SUBURBAN URBANITY

To support a sustainable development and therefore the competitiveness of Zoetermeer in the South Wing metropolitan region

P2 Report

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COLOPHON

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1 Introduction

1.1 Motivation
As a former resident, I am very familiar with the city of Zoetermeer. During the 1980s and 1990s I had a calm and safe childhood in the city. When I became a teenager, I started to notice some things were missing in the city, especially when comparing it with other cities. There were not many leisure and cultural amenities to choose from, therefore I had to travel to The Hague. The same goes for the labor force, the most of them commuted to Hague. The city is a typical New Town, in the peripheral area of the Hague. At the same time the city has quite a large population (in the South Wing it is the third biggest city) and has developed some strong urban qualities, like a mixed living, office and shopping centre. Besides, regionally it got better connected with Rotterdam and the Hague, mainly due to the RandstadRail development. Do not forget Zoetermeer is located just 35 minutes by car from Schiphol Airport. As a former resident, I am concerned about the future of Zoetermeer. I think it has enough potential to support its sustainable development in order to become a more vital city. From an urban designer’s perspective, I want to find a way to deal with this potential, by analysing the way Zoetermeer developed last decades, in order to find a way I could support its sustainable development.

1.2 Context
Zoetermeer is a Dutch New Town located in the province of South Holland (Figure 1). The city experienced an extensive urbanisation since the 1960s. Before the 1960s, Zoetermeer used to be a small village in between the polders (Figure 2), famous for its butter production. In 1962, in the First Note, Zoetermeer was planned to be a ‘centre of urban development’ for region (South Holland) in 1962, in order to house the surplus of the big cities (the Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht) their...
population in mainly suburban housing. During the next decades, different policies influenced the development of the city (Figure 3), what resulted in a city without a clear focus. For example, the focus of Zoetermeer on the region shifted to a focus on the Hague, while other policies plans remained focussing on the region. Also Zoetermeer on the region shifted to a focus on the Hague, while other policies plans remain focussing on the region. Also during those decades, Zoetermeer grew from a small village into the third biggest city in the South Wing (over 120,000 inhabitants), but stayed mostly suburban.

Being the third biggest city does mean that the city is the biggest city in the South Wing after Rotterdam and The Hague. In amount of populations it has potentials to be an important city within the South Wing. Nevertheless, it cannot compete with cities, like Leiden and Dordrecht. In the first place, it does not have a comprehensive historical layered structure and is not of any cultural significance like Leiden and Dordrecht. Next to that, for example the level of education and labour force are not comparable, even not with cities in its direct surroundings (Figure 3, 4).

The South Wing metropolitan region is the polycentric south part of the bigger Randstad region, driven by the cities of Rotterdam and The Hague. In order to compete with the strong, monocentric North Wing (Amsterdam), the South Wing needs to bundle its specific qualities.

Within this South Wing, Zoetermeer houses people that work mostly in the Hague. Besides (mostly suburban) housing it does not add much more to the South Wing. At the same time, being in this position, Zoetermeer cannot develop sustainable and might become a boring town. Interestingly enough, plans like the ‘Randstad 2040’ do not focus on the development of Zoetermeer within this metropolitan region (Figure 6).
Figure 4 Education level of Zoetermeer in relation to the Hague region: Source (Reijndorp et al., 2012, p.115)

Figure 5 Jobs/labor force of Zoetermeer in the Hague region. Source: (Reijndorp et al., 2012, p.117)

Figure 6 Randstad region development according Randstad 2040 structuurvisie (Ministerie van VROM, 2008 p.9)
Figure 7 Zoetermeer in the 1950, before the expansion. Source: map by author

Figure 8 The original plan for the expansion of Zoetermeer from 1968. Source: http://www.refdag.nl/polopoly_fs/2012_05_30_pktdl1_zoetermeer_6_fc_v_web_1_648198!image/3866515979.jpg

Figure 9 Zoetermeer in the 1960, just starting the expansion. Source: map by author

