Mapping the market: a portfolio approach for informed deliberation of urban development strategies
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5 Description of the portfolio workshops

We’re finally discussing content!
Workshop participant

5.1 Introduction

I applied the portfolio approach to eight cases/workshops. This chapter will illustrate the workshops by describing why they were organised, who were invited, what was discussed, how participants acted and reacted and what was learned by both participants and researchers. The chapter consists of a series of single case studies. This means that conclusions about the workshop and the portfolio approach apply only to the individual cases, whereas Chapter Six will present a cross-case analysis in order to understand the differences and similarities between the workshops, based on differences in the approach itself and the context. The workshops will be presented chronologically, based on the written reports. They will be further enhanced by the author’s reflections, based on observations and the surveys conducted among the participants after the last three workshops. The table below provides more details about the workshops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a &amp; 1b</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>Holendrecht</td>
<td>17 December 2003 and 18 March 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>Chassébuurt</td>
<td>27 May 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>The Creative/Knowledge City</td>
<td>3 September 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>‘50,000 houses’</td>
<td>17 May 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Amsterdam region</td>
<td>The regional portfolio</td>
<td>27 June 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>The development of Amsterdam neighbourhoods: past and future</td>
<td>6 October 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>Opportunities for value increase in Rotterdam Oud-Zuid</td>
<td>9 July 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>Gentrification in Rotterdam</td>
<td>22 August 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The workshops were organised by the planning departments in Amsterdam and Rotterdam in cooperation with the university. The planning departments would usually provide the location and the chair for the meetings. My role in these workshops mostly consisted of introducing and explaining the portfolio approach, and displaying the portfolio maps. After this, my role was mainly to observe the participants’ reac-
tions and the discussions, to further clarify things about the portfolio approach if necessary, and to join discussion only to very limited extent.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the research has been an iterative learning process, and this also holds true for the methodology. As it became increasingly clear that evaluating the portfolio approach is a matter of analysing how participants respond to it and work with it, more attention was given to this. This is why the last three workshops were followed by a survey questionnaire, inquiring after participants’ experience in the workshops.

Before describing the workshops, the chapter will start with a brief description of the latest version of the portfolio approach, as was applied in the last three workshops. Chapter Six will discuss the adaptations of the portfolio approach which have led to its current form. For a more substantive background, I also give a short description of what the portfolios of Amsterdam and Rotterdam actually look like.

5.2 The portfolio instrument as used in the last workshops

Since its first application, the portfolio instrument evolved, both in terms of how neighbourhood positions are identified and how workshops are organised (further described in Chapter Six). In this chapter, I will outline the most recent version of the portfolio approach; this ‘version’ also describes the portfolios of Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

Figure 5.1: The portfolio matrix

Neighbourhood potential: indicated by increase in market value over 4 years

Market value: performance measured by Property values per m²

Measuring neighbourhood positions

As described at the end of Chapter Two, the distinction between performance and potential of neighbourhoods is central to the portfolio tool, similar to the Growth-share matrix. In the most recent version of the portfolio approach, the performance of a neighbourhood is indicated by the average of its transaction values per m². The potential of neighbourhoods is measured by looking at the increase rates of these values (in absolute terms) over the last four years. The specific category of a
neighbourhood depends on whether property values and their increase are below or above the city average (Figure 5.1).

Data on transaction values were available for Amsterdam from 1975 to 2005 and for Rotterdam from 1987 to 2005. As I measured value increase over a period of four years, this allows for portfolio maps from 1979 to 2005 for Amsterdam and from 1991 to 2005 for Rotterdam. In addition to the portfolio of the whole city, the portfolio approach can also be used for one specific part of the city. It may be more relevant to look at the positions and opportunities of neighbourhoods within a part of the city. This was the case in the workshop for Rotterdam Oud-Zuid; because almost the entire southern part of Rotterdam has a weak position, it was more interesting to look at the differences within this area. The workbook describes this possibility of looking only at a certain part of the city as a ‘partial portfolio’.

The portfolio workshops
The portfolio approach as an instrument should be seen as a combination of the portfolio concept together with its application in workshops. The workshops are prepared and organised jointly by those initiating or requesting a workshop, usually civil servants from the local planning department, and the facilitator who applies the portfolio instrument. Apart from the information given by the portfolio maps, the organisers also collect other information that may be useful in relation to the more specific issue discussed in the workshop. This may involve maps representing certain socio-economic patterns of the city or area, or for example the ownership situations in a specific area.

Just how the workshop is organised and which steps are taken depends on aspects such as the objective of the workshop, the stage of the planning process, and the scale of examining neighbourhood positions. Even though the application may take more than one workshop, some steps are always part of the process (as depicted in Figure 5.2).

The workshops start by introducing the problem at hand and the potential added value of organising a workshop using the portfolio approach. This is followed by the introduction of the portfolio concept and a display of the maps that indicate the neighbourhood positions throughout the years, which are analysed, in a plenary session or in small groups. The general pattern of the city and the strategic positions of neighbourhoods, in relation to the concerning topic, area or theme are discussed. The goal is to figure out the way in which this pattern evolved and the driving forces behind this change.

After the analysis, step three depends on the scale of the workshop analysis. If the workshop concerns the city, or a large part of it, the participants are asked to think about what they believe are attractive areas for investment, and what should be done in order to make the areas more attractive. This is done by placing coloured stickers on large maps hanging on the walls. Different colours indicate where participants would never invest, where they would invest without reservations, and where they would invest provided that others also undertake specific interventions. The participants write down their motivations on the stickers and then illustrate and discuss their choices. If the workshop is focussed on one particular area or neighbourhood, step three may also involve a discussion of what could be the realistic ambitions for this specific location.
Finally, fuelled by the previous steps, the discussion that follows outlines who should do what, where, when and how in the areas (not) indicated on the maps. Which are the interdependencies between stakeholders? Which kind of interventions by one actor may trigger interventions of another?

**Figure 5.2: The basic structure for organising workshop and collecting information**

The most recent version of the portfolio approach as described here corresponds with the way it is described in the workbook of the Physical Planning Department in Amsterdam. Despite this degree of institutionalisation of the instrument, this is not the ‘final version’ of the tool. The planning department may find it useful to apply the portfolio approach in a different way. For example, it has been applied also in combination with other tools.

The approach as described here produced patterns showing the changing positions of neighbourhoods in the Amsterdam and Rotterdam portfolio. The approach itself changed as well, and it was not applied in all of the eight workshops the way it is...
5 Description of the portfolio workshops

Nonetheless, for a better understanding of all of the cases and of the neighbourhood positions in the two cities in general, it is useful to describe and show how the neighbourhoods’ positions of Amsterdam and Rotterdam evolved over time. This will provide a useful background for the workshops described further below.

5.3 The residential portfolio of Amsterdam

In this section I will describe the general patterns, as presented by the portfolio maps of Amsterdam, and how the positions of neighbourhoods evolved from 1979 to 2005. Figure 5.3 depicts the 2005 portfolio map; the maps of other years can be found in Appendix IV. Similar maps were made for offices and the positions of Amsterdam neighbourhoods in this segment. As these were used to much lesser extent in the workshops, these are not discussed here, but they can be found in Appendix IV as well; here I will focus on the residential portfolio. In the early years many neighbourhoods are blank, many of which appear later on the map. This is caused by a very (too) small amount of transactions in a neighbourhood in the course of one year; it makes it impossible to calculate a representative average value. Over the years, the proportion of owner-occupied dwellings in the city increased, but some neighbourhoods remain blank up to 2005, as they consist of high or very high proportions of rented housing. Here, the amount of transactions is obviously much lower.

Figure 5.3: The residential portfolio of Amsterdam in 2005
Looking at the portfolio maps of 1979 and 1980, there is a clear distinction between stronger and weaker neighbourhoods. Due to a decline of housing prices in the beginning of the 1980s, most of the stars and question marks turn into cash cows and dogs respectively, but the sharp distinction between stronger and weaker areas continues until the mid-1980s. That is, most of the neighbourhoods within the city centre are either stars or cash cows. It seems that the popularity of living in the centre, particularly by the canals has endured through the years. Immediately outside of the centre, the adjacent neighbourhoods are predominantly in the ‘dog section’. These are neighbourhoods built mostly in the late 19th century or the beginning of the 20th century. Houses in these areas were often in poor physical state and this is where most of the early urban renewal took place. A notable exception within the 19th century belt is the area south of the Vondelpark. Unlike most of the 19th century neighbourhoods, this area was not built for the working class, but was made up of larger houses for the well-to-do (which it is to this day).

Interestingly, the areas outside of the ring road, including the northern part of Amsterdam above the IJ, in these years have a relatively good position. These are predominantly post-war neighbourhoods, consisting for large parts of apartments designed in functionalist style. It should be noted however that in this period there are a lot of ‘blanks’ on the maps. These blank neighbourhoods, with their large portions of social housing, could very well have been in a weaker position than the stars and cash cows in these areas.

The end of the 1980s brings with it the first cracks in the pattern described above. While the city centre retained and improved its strong position, some of the areas outside of the ring road fell to a dog position. At the same time some of the 19th century neighbourhoods moved from a dog to a question mark. This process of ‘switching positions’ continued until around 2000, when most of the areas within the ring road, including many of the neighbourhoods in the so called ‘20-40 belt’, turned into stars or cash cows. The only areas within the ring road that have not (yet) transformed into stars or cash cows are found in the east part of the city (Dapperbuurt, Indische buurt and parts of the Oosterparkbuurt), and the northwest (parts of Bos en Lommer and De Baarsjes). After 2000, there is a downswing in the housing market and many of the stars turn into cash cows. In 2005 there is a remarkable appearance of question marks outside of the ring road. Since 2005 is the most recent year for which data were available, it is impossible to determine if this is the beginning of an actual upgrading process of these areas.

5.4 The residential portfolio of Rotterdam

For Rotterdam, useful data on real estate transactions are available from 1987 to 2006. This means that portfolio maps can be made from 1991. Figure 5.4 below shows the 2005 portfolio map, with the maps of earlier years in Appendix IV. The first noticeable item is the relative stability of the general pattern of the portfolio. This may be

1 In relative terms, there are always neighbourhoods with an above average increase of property values. In order to have a star or question mark position however, increase rates have to be above zero at least. In periods of general downturn, many neighbourhoods do not meet this standard. This situation is further discussed in Appendix I.
related to the lower level of detail in the Rotterdam portfolio (87 neighbourhoods in Rotterdam versus 355 in Amsterdam) as well as to the much shorter period covered by the portfolio maps. Nonetheless, the image remains that over the examined period there are relatively few neighbourhoods that change colour. Some areas remain within the dog section throughout the entire period. These include areas north of the city centre such as Blijdorp and Bergpolder, in the west (e.g. Spangen), and particularly neighbourhoods south of the Maas river, such as Oud-Charlois and Tarwewijk, which have a very weak reputation. At the same time, there are neighbourhoods that have upheld their strong position in the last 15 years. These are the more popular neighbourhoods north of the ring road, such as Schiebroek and Hillergersberg, Hoek van Holland (near the coast) and some locations near the centre, such as Kralingen and west of the city centre.

**Figure 5.4: The residential portfolio of Rotterdam in 2005**

The city centre itself and some immediately adjacent neighbourhoods are generally found in the star and cash cow section as well. Interestingly, however, from roughly 1996 to 1999, the city centre turned into a dog, after which it returned to a stronger position. Some signs of neighbourhood upgrade can be seen on a small scale: neighbourhoods such as Tussendijken or the adjacent Bospolder moved into a star and a question mark position respectively. Also, Rubroek, located directly north of the city centre, joined them as a question mark. South of the river, the move of Carnisse and Bloemhof to a question mark position is interesting, as the south part of Rotterdam has had and still has to cope with a negative image. Value increases in these
neighbourhoods have been above the city average for three consecutive years since 2003, and in 2005 some other neighbourhoods joined Carnisse and Bloemhof as question marks. Regarding the recent additions to the question mark portfolio, it remains to be seen whether this is really a sign of the beginning of an upgrading process, similar to those seen in the Amsterdam portfolio.

5.5 Comparing the portfolios of Amsterdam and Rotterdam

Comparing the Rotterdam portfolio with the Amsterdam portfolio yields a number of interesting differences (despite the fact that the portfolio maps of Rotterdam are available only from 1991). One of the most striking differences is the little dynamics of the neighbourhoods’ shifting positions in Rotterdam. In fact, the general pattern of the Rotterdam portfolio of 1991 (or 1992, which shows more neighbourhoods) does not differ all that much from the recent pattern of 2005 (Figure 5.4). For instance, there is no ‘inside-out’ switching of positions as described above for the Amsterdam portfolio. Furthermore, the overall dispersion of stars, cash cows, dogs and question marks is more fragmented in Rotterdam. The current pattern in Amsterdam is characterised by a strong hierarchy running outwards from the centre. Moving away from the centre of Amsterdam, property prices and the position of neighbourhoods generally decrease. Only the villages within municipal borders and suburban neighbourhoods at the very fringe maintain a stronger position and deviate from this pattern.

Yet even though Rotterdam does not appear to share an equally recognisable pattern and looks more like a patchwork, there are some similarities. Despite spending some years as a dog, the Rotterdam city centre and the more suburban areas perform strongly. Subsequently, both in Amsterdam and Rotterdam the dogs can be found mainly in the early post-war parts of the city. The crucial difference between Amsterdam and Rotterdam is the position of the 19th century and pre-war neighbourhoods. Whereas in Amsterdam the majority of these neighbourhoods have seen substantial upgrading, mostly during the 1990s, there are little of such developments in similar neighbourhoods in Rotterdam. As a result, the current pattern of Rotterdam somewhat resembles Amsterdam at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s: a strong city centre surrounded by weaker pre-war neighbourhoods. The differences between the two cities are also evident when comparing their portfolios and individual neighbourhoods in a scatter plot that demonstrates the difference in property values in absolute terms (see Figure 5.3).

