

ISOCARP 2015 Congress Brussels  
October 19 2015

# Coproduction in urban renewal projects (revisiting Polanyi / challenging boundaries) Flanders/Belgium 2002-2015

André Loeckx

1. the urban condition 1990: urban decay, suburban sprawl
2. the project mode of urban development
3. brief ideology of Urban Policy/Projects in Flanders/Belgium
4. Urban Renewal Project issues: synergy, coproduction, double scale
6. urban renewal? what about territories and city regions?
7. coproduction? what about participation?

# 1990ies, views from the city:

the city neglected, unwanted, left behind, blamed as a realm of problems: old housing stock, inappropriate dwelling typologies, neglected public realm, traffic congestion, abandoned places of production, ethnic tension, riots, urban exodus



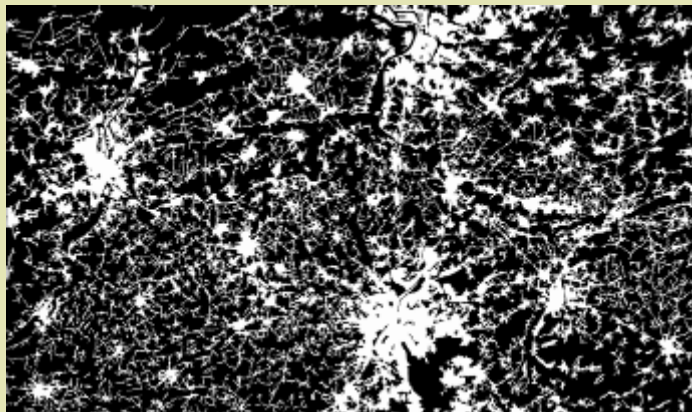


1990, views from the 'città diffusa', 'de nevelstad':  
urban sprawl, car based mobility, suburbanization, overconsumption of open space, suppression of rurality, impoverishment and gentrification, contested territories





Flanders/Belgium 1990-2000: two main concerns for urban renewal: 1 to counter suburban sprawl and urban exodus





Flanders/Belgium 1990-2000: two main concerns for urban renewal: 2 to clean up and reuse the postindustrial legacy in order to re-urbanize the city



the urban condition 1990: the legacy of the second industrial revolution: obsolete postindustrial infrastructure, pollution, urban brownfield reserve

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# Europe 1985-2005: the developer's project mode of urban transformation, London, Rotterdam, Barcelona, Berlin...



# the project mode of urban transformation in Europe

- speculative urbanization or lack of investment is replaced by superprojects that demonstrate a certain urban quality: diversity, design quality, emphasis on the public realm, elements of sustainability...
- superprojects only occur in major cities with major economic assets
- project mode is driven by major drivers: by powerful real estate market forces, by unique events generating exceptional political will (olympic games, Wende, ...)
- often waterfront developments: suitable for up-market real estate
- monofunctional postindustrial equipments are replaced by 'mixed developments' with limited mix: offices, commerce, middle class residence
- in spite of phasing and flexibility: relatively homogeneous developments with massification effect
- generic architecture with exceptional spots of star-architecture: the Bilbao Frank Gehry formula
- top-down development: participation as 'infotainment'
- gentrification and social selection
- ...



# Flanders-Brussels 1985-2005:

the developer's project mode of urban transformation

the absent local government, the urban debate as an act of resistance



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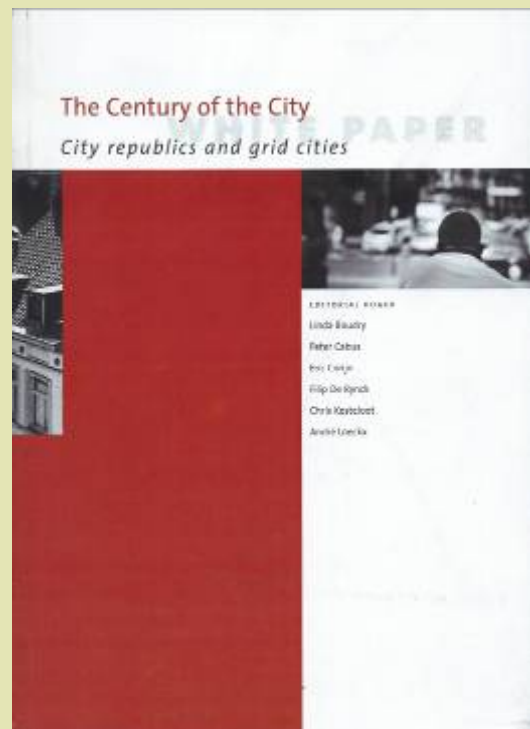
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# Flanders' Government White Paper on Urban Governance and Urban Projects: “The century of the city”, 2002-2004

De eeuw van de stad  
**WITBOEK**  
*Over stadsrepublieken en rastersteden*



- the city and the urban region = realm of 21st century development
- ‘4-D development’: density, diversity, democracy, sustainability (duurzaamheid)
- ‘3-I development’: three modes of social integration [Karl Polanyi, 1944]: welfare redistribution, market exchange, reciprocity; 3 main project actors: government, private sector, civil society/community
- two complementary modes of governance: representative democracy and participatory democracy
- subsidiarity and horizontal governance versus top-down dictates and sectorial autarky
- towards triple coproduction: public-public / public–private / public-civil
- policy and project considered as complementary government actions: the urban renewal project = local laboratory of 4-D and 3-I development
- the urban government is author and director of the urban renewal project



## set-up of policy and project instruments

### set-up of project support programme

- elaboration and implementation of different policy instruments:
  - city monitor for 13 central cities
  - city contract procedure with public authorities and departments
  - city visitation
  - 'at home in the city' award for completed urban projects
  - financial and organizational support for coproductive urban renewal projects in 13 central cities and 21 provincial towns
  - establishment of Urban Policy Team within Flemisch Government
- supporting coproductive urban renewal projects:
  - 'concept subsidy' = subsidies and support for project definition as a mode of capacity building for local governments (project research and design, early consultation and participation, project set-up)
  - project subsidies and support for project proposals selected on the basis of quality criteria by an independent multidisciplinary jury
  - follow-up of selected projects by the Urban Policy Team + experts (incl. jury members): quality chamber, local project workshops
  - publications and exchanges

subsidizing and supporting coproductive urban renewal projects selected by multidisciplinary jury on the basis of quality criteria / quality transitions

