



MARK BREARLEY AND JANE CLOSSICK

Promoting Industry in Brussels A Good City Has Industry

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
THE SCHOOL OF ART, ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

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Project details

Output authors	Mark Brearley and Jane Clossick
Collaborators	The work presented in this portfolio has been produced in collaboration with several individuals and institutions. A detailed list of contributors is provided in the Acknowledgments section of this document.
Project title	<i>Promoting Industry in Brussels: A Good City Has Industry</i>
Output type	T – Other (Design Process)
Location	Brussels, Belgium
Dates	2014–present
Budget	€175,000
Funders	Departement Omgeving
Partners	Architecture Workroom Brussels and Departement Omgeving





Figure 2. 'A Good City has Industry'
Exhibition, Bozar Brussels 2016.
Photograph: Tim Van de Velde.

Research content and significance

DESCRIPTION

Brussels, like London, is squeezed for land with limited space for new development. Since 2013, Mark Brearley, Jane Clossick and colleagues at AAD Cities, have situated research in Brussels, exploring ways to promote integration of industrial activities into the urban fabric. This portfolio collates multiple strands of action, exploring questions, methods and insights revealed through this process.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research explored the industrial economy in Brussels, assessing the integration of industrial uses into the urban fabric, and testing processes of influencing stakeholders towards valuing and retaining industry.

- Where are the opportunities in the city-region for industrial use-mix and intensification?
- What strategies best integrate industrial accommodation within the city of Brussels in these areas of opportunity?
- How best to raise awareness of the industrial economy and its challenges in Brussels amongst city stakeholders?
- How can the development opportunities be made visible to stakeholders and policymakers?

PROCESS

The four steps to the action research include: 1. Surveying and mapping of past and present geography of the industrial economy; 2. Envisioning future scenarios for key localities through research-by-design; 3. Engendering collaboration between the agencies involved; 4. Advocating ideas generated through step three to accelerate the retention and revalidation of industry. This process was implemented through 20 research-by-design workshops, a major exhibition and multiple engagements with stakeholders.

DISSEMINATION

The research has been disseminated across multiple channels, both as part of the process of producing outputs and at numerous presentations in Brussels, London and across Europe.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of this research lies in the potential loss of industry in the nucleus of the urban fabric in Brussels (as in London). This would have irreversible impact on the economy and ripple effect on functioning of cities, through the decentralisation of livelihoods, affecting social structures in cities. The research made visible this possible degradation, and explored opportunities for altering the course through effecting policy change.

Introduction

Since 2013, Mark Brearley, Jane Clossick and their AAD Cities (formerly Cass Cities) colleagues have been undertaking action research in Brussels, exploring how to reveal and promote the integration of industrial activities into the urban fabric. Their interventions have engaged with a number of European cities, including London (Clossick and Brearley, 2020), but a substantial part of the work has focused on industrial areas in Brussels, asking if and under which conditions (physical, economic, social and political) industrial uses can be intensified through the introduction of innovative types of industrial accommodation; and how the political and cultural attitude towards industry in the city can be shifted. The two aims of this research were to reveal the industrial economy in Brussels and explore the integration of industrial uses into the urban fabric; and to test the process of influencing stakeholders towards valuing and retaining industry.

Brussels has a number of industrial sites threatened by redevelopment for other, higher-value uses, including Buda, Vilvoorde and Molenbeek. Brearley and Clossick engaged with these localities and with local, regional and national stakeholders to undertake action-research activities which included workshops, exhibitions, lectures and

meetings. This research has developed through a co-productive, design-based, and action-oriented methodology, and crucially, through the engagement of key stakeholders at all stages of the research—including policy makers, urban developers and design professionals from Brussels, Flanders and beyond. As a result, Brearley and Clossick's work has reached and benefitted a wide audience, detailed in a separate REF2021 Impact Case Study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

These questions come in two types, first practical questions about the city and its urban design:

1. Where are the opportunities in the city-region for industrial use-mix and intensification?
2. What strategies best integrate industrial accommodation within the city of Brussels in these areas of opportunity?

Second, questions concerning the persuasion of stakeholders towards industrial intensification and use-mix:

3. How best to raise awareness of the industrial economy and its challenges in Brussels amongst city stakeholders?
4. How can the development opportunities be made visible to stakeholders and policymakers?



Figures 2 and 3. (Top) Industrial area of Buda, Brussels. Photograph: Carmel King. (Lower) Aerial photograph of Buda.

Source: Urban Workshops Report by J. Zaman, 2020.

Research context

Brussels, like London, is squeezed for land and there is limited space for new development. It consists of just 162 km² (63 sq. mi) with a population of over 1.2 million. It has a different language and governance structure to the neighbouring Walloon and Flemish regions of Belgium, and the regional governments have virtually no history of working together on urban planning and design at their borders. Recent legislation (ZEMU) permits housing to be built on industrial zoned land, but the public actors driving such legislation are without sufficient knowledge of appropriate industrial functions which can exist alongside housing (Hill, 2018). The regional borders tend to be where industrial uses are situated, and without urban husbandry, the lowest-value uses such as industry tend to be priced out of these localities, and the land turned over for development of housing and services.

Retaining and intensifying industry in cities such as Brussels is an important priority for sustainable growth. The definition of industry includes a broad range of activities: manufacturing, storage and distribution, waste management and recycling, wholesale markets. Industrial activity meets the expanding just-in-time needs of 21st century cities, without excessive trip generation and associated carbon

emissions. Industry is an important component of a diversified economy that offers employment opportunities to suit all. It is resilient to economic, technological or social shocks and creates entrepreneurial endeavour, generating enterprise valuable for the wider economy. However, prior to Brearley and Clossick's involvement, industrial uses in Brussels were frequently undervalued and brushed aside by policymakers.

The research aimed to uncover the nature of the industrial economy in Brussels, and to explore design possibilities for integrating industry into the urban fabric. Examples of industrial activities are shown in Figures 4–7. Prior to AAD Cities collaborations, there was a paucity of detailed analysis of industrial uses in the Brussels region: “The question of what type of manufacturing is relevant to Brussels remains a serious challenge for many public actors and community groups, who are aware of the pressing tide of change facing the little remaining ... land currently zoned industrial” (Hill, 2018). In general, industry remains very important as an element of the economy in urban areas, yet it is poorly understood (Ferm and Jones 2017). This is true of Brussels, where all industrial uses had previously been clumped together as purple industrial zones with

no differentiation or examination of their delicate ecologies. This research sought to add to this literature and field of practice, both by providing policymakers and collaborators with methods to undertake detailed analysis of industry in Brussels (Clossick and Brearley, 2020), and by producing detailed design research on how to integrate industrial uses into the urban fabric.

The second aim of this research was to identify how to make a difference in urban space through influencing stakeholders and policymakers. Most academics are keen to impact policymaking but often it is difficult to identify where to begin (Evans and Cvitanovic, 2018). There is little research on pathways to achieve impact, and the comparative effectiveness of different methods has not been established (Haynes et al., 2011; Douglas, 2012; Wilkinson, 2017). This research sought to contribute to this literature in several ways. Firstly, by testing what has worked as 'good evidence' for impacting policy in Brussels; secondly, testing different methods of communication of that evidence to stakeholders at all levels; thirdly, drawing conclusions about which actions are most impactful in Brussels when it comes to shifting or accelerating urban policy towards integration of industrial uses into the urban fabric.

Ultimately, the research should offer a set of tools for academics who wish to engage with influencing policy.



Figure 4. Rue Massui. Photograph: Bas Bogaerts.



Figure 5, 6 and 7. (Top) Godiva factory, Koekelberg. (Centre) Greenbizz. (Lower) Rue Heyvaert. Photographs: Mark Brearley.

Research process

Action research is a methodology which co-produces knowledge and action to find solutions for pressing on-the-ground problems (Bartels and Wittmayer, 2018). In addition to situating the research in the academic landscape, the action-research undertaken in Brussels required a recognition of broader policymaking dynamics, and efforts to understand the nature of the stakeholders as audiences and participants in the work (Jones and Crow, 2018). Action-research was an appropriate methodology for this research because the primary goal was impact, to change the course of urban planning in Brussels. Over the five years of the project, the reflective process of action-research—in which the practitioner undertakes an action, then reflects on its success—allowed for expanding the network of stakeholders involved in the project, and for refining of our modes of engagement.

The research includes four intellectual strands: surveying and mapping; envisioning future scenarios; engendering collaboration between agencies; and advocating for the retention and densification of industry in Brussels. These strands correspond with the research questions and have been explored through many forms of engagement with the sites and stakeholders under investigation.

SURVEYING AND MAPPING

Part of the investigation involved revealing the geography of the industrial economy, past and present. A key innovation of this work was the adoption of an original ‘industrial audit’ methodology refined in London (Brearley and Clossick, 2020), based on the collection of architectural, qualitative and quantitative data, and disseminated through graphic displays in publications and exhibitions.

ENVISIONING FUTURE SCENARIOS

Key localities were identified and future scenarios envisioned through research-by-design—primarily through a series of participatory design workshops. The research conducted in these locations included spatial mapping of existing economic activities; identifying opportunities for industrial intensification and a mixing of uses, and exploring architectural and urban design options for exploiting those opportunities. The key action was sharing the design research produced with a wide variety of stakeholders: developers, architects, landowners and local and national governance actors. For example, figures 8–11 include images of the November 2017 *Leuvensesteenweg workshop*, which drew from Brearley’s experience at design for London and explored



Figures 8-11. Leuvensesteenweg workshop, held at Firma, Brussels, 2014. (Top left) Jane Clossick. (Top right) Mark Brearley.

