

Empowering the Productive City in an Urban Neighbourhood

Creating a Multifunctional 'Hub' in the Heart of a Multicultural Vulnerable Neighbourhood



The Visserijplein in the heart of neighbourhoods Bospolder and Tussendijken (BoTu)

Photos by Frank Hanswijk

SCALES: L/S - urban + architecture / architecture + context

TEAM REPRESENTATIVE: architect / urbanist

SITE FAMILY: IMPLANTING - Productive milieus

LOCATION: Rotterdam, Bospolder Tussendijken, Visserijplein

POPULATION: 650,000 inhabitants (Rotterdam)

STRATEGIC SITE: 61.5 ha **PROJECT SITE:** 2.2 ha

SITE PROPOSED BY: Municipality of Rotterdam

ACTOR(S) INVOLVED: Municipality of Rotterdam, Delfshaven Coöperatie, St. Park 1943, Havensteder, Bibliotheek Rotterdam, Pier 80

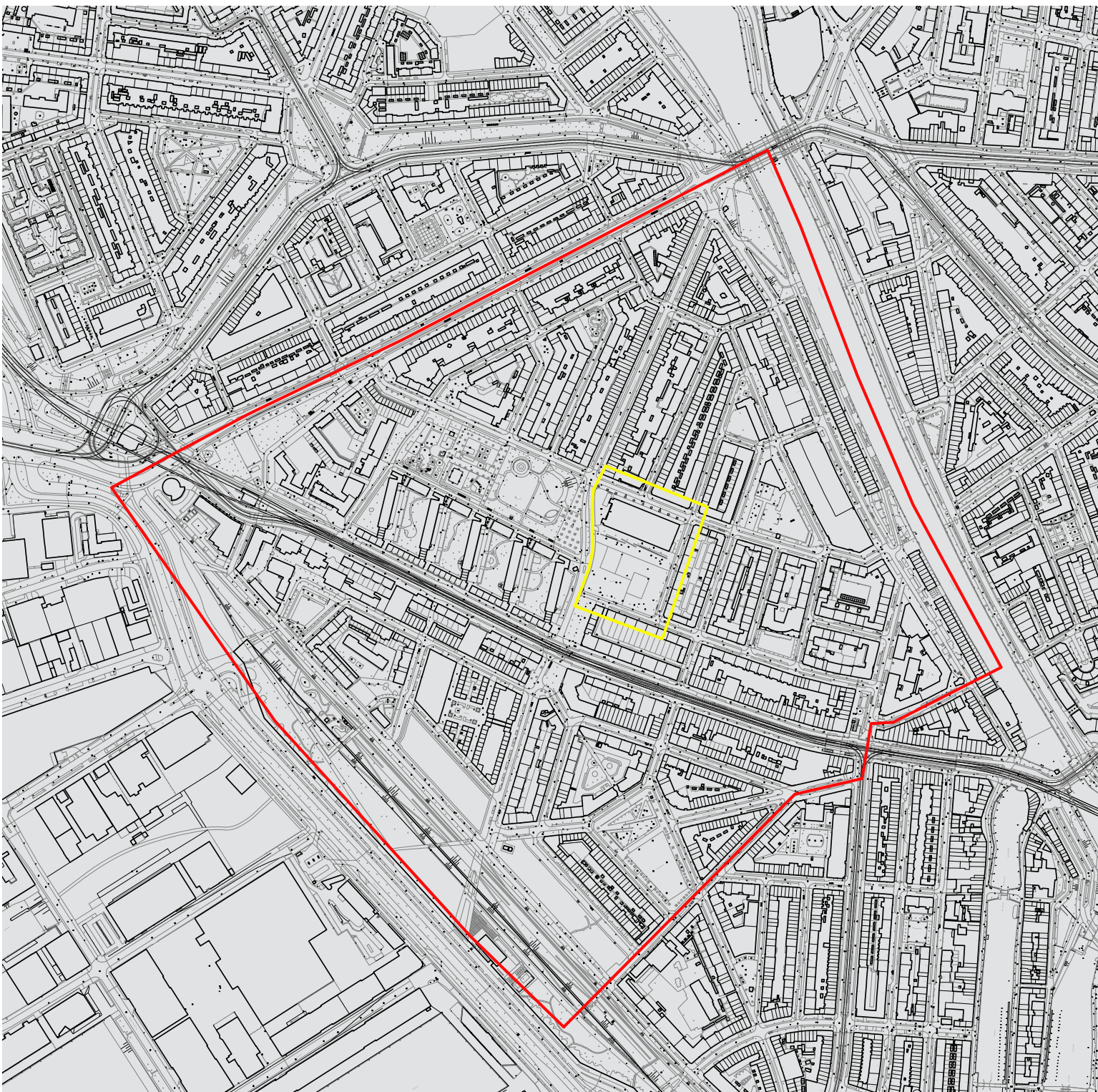
OWNER(S) OF THE SITE: Mix of public and private ownership

COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION: Design (or research-by-design) assignment on implementation at the project site (or a site with

similar characteristics) commissioned by the municipality of Rotterdam and/or private partners

HOW CAN THE SITE CONTRIBUTE TO THE PRODUCTIVE CITY? The accessibility of learning environments in the broad sense is crucial for the empowerment of vulnerable citizens and the future career opportunities of children. Improving the resilience of residents in vulnerable urban neighbourhoods, like Bospolder Tussendijken (BoTu), requires a local network of places with a mix of functions to meet, learn, make, play and work. Transforming natural meeting places, like the Visserijplein in the heart of BoTu, into such a multifunctional 'hub' ensures that these new interaction milieus are deeply rooted in the daily life of residents.

CITY STRATEGY The City of Rotterdam seeks opportunities in the combination of accommodating its growth and creating a more inclusive city. To lift the socioeconomic status of vulnerable neighbourhoods, like BoTu, it focuses on improving the perspective of vulnerable residents in the area. To this end, it aims to remove barriers so that everyone can participate more easily in social and societal processes, with equal opportunities in education, work, culture and sports. Upgrading and diversifying the housing stock, and improving educational infrastructures are important basic strategies. In addition, strategic urban interventions – new developments on a relatively small scale and a more attractive public space – are used to embed mixed programmes and facilities in the heart of these neighbourhoods, empowering residents of all ages on multiple levels and building a just and equitable city.



SITE DEFINITION The project site is located in the heart of BoTu. The site is bordered on three sides by archetypal serially produced housing blocks (partly after the Second World War) and on one side by Park 1943. Twice a week the square is the setting of a busy market. On the other days of the week, it is a large underused open space. Pier 80, a multifunctional community centre, is located on one end of the square. It includes a library, sport facilities, and (co-)work and meeting spaces. The current programme of Pier 80 already attracts many residents, but should be more progressive. The challenge is to design a multifunctional building block in the heart of a multicultural, vulnerable neighbourhood, incorporating (part of) the local market and providing space to new forms of living, meeting, learning, making, playing and working – by analogy of new concepts like the Library of the Future – to give the area a socio-

economic boost.

HOW IS PRODUCTION CONSIDERED IN THE URBAN DIVERSITY PROGRAM?

Rotterdam is growing. The city aims to build 50,000 new homes in the next decade and to vigorously enhance the quality and energy performance of the existing built environment. Rotterdam is looking for ‘good growth’: building a compact, circular, productive, healthy and inclusive city with equal opportunities and high quality of living for everyone. It aims to be a vibrant and welcoming place for people of all walks of life, ages and beliefs, enabling them to prosper. Citizens of Rotterdam should be able to live productive lives by working, learning, caring or in any other way contributing to the development of the city and its narratives. Therefore, it is important to remove barriers, to

increase connectivity. Europen15 focusses on sites that might catalyse opportunities on multiple levels, places of meaning that might enhance the city’s social resiliency. These are some of the abstract notions rooted in the new Rotterdam vision and regulatory framework on spatial and socioeconomic developments, called the *Omgevingsvisie*. This framework is currently being drafted by the municipality. It should accelerate innovative spatial solutions and sustainable socioeconomic developments. It is supported by an extensive participatory process and an action research program. The Europen15 sites have been selected to implement this process, through research-by-design and its aim of implementing exemplary projects.

European 15 – Rotterdam (NL)



The Visserijplein with the weekly market (Thursdays and Saturdays)



The Visserijplein on market days



The Visserijplein on regular days



Typical architecture in the neighbourhood, with small shops on the ground floor



Community centre 'Pier 80' next to the Visserijplein