- 1. **structural impact**: 'lever effect', correlated to urban structure planning
- 2. **integral sustainability**: spatial, social, economical, ecological
- 3. **urban synergy**: gathering, connecting, interweaving of separated functions, services, infrastructures, projects, investments, sectors, authorities
- 4. **urban coproduction (1)**: efficient project oriented public - public coöperation
- 5. **urban coproduction (2)**: public - private partnership on the basis of mutual benefit
- 6. **urban coproduction (3)**: responsible citizenship and participation
- 7. **quality planning and design** as integrating spatial frame and platform
- 8. **performative project set-up and process architecture**: phasing, timing, financing
- 9. **steering by local government**, set-up of local project team



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# City of Ghent, Gasometer site and Rabot Quarter

19th century belt: substandard workers housing, social housing, postindustrial patrimony





# City of Ghent, Gasometer site and Rabot Quarter:

Urban Renewal project Section 1: housing development on PPP basis: private housing, social housing (climate neutral, quality design, typological and social mix), public park, Section 2: reuse of former gas containers for community facilities, dwelling upgrading in the adjacent 19th century Rabot neighbourhood



work by a.o. Rapp&Rapp, EVR, ONO, De Smet Vermeulen, Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen, Aclagro, Koramic Real Estate,



# City of Ghent, Gasometer site and Rabot: coproductive dwelling upgrading in adjacent Rabot neighbourhood



# City of Ghent, Gasometer site and Rabot:

coproductive dwelling upgrading in 19th century Rabot neighbourhood



## Samen de puzzel leggen

sensitizing (house visits, renovation fair,...)

advising (technical and architectural advise,...)

supporting (collective purchase and commission, temporary rehousing ...)

coaching (loans, subsidies, reciprocal help,...)

activating (social economy, on site technical training, ...)

## Sensibiliseren

Woonwinkel, Samenlevingsopbouw

## Adviseren

Woonwinkel, MilieuAdviesWinkel, REGent, BWT

## Ondersteunen

OCMW, Stad Gent, FRGE, OTC, BWT

## Begeleiden

Domus Mundi, De Sleutel, Labeur, BWT

## Activeren

Stad in Werking, Samenlevingsopbouw, Sociale



# City of Ghent, Urban Renewal project 'Old Docks' urban design competition 2004, OMA's 'skewer' scheme



City of Ghent, Urban Renewal Project 'Old Docks'  
phase 1 'Traders' Dock East' (Handelsdok Oost), 2011



phase 1 'Traders' Dock East' (Handelsdok Oost), 2011-  
strategic subproject 1: infrastructures of connection  
2 pedestrian and bicycle bridges (inauguration of Batavia bridge summer 2012)



strategic subproject 2: restoration of the quays,  
reconstruction of obsolete infrastructures into qualitative public places

phase 1 'Traders' Dock East' (Handelsdok Oost), 2011-  
strategic subproject 2: socio-cultural programme DOK 2012-  
'dockyard for leisure and cultural manoeuvres'





phase 1 'Traders' Dock East' (Handelsdok Oost), 2011-  
strategic subproject 3: mixed housing project 'Skippers' Quay', 2013-  
PPP, social housing, real estate housing, various dwelling typologies, waterfront  
promenade, neighborhood parks, collective gardens, school, public facilities



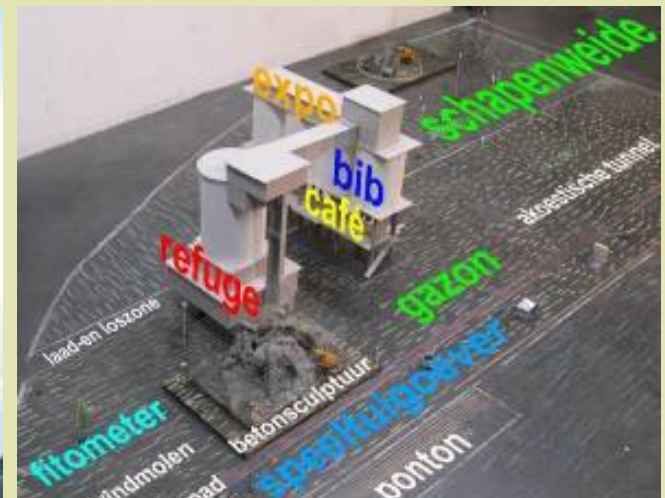
work by a.o. Stéphane Beel architects, Maat designers, Pauwels landscape arch.  
ReVive, Vanhaerents Developments, Van Roey Real Estate, SOGENT



phase 1 'Traders' Dock East' (Handelsdok Oost), 2011-  
strategic project 5: neighbourhood park, reuse of concrete plant and yellow crane for public purpose, idea competition, workshops, PPP



Robbrecht and Daem+ Whiteread arch.



