Value
Added
Planning

Workbench Spatial Quality

Spatial quality through stakeholder-participation Lessons learnt from the city of Amersfoort, the Netherlands

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Part of VALUE - programme (Valuing Attractive Landscapes in the Urban Economy)
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Abstract

This report is the second in a series of three reports named *Value Added Planning,* consisting of three unique, but interconnected tools, namely the Green Credit Tool, the Workbench Method and Value Added Planning, These tools have been developed and/or tested in the context of the European INTERREG programme: VALUE **(**INTERREG IVB North West Europe - Valuing Attractive Landscapes in the Urban Economy**)**, in which the municipality of Amersfoort is involved. Aim of this programme is to understand how green space in urban centres can become more competitive with other urban functions. In this context, the municipality of Amersfoort has introduced the interactive method named *Workbench Spatial Quality* (Werkbank Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit in Dutch) in their spatial design in several areas in their municipality.

The Workbench Spatial Quality (to be referred to as Workbench) has been applied on two cases in Amersfoort: Park Randenbroek and Vathorst NW. In this report the Workbench as applied in Amersfoort is evaluated. Research was done on the basis of literature research, case-material and interviews performed with several experts. Furthermore, research was done by students at the Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR). Part of the evaluation in this report makes use of a quick scan of 19 Dutch cases.

The question addressed in this report is:

1. How was the Workbench Spatial Quality applied in Amersfoort?
2. Can the Workbench contribute to sustainable spatial planning?

In the evaluation of the Workbench special attention is paid to three factors that appear relevant when applying the Workbench: participation (people), location (place) and profit (resources and time efficiency).

From the analysis of the quick-scans and case-studies in the Amersfoort several conclusions can be drawn. Regarding participation it was found that stakeholder identification and the level of stakeholder involvement are of big importance. In the case of Vathorst NW the municipal council was one of the stakeholders involved from the start of the Workbench and was involved throughout the participatory planning process. This resulted in the fact that the municipality was knowledgeable on the developments in the participatory stakeholder process and could give their feedback throughout the period in which the process took place. Therefore the interests of the council could be aligned with the demands and wishes from the community. In Park Randenbroek however, the municipal council was not actively involved during the Workbench, as resistance against the municipal plans had already grown through time for the stakeholders involved. The spatial planning process was a lengthy process in which municipality and stakeholders took stronger opposite standpoints. This resulted in little support for the municipal planning and in a time-inefficient process where social capital was lost. To improve communication and the participatory process of the Workbench, it is thus recommended that the commissioner is seen as one of the stakeholders to be actively involved in the Workbench process.

Concerning stakeholder diversity it was found from the quick-scans that when only policymakers were involved in the workbench method fewer spatial qualities were mentioned. Moreover, comparing the

19 cases in which the Workbench was applied in the Netherlands through the quick-scans it appears that more green values and future values were mentioned by local stakeholders than by policy makers. This probably has to do with the fact that local stakeholders are more attached to their local environment and value these local values more then very abstract values which are more interesting at higher levels of policymakers. It is thus argued that local stakeholders should be involved in spatial planning when green values are to be incorporated in spatial designs.

Regarding the location where the Workbench is applied several conclusions can be drawn in relation to theories on place attachment. Comparing the locations on which the Workbench was applied, it became clear that place attachment can be regarded much lower in Vathorst NW as this is a largely undeveloped area. Park Randenbroek however is a park in the city centre. Place attachment in this location can be considered very high as people have used the park for multiple purposes over time and have created emotional attachment to the location for both its functions and its intrinsic value. Open brainstorming on the future destination if the Park appeared to be very difficult. In Vathorst NW, an open space with no specific destination yet, where place attachment can be considered to be low, this free thinking and brainstorming on future possibilities appeared to be much easier. Redesigning an area where place attachment is high can be expected to be more time-consuming and complex then cases where location did not previously have a clear destination and where attachment is close to non-existent.

When it comes to the profit dimension various aspects are highlighted: time-efficiency, the impact on resources available in spatial planning and future values in spatial design are relevant. Regarding time efficiency, it is not about direct gains in terms of time-efficient planning. Involving stakeholders actually is often a very time-consuming business. But, participatory processes such as the Workbench can result in more support in decision-making and less delay in the planning itself. As became clear in the case of Park Randenbroek, non-compliance with municipal spatial designs and plans is not wishful, as this can result in extreme delays in decision-making. Moreover stakeholder involvement through the Workbench can result in more compliance with plans made and exerted also on the long run, leading to more sustainable designs. When applying the Workbench it is thus recommended in this report to outweigh time costs during the participatory process against gains in terms of sustainability and durability of designs on the long run.

It proved difficult thus far to complete the Workbench to its full extent in practice. The last parts of the cycle, ' Execution' and 'Experience' are often not reached in practice, as this depends on many external factors. External factors can be factors such as budgets available for the execution of the new planning and the political willingness to invest in proposed plans. However, if the Execution phase is applied, then stakeholders are not only asked to think of the feasibility of the plans and designs made, but they are also invited to explore their own networks and resources, to make the plans operational in practice. In this manner resources can be come across which were in first instance not thought of. In this way applying the Workbench might result in the availability of more resources for spatial planning then was assumed at the start of the planning process. It thus seems advisable to execute these final stages of the Workbench in practice, since this might have a greater spin-off in terms of financial means, networks and other resources. Moreover, within the Workbench there is a special focuses on future values. This means that plans developed through the Workbench have a long-term character. In order to increase the sustainability of plans and designs it is advisable to make use of tools which stress the future values within the Workbench.

In the discussion it is finally argued that the overall contribution of the Workbench Method lies in the realization of sustainable designs (manifesting out of participatory planning processes), resulting in

qualitative spaces (based on perceived values, user values and future values as identified by stakeholders). It is a means towards integrative planning, acknowledging all stakeholders and providing the platform for interaction, which will lead to the planning of feasible, sustainable, future projects.

However, sharing responsibilities and regarding 'everybody as an expert' is not always easy. A shift has to be made from a management controlled process into a stakeholder controlled process. Only when this shift is made, one can speak of true stakeholder participation and shared notions of spatial quality. By sharing responsibilities in spatial planning, stakeholders can feel that they become 'co-owners' of their environment. This can be beneficial in terms of maintenance of the location: stakeholders might be more willing to participate in future maintenance of the location, as they feel more connected and attached to it. On the other hand one should communicate properly what is asked from the stakeholders, so that it becomes clear where their stakeholder involvement and responsibility starts and where it stops.

When stakeholder involvement and shared responsibility is managed and facilitated properly, it could possibly reduce the costs for maintenance of public green space, which is often a struggle for municipalities. Moreover, this strong involvement with the locality might also help to keep the perceived qualities of the environment up to date. When stakeholders continue being actively engaged with what happens in their environment it seems more likely that they enjoy their living environment better. This in itself can be regarded as improved quality of life.

SCIENTIFIC CONTEXT

This report is part of a series of three reports named *Value Added Planning,* consisting of three unique, but interconnected tools, namely the Green Credit Tool, the Workbench Method and Value Added Planning, as illustrated in Figure 1.

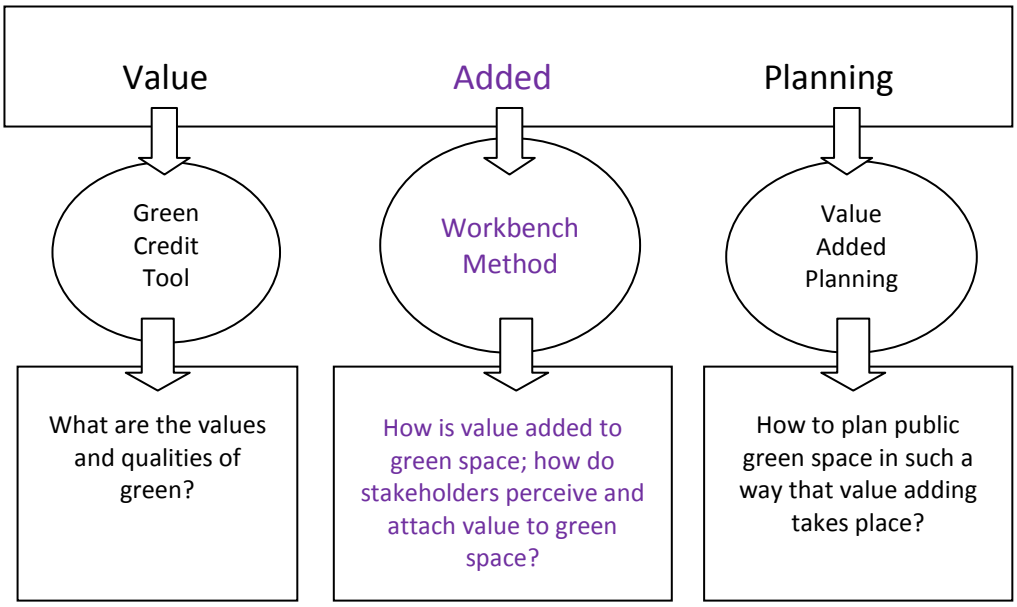


Fig. 1: Scientific context

The first report focused on a tool that can be used for determining the specific *Value*, by means of the Green Credit Tool. The last report will focus on *Value Added Planning*: taking into account the knowledge gained in these first two reports and how municipalities can plan in such a way that the value of green evidently increases.

In this report the emphasis is on *Value Added*, more specifically the additional value of green-spaces that can be added via public participation processes. The added value of green evolves within the Workbench Method, and this tool will be evaluated profoundly, as this method is used to identify spatial quality. This is a method in which stakeholders are involved in the redesign process of green public space, and hence the core issue to determine a way in which spatial quality and specifically the value of green can be incorporated into the planning process.

1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scientific and political context: demand for an integrated approach

Urban development is more and more taking place at the expense of public green space in cities. The city of Amersfoort is, alongside many municipalities in the Netherlands, trying to design its public green space in such a manner that the highest quality of place is reached. However, in the current urban setting, where green space has to compete this is a hard to reach target. The city of Amersfoort stated in the Economical Vision 2030 (Commissie van Ek, 2009:12) that future economical growth of the city is subject to overcoming current contradictions between economy and ecology, wellbeing and welfare, population growth and environmental pressure. The aim should therefore be to interconnect and integrate economic, social and ecological capital. This will be the biggest challenge to built and enhance a sustainable society. The city of Amersfoort should try to take a leading role in the Netherlands in this respect. Hence, it is important to understand the possible values (whether economical, social or environmental) of green in the city-centre, and to seek for manners in which the multiple stakeholders in planning can come up with solutions for green space which are beneficial to all. In this context, the municipality of Amersfoort has introduced the Workbench Spatial Quality (Werkbank Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit in Dutch) in their spatial design in several areas in their municipality to involve multiple stakeholders in spatial planning processes.

The Workbench Spatial Quality (also referred to as the Workbench) was introduced, as part of the European INTERREG programme: VALUE **(**INTERREG IVB North West Europe - Valuing Attractive Landscapes in the Urban Economy), in which municipality of Amersfoort is involved. Aim of this programme is to understand how green space in urban centres can become more competitive with other urban functions.

The Workbench method, developed in the Netherlands by Habiforum in 2005, is an interactive method applied in spatial design in the Netherlands. In the design process a diverse group of stakeholders is involved, from politicians to local residents and organisations. The focus within the Workbench is on designing in such a manner, by involving several stakeholders and following several methodological steps in the design process, that spatial quality is attained. This method is used as it takes into account several aspects of spatial planning, such as economical, social, cultural and ecological values, and thus ensuring a holistic approach to spatial quality.

1.2 Spatial planning and spatial quality

Over the past decades, Dutch spatial planning has been changing from a mostly top-down into a more interactive, bottom-up process. As stated by K. Leidelmeijer and I. van Kamp, 2003), since the fifties a shift took place in spatial planning in the Netherlands, from building densely and focusing on the quantity of houses (i.e. building so-called ‘compact cities’, housing many people on a small surface with a focus on functionalism), to focussing on quality of housing and quality of life in general. The seventies can be regarded as the first time that the notion of liveability gained ground and the opinion of citizens was taken into account seriously. A shift took place from regarding professional experts as only experts, to bottom up approaches, where also citizens have a say. Two movements took place: the social indicator movement and the satisfaction movement. Social factors were taken into account alongside economical aspects.

Hooijmeijer et al. (2001) describes the interconnection of natural diversity, social cohesion and spatial sustainability in spatial planning in the 80s. Spatial planning and spatial quality got more integrated, and a new light was shed on spatial planning in the Netherlands. Spatial quality was regarded as something that needs to be experienced by the people who live in the area and this increased the awareness of spatial qualities and the importance of participation. In the fourth ministerial policy-document for Spatial Planning (Vierde Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening, VROM) spatial quality was further enhanced and split into three elements: perceived value, user value and future value (Hooijmeijer *et.al*., 2001).

This notion of spatial quality is at the basis of the Workbench Method for spatial quality; a participatory approach towards spatial planning. Habiforum, a programme initiated by the Dutch government in 2005, developed the initial Workbench Spatial Quality method (Dauvellier, 2009). It was introduced with the aim to organize the creative spatial planning process in order to result in spatial quality. Underlying the Workbench method was the assumption that spatial quality is dependent on many visions of different stakeholder groups and actors, who together can define spatial quality. The essential cooperation between all stakeholders can be improved by tools that clarify urban development processes and quantify impacts (Seijdel, 2006:1), such as the Workbench Method. This brought a shift towards a more interactive process in spatial planning and an increase awareness of spatial qualities and participation, as the following figure illustrates.

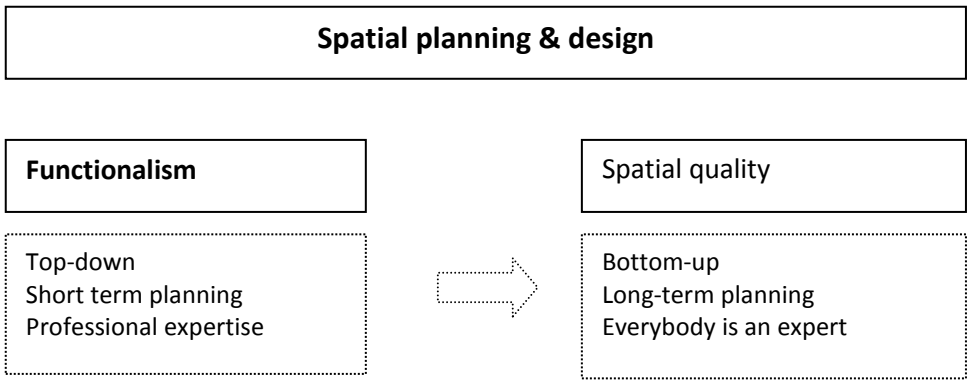


Fig. 2: Shift towards more interactive processes in spatial planning since 1970s

Achieving sustainability requires new planning practices (tools and methods), new stakeholder relationships and both of these demand new skills of planners (Curtis, 2007:110). There is a great need for decision support methods that cope with both the substantive (content) as well as the political (context) dimensions, in order to ensure successful sustainable development (Seijdel, 2006:5). According to Seijdel (2006:5), such methods and approaches should meet the following criteria:

- Integrative: consider different aspects, levels of design and decision making in a holistic approach.
- Dynamic: show the 'performance' of alternatives in relation to preferences and 'behaviour' of stakeholders.
- Interactive: support the negotiation process between stakeholders.
- Transparent: produce results that are clear and understandable to all stakeholders.
- Flexible and reusable: usable for, or adaptable to, a range of similar situations.
- Fast and easy to use: relatively quick to implement by non-experts (residents and politicians).
- Communicative and educational: enlighten stakeholders about problem, alternatives and perspectives.
- Authoritative: the process and the results meet analytical and political standards

The Workbench Method was introduced as a new planning practice, integrating the sustainable development elements, seeking the link between spatial qualities and sustainable development by

enhancing the benefits and spinoffs of urban planning and green space as mentioned above. The Workbench Method as used by Amersfoort municipality was introduced as an interactive planning tool in municipal spatial planning to involve multiple stakeholders in the planning process, aiming to change the top-down approach into a participatory approach, spatial planning into spatial quality, and short term visions into sustainable planning approaches where all stakeholders are seen as experts. This community-oriented planning process involved many aspects which (Yigitcanlar, 2006) found to be essential to the success of advocacy planning such as, concerning community needs, merging natural resources, linking various interest groups, creating investment opportunities, connecting socio-cultural as well as economic priorities.

1.3 Workbench Spatial Quality

The Workbench Spatial Quality was initiated by Habiforum (a Dutch government programme) with the aim to learn to organize the creative process focussing on spatial quality. In the Netherlands the Workbench Method has been applied in spatial planning processes in at least nineteen cases, including Stadshavens Rotterdam, Zuidlanden Leeuwarden, Park Lingezegen and Amersfoort where it is used as a consultation tool (Werkbank Habiforum, 2005:2).

The workbench method focuses on the initial phase of the planning process and aims to ensure qualitative spatial development (Vrom, 2006:1). The Workbench Spatial Quality has been developed as a practical method to bring stakeholders in the field of spatial planning together and to define spatial quality together. Underlying the Workbench is the assumption that spatial quality is dependent on many visions of many different stakeholder groups and actors, who together define spatial quality.

The Workbench method (Werkbank Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit, Habiforum) defines spatial quality as follows:

User value + perceived value + future value = Spatial Quality

These values are defined accordingly:

- User value: suitability and functionalism
- Perceived value= diversity + identity + beauty
- Future value = sustainability + adaptability + manageability

Central to the workbench method is the idea that working on spatial quality is a lengthy process. Spatial quality cannot be created in a short time span, it is a process where reflection and looking into the future are very important and in which different actors are involved in different stages (Wiki-Methodiek Werkbank Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit)

With regard to the relation between spatial quality and the Workbench, the following is assumed by the Workbench Method (Werkbank Habiforum, 2005:1):

1. Spatial quality is different for every place/area and for every person.
2. Spatial quality grows during a cyclical planning process.
3. Users/stakeholders have a central position in the planning process and at the end they judge whether spatial quality was realized

Application of the Workbench should result in a better communication between the participants concerning spatial quality and involvement in discussions and decision-making processes. The focus

on quality should help the actors to gain a general positive attitude, working together on something which is positive and valuable (Wiki- Methodiek Werkbank Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit)

1.4 Research Aim and Questions

Research Aim

The Workbench was applied in two cases in the municipality of Amersfoort, namely Vathorst NW and Park Randenbroek. Aim of this research is to evaluate the Workbench Spatial Quality as it was applied in Amersfoort. This serves to get a better insight in the participatory process in the Workbench and to be able to formulate recommendation on how best to apply the Workbench in spatial planning. Furthermore, general conclusions formulated on a quick-scan that was performed on 19 cases in the Netherlands (de. Graaf et al.) are used to understand some commonalities and trends when applying the Workbench in spatial planning.

Research questions

As was said, *'application of the Workbench should result in a better communication between the participants concerning spatial quality and involvement in discussions and decision-making processes. The focus on quality should help the actors to gain a general positive attitude, working together on something which is positive and valuable.'*

Furthermore, it was said that the Workbench Method as used by Amersfoort municipality was introduced as *'an interactive planning tool in municipal spatial planning to involve multiple stakeholders in the planning process, aiming to change the top-down approach into a participatory approach, spatial planning into spatial quality, and short term visions into sustainable planning approaches where all stakeholders are seen as experts.'*

The question however is if this is the case? Did the Workbench result in better communication between participants concerning spatial quality? And, did the approach in spatial planning change from top-down to a true participatory approach? Moreover, how did the Workbench finally impact on the spatial planning?

In this report the following questions are addressed:

1. How was the Workbench applied in Amersfoort?
2. Can the Workbench contribute to sustainable spatial planning?

2
METHODOLOGY & TOOLS

2.1 Research Methodology

These two research question are answered in the following manner.

To answer the first research questions, a description is given of the Workbench application in both cases in Amersfoort, and the quick-scan analysis is discussed. A couple of elements are used to evaluate application of the Workbench in both the case-studies and quick-scans. These elements are the following:

- Stakeholder identification
- Moment of involvement stakeholders in Workbench
- Time-efficiency
- Location
- Impact on spatial planning

Conclusions are formulated on the process of application of the Workbench.