Figure 10 Zoetermeer between 1975 and 1985. Source: map by author
Before the 1960s, Zoetermeer used to be a small village, situated at the crossing of a regional network Leiden – Delft and The Hague Utrecht. In the 20th century, Zoetermeer was connected to the national highway system (A12) and the NS train network (Figure 7).
In 1962 the first plans for Zoetermeer as ‘centre of urban development’ for the region was mentioned in the First Note. In the structuurplan of 1968 the role of Zoetermeer within the region was illustrated (Figure 8).
During the 1960s the new policy started to be realized. The first neighborhoods developed around the old village consist mainly high rise buildings, based on modernistic principles (CIAM) (Figure 9). Since 1975 those modernistic ideas were criticized, which resulted in small scale family housing (Figure 10). At this moment, the city has been expanded to the original plans. But instead of being focussed on the region, the focused mainly on the Hague, to the ‘Sprinter Stop train’ and the focus on the national highway system, instead the regional road network. Since 1985, when the policy on ‘centres of urban development’ slowly came to an end, the city focused on becoming a city and developed to new neighborhoods, outside the original road and public transport network. This resulted in even more focus on the national highway system and national train system. Besides, the new city centre developed in the centre of the city, based on the original regional framework (Figure 11). Since 1995, the Fourth Note Extra (VINEX) resulted in a new neighbourhood (Figure 12). At the same time, the regional infrastructure network expanded in favour of Zoetermeer.
2 Problem Statement

2.1 Problem definition
Since late 1980s the policy for ‘centres of urban development’ gradually came to an end. Since then, the focus on urbanity within suburban areas decreased. The ‘compact city’ became the main focus in spatial planning and urbanity became synonymous for ‘big city’ (Figure 13), but suburbanity disappeared from the spatial planning policies. The former ‘centres of urban development’ had to survive while there was no attention for them. Besides, the suburban areas remained important within the development of the metropolitan region.

Last decades, the Randstad region is developing from ‘compact city’ to ‘network city’ to ‘metropolitan region’ (Figure 13).

![Figure 13 Shift from compact city to network city to metropolitan region. Source: (IenM, 2011, p15)](image)

According the concept of the metropolitan region, the metropole, the city and the rural area are one system, in which the compact large city remains dominant. Besides, downscaling the responsibilities of the housing policy to local authorities (mainly municipality), causes an increase of both urbanisation as suburbanisation in the Randstad. As the demand for rustic-urban and rural living increases, ‘suburban urbanity’ might be an answer to this development. Urbanity could be defined in terms of increasing density, but also in terms of decreasing density. Suburbanity could be defined in terms of the low dense housing environment.

Reijndorp et al (2012) discuss in ‘Nieuwe steden in de Randstad’ and Reijndorp, Bijlsma and Nio (2012) in ‘Atlas Nieuwe Steden, de verstedelijkting van de groeikernen’, that ‘suburban urbanity’ could contribute to the development of the Randstad metropolitan region and could strengthen the competitiveness of the former ‘centres of urban development’ in the metropolitan region. Nevertheless it remains unclear in what way suburban urbanity could be spatially implemented in the former ‘centres of urban development’ and in particular in Zoetermeer?

Suburban urbanity might contribute to a social, economic and environmental sustainable development of the former ‘centres of urban development’, which could strengthen their competitive position within the metropolitan region. Instead of becoming a boring ‘New Town’, ‘suburban urbanity’ might support Zoetermeer its competitiveness in the South Wing metropolitan region.

Current developments seem not to focus on the urban and suburban qualities of life of Zoetermeer, but on its position within the regional network. The development of the regional focused ‘BleiZo’ office and outlet area and regional focused leisure amenities confirm this focus. Especially the ‘BleiZo’ development cause a shift of office and shopping program from the current city centre to ‘BleiZo’. Both developments might strengthen the city’s economy on regional scale, but do not support the development of the city’s urban and suburban quality of life and thus not their competitiveness within the South Wing metropolitan region.

Next to that, the different neighborhoods (all with their own design principles according a specific era) do function well on their own, but do not with each other. This obstructs Zoetermeer from developing urban qualities of life. Connecting the different neighborhoods on the scale of the city could support this development.
2.2 Study area

The study area is dominated by a regional road defined by the: ‘Australieweg’, ‘Europaweg’ and ‘Amerikaweg’ (Figure 14). The area represents the confrontation between the regional and the local scale (Figure 16 and 17). Originally, the road was part of the regional road network that would define the framework for the development of Zoetermeer (Figure 18). Through time the focus changed from this regional road network to national highway system. This caused a shift of developments from the regional road network to the national highway system, like BleiZo and NS office area (Figure 19). Currently the regional road network only operates as the access system inbetween the different neighbourhoods as well as the system between the neighbourhoods and the national highway system.