In this figure, property values of Amsterdam and Rotterdam and their value increase are set off against each other. It is clear to see that property values (per m²) are significantly higher in Amsterdam. Whereas the neighbourhoods of Rotterdam are dispersed fairly evenly around the national average, even the weakest neighbourhoods in Amsterdam are near this national average. This obviously does not mean that the average Dutch neighbourhood is in the same state as the weakest Amsterdam neighbourhoods. Nor does it mean that Rotterdam neighbourhoods on the left side of their Amsterdam counterparts in Figure 5.5 are in a worse state. The average transaction values per m² are first and foremost an indication of the neighbourhoods’ relative positions within their city; the corresponding different regional housing markets largely account for this significant difference between the two cities. The housing
market of Rotterdam and its surrounding region is relatively relaxed, in stark contrast to the much higher tension on the market in the Amsterdam region (see for instance Aalbers, 2003).²

**Figure 5.5:** The 2005 portfolios of Amsterdam and Rotterdam compared

The next sections will describe the application of the portfolio approach in eight cases. The first five workshops were held in Amsterdam, the sixth one focused on the Amsterdam region, and the last two in Rotterdam. The case descriptions are based on reports made by the author, in some cases with help from minutes made by others organising the workshops. The workshops are presented in chronological order and summarised chronologically as much as possible.

### 5.6 Workshops no. 1a & 1b: Holendrecht³

The area of Holendrecht was selected as the first test case for the portfolio approach. Holendrecht is located in Amsterdam Zuidoost (Southeast). The area looked at in the workshop consists of two major areas, divided by the metro station and railway line (Figure 5.6). A residential neighbourhood, made up mostly of apartments built in the late the 1970s, is located on the east side of the tracks. On the west side is a commercial area hosting offices and the large academic hospital (AMC).

Holendrecht was selected as a case in 2003, during a period of ongoing reconstruction talks that looked at revitalising the west and east side separately, as well as

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² Some of the reasons behind this difference, such as the different urban economies and spatial structure, can be found later in this chapter, in the summary of the Gentrification workshops in Rotterdam.

³ The workshops took place on the 17 December, 2003 and 18 March, 2004 respectively.
the whole area. DRO in cooperation with the university organised a workshop and invited a group of stakeholders which already regularly deliberated about possible interventions. The group consisted of representatives of the municipality (the planning department, the borough, and the development agency), some private developers, housing associations, and the nearby hospital. At the time, DRO had already made initial urban designs, but there was no consensus about these among the stakeholders.

Figure 5.6: Holendrecht

Another reason that the area seemed a useful test case was that there were uncertainties about the opportunities brought by several recent developments in the area, such as the possibility of a new railway station, further development of the west side into an office area, and the refurbishing of the metro station. It was decided that DRO and university would apply the portfolio approach by organising a workshop in order to hopefully kick start discussion among the stakeholders. In total nine people attended the workshop from the various stakeholder groups (Table 5.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representatives</th>
<th>Workshop no. 1</th>
<th>Workshop no. 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning department</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other municipal agencies: city borough, development agency, infrastructure agency.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing associations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private developers and investors</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearby hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first workshop started by introducing the portfolio maps of Amsterdam. Initially, the position of Holendrecht was concealed; the goal was to confront the participants with this new knowledge after they had a chance to share their own views. This was followed by an analysis of trends, which produced a discussion regarding the potential
goals for the area. The second workshop continued by further elaborating and specifying these goals into possible strategies.

*State of the portfolio instrument*

At the time of this first workshop, the portfolio idea had just been developed. Neighbourhood positions, both residential and commercial, were identified by looking at current real estate valuations (not the actual values) and setting these off against the neighbourhoods’ opportunities for development, which were identified as the (not weighted) mean of four indicators. These were derived from earlier interviews with private investors (see Chapter Six). This resulted in two portfolio maps for Amsterdam: a residential and a commercial portfolio.

At this stage of the research, the portfolio tool used other categories than the original Growth-share matrix; neighbourhoods were not identified as stars, cash cows, dogs, and question marks. Instead, different names were used: strong, weak, talented, and vulnerable. How the portfolio instrument evolved from this first type to the most recent version is described in more detail at the beginning of Chapter Six.

*Introduction of portfolio maps*

Introduction of the portfolio approach raised some minor questions about which area exactly was going to be considered when speaking of Holendrecht, and whether competition with other neighbourhoods was part of the model. When the portfolio maps of Amsterdam were presented, the positions of the Holendrecht area were concealed on purpose. The goal was to allow for everyone to express his or her perceptions of Holendrecht’s position without being ‘steered’ by the tool, and to discuss the similarities and differences of opinion between the participants themselves and the instrument. This resulted in the pattern depicted in Figure 5.7.

*Figure 5.7: Perceived positions of Holendrecht: every dot represents a participant’s perception*

The position of the area, as identified by the portfolio tool was added later to generate discussion. In the maps, the residential side of Holendrecht, like most of the surrounding area, appeared as a weak neighbourhood. As there were no residential functions the other side of the metro line, this area remained blank. However, in the map
of commercial uses that detailed the locations of offices and the academic hospital, this area appeared strong (Figure 5.8).

**Figure 5.8: Neighbourhood positions of Holendrecht for residential and commercial use**

![Neighbourhood positions of Holendrecht for residential and commercial use](image)

When discussing the participants perceptions as displayed in figure 5.6, it turned out that some of the different positions in the matrix – particularly with regard to the opportunities and also for the current value – were the result of differences in interpretation of the scheme, while others related to different opinions about the condition of the area. In terms of the latter, the high assessed scores on opportunities for the residential area by some participants were attributed to the good accessibility of the area, the amount of green space and the quality of the urban morphology. Others had a less optimistic view of the opportunities, emphasising the poor reputation of Holendrecht and Zuidoost as a residential area in general. With respect to Holendrecht’s commercial potential, its position was assessed a bit better, due mostly to its good accessibility by car and metro.

*Analysis of trends and developments*

The aim of this step was to find out how trends and developments in and around the area could influence Holendrecht’s position. The participants were divided in two groups. The first group was to assess the influence of a number of given trends based on an inventory made before the workshop and potentially to uncover additional trends. The second group, the control group, made their own inventory and analysis of trends. After approximately thirty minutes, the groups presented their findings and discussed them in the plenary session. For the residential area, the list of trends appeared to show a net positive result. Nevertheless, according to the first group, the problematic reputation of the area would still be a dominant negative factor. The second group, based on their own inventory, found that despite some positive developments the area was likely to decline or is already declining. Already this raised some
discussions about interventions, such as improving the social ‘micro-climate’ of the housing, which could potentially provide a better living environment.

The position of the commercial area was assessed as more stable and less problematic. The largest identified problems were the shortage of parking space and the threat of competing office sites elsewhere in the city taking over existing or potential Holendrecht clients. On the other hand, the planned new railway station and the growing population of new town of Almere were seen as opportunities. The inventory of trends was then presented in the matrix depicted in Figure 5.9, in order to distinguish between autonomous trends and plans, both inside and outside the area.

**Figure 5.9: Identification of trends and developments in and around Holendrecht**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal trends &amp; developments</th>
<th>Internal interventions to come</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ Expansion of the hospital</td>
<td>+ Possible coming of a railway station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Plans for refurbishing the metro station</td>
<td>+ Increasing accessibility with upgrading of adjacent motorway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Moving and rebuilding a small shopping centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Office development at hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Improving local schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Physical decay of the neighbourhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ageing of local population, increasing the mismatch between inhabitants and local services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Vacancy of office buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Shortage of parking space at offices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Expected noise pollution of upgraded motor way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increasing accommodation of lower income households</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External trends &amp; developments</th>
<th>External interventions to come</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ Demand for houses with care facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Increasing of labour pool due to population growth in the catchment area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Competition for investments with comparable areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Opacity of public policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ambitions**

The analysis revealed that the ongoing development of the commercial part of Holendrecht would not pose a challenge (unlike the weaker residential part of the area). Even though additional development of the area (expansion of the hospital and the realisation of new office space) did raise some concerns about the quality of these developments, the main challenge was believed to be improving the residential part of the areas on the other side of the railroad. The main discussion focused on the dilemma whether to improve the situation for the current inhabitants of the east side of Holendrecht or to attract other groups to Holendrecht instead. In the first case, as advocated by the housing association’s representative, interventions should consist of
targeted improvements of the housing stock, public space, and services. The majority of participants, however, felt that the potential of being located near the metro (and possibly the railway) station should be fully captured: not just for slight improvements, the area should be transformed by increasing densities, mixed use development and adding other types of housing to the area: ‘Why shouldn’t we try to attract new groups to Holendrecht?’

As at this point there was no time left to continue this discussion and the accompanying strategies, it was decided to continue it in a second workshop, which was held three months later.

Strategies

The second workshop started with a recapitulation of the previous discussions. The first question that emerged was whether to focus on improvement for the current inhabitants, which would mean improvements within the existing situation, or on trying to attract new groups, which would imply more structural changes to the neighbourhood. These two options were discussed and elaborated in strategies in two working groups, one focused on consolidating the area while the other focused on change.

The first group concluded that full integration of the two parts of Holendrecht, which had been discussed earlier, was not as logical or useful as it first appeared. Most participants did not consider this as a feasible way to connect the two sides. The two sides (which were in fact considered as three areas – the residential part, offices, and the medical cluster) were believed to have their own unique dynamics. Since these converge at the station, the group agreed that there, a new centre could accommodate different complementary functions serving the people living, visiting, and working in the area. This meant that a new (shopping) centre should be realised at the station. But apart from this improvement, considering the perspective of consolidation, only relatively small interventions should be undertaken: minor improvements to the housing stock, and limited development of new housing.

The second working group, with structural change as the central perspective, looked primarily at the expansion of the hospital, affiliated business, and the office space. The metro station should meet the demand for new services due to this expansion. Introducing residential uses on the west side would probably be difficult, but there may be opportunities for ‘home-care’ combinations in the medical cluster. On the residential side, the housing stock should be diversified by developing apartments in higher densities than currently present.

Surprisingly, when the groups presented their findings, it turned out that despite the different perspectives, the groups’ strategies for a first stage of the development process did not differ very much. Both initially focussed on increasing densities and redeveloping the centre, with the west side developing quicker than the residential side of Holendrecht, where it was felt that more caution was needed. This was interesting, as it revealed consensus about an initial strategy that could be used as a framework. Crucially, this strategy was sufficiently robust and flexible to serve as the base for a continuous planning process. It allowed for short-term action, without the immediate need to decide upon more long term interventions that hitherto had impeded the process because of the different opinions, interests, and uncertainties associated. ‘We’re finally discussing content’, as remarked by a participant.
Conclusions
The first workshops were initially meant as test cases for the portfolio approach, and to relatively lesser extent as serious efforts to contribute to addressing the planning challenges. In this case however, the portfolio approach provided a framework for substantive discussion that allowed for substantial progress. The approach contributed to formulating possible, realistic ambitions for Holendrecht and this led to the surprising agreement on a basic strategy that could be used without deciding on detailed interventions. In the words of one of the participants: ‘We have been talking for two years with this group, and now we are finally making progress’.

After the workshop, in April 2004, the consensus that was reached provided a basis for assigning a project manager, who could work on the development of a set of more concrete design requirements. This resulted in a strategic plan in May 2005, which in turn led to more concrete plans.\footnote{The information presented is based on personal communication with the project secretary}

One should be careful when making statements about the extent to which this progress can be attributed (solely) to the portfolio approach. Another type of meeting or workshop focussing on the substantive issues in Holendrecht rather than competencies and authorities of stakeholders, might have had a similar effect. It seems that the workshops provided room for a much needed discussions on the content: what first seemed like a complex dispute, how to develop the area around the metro station, was resolved fairly quickly and easily. It seems that the structure of the workshop was very important, i.e. first discussing and analysing Holendrecht’s current position, then analysing trends and opportunities, followed by a discussion of possible ambitions and strategies. As a whole, the portfolio approach might be seen as a sufficient intervention, with some procedural aspects of it, such as the informal and substantive nature of the discussions and the structure of the workshops, as necessary elements.

5.7 Workshop no. 2: Chassébuurt\footnote{The workshop took place on 27 May, 2004.}

The Chassébuurt, the second case study/test, is located in the borough of ‘De Baarsjes’, directly west of the Kostverlorenvaart which separates it from the 19th century areas. The neighbourhood was built largely in the 1920s, originally consisting mainly of social housing built in ‘Amsterdamse School’ style.

The Chassébuurt was selected because the area experienced rapid changes, however without a clear image in which direction. There were signs of upgrading and increasing popularity, while at the same time the neighbourhood was portrayed as problematic in the media. By discussing the strategic position of the area through the portfolio approach the workshop aimed to generate a better view of the opportunities and threats. A relatively small workshop was organised, consisting of seven people representing the local borough, a housing association, a private developer, a consultant, and the planning department. The steps were similar to those in the Holendrecht case. First, the portfolio concept and maps were introduced, with a concealed position of the Chassébuurt. The positions as perceived by the participants were consequently confronted with those in the portfolio maps, followed by discussion and analysis in
two groups. In the end, there was a discussion regarding goals and ambitions for the area.

