HET EILANDJE
URBAN RENEWAL TOWARDS A DYNAMIC NEIGHBOURHOOD BY THE WATER
The city of Antwerp is working hard to turn Het Eilandje into a bustling new neighbourhood by the water. A lot of the intensive development work in this former port area has been done behind the scene. The results of these efforts could not always be noticed “on the site”, but this has changed now!

I invite you to take a good look around you when you are at Het Eilandje. This neighbourhood looks completely different today than ten, five, maybe even three years ago. The opening of the MAS [Museum aan de Stroom] convinced the last sceptics: it has put Het Eilandje firmly on the map. And many squares, streets and dock edges have still to be redeveloped, and (public and private) innovation and building projects have still to be delivered. Hustle and bustle guaranteed in the coming years!

In the meantime the city is making every effort to turn Het Eilandje into a real residential area, ‘affordable’ for every budget. The conversion of the Cadix area into a socially mixed residential area by the water is in full progress. The decision of the Flemish government not to build the Lange Wapper bridge along the northern end of Het Eilandje was very good news for the city’s ambitious plans for this neighbourhood.

As a city we try to involve the residents as much as possible in the planned developments and keep them informed of everything that is about to change at Het Eilandje (and elsewhere). In the last few years, we have organized each year a large-scale information session on urban renewal at Het Eilandje.

Also this booklet is part of the plan to inform everyone in the best possible way. It clearly identifies Het Eilandje and at the same time describes how diverse this new neighbourhood is. There is always something going on here. It is undoubtedly one of my favourite neighbourhoods in Antwerp.

Lots of reading and viewing pleasure!

Ludo Van Campenhout
Alderman for Urban Development and Spatial Planning
October 2011

Het Eilandje
City Centre
Port
Linkeroever (Left Bank)
River Scheldt
City Centre
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Het Eilandje is a former typical port area in the north of Antwerp. The city wants to convert this city area with a remarkably rich history into a dynamic neighbourhood by the water. The intention is to maintain and, where possible, enhance the key characteristics of Het Eilandje.

**Three partial areas**

Many things have already been realized since the approval of the Master Plan Eilandje (2002). The redevelopment of the partial area Oude Dokken (‘Old Docks’) is nearly completed. But many more things remain to be done at Het Eilandje! The Cadix area is turned into a new sustainable residential area by the water and the Montevideo area is converted into the cultural top attraction of Het Eilandje. Each of these partial areas has a unique identity, to which the new developments will certainly contribute.

**Two connecting axes**

The three constituent neighbourhoods are linked by the Londenstraat-Amsterdamstraat axis. This central traffic axis is turned into a green boulevard. In the future, a tram line will guarantee the efficient connection between the inner and outer city. A cultural axis running from north to south will connect together with the Scheldt Quays - Het Eilandje with the city centre. This imaginary line along several cultural stepping stones will undoubtedly become one of the major tourist attractions in Antwerp.

Het Eilandje, a dynamic neighbourhood by the water

**Het Eilandje - facts and figures**

- Total surface area: 172 hectares
- Total surface area of the constituent neighbourhoods: Oude Dokken, Montevideo and Cadix: 75 hectares
- Water surface: almost 1/3 of the total surface area
- Total length of the quays along the docks: 8.9 kilometres
- Current number of residents (figure 2010): 1,456
- Future number of residents (by 2020): 6,600
The oldest port area in Antwerp
Het Eilandje dates back to 1550 and as such is the oldest port site of Antwerp. In exchange for his contribution to the construction of the city walls, architect Gilbert Van Schoonbeke was allowed to develop a 25 hectare site in the north of the city. He ordered the construction of a new residential area and three inlets from the Scheldt to the inner port. The busy area was appropriately named Nieuwstad (‘new city’).

From marine base...

During the French regency (1795-1814), Napoleon Bonaparte ordered the excavation of the first two docks and they became important as marine base. After Napoleon’s defeat, the King of the Netherlands, Willem I, gratefully used the new facilities to turn Het Eilandje into a flourishing city port. In the nineteenth century several other docks were excavated at Het Eilandje.

...to abandoned port area

In the twentieth century, when the port expanded further to the north, the busy port life disappeared at Het Eilandje and people moved away from the area. For decades, Het Eilandje was a desolate area, a barrier between port and city.

Dreaming of a new future

Only at the end of the twentieth century the first glimmers of interest in the potential of Het Eilandje began to appear. In 1989, together with the organization ‘Stad aan de Stroom’, the city launched an international architectural competition for the Scheldt Quays, the neighbourhood ‘het Zuid’ and Het Eilandje. For Het Eilandje the Spanish architect Manuel de Solà-Morales worked out a plan, but unfortunately this plan never achieved sufficient support. The public opinion, however, started dreaming of a new city neighbourhood. A few pioneers took up residence in refurbished warehouses at Het Eilandje.

A master plan for Het Eilandje

At the end of the 90s, the city and the port authority get the planning process on track again. The Master Plan Eilandje was prepared in 2002. Later on, this master plan was divided into several partial plans. In 2006, the plans for Het Eilandje were included as leverage in the Strategic Spatial Structure Plan Antwerp. In the 2007-2012 policy agreement, the development of Het Eilandje is high on the agenda.

Development at full speed

The three turning points for the development of Het Eilandje were undoubtedly the opening of the marina at Willemdok (2000), the conversion of the Saint Felix warehouse into the FelixArchief (Felix Archives) (2006) and the first stone of the museum MAS (Museum aan de Stroom) (September 2006). In the meantime, the development of Het Eilandje is in full progress. The city decided to entrust the management of this development to its subsidiaries AG Stadsplanning Antwerpen and AG Vespa.
The Master Plan Eilandje was prepared by Buro 5 Maastricht under the supervision of René Daniëls, the city architect at that time, and presented in 2002. With the master plan, the city wants to make Het Eilandje liveable again, with the focus on housing, work and recreation. The master plan sets out the basic urban planning principles for the further development of the area.