(Lower left) Jan Zaman. (Lower right) Dann Jessen (at presentation to stakeholders). Photographs: Jane Clossick.

possibilities for integrating and densifying industrial uses.

COLLABORATION

Collaboration was engendered between the agencies involved, especially cross-border between Brussels and Flanders. The introduction of new types of development requires public agencies to work in collaboration and with property owners, developers, and businesses. In Brussels there is scant history of such collaboration, and we tested ways in which stakeholders can be brought together into neutral territory and introduced to ideas of densification and retention of industry.

ADVOCATING IDEAS GENERATED THROUGH SURVEYING, MAPPING AND ENVISIONING

This component of the process was a catalyst for accelerating the retention and revalidation of industry in Brussels. The team focused on dissemination and persuasion through many events such as design research workshops; multiple meetings with stakeholders; public talks in Brussels, Rotterdam and across Europe, as illustrated through Figures 18 and 19 and documented in the Dissemination section of this portfolio.



Figure 12. Tweet from Architecture Workroom Brussels showing Lefevrestraat workshop, 2018. Benoit Moritz front left.

Figure 13. We Made That blog post on their involvement with Bordet workshop, one of the 2020 series.



Figure 14. Walk around Brussels as part of Buda winter workshop 2017, led by Mark Brearley. Photograph: Jane Clossick.



Figures 15, 16 and 17. (Top and centre) Images from Leuvensesteenweg winter workshop 2017, led by Mark Brearley

and Jane Clossick. (Lower) Presentation of workshop findings in London 2017. Photographs: Jane Clossick.



Figures 18 and 19. (Top) Architecture Workroom Brussels Tweet showing Atelier Zennevallei, 2017. (Lower) 'Fitting more

Industries in Brüssel' discussion with Keving Borret, Mark Brearley, Paul Karakusevic, 2017. Photograph: Finola Moore.

Research activities

The strands of research outlined above were explored through a diverse set of activities, which can be briefly summarized as follows: 2014–2016, workshops in collaboration with and funded by Departement Omgeving, followed by an invitation to Brearley to become the BSI-CityDev Chair (2019). In 2017–2019, further workshops related to the Flurry Noordrand project in Zennevallei, Bordet and Lefevrestraat, as well as workshops related to Brearley's position as BSI-CityDev Chair. Key activities are listed in the following pages, and further details are provided in the timeline (Figure 36) and in the Dissemination section of this portfolio.

Throughout the period of involvement (ongoing in 2020), the research has seen the collaboration and contribution of many individuals and institutions, including amongst others Mr Kristiaan Borret (City Architect for Brussels), Mr Benjamin Cadranel (CEO at Citydev. Brussels), Mr Roeland Dudal (Director at Architecture Workroom Brussels), Ms Charlotte Kokken (Project Manager at Equipe Canal) and Mr Jan Zaman (Spatial Planner at Departement Omgeving). A full list of collaborators is provided in the Acknowledgements section of this portfolio.

WORKSHOP LEFÈVRESTRAT

There were 12 five-day participatory workshops 2014-2019, engaging with industrial localities and design questions. Here is presented one example as indicative of the type of activity and output which was undertaken: *Workshop Lefèvrestraat, 20–24 May 2019*. See Figures 21 –23 for images.

CORE THEMES

- Embedded large scale industry in dense urban fabric
- Conflicts of uses
- Industry and public space

TEAM

Federico Giaretta, Jan Terwecoren, Annekatrien Verdickt, Jan Zaman, with the contribution of Benjamin Cadranel.

VISITORS

Anthony Callens, Véronique Dechamps, Nicolas Doesburg, Roeland Dudal, Charlotte Kokken, Alix Lewalle, Lotte Luykx, Benoit Moritz, Jan Zaman.

The focus of the workshop was the remaining area of industry, protected by designation, that adjoins Lefèvrestraat, Brussels. We explored its relationship with the surrounding urban areas, examined its potential for more interface with the surrounding city fabric, and tested how to design shared-use streets

-04
/07
/17

MORE INFO &
REGISTRATION
WWW.

**ATELIER
BRUSSELS**

.eu



/EN

**—FITTING MORE
INDUSTRY IN**

The debate about where we are going to live and work in the future, is in full swing. To make more room in the city for an urban economy, we need to combine better, we need to stack more compactly and more efficiently. This requires new spatial models. International experts share their vision and experiences in lectures and a panel discussion.

/NL

**—INDUSTRIE MEER
RUIJTE GEVEN**

Het debat over waar we in de toekomst zullen wonen en werken wordt volop gevoerd. Om meer ruimte te maken in de stad voor een stedelijke economie moeten we beter combineren, slimmer verdichten en efficiënter stapelen. Dit vereist nieuwe ruimtelijke modellen. In lezingen en een panelgesprek delen internationale experts hun visie en ervaringen.

/FR

**—DONNER PLUS D'
ESPACE À L'INDUSTRIE**

Le débat sur la façon dont nous habiterons et travaillerons à l'avenir est pleinement entamé. Afin d'aménager plus d'espace dans la ville pour une économie urbaine, nous devons combiner mieux, densifier de manière intelligente et superposer de manière plus efficace. Ceci demande de nouveaux modèles spatiaux. Des experts internationaux partageront leur vision et expériences lors de conférences et de tables rondes.

/ WITH AMONG OTHERS / MET ONDER MEER / AVEC ENTRE AUTRES :

- **Paul Karakusevic** (Karakusevic Carson Architects, London)
- **Hape Schneider** (Hafencity, Hamburg)
- **Joost Beunderman** (OO, London)
- **Mark Brearley** (Cass Institute / Atelier Brussels / Kaymet, London)
- **Kristiaan Borret** (bMa, Brussels)

19h00 - *Perspective.Brussels, rue de Namur 59, 1000 Bruxelles - Language: English*



DEPARTEMENT
OMGEVING



perspective
.brussels

Cass
Cities

QW
b

Atelier
Brussels

Figure 20. Flyer for Atelier Brussels *Fitting more industry In* talk, 4 July 2017.

‘Workshop Lefèvrestraat’

20th - 24th May 2019
24th May final presentation introduced by Benjamin Cadranet (Citydev)

Embedded large scale industry in dense urban fabric

Conflicts of uses

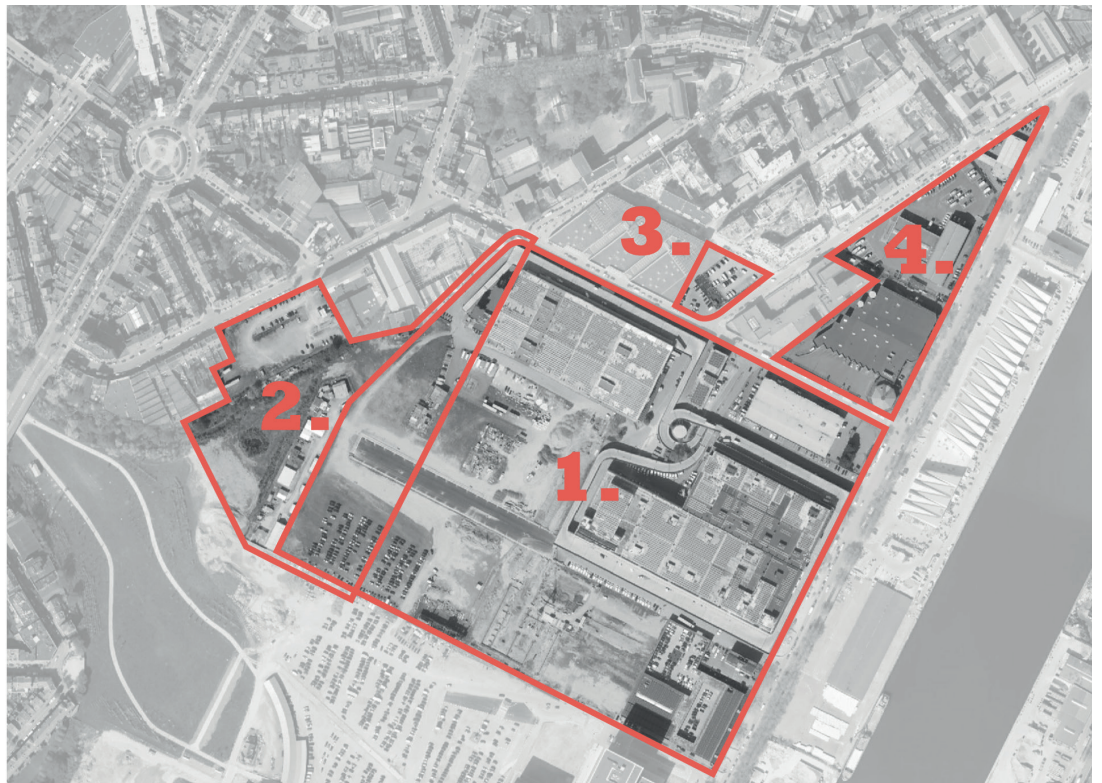
Relationship between industry and public space

Team

Mark Brearley
Annekatrien Verdictt
Jan Terwecoren
Federico Giaretta
Jan Zaman

Visitors

Benoit Moritz
Roeland Dudal
Jan Zaman
Véronique Dechamps
Federico Giaretta
Charlotte Kokken
Alix Lewalle
Lotte Luyckx
Anthony Callens
Nicolas Doesburg



Figures 21 and 22. Images produced at Lefèvrestraat workshop, showing visions for multistorey industrial buildings. Images from

Urban Economy Workshops Report by Jan Zaman, 2020.

