

# WATERFRONT TRANSFORMATIONS AND CITY/ PORT INTERFACE AREAS IN HAMBURG<sup>1</sup>

TRANSFORMACIONES DEL PUERTO Y ÁREAS DE  
INTERFACE CIUDAD / PUERTO EN HAMBURGO

TRANSFORMAÇÕES DO PORTO E ÁREAS DE  
INTERFACE CIDADE/PORTO EM HAMBURGO

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## ABSTRACT

Hamburg has had a major transformation at the urban level within the metropolitan region including the increase of population and the challenge to ensure an adequate supply for the housing market and the growing number of households. The most important idea is a new concept of spatial development which is harnessing the potential of a growing city by “more city in the city”. The vision is based on a growing port and key growth industries to strengthen Hamburg’s role as engine of economic dynamic. The future space requirements, technical infrastructure and new container terminals

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are costly and generate a challenge for the entire city, also reflecting the protection of the environment. In Hamburg this re-development is carried out in areas next to the city centre while new container terminals were located at the periphery. Three different approaches can be analysed with different planning approaches, from a project based strategy, to a larger urban area and last not least to a whole river island Wilhelmsburg. Keywords: waterfront transformation, interfaces areas, city port development.

**Content:** 1. Introduction: contrasting approaches to urban development, 2. A new urban development concept, 3. Waterfront transformations and city/port interface areas, 4. Beginnings of redevelopment: *string of pearls*, 5. A giant step: *hafencity*, 6. IBA, IGS and the *leap across the river*, 7. A way to end reflexion: further projects for the future.

## RESUMEN

Hamburgo ha tenido una gran transformación a nivel urbano dentro de la región metropolitana que incluye el aumento de la población y el reto de garantizar un suministro adecuado para el mercado de la vivienda y el creciente número de hogares. La idea más importante es un nuevo concepto de desarrollo espacial que está aprovechando el potencial de una ciudad en crecimiento por “más de la ciudad en la ciudad”. La visión se basa en un puerto y las industrias en crecimiento clave para fortalecer el papel de Hamburgo como motor de la dinámica económica. Los requisitos de espacios futuros, infraestructura técnica y las nuevas terminales de contenedores son costosos y generan un desafío para toda la ciudad, que también se reflejan en la protección del medio ambiente. En Hamburgo este re-desarrollo se lleva a cabo en las zonas próximas al centro de la ciudad, mientras que los nuevos terminales de contenedores se encuentran en la periferia. Tres enfoques diferentes se pueden analizar con diferentes perspectivas de planificación, a partir de una estrategia basada en proyectos, a una zona urbana más grande y no menos importante a la isla del río Wilhelmsburg.

**Palabras clave:** transformaciones portuarias, áreas de interface, desarrollo de ciudad portuaria.

**Contenido:** 1. Introducción: contrastantes de enfoques del desarrollo urbano, 2. Un nuevo concepto de desarrollo urbano, 3. Transformaciones del puerto y las zonas de interfaz ciudad/puerto, 4. Principios de desarrollo: *string of pearls*, 5. Un paso de gigante: *hafencity*, 6. IBA, IGS y

el *leap across the river*, 7. Una forma de acabar con la reflexión: nuevos proyectos para el futuro.

## RESUMO

Hamburgo teve uma grande transformação a nível urbano na região metropolitana, incluindo o aumento da população eo desafio de assegurar um abastecimento adequado do mercado imobiliário e do número crescente de agregados familiares. A idéia mais importante é um novo conceito de desenvolvimento espacial que é o aproveitamento do potencial de uma cidade em crescimento por “cidade mais na cidade”. A visão é baseada em um porto e o indústrias em crescimento chave para reforçar o papel de Hamburgo como motor da dinâmica econômica. Os requisitos de espaço futuros, infra-estrutura técnica e novos terminais de contêineres são caros e gerar um desafio para toda a cidade, o que reflecte também a protecção do ambiente. Em Hamburgo esta re-desenvolvimento é realizado em áreas próximas ao centro da cidade, enquanto os novos terminais de contêineres foram localizados na periferia. Três abordagens diferentes podem ser analisados com diferentes abordagens de planeamento, a partir de uma estratégia baseada projeto, para uma área urbana maior e não menos importante para toda para toda a ilha do rio Wilhelmsburg.