The Master Plan Eilandje splits up the redevelopment in two phases. Phase 1 includes the partial areas Oude Dokken, Montevideo and Cadix. Each partial area will have its own unique features. With phase 2, the master plan looks at the future, to the north in the direction of the port. Phase 2 includes Droogdokkeneiland, Mexico-Eiland and Kempeneiland in the eastern part of the area.

Later on, the master plan was developed into four detailed documents: the Visual Quality Plan for Exterior Space (2002) and Architecture (2004), the Green Plan (2005) and the Water Plan (2004). Below is an outline of the basic principles of these plans.

Maintain openness and emphasize identity

• What distinguishes Het Eilandje from other city neighbourhoods is a "reversed form of urbanism". The presence of the docks makes the buildings less prominent. It is as if Het Eilandje balances between land and water. The city wants to keep these contrasts. For the redevelopment the emphasis is put on the reorganization of the public domain as well as on the use of the water.

• The structure of right-angled streets and docks, with several remarkable detached buildings, is typical for Het Eilandje. The city wants to enhance and even develop this structure.

• At the same time the master plan wants to emphasize the specific features of each partial area. This is possible by maintaining the historically valuable buildings as well as by planning new additions in the form of ‘filling projects’ between and next to existing buildings, but also with new building projects.

• The cultural axis running from north to south and the Londenstraat-Amsterdamstraat axis are connecting and right-angled axes. On the one hand, they give structure to Het Eilandje and on the other hand, they connect Het Eilandje with the Scheldt Quays and the port, with Park Spoor Noord and through the sailor’s quarter ‘Schipperskwartier’ with the city centre. Both axes also have a social dimension: they facilitate meetings between residents and visitors.

Plans for Het Eilandje

Het Eilandje at the end of the nineteenth century. Extract from the ‘plan instantané de la Ville d’Anvers, 1885’, published by Richard Huybrechts & Cie. Source: City archives Antwerp
Maintain simplicity and roughness
• The former port activities have shaped the area both socially and culturally. Renovation and new building projects should enhance the authentic atmosphere of Het Eilandje. There are clear rules for new buildings as well as for the redevelopment of squares, streets and dock edges.
• Monuments such as warehouses and historical cranes are traces of the rich history. They largely determine the appearance of Het Eilandje, and should therefore be protected. Where possible, bridges and locks are restored and missing connections are repaired. Authentic elements are maintained and integrated as much as possible in the redevelopment.
• The respect for the authentic atmosphere of Het Eilandje is also translated in the choice of specific materials. Cobble stones, steel, bricks, bluestone, etc. are used for building projects and for the redevelopment of squares and streets.

Green plan and water for everyone
• Het Eilandje has never really had any greenery. In line with the residential development which is increasingly available at Het Eilandje, this has to be taken into account for the redevelopment. Michel Desvigne, a landscape architect based in Paris, designed an adjusted green strategy for Het Eilandje. At the dock edges, there will be areas with plants and trees. The new neighbourhood square in the Cadix area will be very green and the central traffic axis Londenstraat-Amsterdamstraat will be a green corridor between the different partial areas. The intention is to integrate all green elements into one visual whole.
• To create a green space at Het Eilandje, traffic is banned from the dock edges and from the residential streets, parking places are substituted by plants and trees. New projects have to meet their parking needs as much as possible with underground parking places. There is a large car park under Godefriduskaai. The master plan also aims to extend the tram network at Het Eilandje: along Londenstraat-Amsterdamstraat between the Leien and the Scheldt Quays and through the Cadix area to the new port house at Mexico-Eiland.
• As former port area, Het Eilandje has several docks and they are all intact. The presence of these water surfaces forms part of the typical style and appearance of this new area. The city is investing heavily in the experiential value of the water (and the surroundings), which has to offer something for everyone. The proposal includes a mixed programme of marinas, round trips, river cruises, historical ships in a museum port, a floating open-air swimming pool and moorings for houseboats.
The cultural axis running from north to south: an imaginary line connecting Het Eilandje with the city centre. The Scheldt Quays are considered as one long, publicly accessible square connecting the city with Het Eilandje. The cultural axis, also called the Falcon-Nassau-axius, is a second stretch connecting the city centre with Het Eilandje. Look at it as an imaginary line running from north to south, through a number of “cultural stepping stones” in the Montevideo area (such as the Ballet of Flanders, the Shop, the Montevideo warehouses and the Red Star Line Museum), along Nassaustraat, the MAS [Museum aan de Stroom] and ‘Schipperskwartier’ in the direction of the historical city centre (and vice versa). The cultural axis running from north to south plays a central role at Het Eilandje and will certainly become one of the major tourist attractions of Antwerp. The most important element is the new museum called MAS [Museum aan de Stroom]. This museum will be a major attraction and meeting point between north and south, between east and west, between port and city, between residents, visitors, businessmen and tourists.

Nassaustraat and Nassaubrug (Nassau Street and Nassau Bridge)
As missing link in the cultural axis running from north to south, Nassaustraat is converted into a pleasant pedestrian area. These works are realized with the financial support of the European Union. This street used to be the main road to the original Eilandje, surrounded by docks. The Nassaubrug connects Bonapartedok and Willemdok and is the oldest bridge of Antwerp! The current bridge is a replica of the historical bridge (built in 1867). This swing bridge is a protected monument and can only be used by pedestrians and cyclists. In 2004, the bridge was replaced by an identical copy by order of the port authorities.