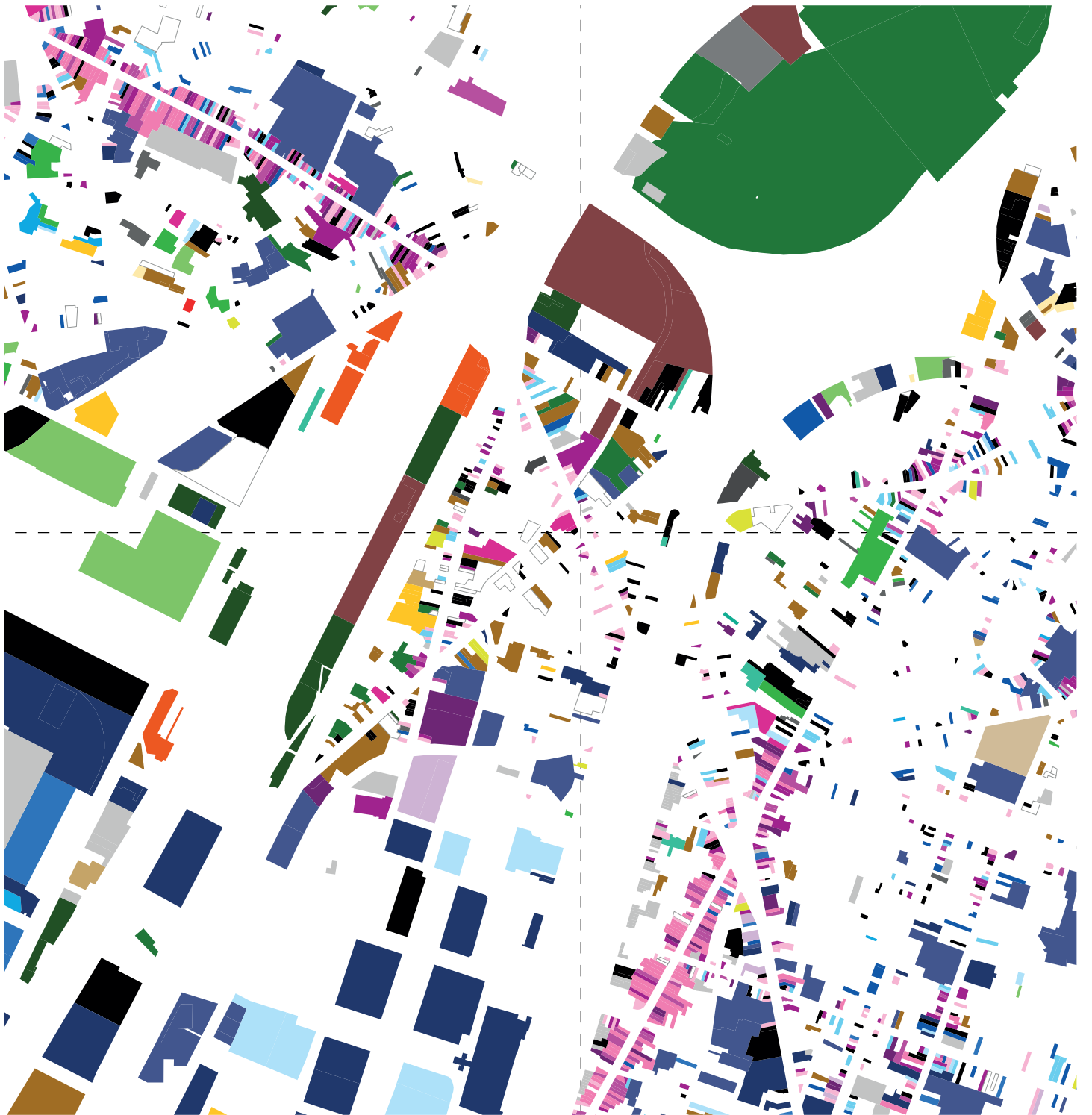








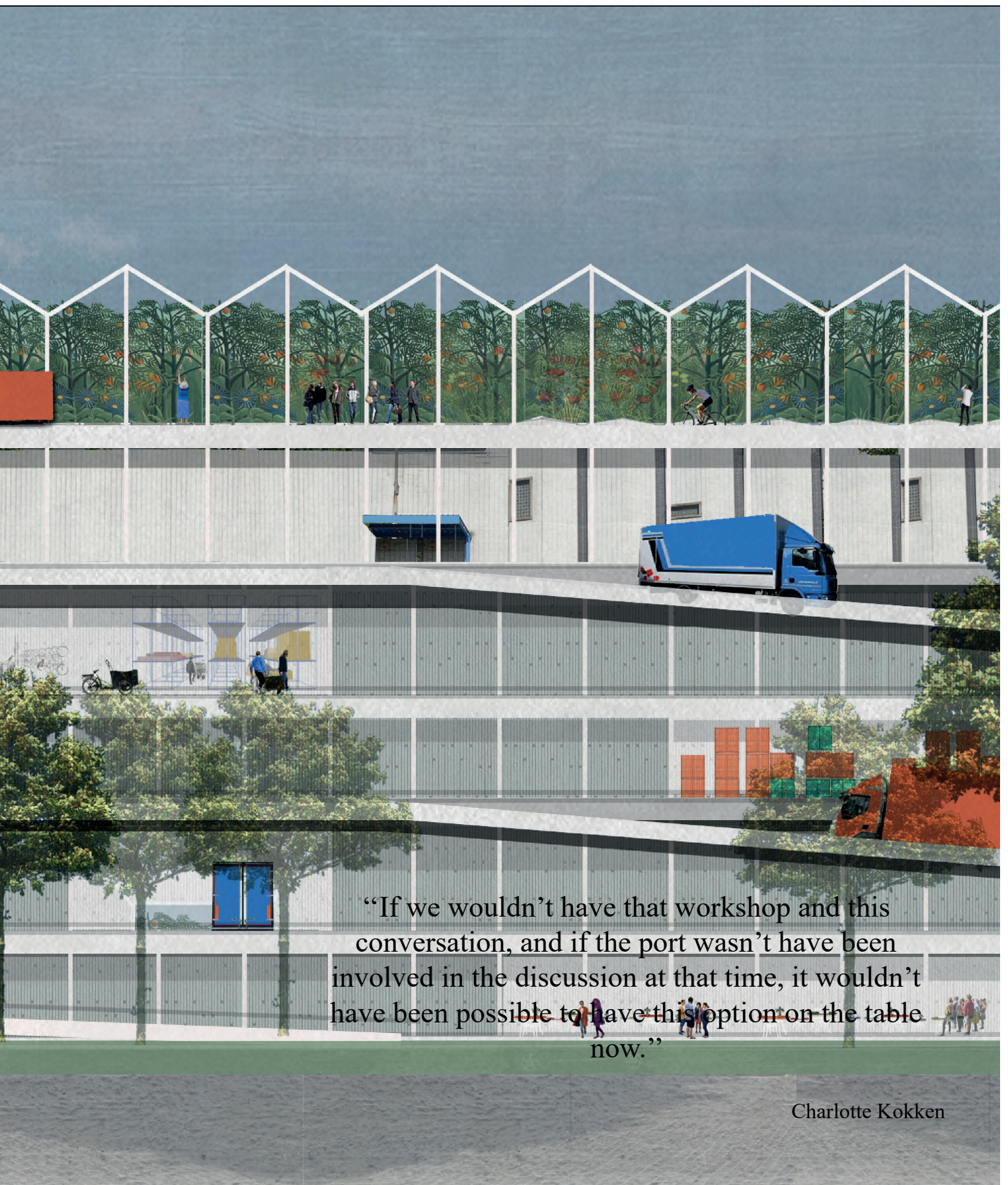
Figure 23. Audit of district. Images from *Urban Economy Workshops Report* by Jan Zaman, 2020.

Legend
20200930_MAPPING
Categories

-  MAG - Manufacture Agriculture
-  MCO - Manufacture Construction materials
-  MMM - Manufacture Metals & machinery
-  MFC - Manufacture Food, beverages & Catering
-  MO - Manufacture Other
-  MPP - Printing & publishing
-  UT - Utilities
-  VA - Vehicles Air
-  VB - Vehicles Bicycles
-  VC - Vehicles Cars & trucks
-  VR - Vehicles railways
-  VW - Vehicles Water
-  CGS - Construction General & structural
-  CIE - Construction Interior & exterior finishing
-  CGA - Construction Gardening & landscaping
-  WC - Wholesale Construction
-  WF - Wholesale Food & beverage
-  WO - Wholesale Other
-  WTS - Transport & storage
-  SE - Services Education
-  SPU - Services Public
-  SHC - Services Health Care
-  SFL - Services Financial, insurance, Legal consultancy
-  SPC - Services Creative, media & advertisement
-  SRD - Services Research, Innovation & development
-  SOP - Services Other Personal
-  SPR - Services Professional
-  SSG - Supporting services Goods related
-  SSC - Supporting services Building related and construction
-  RC - Retail Construction
-  RF - Retail Food
-  RG - Retail Home & gardening
-  RO - Retail Other
-  RP - Retail Personal
-  RB - Restaurants, Cafés & takeaways
-  RH - Hotels & B&B
-  ACS - Arts, Culture , Leisure & Sports
-  F - Faith
-  OU - Unknown
-  E - Vacant



Architectuurplatform (2019) Workshop Lefevrestraat - proposal for an improved TIR-center



“If we wouldn’t have that workshop and this conversation, and if the port wasn’t have been involved in the discussion at that time, it wouldn’t have been possible to have this option on the table now.”

Charlotte Kokken

Figure 24. Image produced at *Lefevrestraat workshop*, showing visions for multistorey industrial buildings. Images from *Urban*

Economy Workshops Report by Jan Zaman, 2020.

with goods access. Proposals were made for re-validation and expansion of the TIR facility the final phase of Greenbiz, and a multi-storey multi-let industrial development.

