

# European 15 - Charleroi (BE)



**SCALE:** XL/L - territory / urban + architecture

**TEAM REPRESENTATIVE:** Architect

**SITE FAMILY:** CHANGING METABOLISM - From linear to circular economy

**LOCATION:** Charleroi, «Porte Ouest»

**POPULATION:** 201,327 inhab.

**STRATEGIC SITE:** 199 ha **PROJECT SITE:** 35 ha

**SITE PROPOSED BY:** City of Charleroi /Duferco Wallonie

**ACTOR(S) INVOLVED:** City of Charleroi /Duferco Wallonie

**OWNER(S) OF THE SITE:** City of Charleroi /Duferco Wallonie

**COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION:** Urban planning and/or architectural study prior to the development

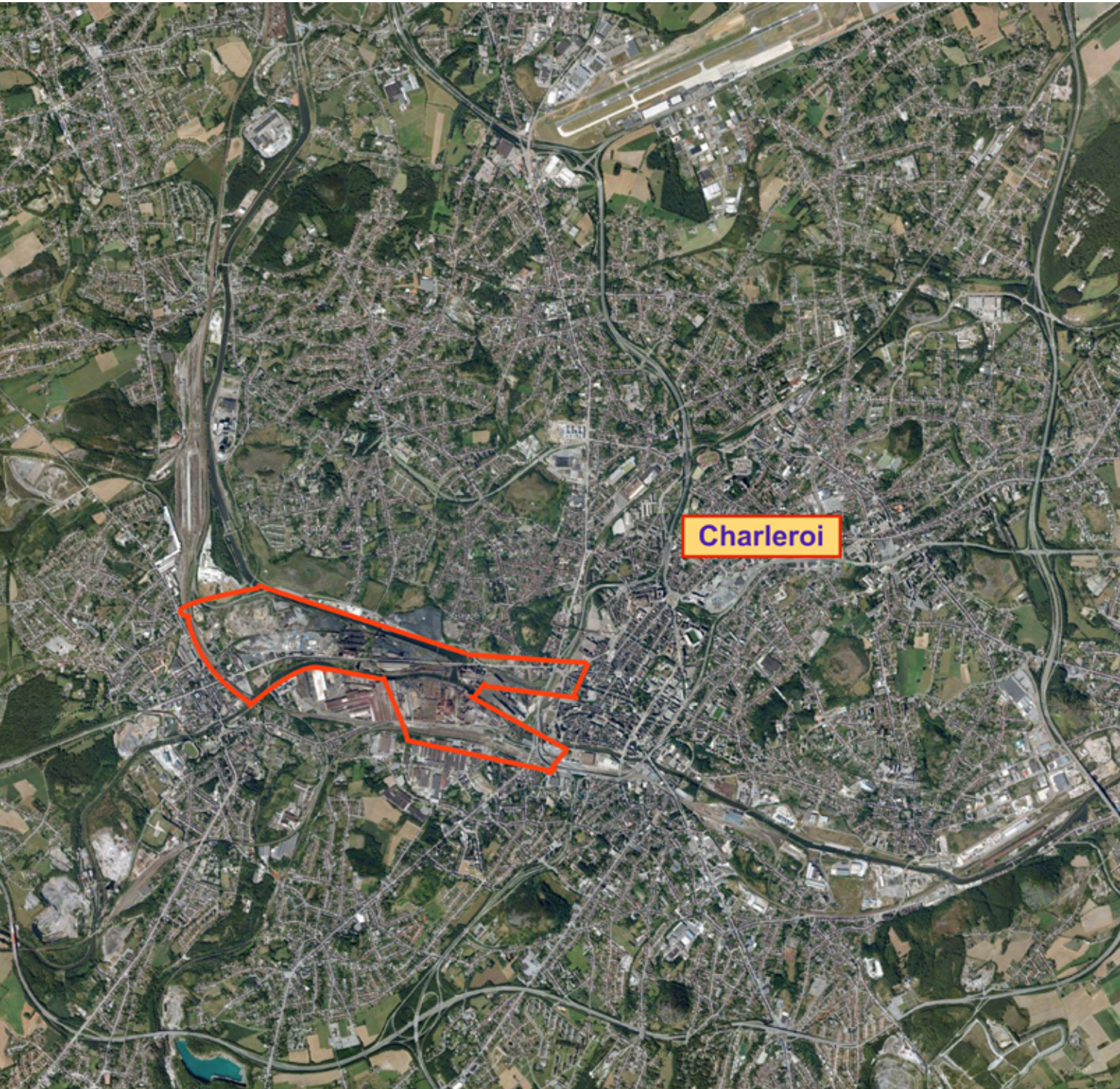
## HOW CAN THE SITE CONTRIBUTE TO THE PRODUCTIVE CITY?