Delivery redeveloped Nassaustraat in 2012
Londenstraat - Amsterdamstraat as green avenue of Het Eilandje
The redevelopment of Londenstraat and Amsterdamstraat and surroundings is an important step in the redevelopment of Het Eilandje. This street connects the three partial areas (Oude Dokken, Montevideo and Cadix), but is also an important link between the Leien and Park Spoor Noord on one side and the Scheldt Quays on the other side. At this moment, it is still a busy traffic area, but this will soon change.

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Two connecting axes: the cultural axis running from north to south and the Londenstraat-Amsterdamstraat axis

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Londenstraat and Amsterdamstraat will be a pleasant pedestrian area with wide pavements and cycling paths in both directions and a lowered roadway for parallel parking. In the future there will be a tram line to and from the city in the middle of the street, with plane trees on both sides. These changes will also create an ideal atmosphere to attract restaurants, pubs and shops.

The redevelopment is planned in four phases, each phase will take approximately 100 days. In total one kilometre and a half will be redeveloped. If everything goes according to plan, the renewed Londenstraat-Amsterdamstraat will be finished by the spring of 2013: a green avenue at Het Eilandje! By then the tram line will also be finished so that the Flemish government can complete the Antwerp tram network with new rails and tram stops.

Delivery in 2013

Londenbrug (London Bridge)
In the future, if the tram has to pass Londenbrug - at this moment there are two lanes in each direction - the bridge has to be widened. This movable bridge makes it possible to go from Kattendijkdok to Willemdok and vice versa. The new bridge design will also allow larger ships to take this route along Verbindingsdok.

Planned from 2014 onwards

London Tower
London Tower is a striking new construction at Het Eilandje, named after the nearby Londenstraat. The 76-metre tall building is one of the highest residential buildings in Antwerp. All 119 flats have been sold. If you would like to know why tall buildings are spread across Het Eilandje, you can find the answer on page 37.

Delivered in 2010

Parkbrug (Park Bridge)
Het Eilandje also gets a safe and direct link with the nearby Park Spoor Noord. The city will build a 70-metre long pedestrian and cyclist bridge over Italiëlei, near Noorderplaats. The realization of Parkbrug depends on the two buildings on which it rests: the London Tower on the one side and the new campus (to be constructed) of Artesis Hogeschool, a college of higher education, near Spoor Noord on the other side. The Parkbrug was designed by the Architects Ney & Partners.

Planned from 2014 onwards
Oude Dokken is an area near Bonapartedok and Willemdok, the first redeveloped area. Most Antwerp citizens identify this part of the area with ‘Het Eilandje’. Oude Dokken is next to the sailor’s quarter ‘Schipperskwartier’. It is the link between the historical city centre, the other parts of Het Eilandje and the port. Since the start of the redevelopment, the area has bloomed.

Stepping stone to a place to linger
The construction of the marina at Willemdok in 2000 was a first important step. In 2006, the abandoned Saint Felix warehouse was converted into the FelixArchief and now houses the city archives. In the meantime, the MAS [Museum aan de Stroom] opened its doors in May 2011. The dock edges were renewed, together with several warehouses and houses. The neighbourhood is now known as one of the nicest places of the city to walk or drink and eat something!

Complementary projects complete the neighbourhood
Typical for large-scale developments around the Oude Dokken area are the smaller (and larger) projects in or between existing buildings. These are renovation as well as building projects. The buildings are usually a combination of flats or lofts on the floors above and shops, offices, pubs or restaurants on the ground floor. These “complementary projects” bridge the large-scale projects and the existing buildings. They level out the phased revival of the partial area. The most recent large-scale project is NapoleonSky, it unites eight buildings around two inner areas.

Completed projects which set the tone
The role played by some pioneers who settled at Het Eilandje was very important. For Oude Dokken we certainly have to mention Dries Van Noten, who installed his fashion workshop in the beautifully restored Godfried Warehouse. The construction of the marina at Willemdok and the city archives at the Saint Felix Warehouse also gave a boost to the area.

Marina Willemdok
With the construction of a marina at Willemdok, the port and the private sector realized the first major investment at Het Eilandje. As a result, next to the marina on the left bank, Antwerp created a second mooring place for passing yachts in 2000. Willemdok is a very popular and attractive marina. To meet the growing demand, extra berths were constructed in 2004 to increase the capacity to 300 places. The latest extension dates from 2010, when also near the MAS [Museum aan de Stroom] a berth was constructed. It means that from now on you can wade your feet at Het Eilandje!
FelixArchief
After 25 years of vacancy, the historical Felix Warehouse - named after architect Felix Pauwels - was substantially restored. The warehouse was added to the list of protected monuments in 1976. Preserving the original architecture of the building was essential in the restoration plans of the architects Robbrecht and Daem. One of the eye-catchers is a 70-metre long and naturally lighted inner street, which literally links the historical city centre with Het Eilandje. In 2006, it was officially opened as the FelixArchief. The building now houses the city archives with all documents of the city administration since the thirteenth century, including the archives of individuals, organizations and companies. In total, there are more than 23 kilometres of archives. In 2009, a restaurant opened in this building, with two multipurpose halls, guaranteeing the necessary hustle and bustle.

Places of interest at Oude Dokken
Het Koninklijk Entrepot
Het Koninklijk (The Royal) Entrepot (completed in 2005) is a prestigious project located next to Willemdok. The remarkable white building houses a limited number of offices on the ground floor and luxury flats with magnificent views over Oude Dokken on the floors above. The project is named after - and built at the place of - the former Royal Warehouses, in popular speech known as “den Entrepot”. The building was designed by architect Hans Kolhoff, who found his inspiration in the old warehouses in the neighbourhood.

