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Annex 3

Case Study: Integration between public transport and  
urban development in the metropolitan region of  
Rotterdam-The Hague

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## 1. Introduction to the case

Increasingly functionally interconnected urban regions necessitate integrated metropolitan transport systems. In the Netherlands, and especially in the Randstad, a coherent high-frequency public transport network is seen as an important prerequisite for increasing the competitiveness of the country in terms of business investment and new development. In the southern part of the Randstad, the Stedenbaan ('Cities Line') initiative aims to promote greater integration between public transport and urban development in the South Wing of the Randstad. The initiative combines two main strategies: (1) the creation of a high-frequency light-rail transport system on the existing railway network; and (2) a regionally coordinated urbanisation programme based on the development of areas around the railway stations (see Figures 1 and 2). It aims to increase development density around nearly 60 railway stations and to improve the accessibility of station areas to increase rail ridership to a level which allows the national rail operator to increase local train frequencies. These strategies are strongly influenced by the concept of Transit Oriented Development.

Figure. 1 Relation between regional rail stations and urban development



Source: Atelier Zuidvleugel (2006)

Figure. 2 Public transport network in StedenbaanPlus



Source: Programmabureau StedenbaanPlus (undated)

The StedenbaanPlus initiative is a platform with ten regional partners, Dutch Railways (NS) and the rail infrastructure provider (ProRail). It was initiated by the Province of Zuid-Holland and the mayor of Dordrecht. Dutch Railways also claims to be one of the initiators. Originally the aim of the initiative was to provide a frequent local train service (in addition to the regional and national train services) on a section of the railway network between Leiden and Dordrecht. Early in 2011 the name of the initiative shifted from Stedenbaan to StedenbaanPlus after joining forces with the regional public transport system (South Wing net). All railway stations and key public transport nodes in the South Wing formed part of the StedenbaanPlus initiative,

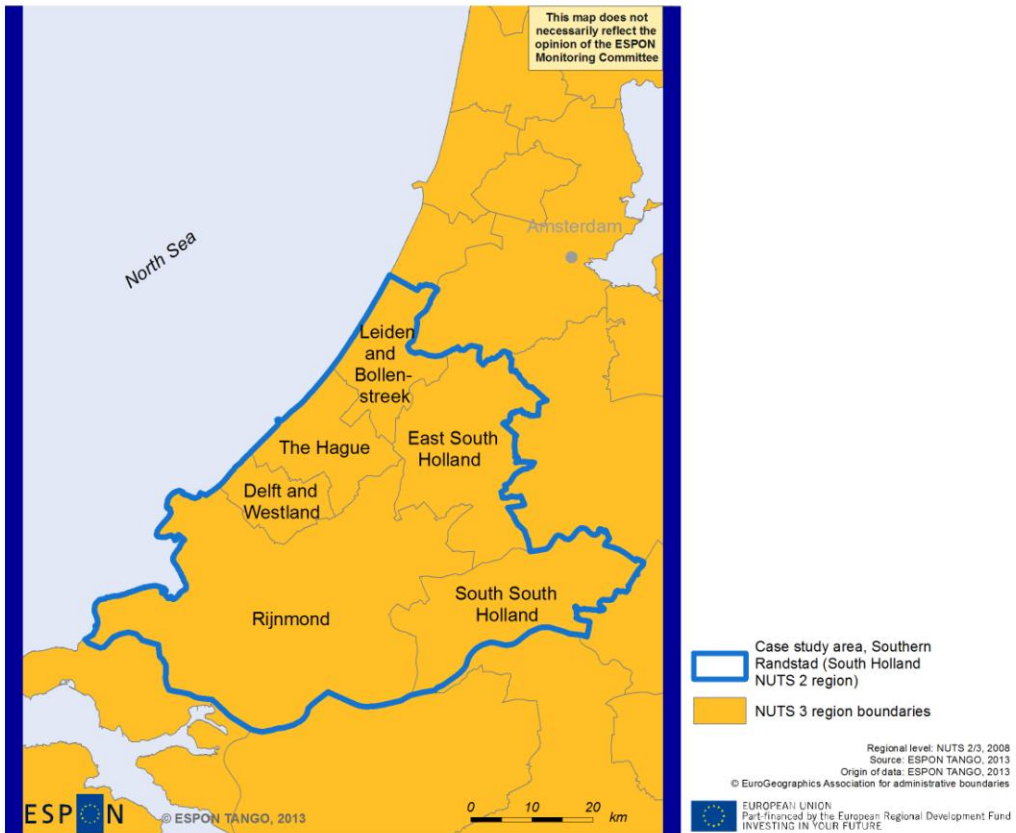
although with a distinction between different types of stations.<sup>1</sup> The new structure and rationale of the initiative was accompanied by a widening of the focus: from the improvement of the public transport services and the quality of facilities at stations towards more integrated urban development (offices and housing) around station locations. Since 2011, the initiative aims to create a consistent and a high-quality network of local trains, light rail, metros, trams and buses. The rationale is that improvements in the quality of public transport nodes will increase the attractiveness of housing, offices and facilities. Moreover, the rationale behind increasing urban development near public transport nodes was to promote the use of public transport and improve accessibility. The StedenbaanPlus initiative is not responsible for the implementation of development but for promoting and coordinating development at nodes on the network.

This initiative illustrates a partnership arrangement between various public and private parties that operates with very few statutory powers or instruments at its disposal. As such, it is reliant on 'soft' processes of governance, primarily taking a coordinating and information-provision role and using powers of argument and persuasion to reach agreements between the various actors involved. It has no powers of development control. The relation between public transport and urban development is crucial and because of this some of the case study analysis focuses specifically on one of the StedenbaanPlus railway nodes (in Delft) since each node has its own development plan and stakeholder configuration.

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1 A distinction is made between (1) stations along the original heavy rail between Leiden and Dordrecht, (2) stations along the regional rail infrastructure, (3) metro and RandstadRail stations and (4) other stations.

