-constructed lines much less than those of the existing ones, since the most profitable connections had been constructed first (Sénat, 1998; Powell-Ladret, 1999:40). In the meantime, other European countries had begun to develop their own high-speed systems, most notably the German Inter City Express or ICE, the AVE (Alta Velocidad Española) in Spain and the Pendolino tilting train in Italy. Several European systems are based on the TGV. One such system is the Thalys, a TGV-type PB(K)A train connecting the Benelux to Paris and Cologne;¹ another, the Eurostar between London, Paris and Brussels. With the expansion of the network in France, Germany and other countries, a European network has gradually come into existence, which is strongly favoured by the European Union's Trans-European Network policy.

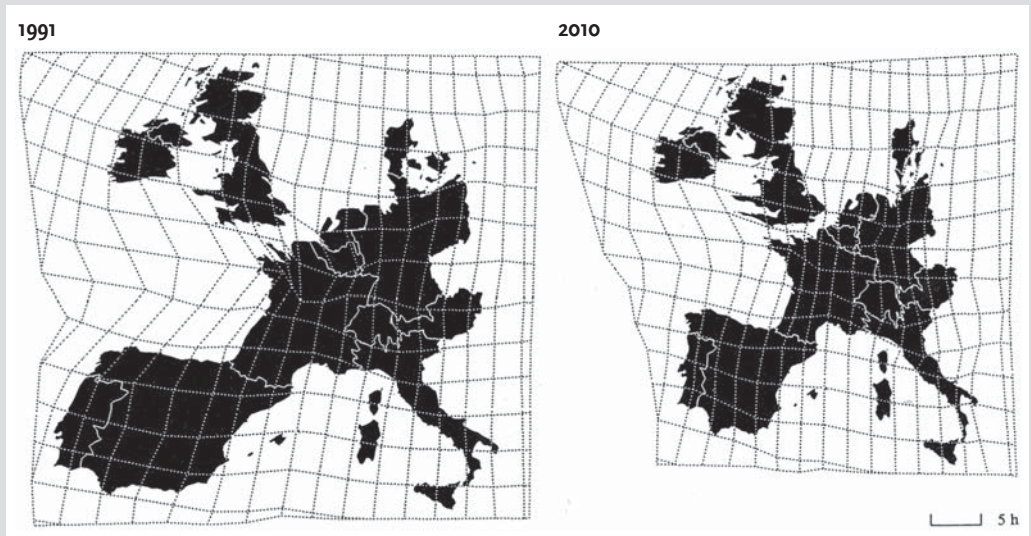
However, not only is the French system the oldest; within Europe, the high-speed train itself and also the spatial and societal impact it brings about has probably developed most extensively and most consistently in France. Economic, geographical and institutional circumstances all favoured the development of the system. When developing the TGV concept, the SNCF had the rare advantage of a new, more market-oriented approach combined with considerable freedom and ample public funding (Powell-Ladret, 1999:39; Pol, 2002:158). Furthermore, the qualities of the TGV suited France's spatial structure perfectly, with relatively few large cities and long distances, all the more so since air transport was still rather expensive at the time. Lastly, the development of the TGV can hardly be considered separately from the French tradition of large-scale, technologically advanced projects, placing it alongside Concorde, Minitel and the sadly ill-fated Aramis.² It may be said, then, that the TGV marked the introduction, at least in Europe, of a kind of *savoir-faire* with respect to the high-speed train.

The impact of the high-speed train goes well beyond its mere transport-technical aspects. Like the railway itself before, the European high-speed

¹ Paris, Brussels, Köln, Amsterdam; the older PBA type does not run to Cologne.

² Probably the least known of these examples, Aramis was to be an urban transport system based on small four-passenger modules, developed between 1969 and 1988 for the Paris transport company RATP. It was never implemented due to (among other reasons) the, at that time, extremely complex technology it required and a fading enthusiasm among engineers and politicians (Latour, 1996).

Figure 1.2 Shrinking Europe



Source: Spiekermann and Wegener (1994)

network considerably accelerates the process of time-space compression in Europe. The significant reduction in travel times between cities and regions over recent decades has been interpreted most expressively in the map of 'shrinking Europe' by Spiekermann and Wegener (Figure 1.2). The map shows how distances are deformed in relation to travel time between regions by high-speed train (not including, therefore, the effects of increasing air transport). Planned improvements will, for a constant timescale, effectively bring regions closer together. In 1991, shrinkage is mainly limited to France, which at that time had by far the most extensive high-speed network. By 2010, the European network will have been expanded and other countries will be affected too, notably Spain, Italy and Germany.

However, time-space compression involves more than merely shorter travel times (Janelle and Gillespie, 2004:667). There is also a strong cultural element in it. According to Harvey (1990:240), it entails:

... processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves.

This aspect is crucial to understanding the impact of the high-speed train on urban development. Besides being an efficient means of transport for many, the HST has an international image: the mere possibility of lunching in Paris and being back in Amsterdam, London or Marseille before dinner – even if few people actually do – and the possibility of commuting over long distances. Moreover, it provides an elegant way of travelling. The high-speed train is considered clean, chic and stylish, making a large part of many railway companies' rolling stock look like old junk in comparison. Altogether, at present it enjoys more or less the same fashionable image that was the preserve of the



Figure 1.3 Gare Avignon TGV (Jean-François Blassel and Jean-Marie Duthilleul, left); Gare Lyon-Satolas at Lyon Saint Exupéry airport (Santiago Calatrava, right)

aeroplane in earlier decades.

This image is reflected in the new stations that are being built in many cities. Of particular note is the striking architecture of many high-speed train stations, which calls to mind the glorious railway cathedrals of the nineteenth century. Well-known examples are Lille Europe and, perhaps to a greater extent, Santiago Calatrava's Liège Guillemins and Lyon Saint Exupéry stations (Figure 1.3, right). But smaller stations such as Avignon (Figure 1.3, left), Aix-en-Provence and Valence also demonstrate the extent of the design ambition of TGV stations. Furthermore, many of the existing stations where the HST will call are being renovated and enlarged. These include Antwerp Central, Brussels Midi, Rotterdam Central, London St Pancras and, before that, Waterloo.

The implementation of the HST leads to urban and, supposedly, economic development around the stations it calls at, and most notably to the redevelopment of station areas in many cities. However, the effects that cause HST stations to become architectural showpieces also raise expectations with regard to the economic effects of the HST. This is based on the accessibility effect of the HST, as well as on the abovementioned image. As one station planner stated, the list of cities that are relevant in Europe nowadays equals the list of cities included in the HST network; this may not be entirely true in fact, but it is increasingly the way things are perceived, which makes it a reality in effect. Thus, the HST fuels the ambition of European cities increasingly involved in a mutual, international competition for economic growth and prestige, not unlike large events such as the Olympic Games or World's Fairs (cf. Shoval, 2002).

The question of the extent to which these ambitions are justified in the sense that the arrival of the HST may indeed be reasonably expected to generate such large economic growth is the subject of a wide and diverse field of research on infrastructure development and urban and economic development; some of this will be discussed in Chapter 3. The main question here, however, is how this large-scale redevelopment of station areas is taking place, and to what extent it contributes to vibrant, lively urban areas. Moreover, it is increasingly recognised that there is an economic dimension to this also, as urban quality and an attractive urban climate are considered economic assets in addition to, for instance, accessibility and the availability of office space.



Figure 1.4
Railway cathedral in
anticipation of
the high-speed
train

1.3 The dilemma of international business location³

Many HST station areas take the form of what we may term ‘international business centres’: locations that aim to attract the offices (head offices in more ambitious areas) of, in particular, internationally oriented producer services, without actually disregarding the main offices of international manufacturing or energy firms. Euralille, for example, was developed explicitly to become a European Business Centre; in Amsterdam, international banks did in effect initiate the development of the Zuidas before local authorities joined in. The HST may facilitate the development of an international business centre for two main reasons. First, it provides additional transport facilities, which are especially important given that knowledge-intensive business still very much depends on face-to-face contact. Second, but by no means less importantly, the HST station provides an image that suits international business. Neither is indispensable: exemplary centres of international business such as La Défense or Canary Wharf can do without, as long as they are experienced as a part of Paris and London respectively. But for cities of a somewhat smaller calibre, high-speed rail connections and image are particularly valuable assets, and the HST is considered a must-have by local politicians.

International business requires large amounts of modern, efficient office space, which can no longer be accommodated in inner cities and, instead, often results in large-scale, monotonous and rather schematic areas. This places many cities in the dilemma of how to meet the requirements of international business without being left with a local version of Brussels’ Quartier

³ I benefited from a discussion with Martin Aarts (Head of the Design Group at the Department of Urban Planning and Public Housing, Municipality of Rotterdam) regarding the issues dealt with in this section.

Nord. Neglecting the demands of business is not an option, as any large city needs this kind of activity in order to prosper economically, and competing cities are eager for any opportunity to fill the gap. Even cities such as Paris and London cannot neglect the requirements of international business. This partly explains the existence of locations such as Canary Wharf and La Défense. The latter was developed in order to 'protect' inner-city Paris from modern office development and to accommodate, at the same time, the demands of international business (Hall, 1999:109; Rykwert, 2000:222 ff.). As Rem Koolhaas states:

Criticism of La Défense clearly centres around its alleged ugliness and lack of elegance and refinement. What it ignores is the very important fact that by acting as a repository of the contemporary in all its triumphant nakedness, it has spared Paris from an imposition of the very same thing (in: Koolhaas *et al.*, 1996:189).

Indeed, many of these areas fail to provide the quality and metropolitan atmosphere required for high-end locations, being monotonous and dull rather than lively and vibrant (Figure 1.5). It is true that romance, mostly, does not bring in profits. The type of firms that locate to these areas tend to be quite sensitive to the quality and status of their offices, however. Quality of the urban environment, for instance the quality of architecture and urban design and the attractiveness of public spaces, may actually prove profitable in terms of increased real estate revenues, despite the additional investments it requires (Rowley, 1998; UCL, 2001; Sparks, in: Bell, 2005:101). Another line of thought relates a more diverse set of urban quality or quality of life issues to the competitiveness of cities in the long term (Kresl, 1995; Segedy, 1997; Rogerson, 1999; Gospodini, 2002; 2006). In recent years, Richard Florida has been the most notable advocate of this idea. Building on the work of Marshall (1920), Schumpeter (1939), Reich (1991) and in particular Jane Jacobs (1961; 1969), Florida stated in *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002a) that advanced service economies are driven by a specific creative class. This, in turn, should be attracted and retained by certain characteristics of the day-to-day urban environment, which Florida defines as 'quality of place'. In short, in order to be attractive top-end business locations, these areas must provide some of those urban qualities they seem to be incompatible with. Still, relatively little is known about how this takes shape in actual redevelopment projects (Spaans, 2004:341).

Thus, the quality of the HST station area is in one way or another relevant to its potential as a high-end business centre. Moreover, unlike La Défense or Canary Wharf, HST stations are often located in city centres. They are important as public spaces, which makes it even more important that they are high-quality urban areas, rather than simply business locations. And many such projects are currently being initiated and planned for. Therefore, in this thesis



Figure 1.5
La Défense,
Paris, on a
Thursday after-
noon

I will focus on the question *what is the role of quality, specifically quality of place, in the development of HST station areas?* What is *quality of place, anyway?* And, if it is as important as is being suggested, what is its role in urban development, and how is it dealt with in actual HST station development projects? In order to answer these questions, I will consider three projects along the TGV Nord from Paris to Amsterdam: Euralille in Lille, which was largely completed in the early 1990s, and the Zuidas in Amsterdam and Rotterdam Centraal in Rotterdam, both of which are now partly under construction and partly still on the drawing board.

1.4 Objective of the research

The core of the matter, as described in the previous sections, may be summarised in three steps. First, the high-speed train is almost universally expected to bring economic development to the cities it will call at by increasing their accessibility, prestige and hence their competitiveness. These expected benefits are currently being materialised by extensive urban redevelopment schemes, focused on future HST stations. Second, it is recognised that urban economic competitiveness, based on innovation, creativity and knowledge spillover, increasingly depends on the presence of specific groups of highly educated people, which in turn is related to the availability of specific qualities of urban space, called quality of place. Third, the above suggests that if the station area is indeed to bring the benefits that are expected, it should contribute to an improvement of precisely those urban qualities that are of increasing importance.

In a broad perspective, then, my objective here is to investigate the relation between urban spatial policy and the urban economy, in particular as it concerns the requirements of the 'creative' service economy. More specifically, it is to investigate the extent to which, and how, urban redevelopment as illustrated here by the redevelopment of high-speed train station areas could increase urban competitiveness by means of an improvement of the quality

of place. I will consider three HST station development projects from the perspective of quality of place; not because the concept as such is bound to play an important role in these projects, but because it is the most elaborate, theoretically founded recent concept of quality of the urban environment having an effect on the economic performance of cities, and a concept that is widely influential among urban policy makers both in the US and Europe, and particularly in the Netherlands. Thus, the question is rather which elements of quality of place can be recognised in the development of these projects, and to what extent the concept is entailed in the development process.

Accordingly, the focus is on the type of urban development induced by the implementation of the high-speed train, regarded in view of the ideas concerning the relevance and content of quality of place. This leads to the following concise problem definition:

To what extent, and how, does the concept of quality of place play a role in current large-scale urban redevelopment?

This is elaborated in particular with regard to the redevelopment of HST station areas, which, as has been stated in previous sections, may be considered exemplary of the type of large-scale redevelopment discussed here. This brings the focus onto several subquestions concerning both the concept of quality of place and the planning of large-scale urban redevelopment areas and, in particular, HST station areas:

1. *What is the nature of the currently assumed relation between the quality of the urban environment, in a broad sense, and urban competitiveness?* It is important to clarify this matter, since it essentially concerns the main reason why quality of place should be relevant in the first place. With regard to this question, however, the focus here will be mainly on the theoretical level, since the intention here is not to test the relation between quality of place and competitiveness, but rather to analyse its effects on urban policy and planning.
2. *How could quality of place be operationalised, in particular with regard to large-scale urban redevelopment?* This involves the operationalisation of the concept of quality of place per se, and also the question of which particular aspects of quality of place could be relevant for such projects as discussed here, and in the case of the specific projects analysed here the question of which aspects are especially important for the development of HST station areas.
3. *What are the objectives of large-scale urban redevelopment projects, in particular the objectives in relation to the development of the urban economy, as well as objectives in terms of urban planning?* In the case of the HST station area development projects studied here, the focus should be on the objectives of these projects as an urban development, beyond providing transport facilities.

4. *How is quality of place understood by the various actors involved in the planning process?* This involves the way quality of place is applied in practice, and the value that is attached to the concept. This is assumed to be related to the viability, in the longer term, of the intentions concerning quality of place as expressed in the project plan, and as such this question is closely related to questions 5 and 6.
5. *Which aspects of quality of place are included in large-scale urban redevelopment project plans?* This indicates how the prevailing ideas about quality of place are put into practice.
6. *To what extent do actors involved in large-scale urban redevelopment support the elements of quality of place included in the project plan?* This concerns the question of the robustness, for better or for worse, of intentions with respect to quality of place.

A better insight into these issues is interesting from a scientific point of view, but could also contribute to improving the way such redevelopment projects are designed and implemented.

1.5 Approach and methodology

To a certain extent my approach here has already emerged, implicitly, from the preceding sections. The focus is not so much on the effects of the high-speed train per se, but rather on the way the expected and anticipated effects on the location function of the node are supposed to contribute to urban competitiveness by increasing the area's quality of place. This implies that many themes come together in the research: urban and long-distance transport, proximity and accessibility, urban economics, social processes, spatial planning on various scales, and complex institutional relations. Moreover, it means the study of plans and intentions based on the supposed effects of the high-speed train rather than on measurable effects and developments in social reality. It is obvious that a relation between these two must be recognised, and, at the same time, that the distinction between plans and measurable results has consequences with respect to the approach and research methods applied.

Another issue is the specific focus taken in the research, particularly in view of the multitude of different factors and elements involved. An integration of different approaches and perspectives with respect to transport and urban research has been made more explicit in recent years by, for instance, Dupuy (1991), who advocates an 'urbanisme des réseaux', an urbanism based on networks and network operators; Graham and Marvin (2001:414), who call for a networked urbanism, emphasising 'relations and processes rather than objects and forms'; and Bertolini (1996; 2000), who almost implicitly applies an integral approach of transport and urban development, now favouring an

evolutionary approach (2005). The approach taken here will be integral, but only to a certain extent. Due to the emphasis on quality of place, the focus will be mainly on urban development – in many cases redevelopment – taking into account the development of transport where relevant. Even then, however, it has to include insight from urban economics, urban design issues and institutional policy-making networks.

In view of the issues involved, part of the research approach concerns the question of how to deal with the more intangible aspects of the city, which have already to some extent been pointed at in the previous sections. Were we categorically to exclude these intangibles from the research, we would probably end up with a much ‘cleaner’ image of quality of place; it would be perfectly reasonable to follow this approach, therefore, and it has to be a deliberate choice not to do so. But we might eventually miss the point of what quality of place is about, as these intangibilities actually constitute an essential part of it. Consequently, it is undesirable to ignore them here. Instead of the aforementioned approach, therefore, it seems preferable to operationalise these elements as much as possible, applying a prudent pragmatism, in order to minimise the ‘immeasurable’ element. A qualitative approach is most appropriate for this. Nevertheless, we eventually must recognise that it is possible to exclude the vagueness related to the intangible aspects of quality of place from the research only at the cost of a considerable loss of potentially vital information; therefore, some of it will inevitably remain part of the research.⁴

To illustrate this, imagine what makes a city, a neighbourhood or even a street attractive and pleasant to be in. Many factors may be named that are important and can be measured and categorised. However, most attractive places and cities also have a certain characteristic we might summarise as authenticity. Although its appreciation is subjective, some places undeniably have ‘it’ and others do not. Authenticity is hard to define exactly, let alone to measure, but this does not make it a negligible quality. In fact, today’s symbolic economy is for a very large part based on such immeasurable ‘feelings’ and not simply labour, materials, transport and even design costs: think only of fashion, designer furniture or the price of an espresso in various locations. The price and even the existence of these products are hard to understand without considering this symbolic value – authenticity, beauty, status. Likewise, the reason why a certain city has excellent quality of place may be hard to fully comprehend if its ‘symbolic values’ are not taken into account.

⁴ In view of this we may quote Mills (1970:230): ‘I don’t have the data, and I shan’t be able to get it – which makes it all the more important that I speculate about it, for in the course of such reflection, if it is guided by the desire to approximate the empirical requirements of an ideal design, I’ll come upon important areas, on which I might be able to get materials that are relevant as anchor points and guides to further reflection.’

Case studies

The study of a dynamic, non-controllable and complex societal process such as urban development necessitates a rather intense analysis, which has to include a diversity of both quantitative and qualitative information. A broad analysis based on, for example, a large set of statistics does not seem appropriate or even feasible in view of the rather elusive characteristics of quality of place, as too many subtleties and valuable details would probably be lost. Furthermore, the fact that the focus is necessarily on plans and processes rather than on existing, measurable urban developments also makes such an approach unlikely.

On the whole, then, the use of case studies seems most appropriate here, especially since the aim is explicitly to position station area projects in the broader context of urban economic competitiveness and quality of place (cf. Yin, 1994:1; 13). The study of a few cases, or even a single case, allows excellent possibilities for in-depth analysis. In this way, a single case does not imply a single observation; each case study includes not a simple yes-or-no, but multiple observations on various relevant aspects of the case (Rueschmeyer, 2003:311; 318). This enables a detailed analysis of even quite complex processes and relations. One such illustration of this is Coleman's opinion that, when it comes to the study of social systems:

... an internal analysis based on actions and orientations of units at a lower level can be regarded as more fundamental, constituting more nearly a theory of system behavior, than an explanation which remains at the system level. It can be said to provide an understanding of the system behavior which a purely system-level explanation does not (Coleman, 1990:4).

Theoretical framework

The empirical analysis will be linked to, and partly directed by, the theoretical framework. This contains a range of previous observations and analyses that may focus and guide the investigation. That is not to say that it starts from an epistemological theory as a blueprint, based on an assumption of absolute objectivity and 'the belief in the possibility of a single, final, detached, and unblemished depiction of the world' (Barnes, 2001:550). Most issues in urban research are actually too complicated to approach from a single theory. Rather, a theoretical 'toolkit' would seem to be required. This includes connected theories and concepts concerning the causes of urban competitiveness, urban quality and the relation between the two, the role of scale in this, the various elements that make up quality of place and the institutional context in which urban redevelopment is taking place. Theory is applied hermeneutically:

... not as a mirror held up to the world, but as an interesting topic of conversation and discussion in its own right and one with practical consequences. [...] I mean it has an

openness both to a wide range of theoretical sources and to the very definition of theory (Barnes, *op. cit.*:546-547).

The theoretical framework as meant here is not a merely academic construction. It is not separated from reality, but constantly related to it by numerous checks and references to a variety of practices well beyond the specific cases involved in the current project. This entails references to the empirical part of the research project and to other cases of high-speed train station development, but examples may also be drawn from other types of urban development.

The explicit reference to a theoretical framework has three main advantages. First, this approach could provide rich insights by making possible a constant and fruitful dialogue between theoretical insights and questions and empirical findings, linking the latter to relevant developments, processes and debates in a broader field than the empirical context:

... the studies that have yielded the most analytical insight were informed by intensive advance theoretical reflection. The results of this reflection may have remained largely implicit or they may have been stated as an explicit theoretical framework of questions, concepts, orienting ideas, and central hypotheses (Rueschemeyer, 2003:317).

As Rueschemeyer continues, such theoretical frameworks 'are not primarily ensembles of testable propositions', although they may contain some. In this sense they are not purely empirical theories; rather, they entail 'problem formulations, conceptualisations, and reasons given for these'.

Second, the theoretical framework connects the case studies. Studying cases in depth makes possible a close interaction between the empirical findings and a theoretical framework, but it may raise the question of whether a small number of cases can deliver theoretically valuable results. Therefore the empirical analysis should be based on a profound advance theoretical reflection. Rueschemeyer (2003:317) states:

Such reflection not only shapes the questions and the premises of the case analysis, it also links them to earlier scholarship and thus to analytical work on other instances of the issues under investigation. It therefore increases – if indirectly – the number of cases on which conclusions are built.

Accordingly, the theoretical framework has an important function when it comes to drawing more general conclusions from the cases studied.

Finally, the theoretical embeddedness of the empirical analysis provides a solid ground for keeping a certain distance from the object of research. This makes it possible to take a critical position, and also to maintain a critical approach during the research project.

Selection of cases

The objective of the research, as stated in Section 1.4, is to study the effects on urban competitiveness and, in particular, quality of place, of the implementation of the high-speed train, and more specifically the redevelopment of station areas that this induces. Thus, the HST may be considered a constant, and the analysis focuses as much as possible on factors concerning the contents of the projects themselves, as well as their local context. This implies that cases should be harmonised as much as possible with respect to other factors, of which the national institutional context is an important one.

Pragmatism then restricts the range of potential cases to the Netherlands. Another factor involved is the privileged access these cases provide by their proximity. Apart from Schiphol Airport, six high-speed train stations will be developed in the Netherlands, known as *Nieuwe Sleutelprojecten* or 'New Key Projects' (VROM, 2002a; 2003a; 2003b; 2006). These are connected by either the Thalys between Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Brussels and Paris, or the ICE from Amsterdam via Utrecht and Arnhem to Cologne (Table 1.1). All these projects are related to smaller or larger urban redevelopment programmes. Of the two Dutch high-speed tracks under construction, the Thalys is the most prestigious. In contrast to the ICE, which will run on an upgraded, existing track, the Thalys is built as a dedicated high-speed railway. It is also expected to carry more passengers than the ICE. The more attractive case is therefore the Thalys. It has been decided that Breda and The Hague will be connected to the HST only indirectly, by means of a dedicated shuttle train.⁵ Lastly, Schiphol Airport is considered excluded as a case study, as it is not physically part of an existing city, making it too specific a case; moreover, office development here is considerable, but not primarily based on the HST. Consequently, the analysis will focus on the large-scale redevelopment projects around the Zuidas in Amsterdam and Rotterdam Central Station.

These are contrasting cases in several respects: different local and regional decision-making arenas are involved, and the economic structure and general culture and conventions of the cities are quite different. The urban economy of Amsterdam has a strong basis in trade and service industries, whereas Rotterdam is more dependent on seaport and manufacturing activities. Another difference lies in the position of the stations within the HST network and the

⁵ It is true, though, that despite the lack of a direct connection, travel times to and from these cities may drop by the implementation of the high-speed train. According to VROM (2003b:13), travel times from Breda to Amsterdam, Antwerp and Brussels will be reduced significantly. Part of this reduction is due to replacing indirect by direct connections and reducing the number of intermediate stops, rather than to high speed as such. In case of international connections from Breda to Antwerp and Brussels, more than half of the estimated travel time reduction is achieved by skipping a 27-minute connection at Roosendaal, near the Belgian border (based on 2005 timetables). No figures are provided for The Hague.

Table 1.1 New Key Projects scored on their intended relation to the high-speed train

City	Project	Service	Full high-speed line	Direct connection by HST
Amsterdam	Zuidas	Thalys/ICE	yes*/no	yes
Rotterdam	Central Station	Thalys	yes	yes
The Hague	Central Station	Thalys	yes	no, by shuttle
Breda	Central Station	Thalys	yes	no, by shuttle
Utrecht	Central Station	ICE	no	yes
Arnhem	Central Station	ICE	no	yes

* South from Schiphol Airport.

urban morphology. The Zuidas is intended to be a start and end station for both the Thalys and the ICE. It is located approximately three kilometres from the inner city, but will be connected directly to it and to the Central Station by means of a new metro link. Rotterdam, on the other hand, is an intermediate station on the Thalys line, located in an inner city which is in itself rather atypical in terms of the extent to which it is the result of large-scale modernist planning.

The full effect of the high-speed train in the Netherlands will only be noticeable in several years' time, as the railway is not yet completed.⁶ Some of the physical effects on the built environment are already visible as many plans have been drawn up and executed based on expectations concerning the high-speed rail network. However, while building volumes may reasonably be estimated, the economic effects in terms of employment and yield are less clear-cut and the results in terms of quality of place are even more difficult to predict. Nevertheless, the effects may partly be anticipated on the basis of the experience of other countries. In France and Japan in particular, the high-speed train has been in operation for several decades now and its effects on urban development can be observed in practice, rather than merely through plans. Therefore the analysis includes a concise reference to Euralille, the first large HST station development project, largely completed in the 1990s and comparable in terms of scale, content and ambition – if not in network position – to the projects in Rotterdam and Amsterdam. This should provide insight into the potential results of the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal projects in, say, ten or twenty years' time, in view of course of the specific context and the specific objectives and approach of the Euralille project.

Sources

The analysis presented here is based on a multitude of sources. The analysis of Euralille, being the reference case, is based on site visits and existing literature. The analysis of the other cases is based on two main categories of sources. These entail, first, the project plans as presented in planning doc-

⁶ Testing has started in the Spring of 2006.

uments and on websites, which provide insight into the quality of place included in the design of the future station area, as it is presented and made public at this moment in time. In addition, policy and scientific documents, maps, press articles and research reports provide qualitative and quantitative data concerning both the plan and the urban context. A significant part of the analysis therefore comprises secondary analysis of existing data, which will be used where available. Statistics are used to study the existing competitiveness and quality of place of the cities involved.

Urban development plans are hard to judge by themselves, however – especially when they exist merely on paper, as is largely the case here. They represent only (at that moment) the end results of an often lengthy and opaque process. Moreover, due in part to their objectives and in part to the way they are presented, plans tend to be optimistic and to look orderly and neatly arranged in comparison to the reality of the city, all the more so since, particularly in the early planning stages, plans also have a function as a marketing tool to promote the project and convince potential participants. Therefore, in order to gain insight into the functioning of the planning process, the role of quality of place in this process, as well as the sum of the ideas, opinions and motivations of those who actually define the plan, a series of in-depth interviews was conducted with key actors involved. These constitute the second main source of information. The interviews focused on the involvement of actors in the project, their views on the purposes of the project, as well as on quality of place and its main elements, their intentions regarding quality of place and their commitment to these. What do they understand by quality of place? Are they willing and able to put the concept, or elements of the concept, into practice, and to what extent are they committed to this? Furthermore, what are their expectations, in this respect, with regard to the role of other actors involved?

In view of the focus on quality of place, interviewees were selected on the basis of two criteria: a) their active involvement in, and estimated influence on, the planning process, and b) their involvement in the development of the station area as a place rather than a transport node. This resulted in a total of thirteen in-depth interviews, which were recorded and subsequently authorised, as well as a number of additional discussions with experts not explicitly related to either of the cases.⁷ The interviews were semi-structured and were based on a concise questionnaire that was taken as a guideline.⁸ It was therefore possible to cover subtle considerations and useful background information while still maintaining the necessary comparability of the interviews in focus and scope; this approach worked out rather well.

⁷ See Appendices A and B for a list of interviewees and the questionnaire respectively.

⁸ Two interviews had a more specific character.

Interviewees could be divided according to their specific role in the planning process into three groups:

- a. developers: representatives of banks and other private development corporations that develop real estate, which, in some cases, is then sold to investment companies;
- b. designers: representatives of public spatial planning and design departments, as well as architects commissioned by public bodies;
- c. coordinators: mostly representatives of public development corporations; while these are public actors, in their tasks and attitudes they are more market-oriented than the representatives of group b).

Designers, of course, generally have a background in urban planning or architecture, but the same is true for many representatives of the other groups, particularly the developers. This implies that any mutual differences in attitude and interests that may appear are not, generally, blurred by differences in background knowledge or jargon.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Introductory and concluding chapters aside, the thesis is divided into two parts of four chapters each. These parts are dedicated respectively to the setting in which urban redevelopment is studied here and the empirical elaboration of this in the case studies. The relation between the chapters and the six subquestions defined above is not one to one; many chapters address one or two questions explicitly and may touch on some of the others. This will be specified in the subsequent section introductions.

Chapters 2 to 5 constitute the setting in which urban redevelopment is studied here. This includes a theoretical background to the research and, in a broader sense, the economic-geographical and institutional context in which the role of urban quality in urban redevelopment is considered here. It is split into several chapters, according to the different topics that come together in the research. Departing from a rather broad point of view, it eventually discusses a number of keys to the empirical analysis in the second part of the thesis.

The aim of Chapter 2 is to gain greater insight into the presumed relationship between important factors of urban competitiveness on the one hand and social and spatial urban policies on the other. Evidence is growing that important factors of urban competitiveness, such as innovation, information, knowledge, culture and creativity, are in many respects localised factors, depending to a large extent on personal relations, face-to-face contacts and specific favourable characteristics of the day-to-day urban environment known as quality of place. The chapter addresses the question of what quality of place is and how it should be understood, and discusses the uses and weaknesses of the concept.

Chapter 3 then adds to the preceding question the matter of scale. One of the effects of the so-called globalisation process is that these relations, even those between small firms, are becoming increasingly international or global. That knowledge exchange is rooted locally does not mean it is restricted to local ties; it also depends on crucial knowledge, sometimes from distant locations or businesses, and on access to markets. This in turn implies the relevance of transport facilities. It is then argued that the railway station, seen as a transport node as well as a place and part of the city, could have an important role in urban development and competitiveness by way of the accessibility to transport networks and the proximity to central urban areas it provides. This also raises the issue of the quality of the station area as a place.

After this, Chapter 4 clarifies the institutional setting of railway station development, identifying the main governance arenas involved and the role quality of place could have in the planning process. It addresses the relation between social reality, institutions and objectives and the domain of the actual project plan. This is of particular importance as the complexity of station development is currently increasing due to the functional and institutional rearrangement of networks and the increasing involvement in spatial economic policy of public and private actors on different scales and government levels. A further question is the extent to which actors truly support objectives related to quality of place.

As many aspects of quality of place seem difficult to plan or construct, it may instead be a matter of creating favourable conditions for quality of place to develop. Furthermore, at the scale of the station area some aspects of quality of place seem more relevant than others. Chapter 5 therefore distinguishes a limited number of key issues for the empirical analysis of the quality of place in railway station areas. These include the functional and spatial diversity, as well as the integration of the station area in the surrounding city. Furthermore, the quality of public space is of particular relevance. These issues are elaborated in this chapter, especially in relation to the development of the railway station area. At the same time they are put in relation to each other, because they cannot be considered separately.

Chapters 6 to 9 describe the empirical research, focusing on an analysis of the case studies involved: Euralille, the Zuidas in Amsterdam and Rotterdam Central Station.

Chapter 6 discusses the Euralille project, which is the reference case here. The exact intentions and objectives attached to each station development project, and the involvement and commitment of various actors, cannot be seen separately from the local context of the city of which they are part. Consequently, Chapter 6 first briefly discusses the 'context of development' of Euralille, focusing particularly on the city's position in the HST network, its economic structure and its current level of quality of place. It then focuses on the main characteristics of the Euralille project itself, as well as the development process.

Chapters 7 and 8 deal with the main cases discussed here, the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal, in a way rather similar to that of the discussion on Euralille, but more extensively. Chapter 7 deals with the context of development of these two projects, by means of a comparative analysis of Amsterdam and Rotterdam in terms of their position in the international transport network, economic structure and current level of quality of place at the scale of the city. The latter part of the analysis also serves the secondary aim of making the rather abstract idea of quality of place manageable by relating it as much as possible to objective, measurable indicators. Chapter 8 then discusses the objectives of these two projects, their role in the development of the city, their situation in the city and the current transport network and the course of their development so far (as neither of them has been fully completed yet). Moreover, it focuses on the development process, indicating the main actors' roles and responsibilities.

Chapter 9 then addresses the main question of this thesis: to analyse to what extent, and how, the concept of quality of place actually plays a role in large-scale urban redevelopment, specifically in the development and planning of the three projects considered here. It focuses on the project plans and the projects themselves as they are at present. It also investigates the motivations and opinions of actors involved in the development process, as well as the conceptual ideas that affect the way the projects are perceived and executed and which support the urban design.

Finally, Chapter 10 reflects on the results of the research, and presents the main conclusions and recommendations that follow from the preceding analysis, in connection to the main dilemmas and discussions to which they relate.

The setting

2 The competitiveness of places

2.1 Introduction

As a result of the shift from the industrial economy to the post-industrial service economy, other factors now define urban competitiveness, such as innovation, information, knowledge, culture and creativity. There is growing evidence that these are in many respects localised factors which are to a large extent dependent on personal relations, face-to-face contacts and specific favourable characteristics of the day-to-day urban environment called 'quality of place'. This points, in other words, at a relation between some important factors of urban competitiveness on the one hand and social and spatial urban policies on the other. Although this relation is not yet well established, it is most relevant to the social and spatial organisation of urban space, and thereby to the way urban development projects such as the ones discussed here are executed.

My aim in this chapter is therefore to gain more insight into the nature of this presumed relation between the quality of the urban environment, in a broad sense, and urban competitiveness (subquestion 1). Furthermore, I will discuss the main components, advantages and possible flaws of quality of place, as a first step to its further operationalisation in later chapters (subquestion 2).

First, Section 2.2 explores various perspectives on the competitiveness of cities, focusing on the question of in what respect the current service economy actually differs from the types of urban economy which were prevalent in earlier periods, and what this implies for the factors of competitiveness involved. In Sections 2.3 and 2.4 I go on to discuss the role of knowledge spillover and creativity, which are considered increasingly important factors of urban economic competitiveness, and the relation of these factors to quality of place. In Section 2.5 I address the questions of what quality of place actually is, what its main elements are and how it is perceived. Finally, Section 2.6 discusses the main criticisms that the concepts of creative class and quality of place have raised, and evaluates their usefulness for the current research. I will then elaborate these concepts in the next chapters specifically with regard to the role of the HST railway station and the current changes in urban governance.

2.2 Central places and cities-in-a-network

The competitiveness of a city is generally known as its potential to attract firms, which are considered the main sources of employment and prosperity, and to generate innovations that may create a comparative advantage and, as a spin-off, new businesses. Not only does competitiveness relate to the economic performance of a city in absolute terms, but also to its ability to compete for economic development with other cities. This leaves us to question what the 'mysterious something' is that makes London, Silicon Valley, Stutt-

gart, Milan and Amsterdam successful, and which Detroit, Manchester and the Ruhr area seem to have lost at one time or another.

Weber (in: Hohenberg and Lees, 1995:23 ff.) distinguished two main causes of urbanisation in history. A city may base its wealth and growth on its position as a central place in an area, and on the influence of its governmental, juridical, religious and cultural institutions. Rather than just the spatial centrality of a city, however, this involves the institutional framework of which the city is part, and which defines for instance specific power relations and the degree of administrative centralisation in a region; it emphasises the hierarchy in the relations between cities. Thus, in earlier times many royal residences or capital cities were places where a region's wealth and power accumulated, while the latest example seems to be Brussels as the administrative capital of the European Union.⁹

On the other hand, a city may derive its wealth from its position in economic networks, as an exchange point for people, goods, information and knowledge and the services derived from that (cf. Le Goff, 1997; Le Galès, 2002:33-40). In this case the relations between cities are considered more from a functional perspective. Thus, the competitiveness of a city is related also to its access to transport and communication networks; in fact it cannot be regarded separately from a city's spatial location relative to such physical elements as rivers, roads, seas and internet backbones. Furthermore, another important, institutional factor related to a city's position in transport networks is the power to control trade flows through tollage, staple right or merchant fleet ownership, for example. Accordingly, many trade cities originated at favourable port sites or near river crossings, and the deterioration of a city's position in the transport networks, in absolute terms or relative to competing cities, could mean the loss of much of its wealth. In contrast, the benefits of an improved position in transport networks may be observed in many cities too.¹⁰

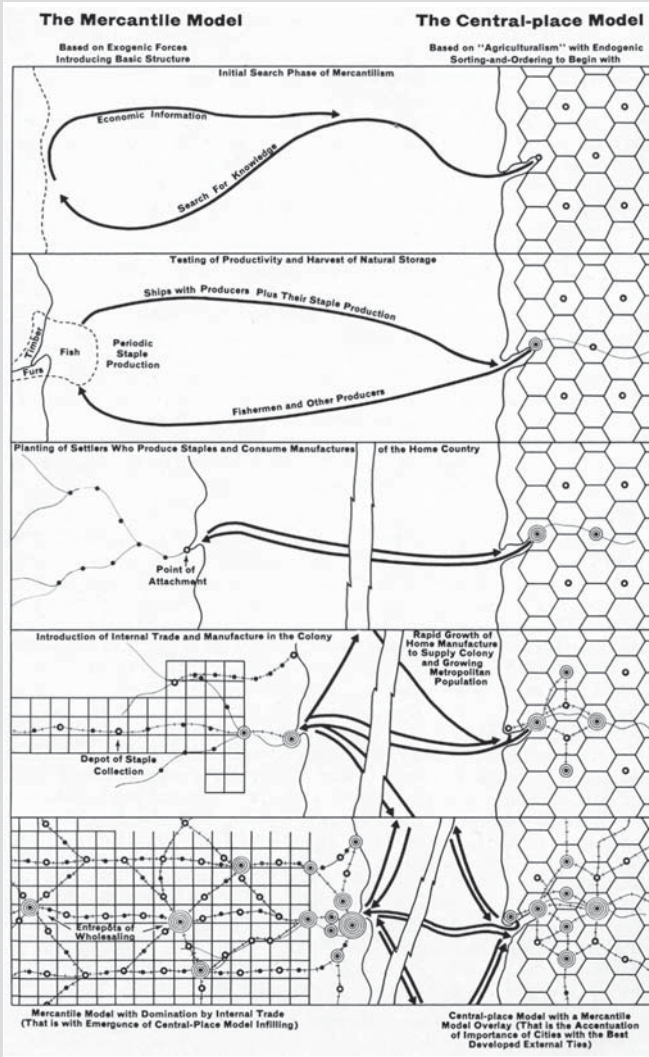
9 Another example is Vienna as the largest city, as well as the main political, cultural and financial centre and railroad node of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Although the degree of centralisation was less than in France, for instance, the primacy of Vienna remained stronger than might be expected long after the disintegration of Austria-Hungary, pointing at a significant effect of path dependency in this (Nitsch, 2003).

10 This may be illustrated by the historical example of Amsterdam replacing Antwerp as the leading merchant city of the Low Countries after the closure of the river Scheldt in 1585, robbing Antwerp of its favourable network position. From the perspective of Amsterdam this implied an improvement of its network position, but only relative to that of Antwerp, as its actual location on the IJ river did not change. According to Israel (1989:29-30), however, the real cause of Antwerp's decline was not so much the closure of the river itself, as the subsequent departure of the rich merchant community. Many of Antwerp's merchants, artists, printers etc. moved to Amsterdam (often via Northern Germany), taking with them a large part of the city's flourishing economic and cultural life, including the control over Antwerp's extensive maritime trade. Thus, Antwerp lost its network position to Amsterdam, but also, and more importantly, its position as a control centre of world trade and venture capital.

The dichotomy described above, between central places and cities-in-a-network, may to a certain extent also be found in, for instance, Vance's model of mercantile versus central place settlement, shown in Figure 2.1. In this model, the mercantile settlement pattern in the colony resembles the network model, while the home country is dominated by the established, agriculture-based central place system. When both systems grow more mature, and their cities larger, the two systems become increasingly alike, reflecting the fact that central places also include elements of the network model and vice versa. Likewise, the same dichotomy also resembles the 'two routes to city success' mentioned by Taylor (2004:209-210), the 'economical politics' based on a city's position in economical and transport networks, and the 'political economics' related to the role of a city in a centralised political system. Still, although typical governmental cities (Rome and Madrid) and trade cities (Amsterdam and Antwerp) may be distinguished, both elements can be found to some extent in each city of any significance. In fact, they are closely related, as is also visible in Vance's model. Centres of government and culture attract foreign travellers and create demand that induces trade. Moreover, the development of infrastructure networks reflects decisions influenced or enforced by sheer political power, which has to rely also on an efficient transport network. One obvious example is the dominant position of Paris in networks of virtually every kind, including the recent TGV network, which reflects the long tradition of centralisation in France.

While the distinction between central places and cities-in-a-network was never that clear, it was to become even more blurred, as for most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries urban economies of both types focused mainly on industrialisation. This largely distracted attention from the factors of competitiveness described above. But traditional manufacturing sectors such as metals, textiles, chemicals and the food industry became more labour-intensive, providing an ever narrowing base for urban wealth, or even disappeared completely from Western cities. Current urban economics is now once more increasingly focused on the city-in-a-network: the city as a gathering place of people, where information and knowledge are exchanged. This recalls the medieval market towns and seventeenth-century merchant cities described by Hohenberg and Lees (1995), Le Goff (1997) and Hall (1998), but now operating on a global scale and with high-tech means of transport and communication. In this respect it is tempting to consider the current post-industrial economy a return to previous values. However, it would also be an oversimplification, if only because such economic transformation processes give evidence of a strong institutional path dependency. Particularly in industrial cities, the focus of local authorities still tends to be the manufacturing industry, in which large investments have been made and which is in many cases deeply involved in local governance. Thus, an industrial past may pose a burden on the development of a service economy (cf. Kloosterman and Trip, 2004).

Figure 2.1 The division of central places and cities-in-a-network illustrated by means of Vance's model of settlement as opposed to Christaller's model of central places



Source: Vance (1970:151)

Nonetheless, other factors than in the industrial era seem to be important to the economic success or failure of cities, and other cities than before have become successful. Building on the ideas of Marshall (1920) and Schumpeter (1939), studies of the urban economy have paid growing interest to such aspects as innovation (Jacobs, 1969), information (Castells, 1989), knowledge (Lambooy, 1993; Storper, 1997; Hall, 1998), culture (Scott, 2000) and creativity (Florida, 2002a), emphasised by such concepts as the 'information economy', the 'knowledge economy', the 'creative economy' and the 'cultural economy'. Storper, for example, emphasises the importance of knowledge transfer, while Scott and Florida focus respectively on the role of cultural industries and creativity in defining a city's economic strength. Others, such as Grabher (2002) and Bathelt et al. (2004), concentrate on the relation between local clusters and 'global' networks, while Malmberg and

Maskell (2002), Storper and Venables (2002) and Boschma (2005a; 2005b) analyse the role of proximity and face-to-face contacts in this.

These aspects were also important in the industrial economy, but a fundamental, twofold change has occurred. First, in service industries such as advertising, publishing, ICT and financial services these aspects constitute the core of the business, instead of being auxiliary to the manufacturing process. Second, these service industries themselves are considerably larger and more numerous than before. Accordingly, their importance for the economy as a whole is greater. In fact, as Robert Reich described in *The Work of Nations*

(1991), these high-grade service activities are the driving force of the modern urban economy. These sectors themselves depend very little on the success of other sectors, but in contrast their success defines to a considerable extent the success of those sectors that provide personal services and, to a lesser extent, standardised services. This raises the question of which factors define the success of service industries.

2.3 Local clusters in the service economy

A recurring element in all success stories of urban competitiveness appears to be the transfer of information or knowledge between local or regional clusters of related firms. But while many authors agree on this, they apply different interpretations according to their particular focus. Sassen (2001), for instance, focuses primarily on the control centres of the financial sector that are located in global cities such as London, Tokyo and New York; Hall (1998; 2000) emphasises the role of culture and the transfer of ideas in successful urban economies throughout the ages, while Castells (1989; 2000:443) stresses the importance of communication networks and information flows. However, as Storper (1997:239) states, abstract and codifiable information in itself is not scarce, but – being standardised, digitised and widely distributed – readily available in many places. It can be traded and is increasingly ubiquitous, and mostly it is not tied to a specific city or node. Therefore it can hardly be considered a solid foundation for urban competitiveness in the long term. Indeed, as is the case with transport infrastructure,¹¹ those cities that claim to benefit from an advantage in terms of access to ICT backbones seem to possess other valuable assets as well.

Specific knowledge, however, such as tacit knowledge or know-how, is not codifiable, especially as knowledge spillover occurs not only between firms or individuals within the same business. More important is the transfer of knowledge between different sectors, which Hall (1998:19) defines as ‘the ability to transfer ideas from one circuit into another’. This requires that there be ‘many such circuits’, hence economic diversity. However, this implies the involvement of different sets of codes and conventions, which further complicates the transfer of knowledge. In contrast to standardised information, knowledge therefore often requires an explanation to it in order to be useful, for instance when it is applicable only in a specific context; rather than just the possession of information, it entails the use and understanding of information. It is therefore largely dependent on face-to-face contact and informal, personal relations. This is summed up in what Storper and Venables call ‘buzz’:

¹¹ See the discussion on this issue in Section 3.3.

... the heart of the matter lies in the various effects of face-to-face contact, which we will refer to collectively as the “buzz” of the city. This is not a new idea, but it seems possible today to specify what it is about face-to-face contact that creates buzz, and why buzz should be an economically-important enough force to contribute significantly to the agglomeration of economic activity and persons in an age where both physical transportation costs and the costs and ability to transmit information have declined so significantly (Storper and Venables, 2002:4).

Thus, despite the fact that distance has become less important to the transfer of standardised information, this specific knowledge spillover within local clusters is in most cases strongly dependent on spatial proximity (cf. Glaeser, 1998:146-147). Consequently, it is a specific, localised factor, and an important factor of urban competitiveness, rooted in those cities and regions where the right kind of ‘buzz’ is found. It is rooted rather than just localised because it is tied to a city by factors that are characterised by a high degree of geographical path dependency, which implies that normally it will stay in place even if the people involved may vary over time. In this sense, it is rather similar to the ‘industrial atmosphere’ of Sheffield and Solingen described by Marshall (1920:284; 287), which provided manufacturers in those cities with considerable advantages that could hardly be found elsewhere. Accordingly, Marshall also points at the ‘surprising permanence’ of many industries once they have become locally rooted, as ‘an atmosphere cannot be moved’.

This is not meant in the sense of spatial determinism. The concept of path dependency implies that such clusters and atmospheres can indeed move or disappear, but that this will normally be a long-term process. Exceptions may be found, for instance, in cases where the entire group involved in certain activities moves. This is mostly due to external circumstances.¹² Another possible exception is when a cluster depends very much on only one or a few key persons. Sometimes the cluster may re-form elsewhere.

In view of this, much research on the success and failure of cities in the service economy may be considered to focus on the characteristics of a certain industrial atmosphere of the service industries, although with various, different labels. This is clear in the obvious examples of successful, but rather atypical, local clusters that have been studied time and time again, such as Silicon Valley and the film industry in Hollywood. However, the same principles have also been found at work in studies on more average clusters, such as Grabher’s study on the advertising business in London (2002). (In fact, university research itself is another example.) Activities like these may to a certain extent also be found in the Netherlands, especially in Amsterdam.¹³ Thus,

¹² This is also the case in the earlier example of Antwerp (note 10).

¹³ See Sections 7.3 and 7.4.

while the existence of local clusters of knowledge spillover should certainly not be considered the only factor defining urban competitiveness in the service economy, their importance exceeds that of typical cases like Silicon Valley.

2.4 The creative class

We have suggested that, where competitiveness is concerned, cities should focus on the category of highly educated knowledge workers, which Reich in *The Work of Nations* (1991) calls 'symbolic analysts'. This includes more than just ICT or financial services, but is more specific than the general category of information workers (Storper, 1997:240). In *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Florida defines it as a distinct social class, including:

... people in science and engineering, architecture and design, education, arts, music and entertainment, whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology and/or new creative content [...] the Creative Class also includes a broader group of *creative professionals* in business and finance, law, health care and related fields. These people engage in complex problem solving that involves a great deal of independent judgement and requires high levels of education or human capital. In addition, all members of the Creative Class [...] share a common creative ethos that values creativity, individuality, difference and merit. For members of the Creative Class, every aspect and manifestation of creativity – technological, cultural and economic – is interlinked and inseparable (Florida, 2002a:8).

This confirms the findings of Landry (2000:12) that, although creativity has thus far been associated mainly with artists or scientists, it is actually found in places where there are 'increasing numbers of people working in social, business or political arenas whose way of addressing problems was clearly creative'. He concludes that creativity and innovation require characteristics that cut across the boundaries between different activities. The concept of the creative class has been much more criticised than that of the symbolic analysts, especially as Florida puts a strong emphasis on relatively small groups of bohemians, gays and various subcultures. Apart from that, however, Reich and Florida generally mean the same category of 'problem solvers' such as economists, legal, financial and ICT advisors, engineers, doctors, scientists, journalists and managers. This list also roughly corresponds to the producer services and derived consumer services emphasised by Sassen (2001) and Hall (2001:61-62), but Florida puts a clear focus on creativity, innovation and the cultural industries also emphasised by Scott (2000), Kloosterman (2004) and Markusen (2004). However, while specific cultural industries are dismissed by many as being too specific a starting point for urban economic analysis, the creative class in a broader sense is relevant to a much wider range of cities,

particularly those possessing or developing a more advanced service economy, without being distinct centres of art and culture.

According to Florida's theory, this creative class tends to be concentrated in certain locations which offer specific favourable qualities of life, all the more so since job mobility in these sectors of the economy is high (Boschma, 2005a:1007). Thus, when members of the creative class decide where to live, they focus more on attractive living conditions than on the location of a specific firm, which they might leave again before long ('jobs follow people' rather than 'people follow jobs'). In other words, jobs increasingly follow people, while previously the opposite used to be true. Therefore, in particular with respect to the more advanced economic sectors and urban economies, it is increasingly important to focus not so much on attracting firms, but on attracting and keeping the right, talented people. This requires what Florida calls a 'people climate':

... a general strategy aimed at attracting and retaining people – especially, but not limited to, creative people. This entails remaining open to diversity and actively working to cultivate it, and investing in the lifestyle amenities that people really want and use often, as opposed to using financial incentives to attract companies, build professional sports stadiums or develop retail complexes (Florida, 2002a:293).

The latter more or less expresses the current strategy of many Dutch cities. However, rather than stadiums and shopping centres, a people climate requires the cultivation of diversity of thought, open-mindedness and tolerance to new ideas, minority groups and subcultures; it requires what Florida calls 'quality of place'.

2.5 Quality of place according to Florida

So far, the level of urban amenities and other aspects of the urban climate have mostly been associated with quality of life issues, rather than economic competition. Nonetheless, Kresl (1995:51), discussing the competitiveness of US cities, states that relatively competitive urban economies are characterised by the creation of high-skill, high-income jobs, the production of high-quality, environmentally benign goods and services, a balanced labour market, sufficient transport and communication infrastructure, a favourable location and economic structure and diverse urban amenities. Segedy (1997:57) also concludes that quality of life is becoming more important as a location factor for firms.

Quality of place as defined by Florida is more specific, however. It includes a set of qualities that collectively make a city an attractive place of residence for the creative class, including aspects such as economic and spatial diversi-

Table 2.1 Main elements of quality of place and indicators suggested by Florida and related literature

Quality	Indicator
diversity	– functional diversity, distinctive neighbourhoods, sufficient density
specific amenities	– individual sports facilities, recreation areas and restaurants per capita; (semi-)public spaces for informal meetings (<i>third spaces</i>)
liveliness; culture	– cultural and musical events; live performance venues per capita
technology; innovativeness	– patents per capita; relative percentage of high-tech output
talent	– percentage of people with bachelor's degree and above
creativity, bohemia	– percentage of artistically creative people
tolerance; openness	– relative percentage of foreign-born people; idem coupled gays
aesthetics	– architecture; parks; urban heritage
environment; sustainability	– natural environmental assets; environmental quality; reuse of older industrial sites
safety	– crime figures

Based on: Florida (2002a:215 ff.; 252; 255-8; 331-4; 2005a:37-41; 2005b:57 ff.), Kloosterman (2001:13-4), Glaeser *et al.* (2001:35 ff.) and Gertler (2004a:7-10).

ty, specific amenities, the possibility of informal meetings in so-called 'third spaces', safety, liveliness and such indefinable aspects as authenticity, tolerance, street life and urbanity. Table 2.1 provides a non-exhaustive list of qualities related to quality of place, as well as some indicators suggested by Florida and other authors in this field. Although many of these characteristics are easy to perceive in places where they seem to be 'in the air', some of them are hard to define. For planners, they are difficult to reproduce, let alone to create out of the blue; for researchers, they are difficult to measure.

Measuring quality of place

Florida expresses quality of place by a set of indices measuring in particular technology, talent and tolerance, developed in a series of studies on the quality of place of a range of US cities (Florida, 2000; 2002a; Florida and Gates, 2001). Some years later, he analysed the quality of place of 14 European countries in comparison to the US (Florida and Tinagli, 2004). This analysis was based on three sets of three indices, measuring talent, technology and tolerance between 1995 and 1998. In total, the Netherlands ranked fourth as a 'creative economy'.

Something might be said about the criteria applied in these analyses. First, Florida had to adapt some of the criteria he originally used in the US according to the data available in EU countries. However, he was able to do so without changing the concept of quality of place. The essence of quality of place seems to be found in the qualities it entails, rather than in the exact criteria itself, as long as the criteria applied are appropriate and enable reasonable comparisons between cities or regions. Nevertheless, Florida and Tinagli (2004:42) point at the problem of comparability between countries. Differences in educational systems between countries, for instance, may affect the comparability of data on the level of education; likewise, comparing the US with EU countries may require caution, as comparable data in some cas-

es have to be obtained from different sources. Moreover, Florida occasionally applies specific data obtained in a rather ad hoc way, such as a 'coolness indicator' from *POV Magazine*. Consequently, incomparability with other studies has to some extent been locked into the analysis.

Second, many studies in the field of economic development emphasise technology as the almost exclusive source of creativity and innovation. To some extent Florida might be considered too much focused on technological innovation, such as the relative size of a city's high-tech output or number of high-tech patents (the concept of the creative class is obviously inspired by the success of Silicon Valley). Measured this way, innovation is the main weakness of the Netherlands. However, this underestimates the value of conceptual, non-technological innovation, such as the innovative design of Rem Koolhaas or Mecanoo Architects, or the development of innovative television formats such as *Big Brother*.

Third, regardless of the criteria applied, measuring quality of place on the national level produces an indicative, less detailed picture, as it does not tell anything about the position of individual cities; indeed, Florida and Tinagli (op. cit.:41) consider it only a first step. To link the competitiveness of cities and regions to their quality of place, it is necessary to study the issue at the local or regional level. This may bring about new data problems, as many of the data from international organisations (EU, Eurostat, OECD, ILO, etc.) used by Florida and Tinagli are not available on a city level. Instead, data might be obtained at lower levels, but this may further complicate the matter of comparability.

The emphasis put on data suggests that it is not easy to define an exact measure of quality of place. In fact, this is only part of the problem. Although many of the characteristics listed in Table 2.1 are easy to perceive in places where they exist, some of them are hard to define. Then there is the issue of scale. Florida considers quality of place mainly at the city level (although he is not very explicit about this, he uses data on the metropolitan level), but several elements of it may also be applied on different scales. In fact, some of the qualities stressed by Florida, such as diversity and liveliness, point at certain locations within cities. Others, such as tolerance, are relevant at higher levels. The fact that in urban regions such as the Randstad or the Rhine-Ruhr area working, living and recreating often takes place in different cities is another complicating factor not mentioned by Florida.

Nonetheless, it is clear that many elements of quality of place are most easily found in historic inner cities with their diversity, liveliness and small scale. Indeed, most places that are celebrated for their (what we would now call) quality of place are located in inner cities, or in places that in many aspects resemble inner cities. In inner cities, however, certain aspects of quality of place, such as diversity and authenticity, may grow over time, but how could this be planned in inner cities that do not by themselves have an attractive



Figure 2.2
Popular festivals may be as important as highbrow culture: summer evening concert in Madison, Wisconsin, one of the smaller cities featured in *The Rise of the Creative Class*

urban climate, and how could this be achieved in newly developed areas? While it may be impossible to plan quality of place, could it be possible to plan for quality of place, creating favourable conditions for quality of place to develop?

Criticism

However elusive some of his ideas may be, Florida's book seemingly has the characteristics of an urban growth 'manual'.¹⁴ It has been popular almost instantaneously among local and regional policy makers in the US and Europe (cf. Peck, 2005:742). As Florida's influence among local policymakers grew rapidly, his ideas increasingly became an issue of interest and sometimes fierce debate in urban economics and urban geography. Indeed, popular as they may be, the ideas of Florida have also raised criticisms (fuelled even more by the author's inevitable stardom). As has already been pointed at in the previous paragraphs, some comments may be made on the applied data and their comparability. Also, many left-wing critics in particular consider the creative class an elitist concept, a normative argument rather than one concerning content, and one that ignores the fact that Florida intended creativity, the 'great leveler', to be less exclusive than existing, comparable categories (Florida, 2005b:4-5).¹⁵ Right-wing critics blame Florida for attacking business interests and family values (Peck, 2005:741). Florida himself maintains that he is politically neu-

¹⁴ Florida hardly provides clear-cut urban planning guidelines like for instance Jacobs (1961) did, although he comes close to this in his report on the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan (Florida, 2002b).

¹⁵ However, recently Florida has also expressed his worries that the creative economy might become too exclusive, increasing rather than reducing inequalities (Florida, 2005a; 2005c). Accordingly, he applies an inequality index and a housing affordability index, developed by Kevin Stolarick, to measure the economic and social inequality (2005a:281-282). It is not clear if, and to which extent, this adaptation is in fact induced by the above-mentioned criticisms.

tral, a claim that is not entirely convincing in view of his recent criticism of the current neoconservative climate (Florida, 2004a; 2004b; 2004c; 2005a). Furthermore, quality of place is often considered a vague concept, but this is because of its multiplicity and complexity, rather than a lack of content. The main problem is how to measure quality of place and its possible impact, and not so much whether or not something like it does exist.

Other objections fall mainly into three categories. First, some reviewers of *The Rise of the Creative Class* state that many of Florida's ideas are not as new as they seem (Glaeser, 2005; Sawicki, 2003). Baris (2003) blames him for using the ideas of others too easily. Indeed, Florida obviously builds on the work of others, as well as on personal experience (Florida, 2005b:7 ff.). The economic importance of categories very similar to the creative class has been stressed before: the resemblance of the creative class to, for instance, the symbolic analysts described by Reich (1991) and the 'bourgeois bohemians' of Brooks (2000) is obvious. The main difference lies in the link Florida makes between urban economic development and quality of life issues. He makes the relations between these elements much more explicit than they were before, connecting previously unrelated or vaguely related concepts in a broad field of economy, sociology and urban development. Furthermore, he replaces 'quality of life' with the more specific 'quality of place', paying more attention to social and cultural aspects.