Although it still accompanies Zoetermeer’s city centre (Figure 15), as well as new large regional focused leisure amenities.

Besides, this regional road network is the only infrastructure network in between the different neighbourhoods, while a city road network might be helpful in order to strengthen the urban and suburban qualities of life of Zoetermeer.

As the study area defines the development of the original city centre as well as represents the confrontation between regional and local scale it could be the key area in order to achieve urbanity and suburban qualities of life.
Figure 15 Regional road and city centre. Source: illustration by author

Figure 16 Regional road, city centre and residential neighbourhood. Source: illustration by author

Figure 17 Regional road and residential neighbourhood. Illustration by author
2.3 Problem statement
What spatial interventions could strengthen the urban and suburban qualities of life of Zoetermeer?

2.4 Objective
To support a sustainable development and therefor the competitiveness of Zoetermeer in the South Wing metropolitan region.
3 Research Question

3.1 Research Question

**What spatial interventions could strengthen the urban and suburban qualities of life of Zoetermeer?**

3.2 Sub Research Questions

In order to define the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (S.W.O.T.) the problem definition is dealing with, a set of sub research questions is set up. By using several kinds of specific methods, the sub research question will be answered in order set up a confrontation matrix. This confrontation matrix will lead into a set of spatial strategies for a design.

3.2.1 In what way did Zoetermeer develop till present day?
This question needs to be answered in order to define the present Strengths and Weaknesses in relation to Zoetermeer its qualities of life.
A spatial historical analyse on regional, city as neighbourhood will be made, by mapping (sub)urban development and infrastructure networks. The analyse will contain the urban development of Zoetermeer, starting from 1950s (just before the 'centre of urban development' policy is introduced in the First policy document 'spatial planning' in 1962) till the current situation. Every time frame will be put in societal perspective by describing the defining trends in policy.

3.2.2 In what way will Zoetermeer develop the next decades?
This question needs to be answered in order to define the current trend in the development of Zoetermeer and define their Strengths and Weaknesses in relation to problem definition. In order to do so, policy documents, visions and (master) plans by national, regional and local authorities will be (spatially) analysed.

3.2.3 What are the spatial characteristics of the different neighbourhoods?
This question needs to be answered in order to define the Strengths and Weaknesses of the different neighbourhoods in relation to urban and suburban conditions.
A spatial analyse will be made of the different neighbourhoods. Density, typology and infrastructure will be mapped. This analyse will be accompanied by theories considering urbanisation, suburbanisation and infrastructural networks.

3.2.4 What type of program is present in Zoetermeer?
This question needs to be answered in order to define Strengths and Weaknesses of the current program in relation to urban and suburban qualities of life.
Besides mapping the specific program present in Zoetermeer, both the program specific typologies and connection to infrastructural networks are mapped. This analyse will be accompanied by theories considering the dynamics of different kind of program, in order to clarify the Strengths and Weaknesses of the present program.
This answer should be put in the perspective of the answer of question 3.2.3.

3.2.5 What type of infrastructure network is present in Zoetermeer?
This question needs to be answered in order to define the Strengths and Weaknesses of the infrastructure network in relation to the urban and suburban qualities of life.
Besides mapping the different infrastructural networks on national, regional and city, theories considering infrastructural networks will accompany this analyse in order to put clarify the Strengths and Weaknesses of the infrastructural networks. This answer should be put in the perspective of the answer of question 3.2.3.

3.2.6 Which program should be added or changed?
Following question 3.2.4, this question needs to be answered in order to find, next to the Strengths and Weaknesses of the present program, Opportunities and Threats of the program in relation to the urban and suburban qualities of life. This question will be answered by using the same literature as used in 3.2.4 and by doing case-studies.

3.2.7 What type of infrastructure network should be added to support both urban as suburban development?
Following 3.2.5, this question needs to be answered in order to find, next to the Strengths and Weaknesses of the present infrastructure network, Opportunities and Threats of the infrastructure network in relation to the urban and suburban qualities of life. This question will be answered by using the same literature as used in 3.2.5 and by doing case-studies.

3.3 Theoretical framework
The problem definition defines a theoretical framework, in order to answer the research questions. In general, the project is based on the idea that 'suburban urbanity' (Reijndorp et al, 2012) could support a sustainable development and therefor the competitiveness of Zoetermeer in the South Wing metropolitan region. To assist this theory, other theories are used. Those

theories are (as explained before) based on (sub)urbanisation processes, infrastructure networks and program dynamics.