# CASE STUDY AREA 3: SOUTHERN RANDSTAD



## 2. Coordinating the actions of actors and institutions

### 2.1 Background on territorial governance in the Randstad in relation to regional transport and spatial planning

The Dutch government structure is a three-tiered, decentralised unitary state, based on the self-government of provinces and municipalities. Co-government is the underlying principle: the central government involves the provinces, the municipalities, or both in the formulation and implementation of its policies. Decisions cannot be imposed from above but must come from consensus building between all parties according to an established framework. Although this does not always materialise in formal documents, it is a form of public policy packaging. In the case of metropolitan regions, especially in the Randstad, there has been much discussion and debate for almost half a century about a 'regional gap' in governance, notably between the province and state levels of decision-making, and possible ways of filling this 'gap' in order to deliver more integrated policies.

From an international perspective, the sub-national levels of governments have considerable responsibility in the Netherlands compared to many other European countries (OECD, 2007: p.157). The responsibilities of the municipalities are more substantial than those of the provinces. Municipalities are responsible for a wide range of policy sectors including roads, public transport, housing, spatial planning, environment, social affairs, economic development, education and health care. Although municipalities share many of their responsibilities with central government they are nevertheless relatively independent. Municipalities are often relatively large and have a considerable staff. However, there are a significant number of smaller municipalities, which adds to the need for intermunicipal cooperation. Provinces coordinate some public policies (e.g. planning, transport, culture, social affairs), and have legal control over the municipalities and over water boards<sup>2</sup> (which are entirely separate from the municipalities and do not share common boundaries).

Cooperation between Dutch municipalities is very common: a typical local authority will have close to 30 cooperative arrangements (OECD, 2007: p.170). Many of these arrangements are task specific and single issue, where each agreement involves a different set of municipalities and different timescales. Since 2003, the city regions have been based on the so-called Joint Arrangements Act plus (WGR-plus regions<sup>3</sup>). There are currently eight WGR-plus regions in the Netherlands (Figure 3). Cooperation at this level involves a degree of compulsion which is absent from intermunicipal cooperative arrangements. These city regions consist of a large city with the surrounding municipalities that form part of the same daily urban system. There are four of these WGR-plus regions in the Randstad: the city regions of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. Two of these WGR-plus regions are

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<sup>2</sup> Dutch water boards (*waterschappen* or *hoogheemraadschappen*) are regional government bodies charged with managing water barriers, waterways, water levels, water quality and sewage treatment in their respective regions. These regional water authorities are among the oldest forms of local government in the Netherlands, some of which were founded in the 13th century.

<sup>3</sup> WGR = Wet gemeenschappelijke regelingen.



physically adjacent – Rotterdam and The Hague – and this is where the StedenbaanPlus initiative is located.

The WGR-plus regions are managed through boards formed by administrators from municipalities who have to give accounts of their decisions in their municipal council. The former national cabinet made various attempts to streamline government as a whole and planning in particular, planned to abolish the WGR-plus regions by the end of 2012. Reducing the number of layers of decision-making was one of the main reasons behind these plans although the issue of accountability (and the lack of directly elected representatives) has also featured as another argument for their abolition. In a more recent twist, the national cabinet resigned (in April 2012) and the current situation regarding these plans to abolish the WGR-plus regions is uncertain. At the very least, the WGR-plus regions currently have a stay of execution.

City regions have several areas of responsibility within the fields of transport, housing, the environment and the regional economy, but are particularly important actors in the area of traffic and transport. However, city regions only have limited influence on the rail transport services provided by the national rail operator (NS) at city-region level. Despite the contract between the NS and the central government, which requires NS to consult with decentralised governments about the services to be provided, NS is generally more interested in its responsibility to provide services for long-distance travellers rather than local ones. It is therefore difficult for a region to negotiate with NS for the use of the main railway network track to improve city-region public transport, as is the case in the South Wing of the Randstad. This is an issue that the StedenbaanPlus initiative attempts to address.

*Figure 3. Location of the current WGR-plus regions*



Source: Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2010

The effectiveness of city regions remains largely dependent on voluntary municipal cooperation.<sup>4</sup> Horizontal cooperation works well as long as the interests of the participating municipalities are the same but this is not always the case: city regions are subject to municipal conflicts of interests and do not always embody a shared vision or common set of priorities for the region (OECD, 2007: p.173). This was evident for example in the development of the RandstadRail line (a light rail project in the province of South-Holland linking the city regions of The Hague and Rotterdam), where delays were incurred due to conflicts of interest related to the fact that Rotterdam wanted its metro network to extend to The Hague whereas The Hague had other priorities (Dijking et al., 2001).

## **2.2 Territorial Governance in the South Wing of the Randstad**

Two regional institutions – administrative platforms – were created around 2000 in the Randstad: one for the north and the other for the south (the Administrative Platform for the South Wing – *Bestuurlijk Platform Zuidvleugel* or *BPZ*), which covers the city region surrounding the Hague and Rotterdam (Figure 4). The BPZ has the following eight partners: the Province of Zuid-Holland, five regional cooperation bodies including the city regions of Rotterdam (*Stadsregio Rotterdam*) and The Hague (*Haaglanden*) which are both WGR-plus regions, the regions of Holland Rijnland (the northern part of the province with Leiden as the largest city), Drecht Cities (Dordrecht and surrounding municipalities) and Midden-Holland (Gouda and its environs) and the municipalities of Rotterdam and The Hague. The BPZ was not meant to become a new decision-making layer of government, but a platform to reach agreements about projects and investments without a transfer of competences. Co-operation at the city-region level is hampered by the lack of implementation power: every municipality that is part of these co-operative arrangements can block the decisions (OECD, 2007: p.160).

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<sup>4</sup> Mechanisms exist (in principle) to go beyond voluntary forms of cooperation at some levels.