**Figure 5.10: Perceived positions of the Chassébuurt as shared by the participants**

![Diagram showing perceived positions of the Chassébuurt](image)

**Input of explicit information**

Similar to the Holendrecht workshop, the neighbourhoods’ positions were identified by looking at real estate valuations and the combined indicator for opportunities, which produced map of the strong, weak, talented, and vulnerable neighbourhoods (both for residential as well as commercial). The position of the Chassébuurt was however not immediately shown in the workshop; the participants were then asked to show where in the portfolio they would locate the area (the scheme of Figure 5.10).

After this, the facilitators revealed the position of the area as measured in the portfolio approach; in residential terms the Chassébuurt appeared as partly talented and partly weak. The scatter plot showed that the two neighbourhoods that make up the Chassébuurt are near each other, with the southern part just under the city average.

For commercial uses, the Chassébuurt appeared significantly less attractive. The area was identified as weak, among the least expensive and attractive, also the case for the surrounding neighbourhoods (see Figure 5.11).

It appeared that the participants’ view of the residential neighbourhood did not differ very much from the model’s position, although some did estimate higher property values for the area. The reasons for this still under average position on the horizontal axis are the overrepresentation of low-income groups, i.e. elderly people who have lived in the neighbourhood for a long time and immigrants. The high opportunities, on the other hand, were attributed to the proximity of the city centre and the fact that the neighbourhoods in Oud-West also had been upgrading (as indicated by the portfolio maps). However, upgrading the Chassébuurt was believed to be a bit more difficult, as its housing blocks, in contrast to Oud-West, consist of larger ensembles. These are harder to buy, renovate, and adapt for individual use; i.e. there is less flexibility. On the other hand, it was observed that the houses in the Chassébuurt were larger and often of better quality.

Another observation involved the differences within the neighbourhood itself. In general, the quality of housing and public space and the diversity were
thought to be higher along the edges of the neighbourhood. These parts started to attract new, more affluent groups, as opposed to the poorer quality on the ‘inside’ of the neighbourhood.

Figure 5.11: Position of the Chassebuurt for residential and commercial use

As for commercial uses, the perception was more optimistic than the portfolio tool presented, but still estimated as rather weak. Remarks were made, however, about how different types of commercial uses would have different positions in the portfolio. The neighbourhood was clearly not deemed suitable for larger office buildings, also due to its poor accessibility by car. For small start-ups on the other hand, the area might become quite attractive.

Analysis of trends and developments
As in Holendrecht, the Chassébuurt was considered as a neighbourhood in transition, subject to various developments, which should be further analysed for their possible
influence. These were analysed in two groups, one group with and one without a number of given trends and developments, which resulted in the lists in Table 5.3.

**Ambitions**

Based on the analysis, it seemed that the Chassébuurt could develop in different directions. The area might remain more or less the same for some time, but participants agreed that a process of gentrification was more likely. It was discussed to what extent this process should be accommodated and stimulated. Participants were then asked what other neighbourhoods could be possible ‘role models’; the answers included ‘the Diamantbuurt in de Pijp, but more diverse’, or the Hoofddorppleinbuurt, both in the south. Based on these examples, it appeared that most of the participants saw the future development of Chassébuurt as a lively and diverse but not completely gentrified neighbourhood.

**Strategies**

As in the Holendrecht case, there was no time left to discuss the strategies that ensued from the analysis, e.g. how to achieve a desired balance between gentrification and diversity. The plan was to organise a second workshop; unfortunately, several attempts to bring together the same group of people failed and eventually the momentum for organising a second workshop was lost.

**Conclusions**

The portfolio maps provided explicit information about the position of the Chassébuurt, which was used for further analysis of the area and the reasons for this development. This was an open discussion: for example, participants felt free to make politically less correct statements about where to invest and why.

The participants were interested and there were positive reactions about the approach. It seemed that some valuable insights were gained about the neighbourhood’s position, influential trends, and possible ambitions. Despite such insights, it did not lead to any commitments among participants, primarily due to lack of urgency. Unlike the workshop in Holendrecht, the Chassébuurt workshop did not connect to an existing, ongoing process. Nor was there a direct cause for the workshop, other than the fact that Chassébuurt is a dynamic neighbourhood that is change, which made it an interesting test case. This probably explains why there was no second workshop.
### Table 5.3: Listing trends in and around the Chassébuurt (author’s translation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outside of the Chassébuurt &amp; autonomous</th>
<th>Interventions outside of the Chassébuurt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentioned by participants</td>
<td>Mentioned by participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra-city migration of ethnic groups may have positive (ethnic mix) and negative (moving out of immigrant middle class) effects: +/-</td>
<td>Recent political attention for the area. It implies a sense of urgency that may generate public investments, but it may also scare off private investors: +/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuppies with children from elsewhere may look for larger houses in the Chassébuurt: +</td>
<td>Urban renewal elsewhere has both a complementary as a competitive effect: +/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large demand for middle-class housing within the ring road: +</td>
<td>Competition from urban renewal of post-war neighbourhoods in Amsterdam West: -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aging: the Chassébuurt might become a popular neighbourhood for seniors with urban life styles: +</td>
<td>Cutbacks in urban renewal here or elsewhere can have both positive as negative effect: +/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary halt to building offices creates opportunities for Chassébuurt, but this is a negative trend in the long term: +/-</td>
<td>Inflexibility of the allocation system for social housing impedes mixing of income-groups: -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given by workshop organisers</th>
<th>Given by workshop organisers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steady upgrading of neighbourhoods from the city centre outwards: when is the Chassébuurt due for upgrading?</td>
<td>Cutbacks on urban renewal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within the Chassébuurt &amp; autonomous</th>
<th>Interventions within the Chassébuurt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentioned by participants</td>
<td>Mentioned by participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous inflow of middle class groups: +</td>
<td>Continuous inflow of middle class groups: +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within the neighbourhood the reputation is deteriorating, but outside it is improving: +/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realisation of a large new mosque will improve the reputation of the area, other participants believe exactly the opposite: +/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovation of Edelsmedenschool as a place for cultural activities: +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a parking garage: +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Given by workshop organisers            | |
|----------------------------------------| |
| Construction of upmarket houses which attracts new groups | |
| Improvements to public space | |
| Increasing feeling of danger | |
| Decreasing amount of cars in the neighbourhood due to changing traffic flow on a higher scale | |
| Increasing amount of ‘less representative’ shops at the cost of ‘better shops’ | |
| Increasing number of activities for children | |
| Mosque: whether assessed positively or negatively depends on group | |
| Other renovation projects | |
5.8 Workshop no. 3: The Creative/Knowledge City

This workshop was the first that did not focus on one particular neighbourhood, but that looked at the whole city. Instead of looking at whether and how to intervene in a single area, discussion was focussed more on where to intervene in the urban portfolio.

The background of the workshop was the expressed interest in Amsterdam about the idea of the ‘creative city’, or the ‘knowledge city’. This idea had taken root thanks to a presentation held by Richard Florida - known for *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) - to local politicians in Amsterdam. Without going into detail, the idea was that the city should try to attract and accommodate the creative workforce, deemed necessary for competing in the international, post-industrial economy. The planning department, however, did not really have a clear idea about the spatial implications of this strategy. A small workshop was organised, in which the portfolio approach was utilised to provide more insight into which areas in the city did (or could) contribute to the idea of the knowledge city. The workshop was attended mostly by municipal agencies (from the planning department, the development agency and the project management agency), but also a private developer and the chamber of commerce were represented. The workshop started (after introducing the portfolio concept and maps) by discussing the spatial implications of the creative knowledge city idea and subsequently analysed where to locate opportunities. This was then further related to the neighbourhoods’ positions in the portfolio, finally producing possible strategies.

![Figure 5.12: Mean values of four indicators of attractiveness for investment for residential (left) and commercial use (right)](image)

**Input of explicit information**

In this workshop, neighbourhood positions in the portfolio were identified in the same manner as in the previous two workshops. Added to the portfolio maps, however, were maps that indicated the opportunities for development by looking at four characteristics (Figure 5.12).

Apart from the portfolio maps, some of the conclusions from a municipal report were used as input for discussion. The report argued that the city had a good

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6 The workshop was held on 3 September, 2004.
starting position with respect to the knowledge economy: it has a variety of strongly represented sectors (such as logistics and distribution, finance and commercial services, ICT, media, design, culture, and tourism), a high proportion of young and well-educated people, and a climate of diversity and tolerance. The main problem, however, was considered to be the lack of dynamics in the housing market; finding qualitative, or any housing is difficult for various groups.

Analysis
The conclusion from the report generated discussion about the extent to which policies aimed at realising attractive neighbourhoods come at the expense of affordable housing and vice versa. Ideally, to attract a young, educated workforce, the city would require attractive yet affordable living environments. Particularly 19th century neighbourhoods were considered perfect for this target group, as well as offering good locations for start-ups. However, currently most of these neighbourhoods in Amsterdam could not be considered affordable anymore.

Opportunities for accommodating the knowledge city: residential
When discussing where opportunities for accommodating the ‘creative’ groups and businesses could be accommodated, the point was made that a distinction should be made between so-called ‘potentials’, young people with high education but relatively low income, and the ‘arrivés’, individuals with high education and high income. While the first group looks for qualitative but principally affordable housing or premises to start a business, the latter group can afford more expensive living or working environments.

Regarding the ‘potentials’, the urban atmosphere of the centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods were deemed very suitable. However, whereas up to the beginning of the 1990s the expensive city centre was surrounded by more affordable neighbourhoods, a steady process of gentrification – starting in de Pijp and spreading in an eastern and western direction – meant rising property values in most of these neighbourhoods too. It was therefore believed that opportunities should be sought in adjacent, still affordable areas that are still within the vicinity of the centre: parts of Bos en Lommer, Watergraafsmeer, the Spaarndammerbuurt and Houthavens, the Indische buurt, and Zeeburgereiland. Due to the distance to the centre, Amsterdam-Noord and IJburg were seen as having less potential. Similarly, the ring road was regarded as an important spatial and psychological barrier.

As for the arrivés, there was much less discussion, as accommodating housing for them was considered less of a challenge. There was a broad consensus that the well-known (to the participants) southern ‘wedge’, stretching from the centre to Amstelveen, had always been and would remain the most important residential location for this target group (if they seek an urban lifestyle). The development of the Zuidas might offer another, new type of living and working environment for this group. Those with a more ‘rural’ preference could find adequate housing opportunities elsewhere in the region.

Opportunities for business
With respect to working environment, apart from the distinction between the potentials versus the arrivés, the participants wished to make another distinction, that be-
tween small-scale and large-scale. It was agreed that finding small premises for potentials involved the same problems as finding affordable housing, namely the difficult relationship between affordability and attractiveness. One of the suggestions for addressing this problem was to make it easier for people to work at home, both in physical and legal terms. Then, when small businesses grow and require larger accommodations, they should be able to find room in the city, without immediately having to move into the western harbour area. Opportunities could be found along the ring road, in Watergraafsmeer, Overamstel, and possibly at the edges of the Zuidas.

As for the well established businesses, both small and large, finding adequate space turned out to be much less of a problem. Small-scale businesses are able to find room for instance around the academic hospital, the science centre in Watergraafsmeer, and directly north of the IJ. For larger offices, there was still believed to be sufficient space available at Sloterdijk, at the Zuidas, and in Zuidoost.

**Strategies**

Based on the previous analysis, participants were asked to discuss what this analysis meant in terms of strategies from a portfolio perspective. What could be the strategies for strong, weak, talented or vulnerable neighbourhoods?

The existence of strong neighbourhoods would normally be perceived as a plus. However, from the perspective of accommodating the so-called potentials, the lack of affordability was seen as a problem.

One of the participants put this very directly: ‘Some of the marginal areas may be tomorrow’s talented areas’. Therefore, if one wants to stimulate such a process, one should look for ‘islands of potential’ in those neighbourhoods, invest there and possibly stimulate an oil-stain like development from there. Examples of such islands might be interesting cafes or restaurants, possibly with an attractive ethnic ‘flavour’.

In talented neighbourhoods, where private investments may be expected, it was found that local government should try to steer developments in line with its ambitions. For some areas this would imply upgrading towards a strong position, while for others the perspective of the creative knowledge city would suggest otherwise. Instead of trying to guide these areas towards a strong position, it may very well be desirable to keep the neighbourhoods accessible, for instance by ‘artificially’ maintaining property values at a relatively low level. Areas mentioned earlier such as Bos en Lommer or the Indische buurt might be good candidates for this approach.

Finally, some of the vulnerable areas may be prone to fall to a weak position. This is a process local government usually try to avoid. Some of the participants believed that ‘leaving some areas alone for a while’ might be an interesting opportunity for starting a new cycle, even though they did not expect this to be enacted into policy, considering the planning tradition of the Netherlands.

**Conclusions**

This was the first workshop that took a portfolio perspective instead of a single neighbourhood. As such, it generated new ideas about where, how and why to invest in some areas, particularly focusing on the goal of developing the creative or knowledge city.
As in the previous two cases, the aim of the workshop was primarily to test the portfolio approach. It did not appear that urgent to find spatial opportunities for the creative/knowledge city, and there was no existing network of people who met on a regular base (contrary to the situation in Holendrecht for instance).