Second, it is remarked that part of the statistical evidence presented by Florida is rather thin and moreover that the analytical clarity suffers from the casual style of the book (Glaeser, 2005; Sawicki, 2003; cf. Malanga, 2004). Nevertheless, Florida (2005b:24) again found a relation between the creativity index and the growth of high-quality employment and income, admitting that the relation may not be found for low-quality employment growth. Furthermore, he found that the size of the creative class was not directly related to employment growth, but was indeed related to innovation, high-tech industry and talent (Florida, op. cit.:37; 182). Nevertheless, in the Netherlands, Marlet and Van Woerkens (2004a) did actually find a significant relation between the relative size of the creative class and employment growth between 1996 and 2002, corrected for population growth, and between the size of the creative class and the quality of a city as a place of residence, a complex measure which in many respects resembles quality of place. Other categories, especially the relative amount of highly educated people, show a weaker relation to employment growth. It may be that Florida overstates and oversimplifies the significance of specific subgroups in the creative class, such as bohemians or gays (cf. Lehmann, 2003:161-162; Glaeser, 2005); after all, these groups themselves are not so much the decisive factor, but the expression of a general atmosphere of tolerance that makes cities attractive for all kinds of people (Florida, 2005b:22). Likewise, he may pay too much attention to specific cultural observations that may not apply to his broad overall definition of the crea-

tive class (Baris, 2003), but so do his critics (Florida, 2005b:20). As a result the debate focuses on these issues that are only a part of Florida's concept. Considered somewhat more generally – think of the parallels with the symbolic analysts – his ideas might be more robust, but a little more common.

A final point of criticism is that Florida does not show how his ideas actually work in practice (Bhagat, 2004:324; Thiel, 2004). This is true to the extent that, as mentioned above, a main strength of Florida's approach is its broad scope. Almost inevitably, then, he does not consider every bit in detail. In this respect, criticism is justified. However, others have analysed those aspects Florida seems to take for granted. For instance, Storper (1997), Grabher (2002) and Bathelt *et al.* (2004) wrote in detail on the functioning of 'creative' clusters in various sectors and countries; Reich (1991) on the changing role of knowledge workers in the economy; Jacobs (1961) and Landry (2000) on the role of tolerance, diversity and creativity. Part of Florida's book could therefore be considered a broad, general framework, but it is quite specific about creative class and quality of place.

2.6 Conclusion

What, then, is the nature of the currently assumed relation between the quality of the urban environment and urban competitiveness? It is clear, by now, that the recognition of the role of knowledge exchange in urban economies has brought about a renewed focus of research and policy on sources of urban wealth that were already important long before the industrial era diverted attention to other location factors. There is growing evidence of a certain, but as yet somewhat intangible relation between these abstract economic principles and specific characteristics of the day-to-day urban environment. The concept of quality of place, a concept which is extensive but not easy to fully comprehend, was coined for this. It is also a much criticised concept, and the question of its operationalisation and measurement appears to be bristling with difficulties. Nonetheless, although some of the criticisms may be justified, quality of place is a useful concept because it connects the competitiveness of the urban economy to a quite sophisticated perspective on urban development and because it is broader and at the same time more specific than comparable concepts such as quality of life. It is therefore a useful concept in this study, provided that it is not applied in too rigid a way.

A people climate and quality of place directly concern only a part of the economy, but this is the part considered the driving force and the fastest growing sector of the economy. Furthermore, they are not the only factors defining urban competitiveness. Nevertheless, factors such as creativity and quality of place are much more important now than they were in previous periods, and their importance is more explicit. It seems logical that in cit-

ies focusing on the more advanced service industries, quality of place will be added to the obvious set of competition factors and consequently will influence urban economic policy. The remaining chapters focus on some of the most palpable elements of quality of space. For the most part, these elements are also explicitly spatial. While they by no means encompass all aspects of quality of place, they may at least contribute to creating favourable conditions for quality of place to develop.

However, discussing spatial aspects of quality of place will necessarily involve issues only touched on so far: spatial scale, proximity and accessibility. The preceding discussion of knowledge spillover is largely restricted to the scale of the city or below, implying the importance of proximity. But, as became clear in Section 2.2, a city's competitiveness is also related to its position in regional, national and even global networks, which would point to the relevance of accessibility, too. In Chapter 3 I therefore relate the issue of urban competitiveness as discussed before to the issues of scale, distance, accessibility and the availability of transport facilities. This leads to a general framework for the analysis in this study.

3 Connecting places: global and local geographies

3.1 Introduction

It is clear that quality of place, economic and spatial diversity in particular, and the existence of specific, localised knowledge spillover are important elements of urban competitiveness, and that they are not easily obtained. This type of knowledge exchange cannot exist in isolation, however. That it is rooted locally does not mean it is restricted to local ties only; it also depends on crucial knowledge, sometimes from distant locations or businesses, and on access to markets. One of the effects of the so-called globalisation process is that these relations are becoming increasingly international or global, even between small firms. In this chapter, therefore, I will continue the discussion on subquestion 1, on the nature of the assumed relation between the quality of the urban environment and urban competitiveness, this time adding the question of scale. This in turn implies the relevance of transport facilities and the issue of how they are related to urban and economic development. This anticipates the discussion of subquestion 3, particularly insofar as this deals with the objectives of large-scale urban redevelopment in relation to the development of the urban economy.

In Section 3.2 I will discuss the different scales involved in the process of knowledge spillover, and the relation between these scales. The multi-scalar character of this process makes it dependent on both proximity to local clusters and accessibility of distant interaction. Accordingly, in Section 3.3 I will focus on the role of transport nodes, in particular the railway station, as the connection between these scales, and as a transport facility and a part of the city. Section 3.4 then discusses the role of the high-speed train station in global-local knowledge exchange, raising the question of its quality of place.

3.2 Global and local geographies

... instead of referring to a physical entity we refer to the interaction between actors: global is the *network* of such interactions, local is the *nodes* of the network i.e. individual actors or, more often, local systems of actors (Dematteis, 1994:201).

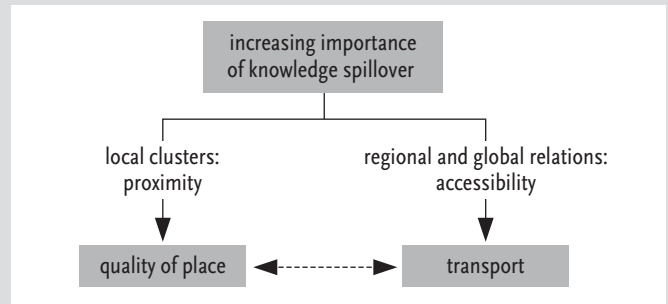
The dependence of specific knowledge exchange in and between local clusters on personal relations means it depends to a large extent on face-to-face contacts and personal relations. These cannot be replaced entirely by electronic devices such as videoconferencing, fax or the internet. It requires types of contacts that are 'too subtle to be performed electronically' (Glæser, 1998:149). This also implies that, unlike digitised information, knowledge spillover is not indifferent with respect to physical distance, as it depends on spatial proximity. Indeed, the greater the 'substantive complexity, irregularity, uncertainty, unpredictability and uncodifiability of transactions, the great-

er their sensitivity to geographical distance' (Storper and Scott, 1995:506). Offner, too, states that:

... even if there were the same possibilities of access at any point on the planet, to conclude that places – as specific spaces – were disappearing would remain absurd. In fact, relationships by connectivity can never be a substitute for links made possible by spatial proximity (Offner, 2000:168).

Therefore, with respect to knowledge transfer, proximity may be considered of vital importance. Malmberg and Maskell (2002:442-443) state that in practice this proximity may extend to the regional level, depending on the type of phenomenon involved.

On the other hand, however, other types of proximity, in particular cognitive proximity, may be more important than 'permanent co-location', as face-to-face contact may then be organised by travelling (Boschma, 2005b:69-70). One's social and professional network is not limited to one's closest friends and local colleagues. As Granovetter (1973) demonstrated, essential knowledge often depends on weak ties to distant acquaintances or quite different businesses. Likewise, Landry (2000), Grabher (2002) and Bathelt *et al.* (2004) state that relations to other cities and other sectors of the economy are essential not only to provide specific knowledge or skills that are not available locally, but also to provide fresh input to the local buzz circuit, which they consider essential to the origin of new ideas. Discussing the networks of relations between firms, projects and individuals in the London advertising industry, Grabher shows the importance of local buzz and the co-location of the partners most involved, especially with regard to the short-term and unforeseeable projects that are common in advertising. In order to get oneself known, obtain commissions and become an insider, it is important to 'be there' in local communities of practice. Occasionally this may mean being in the right pub at the right time, for instance. On the other hand, however, in smaller cities in particular, the availability of specific knowledge often depends on relations with creative professionals, such as photographers, in other cities. Long-distance contacts are also required for contacts with internationally operating clients. Likewise, in quite another sector such as financial services, bankers, solicitors and notaries from multinational companies work closely together on a local level. Often they work for clients in Europe or the United States, making clever use of the time difference. Occasionally trips are required to the head office in, for example, London. In this example, intensive interaction on the local level is combined with long-distance relations. In a more general context, Landry (2000:111) stresses the importance of external contacts and immigrants for bringing in new ideas, skills and talents, and hence of an environment that is receptive to them. This recalls the importance of openness and tolerance for quality of place, as stressed by Florida. Bathelt *et al.*

Figure 3.1 Multi-scalar knowledge spillover

Knowledge spillover occurs in and between local clusters, depending on spatial proximity, and by regional and global interaction, depending on accessibility. These are related to quality of place and transport facilities respectively. The connection of these qualities is a main characteristic of the railway station area.

(2004) also emphasise the role of external contacts in maintaining the local buzz over a longer period; they demonstrate that the combination of these two types of relations is at the same time necessary and complicated. Finally, Boschma (2005a:1006) also recognises the role of social networks in knowledge spillover, although he states that

‘since social networks are often (but not necessarily) geographically localised’, knowledge spillover also tends to be geographically localised.

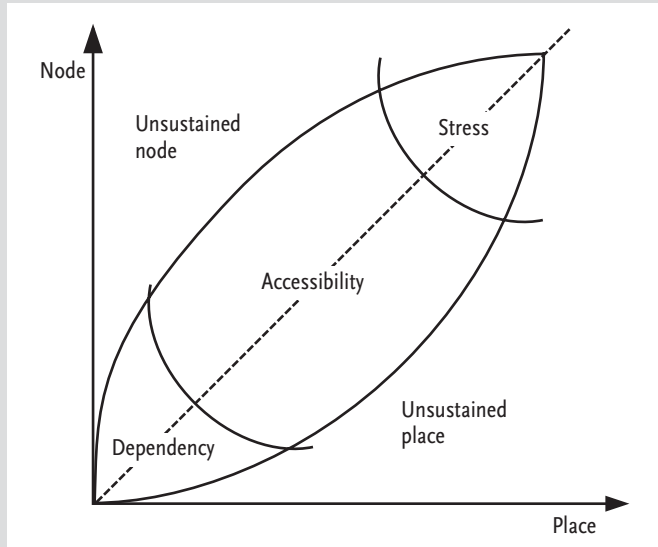
Knowledge spillover is multi-scalar, therefore, involving both local buzz and distant, global or national, interaction (Figure 3.1). In between is the regional level, which is also dependent on accessibility. This level is important with respect to commuting, for instance, but also for the exchange of knowledge. This ‘local-global’ duality of knowledge spillover means that not only spatial proximity per se, but also accessibility – proximity in travel time – is important for knowledge spillover to occur. In short, this implies that knowledge spillover, by the face-to-face contact it requires, is related not only to proximity, but also to the availability and quality of transport facilities.

3.3 The railway station as a node and a place

... it is therefore a mistake to develop binary oppositions of ‘local’ and ‘global’ infrastructure networks. Rather than one network being ‘bigger’ than another it is simply longer or more intensely connected. In this sense a network must always remain continuously local, as it inevitably touches down in particular places (Graham and Marvin, 2001:189).

In light of the above, the railway station is a particularly interesting case, as it offers both accessibility to transport networks and proximity to central urban areas (generally more so than, for example, an airport). Bertolini and Dijst (2003:28) define areas that provide this combination of proximity and accessibility as ‘mobility environments’, stating that transport nodes such as railway stations and airports are perhaps ‘the most intriguing examples’ of this. Thus, as Hall (2001:73-74) states, newly developed locations, somehow based on transport nodes, increasingly supplement traditional locations of face-to-face contacts; many of these concern railway stations. Clearly, regional and national transport networks are vital for this. But the expanding high-speed train network adds an international scale, as well as a certain cosmopolitan

Figure 3.2 Bertolini's model of the station as a node and a place



Source: Bertolini (1999:202)

image that may be at least as important. The implementation of the HST means that, in most cases, a new network is added to existing railway stations and airports.

The railway station – or any urban transport node for that matter – is more than simply a connection between transport systems. It belongs at the same time to the city as well as to the transport network. We might say that it is the place where the network is localised. Thinking of Cas-

tells (1989), we may define the node as a 'place of flows'. Upon closer consideration, the definition of the node itself seems to express these different perspectives of network and place. This is obvious, for instance, in Bertolini's model of the railway station, in which the station's value as a node is related to its value as a place (Figure 3.2). Ideally, both are in balance. In other cases, a balance may be sought by, for instance, reducing the transport value (cancelling superfluous transport services) or increasing the place value (stimulating real estate development). This model has proven a powerful tool for the analysis of transport node development (Bertolini 1999; 2005).

The focus here is mainly on the place value of the station. However, rather than considering the node and place values as such, it is also useful to make explicit the processes behind the movements along the two axes of the model. Following this line of thought, we can say that essentially a railway station has two functions, as shown in Figure 3.3 (Trip, 2003:46-47; cf. Bertolini, 1996:332).

First, being a node, it has a transport function, as an exchange point where networks on different scales and of different modalities are connected and flows are exchanged between them: at the station, passengers change between trains and buses. From this perspective, we may consider the node as a kind of switch between networks and scales, and the exchange of flows as its primary function.

Second, however, as a place the station has a location function, being a place where various activities may be located. These functions influence each other and are often hard to distinguish. Which is dominant in a specific situation depends on the characteristics of the space involved, but also on the perspective of its users. For some users the location function of an airport or a large railway station, which might accommodate a bookshop, supermarket or restaurant and perhaps offices and a hotel, and which might function as a meeting point, is

more important than its function as a transport node.

Figure 3.3 provides a general analytical framework of the node, distinguishing four layers for each of the two functions (elaborated in Trip, 2003:46 ff.).

The starting point is the layer of functional networks, consisting of the various activities that occur in a space. This may concern economic activities, but also recreation, education, social contacts, etc., categories which are often hard to separate, as they depend on the perspective of specific actors. Between activities, interaction takes place, making them in fact the origins and destinations of transport flows.

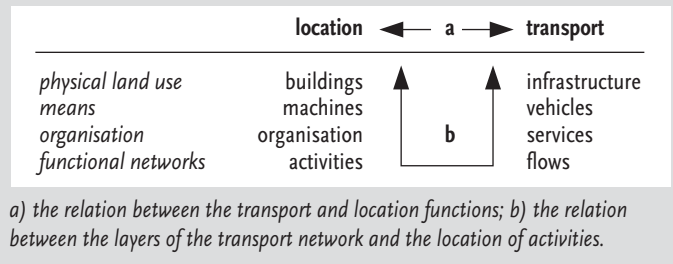
Beyond this layer, three layers of organisation, means and physical land use (the built environment) are distinguished. With respect to the location of activities, these have the rather general labels of organisation, machines and buildings; for example, industrial organisation, assembly lines and factory buildings. Regarding the transport function, the corresponding categories are transport services, vehicles (transport means) and infrastructure. Transport services entail the bundling of flows. In practice, not all of these elements are required in all cases. For collective transport, such as public transport, services are required as individual flows are bundled, mostly with a fixed time schedule and routing; this is not the case for individual types of transport such as the car. Likewise, certain activities require elaborate machinery and extensive buildings, while others, such as many recreational activities, do not. Relations on each layer have their origins in the functional networks of activities and the interaction they generate. Hence the shape of arrow *b*, which indicates that for instance the construction of infrastructure and the development of economic activity are related indirectly, via the transport flows.

The functional networks include the local and global interaction shown in Figure 3.1, although in a non-spatial way. A crucial question is, then, what implications this 'diptych' has for the other layers of Figure 3.3.

The relation between the node and the place

Although it has been mentioned above merely in schematic terms when the functions themselves were discussed, the relation between the two functions of the node has been the object of numerous studies. Most of these focus on economic rather than urban development; in fact, most studies assessing infrastructure projects belong to this category. From what has been said in Section 2.2, however, we may assume that economic development is related closely enough to urban development. The assumption that infrastructure construction leads to economic growth is often included implicitly or explicitly in these studies. The work of Aschauer (1989; 1990) in particular sparked off a series of publications in this field. While Aschauer was rather positive about

Figure 3.3 The two functions of the transport node: transport and location function



the relation between transport and the economy, others such as Vickerman (1989), Vickerman *et al.* (1999) and Batten (1996) are more cautious, pointing at complicating factors such as relative versus absolute accessibility and path dependency of transport networks.

In fact, contrary to the wishful thinking of many a politician, infrastructure itself does not generate spatial or economic development but transport flows may, provided that a certain economic potential, a core of economic activities, exists. To take advantage of passing transport flows, however, it is necessary to interrupt them. People must change trains, park their cars, go shopping or, with respect to freight transport, there must be transshipment of containers, trading, sorting and re-packing of goods, or assembling of parts. Accordingly, the starting points for economic and urban development are those locations where the traffic is disrupted for some reason: the nodes. Or, as Baudez (1960:202) states rather expressively:

La chaussée n'a pas créé les deux villes qu'elle unit; mais les villes ont cherché à se joindre par une chaussée. La chaussée a peut-être créé des haltes ou des auberges le long de son parcours, ou à ces endroits privilégiés que sont les carrefours.

The high-speed railway itself is an obvious illustration of this. The focus on point-to-point connections gives the high-speed train the effect of a tunnel: it almost literally cuts through large areas with which it may have a spatial relation but no functional relation at all; exchange of flows is impossible as the network is inaccessible. The node is the only place where the network is accessible, and from a location perspective, the node as a site 'on top of the network' provides best accessibility. Accordingly, the node is where spatial development in relation to the transport network takes place. The accessibility of the node as a location attracts activities, some of which actually make use of the transport facilities available, and some of which are attracted merely by the possibility of using them (the latter is a common phenomenon at airports and might also be the case for the high-speed railway too). Activity attracts more activity, and agglomeration effects may become important. More activity in turn generates more transport flows. Consequently, the demand for infrastructure and transport services increases.

It may be concluded that although most attention is paid to infrastructure, transport flows are in fact equally important. First, as mentioned above, it is the exchange of flows that defines the transport function of the node. Second, flows are essential for understanding its location function. Furthermore, it is clear that the relation between transport and economic and urban development is not a straightforward causal one.¹⁶ Rather than the too often men-

¹⁶ See Zonneveld and Trip (2003:24-28) for an extensive, although by no means complete, review on this issue.

tioned ‘structuring effect’ of infrastructure, which is a crude simplification, it is a complex reciprocal process. As Offner writes:

On s'affranchit, de cette façon, du rapport de cause à effet (de la poule et de l'œuf...) au profit d'un modèle d'adaptation réciproque: le TGV ne provoque pas la création des technopoles mais il est le mode de transport correspondant le mieux, à un moment donné, à l'apparition de nouvelles formes d'organisation spatiale des entreprises innovantes (Offner, 1993:239).

In many cases lack of infrastructure is, in fact, not the reason for a city's economic development lagging behind. In other cases, the improved connection to a larger centre may cause an outflow rather than an inflow of economic activity, as the benefit of better accessibility works in both directions. This ‘backwash effect’ occurred to a certain extent in Lille, meaning that the overall effect of the Euralille project was positive, but somewhat less so than had been hoped for. This is an effect that is generally unintended, and largely unforeseen, by planners and politicians.

Infrastructure development is often seen as a magic formula for urban economic development: construct a motorway, build a railway or an airport, and instant economic prosperity is guaranteed. If not, then at least some visible action has been taken. However, the generally accepted conclusion of the research undertaken in this field so far is that infrastructure is a ‘necessary, but not sufficient’ condition for economic development; in other words, it can stimulate the development of an existing potential for economic activity but it cannot create one out of nothing. Yet the expectations concerning the economic effects of the high-speed train are enormous.

3.4 The high-speed train station as a place

The high-speed train station provides access to the international transport network, which is considered highly important for urban areas functioning increasingly as economically semi-independent entities in international economic networks (cf. Le Galès, 2002:150-151). Nonetheless, in quantitative terms local and regional transport networks are at least as important. Most large urban or metropolitan areas nowadays are increasingly dispersed or polynuclear urban regions, characterised by intensive, rather criss-cross transport patterns that require efficient and high-capacity regional public transport networks rather than high-speed trains (cf. Trip, 2005a). The obvious example of this is Los Angeles, but this also applies in the cases of, for instance, Greater London, the Ile-de-France, the Ruhr area, the Lille-Roubaix-Tourcoing area and the Randstad.

However, although it is not necessarily the most important modality in

terms of passenger numbers, the high-speed train has certain characteristics which make its overall effect on urban development much greater than that of a conventional intercity train. In fact, the HST resembles air transport more closely than other trains in its private, rather than public, character in terms of management and coordination, its fares and booking system, its fancy image, its effects on time-distance experience, and indeed its expected impact on spatial economic development. Moreover, unlike air transport, it brings the international scale to the inner city. In many cities this effect – or rather, the expectation of this effect – leads to a concentration of urban restructuring and renewal around HST nodes, since it is commonly expected that the expansion of the transport function to a larger scale will lead to a corresponding increase in the attractiveness of the node as a location. Accordingly, the anticipation of the HST in many cities may boost urban development, if only financially, as the combined efforts of public authorities and private developers lead to an almost unprecedented redevelopment of the areas around future HST stations. Projects are being developed in Brussels, Amsterdam and Liège that involve much more than the construction of a railway station. They often imply extensive urban redevelopment projects that are expected to generate considerable economic spin-off. Several projects are also involved with the implementation of HST terminals at airports, for instance in Frankfurt am Main and Lyon Saint Exupéry.

In order to explain these large-scale, highly ambitious developments brought about by the HST, it may be helpful to realise that the HST, in many respects, is more than just a very fast train. It can even be considered a different modality that is compatible with traditional rail transport, but in other aspects resembles air transport. According to Bonnafous (1987:129):

... the TGV ought not to be considered as a traditional railway for, besides the fact that it only carries passengers, its object is not to serve a string of stations. A TGV link is closer to that of an airliner than that of a traditional train when one considers the length of journeys from city to city, the seating capacity (and therefore the commercial objectives regarding the rate of utilisation) and the means of operation (city A – city B).

This is not the case in the Netherlands (and Belgium), where HST stations are relatively close together. In general, however, two distinct advantages of the high-speed train are that, in contrast to the aeroplane, it can provide a direct connection between inner cities, and that it is very fast over long, continuous distances. To a certain extent, however, these qualities may be incompatible. This partly explains both the way TGV services are run in France, as well as the location of stations. Over long distances, say between Paris and Marseille or Toulon, most TGVs call at only one or two intermediate stations, and a second train at one or two other stations, etc. The concept of an inner-city connection is mostly retained for large cities, whereas secondary, intermedi-

ate stations such as those of Avignon or Valence are typically located at the edge of the city, in order to lose as little time as possible. It may be concluded that where the two aspects of the HST, speed and centrality, conflict, the former prevails. As a result, a station such as Avignon TGV in many respects resembles a regional airport both in function and visual appearance: a beautiful building in itself, but surrounded by car parking and car rental facilities, rather than by a vibrant urban area.

Still, in general, as the high-speed rail network has to be selective, it tends to emphasise the accessibility of a limited number of nodes, mainly in or near large cities. This implies that accessibility of the intermediate area will deteriorate relatively; when the implementation of the high-speed train leads to a reduction in other train services, its position may even deteriorate in absolute terms (Bonnaïfous, 1987:130). Regarding spatial economic development, therefore, the effect of the HST is one of polarisation, increasing the focus on large cities at the cost of the intermediate regions. With respect to the position of intermediate stations, the effect may be ambiguous. As with other transport infrastructure, the HST as such will not generate any development where there is no potential. A commission of the French Sénat which evaluated the spatial economic effects of the TGV concluded that:

... une autoroute ou une gare de TGV ne contribueront véritablement au développement d'une ville moyenne que si elles s'accompagnent de la création d'un ensemble de services technologiques, financiers, universitaires qui contribuent à l'implantation d'activités nouvelles [...] dans certains cas, l'amélioration des infrastructures de transport entre des régions de niveaux économiques trop disparates pouvait même conduire à une relative dévitalisation de certaines agglomérations (Sénat, 1998).

In light of the previous section, this quote summarises the issue rather well. The construction of a TGV station in the fields of Haute-Picardie has proved beneficial mainly to trainspotters. Somewhat more interesting is the case of Lille, an intermediate city between Paris, London and Brussels. Here, the introduction of the TGV and the Eurostar to London raised great expectations about the economic spin-off it would generate. These were expressed in the prestigious Euralille project, which will be discussed in detail in later chapters. Indeed, the HST improved the position of Lille relative to Paris and other cities, but it also improved the position of Paris in relation to Lille (Van den Berg and Pol, 1998:89; Cuñat, 2001a:24).

On the local scale, the effect of the high-speed train on urban planning activity actually recalls the impact of the first generation of large railway stations in the nineteenth century, which were considered at the time as the new gateways to the city, replacing the old city gates. This led to urban renewal projects aimed at improving the accessibility of the new stations. Mostly constructed in a contemporary monumental style, they were the functional and visual focus

points of the boulevards that were constructed at the time.¹⁷ As such, the new stations, especially the Gare du Nord and the Gare de l'Est, played an important role in the 'Haussmannisation' of Paris, and in similar but smaller redevelopment projects in Lille, Marseille and other French city centres.

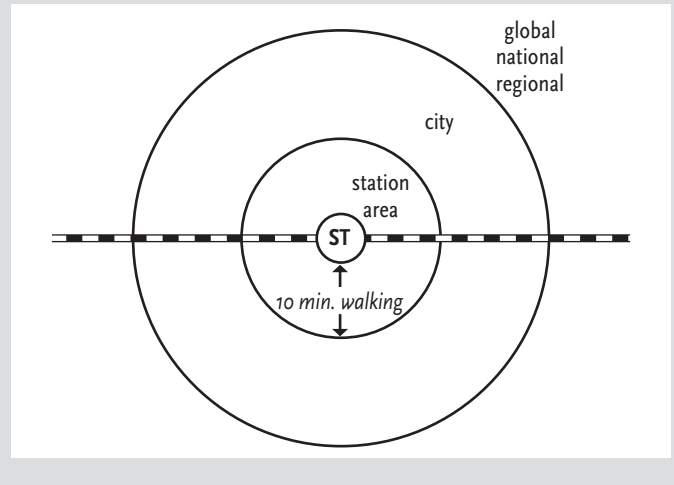
As a focal point for varied activities and flows of people, the station area itself becomes a potential place for face-to-face contact and 'buzz', which typically occur 'in a complex, diversified urban environment' (Storper and Venables, 2002:15). The station area would therefore be an obvious place for the creation of a people climate which seems necessary for future economic growth. The HST, and the urban development it brings about, might emphasise this role, although it seems a point for debate to what extent the current mega-projects are most appropriate for this. We should consider, therefore, how the specific benefits of the station and the station area could be exploited more effectively, to add to the desired competitive quality of place. Moreover, in some cases, development of the railway area is explicitly considered an instrument for increasing the quality of place in the inner city or even the entire city.

In this respect, it is useful to consider the influence of station development on the city at several scales. Schematically, three concentric circles may be distinguished (Figure 3.4). First is the railway station itself. Second is the station area, which may be delineated in several ways (Bertolini and Spit, 1998:11-13). If we take the station area in a broad sense, it seems fair to assume that this is an area within ten minutes' walking distance of the station itself. In smaller cities this may include a large part of the inner city. However, this is a theoretical model; in practice analysis may focus on the inner city as a whole or on the project area, depending on the scale and situation involved; Bertolini and Spit (op. cit.:13) also point at the importance of a flexible, evolving delineation. Third is the remainder of the city. Again, this may be very different in scale, but the cities involved in HST station development projects are generally large and mostly comparable in size. Beyond this circle, and generally beyond the possible quality of place effects of the station, are the larger regional, national and international (or global) scales.¹⁸

17 Carmona (2002:153), writing on the restructuring of Paris in the 1850s and 1860s, says that Napoleon III 'as the starting point for what he had in mind [...] considered that the railheads or railway stations were henceforth the true gates of the city'.

18 Schütz (1998) presents a somewhat similar model of three 'development zones' around the station (also discussed by Pol, 2002:25-27). Schütz does not distinguish between the station and the station area. Otherwise, he distinguishes secondary and tertiary development zones accessible from the station by additional transport modes in, respectively, up to fifteen minutes and more than fifteen minutes. This difference is less relevant here, however, as we zoom in on redevelopment projects directly around the HST station, rather than considering urban development projects elsewhere in the urban area in detail, that is, otherwise than as part of the context of development (see Chapter 7) of the HST station area project.

Figure 3.4 Schematic representation of the various scales involved in the relation between the railway station and the city, and the regional, national and global scales beyond



It now appears that knowledge spillover, which was discussed mostly in a spatially unspecific manner in Chapter 2, is not merely a local process. It involves local proximity as well as accessibility by means of transport networks. The most important insight to emphasise, however, is the truly multi-scalar nature of the process, involving local clusters and global interaction, as well as the intermedi-

ate national and regional scales. The latter is particularly the case in extensive urban regions such as the Randstad; the global or international includes, for instance, the high-speed train and connections to air transport. The simultaneous importance of these scales of social interaction, knowledge exchange and transport points at the station as the node and place where they connect.

Alongside the differentiation between scales goes the insight that proximity on one scale is accessibility on another, that the difference between the two is apparent rather than real. From a bird's eye view, the railway station offers proximity to activities located within the station area or the inner city; from the ground, accessibility becomes important also on a smaller scale, as we may have to walk (sometimes with luggage) for ten minutes or half an hour and cross canals, rivers or busy streets. Clearly, the scale involved in the discussion at any moment influences the perspective: whether the focus is on proximity or accessibility and which types of transport networks are involved.

This concept of the multi-scalarity of the station environment, combined with the layers of transport and location shown in Figure 3.3, provides a flexible framework for the analysis of the relation between the station and the city. This makes it possible to distinguish processes on different scales and between different layers of the transport and location functions. In a way it is complementary to Bertolini's model (Figure 3.2), which expresses the ratio between the two functions.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter continued the discussion on the relation between quality of place and urban competitiveness, whilst also elaborating the importance of transport facilities. Moreover, the debate on the quality of the station area as a place on the one hand and as a transport node on the other already points

ahead at the discussion, in later chapters, as to which elements define the quality of place of large-scale redevelopment areas.

The analysis of quality of place in the remaining chapters largely involves the three local scales indicated in Figure 3.4, discussing the quality of place of the station area in relation to its multi-scalar connections, be it proximity or accessibility. On the other hand, the scales beyond the urban mainly involve the context of development, such as the station's position in regional and long-distance transport networks and the city's position in relation to broader economic processes. There is an institutional side to all this, however, which is related partly to the control and ownership of networks and places, and partly to the objectives and methods of railway station area development. This is explored in Chapter 4.

4 Arenas of decision-making

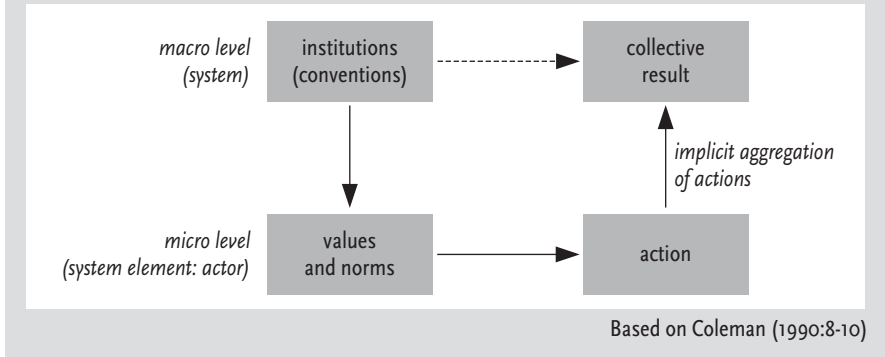
4.1 Introduction

As Chapter 2 showed, knowledge spillover is considered one of the main factors of urban competitiveness nowadays, depending on proximity to local economic clusters, accessibility to long-distance networks and a specific set of urban characteristics known as quality of place. Chapter 3 then argued that the railway station, seen as a transport node as well as a place and part of the city, could have an important role in urban development and competitiveness by way of the accessibility to transport networks and the proximity to central urban areas it provides. This also raises the issue of the quality of the station area as a place. However, it leaves open the question of whether the institutional arrangement involved matters for quality of place and, if so, which conceived institutional arrangements are most suitable for generating a type of node development that could contribute to urban competitiveness in terms of quality of place.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to clarify the institutional setting of railway station development and identify the main governance arenas involved. One specific question is how the institutions and motivations of actors relate to their behaviour. Another issue is how public-private cooperation with respect to the development of high-speed train stations should take place in order to achieve the desired quality of place. This is all the more important since station development is becoming increasingly complex due to the functional and institutional rearrangement of networks and the increasing involvement in spatial economic policy of public and private actors on different scales and government levels. In view of the particular nature of quality of place, the extent to which actors are able to develop and maintain a long-term perspective on the development of the station area is an important factor for the level of quality of place that can be achieved. The possibility of maintaining a long-term view can hardly be considered separately from the issue, addressed in subquestion 4, of how the various actors involved in the planning process perceive quality of place. It also relates to subquestion 6 on the extent to which actors truly support objectives related to quality of place and the elements of quality of place included in the project plan.

Section 4.2 briefly discusses the relations between institutions, actors and policy outcomes. Section 4.3 focuses on the concept of arenas of decision-making, and specifies the arenas of decision-making involved in station area development as they are distinguished here. Section 4.4 then deals with the main trends and processes that currently influence the development of railway areas, in particular the effects of path dependency, the increasingly multi-scalar and multi-actor nature of urban planning and the process of deregulation and privatisation of networks. Lastly, Section 4.5 discusses the need for effective ways of public-private cooperation and coordination and the role of various actors' institutions in this.

Figure 4.1 Generalised scheme of macro- and micro-level propositions in social systems



4.2 Actors, actions, institutions¹⁹

Figure 4.1 provides a generalised framework for the subsequent analysis of the development process of HST station areas, based on the approach of Coleman (1990). Underlying this is a focus on processes internal to the social system, especially the assumed relation between institutions and policy results. In this respect, institutions represent, as Scharpf (1997:38) states, 'rules that structure the courses of actions that a set of actors may choose', as well as systems of social norms and culturally defined values. These are reflected in conventions, opinions, historical and professional backgrounds or ideology (the latter often implicitly). Likewise, Gertler (2004b:7) also distinguished between institutions at the societal level, attitudes and values at the level of the individual and economic behaviour, expressed in industrial practices.²⁰ The question is how these institutions, or a change in these institutions, affect final policy outcome. In Coleman's view the answer to this question ought to be based on an analysis of the individual actors that are the system's basic elements. Thus, a question related to the macro level of the social system has to be studied on the micro level of its elements.²¹

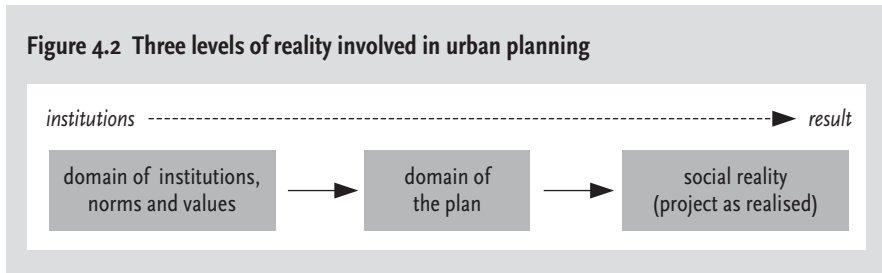
Nevertheless, the macro level also influences the micro level, as the left part of Figure 4.1 shows. Institutions constitute the conditions in which individual actors operate, shaping their values and norms. Thus, they influence actors' perceptions of reality, which are a social construct, and thereby they influence their actions as well. An individual's behaviour can never be completely rational. His perceived image of reality, rooted in the prevailing institutions on the macro level, and a certain 'bounded rationality' (cf. Granovetter, 1985:494)

¹⁹ I would like to thank Stan Majoor of AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, for his very useful advice on the issues described in this and the next section.

²⁰ Sometimes institutions are also thought of 'social entities capable of purposive action' (Scharpf, 1997:38), but it seems less confusing to reserve the term 'actor' or 'collective actor' for this.

²¹ A similar argument is made by, for instance, Granovetter (1985; 1992).

²² I would like to thank Jack Burgers (Faculty of Social Sciences, Erasmus University Rotterdam) for bringing this issue to my attention.

Figure 4.2 Three levels of reality involved in urban planning

together define his purposive action in a specific situation:

We cannot assume that they [actors] will merely follow cultural norms or institutional rules. We also cannot assume, however, [...] that the goals pursued or the interests defended are invariant across actors and across time. Rather, we know that actors respond differently to external threats, constraints, and opportunities because they may differ in their intrinsic perceptions and preferences but also because their perceptions and preferences are very much shaped by the specific institutional setting within which they interact (Scharpf, 1997:36-37).

At the individual level, the relation between one's values and norms on the one hand and one's actions on the other appears more direct than in the collective system at the macro level, where various opinions and beliefs intertwine more easily than on the individual level; in the eventual result they are sometimes hard to disentangle. The individual action should not be confused with the final result of a policy on the macro level, however. As the system was split to analyse all individual actors' motives on the micro level, all actors' individual actions should be aggregated again to get the eventual result at the macro level (Figure 4.1).

Levels of reality behind the plan

The above distinguishing of institutions and actions on the macro level of the social system and the micro level of the individual may be related to different levels of reality: on the one hand there is the domain of institutions, norms and values, on which actors base their actions; on the other hand, there is the result of these actions in social reality. The intention is to know the relation between the reality of institutions and the collective result, that is, the result in social reality. In fact, however, in the analysis of spatial plans a third level should be included. Between the level of institutions, values and norms and the realised project, there is the reality of the plan (Figure 4.2). Still, this division into three levels of reality may be illustrative on the macro level, but cannot be maintained at the micro level of the individual actor, since it is likely that different actors are involved in the planning process as in the realisation of the plan.

The plan in itself is a collective result, based on actions taken during the planning process, and as long as the project is not yet realised, the plan is the most precise image of the project. However, the plan may be the result of an intensive struggle between interests and motivations, most of which remains unnoticeable from outside the planning process. Moreover, in particular in the case of large, long-term projects in which many actors are involved, a project plan tends to function also as a vehicle for discussion and lobbying.²² It serves

to sort out possible solutions to key planning issues and gain commitment from actors who may be involved in future planning stages. Thus, the level of detail that is shown in the early stages of many comprehensive project plans may be deceptive, and may serve mainly to structure the discussion and persuade potential supporters or opponents of the project. Detailed plans may in fact be elaborated at a lower scale for separate subprojects. On the other hand, existing projects may be included in the overall framework of the plan.

The eventual plan is the result of this largely hidden process. But at the same time it is only a first stage, a blueprint or at least a strong representation of what we really would like to know (but cannot), namely the characteristics of the project as it will be when realised. While project plans may give an impression of the level of quality of place, they will always present a rather optimistic view, simply because of the secondary objectives connected to them: to convince actors to participate in the development process.

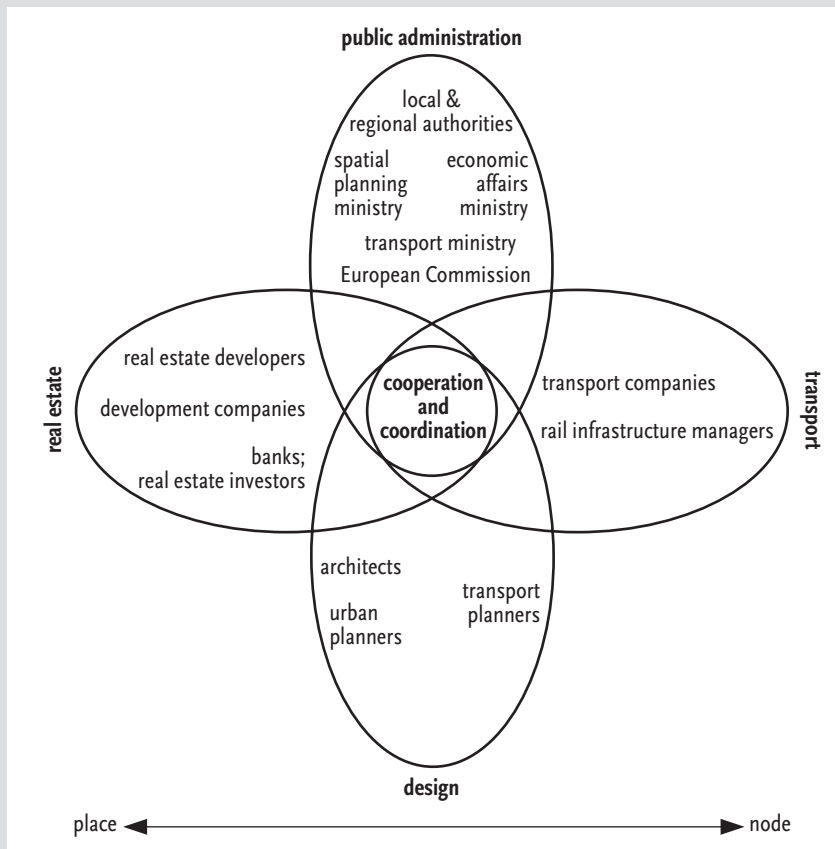
This implies that in order to assess the role of quality of place in the planning process, it is not sufficient to study the project plan alone. It is necessary to focus on the process as well. The next sections therefore discuss the actors involved in HST station area development, defining a number of 'arenas of decision-making', the general trends and institutional processes that currently affect the planning of station areas and the relation between actors, and the way individual actors' roles in the development process are influenced by the norms, values and actions on which their decisions are based.

4.3 Arenas of decision-making in station area development

The framework above provides basic insights into the relation between actors, institutions and policy outcomes, but it is rather general and abstract. In practice, social systems may occur in numerous situations, from the very large-scale to small, project-focused networks including only a few actors. Moreover, various subsystems may often be distinguished on different scales and in different fields, yet all relevant to the case involved. In this regard, Teisman (1992:62; cf. Majoor, 2004) applies the concept of the 'policy arena': a network, centred around a specific policy initiative, which is based on a problem or objective of at least one of the actors involved. However, the arena also provides other actors involved with the opportunity to link their aims to the issue under discussion. With regard to the single redevelopment projects discussed here, 'arenas of decision-making' may also be an appropriate term, in contrast to the 'arenas of coordination' which refer to controlling the usual course of events.

It is evident that a policy arena should be focused on a specific policy initiative, a central issue or project, but otherwise much is unclear about the way various arenas may be distinguished within a certain field. One way is to dis-

Figure 4.3 Arenas of decision-making involved in railway station area development, and an indicative list of actors involved



All arenas may include public and semi-public as well as private actors, although in reality the accent will be different for various arenas.

tinguish arenas according to their scale: a local and regional, a national and an international arena. Regarding the development of the Zuidas, for instance, Majoor (2004:80) distinguishes three arenas (or 'domains of interaction') of, respectively, private actors, local public authorities and public authorities on a higher level. An alternative approach is to define arenas by their main issue of discussion, thus distinguishing an economical, transport-technical and a spatial and environmental arena. In fact, the way arenas are demarcated in a given situation partly depends on the objective and approach involved, and thereby on the analyst's institutional context. The latter approach of discourse-centred arenas seems more interesting here, however. It then appears that conflicts of interest may occur when different arenas are involved, rooted in different institutions and contexts and with different objectives.

In view of the above, four arenas of decision-making with respect to station area development are distinguished here (Figure 4.3). The first arena can be labelled the *public administration arena*, or politics arena. This is to a large extent the arena in which public policy objectives are defined. It includes pub-

lic authorities on different levels and of different natures: local bodies such as councils, mayors and aldermen, regional authorities, ministries, parliament and supranational bodies such as the EU. With respect to the role of quality of place in the development of station areas, the local and regional level seem most directly involved.

Second, a *real estate development arena* is distinguished, which mainly concerns the development of the station area as a place. This is to a large extent dominated by private and semi-public actors: project developers, housing associations, banks and investment trusts that invest in real estate or construction companies that have become active in real estate development. Public development companies also play a role in this arena, for instance with regard to the provision of building lots. The distinction between public and private actors is somewhat blurred, therefore. This arena is very relevant here, as the actors involved in real estate development hold a large stake in the process of station area development, especially since nowadays the feasibility of many station area development projects depends on private real estate funding rather than public funding alone. It also implies that private developers bring in their own objectives with respect to the project, which may or may not influence the role attributed to quality of place.

In a sense, the counterbalance of the real estate arena is the *transport arena*, which is involved mainly with the station as a node. It includes all kinds of transport companies such as infrastructure providers, service providers, urban transport companies and railway companies. It may include public as well as private actors. As the focus here is mostly on the station area as a place, the transport arena is mainly of interest as far as it interferes with other arenas distinguished. The most obvious cases of this are the development of the station building, when a conflict occurs between its functions as a transport node and a place, and cases in which external effects of transport, such as noise, affect quality of place.

Lastly, a *design arena* is distinguished, consisting of urban planners, transport planners and architects, amongst others. This involves both private and public actors, since planners and architects may act on behalf of public services (the spatial planning department of a local public administrative body, for example) as well as private architectural and engineering firms. Their interest in the project differs from that of investors, however. Actors in the design arena mostly work on commission on behalf of those in the public administration and real estate development arenas. Nonetheless, this arena is most relevant with respect to quality of place, as it is concerned with the planning and design of the physical project in detail. Virtually every objective or idea concerning the project has to be discussed in the design arena before it can be materialised. Moreover, even in the earlier stages of the planning process, actors from the design arena are involved in visualising plans, which is essential to raise support and funding for the project.

It is clear – if only from looking at Figure 4.3 – that where many actors from various arenas are involved, coordination of activities becomes an important issue. This is particularly true when close cooperation of actors from different arenas is necessary, as is virtually always the case in complex urban redevelopment projects. In many cases, including those studied here, this coordination task is appointed to a dedicated project organisation, which might be visualised in the centre of Figure 4.3. This type of organisation is often difficult to position. Although different in each project, it is typically mostly public, as it coordinates the planning, development and in later stages the actual construction of the project on behalf of the local public authorities, and is often staffed by public authority personnel. However, at the same time it is semi-independent, closer in its method of operation and mindset to market parties than for instance municipal planning departments, and not liable to public accountability. As with private parties, its accountability is mostly arranged by means of contracts.²³

In practice, the actors involved and their mutual relations will be different for each individual project. Moreover, which arena of decision-making is considered to a large extent also defines which actors are taken into account. Nonetheless, which actors are involved in the policy-making process may also be influenced by, for instance, changes in the prevailing institutions and other, external factors. Section 4.4 will elaborate on this, discussing several main external trends that currently affect the decision-making process with respect to urban and infrastructure development. After that, Section 4.5 focuses more specifically on the ways public and private arenas of decision-making interact and interfere.

4.4 A farewell to comprehensive public planning

The relation between these arenas of decision-making is influenced by a number of processes and trends, which cause changes in the prevailing institutions and, accordingly, in the roles of various actors in the development process. For one thing, since the 1960s and 1970s, faith in the possibility of a successful comprehensive planning process, mostly undertaken by public authorities, has diminished considerably. This has to do partly with the currently prevailing neo-liberal credo, which encourages privatisation of public services and a larger involvement of private venture capital in infrastructure and, notably, real estate development. Furthermore, there is greater general disbelief than before in the mere possibility to mould society, even among plan-

²³ Although these organisation exists in relation to a specific project, rather than on a permanent base, in aspects such as accountability they somewhat resemble the 'quango' discussed by Ridley and Wilson (1995).

ners, which also extends to the field of urban planning (cf. Healey, 1997:28-30). Urban development, in particular urban sprawl, seems to have a dynamics of its own, which spatial planning can only partly guide, but not control. Moreover, the sometimes disastrous results of ambitious, in particular modernist, planning schemes from earlier decades indicate that a detailed, truly comprehensive planning process is very difficult to implement effectively and, when nonetheless forced through, tends to have many unexpected and often undesirable effects (cf. J. Scott, 1998). Post-modernist planning seems to have somewhat more modest intentions. It recognises that planning cannot neglect the specific local context, and that local differences in institutions, culture and economy must be taken into account (Healey, 1997:40-41).²⁴

Besides the mere ability to implement a comprehensive planning process, it is increasingly stated that too detailed an urban planning process is actually undesirable, as the diversity, coincidence and confusion that are typical of many vibrant urban areas depend to a large extent on the self-organisation of those areas (cf. Soja, 1991; Sorkin, 2001a:13); many such areas are indeed apparent results of Garreau's 'law of unintended consequences' (1992:464), which states that 'no matter what your plan is, the result will always be a surprise'.

Path dependency

Thus, as yet, the heyday of comprehensive government planning seems to have come to an end. What frustrates a successful, detailed comprehensive planning process is, first and foremost, that in practice planning never concerns an isolated *tabula rasa*. Instead, existing situations and external influences constantly disturb the effectiveness of plans. Various types of path dependency characterise urban economic development, as well as the development of transport networks. This may imply that a specific development is reinforced, by increasing returns, according to a cyclical, iterative pattern (Piereson, 2000:252-253), but it may also concern a chain of successive events which follow from each other (Mahoney, 2000:508-509). Both are obvious in the development of transport networks. Due to increasing returns, network benefits, in theory, increase when the network expands. Each user is connected to an increasing number of locations, while he himself is accessible to an ever larger group of other users. This is beneficial to existing, extensive networks but is a disadvantage, however, for new transport systems, which may be technologically superior but incompatible. An important advantage of the high-speed train over maglev technology, for example, is its compatibility with the existing rail network. Behind this *technological* path dependency, there may be social, economic or other decisions taken in the past, such as in the case of

²⁴ See Chapter 7, which discusses the local 'context of development' of the projects analysed here.

the different rail gauges in Spain. Having been introduced deliberately for reasons of national defence, it continues to be a hindrance to transport efficiency long afterwards.

A specific type of path dependency, discussed in Section 2.3, is the *geographical* path dependency involved in the growth and semi-permanence of many local economic clusters. It now appears that quality of place is one of the factors defining this kind of path dependency, as far as it facilitates the possible emergence and survival of such clusters.

Finally, perhaps most general is what could be called *institutional* path dependency. Previous institutions, points of view and social patterns are locked in at earlier stages of the policy process and affect present and future decision-making. Furthermore, a cyclical, iterative process may easily occur, as positions and competences of actors or groups of actors are often stable and insensitive to change for long periods, especially in the case of large actors such as governments or multinational organisations (cf. Pierson, 2000). As was mentioned in Section 2.2, for instance, the development of urban economic structure is to a considerable extent influenced by the existing structure, which in turn is reflected in the local institutional context. This is a main reason why authorities so often fail to adapt their policies to a changing economic reality in time. This is not simply a matter of outright conservatism, rather of conventions (or dogmas) and an essentially inward orientation.

As the examples mentioned above indicate, all three types of path dependency are in a way relevant to the cases of HST station area development studied here; to the economic, institutional and physical context in which projects are being developed, and to the way in which the development process takes shape. The various influences of path dependency are, almost by definition, effective over long periods, or even semi-permanently. However, railway station development, and urban development in general, is also affected by a number of important processes that are evolving at present, driven by economic as well as political and cultural motives. It involves a complex of closely interrelated factors, in which, for reasons of clarity, three main elements may be distinguished. These are privatisation, multi-scalar and multi-level governance and multi-actor involvement.

Privatisation

During the nineteenth century, a situation gradually came into existence in which the public authorities of a city considered it their task to provide infrastructure and other public amenities evenly distributed over the city. This included transport facilities, but also sewerage, water, electricity and telephone services, etc., in accordance with the rapid technological development in these fields at the time. In this respect, major urban building and restructuring schemes, in particular the restructuring of Paris in the 1850s and 1860s,

acted as a catalyst. In a similar way, following the increase of direct over indirect rule, national governments strived for an equal distribution of facilities over the entire country (Tilly, 1992:97; cf. 114-116). The growth of dense national railway networks in those days is a prominent example of this, and even the French 'tout TGV' policy of the 1980s and 1990s can be considered in this perspective. On the urban level, this 'modern networked city' (Graham and Marvin, 2001:39 ff.) remained the dominant model for urban government between approximately 1850 and 1960, and for somewhat longer in Europe than in the US.

However, this is no longer the case. Processes of privatisation, deregulation and liberalisation have been prevalent since 1980. These are strongly stimulated by the current neo-liberal tendency in politics, both nationally, in for example the United States, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, as well as on the EU level, which clearly indicates a change in the prevailing institutional framework. Public facilities, such as transport systems, have been privatised on a large scale. Often, networks are divided among several competitors and control over different layers of the network (as distinguished in Figure 3.3) is split and sold separately. Where a single public company was previously in control of tracks, stations, trains, traffic coordination and the planning of train services, the new situation may be that one private company controls infrastructure and another owns the trains with which a third operates rail services; in many cases these concern split-offs from the previous public train company. The actors involved may be different on various parts of the network. This is currently the situation on the railways in the United Kingdom and, to a lesser extent, the Netherlands and Sweden, some of the prominent examples of railway privatisation in Europe (ironically, the predecessors of these 'old' national railway companies were founded on private venture capital). Likewise, while the high-speed train was first introduced and made a success in Europe by the state-owned SNCF, dedicated services such as the Thalys and Eurostar are now exploited by private or semi-private consortia that do not own the rail infrastructure. On the other hand, business increasingly crosses the boundaries between sectors. Railway companies are now among the major actors involved in real estate development around stations, and as such play a much more complex role in urban planning.

Privatisation is said to increase competition and thereby quality, since private actors are assumed to operate more efficiently than public bodies, leading to a better cost-quality ratio. As often, however, social reality is stubborn. Privatisation in public transport and public railways is now increasingly considered a mixed success in terms of price, quality and choice.²⁵ Furthermore,

²⁵ For the Dutch situation see for instance the report of the Advisory Council for Transport, Public Works and Water Management (RVW, 2004:32-35).

with respect to infrastructure development, the willingness of private actors to take their share in the costs of projects tends to remain below the often rather optimistic expectations (Flyvbjerg *et al.*, 2003:136).²⁶

Moreover, as a result of privatisation, the focus is no longer on the equal distribution of facilities. As private companies are obviously interested mainly in the most profitable parts of the network, these tend to be privatised first. This is one of the main causes of what Graham and Marvin (2001) call 'splintering urbanism'. The fragmentation of networks and, by that, of the spaces they connect, results in a focus on premium networks and, accordingly, premium spaces. This 'cherry picking' makes the unprofitable segments that used to be cross-subsidised by the profits made in now privatised segments easy targets for budget cuts. Areas not connected to premium infrastructure and services become liable to deterioration, at least relatively, in terms of accessibility. In extreme cases they become accessibility voids, deprived of the most important economic and transport networks. Graham and Marvin (2001) provide many examples of this, mainly from the US and the UK. In Continental Europe this process may be less far advanced and its consequences less extreme, but they are felt all the same and will only increase in the future. The high-speed train, which is focused primarily on larger cities, may reinforce this process, especially in those quite frequent cases where implementation of the HST is accompanied by a diminution of other train services. Processes of splintering and privatisation for the most part also apply to energy, water and telecommunications networks, which used to be public monopolies. This makes the potential, cumulative consequences even greater.

With respect to station area development, the transport arena of decision-making is affected most directly. While it would have consisted almost entirely of public actors only a few decades ago, as a result of the deregulation and privatisation processes described here it now includes a wide range of public, semi-public and private actors. As the relation between transport and urban development has become more complicated, and in many aspects more intense, urban development itself is indeed affected too, as the fragmentation of infrastructures and services contributes to a fragmentation of urban space. This is particularly true in 'network spaces' such as railway station areas, where transport and urban development closely intertwine.

Multi-arena governance

Two other, largely interrelated processes affect urban planning and infrastructure planning and, consequently, the development of railway station areas: increasing multi-actor involvement and increasing multi-scalar governance.

²⁶ Several recent Dutch policy reports also pointed at this, particularly the parliamentary report on infrastructure projects (TCI, 2004).

Both imply the involvement of a wider range of actors in the policy process.

First, the city must increasingly be considered a collective actor (Le Galès, 2002:10). It entails not only the city government, but many public, semi-public and private bodies that want to be involved in the government process. This means that policy-making is now much more of a multi-actor process than it used to be. Moreover, the involvement of groups other than public authorities in local administration is not confined to business. Increasingly, a wide variety of bodies such as district councils, chambers of commerce, economic, social, environmental and other interest groups and civil initiatives participate, and expect to be enabled to participate, in the local government process. As a result, the emphasis in policy analysis now is on governance, rather than government. This implies that, for instance, urban planning by municipalities increasingly involves negotiations with private actors (Louw *et al.*, 2003:365).

Second, besides a wider variety of actors in terms of background and scope (which we might call a horizontal shift in governance), actors at different scales and, accordingly, different levels of governance are increasingly involved in the planning process (a vertical shift in governance). With increasing complexity, it has become evident that 'no one spatial scale is predominant as the scale at which economic and social problems can be solved' (Louw *et al.*, *op. cit.*:365). In this respect, Allen Scott (1998:10) distinguishes four hierarchical levels of governance relations: the global, the plurinational, the national and the regional (including, almost implicitly, the local: Scott, *op. cit.*:1). On the plurinational level the major entity and the most relevant here is the European Union. EU policy mainly aims at the creation of a free European market and reinforcement of internal cohesion within Europe, in order to achieve a 'level playing field'. This concerns liberalisation and privatisation of numerous activities, but also a considerable amount of new regulation, for example with respect to labour markets and environmental protection (probably best known is the Habitats Directive concerning bird protection). EU policy has both direct and indirect effects on station area development, by stimulating, or coercing by legal means, the development of the European HST network and the liberalisation and privatisation of infrastructure. Moreover, as Le Galès (2002:76) demonstrates, EU policy concerns urban administration much more directly than it did before. The national level, in turn, is said to lose power to both higher and lower tiers of government. Nevertheless, it is still dominant with respect to the planning of major infrastructure and, to a lesser extent, facilitating large urban development projects such as HST station development (cf. Romein *et al.*, 2003:206-207). The regional level, and to some extent the local level, on the other hand, are gaining importance, as cities and urban regions are increasingly involved as independent or semi-independent actors in the field of economics and politics.

Thus, processes of governance do not necessarily occur neatly, step-wise, top-down or bottom-up; instead, various levels of governance interact

upwards, downwards, sideways and even diagonally. Cities and regions participate in international cooperation and maintain their own lobby with the EU to achieve specific developmental goals; non-governmental organisations mobilise protest against policies of regional and national governments, sometimes in international coalitions with sister organisations; nation-states cooperate bilaterally on specific issues, or with lower levels of governance on specific projects. Sometimes these policies at different scales seem to be rooted in different institutions, as may be illustrated by the changes in infrastructure policy mentioned before. In many station and railway development projects in the Netherlands, for example, the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management has a very different mindset from local and regional actors (focused on transport engineering rather than economics and quality of life), which may complicate the planning process considerably (cf. Ipenburg *et al.*, 2001).

The processes described above are closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Overall, their result is an increased complexity of the development process, including various arenas of policy-making: many actors, operating at many scales and administrative levels, and including many actors from outside the public administration arena. In fact, the combined effects of increasing multi-actor and multi-scalar governance might be considered a 'multi-arena' policy process, since several of the arenas represented in Figure 4.3 are involved actively and simultaneously – more so than in the past – in the development process. This concerns not only the actors involved, but also the institutions, the values and norms on which actors base their actions and that are assumed, whether rightly so or not, to differ between private and public actors. The next section therefore discusses the role of various actors' institutions with regard to station area development.

4.5 Public and private actors' institutions: short-term objectives versus long-term perspectives

With respect to urban development, of which the development of station areas is considered here a specific case, the usual situation is one of public-private cooperation, rather than complete privatisation, and the disadvantages of private involvement are less obvious. Involvement of actors other than public authorities in local administration is not an entirely new phenomenon, and the involvement of private parties in urban development and planning is nothing new either. Nevertheless, it can be said that the relation between private and public control of networks and spaces is changing. The balance between public and private has been shifting increasingly towards the

latter during recent decades. Public authorities in most countries, in particular within the EU and North America, now consider public-private cooperation in urban and transport planning necessary and advantageous. The benefits are, at least theoretically, found in the sharing of risks and expenses by means of co-financing by private parties. Accordingly, private, and public-private, supply and control of transport infrastructure and services and parts of urban space such as shopping centres, station buildings and even streets is increasing, while the traditional role of public authorities in these fields is diminishing. On the other hand, public authorities are acting, effectually, more and more as developers, sometimes by means of dedicated semi-public bodies.

Private actors have a large influence on the quality of urban design (Rowley, 1998:151). Public-private cooperation is (in comparison to public development) often assumed to increase the tendency for mono-functionality of profitable functions, to lead to cheaper construction and to reduce the accessibility of public space. On the other hand, even in a publicly developed area the third spaces that are especially important with respect to quality of place, such as restaurants and bars, will for the most part be privately controlled. What does this mean for quality of place?

