

Regeneration of the Urban Coastal area of Scheveningen: *Pearl by the Sea*

Leo Oorschot

Abstract

Nowhere was the advancing globalization so visible as in the coastal area of Scheveningen, one of northwest Europe's seaside resorts with a wealthy tradition nearby the capital city of The Hague. In the 19th century a consortium of bankers from Paris, Frankfurt, and Amsterdam established a fashionable European beach resort right next to a medieval fishing village with a Kurhaus Spa and Casino accessible to the general public. At the end of the 20th century the bathing resort lost its image and most of the fishing industry moved away leaving the coastal zone in a crisis. The municipality decided to give the coastline an economic impulse. Not only that, their ambitions were grandiose. In 2005 they got the idea to make Scheveningen the Second International Center of The Hague with impressive architecture and town planning. The beach, the old fishing village, and the fishery at the harbor were connected into a close urban ensemble by the North Sea by a splendid boulevard. However, the financial crisis in 2008 put an end to extravagant developmental plans, to the great relief of coastal residents. They especially feared the expansion of tourism into the residential areas even though tourism had brought and would continue to bring prosper-

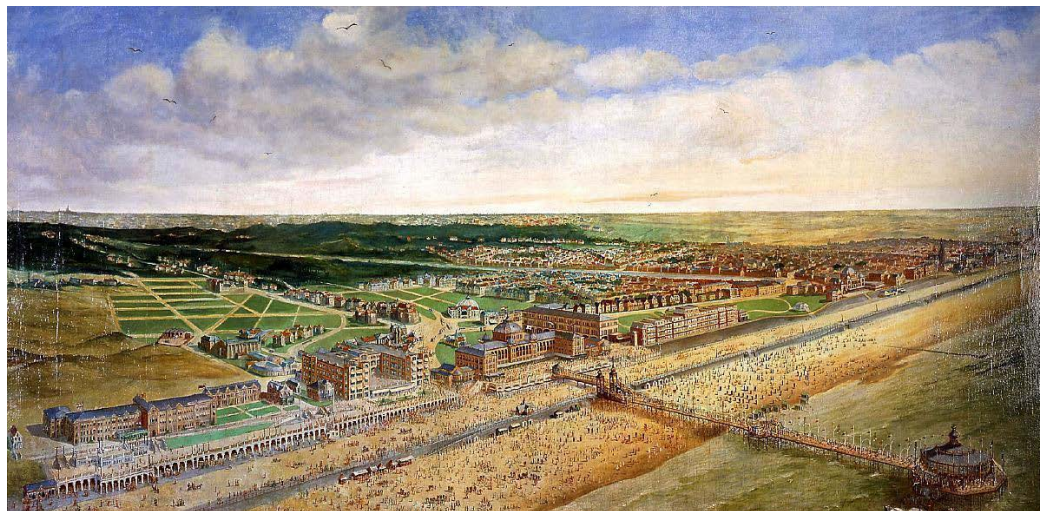


Fig.1 - Masterplan of the Seaside resort by Bernhard van Liefland from 1902, painted by Andreas Carl Sommer. Collection: Muzee, The Hague Scheveningen

ity to the area. The old fishing village was kept intact while the harbor transformed quite differently than sketched and the seaside decayed, losing to its rival the First International Center: the old town of The Hague. How could this have happened to the Pearl on the Sea? Was it the crisis or the stubbornness of residents and entrepreneurs? Or was it the unworldliness of administrators?

La rigenerazione dell'area urbana costiera di Scheveningen: *Pearl by the Sea*

In nessun posto si sentiva l'avanzamento della globalizzazione come nella zona costiera di Scheveningen: una delle grandi località balneari del Nord-ovest dell'Europa con una ricca tradizione vicino all'Aia, sede del governo Olandese. Nel novecento un consorzio di banchieri di Parigi, Francoforte e Amsterdam fondò, accanto al paesino medievale di pescatori, una località balneare con una casa di cura e un casino' aperto al pubblico. Alla fine del ventesimo secolo il posto perse il suo fascino, e quando anche la pesca nel porto diminuì significativamente la zona costiera entrò in crisi e il comune decise di dare un impulso economico. Ma le ambizioni non si fermarono lì. Nel 2005 venne portata avanti l'idea di trasformare Scheveningen nel Secondo Centro Internazionale dell'Aia con corrispondente architettura e urbanistica. La località balneare, il vecchio paese di pesca e il porto dei pescatori vennero uniti con un'impressionante lungomare e diventò una densa struttura urbanistica sulla costa del Mare del Nord. La crisi finanziaria del 2008 mise fine alle ambizioni di alto livello, che fu di conforto agli abitanti della zona. La gente temeva in particolare il soffocamento dalla parte del turismo delle zone abitative, il turismo che dall'altra parte era, e dovrà essere, fonte del benessere locale. Il paese dei pescatori mantenne il suo carattere originale, il porto divenne molto diverso dagli schizzi e progetti originali, e la località balneare perdette la battaglia di concorrenza con il Primo Centro Internazionale, la vecchia città dell'Aia, e degradò. Come avvenne tutto questo con La Perla sul Mare del Nord? Fu la crisi, o la sregolatezza degli abitanti ed imprenditori? O fu la distanza dalla realtà degli amministratori comunali?