**Palavras chave:** port transformações, áreas de interface, desenvolvimento de cidade portuária.

**Conteúdo:** 1. Introdução: contrastantes de abordagens o desenvolvimento urbano, 2. Um novo conceito de desenvolvimento urbano, 3. Transformações o porto e áreas de interface cidade/porto, 4. Início da desenvolvimento: *string of pearls*, 5. Um passo de gigante: *hafencity*, 6. IBA, IGS e o *leap across the river*, 7. Uma maneira de acabar com reflexão: novos projectos para o futuro.

## 1. INTRODUCTION: CONTRASTING APPROACHES TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Hamburg's specific topography is shaped by the confluence of the smaller River Alster and its tributaries into the Elbe. The city is characterised by Lake Alster in its middle and the port with ocean liners on the Elbe. The city state Hamburg is part of the Hamburg Metropolitan Region. In the region the cooperation is based on voluntary basis of the three German federal states Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, and Hamburg, and covers a settlement and economic area to both sides of the river Elbe of approximately 20.000 km<sup>2</sup> with about 4.5 million inhabitants and 1.9 million employees. Their functional independencies can easily be read by the commuter relations. In addition 14 counties from Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony are members of the cooperation based on the mutual Regional Development Concept (REK Hamburg 2000) of the year 2000, an informal "common sense" strategy of the metropolitan region.

The competitiveness of metropolitan regions like Hamburg gains more influence and some of the challenges can only be dealt with on a regional level, some of them on a national and some of them only on a global level. The Hamburg housing market is a regional housing market. Within the metropolitan region it is necessary to accomplish a suitable offer on the market for the growing number of one- and two-person households and the demand of a changed age distribution, choosing quality over quantity. At the same time this offer has to conform to the claim of reduced land consumption. The resulting spatial competition of the city state of Hamburg and the surrounding municipalities has relevant impacts for taxes, as many commuters pay there taxes not in Hamburg where they work but in suburban villages and towns.

The port of Hamburg *is expanding* and also demands more space. The city can not make adequate offers to all interested parties of the logistics branch. At this point there is also a demand for cooperation with the metropolitan region. South of the river for example the "Süderelbe AG" was established, to promote the mutual development of the regional competence cluster "port and logistics", "aviation industry (Airbus/EADS)" and others, associated with the use of synergy effects of the science and research facilities, of the region to secure the almost 30.000 companies and the 800.000 inhabitants of the Süderelbe region a high quality of location and quality of life. Their order reads "strengths strengthen" for growth, creation of value, and jobs.

For a seaport city climate change, global warming and climate protection are some of the important topics in and for the Metropolitan Region. Hamburg takes up this challenge with a broad climate protection conception, which is not only an interdisciplinary and integrative approach but also a border-crossing approach with regional dimension. The diverse spatial functions shall be secured by an active management of spatial resources within the limits of increasing conflicts of usage and the need of economical and sustainable use of land in the port area as well as in the region. The Metropolitan Region Hamburg not only has to strengthen itself within the region, acting "from the region for the region", but also has to compete with other regions of Germany and Europe. Therefore border-crossing alliances and networks of large-scale partnerships with other regions and among the three federal states have to be contracted.

As metropolis and core of a region Hamburg offers an outstanding technical, social and knowledge infrastructure. A further future task is to strengthen the identity of the region

and the metropolis. Cities, communities, and regions have to maintain one's ground in national and international competition. So called soft location factors like quality of life and image of a region are becoming more and more important for a successful economic development. Regional marketing and internationalisation are therefore the new key projects of a metropolitan region and the HafenCity and the IBA are two important examples.

## 2. A NEW URBAN DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Since April 2007 the city of Hamburg possesses a new concept of urban development – the Spatial Vision of Hamburg as a draft. Since the publication of the last urban development concept of Hamburg in the year 1996, that called STEK (Stadtentwicklungskonzept 2007), important new development potentials have arisen and important parameters have changed for the city of Hamburg. With a perspective of ten to fifteen years the Spatial Vision for Hamburg identifies important topics, tasks for the spatial development. Hamburg wants to seize the chances of a growing metropolis. The city shall mobilise its urban potentials and strengthen its character as a green metropolis on the waterfront. The most important aim of the guiding plan reads “More city in the city”. With this demand Hamburg gives consistently the priority to higher densities, infill and sustainable spatial development.