Through these conclusions an attempt is made to already make a bridge to the second research question: can the workbench contribute to sustainable spatial planning? In order to understand the contribution of the Workbench to sustainable spatial planning, the Workbench is placed in the spectrum of the three p's: people, planet and profit. The elements found in the evaluation of the Workbench are consequently linked with the three p's. Hence when discussing people, it is referred to stakeholder involvement and stakeholder analyses. When discussing planet, reference is made to location and place attachment. When discussing profit, notions of time-efficient planning are introduced and future values.

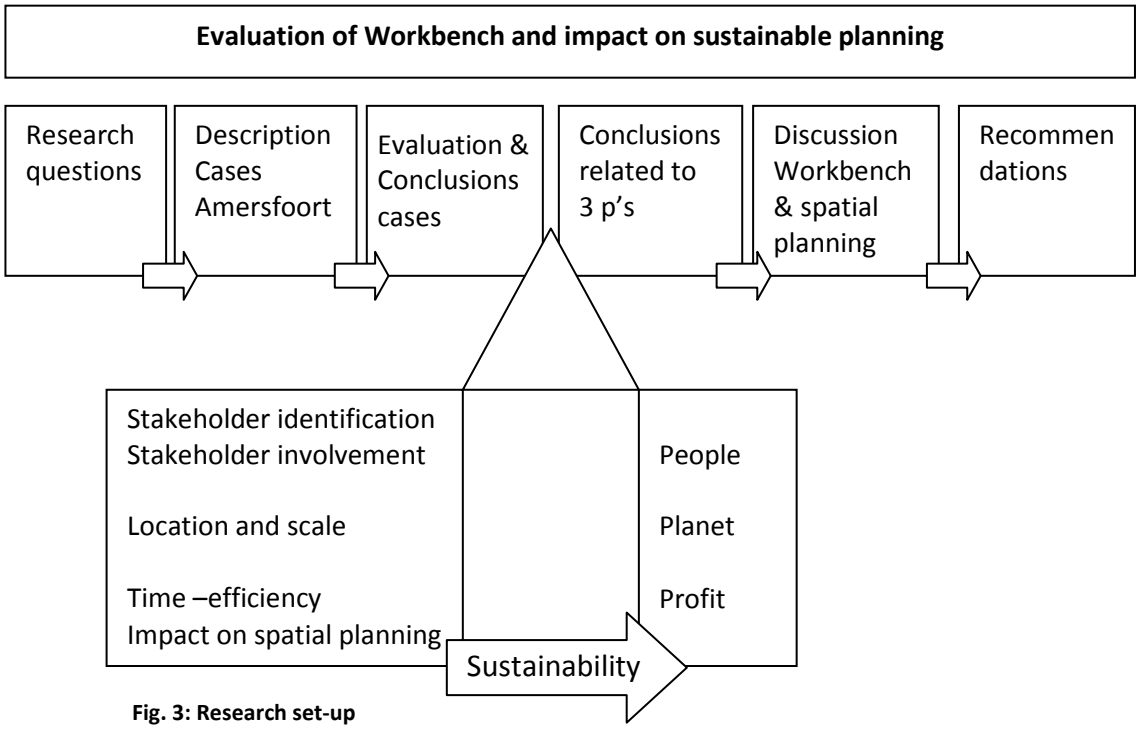


Fig. 3: Research set-up

Thereafter, the Workbench is evaluated on three aspects, namely participation (people), location (planet) and profit (time efficiency, resource availability and future values). This will lead to recommendations formulated for future application of the Workbench method. In the discussion, the Workbench is put in a wider theoretical perspective, where it is elaborated on its contribution to spatial quality and sustainable planning.

2.2 Tools

In order to evaluate the workbench application in Amersfoort two case-studies have been evaluated and a quick-scan on 19 cases, done by a multi-disciplinary student-team at the Wageningen University was used for complementary information. Furthermore, experts have been interviewed and literature study was conducted to back the practical findings with theoretical underpinning.

Case studies and quick-scan

Two case studies were studied in-depth in the Municipality of Amersfoort, Vathorst NW and Park Randenbroek. These case studies were elaborated upon extensively.

- Vathorst North-West, is on a vast area of 245 hectares, which is bordered by two highroads and adjacent to the newly built neighbourhood Vathorst. Vathorst West borders the Western part of the neighbourhood and has the size of 100 hectares. This area mainly consists of meadows. Direct neighbour is a waste-processing company. Vathorst-North has the size of 145 hectares and lies to the north of the National Landscape Eemland, above a small river. This area is the transition area between city and an internationally protected bird-area (Arkemheen). This area has an agricultural function with 21 houses and farms. Vathorst North is in the transition of sand-landscape to a peat-meadow landscape.

- Park Randenbroek is a city park in the middle of the urban centre of Amersfoort-city. Whereas Vathorst is a vacant area where nothing has been built yet, Park Randenbroek is a city-park where buildings have been removed from.

Furthermore, a quick-scan was done by de Graaf et al. (2009) on the basis of 19 cases where the workbench was applied. These cases took place between 2001 and 2007 in the Netherlands and were published on the Habiforum website. The cases were evaluated on the level of spatial planning of the case (local, provincial or on a higher level) and on the number of different stakeholders involved (de Graaf et al. 2009). Conclusions regarding these quick-scans are integrated in the chapter where conclusions are drawn with regard to sustainable planning and the three p's.

Interviews

In total 7 semi-structured in-depth interviews were scheduled with stakeholders and experts, either familiar with the Workbench method or with the case-studies in which it was applied in Amersfoort. Their view on the Workbench in general and specifically as applied in Amersfoort contributed largely to the evaluation of the Workbench. However, since not all the information could be incorporated in this report, the interviews have been added in the annex of this report.

Literature

To underpin the practical findings with theoretical background, literature was studied related to several fields of study. The workbench was evaluated on three main themes, namely: stakeholder participation and level of involvement, location and economical factors. These fields of studies were complemented with theory related to participation, place attachment and sustainability. Literature

consisted of theoretical literature, but also more practical documentation was used on the case-studies in Amersfoort and secondary literature resources were also incorporated.

Contribution students

The research was performed by scientists with a background in social sciences and spatial planning. Besides this, students were actively involved in the research. The quick-scan was performed by the student-team, and forms part of a more extensive report produced by them on the Workbench named: *Participation Matters; an evaluation of the Workbench Method* (de Graaf et al, 2009).

In the figure below it is shown how scientists, students and municipality interacted in the evaluation of the Workbench.

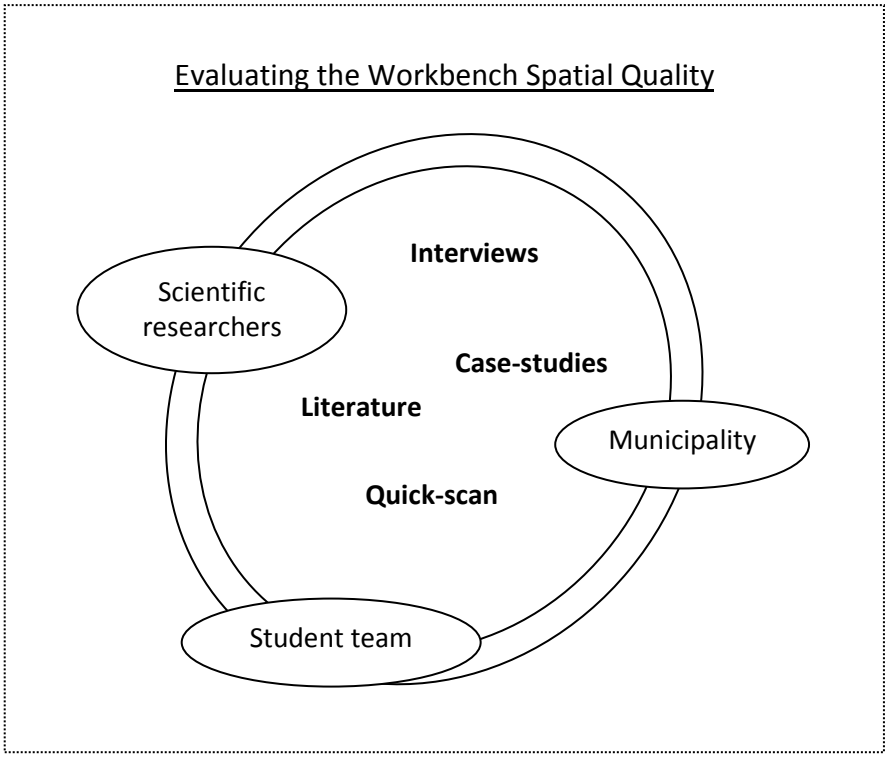


Fig. 4: Evaluating the Workbench

2.3 Limitations

During the research performed experts and professionals were interviewed. However, due to time constraints it was not possible to interview other stakeholders who had participated in the Workbench as applied in Vathorst NW and Park Randenbroek. This means that the research is slightly biased in the sense that the 'true experts' (the local stakeholders themselves) could not be interviewed. However, in order to evaluate the process the experience of the other experts and stakeholders interviewed also proved very valuable.

Another limitation to the research is that the projects assessed have not been implemented to their full extent in practice. This has to do with external factors that impacted on the spatial planning process, such as financial restrictions to implement project designs and changes in policy concerning the planning process. This also means that evaluation of the impact of the Workbench in spatial planning could only be assessed to the extent where the Workbench had an impact on the *process* of spatial design, rather then on the impact of the designs themselves in daily life.

2.4 Set up

In this report, the following chapters can be distinguished. The Workbench method will be described into greater detail in chapter 3. In this chapter the circular process of the Workbench method is described (3.1) and the tools which it is made out of are highlighted in chapter 3.2.

In chapter 4 the two cases are presented where the Workbench was applied in Amersfoort are presented and evaluated. In the chapters 4 the case-studies are elaborated on in depth. In chapter 5 conclusions are From the process description conclusions are drawn in chapter 8.

In the subsequent chapter the Workbench is reflected upon in the light of the three p's as mentioned in many sustainability theories: people, planet and profit. In the following three (sub) chapters these three aspects in the Workbench are considered more in depth. Hence one chapter focuses specifically on participation, and more specifically level of stakeholder involvement and stakeholder analysis. In the next chapter the location where the Workbench is applied is discussed. Here theories on place attachment are included. Hereafter (indirect) economic factors are highlighted (profit), such as the impact of the Workbench on time-efficiency in spatial planning and its possible impact on resource availability. In these chapters practical evidence is backed up with literature and theory.

On the basis of these chapters recommendation are formulated on how to apply the Workbench Spatial Quality in spatial planning and which aspects to bear in mind when starting a participatory process such as the Workbench.

Lastly, in the discussion chapter (11) the Workbench is put in a wider respective and its possible impact on spatial planning in relation to spatial quality and sustainability is reflected upon.

3
WORKBENCH SPATIAL QUALITY – METHOD & TOOLS

3.1 Method

Introduction

Habiforum, a programme initiated by the Dutch government in 2005, developed the initial Workbench Spatial Quality Method (Dauvellier, 2009). It was introduced with the aim to organize the creative planning process in order to result in spatial quality. Underlying the Workbench Method was the assumption that spatial quality is dependent on many visions of many different stakeholder groups and actors, who together can define spatial quality. Spatial quality, however is subjective, it is different from place to place and from person to person. (Werkbank Habiforum, 2005:1).

The Workbench Method is an interactive planning method in which stakeholders are intensively involved. The workbench can be used for instance by governments, such as municipalities in processes for spatial planning, where no specific spatial planning or designs have been made yet. Goal of the method is to involve stakeholders from the very start of the planning and design process and ask them to brainstorm openly and think of what they would like to see in a specific area in future.

The government agency (for instance a municipality) that starts up the interactive planning process should firstly set a very clear framework of the possibilities and restrictions in the area, to make sure that the developed plans fit in the municipal framework. Besides this, the government agency decides, together with external facilitators of the workbench process which are relevant stakeholders in the redevelopment area. Relevant stakeholders can range from inhabitants to architects and local companies.

From this moment onwards an open brainstorming process starts, in which creativity is stimulated and stakeholders are asked to think in terms of what they would like to see in future. This is where the main strength of the workbench lies: people are asked to think in terms of options and possibilities, rather then restrictions.

The Workbench Method is thus a planning tool which tries to gain an integral view on the use and experience of the green-area, from the perspective of different stakeholders (inhabitants, investors, landowners, local authorities, experts etc.) and their different interests at stake. The Workbench Method focuses on the initial phase of the planning process and aims to ensure qualitative spatial development (Vrom, 2006:1) by ensuring community participation from the beginning of the project.

The application of the Workbench should result in a better communication between the participants concerning spatial quality and involvement in discussions and decision-making processes. The focus on quality should help the actors to gain a general positive attitude, working together on something which is positive and valuable (Wiki- Methodiek Werkbank Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit)

Stages of the Workbench method

The workbench method is characterized by a planned process in which stakeholders are intensively involved. The optimum amount of participants in a workbench workshop is around 15 or 16 participants. When more people are invited you have to split up in more small groups during the process. Best is when participants from all stakeholders-groups are invited and act not as official representation, but as voice from within their background with a strict personal sound. But the final decision who to invite is the responsibility of the initiator who is host and sponsor of the process (Dauvellier, interview 2009; De Jonge, interview 2009)

The method is circular in its approach and consists of four phases: the initiative phase, vision phase, execution phase and use phase. The first phase consists of an interactive process, the second phase a shared vision to developed, in the third phase a design is created and the last phase is the implementation, control and monitoring thereof. These four phases can be subdivided in 11 steps. Dauvellier (personal interview, October 2009) states that the workbench is very dynamic and can be adapted and further developed continuously. The workbench does not have to be applied in its totality, meaning all the 11 steps. A couple of steps will always be the same, but the workbench can be freely interpreted by the person who uses it. The essence of the workbench is applying the four main steps of the process:

1. determine what individuals perceive as qualities
2. translate these individual qualities into common themes
3. translate these ideas into concrete plans
4. develop scenarios

Facilitation

Via internet elaborate manuals can be found stating how to use the Workbench tools and whom to involve in a planning process, for anybody interested to use these tools. However, in practice the workbench is often facilitated by a professional facilitator. In this respect, R. Thomas (Interview, October 2009) says it is essential that the facilitation is done properly in the workbench process. The workbench is a process between people. It should be applied in an equitable manner, else it cannot take effect. People should be free from dogmas; this is a major element on which the facilitator should focus. Especially when it concerns green space it is very important to make sure people don't react dogmatically, only then one can take the three steps in the workbench method.

3.2 Tools

The circular approach of the Workbench stimulates creative thinking whilst ensuring continuity, by linking the core concepts: experience, strive, planning, making, as illustrated in the following figure.

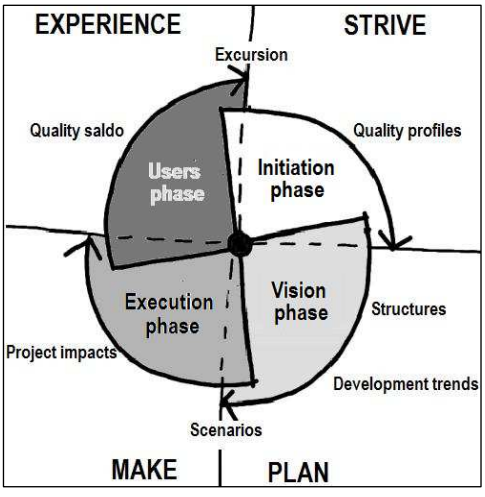


Figure 5: Workbench Method process (Habiforum, 2005)

Each of the phases and steps will be described accordingly:

Phase 1: Experience

The first step is often an excursion to the redevelopment area, so that all stakeholders have a common understanding of the area. This first stage is a very important stage, even though it is a seemingly logical step to take. Importance of the first step is that all stakeholders have a common experience of the area. Everybody thus starts of with a common perception of the possibilities and restrictions. Furthermore, this first step is important to enhance create awareness of what the area looks like in practice, and to enhance a feeling of connectedness with the redevelopment area. The first step is thus a step in which people gain inspiration, feel connection to what they will discuss about in the next stages of the process. Furthermore, there is another equally important social impact of organising an excursion: stakeholders, with various backgrounds and fields of expertise will have one common experience. This will make them feel more connected and give people who might have thought they will not have a relevant background the feeling that they do have a say. By organising this first step the stakeholders will feel more connected, have a common experience to share and this will enhance the feeling that 'everybody is an expert'.

Tools:

Excursion

Man needs to experience a spatial place in order to be able to define it. The project team should undertake an excursion to the site (Habiforum, 2005:5) to see, hear and feel the presence of the place. Other forms of excursions are also possible (map excursions, video presentations etc) if there are time or money constrains.

Phase 2: Strive

The second phase in the Workbench Method is about striving. Stakeholders are asked dream and be creative in what they envision. They are asked to identify their own user/experience and long-term values in a certain redevelopment area. Stakeholders are asked to think in what they would ultimately like to see (within the framework set by the government) in the redevelopment area. What is done in this stage is that stakeholders are asked specifically to think about the qualities of the area. When stakeholders think in terms of what cannot be planned this does not lead to creativity. Therefore, the professional facilitator of the process should make sure that stakeholders will think in terms of possibilities and options. In this way creative plans can be made in the following phase.

To structure the process somewhat, a matrix is used. By using the matrix one can ensure that stakeholders will consider not only one specific quality or value, but that they will take into account all types of qualities which a redevelopment area might have. Thus, stakeholders identify their own values based on these questions:

- How is the green area used?
    - User value – suitability and functionalism
- How is the green area experience?
    - Experience value – diversity, identity and beauty
- How should the area be used in the future?
    - Future value – sustainability, adaptability, management

After the values are categorized (refer to the matrix in Table 1) and linked together by the public participation facilitator. Stakeholders have the opportunity to discuss their values and perspectives, and the importance thereof.

Table 1 is an example of a completed matrix used within the Workbench Method, illustrating the different values and categories (Wiki-Methodiek Werkbank Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit).

	Economical quality	Social quality	Ecological quality	Cultural quality
User value		•	•	•
Perceived value	•	•	•	•
Future value	•	•	•	•

Table 1: Workbench Matrix (Habiforum, 2008)

When the matrix has been filled in, it will reveal the quality profile of an area, illustrating the possible spatial quality strengths and potential threats. Furthermore, it identifies the quality gains and losses within an area.

Tools:

Quality profiles

Spatial qualities are different for each location and for each user and resident (Habiforum, 2005:6) and therefore need to be quantified and qualified for each project. Specific elements are identified by means of a matrix method, where elements are chosen based on sustainability and user preference. The elements are divided within sectors and the amount of elements per sector are summarized. The elements are further divided into clusters sensitivity. Issues which need most attention are enhanced this way.

Structures

Spatial qualities are linked to the function, form and structure of the space. The links are illustrated by the quality profiles and interpreted in terms of maps. The first step is to design a map of the current situation and qualities. The second step is to identify future issues and qualities. Development perspectives are thus identified (Habiforum, 2005:7).

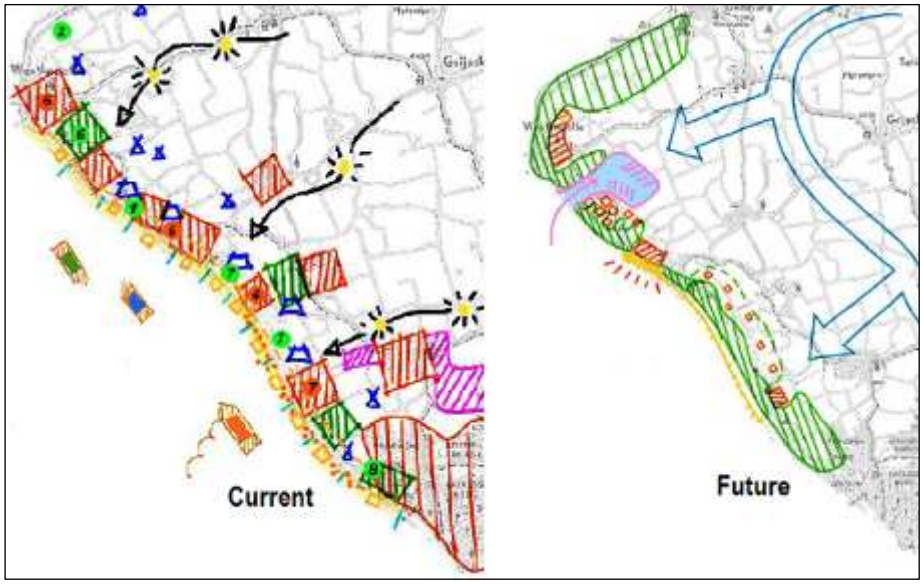


Fig. 6: Example of a development perspective (Habiforum, 2005:8)

Phase 3: Plan

In the vision phase or plan phase an analyses is made of the area and a vision is developed on the basis of the quality profiles. The vision phase is a phase in which people are asked to be creative and come up with powerful ideas for the current situation and for the future. They are asked to think of their own plans and present their ideas to the others in a specific concept. Whereas some people might present their idea as such: 'we would like to have more green for a playground for children', they are now asked to phrase it in a more powerful manner, for instance: 'The green jungle!'. This inspires others and also shows the motivation and the feelings people have and will also make it easier to communicate their ideas to others. In short: this stage is about integrating the perceived qualities in the previous phase into future development plans.