Private interests beyond shareholder capitalism

Quality of place requires a long-term perspective by all actors involved for two reasons. First, this is simply because quality of place cannot be developed instantaneously. Being an emergent quality, it requires time to evolve. Large-scale office provision in itself tends to be a profitable activity for developers in the short term, but establishing measures to improve the quality of place is not necessarily cost-effective. In the long term, however, quality often pays. It increases the value of projects, which is indeed reflected in revenues. UCL, for instance, found that good urban design, which they understand in a much broader sense than just architecture, has a positive effect on the economic returns on a project, as well as on its prestige, functional mix, supra-local competitiveness and social and environmental quality (UCL, 2001:8; 18). This implies that a long-term perspective is eventually also in the interest of private, profit-oriented actors.

Second, from the above it follows that, in view of the shared development and control of the project area by public and private actors, development of HST station areas in a way that encourages the emergence of a distinct quality of place necessitates a collective action. Mutual cooperation is required also after the immediate development of the project, in order to guarantee maximum quality of place. As Jennings (2005:366 ff.) states, this means that the time horizons applied by both parties are related, and hence must be compatible. Moreover, it means that successful cooperation, based on mutual reliability, requires a long-term perspective from both parties: it makes no sense to

maintain a long-term perspective when dealing with parties that act purely from a short-term perspective.²⁷

However, the competitive environment in which private actors operate encourages them to apply a short-term perspective (Kohn, in: Jennings, 2005:367; cf. Rowley, 1998:163). It is typically assumed that private actors in the real estate arena aim for profit, efficiency and shareholder value, preferably in the short term; a neo-classical perspective, therefore, in which quality of place is irrelevant, and hence no effort will be invested into it. The mainly public actors in the design and public administration arenas, on the other hand, would pay more attention to long-term objectives and the public interest,²⁸ which we may presume to include quality of place.

However, just as there is not one public authority and many semi-public or public-private and private actors are instead involved in the planning process of HST station areas, so are the institutions, norms and values of different actors less clear-cut than we might hope for. Private actors are not by definition blind to the public interest, they do not have short-term interests only, and while their strategies are often short-term, this is not necessarily always the case. They may go, at least effectively, beyond the objectives of shareholder capitalism. This may in particular be true when the public interest supports the private interest at stake. Project developers and investors may, for instance, support strategies aimed at public safety or other aspects of quality of place when they believe this will increase the value and marketability of the real estate involved (Rowley, *op. cit.*:165). Also, the image of the firm may be a reason for actions not directly aimed at the primary objectives of business. As Rowley (*op. cit.*:163) mentions, developers are usually responsible for the financial result of a project, but for many people it is also 'the developer who is ultimately responsible for the quality and appearance of a development'. Moreover, different private actors involved in one project may have mutually diverging objectives (cf. Whitley, 1999). As Healey (1997:32) states: 'The forces which structure the economic sphere are manifest as much in complex global financial flows as in the exploitative behaviour of a local industrialist. And they lead to very diverse interests in what happens in places, as companies have different strategies and different interests in land, property and the quality of places'. The same is likely to be true for various

27 'If you, in my decision environment, become more reliable through better foresight, I can plan better too. You and I are related thus: shorter horizons for you will likely shrink mine as well. We all create disturbances in each other's endeavors. Stability and instability yield a spreading contagion' (Jennings, 2005:366).

28 A term used here for convenience, although we may ask whether a specific public interest actually exists and, if so, what it entails, especially as '... the culturally homogeneous community with a common 'public interest' has been replaced in our imaginations by the recognition of a diversity of ways of living everyday life and of valuing local environmental qualities' (Healey, 1997:32).

public authorities, who may have quite mundane objectives besides a more or less exalted public interest.

4.6 Conclusion

From the discussions in the preceding sections, a number of issues may be derived that are essential to the role of quality of place in the development process of HST station areas. These particularly concern the relation between public and private actors and their respective objectives and institutional backgrounds.

First of all, the above raises the questions a) to what extent real estate developers and investors recognise the importance of a long-term perspective on quality of place; b) whether they indeed base their actions on such a long-term perspective, and c) if so, whether or not they are able to maintain this perspective, for better or for worse, in spite of the short-term objectives of shareholder capitalism. In other words, to what extent are actors really committed to the long-term objective of quality of place? These issues are essential to the discussion in later chapters, particularly on subquestions 4 and 6, on the perception of, and support for, quality of place in planning practice. As for now, it may be said that the potentially wide divergence between seemingly similar actors indicates that the analysis of the development process of HST station areas requires a rich actor view. It is necessary to focus on individual actors' norms, values and actions to gain real insight into the decision-making process, rather than merely on the collective result.

Second, supposing that private actors do intend to apply a quality-oriented approach, there remains the question of how this should be implemented in practice. As mentioned in Section 4.3, most HST station development projects actually entail extensive complexes of subprojects – some profitable, some not – which means it would be possible to apply a value capturing approach (Priemus, 2003:8). This means profits are not withdrawn from the project but reinvested in the area, to finance unprofitable elements of the plan that may enhance its quality, for instance. It is a means of financing parts of urban transit systems, for example. In HST station area development it will most likely mean that profits from real estate development are reinvested in order to realise public space or unprofitable amenities. The system is based on the condition that profits are indeed made on part of the project. Although it is a public-private collective action, in effect it amounts to a kind of cross-subsidy not very different from the way purely public urban development may take place. A tempting conclusion is, then, that in order to make private parties act in the interests of quality of place, they should act to a certain degree like public actors – that is, like public actors are conventionally assumed to act. Also, as Rowley (1998:164) suggests, much may depend on persuasive archi-

tects and planners to convince private actors of the importance of quality.

Lastly, a crucial question is to what extent actors' (public as well as private) commitment can indeed be found in actual projects as they are planned. This requires analysis of project plans, but also of actors' understanding of quality of place. First, however, it requires a further specification of quality of place, in particular the spatial aspects of quality of place which are relevant to aim at on the scale of the project area. A number of keys to this will be discussed in the next chapter.

5 Keys to the analysis of quality of place

5.1 Introduction

As many aspects of quality of place seem difficult to plan or construct, it may instead be a matter of creating favourable *conditions* for quality of place to develop. This is most obviously the case with abstract elements such as urbanity, liveability or authenticity; moreover, some of these aspects are rather subjective and their valuation is partly culturally determined (cf. Verbart, 2004:49). Yet some aspects of quality of place are undeniably related to specific features of the city that are all too palpable, which by no means implies that they are easy to plan. Some are relevant mainly at the level of the city or beyond, some at the smaller scale of the neighbourhood or urban district, or, for that matter, the railway station area.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to distinguish a limited number of key issues for the empirical analysis of the quality of place in railway station areas in the following chapters. This involves the issue, addressed in subquestion 2, of how quality of place can be operationalised, in particular with regard to large-scale urban redevelopment. By distinguishing a number of key elements of quality of place in such projects, the chapter in a way also anticipates subquestion 5 on the elements of quality of place that may be distinguished, in later chapters, in actual project plans.

The key issues distinguished here include, first, functional and spatial diversity by way of measures to plan and retain an agreeable scale, grain and functional mix, and, second, the integration of the station area in the surrounding city. Third, in relation to the possibility of informal meetings, street life, urban culture and the occurrence of buzz, which are all important elements of quality of place, the quality of public space is of particular relevance. Again, this is not to say that no other issues are involved in the quality of place of station areas. With regard to the more concrete aspects, however, that are relevant at the scale of the station area, the three aspects distinguished here may certainly be considered essential. Moreover, as far as it does not concern the specific role of the transport function in the station area, much of what is discussed in the following sections also applies to large-scale urban redevelopment in general.

The three keys – diversity, integration and public space – are elaborated in this chapter in relation to the development of the railway station area. At the same time they are put in relation to each other. In this respect, the involvement of various scales is particularly relevant. For one thing, the diversity in an area on a certain scale may be interpreted as integration on a smaller scale. Likewise, these issues may be related to those of proximity and accessibility, which in previous chapters have been specified as main, distinct qualities of the railway station area. This chapter aims to untangle what is quite a complicated matter.

Section 5.2 discusses the importance of diversity for urban vitality in gen-

eral, arguing that diversity entails more than just a combination of different functions. Subsequently, in Section 5.3 the particularities of functional diversity in railway station areas are discussed. Section 5.4 then focuses on a higher scale, dealing with the integration of the station and its environment in the city, as well as the role of transport infrastructure in this. After that, Section 5.5 discusses the quality of public space, which may partly be regarded as a synthesis of the two preceding sections and partly as a discussion of a higher lever of abstraction touching on more elusive aspects of the city and quality of place.

5.2 Diversity

Diversity is one of the most important aspects of quality of place, emphasised by Florida as well as others writing on quality of place and similar subjects.²⁹ Moreover, this attention paid to diversity is nothing new. In the 1960s, Jane Jacobs stressed the importance of both economic diversity (in *The Economy of Cities*, 1969) and spatial and functional diversity (in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1961) for cities to remain competitive and attractive over time. Jacobs mentions several important elements of diversity:

- 1) The district, and indeed as many of its internal parts as possible, must serve more than one primary function; preferably more than two. These must ensure the presence of people who go outdoors on different schedules and are in the place for different purposes, but who are able to use many facilities in common.
- 2) Most blocks must be short; that is, streets and opportunities to turn corners must be frequent.
- 3) The district must mingle buildings that vary in age and condition, including a good proportion of old ones so that they vary in the economic yield they must produce. This mingling must be fairly close-grained.
- 4) There must be a sufficiently dense concentration of people, for whatever purposes they may be there. This includes dense concentration in the case of people who are there because of residence (Jacobs, 1961:150-151).

Accordingly, in terms of urban structure, diversity requires not only a mixture of residential and economic functions, but also a mixture of buildings of various sizes and ages for various types of businesses, as 'new ideas must use old buildings' (Jacobs, op. cit.:188). Sorkin (2001b:8) actually states that 'the compatibility of sizes' is likely 'to become the main problematic of use harmonisation'. Furthermore, it requires small building blocks to achieve an open, well-accessible urban texture with a pedestrian scale, and a sufficient density of people. These ideas have since been embraced by numerous urbanists,

²⁹ See Section 2.5.

such as Lynch (1981) and Rykwert (2000). Grant (2002:73), too, mentions that functional diversity may liven up an area after working hours, and thereby create new business opportunities. In fact, these new businesses themselves are part of the functional mix that enlivens the area.

However, Jacobs (1961:241 ff.) also defined the principle of 'self-destruction of diversity', which implies that in buildings, streets or neighbourhoods where a diversity of functions coexists, successful functions like offices tend to inflate location costs, driving away weaker functions through a kind of commercial gentrification process. In this respect, Maitland (1997:104) describes how in urban areas focused on tourism and culture, such as Covent Garden in London, functions that mainly cater for the local market 'may be driven out by leisure and tourism activities able to pay higher rents'. Likewise, in newly developed areas there is often a tendency towards overrepresentation of the most profitable functions, especially where development is mainly market-driven. Jacobs conceived her ideas in an American context in the 1950s and 1960s, but as there are signs of an increasing role of the private sector in spatial planning in Europe too, the role of public authorities as the protector of the 'public interest' is less obvious than before. This is particularly the case with regard to the planning of newly developed areas, which seldom takes place now without the extensive involvement of private actors.³⁰ As has been mentioned before, this may easily lead to rather monotonous office areas, in which efficiency dictates large rather than small blocks.

It is therefore important to strive for a structural means to maintain diversity and prevent spatial or economic 'monoculture'. Indeed, the elements of diversity emphasised by Jacobs seem important elements of what is now referred to as quality of place, and they clearly point at the relevance of mixed-use development. In fact, mixed land use is somewhat of a hype amongst urban planners and project developers, and sometimes seems to be considered an end in itself instead of a means to other objectives of urban development policy such as economic and social vitality and diversity, liveliness, etc. (cf. Grant, 2002:80). Still, the concept in itself is not new. In a historical perspective, the separation of functions during the modernist era might even be considered an exception to the rule, a necessary response to the negative side effects of industrialisation. The present tendency to promote mixed-use development in suburban areas, for example in 'new urbanism', may then be considered an attempt to undo the modernist separation of functions and the strong car-dependency it brought about. In contrast, in the case of the development of station areas, which are mostly located in or near inner cities, mixed use mainly involves the development of multi-use projects with relatively high or very high densities (Grant, op. cit.:74).

³⁰ See Section 4.4.

Diversity of functions

Diversity involves more than just combining functions, however; the degree of mixture is equally important, entailing for instance the grain and the alternation of functions (cf. Roberts and Lloyd-Jones, 1997:149). Moreover, both Jacobs and Florida stress that liveliness is primarily about a mix of people, and that a mix of functions is a means to achieve this. Jacobs (1961:178-186) considers small blocks important to facilitate the circulation and mingling of pedestrians, an important factor of liveliness (street life), and safety, in particular during the evening (cf. Coupland, 1997). The importance of pedestrian flows for the success of many retail sectors has often been discussed and plays a main role in the design and functioning of, for instance, shopping areas and shopping centres (cf. Brown, 1991; Kooijman, 1999; Trip, 2002). Without sufficient density of people, however, the small blocks emphasised by Jacobs may dilute pedestrian activity too much. Flows and the combinations of functions that attract and generate them should 'match' the desired level of activity in the public space at various times of the day (Roberts and Lloyd-Jones, 1997:154-157). This typically requires medium-height buildings and combinations of offices or shops with residential functions and possibly restaurants or bars, which may increase liveliness outside office hours.

Diversity of people

A mix of uses should also include a mix of users, therefore (cf. Sorkin, 2001a:13-14). A shopping street may be deathly quiet in the evening, not because there is no one living there (there may well be), but because there is no one in the street. Pedestrian flows are, therefore, important in terms of liveliness and safety, as well as for the success of retail functions. When few pedestrians are in the streets, for instance during the evening, the presence of bikes and cars may also add to the safety of the area, which is another important aspect of its quality of place. A larger variety of functions and a larger variety of flows stimulate each other. Thus, various amenities, such as museums, parks and restaurants, may attract a larger diversity of flows to an area, but so may a larger variety of transport facilities. Moreover, no mix of functions will increase the liveliness of an area if the transport flows connected to these functions are separated: it should therefore be a point of attention that mixed use should be more than just a spatial combination of functions. Rather, it should be considered as a mixture at the level of the functional network (cf. Figure 3.3).

5.3 Diversity in the station area

How should these requirements for an attractive, diverse urban area be seen in the context of railway station area development? Functional diversi-

Table 5.1 Different combinations of location and transport functions at the node relate to different fields of attention and, accordingly, different fields of research and policy

	Location functions	Transport functions
Location functions	a) functional diversity	b) transport-related urban development
Transport functions	c) environmental effects of transport; barrier effects of infrastructure	d) intermodality and interconnectivity

ty as discussed above mainly involves a mixture of residential and commercial functions, which does not seem to pose any problems specifically to railway areas, and is in fact applied in several recent station area development projects. On the other hand, a mixture of buildings of different ages and sizes, another aspect emphasised by Jacobs, seems a factor that is difficult to achieve in large, all-new projects, as many HST station developments are. Nevertheless, it could be possible with small-scale projects which are woven into the existing urban fabric. The extent to which this is possible is partly defined by the path-dependent development of urban station areas, but it is also a matter of the approach taken in the development process.

Diversity in station areas, however, also brings about a stronger focus on the transport function, and on the combination of transport and location functions. The location function itself may include many different activities, such as shops, offices and residential buildings and numerous cultural and recreational facilities. Likewise, the transport function includes networks of different transport modalities. It is therefore possible, and in fact even quite common, to have different combinations of activities also within the scope of the overall transport or location function of the node. Accordingly, functional diversity may occur in various forms, starting from the transport and location function of the station. This is indicated schematically in Table 5.1.

As Table 5.1 shows, different combinations of location and transport functions at the node may be related to different fields of attention of research, as well as policy. Most simple is a combination of different location functions (a), belonging to the location function of the station area. This functional mix is a source of diversity, which is in turn an important element of quality of place, and as such it is important to this study. The combination of businesses or shops with apartments is an obvious example of this. In contrast to this, the combination of transport functions (d) relates to intermodality, the connection between different transport modes and networks. This involves the station purely as a node, an exchange facility for transport flows. This issue is not specifically dealt with here. Finally, the combination of transport and location functions is a main characteristic of station areas. Its impact is two-fold. On the one hand, it involves the transport related spatial economic development (b). As the framework of Figure 3.3 indicates, the existence of transport flows is an essential precondition for the transport function of the station (which is the exchange of flows). Furthermore, flows are important also to its quality as a place. Whereas in some areas the problem may be that

not enough flows are generated, in the case of the station area the station as a transport node generally attracts sufficient flows and the problem may be rather how to utilise them. This is in fact one of the main ideas behind station area development: that the availability, at one place, of a wide variety of transport flows should have a counterbalance in the development of a larger diversity of functions. This implies the development of the station as a place, and it raises the issue of how to accommodate the flows in order to guarantee the quality of the place.

On the other hand, however, the combination of transport and location functions also involves a drawback: the often negative external effects of the transport function on the location function (c). Thus, it is this combination of functions that is an important advantage of station areas, but also very much complicates the issue of its quality of place. Infrastructure and transport means such as trains, buses and trams may have a negative impact on the actual as well as the perceived quality of place. They cause noise, pollution and sometimes danger to pedestrians and cyclists. With regard to diversity, the most important result of this is that the external effects of the transport may in some cases actually prevent the development of a more diverse urban climate. Building regulations concerning noise or air pollution (airborne particles, for example) may prohibit the construction of dwellings within a certain distance from main infrastructure. Likewise, safety measures can make it very difficult to build near or even over infrastructure, in particular when the transport concerns toxic or explosive chemicals. And, indeed, many examples of station area development include this type of combination of infrastructure and other functions: offices over railway yards; apartments built on metro tunnels; shops underneath road or rail viaducts.

Thus, it might seem as if transport is just one of the urban land uses, and in some aspects it is. In constructional terms, however, it is not. It poses considerably more problems in combination with other functions than for instance offices or shops do. In this respect, the tendency is to hide the 'mechanical' part of the station's transport function as much as possible in favour of its location function; the high-speed train is an exception to this insofar as, in accordance with the image and status attached to it, there is a tendency to keep the HST itself in sight (or even show it explicitly), but not the railroad. At the same time the functional relation between the functions, in terms of flows, should be left undisturbed, as it is required for the station's existence as a place. This dilemma is one of the leitmotifs in railway station development when it concerns quality of place issues. The optimal solution seems to be to simply build over the infrastructure, as has been done in for instance La Défense (Figure 5.1), Canary Wharf and Donau City in Vienna. This is expensive, however. On the other hand, it may enable additional real estate development, which may be applied to partially or completely compensate for the extra costs.



Figure 5.1
Tunnelling may be an effective but expensive way to deal with the negative effects of transport. In La Défense, a 'slab' covers roads, underground car parks and the subway station

5.4 Integration

The preceding section discussed diversity within the station area. Theoretically, the integration of a project in the city is closely related to the issue of its diversity, but on a larger scale, and with an even greater focus on flows and dynamics, rather than locations only. It involves not the diversity in the project area, but the diversity in the project area and its surroundings, or in the urban district or even the city. The essence is that if the project area and the areas surrounding it function as a whole rather than separate areas, a larger diversity of functions and users is achieved in the total area.

The station area is not an 'island' in the city; or at least, it should not be an island. The danger is imminent, however. The station is not only a part of the city, but also a connection between scales. This makes it truly multi-scalar in terms of transport, but also in terms of culture and atmosphere, being at the same time local as well as regional and national, and in case of the high-speed train, international too. Moreover, due to its specific development, it often differs from the surrounding area in ownership and control, scale and architecture, and it is a concentration point of infrastructure. As a consequence, there is the risk of the fragmentation of urban space: of the station area developing separately from the surrounding urban area in terms of spatial and functional development. In particular this may be the case when the station area concerns an extensive redevelopment area. Worse still, apart from becoming an enclave, isolated from the existing city, the station area, and in particular the railway itself, may effectively separate existing urban areas on either side of it (cf. Juchelka, 2002:12). This is mostly the case with large central stations including extensive railway yards and public transport infrastructure.

There is growing concern that the social, economic and environmental vitality of urban areas might be endangered by this ongoing fragmentation,

which might also affect the quality of place. It is essential, therefore, to secure the link between the project and the city, even more so in station areas with their large-scale infrastructure, which may suffer particularly from the spatial aspects of 'splintering urbanism'. Accordingly, Graham and Marvin (2001:414) state that:

... there is a desperate need, in particular, to imagine ways of weaving secessionary and glocal network spaces into the finer-grained fabric of the urban spaces and times that surround them.

Types of integration

Several types of integration may be involved. The first of these is integration in a functional sense. This implies that there are certain functions in the project area that attract users from outside. Most specifically, therefore, this entails functions that cannot be found in the surroundings of the project area. The project area should become a destination for people to visit purposefully. Conversely, users and inhabitants of the project area should leave the area to make use of functions in the surrounding neighbourhoods, which could even increase the economic basis for a wider range of functions in these areas. This means that, ideally, the planning of functions inside and outside the project area is coordinated to prevent duplication and stimulate possible supplementation of functions. The problem is, then, that while the project area may be entirely or mostly new, the surrounding neighbourhoods will in most cases be older urban areas with an existing functional structure. Connecting the two in a convincing way may present quite a challenge.

Second, we have what may be called spatial integration. Once functions are there, it is important that potential relations between the project area and other neighbourhoods can be effectuated. This implies that a second requirement of functional integration is accessibility. This involves the accessibility of various location functions present in the station area and its surroundings. Moreover, it also concerns the accessibility of the station itself. The latter is also important from the perspective of the station's transport function. In many cases, it is a city's main node in terms of passenger transport, a true 'gateway' to the city. Hence, it is the most specific function used by people from outside the station area.

Functional relations between the station, the station area and other parts of the city (or even beyond) therefore involve both the location and transport functions of the station area. However, in reality functional relations may be facilitated or, on the other hand, be hindered or blocked by various kinds of barriers, the most important of which are physical barriers. It may be said that functional integration of the station area should have a parallel in spatial (physical) integration (recall the relations indicated in Figure 3.3). This involves integration at different scales: of the station in its environment, but

especially with larger projects, of the project area in the existing city. On various scales accents may differ, but essentially the same elements may be distinguished.

Most physical barriers are related to infrastructure. The barrier effect of infrastructure, which is in itself a general phenomenon, is felt especially in many station areas. The station area is a concentration point of large-scale infrastructure, such as artery roads and railroads, which hinder 'slow' traffic such as pedestrians and cyclists. Close to the station, bus and tram stations, car parks and bicycle sheds may be added to this, and they often have similar barrier effects. Sometimes such barriers may be bridged, often literally, by building over railways or roads. This often takes the form of a bridge or skywalk between the station and the city centre. The Hoog Catharijne shopping centre in Utrecht, for instance, has such a function, which connects the Central Station to the inner city, which is situated on the opposite side of an urban motorway. Occasionally, station tunnels and passageways also connect neighbourhoods on both sides of the railway. Likewise, pedestrian traffic may be led through the building, giving it a function as a city street. One example of this is Termini station in Rome. The Galleria Termini, a shopping arcade connecting the two sides of the station, passes through the station building. To make sense in terms of the functional network, this approach requires the location of additional functions as 'anchors' in or near the station, to lead sufficient flows through the station; at Termini these include the shops in the Galleria, as well as an underground shopping centre and the metro station beneath the mainline station. In a similar way, spatial integration on a larger scale may entail the continuation of the street pattern of surrounding areas in or through the project area. It may also include the connection of an area to its surroundings in terms of scale, grain and density. Possible solutions could be found in the adjustment, for example, of the size of separate building blocks (which, as we recall the small blocks mentioned by Jane Jacobs, may also serve diversity).

Third, there are other aspects to consider when talking about integration, which involve the mental, instinctive integration of the project. A comparison may be drawn to the concept of the mental map. A mental map of the railway station area and its environment would normally show its 'mental integration' in the city, as far as it concerns the individual drawing that map. This is a rather subjective criterion. Nonetheless, it cannot be ignored here, because, ambiguous as it is, it is actually closely related to the more elusive aspects of the city itself. This mental aspect is also potentially relevant with respect to quality of place; furthermore, it definitely plays an important role in practical urban planning and architecture. This 'mental integration' is partly related to its functional and spatial integration, but not exclusively. Urbanists and architects often relate it to the observability of the urban area. Visual integration is therefore a third aspect of integration to be mentioned here. It is mostly elab-

orated in practice by means of visual axes, visual continuation of spaces and transparency of separations. It also involves the 'legibility' of the space (Rykwert, 2000:245). The effect of this becomes clear when we think, for example, of the sense of disorientation one may experience when in a certain area for the first time. For incoming travellers, the station is the entrance to the city. When they leave the station, they should immediately have a clear sense of orientation: they should almost instinctively know 'what is where', in particular with respect to the location of the inner city. Spatial clarity is therefore an important element in most current public space designs.

5.5 Public space

The Internet is great, but it ain't the Piazza Navona (Sorkin, 2001b:7).

With respect to quality of place, three main issues have been distinguished in this chapter. Two of these concern more or less tangible, spatial aspects of quality of place. The quality of public space is the third key distinguished here to the quality of place in the station area. It is probably the most important one. It partly includes the two issues discussed above – diversity and integration – but at the same time it goes far beyond them. Of the three issues discussed in this chapter, the quality of public space is also most strongly related to the intangible aspects of the city and quality of place.³¹ It is strongly related, for instance, to the concept of third spaces; public space in vibrant urban centres is one of the most important locations for 'buzz' (cf. Zukin, 1995:13):

... it is the place for news and gossip, for the creation of ideas, for marketing them and swiping them, for hatching deals, for starting parades. This is the stuff of the public life of the city – by no means wholly admirable, often abrasive, noisy, contentious, without apparent purpose.

But this human congress is the genius of the place, its reason for being, its great marginal edge. This is the engine, this is the city's true export (Whyte, 1988:341).

Even experts in the field find it hard to define what makes a good public space. Most come up with a list of important elements rather than a sharp definition. In *City: Rediscovering the Center*, William Whyte (1988) observed the functioning of public spaces such as squares and street corners in great detail. His findings confirm much of what Jane Jacobs had written before (Lofland, 1998:4). He discusses a large number of factors that affect the quality of public space. However, so many other authors from different disciplines

³¹ See in particular Section 2.5.

have written on the issue – Jacobs (1961), Lynch (1981), Zukin (1995), Lofland (1998), Rykwert (2000) and Sorkin (2001a; 2001b), to mention only a few – that it would be utterly useless even to strive for completeness. Nevertheless, a number of important factors keep returning throughout the literature.

To start with, people are the single most important factor: there can be no public space without a public. To attract people, a place should ‘tap’ on a flow of them (Whyte, 1988:108 ff.). As people are not likely to walk great distances, a peripheral or insufficiently accessible location is less likely to become a successful public space. The need to have a sufficient number of people in the streets or squares also implies that, to take an example, shopping centres and networks of underground passages or skywalks (as may be found in US cities such as Minneapolis/Saint Paul) are generally considered detrimental to the quality of outdoor public space.

The other factors are discussed in no strict order of importance. Second, then, there is the issue of scale. Spaces that are too large are considered unattractive, as most people favour a sense of enclosure. This seems to be a problem in the case of the esplanade above the subway station at La Défense, particularly in comparison to cosy inner city neighbourhoods, and also in the relatively narrow streets and squares of Canary Wharf. It is also one of the reasons why many stately designed squares – these are always the result of a deliberate design – are not very attractive public places.

Third, several authors mention the aesthetics, style or architecture of the area. This appeared to be an important but not decisive factor in the research of Whyte (1988:109). It is a factor that is hardly measurable anyway, as it is not only highly personal, but also depends on one’s professional background. The relation between architecture and the way a place is functioning is an issue of much debate. On the one hand it may be stated that, while designers considered buildings as a whole, the general public focuses mainly on the first few floors. Moreover, these are often interpreted the way a décor is seen, somewhat superficially, instead of being considered in great detail. In this respect, therefore, the question of whether high-quality architecture is really that important seems justified; in many cases ‘agreeable’ architecture may be a more appropriate term. On the other hand, as many current shopping areas show, architecture that is merely agreeable is likely to result in anonymous, interchangeable places. Architecture may give a place a certain distinctiveness. This may concern a specific building, but this is not necessarily the case. It is also about authenticity, genuineness and identity (Herrera and Chapman, 2006). These are qualities all great public places have in common, and that are relevant to quality of place as intended by Richard Florida. Yet not all architecture that is distinct in an aesthetic sense is also generally perceived as being pleasant. Moreover, distinctiveness is in itself a subjective value (cf. Jivén and Larkham, 2003:75).

Social safety is another specific element that is essential to public space

and which may pose a problem. It is related to the control and maintenance of urban space, and to the extent to which it can be observed. Not only will people not use a space when they do not see it (Whyte, 1980:58), they may actually avoid it. The control of public space – private or public – in particular is considered an important aspect in this respect. Private control, which is common for instance in the UK and the US, is often assumed to decrease the accessibility of public space to groups considered less desirable from a commercial point of view, or that are expected to cause trouble of any kind: teenagers, skaters, the homeless, beggars and street musicians, or people suspected to belong to such groups. It is true that many station areas are unsafe, as stations tend to attract pickpockets, drug addicts, etc.; some kind of control is preferable, therefore, but without excluding broad groups. With regard to this, Sharon Zukin (1995:28-34), for instance, discusses the control of Bryant Park and other parks in New York. She is quite negative about the tendency to keep ‘the undesirables’ out by severe surveillance, rather than by making the park attractive and lively, as recommended by Whyte (in: Zukin, 1995:30). However, it is dangerous to generalise. Both private and public control may take very different forms. Publicly controlled parks close at night in London and Paris, just like privately controlled public spaces, but unlike most publicly controlled parks in the Netherlands, and the privately controlled ‘Koopgoot’ shopping centre in Rotterdam, for instance.

Furthermore, the availability of ‘sittable space’ is important. ‘People tend to sit most where there are places to sit’: an obvious statement, but the naked truth (Whyte, 1988:110). Therefore, the presence of benches and other sittable surfaces is an important ingredient of pleasant public spaces. Moveable chairs, as may be found in parks in Paris and London, are even better, but they would seem to be feasible only in areas which are closed at night. Another type of sittable space concerns paying, semi-public terraces. In the Netherlands a particular point of note is the availability of covered spaces or porches for protection from the rain.

Lastly, several other factors are mentioned, such as the availability of specific amenities. These include seating, but also trees, water features and the possibility of purchasing food and drinks. Trees and water may improve the micro-climate and absorb or hide urban noise. Art may also increase the attractiveness of public space (Miles, 1997); this may include street theatre, music and visual arts (particularly sculptures). Last but not least, sunshine and warmth are important but not decisive factors in Whyte’s research. In moderate climates such as those of the three cases discussed in the next chapters, the presence of sunny areas is related to the possibilities of installing seating areas and terraces. In southern European countries, on the other hand, shade may be more important.

While the factors discussed above may contribute to the quality of public space, several processes may also reduce it. As said before, some of the issues

mentioned in the preceding sections are also important factors defining the quality of public space. Hence, the dangers to public space in the first place include some of the hazards and problems discussed before: the development of monotonous or mono-functional areas, lack of density or urban fragmentation by physical barriers. These issues have been dealt with above.

While lists may be made up of factors defining the quality of public space, quality as a whole, integrally, seems to encompass more than the combination of elements (cf. Whyte, 1980:54). This complexity becomes clear, for instance, from Michael Sorkin's description below of the urban climate of Amsterdam:

Cities have vibes, and Amsterdam is an especially mellow place. The feeling in the street is one of tolerance, and the boundaries of fear are set wide. Amsterdam is not a city that provokes anxiety when asking directions or advice from strangers, and this, I think, is a hallmark of a great urban culture. Such civility – so eloquently set out by Jane Jacobs in her descriptions of the characteristics of good neighbourhoods – is, of course, a product of culture, not architecture. But architecture is also a product of culture. How does architecture reinforce the good vibe?

Amsterdam is a high point in the architecture of neighborliness. Like all such architectures, it is extremely complex, constructed of the delimited vistas of winding streets and canals, of the richness, charm, and eccentricity of a texture built up by small increments – bricks, pavers, window panes, fittings – and of the careful, centuries-old patina of both careful addition and the de-symmetries of subsidence and wear. Colluding in this conviviality are also the ease of movement and the preference to walkers, bikers, boaters, and trams; the small, local scale of commerce; the density of cafés, restaurants, bars, and those “coffee” shops; and, especially, the luminous, graceful, and intimate domestic architecture. Holland is still the most densely populated country on earth, and it has produced, in its old cities, an exemplary culture, not of congestion but of density (Sorkin, 2001b:70).

Sorkin mentions many of the elements listed above, such as scale and architecture, in relation to each other and to more intangible aspects such as tolerance, civility and a sense of safety.³² But it also becomes clear how all of these elements work together to generate the ‘vibe’. Explaining the quality of public space requires the identification of separate elements, but this may easily lead to a loss of the total view. Images are another way to show how elements of public space go together in practice (cf. Herrera and Chapman, 2006). Figure 5.2 shows a number of pictures of various public spaces, most of them rather successful, which include several of the elements discussed above.

³² See also the comparable quote of Pi de Bruijn on the Zuidas in Section 9.2.

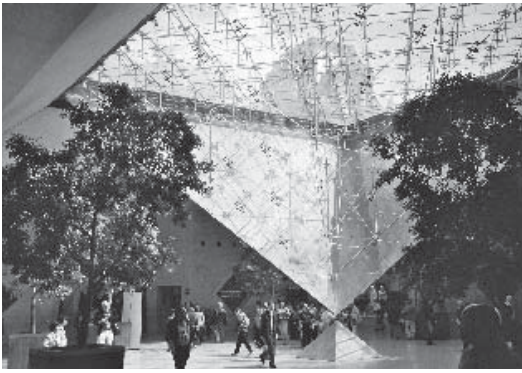


Figure 5.2 Examples of public spaces. From left to right, top to bottom: inverted pyramid and indoor trees in the Carrousel du Louvre; Jardin Atlantique above the Gare Montparnasse; art, sittable space and food outlets in La Défense and Canary Wharf; water, trees and sittable space in Kensington Gardens; purchase of food at the farmers' market; control of space: the gate of the Jardin Atlantique, which closes at 8:30 pm; food, sittable space and enclosure

Lastly, one interesting analytical approach to public space that should be mentioned here is the atlas of the ‘cultural ecology’ of Rotterdam made by Dudok *et al.* (2004).³³ It concerns an interactive system which enables users to produce maps of the city indicating important aspects of the ‘sense of place’, for example public spaces, the inner city at different times of the day, the location of specific amenities concerning, for example, knowledge exchange, nightlife, shopping and cultural industries, traffic flows, building periods, rent level, accessibility, prevailing nationalities and lifestyles. These criteria may be combined with each other, which enables the visual representation of rather complex aspects of the city. This makes the atlas a sophisticated tool in the analysis of public space and a number of the other elements of quality of place. The drawback is, however, that it had to be based on an extensive survey. It covers only the inner city of Rotterdam. Moreover, to keep the tool up to date, the survey should be repeated from time to time, something which seems uncertain, if not unlikely.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed a number of key issues of quality of place on the scale of the urban redevelopment project. Of these, public space may be the element of urban development that is most difficult to plan, since it is related to so much of just the intangible qualities that also make quality of place itself so hard to grasp. The discussion above focuses on more or less concrete elements that may be included to create conditions in which a good public space may emerge, but they are no guarantee for the quality of public space, nor for the way it is used.

This raises the question of how the issues mentioned in this chapter can be linked to the more intangible aspects of quality of place. These are for a part included – although on an abstract level – in the quality of public space. For another part, these elements are relevant not so much on the project scale, but on the level of the city as a whole. They may not as such be involved directly in the redevelopment of station areas, but they may nonetheless influence the objectives and development process of the projects discussed here. But their influence may stretch further.

Tolerance, for instance, is strongly emphasised by Florida, because it allows people of various groups to live together and live their own life, which is considered a precondition for creativity, and for attracting and retaining creative people. Hence, Florida considers the presence of a wide diversity of people as

33 Regarding this issue, I benefited from a discussion with Jan van Teeffelen (Municipality of Rotterdam, Department of Urban Planning and Public Housing).

an indicator of a tolerant atmosphere, and this explains his focus – a stumbling block for his critics – on immigrants and subcultures such as gay and bohemian scenes, not merely because of the often undeniable creativity of these people, but because of the tolerant atmosphere of which they are an exponent. Likewise, on a smaller scale, the diversity of people in the project area is related to the diversity of functions present, but may also be indicative of the control of the area: is it tolerant and easy-going, or is there a more stringent regime, as in the abovementioned parks observed by Zukin?

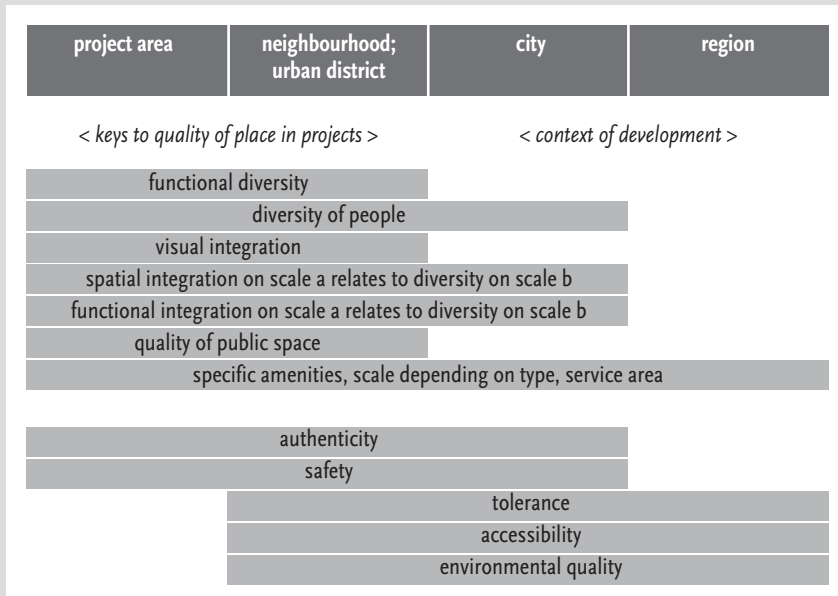
Environmental quality, as was mentioned above, is certainly related to the external effects of traffic in a station area. In brownfield developments it may concern the possible presence of soil pollution, for example. In other ways, it depends on factors that are active on a large scale, such as the overall pollution level. Environmental factors may affect the type of functions that are included in the plans – particularly with regard to the residential function – but they may also affect the quality of public space: noise and exhaust fumes can spoil any nice spot, however green, sunny, enclosed and sittable it is.

Safety, then, relates to the control of the area and the presence of pickpockets and petty crime, and also to traffic safety. But safety – in particular perceived safety – is also related to the overall crime level in the city, which may in turn influence the type of control of the project area, by creating a certain mindset. This has become clear in Rotterdam in recent years, where feelings of unsafeness created a general climate of crimefighting and zero tolerance, which led to oppressive measures at specific locations such as the Central Station (where, it must be admitted, they have been rather effective).

Authenticity is another element of quality of place that is mentioned by Florida. This has to do with the authentic atmosphere of a city, perhaps one of the most elusive elements of quality of place, but unmistakably a quality of all great cities. But when one is actually in a city, authenticity also depends on the architecture, the design of the streets and parks, the type of shops and amenities. This is still a rather vague and subjective element, but one clearly related to the scale of the project area or even the smaller scale of a street or an individual building. It may be deceptive, though, as a fake medieval façade may contribute to the perceived authenticity of a square, as long as it is sincerely integrated. Authenticity is also a factor of the quality of public space.

If one conclusion emerges from this, it must be that writing and debate on these issues of quality of place, or urban quality in general, may continue almost indefinitely. What is more, being able to discuss and analyse these issues does not necessarily imply the capability to plan and design them in cities. The aim here, however, was to distinguish a limited number of keys to the analysis of quality of place in large-scale urban redevelopment schemes. Relating to subquestions 2 and 5, this is a step towards the further operationalisation of quality of place, particularly with respect to the elements of quality of place that may be relevant at the scale of the projects discussed in

Figure 5.3 Indicative schedule of various elements of quality of place working particularly on different scales *



**Above, the keys distinguished here, which are relevant mainly on a smaller scale; below, the more intangible elements that are relevant mainly on the city or regional level, and which are here discussed mostly as being part of the context of development of the projects. Note that the difference is gradual rather than sharp, and that some elements, such as the level of amenities, are in between.*

subsequent chapters (Figure 5.3). The three key issues that have been distinguished here include diversity of functions and people, the integration of the project in the city in a functional, spatial and visual sense, and the quality of public space. The latter probably comes most closely to the core of what quality of place is about, concerning still a relatively small scale, however. These issues will be discussed in Chapter 9.

This is not to deny the importance of the 'difficult' elements of quality of place that are hard to measure or plan. The more elusive elements of quality of place in many cases affect the objectives and the development path of the projects. Moreover, it is clear that they also affect the quality on the level of the project area, although in many cases their effect is indirect. We may say that on the whole they create conditions for quality on the project area, whereas the concrete elements on the scale of the project area itself have a more direct and demonstrable effect. It is appropriate, therefore, that these large-scale aspects are indeed taken into account as an important part of the local context in which the projects are developed. They will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7 as a part of the local and regional 'context of development'.

The cases

6 Euralille

6.1 Introduction³⁴

In this chapter I will discuss the Euralille project in the French city of Lille. As an HST-related urban development project, it was the first of its kind in Europe and as such it should be considered a landmark in the recent development of European cities. Moreover, it resembles the main cases studied here, the Zuidas in Amsterdam and Rotterdam Centraal, in more than a few aspects. Therefore, it is discussed here as a reference case, on the basis of previous research.³⁵ Accordingly, discussion on Lille will in some aspects be rather limited compared to that on Amsterdam and Rotterdam in subsequent chapters.

The exact intentions and objectives attached to each project, the course of its development path, and the involvement and commitment of various actors cannot be seen separately from the local context of the city of which they are part; we might call this the 'context of development'. The focus in this chapter is, therefore, mainly on the issue addressed in subquestion 3: the objectives of the Euralille project, in particular the objectives in relation to the development of the urban economy, as well as objectives in terms of urban planning.

Section 6.2 briefly discusses this context of development for the Euralille case, focusing on the economic structure and quality of place of Lille. Section 6.3 then analyses the origin and objectives of the project. Section 6.4 deals with the development process.

6.2 The context of development

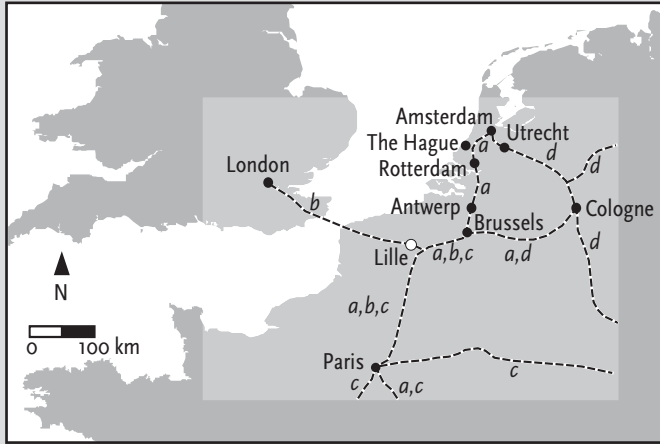
The city of Lille is part of the Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine (LMCU), formerly the Communauté Urbaine de Lille (CUdL). This consists of as many as 85 municipalities with around 1.1 million inhabitants. The largest of these is Lille with 166,000 inhabitants. The other main settlements are Roubaix (97,000 inhabitants), Tourcoing (93,000) and Villeneuve d'Ascq (65,000). In contrast, the smallest is the municipality of Warneton, with a mere 178 inhabitants.³⁶ The area connects to the Belgian conurbation of Kortrijk (Courtrai) and Tournai, with

³⁴ I would like to thank Marjolein Spaans of OTB for providing valuable information and literature on the development of Euralille.

³⁵ Euralille has been described in several previous publications, most extensively by Spaans (2002); others who must be mentioned here are Bertolini (1996; 2000), Bertolini and Spit (1998), Dovey (1998), Van den Berg and Pol (1998) and Pol (2002). Koolhaas and Mau (1995) and Koolhaas *et al.* (1996) discuss the project from the architects' perspective.

³⁶ Figures obtained from Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine (www.lillemetropole.fr, 25 October 2005), based on 1999 data from INSEE (see note 38).

Figure 6.1 The central location of Lille in the existing and planned high-speed rail network and current high-speed train services in Northwest Europe



Legend

a: Thalys (including seasonal services), b: Eurostar, c: TGV, d: ICE

500,000 inhabitants (Albrechts *et al.*, 2001:37). The municipality of Lille itself is relatively small, with a surface area of 25.4 km². This administrative fragmentation is reflected in the available statistics, which concern either the arrondissement, the metropolitan region, or the small municipality level. This makes it necessary to focus on both the local and regional level, more so than in the cases of Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

Network position

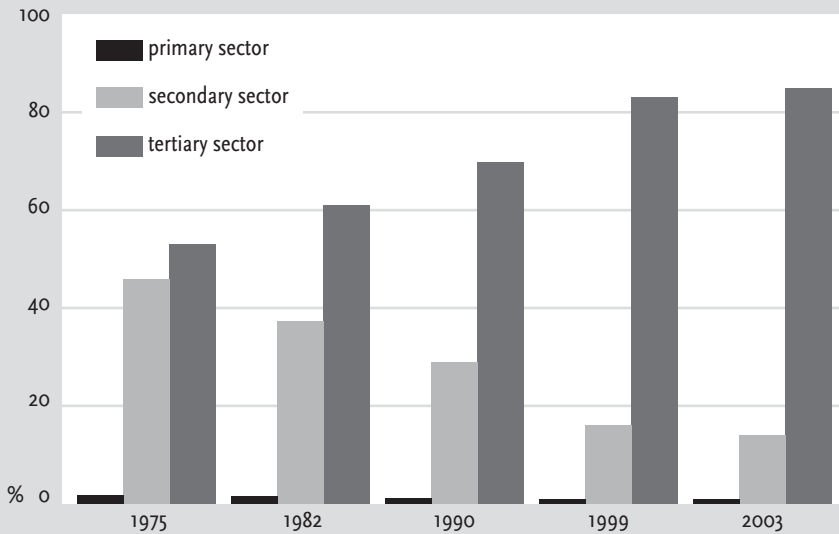
Lille is located centrally within the high-speed train network in Northwest Europe (Figure 6.1). Although it is often considered to be the node of the HST lines to Paris, London and Brussels, it is in fact located on the London branch, which means that trains between Paris and Brussels do not normally call at Lille. Nevertheless, its network position provides Lille with frequent, direct HST connections not only with these three cities, but also with Southern France, and it provides French cities with a connection to Northwest Europe that bypasses Paris (Albrechts *et al.*, 2001:17).

Economic structure

After the industrial revolution Lille gradually became one of the most important French provincial cities and an important industrial city, its wealth based on textile and clothing manufacture and mining. Since the 1960s and 1970s these traditional industries have declined, however. The consequent loss in employment has only partly been replaced by new manufacturing activities.

Figure 6.2 shows the development of the economic structure of the arrondissement of Lille in detail. The share of manufacturing in total employment decreased steadily between 1975 and 2003, while employment in trade and services increased. Yet the share of manufacturing remains relatively high. Textile manufacturing is still the region's main industrial activity (Albrechts *et al.*, 2001:32). The share of services is high also, but these include public services, which are even more extensive in France than they are in the Netherlands. As these are figures on the arrondissement level, they also include towns such as Roubaix and Tourcoing, which are traditional manufacturing cities even more than Lille. Accordingly, at around 9 percent the share in manufacturing is much smaller in the city of Lille itself, which has a relative-

Figure 6.2 Development of the economic structure of the arrondissement of Lille between 1975 and 2003 (shares in percentages of total employment)



Source: 1975-1990: ADUML (1994); 1999 and 2003: secondary sector: INSEE (2005), primary and tertiary sectors estimated on basis of INSEE (2005)

ly more diverse economy and where in particular the share of trade is considerably larger (Spaans, 2002:200).³⁷ Unemployment rates in the arrondissement of Lille were 11.7 percent in 2000 and 13 percent in 2004, which is a little below the regional average, but considerably above the average of large cities in France (INSEE, 2005).³⁸

Quality of place

It is not the intention here to present a comprehensive analysis of the level of quality of place of Lille comparable to the analysis of Amsterdam and Rotterdam in the next chapter. Nonetheless, a limited number of indicators may be applied to gain at least some insight into this matter. These are obtained mainly from Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine and the Eurostat Urban Audit.³⁹ The latter allows some international comparison, although due to classification differences they are not directly comparable to the Dutch statistics applied in Chapter 8.

One important criterion is level of education. According to the Urban Audit data, the percentage of the population educated to tertiary level and higher (ISCED levels 5 and 6)⁴⁰ is 15.6 in Lille, compared with 24 percent in Amster-

³⁷ Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine (www.lillemetropole.fr, 25 October 2005).

³⁸ INSEE: Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques. Unless specified otherwise, all INSEE data have been obtained from www.insee.fr (3 November 2005).

³⁹ Eurostat, Urban Audit (www.urbanaudit.org, 27 October 2005).

⁴⁰ International Standard Classification of Education of UNESCO. ISCED levels 5 and 6 are comparable to the Dutch WO/HBO level.

Table 6.1 Indication of leisure and cultural amenities in the Lille region per 100,000 inhabitants

	Lille	Roubaix	Tourcoing	Villeneuve d'Ascq	Lille Métropole
Restaurants*	46.3	2.1	3.2	3.1	17.6
Hotels	18.6	6.2	5.3	10.8	7.9
Cinemas	2.4	-	-	3.1	1.6
Modern music venues	3.0	2.1	1.1	3.1	1.0
Theatres	3.0	2.1	1.1	3.1	1.6
Universities	3.0	-	-	4.6	0.7

* The list of restaurants on the website is by no means complete. Walking around Vieux Lille, it becomes obvious that there are more restaurants than listed here; moreover, several restaurants known to the author are not included. Also, the number of restaurants mentioned in Tourcoing, Roubaix and Villeneuve d'Ascq seems too small. An alternative source (www.fra.webcity.fr, 17 January 2006) mentions 6.2 restaurants per 100,000 inhabitants in Roubaix, 5.3 in Tourcoing, 9.2 in Villeneuve d'Ascq and as many as 181 in Lille, with 30 hotels per 100,000 inhabitants in Lille and 5.2 in Roubaix, while other figures remain unchanged. On the whole, data on restaurants in particular do not seem especially reliable, but the overwhelming dominance of Lille over its neighbouring cities is obvious nonetheless.

Source: based on data from Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine (www.lillemetropole.fr, 25 October 2005)

dam and 13.8 percent in Rotterdam. Lille is closer to Rotterdam in this respect. With regard to the position of ICT and high-tech industries, approximately 8.4 percent of Lille's labour force is employed in ICT, a figure comparable to the share of ICT in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

Table 6.1 gives an indication of the level of leisure and cultural amenities in the main cities of the Lille Métropole region. Although some comments may be made especially with regard to the data on restaurants, these figures are useful to indicate the position of Lille within the region. In catering and hotels, the dominance of Lille is clear. Moreover, Lille itself accommodates mostly foreign to exotic restaurants, whereas outlets serving French cuisine are concentrated in the smaller cities; a fact which is likely to reflect not so much the distribution of the non-French population as the position of Lille as the main centre of leisure and tourism in the region. In terms of cultural facilities, Lille has the most amenities in absolute terms, but the much smaller Villeneuve d'Ascq, a 1960s 'technopole' near the centre of Lille which accommodates a large part of the city's university and high-income population (Spaans, 2002:200), scores remarkably well in relative terms. Within the region of Lille Métropole, these areas seem most relevant concerning quality of place and the creative class. Indeed, the inner city itself, *Vieux Lille*, is quite attractive, consisting of old Flemish neighbourhoods and a nineteenth-century French quarter (Figure 6.3). On top of this, in 2004 Lille Métropole was the European Capital of Culture.

Regarding recreation areas, the wider environment of Lille is characterised by an extensive network of inland waterways and green countryside, including the Scarpe-Escaut regional park. Nonetheless, Lille Métropole itself has only 15 m² of green space per inhabitant, compared to 26 m² in Brussels and 60 m² in Am-



Figure 6.3
The Grand
Place in Lille

sterdam, to take two examples. Plans exist to increase this, however (Jonkhof and Van Ravesteyn, 2005:27-28). With respect to social safety, lastly, Eurostat provides a figure of 10,400 registered crimes per 100,000 inhabitants aged 15-74 in Lille in 2001, compared with 13,600 and more than 18,300 in Rotterdam and Amsterdam respectively.

6.3 Euralille

Originally, the TGV was not considered an important factor in urban development; instead, it was regarded mostly as a nuisance. The new station at Lille was planned underground, several kilometres outside the inner city, in accordance with the general policy of the SNCF at the time (Duthilleul, in: Koolhaas et al., 1996:86-87). It was the idea of Lille's mayor, Pierre Mauroy, to bring the TGV almost to the inner city of Lille and to use it as the anchor of the European Business Centre, a cluster of high-end service industries, commerce and leisure designed to improve the economic position of the city as a whole. Plans for this had already existed for some time in the region. Industrial decline had set in, and Lille had to find ways to develop a service economy. In this situation, Euralille served as a catalyst to economic developments that were already in place. It was inspired by these processes, and subsequently reinforced them (Bertolini and Spit, 1998:68). Regardless of its eventual success, this approach has made Euralille a milestone in urban development.

It was a time of *grands projets* in France, of Mitterrand's Bibliothèque Nationale, the Grande Arche in La Défense and the Louvre pyramid. Nevertheless, the future of Euralille was far from certain. Even the project's leading architect and urban designer Rem Koolhaas initially had his doubts:

On reading the competition brief, I was at first convinced that the idea of a European Business Center was a typical example of French megalomania, of which I was very sceptic.



Figure 6.4 Nineteenth-century Lille: rue Faidherbe between the inner city and the station (left); Lille Flandres station, with the Euralille towers to the left (right)

tical. Remember, this was a time when it was still unsure how great the impact of the TGV would actually be (in: Koolhaas *et al.*, 1996:51).

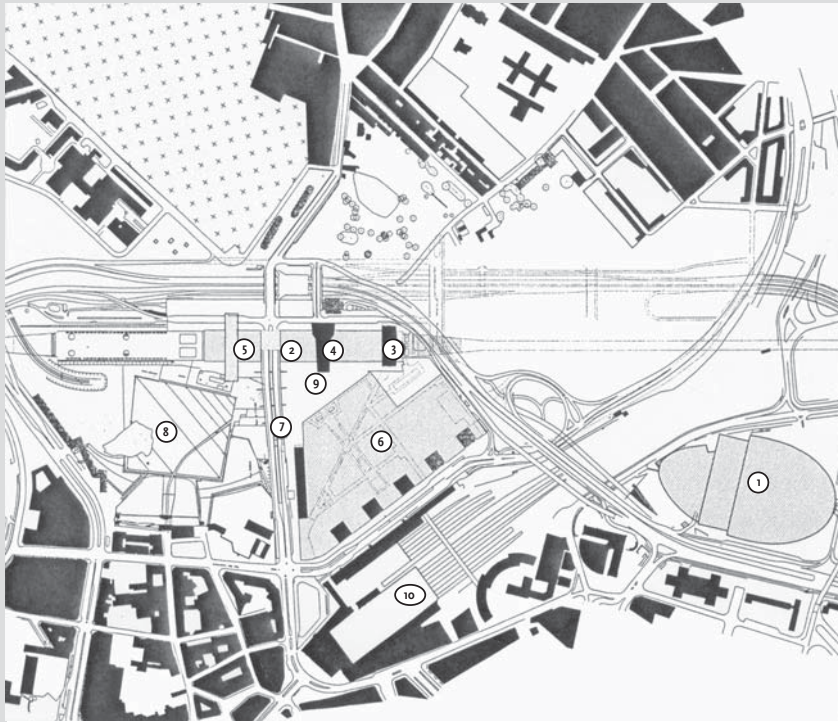
The focus of the project would be international, to prevent the city becoming merely a ‘suburban metropolis’ of Paris (Cuñat, 2001b:23). Accordingly, all international trains, as well as TGVs to destinations in the province, stop at Lille Europe, while only regional trains and the TGV to Paris still depart from Lille Flandres station. The complex would be built at a location between the existing Lille Flandres station and the ring road. Lille Flandres, the former Gare du Nord from Paris, was built in the nineteenth century on the very edge of the inner city. A Haussmanian style boulevard was constructed to connect the station to the centre (Figure 6.4). Nevertheless, the station area was characterised by a diverse mix of functions, but a low overall value, being fragmented and cut off from other parts of the town by infrastructural barriers (Bertolini and Spit, 1998:72; Tiry, 1999). The site beyond the existing station, where Euralille was to be located, had remained vacant since the nineteenth century for military reasons,⁴¹ and was bought from the Ministry of Defence for one franc (Spaans, 2002:206).

To work out proposals, the firm Euralille-Métropole was founded in 1988, with Jean-Paul Baietto, formerly director of the SCET (Société Centrale d’Équipement du Territoire),⁴² as director and Mauroy as chairman of the board. At around the same time, Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas was appointed to work on the urban design of what was to become Euralille. This was not an obvious choice: at the time Koolhaas was not quite as famous as he would become some years later, and in fact he was to a large extent an unbuilt architect. Two aspects of the urban design of Euralille are considered particularly innovative. The first is Koolhaas’ vision on the city, which is much broader than just the project itself; this was the main reason for selecting him as the

⁴¹ As a border town, the development of Lille’s centre was for a long time restricted by a ring of fortifications, part of which may still be admired.

⁴² The SCET is a public organisation which assists local governments with respect to the planning, development and execution of urban development projects, in particular the SEMs (Société d’Économie Mixte) of which the SAEM is an example (see also www.scet.fr).

Figure 6.5 Situation of Euralille



- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Lille Grand Palais | 5. hotel (not yet built) | 9. Place F. Mitterrand |
| 2. Lille Europe Station | 6. Euralille Center | 10. Lille Flandres Station |
| 3. Tour Lille Europe | 7. Le Corbusier viaduct | |
| 4. Tour Crédit Lyonnais | 8. park | |

Source: Koolhaas *et al.* (1996)

leading architect in the first place, following oral presentations by each of the candidates. The second is the way the urban design deals with the ' Gordian knot ' of infrastructure that is the core of Euralille: the HST itself, but also the ring road, parking facilities, the metro and other local infrastructure.

In 1990 the project was approved by the Communauté Urbaine de Lille, of which Mauroy had become chairman in the previous year. As it became clear the project would be feasible, in 1990 the SAEM (Société Anonyme d'Economie Mixte) was founded, a public-private partnership for the development of Euralille, led by Baïetto and Mauroy. Total investments in Euralille amounted to 800 million euros, 560 million of which was funded by private investors (Bertolini and Spit, 1998:75; Bertolini, 2000:470; Spaans, 2002:206-212).⁴³

Euralille consists of three parts, which are shown in Figure 6.5 (Bertolini and Spit, 1998:78-79):

- a. the Cité des Affaires, which encompasses the Lille Europe station with the WTC and Crédit Lyonnais office towers above it (Figure 6.6);

⁴³ In French francs 5.3 billion and 3.7 billion respectively.

Figure 6.6
Situation of
Euralille



- b. the Euralille Centre, situated between the two stations, including offices, apartments, a shopping centre, a hotel and various other amenities (Figure 6.7);
- c. the Grand Palais congress and exhibition centre, including meeting rooms, auditoriums, catering facilities and an events hall.

Furthermore, the Portes du Romarin office area in La Madeleine, opposite the ring road, may also be considered part of the project, although in fact it was only included in the project afterwards (Euralille, 1993; Bertolini and Spit, 1998:79). Similarly, new office developments north and east of the station and the Euralille Centre were added to the project. The total real estate programme that is currently planned covers a total area of 611,000 m², of which 38 percent involves offices, 20 percent apartments and 43 percent various amenities.⁴⁴

Due to a crisis in the real estate development sector at the time of completion in the mid 1990s, part of the plan has not been completed as intended (Bertolini, 2000:469). In particular the amount of office space constructed has remained behind schedule for a long time. Originally, the Cité des Affaires was planned as a row of skyscrapers on top of the railway station and the railway itself, only two of which have been built as yet. Other concrete parts of the plan that have not yet been realised include a four-star hotel in a third tower, designed by Marie and François Delhay, above the Lille Europe station. Nevertheless, office development has been recovering in recent years. In September 2005 a fourth tower was added to the Euralille Centre, indicating that the development of the project is not yet complete. A second stage, Euralille 2, is planned to be completed in 2010, and includes another 190,000 m². With 47 percent offices, 25 percent apartments and 28 percent amenities, Euralille 2 will be focused somewhat more on office development compared to the first stage of the project.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ SAEM Euralille (www.saem-euralille.fr, 24 March 2006).

⁴⁵ Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine (www.lillemetropole.fr, 24 October 2005) and SEAM Euralille (www.seam-euralille.fr, 24 March 2006).