3.3.1 (Sub)urbanisation processes
In order to understand under what circumstances urbanisation and suburbanisation processes occur, theories of Jane Jacobs (1961) are reviewed.

3.3.2 Infrastructure networks
In order to understand in what way infrastructure networks influence urbanisation processes, Peter Taylor's 'Prime Modernities' (1999), Peter Hall (1966) and the strategies on networks that support the urbanisation process Stephen Read suggests in 'Intensive urbanisation: Levels, networks and central places' (Read, 2013) will be discussed.

3.3.3 Program dynamics
In order define what program should be added or changed, it necessary in what the dynamic is of different types of program. In what way does a certain program connects itself spatially to the network or maybe does not connect itself to the network. For example Romein & Maat (2013) discuss spatial organisation of consumer services in the polycentric urban context.
4 Methodology

4.1 Process
The methodology is formulated from a designer perspective. The process is based around the problem definition that defines the research questions, in order to achieve the objective. The research questions will be answered by using different analytical tools and a theoretical framework (which is defined by the problem definition). The answers of the research questions will be evaluated in a confrontation matrix in order to define strategies that might be an answer to the problem definition. The strategies will be the base for a design, which hopefully can answer spatially the main research question in order to achieve the objective (Figure 20).

Figure 20 Methodology. Source: illustration by author
4.2 Time-working plan
From the start of the project, the problem definition, the research question and the objective should be defined and refined. While the problem definition should be clear at the time of P2, the main research question and the objective should be refined till the end and constantly tested to the new development in the research process. The sub research questions related to the Strengths and Weaknesses of the problem definition should be answered during P2, while the sub research questions related to the Strengths and Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats should be clear at the time of P3. Although, they already (partly) could be answered before P3, in order to start define the strategies and start designing. At P3 the strategies should be defined in order to complete the design and answer the main research question and find a way to achieve the objective at P4. Till P5 there will be time to refine the latter en reflect on the research and the process (Figure 21).

Figure 21 Time-working plan. Source: illustration by author
5 Relevance

5.1 Societal Relevance
The project is related to a general trend in Dutch policy, which is the decreased focus on a sustainable development and the competitiveness of the Dutch New Towns. Since the policy for ‘centres of urban development’ ended (late 1980s), the focus on urbanity within suburban areas decreased. The former ‘centres of urban development’ had to survive while there was no attention for them. Besides, the suburban areas remained important within the development of the metropolitan region.
Due to a urbanizing as well as suburbanizing Randstad metropolitan region, the demand for rustic-urban and rural living increases. In this perspective, Reijndorp et al (2012) discuss in ‘Nieuwe steden in de Randstad’ and Reijndorp, Bijlsma and Nio (2012) in ‘Atlas Nieuwe Steden, de verstedelijkning van de groeikernen’, the future role of the former ‘centres of urban development’ within the metropolitan region. According them, ‘suburban urbanity’ could contribute to both the development of the Randstad metropolitan region as to support a social, economic and environmental sustainable development and thus the competitiveness of the New Towns in the metropolitan region.
In this perspective, ‘suburban urbanity’ might support Zoetermeer its sustainable development and thus competitiveness in the South Wing metropolitan region, instead of becoming a boring ‘New Town’.

5.2 Scientific Relevance
The project is related to the research theme of ‘Metropolitan spatial structure’, by TU Delft in collaboration with research institute OTB.

The project’s objective to support a sustainable development and therefor the competitiveness of Zoetermeer in the South Wing metropolitan region, relates to the research theme its concern on “understanding the evolution of metropolitan spatial structure, and the performance of different regional spatial structures in terms of economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability and social wellbeing.”
Also the project’s approach on finding strategies in order to define a design that supports the development of Zoetermeer within in the metropolitan region, links to the research theme its concern on “linking planning strategy and practice positively with improved knowledge of spatial structure and performance”.
6 Intended end products

6.1 Strategies
Derived from the answers on the research questions, a set of strategies is defined in order to strengthen the urban and suburban qualities ‘suburban urbanity’.

The general strategy is to connect the different scales present with study area. In order to so it is essential to:
- add a city scale infrastructure network to connect different scales with each other
- intensify the crossings of the different networks, in order to support urbanity

In order to prevent the city centre from decreasing its position, the new developments along the highway should be connected with the study area, by city scale infrastructure network. The crossings of this network with the study area should be intensified (Figure 22).