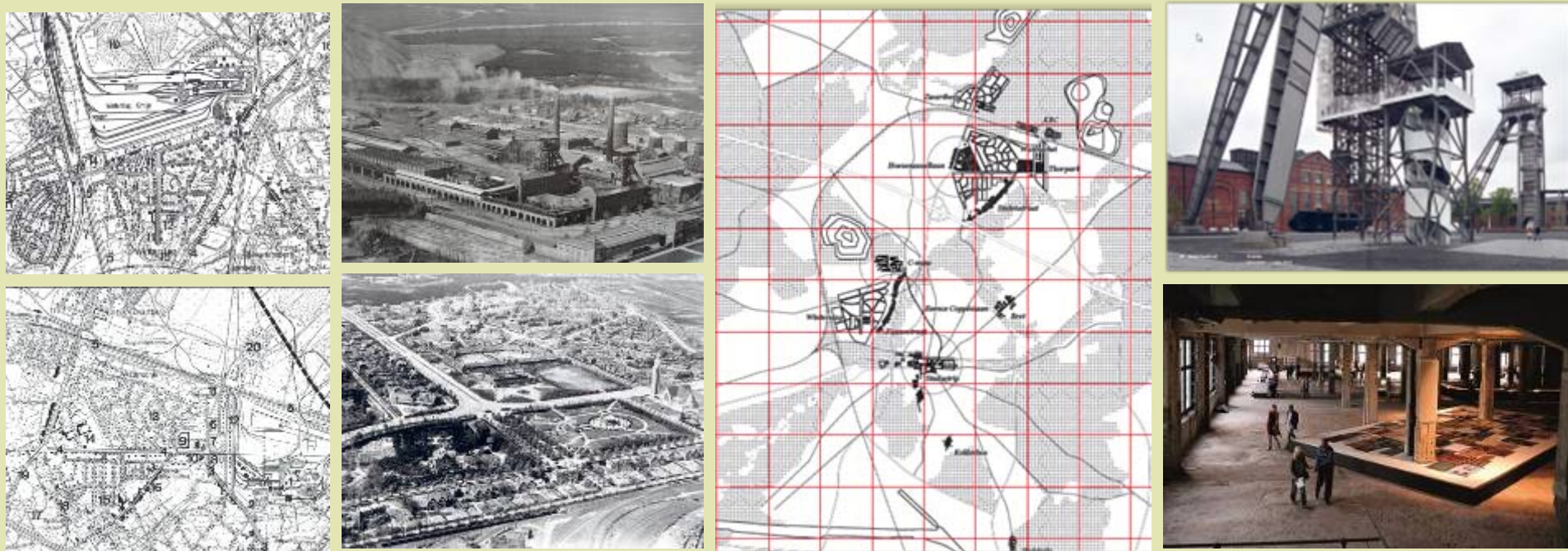
Tractor Collective

# City of Genk, Winterslag, Waterschei, Zwartberg coal mine sites and company towns renewal projects 2007-

Genk's first industrial revolution:

coal mine sites and company towns Winterslag, Waterschei and Zwartberg,  
industrial heritage, monumental morphology, cultural memory

C-mine Winterslag: centre for culture and design, Thor Waterschei: research  
and development park renewable energy, La Biomista Zwartberg: biodiversity  
studio and productive park



Illustrations from: Joeri De Bruyn (ed), Genk Rasterstad, 2015 work a.o. by BUUR, fotogr; Stijn Bollaert



# City of Genk, Sledderlo urban renewal project, 2010-

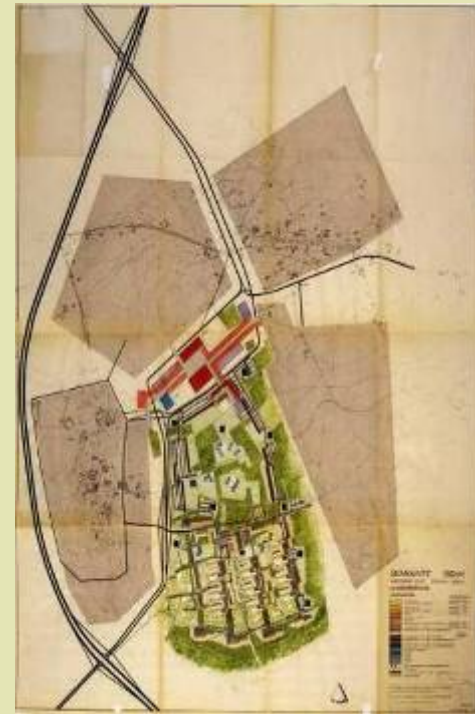
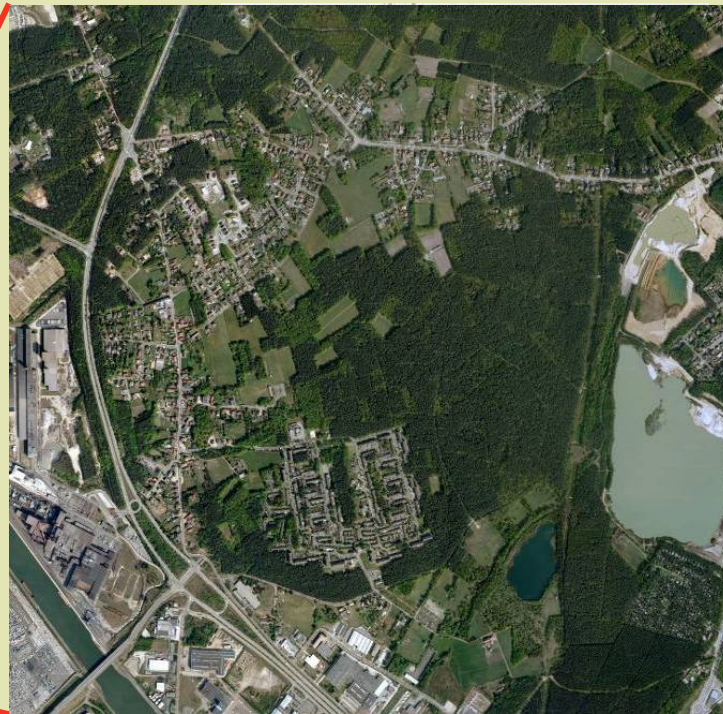
Genk's second industrial revolution:

the Albert canal, the Antwerp-Liège industrial corridor, the Ford Genk plant

the modernist ideal: the Company Town Sledderlo, Sam van Embden, 1963

the modernist ideal fragmented, downgraded, abandoned,

New Sledderlo: social enclave, Old Sledderlo: sprawling ribbon suburb



BUUR masterplan, BBS landscape design, City of Genk, Social Housing Company



Genk, New Sledderlo, peripheral urban ghetto:  
unemployment, low level of schooling, ethnic  
concentration, substandard housing



City of Genk, Sledderlo, urban renewal project, 2010-  
abolishing the peripheral ghetto condition: 11 strategic subprojects:  
connectivity, social housing upgrading, mixed social proximity, densification  
of suburban sprawl, public facilities, integrating landscapes

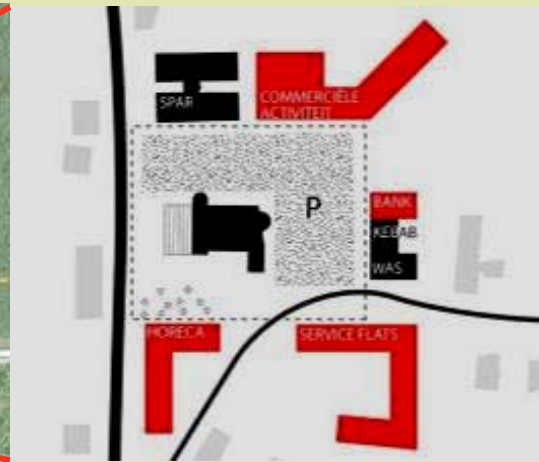


BUUR masterplan, BBS landscape, City of Genk, Social Housing Company Nieuw Dak



# City of Genk, Sledderlo urban renewal project, 2010-

## strategic subproject: upgrading village center Old Sledderlo



### upgrading the village centre

- supporting local commerce
- new housing typologies
- upgrading public space around the village church / reuse of the church as community center





