



1 2

(1) Pension Homeland, a hotel in a former navy officers' quarters (2) Brew master Erik Spratte at Homeland Brewery (3) New façade on a 1960s building (4) VR/AR start-up incubator VRBase (5) Makerversity (6) Open for business (7) Enjoying the flexible workspace



Q&A
PATRIK DAHLIN
 Project manager,
 City of Stockholm
 Sweden

Stockholm is redeveloping Slakthusområdet, its industrial meatpacking district, with the aim of turning it into a dynamic new neighbourhood. — SZ

What makes this area an attractive proposition?

Slakthusområdet is an industrial area dating back to 1912, when it became the meatpacking district. For a long time food manufacturing was the main industry here but lately others have been coming in, such as architects, designers and artists. So interest in the area, which is quite central in Stockholm, is growing and the food industries are slowly leaving.

What are you hoping to create?

The aim is to bring in new offices, which will in turn attract retail and more F&B. There is a desperate demand for housing. We will build 4,000 new homes but not until 2021.

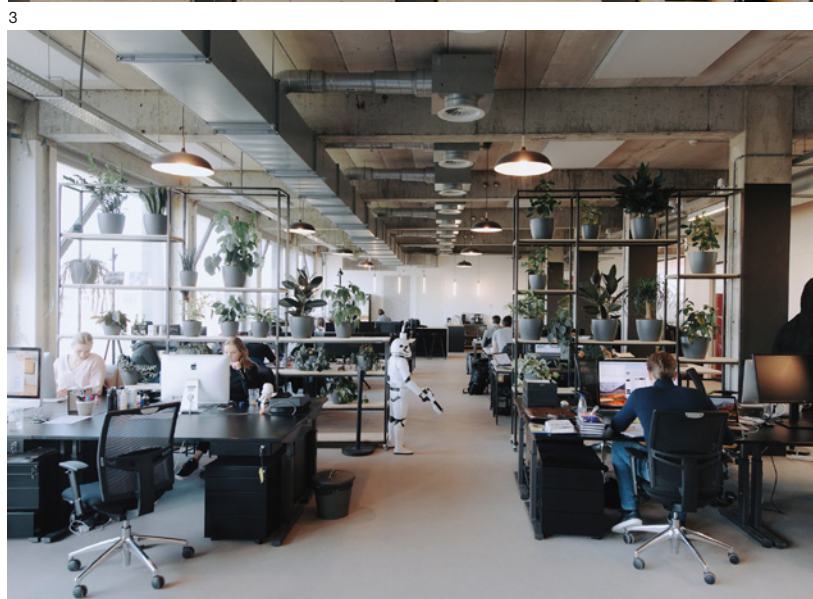
How will you make it a success?

We will encourage environmentally friendly car-free living here. We will look at new building heights and volumes and how they sit next to older buildings – but many of the decisions are still ahead of us.

B
 REGENERATION/AMSTERDAM
Clean slate

What does it take to breathe life into a neglected district in a long-lasting and meaningful way? We look in on an area in Amsterdam that is doing it right.

By Venetia Rainey
 Photography Evelyn Dragan



3 4

If you had looked at Google Maps satellite images of Amsterdam a few years ago you'd have spotted a large patch just east of Centraal Station that was blurred out. This was the secretive Marineterrein, a naval base dating back centuries.

"I've lived in Amsterdam all my life and this area was never accessible," says Daniël Doornink, founder of start-up incubator and accelerator VRBase. He gestures at the 17th-century wharf building that skirts the site. "There are massive walls around most of it. Now we're trying to pull them down, not physically but virtually and figuratively." The Dutch navy is vacating the island and Doornink's company is just one of the innovation-focused businesses giving a previously off-the-radar part of Amsterdam a new lease of life.

It's a challenge that many cities are grappling with today. As the need for our cities to grow intensifies, areas that were once undesirable, industrial or off-limits have to be reimagined as lively and liveable new neighbourhoods. But how do you go about doing that? Do you start with housing and try and lure first-time buyers? Or

lead with restaurants and retail? Or perhaps build offices first and tempt commercial tenants? There are many options but Amsterdam's Marineterrein holds a possible solution.

Despite numerous proposals for short-term money-making developments involving housing or office space, the Dutch government and the Amsterdam municipality were more thoughtful. "They thought: 'What can we do here that can make a national difference?'" says Liesbeth Jansen, project director at Bureau Marineterrein, the body tasked with the area's development. The answer was to create an innovation hub incorporating business, education and science spread over 13 hectares of prime real estate. It's a long-term vision they hope will bring greater returns for, and investment in, the country's growing knowledge economy.

Jansen is leading the charge. Having already captained the transformation of the city's Westergasfabriek from a post-industrial wasteland into a vibrant outpost hosting regular festivals and conferences, she knows what she's doing. "You need to know what is of real value and what you should foster," she says from her waterside office in the old navy commander's house. "It's like when you buy a house with a garden: you wait one year to see how the garden behaves, where the sun is and what grows by itself."

The activity underway at Marineterrein is already promising, with a community of 400 people breathing new life into the area. In a 1960s building overlooking the shining waters of the River IJ is Makerversity, a bustling meeting place, classroom and workspace for all sorts of creators and makers. "People can make prototypes here and experiment," says project manager Jessica Stanley, gesturing at the people using the equipment around her, from 3D printers to sewing machines. "We're a home for projects empowering people to take control of the city in a positive way."

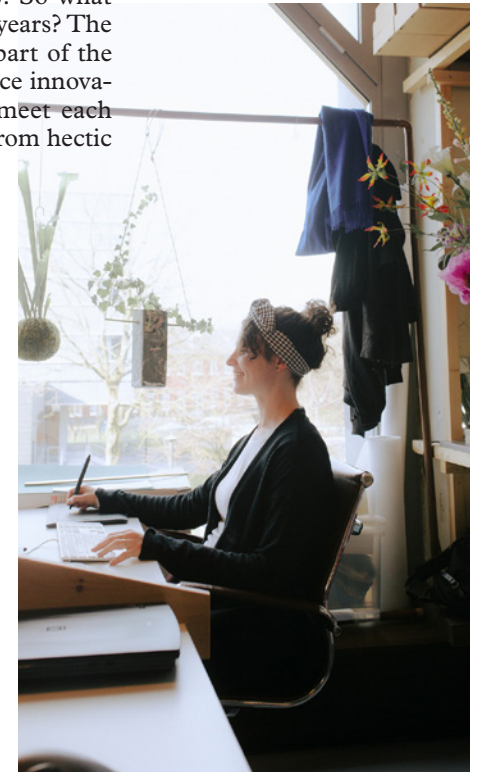
Other Marineterrein tenants include the already well-respected Scheepskameel restaurant and Pension Homeland, a quirky hotel incorporating a brewery. "I don't think an area can be regenerated without food and beverage," says Jansen. "You need those meeting places but it's a matter of balance." There are also several "smart-living" projects, such as a blue-green roof for research into rain and evaporation. Almost everything is geared towards exploring possibilities for a healthier, more efficient city. So what will it feel like in another five years? The goal is to have "a welcoming part of the city where people can experience innovation", says Jansen, "but also meet each other, swim and have a break from hectic city life." — (M)



5



6



7