The central notion found in the analysis was that affordable yet attractive areas are scarce (the core of the population target groups in the creative city). Often the portfolio approach requires emphasising that not every neighbourhood can or should be a star or a cash cow, and that increasing property values should not be seen as an end in itself. This analysis, however, pointed to the opposite, i.e. that there was a sufficient number of stars and cash cows where the well established groups and businesses could locate. Finding space for these residents, albeit being important as well, was thought to be a relatively minor problem. Rather, the analysis revealed the need for affordable neighbourhoods and demonstrated the need, and the ambition, to strive for a balanced portfolio. The ensuing strategies were then discussed for each of the four types of neighbourhoods. Interestingly, the discussion largely proceeded the way it was planned while preparing the workshop, without needing much intervention to steer discussion in the preferred direction. There seemed to be a natural flow from analysis to discussing opportunities to strategies. A discussion of the potential ambitions, however, remained more implicit in both the analysis and the strategies. But in fact the ambition was quite clear: to find neighbourhoods with affordable accommodation and possible strategies for coping with this.

The explicit information used in the workshop consisted of a portfolio map for residential land use, one for offices and one for (industrial/manufacturing) businesses. All three combined with a map showing the score on opportunities as measured at the time of the workshop. Even though, the residential maps elicited some criticism that it might be better use transaction values instead of the real estate valuations; they were still seen as convincing patterns. The participants referred to them several times in the discussions, which allowed for the integration of explicit and tacit knowledge. The maps for offices and business received more serious criticism, because they did not offer a distinction between large and small offices and businesses. It was argued that both for offices and industrial/manufacturing business, property values (and valuations) of smaller premises would show patterns different from the larger premises. Therefore the portfolio maps that combined these two were not regarded as realistic or very useful images. Considering the topic of the workshop and the difference between start-ups and more established companies (the former seeking mostly smaller accommodations, while the latter need larger premises), this was a serious problem. As a result, the analysis of neighbourhood positions in terms of offices and buildings was based more on tacit information, with the portfolio maps left somewhat aside. For the residential areas, the portfolio maps featured prominently in the discussions.

5.9 Workshop no. 4: '50,000 houses'7

The previous workshop already demonstrated that the attraction of Amsterdam’s urban economy has some downsides as well. The young educated workforce has

7 The workshop was conducted on 17 May, 2005.
problems finding affordable housing, which is being addressed through the construction of new housing (between 2010 and 2030, 50,000 new housing units are planned in Amsterdam. This number is the result of regional negotiations between municipalities, which together committed themselves to realising 150,000 new houses. For several years however, finding room to build these houses has proved to be difficult. In order to accelerate construction, the city established a special agency to coordinate and increase the pace of development, the Bureau Woningbouwregie.

The municipal spatial structural plan provided general perspectives about which areas will be developed or restructured in the long term; however, the locations where these 50,000 houses should be built were not completely clear. In terms of accelerating construction, it would be useful to have more insight into which areas would be relatively easy to develop, by simply allowing 'the market to do its work', and which areas require more public support.

A portfolio workshop was put together to discuss these types of questions. The thirteen participants represented the planning department (4 persons), various municipal agencies (5 persons), a housing association (2), and two private developers. The workshop consisted of discussions about the general patterns of the Amsterdam portfolio, ongoing and expected trends and developments, general ambitions, and strategies.

**Figure 5.13:** Property values per m² in 2003 and their rate of increase from 1999 to 2003

In this workshop, the portfolio positions were identified differently from the previous workshops. Instead of looking at opportunities as a combined variable made up of the characteristics of the four neighbourhoods, now the increase rates of property valuations were used. The result was a portfolio map showing property values and their rate of increase over the course of four years (Figure 5.13 and 5.14). In addition, instead of using strong, weak, vulnerable and talented to identify neighbourhood positions, the terms stars, dogs, cash cows, and question marks were used again. The motives for these changes are described in first sections of Chapter Six.
Discussion of the portfolio maps
There were some reactions of surprise when the portfolio maps were introduced. For example, the position of Buitenveldert as a dog did not correspond with the stable, quiet and stately image of this area. Secondly, the appearance of some question marks in the east of the city was perceived as interesting. It was related to the emergence of new cafes and restaurants, which ‘advanced’ from already gentrified areas. Finally, there was the somewhat ‘disappointed’ conclusion that despite all the efforts put into developing the south east of the city, this did not result in higher property values. Others remarked, however, that increasing values may take a bit longer to emerge and questioned whether value increases in this area should be a goal in the first place.

Figure 5.14: The residential portfolio for Amsterdam in 2003

Analysis
A number of trends and developments were analysed for their effects on Amsterdam neighbourhoods, the most important of which are mentioned above. Like the previous workshops, this took place in two groups. First, there is the regionalisation of the housing market to consider: in particular neighbourhoods on the fringes of Amsterdam increasingly have to compete with the surrounding suburban municipalities, such as Almere and Hoofddorp. For more central neighbourhoods this was thought to be much less the case. This is related to the continuous demand for living in central, urban environments. The fact that this demand still exceeds the supply was held respon-
sible for the oil-stain-like pattern of outward upgrading. But how far from the centre can this development spread outwards? Some of the participants felt that the maximum coverage of this development corresponds to the area one can reasonably reach by bicycle from the centre. In any case, if the goal is to facilitate this demand (the question remains whether this is always desirable), some ‘barriers’ may have to be removed: parts of the social housing stock can be sold and dwellings can be enlarged by merging them.

Further, the ageing of the population is expected to affect the demand for living in urban neighbourhoods; but there was no agreement about whether the increasing number of older people will result in less or more demand for housing premises in these areas. Meanwhile, many families are still leaving the city, as increasing house prices make large houses with gardens very expensive. It raised the issue whether and how this should be anticipated: for example, by building houses with gardens or trying to fulﬁl this need in a more urban manner.

Another often mentioned issue was the role of infrastructure. Although some statistical tests demonstrated little correlation between accessibility by public transport and property prices in Amsterdam, the new metro line to Noord was expected by most participants to have a crucial effect on the development of this part of the city and improve its ‘distant’ image. Finally, the effect of image in general was seen as very important, but also difﬁcult to inﬂuence/change. Sometimes poor reputations can turn around overnight or remain stubbornly poor for a long time.

Ambitions
Discussion first revolved around the purpose of the portfolio approach itself. Does the tool serve to demonstrate the financial or economical implications of public interventions with social, economic or spatial objectives; or does the tool inherently come with some sort of optimal investment strategy as well? It appeared that the former is the case. Despite the fact that there are different types of objectives, it was felt that there must be some kind of meta-strategy for creating a balanced urban portfolio. Most felt that the instrument was suitable for application on a micro-scale and short term; it could reconstruct how and why a neighbourhood developed. On a city-scale, the instrument was seen as a way for substantiating long term investments and also as a way to monitor the diversity of types of neighbourhoods.

In the next step of the workshop, three main ambitions from a general portfolio perspective were mentioned: to prevent neighbourhood decay, to provide a good living environment, and to accommodate those who keep the city running economically.

Strategies
Finding opportunities for realising 50,000 houses within the ring road was believed not to be very difﬁcult in terms of economic opportunities. Although ﬁnding physical room can be difﬁcult, the areas within the ring road were seen as having potential. Considering the pressures on the housing market (and the fact that they are surrounded by stars, cash cows and question marks) even most of the dogs were expected to upgrade sooner or later. Notwithstanding the remark that the areas within the ring road are not as easy to develop as it might appear (due to problems and costs of working in existing urban environments) strategies for developing these more cen-
tral areas would therefore be relatively simple when compared to dogs outside the ring road. This was seen as a completely different and more problematic area. It was therefore decided to focus the discussion (organised in two groups) on strategies for the more problematic areas: the more peripheral dogs.

Group one identified two types of dogs: those located along the ring road, either just within or outside of it, and those further away. Considering the identified oil-stain-like development of upgrading and gentrification, the first type of dogs has more potential. Some of the examples included the neighbourhoods between the western ring road and metro line, Buitenveldert, and the ‘Shell area’ directly north of the IJ. ‘Empty’ areas, such as abandoned industrial sites, also were seen as having similar potential. The other, more peripheral dogs required another strategy for upgrading, by the large scale introduction of new types of housing oriented at new groups, in order to create a ‘critical mass’. The strategy was to create ‘islands’ where a new urban environment may attract new groups, which would precipitate oil-stain-like developments, similar to those in the centre. At the same time, it was agreed that these kinds of investments should not be at the cost of investments aimed at providing the current inhabitants with opportunities to move up the housing ladder within their neighbourhood or to keep the area from falling into decay.

In the end, four types of strategies for dogs were produced. (1) Dogs well within the ring were expected to be able to develop on their own. Dogs along the ring road however have potential as well, which however will often require public initiatives first (2). The ‘peripheral’ dogs that have a special quality (3), such as being near the water or close to a large concentration of shops and services, provide the opportunity to generate a new type of environment, along with a hopefully improving reputation. Finally, in the dog areas with little opportunities (4), public interventions will be required to support and improve the quality of life for the current inhabitants.

The second group made a subdivision of dogs as well, according to the way that they should be developed spatially: either into more urban or more suburban environments. This implied that the first type should be developed in the more urban parts of the city; public transport nodes in particular provide opportunities for development. More suburban types of development should take place near the more rural areas. These suburban neighbourhoods could then be connected with the ‘critical mass of green space’. These more peripheral dogs could offer a diversified environment, and thus attract different groups: young people, families, and possibly those who regret leaving the city.

Similar to the first group, the discussion resulted in different strategies for different types of dog neighbourhoods. In the more remote dog areas, successful development should be realised by creating a critical mass that is able to provide a new product: e.g. large, flexible apartments. Important opportunities were identified in the quieter, greener areas at the fringes of the city, the edges of the central areas near the ring road, and the public transport nodes.

Conclusions

The discussions took place in an open atmosphere and stimulated the expression of different viewpoints. The portfolio maps mostly confirmed, but also contested some of the participants’ perceptions regarding the difference between Amsterdam neighbourhoods within and outside the ring road. The portfolio maps revealed some
dogs within the ring road, and, while the participants did not disagree with these positions, they still felt that sooner or later these neighbourhoods would upgrade relatively easily. Hence, it was decided to focus discussion on the more challenging dogs outside of the ring road. Further, another distinction between less and more attractive dogs was made, based on amenities as perceived by participants. These distinctions appeared during the workshop and thus could not have been made beforehand. The portfolio maps could only provide a general distinction of the neighbourhoods’ positions, explicit information that served as a common ground. By linking it with more tacit information, the opportunities for dog neighbourhoods were then further elaborated.

During the steps moving from analysis to opportunities to strategies, the link from analysis to ambitions appeared somewhat problematic. Mostly general statements were made, mostly uncontested (at least in the Amsterdam context). More concrete and contestable ambitions were shared for the dog neighbourhoods. The connection was made with the portfolio maps, rather than the trends and developments analysed earlier.

Although it was not the explicit aim of the workshop, the findings of the workshop did not lead to significant commitments on part of the participants. This appears to be related to the fact that the workshop was not an integral part of an existing project and thus remained an informal exercise.

Some notable substantive insights that emerged about neighbourhoods were the relative weak position of Buitenveldert, the question marks in the east, and the somewhat disappointing notion that the investments in Zuidoost had not (yet) produced the desired changes in position.

The portfolio map demonstrated that most of the neighbourhoods within the ring road had good positions: stars, cash cows, and question marks. The few dogs there, due to the fact that they are surrounded by stronger areas, were seen as having more potential than dogs outside the ring road. This is why discussion of strategies focussed mostly on the latter. Collectively, the participants identified different types of dogs and the accompanying ideal type strategies.

5.10 Workshop no. 5: The Regional Portfolio

The city of Amsterdam is characterised by its hand shaped demarcation, with ‘fingers’ running to the north, east, south, and southeast. Even though it was not explicitly developed as such, this concept has been one of the most important guidelines for urban planning in Amsterdam on the urban scale. With the ongoing urbanisation of the Amsterdam city and region, the awareness came that the finger city concept may have to be adapted to this new situation. This led to a project named Stadsvorm (see Gieling, 2006), a study conducted by the planning department about the future form of Amsterdam and the region.

With the development of the portfolio approach taking place at the same time, it seemed useful and interesting to expand the portfolio approach to the regional scale. What would the regional portfolio of neighbourhoods look like? The problem for realising this mapping was a lack of data on property values from surrounding

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8 The workshop was organised on 27 June, 2005.
Description of the portfolio workshops

Analysis

After introducing the portfolio concept, all of the larger municipalities surrounding Amsterdam were discussed in two groups. Representatives from the concerning municipalities gave their rough estimates on the position of each neighbourhood, either as stars, cash cows, question marks, and dogs. These were then sketched on large maps, followed by a discussion on the reasons behind this pattern.

In the Haarlemmermeer, the main difference was found between the older neighbourhoods, consisting of ‘ribbon’ developments along old roads and waters, and the more recent large scale expansions. Both the suburban Amstelveen and Abcoude were considered parts of the Amsterdam housing market. As a suburb of Amsterdam they should probably be qualified as cash cows. Within the municipalities themselves, there would be a difference mostly between the pre-war and post-war areas: the former are stars or cash cows, while the latter are dogs.

When discussing Zaanstad, Purmerend, Almere, Hilversum and Bussum, the patterns largely appeared similar to the previous workshops. Pre-war neighbourhoods, closer to the centre, and the more rural parts further away were mostly expected to be cash cows (and sometimes stars). More recent expansions, ranging from apartment blocks built in the 1960s to single-family dwellings built in the 1990s, were usually considered relatively less attractive.

An important difference between the municipalities and neighbourhoods was also noted. It appeared that older, more fragmented parts of the city are more dynamic. Such fragmented areas, with their ‘raw edges’, leave room for interesting new developments, gentrification and changing land uses. Examples include neighbourhoods around the Zaan river in Zaanstad, and pre-war areas in Haarlem, as well as various parts of Amsterdam. In contrast, cities such as Hoofddorp, Purmerend, and Almere largely consist of urban expansions from the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. These larger, mono-functional chunks were considered less dynamic.