The City of Charleroi has traditionally built its economy on industry (steel-making, glass-making, mechanical engineering, etc.). It is also at the centre of a vast coal-mining basin (previously known as the “Black Country”). The decline of all these industrial activities gave way to vast sizeable areas of industrial blight that the City of Charleroi and Duferco Wallonie (the owner of the former “Carsid” industrial site) intend to redevelop. This reconversion will involve improvement of the built-up environment, tourism development alternatives and also an economic relaunch based on the establishment of companies and new industries. The “productive city” theme takes on its full meaning here.

## CITY STRATEGY

Charleroi has set up a master plan, whose effects will be increasingly felt, in which the unifying project of urban redevelopment is based in particular on regeneration of the “Marchienne-au-Pont” district, an essential part of the site, via a strategy of residential neighbourhoods that incorporate community urban functions, which have a positive knock-on effect on the heart of the former municipality deteriorated by the departure of industry. The city authorities are envisaging the productive development of a landscaped park in which the challenge to be met is the collaborative neighbouring between the landscape and the industrial aspects, of which the image of heritage or resilient productivity will contribute to the sector’s appeal.



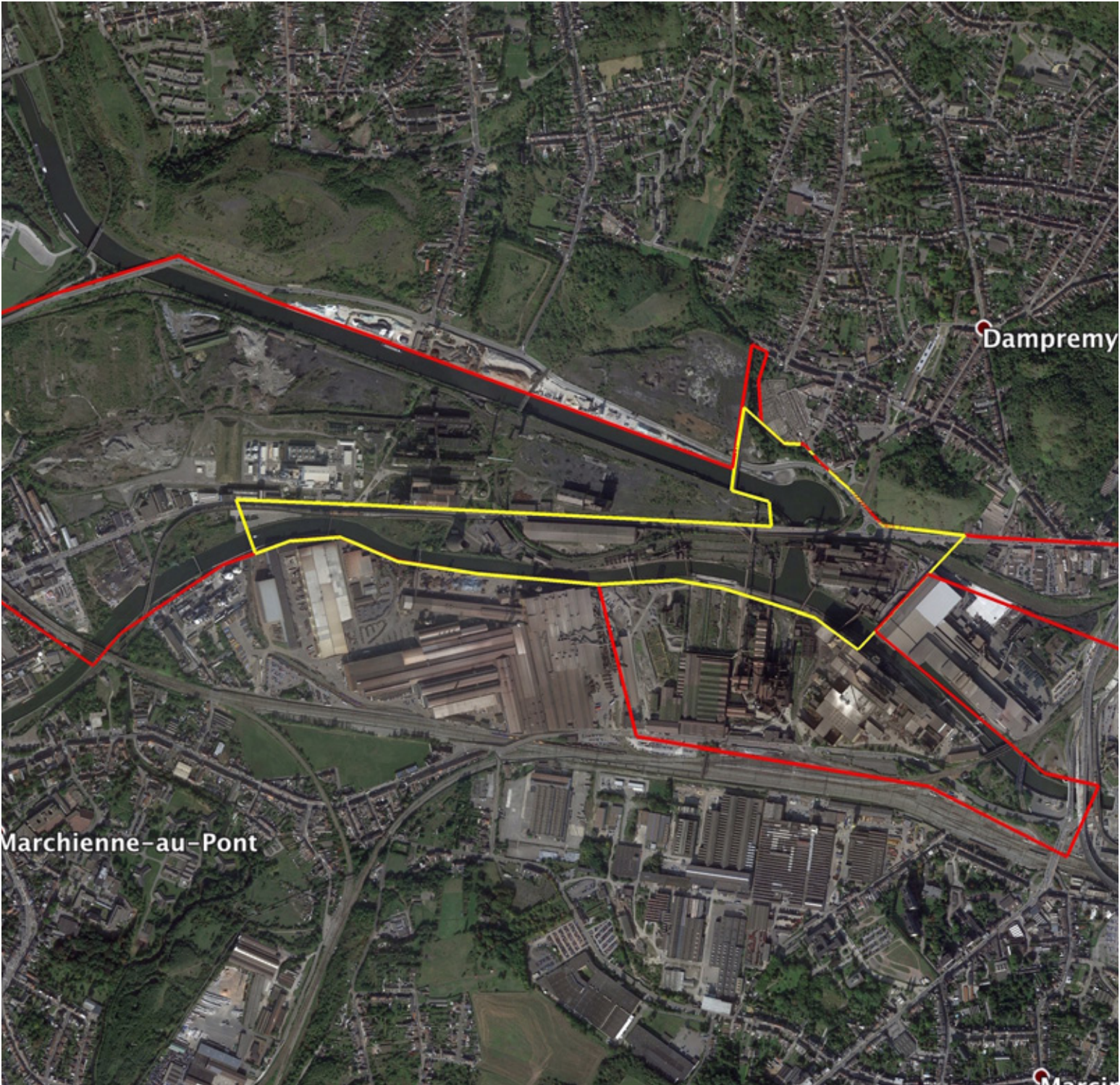


**SITE DEFINITION**

The perimeter of the “Western Gate” mainly encompasses the municipalities of Marchienne-au-Pont and Monceau-sur-Sambre, situated to the west of Charleroi city centre. This perimeter is at the convergence of three valleys: Sambre, Eau d’Heure and Piéton stretching from Brussels to Charleroi. The predominant aspect of the relief is the Sambre Valley and its broad alluvial plateau. This zone is a crossroads between the upper and lower Sambre Valley. Along the Charleroi-Brussels Canal, the varied relief of the slag heaps comprises a significant green backdrop.

