

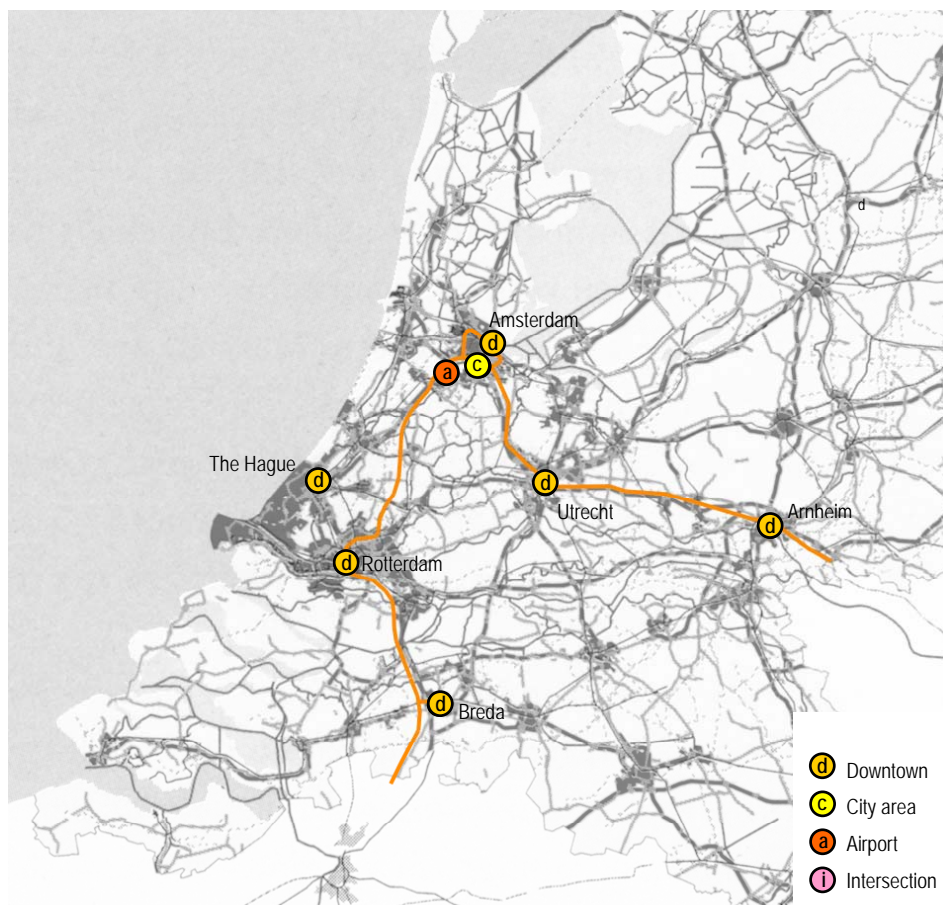
3 Case study Amsterdam/ Randstad

The TEN scheme places Amsterdam at the end of two European axes: One towards the south, crossing the Randstad and connecting with Brussels and Paris, and another towards the East, linking Amsterdam with Cologne or Berlin.¹

According to the current plans, the HST will serve three stations within the Amsterdam agglomeration: This includes the present central station located at the northern end of the downtown area, a newly built underground station in the southern city area (Zuid/ World Trade Center), and the existing underground station inside the Amsterdam airport terminal (Schiphol). All three stations are linked to major space-functional development programmes. For the two city locations, this has been done in the form of large-scale urban projects comprising 800.000m² (central station) and 1 mio.m² (Zuid/ WTC) total gross floor-space.

Within the Randstad, the next stops of the HST will be Utrecht (15'), Rotterdam (28') and The Hague (36'), and outside Breda (48') and Arnhem. Likewise, each of these locations is connected to large scale urban (re-) development projects (Fig.IV.13+14).

Fig.IV. 13: Planned HST connection of the Amsterdam region and the Randstad; source: VROM/ EZ/ V&W/ LNV. 1999, 21 - *modified*



¹ cf. chapter III.2.2

Fig.IV. 14: HST station locations in the Amsterdam region: Centraal Station, Zuid/ WTC and Schiphol airport; source: ROA 1998a, 69 – *modified*



3.1 Context analysis – space and institutions

3.1.1 Space-functional structure and dynamics

The Netherlands is a comparatively small country characterized by a polycentric urban geography. The most remarkable aspect is that apart from the necessity to control the water, the topography has not placed any significant restrictions for urbanization. The present settlement structure is therefore largely a result of the interplay between spatial planning, social and market forces.

With the principal cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht, the highly densified urban area in the West (*Randstad*) contrasts with the other regions in the North and East, where only intermediate towns and agglomerations are located (esp. Maastricht, Breda, Nijmegen). The *Randstad* is also the principal concentration of economic activities and transport flows, comprising large-scale infrastructures such as the Rotterdam port — the largest in the world — and Schiphol airport south of Amsterdam, the only international airport in the Netherlands.

Within the *Randstad*, the largest agglomeration is Amsterdam, comprising several intermediate centers, Schiphol airport and the new town of Almere. Suburbanization has taken place in practically all directions, but new economic activities (services) settled particularly southwards in the proximities of Schiphol and the World Trade Center. On the contrary, the North is increasingly lacking development dynamics and partially has to deal with urban decay.²

² cf. dRO 1998a

3.1.2 Institutional framework: Actors involved in HST planning

Government structures and competencies

Regarding the vertical distribution of power, the Dutch government system can be described as unitary, combined with decentralized legislative and administrative competencies on three levels — national, regional and local.³ Based on a national spatial planning act, the main policy principles and guidelines for spatial development are defined periodically by the responsible ministry for housing, spatial planning and the environment (*Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer* - VROM). The primary instrument for this purpose is the “spatial planning report” (*Nota over de ruimtelijke ordening*) elaborated by a national spatial planning agency that forms part of the VROM. The report is assessed by an advisory council that incorporates representatives from organizations, institutions and experts (*VROM-Raad*). Furthermore, overall structure plans that contain general policy guidelines for sectoral subject matters (*structuurschema*) are prepared by the corresponding ministries e.g. for transport or economic development.

Particular emphasis is put on the coordination between sectoral policies with spatial implications. Policy drafts are being prepared in the national spatial planning commission (*Rijksplanologische Commissie* - RPC) composed of high officials from the different ministries. The RPC forms an “anteroom” to the council of ministers and also coordinates the sectoral structure plans with the spatial planning policy.⁴ However, this process of interministerial “coordination” has also been criticized for a lack of transparency and legitimation due to implicit power shifts between sectoral policies.⁵

The Netherlands is divided into 12 administrative regions (*Provincie*) responsible for determining spatial planning policies at the regional scale. Similar to the national level, tasks are divided between institutions of an executive, advisory and research character. For their coordination with ministries, municipalities and neighbouring regions, consultation procedures are defined in the spatial planning act.

Some regions elaborate general guidelines for future spatial development in a deliberation procedure with lower tiers and social actors. Such conceptual frameworks do not have any legal status but mainly serve the purpose of persuasion. However, the regions can draw up regional plans (*streekplan*) as a legal instrument to provide orientation for spatial development. The plans have to take into account national spatial policies and, in case of divergences, government can intervene through consultation and instruction. In respect to the lower levels, regional plans are in principal indicative, although the region controls municipal plans in respect to their conformity, and may reject or approve them.⁶

The local authorities hold a strong position since the most important instrument for the control of urban development, and also the *only legally binding one* for both public and private actors, is the local land use plan (*bestemmingsplan*). Its elaboration is obligatory for “those parts of the municipality outside the built-

³ Newman/ Thornley (1996, 47-52) categorize the Dutch system as a member of the “Napoleonic family”.

⁴ VROM 1996, 7

⁵ Hajer/ Zonneveld 2000, 342

⁶ VROM 1996, 14

up area”.⁷ A land use plan can only be formulated by the municipality so that higher tiers may reject, but cannot change it. For the general orientation of urban development, municipalities can draw up indicative land use plans (*structuurplan*) similar in character to the regional plans, and sectoral structure plans (e.g. for transport), but only large cities actually do so.

Last but not least, an important feature of municipal urban planning is the high share of *public land ownership*. For instance the municipality of Amsterdam possesses 75% of its territory. Building permits are thus linked to long term leasehold contracts, which influences the role of the municipality as a negotiating party and leads to a more active involvement in urban development.⁸

In 1985 a regulation for the decision making process concerning major national plans and projects such as the spatial planning report or the HST has been adopted as part of the spatial planning act. This so-called “key planning decision” (*Planologische Kernbeslissing – PKB*) has furthered public consultation and involvement of the parliament into national policy making.⁹

As a whole, the Dutch planning system lacks instruments of power and active implementation so that results basically depend on the procedures of consultation, persuasion and cooperation, which on the opposite are regulated in detail.¹⁰ This has led to a remarkable institutional density in terms of spatial planning — from official bodies and interadministrative commissions to private consultancies. It also means that the “output” of plans, development concepts, visions, etc. is very high: Plans frequently comprise chapters summarizing the multitude of (recent) other plans that overlap with their subject. Thus, while the average lifetime of the plans tends to decrease, an active reproduction and transformation of the corresponding discourses is taking place. Spatial planning appears essentially as a continuous exchange and renewal of conceptual frameworks.

3.1.3 Railway transport

By the end of 1995 the Dutch national railways (*Nederlandse Spoorwegen – NS*) and the government signed an agreement concerning the privatization and restructuration of the company. With this agreement the separation of infrastructure and operation was combined with the separation of a market sector and a public sector. While the latter is responsible for the infrastructure planning, maintenance and operating regulation (*Railned BV*), the market sector comprises the four main divisions of passengers, cargo, real estate and stations.¹¹ For railway planning tasks from the strategic level to the realization of projects, the corresponding departments of NS were transformed into a private consultancy working for the public and the private sector (*Holland Railconsult*).

⁷ *ibid.* 17

⁸ Newman/ Thornley 1996, 50

⁹ The PKB consists of four phases: First, the national government submits a policy proposal to parliament, public authorities, the VROM-Raad and the general public and invites for reactions. Second, a revised proposal is published by the national spatial planning agency or the responsible ministry and appraised by the RPC. Third, the government reaches its conclusions in a draft handed in to parliament. Fourth, all parts approved by parliament are published in a final document.

¹⁰ WRR 1999, 13

¹¹ NS Reizigers, NS Cargo, NS Vastgoed, NS Stations

In conformity with this organization structure, the property of the national railways was divided into the infrastructure part retained by the public sector and “other”, which comprehends about 4.000ha land and 335.000m² office floor-space, now assigned to NS real estate. Moreover, the right to build over the rail infrastructure in station areas was granted to NS real estate.¹²

In respect to the operation, NS *Reizigers* is at present the only company providing services at the international, national and regional level. For the operation of the HST, the company has been given preference for the national links, whereas for the international ones an open call for tenders has been initiated in 2000.¹³

3.1.4 Air transport

The only international airport in the Netherlands is Schiphol, located 10km south of Amsterdam on the territory of the municipality of Harlemmermeer. It is managed by a private company (Schiphol Group) although the airport’s capital is entirely public with the Dutch state as majority shareholder.¹⁴ A privatization is envisaged by government but still under discussion.¹⁵ The terrain of the airport including the real estate is currently owned by the company, which forms one of the major discussion points in respect to privatization.

In terms of transport volumes, Schiphol ranks 4th in Europe (1998: 34mio. passengers, 1.2mio. t freight) but a growth up to 60mio. passengers by 2010 is envisaged and long-term possibilities for handling 80-100mio. have already been studied.¹⁶ However, compared to other European hubs the catchment area of Schiphol is considerably smaller. Regarding its growth objectives, this attributes additional weight to the long-distance accessibility of the airport. Furthermore the eccentric position of Schiphol within the country makes Brussels and Cologne/ Bonn attractive alternatives for Dutch air passengers. At present the location is connected by a national motorway and an underground railway station on the Amsterdam-Rotterdam line, situated within the central terminal.