With respect to Amsterdam as a ‘finger city’, it was noted that the fingers appear to be among the great dog areas in the region: Nieuw West, Noord, and Zuidoost. This raised discussion about the success of the fingers and the spatial concept in general. However, Amstelveen and Zaanstad, which are also considered as ‘fingers’, are completely different. Amstelveen was generally perceived as a cash cow. So rather than a problem of the finger city, the dog positions of Nieuw West, Noord, and Zuidoost were attributed to the general unpopularity of early post-war neighbourhoods.

The issue that emerged was that these three large dogs (together with Schalkwijk, a large scale early post-war area in the west of Haarlem) result in what could be called four large ‘dog cities’. Is this desirable? Because it was suggested that on a regional level this appears to be almost an ‘inversed donut city region’: the strong centre of Amsterdam, surrounded by large dog areas, followed by the stronger cities and stable suburbs. There was no broad consensus on this conclusion. First, there was the notion that there will always be dogs in a portfolio. The real question is whether this constitutes a problem. Second, because of the lack of data, it remains to be seen whether these perceived patterns are real. This also involved the question whether the municipalities. Still, a workshop was organised, with the participation of civil servants from the planning department of Amsterdam and other municipalities, such as Zaanstad and Almere.
neighbourhood’s position should be identified by looking at the municipal average of the cities or at the regional average. Because of the lack of data on property values, it was agreed that one should be careful when drawing conclusions and formulating strategies.

Conclusions
In an open discussion, an interesting analysis was made of the neighbourhood positions in the region. The workshop did not have the same structure as the other portfolio workshops. Instead, after analysing the region in two groups the perceived portfolio positions were presented. This led to a general discussion. As previously mentioned, it was difficult to translate this into conclusions and possible actions, although it must be said that the workshop was a free exploratory exercise, without the explicit aim to turn results into action.

In this workshop, there could be no integration between tacit and explicit information, as there was simply no explicit information available. With help from the participants’ tacit knowledge, the workshop could produce only broad sketches of a collective perception of the region in terms of property values. More specifically, in terms of current property values, a pattern could be made with reasonable confidence. In terms of (differences in) value increases, there was significantly less knowledge among the participants. As a result, discussions mainly involved cash cows and dogs, rather than stars, and particularly little was said about question marks. Apparently, there was more knowledge about the current positions of neighbourhoods than about their dynamics; in particular the dynamics seem to require more explicit information. Although the discussion was interesting, the portfolio approach could not be applied fully without the proper data and portfolio maps.

5.11 Workshop no. 6: The development of Amsterdam neighbourhoods: past and future

This workshop was a shared initiative of the planning department and ING Real Estate. The latter was interested in discussing the strategic positions, their opportunities and strategies for development of some specific areas where they operated, notably the Northern IJ banks and the Zuidas. ING Real Estate saw the portfolio approach as a way to analyse the development opportunities of these areas, whereas DRO was interested in examining how these and other neighbourhoods had evolved over time.

At this time, the portfolio approach had just been altered to allow for a longitudinal view of neighbourhood’s positions. The statistical tests that found some correlation between property values and neighbourhood characteristics did not provide sufficient understanding of all of the possible influences, nor did they provide adequate guidelines about interventions. Therefore, it was deemed useful to organise a workshop to provide a forum for discussing the main driving forces behind the life cycles of Amsterdam neighbourhoods. The insights gained in the workshop were used as background material for the ‘portfolio workbook’. For this reason, this workshop is described a little more extensively than the others.

9 The workshop took place on 6 October, 2006.
While the planning department was more interested in understanding the driving forces that influenced the developments of neighbourhoods in Amsterdam, on the other hand ING Real Estate was interested more in the future developments of their specific areas and sought to understand the driving forces that could stimulate these areas.

The participants included the ING (2) and the planning department (3), other municipal agencies (3), other private developers (1), housing associations (2), and the university (1).

**Figure 5.15: Map marking the areas to be discussed in the workshop**

**Steps in the workshop**
The workshop started with a demonstration of the portfolio maps, followed by the discussion of a number of pre-selected areas. These areas were selected because of their supposedly dynamic position, a lot of current or planned development, or because their position in the portfolio required more analysis. They included the 19th century belt, and the Indische buurt, Buitenveldert, and Amsterdam-Noord (Figure 5.15). Analysing these areas resulted in a more general overview of developments and possible interventions. This was followed by an exercise where participants had to indicate on a map their preferred attractive investment areas. Finally, the opportunities and possible strategies were discussed, in particular for the Zuidas area where ING had a large stake.

**Analysis of specific areas: 19th century neighbourhoods and East**
This workshop was the first where residential portfolio maps were available not just for one year, but for an extensive period, i.e. from 1979 until 2005. The workshop
started by displaying the sequence of portfolio maps a number of times, followed by a discussion of the development of different neighbourhoods. In the portfolio maps, there was a distinction between the development of the southern/western part and the eastern part of what is known as the 19th century belt. Whereas neighbourhoods in the first part, such as De Pijp, Oud-West, and Westerpark, have seen considerable increases in property values (especially during the 1990s) neighbourhoods in the east, such as the Oosterparkbuurt and Indische buurt, appear to be lagging behind (see Figure 5.3 and the maps in Appendix IV). The participants openly wondered about the reasons behind this difference.

The difference in ownership between the areas was seen as the first (combined) explanation. The south and the west part of the city had higher shares of private rented dwellings; these can be sold relatively easily to new and more affluent groups. Interestingly, this trend started in a period of economic recession. In addition, these areas consisted of small dwellings that fitted well with these lifestyles. Since demand continued to exceed supply, this development spread from the centre outwards: first to the Jordaan in the late 1980’s, then south to De Pijp, and from here in a north-western direction to Oud-West and Westerpark, and now to the Baarsjes. Such development is possible in neighbourhoods with good spatial and psychological accessibility to the centre, and a fine-grained urban fabric. If these conditions are met, neighbourhoods can lean and build on the image of the adjacent neighbourhood.

There was a consensus that these conditions are largely absent in the eastern part of the city, blaming in particular the large-scale basis of urban renewal in these areas. This intervention was held responsible for the loss of the typical 19th century authenticity, and – due to the technique of using concrete instead of bricks – reducing the flexibility of use, which is blamed for the flight of many small-scale non residential activities from the area. Furthermore, the renewal consisted largely of social housing, housing many immigrant families, while the area was less accessible to smaller households, due to the housing allocation system Overall, the area was seen as currently being standing at a transition point. After the initial wave of pioneers, risk-avoiding households are moving into the area as well. Housing associations are selling houses at still relatively low prices. The net result is that the population is expected to significantly change in the coming years. However, the Indische buurt also has some significant handicaps to overcome as well. The elevated railway track was considered an annoying barrier between the area and the city centre, and the neighbourhood still has a troublesome reputation. The opportunities in the east are rising and ready to be unleashed.

**Buitenveldert**

Buitenveldert, located in the south of the city, used to be a traditional cash cow in the portfolio maps, which fell to a dog position at the end of the 1990s. Interestingly the area still has the reputation of a stable cash cow, which is precisely why Buitenveldert was chosen to be subject to further analysis.

When trying to understand this discrepancy between the reputation and property values, the group first asked some critical questions about in data on the property values. It was suggested, as dwellings are relatively large in Buitenveldert, that values in absolute terms are above the city average, even though values per m² are not proportionally high. However, this not a valid explanation, as the portfolio tool corrects this
effect: if transaction values per m² are below city average but above in absolute terms they are not assigned a dog position in the portfolio maps. An alternative cause was its position in contrast to neighbourhoods in and around the centre, which experienced rapid property value increases. However, no similar developments followed in Buitenveldert, which lost its good position as a result.

Nonetheless, some problems in Buitenveldert itself were mentioned as well. Many of the dwellings have not been modernised by the senior citizens living there and now are outdated: ‘large-scale renovation is impossible since we are in effect dependent on the decease of the occupant’ (Participant). At the same time, the neighbourhood has a dreary image because of the functionalist urban morphology. Is Buitenveldert indeed sliding in a downward spiral? Most found this a bit too extreme. Compared to other areas built in the same period, such as Niew West, Buitenveldert still has a better position in terms of safety and reputation. Moreover, the development of the adjacent Zuidas was thought to offer significant opportunities.

Even so, Buitenveldert should be seen as part of the regional housing market, and from this perspective it has difficulties competing with greener and more spacious suburbs, such as Hoofddorp or Almere. This is why the area needs to be renewed. The image of Buitenveldert as a neighbourhood for the elderly should be altered more towards one attractive for ‘empty-nesters’ with a more urban lifestyle. These could be people who currently live in the suburbs and who are tired of every-day congestion and are looking for a more urban yet still relatively quiet neighbourhood. Still, some serious restructuring would have to take place first. Ideally, some of the private developers are in favour of demolishing the outdated flats and replacing them with spacious apartments surrounded with more ‘green and blue’.

Noord
Amsterdam-Noord, across the IJ, is a very large and diverse area. It consists of more urban, suburban and ‘rural’ parts, and has neighbourhoods from virtually every decade of the 20th century. Particularly in the portfolio maps of recent years, this fragmented pattern is hardly visible: most of the neighbourhoods have a dog position. The point to be discussed is whether the area has the potential to become more popular, particularly now that an array of urban developments is planned or underway: redevelopment of the docklands, and the central area along the new metro line connecting Noord to the centre.

Noord has two reputations. On the one hand, there is the much appreciated almost village-like atmosphere along the original ribbon development running through the area. The more dominant, negative image is caused by the large blocks of social housing. In any case, there was the general notion that Noord never really belonged to Amsterdam. Furthermore, the housing market in Noord is seen as quite separate from Amsterdam. A lot of migration takes place within Noord itself, as well as from and to suburban cities north of Amsterdam, such as Purmerend, Zaanstad and Hoorn. The development of the former docklands on the northern IJ-banks was seen as serious potential for bridging the psychological barrier between Noord and the city centre. The general agreement remains that the barrier of the IJ is still a persistent boundary. Although the view of the water, especially after the redevelopment of the banks, was seen as an asset, some thought that a visual connection by means of a bridge should be made.
In neighbourhoods further away from the water and the centre, urban development takes place as well, but these parts will have to compete with regional suburbs. One of the participants stated that in some of these neighbourhoods the housing association he represented has been selling houses since 1999. Although not visible in the portfolio maps, this had led to rising property values according to him. In some of these neighbourhoods there are still some problems, and improvement is expected to take longer.

Other areas
After discussing these key areas, the positions and opportunities of some of the more remote parts of Amsterdam were considered. The poor position of the Nieuw West was addressed through large-scale renewal programs, aimed at more diversity and quality of the housing stock. According to some participants, this has not (yet) resulted increased property values of apartments (although single-family houses are rented and sold without problems). The perceived problem was that the groups that should be attracted to these areas still prefer more centrally located neighbourhoods. It remains to be seen whether this remains a problematic market, or that it is merely a matter of time for these areas to gain the trust of new groups, particularly the potential buyers. Judging by the changing image of IJburg, the latter may indeed be the case. Initially, it was expected that expensive units could be easily sold there, but the program had to be altered due to the negative image in the media and the notion that people who buy expensive houses usually are not very keen on ‘pioneering’. Now, among other things thanks to a new city beach, its reputation changed and apartments are selling well.

In Zuidoost, somewhat similar to Noord, two types of developments were distinguished. On the one hand, development of the large-scale entertainment, sports and leisure activities in the Bijlmer area was seen as a major impulse for some of the adjacent neighbourhoods, most of which have a poor position. However, the residential neighbourhoods more to the east were thought to be part of a simultaneously internal and regional housing market, separated from the rest of Amsterdam. And like Noord, it was perceived that improvement in these areas should build on the strong identity and social cohesion of the people living there now: mostly with a Surinamese, Antillean, or Ghanaian background.

Role of infrastructure
Does large-scale infrastructure influence the patterns in the urban portfolio? Some affirmative answers in Amsterdam were the Amstelstation and the Zuidas. This is why the new metro line to Noord was seen as very important. Equally, and sometimes even more, important was the quality of public space, which is often still inadequate. An interesting (ideal typical) distinction was made. If areas are inhabited by inhabitants who spend most of their day within their neighbourhood, then emphasis should be on the quality of public space. If people have a wider orientation (by working elsewhere and using services further away) then public investments should focus more on accessibility. In general, it was suggested that the need for investments in public space and infrastructure increases with the distance from the centre.
Forces driving neighbourhood change
The analysis described above generated a non-exhaustive list of aspects that can influence the course of neighbourhoods. A distinction was made in spatial and physical characteristics of the housing stock and the neighbourhood, trends and developments in the housing market, and public interventions.