KEYWORDS:

globalization, regeneration, coastal area, The Hague, Scheveningen

Regeneration of the Urban Coastal area of Scheveningen: *Pearl by the Sea*

Leo Oorschot

The seaside resort of Scheveningen was long the pride of The Hague with numerous icons such as the Kurhaus, the Pier, a picturesque village, and fishing port. The resort was the center of power and entertainment around the 1900's with pronounced Fin de siècle architecture. All of the beautiful architecture was demolished in the 1960's and 1970's and the coastal zone was haphazardly cluttered by property developers. The resort and harbor developed in the 19th century adjacent to the fishing village of Scheveningen. The capital city of The Hague is situated 3-4 kilometers inland. From 1870 to 1910 beautiful garden estate manors were built between the coastline and the city, with the resort serving as city center. The Hague now had two city centers competing with one another. At the end of the twentieth century the seaside bathing resort lost the battle for tourism from the historic city center of The Hague because its appearance and upkeep were let go; fisheries disappeared and tourism declined. The regeneration of the urban coastal areas of Scheveningen was characterized by grotesque planning before the financial crisis in 2008. After that, new developments were left open to the free market. The conflict between the international ambitions of the municipality relating to tourism and residential interests became a major topic. Of all of the plans only those for the boulevard and the renewal of Duindorp were realized. Nowadays, the two largest icons of Scheveningen are bankrupt: the Kurhaus and the famous Pier. How could this happen to the Pearl by the Sea?

Framework: the Power of the Image

How a city is presented in the new media is central in times when cities are competing with one another for attention and popularity. Both now and historically, even though the image may differ from how the city spaces actually look like, it's the image that has become increasingly important. Councilmen use pretty images to attract and bind visitors, well-to-do residents, foreign institutions, and companies in order to keep the urban economy running well. In this context, also The Hague wants to present itself as a beautiful World City. In recent years marketers have been visualizing that idea on websites with colorful images of the city; websites that come and go without being archived by the City Council.

New city marketing strategies have overshadowed old style policy and masterplans. Thirty years ago those were lengthy boring documents full of research statistics and graphs. Not today. Nowadays, the image of the city is even better designed than travel brochures. Master plans and policies are now represented by rich images full of ideas from city marketing using attractive colorful photographs and narrative texts. An analysis of the well known problems or framework for the

various stakeholders is of secondary importance.

By tradition, the ruling parties in office always supported the parties in government regardless of the topic and the opposition was always against it. This resulted in insurmountable conflicts between the interested groups with no way out. The conflicts got battled out in the media (local newspaper *Den Haag Centraal* and local broadcaster *Omroep West*) and also through biased websites. Communication between residents and city government organizations was difficult and there was little room for compromise. The analysis here focuses mainly on the conflict and imaging in the media around the regeneration of Scheveningen.

Regeneration of the Urban Coastal Area

The ambitious *Masterplan Scheveningen Coastal Area (2001)*² was a development and assessment framework based on plans from 1997 of alderman Noordanus and later alderman Hilhorst in 2001.³ The master plan aimed to revitalize the neglected coastal strip economically by developing tourism. It comprised three characteristic areas: the seaside, the village, and the seaport, linked together by the boulevard and the beach. According to the *Architectural Quality Report (2004)*⁴ the port, most of the seaside, and the zone along the coast between the sea and the village fell within the characteristic place designated as 'special urban areas', which meant that old buildings could be demolished and new experimental ones could be developed. To ensure the quality of the architecture and consistency in the area, the city decided to establish more strict guidelines for parts of the harbor than the criteria already laid out in the *Architectural Quality Report*. In this way they could improve the nostalgic atmosphere in the harbor and maintain the utilitarian harbor buildings in the surrounding residential areas. The *Architectural Quality Report* specified most importantly that the historical character of the village with its fine urban spaces, alongside the fashionable seaside resort and grandeur of the typical European seaside architecture, needed to be restored in style. As ambitions piled up in the golden age of project development, the regeneration of the coastal zone turned out to be about more than just economic impulses.

Scheveningen, the Second International Center of The Hague

North of the harbor is the domain for tourists and to the south is the residential area and beach that the locals bike to. This invisible border played an important role in local politics until the arrival of alderman Norder in 2004 (Oorschot 2012a, Bekkering & Beemster 2009). Scheveningen, with its international character, was designated as the Second International Center of The Hague and was to become the new place to go. The invisible border between tourism and residency was expanded by way of small bridges, plans for a cableway, and ambitious programming for tourism.

These ideas were already given form for the first time in the comprehensive work *World City by the Sea. Structure-vision The Hague 2020 (2005)*.⁵ In the view of alderman Norder, the International City needed a powerful growth in tourism and the establishment of new international institutes. Every hotel bed meant one more job. According to him, a conscious choice was made to integrate the master plans of Scheveningen, Kijkduin and the International Zone to form a plan greater than any other plan before. The boundary of the international coastal zone was extended to the residential areas of Kijkduin, up to the border of Wassenaar, and the Peace Palace deep inland. By combining the master plans and upgrading the coastal area to a Second International