For the airport management these circumstances have increased the importance of the transfer functions at the airport and of strategic alliances with airlines and other airports (e.g. JFK airport in New York). Still, Schiphol is dominated by the national airline KLM for which it is the principal hub, and which sustains 45% of the jobs at the airport. Schiphol currently offers a total of ca.50.000 jobs, i.e. 7% of the labour market in the Amsterdam region.¹⁷

However, in 90s the airport company has also followed a policy of active location development according to the objective of creating an “airport city”. Apart from the airport-bound activities, hotel-, conference-,

¹² NS Vastgoed 1999, 8

¹³ HSL project 1999

¹⁴ State 76%, Amsterdam 22%, Rotterdam 2%

¹⁵ Schafsma 2000

¹⁶ Schiphol Group 1998, 7, 9; Schafsma 2000

¹⁷ Schiphol Group 1998, 8; Schafsma 2000

retail- and office space have been extended so that in economic terms these functions (including parking) have become more important than the air transport (cargo and passengers).¹⁸

3.2 Process analysis - plans, policies and decisions

Five principal stages can be distinguished in the planning process for HST integration in Amsterdam and the Randstad. On the national level, the 4th spatial planning report and the definition of the basic infrastructure layout in two key planning decisions (PKB) provided the framework for the initial approach.

In parallel, both the institutionalization of the large agglomerations through the formation of new planning entities, and within Amsterdam the reinterpretation of the two HST station areas and their interrelation had an important influence on the further process. A fourth stage then appears with the “integration” of national policies through institutional changes within government and the creation of the “new key projects” policy. Finally, the discursive and institutional structuration of the Randstad region as a spatial unit represents the last stage that has marked the planning approach.

3.2.1 National policy orientations: VINEX and the HST reports

In 1988 the responsible ministry for spatial planning (VROM) finished the key planning decision procedure for the “4th spatial planning report”. This report provided a new orientation for the spatial development of the Netherlands in the context of European market integration. It attributed a crucial role to external accessibility, competitive cities and the development of tourism and recreative functions in the rural areas. A new HST line was envisaged for the connection of Amsterdam, Schiphol and Rotterdam to the Belgium border (South-line), as well as an upgrading of the railway tracks towards Germany for HST use.

In the same year the NS published an investment programme titled “Rail21”. It envisaged a general capacity extension for the existing railway network by track duplication and the improvement of junctions, with the overall aim of doubling passenger transport until 2015. For the introduction of the HST the railway company equally saw the priority of the South-line, as did the government. Thus, when in 1989 the transport ministry presented its national transport structure plan (SVV2) it was focused on two key issues: The promotion of the railways through the introduction of high-speed services and improved public transport interconnections, and the control of growing car traffic in the large agglomerations.¹⁹

After the government change in 1989 the 4th report was amended in 1991 by an “extra” report (*Vierde Nota over de Ruimtelijke Ordening Extra - VINEX*) which maintained the former strategic orientation, but added an emphasis on certain social and environmental issues. In particular, to tackle the problem of the increasing automobility in the large urban regions, a “location policy” was created to coordinate location decisions regarding accessibility characteristics and -requirements. Furthermore, a selective support was granted for strategic “key projects” to enhance the planning process and provide cities with urgently required functions and facilities. In turn, an integrated spatial and environmental planning approach was

¹⁸ ROA 1998, t49; Schafsma 2000

¹⁹ V&W 1990

introduced for certain rural areas (*ROM-beleid*).²⁰ These different approaches for urban and rural space reflected the principles of spatial “concentration” and “differentiation” that represent a fundamental orientation in Dutch spatial policies.

The key planning decision for the HST was then initiated in 1991 with the publication of a first “HST report”.²¹ The VROM and the ministry of transport proposed the construction of new HST tracks for a direct connection Schiphol-Rotterdam-Belgium border, thus discarding an operation on or along the existing tracks and bypassing the urban centers in the West (Leiden, The Hague, Delft). Travel times, transport potentials and noise/environmental impacts were the criteria for the justification of this choice. After the consultation procedure the critical reactions in respect to the concentration on external accessibility led the government to prepare a revision of the report, published in 1994.²² However, based on a more detailed comparison of alternatives but using the same evaluation criteria, the previous selection of measures was confirmed.

In 1995 the responsible ministries, now in concert with the ministry of economic affairs, further underlined the focus on the connection of Schiphol with the finishing of the key planning decision for the airport.²³ To ensure the growth of Schiphol, great importance was attributed to the national economy so that the HST line to the South appeared as an urgent measure to liberate capacities in air and road transport.

3.2.2 Urban regional institutionalization: Formation of the ROA

From the mid eighties the trends of spatial and economic development have intensified the debate about the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative structures for spatial planning in the Netherlands. Proposals for innovation and restructuring of the system especially focused on the situation in the large agglomerations.

The traditional three-level system experienced an important modification with the approval of the skeleton law for the cooperation between municipalities in urban regions in 1994 (*Kaderwet bestuur in veranderingen*). The new regulation aimed at the gradual creation of a regional planning authority for densely urbanized areas. On the one hand it acknowledged and defined the specificity of the agglomerations regarding the problems of spatial development control and policy coordination. On the other hand the new administrative level should also provide agglomerations with a common identity which could enhance citizen’s interest in regional politics – a matter deemed somewhat “invisible” by then. The skeleton law opened up the possibility to negotiate the distribution of competencies and responsibilities between the municipalities and a new authority for the urban region (*kaderwetgebied*). Within this territory intermunicipal competition should be prevented by the creation of a common pool for trade tax revenues so that location factors such as accessibility or image could become decisive in this respect.²⁴

²⁰ VROM 1991

²¹ V&W/ VROM 1991

²² *idem* 1994

²³ V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1995

²⁴ ROA 1995, 3

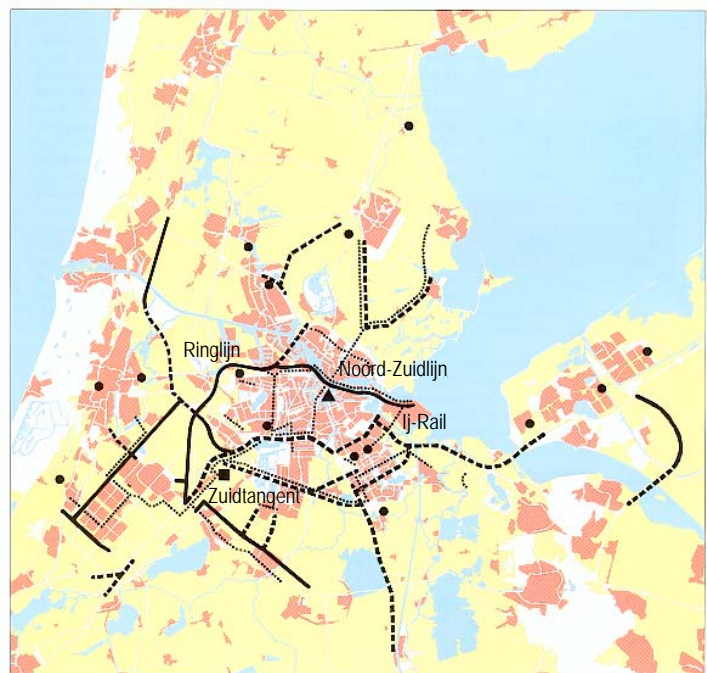
In the Amsterdam region, voluntary cooperation between municipalities had been practiced since the beginning of the seventies in an informal circle of municipal councillors (*Informeel Agglomeratie Overleg*). In 1986 a first agreement was signed between 23 municipalities to create an informal cooperation entity (*Regionaal Overleg Amsterdam*) which had finally been given a formal statute in 1992 (*Regionaal Orgaan Amsterdam – ROA*). The ROA is constituted by indirect representation as its members are selected by and from the different municipal councils. It has been given four basic competencies that were reinforced by the skeleton law after 1994: public housing, economic affairs, transport and environmental planning. However, the delimitation of the ROA does not comprise Haarlem and Almere so that it depends on external cooperations.

The first major task of the new body was the elaboration of an urban regional transport plan, published in 1993.²⁵ With the skeleton law, the ROA has been envisaged to become the urban regional transport authority. According to the concept of “transport regions” (*vervoerregio*) its competencies have been extended also for public transport regulation, operation and investments.

For this purpose it has been assigned its own budget from municipal funding, independent from government finance.²⁶ Further studies therefore concentrated on the extension and improvement of the regional railway network (*RegioRail, RegioNet*), where the ROA intended to take over operation from the NS. In particular, a new metro line that will connect the northern districts via central station and Zuid/ WTC with Schiphol (*Noord-Zuidlijn*), the completion of a metro ring (*Ringlijn*), a light-rail link along the river (*Ij-rail*) and a tangential express-bus connection from Haarlem via Schiphol and Zuid/ WTC to Almere (*Zuidtangent*) were envisaged as priority projects. These links reinforce the role of the central station and Zuid/ WTC as urban regional centralities (Fig.IV.15).

Fig.IV. 15: Public transport infrastructure projects in the ROA area: Noord-Zuidlijn, Zuidtangent, Ringlijn, Ij-rail; source: ROA 1993, 44

Furthermore, a structure plan was drawn up for the ROA area until 1998 (*regionaal structuurplan*). It has the functions of a regional plan (general orientation, checking municipal plans) but includes an implementation oriented program focused on strategic regional projects and also integrates an economic development plan. Here, the connection to the HST and



²⁵ ROA 1993

²⁶ *idem* 1995, 4

the development of the three station areas figure as strategic measures in relation to the reconfiguration of the regional railway network.

During the same period, the region of Noord-Holland started to elaborate a spatial structure plan, yet for the entire region. From 1996 to '98 this "Development vision 2030" was the subject of different publications for consultation that particularly supported the connection to the HST and the development of the station areas Schiphol and Zuid/ WTC. Therefore, by 1998 the planning framework appeared to be considerably strengthened from a regional perspective.

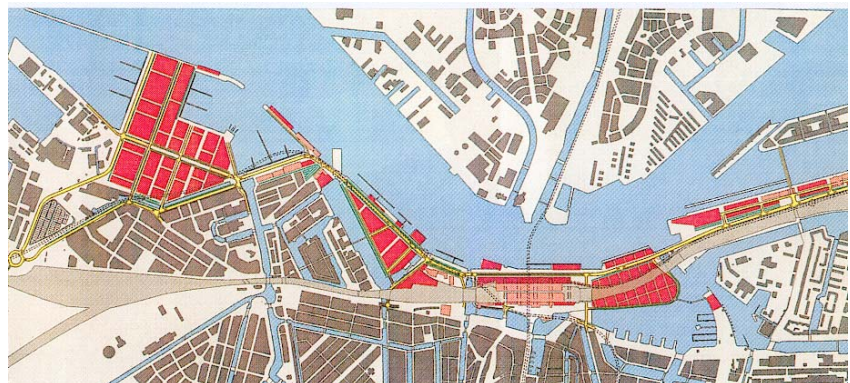
3.2.3 "Castling" in the city: Central station and Zuid/ WTC

Until 1994 the most important strategic project and location for office development was the conversion of the central port area of Amsterdam (*Ij-oevers*), located right behind the central station. It had the status of a "key project" according to the VINEX and was promoted by a partnership between the city and private investors.

But while investments at the *Ij-oevers* location stagnated, the development pressure increased in the area around the Zuid/ WTC station. Here, expectations were rising due to the combination of available space, excellent road accessibility, proximity of the airport and the envisaged arrival of the HST. Already the extension plan of 1934 had reserved the area for a new railway station.²⁷ Moreover, due to the infrastructure configuration Zuid/ WTC represents rather an alternative stop to the central station than an additional one, so that in respect to shorter travel times the peripheric position appeared advantageous. Consequently, the NS strongly supported the idea to turn Zuid/ WTC into Amsterdam's future main HST station, where also the southern and the eastern HST tracks could meet.

However, the city had not planned to develop the area precisely due to its "edge" location and the possible competition with the *Ij-oever* project, although investors proved to be aware of the potentials at Zuid/ WTC. Hence, in spite of the official course singular building permits were granted incidentally in order to not "lose chances for the city".²⁸ But as the development pressure was increasing, the need for an integral plan became recognized by 1993. In view of the vanishing development expectations, the private partners of the *Ij-oever* project finally decided to withdraw in February 1994, which marked the end of this ambiguous approach of the city (Fig.IV.16)

Fig.IV. 16: The *Ij-oever* project with the central station and the future *Noord-Zuidlijn* crossing; source: dRO 1994, 199



Amsterdam Uitbreidingsplan - AUP²⁷

²⁸ dRO 1998b, 5

After local elections in march 1994 the city's urban development policy experienced a re-orientation. The conversion of the port area was now directed towards a mixed high-grade housing (330.000m²) and working area (340.000m² office space, 140.000m² public facilities) as a continuation and complementation of the city center. By contrast Zuid/ WTC should become the "top location" for office development in Amsterdam and the Randstad. A new partnership was formed for the elaboration of a masterplan for the Zuid/ WTC area, including the city and the affected districts, the transport ministry, NS, the trade fair company (RAI), the WTC, the Free University and the ABN AMRO bank. The local public authorities were in charge of the coordination of the planning process and the realization of previous studies. A first draft version was then published in October 1996 and discussed with local interest groups. At the same time the city's spatial planning department published an investment plan for the period 2005-10 with the programmatic title "Accessible Amsterdam". The plan fully incorporated the changed orientations and put special emphasis on the development of the public transport network. In particular, the new metro- and light-rail lines connecting with the HST stations were demanded in respect to the negotiation of financial contributions from the government and the parallel elaboration of the ROA structure plan.