**Table 5.4: List of possible influences on neighbourhoods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spatial and physical characteristics</th>
<th>Housing stock</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood characteristics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Location and adjacent neighbourhoods</td>
<td>- Size of the dwellings and the grain of the urban fabric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Safety</td>
<td>- Type of housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Green space and water</td>
<td>- Physical state</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Vicinity of the centre</td>
<td>- Divisibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Image</td>
<td>- Authenticity</td>
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<td>- Identity</td>
<td>- Ownership</td>
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<td>- Accessibility</td>
<td>- Accessibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Level of services</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Spatial barriers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Population</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Extent to which people are orientated at their own neighbourhood (such as in Noord and Zuidoost)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing stock</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Size of the dwellings and the grain of the urban fabric</td>
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**Developments in the housing market and social-economic trends**
- Increasing general demand for housing with increasing number of jobs and economic growth
- Increasing supply of owner-occupied dwellings, largely by housing associations and the increasing competition
- Changing incomes, lifestyles and demands
- Poor maintenance by current inhabitants
- Fiscal treatment of mortgage rates
- Financial autonomy of housing associations

**Public interventions and policies**
- Urban renewal: large or small-scale
- Rent policy and policy on division of apartments
- Investments in public space
- (Visible) investments in infrastructure
- Public services: library, swimming pool etc.
- Zoning

**Identifying opportunities**
During the break, participants were asked to identify on a map their preferred areas for investment. Stickers of three colours were handed out: green for investing ‘without reservations’; blue for expressing interest, provided that some actor would ‘do something’ there; and red indicating a complete disinterest for the next ten years (Figure 5.16).
Judging by the map, there was hardly any interest shown in the city centre and Oud-Zuid. This did not imply complete lack of interest, but due to the limited number of stickers other areas were simply preferred more. At the same time, it was said that these two popular areas have relatively little room left for development, both in physical terms, as in terms of increase of property values.

Although IJburg (green) and the Zeeburgereiland (blue) were much appreciated, there were some doubts about investing there. In these areas of urban expansion, producing and particularly supplying a large number of houses at once was considered problematic. Another concern was the poor accessibility to the centre by bicycle. Closer to the centre, parts of the Indische buurt were seen as interesting, particularly the parts where there was small scale urban renewal rather than large chunks.

**Figure 5.16: The sum of development opportunities as identified by the participants**

Despite earlier positive remarks made about the opportunities in the Zuidoost, most of the area was covered with red stickers. Neighbourhoods such as Venepolder and Holendrecht were seen as gliding in a downward spiral, but at the same time the blocks are simply not old enough to demolish and rebuild. The low property values in these areas showed some upgrading potential, but only in the long run and in combination with an improved reputation of the area. For now, only a few parts in Zuidoost that offered some special amenities were indicated as interesting. Around the lake at Gaasperplas, there is room to generate sufficient critical mass to create a new living environment.
More to the west, the Amstel III area raised some discussion. According to one of the housing associations, the area should be used for office construction as it is not suitable for residential use. A private developer on the other hand stated that she has so much confidence in the entertainment and leisure developments near the Bijlmer station that building a high-rise apartment building there was being seriously considered (even though it might be difficult to find dwellers). Others saw an opportunity to transform some of the many vacant office buildings around the station into apartments.

While Oud-West and Westerpark, closer to the centre, have already been upgrading, there is still a large number of small households looking for accommodation. Directly to the west, De Baarsjes and Bos en Lommer were seen as the most logical candidates for this process of upgrading. One of the private developers was already developing there. Opportunities were found in the large size of houses and gardens. At the same time the area was said to require more than simple renovation and resale of houses: in particular the public space would need more attention.

To the north, there is the railway station Sloterdijk and the surrounding office-sites. Despite its good location (near the water) most participants did not want to invest there for the next ten of twenty years, if ever at all: 'too little amenities to connect with'.

Along the western ring, a mixture of red, blue, and green was created on the map. Whereas the area around the fashion centre is close to a railway and has a lot of green space, the Delflandplein area on the other hand was seen as so difficult to develop, as it is 'stuck' between existing blocks. But, according to a developer in the workshop, ‘if it were bombed, you could build a nice shopping centre here, with apartments on top of it’. Someone else responded that it is a matter of picking the specific target group. Families would indeed require more green space. Yet for urban oriented households, the location of these types of neighbourhoods – Delflandplein, Bos en Lommerplein, Plesmanplein – holds a great opportunity to pull the urban environment into the west. This would require a lot of investment: hence the blue stickers.

According to a city official, in Overtoomse Veld development took place in exactly the wrong way. Apartment blocks were built further away from the centre, where low-rise buildings should have been built. The apartments should have been built closer to the ring road. Others agreed. Particularly the larger streets in Nieuw West provide for good access by public transport and by bicycle to the centre, in turn also providing room for development both terms of the market and in physical terms.

More to the west, opportunities were scarcely found. Similarly to Zuidoost, the Sloterplas lake was said to provide room for generating critical mass, developing a new type of environment in this otherwise weak area. Both Geuzenveld and Osdorp were not seen as very interesting, even though some of the projects realised by housing associations there were appreciated.

‘No reservations’

Some areas hardly raised any discussion, as they were appreciated virtually ubiquitously. This concerned mostly former industrial or harbour areas, all within the ring road, that sooner or later are to be transformed into residential neighbourhoods. Examples are Overamstel and Houthavens, where development is already planned, or
the Food Centre area, where development is still uncertain. The military site in the centre as well as the adjacent neighbourhood Kattenburg (with its generally detested urban renewal architecture) were also considered great locations for redevelopment.

Strategies for redevelopment in Noord and the Zuidas
Since the workshop aimed to achieve more clarity about possibilities, particularly for Noord and the Zuidas, the opportunities and possible development strategies for these two areas were discussed more extensively.

Amsterdam-Noord
Directly across the IJ are the docklands on the IJ-banks, covered with green stickers. Some of the participants, including those already investing there, stated that the large-scale redevelopment is aimed principally at attracting new residents into Noord. The docklands were considered to have more than enough room to build a new environment that can compete with the existing neighbourhoods in and around the city centre. Apart from the new metro line, a new bridge was said to enhance opportunities even more, particularly with respect to the parts further away from the ferry terminal. Here, accessibility by public transport should be improved. In spite of the huge opportunities there, it was commented that development of the area should also contribute to the quality of neighbourhoods behind the IJ-banks.

Two of these neighbourhoods are the Van der Pekbuurt and Vogelbuurt, built in the first two decades of the 20th century. Both neighbourhoods had been suffering from social problems and a bad reputation, but all participants expected the two neighbourhoods to benefit heavily from the developments at the IJ-banks. In the words of participant representing a housing association, ‘Ten years ago, everyone wanted to get out of the Van der Pekbuurt, and no intervention plan could be radical enough. This changed with plans for the new metro line and the redevelopment of the northern IJ-banks’. Meanwhile, housing associations and the local borough are still investigating possible strategies, and some participants complained about the lack of clarity and ambiguity. This raised discussion about whether to renovate these and whether several small houses should be combined into one, as was done in the Spaarndammerbuurt.

Further away from the IJ is the CAN-area, located along the new metro line. Whereas the IJ-banks, as well as the Van der Pekbuurt and Vogelbuurt, are aimed at new groups from outside, the CAN-area aims at providing accommodation for (young) people from Noord itself. Judging by the lack of stickers placed here, it was apparently not considered to be the most exciting place to invest. Nevertheless, according to some participants who are familiar with the area, housing development appeared successful, with some expressed doubts about the feasibility of office development.

More to the west, Molenwijk was considered to be one of the worst neighbourhoods in the city. It has similar architecture to the Bijlmer flats and is plagued by social problems. A restructuring program similar to the Bijlmer would sound logical, but it was commented that the Bijlmer is located far more strategically on the south side of the city and is better accessible by public transport as well. It would be more difficult to implement a similar approach in Molenwijk.
Finally, the more rural part of Noord was briefly discussed. Although development of the open space there is considered taboo in Amsterdam, some were thinking of realising housing oriented at the IJsselmeer.

**Zuidas**

There was no discussion about the general potential of the Zuidas, one of the largest urban redevelopment projects in Amsterdam and the Netherlands. The area is to become the new CBD – a multifunctional, high-density urban environment with numerous facilities and housing. There were some doubts about the latter: will the area indeed become sufficiently attractive so that people will want to live there? The so-called ‘dock model’ (where most of the infrastructure is brought underground) provides opportunities, but then a lot still depends on the quality of the public space and the types of shops and facilities: ‘Hence a blue sticker’. Considering the amount of people who use the railway station and work in the offices, it was thought that there will surely be entrepreneurs opening bars and restaurants. A more challenging issue was how to ensure the good quality of quality of shops that will entice people to live there, i.e. how to prevent the inevitable show rooms and chain stores.

Another challenge was the quality of the area in general during the redevelopment process, which was expected to span around two decades. If internationally operating businesses and the expats employees are to (re)locate to the Zuidas, they want to locate to a good quality environment. ‘They do not want to work and live on a building site’ (private developer). If the goal is to attract people and businesses now, then the quality of the place has to be upgraded now as well. For instance, the area around the railway station is currently considered as a dreadful place; therefore, it was seen as crucial to take on and finish redevelopment piece by piece, instead of ‘everything at the same time’.

With respect to the issue of housing, the question was asked which kind of housing should be realised and for which target group. Expats had been mentioned earlier, but it was agreed that one should aim for a wider group. Moreover, there is no need to live at the Zuidas if one works there, especially with the new metro line being constructed, so the location needs to attract inhabitants in its own right. This goal was perceived as even more difficult than attracting business.

The discussion then shifted to the influence of developments at the Zuidas on Buitenveldert, located directly south of it. It was mentioned that Buitenveldert will only benefit from the Zuidas developments in about twenty years. The city should act in Buitenveldert now, but since this could hamper developments at the Zuidas, a more integrated plan is needed. But this line of reasoning could be reversed as well: ‘How can the Zuidas benefit from Buitenveldert?’ One of the answers was that, whereas the Zuidas will mostly consist of expensive housing, Buitenveldert might provide the necessary supply of affordable housing for less well-paid jobs at the Zuidas. This strategy would imply renovation instead of redevelopment. This was not a unanimously supported strategy; with the excellent accessibility one does not need to live nearby.

Whether the large investments in development of the Zuidas by means of the ‘dock model’ would be justified in terms of increasing property values, was still deemed as uncertain. It depends on how the city centre will develop: whether it will remain within the current area or shift more towards the south. Yet it was argued that
a city like Amsterdam can easily have multiple centres, and the Zuidas should find its own 'flavour', which housing facilities in the old centre cannot offer. In the end, however, it was believed that all development will depend on the Zuidas' ability to attract business.

After the workshop, the driving forces and the strategies were distilled and integrated in the portfolio workbook developed for the planning department. Some of the strategies are described in Chapter Seven.

Conclusions
The presentation of the portfolio maps was used as input material to analyse the way Amsterdam neighbourhoods had been developing throughout the years. According to the respondents of the survey, the patterns did not present many surprises. All indicated that they were either mostly confirmed (3) in their perceptions, or sometimes surprised/sometimes confirmed (4). The position and analysis of Buitenveldert was of particular interest during the workshop. This was a clearly visible example of how the portfolio approach provided explicit information that did not fit with the dominant existing perceptions. The participants were surprised by the relatively weak position of the area and were eager to analyse and discuss it further. This collective analysis changed the perception about this neighbourhood, as well as the intervention approaches for this area. In this example, one could speak of a collective learning process, which also enhanced the individual insight after the workshop. More generally, with respect to the outcome of the workshop, this also holds true for other areas and neighbourhoods. The specific positions of other neighbourhoods may not have been as remarkable as Buitenveldert, but the analysis of the driving forces behind these positions did lead to lively discussions and insights, (as confirmed by the participants’ responses to the evaluative survey).

According to the survey, the insights gained were limited to the content. With respect to the perceptions or ideas among other actors, hardly anything notable was mentioned. Public, semi-private and private actors were all said to ‘behave’ in a predictable fashion, i.e. private developers had a clearly commercial view of things, as opposed to the more socially-oriented attitude of the (semi-) public participants.

This workshop was a shared initiative of DRO and ING Real Estate. For the planning department, the workshop was meant to provide a better understanding of the driving forces behind neighbourhood developments. For ING Real Estate, it was important to connect such understanding to their development plans in some of the analysed areas. The workshop was not explicitly integrated in an existing project, other than the further development of the portfolio approach itself.

Several respondents in the survey appreciated the fact that discussion was open, broad, and substantive. This allowed for ‘a dialogue, a mutual understanding among actors and the discovery of common interests’. It seems that this broadness and openness did come at the expense of the structure of the workshop, as indicated by two respondents. Indeed, analysing and indicating opportunities for investment did not converge into an evenly structured discussion of strategies. In this case, however, this was not so problematic. The workshop was seen as a ‘free exercise’, not part of an existing project, and there was no need to reach mutual commitment or agreement about further strategies.
During the workshop, the portfolio maps provided an image of how Amsterdam neighbourhoods had developed to their current positions. This type of explicit information was then used to start a collective analysis of how the neighbourhoods reached this position, based on more tacit forms of knowledge. The maps were used as a visual reference point, often confirming what most already knew; however, sometimes they did provide valuable new insight.

5.12 **Workshop no. 7: Opportunities for value increase in Rotterdam Oud-Zuid**

The first workshop in Rotterdam focused on what is known as Oud-Zuid. It is the part of the city south of the Maas river, consisting of mainly two boroughs: Charlois and Feijenoord. Figure 5.17 illustrates the specific neighbourhoods that were discussed in the workshop. Oud-Zuid's neighbourhoods are mainly pre-war constructions, with the exception of Carnisse, which has a significant share of early post-war apartment blocks. The Afrikaanderwijk, Katendrecht, and Kop van Zuid, located near the river by and large are a combination of 1980s and 1990s renewal and more recently augmentations.