Loodswezen (Pilotage)
Loodswezen or Loodsgebouw (Pilotage) is an administrative office building from 1894, situated between Bonapartedok and the Scheldt. The building was used as such until 2003, when it was sold by the city of Antwerp to the Flemish government. The Pilotage is an eclectic building, there is also a court yard and it has a stately tower. In 2007, the Loodswezen, together with the monument to fallen sailors, was added to the list of protected monuments. In the Master Plan Scheldt Quays, Loodswezen gets an appropriate new destination, possibly with food and drink services.
Hangar 26/27
Hangar 26/27 is a long building along the Scheldt. It used to provide storage for port activities. In 2000, the characteristic building received a makeover, designed by the Antwerp architects Poulissen & Partners. Because of the wooden external layer, the building is known in Antwerp as “het stekkedooske” (dialect for box of matches). Today, it houses a wide range of public-oriented events, such as the office of the regional broadcaster ATV and other media companies, congress facilities and food and drink services.

Did you know?
The excavation of Bonapartedok began in 1807 and the dock was inaugurated on 1 January 1811. It was the result of the hard work of 2000 people with spades. The only equipment they had were horse carts to remove the sand. 2011 is the year of the two hundredth anniversary of the dock.

Oude Dokken - facts and figures
Surface area: 57 hectares
Number of residential units in 2010: 887
Number of residents in 2010: 995
Current residential summary:
+ 46% on the floors above, three quarters are flats
+ 17% on the ground floor, less than one third are flats
Timing (re)development public domain: in progress
Number of moorings at the marina Willemdok: 300
Projects at Oude Dokken

MAS [Museum aan de Stroom] and MAS square
Between the two docks, there is the impressive museum by the river called MAS [Museum aan de Stroom]. It tells the story of the city, its residents, the river and the port. The shape and the bricks make the museum look like one of the old warehouses at Het Eilandje. The different building layers symbolize the different layers of the history of the city. Along the MAS boulevard, visitors can make a free “vertical city walk” to the roof terrace, with a magnificent view over Antwerp and the port. The museum and adjacent square were designed by the Dutch Architects Neutelings-Riedijk. More information at www.mas.be.

Delivered in 2010, opened in May 2011

Museum port Bonapartedok
Bonapartedok (1807-1811) is the oldest dock of Antwerp, built by order of Napoleon. With the opening of the MAS [Museum aan de Stroom], the dock will get a new function and become a museum port. The museum port will be an attractive and bustling place with numerous events in and along the water. Nassau bridge is the entrance to the new museum port. It emphasizes the historical character of Oude Dokken. For a limited number of houseboats with historical character, the city provides mooring places. Opening planned in 2014.

Did you know?
The location of the MAS [Museum aan de Stroom] is less accidental than it seems. This place used to be the location of the Hansa or Oosterlingen House. This impressive building was built between 1564 and 1568 and it was the largest business centre of the city. It housed the German Hanze in Antwerp. The building was 80 by 62 metres and there were no less than 133 rooms and storage places. German merchandisers could stay here and store their goods. It was destroyed by a fire in 1893.
The city wants to turn the Montevideo area into a bustling part of Het Eilandje. The redevelopment of this partial area is in full preparation. The construction of both public and private buildings has already begun or is almost finished. When everything is done, these changes will enhance the unique vivid atmosphere. At this moment, there is not much going on, but soon the Montevideo area will be a real cultural top attraction!

The Montevideo area, the cultural top attraction of Het Eilandje

The city wants to turn the Montevideo area into a bustling part of Het Eilandje. The redevelopment of this partial area is in full preparation. The construction of both public and private buildings has already begun or is almost finished. When everything is done, these changes will enhance the unique vivid atmosphere. At this moment, there is not much going on, but soon the Montevideo area will be a real cultural top attraction!

The original Eilandje

Historically, the Montevideo area is the original Eilandje. Indeed, when Bonapartedok still had a lock, the area was completely surrounded by water. With all bridges raised, the area was cut off completely. This inspired the name “Het Eilandje” (the islet). This part is called the Montevideo area, after the capital of Uruguay, which used to be an important business partner. At this moment, it is not a densely populated area.

Part of the cultural axis running from north to south

The Montevideo area has several characteristic buildings, such as the Red Star Line building, the Ballet of Flanders, the Montevideo Warehouses and the Shop. Without exception, they are reminders of the rich history of this part of the city. The city wants to restore these buildings to their former glory and prepare them for a new use. Depending on the direction, the Montevideo area is also the beginning or the end of the cultural axis running from north to south.

Finished project that set the tone

The Montevideo area has one project that started the conversion of this part of the city into the cultural attraction of Het Eilandje: the Ballet of Flanders.

The Montevideo area - facts and figures

Surface area: 10 hectares
Number of residential units in 2010: 107
Future number of residential units: 496
Number of residents in 2010: 121
Future number of residents: 939
Current residential summary:
• 40% on the floors above, three quarters are flats
• 23% on the ground floor, fifty percent are flats
Timing (re)development public domain: 2011-2015
Average number of river cruise ships at Kattendijkdok between 2004 and 2010: 330
Royal Ballet of Flanders
The Royal Ballet of Flanders was founded in 1969 and is the only classical ballet company in Belgium. In 1995, the ballet company moved to its current location. It was the first cultural establishment in the Montevideo area. The ballet dancers have studios, ateliers and rehearsal rooms. In the same building they also perform their own shows at the theatre. The famous symphonic orchestra delfilharmonie will continue to use this building until the autumn of 2013.

Projects in the Montevideo area
Red Star Line | People on the Move Museum
The Red Star Line | People on the Move Museum will soon open its doors in the historical buildings of the legendary shipping company (with the red star in the flag). It will be a place for memories, impressions, debates and research on international mobility and migration in the past and the present. The story of the Red Star Line and its passengers will come to live, the visitors will follow the emigrants. The building is designed by the New York architects Beyer Blinder Belle, who also designed the plans for the Ellis Island Immigration Museum in New York. The Red Star Line buildings will include a watch tower, with a view over the Scheldt. From the nearby Rijnkaai, during the period between 1873 and 1934, more than two million Europeans from different countries left for the United States of America or Canada to find their happiness. More information at www.redstarline.be.
First stone in May 2010, opening of the museum in the spring of 2013.