Tools:

Development trends

This forms part of the vision phase and incorporates the development of the different qualities (Vrom, 2006:8). The core future issues are the main focus of this step. The development trends to address these issues are identified accordingly. There can be traces of metamorphose where a transformation of identity and functionality is seen. Furthermore, there is identity enhancement where past quality characteristics take a new form, meaning and implementation (Habiforum, 2005:9). There are different spatial-economic scales (regional/local), social organization (collective/individual) and spatial diversity (concentration/sprawl).

Scenarios

A future vision is designed for each of the scenarios, illustration the development trends and objectives to develop the certain qualities (Habiforum, 2005:9). The spatial dynamics are enhanced this way. The overall future vision will have a schematic character with specific crucial objectives.

Project impacts

Projects are determined for each scenario in order to refine the future vision (Habiforum, 2005:10). The focus lies on the main development structure, with sub-projects to ensure specific area developments that will enhance the greater development vision. Projects are divided in short (5 year) and longer term (25 year) phases, and three projects are developed per phase.

Calculate and mapping tool

One of the recent tools being used is the tool for calculating the cost which a development might bring along and also to draw these into maps directly, so that it becomes apparent which scenarios are feasible and which are not. This is very helpful tool to make sure that scenario's do fit into the framework that has been set by the commissioner.

Layer-approach

People tend to think mostly on the occupation layer of an area. In the layer-approach people are asked not to consider only the occupation layer (how the space can be used), but also consider the ground layer (the type of soil, to whom the ground belongs etc.) and infrastructure layer (what networks have been constructed when it comes to energy transportation, sewage...etc).

Hence the layer approach focuses on three layers:

- ground layer

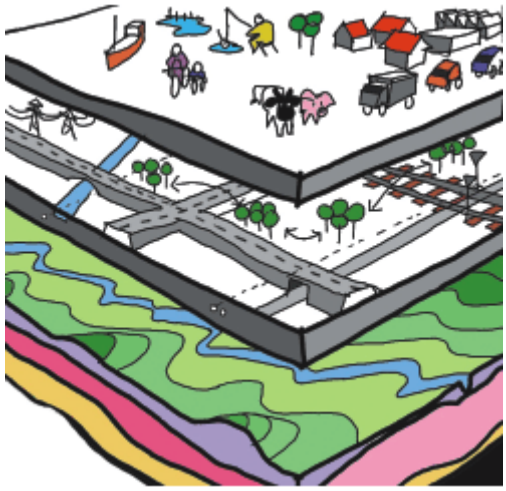


Fig. 7: The layer approach (www.ruimtexmilieu.nl)

- infrastructure network
- occupation/buildings layer

Phase 4: Make

In this stage stakeholders are asked to become realistic and think of how they can bring their vision into practice. The strength of the workbench is that ideally a broad range of stakeholders with different backgrounds and expertise take place. All these stakeholders have different social networks and resources that can be explored to bring the visions into practice. In this phase, the facilitator guides the stakeholders through the process of exploring their own networks and to come up with economical and financial possibilities and options, to bring their plan into practice. Resources and networks of the stakeholders are thus combined. In this stage the plans can also checked with external architects and accountants in order to understand the feasibility of certain ideas and visions. This is communicated to the stakeholders and little by little they align their vision and plan with what is doable in practice.

Tools:

Quality Balance

The quality of each scenario is determined in the following table. The scenario is based on a future projection within the next 25 years. The table is based on a checklist of the quality profiles.

Quality saldo	+	-
Economic		
Ecologic and social-cultural aspects Indentity enhancement Tourism approach Innovation Accessibility		
Social		
Livibility and safety Space for inititives User group Accessbility Freedom of choice		
Ecologic		
Perspectives Health, safety Sustainability and qualities		
Cultural		
Cultural historic identity History Space for development Diversity		

Table 2: Quality profiles checklist (Habiforum, 2005:12)

Design

Design teams are selected based on experience on specific quality aspects. The design should accommodate specific project focussed qualities, but also general quality aims. A supervisor should monitor the quality of the project and align project goals. A quality test should be designed to evaluate different and alternative designs.

Realisation

A risk-analysis should be conducted for all qualities as part of the implementation phase. This should include a budget, financing, timeframes and technical difficulties. Develop integrated financing possibilities (red for green, space for space, quality for quality – examples of current Dutch initiatives). Quality monitoring test should be conducted throughout this phase. The future user should form an active part of this phase and state their ideas and perspectives, in order to guide further implementation.

Phase 1: Experience

The start and the end of the Workbench process is similar, but has a different touch. In the end of the process it is important to align the plans with practical possibilities. Else the plans might not be in line anymore with the qualities that stakeholders envisioned in the first phase of the Workbench Method. Since quality is something which only exists by means of stakeholders defining and experiencing it as such, it is important to understand to what extent the qualities identified in the initiative phase actually will be brought into practice in the newly developed plans. In the use phase the plans are thus monitored and evaluated and the main aim is to ensure that the final plans do not fall short in terms of their impact on spatial quality as perceived by the stakeholders.

Tools:

Control vision

Determine if the rules and regulations give adequate space of use and experience of the spatial qualities. Ensure space for “unplanned” qualities and for future extensions. Create a quality checklist for the maintenance and control plan.

Monitoring and evaluation

Frequent surveys should be conducted. Evaluate the realized qualities in comparison to the planned qualities. Determine the realized advantages in terms of more visitors, more excursions, publications, social value etc (Habiforum, 2005).

4
CASESTUDIES

4.1 Vathorst NW

Introduction

Vathorst, in Amersfoort, is a large mainly open space, consisting of 245 hectares in total, where developments are planned and 11000 houses to be built. The municipality of Amersfoort decided to initiate an interactive planning process, to get input from the community in the future redevelopment plans concerning a part of the broader redevelopment project. The workbench was introduced as part of this interactive planning process. During the interactive process, a "cooking book" has been made for spatial planning; illustrating the different "ingredients" needed to build a successful urban area.

Fig. 8: Arial picture Vathorst NW (Source: www.vathorstwestnoord.nl/plangebied)

Workbench

The workbench took place during three days with 60 stakeholders. Often plans of the municipal council are more ambitious then what is feasible in practice. Aim of the interactive planning process was to align the vision of the council with the ambitions at a local stakeholder level. This can also result in more public support in the decision-making process. The municipality council set a framework of conditions in advance, and developed a methodological framework. Three steps were identified in the process:

1. discovering spatial qualities and ambitions of the stakeholders
2. development of scenario's (cooking book)
3. evaluating the scenario's

After each step in this process the municipality council was consulted, to align their plans and visions with the outcomes of the interactive planning process. Outcome of this trajectory was a list of spatial ingredients that were sought.

The process of feedback from municipal council after each step of the workbench is illustrated in the figure below:

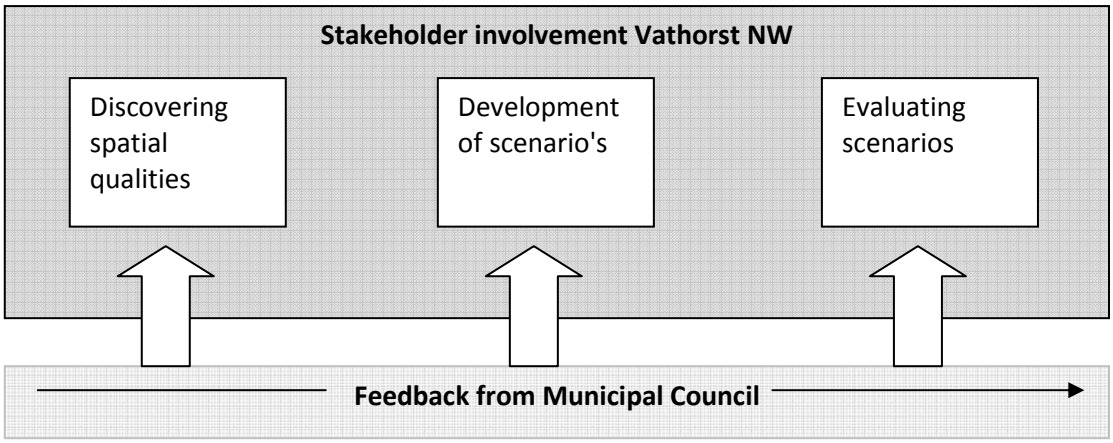


Fig 9: Stakeholder involvement Vathorst NW

Cookbook

The interactive planning process in which the workbench was applied in Vathorst was effective. Four 'recipes' were compiled by the stakeholders during the Workbench process.
These are as follows:
1. Cradle to Cradle: Sushi: no waste
2. Sustainable town: Waterzooi: sustainability
3. Lasagne Verde: peacefulness and socio-cultural life
4. BBQ Neighbourhood: knowing each other, social cohesion

In order to reach these concepts lists of ingredients were compiled. Questions that were asked were for instance: which ingredients do we need to create a 'Sushi'-neighbourhood? From this process diverse spatial 'ingredients' were compiled. Ingredients were for instance:
- amount of houses, how many houses per hectare
- style of building
- intensity of use of space, multiple functions
- type of buildings
- facilities in the neighbourhood
- the function of agricultural landscape
- recreation
- transport and traffic

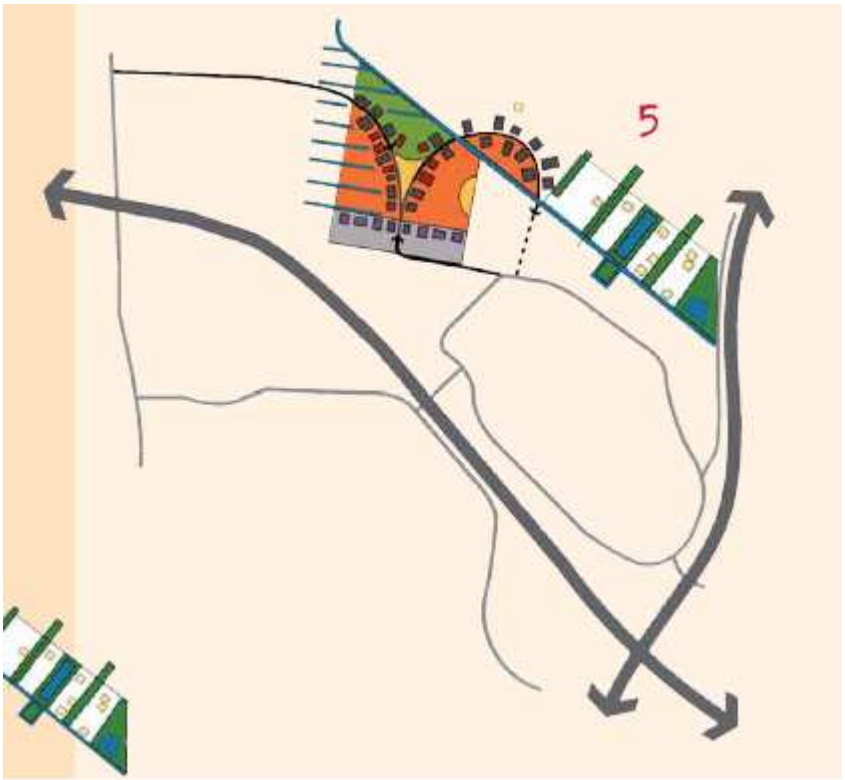
These ingredients were evaluated by the council, and throughout the workbench process they have made clear which plans and ideas are feasible, and which not, and which they preferred over others.

In the pages below these concepts are illustrated with small maps, also to be found in the cookbook 'Aan Tafel!' (Amersfoort, 2009). There are short descriptions with each map to make clear what the concept relates to.

Sushi: Cradle to Cradle; no waste

In the Sushi neighbourhood the building style is very compact. The focus is on sustainable building and living, according to the cradle to cradle concept. The north of Vathorst is developed into a recreational area, with green lanes and forests.

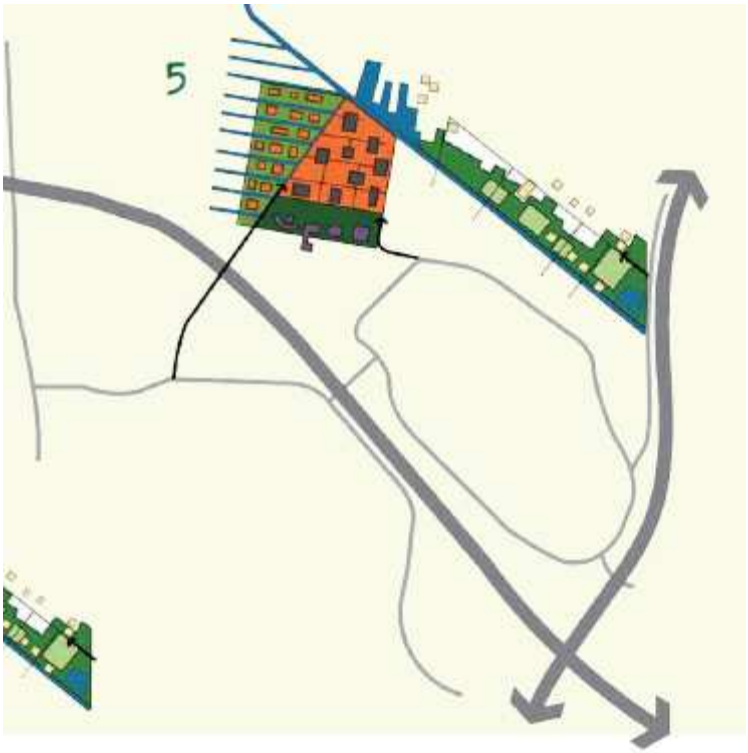
Fig. 10: Sushi concept- Vathorst NW (Municipality Amersfoort, 2009)



Waterzooi: sustainable town

Waterzooi has the character of a village or small town. It should be an eco-village, in which diversity and the small scale are important. A meeting point is central in the design. There is diversity in the way in which houses are built and the location will have a strong social atmosphere. The rest of the landscape will remain agrarian.

Fig. 11: Waterzooi concept- Vathorst NW (Municipality Amersfoort, 2009)



Lasagne Verde: peacefulness and socio-cultural life

In the Lasagna Verde structure, building is also very compact. New concepts of building are applied. There is a city-like atmosphere and green and red are integrated: green roofs of houses give a natural touch.

Fig. 12: Lasagne Verde concept- Vathorst NW (Municipality Amersfoort, 2009)

BBQ: Neighbourhood concept, social cohesion

The BBQ neighbourhood is typified by the social structure of neighbourhoods. There is a sub-urban atmosphere and the new Vathorst is separated from the already existing part of Vathorst by a green corridor. Social cohesion is important in the neighbourhoods.

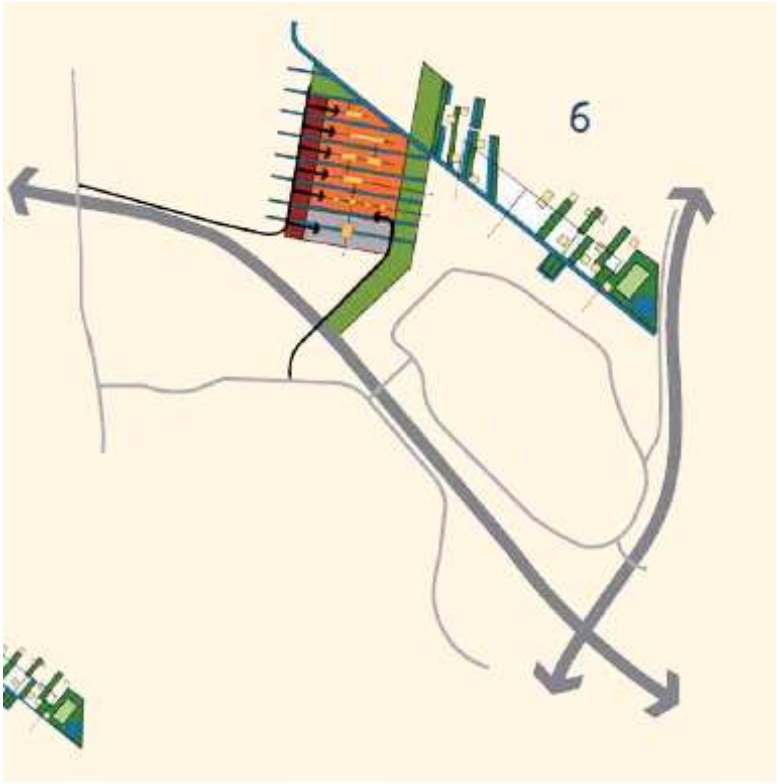


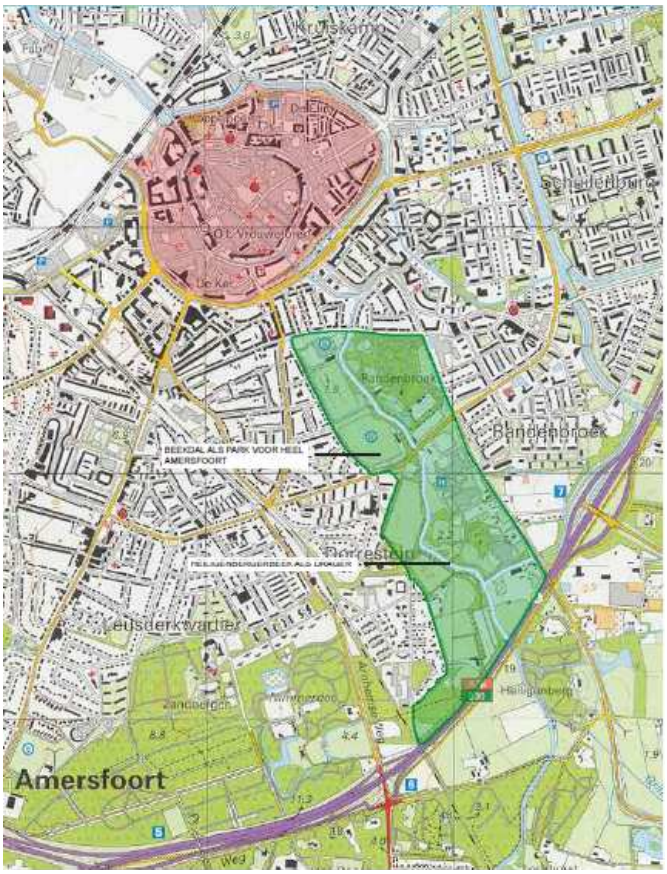
Fig. 13: BBQ concept- Vathorst NW (Municipality Amersfoort, 2009)

4.2 Park Randenbroek

Introduction

Park Randenbroek is a big city park in the centre of Amersfoort centred on the stream 'Heiligenbergerbeek'. In 2000 a redevelopment process was initiated in the park. Reason was that several developments were planned: the hospital in the park would be broken down and the sports club wanted to expand (Amersfoort Municipality, Consultatienota, 2008). In 2001 a consultancy trajectory started. However, there were some main concerns of resistance vented:

- the balance between red and green on the hospital site
- resistance against a skeeler path
- too little attention for the role of the Heiligenbergerbeek



In 2002 the municipal elections and resistance against the plans paralysed the process temporarily. When decisions were made concerning the hospital and the swimming pool location (in 2004 and 2005 respectively) the process was again revived. It was decided to relocate both the hospital and the swimming pool outside the redevelopment area. In February 2006 a new vision was developed 'Een beekdal in de stad' by the municipality, with the intention to start up a broad consultation trajectory. However, this plan was not approved by the municipality council due to several reasons. One of the reasons was the demand to involve stakeholders in an earlier stage in the development of a new vision, before the start off of formal consultancy trajectory (Amersfoort Municipality, Consultatienota, 2008).