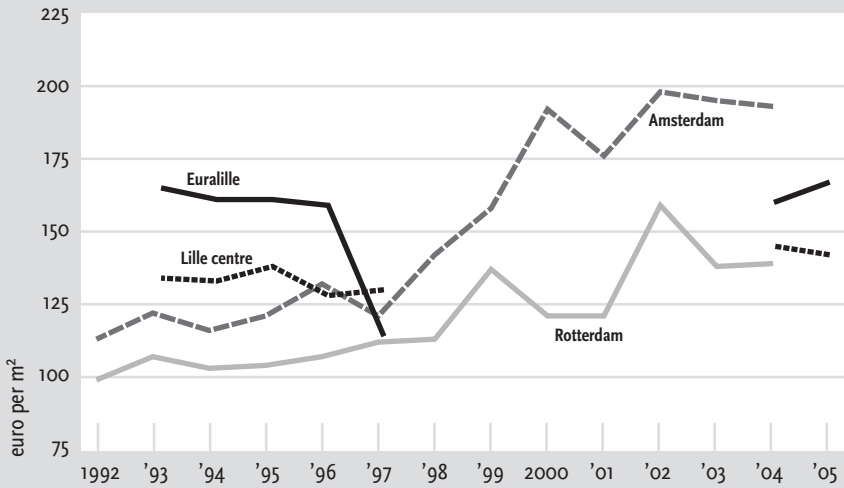
Figure 6.7 The Tour Crédit Lyonnais (Christian de Portzamparc) and the Tour Lille Europe (Claude Vasconi), both built over the railway station

The success of business locations is often measured in terms of office rents. Figure 6.8 shows the average rents for new offices in the centre of Lille and Euralille compared to the average rents for (new and existing) offices in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Some caution is required when interpreting these figures. Although data for Lille are incomplete, it can be observed that rents in the centre of Lille are comparable to, or even somewhat higher than, those in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Euralille is more expensive than the inner city, whereas all other parts of Lille Métropole (not shown in Figure 6.8) have a lower rent level. The graph also shows the decrease in rents in Euralille in particular in the mid 1990s, an indication of the abovementioned real estate crisis. When considered over the whole period, office rents in Lille have remained relatively constant. In recent years the level has again been comparable to that of Rotterdam. Amsterdam, on the other hand, is becoming increasingly expensive, partly due to high rent levels in newly developed office locations, particularly the Zuidas and the IJ embankment area.⁴⁶

Despite the initial scepticism, it appears that Lille made the best possible use of the development of the TGV and the Channel Tunnel. The effect of Euralille on the urban economy is generally considered positive. Revitalisation and economic transformation had already started when the project was initiated. As Section 6.2 indicated, the transformation from an industrial to a service economy has only been partially successful so far, but since the 1970s Lille

⁴⁶ The rent levels in different parts of Amsterdam and Rotterdam will be discussed in Chapter 8.

Figur 6.8 Average rents for new offices in Lille, compared to average rents (new rental contracts) in Amsterdam and Rotterdam



Sources: 1993 to 1997: ADUML (1998:73); 2004: Atisreal Auguste-Thouard (2005:5); 2005: OBM (2005); Amsterdam and Rotterdam: ABF Research Real Estate Monitor (September 2005)

has nevertheless progressed significantly, and the contribution of Euralille has been considerable (Spaans, 2002:223). The project has in particular great symbolic value, contributing very much to the image and self-confidence of Lille as a modern city. In particular, the position of the inner city itself within the urban area has been strengthened. Euralille is complementary to this, rather than competing (Bertolini, 2000:471; Cuñat, 2001a:24).

6.4 The development process

Ultimately, Euralille is a conglomerate of smaller projects that were financed by private investors within the format of an urban design that was approved by the public sector and coordinated by a mixed and publicly controlled development organization (Spaans, 2002:209).

Euralille was developed according to the common French approach of the SEM (Société d'Economie Mixte), in which public actors initiate an urban development project and subsequently involve private parties (Tilman, 1994:27). In accordance with French law, public authorities held a majority share in the SAEM of 54 percent, with 40 percent held by banks and 6 percent by other private actors such as the Chamber of Commerce. As many as thirteen financial institutions participated in the SAEM, most importantly the national banks Caisse de Dépôts et Consignations, Crédit Lyonnais Développement Economique and Banque Indo-Suez, and the regional Banque Scalbert Dupont and Banque Populaire du Nord. Among the public partners, the municipality of Lille and the Communauté Urbaine de Lille were the most important, but the municipalities of La Madeleine, Roubaix, Tourcoing and Villeneuve d'Ascq,

the Région Nord-Pas de Calais and the Département du Nord all held minor stakes. Parties at the local, regional and national level were all represented in the SAEM, therefore. The risk was divided between public and private actors. Private investors, in particular a number of banks, provided 70 percent of the capital, and the public sector most of the financial guarantees. The city of Lille provided the land, which it had obtained for next to nothing (Vermandel, in: Koolhaas et al., 1996:15; Bertolini, 2000:470; Spaans, 2002:206; 215; 218).

Opposition to the project came predominantly from three sources. First, there was general resistance to the construction of such a modern, large-scale project so close to the historic inner city, which would take away Lille's 'traditional flavour'. This was particularly strong in the first stage of the project, and led to a number of alterations in the initial design (Vermandel, in: Koolhaas et al., 1996:22). At the same time there was a growing awareness that there was no real alternative if Lille was to modernise its economy. Second, retailers from the inner city feared competition from the shopping arcade in the Euralille Centre. To avoid this, the amount of shopping space in Euralille was reduced, shops in Euralille were given a more distinct focus so as to be different from those in the inner city, and shops in the inner city were given the opportunity to open a second location in Euralille (Bertolini and Spit, 1998:76-77). Lastly, several municipalities in the region feared negative effects of the project and received compensation (Pol, 2002:70). Likewise, the SNCF had to be compensated for the additional costs of not locating the station as originally planned.

One of the most striking aspects of the development of Euralille is the extent to which the process has depended on the personal involvement of Pierre Mauroy and several other key figures. The close cooperation and personal influence of Koolhaas, Baïetto and Mauroy seems to have been a decisive factor in the success of the project. The mayor of Lille since 1973, Mauroy was, by way of a typically French *cumul des mandats*, also prime minister of France from 1981 to 1984, when the crucial decisions were made on the construction of the Channel Tunnel and the TGV Nord to Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, and from 1989 onwards chairman of the Communauté Urbaine de Lille. On top of that, he became chairman of the board of the SAEM in 1990. It was through his functions and his political influence that he was able to realise his ideas (Bertolini and Spit, 1998:75; Spaans, 2002:204-205, 212; cf. Savitch and Kantor, 2002:184).

Similarly, the involvement of Koolhaas was essential to the project as it has been realised. It was Koolhaas who came up with the urban design on which the entire project is based, and in later stages of the development process he was, as a kind of supervisor, involved in major decisions such as the choice of architects. The urban design itself – and by this, Koolhaas' conceptual vision – has been very important in the development of Euralille. It fulfilled its obvious function as a framework for the physical development of the project. Further-

more, however, it was important for the image of the project (before any of the landmark buildings had been designed) and it played a key role in attracting private parties (Tilman, 1994:29). Essential to this was the willingness of, in particular, Baïetto to accept Koolhaas' sometimes rather abstract ideas, an openness which surprised even Koolhaas himself (Koolhaas and Mau, 1995:1164-1170). As president-director of the SAEM, Baïetto was also important as an intermediary between Koolhaas, Mauroy and the other actors involved.

6.5 Conclusion

Despite a limited analysis in comparison to that of the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal in the next chapters, the case of Euralille provides an interesting insight into the potential long-term effects of a large-scale urban redevelopment project. This concerns in particular the effects on the level of the city and the region; effects relating to quality of place on the scale of the project area will be discussed in Chapter 9.

Obviously, then, the discussion on Euralille must be considered in the specific urban context and taking into consideration the particular objectives of this project. Indeed, the objectives of Euralille show an obvious relation to the state of the urban and regional economy at the time the project was initially conceived. As a traditional industrial city that suffered severely from industrial decline, Lille had to find ways to stimulate processes of economic transformation. Although these had started before the idea of Euralille emerged, the project did have a largely positive effect, both economically as well as psychologically. The effect seems to be surprisingly local, however. The region still depends to a considerable extent on manufacturing industries, while central Lille – which is only a small area – is more of a service economy. Likewise, quality of place in central Lille has improved in many aspects, as it would seem to appear, for instance, from the vibrant cultural atmosphere and the increased attractiveness of the city to tourists and shoppers.⁴⁷ The disappointments that are sometimes expressed with regard to the effects of Euralille seem to be caused partly by the excessive expectations that existed initially, and partly by market developments outside the influence of local and regional authorities. In particular the amount of office space constructed has remained below initial expectations for some time.

The development of Euralille is characterised by the strong personal

⁴⁷ The riots that took place in November 2005 especially in Roubaix and the southern suburbs of Lille are proof, however, of the large gap that exists between Lille and the *banlieue*. For a part this is a rather violent manifestation of the exclusion of social groups in the service economy signalled also by Florida (2005c).

involvement of three men, all with a different but essential role in the process: Mauroy the initiator and influential politician, Koolhaas the visionary urban designer and subsequently supervising architect, and Baietto the manager and intermediary. Furthermore, the urban design was conceived in the very early stages and was an important instrument as a framework for discussions on the project and a means for convincing private parties.

Besides these elements, however, there seems to have been – even in the earlier stages – a strong sense of urgency, of the necessity to somehow grab the chance, provided by the TGV and the Channel Tunnel, to make a significant leap in the development of Lille (Koolhaas, in: Koster, 1994:20). Moreover, it would have to be done fast, as the new station would have to be completed simultaneously with the Channel Tunnel: the most important parts of the project, including the station, the main office towers, the conference centre and the Euralille Centre, were all built within five years. This is considerably faster than the projects in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, which are discussed in the next chapters.

7 Amsterdam and Rotterdam: the context of development

7.1 Introduction

In previous chapters I have argued that knowledge spillover and the creative class are increasingly becoming the driving forces of the urban service economy and that, accordingly, the concept of quality of place is of growing importance in urban economic policy. Knowledge spillover is multi-scalar, being related to local clusters as well as long-distance interaction. This points at the importance of railway station areas, which combine both, and in particular HST station areas, which add an international dimension and a tremendous dynamism to station area development. In the preceding chapter I went on to focus on the development of Euralille, a project that may be considered a milestone in HST station development, although not a complete success in all aspects.

In Chapters 7 and 8 I will focus on the two main cases involved in this study, the Zuidas in Amsterdam and Rotterdam Central Station. As became clear from the discussion on Euralille, the exact intentions and objectives attached to each project, the course of its development path, and the involvement and commitment of various actors cannot be considered separately from the local context of the city of which they are part. In this chapter I will therefore briefly expose this context of development in which the projects in Amsterdam and Rotterdam are implemented. I will then discuss the network position, the economic structure and the existing level of quality of place of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. This concerns, first, subquestion 2, which asks how quality of place could be operationalised, in particular with regard to large-scale urban redevelopment. The analysis in the next sections will make the issue of quality of place on a city scale more concrete and, within the limits set by the nature of the concept itself, operational. Moreover, the analysis of the context of development is a necessary aspect of subquestion 3, on the relation between the objectives of large-scale urban redevelopment projects and the development of the urban economy and urban planning. The other side of this issue, the objectives of the projects themselves, will be dealt with in Chapter 8.

Although Amsterdam and Rotterdam are similar cities in many respects, they differ in many others:

Even a first-time visitor will also notice the unmistakable difference in atmosphere, if only by looking at the skylines. Travelling from Amsterdam's well preserved seventeenth century city centre to the centre of Rotterdam [...] this visitor will be confronted there with a whole array of modern and postmodern office buildings. These recent high-rise, steel-and-glass structures give Rotterdam a distinct, rather non-Dutch atmosphere (Kloosterman, 1996:470).

It is easy to slide into polarising terms when comparing these two cities. Yet despite their differences and their rivalry, Amsterdam and Rotterdam have a lot

Table 7.1 Area and population of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and the Netherlands on 1 January 2004

	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	Netherlands
Total area (km ²)	219	304	41,528
Land area (km ²)	165	206	33,783
Population	739,104	598,923	16,258,032
Population density (inh. per km ² of land)	4,480	2,901	481

Source: CBS (2005)⁴⁸**Table 7.2 Population development of Amsterdam and Rotterdam since 1970**

	Amsterdam			Rotterdam		
	Population	Net change (%)		Population	Net change (%)	
		since 1970	since 1990		since 1970	since 1990
ca. 1970	820,000			687,000		
ca. 1990	701,000	-14.51		574,000	-16.45	
ca. 2000	715,148	-12.79	2.02	589,987	-14.12	2.79

Source: based on Savitch and Kantor (2002:11-2)

in common. For one thing, they are fairly similar in size. While Amsterdam has approximately 739,000 inhabitants, Rotterdam is somewhat smaller (Table 7.1). In terms of actual population development, the difference between the cities is not that large, however (Table 7.2). Furthermore, Rotterdam covers 206 km² of land area, which is considerably more than Amsterdam. Amsterdam therefore appears to be more densely populated, but this overlooks the fact that in Rotterdam a large part of the surface area is occupied by seaport activities.

From an international perspective the differences between the cities are hardly substantial. Both are part of the Randstad, the urban core region of the Netherlands, and as such many studies do not even mention them as separate cities (Kloosterman, 1996:470).⁴⁹ However, on the whole it seems fair to consider Amsterdam as a more advanced, 'global' economy. This is reflected in the city's position in the many rankings in this field. Many of these include Amsterdam, but not Rotterdam (cf. Hall, 2001:62-63, 68; Sassen, 2001:180 ff.). Of those who include both cities, Lever (1999:1031) ranks Amsterdam 5th and Rotterdam 80th of 117 European cities in terms of competitive success, but this

⁴⁸ Statistics Netherlands, the central statistical office of the Netherlands (CBS: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek). All CBS data have been obtained from www.statline.cbs.nl.

⁴⁹ In comparison, Lille Métropole is smaller than the Randstad, but considerably larger than the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

concerns the period from 1971 to 1988. Likewise, Savitch and Kantor (2002:11-12) characterise Amsterdam as 'prosperous', Rotterdam as 'distressed', and the type of development between 1970 and 2000 as 'dedensification' and 'decline' respectively; these terms may somewhat exaggerate the difference, however. In the Loughborough Group inventory of world cities (Hall, 2001:71), Amsterdam is classified as a 'gamma world city', Rotterdam as a city with 'some evidence of world city formation' (see also Taylor, 2004:203).

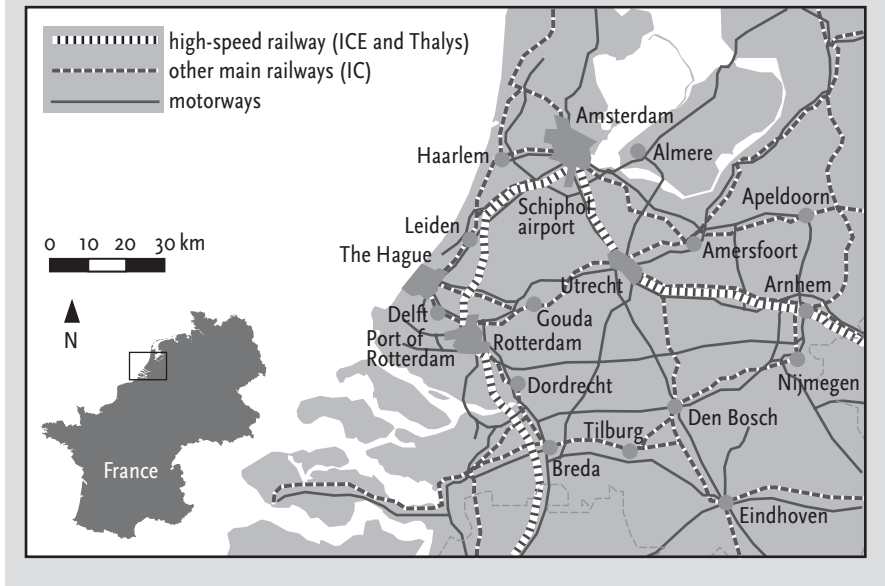
The discussion of the competitiveness and quality of place of Amsterdam and Rotterdam in this chapter is split into three parts. First, Section 7.2 briefly discusses the position of both cities in transport and communications networks, in particular the high-speed rail network. Section 7.3 then analyses the urban economic structure, focusing on the question of the extent to which these two cities do actually classify as service economies or even 'creative' economies as considered by Florida. In Section 7.4 a selection of criteria is applied to estimate and compare the current level of quality of place. Finally, Section 7.5 briefly discusses the urban economy and quality of place of Lille, in order to sketch the context of development of the Euralille project. The projects themselves will then be elaborated in the next chapter.

7.2 Network position

The network positions of Amsterdam and Rotterdam with respect to passenger transport, in particular on the regional level, are to a large extent related to their being part of the Randstad conurbation, a typical polynuclear urban region (PUR).⁵⁰ Such a polynuclear area as a whole has a considerably lower average density of population and employment and a more scattered urban development pattern than the monocentric metropolis. It may even include large natural or agricultural areas, such as the 'green heart' of the Randstad (roughly the area between Leiden and Utrecht in Figure 7.1). As such, it is the opposite of the compact city model considered favourable for public transport. While the low average density of the PUR has certain advantages in terms of quality of life (and possibly quality of place), it is at the same time a major restriction to the implementation of an efficient internal public transport system. Due to the lower densities in a PUR, there is often insufficient economic basis for metro-like systems, which depend on large transport volumes in order to be feasible. Achieving efficient connections between the centres of the main cities in the area is not the problem; it is transport to and from secondary centres, of which there are many in the PUR, and to loca-

⁵⁰ This issue is discussed more extensively in Trip (2005a), on which this and the next two paragraphs are partly based.

Figure 7.1 Location of Amsterdam and Rotterdam within the Randstad, as well as the future high-speed railway trajectories



tions on the fringe of the main cities that is relatively time-consuming. As intensive, rather criss-cross inter-urban commuting and a mixture of local and long-distance transport are other characteristics of many PURs, the danger of road congestion and overloaded railway systems is obvious. Indeed, both are undeniable problems of the Randstad.

While the specific terms and concepts applied may change over time, spatial policy concerning the Randstad is always, in one way or another, concerned with finding a balance between the quality of life advantages of a low-density, dispersed area on the one hand, and the protection of green areas and the reduction of car dependency on the other. As Schwanen *et al.* (2004) showed, this policy has not always been successful. Although increasing emphasis has been placed on protecting the central green area of the Randstad, further urban development in this area could not be prevented completely. A second main policy objective is to strengthen the internal coherence of the region, which should make it more competitive. Current policy continues to specify this view, expressing the ambition of the Randstad to play its part at the level not only of other urban networks such as the Rhine-Ruhr area, but also of monocentric metropolises such as Paris and London. At the same time, however, it should retain the specific advantages of the polycentric urban region, in particular its large green areas and presumed superior quality of life.⁵¹

Accordingly, for the Randstad to indeed function as a single coherent region,

⁵¹ As early as 1958 it was assumed that, within the span of a few decades, the Randstad could, and would, be a coherent functional area, with better internal accessibility and quality of life than centralised metropolises (Werkcommissie Westen des Lands, 1958:61; Lambregts and Zonneveld, 2004). This was also one of the main ideas behind the recent (but now abandoned) Delta Metropolis initiative (VROM, 2001).

improvement of its internal accessibility is necessary. It is assumed that mobility patterns will expand and become more intensive and irregular, circumstances that would encourage increased dependency on car transportation. Any public transport system should therefore be a considerable improvement on the current, rather fragmented regional transport system, in order to provide a better alternative to car transport to remain competitive over time and thereby be able to attract more passengers and increase the share of public transport in the modal split. It should offer frequent services and include many intermediate stops (cf. VROM, 2001:50; 2002b:73). This will require huge investment in the road and railway systems, in the main lines as well as the secondary network. A light rail system is considered the best solution for this. Such a system operates, for instance, on the Rijn-Gouwe line between Gouda and Leiden, and Randstad Rail between Rotterdam, Zoetermeer and The Hague.⁵² Since the threshold value of a light rail system, in terms of the minimum required transport volume, is larger than that of a bus, some of these systems are being constructed as free bus lanes with the intention that in time they may be converted into light rail tracks; an example of this is the new bus lane between Amsterdam, Schiphol and Haarlem. These new systems also connect railway stations. This is especially relevant with respect to Rotterdam Centraal, where the construction of an underground station for Randstad Rail is an important element of the project.⁵³

With respect to freight transport and long-distance transport, the differences between Amsterdam and Rotterdam are substantial. Where air transport is concerned, the emphasis is clearly on Amsterdam. With 405,000 air movements and over 44 million passengers in 2005, Schiphol is Europe's fourth largest airport, after London (Heathrow), Paris (Charles de Gaulle) and Frankfurt. In the same year, Rotterdam Airport had a passenger volume of just over one million.⁵⁴ With respect to seaports, the situation is the reverse. The port of Rotterdam is one of the largest in the world, with a throughput in 2005 of 370 million tonnes (the largest), compared with 75 million tonnes for Amsterdam and the North Sea Canal area. With respect to containers, however, which is the fastest growing sector, Rotterdam was only seventh with 9.3 million TEU.⁵⁵ This labour distribution between the two cities is reflected in other parts of the transport system. Accordingly, freight transport networks, such as the Betuwe railway to Germany and many pipelines, are focused on the port of Rotterdam. Amsterdam, on the other hand, is a central hub in the inter-

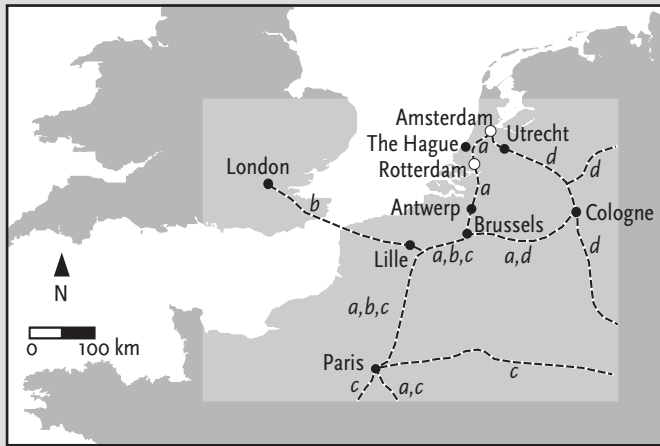
⁵² Or as an interviewee from Rotterdam stated it: the 'extension of the metro to The Hague'.

⁵³ See Section 8.3.

⁵⁴ Figures obtained from www.schipholgroup.nl (15 August 2006).

⁵⁵ Figures obtained from www.portofrotterdam.com (14 August 2006). Twenty feet equivalent unit: a standard unit of measurement in container transport.

Figure 7.2 Rotterdam and Amsterdam in the existing and planned high-speed rail network and current high-speed train services in Northwest Europe



Legend

a: Thalys (including seasonal services), b: Eurostar, c: TGV, d: ICE

national network of ICT backbones (Drewe, 1999:9 ff.).

Position in the high-speed train network

With respect to the high-speed train, both the ICE to Cologne and the Thalys to Paris depart from Amsterdam, while Rotterdam is an intermediate station on the Thalys high-speed railway to Paris (Figure 7.2). The main objective of this line is to improve the connection between the Randstad and Brussels

and Paris, but with the connection to the growing HST network other services can be implemented relatively easily, as the existing direct connections to the south of France (in summer), to the Disneyland Resort Paris and to the Alps (in winter) show. Thus, the HST increasingly plays a role not only in international business contacts, but also in international tourism. Still, the HST is expected to be particularly important for the long-distance connections and the image that are important to the service industries, comparable to (and in many cases in competition with) air transport, but more closely connected to the central urban areas. This expectation is one of the driving forces behind many of the station redevelopment projects discussed in Section 3.4.

In relation to the regional transport discussed above, it has been suggested that a combination of improved, but conventional, high-speed and intercity trains based on the current network could be developed into a system of fast inter-urban connections between the largest cities within the Randstad, supplementary to the regional transport system and linked to the international high-speed connections (cf. Egeter et al., 2000; VROM, 2002b:34; 2002c). A magnetic levitation system has been considered too, but recent policy considers this option too expensive. Furthermore, such a system would not have the network advantages of a high-speed train. It seems doubtful, however, that high-speed trains will in practice have a considerable share in the regional transport. The present costs and organisation of the HST, such as the need to make reservations for each journey, make it not particularly suitable for daily commuting.⁵⁶ Moreover, within the Randstad the advantage in terms of travel time

⁵⁶ At least when the complicated way the Thalys is currently operated is an indication. In France, for instance, the TGV is operated more like a 'normal' train, making it is easier and less expensive to make last-minute reservations.

Table 7.3 Accessibility of Amsterdam and Rotterdam and Lille in 2001, compared to the EU average (100)*

accessibility	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	Lille
By air	175	140	103
By rail	180	191	206
By road	152	164	176
Multimodal	171	143	120

*The EU average is the average of 258 medium and large-sized cities in the EU, Bulgaria and Romania. Accessibility is measured as the potential accessibility to GDP by air transport, the potential accessibility to population by road or rail and a combined index of accessibility by multimodal transport, according to the indicators proposed by Wegener *et al.* (2001:11, 45; cf. CEC, 2004).

Source: Eurostat, Urban Audit (www.urbandaudit.org, 25 January 2006)

will remain marginal, as the HST can hardly use its speed potential here and pre- and end transport remains as slow as before. The situation may be different where the implementation of HST services leads to a substitution of conventional trains, as occurred in France in some areas, much to the detriment of some smaller cities' accessibility.

Lastly, Table 7.3 shows the accessibility in 2001, by various modalities, of Amsterdam and Rotterdam compared to that of Lille and to the European average. This again shows the good accessibility of Amsterdam via nearby Schiphol Airport. Accessibility by rail is excellent for Lille, due to its central position in the HST network. Indeed, the HST to Amsterdam and Rotterdam is not yet included in these figures. Its effect on the future accessibility of these cities is likely to depend also on the extent to which it will lead to a reduction in other train services.⁵⁷

7.3 Economic structure⁵⁸

The differences that emerged from the preceding sections reflect the different economic structures of the two cities. Rotterdam, its local economy closely tied to one of the world's largest seaports, traditionally specialises in manufacturing and transport. In contrast, Amsterdam concentrates on commerce, producer services and tourism, sectors considered characteristic for advanced knowledge-based urban economies. This division of labour has been pointed at by Kloosterman (1996) and to a large extent it still exists. This is indicated in Figure 7.3, which shows the economic structures of Amsterdam and Rotterdam in 1996 and 2002 based on data concerning the employment per 2-digit SBI/ISIC Rev.3.1⁵⁹ sector in 1996 and 2002 obtained from the LISA database.

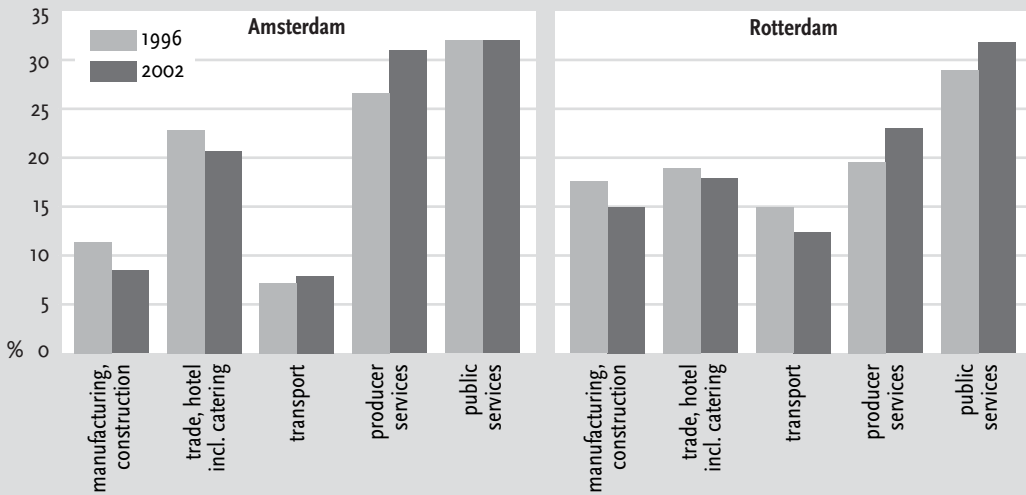
On the whole, the picture corresponds to the traditional image of Amsterdam as the more advanced service economy and Rotterdam as the main sea-

⁵⁷ In particular, it is likely that the HST will largely replace the current Benelux train between Amsterdam and Brussels, which may imply higher prices and fewer stops and services per day (Vara/NPS television broadcast *Zembla: De lege snelheidstrein*, 21 October 2004).

⁵⁸ Sections 7.3 and 7.4 are largely based on Kloosterman and Trip (2004) and Trip (2005b).

⁵⁹ International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities.

Figure 7.3 Economic structures of Amsterdam and Rotterdam in 1996 and 2002 (shares in percentage of total employment)



Source: LISA (2003)

port city. In Amsterdam, the share of trade, tourism and producer services is larger; Rotterdam has a higher proportion of construction, manufacturing and transport.⁶⁰ Public services such as education, healthcare and public administration are important in both cities. Yet the shares of manufacturing, construction and trade between 1996 and 2002 decreased in both cities, while producer services showed a strong increase. This points at a continuation of the process towards a post-industrial economy in both cities. In terms of their economic structure the difference between the two cities actually became smaller, an indication that the economies of both cities have tended to converge.⁶¹ This appears to have been a slow, long-term process, as Kloosterman (1996) found rather similar results for the period between 1980 and 1992. Likewise, Kloosterman and Lambregts (2001:728) found a convergence of sectoral composition between 1988 and 1997, measured by business start-ups, between a sample of 13 cities within the Randstad, including Rotterdam and Amsterdam.

However, the figures used here are rather general and may easily conceal

⁶⁰ In this, Rotterdam resembles other seaport cities, such as Antwerp and Hamburg. In particular in Antwerp, the share in employment of manufacturing is even somewhat larger than in Rotterdam, and the share of trade, catering, transport and telecommunication. In 2002, the share of manufacturing and construction together was 15 percent in Rotterdam, 16.6 percent in Hamburg and 30.3 percent in Antwerp (GOM, 2004; Handelskammer Hamburg, 2003). In Lille, not a seaport but an industrial city as well, it was 17 percent according to INSEE (2005). A direct comparison is complicated, however, by difference in sector definitions.

⁶¹ The sectoral composition of employment of the two cities in 1996 and in 2002 has been compared by the χ^2 measure, measuring the cumulative deviation of the actual employment share (O) from the share expected (E), according to the formula $\sum(O-E)^2/E$. Over all five sectors distinguished in Figure 7.3, χ^2 decreased from 18,564 in 1996 to 13,504 in 2002 (based on absolute employment figures and corrected for overall working force growth).

Table 7.4 Total labour force (15-64 years) and unemployment rate as a percentage of the labour force in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and the Netherlands in 1996 and 2002

	Labour force (x 1,000)			Unemployment rate (%)		
	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	Netherlands	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	Netherlands
1996	332	235	6,681	11	12	7
2002	376	264	7,444	5	7	4

Source: CBS (2003)

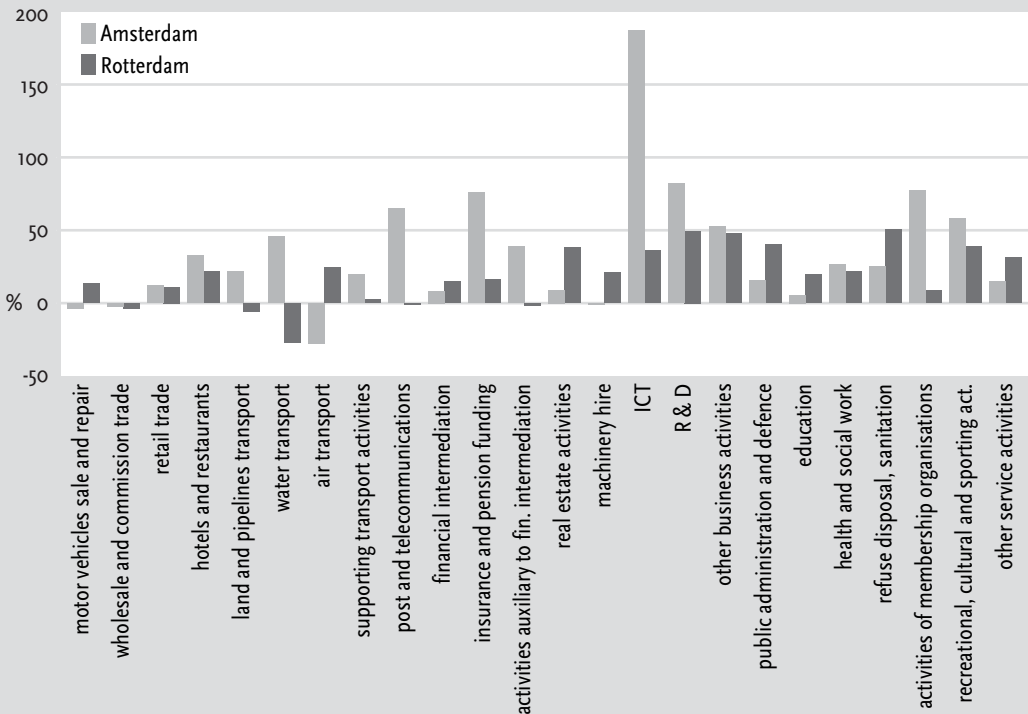
things. First and for all, they do not show the divergence of the two cities in terms of absolute employment numbers due to their different rates of growth. Total employment in Amsterdam increased by 24 percent from 375,000 to 465,000, and by 15 percent from 278,000 to 319,000 in Rotterdam (LISA, 2003). Moreover, differences in wage structure within sectors, for instance, which are not visible in these data, may influence the economic effect of changes in employment, with sectors most involved in international markets largely responsible for the growth in high-wage jobs (Kloosterman, 1996:475).

In terms of producer and public services in particular, Amsterdam is relatively strong in the areas of hotels and catering, telecommunications, legal and financial services, ICT, research and development, membership organisations (such as unions), recreation and cultural services;⁶² Rotterdam in the sale and repair of motor vehicles, land and water transport, transport-related services and environmental services. Figure 7.4 shows the development of the service sector between 1996 and 2002 in more detail. Most striking is the 187 percent increase in ICT services in Amsterdam, against a mere 36 percent in Rotterdam. Furthermore, employment in telecommunications, financial services, research and development, professional and interest organisations and recreational, cultural and sporting activities increased more in Amsterdam than it did in Rotterdam. Rotterdam, in turn, had a small advantage in air transport, real estate, public administration, education and environmental services such as sanitation. With respect to air transport these data are somewhat misleading, as data for Rotterdam include Rotterdam's airport (Zestienhoven), while Schiphol Airport is not included in data for Amsterdam, a difference reflecting the administrative boundaries in both cases.

It may be concluded that the traditional difference between Amsterdam and Rotterdam in terms of economic specialisation and economic structure still exists. The two economies are actually converging, although at a very slow pace. Moreover, this process is concealed by the much higher growth rate of employment in Amsterdam, which implies that although the structure of the two economies may become more equal, the actual difference in terms of jobs continues to increase. This difference in economic performance is reflected in unemployment (Table 7.4), which is higher in Rotterdam than in Amster-

⁶² That is, the actual employment in 2002 (O) is twenty percent or more above the expected value (E) based on the economic structure of Amsterdam and Rotterdam together.

Figure 7.4 Changes in employment in services between 1996 and 2002 in Amsterdam and Rotterdam (percentages)



Based on LISA (2003)

dam (five to seven percent in 2002) and more persistent: since 1996, the end of a period of economic recession, unemployment decreased by approximately 55 percent in Amsterdam, compared to 42 percent in Rotterdam (CBS, 2003). This corresponds to the economic structure of the cities. In Amsterdam the share of the fast-growing service sectors is larger. Rotterdam, in contrast, benefits less from its larger share of manufacturing, which is becoming increasingly labour-extensive due to mechanisation and automation. Nonetheless, unemployment in both cities is only about half of that in Lille, and employment growth is higher. This should be considered in the context of the French economy, which was characterised in the late 1990s by lower growth rates and higher unemployment than the Dutch economy. But even if this is taken into account, the difference is considerable.

Thus, although the difference is closing slowly, Amsterdam still very much has the more competitive, 'creative' economy of the two. It has a larger share of those economic activities that Florida relates to quality of place; but, leaving aside a possible causal relation between the two, does it actually have a higher level of quality of place than Rotterdam?

7.4 Quality of place

To measure the quality of place of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, it is not possible simply to repeat previous analyses of the quality of American cities (Florida 2000; 2002a) or European countries (Florida and Tinagli, 2004). As mentioned in Section 3.5, some of the measures of quality of place that Florida applied in the US require specific data which are not available in Europe or which are only available in different forms. However, as Florida and Tinagli demonstrated, it is possible to measure quality of place using slightly different data. A pragmatic approach seems best therefore, especially since this analysis is concerned with the quality of place of just two Dutch cities, which at least eliminates the hazards of an international comparison.

A number of criteria were selected to grasp the essence of quality of place. While this selection obviously took place with one eye on the measurements applied by Florida, the focus here is less on high-tech industries, as it is recognised that innovativeness may also be found in other sectors. Accordingly, the analysis below focuses on three groups of criteria, aimed at three main elements of quality of place:

- a. creativity and talent: the size of the creative class, human capital and employment in technology and cultural industries;
- b. diversity, tolerance and safety: the relative importance of bohemian and gay scenes, the percentage of foreign-born people, crime rates and perceived safeness;
- c. cultural and recreational amenities: the relative number of amenities and venues and access to nature and recreation areas.

Table 7.5 shows an overview of all the criteria applied. Data were obtained mostly from two sources: Statistics Netherlands (CBS) and the comparison of the fifty largest Dutch cities by Marlet and Van Woerkens (2004b), also partly based on CBS data. Additional sources were used where appropriate.

a. Creativity and talent

Marlet and Van Woerkens (2004b) estimate the creative class to be 22.1 percent of the workforce on average in the fifty largest Dutch cities. Due to differences in data and calculation method, this figure is not comparable to the almost thirty percent found by Florida and Tinagli (2004:14); it may serve as a means for comparison, however. In Amsterdam the creative class is 27.2 percent, against 20.8 percent in Rotterdam. An important subgroup of the creative class are people working in the ICT and high-tech industries. Marlet and Van Woerkens estimated these at 6.9 percent of the workforce on average in the fifty largest Dutch cities, 7.9 percent in Amsterdam and 6.6 in Rotterdam. This corresponds to around thirty percent of all creatives; the creative class of Rotterdam, although smaller, is slightly more technology-oriented than that of Amsterdam.

Table 7.5 Selected aspects of quality of place in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and the Netherlands

	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	Netherlands*
a. creativity and talent			
creative class (% of working force) ^a	27.2	20.8	22.1
human capital (% of working force with HBO or WO education) ^b	44.7	30.3	28.9
ICT and high-tech (% of working force) ^a	7.9	6.6	6.9
<i>Employment in selected cultural industries (% of total)^c</i>			
publishers	1.7	0.4	0.6
architectural services	0.9	1.7	1.2
advertising	1.0	0.5	0.4
film and video production	0.4	0.1	0.1
radio and television programme production	0.2	0.1	0.2
performing arts	1.2	0.4	0.4
news agencies and journalists	0.0	-	0.0
libraries, museums, nature protection	0.4	0.2	0.3
total	5.9	3.3	3.2
b. diversity, tolerance and safety			
bohemian scene (% of population) ^a	2.0	0.5	0.6
gay scene (index: Amsterdam = 100) ^a	100.0	27.2	38.3
foreign born (% of population) ^b	29.0	26.7	10.6
perceived safety (% of population feeling safe at all times while in the city) ^d	53	28	n/a
<i>Registered violations of the criminal code (Wetboek van Strafrecht)</i>			
<i>in 2002, per 100,000 inh. between 12 and 79^b</i>			
total	16,621	13,189	9,660
of which violent crimes	1,773	1,415	830

Regarding human capital, Florida compares the percentage of the population between 25 and 65 with a bachelor's degree or higher. In the Dutch context, this would be the percentage of the workforce (aged 15-64) with an HBO or WO (higher vocational or scientific) education. In 2002, this was 28.9 in the Netherlands, as much as 44.7 percent in Amsterdam and 30.0 percent in Rotterdam (CBS, 2004).

Lastly, cultural industries make up the core of the creative class and are an important indicator of a city's cultural vitality. Employment in specific cultural industries such as publishing, advertising, journalism and performing arts is considerably greater in Amsterdam than in Rotterdam. The only exception is architecture, a cluster of which seems to be developing strongly in Rotterdam (Kloosterman and Stegmeijer, 2005).

b. Diversity, tolerance and safety

Florida stresses in particular the role of diversity and tolerance, which implies

	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	Netherlands*
<i>c. specific amenities</i>			
access to nature areas (index) ^a	17.1	28.7	45.2
access to inland water (index) ^a	81.2	57.8	52.8
access to coastal areas (index) ^a	42.4	49.4	32.1
image, 'coolness' ^e	0.61	0.12	n/a
<i>Catering and nightlife (amenities per 100,000 inh.)^f</i>			
restaurants	132.2	74.5	84.4
cafés	97.8	51.7	46.7
discos	1.9	1.7	1.8
nightclubs	1.6	1.0	0.3
<i>Culture and education (amenities per 100,000 inh.)^f</i>			
theatres and concert halls	11.4	2.8	3.8
museums	8.1	5.0	5.4
cinemas	3.0	0.8	1.9
institutions for higher (vocational) education	5.7	2.5	5.2
<i>Sports (amenities per 100,000 inh.)^f</i>			
fitness centres	7.3	6.3	8.3
tennis courts	1.5	1.3	3.0
swimming pools	2.2	2.5	7.2
<i>Recreation areas (ha. per 100,000 inh.)^b</i>			
parks	164.8	223.2	151.5
sport fields	106.1	103.6	198.5
allotments and other recreation facilities	65.4	63.2	210.4

*For data obtained from Marlet and Van Woerkens (2004b): fifty largest Dutch cities.

Sources: a) Marlet and Van Woerkens (2004b); b) CBS (2003; 2004); c) Kloosterman (2004) and CBS (2004); d) O+S (2004); e) Healey & Baker (2001); f) based on the number of registrations in KPN online telephone guide (www.telefoongids.ptt-telecom.nl), 9 June 2004

the acceptance of differences. He applies such measures as the 'bohemian index' and the 'gay index' (Florida, 2002a:333). Marlet and Van Woerkens introduced similar indices. First, they estimated the relative importance of the bohemian scene, or the share of writers, designers, composers, painters and other artists as a percentage of the population, based on the membership of artists' organisations. They estimated this at 0.6 percent on average in the fifty largest Dutch cities, 2.0 percent in Amsterdam and 0.5 percent in Rotterdam. Likewise, they constructed an index of the relative importance of the gay scene, based on the membership of gay organisations. Ranking first, Amsterdam is defined at 100; Rotterdam scores 27.2, while the fifty city average is 38.3. It appears that these alternative lifestyle 'scenes' are among the factors in which the difference between Amsterdam and Rotterdam is most significant.

Another measure applied by Florida is the 'melting pot index', which includes the percentage of foreign-born people in the population ('first generation immigrants' in Dutch terminology). In January 2003 this was 10.6 per-

cent for the Netherlands, 29.0 percent for Amsterdam and 26.7 for Rotterdam. However, the use of this as a measure of diversity or tolerance seems questionable. It tells little about socio-cultural diversity, as immigration mostly includes just a few large groups rather than a balanced distribution over many nationalities. Moreover, the rise of immigration in Dutch cities seems to encourage xenophobia rather than tolerance (one might also doubt the accurateness of this criterion in the US after 9/11). A better measure of diversity, therefore, would seem to be the variety rather than the amount of foreign-born people. This gives Amsterdam a marginal advantage.⁶³ On the other hand, concentration in the three largest groups (apart from Dutch-born people) is somewhat less in Rotterdam. Altogether, this measure does not indicate a clear difference between the two cities.

Lastly, an important aspect of quality of place often related to tolerance is safety. The relation is somewhat ambiguous, however, as feelings of unsafety may in different situations be related to too much, or too little, tolerance (on the side of the authorities and the public respectively). In a Eurostat investigation in 2004, around one quarter of respondents felt safe at all times in Rotterdam, and about fifty percent in Amsterdam (O+S, 2004:3). However, this may be influenced by the fact that, especially since the local elections of 2002, public safety and crime have been an issue of debate in Rotterdam, much more so than in Amsterdam. Despite the reputation of Rotterdam as being a dangerous city, the relative number of violent crimes is actually higher in Amsterdam.⁶⁴ The larger size of the Rotterdam police district may bias these figures, however, as it includes a large rural area which presumably has a lower crime rate;⁶⁵ the district of Amsterdam is much more confined to the urban area. It may be assumed, therefore, that official crime rates are flattering the actual situation in Rotterdam. On the whole, the present situation with respect to safety points at a slight advantage for Amsterdam over Rotterdam, partly due to a difference in perception between the cities.

c. Specific amenities

Other factors defining a city's attractiveness to the creative class are a rich cultural climate and ample possibilities for, in particular, individual sports

⁶³ Calculated by the distribution of the foreign born population (in percentages) over 40 nationalities and five divers categories (obtained from CBS, 2004), the variance is 14.9 for Amsterdam and 16.0 for Rotterdam, against an average of 8.2 for the Netherlands. A larger variance implies a stronger concentration, and consequently less variation.

⁶⁴ The number of murders, although hardly a good indicator of quality of place, increased from 22 in 2004 to 32 in 2005 in Amsterdam, and from 20 to 25 in Rotterdam (www.elsevier.nl, 14 August 2006).

⁶⁵ It includes part of Schieland, north of Rotterdam, as well as the islands of Goeree Overflakkee, Hoekse Waard and Voorne Putten.

(Florida, 2000:44). Table 7.5c shows an inventory of catering and nightlife facilities, sports and cultural amenities and higher education institutions. Amsterdam has a richer nightlife culture and more cultural facilities: it has by far the most restaurants, cafés and theatres, while it also has considerably more museums and higher education institutions. Yet in view of the complex nature of quality of place, these statistics are not completely satisfactory. The number of museums, for example, tells us nothing about the size of a museum, its focus and the number and scope of the exhibitions it houses. Moreover, as Florida (op. cit.:29; 44) stresses, 'big ticket' events are insufficient. Having the Concertgebouw Orchestra certainly is a great asset, but in terms of quality of place it may be equally important to have a regular street music festival. Quality of place strongly depends on such elements that exist aside of a city's 'high culture' facilities, but which are most important contributors to street life, liveliness and diversity. It seems that in this respect Rotterdam may perform better than statistics indicate, hosting for instance the Summer Carnival, the International Film Festival, the Gergiev Festival and the North Sea Jazz Festival.

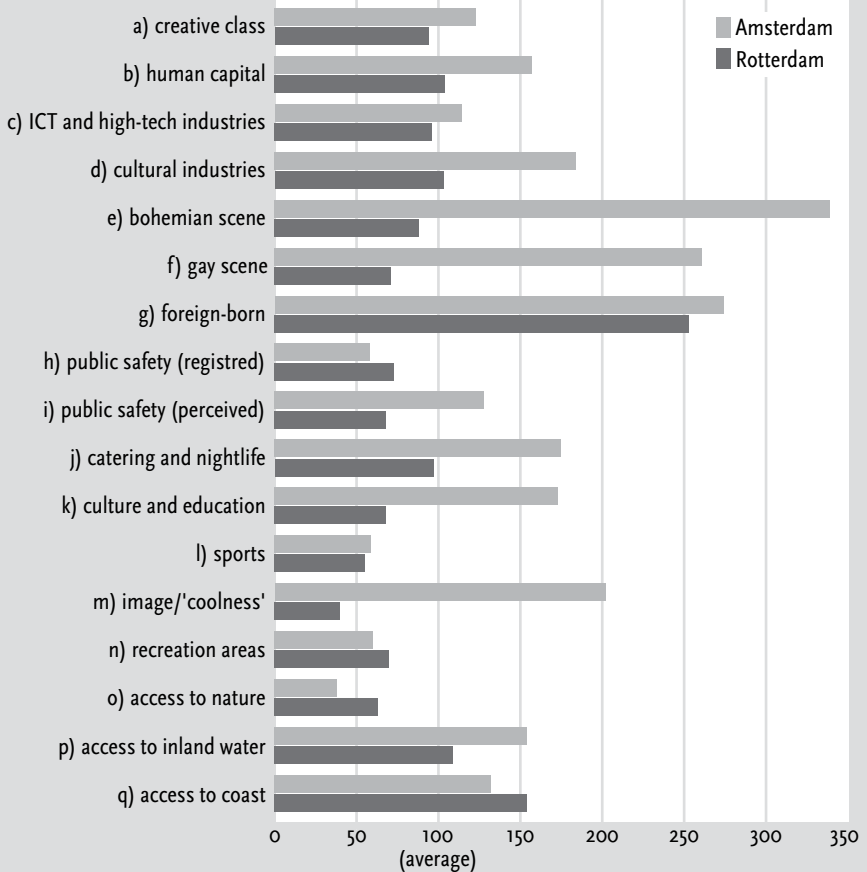
The amount of recreation facilities within the city is considered an important element of quality of place too; Rotterdam has a marginal advantage in this respect, due to the size of its parks. It also has more swimming pools, but relatively fewer fitness clubs and tennis courts than Amsterdam. Recreation possibilities also depend on access to nature areas outside the city. Inhabitants of Amsterdam in particular have limited access to nature areas, but both cities remain far below the fifty city average. On the other hand, Amsterdam in particular provides better access to inland waterways, while access to the coast is well above average for both cities (Marlet and Van Woerkens, 2004b).

Lastly, Florida (2000:34) applies a 'coolness' index obtained from *POV Magazine*, which tends to be related to high-tech industries and knowledge workers. Obviously, such an indicator is difficult to transfer to the analysis conducted here. A comparable index may be found in Healey & Baker (2001:25), who surveyed the image and 'coolness' of 26 European cities among representatives of e-business firms. Based on a city's number of nominations for best, second and third, Amsterdam ranks fifth with 0.61 and Rotterdam 18th with 0.12, compared to an average of 0.30. The large difference in the number of pages dedicated to Amsterdam and Rotterdam respectively in the *Lonely Planet* and *The Rough Guide* travel guides provides further circumstantial evidence of the difference in perceived coolness between the cities.

Indices of quality of place

Figure 7.5 shows the criteria explained above in a comparative way. An index is calculated for all criteria, with the average defined as 100 and showing the relative scores of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Relative strengths and weaknesses are therefore visible at a glance. Amsterdam ranks above Rotterdam on

Figure 7.5 Rotterdam and Amsterdam compared on a number of indicators of quality of place (indices: average is 100)



Notes: a) creative class as a percentage of the workforce; b) percentage of the workforce with higher education (HBO/WO); c) people working in ICT and high-tech industries as a percentage of the workforce; d) employment in selected cultural industries as a percentage of total employment; e) bohemians as a percentage of the population; f) relative importance of the local gay scene; g) foreign-born people as a percentage of the population; h) reciprocal of total registered crimes per inhabitant; i) percentage of the population feeling safe at all times in the city; j) catering and nightlife amenities per inhabitant; k) cultural amenities and higher education institutions per inhabitant; l) individual sports facilities per inhabitant; m) image of cities among e-business companies; n) size of recreation area per inhabitant; o-q) indices of the access to nature areas, inland waterways and coast. Based on: a), c), e), f) and o-q) Marlet and Van Woerkens (2004b); b), g), h) and n) CBS (2003; 2004); d) Kloosterman (2004) and CBS (2004); i) O+S (2004); j), k) and l) KPN (www.telefoongids.ptt-telecom.nl, 9 June 2004); m) Healey & Baker (2001). Average is: for a), c), e), f) and o-q) the fifty largest Dutch cities; for b), d), g), h), j-l) and n) the Netherlands; for i) 31 selected European cities; for m) 26 selected European cities.

most criteria, particularly in bohemian and gay scenes, culture and image.

Obviously the indices listed in Figure 7.5 can be averaged: this results in a score of 155 for Amsterdam and 94 for Rotterdam, compared to an average of 100. In this calculation all criteria are equally weighted, which is rather arbi-

trary, however. For this reason a presentation of the data similar to that in Figure 7.5 seems preferable.

7.5 Conclusion

Amsterdam is much more a service economy than Rotterdam. It is also more of what could be termed a 'creative economy'. The difference in economic structure is decreasing, but only at a very slow pace; the effect of this process is easily nullified by the growing difference in absolute employment. Rotterdam is relatively weak in those sectors that currently show the highest growth rates and the most value-adding production, and which are considered basic to the development of a strong service economy. Fast-growing service activities are well represented, on the other hand, in Amsterdam. Rotterdam is strong in port and manufacturing industries, but these are becoming increasingly labour-extensive; thus, while these 'old' industries are still important in terms of employment, their importance is diminishing. Furthermore, Amsterdam ranks higher on virtually all quality of place criteria. It has more to offer in most categories of amenities, partly in relation to its thriving tourist industry, and in contrast to Rotterdam it has a generally popular inner city.

This contrast between Amsterdam and Rotterdam illustrates earlier comments on the specific difficulties many industrial cities experience when attempting to develop into a modern service economy.⁶⁶ Older cities-in-a-network, which are more diversified from the beginning, tend to adapt better to changing circumstances. The main development of Rotterdam occurred only in the nineteenth century, as the city benefited from the fast industrialisation in its German hinterland (the Netherlands themselves lagging behind in this respect). Only then did Rotterdam become comparable in size to Amsterdam. This period of industrial growth continued until well after the Second World War and although eventually a period of severe industrial decline set in, the industrial past is still reflected in the present economic structure of the city.

In several respects, Rotterdam is more like Lille than Amsterdam. It is comparable to Lille both in its large-scale industrialisation during the nineteenth century, and in its current problems with economic transformation. In both cities the arrival of the high-speed train and the development of the station area are applied as a means to support the process of economic restructuring. There are differences, too. Rotterdam's inner city is less attractive than that of Lille, which has benefited in particular from the development of Euralille. Furthermore, Lille's position in the HST network between three important capi-

⁶⁶ See Sections 2.2 and 4.4.

tal cities – of which Brussels is not only the capital of Belgium, but also of the European Union – is much more central than that of Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

The preceding analysis of the context of development of the Rotterdam Centraal and Zuidas projects is essential to the discussion on the objectives of the projects, particularly those with respect to the development of the urban economy and urban planning. Indeed, the HST-related development projects in Amsterdam and Rotterdam reflect in their objectives and development paths the differences between the two cities in terms of economic structure and quality of place. Just as well, however, they reflect the spatial structure of the city, the local spatial policy and the necessity to accommodate various functions – in particular the offices of the sought-after producer services. These will become clearer in the next chapter, which discusses the projects themselves more closely.

8 The Amsterdam Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal projects

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will consider the main projects investigated here, Amsterdam Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal, discussing their objectives and role in the development of each city, their situation in the city and the course of their development so far (as neither has been fully completed yet).⁶⁷ This involves a focus on subquestion 3, on the objectives of large-scale urban redevelopment projects, in particular the objectives in relation to the development of the urban economy, as well as objectives in terms of urban planning. In previous chapters, I outlined main aspects of the development of station areas, the reference case of Euralille and, in Chapter 7, the broader context of development of the projects in Amsterdam and Rotterdam: their position in the transport network and the state of the cities in which they are conceived. Now the focus is on the projects themselves: their background and origins, objectives and essential features of the projects. Finally, I provide a concise overview of the elements of quality of place included. These will then be elaborated in more detail in later chapters.

The discussion of the projects in this chapter is mainly based on an analysis of the project plans as they are presented in planning and policy documents. For the Zuidas, these include the initial *Masterplan*, as well as the subsequent Vision documents (DRO, 1998; 2001a; 2004); for Rotterdam Centraal, the *Masterplan* (Alsop, 2001) and the main documents concerning the present plan (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2003; 2005; PTRC, 2003), as well as the projects' websites.⁶⁸ Other sources were also used. These include data on the railway stations involved, which was obtained from NS Commerce (MOA),⁶⁹ and information obtained from interviews conducted with key actors involved in the planning process.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. Section 8.2 deals with the Zuidas project in Amsterdam, discussing its planning history, objectives and main features, as stated above. It also briefly outlines the development process. Likewise, Section 8.3 discusses the Rotterdam Centraal project in a similar way. Lastly, Section 8.4 draws some comparisons between the two projects, leading to brief conclusions with respect to their main similarities and dissimilarities.

⁶⁷ Both projects have been described in detail in several previous publications. Only a few of these are mentioned here: for the Zuidas Bertolini and Spit (1998), Bertolini and Salet (2003), Wolfram (2003), Ploeger (2004) and Salet and Majoor (2005), and for Rotterdam Centraal Kooijman and Wigmans (2003a). Van den Berg and Pol (1998) and Pol (2002) discuss both projects.

⁶⁸ These are www.zuidas.nl and www.rotterdamcentraal.nl respectively.

⁶⁹ I like to thank Mark van Hagen and Menno de Bruyn (NS Commerce).

8.2 Zuidas

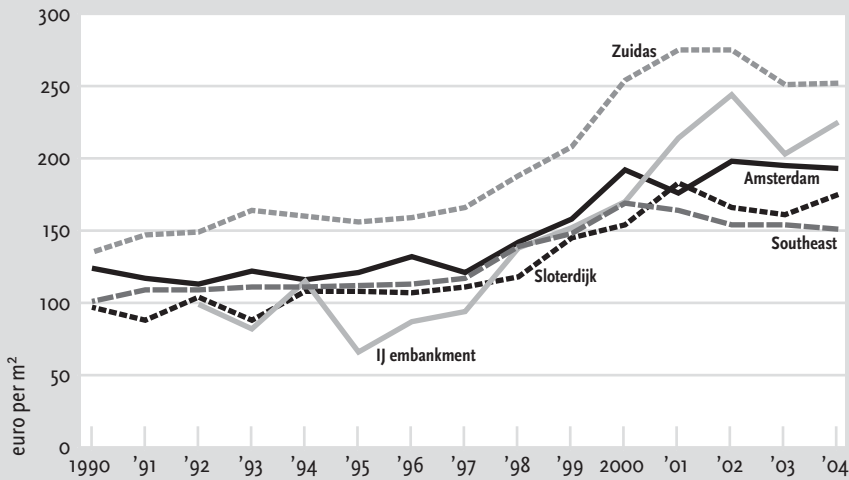
Post-war reconstruction of the urban economy in Amsterdam led to a increased focus on industrialisation in the 1940s and 1950s. Nevertheless, there was soon a growing awareness that Amsterdam was not, and would not be, a truly industrial city. Rather, the focus was on the reinforcement of the service sector, in particular the city's strong position as a centre of finance and banking. For the time being, these activities could be accommodated in the inner city. But growth and consolidation of the banking sector, and likewise of other service activities, led to a constant increase in the demand for offices. This could no longer be accommodated in the small-scale inner city. The planning and construction of modern office buildings in this area, and the construction of more and wider roads to improve accessibility, gradually began to raise fierce protests during the 1960s and early 1970s. Local authorities came to realise that the historic inner city should indeed be protected, but also that, at the same time, the continuous growth of the service industries required the construction of more office space that was larger and more accessible than could possibly be found in the inner city. Accordingly, the 1970s large-scale office construction took place for the most part in peripheral areas such as Amstelveen and Buitenveldert (Ploeger, 2004:95-99).

Nonetheless, as office development within the inner city was hardly an option anymore, local authorities found that the city still needed a high-quality office location. Initially, the intention was to redevelop the embankments of the river IJ, the area near the Central Station. Economic activities should be concentrated, if not in, then at least near the inner city (Rooijendijk, 2005:385). The development of the area would be based on plans by Rem Koolhaas in 1991 (at about the same time he was involved in the development of Euralille). But although considerable time and effort was spent elaborating this plan, private parties preferred locations closer to the ring road. In the 1980s, large-scale office development had already taken place in Amsterdam Southeast and Sloterdijk, locations accessible both by train and motorway. Now, instead of locating in the embankments area, private parties moved to the Zuidas, the area on both sides of the southern part of the A10 beltway and the South/WTC station.⁷⁰ In effect, the Zuidas rather than the embankments area became Amsterdam's top-end office location in the early 1990s, with the highest office rents in Amsterdam (Figure 8.1). Eventually, local authorities chose to accept the reality of the situation and shifted their focus to the Zuidas too (cf. Majoor, 2006:19-20).⁷¹ Despite this, office rents in the embank-

⁷⁰ Hence Zuidas, or 'South Axis'.

⁷¹ The issue caused a fierce controversy, in which some proposed to 'prohibit' further development of the Zuidas; but eventually resistance proved futile (see Rooijendijk, 2005:384-388).

Figure 8.1 Development of average office rents (new rental contracts) in Amsterdam between 1990 and 2004



Source: ABF Research Real Estate Monitor (September 2005)

ments area indicate that the differences with the Zuidas are not as large as might be expected, making the area still a very good second best.