# City of Genk, Sledderlo urban renewal project, 2010- strategic subproject: upgrading the social housing enclave: demolition, renovation, new construction, lay-out of public realm

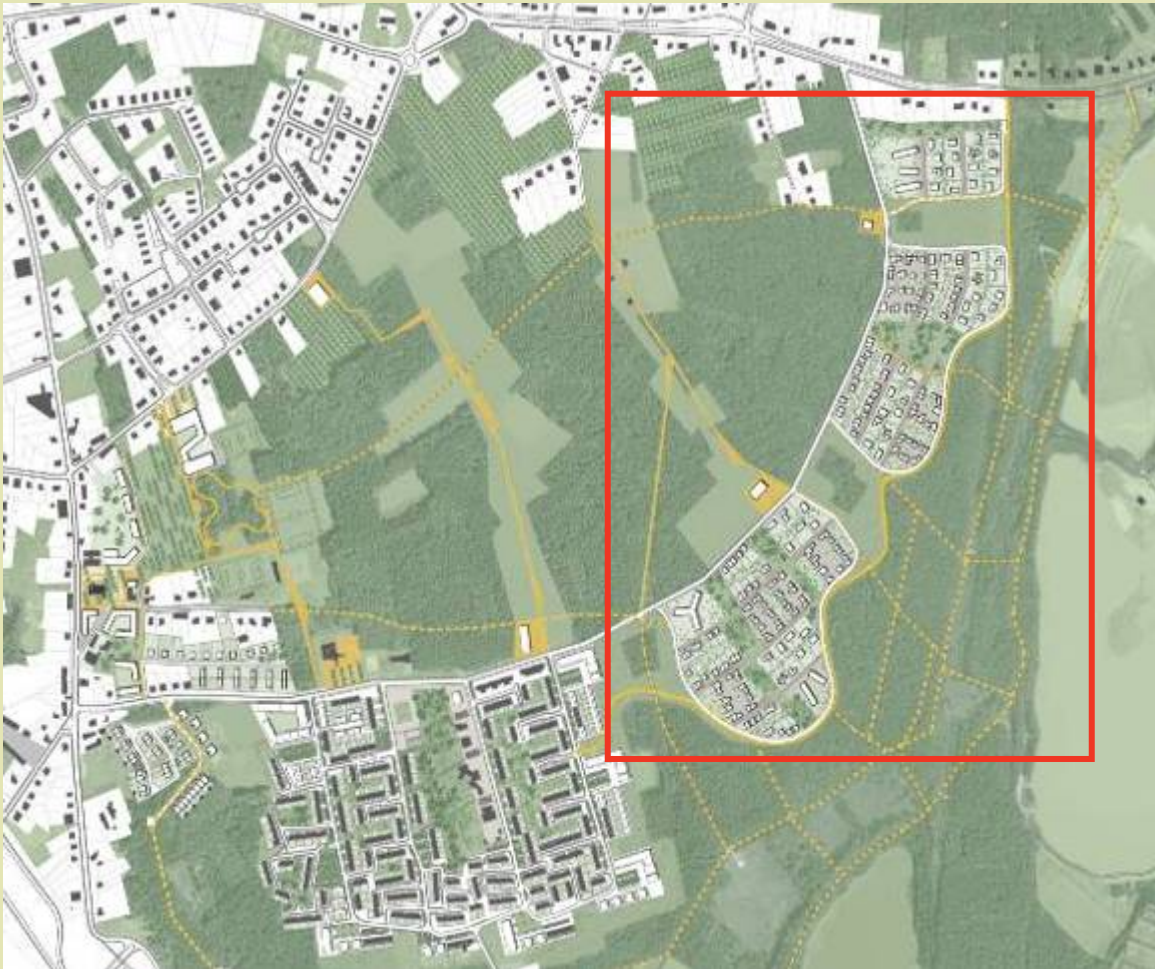
abolishing the ghetto stigma



BUUR masterplan, BBS landscape, City of Genk, Social Housing Company, Lava architects  
photogr. OSA, Stijn Bollaert in: Joeri De Bruyn (ed), Genk Rasterstad, 2015 p158-159



City of Genk, Sledderlo urban renewal project, 2010-  
strategic subproject: real estate developments on PPP basis,  
negotiation by design: 1. social proximity and phases of development,  
2. new dwelling typologies: compact dwelling in the green



BUUR masterplan, BBS landscape, City of Genk, developers' tender ongoing



# City of Genk, Sledderlo urban renewal project, 2010- integrating social housing upgrading, urban renewal, landscape redevelopment



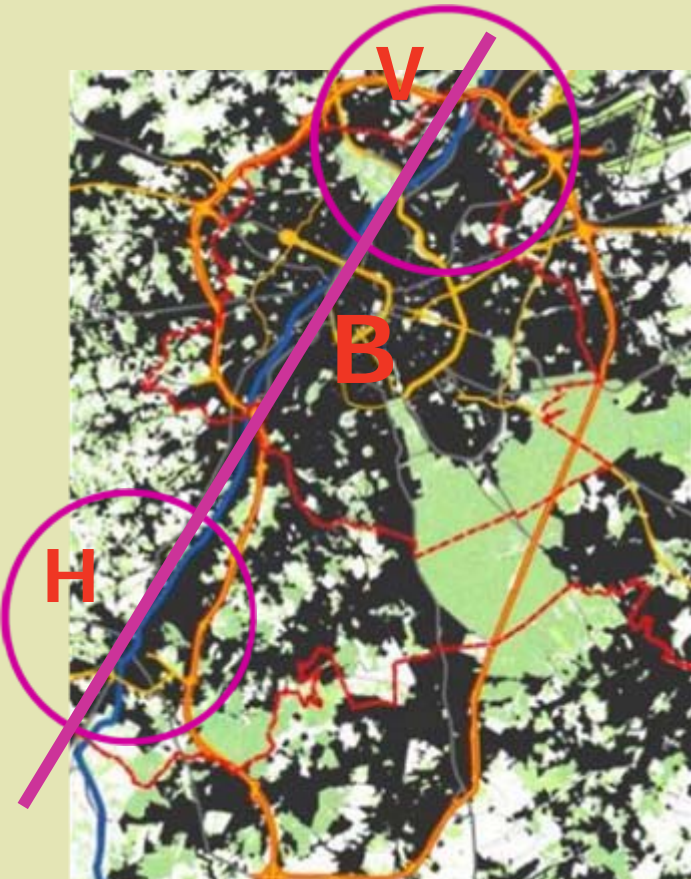
BUUR  
masterplan,  
BBS landscape,  
City of Genk,  
Social Housing Cy  
Lava architects



