

“Enough plans have been made, now we should really **do something.**”

“Limburg shrinks of course, but the **growth will return.**
That’s how it always works.”

“The region needs new **impulses.**”

“Instead of investing in shrinking regions, investments should be made in a sustainable and dynamic **metropolis.**”

“To make a career, you are forced to **move to the Randstad.**”

“Municipalities have to **fight against shrinkage** and aim for growth.”

“The biggest towns of South Limburg **do not shrink.**”

“Limburg is a nice and inexpensive region to live, but you should also be able to **work** there.”

Landscape Planning and Design for a Shrinking Region:
A Reflective Case Study Approach in the Dutch Border Region South Limburg

MSc-thesis Landscape Architecture and Planning
Wageningen University

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R.B.L. (Ralph) Tangelder *BSc*
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WAGENINGEN **UR**

For quality of life

Landscape Planning and Design for a Shrinking Region:

A Reflective Case Study Approach in the Dutch Border Region South Limburg

Thesis (LAR-80436 / LUP-80436)

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Shrinkage. Krimp. Schrumpfung. A phenomenon which has already served as inspiration for many researches, policy documents and newspaper articles. Though in the domain of landscape architecture and planning, still much can be learned about planning and designing under the influence of shrinkage. Being curious, we wanted to know more about the relation between shrinkage and landscape architecture and planning. An interesting study area was quickly found: South Limburg, having an urban character and facing the largest population and household decline in the Netherlands at the moment. However, the start of the research process was a somewhat difficult one. We soon found out that shrinkage is a broad term, and in South Limburg strongly interrelated with economy, liveability, cross-border development, identity, internationalisation and so on. Choices had to be made regarding the points of attention for this research. The earliest interview results helped greatly in evaluating which topics would be these focus points for the thesis research.

We want to thank our supervisors Raoul Beunen, Sven Stremke and Joren Jacobs for their inspiring ideas, critical comments and fruitful discussions during the research process. Many thanks also to all the 40 people we interviewed. Without these extensive, open and joyful interviews in offices, cafes, restaurants, barracks and living rooms we would never have understood what we were actually researching. A special word of gratitude to two people who offered a helping hand: Pascal Wauben, municipal urban designer at the municipality of Sittard-Geleen, who gave useful comments on the design proposals made in this thesis for the city of Sittard. And Aad Blokland, project leader internationalisation at the province of Limburg, who gave us inspiration to focus this thesis on the region of South Limburg by showing us South Limburg's international and cross-border relations. Without the accurate revision of the German summary by Erik van Nieuwenhoven, we would not have been able to include this summary for our German readers. We want to conclude these acknowledgements by thanking the Stichting NH-BOS, a foundation which encourages landscape architecture. With their financial support, we were able to broaden our scope by including reference studies in both the Netherlands and Germany.

With this thesis, we hope to make a contribution to the actual shrinkage debate in the Netherlands, and in special South Limburg. We hope to open up the minds of all actors involved in this debate, by offering them an approach which enhances the discussion between these very same actors. The time of research for causes and effects of shrinkage is over. It is time to act!

During the last 5 years population decline has become a well-known topic in the Netherlands. Newspaper articles, TV documentaries, research reports, internet blogs, conferences and policy documents all pay a fair amount of attention to this phenomenon. A phenomenon which is being cursed by some, being blessed by others. In the Netherlands especially the consequences of household decline are spatially noticeable. Because of this also the disciplines which deal with the spatial arrangement of the landscape are being confronted with shrinkage. This thesis researches how the spatially oriented disciplines deal with the consequences of population and household decline. For this purpose it is decided to conduct a case study research in South Limburg, a region which is momentarily confronted with the biggest consequences of shrinkage in the Dutch context.

In this line the following main research question is posed:

What is the contribution of landscape architecture and planning concerning the dealing with spatial effects of shrinkage on residential areas in South Limburg?

In order to answer this question the research is conducted with the aid of a literature study, open ended interviews and reference studies in the Dutch regions of Groningen, Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and the Achterhoek and Former East Germany. To focus the research scope the theory of orders of observations is used. This theory introduces the two basic orders of observation: the 'what' and the 'how'. The first order of observation is about observers observing the world around them, the 'what'. This 'realist' order observes what it observes and accepts its content as more or less taken for granted. What they see and do not see depends on their location within the networks of society and culture. Therefore 'truth' and 'facts' are accepted as 'real', although in another cultural network with other observers different 'truths and 'facts' may exist. However, first order observers cannot see these paradigm differences, since they cannot observe just how they manage to observe. Here the second order of observation comes in. With this order it becomes visible how, not what, first order observers observe, by observing the observing of first-order observers. Next this theory has been made concrete in the concepts of storytelling, framing and agenda setting. By means of these concepts the interviews results and literature have been analysed.

Based on the results of the case study research it appears that the South Limburg shrinkage debate is being characterised by a struggle with the consequences ascribed to population and household decline. These consequences express themselves in housing vacancies, deterioration, a decline of municipal financial means en a decrease of the liveability in shrinking neighbourhoods. The problematic dealing with shrinkage is mainly caused by the different interpretations of people and organisations and the way these interpretations are used for diverging future perspectives. Moreover there is disagreement

between the national, regional and local governments, housing corporations, project developers and banks regarding the question who should take the initiative to finance the shrinkage approach, since the demolition costs of vacant houses and the restructuring of neighbourhoods are sky-high. On top of this agreement the South Limburg governments are confronted with decentralisation of policy and budget cuts. Within the current paradigm of economic growth 'shrinkage' is seen as a failure. The credo of 'more' is still dominant. Due to this combination of factors a regional approach in handling the shrinkage issue is currently still unsuccessful. Nevertheless spatial professionals are currently working on visions for South Limburg, in which by means of new ideas and alternative instruments in dealing with shrinkage is being tried to find new ways in a spatial arena altered by shrinkage.

The authors are convinced that the disciplines of landscape architecture and planning can offer a concrete contribution in the dealing with the shrinkage issue. For this purpose a new approach is being drawn which offers new possibilities to deal with shrinkage. The cornering and demolishing of houses unsuitable for current demand, investments in liveability in shrinking neighbourhoods and new ways to arrange and maintain spaces which fell vacant due to shrinkage, comprise the key of this new approach. This new approach is then with the aid of future oriented scenarios translated into two alternative designs for the neighbourhood MSP in Heerlen and the neighbourhood Overhoven-Baandert in Sittard. The role of the designs is redefined; they are no longer seen as the impressions of fixed end results, they are now being deployed as means to clarify the discussions regarding the future of South Limburg.

The Dutch planning process is being characterised by a huge gap in the timespan between the start phase and the realisation phase of a plan. During the realisation phase the original starting-points are often no longer suitable in a changed world. Flexibility and prioritising turn out to be important ingredients to be able to adapt to unknown factors and uncertainties during the realisation of new plans.

In the new proposed approach the role of the designer also changes: his or her basis of the design, the vision, is no longer only based on the analysis of the area in the spatial context. More attention is in this regard also paid to the opinions and perspectives of people and organisations relevant for the shrinkage debate. It is recommended to carry out a comparable research on a larger scale level for all Dutch regions confronted with shrinkage in order to obtain more knowledge regarding the way in shrinking regions is being dealt with this phenomenon, instead of how should be dealt with this phenomenon. Finally it is also recommended for governments and housing corporations to use the limited available financial means for this proposed new approach. In this regard most attention should be paid to a balanced financing of these new interventions and the improvement of the liveability of shrinking neighbourhoods.

Bevolkingskrimp is in de afgelopen 5 jaar een bekend begrip geworden in Nederland. Krantenartikelen, TV-reportages, onderzoeksrapporten, internetfora, conferenties en beleidsrapporten besteden ruimschoots aandacht aan dit fenomeen. Een fenomeen dat door sommigen wordt vervloekt, door anderen wordt gezegend. In Nederland uiten met name de gevolgen van de afname van het aantal huishoudens (huishoudenskrimp) zich ook ruimtelijk. Hierdoor worden ook de disciplines die zich bezig houden met de ruimtelijke ordening met dit verschijnsel geconfronteerd. Deze thesis onderzoekt hoe de ruimtelijke disciplines met de gevolgen van bevolkings- en huishoudenskrimp omgaan. Hiertoe is besloten een casestudie onderzoek uit te voeren in een regio die momenteel het ergst met de gevolgen van krimp wordt geconfronteerd: Zuid-Limburg.

In dit kader is de volgende hoofdvraag gesteld:

Wat is de bijdrage van landschapsarchitectuur en ruimtelijke planning aan gaande het omgaan met ruimtelijke effecten van krimp op woonwijken in Zuid-Limburg?

Om deze vraag te kunnen beantwoorden is het onderzoek uitgevoerd met behulp van een literatuurstudie, open interviews en referentiestudies in Groningen, Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, de Achterhoek en voormalig Oost-Duitsland. Om het onderzoek scherp te kunnen stellen is gebruik gemaakt van de theorie van ordes van observatie. Deze theorie stelt dat er eerste en tweede ordes van observatie zijn. De eerste orde wordt gevormd door 'observanten' die de wereld om zich heen observeren als 'het wat'. De observaties worden geaccepteerd zoals ze zijn, waarheden en feiten worden aangenomen als 'echt', hoewel andere observanten in andere netwerken eigen waarheden en feiten construeren. Paradigma verschillen kunnen eerste orde observanten echter niet zien doordat ze zichzelf niet kunnen observeren. Tweede orde observanten kunnen dit wel; zij kunnen zien hoe, niet wat, eerste orde observanten observeren, door het observeren van eerste orde observanten te observeren. Deze theorie is vervolgens geconcretiseerd in de concepten storytelling, framing en agendasetting. Met behulp van deze concepten is richting gegeven aan de analyse van de interviews en de literatuur.

Uit de resultaten van het casestudie onderzoek blijkt dat het Zuid-Limburgse krimpdebat wordt gekenmerkt door een zekere worsteling met de gevolgen toegeschreven aan bevolkings- en huishoudenskrimp. Deze gevolgen uiten zich met name in leegstaande woningen, verpaupering, daling van gemeentelijke inkomsten en een afname van de leefbaarheid in zogeheten 'krimpwijken'. Deze moeizame omgang met krimp wordt vooral veroorzaakt door de verschillende manieren waarop krimp door mensen en organisaties geïnterpreteerd wordt en hoe deze interpretaties vervolgens in verschillende toekomstperspectieven worden uitgezet. Daarnaast bestaat er tussen de nationale, regionale en lokale overheden, woningcorporaties, projectontwikkelaars en banken onenigheid aan-

gaande de vraag wie het initiatief moet gaan nemen om de krimpaanpak te financieren, aangezien de kosten van het slopen van leegstaande woningen en het herstructureren van wijken torenhoog zijn. Bovenop deze onenigheid worden de Zuid-Limburgse overheden geconfronteerd met decentralisatie van beleid en met bezuinigingen. Binnen het algemeen geldende paradigma van economische groei wordt 'krimp' gezien als falen; het credo van 'meer' blijft nog immer dominant. Een regionale aanpak van het krimp-vraagstuk wil door deze combinatie van factoren maar niet lukken. Desondanks zijn ruimtelijke professionals bezig visies op te stellen voor Zuid-Limburg, waarin door middel van nieuwe ideeën in de omgang met krimp en de inzet van alternatieve instrumenten wordt geprobeerd een nieuwe weg te vinden in een door krimp veranderend ruimtelijk speelveld.

De auteurs zijn van mening dat de vakgebieden landschapsarchitectuur en ruimtelijke planning een concrete bijdrage kunnen leveren in de aanpak van het krimp-vraagstuk. Hiertoe is een nieuwe aanpak opgesteld, die de regio nieuwe mogelijkheden biedt om met krimp om te gaan. Het opkopen en slopen van huizen die niet meer aan de hedendaagse vraag voldoen, investeringen in de leefbaarheid in krimp-wijken en nieuwe manieren om de vrijkomende ruimte in te vullen en te onderhouden, vormen de kern van de nieuwe aanpak. Deze is vervolgens met behulp van toekomstscenario's vertaald in twee alternatieve ontwerpen voor de wijk MSP in Heerlen en de wijk Overhoven-Baandert in Sittard. De rol van de ontwerpen is gedefinieerd; ze vormen niet langer impressies van vaststaande eindbeelden, maar worden ingezet als middel om de discussies aangaande de toekomst van deze gebieden te verhelderen.

Het Nederlandse planproces wordt gekenmerkt door een groot gat tussen het moment van opstellen van een plan en de uitvoer. Ten tijde van de uitvoering zijn de oorspronkelijke gedachten achter het plan vaak niet meer geschikt voor de veranderde wereld. Flexibiliteit en prioritering blijken belangrijke ingrediënten om toch op onbekende factoren en onzekerheden te kunnen inspelen gedurende de uitvoering van nieuwe plannen. In de nieuwe voorgestelde aanpak verandert ook de rol van de ontwerper zelf: zijn of haar achterliggende visie is niet langer alleen gebaseerd op de analyse van het gebied in de ruimtelijke context. Er wordt nu ook meer aandacht besteed aan de opvattingen en perspectieven die mensen en organisaties binnen het krimpdebat erop na houden. Er wordt dan ook aanbevolen op grotere schaal een soortgelijk onderzoek uit te voeren in alle Nederlandse regio's die met krimp worden geconfronteerd, om zo meer kennis te vergaren aangaande de manier waarop in krimpende regio's wordt omgegaan met dit fenomeen, in plaats van hoe zou moeten worden omgegaan met dit fenomeen. Tenslotte wordt ook aanbevolen de voor handen zijnde financiële middelen in te zetten voor deze voorgestelde nieuwe aanpak, waarbij vervolgens de meeste aandacht uit gaat naar een evenwichtige financiering van nieuwe ingrepen en het verbeteren van de leefbaarheid van krimp-wijken.

Demographischer Wandel ist in den letzten 5 Jahren ein bekannter Begriff geworden in den Niederlanden. Zeitungsartikel, Fernsehsendungen, Forschungsberichte, Internetforen, Konferenzen und Programmvorlagen verwenden alle in reichem Maße Aufmerksamkeit auf diese Phänomene. Ein Phänomen das von manchem verflucht, von anderen gesegnet wird. In den Niederlanden äußern sich besonders die Folgen der Verringerung der Anzahl von Haushalten auch räumlich. Hierdurch werden auch die Disziplinen die sich beschäftigen mit der Raumordnung mit dieser Erscheinung konfrontiert. Diese Arbeit untersucht wie die Raumdisziplinen sich verstehen mit den Konsequenzen der Bevölkerungs- und Haushaltschumpfung. Hierzu ist entschieden eine Fallstudie durchzuführen in Südlimburg: eine niederländische Region die momentan sehr betroffen wird von den Folgen der Schrumpfungsprozesse.

In diesem Rahmen wird die nachfolgende Hauptfrage gestellt:

Welchen Beitrag liefern Landschaftsarchitektur und Raumplanung für den Umgang mit räumlichen Effekten von Schrumpfung auf Wohnviertel in Südlimburg?

Um diese Frage beantworten zu können, ist die Forschung durchgeführt mit Hilfe einer Literaturstudie, Interviews und Referenzstudien in den niederländischen Regionen Groningen, Zeeuws-Vlaanderen und der Achterhoek und in den deutschen Bundesländern Sachsen-Anhalt und Sachsen. Die Forschung wird fokussiert auf Grund der Theorie von Niveaus der Beobachtung. Diese Theorie behauptet, dass es zwei Niveaus der Beobachtung gibt. Auf dem ersten Niveau funktionieren ‚Beobachter‘ die die Welt herum beobachten wie ‚das was ist‘. Die Beobachtungen werden akzeptiert wie sie sind, Wahrheiten und Fakten werden angenommen als ‚echt‘, obwohl andere Beobachter in anderen Netzwerken eigene Wahrheiten und Fakten konstruieren. Paradigma-Unterschiede können Beobachter im ersten Niveau jedoch nicht wahrnehmen, da sie sich selbst nicht beobachten können. Beobachter im zweiten Niveau haben diese Möglichkeit schon; sie können sehen wie, nicht was, Beobachter im ersten Niveau wahrnehmen, dadurch dass sie das Wahrnehmen der Beobachter des ersten Niveaus beobachten. Diese Theorie ist dann anschließend konkretisiert in den Konzepten Storytelling, Framing und Agenda-Setting. Mit Hilfe von diesen Konzepten sind die Interviewergebnisse und ist die Literatur analysiert worden.

Die Ergebnisse der Fallstudie zeigen an, dass die Schrumpfungsdebatte in der niederländischen Region Südlimburg gekennzeichnet wird von einem schwierigen Umgehen mit den Folgen die an Schrumpfung zugeschrieben werden. Diese Folgen drücken sich besonders aus in leerstehende Wohnungen, Verelendung, Verringerung der kommunalen Finanzkraft und in einem Rückgang der Lebensqualität in sogenannten ‚Schrumpfungsvierteln‘. Dieser schwierige Umgang mit Schrumpfung wird vor allem verursacht durch die unterschiedlichen Weisen worauf Schrumpfung von Individuen und Organisationen interpretiert wird und wie diese Interpretationen darauf in unterschiedlichen Zukunfts-

perspektiven aufgenommen werden. Dazu kommt die Uneinigkeit zwischen dem niederländischen Staat, der Provinz Limburg, den Gemeinden, Wohnungsunternehmen, Baugesellschaften und Banken über die Frage wer die Initiative nehmen soll, das Anfassern der Schrumpfung zu finanzieren. Die Kosten des Abrisses von leerstehenden Wohnungen und der Umstrukturierung von Vierteln sind nämlich turmhoch. Darüber hinaus werden die südlimburgischen Behörden konfrontiert mit Dezentralisierung von Programmvorlagen und mit Einsparungen. Innerhalb des allgemein gültigen Paradigmas von wirtschaftlichem Wachstum wird ‚Schrumpfung‘ betrachtet als Scheitern; das Credo ‚mehr‘ bleibt noch immer dominant. Eine regionale Strategie der Schrumpfrungsfrage gelingt, wegen dieser Kombination von Faktoren, noch immer nicht. Trotzdem arbeiten räumliche Professionals an Leitbildern für die Zukunft Südlimburgs, worin mittels neuen Ideen in dem Schrumpfrungsverfahren und dem Einsatz alternativer Instrumente versucht wird, einen neuen Weg zu finden in einem durch Schrumpfung geänderten Spielraum.

Die Autoren sind der Meinung, dass die Fachgebiete Landschaftsarchitektur und Raumplanung einen konkreten Beitrag verschaffen können beim Anfassern der Schrumpfrungsfrage. Hierzu ist eine neue Strategie entworfen die die südlimburgische Region behüten soll vor den negativen Effekten von, aus ihrem Blickpunkt, ‚falschen‘ Reaktionen auf Schrumpfung. Innovation, Unabhängigkeit und Unverbindlichkeit bilden den Kern dieser neuen Strategie, die danach mit Hilfe von Zukunftsszenarien übersetzt worden ist in zwei alternative Entwürfe für das Viertel MSP in Heerlen und das Viertel Overhoven-Baandert in Sittard. Die Rolle der Entwürfe ist umdefiniert; diese bilden nicht länger Impressionen feststehender Fertigbilder aus, werden aber eingesetzt als Mittel um die Diskussionen in Bezug auf die Zukunft dieser Gebiete aufzuklären.

Der niederländische Planungsprozess wird gekennzeichnet von einem großen Loch zwischen den Momenten des Planungsanfangs und der Durchführung. Während der Durchführung sind die ursprünglichen Gedanken, worauf ein Plan basiert ist, oft nicht mehr geeignet für die geänderte Welt. Flexibilität und Priorisierung zeigen sich als wichtige Zutaten, um trotzdem doch auf die unbekannteten Faktoren und Ungewissheiten einspielen zu können, während der Ausführung neuer Pläne. In der neuen vorgestellten Strategie ändert sich auch die Rolle der Designer: ihr Grundleitbild ist nicht länger nur basiert auf der Analyse des Gebietes in dem räumlichen Kontext. Es wird jetzt mehr Aufmerksamkeit gerichtet auf die Meinungen und Perspektiven die Individuen und Organisationen haben, die relevant sind in der Schrumpfrungsdebatte. Empfohlen wird auf einem größeren Umfang eine gleichartige Forschung durchzuführen in allen niederländischen Regionen, die mit demographischem Wandel konfrontiert werden. Zum Schluss wird empfohlen die vorhandenen Finanzmittel für diese vorgeschlagene Strategie zu benutzen, wobei dann die meiste Aufmerksamkeit verwendet wird auf eine ausgeglichene Finanzierung neuer Eingriffe und das Verbessern der Lebensqualität sogenannter ‚Schrumpfrungsviertel‘.



“ *Nothing happens here, the municipality does nothing!* ”

Inhabitant of Kerkrade-West in the documentary 'Mijn Heilust' (2010)

”

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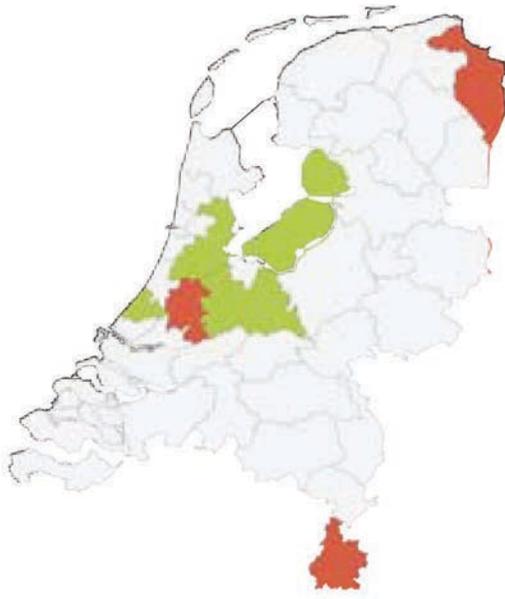
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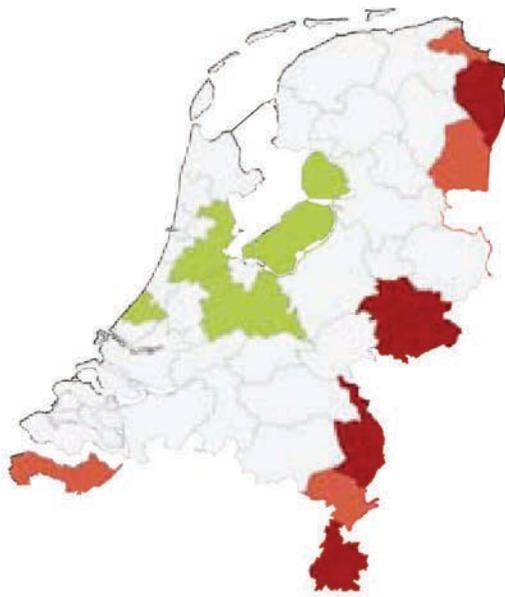
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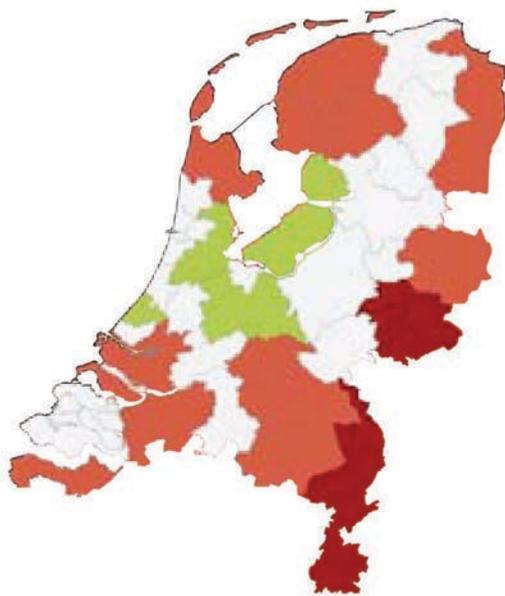
Population decline		Population growth (leading)	
South Limburg	0.99 (-6096)	Greater Amsterdam	1.02 (+23562)
Delfzijl and surroundings	0.98 (-1034)	Utrecht	1.02 (+23302)
Eastern Groningen	0.99 (-1008)	Region The Hague	1.02 (+15015)
Eastern South Holland	1.00 (-5)	Flevoland	1.03 (+10717)

Table 1.1/ Figure 1.1 Population decline and growth per COROP-region in period 2008-2010 (ABF Research, 2009)



Population decline (leading)		Population growth (leading)	
South Limburg	0.94 (-36880)	Utrecht	1.08 (+102996)
Achterhoek	0.98 (-6850)	Greater Amsterdam	1.08 (+96019)
North Limburg	0.98 (-4455)	Flevoland	1.14 (+52631)
Eastern Groningen	0.97 (-4399)	Region The Hague	1.06 (+51176)

Table 1.2/ Figure 1.2 Population decline and growth per COROP-region in period 2010-2020 (ABF Research, 2009)



Population decline (leading)		Population growth (leading)	
South Limburg	0.83 (-94075)	Utrecht	1.13 (+178607)
Achterhoek	0.91 (-35052)	Greater Amsterdam	1.12 (+167339)
North Limburg	0.92 (-20952)	Flevoland	1.22 (+96590)
Middle Limburg	0.93 (-16623)	Region The Hague	1.09 (+75295)

Table 1.3/ Figure 1.3 Population decline and growth per COROP-region in period 2020-2040 (ABF Research, 2009)

1.1 Aim of this thesis

When exactly it will happen is debatable, but that it will happen, is a thing on which all different prognoses agree: the population size of the Netherlands will decline (CBS, 2011a). The most recent prognosis of Statistics Netherlands (CBS) prospects that the population size of the Netherlands will reach its maximum in 2040: about 17.84 million. In 2060, the number of inhabitants is expected to be about 17.74 million (CBS, 2011a). The prognosis for the national number of households prospects a maximum of about 8.49 million in 2046. In 2060, this number is expected to be about 8.44 million (CBS, 2011b). These phenomena of population and household decline are not unique for the Netherlands, these are expected for many (western) countries and are therefore significant on a national and global scale. Shrinkage however, is considered as a structural decline of the population and the number of households within a region, which has consequences for the level of facilities and the economic perspective of that region. Shrinkage is thus a phenomenon that occurs on a regional scale level.

COROP-region The Netherlands can be divided into 40 COROP-regions. The differences in population development are high between these regions. Greater Amsterdam, Utrecht, Region The Hague and Flevoland are the four leading growth regions, at least for the coming decades until 2040 (table/graph 1.3 CBS). In the period 2008-2010, there were only four COROP-regions that faced a population decline: South Limburg, Delfzijl and surroundings, Eastern Groningen and Eastern South Holland. In the period 2010-2020, the number of declining regions is expected to double, led by South Limburg, the Achterhoek, North Limburg and Eastern Groningen. In the period 2020-2040, almost half of all COROP-regions is expected to face a declining population, led by all three regions within the province of Limburg and by the Achterhoek region.

shrinking region

South Limburg, the region on which this thesis concentrates, is the leading region when it comes to decline in human population, but also when it comes to decline of the number of households. It is thus the leading shrinking region of the Netherlands. Furthermore, the region is mixed urban and rural. Many studies have been done about shrinkage in South Limburg, most about the causes and effects. There is only little information about the dealing with shrinkage focused on landscape and the spatial organisation, therefore:

> The first aim of this thesis is to generate knowledge about how actors deal with shrinkage: what perspectives do exist, how do involved people handle?

When this aim is reached, a diverse image is given of the current thoughts about shrinkage, which in itself is a great value. However, the authors of this thesis are trained in creating their own perspectives based on their knowledge, skills and experience. It should therefore be of no surprise that this thesis has a second aim:

> The second aim of this thesis is to contribute to the discussion of the future development of South Limburg, by using the generated knowledge to develop strategies and illustrative designs.

1.2 Shrinkage: a problem?

Since the industrial revolutions of the 19th Century, political decision-making is based upon two types of growth: growth of the human population and growth of the economy (Derks, 2006). When decision makers are confronted with the prospects that the end of the population growth is near and that in some areas a decline has already been deployed, they are shocked (Derks, 2006). Not surprisingly, decision makers do not embrace the phenomenon of shrinkage when this strikes their municipality. Instead, a common experienced process among them is that they first trivialise or even deny shrinkage in their municipality, then try to fight against the phenomenon and only finally accept and direct shrinkage (Interview with Selma van Mensvoort on 4 March 2011 in Maastricht). Some municipal authorities are nowadays even using shrinkage: shrinkage as a chance to improve people's living conditions by focusing for example more on liveability and nature quality (e.g. Pauw, 2011).

Within the current shrinking regions of the Netherlands, Dam et. al. (2010) distinguish two types of reactions among decision makers: challenging and directing shrinkage. The phase of trivialising and denying shrinkage is thus already passed in these regions. Challenging shrinkage aims for a new population and household growth, where directing is the adjustment of the demand and supply to the new circumstances (Dam et. al., 2010). Directing shrinkage does not mean that shrinkage cannot be a problem: "Less inhabitants and households and a smaller potential labour force do not have to be a problem, but the transition from the one to the other situation can be a problem, especially when there is a fast, extensive and long-lasting shrinkage of several neighbouring municipalities at the same time and these municipalities do not anticipate on time" (Dam et. al., 2010, p. 20).

The transition process can thus be a problem. The way how the transition to a lower number of inhabitants and households is given form is therefore the subject of the first part of this thesis. Apparently, people disagree about what are considered to be 'good' and 'bad' ways to deal with the consequences of shrinkage.

The first part of this thesis will focus on this issue. By means of interviews, reference studies and literature studies, the authors of this thesis try to sketch the broadest range of how people interpret shrinkage, and how they deal with its consequences.

1.3 The challenge of shrinkage for landscape architecture and planning

When the range of interpretations of shrinkage and dealings with its consequences is sketched, it is possible to position the role of the disciplines of landscape architecture and planning within the shrinkage debate.

Several studies already demonstrated that shrinkage has consequences for the spatial domain. Dam et. al. (2006) investigated the demographic component in spatial developments, and the possible effects of shrinkage on the housing market, the environment, the level of facilities, the mobility, the regional economy and the spatial management. It will not require much imagination that changes on these fields continue in spatial changes.

The least attractive houses become vacant, each year more and more. Private house owners have many troubles with selling their house for a reasonable price. When nothing is done with these vacant houses, deterioration of whole neighbourhoods is around the corner. Interventions are necessary, but how should this be done and how can it be financed? The uncertainties about the amount of shrinkage, the complexity of the spatial consequences and the relatively low budget make the process of designing and planning

in shrinking regions a real challenge.

With the ability of representing future scenarios, landscape architecture and planning could contribute to the discussion about shrinkage. By discussing the possible and probable futures, and by making representations of desired futures, landscape architecture and planning make a contribution in the imagination of the involved actors. Showing alternatives may stimulate actors to handle in a certain way. It may also result in investments which would not be done when this imagination is absent.

1.4 Case studies

Two types of case studies can be distinguished within this thesis.

The first type covers the region of South Limburg. In this case study, the perspectives of people and organisations who are involved in the shrinkage debate are studied. This case study is used to reach the first research aim, about how actors deal with shrinkage (see section 1.1).

The second type of case studies are used to reach the second research aim, about making a contribution to the current shrinkage debate by developing strategies and illustrative designs (see section 1.1). Two case studies will be done: one in the neighbourhood MSP in Heerlen, and one in the neighbourhoods Overhoven-Baandert in Sittard. Chapters 4 and 5 explain why this low scale level is significant for design interventions.

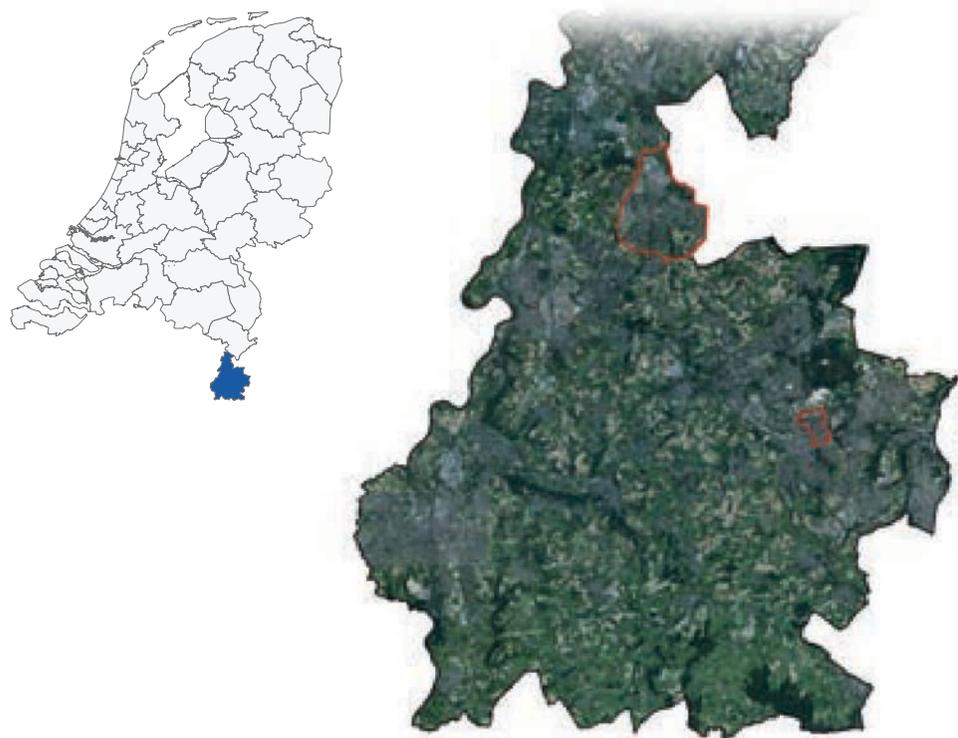


Figure 1.4

The case studies Overhoven-Baandert and MSP in South Limburg



1.5 Research questions

To structure and define the research process, the following research questions are used for this thesis:

Main question:

+ **What is the contribution of landscape architecture and planning concerning the dealing with spatial effects of shrinkage on residential areas in South Limburg?**

Sub questions:

- 1 What is the current status of causes and spatial effects regarding shrinkage on residential areas in South Limburg?
 - What are the causes of shrinkage for the region of South Limburg?
 - What are the spatial effects of transformations on residential areas as a consequence of shrinkage in South Limburg?
- 2 Is there a scope for a new approach for dealing with shrinkage?
 - What is the current practice of landscape architects and spatial planners regarding residential areas on a regional, sub-regional and local scale in the region of South Limburg?
 - How are current perspectives of involved actors on shrinkage influencing projects regarding residential areas carried out by landscape architects and spatial planners?
 - How do landscape architects and spatial planners in other regions deal with the effects of shrinkage on residential areas?
- 3 If a new approach is needed, how does a landscape architectural design for a shrinking residential area look like and is this new approach suitable as a contribution to the discussion about the future of a shrinking region?

1.6 Structure of this thesis

descriptive research This thesis is structured in three parts. Part one presents the descriptive research and fulfils the first research aim. Part two presents the prescriptive research, which is necessary to fulfil the second research aim. Part three is the general reflection upon this thesis.
prescriptive research

Part one starts with chapter 2, which discusses the theoretical and methodological framework as basis for the descriptive research. Chapter 3 describes the results of the descriptive research, followed by conclusions in chapter 4.

Chapter 5 is the first chapter of the prescriptive research. Based upon the conclusions in chapter 4, a vision towards a new approach for dealing with shrinkage in South Limburg is presented in chapter 5. Chapter 6 is the design proposal for the neighbourhood MSP in Heerlen. Chapter 7 is the design proposal for Sittard.

Part three consists of chapter 8, which is the reflection upon this thesis and which answers the main research question.

The annexes can be found on the CD-ROM at the back of this report. These annexes contain a lot of information which is not necessary to read for understanding the message of this thesis, but which are valuable for further deepening into the subject of shrinkage.



.....**PART ONE**.....

“ *Should we get more children to survive? No. Gradual population decline as a consequence of prosperity is a blessing.* ”

Economist Derks (2010)



.....
**DESCRIPTIVE
RESEARCH**

“

The real problem is the ageing of the population.

Managing director of the Foundation Region Branding South Limburg
Ortjens (2011)

”



2.1 Introduction

This chapter elaborates on the underlying theoretical approaches used to reflect on the planning and design practices regarding shrinkage conducted in South Limburg. The way how in these planning and design practices is dealt with shrinkage, the research subject, is seen as a social phenomenon which demands an interpretative research approach. This theoretical frame explains theories and concepts which help to understand how the planning and design practices are seen by different involved persons and organisations.

meta-theory Firstly, the meta-theory of orders of observations is introduced, followed by its application in the case study contexts. Secondly, the concept of storytelling is explained followed by the concepts of agenda setting, issue framing and the choice of means and ends. At the end of this chapter the methodological framework is presented.

2.2 Meta-theory: first- and second order observation

This thesis explores the relation between the spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Limburg and the way how different individuals and organisations deal with this phenomenon. Special attention is paid to the position of spatial planners and landscape architects within this relation. To be able to understand the reciprocal relation between the context in which the spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Limburg take place and the way how individuals and organisations deal with this phenomenon, the authors loosely draw upon the theory of first and second-order observations as developed by Luhmann and Fuchs (Luhmann, 1992; Fuchs, 2001). These sociological concepts may best be explained by introducing the two basic orders of observation: the 'what' and the 'how' (Fuchs, 2001, p. 25). The first order of observation is about observers observing the world around them, the 'what'. This 'realist' order "...observes what it observes and accepts its content as more or less taken for granted" (Fuchs, 2001, p. 25). What they see and do not see depends on their location within the networks of society and culture. Therefore 'truth' and 'facts' are accepted as 'real', although in another cultural network with other observers different 'truths and 'facts' may exist. However, first order observers cannot see these paradigm differences, since they "cannot observe just how they manage to observe" (Fuchs, 2001, p. 25). Here the second order of observation comes in. On this order it becomes visible how, not what, first order observers observe, by observing the observing of first-order observers. Second-order observations are 'constructivist', which means that "...that which empirically exists is a construction of some sort, relative to an observer" (Fuchs, 2001, p. 8).

This theory forms the theoretical basis for the way the research has been set up. The research carried out regarding causes and effects of shrinkage and the conditions which influence these developments, should be seen as first order observations. This means that theories are used which explain important mechanisms about the way how phenomena in the research context are functioning. These mechanisms are not questioned in this research, but 'accepted' as being facts. On the other hand, the research carried out regarding perspectives, goals and actions of involved persons and organisations in the planning and design context, should be seen as second order observations. The authors analyse how spatial professionals, being first order observers, deal with the spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Limburg.

Reflective research

reflexivity By making use of the theory of first and second order observations, the authors think they are better capable of taking a reflexive approach towards the research content. The role of landscape architects and spatial planners becomes explicit by reflecting on their perspectives, goals and actions. According to Beunen (forthcoming) "...a stronger focus on reflexivity in planning and design education is desirable because this can contribute to the sharper delineation of art, science, and mere accepted practice" (Beunen et al.,

forthcoming p. 4). Translated to this thesis, it means that the research is not only about investigating the problematic spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Limburg, choosing the methods to deal with this problem and making plans to find solutions for the problem. This is what first order observers are trained to do, which is not wrong in their own common sense (Fuchs, 2001, p.26). Though this way of working needs the reflection of the academic attitude (Beunen et al., forthcoming, p.7) to be able to deconstruct the deeply rooted paradigms or common sense habits which cannot be questioned in the first order cultural network of landscape architecture and spatial planning. The authors are aware that, although self-observing stimulates reflexivity (Fuchs, 2001, p.20), they are restricted as second order observers since they as well fit in relational networks of the landscape architecture and spatial planning culture, due to their training as landscape architects or spatial planners. On the other hand, no second order observation would be possible without the frames, paradigms, and perspectives belonging to these relational networks since there would be no relation to observe (Fuchs, 2001, p. 33). Therefore, the authors think they should have knowledge about the research context as well. This demands continuously switching between first order observations and second order observations. Translated to this research, it means that the context in which the spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Limburg take place cannot be explained without investigating the perspectives, goals and actions of persons and organisations involved in this phenomenon, and vice versa: these perspectives, goals and actions cannot be made explicit without an understanding of the context in which they come up.

deconstruction

2.3 Applying the theory of observation in the research context

Chapter 3 elaborates on the case and reference studies used in this research. These studies form the research context in which the concepts of orders of observations are applied. For this thesis, case study research makes it possible to tell the narrative of how individuals and organisations deal with the spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Limburg, as well as in other shrinking areas in the Netherlands and in Germany. Since the research context is very complex, it is not the authors intention to draw general conclusions upon the results of the case study research. The results will be used to uncover the way shrinkage has spatial consequences within the context of South Limburg. By telling a narrative, the authors try to "...approach the complexities and contradictions of real life" (Flyvbjerg, 2004a, pp. 429 & 430). It is especially the context that makes generalisation about the way people deal with shrinkage impossible. Value-free generalisations pay little attention to the sensitivity of the issues' contextual circumstances (Fischer, 1998) like the specific spatial organisation and a mix of individuals and organisations that have their own values and interests. This variety is in this thesis illustrated by the use of multiple reference studies. In this respect, Van Assche mentions "...that in post-structuralist interpretation theory, context is mostly replaced by a number of other concepts, like framing" (..) and "narrative" (Van Assche, 2007, p. 114). These concepts will be explained in detail in sections 2.4 and 2.5.

case study research

post-structuralist interpretation theory

2.4 Storytelling concept

As written in section 2.2, the shrinkage debate in South Limburg is created by the perspectives, goals and actions of involved persons and organisations. In this section, the research concepts and methodologies are explained which are used to analyse these perspectives, goals and actions of the involved persons and organisations within the context of the case and reference studies in chapter three.

Many different perspectives, actions and goals regarding the spatial consequences of shrinkage coexist. If we frame these perspectives, actions and goals as stories or narratives, the concept of storytelling can be used to explain why different stories coexist and why some are more dominant than others. Arguing in line with Throgmorton's theory

about storytelling (2003), people involved in a planning process can be seen as authors who write texts. These texts are meant to be persuasive; they are intended to convince the reader (Throgmorton, 2003). Since “multiple stories are being told simultaneously” (Throgmorton, 2003, p.129), some stories may seem more appealing than others. According to Throgmorton there are no true stories, only constructed stories. The content of a story thereby depends on the purpose that the author has in telling the story (Throgmorton, 2003, p. 126). Parts of a story are left out; they do not fit the purpose. Other parts are accentuated (Throgmorton, 2003, p. 128). However, although the author has a clear purpose with his story, due to the existence of multiple simultaneously present stories, the meaning of his story can be interpreted in many different ways by many different readers (Throgmorton, 2003, p. 129). If we translate this concept to planning, it is argued that “...planning is performed through story in a myriad of ways” (Sandercock, 2003, p. 12). Sandercock discusses a number of ways in which storytelling is used as a form of power in the planning process. For this thesis four of them are most applicable and described below.

Community participation processes

As many as possible people are invited to tell about their local neighbourhood and living environment which makes it possible for planners to draw on local knowledge. In the reasoning of Sandercock this helps democratising planning (Sandercock, 2003, pp. 14 & 15).

Non-verbal stories

Art forms like music or video may help to tell stories. Sandercock argues this way of storytelling is used in two ways in the planning process: the ability to invent, to tell and listen to stories is stimulated, as well as the creation of spaces where these stories can be heard (Sandercock, 2003, pp. 16 & 17).

Story and policy

Sandercock elaborates on the way how storytelling influences the relation between knowledge and action. According to Marris, “...academics are powerful critics but weak storytellers” (Marris, 1997 in Sandercock, 2003, p. 19). On the other hand “...community actors have great stories to tell, but no means of telling them, except to each other” (Marris, 1997 in Sandercock, 2003, p. 19). Sandercock therefore argues that academics and planners should develop skills with which they are better equipped to tell stories that “...capture the imagination of a broader and more political audience than our colleagues alone” (Sandercock, 2003, p. 20). She concludes with stating that if planners want to be more effective in turning knowledge into action, they should be better capable in using the (persuasive) craft of storytelling (Sandercock, 2003, p. 20).

Story as catalyst for change

Stories can offer alternatives to change existing dominant discourses or paradigms. Successful stories can serve as inspiration, they can bring a message of hope. According to Sandercock, people engaged in planning are often members of the dominant network. They are mostly unable to recognise and question the dominant cultural norms and practices. Stories can challenge and question this dominant network (Sandercock, pp. 18 & 19).

These four forms of storytelling support the explanation of the empirical results described in chapter 3. The way the interviewees build the constructions of reality of their stories help to gain insight in what they deem important within the broader shrinkage debate. The form of storytelling is chosen according to what fits best in the given situation an interviewee is confronted with.

For our research on the perspectives, goals and actions of the different individuals and organisations within the context of the spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Lim-

burg, we think it is crucial to understand the role of stories in the planning process. According to Sandercock this understanding "...can also be an aid to critical thinking, to deconstructing the arguments of others" (Sandercock, 2003, p. 12). Using the concept of storytelling may help us to gain insight in how involved actors think about the role of landscape architects and spatial planners in shrinking regions.

In the case and reference studies, different perspectives, goals and actions regarding the spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Limburg are at stake in literature, in interviews and in panel discussions during conferences. People advocating these stories often use strategies like agenda setting and framing to promote their stories or to make them more appealing. Analysing these stories makes it possible to see 'how' these persons and organisations deal with the spatial consequences of shrinkage in South Limburg. By reflecting on the way how people tell their stories, the underlying assumptions and paradigms based on their position in their cultural network become visible. The authors consider agenda setting and framing strategies when they are used by the involved actors. In this theoretical framework, the theories behind agenda setting and framing plus the choice of means and ends are made explicit and explained. However, in the research context the mechanisms behind both concepts are very intertwined. Therefore these concepts are often applied in a combined way in chapter 3.

2.5 Theories on issue framing, means & ends and agenda setting

Framing the issue – how do involved actors react on shrinkage?

Every problem is someone's problem. This statement can be underpinned by the theory of interactional issue framing. Issue framing can be formulated as "How parties interactively construct the meaning of issues in the conflict situation" (Dewulf et al., 2009, p. 166). This can be explained by taking the research subject, shrinkage, as illustration. As we will see in chapter 3, different individuals have different ideas, based on their own stakes, about what shrinkage actually is. Some see it as a real problem for the prosperity of the region, while others see it as just a phenomenon-as-it-is with which people have to deal in the best way possible. The existence of different views on the phenomenon of shrinkage means that there is no clear agreement about a common (problem) definition on what shrinkage actually is. Interactional issue framing may help to reveal how involved actors emphasise or downplay particular parts of the issue (Dewulf et al, 2009), or when referring to storytelling (see above), how these actors emphasise or downplay particular parts of the stories they tell. Based on the ways how actors frame shrinkage and its underlying issues, their reactions on the question 'what should be done about it' differ as well.

Formulating ends and choosing means – What has to happen in the shrinking region and how does it have to happen in the actors' viewpoint?

instrumentalism The relation between defining a problem, formulating goals as to when the problem is 'solved' and choosing the means to solve the problem is a complicated one. From an instrumentalist point of view, the common idea is to define a problem, set goals and choose means to solve the problem at stake (Fischer, 1998; Ringeling, 2002). However, it is not simply about setting goals and choosing objective methods or means to solve a certain problem. As well as with defining problems also means and ends are formulated and used depending on the people who formulate and use them. There are no value neutral means, they are shaped in a political context (Peters, 2004; Ringeling, 2002). Most literature (Fischer, 1998; Peters, 2004; Ringeling, 2002) is focused on the formulation of problems, means and ends within a government policy context. In our research the scope is broadened to all involved actors. They can represent governments, agencies, landscape architecture offices, housing corporations, citizens and so on. All these parties frame problems, set goals and choose means to solve their problems. Therefore we have

to translate the reasons that policy literature gives on the question why certain actors choose certain means. Ringeling (2002) states that "the design of the instrument is effected by the mix of instruments and by the political-administrative decision making on that mix" (Ringeling, 2002, p. 11). This makes the characteristics of means difficult to specify (Ringeling, 2002, p. 10). The third reason forms the normative side of means (Ringeling, 2002, p. 16). Means can also be goals, depending on the one who prefers to use a particular method above others. This preference can then be related back to "...the interaction between the observer and its segment of the world or niche" (Fuchs, 2001, p. 22) in which niche is understood as a "...variable interaction between an observer and that which he observes" (Fuchs, 2001, p.22). To give an example: an actor makes use of a particular method because he has experience with this method, based on, in his view, positive results in the past. Because of this niche, it can be hard for a person or organisation to make use of for them unknown means, since they do not fit in their 'selective pattern of observation', "...as an actualization of one possibility among alternatives" (Fuchs, 2001, p. 25).

Setting the agenda - How are the involved actors trying to put their own problem definition, goals and means on the agenda?

Agenda setting literature discusses the way how a topic is put on the agenda and gains attention. The agenda can be defined as a discussion within a specific context about topics which gain attention during a limited time period (own definition). In agenda setting literature, theories in mass-media context (e.g. McCombs, 2005; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007; Sheafer, 2007) and in political/policy context (e.g. Bröer, 2008; Nibet & Hüge, 2007; True et al., 2007) form important discussions among scientists. In the light of our research, agenda setting theories form a rich source of inspiration. However, they cannot be applied one to one in chapter 3 since we do not focus on a particular (mass) media or political/policy agenda setting context. We are interested how involved persons and organisations within the broad context of the shrinkage debate in the Netherlands, though particularly in South Limburg, make use of their visions on shrinkage to persuade a larger audience. This audience can be made up out of politicians and policymakers, spatial professionals, financial or demographic experts, civilians and so on. Since most agenda setting theories are model-based (e.g. Bachrach & Baratz, 1970; Kingdon, 1984; Baumgartner & Jones, 1991; Sabatier, 1998) it is difficult to apply them to a more normative context, since these models are largely quantitative.

"Rather than altogether rejecting the empirical methods of the social sciences, I argue that the issue is how to situate them within the context of normative concerns that give their findings meaning" (Fischer, 1998, p.130).

With this quotation we want to stress the way we apply agenda setting theories in chapter 3. In line with Fischer's argumentation the authors do not want to prove the fact that involved actors set agenda's, they want to understand how and why they set agenda's (Fischer, 1998).

2.6 Methodological framework

In this section is with the help of the research scheme presented in figure X explained how the thesis research has been set up. The authors started with a literature scan to explore scientific articles and policy documents addressing shrinkage. Already in this early phase it turned out that this phenomenon is given different meanings by different the authors. Therefore was chosen not to conduct research on shrinkage itself (i.e. researching the causes and consequences of shrinkage and policy approaches to deal with them), though on the different meanings, interpretations and perspectives regarding the spatial consequences of shrinkage on residential areas and what this means for the role of landscape architects and planners.

Case study approach

The authors were convinced that analysing meanings, interpretations and perspectives would require a qualitative research approach. Therefore a case study approach was chosen. Decided was to do extensive research within a single case study since the time space of this thesis was limited. South Limburg was chosen as study area since this Dutch region has an urban character and is the leading shrinkage region of the Netherlands as was explained in section 1.1. Next, to put the results obtained in South Limburg in a broader perspective and to acquire inspiration for the prescriptive research, reference studies were conducted in the Dutch regions of Zuid-Limburg, Groningen, Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and the Achterhoek and the German regions of Sachsen-Anhalt and Sachsen. These reference studies are presented in annexes II and III. In the prescriptive research again two case studies were conducted within the larger case study of the descriptive part. These two case studies serve as study area for the designs made.

Literature study

The literature used in this thesis can be split up in scientific and non-scientific literature. The scientific literature study has been conducted for two different purposes. Firstly the scientific literature introduced in this chapter has been used to set the research focus. The theories and concepts presented act as a guideline for the way the research results are interpreted. Secondly the scientific literature used in chapter 3 and beyond, is used to add information and deepen the analysis of the research results. The non-scientific literature (e.g. newspaper articles, policy documents, internet websites) is used to clarify interpretations and visions, to introduce issues related to shrinkage and to add information.

Interviews

26 open interviews were conducted from the case and reference studies. These interviews provided the most interpretations, meanings and perspectives regarding shrinkage and thus form the most important source of information for this thesis. Though, during these interviews also practical information (e.g. ideas, inspiration, 'how to' advices) was obtained for the prescriptive part of this thesis. Extra information about these interviews is added in annex I.

Conferences

The authors also visited four conferences on shrinkage in the Netherlands. Information from presentations and discussions held during these conferences was also used to explore the different interpretations and perspectives regarding shrinkage, made by professionals and academics. Information regarding the conferences can be found in annex IV.

Empirical observations

The empirical observations made during the research process are mostly about shrinking neighbourhoods. Many neighbourhoods in South Limburg, other Dutch regions and Germany were being visited and observed. Photographs were taken to analyse the current situation of neighbourhoods both with and without new design interventions to deal with shrinkage. For the authors, these observations served to get familiar with the visible aspects of shrinkage, as well as to offer inspirations for possible design solutions proposed in the prescriptive research part.

.....Dealing with shrinkage.....

“ *We have to think in a different way about growth; it has to do with authenticity and our own strength.* ”

Creative entrepreneur Hermans & city artist Meertens (2011)



3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Introduction

“Zuid-Limburg, bright site of life” (Stichting Regiobranding Zuid-Limburg 2011), “Lust for life” (VVV Zuid-Limburg, 2011a) and “Zuid-Limburg, dé fiets- en wandelregio bij uitstek” (South Limburg, the pre-eminent cycle and hiking region) (VVV Zuid-Limburg, 2011b); some of the many slogans promoting the region of South Limburg for tourists, companies, higher educated people from other parts of the Netherlands and even from abroad. The image of a green, hilly and spacious region inhabited by friendly people living a ‘Burgundian’ lifestyle is seen as a strong marketing brand by the different tourist and region branding agencies. On the other hand, the region of about 608,000 inhabitants (CBS, 2011c) faces a declining number of people and households. It may be seen as somewhat odd that a region with such perceived (landscape) qualities, loses inhabitants instead of attracting them. This chapter therefore starts with a brief explanation of the shrinkage process in South Limburg. The shrinkage process forms the background of the main point of the chapter: to give an overview of different definitions of and perspectives on shrinkage as stated by people who are involved in the shrinkage debate of South Limburg and to show the role of landscape architecture and planning within this debate. During this consideration side steps are made to related topics in other shrinking areas in the Netherlands and Germany as well as to discussions held during academic and governmental congresses. Since the backbone of this chapter is formed by several interviews with key persons in the shrinkage debate in South Limburg, the interviewees will first be introduced.

3.1.2 Interviewees

In the previous chapter, storytelling was explained as a valuable concept to analyse why different stories coexist and why some are more dominant than others. Stories are neither true or false, they are constructed by an author who has a certain purpose with his story. The people interviewed for this thesis have their own specific perspectives about shrinkage in South Limburg. Since these perspectives may differ from each other and are sometimes even opposing, the differences between the perspectives are interesting to research. The interviewees were chosen for two reasons. Some expressed their perspectives on shrinkage in television documentaries, newspaper articles, weblogs and magazines. Others were involved in the spatial planning or design processes in shrinking areas.

The documentary ‘Krimpen aan de Maas’ in VPRO’s Tegenlicht on the 29th of November 2010, described the perspectives of two architects on shrinkage in South Limburg. Jo Coenen is professor of Building Sciences at the Technical University of Delft, a well-known Dutch architect and owner of an international architecture firm. Jerome Paumen works as an architect at HVN Architecten b.v. in Hoensbroek. In the documentary, their perspectives are being presented as opposing: Coenen wants high scale (cultural) investments in the city centres of South Limburg and pleas for ‘Bandstad’, a large urban agglomeration between Maastricht, Liege, Hasselt, Sittard-Geleen, Heerlen and Aachen; to the contrary, Paumen pleas for small scale investments in the neighbourhoods and villages of South Limburg, inspired by the local and regional identity.

When it comes to the question of ‘how and to what extent should be invested in a shrinking region?’, the perspectives on shrinkage of Wim Ortjens and Josse De Voogd are opposing as well. Wim Ortjens is managing director of the foundation Region Branding South Limburg which promotes the region of South Limburg. Josse de Voogd works at the Scientific Bureau of GroenLinks, a Dutch national political party. On his website Ortjens is sarcastic about what he calls ‘shrinkage believers’ (Ortjens, 2011). Ortjens states that it would be better to put all effort in investments in South Limburg (Ortjens, 2011). De Voogd is very critical about these investments. In an article in magazine ‘De Helling’, he asserts that the focus of investments should be primarily on the axis Amster-

dam – Utrecht and surroundings, since this is the only way in which the Netherlands can compete with other metropolises in the world (Voogd, 2010b).

The perspective of landscape architects and urban planners on shrinkage is illustrated by Selma van Mensvoort, Thierry Goossens and Ron van Genderen. Van Mensvoort works as urban planner at Buro 5 and is concerned with different shrinkage related projects in South Limburg. Goossens, landscape architect at Parkstad Limburg, works on a future perspective for the Parkstad region. Van Genderen, director and urban planner at BGSV in Rotterdam, worked with his team on an urban development plan for the shrinking neighbourhood MSP in Heerlen.

The last series of interviewees are related to the case of the shrinking neighbourhood of Kerkrade-West. Many of the inhabitants left this neighbourhood. The remaining inhabitants are confronted with depreciation, crime, a degraded social housing stock and open or 'released' spaces where buildings already have been demolished. In the media, the neighbourhood received a bad reputation as being 'the' shrinking neighbourhood of the Netherlands (Flier, 2011). However, the municipality of Kerkrade is trying to improve the liveability of the neighbourhood by means of redevelopment. Hein Bracun is neighbourhood manager of Kerkrade-West and Slobodan Alicehajic is urban designer for the business case Kerkrade-West. Both are employed at the municipality of Kerkrade. Johan de Niet is area developer at Hestia Groep, a medium-large housing corporation in the municipalities of Kerkrade and Landgraaf. In Kerkrade-West, Hestia is the owner of most social housing. Peter van den Berg is architect and owner of Archilot office for Architecture and Urban Planning in Maastricht, who has developed a reconstruction plan for the district Heilust within Kerkrade-West. Wiel Beijer, journalist at newspaper De Limburger, and Karin Hillebrand, journalist at regional television channel L1, started the multimedia project 'Mijn Heilust' to raise attention for the daily issues of people living in a shrinking neighbourhood. The last interviewees are inhabitants of Kerkrade-West who have united themselves in the inhabitant platform of Kerkrade-West.

*business case
area developer*

Although the interviewees are mentioned in relation to a specific subject within the shrinkage debate of South Limburg, the authors of this thesis also interviewed them about their general views on shrinkage, taking place in South Limburg. Where relevant these outcomes are discussed as well. The neighbourhood of Heilust in Kerkrade-West, earlier described to be considered as 'the' shrinking neighbourhood in the Netherlands, is taken as an in-depth business case where multiple actors and their perspectives are involved. The full versions of the interviews can be found in annex I.

3.1.3 Side steps: Former East Germany and other regions in the Netherlands

South Limburg is not the only shrinking region within the Netherlands. For a good understanding of the situation in South Limburg, it is important to have a look at the larger (Dutch) context. Therefore the handling of the shrinkage issue in other parts of the Netherlands is taken into account as well. These regions are Northeast Groningen, Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and the Achterhoek. Most attention is paid to their experiences with shrinkage and the policy measures these regions introduce to handle shrinkage.

The situation in the shrinking Former East German cities of Leinefelde, Dessau, Leipzig, Halle and Naumburg was used to explore new ways of designing and policy making within a shrinking neighbourhood, city or even region. Where relevant, experiences gained in these cities are being elaborated on as specific possible outcomes of shrinkage issues which are now being discussed in South Limburg.