Next to that, the different neighbourhood, as well as the regional leisure amenities should be connected with the study area, by city scale infrastructure network. In this case the crossings of this network with the study area should be intensified as well (Figure 23).

Figure 22 Connect the different neighbourhoods and the regional leisure amenities with the plan area and intensify the crossings. Source: map by author
6.2 Design goals
Crucial parts in the study area in implementing the strategies will have to be defined to intervene. Those ‘plan areas’ will define the strategies (city scale infrastructure network and intensification) in a spatial design. In this way those interventions hopefully help to strengthen the urban and suburban qualities of life of Zoetermeer, in order to support a sustainable development and therefor the competitiveness of Zoetermeer in the South Wing metropolitan region.
7 Bibliography

Literature:


Policy documents, notes, reports:


Spatial principles defining suburban urbanity
Supporting a sustainable urban development of Dutch New Towns

Course AR3U022, Theory of Urbanism
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Abstract – The concept of the metropolitan region in the Randstad requires to define the subject of suburban urbanity in Dutch New Towns, in order to support their urban development. Suburban urbanity is defined as essential in the development of the Dutch New Towns as it will strengthen their position within the Randstad metropolitan region by developing their own urban qualities as providing suburban qualities to the region. By discussing Stephen Read’s network model (2013), some spatial principles are defined that could define an answer. The use of the crossings of the different ‘levels’ of a network might support a sustainable urban and suburban development of Dutch New Towns.

Key words – suburban urbanity, spatial principles, network, Dutch New Towns, metropolitan region, sustainable urban development

1 Introduction

Reijndorp et al (2012) and Reijndorp, Bijlsma and Nio (2012) discuss the future development of Dutch New Towns in the context of the Randstad metropolitan region. According them, the Dutch New Towns both need to develop a certain level of urbanization, as to retain their suburban qualities, in order to survive within the metropolitan region. It is essential to define the subject of ‘suburban urbanity’ in the Dutch New Towns, in order to support a sustainable development for both the Randstad metropolitan region as the Dutch New Towns. Therefore this literature review paper discusses what main spatial principles define suburban urbanity in Dutch New Towns, in order to support their urban development.

In order to find an answer to this aim, it is essential to understand which spatial principles base the Dutch New Towns. Those principles will be put in perspective by discussing the network model Stephen Read (2013) discusses in ‘Intensive urbanisation: Levels, networks and central places’ in order to come up with spatial principles that could help to define what suburban urbanity could be in Dutch New Towns.

First this paper discusses the definition of suburban urbanity according
Reijndorp et al (2012; 2012), in order to clarify the aim. Next the main spatial principles of Dutch New Towns will be explained to define their qualities and what they might lack. Then the network model Stephen Read (2013) suggested is discussed as it could help construct strategies for more layered, sustainable and socially enabling urbanisation and central place development in the future. After this a conclusion is made of which spatial principles define suburban urbanity in Dutch New Towns, in order to support their sustainable development. Finally some main spatial principles will be recommended to

2 What is suburban urbanity?

The ministry of Infrastructure and Environment describes in ‘Ontwerp Structuurvisie Infrastructuur en Ruimte’ (IenM, 2011) describes the urbanisation problem for the Randstad till 2040. Although it remains unclear in what way this urbanisation will be shaped, it represents a shift in thinking about the urbanisation process: from compact city to network city to metropolitan region (Figure 1).

![Figure 1: Shift from compact city to network city to metropolitan region](Source: (IenM, 2011, p15))

According the concept of the metropolitan region, the metropole, the city and the rural area are one system, in which the compact large city remains dominant. Next to the metropolitan region development, municipalities become less restricted in defining their housing policy, which will lead to a focus from the provinces of Flevoland and Gelderland to the Randstad. This process will increase the urbanisation in the Randstad, which will increase suburban living too. It is not desirable to ignore the latter. As the demand for rustic-urban and rural living increases, suburban urbanity might be an answer to this. Reijndorp et al (2012) discuss in 'Nieuwe steden in de Randstad' and Reijndorp, Bijlsma and Nio (2012) in ‘Atlas Nieuwe Steden, de verstedelijking van de groeikernen’, the way suburban urbanity could contribute to the development of the Randstad metropolitan region and the Dutch New Towns.