A prognosis from 2004 shows further growth chances for Hamburg. Accordingly the city can gain additional 80.000 inhabitants or 60.000 households until 2020. Altogether Hamburg will have a positive balance of migration. The focus lies on the age group of 15 – 30 year olds, meaning the young adults. Hamburg obviously makes attractive offers for housing, employment and education for this group and represents

an appealing living space. The balance of migration within the surrounding suburban area is in contrast still negative for Hamburg, but tending to decline. In the future a substantial attention must be paid to the improvement of the existing housing stock offer and new offers for the present inhabitants, young families as well as for newcomers.

So the key strategy shall be understood as a spatial strategic concept, which shows future emphases of action and does not follow the demand of spatially comprehensive planning. At the same time it is an informal strategy about the key projects of the city, which visualize how the aims shall be realised. In a highly abstracted form the guiding plan shows the spatial structure of the city region and the important topics of future urban development.

The advantages of an inner development are obvious: instead of high costs for new buildings the existing infrastructure of the city is used – from public transport to cultural and education facilities. The usage of often precious scenic and natural open space is minimized. The “Green Metropolis on the Waterfront” is and will be an important feature of Hamburg and a benchmark for the development of the inner city. This requires a responsible and sustainable use of space and resources. More city in the city means at the same time to give the inner-city locations a high quality urban shape—by higher densities, new uses, mixed uses and upgrading of public spaces. More apartments and more jobs have to contribute altogether to a higher quality of life and not to question existing qualities, if one wants to avoid emigration.

As a growing City Hamburg needs a sufficient amount of apartments to fulfil the demand of the growing population. Therefore the city set itself the goal to build 5.000 to 6.000

new apartments a year. Urban conversion and infill requires the participation of many actors and often enough long-term endurance. Often local initiatives don't want higher densities and infill and there are many fights against new projects ("Nimby" – Not in my backyard).

The Spatial Vision of Hamburg relies on the major growth industries of the city to strengthen its role as a driving force of economic dynamic. In the focus are those industries, which probably have a large demand of space and which ask for specific locations. To those belong especially businesses of the competence cluster "port and logistics" as well as "aviation", which are supported by various promotions. On the other hand the "creative industries" look for older buildings and conversions close to downtown. The economic dynamic is carried by a number of small- and middle-sized businesses. The creative economies like media, internet technology and communication, film, music and design are initiator and at the same time milieu defining for the city. Hamburg has already established quarters like "Schanzenviertel", "Karovierteil", and "Ottensen", which offer such a milieu for certain groups but where also displacement and gentrification is important topics.

In the period after German reunification many conversion areas of the Federal Armed Forces, the Post, the German Rail, and large hospital areas have provided new urban uses. But most important like in all seaport cities is the conversion of derelict former port areas. Only ten years ago the rapid worldwide increase of container transshipment and cruise ships was not predictable. In Hamburg this development takes place with an active port right in the middle of the city. The future requirements of space, technical infrastructure and new container terminals and environmental protection as well are a great and also costly challenge for the entire city.

### 3. WATERFRONT TRANSFORMATIONS AND CITY/PORT INTERFACE AREAS

Also in Hamburg port areas had not been addressed by urban planning for many decades and were perceived as "no-go areas", dangerous unsafe zones, "facades of ugliness", but also as diasporas and stepping stones for newcomers. The discourse on appropriate strategies for handling such potential development areas has stirred controversial debate on the theory and practice of planning goals and priorities not only in Hamburg.

The term "re"-vitalisation of ports and waterfronts straddles a range of meanings attached to very diverse processes and plans. While port planning includes (internal) port development measures such as the reorganisation and relocation of port uses, urban planning is now concentrating on changing former port economies to activities such as services, tourism, leisure and housing. Terms like quay, waterside and embankment describe areas, buildings and facilities formerly associated with ports. Revitalisation, however, has no precise definition, but embraces a complex field of changing uses, rejuvenation and regeneration, redesign and remodelling at the intersection of diverse interests that are connected at the interface of city/country–port/water. Hence, the terms revitalisation, change of use and development are often used synonymously.