A GOOD CITY HAS INDUSTRY

An exhibition held at International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam, BOZAR Brussels 2016-2017, shown again at the Felixart Gallery in Drogenbos in 2017. The exhibition presented the architectural proposals and urban strategies developed in *IABR-Atelier Brussels: The Productive Metropolis* (below) for which Brearley was the Atelier Meister.

ATELIER BRUSSELS

Steering group: perspective.brussels, bMa, OVAM, Ruimte Vlaanderen, Province of Vlaams-Brabant, POM Vlaams-Brabant, IABR, Architecture Workroom Brussels.

Atelier Meister: Brearley & AAD (Cass) Cities, London Metropolitan University. Design Research: plusoffice architects, WRKSHP collectif; CENTRAL, Eva Le Roi and Maxime Del-vaux; URA, Yves Malysse and Kiki Verbeeck); Space-lab.be; Fabric, ULB (LoUlsE and BATir). Circle Economy Publication: A+ Architecture in Belgium.

EXHIBITION PRODUCTION

Curator: Architecture Workroom Brussels

Co-production: IABR, AWB, BOZAR

Coordination: Iwan Strauven, Francis Carpentier (BOZAR)

Scenography: 51N4E

Graphic design: Ward Heirwegh

Photography: Bas Bogaerts

Text: Joeri De Bruyn, Architecture

Workroom Brussels

Translation: Nathalie Callens (FR), Lisa

Page (ENG), Sandra Atterbury (ENG)

Films: Storyrunner, Jonathan Ortegat,

Bertrand Lafontaine Producers:

Vidisquare, Milo-profi, zwartopwit,

Lettershop Edegem, Nick Dewilde, Atelier

Verstrepen, ASAP, PMR.

The exhibition represented the participation of Brussels and Flanders in the seventh edition of the International Architecture Biennale in Rotterdam IABR 2016 – The Next Economy. The exhibition brought together existing urban strategies and current projects which concerned retention and densification of industry in Brussels. In addition, hypothetical projects were displayed, proposed by architects, policy makers, experts, developers and entrepreneurs working together on design re-search projects, to briefs formulated by Brearley and the project team. The exhibition presented 10 ways to build the ‘productive city’ of the future as well as showing the extensive mapping work undertaken by AAD Cities in Brussels.

MENU IABR-

«IABR-EDITIES: 2003 - 2018 IABR-2016-THE NEXT ECONOMY AGENDA IABR-2016-

26-15
2017
OKT JAN
PALEIS VOOR SCHONE KUNSTEN, BRUSSEL

**A GOOD CITY HAS
INDUSTRY**

IABR ATELIER BRUSSEL IN BOZAR,
BRUSSEL

De resultaten van Atelier Brussel vormden een belangrijk onderdeel van de hooftentoonstelling van IABR-2016-THE NEXT ECONOMY in Rotterdam. Nu worden de resultaten ook getoond in BOZAR/Paleis voor Schone Kunsten te Brussel, de hoofdstad van Europa, als het hart van de tentoonstelling **A Good City Has Industry**.

Gekoppeld aan de tentoonstelling vindt er een uitgebreid programma van debatten, lezingen en master classes plaats. Voor meer informatie klik [hier](#).



FOTO: SAS BOGAERTS 2016

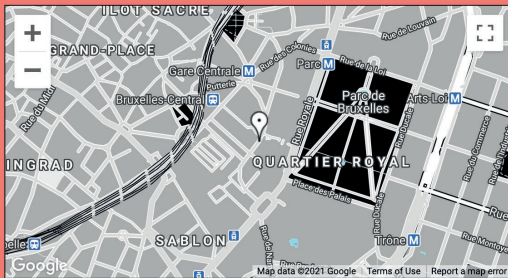
De tentoonstelling toont de noodzaak voor ruimte in het metropolitane gebied van Brussel voor de huisvesting van een diverse economie. Industrie maakt een vitaal deel uit van het rijke economische en stedelijke weefsel van een veerkrachtige stad. De binnen het Atelier ontwikkelde strategieën laten zien hoe productieve activiteiten opnieuw een plaats kunnen krijgen in de stad. Een stad waar men kan wonen én werken.

Locatie: BOZAR, 1e verdieping Ravensteingallerij, 1000, Brussel

Data: 26 oktober 2016 - 15 januari 2017

Openingstijden: di - zo 10:00-18:00, do 10:00-21:00

Toegang: Gratis



GERELATEERD

[IABR-ATELIER BRUSSEL](#)

DOWNLOADS



[FOLDER ATELIER BXL](#)

[TWEET](#)

26.10.16
15.01.17

**BO
ZAR**

[ENG]

A Good City
Has Industry



Figure 25 and 26. (Left) Exhibition poster for 'A Good City Has Industry, source: <https://iabr.nl/nl/event16/bozar16>. (Right) Images

from exhibition booklet, by AWB.



Figures 27, 28 and 29. *A Good City Has Industry*, 2016 BOZAR exhibition. Photographs: Tim Van de Velde.

Atelier Brussels

Urban Agenda
Public Program

Atelier Brussels is the first edition of a public workroom program focusing on architecture and the art of city-making. Architects, urban actors, policy makers and experts present ongoing work, share insights and set an ambitious agenda for designing the future.

Curated by Architecture Workroom Brussels in the framework of the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam 2016, entitled The Next Economy.

EXHIBITION

A GOOD CITY HAS INDUSTRY

26.10.16 BOZAR
↓
15.01.17 Ravensteingallery 48
Brussels

25.10.16 Opening event with
AT 19:30 parallel debate
sessions and
presentations

Launch of A+262
[Re]work

15.01.17 Closing event with
AT 15:00 cake and coffee

SYMPOSIUM

THE PRODUCTIVE METROPOLIS

29.11.16 BOZAR
FROM 9:30
TO 17:00 Rue Ravensteinstraat 23
Brussels

DEBATES

DESIGNING THE FUTURE

Atelier BMWSTR
Ravensteingallery 54-59
Brussels

01.12.16 The Healthy City
AT 19:00

08.12.16 Energy Regions
AT 19:00

22.12.16 Designing With Flows
AT 19:00

12.01.17 The Productive City
AT 19:00

26.01.17 Visionary Housing
AT 19:00

09.02.17 Less Infrastructure,
AT 19:00 Better Mobility

23.02.17 Ambitious Open
AT 19:00 Spaces

Images: Ben Rogiers
Graphic Design: Wael Hamegh
Responsible Publisher: Jochen Delecloux, Houtvinklaai 20, 1000 Brussels

URBAN WALKS

Exploring The Productive
Metropolis
by Ruimte Vlaanderen

18.11.16 Industrial [Dutch]
AT 19:00 Groundfloors

27.11.16 Industrious [Dutch]
AT 19:00 Valleys

11.12.16 High Streets [Dutch]

PUBLICATION

A+ 262 [Re]work
on sale at www.a-plus.be/
shop and in specialized
bookshops

MASTERCLASSES

Designing With Flows
by Fabric and ULB/BATir
for OVAM

08.12.16, 22.12.16,
12.01.17, 02.02.17

The Healthy City
By IABR, Architectuur
Lokaal and AWB

14.11.16 → 18.11.16
01.12.16, 02.12.16

The Productive High Street
by CASS Cities for
Ruimte Vlaanderen

18.11.16 Presentation
AT 10:00

For more info, updates and registration please visit

WWW.ATELIERBRUSSELS.EU



Figure 30. *Atelier Brussels* program, Images: Carmel King <https://www.iabr.nl/media/document/original/atelierbxl_folder.pdf>



Figure 31. (Top) Exhibition opening, *A Good City Has Industry*, BOZAR, 2016. Photograph: Renaud Schrobiltgen.

Figure 32. (Bottom) *Atelier Brussels* workshop at BOZAR 2016. Photograph: Jonathan Ortegat.



Figures 33 and 34. Exhibition opening, *A Good City Has Industry*, BOZAR, 2016.
Photograph: Renaud Schrobiltgen.

ATELIER BRUSSELS - THE
PRODUCTIVE METROPOLIS

13-minute video entitled *Atelier Brussels*
– *The Productive Metropolis* (2016).

This is a documentary by Storyrunner in collaboration with Architecture Workroom Brussels in the framework of the IABR 2016 Atelier Brussels – The Productive Metropolis, for which Brearley was Atelier Meister. Supported by OVAM, Brussels-Capital Region and Departement Omgeving. The video makes the argument that the different districts of Brussels can be brought together with industry, that industrial uses provide local jobs as well as a stepping stone into the economy for the most economically disadvantaged members of society. Brearley argues that development needs to no longer be monofunctional, but to be mixed and inventive and he explores examples from Brussels' historical urban fabric. He comments that much more industry has been lost from London than Brussels, and that Brussels is in an excellent position to participate in the next, productive, economy of the 21st century, and has all the tools it needs for the creation of a sustainable, circular economy. The documentary was shown at the *A Good City Has Industry* exhibition.