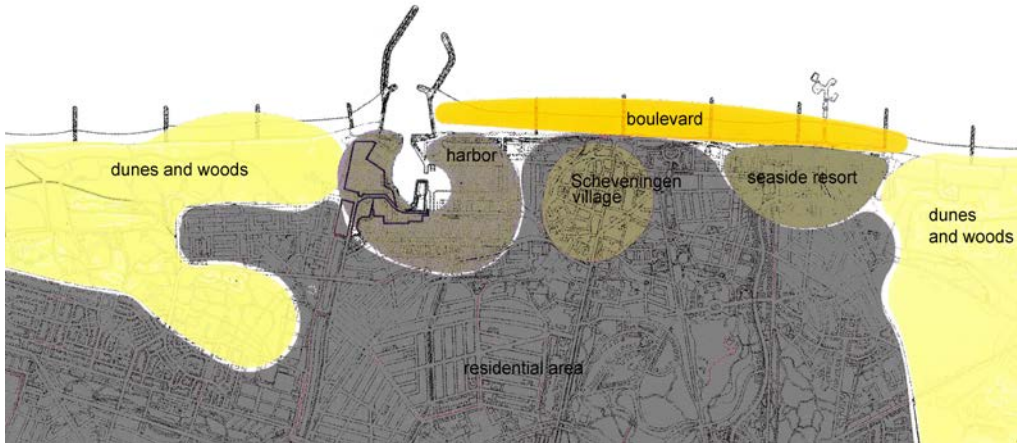


Fig.2 - The Harbour, the Fishermans vil-
lage and the Seaside resort connected by
the Boulevard.



Fig.3 - Impression of the Spanish-Cata-
laan architect and urbanist Busquets

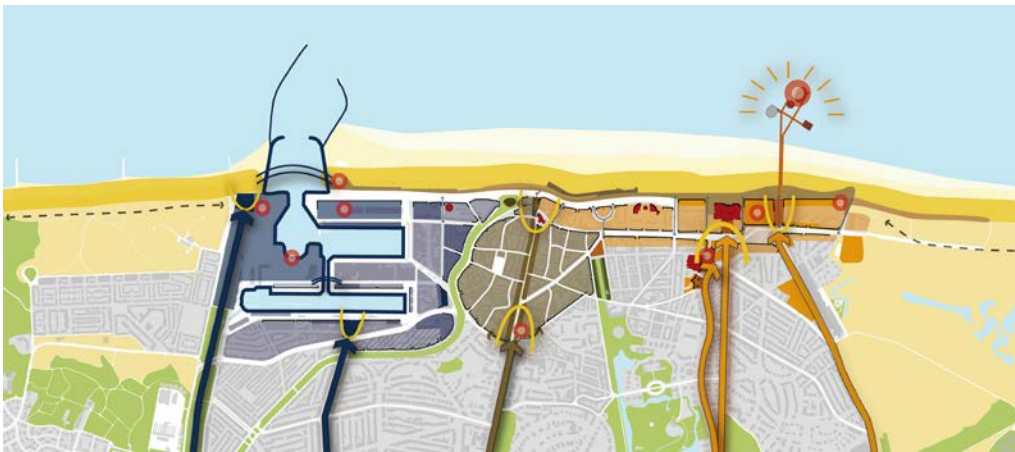


Fig.4 - The harbour, the Fishermans vil-
lage and the Seaside resort connected by
the Boulevard



Fig.5 - Impression of the harbour

Center, the municipality could present its ambitions and structural vision to the outside world. There was a downside though. Residents' organizations feared traffic obstructions by the uncontrolled increase of tourism and the gross establishment of international organizations (ICTY, OPCW, Europol, Eurojust and International Criminal Court)⁶ whose complexes were rising like bunkers everywhere in the residential areas.

Marchel Wijermans (project leader closely involved in giving form to the vision of the city and coordinating project manager for elaborating the plans) stressed that the plans no longer adhered to traditional 'project-urban-planning' but to one coherent structure for the entire city. 'The municipality needed a spatial framework, an answer to the question: where are we going with the city? Do you know what you want? The city was bombarded by commercial developers and by the central government with these rhetorical questions. The answer was this: the structural vision sets out a clear course.' (Beemster 2009: 25). At the genesis for the vision of a Second International Center, Wijermans repeated the ideals of the compact city: 'it has to be a place that is populated throughout the year drawing visitors from home and abroad, with a mix of tourist attractions, employment, and living.'

In the *Leisure Report The Hague 2005-2010* (2005)⁷ two leisure hotspots are mentioned: Scheveningen and the historic center of The Hague. In short, attractive zones for the development of the 'International City of Peace and Justice'. (Van Krieken & McKay 2005). Especially the coastal zone of The Hague would have to compete with other global cities where international politics and the United Nations were concentrated like Geneva, Brussels, Washington, New York, Nairobi, and Vienna. On its website the municipality promoted itself: 'Scheveningen-coast is the bustling seaside Second City Center of The Hague, attractive for locals and tourists all year round. With its 15 million visitors a year Scheveningen is one of the largest seaside resorts in Northwest Europe and it should stay that way.'⁸

Even before the appearance of a structural vision in 2005, the Norfolk Line (cargo) announced its plan to leave Scheveningen which would leave an attractive area in the harbor free for new development. In 2006, the municipality asked four consortia, each with their own architect, to present a vision for the seaport, however none of the plans turned out to be mature enough for implementation. Later, the municipality's own plans turned out to be a pastiche of those studies.

The beautiful images in the *Report of Startingpoints Development Scheveningen Harbor – Scheveningen Harbor Pearl by the Sea* (2007)⁹ by the Spanish-Catalan architect and urban designer Joan Busquets Grau presented a seaside resort of format with quite a few experimental towers, symbolic of an international city. This document was the elaboration and imagination of a vision that stated: 'The Wérelstad aan Zee is a multicultural city, an international city, a city by the sea, and a monumental residence.'¹⁰

The goal was to create an authentic urban center with a mix of restaurants, hotels, leisure, and living plus the realization of special amenities of international allure linked on either side of the harbor by an architectural (cultural) icon. However, the residents of the coastal zone and the local fishing industry didn't see their own interests considered in these plans, despite the optimistic words and wonderful drawings. Regardless of these protests, the high-minded ambitions for the Scheveningen harbor would be hampered anyway when in September 2008 Lehman Brother's in New York went bankrupt and a worldwide financial crisis emerged.