The discussion on suburban urbanity is not new. The discussion originally started during the realization of the Dutch New Towns. As the Dutch New Towns originally had to offer both single-family dwellings in a rustic environment, as the proximity of urban life, the Dutch New Towns have always been on an area of tension between city and suburb. Those two ambivalent qualities are best characterised as suburban urbanity. As the Dutch New Towns are based on both suburban as urban principles, it is essential to understand those principles when discussing suburban urbanity.

After all, suburban urbanity is essential in the way sustainable urban development in the Dutch New Towns could be established. It is impossible to design urbanity in social and cultural terms, but it arises and changes by an interaction between physical, economic and cultural factors. A ‘sustainable city’ is a city that could adapt urbanization and new development. Due to their spacious and flexible design, the Dutch New Towns could accommodate those processes, but at the same time strengthen their suburban living qualities.

In ‘Death and Life of Great American Cities’ (1961 cited in Reijndorp et al, 2012, p.53) Jane Jacobs brings the case to attention almost passingly. She wonders in what way neighbourhoods could be build, if they socially become more urban through time, that could offer space to this urbanisation process, which accompanies differentiation of the population and new social and economic dynamics? Following up, an answer should be found on the way suburban living environments could remain their suburban character.

3 What are the main spatial principles of Dutch New Towns

In order to understand in what way the Dutch New Towns relate to suburban urbanity, it is essential to understand the main spatial principles of the Dutch New Towns and the reason why they are designed according those principles. Reijndorp, Bijlsma and Nio (2012)
discuss in ‘Atlas Nieuwe Steden, de verstedelijking van de groeikernen’ those spatial principles.

The design process of the Dutch New Towns is related to the shift from a formal to a scientific way of urbanism, which is based on statistics. This results in models like ‘bundled deconcentration’, which demonstrate the shift from a non-esthetical to a functional based urbanism. Variables like speed, flexibility and financing dominate the design, which results in generic. The urban design of the public space is neglected, while diagrams define neighbourhoods. Relationships between building blocks, green and traffic are defined in an abstract way, which results in a lack of scale and place. This denies thinking in spatial hierarchy and of location specific characteristics. Specific urban elements on city scale like routes, axis, squares and centres are not important for the urban identity.

In order to define the urban identity the urban design will, according the ideology of individualism and self-expression, focus no longer on large-scale projects, but on small-scale projects. Besides, the focus in urban design shifts from building blocks to the road and green structures. Since the 1960s, the road structures are designed autonomous, from national scale to local scale, independently of the building blocks and urban tissue. The green structures will, next to structuring the urban design, provide the ‘green’ experience of the new suburban city. But in most Dutch New Towns, those green structures will be specified as buffer, emptiness or spare space, without any specific character or public function. Due to this negative character, the potentials of the green structure remain unutilized. This in contrast to England and France, where those green structures are used in a positive way. In France, those green structures are, besides being functional and spatial, of cultural and public significance. The green structure is used as key element for urban development, but is of local significance at the same time.

It is clear that the functional approach on the design of the Dutch New Towns resulted in some qualities (efficiency, flexibility), but also some lacks (meaningless spaces with no relation to any scale). The advantage of the Dutch New Towns is their spacious design, due to a flexible planning. This allows the city to adjust to new developments and allow intensification of any kind and scale.

4 Spatial principles that support sustainable development

In order to support a sustainable development of the Dutch New Towns, it essential to define strategies and spatial principles that could assist this sustainable development. Therefor, a better understanding of processes as social, economic and environmental developments is required.

Stephen Read (2013) proposes a network model that will spatialise urbanisation in relation to the networks that are the spatial datum to the urbanisation processes themselves. It is hoped the model will help us see cities in terms of processes that produce vitality, centrality and social and public space and help us think about making these in a variety of types and at variety of ‘levels’ and scales. As urbanisation potentially can take place on any scale of network and as the sustainable development of the Dutch New Towns highly depends on scale, the model hopefully can support the sustainable development of Dutch New Towns.