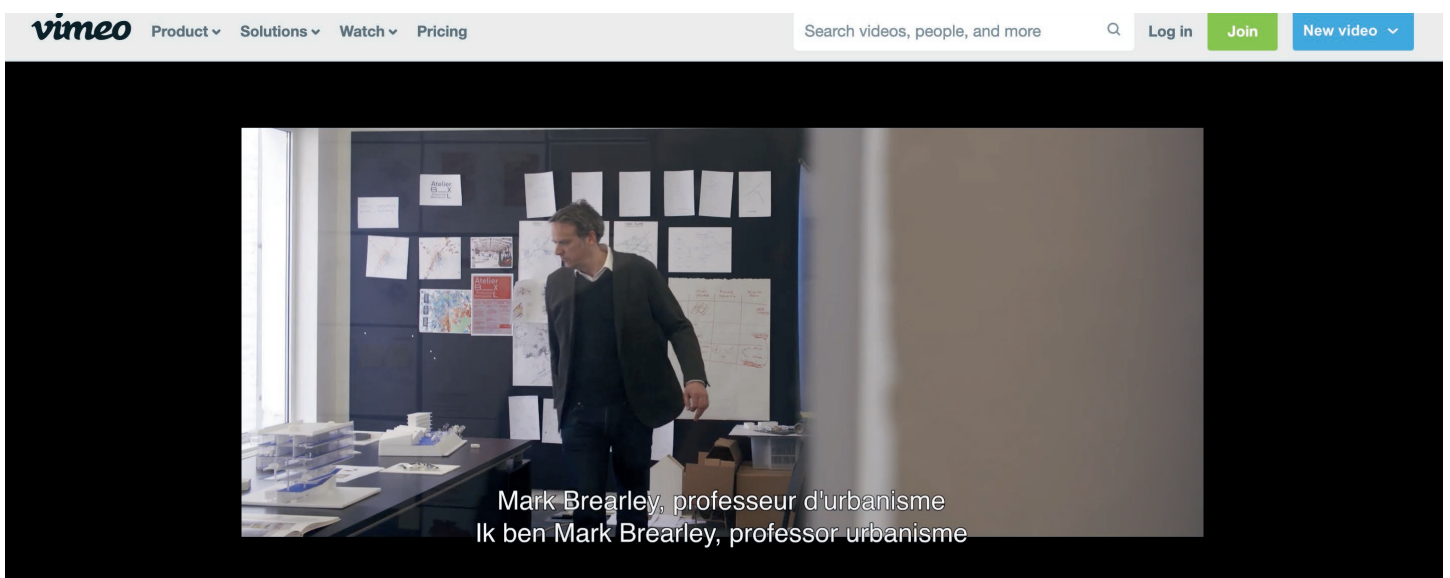
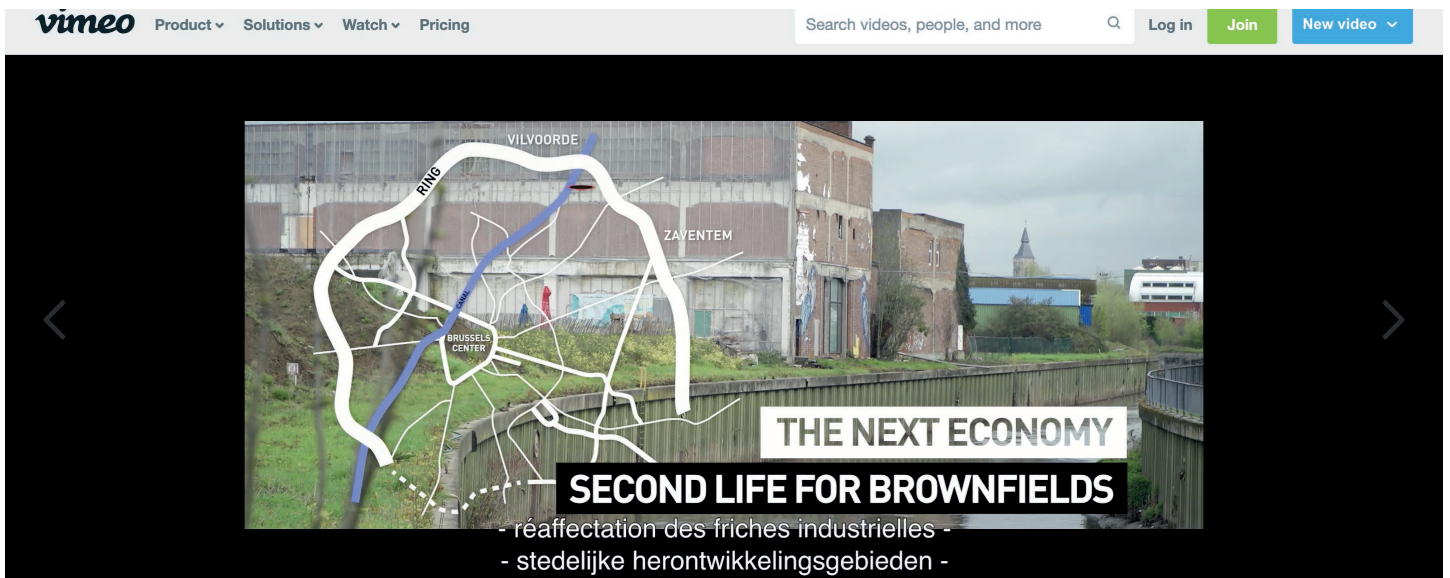
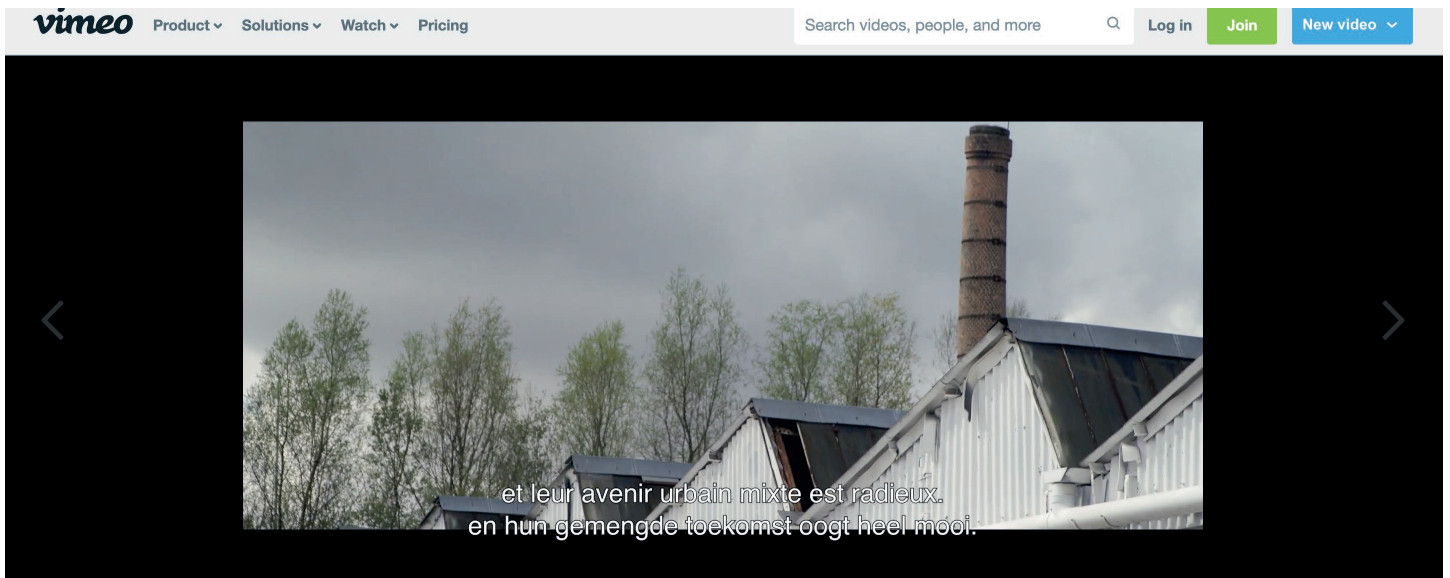
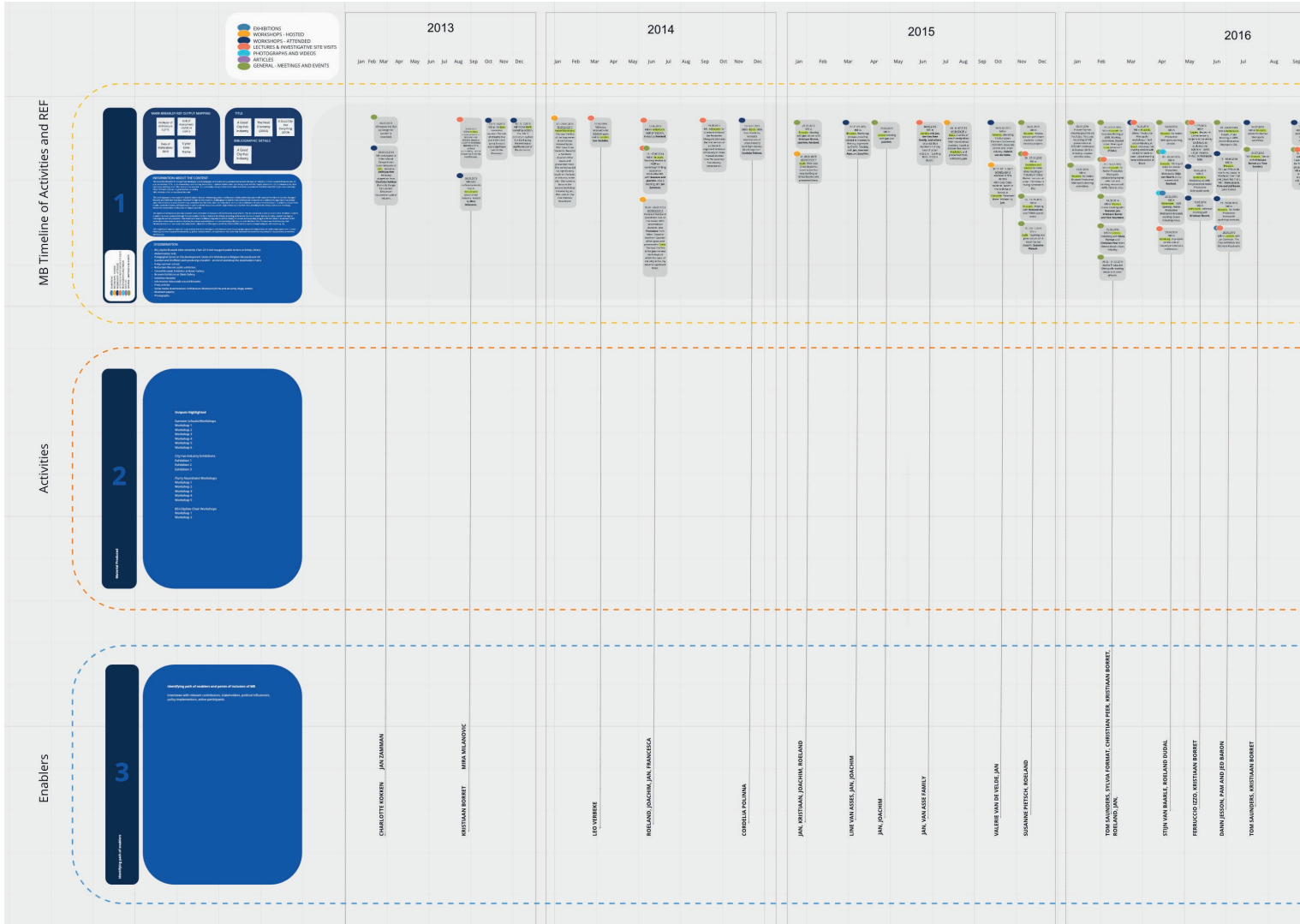