In January 1997 the NS in cooperation with the municipal public transport operator GVB issued a reaction to the proposals of the masterplan. Under the title "South node" the transport requirements of the location were emphasized, thus in principle supporting the development but criticizing the limited capacity and flexibility of the envisaged (underground) space for infrastructure.

After the public consultation, the masterplan for the "Zuidas" (South-axis) was passed by the city council in January 1998. The plan envisages a development over 20 years divided into four intermediate phases. The phases are related to the gradual infrastructure extension and are supposed to assure flexibility for posterior adaptations. The development area is subdivided into sectors that are attributed a dominant function respectively (office or housing), comprising a total of 650.000m² office floor-space and 215.000m² for housing. These areas are respectively mixed with a percentage of complementary functions (in total 134.000m² office, housing, retail, amenities) and 7.000m² for R&D. By June 2000, 15% of the office space was completed and 10% in development, while all housing and facility projects were still in preparation for after 2001.²⁹

As a principal objective the plan assumes the complete coverage of the tracks running through the area (rail and ring road) in order to eliminate the barrier effect and gain continuity of the public space. However, it does not resolve the objections of the operators. In order to permit further study and negotiation of an infrastructure solution, costs for the coverage and profits from developing the gained surface (ca. 20ha gross building land) through NS real estate were excluded from the project design and financing. With that, revenues from the operation would even leave the city with a surplus of €90mio (Fig.IV.17).³⁰

²⁹ dRO 2000, 24-28

³⁰ *idem* 1998b, 54



Fig.IV. 17: Zuidas masterplan – urban structure and infrastructure coverage; source: dRO 2000, 9

3.2.4 “Integration” of national policies: ICES and new key projects

In 1995 the debate about the 5th spatial planning report was initiated by the VROM with the publication of a development vision “Netherland 2030” that displayed radically different scenarios for the process of urbanization in the Netherlands.³¹ Apart from the categories of spatial concentration or sprawl, mobility and the environment, but also the economic positioning of the Netherlands and the roles of public and private actors were used to shape the proposed development paths. The preliminary conclusions pointed to a more active involvement of the government in the spatial structuring and economic development of the country.

In 1996 a commission was created out of members from different ministries in order to effectively increase the focus of public investments on competitiveness (Interdepartmental Commission for the strengthening of the Economic Structure - ICES). The ICES then started to elaborate its own policy guidelines, first published in a “mission letter”.³² With an emphasis on “integrality” it proposed additional support for the “general business environment” through selective financing of projects that combine accessibility, urban renewal and employment creation.

At the same time the position of the NS also changed since, with the privatization in 1995, the interests of the railway company had started to diversify. By initiative of NS, a commission had been formed together with members from public authorities (municipal, regional) and the chambers of commerce to perform case studies on French examples of HST integration (Paris, Lyon, Nantes, Lille). In their recommendations published by the NS in 1996, more consideration for the interactions between urban

³¹ VROM 1995

³² ICES 1996

development at station locations and new railway services was demanded, thus criticizing the limited approach of the new HST report.³³

By the end of 1996 the government then shifted the national policy priorities with a reorientation of the “key project” practice started in the VINEX. Only the four HST station area developments in the Randstad were given the status of “new key projects” (*nieuwe sleutelprojecten*), to which in a second step the project in Arnhem was added. For these projects “integral planning” and cooperation of government levels was envisaged as well as coordination between the locations and financial subsidy linked to qualitative development criteria. In 1998 a first evaluation of the differently advancing “new key projects” was carried out by the VROM that confirmed the support of the government. A second evaluation in 2000 then included the HST station area development in Breda and refined the criteria with respect to market orientation and public private partnership.

Correspondingly, the NS real estate division started to develop a selective development strategy with the aim of intensifying interaction between real estate profitability, increase of train use and exploitation of the stations. Until 2000, for 30 of the 38 station areas where NS real estate has properties, location profiles were defined that specify investment risks and functional development programmes. The HST stations figure at the top of a four level hierarchy that indicates the spatial scope of the stations, while the 8 excluded locations were said to “miss the market potential”.³⁴

Nevertheless, in 1997 the key planning decision for the HST South-line could be finished without major modifications of the project. In spite of the difficulties of crossing the “Green Heart” and achieving integration into urban areas, the chosen new track was the straightest connection Schiphol-Rotterdam-Belgium border possible, thus minimizing travel times. The fast connection between Rotterdam and Schiphol also led to the decision not to grant an international relevance to the airport in Rotterdam. The total costs of the infrastructure project were estimated at €3.42bill. and completion was envisaged for 2004. In respect to the “considerable profitability”, private financing was suggested to cover 50% of the costs.³⁵

3.2.5 Structuration of the Randstad region: Regio Randstad, Deltametropool, BCR

From 1996 to '99 important transformations have taken place in the institutional context. These transformations have reinforced the role of the Randstad as a spatial (planning) unit and the orientation adopted with the “new key projects”. For the development of the HST they have thus not had immediate consequences but rather generated new modes of interaction and a conceptual framework that may influence the continuation of the related projects and the long term integration of the HST. The starting point formed in particular the spatial development vision “Netherlands 2030” of the VROM and the “mission letter” launched by the ICES which instigated the lower tiers to actively intervene.

³³ NS 1996

³⁴ NS Vastgoed 2000, 5-10

³⁵ V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1997, 15, 20

In 1996 an association between the four regions (*Provincie*) of which the Randstad forms part, the four major cities and their respective urban regions (*kaderwetgebiede*) was created under the name of “*Regio Randstad*”. The initiative had been taken by the regions in order to facilitate new modes of multi-level cooperation and formulate a common spatial development policy for the whole Randstad. The association carries out studies and elaborates reports to influence the debate about the spatial planning policy in the Randstad.³⁶

Also in the same year, the councillors for spatial planning of the four major Randstad cities decided to enhance cooperation between government levels in order to develop a “vision for urbanization in the western Netherlands”. discussions were held during 1997 and a consultation of social actors took place, based on development scenarios elaborated by two university professors from Amsterdam and the research center of the investment bank ING. In 1998 a declaration entitled “Deltametropool” was published that represents both a policy proposal and a political strategy. “Deltametropool” thus also became the name of an association founded by the four Randstad cities and joined by the chambers of commerce, other organizations and individuals.³⁷

Following the proposal of the ICES, the government had also made a step towards the institutional interweaving within the Randstad. A commission for policies concerning the Randstad development was established in 1996 (*Bestuurlijke Commissie Randstad* – BCR). The BCR is composed of representatives from the five relevant ministries and from the members of *Regio Randstad*, which also provides the secretariat’s office. It constitutes a multi-level communication platform for the exchange of viewpoints and is responsible for the coordination of measures and investments, but has no additional competencies.³⁸

It is against this modified background that the VROM published in 1999 the last proposal for the 5th spatial planning report. After the consultation procedure which now also included reactions from the Deltametropool association and the Regio Randstad the 5th report was finally approved in November 2000, thus framing the integration of the HST in the near future.

³⁶ Dykman 2000

³⁷ Deltametropool 1998, 29

³⁸ Bekker/ Gravemaker 2000

3.3 Text analysis - planning documents and publications

3.3.1 National government

The connection of Amsterdam to the HST has been immediately related to the basic question *if* HST lines are to be established *at all* in the Netherlands and *how* this should be done. Furthermore, the planning process has been accompanied by a reformulation of spatial development policies so that, from the outset, the local planning problem of HST integration was equally a national one.

Since the guiding concepts of the national government have been partially modified in the course of the planning process, different conclusions about the role of the HST, its future stops and their respective development have also been drawn. In spite of reinterpretation and also reformulation, the discourse structure appears to be composed around 5 principal issues: The development of the TEN and the Dutch “mainports”, the concentration of urban development and its space-functional organization, the particular role and structuration of the Randstad, the definition of the “key projects” policy and at last the environmental implications of the HST related to the objective of sustainable development.

“Netherlands-Distributionland”: TEN integration and “mainport” connection

With the approval of the VINEX the subjects of internationalization and competitiveness appear on top of the national policy agenda after 1990. In practically all planning documents the introductory analyses of development trends place the Netherlands in the context of European market integration and increased competition.³⁹ The argumentation then underlines the specific importance of the international accessibility and transport for the Dutch economy with respect to structural change and enterprise location choices, reflected in the formula of “Netherlands–Distributionland”.⁴⁰ The VINEX declared the “competitiveness of the Netherlands” the first criterion to define national investment priorities, but still in ‘96 the ICES argued that the “advantageous geographic position is the basis of prosperity”, demanding correspondent infrastructure investments.⁴¹

In the new HST report two extreme scenarios are distinguished in reference to the European HST network—one based on the construction of entirely new infrastructure (“part of”) and the other on the use of the existing tracks on the other (“connected with”). These titles suggest an orientation at *integration*, as opposed to *segregation*, and thus anticipate the final choice for the first solution.⁴² More explicitly, in the PKB for the South-line the European HST network is said to convey a potential threat for the Netherlands. As physical space would become contracted and the “European network” starts to form out of “loose projects”, the integration into this network would be required in order to not become distanced relatively.⁴³

³⁹ VROM 1991, 3, 11; *idem* 2000a, V-8; V&W 1990, 5; VROM/ V&W 1994, 23; ICES 1996, 2; V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1997, 7

⁴⁰ VROM 1991, 3, 23

⁴¹ *ibid.* 1990, 33; ICES 1996, 2

⁴² V&W 1994, 71

⁴³ *ibid.* 1994, 60, 135; V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1997, 8-10

“Can we permit ourselves as a country not to participate in this project with our own infrastructure ... or do we thereby place ourselves in a physical sense outside the process of European integration?”
(V&W/VROM/EZ 1997, 10; *translation*)

A specific role is attributed to the “engines of the economy” Schiphol airport and the Rotterdam harbour, designated as “mainports”.⁴⁴ Their accessibility and connection to the “hinterland” is deemed essential for the Dutch economy.⁴⁵ The above mentioned arguments are therefore used in the PKB Schiphol to justify the development of the airport as an air transport hub, while its connection to the HST figures as a contribution to the “outgrowth” of the “mainport” by liberating capacities through a “substitution of at least 5mio. *passengers* in 2015”.⁴⁶ At the same time the HST should extend the capacity of the railway system in order to assure the accessibility of the economic centers and “avoid a transport infarct”.⁴⁷ In the first place the HST is thus conceived of as a means to assure international accessibility and allow further growth for both air and ground transport.

Starting from this perspective, priority is given to the realization of the South-line. The interconnection of the “mainports” and the access to the principal (flight) destinations abroad (Brussels, Paris, London) is expected to provide the most attractive HST offer and cause “substantial substitution” effects while the (private) infrastructure financing and the “considerable profitability” for the operator could also be assured.⁴⁸ By contrast, for the HST East-line an upgrading of the tracks is envisaged only for the period after 2010.⁴⁹ Therefore, the only HST stops planned initially are Schiphol (in the first place), Rotterdam and Amsterdam, while a maximum speed (300km/h) is demanded on the tracks between Schiphol and the Belgium border.⁵⁰

However, the understanding of the HST and the development of the TENs has become modified in the course of the planning process, as reflected in the 5th spatial planning report. Here the need for a different kind of TEN in northwest-Europe is derived from the analysis of the space-economic position of the Netherlands. The development of these networks should thus focus on “multimodal Euro-corridors” and using the existing infrastructures in order to “achieve the conformity of international accessibility and space-economic potential of cities”.⁵¹

“The Netherlands has an interest in that the European TEN policy for Northwest Europe will be turned around towards an area-specific quality policy.” (VROM 2001, V-8; *translation*)

Hence the mutual influence of the local urban conditions and the international accessibility becomes constitutive for the TEN, now understood as a selective rather than cohesive development measure.

⁴⁴ V&W 1990, 5

⁴⁵ VROM 1991, 21; V&W 1990, 8

⁴⁶ V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1995 *emphasis added*, 6-9, 14

⁴⁷ V&W 1994, 135; ICES 1996, 2; V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1997, 11

⁴⁸ V&W 1994, 60; V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1997, 13

⁴⁹ V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1995, 15

⁵⁰ VROM 1991, 21

⁵¹ *idem*, V-8

Behind this change of perspective lies a different notion of the organization and structure of urban space in the Netherlands and Europe.