The cycle of dereliction, neglect, planning, implementation and revitalisation of old harbour areas as well as the necessary construction of port infrastructures are part of a complex network of stakeholders and interests. Derelict waterfront sites offer opportunities for new sustainable uses that no longer require sites close to the water. New waterfronts in particular

mirror globalisation processes and have become locations for work, housing and recreation favoured by the “creative class” (Florida 2005, Peck 2005) in knowledge-based societies.

Everywhere efforts are being made to compensate structural changes in cargo handling, ship building and seaport industries, as well as the consequential loss of employment by way of revitalisation projects that exploit structural changes in an attempt to modernise the urban economies. Although there are a great variety of influences as size of the project, local and regional office and housing market, timeframe of planning and implementation, approaches and targets chosen for regeneration and context of governance and planning cultures roughly a similar sequence of developments can be noted:

- dereliction, relocation of terminals and port uses
- neglect of derelict areas
- planning, concepts and designs for sub-optimally used former port areas
- implementation, construction
- revitalisation and enhancement of port areas and along waterfronts.

Generally, transformation began in the oldest parts of the ports and cities, with small projects such as converted warehouses, and slowly moved to more peripheral areas that were redeveloped later. Initially, a step-by-step approach was often taken, beginning with the most attractive sites, but not integrating developments in a sustainable urban or regional (re) development strategy. In the context of stronger competition between seaports and the challenges of globalisation, waterfront redevelopment has to be integrated into a city-wide and regional planning and research perspective.

Much experience of transforming central urban waterfronts has been gained in the meantime. However, the targets of the projects are not adequately defined and it is not clear what the indicators are for best practice and “success stories”. Often this kind of project-based “research” is done with local studies and merely comparing the situation before and after revitalisation. As not much trans-disciplinary comparative research in this field is available so far, such studies offer opportunities for identifying different structures of decision-making processes, different types of urban (re)development and diverse socio-cultural conditions (Wolman and Ford III and Hill 1994, p. 838).

Compared with other planning tasks a complicated set of competencies exist for waterfront revitalising projects. They include national state responsibilities and ownership relations (like customs and regulations of the “freeport”—abandoned in Hamburg in 2013), different local authority competencies and finally private rights and interests. Not the Ministry for Urban Development and the Environment (BSU) but the Hamburg Port Authority (HPA), with its special rules, is the planning authority in the port of Hamburg. Thus urban development planning can generally not be done in port areas and port related waterfronts. Cooperations between the two Authorities are notoriously difficult.

#### **4. BEGINNINGS OF REDEVELOPMENT: “STRING OF PEARLS”**

After the end of the Cold War, Hamburg regained its central position as the most eastern port on the North Sea and as a gateway to the Baltic Sea. Most of the port is owned by the city of Hamburg and is governed by the Hamburg Port Authority (HPA). The port is perceived as part of the urban

infrastructure, and capital investments in quays and harbour basins, and the maintenance and dredging of the shipping channel as important transactions accounted for in the city's budget. Hamburg is the site of Europe's second largest port and is a tidal seaport city on the estuary of the River Elbe, one hundred kilometres upstream from the North Sea.

The waterfront along the northern shore of the Elbe in Altona, with splendid views towards the shipyards and ocean liners, plays a special role in Hamburg. Like in other seaport cities, the oldest facilities and infrastructures from the mid-nineteenth century near the city centre became vacant or underused in the 1980s and the port moved south-west-seawards where new container terminals were built. When its port-related activities declined, public attention became increasingly focused on new uses. In the early 1980s, the northern shore of the Elbe comprised a heterogeneous mix of land uses with buildings from the mid-nineteenth century to the post-war period. The idea of upgrading of this waterfront area raised high expectations. New uses had to be found, identification points created, and attractions for citizens, visitors and tourists established. Revitalising measures on the waterfront were expected to have a positive impact on the city. The best locations were presented to companies and investors looking for new sites. A catchy name was found for the zone: "String of Pearls". It was assumed that applying a coherent strategy for the whole area would be difficult, but that a string of spectacular projects based on a market-led approach would generate enough interest and, consequently, higher land values to upgrade the area.