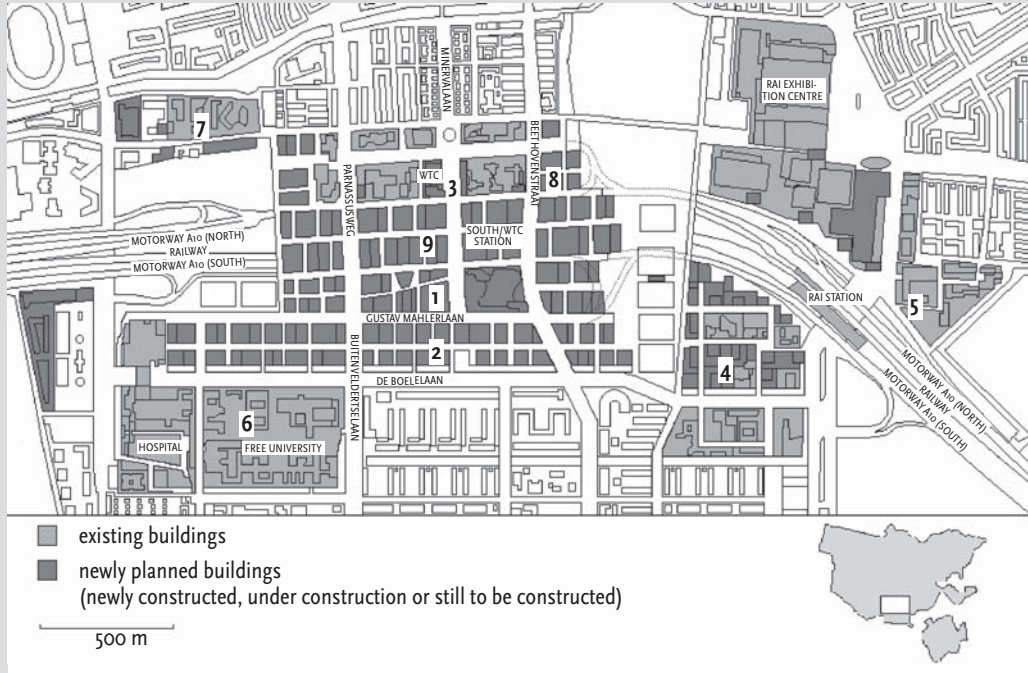
The project

As Figure 8.2 shows, the Zuidas is much larger than the station and its direct environment. The project includes numerous subprojects over an area of approximately 2.8 km by 1.2 km along a bundle of rail and motorway infrastructure. In this area, and in the area north around the Apollolaan (not shown), a large number of legal and financial business services are already located,⁷² as well as the WTC, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Free University), the university hospital, the RAI conference and exhibition centre and the Court of Justice. As Figure 8.3 shows, South/WTC station itself is quite small at present, but it has good connections to Schiphol Airport. Over the period 1996 to 2003 it was the primary station for almost 83,000 people in the surrounding area, compared to almost 550,000 for Amsterdam Central Station; this concerns the service area, rather than the actual number of travellers. South/WTC station had direct connections to 33 other stations in 2003, compared with 114 for CS (NS MOA, 2005). The current number of fewer than 20,000 rail passengers per day will increase to 90,000 by around 2020 (or 200,000 including other modalities).⁷³ A new metro link which is currently under construction will connect the station to the inner city. Moreover, it is intended to be Amsterdam's main high-speed train station (ICE and Thalys).

⁷² The growing reputation of the Zuidas among these groups may be illustrated by a law firm, located just north of the actual project area, advertising as 'the no-nonsense lawyers of the Zuidas' (Lexence spot, 9 September 2005, Radio 1 broadcast).

⁷³ Based on interview reports and www.zuidas.nl (4 August 2006).

Figure 8.2 The Zuidas as planned



Based on DRO (2001a; 2004); Projectbureau Amsterdam Zuidas (2002)

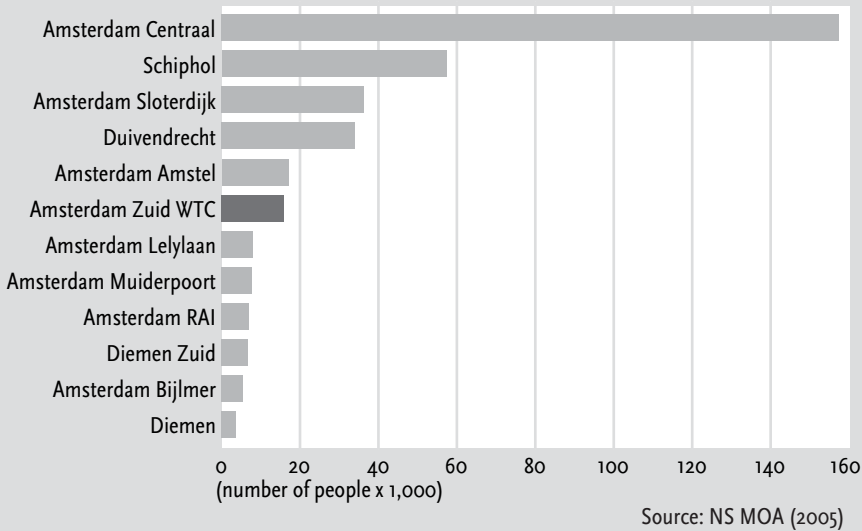
The aim of the Zuidas project is to create a new sub-centre which is secondary to the inner city but with a distinct, metropolitan atmosphere. Pi de Bruijn, urban designer and supervisor of the project, emphasises the area's accessibility as well as its urbanity:

Zuidas is a niche: a new hyper-urban area development embedded in existing urban tissue, with the airport and the inner city of Amsterdam at 5 minutes' distance and excellent connections, in one of the most urbanized zones of Europe (De Bruijn, 2005a).

The Zuidas should become a high-quality location for service industries, competing on the international level. Key actors involved in the development process emphasise the international dimension of the project, its uniqueness in, and importance for, the Netherlands and the importance of creating a metropolitan atmosphere that is characteristic of Amsterdam. A secondary objective, or a means to achieving the first, is to develop an attractive urban district.

This is reflected in the projects that actors involved refer to for comparison when asked for specific sources of inspiration. The Potsdamer Platz in Berlin is frequently mentioned as the project most similar to the Zuidas in terms of density and urban structure. Frequent references are also made to Canary Wharf in the London Docklands and La Défense in Paris. Both are praised and criticised for specific aspects of their design. Manhattan is referred to because of its density and distinct urban grid. It is significant that none of these are

Figure 8.3 Size distribution of railway stations in the Amsterdam region (number of people getting on and off and changing trains in an average working day in 2003)



HST station projects; they are mainly referred to with regard to the development of the Zuidas as a place, as an urban area. Direct competition, however, is expected to occur on a somewhat lower level, with cities such as Brussels, Frankfurt, Barcelona and Milan (De Bruijn, 2005a). When actors do refer to TGV stations, Euralille and Lyon Saint Exupéry station are mentioned most frequently, but mostly in a negative sense, to illustrate flaws to be avoided in the Zuidas.⁷⁴

The project first proceeded with the *Masterplan Zuidas* (DRO, 1998). At about the same time, Dutch architect Pi de Bruijn was named urban design supervisor of the Zuidas, a function comparable to that of Koolhaas in the development of Euralille; De Bruijn would hold the position until July 2006 (Steinmetz, 2006). However, whereas Koolhaas could start virtually from scratch, the rough outline of the Zuidas was actually there when De Bruijn was appointed. Since then, the plans have been elaborated gradually, while the focus has shifted from offices to a mixture of offices, apartments and other functions, which are together estimated at about 2.2 million m². Construction has started in some parts of the area, in particular the western tip of the zone, the area around the WTC and the Mahler and Gershwin projects south of the railway station (DRO, 2001a; 2004). The focus here is on the latter three areas, where development is extensive and comprehensive, rather than piecemeal. These areas, therefore, are at present most relevant with respect to the analysis of quality of place.

Public debate, in contrast, has focused on the construction of a 1.2 km railway and motorway tunnel ('dock') suitable for building on, thus providing additional building space.⁷⁵ Other options considered have included an infrastruc-

⁷⁴ Based on various interviews.



Figure 8.4 Canary Wharf in the London Docklands (left) and Potsdamer Platz in Berlin (right) are among the projects planners and developers of the Zuidas refer to most frequently



Figure 8.5 Artist's impression of the Zuidas
Design by CIIRD Architectural Presentations for Projectbureau Zuidas

tural dyke and a roof-like construction, or 'deck'. Although the tunnel is the most expensive proposal, the municipality of Amsterdam very much favours this option. In fact, the policy process concerning the Zuidas has been focused on the realisation of the tunnel, making the entire project seem to depend on it; due to the process and the form the plan has taken it is now hard to imagine any another solution. Plans concerning this area are still preliminary, however, and their feasibility remains uncertain. Discussions into their feasibility will not be elaborated here. Meanwhile, it is hard to say something useful about the quality of place in this area other than in general terms which equally apply to the surrounding parts of the Zuidas. In the long term, however, the tunnel itself could have an important influence on quality of place in the Zuidas, and as such it will indeed be discussed in the next chapter.

75 The translation 'dock' ('dok' in Dutch) seems somewhat ambiguous. In fact 'tunnel' would be more according to the actual features of the design. Still, this is an arbitrary choice.

The main subprojects within the Zuidas, as shown in Figure 8.2, are the following:⁷⁶

1. Mahler 4, which will include around 190 apartments, 166,000 m² office space, retail space and parking;
2. Gershwin, with a minimum of 1,090 apartments, 10,000 m² office space and almost 13,000 m² amenities;
3. WTC/Zuidplein, including an expansion of the World Trade Centre, public space, retail facilities and parking space;
4. Vivaldi, which will include 700 dwellings, 265,000 m² office space and a minimum of 38,000 m² amenities;
5. Kop Rivierenbuurt; this development adjacent to the existing Rivierenbuurt neighbourhood will include around 400 dwellings, 50,000 m² office space, and amenities including a theatre, hotel and synagogue;
6. the Free University quarter, which will include 102,000 m² of residential and 143,000 m² of office space, and over 200,000 m² of amenities, entailing and expansion of the university and the university hospital;
7. the northern zone, including a variety of smaller projects: around 80,000 m² of various functions, as well as the Court of Justice and the Rietveld Academy;
8. the museum quarter, which will include 60,000 m² office space and residential space, and amenities, including one or more museums;
9. the dock area ('Composer'), the area to be developed on top of the infrastructure. This would include around 4,000 apartments, 390,000 m² office space and 115,000 m² amenities.

Surprisingly, perhaps, even in the present stage of the Zuidas project it is uncertain whether the HST – at least the Thalys to Paris – will actually stop at South/WTC station. As the station is only small at the moment, all HSTs currently stop at Amsterdam Central Station. The decision on whether or not the Thalys will eventually come to the Zuidas will be taken by the consortium that runs the train, HSA (High Speed Alliance). This is a cooperation of the Dutch Railways (NS: Nederlandse Spoorwegen) and KLM airlines. HSA has not yet committed itself to the case. One of the main factors in this has been the prolongation of the HSA concession, which will end only a few years after the planned completion of the Zuidas station. Should the concession not be prolonged, or if prolongation were uncertain, it might not be worthwhile to shift the HSA operations to South station for the remaining period. Although it is generally assumed that the HST will come in due course, the issue is interesting in itself, as it raises the question of how essential the HST is in fact for the development of the area and for its quality of place.

⁷⁶ Based on the figures mentioned on the Zuidas website (www.zuidas.nl, 7 November 2005).



Figure 8.6 Site of Amsterdam Symphony, the first block of Gershwin (left), and the final stage of the construction of Mahler (right), July 2006

Development process

In view of the project's scale and scope, it is no surprise that the organisation of the Zuidas project is rather complicated. The Zuidas consists of a large number of subprojects, each of which involves different combinations of developers and architects. For each subproject, developers are united in one or more consortia. Mahler, for example, involves ten architects and a consortium of three developers; Gershwin involves another nine architects and four consortia of two to four developers each; while the dock plans ('Composer') involve another combination of three developers (Table 8.1). The names listed also provide a clue as to the range of private and semi-private actors involved in these projects, from local and regional housing corporations on the one hand, to globally operating banks such as ING, Rabobank and ABN Amro on the other. The large number of actors involved means that effective coordination of the project is essential. The development process is coordinated on behalf of the municipality of Amsterdam by the central project office (Project-bureau Zuidas).

With respect to the development process itself, Figure 8.7 presents a rough scheme of the actors' network as far as it is directly relevant to quality of place. The overall urban structure of the Zuidas, envisaged in the Vision documents (DRO, 2001a; 2004), was designed by coordinating supervisor Pi de Bruijn and the municipal planning department (DRO: Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening). Based on this overall structure, DRO and the supervisor draw up specific design codes for each subproject, in consultation with the developers involved. These codes comprise a detailed framework for most aspects of the design of the area. The architects involved in Mahler, for instance, were provided with a 27-page document describing functional mix, street pattern and block sizes, building volumes, maximum floor area for each level of the buildings, building heights for each block and for separate parts of blocks, as well as suggestions for the situation of entrances, lobbies and parking facilities (Medic and Puljiz, 2000). The supervisor oversees the implementation of the design. Public space, such as streets and squares, is designed by DRO. Development concessions are granted by the municipal development corporation of Amsterdam (OGA: Ontwikkelingsbedrijf Gemeente Amsterdam). OGA also

Table 8.1 Developers and architects involved in three subprojects in the centre of the Zuidas

Mahler 4	Gershwin	Composer
Developers: Fortis Vastgoed Ontwikkeling; ING Real Estate; G&S Vastgoed	<i>I Zuidschans:</i> AM Wonen; Amvest; Bouwfonds Wonen; De Dageraad Housing Corp. <i>II Gershwin Plaza:</i> Bouwfonds; Trimp & Van Tartwijk <i>III Royaal Zuid:</i> Prospect Amsterdam; Rabo Vastgoed; ERA Bouw <i>IV De Complete Stad:</i> ING Real Estate; BPF Bouwinvest; Housing Corp. Amsterdam; Het Oosten Housing Corp.	ING Real Estate; NS Vastgoed; ABN Amro
Architects: Toyo Ito; Rafael Viñoly; Skidmore Owings & Merrill; Architekten Cie.; Michael Graves; UN Studios; Erick van Egeraat; Van Bosch; Foreign Office; Van den Oever-Zaaijer	<i>I Zuidschans:</i> Claus & Kaan; Steven Holl; Riken Yamamoto & Fields Shop <i>II Gershwin Plaza:</i> Architekten Cie. <i>III Royaal Zuid:</i> KCAP; Yves Lion <i>IV De Complete Stad:</i> Meyer & Van Schooten; Jo Coenen; Zeinstra Van der Pol	not yet known

Source: Geldof and Nieto Diaz (2003:22); Geldof and Wien (2004:26)

assesses the feasibility of municipal designs and directs the execution by the department of public works.

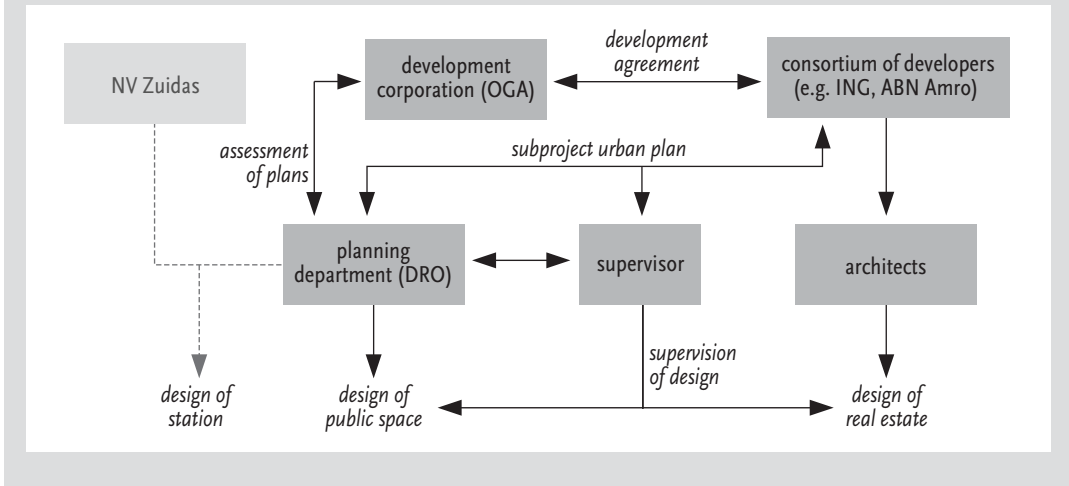
The left (dotted) part of Figure 8.7 indicates the parties involved in the design of the station, which is part of the infrastructural tunnel or 'dock'. This will be commissioned by the NV Zuidas, a partnership of the Municipality of Amsterdam, the Finance Department (each with a 20 percent share) and five private banks (60 percent) specifically founded for this purpose. NS (not shown separately) does not participate in this as yet, but maintains building rights for the area.⁷⁷ DRO is working on the design of the non-infrastructural part of the station (the infrastructural part is mainly overseen by Prorail, the infrastructural branch of NS).⁷⁸ As yet, however, it is uncertain what shape this will eventually take, as the design of the area on top of the tunnel is still in the preliminary stages.

The national government has not been mentioned above, which is no coincidence, as the active role of national authorities concerning quality of place issues in the Zuidas – and in Rotterdam Centraal as well – may be considered

⁷⁷ See www.amsterdam.nl (21 January 2004); www.zuidas.nl (14 August 2006); Bestuurlijke Overeenkomst Zuidas-dok (2006).

⁷⁸ Normally Prorail would commission the development of railway stations, but as the development of HST stations has also been delegated to local authorities, an ambiguous situation has emerged. As a result, Prorail's involvement in the Zuidas is limited, while it is more explicit in Rotterdam.

Figure 8.7 Main network of actors involved in the Zuidas project (not including infrastructure planning)



relatively minor. Although it is heavily involved in funding the infrastructural aspects of the project, the national government tends to distance itself from the design and planning issues. The Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management (V&W: Verkeer en Waterstaat) has considerable funds designated for the infrastructural part of HST projects. However, operating from a strong transport engineering perspective, it is not involved or even interested in their development as a place, which it fears might delay and complicate the infrastructure construction. Accordingly, it considered the expensive and complicated infrastructure dock to be for the most part a nuisance (Majoor, 2004:90-91; V&W, 2005).⁷⁹ On the other hand, the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM: Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer) is involved by way of the New Key Projects policy, and is indeed interested in the urban development component of the HST projects. But, as Table 8.2 shows, it has a much smaller budget and mainly confines itself to the assessment of plans (VROM, 2003b).

In short, it may be concluded that the local, public authorities largely define the overall structure and the design of public space of the Zuidas. The quality of functions and the selection of actual users, on the other hand, are mostly entrusted to parties in the private sector. Meanwhile, consultation on these issues takes place on a regular basis between public authorities and private parties.

8.3 Rotterdam Centraal

The origins of the Rotterdam Centraal project are quite different. After the destruction of inner-city Rotterdam by German bombing in May 1940, it was de-

⁷⁹This may not be limited to the Zuidas. Romein *et al.* (2003) signal a very similar difference in attitude between VROM and V&W in the case of large-scale railway construction between the Netherlands and Germany.

Table 8.2 Financial involvement of national government in New Key Projects (million euros, 2005 price level)

Project	From New Key Projects budget (VROM) ¹⁾	From MIT budget (V&W) ²⁾	From NoMo budget (V&W) ³⁾	Total
Amsterdam Zuidas	139	378	143	660
Rotterdam Centraal	54	161	-	215
Other New Key Projects	153	430	-	583
Total	346	969	143	1,458

1) Total of New Key Projects programmes 1 and 2.

2) Not including additional expenses (also from the MIT budget) for a new metro link between Zuidas and Amsterdam Central Station, the Randstadrail light rail station at Rotterdam Centraal and an additional platform at Arnhem Central Station.

3) NoMo: Nota Mobiliteit; calculation based on 2002 price level figures and CBS price level indices.

Source: VROM (2006:36)

cided to develop an entirely new city centre according to strict modernist design principles, trading Dutch 'cosiness' for what was perceived at the time as space and efficiency. What fragments of the inner city had survived the devastating fires were mostly demolished to create a *tabula rasa* as far as possible. Compared to other Dutch inner cities, the new centre of Rotterdam provided more space for car traffic and included novelties such as, for example, the Groothandelsgebouw (1949-1952) by H.A. Maaskant, the Lijnbaan (1952-1954) by Van den Broek and Bakema (the Netherlands' first pedestrian shopping street, and one of the first to become outdated), and the first metro system in the Netherlands (1968). This reconstruction phase lasted until the early 1990s (Schrijnen, in: Moscoviter, 1995:35-36). Meanwhile, the seaport expanded continuously and Rotterdam became the pride and joy of Dutch post-war industrialisation policy, specialising in petrochemical industry. The city suffered severely from the general decline in traditional manufacturing industries, however. Furthermore, due to mechanisation and automation, seaport activities became increasingly labour-extensive. And, as they also became ever more large-scale, they moved seaward to larger harbour areas away from the city; the newest port areas, such as the Maasvlakte, are situated about thirty kilometres from the inner city. Thus, the relation between the city of Rotterdam and its seaport, which used to be very close, is changing spatially as well as economically. While manufacturing and port activities are still important to the economy of Rotterdam, if only because of their sheer size, they no longer suffice as an economic base. Enormous investments are still being made in harbours and other infrastructure in favour of the port – which still dominates the city's mindset – but they generate relatively little employment. Consequently, like many old industrial cities, Rotterdam has to become less dependent on its manufacturing base and develop a modern service economy. Urban government is now focused on attracting higher-income groups and retaining the middle class. In this respect, the quality of the inner city itself is another problem, especially in view of the growing importance of quality of place. Although the best examples from the reconstruction period connect to the distinct pre-war architectural tradition of Rotterdam and still stand out,



Figure 8.8
High-rise apartment blocks along the river (left); the Erasmus bridge (right)

the majority of the 1950s and 1960s buildings now look bland and outdated, as the accent had often been on the reconstruction itself, rather than on urban or architectural quality. As Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas states:

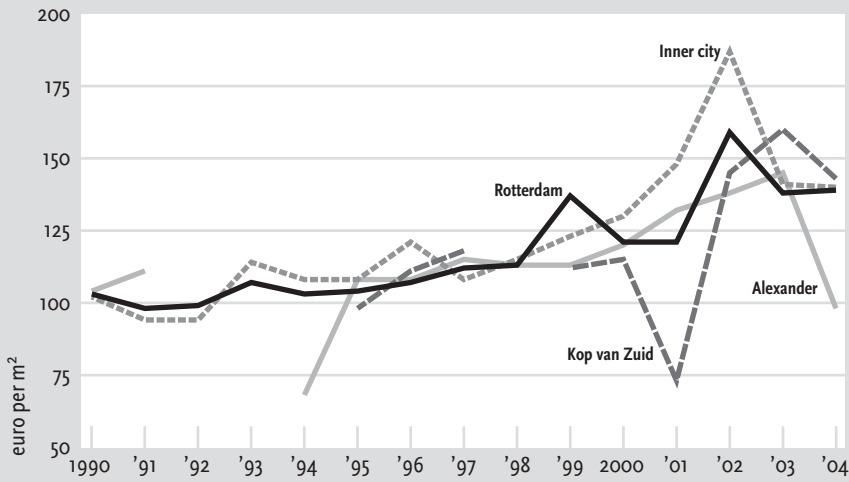
Rotterdam was the model city of the fifties, when the serene order of its slabs and the connective tissue of the Lijnbaan achieved paradigmatic status. In the sixties its popularity tumbled abruptly; in the end, only planning delegations from the East and the Third World came to visit.

In the seventies, new generations of planners took over. The old generation had simply been “building the city”; now that same city was declared “one gigantic problem” (Koolhaas and Mau, 1995:207).

Meanwhile, however, as port functions gradually move seaward, old harbour areas are being redeveloped for residential and commercial functions, providing new opportunities for development. The largest of these so far is the prestigious Kop van Zuid project, including high-rise office and apartment buildings, the Court of Justice and considerable cultural amenities. Rotterdam’s increased ambitions and renewed self-consciousness are to some extent reflected in the striking modern architecture that became increasingly decisive for the city’s image and identity in the 1980s and especially during the 1990s, and an active policy evolved to encourage distinct architecture. The Erasmus bridge, designed by UN Studio in Amsterdam, became the city’s new icon. High-rise apartment blocks have been built along the river to attract the middle class (Figure 8.8).

Despite these efforts, among the main office locations within Rotterdam there is not a single top-end location comparable to the Zuidas. Figure 8.9 shows the development of office rents in Rotterdam. A comparison with Figure 8.1 shows that until the end of the 1990s, office rents in Rotterdam were not considerably different from those in Amsterdam, the Zuidas being the only exception. Since then, however, growth has been stronger in Amsterdam, particularly in the Zuidas and the embankments area, while there has been less stagnation in the office market in Amsterdam than in Rotterdam, increasing the overall difference between the cities. With regard to the station area it is relevant to remark that the Groothandelsgebouw next to the station currently suffers from an effect similar to that in Lille: its renovation was completed in 2005, when demand for inner-city office space had just decreased, resulting in a decline in the building’s occupation rate from 94 percent in 2001

Figur 8.9 Development of average office rents (new rental contracts) in Rotterdam between 1990 and 2004



Source: ABF Research Real Estate Monitor (September 2005)

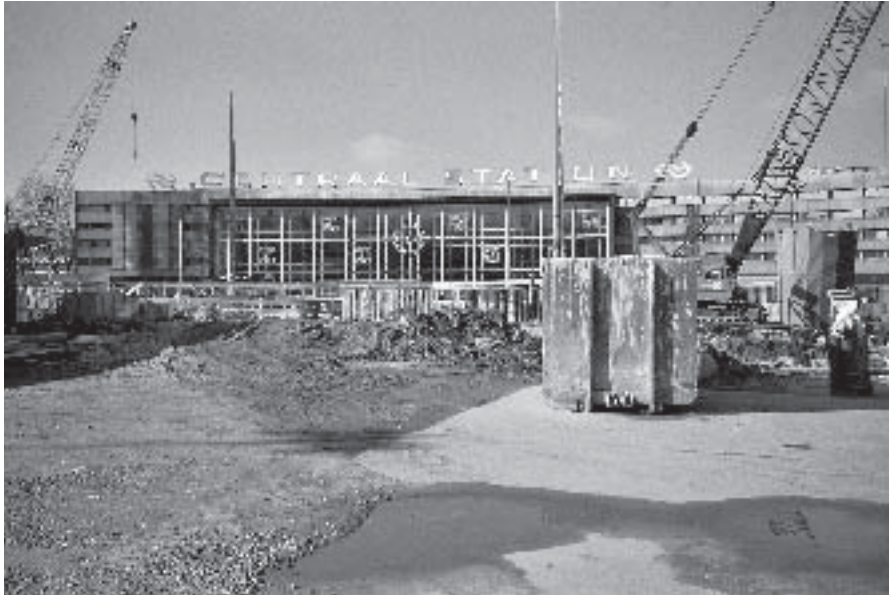
to 60 percent in 2005 (Groothandelsgebouwen N.V., 2006:54).

The project

In recent years, Rotterdam's ambitions, as well as its flaws, have become most obvious in the Rotterdam Centraal project. The decision to construct a high-speed railway between Amsterdam and Paris was the catalyst for the renewal plans for Rotterdam Central Station. It was clear that the station itself should be upgraded and expanded. The current building (Figure 8.10) was designed in 1957 by Sybold van Ravesteyn and inspired by Termini station in Rome. It had become too small to accommodate future passenger volumes, particularly because of the narrow tunnel beneath the platforms. Rotterdam CS is the largest station in the region, its relative dominance being even larger than that of Amsterdam Central Station (Figure 8.11). This is due to the fact that, because of their network position, the secondary stations in Rotterdam offer less favourable services, in qualitative terms, than those in Amsterdam, in effect strengthening the relative position of the Central Station. Also, the service area of Rotterdam CS is even larger than that of Amsterdam CS; over the period 1996 to 2003 it was the primary station for 800,000 people. Rotterdam CS had direct connections to 79 other stations in 2003 (NS MOA, 2005). The number of travellers is smaller than in Amsterdam relative to the service area.⁸⁰ It is expected to increase from 110,000 per day to approximately 205,000 in 2025 (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2003:2). Besides the HST, the station will accommodate Randstad Rail, a light rail service to The Hague, which will connect to the existing metro station. However, the objective was also to improve the quality of

⁸⁰ Probably due to the fact that the service area of Rotterdam CS is larger and includes a rural area that is relatively inaccessible by train, with many potential, but few actual rail travellers.

Figure 8.10
Rotterdam
Central Station,
March 2006,
its west wing
already demol-
ished



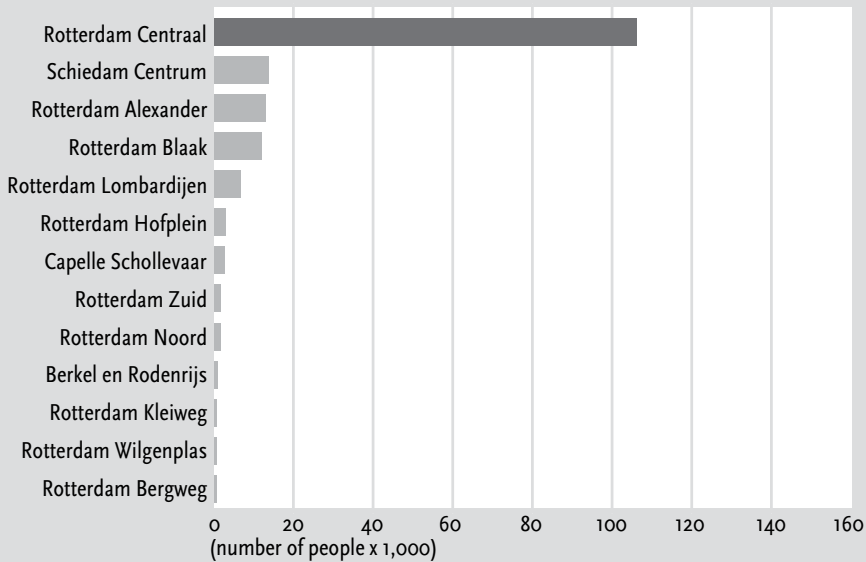
the station area, now mostly an unattractive out-of-the-way place, and, thereby, the attractiveness and dynamic of the inner city as a whole (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2003).

In early 2000, a shortlist of five urban design agencies was drawn up. One of the contenders was OMA, the office of Rem Koolhaas, urban designer of Euralille (Kooijman and Wigmans, 2003b:8).⁸¹ Eventually, Alsop Architects of London were selected to draw up a design. The result was William Alsop's ambitious 2001 *Masterplan Rotterdam Centraal*, which was not so much a detailed architectural design as a flexible framework. It aimed not only on improving the station itself, but also on the more abstract objective of upgrading inner-city Rotterdam and creating a metropolitan atmosphere to suit the new economy by means of specific spatial measures and by inducing a new dynamism into the city:

Rotterdam Centraal is an important location for mobile individuals, who arrive, transfer or linger. The ambition is to connect the area with the future of the city, to make it responsive to changing demands that Rotterdam will place on it. This is clear from the city experience of other developments, such as the Van Nelle factory, the Groothandelsgebouw, the Kop van Zuid and the high-rise office and residential buildings. [...] An essential element of the Rotterdam Centraal project is that it generates new relationships and activities at different levels of scale. The city is interweaving with the qualities that are present elsewhere. Conversely, the city is becoming a principal alternative in the larger (trans) national region. Rotterdam Centraal is becoming a gateway to Amsterdam Airport. The high-speed railway will bring Rotterdam within an hour's travel for over 6 million people. In that context, Rotterdam Centraal is not only a physical project, it is a catalyst for other initiatives. It does not determine in advance, but facilitates a framework that will be responsive to future market development (Alsop, 2001:14).

⁸¹ See Chapter 6.

Figure 8.11 Size distribution of railway stations in the Rotterdam region (number of people getting on and off and changing trains in an average working day in 2003)



Source: NS MOA (2005)

The plan included a real estate programme of 641,000 m², consisting of 195,000 m² of residential space, 318,000 m² office space, a hotel and 125,000 m² of 'urban entertainment', including various amenities such as shops, food outlets and a theatre. The new dynamism was expressed by the image of the station as a set of giant 'champagne glasses' (Figure 8.12). However, with costs estimated at 875 million euros, the plan would be too expensive and was considered too extravagant by many (Alsop, 2001; Kooijman and Wigmans, 2003a:321). Those same elements that distinguished the project were the main objects of criticism – especially the champagne glasses, a performative element that was intended mainly to demonstrate the potential and flexibility of the programme and to distinguish the location of the station, and in fact was not essential to the plan and not included in the project budget (Kooijman and Wigmans, 2003b:9). It appears that Rotterdam recoiled at the cost of its great ambitions.

The national government considered the cost of the *Masterplan* a prohibitive objection and demanded considerable changes. The plan was finally abandoned, however, when in March 2002 local elections brought the local *Leefbaar Rotterdam* party (led by Pim Fortuyn) to power, which was strongly opposed to the 'megalomaniac' project. Although this is generally regarded as the deathblow of the *Masterplan*, the elections appeared to have suddenly exposed a lengthy, gradual process of growing discontent with the plan. In the city council, support for the project now eroded quickly. The *Masterplan* seemed doomed. A less ambitious plan was needed.

In 2003 a new programme of requirements was formulated. The new project is considerably smaller in scope and, accordingly, much cheaper, at an estimated cost of around 410 million euros. In effect:



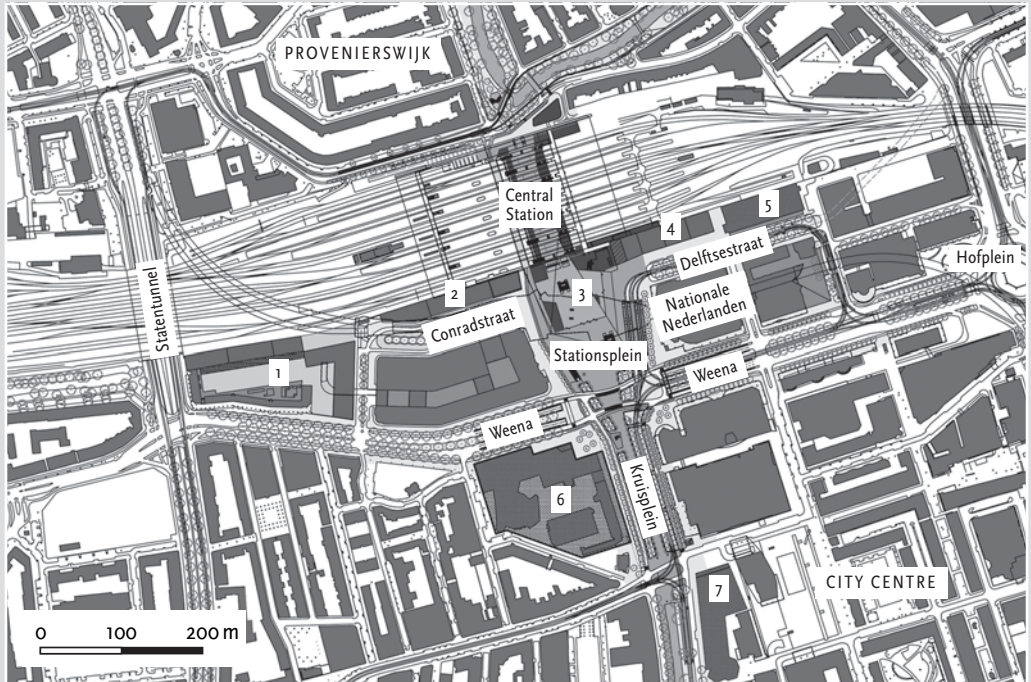
Figure 8.12
 Alsop's giant
 'champagne
 glasses'
 Source: SMC
 Alsop (2003)

... an externally based approach to the economic rejuvenation potential of the city has made way for a local, internal approach to the palpable day-to-day problems within the city limits of Rotterdam (Kooijman and Wigmans, 2003a:321).

However, the problems with respect to the structure of the station area have not disappeared, and the previous discussions about the *Masterplan* may have made them even more obvious. The intentions of the project are formulated in a somewhat more modest way than in the Alsop period. The primary objective now is to build a new station and to upgrade the station environment, to connect it to the inner city and to make the area a 'frontpiece' for travellers arriving in Rotterdam. It should feel like a genuine part of the city, rather than an office location. Secondary is the development of the wider station area. These objectives, which are more modest than those of the Zuidas, are reflected in the projects taken as a reference. When asked, actors involved in the planning process mention not so much the extensive projects of the London Docklands and La Défense, but a wide range of projects in the Netherlands (including the Zuidas), France (including Lyon Saint Exupéry), Germany, Spain and other countries. Almost all of these concern railway stations in combination with amenities and real estate.

The time schedule reflects these priorities in a stronger sense than in the *Masterplan*. The implementation of the HST and Randstad Rail, which is scheduled for 2006/2007 and 2008 respectively (V&W, 2005), has increased the pressure on the planning of the station itself, as well as the logistic problems during the construction. Consequently, the current focus of the project is on the station itself, as this is most urgent now. The projects mentioned as a reference for Rotterdam Centraal are therefore mainly confined to railway stations in the Netherlands, Germany and France. Team CS, a combination of Benthem Crouwel, Meyer en Van Schooten and West 8 Landscape Architects has been appointed to design the new station. The development of the surrounding area, which is smaller than the area considered in the Alsop plan

Figure 8.13 Rotterdam Centraal project area (figures indicate sub-areas mentioned in main text)



Source: by courtesy of the Municipality of Rotterdam



Figure 8.14
Team CS design
for Rotterdam
Central Station
and the Delftse-
plein

Source: illustration and design by Team CS: Benthem Crouwel Architekten, Meijeren Van Schooten Architecten and West 8 (2005)

(Figure 8.13) and which does not include the Hofplein area (east of the station area), is expected to occur in a second stage and is explicitly considered a spin-off of the railway station. Eventually, it should include about 220,000 m² of new real estate, about a tenth of the Zuidas (VROM, 2003b:27).

The overall project involves seven sub-areas, shown in Figure 8.13, some of which are still in the preliminary stage (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2005):



Figure 8.15

Partial demolition of the 'old' station and start of work on Randstad Rail, May 2005

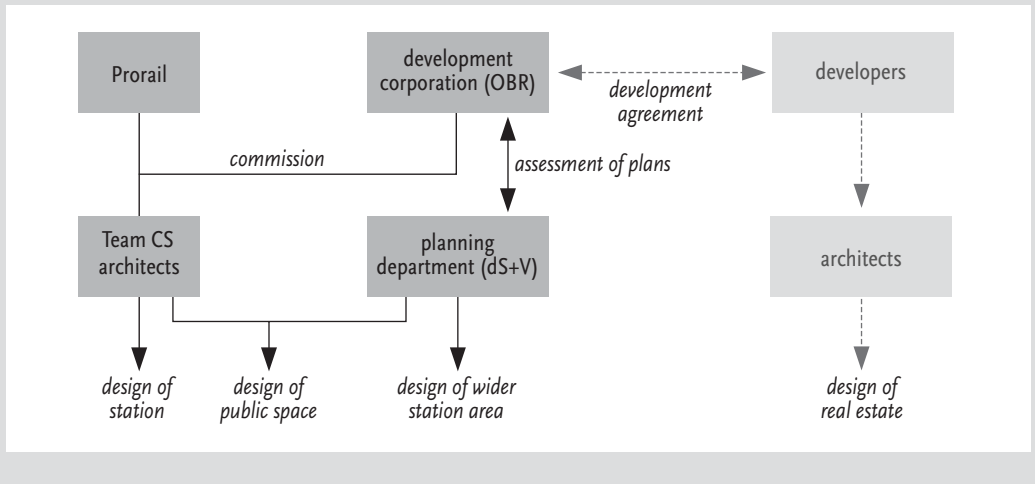
1. the area of Schaatsbaan Albeda: potential development of this area will take place after 2010. It would include 260 to 450 apartments, 20,000 m² office space, amenities, possibly a school and 24,000 m² parking space;
2. the Conradstraat, west of the station: a building adjacent to the railway tracks will include 44,000 m² to 55,000 m² office space, amenities and also 7,000 m² parking space;
3. the station building and square;
4. the Delftseplein, east of the station: a building adjacent to the railway tracks will include 35,000 m² to 55,000 m² office space (possibly in the form of a 130 m high-rise building) and 9,000 m² parking space;
5. the former post office, which will be renovated from 2006 to include 35,000 m² office space and amenities;
6. the Weena Point location: the development of this site remains uncertain, but will probably include apartments;
7. the Calypso location, which will include apartments, retail space and a church.

Development process

In comparison to the Zuidas, the development process in Rotterdam seems less complex, with, at present, no subprojects, fewer actors and no private developers involved. The renewal of the station and the infrastructure are mainly funded by public money. Private parties were involved in the *Masterplan*, however: in 1999 the municipality of Rotterdam and NS, together with private investors Rodamco and ING bank, established a public-private cooperation and defined the starting points of what would become the *Masterplan*. Shortly after the presentation of the *Masterplan* in 2001, however, both private investors left the cooperation for reasons not directly related to the plan itself: Rodamco because acting as a real estate developer would imply the loss of its corporate tax dispensation; ING because it proved impossible to purchase the old post office building next to the station, which it considered essential to its participation (Oosten and Esselbrugge, 2002:343; Kooijman and Wigmans, 2003b:8).

The national government was not actively involved in the planning of the

Figure 8.16 Main network of actors involved in Rotterdam Centraal (not including infrastructure planning)



Masterplan, but, as shown in Table 8.2 above, it co-financed the transport infrastructure involved (Oosten and Esselbrugge, 2002:341-342; V&W, 2005). Despite this lack of involvement, the national government had to approve the project's funding, however, which it refused on the grounds of the excessive budget. This led to severe budget cuts, but by then the local political situation in Rotterdam had changed and the Masterplan was abandoned (Kooijman and Wigman, 2003a:321; 2003b:9-10). In 2003, the region and the municipality of Rotterdam, NS and the Ministries of Transport, Public Works and Water Management and Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment formulated a new programme of requirements (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2003). The increased time pressure with regard to the HST and light rail planning was the main reason for the involvement, after all, of the national government in the project.

Figure 8.16 shows the network of actors involved in the development of Rotterdam Centraal according to the present plan. The municipality of Rotterdam, in this case the municipal development corporation (OBR: Ontwikkelingsbedrijf Rotterdam), and Prorail commissioned the design of the new station.⁸² Team CS, a combination of Benthem Crouwel, Meyer and Van Schooten and West 8 Landscape Architects, were appointed to the job. In cooperation with Team CS, the municipal planning department (dS+V: Dienst Stedebouw en Volkshuisvesting) is responsible for designing the public space around the station; dS+V is also responsible for designing the bus and tram stations and the streets adjacent to the station.

The eventual development of the station area in later stages, indicated by dotted lines in, Figure 8.16 will depend on the provision of private investments. While nothing has been made public about this, the city's development corporation is involved in acquiring potential private parties. OBR also assesses the feasibility of municipal designs and directs the execution by the department of public works.

⁸² See note 12.

8.4 Conclusion

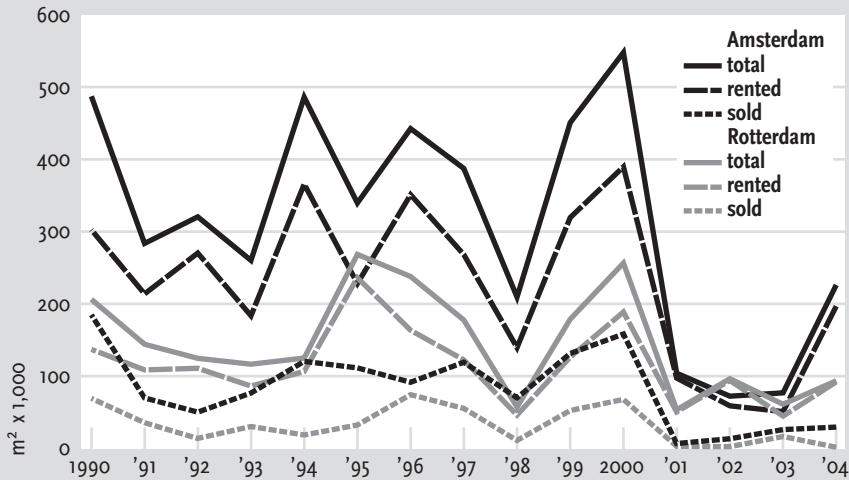
It is important to consider the main objectives of the projects involved here – in particular the objectives in relation to the development of the urban economy, as well as objectives in terms of urban planning – which cannot be separated from their local context: Amsterdam an advanced service economy, Rotterdam an industrial economy trying to transform itself. Accordingly, quality of place plays a different role in both projects but is important in both cases. The Zuidas is intended to be a sub-centre, secondary to the inner city, but with a distinct, metropolitan atmosphere. It is designed to become a top-end location for service industries, competing with other cities at an international level. In Rotterdam, on the other hand, the project is adjacent to the inner city. The aim is to improve the connection of the station area to the inner city, to improve the quality of the station area and the accessibility of the inner city. This should improve the quality of the whole area. In both cases, aiming at quality of place has to be weighed against the seemingly straightforward demands for efficiency and profitability. By its objectives as an international business location, its size, as well as its situation some distance from the inner city, the Zuidas resembles projects such as the London Docklands and La Défense. Rotterdam, on the other hand, is in all three aspects more like Euralille or the development around Brussels Midi station.

Euralille is to a certain extent similar to Rotterdam as far as its main objectives are concerned: it was intended to stimulate the development of a service economy and to improve the quality of the surrounding city. It is adjacent to the inner city, as in Rotterdam, but adjacent to an attractive, historic inner city, to which it is alien in many respects. With respect to the development of service activities, there was some positive effect, although less than was anticipated. The quality of the inner city has, however, greatly improved, as has the image of Lille.

The development of Euralille has been delayed, and partly aborted, by the real estate market situation. This is a risk factor in Amsterdam and Rotterdam also. Figure 8.17 shows the realisation of office space in the two cities since 1990. Since 2001, realisation figures have been small. Still, there is no shortage of office space; as Figure 8.1 and Figure 8.9 show, office rents have also tended to decrease. The Zuidas will add 2.2 million square metres of office space to the city; Rotterdam Centraal will contribute less, but in the local context this is still a considerable amount.

On the one hand, it is true that particularly in the case of the Zuidas, this office space will be provided gradually, over a long period. On the other hand, the long-term forecasts of the real estate market are not especially optimistic at the moment, pointing at a market of replacement, rather than extension of office space. Besseling *et al.* (2003:40) call the building volume of the Zuidas 'ambitious, but not unrealistic' in view of the 1990s real estate market

Figure 8.17 Total realisation of new office space in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, 1990-2004



Source: ABF Research Real Estate Monitor (September 2005)

situation. However, they also state that in the next decennia market development is uncertain, but probably less prosperous than in the recent past. In the long term, development of employment in financial and other business services will be the main factor defining the demand for offices in the Zuidas segment, and for demographic reasons employment in these sectors is expected to decline after 2020 (Besseling et al., 2003:41-42). If this situation did indeed continue, it may affect the development of the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal. Commercialisation of office space in the Zuidas so far has been quite successful, but it may mean that firms are abandoning locations elsewhere in the city. Also, only a small part of the planned real estate has been commercialised, but this is in one of the best areas. On the other hand, there are rumours that the third stage of Mahler will be postponed due to market conditions, and that one of the buildings will be converted to apartments rather than offices (Bokern, 2005; PropertyNL, 2006).

In order to assess the role of quality of place in these projects, it is therefore relevant to know to what extent it is founded on a long-term perspective and the recognition that quality may actually be a benefit, rather than merely a cost factor. Accordingly, it is necessary to gain insight into which actors and arenas of decision-making are involved, how they understand and appreciate quality of place and which time horizon they apply. The next chapter will therefore take a closer look at the development process of these projects and the role of quality of place in this.

9 Quality of place in the projects

9.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the main question of this thesis: to analyse to what extent, and how, the concept of quality of place actually plays a role in large-scale urban redevelopment, specifically in the development and planning of the three projects considered here. This involves the questions of how quality of place is understood by the various actors involved in the planning process (subquestion 4), which aspects of quality of place are included in the project plans (subquestion 5) and to what extent actors involved in large-scale urban redevelopment support the elements of quality of place included in the project plan (subquestion 6). Previous chapters indicated that urban quality, more particularly quality of place, is considered increasingly important for the vitality of the city, from an urban economic perspective as well. Still, physical transport also remains essential, a presumption essential to the large-scale urban development undertaken around high-speed train nodes in many cities across Europe. This type of highly commercialised development does not necessarily produce high-quality urban areas, however. Moreover, various arenas of decision-making are involved, entailing public as well as private actors who may have different mindsets, objectives and time horizons.

I then discussed, in Chapters 6 to 8, the context of development of the station area development projects studied here, as well as the main characteristics and objectives of the projects themselves and their respective development processes. In Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Lille, railway station development is planned and executed in quite different contexts and with somewhat different objectives. Accordingly, the role of quality of place also differs between these projects, although it is an important aspect of all three of them.

This chapter elaborates on the latter issue. It investigates to what extent, and in which way, quality of place is addressed in the cases studied here. This involves the role of quality of place in the development process, in the actual project plan and – no less importantly – in the conceptual ideas and assumptions that are behind the plan and which remain partly unnoticed at first sight. Furthermore, it includes the question of which specific elements of quality of place are involved, and how these relate to more general conceptions of urban quality. It must be noted, therefore, that whereas it may seem as if quality of place is not always discussed as a whole, this does not imply a change in definition; rather, that a large part of this chapter is mainly concerned with those elements of quality of place that are relevant in the planning practice of the projects involved. This said, however, it is also particularly relevant to take account of the extent to which the more intangible elements that are specific of quality of place, such as openness, authenticity and the availability of third spaces, are taken into account in the plans, and whether these are in any way present in the mindset of the actors responsible for the

planning and design of the projects involved.

The analysis in this chapter of Euralille, being the reference case, is based on a number of site visits, as well as on literature, in particular Koolhaas and Mau (1995), Koolhaas *et al.* (1996), Bertolini and Spit (1998), Dovey (1998), Bertolini (2000) and Spaans (2002). The analysis of the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal projects is based on an analysis of the project plans as presented in planning documents and on websites, and to a large extent on a series of in-depth interviews conducted with key actors involved in the planning process. At this point, it may be useful to recall that among the interviewees three groups were distinguished:⁸³

- a. developers: representatives of banks and other private development corporations that develop real estate, which, in some cases, is then sold to investment companies;
- b. designers: representatives of municipal planning and design departments, and architects commissioned by public bodies;
- c. coordinators: mostly representatives of public development corporations; while these are public actors, they are more market-oriented in their tasks and attitudes than the representatives of group b).

This approach implies that Euralille is included as a reference with respect to the various aspects of quality of place, not with regard to the discussion of actors' mindsets and distribution of responsibilities in the first two sections. Nevertheless, the ideas of Rem Koolhaas in particular on the development of Euralille will be discussed where appropriate, as they have obviously to a large degree defined the way the project has eventually been developed.

Although this is by far the longest chapter thus far, it could easily have been twice as long, such is the actors' enthusiasm and the richness of their ideas on the projects they are involved in. This is expressed by means of a number of quotations from interviewees. It should be noted that these have been taken from the authorised interview reports rather than the integral (but unauthorised) interview tapes, and have been translated from Dutch. However, in order not to rely on single opinions too much, the analysis as presented in this chapter has been limited to the gist of what was said, using individual interviewees' remarks as an illustration or a nuancing of more general issues.

In short, the structure of the chapter is as follows. Section 9.2 discusses actors' perceptions of quality of place: what do actors involved in the development of the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal understand by the concept and what aspects of quality do they value most? Section 9.3 focuses on the distribution of responsibilities in these projects with regard to the aspects of the project planning related to quality of place. Sections 9.4 to 9.11 then discuss

83 See Section 1.5.

in detail the elements of quality of place as they are dealt with in the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal projects, in comparison to Euralille.

9.2 Actors' perceptions of quality of place

The question of the role of quality of place in the planning process of these projects in turn raises the question of what actors involved in the development of the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal actually understand by quality of place. Actors' perceptions of quality of place may be expected to have influenced the actual project plans. The opposite may also be true, however, as the planning process is lengthy and often iterative. Furthermore, the importance actors attach to quality of place for a large part defines the viability of a long-term perspective, which is required for the evolvment and maintenance of quality of place.⁸⁴ In a way, therefore, the perception of quality of place partly determines its viability. If actors involved are convinced quality of place is important, they are likely to put more effort into it, and to persist longer. They will not, on the other hand, if they consider quality of place an insignificant buzzword – which increases the chance that there will indeed be no quality of place.

All three groups of actors – developers, designers and coordinators – appear to have articulate ideas on what a city should be, and these ideas are not radically different from each other. Whether or not these ideas are based specifically on the concept of quality of place, they certainly to a large extent correspond to the elements of quality of place relevant in the design of station areas.

Few of the actors interviewed are more than superficially familiar with the ideas of Richard Florida concerning the creative class and quality of place. Yet all pay explicit attention to elements of quality of place, although often under different labels. A wide variety of issues that were mentioned only once or twice are not mentioned in Table 9.1.⁸⁵ The issues mentioned more frequently provide an overview of aspects interviewees consider relevant to quality of place. On the whole, these mostly concern aspects directly related to urban design, which suggests that only some of the ideas of Florida are taken into

⁸⁴ See Section 4.5.

⁸⁵ These are: social safety, availability of high-quality amenities (both mentioned two times), existence of social networks within the area, area user pride, experience of a 'sense of space', quality of the connection between the station and its environment, image of the station, quality of the relation between buildings and their the situation and actual use, availability of green areas, liveability within the area during the period of construction, tolerance, amount of sunshine in streets and on squares, existence of an open society, appropriate size (of streets etc.) and presence of a university (all mentioned once).

Table 9.1 Main characteristics of quality of place mentioned spontaneously by interviewees

Characteristics	Frequency
Public functions at street level outside of buildings	7
Quality of public space	7
Functional mixture	6
Liveliness during the day	6
Density	5
Building materials applied	5
Clarity of design; extent to which public space can be surveyed	4
Control and maintenance	4
Quality of architecture	4
Accessibility	3
Safeness and convenience for pedestrians	3

Source: Author's survey among actors involved in the development of the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal projects (2005)

account. These are the elements that are relevant at the level of the project area, which are easiest to schedule into urban design and are closely related to the interviewees' sphere of activity. These issues strongly correspond to the factors of thriving urban areas emphasised by Jane Jacobs, and by many others after her. Nevertheless, rather than being specifically related to quality of place, they are closely related to the

desired urban or metropolitan climate, which is, as one interviewee states, an expression of quality of place.

Nonetheless, some actors, most of them designers, are also concerned with the more intangible aspects of quality of place, such as tolerance, openness and authenticity, the possibility of unexpected encounters and, in general, the excitement of the city. This does not in all cases mean those actors are familiar with the work of Florida; it does mean, however, that they share some of his ideas. Pi de Bruijn, supervisor of the Zuidas, refers, for instance, to the Zuidas as a 'metaphor of modern society, an open society that is founded on local values' (De Bruijn, 2005a). And elsewhere:

Although it is not the goal we set ourselves beforehand, our ambitions come very close to the kind of city that Richard Florida regards as the fertile breeding-ground for creative talent – with Jane Jacobs, of course, in the background, who described which qualities a city needs to produce genuine urban life back in the early 1960s. It is above all the city where you come across both like-minded people and people who are strange in every aspect. It is the city – in the words of Florida – that is open, diverse, tolerant. It is also the city with a lively street life, though one that is not confined to the streets themselves, but extends to public amenities such as the bar. Giambattista Nolli already grasped that in the eighteenth century: one of his famous maps of Rome showed the entire public domain, including the interiors of churches and other public buildings.⁸⁶

In short, these are the qualities which have made cities, ever since their emergence, the places which attract talent, where new ideas are developed, and where creativity is stimulated more than anywhere else. That was already the case millennia ago in the case of the cities of Babylon, it applies in the late Middle Ages to Florence and the cities of Flanders,

⁸⁶ *Nuova Pianta di Roma Data in Luce da Giambattista Nolli l'Anno MDCCXLVIII (1748)*.

to the cities of Holland in the Golden Age, and later to Paris, London, Vienna, Berlin and New York (De Bruijn, 2005b:159-160).

Or, as one interviewee says:

That possibility to meet, life, society, in a very broad sense, is very important. London has such a cosmopolitan society, even more so than New York. Amsterdam also has a bit of it, and is something of a refuge city. Amsterdam is 'the world's smallest metropolis'. Therefore it is the right place to further develop this idea. There is a need for it. And the Zuidas is located at a node, which makes it a natural topos for this (from interview report).⁸⁷

Another, while still recognising the relevance of quality of place, is more critical:

Florida's story is very much a hype, a freak of fashion. It recalls the time when Frank Gehry had designed the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao and all cities subsequently wanted a museum, because of the 'Bilbao effect'. Demographic factors such as tolerance are certainly important, but this is something that concerns the city of Amsterdam as a whole (from interview report).

It is recognised, therefore, that these more intangible elements of quality of place are relevant mainly on a higher scale, being hardly applicable in a station area setting. Consequently, with regard to the project itself, those interviewees who are familiar with Florida's ideas also for the most part stick to palpable elements related to urban design.

However different the projects may be, on the whole the actors involved in the planning process focus, on a general level, on similar aspects when they think of quality of place. Many are related to liveliness: functional diversity, which is expected to increase the liveliness of the area outside office hours, safety, the comfort and safety of pedestrians and sufficient density. Moreover, liveliness as such is one of the items mentioned most frequently. When we look beyond the issues mentioned in Table 9.1, liveliness is related also to grain and scale of the area and the viability of commercial amenities. In many instances, such as the relation with social safety and the viability of shops, the relation is a two-way one.⁸⁸ Liveliness is also related to public space, the quality of which is another one of the issues mentioned most frequently by interviewees in both cases. In fact, this also includes a variety of factors. Actors who mentioned this issue were asked to specify the factors that define good public space. The factors mentioned here include many of the issues

⁸⁷ Quotations from interview reports are translated from the original Dutch.

⁸⁸ See Chapter 5.

also listed separately, such as functional diversity, architecture, clear sight-lines and liveliness. Nonetheless, like liveliness, public space as such is clearly perceived as one of the most important factors defining quality of place.

It may be concluded that many of the aspects that are considered important regarding the quality of the area, whether urban quality or specifically quality of place, are in fact complex factors made up of, or at least closely related to, several other factors, in such a way that it seems as if 'everything relates to everything'. Virtually every attempt to distinguish or classify the various issues involved is therefore likely to suffer from overlap and a certain degree of inconsistency. Nevertheless, based on the complete interviews conducted, rather than just the question referred to in Table 9.1, a number of main issues may be distinguished, which are grouped under four main aspects of the project:

- a. the appearance of the area, particularly of the buildings. This includes the quality of architecture and the quality of the applied materials (9.4);
- b. the general urban structure of the project and the principles behind it (9.5), as well as the spatial and visual integration of the area within the surrounding city (9.6);
- c. the type of functions planned, or existing, in the project area (9.7), the location of these functions both in the area and in individual buildings (9.8), as well as the quality of these functions and their possible effect on other functions (9.9), and their role in the functional integration of the project in the city (9.10);
- d. the way the project area is used, managed by public and private organisations, and experienced by users and visitors. This particularly entails the quality of the public space in the area, the way public space is actually used (9.11) and, especially, the role of third spaces in the design (9.12).

These issues are elaborated in Section 9.4 onwards. Before that, however, the next section discusses the distribution of actors' responsibilities with regard to the main aspects of the project planning related to these issues.

9.3 Distribution of actors' responsibilities

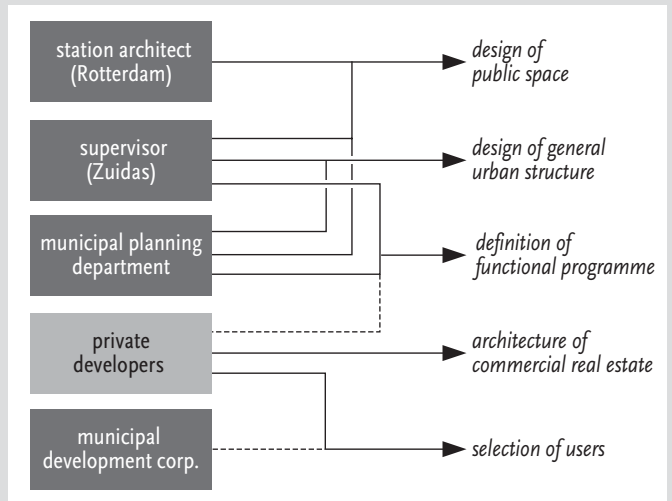
Despite the differences between the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal projects, some common denominators may be identified with regard to the development process. Figure 9.1 shows a generalised scheme of the mutual distribution, among actors involved, of responsibilities with respect to the elements of the development process related to the abovementioned issues, based on the project organisations as described in the previous chapter. The schedule distinguishes between public and private actors, and between formal responsibility and informal involvement. On the whole, it may be concluded that in these cases public actors largely decide on the quality of public space, the function-

al programme and the general urban structure of the area, while the selection of users is trusted to the private sector. The scheme also shows the central role of the supervisor in the Zuidas.