3.2 Shrinkage in South Limburg

3.2.1 Introduction

South Limburg is a region in the southeast of the Netherlands and has a much longer borderline with Belgium and Germany than with the rest of the Netherlands. The region itself can be described as an area with many varieties on short distances. It can be split up in several sub-regions, each with its own characteristics. The largest city and provincial capital Maastricht is situated in the valley of the Meuse river and contains 119,494 inhabitants in May 2011 (CBS, 2011d). The inner city of Maastricht is a major (tourist) attraction and business meeting point with about 20.8 million visitors in 2005 (OWP Research, 2007). The Academic hospital, the University of Maastricht and several governmental offices and agencies provide the majority of available jobs within the city. The municipality of Sittard-Geleen, 20 kilometres northeast of Maastricht, is best known for the automotive industry of Nedcar and the chemical industry of DSM and Sabc. The municipality has 94,757 inhabitants in May 2011 (CBS, 2011e). The eastern part of South Limburg adjacent to the German border contains the largest urban agglomeration. Here 8 municipalities participate in the WGR-plus region of Parkstad Limburg with about 255.000 inhabitants (Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg, 2011). Heerlen, the largest city within the agglomeration, has 89,207 inhabitants in May 2011 (CBS, 2011f). In between these three urban areas the more rural 'Heuvelland' (Hilly County) forms a touristic hotspot where most campsites and bungalow parks can be found. The 'Heuvelland' has many small villages which tourists experience as picturesque in combination with the hills, streams and landscape sceneries. A detailed explanation of the landscape and the genesis of South Limburg is described in annex V.

WGR-plus region

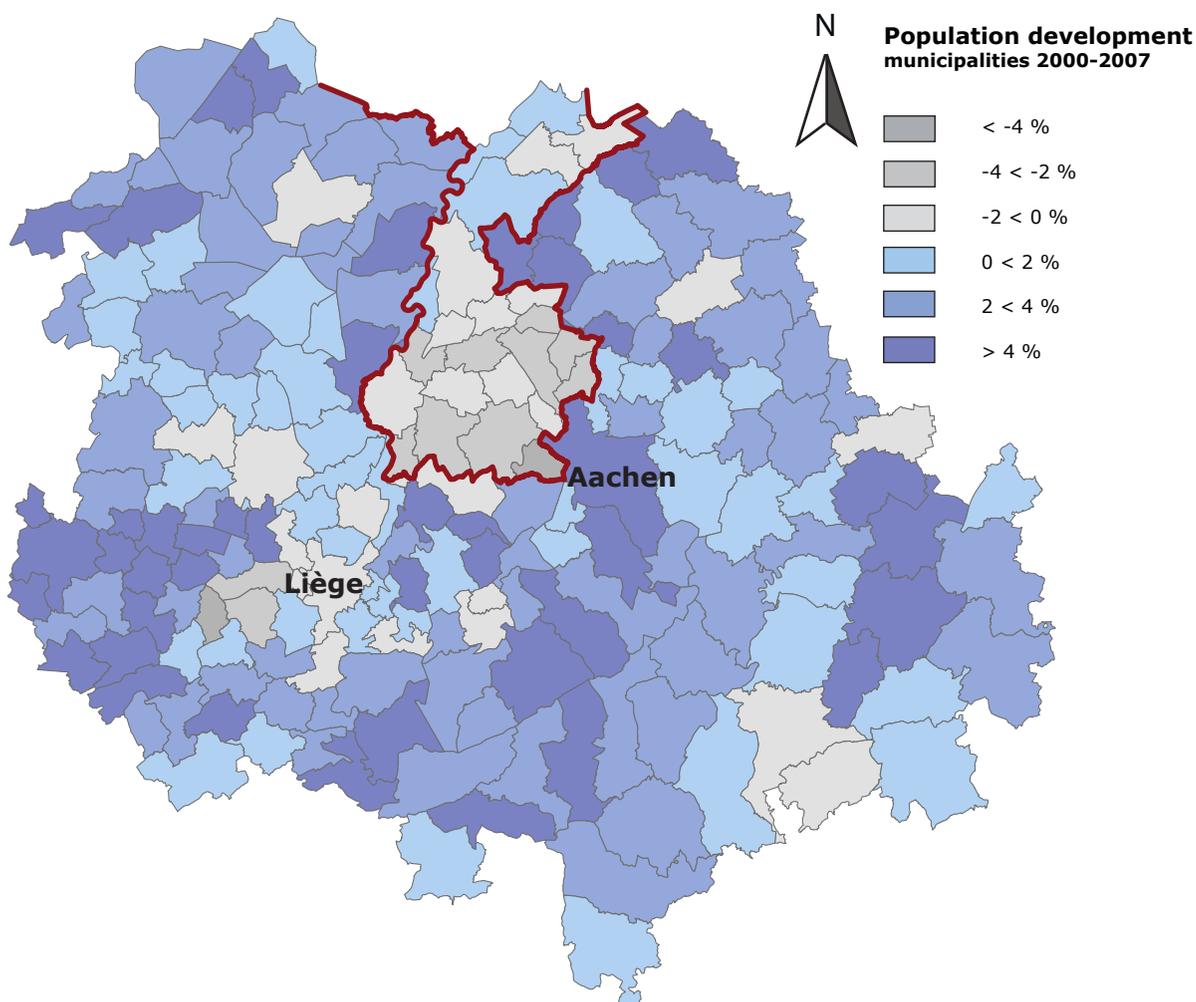


Figure 3.2 Shrinkage in a cross-border perspective [scale 1 : 1,000,000]

3.2.2 Knowledge without disagreements: causes and effects of shrinkage in a historic perspective

Before the start of the twentieth century, South Limburg was a region which was dominated by agricultural land use and furthermore consisted of the capital Maastricht and small villages. This all changed in 1899 when the first state owned coal mine started producing coals for the Dutch energy market. With the start of large scale coal mining many new employees were needed. These were attracted from other regions of the Netherlands as well as from other European countries. Small villages like Geleen, Kerkrade and Heerlen expanded rapidly in number of inhabitants. The number of coal mines raised in thirty years to eleven due to the high demand for coals. The demand for coals increased further after the Second World War. In 1958 the coal mining in South Limburg reached its peak with 58,000 people working in the mines. Nevertheless, in 1965 prime minister Joop den Uyl proclaimed the closure of all Dutch coal mines and as a result, between 1967 and 1974 all mines were closed. Due to cheap coals from abroad and the discovery of a gas bubble in Slochteren in the north of the Netherlands in 1959, the mining in South Limburg had become relatively too expensive (LGOG, 2011).

Since almost 30% of the labour force of South Limburg was employed in the mining industry or its suppliers, the unemployment rates increased drastically in the late sixties and early seventies (LGOG, 2011). The Dutch national government tried to fight the high unemployment rates by developing a policy which stimulated companies and governmental agencies to move their activities to, among others, South Limburg. As a result of this policy many of the former mining employees found a job at the chemical industry of DSM in Geleen, the CBS (Statistics Netherlands) office in Heerlen and DAF (nowadays Nedcar) automobile factory in Born. However, due to the oil crisis in 1973, again many people became unemployed (LGOG, 2011). In the eighties in a town like Kerkrade, the unemployment rates were up to 25% of the labour force (Geilenkirchen, 2011). The high unemployment rates in the eighties were mainly caused by the inability to work, early retirements and a downward spiral of second generation effects with high youth unemployment (Provincie Limburg, 1987).

These economic developments are an explanation for the rise and fall of the amount of people living in South Limburg between 1950 and 1990. On the one hand there were (unemployed) people who moved out of the region to places where they could find better job opportunities. On the other hand there was still a natural population growth. After 1990, the combination of low birth rates, ageing and outmigration of mostly young higher educated people (braindrain) causes the demographic decline in South Limburg (Derks et al., 2010). Both the fall of the birth rates and ageing of the population are not unique for South Limburg; these developments are taking place in the whole of the Netherlands and even on a European scale. Fertility dropped because society changed its view to a more modern way of thinking. Part of this modern way of thinking was the emancipation of women (Lesthaege & Van der Kaa in: Evers et al., 2006). Attitudes towards forming a family changed and people got married later in life, or remained single. In this perspective the amount of break ups also emerged (Lesthaege & Van der Kaa in: Evers et al., 2006). The inevitable consequence was a significant drop in the natural birth rate (Evers et al., 2006).

The demographic and economic development of the former coal mining region of South Limburg fits in a more general development pattern of former mono-structural regions. Based on discussions among academics during the conference on shrinkage in Europe, held in Amsterdam on the 16th and 17th February 2011, it turned out that most academics agree on the causes of shrinkage in former industrial cities or regions. For South Limburg two kinds of causes as formulated by Wiechmann, professor of spatial planning at the technical university of Dortmund, are relevant: firstly economic restructuring, turning from an industry-based economy to a knowledge-based economy, and secondly demographics, which can be subdivided into low fertility rates and immigrant settlement

rates (Wiechmann, 2011). Since 1997 these changes lead to a population decline in South Limburg. According to Derks (2006, p.13), this decline is structural.

Shrinkage can have its effects in different ways. The Topteam Krimp (topteam shrinkage) conducted research on the effects of shrinkage for Parkstad Limburg on behalf of the ministry of internal affairs. According to their report, shrinkage has consequences for housing, education, economy, the labour market, mobility, healthcare, cooperation of public administrations and financing (Dijkstal & Mans, 2009a). For housing some critical observations are made. Firstly due to the decline of the number of households, housing vacancies are occurring in socially weaker neighbourhoods which therefore decline even more. Secondly the changing population composition with relatively more elderly people does not match with the current housing stock. According to Dijkstal and Mans (2009a) this second observation however is a consequence of ageing of the population, not shrinkage, and occurs throughout the whole of the Netherlands. Another important observation is the belief that shrinkage costs money; governments of shrinking regions 'earn' less due to a declining number of financial sources, because their financial system is partially based upon the number of inhabitants (Dijkstal & Mans, 2009a).

The effects of shrinkage in South Limburg fit in the overview of effects which were being discussed at the above listed conference of shrinkage in Europe. Wiechmann (2011) mentions as important occurring effects: a population decline in the second half of the twentieth century, high housing vacancies, a deteriorating (governmental) financial basis, an oversized infrastructure and a struggle to accept shrinkage as a phenomenon in the beginning of the process. These effects were illustrated by examples from Former East Germany, Taranto in Italy, Porto in Portugal, the United States and Japan. Wiechmann (2011) states that the differences between cities can be found in the extent and the spatial pattern of the vacancies. Fol (2011) adds more effects: increasing unemployment and social segregation within, and between cities. For example the amount of immigrants in the shrinking Parisian suburbs increased while the upper class left. This observation is also in line with what is happening in South Limburg, especially in Parkstad Limburg.

3.2.3 *The start of disagreements: is shrinkage a phenomenon or is it a problem?*

After the somewhat 'neutral' discussion of possible causes and effects of shrinkage in South Limburg, the authors want to shift the attention to the different views on the shrinkage issue in South Limburg. Several (shrinkage) experts, organisations and research institutes gave recommendations how the region should deal with shrinkage, now and in the future (e.g. Dijkstal & Mans, 2009a; Rijksoverheid, 2009; Deetman, 2011; Verwest & Van Dam, 2010; Gerrichhauzen & Dogterom, 2007). Their points of attention are not very different. All reports mention the necessary restructuring of the housing market, a new regional financial perspective, more regional cooperation (between governments), the need to find solutions for unfitting national policies in shrinking regions, the need for high quality education and the aim for a vital regional economy with some main points of focus. All recommendations are particularly aimed at the role of the local, provincial and national government.

Though not only governments are being confronted with the shrinkage issue; there are far more people and their organisations playing a significant role. Furthermore, between and even within governmental organisations different views on what shrinkage is, what it means and how to (re)act on it, exist. Therefore in the next section different problem definitions regarding shrinkage are being discussed.

3.2.4 *The different meanings of shrinkage*

The different interpretations of the definition of shrinkage already start within the academic debate. According to Wiechmann (2011), there is no consensus on a clear definition

of the term 'shrinking city'. There is consensus about the characteristic of a decreasing population, the quantitative aspects however differ widely. And then there is discussion whether the definition of a shrinking city should contain other elements of shrinkage, which Wiechmann describes as "a structural and multidimensional phenomenon" (Wiechmann, 2011, slide 16.). If the range of case studies of shrinking cities and regions presented during the previous mentioned conference on shrinkage in Europe is taken into consideration, then this statement can be underpinned by some examples. The case studies presented vary from what we would call, within the Dutch context, suburbanisation which takes place in Porto, Portugal, to declining industrial cities in Poland, France and the UK.

For the Netherlands, the definition of shrinkage as made by the predecessor of the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving) in 2006, is still leading in Dutch national governmental publications and used in the reports of the Topteam krimp (Topteam shrinkage):

"The Topteam shrinkage focusses on substantial and structural population and household decline in a region (in which urban areas can be part of that region). This means that the Topteam points at shrinkage on the long term, in the course of which is not only spoken about a decline of the number of inhabitants, but also of the number of households." (Dijkstal & Mans, 2009b, p. 14) (translated in English)

In line with this definition the region of Zeeuws-Vlaanderen in the south west of the Netherlands, will not face shrinkage before 2040. The province of Zeeland in which the region of Zeeuws-Vlaanderen is located, disagrees with this conclusion. Based on a more recent prognosis and their own methodology Zeeuws-Vlaanderen will face shrinkage after 2020 (Provincie Zeeland, 2009).

Since the definitions of shrinkage are kind of arbitrary because they depend upon the specific context in which a certain definition is being agreed on, also the interpretations of shrinkage differ to a great extent. This can be illustrated by some examples from publications of organisations actively dealing with shrinkage in South Limburg and people interviewed by the authors on the South Limburg shrinkage issue.

According to the province of Limburg, shrinkage as a phenomenon is not a problem, rather a chance to improve the living, labour and residential climate. Shrinkage is not a policy aim; it is a condition which makes a change in policy necessary if goals want to be reached. However, the reality of the threats cannot be overseen since these form important challenges (Provincie Limburg, 2008). With this view the province tries to frame the shrinkage debate in a more positive setting. It can be seen as a reaction on the negative image of shrinkage as a huge problem which is often stated that way in national and regional media. Especially the assumption that the unattractiveness of Limburg causes the shrinkage issue is being framed as a complete misunderstanding. The province puts a great deal of emphasis on the decline of the fertility rates as the main cause of shrinkage in Limburg, combined with a negative migration rate of mostly young and higher educated people who do not return after their study period outside the region (Provincie Limburg, 2008). It is very difficult to research if this way of framing by the province of Limburg has its effects, i.e. a more positive image of the province in the mind of the Dutch people.

Architect Van den Berg of the office for architecture and urban planning Archilot takes a different perspective on shrinkage. According to Van den Berg, fear is a huge problem when dealing with shrinkage. Shrinkage is expressed as something unknown; people do not know what bears down on them, what the future will bring. The thought 'more, more, more' is under pressure. That is why, according to Van den Berg, we have to get rid of the growth model and plan space differently (Interview with Peter van den Berg on 27 January 2011 in Maastricht).

Another interesting view on shrinkage is made by Beijer and Hillebrand, two journalists who made a half year documentary on the daily issues of a shrinking neighbourhood, 'Heilust' in Kerkrade-west, part of the Parkstad region. According to Beijer and Hillebrand the term 'shrinkage' is for professionals and scientists, not for inhabitants of the neighbourhood. The residents show little interest for the phenomenon of shrinkage, while there is significant attention for related phenomena as impoverishment and ageing of the population. The people of the neighbourhood are more concerned with developments which directly influence their daily lives (Interview with Wiel Beijer & Karin Hillebrand on 26 January 2011 in Maastricht).

Wim Ortjens of the Foundation Region Branding South Limburg (Stichting Regiobranding Zuid-Limburg) sees shrinkage not as a problem. The fact that the amount of inhabitants decreases, provides the region with a sense of spacious fresh air. Of course it is causing some problems with project developers and vacant housing. However, it is nothing which cannot be overcome if coordinated well by the government. The real problem is, according to Ortjens, the ageing of the population in South Limburg. On the other hand, Ortjens sees problems occurring when there is a decrease of external money from the national government for the region. This will hamper the development of South Limburg to become a flourishing region again (Interview with Wim Ortjens on 27 January 2011 in Maastricht). Ortjens clearly tries to reframe the problem definition; shifting it from the consequences of shrinkage to the consequences of the ageing of society.

So far the focus has been on the definition of shrinkage (what is shrinkage) and the problem framing of shrinkage (how are consequences of shrinkage interpreted). The next step is to show the different visions on shrinkage in the way how the region of South Limburg may deal with this phenomenon and its perceived consequences in the future.

3.3 Different interpretations on dealing with shrinkage

3.3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 explained that people and their organisations are part of one or more cultural networks. The way how they react on the phenomenon of shrinkage and its effects as well as the ideas they have on how to deal with the effects of shrinkage, are dependent upon these people's and organisation's location within the networks of society and culture (cf. Fuchs, 2001). The perception of what shrinkage is and also the conditions related to shrinkage are differently interpreted in different settings. For example, scientific debates focus on other shrinkage related aspects than problem definitions and actions of policy makers or spatial professionals. In this section, the different interpretations and perspectives regarding shrinkage are made more explicit.

3.3.2 Role of the local, provincial and national governments in the shrinkage debate

A good example of different perspectives regarding policy makers, is given by the new year speeches of the mayors of South Limburg's largest municipalities Maastricht, Sittard-Geleen and Heerlen. These illustrate the different interpretations of shrinkage within the region's local governments very well.

"Ladies and gentlemen, despite the critical remarks (...), I hold my ground that it would be a shame if our city would come to terms with shrinkage of the population". (New year speech Onno Hoes, mayor of Maastricht on the 2nd of January 2011, p. 2. English translation by authors)

The mayor refers to the yearly arrival of 5000 new citizens who follow courses as students at the university of Maastricht. This forms his direct argument why the acceptance

of shrinkage is not an issue, since Hoes doubts whether the city shrinks (Hoes, 2010). Hoes underpins this direct argument by referring to the statement "...that a city with the charisma of Maastricht should be able to measure up to Cambridge, Oxford, Fontainebleau, Grenoble, Bologna." (Hoes, 2011, p. 2 & 3) It seems that the issue of shrinkage on a regional scale level conflicts with the ambitions of the city's government which are clearly aimed at an international scale level (e.g. the organisation of Maastricht Cultural Capital 2018).

In his new year speech the mayor of Sittard-Geleen mentions the declining number of inhabitants of his municipality. Shrinkage has become visible and its impact recognisable. In his view of dealing with shrinkage, Cox makes a plea which rather contrasts with the Maastricht point of view:

"Shrinkage is not a local problem, but strikes the whole of South Limburg. Therefore it demands a South Limburg approach." (New year speech Sjraar Cox, mayor of Sittard-Geleen on 04 Januar 2011. English translation by authors)

Also in other parts of his speech the mayor emphasises the need to cooperate on the scale level of South Limburg. He mentions Brainport, the joint campus development of Eindhoven, Sittard-Geleen, Maastricht and Heerlen, as one of the most important projects where regional cooperation with Maastricht and Heerlen is really necessary (Cox, 2011).

Of all three mayors, the mayor of Heerlen pays the most attention to shrinkage: over half of his speech. Depla relates nearly all of his themes (employment, regional cooperation, successes, future city vision and security) to shrinkage. "The shrinkage issue is according to me the most fundamental job (the city has to face)" (New year speech Paul Depla, mayor of Heerlen, on 06 Januar 2011. English translation by authors). The mayor makes a difference in acceptance of and resistance versus shrinkage. Depla states that the natural shrinkage (less children, more deaths) is something which is inevitable. However, the shrinkage due to migration (Depla calls this removal truck-shrinkage) should not be accepted by policy makers and politicians, since this tells something about the attractiveness of an area (Depla, 2011). Overall, it is remarkable that shrinkage is no longer used as a container term, incorporating many different interpretations and assumptions within a single word. It shows that the municipality of Heerlen is aware of the multiple explanations that the term 'shrinkage' may contain. And in line with Sittard-Geleen, also Heerlen aims at regional cooperation of Maastricht, Sittard-Geleen and Heerlen to receive the most benefit out of the Brainport development (Depla, 2011).

When these three new year speeches are compared with each other, it becomes clear that a regional governmental approach on the consequences of shrinkage is currently a somewhat hard to execute task. Furthermore, the differences in shrinkage approach between these three cities are not the only contradictions regarding shrinkage within the Dutch administration. Dutch state minister of internal affairs Donner explained, during the Conference 'De kracht van krimp' (the strength of shrinkage) in Den Haag, the Dutch cabinet's view on the role of the Dutch government in general. In short it can be summarised that the governmental organ must become more compact with less costs and with more administrative coherence as well as more effectiveness. 6.5 billion euro has to be cut down on the whole governmental organisation. Choices have to be made in what tasks the government keeps on doing, and there are tasks which have to be executed more in cooperation with the civil society. Next, Donner relates to the governments in areas with population decline. Also they will face budget cuts, and therefore they need to redefine their tasks and increase their cooperation with each other and other governmental layers (Donner, 2011).

Based on this changed role of the national government due to budget cuts and a redefinition of tasks, it can be understood that it becomes quite hard for the national gover-

nment to fully support shrinking regions by providing knowledge, financial means and administrative support is advised in several publications (e.g. Dijkstal & Mans, 2009a; Rijksoverheid, 2009; Deetman, 2011; Verwest & Van Dam, 2010; Gerrichhauzen & Dogterom, 2007).

3.3.3 Financing the dealing with shrinkage and taking the initiative

The national government's policy is contrasting with statements of an alderman of a Parkstad municipality and employees of a housing corporation and a merchant bank. In their view the national government should come up with financial help and stimulating measures to improve the present situation on the housing market in shrinking regions (see annex IV: conferences). Ortjens of the foundation Region Branding South Limburg argues in the same perspective. According to him, the national government should not only pre-invest in the region's privately owned housing stock, it also needs to adjust the migration and border tax policies. In Ortjens' view the current policy on migration and border taxes is hampering the region's need for qualified employees. Therefore the migration policy should be liberalised to make it easier to attract highly educated people to South Limburg. Border tax policies should be adjusted to make it easier for people from South Limburg to work across the border. Currently there are lots of problems with differences between countries with for example pension funds, mortgage rate deductions and social security systems. Ortjens experiences the border as a great barrier for an optimal functioning of the South Limburg region (Interview with Wim Ortjens on 27 January 2011 in Maastricht).

local zoning plan

On the other hand, there are people who think it would be unrealistic to look at the national government for money and/or coordination. During the real estate congress "Investeringsprojecten Krimp Limburg", a representative of a large real estate company states that the province (of Limburg) should take the leading role. This administrative layer should come up with a regional structural concept for housing which is binding for every actor. This policy document should then be translated into the local zoning plans of the individual municipalities. Paumen, architect at HVN Architecten, sees also a major role for the province. In his view, the province should take a leading role to come up with a base map which determines where a municipality can or cannot build and where demolishing must take place. According to Paumen this prevents housing corporations from only taking a look at their housing stock. This way the economic perspective is no longer leading when making decisions about which neighbourhoods are going to be demolished (Interview with Jerome Paumen on 26 January 2011 in Hoensbroek).

When taking a look at the current activities regarding shrinkage that the province of Limburg carries out, most attention is paid to the analyses of the consequences of shrinkage for Limburg, negotiating about strategies and policies to execute in cooperation with the national and local governments and the organisation of multiple networks in which experts can exchange their knowledge and ideas (Provincie Limburg, 2010). The "Kennisnooppunt Krimp" conference is one of these examples. However, according to Van Essen, strategist at the Province of Limburg, the time for talking and advising is over. He pleads for immediate action regarding demolition of houses and financial aid for municipalities which face the severest consequences of shrinkage (Interview with Ben van Essen on 24 January 2011 in Maastricht).

The provincial government coalition agreement reports about an integral operation procedure in cooperation with municipalities to tackle the issues taking place in villages and neighbourhoods. This point is mostly about crime, unemployment and hinder. Nevertheless, it is connected to shrinkage by stating that these problems often occur in shrinking neighbourhoods. Another point related to shrinkage mentioned in the coalition agreement is the decentralisation of the Dutch spatial planning and housing policies together with the search for measurements to give new impulses to shrinking regions. The coalition partners state that the province will pay special attention to the 'vervangings-

opgave', the task to renew and upgrade the current housing stock. This will be a point of attention in the provincial housing vision (Coalition agreement, 2011).

In contrast to wishes of some interviewees, the coalition agreement does not directly speak about demolishing houses or financing shrinkage accommodating measurements. The demanded role of a province who takes the lead in the South Limburg shrinkage issue is not yet becoming reality.



Figure 3.3 Aerial photo of Delfzijl-Noord, during restructuring

In contrast, the province of Groningen did play an important role in the shrinkage accommodating process in Delfzijl, located in the province of Groningen. Already in the beginning of the 1990s, parts of Delfzijl were demolished. Especially after 1995, demolishing took place on a large scale. But this was still considered to be insufficient, therefore an external advisory committee advised, around the year 2000, that the restructuring had to be increased. The Masterplan Delfzijl was based on two such advisory notes, and includes the demolition of 1200 houses in Delfzijl-Noord, which had to be replaced by 800 new houses. 90% of the restructuring involved rental houses, and 10% private houses. The 1200 houses were first demolished before the new houses were built, although due to political pressure, some small building activities already took place before the demolition was finished. Fragmented demolition costs a lot more money than demolition on a large scale.

At the beginning of this restructuring, 800-900 houses in Delfzijl-Noord were vacant. The municipality then still had the idea that when new attractive houses are built, the shrinkage could be solved.

For the restructuring of Delfzijl-Noord, an external independent project organisation was founded. This organisation, called the Development Corporation Delfzijl (Ontwikkelingsmaatschappij Delfzijl – OMD), had far-reaching powers. 80% of the responsibilities of the municipality council were taken over by this project organisation. It was difficult for the municipality to deal with this. The OMD was a partnership of the corporation Acanthus (49%), the municipality (49%) and the province (2%). This means that in cases of different opinions, the province is the deciding partner. The OMD was created for a period of ten years, and is now abolished, which means that the municipality council has the full powers again (Interview with Rita Rolink, civil servant of the municipality of Delfzijl, on 3 January 2011 in Delfzijl).

A different story appears when we take a look at the Parkstad region, the region within South Limburg which is dealing with the strongest shrinkage and thus with the strongest consequences.

According to Van Essen, the costs to accommodate the consequences of shrinkage are estimated at about 500 million euro, where Parkstad Limburg only has 44 million available (Interview with Ben Van Essen on 24 January 2011 in Maastricht). Even this relatively 'small' amount of money granted by the national government to accommodate the shrinkage process is something Parkstad Limburg has to defend all the time. With the words of alderman Smeets of the municipality of Heerlen: "banks can be saved, dikes can be strengthened, so this means we can also take a 20 years period to get a grip on shrinkage!" (Smeets, 2011). In general, the financial aspects of the shrinkage issue are a significant bottleneck. In Delfzijl, the municipality also received funding from the national government, though due to the high costs of the housing demolition the municipality records a loss of 10 million euro (Interview with Rita Rolink, civil servant of the municipality of Delfzijl, on 3 January 2011 in Delfzijl). The report of the Deetman-commission, about the possibilities for the province of Limburg in making strategic choices with the current demographic transitions, states that the financial aspects of the reduction of the housing stock are too high for the municipalities, region and province alone. These need financial aid from the national government (Deetman, 2011). There is however a debate going on who has to take the initiative in the shrinkage accommodating process. Should this be the government? Banks? Real estate developers? During both the real estate congress "Investeringsprojecten krimp Limburg" and the conference 'De kracht van krimp' (the strength of shrinkage) in Den Haag it was generally being agreed on that the one who takes the initiative, also pays the bill. The other involved parties will profit as free riders from the investments of the initiating party. In practise this means that all organisations are waiting for each other and thus no serious progress in the handling of shrinkage is being made. At the moment there are no clear solutions given to get out of this stalemate.

3.3.4 Scale level and focus of investments

Besides the financial issues there is another point of discussion leading to different views on what to do in a shrinkage scenario.

When speaking about investing with limited resources in the region it is the question in what to invest. Multiple organisations or groups of organisations try to put their priorities on agendas of decision making authorities. Therefore, different focuses in scale level exist. On the one hand there is a focus on small scale investments in mostly neighbourhoods and liveability projects, aimed at the wellbeing of inhabitants and the accommodation of shrinkage (Interview with Inhabitant platform Kerkrade-West on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade). On the other hand there is a focus on high scale investments in infrastructure, campus developments, city centres and international cooperation. In this view, thinking in (economic) growth is still dominant.

This growth thinking can be illustrated by a wide range of examples from the case study. According to Ortjens it is of vital importance to invest in South Limburg as a whole. Only in this way a vital and resilient region is maintained. Therefore his organisation brands the image of a region where career opportunities can be combined with affordable living and a Burgundian lifestyle (Interview with Wim Ortjens on 27 January 2011 in Maastricht). In the opinion of the director of research organisation NEIMED it is essential that the region looks to the high scale level, since the money is coming from there. Innovation and technology centred on campuses fit in this ideology. This campus development is known as Brainport 2020, an initiative in which the region of Eindhoven, the Health campus of Maastricht, Chemelot in Sittard and Avantis near Heerlen are seen as the innovating motors behind the southern Dutch economy. The aim of Brainport 2020 is to belong to the top 10 of most innovating regions worldwide by 2020. The campus development is a joined cooperation between the province of Limburg, DSM and the University of Maastricht (Bruijns, 2011). The ideas of Jo Coenen, a well-known South

Limburg architect and former Chief Government Architect of the Netherlands, fit in this perspective. In his vision the cities of South Limburg have the potential to become 'Bandstad', a cross-border city (with Aachen, Hasselt and Luik). In this regard, Coenen focuses on cultural impulses in the city centres of South Limburg. By building for example new cultural centres and education centres, he creates places where people can meet. This should have a rebounding strength which automatically stimulates more migrants to settle in South Limburg (Interview with Jo Coenen on 28 February 2011 in Maastricht). Other examples of high scale developments are among others the candidature of Maastricht Cultural Capital 2018, the construction of the regional road 'Parkstad Buitenring' and the underground construction of the A2 motorway in Maastricht.

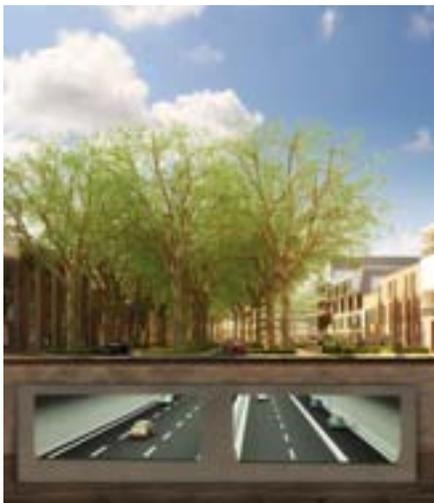


Figure 3.4 *Underground construction of the A2 motorway*



Figure 3.5 *Cross-border business campus 'Avantis'*

There are people who, based on different underlying motivations, put question marks at the aim for high scale projects in which big amounts of tax money are involved. In his report 'Structurele bevolkingdaling, een urgente nieuwe invalshoek voor beleidsmakers' economist Derks warned for overinvestments in infrastructure, industrial sites and residential areas. Due to the declining amount of inhabitants there will eventually be less congestion on motorways, less employees and less demand for housing (Derks, 2006). Another critical remark was made during a discussion at the "Kennisknooppunt Krimp" conference in Maastricht. A civil servant remarked that region branding, campus development and Maastricht cultural capital 2018 are developments which are a remote thing for citizens, since they have nothing to do with the liveability of neighbourhoods, which is important for them. The liveability is often expressed in relatively small matters like the closing of a school or neighbourhood safety at night (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade). This statement is strengthened by Jerome Paumen. According to Paumen, the focus of investments should be on the liveability of all neighbourhoods in South Limburg, which means no high scale investments to put a single neighbourhood on the map again (Interview with Jerome Paumen on 26 January in Hoensbroek). Additionally, there are the critics of Robson, emeritus professor of geography at the university of Manchester, made during his speech at the conference of Shrinkage in Europe in Amsterdam. Robson states that there is a 'pervasive optimism bias' in regeneration strategies of shrinking cities, although they have helped to slow down the population decline. He also mentions the 'bandwagon effect'. This means that all shrinking cities aim at the same 'shrinkage turning events' like bio-science, cultural industries and inner-city flats. There are only a few policies which really accept shrinkage, which Robson illustrates by two examples. A first example is the demolition demanded by the government of small settlements with a strong decreasing population and without a clear future. A second example forms the renewal of the housing market in which the government demolishes houses in urban areas to diminish the levels of housing vacancy and at the same time invests in the improvement of the

existing housing stock. Robson further sees a clash between the 'top-down' logic of planners and the cultural involvement and spatial identity of the inhabitants. He calls this a clash between economic and social values (Robson, 2011). De Voogd, electoral geographer and working at the scientific bureau of the political party 'GroenLinks', is critical on high scale investments from another perspective. He looks at the Netherlands as a whole and states that the economic growth is concentrated in Amsterdam, Utrecht and a 'green belt' around it, reaching from Alkmaar to Nijmegen. High scale investments should be concentrated in this zone. For South-Limburg (apart from Maastricht) it is a waste of money to aim at high scale investments which are intended to put the region on the map again. These overinvestments will only lead to more disappointments in the future. With disappointments De Voogd means the failure of the national government to stimulate growth in peripheral areas. Political promises were made in the past regarding investments and wealth in the whole of the Netherlands. This was also the case in regions where the economic base had disappeared, like in South Limburg as a consequence of the closure of the mines. Due to these promises the expectations of the inhabitants were sky high. De Voogd argues that until the 1970s it was indeed possible to spread wealth across the country by steering economic and geographic developments. However, this policy lost its steering power because of globalisation of the economy and political transformations. Therefore, according to De Voogd, the region should focus on small scale projects intended to reduce and transform the housing stock and to improve the living quality of its inhabitants (Interview with Josse De Voogd on 15 February 2011 in Nijmegen).

The plea of De Voogd should be taken with some nuance. His article in *De Helling* magazine portrayed an image of a sharp distinction where to invest money and where not to invest. The introduction set the tone by "Er moet echter niet worden geïnvesteerd in krimpgebieden, maar in de duurzame en dynamische metropool" (Voogd, 2010b, p. 12), which means that there should be a focus of investments in the axis of growth and no more investments in shrinking regions. During the interview it appeared that this distinction was not as sharp as it appeared. It is not desirable to reduce the amount of investments for Heerlen and the remaining part of the shrinking region of South Limburg to zero, as what happens in many rural villages in France. The inhabitant numbers are simply too high to do nothing. Additionally, in a country where the Christian Democratic range of ideas was (and still is) part of the government for decades, it is hard to stop the spread of financial resources to regions which are shrinking. This body of thought simply cannot accept that villages in peripheral regions die out, as what happens in France (Interview with Josse De Voogd on 15 February 2011 in Nijmegen). Therefore the difference between the perspectives of Ortjens and De Voogd is not about whether to invest money or not in a shrinking region. It is about how to invest money in a shrinking region.

Both perspectives of Wim Ortjens and Josse de Voogd are contrary when it comes to how to invest in a shrinking region. Ortjens believes that it is essential to do some large-scale investments and is clearly aiming at growth. De Voogd opposes this perspective by proposing to limit the investments to a level of accommodation of shrinkage, in order to keep the area liveable. Both perspectives raise some critical questions. For the perspective of Ortjens, it is questionable if the investments he proposes pay off. It is for example hard to say if the broadening of the highway A2 is really necessary in the future, as also Wim Derks questioned this intervention (Derks, 2006). Secondly, it is also questionable if the province of Limburg and the municipalities of South Limburg should invest in a large-scale development for a certain municipality to give it a boost, while in this same municipality some neighbourhoods are impoverishing. Ortjens would say, invest in both. New developments for a large impulse as well as in the renovation of neighbourhoods which are in a poor condition (Interview with Wim Ortjens on 27 January 2011 in Maastricht). De Voogd sees this from another perspective, because the amount of available money is not unlimited. There are some choices to be made. Additionally, investing in large-scale projects to give the region a new impulse comes with a risk. Especially in a time where the European Union keeps repeating that all countries must balance their financial income and expenses with only a small budgetary deficit. This means a cut back in costs,

also for the Netherlands. In that way it would be sensible to invest money in regions where the economy can grow, as De Voogd proposes. However, this would mean that the people who live in a shrinking region are forced to move to the axis of growth to have more potential for a job. And is it under these circumstances fair that people who do live in a shrinking region pay less taxes? De Voogd thinks this last is hard to execute, but it would be fair indeed (Interview with Josse De Voogd on 15 February 2011 in Nijmegen).

At the smaller scale level of the shrinking city and the neighbourhood, the effects of shrinkage become more visible, especially in the post-war neighbourhoods. Here the focus is on the demolition of houses which do no longer match with the customer demands of today as well as the contemporary building standards. The neighbourhood manager of Kerkrade-West, Bracun, states that due to the increased vacancy of houses in the district, the impoverishment of the neighbourhoods increases as well. This leads to a lower quality of life in the neighbourhood because vandalism increases at places without social control, and social cohesion and commitment with the neighbourhood declines (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade). These effects demand that housing corporations and municipalities have to be more aware about the wishes and demands of the inhabitants. In Kerkrade-West both the municipality and the housing corporation Hestia Groep are already active in involving the inhabitants in their policy making for the neighbourhood. The municipality provides an amount of 20,000 euro per year for the 'liveability budget'. This money is administered by both the municipality and the inhabitant platform and can be used for all kind of small neighbourhood projects. Inhabitants can fill in a form, where they have to make a case for their idea. Examples are the lighting of dark back paths behind houses, small scale vegetation adjustments, a jeu de boules course and a school safety project. These projects have immediate results, which contribute significantly to the liveability in the neighbourhood. Often, the inhabitants have good ideas which are suitable for the liveability budget. However, they usually do not take the step to contact the municipality for it. The inhabitant platform helps the inhabitants to fill in the form for an application and they also give the inhabitants advise when they notice there is a problem which can possibly be solved with the special budget for the neighbourhood (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade).

designer The consequences of shrinkage on the small scale level of the neighbourhood demands for other practises of designers. Their role is changing. In the next part the authors want to elaborate on this changing role.



Figure 3.6 Vacant apartments in Kerkrade-West



Figure 3.7 Vacant houses and shops in Kerkrade-West

3.4 Practices and experiments in dealing with shrinkage

3.4.1 Introduction

Designers can fulfil an important role in making a shrinking city or neighbourhood liveable again. They can give a necessary creative input in the neighbourhood's design, as well as in the planning and implementation process. They can also contribute with ideas and experiences in discussions about the future of shrinking areas. In this part, insights are given about the conducted practises of designers dealing with shrinking neighbourhoods in South-Limburg. When relevant also examples from other Dutch and Former East German cities are being elaborated on. Special attention is paid to the role of the design, the use of 'alternative' instruments and the communication process.

3.4.2 The role of design

According to Van Mensvoort, urban planner at Buro 5 in Maastricht, the region's decreasing population has a huge impact on housing, facilities, spatial quality and social cohesion. In her view many plans can be made for these issues, but the main problem which is faced is how these plans can be financed. What implementations are necessary to make sure that the remaining houses and facilities keep their significance and value. This means that formerly, many housing visions were only supported by lots of texts and numbers. In shrinking regions it becomes however obvious that it is also important to include the housing environment in these visions, and make use of spatial principles. Buro 5 works on two scale levels. On a regional scale, the office works on issues like how to deal with the housing stock, what implementations are needed, what plans should be cancelled and what plans should be executed. This is done in cooperation with other offices. On the lower scale of a neighbourhood or district, it is important to include other issues, like social issues (Interview with Selma van Mensvoort on 4 March 2011 in Maastricht).

spatial principles

Design experiences in Heerlen-MSP and Kerkrade-West

In the next sections experiences about making designs for shrinking neighbourhoods are discussed based on examples from Heerlen and Kerkrade. It is explained why phasing, flexibility, uncertainty and alternatives are important factors to deal with when designing for a situation of shrinkage.

The neighbourhood MSP in Heerlen is confronted with a loss of inhabitants due to an unsuitable housing stock: the plots and the houses of the mining colonies are too small and the gallery flats do no longer meet the demands of today. Therefore housing corporation Woonpunt asked the office BGSV Bureau voor Stedebouw in 2008 to make an urban planning vision for MSP (BGSV, 2008). In the view of Van Genderen the question was: how can the neighbourhood be made attractive again? Two conditions were important: (1) a neighbourhood where the basic facilities like schools and stores are present; (2) there must be space for a new inflow of people. Talking about flexibility means that there has to be searched for the framework or carriers of the area. The carrier for MSP is quite simple: on the main structure, it is the stream valley in the west and the light rail station in the south. On a larger scale, it is the nearness to nature area Brunssummerveld and the centre of Heerlen. The neighbourhood thus already has all ingredients to make living there attractive (Interview with Ron van Genderen on 8 February 2011 in Rotterdam).

The number of houses that has to be demolished is 400 to 500. The first reaction was that this would result in a huge amount of so-called 'released space', the space which is left over after buildings are demolished. However, when the ambition is pursued to make the neighbourhood more attractive, competitive houses and plots have to be made. This can be done by merging two small plots into one big plot, and rebuilding houses in a much lower density. Doing this will result in less empty plots. It is possible to offer large

plots and houses at the edges of the neighbourhood.

The seven apartment buildings along the Limburgiastraat have already been demolished. At this location, in the heart of MSP, a new centre can be developed. The main points for investments are thus the main structures. Within this framework of main structures, there is space for flexibility to renew parts of the neighbourhood, or to choose to leave parts as they are now. Some parts are easier to restructure than others, which is caused by the amount of private property in the area. A lot of private property means that restructuring becomes very difficult. It is quite easy to restructure the apartment buildings, since these are all owned by housing corporations. In some other parts it was very difficult to change the structure. According to Van Genderen this was regretful from a designer's point of view since in some of these parts there are problems like very small plots and parking problems. Remarkable is that this is mainly seen as a problem by the designers, while the inhabitants do not see this as a problem. (Interview with Ron van Genderen on 8 February 2011 in Rotterdam).

The neighbourhood Heilust in Kerkrade-west is a different story. As was said earlier this neighbourhood is also suffering from a huge loss of inhabitants due to the present unsuitable housing stock. Over time it became clear there was no more demand for new houses. The problem was that the growth paradigm was still very strong even though the municipality and housing corporation Hestia Groep were convinced of declining inhabitant numbers. Both organisations thought the downward trend could be reversed by building new houses. However, the value of the building ground and buildings decreased under the influence of declining inhabitant numbers (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade).

Hestia Groep sees an important task for the housing corporation to prevent the neighbourhood from deterioration. This has also benefits for the organisation itself, since this may attract new tenants to the neighbourhood (Interview with Johan de Niet on 9 February 2011 in Kerkrade). Despite the problems which come with demographic decline and in particular with household decline, the municipality of Kerkrade sees the phenomenon of declining inhabitant numbers also as a blessing for the area. The high density neighbourhoods, especially in Kerkrade-West, were not a desired situation (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade).

The development and the execution of a spatial plan can take a long period of time. The main shopping facility at the Akerstraat-Carboonplein in Kerkrade-West took approximately twenty years to develop. With a time span of 10 years or longer, it is very hard to adapt to the needs of a current situation. It is even not sure if the adaptation will prove its usefulness after it has been realised. Additionally, when some developments are made explicit in municipal policy, the idea is sometimes already out-dated (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade). Apart from the period of which a plan is developed and executed, there is also the term regarding the target groups. For Kerkrade-West for example, there is a significant demand for reasonable priced rental housing. This segment is particularly important for elderly people, who form a relatively large group at the moment, though who will obviously diminish during time after the Baby-boom-generation has passed away. De Niet of Hestia Groep argues that it is important to look at a longer time period, because the qualitative demand for houses will also change during a period of twenty years. Therefore it is hard to adapt the housing stock immediately to every current change of demand. A precondition of the plan for the neighbourhood is flexibility and phasing. It is important that the eventual end result must be clear, but in the process to reach the end result there must be space for flexibility (Interview with Johan de Niet on 9 February 2011 in Kerkrade).

Apart from the rental housing stock, there will also be a need for transformations in the privately owned housing stock. However, the municipality has no concrete ideas how to deal with this assignment. It differs greatly from a situation in the rental housing segment, where in most cases, there is one point of contact for a whole street or block,

namely the housing corporation. Additionally, there are easier ways of negotiation and compensation in comparison to the privately owned housing segment. For instance, private house owners have their obligations regarding their mortgage. An example of a solution is that the housing corporation in the area can buy these houses of people who want to leave their house. This way, the housing corporation can add up new houses to their stock for rent, to compensate the losses of the demolished housing stock of inferior quality. However, it is unavoidable that at some stage, houses have to be demolished because there will simply be too much of them. Therefore the municipality looks at the provincial government, to come up with instruments to deal with the transformation tasks at hand. This is something the municipality cannot do on its own and many of the municipalities in South Limburg have to deal with exactly the same problems (Interview with Hein Braacun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade).

The design process for the restructuring areas in Delfzijl, Groningen, is characterised in the same way as in Heerlen and Kerkrade. Future spatial designs for the shrinking neighbourhood Delfzijl-Noord are based upon strategic inventories: these include social real estate, commercial real estate, the quality of these houses, the development of the population and the functions that are needed. Such a plan has no final image, but has to show alternatives and should be flexible. Also, the social programme is very important, and should be included parallel to the physical programme (Interview with Rita Rolink, civil servant of the municipality of Delfzijl, on 3 January 2011 in Delfzijl).

The use and maintenance of released space in South Limburg

Between designers there is a discussion going on about the use and maintenance of the released space. In Heilust, part of Kerkrade-West, there are big 'green' unused plots where people are walking their dog. The inhabitants have a feeling like nothing is happening, and wonder why the municipality takes such a long time to do something with it. (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade) According to the municipality of Kerkrade it is a waste of money to develop something temporary where in the near future will be a community centre and a park (Interview with Hein Braacun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade). In MSP however, designers and artists cooperated with inhabitants to design and construct community gardens, *pocket park* and small agricultural fields for temporary or permanent use. Meertens, city planner of the municipality of Heerlen, and Hermans, creative entrepreneur, stated that these examples of new land use made a successful connection between social activities and public space. People's social relations strengthened and entrepreneurship was stimulated. (Meertens & Hermans, 2011).

In other towns, like Landgraaf, municipalities plan to make the released spaces public and green. Urban planner Van Mensvoort sees some difficulties with this approach. Public green should be maintained, which costs a lot of money and does not bring new money in. She is critical about this and has the opinion that other uses of the released spaces should be considered, like private ownership (expanding gardens or houses, merging houses, adding parking space). It should also be seriously considered to preserve the houses, since this may be the cheapest solution. This is only possible when other functions for these houses can be found (Interview with Selma van Mensvoort on the 4th of March 2011 in Maastricht).

Landscape architect at Parkstad Goossens sees possibilities for reducing the maintenance costs of public green. Municipalities have to reconsider the vegetation types they want to use and the ways of maintenance in light with their budget cuts. In fact, Goossens sees the released spaces as a kind of a laboratory, a test space. However, it should be communicated that half of the experiments may fail, but the other half of the projects will not. Everyone should be realistic, when no mistakes may be made, nothing will be reached (Interview with Thierry Goossens on 25 January 2011 in Heerlen).

Dessau's concept of released space

In Dessau, a city in Former East Germany where the consequences of shrinkage are a big issue as well, (landscape) architects developed together with the city a strategic concept in which a landscape trail is created. Dessau has a de-central city structure. In the first strategy of urban cores (Urbane Kerne) the most vital city parts remain and are being strengthened, including the inner city. The other parts of the city which no longer function become available for the second strategy: the landscape trail (Landschaftszug) inspired by the 'Gartenreich Dessau-Wörlitz', the UNESCO heritage park surrounding the city. In this strategy neglected buildings and industrial sites are demolished and landscape returns in its place (Urbane Kerne und Landschaftliche Zonen, 2010, p 14). By demolishing empty buildings, the city will 'regrow' to a collection of small cores, with a landscape zone in between. To achieve this, the city will be repixelated ('aufgepixelt') in which the city is divided into a raster with equal squares. Every square is checked whether it still functions as intended. If not the square can be repixelated for the landscape trail (Planungswerkstatt Stadtumbau Dessau, 2007). With this method, not all land is immediately needed to realise the concept of urban cores; the repixelation makes it possible to phase the process. In this way a green trail will slowly 'grow' around the city centre. At this moment, it is discussed how the urban cores have to be connected to each other. Many facilities have to be concentrated in the city centre. Though the repixelation must be seen as a concept. It was impossible to implement this concept literally as a spatial method. This would demand a too intensive design and gardening and does not fit in a shrinkage process. Therefore, symbolically more layers were added to the concept (Interviews with A. Lischke, city planner of Dessau-Roßlau, conducted on 22 February 2011 and M. Rudolph, architect at Station C23 Architekten Leipzig, conducted on 23 February 2011). A flexible planning concept is invented to allow the double strategy to function. This planning concept to realise the landscape trail is meant for the long term (15 – 20 years), flexible in space and time (since it is not known if, where and when buildings or industrial sites can be turned into landscape) and open to changes. Therefore it is hard to say how the landscape trail will look like eventually (Urbane Kerne und Landschaftliche Zonen, 2010, pp. 14 & 35; Internationale Bauausstellung Stadtumbau Sachsen-Anhalt Dessau-Rosslau, 2010, pp. 16, 22 & 23).

regrow / Rückbau



Figure 3.8 Landscape zone and urban cores



Figure 3.9 Landscape zone in development



Figure 3.10 Examples of two different claims

The implementation of the landscape trail can be divided into vegetation plots, claims, sponsorships ('Patenschaften') and oak quincunxes. The vegetation plots within the landscape trail should be self-sustaining or of low maintenance, which means mowing once or twice a year. At least no extra people should be needed to maintain it. The architects worked together with botanists and a university to make gross mixes of vegetation. People did not like wilderness directly in front of their door, but when a distance of 3-5 meters is kept between people's property and the wild field, they do not complain according to architect Rudolph. Therefore, wild fields are maintained at the edges, to show that the plot is not neglected. (Interview conducted with M. Rudolph, architect at Station

C23 Architekten Leipzig, on 23 February 2011)

The claims of 400 square metres are plots that are adopted by individuals who want to use the land as for example a garden. Sponsorships are almost the same, only these are not limited to the size of 400 square metres. Youth associations have created a bmx dirt track (Dirt-strecke) as part of the landscape trail on a site of a former industrial complex (Urbane Kerne und landschaftliche Zonen, 2010, p. 70). When someone wants to make use of a claim or sponsorship, the user has to maintain the plot to prevent the landscape from being neglected. The plot must also be accessible to the public. In principle, the plot can be used for five years, thereafter it will be discussed whether the contract will be prolonged or not. Some plots are maintained by farmers, which is cheaper and easier compared to maintenance by the municipality. The oak quincunxes are plots where five oaks are planted in a quincunx. There are no possibilities for commercial use of the released plots (Urbane Kerne und landschaftliche Zonen, 2010, pp. 61-65 & 68-75). A disadvantage of this method is that not all plots look beautiful, especially during the winter season. However, this does not outweigh its success (for example the winning of the architecture prize in Barcelona). (Interview with A. Lischke, city planner of Dessau-Roßlau, conducted on 22 February 2011)

3.4.3 *The role of the designer*

Different requirements when designing in shrinking areas

With the design, also the role of the designer is changing in shrinkage situations. Urban planner Van Mensvoort outlines some differences of working in a shrinkage situation compared with common practises in a growth situation. For designers it is important to think in a time span: what implementations have to be done at what moment, and how can the neighbourhood remain attractive during the process. Though there are many parties talking about shrinking neighbourhoods. Designers should distinguish themselves by representing and providing insight into ideas. This role should not be neglected in shrinkage assignments. In these assignments designing is still about showing the future in an attractive way, however it is important to be very realistic and to make sure that the plan is financially feasible. Also, in a shrinkage scenario, the focus is more on retaining people in the area than on attracting new people to the area. In a growth scenario, new impulses can be generated by adding facilities and different housing types, while in a shrinkage scenario the designer has to look very critical at the quality of existing houses and spaces. Van Mensvoort is content though that design assignments are now about quality instead of quantity. The designer is forced to look critically: when no attention is spent on quality, even less people will (want to) live in the area. What is lacking in a shrinkage scenario, is the opportunity to invest in unattractive areas with money generated by new developments. Therefore, it is important that the designer thinks about at what places interventions have to be done and whether the intervention will generate a desired effect or benefit. Van Mensvoort concludes by stating that in shrinkage situations designers have to think much more about social issues. According to her it should be investigated how spatial interventions can be an impulse for other domains (Interview with Selma van Mensvoort on 4 March 2011 in Maastricht).

Van Mensvoort gave a very detailed overview of how she, as designer, currently operates in a context which is drastically changed by the consequences of shrinkage. Other designers present their ideas and proposals to design with shrinkage more future oriented.

Diverging visions for the future of South Limburg

Landscape architect Goossens sees the shrinkage projects taking place in Parkstad as a reference to a futuristic energy landscape of new materials, which will be the building materials for the energy and food production. It is a big chance to link these small concrete projects with the larger overall-vision of energy transition: are these projects the prototypes of our future urban agriculture? In Goossens vision, the energy transition

forms a drastic change in the way society is organised. He makes a lot of effort in putting the energy transition together with the IBA, the International Building Exhibition, on the agenda of decision makers. This way, Goossens functions as a booster for new ideas.

Architect Paumen competed in a contest held by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood Sanderbout in Sittard. This former mining settlement is enlisted for demolition by the city council, since these houses do no longer meet up with present day housing standards. New more expensive houses should replace this colony. The aim of the contest was to develop alternatives for the demolition. The plan of Paumen won the competition. He made a renovation concept for this neighbourhood. His idea was to care about the characteristics of the neighbourhood which would preserve the perceived identity of the miners settlement. In his opinion it is not about the details in this neighbourhood, it is rather about the replacement of new buildings. On the high scale Paumen thinks that the province should take a leading role to come up with a base map which determines where a municipality can or cannot build and where demolition must take place. Therefore the larger picture is kept in mind and then it should not be possible that housing corporations only look at their housing stock and determine with an economic perspective that a certain neighbourhood must be demolished as is the case in Sanderbout. Paumen addresses the importance of a 'Burgundian' approach to deal with the future development of South Limburg. High scale investments should only go to the three important cities of the region. There should be investments in the other urban and rural districts, however these investments should be spread out across these areas, to preserve the characteristics of the region (Interview with Jerome Paumen on 26 January 2011). Paumen's way of working is more inspired by the characteristics of the place and the region, of what is already there including the inhabitants. He pays a lot of attention to the perceived local and regional identities. Although Paumen was interviewed for the television programme *Tegenlicht* (VPRO, 2010), where he explained some of his ideas, most of his thoughts and ideas about the future of South Limburg are written down in a book which is supposed to be finished by the end of 2011.

Architect Coenen expects that from now on the majority of the architectonic projects will involve existing building structures, roads and also landscapes. "The primary objective is no longer to build the new, but to add to the existing structures" (Coenen, 2011). These projects will not primarily focus on producing new built-up areas, they rather add and integrate elements with the structures that already exist at that place. If an architect can intertwine existing structure and elements with new interventions, then you can rightfully speak about an art (Coenen, 2008, pp. 18-31).

During his time as Chief Government Architect of the Netherlands, Coenen came to the conclusion that the definition of the term 'plan' does not exist anymore. Spatial plans are not solid blue prints anymore, they experience a constant transformation process. The question is how to design when everything constantly transforms (Interview with Jo Coenen on 28 February 2011 in Maastricht). Coenen compares the role of a plan with the Aachen Cathedral. This Roman Catholic church is the oldest cathedral in Northern Europe and Charles the Great started the construction around 792 A.D. with the first chapel (Conant, 1993, p. 47). At that time no one knew what the cathedral would look like when the construction was completed, though the rank of a cathedral was always there. During the centuries there were new consequential Gothic and Renaissance additions and some of the later buildings surrounding the courtyard incorporate vestiges of old work (Conant, 1993, p. 47). Coenen addresses the importance of a general plan, which is comparable with that of the Aachen Cathedral, for the region of South Limburg. This plan should incorporate in which direction the development of the region should head the next couple of decades. This direction should not directly be expressed in a spatial design for the region. It is a general idea where to head with the region. Individual operating municipalities are highly inefficient. With the plan functioning as in the idea of the cathedral, every governmental layer works according to this plan. In that way the region is seen from a realistic regional perspective by every operating governmental layer (Interview with Jo

Coenen on 28 February 2011 in Maastricht).

In the introduction of this chapter was already mentioned that both Coenen and Paumen appeared in the television documentary 'Tegenlicht' (VPRO, 2011). The director of the documentary polarised the discussion by placing these two architects with their perspective in different corners of the discussion. But actually both perspectives are not as wide apart as the director made it appear. The contradistinction does not exist. Both architects agree to look on a regional or even larger international scale when it comes to the future development of villages, cities and landscapes. Coenen addresses the importance of working on a larger scale and this task can be handled by the academic world or by the region itself comparable with the region functioning as the cathedral of Aachen. Paumen sees a more leading role for the provinces to deal with the complexity of the future development of a region and all the uncertainties which come along during time. This last was not part of the documentary. So both architects make use of the 'helicopter view'. The distinction between both perspectives is the way of investing. Large projects dependent upon relatively high investments to put a neighbourhood or a city on the map again, versus a Burgundian approach with small scale restoration interventions which preserve the perceived identity of a neighbourhood. When we talk about new propelling-forces for a city as Coenen wants to introduce them, Paumen addresses that these are already present. But these natural engines for a city are presently in many cases considered to be of no value for the city and therefore they will be demolished. Precisely these buildings are highly valued since people appreciate their perceived history and identity and therefore these buildings can play a major role when it comes to new social functions. For a municipality or a housing corporation, these buildings are written off, but for architects these buildings are becoming more and more interesting and these people start to revalue the historic architecture of these buildings. The question is what will happen if a certain building or ensemble of buildings is not profitable anymore for a housing corporation or a real estate developer. After an expensive renovation the persons with an easy accessible rent can no longer pay for the new rent, but someone who rents in the middle segment can maybe afford a larger house which has been merged from two smaller houses. Paumen argues that preservation and renovation is often the most sustainable way of building. If a building is really in a bad condition, where a lot of investments are necessary so the building can still stand, then it is necessary that the building is demolished. When something is replaced it has to be clear that size and scale fit a suitable intervention at that particular place. But the consideration between restoration and demolishing should be made far more critical with regard to the perceived identity of a place.

Which of these two approaches works, depends on the place. Some areas may need a large impulse to keep the area attractive. Centre Céramique at Maastricht is a big success because culture, information, entertainment and recreation are merged in an efficient way with impressive architecture (Hoek, 2004). At other places these high investments will not lead to the intended drive for this area. For the new shopping centre of Kerkrade-West, it is still the question if it will give the neighbourhood the impulse that was aimed for (Interview with Jerome Paumen on 26 January 2011).

3.4.4 The use of 'alternative' instruments

Introduction

As was previously explained, in the perception of many interviewees, shrinkage goes hand in hand with housing vacancies, financial losses and social issues. Therefore it becomes important to invent new instruments or to use existing instruments in new ways to handle these consequences. This section elaborates on these 'alternative' instruments. Successively, experiences regarding cooperation between organisations, the value of the International Building Exhibition (IBA) concept, the vacancy of private houses, social policy for shrinking neighbourhoods and claims from real estate developers are being elaborated on, since these instruments may play a significant role in the context of the design and planning process for shrinking places.

Cooperation

In dealing with shrinkage, cooperation between organisations (mostly stated as being governments) is seen as one of the key advices by several (shrinkage) experts, organisations and research institutes (e.g. Dijkstal & Mans, 2009a; Rijksoverheid, 2009; Deetman, 2011; Verwest & Van Dam, 2010; Gerrichhauzen & Dogterom, 2007). These advices formed among others the basis for the Region programme (Regio Programma), in which the eight Parkstad municipalities in the city region of Parkstad Limburg intensify their mutual cooperation. In this document, aimed at long term strategies and short term actions, the municipalities handle over more authority instruments to the city region in order to be able to deal with the consequences of shrinkage. As a result, policy on the domains of spatial developments, housing, mobility and economy are being executed by one organisation instead of eight separate organisations. Also the communication with the province of Limburg, the national government and the city region of Aachen now goes via the organisation of the city region (Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg, 2010). This agreement goes a step further than the agreements in the intermunicipal structure vision (intergemeentelijke structuurvisie) made in 2009. In this vision the agreements on housing, mobility, spatial planning and economy are made. These agreements arrange the spatial tuning between the municipal policies for a 10 year period together with a long term view towards 2030 (Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg, 2009).

Several other Dutch shrinking regions also saw the need for more regional governmental cooperation.

