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**The power of knowledge and mobilisation
in the European Quarter in Brussels:
A trajectory of incremental changes
in discourses and in on-site development**

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For almost six decades, the development of the European Quarter in Brussels is marked by an antagonistic struggle between dominant political and economic powers versus the resistance of a minority (i.e. the 'district coalition' versus the 'neighbourhood and liveability coalition'). Whereas the general direction of the quarter's urban policies did not change, the minority has realised multiple incremental changes in the discourses as well as in on-site development.

The paper first briefly reconstructs the trajectory of this conflict-loaded development and it elaborates the discursive distance between the development perspectives of respective coalitions. It then turns to several small-scale cases where the neighbourhood and liveability coalition has managed to induce changes, i.e. cases that qualify as incremental change and as a 'partial success'. The examples are symptomatic for the type and the level of conflict in this neighbourhood, with for instance arguments over the urban programme, over the protection of residential functions and of historic patrimony under the threat of the speculation that can be related to the prevailing economic and political interests. In this reconstruction, the study considers different strategies to develop coalition resources with the intention to influence policies. These include the mobilisation of advocates, the involvement in cooperation and negotiation attempts with actors from the dominant coalition, as well as the building of knowledge resources. The concluding reflection presents contending interpretations about the trajectory of the minority coalition. In this, the description of the neighbourhood coalition as a minority is reframed in the light of its hegemonic position as an opposition, i.e. appearing to prevent other oppositions from emerging. We then also examine the potentials and the limitations to learn and to transfer the experiences from the European Quarter to other neighbourhoods. Last but not least, the material and normative changes that resulted from the skilful exploitation of resources by the neighbourhood coalition are questioned in their value as 'partial successes' as they hardly changed the stability of dominant powers: has there been a true incremental, political change and an opening towards the co-evolution of new perspectives, or should these so-called 'successes' be re-interpreted in the light of the politics and strategies of the district coalition?

1. Introduction: Issue and background on the methods

More than once, the development of urban policies in the European Quarter has been described in almost exclusively negative terms, reduced to being "a downright planning failure" (Doucet, 2010:92; cf. Sleebus, 1993; Eco, Koolhaas, 2001). By contrast, a more differentiated analysis—resulting in a slightly more optimistic view—also considers the commitment, the sustained mobilization and the development of knowledge by local and regional actors who opposed dominant policies. Although there are no examples of radical policy changes in the European Quarter, the continued commitment of different actors in a minority position did pay off, and should not be underestimated. The effects are clearly visible in partial successes on site as well as in gradual concessions in the dominant discourse.

The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) is here the point of departure for this kind of analysis (cf. Sabatier, 1986, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c, 2000 2007; Sabatier, Jenkins-Smith, 1988, 1993; Sabatier, Weible, 2007; Weible, Sabatier, McQueen, 2009). The ACF departs from the assumption that actors line-up around a number of controversies, which are lasting for several decades (Sabatier, Jenkins-Smith, 1993). It is assumed that a policy domain can be read as a landscape with two to five advocacy coalitions, i.e. actors who problematise policy issues in a similar way and who cooperate over time (Sabatier, 1998c: 103). This is also the case for urban policies about the European Quarter in Brussels (Kuhk, 2013). The empirical basis for this investigation is developed as a qualitative study, i.e. including the analysis of historic reviews; the study of documents such as policy briefs, press releases and urban studies; as well as in-depth interviews.

In the European Quarter, the controversies between dominant policies and minority views are multi-faceted, and they contain many different elements that can lead to opposing perspectives and conflicts. It

therefore seemed appropriate to study a wide range of tangible symptomatic cases—specific projects, constellations of cooperation and agreements—to understand the nature of these controversies as well as the strategies the actors used to encounter them. For analytical clarity, the issues in the micro-cases are presented in a ‘systemic frame’ with 12 categories of different policy issues that are regrouped into three topics, with discussions about ‘scope and locations’, ‘functions, scales and quality’ and ‘instruments, procedures and actors’. For each policy issue, we identified two to five answers that are relevant in policy discussions as well as in on-site development (i.e. different policy options, on discontinuous scales). Actors within one ‘advocacy coalition’ share a set of beliefs, which is translated into a discourse that combines different policy options into a more or less coherent development perspective. Table A1 in the appendix provides an overview of the different policy issues, complemented with tangible examples.

2. Historical brief: Contentious development perspectives in the European Quarter

The analysis of plan orientations in Brussels proved that the landscape of advocacy coalitions can be read as a set of two rather distinct, mature coalitions and two nascent coalitions (Kuhk, 2013: 96-110). These are the ‘post-war modernism coalition’ from the 1950s on, the ‘anti-modernist counter-reaction’ from the 1970s on, a ‘regional centralist coalition’ that emerged with the new institutional setting of the Brussels-Capital Region and the ‘positivity, contemporary design and co-production coalition’ at the end of the 1990s.

The dominant discourse from post-war modernistic approaches focused on large-scale development and economic profitability, whereas the opponents defend the specificity of local aspects and the viability of the city. This reaction and indeed wider social movement can be observed on the level of urban policies in Brussels as well as in specific neighbourhoods such as the European Quarter, the contested Marollen near the Palace of Justice or the North Quarter with a drastic change from residential fabric into an office district. The profound confrontation in urban policies in Brussels in the early 1970s qualifies as a collective political struggle with both local and regional actors involved (i.e. referred to as the ‘*première tournant*’ by Aron, 1978). The anti-modernist coalition emphasizes support for a more encompassing approach, which focuses on the development of neighbourhoods in their entirety and placed in the wider context of the Brussels’ region (i.e. ‘*reconstruire la ville*’, cf. Schoonbroodt, 2007) rather than solving single issues for particular inhabitants (the so-called ‘not-in-my-backyard’ or NIMBY-reaction). The confrontation between post-war modernists and the anti-modernist reaction also seems to have a good explanatory value for the tensions in the European Quarter. Numerous projects and issues in this neighbourhood symptomatically illustrate the confrontation between the dominant and the minority coalition, referred to as ‘district coalition’ and as ‘neighbourhood and liveability coalition’ when the focus turns to the European Quarter. For instance, there are (1) the discussions on the speculation with land prices and vacancies in the vicinity of existing buildings for the European institutions (particularly strong in the areas Northwest of the Berlaymont building for the European Commission and in an area South of the Justus Lipsius building that is used by the European Council), (2) the discussions about the delimitation of safety zones for top meetings and more generally about the public character of open spaces in relation to the quality of life and the ‘accessibility’ of the district, (3) or the discussions on proposals for the monolith zoning of the office areas around the Schuman roundabout opposed to the proposals for mixed development and a recognition of diverse neighbourhoods within the wider European District (cf. Figure 1: Overview of Symptomatic cases).

Notwithstanding the partial successes of the minority coalition ever since the early 1970s, the general tenor in the European Quarter knew only little deviation from the focus on international profiling and economic potentials. To meet this profile, the district coalition enabled changes of scale and functions, which were experienced as a threat to the values of the minority coalition, namely the viability of an inhabited neighbourhood, the attention for the local identity and the consultation with local actors. The new

institutional setting of the Brussels-Capital Region in 1989 essentially adds no new arguments to this confrontation when it comes to the specific issues of the European Quarter.

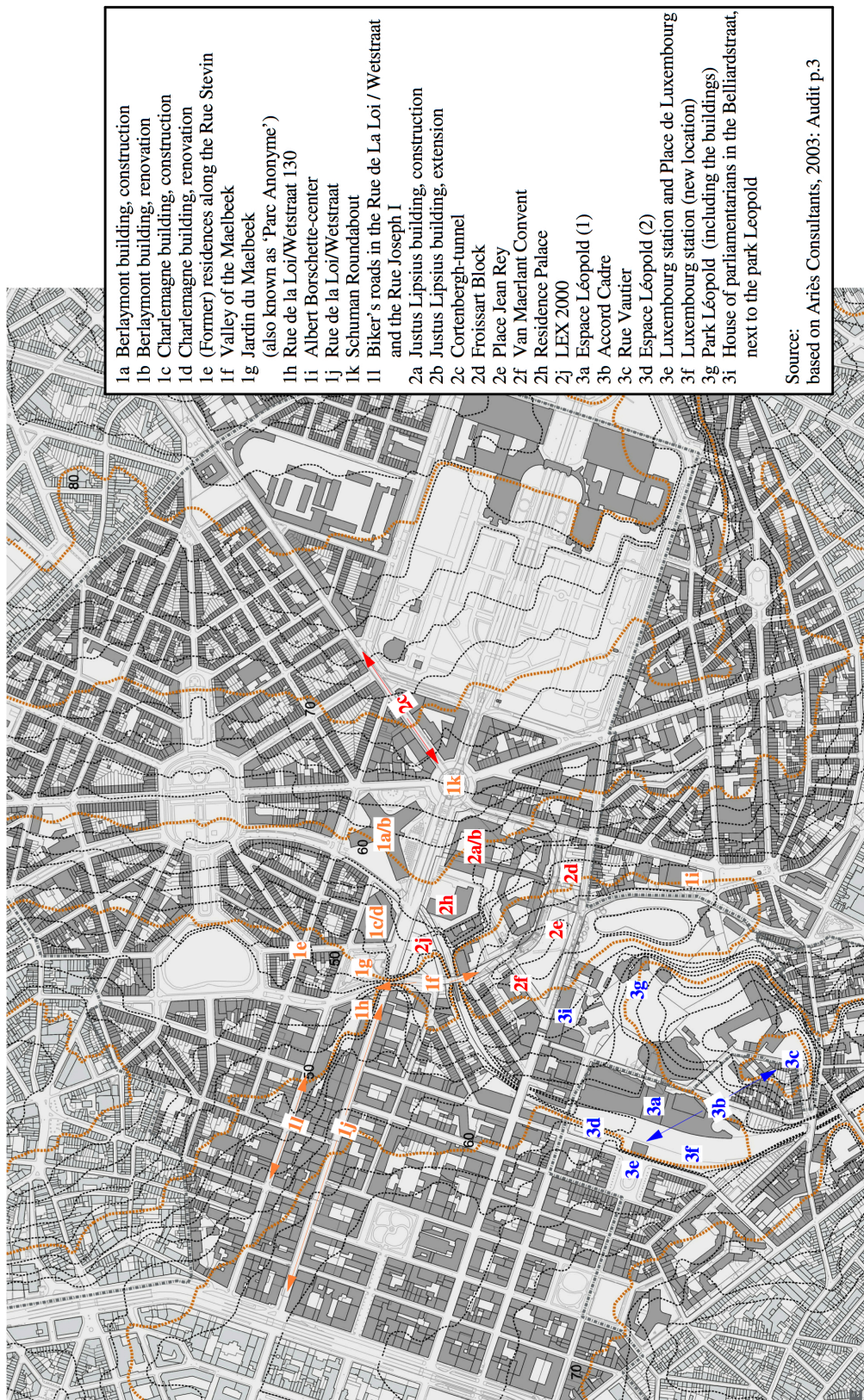


Figure 1: Overview of symptomatic cases (Source: Kuhk, 2013:113, lowest layer: Ariès Consultants, 2003, Audit:3)