Montevideo Warehouses
The Montevideo Warehouses were built in 1895 in the typical industrial architectural style of the old Antwerp port: huge, lofty spaces with flexible lay-out possibilities and floods of light. These warehouses will be restored to their former glory by a private developer. The typical façade and roofs of the building will undergo a thorough renovation, according to a design by architect Chris Poulissen. A new transparent feature building will be built on the northern side of Kattendijkdok. The warehouses will be given new dynamic functions (shops and offices) and include an underground car park.
### Schipperskwartier
1. Falconplein
2. Van Schendelplein
3. Havenboulevard
4. MAS (Museum aan de Stroom) and MAS square
5. Bonapartedok (future museum port)
6. Nassaubrug and Nassaustraat
7. Amsterdamstraat
8. Hangar 26/27
9. Rijnkaai
11. The Shop
12. (Future) Limaplein (square)
13. Kattendijksluis and dry docks
14. Montevideo area
15. Royal Ballet of Flanders
16. Westkaai Towers
17. Londenbrug en Londenstraat
18. Location new port house
19. Initial location (future) floating open-air swimming pool

### Cadix area
20. Former customs building and (future) Cadix square
21. Former Cadix development
22. Noorderpershuis
23. Stedelijk Instituut voor Sierkunsten en Ambachten (future SISA arts campus)
24. Former customs building and (future) Cadix square
25. Former Cadix development
26. Marina Kempisch Dok
27. Technicum Noord-Antwerpen (TNA)
28. Retirement home ‘Het Gouden Anker’
29. Location (future) Parkbrug (Park) Spoor noord
30. New customs building
31. Park Spoor Noord

### Oude Dokken
2. Van Schoonbekeplein
3. Hanzestedenplaats
4. MAS (Museum aan de Stroom) and MAS square
5. Bonapartedok (future museum port)
6. Nassaubrug and Nassaustraat
7. Amsterdamstraat
8. Hangar 26/27
8. Rijnkaai
9. The Shop
10. (Future) Limaplein (square)
11. Kattendijksluis and dry docks
12. Montevideo area
13. Royal Ballet of Flanders
14. Westkaai Towers
15. Londenbrug en Londenstraat
16. Location new port house
17. Initial location (future) floating open-air swimming pool

### Montevideo area
17. The Shop
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### City Centre

### Port

### Eilandje

### Centre

### Willem Dok

### Oude Dokken

### Cadix
The Shop
The Shop is located where the first recruitment office for ship repairers was built in 1937. It is as legendary to ship repairers as 't Klein Kasteeltje (Tiny Castle) has been to army recruits. The current building with the typical round shape dates from 1963. The project developer wants to change this authentic building as little as possible. Architect Jo Peeters made the plans. There will be catering facilities (grand café) and an event hall. The shop will offer a wide range of activities at Het Eilandje.
Works start in 2011, delivery planned in 2013

Kattendijksluis (lock)
Kattendijksluis was built more than 150 years ago and is the oldest existing lock in Antwerp. It was used for the last time at the end of 1998. In 2008, the Management Company Antwerpse Moeilijk and the agency Waterwegen en Zeekanaal (Waterways and Sea Channel) started the restoration of the Kattendijksluis and the construction of an impressive rolling bridge over the lock complex. The Kattendijksluis was reopened in the summer of 2011 and makes it possible for ships to sail directly from the Scheldt into the lock and vice versa. For the development of water tourism at Het Eilandje, this restoration is an important project.
Opening new Kattendijksluis in the summer of 2011

Westkaaitorens
The two towers along Kattendijkdok are the first two of the six residential towers of the Westkaai project. The project developer used three famous architectural firms, and they each designed two towers: Diener & Diener, Gigon & Guyer (both from Switzerland) and David Chipperfield (London). The six towers will be a combination of flats, lofts and studios, but there will also be room for catering facilities, shops and possibly also offices. Together with the planned terraces, benches and green areas, this will create a vivid atmosphere at the Montevideo area. An underground car park under the towers makes sure that the public space remains as free as possible. The four other towers will be built next to the two existing towers and have a completely different look.
Start construction third tower January 2012, delivery spring 2014

Limaplein
The end of the current Limstraat will be converted into a square called Limaplein. This will be a new city square with a view over the water. Limaplein will be a dynamic square, mainly traffic free, with pavement terraces and also room for art, mainly referring to the rich port history. The city already has a design for the square.
Redevelopment planned from 2013 onwards

Kattendijksluis
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Start construction third tower January 2012, delivery spring 2014

Opening new Kattendijksluis in the summer of 2011
Did you know?
Why are there tall buildings spread across Het Eilandje? In the plans made for Het Eilandje by Manuel de Solà-Morales in the beginning of 1990s, he included several slim office towers to give the area enough economic appeal. This idea was also mentioned in the Master Plan Eilandje (2002), which included the construction of several residential towers. The spreading of these tall buildings across the area guarantees openness and safeguards the public domain. At the same time these buildings allow both residential units and offices on a limited space. Two birds with one stone!

Near Oude Dokken there are several statues inspired by the work of Eugen Van Mieghem (1875-1930). This famous resident of the Montevideo area has no equal when it comes to painting popular port live in Antwerp. The statues are made by the Dutch sculptress Carla Kamphuis-Meijer. In 1993, the Eugen Van Mieghem Museum opened near the Steen. It displays about 150 works of the artist. More information at www.vanmieghemmuseum.com.
The Cadix area is a less known and varied part of Het Eilandje, where today only a few hundred people have their residence. The borders of the area are abandoned or are still partly - but also less and less - used by port companies. They form a barrier between the neighbourhood and the docks. The city wants to turn this part into a new residential area by the water for everyone. In the future, this area will house more than 4,000 residents!