Northeast Groningen consists of three shrinking regions. Positive solutions require to look and think across municipal borders. Therefore, shrinkage is treated on a regional scale. Since 2003, there is an administrative agreement for the Eemsdelta (Bestuursakkoord Eemsdelta), including the municipalities of Delfzijl, Appingedam, Loppersum and Eemmond. At that time, mainly agreements on spatial and economic topics were made. Since the revision in 2008, housing and facilities are also included in this agreement. The agreement ensures that cooperation takes place on a regional scale level. Another document is the 'regiopact', which includes a regional prognosis of the household development. Every year, this is monitored and evaluated (Interview with Marian Scharft, senior advisor at the CMO Groningen and former alderman of the municipality of Delfzijl (2002-2006) on 4 January 2011 in Uitwierde).

The basis for the new regional policy is to accept and accommodate shrinkage as well as to fight it (Gemeente Appingedam et. al., 2009, p. 2). In the period 2009-2018, there is space for 2,600 new (replacing) houses. 3,300 houses that do not fulfil today's requirements anymore have to be demolished. This means a retraction of 700 houses from the housing market in the Eemsdelta. The province picks this housing assignment up in the adapted implementing act of the provincial spatial plan (provinciaal omgevingsplan - POP) (Gemeente Appingedam et. al., 2009, p. 2). The number of houses that may be built per municipality are presented as contingents. The province monitors that municipi-

Einwohnerkannibalismus municipalities do not exceed their contingents, which means that Einwohnerkannibalismus has no chance. Despite some discussion between municipalities about the number of contingents that they have, these numbers are very strictly utilised. Exceptions are rarely made (Interview with Marian Scharft on 4 January 2011 in Uitwierde).

At this moment (2011), the municipalities of the Eemsdelta region are working on a regional liveability plan (regionaal leefbaarheidsplan). This is done in cooperation with schools, care institutions and welfare organisations (RTV Noord, 2011).

Despite the fact that the Achterhoek region does not face shrinkage yet, a regional vision for housing (regionale woonvisie) is already composed which concerns seven municipalities.

The regional vision for housing is composed by a project group, consisting of the municipal policy advisors on the field of housing, representatives of the housing corporations and the province of Gelderland. The project group thus consists of three parties (Interview with Joyce Lammers, policy advisor on housing at the municipality of Doetinchem on 5 January 2011 in Doetinchem). The vision is established because the shrinkage issue is foreseen for this region: the number of inhabitants is already (slightly) declining and the number of households is expected to decline after 2020 (ABF Research, 2009).

qualitative housing program

Every four years, the province composes a qualitative housing program (kwalitatief woonprogramma – KWP). After the most recent KWP for the period 2010-2019 was established, it became clear that the housing demand for the Achterhoek was far less than expected: 5,900 instead of 10,000 houses had to be build. It became clear that the number of new housing developments had to be tempered, and that this had to be done together with all municipalities, to prevent the region from Einwohnerkannibalismus. The municipalities initiated the idea for a regional vision for housing, and asked the province to take the lead themselves. The municipalities did not want the province to decide about the number of houses that each municipality is allowed to build.

In the beginning of the process, not all municipalities were convinced that the region would shrink. Especially concerning their own municipality, there were big questions about if and to what extent shrinkage will take place. It also depends on what prognosis was used. It took a while for all to face the same direction, and to convince some municipalities that building new attractive houses to counter shrinkage would not work. The development of the regional vision for housing proves that this switchover succeeded, however the choice for a prognosis will always be a point of discussion.

When composing the regional vision for housing, the aldermen of the municipalities have visited Parkstad. This contributed to the awareness process of the aldermen. Representatives of the municipalities also visited northeast Groningen. However, good examples were not found: both reference regions started too late with their approach to shrinkage. With that, Lammers stresses that the Achterhoek is unique with its early anticipation on shrinkage.

After the regional vision for housing is authorised, it will be implemented in the local (municipal) policy. The regional vision is a delimiting document, and it is binding. However, there are no means to make sure that every municipality strictly follows the requirements of the vision. What municipalities can do, is attend each other on their responsibilities. If this would not work, the representative of the province of Gelderland will be asked to play a role in this process. Another request to the province is financing. A kind of shrinkage fund is being set up; the question is what the contribution is from the state, province, municipalities and corporations (Interview with Joyce Lammers, policy advisor on housing at the municipality of Doetinchem on 5 January 2011 in Doetinchem).

Others point out specific cooperation between governments, companies and inhabitants: Meertens and Hermans speak about the necessity of regional cooperation in South-Limburg; where local authorities have to work together with local entrepreneurs like the Gulpener beer brewery and a local apple syrup producer, artists and inhabitants (Meertens & Hermans, 2011). Van der Laan, mayor of the city of Amsterdam, was impressed by the consequences of the shrinkage situations in Delfzijl (Groningen), Sluis (Zeeland) and Heerlen. He offered the help of the capital's administration to provide the smaller

municipalities with knowledge and support on a voluntary basis. This offer was gladly accepted. Furthermore this national cooperation forms a platform where the municipalities can learn from each other's situation (Interview with Maria Cuartas, director mayor's office at the municipality of Amsterdam on 11 February 2011 in Amsterdam). And then there is the cross-border cooperation between South Limburg and its foreign neighbours, which is already taking place or in a planned stadium.

During the 1980s many Germans came to live in Kerkrade-West. For them it was relatively cheap to live in for example the district Gracht in comparison to neighbourhoods in their own country. Now the situation is practically reversed and many of the Germans move back to Germany. This all has to do with the regulations concerning taxes and housing costs, which was previously mentioned (Interview with Johan de Niet on 9 February 2011 in Kerkrade). De Niet, area developer of Hestia Groep, is sceptical about cross-border cooperation with Germany. However, he sees potential under certain circumstances. In his opinion, this can only function with a holistic adjustment between the two regions in which both adapt their regulations and policies to improve the correlation. Also the municipality of Kerkrade is not actively cooperating with the other side of the border (Interview with Johan de Niet on 9 February 2011 in Kerkrade). On the other hand, the members of the board of the inhabitant platform see clear potentials

area developer

RWTH

when the RWTH Aachen University wants to expand its capacity. This will automatically lead to an increase in the demand for housing in the area regarding personnel as well as students. The board is hopeful that the new Avantis rail track (Avantislijn) will bring them some new impulses (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade). The Avantis rail track is one of the cross-border public transport projects in which the region tries to improve the connections with its neighbours. The Avantis rail track forms a light rail connection between Heerlen and Aachen via the business park Avantis. Another project is extending the intercity connection between Eindhoven and Heerlen towards Aachen, which provides a connection to the HST-network in Aachen and connects the knowledge centres of the TU/e and RWTH. A third idea is to extend the Euregiobahn, which currently connects Heerlen and Aachen, towards Sittard. The intention of the better cross-border public transport is to strengthen the relation with Aachen, through which the inhabitants of the region can make use of each other's facilities (Interview with Thierry Goossens on 25 January 2011 in Heerlen).

HST-network, TU/e
Euregiobahn



Figure 3.11 Cross-border public transport...



Figure 3.12 ...connecting the region of South Limburg with the HST-station of Aachen, just across the border

The International Building Exhibition (IBA) concept

The 'Internationale Bau Ausstellung' (International Building Exhibition, short IBA) is a German invented concept, meant to stimulate a transformation in cities and regions which are under influence of economic, social and/or environmental changes. A common strategy is to give a certain area economic, social, cultural and environmental impulses over a ten year period by combining financial funding, bringing together key actors, challenging spatial professionals to experiment by organising competitions and inviting citizens to participate. Herein the quality of processes and participation comes to the fore (IBA-Netzwerk, 2009).

Parkstad joined the Eo Weijers competition, a Dutch designers competition, for 2011. However, according to landscape architect Goossens, Parkstad relinquished this competition in order to spend all effort into the organisation of the International Building Exhibition. This was done because Parkstad wants to work and think across the state border. The Eo Weijers is especially limited to Dutch designers, where Parkstad wants to make use of the potencies and chances of Germany. But also on the domain of energy, it is important to have an international focus, since other countries like Austria, Denmark and Sweden are further developed in this issue (Interview with Thierry Goossens on 25 January 2011 in Heerlen).

Expertenrat

The IBA is an open process. Each city or region can decide for itself to organise an IBA, and is thus totally different than a competition to attract the Olympic Games or the Gartenschau. To maintain the quality of the IBA, an 'Expertenrat' is installed, but there is no selection. The Parkstad board has the opinion that the IBA had very good results in Germany. The IBA has a focus and concept, which helps to develop all plans within the next ten years into the same direction. It should also work as a catalyser for the projects and transition, by stimulating inhabitants, politicians and the international world. In 2020, it should be clear what this project has achieved, and other regions can learn from the accommodation of shrinkage in combination with the energy transition. The board of the Parkstad region is the principal for the IBA project. One year will be spend on the 'uitvoeringsagenda 2012-2020', in which is included what the focus of the IBA will be, what the aim is, what IBA-projects are envisioned, what quality criteria are connected to these, how an IBA-project distinguishes itself from other projects, how the IBA will be financed, what parties will join the IBA, and so on. The parties should be willing to invest for eight years in the project (Interview with Thierry Goossens on 25 January 2011 in Heerlen).

At this moment, the IBA is being organised by Parkstad only, in order to develop its own profile and chances. It substantiates the 'Region Programme' (Regioprogramma) of Parkstad. However, according to Goossens, it is not excluded that later on in the process, when Parkstad has formulated a clear story for the IBA, a jump towards a higher scale will be made, which may include the area of Aachen or even the whole area of South Limburg.

Usually, every IBA starts with a huge amount of scepticism: it costs a lot and what will it bring in for the region? Though, according to Goossens, during the process more understanding about the positive effects of the IBA will come up. A 'work studio' (werkatelier) is established for approximately 1.5 years with internal and external experts, as well as a 'leading group' (kopgroep) with ambassadors who carry out the concept of the IBA and the 'Friends of the IBA (Vrienden van de IBA)', where partners can position themselves as a friend of the IBA, in an informal way. Thanks to this, the different stakeholders can debate with each other in a kind of symposium setting based on the IBA concept. This setting can generate new shareholders and widely accepted ideas. There will also be a committee of recommendations with important people like Jo Coenen, a 'rijksbouwmeester' or a politician (Interview with Thierry Goossens on 25 January 2011 in Heerlen).

The former participation in the Eo Wijers competition has to boost the IBA process, which

has the same ideas regarding the combination of energy and shrinkage. 'Energy' also covers food, building materials and water. Thierry Goossens is convinced that the IBA can be very successful for the image of the region. Parkstad already has a good image regarding how to deal with shrinkage, and with the IBA the region can profile itself also internationally. There are many requests from several universities to do studies in Parkstad (Interview with Thierry Goossens on 25 January 2011 in Heerlen).

Some inspiration for the IBA in Parkstad may have come from the German IBA Urban Redevelopment Saxony-Anhalt 2010 (IBA Stadtumbau Sachsen-Anhalt 2010) which was finished in 2010. In 2002 the state government of Saxony-Anhalt decided to install an International Building Exhibition as an instrument to experiment with new methods to deal with consequences of shrinkage in an urban context. The occasion to start an IBA in (eventually) 19 cities of Saxony-Anhalt, including Dessau, lies in the challenges to face with urban shrinkage in these cities. Traditional policy methods based on a growth model, as discussed in sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3, are no longer able to handle the huge challenges coming with structural population and household decline. Vacant buildings, unemployment, unbalanced public finances and less inhabitants are all seen as influencing factors with which the current governmental, private and societal means struggle to cope with. Therefore new methods and strategies had to be invented, combined and experimented with. For every single of the 19 involved cities, a unique concept was developed over time. These concepts contained long term goals with a package of strategies the cities put together in cooperation with the IBA management (IBA-Büro GbR, 2010a).

Though also the IBA concept has its positive and negative points. According to architect Rudolph, the IBA in Saxony-Anhalt did not result in spectacular designs. The main result is that a change of thinking in the participating cities can be felt: policy makers were being shown that their city can do much more on its own strength, instead of waiting for (financial) means from others. Another point Rudolph stresses is the 'IBA-show'. In the final exhibition year in his eyes too less was shown about the projects in the cities and the achievements. the IBA failed in their communication with the participating cities and in grasping what the cities really have enquired. Therefore the 'IBA show' was superficial; it showed only the surface. Rudolph expected a more in-depth presentation of results after 10 years of work. Looking back, he is still positive about the IBA concept; for the most participating cities it was good to do. However, in the future a better reflection is really needed (Interview with Michael Rudolph on 23 February 2011 in Leipzig). When organising their own IBA, Parkstad can for sure learn from the experiences gained in Saxony-Anhalt.



Figure 3.13 IBA information column at the central station of Dessau



Figure 3.14 IBA in Naumburg: communication via banners at abandoned houses

Vacancies in the privately owned housing segment

As was stated earlier, both neighbourhood manager Bracun and urban planner Van Genderen foresee problems occurring with (vacant) privately owned houses, since reconstruction tasks of neighbourhoods will be more difficult. Municipalities also have to communicate with more people rather than only the housing corporations. The shrinking cities in Former East Germany faced comparable problems. In Dessau, property owners were mostly not interested in the transformation of their property for the construction of the landscape trail, since the profit rate would decrease. However, due to the fact the property will very likely not be profitable for the coming years, the costs of the property are higher (exploitation costs, municipal property costs, insurances) than the benefits. Property owners are therefore likely to sell their property to the municipality for a small amount of money (Urbane Kerne und landschaftliche Zonen, 2010, pp. 24-31). For the banks, the municipality of Dessau developed strategies to negotiate and to put pressure on them, by stating that land can be bought by the city but only for a certain price. A second strategy would involve the municipality stating a building permission would never be given for a certain plot. (Interview with Michael Rudolph on 23 February 2011 in Leipzig). Though it must be said that the municipality is heavily dependent upon external financial means to be able to buy property plots (Urbane Kerne und landschaftliche Zonen, 2010, p. 30).

In the 'Leipziger Osten', a shrinking neighbourhood in Leipzig, many of the empty houses have been demolished and turned into 'green zones' which are accessible to the public. These houses are generally privately owned. City planners had conversations with these owners in order to turn their properties into temporary green spaces. 'Permit agreements' (Gestattungsvereinbarungen) were made to (partly) demolish buildings, arrange the parcel for plant materials and place public furniture. The plot owner is responsible during the altering and for that receives a subsidy from the city which compensates for all altering costs made. With the agreement a parcel is given for public usage for 8 to 10 years. During this period, the parcel may not be developed for building activities, although the building permit is maintained and the owner does not have to pay city taxes (Stadt Leipzig, 2003, pp. 41 & 45). The question rises what will happen to the plot (and the concept of the green zones in total) after 10 years, since the construction of buildings is still permitted with these agreements. In South Limburg the situation regarding the privately owned buildings is not yet that urgent as in Leipzig, though it might be possible that in South Limburg implementation of these kind of measures is also needed in the near future.

Social policy for shrinking neighbourhoods

Since 2000, the municipality of Kerkrade started the initiative of 'operating in a neighbourhood specific way'. The goal of this project is to limit the gap between the governmental organisation of the municipality and the inhabitants, as well as to involve inhabitants, entrepreneurs and other actors in the policymaking process of the municipality. Within the municipality there are seven people responsible for the execution of this policy programme, and all can move freely through the governmental organisation of the municipality. They are not limited to a certain department. These people are there to get in contact with actors and inhabitants in the neighbourhoods. Both Bracun and Alicehajic of the municipality of Kerkrade, both actively concerned with this case, have positive experiences in communicating with the neighbourhood Kerkrade-West and vice versa, as a result of the project 'operating in a neighbourhood specific way'. The initial intention of the project had not so much to do with the upcoming demographic decline in the neighbourhood. It was specifically meant to deal with the enormous reconstruction task at hand for the out-dated post war housing stock. Now the project also helps to deal with the consequences of shrinkage in the neighbourhood, which are inherently connected with the reconstruction task (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade).

The process of working in a neighbourhood specific way deals with the neighbourhood in a way that the involved actors all contribute to the plan development process from their own discipline in an integral way. In this respect, all actors wanted to get to know each other properly. They wanted to learn from each other's interests and they wanted to learn on what aspects actors could make concessions. In other neighbourhoods, it is not uncommon that the plan development process is very stiff because every actor sticks to its own interests and is therefore not willing to make concessions. The actors at the start of this process were the province of Limburg, the municipality of Kerkrade, Parkstad and housing corporation Hestia Groep. At this early level of the plan development process the inhabitants were not involved. The inhabitants were informed by the neighbourhood paper about the fact that the municipality wanted to improve the neighbourhood and that they are preparing the process of doing something about the physical and socio-economic problems (Interview with Hein Bracon and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade). The inhabitant platform thinks that this is the right approach because it is of no use to involve them in the process while there are no ideas yet. There should be a concept vision as discussion tool between the municipality and the other parties (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade).

Leading for the neighbourhood specific operations are the integral neighbourhood visions of the neighbourhoods of Kerkrade. These documents contain the visions for the desired future developments of the neighbourhoods for the period until 2020 at all different fields of municipal policy. These integral neighbourhood visions are formulated in collaboration with the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, the housing corporations, public facility services and other actors in the neighbourhoods. Parallel to the integral neighbourhood visions, the structural concept for Kerkrade was developed and ready for inspection by the end of 2010. This is a steering document which has no binding policy for the municipality. It focuses on the themes landscape and the green environment, tourism, leisure and cultural history, traffic, facilities and living and working. Both the structural concept for the whole municipality as well as the integral neighbourhood visions form the basis for the development of the local zoning plan, which does contain binding policy (Interview with Hein Bracon and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade).

local zoning plan

The municipality of Kerkrade is inspired by a few inland and foreign excursions. The employees of the physical department of the municipality have visited foreign projects in the Ruhr area. An example is the transformation of the old industrial area of Emscherpark. Additionally, they visited projects elsewhere in the Netherlands, for example in Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and Northeast Groningen. On social level, the project team of operating in a neighbourhood specific way, was inspired by the University of Twente, which organised several social projects in relation to the football club FC Twente. The situation of Kerkrade-West is comparable because this area also has a professional football team, namely Roda JC Kerkrade, which also has an important social function for the neighbourhood. The project team has also been informed by the Belgium football club KRC Genk. This club explained how they handle a comparable social case, and the project team translated this back to their own situation in Kerkrade-West. They asked themselves the question if this approach could also be useful for their area. Especially a neighbourhood as Kerkrade-West needs the confidence of a role model. At this moment the project team is considering how they can apply these inspirations on their case (Interview with Hein Bracon and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade).

The city of Leipzig in Germany picks up the social programme for its shrinking neighbourhoods in a slightly different way. By installing an information centre in the middle of the shrinking neighbourhood 'Leipziger Osten', it is now possible for inhabitants and visitors to directly ask questions about what is going on in the district. In the information centre there is also an on-going exhibition about the projects undertaken in the district (based on empirical observation). And for starting neighbourhood entrepreneurs there is an advisory trajectory in which they can apply for micro-credits, subsidies and aid in setting up their business (KMU-Beschäftigungsbeihilfe Ablaufplan, 2010; Fördermittel für die lokale Wirtschaft im Leipziger Osten – Beihilfeprogramm für kleine Unternehmen im

EFRE-Fördergebiet "Zentrum Eisenbahnstraße/Leipzig-Ost", 2009; Mikrokredite, 2009). The last trajectory is aimed at the social welfare of the inhabitants. Because of the cheap housing prices in the neighbourhood, social weaker people are attracted and maintained. Therefore the information centre is also used as a place where residents can meet civil servants dealing with migrants and integration, public space safety, youth and family affairs (Kolibri Kommunikationsplattform, 2010; KIFAZ Kinder- und Familienzentren, 2010; PHILOs Prävention, Hilfe & Initiative im Leipziger Osten, 2010; Integration durch Beteiligung, 2010).

Claims of real estate developers

According to Bracun and Alicehajic of the municipality of Kerkrade the municipalities in South Limburg face problems with real estate developers who speculatively bought building ground, the so called risk-bearing developers. These firms have certain building claims for an area. When the municipality wants to withdraw these building rights, the municipality has to pay them a large compensation for their losses. This is the reason that many building projects on fresh grounds continue against their better judgement, because it simply costs too much money to break open the contracts and stop the building activities. Nowadays in South Limburg, the large building projects are usually executed in separate phases, not all houses of new districts are built at once. Additionally, the real estate developers wait until at least 70 percent of the houses is sold, before they start their building activities. Moreover, the latter is a phenomenon which occurs nationwide nowadays. Against all odds they build, even if this would cause problems on the longer term for a neighbourhood, village or city as a whole. Because these 'new' inhabitants in most cases come from less attractive neighbourhoods in the city or region, their former homes are often left vacant. Many of the real estate developers are well-informed by the fact that it is a risky business to build on fresh grounds, while the demand for houses is decreasing drastically. Therefore both municipality as well as the real estate developers often try to negotiate the redemption money for the building rights. For many of the smaller real estate developers this is an absolute necessity, otherwise their company will go bankrupt. The larger real estate developers take their loss more often, and add the damage to the remaining turnover of the company. In this way a part of the losses can be compensated with other projects which are profitable. The smaller real estate developers often do not have these opportunities (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade).

Van Genderen acknowledges this development from a designer's point of view. In his urban planning vision for the neighbourhood MSP in Heerlen, he states that it was difficult to recover the landscape elements, which was expected to be a chance in a shrinking neighbourhood. There was for example an idea to recover the stream valley in the west, but in the meantime, parts of the valley had already been developed with new housing projects by a project developer. At the moment, there are more active claims of developers in such potential areas. Sorrowful is thus that at these locations where the designer can really make a contribution to the spatial quality, this is made impossible by the claims. The fact that these claims are there was discovered during the analysis. The designers unsuccessfully tried to convince the municipality to change the location of these claims by drawing the landscape potentials (Interview with Ron van Genderen on 8 February 2011 in Rotterdam). Despite these efforts, the new houses are still being build. Spatial planners and designers will simply have to deal with these claims in their plans.

3.4.5 Means of communication and participation

Introduction

During the conference 'Shrinkage in Europe' in Amsterdam, key note speakers Fol and Robson paid attention to the consequences of shrinkage for people living in a shrinking neighbourhood. They concluded that urban shrinkage results in growing socio-spatial

disparities and tensions in local policies (Fol, 2011; Robson, 2011). Therefore it can be understood that the communication between government and inhabitants of shrinking cities is becoming more important, since shrinkage can have a major impact on people's daily lives as was illustrated by the inhabitant platform of Kerkrade-West. In their neighbourhood many of the buildings have been demolished, now they want to see what is going to happen with the area (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade).

Communication between municipality and inhabitants

Within the municipality of Kerkrade, the civil servants who are responsible for the neighbourhood specific approach are also responsible for the communication process with the inhabitants. Bracun is responsible for the neighbourhood Kerkrade-West and he has positive experiences with the neighbourhood specific approach. On a weekly basis the neighbourhood manager has a consulting hour where inhabitants can walk in without an appointment. Additionally, when the process of operating in a neighbourhood specific way started, a new partner in the communication process was introduced; the inhabitant platform of Kerkrade-West (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade). The members of the inhabitant platform are not democratically chosen. They got involved by themselves from different backgrounds and from different districts within the neighbourhood of Kerkrade-West. The backgrounds of the members range from entrepreneurs and the tenants association to community work and the local orchestra. These people are able to receive signals from the inhabitants on what 'really' lives among the inhabitants. In this way it is easier to give feedback on developments in the neighbourhood, both to the municipality as well as to the inhabitants. On the demolition activities in Kerkrade-West, the inhabitant platform has no influence. This is all determined on a governmental level as well as by the housing corporation. The task of the inhabitant platform in this is to monitor the liveability in the neighbourhood, and to make sure that the interests of the inhabitants are expressed towards the decision makers (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade).

The inhabitant platform communicates via the local newspaper and their website. Occasionally, there are more direct approaches used, as what happened when two primary schools were about to be merged in Kerkrade-West. These plans were already there for five years, however there was a strong opposition. The inhabitant platform decided to hold a survey among parents and other people involved to find out what really lived among them. By means of this approach, the inhabitant platform could express a representative voice towards the municipality regarding this development. The inhabitant platform is not a conciliation organisation between the municipality and the inhabitants. The members limit themselves by signalling a range of thoughts at one party and trying to clarify these to the other parties. During the last decade both parties have developed a good relation and cooperation since the implementation of the neighbourhood specific approach and the new communication strategies (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade).

There is also feedback from the inhabitants regarding this new approach. Until recently, the inhabitants had a hard time dealing with municipal questions and plans. The psychological boundary to go to the municipality was often simply too big to really go there. The same is true for the municipality when they wanted to communicate with inhabitants, because the residents of the neighbourhood are hard to reach. An average residents meeting for the municipality of Kerkrade and Hestia Groep, is mostly just attended by the members of the inhabitant platform, while it is particularly meant for all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. At the same time it becomes clear that the level of thinking of the inhabitants is also limited by affairs which directly concern them. In this regard there is attention for the school which is threatened to close down, but the future development of the neighbourhood as a whole in the coming decades is considered to be too abstract

and not many inhabitants are willing to discuss this theme. Therefore the municipality has hired a professional communication agency from Eindhoven, to investigate how to involve also the individual inhabitants within the planning process for the integral neighbourhood vision. The municipality hired a professional communication agency because they realised that governmental communication is something else than the communication which follows from the initiative of operating in a neighbourhood specific way (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade).

At this moment the municipality of Kerkrade communicates its ideas by means of flyers, neighbourhood-television, the city paper, a neighbourhood paper and workshops. The municipality has organised workshops for the inhabitants in collaboration with housing corporation Hestia Groep, the inhabitant platform and urban design bureaus. During these meetings, some ideas were presented on which the inhabitants could respond. To gain as much feedback and ideas as possible, there were several rounds of approaches during the meetings. One way was to assign a value on the scale of one to ten depending on the individual appreciation of elements in the neighbourhood presented on pictures. In this way it became clear what people wanted to preserve and which elements or functions were of less importance. Another approach was to think completely out of the box. The inhabitants got a blank transparent overlay on the aerial map of Kerkrade-West on which they could indicate changes for the neighbourhood according to their vision. This could mean the displacement or removal of certain functions, or the introduction of functions which are not present in the neighbourhood at the moment. Hereby, they were not limited to the geographical position of certain elements and functions, they could think completely out of the box. This resulted in inspiring insights for the workgroup of the municipality and the medley of ideas was bundled and documented in the form of the neighbourhood vision of Kerkrade-West (Interview with Hein Bracun and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade). Following the process of operating in a neighbourhood specific way, the board of the inhabitant platform hopes that the municipality comes up with some concrete propositions for the future development of the neighbourhood. The inhabitants should then make comments on them and determine in cooperation with the municipality which plan will be executed (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade).

In Delfzijl, Groningen, one of the learning points for the municipality was the communication with all parties in the town. Once or twice a year, the mayor and aldermen visit villages to talk about the shrinkage situation and other problems. The awareness among the inhabitants is more about the social issues regarding shrinkage than about physical issues. Participation of inhabitants already takes place in Delfzijl. The budget for Delfzijl-Noord was for example extended with 100.000 euro for participation projects (Interview with Rita Rolink, civil servant of the municipality of Delfzijl, on 3 January 2011 in Delfzijl).

repixeling In Dessau, communication between municipality and citizens was a major issue as well. Both the municipality and the designers were concerned how to involve the city's inhabitants in the projects developed during the IBA period. Although the term 'repixeling' (Umpixeln) was only used to explain in an easy understandable way the demolition changes happening in Dessau, there are in fact many things to be seen in the landscape. Besides the exhibitions which were held during the final year of the IBA in 2010, another communication project, the 'red threat' (Rote Faden) is still visible. Along the landscape trail a route was made, marked by red flags. Visitors or inhabitants can walk or cycle along the spots where the landscape trail is being created. According to Lischke, city planner in Dessau, the Rote Faden route helps to get an understanding of the inhabitants. Many inhabitants of Dessau discovered new things in their own town when they walked or cycled along the route. But not only the inhabitants need to be informed about the changes Dessau undergoes. All activities for the IBA in 2010, will last for 20-30 years. This long term makes it difficult to communicate the projects, especially to the municipality board, which changes every four years. Therefore, as a kind of continuation of the IBA a cycle route through Dessau will be organised each year. (Interview with A. Lischke, city plan-

ner of Dessau-Roßlau, conducted on 22 February 2011 in Dessau)

What architect Rudolph learned a lot about in Dessau was the intensive communication and participation process with the inhabitants of Dessau. The wishes of these local people went directly from them to the designers. During the construction process, walking tours with the designers were organised through the Landscape trail. The cooperation with other partners was very intensive as well: during the last three years, Rudolph went almost every week to the site to have meetings of four to six hours (Interview with Michael Rudolph on 23 February 2011 in Leipzig).

Involving citizens in their city's development

Compared to Dessau, the small city of Naumburg had a somewhat different approach regarding the IBA projects which have taken place in the city. Naumburg is another one of the 19 cities who joined the IBA urban redevelopment Saxony-Anhalt 2010. The initiative to join the IBA exhibition was not undertaken by the city council, but by the 'citizen association' (Bürgerverein), a group of citizens who wants to enhance the Naumburg city life via art, culture, education and the stimulation of people to engage themselves for the city (Naumburger Bürgerverein, 2011). Already in 2003, the citizen association Naumburg called all its architects and engineers together, to discuss what they can do to improve the perceived spatial quality of Naumburg. Back then, participation within the IBA did not happen. In 2008, the preparations for the IBA eventually did start in Naumburg. There was not much time for the process since the final exhibition (presentation of the results) would be in 2010. The city's membership was approved when the town would add something to the exhibition that other towns did not. Therefore Naumburg participated in the IBA with the slogan of 'citizenship and architectonic culture' (Bürgerschaft und Baukultur). 'city education' (Stadtbildung) became an important concept (Internationale Bauausstellung Stadtumbau Sachsen-Anhalt Naumburg 2010, p. 18). Architectural education for children was seen as essential because every inhabitant must be able to change something in the town, not only the architects. The 'Architecture and Environment House' (Architektur und Umwelthaus) was the main issue for joining the IBA. Since one project is not enough for participation in the IBA, also other projects were linked to the IBA. Where the citizen association wanted to design in cooperation with locals, the IBA wanted to have a design competition for architects. However, the possibilities for a design competition were low since the Architecture and Environment House is a restoration project. Locals could participate by for example starting a café for disabled people in the Architecture and Environment House. There was also cooperation with a school, which had good results. The main aim was to improve the imagination of the pupils (Interview with B. Cronau-Kretzschmar, architect at Cronau-Kretzschmar Architekten and M. Benzko, city planner of the Municipality of Naumburg, conducted on 24 February 2011 in Naumburg).

The IBA in Naumburg was the start of a process which will last for many years. Communication towards the inhabitants and involvement of the youth are the main (non-physical) results of the IBA in Naumburg; many physical results will be visible by 2012, like the Architecture and Environment House. The IBA attention also persuaded aborigines from Naumburg (mainly aged 60 years of age or older) who moved to the west of the country, now to move back and buy a house for a small price (like € 20.000,-). This is mostly thanks to the campaign 'This house wants to live!' (Dieses Haus will leben!). Furthermore, the IBA project helped to increase the awareness of the shrinkage issue among the inhabitants. Until 1997 there was a housing shortage in Naumburg. The shrinking issue is thus very recent, and therefore the awareness is still not fully present, every village within the Naumburger municipality still fights for its own survival and still wants to grow. Since 2009, Naumburg has a new 'local zoning plan' (Flächennutzungsplan). For housing, this plan aims at condensation instead of new housing areas. It is difficult for the municipality to communicate to their inhabitants that it is nowadays not possible anymore to build a new large house at the countryside. Discussions on how to deal with facilities in the 30 villages belonging to the Municipality of Naumburg can in the

future be held in the Architecture and Environment House. Though, when at the beginning of the IBA process more parties had joined the discussion, it would have been better for the amount of results obtained (Interview with B. Cronau-Kretzschmar, architect at Cronau-Kretzschmar Architekten and M. Benzko, city planner of the Municipality of Naumburg, conducted on 24 February 2011 in Naumburg).

Role of the media in the communication process

Within the debate about shrinkage, the media is abundantly involved as is already stated in the introduction of this thesis. The media can play an important role regarding the image of a neighbourhood, city or region. Their message can have both a positive or a negative impact. To give an example regarding the neighbourhood of Heilust in Kerkrade-West; every time when an event occurred which was related to criminal activities in a neighbourhood in Limburg, the provincial television channel L1 used the images of the neighbourhood Heilust even with a street name sign which said 'Heiluststraat'. This was probably not done on purpose, but it contributes in a negative way to the image of the neighbourhood. Additionally, in October 2010 a journalist of the Dutch national newspaper *De Volkskrant*, asked the alderman of Kerkrade to talk with her about Kerkrade-West, because she wanted to write an article about shrinkage that is occurring over there. The alderman agreed and showed the journalist around for the whole day. According to Bracon it was a very positive interview and all aspects of what is happening in Kerkrade-West at the moment were discussed. A few days later a very negative article was published in *De Volkskrant*. The header was "Nobody knows each other in Kerkrade" (Ros, 2010). The alderman called immediately with the editorial staff of *De Volkskrant* and told them that their story was very unilateral and this was not what he and the journalist had talked about all day. He could imagine that this was the impression that the journalist got from the city that day, however then the alderman would have liked to discuss this and be able to comment on the journalist her impressions to place her view in a more neutral perspective. *De Volkskrant* agreed that the story was not correct and apologised for the unprofessional procedure. However, there was no such thing as a rectification to reduce the damage under the readers of the newspaper, who have not read a balanced impression of Kerkrade-West (Interview with Hein Bracon and Slobodan Alicehajic on 26 January in Kerkrade). Both media examples are few out of many negative messages, and all have their own influence on people's perception of an area.

On the other hand, the media can also play a positive role when it comes to the debate regarding shrinkage. Beijer (news paper *De Limburger*) and Hillebrand (regional television channel L1) started the multimedia project 'Mijn Heilust'. Beijer has lived in the district of Heilust within Kerkrade-West for the first 17 years of his life. He left the area 40 years ago. As a visitor one ought to get a different impression of the neighbourhood in comparison to a person who has lived in the area. As former resident you see changes, houses that have been demolished for reconstruction, shops that have disappeared and specific new adjustments for elderly care. This however, is a phenomenon which occurs at many locations in the Netherlands these days. Although, when you take the actual figures of the neighbourhood, then you see that there are major changes both at this moment as well as changes that are coming. These are not comparable to other places in the Netherlands (Interview with Wiel Beijer & Karin Hillebrand on 26 January 2011 in Maastricht).

Where the public debate around shrinkage is often performed on the macro scale of the municipality, these journalists take the audience to the micro scale and show them what shrinkage really means for the people of a neighbourhood (Eijssen, 2011). It is not about policy makers and politicians this time, it is about the people in the neighbourhood. Therefore, this media project clarifies shrinkage with a human perspective, which is identifiable, understandable and accessible for lay people who are not involved professionally with the phenomenon. Obviously, it is also interesting for professionals and academics to learn from the micro scale approach of 'Mijn Heilust'.

'Mijn Heilust' digs deep in the mining history. It shows that the time of 182 medium sized

Een GLINSTEREND stukje hoop

Moestuintjes zijn hip in de wereld van de stedenbouwkundigen. Het kost niet veel en levert sociale cohesie op. Is dat zo? Of zijn het dure multicultuifities, die tot niets leiden? In de

Heerleense Vogaar- wijk Mezenbroek wordt een poging gedaan om groot onbeganen om te zetten in bescheden welbehagen.



Dit is de nazet doorn van Job Cohen. Kom er buiten deze dierbare vlekken met groene oase, dat is in essentie de meest haalde werkhouding van Vogaarwijk Mezenbroek. Waar iedereen een hovenier zal heeft. Ten, oudere buurtbewoners van de gemeente, er is nu een woonwijk met een kleine, Shalwa van een criminele afbreng. Shalwa, goetische, open markt of stansite, liep met haar dochter over straat. Een droevigheids kwam op hen en een onconcreet zijp doped op provocerende wijze. Inhebben. Verreken. Vandelien. Het is in sigaalaketen aanst, ook niet maar in Mezenbroek ervan op. Mezenbroek hebben een haat liefde verhouding met hun wijk. Mezenbroek, zoals Ten, moet in klappen tot de portierafdeeling van de politie. Het is een gebied van vandalisme en criminaliteit. Anderen worden. De dichter staat van het gebouw, de overloop, is, dat was er. Maar nog erger was de 'buit' (de tank afzet) van hun laatste stude eigen identiteit afgrijst. Zo werden ze het. Een bewoner in criminele Malle Prieur genoemd. Zonderlinge kade. Die in wooning en uitdaging had gemaakt. Toen de plannen voor de sloop leidend werden, zei hij tegen iedereen dat de

hoorn wilde: 'Ik ga er alreest uit tussen ze. Huisler'. Normaal geroede heen. Op de dag van sloop troffen ze Malle Prieur Ivenhoos aan. Ingeplaat aan een hek. Had zich met behulp van schoerverters ophangingen. De verlaten sporen, de delfen ook. Volgens officieel gegevens uit 2009 heeft Mezenbroek 1,500 inwoners. Bijna vijf procent is ouder dan vijftien jaar. Het meer dan vijf procent van de werkzame personen heeft een baan. Een op de negen huishoudens leeft van een bijbaanactiviteit. En het gemiddelde inkomen bedraagt 13.000 euro, lager dan het landelijke gemiddelde (14.200) en zelfs nog lager dan het regionale gemiddelde (14.000). Mezenbroek is een snuifloos. Voortgevoerd van de wijkbewoners is van alcoholische afkomst. Bij de laatste verkiezingen stemde 60% op de VVD of de SP. Een op de drie op de PvdD. Nu stemde SP. Terwijl hij genoeg achterstevingen had met alcoholische personen om op de PvdD te stemmen. Zoals die heer die ze voor hem gingen staan en stemden. 'We gaan verlaten ook, mogen we uw leip erin stellen?'

In Mezenbroek groeide het onbeganen. 'Aanvalslijnen de bewoners acht hun gedrag. Overdag, op straat, lopen ze elkaar voorbij. Van Shalwa, onbegrijpelijk mensen-makelaar, ook probeerde. Elke dag liep ze wel een uur door de wijk om mensen aan te spreken. Het led een kanakoe miste. Huizenlinden werden over een kam geshoven. Mezenbroek werd een afspiegeling. Toen de bewoosche Vooalkullien (zoen verdramp) onder de afspiegelingen werd, werd het kankare Heerleense verspreid over Mezenbroek. En ging de verplaatsing over een nieuw te bouwen gebied van vandalisme en criminaliteit. Anderen worden. De dichter staat van het gebouw, de overloop, is, dat was er. Maar nog erger was de 'buit' (de tank afzet) van hun laatste stude eigen identiteit afgrijst. Zo werden ze het. Een bewoner in criminele Malle Prieur genoemd. Zonderlinge kade. Die in wooning en uitdaging had gemaakt. Toen de plannen voor de sloop leidend werden, zei hij tegen iedereen dat de

gastriet, als nieuw wijfkrift. Grote duurzame woningen. Ze las het met haar het project Grote Kerkwijk Mezenbroek. Soudachter Roof Meeren en kunstenaar Karin Proden bedachten het project. De inzichten vonden zij in de zogenaamde Theoretische Taun, een van oorsprong Engels project, met als uitgangspunt: veranderlijke en verplaatsende gebieden waar aantrekkingskrachten worden gecreëerd als groene ontmoetingsplaats voor de bewoners. Er opent is even simpel als doortreffend. Ten zich. Nog wel te begrijpen ook, vanuit jantingang projectivering. Zo, dat geld wat komen? En zo niet alle niet meer



Coöportiet van de deelnemers aan het moestuintjeproject in Mezenbroek. Foto: Armand Niblik

moestuurt midden in eigen wijk, wel voor bewoners. De twee huizen in Mezenbroek, doet ook mee. Ook zij hebben hun eigen mekjes. Aandachtvol onderzoek de moestuurt laat ze zien hoe de groot en dat het niet in de dierlijk wordt gemaakt. Naast de moestuintjes zijn fruitbomen geplant, geproportioneerd in de Bette. Het lijkt te werken. Alhoewel en aantrekkingskrachten door de helpen d'kaar. Wijk, gebiedsdoelke. Markoekke woonwijk, dove de kinderwagen voor zich uit. Ze werkt samen met anderen in de wijk. Tot die tijd had ze nooit contact met anderen in de wijk, terwijl ze er al



Moestuurt midden in eigen wijk, wel voor bewoners. Foto: Armand Niblik

vele jaar woonde. Geldt ook voor de Leste Agria. Voorg jaar hieldte ze met naar de groeneboren. Ze maakte van haar eigen oude boegje, Inloofok, sien en da. De boerelende vrouwen samen het woonwijk. Zoals Natalia en Agria. De groene om met haar handen te werken. Hun families hadden ook grond. Er worden tegevoert uitgevoerd. 'Wat is dat?' vroeg Natalia aan Leo en boodte hem een plantje voor. Bette. Toen en Shalwa zijn uitermate belangrijk verhoudingspersonen in dit project. Voor Ten heeft het soms ten dubbel. Het doet zijn uiterste best om in de moestuintjes harmonieus met buurtbewoners om te gaan. Maar hij moet zich niet als veel buurtbewoners, ook aan het dat het glanzende wijkontexten verlaten is. De enige wijk die de groeneboren, zijn de Turke kappert. Zoals wordt het onbeganen in de wijk. Daarom is een simpel ontmoetingspunt zo belangrijk. Shalwa kende Natalia, zoals Ten herformuleert. Als hij Leo voorbij zag fietsen, dacht hij, wat is dat voor een z'n'frank. Nu staat hij schouder aan schouder met hem in de tuin te werken. Kleint simpel en kort bijna elke. De groene bellen, zegt Mike Fouerman, projectleider van de gemeente Heerle. Het is een knoest project. Het heeft veel geld gekost. Dringende en bouwlen en bodlen. Maar als de sociale omringing in deze grotelijke wijk, dan is dat het geld waard. Ze niet dat het werkt. Men overveeg het idee over te 'planten' naar Heerlebroek.

Natuurlijk, de sociaal-economische problemen loe er een meer ook. Maar de hangingsproef zijn weg. Zelf de grintieve schikking, opperhoof te lage, paleis is onaangetast, een unicum voor Mezenbroek. En van Shalwa waren wel waanoren. Die is van hen. Die is van de bewoners. En van hen. Het zou een ramp zijn om de te go. Het zou een ramp zijn als dit kon weer werd afgelapt. Maar dat ligt helemaal aan de bewoners

zelf, zegt Mike Middelke volgende jaar komt er een evaluatie. Als het dan nog goed loopt, blijft het. Het gaat hier maar om duurzame vlekken meer. Maar voor een gebied de bewoners van Mezenbroek hun led in eigen handen. Er moet markt fatsoen plan voor communicatie en activeren. 'Ik voel me alom in Rotterdam en Wageningen zich bij de programmamakers in de wijk, terwijl ze er al

Limburg meden land, in het was ons en land. Maar dat hebben de moestuurt ons afgevoeren. Vandaar is het niet meer zo gezellig zoals vroeger. Toen kon je met de buien nog lachen en samen een kopje koffie drinken. Nu heb ik Amstellanen naast me wonen. Die vertellen niet. Ze hebben de hele dag tijd om niet te denken. Daarom is er het onbeganen. Bij mensen zo die die.

In woon in 32 jaar in Heerle.

Figure 3.15 Newspaper article about 'hope' for MSP

LIEVER GEEN AAPJES KIJKEN IN Heilust

Een half jaar lang heeft deze krant, in samenwerking met omroep L1, in het project Mijn Heilust het thema krimp belicht. Welke lessen zijn daaruit te trekken en hoe kun je die toepassen in een mediatijdperk waarin het is ontdekt als scriptieonderwerp en er zelfs wordt gesproken over krimptoerisme? Een beschouwing.

door Branko Eijssen

Als je op een zonnige dag door de wijk Heilust wandelt, kan het zomaar gebeuren dat er een voorbeeldijk. De verwachting is dat er tot het jaar 2020 nog waaingen worden gesloopt. Heel Nederland kijkt verwachtingvol naar Parkstad en Zuid-Limburg, waar de oplossingen voor de toekomst moeten worden bedacht. Dat verhaal is nageregend bekend. Ook vaak gebouwd als het over krimp gaat, mag je niet spreken van een 'probleem' maar moet je praten over een 'kans'. Of een 'uitdaging', dat mag ook. 'Krimp' staat hoe dan ook op de kaart', constateert Jack Vincken, directeur van woonmaatschappij Heilust. 'Wij zijn natuurlijk al een tijd bezig, maar door het project Mijn Heilust heeft het wijk nog extra extra onder verveegings gelogen.

Kenners hebben het dan alijd over de zogenaamde communicatiekrimp. Het benoemen van krimp kan ook averechts werken. Ofwel, praten over krimp werkt krimp in de hand. 'Wekelijde krigen wij aanvragen uit wijkwonen in Heilust. Stank heb je een signa wat je nooit meer van af komt.'

Krimp. 1,2 miljoen hits op zoekmachine Yahoo Nederland, geen naar dit onderwerp is de knochten van het po-



Illustratie: Roben L. Oppenheiser

Ongaan met krimp anno 2015 blijft balanseren op een dun lood. Ook al omdat er - soms uit onverwachte hoek van alles wordt gegeven, waar je toch even over moet nadereken. Zoals de gemeente Heerle. Het is een krimp die begint vorig jaar met een waarschuwde voor het kopen van een huis in een nieuwbouwwijk in gebouwen door de bevolking krimp.

Of neem de uitspraak van de voorzitter van VNO/NCW Bernard Wamonts onlangs in het relatiegezamen van het Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, en wat de wereld via sociale mediakanalen als Twitter snel kennis van deed.

In Zuid-Limburg is een plan voor een vernieuwde ontwikkeling van de Maastreek Campus in Sittard-Geleen en de Maastreek Health Campus. Daardoor ontstond in de komende tien jaar een nieuwe baren voor kenniswerkers en vele duizenden extra arbeidsplaatsen aan diverse werkgelegenheids in de regio. Ik begrijp werkelijk niet hoe je zoets moede kunt employeren en reguleren over krimp en de afbraak van huizen kunt praten. Dat heb ik ook letterlijk zo tegen de aanwezige politiek gezegd. Ho op met praten over krimp en begin met het ondernemen van activiteiten.'

Er niet over praten? Geen optie. Het is voor betrokken partijen vaak zoeken naar de juiste ton. Eindhoven, als-

zijn de drie gebieden waar ze de fase van voorbereiding al lang voorbij zijn. Dat hebben we voor de rest van Nederland, die het soms niet wil begrijpen. Wij willen nu de problemen oplossen en aan de slag. En inderdaad, niet denken in problemen maar in kansen.

Krimp: het onderwerp is niet langer voorbehouden aan deskundigen die erover hebben doorgesproken. De vele reacties op het multimediale project Mijn Heilust van de Limburgse kranten en regionale ontsop tonen aan dat men begon zijn met een maatschappelijk relevant thema, zeker als je erin slaagt dat op een positieve manier - op hyperrealistische schaal - uit te spelen. Laten zien dat krimp niet alleen maar chagrijn is.

Dan blijkt krimp phoseling een aantrekkelijk onderwerp om over te bloggen, melden studenten van de universiteit in Rotterdam en Wageningen zich bij de programmamakers in de wijk over de rol van bestuurders in de aanpak van krimp en wat wij - de media - daar eigenlijk van vinden en krijgt He-

lust, zoals vroeger ook, landelijke aandacht in het NCRV-programma Rondom zo.

Geld? Nee, volstrekt logisch, zegt Marc Maatzer. De architect van Maurer United Architects in Maastricht heeft samen met zijn partner Nicole meegeschreven aan de gebiedsvisie voor Kerkrade-West. 'We leven in een mediatime. Een project als Mijn Heilust is de perfecte manier om mensen te bereiken. Zeker als je dat via alle kanalen kunt doen. Er ontstaat draagvlak. Daardoor worden inwoners zich meer betrokken en krijg je makkelijker contact.'

Zijn advies aan betrokken partijen in Heilust: maak gebruik van audiovisuele middelen. 'Er wordt nog gewerkt met folders, maar dat is natuurlijk hopeloos outerdert. In plaats van intoopvoeren te organiseren, zetten ze de informatie op internet. Dat leest toch niemand? Hetse demotie zandheid in, le moet zaken visueel aantrekkelijk brengen. Zeker bij een toch redelijk abstract onderwerp als krimp. De manier is al lastig genoeg.'

Figure 3.16 Newspaper article about 'shrinkage tourists' in Heilust

companies with many cafes is over. Luckily there are also positive things to mention and that is where the focus of this project is. Both journalists also see a task to improve the image of Heilust, that not all is doom and gloom (Interview with Wiel Beijer & Karin Hillebrand on 26 January 2011 in Maastricht).

The inhabitant platform is positive about the media attention regarding Heilust. However, some think there is too much attention for the past, how nice it was back then. There is a risk of looking back all the time, because it can give a false signal. There should also be attention for the present and the future (Interview with members of the inhabitant platform Kerkrade-west on 26 January 2011 in Kerkrade).

It is not the first task of this project to communicate the municipal and provincial policy to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. The project is completely independent. On the other hand, the project devotes special attention to make clear to the inhabitants that the image of vacant space gives the impression that the municipality is doing nothing to help their neighbourhood, is not correct. It takes time and money to develop a certain strategy for the neighbourhood. It is simply not possible that when a housing block is demolished, that in a week time, there is a whole new leisure park with 30-year-old trees. The residents of the neighbourhood should adjust their expectations to a realistic level and the media project helps to achieve this understanding (Interview with Wiel Beijer & Karin Hillebrand on 26 January 2011 in Maastricht).

mijnheilust

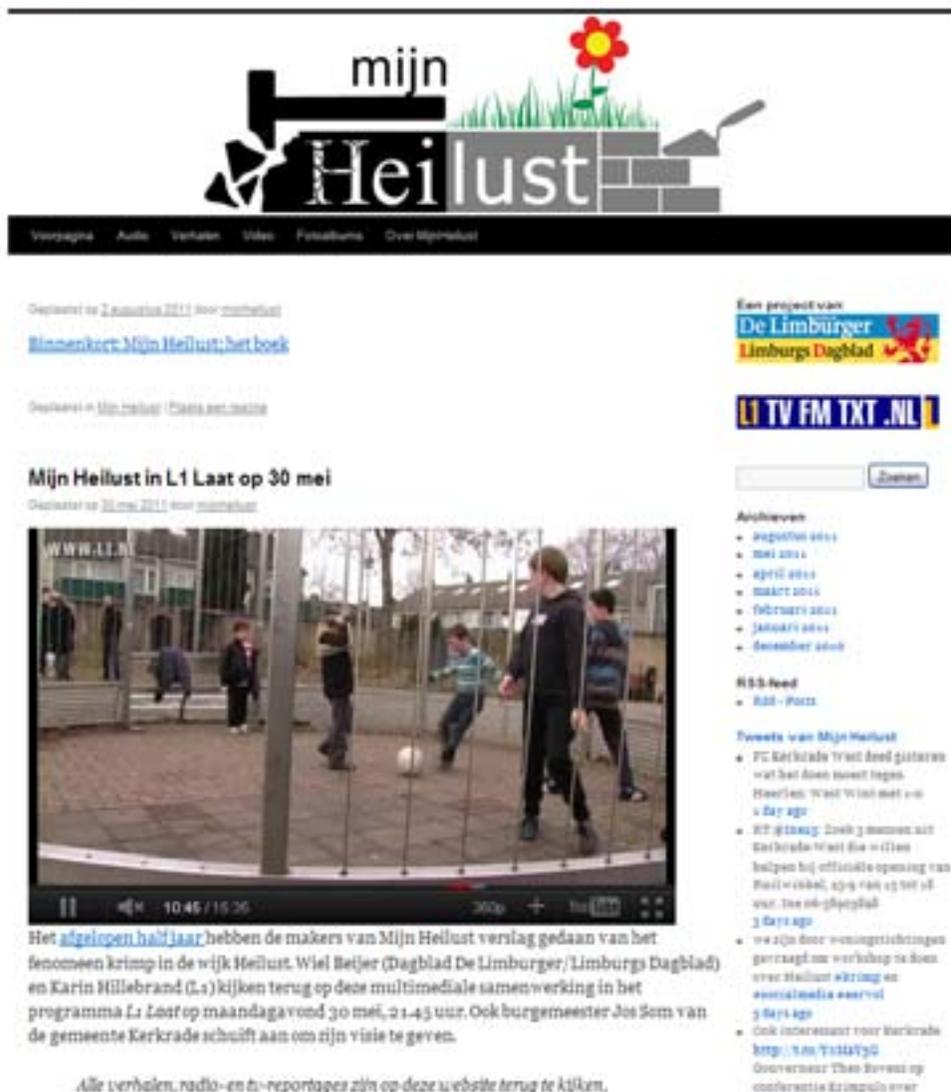


Figure 3.17 Screenshot of the website which is part of the project 'Mijn Heilust'



“ *How viable are shrinking regions at all? If you want to invest, invest in liveability and aesthetic improvement.* ”

GroenLinks electoral geographer De Voogd (2011)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter considers and discusses the outcomes of the descriptive research by dealing with the first and second sub questions as posed in the introduction. The research questions are structuring for the information presented in this chapter. The answers are based on the research results described in the previous chapters.

4.2 Aim and research questions

This conclusion of the descriptive research considers the first aim of the thesis in generating knowledge about how actors deal with shrinkage in South Limburg: what perspectives do exist, how do involved people handle?

To be able to reach this aim, in the introduction the following research questions were posed:

Main question:

+ **What is the contribution of landscape architecture and planning concerning the dealing with spatial effects of shrinkage on residential areas in South Limburg?**

Sub questions:

- 1 What is the current status of causes and spatial effects regarding shrinkage on residential areas in South Limburg?
 - What are the causes of shrinkage for the region of South Limburg?
 - What are the spatial effects of transformations on residential areas as a consequence of shrinkage in South Limburg?
- 2 Is there a scope for a new approach for dealing with shrinkage?
 - What is the current practice of landscape architects and spatial planners regarding residential areas on a regional, sub-regional and local scale in the region of South Limburg?
 - How are current perspectives of involved actors on shrinkage influencing projects regarding residential areas carried out by landscape architects and spatial planners?
 - How do landscape architects and spatial planners in other regions deal with the effects of shrinkage on residential areas?

The third sub question posed in the introduction is subject in the prescriptive research part. The main research question will be answered in chapter 8.

4.3 Causes and effects of shrinkage in South Limburg

After the closure of the last South Limburg coal mines in the seventies, the main economic strength of South Limburg had disappeared. It is highly doubted whether the Dutch national policy to stimulate the region's economy by moving companies and offices to South Limburg, had its effects in increasing investments and job opportunities. Many people left the region; many people who stayed became unemployed. Since 1997, the combination of changes in economy and demographics led to a population decline in South Limburg. The combination of low birth rates, ageing and outmigration of mostly young higher educated people (braindrain) forms the most important aspect.

The effects of shrinkage in South Limburg are comparable to the effects in other former industrial European regions which are now confronted with shrinkage. Due to the decline of the number of households, housing vacancies are occurring in socially weaker neighbourhoods which therefore decline even more: the level of facilities, spatial quality and social cohesion decreases. Next, there is the belief that shrinkage costs money; governments of shrinking regions 'earn' less due to a declining number of financial sources. And there is a debate going on whether shrinkage causes the mismatch between a changing population composition with relatively more elderly people and the current offer of housing stock. Researchers also point out the governments' struggle to accept shrinkage as a phenomenon in the beginning of the awareness process.

In line with the aim of this thesis it is of great interest to study, with the aid of the concepts and theories described in chapter 2, how the effects of shrinkage are being perceived and, in the next step, are being dealt with. In the next sections the authors try to give more insights in the dilemma's the involved people and organisations within the South Limburg shrinkage debate are confronted with.

4.4 Multiple stories to reveal the different interpretations of shrinkage

Shrinkage is a broad term. Therefore it can be understood that there is no common agreement, neither among academics, nor among practitioners, what shrinkage actually is. Nonetheless the Dutch national government uses a single definition in all their publications. This definition is than again often subject of debate. Besides the definition of shrinkage, also the interpretations of shrinkage differ to a great extent.

Some people from South Limburg frame it as a problem for architects, the economy and housing market, because less money will be earned and vacancies will occur; others see chances rising with regards to a better living quality and more open spaces, since there are less inhabitants left to make use of that space. And then there are the inhabitants of shrinking neighbourhoods. For them, the term shrinkage has no meaning. They are more concerned with issues like impoverishment, ageing of their neighbourhood and the loss of public facilities. It can be concluded that the interpretations of what shrinkage actually means, the consequences of shrinkage and what should be done differ for each interviewed person or organisation according to their place within the cultural network. Therefore the problem definition of (the consequences of) shrinkage in South Limburg is not that clearly defined as many reports implicitly estimate.

For the research approach of the phenomenon of shrinkage, the authors chose to base the main results of the analysis on the interviews with persons who have different professional backgrounds and are involved in the South Limburg shrinkage debate. This case study approach is founded on the underlying concept of storytelling, as explained in chapter 2. The authors want to stress that by using this concept the qualitative analysis of how shrinkage actually is perceived, improved. For example, statistical analysis may show the quantitative impact of the consequences of shrinkage in facts and numbers; however, it cannot provide insights into the perceptions of key actors within the shrink-

age debate. Especially in the in-depth case of the shrinking neighbourhood Heilust in Kerkrade-west, the concept of storytelling was very useful. Only when put together, the different stories of the interviewees involved in the Heilust case gave a good insight of the approach of shrinkage consequences by people who are involved as inhabitants, civil servants, architects and so on. However the concept of storytelling also has its limitations, as Throgmorton already wrote: "The meaning of the text is contestable and negotiated between the author and its many readers" (Throgmorton, 2003, p. 129). For this thesis this means that although the authors have a clear purpose with their story, due to the existence of multiple simultaneously stories present, the meaning of their story can be interpreted in many different ways by many different readers. Since all stories are constructions invented by an author and written with a certain purpose (Throgmorton, 2003), differences in interpretations cannot be avoided.

As stated above important issues which came to the fore due to the set-up of the research in accordance with the theory of first- and second-order observation (Luhmann, 1992; Fuchs, 2001), were the competing perspectives regarding the meaning of the term 'shrinkage', and how the consequences of shrinkage should be tackled. The authors are convinced that without the application of the theory of observation it would hardly be possible to obtain insight into the multiple stories of shrinkage in South Limburg. By dividing observations in first and second order, the researcher becomes aware of his or her own interpretations and bias. As long as there is no own interpretation (first order) of shrinkage made in the descriptive part of this thesis, it is rather easy to analyse how interviewees and others mentioned during the description of the research results in chapter 3, frame their perspective of shrinkage and try to persuade others to take over this perspective by putting it on some sort of agenda setting platform (second order).

The reverse happens as well: people involved in the shrinkage debate of South Limburg value certain topics like the energy transition, identity or liveability, as important and want to raise attention for these topics. Shrinkage as being an actual and popular issue in news media is seen as a useful agenda setting issue. Therefore, the original topic is framed in a new way, containing a shrinkage element to raise more public awareness for the original topic. According to the authors, this reframing is one of the reasons for the broad interpretation of shrinkage.

4.5 Challenging the story of growth in the planning system

A sharp contradiction exists in how there should be invested in the region of South Limburg. Some interviewees are focused on a higher, (inter)national scale level and believe in high scale investments to support the macro economy. They plea for investments in high tech campus developments, cross-border cooperation, infrastructure and inner-city centres. The aim of economic growth is seen as very important since money should be earned. Only in this way a vital and resilient region is maintained. This aim is partly fulfilled by branding the region.

However, based on five different arguments, others highly question these large scale projects. Firstly, since the region is shrinking, in the near future there will be less demand for the services these projects offer; they are considered as over-investments. Secondly these projects are for most citizens simply a remote thing, far away from their daily lives. Thirdly the tax money put in these large projects should actually be invested in the liveability of all neighbourhoods in South Limburg. Fourthly, almost all shrinking cities in Europe aim at the same 'shrinkage turning events', the large scale projects in South Limburg included. Fifthly there is the warning for future disappointment caused by these investments. In the past, politicians have made equal promises regarding the economic development of peripheral regions, which led to high expectations among inhabitants that were not being fulfilled.