Figure 4. Boundaries of the Administrative Platform South Wing (coloured areas)



Source: Provincie Zuid-Holland

The StedenbaanPlus initiative is very closely aligned to the formation of a single metropolitan region for The Hague and Rotterdam and covers the same territory. Because the metropolitan region is currently under development, it does not have legal powers (at the moment at least), with the exception of the powers and responsibilities given to WGR-plus regions. Consequently, the StedenbaanPlus initiative is essentially a partnership arrangement between various public and private parties that operates with very few statutory powers or instruments at its disposal. As such, it is reliant on 'soft' processes of governance, primarily taking a coordinating and information-provision role and using powers of argument and persuasion to reach agreements between the various actors involved. A deliberate choice was made in the StedenbaanPlus initiative not to develop new instruments but to closely link to planning instruments of participating government tiers, such as the provincial structural vision (*provinciale structuurvisie*) and the provincial legally binding land-use regulations (*provinciale verordening*).

### 2.3 Actors and institutions in StedenbaanPlus

The StedenbaanPlus case is primarily concerned with regional public rail transport and urban development around railway stations. The key actors include NS (Dutch Railways) and ProRail (rail infrastructure manager) as well as the regional authorities of the Province of Zuid-Holland, the city regions of The Hague and Rotterdam, the cities of Rotterdam and the Hague, the region Holland-Rijnland and the municipal cooperations Drechtsteden and Midden-Holland. Although property developers are

centrally involved in the development process (and crucial for the success of StedenbaanPlus), they are not a formal actor in the StedenbaanPlus initiative.

Two directorates of Dutch Railways (NS) are important to the StedenbaanPlus initiative: NS Stations and NS Travellers. NS Stations is responsible for the exploitation and management of stations while NS Travellers is responsible for the provision of train services for passengers. NS is organised in four regions, each of which is responsible for chain facilities and property development in the stations. A separate company – ProRail – is responsible for the construction, maintenance, management and security of the rail network (including platforms). The exact division of responsibilities between these actors (NS Stations, NS Travellers and ProRail) is sometimes a source of debate.

Other than the national railway company, there are also public transport companies. The four main cities in the Netherlands each have their own public transport company. In Rotterdam this is RET and in The Hague it is HTM which operates metro, tram and city buses. In the rest of the country public transport companies are chosen on the basis of concessions. Outside the cities of Rotterdam and The Hague the rest of the South Wing of the Randstad is divided into seven concession areas (Figure 5).

Since the start of Stedenbaan the management principle of the partners in the platform has been ‘one organisation, one vote’. It was a deliberate choice to form a small group and not to represent the property development sector in this group. The shift from Stedenbaan to StedenbaanPlus led to a more streamlined, effective and efficient way of working. It also led to a shift towards addressing to a larger extent local parties as municipalities, property developers and end users. Including a broader network of rail infrastructure – including metro and light rail – did not result in incorporating the public transport companies of Rotterdam and The Hague – exploiting these lines – into the actor platform. One of the reasons given in the interviews is that the municipalities are steering these public transport companies closely and thus can represent their interests sufficiently in the platform.

The StedenbaanPlus working structure is organised around a number of themes. Each theme is addressed by a working group in which the ten partners are represented. Each working group handles the rapport of a theme. As the StedenbaanPlus secretariat provides all chair persons, coordination between working groups primarily takes place at the Secretariat.

Figure 5. Boundaries of public transport concession areas in the Netherlands



Apart from the Steering Group, there is the Administrative Committee (*Bestuurlijke Commissie*), in which there is a representation of both the traffic and transport and spatial planning sectors. For a long time there has been tension between the three major appointed administrators<sup>5</sup> – the mayors of the cities of Rotterdam and The Hague and the Commissioner of the Province of Zuid-Holland. The mayors of the two cities did not see eye to eye, but have more recently cooperated on the development of the Metropolitan Area Rotterdam-The Hague. Because of the friction between individuals, only elected (rather than appointed) representatives are member of the Administrative Committee. Formally the two major cities can be represented separately, but as the city region is a bottom-up representation, the Alderman of the city of Rotterdam is also the political representative on traffic and transport for the city region of Rotterdam. The presence of Rotterdam and The Hague is an issue in the composition of platform meetings as they do not feel equally represented by their city region. Once a year all working groups meet to formulate the yearly plan of activity, which is approved by the Administrative Commission. The actual implementation of the activities is taken up by the municipalities.

In 2006 the declaration of intent on Stedenbaan was signed by the Province of Zuid-Holland and the city regions of The Hague and Rotterdam – representatives of the Administrative Platform South Wing and the three transport authorities within the South Wing responsible for city and regional public transportation on their territories – and the Dutch Railways company NS. In the declaration of intent, integrated public transport systems and urban development were considered central for improving the accessibility and liveability in the South Wing.

<sup>5</sup> Mayors and provincial commissioners are appointed and not elected.

StedenbaanPlus does not have power that is binding for either the local or provincial authorities. Instead, it acts as a platform for dialogue on spatial planning, housing, employment, transport and accessibility among local governments. Its influence over national policies is limited: other bodies such as the association of municipalities (VNG) and the association of provinces (IPO) have more influence. However, the cities of Rotterdam and the Hague are powerful sub-national institutions and have direct connections to the central government. Like the other two largest cities in the Netherlands, they receive more funds and have the most substantial responsibilities. Relations between the four biggest cities have always been competitive since no city has ever become clearly dominant (OECD, 2007: p.142). Thus, the creation of the metropolitan region of Rotterdam and the Hague potentially concentrates power/influence into the metropolitan region of these two cities (Rotterdam and The Hague).

Several interviewees contend that the StedenbaanPlus platform has an additional role compared to the South Wing platform as it closely relates to NS and ProRail and thus the rail infrastructure providers. It also helps to bring policy issues from the region to the attention of national government. The added value is putting issues on the agenda and promoting issues as the improvement of regional public rail transport and the close relation between regional public rail transport and urban development around stations. An issue which StedenbaanPlus is currently addressing is the doubling of the heavy railway track from two to four tracks between Delft-Zuid and Schiedam, which connects the two city regions and is a major bottleneck in the Randstad rail capacity.

## **2.4 Territorial Governance arrangements in StedenbaanPlus**

Polycentric metropolitan regions are particularly keen on “soft governance arrangements” (OECD, 2007: p.175). Many governance partnerships for polycentric regions are bottom-up initiatives coming from municipalities themselves, rather than driven by the national government, often with partners from private and voluntary sectors and other public and private agencies. These partnerships do not have decision-making powers but can influence decision-making processes and seek implementation by making recommendations to the decision-making bodies. The key objectives followed by these governance partnerships are usually strategic development, project orientation, networking and advocacy.