More specifically, the responsibilities are divided as follows:

- municipal planning departments, together with the supervisor in the Zuidas, are responsible for the general urban structure of the area, and the more or less detailed design codes on the subproject level;
- the municipal planning department, and the supervisor in the Zuidas, are responsible for the functional programme, in quantitative terms as well as in terms of location. However, this is defined in close cooperation with private developers;
- municipal planning department and publicly commissioned architects are responsible for the design of public space (streets and squares) and public amenities (schools, parks, etc.). Maintenance of public space is also taken care of by public parties;
- private developers are responsible for the architecture of the commercially developed real estate, within the margins set by the conceived urban plan;
- private developers are responsible for the final selection of the users of the real estate they develop. The municipality is involved in this too, mainly by means of the municipal development corporations, but it bears no formal responsibility.

Figure 9.1 Distribution of actors' responsibilities in the Zuidas and Rotterdam Central projects with respect to various aspects of the project planning process relevant to quality of place*



**) Dotted lines represent consultation rather than formal responsibilities; light gray boxes represent private actors; dark gray boxes public actors or publicly commissioned actors.*

9.4 Architecture and applied building materials

Two related aspects that are mentioned by all private developers and representatives of public development corporations are the quality of architecture and the quality of applied materials. Remarkably, designers hardly mention these issues, taking them for granted, perhaps. Architectural quality implies a variety of building forms and the involvement of architects of an international standing. The quality of applied materials concerns for instance the type of stone or paving and the craftsmanship put into buildings and public space: what one interviewee calls the 'semiotics' of the area:

Workmanship, the semiotics. A beautiful finish is very important for the quality of the area, of public spaces as well as of buildings. For example, you can see that a banking office is a valuable building when it has a beautiful appearance. When the finish of both buildings and public spaces is good, this has a very strong effect on the image of the area (from interview report).

In the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal developers are responsible for the architecture of the commercially developed real estate, within the margins set by the conceived urban plan; the municipal planning department public or publicly commissioned designers for the architecture of public space and public amenities. Architectural quality is considered an important issue in the Zuidas, in view of the explicit ambition to develop a high-quality international business location and the type of users targeted: banks and other financial services, which tend to attribute great importance to the appearance and status of their building. Remarkably, the quality of architecture and applied materials are emphasised most strongly by developers, themselves part of the financial sector; one interviewee considers it the most important factor of all. It is stated that architectural quality concerns for instance the choice of renowned architects such as Michael Graves, Rafael Viñoly, Toyo Ito or Skidmore, Owings and Merrill in Mahler, who are able to give their buildings a distinct expression, and the area a certain authenticity. But will this make the Zuidas sufficiently different from other high-end business locations, furnished with the creations of other, but equally renowned architects? One wonders whether this international architecture will contribute to a sense of locally based authenticity (Figure 9.2).

The quality of applied materials concerns the buildings themselves, as well as public spaces. It concerns pavement type, flower tubs, etc. The Zuidplein, in front of the WTC and the railway station (see Figure 8.2), is mentioned as an example of the Zuidas quality, in particular the stone beds containing various types of trees. It is an issue in the design of the station also: the image of the station should be supported by its architecture and the materials used. Although the station at the Zuidas will to a large degree be integrated into the surrounding buildings, it should be recognisable as a station, more so than for instance the underground railway station at Schiphol Airport.

Architectural quality is mentioned less with respect to Rotterdam Centraal, where private development is not in order at the moment. Here, however, it is emphasised that the station and the station square, which are a traveller's first impression of Rotterdam, should be beautiful, both in terms of architecture and detailing. In several aspects the idea of the station as a city gate, and the station square as the 'frontpiece' of the city, is cherished in Rotterdam, apparently more so than in the Zuidas. Not surprisingly, then, the chaotic and shabby situation of the current station square is a strong motivation behind the new design:



Figure 9.2
Not the traditional image of Amsterdam: international architecture by Rafael Viñoly (left) and Toyo Ito (right) in Mahler

present this is an old-fashioned station area: dull, dirty, with many offices, awash with trams, buses and taxis. If this is the first impression you give as a city, one wonders whether people will be able to get over it.

We want to make sure that you do not get off [the train] in an office area, with all the misery mentioned above, but in the middle of the city. You should have a genuine feeling of having arrived in the city centre (from interview report).

And:

Each day, tens of thousands of pedestrians enter the city through the station. It is the entrance to the city; it is important that it is beautiful. Sometimes [the solution] is simple, but what matters is that you should aim high when you invest. Also with respect to control; you should take care to ensure that it remains beautiful (from interview report).

Even so, the problem remains that architectural quality, as far as it implies beauty, lies in the eye of the beholder, and that high-quality architecture from a professional point of view does not necessarily appeal to a general audience. Euralille was designed by several renowned, mostly French, architects: Jean Nouvel (who designed the Euralille Centre), Christian de Portzamparc (the Crédit Lyonnais tower), Claude Vasconi (the Lille Europe tower), Jean-Marie Duthilleul (the Lille Europe station) and Rem Koolhaas himself (the Grand Palais). The receptive mind can easily find beauty in Euralille: the intriguing Crédit Lyonnais tower, the colourful façade of the apartments in the Euralille Centre, the transparency of the railway station. This is all highly subjective, however. Koolhaas was heavily criticised by French critics on account

of the perceived ugliness of Euralille, especially when considered in contrast to the historic inner city. Rykwert (2000:254) is also quite negative, referring to Euralille as ‘a miniature instant Houston-by-design’, overwhelming the inner city. As Koolhaas argues, in Europe, modernisation projects such as Euralille have always been considered artificial to the historic city, hence (as by definition) unauthentic and ugly. Yet he dismisses a historicising approach. ‘In these terms Euralille is undoubtedly ugly; it would have been pathetic (may I even say dishonest?) for it not to have been’ (Koolhaas, in: Koolhaas *et al.*, 1996:190). In fact, Koolhaas famously states that the perceived ugliness of Euralille is not relevant as long as it functions well:

Just as a bypass operation, Euralille is a drastic intervention to nourish an old city with the complex flux of (anti)culture and make it accessible to a theoretical population of 70 million inhabitants, to provide it with the living organs with which to attract that potential community that will never be “together”. Such an operation cannot be judged on the beauty of its scar, but rather on the patient’s sense of enhanced vitality, on his performance rather than his appearance (Koolhaas, in: Koolhaas *et al.*, 1996:190).

Landmark buildings

If the issues of architectural quality, the aesthetics of the area and its proposed authenticity are taken further, the question may arise of whether a large and ambitious urban development project needs a landmark building as a symbol and, perhaps, a promotional means. La Défense, for instance, has the Grande Arche (Figure 9.3, right), the Potsdamer Platz the Sony Center, the Docklands maybe not a clear symbol, but at least the tall One Canada Square tower. In other cases, such as Lyon Saint Exupéry, the new Liège-Guillemins or the planned new Dortmund Hauptbahnhof, the station itself is a clear landmark. In Euralille, Koolhaas wanted a row of towers of different and expressive designs. He deliberately demanded that each tower would cross the 50 m width of the railway tracks to encourage the architects to design ‘strange’ shapes (Doutriaux, in: Dovey, 1998:91). Although only two of these towers have been built so far, the Tour Crédit Lyonnais in particular has become something of a symbol of the project.

Opinions differ on whether or not the Zuidas needs a landmark like the Tour Crédit Lyonnais.⁸⁹ The most remarkable structure in the area would be the ‘dock’, the tunnel accommodating the motorway, the railway and metro lines and the station beneath medium to high-rise office and apartment buildings. Similar constructions have been built before in other large-scale office areas, but on a smaller scale or with the main buildings located next to

⁸⁹ It is tempting, although not entirely realistic, to visualise Pi de Buijn’s recent design for the 262 m Belle van Zuylen tower in the Zuidas, for instance.



Figure 9.3
Deltse Poort
(Abe Bon-
nema), the
building closest
to a landmark
for the station
area in Rotter-
dam, and the
Grande Arche
of La Défense
(Johan Otto von
Spreckelsen)

rather than on top of the tunnels, as in Donau City, Vienna, and in La Défense (COFER, 1987:4-5; Stadt Wien, 2005). As a landmark the tunnel itself will probably be useless, however, as it will be largely invisible. Even if it were possible to show the construction, for instance in a kind of vault (cf. Trip, 2004), an underground landmark would seem too much of a contradiction in terms.

Alsop's group of champagne glasses in front of Rotterdam Centraal was intended as a statement rather than a concrete design proposal, but it would have made quite a landmark. It might have been replaced by another building in the definitive design, but as long as the intention would have remained the same, this would most likely have a strong expressive power too. After the fiasco of Alsop's almost voluptuous design, however, in the current plan the station is intended to be a 'modest icon' of the city. Several high-rise buildings may be built in the area in later stages of the project. However, it is unlikely that they will be tall enough to rival the Deltse Poort as the area's tallest and most dominant building (Figure 9.3, left). Otherwise, their design is still unknown.

9.5 Urban design

Issues such as street pattern, scale and grain are defined in the general urban design. This is one of the elements of the project which to a large extent defines the eventual character of the area. It is also one of the aspects in which conceptual ideas concerning the design are most visible. In the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal this is overseen by the municipal planning departments, and together with supervisor Pi de Bruijn in the Zuidas. Once the general urban design has been completed, more detailed subproject outlines are drawn

up as guidelines for the various architects involved. Rem Koolhaas worked on the urban design of Euralille, in consultation with the SAEM and other main actors involved.

Euralille is conceived primarily as a part of the international 'space of flows', rather than an extension of Lille. The project as it exists today is to a large extent the result of Koolhaas' idea of the city, which is not primarily based on context or history, but on a generic, functional modernism. Two themes in particular keep returning in Koolhaas' writings: the density and multitude of different uses of the skyscraper and the highly commercialised space of the shopping centre and the amusement park. *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* (1978) deals essentially with these issues; they return time and time again in texts such as *Junkspace* (Koolhaas, 2001), *Bigness* and *The Generic City* (Koolhaas and Mau, 1995:495-516; 1248-1264). Both themes are evidently present in Euralille, perhaps even more explicitly than in any of Koolhaas' previous designs: the row of office towers planned above the railway tracks, the shopping centre, the multifunctional Grand Palais. Most of these concern large, mostly inward-oriented complexes – in view of the above, they may, in a way, be considered horizontal skyscrapers. They are mutually connected, but still in practice they seem more or less autonomous entities planted together. Indeed, this is how they appear even in the early sketches of Euralille.

One of the main challenges in the early stages of the design process of Euralille was the untangling of the 'Gordian knot' of infrastructure that includes the high-speed railway, the ring road and local roads, the underground car park and the adjacent railway station. The way Koolhaas handled this problem made it one of the distinct and innovative elements of the Euralille design. The result was the Espace Piranézien or Piranesian Space, an open space crisscrossed by bridges, elevators and escalators connecting the station, the metro, the car park and the ring road (Koolhaas and Mau, 1995:1162; 1200-1203).⁹⁰

In sharp contrast to the structure of Euralille, the central area of the Zuid-as is largely planned as a grid of relatively small blocks, separated by relatively narrow streets, that could be developed separately, enabling diversity and flexibility. Mahler, for instance, consists of six blocks separated by streets approximately 10 m wide (Figure 9.4). This grid will extend southwards to include Gershwin, northwards to Composer (the area on top of the infrastructure tunnel) and westwards to Händel. Whereas the different sub-projects are separated by somewhat wider streets to accommodate traffic, the internal streets are relatively narrow and often mainly focused on pedestrian traffic. This structure is inspired by the Manhattan grid, and also by inner-

⁹⁰ Named after Piranesi's *Carceri* etchings.

city Amsterdam. Its structure is roughly based on Manhattan, and its scale on central Amsterdam. The grid was not very explicit in the 1998 *Masterplan*, but it became so shortly afterwards, based on the ideas of supervisor Pi de Bruijn. It is still intact, despite the changed objective of the project from an office location to a more diverse mixed-use area. However, some consider it too rigid or too much a relic of the Zuidas' past as an office location:

We are dealing with a development that is to take some 35 years, in which we develop sub-areas, one by one. This is when you need a flexible development strategy. The Vision 2004, the further development of the *Masterplan*, is not a blueprint. You can't say what the city will look like in 2025. [But] the design is not in line with this, it is too rigid. This is even more true for the zoning scheme. [...] This merely imposes restrictions, which leads us nowhere. Neither can it be maintained in practice; what if Philips wants to locate a new head office here and it doesn't fit in with the zoning scheme? (from interview report).

With an estimated floor space index of three to nine in the central area of the Zuidas, density is relatively high (DRO, 2004:27).⁹¹ The figure for the Zuidas as a whole is 1.3, while the surrounding neighbourhoods have an FSI of about 0.9 to 1.4. This implies the Zuidas will be built very densely when considered in a Dutch perspective. Nevertheless, it is a rather moderate density compared to other international business locations: La Défense as a whole has an FSI of 1.7 and Canary Wharf of almost 3.9 (DRO, 1999:14; De Wilde and Van den Dobbelen, 2004:19). The higher overall density of these areas is partly due to the high-rise buildings they include;⁹² in La Défense, but less so in Canary Wharf, this is compensated for by the open public spaces. Most buildings in the central area of the Zuidas are limited to approximately 30 m, with sections of 60 m and towers of about 100 m arranged in a staggered pattern to provide light and attractive views to their users. This is defined in the subproject plan that serves as a guideline for the actual design of the building.

In the project area of Rotterdam Centraal, most of the urban structure already exists, making it de facto fixed. The focus here is on intensification. The current density will be increased substantially, mainly by adding high-rise apartment buildings south of the station square (Weena Point) and even beyond the Kruisplein (Calypso), all in further stages of the project, however (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2005; see Figure 8.13).

⁹¹ FSI: the ratio between the total floor surface and the ground surface in an area (DRO, 1999).

⁹² In Paris 8 of the 10 tallest buildings are located in La Défense (the other two being the Eiffel Tower and the Tour Montparnasse), in London 8 out of 10 are located in Canary Wharf, although some new towers are being constructed also in the City (www.skyscraperpicture.com, 12 April 2006).

Figure 9.4 A view across the central 'diagonal' of Mahler, showing the remarkable narrowness of the street: the characteristic stairs of the Viñoly building seen from the inner courtyard of the SOM building opposite (compare with Figure 9.10)



Scale

Several, mostly public, actors mention the issue of scale. Designers in both cities want varied, small-scale buildings. To maintain sufficient density, they envisage tall but narrow buildings. As one interviewee from Rotterdam says:

In German and Belgian cities you see narrow and tall buildings, with a height of, for instance, twenty stories, but only ten metres wide. We could have the same here. Then you would have narrow building lots with buildings as tall as 70 or 80 metres. This would also be a reaction to the present division in large blocks. This signals death for those streets, simply because nothing ever happens there. That is the nice thing about the Groothandelsgebouw: that it is a large building, but there is a lot going on. When you issue building lots, you would like to oblige people to do something for the city in return. You see the same in New York and Chicago. Block size is not a problem there, because there is a lot going on. (from interview report).

A similar sentiment also lives in Amsterdam:

It concerns a fine grain in public space, the height of blocks, small blocks. The tendency is to have large blocks developed by one single developer, but that's not what we want. It is quite a struggle. But it did work in Mahler, and now nine different architects are building there. The initial intention was to have one architect design the whole block. A smaller scale might be possible, but we haven't yet succeeded in that. It would be good if individuals could also develop a building, not just 'big is beautiful'. But that doesn't have to be possible everywhere. It might be possible on the edges of the area, perhaps a villa-like development. You can often see something like it in Belgian cities: a fine grain, very sophisticated (from interview report).

This could even enable private individuals to build their own house within the project. However, they recognise that this is hardly realistic, as investors and developers, particularly the large development companies involved in

projects such as the ones considered here, prefer large blocks and buildings (cf. Bell, 2005:100). The result should be large buildings designed to look small and varied, giving a suggestion of small scale; in many aspects it is mainly the décor that counts, after all, rather than the building behind it. If possible, each block in the Zuidas should contain more than one building, which is partly the case in Mahler. Yet current development in the Zuidas so far could hardly be called small-scale; instead, it is dominated by large office buildings and large-scale infrastructure.

In view of this preference for small-scale development, even in the framework of a large project, projects embedded in an existing urban area may have an advantage over all-new development. Rotterdam Centraal is an exception to this, however, as the existing environment of the station is already quite large-scale. It consists of 1980s and 1990s office buildings and the huge Groothandelsgebouw, facing onto wide roads and squares (Figure 9.5). An attempt to introduce a small scale here runs the risk of looking pathetically out of place. Moreover, large-scale and expansive spaces are considered a distinctive, positive feature of the city. As one interviewee says:

Rotterdam is a city of large spaces, particularly in the inner city. But many people long for the old inner cities, for cosiness, for nostalgia instead of modernity, especially in these fearful times. So, should you rebuild an old city? Other people find Rotterdam exciting. The tension of the great, high-rise buildings, the space that is different from that in other cities; you must preserve that. You should use the space as a quality. Rotterdam used to be occupied mostly with construction, but now that there is an existing inner city, the main challenge lies in the public spaces. In some places public space is good, but the inner city is not yet coherent. Twelve years ago the station area was still partly an open space. If we succeed in our plans, we will have made a piece of city there by 2009 or 2010 (from interview report).

Behind the masterplan

Altogether, an essential difference between Euralille on the one hand and the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal on the other seems to be the extent to which the urban design is based on the concept of the 'traditional' city street. This traditional city may be imagined as streets lined with houses, shops, etc. on both sides, connected by similar side streets to smaller or larger blocks. As mentioned above, Euralille consists of large, relatively isolated entities, separated by wide streets and squares. The centre of the Zuidas, in contrast, is made up of more or less square building blocks and relatively narrow streets. In Rotterdam the streets are wider and the traditional city structure is less obvious, but the current plan in many respects intends to strengthen it. The contrast with Euralille could hardly be more evident. Similar differences may be observed among comparable projects. La Défense, which is to a large extent based on a 1964 plan (COFER, 1987), tends towards the model of Euralille,



Figure 9.5
The Groothandelsgebouw (left) and the office buildings facing the Weena (right)

as does Donau City, which is now based on a 2003 masterplan by Dominique Perrault for its further development, but in its present state largely dates from the 1980s and 1990s (Stadt Wien, 2005:2).⁹³ In contrast, Canary Wharf, based on the masterplan of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, has a more traditional structure (Edwards, 1992:44; Bell, 2005:102).⁹⁴ This is also true for the Potsdamer Platz, for which Renzo Piano drew up the masterplan; in this respect, it is considered the main example for the Zuidas. To be sure, however, all this concerns the structure of these areas, in particular their street patterns, and not their building styles or architecture.

One issue to be considered is whether a street-based design would have been less plausible in Euralille than it is in for example the Zuidas, in view of the criss-cross rather than parallel pattern of the main infrastructure. The main reason for this seems to be the railway to Lille Flandres station, which crosses the area almost at a diagonal, dividing the project itself in two. As the construction of a tunnel, as was considered for the Zuidas, would have exceeded the project's relatively limited budget, the result is a rather fragmented urban space even apart from the urban design approach.

The urban structure, and the masterplan, if there is any, is very basic to the further development of the area. As mentioned before, in many cases it is also a vehicle for further discussion of the plan and for the selection of the actors that will be involved in the project's further development.⁹⁵

Interesting, therefore, is the way in which the project plans are actually conceived, particularly with regard to the subproject plans. In the case of the Zuidas, developers commit themselves to the overall urban design and the development plan of the subproject involved, which is based on the overall urban design and includes a detailed functional programme. DRO, developers and the supervisor draw up these subproject plans together, but it appears that public parties are dominant in this, if only because the subproject plans have remained, thus far, very close to the *Vision* conceived by DRO and the super-

⁹³ See www.perraultarchitecte.com (April 2006).

⁹⁴ Actually, Canary Wharf is the only part of the Docklands based on a masterplan, apart from the Royal Docks (based on a plan by Richard Rogers). Masterplanning was associated with municipal, politically involved planning (Edwards, 1992:44-46).

⁹⁵ See Section 4.2.

visor. Obviously, individual actors do question certain aspects of this plan, even when they have committed themselves to it. Private parties, but not all of them, respond that everything – the grid, the functional mix, the building heights, etc. – had already been decided beforehand. On the one hand, public parties responsible for the plan concluded that developers apparently had no desire to adjust the plan, since they did not ask for it. On the other hand, some elements that designers consider desirable from a quality of place perspective are not included in the plan when perceived as unrealistic from a commercial point of view, such as the elements of small-scale development mentioned above.

In comparison, communication about Rotterdam Centraal is less transparent. At the time that Alsop's *Masterplan* prevailed, external communication was clear and comparable to the way the *Zuidas Vision* is communicated. With the current plans, external communication has become rather prudent. This may be due in part to the strategy of the municipality and the national government to make clear arrangements before making things public, in contrast to the situation surrounding the *Masterplan*, when the national government did not agree with the plans which were already widely made public. Also, the failure of the *Masterplan* in general is likely to be of influence on the current communication policy. This also affects communication between the architect and the municipal planning and development departments. Team CS is commissioned to design the station and its direct environment, and not as a masterplanner. It is hardly involved in the further development of the area at all, and is not always informed about the state of affairs concerning the further planning of the area, such as the development of the streets adjacent to the station.

9.6 Integration into the city

One specific element of the urban design related to quality of place is the integration of the project into the city. This is considered an important aspect, and the objective of integration is mentioned explicitly in all three projects considered here, albeit in different ways. In the *Zuidas*, it is stated that the project should be part of the city, that it should 'be' Amsterdam. Moreover, it should heal the urban tissue by connecting the area north and south of the ring road and the railway. In Rotterdam, a major aim of the project is to improve the connection between the station area and the inner city, to the advantage of both. In Euralille, lastly, one objective was the connection and integration of the inner city with the neighbourhoods on the other side of the ring road, while the integration of the Euralille project itself within the existing city was one of the main challenges Koolhaas faced when he conceived the urban design.



Figure 9.6 The Le Corbusier viaduct crossing the station building, seen from above the ring road (left) and from the inner city towards Lille Europe station (right)

As was indicated briefly in the preceding section, the specific development of Euralille also influenced the way the project is integrated into the city of Lille. A major difficulty in the design of Euralille was how to integrate this project of radical modernisation into the existing city (Koolhaas, in: Koolhaas *et al.*, 1996:65; Koolhaas and Mau, 1995:1160; Dovey, 1998:89-90). Previously, the Euralille site was occupied by a little-used park and even then the site was already considered an urban void; the ring road was also there at that time. To overcome this double barrier, the Le Corbusier viaduct was constructed to connect the inner city and the Euralille Centre with the station and the ring road and the La Madeleine and Saint Maurice districts beyond (Figure 9.6). To connect the two stations, Lille's advanced automated metro (VAL) was extended to the Lille Europe station, and beyond that to Roubaix and Tourcoing.

Another characteristic element that is aimed especially at the visual integration of the city and the TGV is Euralille's TGV window, a glass wall along the full length of the station, which offers a wide view inside to the TGV and outside towards the old city and particularly the Euralille Centre (Figure 9.7). The TGV window is designed to express the relation between Lille and the TGV, which seems largely a symbolic function. However, the enormous window also allows daylight into the station, which, together with the optically light construction of the station roof, makes the station's interior remarkably light.

Despite these measures, however, there is still a strong feeling that Euralille is a barrier and an alien element in the city, and in all objectivity it cannot be denied that it is both. Its scale and architectural 'language' is completely different from that of the inner city (with the exception perhaps of the modern block opposite the Euralille Centre) and it is surrounded by wide and busy streets. The station itself, stretched along the ring road and high above ground level, increases the barrier effect, at least visually. Furthermore, the railway and the yard of Lille Flandres station separates the Grand Palais from the rest of the project. Indeed, the perceived lack of integration of Lille and Euralille is one of the most heavily criticised aspects of the project.

In the Zuidas, the main barrier between Buitenveldert to the south, and the Rivierenbuurt and Oud Zuid neighbourhoods to the north, is the wide bundle of the six-lane A10 ring road, the railway and the metro tracks (Figure 9.8). All this infrastructure is currently elevated on a dyke (at the +1 level). In future, the ring road will be expanded to ten lanes in 2015, the railway from three



Figure 9.7
The TGV win-
dow seen from
outside and
the station's
interior

tracks (at present) to at least four in 2015 and six in 2030 (Salet and Majoor, 2005:12; 49). This will further increase the barrier effect; moreover, the possibility for expansion is restricted by the existing buildings on both sides of the infrastructure zone. One of the functions of the proposed tunnel is therefore to 'heal the urban tissue'. It would bring all infrastructure mentioned underground; the standard version would place the ring road and railway tracks on the -1 level, while an alternative plan proposes a two-level stacked tunnel, with the railway and metro tracks stacked beneath the station building. This would be more space-efficient, which would make it possible to add an underground car park or set aside space for further infrastructure expansion.⁹⁶ It would also level the barrier that now divides the Zuidas. However, to do this, it is not necessary to build on top of the tunnel; merely covering the infrastructure would be sufficient (and supposedly cheaper), provided that the area on top is made into an agreeable public space rather than a void.

Another element of the design aimed at the integration of the project into the surrounding area is the continuation of the existing street pattern in the project area. This means that the area's main north-south connections, the Beethovenstraat, the Buitenveldertselaan and the Amstelveenseweg, will be maintained in the newly developed area, and will eventually also cross the infrastructure tunnel. Only the Minervalaan will end (as it does currently) in three squares around the station, which will constitute the Zuidas' most important public spaces. This is also the starting point of the central axis to the wealthy southern part of old Amsterdam, which already houses many of the producer services that make up the Zuidas' main target group.

Policy documents mention additional means to integrate the Zuidas into the surrounding area, such as a continuation in scale and pavement type (DRO, 2001b:8). This partly involves the visual rather than the physical integration of the Zuidas. These issues were hardly mentioned in the interviews,

⁹⁶ This is the most common variant. Other versions of a stacked 'dock' are imaginable, for instance stacking the ring road on one side, or on both sides of the infrastructure zone. This would be even more space-efficient.

Figure 9.8
 A picture of
 the current
 Zuid/WTC sta-
 tion, showing
 the width of the
 infrastructure
 bundle dividing
 the Zuidas. To
 the left is the
 WTC, to the
 right, the ABN
 Amro building.
 A temporary
 HST platform
 is being con-
 structed



however. Furthermore, they are less relevant to the current development of the central area of the Zuidas, around the WTC, Mahler and Gershwin, than to the development of the fringes of the area.

In Rotterdam, the main issue with regard to the integration of the project within the city is the wide and busy Weena boulevard, which runs between the station and the inner city. Although the through traffic lanes pass through a tunnel for about 100 m in front of the station, there still remains a confusing crossroads with heavy car, taxi, bus and tram traffic. Solving this barrier problem has therefore been an explicit objective in all stages of the Rotterdam Centraal project. Also planned a balcony, or rather, a bridge that would run from the top of the station and the station square all the way to the other side of the Weena. It would have been a physical, but surely also a symbolic connection of the station to the inner city. The Weena itself would become more like a genuine boulevard, and more friendly to pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

The latter is still included in the current plan. The existing Weenatunnel in front of the station will be extended to create a larger zone without through traffic, but the intended boulevard-like atmosphere requires other measures such as trees and a wider pavement. Traffic will be guided around the station square, which will be pedestrianised; previously pedestrians had to walk around the square – one interviewee refers to it as a ‘suicide square’ – to avoid being hit by a bus or tram. The aim is to achieve a more transparent planning of traffic flows. Trams will stop on the eastern side of the square. By largely removing car traffic in the area and reducing the number of buses, traffic should become safer. The Kruisplein, opposite the station square, will be upgraded. This park-like route, lined with sculptures and leading from the Kruisplein to the museum area, should extend the ‘cultural axis’ to the station.

Another explicit aim of the current plan is to give the station an ‘address at the Weena’. In the existing situation the station is relatively small com-

pared to the surrounding buildings and is set back behind the bus and tram stations in the station square. At first, the idea was to expand the station right to the Weena, and move the station square to the Kruisplein on the opposite side of the Weena (PTRC, 2003). This posed a number of problems. First, travellers leaving the station would immediately find themselves on a busy road, rather than a quiet square where they are able to pause and get their bearings. Second, it would have meant a station hall of almost 160 m in length, which is considered too large. Furthermore, such a large hall would leave insufficient means to construct a single roof over the platforms, which was a key wish of Team CS who designed the station. Finally, it would be difficult to connect and upgrade the Delftseplein and Conradstraat either side of the station, which would then in effect be situated almost behind the station hall. Therefore, the new hall will now occupy about half of the current station square; it will still be considerably larger than the existing hall, however, or roughly the size of Schiphol Plaza; of sufficient size to realise the planned real estate programme. The square in front may accentuate the building even more, as it will remain more visible from the road than the existing station.

One final issue is the development of the Provenierswijk district, north of the station. This area is currently very much the 'backside' of the station, a somewhat indistinct residential area. Development of this area will not include real estate development similar to that on the inner city side. Directly north of the station a 50 m tall Dutch Railways office tower is planned. This plan has been badly received in the Provenierswijk, as it is thought the building will shade the neighbourhood and decrease social safety after office hours (Kuiper, 2005). Nonetheless, apart from this relatively small development the aim is to improve the area, but as if it were a small-town neighbourhood. This entails bringing the Spoorsingel, an attractive street which is the area's main asset, closer to the station; this should replace the current rather dull square. The proposed development of both sides of the station is therefore very different: a vibrant, dynamic city to the south, and a quiet, quasi small-town neighbourhood to the north.

9.7 Real estate programme

Functional diversity is considered one of the most important issues with regard to the attractiveness of urban areas, particularly concerning liveliness and social safety, for instance. This includes the type of functions that are located or planned in a certain area, in quantitative terms, but also with regard to the location of functions relative to each other.

The functional mix is defined in the projects' real estate programmes, which included the amount of real estate planned for each of the three main

Table 9.2 Real estate programme and functional mix of the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal (planning in 2003) compared to Euralille (current planning)

	Zuidas		Rotterdam Centraal		Euralille*	
	m ²	%	m ²	%	m ²	%
Business	985,000	42	60,000	27	321,408	40
Residential	1,056,000	45	130,000	59	166,169	21
Amenities	321,000	14	30,000	14	314,326	39
Total	2,362,000	101	220,000	100	801,093	100

* Planning of Euralille 1 and 2, excluding the Grand Palais, including Les Portes du Romarin.

Source: VROM (2003b:61); www.saem-euralille.fr (24 March 2006)

Table 9.3 Real estate programme and functional mix of the Zuidas, Rotterdam Centraal and Euralille relative to some comparable projects (percentages may not total 100 due to rounding)

Project	City	Total (m ²)	Functional mixture (%)		
			business	residential	amenities
Zuidas ^a	Amsterdam	2,252,000 ¹⁾	44	44	12
Rotterdam Centraal ^b	Rotterdam	220,000 ¹⁾	27	59	14
Euralille ^c	Lille	801,903 ²⁾	40	21	39
Bijlmer (South East) ^d	Amsterdam	801,000	50	12	38
Canary Wharf ^d	London	1,350,000	93	3	4
Broadgate (Liverpool Street Station) ^d	London	370,000	92	0	8
King's Cross Railway Lands ^e	London	824,000	73	18	9
La Défense ^d	Paris	2,710,000	92	0 ³⁾	8
Rive Gauche (Gare d'Austerlitz) ^d	Paris	1,650,000 ¹⁾	45	30	24
Montparnasse ^e	Paris	352,500	64	21	15
Potsdamer Platz ^f	Berlin	340,000 ⁴⁾	57	20	23
Donau City ^g	Vienna	500,000 ¹⁾	max. 70	20	10
Ørestad ^h	Copenhagen	3,600,000 ⁵⁾	60	20	20

1) Final situation according to current plans.

2) Final situation according to current planning of Euralille 1 and 2, excluding the Grand Palais, including Les Portes du Romarin.

3) The demarcation of the area seems a crucial factor here. La Défense does contain apartments, but they are located at the fringes of the area.

4) Based on the *Optimized Masterplan* (1994) from Renzo Piano and Christoph Kohlbecker.

5) Maximum in final situation according to Masterplan.

Sources: a) DRO (2004:20); b) VROM (2003b:61); c) www.saem-euralille.fr (24 March 2006); d) De Wilde and Van den Dobbelen (2004:19); e) De Wilde (2002:26); f) Lampugnani and Schneider (1997:12; 140); g) www.viennadc.at (6 March 2006); www.wien.gv.at/stadtentwicklung/donaucity (3 March 2006); h) Ørestadsselskabet (1995:38); www.orestad.dk (19 May 2006). I thank Andres Faludi of OTB for providing some valuable information on Donau City.

Table 9.4 Real estate programme and functional mix of Euralille in different planning stages (excluding the Lille Grand Palais, unless stated otherwise; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding)

	Total (m ²)	Functional mixture (%)		
		business	residential	amenities
Planning in 1997	273,190	41	9	50
Planning in 1997, incl. Grand Palais*	348,210	32	7	61
Current planning, Euralille 1	611,903	38	20	43
Current planning, Euralille 2	190,000	47	25	28
Current planning, total	801,903	40	21	39
Current planning, total, incl. Grand Palais*	876,923	37	19	44

* Estimates.

Source: 1997: Bertolini and Spit (1998:79, 83); current planning: www.saem-euralille.fr (24 March 2006)

functions that are generally distinguished: business, residential and amenities, the latter covering shops, leisure facilities, catering outlets, educational institutions and the like. Table 9.2 shows the building volume and functional programme of the three projects considered here. The Zuidas is the most balanced in terms of its offices to residential ratio. Moreover, it is by far the largest of the three projects, the difference with Rotterdam Centraal being as much as a factor of ten. Despite these seemingly precise figures, it is difficult to say exactly how large each project is and what its functional mix is. This is because both are subject to continuous changes, as plans are adjusted to accommodate changes in insights, market conditions, etc., and because both may be calculated in different ways (including or excluding certain fringe areas, for instance). More important, however, is that they provide a good indication and a basis for comparison.

To put these figures in a broader context, Table 9.3 shows the three projects in comparison to a number of other projects in several European cities. The functional programmes of the three projects studied here differ significantly from those of most of the other projects, which tend to be strongly focused on office development. Amsterdam South East and Paris Rive Gauche are the main exceptions to this.

Euralille was, initially, strongly focused on a diversity of amenities (Table 9.4). This is hardly a surprise, in view of the large multifunctional conference and exposition centre in the Grand Palais and the large shopping centre, the school and the hotel included in the Euralille Centre. Moreover, the amount of office space has long remained behind schedule. In the long term, however, as the additional parts of Euralille and the second stage of the project are being realised, the ratio between offices and amenities will be more equal. Meanwhile, the size of the total programme has increased since 1997 as more areas have been added to the project.

In the Zuidas, the shares of business and residential functions are about equal in 2003, whereas in 1998 the ratio was 65 to 21 percent (DRO, 1998), a change which reflects the shift in objective from an office area to a metropolitan urban centre. As one interviewee says:

Table 9.5 Real estate programme and functional mix of the Zuidas in different planning stages, according to planning documents (percentages may not total 100 due to rounding)

Year	Source	Status	Total (m ²)	Functional mixture (%)		
				business	residential	amenities
2000	Concept Vision	planned	1,956,000	63	28	9
2001	Vision	planned	2,252,000	44	44	12
2004	Vision	potential	2,748,420	40	43	18

Source: DRO (2001a:21; 2004:20)

Until recently, a CBD with offices was developed and dwellings were located elsewhere, like in the Docklands or La Défense. That is hard, cold urbanism from a business perspective; it does not lead to a sophisticated urban environment as intended in the Zuidas (from interview report).

Furthermore, the importance of diversity in time is emphasised:

[Amsterdam] Southeast, for instance, is closed after office hours. Here, in about ten years' time there will be something going on 24 hours a day. You'll be able to go out here, dancing, like you see at the Potsdamer Platz. That mix of functions is what goes to create the true urban quality of the area. Other amenities are now already open 24 hours a day, such as the hospital, the university, ABN [large bank building], the station and even the bicycle sheds. There'll be fancy places here in no time. It is also necessary for people arriving from Schiphol; Schiphol never closes (from interview report).

Table 9.5 shows the development of the functional programme in the subsequent Vision documents. The share of offices has decreased over the years, while the shares of the residential function and amenities have increased.

Table 9.6 shows the effect of the planned infrastructural tunnel or 'dock' on the functional programme. First, the option without the tunnel is much smaller in building volume. Compared to the (preferred) tunnel option, it lacks a considerable part of the project's most expensive building area, which would otherwise be the area on top of the motorway and railway. Second, within the reduced programme the share of the residential function would be relatively lower, since environmental regulations concerning traffic noise and pollution (for instance small particles) would make it impossible to build apartments in the zones adjacent to the infrastructure. For the same reasons, this area would be less valuable for other functions too. The Zuidas would still be a large and mostly mixed-use project, however, with a relatively larger residential function than comparable areas such as La Défense or the Potsdamer Platz, and rather similar to the Rive Gauche in Paris (Table 9.3). But the residential function would be driven to the outer zones of the project area, and the central area would resemble exactly the archetypical business locations planners explicitly want to avoid.

With a development period of over twenty years, it is realistic to expect that

Table 9.6 Real estate programme and functional mix of the Zuidas with and without the planned infrastructure tunnel (planning in 2003; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding)

	Total (m ²)	Functional mixture (%)		
		business	residential	amenities
Tunnel option ('dock')	2,362,000	42	45	14
Without tunnel	927,000	46	36	18

Source: VROM (2003b:61)

Table 9.7 Real estate programme and functional mix of Rotterdam Centraal in the current plan (planning in 2003), compared to Alsop's Masterplan (2001)

Year	Source	Status	Total (m ²)	Functional mixture (%)		
				business	residential	amenities
2001	Masterplan	abandoned	641,000	50	30	20
2003	current planning	planned	220,000	27	59	14

Source: Alsop (2001:97); VROM (2003b:61)

the currently planned real estate programme in the Zuidas will evolve over time and will adapt according to market conditions, changes in approach and advancing knowledge. Recently, for instance, it has been stated in the press that, due to the difficult market for office locations, the UN Studios building (24,000 m²) might be turned into apartments rather than offices (PropertyNL, 2006). More substantial adjustments are likely to be a matter of time.

Table 9.7 shows the planned functional programme in Rotterdam Centraal. This will largely be realised in a second stage of the project, the first stage covering mainly the station itself, the station square and the related infrastructure. The station area in Rotterdam is already an important, rather large-scale office location, while in contrast the population of central Rotterdam is far below what might be expected. Hence the focus here is on increasing the residential function (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2003:4; 2005). The potential of the area is estimated at 1,000 apartments, or 1,500 inhabitants. A limited amount of amenities is planned, merely to provide facilities for the station area itself and to enliven the streets surrounding the station. With regard to offices, the Rotterdam Centraal project website (Spring 2006) mentions a potential of 100,000 m² in 2010, more than the 2003 data listed in Table 9.7. This change may be due partly to a more liberal demarcation of the project area, as the current urban plan includes some blocks not included in the project area as defined in 2003 (see Figure 9.13).

A comparison with the programme planned by Alsop immediately shows the large difference in development around the station, even aside from the

fact that the area taken into account is larger in the *Masterplan* than in the current plans. The total programme has been reduced by approximately 65 percent. Here again, the current focus on the residential function appears. In relative terms, this has been reduced the least, which implies that in effect its share in the total programme has doubled.

9.8 Location of functions

Apart from the type of functions that exist in a certain area, their exact location very much influences the development of the area and is related to, amongst other things, the quality of public space. Probably most important is whether public and semi-public functions, such as shops, restaurants and bars, are located in the streets or inside larger buildings. The latter is largely the case in Euralille, where most shops, including the majority of the large ones, and most of the catering facilities, are located within the shopping arcade in the Euralille Centre. The building has an almost complete inward orientation. It is true that certain semi-public functions are located on the outside of the Centre in the western façade facing the Le Corbusier viaduct between the inner city and Lille Europe station, as well as opposite the station in the Place François Mitterand. These include several shops, bars and the Lille Europe hotel, with a reception desk almost on the pavement. The eventual result is, altogether, less than might be hoped for. Along the viaduct, the pavement, and hence the pedestrian traffic to and from the station, is split between the higher level of the viaduct and the lower level of the pavement leading to the Place François Mitterand (Figure 9.9). Furthermore, some of the bars and restaurants in the square have closed down. As a result, street life is largely limited to the inside of the shopping centre, leaving the streets outside surprisingly empty. Indeed, interviewees in Amsterdam and Rotterdam considered this a major flaw of Euralille:

The problem with large shopping malls is that, like parasites, they are inwardly oriented, and nestle themselves in an environment with only negative backsides on the outside. They suck people in, away from the street. This is what went seriously wrong in Lille (from interview report).

In both projects, public and semi-public amenities are deliberately planned in the streets, rather than inside a shopping centre. In this respect, the Euralille Centre is explicitly considered an example to be avoided.

In Rotterdam Centraal, the number of public and semi-public functions will be limited, but they will be explicitly located in the Delftseplein and the Conradstraat, next to the station, in order to bring sufficient liveliness to these now rather empty and out-of-the-way streets. Moreover, the plans include the possibility to accommodate functions in the plinths of existing buildings such



Figure 9.9 The western façade of the Euralille Centre (left); the pavement between the Centre and the Le Corbusier viaduct, facing towards the station (right)

as the Delftse Poort, which is currently a largely closed façade. The Groothandelsgebouw opposite the station square serves as an example in this respect: it accommodates a range of small shops, the Grand Café Engels and, very appropriately in this respect, the Rotterdam Centraal project information centre. The intention is to keep the station square itself free from constructions such as kiosks and food stands and to retain it as a large open space. Planners are also keen to keep the station hall free from commercial functions as much as possible (concentrating them in the tunnel beneath the platforms), but it is acknowledged that this may conflict with the priorities of Dutch Railways, which will exploit the amenities within the station (this issue is discussed further in the next section).

In the Zuidas, public and semi-public functions are planned to be accommodated in the plinths of buildings. In Mahler, for instance, the two lower floors are reserved for this. A glass façade will provide a sense of space in the relatively narrow streets, an effect of which not all interviewees are equally convinced (Figure 9.10). Internally-oriented shopping centres and arcades will be avoided unless they would add high-quality areas to the general public space. The possibility of a shopping centre like that of Euralille is almost universally rejected. As will appear in the next section, only Dutch Railways expresses a somewhat different view in this regard.

With respect to the location of public and semi-public functions within the project area, not all final decisions have been made yet. It is clear, however, that the more peripheral parts of the Zuidas will mainly consist of offices and apartments, and that public functions will for the most part be located in or near the central area. Some shops and catering outlets will be concentrated in the Mahler area and the squares around the station. Shops will also be located in the Beethovenstraat (which runs north-south through the centre of the Zuidas area; see Figure 8.2), but whether a continuous shopping area will be planned between these two clusters is as yet uncertain. Several interviewees warn that too large a shopping concentration could compete too much with existing shopping areas. There is no fear of the Zuidas competing with inner city shops, but the Zuidas as a strong shopping area could be serious competition for Amstelveen, the Gelderlandplein shopping centre in Buitenveldert and the existing shops in the Beethovenstraat (Schiphol Plaza is not mentioned in this regard). The general expectation is that this will not occur with the currently planned shopping volume, however, as the focus will be on 'quality' rather than 'quantity'.



Figure 9.10 Relatively narrow streets and public functions in the plinths of buildings, in the ‘diagonal’ main street of Mahler (left) and, already a more established area, in the WTC at the Zuidplein (right; see also Figure 9.12)

Other, specific public functions will be located mostly at dedicated sites in the Zuidas. These will be discussed in the next section.

9.9 Quality of functions

Apart from the type of functions, their quality is generally considered essential to the overall quality of the area in the long term. In other words: who are the final users of the area? As mentioned before, many firms in the business service sectors are quite sensitive to the quality of their offices’ environment. This involves not only architecture and the application of high-quality materials, but also the status of the ‘neighbours’. Low-quality functions are feared to drag down the appearance of an office’s environment, and to attract a public considered undesirable. This in turn may hurt the rent level and, hence, the revenues of developers and investors. Which functions are ‘low quality’ is of course partly a subjective matter, but from the interviews it is not difficult to get a general picture: fast food restaurants, supermarkets, discount shops, social or student housing – which should preferably be kept at some distance from banks and lawyers’ offices, since they are likely to decrease the status, and hence the value and rent level, of real estate.

Matching functions

The issue of the quality of functions is considered essential particularly in the Zuidas, with its high ambitions and extremely lengthy construction period, and its explicit focus on exactly the type of businesses considered sensitive to the issue. This is not entirely academic:

It is partly a process of self-regulation, because firms locate in the Zuidas because of its image. Houthoff Buruma [a law firm], for example, the main tenant of the Viñoly building, didn’t want a supermarket located beneath their office. Then again, a high-end supermar-

ket like the one in the WTC, where you can buy champagne and cigars, now, that wouldn't have posed a problem (from interview report).

Especially among developers, it is felt that within the functional programme certain functions that do not match should not be accommodated next to each other. Social housing is the most notorious example. According to the municipality of Amsterdam, the Zuidas should include a significant share of social rental housing (30 percent of all housing). It is widely doubted by developers, but also by the national government, whether it is realistic to plan a relatively low-yield function such as social housing in the most expensive location in Amsterdam:

It is not so much of a problem to have social housing, but it is just not feasible, when you realise that even now, even with a smaller percentage of social housing and a lot of scraping together, cost calculations for the dock can only just be made to balance. Having social housing in the area is a good thing. It contributes to urbanity and it is a part of Amsterdam. It contributes towards a mix of people in the area that is worthy of a big city. But the point is, where it would be located. You shouldn't locate [social housing] next to a bank, for example; that doesn't make sense either, because the yields will decrease, since the bank building will become less valuable. Social housing does fit in with urbanity, but not with high-end amenities. It should not have a dominating negative impact on its neighbours, but it should be located, for instance, a few blocks away (from interview report).

Also, it is stated that social housing is incongruous with the sort of high-end business location the Zuidas is intended to be, or that it may well be part of the area and even contribute to its diversity, but that it should not be located near high-quality amenities and business sites, with which it does not match. Likewise, interviewees tend to be cautious with regard to the possibilities for, for example, a large cinema or other mass entertainment facilities; it is stated that, indeed, this may help to create the lively atmosphere of the Leidscheplein and Rembrandtplein – two of Amsterdam's most vibrant leisure districts – but that this is not the atmosphere and the public of a high-end location. On a smaller scale, the question is who decides on whether the 'retail' planned for will actually be a discount supermarket or a book store, the 'catering' a Michelin-rated restaurant or a Burger King – or a fast food automat, generally considered the least desirable of all catering functions. As in the case of social housing, actors generally recognise that an urban area should have amenities of various qualities, but not next to specifically high-rental office buildings.

Although less so than in the Zuidas, the quality of functions is also an issue for debate in the Rotterdam Centraal project, both with respect to the station itself and its environment. No large amount of amenities is planned in the area anyway, and private development of real estate is not yet in order. A point of attention is, however, the type of amenities in the station itself. One

interviewee suggests that a branch of the city's main book store, Donner, or the Bijenkorf department store would be appropriate, or something similar to the shopping centre at Schiphol Airport (Plaza).

Literature suggests that the quality of functions as such has not been an issue in the development of Euralille to the extent that it is in the Zuidas in particular. However, it was relevant for another reason. The possible competition between functions, especially retail, in Euralille on the one hand and the inner city on the other was the cause of much debate and opposition to the plan. Consequently, it had to be considered in the development process. One of the measures taken to prevent Euralille from becoming too much of a threat to existing shops in the city was the coordination of retail in both areas. First, the shopping area in Euralille was reduced. Second, 37 percent of retail space in the Euralille Centre was reserved for secondary branches of inner-city firms. Third, however, it was decided to aim Euralille at types of shops that would not compete directly with inner-city retail, in particular innovative, specialised products (Bertolini and Spit, 1998:77). Quality and status of the shops and functions as such does not seem to have been that important. The main anchor store in the Euralille Centre is the Carrefour supermarket; catering facilities are neither remarkable nor unremarkable (there is no Burger King).⁹⁷

Selection of commercial users

While public actors largely decide on the functional programme and the general urban structure of the area, the filling in of this framework with concrete firms and amenities is, both in the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal, entrusted to the private sector, and eventually to investors rather than developers. The municipality provides guidelines and influences the selection process, by means of coordination committees, for example. Legally, the municipality could ban certain users. In Rotterdam, it could do so as the landowner; in the Zuidas, it could include an embargo in the long lease agreement. However, this possibility is mentioned only by representatives of municipal development corporations, who draw up the contracts. The general feeling from the interviews seems to be that a prohibitive approach is just not done.

The long-term view of private actors seems essential to the quality of the area in the long run, therefore. However, it is easy to adopt a long-term view for a while, but by definition its value emerges only in time, for better or for worse. Private actors are often considered to be guided, more so than public actors, by short-term interests, even if it appears in this case they have a distinct long-term perspective. The views they currently express on issues related to quality of place are miles ahead of the perspective of the stereotypical short-term moneymaker, but in the end, the robustness of private actors'

⁹⁷ See www.euralille.com (April 2006).

commitments, as opposed to the supposedly short-term requirements of economic competition, cannot be known for sure at this moment.

In the Zuidas, where the issue is most heavily debated, both private and public parties currently express a firm belief in the ability of market parties and economic processes to achieve a balanced, but high-quality, urban area. Nevertheless, it is clear that if stagnation were to occur in the commercialising of the Zuidas, as happened in Lille in the mid 1990s, developers and investors would eventually lower their standards rather than leave buildings unoccupied. In what terms they will do so is unclear. Both public and private actors in the Zuidas recognise the reduction of quality requirements as a potential danger, which should be prevented by way of coordination between public and private actors. An urban area needs various types of amenities, but interviewees agree that it is important to maintain a high standard right from the beginning in each and every part of the project. Once the quality of the area has gone, which could happen very fast, it will not easily be regained and all investors will suffer, as the decline will affect neighbouring properties or areas. This makes actors very dependent on each other. Private developers depend on each other for maintaining sufficient quality requirements when commercialising their property, and they need public parties, for instance to design and maintain public space in the area, which they consider an important aspect of quality of place. On the other hand, public parties depend on private actors for the selection of tenants that match the common ambitions. This is essentially a matter of trust between actors.

Many interviewees consider this a hypothetical issue, however; there is a strong belief in the competitiveness of the area. In this respect, both private as well as public interviewees express a firm belief in the effect of self-regulation. The high rent level of the Zuidas, second only to Schiphol Airport, should function as a selection tool (in a certain sense a controlled version of Jane Jacob's self-destruction of diversity). The abovementioned example shows that, in practice, the demands of existing users also appear to be a criterion. As various interviewees stress:

We have complete trust, also in the market. Our visions have been coordinated intensively for so long that in fact there is a shared ambition. We worry about the things our customers think are undesirable: things such as a school for problem children, or social housing. In time this will probably also be all right (from interview report).

The concept is really supported: the functional mix, the density, the international atmosphere, the image of what a city should be. This has been discussed with those people [i.e. other public actors] numerous times and they do support it. The same discussion has been had with project developers and they too support the philosophy. Perhaps there will be a time when they will knuckle down, but until now things are going well (from interview report).

The rent level and the atmosphere of the area will help sort things out; you can already see it happening in Mahler. Market parties select their tenants with this in mind, and they are doing it fairly well. So, there'll be a high-end restaurant on the corner opposite the station. It is a matter of coordination and conviction; you can no longer direct and enforce [these things]. There is a danger that quality requirements may be weakened in time, but what else could you do? You might establish a steering committee, but it's doubtful whether that would work. What is better is to start with an in-depth discussion with all the parties about the ambitions you have, the things you want. We are reasonably optimistic about this (from interview report).

Nevertheless, the above should be put into perspective. As a matter of fact, it is likely that during the construction period the Zuidas will not yet be able to offer the intended quality.⁹⁸ Measures will be taken to minimise nuisance caused by building activities, for example around the station, but it will still inevitably affect the quality of the area. Furthermore, as long as the infrastructure tunnel – which is planned to be completed around 2020 – is not built, Mahler is merely a location along the motorway. The tunnel itself, because of its complex construction, will extend the construction period even further. Therefore, excessively high ambitions in the beginning could result in disappointment; too modest ambition in missing the chance to create a truly high-end location.

Existing functions

With regard to the quality and diversity of amenities of, in particular, the Zuidas, the importance of already existing functions is emphasised by various interviewees. As one interviewee states:

In terms of the area as a whole you might say the Zuidas is a series of very highly qualified brands. There you have the Free University, the Court of Justice, the RAI, hotels, Sotheby's, the WTC, the Olympic Stadium. In the midst of these, you are enabled to reside, work and live; that is obviously a privilege (from interview report).

Altogether these strong 'brands' are considered to define the identity of the Zuidas, rather than a landmark building.

In Rotterdam Centraal the emphasis is less on the functions that currently exist in the project area. The project is adjacent to the inner city, however. Consequently, it is considered unnecessary to develop a wide range of functions in Rotterdam Centraal, other than those serving the project area. Restaurants, theatres, shops and a casino are already a short distance away; the

⁹⁸ This may be illustrated by the case of the Groothandelsgebouw in Rotterdam, where the increasing hindrance of the Rotterdam Centraal project is named as one of the main reasons for the low occupation rate of the offices (Groothandelsgebouwen N.V., 2006:6).

aim of the project is to make them more visible and more accessible, rather than to copy them. Nonetheless, the functions that are currently located in the station environment, such as an Italian restaurant in the Delftse Poort building and several functions in the Groothandelsgebouw, will obviously be integrated into the plans.

Particular amenities

Apart from the usual functions – offices, residential and amenities – and the specific functions already present, several new amenities are being planned in the Zuidas that should be noted here. First, a theatre is planned, which will be developed by Dutch theatre and television tycoon Joop van den Ende. It will be located near the RAI exhibition centre, some distance from the central area of the Zuidas. Mr Van den Ende's track record indicates that the theatre is most likely to become a success. A cluster of museums is also planned to the east of the WTC. This will include a design museum, planned by the municipality but largely developed by ING. The design theme is intended to connect to the identity of the Zuidas. There will also be a privately developed museum, and it is likely that one or two other museums will locate in the area.

Apart from these rather large-scale amenities, interviewees emphasise the importance of a wide range of public and semi-public functions in the Zuidas, such as sports facilities, fitness clubs, day care centres, medical services, etc. These are considered important to make the Zuidas a piece of 'real' city that can provide its users and inhabitants with a broad range of facilities. Also, some of these functions may increase liveliness in the area in the evening. Fitness clubs are mentioned as an example of this, especially if they would be visible from outside, rather than hidden. The Reebok fitness centre in Canary Wharf is mentioned as an example in this respect, its large windows enabling a visual relation to the public space outside and providing panoramic views over London. In Mahler, a health and fitness club will be accommodated in the SOM building.

Amenities within the railway station

In both Amsterdam and Rotterdam, interviewees mention specifically the poor quality and diversity of amenities within railway stations; in particular the perceived high price level and the elevated concentration of fast food restaurants cause annoyance. This is the responsibility of Dutch Railways, which in response admits that this criticism is partly justified, especially where the station at Rotterdam is concerned. However, it is currently raising its quality requirements concerning station amenities. Moreover, the sameness of amenities in each station is based on a deliberate choice: to provide the traveller with, at least, an equal range of amenities at all locations. While aimed at the convenience of travellers, this strategy is not generally appreciated. Nevertheless, the aim is to differentiate more at larger stations; the recent-

ly opened restaurant De Tijd at Utrecht Central Station is mentioned as an example. Likewise, more attention is paid to waiting and infotainment facilities. At HST stations an even wider range of facilities is required, including more high-quality shops and dedicated first class lounges. It is the intention to aim commercial facilities in the station primarily at railway travellers, but use by others may occur in practice.

The perspective from which Dutch Railways is developing its stations is affected by its different starting point compared to other developers: a long-term, but rather expensive right to exploit rail transport and stations, rather than once-only development and sale of real estate. As a railway company, it has to pay an infrastructure fee for the use of the rail network. This may amount to a considerable sum. The HSA (High-Speed Alliance), the consortium that will run the Thalys service to Brussels and Paris and in which Dutch Railways has a 90 percent share, faces an annual infrastructure fee of 150 million euros. This comes on top of the 146 million euros (in 2005) Dutch Railways has to pay for the use of the Dutch rail network (NS, 2006:60). This kind of money can hardly be earned back merely with the income from rail services. Dutch Railways obtained the exploitation rights for its stations when the company split in 1995, and it aims to profit from this as far as possible. And it has not been unsuccessful in this: in 2005 almost 40 percent of the profit from Dutch Railways came from the development and exploitation of stations, while this made up only 15 percent of turnover (NS, op. cit.:59-61).

Still, apart from these factors the ideas of Dutch Railways and other parties seem to differ in some aspects, as is indicated by the suggestion to construct a huge shopping centre near the station, an idea despised by others.⁹⁹ Foreign examples, such as the stations of Zürich and Rome Termini, show that a shopping centre and railway station can 'match'. But as the case of Euralille shows, the effect of this combination on its environment should be taken into account, in particular when it is part of a larger development project.

9.10 Functional integration

Of the three main types of integration discussed in Chapter 5 – functional, spatial and visual or mental integration – the latter two have already been discussed at some length in previous sections of this chapter. Perhaps the most fundamental, however, is functional integration, in the sense that it relates directly to the level of the functional network. The question arises, therefore, of the extent to which functional relations between the project area and the surrounding city will exist in these cases, and to what extent the is-

⁹⁹ See Section 9.8.

sue of functional integration is actually taken into account in the planning of these projects.

In view of the ratio of amenities to the residential and office functions in Euralille (Table 9.4), it is clear that the amenities included in the project are not intended merely to serve the project's office users and inhabitants. This seems more or less obvious for the station itself and the conference centre in the Grand Palais. Furthermore, the fact that the shops in the Euralille Centre appear to be complementary to, rather than in competition with, those in the inner city, suggests that at least the shopping centre succeeds in attracting people from outside the project area, which is immediately obvious by the crowds shopping in the centre. The shopping centre is located close to the inner city, closer in fact than to the main residential areas included in the project.

The functions planned in Rotterdam Centraal are meant primarily to serve the station and its direct surroundings rather than to attract people from other areas. The intention is to draw people from the station into the inner city: to the shops, the restaurants and cultural amenities in the museum district and the Schouwburgplein. With regard to this, one interviewee emphasises the importance of deliberately not including too many attractive functions around the station, which would 'give away' the city to travellers arriving in Rotterdam, rather than seducing them to explore the inner city.¹⁰⁰ However, this should be considered in combination with the spatial and visual integration of the project as mentioned before, particularly with the necessary improvement of the connection between the station and the inner city. On the whole, these issues seem of primary importance in Rotterdam Centraal, and their realisation a precondition for the functional integration of the station area.

In the Zuidas, it is explicitly the intention to establish a functional integration of the area into the surrounding city, or even the surrounding region. Although this is seen in two directions, the focus is mainly on the attractiveness of certain amenities in the project area to people from outside. It is clear that this involves in the first place the more specific functions, which were mostly mentioned in the previous section. These partly concern existing functions such as the university, the hospital and the court of justice. The design museum is mentioned as one of the newly planned attractions that may have a regional, if not a national or international, impact. It is a facility which could attract to the Zuidas groups of people that otherwise would not visit the area,

¹⁰⁰ In this respect, a comparison is drawn with the successful Groninger museum, built opposite the Central station in that city. In fact, however, the cases may not be entirely comparable, in that the museum has added a new bypass route from the station to the attractive inner city (cf. Trip, 2002), whereas this extra dimension would be lacking in Rotterdam.

and by this the museum is expected to contribute to the image of the project. Implicitly, it is assumed that the other museums that are planned may also add to this, although this will depend on the attractiveness of their respective collections.

The theatre is also considered an important attraction in the Zuidas. In contrast to the museums, it might increase the liveliness of the area in the evening as well. However, it will be located near the RAI exhibition centre, about a kilometre from the central area around the station. Some doubts were expressed over the logic of this location, as it was stated that theatregoers will not easily be able to visit bars or restaurants in the Zuidas after the show when these are beyond walking distance. Moreover, visitors arriving by train are likely to come via the nearby RAI station rather than the more centrally located South station.

9.11 Public space

Perhaps the most important element of quality of place on the scale of the urban redevelopment project is the quality of public space. It is certainly one of the elements most valued by the interviewees involved in the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal projects. However, it is hard to say what defines good public space. It entails a variety of factors, and like quality of place itself a definition is likely to take shape as a list of characteristics rather than a definition in the strictest sense. Nonetheless, from the interviews it became clear that public space as such is also perceived as one of the most important factors defining quality of place:

Florida's theory is, although implicitly, fully incorporated in the plan. Most important is that public space should be really good. It should be like an urban interior, it should feel as if you are in an interior, just like in the inner city (from interview report).

Interviewees were asked to specify what they thought defines good public space. The factors mentioned here include many of the issues also listed separately, such as functional diversity, architecture and appropriate scale. Furthermore, from the discussion in Chapter 5 it was concluded that the quality of public space also involves the availability of parks, sittable spaces and various amenities. Most of these issues have been discussed in the preceding sections: a diverse mix of functions, specific amenities to increase the liveliness of the area and attract people from outside, a relatively high building density, the location of functions in the streets rather than in shopping centres, relatively narrow streets, attractive squares.