Consequently there are people who place more emphasis on the lower scale level of the region and the neighbourhood. For them, well-being, liveability and identity seem more important. And then there are people who state that both visions can exist alongside each other without a conflicting contradistinction. This probably means there are different cultural networks at stake here. A network with people who focus on the macro scale level with an economical-spatial orientation and a network constructed by people who place their focus on the micro scale level where the most attention is paid to social and civil affairs like liveability and education.

This scale level discussion is in its core the discussion about what way to head regarding the future of the region of South Limburg. For an understanding why dealing with shrinkage as it is happening at the moment is that uncoordinated, it is interesting to dig a little deeper into what can be called the 'growth-paradigm'.

The western capitalistic society has for years been dominated by a taken-for-granted strive for economic and population growth (Blauwhof & Verbaan, 2009; Jackson, 2009; Roseland, 2000). Growth was (and still is) seen as necessary for prosperity, innovation and the improvement of life (Jackson, 2009). For the last decades, this paradigm has been questioned more and more. The debates on climate change (Giddens, 2008), depletion of natural resources (Roseland, 2000), global income differentiations (Jackson, 2009) and environmental degradation (Stern et. al., 1996) show that there is discussion regarding the sustainability of this growth paradigm.

Nota Ruimte

Also in Dutch context, the facilitation of economic development has been one of the main goals of the spatial planning system (Voogd & Woltjer, 2010; Hajer, 2007; Van Vliet, 2006). In the 'Nota Ruimte' (National Spatial Policy Document) this goal is spatially translated into the first objective of the Dutch policy on the spatial organisation: strengthening the international competitive position of the Netherlands by taking away spatial bottlenecks for economic growth (Nota Ruimte, 2006, p.5.). The Randstad is seen as the economic core of the country and thus this area receives most attention regarding spatial developments (Nota Ruimte, 2006, pp. 14, 16, 32). This perspective implicitly means that there is also a periphery which economically performs less. In the Dutch context, most of the peripheral regions are perceived to be located at the state border (Eker & Van Houtum, 2007, p. 13). In the second half of the 20th century, the Dutch state government conducted an active policy to stimulate people and companies to relocate themselves in the Dutch border regions (Korte toelichting op de tweede nota over de ruimtelijke ordening, 1967, pp. 4 & 5; Derde nota over de ruimtelijke ordening – deel 2: verstedelijkingsnota – deel 2a: beleidsvoornemens over spreiding, verstedelijking en mobiliteit, 1976. pp. 135 & 136; Derde nota over de ruimtelijke ordening – deel 2: verstedelijkingsnota – deel 2d: regeringsbeslissing met nota van toelichting, 1976, pp. 14, 134, 135, 136). This reallocation of people and companies was meant to improve regional competitiveness. According to Beetz (2008), who investigated the comparable peripheral situation of the German state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, these state government policies focused on developing equivalent living conditions in all parts of Germany. And since 'equivalent' was commonly translated as 'equal' throughout the second part of the 20th century, "the decline of many rural regions has now led to reconsideration." (Beetz et al., 2008, p. 296) Due to changed conditions like globalisation, decline of top-down state controlled policies and demographic changes and a significant loss of (national) economic importance of peripheral regions, it becomes necessary to rethink and adjust the national spatial development policy (Heinrichs, 2006, p. 653). In Germany, there is a field of tension in the debate between a national spatial policy aimed at a contribution towards a collective goal of growth and a policy aimed at a contribution towards an interregional or even intraregional goal of compensation. In the first case, peripheral regions may, according to some, become 'losing regions' (Verliererregionen). In the second case, according to Heinrichs (2006), inhabitants are better off when Germany as a whole is economically competent instead of when a peripheral region profits from national compensation policies (Heinrichs, 2006, p. 653). This debate is more or

less the same in South Limburg. The 'Nota Ruimte', written in 2006, does not mention the 'national spreading policy' (Rijksspreidingsbeleid) anymore, in opposition to the spatial policy documents from the sixties and seventies (Nota Ruimte, 2006).

Since the growth paradigm forms one of the basics of the current Dutch spatial planning system, it is very hard for many people who are confronted with shrinkage (in the broadest range of definitions) to understand and accept its consequences. Therefore, the strong growth paradigm limits fundamental discussions about the question how planning should be organised under shrinkage circumstances. More reflection is needed about situations in which the dominant story of economic growth is being confronted with shrinkage, like what happens in South Limburg.

4.6 Organising shrinkage approaches in a changing planning context

Besides the confrontation between the growth paradigm and shrinkage there is another recent phenomenon which has a significant impact on the planning context in South Limburg. Since spatial planning in the Netherlands is more or less 'accepted' as a public task and therefore a government steered intervention in space (Taverne, 1992, in: Van Assche, Beunen & Duineveld, forthcoming; Voogd & Woltjer, 2010), the Dutch national government has long been very dominant regarding the spatial organisation of the country. However, as was explained in chapter 3, due to budget cuts and deregulations the national government sheds its spatial policies to lower governmental authorities like the provinces and municipalities. Other policies are abolished and affairs are left over to the civil society and the market. Though in chapter 3 it was also made clear that a lot of interviewees state that it would be very hard for their region to cope with shrinkage without the help of the national government (i.e. as expressed in a plea for financial help and measures to resolve the border issues on migration and tax policies).

pocket park

Interesting in line with the decentralisation and abolishment of policy is the plea for 'self-regulation' (zelfsturing) made by several Dutch politicians. The philosophy behind the plea is that the citizen again takes over the former tasks of the (local) government by cooperating together. Examples are 'taxi-services' for elderly people, shopping courier services, social meetings, conflict management between neighbours and so on (Driessen, G. 2010). Though also the cooperation of designers, artists and inhabitants to arrange community gardens, pocket parks and small agricultural fields in the neighbourhood of MSP in Heerlen can be put under the umbrella of this phenomenon. Self-regulation is framed as an ideal and cheap solution to deal with both shrinkage and a retreating government (Driessen, G. 2010; Driessen, G. 2011). Jorna, professor of public administration at ASESOR, the University of Lower Silesia in Wroclaw, sees the same movement of a government which leaves the field and citizens and civil organisations who have to take up a more initiating role. Though in the Netherlands, the government is not always capable to handle this occurring situation. According to Jorna, the question is whether the government could stimulate 'civilianship' (burgerschap). And a more interesting question is whether our (the Dutch) government can stimulate 'civilianship' (Jorna, 2011). It remains thus the question what the effects of the decentralisation of the Dutch spatial planning policy will be.

In line with this decentralisation, other interviewees seek their good in the aid of the province of Limburg. They expect the province to take the leading role in the shrinkage debate by developing a regional structural concept for housing, which determines where a municipality can or cannot build and where demolishing must take place. However, when taking a look at the current activities of the province, it occurs this authority is mostly analysing the consequences of shrinkage and negotiating with other governmental layers about strategies and policies to be developed. And the in the spring of 2011 written provincial coalition agreement does not directly speak about demolishing houses

or financing shrinkage accommodating measurements. The demanded role of a province who takes the lead in the South Limburg shrinkage issue is thus not yet becoming reality.

On municipal level there is not much agreement on a common shrinkage strategy either. The three largest cities radically differ in the way they deal with shrinkage, varying from denying that shrinkage takes place in their city to fully accept and accommodate shrinkage. On the other hand, the municipalities in South Limburg learned to cooperate on a regional scale level regarding affairs which are too complex for a single municipality, like the Brainport development. This meant a shift from an inward looking municipality, standing up for their own interests, to an outward looking municipality, cooperating with their neighbouring municipalities.

Though the need for regional co-operation is high. In the Achterhoek, the municipalities initiated a regional vision for housing as soon as it became clear that the region would face shrinkage in the future. In North East Groningen, regional co-operation was advised by the Topsteam Krimp and the province of Groningen. The municipalities already made a pact and are now working on a regional liveability plan. The housing programme as agreed in the pact, is now implemented in provincial policy, meaning that this is binding.

To make the disagreements about coordination, strategies and initiative even more complex, there is also a discussion about the financial aspects of shrinkage taking place. The large costs of demolishing housing blocks in the social rent sector have to be paid. In the near future, interviewees expect problems with vacancies in the private real estate sector as well. Although they feel a sense of urgency, housing corporations, municipalities, real estate developers and banks disagree who has to take the initiative in this matter. They do agree however on the statement that the one who takes the lead in the shrinkage accommodating process, will also pay the bill. All parties are thus waiting for the other to take the lead, so they can profit from earlier investments. Since everyone waits for one another, in practise nothing is happening at the moment. Because every actor points its finger to another actor, the question who should take the initiative is therefore still unclear.

As was said before, shrinkage opposes the paradigm of economic growth. The planning instruments developed in the second half of the 20th century, were mostly invented to stimulate this growth and are unsuitable in a situation of shrinkage, since the underlying mechanism of more is no longer present (Klinkers, Hovens & Derks, 2009). Therefore practitioners involved in spatial planning for shrinking regions call for alternative planning instruments, no longer aimed at growth, as was already discussed in section 3.4.4. In the past governmental and scientific experts had a large influence in the development of new instruments which led to top-down governmental coordination, steering and control (Van Assche, Beunen & Duineveld, forthcoming). Nowadays, as was being shown at the conferences the authors visited in Amsterdam and Den Haag, practitioners and politicians criticise the in their eyes unsatisfying answers of academics. The academics who are researching the causes and consequences of and the actions taken regarding shrinkage, state their research is being limited due to a lack of data. And the examples of policies which deal with shrinkage in a 'good' way, are mostly isolated small scale experiments. It seems very hard for academics to provide the 'right' answers.

4.7 Role of the designer, design and designing under influence of shrinkage

In chapter 3 has been written about the dilemma's governments and housing corporations and therewith their spatial and housing policies are confronted with when their basic assumption (economic growth) is confronted with the opposite: shrinkage. In chapter 3 was also written about (landscape) architects, urban planners and designers who grapple this contradiction between the existing paradigm of growth and the new reality of shrinkage to put their own stories on the agenda; stories (visions) which are intended to pro-

voke a change in thinking in the minds of policy makers, other planners and designers as well as citizens. An example forms the plan for the regional energy transition in Parkstad which is now being implemented in governmental documents. Sandercock (2003) classifies the usage of these stories as a “catalyst for change” (Sandercock, 2003, p. 18). The stories or visions told in section 3.4.3 shape, with the words of Sandercock, “new imaginations of alternatives” (Sandercock, 2003, p. 26). They serve as inspirations when they are re-told (Sandercock, 2003). Sandercock sees this “organising of hope” (Sandercock, 2003, p. 18) even as one of the fundamental tasks of planners. In accordance with the empirical material this thesis provided the authors cannot join the discussion about the fundamental tasks of planners; they however do want to stress that the organisation of an International Building Exhibition (IBA) seems, based upon the interviews conducted in Saxony-Anhalt and South Limburg, a strategically applied instrument to advocate for alternative ways of dealing with shrinkage. The IBA offers a platform where by means of successful agenda setting the alternative stories or visions of designers, planners, policymakers, artists and citizens can be heard by, what Sandercock calls, “the dominant culture whose version of event, of behaviour, and practices, are the implicit norm” (Sandercock, 2003, p. 19).

Apart from a visionary approach of landscape architects and planners, phasing, prioritising, flexibility, dealing with uncertainties, generating alternatives and the housing environment have all become more important factors in the design process. Additionally, there is the social programme, which, according to the interviewees, should be included parallel to the physical programme. Interviewed landscape architects consider released spaces as a kind of laboratory to test their designs for shrinkage. An important question for designers is how their design intervention makes sure that people will want to live in the South Limburg neighbourhoods.

Furthermore the role of the designer is extending. In shrinkage situations there are many parties sitting around the table, and according to the interviewees designers should distinguish themselves by representing and providing insight into ideas. Realism about the (financial) feasibility of the plan is thereby a necessity, as well as close cooperation with other parties. The visionary ideas of designers form therefore an added input in new directions the region of South Limburg can head for.

As already stated by most interviewed designers, attention for social issues is of key value when making plans for shrinking neighbourhoods. This was illustrated by the project of operating neighbourhood specific in Kerkrade-West and the social programme for a shrinking neighbourhood in Leipzig.

The problems with claims of real estate developers showed the difficulties governments can encounter when trying to decrease the building activities in shrinking municipalities. Also for designers these claims caused problems: when trying to upgrade the environment of shrinking neighbourhoods, they cannot ignore the new housing projects on fresh grounds.

4.8 Alternative instruments and communication starting points

In the context of the design and planning process for shrinking regions, the interviewees elaborated on the use of ‘alternative’ instruments. It turned out that intensive, even cross-border cooperation between governmental layers, inhabitants, media and businesses is seen as very important under shrinkage circumstances. Especially the adjustment of complementary housing policy between municipalities is important to prevent Einwohnerkannibalismus. Furthermore, the region of Parkstad wants to organise an International Building Exhibition (IBA) in order to boost the current ambitions and ideas (energy transition) and to make use of the potentials of the nearness to Germany. The IBA Urban Redevelopment in Saxony-Anhalt was considered to be a rather successful project. The interviewees were mostly content with the concept used. According to them, the strength of the IBA concept is to tell the story of the concerned city and to create a



“ *The new public space had to be a place for every inhabitant in the neighbourhood!* ”

Inhabitant neighbourhood MSP Heerlen (2010)

change of mind in the practices of designers, citizens and politicians.

The vacancy of private houses is seen as a future problem for the restructuring of shrinking neighbourhoods in South Limburg. In the German shrinking cities there has been experimented with different methods to deal with this issue. According to one of the interviewees, landscape architect Goossens, with some adjustments these methods could also be introduced in South Limburg.

The last theme elaborated on is the different ways in which is being communicated by involved actors in a shrinking neighbourhood and within the larger regional shrinkage debate in South Limburg. Interviewees, from different municipalities and inhabitants from a shrinking neighbourhood, stated the importance of tight and frequent connections between municipality and inhabitants. With these connections, municipality and inhabitants are better able to give feedback on each other's wishes and ideas. Furthermore, it was shown that the role of the media can be very negative as well as very positive on the constructed image of a shrinking neighbourhood for the larger public. And again, from German experience it occurred the IBA process can be of great value in three issues: involving the citizens into the spatial and cultural development of their own city; promoting a certain image of a city and provoke a change of mentality in the heads of the city's policy makers that a city can do much more on own strength.

4.9 Scope for a new approach for dealing with shrinkage

People and organisations within the South Limburg shrinkage debate are struggling with the consequences imputed to this phenomenon in their region. As discussed in this chapter the struggling was expressed through the different interpretations of shrinkage, the different perspectives where to head for in the future, the disagreements about how to invest, the financial issues coming with shrinkage and the discord among the governmental authorities regarding a cooperation approach to deal with shrinkage. On top of these issues come deregulation, budget cuts and a still dominant growth paradigm.

It has also been made clear that the big issues regarding vacant buildings, demolition, declining financial means and deteriorating neighbourhoods in shrinking regions demand a different attitude from landscape architects and planners. Plans and designs arise in a drastically changed planning and design context. Changed in terms of social, spatial and financial conditions, as well as in terms of political and administrative conditions. This descriptive research made clear that actors who make the key decisions in the planning and design context are very divided regarding the dilemma what direction the region of South Limburg should head for in the future.

Therefore the authors are convinced a new approach to deal with shrinkage in South Limburg is needed, the scope is certainly present. This new approach is presented in the following chapters.



“

A green trail will slowly ‘grow’ around the city centre.

Landscape architect Rudolph (2011)

”

.....**PART TWO**.....



.....

PRESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH



“ *The released spaces can act as a kind of a laboratory, a test space.* ”

Landscape architect Goossens (2011)

5.1 Introduction

A new approach for dealing with shrinkage is necessary to prevent South Limburg for the negative effects of 'wrong' reactions on shrinkage. To achieve this new approach, the authors of this thesis will provide their vision on the shrinkage issue, based on all knowledge that is gathered in chapter 3. In the next section, the authors provide their definition of shrinkage. In the section thereafter, the same themes as in chapter 4 will be used to propose how spatial professionals should deal with the effects of shrinkage. This chapter ends with a section about the construction of the two most probable scenarios for each of the two case studies, which are also based on the knowledge gathered in chapter 3. Chapter 5 is therefore fundamental for chapters 6 and 7.

5.2 Shrinkage redefined

A definition of shrinkage has already been given in section 1.1 of the introduction. During the descriptive research, the authors were confronted with various explanations of the term shrinkage. Based upon these different definitions of shrinkage, the authors of this thesis use the following definition:

"Shrinkage is the phenomenon of structural household and population decline which occurs on a regional scale level, with significant spatial, social and economic effects for that region."

This definition needs some explanation.

Firstly, it is important to understand that although the effects of shrinkage affect a whole region, the effects are mainly visible on the lower scale level: houses become vacant, streets become deteriorated and a unilateral population remains in neighbourhoods where people leave.

Secondly, it is important to understand that shrinkage is a process, with the result of less inhabitants and households. This process causes the effects, not the result. A low number of inhabitants and households is in itself not a problem. For example, some small municipalities are economically healthier than large municipalities (VNG, 2011), and small municipalities are likely to have less typical urban problems like congestion and crime. It is the transition, both towards a lower number of inhabitants as well as from growth to shrinkage, which has very complex effects.

Thirdly, the authors want to stress that 'effects' should not be confounded with 'problems'. The authors of this thesis want to emphasise that the effects of shrinkage are not automatically a problem. The way how the transition is given form, i.e. how the different parties deal with shrinkage, determines whether shrinkage causes serious problems or whether it is only the driving force towards a different future.

5.3 Dealing with the consequences of shrinkage

5.3.1 *Role of the governments*

The national government should be aware that the region of South Limburg is not treated as the backyard of the Netherlands, but as a dynamic region which is part of a larger international network, including the regions of Aachen and Liège. Current regulations, varying from planning and housing regulations to tax and labour regulations, should be adapted by taking away all barriers that obstruct cross-border activities. Only in this way, the region can fully profit from its strategic situation in the midst of these highly dynamic European regions. Other adaptations in current regulations are necessary to make creative, temporal solutions possible in areas with many vacancies. National regulations should not impose any barrier for creative ideas that, whether temporally or not, improve the quality of the environment.

The provincial government should take a leading role in the coordination of (spatial) projects and housing assignments. The province acts as a watchdog by securing that the municipalities stick to their building limitations. This monitoring role is necessary to prevent the region for phenomena like *Einwohnerkannibalismus*, with many problems and quarrels as result.

The municipal governments should co-operate to avoid mutual competition. They should be aware for megalomaniac projects which can result in disappointments and huge financial losses. Instead, municipalities should pay attention to the small scale level: the daily environment of their inhabitants. In the end, the municipality should take care for its inhabitants. With a decreasing budget, it is unethical to spend high amounts of money for megalomaniac and risky projects, and neglect the daily environment of its inhabitants. In a region where every person that remains is of such a high value, every penny should be used for the quality of this person's environment.

5.3.2 *Initiative and financing*

For each municipality, an external independent project cooperation can be found in which all partners take their share. In such a corporation there should be representatives of at least the municipality, the province, real estate developers, housing corporations (for the rental housing sector) and banks (for the private housing sector). The cooperation could be extended with other relevant partners, like the retail sector, public transport companies and the urban region. Preferably, the cooperation has a structure in which the municipality has a share of 49%, the (semi-)private parties have a share of 49% and the province has a share of 2%. This way, the province is the deciding partner.

To deal with the consequences of shrinkage, the national and provincial government should invest money in both research how to deal with shrinkage, as well as financial means to adapt the spatial organisation to better fit a future in which inhabitant numbers decrease. The time to invest money and effort in searching for the causes and consequences of shrinkage is over, the time has come to act. If no concrete measures are implemented, the region will become less and less attractive for inhabitants to stay. The necessary investments to improve neighbourhoods that suffer from the consequences of shrinkage should be done by a foundation on municipal level. This foundation should be funded by several parties that play an important role when it comes to the liveability in the neighbourhood. The main participants here are the municipality itself, the housing corporations, the banks and also the inhabitants themselves. In these times with huge cut-backs, it is not more than reasonable to expect also investments from this latter group of people, because the investments in the neighbourhood will have a direct effect on the liveability in the neighbourhood and therefore also the wellbeing of inhabitants as well as property values of real estate.

The amount of investments to improve neighbourhoods should be increased. Demolition costs of houses have to be paid, and there should be a budget to develop the released spaces. The amount of investments is crucial for the development strategy of the neighbourhood: when the budget increases, demolition can be done more strategically and the released spaces can be developed with more quality.

5.3.3 Scale level and focus of investments

Based on the knowledge gathered in chapter 3, the authors of this thesis see no contribution for a spatial design on a regional scale level. The phenomenon of shrinkage reveals itself on a regional scale, however, most of the effects occur on the lower scale levels of a (part of a) city or neighbourhood. Therefore, investments on the higher scale level of the province should be limited to preserve the accessibility of the region and the maintenance of certain facilities. This means investments in high-quality (cross-border) infrastructure and public transport, and mediation regarding which facility locations should be closed or moved.

The majority of investments have to be done on the lower scale of a (part of a) city or neighbourhood. This is also where the focus of design should be. The investments should then mainly be used for the cornering and demolition of houses that have to be retracted from the housing market. These investments will very rapidly reach several tons per retracted house. The amount of investments depends on the choices what houses will be demolished. Or the other way round, the kind of houses that has to be demolished depends on the amount of investments that can be done. Demolition in the private sector requires higher investments than demolition in the rental sector.

Next to investments in demolition, investments should be done to create a liveable environment without impoverishment. The cheapest solution is to turn the released spaces into (temporal) green spaces which require low maintenance. A much more expensive solution is to restructure the whole environment, which needs the movement of people from non-vacant houses to other houses and high investments in design and maintenance.

5.3.4 Role of the designer, designing and the design

The role of the designer in a situation with shrinkage does not differ that much from a situation with growth at the one hand. In that sense, the designer should be able to translate the possible futures into desired futures. He or she has to distil a manageable number out of all different wishes and opinions. These different desired futures can then be used as a mean of discussion. At the other hand, there is a characteristic difference for the role of the designer when it comes to a situation with shrinkage. Based on the findings in chapter 3, the designer is much more concerned with social issues in a neighbourhood as a consequence of shrinkage. Therefore, the designer should take into account the concrete and urgent (social and spatial) problems which mostly occur on a low scale level. In that sense, the designer actively tries to anticipate on the social issues with creative spatial solutions. The trick is to tackle these (often non-spatial) social issues by implementing solutions in the design. Examples can be found in the so called pocket parks, a social care farm or the use of claims and sponsorships to enhance the social commitment of individuals with a certain neighbourhood. In that sense, thinking out of the box is a very important task for a spatial planner as well as a designer. Both professions can put their effort in remaining realistic as well as thinking in ways that other actors would not have searched to find solutions.

A situation of shrinkage often drastically changes the way of designing. Whereas in times that both inhabitant numbers and household numbers increase, a spatial plan could automatically count on generating new financial resources by executing the plan and selling or renting the properties, a situation of shrinkage often cannot. This means that

certain developments of a design that cost money, cannot be compensated by the development of new houses, because there is no need for more of these buildings. Spatial developments in a situation of shrinkage focus on reconstruction in lower densities and refurbishing of a (part of a) city or neighbourhood. This has significant consequences for the process of designing since the designer has to keep in mind that the financial resources are strictly limited. This calls for creative solutions especially concerning the maintenance of the public space.

To help a (part of a) city or neighbourhood with the consequences of shrinkage, the design itself can play a strategic role and therefore it can be of great importance. As comes to the fore from the case of Heilust, the planning process to achieve a widely supported plan takes time. To deal with this problem, a design should be adopted in an early stage of the planning process when actors have explored the consequences of shrinkage for their case and are searching for a solution. In that sense, the design is not developed as a blue-print by technocratic designers, it merely functions as a catalyst for discussion to come to a possible solution for the issues that come along with shrinkage. Preferably this design should contain at least two possible design solutions with different starting points for that same area. In that way it serves as inspiration for a substantive discussion between actors for the question where to head for with the spatial development of a certain area. This last approach can be implemented by the use of scenarios and prioritising. Different scenarios help to stimulate and guide the current discussions, and prioritising makes it possible to include solutions for urgent problems, without losing track of the long-term vision for the area. Another advantage of prioritising is that uncertainties can be addressed.

5.3.5 Use of alternative instruments

Cooperation between different governmental layers, both horizontally and vertically, is very important. Processes as for example the reduction of the number of houses, the cancellation of spatial projects and the distribution of facilities all need a strict agreement in order to succeed.

Creative solutions are necessary to achieve the above mentioned processes. Project developers have to be persuaded that their claims have no value anymore, and they should be triggered to choose alternative locations or to invest in other kind of projects. To overcome these claims, some cases need financial means for compensation of the losses.

5.3.6 Means of communication

The communication between the municipal government and its inhabitants should be tight and frequent. Communication with inhabitants should be about concrete and urgent issues instead of about shrinkage. Inhabitants are not interested in the changing number of inhabitants; their interest is about their quality of living.

Communication is not limited to the interaction between the municipality and the inhabitants in a participatory process. During the demolition process of buildings, communication plays an important role at the areas where a transformation or adaptation takes place. Therefore inhabitants should constantly be informed on site, so they can understand what is happening and why.

External communication, like region branding, should not aim for the attraction of new inhabitants. Instead, the region could promote itself as one of the leading shrinking regions with state-of-the-art, experimental treatments. South Limburg can be a valued example for many other regions in the world, which inescapably will be confronted with a similar phenomenon and its effects.

5.4 Two scenarios for the case studies

Section 5.3 clearly asks for a new approach for dealing with the consequences of shrinkage, especially considering the role of the design. By applying at least two scenarios, and therefore two design solutions for that same area, the discussion between different actors will be encouraged.

5.4.1 A prospective approach

The different interpretations of shrinkage indicate that it is very difficult to have an idea of the future of South Limburg. This does not mean that anticipation on a changing future is not possible. A prospective approach helps building the future. The prospective approach does not predict the future, but "it enables us to consider tomorrow's world as something that we create, rather than something already decided, like a mystery that simply needs to be unravelled (de Jouvenel, 2000). Scenarios are commonly-used simulation tools for the prospective future, and often used by landscape architects and spatial planners. The aim of this section is to construct two probable scenarios for the case study areas in South Limburg. The next subsections present the step-by-step construction of these scenarios, with guidance of the brief methodological guide to scenario building written by De Jouvenel (2000).

Figure 5.2 schematically shows the construction of the scenarios. The current situation, i.e. 2011, can develop in n possible scenarios. Of these scenarios, the two most probable scenarios will be further elaborated. Together with the vision on dealing with the consequences of shrinkage, these probable scenarios are input for the two case studies in chapters 7 and 8. In these case studies, it will be studied how these two probable scenarios can be turned into desired scenarios.

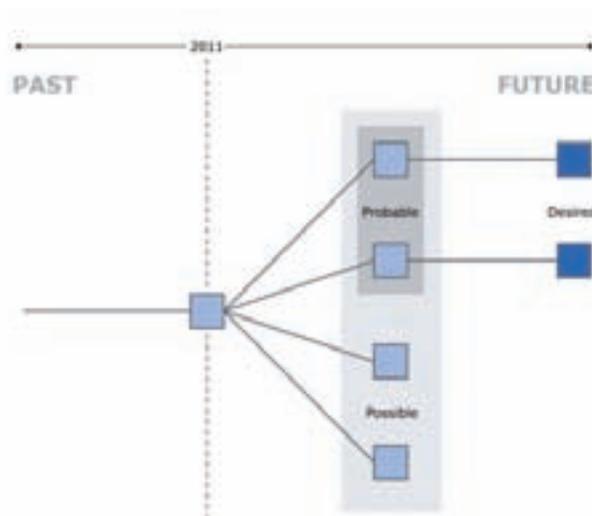


Figure 5.2 The construction of scenarios

5.4.2 Horizon line

The horizon line of the possible and probable scenarios is set on the year 2040. This is in line with the horizon line of the current prognoses on the regional scale level which are used for this thesis. This horizon line can be changed for the desired scenarios, dependent upon the horizon line of the prognoses for the used scale level.

5.4.3 Key variables

The many views upon shrinkage that passed by in the descriptive research, are the result of different expectations of how certain variables will or should develop. The key variables that are used for the construction of possible scenarios are: the number of households, financial means, facilities, economy, investments and the attractiveness of the environment.

5.4.4 Cross impact matrix

A cross impact matrix determines the interrelationship between the key variables. The active sum indicates the influence of a variable on the other variables. The passive sum indicates how much a variable is influenced by other variables. The impact varies from no impact (0) to high impact (4).

	No of households	Financial means	Facilities	Economy	Investments	Attractiveness environment	Active sum
No of households		4	3	3	3	3	16
Financial means	1		4	2	4	3	14
Facilities	2	1		2	1	3	9
Economy	3	3	3		3	3	15
Investments	2	1	4	3		4	14
Attractiveness environment	3	1	1	3	1		9
Passive sum	11	10	15	13	12	16	

Table 5.1 Cross impact matrix

The values that are assigned to the impact of the variables are derived by the authors of this thesis, based upon their knowledge and the interpretations of the interviewees. It would be more accurate to construct a cross impact matrix during a workshop, because these numbers remain rather arbitrary at this point. Nevertheless, this matrix gives a good method to capture the complexity of the interrelations of issues that are influenced by the effects of shrinkage and vice versa.

The number of households has the highest active sum. It should be taken into account that the relationships are direct as well as indirect. A change in the number of households has for example a huge impact on the financial means, because the tax income for municipalities is for a large part dependent upon the development of the number of households. The amount of financial means has a high impact on the level of facilities and investments. The level of facilities is also directly influenced by the number of households, because of the threshold value.

5.4.5 Possible scenarios

Growth

The number of households will increase, which will maintain the financial means of municipalities and housing corporations. With these financial means, the facility level can be maintained and investments can be done to generate new impulses and make the environment attractive.

Restructuring: shrinkage with relatively high investments

The number of households will decrease, resulting in insufficient financial means for municipalities and housing corporations. These parties need a lot of money to restructure parts of neighbourhoods to enhance the liveability in that same neighbourhood. Part of this money will be provided by higher governments, like the province of Limburg, the Dutch state and Europe, because shrinkage is put highly on the political agenda.

Laissez-faire: Shrinkage with relatively low investments

The number of households will decrease, resulting in insufficient financial means for municipalities and housing corporations. These parties need a lot of money to restructure parts of neighbourhoods to enhance the liveability in that same neighbourhood. However, this money is not available, making extensive restructuring impossible. Most investments will be done in the demolition of houses. To prevent the areas for deterioration, low-cost possibilities have to be found to accommodate the shrinkage.

5.4.6 Probable scenarios

Since all prognoses for South Limburg assume that the population and the number of households will decline, i.e. that the region will face shrinkage, the growth scenario will not further be explored. Both shrinkage scenarios are presented on the next pages.





Restructuring





Laissez-faire



5.5 Selection of two case study areas to implement both scenarios

To apply the new approach derived from the vision presented in this chapter, the authors of this thesis implement the new approach by making a design for each scenario at two case study areas. In that way each landscape architect of this research and design team is concerned with one case study area. The first case study area consists of the neighbourhood of MSP. The authors of this thesis chose for this area because Parkstad has the most radical figures considering shrinkage in the Netherlands. Additionally, within Parkstad, Heerlen experiences the most prominent figures. Within Heerlen, the area of MSP experiences the most radical figures, and is therefore one of the most important areas of attention. The phenomenon of shrinkage is widely accepted as something that cannot be avoided by the municipality of Heerlen. And therefore, it also acts according to this acceptance. The municipality received many financial resources to spend on research of how to deal with the consequences of shrinkage, as will come clear from chapter 6. This resulted in abundant reports about specific demographic figures and demolition programs on a neighbourhood scale. Moving from Parkstad to settlements to the West or to the North in South Limburg, where a future as a shrinking urban unit is not as widely accepted as in Parkstad which has been explained in section 3.3, these figures are not abundantly available. Therefore the authors of this thesis selected the city of Sittard as second case study area, because political awareness and acceptance of shrinkage (to the extent that there is) took several years longer in comparison to the situation in Parkstad. Additionally, this city has come to a point that the spatial policy that has been developed to deal with the effects of shrinkage, should be implemented by concrete spatial pilot projects on a neighbourhood scale. This makes it an interesting second case study area to apply the approach that has been developed in this chapter. Chapter 6 and chapter 7 respectively deal with these cases of MSP and Sittard.

“ “ *If you really want to spend money, give relocation subsidies to people who want to go to the Randstad.* ” ”

Professor of international economics Brakman (2010)



6.1 Introduction

The first case study of this thesis is a design for neighbourhood MSP in Heerlen. MSP is a neighbourhood which had many decades of growth, and started shrinking in the last decade. The neighbourhood gets a lot of attention, since it also faces many social problems. Both the shrinkage as well as the social problems are being worked on: apartment buildings are being demolished, social programmes are started (like 'Mijn MSP') and an urban vision has been made which aims for improvement of the neighbourhood.

To provide the reader with some basic knowledge about MSP, section 6.2 presents the demographic context which the neighbourhood has to deal with. Section 6.3 briefly discusses the historical development of the neighbourhood. Section 6.4 discusses the current situation of the neighbourhood, like the physical structure. Current projects that affect MSP are described in section 6.5. The current urban vision for MSP is presented in section 6.6. Section 6.7 is a review of the projects and the current urban vision. Sections 6.8 and 6.9 respectively present the design for the restructuring scenario and the laissez-faire scenario. Section 6.10 closes this chapter by some finishing remarks about the differences between the restructuring scenario and the laissez-faire scenario, and about the interchangeability of the proposed designs.

6.2 Demographic context

6.2.1 Shrinkage in MSP

At many places in MSP, the shrinkage becomes visual by means of vacant and abandoned houses, by demolition processes and by empty 'released' spaces (figure 7.5). In numbers and figures, the shrinkage issue can best be visualised by a graph that shows the relative decrease of the housing stock. Figure 6.2 shows that in 2025, the housing stock is expected to decrease with almost 5 per cent compared to 2010. In absolute numbers, this means a retraction of 157 houses.

This decreasing housing stock is the direct result of the decreasing number of inhabitants and households: the total number of households in MSP will decline with 157. Figure 6.3 shows this decline, and also subdivides the households in three different age groups: under age 25, between age 25 and 64 and age 65 and higher. It is obvious that the shrinkage is accompanied with ageing: the number of households with age group 65 and higher will increase, while the number of households with age group under 25 will decrease.

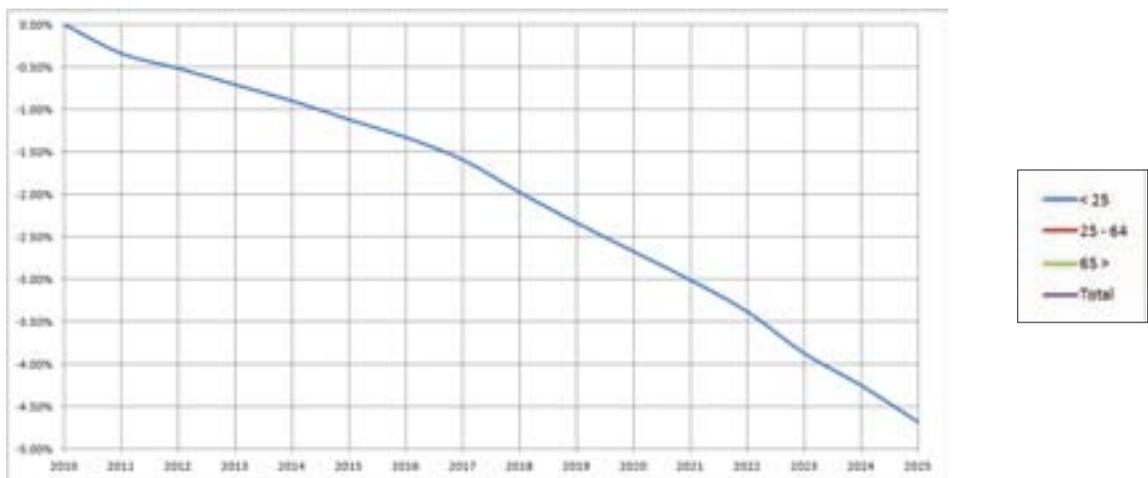


Figure 6.2 The prognosis of the housing stock for the period 2010-2025

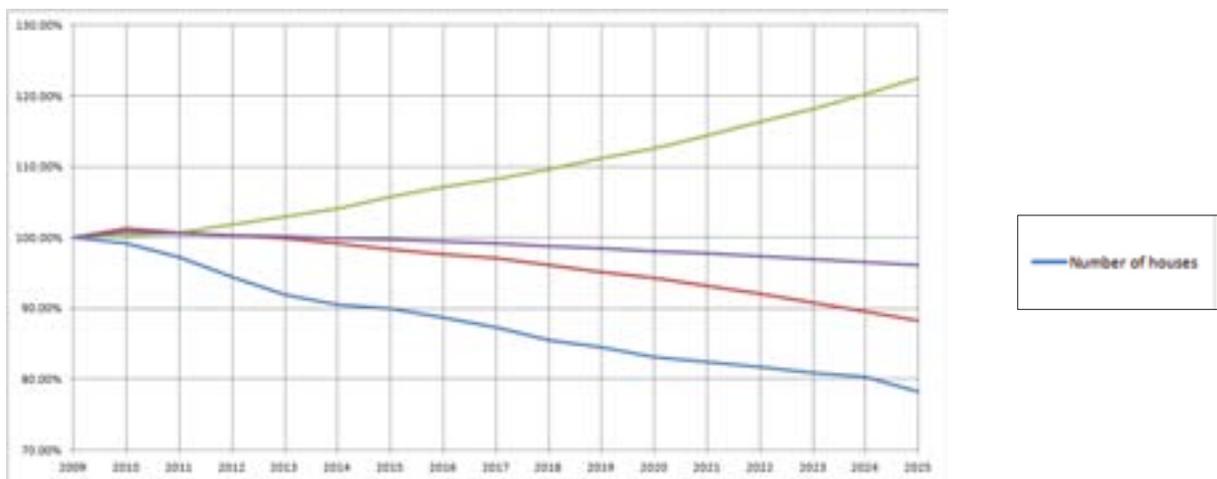


Figure 6.3 The prognosis of the number of households for the period 2009-2025

6.2.2 Shrinkage in Parkstad Limburg

The shrinkage in MSP does not stand alone, but is part of a larger process that affects the whole of South Limburg. Parkstad Limburg is the largest urban region within South Limburg, and faces the strongest shrinkage of the Netherlands (see also Dutch reference studies, annex II). Within Parkstad Limburg, Heerlen is the largest municipality, and also faced the highest absolute population decline during the period 2003-2011: 4,773 inhabitants less. The whole region of Parkstad Limburg faced a decline of 11,437 during this period.

The prognosis for South Limburg, as made by Etil (2011), shows that the number of inhabitants of Parkstad Limburg is expected to further decline during the period 2010-2040. Within these 30 years, the population size of Parkstad Limburg is expected to decline with 55,520. Heerlen faces the highest absolute losses: 18,970 inhabitants.



Figure 6.4 The visibility of shrinkage: released spaces due to the demolition of apartment blocks (Limburgiastraat)

6.2.3 Shrinkage in the Euregio

Remarkable is that the shrinkage literally stops at the border. Just a few kilometres east of Heerlen, in Germany, there is pressure on the housing market due to the growth of the Aachen region (figure 6.5).

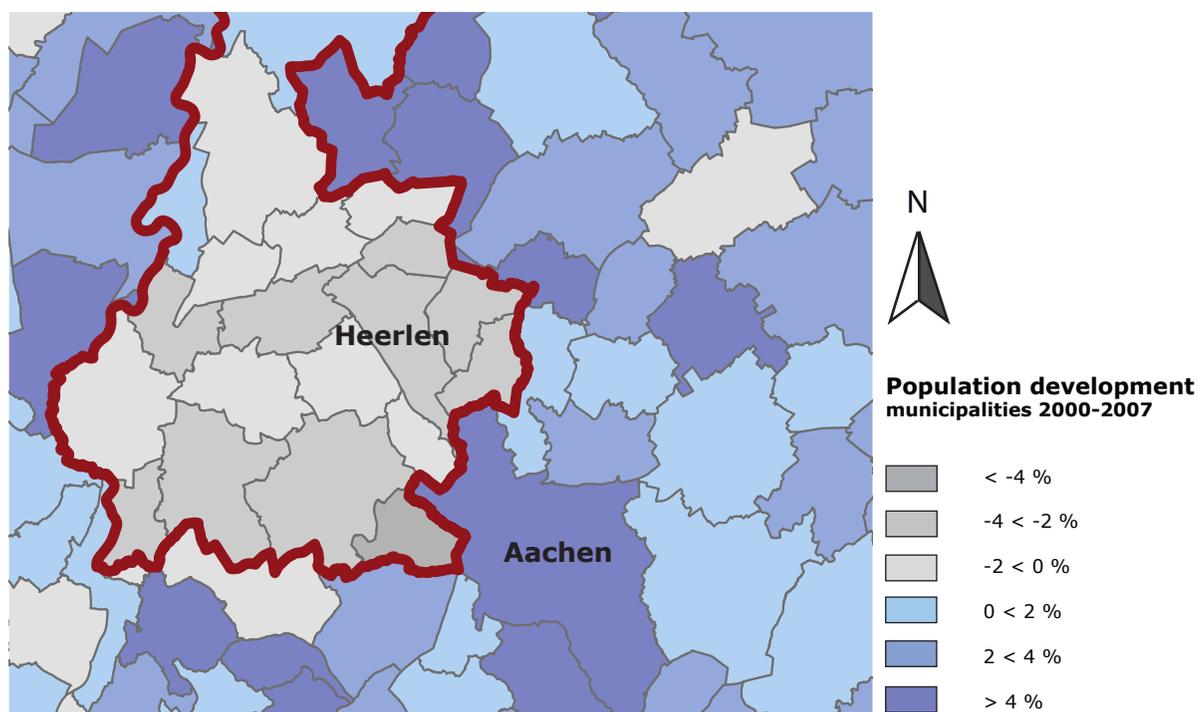


Figure 6.5 Heerlen borders the growing region of Aachen [scale 1 : 500,000]



1950 Growth of Meezenbroek and ribbon development along Schaesbergerweg.



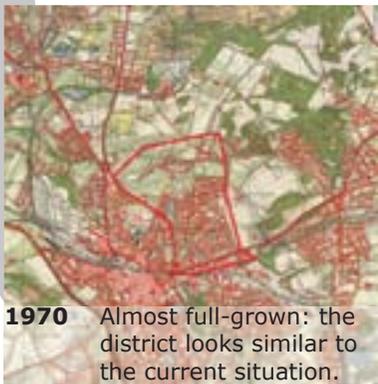
1900 Emergence of mining colonies Meezenbroek and Leenhof.



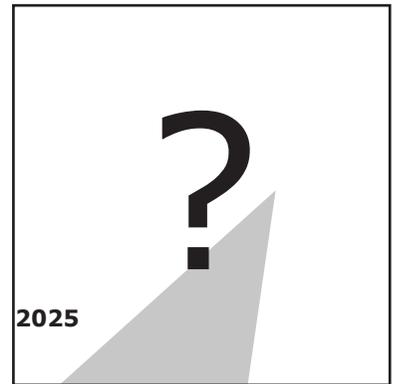
1960 Meezenbroek, ribbon development and Leenhof grow together.



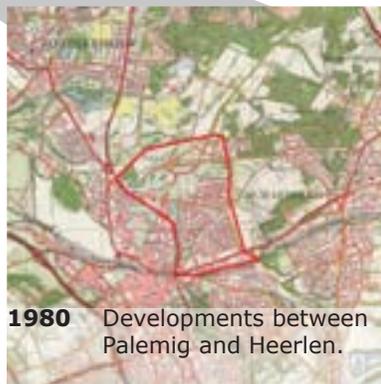
1850 Palemig as village.



1970 Almost full-grown: the district looks similar to the current situation.



2025



1980 Developments between Palemig and Heerlen.



1990 No large developments anymore within MSP.

Figure 6.6 The historical development of MSP

6.3 A brief history of MSP

So far in this thesis, continuously the abbreviation 'MSP' is used to refer to the neighbourhood of this case study. MSP, which is the commonly used name for the neighbourhood, already suggests that the neighbourhood consists of three different parts. This is indeed the case, as an analysis by means of historical topographic maps of the neighbourhood learned (see figure 6.6).

One of the earliest available maps on this scale level, dates back to the 1850s. The image at the beginning of the timeline shows the boundaries of the current neighbourhood (red) on the topographical map of 1850. Obviously, most of the current neighbourhood was used as agricultural land. There was only one village in the northern part of the current neighbourhood: Palenberg or 'Palemig'. The letter P out of MSP thus stands for 'Palemig', a former small village north of Heerlen.

On the topographic map of 1900, two new villages come into being in the same area. These are the developments of Meezenbroek and Leenhof: two colonies realised for workers in the upcoming mining industry. The letter L cannot be found in MSP, but the M undoubtedly stands for 'Meezenbroek' - a mining colony.

The next topographic map, again a time-jump of half a century, shows the situation around 1950. The amount of agricultural land use decreases, while more and more houses are built as expansions of mining colony Meezenbroek. Furthermore, ribbon development along the Schaesbergerweg can be observed. This explains the S in MSP: Schaesbergen.

For the period from 1950 to 1990, the last decades in the timeline of figure 6.6, a sequence of topographic maps show the changes for every ten years. Obvious is that over time, the separate entities where the letters MSP stand for, are more and more merging together. In fact, this counts for the whole Parkstad region. Just outside the red contour of the current neighbourhood, it can be observed that large parts of the rural landscape are taken over by urbanisation.

After 1990, the changes in urbanisation are hardly visible on the topograph. Therefore, the maps of 2000 and 2010 are not presented in the image. An aerial photo of the situation in 2008 is presented in section 6.4.

During the timeline as shown in figure 6.6, the growth of the population is clearly followed by the urbanisation pattern. Now the population does not grow anymore, and also the number of households is declining, it will be very unlikely that the topographic map of 2025 shows further urbanisation. Will the border of the city retreat? Or are there other possibilities?



Figure 6.7 Aerial view of the case study area MSP

[scale 1 : 10,000]



6.4 The current situation

6.4.1 An aerial view of MSP

An aerial view of MSP, taken in 2008, is shown on the left page (figure 6.7). Since the image is three years old, some changes have already taken place. The seven L-shaped apartment buildings in between Schaesbergen and Meezenbroek are demolished in 2009. A little later, the U-shaped apartment buildings in between Meezenbroek and the sports park are demolished. The same is planned for other apartment buildings within MSP, of which most are situated along the edges.

In this period of three years, not only demolitions took place; also additions have been done. Houses of high quality are for example added in the south-west corner between Schaesbergen and Meezenbroek. Concerning infrastructure, the inner ring of the Parkstad ring has been established. The construction can be recognised in the image. In sections 6.4 - 6.6, the main recent projects and the current urban vision for MSP are discussed.

6.4.2 Structure of the neighbourhood

Figure 6.8 shows the main infrastructure of the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood is wedged in between the inner ring road of Parkstad (North and East), the rail road between Heerlen and Kerkrade/Aachen (South) and the Schandelerboord (West).

Another way of presenting the structure of the neighbourhood is done by figure 6.10. Seven main structures can be recognised in the housing types. Four structures are part of the 'origin' of MSP: the ribbon developments of Palemig and Schaesbergen, and the mining colonies Meezenbroek and Leenhof. The three other structures are post-war developments, including the most recent additions. Figures 6.11 - 6.17 show photographs as examples of these types of houses.

From a whole different order is the structure of ownership. As presented in figure 6.9, three different housing corporations have property in MSP. Next to that, there are also a lot of private ownership, and some houses are (currently) property of project developers.

These three structures are important for the development of both scenarios. The non-physical structure of ownership is an important factor for the demolition of houses. As earlier shown by the descriptive research, it is much more expensive and time-consuming to demolish privately owned houses than corporation owned houses. The structure of housing types may be used as guide for a new structure of the neighbourhood. Despite the small sizes of houses and gardens in the oldest parts of the neighbourhood, these houses are loved for its appearance and historic value. The newest additions are often built on valuable, green locations, but are of high quality. Houses and apartments built in the period 1940-1980 are often of a very low quality, and in an abandoned state. Restructuring should therefore preferably take place in this segment.



Infrastructure

-  Parkstadring with junction
-  Main roads
-  Railroad with train station
-  Case study border



Figure 6.8

The main infrastructure in and around MSP

[scale 1 : 10,000]



Ownership

Corporations:



Woonpunt



Weller



Voorzorg



Project developer



Private



Case study border



Figure 6.9

The ownership of the houses in MSP [scale 1 : 10,000]



Housing structure

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
|  | Historic ribbon development Palemig |  | Houses / buildings 1940-1960 |  | Case study border |
|  | Historic ribbon development Schaesbergerweg / Kloosterkoolhof |  | Houses / buildings 1960-1980 | | |
|  | Mining colony Leenhof |  | Houses / buildings >1980 | | |
|  | Mining colony Meezenbroek |  | Unknown | | |



Figure 6.10

The housing structure of MSP, categorised by construction period

[scale 1 : 10,000]



Figure 6.11

Ribbon development along the Schaesbergerweg



Figure 6.13

Mining colony 'Leenhof'



Figure 6.15

Houses constructed in the period 1940-1960 in Meezenbroek



Figure 6.17

Houses constructed in the 21st Century, at the eastern edge of Schaesbergen



Figure 6.12

Ribbon development in Palemig



Figure 6.14

Mining colony 'Meezenbroek'



Figure 6.16

Houses constructed in the period 1960-1980 in Palemig

6.5 Current projects in MSP

6.5.1 External projects with consequences for MSP

The Gebiedsagenda Limburg, published in October 2009, provides an overview of the current 44 spatial projects in the province of Limburg. Eight of these projects are of significance for MSP. The projects can be subdivided in three themes, in which these are classified.

1 Urbanisation and restructuring

Krachtwijk MSP

MSP, as well as the population decline which it has to face, is specifically mentioned as a separate project in the Gebiedsagenda Limburg. The aim of this project is to generate new residential environments which are attractive enough to retain people with middle and high incomes, as well as to attract them. Examples are a new neighbourhood centre, more differentiation in housing, better connections between the three neighbourhoods, improvement of the public space and more 'green' in the neighbourhood. On the field of sustainable neighbourhood development, some projects within the neighbourhood are addressed on a Euregional scale level.

Limburgse wijkenaanpak

The 'Limburgse wijkenaanpak', Dutch for Limburgian district policy, is a response to the shrinkage issue as well as the qualitative mismatch on the housing market. The assignment for South Limburg is the retraction of houses from the housing stock, and the upgrading of the current housing stock and (public) environment. Only five neighbourhoods of Parkstad are covered by this policy. Despite MSP is one of the neighbourhoods which faces the strongest decline, it is not included.

Maankwartier

The area around the central station of Heerlen, just a stone's throw away of MSP, is being redeveloped. This includes new facilities like offices, retail, houses, a hotel and congress facilities.



Figure 6.18

Impression of the Maankwartier: upgrading of the rail station development. At the background, the Sigrano sand excavation can be seen, just north of Palemig

2 Infrastructure

Buitenring Parkstad

Together with the outer ring road of Parkstad, the inner ring road is being constructed. This inner ring forms the northern and eastern boundary of the neighbourhood, and provides three new entries to the neighbourhood: two at the East and one at the North.

Avantislijn

A new railroad is planned between Kerkrade-Centrum, via the new business park 'Avantis', towards Aachen in Germany. After completion of this railroad, the train station south of MSP (Heerlen De Kissel) will be accessible from four extra stations, including the new business park 'Avantis'. At the earliest, trains will use the Avantislijn in December 2013 (Knowlinx, 2011).

Thalinx: high-speed-train Eindhoven-Heerlen-Aachen

A high speed train has to connect Heerlen with Eindhoven and the HST-station in Aachen. This will significantly improve the (international) accessibility of the central station of Heerlen, close by MSP.

3 Green and blue networks

Nationaal Landschap Zuid-Limburg

This project is in the implementation phase, and aims for the maintenance and strengthening of the South Limburg landscape. The neighbourhood MSP is not part of the national landscape, but is situated in between the urban centre of Heerlen and the national landscape. It can therefore be an important link between city and countryside.

Groenagenda Parkstad Limburg

The Groenagenda Parkstad Limburg includes a wide range of nature development projects within Parkstad Limburg. One of the projects is the redevelopment of the Geleenbeek valley. The brooks in and around MSP are part of the Geleenbeek system.



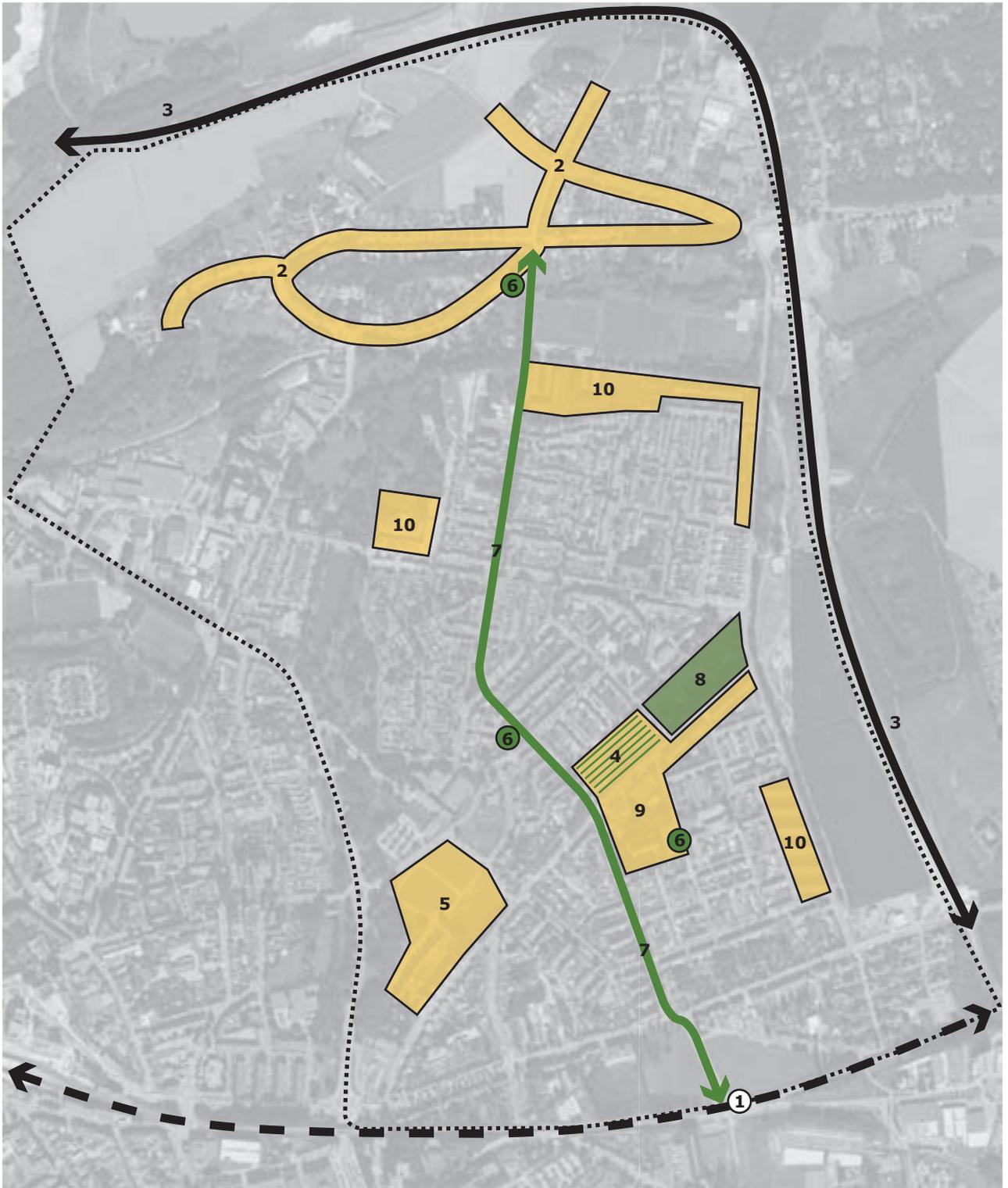
Figure 6.19 Intercity service from Aachen, via Heerlen, towards the Randstad



Figure 6.20 Thalinx and Avantislijn



Figure 6.21 Brook in between Meezenbroek and Palemig



Current projects

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
|  | Urban redevelopment projects |  | Pocket parks |
|  | Fruit orchard |  | Parkstading |
|  | Temporal allotment gardens |  | Train station 'De Kissel' |
|  | MSP Allee |  | Case study border |

The number indicates the project in the main text



Figure 6.22

An overview of current projects in MSP

[scale 1 : 10,000]



Figure 6.23 Train station 'de Kissel'



Figure 6.24 Parkstad binnenring



Figure 6.25 Redevelopment of Palemig: a new streetscape is created

6.5.2 Projects within MSP

Within the neighbourhood, several projects are ongoing or have been currently realised. Relevant projects for this case study are described below, and when possible indicated on the map in figure 7.20. The projects are chronologically ordered.

- 1 2007: *Train station 'de Kissel'*
With the realisation of a train station, served by trains between Heerlen, Kerkrade and Aachen, the neighbourhood has a fast connection with the city centres of Heerlen, Kerkrade, Aachen and Maastricht.
- 2 2008: *Redevelopment of Palemig*
The historical centre of Palemig has been renovated in 2008. Together with the realisation of a new sewerage system, the streetscape has been restored into the authentic rural character of the former village. Cobbles and trees restore the rustic atmosphere of the past.
- 3 2008-2011: *Parkstad binnenring*
The inner ring of the Parkstadring unburdens the neighbourhood from ongoing traffic. There are three connections for MSP: one north of Palemig, one east of the sports fields and one east of Schaesbergen.



Figure 6.26 *The new neighbourhood centre*



Figure 6.27 *The new neighbourhood centre*



Figure 6.29 *The fruit orchard with 50-year-old trees*



Figure 6.30 *The MSP Allee: increasing coherence in MSP*



Figure 6.31 *Parkheuvell: new housing development*



Figure 6.28 *Pocket park in Meezenbroek*



Figure 6.32 *Allotment gardens increase social cohesion*

- 4 2010:** *Allotment gardens*
On parts of the location where a new neighbourhood centre is planned (see further on in this section), allotment gardens will fill up the released space until the construction of the centre starts. The construction of the new centre is planned for 2013. Already after the first season, the allotment gardens prove to be a success. It is an important meeting point for inhabitants of the neighbourhood: people visit the place daily to maintain their garden, and workshops are held frequently.
- 5 2011:** *Parkheuvel*
On a former green wedge in the western part of Schaesbergen, 160 new houses are developed including (semi-)detached houses, terraced houses and apartments. Phases 1 and 2 have already been realised, phase 3 will be completed in 2011.
- 6 2011:** *Pocket parks*
Pocket parks are places which have a strong social function. Residents are involved in the design of these places, as well as in the surveillance after realisation. The idea behind this concept is that pocket parks are places that belong to the residents. In 2011, the third pocket park of MSP will be opened at the southern edge of Palemig. Two pocket parks are already in use: one in Meezenbroek and one in Schaesbergen.
- 7 2012:** *MSP Allee*
The MSP Allee will connect the three neighbourhoods, to increase the cohesion of MSP. Within MSP, the slow traffic route is a barrier-free boulevard for pedestrians and cyclists. On the higher scale, the alley is part of a connection between the nature area Brunsummerheide and Molenberg, a neighbourhood south of MSP.
- 8 2011:** *Fruit orchard*
Next to the allotment gardens, a fruit orchard has been realised in the beginning of 2011. Contrary to the allotment gardens, the fruit orchard is intended as a permanent feature in MSP. Approximately 100 trees are planted which are older than 50 years. Therefore, it is expected that inhabitants of MSP can enjoy the fresh fruits already this autumn.
- 9 2014:** *New neighbourhood centre*
A new centre for the neighbourhood is planned around the junction Limburgi-straat - Colijnstraat - Amsterdamstraat. Two supermarket brands have already confirmed to open a shop in the new centre. Moreover, small shops which are currently situated in other parts of MSP will probably also move to the new centre. Not only shops are part of the new centre, the project also includes 33 houses for seniors, 14 patio bungalows in the expensive segment and 55 apartments. In the midpoint of the centre, a new square provides space for terraces and events.
- 10 Ongoing:** *Demolition and new developments*
At the edges of MSP, apartment buildings are nominated for demolition. By the time writing of this thesis, some buildings may already have been demolished. The released spaces will be used for renewing the housing stock: houses of higher quality will be developed on these spaces.