Figure 35. Stills from the *Atelier Brussels - The Productive Metropolis* video, Storyrunner, 2016.



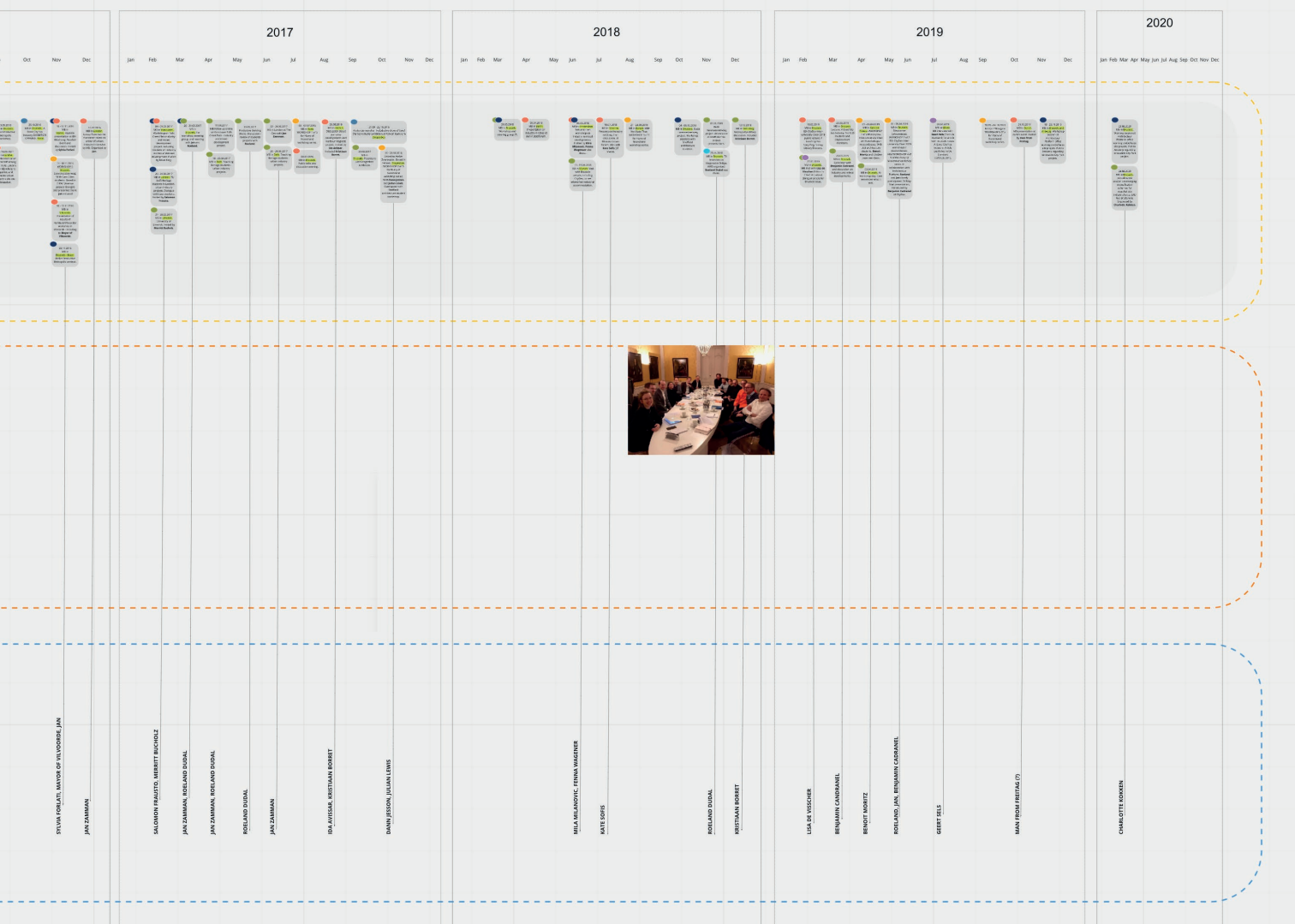


Figure 36. Diagram showing every activity undertaken for this piece of action research from 2014-2020.

For details see <https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_ks0YSx4>

Research insights

SURVEYING AND MAPPING

Research question: Where are the opportunities in the city-region for industrial use-mix and intensification?

Working with Departement Omgeving, locations were identified which are suitable for use-mix and intensification, and these areas were the foci for the design research workshops as well as mapping activities carried out by collaborators using methods established by AAD Cities in London (Clossick and Brearley, 2020). The locations included Noordrand, Buda, Kerklaan, Chaussee de Louvain (Leuvensesteenweg), Zennevallei, Roeselare, Bordet and Lefevrestraat.

Representing industrial activities both through maps and photographic cataloguing was an effective tool of persuasion towards the value of integrating industrial activities into the urban fabric; examples produced by Architecture Workroom Brussels using our techniques can be seen in Figures 37 and 38. The major insight from this process was that by differentiating nuanced industrial and economic activities and making them visible to stakeholders, then policymakers, communities and designers can appreciate their civic and economic value.

Decision-making on urban space never adheres to the ideal of ‘evidence based’, in part because the evidence is so wide-ranging and open to interpretation. According to Gigerenzer and Selten (2001), individuals use ‘rational’ shortcuts when there is an overwhelming volume of information available which include trusting experts, emotions and familiarity with issues (Jones and Thomas, 2017). Here, we framed the evidence by creating images which simplified, explicated and allowed familiarity to develop. In turn, this allowed stakeholders to become more receptive to the proposed policy and urban design solutions, as the quote below from the testimonial letter of Kristian Borret, the city architect of Brussels, illustrates: [This] “research shows that our cities have been undergoing gentrification and as an outcome, industrial accommodation has been pushed outside of urban areas; and that this is a harmful process, and should be challenged” (London Metropolitan University 2021).

In Brussels, Brearley was able to define and describe this phenomenon with precision—partly by presenting the situation in London as a negative example, with its more extreme neoliberal economy and *lassaiz-faire* approach in planning. He also persuaded many that in an urban planning environment that is as

