

Location: Zaanstad, Zaanwerf

Category: Industrial Wastelands to Be Redeveloped

Population: 130,000 inhab.



Zaanstad is dominated by the presence of the river Zaan. The Council is composed out of 7 former independent communities, 4 of which lie right on the river. The town planning construction can be understood by looking at these previously independent districts: now the town consists in several urban intersections that lie stretched out along the river Zaan covering 11 km. The banks of the river are a constantly changing theater – sometimes bustling with noise and activity, sometimes still and dreamy. A waterfront town.

Until the last century, the Zaan district was the centre of Dutch industry. Great development in transport reduced the importance of water transport. Some of the industry managed to survive along the Zaan banks, but it would be pointless to deny the decline.

The area, close to Amsterdam, is unique in what it has to offer in development space for dwelling, work and leisure. In 1988 a restructuring plan was developed for the entire Zaan banks by Teun Koolhaas design bureau. The essence of this view was the awareness of the importance of a consistent spatial structure for the banks of the Zaan, within the greater region.

THE SITE

The Council plans to get rid of all obnoxious industry in Zaandam-Oost, an area lying on the Eastern side of the river, and reserve it for residential ends. In this part of Zaanstad the river banks are very striking: tall factory buildings line the edges and are very noticeable. These large factories have their own history. It looks as if the factories that at present dominate the East bank (Marvelo and Sigma) will shortly disappear. A unique location of about 3.5 ha - Zaanwerf- will then come free for residential dwellings.

The position of the Zaanwerf site is striking, concentrated on the South-West, with an enclosed warehouse architecture. It will be ideal for an inner city river frontage. With a combination of dwellings and amenities, which should be open to the general public, the waterfront of the Zaanwerf location could become a multifunctional area, with an excellent pedestrian zone. This pedestrian area along the river Zaan should be able to fit without any problem into the planned traffic-free centre of Zaandam.

EUROPAN 2 – ZAAANSTAD – NEDERLAND