Figure 6.33 Map representing the current urban vision of MSP [not to scale]



6.6 The current urban vision for MSP

In 2008, the office for urban planning BGSV drew up an urban vision for MSP. This was done in close collaboration with the municipality of Heerlen and the housing corporations Weller, Voorzorg and Woonpunt. The vision sketches the developments until 2020, with some vistas towards 2025 (KEI, 2011). It focuses on the main structures of the neighbourhood. Within this framework of main structures, there is space for flexibility to renew parts of the neighbourhood, or to choose to leave parts as they are now (Interview with Ron van Genderen, 8 February 2011 - see annex I).

Part of the urban vision is the new neighbourhood centre, which will be constructed on the former location of seven apartment buildings. The development of new houses in the centre of MSP should attract new inhabitants, and keeps the neighbourhood vital. New houses at the edges of MSP, on the location of current apartment buildings, anticipate on the green character of MSP. This green character will furthermore be increased by realising good connections with the green edges of the neighbourhoods. Together with the new pocket parks, this will provide more space for playing and recreation. Parking problems in Meezenbroek and Schaesbergen will be solved by creating space by strategic demolition of houses (BGSV, 2008).

6.7 Evaluation of the current projects and urban vision

It is interesting that despite Parkstad Limburg and the municipality of Heerlen promote that they accept the shrinkage of their region, many projects still aim for attracting inhabitants and developing new houses. Of course, renewing of the current housing stock is necessary to fulfil the requirements of the changing population. However, investing in a complete new neighbourhood centre is not what a shrinking neighbourhood needs. It is highly questionable whether the new centre and houses, also included in the urban vision, will really attract new inhabitants. It should be considered that these new inhabitants come from other parts of the neighbourhood and region, strengthening shrinkage in other parts of the region. The same is true for the shops which will settle in the new centre: especially the small shops come from other parts of the neighbourhood, for example from the ribbon developments, leaving behind empty shops which result in a neglected streetscape in these areas. Investments should better be done in the current housing stock, in the demolition of houses and in the redevelopment of the released spaces to prevent the neighbourhood for deterioration.

The urban vision for MSP is in some regards contradictory. At the one hand, the vision mentions the separate entities and characters of Meezenbroek, Schaesbergen and Palemig; at the other hand, the vision suggests interventions that strengthen the coherence of MSP. The map in figure 6.33 shows Palemig as a separate entity. Palemig is to a large extent excluded from the vision, except for the connection by the MSP Allee. Apparently, Palemig does not really belong to MSP according to the designers of this vision. It would be more convincing when the differences between separate neighbourhoods within MSP were more emphasised, instead of the more or less ignoring of one of the neighbourhoods.

The social projects can conveniently be installed in the further development of the scenarios. There is much enthusiasm for these projects, and only little investments are necessary. The social projects increase the social coherence in MSP.

6.8 Scenario 1: Restructuring

6.8.1 Introduction

The restructuring scenario shows how the neighbourhood can develop with relatively high investments. The majority of the budget has to be spent on the demolition of houses. However, there is also budget for restructuring of the neighbourhood. With this budget, houses can be demolished on strategic places. People who live on these strategic places, can be financially stimulated to move to another house. After the houses have been demolished, there are still financial means to develop the released spaces into something new. This 'something' is subject of this scenario.

Since Parkstad Limburg has the ambition to organise an IBA, this restructuring scenario may be seized to show the world that shrinkage not only causes problems, but also gives the opportunity to create a whole new structure, with lots of possibilities.

6.8.2 Concept

The neighbourhood will be restructured in such a way, that separate smaller neighbourhoods arise out of the current situation. More or less, the neighbourhood will 'regrow' to its origin: three separate entities: Meezenbroek, Schaesbergen and Palemig. Of course, it is unrealistic to aim for a regrow to the three 'original' neighbourhoods. The amount of shrinkage is too less to demolish all low quality post-war housing. Next to that, an incredibly persuasive force is needed to be able to demolish recent additions of high quality, like Parkheuvel.

The concept therefore aims at restructuring MSP into separate neighbourhoods, without aiming for a restoration of the situation around 1900.

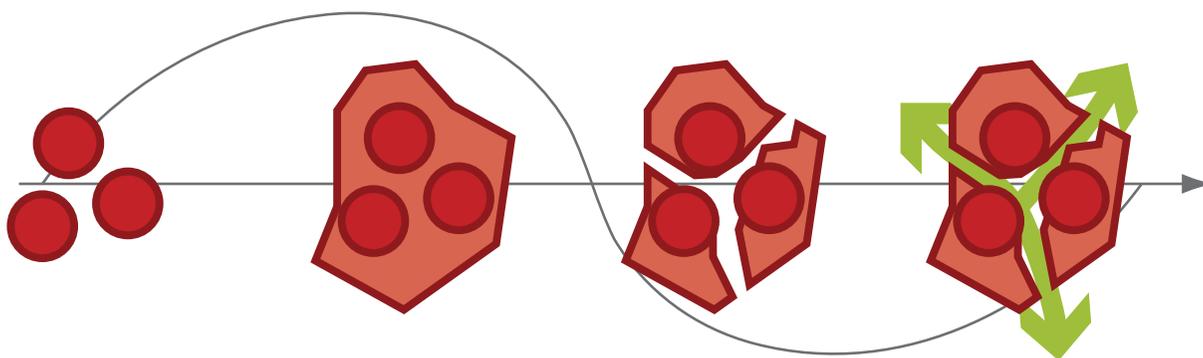


Figure 6.34 Concept of the restructuring scenario

The next assignment is to redevelop the new structure. Due to the size of the assignment, as well as the background of the authors of this thesis, this chapter only deals with the released spaces within the structure; not with the redevelopment of the remaining urban neighbourhoods.

The inspiration for the new structure lies in the English landscape style. The style will be adapted to tell the visitor the story of a shrinking neighbourhood, i.c. MSP. The classic example of a park which is based upon the English landscape style is Stourhead, near Stourton in England. Design principles of this park are altered to be of use for the new structure in MSP: a landscape park of the 21st Century. With the execution of this new structure, MSP could develop into the classic example of how the effects of shrinkage can be turned into positive results.

6.8.3 Design principles

design principles The following design principles are guiding for the design:

1 Marked edges

The edges of the park are marked by a strip with lane trees along streets, and by small bushes in front of backyards of houses.



Figure 6.35

2 Narrative route

The new structure has a start and an end. In Stourhead, the original route starts at the Stourhead house, then slowly leaves the cultivated world of humans and enters the natural, divine world. During the route, the visitor gets into the story of the Aeneid, a Latin epic poem. In MSP, the route will start at the new train station 'De Kissel'. From there, the visitor is attracted into the neighbourhood and will get into the story of MSP: a story about growth and shrinkage; about development, demolition and redevelopment.



Figure 6.36

3 Follies and vistas

vista, folly

Stourhead has several vistas towards follies. Unlike the follies in a traditional English landscape park, the follies of the landscape park of the 21st Century are not useless constructions which are located on the most ideal locations. The follies in MSP are buildings which are relicts from the development of the neighbourhood: these can be still in use, in demolition, or abandoned as ruin.



Figure 6.37

4 Use of local materials

Materials originating from MSP will be used in the park. The pavements consist of former facing bricks and relief is created by accumulating demolition materials.



Figure 6.38

6.8.4 Plan drawing

The plan drawing for the restructuring scenario is presented on the next pages. It is also included on scale 1 : 2,000 on the CD-ROM.

The plan drawing shows a suggestion how the structure of MSP could be in 2040. Houses are demolished in a strategic way, making it possible to restructure the current neighbourhood into five separate neighbourhoods.

The narrative route is situated in the zones in between the five neighbourhoods. The route starts at train station 'De Kissel', and ends at a watchtower across the Parkstading. This watchtower is a landmark for the IBA project, which is visible from the Parkstading. From the top of the tower, the new structure of the neighbourhood can be observed. In this way, the visitor who walked the narrative path has a better understanding of the story which was consumed during the walk.

6.8.5 Prioritising

The four images below demonstrate the priority of the proposed interventions.

Current situation

At this moment, there are two large vacant spaces: one in the North of Meezenbroek and one along the Limburgiastraat.

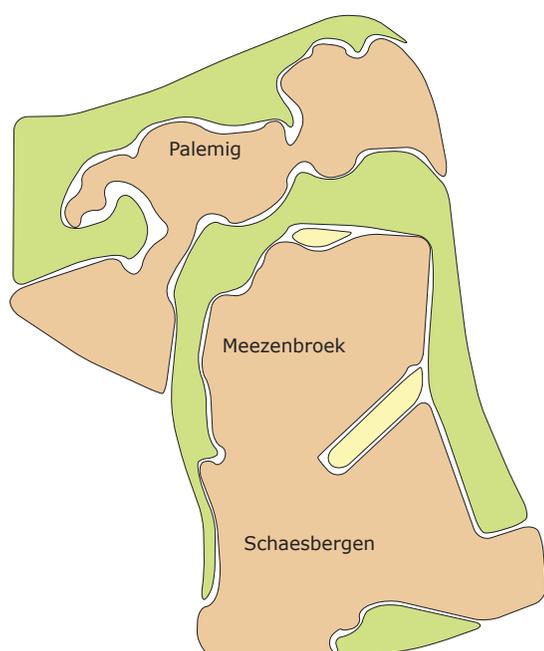


Figure 6.39 Current situation

Highest priority (e.g. 2011-2015)

In the short term, these vacant spaces can be developed by planting trees and by expanding the allotment gardens and fruit orchard. The narrative route can already be constructed. How this can be done is explained in section 6.8.6.

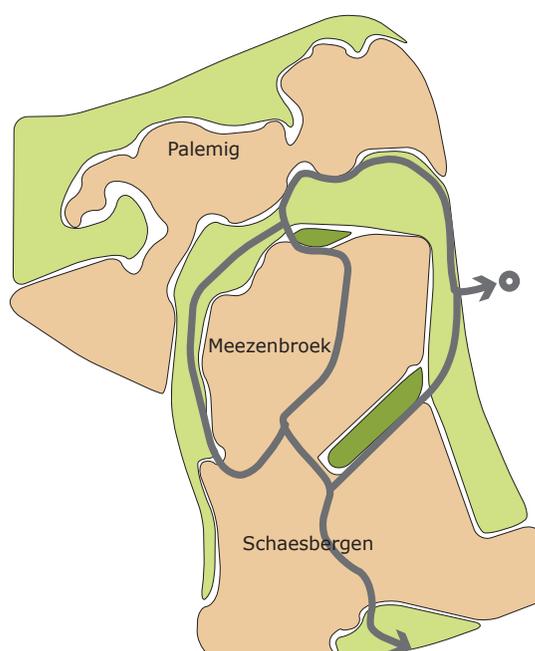


Figure 6.40 Highest priority

2nd highest priority (e.g. 2015-2025)

In the medium term, the first demolition can be done at the location where the debris hills should come, and at the route between the train station and the watchtower.

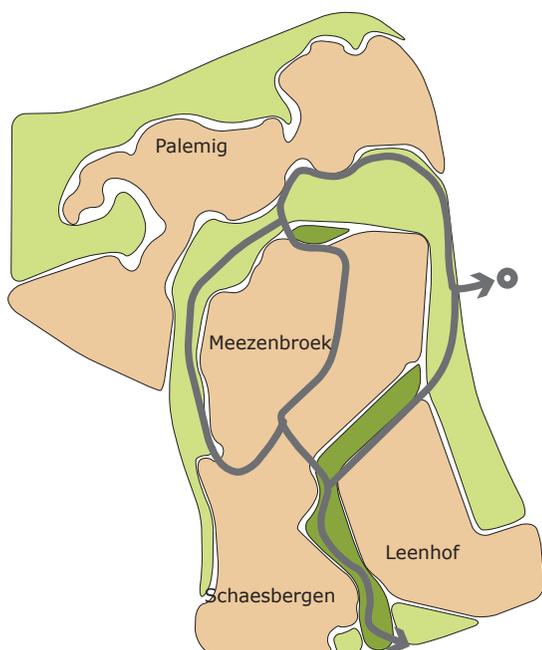


Figure 6.41

2nd highest priority

Lowest priority (e.g. 2025-2040)

In the long term, demolition can be done around Meezenbroek, to separate the neighbourhood into more smaller entities.

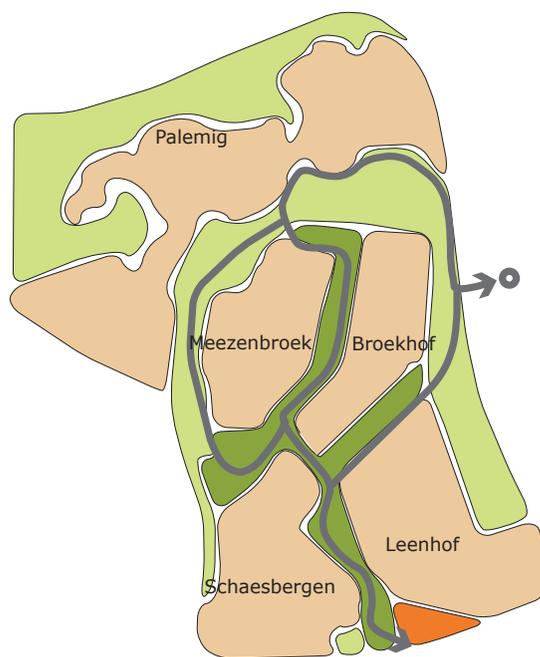


Figure 6.42

Lowest priority



Figure 6.43

Plan drawing 'restructuring'



Legend

-  **Main path (4.00m wide)**
paved with former facing bricks
 -  **Path (2.00m wide)**
paved with former facing bricks
 -  **Square**
paved with former facing bricks and
designed with demolition materials
 -  **New park and avenue trees**
 -  **Existing trees**
 -  **Fruit orchard**
 -  **Allotment gardens**
 -  **Watchtower**
 -  **Buildings within the case study area**
 -  **Buildings outside the case study area**
 -  **Water**
 -  **Sports fields**
 -  **Built up area**
 -  **Grass**
 -  **Arable land**
 -  **Road**
 -  **Railway**
- scale: 1 : 5.000**



Figure 6.44

A Entrance of the narrative route

[scale 1 : 100]

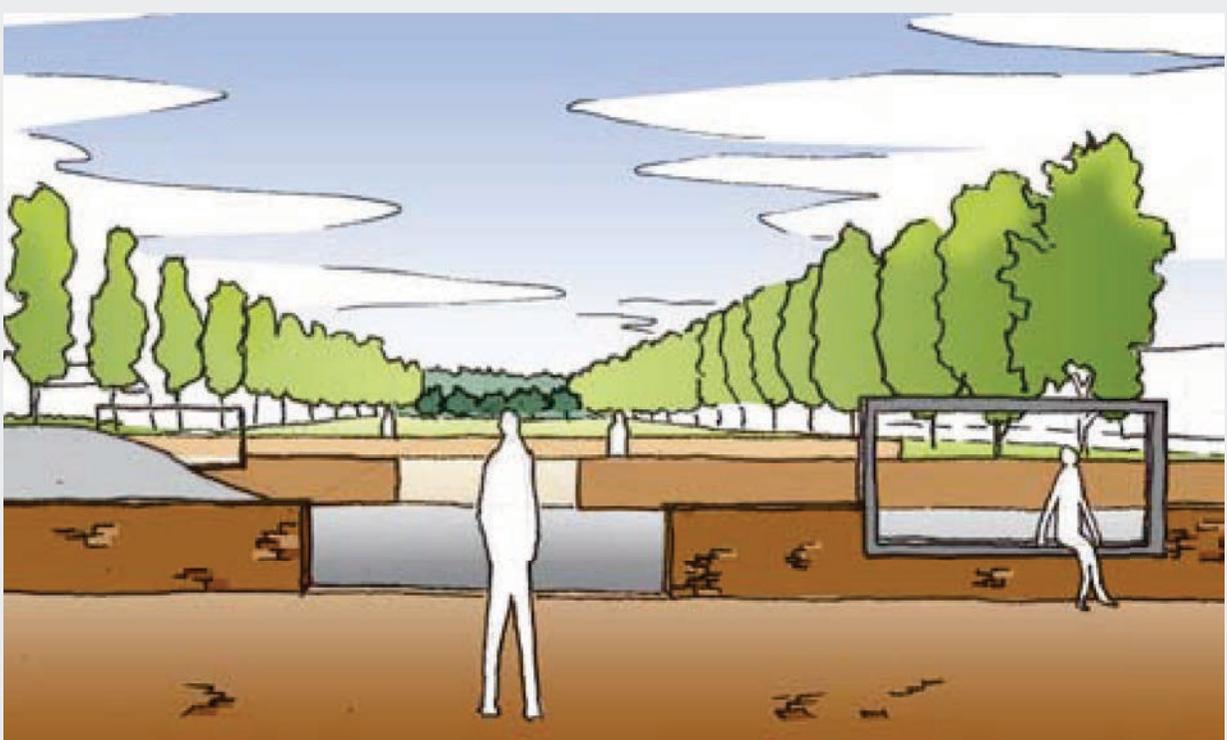


Figure 6.45

B Central square Colijnstraat, view towards allotment gardens

[scale 1 : 50]

6.8.6 Impressions

A The narrative route: path, vistas and follies

The perspective drawing on the left shows the main elements of the narrative routes. The path is constructed from former facing bricks of demolished houses. The direction of the path, together with the planting of trees and bushes, forces the pedestrian to look towards the historic ribbon development along the Schaesbergerweg.

Such vistas are created for all different housing structures within the neighbourhood. When the pedestrian walks the narrative route, he or she will be confronted with the different developments of MSP in time.

B Central square at the Colijnstraat

The Colijnstraat will be the central square of the narrative route. At this square, material from the demolished houses are used as decoration.



Figure 6.46

Former facing bricks are used as pavement and as walls at the edges of the square.



Figure 6.47 **C** The current situation of the Colijnstraat

[scale 1 : 50]



Figure 6.48 **C** The Colijnstraat during the first phase: narrative route can already be realised

[scale 1 : 50]



Figure 6.49 **C** The Colijnstraat during the second phase

[scale 1 : 50]

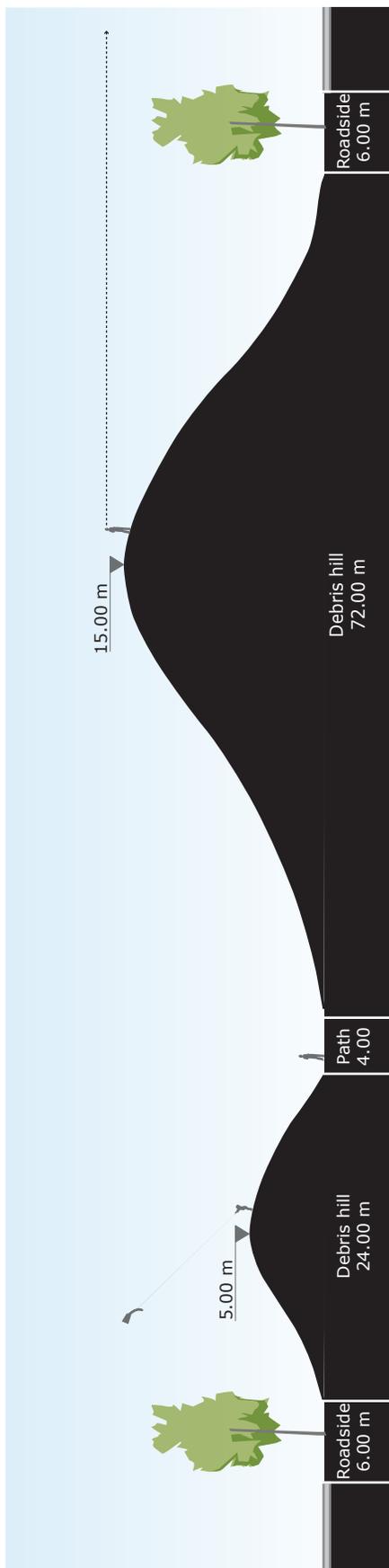


Figure 6.50

D-D' Cross-section of the debris hills

[scale 1 : 500]

C Colijnstraat before realisation of the central square

The previous visualisation showed the target image of the square at the Colijnstraat. The sequence of images at the left page shows how the Colijnstraat will look like during the different phases of the restructuring process. The above figure shows the current situation. The middlest figure shows how, during the first phase, the narrative route can already be implemented in the current streetscape. The image at the bottom shows how the Colijnstraat looks like during the demolition process.

D Debris hills

The cross-section left of this text indicate the size of the debris hills in between the Amsterdamstraat and Den Haagstraat.

E Watch tower

An impression of the watch tower is shown in the image below.



Figure 6.51

E Impression of the watchtower

6.9 Scenario 2: Laissez-faire

6.9.1 Introduction

The laissez-faire scenario shows how the neighbourhood can develop with relatively low investments. Most of the budget has to be spent on the demolition of houses, meaning that restructuring on the large scale is not possible. Investments should be done on the low scale of the released spaces. Inspiration for the elaboration of this scenario was found in the 'Development Concept Landscape Stroke' (Entwicklungskonzept Landschaftszug) in Dessau, Germany, developed by Station C23 architecture, landscape and urbanism.

6.9.2 Concept

The neighbourhood will not be restructured. Small scale developments will be done on the released spaces. The released spaces are not planned, but are totally dependent upon the places where houses become vacant. After demolition of these houses, the released spaces will be developed in such a way that the maintenance costs are low. Three options are available for the completion of the released spaces, which are presented below.

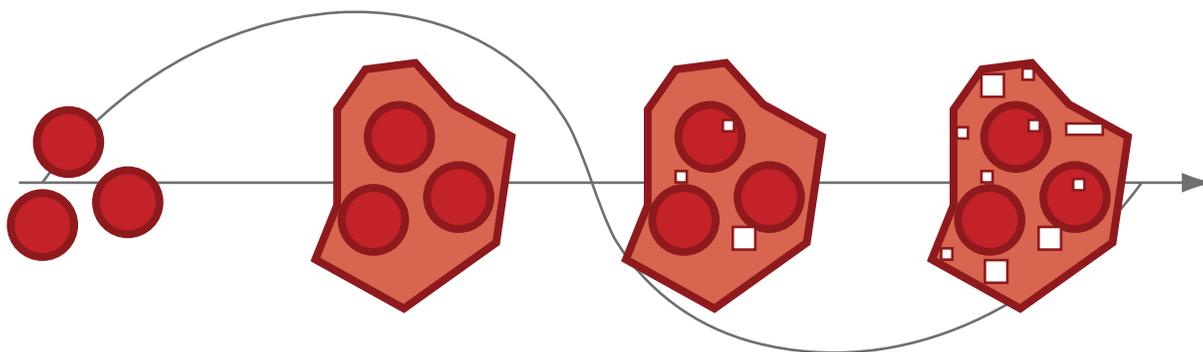


Figure 6.52 Concept of the laissez-faire scenario

1 Claims

Pre-defined areas of about 100 m² (10 x 10 m) are available for interested residents. These claims can be used for activities which need space and are not possible within the current urban fabric. In principle, claims are meant for individuals who want to adopt a small piece of their neighbourhood. In return, they can use these areas for their own benefit.

2 Partnerships

In consultation with the municipality of Heerlen, larger areas than the pre-defined claims can be requested. This is in principle meant for groups of people who share a common interest, and who want to maintain the area together.

3 Wild grasslands

These places that are pending for claims or partnerships, will be turned into wild grasslands.

6.9.3 Design principles

design principles Flexibility and initiative of the residents are fundamental in the laissez-faire scenario. Therefore, it is avoided to implement design principles which leave little space for flexible use of the spaces. Two design principles are regarded as essential to prevent the neighbourhood for an abandoned appearance, which is a pitfall in this flexible concept.

1 Maintained edges

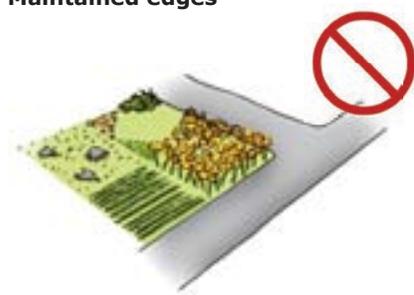


Figure 6.53 Without maintained edges

Claims / partnerships

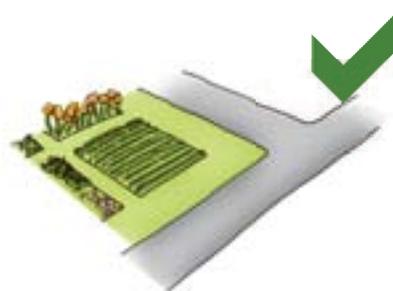


Figure 6.54 With maintained edges

The external edges of claims and partnerships get a stroke of 5 meters which are maintained on a regular basis. In principle, this is regularly mowed grass. The stroke can however also be used for functional purposes like parking lots, dependent upon the needs of the location. Internally, in-between claims and partnerships, strokes of 2.5 meters divide the plots from each other.



Figure 6.55 Without maintained edges

Wild grasslands

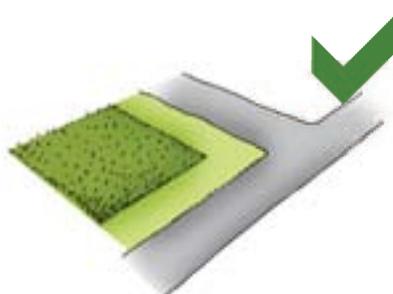


Figure 6.56 With maintained edges

The external edges of the wild grasslands will also get a stroke of 5 meters. The strokes are a framework which assures a coherent streetscape. Due to this maintained framework, all kind of developments are possible without causing a cluttered appearance.

2 Public accessibility

The claims, partnerships, wild grasslands as well as the maintained edges should all be accessible to the general public. Concretely, this means that every claim or partnership should at least have one passway from one side to another.

6.9.4 Plan drawing

The plan drawing for the laissez-faire scenario is presented on the next pages. It is also included on scale 1 : 2,000 on the CD-ROM. Compared to the restructuring scenario, it is obvious that the current structure of MSP will not drastically change.

The number of houses which will be demolished, is less than in the restructuring scenario. The locations of the released spaces with claims, partnerships and wild grasslands are the result of current and planned demolition projects. Probably, on other locations will also be demolished. Where and to what extent is however very uncertain, and will depend upon the most recent prognoses. The plan drawing therefore only shows an impression how the structure of the neighbourhood can look like in 2040.

6.9.5 Prioritising

The four images below demonstrate the priority of the proposed interventions.

Current situation

At this moment, there are two large vacant spaces: one in the North of Meezenbroek and one along the Limburgiastraat.

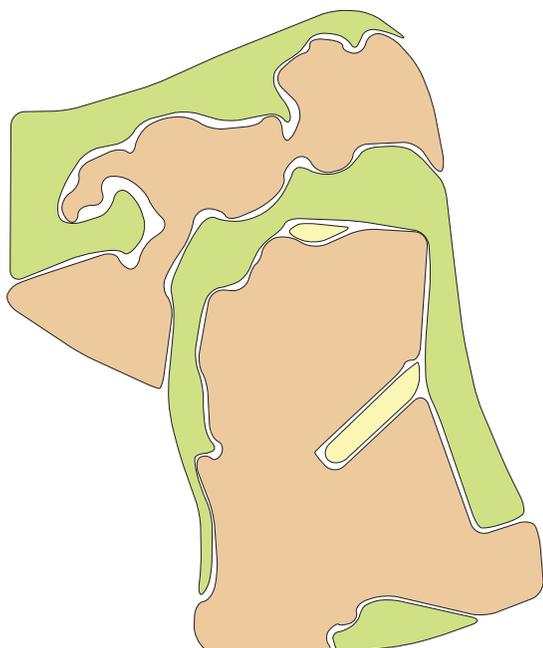


Figure 6.57 Current situation

Highest priority (e.g. 2011-2015)

In the short term, these vacant spaces can be developed by using the concepts of claims, partnerships and wild grasslands.

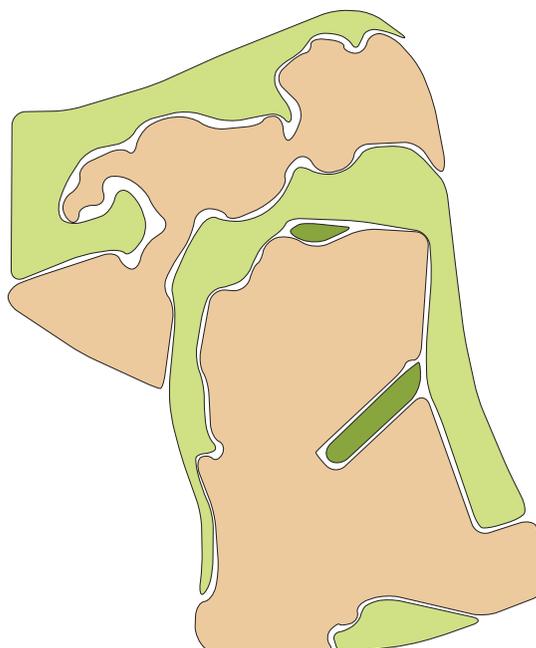


Figure 6.58 Highest priority

2nd highest priority (e.g. 2015-2025)

In the medium term, the neglected buildings in the North of Meezenbroek can be demolished, and the released spaces can be redeveloped using the given concepts.

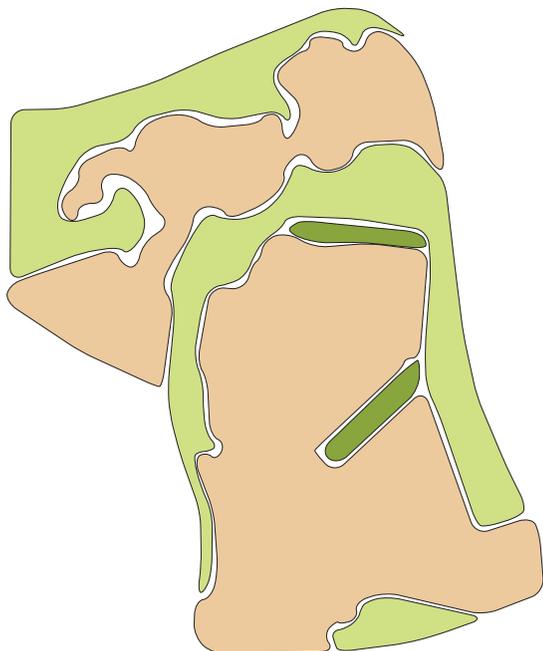


Figure 6.59 2nd highest priority

Lowest priority (e.g. 2025-2040)

In the long term, the other apartment buildings along the edges of MSP can be demolished, and the released spaces can be redeveloped using the given concepts.

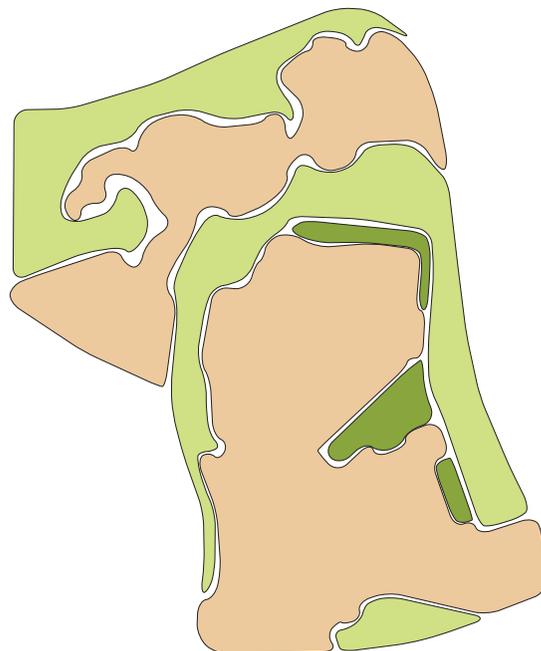


Figure 6.60 Lowest priority



Figure 6.61

Plan drawing 'restructuring'



Legend

	Paths
	Claims
	Partnership
	Wild grassland
	Maintained edge
	Fruit orchard
	Existing trees
	Buildings within the case study area
	Buildings outside the case study area
	Water
	Sports fields
	Built up area
	Grass
	Arable land
	Road
	Railway

scale: 1 : 5,000

A Goselingstraat



Figure 6.62 **A** Current situation



Figure 6.63 **A** Desired situation with claims, wild grassland and the fruit orchard

6.9.6 Visualisations

B Govert Flinkstraat



Figure 6.64 **B** Current situation



Figure 6.65 **B** Desired situation with claims

C Bredastraat



Figure 6.66 **C** Current situation



Figure 6.67 **C** Desired situation: wild grassland

6.10 Finishing remarks

The elaboration of the two scenarios in this chapter, gave insight in how the neighbourhood can develop in the future. The two designs are totally different: in the restructuring scenario, the neighbourhood is undergoing a transformation, while in the laissez-faire scenario, only on these places where buildings are demolished, interventions are visible. Both designs have advantages and disadvantages.

The advantage of the restructuring scenario is that the neighbourhood gets a new identity. In fact, five smaller neighbourhoods are created out of the former aggregated 'MSP'. The negative image that the neighbourhood currently has, may be turned 180 degrees into a positive image of how a neighbourhood can handle shrinkage. The neighbourhood may even be an example of how to create something new in a shrinkage situation for spatial professionals. However, since strategic demolition is needed to reach a restructured neighbourhood, it is very likely that some residents have to be forced to move to another location. It is an ethical question whether the new structure of the neighbourhood is more important than the demands of individual residents. The investments which are needed to reach the restructured scenario, will be enormous, especially when people are forced to move.

The laissez-faire scenario is very flexible, since interventions only happen on locations where these are needed, and only when these are needed. Most investments have to be done in demolition, the reuse and maintenance of the released spaces costs very little. The character of the neighbourhood will not really change, only on some spots where buildings are demolished, changes become visible. Besides some social interaction around the claims and partnerships, the atmosphere of the neighbourhood will probably not further improve.

To a large part, elements of the designs can be interchanged. The concepts of claims and partnerships can be easily used in combination with restructuring. The other way round, in a laissez-faire scenario, the released spaces can be developed into small parks with some more investments. The one design does not eliminate the other. Therefore, the designs should be used as discussion materials to head towards a desired future.



“ *A green environment makes the region more attractive, through which it is possible that more people settle here. That should help to soften the effects of shrinkage.* ”

Project leader at Waterboard Roer & Overmaas Tholen (2010)

7.1 Introduction

The second case study is Sittard. This chapter starts with a general impression of the characteristics of Sittard as a city, followed by a clarification of how the city has evolved its urban borders over time. The next section deals with the demographic prognosis for the city. These prognosis are then linked to the present day housing situation. However, because specific information about the housing stock in relation to demographic prospects for the city is not abundantly available, there is need for an analysis on this point. Therefore, the current and desired housing situation are sketched. This is followed by an explanation of how contemporary municipal policy tries to deal with the effects of shrinkage on this housing situation, roughly from the moment that awareness of shrinkage started until present. Based on this analysis the contribution of this thesis with respect to the further development of spatial policy is formulated using starting points for the design proposal. Finally, the design is presented for creating a resilient city structure which enhances the liveability in the neighbourhoods of Sittard.

7.2 Characteristics of the city Sittard

Sittard is part of the municipality Sittard-Geleen which is one of the municipalities of the sub-region Western Mining Area located in the bottleneck of South Limburg. The city is bordered by the N297 road in the North and the N276 road in the West and South. The eastern edge of the city is roughly formed by the Dutch-German border. Sittard is situated on the transition between two landscape types, the hilly country of South Limburg and the Meuse river landscape a few kilometres to the West. Additionally the city is surrounded by a stream valley landscape in the North. To the West the city is situated adjacent to the 'coulisse' landscape (Lambert et al, 2009, pp. 14-15). The landscape types are indicated by figure 7.1.

The impression of the city centre of Sittard as one of the oldest cities in the Netherlands, is comparable with cities in the Rhineland in Germany. Examples of these similar city centres are Kleve, Goch, Kevelaer and Rheinberg. Figure 7.2 and 7.3 illustrate this impression. At the moment the city centre is characterised by different building-styles. There are for example the Petrus Church and the Basilica of the Dominicanen Monastery. On the other hand there are the historic buildings on the market square next to the modern department store building of the V&D which is presented in figure 7.4. The new plans of Zitterd Revisited, illustrated with figure 7.5 – whereby the city centre and the area directly adjacent to it are adapted to provide new apartments, shops, parking space, a culture and education cluster and many more - even make this contrast more explicit by placing the modern buildings of the culture and education cluster the Dobbelsteen next to the historic silhouette of the city centre. The Dobbelsteen is indicated with number 2 in figure 7.5. Around parts of the walled city centre there are the former fields of fire which have only minimally been used as building ground in the past. At the moment the houses at the northern edge are replaced by apartment buildings for the higher segments of both rental and private property. This project is indicated by a number 1 in figure 7.5. The remaining area is used as leisure park, allotment-gardens and private and semi-private herbal garden and rosary. Underneath the leisure park a parking-lot has been build for approximately 640 cars.

Most of the daily facilities for the inhabitants of Sittard are to be found in the city centre. There are not many community centres with supermarkets left in the surrounding neighbourhoods, and some of the ones that were present closed their doors (Lambert et al, 2009, p 28). An example of this is the vacant building of the drugstore at the Hemelsley visualised with figure 7.6. Other facilities, for example those in the neighbourhood Molenbeek, have moved to newer neighbourhoods in Kemperkoul and Limbrichterveld. This phenomenon supports the common policy of the municipality to cluster facilities to deal with new market circumstances and declining customer numbers as a consequence of shrinkage.

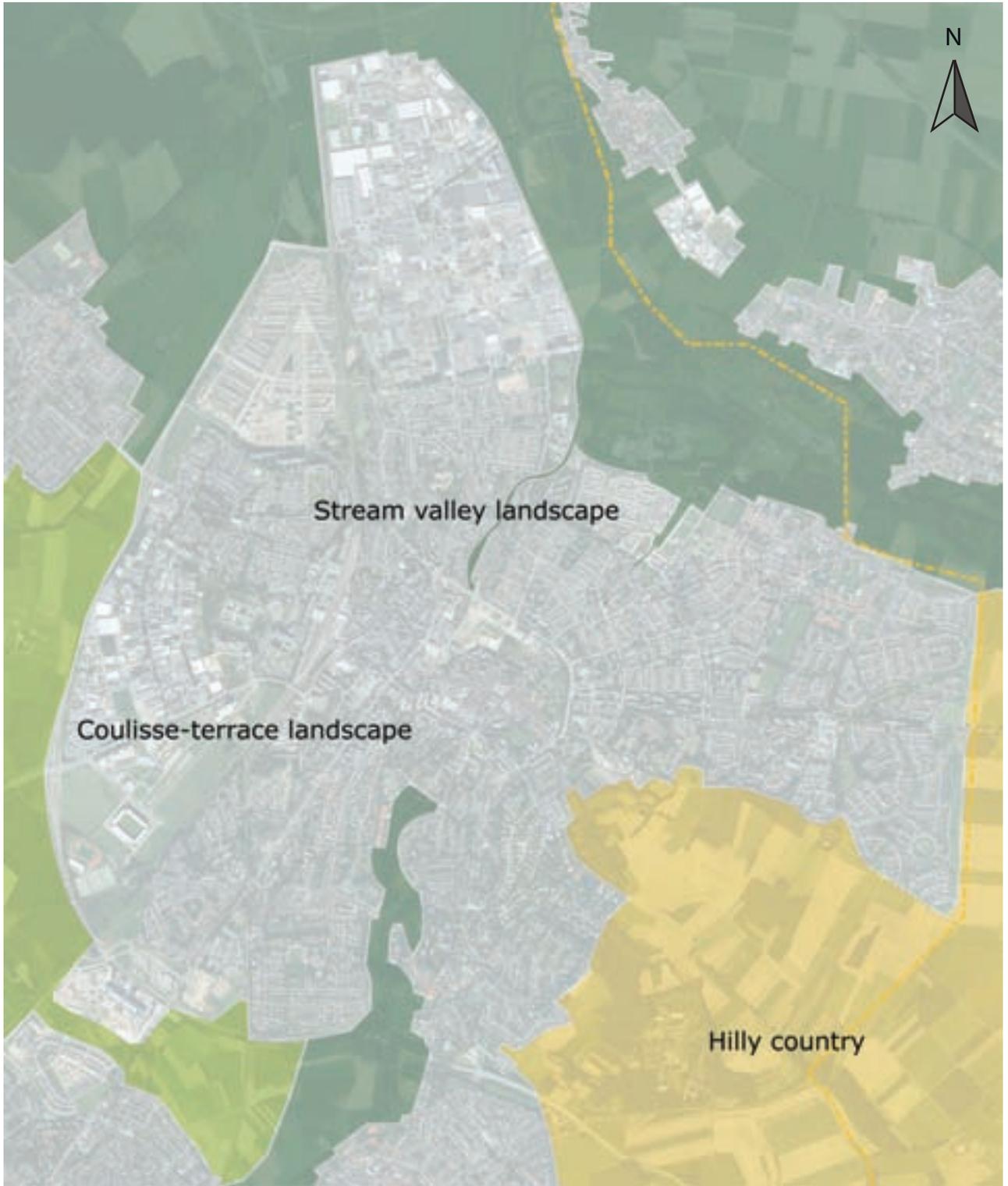


Figure 7.1 The surrounding landscape types of Sittard



Figure 7.2 Impression characteristic city centre around 1926



Figure 7.3 Impression city centre, with in the background the Petrus Church



Figure 7.4 Modern V&D building right next to the historic buildings of the market square



Figure 7.6 Vacant drugstore building Hemelsley road

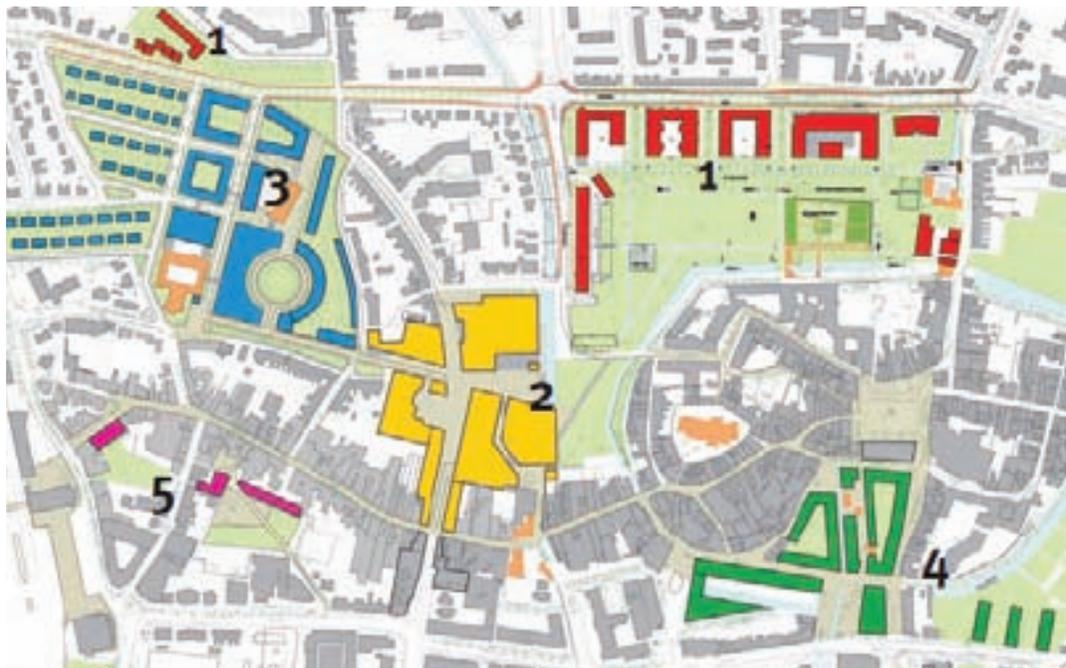


Figure 7.5 The plan Zitterd Revisited

7.3 Development of the urban borders of the city

Many archaeological remains from the Stone Age to present prove that the area around Sittard was an important place for human settlements during time. The oldest urban core of Sittard dates back to the 11th century, where presumably a castle was built at the place where today the Kloosterplein and Oude Markt are located (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 67-70). The settlement developed to a marketplace with a maintenance function for its surrounding settlements and hamlets, under the positive influence of its strategic location adjacent to an inter-urban track. From this moment the urban core expanded in separate stages. In 1243 Sittard received the city law and the core was expanded in an oval shape. During the 14th century, the historic core was adapted to its current size. Each expansion also ensured the expansion of the ramparts around the city. A part of the contemporary ramparts is presented in figure 7.7. During the 17th century the city suffered from several sieges. In 1677 the defensive strength of the city was diminished to such a degree, that eventually the ramparts lost its function. Therefore, the city expanded its urban borders with new ribbon developments along the Brandstraat, Paardestraat and Putstraat (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 67-70).

7.3.1 *City developments between the start of the 19th century and the Second World War*

From 1815 the area around Sittard belonged to the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. From that moment the city was positioned adjacent to the new state border with Germany. At that moment Sittard lost its important function as intermediate trading town between Cologne and Flanders (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 37-43). Therefore its orientation shifted from East-West to North-South (Lambert et al, 2009, p 12). To stimulate the involvement of the Dutch part of Limburg with the Netherlands, a road between Nijmegen and Maastricht was constructed in 1840. The track of this road runs at 250 metres West of the city centre of Sittard and is clearly visible at the sequence of topographical maps shown in annex VI. Additionally, the newly constructed railroad of 1865 between Venlo and Maastricht was of great economical benefit for the city. The importance of Sittard considering railroad traffic increased with the opening of the rail track between Sittard and Herzogenrath in 1896. Sittard became an important railroad junction. Because of these relatively excellent transport connections, Sittard was a desirable refuge for French and German monastic orders, who fled as a consequence of anti-Catholic laws in their countries of origin (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 37-43). Additionally, the priests were drawn by the Western Mining Area because when the building of the Maurits Mine started from 1916, the area was confronted with immigration of 'rough' foreign people. The priests provided the pastoral care of these new inhabitants (Van Binsbergen & Schrader, 2005, p. 10). The city still possesses much religious heritage developed during this movement and it is inextricably connected with the identity of Sittard. It also determines for a great deal the impression of the city centre's silhouette seen from the North nowadays. This cityscape, presented in figure 7.7, is officially protected since 1972 with the inclusion of the ramparts and parts of the former fields of fire (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 72-75). Another protected element of the city landscape is the Stadspark Sittard presented in figure 7.8, which has been developed between 1920 and 1927 (Janssen, 2000). The park has been developed in the English Landscape Style with a great variety of tree species. Together with the Vondelpark in Amsterdam, the Stadspark Sittard is the only monumental city park in the Netherlands (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, p. 100).

Until the official establishment of the State Mine Maurits in 1926 in Geleen, the area around Sittard was mainly characterised by a rural agrarian society and landscape. Apart from the State Mine Maurits there was also the industrial activity of the nitrogen compound company which was established in 1929. The next two decades were represented by a major industrialisation of the area (Lambert et al, 2009, p 12). The sparsely populated area transformed into a densely populated industrial area. During the early

decades of the industrialisation, the politicians of Sittard believed this city would become the centre of the mining activities in the area. To meet the expected influx of immigrants, the city expanded with new mining settlements at some distance of the city. This happened in Ophoven, Overhoven Stadbroek and Limbrichterveld. Examples of these mining settlements are Sanderbout presented in figure 7.9 and Achtbunder presented in figure 7.10. Apart from these settlements, the main centre of the mining industry was concentrated in Geleen, because the small bending streets within the ramparts of the centre of Sittard were not suitable for the modern traffic activities which came along with the mining activities (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 37-43).



Figure 7.7 *Protected cityscape: former fields of fire, ramparts and religious cultural heritage*



Figure 7.8 *Impression of the monumental city park Stadspark Sittard*



Figure 7.9 *Impression former mining settlement Sanderbout*



Figure 7.10 *Bird's eye view from the East of brand new mining settlement Achtbunder around 1955*

During this time of one of the most radical expansions of the city, Jos Klijnen, urban planner for the city of Sittard, made several urban expansion plans between 1932 and 1959. The urban development plan of 1957 is presented in figure 7.11. These plans were the first plans which sketched the future development of the city with an integral planning approach (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 37-43). During time, many of the surrounding solitary hamlets of the major centre of Sittard have been absorbed by urban expansions. This is comparable with what happened in nearly all historic cities in the Netherlands when these expanded after WWII. The hamlets of Sittard were: Leyenbroek in the southeast of the city centre presented in figure 7.12 around the year 1955, Ophoven to the southwest, Overhoven to the North and Stadbroek and Broeksittard to the northeast. This last hamlet is presented in figure 7.13 around the year 1955. Also the historic infrastructure is considerably intact and is embedded in the present day infrastructure system (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 37-43).

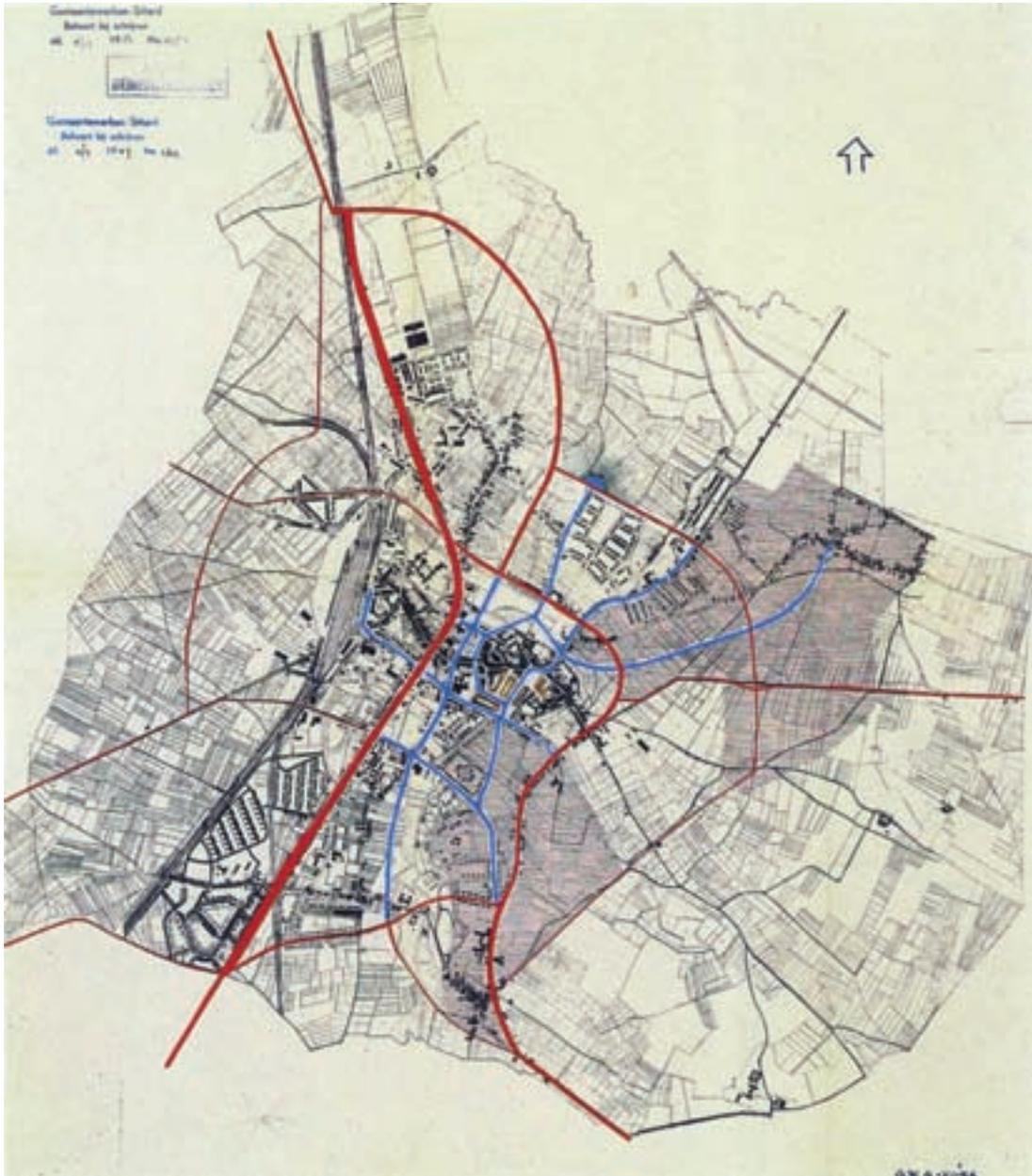


Figure 7.11 Urban expansion plan Sittard of 1957 drawn by city planner Jos Kleijnen



Figure 7.12 Bird's eye view from the East of hamlet Leyenbroek around 1955



Figure 7.13 Bird's eye view from the East of solitary hamlet Broeksittard around 1955

7.3.2 Urban developments from the second half of the 20th century until most recent urban adaptations

During the 1950s and 1960s the city centre of Sittard lost many shopping facilities to growing mining municipalities as Brunssum, Hoensbroek and neighbouring Geleen (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 37-43). At 17 December 1965 the minister of Economic Affairs announced that the mines in South Limburg would be closed down. In the summer of 1967 the State Mine Maurits permanently stopped with the production of coals. From that moment, the company DSM focussed its business on the chemical industry. After 1970 some shopping facilities returned as a consequence of a reconstruction of the inner city and the development of larger store chains. Apart from the loss of shopping facilities the centre lost many inhabitants to the new developed neighbourhoods of the city until approximately 1970. The economical base of the region, which was provided by the mine, disappeared. This ensured that after 1970 the population increase and the rapid expansion of new neighbourhoods came to a halt (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, pp. 37-43).

Around 1975 the strong expansion of the municipality Geleen ended because of limitations by the zoning area around the chemical company DSM. Additionally the boundaries of Geleen's own borders, as applied since the start of 1981, were reached. Contrary to the situation in Geleen, the municipality of Sittard had no limitations as such and could therefore continuously expand its urban area. At the beginning of the 1980s the population increased significantly again and Sittard expanded with the neighbourhoods Kemperkoel, Haagsittardpark and Europapark in the eastern part of the city. At these times, there were also expansions within the neighbourhoods of Ophoven and Kollenberg (Notten, 2001, pp. 12-16). In 1993 the Fourth Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening was accepted by the national government, which meant for Sittard, that the city had to provide for new housing and working areas, as well as new recreational areas, all within or as near to the city's edges as possible. The focus of this policy on locations and number of houses led to a limited attention for spatial development. Therefore the Fifth Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening was developed in 2000, which aimed at a strong steering mechanism and a selective role for the national government. The remaining tasks had to be executed by the lower governmental organisations and private initiators. This meant a more explicit task for market parties and less top-down regulation from national spatial policy (Notten, 2001, pp. 1-10). During the period 1995-1998 the municipality grew with approximately 1400 houses. The average number of household members for Sittard-Geleen is 2,16 persons per household at 1 January 2010 (Notten, 2001, pp. 12-16). This figure gradually decreases. The expansion Hoogveld, with approximately 1000 houses to the North of the neighbourhood Limbrichterveld, started around 1998. It answers to the increasing demand for single household houses at that time and suitable housing for an ageing population and a decreasing number of household members (Notten, 2001, pp. 12-16).

The expansion of the borders of Sittard during time is roughly presented in figure 7.14, based on the historical maps in annex VI. At this moment there are plans to redevelop the area of the former Maasland hospital, which officially closed its doors in January 2009. However, these plans are highly uncertain because of the recent demographic developments. The hospital has reopened its doors at a new location between Sittard and Geleen with the name Orbis Medical Centre. There are also plans for the reconstruction of Molenbeek in the neighbourhood Stadbroek, however these plans are also delayed several times based on a personal conversation with ir. Pascal Wauben (municipal urban designer – date conversation: 2011-03-04).

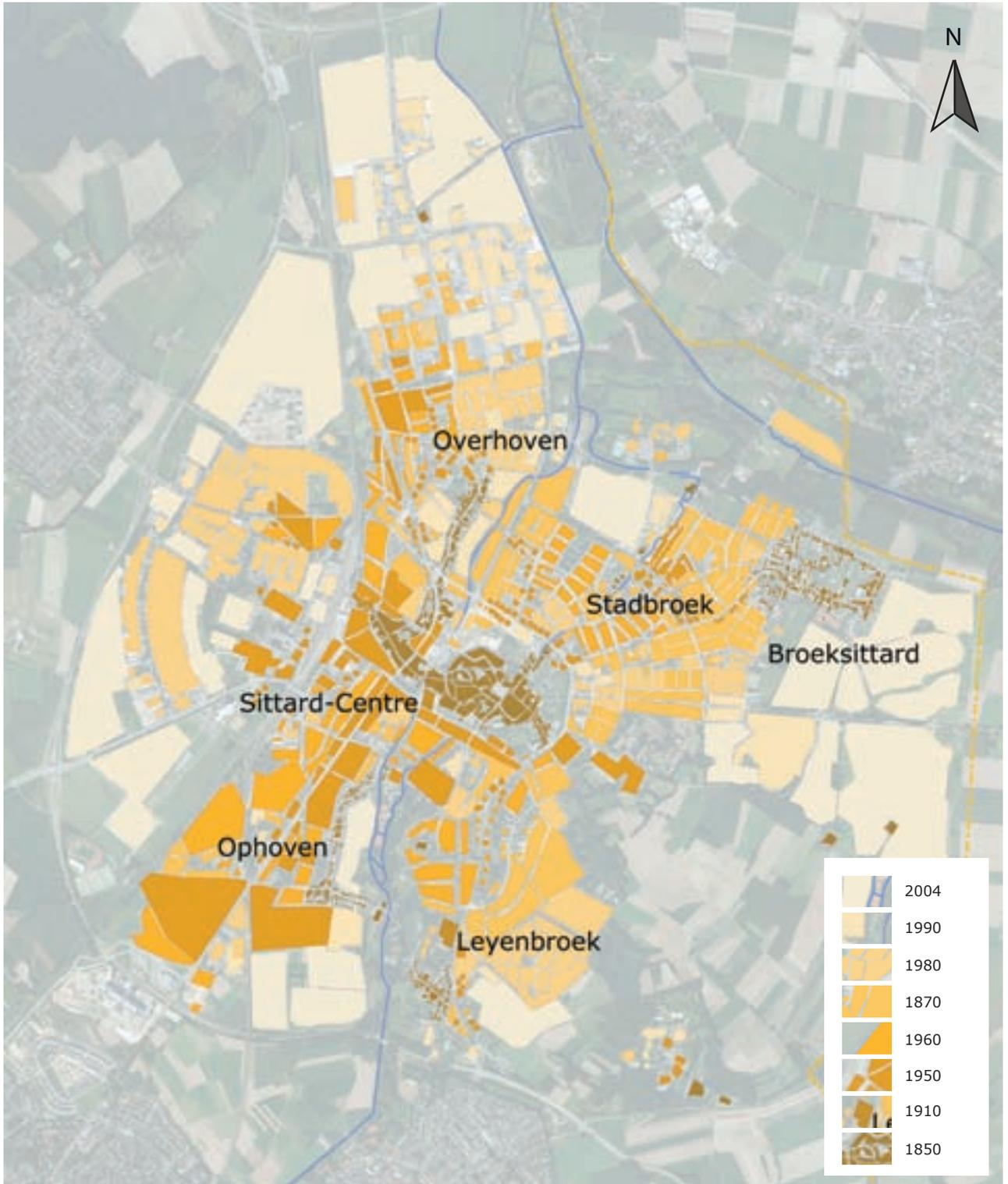


Figure 7.14 Expansion of the urban borders of Sittard

7.4 Demographic prognosis for the municipality of Sittard-Geleen

At 1 January 2011 the municipality of Sittard-Geleen counted 94,814 inhabitants. This is 429 inhabitants less than the year before on the first of January (CBS, 2011g). Section 7.4 deals with the causes and effects of this decline and the figures with respect to the housing stock.

