



# The View of Rotterdam **WE FOUND COMMON GROUND IN THE BALANCING ACT**

In true Rotterdam fashion, Katendrecht is a place where people roll up their sleeves and get things done. The ambition is clear: the area between the Rijnhaven and the Waalhaven is transforming from an industrial port zone into Rotterdam's second city center. The View of Rotterdam is leading the charge, developing, constructing, and financing a 100,000 m<sup>2</sup> project in two phases. This includes residential apartments, a five-star hotel, office space, restaurants, retail, a parking garage, and more—with a total investment of approximately €350 million.





An architectural rendering of a modern waterfront development. On the left, a multi-story building with a white facade and black metal balconies is shown. The balconies have plants and people. A wide, paved pedestrian promenade runs along the building, featuring trees, benches, and people walking. To the right of the promenade is a wooden boardwalk that leads to a waterfront promenade. The water is calm, and a small boat is visible. In the background, a city skyline with several tall buildings is visible under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

**“NO  
FRICTION,  
NO  
SHINE”**



Rick van Heumen

As Director of The View of Rotterdam, Rick van Heumen and his team are responsible for this large-scale development. He acknowledges the patience required: “It’s been ten years since I first got involved in this area’s transformation. And the world hasn’t stood still in that time. That means you have to constantly adapt—while staying within set frameworks.”

For the past 3.5 years, Eric de Vetten from Quadrant4 has been closely collaborating with Rick as Project Director for Construction Management. He describes the dynamic nature of the project: “A lot has already been developed around the Rijnhaven, including the Wilhelminapier across the water. Now, the focus is shifting to what we call the ‘Pols of Katendrecht.’ Traditionally, this has been a port district filled with silos, warehouses, and factories. The View of Rotterdam has taken a pioneering role here—showing the municipality what’s possible in this area with their plans. The city responded swiftly and developed a broader vision for the district.”

Today, the first residents have moved in, the hotel is nearing completion, and phase two of construction is underway. But as with any pioneering effort, the journey hasn’t been without its challenges. Rick explains: “When we started ten years ago, we weren’t working with an empty plot of land. Instead, we had to incorporate an existing two-level

underground parking garage and an original design. The View of Rotterdam saw the potential and stepped in. This was far from a blank canvas, and we knew: you only get one chance to lay the first stone. You have the core concept, and from there, you build around it. The ‘outer layer’ consists of bricks and mortar, but the true essence—the reason you’re building—keeps evolving. And that’s where it gets complex.”

Embracing their pioneering spirit, the developers made a bold decision: beginning construction of the apartments without pre-sales. While this strategy is proving to be a long-term success, it requires continuous coordination with multiple stakeholders. Rick elaborates: “Each apartment becomes a ‘special product’, with buyers having unique requests. In these kinds of projects, time is both your greatest ally and your biggest challenge. During the development phase, you have the time to discuss, plan, and refine your vision. But the moment construction begins, the conversation shifts to deadlines, and time takes on an entirely different meaning.”

Eric observes that Rick remains unusually involved throughout the entire process: “Normally, a developer starts stepping back once construction is underway. But here, we still see important decisions being made along the way—not just with the apartments, but across the entire project. For example, we originally planned for office spaces, but the way people work has changed—so we need to adjust. The project includes both retail and hospitality, but their functions are blending more than ever. How do you manage that in terms of space allocation?”

Rick agrees: “That’s the reality of building in the Netherlands. You have to navigate a web of stakeholders—the municipality, investors, residents, property owners, and a complex regulatory landscape. That’s the game. It’s a balancing act where you need to respect every party’s interests while making a substantial contribution to a new city district. And in this balancing act, Eric and I have found common ground.”

He concludes: “No friction, no shine. Ultimately, we can all be incredibly proud of this as the first major project in Rotterdam’s second city center.”