Many metropolitan regions across the world have placed greater emphasis on voluntary instruments for co-ordination and co-operation and even the few examples of strong metropolitan governance through metropolitan governments and amalgamated cities coexist with other forms of network arrangements. In terms of efficiency, it may be second best to rely on co-operative mechanisms, but they also have their own merits such as fostering communication and possibly limiting bureaucratic mission creep (i.e. the tendency of bureaucracies to try to claim more powers and resources). On the other hand, experiences of voluntary co-operation arrangements are most often difficult if not impossible to implement in the context

of conflicting relationships between different territorial layers or when there are high intra-metropolitan disparities (OECD, 2007 p.191).

### 3. Integrating policy sectors

#### 3.1 Cross-sectoral policy integration

The integration between public transport planning and urban development takes place at different levels. The Structure Vision Randstad 2040<sup>6</sup> (*Structuurvisie Randstad 2040*; Ministerie VROM, 2008) and the Randstad Urgent programme addressed social, cultural, ecological and economic trends and challenges and the spatial implications related to the spatial structure of the Randstad. A close relation between mobility and urban development was a high priority. Even though StedenbaanPlus is embedded in national and local policy, it is primarily aligned with regional policy within the South Wing. It is one of the five South Wing programmes, the other four being the Economic Agenda, the Accessibility Package (road infrastructure), the Urbanisation Programme and Metropolitan Landscape (green areas near the city).

The statutory spatial planning documents to which policy concerned with the StedenbaanPlus initiative is aligned are the national, provincial and local structure visions. City regions can also formulate structural visions, although this is not mandatory. The statutory provincial structure vision – approved in 2010 before the shift from Stedenbaan to StedenbaanPlus – emphasises the relation between urban development and mobility. It mentions Stedenbaan as an accelerator for spatial differentiation in living and working environments and is considered essential in the region's continued urbanisation. In provincial documents, the Stedenbaan initiative is presented as integrated concept and not as separate sectors only coming together in the programme itself.

When looking at national policy documents and programmes the StedenbaanPlus initiative is aligned to the National Policy Strategy for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning<sup>7</sup> (SVIR: *Structuurvisie Infrastructuur en Ruimte*, Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2012). This statutory spatial planning document replaces a number of national policy documents and relates national policy in the field of spatial planning and mobility. Meurs and Sandee (2012) conclude that the SVIR does not exploit all

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<sup>6</sup> The Randstad 2040 Structural Vision is part of the government-wide programme, in which the national and provincial governments, municipalities and metropolitan regions jointly tackle various issues in the Randstad. The aim of the programme is an economically strong Randstad. The Structural Vision sets the course for our long-term spatial development in terms of building and planning and relationship between spatial development and nature, leisure activities, education, health and labour market participation. The *Randstad Urgent* programme comprises crucial projects that require decisions in the short term.

<sup>7</sup> The National Policy Strategy for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning presents a vision for spatial planning and mobility. It includes the infrastructure projects in which central government wants to invest in the future. Provinces and municipalities will be given more responsibilities for spatial planning while central government will focus more on national issues such as the improvement of accessibility.

opportunities available, that policy focuses too one-sidedly on the transportation function of nodes and offers too few national instruments to govern the urban development around these nodes. They argue in favour of more regional governance.

StedenbaanPlus is connected to a number of national infrastructure programmes, one being the national Programme on High Frequency Rail Transport<sup>8</sup> (*Programma Hoogfrequent Spoorvervoer*) coordinated by the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment. The essence of this programme is the construction of new rail infrastructure for transportation of goods and for regional public transport systems with multimodal connections, enabling shorter travel times and higher trip frequencies. It also relates to another programme (*Programma Beter Benutten*) managed by the same ministry and focused on a better use of the existing railway infrastructure network.

### **3.2 Barriers to cross-sectoral policy integration**

In 2010 another government came to power which merged the ministries responsible for spatial planning, mobility and infrastructure. This change is reflected in the national MIRT territorial agenda, produced as part of the national government's long-term investment programme on infrastructure, land use and transport.<sup>9</sup> The MIRT territorial agenda is meant to stimulate the coherence between the policy fields of spatial planning and infrastructure and between central and regional policy. It is intended as a basis for decisions on central investments particularly in infrastructure and a good example of public policy packaging. Dutch spatial planning is very much a coordinative activity and thus, when compared to other countries, there were not many barriers to cross-sectoral policy integration until another government came into power in 2010. Since then, the national political interest in spatial planning has decreased, both in terms of responsibility and investment. In addition, the economic crisis has strongly affected the property market and urban development is at a standstill. Moreover, the South Wing faces a governance challenge as the government has tried to dismantle WGR-plus regions (see above). If this occurs, one consequence could be that two regional government structures will then compete for power: (i) the Administrative Body of the South Wing in which the emphasis is on the province and the two city regions; and (ii) the Metropolitan Region Rotterdam-The Hague in which the emphasis is on the two

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<sup>8</sup> The national programme High Frequent Railway Transport – coordinated by the ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment – aims to increase railway capacity in seven corridors (five passenger lines and two goods corridors) as part of the national 'Better Utilization' programme (*Beter Benutten*). This latter programme aims at a reduction of traffic congestion by 20-30% in the period 2012-2014 on specific routes which are the most congested. Central government, regional government bodies and the private sector are developing joint package deals for the regions of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Haaglanden and Utrecht as well as the province of Brabant.

<sup>9</sup> The MIRT territorial agenda is part of the national MIRT programme (*Meerjarenprogramma Infrastructuur, Ruimte en Transport*). The MIRT programme asks for a territorial agenda in order to provide a strategic framework to assess which programmes and projects should be taken up. The agendas are drawn up cooperatively by central and lower tier government in each of the eight MIRT regions in the Netherlands. These territorial agendas aim to provide insight why projects are being pursued and how they contribute to the integrated development of an area.



major cities. The Metropolitan Area Rotterdam-The Hague covers a smaller territory than the South Wing.