From “compact city” to “urban networks”

In the VINEX, two basic policy levels are distinguished: The structuration of “everyday-life environs” (*dagelijkse leefomgeving*) understood as the living conditions in urban areas, for which the lower tiers would be responsible, and a “national spatial development perspective” which defines the international position of the Netherlands and that the government itself would seek to implement.

For the “everyday-life environs” policy orientations are given both for urban and transport development. The concentration of the predicted urban growth in 27 “city regions” (*stadsgewesten*) around existing major centers is declared a principal objective. At the scale of these basically monocentric agglomerations measures would be required e.g. for urban renewal and the creation of new space following the vision of a “compact city”.⁵² Moreover, for the strengthening of the capacity of supra-municipal control and intervention, the creation of a legal basis is foreseen.

In respect to the increasing road transport volume a new policy is introduced that regulates the location of enterprises and facilities, relating their transport requirements to the “accessibility profiles” of urban places. This so called “ABC-policy” distinguishes three types of locations: A: principal railway station areas in the urban centers, B: sites with a good public transport *and* a good motorway access, C: sites close to motorway exits. For each type the sort of activities to be located there is indicated.⁵³ Despite the restrictions and deficits of this policy it has apparently contributed to a new focus on railway station area (re-) development and the consideration of a hierarchy among public transport nodes.⁵⁴

Against this background the VINEX deals with the development of the national transport networks and the “mainports. It designates those cities with an advantageous network position as “urban nodes” (*stedelijke knooppunten*) which should fulfil a central function for their region, develop an “own profile” and enhance national competitiveness. The urban nodes are attributed different spatial scopes distinguishing four levels: International (only Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague), national, Euro-regional and regional.⁵⁵ Similar to the ABC-locations at the scale of the city region, these city regions as a whole are presented as national “locations” that are given development priority, while other urban concentrations should develop “under their own steam” and depending on national and international activity centers.⁵⁶

“These urban nodes form good starting points in order to play a part nationally and internationally in the competition of cities. When assigning means for the required high-grade public facilities, the urban nodes will be given preference.” (VROM 1991, 23; *translation*)

⁵² VROM 1991, 9, 15

⁵³ *ibid.*, 17; V&W/ EZ 1997

⁵⁴ VROM 2000b, 5-8

⁵⁵ *idem* 1991, 23

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, 25

The “urban nodes” appear to be the conceptual starting point for posterior policies that further elaborate and differentiate the mutual conditioning of accessibility and urban development at a national scale. In the 5th spatial planning report this is finally summarized in the concept of “urban networks”. Here, spatial diversity and quality are underlined as the basic criteria for spatial development, conditioned by the urban/rural difference but not linked to a particular urban form or scale. While open space should be maintained and protected, urban areas ought to become transformed and densified.⁵⁷ For this purpose a double delimitation by “red/ green contours” is introduced that allows urban extension only within the “red contours” and demands protection for “green contours”.⁵⁸

In order to “increase contrasts” and create “chances for emancipation and integration” an intensified use of space is demanded, in particular around the nodes of the public transport network. These nodes should develop as centralities striving for a mixed functional structure, high density and a coordination between programmes to avoid location competition.⁵⁹ For this purpose a broader scope is also given to the ABC-policy, since apart from accessibility it should equally take into account the effects of a location decision on the “urbanity” of the respective sites, their vitality, economic potential, spatial quality and livability according to the “node/ place model”.⁶⁰

The structuration of urban space is therefore no longer conceived of in terms of homogeneous “city regions” or “everyday-life environs”, but hierarchized by the accessibility and development potentials of singular places. Their organization into an urban network is thus seen as the principal task in correspondence to the emerging “network society” and “network economy” that would demand both a spatial “scale enlargement” and “urban centers with their own character”.⁶¹

Cooperation between the “members” of these networks — including residents, private parties and the public authorities — is therefore emphasized in order to decide on “specialization and interconnection” of the places.⁶² Apart from the Randstad region five urban networks of international significance are identified, three of which have a cross-border character.⁶³

“By improving the urbanity and increasing the quality (e.g. through more variation of milieus) the urban networks can better face international competition. The network economy conveys multiple contacts and asks for a high quality of places and accessibility.” (VROM 2001, V-41; *translation*)

⁵⁷ VROM 2001, V-15

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, V-22, -25

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, V-44

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, V-42; cf. Bertolini/ Spit 1998, 7-17

⁶¹ VROM 2001, V-40

⁶² *ibid.*, V-41

⁶³ Breda-Tilburg-Den Bosch-Eindhoven; Groningen-Assen; Maastricht-Heerlen-Genk; Arnhem-Nijmegen-Emmerich; Enschede-Hengelo-Amerlo-Osnabrück-Münster; VROM 2001, V-42

Randstad: "Economic core area", "space-economic primary structure", "Deltametropolis"

A specific importance has always been attributed to the Randstad region. The VINEX identifies an internationally oriented "economic core area" (*economische kerngebied*) physically described as the "city ring central Netherlands", of which the Randstad forms part as principal location for international services. This increasing specialization of the cities would then lead to growing interregional and international transport relations.⁶⁴ Thus the need for higher transport infrastructure capacities is explained as a consequence of the demanded reinforcement of the economic structure.

"The use of the national and international potentials of the economic core area 'City ring central Netherlands' is especially important with respect to the significance of the Netherlands as a country of transport and distribution." (VROM 1990, 23; *translation*)

For the construction of the HST the "possibility" to connect The Hague and the improved accessibility between Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Breda, which could "strengthen the internal cohesion" of the Randstad, first appear as further arguments in the course of the PKB for the South-line.⁶⁵ After the ICES attributed a short term priority to measures that "strengthen vitality, improve accessibility and control mobility" in the Randstad, the articulation of the "economic heart" as a *unit* then turns out as a development objective in its own right.⁶⁶ European competition pressure would demand a "scale enlargement" and improved interconnection of the "Randstad as a metropolis" that should bring about "synergy effects".⁶⁷

"In order to be able to compete with metropolises such as London and Paris and the central position these cities have internationally, the Netherlands are lacking the scale. In the Randstad, a stronger unity can be aimed at through more coherence and a scale enlargement can be achieved that may lead to a strengthening of the supporting surface." (VROM 1998, 7; *translation*)

Following the analysis of the ICES, the concentrations of economic activity and their infrastructural connection start to appear as an independent spatial subsystem designated as "space-economic primary structure" (*ruimtelijk-economische hoofdstructuur*), conceptually separated from an "ecologic main structure".⁶⁸ In both subsystems the Randstad necessarily occupies a prominent place. The 5th spatial planning report finally adopts the concept of "Deltametropolis" and demands an improved transport interconnection either by extending the existing networks or by "adding a new system along the inside of the Randstad ring".⁶⁹ Especially at the HST stations, high quality connections to the intermediate centers should be achieved (Fig.IV.18).⁷⁰

⁶⁴ VROM 1991, 7, 23

⁶⁵ V&W 1994, 135; V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1995, 13

⁶⁶ ICES 1996, 5; VROM 1998, 6

⁶⁷ VROM 1998, 5-7

⁶⁸ ICES 1996, 2; VROM/ EZ 1999; VROM 2001, V-4

⁶⁹ see 2.4.6 in this chapter

⁷⁰ VROM 2001, V-10, 43

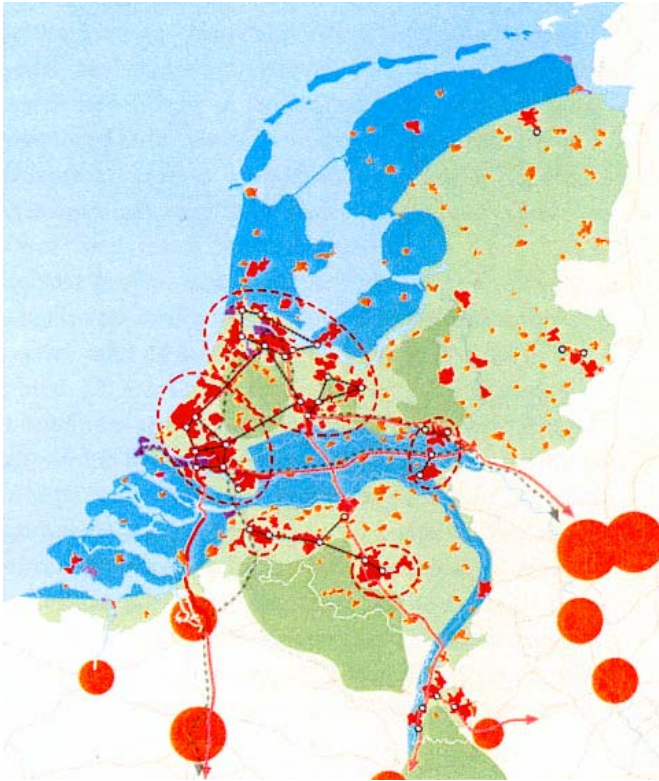


Fig.IV. 18: Urban networks and the “space economic mainstructure” in the discussion of the 5th spatial planning report – development scenario “Stedenland plus”; source: VROM/ EZ/ V&W/ LNV. 1999, 36

“With the introduction of the ‘Deltametropolis’ concept, the international profile of the Randstad as an urban network is being expressed. Both the internationally unique wetland character (‘delta’) as well as the attribute of a big city (‘metropolis’) are used in order to provide the area as a whole with its own image in Europe. . . . The Deltametropolis is an urban concept with an enlarged scale and reinforced dynamic.” (VROM 2001, V-7; translation)

“New key projects” and “integral” approach

The concept of “key projects” has been introduced by the VINEX where this feature of its “selective policy” is deemed to integrate sectoral issues and foster administrative cooperation through concrete realizations.⁷¹ For a limited number of urban development projects the government thus envisages to enhance decision making and create public-private partnerships for which the state’s financial contributions are fixed in individual contracts.⁷² In respect to the programmes, however, no indications were initially made so that different types of projects have been chosen — for instance in Amsterdam the redevelopment of the *Ij-oevers*.

In 1996 the key projects policy experienced a re-orientation. Since the ICES put the emphasis on the need for an “active approach” facing the identified four major dilemmas of employment deficits, transport congestion, space consumption and social segregation in an integrated way, the HST assumes a crucial role.⁷³ The status of “new key project” is now limited to the HST station developments in the four main cities of the Randstad, while in a later stage Arnhem and Breda are also included.

National subsidies for these projects are conditioned by the fulfilment of four basic evaluation criteria that reflect the orientations of the ICES: “Strengthening of the national economy, accessibility of the economic

⁷¹ VROM 1991, 31

⁷² *ibid.*, 35

⁷³ ICES 1996, 1, 4

centers, vital cities and quality on the project level”.⁷⁴ Moreover, the project management should aim at a coordination between these six “top-locations” for office development and avoid competition both between the locations and with their surrounding regions. Thus, the Randstad Policy Commission (BCR) and the urban regional planning authorities (*kaderwetgebiede*) would become especially important.⁷⁵ The new key projects would then contribute to “strengthen the center function of the city” and “spread positive effects” over their regions, it is argued.⁷⁶

The HST appears here as an indispensable component because, even though its effects on business location choices are expected to be rather limited, *not* realizing an HST connection is said to have negative consequences.⁷⁷ Finally in 2000 the criteria for the projects’ evaluation and the granting of subsidies have been revised, now formulating the priority of the attractiveness as “international business location” and the addition of growth sectors to the economic structure, while a functional mixture should also be achieved.⁷⁸

A key project of a different kind represents the development of Schiphol. The government has not defined it as such since the airport would not “contribute to the vitality of the city”.⁷⁹ In the PKB for the airport, its development areas are classified in spite of the HST stop as B and C locations according to the location policy categories and reserved for strictly airport-related activities, while at the same time the improvement of the regional accessibility is demanded (road and public transport).⁸⁰ In the logic of the ABC-policy the exceptional accessibility of the airport thus contrasts with its development restrictions. Therefore, the question of the relation between Schiphol and the Zuidas is raised in the key project’s evaluation, but not answered. Two scenarios are sketched for the future development of the airport, titled “transport machine” versus “autonomous urban system” or “Randstad airport” versus “airport city”, but conclusions are postponed.⁸¹

“Double objective”, transport substitution, “sustainable development”

“Sustainable development” appears as an overall objective throughout national planning documents, usually by making a reference to the definition of the UN-commission on environment and development.⁸² However, the use of this concept mainly focuses on frictions between *economic* and *environmental* objectives.

