

Sense of place in practice

Investigating the potential of place meanings in a participatory process

Matthijs Jaspers



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...

There are places I'll remember,
all my life, though some have changed.

Some forever, not for better;
some have gone and some remain.

All these places had their moments
with lovers and friends I still can recall.
Some are dead and some are living,
in my life I've loved them all.

The Beatles - In my life

...

Abstract

This study investigates the widely suggested potential of place meanings (sense of place) in a participatory project process. Both past and current literature tends to focus on further exploration and quantification of sense of place in abstract theoretical ways, neglecting qualitative empirical research into the applicability of the concept in planning and design processes. This research bridges the gap between theory and practice and does so by concentrating on the role of place meanings in the project bypass Veessen-Wapenveld. First, an extensive literature overview leads to a conceptualization of sense of place into three strongly intertwined aspects: attachment, identity and dependence. Secondly, through in-depth semi-structured interviews with involved locals and professionals, four research sub-questions are addressed: (1) What aspects associated with sense of place are brought forward and (2) are such notions brought forward in the project process? (3) What factors are considered important when evaluating the project process? (4) What is the potential role for sense of place as perceived by those involved? Third, the results are discussed and concluded. While the findings show a limited role for sense of place in the project Veessen-Wapenveld, both locals and professionals underline the importance of place meanings in general and in the project process. However, due to the complex and severe nature of the intervention, other factors such as communication and expectation management overshadow the possible role for place meanings in Veessen-Wapenveld.

Keywords:

Place, Sense of place, Place meanings, Participation, Attachment, Identity, Dependence.

Preface

For as long as I can remember my dad warned me about the supposedly horrifying task of doing your master thesis: “*Your thesis...*” he said to me, “*...will be the most terrible and difficult part of your study. I still have nightmares...*”. Needless to say, I was looking forward to it. During a conversation with Maarten Jacobs we came across the subject sense of place, a concept we both share an interest in. Together with Patricia Braaksma, Maarten and I discussed the possibilities and before I knew it, I had started working on my master thesis. I was prepared for the worst, but apart from the occasional writing block all went well.

Time has passed –a bit too much actually- and at last I can present my thesis. While it is “*...only a master thesis.*” (also my dad), I still would like to show my gratitude to the following people: first and foremost, I would like to thank Maarten for his pragmatic and down-to-earth approach which helped me to put things in perspective and remain light-hearted throughout the whole process. Thanks to Patricia for those helpful discussion we have had at the beginning. Thanks to all the interviewees for sharing their insights and coffee with me. I also appreciated the many distractions provided by my friends and the support I got from my family, including my dad! Finally, Marjolein, thanks for being there.

Matthijs Jaspers

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1. Introduction

1.1 Prologue

Contemporary society is increasingly globalised and flows of information are the modern way of getting around. These developments have sparked another movement in which people feel the need to grab hold to some of the last roots that bind them to their history and culture (Antrop, 2001). Processes of localization, increasing interest in cultural heritage and lifestyles that promote slow living such as the rural idyll offer resistance to the ever changing society: the need for people to be able to identify themselves with their physical and social environment remains. It is perhaps becoming increasingly important, as most people long for some stability in their lives (Antrop, 2001). Many people find this stable factor in their homely surroundings, filled with memories, experiences, stories, values and the like. People have always connected to their surrounding environment in one way or another (Palmer, 1997; Antrop, 2005), and in this fast pace era, connectedness and identifying to the landscape seems to be appreciated more than ever. But what happens when these experienced landscapes come under threat?

As with society, shifts are happening in other fields as well. Governments and institutions move from a top down to a bottom up approach and a similar shift can be observed within the discipline of landscape planning and design, where the end-users are encouraged to become actively involved in the planning and design process. In the professional field, this so called participatory process has become a notorious element. Although it supposedly serves many functions –create common ground, gather information, out-of-the-box ideas- professionals often consider it an obstacle that provides those who are not in favour of the design with an opportunity to frustrate the process (Devine-Wright, 2011). On the other hand, a common idea among participants is that being involved usually is merely to give them the illusion that they are taken seriously. This makes participatory design expensive and time-consuming, but it is signatory for the Dutch approach and here to stay.

This thesis is about a combination of the above paragraphs: place meanings and their potential role in a spatial intervention process. Through in-depth interviews I will investigate the project bypass Veessen-Wapenveld, in search of a better understanding of the concept sense of place and its applicability in practice.

1.2 Problem statement

A more grounded view of the difficulties that can be encountered in a collaboration between professionals and end-users may lead to a more efficient process and a more satisfying project outcome (Buchecker, 2003; Jorgensen and Stedman, 2006; Manzo and Perkins, 2006). Because of this, research has been conducted on the idea of participation in planning and design. Like the participatory process in practice, much of the literature is concerned with relocation, financial compensation, informing and so on (Manzo and Perkins, 2006). Besides these rational elements there is also increasing academic interest in the more abstract dimension of place meanings and the promising part these could play in a participatory processes. If a designer has better understanding of a local's worries and from which these worries originate, it becomes less hard –perhaps still not easy- to find an adequate solution. Whilst many of these papers point out this and other potential roles (Davenport and Anderson, 2005; Manzo and Perkins, 2006), little empirical research can be found that actually investigates these claims. Often, further research is suggested which leads to the following problem statement: *The current literature concerning the application of place meanings is deficient. Specifically it lacks empirical research into the suggested role of place meanings in a project process that involves participation of local stakeholders.*

1.3 Research purpose and question

The purpose of this research focuses on the supposed applicability of place meanings and surrounding concepts in a participatory process. Simply put, it is *about bridging the academic research of place meanings with the reality of planning and design in practice*. In order to investigate this, I need an in-depth account of place meanings in literature –which is done in the second section- and an investigation of similar depth into place meanings in practice; the case study Veessen-Wapenveld. With the knowledge from the second section

as backdrop, the gathered data from the case study can be analysed. The research question that follows the problem statement and research goal is as follows: *What role do place meanings play in the participatory process of bypass Veessen-Wapenveld?* This general question will be answered through sub-questions which will be introduced after the theoretical framework as a more detailed understanding of place meanings is helpful in the understanding of these.

1.4 Relevance

The relevance of this research is threefold. On academic level it aims to fill the void between the theoretical research into place meaning and actual empirical research of place meanings in practice. In addition, apart from conceptualizations of place meanings, the majority of the research that has been conducted (on place meanings or the elements that fall under place meanings) adheres to a positivist or hypothesis testing approach, as is argued by Davenport and Anderson (2005). The aim of such an approach is to investigate place attachments strength, scale and so forth. Stedman (2003) notes that this quantitative research does not tell us much about the meanings or beliefs someone has with a certain place. Davenport and Anderson (2005): *"In other words, measuring the strength of attachment based on identity or dependence does not tell us why identity is important or what it means to depend on a place."* This argues for a more qualitative, interpretivist approach, to *"...extend our understanding of the human–environment relationship beyond the tangible and instrumental (quantitative) to include the symbolic and emotional (qualitative)."* Then, place meanings in practice and the possibility to be used as a tool in participation processes is useful in a professional sense as well. Even though concepts pertaining place meanings –such as identity and attachment- are familiar to a fair share of designers and planners, it seems that an insufficient understanding and acknowledgement of the significance these emotional aspects can bring about is an issue that merits more attention. As we will see in the literature review, place meanings are especially prominent in the event of landscape change. Cheng et al. (2003) have brought forward that when meanings are assigned to a place, they are *"...confirmed, challenged, and negotiated in a variety of ways..."*. An insight in the way people place relationships behave when intervention is at hand can therefore be an interesting asset in the toolbox of planners and designers. The potential application of place meanings in a planning and design process brings us to the social relevance of this thesis. As is already made clear in the above it is about the possibility to equip professionals with a tool that may enhance, improve or at least smoothen the project process, -more specifically the participation process- by creating mutual understanding of the involved parties (Manzo and Perkins, 2006). Another advantage is that this mutual understanding created by incorporating place meanings in a project may also lead to more viable designs that are adapted to better suit the needs of the end-user (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2006).