Since then, a number of new buildings and conversions of older warehouses have significantly gentrified the area along the northern Elbe bank. Most of the new projects are office

buildings including restaurants on the ground floor. The long periods of time that pass from riverfront sites falling derelict to surveys, designs and implementation works, are due to different reasons specific to each project. The implementation of projects was not strictly governed by planning requirements, but by the availability of plots and developers' interests as well as investment considerations that originated from different periods and planning contexts. The metaphor of the "string of pearls" suggests that there had been an urban planning concept, but it was not coined until the project was already under way. More than two decades after the start of the retrieval of public access to the waterfront along the river a promenade connects the different parts of transformation.

## 5. A GIANT STEP: HAFENCITY

The approach for HafenCity differs from the "string of pearls". It is the most important urban redevelopment project in Hamburg – the most significant reclamation of the (outer) city centre for housing in Germany – and one of the largest projects of its kind in Europe. The HafenCity re-establishes the connection between the River Elbe and the city centre, giving Hamburg a new direction for growth: down to and along the river. HafenCity extends from the Speicherstadt (Warehouse District), to the Elbbrücken, the bridges across the river. For the first time, a large area is being taken from the port area and put to other uses. The existing site covers approximately 155 hectares of both old and new operational port facilities. It is surrounded by several neglected housing estates, the wholesale market, industry, port facilities and railway lines.

HafenCity started at the end of the 1990s is the most important urban redevelopment project in Hamburg. Hamburg

has adopted a plan-led, mixed-use approach for HafenCity. Following a competition for a Masterplan, specific districts were designed with a focus on offices, housing, shopping, and recreation. In a way, HafenCity is a latecomer project, where planners tried to avoid the mistakes of other waterfront revitalisation projects like mono structures in London Docklands. Approximately 5,500 apartments for 10,000 to 12,000 inhabitants were planned, with projections for required social infrastructure, such as schools and community centres, based on these figures. The area is within the Elbe flood plain, making built and organisational solutions for the protection of people and buildings indispensable.

The Masterplan (2000) specifies the phased implementation of developments in sub-districts. It lays down the principal development sequence from west to east, avoiding uncontrolled construction activities throughout the development area. A zoning plan for HafenCity's first phase was drawn up in 2000, and land sales started in 2001. A development agency was devised in 2002 and the first buildings completed by 2004. The newly founded GHS (Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Stadtentwicklung GmbH, later HafenCity Hamburg GmbH) is responsible for the area and the implementation of its projects. A typical quango (Quasi autonomous non governmental organization) was set up in order to hasten development, which soon owned most of the land.

The federal state government fosters opportunities for growth in Hamburg and its metropolitan region ("Metropolis Hamburg – a Growing City"), HafenCity being its flagship project. In 2006, plans for the future centre (Überseequartier) of HafenCity were finalised. Construction of the characteristic mixed use development began in 2007, starting with a new metro line. In 2004, a temporary cruise terminal received its first passengers at Hamburg. Although the world financial

crisis caused some delays and vacancies of office space in the Überseequartier. Implementation of the southern part of the commercial heart of HafenCity was stopped and a new developer must be found. The overwhelming demand for (affordable) can lead to housing more housing projects. In 2008, the Maritime Museum was opened in Speicher B (Warehouse B). Most spectacular is the project of a concert hall (Elbphilharmonie) on top of Speicher A (Warehouse A). The landmark project has attracted a good deal of international attention not only because of the spectacular architecture but also because of rapidly increasing costs and delays in construction works. Already in the planning and construction phase it became a distinctive international new trade mark of the city.

An updated Masterplan for the eastern part of the HafenCity was decided in 2010. Three districts with a variety of uses are in the pipeline: Baakenhafen neighbourhood will be used for different types of housing and recreation. Oberhafen will be transformed to a creative and cultural district, where existing older warehouses will be reused and sport facilities right by the water will be provided. The most eastern district, Elbbrücken neighbourhood, will be the entrance gate with higher buildings and a mix of offices, residential and shopping facilities.