Then again, the actors from the fourth planning orientation in Brussels at the end of the 1990s did succeed to add new arguments, although their contribution remains rather modest with regard to the European Quarter. The latter—here referred to as ‘urban design coalition’—incorporates some elements of the anti-modernist orientation, but it also and simultaneously attempts to react against it. This young coalition succeeded to realise only relatively little change or renewal in a discourse that has been polarised for a long time already. Basically, the younger coalitions in urban policies in Brussels are less pronounced in the European Quarter, which is confirmed in an analysis of mobilization and coordination attempts (Kuhk, 2013: chapter 9). Figure 2 presents the chronological emergence of different coalitions in urban policies in Brussels and in the European Quarter.

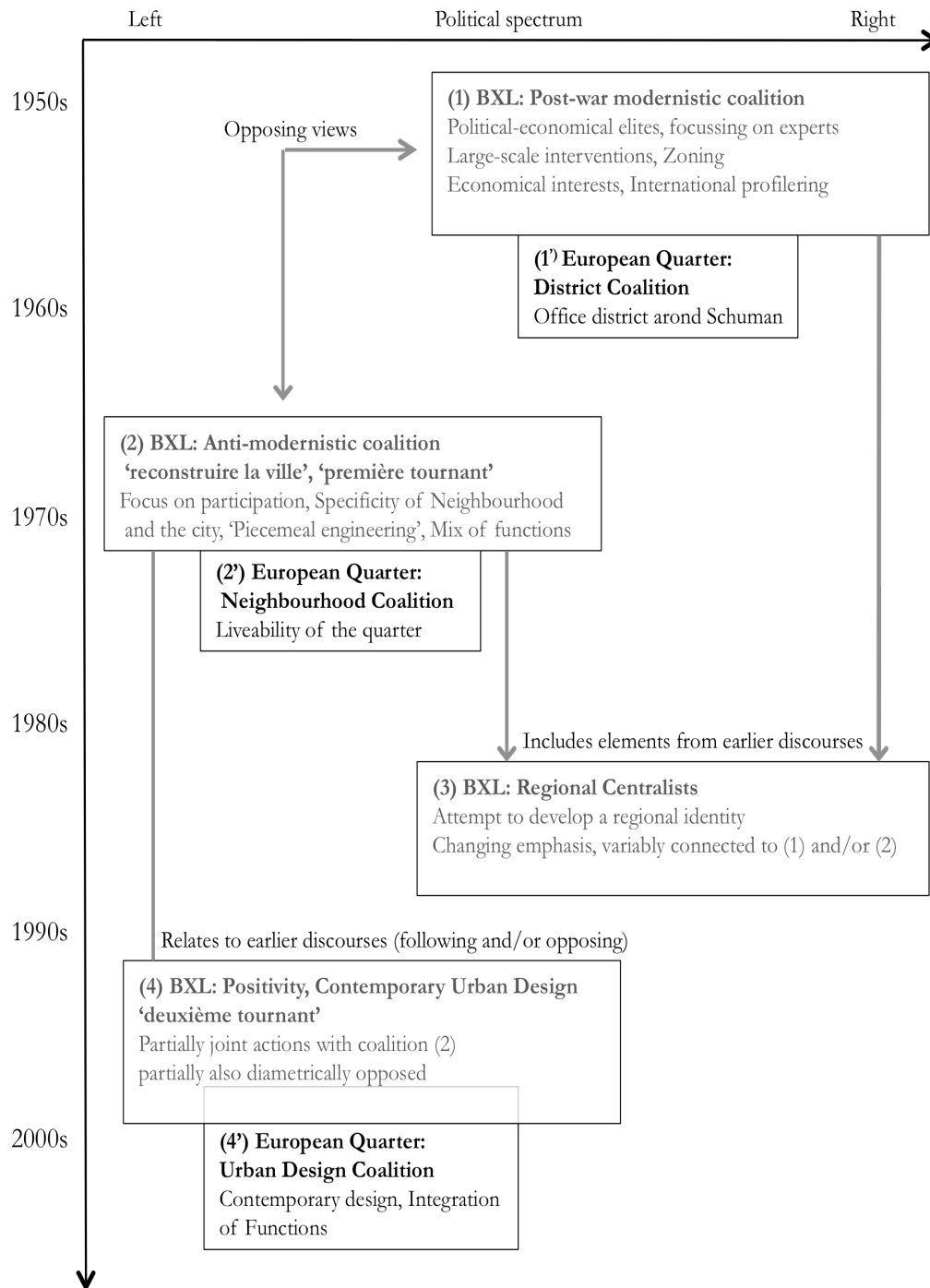


Figure 2: Advocacy coalitions in the European Quarter in relation to advocacy coalitions in urban policies in Brussels.

The largest discursive distance between actors in urban policies in the European Quarter is found between, on the one side, economic actors with an international orientation and, on the other side, local civil society organisations with a strong focus on the neighbourhood. Figure 3 summarises the (most extreme) positions of the district and of the neighbourhood coalition. It illustrates the different options that are chosen for multiple policy issues. Whereas there is generally an agreement on developing the quarter as a location for the European institutions, the options differ largely when it comes to *how* this should be done.

Policy issues	Preferred policy options For District coalition	Preferred policy option For Neighbourhood and Liveability coalition
a. Scope and Locations		
a.1. EU Inst. in BXL/ Belgium	Basic agreement on Brussels as the main location for European Institutions in Belgium	
a.2. Extensions in BXL	Concentrated development in the European Quarter	
a.3. Extending within the EQB	Proposals for new sites: next to the existing sites	Proposals for new sites: on a relative distance of existing sites OR densification on existing sites
b. Change of scales, functions and qualities		
b.1. Programme, functional development and mix	Planned separation of functions, Plans for the development of offices as a mono-functional business district, Rationale: focus on a single plot and on projects.	Mix at the level of the neighbourhood, of a street and at the level of single units, Rationale: focus on the entire neighbourhood
b.2. Scale of development	Large-scale interventions, High rise, High density development, High floor area ratio.	Small-scale interventions, Low rise, Low density development, Low floor area ratio.
b.3. Perspectives on mobility and public space	Focus on Private Mobility: Road connections, Parking lots, Accessibility of buildings for cars, Connections to highways, Focus on single transport modes, a more specialised approach, Rationale: Focus on long-distance connections, Interpretation of public space as being the 'residual space' after organising mobility, Restricted definition of 'public space' in terms of public ownership.	Focus on Public transport and on soft users, Network of lines and stops, Network of bike roads and pedestrian areas, Focus on multimodality in an integrated approach, Rationale: Focus on short-distance passage, Validation of public space in its own right, as a space to enable encounters and expressions, as a sequence of spaces, Widened definition of 'public space' in terms of public access.
b.4. Security Issues (construction sites, top meetings, liveability)	Security for top meetings, Security of construction sites regulated and controlled by public authorities (as a result of learning).	Security of construction sites regulated and controlled by public authorities Viability (and partly also security) for the surrounding neighbourhoods, related to aspects of planned mix of functions, public access of open spaces, passage through building blocks, frequency of use, space for soft mobility, etc.
b.5. Architectural Quality and Conceptual development	Functional approach (technical and economical rationality of design and construction), focus on single project or plots.	Relational approach (relative importance of different space claims and users, considering flows) and Discursive approach (meaning of spaces), Consideration of a wider urban setting.
b.6. Accounting for the Genius Loci	Generic proposals, expected to be applicable to different places, Ignores the existing (exclusively future-oriented)	Specific proposals, adapted to the particularities of the place, dynamises the existing (intergenerational perspective) or protects (past)
c. Instruments, processes and actors		
Financial terms	Different financial constellations possible (renting, leasing, ownership; private, public-private, public) Real estate market is a major actor Generic Volumes (if rented or leased), Specific only if owned Decisions by few actors (political and economical elite) Project-based development	Different financial constellations possible (renting, leasing, ownership; private, public-private, public) Public authorities are a major actor: development with the intervention of the public authorities Comprehensive plans for the whole neighbourhood, e.g. publicly commissioned studies (master plans) Participation of many actors

Figure 3: Development perspectives for the district coalition and for the neighbourhood coalition

3. Focus on the neighbourhood and liveability coalition¹: actors and values

Both the announcement of more European institutions to come as well as the defence for a car-oriented logic triggered reactions from local associations and from intellectuals who regrouped in regionally oriented civil society organisations. Initial euphoria about the new guests in Brussels turned into considerable anti-modernist protests, initiated by various newly formed action groups with left ideologies. The neighbourhood coalition centres around *inhabitants* of the European Quarter, who are organised in *neighbourhood associations*. Examples are the ‘Association Quartier Leopold’ (AQL) in Ixelles/Elsene, the ‘Riverains Jourdan’ in Etterbeek, the ‘Groupe d'Animation du Quartier Nord-Est asbl’ in the city of Brussels (GAQ) as well as smaller associations such as the ‘Comité Pascale-Toulouse’, the ‘Comité Stevin’ and the ‘Comité Comines-Froissart’, most of which emerged in the 1970s², mostly with specific occasions when political decisions or plans by economic actors urged for action. The neighbourhood associations differ in their composition, profile and in their routines. They all focus on specific and limited areas. The organisations intend to inform inhabitants and to mobilise them by using a range of ‘regular tools’ such as informational gatherings or street actions³. Their focus is not exclusively on ‘la lutte et la défense’, on ‘battles and defensive reactions’ though, but also on animation and on maintaining good relations between inhabitants, which intends creating a strong participative tissue in the European Quarter. At times, the neighbourhood associations also cooperate, e.g. for specific projects at the fringes of their respective perimeters or for projects with a larger scale and importance, such as the Project Urbain Loi (cf. Atelier Ch. De Portzamparc, 2008). Members of the AQL stress that all actions were meant to be a part of something larger anyhow and a part of a fight for general interest (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, 09.12.10). Frequently, these local neighbourhood associations receive the support from *regional organisations*, such as the Atelier de Recherche et d'Action Urbaines asbl (ARAU, 1969), Inter-Environnement Bruxelles (IEB, 1971) and the Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu (BRAL, 1973). Also these were a reaction against the planning in the 1950s and 1960s, which was perceived to be ignorant of local and civil society needs.

