

Report Schiedam site visit 6 April 2013

More than 70 potential participants gathered at the starting point of the visit to see the Schiedam site for the European 12 round with their own eyes. After a warm



reception in a former gin distillery with coffee and cake (it was a little too early for *jenever*) and a word of welcome by the alderwoman Nathalie Gouweleeuw the participants heard the same presentation as that given at the information market (see www.europan.nl), but now presented by urban developer Roelof Geijteman. Schiedam is seeking a strategy to make the city “adaptable” for the future.

There is a number of important points that the participants need to take into consideration. First of all Schiedam wants better public space, more room for economic development and better accessibility for the city for both the business and the private sector. Major changes are planned in the coming years that have repercussions on the city. Large-scale sports facilities will be built along and above the new A4 motorway (Delft-Schiedam route). This will create space for developing new programmes on other sites including – for Schiedam – new housing types that are more attuned to the wishes of the Schiedam’s inhabitants. The construction of the A4 motorway will also have repercussions on mobility in the city.

The second important point is that future developments will seek to establish a connection with the underlying urban and landscape structure. With a number of developments the accent will therefore be placed on the river Schie. Historical character, water and harbour elements are significant for the revitalisation of the city centre. The focus of the shopping and leisure area in the city centre will therefore concentrate round the river Schie. This should be a mix of economic and public functions.



Developments on the Nieuw Mathenesse industrial estate should also be taken into consideration. This is situated in the south-easterly part of Schiedam, a small part of which belongs to the municipality of Rotterdam. The industrial character will be retained but the site will become increasingly integrated with the surrounding city and will have a more mixed programme. This change will require better access and it will therefore have consequences for the area around the site. The area will be transformed in the coming two decades.

Finally, the dike structure in Schiedam is important. The original dike structure runs from Rotterdam via Koemarkt straight through the historical centre. In the future the traffic focal point will shift to the new dike structure further to the south. From Rotterdamsedijk the traffic will be directed round the centre via Van Deventerstraat. This will reduce the traffic on the present Rotterdamsedijk, giving it a different character. A projection of the volume of traffic for the new route round the city and the roads in the city has been made, but that model is very flexible.

The core question for the competition is: what strategy can be devised for Koemarkt and its surroundings for the coming 20 years. A plan is needed that takes the future into consideration and it should therefore be “adaptable” over the next two decades. The development of the Vrom site and a new design for Koemarkt can form the first step in the realisation of that strategy.

After the presentation the participants visited both areas of the competition site.



The Vrom site is an undeveloped site situated between the river Schie and the industrial area to the east. Buitenhavenweg will shortly be redesigned and the waterfront will acquire more significance as a walking route. The glass factory to the east of the site will be retained there. The plan for the area on the south of the site is to create a distillery cluster, making space in the historical city centre for other developments, including housing. The access route to the glass factory will be relocated from the west to the east side, creating space for a pleasanter environment on Buitenhavenweg. After the renovation the glass factory will house a museum and visitors will be able to see how bottles are manufactured. Inland shipping makes only limited use of the water. The bank should be developed further and should link up with the city centre. This bank also forms part of the regional cycle route “from city to beach”. The cycle route and the promenade will reinforce each other. The apartments along Rotterdamsedijk, with their backs facing the Vrom site, are private properties. Redevelopment of this block is motivated by urgency resulting in the need to bear the economic cost of this development.

The conclusion is that this site should be given more than one function: industry, housing, recreation and preservation of the historical aspect. Despite the nuisance from the businesses in the vicinity, a residential function is possible thanks to the *stad en milieubenadering* (urban and environmental) regulations: there must be sufficient quality to counteract an increase in the nuisance level. Plans by a private party to build accommodation for the elderly on the site were refused by the municipality because there are many other, far better, potential sites for such a programme in the city.

With Koemarkt there is a concrete boundary between industry and the centre. The Vrom site infill should bring more cohesion to these two areas. As regards parking facilities: the new programmes must provide for these on-site. To the question as to where Buitenhavenweg links up in the south, the reply was that it links up with the harbour that runs over the new dike (Havendijk, Westfrankelandsedijk) and, in the distant future, with the waterfront developments.

In the area round Koemarkt the first stop was at the Plantage. This is the oldest part of Schiedam and, in the past, it formed the city’s outer border. The northern part of the park was recently laid out, this was formerly a car park. The road alongside it, Oranjestraat, is one of Schiedam’s traffic arteries. Changes in the traffic structure will reduce the volume of traffic.





There is a number of listed buildings near Koemarkt, such as the Dudok building by Koemarktbrug and the Passage. These buildings should, of course, be preserved. Lange Haven is situated opposite the Dudok building where, in the past, the cow market was held. This spot with its historical premises is Schiedam's crowd puller. The municipality recommends

“doing something” with this feature.



Koemarkt itself is an open space at the end of Rotterdamsedijk. Here the approach route from Rotterdam splits. The old city centre lies straight ahead. Koemarkt is a public space where celebrations and events are held. The space is situated as it were behind the T-junction from Rotterdam.



There are kiosks there now and the entrance to an underground car park. The car park entrance is, in principle, an established feature in the development, the car park is private property. The municipality has, however, added detailed drawings of the underground infrastructure to the complete site folder. Allowing for this, improving the underground car park entrance could be an option.

A tram runs from Rotterdamsedijk and turns right across Koemarkt. The kiosks are not necessarily permanent features. The tram will have to be retained, but a minor alteration to the route is possible.

To the question as to how the traffic structure round Koemarkt will develop in relation to the harbour route, the reply was that accents will shift in the main traffic structure and the harbour route will become more important. This will affect Koemarkt. The complete site folder includes a traffic scheme indicating the extent to which the junction on Koemarkt can be scaled down.

After the visit to the European 12 site in Schiedam, at the invitation of the municipality drinks and tapas were served and almost everyone gladly accepted. This was a highly enjoyable conclusion to a chilly, but sunny site visit in Schiedam.

European Nederland,
April 2013