7.4.1 *The causes and effects of shrinkage in the Western Mining Area*

Etil (2011) estimates that the Western Mining Area has lost approximately 20 percent of its inhabitants by the end of 2040 in comparison to 2010. This means a decrease of almost 61,000 inhabitants for the whole area. For the municipality Sittard-Geleen this means a decrease of approximately 12 percent in the same period. This represents a loss of almost 11,500 inhabitants. According to Companen (2008a) one of the causes of the declining population is natural, because the birth rate is significantly lower than the death rate. The explanation for this trend is the de-juvenation and ageing of the population. Additionally, people have less children on average in comparison to decades ago. A second cause is a negative migration ratio. The area gains inhabitants from Parkstad and Maastricht, presumably caused by respectively restructuring activities and by higher housing prices. Despite the fact that the area gains inhabitants from other parts of South Limburg, the area mainly loses inhabitants on balance to the northern part of Limburg, the province of Brabant and other parts of the Netherlands. This is considered to be related to the better job opportunities and education facilities in other parts of the Netherlands. The area also loses population to Belgium and Germany, presumably as a consequence of lower housing costs and tax benefits (Companen, 2008a, pp. 13-17). Apart from the underlying reasons Companen mentioned, there is also a less tangible reason that the population numbers in the region drop as a consequence of migration. This reason came forward during a personal conversation with ir. Pascal Wauben. The image of the region with respect to job opportunities is not that good. People think there are less opportunities for an interesting job and as a consequence they do not come to the area or move away. The effect of this phenomenon is double because when there are not enough high educated people in the area, the companies that are there, tend to omit new investments. Additionally, companies that want to establish a business in the region have a hard time to find suitable personnel as a consequence of the ageing working-population. At the same time, the job opportunities in the region relatively increase because of this last remark.

7.4.2 *The consequences of shrinkage for the housing stock in figures*

For the housing stock it is important to understand what this means for the number of individual households in the municipality of Sittard-Geleen. This number will decrease with 12 percent from 2010 to 2040, which means a decline of 5,181 households (Etil, 2011). Towards the year 2020 the total number of households will still grow in the city of Sittard, as can be concluded from the charts with respect to household numbers in figure 7.15. Until that moment the effect of a declining population is reduced by the so called household dilution. This is mainly caused by the growth of the specific age group of 65+. The number of households of the age group younger than 65+ years old already decreases from this moment. After 2020 the trend of a declining total number of households sets in. Still the number of households for the age category of 65+ will continue to grow until 2034 (Companen, 2008a, pp. 13-17). These household numbers have a direct effect on the demand for houses because every household usually represents a housing unit. Because the number of households declines there is also a decline in the need for houses, presented in figure 7.16. Until 2017 this number increases slowly. After this year a downward trend sets in. In 2025 the number of houses that is needed is around 17,811 and roughly represents the same number of houses that was needed in the year 2010. After 2025, it is expected that the number of houses that is needed will decrease further. To adapt the housing stock to the needs of a certain time is a delicate

task, since rental houses owned by a housing corporation are built for at least 50 years and privately owned houses for even longer. There is need for a strategic approach in the coming decades. It is hard to mediate between for example present day needs for elderly housing, who need specially adapted facilities, when after 2030 the demand for these housing types slowly decreases. Therefore Companen advises to not expand the total amount of houses. Sittard should rather make adjustments to meet with the qualitative demand for housing (Companen, 2008a, pp. 20-24).

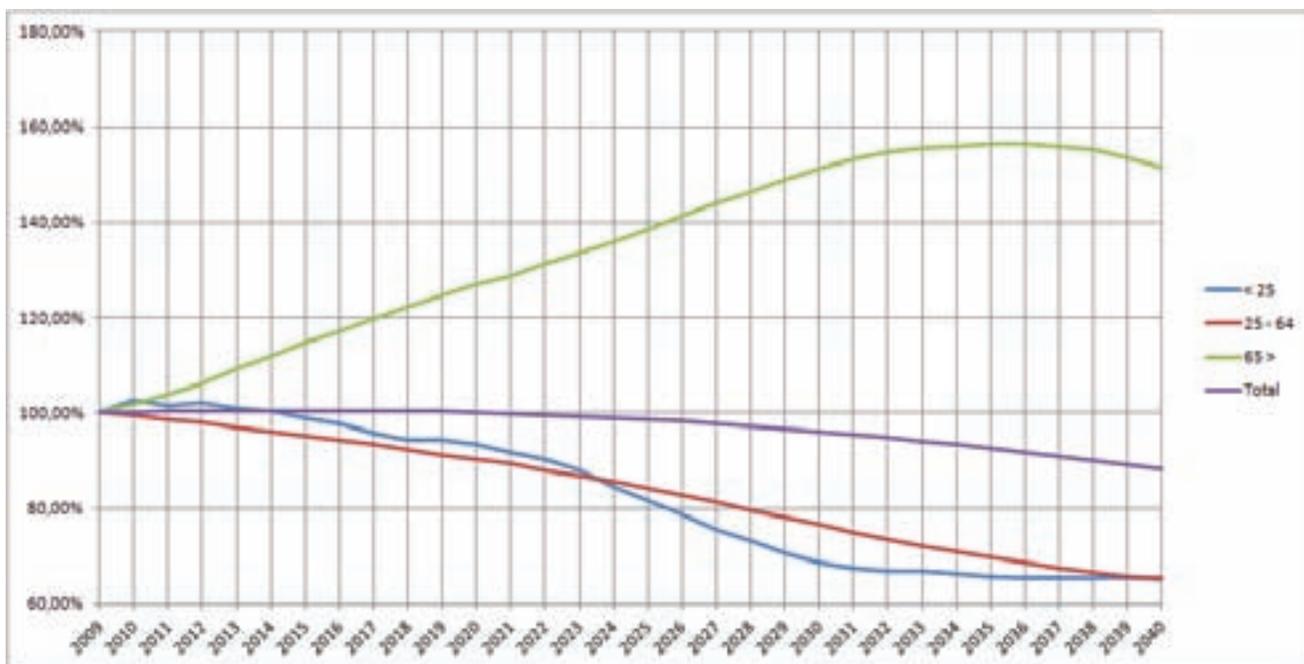


Figure 7.15 Household development per age group in percentages for the municipality Sittard-Geleen

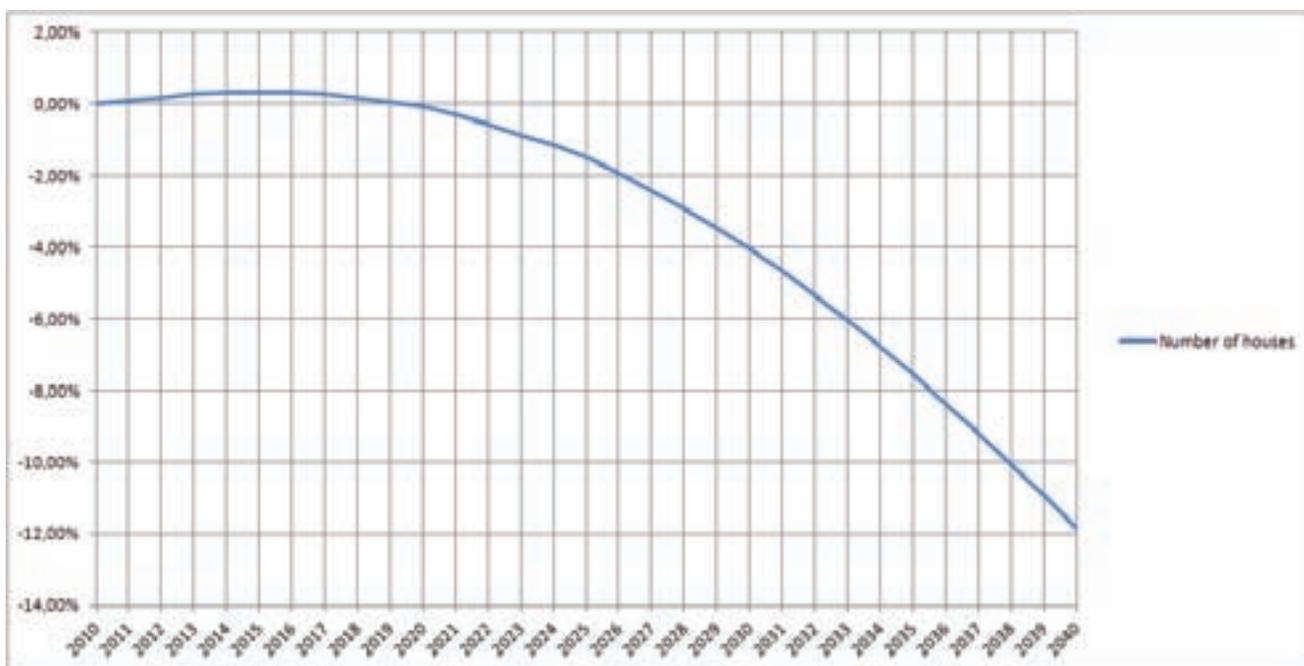


Figure 7.16 The development of the total need for housing units in percentages from fixed point 2010 for the municipality Sittard-Geleen

7.5 Facing the future of the development of the housing stock

Before continuing with the policy shift as a consequence of the upcoming shrinkage, it is sensible to sketch the situation with respect to the future development of the housing situation for Sittard.

7.5.1 *A quantitative and a qualitative mismatch between supply and demand in the housing market*

In his thesis of 2001, Notten came to the conclusion that the housing situation of the former municipality Sittard is only minimally surveyed (Notten, 2001, p. 15). Additionally, Notten concludes already in 2001, with a calculation for the housing stock of Sittard-Geleen, that the quantitative housing surplus exceeds not only the housing demand for both Sittard and Geleen. It also exceeds the total binding steering numbers for the whole of the Western Mining Area imposed by the province of Limburg. Apart from the quantity of houses, Notten argues that the residential consumer has become more critical and conscious about the quality of housing and the environment. Notten experiences in his own working field as real estate agent in the area of South Limburg that the consumer pays more attention to the importance of the charisma of the house and the neighbourhood. Therefore Notten detects more interest for neighbourhoods build before the Second World War as well as neighbourhoods build directly after it, with a special characteristic architecture. He also experiences a decrease in popularity of houses build between the 1960s and 1980s, characterised by a simple architecture and a bad image. A third development Notten experiences is a stronger position of new developments with an excellent architecture, functionally, low maintenance, energy efficient and a peaceful environment (Notten, 2001, pp. 25-29).

Notten argues that the housing market mechanism has developed within the circumstances of supply shortage. The present day development of an increasing housing stock accompanied by a decreasing housing demand is not necessarily a threat for the present day housing market mechanism. Notten expects that this housing market trend will eventually lead to lower housing prices, a better price-quality ratio and thereafter a natural selection on the housing market. Vacancy will be concentrated in the housing stock which does not answer any longer to the present day demands of the residential consumer. This leads to a chance for restructuring of the housing stock after the demolition of unpopular housing (Notten, 2001, pp. 30-34). House owners and house renters increasingly ask for higher standards with respect to the functional quality of a house, the energy label, the living comfort and the finishing of houses, the living environment, the social safety of the neighbourhood, nursing care facilities and the environment. Therefore, the residential consumer is more and more determining the housing market. This means that supply and demand must be balanced in a way which fits this market situation (Notten, 2001, pp. 1-10).

7.5.2 *The residential types of Sittard*

The Residential Environment Concept for the Western Mining Area distinguishes five residential types (Companen, 2008a, pp. 7-12). The publication of Companen distinguishes only three of these residential types for the city of Sittard. The first is city centre housing, roughly situated in the historic core of the city with its orientation on the central train station. The second type is urban housing which is practically formed by the remaining neighbourhoods of the city, apart from the most rural areas of the type rural housing. Future demands for housing focus on city centre housing and green environment types. Many of the post-war neighbourhoods of Sittard belong to neither of these and here there is a significant qualitative transformation and reconstruction of the housing stock necessary (Companen, 2008a, pp. 7-12).

As a consequence of the rising prosperity, there will be less need for social housing. This applies for both stacked housing as well as soil-bounded housing. There is need for a qualitative reconstruction to deal with the qualitative mismatch between supply and demand. A part of the existing social housing stock has to be transformed to social housing which is lifecycle resilient, the higher rental segments or privately owned houses (Companen, 2008a, pp. 20-24). Elderly want to stay relatively independent for a longer period, which means that there is need for adjustments in their homes, or they have to move to other housing types as for example single-floor housing (Companen, 2008a, pp. 20-24). At the same time a dilution of the population means less bearing capacity for certain facilities. The process of population decline will strengthen the effects that were already occurring with respect to scale enlargements for facilities. The document of Companen clearly states that quality and accessibility come first before nearness. The demand for specific facilities for elderly increases and therefore, specific facilities and housing should be combined and concentrated (Companen, 2008a, p. 19). Additionally, population decline and ageing of the population will lead to a decrease of the labour force with 23 percent for 2030. This means that the potential for a job will increase during the coming years, however it also means that some workers have to come from elsewhere, if the economic growth will continue with approximately 2 percent per year. Therefore the area should have suitable attractive residential areas (Companen, 2008a, pp. 17-18).

7.5.3 The contemporary reconstruction activities face a qualitative mismatch

The regional and local housing investigation of 2009 is conducted upon instructions from the municipalities and the housing corporations of the Western Mining Area. It is based on governmental spatial plans, the strategic housing stock management of the housing corporations and surveys under households and starters from who approximately 30 percent responded. The research made clear that one out of seven houses in the region will not answer to the needs in the near future, if the reconstruction activities will be limited to one on one replacement of the existing housing stock. There should be a turn when it comes to the quality of the housing stock. This turn is characterised by a shift from building programmes which enhance supply to a system where programmes are based on consumer demands. There will be a shift in demand for both the private housing sector as well as the rental segments. Especially staircase entrance flats and linked houses in the rental segment are vulnerable. For the private housing sector there is need for a reconstruction in the housing stock of cheaper linked houses. On the other hand there is a great need for apartments which have an elevator and single-floor housing for rent. For Sittard this means that there is space for new developments in the city centre. The developments in the remaining urban areas of the city will be characterised by dilution of houses and greening of the neighbourhoods (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2009). In summary, there is need for a qualitative accent which focuses on a diversion of suitable living circumstances for elderly, city centre housing as well as green living environments, a relative increase of privately-owned housing and resilience especially when it comes to energy consumption.

7.6 From growth-thinking to accepting a future as a shrinking city

During the years many spatial policy documents have been developed by the former municipality of Sittard, the municipality of Sittard-Geleen, the region Western Mining Area and the province of Limburg. These documents focus their attention mostly on the housing stock situation presented in the former section. The policy documents all set as goal to come to a widely supported plan to deal with the consequences of shrinkage. To give a clear impression of what has already been done by the governmental organisations, this section devotes attention to the policy documents developed roughly from the moment that the political awareness of a future as shrinking sub-region became eminent. At the end of this section, in figure 7.17, a diagram is presented which contains the most important policy documents that pass in review.

7.6.1 The moment of accepting a future with shrinkage

In 2001 the municipality of Sittard merged with the municipalities of Geleen and Born to become the new municipality Sittard-Geleen. This municipality has the highest amount of inhabitants in the Western Mining Area. At the start of 2005, the municipality of Sittard-Geleen, the Province of Limburg and the national government agreed on an increase of the total amount of houses in the Western Mining Area of approximately 1800 new houses until the year 2010. At that time some professionals already warned for the demographic decline which was at hand (Guyt, 2006). Since 2002 the population of the Western Mining Area started with a structural population decline. Since 2007 the number of households followed this structural downward trend as well, with great consequences for the spatial policy for this area, especially with respect to the housing market (Provincie Limburg, 2009, pp. 5-9). Local politicians have advanced three stages of reacting on prognosis for population decline before they eventually accepted the figures (Guyt, 2006). The first stage is of denial, because history has taught that eventually there will be growth again. The second stage is haggling in which politicians preach that they will counter the negative demographic prognosis by means of building new houses to attract more people. The final stage is acceptance, which means that shrinkage does not automatically stands for stagnation. It rather means dynamics and new chances to focus on quality and resilience in all of the residential types. Therefore the municipalities of the Western Mining Area – Sittard-Geleen, Stein, Beek and Schinnen – together with the province of Limburg and the housing corporations of the region, agreed to work together to anticipate on demographic changes in an effective cooperative way, before it is too late to steer developments in a resilient direction (Guyt, 2006).

7.6.2 Policy development for dealing with the effects of shrinkage

In 2006 the municipalities of the Western Mining Area came up with a Housing Concept (Westelijke Mijnstreek, 2006). In here the policy starting points and the objectives of both the municipalities as well as other actors - for example the housing corporations - are assembled. Under the pressure of expected demographic developments within the area, there was a strong need to come to a joint regional policy with respect to the housing stock. At that time the involved parties acknowledged the fact that it was probably impossible to counter the demographic developments in the region, nevertheless, there were possibilities to steer the consequences in a 'desired' way which embraces resilience. This led to the development of an analysis of the housing stock in 2007 which contained the figures of the housing market and demographics for the whole of the Western Mining Area on neighbourhood scale (Companen + SAB Eindhoven, 2007). A corresponding publication was developed in 2008 which is based on the inventory of the housing stock, the so called Residential Environment Concept (Companen, 2008a). It is an important strategic document which forms the fundament for the reversal of the underlying trend with respect to regional housing policy. The report contains the strategic vision for housing policy for a period until 2020 – 2030, for the Western Mining Area as a whole as well as the five distinguished residential types (Companen, 2008a, pp. 5-6). Attached to this last report is the appendix which contains the so called hotspots for that moment (Companen, 2008b). These hotspots are inner-city developments or extensions of the urban area which have an impact that contributes significantly to the envisioned target transformation of the city. The combination of these last three documents is an important step with respect to the upcoming transformation tasks concerning the demographic developments of the region, because all municipalities have agreed on this vision. The most important housing corporation in Sittard, Zo Wonen, has even integrated the relation between the outcomes of the Residential Environment Concept (2008) and the strategic stock policy of ZO Wonen for a period of 25 years. The ZO Woonvisie discusses the parts of neighbourhoods in Sittard and Geleen where it is expected that the impact of declining inhabitant numbers will be the most prominent (Lambert et al, 2009, p 6). After the Residential Environment Concept the Regional Vision has been developed in 2009 (Provincie Limburg, Gemeenten Westelijke Mijnstreek, 2009). This document

represents a further continuation of the cooperation between the municipalities in the Western Mining Area on all spatial functions. The starting points of the Residential Environment Concept are reformulated in section: elaboration starting points transformation housing stock (Provincie Limburg, Gemeenten Westelijke Mijnstreek, 2009, pp. 17-19). In the same year of the former publication a Regional and Local Housing Investigation is conducted (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2009). There is no official public publication of this document available.

7.6.3 A resilient housing market

From the Residential Environment Concept (2008), the Regional Vision (2009) and the Regional and Local Housing Investigation (2009) the course for a resilient housing market is formed. To come to a weighted housing market policy, the region needs instruments to steer a shrinking housing market properly. These instruments are formulated in the document Shrinkage Instruments of 2010 (Companen + VD2 Advies B.V., 2010). Eventually, in 2011, the region of the Western Mining Area has come up with the Sectoral Structural Concept Housing (Companen, Buro 5 Maastricht, 2011). This document integrates policy from the former initiatives and publications on a regional scale. It is a vision in which choices with respect to the housing market are made explicit, and with this policy the region can steer developments to a desired development for both the shorter as well as the longer term. The document focuses solely on the housing market. Therefore other spatial functions as business areas are left out of the scope of the document. The Sectoral Structural Concept Housing forms a solid base for the elaboration, statement and updating of the local zoning plans of the individual municipalities of the region. Additionally, the document is an important achievement because the cooperating actors - housing corporations, healthcare providers, real estate developers, real estate agents and the residential consumers - all support the choices which have been made and are presented in the document. According to Companen, this gives the market new perspectives and will lead to confident investments for the transformation of the housing market in the coming years (Companen, Buro 5 Maastricht, 2011, pp. 6-15). The Sectoral Structural Concept Housing has very similar principles as the Provincial Housing vision of 2011 (Provincie Limburg, 2011a, pp. 82-83).

7.6.4 The integral spatial vision

Apart from the governmental policy documents which focus on the reconstruction of the housing market, there is also the document which presents the integral spatial vision for the municipality of Sittard-Geleen. On the basis of article 2.1 of the new act of law spatial planning (nieuwe wet ruimtelijke ordening nWro) of July 2008, all municipalities are obliged to come up with a structural concept for the whole municipality. The structural concept of the municipality Sittard-Geleen has something special in comparison to for example the structural concept of Maastricht. It is the first structural concept since the work of urban planner Jos Klijnen, earlier discussed in section 7.3.1. Since Klijnen there has been no thoughts about the integral spatial urban development of Sittard, based on a personal conversation with ir. Pascal Wauben. Where most other municipalities can constantly renew their structural concept, this was not possible for the municipality of Sittard-Geleen, especially because it is a merged municipality. For the first time since Klijnen, the municipality had to present their integral spatial policy. The municipality decided to only build on contemporary spatial policy to prevent certain limitations of developments which are implemented in this contemporary policy. Therefore, no clear starting points with respect to the consequences of shrinkage are integrated in this document. The policy is binding for the general spatial developments within the municipality, however the policy has no binding regulations comparable to the local zoning plan. Nevertheless, the document serves as a basis for new adaptations in the local zoning plans on all spatial aspects (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2010, p. 11). The spatial policy process to deal with shrinkage so far is presented in figure 7.17.

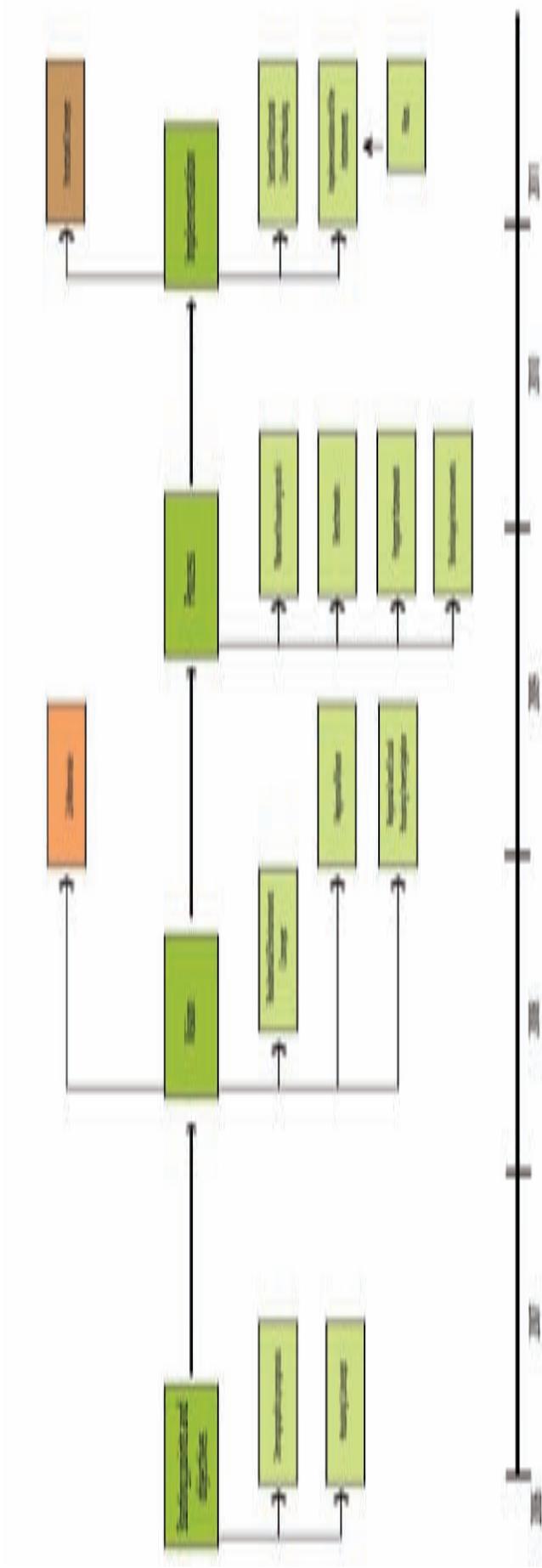


Figure 7.17 The spatial policy process to deal with shrinkage so far

7.7 The further development of policy with respect to shrinkage

There are two essential elements that are lacking in contemporary spatial policy in Sittard. The first is clear visionary policy for a resilient city structure which anticipates on the consequences of shrinkage. The reason for this is a rather conservative integral spatial vision presented in section 7.6.4, which is limited to outdated policy that does not include any of the policy documents presented in section 7.6 with respect to shrinkage. Secondly, the municipality has not yet come to concrete spatial designs on a neighbourhood scale to deal with the liveability in vulnerable neighbourhoods with respect to shrinkage. Contemporary policy is limited to rough abstract markings of which neighbourhoods need municipal attention for reconstruction activities (Companen, Buro 5 Maastricht, 2011, p. 29). Concrete design efforts are limited to the plan Zitterd Revisited earlier discussed in section 7.2. No concrete adaptations are implemented so far in a spatial design which deals with shrinkage in vulnerable neighbourhoods. This section formulates the concrete research and design focus for what an (urban) landscape design can contribute to the further development of spatial policy for the city of Sittard with respect to the effects of shrinkage.

7.8 Starting points for new spatial policy for Sittard

As has been clarified in section 7.4 about the demographic prognosis for the municipality of Sittard-Geleen, the demographic situation in Sittard is comparable to the one in Heerlen presented in chapter 6, however the prognosis are slightly less extreme. Nevertheless, it is necessary to preserve the liveability of the neighbourhoods in Sittard as social purpose.

7.8.1 *The desired way for the city to shrink*

Shrinkage does not mean stagnation, it means a different approach for the same purpose as in a situation with demographic growth; a resilient city. In a situation where shrinkage occurs, and therefore also less houses are needed, it would be the most logical to shrink in a similar way as Sittard has evolved and expanded its borders during time. This development is presented in section 7.3 and illustrated with figure 7.14. Shrinkage should then take place from the outside to the inside of the city. The reason for this method of de-urbanisation is that it would be the most logical way to preserve the urban character of the city. In that respect the phenomenon of shrinkage leads to a dilemma based on a personal conversation with ir. Pascal Wauben. This dilemma is urbanity on the one hand and lower density urbanity on the other. Urbanity depends for a large part on a concentration of certain functions and facilities. These functions and facilities will only function with a certain density of building and a certain amount of inhabitants. In a situation of shrinkage, it is likely that these features of a city get lost because the program of functions and facilities gets smaller, while the availability of ground to position these functions increases. Despite of what is desirable, this method of de-urbanisation whereby the city shrinks from the outside to the inside, is practically unrealistic, because of the huge financial means this would take and the destruction of an excellent housing stock, usually build in most recent decades at the edges of the city. Often, this housing stock is perfectly adapted to present day demands of residential consumers and environmental considerations. Additionally, in a time with huge governmental cutbacks European-wide, it would be irresponsible to finance the destruction of perfectly suitable housing capital.

7.8.2 *The actual spatial pattern of shrinkage within the city*

Traditionally, despite of what is preferred in a situation of shrinkage, the effects of shrinkage occur in the bad parts of the rental housing stock scattered over certain neighbourhoods in the city. These effects are already present in some neighbourhoods nowadays and will become more prominent in the coming decades. Actions have to be taken to prevent neighbourhoods from deterioration, which otherwise will only stimulate the down-

ward trend these neighbourhoods have set in. For this, there is some attention in parts of the city. These are the neighbourhoods of Sanderbout, Achtbunder and Thienbunder in the southeast of Sittard and the area around the Molenbeek in the northeast of Sittard, both indicated with orange circles in figure 7.18. However, the predominant focus of the municipality Sittard-Geleen at the moment, is Zitterd Revisited, indicated by a red circle in figure 7.18 and displayed in figure 7.5.



Figure 7.18 Social and spatial attention areas in Sittard

Based on the document 'Masterplan Zitterd Revisited, 1999-2009', this plan mainly focuses on developments in, and directly around the historic city centre of Sittard (indicated by the numbers 1, 2 and 4 in figure 7.5) and the area around the central train station (indicated by a number 5 in figure 7.5), the former hospital area of the Maasland Hospital and the nursing clinic (indicated by a number 3 in figure 7.5) and its new location in between Sittard and Geleen called Orbis (Team Communicatie gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2009). The idea is that the Western Mining Area with approximately 150.000 inhabitants needs a powerful regional orientated urban centre, to keep young people and middle class income groups in the city and in the region. Additionally, the project has to attract new labourers from the knowledge industry and it has to attract new companies. It also functions as a boost for the revitalisation of the city (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2011a). Other parts of the city are left out of this plan, for the most. Apart from these three areas within the city, there are also some potential areas for reconstruction, partly as a consequence of the effects of shrinkage. These are; the neighbourhood in the western part of Sittard around the former miners colony of Limbrichterveld, the neighbourhood of Vrangendael in the East and the area to the North of the city centre around the Geleenbeek on the transition of the neighbourhoods Overhoven and Baandert. These areas are indicated in black in figure 7.18. The spatial policy which comes forward from the Sectoral Structural Concept Housing does pay attention to these neighbourhoods which are not part of Zitterd Revisited. However, this policy is limited to a layout plan with general markings for neighbourhoods that need adaptations and reconstruction to deal with the effects of shrinkage. This focus is considered to be on a very high scale level and therefore too abstract. In comparison to the plans for Zitterd Revisited, these neighbourhoods can count on significantly less municipal attention at the moment.

7.8.3 Arguments for policy to structure upcoming extra space

Because one of the consequences of shrinkage is the vacancy of houses and buildings, and because it is practically impossible for the city to shrink from the outside to the inside, there will be free space available within the urban boundaries of the city. This extra free space should not be used to lower the density of housing in the neighbourhoods of Sittard. Most of the neighbourhoods are characterised by relatively high density building and it is not sensible to disrupt this characteristic street pattern. Therefore it is important to practice another way of reorganisation without causing damage to the density and characteristic of the neighbourhoods. Instead of making neighbourhoods greener with marginal new green plots, it is more sensible to create new space at the transition of two adjacent neighbourhood borders, and cluster green spaces with added value for these surrounding neighbourhoods. In this way the urban densities will be preserved, that are needed to keep certain facilities resilient as earlier discussed in this section. Traditionally, these transitions between two neighbourhood areas are situated along city structuring landscape elements as for example main roads or water streams.

Apart from the argument to cluster urban densities, the city of Sittard accommodates not many public green areas inside the urban context, except for the areas presented in figure 7.19. Because of the lack of abundant internal leisure areas, the city is very dependent on the surrounding non-urban landscapes which penetrate the urban landscape of Sittard at certain places. These are indicated in figure 7.20. One of the leading landscape units here is the Schwienswei park to the North of the city, which is of great importance for outdoor leisure activities near the city. Additionally, there is the rural area of the Kollenberg which penetrates the city from the East, and the stream valley of the Geleenbeek and its artificial side-branch the Molenbeek, which penetrate the city from South to North. By trying to structure the free space the formation of a green structure in the city can be enhanced, which significantly expands the accessibility of leisure areas for the inhabitants of Sittard. It also improves the legibility of the city. The perception of landscape structuring elements as for example water ways, that have been lost during the expansion of the city, can partially be restored and contribute to a resilient city structure.

In short, the task to deal with the effects of shrinkage for Sittard leads not simply to a beautification project of the deteriorated parts of a neighbourhood. By trying to structure the upcoming extra space which is available by creating green corridors, Sittard:

- meets with reconstruction and demolition tasks (discussed in section 7.5);
- preserves the urban features and the characteristics of the neighbourhoods;
- enhances a green connection between the inner-city and the external green areas surrounding the city;
- restores the legibility of the city.

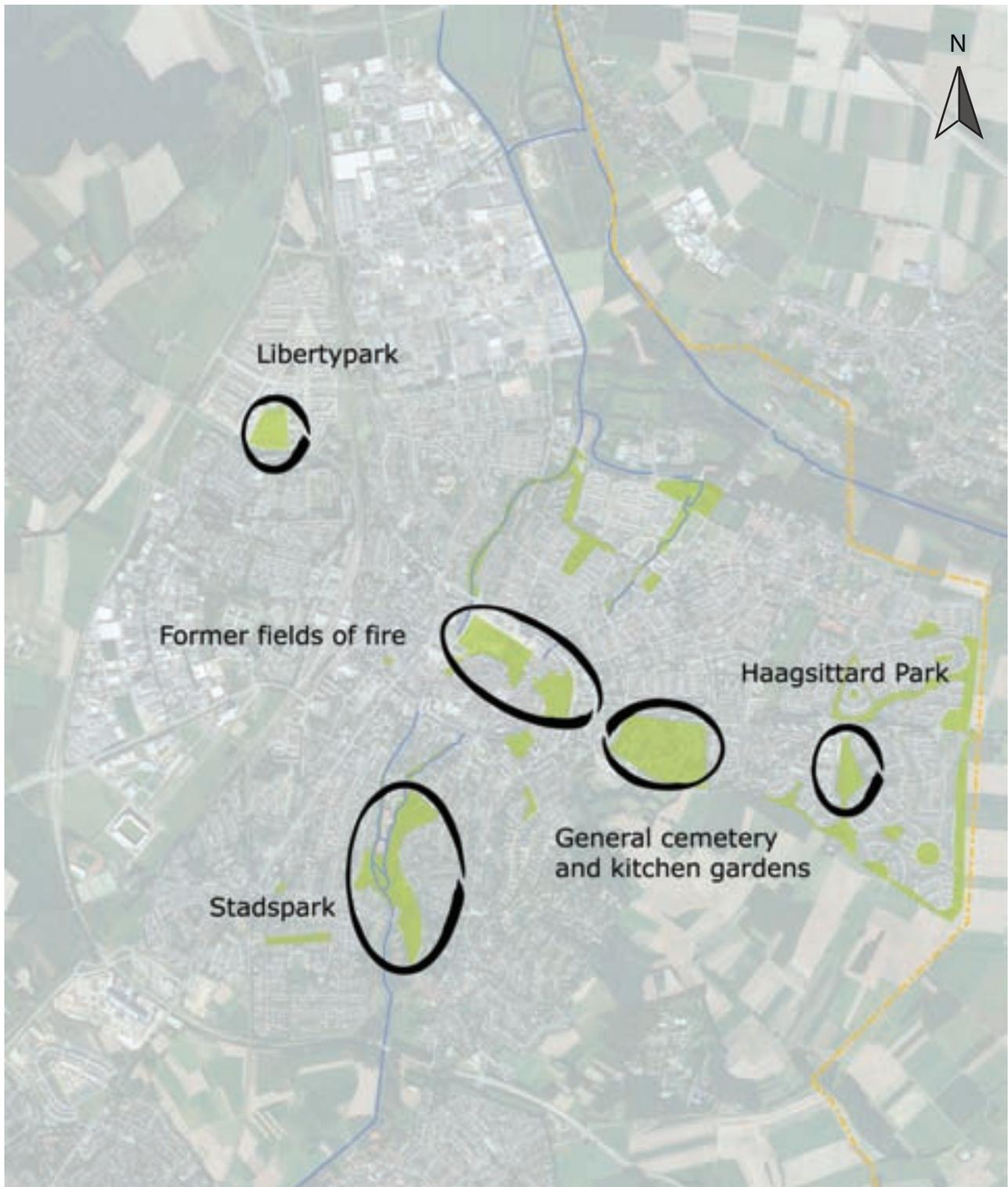


Figure 7.19 Internal leisure areas

For structuring this extra space there are many potentials and therefore the design assignment has born. This task is no longer limited to where to place what function, it consists merely of where to concentrate what function. The research and design focus is formulated in the next section.

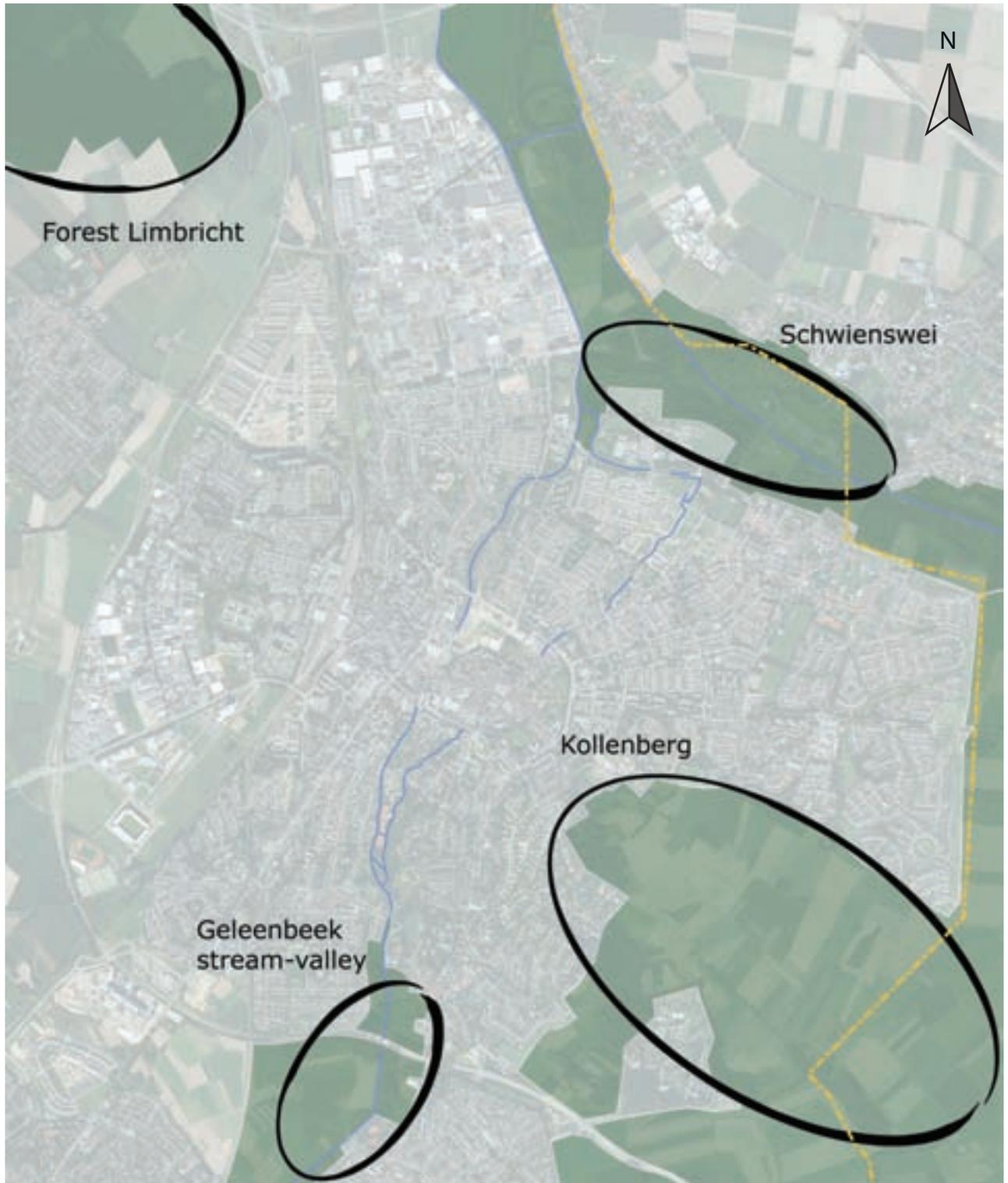


Figure 7.20 External leisure areas

7.9 The research and design focus area

For this idea of a green structure within the city, there are some bottlenecks, indicated red in figure 7.21. These bottlenecks hamper the continuity of a green structure in the city. The research and design focus for this project is on the bottleneck along the Geleenbeek to the North of the historic city centre, on the transition of the neighbourhoods Overhoven and Baandert. This area is indicated with an orange square in figure 7.21 and presented in figure 7.22. The reason for this choice is because the project can contribute to the continuity of the stream valley landscape of the Geleenbeek and additionally, the area has not received much spatial attention before, while the effects of shrinkage occur here as well. Finally, this area is challenging because it presumably will encounter vacancies in the privately owned housing sector in the coming years. This makes interventions in this housing segment necessary in the near future. The following sub-sections describe specific issues that are of critical importance in the research and design area.

7.9.1 The Geleenbeek

The Geleenbeek finds its origin to the North of Heerlen and streams for nearly its whole track in rural area to where it leads to the Meuse river at Stevensweert. The stream valley is interrupted by parts of the city centre of Sittard, where the stream disappears underground and pops up again further downstream, presented in figure 7.22. This happened around half the 20th century as a consequence of several discharges of sewage water from the city and the Emma and Maurits State Mines (Vroege, 2010, p. 10). At this place where the stream is not visible in the city centre, the stream carries water through a tube. Basically, the stream valley landscape suffers from this rough interruption ecologically, but also when it comes to the perception of the continuity of the stream valley landscape, because the stream is not visible for more than 400 metres of its track.

More to the North the Geleenbeek suffers from a strong canalisation of its track and a monotonous character, presented in figure 7.23. Despite the fact that the track of the stream runs in open air from here, the stream is hard to perceive from the accompanying road system and pavement structure. This is partly because the road simply runs too far from the stream for visitors to perceive it from up there. Secondly, the top of the slopes of the canalised stream is covered with impenetrable shrubs which block the view from the side to the stream, indicated in green in figure 7.22. Figure 7.24 gives an idea of what these shrubs do for the view on the Geleenbeek. The vegetation functions as a green wall to block the view from the houses on one side to the apartment flats on the other side of the Geleenbeek and vice versa. In this sense the green wall creates an illusion of a green living environment. The conditions in winter time show the actual situation and then the illusion is gone.

According to the research of Heusschen Copier the Geleenbeek has a specific ecological function (SEF), surprisingly also along its track through the centre of Sittard. Additionally, this zone is considered to be Provincial Development Zone for Green (POG) (Vroege, 2010, p. 7). According to this same research of Heusschen Copier, the morphological conditions of the Geleenbeek will be improved between 2010 and 2015. Nevertheless, these improvements are limited to the area of the Stadspark to the South of the city centre of Sittard. For the period between 2022 – 2027 the track along the Industriepark Noord has been planned for improvements. There are no improvements planned for the area in between these two locations, roughly seen as the focus area of this research and design part of this thesis.

7.9.2 The housing stock

For the neighbourhood Overhoven, the demographic condition of shrinkage starts least from 2009 with respect to inhabitant numbers, the amount of households as well as the need for housing units. These last two are presented in figures 7.25 and 7.26.



Figure 7.21 Bottlenecks within the city green structure



Figure 7.22 Main city water streams and neighbourhoods case study

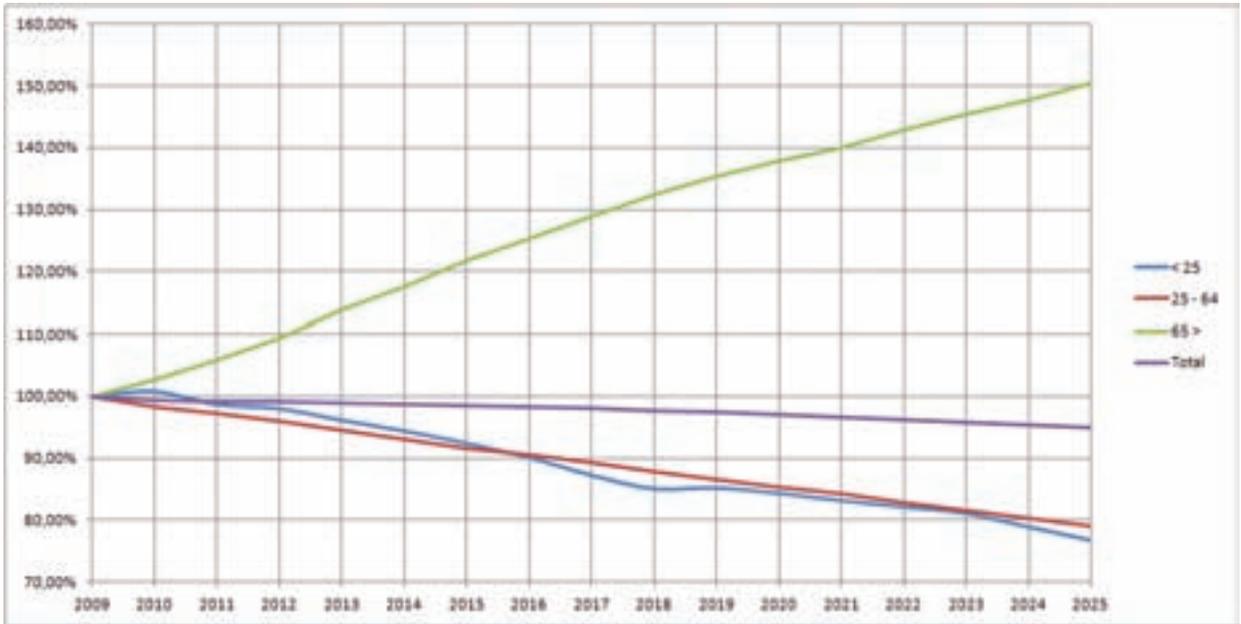


Figure 7.25 Household development per age group in percentages for the neighbourhood Overhoven

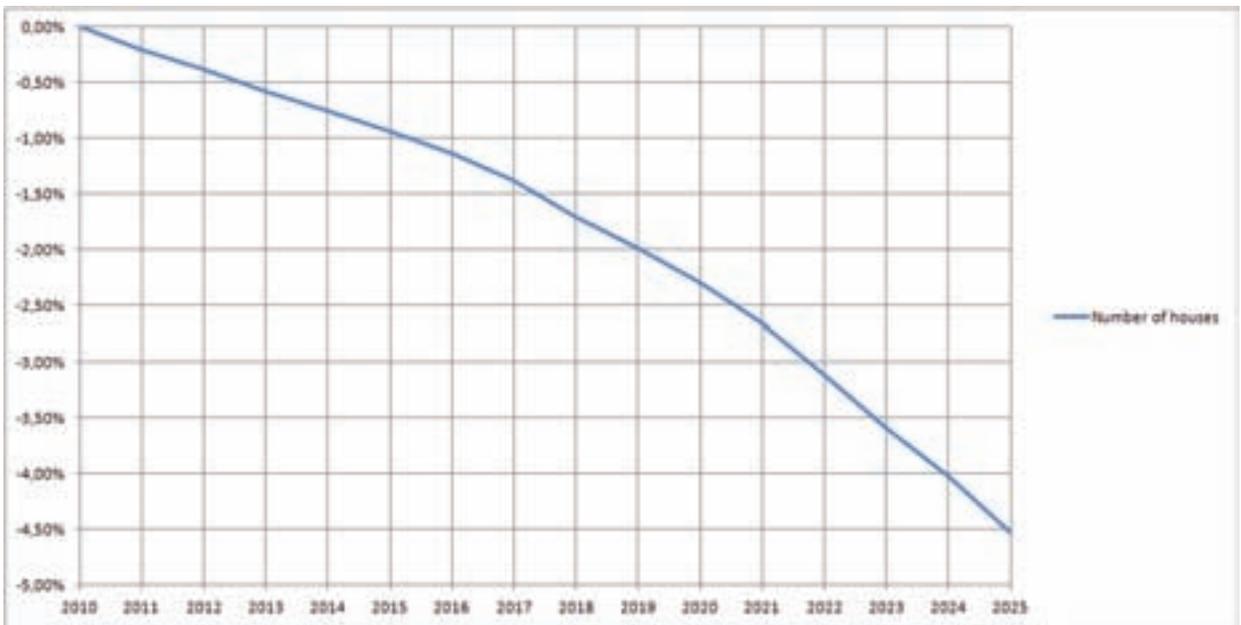


Figure 7.26 The development of the total need for housing units in percentages from fixed point 2010 for the neighbourhood Overhoven

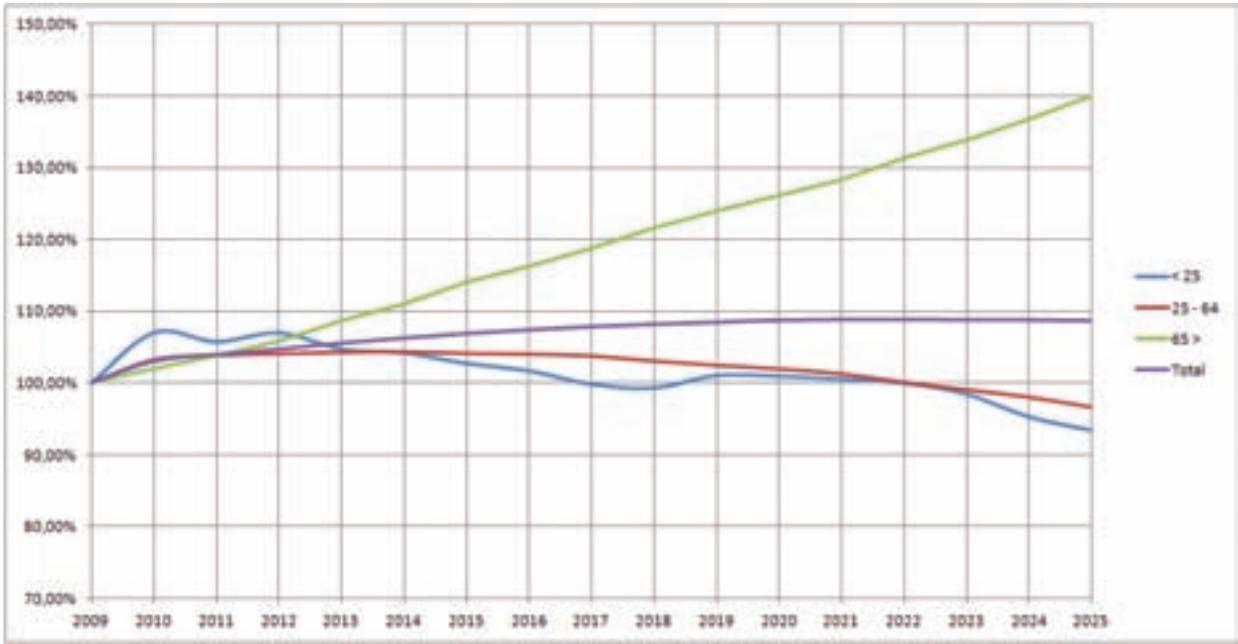


Figure 7.27 Household development per age group in percentages for the neighbourhood Baandert

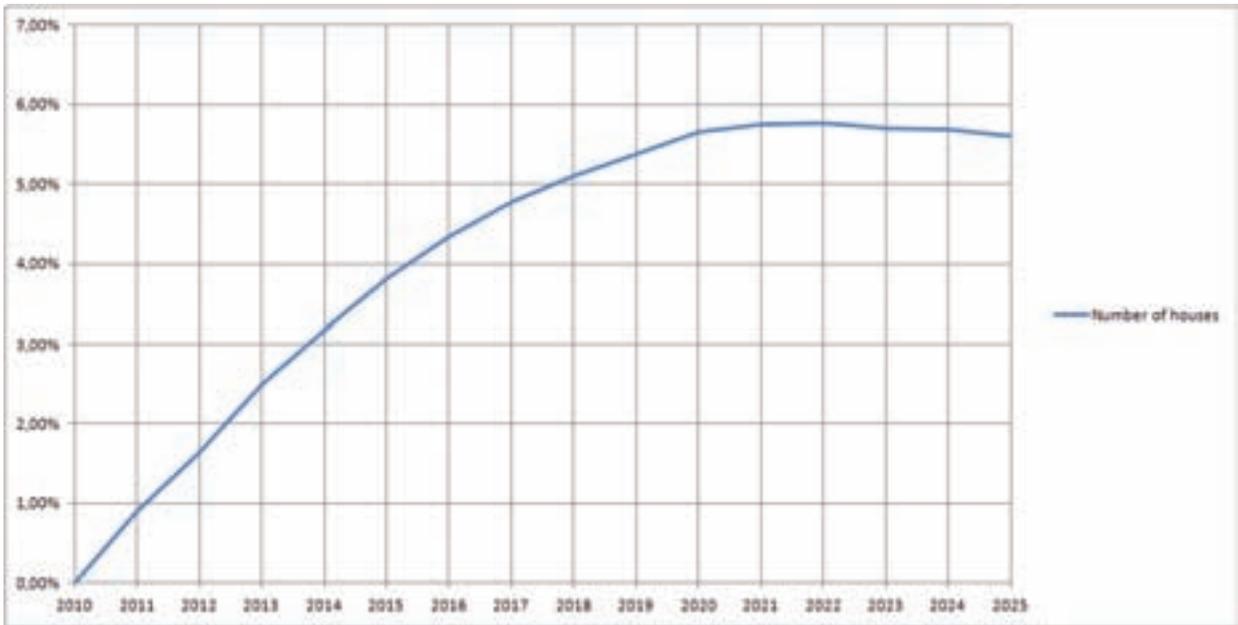


Figure 7.28 The development of the total need for housing units in percentages from fixed point 2010 for the neighbourhood Baandert

The prognosis for the neighbourhood Baandert show a similar trend. Both prognosis are presented in figures 7.27 and 7.28. Nevertheless, at this moment Baandert shows no sign of shrinkage according to these figures. Zooming in on the prognosis figures for the neighbourhood Baandert, it becomes clear that there will be no shrinkage until the year 2022, whereby the effects of the declining inhabitant numbers are reduced by the effects of household dilution. From that moment onward, the population and household numbers start to decline and this also has its effects on the need for housing units. The prognosis on neighbourhood level go as far as 2025. Nevertheless, the authors of this thesis expect that the downward trend of the need for houses will continue based on the prognosis for the city as a whole presented in section 7.4. These figures reach until 2040. Apart from the quantitative mismatch presented above. There is also the so called qualitative mismatch, earlier discussed in section 7.5. From the 1960s onward, new urban expansions have been build around the Geleenbeek to the North of the city centre as a consequence of economic and demographic prosperity. Two examples are presented in figure 7.29 and 7.30 with respectively the apartment flats adjacent to the Doctor Nolenslaan and the apartment flats on the junction Doctor Nolenslaan – Hemelsley (Vroege, 2010, p. 11). This area mainly consists of flats and small scale (linked) houses, presented in figures 7.31 – 7.33. Now the area suffers from a bad housing stock especially in the rental segment of the apartment flats between the Ruys de Beerenbrouckstraat and the Doctor Nolenslaan and the area surrounding the Albrecht Rodenbachstraat and Hemelsley in this area. These housing units show a clear example of the qualitative mismatch in the neighbourhood. Additionally, the construction condition of these housing units is not conform contemporary standards. Therefore the housing corporation plans to demolish most of these apartment flats (Lambert et al, 2009, p. 58). The housing corporation wants to replace these buildings by lower density housing units in a much more expensive rental segment (Lambert et al, 2009, p. 60).

7.9.3 Infrastructure

Apart from the issues with respect to the Geleenbeek and the housing units in that area, the infrastructure system also needs improvements. These interventions are not limited to the focus area because the infrastructure system must function on a city scale and is therefore not limited to the focus area itself. One of the plans initiated by the municipality of Sittard-Geleen at the moment is the construction of a roundabout to improve the traffic flow on the crossing of the Elisabeth van Barnstraat – Odasingel and the Rijksweg Noord (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2011b). Because the Rijksweg Noord forms a significant barrier for shoppers in the shopping street from the central train station to the historic city centre, there are also plans for making this road car-free adjacent to the new culture and education centre that has to be build (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2011c). The present-day situation with respect to the crossing of the shopping street and the Rijksweg is presented in figure 7.34.

7.9.4 Zitterd Revisited

Besides the specific issues that play a role in the focus area, both plans for each scenario presented in chapter 5, have to be adapted to the plans for Zitterd Revisited earlier presented in figure 7.5. The demolition activities for the sub-plan the Dobbelsteen, which is the new culture and education centre, have resulted in vacant plots that are ready for the new development interventions. However, some buildings as for example the Action shopping facility, are still standing at this location. With respect to both scenario's presented in chapter 5, it is questionable which project phases of Zitterd Revisited are able to be realised. Nevertheless, it is important that both scenario's provide an access road to the historic city centre for provisioning companies and for the use of emergency services, as well as a road connection to the main entrance of the underground Oda Parking lot facility.



Figure 7.23 A strong canalisation and a monotonous character of the Geleenbeek



Figure 7.24 Vegetation edge deprives view on the Geleenbeek from street and dwellings



Figure 7.29 The apartment flats adjacent to the Doctor Nolenslaan around 1965



Figure 7.30 The apartment flats on the junction Doctor Nolenslaan – Hemelsley around 1965



Figure 7.31 The apartment flats and linked houses adjacent to the R. de Beerenbroeckstraat



Figure 7.32 The apartment flats on the junction Doctor Nolenslaan – Hemelsley



Figure 7.33 The apartment flats of Hemelsley do not meet with present day building standards



Figure 7.34 Crossing of the shopping street and the Rijksweg which is a significant barrier

7.10 The design proposals

This section deals with the design solutions for each scenario. The designs serve the overall purpose of the municipality to increase the liveability of its shrinking neighbourhoods by adapting the spatial structure of the neighbourhood, to keep these from coming in a vicious circle of deterioration. Both designs are inspired by the line of thought presented in section 7.8, and therefore try to realise a green corridor along the Geleenbeek. Both the scenario "restructuring" in section 7.10.1 as well as "laissez-faire" in section 7.10.2, are provided with sub-sections about the design principles which are leading for each design as well as a sub-section about the prioritisation and phasing of each plan between the present-day situation and the year 2040. Each sub-section for both scenarios ends with a presentation of the design condition in 2040 and a general impression of what the area can look like in 30 years based on each scenario. Section 7.10 finishes with overall remarks of the contribution of both designs to the further development of spatial policy for Sittard with respect to the effects of shrinkage.

7.10.1 The design for scenario "restructuring"

The scenario of "restructuring" gives the municipality the possibility to systematically steer reconstruction activities according to a certain image that is presented in municipal policy. This scenario stands for a top-down approach and it means that interventions in both the privately owned housing stock as well as the rental segments can be done to actively deal with vacancy issues. With the scenario of "restructuring", the municipality actively tries to create a robust green corridor which connects inner-city green areas with the external green areas. This concept is presented in figure 7.35. In that way the robust corridor functions as a landscape interface between the urban area of Sittard and the surrounding external green areas. The green corridor of the scenario "restructuring" is characterised by a transition along the Geleenbeek from intensive land use in the inner-city towards extensive land use to the rural and natural areas of the Schwienswei in the North. A similar transition can be found at the area where the Geleenbeek enters the city from the South; rural area – more intensively used cultivated land around the historic hamlet Leyenbroek – national monument Stadspark – inner city water stream. This principle is mirrored for the area first mentioned, though the variation of land use differs.

The design provides the city with an opened up Geleenbeek within the urban context. A significant extension of this open air stream in an ecologically justified setting, leads along the edge of the new culture and education centre, positioned between the historic city centre and the Rijksweg road to the West of it. Adjacent to this area are the former fields of fire, which are clearly defined by the new apartment units and the culture and education centre of the reconstruction plan Zitterd Revisited. These clear boundaries are presented in figure 7.36. The Geleenbeek continues its track to the North where the canalisation profile is adapted to enhance a better recognisable water stream. Adjacent to this the circular allotment-garden plots are situated on former housing parcels. The allotment-garden plots can be used by one or more interested inhabitants, depending on the size of each structure. Further North, the stream valley opens up and this area is characterised by a much more extensive land use. The stream valley gets wider and there is more space for the water in overflow areas in case of extreme rain-water discharges. The area, formerly characterised by apartment flats, has a new urban edge which is inspired by the hamlet Leyenbroek in the South of Sittard. The irregular edge is mainly formed by the variation of backyards and high orchards in combination with hawthorn hedgerows. This last combination is a characteristic landscape element in South Limburg as has been described in the landscape analysis in annex V. Further downstream the corridor gets wider and preserved mature trees form an extensively used rural stream valley landscape of grass. The Geleenbeek continues its stream to the North along the characteristic landscape element of poplar as stand in the valley through the Schwienswei park.