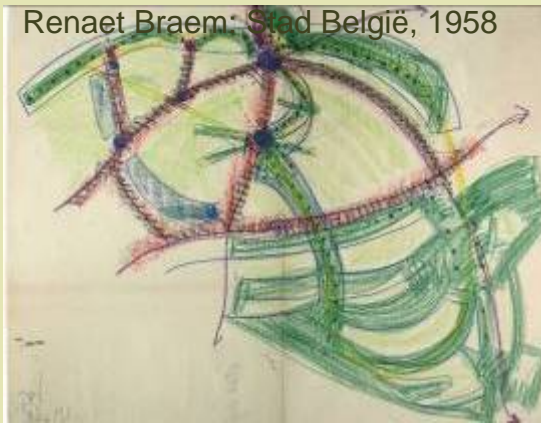
# Town of Halle, Town of Vilvoorde

redevelopment of brownfields along former Antwerp-Brussels-Charleroi industrial axis and infrastructure corridor (the 'ABC corridor')

redevelopment of brownfields along the declining industrial rail-canal corridor, landscape restoration river Zenne, upgrading of the town centre, urban facilities, new urban housing, public spaces, leisure, economic development



Renaet Braem: Stad België, 1958





# Halle, urban renewal project Nederhem, 2006-

URP: redevelopment of brownfield between railway and canal, stitching the morphological fracture between medieval town and working class suburbs, installing a 'third district' as connector and attractor, public facilities (sport, carnival), multifunctional neighbourhood: mix/proximity of dwelling and working, public park, landscape restoration river Zenne



masterplan and quality management: De Smet Vermeulen architects  
stad Halle, National Railway Company, Haviland intercommunale, Van Roey, Matexi



# Halle, urban renewal project Nederhem, 2006-

The Urban Renewal Project reduced to a residential real estate project?

The National Railway Company postpones new industrial development.

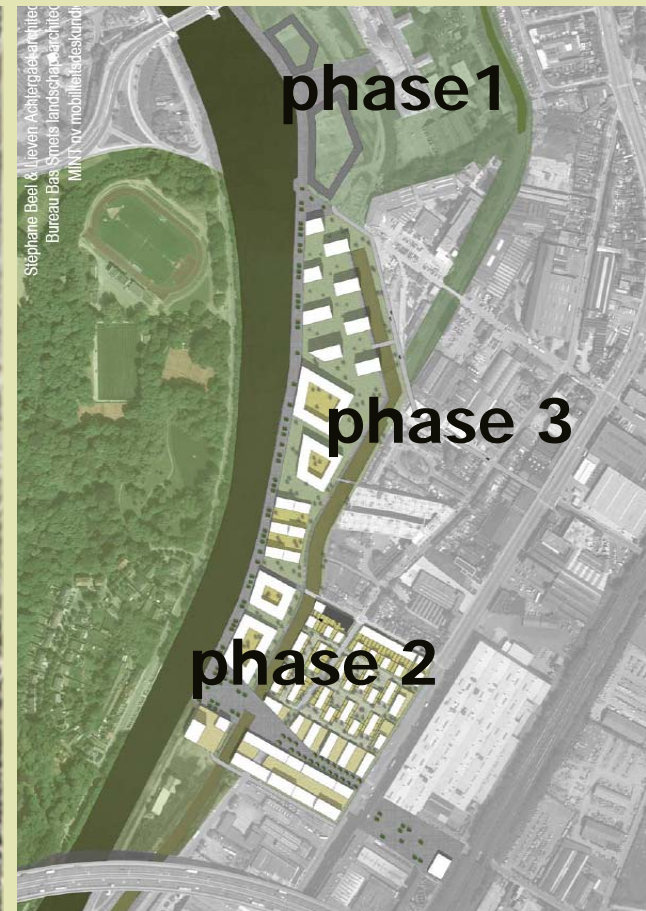
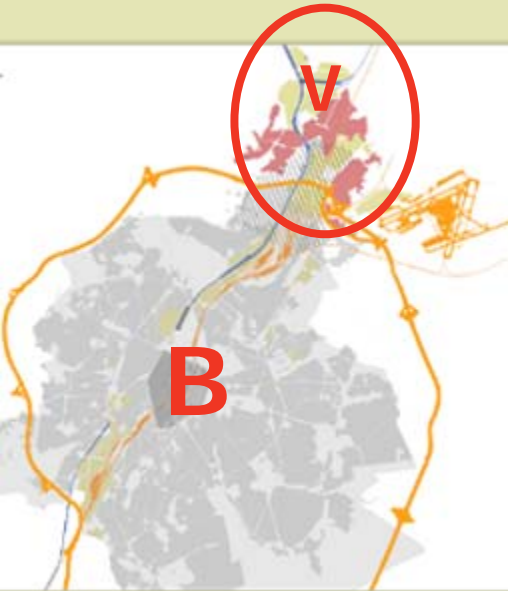
After years of political discussion the local government finally launched the construction of the long expected swimmingpool.