Striking a balance between “individual freedom, accessibility and environmental amenity” is thus aimed at with the second transport structure plan, although it is recognized that the transport development would

⁷⁴ VROM 1998, 15

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, 6, 39

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, 44, 7

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, 16

⁷⁸ VROM 2000a, 20

⁷⁹ *idem* 1998, 18

⁸⁰ V&W/VROM/EZ 1995, 14, 27, 29, 33

⁸¹ VROM 1998, 18

⁸² *idem* 1991, 7; *idem* 2001, V-5; V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1995, 8

“make or break” the competitive position of the Netherlands.⁸³ This perspective is shared in the VINEX, stating that, in conflict situations such as Schiphol, a weighing between economic and ecologic objectives would be required.⁸⁴ However “ecologic diversity” is also said to be the second “spatial potential” after the geo-position of the Netherlands: For the Randstad environmental protection should therefore be combined with tourism and leisure and could thus equally “contribute to competitiveness”.⁸⁵

In the PKB Schiphol a “double objective” is defined with the growth of the airport and the improvement of the living environment, suggesting that inherent contradictions can be resolved.⁸⁶ Likewise the ICES demands to “strive for sustainability, spatial quality and responsible environmental policy” and develop the “space-economic primary structure”, but sees these objectives in an implicit hierarchy: After the “necessary economic infrastructure” has been achieved the “demanded concern about the environment and livable environs” could be attended gradually.⁸⁷ The principal challenge is thus identified as a “sustainable *economic* development”.

“The challenge consists in achieving a sustainable economic development, where economic growth, strengthening of the competitiveness, and the increase of employment go hand in hand with a better management of space, nature, biodiversity and an absolute decrease of emissions polluting the environment.” (ICES 1996, 2; *translation*)

That this perspective is not unproblematic is in principal realized in the 5th spatial planning report. Considering the completed infrastructure investments it is acknowledged that “the airport and the seaport [Rotterdam] have further developed as international transport nodes [while] the realization of the livability-goal remains unanswered.” Nevertheless, a “sustainable growth” of the “mainports is envisaged “within the margins of the quality of the living environment”.⁸⁸

In respect of the HST, “sustainability” has played an important role in the PKB, linking the environmental implications of this transport mode to the economic objectives. The “substitution” of road and air transport (short distance flights) to the railways is therefore said to “reduce environmental impacts” or “improve the environment”.⁸⁹ Furthermore, as European integration would lead to a growth of international transport, the increase of the corresponding railway market share would benefit the environment and transport safety. Thus, for the sustainable development of the Netherlands a “fully-fledged connection” to the HST network would be “necessary”, it is concluded.⁹⁰

Regarding the HST station area developments, however, “sustainability” has had less weight as an argument. Thus in the new key projects’ evaluation the concept has been generously defined as

⁸³ V&W 1990, 5

⁸⁴ VROM 1991, 27

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, 29

⁸⁶ V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1995, 6

⁸⁷ ICES 1996, 1, 6

⁸⁸ VROM 2001, V-8, 9

⁸⁹ V&W 1994, 46

⁹⁰ V&W/ VROM/ EZ 1997, 11-13

“investing in quality” and is deemed an “important aspect to be considered” in the further elaboration of the projects. This “quality” is in turn understood as the “suitability of space to fulfil certain socially desired functions”. The second evaluation report then mentions only once the aim of assuring a “sustainable economic structure and mobility”.⁹¹

3.3.2 City of Amsterdam

For the city, getting connected to the European HST network represents a strategic condition for its competitiveness. The HST should thus contribute to the development of the “mainport” Schiphol by “transport substitution” and also foster a “metropolitan development” of the Randstad as a spatial unit. Functional specialization and interconnection of economic centers are the conceptual orientations for the internal structure of the Randstad and Amsterdam as its “economic motor”. In this perspective, HST stations are portrayed as “changeover machines” where the surroundings should develop a specific functional mix. A “shifting” from the central station to the *Zuidas* as future centrality is therefore expected. Furthermore, the envisaged urban structure is supposed to limit automobility and promote an economic use of space as conditions for a “sustainable development”.

TEN connection: “Internationalization”, “mainport” development and “competitiveness”

Where the city argues directly in favour of the HST construction, the process of European integration and interregional competition form the background. Although the effects of the HST are expected to be limited in the Netherlands, getting connected to the HST network too late or not at all would result in an outflow of international businesses, limit congress and tourism activity and therefore lead to employment loss.⁹² Moreover, the HST would be important for the development of the “mainport” Schiphol because of “transport substitution”. Therefore travel times, transport potential, investment-/exploitation costs and environmental impacts are the criteria underlined for the design of the HST lines in order not to “lose transport”.⁹³

“The good international competitive position of Amsterdam will be under pressure, if the agglomeration will not have an HST to Paris and Germany around the year 2000.” (dRO 1994, 15; *translation*)

“Metropolitan development” in the Randstad: “Economic motor”, “concentration and specialization”

The international positioning of Amsterdam would require the strengthening of the economic position and qualities of the Randstad as a whole and the “space-functional specializations within”.⁹⁴ Therefore the concept of “metropolitan development” is introduced, defined as “urban concentration in the Randstad”, “using existing investments” and assuring the international accessibility of the “mainports, a fast link between them and connections with their “hinterland”. The HST would approach the north and south wing

⁹¹ VROM 1998, 44; *idem* 2000, 4

⁹² dRO 1994, 14, 15

⁹³ *ibid.*, 29, 30

⁹⁴ *idem* 1998b, 10

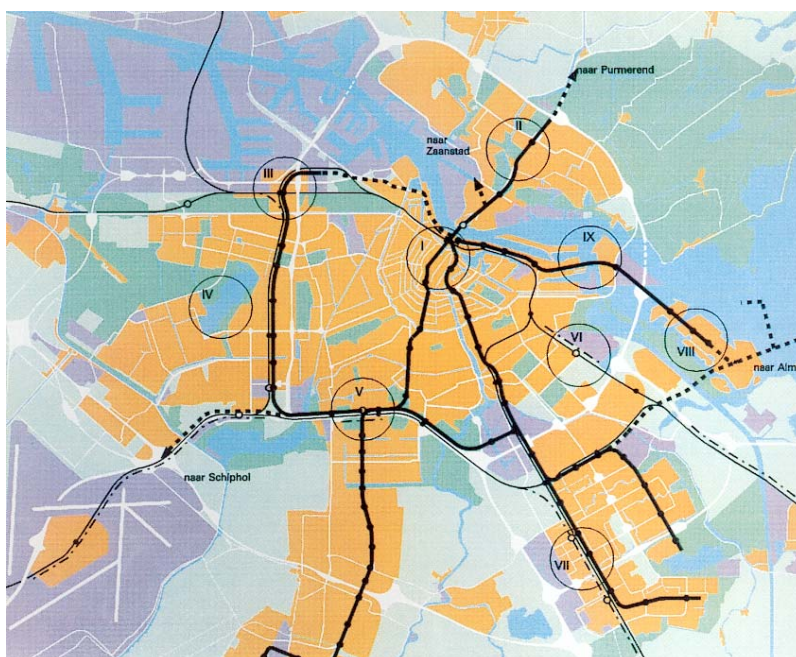
and make the Randstad “function as a unit”. Alternatives to this perspective are discarded, since they would miss the “advantages of agglomeration”.⁹⁵

Amsterdam is described as a “motor”, “focal point”, “breeding ground” or the “cork on which the national economy is floating”. It would thus equally provide spin-off effects for its urban region.⁹⁶ While other growing sectors like transport and tourism would already receive support through development measures, the service sector is said to be “missing new impulses”. By “broadening its product” through high-grade services, leisure and media businesses, the international position of the city could thus be strengthened and the presence of “decision makers” increased. Within the city urban development priority is given to nine “focal points” at nodes of the public transport network, while the international nodes, in particular, are said to form the basis of a “concentrated regional development”. These “focal points” should cover the estimated floor-space demand for housing and economic activities (Fig.IV.19).⁹⁷

Fig.IV. 19: Planned rail infrastructure and the nine “focal points” of development; source: dRO 1996, 1

“The more metropolitan development we suggest, i.e. a concentrated development of the agglomerations in the Randstad, is in fact already set in motion by today’s policies, but it is not yet defined as such. The strengthening of the ‘mainports’ and their connection to the hinterland is an already accepted policy.” (dRO 1996, 13; *translation*)

“The big urban regions are important breeding places for economic and cultural activities. Investments in the big cities provide a huge social return.” (dRO 1998, 10; *translation*)



HST station areas: Shift to Zuidas, “changeover machines” and “functional mix”

Amsterdam central station is considered to be the “logical stop” for both HST lines, although in the future a shift towards Zuid/ WTC would be probable due to the urban development in the South and the impossibility to make the route through the city faster.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the Zuidas area is seen as the link between the housing areas in the East and West (Almere, Haarlem) and the workplace concentration in the South of Amsterdam, as well as to the city center. This growing transport relation would thus require

⁹⁵ dRO 1994, 14; *idem* 1996, 13, 16

⁹⁶ *idem* 1996, 11

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, 19; *idem* 1998, 6,7

⁹⁸ *idem* 1994, 23, 25

improved accessibility by road (A10) and rail (*Noord-Zuidlijn, Ringlijn*). Equally, the use of the HST and the urban development possibilities are said to depend on the connection with secondary transport modes, defining the station buildings as “changeover machines”.⁹⁹

The development of the station areas should envisage a high density and a specific functional mixture oriented at the HST. In the center an impulse for the *Ij-oever* project is expected, and space for the expansion of present functions should be provided. By contrast, the *Zuidas* should attract international enterprises and “various big-city functions”, while housing and facilities should assure “livability and security”.¹⁰⁰ The area would already offer a “complete package” of business facilities in proximity while the quality of the living environment, green space in the direct surroundings and social-cultural amenities would be important for enterprise location choices. Emphasis is also put on the new physical relations between the neighboring districts as well as the urban design quality of the projects.¹⁰¹

“This advantage (center-to-center) should be used by addressing as much as possible the specific requirements of the HST travellers through offering direct, frequent, fast and comfortable connections to the most important destinations for them. (dRO 1994, 19; *translation*)

“Criteria for assessing the suitability of functions for a location close to an HST station are namely the international orientation, the share of visitors, the uniqueness (special functions belong to a special place), the relation to other functions in the area, the 24h use.” (dRO 1994, 25; *translation*)

“Sustainable development”: “Economic use of space” and “limiting mobility”

In spite of the risks of social segregation and environmental deterioration resulting from current development trends, big cities would still have the “highest potentials for a sustainable development”. In this respect, improving the quality of infrastructures is regarded as increasingly important for urban renewal and the “use of existing potentials”. Both the development of the “focal points” including the two HST station areas and the extension of the urban-regional public transport network are presented as contributions to the basic objectives of “limiting mobility” and an “economic use of space”, while the latter is especially said to condition a “sustainable regional development”.¹⁰²

3.3.3 Nederlandse Spoorwegen – NS

The argumentation of the NS first defends the necessity of the HST construction in the Netherlands with the connection to the European network and the competitiveness of “urban poles”. Furthermore the HST is said to improve the market position of the “railway product”, to “substitute transport” and therefore contribute to an environmental friendly transport development. The HST would offer the possibility of taking advantage of the “*effet TGV*” through “synergies” with the development of station areas, achieving a selective location of activities through pro-active partnerships.