Although the local and regional associations can be considered as main actors in the coalition, they also received the support from different other actors, although not always on a continuous or consistent base. For instance, the coalition seems to find support from a range of *employees of the Brussels agglomeration* from 1971 on, since the 1980s also more explicitly from *employees of European institutions*, as well as from ‘*urbanites*’ *beyond the European Quarter*, and occasionally even beyond Brussels since the 1990s. The neighbourhood coalition gained only limited support from *trade unions*, e.g. with the support of the European Civil Servants’ Trade Union for the 1995 Publication “Wijken voor Europa” (Wijkorganisaties Europawijk, 1995). The support from different public authorities is—euphemistically speaking—rather varied. Another source of support was found with the ‘*squatters*’ for the Parc Léopold at the first European summit, and later also from activists who fought to preserve the Luxembourg station. Many supportive inhabitants who worked in the small-scale artistic studios in the neighbourhood and who supported the neighbourhood associations, have meanwhile left the area though (e.g. in the Rue Godecharle, INT Marco Schmitt, 08.10.10). Last but not least, the neighbourhood coalition could also enjoy the occasional support of *journalists* from (local) press (INT Christine Goyens, 07.09.10).

Actors in the neighbourhood coalition emphasize the following values: (1) a strong focus on solidarity and on just societal development, (2) the protection of property rights in an intergenerational perspective, (3) a pluralist view on society, (4) and the possibility to develop inclusive policy processes. Members of the neighbourhood coalition want to safeguard the liveability of the quarter and to emphasise the qualities as a residential quarter. On multiple occasions, members of the neighbourhood coalition therefore reacted against the large-scale developments and particularly also against the undemocratic processes that

¹ In order to fully understand the processes of political contention in the European Quarter, it requires the study of both minority and dominant coalitions. Whereas the paper merely focuses on the strategies (i.e. resources such as mobilisation and knowledge production), the phd equally sketches the position, policy options, successes and resources of the dominant coalition.

² Some of which disappeared in the 1980s-1990s, e.g. the Comité Comines-Froissart disappeared when the street and the adjoining plots became the new site to build the European Council.

³ The Association Quartier Leopold has also applied more juridical tools.

accompanied these. The strong emphasis on liveability of an existing residential quarter is translated into a focus on mixed development, small-scale and low-density interventions, mobility for local users and qualitative development of public spaces. Members of the neighbourhood coalition raised for instance questions about the usefulness of having a massive concentration of European institutions in the heart of Brussels, about the apparent isolation of the new users, about the lack of public information and forms of consultation, or about the function and the appearance of specific buildings. Inhabitants perceived the changes in the European Quarter as brutal and fast transformations. Their worries concern the aims and the quality of the interventions in relation to the existing urban fabric and users, as well as the follow-up during construction and the processes of decision-making in urban policies.

4. Zoom in on microcases: realisations and partial successes from a minority position

The actions of the neighbourhood and liveability coalition illustrate their position: they have been vigorously involved in the urban debate about the European Quarter since the 1970s and found themselves often in opposition to official institutions and to economic actors. Their proposals have had some impact on the quarter, for instance in delaying major projects such as the Council of Ministers' building. Many more examples were to follow since the 1970s: they reacted to the concept of the inner-city highways, to the 'Plan de secteur' or to the demolition of the Leopold Brewery in order to construct the International Congress Centre (better known as European Parliament). They also reacted on the speculation about the sites between Rue Stevin, Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat and Chaussée d'Etterbeek (site of the 'Parc Anonyme', officially known as 'Jardin de Maelbeek'), on the plans to build a regional representation of Bavaria in the Boulevard Clovis, on the planned extensions of the Albert Borschette Conference Centre, and so on.

The following paragraphs discuss different partial successes, starting from the first confrontation about the Maelbeek valley. The first two examples largely focus on actions that are wider than the European Quarter, these are successes for the anti-modernist movement in which the neighbourhood coalition is embedded. The other examples demonstrate actions of local associations in the European Quarter and their partial successes on site.

Microcase 1: Confrontations about the Chaussée d'Etterbeek (early 1970s)

In the early 1970s, a larger network of inner-city highways was planned in order to connect a ring of municipalities around the historical centre of Brussels. This triggered a lot of reactions. The struggles on this issue, particularly also in the valley of the Maelbeek became the "Le grand cheval de bataille de l'agglomération" (INT Christian Frisque, 25.11.10), so to speak the main battlefield for the agglomeration. The Maelbeek valley (cf. figure 1, 1f) was at that time a problematic area with run down warehouses and lots of abandoned buildings, with little connection between what existed in the valley and what was developed along the Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat (except for the back entrances to the Residence Palace, which are oriented towards the Chaussée d'Etterbeek). Both the contents of the policy makers' discourses as well as the large opacity about the planned and the ongoing developments lead to fierce reactions (cf. INT Christian Frisque, 25.11.10). The battle over the valley of the Maelbeek was the first important confrontation between the two competing advocacy coalitions in the European Quarter. In this, the differences between the economic and the social logic, but also the generational difference between the employees in the new administration of the Brussels' agglomeration and the people who worked for municipalities became clear. Many different local action groups appeared. Local actions were partly coordinated from ARAU, together with the BBL (Bond Beter Leefmilieu) and IEB. Especially ARAU did not settle for defensive *actions* only, they also actively proposed *alternatives*; the first such alternative plan was presented on a press conference on 19th of October 1972 (cf. Schoonbroodt, 2007:70). It was proposed that residences would be renovated in alternating phases and that the offices of the European institutions would be located on sites that would not disturb the existing neighbourhoods. In the end, only a small part

of the Chaussée d'Etterbeek was realised as a street with two times two lanes and a central strip. Soon after the new institutional structure of the 'agglomération' came into being in 1971, the alderman Serge Moureaux initiated the 'Commission de l'Aménagement de la vallée du Maelbeek', mostly referred to as the "Round Table of Maelbeek" (1974 – 1978) (INT Christian Frisque, 25.11.10). The establishment of this *platform for negotiation* is perceived to be an indirect effect of early actions of the neighbourhood associations and of interest groups such as ARAU, BBL and IEB.

This 'Round Table of Maelbeek' included regional and local players, and promoted the dialogue between the neighbourhood associations, the municipalities Brussels, Ixelles and Etterbeek and the Société de Développement Régional Bruxellois (SDRB). It hereby clearly qualifies as a cross-coalition coordination. The gatherings were led by the members of the Agglomeration of Brussels (with Serge Moureaux as the president), with different communities involved (Brussels, Etterbeek, Ixelles and Saint Josse), different ministries (e.g. the Belgian departments for public works and for traffic), the central administration of urban planning and spatial development, the national train company NMBS as well as the regional company for public transport MIVB, the society for regional development and different neighbourhood associations. The Round Table refused the proposal from the Belgian government to cover the Chaussée d'Etterbeek over a distance of 300 metres in order to present suitably large terrain for a new and prestigious building for the European Council (BCR Parliament, 2003:9). Since one of the main ambitions of the neighbourhood coalitions was to oppose the plans of turning the Maelbeek valley into a city highway in a larger network, the federal Minister of Public Works Jos De Saegher was also addressed. The Agglomeration's ambitions were politically opposed to the intentions of the national government, reflecting the position of the newly emerging neighbourhood coalition versus the dominant political and economic powers. The gathering resulted in the *renewal plans* for the valley of the Maelbeek in 1973. The implementation of the main ideas from this group was only achieved about thirty years later though (INT Christian Frisque, 25.11.10).

Microcase 2: The 'Plan de Secteur' as a promising plan? (1979)

Another example of a partial success of the anti-modernist movement is the Regional Land Use Plan from 1979, which also included important statements about the European Quarter. The Brussels' College of Mayor and Aldermen ratified the Plan de Secteur on the 28th of November 1979. This particular plan emerged from *democratic cooperation*: the influence of groups such as ARAU is clearly visible in the desire to provide a protection for zones and sites of cultural, historical, or aesthetic interest (e.g. to preserve all of the 'Quartier Nord-Est', the square Frère Orban with its surrounding buildings, the streets Pascale and Toulouse, the Parc Léopold and the Rue Vautier, the Square de Meeus, the Square de Luxembourg and the train station, and a small portion of the rue Joseph II) (cf. Papadopoulos, 1996:80).

Although this desire is clearly stated in the plan, the intentions were only partly realised, and many exceptions to the plan were allowed in the implementation. The most famous exception would become the development of the so-called ICC or International Congress Centre⁴, better known today as the hemicycle for the European Parliament. Additionally, also a whole list of relatively small-scale changes hollowed out the initial intention to protect housing. The exceptions were realised through a series of 'Plans Particuliers d'Aménagement' (PPA), which resulted in a fundamental change of the quarter's features: "Ten street blocks in the Quartier Européen-Léopold, which were zoned exclusively for residential use, have now been almost entirely absorbed by EC-related building projects" (Papadopoulos, 1996:81).