Large building projects at the edge of the area, facilities and public domain

The city mainly makes new buildings possible at the edges of the area, and leaves room for a central square, child care, kindergarten and primary school, a sports centre and assisted living flats. Each development will be a good balance between affordable, residential and social units. The city also plans the complete redevelopment of the streets and squares in this area.

A vivid, creative and easily accessible residential area

The private market and social housing companies plan several complementary and new building projects in the existing area, some have already been finished. In the Cadix area there will also be opportunities for creative companies, shops and catering facilities. A new tram line in the area in the direction of the inner and outer city will complete the picture. This will certainly give a boost to the Cadix area.

An environmentally-friendly residential area

The city wants to develop the Cadix area as ecologically as possible. Project developers and social housing companies are obliged to use sustainable materials and build in an energy-efficient manner. Residents will be encouraged to install green roofs, use rain water and not to waste water. The city uses sustainable materials for the dock edges and streets, plans lots of green and wants to use sustainable lighting for the area.

Projects which set the tone

Two major projects in the Cadix area were completed in 2006. Both bring along many activities and are a first step towards the redevelopment of the area.

Het Gouden Anker (Golden Anchor)

‘Het Gouden Anker’ is a home for the elderly, with a view over Kempisch Dok. There are 90 beds - mainly for retired shippers - and also 23 assisted-living flats on the top floor.

The Cadix area gets its name from the centrally located Cadixstreet (street). The name refers to the southern Spanish port Cádiz, which was once the most important port for the trade in spices. The area had no official name, but it was called the “yellow quarter” by the residents, because of the many houses in yellow bricks.
Marina at Kempisch Dok
At Kempisch Dok a social “marina” with fixed mooring places was built for boats formerly moored at Lobroekdok (to be redeveloped). A marina at social prices is an addition to the existing marinas on the left bank and at Willemdok.

Some points of interest in the Cadix area
The Cadix area is a varied neighbourhood, with several historical buildings. There are not only two schools (see below) but there is also the recruitment office for dockworkers and the Noorderpershuis. In the autumn of 2010, another point of interest suddenly appeared.

Recruitment office for dockworkers and Werkvormm
The recruitment office for dockworkers (called “’t Kot”) was built in 1938-1939. It was a design by city architect Emiel Van Averbeke. In 1940, it was occupied by the German army, they remained there until after the liberation of Antwerp. The first official recruitment was recorded in November 1944. Every working day, the dockworkers present themselves during a recruitment meeting where the foremen of port companies offer work. This has been a tradition for more than 65 years! Nearby, at Madrasstraat, the social employment project Werkvormm was established in 2002.

This project involves the maintenance and restoration of the maritime heritage at Het Eilandje and in the port.

Noorderpershuis
The Noorderpershuis was used as such from 1878 until 1975. Inside the Noorderpershuis, water was put under pressure in steam turbines to open the lock doors and bridges. In 2000, the city installed “Project Bureau Eilandje” in the building. Plans for the redevelopment of Het Eilandje were devised and coordinated from here. The building also houses the technical department of the port and is partly used as meeting place and work space. The entire building was put on the list of protected monuments.

Mexicobos and Mexico Bridges
Mexicobos (forest) is a “special case”. During the night from 8 to 9 November 2010, six youngsters and a group of sympathizers planted one thousand trees on the vacant site near the northern edge of the Cadix area (near the historically valuable Mexico Bridges). With this happening they wanted to emphasize that there are not enough trees in the city and in Flanders. The city was impressed by the initiative and decided to maintain the site as tree plantation and see where the trees could be planted in the future. The trees will stay there until 2016 at the latest. Go and have a look! On 5 April 2011, the Mexico bridges exceptionally opened for the floating presentation of the Water Plan Eilandje. More than 350 residents and water users made a unique round trip along the six docks of Het Eilandje.
Projects in the Cadix area

New residential units along the dock edges

The largest project in the Cadix area is undoubtedly the development of new building volumes planned at the edge of the area, with a splendid view over the docks. These are the sites on the edge of Kattendijkdok and the northern part of the Cadix area, along Houtdok. The first sites sold on the private market "under conditions" are a few undeveloped sites to the north of Indienstraat. Project developers can apply, in combination with architectural firms. The city will choose a project developer to realize the project. The whole development will take at least ten years.

The first allotment on the market in the summer of 2011, new building volumes are expected by 2013

Cadixplein (Cadix square) and former customs site

In anticipation of the further development of the area, the city prepares the creation of a new green square. The square will be centrally located and mainly occupy the parking of the former customs office. It will go from Napelsstraat to the dock edge of Kattendijkdok and be one and half times as large as Groenplaats! By expanding the square to the dock edge - where there will also be a floating pontoon - the city really makes a link between the neighbourhood and the water. In consultation with the residents, new ideas were presented for the square. The square should be a real meeting place for the residents: a natural park square combining trees and open spaces. Along the square, there will be shops and catering facilities. The adjacent customs building will be redeveloped as a new mixed building volume, with residential units and possibly also other uses such as offices and a supermarket.

Design competition launched at the end of 2010; delivery Cadix square planned for 2014

Kattendijkdok-Oostkaai and the west quay at Kempisch Dok

The street Kattendijkdok-Oostkaai is situated along the Cadix area and, like Londenstraat-Amsterdamstraat, will be converted into a green avenue, in this case adjusted to the area. Here too the Flemish government plans a tram line. Until recently the west quay at Kempisch Dok was mainly used as parking place by truck drivers. The city will redevelop this broad dock edge and turn it into a pleasant place by the water. There will be quay gardens and places to play and do sports. Awaiting the start of the works, the city already created temporary quay gardens in 2011.