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured into nine chapters. With exception of this first and the two last chapters, each chapter has a more detailed outline at the beginning. This first chapter, the introduction, covers the motivation to undertake this research; the problem statement, research goal, research question and the relevance of the research. The second chapter is the literature overview in which attention is first given to place meanings by contemplating the idea of place. This contemplation leads to a construction of place into three elements: physical location, action and meaning. I will continue with the latter and turn to the empirical research of place meanings; sense of place. Sense of place is also divided into three elements, each of which is investigated thoroughly. With this knowledge in mind we can turn to the third chapter, the theoretical framework in which I present the research model and conceptual framework leading to the introduction and elaboration of four sub-questions. The fourth chapter is the methods chapter in which I will explain and argue for the opted method of gathering data and analysis. Also, a more detailed background of the circumstances surrounding the case study Veessen-Wapenveld is given. Titled "Results", the fifth chapter complements the background of the case by (subjective) accounts of the respondents before going into a more sense of place oriented direction. Each of the sub-questions is dealt with separately. In the sixth chapter, I will discuss the literature review in relation to the findings and compare my findings with other research. In the seventh chapter I will present four separate conclusions for each sub-question and also contemplate on the main question and suggestions for further research. The eighth and ninth chapter are respectively the bibliography and the appendix, which include the endnotes.

2. Literature overview

In this part an account will be given of the relevant concepts and theories surrounding place meanings. The first chapter expounds on the complex concept of place and in the second chapter I will elaborate on place meanings. Because of the length and complexity of that chapter a more detailed overview is included in the beginning.

2.1 Introduction place

To fully appreciate the significance of place meanings, it is helpful to first have a better understanding of place. Much has been written on the concept place and taking into account the overwhelming amount of recent publications, little decline is visible. In fact, when zooming in on the debate between place-theorists, one is likely to become more confused as the discussion has been going on for nearly four decades (Gustafson, 2001). A key difficulty in the operationalization of the term place stems from the wide variety of disciplines have assigned a particular significance or meaning to it. When mentioned in a geographical context, place is most often used to describe a physical location (Paasi, 1991), while in sociology, place may concern a figurative positioning within society and concerns for instance cultural, ethnical and economical aspects, each of which altering the interpretation of place as a concept (Gieryn, 2000). For the sake of readability, this account will be limited to examples relating to the broader field of geography, but the usage of the word place expands trough nearly all research fields (Hay, 1998).

2.2 Place, why bother?

In todays' society, the notion of place –and especially its boundaries- has become blurred through the process of globalization and the rise of the network/information society (Gieryn, 2000). These on-going processes have led to different conceptualizations of place in which some question the relevancy of place in modern society (Hay, 1998), claiming that these processes have deluded a possible definition of place to such an extent that debating it is obsolete. On the other hand, some argue that modern society has led to an increased sense of locality, to counteract the globalization process and in order to maintain their (regional) identity (Castells, 1997; Paasi, 2002). Questioning the relevance of debating place seems a contradiction in terminis, as the arguments put forward make part of the debate altogether. Besides, in both theory and practice there is an increase in conscious awareness of phenomena such as sense of place, place identity, place meanings, and so forth.

Even within the field of geography the plurality of interpretations, theories and definitions on place alone make it impossible to offer an exhaustive account. On top of that, the interrelatedness of place makes it hard to distinguish approaches and disciplines, which is not unusual with a transdisciplinary concept (Jorgensen, 2001). This does however make it difficult to come up with an adequate overview. Some writers have attempted to categorize these different approaches, attempting to provide an insight on the different interpretations of place. Others steer clear of such overviews and directly jump to the literature that is relevant according to the writer (Gieryn, 2000). Though being thorough is not a sin, such an overview would outreach the scope of this thesis, hence in this chapter I will focus on the similarities that can be found in some popular place theories from different decades, thereby narrowing down to the core of place whilst at the same time addressing the length of the debate.

2.3 The power of three

Despite the abundance of place conceptions, a division of place into three dimensions seems well established among the majority of place-theorists. Of course there are variations, differences in terms and connotations, but in general, they can be seen as complementary to each other (Proshansky, 1983).

Relph (1976) is best known for his influential work "Place and placelessness" which has become a classic and is among the most oft-cited works on place. He argues that place and space are inextricable parts of each other. Space and context alone do not define place, it is human interaction that turns space into place and to what places eventually mean to people. He suggests that the different notions of space may become place

through experiencing, engaging in activities and having remembrance of a place, citing Heidegger: '*Spaces receive their being from places and not from 'the space' ... man's essential relationship to places, and through them to space, consists in dwelling ... the essential property of human existence.*' (cited from Norberg-Schulz, 1971, p 16). Relph proposes a division into three aspects that form the identity of place: physical setting, activities, and meanings, emphasizing that '*The three fundamental components of places are irreducible one of the other, yet are inseparably interwoven in our experiences of places.*' (cited from Relph, 1976, p 47). This is important to keep in mind; similar as space and place cannot be seen as separate, the combination of the physical setting, the activities and the assigned meanings result in the actual experience of a place. Of the three elements the first two are relatively straightforward; physical settings is about observations of static objects such as a mountain or a building. Activities can be seen as functions of a place and that what people do there. The latter of the three, meanings, is a more intangible, abstract term. It signifies that what is created through people's intentions and experiences regarding to a specific place. In order to fully appreciate the concept of place as proposed by Relph, the three components need to be seen as an organic entity, in which they all influence each other. Similar to space and place, these aspects should be no strict distinguishable structures; it is the combination of the physical setting, the activities and the assigned meanings that together result in the actual experience of a place.

Another comprehensive study on place is made by Agnew and Duncan (1989). In the book "The power of place" they conceptualize place as being constructed out of three elements for which they have coined the terms location, locale and sense of place. Each element comes from a different branch of geography. The element location stems from economical geography and is concerned with '*...the spatial distribution of social and economic activities resulting from between-place factor cost and market price differentials.*' Locale (human geography) then describes '*...the setting for everyday routine social interaction provided in a place...*' and from cultural geography, sense of place is regarded as '*Identification of a place engendered by living in it.*' Agnew and Duncan elucidate place via a cross-disciplinary approach which, according to them, acknowledges the complementary existing and inextricableness of the elements of place.

A more recent interpretation has been brought forward by Gieryn (2000), who has similar arguments and suggests that a place always consists of a geographic location, material form, and investment with meaning and value. Geographic location refers to the unique spot a place has in the universe: '*Place is the distinction between here and there, and it is what allows people to appreciate near and far. Places have finitude, but they nest logically because the boundaries are (analytically and phenomenologically) elastic.*' Material form is more about the physical attributes of a place: '*It (a place) is a compilation of things or objects at some particular spot in the universe.*' Material form is about the construction of (cultural) artefacts and, at the same time, influences social process and dynamics of culture through the effects the artefacts bring about (Habraken, 1998). Investment with meaning and value is about the social construction of the term place, it regards place as place only when there are people who identify it as being so (Feld and Basso, 1996). According to Soja (1996), a place is not only constructed in some sort of physical way, but they are also '*...interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood, and imagined.*' To summarize Gieryn's account on place: '*A spot in the universe, with a gathering of physical stuff there, becomes a place only when it ensconces history or utopia, danger or security, identity or memory.*'