Microcase 3: Limited success concerning the demolition of the Leopold Brewery (1987)

The neighbourhood organisation 'Association Quartier Léopold' was formed at the time when the Leopold brewery was sold to developers in 1987 (cf. Figure 1, 3a, location for the European Parliament at the

⁴ At the time when the European Parliament was build, then officially presented as the ICC or International Congress Centre, there was no option to present it as the European Parliament to be, since the decision of location was not formerly decided yet on the European level.

Espace Léopold). The association set up a *legal action* to stop the demolition works. The action was not addressed against the presence of the European institutions as such, but rather against the way things were changed in the European Quarter. The action was aimed at demonstrating the obvious neglect of specific resident's interests and the neglect of the general interest. The association expected that the action would not lead to a permanent re-organisation of powers, but utmost to a temporary 'tremble'. The action indeed resulted in a temporary 'on hold' (Demey, 2007:351, cf. INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, Paul Jamouille, 09.12.10): the Brussels' Region had not yet acquired a corporate personality, it therefore did not have the authority (yet) to grant a building permit, nor to apply for a building permit as a client (BCR Parliament, 2003:14)⁵. Even if only having a temporary effect, the result was perceived to be a very important step and statement of power for the newly formed local association. It was highly motivating to continue actions for their cause, as is illustrated in the following sections.

Microcase 4: Embedding actions in a broader approach: the 'Accord cadre' (1988)

The twenty pages of the 'Accord Cadre' from December 1988 is an example of a written agreement between actors who adhere different development perspectives. The struggle from local actors reacted on the potential nuisances along the planning and the construction of the European Parliament. The 'Accord Cadre' is an agreement between a developer (SEL, Société Espace Léopold) and a neighbourhood organisation (AQL, Association Quartier Léopold). Furthermore, also A. Lefèbvre signed for the 'Comité Régional d'Accompagnement de l'Accord Cadre' (for the BRDA Brussels Regional Development Agency, cf. SDRB/ GOMB). Two leading members of the association, Marie-Dominique Bernard and Paul Jamouille provide a differentiated perspective on the effects of this agreement, indicating both the relevance and the risks (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, Paul Jamouille, 09.12.10): the Accord Cadre provides a frame for negotiation to relocate sixty-five people who lived in proximity to the actual site of the European Parliament⁶, in houses that were to be demolished. The agreement did not exclusively address owners; it also protected the tenants. Even with this frame for arbitration, the negotiations still had to be developed step by step, for each owner and for each tenant separately though.

Another important effect was the re-assignment of about twenty-five buildings for housing. These buildings were poorly occupied or abandoned, and thus became candidates for demolition and speculation. This measurement has strengthened the residential character of the neighbourhood and it has also raised the occupancy rate. The revaluation of the 19th century housing stock has also lead—both here as elsewhere in Brussels—to a significant rise of prices (INT Paul Jamouille, 09.12.10). This seems positive for those who want to sell a property, although negative for who needs to disburse siblings inheriting a family property.

As for the safety of the construction sites, the Accord Cadre essentially proposed two measures against careless management of construction sites, which resulted in some additional regulation. One measure was to close off the construction sites, to limit the number of accesses and hereby to limit the possible impact on the adjoining roads. The other measure was to appoint a safety coordinator⁷ for the construction sites. The effect of these two measures was significant, as it turned the construction site of the European Parliament into one of the safest large building sites in Belgium (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, 09.12.10). The idea of a safety coordinator is meanwhile translated into a European Directive⁸.

Additionally, there was also an aesthetic measurement for construction sites: a small-scale competition was organised for the illustrations⁹ on the panels that surround the construction site. Furthermore, the negotiations that resulted from the 'Accord Cadre' also had a structuring effect for the cohesion of the

⁵ In an appeal to a higher court, the first decision to suspend all activities was undone. The argument was that the Region is part of a federal State and the permit therefore can be granted to the State instead (BCR Parliament, 2003:14).

⁶ In the Rue Wiertz and the Rue Godecharle.

⁷ The man who was appointed as a safety coordinator unfortunately died because of an accident at the construction site, which is, of course, most dramatically, painfully ironic and a failure of implementation of what was aimed at in the agreement.

⁸ Cf. 92/57/EC, from the 24th of June 1992.

⁹ The winning 'homme qui court' was shown on the panels at the construction site for the Lex 2000.

neighbourhood since the struggles for individual residences, studios and apartments were developed in a shared space for negotiation¹⁰. However, the at times verbally violent battles are said to have had important psychological effects on the inhabitants. According to the members of the neighbourhood association, some people would stay away from the area even years after the struggle to avoid the bad memories (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, 09.12.10).

Whereas the members of the AQL show a certain pride about the 'Accord Cadre', even 20 years later (INT Paul Jamouille, 9.12.10), the historian Thierry Demey remains modest about the effect. Demey evaluates it as a vague outline agreement and a petition of principles that is a frame rather than a guarantee or a genuine commitment, e.g. for renovations (Demey, 2007: 354-355). Also, the civil society organisations seem to have little certainty with regard to the quality and the openness of future negotiations (Demey, 2007:351). What is more, the agreement seems to centre on real, yet locally limited disturbances (Demey, 2007:352). According to Demey, it would have been a better approach "to consider these buildings as a vital element in the re-development of the local area, in which they must play an integral part" (Demey, 2007:352). Based on the interview with the members of the neighbourhood association, my general impression is though that opening the 'box' of design principles and of urban planning would have hindered signing an agreement (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, Paul Jamouille, 09.12.10). Trying to include Pandora in the list of demands is of no avail when a written agreement is the objective. In my estimation, the agreement should be valued as an important rapprochement between the local actors and the economic actors, since it helps to bridge a large discursive distance.

Microcase 5: Cooperation around the Rue Vautier: solidarity after an internal shock (1989)

At rare occasions, actors—even from different advocacy coalitions—decide to work together on a single issue on the base of a shared interest in short term, beneficial coordination attempts. The negotiations in the aftermath of the gas explosion at the Rue Vautier are an example thereof¹¹.

On 18 December 1989, amid construction works for the European Parliament, the Rue Vautier shook due to a gas explosion at the house of family Dellicour. Just two days later, the papers were filled with accusations towards the gas companies Unerg and Sibelgaz as well as towards the constructors of the CIC 'Centre International des Congrès', or—as mentioned between brackets in the newspapers already then—the future European Parliament¹². Soon after, following hypothesis was forwarded as possible cause for the accident: in order to build the CIC, the underground needs to be partly dried to become more stable for the planned construction. The amount of water that was removed was larger than the amount of water that could be contained by the sewers. The water that could not enter the sewers would have caused—together with the heavy traffic—a sagging of the ground in the Rue du Remorqueur/ Stoomsleperstraat. This allowed the water to further seep into the ground and to wash away the ground under a pipeline for gas. The latter broke (in the area of Brussels City, controlled by Sibelgaz) and the gas flew into the underground hollow spaces, from the Rue Wiertz all to the Rue Vautier where turning on a central heating provided the spark for the tragic accident (in an area of Elsene, controlled by Unerg). At a later point, it was suggested that also the city of Brussels who granted the building permit, as well as the constructor of the Parliament (the 'Association momentanée Travaux S.A. Batiments et Ponts Construction')¹³ should be held partly responsible. Many questions arose on top of the direct issues that the inhabitants were facing in order to deal with the consequences of this dramatic accident. There were questions about the immediate reaction of the emergency services, about wider security issues of construction sites in relation to utility networks, about maintenance and coordination, both between the different providers of utilities and between different policy entities. Many questions concern the direct and the indirect responsibilities.

¹⁰ "At least, we know each other and we had a more cohesive neighbourhood" (INT Jamouille Paul, 12/09/2010).

¹¹ The case was reconstructed, based on press releases and other documents in the Bral Archives, and then discussed with members of the AQL (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, Paul Jamouille, 09.12.10).

¹² 'La Colère après l'explosion meurtrière', 20.12.89, in: Archives Bral, Box 002 Cover 645.

¹³ Cf. 'L'Europe Parlementaire pour les victimes du gaz', in: Archives Bral, Box 002 Cover 645.

The neighbourhood showed great solidarity in dealing with the consequences of the accident. The importance of coordinated action was emphasised by Henri Bernard (the former chairman of the neighbourhood association AQL) in a *preparatory note for a meeting* on the Rue Vautier gas explosion. The gathering was organised to discuss a juridical report about the explosion. Different interests became joined in the aftermath of the incident. The chairman *proposed a forum* on a more regular base¹⁴. The gas explosion was also an important stimulus to continue with the agreements made in the 'Accord Cadre', and more specifically so with the paragraph three on security issues and on temporary nuisance.

Five days after the accident, the neighbourhood associations as well as actors from the regional associations jointly and publicly require for a thorough investigation about the causes¹⁵. Marcel Reydam and Jean-Marie Michel –at that time chairmen of respectively the regional BRAL and IEB- supported this idea. Also the solicitors Beauthier and Van Meerbeeck publicly supported this point of view. The *solidarity* within the neighbourhood coalition became more visible and also wider in the aftermath of the accident. Also the green party joined and demonstrated their position more explicitly¹⁶.

Then also, the neighbourhood association AQL *issued a summons against the city of Brussels*, as they granted a building permit without the necessary precautions taken where large infrastructure works are executed in a residential neighbourhood. When the building permit for EII in the Rue du Remorqueur/ Stoomsleperstraat was discussed at the consultative committee for the city of Brussels in July 1988, AQL had already intervened to point at security matters¹⁷.

The conclusion seems to be that the gas explosion has served as an important trigger to join different voices from the neighbourhood coalition, to mobilise new partners for support as well as to accelerate the implementation of the Accord Cadre, whereas the inhabitants who were directly concerned in fact had to wait very long for support and explanations (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, Paul Jamouille, 09.12.10). Particularly the questions on the responsibilities were not solved even decades after the accident had happened.