Fig. 14: Park Randenbroek

Workbench

In 2007 a participatory trajectory was started. At the basis of this trajectory was a consultation model. In this model policy is shaped together with the stakeholders. In a proposal of the council the procedure was written out. In this consultation trajectory several stakeholders and representatives at a city-level were asked to participate.

The goal of this meeting was twofold:

1. To make clear what the importance is of forming a common vision on the park and to make clear what the position is of the participants in the trajectory.
2. To offer the possibility to ask questions en make remarks on the future of the park and the framework set by the municipality (Amersfoort Municipality, 2008)

Stakeholders invited to this meeting were amongst others Foundation 'Heiligerbeekdal', the province of Utrecht, the water-board and Amersfoort Sports federation. After this a second evening was organised in which the workbench was presented as methodology. The stakeholders argued for an open consultation trajectory.

On November 1st 2007 the consultation trajectory officially started with an information evening for everyone interested within the Municipality of Amersfoort. During this evening participants who were interested could register to take part in one of the four consultation trajectories for the park:

1. Swimming-pool location
2. Sports area & ice-skating location
3. Park, river and Vosheuvel
4. Elisabeth hospital

In each group about 12 to 16 residents, users and other stakeholders partook.

In the follow up a workshop day on the Workbench was organised. Peter Dauvellier (expert on the Workbench) gave an introduction on the method. The four consultation groups identified current and future spatial qualities for the entire park, according to the quality four profiles in the workbench (social, cultural, economic and environmental). However, the wish of the municipality to make the Workbench trajectory into a shared process received a lot of criticism of the participants. Finally it was decided that the municipal group could help identifying qualities, but the prioritisation of qualities was to be done by the other participants (mainly users and residents). (Amersfoort Municipality, Consultatienota, 2008).

The Workbench was held in 3 sessions, consisting of several meetings:

- inventory of individually perceived values
- making scenario's and visions
- producing alternative plans

Below the quality profile drawn up by the participants of the Workbench in Park Randenbroek is shown:

Kwaliteitsprofiel Park/beek/Vosheuvel

	Kwaliteitsthema's	Belangrijkheid voor Park/beek/Vosheuvel	Kwetsbaarheid
Economisch pofiel			
	Geld verdienen met "leuke dingen"		
	Bereikbaarheid / parkeren!		
	Ze is aantrekkelijk		
	Groenste stad van de "wereld"		
	Belangrijke indirecte "winst"		
Sociaal Profiel			
	Toegankelijkheid & ontmoeten (in natuurlijke omgeving)		
	Veilige en gezonde leefomgeving		
	Sport & recreatie (in natuurlijke omgeving)		
	Dynamisch gebruik en natuurlijk park		
Ecologisch profiel			
	Ecologische verbinding structuur met regio		
	Groot Stadspark!		
	Basiskwaliteit milieu		
	Onderhouds waarborg		
	Educatie & informatie		
Cultureel profiel			
	Tijdsbeeld		
	Ruimte bieden aan...		
	Inspiratiebron		
	Ontmoeting		

Table 3: Quality profile Park Randenbroek (www.werkpartners.nl)

This profile is the result of using the matrix for spatial qualities, in which four main clusters of qualities are discerned: economical, social, environmental and cultural qualities. For all the qualities mentioned it was identified how important (red) and how vulnerable (green) these qualities were, according to the participants. In the quality profile above it becomes clear for instance that the ecological connection with the region is identified as an important quality, but at the same time as a vulnerable quality. This means that if nothing is done about it, this connection will probably not be attained, due to its' vulnerability.

Beginning 2008 a second consultation meeting took place. The qualities mentioned during the previous meeting were drawn into a map for all four areas in the park. After this each group answered three questions:

- Can the future qualities and chances be combined with each other or are they conflicting?
- What are the consequences of certain wishes? When is it necessary to link the wishes in one area with the wishes in another area in the park?
- How do the wishes and dilemmas relate to the framework of the municipality?

On the following pages the 'quality profiles' that were made during these sessions are shown.

On the map below the functions and facilities within the park have been indicated. The hospital location (ziekenhuis), sports facilities and allotment gardens (volkstuinen) are indicated.

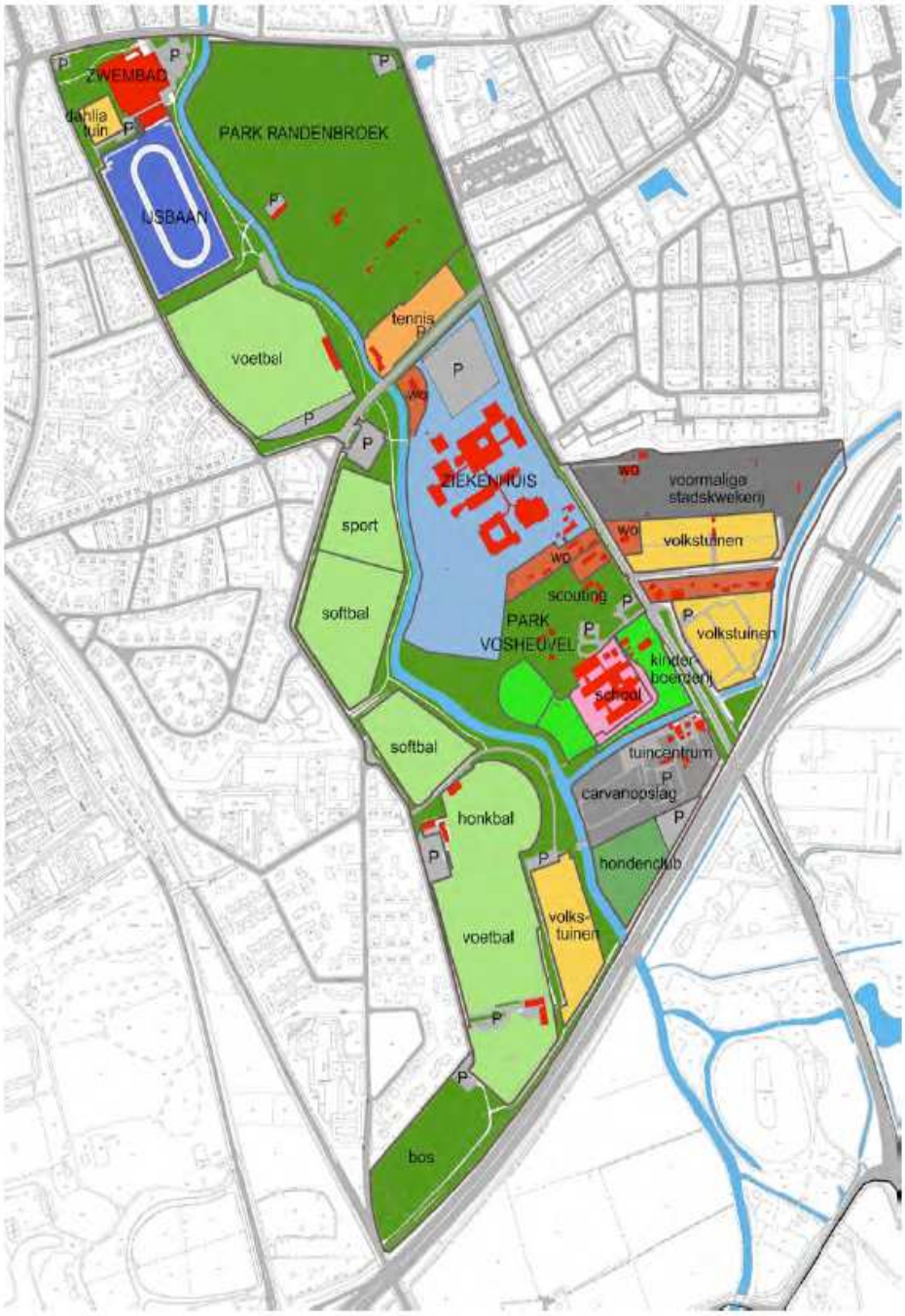


Fig 15: Function of Park Randenbroek in 2009 (www. werkpartners.nl)

Below the economic quality profile that was made for Park Randenbroek is shown. In this profile three main qualities were mentioned, and identified through the following concepts:

- Making money with 'fun things'
- Accessibility and parking
- The greenest city in the world

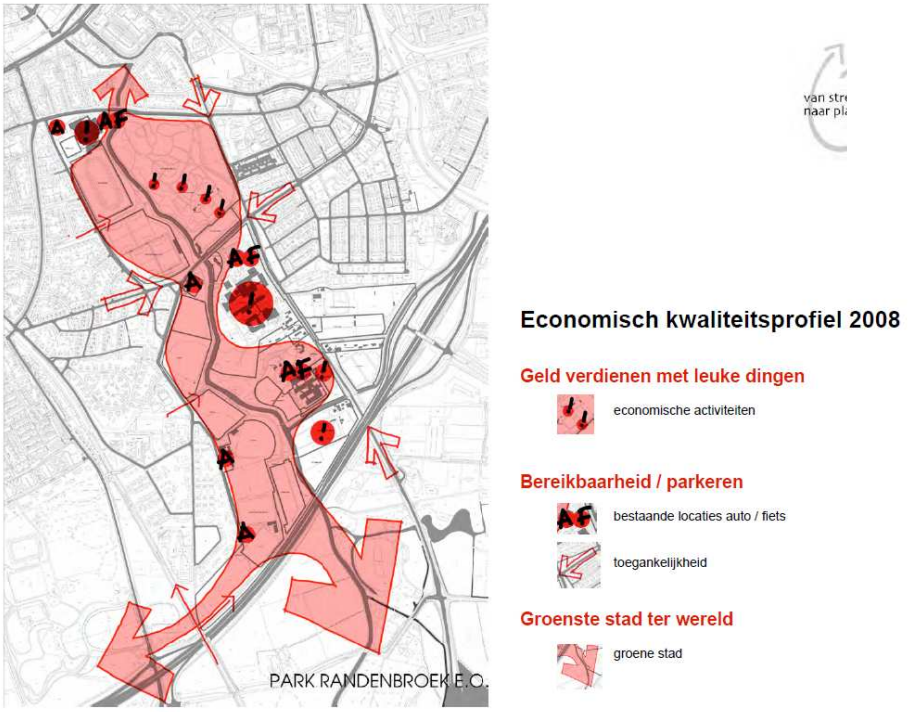


Fig 16: Economic quality profile (www. werkpartners.nl)

Regarding social qualities there were also three main characteristics chosen, namely:

- Accessibility of the park and the park as a meeting point
- A safe and healthy living environment
- Dynamic use of the natural surroundings

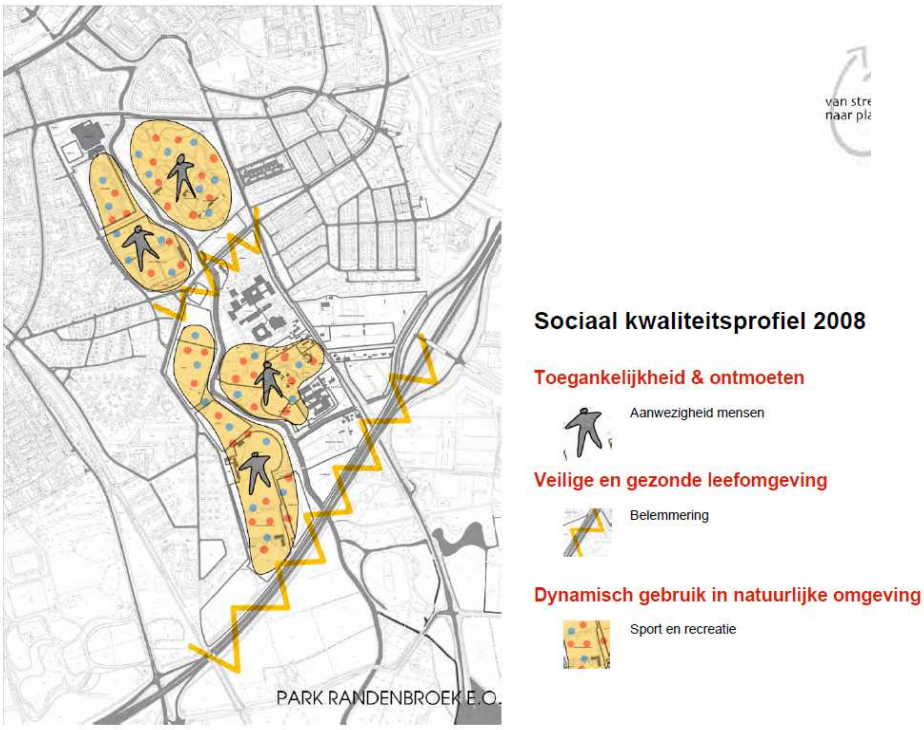


Fig 17: Social quality profile (www. werkpartners.nl)

In the cultural profiles which were drawn four main topics were discerned:
- image of the time
- offering space for cultural activities
- serving as a source of inspiration
- serving as a meeting point

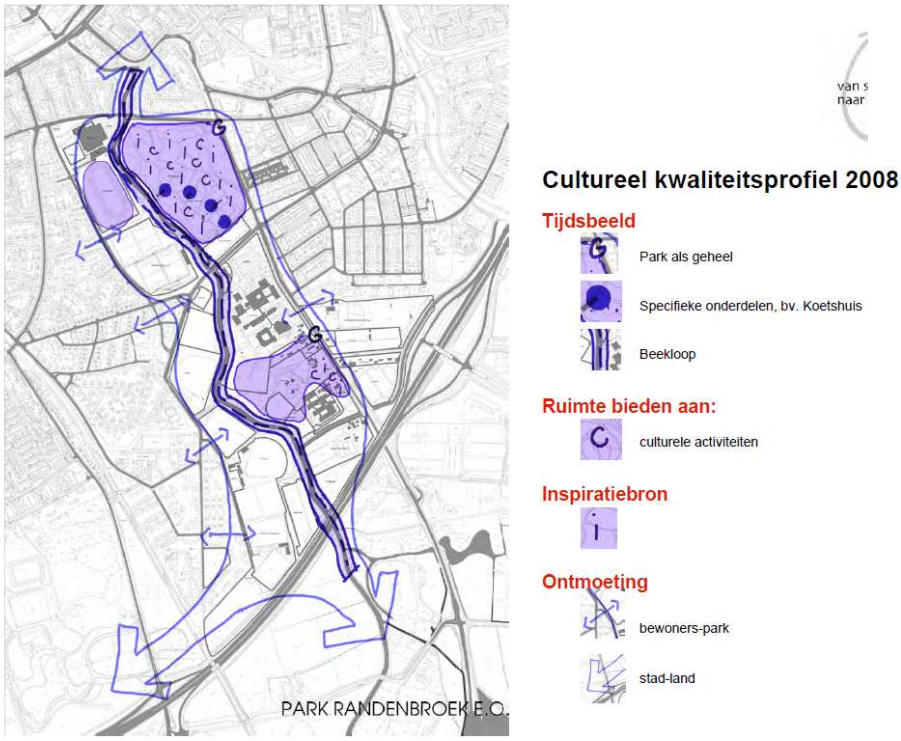


Fig 18: Cultural quality profile (www. werkpartners.nl)

Finally, also an ecological profile was constructed, in which the following four main qualities were named:
- the ecological structure of the region
- the image of a big city park
- Its' contribution to the basic quality of the environment
- the function of the park for education and information

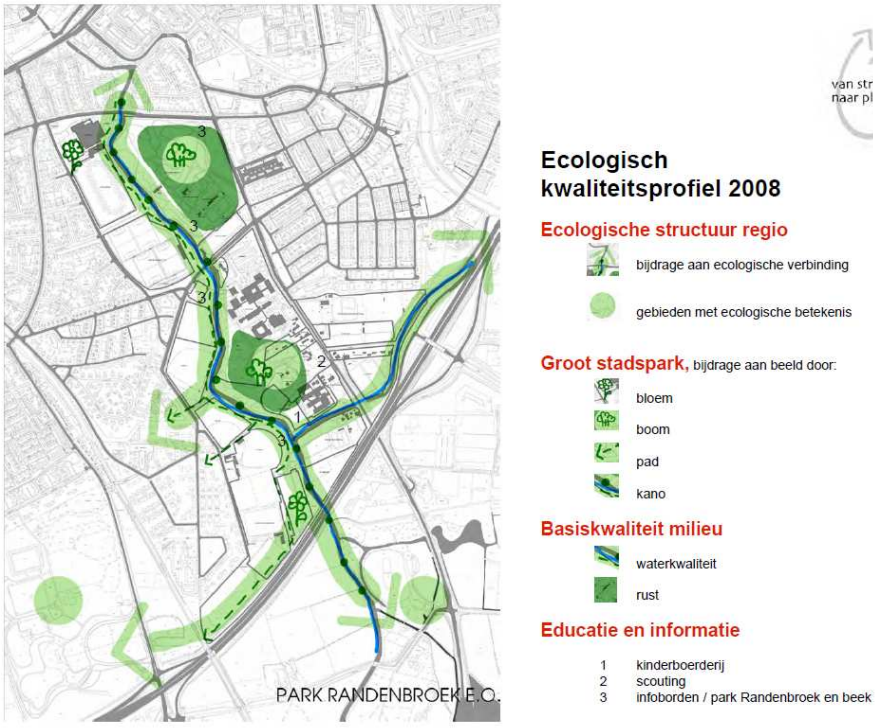


Fig 19: Environmental quality profile (www. werkpartners.nl)

In the third meeting the current and future qualities were fit into the integral redevelopment proposals of the municipality. In the fourth meeting the separate proposals per area were integrated into one proposal for the entire park and surroundings.

In a fifth meeting the consultation trajectory of the workbench was closed. There were 30 attendants to this meeting, who argued strongly for a green design of the park.
The proposals made by the consultancy groups were financially backed-up by an independent economist. Furthermore, a landscape architect showed how the different proposals could be fitted into one proposal for the park. Also the municipal councillor was present and showed his consent about the enthusiasm of the participants in the trajectory. However, he also noted that a couple of the proposals made by the participants did not fit into the framework that was set by the municipality.

The proposals made through these consultancy groups meetings were financially backed-up by an independent economist. In these calculations it appeared to be difficult to implement the proposals of the consultancy groups financially.

Furthermore, during the consultation trajectory several participants referred to the 'economic value of green'. Here they made a connection to a national trend to point at the value of green in the city. Referring to the programme 'Green and the City' (initiated by the ministry of agriculture, nature and public health) value of green in an urban context can for instance be beneficial to:

- Health
- Liveability
- Economy
- Environment
- City and rural areas (Brosens, 2008)

These are all virtues of green and are recognised as such by the municipality of Amersfoort (as becomes clear in the policy document 'Vision Green-Blue structure'. However, although these are virtues of green, there is no direct translation of these future benefits of green into monetary values and financial means which can be used as investment or directly returned to cover costs made by the municipality to invest in green. (Amersfoort Municipality, Consultatienota, 2008). The suggestion that was made was that the taxes (WOZ- Waardering Onroerende Zaken belasting) on houses would increase sufficiently due to an increase in the value of houses because of the presence of a green surrounding. However, when calculating the returns through taxes to the municipality, this appeared not to outweigh investments being made in the park. In September 2008 the results of the consultation trajectory were discussed

in the municipal council. This was followed by a couple of investigations on several fields in the park, such as ecology, demand for space at the sports club etc.

After this a proposal has been made by the municipal council in which the outcomes of the consultancy trajectory were partially integrated: 'Multiple enjoyments in a special city-park – Structural vision on Park Randenbroek and surroundings' (Council proposal, Municipality Amersfoort, May 2009). Proposals as outcome of the Workbench were taken into account. However, as said, financially the proposals were not feasible to implement, so only elements of the proposals could be integrated into the final municipal vision on the area. This meant that specific wishes of the participants in the trajectory could not be integrated in the final municipal proposal.

Since the intensive consultancy took place, of which the Workbench formed an essential part, the municipality does not have to apply official consultation anymore. This however does not mean that consultation and communication would end here. After the intensive consultation in 2007/2008 the municipality continues organising stakeholder participation and involvement in their future communication concerning the redevelopment in the park area. This communication is organised per location (based on the four locations identified during the consultation trajectory). (Amersfoort Municipality, May 2009). Specific redevelopments can be implemented directly, whilst others can be implemented only in a later stage, as is the case with the hospital area, where redevelopment can probably only start off from 2013 onwards.