The development Kattendijkdok-Oostkaai is planned from 2013 onwards. Development of the west quay at Kempisch Dok from 2013 onwards, after the restoration of the dock edge by the port company.
Arts campus and other schools

In the Cadix area there are now two secondary schools with a wide range of vocationally-oriented departments: Technicum Noord-Antwerpen (TNA) and Stedelijk Instituut voor Sierkunsten en Ambachten (SISA). The students are very involved in the neighbourhood and provide added value. Both schools also organize evening classes for adults. The city will renovate the SISA building, a protected monument, and expand it to establish a large creative arts campus with arts and craft courses (also the ballet department). The city also plans a kindergarten and primary school near the new square.

New schools planned from 2015 onwards

Office and residential tower with pedestrian bridges

Just like elsewhere at Het Eilandje, the Cadix area will also have a tower building. The 80-metre tall building at the north quay of Kempisch Dok will mainly be used for offices and residential units. With a bit of luck, the people now living in the Cadix area will have to walk 5 minutes to work. At the same time, the city wants to improve accessibility and build pedestrian bridges over Kempisch Dok and Asiadok.

Tower planned from 2016 onwards

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The Cadix area - facts and figures

Number of residential units in 2010: 310
Future number of residential units: 1,896
Number of residents in 2010: 505
Future number of residents: 4,046

Current residential summary:
- 32% on the ground floor, three quarters are flats
- 41% on the floors above, three quarters are flats

Timing (re)development public domain: 2011-2020
Number of mooring places in the marina Kempisch Dok: 240
About one third of the surface of Het Eilandje consists of water. With the further disappearance of the port activities, the docks can get a new destination. Willemdok and Kempisch Dok are now two lively marinas. The city has more ambitious plans to turn Het Eilandje into a perfect maritime place!

Something for everybody on the water
The water at Het Eilandje must offer something for everybody. Culture and experiments, fishing, food and drinks - but also living on or along the water - rowing contests, boat repair and boat trips, fantastic sun sets or spectacular water events: all these water-related activities must get a place here.

Personalized enjoyment
The water element at Het Eilandje is a beautiful scenery for numerous events. In 2010, Het Eilandje was the centre of The Tall Ships Races - just like in the old days, tall historical ships filled the docks - but also the place where the Royal de Luxe diver was lifted out of the water. The water event WaterKANT, which puts the sailing heritage of the city in the spotlight, is organized every two years in and around the docks. In 2010, 373 river cruise ships moored at Kattendijkdok and there are several possibilities to take a round trip. In addition to all these fantastic things, the city also wants to give residents or visitors the opportunity to enjoy the maritime atmosphere of Het Eilandje on foot or by bike.

Several concrete water projects
The creation of the marina at Willemdok in 2000 was one of the first water projects at Het Eilandje. In 2006, a marina with fixed mooring places was opened at Kempisch Dok. River cruises, round trips and event ships can also moor at Kattendijkdok.

The city wants to realize several other water projects at Het Eilandje. The most important projects are described below, with the exception of the museum port at Bonapartedok (see page 27). The city is working on a clear water policy for Het Eilandje, including an improvement of the water quality.

Mooring places for houseboats, including facilities
There are some houseboats in the docks. They liven up the area and contribute to the maritime atmosphere. As part of the Water Plan Eilandje, the city is now working on a houseboat policy.

At Houtdok and Kempisch Dok - and to a limited extent also at Bonapartedok - the city will provide 40 to 50 mooring places for houseboats in the future. The city also wants to provide the necessary facilities for these houseboat clusters. The plan is to attract boats with an original and ‘maritime’ look. For retired shippers who still live on their ship, there is a special arrangement. The quay walls will be renovated and utilities will be made available for houseboats.

Houseboat clusters operational by 2014
Floating and movable open-air swimming pool
Following the example of other large European cities, Antwerp wants a floating open-air swimming pool at Het Eilandje. This swimming pool would offer a welcome refreshment during the summer months, an addition to the existing city swimming pools. The city prefers a high-quality movable swimming pool, which can be placed in various docks at Het Eilandje. The swimming pool should give swimmers the impression that they are swimming in the docks. The city also wants it to be a child-friendly swimming pool, with a children’s pool and a paddle pool. An external supplier will realize the swimming pool project from design to operation. Planned by the summer of 2012

Facilitate and attract water tourism
The city worked out an active water policy for tourists, for example, by providing appropriate mooring places for river cruise ships and investing in public berths, which can be used as water taxi stations. The centrally located and majestic Kattendijkdok will get a tourist-recreational destination. The opening of the renewed Kattendijksluis in 2011 is very good news for the water tourism at Het Eilandje. It considerably increases the access of the docks over water. By making water tourism more attractive, the city will create an additional entry and attract more visitors to Antwerp.

New pick-up point for round trips at Londenbrug from 2012 onwards.

Maintenance and restoration of maritime heritage
The redevelopment of Het Eilandje respects the maritime past of the area. Authentic materials such as cobble stones and bluestone are used for the redevelopment. Historical heritage such as port cranes are restored and bridge connections are repaired. The Nassaubrug was repaired in 2006, but on the west quay at Verbindingsdok, for example, there is also the Willembrug, so rusty that it cannot be used anymore. The city is looking for a financially and technically feasible solution to restore this movable bridge.

Phased repair of the quay wall in progress, restoration Willembrug planned from 2014 onwards.
What the city wants to achieve with the Water Plan Eilandje: ten guidelines.

Create one area with different atmospheres
Enhance the nautical atmosphere
Provide a mixture of activities on the water
Guarantee openness
Preserve the maritime heritage
Maintain the port character
Adjust the water infrastructure
Conduct an efficient water policy
Improve the water quality
Develop water activities

In August 2000, Bonapartedok was the location of the “Floating Gardens”. The French company Le Phun brought this show in the context of the yearly “Summer of Antwerp”. The 12-day spectacle attracted many people to Het Eilandje.