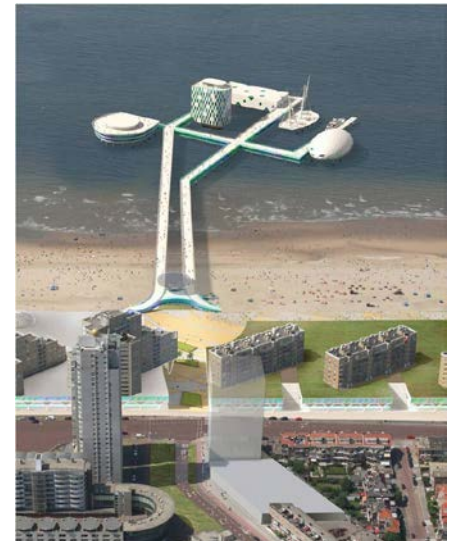


Fig.6 - Impression of the seaside resort with the Pier

Scheveningen Harbor and New Realism in Planning

The financial crisis gave rise to a whole different planning track for the harbor of Scheveningen.¹¹ However, it turned out to be no less ambitious than before. Unfortunately though, a few months before the elections in November 2009, an important part of the master plan was eliminated. The fourth cruise terminal considered for the outer harbor, that would sacrifice the beach used by the local inhabitants, turned out to be a big problem. Interesting enough, these plans were in the hands of the cruise terminal specialist Züblin Grenada, local housing corporation Vestia, and property developer AM (with former alderman Noordanus at the helm). During a general meeting of the local Liberal Party (VVD) members voted massively against the plans and for the preservation of the southern beach. The Christian Democrats (CDA), Socialist Party (SP), the Green Party (GL), Social Liberals (D66), Populist Right-wing Party (PVV), and City Party (HSP) already were in support of the residents. Alderman Norder and the Social Democrats (PvdA) stood with representatives of entrepreneurs alone with their ambitions but it was really the Liberal Party (VVD) that led to the turnaround which ended the plans for constructing an outer harbor with a new cruise terminal. The new *Masterplan Scheveningen-Coast* (2010)¹² without the cruise terminal stood for strengthening the character of the area and for a hefty expansion of tourism. The sea had to be appealing to locals and tourists four seasons a year. For the village, the emphasis was on the preservation and protection of its original character. In the port, it was about a good combination of living, working, going out, and shopping. Measures were drafted to manage the traffic flow and to improve parking yet no money was reserved for a tram line going towards the harbor. The strong focus on increasing tourism, building high-rises and how to manage traffic remained a source of annoyance for the protesting residents and organizations. In the local newspaper *Scheveningse Dagblad* from February 12, 2010 the following message appeared: ‘chairmen of eighteen The Hague residents’ organizations are angry at the municipality. They find that they have too little participation in the making of plans for the improvement of The Hague coast and the construction of the new northwest roadway.’ Residents were angry about the expected traffic obstructions accompanied by mass tourism at the seaside; they were angry about the plan for a block of high-rises on both sides of the entrance to the port, and about landfill in the third port, but what especially ticked them off was that eighteen residents’ organizations were ignored in the process. The feedback group for residents still had to come together while the master plan was already approved by the city council. At a debate evening held on February 16, 2010 about the future, the majority of the political parties said that they would rip up the *Masterplan Scheveningen Coast* (2010) after the coming elections. Surprisingly, the citizens voted in the elections loyally to the political parties in office. Even so, there still came a major change to the city because the economy was under considerable pressure and the city’s income was decreasing. In the coalition agreement of 2010 the newly elected city board noted that there was a new reality in the field of regional development. They still spoke optimistically about a slower course of building developments even though the media was ringing alarm bells everywhere about the impact of the financial crisis and political impotence on the housing market problem. The new city board made an agreement that economic development and the maritime character of the port would continue to be strengthened. The new aldermen had to go talk with the fisheries sector and there

would be no landfill in the third port. For a while it became quiet around the urban planning for the Scheveningen Harbor.

Then, in February of 2012 an elaboration on the urban plan *Scheveningen-Haven 2025* was published. Many of the grandiose plans of the past were gone. It was an urban development plan adapted to the new economic situation but its approach was different. Perhaps this was thanks to the influence of the new head of urban planning, Erik Pasveer, who took office on October 1, 2010. In respect to previous versions this urban plan contained a number of remarkable changes. The third port was not closed up and the fishing industry came back to the harbor. There were plans for 700 new homes of which 20% for social housing at the former Norfolk area of the harbor and 100,000 m² for working spaces, restaurants, hotels, retail, water sports and fishing. Only two of the experimental high-rise towers would remain on either side of the entrance to the seaport. One hotel on the south side rising about 100 meters up and another one 40 meters high on the north side. Also on the north side of the port existing sport facilities like surf village and beach volleyball would be expanded. Developments and plans were made for water and beach sports. The new boating and sailing opportunities for tourists would be developed in the third harbor. Both sides of the harbor entrance would connect via a cableway and bridge. Old wounds were torn open again and residents' organizations feared once more traffic chaos. After the presentation by alderman Norder, the emotions ran wild again: 'Who is this all for?', asked everyone wondering, 'for the residents or tourists?'