The latter factors in particular have proven less successful in Euralille, and accordingly the quality of public space here – with the exception of the



Figure 9.11
Place F. Mitterrand in front of the station's 'TGV window' (left) and seen towards the Euralille Centre (right)

Source: DRO (2001b:37)

semi-public space inside the shopping centre – is lower than that planned for in the other projects. During the development of Euralille, a quality circle evaluated the aesthetics, safety and accessibility of public spaces in particular (Frémont, in: Koolhaas *et al.*, 1996:170-173). Yet the result is not satisfactory in every aspect. Public space around the station is furnished with art, water, trees and access to shops and catering facilities within the Centre. It is an enclosed square, in itself not unattractive, except for being largely deserted. As mentioned above, a main reason for this is the shopping centre: with its inward orientation it tends to draw people off the street, while amenities on the outside are insufficient to generate any sense of street life (Dovey, 1998:94). Catering outlets in the square have mostly closed. On the opposite side of the Euralille Centre, facing the Avenue Willy Brandt, walkways have been constructed, which should give access to facilities in the Centre from the outside, but they too have partly been closed.

Originating from unconventional starting points, the project seems hardly susceptible to traditional criteria of urban quality. Koolhaas famously stated that critics of Euralille as a place hold 'no grounds against a non-place', and that the project's supposed ugliness is irrelevant as long as it succeeds in its objectives (in: Koolhaas *et al.*, 1996:189-190). It may well be considered that traditional values are not always satisfactory in the context of such an innovative project. But, semantics aside, even this non-place is in fact a place for people to work, live, recreate, etc. As such, it has some definite weaknesses, which bear no relation to whether Euralille is ugly or not. Figure 9.11 shows the public space around the station, while Figure 9.6 also gives an impression. The pictures (taken on a Saturday afternoon in moderate weather conditions) can hardly be said to show a vibrant urban area, especially not taking into account the bustle in the rue Faidherbe and on the terraces of the Grand Place, and bearing in mind the fact that these pictures show the central area of Euralille, the station square.

In the planning of the Zuidas, very much attention has been paid to the quality of the public space. Many of the elements that are important in this respect have been discussed in previous sections. The centre of the Zuidas includes a large variety of functions, public and semi-public functions located in the plinths of buildings, relatively narrow streets and a high density. Also, around the station a series of squares has been planned, of which the Zuidplein and the Mahlerplein already exist; they will be connected by a central station square. The squares will be one continuous space, the finale of the



Figure 9.12
The Zuidplein
on a sunny Fri-
day afternoon:
sittable space,
high-quality
materials, trees

50 m-wide Minerva axis (Figure 9.13). They will be different in character, however. The Zuidplein and the Mahlerplein will be relatively quiet and green, while the station square will be lively, with shops and terraces (DRO, 2001b:34-35). Another main public space is the Beatrix park, located east of the Beethovenstraat (DRO, op. cit.:38-41). Eventually it will be extended over the infrastructural tunnel, over the full width of the Zuidas. Some relief will occur where the railway and the motorway enter the tunnel. The park will include sports fields and the planned museums of the Zuidas, with a skyline that recalls (in the designers' renderings) Central Park.

However, whereas actors do not differ much in the elements of public space they mention, they do in the appreciation of the actual public spaces in the project. The diverging views became clear, for instance, with respect to the Zuidplein in the Zuidas, which is highly praised by some, yet despised by others. Located between the two buildings of the WTC and in front of the railway station, this square will eventually be one of the central public spaces of the Zuidas (Figure 9.12). It has been furnished like an orchard, with various species of tree in plots framed with sustainable stone, which are actually containers half set into the ceiling of the parking garage beneath the square, to provide sufficient soil depth for the trees (Aluvihare, 2004:24). People use these plots to sit on instead of benches. Bicycles are stored in an underground bicycle shed. In general this layout is appreciated, apparently most strongly by designers and architects; it is mentioned that people working in nearby offices have lunch in the square:

In this respect, the Zuidplein has an interesting design, in which the space is no longer just free space, but is taken by nature. During their lunch break, people go there to eat, sitting on the edges around the trees. There are skaters [obviously attracted by the smooth pavement and stone rims]; initially they were not very much appreciated, but now they are. There will be a video screen to give the impression of an open-air theatre. You can see that a pleasant atmosphere is evolving (from interview report).

At the same time, however, it is mentioned that the square is 'stony' and that it is deserted after office hours. Another interviewee expresses the many aspects of public space:

Clean, undamaged and safe. Or 'Would my mother feel at ease?' This does not involve locating buildings in the midst of nothing, but it involves the architecture of space; to cre-



Figure 9.13
 Artist's impression of the station square in the Zuidas, seen from the Zuidplein
 Source: DRO (2001b:37)

ate the space people have to be in. Green is very important, public space, facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, clarity and transparency. For example, we employ two gardeners who ensure that there are flowers in certain places, and that bulbs are being planted. In that way you show that you are not only concerned with making money or constructing buildings, but with space itself (from interview report).

The main large public space included in the Rotterdam Centraal area is the station square and the adjacent Kruisplein, Conradstraat and Delftseplein (see Figure 9.13). The square in front of the station will be kept as 'clean' as possible. Not only will it be free from traffic, there will also be no bicycle racks (which will be located underground) or food stands. Thus, the station itself will be clearly visible from the Kruisplein (Figure 9.14). The Kruisplein will be upgraded. Currently an area infested with cars and trams, it should become an attractive promenade, similar to Las Ramblas in Barcelona or the Voorhout in The Hague (Figure 9.15).

The streets next to the station will be transformed into attractive public spaces too, with trees and some shops and catering facilities in the plinths of existing buildings as well as the buildings projected along the railway next to the station. One interviewee mentions the potential conflict between the design of the public space and the wishes of taxi and tram operators. Taxis want to get as close to the station as possible, while designers want most of them to stop at a dedicated zone a small distance away. Trams require space for manoeuvring, and the more advanced wide-bodied trams with low floors sometimes require more space than conventional systems. These kinds of processes tend to conflict with the basic concept of a certain public space as conceived by designers. Eventually, then, it may be preferable to choose a completely different design concept than to keep muddling with the original idea. This also has to do with the intended clarity of design:

In general you should be able to explain it in a simple way; people should understand a building at first glance. That is the essence of designing the station. When you enter the

Figure 9.14
 Artist's impression of the station square and Rotterdam Central Station (compare with Figure 8.10, and Figure 8.12)

Source: Illustration and design by Team CS: Benthem Crouwel Architecten, Meijer en Van Schooten Architecten and West 8 (2005)



Figure 9.15
 Artist's impression of the Kruisplein (compare with Figure 9.5)

Source: Illustration and design by Team CS: Benthem Crouwel Architecten, Meijer en Van Schooten Architecten and West 8 (2005)



station, you can already see the trains; you know where they are. That confrontation, visually, is immediate (from interview report).

Lastly, maintenance of public space is also taken care of by public parties. It is suggested that private control, as in Canary Wharf, would better guarantee the quality of public space. In this regard a comparison is drawn with the publicly controlled La Défense, where public space is considered to be shab-

by, pavements damaged, etc. (which is true only in the older parts of the area). At least one interviewee explicitly mentioned that the parks in the Zuidas should be closed at night, although it is uncertain whether this will actually be realised, as Dutch parks are generally open all day.

9.12 Third spaces

Opinions among interviewees differ widely on whether third spaces, the public and semi-public spaces suitable for informal meetings emphasised by Florida, play any role in the planning process. Many semi-public facilities that function as third spaces – catering outlets in particular – are planned for reasons of liveliness and diversity. When asked, developers in the Zuidas refer in particular to a large variety of amenities that may serve as meeting points and locations of ‘buzz’: specific bars and restaurants, the health and fitness club in the SOM building in Mahler, the hotel that is planned, the Mahler square:

In Mahler there is another square where you can sit, and the diagonal [i.e. the main street through Mahler], for students travelling from the university to the station. So there will be students there, instead of merely grey suits. Hence, there will be different coffee shops, etc. (from interview report).

In addition to this, parks are mentioned, the theatre, the metro station, and even – Richard Florida could not possibly have imagined this – the graveyard. The concept of third spaces as such is not evident, however. Apart from these facilities, developers seem a little sceptical about the role of third spaces in the current design.

Planners and designers are more likely to refer to the atmosphere and the quality of public space when asked about the role of third spaces. Some state that the potential for ‘encounters’ is included in the design of public space, for instance of the Zuidplein. Others, however, are of the opinion that third spaces or anything of that type did not play any significant role in the design.

Actors involved in Rotterdam Centraal in particular state that third spaces should not necessarily be found within the station area, although the station itself may have a function as such. The nearby theatre, restaurants and the Doelen concert and conference complex are considered more important in this regard.

Finally, mainly designers stress that good public spaces, and third spaces for that matter, have to evolve and cannot be constructed instantaneously, but can be ruined in next to no time. Subtle urban spaces may evolve even where and when they are not planned, and they may be destroyed by deliberately overly enthusiastic encouragement policies.

9.13 The high-speed train

The emphasis here has been on the development of the station as a place rather than a transport node, and in particular on the development of the station area. The high-speed train is, first and for all, a factor that induces the development of the area around many of the stations it calls at, although it is not always the only or even the most important factor. However, we still may ask where this leaves the HST. Although the objective here was not to test the relation itself between the implementation of the HST and the development of the station area, some conclusions on the perceived role of the HST emerged from the analysis. Appreciation of the HST differs; it is mentioned only occasionally as a factor in the quality of the area. In the case of the Zuidas, proximity to Schiphol Airport is considered the area's most important asset, and the HST will not further improve this. Also, accessibility by car is valued at least as much as the HST. And in terms of passenger volume, the metro and the regional train systems are far more important; estimates of the number of HST travellers in Amsterdam vary between 30,000 and just a few thousand per day. The HST is appreciated, however, for its effect on the image of the Zuidas: it is felt that any high-end location nowadays must have an HST connection.

With regard to the connection of the Zuidas to the international market, Schiphol Airport is most important. However, an HST calling is important for how the station is experienced; people with suitcases, various languages, etc. The romance of travelling. You get the same feeling at the Central Station when an international train stops. It does not even concern many travellers; there are ten trains per day or so for perhaps a few thousand travellers, against 200,000 cars passing by (from interview report).

It is very difficult to say how much the HST will actually be used; the metro to Schiphol is more important. But your image would certainly suffer (from interview report).

[The HST] would improve connections, but is mainly a matter of image. It would not be a lethal blow for the Zuidas if it did not come; there are already firms located there at present, after all. But you cannot pretend to be a national, let alone an international, high-end location if you do not have the high-speed train (from interview report).

In Rotterdam, in contrast, the HST makes more of a difference, as it would significantly shorten travel times to Schiphol. The image effect is considered important here also, all the more so since Rotterdam, in comparison to Amsterdam, lacks a strong image of its own. This is true also of Lille. Moreover, in this case the transport value of the HST is likely to be more important, since Lille is situated in a much more central position in the network than the other two cities (cf. Table 7.1).

9.14 Conclusion

In view of the overall conclusion presented in the next chapter, conclusions here will be kept brief. The Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal involve two of the largest urban redevelopment projects currently underway in the Netherlands. In these prestigious projects, the attention paid to quality is likely to be above average. Even so, the role of quality of place is ambiguous. From the interviews that were conducted, both public and private actors involved in the development process appear to have elaborate ideas on what a city should be, and these ideas are not radically different from each other. These mostly concern aspects directly related to urban design: diversity, liveliness, safety, beauty. On the other hand, it is less clear whether third spaces, the public and semi-public spaces suitable for informal meetings emphasised by Florida, play any role in the planning process. Many semi-public facilities that function as third spaces – catering outlets in particular – are planned for reasons of liveliness and diversity. The concept of third spaces planned as such is less evident.

Whether or not these ideas are based specifically on the concept of quality of place, they certainly correspond to a large extent to the elements of quality of place relevant in the design of station areas. Although few of the actors involved are familiar with the ideas of Florida, they instantaneously link them to their own ideas. More abstract elements of quality of place play an important role in the background, particularly with respect to the conceptual ideas that are behind the urban design, and on which it is based. In this regard, the difference between Euralille and the other projects seems to be particularly significant.



10 Conclusions

The planned city, the planned village [...] are, we have emphasized, likely to be thin cities, villages [...]. They are thin in the sense that they cannot reasonably plan for anything more than a few schematic aspects of the inexhaustibly complex activities that characterize “thick” cities and villages (J. Scott, 1998:261).

10.1 The subtleties of quality of place

Walking around the city, it seems, you are able to experience those elements of quality of place, or whatever we might call it, which seem to escape objective measurement, such as authenticity, urbanity, the qualities or flaws of a public space. However, this may be deceptive. In fact, as you walk around you may not experience everything there is about quality of place. Tolerance, for instance, which is strongly emphasised by Richard Florida, may reveal itself only occasionally or after some time. It seems, therefore, that just as many aspects of quality of place need time to evolve, they also need time to be fully appreciated. Moreover, it is clear that many aspects of quality of space are to a large extent subjective, but on the other hand it is hard to think of any not attached to a certain general feeling of what is ‘good’ or ‘bad’ quality. Still, such subtle and vulnerable, but largely invisible qualities tend to be neglected or undervalued in a context increasingly dominated by market parties driven primarily by short-term shareholder capitalism (Kloosterman and Trip, 2006). Quality of place does not generate higher profits in the short run, and its long-term benefits are hard to internalise at a specific location, as they usually impact on a larger area that is hard to delineate.

In the preceding chapters, I investigated to *what extent, and how, the concept of quality of place plays a role in current large-scale urban redevelopment*. I focused in particular on the role of quality of place in a number of large-scale redevelopment projects around high-speed train stations. These often take shape as the type of international business locations mentioned in Chapter 1, which were characterised as being (or at least being perceived as) dull and monotonous. The development of HST station areas is therefore closely related to the dilemma of international business location: how do you accommodate a large amount of office space and yet maintain an attractive urban environment? Moreover, more than a fringe location, station area development brings the abovementioned dilemma back into the heart of the city, making urban quality even more important.

The depressing results of many previous large-scale redevelopment schemes, in terms of for example liveliness and diversity, are proof that the doubts expressed above are justified. In the projects considered here, however, the attention paid in the planning process to quality – if not ‘quality of place’ as such – is considerable. On paper, both the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal are way ahead of archetypical business locations such as Canary Wharf and

La Défense in terms of urban quality; Euralille is already a better contender. Will it be sufficient to convince the aforementioned sceptic observer? Probably not. But it is likely, on the other hand, that the urban planner will be content and perhaps silently reassured.

One of the first issues addressed here is the nature of the currently assumed relation between the quality of the urban environment, in a broad sense, and urban competitiveness (subquestion 1). Richard Florida's ideas on the creative class and quality of place currently are a hype. However, rather than dismiss them for this reason, we may ask ourselves why they are so immensely popular. Is it because, in a period when economic considerations have become prevalent, Florida has made sensible and economically justified all those things we always wanted to see in a city? Although it is true that Florida builds on the work of others, primarily Jane Jacobs, he certainly seems to have hit the mark on a large number of issues. To be sure, creativity and quality of place are not the only factors defining urban competitiveness, but they are much more important now than they were in previous periods, and their importance is more explicit. An attractive environment is one of the factors considered of increasing importance also from an urban economic perspective, as it is assumed to be an important condition for the development of an advanced, 'creative' service economy. Following Florida, this specific urban quality is elaborated here as the concept of quality of place.

The implications of the creative class and quality of place for urban planning and design certainly deserve attention if these issues are as important to the vitality of cities as is currently being suggested (cf. Trip, 2006). Often, the intention to stimulate creativity in the city results in projects such as the redevelopment of old industrial estates for use by artists and musicians, or other measures strongly focused on the cultural industries. However, as the creative class as defined by Florida is much broader, including those employed in public and private service activities, science, law, healthcare, etc., surely its implications for urban planning should entail more than the reuse of old buildings. Consequently, the question arises of the extent to which the concept is embedded in large-scale urban redevelopment, which seems to be incompatible with 'romantic' ideas or 'old-fashioned' small-scale development.

10.2 Applicability and usefulness of the concept of quality of place

Given the relevance of quality of place, the question arises of how quality of place could be operationalised (subquestion 2). This actually involves a two-fold approach. First, the operationalisation and analysis of quality of place, like Florida did, on a city level, as a part of the context in which the projects

develop. Second, the operationalisation and analysis of quality of place specifically with regard to its role in large-scale urban redevelopment projects.

From the theoretical discussion on the concept of quality of place as interpreted by Florida, it appeared that the concept has some serious weaknesses, in particular a strong dependence on very specific data and data analyses and a bias toward high-tech on the one hand, and small groups of bohemians on the other. It is nevertheless a useful concept for the analysis of current urban and urban economic development. It connects the competitiveness of the urban economy to a quite sophisticated perspective on urban development in a more explicit way than previous concepts. Furthermore, it is broader and at the same time more specific than comparable concepts. An analysis was included in the research, therefore, of the quality of place in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and, although far less extensively, Lille. The objective of this was threefold. First, to confront the criticism on the perceived vagueness of quality of place. Second, but no less importantly, to gain insight into the applicability of the concept of quality of place in a different context than those studied by Florida. Third, to analyse the context of development in which the case study projects are being developed, which is assumed to influence the objectives of the projects and the way the development process is taking shape.

Although measuring quality of place is difficult and in some ways impossible, it proved possible through the use of a selection of criteria to obtain a satisfactory picture of the actual quality of place in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, which goes beyond the obvious statistics. The analysis rather closely followed Florida, who first operationalised the concept of quality of place. Analysis of quality of place is sensitive to data availability, however, and in this respect a pragmatic approach seems necessary, making prudent use of the data available to grasp the essence of quality of place, rather than sticking to particular data that are unavailable; a line of reasoning that accords to the way Florida himself seems to approach the data problem.

Furthermore, some of the main elements of quality of place are rather elusive qualities, data on which are hardly likely to be found in standardised statistics or other quantitative sources. The problem lies, therefore, in finding a balance between being exact and being comprehensive. The former implies the use of measurable, quantitative or qualitative, criteria, thus leaving out of consideration an essential, but intangible part of what entails quality of place. The alternative, taking into account quality of place as a whole, leads almost inevitably to the use of more obscure, ad hoc data sources. In the analysis carried out here, I chose a position in between, which worked out rather well. Nevertheless, this approach could not entirely solve the problem of measuring intangible qualities such as liveliness or authenticity. An approach based on revealed preference analysis may be more appropriate for this, but it has to be seen whether such a mostly quantitative approach can be made suit-

able for the intangible issues considered here. Even such an approach could not solve all problems with respect to, for instance, the subjectivity of some potential criteria. Besides, this method would not have been suitable for newly developed projects such as the ones discussed here, which for a large part exist merely on paper.

Lastly, there is the matter of scale. Following Florida, the analysis of quality of place as a part of the context of development focused on the city level. While it is true that many differences may exist within a city – for instance between the two sides of the river in Rotterdam and, even more so, in Amsterdam – this is the right scale for many aspects of quality of place, such as diversity, which might even be measured on a smaller scale. However, in the Dutch (or European) context a multi-scalar approach to quality of place may be more appropriate. Many people live, work, recreate and shop in different cities within extensive urban regions. Accordingly, some elements of quality of place should be measured at a regional or metropolitan scale, such as environmental quality, accessibility of the city or economic diversity. Such an approach would involve a variety of administrative areas, however, which would make the availability and comparability of data even more complex. On the other hand, there are elements of quality of place – particularly the ones manifest in the projects considered here, such as spatial diversity, the level of amenities and the quality of public space – that may be most relevant at a sub-local scale. Some elements, such as the availability of very specific amenities, accessibility and safety, are relevant at more than one level.

In short, operationalisation of quality of place in further research should pay attention to the appropriate scale on which various criteria should be measured, taking into account data availability and the comparability of cases. It may partly be based on rather standard official statistics. To gain insight in the quality of place of a city, however, more ad hoc, sometimes even indistinct, data sources should not be ignored, but obviously these should be used in a prudent and critical way. Even then, it may prove virtually impossible to measure some of the intangible elements of quality of place.

It may be concluded that, approached in this way, quality of place indeed proves a useful concept to analyse the context of development of the case study projects, especially when combined with an analysis of the local economic structure. Altogether, the traditional difference between Amsterdam and Rotterdam in terms of economic specialisation and economic structure still exists. Employment in manufacturing industries is on the decline in both Amsterdam and Rotterdam, while services are on the increase. The two economies are moving in the same direction, but at a very slow pace. There is a certain path-dependency in this process, however, by which Rotterdam's previous advantage in manufacturing is now in some aspects a millstone around its neck. Consequently, absolute growth lags behind, as the city is relatively

weak in most of the service industries that currently generate most employment growth. In contrast, these are major strengths of Amsterdam.

Amsterdam also ranks well above Rotterdam in quality of place, particularly regarding socio-cultural aspects: cultural industries, gay and bohemian scenes, nightlife, culture, image. Not only are these some of the most disputed and intangible aspects of quality of place; they are also factors strongly emphasised by Florida. In several other aspects the difference between the cities is only small. However, despite the fact that the analysis has been relatively extensive, the problem remains that where the intangible elements of quality of place are involved, official statistics are not always sufficient.

The analysis of the context of development of the projects is important, as it is assumed that it is related to the objectives of large-scale urban redevelopment projects, in particular the objectives in relation to the development of the urban economy, as well as objectives in terms of urban planning (sub-question 3). Thus, in the Zuidas the main objective is to create a high-end location for the city's growing service industries, which at the same time should provide an attractive, diverse urban atmosphere supplementary to the inner city. In Rotterdam, redevelopment of the station area should contribute to an increase in the quality of the surrounding area, particularly the inner city, especially by increasing the area's residential function. This should make Rotterdam more attractive to middle- and high-income groups. Quality of place may be expected to play a role in both these projects, therefore.

10.3 Quality of place in the case study projects

The main question considered here is to what extent, and how, the concept of quality of place plays a role in the planning process of large-scale redevelopment projects – more specifically, in the high-speed train station redevelopment projects of Euralille, Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal. This concerns the way quality is perceived and supported by actors involved in the development process of these projects, the specific elements of quality of place taken into account in the planning, and also the question of whether it is realistic to expect the type of long-term collective action – particularly between public parties and private developers and investors – that is necessary to achieve and maintain a sufficient level of quality of place. To guide the analysis, three key issues of quality of place were distinguished beforehand: diversity of functions and people, spatial, functional and visual integration of the project and the quality of public space; this is a second step in the operationalisation of quality of place in large-scale redevelopment areas.

The issue of the role of quality of place in the planning of these projects first raises the question of how quality of place is actually understood by the

various actors involved in the planning process (subquestion 4). Actors' perceptions of quality of place may be expected to have influenced the actual project plans. The opposite may also be true, however, as the planning process is lengthy and often iterative. Furthermore, the importance actors attach to quality of place for a large part defines the viability of the long-term perspective required for the evolution and maintenance of quality of place.

In fact, it must be concluded that few of the actors interviewed were more than superficially familiar with Florida's ideas concerning the creative class and quality of place. All interviewees appear to have elaborate ideas on what a city should be, however, and these ideas are not radically different from each other. Whether or not these ideas are based specifically on the concept of quality of place, they certainly to a large part correspond to the elements of quality of place relevant in the design of station areas, although often under different labels. Moreover, actors instantaneously recognise the ideas of Florida and link them to their own ideas. This again suggests that Florida hit the mark by framing and making explicit ideas that seemed to be evolving already in professional circles. It also largely supports Jane Jacobs, who was heavily criticised for a long time because of her ideas that were, after all, in many aspects very similar to those now popularised by Florida.

In view of the above, the next question is which aspects of quality of place are included in large-scale urban redevelopment project plans (subquestion 5). Again, the conclusion is that the role of quality of place as such in the development of the projects considered here is actually limited. However, many of the measures aimed at urban quality in fact concern elements of quality of place. Unsurprisingly, these are not the elusive, socio-cultural aspects that appeared important from the analysis of the context of development, but rather the elements that are relevant on the scale of the project and are related to urban design: the functional programme is diverse, with a larger share of residential and leisure functions than in most (older) comparable projects; attention is paid explicitly to the integration of the project in the surrounding area, both physically and functionally; specific planning elements should increase the quality of public space, such as the location of shops in streets rather than in inwardly-oriented shopping centres. In fact, then, all the key elements of quality of place distinguished above are there, although in a very much interrelated way and not under the label of quality of place.

A specific point of attention in railway areas is the somewhat ambiguous relation between the functions of the station as a node in the railway and other transport networks on the one hand, and its function as a place on the other. Both functions are required at the same time and place for urban economic development around the station. However, when the optimal quality of one of them alone is concerned, they may conflict with each other. In the case of quality of place in railway station areas, this involves mainly the possible

negative influence of the transport function of the station on the quality of the station area as a place: noise, pollution, spatial fragmentation. Although these problems manifest themselves strongly in station areas, they may also occur elsewhere. A common solution is to separate, in effect, the two functions physically, while connecting them on the level of the functional network. In practice, this can be done by tunnelling the main infrastructure, as in La Défense. The infrastructure 'dock' which is planned in the Zuidas is another variant of this. In this respect, it is an important element defining the eventual quality of place in the Zuidas.

It is often stated that small-scale development is a condition for an attractive and diverse urban space. Nonetheless, as for instance parts of Manhattan show, a large scale as such is not necessarily detrimental to a lively urban environment, as long as it functions as a small-scale, fine-grained area, especially at the ground level. This is exactly what planners in Amsterdam and Rotterdam have in mind – small buildings that are experienced as being small-scale – but as yet the question remains of whether they will succeed, as long as the market demands large blocks and buildings. In Rotterdam, the existing situation is already overwhelmingly large-scale, whereas in the Zuidas the viability of the approach has yet to be proven by the eventual result of the measures included in the Mahler design.

The high-speed train itself is not primarily mentioned as a factor of quality of place. Its appreciation differs between the cases analysed here, and it has two faces. First, it is valued insofar as it contributes to the image of a project, all the more so when this is located in a city with no great reputation of its own. Second, its appreciation as a means of transport depends on the project's position in the HST network, as well as the position relative to an international airport. The Zuidas in particular is actually not a station-based project in the sense that it is dependent or even induced by the HST. The HST is considered an added value, not an essential precondition for the project's success; in this respect it should be noted, however, that even if the Zuidas did not get an HST connection, Amsterdam itself definitely would. Rotterdam Centraal and Euralille in particular are in effect induced by the HST, even while the deep motivation behind the projects lies largely in the local context of development. This is most obvious in the case of Euralille, which is located in a central position on an important node, whereas Rotterdam and Amsterdam are much more peripheral in the European HST network.

The more abstract elements of quality of place play an important role mainly in the background. Mostly designers are concerned with these issues. This does not in all cases mean that they are familiar with the work of Florida; it does mean, however, that they share some of his ideas on urbanity, openness or authenticity. It remains somewhat unclear how these are implemented in the design of the projects, however.

Probably the main aspect in which these abstract ideas become visible to a certain extent is the urban design of the area, the overall structure that serves as the basis for its development. This may reveal a lot about the conceptual ideas that are behind the project, on which the urban design is based. This is a perilous matter, however. The ideas of Rem Koolhaas in particular are difficult to comprehend, let alone summarise or paraphrase. His ideas of the city are strongly based on an analysis of relations and connections. Accordingly, Euralille is not so much a place as an address, '70 minutes from London, 50 minutes from Paris, 18 minutes from Brussels' (Koolhaas and Mau, 1995:1170). A main reason for the fierce criticism raised about Euralille is the incompatibility of Koolhaas' radical ideas on what a modern city should be, and the more traditional ideas of his French critics.

In this respect, the conceptual ideas on the city of Koolhaas versus De Bruijn and the designers of Rotterdam Centraal seem crucial. Euralille is conceived primarily on the basis of its position in international networks, and the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal (after Alsop) as part of existing cities; none of them exclusively so, however. Unlike Euralille, both the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal are largely based on the idea of the traditional street as the model of urban life. However, to say that this implies an attempt to reconstruct an imaginary past, versus an analytical look into the future, would hardly be fair. For one thing, the seemingly criss-cross (rather than parallel) heavy infrastructure at Euralille makes a traditional approach less likely anyway. As it is, Euralille largely fulfilled its objectives at the macro level, but has a limited urban quality on the street level; it functions better as a node than as a place. Perhaps the project is 'saved' by its modest scale vis-à-vis La Défense and its relatively small amount of office space for an international business centre; which would be ironic, since the latter is exactly the one aspect in which it did not fulfil its purpose for a long time. It is also true that, at least in theory, the ideas behind the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal in many aspects better equate with the essence of quality of place as conceived by Richard Florida and Jane Jacobs, but have yet to be proven – leaving the dilemma of international business location as yet unsolved.

Finally, after the discussion in the preceding chapters on the role of quality of place in these urban redevelopment projects, the importance of quality of place in a broader sense must not be ignored. Aspects such as a tolerant, open climate and public safety cannot, or only to a limited degree, be defined at the scale of an individual neighbourhood. They are most relevant, however, at an urban scale or even nationally, and they may affect the chances for creating attractive places on lower scales. In Rotterdam, for instance, the perceived unsafeness and, in response to this, the focus on repressive measures might in time prove detrimental to the development of a 'creative' economy (Kloosterman and Trip, 2004; cf. Van Lent, 2006). In contrast, many of the planners of

the Zuidas are very conscious of Amsterdam's reputation as an open and tolerant city, and are eager to connect it to the intended metropolitan atmosphere of the Zuidas (increasingly joining in the idiom of Florida as the 'creativity debate' continues). Differences such as these may easily take on larger proportions in the mindsets of international business partners necessary to the success of the project.

10.4 Public-private cooperation and the long-term perspective

Last but not least, there is the question of the extent to which actors involved in large-scale urban redevelopment support the elements of quality of place included in the project plan (subquestion 6). This is particularly relevant with regard to private, profit-oriented actors. Although urban quality in business locations may pay by means of a higher rent level, the financial benefits of quality according to the ideas of Florida are more likely to appear only in the long run. Also, quality of place often requires additional investments, which will generally not be profitable in the short term, since it is to a large extent an emergent quality that needs time to evolve. Even then, allocation of its benefits to specific places is hard. Quality of place necessitates a long-term perspective, therefore. Moreover, its maintenance requires a long-term cooperation between the actors involved, also after the initial development stage of the project. Public parties are generally assumed to act from such a long-term, quality-oriented perspective. This stands in sharp contrast to the presumed short-term view of, in particular, private developers, who are considered to be interested mainly in short-term profit.

Quality of place requires a collective action – if only because of the complex distribution of responsibilities for different aspects of the development process. In view of the large involvement of private parties in the redevelopment of HST station areas, this implies that some kind of public-private cooperation is necessary. This in turn means public and private partners must have corresponding time horizons, which raises the question of whether private partners are prepared to maintain the long-term perspective necessary for the achievement of quality of place, or will instead go for an immediate profit.

In both the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal cases, the local government is an important player. Public actors and publicly commissioned architects not only largely define the overall urban structure of the area and the functional programme, public parties also design and maintain the public space, which is an important element of quality of place. They also have a persuasive, if not decisive, influence on the eventual quality of functions. Moreover, they define the objective of the project, in the perspective of its broader urban economic

context. This becomes clear for instance in the transformation of the Zuidas project from a market-driven office development to the development of a diverse, metropolitan urban area. The same is true in Rotterdam, although public ambitions here tend to be moderated somewhat by the previous setback of the failed *Masterplan*. Private developers, on the other hand, are responsible for the architecture of the commercially developed real estate, within the margins set by the conceived urban plan. They are also responsible for the selection of eventual users of privately-developed office space and amenities.

Within the main arenas of decision-making several discourses may be distinguished concerning the quality of place in the area and the way this could be maintained in the long run. Two of these in particular involve aspects in which shared responsibility exists between public and private actors.

The first of these concerns the urban design of the area. This involves the contents of the plan, as well as the way the urban design is conceived and implemented. The main aspects of the project plans, especially the general urban design and subsequent design codes, were mostly conceived by public actors together with publicly commissioned architects or designers. Other actors involved have committed themselves to the urban design and the design codes, including the real estate programme. Also, at present there seems to be a general agreement on the objectives of the projects; a primary condition for their success and, also, for the assessment of their results (cf. Lindblom, 1959:84). In public, therefore, actors all agree on the project philosophy, which is most clearly defined for the Zuidas (in the *Vision* documents), and all seem to have a distinct long-term vision on the development of the area.

Some differences in opinion may be expected in projects this large and diverse. While officially there is a joint vision of all actors involved on how these objectives could best be achieved, it appeared from the analysis that different views exist among actors involved in certain elements of the plan. This is true, for instance, with respect to the urban grid applied in the urban design of the Zuidas: some consider it inflexible, or a relic from the project's past as an office location. Also, opinions differ with regard to the amount of various amenities required for a truly vibrant urban climate, or the mix of functions on different scales. On the other hand, some elements that designers consider desirable from a quality of place perspective are not included in the plan when unrealistic from a commercial point of view. Designers in both cities, for instance, want varied, small-scale (tall but narrow) buildings, while they recognise that efficiency dictates large blocks and buildings.

In Rotterdam, no private parties were actively involved at the time of research. In this case, however, it may be remarked that communication between actors involved in various parts of the project appears to be less than optimal, and the general external communication rather restricted compared to the Zuidas. When asked about this, interviewees tend to explain it by the

painful experiences of earlier stages in the development process (the *Masterplan*), which have made public actors cautious.

The second field of public-private cooperation concerns the quality of the functions and the quality of public space, which are both considered major factors in the quality of the area as a whole. While public actors largely decide on the quality of public space, the functional programme and the general urban structure of the area, the filling in of this framework with concrete firms and amenities is entrusted to the private sector, eventually to investors rather than developers. Both private and public parties express a strong belief in the ability of market parties and economic processes to achieve a balanced, but high-quality, urban area. Self-regulation, by means of a high rent level and a high-end profile – which are mutually reinforcing – should be able to guarantee the quality of functions, and prevent the co-location of functions that do not match and would affect the top rent level.

This belief in the market is partly based on a strong mutual trust between parties. Private developers need public parties, and private actors such as architects that are commissioned by public parties, for instance to design and maintain public space in the area, which they consider an important aspect of quality of place. On the other hand, public parties depend on private actors for the selection of tenants that match the common ambitions. The mutual dependency of public and private parties involves more, however, and it is essential that it is not restricted to the early stages of the development process. Both groups need each other also in the long run, for the control and maintenance of public space, for example, or maintaining the high quality standards that are initially set. It is preferable, therefore, to establish some structural body for public-private cooperation, not only during the development of the area, but also afterwards. In mixed-use areas such as the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal, this should also include the inhabitants of the area and, in case of social housing, housing corporations. However, the danger of overregulation is imminent in such cases. And in the end the success of such an approach still depends on actors' attitudes towards cooperation, and towards quality of place.

The analysis of quality of place in the projects considered here indicates that private developers can indeed jump over their own shadow and show genuine interest in the quality of place. They can do this partly because the financial parties involved might still not be dominated wholly by shareholder capitalism. The ING Bank, for instance, was (partly) a public bank and even though it has been privatised it still may weigh other interests than just short-term profits, in particular as their own headquarters are located in the Zuidas. Likewise, private actors also actively supported the ambitious *Masterplan* in Rotterdam. They can do this partly because of a discretionary freedom that allows them to take decisions on, for instance, the design of the projects somewhat independently. Moreover, the representatives of the developers

involved in the planning of the projects have in many cases the same educational background as the architects and designers, rather than being average bankers. Consequently, they share not only the vocabulary, but often – and sometimes quite explicitly – also an internalised motivation to create something ‘beautiful’ and ‘liveable’. The views they currently express on issues related to quality of place are miles ahead of the perspective of the stereotypical short-term moneymaker. It is even stated that, at present, developers are actually more ambitious than public actors with respect to urban quality; moreover, that their ambitions are almost overdone. If the views of Dutch Railways on the development of the area differ in some essential aspects from those prevailing among the other actors, this is partly due to its different financial involvement in the projects. At the same time, private developers also have a closer affinity than, for instance, designers with the intended final users of the area (particularly financial and legal producer services) and their demands. This manifests itself in their slightly different priorities concerning the interpretation of quality of place, such as an explicit appreciation of craftsmanship in architecture.

The (rich) actor view corrects some of the more gross statements that could be made by just looking at the organisational structure of the projects and the results of previously developed business locations. However, it should be said that even actors among private sector parties that do take an authentic interest in a quality of place that transcends mere moneymaking are bound to the constraints of their institutional context. This is reflected, for example, in the still mostly large scale of the designs, whereas it is mentioned that a smaller scale would be preferable from a quality perspective. In the end, the robustness of private actors’ commitments cannot be known for sure at this moment. It is clear, and generally acknowledged, that if the commercialisation of the Zuidas were to stagnate, the current high standards with regard to quality of place would eventually suffer. In the Zuidas, in particular, there is a strong belief in the success of the project. This is reflected, for example, in the areas the Zuidas is supposed to compete with. It is suggested in planning documents, for instance, that the project would be comparable with La Défense and Canary Wharf, implying that Amsterdam is competing with Paris and London. At the same time this ambition has been criticised, for instance quite recently by Engelen and Smit (2006), and indeed it seems not entirely realistic. On closer consideration, however, actors involved in the development of the Zuidas indeed tend to position the project in line with location in cities such as Brussels and Berlin. In this respect, Meijdam and De Vries (in: Salet and Majoor, 2005:182) state that the Zuidas should choose between the level of Copenhagen, Barcelona and Singapore, or the lower, less exclusive level of ‘countless other urban regions, all good performers in themselves, in Western and Central Europe’; the latter seems unimaginable as yet.

In a way, these high ambitions and large-scale approach materialise in the 'dock', which is perhaps more ambitious than any comparable construction found in similar redevelopment projects. There is little doubt that tunnelling the infrastructure in the Zuidas would very much improve its quality of place. Yet the market-driven wish to use the area on top of the infrastructure tunnel as a highly profitable building space is likely to make things more complicated and expensive (if only because of safety requirements), whereas from a quality of place perspective cheaper solutions may be sufficient; a condition would be, however, that the area above the infrastructure is turned, for instance, into a public space such as the Jardin Atlantique or into a zone for the desired small-scale development which connects both sides of the area, rather than being left as a bare concrete plain, as in La Défense. Moreover, deliberately focusing the development process of the Zuidas to a large degree at this single option suggests that an 'all or nothing' decision is necessary. This may imply that an important part of the area's quality is risked for a high, but uncertain ambition.

Needless to say, the fate of projects like the Zuidas eventually depends to a large extent on market conditions far beyond the influence of planners and developers. Euralille was plagued by a crisis in the real estate market at the time of its scheduled completion. It is uncertain whether the market for large-scale offices will be kind to the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal in the longer term.

10.5 Planning for quality of place

Somehow, Rem Koolhaas is present in all three case studies discussed here. Koolhaas drew up the urban design for Euralille and the urban design for the IJ embankments area, which should have become more or less what the Zuidas is now intended to become. His office, OMA, is based in Rotterdam and is a cornerstone of the city's main cluster of cultural industries, he was one of Alsop's contenders for the design of Rotterdam Centraal, and he designed the bus station in Rotterdam, the demolition of which marked the unofficial start of the Rotterdam Centraal project. In his modernism, he may be considered, in a way, an heir of Van den Broek and Bakema, the former of whom was involved in the post-war reconstruction of Rotterdam. His presence in all the cases seems appropriate, as he is among the most admired and despised of modern architects, and the dilemma of modern urban development seems omnipresent in his work.

The essence of this dilemma seems to be the question of why planned urban spaces often feel artificial. It may be partly because cities are too complex and in many ways too subtle to plan; but also partly because many planning principles somehow miss the point. They seem perfectly capable of plan-

ning systematically organised built areas, but not vibrant cities. It has been said before that quality of place cannot be planned, but that to some extent it can be planned for. Of course, new projects can never acquire the richly layered identities and related quality of place of historically grown 'thick' cities and urban neighbourhoods. One could, however, plan in such a way that the chances of getting there at some point in time are considerable.

In theory, a fully comprehensive planning process could be the best possible path to quality of place. The call for a more comprehensive approach in urban planning and development seems a reaction to the complexity of current urban redevelopment, not least in railway station areas. In practice, however, it may be hardly feasible otherwise than as rather broad outlines, exactly because of that same complexity. In contrast to this stands a policy of incrementalism: taking small steps, 'muddling through' (Lindblom, 1979:581; cf. J. Scott, 1998:345). This would be an appropriate approach in view of the character of quality of place, in fact not unlike the one favoured by Jane Jacobs. It is hard to imagine, however, as a method for developing international business locations or comparable projects such as the ones considered here; in practice, incrementalism can only be applied here to a limited extent, if at least a somewhat coherent area is to be developed. It is necessary, therefore, to find a balance in this: to find ways to implement a more incremental planning within the framework of current urban planning practice.

A main element of the development, from the quality of place perspective, is the existence and the contents of an overall framework – call it urban design, masterplan or vision. Bell (2005:106-107) concludes that the mere existence of a masterplan already leads, among developers, to perceived economic benefits and reduced risks. However, the emphasis here is on the contents of the urban design: all three cases analysed here are based on an elaborate urban design, particularly Euralille and the Zuidas, and yet the difference between them is significant. The inclusion of an elaborate, rather fine-grained street pattern, the location of public and semi-public functions in streets rather than shopping centres, the design of enclosed squares or small parks rather than bare stony expanses, a small-scale mix of functions – all these elements together make a huge difference. If the aim is to achieve an urban quality as conceived by Jacobs and Florida, these elements should be guaranteed in the urban design, as a kind of basic condition for urban quality.

In relation to this, a major difference between the cases is the role and presence of a publicly commissioned 'urban design supervisor'. This is an important aspect, as the very great influence of the urban design and the conceptual ideas of the urban designer became obvious in the cases studied here. In Euralille, Rem Koolhaas was appointed as such in a very early stage of the project. Besides conceiving the urban design, he was involved in the selection of architects and he was, in general, one of the driving forces behind the

project. In the Zuidas Pi de Bruijn has a comparable role, although he was appointed in a somewhat later stage of the project. In contrast, there is no overall urban design supervisor for the Rotterdam Centraal project. William Alsop could have played a supervisory role, if only the *Masterplan* had been accepted. This might, for instance, have had a positive effect on the communication between the various parties involved in the project. Also, the general direction of the project after the *Masterplan* might have been more clear.

Some of the elements that should be dealt with in the masterplan may conflict, at first sight, with developers' interests: a relatively fine grain, the inclusion of small parks or enclosed squares, the prevention of large inward-oriented shopping centres at the cost of the functions located in the streets. Developers, especially large development companies as involved in the projects discussed here, prefer large-scale development to utilise economies of scale and reduce risks. It is preferable, therefore, that public authorities maintain, or obtain, a coordinating role in order to counterbalance pressures from the private sector. Public, or publicly commissioned, parties should be responsible for the overall urban design of the project. This is more or less the case in all three projects considered here, although it may be more explicit now and then.

Nevertheless, the result is quite different in Euralille and, as it would appear, the Zuidas, also in terms of the elements considered important to quality of place. This illustrates the fact that not all urban design harmonises equally with the kind of urban atmosphere that follows from the ideas of Richard Florida and, even more so, Jane Jacobs. In short, therefore, the public design should match the type of urban atmosphere that is desired, and it should go together with a set of requirements to guarantee at least the basic conditions for the development of such an atmosphere, in terms of grain, scale, functional mix, etc. If this leads to a more conventional type of city than the grand schemes of modernism, this may not surprise anyone in a time that in many ways values the past. The problems of large-scale urban redevelopment involve an apparent dilemma between the modern concepts of urban planning and the desired atmosphere, which in some aspects resembles an 'old', but often imaginary, city. This should not lead to quasi-old reconstructions. Jacobs herself was often accused of nostalgia by modernist critics; and indeed, nostalgia would only lead to more themed and unauthentic spaces. However, a more conventional street pattern, for example, does not imply conventional, or even historicising, architecture. Instead, proven structures should be applied with modern idiom.

As a counterbalance to the abovementioned overall structure, there is the way in which it is filled in. It is important to strive, within the framework of the urban design, for the basic qualities suggested by Jacobs, Florida and others. This implies that there should be room for incremental development, by way of taking small steps and enabling small-scale development and possibly

less formal forms of urban development, if only in parts of the area. In this regard, it is worth noting that while inner-city Amsterdam and the Manhattan grid are explicitly mentioned as an inspiration for the Zuidas, this concerns their present state, rather than the way they have evolved. When their laid-out street patterns were filled in over time, some general planning regulations applied: 'keuren' concerning the location of various functions, the size of blocks (and, by self-selection, the type of houses) and the provision of gardens in Amsterdam, zoning law in Manhattan (cf. Gemeente Amsterdam, 1975; Koolhaas, 1978; White, 1987).¹⁰¹ Within this framework, a wide diversity of buildings and functions gradually evolved; a development path rather unlike that of modern urban redevelopment.

Taking small steps, making little plans that can be changed according to new needs, means the development of the project would be more flexible with regard to advancing knowledge, expected or unexpected results of earlier planning stages and changing market conditions. The current plans provide for this flexibility only to a limited degree. In the Zuidas, the 'dock' in particular dictates the development of the area by its huge costs and technical complexity. The problem is not the 'dock' itself, but the fact that it is being put forward as the only acceptable alternative already in an early stage of the project. In Rotterdam the planning is necessarily less flexible, since the project is located in an existing, already largely built urban area.

Small-scale development could also enable individual firms or possibly private persons to invest in the area, a possibility which is actually favoured by several actors involved, but is quite unrealistic in the current approach. Again, this recalls the development of the Manhattan grid. Specific zones might be dedicated to this, which might also serve as creative 'incubator' spaces and include attractive third spaces – informal bars and restaurants, distinct shops, internet cafés, etc. – amidst zones of larger-scale office and apartment buildings and more conventional amenities.

This is not to say that only small plans should be made; this would make the development of locations such as considered here virtually impossible. As was emphasised above, some kind of overall urban design is necessary. But it must be as open and flexible as possible, in order to allow for gradual elaboration in small-scale subprojects. Cities are about mixing of different types of people, buildings and life. That does not have to be realised at the scale of every subproject. It is not realistic to expect that all of the area will be equally diverse and vibrant, nor is this necessary; it is not the case in Manhattan or the inner city of Amsterdam or other examples of quality of place either. But still, every individual project needs to be open to all sorts of expected and unexpected changes.

¹⁰¹ See also www.20eewennederland.nl (3 August 2006).

Finally, the intention should not be a comprehensive, detailed planning process, but rather flexibility and a certain trust in the self-organisation of urban spaces. The ambition to plan too much is recognised by designers in the Zuidas as well as Rotterdam. Both the ability and the desirability to plan everything are questioned. It is acknowledged in both cities that the subtleties of urban quality often go beyond the influence of planners, even though the unintended effects that may occur are not necessarily detrimental. This awareness alone is an essential ingredient of urban quality planning, if it is indeed put into practice. It should be combined with the willingness to accept unintended and occasionally even perverse results of planning, and the flexibility to use or adjust them as appropriate.

The complexity of railway station area redevelopment, together with the intangibility of quality of place, poses a great challenge that may push current urban planning to its limits. If quality of place is indeed a main objective – whether explicitly in the way it is conceived by Richard Florida or not – urban redevelopment must take into account diversity, integrity, authenticity, appropriate scale, flexibility and a framework that guarantees the basic conditions. Those approaches that come closest to the essence of quality of place tend to be phrased in terms of cultural or human ecology, people-oriented design and the *inhabiting* of public space. Rather than straightforward development, these terms suggest a guided evolution.

Summary

What makes a city? Planning for ‘quality of place’. The case of high-speed train station area redevelopment.

Jan Jacob Trip

Introduction

The implementation of the high-speed train is leading to large-scale redevelopment programmes in numerous cities it calls at. Many of these redevelopments are in the form of what might best be described as international business centres, locations where the providers of internationally-oriented services will hopefully set up shop. There are two main reasons why HST facilitates such redevelopment programmes. First, it provides access to additional, high-quality transport. Second, but no less important, its high-powered image is perfect for international business. Consequently, ambitious cities often see the HST as a ‘must-have’.

But, as international businesses require large swathes of modern, efficient office space, which is no longer available in inner cities, they have no choice but to settle in large and monotonous areas, which rarely have the *cachet* and metropolitan atmosphere of high-end locations. Nonetheless, many authors and practitioners of urban geography, planning and design are attaching increasing importance to the quality of the urban environment. For instance, the substantial investment required for high-quality architecture and urban design and attractive public space may be recouped via higher real estate revenues. Another line of thought concerns a more diverse set of urban-quality or quality-of-life issues which might enhance the competitiveness of cities in the long term. In recent years Richard Florida has been the most notable advocate of this idea. Building on the work of Jane Jacobs, in particular, Florida argues in *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) that advanced service economies are driven by a specific creative class, which needs to be won over and retained by certain characteristics in the day-to-day urban environment, which Florida defines as ‘quality of place’.

The quality of the HST station area is therefore relevant in one way or another to its potential as a high-end business centre. Second, stations are often located centrally in the city. They are important as public space, which makes it even more relevant that they be attractive urban areas, rather than just business locations. In this paper I shall use the projects around HST stations as a means of exploring the role of urban quality – particularly quality of place – in large-scale urban redevelopment areas. Hence, I shall concentrate on the station as a place, rather than a transport node, and on the station area, rather than the station itself.

The aim and structure of the study

The aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between urban spatial policy and urban economy in the light of the requirements of the 'creative' service economy. More specifically, it will explore how and to what extent quality of place is involved in current large-scale urban redevelopment, as illustrated here by the redevelopment of high-speed train station areas. The question that will be addressed is therefore:

To what extent, and how, does the concept of quality of place play a role in current large-scale urban redevelopment?

This is elaborated in particular with regard to the redevelopment of HST station areas, which, as has been stated in previous sections, may be considered exemplary of the type of large-scale redevelopment discussed here. This brings the focus onto several subquestions concerning both the concept of quality of place and the planning of large-scale urban redevelopment areas and, in particular, HST station areas:

1. *What is the nature of the currently assumed relation between the quality of the urban environment, in a broad sense, and urban competitiveness?* It is important to clarify this matter, since it essentially concerns the main reason why quality of place should be relevant in the first place. With regard to this question, however, the focus here will be mainly on the theoretical level, since the intention here is not to test the relation between quality of place and competitiveness, but rather to analyse its effects on urban policy and planning.
2. *How could quality of place be operationalised, in particular with regard to large-scale urban redevelopment?* This involves the operationalisation of the concept of quality of place per se, and also the question of which particular aspects of quality of place could be relevant for such projects as discussed here, and in the case of the specific projects analysed here the question of which aspects are especially important for the development of HST station areas.
3. *What are the objectives of large-scale urban redevelopment projects, in particular the objectives in relation to the development of the urban economy, as well as objectives in terms of urban planning?* In the case of the HST station area development projects studied here, the focus should be on the objectives of these projects as an urban development, beyond providing transport facilities.
4. *How is quality of place understood by the various actors involved in the planning process?* This involves the way quality of place is applied in practice, and the value that is attached to the concept. This is assumed to be related to the viability, in the longer term, of the intentions concerning quality of place as expressed in the project plan, and as such this question is closely related to questions 5 and 6.

5. *Which aspects of quality of place are included in large-scale urban redevelopment project plans?* This indicates how the prevailing ideas about quality of place are put into practice.
6. *To what extent do actors involved in large-scale urban redevelopment support the elements of quality of place included in the project plan?* This concerns the question of the robustness, for better or for worse, of intentions with respect to quality of place.

These questions were tackled by conducting case studies on three projects along the TGV Nord from Paris to Amsterdam. The first is Euralille in Lille, which was more or less complete in the early 1990s and which serves as a reference case. The other two are the Zuidas in Amsterdam, and Rotterdam Centraal in Rotterdam, which are both partly under construction and partly on the drawing board. To connect these case studies and to place them in a broader perspective which permits more general conclusions, the empirical analysis is embedded in a fairly explicit theoretical framework.

The analysis of Euralille, the reference case, is based on site visits and literature. The other case studies are based on two main sources: an analysis of the project plans presented in planning documents and on websites; and a series of in-depth interviews with key actors in the planning process. The interviewees were selected on the basis of active participation in, and estimated influence on, the planning process, and their involvement in the development of the station area as a place, rather than a transport node. They may be split into three groups according to their role in the planning process:

- a. developers: representatives of investors and other private development corporations;
- b. designers: representatives of public spatial planning and design departments, as well as architects commissioned by public bodies;
- c. coordinators: project coordinators and representatives of public development corporations.

Quality of place

According to the creative class concept, it is essential in advanced urban economies to attract and hold on to talented people rather than firms. This requires what Florida calls a 'people climate', a strategy aimed at winning over and retaining talented – especially creative – people. One crucial element of the people climate is quality of place: an attractive, diverse and tolerant urban environment – which is being increasingly regarded as a key factor in urban competitiveness.

Quality of place as defined by Florida entails a set of factors that collectively make a city an attractive place of residence for the creative class. These include, for example, economic and spatial diversity, specific amenities, the

chance of informal meetings in so-called 'third spaces', safety, vibrancy, as well as indefinable aspects such as authenticity, tolerance, street life and urbanity. Some of these factors are hard to define, and even harder to measure or to reproduce. Nonetheless, the concept is widely influential among urban policymakers in the US and Europe.

Criticism

Despite their popularity, Florida's ideas have also been greeted with criticism. The outcome of his statistical analyses seem somewhat sensitive to the type of data used, although the assumed relationship between the creative class and growth in employment has indeed been confirmed, also for the Netherlands. Moreover, the availability and comparability of data present a problem when comparing the quality of place of cities, especially at international level. Common sense, and particularly the way Florida himself deals with this problem in successive studies, suggests that what is most important, within certain limits, is to grasp the essence of quality of place, rather than to adhere strictly to the criteria applied in other analyses.

Another flaw in Florida's work is the alleged lack of detail. This is largely due to its broad scope and the fact that Florida builds on the work of others. The resemblance between the creative class and, for instance, the symbolic analysts described by Robert Reich is obvious, and the influence of Jane Jacobs is patently clear as well. However, Florida makes the link between urban economic development and quality of life issues much more explicit than before, connecting previously unrelated or only vaguely related concepts in a broad field of economy, sociology and urban development.

Ultimately, quality of place is a useful concept because it connects the competitiveness of the urban economy to a sophisticated perspective on urban development. This does not necessarily imply that the concept as such is bound to play an important role in the cases considered here; the question is rather which elements of quality of place can be identified in the development of these projects, and to what extent is the concept embedded in the development process.

Operationalisation

The operationalisation of quality of place involves a dual approach. First, quality of place needs to be analysed at city level, as part of the context in which the projects develop. A number of criteria have been selected to capture the essence of quality of place. With an eye to the measurements applied by Florida (but focusing less on high-tech industries), the analysis focuses on three sets of criteria concerning three main elements of quality of place:

- creativity and talent;
 - diversity, tolerance and safety;
 - specific amenities.
-

Second, three key issues were distinguished to reflect the role of quality of place in large-scale urban redevelopment projects:

- diversity of functions and people;
- spatial, functional and visual integration of the project;
- quality of public space.

The more elusive elements of quality of place are relevant not so much at project level but at the level of the city as a whole. However, in many cases they do affect the objectives and the developmental path of the projects. Moreover, they may also – indirectly – affect the quality at project level. We might say that, on the whole, they create the conditions for quality in the project area, whereas the concrete elements have a more direct and demonstrable effect.

Cases

The projects in this study are examined explicitly in their local ‘context of development’. The analysis focuses on the position of the cities in transport and communication networks (in particular the HST network), the current level of quality of place, and the urban economic structure. The emphasis is on the two main case studies, Amsterdam and Rotterdam; the analysis of Lille is relatively limited.

Context of development

Lille is located centrally in the HST network, between Paris, London and Brussels. Out of the three cities considered here, it has the best accessibility by rail and road, although it may be equalled by Rotterdam once the high-speed Brussels-Amsterdam line is operational. Amsterdam has the best accessibility by air thanks to Schiphol Airport.

The traditional difference between the economic structure of Amsterdam and Rotterdam still exists. Employment in manufacturing industries is declining in both cities, while services are on the increase. Absolute growth is trailing behind in Rotterdam, as the city is relatively weak in most of the service industries which generate the most employment growth. In contrast, these are major strengths of Amsterdam, which has the more competitive service economy of the two, with a larger share of the economic activities that Florida relates to creativity and quality of place. Finally, Lille is, like Rotterdam, a traditional manufacturing city which is transforming itself into a more competitive service economy. The efforts have been largely successful, especially in central Lille, although the city still exhibits characteristics specific to the French economy, such as a large public sector and a higher unemployment.

Amsterdam also ranks well above Rotterdam in quality of place, particularly in socio-cultural terms: cultural industries, alternative scenes, nightlife, culture... Not only are these some of the most disputed and intangible aspects of

quality of place; they are also emphasised by Florida. The difference between the cities is minor in several other aspects. Rotterdam may perform better on some counts than the figures show. The problem remains that official statistics do not always suffice when it comes to the intangible elements of quality of place. The analysis of Lille suggests an improvement in the quality of place, particularly in central Lille, where Euralille and the historic inner city are able to attract many tourists and shoppers.

This context of development influences the objectives of the projects discussed here and, occasionally, the way in which the process unfolds and the number and type of actors.

Euralille

After the industrial decline of the 1960s and 1970s, the local economy in Lille was desperately in need of transformation. The TGV could serve as a catalyst in this process, since it was the anchor of the already planned European Business Centre: a cluster of high-calibre service industries in commerce and leisure, which would strengthen the urban economy. Built on a site between the Lille Flandres station and the ring road, and adjacent to the city centre, Euralille includes offices, apartments, a conference centre and a shopping mall. The Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas was commissioned in 1989 to execute the urban design. His plan was a crucial element in the development of Euralille, as a framework for both the construction and the image of the project and the potential for attracting private parties. The close co-operation and personal influence of Koolhaas, the director of the SAEM public-private development corporation Jean-Paul Baïetto, and mayor (and former French Prime-Minister) Pierre Mauroy played a particularly decisive role in the project's success.

Despite the initial scepticism, the effect of Euralille on the urban economy is generally recognised as positive. Furthermore, the project has a strong symbolic value, contributing much to the image and self-confidence of Lille as a modern city, and its position as a centre for shopping and tourism. The position of the city centre within the urban area has been especially strengthened. The disappointments with regard to the effects of Euralille seem to be caused by excessive initial expectations and by externally driven market developments when the project was nearing completion.

Zuidas

During the 1960s, growth and consolidation in banking and other service sectors led to a steady increase in the demand for offices in Amsterdam, which could no longer be satisfied the historic city centre. Nonetheless, in the early 1990s, the local authorities found that the city still needed a high-calibre office location. Plans to redevelop the embankments of the River IJ failed, as entrepreneurs preferred locations closer to the ring road. In effect, the Zuidas,

around the southern railway and the A10 motorway, became Amsterdam's top-end office location early in the 1990s. The local authorities assumed an active role in the development of the area.

Since then, plans have been elaborated gradually by the municipality and supervisor Pi de Bruijn. The focus has shifted from offices alone to a mix of offices, apartments and other types of accommodation. The aim of the Zuidas project is to create a secondary city centre with a distinct, metropolitan atmosphere; it should be both a high-end location for internationally competitive service industries and an attractive urban district. The project entails numerous subprojects. The focus here is on the area around the WTC and the Mahler and Gershwin projects south of the railway station, where development is furthest. The public debate, in contrast, is focusing on the construction of a 1.2 kilometre long railway and motorway tunnel ('dock') with the plans still in the preliminary phase. That said, in the long term the dock could have a significant influence on the quality of place in the Zuidas.

Rotterdam Centraal

Like Lille, Rotterdam was hit hard by the decline in traditional manufacturing. At the same time, it felt the backlash from the mechanisation and automation of seaport activities. The local authorities have now adopted modern ideas on urban competitiveness and are focusing on attracting higher-income groups and retaining the middle class. The post-war inner city, widely perceived as unattractive, poses a problem in this respect, especially in view of the growing importance of quality of place. Rotterdam, with its modernist layout, is one of the few Dutch cities able to accommodate a large-scale office development in its inner city. The station area is already an important, but not particularly attractive, office area. Accordingly, the aims of the Rotterdam Centraal project go beyond improvements to the transport node; they now embrace improvements to the station area, which will enhance the attractiveness and dynamics of the inner city as a whole.

The project got off to a false start with the ambitious, but vastly expensive and extravagant, *Masterplan* of 2001. The current project is considerably smaller in scope and cheaper. The focus is on the station itself, which is the most urgent problem at present. The development of the surrounding area is expected to take place in a second stage.

The projects discussed here cannot be separated from their local context: Amsterdam, an advanced service economy; Rotterdam, an industrial economy in a process of transformation. Quality of place plays a different role in each case, but that does not make it any less important. In the Zuidas, the aim is to create a sub-centre to complement the inner city, but with a distinct metropolitan atmosphere; a high-quality location, competitive at international level. In Rotterdam, the aim is to improve the quality of the station area and its

connection to the inner city. This should boost the quality of the entire area. In both cases, the quality-of-place aims have to be weighed against the seemingly straightforward demands for efficiency and profitability.