Although the Workbench started of as an initiative to involve the stakeholders in order to come to a mutual understanding of spatial quality, during the participatory process difficulties came up. A major problem in the process was the definition of spatial quality, defined by the stakeholders as mainly green space. However, after (independent) calculations of economic possibilities for an entire green design of the park it appeared to be financially unfeasible. Besides, it was argued by participants that the frame of the municipality, focusing on budget-neutrality, leaves little space for participation and new proposals. This led to mistrust and disappointment, and eventually led to a conflicting situation between stakeholders and the municipality. In June 2009 a consultation meeting was held concerning the 'Vision on Park Randenbroek'. In this meeting several stakeholders and participants were present, amongst which residents and representatives of foundations and sports clubs. The conclusion of this meeting was that most of the people present in this meeting were negative and critical concerning the frame that was set by the municipality and the extent to which the proposals of the consulted participant groups were taken into account in final decision making (Consultation meeting. Amersfoort Municipality; June 2009).

In 2010 the municipal council in Amersfoort changed to a more 'green-oriented' council. They have decided that no building should take place in Park Randenbroek. Even though the Workbench allowed people to voice their opinion on the destination of the park, it seems the Workbench did not have a big impact on the planning process. It is the municipal council who finally decides what happens in the park concerning future development.

5
EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

Vathorst NW and Park Randenbroek were evaluated with regard to several aspects: stakeholder identification and stakeholder involvement, time-efficiency, location and overall impact on spatial planning.

5.1. Vathorst

Stakeholder identification

Who should be identified as stakeholder? This decision is mostly made by the facilitator of the participation trajectory and the commissioner. In Vathorst this also occurred, and as described above the municipal council was also involved in the trajectory as a stakeholder, whilst in most Workbench trajectories the commissioner is not involved as a stakeholder. Municipality Amersfoort (A. Goossens, October 2009) argued that the presence of the Municipal council in the Workbench as a stakeholder was essential in the effectiveness of the trajectory. The municipal council is the initiator of the process and the decision maker concerning what will be planned and built in the redevelopment area finally. Through their involvement they could supply the other stakeholders in the process with essential information on the feasibility and also give their opinion on plans and concepts made. This meant that it is more likely that elements of these plans will be part of the final designs made for this redevelopment area. Involving the commissioner in the participatory trajectory seems therefore to have been beneficial to the trajectory in Vathorst.

Moment and level of involvement stakeholders in Workbench

In Vathorst the stakeholders were involved from the start of the planning trajectory to share their thoughts and ideas. This made it a very open trajectory.

Time-efficiency

The Workbench was applied in Vathorst in three sessions, and was rounded up in one and a half year. The time-span was thus not too long. Overall it was a quick and efficient trajectory, with involvement of the municipal council at several moments and feedback from architects and planners at moments when this was requested.

The participatory trajectory was transparent and open for the 65 stakeholders involved in the three sessions. However, the trajectory was decided to be closed for outsiders and stakeholders were told not to affiliate with media or other external organisations. Information was not to be spread to others who did not take part. Furthermore, the council would first give their approval before information was handed to outsiders or sometimes to the stakeholders in the participatory trajectory. This meant that communication was sometimes slowed down, and that the process of the Workbench sometimes lost momentum and energy.

Location

Vathorst North and West, were undeveloped, mostly vacant areas at the moment in which the Workbench was applied. This means that most stakeholders involved did not have actual, direct stakes in the area to be developed. This also implies that stakeholders can enter the Workbench is an open manner, without having fixed mindsets on how things are or should be. It seems to be easier to

implement participatory trajectories in areas where no development has taken place yet, so that people can think freely and brainstorm openly, without too many fixed mind-sets.
Furthermore, when the workbench is facilitated well, people can freely imagine and become creative. R. Thomas (facilitator) reflects on the Workbench in Vathorst, where people came up with the idea of the 'lifted landscape'. They wished to see the landscape of the nature park to cross over gradually into the city centre. In a creative process they imagined it would be ideal if the landscape could be lifted and one could build underneath. This in the end resulted in the idea of having houses with grass-roofs.

Impact of Workbench in spatial planning Vathorst North West
The final result of the workbench process in Vathorst was accepted by the municipal council. In this regard the workbench process can be regarded as a successful process, in which the results are accepted and shared by multiple stakeholders. Furthermore, the Workbench was implemented efficiently and the planning process was not slowed down substantially.

There were different views on how exactly the process should take place. Whilst the municipality regarded the process as a manner to come up with a common vision the facilitator of the process noticed that stakeholders were interested to go further and mobilise their networks in order to make a step further into the actual implementation of the newly developed plans. According to the facilitator stopping the process at this point would mean a loss of the social capital that was built up during the workbench process.

One of the facilitators stated that 'it is very important that from the start people are aware that they are asked to think along and not to start planning themselves.' (De Jonge, Interview 2009*).* Vathorst West is a difficult case, in this respect, as the house building has been postponed with many years due to the economical crisis. Many plans can be made, but they cannot be brought into practice yet. A difficulty with Vathorst is that the workbench was applied in the stage where decisions already had been made concerning the location of the neighbourhood. According to the facilitator it would have been good if they had been approached in an earlier stage to start with the workbench.

However, even though the plans will not be executed directly the workbench method is still of importance due to the fact that the outcomes of the workbench have set an urgent policy line. The municipal council will decide on the path to take, but the outcome of the Workbench will form an important basis in the plans presented to the council. (Thomas, Interview October 2009)

WORKBENCH	**VATHORST North & West**		
	details	**result**	**impact on overall process**
Stakeholder identification	Involvement council (decision maker) as stakeholder	Feasibility of plans was checked throughout the process: less changes in the overall process	More trust in process
Moment of involvement stakeholders in Workbench	From the start of planning process	Feeling of true participation	more efficient planning process with less resistance
Time span	Well organised sessions, within time span of one and a half year, sometimes	Mostly motivated stakeholders, though sometimes difficult to keep momentum and	Overall efficient trajectory

	delayed communication because of need for council approval.	energy in the stakeholder sessions.	
Location	Undeveloped area, outside the city centre	Stakeholders are open to new ideas since most of them are not directly affected	less conflicting interests: easier to implement a participatory trajectory for an area where no development has taken place yet:
Impact of Workbench in spatial planning	Due to crisis no development in practice yet		Workbench outcomes as basis for plans presented to municipal council

Table 4: Evaluation Workbench Vathorst NW

5.2 Park Randenbroek

Stakeholder identification

Many stakeholders that participated in the Workbench had already been active in the previous planning processes organised by the municipality, concerning the park. When the Workbench was initiated the stakeholders did not want the municipality to be actively involved. Since the ideas of stakeholders and municipality were already known to differ from each other extensively, and had fixed mindsets on what should be developed, the Workbench could not be seen as an open trajectory in which everybody could be entirely free to brainstorm and make new visions.

Moment of involvement stakeholders in Workbench

The Workbench Method was applied in a very late stage of the planning process. It proved that by this time cooperation between residents and municipality had become difficult. Besides, it was not possible for the municipality in this stage to change the plans to fit with the wishes of the residents. Thus, in this case the workbench was mostly useful for the inhabitants to voice their opinion and be heard, but the outcomes of the process could not be incorporated in the eventual design, as they were too far apart from the plans of the municipality.

Time-efficiency

The consultancy trajectory in the park was a long process with many difficulties faced, especially when residents and municipality appeared to have different views on the future of the park. In an interview with W. Oxener, Landscape architect, involved in the consultation trajectory he explains that one of the main problems in the consultancy trajectory (starting already in 2000) was that the process took too long, and within the process the frame of the municipality was adapted several times. *'The board of the municipality was not very stable and the planning was handed over from one alderman to the other. In total the plans were revised by four aldermen. This meant a lot of delay, sometimes with four years'.* This added up to the discontent of participants with the participatory trajectory (Oxener, 2009, personal interview). Even though people were heard and they were invited to voice their opinion, still in the end they were not happy with the outcomes of the trajectory and the way the municipality handled their proposals and input.

Location & scale

What should not be underestimated in the case of Park Randenbroek is the fact that the location was already clearly developed: a large city park with sports-facilities and a hospital location. The question

was how this already existing park should be redeveloped. The fact that the location already had a clear destination before the new planning process started means that stakeholders also already had a fixed mindset on what should happen in the park.

Some of the people involved had also been living next to the park for many years, and were not interested in any changes which would make the park less 'green'. Some of the stakeholders involved had organised themselves in activist groups, striving for an entirely green design of the park. In general, asking people to think freely about what they would like to see developed in their 'own backyard' makes it difficult to brainstorm freely and to be open minded.
Furthermore the location is in the middle of the city, which means that there are many stakes at hand in general.

Impact of the Workbench on spatial planning
The Workbench method was not implemented in Park Randenbroek from the start of the project and it can be questioned if this could be the reason for the problems experienced in this area, and if it could have been avoided if the Workbench method was implemented from the start of the project. The participatory trajectory in Park Randenbroek seems to have been ineffective. Community participation seems to have been unsuccessful and residents did not approve of the proposed development plan.

However, Dauvellier stated that even though the workbench was applied in a very late stage, and the plans were not according to the wishes of the residents, it still was a helpful tool, as it involved the stakeholders in the planning processes. *'People need to be able to speak their minds and to be heard. It's important that people think positively and that they are asked to name the qualities of a certain area, instead of thinking in terms of restriction'*. If the workbench was applied in an earlier stage, there might have been more possibilities in the planning. *'At the start of the project one needs to think about the imaginable, and only later on consider the feasibility thereof. Within the context and framework one needs to think in terms of possibilities and challenges.'* (Dauvellier, 2009)

WORKBENCH	**PARK RANDENBROEK**		
	details	**result**	**impact on overall process**
Stakeholder identification	No continuous involvement of municipal council in workbench	Plans made in Workbench do not fit with ideas of municipal council. Discontent with the frame set by municipality.	Municipality perceived as an outsider and animosity
Moment of involvement stakeholders in Workbench	In late stage of planning process	Resistance of stakeholders	Slow and difficult participatory trajectory
Time-efficiency	Long consultation process before starting Workbench Changes in municipal throughout a year time throughout time	Plans of municipality changed with time and with different councils. Changing framework.	Distrust of stakeholders in frame set by municipality
Location	Within the urban centre, in an already	People were very involved and had high	Difficult process in which stakeholders defended

	developed area. More stakes and stronger stakeholder involvement	stakes	their stakes and inflexibility to change plans/visions
Impact on spatial planning	In 2010 the municipal council decided not to build in the park.		Workbench: allowed people to voice their opinion on the destination of the park. However, municipal council finally decides what happens in the park concerning future development.

Table 5: Evaluation Workbench Park Randenbroek

5.3 Conclusions

Stakeholder identification

Regarding participation it was found that stakeholder identification is of big importance. In Park Randenbroek the municipal council was hardly involved in the participation trajectory. In Vathorst the council was consulted and gave active feedback on what had been discussed in the participatory trajectory. This involvement of the council was relevant as to mainstream plans of stakeholders continuously with frames set by the council.

Stakeholder involvement

The moment in which stakeholders were involved appears to be of importance: when involving stakeholders at a late stage in the planning process this leaves little space for freedom and creativity in the trajectory. Plans have already been drawn and flexibility to incorporate new ideas has diminished.

Location

On what kind of location is the Workbench applied? When it is a location where has been built already, and the specific destination of the location is to be discussed, it can be expected that the stakeholders already have a clear opinion on what is to be developed or what should not be developed. People have many more stakes in those areas then in places where nothing has been built yet. This is clearly reflected in the case of Park Randenbroek, where many stakeholders had already made up their mind on the future destination of the Park.

Time efficiency

When the participatory process takes a long time this can mean that people can loos energy to participate. This can also imply that the framework of the municipal council might change, which gives uncertainty to stakeholders and confuses the participation process. During the participation process social capital is built, which might be lost if the process is not keeping its momentum. Furthermore, when stakeholders have little insight in the process and decisions being made by the commissioner this can result in mistrust. This might delay the participation process and make it into a lengthy process as became clear in Park Randenbroek.

The cycle and impact of the Workbench

In Park Randenbroek the Workbench was more used as a manner for stakeholders to still have a voice and be heard, but final steps were also not completed. Concerning Vathorst, the last phase of the process was not taken. Due tot the crisis decision-making concerning the building of houses was delayed. Furthermore, there were different ideas on the extent to which the Workbench should be implemented: should stakeholders mobilise their networks and try to get designs implemented in practice or is this where the municipality takes over?

6
WORKBENCH & THE THREE P'S

From the case material it became clear how the Workbench process takes place in practice. Three elements appeared to be relevant when studying and evaluating the Workbench: participation, location (place) and the time dimension. In the following three chapters these three elements will be elaborated on, both in theory and in practice.

These three elements are put into the perspective of the three P's: people, planet and profit.
This model is often used to illustrate that the focus should be on multiple aspects of life, namely social, economical and ecological aspects in order to reach sustainable development.

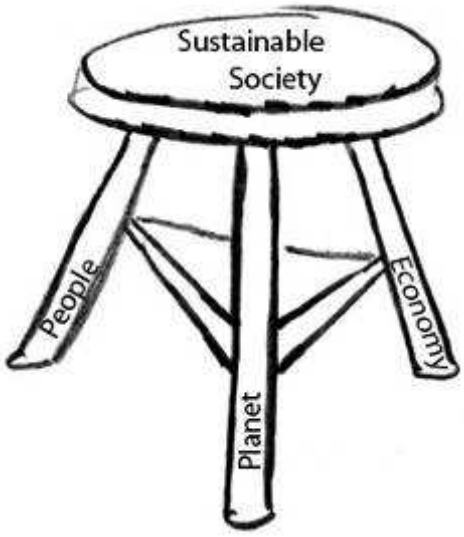


Fig. 20: Sustainability and the three p's (.J. Ivanko, 2008)

In the following chapters, firstly participation (people) is discussed. Two elements are highlighted with respect to participation: stakeholder analysis and level of stakeholder involvement. Secondly the impact of the location (place/planet) on the Workbench process is discussed, and place attachment is reflected upon. Thirdly time-efficiency, future dimensions and resources (profit) are considered when applying the Workbench in spatial planning. In this respect it is examined how the Workbench can contribute to time efficiency in spatial planning and how it can contribute to more sustainable planning in general.

6.1 People (participation)

Participation is at the basis of the Workbench. Literature suggests many benefits and challenges of participation processes. Benefits can be considered increased understanding, increased public support and commitment and enhanced compliance as stakeholders are more knowledgeable. Further, it can lead to increased legitimacy and enhances obligation to comply with the results. Challenges are said to be delays in decision-making, increased expenses, tension among stakeholders groups, lack of consensus and conflict management (Kessler, 2004:7).

From the case-material it appears that there are different perspectives on how participation should be organised and who should participate. In this context it is reflected upon how participation processes are described in literature, and how this relates to the Workbench. Firstly stakeholder identification is discussed. Hereafter the level of involvement will be considered.

Stakeholders analysis

There are many ways to conduct a stakeholder analysis, but the basics, however, remain the same, stating the process of identifying the core stakeholders. The following figure as created by Breman (2008) illustrates the basic principles of the stakeholder analysis process.

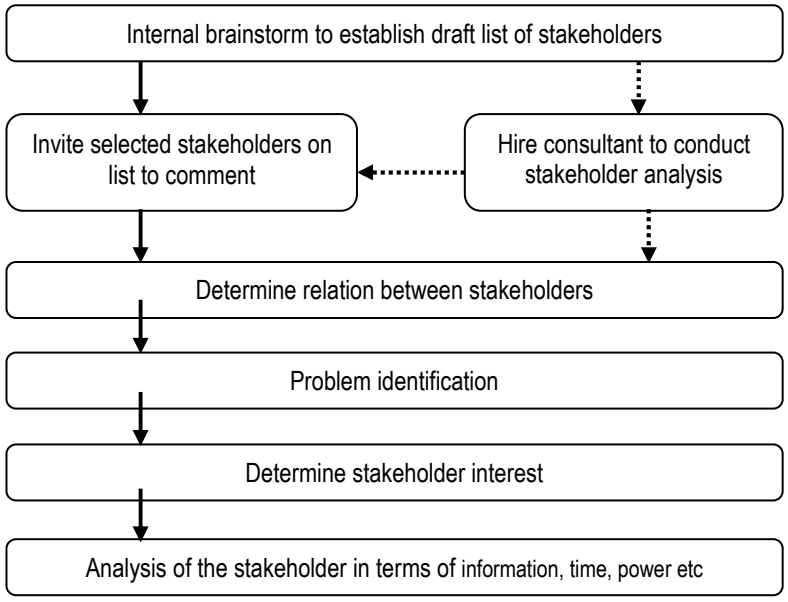


Fig. 21: Stakeholder analysis process (Breman, 2008)

Predominately participants are chosen based on their role in society. When conducting a stakeholder analysis, one should seek to enhance
(1) **Collaboration** - to maximize benefits through specialized and local knowledge,
(2) **Communication** – to enhance the synergies between systems and strategies,
(3) **Cost savings** – to expose potential of solutions through direct exchange of ideas and feedback and
(4) **Improved performance** – by selecting experienced, knowledgeable and committed stakeholders.

Culbreth *et al (*2006:13) states that all members within the multi-stakeholder process have expectations. Participation is made worthwhile for members when they have some means of gain like interest in the plan, their views being taken into account or being part of a group-decision that have authority (Culbreth et.al, 2006:13).

Level of involvement

There are various factors that influence the success (or unsuccessfulness) of participation, but by determining the level of stakeholder involvement, and by clearly communicating this to the relevant stakeholders, will clarify the needed input, and strengthen the structure of the participation processes itself. According to Culbreth et.al (2006:11) public participation should seek time to see the process through, willingness to compromise, credible facilitators, trust among members and minimizing technical issues.

The level of involvement is determined by the expected and needed input of communities within the planning process. The participation ladder is a tool used to determine the different types of participation, and accordingly state the needed input and stakeholders. It illustrates the different levels of participation, without focussing on quality or applicability of the different levels as it is subject to each individual situation. Different participation ladders exists, from the one created in 1696 by Arnstein, till the more recent concept of the NOAA Coastal Services Center (2000) and Breman *et al* (2008:26). The participation ladder, as described by Breman et al (2008) consists of the following levels:

Table 6: Levels of the participation ladder (Breman *et al*, 2008)

1	Inform	Authorities determine agenda for decision-making. No actual input by the communities
2	Consult	Authorities determine agenda, but consult the communities in regards to the development
3	Advice	Authorities determine agenda, but is open to advice and suggestions from the community
4	Co-operation	Authorities, communities and stakeholders are jointly in decision-making process
5	Equal rights	Final results are subject to equal preferences of authorities and the communities.

The ladder developed by Bremen et al (2008) coincides to a big extent with the participation ladder as developed by Edelenbos and Klijn (2005). In this participation ladder a more elaborate description is given of the different stages, including the meaning of participation to the implementing agency, receiver and the scope of participation.

	The meaning of participation for the implementing agency	The meaning of participation for the receivers	The scope of participation
Informing	Policymakers determine the agenda and inform those involved	Actors do not have input in policy development	Display – Legitimity
Consulting	Policymakers determine the agenda but regard those involved as a useful discussion partner in the development of policy	The result of the discussions will not necessarily be represented in the final policy	Legitimizing and might provide better solutions and ideas
Advising	Policymakers determine the agenda and give those involved the opportunity to raise problems and formulate solutions	Actors play a full role in the development of policy	Results of the discussions may deviate but will be mirrored in the final result
Co-producing	Policy makers and those involved determine a problem solving agenda in which they search for solutions together	Those involved play a very important role in the entire process	The results of the discussions are part of the final decision making
Co-deciding	Policymakers leave the development and decision making to those involved	Those involved become the policymakers	The results have immediate effect and policymakers accept the outcomes

Table 7: Participation Ladder modified from Edelenbos J., Klijn E.H., 2005 (de Graaf et al, 2009)

In the participation ladder of Edelenbos and Klijn it becomes clear for which purpose one would decide on a specific level of participation. When participation is solely about informing the participants, then the reason for an authority to do this can be sought in display or justification of proposed plans. When one moves on to a next step it is also wished for some input of ideas. When going one step further into advising, active input in policy is asked of stakeholders. Moving to a co-producing level the results of discussions are used in final decision making. When it is about co-decision-making, the stakeholders become policy-makers and the results of their discussions are accepted as such by policymakers.