One of the interviewees indicated that the two sectors of transport and spatial planning are not always equally represented in decision-making processes, and consequently that issues are not fully discussed in the Administrative Commission. While the transport sector is usually represented by provincial and local politicians, the spatial planning sector is often represented by senior policy officials instead. Consequently various issues are not fully or equally discussed at meetings.

### **3.3 Perceived synergies of the cross-sectoral approach**

The assumption underlying the StedenbaanPlus initiative is that by providing high-quality public rail transport, specific hubs can be turned into attractive places to build homes, offices and facilities. Achieving urban development around public transport nodes is also expected to result in more passengers using public transport and better accessibility. The outcomes of the programme are dependent on negotiation and compromise between the partners involved. Until now the focus has been on public transportation and urban development and less on the synergy for the economic output.

## **4. Mobilising stakeholder participation**

The six regional government bodies<sup>10</sup>, two local government bodies<sup>11</sup>, national railway company (NS) and ProRail are involved as formal actors in the programme. As it was initiated by the South Wing Platform it is predominantly a platform for provincial and local politicians. For that reason it is less obvious to directly relate to the general public. This is considered a task of municipalities at the level of individual nodes. However, since the shift from Stedenbaan to StedenbaanPlus there is more attention for the actual implementation, but not in the sense of formal partners or addressing the general public. The development sector for example is now more involved but in a platform function: argumentation and stimulation of brownfield development around nodes in conferences and meetings. According to the interviews, there is the feeling that the views and inputs of development sector are increasingly taken into account in the StedenbaanPlus initiative, even though the sector is not formally part of the initiative. Stronger links with the development sector is also a consequence of the economic crisis and the necessary reorientation in urban development. In some nodes, where for example the national rail network adjoins regional light rail systems (e.g. Gouda and Den Haag LOI), attempts have been made under the StedenbaanPlus initiative to form strategic alliances between major office users, NS and the public transport operator in order to try to steer new development at these specific locations.

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<sup>10</sup> Province Zuid-Holland, city regions of The Hague and Rotterdam, the cities of Rotterdam and the Hague, the region Holland-Rijnland and the municipal cooperations Drechtsteden and Midden-Holland.

<sup>11</sup> Cities of Rotterdam and The Hague.

Even though the StedenbaanPlus initiative does not aim to involve citizens, consumers or consumer organisations, the major documents by the StedenbaanPlus secretariat are easily accessible through their website. The Secretariat also provides a regular digital newsletter for those who are interested. In conclusion we can say that through the representation by province, city regions, other regions and main cities in the platform there is only an indirect democratic legitimacy and public accountability. For citizens it is less transparent although documents as the yearly Monitors and Activity Reports are easily available.

## 5. Being adaptive to changing contexts

In recent years, property development has been subject to the economic crisis. As it became more difficult for households to obtain a mortgage, dwellings were sold at a much lower pace. As a result the supply of new housing practically came to a standstill. At the same time it became more difficult to develop brownfield areas as they are more expensive to develop in existing urban areas. This either requires public subsidies or results in higher housing prices. Alternative or experimental forms of residential or employment development are generally considered with extreme caution by property developers or investors. What has been very instrumental is the strong national policy to chiefly build in existing built-up areas. This has influenced regional policy documents. As a result, it has become increasingly difficult to obtain planning permission to build in rural areas. The reorientation in urban development has meant a shift from a supplier-led market towards a demand-led market, which means more attention to consumer demand.

At the same time as the property crisis, major financial cuts in public expenditures have affected public transport. Power shifts have taken place (which began long before the current property development crisis) in which certain powers have been transferred from formal to informal bodies. The current debate about abolishment of the WGR-plus regions and transfer of the transfer authority to either back to the Province or towards a new body will surely affect the StedenbaanPlus organisation. The transport authorities have a budget of about half a billion euro for urban and regional public transport. The rise of the Metropolitan Area Rotterdam-Den Haag is a reaction to this change. The proposal by the minister is to transfer the transport authority from the two city regions to an authority covering the Metropolitan Area and including the two city regions and the Province. If this happens the StedenbaanPlus platform will probably decrease by three partners as the two main cities and the two city regions will be replaced by the Metropolitan Area.

Recent analysis by Meurs and Zandee (2012) is corroborated by some of the interviewees who suggest that government can contribute considerably in the achievement of urban development around rail station nodes. The key factors include:

- *Regional selectivity*: as making choices in the locations available for development is considered crucial in the current market conditions, the Province of Zuid-Holland has taken the lead in cancelling potential new housing, office and retail locations. This is not done explicitly in the context of StedenbaanPlus. In order to

reach the objectives of StedenbaanPlus it is easier to steer development on the basis of office development. StedenbaanPlus strives after 80% of all new office space on node locations. This is easily achieved as the market sector is much more inclined to develop on nodes. It also requires a city council which steers less on details than before – if developing at all. In relation to housing locations accessibility by public transport is only one of many factors and thus more difficult to steer in the setting of StedenbaanPlus.

- *Clear profile*: each node needs a clear profile that distinguishes it from other nodes. Key words are quality of place and spatial identity. Important is also that government makes development around nodes more attractive.
- *Problem owner*: experience suggests that it is often difficult to find a problem owner who can link the ambitions and interests of all actors. The joint approach of the national programme Better Utilization (*Beter Benutten*) can contribute to a solution.

Although Meurs and Zandee (2012) suggest equalization of benefits as a fourth key factor, the interviews do not confirm this. The suggestion of Meurs and Zandee (2012) suggest that stimulation and selectivity of node development could be linked to central government funding. Although there were attempts at the start to take this up, this was not taken further. One of the respondents suggested that there is no institutional support for equalization in the field of infrastructure and urban development in the Netherlands. The heavy rail infrastructure in the Netherlands is controlled by a monopoly and a change in the way of managing it would require huge political changes.