The town proposes the study of a linear River and Canal park on the scale of the urban region.  
(URP Concept Subsidy call 2015)



Town of Vilvoorde, urban renewal projects Watersite  
redevelopment of the postindustrial strip between canal and railway,  
masterplan establishes link with Brussels Harbour, new residential urban  
quarters, public waterfront promenade, landscape renovation river Zenne



overall masterplan concept Xaveer De Geyter architects, 2006  
phase 2: masterplan Beel-Achtergaele arch, BBS landscape design, 2008



# Vilvoorde, urban renewal projects Watersite

## phase 1: urban renewal project Kanaalpark, 2005

lay-out park and playgrounds, waterfront promenade, renovation of old prison ('Tuchthuis'), hotel-restaurants-café, housing



work by: Styfhals en Partners, Robbrecht en Daem, Bob 361, Stad Vilvoorde, W&Z, TV  
partnership Watersteen (Virix),



## Vilvoorde, urban renewal projects Watersite, phase 2 'The Mills':

new housing quarters, urban housing typologies, green energy, lay-out of public domain, waterfront promenade, Zenne river banks pedestrian+bicycle bridge, railway station (metropolitan rail network)

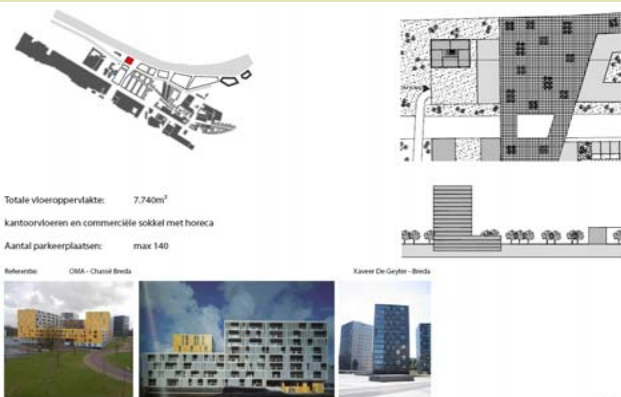


work by a.o. Xaveer De Geyter architects, Beel-Achtergael arch., BBS landscape design, CEE-engineering, stad Vilvoorde, W&Z, PSR Brownfield Developers-Matexi

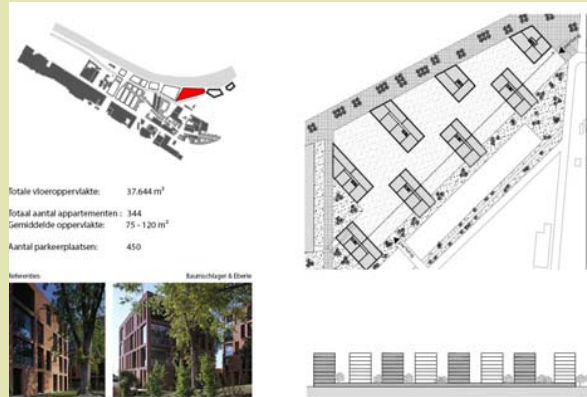


# Vilvoorde, urban renewal projects Watersite, phase 2: 'The Mills', 2008, integrating public domain / new urban housing typologies / green energy, collective heating

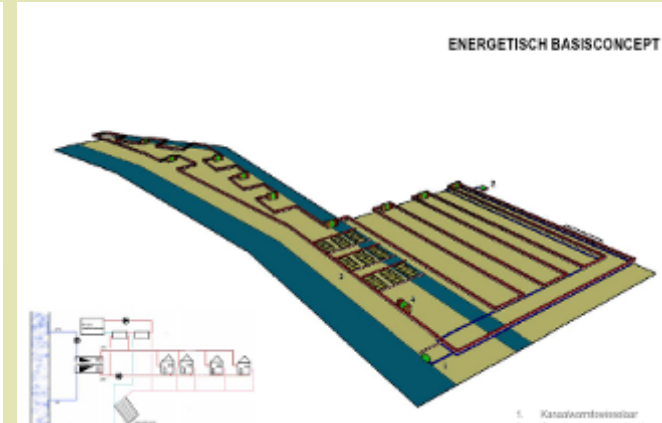
Bureau Bas Smets, landscape design



TOREN



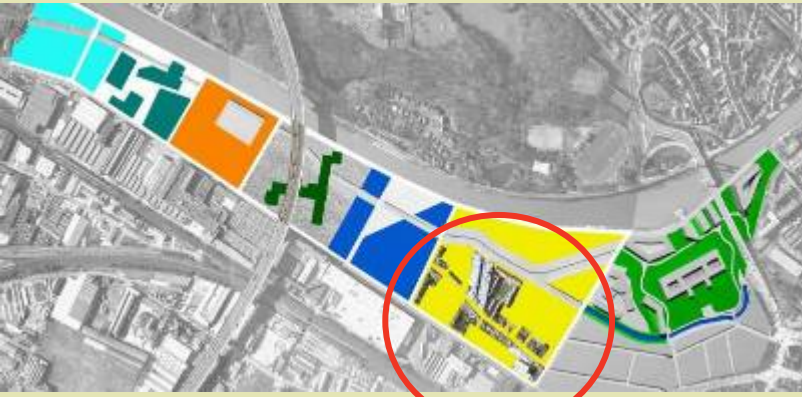
URBAN VILLAS



Stéphane Beel and Lieven Achtergaele, architects, CEE-engineering

the ABC-corridor revisited or transformation of an industrial armature into  
a (gentrified) high quality residential estate?

Vilvoorde, urban renewal projects Watersite,  
phase 3: 'Broek', 2014, redevelopment of industrial/residential fabric,  
landscape renovation river Zenne