Quality of place in the case studies

Quality of place as such has only a limited role in the development projects studied here. However, many of the measures aimed at urban quality also concern elements of quality of place. These are not primarily the elusive, socio-cultural aspects that emerged as important from the analysis of the context of development, but rather the elements that are relevant at the scale of the project and which relate to urban design: the functional programme is more diverse than in most comparable projects; explicit attention is paid to the physical and functional integration of the project in the surrounding area; specific planning elements, such as shops in the streets rather than in inwardly-oriented malls, should enhance the quality of public space. In effect, all the key elements of quality of place distinguished above are present, although in a less interrelated way and without the label.

The actors' perception of quality of place

The role of quality-of-place elements in the plans, and the extent to which they can eventually be realised, also depend on the attitude and behaviour of the actors in the planning process. Their perception of quality of place may well influence the actual project plans. The reverse may also be true, however, as planning processes are lengthy and often iterative. Furthermore, the importance the actors attach to quality of place largely defines the viability of the long-term requirements for its evolution and maintenance.

The actors in the planning process associate quality of place primarily with elements that are directly related to urban design at project level. These are the elements which are easiest to plan and are closest to the actors' own sphere of activity. Vibrancy and street-life are considered particularly important by both public and private parties. These are created by increasing functional diversity, by improving the comfort and safety of pedestrians, and by offering a fine-grained range of amenities. Furthermore, they want to reduce urban fragmentation by removing infrastructural barriers. Finally, both public and private parties focus on the quality of public space – also one of the issues mentioned most frequently by interviewees. These issues strongly correspond with the characteristics of thriving urban areas emphasised by Jane Jacobs and many others after her. They are closely related to the desired urban or metropolitan climate rather than specifically to quality of place.

Two related aspects which were mentioned only by private developers and representatives of public development corporations are the quality of the architecture and the materials. The first implies a variety of architectur-

al forms and involvement by architects of international standing; the second relates to the 'semiotics' of the area and is considered an important issue in the Zuidas, given the user target group (banks and other financial services) and the explicit ambition to develop a high-quality business location. It figures less in Rotterdam, where private development is not the main concern at the moment. However, the problem remains that architectural quality is a somewhat subjective factor, and that what the professionals see as high-quality architecture is not always appreciated by the general public.

Finally, there are differing views as to the importance of the HST. It is regarded as a key contributor to the image of a project, but its value as a mode of transport depends on where the project is positioned in the HST and its proximity to an international airport. The Zuidas, in particular, is not a station-based project in the sense that it is dependent on or was even inspired by the HST. Rotterdam Centraal, and especially the more centrally located Euralille, were in effect inspired by the HST, even though the deeper motivation lies largely in local development.

The above suggests that only part of Florida's ideas are being taken into account. The more abstract elements of quality of place figure in the background rather than the foreground. In particular designers are concerned with these issues. This does not mean, in all cases, that they are familiar with the work of Florida; but it does mean that they share some of his ideas on urbanity, openness and authenticity. Probably, the main aspect in which these abstract ideas become visible to a certain extent is the overall urban design of the area, which may reveal a lot about the conceptual ideas behind the project. In this respect, the conceptual ideas on the city of Koolhaas versus those of De Bruijn and the designers of Rotterdam Centraal seem crucial. Euralille is conceived primarily on the basis of its position in international networks, while the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal (after Alsop) are seen as part of existing cities – though neither exclusively so. Both the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal are based on a more traditional street pattern than Euralille, although the difference is partly due to the situation of the projects. As it is, Euralille largely fulfils its macro-level objectives, but it has only limited urban quality at street level. At least in theory, the ideas behind the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal are, in many respects, a better match for quality of place as conceived by Richard Florida and Jane Jacobs, but this is yet to be proven.

The importance of quality of place in a broader sense must not be ignored. It is virtually impossible to define aspects such as a tolerant, open climate and public safety at project level. They are, however, highly relevant at urban or even national level and they may affect the chances of creating attractive places on lesser scales. Designers, in particular, are conscious of this. The zero-tolerance climate of Rotterdam, or Amsterdam's reputation as a commercial centre – differences such as these may easily assume greater impor-

tance in the mindsets of the international business partners who are essential to the success of the project.

It must be concluded that few of the interviewees had more than just a passing knowledge of Florida's ideas on the creative class and quality of place. All appeared to have elaborate ideas on what a city should be, however, which were not radically different. Irrespective of whether these ideas are based specifically on the concept of quality of place, they certainly correspond to a large extent with the elements of quality of place which are relevant in the design of station areas, albeit often with different labels. The actors instantaneously recognised the ideas of Florida and linked them to their own (making increasing use of the idiom of Florida as the 'creativity debate' continues). This suggests that Florida framed and made explicit ideas that seemed to be already taking shape in professional circles.

Long-term perspective

Last, but not least, there is the question of how far the actors in large-scale urban redevelopment actually support the quality-of-place elements in the project plan. Although urban quality at business locations may pay off through higher rents, it often requires additional investments which are more likely to be recouped only in the long run, since quality needs time to evolve. Moreover, maintenance also requires a long-term cooperation between the actors. And even then, it is hard to allocate the benefits to specific places. Quality of place therefore calls for a long-term vision. Public parties are generally assumed to act from a long-term, quality-oriented perspective. This is in stark contrast with the presumed short-term view of private developers, in particular, who are thought to be interested mainly in a quick profit.

In the case of both the Zuidas and Rotterdam Centraal, the local government is an important actor. Public actors and publicly commissioned architects do not only largely define the overall urban structure of the area and the functional programme, they also design and maintain the public space, which is an important element of quality of place. Moreover, they have a persuasive, if not decisive, influence on the eventual quality of the functions and they define the objective of the project within its broader urban-economic context. Private developers, on the other hand, are responsible for the architecture of the commercially developed real estate within the parameters of the urban plan. They are also responsible for selecting the actual users of privately developed office space and amenities.

There are two specific responsibilities with regard to the quality of place in the area and the way it could be maintained which are shared by the public and private parties.

The first concerns the general urban design of the area. The main aspects of the project plans, especially the general urban design and subsequent design codes, were conceived largely by public actors in association with publicly commissioned architects or designers. Other actors have committed themselves to the urban design and the design codes, including the real estate programme. Also, at present there seems to be general consensus on the objectives of the projects. In public, therefore, all the actors agree on the project philosophy, which is most clearly defined for the Zuidas, and all seem to have a distinct long-term vision on the development of the area. Some differences in opinion may be expected in projects as large and diverse as this one. The analysis revealed that the actors had different views of certain elements of the plan, such as the urban grid in the Zuidas, the optimal number of amenities, or the mix of functions on different scales. On the other hand, some elements that designers consider desirable from a quality-of-place perspective are not included in the plan if commercially infeasible, particularly in a more small-scale development. In Rotterdam, communication between the actors in various parts of the project and the outside world appears to be less than optimal anyway, probably due to previous experience of the *Masterplan*.

The second public-private responsibility concerns the quality of the functions and the public space, both considered major factors in the quality of the area as a whole. The selection of firms and amenities is entrusted to the private sector. Both private and public parties express a strong belief in the ability of market parties and economic processes to achieve a balanced, but high-quality, urban area. Self-regulation via high rents and a high-end profile (mutually reinforcing) should be able to guarantee the quality of functions and prevent mismatches that would affect the top rent level. This belief in the market is partly based on a strong mutual trust and dependence between public, and publicly commissioned, actors and private parties. Both groups need each other in the long run for, amongst others, the control and maintenance of public space and for retaining the high quality standards that were set at the start.

The analysis of the above projects indicates that private developers show a genuine interest in quality of place and are streets ahead of the stereotypical short-term money-maker. They can do so partly because of a discretionary freedom that allows them to take decisions on, for instance, the design of the projects rather independently. Moreover, in many cases, the representatives of the developers involved in the project planning have the same educational background as the architects and designers and are not average bankers. At the same time, private developers also have a closer affinity than, say, designers with the prospective users of the area and their demands. This emerges, for instance, in the slightly different priorities in the interpretation of quality of place, such as explicit appreciation of architectural craftsmanship.

However, even private sector parties who are genuinely interested in a quality of place as more than just a money-spinner, are bound by the constraints of the institutional context. The robustness of the private actors' commitments is not definitive at this moment. It is clear, and generally acknowledged, that if the commercialisation of the Zuidas were to stagnate, the current high standards for quality of place would eventually suffer.

Planning for quality of place

New projects can never acquire the richly layered identities and quality of place of historically evolved cities and urban neighbourhoods. One could, however, plan things in a way that considerably increases the chances of getting there at some point in time.

In theory, a comprehensive planning could offer the best possible path to quality of place. One main element of the development, from the quality-of-place perspective, is the existence of an overall concrete framework. The mere existence of a masterplan already leads developers to perceive economic benefits and lower risks. All three cases analysed here, particularly Euralille and the Zuidas, are based on an elaborate urban design which has been monitored by a publicly commissioned 'urban design supervisor', who is one of the driving forces behind the project. Yet, there are significant differences between them. The inclusion of an elaborated, fine-grained street pattern, public and semi-public functions in streets rather than malls, enclosed squares or small parks rather than bare concrete slabs, a small-scale mix of functions – all these elements together make a huge difference. If the aim is to achieve urban quality as conceived by Jane Jacobs and Richard Florida, these elements should be guaranteed in the urban design, as basic conditions for urban quality.

Some of the elements that should be dealt with in the masterplan may seem to conflict at first with the developers' interests: a relatively fine grain, the inclusion of small parks or enclosed squares, the prevention of large inward-oriented malls at the cost of functions located in streets and so on. It is preferable, therefore, that the local authority assume or be given a coordinating role in order to counterbalance pressures from the private sector. Public, or publicly commissioned, parties should be responsible for the overall urban design of the project. This is more or less the case in all three projects discussed here, although it may be more explicit now and then.

Nevertheless, the result is quite different in, for instance, Euralille and, as it seems, the Zuidas, when it comes to the elements considered important to quality of place. This illustrates the fact that not all urban design blends in with the kind of urban atmosphere that follows from the ideas of Florida and, even more, of Jacobs. In short, therefore, the public design should reflect the type of urban atmosphere that is desired, and it should go hand in hand with

a set of requirements to guarantee at least the basic conditions for the development of such an atmosphere, in terms of grain, scale, functional mix etc.

The call for a more comprehensive approach in urban planning and development seems like a reaction to the complexity of current urban redevelopment, not least in railway station areas. In practice, however, broad outlines may be all that are feasible, precisely because of that complexity. In contrast with this, is a policy of incrementalism. This would be an appropriate approach in view of the character of quality of place and is, in fact, not unlike the approach favoured by Jacobs. It would imply small steps and small-scale development, and possibly less formal practices of urban development, if only in parts of the area. Small steps and small-scale plans that can be adapted to suit new needs would make the development of the project more flexible and more amenable to new insights, the anticipated results of earlier planning stages, and changing market conditions. The current plans can cope with these factors only to a limited degree.

This is not to say that only small-scale plans should be drawn up. This would make it virtually impossible to develop locations such as those considered here. In practice there are limits to incrementalism. It is advisable, therefore, to apply more incremental planning in the framework of current urban design practices. As emphasised above, some kind of overall urban design is necessary. But every individual project still needs to be able to absorb all sorts of expected and unexpected changes, also beyond the physical construction of the area. The approaches that come closest to the essence of quality of place tend to be expressed in terms of cultural or human ecology, people-oriented design and the *inhabiting* of public space. These terms suggest a guided evolution rather than straightforward development.

Samenvatting

Stedelijke planning gericht op 'quality of place'; de herontwikkeling van HST-stationsgebieden

Jan Jacob Trip

Inleiding

De invoering van de hogesnelheidstrein is in veel steden aanleiding voor het opstarten van grootschalige herontwikkelingsprogramma's. Veel hiervan nemen de vorm aan van wat we 'international business centres' zouden kunnen noemen: locaties die specifiek zijn gericht op het aantrekken van de kantoren van vooral de grote, internationale georiënteerde dienstverlenende bedrijven. De HST kan om twee redenen bijdragen aan de ontwikkeling van zulke gebieden. Ten eerste biedt de HST een aanvullende hoogwaardige transportverbinding. Ten tweede, en zeker niet minder belangrijk, spreekt het imago van de HST het internationale bedrijfsleven zeer aan. Als gevolg hiervan beschouwen veel ambitieuze steden aansluiting op het HST-netwerk als een must.

Het internationale bedrijfsleven vereist echter een grote hoeveelheid moderne, efficiënte kantooruimte, waarvoor in de binnensteden nauwelijks plaats is. In plaats daarvan ontstaan vaak grootschalige, monotone kantoorgebieden, die vaak niet de kwaliteit en de grootstedelijke atmosfeer bieden die een hoogwaardige locatie moet hebben. Toch wordt stedelijke kwaliteit steeds belangrijker gevonden. Doordat de vastgoedopbrengsten toenemen, kan een hoogwaardige stedelijke omgeving, met bijvoorbeeld goede architectuur, een goed stedenbouwkundig ontwerp en een hoogwaardige openbare ruimte, renderen ondanks de extra investeringen die ervoor nodig zijn. Ook wordt wel een verband gelegd tussen stedelijke kwaliteit en 'quality of life' in bredere zin en de concurrentiekracht van steden op de langere termijn. Richard Florida is momenteel de voornaamste vertegenwoordiger van deze stroming. Florida, die voortbouwt op het werk van met name Jane Jacobs, stelt in zijn boek *The Rise of the Creative Class* uit 2002 dat een specifieke 'creatieve klasse' de drijvende kracht is van de moderne diensteneconomie. Deze creatieve klasse wordt op zijn beurt aangetrokken door bepaalde kenmerken van de dagelijkse stedelijke omgeving, door Florida gedefinieerd als de 'quality of place'.¹⁰²

Hoe dan ook is de kwaliteit van het gebied rond het HST-station dus van belang voor de ontwikkeling van het gebied tot hoogwaardige bedrijfslocatie. Bovendien liggen stations vaak midden in de stad en is het stationsgebied een

¹⁰² Gezien de zeer specifieke inhoud van het begrip 'quality of place' heb ik ervoor gekozen dit niet te vertalen, maar vast te houden aan de oorspronkelijke term van Florida. Hetzelfde geldt voor begrippen als 'people climate', 'third spaces' e.d.

belangrijk onderdeel van de openbare ruimte. Daarom is het des te belangrijker dat het een aantrekkelijk stedelijk gebied is, in plaats van puur een kantoorgebied. In dit proefschrift richt ik me daarom specifiek op de ontwikkelingen rond de stations van de hogesnelheidstrein, om te onderzoeken wat de rol is van stedelijke kwaliteit, en in het bijzonder van *quality of place*, in zulke grootschalige stedelijke herontwikkelingsprojecten. Mijn aandacht gaat dus vooral uit naar het station als plaats, en niet zozeer als vervoersknooppunt, en meer naar het stationsgebied dan naar het station zelf.

Doelstelling en opzet van het onderzoek

Het doel van het onderzoek is het verband te onderzoeken tussen het stedelijke ruimtelijk beleid enerzijds en de stedelijke economie anderzijds, met name waar het gaat om de ‘creatieve’ economie. In het bijzonder is het doel te onderzoeken in hoeverre, en op welke wijze, *quality of place* een rol speelt in grootschalige stedelijke herontwikkelingsprojecten, waarvan de huidige projecten rond de HST-stations een voorbeeld zijn. Dit resulteert in de volgende probleemstelling:

In hoeverre, en op welke wijze, speelt het concept quality of place een rol in de huidige grootschalige stedelijke herontwikkeling?

Deze probleemstelling is uitgewerkt in een aantal onderzoeksvragen:

1. *Wat is de aard van het momenteel veronderstelde verband tussen de kwaliteit van de stedelijke omgeving, in ruime zin, en de concurrentiekracht van de stad?* Het is belangrijk hier duidelijkheid in te scheppen, omdat het hier in feite gaat om de voornaamste reden waarom *quality of place* überhaupt van belang zou zijn. Deze vraag wordt echter vooral op een theoretisch niveau onderzocht, aangezien het doel hier niet is om het verband tussen *quality of place* en concurrentiekracht te toetsen, maar om het effect ervan op stedelijk beleid en planning te analyseren.
2. *Wat zijn de doelstellingen van grootschalige herontwikkelingsprojecten, met name de doelstellingen met betrekking tot de stedelijk-economische ontwikkeling en die met betrekking tot stedelijke planning?* De nadruk ligt hier op de stedenbouwkundige doelstelling van de hier besproken ontwikkelingsprojecten rond HST-stations en minder op de doelstellingen met betrekking tot vervoersvoorzieningen.
3. *Hoe kan quality of place worden geoperationaliseerd, in het bijzonder quality of place in grootschalige herontwikkelingsprojecten?* Dit betreft de operationalisatie van het concept *quality of place* als zodanig, maar ook de vraag welke specifieke onderdelen van *quality of place* van belang zijn voor het soort projecten dat hier aan de orde is, de vraag welke onderdelen speciaal van belang zijn bij de ontwikkeling van HST-stationsgebieden.

4. *Welke opvatting van quality of place hebben de verschillende actoren die betrokken zijn bij het planproces?* Dit heeft te maken met de manier waarop in de praktijk met quality of place wordt omgegaan, en met de waarde die aan het concept wordt toegekend. Aangenomen wordt dat dit in verband staat met de levensvatbaarheid, op de langere termijn, van de doelstellingen met betrekking tot quality of place zoals die zijn weergegeven in de projectplannen. Daarmee bestaat een samenhang tussen deze vraag en de vragen 5) en 6).
5. *Welke onderdelen van quality of place bevatten de projectplannen van grootschalige herontwikkelingsprojecten?* Dit geeft aan hoe de heersende ideeën over quality of place in de praktijk worden gebracht.
6. *In welke mate worden de in de plannen opgenomen onderdelen van quality of place daadwerkelijk ondersteund door de betrokken actoren?* Hierbij gaat het om de vraag hoe robuust de voornemens met betrekking tot quality of place zijn, in voor- en tegenspoed.

Om deze vragen te beantwoorden zijn casestudies uitgevoerd naar drie projecten langs de TGV Nord van Parijs naar Amsterdam: Euralille in Lille, dat al grotendeels in de vroege jaren negentig voltooid werd en als referentie dient, en de Zuidas in Amsterdam en Rotterdam Centraal in Rotterdam. Deze laatste projecten zijn al gedeeltelijk in uitvoering, maar liggen gedeeltelijk ook nog op de tekentafel. Om deze casestudies met elkaar te verbinden en in een breder perspectief te kunnen plaatsen, en om meer algemene conclusies te kunnen trekken, wordt de empirische analyse ingebed in een theoretisch kader.

De analyse van Euralille, de referentiecasi, is gebaseerd op enkele bezoeken aan het project en op bestaande literatuur. De andere casestudies zijn hoofdzakelijk gebaseerd op twee bronnen. In de eerste plaats is een analyse uitgevoerd van de projectplannen zoals die worden gepresenteerd in plan-documenten en op websites. Daarnaast is een serie diepte-interviews afgenomen met sleutelactoren die betrokken zijn bij het planningproces. De geïnterviewden zijn geselecteerd op basis van hun actieve betrokkenheid, en hun geschatte invloed op, de ontwikkeling van het stationsgebied als plaats, niet als vervoersknooppunt. Aan de hand van hun specifieke rol in het planningproces kunnen ze worden onderverdeeld in drie groepen:

- a. ontwikkelaars: vertegenwoordigers van private investeerders en projectontwikkelaars;
- b. ontwerpers: vertegenwoordigers van gemeentelijke diensten voor ruimtelijke ordening, en van architecten die werken in opdracht van openbare organen;
- c. coördinatoren: projectcoördinatoren en vertegenwoordigers van gemeentelijke ontwikkelingsbedrijven.

Quality of place

Volgens de theorie van de creatieve klasse is het vooral voor hoogwaardige stedelijke economieën in toenemende mate van belang om zich niet zozeer te richten op het aantrekken van bedrijven, maar op het aantrekken (en vasthouden) van getalenteerde mensen. Dit vereist wat Florida een 'people climate' noemt: een strategie gericht op het aantrekken van getalenteerde, in het bijzonder creatieve, mensen. Een essentieel onderdeel hiervan is de quality of place: een aantrekkelijke, gevarieerde en tolerante stedelijke omgeving. Deze wordt beschouwd als een steeds belangrijker onderdeel van de concurrentiekracht van steden.

Quality of place, zoals Florida het definieert, omvat een aantal kenmerken die tezamen een stad aantrekkelijk maken als woonplaats voor de creatieve klasse. Het gaat dan om dingen als economische en ruimtelijke verscheidenheid, bepaalde voorzieningen, de mogelijkheid om elkaar informeel te ontmoeten in zogenaamde 'third spaces', veiligheid, tolerantie, levendigheid en straatleven en onbenoembare kenmerken als authenticiteit en stedelijkheid. Sommige van deze kenmerken zijn moeilijk te definiëren, laat staan te meten of te reproduceren. Toch is de invloed van Florida's ideeën op stedelijke beleidsmakers in zowel de VS als Europa groot.

Kritiek op Florida

Hoe populair Florida's ideeën ook mogen zijn, ze roepen ook bezwaren op. Zo lijken de resultaten van zijn statistische analyses tamelijk gevoelig te zijn voor het soort gegevens dat wordt gebruikt. Toch is het veronderstelde verband tussen de creatieve klasse en de groei van de economie ook bevestigd in onderzoek naar de Nederlandse situatie. De beschikbaarheid en vergelijkbaarheid van gegevens zijn een probleem als het erop aankomt de quality of place van steden te vergelijken, vooral op internationale schaal. Het lijkt erop dat het er, binnen zekere grenzen, vooral om gaat de essentie van quality of place goed te treffen, en minder om vast te houden aan heel specifieke gegevens die in voorgaande analyses zijn gebruikt. De manier waarop Florida zelf in achtereenvolgende studies met dit probleem omgaat wijst hier ook op.

Een ander bezwaar van Florida's werk is zijn veronderstelde gebrek aan detail. Dit is grotendeels het gevolg van zijn brede perspectief en van het feit dat hij voortbouwt op het werk van anderen. Florida legt echter veel nadrukkelijker het verband tussen stedelijke economie en quality of life dan voorheen is gedaan. Hij verbindt daarbij uiteenlopende ideeën uit de economie, sociologie en stedelijke ontwikkeling, die tot nu toe niet, of alleen op onduidelijke wijze, met elkaar waren verbonden.

Uiteindelijk is quality of place een bruikbaar concept, omdat het de economische kracht van steden in verband brengt met een zeer fijnzinnige visie op stedelijke ontwikkeling. Dit betekent niet noodzakelijk dat quality of place als

zodanig een belangrijke rol speelt in de hier onderzochte cases; de vraag is eerder welke onderdelen van quality of place aanwezig zijn in de ontwikkeling van deze projecten, en in welke mate het concept een rol speelt in het ontwikkelingsproces.

Operationalisatie van quality of place

De operationalisatie van quality of place in dit proefschrift gebeurt op twee manieren. Ten eerste is een aantal indicatoren geselecteerd die de kern van quality of place vormen, om zo de quality of place te analyseren op het niveau van de stad. Deze maakt deel uit van de lokale context waarin de bestudeerde projecten tot stand komen. Met het oog op de door Florida verrichte studies (maar met een minder sterke nadruk op hightech-activiteiten) zijn drie groepen indicatoren gekozen voor drie belangrijke onderdelen van quality of place:

- creativiteit en talent;
- diversiteit, tolerantie en veiligheid;
- het aanbod aan specifieke voorzieningen.

Ten tweede zijn drie kernelementen onderscheiden van quality of place op een lager schaalniveau, die als leidraad dienen bij de analyse van de hier bestudeerde projecten:

- de verscheidenheid aan functies en mensen;
- de ruimtelijke, functionele en visuele integratie van het project;
- de kwaliteit van de openbare ruimte.

De meer ongrijpbare onderdelen van quality of place zijn in de meeste gevallen niet zozeer van belang op de schaal van een project, als op het niveau van de stad als geheel. Maar vaak beïnvloeden ze wel de doelstelling en het ontwikkelingstraject van projecten. Bovendien kunnen ze, indirect, ook de kwaliteit op projectniveau beïnvloeden; we kunnen zeggen dat ze voorwaarden scheppen voor de kwaliteit van het project. De concretere onderdelen van quality of place die spelen op de schaal van het projectgebied hebben een directer aanwijsbaar effect.

Casestudies

De hier onderzochte projecten worden nadrukkelijk bekeken binnen hun lokale 'ontwikkelingscontext'. De analyse van deze context is gericht op de positie van een stad in transport- en communicatienetwerken (in het bijzonder het HST-netwerk), het huidige niveau van quality of place en de economische structuur van de stad. De nadruk ligt op de Zuidas en Rotterdam Centraal. De analyse van Lille, als referentiecasi, is relatief beperkt gebleven.

Ontwikkelingscontext

Lille neemt in het HST-netwerk een centrale plaats in tussen Parijs, Londen

en Brussel. Van de drie hier vergeleken steden is het het best bereikbaar per trein en auto, hoewel vooral Rotterdam Lille in dit opzicht ongeveer zal evenaren als de hogesnelheidslijn tussen Amsterdam en Brussel eenmaal operationeel is. Amsterdam is het best bereikbaar per vliegtuig, dankzij de nabijheid van Schiphol.

Qua economische structuur bestaat het traditionele verschil tussen Amsterdam en Rotterdam nog steeds. Het werkgelegenheidsaandeel van de industrie daalt in beide steden, terwijl dat van de dienstensector stijgt. De absolute werkgelegenheidsgroei in Rotterdam loopt achter bij die in Amsterdam. De stad doet het relatief slecht in de meeste van de dienstverlenende activiteiten waarin momenteel de werkgelegenheid het sterkste groeit. Dit zijn juist sterke punten van Amsterdam, dat relatief meer van de economische activiteiten heeft die Florida verbindt met creativiteit en quality of place. Lille, ten slotte, is net als Rotterdam een traditionele industriestad in een proces van verandering in een meer concurrerende diensteneconomie. In de centrale stad Lille zelf is dit voor een groot deel gelukt, maar vergeleken met de beide Nederlandse steden heeft Lille een grotere overheidssector en een hogere werkloosheid.

Amsterdam scoort ook aanmerkelijk hoger dan Rotterdam voor wat betreft quality of place, vooral als het gaat om sociaal-culturele elementen: de 'cultural industries', alternatieve scènes, nachtleven, cultuur. Dit zijn niet alleen enkele van de meest omstreden en ongrijpbare onderdelen van quality of place, het zijn ook aspecten die door Florida bijzonder worden benadrukt. Op sommige andere gebieden is het verschil tussen beide steden maar klein. Toch lijkt het aannemelijk dat Rotterdam het op verschillende punten beter doet dan de cijfers laten zien; het probleem blijft dat officiële statistieken niet altijd toereikend zijn waar het de ongrijpbare onderdelen van quality of place betreft. De analyse ten aanzien van Lille wijst vooral op een verbetering van de quality of place in de centrale stad Lille, waar Euralille en de historische binnenstad in staat zijn vele toeristen en shoppers aan te trekken.

Euralille

Lille leed onder de industriële neergang in de jaren zestig en zeventig en stond voor de taak de lokale economie te hervormen. De TGV zou hierbij als een katalysator kunnen dienen, als basis voor een gepland Europees zaken-centrum: een cluster van hoogwaardige dienstverlenende, commerciële en recreatieve activiteiten dat de lokale economie zou moeten versterken. Euralille werd gebouwd op een terrein tussen het bestaande station Lille Flandres en de rondweg, grenzend aan de binnenstad. Het omvat kantoren, woningen, een congrescentrum en een winkelcentrum. De Nederlandse architect Rem Koolhaas werd in 1989 gekozen om het stedenbouwkundig ontwerp te maken. Zijn ontwerp heeft een doorslaggevende rol gespeeld in de ontwikkeling van Euralille, als uitgangspunt bij de aanleg van het project, maar ook voor het imago van Euralille en de mogelijkheid om private partijen aan te trekken. Vooral

de nauwe samenwerking en de persoonlijke invloed van Koolhaas, Jean-Paul Baïetto (directeur van de publiek-private ontwikkelingsmaatschappij SAEM) en Pierre Mauroy (burgermeester van Lille en voormalig premier van Frankrijk) zijn beslissend geweest voor het succes van het project.

Ondanks de aanvankelijke scepsis wordt het effect van Euralille op de lokale economie overwegend positief beoordeeld. Bovendien heeft het project een grote symboolwaarde, en draagt het veel bij aan het imago en het zelfbewustzijn van Lille. Binnen het stedelijk gebied is vooral de positie van de binnenstad versterkt. De teleurstelling die soms wordt geuit met betrekking tot de resultaten van Euralille lijkt gedeeltelijk te worden veroorzaakt door de te grote verwachtingen die aanvankelijk bestonden, gedeeltelijk ook door de stagnatie op de vastgoedmarkt in de tijd dat het project grotendeels werd voltooid.

Zuidas

Sinds de jaren zestig steeg de groei in de vraag naar kantoorruimte voor banken en andere dienstverlenende activiteiten in Amsterdam aanhoudend. In de historische binnenstad was hiervoor geen plaats meer. In de vroege jaren negentig was de gemeente van mening dat de stad niettemin een hoogwaardige kantoorlocatie moest hebben. Het aanvankelijke plan voor herontwikkeling van de IJ-oevers mislukte echter, omdat private partijen de voorkeur gaven aan locaties dicht bij de rondweg. In feite was de Zuidas, zuidelijk van de binnenstad gelegen rond de spoorlijn en de rondweg A10, vanaf het midden van de jaren negentig de toplocatie van Amsterdam. De lokale overheden namen vervolgens een actieve rol op zich in de ontwikkeling van dit gebied.

Sindsdien zijn de plannen geleidelijk aan uitgewerkt door de gemeente en de stedenbouwkundig supervisor van het project, Pi de Bruijn. De nadruk verschoof van kantoren naar een combinatie van kantoren, woningen en andere functies. Het doel van het Zuidasproject is een secundair stadscentrum tot stand te brengen met een uitgesproken grootstedelijke atmosfeer; het moet een hoogwaardige vestigingsplaats zijn voor tal van dienstverlenende bedrijfsactiviteit, die op internationaal niveau kan concurreren, maar ook een aantrekkelijk stadsdeel. De Zuidas bestaat uit talrijke deelprojecten. De nadruk ligt hier op het gebied rond het WTC en de deelprojecten Mahler en Gershwin ten zuiden van het station, waar de ontwikkeling het verste is gevorderd. De openbare discussie is echter sterk gericht op de aanleg van een 1,2 kilometer lang 'dok' voor de spoorweg en de rondweg, waarvoor de plannen nog in een voorlopig stadium verkeren. Op de langere termijn kan het dok een grote bijdrage leveren aan de quality of place in de Zuidas.

Rotterdam Centraal

Net als Lille leed ook Rotterdam zwaar onder de neergang van de traditionele industrie en de mechanisatie en automatisering van havenactiviteiten. De

lokale overheid richt zich nu op het aantrekken van hogere-inkomensgroepen en het aan de stad binden van de middenklasse. Daarbij is de naoorlogse binnenstad, die in het algemeen als weinig aantrekkelijk wordt ervaren, een probleem, zeker gezien het toenemende belang van quality of place. Rotterdam is echter wel een van de weinige Nederlandse steden die in de binnenstad plaats kan bieden aan grootschalige kantoorontwikkeling. Het stationsgebied is nu al een belangrijke kantoorlocatie, maar het is geen erg aantrekkelijk gebied. De doelstellingen van het project Rotterdam Centraal gaan daarom verder dan het verbeteren van het vervoersknooppunt: het doel is ook het verhogen van de kwaliteit van het stationsgebied en, daardoor, van de aantrekkelijkheid en dynamiek van de binnenstad als geheel.

Het project kende een valse start met het *Masterplan* uit 2001, dat zeer ambitieus was, maar te kostbaar en te extravagant werd gevonden. Het huidige project is aanmerkelijk kleinschaliger en goedkoper. De nadruk ligt op het station zelf, momenteel het meest dringende onderdeel van het project. De ontwikkeling van het omliggende gebied vindt naar verwachting plaats in de tweede fase van het project.

De hier besproken projecten kunnen niet los worden gezien van hun plaatselijke context: Amsterdam als moderne diensteneconomie, Rotterdam als een industriële economie in een proces van verandering. De rol van quality of place is in beide projecten verschillend, maar kwaliteit is in beide gevallen van belang. In de Zuidas is het doel een subcentrum tot stand te brengen, complementair aan de binnenstad, maar met een uitgesproken grootstedelijke atmosfeer; een toplocatie die kan concurreren op internationaal niveau. In Rotterdam is het doel het verbeteren van de kwaliteit van het stationsgebied en de verbinding van het station met de binnenstad, wat de kwaliteit van het gehele gebied ten goede moet komen. In beide gevallen is het streven gericht op quality of place als tegenwicht voor de ogenschijnlijk onbuigzame eisen van efficiency en winstgevendheid.

Quality of place in de projecten

De rol van quality of place als zodanig in de hier besproken projecten is beperkt. Maar veel van de maatregelen die zijn gericht op stedelijke kwaliteit hebben feitelijk betrekking op onderdelen van quality of place. Het gaat daarbij niet primair om de ongreepbare, sociaal-culturele factoren die naar voren kwamen uit de analyse van de ontwikkelingscontext, maar eerder om onderdelen die van belang zijn op de schaal van het projectgebied en die te maken hebben met het stedenbouwkundig ontwerp: de mate van functiemenging is groter dan in de meeste vergelijkbare projecten; er is nadrukkelijk aandacht besteed aan de ruimtelijke en functionele inpassing van het project in het omringende gebied; het ontwerp bevat onderdelen die specifiek zijn bedoeld om

de kwaliteit van de openbare ruimte te verhogen, zoals het plannen van winkels in de straten, in plaats van in naar binnen gekeerde winkelcentra. In feite zijn alle cruciale onderdelen van quality of place die hierboven zijn onderscheiden aanwezig, zij het dat ze zeer sterk onderling zijn verbonden en vaak niet worden gepresenteerd onder de noemer quality of place.

De perceptie van quality of place door betrokken actoren

De rol van bepaalde onderdelen van quality of place in de plannen, en de mate waarin de intenties uiteindelijk kunnen worden gerealiseerd, zijn mede afhankelijk van de instelling en de handelingen van de bij het planproces betrokken partijen. Het mag worden aangenomen dat de manier waarop actoren quality of place opvatten van invloed is op de feitelijke projectplannen. Het omgekeerde kan echter ook het geval zijn, aangezien het om een langdurig en vaak iteratief planproces gaat. Bovendien bepaalt het belang dat actoren hechten aan quality of place voor een groot deel de mogelijkheid om vast te houden aan een langetermijnvisie. Dit laatste is noodzakelijk voor het ontstaan en het in stand houden van quality of place.

De actoren die betrokken zijn bij de planning van de hier besproken projecten associëren quality of place primair met onderwerpen die direct verband houden met het stedenbouwkundig ontwerp op de schaal van het project: aspecten die relatief eenvoudig te plannen zijn en die nauw aansluiten bij de dagelijkse activiteiten van deze actoren. Zowel publieke als private partijen benadrukken het belang van levendigheid en straatleven: door het vergroten van de variatie aan functies, het verhogen van het comfort en de veiligheid van voetgangers en door een fijnmazige differentiatie in functies. Verder streven beide groepen ernaar de ruimtelijke versnippering van de stad te verminderen door het slechten van infrastructurele barrières. Zowel publieke als private partijen richten zich tenslotte op de kwaliteit van de openbare ruimte, eveneens een van de elementen die het meest worden genoemd door de geïnterviewden. Deze thema's komen sterk overeen met de factoren van stedelijke vitaliteit die werden benadrukt door Jane Jacobs, en vele anderen na haar. Meer nog dan met de eigenlijke quality of place, houden ze verband met het gewenste stedelijke of grootstedelijke klimaat.

Twee aspecten die met elkaar in verband staan en die alleen werden genoemd door private ontwikkelaars en vertegenwoordigers van gemeentelijke ontwikkelingsbedrijven zijn de kwaliteit van de architectuur en de kwaliteit van de toegepaste bouwmaterialen. Het eerste betekent variatie in bouwvormen en de inzet van architecten van een internationale statuur; het tweede de 'semiotiek' van het gebied. Dit wordt vooral in de Zuidas als een belangrijk thema beschouwd, gezien het soort gebruikers waar men op rekt (banken en andere financiële instellingen) en de nadrukkelijk uitgesproken ambitie om een hoogwaardige vestigingslocatie te ontwikkelen. In Rotterdam, waar private ontwikkeling op het moment nog niet aan de orde is, wordt het onder-

werp minder genoemd. Een probleem blijft evenwel dat de kwaliteit van de architectuur een nogal subjectief criterium is en dat architectuur die vanuit een professioneel standpunt als hoogwaardig wordt gezien niet perse ook een algemeen publiek aanspreekt.

De waardering voor de HST, tenslotte, varieert. De HST wordt op prijs gesteld omdat hij bijdraagt aan het imago van het project. De waardering binnen een project voor de HST als vervoermiddel hangt af van de positie van het betreffende project in het HST-netwerk en van de ligging ten opzichte van een internationale luchthaven. Zeker de Zuidas is in feite geen echt stationsproject in de zin dat het afhankelijk is van de HST, of dat de HST de aanleiding tot het project vormt. In het geval van Rotterdam Centraal, en vooral het meer centraal gelegen Euralille, vormde de komst van de HST wel de aanleiding tot het project, ook al is de motivatie van de projecten in wezen grotendeels gelegen in de plaatselijke ontwikkelingscontext.

Het bovenstaande lijkt erop te wijzen dat slechts een gedeelte van Florida's ideeën een rol speelt. De meer abstracte onderdelen van quality of place spelen voornamelijk een achtergrondrol. Vooral ontwerpers houden zich hiermee bezig. Dat wil niet perse zeggen dat ze vertrouwd zijn met het werk van Florida, maar het betekent wel dat ze sommige van zijn ideeën over stedelijkheid, openheid en authenticiteit delen. Deze abstracte ideeën worden waarschijnlijk met meest zichtbaar in het stedenbouwkundig ontwerp. Dit kan veel onthullen over de ideeën achter het project. Het verschil in de conceptuele ideeën over de stad van Koolhaas enerzijds en De Bruijn en de ontwerpers van Rotterdam Centraal anderzijds lijkt wat dit betreft cruciaal te zijn. Euralille is primair ontwikkeld op basis van zijn positie in internationale transportnetwerken, de Zuidas en Rotterdam Centraal (na Alsop) veel meer als onderdeel van een bestaande stad. In al deze projecten spelen echter beide benaderingen wel in meer of mindere mate een rol. De Zuidas en Rotterdam Centraal zijn gebaseerd op een meer traditioneel stratenpatroon dan Euralille, hoewel dit verschil gedeeltelijk te wijten is aan de specifieke ligging van de projecten. Hoe dan ook, Euralille voldoet op macro-niveau grotendeels aan de verwachtingen, maar heeft op straatniveau een beperkte stedelijke kwaliteit. De ideeën achter de Zuidas en Rotterdam Centraal sluiten, zeker in theorie, beter aan bij de kernwaarden van quality of place zoals die zijn opgesteld door Richard Florida en Jane Jacobs, maar moeten nog in de praktijk worden beproeven.

Het belang van quality of place in een meer algemene zin moet niet worden veronachtzaamd. Aspecten als een open, tolerant klimaat en openbare veiligheid kunnen nauwelijks worden bepaald op de schaal van het project. Maar ze zijn wel belangrijk op het niveau van een stad of zelfs op nationaal niveau, en ze kunnen van invloed zijn op de mogelijkheid om op kleinere schaal aantrekkelijke plekken tot stand te brengen. Vooral ontwerpers

zijn zich hiervan bewust. Het klimaat van *zero-tolerance* in Rotterdam, of de reputatie van Amsterdam als open koopmansstad – zulke verschillen kunnen gemakkelijk grotere vormen aannemen in de gedachten van de internationale zakenpartners die nodig zijn voor het slagen van het project.

Slechts enkele van de geïnterviewde actoren zijn meer dan oppervlakkig bekend met Florida's ideeën over de creatieve klasse en *quality of place*. Alle geïnterviewden hebben echter een nauwkeurig beeld van wat een stad zou moeten zijn, en hun gedachten hierover verschillen niet fundamenteel van elkaar. Of deze ideeën nu feitelijk zijn gestoeld op het concept van de *quality of place* of niet, ze komen in elk geval voor een groot deel overeen met de onderdelen van *quality of place* die van belang zijn bij het ontwerp van stationsgebieden, al verschijnen ze onder een andere vlag. De betrokken actoren herkennen de ideeën van Florida ogenblikkelijk en koppelen ze aan hun eigen gedachten, waarbij ze ook steeds meer het idioom van Florida overnemen naarmate het debat over de creatieve economie voortduurt. Dit wijst erop dat Florida een gevoelige snaar heeft geraakt door het benoemen en expliciet maken van ideeën die binnen de beroepsgroep al aan het ontstaan waren.

Langetermijnvisie

Een laatste, maar zeker niet onbelangrijke, vraag is in hoeverre de partijen die betrokken zijn bij grootschalige stedelijke herontwikkeling de maatregelen gericht op *quality of place* in het projectplan daadwerkelijk steunen. Het vergroten van de stedelijke kwaliteit in kantoorgebieden uiteindelijk kan renderen door hogere huuropbrengsten, maar het vergt aanvankelijk vaak extra investeringen, terwijl de baten pas op langere termijn blijken, aangezien een dergelijke kwaliteit tijd nodig heeft om te ontstaan. Bovendien vraagt ook het onderhouden ervan een langdurige samenwerking tussen de betrokken actoren. En zelfs dan is de uiteindelijke toewijzing van de baten aan bepaalde gebieden een probleem. *Quality of place* vraagt daarom om een langetermijnbenadering. Over het algemeen wordt aangenomen dat publieke partijen handelen op basis van zo'n, op kwaliteit gerichte, langetermijnvisie. Dit staat in schril contrast tot de veronderstelde kortetermijnbenadering van bijvoorbeeld private ontwikkelaars, van wie wordt aangenomen dat ze vooral zijn geïnteresseerd in snelle winsten.

In de Zuidas en Rotterdam Centraal is de lokale overheid een belangrijke speler. Publieke partijen en in opdracht van publieke partijen werkende architecten bepalen niet alleen grotendeels de stedenbouwkundige structuur van het gebied en het bouwprogramma, maar publieke partijen ontwerpen en onderhouden ook de openbare ruimte, een belangrijk onderdeel van de *quality of place*. Ze hebben verder een sterke, zij het niet beslissende, invloed op de uiteindelijke kwalitatieve invulling van de functies. Bovendien bepalen ze, binnen de algemene lokale economische context, de doelstellingen van het

project. Private ontwikkelaars, aan de andere kant, zijn (binnen de marges van het stedenbouwkundig ontwerp) verantwoordelijk voor de architectuur van het commercieel ontwikkelde vastgoed. Ze zijn ook verantwoordelijk voor de selectie van de uiteindelijke gebruikers van privaat ontwikkelde kantoorruimte en voorzieningen.

Met betrekking tot de quality of place in het gebied en de vraag hoe deze in stand kan worden gehouden, zijn twee thema's te onderscheiden waarbij een gedeelde verantwoordelijkheid bestaat van publieke en private partijen.

Het eerste thema betreft het algemene stedenbouwkundig ontwerp. De belangrijkste onderdelen van de projectplannen zijn grotendeels opgesteld door publieke partijen en in opdracht van publieke partijen werkende architecten of ontwerpers. Dit geldt in de eerste plaats voor het stedenbouwkundig ontwerp en de daaruit voortvloeiende ontwerprichtlijnen. De andere betrokken partijen hebben zich hieraan gecommitteerd, met inbegrip van het vastgoedprogramma. Bovendien lijkt er momenteel een algemene overeenstemming te bestaan over de doelstellingen van de projecten. In het openbaar stemmen alle partijen daarom in met de projectfilosofie, die voor de Zuidas het duidelijkste is omschreven. Alle partijen lijken een duidelijke langetermijnvisie te hebben op de ontwikkeling van het project. Aan de andere kant mag worden verwacht dat binnen zulke grote en veelomvattende projecten verschillen van mening bestaan. Uit de analyse bleek dat de meningen van de betrokken actoren met betrekking tot sommige aspecten van het plan uiteenlopen. Voorbeelden hiervan zijn het toegepaste gridpatroon in de Zuidas, de optimale hoeveelheid geplande voorzieningen of de functiemenging op verschillende niveaus. Aan de andere kant zijn er ook onderdelen die juist ontwerpers wenselijk vinden vanuit het oogpunt van quality of place, maar die toch niet in de plannen worden opgenomen omdat ze commercieel gezien niet realistisch zijn. Daarbij gaat het vooral om vormen van een meer kleinschalige ontwikkeling. Los hiervan lijkt in Rotterdam de communicatie tussen partijen die betrokken zijn bij verschillende onderdelen van het project niet optimaal te verlopen, en hetzelfde geldt voor de externe communicatie. Dit is waarschijnlijk het gevolg van de recente ervaringen met het *Masterplan*.

Het tweede onderwerp van publiek-private samenwerking betreft de kwalitatieve invulling van functies en de kwaliteit van de openbare ruimte, die beide worden gezien als belangrijke onderdelen van de quality of place van het gebied als geheel. De selectie van concrete bedrijven en voorzieningen is toevertrouwd aan de private sector. Zowel publieke als private partijen geven blijk van een groot vertrouwen in het vermogen van marktpartijen en de mogelijkheid door economische processen te komen tot een uitgebalanceerd, hoogwaardig stedelijk gebied. Zelfregulatie, door middel van een hoog huurniveau en een hoogwaardig profiel – die elkaar versterken – moet de kwaliteit van de functies in het gebied garanderen en voorkomen dat functies bij

elkaar worden geplaatst die niet bij elkaar passen, en die de huurwaarde zouden aantasten. Dit geloof in de markt is voor een deel gebaseerd op een sterk vertrouwen en een sterke onderlinge afhankelijkheid tussen publieke partijen en in opdracht van publieke partijen werkende actoren enerzijds en private partijen anderzijds. Op de lange termijn hebben beide groepen elkaar nodig, bijvoorbeeld voor het beheer en onderhoud van de openbare ruimte, of om de hoge kwaliteitsstandaard die aanvankelijk is gesteld te handhaven.

De analyse van de quality of place in de hier besproken projecten wijst erop dat private ontwikkelaars oprecht belangstelling tonen voor de quality of place, ver voorbij de benadering van de karakteristieke snelle *moneymaker*. Ze kunnen dit voor een deel naar eigen oordeel doen omdat ze een zekere vrijheid hebben om beslissingen met betrekking tot bijvoorbeeld het ontwerp van het project tamelijk onafhankelijk te nemen. Bovendien hebben de vertegenwoordigers van de ontwikkelaars die betrokken zijn bij de planning van de projecten in veel gevallen dezelfde opleiding en achtergrond als de architecten en ontwerpers, die afwijkt van de opleiding van bijvoorbeeld bankiers. Tegelijkertijd hebben private ontwikkelaars meer affiniteit dan bijvoorbeeld ontwerpers met de beoogde eindgebruikers van het gebied en hun behoeften. Dit blijkt bijvoorbeeld uit de iets verschillende prioriteiten die ze leggen in hun opvatting van quality of place, zoals een sterke nadruk op afwerking en architectuur.

Maar zelfs die partijen in de private sector die een oprechte interesse in quality of place tonen die verder gaat dan het maken van winst zijn gebonden aan de beperkingen die hun institutionele omgeving hun oplegt. Uiteindelijk is het onmogelijk om op dit moment te weten hoe robuust de steun van private partijen zal zijn. Het is duidelijk, en het wordt ook algemeen erkend, dat wanneer de afzet van kantoren in de Zuidas zou stagneren, de huidige hoge normen met betrekking tot quality of place uiteindelijk zullen worden afgezwakt.

Plannen voor quality of place

Nieuwe projecten kunnen nooit meteen de rijk gelaagde identiteit en de daarmee verbonden quality of place bereiken van historisch gegroeide steden en buurten. Men kan echter wel op zo'n manier plannen dat de kans dat ze zulke kwaliteiten ooit zullen krijgen reëel is.

In theorie zou een integrale planning de beste weg kunnen zijn naar quality of place. Een belangrijk onderdeel hiervan, vanuit het oogpunt van quality of place, is de aanwezigheid en de invulling van een alomvattend kader, een 'masterplan'. Alleen al het bestaan van een masterplan leidt ertoe dat ontwikkelaars economische baten hoger inschatten en risico's lager. Alledrie de hier besproken projecten zijn gebaseerd op een uitgebreid stedenbouwkundig

ontwerp, vooral Euralille en de Zuidas, waar een door de overheid benoemde stedenbouwkundig supervisor toezicht houdt op de ontwikkeling en een van de drijvende krachten is achter het project. Toch is het verschil tussen deze projecten aanzienlijk. Een gedetailleerd, tamelijk fijn vertakt stratenpatroon, het plaatsen van openbare en semi-openbare functies in de straten in plaats van in winkelcentra, het ontwerpen van omsloten pleintjes of kleine parkjes in plaats van stenige vlaktes, functiemenging op een laag schaalniveau – samen maken al deze onderdelen een groot verschil. Als een stedelijke kwaliteit zoals die is gedefinieerd door Jane Jacobs en Richard Florida het doel is, zouden elementen als deze moeten worden gewaarborgd in het stedenbouwkundig ontwerp, als een soort basisvoorwaarde voor stedelijke kwaliteit.

Sommige van deze maatregelen kunnen op het eerste gezicht tegenstrijdig zijn met de belangen van projectontwikkelaars: een fijn vertakt stratenpatroon, kleine parkjes en beschutte pleintjes, het voorkomen van naar binnen gekeerde winkelcentra die ten koste gaan van de functies in de straten. Het verdient daarom de voorkeur dat publieke partijen een coördinerende rol krijgen, of houden, als tegenwicht tegen de druk van de private sector. Publieke partijen, of partijen die werken in opdracht van publieke partijen, dienen verantwoordelijk te zijn voor het overkoepelende stedenbouwkundig ontwerp van het project. Dit is al in meer of mindere mate zo in de drie hier onderzochte projecten, maar het zou meer nadrukkelijk het geval moeten zijn.

De resultaten van de plannen in bijvoorbeeld Euralille en, naar het zich laat aanzien, de Zuidas, zijn zeer verschillend, ook voor wat betreft de aspecten van quality of place waaraan belang wordt gehecht. Dit illustreert het feit dat niet iedere stedenbouwkundig ontwerp even goed samengaat met het soort stedelijk milieu dat volgt uit de ideeën van Florida en, meer nog, Jacobs. Een stedenbouwkundig ontwerp moet passen bij het stedelijke milieu dat ermee wordt beoogd, en het zou moeten worden vergezeld van een aantal bepalingen om tenminste de basisvoorwaarden te garanderen voor het ontstaan van zo'n milieu, op het gebied van schaal, textuur, functiemenging enz.

De oproep tot een meer integrale benadering in stedelijke planning en ontwikkeling lijkt een reactie te zijn op de complexiteit van de hedendaagse stedelijke ontwikkeling, zeker in stationsgebieden. Juist door die complexiteit zou zo'n benadering in de praktijk echter wel eens nauwelijks haalbaar kunnen zijn, behalve in de vorm van een aantal vrij algemene richtlijnen. Hiertegenover staat een beleid van geleidelijke ontwikkeling. Gezien het karakter van quality of place zou dit een passende benadering zijn, eigenlijk niet erg verschillend van de benadering die Jacobs voorstaat. Het zou een ontwikkeling in kleine stapjes betekenen en kleinschalige, en mogelijk ook minder formele, vormen van stedelijke ontwikkeling mogelijk kunnen maken, als was het maar in een gedeelte van het projectgebied. Een ontwikkeling in kleine stapjes, met bescheiden plannen die kunnen worden aangepast naar gelang de

behoefte, zou betekenen dat gedurende de ontwikkeling van het project flexibeler kan worden omgegaan met voortschrijdend inzicht, verwachte en onverwachte gevolgen van voorgaande fases in de planning en veranderende marktomstandigheden. De huidige plannen bieden deze flexibiliteit maar in beperkte mate.

Dit wil niet zeggen dat alleen kleine plannen gemaakt zouden moeten worden. Dat zou de ontwikkeling van projecten zoals hier besproken bijna onmogelijk maken. In de praktijk zijn er grenzen aan de mate van geleidelijkheid van de ontwikkeling. Het is daarom noodzakelijk de principes van een meer geleidelijke ontwikkeling op te nemen in de huidige stedenbouwkundige structuren. Zoals hierboven al is benadrukt is enige vorm van stedenbouwkundig ontwerp noodzakelijk, maar dat neemt niet weg dat de ontwikkeling van elk project op zichzelf open moet staan voor alle mogelijke verwachte en onverwachte veranderingen. De benaderingen die het dicht bij de kern van quality of place komen zijn over het algemeen geformuleerd in termen van culturele of sociale ecologie, mensgericht ontwerp en een 'bewoonbare' openbare ruimte. Deze termen wijzen niet zozeer op een rechttoe rechtaan ontwikkeling als wel op een begeleide evolutie.

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Appendix A **Interviewees and discussion partners**

Zuidas Amsterdam (authorised interviews)

Mr U.E.B. de Goede	Fortis Real Estate Development
Ir. R. Hoogendoorn	ING Real Estate
Mr H.P.T.M. Joosten	Bouwfonds Property Development
Drs R. Dijkmeester	Zuidas Project Office
Ir. P.B. de Bruijn	De Architecten Cie.
Ing. C. Geldof	Municipality of Amsterdam, Department of Spatial Planning (DRO)
Ir. G. Kwakkenbos	Municipality of Amsterdam, Department of Spatial Planning (DRO)
Drs. K.M. Mook	Dutch Railways (NS), Department of Commerce
Mr G.J.M. Heemskerk	Municipality of Amsterdam, Development Corporation (OGA)

Rotterdam Centraal (authorised interviews)

Mrs R. Aarnink	Municipality of Rotterdam, Department of Urban Planning and Public Housing (dS+V)
Ir. M.J. Aarts	Municipality of Rotterdam, Department of Urban Planning and Public Housing (dS+V)
Mr P. Rodenberg	Municipality of Rotterdam, Development Corporation (OBR)
Ir. M. Blom	Bentham Crouwel/Team CS

Other discussion partners

Mr J. van Teeffelen	Municipality of Rotterdam, Department of Urban Planning and Public Housing (dS+V)
Prof. dr. J. Burgers	Erasmus University Rotterdam, Faculty of Social Sciences
Dr. ir. L. Bertolini	University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam Institute for Metropolitan and International Development Studies
Drs. S.J.H. Majoor	University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam Institute for Metropolitan and International Development Studies
Dr. ir. D.C. Kooijman	Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture

Appendix B Questionnaire

Interviews were semi-structured by way of a concise questionnaire that was taken as a guideline. All interviews were conducted in Dutch, which has hence been included after the translation of each group of questions.

General

- Could you briefly specify your function and the nature of your involvement in the Zuidas/Rotterdam Centraal project?
- In your opinion, what is, generally speaking, the most important objective of the project?
- What is the main reason for your organisation to be involved in the project?
- In preparation for the project, did you visit or study other projects which provided ideas or inspiration for the Zuidas/Rotterdam Centraal projects? Which other projects did you visit or study?
- Which aspects of these projects did you like in particular?
- Which aspects are, in your opinion, the most important with regard to the quality of the Zuidas/Rotterdam Centraal as a place?
- Which of these characteristics is, in your opinion, most important?
- Over which of these characteristics do you have direct influence?

- *Kunt u kort aangeven wat precies uw functie is en in welke hoedanigheid u bij de Zuidas/Rotterdam Centraal betrokken bent?*
- *Wat is naar uw mening, in het algemeen gesproken, de belangrijkste doelstelling van het project?*
- *Wat is voor uw organisatie de belangrijkste reden voor uw betrokkenheid bij het project?*
- *Heeft u ter voorbereiding op het project andere projecten bezocht of bestudeerd die u ideeën of inspiratie hebben gegeven voor de Zuidas/Rotterdam Centraal? Welke?*
- *Wat sprak u in het bijzonder aan in deze projecten?*
- *Welke vindt u in dit verband de belangrijkste aspecten van quality of place/kwaliteit van Rotterdam Centraal als plaats?*
- *Welke van deze kenmerken zijn volgens u de belangrijkste?*
- *Op welke van deze kenmerken heeft u zelf direct invloed?*

Diversity

- In your opinion, to what extent is diversity more than merely the combination of different functions?
- Which functions or specific amenities do you think are important with respect to the development of the area?
- Which specific amenities are being planned as part of the project?
- Do you have influence over these functions or amenities being present or not in the project area?

- Do you have influence over the way these functions are elaborated?
 - If so, does the choice of specific functions involve criteria concerning the quality of the area?
 - Which of the other actors do you expect to be involved in this? What kind of involvement do you anticipate?
 - Is explicit attention paid in the project to, for instance, the coherence of functions, the relation to traffic flows, pedestrian flows, etc.?
-
- *In hoeverre is diversiteit in het gebied naar uw opvatting meer dan puur het combineren van functies?*
 - *Welke functies of specifieke voorzieningen vindt u belangrijk voor de ontwikkeling van het gebied?*
 - *Welke specifieke voorzieningen zijn gepland in het project?*
 - *Heeft u invloed op het al dan niet voorkomen van deze functies of voorzieningen?*
 - *Ook op de precieze invulling van deze functies?*
 - *Zo ja: spelen bij de keuze voor bepaalde functies ook criteria m.b.t. de kwaliteit van het gebied een rol?*
 - *Van welke andere betrokken actoren verwacht u dat ze hierin een rol spelen? Welke?*
 - *Is in het project expliciet aandacht besteed aan bijvoorbeeld de samenhang tussen functies, de relatie met verkeersstromen, de loop van voetgangers etc.?*

Integration of the project

- To what extent do you expect the amenities within the project area to serve the inhabitants of other areas and, vice versa, inhabitants of the project area to make use of facilities elsewhere in the city?
 - Is explicit attention paid in the project to stimulating the relation between the project area and the surrounding urban area? If so, in what way?
 - What specific measures are planned to stimulate the relation between the project area and the surrounding urban area?
 - Do you think the attention paid to this in the plans is sufficient? If not, what measures should be taken?
 - Do you possess any direct influence over this?
 - Which of the other actors do you expect to be involved in this? What kind of involvement do you anticipate?
-
- *In hoeverre verwacht u dat de voorzieningen in het projectgebied ook gebruikt zullen worden door bewoners van buiten, en omgekeerd, gebruikers van het projectgebied de stad in zullen gaan voor bepaalde dingen?*
 - *Wordt in het project aandacht besteed aan het bevorderen van relaties tussen het projectgebied en de omliggende stad en zo ja, op welke manier?*
 - *Welke specifieke maatregelen zijn gepland in het project om de relatie tussen het*

projectgebied en de omgeving te bevorderen?

- Wordt hieraan in de plannen naar uw mening voldoende aandacht besteed? Zo nee: wat zou er dan moeten gebeuren?
- Heeft u hier direct invloed op?
- Van welke andere betrokken actoren verwacht u dat ze hierin een rol spelen? Welke?

Third spaces

- Is the presence of informal meeting places taken into account in the planning of public and semi-public spaces in the Zuidas/Rotterdam Centraal, for example by means of specific facilities? In what way?
- Is de aanwezigheid van informele ontmoetingsplaatsen iets waar bij de planning van de openbare en semi-openbare ruimte in de Zuidas/Rotterdam Centraal bewust op wordt gelet, bijvoorbeeld door specifieke voorzieningen? In welke vorm gebeurt dat?

Curriculum vitae

Jan Jacob Trip was born on 9 February 1970 in Groningen. In 1988 he completed his pre-university education at the Praedinius Gymnasium in the city. Between 1988 and 1994 he studied Human Geography at Groningen University, where he specialised in transportation and labour market geography. His master's thesis involved an analysis of the hinterland relations of the regional seaports of Delfzijl and Eemshaven. After this, he was involved in various research projects on transport and regional development.

In 1999 he started as a researcher at the OTB Research Institute for Housing, Urban and Mobility Studies, where he participated in several European research projects on freight transport, infrastructure and regional and urban development, as well as in a number of smaller projects for the Dutch and Flemish national governments. During the work on his PhD thesis, he participated in research groups on multiple land use and railway station development.

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Urban quality is generally considered increasingly important for urban competitiveness. Nevertheless, large urban redevelopment schemes often fail to provide sufficient quality from a user's perspective. This study therefore investigates the role of urban quality in large-scale urban redevelopment, which is here elaborated in terms of Richard Florida's concept of quality of place. In a number of extensive case studies, it focuses on prestigious redevelopment projects around the high-speed rail stations in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Lille. It provides an analysis of the role of urban quality in the development of these projects, as well as some insights in the applicability of quality of place in a wider Dutch context. In addition, the study advocates a more open and flexible planning process, based on a distinctly long-term perspective on urban quality.

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