Interesting in this respect is that control of the participatory process shifts from the authority to the stakeholders. In the following table on participatory decision-making (NOAA Coastal Service Centre 2000) it is shown how the control over a participatory trajectory can shift from being management controlled to stakeholder controlled.

Management Agency Controlled		Stakeholder Controlled	
I	II	III	IV
Management agency has authority, makes the decision, and then informs the stakeholders • Telling • Directing • Management agency is accountable and responsible • Management agency is in control • Stakeholders are told about, but not involved in decision making	Management agency gathers input from the stakeholders before deciding • Selling • Coaching • Stakeholder input is gathered as part of the process • Stakeholders are consulted and may have input into the decision	Stakeholders decide and recommend actions for the agency to implement • Participating • Facilitating • Accountability is shared • Stakeholders provide decision to management agency, who then develops an action plan and implements the decision	Stakeholders decide and act to implement • Delegating • Liaisoning • Stakeholders are ac countable and responsible • Stakeholders can set direction and take action without approval • Stakeholders implement decision

Table 8: Participatory Decision-making Continuum (NOAA Coastal Services Center 2000, modified from Bens 2000 in Kessler, 2004:13)

Whereas in the first category (to be associated with informing) the management agency keeps full control of the process and makes decisions. In the fourth category (to be associated with co-decision-making) the stakeholders have taken full control and are the final decision-makers. Category three (in between advising and co-operation or co-production) is the category which is identified with true participation, where stakeholders have an impact on the decision-making, but are not the final decision-makers. Level two is where stakeholders are consulted and may have an input in the decision (consulting to advising level).

6.2 Planet

"Public participation is important in integrating environmental considerations into urban planning and management, because, as direct users of the city environment, urban residents have first hand experience of environmental challenges. They are also keenly aware of the economic impact of environmental actions, but may not be aware of the impact of these actions beyond their neighbourhood. Public support is essential in ensuring that environmental action plans are workable; this is greatly enhanced through their involvement in the decision-making process". (Liveable Cities: 2007:47).

What the relation is between the Workbench as a participation method and the location where it is applied. In this respect two topics are highlighted: attachment to place and emotional co-ownership? Answers may be found in theories related to place attachment. The Workbench can be applied in any situation and location in spatial planning, however locations differ everywhere, and this might impact also on the outcomes of the Workbench. Why would the type of location have an impact on a participatory process?

This has to do with what is called ‘place attachment’. Place attachment emphasizes the manner in which we personally construct our notions of place (Gifford 2002, p273, cited in Brocato, 2006). Low (1992) defined it as `an individual's cognitive or emotional connection to a particular setting or milieu' (p. 165, cited in M.C. Hidalgo, B. Hernandez, 2001). Or, in the words of Cuba and Humon, 1993: 'Place attachment arises when settings (e.g., local parks) are imbued with meanings that create or enhance one’s emotional tie to a natural resource' (in **Vaske and** Kobrin 2001).

A distinction can be made between functional place attachment, where people have become acquainted and connected with the use of the space and the facilities, and emotional place attachment, where people are attached emotionally to the location. Functional place attachment is a result of a particular experience with the area, whereas emotional attachment has to do with 'the psychological investment with a setting that has developed over time' (Williams and Patterson, 1999, in Vaske and Korbin, 2001).

Place attachment in Randenbroek and Vathorst NW

Both functional place attachment and emotional place attachment can be relevant in relation to the Workbench. As became clear in Park Randenbroek, many of the stakeholders had deep emotional binding with the location. This was also stressed in an interview with W. Oxener (2009), Municipality Amersfoort, who had been closely involved in the planning process at Park Randenbroek. In Park Randenbroek most of the stakeholders had strong feelings about the park and its identity. It was stressed that the park should be entirely green and no building should take place. These were issues which could hardly be discussed upon. The stakeholders seemed much attached to the specific location and changing the destination of the location thus was difficult to discuss. Another aspect is that Park Randenbroek is located in the city centre. This means that there are many people who use the Park for recreation or other purposes and thus place attachment is very high.

This was contrary to the situation in Vathorst, where a huge relatively open space was to be discussed upon and designed for living purposes in future. In the case of Vathorst NW, the area had little functional use so far. Functional place attachment in relation to Vathorst NW can thus be considered low. Also the emotional attachment is thus still very low. This might have significantly influenced the Workbench process in Vathorst NW, making it easier to discuss future purpose of the area with stakeholders who are little attached to the area and able to brainstorm openly and think in a creative manner.

Green values and attachment to place

From the quick-scans (de Graaf etal, 2009) it appeared that when only policymakers were involved in the workbench method, fewer spatial qualities were mentioned. However, when involving more diverse and local stakeholders (in contrast with stakeholders at higher policy-levels, less attached to the locality), green values received more attention. Furthermore, more future values were found when more local stakeholders were involved. Policymakers seem to be more focussed on current values (de Graaf et al., 2009). This seems to be interlinked with place attachment. Local stakeholders are more attached to the locality than policy makers at higher levels of policymaking. Hence local, green values will be more likely mentioned than values which are not specific to the locality.

6.3 Profit

Time-efficiency

When reflecting on the case study of Park Randenbroek, it becomes clear that stakeholders were involved in a very late stage of the planning process. This has contributed to of resistance of stakeholders to plans developed by the municipality. Finally this, amongst others, also delayed the planning process to a great extent. Involving stakeholders f through the Workbench method from the beginning of the planning process can thus impact positively on the overall time spend on spatial planning.

Future values and shared responsibilities

Future values play an important role in the Workbench method. The method does not focus only on here and now, but it is about dreaming and seeking for future possibilities and options. By implementing the Workbench method stakeholders are invited to brainstorm and think freely of spatial qualities perceived. This gives the Workbench a sustainable character, ideally bringing stakeholders from experiencing to striving, planning making and back to experiencing the area.

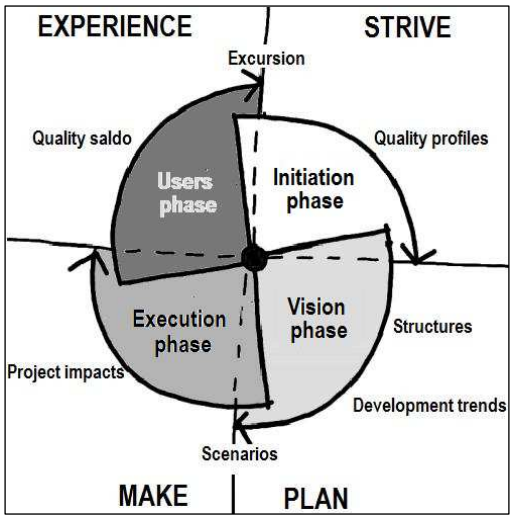


Fig. 22: Workbench Method process (Habiforum 2005)

Within the Workbench several tools are used to make sure that future values are incorporated in planning. To illustrate this, two tools in relation to future values will be reflected upon: the matrix and the layer-approach.

- **Matrix**

The matrix is used in the phase typified with Strive in the diagram above. This is the phase in which stakeholders are asked to brainstorm on the qualities of the location and to envision what they would like to preferably design the area in future. The matrix thus incorporates not only user values and perceived values, but also invites stakeholders to name future values of the location.

What became clear in the quick scans performed is that when comparing values mentioned by local stakeholders and stakeholders at higher policymaking levels, that local stakeholders mentioned more future values then the other group. This might have to do with the fact that local stakeholders (i.e. people living in the area) tend to think more on the long-term development, as they will also be confronted with these developments when they continue to live there. Policymakers, however, are

often elected for shorter terms, and more interested in achieving short-term goals, visible to a broader public.

	Economical quality	Social quality	Ecological quality	Cultural quality
User value		•	•	•
Perceived value	•	•	•	•
Future value	•	•	•	•

Table 9: Workbench Matrix

- **Layer-approach**

In the Workbench method the layers approach can be used as a tool in the Plan phase, in which the step is made from quality profiles to actual plans and designs. However, in order to make a proper plan it is important to understand the different responsibilities that different stakeholders have. In this respect J. De Jonge (2009) stated: 'In spatial planning there is a hierarchical structure in thinking and in responsibilities. The individual is not responsible for the ground-layer, but does have responsibility for the occupied layer. Because of this it is very important that in the Workbench **all** stakeholders are present. Furthermore, knowledge/expertise and commitment are more relevant than professionalism'.

In the layer approach all the layers of responsibilities are considered. This is illustrated in the picture below:

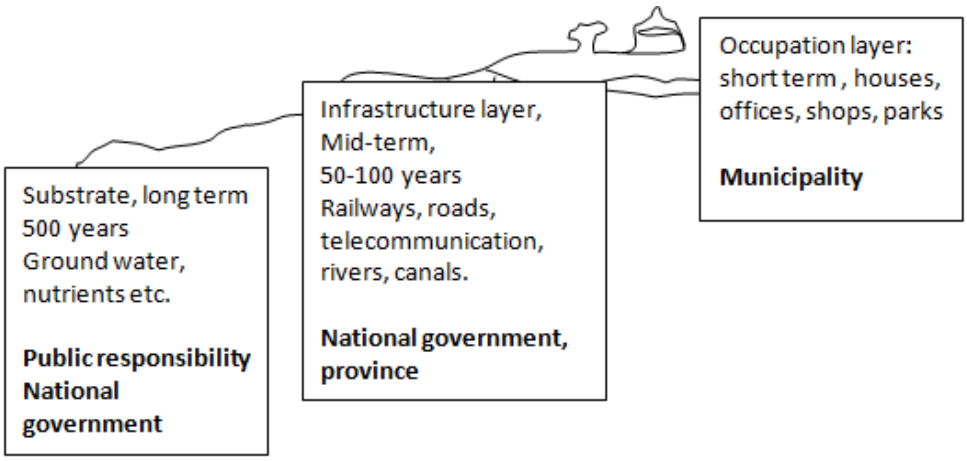


Fig. 23: Layer approach, D. Wagenaar (Participation matters, De Graaf et al, 2009)

Looking at this figure it becomes clear that different stakeholders have different responsibilities and that therefore it is important that all these stakeholders are involved. This approach also makes the Workbench more future proof. Instead of only focussing on specific functions and specific responsibilities here and now an attempt is made to integrate all the different layers of responsibilities in different time-frames. Furthermore, the discrepancy between short-term investments and long-terms investments becomes insightful. By having the conversation on three facets, actors, space and time, people are also triggered to think about responsibilities, on the long term and on the short run.

Resources

In many planning processes a budget is made as a starting point, in which plans and designs to be made must fit financially. However, this means that designs and plans have to be developed in a fixed set of constraints, leaving little space for innovative ideas. The Workbench reasons from a different starting point: firstly stakeholders are selected and involved and asked to brainstorm. This is not done without any framework; on the contrary, there is also a fixed framework which has to be considered. However, as a starting point stakeholders are stimulated to brainstorm freely within a given set of parameters and are asked to dream of what they would ultimately like to see planned in future. Only in a later stage feasibility is considered and it is made sure that plans and designs fit in the framework. In the Make-phase (execution) stakeholders are invited to consider their own networks and resources. When this is done, it might happen that there are more resources available through networks of the different participants, then one would have imagined at the start of the planning process. Hence, by adopting the Workbench in spatial planning one might come across more resources than expected at the start of the process, and more might appear to be feasible financially than thought of in first instance.

7
CONCLUSIONS ON THREE P'S

7.1 People

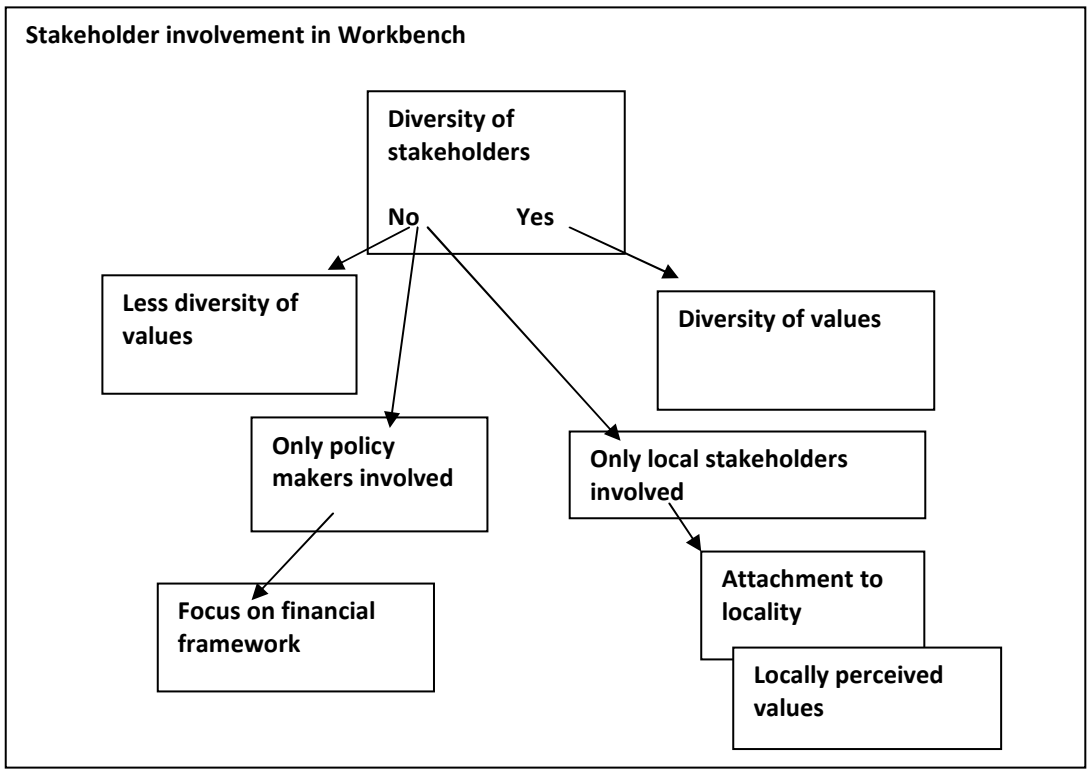
Stakeholder analysis and the Workbench

In the Workbench there is no strict protocol for participation. Who is invited to partake in the Workbench is decided by the facilitators of the Workbench in close cooperation with the commissioner. The aim is to involve as many relevant stakeholders as possible. Prerequisite is that the stakeholders are open-minded and interested to go beyond personal gains or stakes. Furthermore it is important to have a diversity of stakeholders, ranging from inhabitants to architects or planners and local businesses.

Once the stakeholders have been identified, it should be determined to what extent their input will be used. Thus the level of stakeholder involvement is determined. However, stakeholder analysis does have a great impact on the process of the Workbench. This was illustrated with a quick-scan that was done on the basis of 19 Dutch cases where the workbench was applied (de Graaf et al. (2009)). These cases took place between 2001 and 2007 in the Netherlands and were published on the Habiforum website. The cases were evaluated on the level of spatial planning of the case (local, provincial or on a higher level) and on the number of different stakeholders involved (de Graaf et al. 2009). From these quick-scans three tentative conclusions can be drawn; regarding the phases which are applied in practice, the diversity of stakeholders and the type of stakeholders involved.

As was seen in the quick-scans (de Graaf, et al., 2009) low stakeholder diversity meant a lesser variety of values mentioned. Besides, involving only stakeholders at a very high policy-making level, meant lesser understanding of locally important values. Further, more focus was on economical values, as stakeholders involved in policymaking tend to look more at the financial framework and are less free to brainstorm and dream freely in this respect.

Fig. 24: Stakeholder involvement in Workbench



Stakeholder analysis and identification also appeared to be relevant in the cases studied at Amersfoort. When studying the cases of Park Randenbroek and Vathorst it seems that involving the commissioner as an active stakeholder during the Workbench method is important. When the commissioner operates outside the Workbench process (as was the case in Randenbroek) this means that the commissioner has little insight in why stakeholders decide upon certain issues. Also, the framework set by the authority can become more insightful for the other participants when the commissioner is involved. A good communication and involvement of the commissioner in the Workbench therefore seems essential.

Workbench and level of stakeholder involvement

The Workbench Method ideally functions on a level of "co-operation" – intending that authorities and citizens agree to share planning and decision-making responsibility. As it was stated by Dauvellier in an interview (Dauvellier, 2009), the stakeholders are involved from the very start of the process and should give their final valuation of the spatial design made. This means that stakeholders are involved in brainstorming and coming up with ideas, and are asked to engage in developing designs and involving their own resources. Final designs are made by stakeholders together with experts and evaluated by experts. Elements of the designs appear in the final results of the participatory trajectory.

However, is in practice it appears that it is not said that elements of designs are adopted in the final designs. Referring to the table above, the process of the Workbench is mostly at level two, a process which is still management controlled, where stakeholders are consulted and may have input into the decision, but accountability is often not shared.

Furthermore, when looking at the overall application of the Workbench, in the quick-scans (de Graaf et al., 2009) it was found that none of the Dutch cases completed all the steps of the workbench method, from vision to the execution phase. Mostly the cases dealt with the first two phases in the Workbench method. Only in Walcheren the execution phase was also applied in practice. This means that whereas in most cases the workbench was used as a tool to use participation at an informing or consultant level, in Walcheren participation in the workbench was at the level of co-producing.

This also became clear in the case of Park Randenbroek, where the Workbench was more used as a manner to legitimize policymaking or possibly to consult the stakeholders, but active participation did not take place. In Vathorst the Workbench allowed for much more participation, however, also in this case it seems that accountability was finally not shared with the stakeholders. The municipality remained the final decision-maker and involved the stakeholders on a level below active co-operation or co-production. As the facilitator of the Workbench stated: stakeholders were willing to take the process further and involve their networks and move into the final steps of the Workbench: the make and user phase. However, the municipality did not want to continue into the phase where decision-making is shared. This also meant that social capital that was built during the process was not further supported and stimulated.

Involving the commissioner of the Workbench in the participatory trajectory could make it easier to shift from a management controlled process into a stakeholder controlled process, thus enabling true participation.

7.2 Planet (place attachment)

On one hand place attachment can be valuable when it comes to participatory processes in spatial planning, such as the Workbench. In the sense that local values are embedded in the planning process, place attachment is valuable.

On the other hand strong place attachment can also hinder planning, as it can make people less open to think openly about new designs and can also impact on the length of the planning process, when stakeholders are slowing down planning out of fear for changes. This especially became clear in Park Randenbroek, where decision-making was slowed down extensively.

Another remark can be made on the type of stakeholders that might be attracted to these types of participatory processes. It is often stakeholders who are strongly attached to their environment who are more likely to participate. In this respect it is more difficult to reach people who are less happy about their environment and care less attached to it. This is a pitfall of many participatory processes, to which special attention should be paid when selecting stakeholders.

7.3 Profit

Can the Workbench have an impact on economical factors in spatial planning? Could the participatory process for instance impact on financial means available in spatial planning? It seems the Workbench can have an impact on indirect factors impacting on economical factors, namely future values and time-efficient planning, and in theory can contribute to the availability of financial resources in spatial planning.

Regarding time efficiency participation can work in two ways. Involving stakeholders in spatial planning on one hand can be considered a temporarily time-consuming activity. Stakeholders need to be selected, the process needs to be facilitated carefully and all in all this can take several full days spread over several months. However, on the long run active stakeholder involvement in spatial planning can prove to be beneficial time-wise.

8
DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

This report evaluated the Workbench as it was applied in two cases in Amersfoort. Besides, conclusions have been drawn in the previous chapters in terms of its impact regarding participation, environment (place) and its contribution to economical aspects in spatial planning. In this chapter it is discussed how we can place the Workbench in a somewhat wider perspective, considering its contribution to spatial planning and its qualities in terms of contribution to sustainability and quality of life.

8.1 Actors, time and space

In the evaluation of the Workbench as applied in Amersfoort, it becomes clear that it is relevant to involve stakeholders from different levels of decision-making, including municipalities themselves. When everything is in hands of the government people don't consider their own responsibilities. By applying the Workbench a sense of 'ownership' with all the stakeholders is encouraged. (De Jonge, October, 2009).