## 6. IBA, IGS AND THE "LEAP ACROSS THE RIVER"

The river island Wilhelmsburg with the area "Leap across the River Elbe", and the district Harburg are especially affected by the transit traffic. The cutting of quarters by traffic roads and the noise exposure by road, rail and air traffic have become reality in many other parts of the city. In future important tasks of urban development are to find solutions, which meet the claims of city residents for a better quality of life and at



the same time account for the economic development of the city. So this is a special chance for Hamburg to move within an experimental scope during the preparations of the Internationale Bauausstellung IBA Hamburg (International Building Exhibition) and the International Garden Show 2013 (IGA), where many involved parties are integrated in a future discussion about sustainable solutions of urban development.

A new urban connection is planned from the city centre north of the river via HafenCity across the Elbe to Wilhelmsburg to Harburg Riverport and the south. Amidst these poles and bridge heads, Wilhelmsburg Mitte is expected to develop into a new centre. But most importantly, the Reiherstieg, canals and the watercourses in Wilhelmsburg should become its new 'life veins'. Wilhelmsburg will become the focus of iconic urban design projects. The strategy also includes a more regional perspective. "Leap across the River Elbe" by also improving the housing and living conditions within the area. The exhibitions are both intended to speed up the step-by-step approach to regeneration.

The dynamic port and the large river island Wilhelmsburg with their diverse city landscapes form conflict-laden interfaces, but at the same time represent also an urban development potential of inestimable value. In 2013 the exhibitions visualised new ideas and solutions in this area for future life in metropolises. The "experience area" river Elbe is connected with the assignment to conserve this multifaceted area, to develop it and make it accessible and tangible to the city society.

Stretches along Reiherstieg and the southern banks of the Norderelbe are still mainly occupied by port-related and industrial uses, while the eastern side has a range of different residential neighbourhoods. Flood control structures and noisy

transport arteries crossing Wilhelmsburg lend it the character of a transit space. Conflicts between port uses, new terminals, the relocation of the dock railway, the cross-harbour link (Hafenquerspange) and new residential areas are inevitable. It is assumed that the "Leap across the Elbe" is a task that will span one century, occupying at least two generations. The IBA is not a classical building exhibition, but a demonstration project for new ideas of participation and planning procedures. The main topics are briefly:

**Cosmopolis:** Social inclusion, cultural diversity, improvements of education and concepts for an international urban society

**Metrozones:** Concepts for fragmented uses and development of inner edges of the city

**Cities and climate change:** Concepts for a sustainable metropolis, demonstration of environmentally friendly, renewable energy using own resources

On the IBA Dock, a floating exhibition and office dock, the plans and models can be visited. Topics and goals for the future of metropolis can be explored as well the current status of IBA projects before the exhibitions start in 2013. All projects with an IBA certificate will be examined by criteria like distinctiveness, feasibility, project capability and structural effectiveness. By this project-led, experimental and incremental approach the IBA hopes to generate a valorisation for the total island Wilhelmsburg on the long run.

## 7. A WAY TO END REFLEXION: FURTHER PROJECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Plans for the transformation of derelict waterfront sites in Hamburg started with a project and architecture-led incremen-

tal approach along the northern river bank. Conflicts arising between urban and port development were dealt with case by case, among the authorities and stakeholders. Rapid implementation of building projects was the prime goal. HafenCity implied a jump in scale and a more complex implementation strategy formulated with the city as developer and a project embedded in urban perspectives of inner-city extension. HafenCity is a more plan-led and pro-active approach, while also improvements and updates of the plan related to changes in the office and housing market were possible. The implementation phase was predicted in 2000 to last about 25 years.

The “Leap across the River Elbe”, on the other hand, reorganised the urban perspectives for the entire city. Using architectural projects, the geographical centre of Hamburg will be moved from the periphery into a new centre by means of a diverse range of projects and plans that are part of a long-term strategy. Initially, the existing building stock will be selectively enhanced and distinct innovative projects incorporated into an overall urban design concept which will restructure the interface between port and city. The upgrading of Wilhelmsburg will take many decades and must be balanced between requirements of the local inhabitants for affordable housing and dangers of partly gentrification.