In a letter to the city council on May 8, 2012 from the joint residents' organization General Society for the Protection of Nature (AVN) and interest group Scheveningen Port (BSH) the old problems came to light. There requests were for no high-rises, no connection to the port by cableway or bridges but first a renewed traffic plan with a tram line. The large-scale new construction foresaw the kiss of death for many entrepreneurs in Scheveningen-Bad since there were already too many vacancies by the spring of 2012. Economic activities would shift from the seaside to the seaport. There was however praise for the new housing plans for the Norfolk area and keeping the third harbor in the port open for the benefit of the fisheries and port-related entrepreneurs. The strategy of the opposition and residents' organizations, trained in resistance for years about the development of the coastline, was surprisingly simple: no connection to the harbor, the north side for tourists and the south side for the local population with the harbor itself forming a natural barrier between them. Business and municipality saw this differently and wanted to connect the two areas.

Norder discussed the plans on May 16, 2012 with the Council's Committee on Space, where he suggested a number of improvements and concessions to improve the quality of life in the residential areas. In the new reality of 'after the financial crisis' there was no longer an 'integrated development area' mentioned between the city and property developers, but 'flexibility' and 'organizing in phases' for all parties even though there was a substantial risk to The Hague with this new form of area-development. While area-developer ASR and real estate developer Malherbe worked on phasing the project, housing corporation Vestia intended to build 700 homes in the Norfolk area. However Vestia would later be forced to shut down all development in The Hague and elsewhere and their on-going projects had to be transferred to ASR and Malherbe. On May 16th alderman Norder promised the Council to present them with a *Architectural Quality Plan*

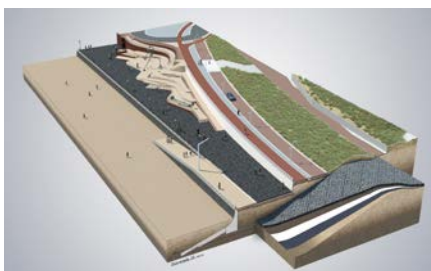


Fig.7 - Boulevard ground scheme

for the harbor. Urbis Office for Urban Design from Rotterdam produced that plan in 2013.¹³ As a result of a deal made with the sale of shares of the tram company (HTM) future tram lines would be constructed to make the port accessible by public transportation.

The urban plan of 2012 was greatly improved in a number of aspects. It was less self-absorbed than its predecessors and the urban spaces and the morphology of buildings were better connected to the environment. Residents' organizations were positive about the quality and the scale. The older plans incorporated strange lineal subdivisions, which randomly landed at the harbor. In the new plan the urban planners drew a secluded square at a strategic place that connected the urban spaces in different directions. The blocks of buildings would provide quiet for residents at the height of the tourist season. The choice for these plans also drew in the atmosphere, color and scale of the old adjacent neighborhood of Duindorp. To design the visual quality plan, Urbis looked at examples of similar developments in the harbors of Copenhagen and Malmø. The conflict over the cableway, which would connect the tourist area of the harbor to the residential section, is ongoing and every year the municipality's budget is shrinking so that the cableway plan can only be saved by free market development.

Fig.8 - Boulevard section of the dike



Scheveningen Boulevard ¹⁴

With the new boulevard the seaside was finally connected to the fishing village and the seaport in one powerful gesture (Oorschot 2012b, 2012c). The boulevard is an architectural icon built of clay, sand, and stone which serves to protect the coastline from the sea for the next hundred years and at the same time, it is a design that gives bathers at the seaside a place to parade in a cosmopolitan environment. The development of the Scheveningen boulevard was carried out simultaneously with the harbor because both construction areas had to deal with a coastal defense system. Furthermore, the boulevard is situated in the tourist zone of the city so that it is