⁹⁹ dRO 1998b, 11, 22

¹⁰⁰ *idem* 1994, 16, 25; *idem* 1999, 4

¹⁰¹ *idem* 1998b, 7, 10-12, 16

¹⁰² *idem* 1996, 11, 12, 28

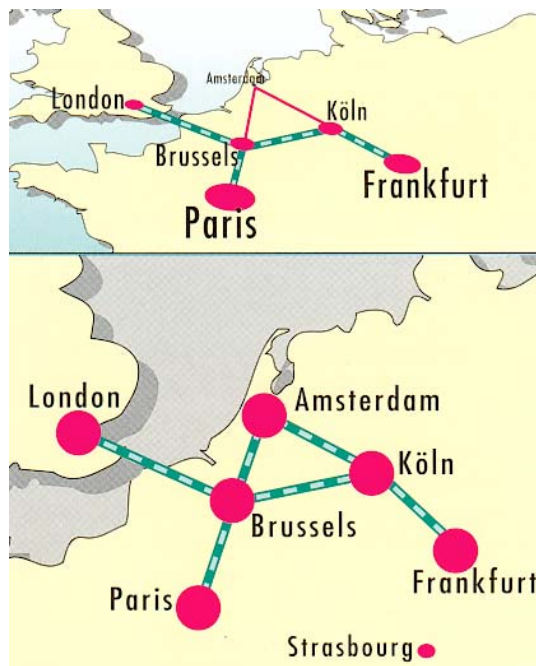
TEN connection: Competitiveness of “urban poles”

The HST is presented as an “obvious quality leap for passenger transport”. A connection to the European HST network, it is argued, means an opportunity for cities and regions to “improve their position in Europe” or “become poles in the European urban network”, whereas not being connected “in time and adequately” could make the Dutch poles to “losers”. With respect to the track decision, the threat is uttered that “operators may decide to limit or suspend services” if they had to slow down operation on the existing infrastructure with the “expensive rolling stock”, which would of course “further increase backwardness” (Fig.IV.20).¹⁰³

Fig.IV. 20: “Netherlands in the periphery” and “The regions grow towards each other”; source NS 1996, 5

HST development: Railway market position, transport substitution, environmental friendliness

It is emphasized that the “necessary infrastructure” should be “available in time” and that in the international network, “short travel times always form the basis” for the mutual accessibility between the poles. Then the HST would bring positive effects for the environment and accessibility “among others by substitution”, form an “attractive alternative for car and aircraft” as it “stops in the city centers” and improve the image and market position of “the total railproduct”.¹⁰⁴



“A higher transport share of the HST means a contribution to an environmental friendly solution of the mobility problem.” (NS 1996, 5; *translation*)

“Effet TGV” and “HST world”: Station area development, synergies, partnerships

Most of all, the space-economic effects (“*effet TGV*”) are emphasized, which could result from “synergies” between transport, rolling stock, stations and their surroundings. As a condition for these effects, a proactive approach is demanded, forming “networks of public and private parties and key-actors”.¹⁰⁵

Denoting the differentiated floor-space offer and the “win-win situation” created by profit distribution, the “Euralille” project is mentioned as a positive example in respect to approach and realization. By contrast,

¹⁰³ NS 1996, 3, 5, 10

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, 4, 5, 10

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, 5, 11

the discussions about the HST in the Netherlands (by 1996) would be concentrated on the track design and “mitigating negative effects”, whereas positive space-economic effects would not be considered sufficiently.

“This experience [study-trip to France] has led to the first conclusion that the construction of the high-speed line forms an absolute necessity in order to create the ‘world of the high-speed train’ in the Netherlands.”
(NS 1996, 9; *translation*)

Selective development, “profit center” and regional accessibility

Fast connections by airplane and HST are presented as the current orientations for a more globally operating economy. Due to its position and good accessibility in the Randstad and internationally, the “South node” (Zuid/ WTC) is said to have the potential to become an “international top location”.

The proximity and international importance of Schiphol are regarded as positive factors for the *Zuidas* as a business location. Both station locations are considered to be complementary since they would serve different transport markets: While the stop at Schiphol allowed to profit from the “substitution” effect and to support the airport’s development as a “hub”, Zuid/WTC would be a business destination and location of non-airport related activities. For tourism and business passengers, a public transport connection to the center (*Noord-Zuidlijn*) is deemed especially important since for operating reasons not all HSTs from the East (Germany) would stop in the center (Fig.IV.21).¹⁰⁶

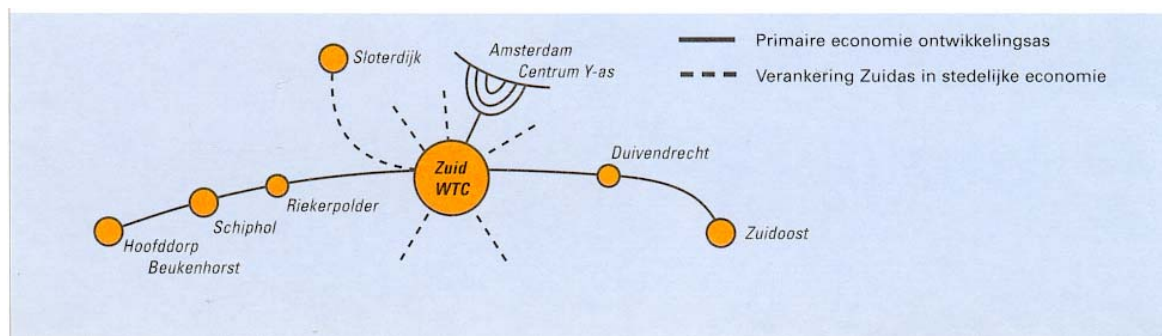


Fig.IV. 21: Integration of the Zuidas in the “principal economic development axis” - and secondary position of the central station; source: NS/ GVB 1997, 4

“The choice between the stops for the HST (Central station or Zuid/WTC) defines which location will benefit of the extra impulse for urban development.” (NS 1996, 5; *translation*)

The urban development is seen to influence the effect of “substitution” and the passenger volume of the HST so that space for “activities that provide a maximum of European rail transport” should be created. The Zuid/ WTC station should thus become a “custom-made” public transport node, offering “products exploited in a network”.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ NS 1996, 12; NS/ GVB 1997, 4, 6, 7

¹⁰⁷ NS/ GVB 1997, 6, 10, 14

A selective location of activities with a high density is demanded in the immediate surroundings, comprising functions open to the general public and special facilities for HST users since “exclusively large-scale office development is insufficient and wrong”. Both in respect to the urban environs and the station building, the design quality is underlined for “good design is good business”. However, a development in phases as envisaged in the *Zuidas* masterplan is considered to affect the image and attractiveness of the project negatively, since this would mean longer construction times and “disorientation for the users”.¹⁰⁸

“The South node is more than a ‘transferium’ or a ‘changeover machine’. It must be a ‘profit center’ with space for services and commercial activities.” (NS/ GVB 1997, 18; *translation*)

As changing mobility patterns and disperse settlement structures would modify the public transport demand, regional accessibility “at least equal” to that of Schiphol and the concentration of urban development along the main public transport axes are said to condition the development of the *Zuidas*.¹⁰⁹ In opposition to the solution defended in the master plan, the limited transport capacities for the HST and regional trains are criticized as is the limited flexibility of underground infrastructures which would restrict future expansion.¹¹⁰

Whereas projects in Utrecht, Rotterdam and The Hague would also be on the way in order to realize the “*effet TGV*”, different conditions are identified for Arnhem/ Nijmegen and Enschede/ Hengelo. Here the necessity for “further market studies”, promotion and cooperation are emphasized. Since the regional public transport access would be unsatisfactory, the station development should “offer sufficient parking space” and “guarantee car accessibility from the larger region”.¹¹¹

3.3.4 Provincie Noord-Holland

The argumentation of the Provincie is necessarily based on government policies but sets particular regional accents. In the agenda for spatial policy of 1998 three subjects are said to “determine the future of Noord-Holland”: Schiphol, mobility and agriculture.¹¹² The role of the HST and its station areas is closely related to an urban structure model. It is described with the development of the Randstad as a regional unit and “European logistics delta”, and with the *Zuidas* area as new growth pole. Moreover the HST is said to contribute to spatial differentiation and environmental development by featuring the multimodal transport nodes Zuid/ WTC and Schiphol.

Randstad, “European logistics delta” and “economic primary structure”

From the point of view of the region, regarding the process of globalization and changing activity patterns “solutions for urban questions” should be found at the scale of the Randstad as part of the “Northwest

¹⁰⁸ NS/ GVB 1997, 18, 19, 30

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, 6, 7, 9-11

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, 26, 27

¹¹¹ NS 1996, 12-14

¹¹² Provincie 1998, 24

European megapolis". Increasing importance is ascribed to this new supra-regional identity to strike a balance between "stable places" and the "international living together".¹¹³ Furthermore, a "natural role" of the Randstad as "European logistics delta" is identified, deriving the strategic importance of the international accessibility i.e. the growth of Schiphol and the construction of the HST lines. Space should be offered flexibly for new economic development within the "economic primary structure" composed of specialized "economic centers" and the connections with their "hinterland". In this, the "focal points" would be Schiphol, reserved exclusively for airport activities, and Amsterdam *Zuidas* as "top location for international services". However, to further profit from the airport growth in the long run would require its relocation from Harlemmermeer into the North-sea.¹¹⁴

"In many areas, the Randstad as a regional unit will gather further importance. Internationally, the Randstad can strengthen itself by developing a good infrastructure, through good cooperation and coordination of the 'mainports', through cooperation of the big cities in developing their international investment profile, and through a good design of the green space." (Provincie 1998, 24; *translation*)

"Spatial differentiation", "node development", "environmental development"

Against the trend of "structurelessness, segmentation and levelling" the aim should be more "spatial diversity" and "differentiated speed" in the development dynamics. The densification of the *Zuidas* area as a new "growth pole of the Randstad" is seen as a part of this strategy, accompanied on the other side by low density urban expansion to satisfy the housing demand.¹¹⁵ Equally, the growth of Schiphol is demanded while this should occur ensuring "livable environs". Environmental objectives are said to be jeopardized by the "social dynamics". But instead of being prohibitive, policies should try to "stimulate developments good for the environment" with a focus on mobility, space consumption and water management.¹¹⁶ The new HST lines would therefore represent an "investment in the future and the environment".¹¹⁷

"Multimodality", "selective accessibility", "transferia"

Transport growth and diffuse mobility patterns should be answered by an intensified use of infrastructure, transport chains and "multimodality". Spatial development could thus be steered by "selective accessibility", defining a hierarchy of networks and improvements or restrictions for the nodes. Regarding public transport, competitiveness is only recognized for regional rail and HST/ IC services so that these systems should be improved and connected with the road network through changeover points in order to shift car-traffic to the train. Although situated in the periphery, airports, stations and "transferia" would become the "new meeting points"¹¹⁸ By contrast, a second regional ring-road should also be completed,

¹¹³ Provincie 1998, 8, 10, 22

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, 16, 17

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, 7, 10, 11, 23

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, 7

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, 34

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, 18, 22

thereby adding the “missing links” which could create a new regional development axis in the North (*Westfrisiaweg*) and have “strong consequences for urban development” in the Zuidas area (Fig.IV.22).¹¹⁹

Fig.IV. 22: Accessibility map for Noord-Holland and the Amsterdam region: HST line, motorways, regional rail and “transferia”; source: Provincie 1998, 39



3.3.5 Regionaal Orgaan Amsterdam - ROA

Placed in the context of European competition, the ROA presents the Amsterdam region as the “economic motor of the Randstad metropolis”. Internationalization, attraction of economic activities and the specialization of business areas are therefore essential conceptual orientations. Reinforcing the “space-economic primary structure”, equilibrating urban regional development and limiting automobility are the chief objectives. The envisaged development could finally resolve frictions between economy and ecology and allow a “growth in sustainability”. Therefore, the development of the three HST station areas as “multimodal nodes” and the extension of the urban regional public transport system appear as key measures for the ROA.