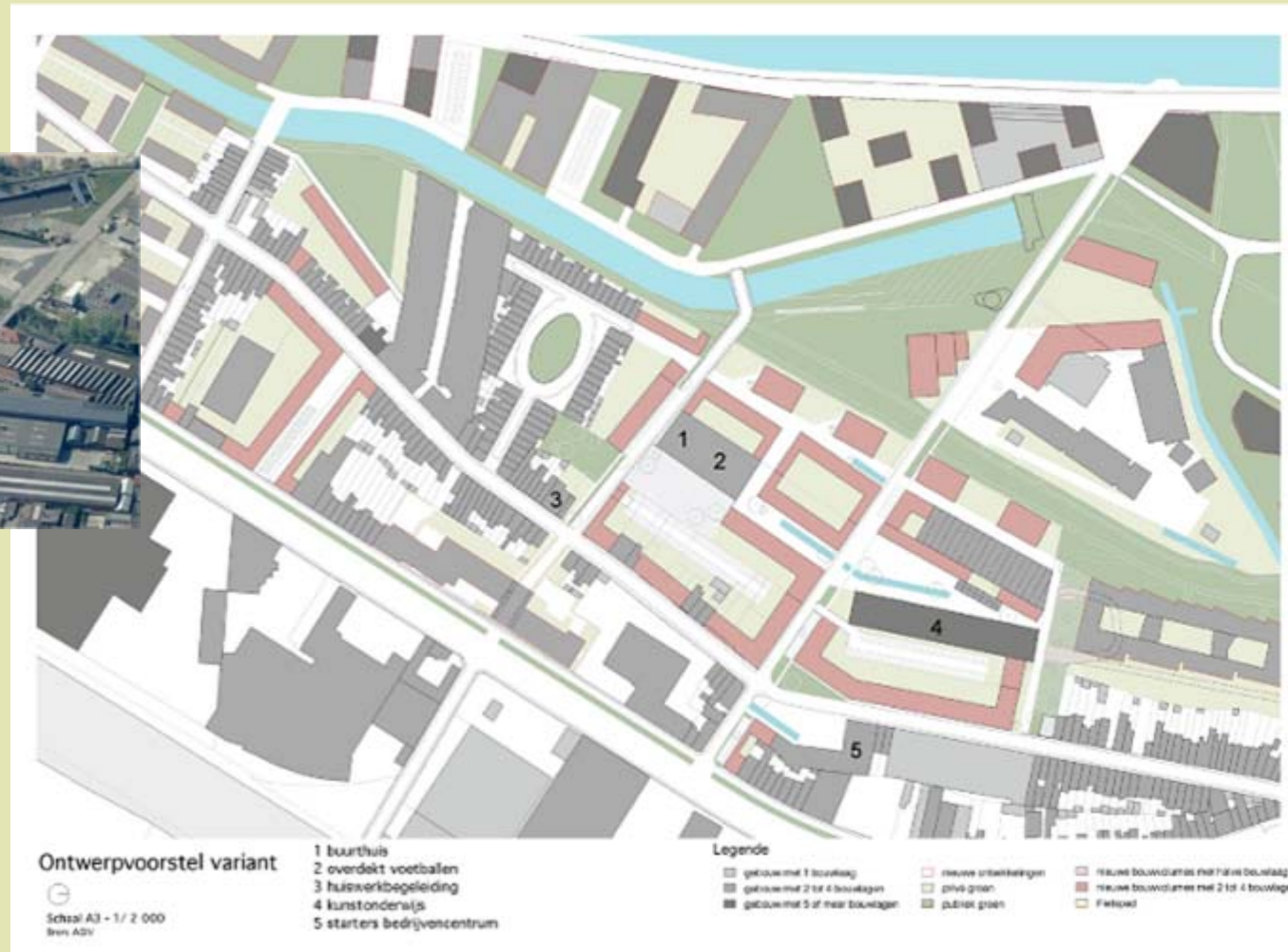
Concept Subsidy 2013: social-spatial survey and fieldwork: need for social facilities:  
day nursery, neighbourhood centre, school, kids' homework support, rehearsal  
space, indoor sport accommodation, game centre, starters' centre, art academy,...



Vilvoorde, urban renewal projects Watersite,  
phase 3: 'Broek', 2014,  
social knowledge, local economy, built patrimony, welfare issues, local  
appropriations form the basis of the masterplan



1+2 reuse  
of industrial shed:  
community centre +  
indoor football  
3 kids' homework  
support  
4 art academy  
5 starters' centre



# Vilvoorde, urban renewal projects Watersite, phase 3: 'Broek', 2014,

negotiation by design of local development coalitions and coproductive potentials, insertion of welfare programmes, immediate/transitional uses of vacant places.

**Cluster 4 -Woestijnvis**




- Woonontwikkeling
- 1 private eigenaar
- Afhankelijk van plannen De Vijver Media
- Parkeren – kantoorontwikkeling buiten Broek



61

**Cluster 3 – Decor Oyenburg**

- Woonontwikkeling met nieuwe doorsteek
- 4 private eigenaars
- Gesprekken gaande



60



Vilvoorde, urban renewal projects Watersite,  
Concept Subsidy call 2015: Vilvoorde, modes and programmes of  
temporary appropriation in reconversion projects

the Kruitfabriek experience: activating the urban debate, engaging civil  
creativity, supporting interregional exchange and cooperation



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# the territory (re)development agenda

Urban Renewal Projects and Concept Subsidy, call 2014

Concept Subsidy Genk Kolenspoor ('Coal Track')