The projects and plans illustrate paradigm shifts in urban planning not only in Hamburg. Shortage of funding and deficits in the budget make untargeted subsidies impossible and enforce more flexible plans and concentration on most important (“flagship”) projects with most and manifold impacts.

When more than 30 years ago discussions began on the redevelopment of derelict and sub-optimally used harbour sites, it was assumed that this would be a specific and unique plan-

ning task. Using experiences from North America the new post-industrial waterfront was imbedded in a re-invention of the city image. Especially the waterfront was the place where the transformation from the industrial and fordist city to the post-industrial and science-based city could be recognised, in a way a shift from ships to chips (Schubert 2001: 131; Ward 2002: 342). In the 1980s, inexperience not only in Hamburg, but in Europe, unclear responsibilities, a bad image and want for possible future uses allowed “pioneers” to exploit niches for their own purposes. Soon this was followed by single redevelopments of (often listed) warehouses and the conversion of the architectural heritage dating back to early industrialisation into lofts and expensive private apartments. Soon it became clear that standardised regeneration models (“do a Baltimore”—referring to Baltimore Inner Harbour and the festival market approach) are not delivering the best local solutions. The partly mono-functional and small-scale approach to redevelopment of central port and derelict waterfront sites has now been integrated in large-scale strategic often regional perspectives. Waterfront sites became integral parts for the redevelopment and important components in comprehensive urban and regional concepts. Although waterfronts like in Hamburg are important elements for redevelopment and unique image factors for urban marketing they are now often integrated in sustainable medium-term and long-term regeneration perspectives, together with other brownfields, transport and landscape planning projects.

But the distribution of resources and power between terminal operators and logistics enterprises as “global players” and the cities and ports as “local actors” has become more and more unbalanced. Whilst the attention of large logistics companies is increasingly concentrated on investment returns and global optimisation strategies, (seaport) cities must consider

local medium to long-term perspectives for the development of their ports and urban areas. Today, the flow of goods is managed from business locations far from the ports. Important terminal operators such as the Port of Singapore (PSA) or Dubai Ports World act globally with a focus on horizontal and vertical integration, offering their customers bespoke logistics services. The part of global terminal operators (transnational terminal operating companies TTOs) has significantly increased during past years (Juhel 2001, p. 143).

The postulate to stop thinking in terms of “city or port“, but of “city and port” instead, incorporating aspects of sectoral and comprehensive regional planning, collides with harsh reality. Merging the terms competition and cooperation into co-optation signifies a joint approach that is, however, still wishful thinking. It is important to leave behind romanticising and nostalgic views as the planning of cities and ports will increasingly follow different development parameters. The future development in coastal regions and seaport cities is thus dependant on the interaction and development of the global economy, transport and ship building, nature and the environment as well as climate change and, ultimately, the citizens’ interests. The conflicts of interest in coastal regions are similar all over the world – amplified by global development trends in the field of logistics – and are expected to grow rather than lessen in the future. Architects’ visions as well as the covetousness of the real estate industry and urban developers, egged on by the media to convert harbour and waterfront sites into promenades and attractive housing, offices and cultural facilities, clash with the requirements of port logistics and economies.

The largely automated terminal operation and the ISPS Code (International Ship and Port Facility Security Code) have made ports into high-security zones, strictly controlled and with limited access. This in turn implies the reversal of centuries of development: cities need their ports, but modern container ports no longer need cities; its outdated structure has become a hindrance to future development. The perception of port cities as one organisational and spatial unit consisting of city and port is replaced through decoupling and spatial specialisation.

The flagship projects are an integral part of their respective national planning cultures, urban regional housing and office markets and globally established real estate and project management structures. At the same time they document perspectives of European urban development from monocentric to polycentric (regional) cities. Although the ambivalence, fragmentation and social polarisation continue to be significant at a small-scale, they are embedded in large spatial contexts.

Spatial planning has thus gained in significance. Although city marketing is primarily concerned with landmark projects by “star” architects, they are now nothing more than important components within the whole city. The implementation of integrated and sustainable regional and spatial planning policies on the other hand is linked to different political traditions and planning cultures. Mostly the countries that have anticipated the increasing competition between seaport cities and, in response, adopted forward-looking regional strategies and new governance structures involving the relevant private and public stakeholders will succeed in the long-term.

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