Another type of barrier are the regulations concerning external safety in relation to urban development. This is primarily related to risks that the use of railway infrastructure poses to the surroundings (e.g. accidents during the transport of hazardous goods by rail) by goods transport. This is an important issue south of Rotterdam where goods from the harbour are transported towards Germany and Belgium through the built-up area of Dordrecht and surroundings. Safety regulations specifically apply to hazardous substances and influence housing and working locations. If the transport of goods by rail was diverted outside inner-city railway sections, this would increase the development opportunities in Dordrecht and surrounding cities. The StedenbaanPlus secretariat has put this issue on the agenda at the national and even international level. Safety regulation not only applies to the transport of goods. After a collision between two trains in Amsterdam safety regulations were tightened up which also influences the frequency of passenger trains on the rail network.

As a consequence of the changing context, including the property market crisis and national budget cuts, the StedenbaanPlus secretariat is preparing an evaluation to assess the need for changes to the initiative. The yearly Monitor drawn up by the StedenbaanPlus secretariat also assesses the progress of the overall programme and considers the extent to which objectives and planned activities have been met. The adaptability of the StedenbaanPlus initiative is enforced by the structure chosen: a platform without instruments of its own but closely linked to instruments by the

participants and a flexible structure by organising related ad-hoc debates if changes in the context require (e.g. the property market crisis).

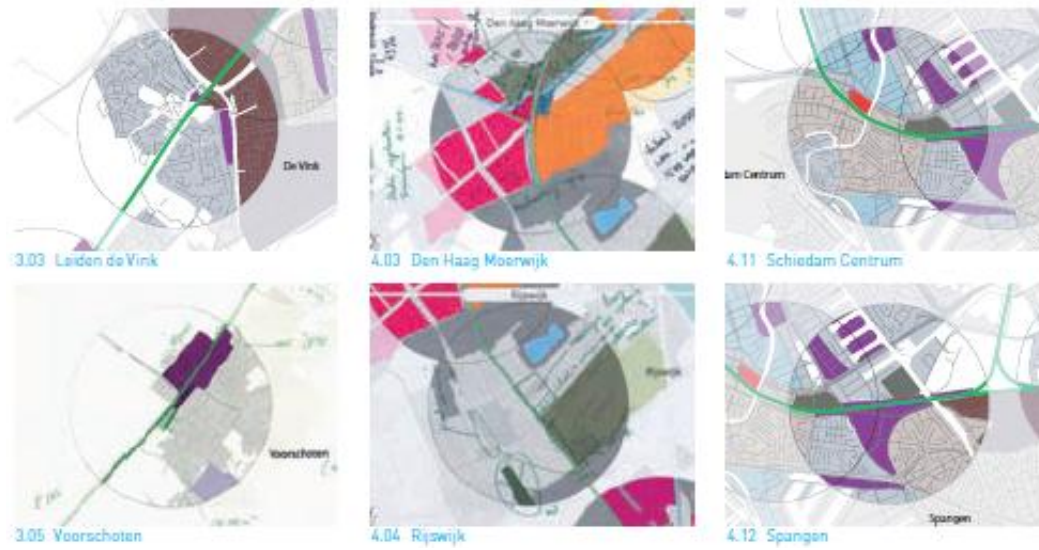
## **6. Realising place-based/ territorial specificities**

### **6.1 Introduction**

What is distinctive about the South Wing of the Randstad is that it is one of the most densely populated regions in the world which necessitates the efficient use of the territory. It is a large and low-rise region compared to other very densely populated areas in the world. If no coherent approach is chosen for mobility, economic development could suffer. Public transport policy is primarily made and implemented at the national and local levels, while few powers rest with the regional level even though the South Wing of the Randstad is a polycentric urban region in terms of passenger transport. In order to provide greater accessibility to an efficient public rail transport system, new residential and employment developments need to be located close to public transport nodes. Some of these nodes require development on brownfield sites which are often more expensive than greenfield development. The platform of actors is government-dominated apart from the rail related actors NS and ProRail. The shift from Stedenbaan to StedenbaanPlus increased the number and type of nodes considered in the region: under the Stedenbaan initiative, only heavy rail nodes were considered whereas both heavy rail and light rail nodes were included in the StedenbaanPlus initiative, thus affecting many more municipalities.

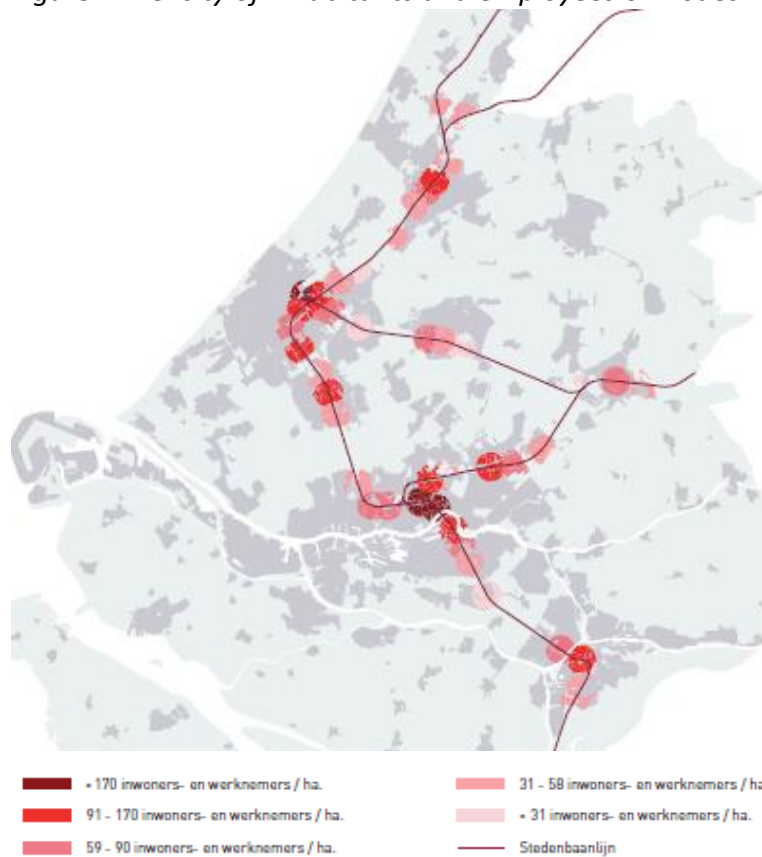
In analysing the StedenbaanPlus case, there are two levels that are important. The first is the StedenbaanPlus initiative itself, which presents the overall approach and stimulates and coordinates activity. The second concerns the individual rail nodes, where the relation with urban development will have to take place. Various studies have been undertaken to identify potential areas for residential and employment development at specific nodes (Atelier Zuidvleugel, 2006) (Figure 6). This reflects a place-based approach in which different types of nodes are distinguished in terms of accessibility to employment (Figure 7). The links between the rail network and territory provide opportunities for different types of development. The position of each station within the StedenbaanPlus network, as well as its territorial characteristics, were identified as part of this exercise. All the extreme combinations of indicators were then analysed.