The main reason for selecting Oud-Zuid for this workshop was the fact that for the last years, several stakeholders (municipality, housing associations) had been investing heavily in the area. Apart from offering insight into the general developments and patterns in Rotterdam and Oud-Zuid, the portfolio approach was also seen as potentially providing valuable evaluation to which these investments resulted in value increases. The workshops focussed on three main questions:

1. **Why did value increase occur (or not) in certain neighbourhoods in Oud-Zuid, and due to which causes?**
2. **Where are the current opportunities for value increases?**
3. **What should happen in order to realise value increases? Which interventions are necessary and who should initiate them?**

Five individuals represented the planning department (DS+V), which organised the workshop. Other municipal agencies included the borough of Feijenoord and the municipal development agency. Four different housing associations were represented by five participants, and there was one private developer.

The workshop started by introducing the portfolio concept and the maps, followed by a discussion of the portfolio positions of all neighbourhoods in Oud-Zuid. The participants then identified and discussed where they would be interested in investing, resulting in a discussion of opportunities and interventions for each of the neighbourhoods.

*The portfolio of Oud-Zuid*

Although the south of Rotterdam was popular early after WWII (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2007), most neighbourhoods in the south, apart from a few exceptions, are dogs in the portfolio maps from 1991 to 2005 (see Figure 5.4 and the maps in Appendix IV). This was a general observation that came as no surprise to the participants. However, since the workshop was about finding opportunities within Oud-Zuid, it was

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10 The workshop took place on 9 July, 2007.
more interesting to look at the differences within the area. Therefore, (before the workshop) the facilitators made maps that showed the positions of the neighbourhoods not from a citywide perspective but from the perspective of an ‘Oud-Zuid portfolio’. By identifying whether property values and their increase rates are below or above the Oud-Zuid average, a new portfolio of stars, cash cows, question marks and dogs was generated (Figure 5.17).

In this portfolio, the main distinction appeared to be between the cash cows and stars in the borough of Feijenoord, and the dogs in the Charlois borough. Only in 2003 did the neighbourhood of Carnisse appear as a question mark. In Feijenoord, the most eye-catching development was the star and cash cow positions of Afrikaanderwijk, Kop van Zuid and Entrepôt. Bloemhof transformed from a dog to a question mark (2003) and finally into a star (from 2004). Hillesluis has been shifting back and forth between star and cash cow.

![Figure 5.17: Portfolio of Rotterdam Oud-Zuid in 2005](image)

**Analysis**
The sequence of portfolio maps in Oud-Zuid was shown several times, so that participants had some time to reflect on the changing patterns. Then, one by one, the (changing) position of each neighbourhood was discussed.

Oud Charlois used to be a cash cow but it has been a dog since 1995. The reason for the weakening position was identified as the very limited renewal and new developments there, in contrast to other parts in the south. ‘Stagnation apparently means decline’, was the conclusion.
Despite the many investments made there, Tarwewijk remained a dog since 1992. Participants agreed that it has simply too many negative developments that maintain its very negative reputation, such as drug dealing, the arrival of dubious landlords, and illegal immigrants. Although the physical housing stock was considered to be of relatively good quality, it seemed that people had completely lost faith in the area.

Katendrecht appeared in the maps only in 2005, because of a very limited number of transactions in the course of the previous years. Its question mark position was recognised by all; the potential of Katendrecht was seen as obvious. Still one of the participants, a private developer currently investing heavily in the area, stressed that this ‘obvious enthusiasm’ had been present for only about two years. There was still a lot to be done in Katendrecht, if one wanted to attract families there, and the municipality was not doing enough. New services, shops, and particularly schools were needed.

Carnisse had been a dog until 2003, when it turned into a question mark. However, the participants did not feel that this value increase represented an actual upgrading of the neighbourhood. A possible explanation for the demonstrated value increases could have been the recent sale of about one hundred social dwellings, which increased the transaction values. Nonetheless, the reputation of Carnisse was considered much better than for instance the Tarwewijk, particularly in regard to attracting families.

Bloemhof made a move from a dog to a question mark to a star, and even has a question mark status in the ‘total Rotterdam’ portfolio. This was seen as a surprise. The value increases were attributed mostly to the investments in the physical housing stock made by several housing associations. Although the changing position of the adjacent Hillesluis is less dramatic, a similar analysis was provided for this change, which attributed improvements to the investments in the housing stock.

Where to invest?
The participants were asked to demonstrate where in Oud-Zuid they would be interested to invest, by placing stickers on a map. A green sticker indicated ‘unconditional’ willingness to invest in the area, yellow indicated ‘willingness to invest provided that something happens first’, and pink/red meant that one had no intention to invest there whatsoever (Figure 5.18). It was stated that everyone should take the perspective of his/her own organisation, as there was some confusion about what viewpoint to take: investment aimed at pure profitability or (also) investment for public goals. As in the previous step, the findings for all neighbourhoods were discussed one by one.

The Kop van Zuid did not generate much interest. This seemed remarkable, but the area was seen as doing well on its own and not requiring substantial public investments. To the east of Kop van Zuid however, in Feijenoord, there was more potential waiting to be ‘unleashed’. Its location at the river banks, and the good reputation of the Kop van Zuid practically guaranteed a return on investment. Particularly some housing associations that already own property there saw good opportunities to sell (some of their) social housing.

There was a broad agreement that Katendrecht and the Afrikaanderwijk were clearly upgrading, as illustrated by the many green stickers. The portfolio maps demonstrated that property values were rising there, and the participants indicated that
they expected this positive trend to continue. Still, this would require some necessary measures to be taken by the local government. The level of services would have to be raised, and the quality of the ‘entrance’ of the area – now occupied by industrial uses – needs to be improved. Together with the Kop van Zuid, developments on Katendrecht were expected to have a positive effect on the Afrikaanderwijk. Some mentioned the possibility of building a new residential island in the Maashaven, as a way of connecting Katendrecht to the more problematic Tarwewijk.

Figure 5.18: One of the maps indentifying the participants’ investment preferences

The neighbourhoods Bloemhof and Hillesluis are located directly south of the Afrikaanderwijk, and this was seen as an opportunity to try and connect them to the ongoing upgrading process there. There were some reservations however. In order for Bloemhof and Hillesluis to become attractive, the city was expected to provide more clarity about its intended interventions. Will the city continue investing in the south (Parkstad)? Will the city construct a third Maas bridge and thus connect the south to the eastern part of the city? And will public space at the ‘southern boulevard’ be upgraded? One of the possibilities for improving the quality of the living environment in Bloemhof was to decrease the housing density.

None of the participants were keen on investing in Tarwewijk. The south as a whole already had a relatively poor reputation, with Tarwewijk as its low point. Only a drastic change in Tarwewijk’s image might return some investor faith there, but this was not expected to happen soon.

In Carnisse, one housing association had committed itself to improving the privately rented housing stock and was thus already investing heavily. Other actors
who lacked a direct stake in the neighbourhood were more sceptical about its opportunities and looked at local government to take the initiative, principally in improving the level of services and the quality of public space. Like Bloemhof and Hillesluis, the city should state its intentions regarding infrastructural measures more clearly. In the end, Carnisse was seen as having some potential (also due to its proximity to the Zuiderpark and the Zuidplein), but there was no broad agreement on this matter.

There were less differences of opinion about Oud Charlois, which had a dog position and mostly yellow stickers on it. Particularly the authenticity of the old village centre was seen as an important asset that provides opportunities, as well as a possible connection with Katendrecht and the harbour area. Upgrading was however believed to require a lot of effort. First, the area should be clean and safe, and the privately rented housing needs improvement.

Finally, there was a discussion about the Zuidplein area, which consists of a shopping centre with large retail stores and a theatre. Despite the fact that further development of the area was seen as interesting (it could also have a potential spin-off effect on the adjacent neighbourhoods), most participants were not interested in investing there.

**Implications**

After the workshop, the planning department distilled some key issues and lessons learned. Apart from some more specific findings for specific neighbourhoods, the main lesson appeared to be the awareness that participating (non-municipal) organisations wanted the city to make clear decisions about future large-scale interventions. More clarity and certainty was sorely needed about constructing a new bridge or tunnel, about where a new railway station would be built, or investments in the renewal of certain areas for the coming period. More certainty will significantly contribute to increasing the willingness of other stakeholders to invest. As stated by a developer: ‘No decision = no certainty about the future of the area = no commitment to invest by other actors’.

**Conclusions**

The aim of the workshop was to find answers to the questions identified above. Why did value increase occur in certain neighbourhoods in Oud-Zuid, and due to which causes? Where can one find opportunities for value increases? What should happen in order to realise these value increases? Which interventions are necessary and who should initiate them?

The portfolio maps served to provide more insight into the positions of the neighbourhoods in the south and their development, thus providing the input material for answering the first question. Since the far majority of the south appeared as a dog in the complete portfolio of Rotterdam and since the workshop was about finding opportunities within the area, the partial portfolio of the south was used the most. These two levels of scale, according to the respondents of the survey, presented a reasonably complete image of neighbourhoods’ positions. For five out of the eight respondents these were mostly recognisable patterns. The other three respondents indicated that they were sometimes surprised, and sometimes saw their perceptions confirmed. There were some interesting shifts. For example, the Afrikaanderwijk, which appeared as a dog in the Rotterdam portfolio, was a cash cow in the partial
portfolio. One of the respondents said to be glad to see some evidence of development taking place in the area. This was attributed to the stronger neighbourhoods directly north of it: Kop van Zuid and the upgrading Katendrecht. Another interesting neighbourhood that had a surprisingly strong position was Bloemhof.

Indicating investment opportunities resulted in a more tangible result and fuelled discussion about who would or should intervene. The others’ perceptions of the neighbourhoods were largely as expected, with some surprises. Respondents from both the municipality as well as a private developer were surprised about the fact that some housing associations did not show any interest in investing in the Kop van Zuid. In the words of a municipal agent, ‘in contrast to what some may think, it is not like everything is simply improving there by itself’. In turn, a respondent representing a housing association was surprised by this reaction. Discussion of the Kop van Zuid area apparently did not result in a shared analysis of the area, but rather led to some insight into others’ views of the area. One of the insights, both during the workshop and in the survey, was the importance of proper services, in particular schools. Another lesson learned was the expressed need for clarity about the foreseen large public investments in infrastructure and public space.

The workshop took place against the background of a generally increasing attention paid to property values by the Rotterdam municipality, which is related to a municipal programme of acquiring some of the badly rundown properties (not in the least in Oud-Zuid). This was reflected in the workshop, where knowledge about property values was desired. At the same time, the workshop was also compatible with the ongoing project ‘Profilering Oud-Zuid’, where some of the participants participated.

In the end, it seems that the increased attention given to property management and value developments in Rotterdam created a suitable background for application of the portfolio approach. The workshop did contribute new insights about neighbourhood developments, maybe more for the public stakeholders than for private actors. The workshop did not lead to refined strategies for neighbourhoods, but this was not its explicit purpose. Some of the respondents shared that the portfolio tool provided them with a fresh perspective on Oud-Zuid, which generated enthusiasm and an open and lively discussion about the area and its opportunities. During the discussions, the neighbourhood positions in the portfolio were continually used as reference. That is, the approach did not only provide a new way of looking at neighbourhood relationships and positions, it also provided valuable explicit information. The participants used this information as evidence when justifying their ideas about opportunities and strategies.

**Suggestions**

Some improvements to the portfolio approach were suggested. One concerned the perspective when making investment choices, i.e. should such investment have purely commercial motives or should one indicate where development is desirable? Another point was that more detailed information about neighbourhoods was needed in order to have more evidence based strategies. The respondent did realise that this would be difficult to supply for all the areas considered in the workshop.
5.13 Workshop no. 8: Gentrification in Rotterdam\textsuperscript{11}

Several municipal reports in Rotterdam have demonstrated the municipality’s ambition to stimulate processes of gentrification, in various neighbourhoods (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2004; 2007, Van der Zanden, 2007). Looking at the development of property values through the portfolio approach, and discussing these in a workshop, was seen as a good way to provide more clarity on the subject of gentrification and where it might appear in Rotterdam. Building on these insights, more focused plans or policies could be further developed.

I jointly organised the workshop with the Rotterdam Planning Department (DS+V), inviting representatives from housing associations, private developers, the planning department, the city development agency, and city boroughs (in total 21 people attended).

After discussing gentrification in general, the portfolio of Rotterdam was discussed, analysed, and compared with the Amsterdam portfolio. Then, the participants indicated their investment preferences on maps, which fuelled the final discussion on strategies for each area. Since the workshop focussed on gentrification, the parts of Rotterdam outside of the ring road (as well as the neighbourhoods south of the river) were seen as mostly irrelevant and therefore left out of the discussion.

What is gentrification?

The workshop started with a short discussion on gentrification and its connection to planning. Particularly the latter revealed some differences of opinion. Whereas most of the participants agreed that local government can provide some of the conditions necessary for gentrification, some believed that principally gentrification should be ‘left alone’ in order to blossom.

Most participants argued that in its essence gentrification is an autonomous process; it is not steered by public intervention, but rather by interplay of pioneers, gentrifiers and landlords. Furthermore, most considered gentrification (at least in Rotterdam) as a positive phenomenon; there was no significant debate about its effects on the social order or the issue of displacement (see e.g. Uitermark et al., 2007). As for the latter, it was argued that in the Netherlands, due to existing rent protection mechanism, gentrification is to a much lesser extent accompanied by direct displacement of existing tenants.