Microcase 6: Actions and changed context at the Parc Anonyme (1970s-2001)

Another example of local actions can be found at the crossing of the Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat and the valley of the Maelbeek (cf. figure 1, 1g). Today officially known as the 'Jardin de la Vallée du Maelbeek/ Maalbeekdalhof', the site between Rue Stevin and Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat, along the Chaussée d'Etterbeek, was targeted for extensions of the European institutions, already in the seventies (INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10). The site was promised to the constructor De Wael for the construction of the offices for Jaques Delors. Both GAQ, ARAU and IEB reacted against this development since each additional office project would continue the rapid change of scale and function of the former residential quarter. This prospect of growing needs for office spaces would foster speculation even further. Also, the quarter was developed through a project-based approach instead of departing from a visionary master-plan. This development risked neglecting public needs such as the wider integration into the neighbourhood, a balanced development of public spaces or an overall assessment of the effects on mobility. In its further development, the site was not used for office extensions: It was used as parking lots and then finally turned into a park. Although the so-called 'Parc Anonyme' was remembered as a "testimony to the obstinacy of the residents" (Demey, 2007: 391)¹⁸ and although the function and approach fits with the values adhered by the neighbourhood coalition, the representatives of the neighbourhood association GAQ were somewhat more careful in their evaluation:

¹⁴ AQL, Note in preparation of a meeting on the 15th of October 1990, in: Archives of Bral, box 002, cover 0780.

¹⁵ 'De wijk neemt het niet', 25.12.89, in : Archives Bral, Box 002 Cover 645

¹⁶ 'La drame de la rue vautier émeut Ixelles', in: Archives van Bral, box 002, Cover 645.

¹⁷ Report from the consultative commission at the City of Brussels, July 1988, notes on the intervention of AQL, in: Archives Bral, Box 002 Cover 645.

¹⁸ Cf. also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jardin_du_Maelbeek.

«Parfois, si on gagne, c'est pas toujours nécessairement du à l'action continue du comité. C'est parce que les destinataires ont finalement changé d'idée. Qu'est-ce qui a pu les faire changer d'idée? Est-ce que ce sont des pressions locales ou est-ce que c'est d'autres opportunités ailleurs? Qu'ils n'ont plus de budget, qu'ils envisagent autres choses?» (INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10).

“Sometimes if you win, it's not always necessarily due to the continued action of the committee. This is because the addressees have finally changed their mind. What could make them change their minds? Have these been local pressures or have these been other opportunities elsewhere? Do they lack the budget, are they considering other aspects?” (INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10).

Another example was provided in this context: the GAQ association reacted against the construction of a large-scale project in the Avenue Palmerstone. The project was eventually cancelled, although not so much due to the actions of the committee, but rather as a result of the declaration of bankruptcy of one of the developers. Also a changed context can be at times a favourable partner to the exigencies of the local actors.

Microcase 7: Creative actions for the regional representation of Bavaria (end of the 1980s)

Strategies of local action groups are mostly made-to-measure. They are designed as an issue is developing. The discussions about the regional representation for Bavaria can illustrate the discourse and also the strategic inventiveness of local actors. The regional representation of Bavaria is today housed in the former Institut Pasteur in the Park Léopold to the South of the European Quarter. The initial plans though were to settle in the Boulevard Clovis 18-20 at the North-East of the quarter¹⁹. When the regional representation of Bavaria presented its first plans for a location in the European Quarter, there was a collaboration of the GAQ with inhabitants from the Boulevard Clovis, at the end of the 1980s (INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10; INT Etienne Christiaens, 02.07.02). The earliest reactions against the plans for Boulevard Clovis focused on traditional tools such as *public enquiries*, participation to *consultative commissions* and *direct contact to the aldermen of urbanism* at the city of Brussels. Local actors reacted against the plans to demolish existing buildings in order to construct offices and accommodations for the ‘ambassador’ and for the trainees, whereas the buildings were already recognised as an important patrimony. Also, the planned residences were not targeted at the inhabitants from the quarter; the *raison d'être* was related to the construction of offices (i.e. for trainees). The fear was that the newcomers—since their stay is temporary and related to their job—would not integrate or contribute to the quarter's daily praxis in a sustainable way. These reactions were forwarded to the city of Brussels. Also, local actors reacted against the fact that the Brussels-Capital Region interpreted representations of European regions to be similar to embassies, which results in building permits that are directly granted by the region and no longer by the city of Brussels. Based on their experiences from the past, the fear of the association is that the region would be somewhat more tolerant and admissive than the city of Brussels. The association argues that economic pressures were the real drivers, which have nothing to do with requests that result from a diplomatic status. The regional associations IEB and ARAU supported the neighbourhood association in this debate, for instance with the interpretation of official documents.

Another strategy—which truly demonstrates the custom-made approach—in this case was to address members of the regional Bavarian government. This was realised through *statements in the media* in Belgium as well as in Bavaria, resulting in a mobilisation in the respective region. The strategy was to question the plans to demolish existing volumes in order to build new ones, stressing the fact that the existing patrimony, were bought for considerably high prices. The Bavarian representation paid about 30 million Belgian francs for each house. This is considerably high for Brussels at that time (2 to 3 times the market price), although it appeared to be more reasonable when compared to prices in Munich back then. The original plan was actually abandoned and the possibilities of renovation were then considered, which is a totally different road than before. In fact, the representative of the GAQ received a question from the

¹⁹ The location is not identified on the map of symptomatic cases, since it was only included after interviews whereas the long list of microcases to be studied was designed on base of document analysis (historic reviews and archives of BRAL).

Bavarian representation on whether any documents on the history of the buildings were available (e.g. to restore details such as the front doors in the original state). Also here, it is only a 'partial success' since the change of function from residences to offices could not be stopped (cf. Gilissen, in: BCR Parliament, 2003:80).

Microcase 8: Nondescript changes in proximity to the European Commission (since 2000)

Another particular case is the debate about the building blocks in proximity to the offices for the European Commission from 2000 on (cf. INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10). It concerns the Rue Archimède, the Rue Stevin, the Rue Franklin and the Avenue Michelangelo (cf. figure 1, area North of 1a). Whereas the buildings in these areas are predominantly used for private residences, they are increasingly also used for hotels and catering industry, and progressively also envisioned for office functions (e.g. for economic actors who wanted to settle in proximity to the European institutions). Particularly the hotel and catering services are experienced to spread in an uncontrolled way. This is the process that has been observed by inhabitants: the first step is to turn residences into different functions; the next step is to extend towards the streets with terraces on the sidewalks. Then, tiles are laid in the former private gardens to use also the inner courtyards for the commercial functions. The neighbouring residential units experience the nuisance of noise and of smells. More than once, inhabitants left their homes for this. Particularly the appearances of a growing number of Irish pubs²⁰, which seem to recall an image of 'noisy pubs where flaming rows are regularly provoked', are an eyesore. The strong reactions of inhabitants is not always understood since there have been some local shops as well in former days. The difference is that these shops were mostly situated at the corners of the building blocks with a visible presence to the street, yet no nuisance to the inner courtyards of a building block. They mainly targeted local users from the neighbourhood. It is worth mentioning that the Regional Development Plan has attention for the protection of inner courtyards (BCR, 2002), whereas this is not included in the Regional Land Use Plan (BCR, 2001).

The association GAQ negotiated with the alderman of urbanism from the city of Brussels about a 'Plan Particulier d'affectation du Sol' (PPAS), which is a *specific land use plan*. This could help to protect the residential function, e.g. by limiting the use of inner courtyards and by limiting the establishment of other functions. The neighbourhood association forwarded a proposal of a text for the PPAS. This proposal was first discussed in a general assembly with members of the association, where the alderman for urbanism (at that time Henri Simons) was also invited. The municipality supported their point of view and executed a study on the value of the patrimony. The study equally provided in a foresight of future needs in the streets that were concerned. Already the fact that a specific land use plan would be assigned and more so, the fact that specific requests from the neighbourhood association would be considered in this, are perceived to be a partial success for the protection of housing and for the liveability of the neighbourhood. The representatives of the GAQ neighbourhood association (INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10) emphasised that their reaction is no general opposition against a mixture of functions; it is an appeal to think about consequences and to opt for a more considerate and sustainable approach. They also stressed that the economic pressure that can be exercised by commercial functions should not be underestimated. For instance when it comes to taxes, residences appear to be a much less attractive option for a municipality, which weakens the position of the inhabitants. The consideration of these inequalities of power though strengthens the sense of having achieved an important partial success²¹.

Parallel to this negotiation about a land use plan for this part of the neighbourhood, the association also *reacted to public enquiries* whenever a hotel or a catering facility wanted to settle in the area. The same arguments were applied at consultative commissions, which resulted in a gradually growing support by the aldermen for urbanism in the city of Brussels (INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10).

²⁰ Respondents from the interview named one particular pub to fit in this image, which is the 'James Joyce' in the Rue Archimède.

²¹ This illustrated the phenomenon of a 'devil shift': the tendency for actors to view their opponents as less trustworthy, more evil, and more powerful than they probably are (Sabatier, Hunter, and McLaughlin 1987).

5. Concluding reflections for optimists, realists and cynics: The added values and the limitations of local capacity building

In his study of urban regimes in the European Quarter, Papadopoulos' interest is in the first place directed towards the dominant development perspective. However, he does wonder, "How well do the Belgian Government's and private sector's urban conceptions for the seat of the European executive branch fit the needs of the city's inhabitants, its strategic planning for the twenty-first century, and the image Brussels wants to project to the world?" (Papadopoulos, 1996: 67). The concern about the inhabitants' needs has been and still is the core interest of the neighbourhood and liveability coalition that emerged by the end of the 1960s to oppose the then dominant orientation in planning. Even if there is no evidence for a radical change of discourses or of a true compromise in the European Quarter²², there is evidence for partial successes for the neighbourhood coalition. The conclusion briefly reflects on the value of these 'successes': What lessons can be learned for the European Quarter as well as for other neighbourhoods? How strong is the position of the neighbourhood and liveability coalition? And what is the relative importance of the 'partial successes'?