These theories have been criticized on several points. According to these critiques, the theories are essentialist (e.g. place – non-place); comprise of mere dualisms (e.g. space – place) leading to a simplistic interpretation of place experience and the tripartite construction of place elements would not respect the inextricability of the presented concept (Hubbard et al., 2008). The critique concerning the essentialist character of the theory stems mainly from Peet (1998) and Cresswell (2004). They argue that in order for Relph's theory to work, one needs to abstract the human being to a single core of human experience, where there is little room for social, individual and temporal influence on experience of a particular place. What these critics seem to neglect is that within phenomenology there are different dimensions of human experience and existence working at the same time, all of which play an important role in understanding human and societal phenomenon. With this in mind, several case studies can be found that argue against this notion of essentialism (Chaffin, 1989; Million, 1992) making the theory of Relph fit graciously within the phenomenological approach. The critique explained above is the result from not acknowledging or recognizing

ones ontological and epistemological grounds, as Grix (2010) has argued. The notion of simplistic interpretation through the use of dualism is concurred by Relph himself (Relph, 2000). Throughout his work Relph writes in a dialectic manner (place has placelessness, par exemple) This has resulted in readers interpreting things as good or bad. Simplistic as it may seem, it has provided a clear structure and language that is useful as well as applicable. As with most of the literature on place, it is the interpretation of the reader (influenced through personal and professional experience) that evaluates the introduced contrapositions; place does not necessarily equal good, placelessness is not necessarily bad. In line with this critique is the assumption that Relph's writing echoes a hint on nostalgia, comparable to the conceptualization of the rural idyll about a decade later (Mingay, 1989; Halfacree, 1993). This critique overlooks the process of globalization and current time space compression, which was almost unimaginable at the moment of writing (Castells, 1989).

The theories introduced above are only parts of the debate on place, but they do help to understand the difficulty in dealing with a much (mis)used concept. Despite differences, each of the theories elaborate on the overarching idea of place meanings, regardless of varying conceptualizations such as sense of place, rootedness, spirit of place or insideness. The elusiveness of people-place relationships is handsomely illustrated by Durrel, (1969, p 6): *'Different places on the face of the earth have different vital effluence, different vibrations, different chemical exhalation, different polarity with different stars; call it what you like. But the spirit of place is a great reality.'* In the next chapter I will further investigate this intangible dimension of place: meaning.

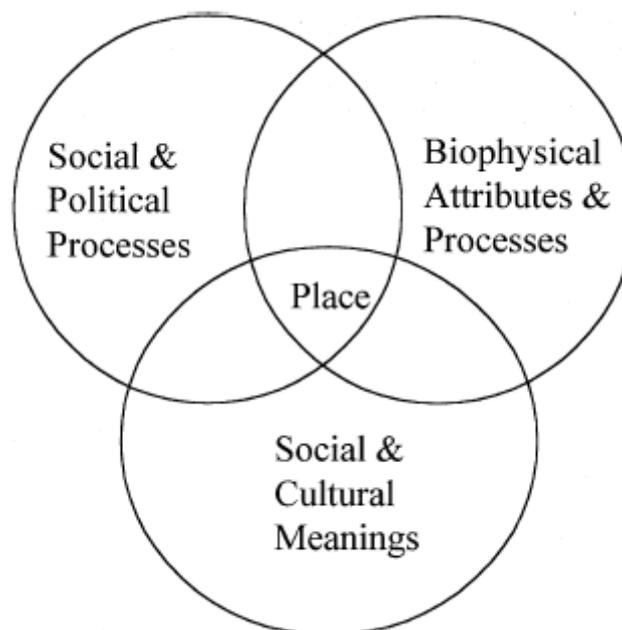


Figure 1: Model showing how place results from dynamics between three aspects. (Cheng et al., 2003)

2.4 Introduction place meanings

Continuing with the three partite of place as I have introduced in the previous section. This prevailing conceptualization of place describes three inextricable elements that together construct what the concept place is about. We assume that place is:

- A physical location
- In which action/interaction takes place
- Hence, places become meaningful to its users; place meanings.

A more thorough investigation of the literature on place meanings introduces numerous concepts that are associated with place meanings. These connections are important because similar to place, place meanings has been the focus of research from a variety of disciplines (e.g. environmental psychology, human geography, sociology, leisure and tourism) that again differ in approach (e.g. cognitive, social constructivist, phenomenological). Likewise, this has resulted in a plethora of theories, concepts and definitions. Despite of this, most concepts share a fundament and often overlap, altogether adding to the understanding of relationships between people and place. However, cross-disciplinary interest also has a downside, as Altman and Low (1992) underline on the theory of place attachment:

'...place attachment subsumes or is subsumed by a variety of analogous ideas, including topophilia (Tuan, 1974), place identity (Proshansky et al., 1983), insideness (Rowles, 1980), genres of place (Hujord, 1992), sense of place or rootedness (Chawla, 1992), environmental embeddedness, community sentiment and identity (Hummon, 1992).'' (Altman and Low, 1992).

The paper from which this passage is cited is almost two decades old and I should add that in the meantime many alterations, additions and new concepts have been introduced. Providing an overview of past and current affairs on place meaning is near impossibleⁱ neither is it at the heart of this research in the first place. Elucidating place meanings and the associated processes and phenomena however, *is* at the heart of this study and to this I will turn now.

2.5 Structure of chapter

Because I will be dealing with abstract concepts that are closely linked or intertwined, it is helpful to have a good understanding of how this chapter is structured. First, a definition of place meanings is provided and shortly elaborated upon. Then, a number of considerations are introduced which are vital in the understanding of place meanings and also apply to the rest of the chapter. Hence, with these considerations in mind, I will turn to the concept sense of place. We will see that it is constructed from three sub-theories: place attachment, place identity and place dependence. All of these will receive full attention and for the sake of readability they are dealt with separately. This part of the chapter is structured in the following way. First, a preliminary definition is provided, followed by a more thorough explanation that sheds light on the different elements and processes that shape the sub-theory. With this better understanding of the three sub-concepts, we can again reflect on sense of place in a more holistic/ecological way. According to many theorists, this holistic vantage-point / understanding of sense of place shows the potential benefits and usability of place meanings in practice. This extensive account of theory allows us then to come up with sub-questions that guide the practical research of this thesis.

2.6 Place meanings

Place meanings are an overarching idea that can be defined as ‘...any general belief, value, or affect in the mind of a subject that relates that subject to a particular place in some way...’ (Jacobs Buijs, 2011). This wide-ranging description virtually allows every theory with people-place relationships at its core to be included. The encompassing quality of place meanings allows conflicting views on nuances within minor concepts of place meaning theory to be left aside. This concurs with what Manzo and Perkins (2006, p. 337) state: ‘...regardless the diversity of terms, synonyms and homonyms, what is important is that people-place relationships are at the core of the matter.’ Despite the comfort of such a spacious definition, it does somewhat limit the options to adequately point out what matters in this research. The variety of concepts that fit under place meanings, are in academic research often summarized as sense of place (Jacobs and Buijs, 2011). Thus, the extensive literature on sense of place helps us to understand what processes take part in the formation of place meanings. Within the sense of place literature there are three elements that make up a major part of the literature and can help investigate and categorize place meanings. These concepts are place attachment, place identity and place dependence. They have been around for quite some years and continue to play a defining role in the research on people-place relationships. Prior to introducing sense of place and its kinship, we need to recognize some difficulties.

2.7 Considerations regarding sense of place

As with just about any concept introduced so far, sense of place and the concepts it entails has been subject of debate amongst theorists from different disciplines. Accordingly, many interpretations can be found and there are opposing views as to which element or process plays a significant role and which does not. This confusion can be traced back to the debate on defining place earlier in this chapter. We have seen that often a precise definition is not feasible, because different disciplines are working on the same particular concept. All of these disciplines may have their own approachⁱⁱ, make use of other theories to explain phenomenon, researchers may be of opposing schools of thought and so on. Kyle and Chick (2007) add the variety of study contexts, which has also led to different conceptualizations, build versus natural environment for instance. Even within a single discipline consensus remains an ideal that is hard to achieve. This structural difficulty, among other factors, leads to the forming of synonyms and homonyms, which complicates the usability of the concept and make it hard to navigate through the dense forest of literature.