The Rotterdam and Amsterdam portfolios compared

One of the ways of finding opportunities for gentrification in Rotterdam was to understand the differences and similarities with gentrification in Amsterdam. Therefore, next to the portfolio of Rotterdam, the Amsterdam portfolio was shown as well. First, the changing patterns in Amsterdam were introduced, followed by those of Rotterdam. This comparison fuelled discussion about the different ways in which both cities had developed. The first and foremost noted difference was the relative lack of dynamics in Rotterdam. Whereas in Amsterdam, many neighbourhoods had been gentrifying or upgrading, particularly in the 1990s, the patterns in Rotterdam mostly remained the same: ‘No matter how fast you play the film, nothing really happens!’ (Private developer). Several reasons for this difference were discussed. First, as put for-

\textsuperscript{11} The workshop was held on 22 August, 2007.
ward by the same developer, there is the problem of scale. Since the neighbourhoods used in the Rotterdam portfolio are larger in size than those in Amsterdam, small-scale increases in property values were harder to pinpoint in Rotterdam. It was argued that these types of developments do in fact occur. However, others argued that in spite of the maps being too coarse-grained, these examples of value increases take place on a much smaller scale in Rotterdam than in Amsterdam. The urban economy of Rotterdam, which is more industry-oriented than Amsterdam, was singled out as an explanation. Rotterdam does not attract the high number of households with urban lifestyles as Amsterdam. As a result, the demand of ‘like-minded’ households for living in lively urban neighbourhoods does not reach the same critical mass. Another reason was the position of the city centre. The bombing in WWII deprived the city of its organic, fine-grained centre. There was a general agreement that rebuilding it according to modernist standards had not resulted in a city centre with an urban fabric that possesses the same ‘undisputed’ status and power of attraction characteristic of Amsterdam.

Figure 5.19: Participants indicated where they would be interested to invest

This shared observation led to the discussion of two main challenges. On city-scale, it was argued that there is a need to continue to stimulate employment, particularly in the creative knowledge economy. At the same time, on a micro-scale the city needs to select certain areas and invest heavily in enhancing their urban quality and appeal. Entrepreneurship (notably for starting cafes, restaurants, or galleries) should be facilitated: ‘bureaucratic’ barriers should be removed. This should be accompanied by investments in the quality of public space and good architecture: ‘no mediocrity, please’. Some good and bad examples were discussed. The accumulated effects of these interventions could provide the conditions for gentrification.
Although there was no dispute about the latter, one of the city officials stressed the limitations of this type of planning for gentrification. For instance, the newly built ‘Montevideo building’ in the Kop van Zuid was originally planned for ‘urban life style’ households, but ultimately was populated mostly by elderly inhabitants. For him, this implied that ‘before we plan for it, we first need to understand it, which apparently is not always the case’ (Rotterdam city official). Someone else then responded that this example clearly demonstrated the volatility of the market, which cannot be steered in this fashion. One of the main conclusions was that, bearing in mind the limited demand for living in urban neighbourhoods (when compared to Amsterdam), there can be only small-scale gentrification. Rather than gentrification as a large-scale process that ‘washes over a neighbourhood from elsewhere’, gentrification in Rotterdam starts from small-scale developments in certain streets. Just around the corner the picture may be different altogether. A strategy called ‘gentripuncture’ would be suitable: small-scale interventions, like acupuncture, should target strategic spots and provide an impulse for further development in that area. Therefore we should not compare ourselves to Amsterdam’, as one participant put it. This statement was met with agreement but also with some criticism: ‘I think we do have to compare ourselves to Amsterdam! The city of Rotterdam is finally maturing and if we are able to attract more people, it can happen’. Some more specific similarities in terms of stimulating gentrification were mentioned as some of the participants who live Amsterdam mentioned that also there gentrification sometimes started with such small-scale interventions.

**Identifying opportunities for development**

Similar to the previous workshops, participants were asked to use green and yellow stickers to signify their investment preferences for different parts of the city: green for investment without reservations and yellow for interest, provided that some conditions are met. In the previous workshop there was some confusion about the perspective from which to make these choices. Whereas this was a straightforward exercise for private developers, i.e. ‘simply’ looking for profitable investments, participants from municipal agencies and housing associations did not exactly know from which angle to approach the maps. Therefore, all were asked to place stickers on a total of six maps. On three maps, for the areas centre (Figure 5.20), Delfshaven (Figure 5.21), and Oude Noorden (Figure 5.22) each identified where he/she would invest, approaching the exercise first from their particular professional angle, not simply looking at maximising profit. On the other three maps for the same areas, everyone demonstrated their personal preference for investment: ‘where would you consider buying a house yourself?’ Furthermore, a distinction was made between participants representing private and semi-private organisations (they used round stickers) and city officials (who used square stickers).

The maps demonstrated opportunities in Delfshaven and North, and to a lesser extent in the centre. This was related to the notion discussed earlier that the centre does not have the type of urban fabric with the required flexibility that can accommodate a mixture of various interesting activities. Only a scarce few parts of the centre did provide these assets and they were among those indicated on the maps.
Again, this exercise emphasised the general agreement that the city centre still requires a lot of improvement.

**Figure 5.20:** The appeal for investment in the city centre, as identified by the participants from a professional viewpoint (left) and personal viewpoint (right)

More enthusiasm was demonstrated in Delfshaven and North. In Delfshaven, interests concentrated around Coolhaven, parts of Middelland, and Nieuw West. Some indicated immediate interest in these areas, which was grounded in the proximity of these areas to the centre by bicycle, the presence of large houses, or the presence of nice shops. Others, however, felt that in Middelland and Nieuw West the level of services and facilities should be improved first, or that a number of rented apartments should be sold.

**Figure 5.21:** The appeal for investment in Delfshaven, as identified by the participants from a professional viewpoint (left) and personal viewpoint (right)

Earlier in the workshop, there was the general agreement awareness that stimulating gentrification in Rotterdam meant that one has to be selective about where to focus investment. The large amount of stickers on the maps however suggested otherwise. Therefore, the participants were asked to look at the maps again and indicate the most
attractive parts. Coolhaven and Middelland were seen as most interesting, even though for Middelland this was not ubiquitously. Whereas some would invest or buy a house here ‘today’, others were not so sure about the area yet.

**Figure 5.22:** The appeal for investment in Oude Noorden, as identified by the participants from a professional viewpoint (left) and personal viewpoint (right)

Noord generated an even more enthusiasm, particularly around and west of the Hofpleinlijn, which was considered as a location of enormous potential. In this area, four housing associations had acquired this elevated track, which had become obsolete with the construction of the Randstadrail. Inspired by similar cases, such as the Promenade plantée in Paris or the High line in New York, the track was thought to inject a major impulse, creating opportunities for all kinds of creative land-uses both on top and below the track and the surrounding neighbourhoods: Oude Noorden, Bergpolder, Liskwartier and Agniesebuurt. The poor connection of Noord with the city centre in spatial terms (for example by bicycle) was perceived as a serious problem. Opportunities for gentrification were found in the authenticity of the architecture there (mostly late 19th century) and the flexibility that these buildings offer (they allow for multiple uses on street level).

The shift of perspective from a ‘professional’ to a possible ‘house buyer’ did not result in significantly different patterns on the map. From a personal point of view participants seemed a bit more hesitant in investing in North (yellow), whereas the same area was covered with green stickers in the ‘professional’ map. The motives for possible investment did not seem to differ either: vicinity to the centre, authentic architecture, and the presence or expected arrival of nice cafes, shops, and restaurants.

**Conclusions**

As in the previous two workshops, all of the participants indicated that their perceptions about the neighbourhood positions were either ‘mostly confirmed’ (4) or met with ‘partly surprise, partly confirmation’ (2). Particularly the fact that property values in the city centre had dropped below the city average for a few years was considered remarkable. Some respondents found it difficult to give examples of other neighbourhoods that had an unexpected position in the portfolio maps. This may be due to the relatively coarse scale of the maps, and the fact that during the introductory presenta-
tion of the maps the focus was more on the whole portfolio rather than on particular neighbourhoods.

Through a discussion about the details of gentrification, the extent to which it can be steered and where it can be found in Rotterdam improved understanding of the issue was generated. There was a clear convergence about the subject: the differences and similarities of gentrification in Rotterdam compared to Amsterdam, and the way gentrification manifested itself in Rotterdam. Crucially, this should not be confused with interventions in terms of urban renewal, which are taking place as well. Contrary to many renewal programs aimed at improving the weaker parts of the city, the idea of the gentrification project was to invest in areas with good opportunities to become the most interesting and exciting neighbourhoods of the city. Although processes of gentrification and urban renewal may overlap, these should still be seen as two different types of investments. This distinction sometimes became blurred during the workshop, as illustrated by the participants’ identification of opportunities. Nonetheless, even confusions like these contributed to providing improved insights into the perceptions and viewpoints of other types of stakeholders. For instance, the municipal respondents mentioned that they were surprised by the different perceptions about the city centre and the passive attitude of other stakeholders in some areas. One of the points of consensus, which was repeated throughout the afternoon, was the need to set priorities. Since the opportunities for gentrification are limited (particularly when compared to Amsterdam) the city should make clear choices.

The notion that gentrification could be facilitated by less instead of more policies, suggested by private stakeholders, was also mentioned as an important lesson learned. At the same time, however, a private developer was surprised by the municipality’s ‘laissez-faire’ attitude with respect to gentrification. A representative of a housing association referred to this approach as pragmatic, yet ‘lacking a bit of focus’. Some lessons about the opportunities of neighbourhoods were learned as well. One participant representing a housing association mentioned in the survey how the workshop inspired him to take another look at his organisation’s strategy for selling social housing units.

Based on informal reactions shared after the workshop and the survey responses, one can conclude that there is a clear need to continue discussing the issue of gentrification in Rotterdam in a similar setting. As stated by a participant representing a housing association,

in my opinion this was the start of a longer process in which eventually all stakeholders in the city should have a role. This will work only if we commit ourselves to it together, with the municipality taking the lead. (Account in survey by respondent working for housing association).

Or in the words of a private developer’s answers in the survey,

these kinds of sessions are fun, but too little is done with them. Continue by appointing concrete projects, have stakeholders add a budget to it and go! This is Rotterdam, this should be possible here. (Account in survey by private developer).
However, due to several practical challenges, not much was done after the workshop. According to a city official, the enthusiasm of the workshop was ‘heard around the department’, but the issue lacked someone ‘owning the problem’, who could lead the effort in further elaborating the items discussed in the workshop: ‘This is what can happen in a large, amorphous organisation like this’ (city official). This pitfall can be avoided by being better prepared: ‘You never know whether workshops like these will generate energy and enthusiasm, but if it does like it did, you should have prepared the possible next step beforehand’ (personal communication, 2008).

It was clear that the scale of the portfolio maps posed a problem for pinpointing gentrification in Rotterdam. This was mentioned during and after the workshop. Data at a lower level were simply not available. Apart from the fact that more disaggregated data and more detailed maps are principally always better, this was also related to the concerning subject of gentrification in Rotterdam. Because gentrification in Rotterdam was thought to take place on a micro-scale, it remains to be seen whether it produces visible effect on the portfolio maps. In Amsterdam on the other hand, data on property values were both available on a lower level of scale and, at the same time, gentrification processes were easier to identify in the maps, even in less detailed maps. Nevertheless, if the portfolio approach were to be applied in Rotterdam again, more detailed maps would be preferable.

There were some contextual factors that influenced the chances of successful application of the approach. First, there is the combination of two aspects: a relative lack of knowledge about where to find gentrification opportunities in the city, This brings a sense of urgency: the planning department and the municipal development agency require more insight in this matter. The workshop (which was a joint initiative by the planning department and the land development agency) helped to combine knowledge of public and private experts about the subject.

There appeared to be an open atmosphere among the participants, which resulted in a lively discussion about gentrification, but also about each other’s roles, i.e. what public and private actors expected from each other. After the workshop, there were compliments on the way the workshop was chaired: specifically about the questions that were asked. This generated an effective pace of discussion, avoiding ‘irrelevant’ distractions and stimulating speedy progress from analysis to opportunities for gentrification.

Regarding the integration of tacit and explicit knowledge, there were some doubts and complaints about the level of detail of the explicit information, i.e. the neighbourhood positions in the portfolio. The maps demonstrated that large scale gentrification apparently did not take place in Rotterdam; however, they could not show the small-scale pockets where it did occur. Because of this, the limited accuracy of the explicit information had to be (and successfully was) compensated by the participants’ tacit knowledge. The explicit information provided by the maps could only set the stage for further discussion. In particular, the participants found the comparison with gentrification in Amsterdam useful.

According to several respondents, a possible follow-up of the workshop should feature more detailed information to support further discussion about specific neighbourhoods and/or strategies. The portfolio maps presented a general image of the dynamics of Rotterdam neighbourhoods; the next level requires information on a more precise smaller scale. More generally, the portfolio approach stimulated the par-
participants to view the city as a portfolio of neighbourhoods. Based on the participants’ reactions during and after the workshop (as well as from the survey responses) this was seen as a new and urgent perspective that stimulated discussion. Several respondents indicated the portfolio maps and matrix, along with the discussion they generated, as the most positive aspect of the workshop. Yet, it seemed also important to simply discuss the opportunities of the neighbourhoods, as mentioned by one of the participants: ‘Individually, we may all perceive an area as interesting, but we need to say this to each other.’

5.14 Conclusion: no conclusion yet

The portfolio approach was applied to eight cases in total, with varied success. With each workshop increased the understanding of the approach, the manner of its application and the appropriate situations/context for applying it. The conclusions and reflections were made only within the context of individual workshops and have only internal validity. More general statements can only be made by means of a cross-case analysis, by examining the differences and similarities between the cases. More evaluation is needed in order to discern the essential aspects of context, mechanism and the outcome of the approach, and the development of the approach. This evaluation should also demonstrate why the current version is better than the earlier versions, which is discussed more extensively in the next chapter.