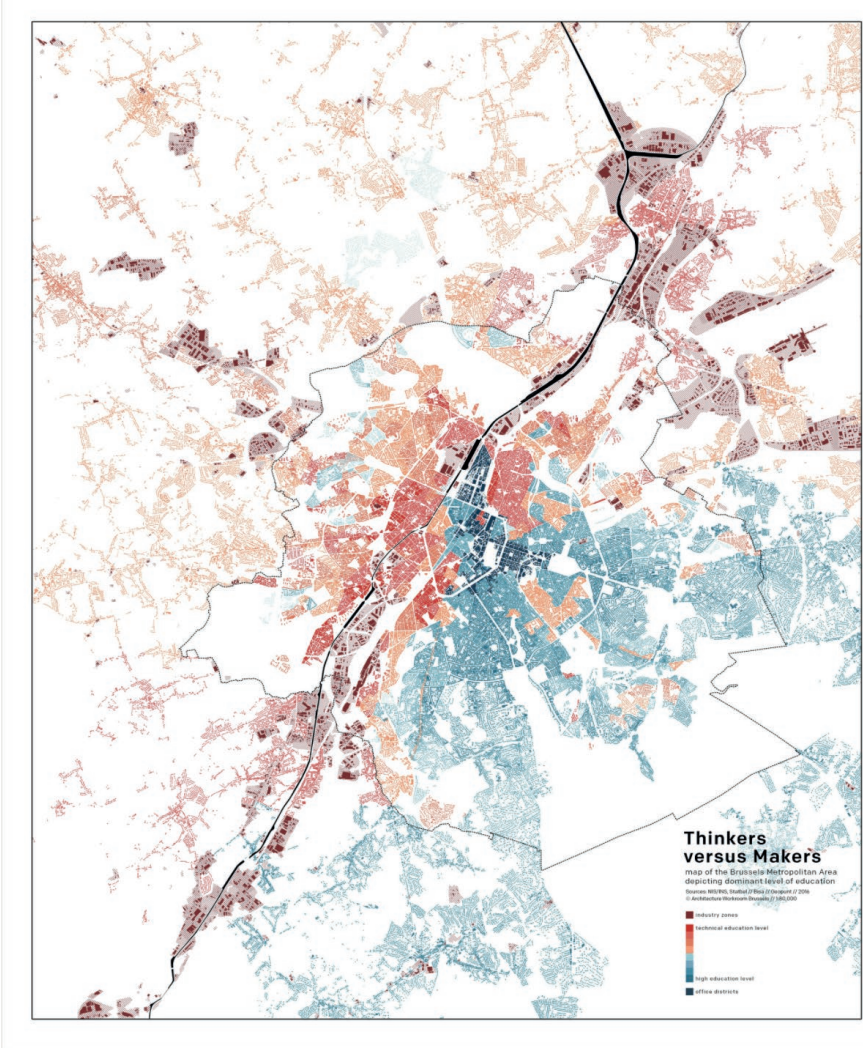
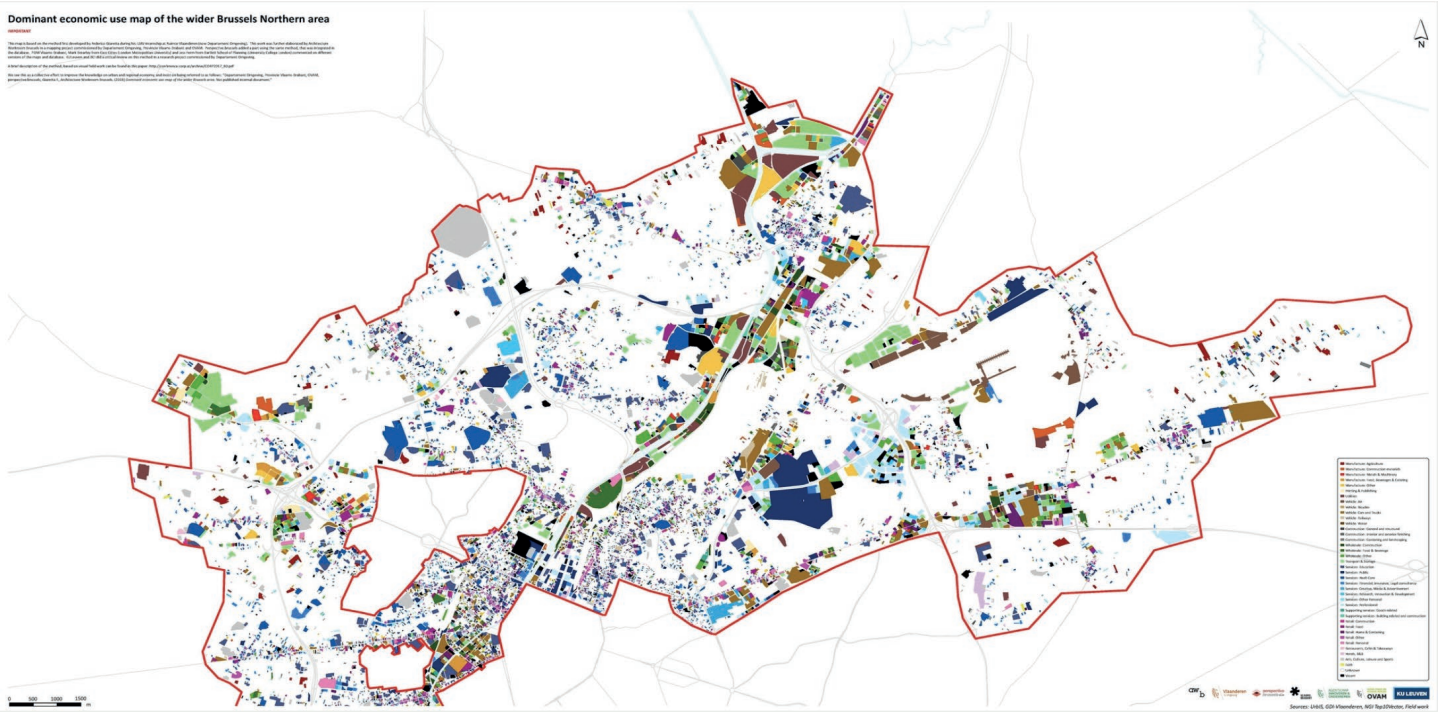


Figure 37. Mapping the Urban Economy, AWB, Department of the Environment, et al. 2016-2020. Figure 38. Thinkers vs Makers

Map, AWB, 2016. Sources: <<https://www.architectureworkroom.eu/en/narratives/2756/a-good-city-has-industry>>

state-led as the one we have in Belgium, we could take action to change the course of urban development.

ENVISIONING

Research question: What strategies best integrate industrial accommodation within the city of Brussels in these areas of opportunity?

In addition to mapping and cataloguing industrial activities, the teams who participated in the workshops and contributed to the *A Good City Has Industry* exhibition, proposed strategies for integrating industrial accommodation into the areas of focus. Such strategies ranged from suggesting giant multi-storey industrial buildings, to integrating industry into proposals for housing intensification, to adding market halls, bars and coffee shops into existing industrial areas. As with other cities, history shows us that industrial accommodation is easily integrated into the urban fabric of Brussels. However, market forces tend towards the expulsion of industry in favour of higher value uses and it is therefore a combination of policy change as well as practical solutions to industrial intensification and use-mix which are required.

A key insight was that in Brussels the intensification of industrial areas is

achievable in economic, architectural and urban terms but that the value of such development is not necessarily apparent to property owners, developers and policymakers without showing them alternative scenarios through design.

Where such scenarios were shared effectively, and examples of good integration shown, persuasion took place, often through the medium of ‘walking and talking’ as described elsewhere (Clossick and Brearley, 2020). For example, in Figures 39 and 40, is shown the original sketch by Brearley which influenced Benjamin Cadranel of Brussels state developers Citydev.Brussels, as he explained: “Brearley worked closely ... to study a specific site close to one of our large projects, near the area known as Port of Brussels. The idea was to show how we can radically re-think the regeneration of such place, without any financial and political constraints. It was meant to be a theoretical exercise, but the accumulation of theoretical exercises can fuel real projects ... we are about to launch Phase Two of our project Greenbiz which is in the same location, and we are definitely going to bear in mind the proposals that were developed in those workshops ... they will fuel the minds of those who are going to write the tender for the area” (London Metropolitan University, 2021).



Figures 39 and 40. (Top) Original Mark Brearley sketch for the site of Greenbizz. (Lower) Proposed plans from Benjamin

Cadranel for Greenbizz ("your work will serve as inspiration").

ENGENDERING COLLABORATION AND ADVOCATING

Research questions: How best to raise awareness of the industrial economy and its challenges in Brussels amongst city stakeholders? How can the development opportunities be made visible to stakeholders and policymakers?

The long history of segregated spatial planning in the Brussels region was overcome through ongoing engagement, a slow-building of relationships both over the five-day course of the workshops but also over years of repeated visits, meetings and co-production of knowledge with relevant stakeholders. The literature on influencing policy contains a lack of advice on how to build the skillset required for policymakers and researchers to manage communities of experts in order to co-produce research and policy (Topp et al., 2018). One such skill which is highly relevant is the need to become familiar with the policy processes of the topic and in the place of engagement (John, 2003, p. 488).

In Brussels, working with collaborators familiar with the region, we identified the multiple locations of influence across levels and types of government in order to focus our actions to promote collaboration in the right places and to the right people. It took time and

multiple engagements in order to learn the institutional rules in the Brussels region in order to engage with them effectively, rules such as policy networks, the relationships between stakeholders, policymakers and branches of local governance.

A key insight therefore was that to collaborate, public agencies need to meet on neutral territory, such as the one afforded by the endeavour of *A Good City Has Industry*, or at the *Industry Comes to Town* talk (see Figures 41 and 42) and be brought together by an external party with respected expertise, but without a political or geographic bias. A key insight was that multiple modes of engagement work for advocacy: talks, exhibitions, publications. In particular, ‘walking and talking’ where Brearley gave tours to stakeholders, is an effective means of communication of the value of industrial activities. The key condition for its effectiveness is the neutrality of us as outsiders. Where the existing network may have a tendency to reproduce the dominant ideologies about the nature of industry in Brussels (that it is noisy, obsolete, and a thing of the past) our work framing the problem in a new light allowed a renewed political feasibility for alternative solutions (Kingdon and Thurber, 1984). The success of this longitudinal involvement strategy is



Figures 41 and 42. 'Industry comes to town' talk by Mark Brearley, Brussels, 19 Sept 2014, Kristiaan Borret in the audience,

Photograph: Jane Clossick.



Figures 43 and 44. 'Made In Brussels', Sheffield University live project with Mark Brearley and Jan Zaman acting as clients.

Source: <http://www.liveprojects.org/2017/made-in-brussels>

echoed by Cairney (2016) who suggests that time is needed to “build up alliances, trust in the messenger, knowledge of the system, and exploit ‘windows of opportunity’ for policy change” (Cairney, 2016, p.124). Jan Zaman, urban planner with Flemish planning authority Departement Omgeving, and collaborator on this research, explains:

“To understand the impact that Brearley and Clossick’s research has had in Flanders, it is important to understand spatial planning in the region. This is a weak planning system which has a strong focus on municipalities regulating private initiative, rather than on proactive regional planning. In this context, the main way for a regional planning agency like Departement Omgeving to influence future spatial development is not through planning policies, but rather through convincing municipalities and private stakeholders alike to endorse and support a particular course of action that benefits the region as a whole. We as an agency have had to develop strong persuasion skills, and learn how to advocate for ideas rather than impose them. The impact of Brearley’s work in Flanders has much to do with finding ways of doing this” (London Metropolitan University, 2021).