Furthermore, we need to acknowledge the complexity of sense of place in reality and how the theories that seek to describe this phenomenon are always simplified. This simplification starts with the separation of the concept into three different elements. Though a very popular and suitable way to research the role of specific elements, the majority agrees that in principle sense of place should be seen as a whole consisting of inextricable processes. Despite the separation in this theoretical grounding, which is merely for clarification purposes, this thesis too assumes that sense of place can best be viewed as a holistic phenomenon. Deconstruction can be useful for research into specific characteristics, processes and influences, but the simplification should be recognized. As stated by Jorgensen and Stedman: ‘*The results supported multidimensionality in sense of place, but also provided strong evidence for a considerable amount of common variation across measured place constructs: while some variation was unique to each place construct, there was a large degree of overlap among the constructs at the empirical level*’ (2006, p. 317) These considerations may seem dire, but this should not distract us from the fact that the theories are always simplified models used to describe reality. On top of that, in this particular thesis, sense of place theory merely provides a background in which the usability of the concept in a real-life situation is assessed. Although these considerations apply to sense of place theory in general, in this thesis the main focus is the usability of the concept, the way in which the concept is researched or defined is of lesser importance. An additional advantage this brings us is that it allows better delineation of the sub-concepts of sense of place by looking at other theories that describe these phenomenon, enabling a more profound understanding of the sub-concepts.

Despite the theoretical underpinnings and countless articles on people-place relationships, I need to point out the highly subjective nature of place meanings. The fact that sense of place has remained elusive for over thirty years is not without reason, we are dealing with a difficult term in respect to the academic world with

demands for replicability of research. If one seeks to investigate the significance of sense of place in a practical setting, theoretical notions only help in so far that they provide a handle that can be used to organize subjective notions into categories (place attachment, place identity and place dependence) and perhaps some sort of strength or intensity in relation to this category. The reality is that, when dealing with sense of place, it comes down to very specific situations in which theory somewhat fades to the background during the research and fades back in when analyzing the data. The data on sense of place so far has proven to be enigmatic, hard to replicate and still then this research sets out to investigate the proclaimed usability of this concept in practice.

So we know that the definitions and aspects of sense of place are subject of debate. But, as I will point out, despite the cross-disciplinary approaches they have been delineated relatively well and one should not forget that in everyday life these elements are intertwined and often experienced unconsciously (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2006). In fact, Shamai (1991) has argued that these place concepts and others can be included under the umbrella term 'sense of place'. Because this research is focused on investigating the applicability of place meanings in practice, the underlying theories are not necessarily the main focal point. However, theoretical operationalization is necessary, in order to appreciate at least some of the elusive constructions and underlying principles that surround place meanings.

2.8 Sense of place

Besides sense of place being used an umbrella term regarding empirical research into place meanings, it is best known as a construct describing '*...the meaning attached to a spatial setting by a person or a group.*' The sense of place model I adhere to has been popularized by Jorgensen and Stedman (2006) who were the first to combine three well-known place-constructs together via the use of attitude theory. They conclude that even though the combination with attitude theory is not flawless it does provide a useable construct which has since been used by various scholars. For further reading I refer to the bibliography; I will merely focus on their construction of sense of place. I have opted for this model because of its limited overlapⁱⁱⁱ and transparent three-fold structure with widely recognized people-place concepts at its core. Thus, I continue with expanding the earlier description of sense of place (suggested above) to include these more complex nuances: a general attitude toward a spatial setting, and a complex psychosocial structure that organises self-referent beliefs, emotions, and behavioural commitments (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001; 2006). In overview, they propose three sub-structures to sense of place:

- place attachment; *feelings toward the place*
- place identity *beliefs about the relationship between self and place*
- place dependence; *the behavioural exclusivity of the place in relation to alternatives.*

In the forthcoming paragraphs I will further expound these influential concepts and how they, together, construe sense of place.

2.9 Place attachment

Abundant research has been conducted on place attachment, generally as an isolated concept but also as one of the three elements. Despite the seemingly inescapable debate on precise definition that seems to haunt people-place theories, with some addition this concept can be delineated relatively well. Among the many theorists that have written on place attachment (Buttimer and Seamon, 1980; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977; 1980; just to name a few), Low and Altman (1992) are the most oft-cited. They describe place attachment as the development of a positive bond between a person and/or group with a spatial setting: '*affect, emotion and feeling are central to the concept*' and the process of bonding involves '*cognition (thought, knowledge and belief) and practice (action and behaviour)*' (Altman and Low 1992, cited from Kyle and Chick 2007).

Interestingly, Altman and Low are also the authors of the citation earlier in this chapter on the confusion of place attachment with other concepts describing people-place relationships such as sense of place. When we reflect on our preliminary definition of sense of place: "*The meaning attached to a spatial setting by a person or a group*" and look at some of the suggested definitions for place attachment in the subsequent paragraph we can spot parallels and overlap.

In search of an apt description of place attachment one is likely to come across some of the following definitions: Shumaker and Taylor (1983): '*...a positive affective bond or association between individuals and their residential environment*' (p. 233). Hummon (1992) shortly defines it as '*...emotional involvement with places.*' (p. 256) Proshansky et al., (1983) emphasize that '*...place attachment involves an interplay of affect and emotions, knowledge and beliefs, and behaviours and actions in reference to a place.*' (cited from Altman and Low, 1992, p. 5). Riley states place attachment concerns an '*...affective relationship between people and the landscape that goes beyond cognition, preference, or judgement.*' (1992, p. 13).

Presented in this order, it is no revelation that academics struggle whether place attachment is a synonym^{iv} or an aspect of sense of place. This confusion receives attention in the research of Jorgensen and Stedman (2001), who show that of the three aspects, feelings of attachment showed the most correspondence with the general sense of place variable: '*...the concepts of identity and dependence were less synonymous with the sense of place factor than was attachment.*' (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001, p. 245)

The definitions put forward so far are ambiguous and do not incorporate the fundamental characteristic of attachment^v which is '*...the desire to maintain closeness to the object of attachment.*' (Ainsworth and Bell, 1970; Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980). Thus, in order to demarcate place attachment, a more narrow definition is needed which includes the foundation of attachment. This argument has been brought to the attention in the article on place attachment by Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001). In this article is discussed that, within the dense forest of literature on place attachment in the context of people-place relationships, it is the elementary definition of attachment that distinguishes place attachment from concepts such sense of place. This leads to the following definition: '*a positive affective bond, based on emotional content, between an individual and a specific place, the main characteristic of which is the tendency of the individual to maintain closeness to such a place.*' Despite this ornate definition, we have to recognize that indeed place attachment shares important characteristics with sense of place in general. With this definition, we can further explore the aspects that constitute place attachment.

2.9.1 Aspects of place attachment

Before venturing into the structures of place attachment it is important to recognize that, similar to sense of place, in reality it is hard to make strict distinctions between the various aspects and processes. The strength lies in the holistic approach of the concept, or as Altman and Low state: '*...place attachment has many inseparable, integral, and mutually defining features, qualities, or properties; it is not composed of separate or independent parts, components, dimensions or factors.*' (Altman and Low, 1992, p 4). Yet, for clarification purposes, I will deconstruct the concept and take a look at some defining aspects and processes, whilst keeping in mind that the whole is more than the sum of its parts.