The above selection illustrates a variety of strategies in examples that are marked by a certain complexity, a relatively high level of conflict and a real sense of 'achieved success' with members of the neighbourhood coalition. Figure 4 summarises the issues, the strategies and the results in these different symptomatic cases²³.

Transfer of experiences?

The examples illustrate that the inhabitants, the neighbourhood associations as well as the regional organisations are concerned about a wide range of issues, i.e. about the protection of the residential function, about particular architectural heritage, about the impact on the mobility and the liveability of a residential quarter, about reducing temporary nuisances nearby construction sites and so on. Their proposals comprise long-term visions for the neighbourhood, reactions on specific projects as well as proposals for short term, direct measurements²⁴.

The range of actions and strategies, which are applied by neighbourhood associations in the European Quarter, are as versatile as the range of issues the actors react on. For instance it includes the more classical, and legally provided approaches such as the reactions to public enquiries, the participation to consultative commissions and legal actions. It also includes street actions and the participation in particular forms of negotiation. On top of that, neighbourhood associations in the European Quarter were committed to develop creative, case-by-case approaches through which they reached out for support from other actors (i.e. the example of the Bavarian representation) or through which they attempted to build knowledge about a case (i.e. the example of the PPAS for the housing blocks to the North of the European Commission buildings). The representatives of the neighbourhood association GAQ stress that each case should be treated separately. Each case requires a different strategy or a combination of

²² This is estimated differently for the level of urban policies in Brussels, since the early period of the Agglomeration enabled the introduction of different demands from civil society actors, i.e. the organisation and legal obligation to install consultative committees, procedures for public investigations, etc. The European quarter, of course, fell under this jurisdiction, but in terms of development perspective, not much changed, even with different procedures.

²³ Other examples of actions and of partial successes are the initial resistance against the plans for the tunnels with an exit at the Rue de Comines; the reactions against the plan to build the Albert Borschette Centre; the initiative "Suite Jourdan Suite"; reactions against the architectural competition 'Sentiers de l'Europe' (cf. Aukett, Art & Build, 1999). More recent examples comprise the introduction of 20mph zones in the Jourdan neighbourhood; interventions for the construction of the public space 'Jean Rey' to the South of the European Council (with the obligation to reinstall housing facilities at the Van Maerlant Site and in the Froissart Block); the re-organisation of the Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat and the Rue Joseph II in terms of mobility (i.e. the construction of bike lanes), and so on.

²⁴ Examples of the latter are the proposal to ban heavy trucks (+3,5 ton) from several streets nearby construction sites, to have more policemen controlling the streets, to organise one-way traffic flows, to allocate parking spaces to inhabitants or to delimit a residential area with restrictions to slow down traffic.

approaches (INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10). This makes it particularly difficult to transfer the experiences from the European Quarter to other neighbourhoods, even if actively involved regional actors can make the bridge to other locations. Then also, there are some particular characteristics of the local actors in the European Quarter, which cannot as easily be found in other locations.

Symptomatic case	Issues	Strategy of the neighbourhood and liveability coalition	Partial successes
Etterbeekse steenweg (Maelbeek valley) 1972	A larger network of inner-city highways are expected to disrupt the existing neighbourhoods	Street action and participation in negotiation attempts (cross-coalition coordination: Round Table of the Maelbeek), active proposing of alternatives (ARAU)	Inner-city highway is only partly realised; and about 30 years later (gradual change): proposals for residential and mixed use are included in the master-plans
Plan de secteur 1979	The plan attempts to provide protection for zones and sites of cultural, historical, or aesthetic interest	Cross-coalition coordination: Cooperation with the agglomeration of Brussels for the development of the plan	Initially promising, since the plan stresses the importance of protection of housing, disappointing in the implementation though with many exceptions granted
Leopold Brewery 1987	The plans to construct an International Congress Centre require the demolishment of the existing patrimony	Legal actions, lead by the neighbourhood association	Temporary 'on hold' of demolition, milestone for the newly emerging association (statement of power)
Accord Cadre 1989	Different issues: urban renewal, relocation of residents, prevention of accidents and nuisance, public services, cohabitation with the European Parliament, the 'price' that was paid by the Leopold District, the competence for disputes with the Court of First Instance	Direct negotiation with the developer	Written agreement between the neighbourhood association and the developer, different interpretations (from milestone to 'mere outline agreement')
Rue Vautier 1989	Gas explosion at a private residence near the construction site of the 'International Congress Centre' (the European Parliament)	Design a broader forum, issue a summons against the city of Brussels	Important trigger for cooperation, faster implementation of the Accord Cadre, little success to identify the responsible
Jardin du Maelbeek 'Parc Anonyme' 2001	The discussion on extensions of the European institutions leads to the speculation about the use of the surrounding sites.	Public enquiries, participation to the formal consultative commissions and direct contact to the aldermen of urbanism	Site is turned into a Park (instead of offices or car park), relation with actions from local association is not unambiguous.
Boulevard Clovis End of the 1980s	The initial plans to build a regional representation for Bavaria had little respect for the existing patrimony.	Public enquiries, participation to the consultative commissions and direct contact to the aldermen of urbanism, but also: media campaign in Bavaria, mobilisation abroad	The original plan to demolish the building was abandoned, possibilities of renovation were considered.
Amenities in proximity to the European Commission (since 2000)	Inhabitants reacted against increased nuisance from the commercial functions, i.e. the noise and smells in the inner courtyards of the housing blocks.	Direct contact to the aldermen of urbanism to negotiate a PPAS, reactions to public enquiries, participation to consultative commissions	Municipality supports point of view of neighbourhood association

Figure 4: Examples of actions and partial successes of neighbourhood and liveability coalition

Knowledge and perseverance creates strength

One noteworthy peculiarity with regard to the local 'participatory tissue' in the European quarter is, that it can rely on inhabitants with a high educational level, in different disciplines. This is not necessarily the case with local users in associations elsewhere in Brussels, as e.g. in different 'multiple deprived' neighbourhoods (cf. Kesteloot et al., 1996, as well as discussion by Baeten, 2001). When it comes to developing expertise for the development of the European Quarter, one could think in the first place of competencies in the domain of urban planning and architecture. As important seems to be the knowledge on economic rules, on juridical regulations and for instance on administrative procedures. This was underlined at different occasions in interviews (cf. INT Christine Goyens, 07.09.10; INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10; INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, 09.12.2010). Examples of this high level of knowledge with the members of local associations can be easily found: the former head of the Association Quartier Leopold, Henri Bernard was a unionist who was trained as a lawyer; several heads of the Groupe d'Animation Nord-Est (GAQ) were trained as architects and/or urbanists (e.g. Etienne Christiaens, Philippe Henkart); the former head of Riverains Jourdan, Christine Goyens followed a training in urbanism in Louvain-La-Neuve and in Brussels; members of different associations contribute with their particular knowledge, as for instance Professor Philippe Van Parijs (member of GAQ) is teaching at Harvard University.

Whereas their particular background is often not specific enough when it comes to particular projects, it obviously helps to understand and to develop a practically adequate approach, for instance in juridical, designerly and urbanistic issues. The transfer of experiences from the European Quarter with regard to the applied strategies therefore has its limits: whereas street actions or the participation to consultative commissions are fairly easy to be used, the initiation of legal procedures can present a higher threshold unless the knowledge in this field is locally available. The knowledge base can be broadened by different means though. The neighbourhood and liveability coalition applied different strategies to enhance the knowledge of local users, which can be transferred to other locations. For instance, local associations invited experts to consult collectively on particular issues (e.g. the president of the Comité Rue de la Loi or Olivier Bastin, the 'Bouwmeester' of Brussels, who were both invited by GAQ neighbourhood association, cf. INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10). Then also, members of different associations indicated that they individually looked for backup in cooperation with experts, i.e. Christine Goyens, president of the Association Riverains Jourdan who consulted with different urbanists (e.g. with Pierre Van Wunnik or with the former president of the regional association BRAL, Marcel Rijdams). The thresholds in activating these strategies could be negative perceptions about professionals (e.g. stereotypes such as applying elitist, theoretical approaches; incompetence when it comes to translating concepts to a wide and diverse audience; insufficient willingness to listen to the local experiences; etc.) or the lack of networks and/or budgets to be able to invite external experts.

Another strategy was to enhance the own knowledge base through education and professional experiences, in order to better understand the wider context of power relations and interests in urban development, or simply to gain competences and vocabulary in different fields. Also here, the president of the Riverains Jourdan stated an example, e.g. when she worked as a freelancer for BRAL. She followed a programme in urbanism at the University in Louvain-La-Neuve, as well as a postgraduate programme at the ISURU, the Institut Supérieur d'Urbanisme et de Rénovation Urbaine. On top of that, she participated in the activities and research of the 'Four cities project', and she has equally been working for the SRDU, the Société Régionale de Développement Urbain. The enhanced knowledge base is perceived to lead to a higher level of professionalization for the local association, and also to a more 'distant' view on urban development (INT Christine Goyens, 07.09.10). This strategy requires other means though: the time, capacity and budgets to invest in education (i.e. instead of time spend for a job or for family) is not necessarily also available with other members or in other associations.