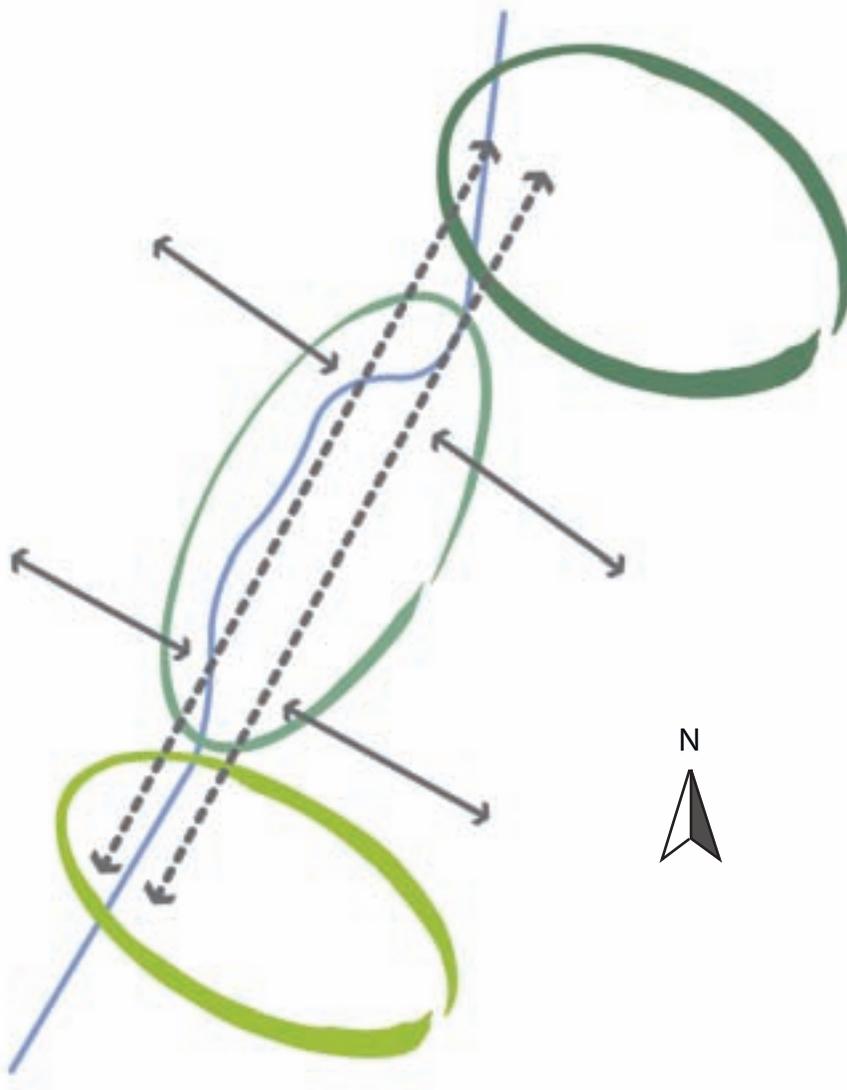


Figure 7.35

Spatial concept for scenario "restructuring": a robust green corridor connects inner-city green areas with the external green area of the Schwienwei. The adjacent neighbourhoods profit from the new robust green connection to improve liveability for the neighbourhood.

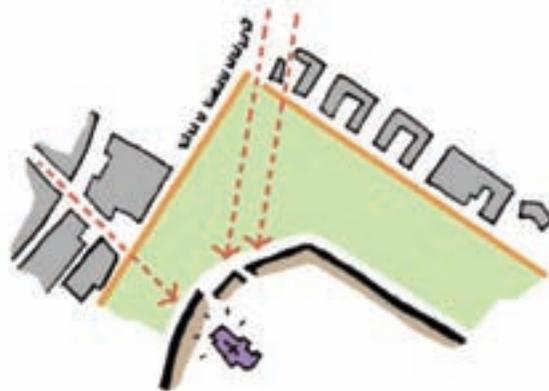


Figure 7.36

Clear urban boundaries define the former fields of fire as coherent open space. The lines of sight indicated with red arrows point at the Petrus Church, the most important landmark of Sittard.

A prominent place is there for the social care farm on the corner point of the northernmost high orchard. The main business of this farm is the maintenance of the surrounding stream valley landscape. The sheep that pasture these lands are cared for in this farm. Other maintenance tasks are also carried out by the personnel on the social care farm. Therefore the farm functions as a maintenance organisation as well as a social workplace for inhabitants who are dependent on these facilities.

Another important intervention is the reconstruction of the infrastructure system. With the implementation of the plans for Zitterd Revisited, the infrastructure in this area is oversized. One entrance to the historic city centre from this side and access to the Oda Parking lot are sufficient. This leads to the removal of the Deken Tijssenstraat and the Haspelsestraat. To overcome the problems with motorised traffic around the main shopping street from central train station to the historic city centre, the area around the new culture and education centre becomes an area accessible only for slow traffic (as in any non-motorised traffic). Traffic will be offered an alternative route via the Poststraat – Lupinestraat - Tunnelstraat along the western site of the central train station as also comes forward out of municipal plans (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2011c). The new route has to be adapted to increasing numbers of traffic. Because a part of the Doctor Nolenslaan forms a significant barrier for the robust green corridor, this road will be deconstructed in a period of 30 years. The traffic flow from the North is redirected in two possible directions and vice versa; the Tuddernderweg and the Doctor A.F. Philipsstraat. All interventions with respect to the infrastructure are presented in figure 7.37. Additionally, a slow traffic route is designed along the track of the Geleenbeek, to enhance the continuity of the perception of the water stream and to enhance the connectivity between inner city green and external green areas.

The scenario of “restructuring” is very dependent on external finances by the national and provincial government. Additionally, a ‘shrinkage foundation’ is funded to deal with the reconstruction tasks with respect to the spatial effects of shrinkage. Participants of the foundation are all actors who have certain interests in the area. These participants can be the municipality, the housing corporations, real estate developers, banks and also the inhabitants of the specific neighbourhood. This alternative future development of the neighbourhood is financially less attractive in comparison to the following scenario of “laissez-faire”. However, the societal benefits of this approach contribute in such a way to a resilient city structure, that the additional costs can be justified. The design principles presented in the next sub-section are leading for the design of this scenario.

7.10.1.1 Design principles

The design principles for this scenario are divided into two types: construction design principles and operational design principles. Construction design principles are more concerned with the physical intervention and the construction that are needed for the design. Operational design principles are more concerned with the implementation of the design and the maintenance. All principles for this scenario are presented in figures 7.38 – 7.45. The background information for these principles is already presented in the description of the design for scenario “restructuring” in section 7.10.1.

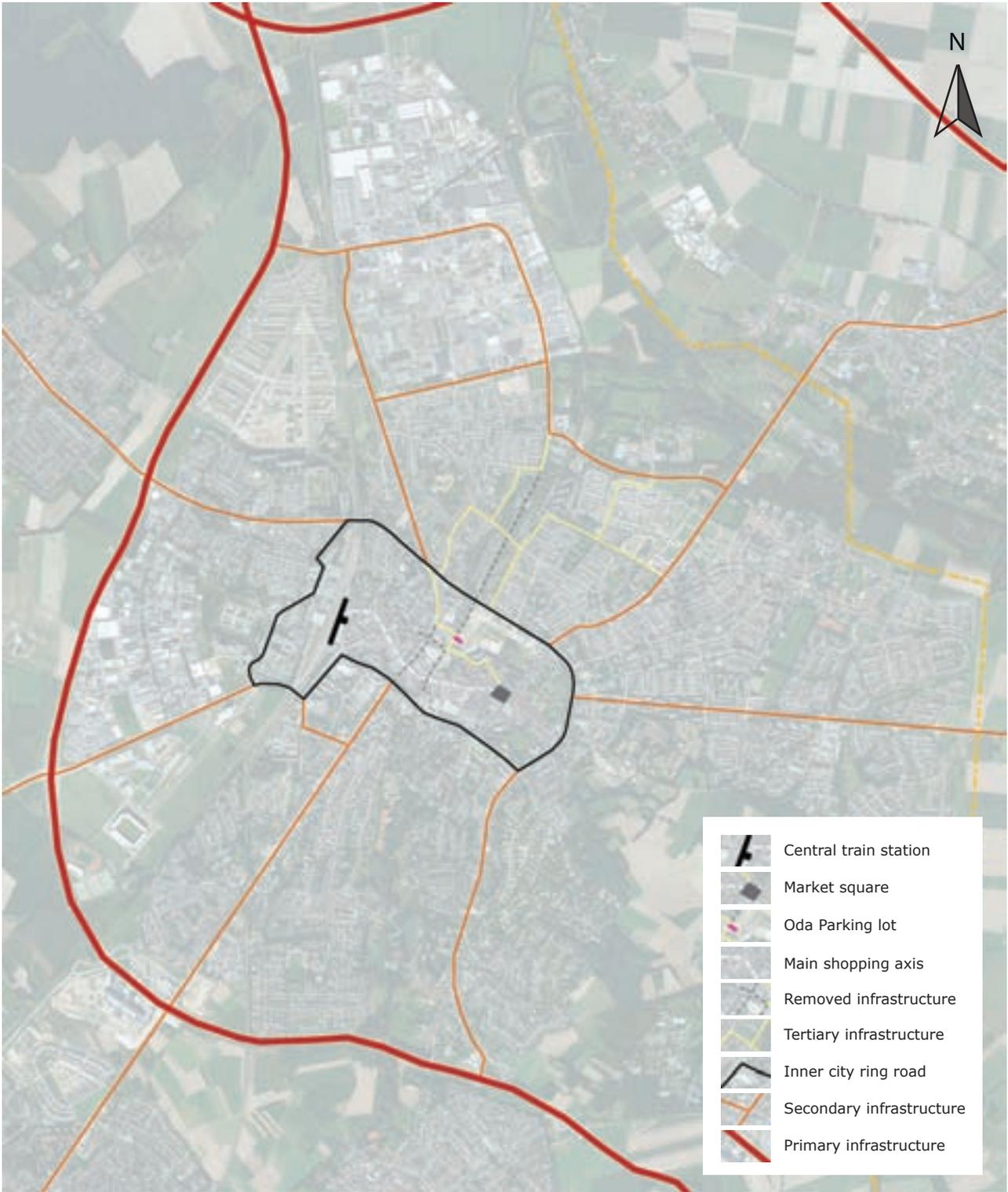
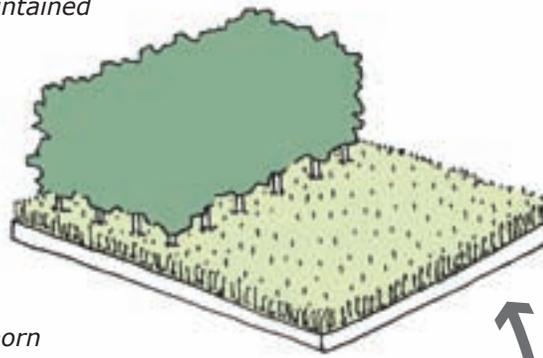
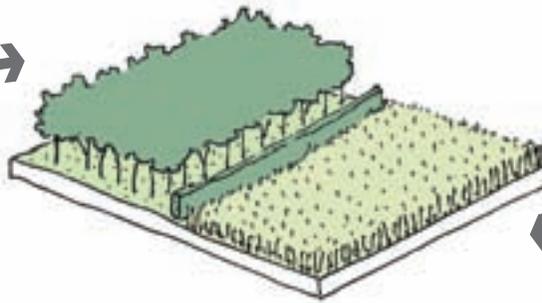


Figure 7.37 Adaptations to make the infrastructure of Sittard more efficient

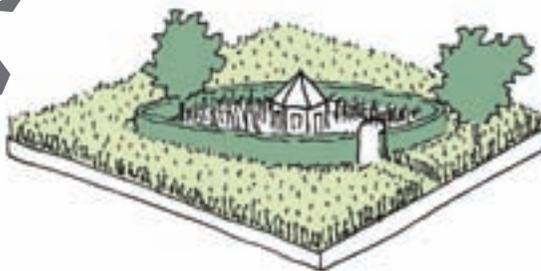
Poplar as stand and extensively maintained rural stream valley landscape



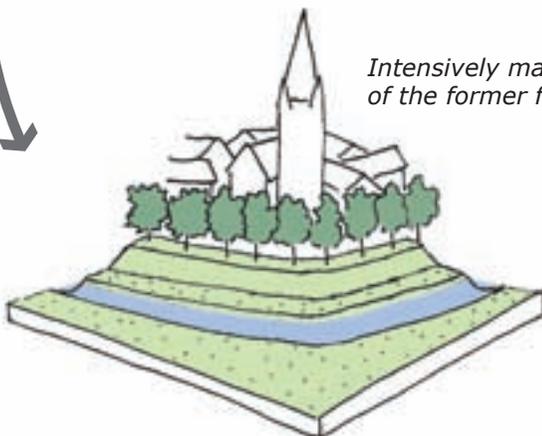
The combination of high orchards with hawthorn hedgerows and extensively maintained rural stream valley landscape



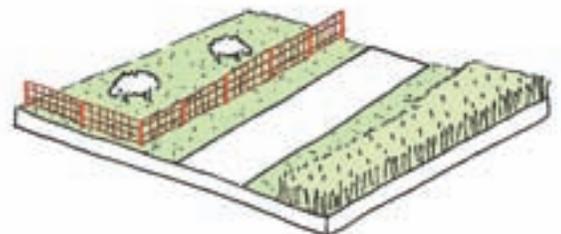
Maintenance by circular allotment-garden plots situated on former housing parcels



Intensively maintained grassfield of the former fields of fire



Construction design principle



Operational design principle

Figure 7.38

A transition along the Geleenbeek from intensive land use in the inner-city towards extensive land use to the rural and natural areas of the Schwienwei in the North.

Figure 7.39

Sheep that pasture these grasslands maintain large parts of the public space seasonally. Roads are kept free from rough grass vegetation for at least 2 metres to prevent the idea of a low maintained area.

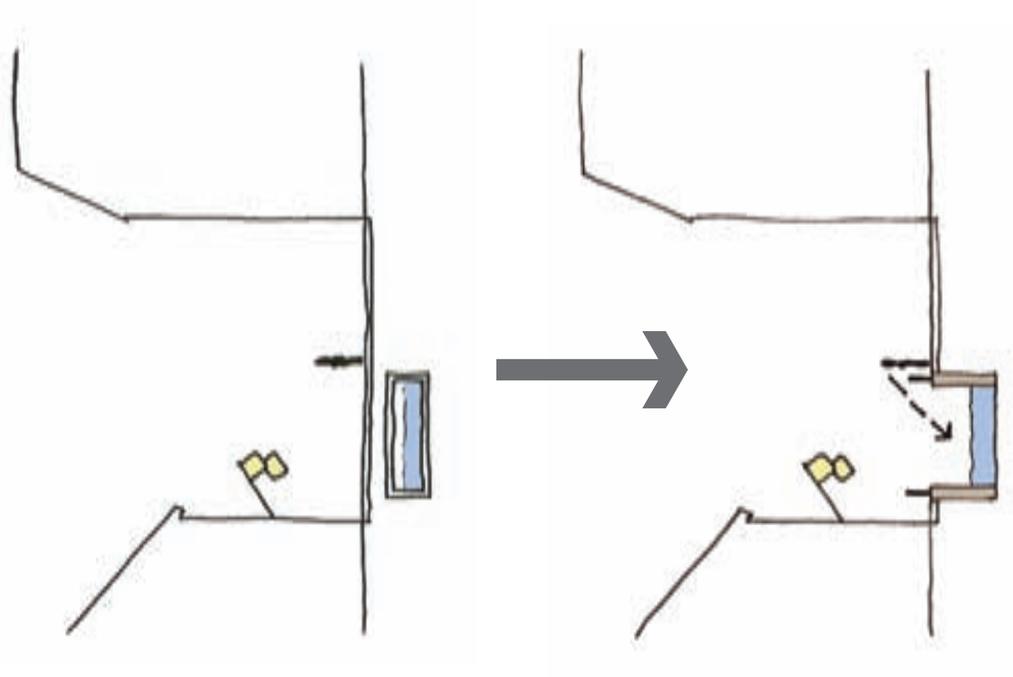


Figure 7.41 Visibility of the Geleenbeek is restored

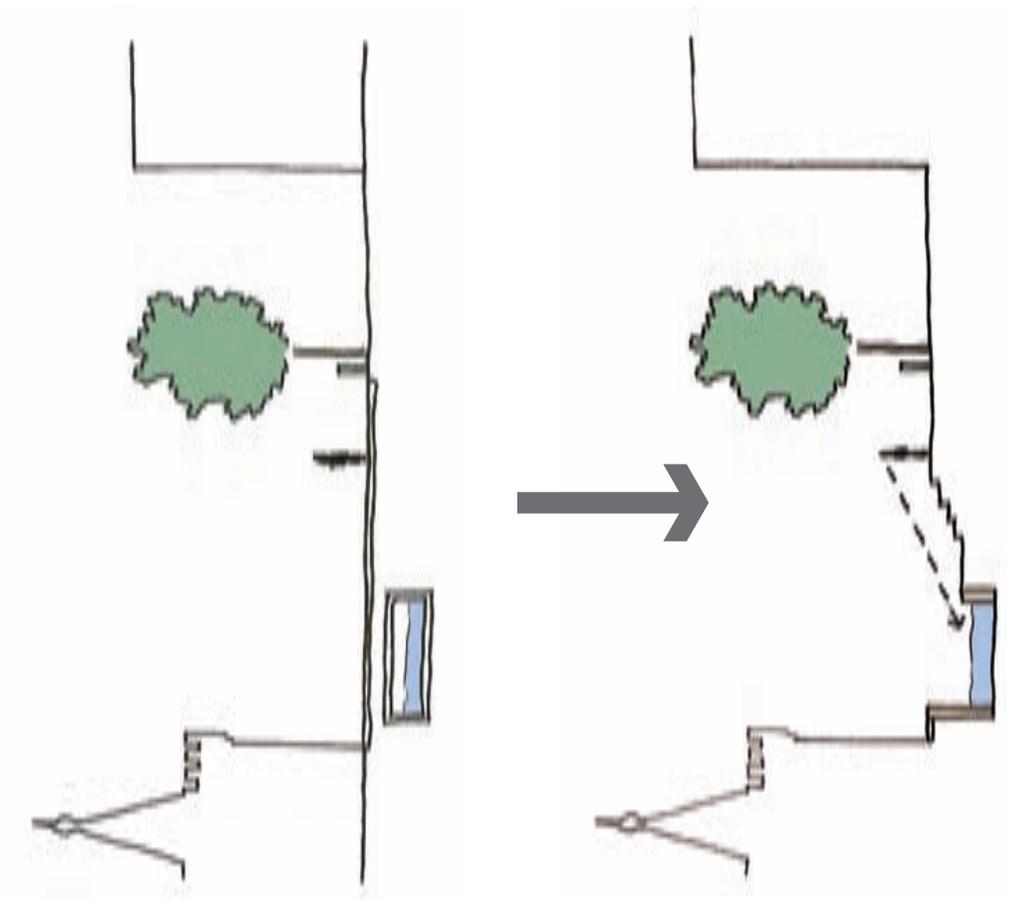


Figure 7.40 Visibility of the Geleenbeek is restored

Construction design principles

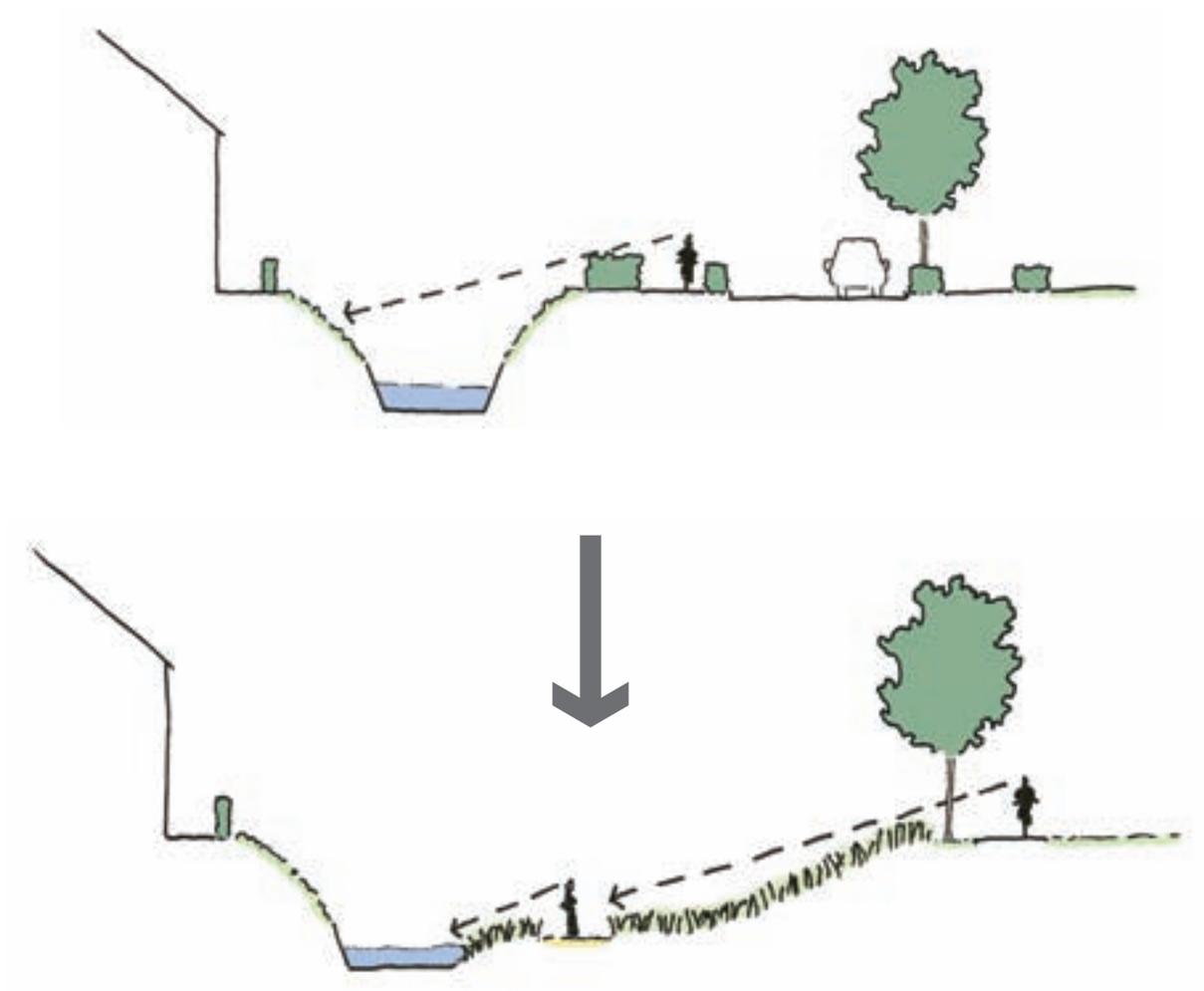


Figure 7.42 *Visibility of the Geleenbeek is improved and the banks are ecologically adapted*

Construction design principles

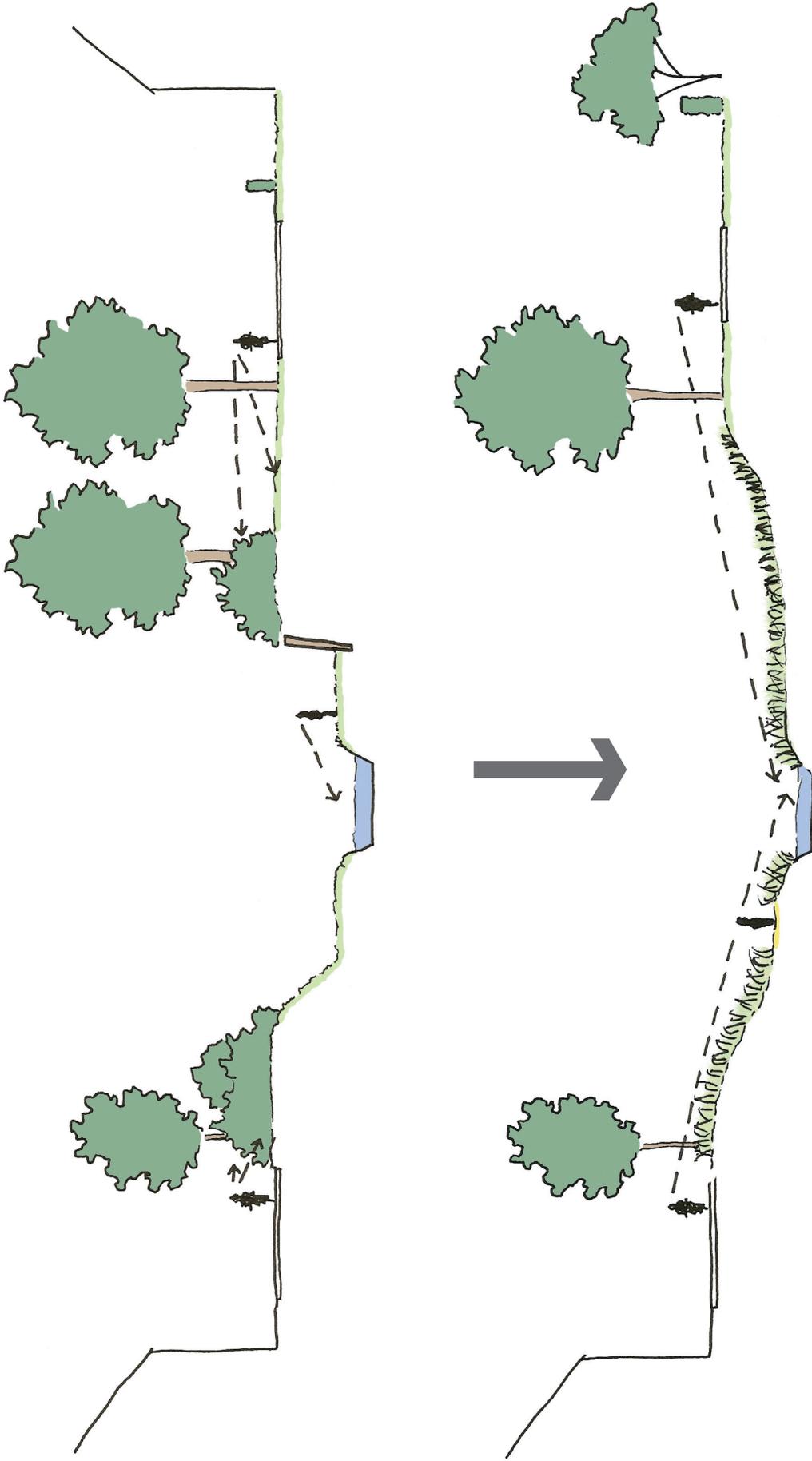


Figure 7.43 Visibility of the Geleenbeek is improved and the banks are ecologically adapted

Construction design principles

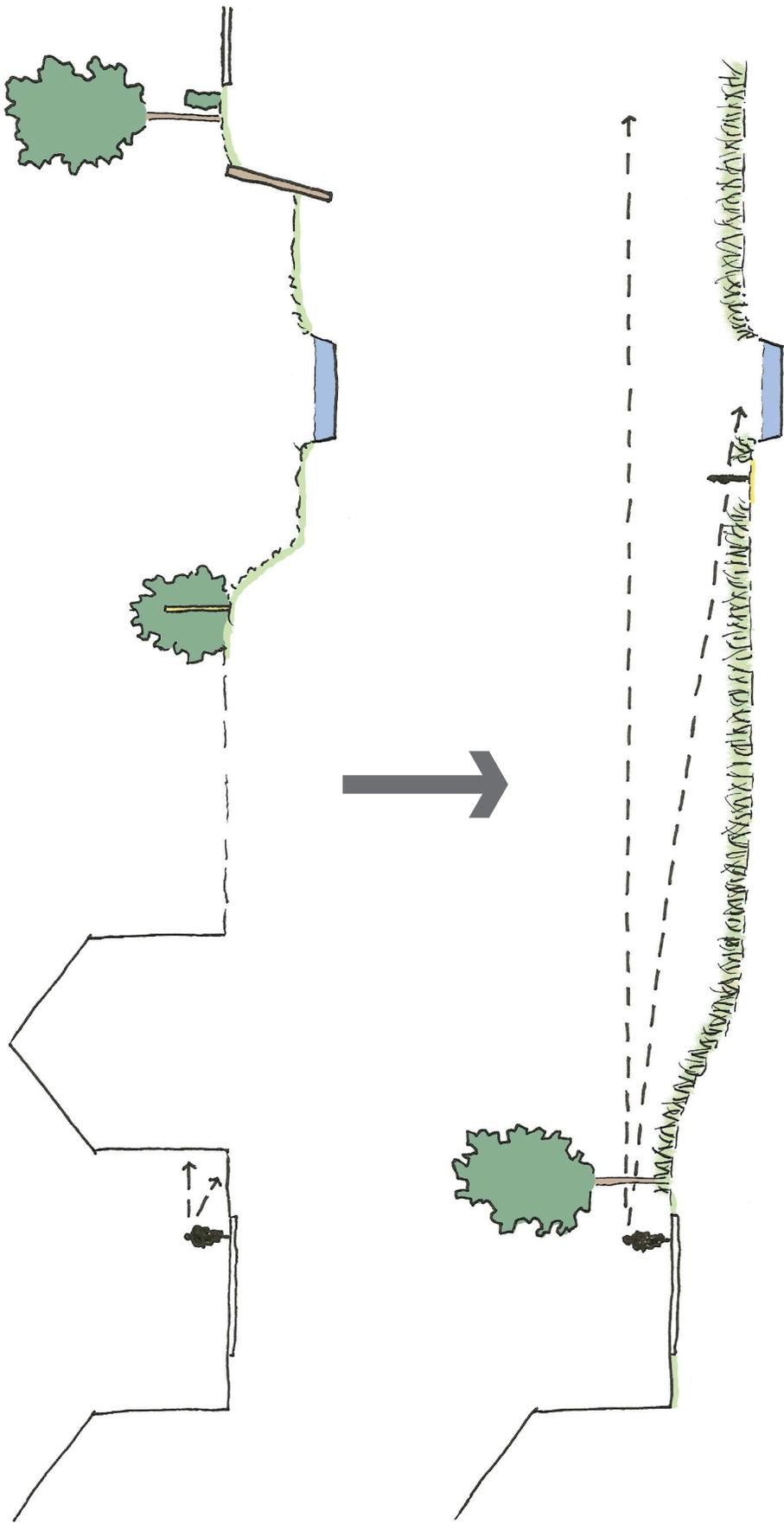


Figure 7.44 Houses directly adjacent to the Geleenbeek are demolished and the original stream valley landscape is restored

Construction design principles

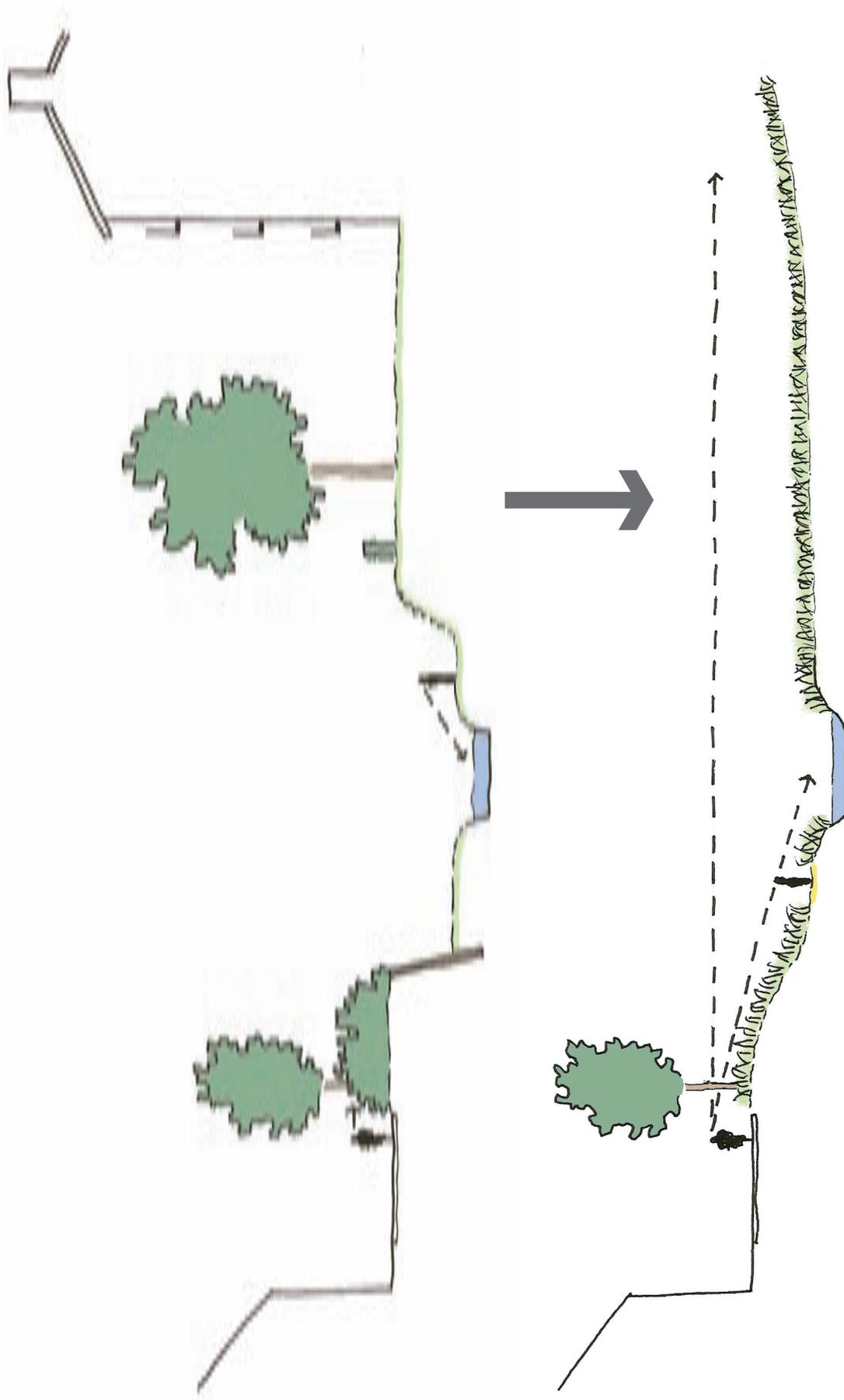


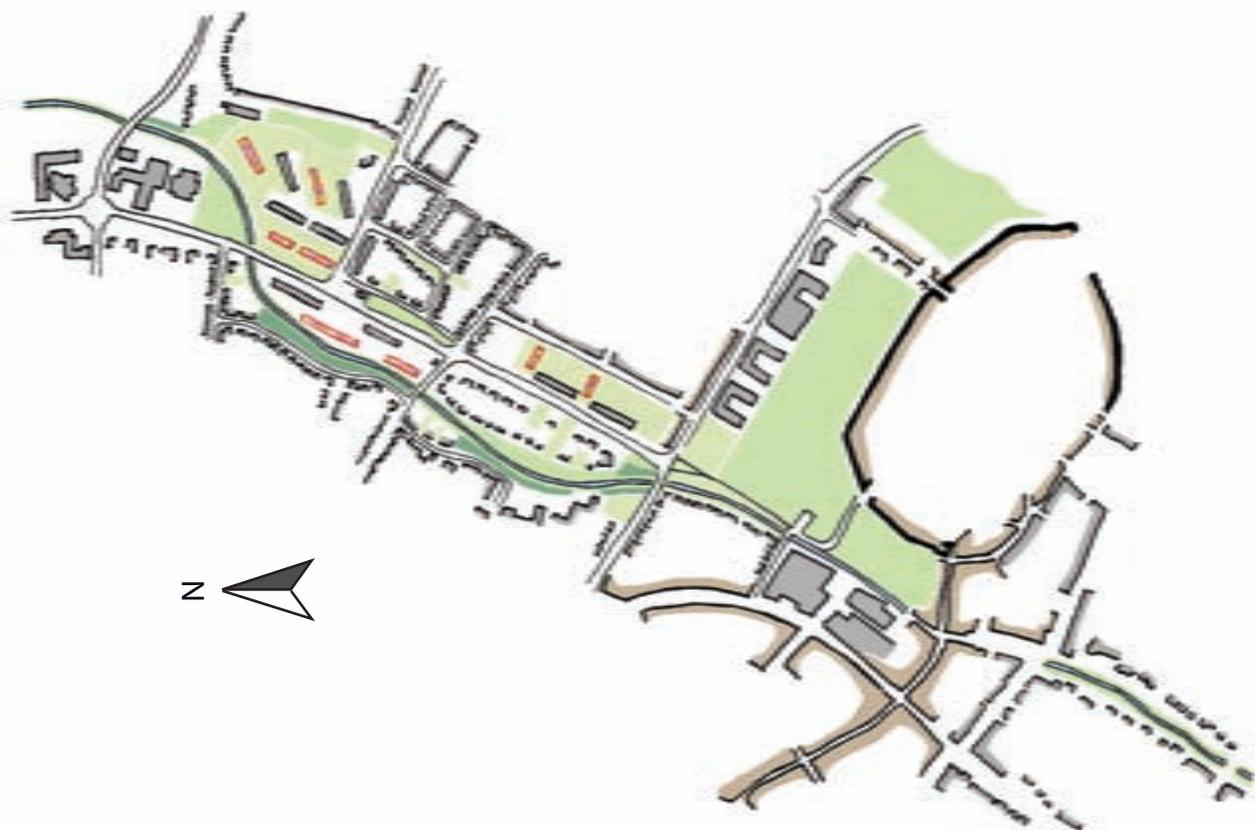
Figure 7.45 Apartment flats adjacent to the Geleenbeek are demolished and the original stream valley landscape is restored

Construction design principles

7.10.1.2 Prioritising plan phases scenario "restructuring"

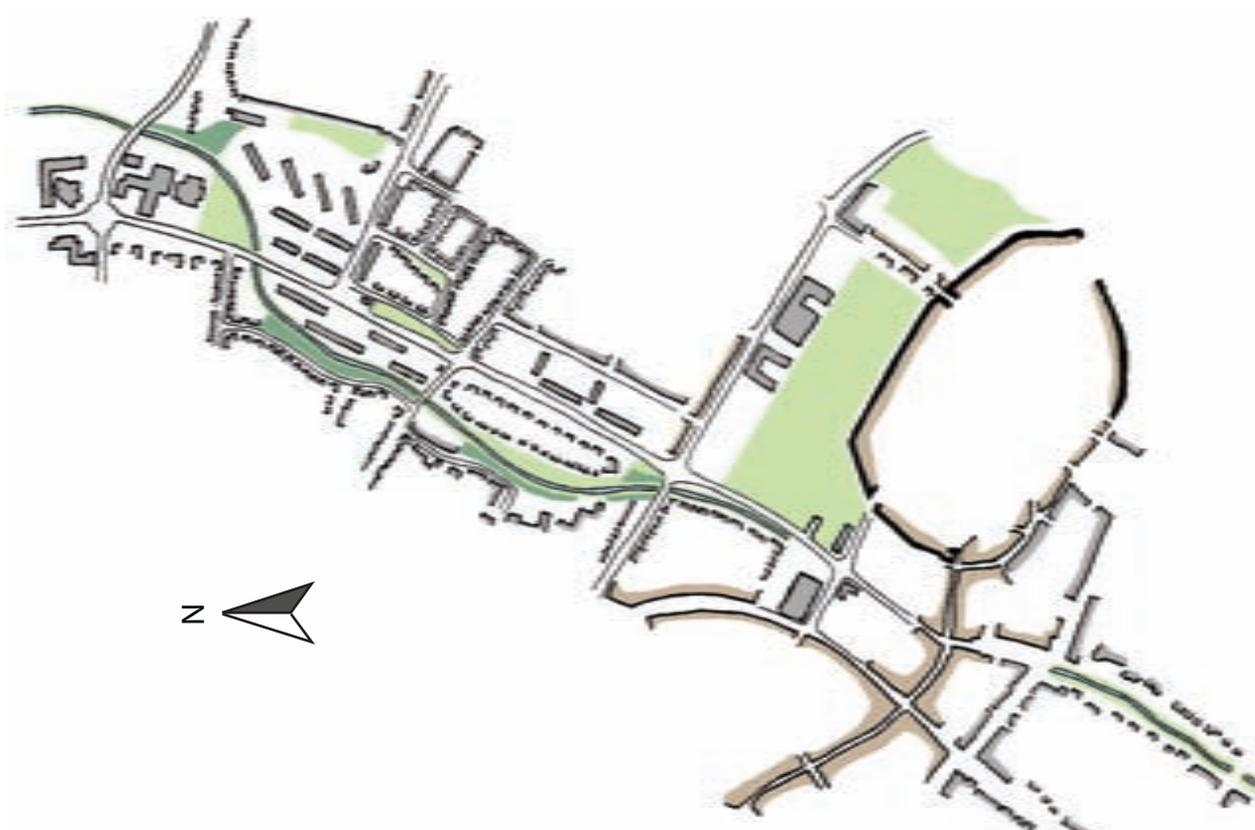
Figures 7.46 – 7.49 present how the plan of the scenario "restructuring" can be implemented during time. The process of giving priorities to certain developments is presented in the sequence of figures. Figure 7.46 starts with the general situation as it is at the moment in 2011. The situation in 2020, presented in figure 7.47, clearly indicates that the plans for Zitterd Revisited have priority. This is rather obvious, because these plans are already in an advanced stage (Gemeente Sittard-Geleen, 2011b). Additionally, the first steps to come to a robust green structure along the Geleenbeek are also implemented. Housing units that become vacant are actively monitored and negotiated by the municipality. Eventually, these will be demolished one by one. The rental housing units that become vacant are monitored by the housing corporation. Buildings that accommodate large numbers of vacancies will have priority for demolition. The housing corporation actively tries to re-accommodate renters who require to stay in the area. The apartment flats that will be demolished are replaced by so called "claims". The approach of using claims is further explained in section 7.10.2 because the claims form the core business of this second scenario. The main difference is that in the scenario of "restructuring" this land use is only temporary. By the year 2030, presented in figure 7.48, these developments are carried out further and new permanent land uses emerge. These are for example the opened up Geleenbeek through the shopping ribbon, the park and its playgrounds adjacent to the Ruys de Beerenbrouckstraat, a section of the circular allotment-garden plots, and the social care farm. By 2040, presented in figure 7.49, the reconstruction of the area is completed.

When during the implementation process of this plan, the supply of financial resources is suddenly stopped for whatever reason, the consequence will be that the spatial steering capabilities of the municipality and its cooperating actors decrease. Therefore, it is possible to switch to the implementation of scenario "laissez-faire" at any moment. In that sense, any intervention is a no-regret measure because none of the measures taken in the scenario "restructuring" interfere with the scenario of "laissez-faire".



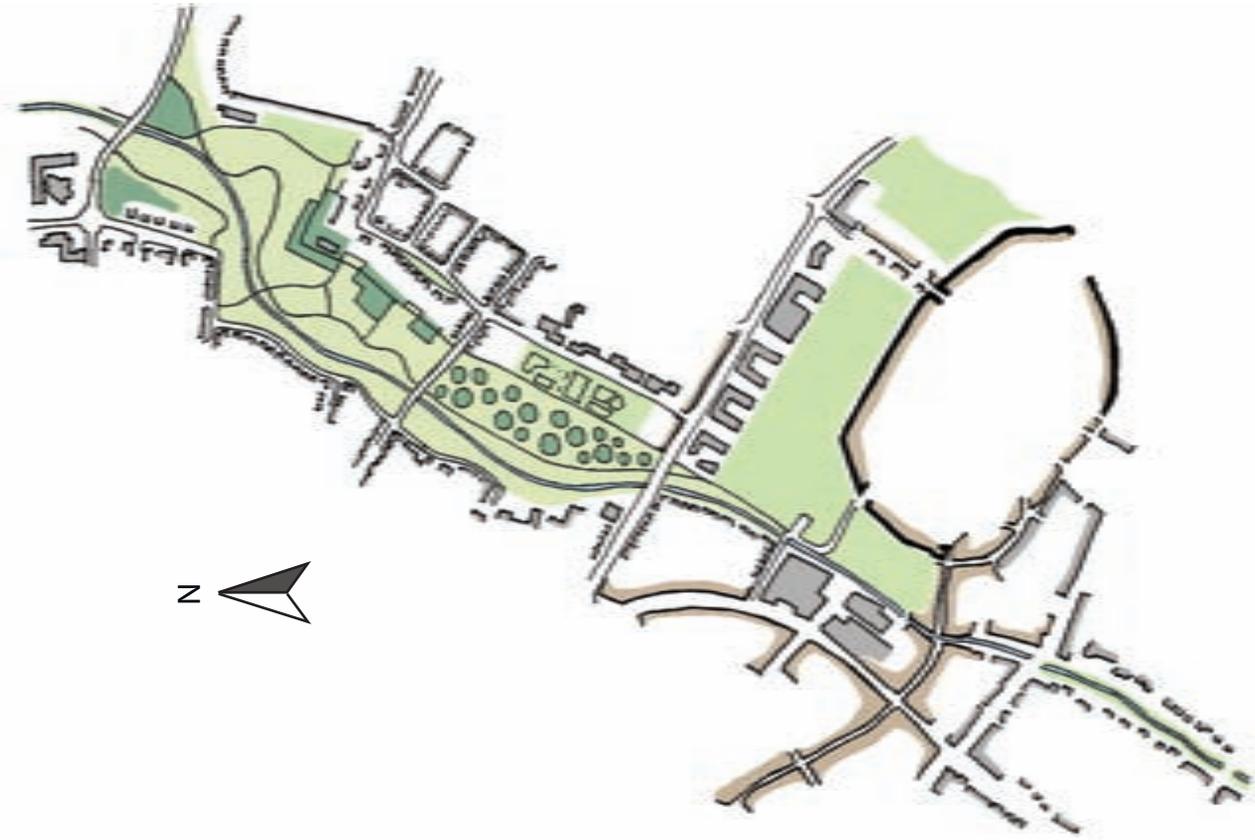
Plan development by the year 2020

Figure 7.47



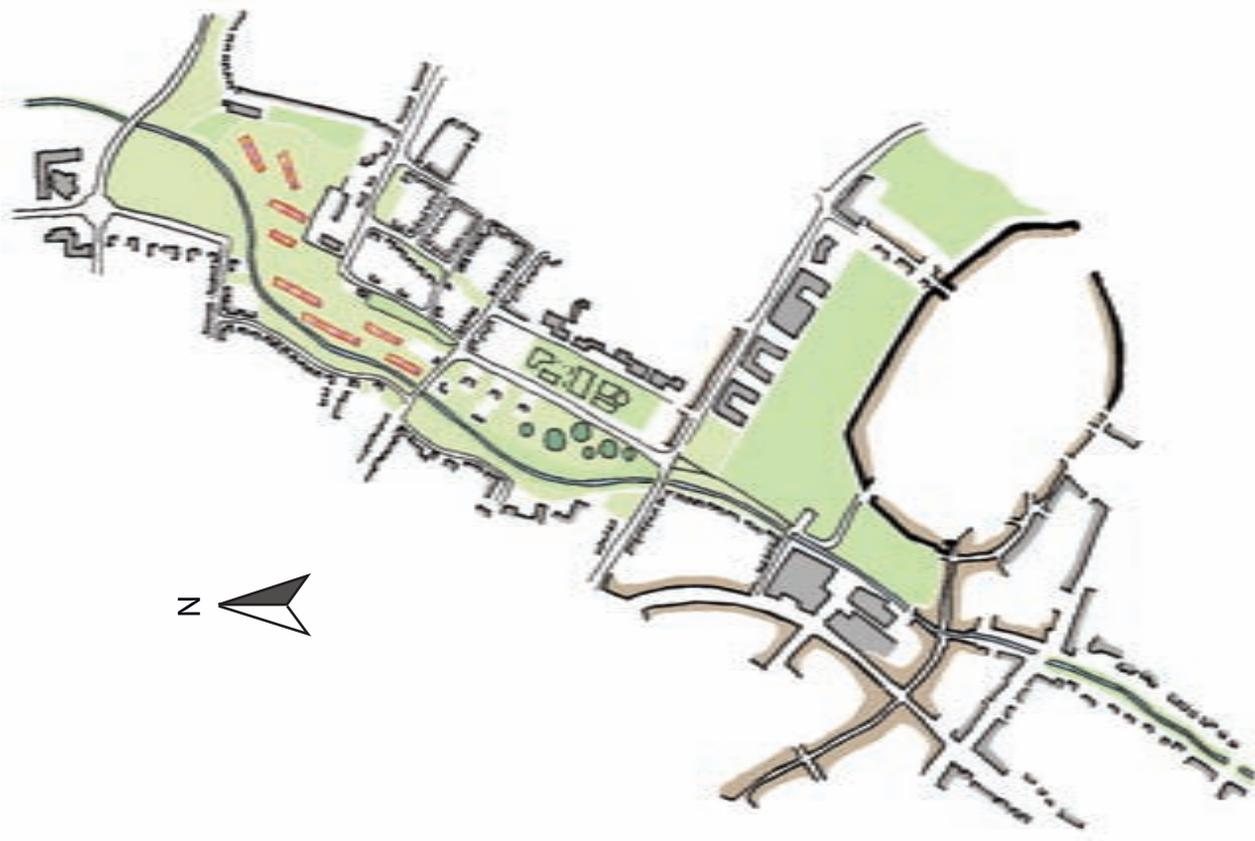
Plan development by the year 2011

Figure 7.46



Plan development by the year 2040

Figure 7.49



Plan development by the year 2030

Figure 7.48

7.10.1.3 The design

The design for scenario "restructuring" is presented in figure 7.50.

7.10.1.4 A general impression of what the area can look like in 30 years

This sub-section gives some impressions of what the area can look like in 2040. Figures 7.52 – 7.56 are concerned with the scenario of "restructuring". Figure 7.51 indicates where the locations of these impressions are in the design plan. It is beneficial to present these impressions, because an important task of the landscape architect contributing to the debate of a shrinking neighbourhood, is the ability to visualise what the area can look like depending on what scenario and starting points are chosen. This can contribute to the formation of a joint future image of the neighbourhood supported by all actors.



Figure 7.51 Locations impressions



Present building units

New building units

New culture and education centre

Leisure facilities

Circular allotment-gardens

Present allotment-gardens

High orchards

Social care farm

Poplar as stand



Figure 7.50

Plan drawing 2040 for scenario "restructuring" (scale 1 : 5000)

Maintained by sheep

Intensive maintenance
by machinery

Areas which are part of
the robust green structure,
though not part of this
design





Figure 7.52 Impression from culture and education centre towards historic city centre surrounded by ramparts. There is special attention for the line of sight towards the Petrus Church.



Figure 7.53 Impression of the protected city panorama including the former fields of fire which are clearly defined by the new culture and education centre



Figure 7.54 Impression of a visible Geleenbeek from the adjacent infrastructure and the circular allotment-gardens

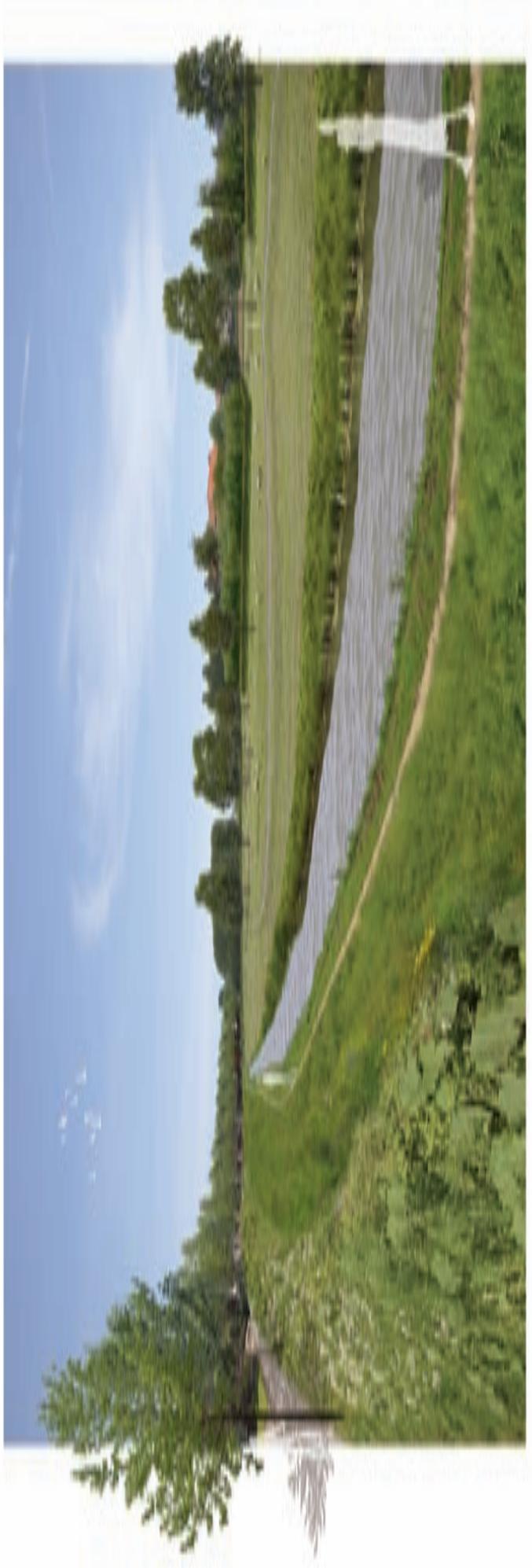


Figure 7.55 Impression of a visible Geleenbeek and a half-open stream valley landscape seen from the adjacent infrastructure. The social care farm has a prominent position within the new urban edge of old and new housing units, backyards and high orchards in combination with hawthorn hedgerows.



Figure 7.56 Impression of the social care farm and the surrounding high orchards in combination with hawthorn hedgerows.



7.10.2 The design for scenario "laissez-faire"

The scenario of "laissez-faire" depends much more on initiatives from market parties and inhabitants themselves, in comparison to the scenario earlier described in this section. Therefore the second scenario stands for a bottom-up approach and because less financial means are available, there are far less instruments for the municipality to steer certain developments. One of the consequences is that hardly any financial means are available to intervene in the privately owned housing sector, or to adapt the infrastructure. Additionally, the financial means to enhance the visibility of the Geleenbeek are limited. In this scenario the new developments for the plan Zitterd Revisited are very dependent on private investments. This means that some parts of the plan may not be executed, depending on external market parties who are willing to invest. Therefore the main focus of this plan is on the areas which accommodate the apartment flats. The result of this is that there are hardly any possibilities for a robust green structure. Therefore this green structure is characterised by the stepping-stone idea between inner-city green environments and the leisure area of the Schwienwei park positioned to the North of Sittard. This concept is presented in figure 7.57. The concept of the scenario "laissez-faire" does by no means result in degraded neighbourhoods. The most important issue in this scenario is the maintenance of the newly released public space. It takes creative solutions as the authors have experienced in Dessau, which take up as less financial means as possible. Therefore, the inhabitants take the lead in maintaining their own environment in the form of claims, positioned on the locations of former building ground. A red line indicates where once stood a housing unit. A claim can be applied for by any inhabitant in the neighbourhood with a good idea for using a plot. The only restriction is that these claims may not be used for building permanent structures. Based on the experiences in Dessau, every five years an evaluation of the claim is done by the municipality and if granted, the inhabitant may continue with the use of the claim. To enhance the communication process between demolition activities and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, red flag poles are positioned nearby demolished building plots and new to build claims. These red poles also have signs with information of the former and contemporary land use. Based on the vision presented in chapter 5 and inspired by the experiences from the reference study in Former East Germany, some design principles for this scenario have been developed.

7.10.2.1 Design principles

The design principles for this scenario are divided into two types: construction design principles and operational design principles. Construction design principles are more concerned with the physical intervention and the construction that are needed for the design. Operational design principles are more concerned with the implementation of the design and the maintenance. All principles for this scenario are presented in figures 7.58 – 7.60. The background information for these principles is already presented in the description of the design for scenario "laissez-faire" in section 7.10.2.

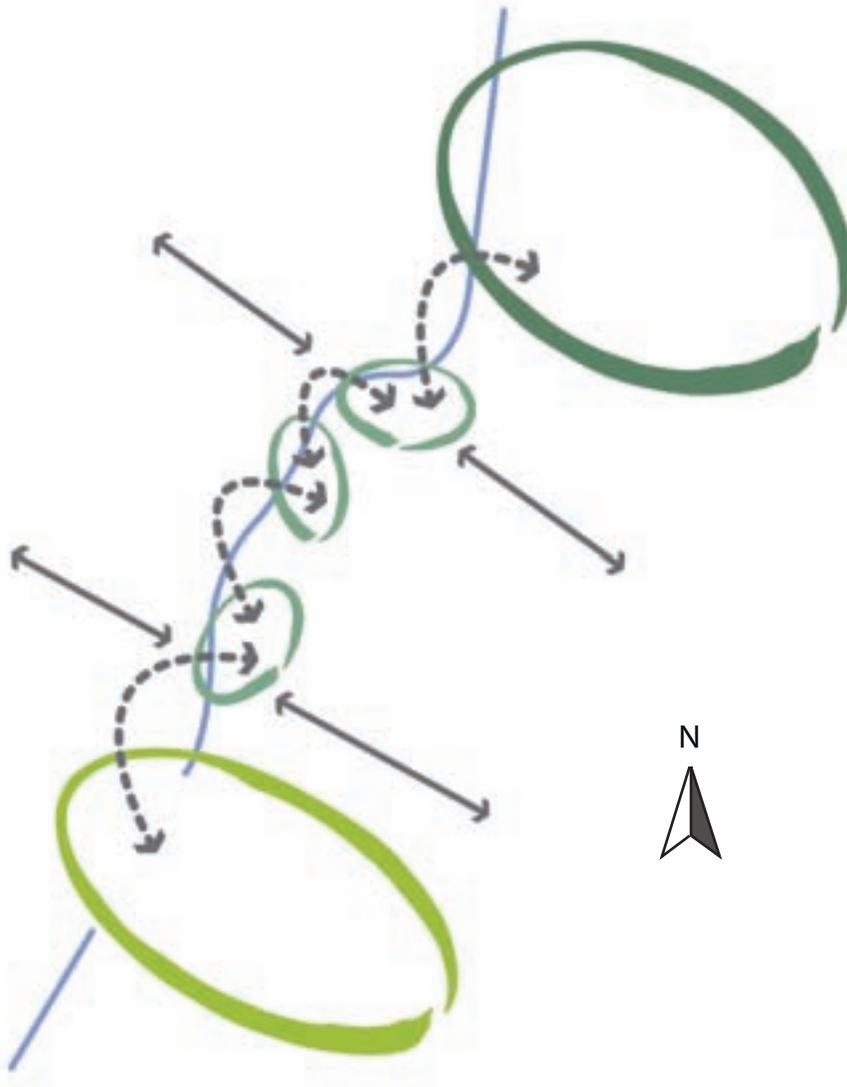
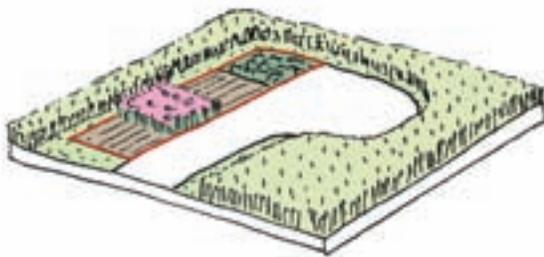
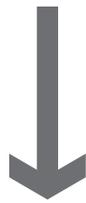
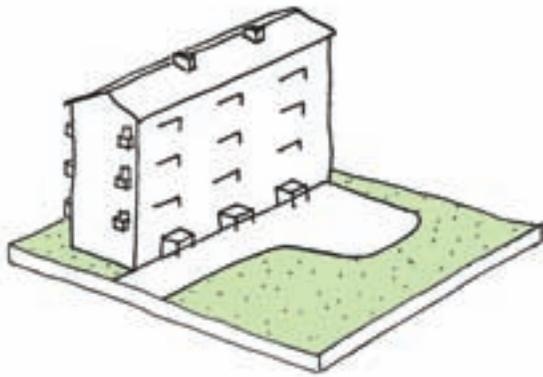


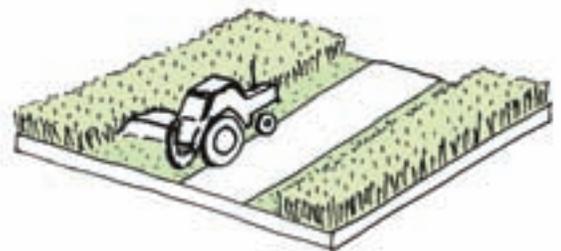
Figure 7.57

Spatial concept for scenario "laissez-faire": a stepping-stone idea green corridor connects inner-city green areas with the external green area of the Schwienswei. The adjacent neighbourhoods profit from the new green connection to improve liveability for the neighbourhood.