According to Altman and Low, there are a couple of characteristics crucial to understanding place attachment. In the literature on place attachment, these elements are often explored as the variables that influence place attachment. In the subsequent paragraphs I will deal with the role of emotions, the scale of a setting, the intensity of experiences that occur, time span and the social makeup in which actions are performed as patterns that are associated with place attachment.

Place attachment is primarily associated with emotion, affect and feeling (Altman and Low, 1992). The addition of the fundament of attachment to this definition indicates that these affects are of a positive nature (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001) though of course there are writers who argue otherwise (Ahrentzen, 1992; Hummon, 1992). Brown and Perkins (2003), Seamon (1982) and Hummon (1992) are just a few of the academics who contributed by exploring embedded emotions in places, feelings of belonging and emotional investments to settings. Besides this aspect, cognition (thought, knowledge and belief) and to a lesser extend practice (action and behaviour) are also influential. Pellow (1994) has written about the way activities in residential areas make for place attachment, a theme which occurs in numerous other studies^{vi} into place attachment.

Place attachment is, not surprisingly, focussed on a particular locality. The scale of such a setting may vary from a room to a country or perhaps even the world. However, most research is focussed on city,

neighbourhood, street or home level (Davenport and Anderson, 2005). Specificity of a place is regards the quality of a place, some academics (Tuan, 1979) have argued the significance of attachment to symbolic or imagined places.

The temporal aspect of place attachment concerns the dynamic quality of people and place. Past memories, present experiences and future expectancies are all temporal features that exert influence on place attachment. Similarly, life-stages (Tuan, 1977; Proshansky, 1983; Gustafson, 2001; Manzo, 2003), spatial interventions (Davenport and Anderson, 2006; Abrahamsson, 1999; Palmer, 1997; Gobster, 2004) and time spent in a certain location (Tuan, 1974; Relph, 1976; Fried, 2001; Gustafson, 2001) too have an impact on place attachment. Distinction can be made between linear and cyclical dimensions (Altman and Low, 1992). Significant events that occur infrequently, such as marriage, have effect on the relationship someone has with a specific place, hence influence attachment. These events are on a linear scale, similar to life-stages. Cyclical, recurring events, such as a yearly visit to the same holiday location, can steadily develop into attachment or as Tuan states *'the steady accretion of sentiment'* (Tuan, 1977, p. 33). Insignificant but frequent events or often visited but ordinary places have the ability to, through this continuity, become of special meaning.

Social relations and composition - The attachment to places is often considered as something on a personal, individual level, but increasingly more academics (Kyle and Chick; 2007 Gustafson, 2001; Manzo, 2003, 2006; Saar and Palang, 2009) emphasize the collectively shared attachments to settings. For instance, a family can develop a bond with their summer home on ground of shared experiences. To this I must add that it is not merely the physical setting to which people become attached: *'The social relations that a place signifies may be equally or more important to the attachment process than the place qua place.'* (Altman and Low, 1992, p 7) To illustrate this, again the example of a family visiting their summer house. The setting can change and thus influence attachment: the quaint river gets canalised, nearby forest becomes agricultural land or real-estate develops in the vicinity of the peaceful holiday retreat. Besides physical change, the family is also subject to dynamics; one of the family-members passing away can seriously affect the experience: *"It's just not quite the same without grandpa"*. Relph (1976) Fried (1963) and Twigger-Ross and Uzzel (1996) have written and referred about how places can become tainted after such events. Kyle (2007) adds that meaningful relationships are often maintained through specific settings as well, and that those who engage in these relationships, to some extent share experiences and become bonded to the setting, as they provide the context for the relationship. Altman and Low suggest that *'places are repositories and contexts within which interpersonal, community and cultural relationships occur, and it is to those social relationships, not just to place qua place, to which people are attached'* (Altman and Low, 1992 p. 7). Moreover, Hidalgo claims that *'...social attachment is greater than physical attachment...'* (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001, p 273) further underlining the significance of the social dimension in people-place relationships. Beside these statements, we should not forget that *'There is no physical environment that is not also a social environment, and vice-versa.'* (Itellston et al., 1974; cited from Proshansky et al., 1983 p. 64)

Altman and Low have also investigated the processes that influence the realization of place attachment. They have proposed the following: biological, environmental, psychological and socio-cultural. Although these elements are intertwined, for research purposes they often receive individual attention. In this section they will be explained individually, but I concur with the notion of other theorists (Low, 1990; Brown and Perkins, 2002; Ahrentzen, 1992) who argue that the interplay of these processes is what matters, not the isolated processes.

Biological processes include evolutionary aspects and physiological adaptations of humans that seek to maintain an ecological linkage between a specific location and the individual or group. This is a very rudimentary connection and the most unconscious of the four processes. Closely linked^{vii} to this are environmental processes. These distinguish themselves from the biological processes on account that they are of a more conscious quality, where the pros and cons of an environment are weighed against other alternatives. The benefits of living in an urban environment versus the benefits of a rural environment for instance. In paragraph 11 of this chapter I will go into greater detail as this process plays an important role in the construction place-dependence. Psychological processes play the most influential role in the formation of place attachment and, as a result of this, are often the subject of research and debate. According to Low,

(1992) it concerns individual experiences in a specific setting that results in the ascription of meaning to that setting. The more intense the experience, the more significant this will reflect in the attribution of meaning. On the other hand, seemingly insignificant experiences, such as walking the same route to school for years, can result in meaningful places as well because of the frequency of the event. We should refrain from strictly seeing psychological processes on an individual level, since they play a significant role in group situations (consider group psyche and peer pressure). We can also associate psychological processes on a group level with the sociocultural processes. The strong influence of socialisation on the formation of sense of place frequently occurs throughout people-place literature. As for place attachment, not only are social and cultural traditions important in the endowment of meaning, but also in maintaining these attachments through social control/pressure and tradition. We should also consider how socio-cultural processes are often steering behaviour and attitude. For instance, deciding to visit a particular setting and the kind of experiences that one seeks are influenced by earlier processes of socialisation.

Despite of its popularity, place attachment has remained an elusive concept. This confusion is somewhat mitigated by a more narrow definition which includes the notion of actual attachment to a place or setting. However, the various aspects and processes that are associated with place attachment do still remind of the preliminary sense of place definition which is being used by many academics. To further clarify sense of place, and by doing so distinguish place attachment from sense of place, I will continue with the elaboration of the other two sense of place dimensions.

2.10 Place identity

To clarify place-identity, I will focus on Proshansky's popular theory (1978; Proshansky et al., 1983). In this theory, place-identity is introduced as a sub-structure of a psychological theory called self-identity. Self-identity focusses on the individual as member of a social world in which '*...the development of a sense of self is rooted in the assimilation and acceptance of a commonly shared set of beliefs, rules, values, and expectancies.*' (Proshansky et al., 1983). Self-identity is a continuous process that is concerned with the way a person reflects on him or herself, which is achieved by considering how the individual thinks he or she is perceived by his or her social surroundings. This practice can be clarified in an exaggerated conscious way by asking questions such as: "*What would I think if someone does what I am about to do? How would I react if I saw someone behave the way I do?*" As such, this act of self-evaluation is personal and at an individual level, whilst at the same time it is strongly influenced by the social surrounding.

Self-identity is, similar to places and place meanings, flexible and its dynamics are not only shaped through social acts, the surroundings in which these actions takes place plays a significant role as well. This connection with the physical world brings us to place-identity. A preliminary definition of place-identity as provided by Proshansky: '*...those dimensions of self that define the individual's personal identity in relation to the physical environment by means of a complex pattern of conscious and unconscious ideas, beliefs, preferences, feelings, values, goals and behavioral tendencies and skills relevant to this environment.*' (Proshansky, 1978, p. 155).