Figure 6. Some examples from the morphological study on nodes (Inventory of municipal plans)



Source: Atelier Zuidvleugel, 2006

Figure 7. Density of inhabitants and employees on nodes in 2010



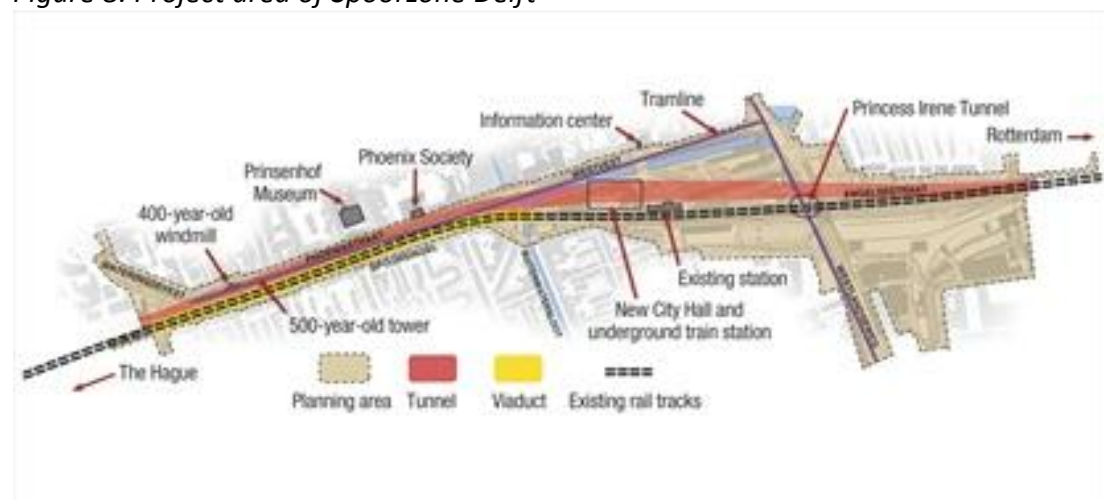
Source: Atelier Zuidvleugel, 2006

## 6.2 Evaluation of one of the nodes: Spoorzone Delft

To identify features of good territorial governance in more detail, we examine one of the StedenbaanPlus railway nodes more in detail. As the relation between public

railway transport and urban development is crucial in the case and each node has its own development plan and stakeholder configuration, we chose one as an illustration. The Delft station project is concerned with the redevelopment of an area of around 40 hectares located in between the inner city and residential neighbourhoods to the west and south. The entire project consists of a railway tunnel, a railway station with municipal office, around 1200 dwellings, a number of office buildings, a city park, water elements, parking facilities (for cycles and cars) and roads. The project provides an immense impetus to development in the city of Delft. The development area will constitute a high-quality connection between city districts that are now separated from each other by the railway. The railway tunnel in Delft is currently being constructed and the project is expected to be completed by 2020.

Figure 8. Project area of Spoorzone Delft



The development project involves cooperation between the municipality of Delft and ProRail. In order to implement the project the municipality of Delft set up a development company (*Ontwikkelingsbedrijf Spoorzone Delft BV*) in 2007, which is responsible for the preparation and implementation of (1) the parts which are railway related and is (partly) financed and subsidised by national government and local government and (2) the urban redevelopment of the area including the new public space, sufficient parking facilities, the new council offices and a new neighbourhood with housing, offices and other facilities. The municipality is a 100% shareholder and appoints the general director. ProRail – as manager of the rail infrastructure – takes care of sufficient capacity, reliability and safety on the Dutch railway network. The ministry of Infrastructure and Environment has assigned ProRail as the formal client for the construction of the tunnel and the underground station in Delft. ProRail is also responsible for building the underground car parking and part of the public space under the authority of the Development Company.

In 2005 the municipality of Delft signed a framework agreement with two developers, Ballast Nedam and NS Poort, which joined forces in the Development Combination Spoorzone Delft CV (OCSD). However, in 2011 the municipality and OCSD concluded that due to changed market conditions the agreement had to be reviewed. As a consequence NS Poort – the property company within NS Dutch

Railways – stepped out and a new agreement was signed with developer Ballast Nedam to develop a smaller part of the area. The remaining area will be developed by several developers which will be selected at a later stage. Although NS Poort intended to take up a wider view of property development than the station only, the property development crisis was a reason to reconsider the scope of development. It resulted in a narrower scope than envisaged at the start of the project and now only concerns the area within the station building. It also proves difficult to have the railway related actors think along with the development actors. One example is the parking of bicycles at the station. The number has increased dramatically and consensus about a solution is hard to find. In the current setting for urban development, issues of scale, flexibility and relations to the core values of an area are crucial. This goes back to the approach of urban development of about a century ago. It requires a less detailed land use plan and the quality plan (*beeldkwaliteitsplan*) will have to leave some room for interpretation, although the area needs a perspective with clarity about rules and liberties. It requires a city council which steers less on details than before. Although Delft Spoorzone is a good example of what the StedenbaanPlus initiative is aiming to achieve, there is little direct link with the StedenbaanPlus initiative in the current implementation phase of the project.