Dissemination

The research has been disseminated across multiple channels, both as part of the process of producing outputs and at numerous talks in Brussels, London and across Europe. The full list of dissemination activities are archived in our digital resources.

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Figure 45. Architecture Workroom Brussels Tweet, Mark Brearley 'A Good City has Industry' event at IABR Rotterdam, 2018.

Figure 46. The audience at lecture 'A good city has everything' in the Solvay Library, Brussels, 2019. Photograph: Mark Brearley.

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Figure 47. Discussion at a Netherlands government meeting, Den Haag. 12th December 2018.

Photograph: College van Rijksadviseurs.

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'Integrating serious productive plants in the urban landscape, maintaining a functioning slaughterhouse in a central position densifying its space, converting obsolete industrial zones into incubation nodes of productive urban enterprises, finding room for a large beer factory in the urban context that demands it, ensuring that ground levels can accommodate economically viable productive functions like plumbing warehouses, implementing commercial-scale urban agriculture and fish farming, converting existing scrap-management activities into a public spectacle of recycling. Using a mix of tools to achieve this, cultural constructions and political debates, the Government Architect's soft power, project-based urban planning, or the innovative use of traditional planning tools. In scope, content and method, Brussels Productive Metropolis is an example to the world.'

Carlos Arroyo ^{ES}

Carlos Arroyo is a Spanish architect, urbanist and teacher. Based in Madrid, he will be the commissioner for the Performing Arts Academy in Bilbao in 2018. A member of Europe's Network of University Commissioners, he developed a theory of project-city production sites.

Brussels, productive city

Mark Bevir - Photo: Ben Roberts

In the future, it is hoped that the economy will be more equitable, clean and local, and therefore have more potential to become urban. For economic, social and racial reasons, it is good to keep productive enterprise in the city. In Brussels, awareness of the fact that production activities are also part of the city led to a series of interesting projects.



aligned with preparation of the Canal Plan that was adopted by the Region's government the following year, reaffirming the place of industry and establishing new mixed-development aspirations for a major piece of the city. In 2014 at the Festival Kanal, this author had a first stab at structuring the practical arguments in support of this new thinking, with reference to tough experiences in London.

Over the four years since, there has been a run of exploratory workshops on the topic, and Atelier Brussels Productive Metropolis picked up where 'ReWork' left off, tested possibilities on live sites, and in 2016 mounted the exhibition *A Good City Has Industry*, featuring Matthew Gregorowski's totemic yellow factory and house model, a simple reminder of an objective and a challenge to past thinking. Politicians and public agencies, straddling state borders, have aligned in support of the mission to retain and enhance the industrial economy, while current Brussels Government Architect Kristiaan Borret and his team work tirelessly to nurture and steer development towards these same goals.

Many cities are now attempting the climb up this particular mountain, reversing entrenched ideas about how things should be, what should happen where. Brussels is ahead, early onto the foothills, now looking likely to be first to achieve a handful of projects that demonstrate a way forward, devise new types, resolve today's challenges in fresh ways.

The ambition of the Brussels Abattoir in Anderlecht is the most breathtaking. They plan to reshape their 12 hectares by the canal to house slaughtering and meat preparation, workshops and kitchens, food and general markets, sport and hospitality, with some housing thrown in. This is one to watch, four design teams now commencing a contest to devise a mighty new building christened *Manufakture*, with industrial meat facilities, parking for the entire site, and a roof landscape perhaps incorporating a swimming pool, all public facing, urban.

A flurry of other projects are asserting the positive role of industry, for example the already constructed *Materials Village* that Tetra architects designed for the Port of Brussels at Vergote Dock, and the *Atelier 219*-designed depot for regional waste-management agency ANP by the canal in Neder-Over-Heembeek. Such projects are emerging across Brussels, hosting the uses we were until recently driving away, doing it with flair, at once pragmatic and celebratory.

In the areas around Dieudonné Lefèvrestraat, near the *Tour & Taxis* renewal area, weaved together with the *1111* freight facility, a remarkable urban ensemble is being shaped. On Port Authority land, a run of ex-trovert industrial buildings is emerging, ready to face new residential across a street, each abutting its neighbours and touching the city, no shrubs or fences, no hiding away over there. Already there is the big Peugeot-Citroën garage, under construction the Générale-designed 4,000m² brewery for Brasserie de la Senne. Next to come is the *Viryon* Drinks building, and more emerges as each year passes.

Nearby is *Citydev's Greenbizz* building, designed by architectessoc. This one's what I call a reconciliation building, making the interface between housing and industrial in a way that has dissolved the threat of encroachment and resolved adjournment challenges. In this case, the *Citydev-led Tivoli* residential area is the immediate neighbour on one side, on the other a world of heavy goods vehicles and beeping forklifts. This delicate ply-clad industrial building, home to a couple of dozen ground-floor businesses in 5,000 m² of workshops, is organized around two covered wander-in vehicle yards, with a floor of small-unit offices on top. It's a charming and well-crafted building, but what's remarkable is the urban job it does, and the testing of an obvious but unfamiliar mix and innovative configuration.

Figure 50. Wakinne, B. (2019) 'Brussels, Productive City', A+ Architecture 278, Special Edition: Brussels June/July 2019.

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Figure 51. Still from Solvay public library lecture 18th Feb 2020. Source: <<https://bsi.brussels/en/video/bsi-citydev-brussels->

[chair-2019-inaugural-lesson/](https://bsi.brussels/en/video/bsi-citydev-brussels-chair-2019-inaugural-lesson/)>

Impact

The impact of the research in Brussels has been detailed in an Impact Case Study for REF2021 entitled *A Good City Has Industry: Successfully Advocating Better Integration of Industrial Activities in Brussels* (London Metropolitan University, 2021).

There has been a paradigm shift in how policymakers, urban developers and design practitioners in Brussels understand industry and the importance of integrating it into the urban fabric. The research made visible the opportunities for use-mix and intensification; raised awareness of the industrial economy and its challenges; provided public and private actors with strategies to make space for industrial activities; and facilitated the development of new approaches to integrating industrial accommodation within the city. It also provided methodological support to research and design projects by Architecture Workroom Brussels and Departement Omeving; helped to shape the strategic vision of Brussels state developer Citydev, who have subsequently developed 25 sites for industrial use (at least 1250 industrial jobs have been retained in the city of Brussels which would otherwise have been lost); and informed the design of some of the most complex urban development sites in Brussels such as Buda, Vilvoorde and

Molenbeek. The impact falls under three categories: Accelerating new approaches to urban planning and real estate development; transferring methodologies for research and development and encouraging experimentation in urban and architectural design.

Our research accelerated public agencies and urban developers in Brussels and Flanders towards changing their programmes and strategies. Our participation in debates has informed outsiders—helped public entities such as the Brussels Bouwmeester (the chief architect’s office) to “raise awareness that a good city has industry (...), that industry belongs to the city” (Borret, 2020). Kristiaan Borret, chief architect, said the work was helpful in making the issue visible to policymakers, planners and designers, so as to gain support towards the development of real projects (Borret, 2020; Zaman, 2020). An opinion echoed by AWB, who said that the initiative *Atelier Brussels: The Productive Metropolis* (where Brearley was Atelier Meister) “accelerated the urban policy conviction that keeping economic activities within the urban fabric is a crucial component of preparing cities for a sustainable future” (Dudal, 2020), and contributed to putting Brussels at the forefront of thinking in Europe about how to approach the industrial economy:

“Brussels has now taken a leading position in innovation, in urban planning and development ... [this] research contributed to accelerating the changes and putting these ideas on the agenda of the right stakeholders” (Dudal, 2020). In Flanders, our contribution helped the regional planning office Departement Omgeving “to show local authorities why and how to integrate the productive economy in the city” and to encourage policymakers to support regeneration plans that make space for industrial accommodation (Zaman, 2020). In these cases, our work has contributed to making the productive city a central concern in the urban policy, planning and architecture discourses of Brussels and Flanders.

This contribution led to two main consequences. Firstly, in 2017, informed by his conversations with Brearley and his exposure to the Productive Metropolis workshop series in 2014–2016, Kristiaan Borret launched the first in a series of design competitions celebrating the integration of productive activities in Brussels (Borret, 2020). The approach to urban design in the North of the city, particularly around the Port of Brussels region, has shifted away from relocating industrial activities outside the city, towards retaining them. This includes for example, the Material Village (which

won the Steel Construction Awards 2018 in the category ‘industrial buildings’ and featured on the cover of Architectural Review) which was developed by Citydev and occupied by MPRO—a material/logistics hub which supplies the Brussels construction industry (Dudal 2020). At least 1250 industrial jobs have been retained within the city borders rather than such jobs being lost or re-distributed.

Secondly, following Brearleys efforts as the BSI-citydev.brussels Chair in 2019, Citydev, public development agency and landowner, have shifted their attitude, recognising that hybrid developments mixing industry and other activities are desirable, and are now taking several forward; and they have initiated a collaboration with the Port of Brussels to facilitate the development of integrated logistics and manufacturing at scale. “The accumulation of theoretical exercises can fuel real projects”, explained Benjamin Cadranel, CEO of Citydev. “we are about to launch Phase Two of our project Greenbiz which is in the same location [the Port], and we are definitely going to bear in mind the proposals that were developed in those workshops.” (Cadranel, 2020).





Figures 52, 53 and 54. Industrial businesses in Brussels, taken during TOP Noordrand workshop series. Photographs: Carmel King.

Acknowledgements

All may not be named here. Apologies to any who have been missed.

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Nicolas Doesburg (CityDev)
Roeland Dudal (AWB)
Federico Giaretta (@MadeinBrussels)
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Caroline Jadot (City of Brussels)
Dann Jessen (East)
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Jan Terwcoren (Architectuurplatform)
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