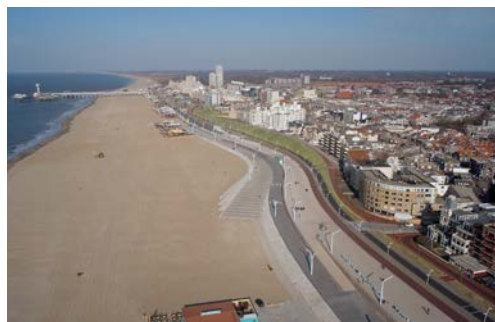


Fig.9 - Boulevard aerial picture

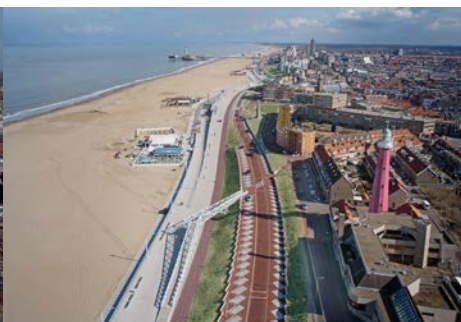


Fig.10 - Boulevard aerial picture



Fig.11 - Boulevard by night

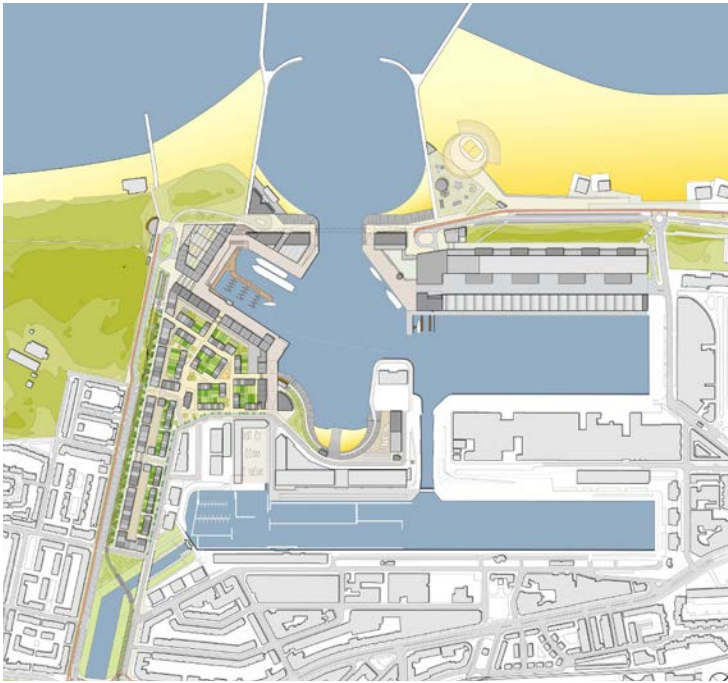
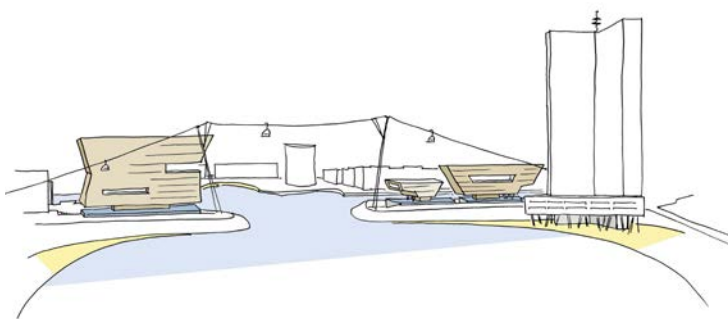


Fig.12 - The Harbour with a new residential area at the former Norfolk area

Fig.13 - The Harbour



less problematic for most of the residents' organizations and finally, the debate on the boulevard did not fall to political outcry like the harbor did. For alderman Norder personally, this was the most important city project of his career as a local politician and as Deputy of the Province involved in the boulevard project. Principals of the boulevard were the government agencies Hoogheemraadschap Delftland, Rijkswaterstaat and The Hague. The design was created by the Spanish-Catalan architect and urban designer Manuel De Solà-Morales, assisted by the engineering office of The Hague. Solà-Morales designed waterfronts and boulevards such as those in Barcelona, St. Nazaire, Porto, and Trieste. Even his first sketches for the boulevard in 2003 that had characteristic wavy lines appeared in the final design. The first design was car-free, an idea that any self-respecting seaside resort aims for. However, businesses and residents insisted strongly during the public participation procedures to restore the old highway on the dunes. Car parading thus became seen as a major touristic quality. Only in 2006, after a Council decision agreed to implementation, did a small road appear. Work on the design took place between 2007 and 2009. The budget was established before the crisis broke out when costs were high but after the crisis the tender turned out very favorably. Construction costs (including the landscaping and dike beneath the boulevard) came to around 75 million euro's. The boulevard was built between 2010 and 2013. An elevated landscape was formed from 2.5 million cubic meters of sand and stone, 1.9 kilometers long containing a seawall of 1 kilometer, 40 to 70 meters wide, and between 8.6 to 12 meters above NAP. The concept of the boulevard was simple: a parade of visitors strolling along the seaside, the fishing village, and the seaport, designed with the curves of the dune landscape, the existing curvatures of the coastline, and the vastness of the sea. Using fine materials, colors, street furniture, different levels and the positioning of the pavilions in compact clusters, the designers created an attractive pedestrian zone for tourists. The clusters of pavilions are distanced so that the walk for tourists is interesting with a clear view of the beach and the sea. Like a ship moored at sea, the different traffic zones were also designed with their own materials, colors and divisions parallel to the beach to enhance them. So powerful and well organized as the boulevard had been handled by the Municipality, Rijkswaterstaat and the Hoogheemraadschap van Delftland, so thoroughly it became ruined by commercial parties.

less problematic for most of the residents' organizations and finally, the debate on the boulevard did not fall to political outcry like the harbor did. For alderman Norder personally, this was the most important city project of his career as a local politician and as Deputy of the Province involved in the boulevard project. Principals of the boulevard were the government agencies Hoogheemraadschap Delftland, Rijkswaterstaat and The Hague. The design was created by the Spanish-Catalan architect and urban designer Manuel De Solà-Morales, assisted by the engineering office of The Hague. Solà-Morales designed waterfronts and boulevards such as those in Barcelona, St. Nazaire, Porto, and Trieste. Even his first sketches for the boulevard in 2003 that had characteristic wavy lines appeared in the final design. The first design was car-free, an idea that any self-respecting seaside resort aims for. However, businesses and residents insisted strongly during the public participation procedures to restore the old highway on the dunes. Car parading thus became seen as a major touristic quality. Only in 2006, after a Council decision agreed to implementation, did a small road appear. Work on the design took place between 2007 and 2009. The budget was established before the crisis broke out when costs were high but after the crisis the tender turned out very favorably. Construction costs (including the landscaping and dike beneath the boulevard) came to around 75 million euro's. The boulevard was built between 2010 and 2013. An elevated landscape was formed from 2.5 million cubic meters of sand and stone, 1.9 kilometers long containing a seawall of 1 kilometer, 40 to 70 meters wide, and between 8.6 to 12 meters above NAP. The concept of the boulevard was simple: a parade of visitors strolling along the seaside, the fishing village, and the seaport, designed with the curves of the dune landscape, the existing curvatures of the coastline, and the vastness of the sea. Using fine materials, colors, street furniture, different levels and the positioning of the pavilions in compact clusters, the designers created an attractive pedestrian zone for tourists. The clusters of pavilions are distanced so that the walk for tourists is interesting with a clear view of the beach and the sea. Like a ship moored at sea, the different traffic zones were also designed with their own materials, colors and divisions parallel to the beach to enhance them. So powerful and well organized as the boulevard had been handled by the Municipality, Rijkswaterstaat and the Hoogheemraadschap van Delftland, so thoroughly it became ruined by commercial parties.