© Le Phun / C. Mathieu
Het Eilandje is at a very short distance from the port of Antwerp, after Rotterdam, the largest international port of Europe. In the Master Plan Eilandje, after the development of the first three partial areas (phase 1), there is a look at a possible future (phase 2). The future development will focus on the link between the current Eilandje and the port: Droogdokkeneiland, Mexico-Eiland and Kempeneiland.

Closer ties between the city and the port (and vice versa). These areas still belong to the port but they will enable a city expansion further to the north in the future. A good relation with the modern and economically very active port - still the largest employer in Antwerp - will play an important role. In the long term at least 20,000 people will live at Het Eilandje.

Planned projects

Further plans have not yet been worked out for the three areas. Concessions held by some port companies up to 2040 have to be taken into account. Yet also the second phase area already offers interesting possibilities.

Droogdokkeneiland

The use of Droogdokkeneiland is still limited and it has one of the best kept collections of dry docks in the world. At this moment the creation of a green park at Droogdokkeneiland is being prepared.

The future of Het Eilandje

Het Eilandje

A view at nightfall of the new port house at Mexico-Eiland in the future, with in the background Het Eilandje, the city centre, the Scheldt and the left bank. © Zaha Hadid Architects

Start of the execution in the course of 2014

New port house at Mexico-Eiland

The port company is building a new port house in and on the former fire station, according to a spectacular design of the London firm Zaha Hadid Architects. A tram line will connect the port house along Het Eilandje with the city centre. At Mexico-Eiland there will be a mixture of functions. Next to the port house, there is another example of a successful redevelopment: in 2002 a restaurant opened its doors in the former pump house.

Delivery planned by 2014

Oosterweel Link and Oosterweel Tunnel

When the Flemish government decided to close the Antwerp ring by means of a combination of tunnels instead of a bridge, it meant more breathing space for the urban development at Het Eilandje. To the north of Het Eilandje there will be a tunnel, with approach and exit roads near Noorderkasteel. It will make Het Eilandje and the port easily accessible.

Start of the works planned from 2015 onwards
A walk at Het Eilandje

After reading this brochure about the past, the present and the future of Het Eilandje, maybe you would like to discover this bustling neighbourhood by the water on your own. We have worked out a walk that will bring you along the three partial areas but also show you how Het Eilandje is connected to the other parts of the city. You start at Schipperskwartier (at a walking distance of the cathedral) and pass - through a small path next to Noorderlaanbrug - also along Park Spoor Noord. Below is a list of the most eye-catching places during this walk, most of them are described in this brochure (see pages 32-33).

Schipperskwartier
1. Falconplein

Oude Dokken
2. Van Schoonbekeplein
3. Hanzezedenplaats
4. MAS (Museum aan de Stroom) and MAS square
5. Bonapartedok (future museum port)
6. Nassaubrug and Nassaustraat
7. Amsterdamstraat
8. Hangar 26/27
9. Rijnkaai

Montevideo area
11. The Shop
12. (Future) Lima square
13. Rattenëjsduis and dry docks
14. Montevideo Warehouses
15. Royal Ballet of Flanders
16. Westkaai Towers
17. Londenbrug and Londenstraat
18. Location new port house
19. Initial location (future) floating open-air swimming pool

Cadix area
20. Former customs building and (future) Cadix square
21. Future neighbourhood development Cadix
22. Noorderpershuis
23. Stedelijk Institut voor Sierkunsten en Ambachten (future SISA arts campus)
24. Retirement home ‘Het Gouden Anker’
25. Marina Kempisch Dock
26. Technicum Noord-Antwerpen (TNA)
27. London Tower
28. Location (future) Parkbrug
58 59

(Park) Spoor Noord
29. Location (future) campus Artesis Hogeschool
30. New customs building
31. Park Spoor Noord

Oude Dokken
32. Port house
33. Marina Willemshaven
34. Het Koninklijk Entrepot
35. FelixArchief

It is a 5-kilometre walk that will take approximately 2.5 hours (you can make it shorter if you want). Enjoy your walk!
Documents

Masterplan
Master Plan Eilandje, prepared by Buro 5 Maastricht under the supervision of René Daniëls (2002)

Detailed plans
Water Plan Eilandje, prepared by Urhahn Urban Design and Rob Vrolsik (2004). This plan was worked out in detail in the Water Plan Eilandje (2011), prepared by the autonomous city planning agency AG Stadsplanning Antwerpen.
Green Plan Eilandje, prepared by Michel Desvigne (2005)

Other documents
Spatial Execution Plan (RUP) Eilandje, prepared by the autonomous city planning agency AG Stadsplanning Antwerpen (2011)
Master Plan Sustainability Cadix, prepared by EVR-Daidalos-Peutz (2009)
To a new square in the Cadix area. Results of the participation programme - autumn 2009 (2010)

Management and coordination
The autonomous city planning agency AG Stadsplanning Antwerpen, together with the city's autonomous real estate company AG Vespa, manages the urban renewal at Het Eilandje. This is done in close cooperation with other authorities and public or private partners such as project developers, utility companies, social housing companies, architects and consultancy offices.

More information
For more information on urban renewal at Het Eilandje you can contact Leo Verbeke, communication officer of the autonomous city planning agency AG Stadsplanning Antwerpen, telephone +32 3 338 21 83, leo.verbeke@stadsplanning.antwerpen.be.
You can find more information on line at www.antwerpen.be/ eilandje (Dutch only). Here you can also download most of the above-mentioned documents.
During the 2010 Tall Ships Races, the then empty MAS pavilion was temporarily used as information desk on urban renewal at Het Eilandje.

This brochure is a translation of the Dutch brochure ‘Het Eilandje - Stadsvernieuwing op weg naar een bruisende stadswijk aan het water’, published in May 2011. Small changes were made where relevant.

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