It is also remarkable that some members from neighbourhood associations in the European Quarter as well as from regional civil society organisations, have been into the subject for well over thirty years now. They have followed from nearby how the European Quarter developed in a long-term observation, and therefore they also expect to be regarded upon as experts as “sometimes we are the only one to carry the historical development of the district”²⁵(INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, 09.12.2010). With this long-term perspective and the experience in a multitude of symptomatic cases, their contributions to the debate about the European Quarter often transcend individual interests. This might be different in neighbourhoods with a higher level of tenants, a lower level of comfort of housing and equally more fluctuation of inhabitants. However also the contributions from inhabitants in the European Quarter are not necessarily perceived as contributing from a broader perspective and a long-term experience, but instead often interpreted as an expression of a 'NIMBY'-approach (e.g. in professional forums with representatives of different coalitions). Instead, the perception about the neighbourhood associations and at times also about the regionally oriented organisations from civil society often is, that they are merely opponents with no other narrative than a 'no'. The examples can illustrate though that their discourse is clearly headed towards developing alternatives. At times though, it proved necessary to state an example in a more forceful action, as indicated by Marie-Dominique Bernard, from the Association Quartier Léopold:

« Depuis le départ, tu dirais que la démarche a toujours été : c'est pas 'non!', mais c'est 'comment?'. Alors, il y avait des moments où on avait dit 'non!', mais ce qui était pour poser un 'rapport de force', c'était un des mots préférés de mon mari. (...) L'objet de l'association est le développement du quartier, ce n'est pas 'se défendre contre'. (...) C'est 'essayer de faire quelque chose de positif avec les éléments qui arrivent.' » (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, 09.12.10)

“From the beginning, you'd say that the approach has always been: it is not 'no!', but 'how?'. There were times when we said 'no!', but that was to demonstrate a 'statement of power', that was one of the favourite words of my husband. (...) The purpose of the association is the development of the neighbourhood, not 'to oppose against it'. (...) It is 'trying to do something positive with the elements that come.' ” (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, 09.12.10)

Power inequalities on two levels

The examples show different strategies and also varied results. The neighbourhood and liveability coalition is well aware of its weak position in the face of economic and political powers. Their weakness can be explained partly due to the relatively low number of members (and a relatively low number of voters to be considered), to the limitations of means (e.g. budgets and partly also knowledge) and to the limited support from decision-makers. Many actors in this coalition seem to perceive the power inequalities between their coalition and the dominant coalition to be a struggle of David versus Goliath (INT Paul Jamouille, 09.12.10). In this, the chair of the GAQ points at the economic interests and enormous stakes that are involved in this power relation with the prices per square meter in the European Quarter (INT Philippe Henkart, 02.12.10). From this pessimistic point of view, the many incremental changes could be perceived as being no more than a drop in the ocean. We will come back on this with the reflection on the notion of 'partial successes'.

There is another power inequality at play though: the dominance of one coalition over the minority presents a highly polarized contrast. For over four decades, this strong oligarchy has determined the debate on urbanism in Brussels, and particularly in the European Quarter. Although the anti-modernist discourse coalition represents a minority in the European Quarter, it is the dominant counter-reaction in urban debates. Typical for this so-called 'Frankenstein'-phenomenon is the tenacious maintaining of positions once they are gained, even if new interests appear that do not have an institutionalized place yet (Hajer, in: Van der Heijden et al., 2002:81). New voices and indeed other forms of opposition to the dominant coalition therefore have little chance to enter the scene. The challenge for new voices is therefore double: first to enter the political arena as a novel opposition (which in itself is already a drastic change), and then

²⁵ Interview was held in French, quote: “quelquefois les seuls porteurs de l'histoire du développement du quartier” (INT Marie-Dominique Bernard, 09.12.2010)

to induce radical political changes through overthrowing the dominant regime. Even if there have been occasional negotiations and collaboration of different voices in the opposition, urban policies in the European quarter have mainly been sang in only two voices. The basic constellation of one dominant discourse and one dominant counter-reaction remains largely visible until today. Both the regional authorities as well as the European institutions could have stepped up much more actively to act as mediators in this constellation to avoid the risk to form oligarchies or to result in a process of 'capture' (cf. Hajer, in: Van der Heijden, Schrijver, 2002: 81). Also, the dominant counter-reaction could have strengthened its position with a more open attitude towards novel initiatives (cf. Doucet, 2010). The last section reflects on the relative impact of the changes that were realised by the neighbourhood and liveability coalition.

In the end: what changed?

There has been no overthrowing of the dominant coalition. The combined and continued efforts of the local actors did nevertheless lead to visible, yet always only gradual changes. The neighbourhood and liveability coalition succeeded to influence urban policies, both through changes of discourses and though effective changes on site. The results are described as 'partial' successes for several reasons. For instance, not all strategies lead to changes in the implementation (e.g. the promising novel discourse of the plan de secteur, which was then hollowed out in its implementation). Also the gradual transitions in the discourse are recognised here as a partial success since these shifts constitute an important condition for changes on site. Then again, some changes were only of short duration, temporary or they proved to be all together reversible (e.g. the temporary on-hold for the demolition of the Leopold Brewery), whereas other changes were only realised years after the initial interventions. Late effects are not necessarily a causal result of the actions (e.g. the realisation of the Parc Anonyme), or the result of a single intervention. They are rather the result of continued actions and/or influenced by a changes context. For instance did the most recent master plan include proposals for mixed and residential use along the Chaussée d'Etterbeek. It also considers reconverting former sites of office spaces into mixed use with residences. These proposals are forwarded more than 30 years after the first actions on this issue. Last but not least, the results are described as 'partial' successes because it often concerns single cases or single projects. The president of Riverains Jourdan recognises the value of single, specific actions and of the partial successes, although she seems to regret that a more encompassing vision on the entire European Quarter and for the entirety of users was not more effectively communicated through these single actions (INT Christine Goyens, 07.09.02). Martin Westlake, who lives in Brussels for a long time already and who is now secretary-general of the European Economic and Social Committee, shared his perception about the quarter's development: "What happened in the end wasn't as bad as might have happened, and I think people forget that" (INT Martin Westlake, 14.10.10). It stems optimistic to see the inexhaustible reserves of patience and perseverance that were applied by local and regional actors to form a critical counter-weight to dominant policies. Their continued involvement results in a tremendous memory and in-depth knowledge about the development of the European Quarter. Whereas the cynic could rate the incremental changes as being inferior and limited in their impact, the continued capacity building from the local and regional actors should not be underestimated. The added value is a feedback in terms of emancipation for the actors involved, and it also includes a sharpening of planning paradigms in the long run: the sustained critic together with the presentation of alternatives challenges the different parties involved to state their positions more explicitly in a development that is marked by conflicts, contradictions and paradoxes. It would be naive to imagine a smooth compromise between these different positions, it seems more realist to invest in a more open debate on the choices in urban policies, which takes more complexity and also new voices on board.

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Interviews

Name	Date; Notes (N) Recording (R) Transcript (T)	Function, Organisation	Emphasis
Christine Goyens	07/09/10 N/R/T	Member of the neighbourhood association 'Riverain Jourdan', has been working for BRAL in the past	Actions and discourses of the civil society organisations, in particular Riverains Jourdan.
Marco Schmitt	08/10/10 N/R/T	Architect, member of the neighbourhood association AQL	Actions and discourses of the civil society organisations, in particular AQL; Artistic actions in the EQB
Martin Westlake	14/10/10 N/R/T	Secretary-General of the European economic and social committee, EESC	Buildings policies of European Institutions, and particularly the EESC
Christian Frisque	25/11/10 N/R/T	Architect, Urbanist for ERU, Centre d'études et de recherches urbaines, and for COOPARCH	Development of different master plans, discourse differentiations and realisations
Philippe Henkart	02/12/10 N/R/T	President for the GAQ; Groupe d'Animation Quartier Nord-Est	Discourses and partial successes of the GAQ, Symptomatic cases: Rue Stevin, Parc Anonyme, Bavarian representation
Marie-Dominique Bernard, Paul Jamoulle	09/12/10 N/R/T	Members of the AQL, Association Quartier Léopold	S Discourses and partial successes of the AQL, Symptomatic case: Rue Vautier, European Parliament, Accord Cadre

Figure 5: Overview of in-depth interviews on urban policies in the European Quarter

List of abbreviations

ACF	Advocacy Coalition Framework, Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993, 1998
AQL	Association Quartier Léopold
ARAU	Atelier de Recherche et d'Action Urbaines asbl
ASBL	Association sans but lucratif (= VZW, Vereniging zonder winst)
BBL	Bond Beter Leefmilieu
BCR	Brussels-Capital Region
BRAL	Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu
BRDA	Brussels Regional Development Agency (=SDRB, Société de Développement pour la Région de
Bruxelles-Gewest)	Capitale, = GOMB, Gewestelijke Ontwikkelingsmaatschappij voor het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk
GAQ	Groupe d'animation du Quartier Nord-Est
ICC	International Congress Centre (= today hemicycle for the European Parliament in Brussels)= CIC
IEB	Inter-Environnement Bruxelles
INT	Interview executed for the doctoral research
PPAS	Plan particulier d'affectation du sol
PRAS	Plan regional d'affectation du sol
PRD	Plan Regional de Développement (cf. GewOP)
PUL	Projet Urbain Loi
SDRB	Société de Développement Régional de Bruxelles (= GOMB, = BRDA)
SEL	Société Espace Léopold
SRDU	Société Régional de Développement Urbain (today ATO/ ATD, = GSSO)

Appendix:
Issues and symptomatic examples in urban policies in the European Quarter in Brussels