This complex definition requires further explanation, but a clearly structured overview proves to be problematic. According to Proshansky et al. (1983), place-identity should not be seen as a coherent and integrated cognitive structure; it is best thought of as '*...potpourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about specific physical settings as well as types of settings.*' Combining past experiences –good and bad- of a place and evaluating these on the many variables results in a collection of values, attitudes, feelings and beliefs about this particular place and thus influence place-identity. The total collection of past experiences in the variety of places can be summarized in what is called the environmental past of an individual. Through living in and interacting with the environment, a wide variety of thoughts on the physical surroundings are gathered (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). These cognitions form the basis on which an individual evaluates the environment surrounding him or her and they are constantly challenged and adapted. These challenges can stem from changes of the individual, the individual's social surroundings or changes of the physical setting. In the upcoming paragraphs, I will expound on the different aspects of place-identity

2.10.1 Aspects of place identity

Similar to what we have seen with place attachment, social factors play an important role in the formation of place-identity. The social makeup of a group in which a particular experience takes place is influential (Kyle and Chick, 2007). For instance, an individual who is part of a group of photography enthusiasts may at one moment positively identify with a particular scenic setting whilst at another moment, in another group with different interests, other factors are (or may be) identified with. This example shows how a setting can carry a variety of functions^{viii} and identities to a single individual. It is through social activities that an individual learns what –within that specific group- is thought of as positive and negative about places. Because of this, some writers (Proshansky et al., 1983; Kruger and Jakes, 2003; Dixon and Durrheim, 2004) question if perhaps the physical setting is a mere background in which experiences take place. Other social factors exert influence on place-identity as well, such as political views or social class.

Besides social dynamics, properties of place-identities may vary in shape through different life-stages. Infant, teenager, adult or elderly; an individual has different needs and desires to identify with from a specific place depending on life-stage (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977; Hay, 1998). It is unlikely that these needs are always satisfied to the same degree. Certain physical attributes^{ix} of an environment such as a rocky trail on a hill may be nice as a teenager (adventure) but seventy years later it will probably be less enjoyable (dangerous), although the positive memory from past experiences perhaps remains. Plenty of young people who prefer the urban environment and dynamics of a busy city shift towards a more rural setting when starting a family or when retiring, in search of a safe, quiet, relaxed environment. The aspect life-stages bring about some other interesting notions concerning place-identity. Assuming that an individual's environmental past starts to take shape at the very beginning of life (Proshansky et al, 1983), it follows that much of everyday-life reflections on the environment and the self-identity take place on a subconscious level. This does not mean that place-identity or signals of place-identity cannot be experienced consciously –as is often the case when settings are under threat or subject to change from external influences- but it points out the significance of the early experiences with the surrounding environment.

Variations in the ability to identify with a place are not only influenced by social variables or temporal dimensions, physical characteristics and their dynamics too have effect on the degree to which a person identifies with a particular setting. A new high-rise apartment building can alter the skyline of a village to such an extent that it influences identification with a place; it is no longer the rural village but it becomes a town. Plenty of other examples can be made up, but it is obvious that there are many physical variables that have impact on the evaluation of a place and by doing so, play a role in the formation of place-identity.

The mental quality of place-identity also merits attention; it is built up from cognitions relating to past, present but also future expectancies of places. Influential in the construction of memories relating to places is the selective engagement of individuals, which I earlier referred to as environments often being mere backgrounds to a (social) experience. According to Proshansky et al., experiences turning into memories are subject to interpretations and fantasies (1983). Through this process of storing an experience as a memory, they become simplified: some things stand out while other things are left out or forgotten. Not only the physical reality of a place becomes a memory, but the memory of this setting is also embedded with the values and meanings that the individual associates with that setting. When thinking of the playground that you used to visit, not only do the physical characteristics come to mind, but also the associated meanings and emotions. Place-identity thus resides on more than just physical aspects such as the Mary-go-round or the location of the playground.

2.10.2 Further notes on identity

What has been written above captures the essence of key factors that play a role in the formation of place-identity. However, it is limited insofar that the main characteristics of identity are not further specified. To clarify this, a more detailed account on identity is in order, for which I will review Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) who have examined place in relation to identity. By using Breakwell's model of identity processes, features of identity can be clarified and illustrated. The model deconstructs identity into four main principles: distinctiveness (*the desire to maintain personal distinctiveness or uniqueness*); continuity (*continuity over time*

and situation between past and present self-concepts); self-esteem (positive evaluation of oneself or the group with which one identifies) and self-efficacy (an individual's belief in their capabilities to meet situational demands)^x. This should be seen as a supplement to the theory of Proshansky and are illustrated by environmental research that corresponds with these four aspects of identity.

Research by Feldman (1990) and Hummon (1986,1990) shows the distinction people make between being a city versus a country person. City enthusiasts identify themselves with the positive features a city offers, and associate themselves with a specific lifestyle. Contemporary real-estate developers often market new neighbourhoods to address a specific lifestyle or culture, echoing post-modern ideas of experience-society (Saar and Palang, 2009). '*...some people... use a place related self-referent in order to present themselves as distinct from others.*' (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996, p 207).

The continuity characteristic of identity is divided into two aspects. Distinction is made between place referent continuity – '*...the maintenance of continuity via specific places that have emotional significance for a person...*' (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996, p 207).and place congruent continuity – '*...the maintenance of continuity via characteristics of places which are generic and transferable from one place to another...*' (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996, p 208).. The former concerns ways in which a person or group uses places to remind oneself of the past, about not forgetting who you are and where you are from. Interesting is that exactly the opposite can occur, where someone has the desire to make a fresh and new starts; after a negative experience such as a divorce someone might choose to cut loose from their old home and start anew. Place congruent continuity then does not regard specific places but certain '*characteristics of places which are generic and transferable from one place to another. People will look for places in which to live that seem to represent their values.*' (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996, p 208).

Self-esteem – Korpela (1989) argues how a favourite place can support self-esteem, while Lalli (1992) brought forward how certain place characteristics can enhance self-esteem, such as living in a historic building or town. Associating oneself with certain place-specific qualities that one finds attractive can thus be related to self-esteem.

Self-efficacy – Humans are always trying to improve –or at least maintain- their psychological well-being (Leibkind, 1992) and this can be traced back into the environment as well. It follows that people seek an environment in which they are able to fulfil their activities. If the environment in any way is a constraint to an individual or group, this may harm their feeling of self-efficacy. Winkel (1981) suggests that people relate to an environment that '*...supports their goals and purposes.*' and for which he suggests the term manageable environment. (Winkel, 1981; cited from Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996, p 208).

Place-identity thus comprises of a wide range of environmental cognitions, be it memories in the past, the environment at that very present moment, or anticipation of future physical settings. These cognitions are shaped by endless processes from different dimensions; physical, social, mental and so forth. In general, place-identity is not consciously experienced, since the processes that shape place-identity are active since the very beginning of one's life and are deeply embedded within the mind. Place-identity is quite an abstract concept which can be somewhat alleviated with the addition of Breakwell's identity processes, as to better comprehend identity all-together.

2.11 Place dependence

Whereas the former two sense of place sub-concepts have received attention from a variety of authors, the majority of research on place-dependence is from the hands of Stokols (1978) and Stokols' collaboration with Shumaker (1981). They shortly define it as '*an occupant's perceived strength of association between him or herself and specific places.*' (Stokols and Shumaker, 1981, p 457). As a subjective quality of the relationship between a place and its user, at first sight place dependence may seem similar to place attachment. Although they do share the characteristic of being bound to a place, place dependence is of a more functional and rational kind. I will further expound this concept by diving deeper into the theoretical structure of place dependence.

2.11.1 Aspects of place dependence

Whether or not one feels dependent with a particular place governs on two main factors which I will deal with separately: (1) the quality of the current place and (2) the relative quality of comparable alternative places.