**HOW IS PRODUCTION CONSIDERED IN THE URBAN DIVERSITY PROGRAM ?**

In a previous study commissioned by Duferco Wallonie and led by a team mainly comprising geographers, urban planning architects and an expert in commercial town planning, the guiding principles of an urban strategy were drawn up: to revitalise new economic activities and commence an ambitious and broad-ranging urban redevelopment programme in an attractive landscaped setting. The objectives are to preserve – or even amplify- the site’s economic purpose, increase density of employment, promote waste treatment and recycling systems, establish tertiary service. In the meantime, the City of Charleroi has tasked a working group with evaluating the site’s industrial heritage. This group is made up of city authority representatives (covering matters such as the city, regional



planning and heritage), technicians and members of the support committee for saving “blast furnace 4”. In addition to the indispensable “economic productivity” included in the Duferco plan, which is one of the essential ingredients of the site’s future, the city also intends to include “intangible productivity” by conciliating “economic stakes” with “cultural stakes”. The former blast furnace, chimneys and industrial gantries are “bedrocks” of the landscape to be made use of and incorporated into the new setting, in order to maintain their interest in terms of history, architecture, aesthetics, social matters, landscaping and collective memory. “Green production” is also one of the stakes that the city wishes to promote, in particular via the creation of a green axis linking the site to the city and the extension of its soft mobility network, called “RAVeL”.







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Mons Road N90, North-East of the site



Mons road N90



Charleroi-Brussels Canal



Mons road N90 - "Rockerill"