Communication on these three dimensions makes the Workbench into a method which can increase the sense of ownership of the stakeholders. This so-called 'emotional co-ownership' is described as 'a strong attachment to a place that results in an interest from local citizens in the perpetuation of the valued qualities of place. Most often this attribute is found in an empowered citizen who is involved in the decision making process of her or his locality'' (Dumreicher and Kolb, 2003, p246 in Dumreicher and Kolb 2008). In the figure below this has been illustrated:

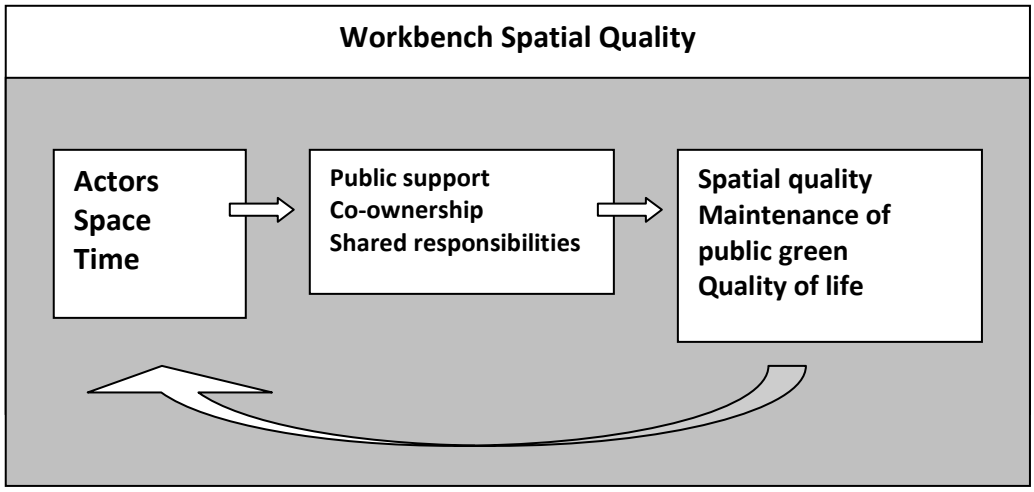


Fig. 25: Workbench; actors, space and time in relation to spatial quality

By sharing responsibilities in spatial planning, stakeholders can feel that they become 'co-owners' of their environment. This can be beneficial in terms of maintenance of the location: stakeholders might be more willing to participate in future maintenance of the location, as they feel more connected and attached to it. On the other hand one should also be careful to communicate properly what is asked from the stakeholders, so that it becomes clear where their stakeholder involvement and responsibility starts and where it stops. The process of stakeholder involvement should thus be well facilitated in order to be effective. If stakeholder involvement and shared responsibility is managed and facilitated properly, it could consequently reduce the costs for maintenance of public green space,

which is often a struggle for municipalities. Moreover, this strong involvement with the locality can also help to keep the perceived qualities of the environment up to date. When stakeholders continue being actively engaged with what happens in their environment it is more likely that they enjoy their living environment better. This in itself can be regarded as improved quality of life.

8.2 Green values, future values and local stakeholders

From the evaluations in this report, it proved that involving local stakeholders in spatial planning is interesting as a manner to strengthen green values in spatial designs and planning. Explanation for this can be sought in the fact that local stakeholders are more attached to their local environment compared to policymakers operating at a higher, abstract level. When local stakeholders are involved, they tend to stress the importance of green in spatial planning. Moreover, local stakeholders (such as residents) also tend to be able to look into the future better, compared to policy-makers. This probably has to do with the fact that local stakeholders are not thinking in terms of fixed frameworks and limited time-spans in which projects need to be finalised. Rather, they are able to think freely and creatively into the future, which makes the Workbench into a powerful method.

8.3 Achieving spatial quality

In the beginning of this report, a brief analysis was made with respect to the developments in Dutch spatial planning. A shift was seen from top-down spatial planning towards bottom-up planning, where multiple stakeholders are actively involved and ' everybody is an expert'. How does the Workbench Spatial Quality fit into these developments? The Workbench Method, although initially created to enhance spatial quality, can contribute to enhance sustainable development initiatives based on social, economic and environmental aspects, but most importantly in terms of transforming current top-down approaches into participatory planning approaches, transforming short-term planning into long-term planning for spatial quality and transforming current approaches to spatial planning (and mindsets) to understand that “everybody is an expert” when dealing with qualitative planning, as the figure illustrates.

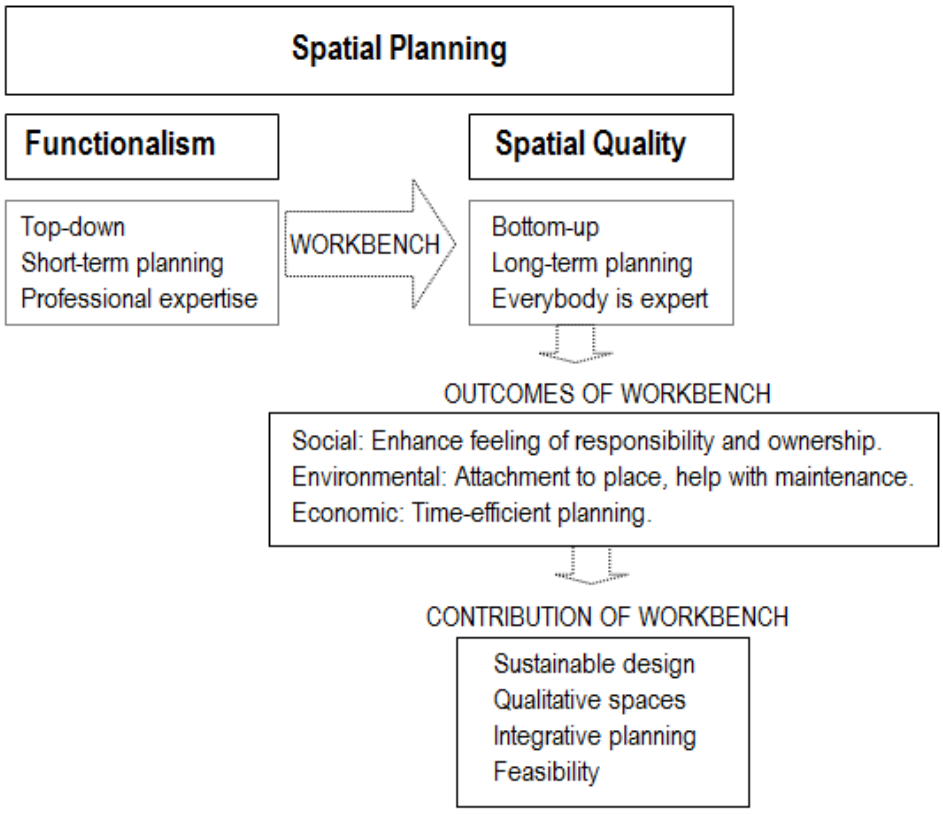


Fig. 26: The Workbench method and possible contribution to Spatial Quality

The overall contribution of the Workbench Method lies in the realization of sustainable designs (manifesting out of participatory planning processes), resulting in qualitative spaces (based on perceived values, user values and future values as identified by stakeholders). It is a means towards integrative planning, acknowledging all stakeholders and providing the platform for interaction, which will lead to the planning of feasible, sustainable, future projects.

However, as also became apparent throughout this document, sharing responsibilities and regarding 'everybody as an expert' is not always easy. As elaborated in chapter 7.1, People (participation), a shift has to be made shift from a management controlled process into a more stakeholder controlled process. Only when this shift is made, one can speak of true stakeholder participation and shared notions of spatial quality.

9
RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the case-studies of Vathorst NW and Park Randenbroek and the evaluation of the quick-scans and literature several recommendations can be made on how best to implement the Workbench method in spatial planning processes.

The recommendations are made in relation to the three major elements highlighted in this report; people (facilitation, stakeholder analysis and level of involvement), planet (green values and place attachment) and profit (time, future, resources).

9.1 People

Facilitation

First of all, it should be noted that the way in which the Workbench is implemented depends to a great extent on the capabilities of the facilitator and the manner in which the workbench is facilitated. Proper facilitation skills are is needed for the selection of stakeholders, managing the interactive workshops and meetings and communicating with the commissioner. Stakeholders should have clarity on when their input is asked and to what extent they are responsible for the plans developed. This should be clearly communicated in order to prevent confusion.

Further, facilitation skills are needed to make sure that stakeholders throughout the Workbench keep focussing on perceived qualities of place, rather than on negative aspects and possible threats. Participatory processes always need to be guarded for dominance of individuals and negativism. The main strength in the Workbench is that people focus on potentials and have an optimistic approach towards the future. Only then plans and designs can bring forward what people envision ideally, resulting in spatial quality in practice.

Selection of stakeholders

Who to involve in the Workbench Spatial Quality can be considered a major concern. However, in the workbench method as described in theory, this aspect receives relatively little attention.

One of the recommendations in this report is to involve policymakers and commissioners actively as stakeholders in the Workbench. In the case studies it became clear that municipal council of Amersfoort was not always involved in the Workbench (as was the case in Park Randenbroek). However, when one of the main actors is not involved in the participation process this can lead to miscommunication, misunderstanding and eventually to mistrust. This is not wishful at all, and hence stakeholder analysis and involvement should be carefully considered at forehand.

Level of involvement

The Workbench could be applied in spatial planning as a method to gain public support in decision-making. However, the aim of the Workbench goes further then solely creating support for ready made plans. Nevertheless, the shift from management controlled processes towards a more stakeholder controlled processes in spatial planning is not easily made. However, it should be considered that the Workbench Spatial Quality functions best in a context which is stakeholder controlled rather than management controlled. This means that the participatory process should be transparent for all parties involved and that trust should be put in the expertise and capabilities of local actors and stakeholders.

9.2 Planet

Place attachment

Local stakeholders can be at times very attached to their environment. On one hand place attachment is wishful: only when people feel attached to a location they will care for it and possibly even help in maintaining it. Appreciating the local environment and accepting and valuing its qualities can contribute to the quality of life on the people who experience the environment, day after day.

However, when place attachment is very strong this can also be reflected in participatory processes. Stakeholders might experience difficulties with visioning the future and are less susceptible to changes in their surroundings. This can complicate participatory process, when this precondition is not vented throughout the participation process. It can thus be advisable to those who would like to incorporate the Workbench Spatial Quality in their spatial planning to consider what type of location the Workbench will be used for and to what extent stakeholders will be attached to this place. When there is a very strong attachment this should be taken into account.

Scope and function of the location

It should also be considered that many people cannot think creatively and freely when the location is very detailed and small in scope. Brainstorming and creative thinking can best be applied to situations in which there are not too many fixed preconditions and already existing functions. When, in the words of W. Oxener (2009, personal interview):*'the scope of the planning-location encompasses someone's backyard- a few square meters with a tree on it - this leaves very little room for imagination'*. This was also illustrated in Vathorst NW, where the location offered enough room for dreams and creative thinking.

Local stakeholders, local values

Involving a diverse range of stakeholders, including local stakeholders is recommendable when applying the Workbench. Involving local stakeholders results in local values being incorporated in visioning and planning. Amongst these values, green values are more often represented than when stakeholders in higher policy levels are involved. They mostly tend to think in abstract concepts and are often limited to fixed frameworks in which free brainstorming is not always wishful.

9.3 Profit

Time-efficiency

One the reasons to apply the Workbench Spatial Quality in spatial planning processes could be to be time-efficient and come up with durable, sustainable solutions. As said in previous chapters, it is not about direct gains in terms of time-efficient planning. Involving stakeholders actually is often a very time-consuming business. But, participatory processes such as the Workbench can result in more support in decision-making and less delay in the planning itself. As became clear in the case of Park Randenbroek, non-compliance with municipal spatial designs and plans is not wishful, as this can result in extreme delays in decision-making.

Moreover stakeholder involvement through the Workbench can result in more compliance with plans made and exerted also on the long run, leading to more sustainable designs. When applying the Workbench it is thus recommendable to outweigh time costs during the participatory process against time costs (with regard to sustainability and durability of designs) on the long run.

Future values

What is special about the Workbench is that it does not focus only on here and now, but it also focuses on future values. This gives plans developed through the Workbench a more long-term character. In order to increase the sustainability of plans and designs it is advisable to deliberately make use of tools which stress the future values within the Workbench, such as the matrix and the layer-approach.

Resources

As became clear in this report, it proved difficult thus far to complete the Workbench to its full extent in practice. The last part of the cycle, ' Execution' and 'Experience' is often not reached in practice, as this depends on many external factors. External factors can be factors such as budgets available for the execution of the new planning and the political willingness to invest in proposed plans.

However, if the Execution phase is applied, then stakeholders are not only asked to think of the feasibility of the plans and designs made, but they are also invited to explore their own networks and resources, to make the plans operational in practice. In this manner resources can be come across which were in first instance not thought of. In this way applying the Workbench might result in the availability of more resources for spatial planning then was assumed at the start of the planning process. It thus seems advisable to execute these final stages of the Workbench in practice, since this might have a greater spin-off in terms of financial means, networks and other resources.

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FIGURES & TABLES

Figures

Tables

ANNEX
EXPERT INTERVIEWS

Interview 28-09-2009
P. Dauvellier, consultant at Dauvellier Planadvies

Peter Dauvellier used to work at the Governmental Spatial-planning Directorate in the Netherlands, which focused at a certain moment on getting more attention for spatial quality in spatial planning processes. Dauvellier was one of the people who tried to get more attention for spatial quality. In 1994 P. Dauvellier started working as an independent advisor on spatial planning.

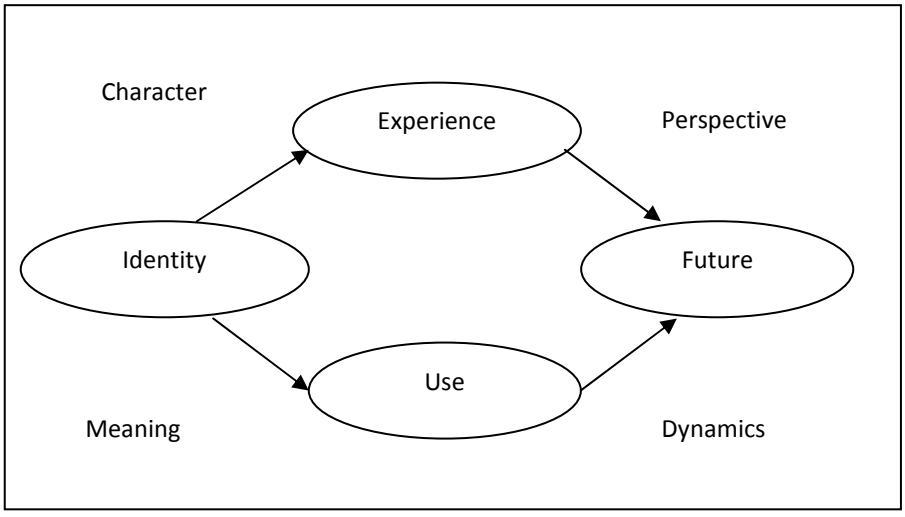
Spatial Quality

What is spatial quality? Should there be a standardization of spatial quality? The answer, according to Dauvellier, is that it is important to define spatial quality thoroughly, but one should not focus on one quality solely. Spatial quality should be defined and redefined continuously. P. Dauvellier: *'It is important that people want to reach something. When people want to attain something then often they find new chances and opportunities themselves and there are more possibilities then one would have thought in first instance.'* In 1974 an explorative policy document for spatial planning was written. Aim in the policy was to link diversity and cohesion and spatial sustainability to each other. In 1982 spatial planning and spatial quality got more integrated. In the workbench method diversity was captured in perceived value, cohesion was captured in the notion of user value and sustainability was captured in future value.

Workbench method

Habiforum developed the Workbench Method. Habiforum was a government initiative and financed with money gained through natural gas revenues. Habiforum stopped operating this year, after being active for two periods of both 4 years. There are three companies that will continue with the Workbench Method. The new website is www.werkpartners.net. In this method they included three values: user value, experience value, future value. Economical value was integrated in the model only in a later stage in the matrix. Another value, identity or origin is also a value that can be included in defining spatial quality. This was for instance done in the booklet 'Ruimte met karakter' (pg.22, Space with Character):

Fig. 27: ' Space with Character', based upon booklet ' Space with Character (interview Dauvellier)



Thus, the workbench is very dynamic and can be adapted and further developed continuously.
The identity or origin was for instance a very important dimension in the Belvedere project, where spatial quality was to a big extent determined by the history and identity/character of the location.

A couple of steps will always be the same, but the workbench can be freely interpreted by the person who uses it. The essence of the workbench is applying the four main steps of the process:
1. determine what individuals perceive as qualities?
2. translate these individual qualities into common themes
3. translate these ideas into concrete plans
4. develop scenarios

Values
The Workbench method does not focus on economical aspects or on the value of green, but on spatial quality. There is certainly an ambition to make this instrument into a more financial instrument in future, but this is not the main aim at the moment.
Values are expressed through words/images and in other qualitative manners. However, one of the main ideas behind the workbench is that you should not try to standardize things.
It does remain difficult to really integrate costs and returns of qualities in the workbench method. Tom Bade did study costs and returns concerning green space and Elizabeth Ruigrok (Witteveen en Bos) calculated the costs and returns of qualities (rekenen en tekenen aan kwaliteit). So, it is possible to express this in monetary values, but the question remains: who will pay for these qualities?

What is ecological value and what position does it take within the workbench?
P. Dauvellier describes ecological value as the environment of the human being, where safety and environmental policy play an important role and which consists of the living environment and natural areas.

Amersfoort, Vathorst & Park Randenbroek
In Vathorst a cooking book has been made for spatial planning. The reason to apply the workbench method in Vathorst was to get the people on board. Nowadays, Dauvellier says *'we live in an open society, you need to involve the people therefore, else they will start to brake, and the process of planning will be slowed down'.*

In Park Randenbroek people were not involved in the start of the planning process. In 2000 the planning process started. In 2005/2006 a vision was developed but this was not approved by the municipality council because of resistance against the plans of the inhabitants. Inhabitants were in favour of an entire green design for the park, whereas the municipality could not make a confession as they needed financial compensation for the already made investments. Finally the municipality invited the inhabitants to take part in a consultation trajectory, though the workbench method. Only the inhabitants took part in this consultation trajectory. They did not want the municipality to be involved so that they could speak their minds freely.

The workbench was held in 3 sessions: inventory of individually perceived values, making scenario's and visions, and producing alternative plans. This was presented to the municipality and an economist made calculations on the basis of these plans. The plans made by the inhabitants came down to creating more green space, which should impact on the price of the houses (based on Tom Bade: value of green). However, the added value of the green was calculated and it appeared that it would not be high enough to compensate for the costs already made by the municipality to be covered.

Effectiveness of Workbench: thinking in terms of possibilities instead of restrictions

Even though the workbench was applied in Park Randenbroek only in a very late stage, and the plans were not according to the wishes of the inhabitants, it still was a helpful tool, according to P. Dauvellier. Reason is that it is necessary to involve the inhabitants/stakeholders in planning processes. *'People need to be able to speak their minds and to be heard. It's important that people think positively and that they are asked to name the qualities of a certain area, instead of thinking in terms of restrictions.'* When the workbench would have been applied in an earlier stage there would have been more possibilities in the planning. Now it was already very restricted, within the limitations that were already set. When from the start one looks at what is thinkable/ imaginable and only later considers the feasibility then often you can achieve much more then you would have thought in first instance. Of course it is important to consider the context and framework of the project. But from there on it is relevant to think in terms of possibilities and challenges.

How long does the workbench method take in practice?

The workbench method is often taking place in three or four sessions. At least once the full round should be done, meaning that the four steps should be taken (identifying qualities, coming up with scenarios, making concrete plans, reconsidering the qualities). At least two days are needed to do this (as was done for the planning process in Walcheren).

Workbench in practice: Walcheren

1. The workbench was done with inhabitants and other stakeholders, during two days.

2. After this, 3 workshop-days were held with the designers. At first the designers were not interested to take into account the qualities defined by the inhabitants, but later in the process they actually came across the same qualities that had already been mentioned by the inhabitants.

3. After this a strategic environmental assessment had to take place (SMB- strategische milieu beoordeling). In this assessment each element in the plans is judged separately and evaluated on bases of European Environmental Policy. This meant that alternatives had to be made.

4. 1.5 years later the original workbench group came together again and made a quality score for the new plans. The themes they had touched upon in the first workbench round were recognized in the new plans that had been made. Alternatives were made and certain original elements were incorporated in the new designs.

Difference between workbench and consultancy rounds/public comments

In the workbench method stakeholders are involved from the very start, before any planning has been made, whereas in the rounds for public comments the ready made plans are presented. The advantage of the workbench is that through consultancy and involvement of stakeholders from he very start there is a bigger chance of support of the plans and also planning process/decision making is often going faster.