Quality of the current place is about how well the particular setting at that moment enables the user to undertake the preferred activity or reach a specific goal. This subjective quality is the result of the combination of two (perhaps obvious) components: user and place. Beginning with the former, an individual who uses a place, to go kayaking for example, is looking to satisfy a particular need (sports, challenge, adrenaline) and has certain expectations of a place. Assessing how well this goal is met is a subjective process based on an internal standard of the user. This standard is constructed from earlier experiences and the following expectations of a setting, producing what is known as the comparison level for places (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959). Jorgensen and Stedman have summarized the comparison level for places aptly into a single question "*how does this setting compare to others for what I like to do?*" (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001, p 234). The comparison level bears a resemblance with the environmental past we earlier encountered in the concept place identity, but in this case concerns functional dependence whereas environmental past relates to identifications with a place. Similar to environmental past is how the cumulative total of previous experiences with a particular place, positive and negative^{xi}, is used to assess the quality of the current place. Stokols and Shumaker recapitulate comparison level for places as "*...degree of satisfaction with place ... indexed by the extent to which an existing place's quality diverges from the occupants' comparison level for places (i.e., their expected level of place quality.)*" (Stokols and Shumaker (1981, p 459).

Besides previous experiences and expectations, the multifunctionality of a setting allows for a variety of activities and goals, and it follows that the more important activities (as viewed by an individual user) have a stronger influence in the overall evaluation of a place. Satisfying highly valued goals, in our kayaking example one can think of successfully maneuvering through a particularly challenging rapid, results in a more positive evaluation than the achievement of lower valued goals. The other way around, the inability to conquer the rapid may also result in a negative experience, depending on the users' attitude. Stokols and Shumaker argue that *'the value of goals or needs will mediate an occupant's assessment of place quality by influencing the strength of an occupant's reactions to goal facilitation or thwarting.'* (Stokols and Shumaker, 1981, p 459).

And then there are the characteristics of a place that of course play an influential role: it provides the user with a specific setting. Stokols and Shumaker name three attributes specifically (*'the amount of resources in an area, their caliber and the degree to which they fit the needs of the occupant.'*) (Stokols and Shumaker, 1981, p 459) but the list can be expanded. Elaborating on the suggestions of the two writers, we can look at some of the physical properties of a place. In the kayak example, there are a variety of elements that play a role in assessing current place quality; the length of the river, the difficulty of the rapids, the scenery and so forth. Also of influence are non-physical properties of the environment that do influence the current setting. These are things such as the presence of other users or the imposed quality of a river as being "*the best of its kind*" for a kayak experience. If we assume that experiences are, to some extent, shaped by expectancies (Larsen, 2007), the influence peers and media can have in the shaping of (perceived) place dependence should be considered.

Summarized, the preferences of the user and the ability to satisfy these preferences in that specific setting results in a quality evaluation of the current place. Variables that play a role in this process are, among others, value of goals met and the characteristics (social and physical) of current place. We already shortly touched upon the comparison level for places, which plays a more prominent role in the second element that constitute place dependence to which I will turn now: the relative quality of comparable alternative places.

2.11.2 Comparison of alternative places

The other aspect that regulates place dependence is the comparison of alternative places. Basically it continues on what has been written above with the addition of alternatives; comparing the setting a user presently occupies with places that are considered possible alternatives. If the question that summarizes current place quality is "*How does this particular setting facilitate me in reaching my goals and/or undertaking*

the activity of my preference?" we can expand that question with: *"What other options do I have and how do these relate to the current situation?"*

Thibaut and Kelley (1959) have introduced the construct comparison level for alternatives which regards users of a setting assessing *'...the quality of expected outcomes among suitable alternative places.'* (Stokols and Shumaker, 1981, p 460). As we have familiarized ourselves with some of the influential elements that constitute current place quality, I will now take a look at some of the factors that determine the list of alternative settings. Stokols and Shumaker introduce awareness, familiarity, mobility and resource specificity.

Awareness is about whether or not a user has knowledge of the existence of alternative settings. Familiarity is an extension of awareness and is concerned with having had experiences in different places. Back to the kayaking example. A particular river can be deemed of the highest quality –which partly depends on the needs of the user-, because perhaps the user is not aware that an even more optimal river is available. After familiarizing –experiencing the other river- him or herself with this alternative setting, evaluation of both settings may result in a shift in place dependence. Awareness and familiarity have a lot to do with the personal characteristics and attitude of the user; is he or she willing to try something new, quickly bored with already familiar settings or easily satisfied with just a single setting?

Another factor is the resource specificity of the activity. A thrill-seeking kayak experience automatically leaves out most of the Netherlands, a cycle racer may be relatively satisfied and someone who wants to take a leisurely stroll has virtually unlimited possibilities and little constraints. In general, more specific requirements limit the potential alternative places drastically. Besides the leisure examples so far, we can also think of people who depend of a specific location for their livelihood; a farmer depends on soil, elevation, gradients and so forth, a boat rental is unlikely to have a successful business in an unattractive area with little water or bad accessibility to the water.

Mobility regards whether or not a user is capable of reaching alternative settings. This makes it possible that, despite awareness and familiarity of other settings, the list of suitable alternative places can be very limited. Physically handicapped or elderly may experience difficulty in travelling larger distances to an alternative setting. This mobility-constraint can be broadly interpreted, for instance financial status or social pressure also influences whether a setting is deemed as a possible alternative. In the current housing situation, someone with an above average wage may not rent "low" priced affordable housing; an individual who has lost its income because of unemployment may suddenly experience financial constraints; someone may steer clear of a particular club that once was popular but according to peers has gone out of fashion.

There are plenty other constraints one can think of that limit the potential quality of otherwise promising alternative settings, such as the ability of a setting to facilitate larger groups or diverse activities and so forth. On top of what has been written already, Stokols and Shumaker suggest a number of factors that cannot be clearly placed under one of the components of place-dependence. I will end with an overview of these factors.

2.11.3 Other influential factors

A distinctive feature of place dependence is the occurrence of feeling dependent in spite of a negative evaluation of the setting. It can simply be the case that there are no, or only worst, alternatives. Few people enjoy being in a nursing-home, but if it is necessary, than it better be the most suitable one: *'It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried.'* (Churchill, 1947). To many people, their office environment is not their favourite place to be, but they are dependent on it as it provides a setting that enables them to do their jobs and have meetings. Similar situations occur in many different settings and are especially interesting in situations where people are forced to relocate. In such situations a temporal aspect to place dependence surfaces; after relocation people may still feel dependent on the place they were forced to leave. This can lead to an increased negative perception of the new environment and often it takes time for people to adjust to the new situation (Riad, 1996).

Maslow's pyramid of human needs (Maslow, 1968) explains how some needs are more salient than others, hence places that facilitate these more fundamental desires are often stronger dependent on compared to settings that enable the achievement of desires higher in Maslow's pyramid. In line with this, the number and

range of needs met by a single setting also has impact on how dependent a user considers him or herself to be. In general, the more needs can be satisfied in one particular place, the more dependent one feels to it. According to Stokols (1979) this leads to a more embedded, extensive or deep-seated type of place dependence compared to settings that have a more narrow ability to satisfy needs. The more desires a place can satisfy, the less likely that there are alternative places, thus further enhancing dependence. Likewise, fewer alternative places result in a stronger feeling of dependence altogether.

Stokols and Shumaker argue that the dynamics following from all these different –and still far from complete– factors make place dependence a very complex phenomenon. Compared to the other dimensions of sense of place however, it is less philosophical and more tangible. Hence, place dependence is frequently used as an argument in discussions surrounding environmental change such as gentrification projects. And while in some way everyone identifies with the environment and becomes attached to it, arguments motivated by place dependence have the advantage to be very concrete and can be made very specific.