By referring to Peter Taylor’s ‘prime modernities’ (1999), ‘communication theory’ (2012) Read explains how cities are implicated in the huge changes that societies have undergone since such settlements first appeared several millennia ago. But Read is critical about the way Taylor reduces cities themselves to ‘containers’ of ‘agglomeration’ (Read, 2013, p.4). By referring to Eric Slater (2004) and Peter Hall, Read emphasizes “the multivacency of world-cities, stating they are on top world-city networks in field of politics, trade, communications, finance, culture, technology and higher education” (Hall, 1966 cited in Read, 2013, p.5). Read clarifies that these networks “are historical – they and their logics are products of construction, adjustment, politicking and negotiation over time – and that cities sit at the nexus of different networks” (Read 2013, p.5). Read states (ibid., p.6) that the different networks themselves are built and converged historically to a state of being (near) generic ‘levels’. The infrastructure on itself is a naturalised system without which urban
societies cannot and could not, throughout history, have functioned (ibid., p.7). Most important, infrastructures are tightly organised integrations of multiple social, cultural, economic and technical factors and components. We could understand them as sociotechnical spaces, which operate at every level of urban societies including, but not limited to, the world economy. New systems are built over old ones. These create worlds regions and cities, but they also join up with already existing systems in ways that maintain or strategically transform structures already established and incorporated into practical lives. Metageographical levels give ranges and scopes to economies, cultures and societies, from those at levels and scales of world-economies, to others at regional, national, urban and other levels and scales. These levels interrelate in order that the whole complexity of production, consumption and other processes that sustain and animate modern life become operational. Those networks their spaces connect with or merge with spaces already existing (ibid., p.8). Their spaces reinforce those legible spaces and make them even more legible (ibid., p.9).

Read combines these theories with knowledge of space syntax, to introduces a diagram that describes a nested hierarchical structure (Figure 3). This structure contains the ‘supergrid’, which consists of urban main-streets, which also centre neighbourhoods and connect them as parts into a whole of the city, while the street and block grid connects parts at the level of houses or shops into a whole of the neighbourhood. Read emphasizes that the diagram in which this hierarchy is constructed is not that of the familiar bounded areas and circles within circles (figure 2).

By describing this model, Read suggests that different networks (‘levels’) should not be seen as bounded areas (‘container’ spaces), but as part of a network, where the different networks interrelate with each other in order to support the complex process of modern life. The urbanisation process is produced at the crossings of the different networks. Those crossings allow different domains and scales of our multivalent economic, cultural, social and human lives to be recombined in central places where different valencies meet, complex work is done, and societies and economies are constructed and organised (ibid., p.15).

**Figure 2:** Areal (‘container’ space) definition of metageographical entities. (grey - neighbourhoods; red – cities; purple – city regions)
Source: (Read, 2013, p11)

**Figure 3:** Network definition of metageographical entities. (grey - neighbourhoods; red – cities; purple – city regions)
Source: (Read, 2013, p11)

### 5 Conclusions

This literature review paper discusses what main spatial principles define suburban urbanity in Dutch New Towns, in order to support their urban development.
Suburban urbanity is defined as essential in the development of the Dutch New Towns as it will strengthen their position within the Randstad metropolitan region by developing their own urban qualities as providing suburban qualities to the region. In order to find an answer in which way suburban urbanity should be designed, the main spatial principles of Dutch New Towns have to be defined. Their efficient and flexible design is an advantage for future urban development. The main disadvantage for urban development is the road and green structures. Those structures, besides being functional, can be characterized as meaningless places for any scale. In order to support urban development, the potentials of those structures should become of significance on both city as local scale.

By discussing Read’s network model (2013) it is hoped to find a way to solve this problem. Read’s model suggests that the urbanisation process is produced at the crossing of different networks. Those networks interrelate with each other in order to support the complex process of modern life. In order to support urban development, it is essential to use the potentials of the crossings of the different networks.

6 Recommendations

In order to define sustainable urban development in Dutch New Towns, a deeper understanding of urban development is needed. The network model suggested by Read does not cope this theme fully, as a lot of other (non) spatial factors play a role in defining urban development. Besides the problems of the Dutch New Towns have to be researched further.

However, some conclusion could be recommended to support a sustainable development for the Dutch New Town Zoetermeer.

It will be essential to consider road and green structures not as ‘container’ spaces, but connect on urban scale as local scale, in order to support urban sustainability. Read’s network model could assist in this process, by using the potentials of some crossings of the different levels to encourage urban development. It might be necessary to add some ‘levels’ in order to enrich a network that supports the production of urbanisation. While some crossing will support urban development, other crossings could assist the development of suburban qualities. What the potentials of those crossings define should be researched further, but this model is a beginning in a way how to deal with suburban urbanity in Dutch New Towns, in order to support a sustainable urban development.

References