International business location ROA: “Economic motor of the Randstad metropolis”

European integration, internationalization and competition between European metropolises are the starting points for the identification of the “Randstad metropolis” as the comparable spatial unit in the Netherlands.¹²⁰ Since large agglomerations would act as “economic motors” and the north wing of the Randstad represented “one of the draught horses of the Dutch economy”, the “quality of the business location” and “urgency” of interregional competitiveness is a primary concern of the ROA. The urban

¹¹⁹ Provincie 1998, 36

¹²⁰ ROA 1998a, t12; *idem* 1998b, III-V

regional economy would strongly depend on international markets and fluctuation in the growth sectors of transport, logistics and business services.¹²¹

“The region sets itself the goal of playing an important role also in a European perspective. As a location for enterprises, offices and institutions, the region should fully count at the international level. The presence of sufficient facilities of international standard, both in the cultural and social area as well as in the field of retail facilities for instance, and a high-quality living environment, are elements that contribute to this aim.” (ROA 1998a, 23; *translation*)

“Space-economic primary structure”: “Scale enlargement”, specialization, equilibration

A conceptual “scale enlargement” is therefore envisaged in reference to the ROA area which would recognize the interdependencies of central and peripheral municipalities.¹²² The development should be focused on six “core areas” and five “secondary economic centers” in addition to the central city. Together with the transport infrastructure these areas would form the “space-economic primary structure” of the ROA. They should become specialized and complementary business locations or “economies of scope”, taking the structure of Schiphol airport as a model.¹²³ Their spatial arrangement would define “strategic connection zones” (*Zuidas, Noord-Zuid, Westrandweg*) where space would have to be reserved for infrastructure expansion, and should also achieve a balanced distribution of economic growth: The North would especially need development impulses from the dynamics in the South.¹²⁴

“The regional economic development strategy is concentrated on the EPS (economic primary structure) and the economic core areas and connecting zones contained therein . . . Through this concentration a segmentation and disjointed development can be avoided.” (ROA 1998b, 31; *translation*)

“Regional spatial projects”: “mainport” and “node development”, regional public transport

The principal measures proposed are to “improve the international image”, realize the HST connection, develop the “mainport” Schiphol, supply office space and industrial land and extend the urban regional public transport system. Urban and economic development should then focus on the “densification of nodes”.¹²⁵

As a strategy for realization the ROA envisages a number of “regional spatial projects” that would require cooperation between public authority levels and an “interconnection of policies”, among which are the HST lines and station areas.¹²⁶ The growth of Schiphol is regarded as “necessary” in respect to the employment effects attributed to the airport. Here the HST connection should thus serve to “get potential

¹²¹ ROA 1998a, 31-33, t13; *idem* 1998b, 1, 7

¹²² *idem* 1998a, t8

¹²³ *Zuidas/ Amstelveen, Zuidoost, Schiphol, Northsea-canal area, Zaanoevers/ Purmerend*; ROA 1998a, 33, 34; ROA 1998b, V-VII; 13, 29

¹²⁴ ROA 1998a, 34, 37

¹²⁵ *idem* 1998a, 36; *idem* 1998b, V

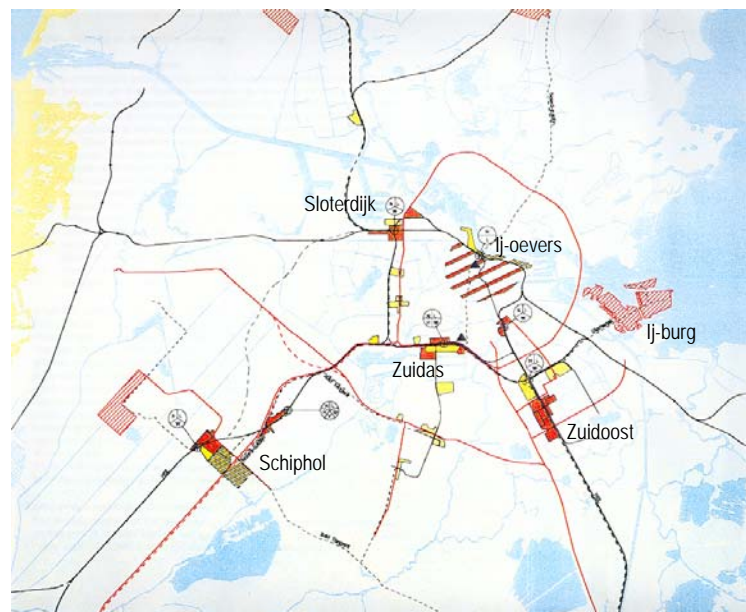
¹²⁶ *idem* 1998a, 69; *idem* 1998b, 89

air-travellers into the train”, while the regional public transport access would also have to be improved.¹²⁷ On the other hand, the HST is expected to support the office development for the *Zuidas* and *Ij-oever* projects, although the two station locations are described as “partly complementary and competing” and a “tension field” is identified between them. As the *Zuidas* is also the only A-location outside the city center, coordination of programmes and timing would be necessary between urban developments at all three “multimodal super-nodes”.¹²⁸

Hence the envisaged new public transport axes (*Noord-Zuidlijn*, *Zuidtangent*, *Ij-rail*) that also interconnect the HST stations appear as crucial links. They should contribute to equilibrate the station area developments and limit automobility in the urban region as they connect the three principal work place concentrations in the South: Schiphol, *Zuidas* and *Zuidoost* (Fig.IV.23).¹²⁹

Fig.IV. 23: Main office locations and regional infrastructure in the Amsterdam region; source: ROA 1998b, 68 - *modified*

“Infrastructure connections for both public and road transport will have to be improved. . . . Especially in favour of an improved economic structure we can speak of the construction of the high-speed lines from Germany and France, the *Zuidtangent*, the *Noord-Zuidlijn*, and the construction of the (prolonged) *Westrandweg*.” (ROA 1998a, 36; *translation*)



“Growth in sustainability”: Improvement of environment and “everyday-life environs”

The ROA describes “growth in sustainability” as its “theme” and strategy. To strengthen the position of the urban region should thus not come into conflict with improving the quality of the environment and the “everyday-life environs” (*dagelijkse leefomgeving*). Despite a “visible tension field” between economy and environment, economic growth is seen as a condition for environmental improvement while environmental quality appears in turn as a location factor and growth sector.¹³⁰ The planning principles of “concentration, differentiation and densification” should contribute to “protect nature and landscapes”.¹³¹ Therefore this argumentation indirectly supports the plans for the HST station area developments.

¹²⁷ ROA 1998a, 34, 53; *idem* 1998b, 16

¹²⁸ *idem* 1998a, t15, t105;

¹²⁹ *ibid.* 1998a, 36; *idem* 1998b, IX; *idem* 1993, 16, 52

¹³⁰ *idem* 1998a, 23, t7, t28; *idem* 1998b, 27

¹³¹ *idem* 1998a, 24

"Economy and environment can also reinforce each other. The environmental quality is a subpart of the attractiveness of the region as a housing and enterprise location. Over time, neglecting the environment means a deterioration of the competitive position. Subsequently, a strong economy offers more chances for necessary investments in the environment." (ROA 1998a, t7 ; *translation*)

3.3.6 Deltametropool and RegioRandstad

From "Fatherland" to "Mother-city": Competitiveness and diversity

The starting point of the argumentation of these two entities is the process of European integration that would increase the competition "between metropolises". In order to stay competitive, the Netherlands would therefore need to develop the Randstad as a metropolis of a "European format" and "critical mass", it is stated.¹³²

As regional identities ("mother-city") would replace national ones ("Fatherland") the Deltametropool association proposes the new development concept of "deltametropolis" in order to express the specific geographical characteristics and historical evolution of the Randstad as a "European center of information, commerce and transport".¹³³ Furthermore the need for a "growth of diversity" in a social, economic and cultural sense is emphasized. Diversity is considered to be both an important source of competitiveness and a condition for social integration, characterizing the cities as "emancipation machine" or "school for cultural interaction".¹³⁴ Finally a policy strategy is described in the four steps of "opinion forming", "coalition forming", "draft and design" and "priority realization" respectively based on the proposed concepts.¹³⁵

"Urban diversity" and "blue/green networks"

The physical structure of this deltametropolis is said to be organized by four components or "layers": "urban diversity", "cultural landscape", water and transport networks. Aside from the national government it is argued that in the Randstad, sufficient space would be available so that urban development could imply both renewal and densification on the one hand and expansion on the other. Instead of a sharp distinction between urban and rural areas, "variations" should be achieved by "densification and dilution" according to the principle of "decentralized concentration".¹³⁶ In turn, to actively protect the landscape and curb urban sprawl, a "metropolitan park system" should be established specifically by increasing the water surface. These "blue and green networks" would thus form "structuring elements" of the urban areas (Fig.IV.24).¹³⁷

¹³² Deltametropool 1998, 2; Regio Randstad 1999, I

¹³³ Deltametropool 1998, 21

¹³⁴ *ibid.* 1998, 3, 4

¹³⁵ *ibid.* 1998, 8

¹³⁶ *ibid.* 1998, 24

¹³⁷ Deltametropool 1998, 6; Regio Randstad 1999, VII



Fig.IV. 24: Infrastructures, "Mainports", "economic development zones" and "urban housing" in the Randstad; source: RegioRandstad 1999, 44

"City ports" and metropolitan rail system

As a "central project" the deltametropool association sees the development of the five HST station locations in the Randstad described as "city ports" (in correspondence to air- and seaport). The accessibility of these "urban interaction milieus" should be optimized by all modes including the interregional roads. Instead of underlining the external connection of the "mainports", the emphasis is put on improving the internal connections in the

Randstad to "enhance interaction" and develop the "economy of services". With this, "synergies" and "creative competition" are expected between specializing urban centers that develop from "lose cities to a whole".¹³⁸

The HST would thus form a "metropolitan rail system" offering high frequency connections between the four largest cities and Schiphol.¹³⁹ A functional hierarchy of separated transport networks and "multimodal nodes" would have to be defined, developing places according to their accessibility. Since 75% of the transport would take place within the range of 10-15km, the urban regional public transport system, including busses, should be improved and offer fast access to the HST stations as principal gates of their urban regions (Fig.IV.25).¹⁴⁰

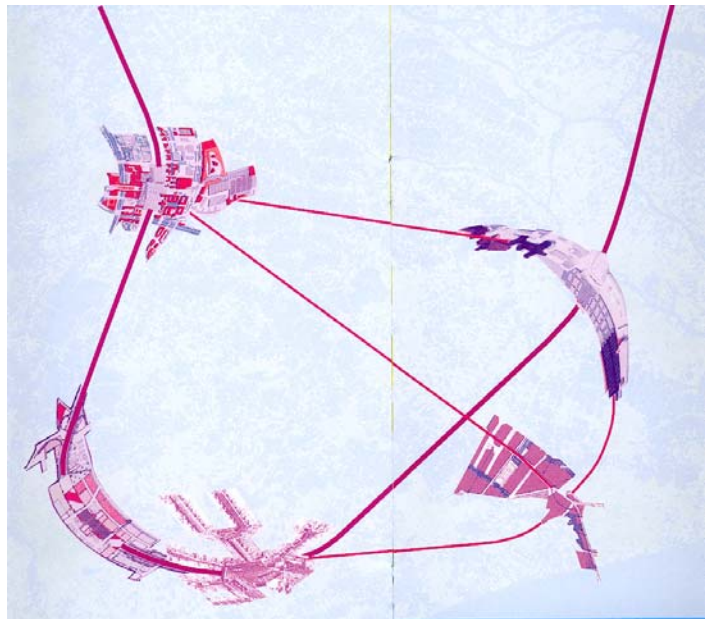
¹³⁸ Deltametropool 1998, 5, 7, 24; *idem* 1999, 1

¹³⁹ *idem* 1998, 5

¹⁴⁰ *idem* 1999, 1; Regio Randstad 1999, VI

Fig.IV. 25: "City ports" in the Deltametropolis; source: Deltametropool 1998, 18

"The map 'city ports' shows what the deltametropolis is all about: Interplay between the cities of the Netherlands in order to keep up in the European competition of world cities. At the nodes of the intercontinental airlines, international railway lines and interregional motorways, there are the city ports, serving as 'mainports' of the deltametropolis for the everyday flows of people changing over, just as there are 'mainports' for freight exchange . . ." (Deltametropool 1998, 19; *translation*)



3.4 Amsterdam/ Randstad - reconstruction of the planning discourse

As a characteristic of Dutch spatial planning, a considerable discursive activity and predilection for the interpretation and transformation of concepts has become visible — which also explains why this case study is the longest. The discourse structure reflects a high degree of consensus among the principal actors. Different positions are less apparent due to both the identical reproduction of concepts and arguments and the use of affined ones that partly conceal shifts of signification. Therefore, instead of radical opposition in the sense of alternative infrastructure designs or urban projects we only find differences of interpretation that might, however, strongly influence the further planning procedures, actor conflicts, investment priorities and development programmes.

The planning approach shows three different conceptual “roots”: The concentration on the development of the national transport infrastructure (TEN, “mainports”), the “location policy” with its focus on accessibility/ mobility, and the understanding of the Randstad as a “European metropolis”. While the first two concepts are closely related to European and national policies, the third one has been put forward especially by the four Randstad cities, thus reversing the habitual direction of the Dutch planning discourse. These concepts reflect an implicit priority concern for the questions of competitiveness, accessibility and economic development, translated into a spatial model that combines rational urban- and transport development with “environmental protection”. Therefore, the concept of “sustainable development” has also been chosen to underline the attributed “integrative” character of the approach, but remains limited regarding an understanding of sustainability as outlined in chapter III.3.2.

3.4.1 Discursive concepts and coalition

Basic concepts: TEN, “mainports” and the “location policy”

In the beginning of the planning process the government argued in two separated spatial categories: On the one hand, the local development of “everyday-life environs” and “compact cities”, and on the other the “national development perspective” for transport axes, “mainports” and “urban nodes”. This conceptual distinction implicitly separates (national) economy and (local) living environments, a perspective clearly reflected in the PKB Schiphol and the “double objective” stated therein.