Scheveningen Seaside

After realizing the beautiful forms and colors of the new boulevard, the seaside declined with the Pier in decay and going bankrupt and the already bankrupt Kurhaus. The beach pavilions formed a messy set of densely packed wooden buildings through which the tourists could hardly reach the beach from the promenade. Each season bathers struggle their way through chairs, tables, plastic palm trees and wooden barricades raised by the owners of beach tents. Important buildings



Fig.14 - Harbor with fisherman

Fig.15 - Harbor entrance, storm 11 beaufort

Fig.16 - Harbor entrance, storm 11 beaufort

Fig.17 - Harbor with boats, storm 11 beaufort

such as the Kurhaus are not even visible. They are fully blocked by a disjointed messy group of structures in front of them. It reminds one of a second-rate furniture showroom rather than a prominent seaside resort. Entrepreneurs of Scheveningen persistently preferred their self-interests above the group's interest. Revitalization plans of the municipality were doomed to failure. Existing ownership, competition, and selfish interests stood in the way of improvement and so slid the seaside resort further away from being an attractive pedestrian environment even though The Hague Center, the seaport, and promenade still all continued to attract tourists.

The Scheveningen Pier, designed by architect Huyg Maaskant (built between 1959-1961), was bought in 1991 for 1 guilder by the Van der Valk Group. They wanted to build a hotel there on the Pier, an absurd idea because one could hardly get there by car or taxi. When these plans failed the municipality was blamed and numerous remarkable alterations began. The Pier lost its iconic character and even fewer visitors visited it than predicted. Everyone knows that visitors like to take a nice leisurely stroll on a Pier but the Van der Valk Group rebuilt the Pier unattractively like a tunnel made of plastic and concrete. The Pier of Scheveningen was once one of the largest architectural icons of The Hague; a very precious exemplary project of the 1960's turned into a haunted house. On the night of September 5, 2011 fire broke out on the Pier, which together with the ruination by Ltd (BV) of Van der Valk completely devastated it. Subsequently the Ltd went bankrupt and the curators were saddled with a ruin on one of the most prominent landmarks of the city. Twenty years lost. The Pier has been on sale since March 2012 but no one has bid on it at auction.

The Kurhaus, another one of the most important architectural icons of the seaside and The Hague, was also struck by disaster back in 2004. The building, under the direction of Willem Endstra, came into the hands of a group of anonymous investors. Endstra was murdered shortly afterwards because he refused to pay the added value of the real estate to its investors involved in the narcotics business.¹⁵ The building was taken over by the international real estate fund Jerusalem Economy Ltd with a Commercial Mortgage-Backed Securities (CMBS) loan of 52.6 million from the Hatfield Philips and Deutsche Bank using the Kurhaus itself as collateral (ca. 70 million). Unfortunately the tenant, the 5-star Hotel Steigenberger, could not pay the annual 4.5 million euro rent which meant that Jerusalem Economy couldn't pay back the interest on the loan. In addition, in February of 2013 the Deutsche Bank devalued the Kurhaus from 63.8 million to 24 million.¹⁶ The same month the Kurhaus was announced bankrupt.

The new boulevard that the authorities developed looks beautiful and has become a true icon of the city. However, the seaside lost the competition battle for tourism to the charming city center with its historic buildings and pleasant urban spaces. Hotels and restaurants where one can dine, stroll, shop and relax grow and prosper there. At the seaside are iconic spaces like the beach and the old boulevard indiscriminately filled with terraces and wooden buildings but the spaces between the buildings are randomly overbuilt so that there is no view to the sea from the road parallel to the coast. Now the free commercial market is no longer interested in investing in this area, which is a great loss for residents of the city and the remaining small business owners. On Friday October 11, 2013 the Pier finally closed to the public due to its crumbling structure and fire hazards. Now there is talk about demolishing the Pier all together.

How could this happen to the Pearl by the Sea?

The municipality claims that the global financial crisis was responsible for the failure of project development. Not only did they ignore residents organizations but the city also underestimated a strong resistance by its own residents. Resident organizations have a lot of knowledge, power and support in the city including many urban planners, geographers, real estate developers, former politicians, as well as federal and local civil servants. The ambitions of the city for Scheveningen Harbor certainly were affected by the crisis and plans had to be adjusted, which actually brought the municipality and the residents closer together.

Furthermore, the resistance against plans for the Boulevard along the coast was lower because everyone recognized the need to protect the land from the sea. As a result, the Boulevard became a beautiful place which definitely helped boost tourism. Yet the Scheveningen Resort nonetheless is going through a difficult time. The reason is because it lost the competition for regeneration to the historic city center of The Hague and because of the division between entrepreneurs who could not to come to realize a joint plan for the revitalization of the Resort.

The Hague is gradually emerging into a new time period where the urban climate is basically everyone's business. The ironic thing is that the pressure of the City Government to become a World City is counteracted by its own citizens, currently of which 52% have been born outside of The Netherlands. Is this the reality of globalization?