## **7. Conclusions**

### **7.1 Major findings on the basis of the dimensions and indicators**

The Stedenbaan initiative aims to promote greater integration between public transport and urban development in the South Wing of the Randstad. The initiative combines two main strategies: (1) the creation of a high-frequency light-rail transport system on the existing railway network; and (2) a regionally coordinated urbanisation programme based on the development of areas around the railway stations. The StedenbaanPlus helps to bring policy issues from the region to the attention of national government.

A first conclusion is that the StedenbaanPlus initiative primarily has a platform function where coordination and promotion activities are central. It thus employs soft instruments and a soft mode of governance. Implementation of StedenbaanPlus goals often occurs at a local scale (e.g. individual railway nodes). It is also at this local scale that the mobilisation of stakeholder participation often takes place. Because of the platform function and the fact that it is less concerned with policy implementation, it may also be more adaptive to changing contexts. Because of the soft approach, there are few statutory powers available for the implementation of the StedenbaanPlus initiative and thus a lack of hard powers and instruments to steer private development. StedenbaanPlus relates to both vertical and horizontal policy coordination. Vertical coordination mainly links municipalities with both formal and informal regional government bodies and less directly with central government. Horizontal coordination relates urban development with public rail transportation. The aspect of public policy packaging is intrinsic in the Dutch spatial planning system

which can be typified as consensus seeking. The StedenbaanPlus platform provides a means of vertical and horizontal alignment of government policy.

The issue of governing capacity was one of the leading principles in putting the platform in place: a deliberate small group of participants, no property development representation, no appointed politicians, decisions on the basis of 'one organisation one vote'. The StedenbaanPlus initiative was set up as a strategic platform and not one with responsibilities for implementation. It was a deliberate choice to link to statutory planning documents at the provincial and local levels.

The StedenbaanPlus initiative is predominantly a platform for provincial and local politicians. For that reason it is less obvious to directly relate to the general public. This is considered a task of municipalities at the level of individual nodes. Through the representation by province, city regions, other regions and main cities in the StedenbaanPlus platform there is only an indirect democratic legitimacy and public accountability. Due to changes in the context such as the property market crisis there is more attention for the actual implementation, but not in the sense of new formal partners or addressing the general public. For citizens the StedenbaanPlus initiative is less transparent although documents as the yearly Monitor and Activity Report are easily available.

During the last few years the StedenbaanPlus initiative was confronted with a number of changes in the context. Among these are the property market crisis, the possible shift in transport authority and national budget cuts on public transport. The StedenbaanPlus secretariat responded by adapting its focus and using instruments as an evaluation and a yearly monitor. The results of the Monitor are taken seriously in a reflexive way. The adaptability of the StedenbaanPlus initiative is reflected in its structure: a platform without instruments of its own but closely linked to instruments by the participants and a flexible structure by organising related ad-hoc debates if changes in the context require so (as for example the property market crisis).

The fact that different levels of government (provincial, subregional, local) are represented in the StedenbaanPlus initiative makes it possible to match the purpose and objectives of the different interventions. In the StedenbaanPlus initiative the territoriality of the network and the nodes within the network has been addressed extensively. Atelier Zuidvleugel (2006) proposed nine development potentials to relate the type of urban development to the territorial specificities of each node. However, there might be a tendency that each local authority focuses on similar types of development which is not conducive to maximising synergies in urban development. Specially in this era of economic downturn, competition between municipalities would be counterproductive. In this context the province took the lead to be selective in the locations where urban development is promoted.

## **7.2 Relation between dimensions and indicators**

In the StedenbaanPlus case there is a close relation between the two dimensions of 'integrating policy sectors' and 'coordinating actions of actors and institutions'. The very nature of Dutch spatial planning determines the strong focus on policy



integration in the spatial planning system itself. When looking at strong relations between indicators, the one between 'governing capacity', 'subsidiarity' and 'reflexivity' is the most striking in our case. The structure chosen and the linkage to existing statutory planning documents determines the level of subsidiarity and reflexivity. Furthermore we conclude that the indicators on 'public accountability' and 'democratic legitimacy' are partly overlapping.

### **7.3 Promoters and inhibitors of territorial governance**

#### **Promoters:**

- *Public policy packaging*: Alignment of government tiers in a soft structure platform ('one government voice towards the market')
- *Cross-sector synergy*: Mix of representation of both sectors (traffic and transport and spatial planning) and inclusion of key private companies
- *Governing capacity*: Small and selective group of actors. Decisions on the basis of 'one organisation one vote'. Set up as a strategic platform and not one with responsibilities in the actual implementation
- *Leadership*: Awareness of power balance between institutions and between the individuals governing these institutions
- *Subsidiarity*: Deliberate choice to link to statutory planning documents at either provincial and local level
- *Democratic legitimacy*: Clear distinction in two scale levels and related democratic legitimacy: (1) strategic platform with indirect democratic legitimacy and (2) local level of implementation with direct democratic legitimacy
- *Transparency*: Easy available documents as monitors and activity reports
- *Reflexivity*: Response to changes in the context by adapting focus and using instruments as evaluation and yearly monitor
- *Adaptability*: A better adaptability by the structure chosen: a platform without instruments of its own but closely linked to instruments by the participants and a flexible structure by organising related ad-hoc debates if changes in the context require so
- *Territorial relationality*: Fact that different levels of government are represented makes it possible to match purpose and objective of the different interventions
- *Territorial knowledgeability & impacts*: Use of typology related to the potential of existing nodes and taking into account the territorial specificities of each node. Use of yearly monitor.

#### **Inhibitors:**

- *Cross-sector synergy*: Not always a comparable representation by sectors (decision makers vs. policy makers) at one table.
- *Governing capacity*: No decision power of its own as there are only soft instruments available.
- *Leadership*: Power struggle between institutions and between the individuals governing these institutions.

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- Paul Meijer, Head of the Department of spatial planning and economy at the City region of Rotterdam (*stadsgewest Rotterdam*), interview in Rotterdam, December 6, 2012.
- Alex Veldhof, Head of the Department of Territory and Living at the Province of Zuid-Holland, interview in The Hague, December 7, 2012.
- Eric van Winsen, director of Region South-West at Bouwfonds Ontwikkeling (major project developer), interview in Delft, December 13, 2012.
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