Is the Netherlands unique with the workbench method?

In the book 'Nederland boven Water- part 2'(Habiforum) several methodologies are mentioned about the participatory planning used in the Netherlands:

- public comments/consultancy rounds
- workbench method
- Schetsschuit: used by Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and food
- Deskundigen oordeel: expert judgement method.

Advantages of these methods are that users are regarded as experts. This also makes these methods distinct from conventional methods in spatial planning. Regarding the users and stakeholders as experts helps to speed up decision-making processes. This is also a trend in other countries: to regard non-professionals as experts. This is for instance happening in the Ruhr area in Germany. The industry here has become outdated and there is a lot of pollution. In order to redesign certain areas the inhabitants have been involved to define qualities in the Ruhr area.

The matrix in the workbench method

The matrix should be regarded as a tool that can be used to categorise the values/qualities defined by the participants. The matrix should be seen as a tool and not be taken too literally/statically.
This can be seen in Vathorst, Amersfoort, where the workbench was used flexibly. Three groups of stakeholders were formed and several scenarios were made. It's not about taking the workbench very statically, but rather flexibly, as long as there is a focus on qualities. The workbench can be regarded as a way to frame everything. It is a collection of several tools/instruments and can be further developed.

Interview 10-2009
Dr. J. de Jonge, WING consultancy

Jannemarie de Jonge used to work at Alterra, but has been working since a couple of years now for WING in Wageningen, which is a consultancy working in the sphere of spatial planning and development. Jannemarie has been working as a facilitator for workbench processes. In 2002 Jannemarie was involved in a workshop that was done. In 2004 P. Dauvellier wanted to continue with this line of thinking, and more workshops were done, where also the matrix was used. Alterra was working on spatial quality in multi-stakeholder processes. Joke Luttik worked on this with Henk Kroon → Kwaliteit in meervoud. This document was the basis for the workbench method. The matrix was based on this (and includes 'old' values, such as prospective_value, already recognized by Vitruvius).

Habiforum

Habiforum dissolved in 2009 and three bureaus continued under the heading: werkpartners: P. Dauvellier (Dauvellier planadvies)/Henk Puilaart (H2 Ruimte) and J. Jonge (WING). Together they make sure the website is there and updated with new experiences.

Strength

One of the strengths of the workbench is that the planning-process/decision-making process becomes structured. Another value is that time is taken into account, so that prospective values also are taken into account.

The 11 steps

In Bergerden the workbench method was applied only 1 day. However, she says the framework of the workbench is more important then to implement the 11 steps exactly. In the case of Bergerden only 4 steps were applied. So far the two most comprehensive projects so far are: Vathorst and Walcheren.
It is not so that the 11 steps have to necessarily be taken. The context and history have to be taken into account when applying the workbench. It is not possible to have blue prints. Every situation is different and also with time the stakeholders change, people become older, the green space changes

and the users of the space change continuously. Therefore it is so important that the time-dimension is taken into account in the workbench method: the workbench is not only about here and now, it is also about the future and prospective values and sustainability.

Matrix & cycle
The matrix can be regarded as the steppingstone for the content, the cycle can be seen as the steppingstone of the process.

Layer-approach
One important aspect is the layer-approach that can be used:
- ground layer
- infrastructure network
- occupation/buildings layer

There is a hierarchical structure in thinking and in responsibilities. The individual is not responsible for the ground-layer, but does have responsibility for the occupied layer. Because of this it is very important that all stakeholders are present. Furthermore, knowledge/expertise and commitment are more relevant than professionalism.

Actors, responsibilities and notions of participation
The workbench method does not offer solutions but does stimulate communication on these matters. Through the workbench method the discrepancy between short-term investments and long-terms investments becomes insightful. By having the conversation on three facets, actors, space and time, people are also triggered to think about responsibilities.

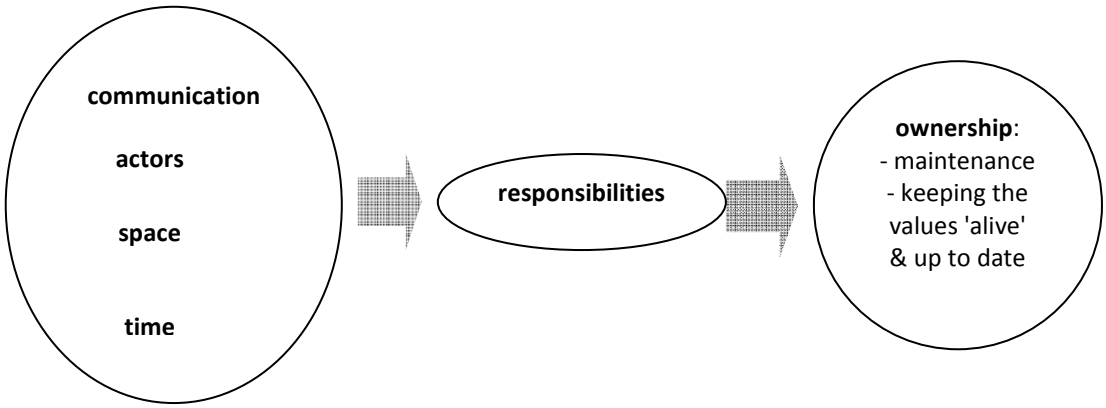


Fig 28: Workbench as a tool to give ownership to people (based on interview J. de Jonge, 2009)

When everything is in hands of the government people don't consider their own responsibilities. One of the aims of WING is to encourage a sense of 'ownership' with the stakeholders.

Examples:
- Vathorst:

Three days with 60 people who would like to take long-term initiatives. However, the municipality of Amersfoort is a bit reluctant in this respect. In Vathorst Noord the users-group should get more responsibilities, however, the municipality does not think this will work out. In this case the ambitions of the workbench method do not match with the ambitions of the municipality. The municipality only thinks in terms of creating support, but they do not want to go further than that.

Participation is no longer only about creating support. That is an old fashioned way of thinking about participation. Participation nowadays is about stakeholder involvement on multiple levels so that more parties than only the government feel responsibility when it comes to execution of plans and maintenance of public space. In Vathorst there were many initiatives that could be further developed if the municipality would support it. These people could play a role here and have an impact as long as the municipality would coordinate this process and take responsibilities.

- Wageningse Eng:
Here the workbench was officially not applied, but similar workshops were held. The process was facilitated by the municipality. Goal was to set up their own quality-standard for the area 'de Eng'. The municipality financed the group of people that teamed up, to facilitate their meetings. It is more interesting that self-organization was supported and an outcome of the process, then the fact that a plan for the area was made.

Social capital
In Vathorst social capital was built up in these 3 sessions, during 1.5 years. However, it is very dependent on who leads the workbench process if the social capital which has been built up will remain there or will fall apart again later. In the case of Amersfoort the municipality wanted to close the process, which might mean that the social capital that was built will disappear again. This is quite dangerous: first you motivate people, and they give a lot of their energy and enthusiasm, to later learn that their plans are not supported. It is very important that from the start people are aware that they are asked to think along and not to start planning themselves. Vathorst West is a difficult case, as the house building has been postponed with many years due to the economical crisis. So many plans can be made, but they cannot be brought into practice yet. A difficulty with Vathorst is that the workbench was applied in the stage where decisions already had been made concerning the location of the neighborhood. According to J. de Jonge it would have been good if they had been approached in an earlier stage to start with the workbench.

Strength
According to J. de Jonge, the most important strength of the workbench is that it focuses on spatial quality. It makes people understand that spatial quality is dynamic and it is not something that has to be written on paper in a plan but it should be a shared sentiment and should live in the hearts of people. Through the workbench people start talking about spatial quality.

International examples
Germany: IBA: International Bau Ausstelling Emscherpark
England: Groundworks: planning and implementation with public involvement
Nl: Hoogvliet Rotterdam, based on IBA
Bureau Krimson, Michelle Provoost, F. Rottenberg

Interview 10-2009
W. Oxener, Landscape Architect Municipality Amersfoort

Pressure in the city
In 2000 P. Dauvellier and W. Oxener started off with a participatory trajectory for Park Randenbroek. Reason was that the pressure on the city was increasing. There were many developments, the hospital was maybe moving and the sports club wanted to become bigger. An analysis was done of

the major bottlenecks and the idea came to do up the park. However, when the hospital moved there was resistance of the people living in the neighborhood. The municipality council stopped developments and wanted to involve the people again in communication on the park. Another participatory trajectory was set up. The board of the municipality was not very stable and the planning was handed over from one alderman to the other. In total the plans were revised by four aldermen. This meant a lot of delay, sometimes with four years.

P. Dauvellier developed the workbench method along the way. He was from the start involved, but at that time the workbench had not been developed yet.

Participation
The participatory trajectories that were done looked as follows:
- evenings where people could have a say, the Lower House method was applied (method for debating)
- formal objection rounds

Decision making
In the beginning it seemed decision making would be done quickly and it seemed it would be a short process. However, when it appeared that the swimming pool would be removed and some financial elements changed this led to commotion and to indecisiveness with the municipality council.

Public support
W. Oxener was involved in developing a plan for an area of 120ha in the city of Amersfoort. In this case public support and consent was very important. Support is something that has to be created actively. It should be there, else the area will dilapidate. The people were very involved and this was also important, as they were the future inhabitants of the houses to be built. Therefore their ideas are very valuable.

Workbench
In Park Randenbroek one person at a certain moment got many supporters, and they started pressuring the municipality. At a certain moment it was decided to have the workbench as a method to involve the people in the process, so that there could be better communication again with them. Firstly Utrechts Landschap was on the side of the support group; however they did not take part in the workbench, because this would mean that they would have to take an official standpoint which they could do in this case. The water-board did take part in the workbench.

Professional team
Besides the workbench a 'professional team' was also set up. They were asked to comment on the results of the workbench. In this professional team the Utrechts Landschap did take part and also the municipality of Leusden and the province.

The biggest resistance was against:
- red for green
- expansion of the sports-complex
- intensification of the hospital and the ice skating rink

The municipality council did set very clear frames for the new plans. However, the inhabitants tried to stretch the frames and the municipality council accepted this. This meant that they gave in where they could actually not give in. This resulted in a lot of resistance to the plans of the municipality,

since, in the end they did have to stick to the preliminary frames that had been set. That is also the reason why the 'inhabitants group' did not want the professionals (mainly the municipality) involved.

The workbench:

- workbench **does not work in very concrete situations** where planning has to be done on **details** and already existent area has to be redeveloped: there are too many stakes and people start reacting to details. Therefore the workbench can better be applied in plans on a higher scale/bigger scale, where people will not think in terms of 'my backyard'. Else people will start to **try to change the frames/preconditions** that have been set and in the end they will be disappointed.
- as soon as things become abstract and the people who are against start organizing themselves it is **impossible to reach consensus**.
- the financial aspects: the municipality **cannot be very ope**n about what expenses they are really planning to make because of the market-competition. This means that the inhabitants will not see the true figures and they will get confused and start mistrusting the municipality. The municipality often does not want to be very clear about the real costs so that they won't disappoint their electorate. However, the fact that they do not make a stand makes people doubt about how fixed the preconditions are and they hence **mistrust** the municipality/politics.
- the fact that municipality councils let themselves being influenced to such a great extent by public opinion leads to poor planning and a drop in the quality of the plans.
- '*in the workbench method expert knowledge and expert-opinion are underestimated. This means that many plans lose their identity and character. They become 'dood-gepolderd'; democratized to death. This is where designs become muddled and blurred and loose character because of too many opinions that have to be taken into account. Green becomes grey and brown in these plans.'*
- plans have to be sold to people, people have to be **seduced** to name the qualities in a certain plan. Many plans are made in an authoritarian manner, but when planning becomes participatory then everything depends on communication. This means that communication should be charismatic and done in a seductive manner, to make sure the plans do not loose their **identity.**
- the opponents are often the most influential and dominant in participatory processes, which means that tin the end choices are made from a **negative standpoint** instead from a positive stand. Or the plans are barricaded and paralyzed by the opponents.
- the workbench underestimates **the intellectual capabilities** of those involved: often it is the intellectuals who show up at the meetings. The people who are less informed/interested don't come. Actually everybody should be presented in these participatory processes. This means that you have to know the area/neighbourhoods very well, so that there are representatives also of the people who will not come (just think of foreigners, migrants, homeless, etc.).
- The workbench can only work when the **potential opponents** are **kept out** of the process, or taken out of it. The workbench is about **qualities**. As soon as people start thinking in terms of what they do not want this can block the whole process and people start to build up resistance against plans and only negative sounds are heard. This is a very difficult balance, but it is important that a positive way of thinking remains. In order to do this the **preconditions/framework has to be set very clearly from the very start** and it should not change throughout the process.
- When starting the workbench process it is very important that everybody is **clear** what they **want to reach**. What do they want, why are they here, what do they **expect** from each other? These are essential questions to be answered.

Green in the workbench

Concerning green in the workbench: green is a safe option for people. Green gives a feeling of safety (if it is well maintained). People don't like taking risks and they want to feel comfortable. They rather live in green areas than in dense cities.

General opinion on workbench in Park Randenbroek
In general W. Oxener is happy that the workbench method was applied. The workbench has lead to more credibility for the municipality officials/servants. It has lead to more communication which is a good thing. However, it did (in the case of Randenbroek) not lead to better/more creative or better supported planning.

Interview 10-2009
R. Thomas - Advisor, mediator Atrivé consultancy

Rudi Thomas has been involved in the process facilitation for the Workbench method in Amersfoort, Vathorst -NW. This is the first time he has facilitated a full workbench process. He has been involved in likewise projects previously. In the case of Vathorst the Workbench method has been applied quite precisely.

Green space and spatial perception
Rudi Thomas is concerned about spatial perception and the value of green and perception of green. According to him green perception is closely interlinked with the design of the green space. When it has not been well designed there is the danger that people don't feel safe or that they do not enjoy the green and thus it can become less valuable. So quantity of green is not equal to quality of green, it is about perception.

Interesting in this respect is to have a look at 'maatschapplijk rendement'- societal output of spatial planning. (SEV- stuurgroep experimentele volkshuisvesting/ MRM- maatschappelijk rendement meting). Often, that what is firstly perceived as not valuable or having added value appears to have added value in retrospect.

The value of using the workbench is that it helps people to look at values in a structured manner. The steps are:
1. understanding/ common understanding
2. association
3. imagination

It is essential that the facilitation is done properly in the workbench process. The workbench is a process between people. It should be applied in an equitable manner, else it cannot take effect. People should be free from dogmas; this is a major element on which the facilitator should focus. Especially when it concerns green space it is very important to make sure people don't react dogmatically, only then one can take the three steps in the workbench method.

When this is done properly people can freely imagine and become creative. In Vathorst people came up with the idea of the 'lifted landscape'. They wished to see the landscape of the nature park to cross over gradually into the city centre. In a creative process they imagined it would be ideal if the landscape could be lifted and one could build underneath. This in the end resulted in the idea of having houses with grass-roofs. If this will be executed in practice remains the question, as the development for Vathorst has been postponed for 4 or 5 years, due to the current economic crisis.
However, even though the plans will not be executed directly the workbench method is still of importance due to the fact that the outcomes of the workbench have set an urgent policy line. The

municipal council will decide on the path to take, but the outcome of the workbench will form an important basis in the plans presented to the council.

Strength of Workbench:

- systematic method to touch upon all the themes.
- it speeds up the decision-making process because:
    - it leads people from a to b. The path is clearly set and people know what they are working towards, without taking side paths.
    - it forces you to explain what the relevance is of each step taken. Thoughts are vented and several parties are involved from the start.
    - people surprise each other with their ideas. This can have an enriching impact (as long as the process is well facilitated).

Weakness of Workbench:

- it's only a methodology, not more then that.
- it can involve making lists of qualities and making collections of newspaper articles etc. But those should be just small parts in the workbench to facilitate the creative process.
- there needs to be an inner drive/motivation to apply the workbench method so that it will work.
- it can be a time consuming process for municipalities/others involved.
- participation level should be very clear: the workbench is not a method for people to have a say in the matter. (inspraak) It is a method based on equal participation. Participation is not based on who you are, or what your position is in society or so.
- from the very start there should be acceptance of each other and respect for each other. Without this the workbench method will not work properly. *'It is of utter importance that everyone makes clear what their stake is in the beginning of the process, this is the basis for participation.''*
- during the entire process communication is very important.

How do you make sure there is a good representation of stakeholders in the process?

In Amersfoort a social worker was asked to select people whom he thought would be good/important to have in the workbench. It is never possible to get everybody involved.

MILUNET multiple landuse - interreg Huib Haccauo

Interview , 10-2009
Dr. J. Luttik, Teamleader/ Senior Researcher at department Landscape and Spatial Planning Alterra

Joke Luttik is working as a researcher at Alterra, focusing on the intersection of economy and landscape. She was one of the writers of ' Kwaliteit in meervoud', 2001. She was mainly involved in the test-phase of the matrix on spatial quality in the workbench. Pieter Hooijmeijer: researcher at Utrecht University, used to be involved in Habiforum. He worked together with Wageningen university on theory behind the workbench method. Spatial quality was further defined. Three spatial qualities were linked to interests.

Matrix

The matrix can be seen as a method to stimulate communication/discussion on spatial qualities. Certain concepts in the matrix are quite difficult to grasp though, such as allocation efficiency and cumulative attractiveness: very abstract. LNV mainly focused on ecology which later on also became one of the qualities mentioned in the matrix.

Economic value

There is a difficulty concerning the economical value. In the workbench we talk about public values, which are not linked to certain parties. Furthermore not everything can be expressed in terms of economical value. Joke Luttik: '*When you would perform a cost-benefit analysis it appears that the landscape has a lot of value. However, the value is not tangible economically, where is the money?*' The price of houses increases due to the presence of green, however the house-owner often already paid for this himself. A striking fact: by the ministry of economical affairs green is not mentioned as a relevant factor to the economy.

Quality of life

There have been studies of expats and life-quality: how international companies can attract expats: green is a factor.

Quality of life:
- social
- health
- environment/surroundings
- fysical/ ecological factors: researchers: Barrie de Vries/ Vincent Kuipers
- etc.

Links & researchers

- www.kennisonline.nl (nu. 6) Groen en gezondheid - The societal value of green is easier to distinguish then the economical value.
- Jan Vreke: green and social cohesion. These values in the public sphere should be supported by the government.
- Witteveen & Bos: Elizabeth Ruigrok: cost-benefit analysis, monetarization of values.
- Sjerp de Vries: research on health and green

Interview, 09-2009

A. Goossens, senior Strategic Advisor **Spatial planning, Municipality Amersfoort**

The Workbench was applied on two locations in Amersfoort: Vathorst NW and Park Randenbroek. Reason to conduct the Workbench Spatial Quality was that the municipal council had been asked to come with a new vision for the development of Vathorst NW. since the Workbench allows to investigate spatial quality and how this can be reached, by involving both experts and non-experts, the council opted for the Workbench Spatial Quality.

Vathorst NW

The Workbench process was passed from Dauvellier to J. de Jonge and Rudi Thomas. They took a flexible approach towards the implementation of the Workbench in Vathorst. Every step taken in the Workbench the council was informed and involved, as to reach more support for spatial planning. and feasibility of plans and designs. The following three steps were made in the Workbench process:
1. discovering spatial qualities and ambitions of the stakeholders
2. development of scenario's (cooking book)
3. evaluating the scenario's

Since the council is the one who will finally decide upon the scenario to be chosen, the continuos involvement of the council was of great importance, according to Goossens. The council was asked to identify a framework and to be involved throughout the three steps to give their judgement. From the discussion held with about 60 participants 4 main scenarios were identified, which where generally focussing on the following elements: city/village/sustainability/ diversity.

A cook book for spatial design was made inn which these scenarios were discussed. The 'spatial ingredients' of which each recipe was made up of were considered by the council.

Park Randenbroek

The participatory trajectory of the Workbench was chosen for Park Randenbroek, because of its focus on different function and qualities of place. Namely: social, ecological, cultural and economical dimension. Peter Sluis was project coordinator initially; later on P. Dauvellier was involved in the facilitation. Three phases can be distinguished in the Workbench for Park Randenbroek, for each phase there was a so-called end-product.

Workbench Spatial Quality

Spatial quality through stakeholder participation
Lessons learnt from the city of Amersfoort

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Lay-out - E. Diemont
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