Therefore, the development of the HST has been strongly influenced by the concepts of TEN and “mainport”, posing the question of *connection or integration* as a transnational challenge for national competitiveness. The suggested urgency and the implicit threat of “isolation” have been decisive for the resolution to (inter-) connect the “mainports” and construct entirely new tracks in order to achieve the shortest travel times and a maximal transport volume for the HST— even though this meant crossing the “Green Heart”.

However this limited focus has also been the main subject of the criticism from lower tiers that led the government to prepare a second HST report and provide broader justification, although without modifying the decision. The continued reproduction of the powerful “mainport” concept by all actors results in being the invariable of the established discourse coalition.

The second important cornerstone of the planning approach has been the initiation of the “ABC-policy” which pointed to a different direction than the TEN’s, although at a lower scale. With the motivation to limit automobility and improve accessibility in the “city regions” this policy aimed at a rational coordination of accessibility and activity at singular “locations”. Yet it also brought a new focus on the development of railway station areas now designated as “A-locations”. Thus, with the orientation at connectivity instead of proximity the “ABC-policy” decisively contributed to a new understanding of urban space that helped the recognition of the *Zuidas* as principal office development location and future HST station by the municipality, as well as the creation of a different conceptual framework for spatially relevant policies by the government.

“Integrated approach” and the modes of policy integration

A combination of both sources has thus been achieved with the “integrated approach” and the merging of objectives at the local and national scale in the “new key projects”. The interrelation of the projects is portrayed by the “network” metaphor that represents a cross-scale spatial reference to a system of specialized but complementary “urban milieus” connected by HST and motorways. The spatial form of the “network city” is the “space-economic primary structure” which defines infrastructure and business concentrations as the constitutive elements of the city. This understanding has also influenced the interpretation of the TENs and their implicit claim of cohesion through homogeneous accessibility. The emphasized interdependence of accessibility and “urban potential” now points to a highly selective investment and subsidizing practice that promotes both dimensions in parallel.

Nevertheless, the “integrated approach” raises the question of the mode of “policy integration” that has taken place. Considering the evaluation criteria of the “new key projects” it seems that instead of deriving particular projects from a multisectoral perspective, sectoral policies have rather become integrated into economic development. This circumstance reflects the influence of the ICES that pre-structured a particular interpretation of “policy integration” as a combination of investments in concrete projects from different policy sectors (transport, urban development, facilities, green space) for the strengthening of the “space-economic primary structure”.

The “network city” therefore also means a concentration of “infrastructure” investments in the economically strong areas or “motors of economy” with the highest value added. This principle is reasonably defended by Amsterdam and the Randstad cities. Still, the attributed “social profitability” depends rather on the distributive effects of the investments, a field where precisely large agglomerations show a particularly bad performance given the observable increase of social disparities.¹⁴¹ The ROA appears to be particularly concerned with the problem of an urban regional disequilibrium in respect to the North. The “switching” of Amsterdam identified by the region also means that current development dynamics place the northern ROA area in a difficult position in terms of accessibility, investments, activity, employment, social integration, etc.

¹⁴¹ BBR 2001, 11

Randstad “metropolis” and institutional change

The evolution of the planning discourse indicates that the national government has not only *produced* argumentative frames but also *adopted* concepts that have first been employed by the big cities and the new intermediaries. This is particularly evident for the discursive shaping of the Randstad as a “metropolis”. For the Dutch planning discourse, this designation represents a significant change since the term “metropolitan” was not part of the spatial terminology before. Corresponding to the scale of the country and its urban centers, only “agglomeration”, “urban region” (*stadsgewest*) and “region” were used as basic references.

Now, apart from the argument of “scale enlargement” as an answer to the challenge of interregional competition, structural change and functional diversity have become important orientations in this respect as well. The rise of the “metropolis” concept has decisively influenced the plans for the HST since initially only the “mainport” connection Schiphol/ Rotterdam was important for the design of the infrastructure. The resulting re-orientation is reflected in the “new key projects” policy after 1996 that takes up the shift performed in Amsterdam from central station to the Zuidas. It equally legitimates the incorporation of The Hague and Utrecht and links the HST connection to urban and economic development. Lastly, the “Deltametropolis” concept literally combines geographical condition and space-economic ambition, portraying the HST as the “metro” of the Randstad.

Furthermore, the “network city” concept has narrowed the margins of action for the regions with their fixed geographical delimitations, whereas it has reinforced the role of the “location” and its corresponding planning authority, the municipality. In consequence, the regions (*Provincie*) appear to be especially weakened by this perspective. Thus, first through the legal constitution of the “city regions”, and second through the creation of the BCR and the foundation of Regio Randstad and Deltametropool, new institutional intermediaries have been created that bridge these gaps and respectively pursue the consideration of their interests in the “network city”.

“Node development”, specialization and complementarity

In this framework for the spatial structure, the development of “nodes” plays a central role and appears in the argumentation of practically all actors, yet linked to different motivations and interpretations. One can distinguish five interrelated types of (inter-) sectoral implications:

- External accessibility and economic development effects of the airport and seaport: “mainport” (all actors)
- Influence of station development in general on modal split and mobility patterns: “changeover machine”, “transferium” (region, ROA, city)
- Internal accessibility and interaction, maximum passenger transfers at HST stops: “city ports” (Deltametropool)
- Maximum profitability of location development and transport potentials, concentration on major nodes with growing business environs: “profit center”, “south node” (NS)
- Urban concentration and densification (all actors), spatial equilibration (ROA)

Still, this discursive coalition around the development of “nodes” neither provides a common orientation, since these objectives are partially contradictory, nor does it offer a complete discussion of the subject (e.g. social and cultural aspects, environmental effects beyond the local “impact”). Nevertheless, while essential strategic questions remain conflictive or disregarded, the corresponding projects are already taking shape and investments are being realized.

One important integral characteristic attributed to the development of “nodes” is their respective functional specialization and the derived necessity for coordination between the projects. This feature corresponds to the differences of accessibility and the identification of a “hierarchy of nodes”. At the same time, the “tension field” of complementarity and competition is also recognized, especially in respect to the relations Schiphol/ Zuidas, Zuidas/ Ij-oevers and between the “new key projects” in the Randstad. For the HST station areas this poses a problem of (public) control over the corresponding projects, since it is a rather difficult issue to reject or deviate investments across municipal boundaries. Moreover, due to the private airport management interest, coordination is particularly difficult in the case of Schiphol, but also for the two stops in Amsterdam that compete for HST services, since the decision over the actual stops and schedules depends on the private rail operator.

It is also the question of what spatial scale(s) serve(s) as a reference for “specialization” and “complementarity”. Discursively placing the HST station areas in a “national development perspective”, the Randstad “metropolis”, their surrounding urban region or in the respective city would mean to frame urban developments and transport connections of a different kind. Yet, the *Zuidas* area appears mainly as a national and “metropolitan” location, whereas the Ij-oevers development is defined as a local project linked to the city center (“Amsterdam on the Ij”).

Environmental advantages and “sustainable development”

In the plans of the public actors “sustainability” appears as an objective for general development or for the proposed projects. The concept represents a reference that affirms conformity with EU-policies and underlines the inter-generational dimension of the plans. However, the criteria of accessibility and economic development potential have been decisive for the actual approach to HST integration and dominate the understanding of “sustainable development” in the categories of “limiting mobility” and “economic use of space” i.e. urban concentration (city). In parallel, an antagonism with the quality of the (living) environment is identified but resolved immediately in statements of a “double objective” (government), “growth in sustainability” (ROA) or the recognition of the environment as a location factor and growth sector (government, ROA, city).

This conceptual separation can still be identified in the differentiation of the “space-economic primary structure” from an “ecologic main structure” or “blue/ green networks”. These concepts put the accent on sectoral unity but de-emphasize interdependencies and connections. Equally the metaphor of “layers” suggests mere superposition, not mutual conditioning.

Furthermore, the effects of “node development” on urban concentration are also accentuated by practically all actors, since, especially at HST stations, an “intensified use of space” is demanded. This, it is suggested, would in turn contribute to keep open space free from further urbanization. It has to be

questioned though if “concentration” and “protection” are actually dealing with the same subject and could therefore justify this relation, while a direct influence on expansion and sprawl is neglected (e.g. the city of Amsterdam claims to supply sufficient office space but to lack industrial land).¹⁴² The “specialization” of nodes also means a displacement of “inadequate” functions from the development areas with subsequent effects on neighbouring districts and the space-functional structure of the urban region.

A final argumentative level in respect to the environmental advantages of the HST are the effects on transport emissions and safety attributed to its introduction. They have been an important argument for the government in the choice for the construction of the new tracks. In spite of the emphasis on environmental merits, however, the maximum “transport substitution” always results in being a secondary effect of the extension of the airport capacity and its catchment area. The basis for both arguments forms the predicted growth of international transport relations with the evident conclusion that the more transport can be shifted to the HST (“the railways”), the better for the environment.

Hence, the concept of “sustainability” lacks a systematic operationalization and results in being an introductory declaration of good will with little influence on the actual project priorities or the design as the actual complexity of the issue remains unattended.

3.4.2 Diverging arguments and opposition

“Densely populated country” or “scarcely densified city”

Although a relevant opposition to the official plans and projects has not developed, some divergences of interpretation between the government and the local authorities represented in the Deltametropool association can be highlighted. The government continues to argue in the dualism of urban/ rural, placing concentration and densification as against “protection” of “nature”, landscapes and patrimony. From the “compact city” to the “red/ green contours”, this principle is understood as a basic strategy to prevent sprawl and save space.

By contrast, while also demanding a concentrated urban development, the cities explicitly recognize the parallel need for “dilution” and “variations” of the urban/ rural dualism. This strategy aims to *structure* sprawl rather than to impede it, which is considered somewhat unrealistic. The cities accentuate these positions portraying the government’s vision as “densely populated country” whereas their “deltametropolis” would be a “scarcely populated city”.¹⁴³ Equally, the dualism of economic development versus (living) environment reproduced by the government is also criticized and contrasted with the concept of “diversity” that should characterize the social, economic and cultural development in the “deltametropolis”.

In both cases, the HST stations result in being specialized centralities in the densified areas, but show a different integration into the urban structure i.e. either with an emphasis on proximity or on accessibility. Thus the “city port” concept uses the analogy of the “mainports” with its focus on external connection and

¹⁴² dRO 1996, 21

¹⁴³ Deltametropool 1999, 1

logistics, now stressing internal connection and “enhanced interaction” by high-grade passenger transport. While one feels tempted to ask if this orientation would initially have led to a different track decision, it seems to point to a scenario of overcompensation of the advantages achieved by urban and transport concentration through extended mobility patterns and increased activity levels.

The argumentation of the Deltametropool association represents a discursive challenge for the government and reflects the new actor constellation. Due to its independent constitution the Deltametropool escapes the practice of successive consultation, agreement of policy concepts and their reproduction. The design of its political strategy points to a new way of internal multi-level coalition forming and interest coordination that bypasses the official institutional practices. A development in this direction could likewise imply a power shift towards the four Randstad cities and their agglomerations, as they achieve to influence national policy orientations according to their particular interests. The institutionalization through the BCR and the RegioRandstad already reflects the need for increased coordination.

Public and private interests in “node development”

Apart from the diverging views of the public actors about “node development” the most significant conflict potential resides in the position of NS and its affiliates for passengers and real-estate. Due to the different options for HST operation in Amsterdam (central station and Zuid/ WTC) and the Randstad (shuttle to The Hague and Breda) the role of the operator has become further reinforced since he decides about the service distribution. Furthermore, NS coordinates investments of its real estate affiliate to suit the future transport connections and schedules.

Although interest conflicts both “internally” and with other investors are not excluded e.g. in respect to the flexibility for ground infrastructure expansion that contradicts urban development objectives, the station areas are subject to a private regime aiming at a “location synergy” that assures a maximum use of the HST. Also at Schiphol, public intervention is restricted due to functional and security aspects but equally by the private management of the airport that receives continuous support through the reproduction of the “mainport” concept.

This understanding of station areas and their connecting infrastructure as separate units that follow an inherent techno-economic logic is further reinforced by the government’s argument of a “space-economic primary structure” and the “network city”. In reference to these concepts public actors thus coincide with NS, yet without raising the question of why entrepreneurial interests should govern the development precisely of those places that are equally portrayed as the new centers of the “network city”. Consequently, from the outset their argumentative position results in being voluntarily weakened while the essential need for public control beyond the design quality of the public space is not recognized.