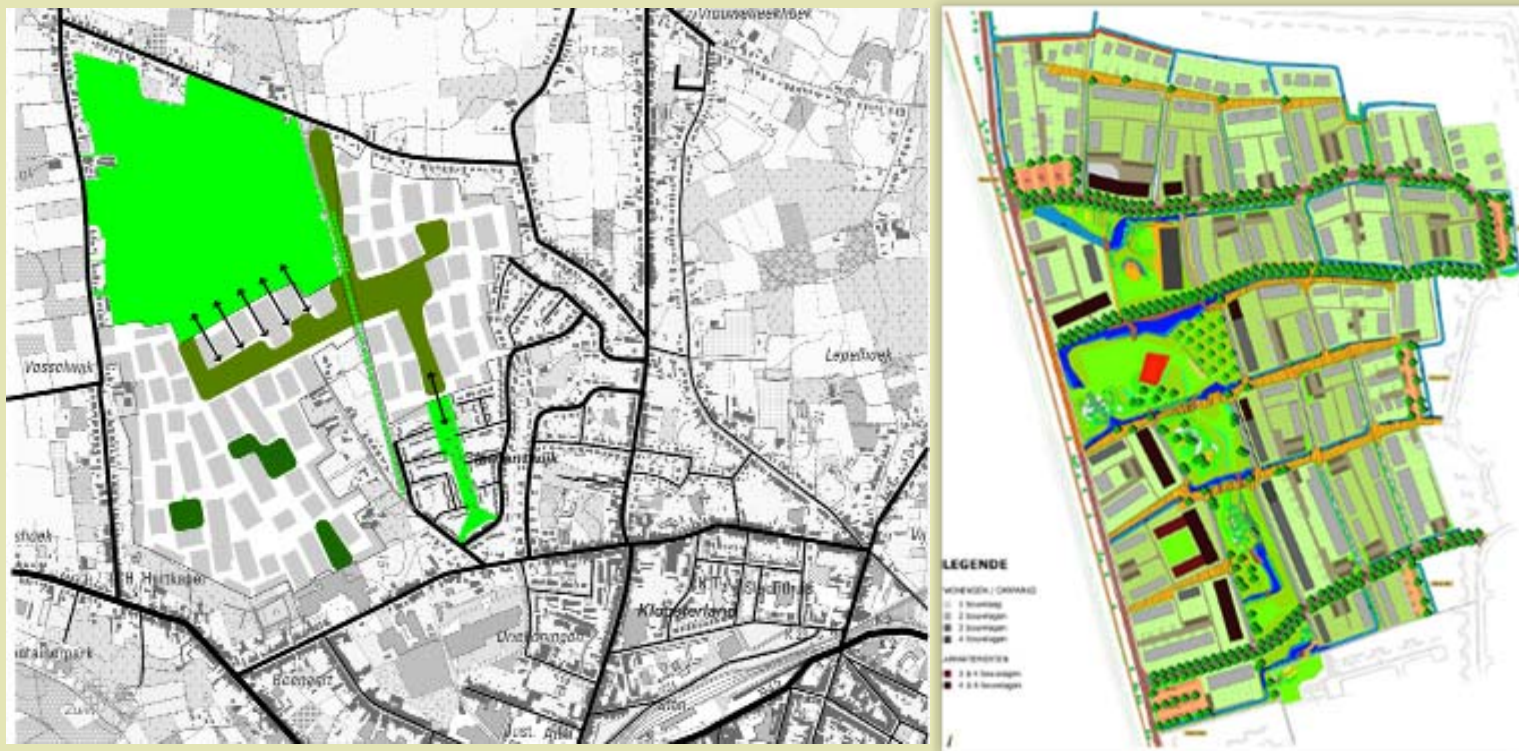


Infrastructure, landscape and space uses should connect the urban projects of Winterslag, Waterschei, Zwartberg, Ford and Sledderlo into a network of complementary generators of urban and territorial development

# the ecology-sustainability agenda

## Urban Renewal Project Sint-Niklaas Clementwijk

the sustainable suburb? reduction of the ecological footprint (increase of sustainability index from 35 to 65) / integration into the urban and the rural surroundings / ecological structures and soft infrastructures / social mix

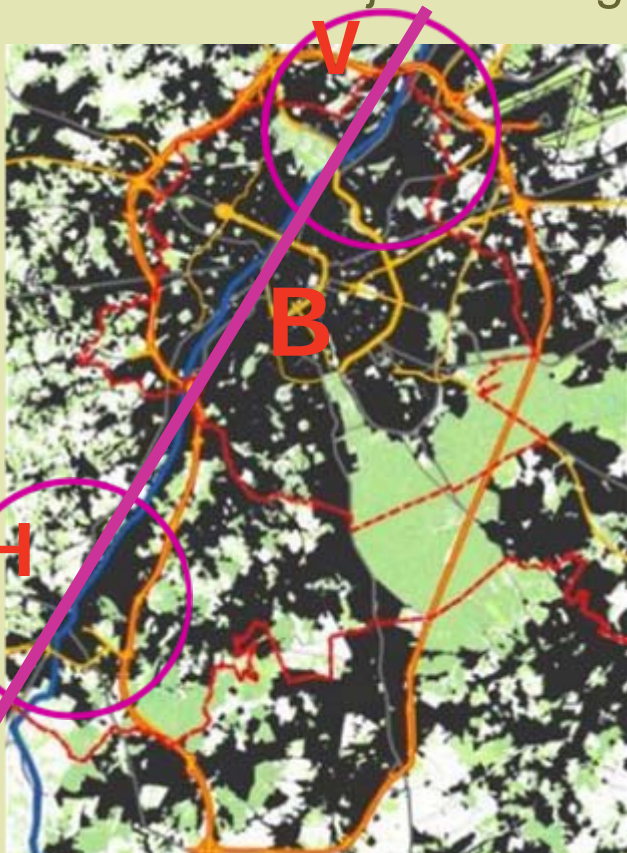


work by Technum, Fris in het Landschap, EVR architecten, Grontmij, Matexi a.o.



## another BHV agenda: double scale, boundary bridging

Brussels Capital Region, Town of Halle, Town of Vilvoorde  
redevelopment along the ABC rail-canal-river-road corridor,  
double scale redevelopment: canal banks redevelopment + river Zenne  
landscape restoration, upgrading of town centers in Flemish periphery +  
facilities and spatial armatures for the Brussels Metropolitan Area, 'canal  
boulevard' + adjacent neighbourhoods in the Brussels Capital Region



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# what about participation?

the coproductive urban renewal project involves different methods and practices of participation



# coproductive urban renewal projects: what about participation?

social knowledge, social-spatial competence, coproduction

## 1 'social knowledge'

Participation is grounded upon the 'mining' of social and social-spatial knowledge. This knowledge is not pre-structured or freely available around the table but requires research (including fieldwork and research by design). Often social knowledge is at the same time spatial knowledge.

Social-spatial knowledge constitutes an important part of the 'raw materials' to be processed by urban design. It reveals ambivalences and contradictions that the design attempts to turn into co-existencies and synthesis. On this basis, 'design for the people' is able to create the spatial platform on which effective modes of 'design with' and 'design by the people' can be performed.



coproductive urban renewal projects:  
what about participation?

social knowledge, social-spatial competence, coproduction

## 2 'social-spatial competence'

Effective participation is not guaranteed by immediate interaction (interviews, around the table conversations, workshop charettes, participatory games etc..). **Effective participation is the outcome of participatory awareness and capacity building processes that progressively transform both explicit and implicit social-spatial knowledge into active social-spatial competence.** Provisional and experimental appropriation of vacant, often unknown or formerly exclusive places is an important mode of participatory capacity building. However, in addition, quick methods of immediacy may offer a useful complement to the slow processes of extended fieldwork and participatory capacity building.

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## 3. 'coproduction'

Participants have to become coproducers of the urban project. Acting as co-producers is an act with considerable participatory impact that prepares for post-project co-management of the new environment.

Coproduction considers concerned citizens as responsible stakeholders, investing into the project, contributing to the decision making and sharing the burdens and benefits of the project.

Coproducers operate on the basis of complementary skills and capacities; they do not replace each others skills but challenge and enrich these within the coproductive process on the basis of their shared socio-spatial competence. As such there is no point in replacing professional design and building skills by non-professional work. Moreover the project process is not limited to design and construction: it involves many complementary skills.



