

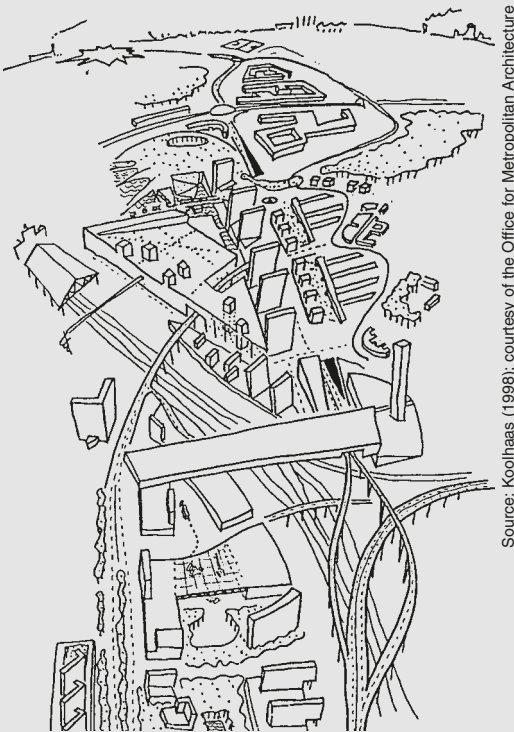
The prime consideration in the development of the urban design concept was its symbolic aesthetic character as a futuristic new business centre for Europe (see Figures 8.19 and 8.20). The central ideas of the scheme were those of Koolhaas as presented in his book *Delirious New York* and his theories of ‘bigness’, ‘commercialism’, ‘exhibitionism’ and ‘density without architecture’ (Koolhaas, 1978). Selective voids to create a complexity of geometry and monumental architecture are the essential ingredients of the scheme. Philosophically, despite Koolhaas’ observations in New York it is closer to the Rationalist tradition than the Empiricist.

The scheme has five major components:

- 1 The TGV station used by London-Brussels trains.
- 2 A triangular forum outside the station (an ‘expression of the conceptual opposition of history–future’).
- 3 Le Corbusier Street (the main traffic thoroughfare linking station, business centre, the edges of Sant-Maurice and Le Corbusier Square where old and new cities meet).
- 4 The park.
- 5 The Convention and Exhibition Centre.

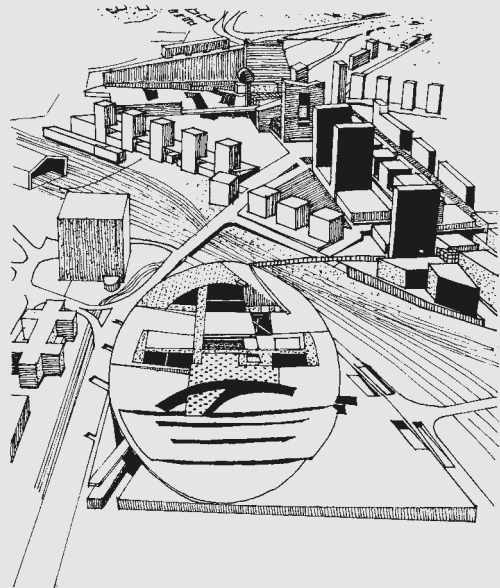
The whole is framed by the edges of the neighbourhood of Sant-Maurice. The Convention and Exhibition Centre is a 300-metre (1000-foot) long multi-functional structure designed to link the fragmented parts of the scheme. The TGV line runs on the surface through the city opening it up to view and views from it.

Implementation of the project took place over a decade in two phases. Phase One (1991–5) involved the acquisition of land and the building of the TGV line and station



Source: Koolhaas (1998); courtesy of the Office for Metropolitan Architecture

Figure 8.19 Rem Koolhaas’ concept for Euralille.



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Figure 8.20 Massing drawing of the development.