a. Discussions about scope and locations (issues and symptomatic examples)	
a.1. European Institutions in Brussels and Belgium	Discussion on other sites in Europe (i.e. Strasbourg, Luxembourg, Torino, Monza, Stresa and Milano, cf. De Groof, Elaut, 2010: 161) and in Belgium (i.e. Liège, Tervuren).
a.2. Extensions to the EQB within Brussels Under discussion: Spread versus concentrated development	<p>Alternatives and/ or extensions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Council of Ministers</u>, proposed in 1972 by the Belgian Government (Demey, 2007E: 280), e.g. Park Parmentier in Woluwe, Chateau Meeus along the Namur-Auderghem motorway, Foresterie Plateau in Watermael/-Boitsfort, the Blaton property and the Park des Sources at the crossroad of the Boulevard de la Woluwe. Later also the site of the Cinquantenaire (and again also the Tervuren Park). • <u>The European Parliament</u> in 1985: the former military barracks of Dailly (following the proposal of Roger Nols) or a location in the North Quarter. The region proposed the area near the Luxemburg station, which has meanwhile become a fully-fledged extension to the European Quarter. • <u>Top meetings for the Council of Ministers</u>: again speculations in 2002 whether or not these would have to take place at other locations, such as the Heyzel or Tour & Taxis, again Boitsfort was proposed, but also the Institute of Natural Sciences in the Park Léopold. (...) The plans to build a meeting space in the angle of Block A of the Residence Palace in 2004 proved that looking for other locations outside the European Quarter is not necessary. • <u>Another European pole with the EU Enlargement</u>: The study Axes/Richtlijnen Brussels-Europe at a press conference on the 14th of May 2002. Other locations not necessary for 25 member states, for 27: extend at Heyzel or Schaarbeek Vorming.
a.3. Extensions of European functions within the EQB Under discussion: New sites at a relative distance of the existing, in proximity to existing sites, re-organisation of existing sites and densification of existing sites.	<p>Proposals and/or realisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Extending the Berlaymont and the Charlemagne buildings</u> towards the North (in the direction of the Squares) and/or West (i.e. along the Rue Stevin). • <u>Locations for the Council of Ministers</u>: between the Rue Juste Lipse and the Rue de Comines, both streets disappeared 'under' the site. • <u>Extending the Albert Borschette Centre</u> to the South, towards the Place Jourdan (today Hotel Sofitel Brussels Europe). • <u>Temporary locations for the European Commission</u> when the Berlaymont was renovated, • <u>Extending the Justus Lipsius Building</u> to the South towards the Rue Belliard, the so-called Froissart Block, alternatively to the West -including or demolishing the Residence Palace-, or to the Southwest towards the Rue Pascale and/or to the East towards the Rue du Joyeuse Entrée/ Blijde Inkomstraat. The extensions to the South or East are not realised: the necessary space was found in the newly build Lex 2000, in the extension of the Justus Lipsius building within the existing plot (by extending with one level on top of block 70, and by covering the inner courtyard to provide space for the international press), and with the use of the existing spaces, and extensions to the Residence Palace with the 'Egg' of Samyn in the angle of Block A. • <u>International Congress Centre</u> (with a hemicycle to be used later by the <u>European Parliament</u>) right next to the Park Léopold since extensions to the residential area of Squares to the North are no option, nor is the listed site of the Cinquantenaire to the East, new locations with right next to the 'Jaques Delors' Building and adjoining buildings in the Rue Belliard, the Rue Remorqueur/ Stoomsleperstraat and the Rue Montoyer. • <u>Buildings inside the Leopold Park</u>, e.g. as a proposal for top summits of the Council of Ministers in the Institute of Natural Sciences.
b. Discussions about change of scales, functions and qualities	
b.1. Programme, functional development and interpretations of mix Under discussion: Planned separation versus planned mix of functions, with a focus on the whole	<p>Examples of symptomatic cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Meaningful changes in the pre-EU era</u>: (1) Utilisation of the Residence Palace for Belgian administration instead of the former residential use, (2) the construction of two high-rise towers at the Square De Meeus: one of these, so-called Eggerickx towers was immediately used for offices instead of for residences. • <u>Along the Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat</u>: meaningful changes of scale and functions with the construction of EU-buildings: first the Berlaymont and the Charlemagne buildings, later the '130', the Lex 2000 building and the Residence Palace. Renewed attention with the Project Urbain Loi (Atelier Ch. De Portzemparc, 2008); related to

<p>neighbourhood, a single street or a single plot as rationale</p>	<p>issues of scales and densities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Discussions on the Chaussée d'Etterbeek</u> reflects a divide in the discourses: An inner-city-highway in the 1960s, valley of the Maelbeek, the collection of lower floors and backdoors office developments or a vital artery in the connection of neighbourhoods, offering possibilities for housing and different facilities. • <u>Renovation of the Berlaymont</u>: technical issues.
<p>b.2. Scale of development</p> <p>Under discussion: large-scale versus small-scale interventions, high-rise versus low rise, high density versus low density, high floor area ratio versus low floor area ratio</p>	<p>The scale of development (i.e. height, volumes, densities) is discussed in relation to other issues, i.e.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The specificity of the existing neighbourhood</u>, i.e. demands for mixed use along the Chaussée d'Etterbeek, or guarantees for urban charges, • <u>The technicality of underground conditions</u>, i.e. large infrastructures for metro lines (along the Rue de La Loi/Wetstraat), railway connections (from Schuman through the area of the Squares) and tunnels (Kortenbergh and Audergem-tunnel), • <u>Constraints that derive from functional requests</u> for specific uses, such as the security issues for the Council during top meetings, • <u>Restrictions in terms of urban planning laws</u>, such as the easement of views from the listed site of the Cinquanteaire in direction of the historical centre.
<p>b.3. Perspectives on mobility and public space</p> <p>Under discussion: focus on private mobility versus focus on public transport and soft users, focus on long-distance connexions versus short-distance passage, interpretation of public space as residual space or as a space in its own right, restricted versus widened definition of public space</p>	<p>Examples of symptomatic cases with regard to mobility issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Symptomatic discussions about underground parking lots</u> along the Rue de la Loi (commission and Justus Lipsius) and about parking lots for the Espace Leopold. • <u>Proposals for the organisation of single streets</u>, such as the design of the Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat including bike lanes, broader sidewalks and multiple new traffic lights, • <u>Proposals for a network of streets within the European Quarter</u>, such as the discussions about creating passages through the vast terrain for the Council, or proposals to reverse the direction of one-way streets (as was proposed in the Ombudspanmédiateur for the Rue Belliard and the Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat), • <u>Proposals for the wider network of mobility</u>, such as discussions about connecting the Luxembourg station to the metro-network, or discussions about a fast connection from Schuman via Josaphat to the Zaventem airport, etc. <p>Examples of symptomatic discussions about public spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Organisation, design and maintenance</u>: e.g. the quality of public spaces at the Espace Leopold, • <u>The access to shops, banks and post offices</u> inside buildings of the European institutions discussions on privately owned, yet publicly accessible spaces such as the former inner courtyard of the Justus Lipsius • <u>Temporary use of sites</u> as parking lots i.e. the Jardin du Maelbeek or the site in front of the Maelbeek Convent). • <u>The visual impact</u>, i.e. on the Parc Leopold with all buildings planned at its fringes, • <u>Guarantees for the development of public spaces</u>, e.g. in the Projet Urbain Loi, • <u>Public access to open spaces</u>: e.g. Leopoldspark and access to the buildings.
<p>b.4. Security Issues (construction sites, top meetings, liveability)</p> <p>Under discussion: Security of construction sites (by contractor and/or regulated by public authorities), security for top meetings, etc.</p>	<p>Examples of symptomatic discussions on security issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Security of construction sites</u>, i.e. the fencing, number of entrances and exits , a security coordinator for construction sites, cf. 'Accord Cadre', security at the building site for the European Parliament, gas explosion at the Rue Vautier • <u>Security of locations for European functions versus liveability of neighbourhoods</u>, i.e. proposals for a 'European Union Central Administrative District' (proximity of services and easier control at top conferences) in relation to circle of speculation, vacancies and decay, a perception of 'problem area', more drastic changes to follow, excuse for profitable regeneration • <u>Security at top meetings</u>, e.g. proposals for the extensions of the European institutions by Groep Planning (1985); discussion on passage of the train below European buildings; 'egg'-shaped building in the angle of the Residence Palace in relation to the railway tracks
<p>b.5. Architectural Quality and Conceptual development</p> <p>under discussion: Functional (technical and economic rationality), relational</p>	<p>Examples of symptomatic discussions about architectural qualities and conceptual development, I relation to other issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Aesthetics and functionality</u>, e.g. Justus Lipsius building: whether functionality, programmatic requirements and security issues should be the main guides to architectural design; • <u>Embedding of architectural design in town planning</u>: e.g. limitations of height for the Justus Lipsius building ('servitude de vue'), the right to protect a view a proposal for a 'chopped' building at the North of the Charlemagne Building, although never

<p>(considering flows) and discursive (considering meanings) approaches; focus on single plots and projects versus consideration of a wider urban setting.</p>	<p>realised. PUL- project, the 'Projet Urbain Loi' in which three large towers are proposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Symbolic, representative value and status</u>: i.e. a concern with the symbolical value of the buildings leads to refusing several options: Cinquantenaire (already symbol for the Belgian Monarchy), former Boudewijn Casern (located in a rather run-down neighbourhood in Schaarbeek); but also to the support for the renovated Residence Palace. • <u>Design and economic constraints</u>: e.g. relation between square Luxembourg and the Leopold Park versus orientation of the 'maille' for economic reasons • <u>Design and political conditions</u>: e.g. European Parliament was built as 'International Congres Centre'. • <u>Design and security</u>: e.g. peculiar shape of the 'egg', 'lantern' or 'urn' -planned extension of the Residence Palace
<p>b.6. Accounting for the Genius Loci</p> <p>Under discussion: generic versus specific proposals; ignoring, protecting or dynamising the existing</p>	<p>Examples of symptomatic cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Radical demolition and restructuring</u> i.e. specific buildings such as the Berlaymont convent, the Leopold Brewery or the Luxembourg station, houses along the Rue Belliard and studios along the Rue Jacques de Lalaing, but also whole housing blocks such as the Froissart Block and residences along the Rue Stevin, up to the disappearance of entire streets such as the Rue de Comines. • <u>Versus highly conservative reflex</u> that derives from the wider experience of 'Bruxellisation'.

<p>c. Discussions about Instruments, processes and actors</p>	
<p>Under discussion: Financial considerations such as decisions to rent, to buy or to lease; private and public investments; private development versus public intervention; project oriented development versus logic of comprehensive plans</p>	<p>Examples of symptomatic cases or discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Financial constellation and budgetary frames</u>: e.g. ownerships by a consortium or by single private actors, rented or leased to the European institutions, or owned by the European institutions (e.g. 130, Ilot Breydel), interventions by public authorities (e.g. owners of land, of buildings, acting as a project developer, etc.). • <u>Effects of the temporary or the consolidated location</u> for European Institutions: i.e. rented, leased and owned properties, plan with short versus longer timeframes, project-orientation versus urban policies, etc. • <u>Different criteria for building projects and planning procedures</u>, e.g. Lex 2000 compared to the Residence Palace . • <u>Competitions</u> i.e. Justus Lipsius, 'Sentier de l'Europe', extensions to the Residence Palace, Schuman roundabout • <u>Urban charges</u> e.g. for the Justus Lipsius Building or for the Lex 2000

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