Construction design principle

Figure 7.58 The old apartment flats are gradually replaced by claims



Operational design principle

Figure 7.59 The low maintenance grasslands are mowed two times a year. The roads are kept free from rough grass vegetation for at least 2 metres to prevent the idea of a low maintained area.

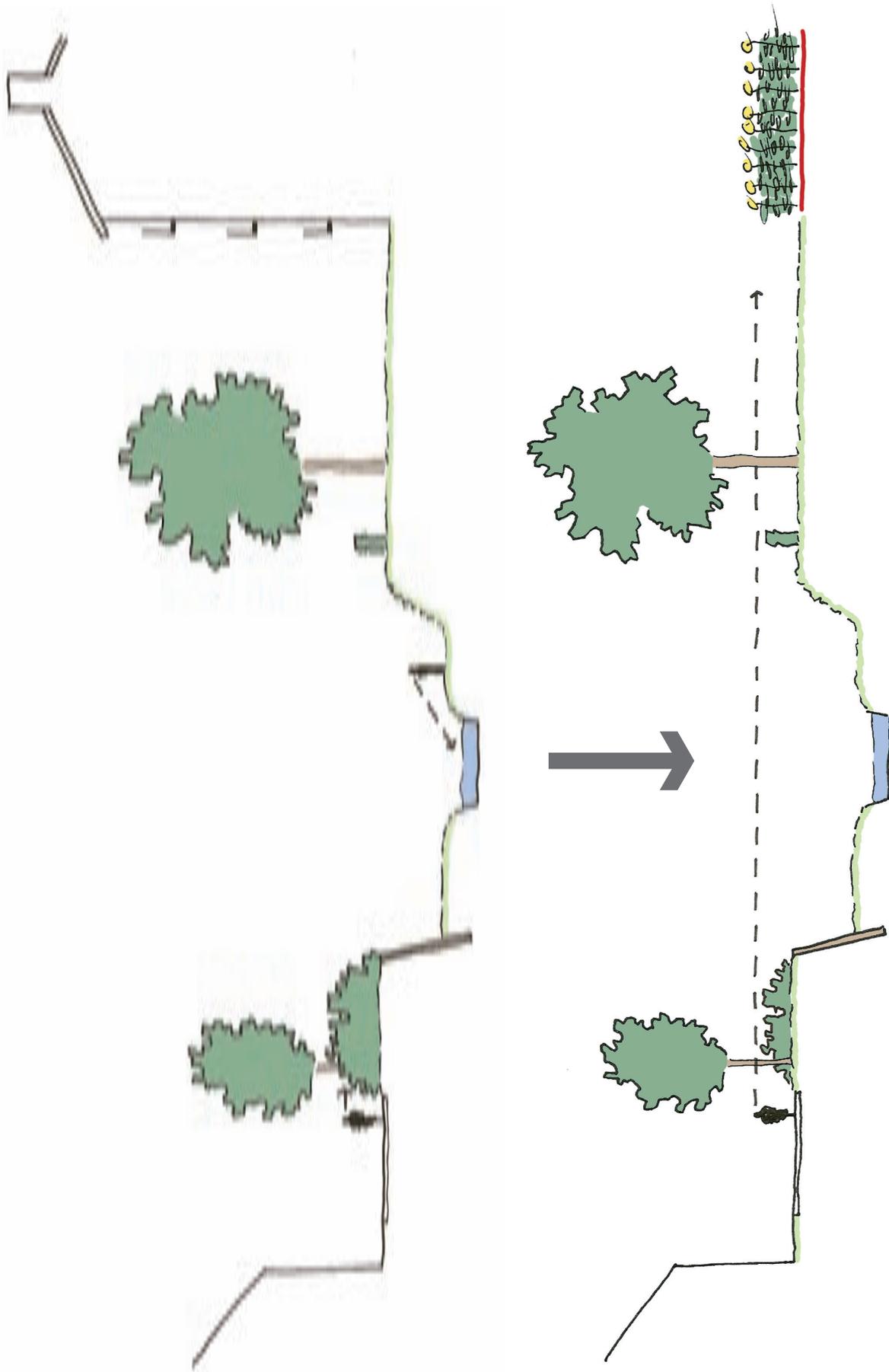


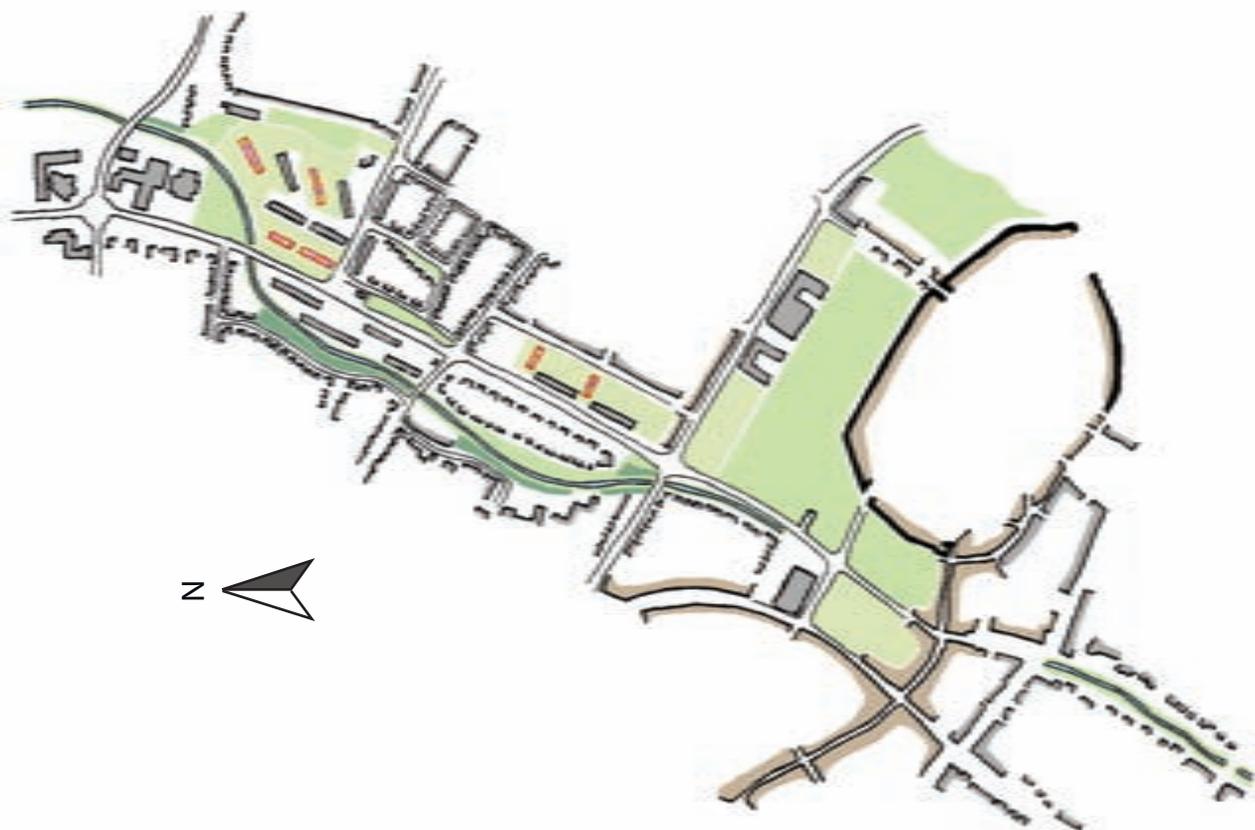
Figure 7.60 Visibility of the other side of the Geleenbeek is restored by removing the vegetation at this point. Apartment flats are replaced by claims.

Construction design principles

7.10.2.2 Prioritising plan phases scenario "laissez-faire"

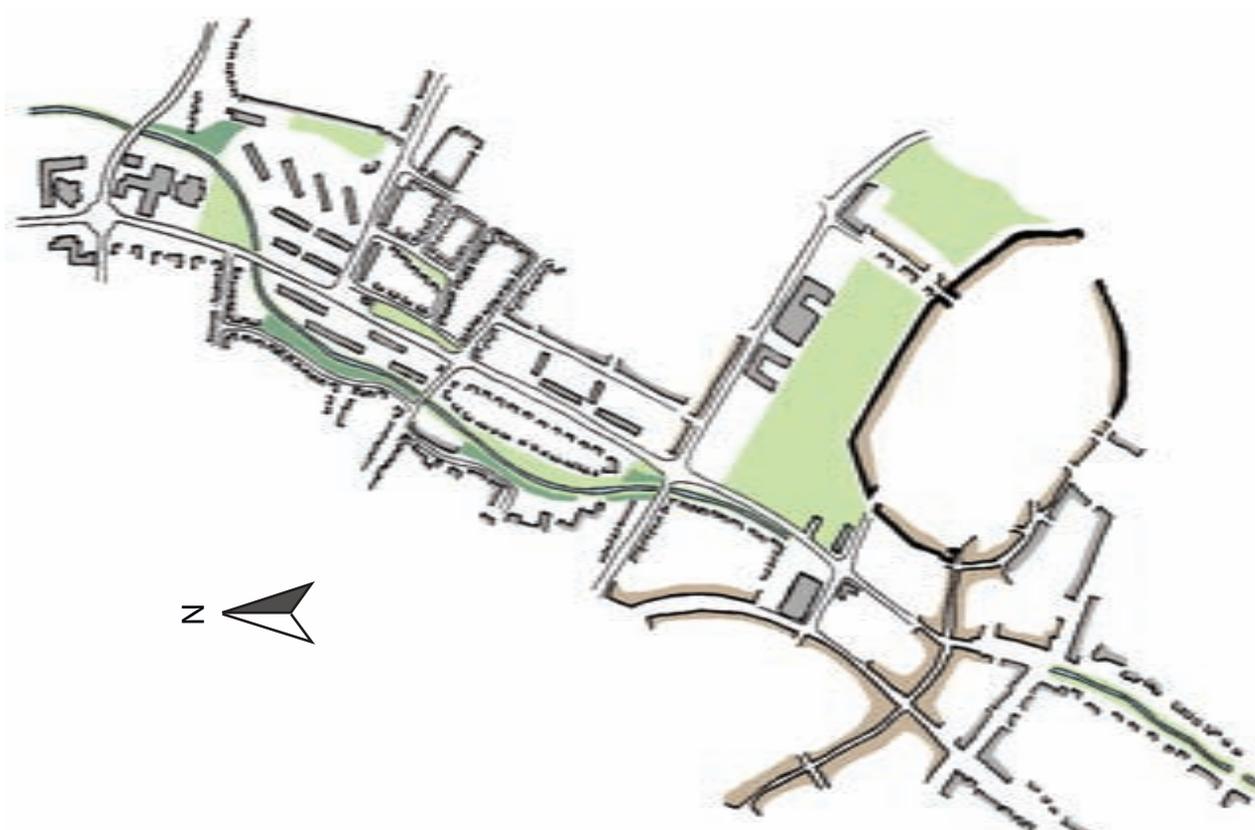
Figures 7.61 – 7.64 present how the plan for scenario "laissez-faire" can be implemented during time. The process of giving priorities to certain developments is presented in the sequence of figures. Figure 7.61 starts again with the general situation as it is at the moment in 2011. The situation in 2020, presented in figure 7.62, is clearly different from the representing situation with scenario "restructuring". First, the plans of Zitterd Revisited are only minimally implemented, because the municipality does not have the financial means to realise them in this scenario. Therefore, the released vacant space will be used as extensive maintained grassland. Secondly, a start has been made with the demolition activities. However, the process to realise these implementations takes significantly longer in comparison to the scenario of "restructuring". Additionally, the demolition interventions are mainly concentrated in the rental units of the housing corporation. There are simply no financial resources to intervene in the housing stock of privately owned properties because it would be far more expensive. This process continues in 2030, presented in figure 7.63. By 2040, presented in figure 7.64, the reconstruction of the area is completed. At that moment the privately owned apartment flats adjacent to the Doctor Nolenslaan are also demolished because the quality of the building construction leaves no other option than to demolish them by that time. This does not mean that the area is finished. After this final phase, there is still space for new developments to enhance the construction of a green corridor, if societal conditions allow new developments.

Perfectly in line with the situation with respect to the scenario "restructuring", it is possible to switch to the implementation of scenario "restructuring" at any moment as well. None of the measures taken in the scenario "laissez-faire" interfere with the scenario of "restructuring". The efforts done for scenario "laissez-faire" are all no-regret measures and will make it even easier to transform the area in a robust green corridor. However, this will only be the case when abundant financial means are available, and in line with that, the gain of steering instruments for the municipality.



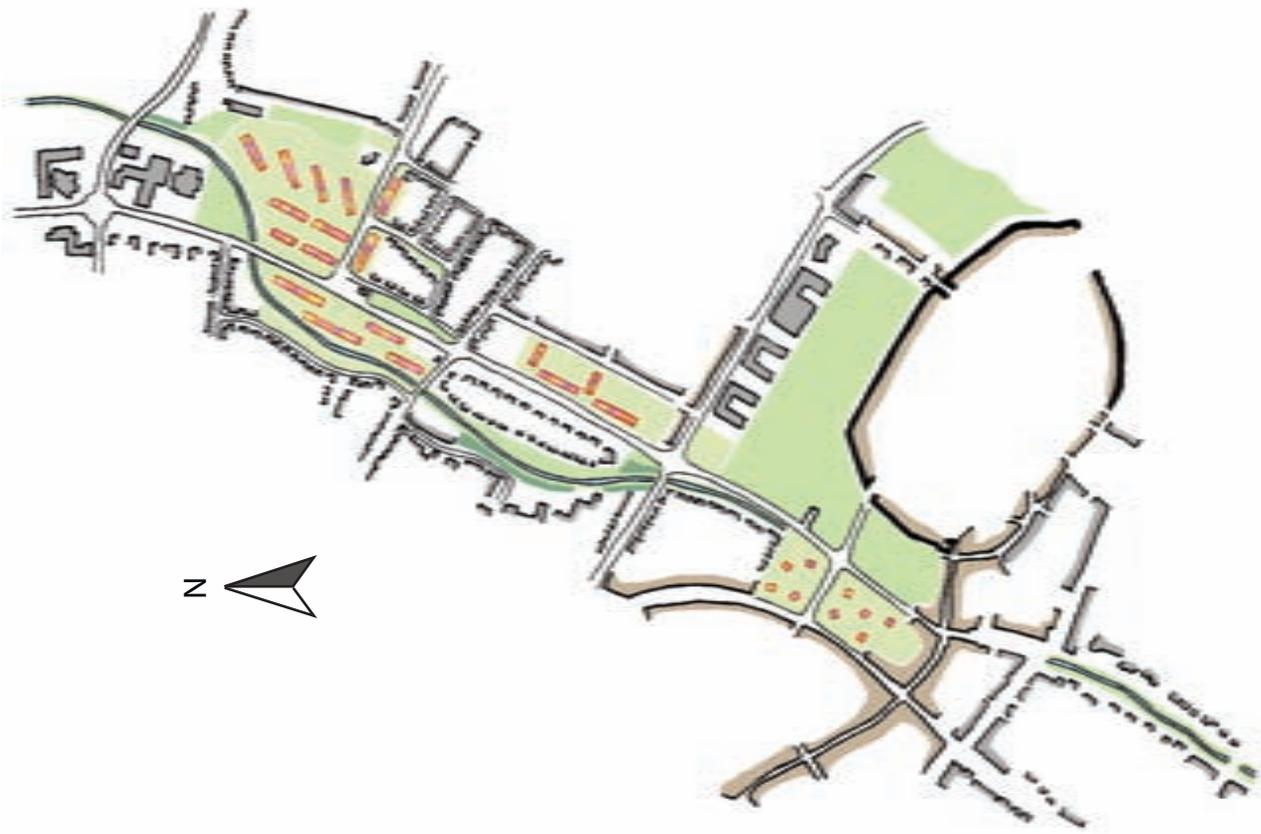
Plan development by the year 2020

Figure 7.62



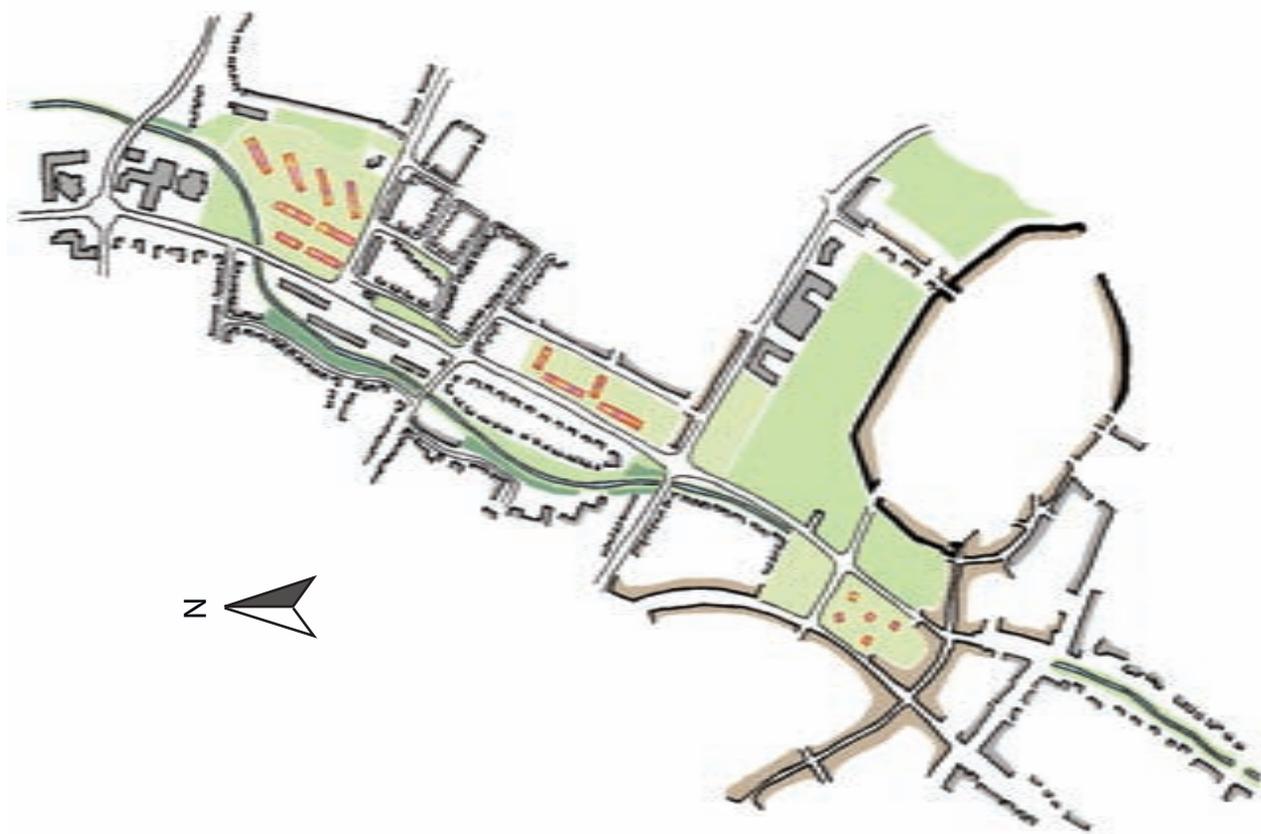
Plan development by the year 2011

Figure 7.61



Plan development by the year 2030

Figure 7.64



Plan development by the year 2040

Figure 7.63

7.10.2.3 The design

The design for scenario "laissez-faire" is presented in figure 7.65.

7.10.2.4 A general impression of what the area can look like in 30 years

This sub-section gives some impressions of what the area can look like in 2040. Figures 7.67 – 7.70 are concerned with the scenario of "laissez-faire". Figure 7.66 indicates where the locations of these impressions are in the design plan. As has been argued in section 7.10.1, it is beneficial to present these impressions, because an important task of the landscape architect contributing to the debate of a shrinking neighbourhood, is the ability to visualise what the area can look like depending on what scenario and starting points are chosen. This can contribute to the formation of a joint future image of the neighbourhood supported by all actors.



Figure 7.66 Locations impressions



Present building units

New building units

Present allotment-gardens

Hedgerows along Geleenbeek

Claims



Figure 7.65

Plan drawing 2040 for scenario "laissez-faire" (scale 1 : 5000)

Low maintenance

Intensive maintenance
by machinery

Areas which are part of
the robust green structure,
though not part of this
design





Figure 7.67

Impression from the Rijksweg to the historic city centre. On the foreground extensive wild grassland linked with claims. There is special attention for regular maintenance of the grass strip to prevent the idea of impoverishment of the public space.



Figure 7.68

Impression of the released space after demolition of the apartment flats. Inhabitants prevent their own neighbourhood from impoverishment by maintaining their own environment in the form of claims.



Figure 7.69 Impression of the transformation of landuse from apartment flats to claims. Additionally, this results in the removal of the vegetation barrier on the left bank of the Geleenbeek, which enhances the visibility of the Geleenbeek from the adjacent infrastructure.



Figure 7.70

Impression of the released space which results in a semi-open wild grassland with solitary mature trees. Existing infrastructure is preserved to provide access to the claims and to provide the opportunity for inhabitants to use this public space as leisure area.



7.10.3 Finishing remarks

The overall purpose of implementing both scenarios is to enhance the liveability in the neighbourhoods of Overhoven and Baandert, as has been clarified in section 7.8. Both the robust green corridor as well as the corridor with the stepping stone idea, enhance the sharp distinction between the neighbourhoods of Overhoven and Baandert. At the same time both scenarios unite the neighbourhoods with a new green public space where inhabitants of both neighbourhoods can do leisure activities and find a resilient green connection between the inner-city green areas and the external leisure areas. This means a significant expansion of sustainable leisure areas of the city and an enhancement of the legibility of the city structure. At the same time, there are many potentials to connect this idea of a green corridor along the Geleenbeek with the project Corio Glana. The intention of this project is that by renovating and greening the Geleenbeek, the stream valley can be promoted as one attractive leisure area. The foundation Landschapspark De Graven, the initiator of the project, and the regional water board Roer en Overmaas, both emphasise that economic models prove that every Euro invested in this project eventually doubles the corresponding profits for leisure and tourism (Dagblad De Limburger / Limburgs Dagblad, 2010). In that sense, a green corridor through the city of Sittard, would significantly contribute to the realisation of this project. The vision of the housing corporation ZO Wonen addresses the important potential for a deeper penetration of the surrounding rural landscape along the Geleenbeek to the North of the historic city centre of Sittard (Lambert et al, 2009, p. 28). However, to really boost the dialogue for spatial development of the neighbourhoods between a wide range of actors, it is important to come up with concrete spatial plans to serve as a basis for discussion on where to head for spatially with a certain neighbourhood. In that sense, both designs presented in this chapter can contribute to the development of spatial policy for Sittard to deal with the social and spatial consequences of shrinkage. Then again, the overall purpose of these designs is to preserve a liveable neighbourhood. The next chapter elaborates further on this thought.



“*The shopping street of Kerkrade-West should focus on appropriate small scale solutions, the Burgundian approach, not this megalomaniac project which destroys the characteristic street pattern.*”

Architect Paumen (2011)

.....PART THREE.....





REFLECTION

“ *No single area in the Netherlands may fall down due to the consequences of shrinkage.* ”

Dutch former minister of housing, neighbourhoods and integration
Van der Laan (2010)



8.1 Introduction

This chapter will first reflect on the outcomes this thesis has provided considering the (possible) role of landscape architects and spatial planners in the South Limburg shrinkage debate. Next, with this last chapter the authors also want to reflect on the process of writing this thesis. Attention is paid to the cooperation between students of the specialisations of landscape architecture and planning in a reflexive research process. This reflexive research process meant reflecting on the perspectives, goals and actions of landscape architects and planners involved in the South Limburg shrinkage debate. The reflection will be concluded by answering the main research question derived from both the descriptive and the prescriptive part of this thesis. Based on the final conclusions some recommendations for planning and design practice, academic planning and design education, and further research are given.

8.2 Deviating starting points in a situation of shrinkage

According to area developer De Niet, spatial development is an enormous slow system. Generally, it takes about ten to fifteen years to develop a new residential area, and this is even in a time and place where the contemporary system works well (Interview with Johan de Niet on 9 February 2011). Hence it takes time to anticipate on new market situations and demographic prognosis. Shrinkage may cause such a new market situation. Based on the findings in chapter 3 and the designs made in chapter 6 and 7, it can be stated that the problems and uncertainties coming with shrinkage, make the current spatial planning horizon too long. The original plan faces a completely changed world after the 10 to 15 years of planning process and is therefore often outdated before implemented. Therefore, it turns out that spatial planning often lags behind the contemporary starting points of the planning context, especially considering the uncertainties that come with shrinkage. In a situation with shrinkage, the consequences of this phenomenon are even stronger, in comparison to a situation with demographic growth, because both profits as well as financial budgets are very limited. Traditional mechanisms to generate financial means do not apply in a situation with shrinkage. This means that there is less financial space to correct failed spatial interventions. At some segments of spatial planning, the adaptations to a new situation set in sooner than expected, because the market provides its own adaptations. This can be elaborated by, for example, a real estate developer who abandons the idea for certain building plans of new houses as a consequence of new insights because the risk of not being able to sell the properties grows. In this regard, the market reacts quicker and more effective in comparison to new governmental policy.

The change that is occurring and continues to enlarge is that more space will become vacant within the city. Eventually, the market mechanism will do its part and the land prices will decrease in certain areas. This results in the fact that land will become less valuable and therefore the economic power of the city will focus less on real estate development. The property which stands on the land is merely what causes the financial problems, based on a personal conversation with ir. Pascal Wauben. Both Heerlen as well as Sittard have a considerably large part of the housing stock which is in bad condition, especially regarding the cheaper rental housing stock. Many of these houses are over 50 years old and their economic value quickly reduces. Often it is possible to use them for living, however the technical condition of these post-war houses is often very weak. Additionally, these houses often do not meet both the present day demand standards of residential consumers and environmental standards. The costs to demolish them are not that high in comparison to what the property is often worth on paper. Therefore, these houses are not that important. However, the land the houses are built on, remains important. Traditionally, the pressure on the purpose and location of the land is what determined the value of the house. Nowadays, this pressure decreases in South Limburg because of shrinkage.

The reduction of pressure on space in South Limburg is partly a consequence of all the

people who move away. These people however, need to go somewhere. This is partly to foreign countries, as was already stated in chapter 7. Others move to the Randstad where the pressure on non-urban areas grows steadily. An example is the new project Legmeerpolder in Amstelveen, where valuable open meadow land will be transformed into housing areas and other urban functions. The shrinking region of South Limburg can compensate partly for the losses of non-urban land around the cities. This can be done by revealing some of the original landscape which has been lost since the rapid urban expansions of the settlements in South Limburg, since the demographic pressure on the region diminishes. A comparable case is the situation of Emscherpark in Germany, where the former industrial activity was transferred to China and the remaining site was transformed into a landscape park to compensate for the lost landscape in China. In that sense there is a mediation of landscape that is destroyed for the need of new dwelling areas, and landscape which is restored because the pressure on the living environment reduces as a consequence of shrinkage. Therefore, this thesis can contribute to a pressing global landscape issue which is the de-urbanisation of parts of the metropolitan delta landscapes.

8.3 A changing role of the design in a situation of shrinkage

During this research and design project, it soon became clear that there are some important differences with respect to the planning and design process in comparing a situation of shrinkage with a situation of growth. This section deals with these differences and how a (scientific) design can make a contribution to the debate about shrinkage.

8.3.1 *Main differences between design for growth and design for shrinkage*

This section reflects on the main differences of designing in a scenario of shrinkage in relation to a scenario of growth. According to urban planner Van Mensvoort, one part which really needs emphasis in a situation of shrinkage is the designer's professional eye for seeing the strengths of his or her project area. Using the strengths perceived to be valuable from a designer's point of view, means that less money has to be invested in generating new strengths (Interview with Selma van Mensvoort on 4 March 2011 in Maastricht).

The money issue is the most difficult difference in comparison to designing in a situation based on a growth scenario. Creative solutions are necessary to create an attractive environment with less money. An example can be experienced on former building plots of demolished plattenbau in Leinefelde (Germany), where the realisation of a Japanese garden is funded by Japan. This funding was possible since Japan wants to expand the cultural heritage of the country. This however, is not a fruitful way of dealing with liveability in a neighbourhood, because the kind of solution presented here for maintaining the public space can be considered as rather occasionally. Other creative solutions can also be found in Germany, like the patenschaften and claims in Dessau. In Heerlen there are experiments with pocket parks. During the design assignment for both case studies Heerlen and Sittard, the scenario of "laissez-faire" made use of the inspirations from Dessau. Both the principle of claims as well as a low maintained grass land are implemented in areas where buildings have been demolished. The result is a clear potential for a liveable environment, without having to use large amounts of financial means.

These creative solutions bring along a third difference in comparison to designing in a situation of growth: the increased need for involvement of local residents. Designers are dependent on the willingness of inhabitants to participate in the design process, as well as in the execution and maintenance of the implementation of the design. When this participation succeeds, it not only has its positive effects on the look of the environment, but also on the social cohesion of the neighbourhood.

These differences with designing in a situation of growth, as well as the unfamiliarity of the actors with shrinkage, have implications for the role of the design. In principle, the design objective in a shrinkage scenario does not differ from the design objective in a growth scenario. The main starting point remains the same; a resilient village, city and region. However, in a scenario of shrinkage there is a rather higher social and societal purpose, because the liveability of neighbourhoods is at stake. Deterioration of the neighbourhood will only be worsened if the neighbourhoods that suffer from the effects of shrinkage come in a vicious circle. At the same time the financial means to actually do something are reduced by decreasing tax incomes of the municipality as a consequence of the effects of shrinkage and contemporary budget cuts for the government which strike European wide. Therefore concrete designs, worked out for different scenarios, can make a significant contribution to speed up the planning process by acting as a catalyst for discussion between different actors involved with a certain case.

8.3.2 The contribution of scientific design to the shrinkage debate

The outcome of the descriptive research showed that the shrinkage debate is very complex. The outcome of this research formed the scientific basis of the designs for Sittard and Heerlen. Compared to 'regular design', which is more based on the analysis of a certain area in its context than on an extensive research, the 'scientific design' has an added value to the shrinkage debate, since the scientific design takes into account the perspectives of many persons and organisations who participate in this debate. In that sense, this thesis contributes to the scientific research with respect to shrinkage. Based on the experiences during the international conference in Amsterdam, the contemporary focus of research is still limited to the causes and effects of the phenomenon. This thesis tries to deal with a concrete request from practice situation, of how to deal with the effects of shrinkage spatially.

A project where many different disciplines, organisations and even departments within organisations are involved, often leads to bad information-exchange. A timid approach for working out an idea to deal with the effects of shrinkage in a neighbourhood is often the result. An example of a situation where this problem occurred was described by the interviewees of the municipality of Kerkrade. To deal with this problem, the municipality arranged a work-group with a wide range of different professions, disciplines and organisations to come and talk to each other to understand each other's interests for the business case of Heilust. Eventually, the conclusion of this approach was that it worked, because it resulted in a balanced plan for the neighbourhood of Heilust, supported by all involved actors. Nevertheless, this approach is very time-consuming since all actors have to head for the same direction. The outcome is often a marginal restructuring of a part of a neighbourhood. There is no real thought about the larger structure of the city or parts of a city. Nevertheless, a future of shrinking neighbourhoods has, apart from threats, also many chances and possibilities. It is an excellent moment to think about the functioning of a city or a part of a city as a whole. The question is where to head with the city in the coming 20 to 30 years, bearing in mind that there will be less inhabitants. In general, both designs presented in chapter 6 and 7, for two scenarios presented in chapter 5, showed the difference between a design proposal for a situation with many steering instruments available for the municipality and a situation where there are not much steering instruments available. This is mainly caused by the difference in financial means available. In that sense, scientific designing can answer to the specific needs of practice situations. The academic can operate independently, without having a concrete assignment depending on specific interests of an actor. This leads to a situation where ideas can be worked out, that otherwise would not have been considered to be possible solutions. As a result, apart from functioning as a catalyst for speeding up the planning process, the design can also be a catalyst for both innovative and inspiring design solutions.

8.3.3 The added value of two different case studies for design

Both case studies of Heerlen as well as Sittard practise very different starting points. Section 5.5 made clear that there are serious differences in the degree of acceptance of shrinkage. This also results in differences for the amount of priority there is to deal with the effects of shrinkage. Whereas Heerlen possessed detailed information on a neighbourhood scale for what the consequences of shrinkage will be for that specific neighbourhood, the knowledge in Sittard is abstract and limited to rather vague assumptions with respect to the consequences of shrinkage for the city and the individual neighbourhoods. This resulted in two different procedures within the starting points of the same approach presented in chapter 5. For the case of Sittard, first there was need for a general vision for the city as a whole in how to deal with the effects of shrinkage spatially. Within this view, the required design attention for the scale of the neighbourhood came into existence. This meant zooming in from several scale levels of attention. For Heerlen there was no need to pay attention to the broader scale of the city as a whole, because the city has clear spatial policy for this which includes the consequences of shrinkage in its spatial policy. Therefore, the focus of attention with the case of Heerlen was directly on a neighbourhood scale, which resulted in a procedure that paid more attention to how different areas within the neighbourhood are positioned to one another. Both proposed procedures prove that there can be a different routine in two types of situations, without losing control of the basic assumptions derived from the vision in chapter 5. Then again, the role of both designs in the development of spatial policy for shrinking neighbourhoods remains the same, as has been clarified earlier in this section.

8.4 Interdisciplinary research process

At Wageningen University the disciplines of landscape architecture, spatial planning and cultural geography have been cooperating for many years to offer a joint education programme (Landscape architecture and Planning) with three different specialisations. Although due to this joint education programme the students of the different specialisations share many courses in their educational curriculum, an intertwined thesis research does not occur that often. Reasons for not cooperating are mostly practical. By involving students of two or more disciplines the students have to deal with as many different sets of criteria, based on the specific demands of the disciplines involved, besides the general academic criteria. This is a rather general issue which may occur when setting up an interdisciplinary research process. For the thesis cooperation between students landscape architecture and spatial planning there is, however, a more specific reason to pinpoint. Until recently the common idea among students was the assumption that the cooperation between students of landscape architecture and spatial planning would be linear. This meant that the spatial planner would start with a 'large scale' vision and strategic policy approach, resulting in a more operational (often translated as: on a lower scale level) plan. Next, the landscape architect would then pick up this operational plan as a guideline for the designing process. The result would eventually be a delay in the cooperation process: at specific moments in time both disciplines had to wait for each other's results; they were depended upon one another's results to be able to continue with their own tasks. This thinking in a linear cooperation process has been (and still is) quite strong among students.

With both the research results and the cooperation process of this thesis the authors want to argue that this 'linear thinking' is based on the wrong assumptions. Due to the intensive collaboration during the descriptive research, both disciplines sometimes carried out the same tasks. The process of cooperation can best be described as iterative. This meant repeatedly giving each other feedback and adding information to each other's contributions during the conduction of the research and during the design process. This created more awareness about each other's role and the input of both disciplines. For the prescriptive part it was coordinated who would do what in which order, so that a workable assignment of duties occurred. During the design process, new insights regarding the

topic came into existence. This could then easily be looped-back to this reflection and final conclusions for both disciplines. Therefore, it is possible that a thesis can be completed rather successful, with an added value because both disciplines work together in a non-linear process. However, this approach comes with many moments of consultation and alignment. Also the supervisors of the project have to be fully aware of how this cooperation works, and what the complementary roles here are. It is therefore advisable that tutoring for the general structure of the thesis is arranged in a shared session. At these moments the best inspirations for working together arose.

8.5 Reflexive research approach

In chapter 2 is explained that with a reflexive research approach the authors are better able to deconstruct the deeply rooted paradigms or common sense habits which cannot be questioned in the first order cultural network of landscape architecture and spatial planning. Therefore (social) constructivism forms the philosophical school of thought for this thesis and shrinkage is seen as a social construction, containing multiple meanings made up by people with different interests. The authors are convinced that with an in-depth case study, it would be easier to get insight into the different definitions and perspectives of involved people and organisations within the South Limburg shrinkage debate. When for example survey research would have been chosen as research method, the results would have been better quantifiable and generalisable. However, it would be hardly possible to get a grip on the reason behind the multiple definitions and perspectives in the South Limburg shrinkage debate, due to these quantifications and generalisations. And based on a survey research the outcomes of the designs made in this thesis would probably be derived from the most desired perspectives mentioned by the highest percentage of the interviewees. Based on the current case study research however, the designs are inspired by the reasons behind the different perspectives on shrinkage. The authors of this thesis weighted these perspectives based on their own experiences, and constructed their own vision which served as a basis for interventions in the specific design assignments. Therefore the design interventions are not intended as final blueprints, but should be seen as means to generate discussion among the involved people and organisations within the South Limburg shrinkage debate.

Because the authors of this thesis experienced shrinkage as a very complex phenomenon with issues that play a role on several scale levels, it was not clear at first what landscape architects and spatial planners academically could contribute to the debate around shrinkage in South Limburg. Therefore the start was broad. During the interview sessions it became clear that shrinkage itself was not the main research task, because abundantly research devotes attention to this. It turned out the perspectives on shrinkage were more interesting to conduct research on, because many of the professionals and academics who deal with the phenomenon of shrinkage are not entirely aware of the fact that the issue is subject to many interpretations as well as ways of dealing with the effects of shrinkage. Some of them are even contrary to each other, but still decisions have to be made how to deal with the effects of shrinkage. Based on the findings during this research, it became clear that coordination and adaptation on shrinkage demand a regional scale approach and that the actual design tasks fit best with a city or neighbourhood scale approach. When this qualitative research approach is implemented on a different case, it would be sensible to interview a wide variety of involved actors that all have interests in that particular case. This will lead to a better insight in the different involved perspectives. On the other hand, this research would never had these outcomes if the authors had limited their scope to one single case study on a city or neighbourhood scale. Therefore, the broad inspiration of many different perspectives can contribute significantly to the debate around shrinkage that is going on in that particular case. Decision makers would not directly fall back on prevailing perspectives that are simply the traditional way to handle the phenomenon.

Being reflexive also means that the role of planners and designers is changing. The authors started with observations of the planning and design context instead of participating actively from the start of the planning and design process by stating a problem definition based on own analysis. This way, the authors do not offer 'solutions' for 'problems' they defined themselves. Since the problem definition is written down in a vision based on the research results, the design 'solutions' offered should be seen as a contribution to the on-going shrinkage debate to show the outcomes of alternative perspectives. This way the 'solutions' are made much more context depended. The relevance of this approach for policy making is thus, that much more insight is given about the contextual factors. The vision, and eventually also the plan and the design, are based on these contextual factors. And since in the descriptive research part multiple perspectives were being elaborated on, in the prescriptive research it can be shown much better which design interventions are based on which (political) perspectives regarding shrinkage.

Within this thesis, the authors tried to fulfil two different roles: the role of an academic and the role of a professional. The role of the academic was considered to be necessary since the study program of landscape architecture and planning is an academic program. By doing the second-order observations, the authors were able to critically review how professionals within their field of study deal with shrinkage. For the purpose of their role as professional, also first-order interviews were conducted with other people (not conducting to the second-order observations) who take part in the shrinkage debate. With the knowledge from the second-order observations, as well as knowledge from first-order observations, the authors were able to start their second role as professional with a solid basis. As professionals, they proposed four landscape designs as a catalyst for discussion among different actors.

Having these two roles, the authors were able to both generate, as well as to apply knowledge. This has been done to identify the problems (diagnosis) as well as to solve them (therapy). Additionally, it was important to explore the phenomenon of shrinkage to intervene and having a distance from practice as well as doing practical actions themselves.

8.6 Final conclusions

This section draws a conclusion from the research in the descriptive part and the prescriptive part of this thesis by answering the main research question. In the introduction of this thesis the following main research question was stated:

What is the contribution of landscape architecture and planning concerning the dealing with spatial effects of shrinkage on residential areas in South Limburg?

During the development of a spatial plan to deal with the effects of shrinkage in a neighbourhood, the discussion between different actors often leads to no consensus in a very time consuming process. The reason for this is that every actor keeps with his or her own interests. Everyone involved waits for the other to act and to take the first step to invest time, effort and money in response to the effects of shrinkage. In that sense every involved actor waits, just to profit from someone else's investments who acts first, afraid to invest money for the benefit of the other.

To overcome this impasse, a joint approach has to be developed with concrete starting points that receive support of all actors. Landscape architects and spatial planners can play a role in this, by providing this working group of actors with new innovative and inspiring alternatives based on a diverse range of scenarios. These designs are developed without any obligation and therefore these can serve as a clarification of the discussion with respect to the future of a shrinking neighbourhood. Landscape architects and spatial planners can independently use their qualifications to include many different perspectives on the case by creating a clear image of how the neighbourhood can function and what the neighbourhood can look like, anticipating on the effects of shrinkage. This can be used as a catalyst for discussion, by using concrete designs. The result is that actors can experience consensus faster because of a joint image for the neighbourhood for which every actor is willingly to moderate one's demands. In that sense, the role of the design changes from a fixed image of an end result to a design which is merely meant as discussion object and broadens the view of actors. Flexibility is key in this. Therefore the landscape architect and spatial planner pay special attention to prioritising certain developments in certain stages of the plan development process. The authors believe that by using this new approach the focus of the discussion between actors can shift from dealing with mutual differences, to a discussion which focusses on mutual agreements for a common goal.

8.7 Recommendations

After having formulated the main conclusion of this thesis, this research and design project finishes with some clear recommendations for the fields of planning and design practice, academic planning and design education and recommendations for further research.

8.7.1 Recommendations for planning and design practice

The outcomes of the descriptive research show the importance of being aware of the multiple interpretations and perspectives with respect to the shrinkage debate in South Limburg. Due to both the limited financial possibilities coming with the consequences of shrinkage, and the greater need to act, since liveability, deterioration and housing vacancies are imminent, people have more needs with less money available. Choices have to be made in which way the consequences of shrinkage will be dealt with spatially. The authors of this thesis stress that these choices can be argued in a better way based on more insights of the reasons why people have a preference for a certain approach. Therefore it is also recommended for governments and housing corporations to use the limited available financial means for the proposed new approach. In this regard most attention should be paid to a balanced financing of these new interventions and the im-

provement of the liveability of shrinking neighbourhoods.

The design interventions proposed in the prescriptive part of this thesis show the role of the design as a fundamental idea for discussion; to visualise different possible futures with respect to the spatial structure of a city or neighbourhood, based on varying underlying assumptions. It has been revealed how paying attention to the scarcity of financial means, can fit in a cohesive vision. This shows the added value of a well-considered design and how phasing and flexibility can make prioritising possible, even with interchangeable phases of the implementation process between divergent scenarios.

8.7.2 Recommendations for academic planning and design education

The authors want to underline that the interdisciplinary cooperation in this thesis research certainly has its advantages. Due to collaboration of the disciplines of landscape architecture and spatial planning, more knowledge about the spatial dimension of shrinkage can be obtained and applied in a more appropriate way. Therefore the so called 'linear cooperation' belongs to the past. This thesis can in this way be seen as an experiment which provided a different kind of cooperation.

Furthermore, in courses where students of landscape architecture and spatial planning are both involved, better opportunities should be given for cooperation experiments based on the student's role of reflexivity. This stimulates his or her role of the critical reader, aware of the context of the planning and design process.

As a last remark for this section, the authors want to advice to put more attention to the underlying paradigm of economic growth in the educational curriculum of landscape architecture and planning. This thesis has shown that the underlying assumption of economic growth as a standard context factor in the design and planning process can and should be reconsidered.

8.7.3 Recommendations for further research

Because the function of the designs, presented in chapter 6 and 7, is not tested in the context the authors of this thesis envision, it would be sensible to implement the designs in the work groups engaged with both specific cases. In this way it is possible to actually test whether or not this new approach has an added value in relation to the approach that is for example used in the case of Kerkrade-West. Since it would take several years to monitor and evaluate the actual added value, the authors of this thesis recommend this for further research.

In section 3.1.2 the authors presented the people who are interviewed for this thesis, and the reasons why these people could contribute to this thesis. For that the authors were perfectly aware of the position of each person within the research, because the interviewees were selected based on the relevance for the research question presented in chapter 2. If the research method in this thesis would be used to deal with other regions that deal with shrinkage in further research, the authors want to stress that the method could be improved by asking the people interviewed so far, if they know any other interesting people with a rather contrary perspective on the case, or maybe the same perspective for different reasons. People who carry out a certain perspective are often confronted with other people who respond with different ideas based on perhaps opposing perspectives. Therefore, the interviewees can provide the researchers with excellent other perspectives they know of. This can significantly improve the profundity of the research and reveal new inspiring perspectives on that specific case.

This research was mostly focused on a single case study area. It would be interesting to research other shrinking regions in the Netherlands based on the theory of first- and second-order observation to see if the same dilemma's would be expressed as were ex-

pressed in South Limburg. From a scientific designer's point of view the research in other shrinking regions may also start with an in-depth case (as for example for Kerkrade-West) to obtain multiple stories with their own alternatives and ideas regarding dealing with shrinkage. The development of a vision can in this way be based on extensive research results and the design can thus be applied strategically.

The financial issues coming with shrinkage are another important topic. Since this topic is closely related to disciplines like economics, public administration and public jurisprudence as well as the people in practice, the authors make a plea for a broad transdisciplinary study. By including a broad spectrum of disciplines, the phenomenon of shrinkage is not limited to the spatial issues as came forward during this thesis. It rather can be studied by a collaboration of multiple disciplines to learn and anticipate on each other's research results.



“ *We will have to accept that ghost villages will arise.* ”

Professor of Demography Latten (2009)





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APPENDICES



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Area developer (NL: Gebiedsontwikkelaar) 3.1.2

In this function a person is responsible for the coordination of a specific process limited in space and time, in which both public and private interests are involved. This process cuts through administrative and sector borders.

Bauhaus II: 3.3

Educational institute for architects, artists and craftsmen in succession located in Weimar, Dessau and Berlin between 1919 and 1932.

Business case 3.1.2

Based on the interview with civil servants of the municipality Kerkrade, this term is used for their multi-actor projects considering spatial and social issues in a specific neighbourhood.

Case study research 2.3

A strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time (Stake, 1995, in: Creswell, 2009).

COROP-region 1.1

The Netherlands are classified in 40 so called COROP areas. This classification is of a regional scale level between municipalities and provinces. Statistics Netherlands (CBS) and the Netherlands Environmental Assessment agency (RIVM) use this classification for regional research.

Deconstruction 2.2

The destruction and on the same moment construction of theories, ideas and concepts (Duineveld, 2006).

Descriptive research 1.6

Research based on matters of observation; informative rather than normative. Describing matters as they are constructed.

Designer 3.3.4

Person who is professionally involved in making spatial designs to propose changes in the arrangement of the environment (i.e. (landscape) architects).

Einwohnerkannibalismus 3.4.4

A German term to describe the happening that the building plans of city A pull the inhabitants away from the nearby city B. City B is then confronted with (the consequences of) less inhabitants.

Euregiobahn 3.4.4

International railway connection between the main train stations of Heerlen and Aachen.

Expertenrat 3.4.4

Literally a German translation of a council of experts.

Folly 6.8.3

The term 'folly' comes from the English word 'foolish'. In England, folly was a popular name for a building which contains that many stupidities of its constructor that it had to be demolished. Later, the term was associated with silly, useless constructions in romantic parks and gardens in the 18th Century England and Germany (Vroom, 2005).

Gartenschau 3.4.4

A German exhibition (Internationale Gartenbauausstellung - IGA) which is held every 10 years. Its main focus is on vegetation, landscape architecture, tree-nursery and garden equipment.

Household dilution II: 3.5.1

The phenomenon of a lowering number of people living in a single household.

HST-network 3.4.4

European rail network for High Speed Trains.

Instrumentalism 2.5

The view that a concept or theory should be evaluated by how effectively it explains and predicts phenomena, as opposed to how accurately it describes the perceived reality of these phenomena.

Interdisciplinary 8.4

A cooperation between different scientific disciplines where knowledge is combined, which leads to new knowledge based on the intertwining of the involved disciplines

Local zoning plan (NL: Bestemmingsplan; DE: Flächennutzungsplan) 3.3.3

In the Netherlands the only spatial plan which is legally binding for civilians. For example building permits are being granted or rejected based on the criteria in the local zoning plan.

Maastricht cultural capital 2018 3.3.2

The city of Maastricht together with the surrounding Euregio Maas-Rijn is one of the Dutch cities who is a candidate for the organisation of the European cultural capital in 2018. The goal of this event is to enhance the European cultural heritage. The city is for one year a platform for cultural events. Maastricht hopes to receive a qualitative boost due to this event. The city expects that its infrastructure, connections and living climate will be improved permanently. Maastricht want to put itself on the map as a 'region of quality' (Bureau VIA2018, 2011).

Meta-theory 2.1

A meta-theory is a scientific theory which studies other theories.

Nota ruimte 4.5

In the Dutch National Spatial Policy Document the government's vision on a national scale level is given regarding the spatial planning process and arrangement for the coming decades.

Pocket park 3.4.2

A small park accessible to the general public, often created on a former plot of vacant buildings. Within this thesis, the term 'pocket parks' refers specifically to the pocket parks in MSP.

Post-structuralist interpretation theory 2.3

School of thought which does not look for formal laws of signification; the emphasis is on interpretation of context under influence of social and historical factors. Therefore the variations on multiple interpretation become numerous. (Van Assche, 2004; Van Assche, 2007)

Prescriptive research 1.6

Research making or giving directions based on a normative approach. Prescribing matters as the author wants them to be.

Provincial spatial plan (NL: Provinciaal omgevingsplan – POP) 3.4.4

A provincial plan on main lines which bundles the structural concept (Structuurvisie), environmental policy plan (Milieubeleidsplan), water management plan (Waterhuishoudingsplan), and the traffic and transport plan (Verkeer en Vervoersplan). It also contains the main spatial elements of the provincial social and cultural policy (Provincie Limburg, 2011b).

Qualitative housing programme (NL: Kwalitatief woonprogramma - KWP) 3.4.4

Supporting policy of the province of Gelderland for its municipalities to set up their inner regional building programme. In this supporting document are among others stated the agreements made regarding the development of the housing offer in Gelderland in the period 2010-2019 (Provincie Gelderland, 2011).



Reflexivity 2.2

A systematic uncovering of preconditions of routine activities (Bourdieu, 1998, in: Howe and Langdon, 2002).

Regrow / Rückbau 3.4.2

A German invented term for the demolition of unused buildings and at the same moment improvement of the environment and city restructuring.

Repixeling 3.4.4

The city is divided into a raster with equal squares. Then the process starts where unused / unoccupied buildings and sites are demolished and turned into the claims and vegetation plots of the landscape trail.

RWTH 3.4.4

Rheinisch Westfälische Technische Hochschule – The Aachen Technical University

Shrinking region 1.1

A region confronted with a structural decline of the population and the number of households, which has consequences for the level of facilities and the economic perspective on a regional scale level.

Spatial principles / Design principles 3.4.2

Describe the fundamental ideas as a basis for a spatial design. The principles form the broader structural aspects of the composition of the design (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2011).

Spatial professional 2.2

Person who is professionally involved with the spatial arrangement of the environment in the broadest sense (e.g. (landscape) architects, (urban) planners, project developers, governmental policy officers).

Survey research 8.5

Provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. From sample results, the researcher generalises or makes claims about the population (Creswell, 2009, p. 145).

Transdisciplinary 8.7.3

A cooperation between different scientific disciplines as well as practitioners in order to deal with complex societal issues.

TU/e 3.4.4

Technische Universiteit Eindhoven – Technical University of Eindhoven

Vista 6.8.3

A vista, or sightline, is according to the Van Dale dictionary a 'place from which a good or bad sight on the stage can be obtained.' In the landscape, it represents a line which connects a viewpoint with the horizon, a point on the horizon or a point in front of the horizon (Vroom, 2005).

WGR-plus region 3.2.1

A Dutch legal cooperation between urban municipalities which has been given extra authority on economical and spatial planning affairs.

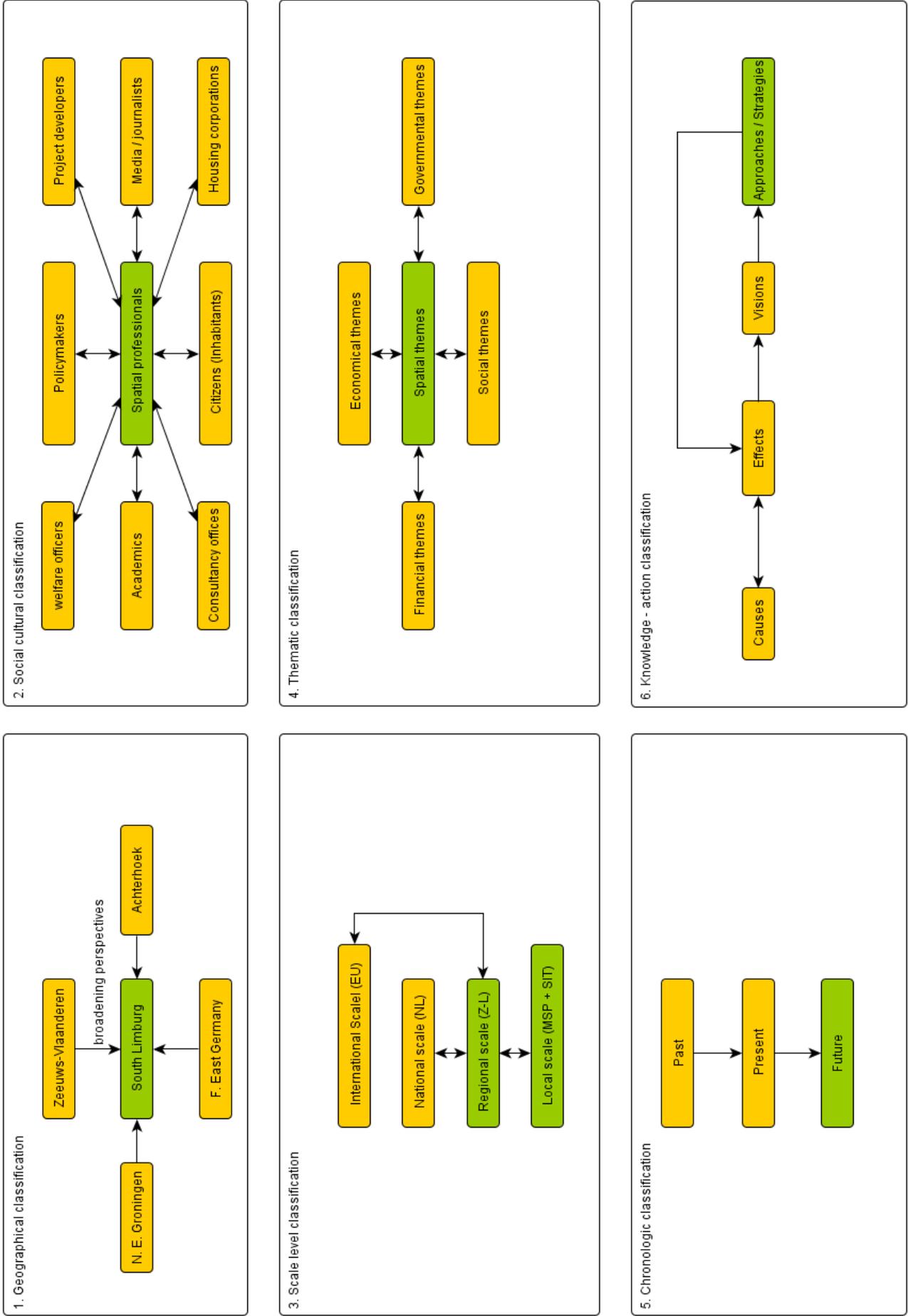


Figure IV.1 Positioning of the research

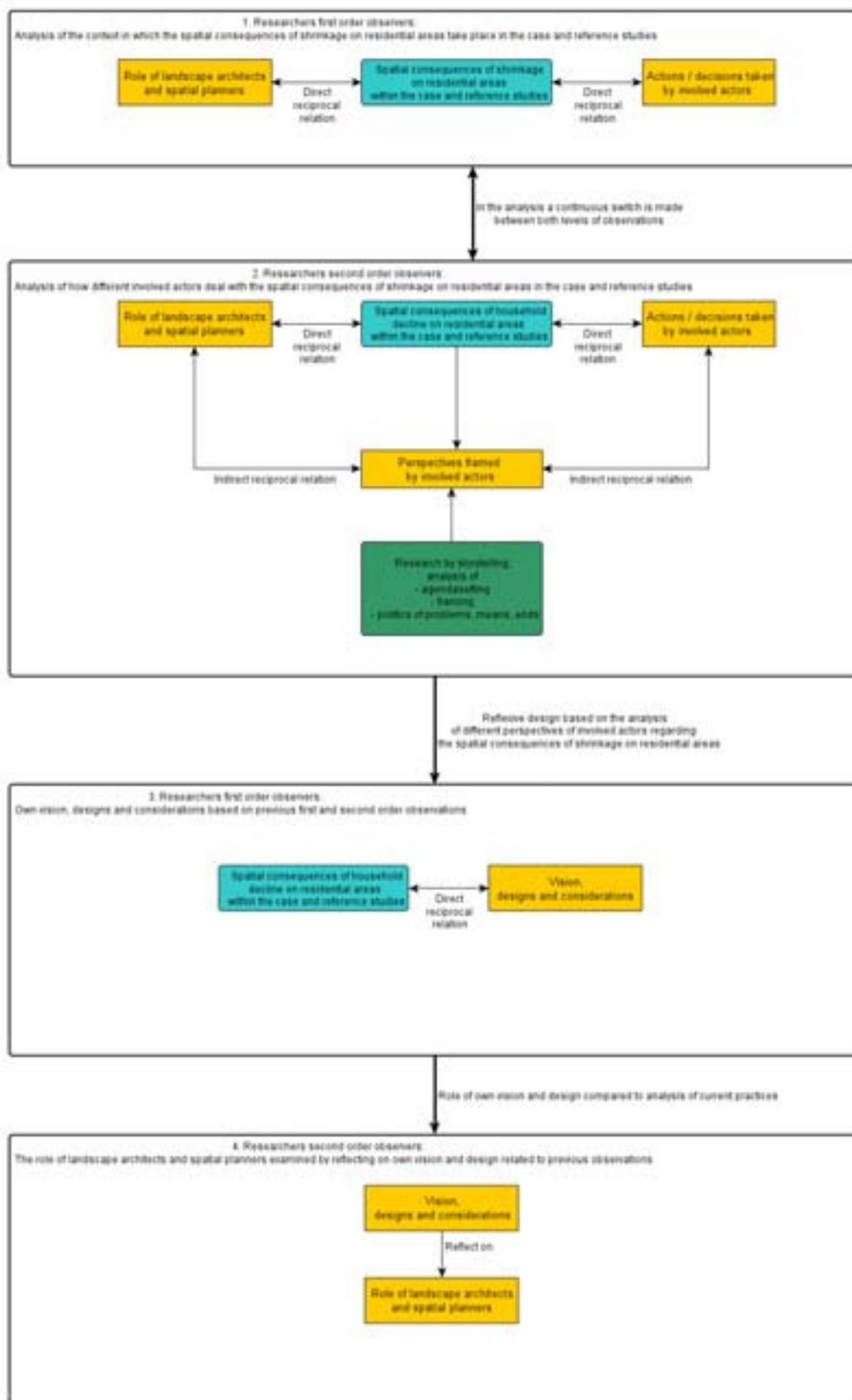


Figure IV.2

Research design