Thanks to Betsy M. Blan for the final English translation and editing



Fig.18 - Seaside resort, storm 11 beaufort

Fig.19 - Seaside resort with Kurhaus, storm 11 beaufort

Fig.20 - Seaside resort with Pier, storm 11 beaufort

FOOTNOTES

- 1 <http://toekomstscheveningenbad.com> (2010-10-28); <http://www.wereldstadaanzee.nl> (website municipality, offline)
- 2 Masterplan Scheveningen-Kuststrook (2001)
- 3 Masterplan Stadeconomie (Oktober 1997)
Panorama Scheveningen, aanzet tot Masterplan Scheveningen-Kuststrook (May 2000)
Terug naar de kust, tussenrapportage Masterplan Scheveningen-Kuststrook (November 2000)
Cultuurhistorische verkenning Scheveningen-Kuststrook (December 2000)
- 4 Welstandsnota (2004)
- 5 Wêreldstad aan Zee, Structuurvisie Den Haag 2020 (2005)
- 6 ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia), OPCW (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons), Europol (European Law Enforcement Agency), Eurojust (The European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit).
- 7 Leisurenota Den Haag 2005-2010 (2005)
- 8 <http://www.wereldstadaanzee.nl> (website municipality, offline)
- 9 van Uitgangspunten Planontwikkeling Scheveningen Havens - Scheveningen-Haven Parel aan Zee (2007)
- 10 van *Uitgangspunten Planontwikkeling Scheveningen Havens - Scheveningen-Haven Parel aan Zee (June 2007): 8*
- 11 van *uitgangspunten Masterplan Scheveningen-kust (Februari 2008)*
Discussie Masterplan Scheveningen-kust (December 2008)
- 12 *Masterplan voor Scheveningen-kust (2010)*
- 13 *Beeldkwaliteitplan Scheveningen Haven (september 2013)*
- 14 Thanks to: Age Fluitman van het bureau van Manuel De Solà-Morales, <http://www.fluitmanarchitecten.nl>, Klaas Hilverda van het Ingenieursbureau Den Haag, *Boulevardnieuws. Kustversterking en herinrichting boulevard Scheveningen, nr.7, april 2011, Boulevardnieuws. Kustversterking en herinrichting boulevard Scheveningen, nr.8, juli 2011, Boulevardnieuws. Kustversterking en herinrichting boulevard Scheveningen, nr.9, oktober 2011*
- 15 *Den Haag Centraal, 21 Februari 2013: 3 Omroep West, 25 Februari 2013* <http://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/25-02-2013/vastgoed-kurhaus-failliet> (04-2013)
- 16 Kurhaus in grote financiële problemen, in: *Vastgoedmarkt, Februari 2013: 6*

REFERENCES

- Beemster, W. (2009) 'Wérelldstad aan zee, In: Stedenbouw & Achitectuur: jrg.26, nr.11, dec. 2009:
- Bekkering, P. & Beemster, W. (2009) 'Marnix Norder: ligging aan zee maakt Den Haag uniek', In: Stedenbouw & Achitectuur: jrg.26, nr.11, dec.2009: 4-7
- Krieken P. J. van & McKay, D. (2005) The Hague - Legal Capital of the World, The Hague: T.M.C.Asser Press
- Oorschot, L.M. (2012a) 'Duivels dilemma: toerist of bewoner?', op: ArchiNed, 4 June 2012, www.archined.nl
- Oorschot, L.M. (2012b) 'Boulevard Scheveningen: van bad naar dorp tot haven', in: HAACS # 02, 2012: 26-31
- Oorschot, L.M. (2012c) 'Spaanse temperamenten en Haagse vindingrijkheid: de Scheveningse Boulevard van Manuel De Solà-Morales', op: ArchiNed, 27 November 2012, www.archined.nl

IMAGES SOURCES

- Fig. 2 From: Concept Masterplan Scheveningen-Kuststrook (2001) City of The Hague
- Fig. 3 From: Wérelldstad aan Zee, Structuurvisie Den Haag 2020 (2005) City of The Hague
- Fig. 4 From: Masterplan Scheveningen-kust (2010) City of The Hague
- Fig. 5 From: Nota van Uitgangspunten Planontwikkeling Scheveningen (2007) City of The Hague
- Fig. 6 From: Concept Masterplan Scheveningen-kust (2009) City of The Hague
- Fig. 7-8 From: Ingenieursbureau of The Hague
- Fig. 9 Aerial picture by: DPI Animation House R9494522
- Fig.10 Aerial picture by: DPI Animation House R9494112
- Fig.11 Photo by: Christian van der Kooy
- Fig.12 - 13 From: Beeldkwaliteitsplan Scheveningen Haven (2013)
- Fig.14 Photo by: Christian van der Kooy
- Fig.15 -16-17-18-19-20 Photo by: Leo Oorschot

Leo Oorschot

l.m.oorschot@tudelft.nl

Technical University of Delft, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Urbanism

<http://www.bk.tudelft.nl/en/about-faculty/departments/urbanism/>

Leo Oorschot is an architect and urbanist from The Hague and chairman of the local architects' organization the Haags Architectuur Café (HaAC) a local organization of architects, city planners, and real estate developers. Currently he is working on his PhD about cultural policy and urbanism in The Hague at the University of Technology in Delft, Faculty of Architecture, department of Urbanism. In the past he worked at KCAP and Geurst & Schulze architects. Today he is working at atelier PRO in The Hague and he is a correspondent for ArchiNed, ArchitectuurNL and HAACS.