2.12 Summarizing sense of place

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts and it should again be stressed that sense of place is best thought of a holistic concept. The three dimensions I have expounded upon each have their own characteristics and play different roles in sense of place construction, but their interrelatedness calls for an ecological approach which focuses on their combined “product”; a sense of place. This sense is associated with a particular place and is a subjective construct of its user, continuously challenged, adapted and shaped by experiences and processes such as socialisation. And it is not only the individual who evolves, the setting itself too is subject to change and intervention. Furthermore, I have emphasized the embedded nature of this phenomenon, which explains the subconscious quality. Deeply rooted emotions associated with a setting are not often experienced consciously in an everyday-life setting. When they do surface it is likely because of dynamics in place –such as a spatial intervention for instance- or changes of the individual such as loss or homesickness. This notion of individuality is rightly challenged by suggestions that argue the existence of a shared sense of place among people who are part of the same group, a neighbourhood community for instance. Regardless of this, the significance of sense of place as an important concept and reality remains, but its elusiveness is something professionals and academics continue to struggle with.

3. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I will continue with the main lines from the above literature review and introduce the research model, the conceptual framework and finally the sub-questions that explore the way to answering the main research question. These sub-questions are constructed through back and forth interaction between the literature and the theoretical framework. By combining the literature with the main question and research goal, I have devised the research model which serves as a guideline for the interviews and the structuring and interpretation of the data (in the coming section). Next, the conceptual framework will be introduced. This abstract scheme visualises the research in its context; the relevant concepts and the possible relations that will be investigated through the sub-questions, which will logically follow from the conceptual framework. Most of the concepts that are part of this model have been elaborated upon in the literature review. However, some of these so called associated concepts have deliberately been left out of the literature review, a decision for which I will make an argument prior to the introduction of the research sub-questions.

3.1 Research model

The table underneath gives an overview of the four themes that together form the fundament of this research.

Figure 2: Research model

Theme	Associated concepts	Sources	Example questions	
			Local	Professional
Place meanings	Sense of place - Attachment - Identity - Dependence	Literature review	How would you describe the (physical/social) environment?	
		Interviews	How important is this (physical/social) environment for you?	Has the project influenced your opinion of the area?
		Project documents		
Place meanings in practice	Sense of place	Interviews	(In what way) do you try to influence the process?	In what way do locals try to influence the process?
	Participation	Project documents	Are personal, emotional arguments brought into the discussion?	What kind of arguments do you have to deal with?
Process evaluation	Participation	Interviews	In the process thus far, what went well and what could be improved?	
	Communication	Project documents	How would you evaluate the project process thus far?	
	Expectations Involvement		How do you think the locals/professionals would evaluate the project thus far? And on what basis?	
Potential	Past opportunities	Literature review	Do you see potential in an approach that incorporates sense of place? Why?	
	Current potential	Interviews	Are there any situations you can think of that would benefit from incorporating sense of place?	Is it possible to deal with personal emotional issues in your profession/in such a project process?
	Future potential	Project documents		
			How are you involved in the project process?	How ambitious are the participatory stakes?

3.2 Conceptual framework

The conceptual model uses the same themes as the research model: place meanings and their occurrences, process evaluation and sense of place potential. The boxes and arrows show the possible relationships that are subject of research in this thesis and from which the research sub-questions will be formulated. These will be explained more in-depth in the last paragraphs of this chapter.

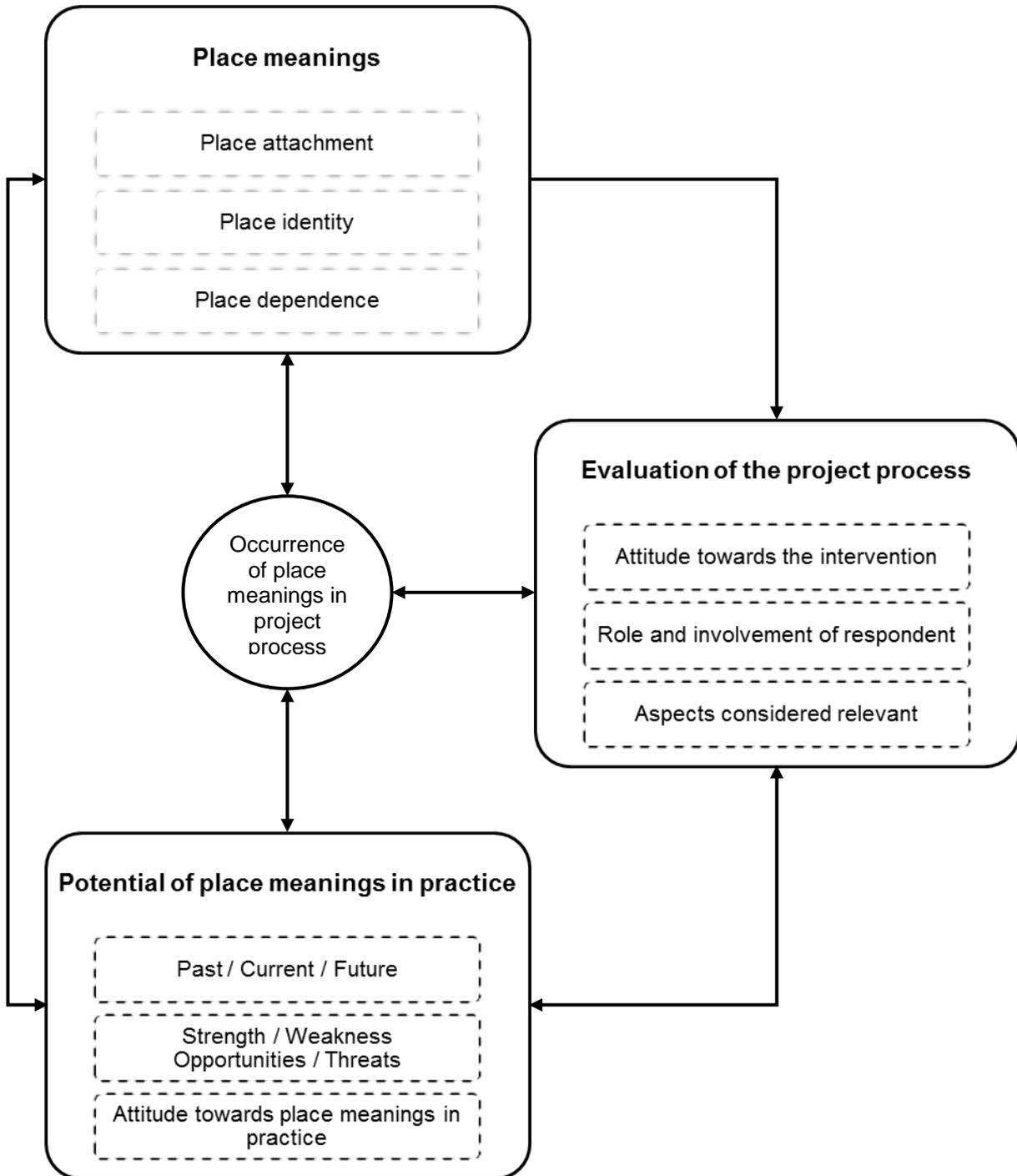


Figure 3: Conceptual framework

Sense of place and the three sub-concepts attachment identity and dependence have extensively been dealt with in the literature review. Together with the gathered data, the information from the literature review will help to come up with an answer for the main research question. And while the sub-questions to some extent include the project process in general or parts of it –such as the participatory trajectory- I have chosen not to operationalize these in the extensive way I have expounded on sense of place. As the core of this research concerns the role of place meanings in practice –specifically this particular case- an in-depth account of the academic literature on project processes is not relevant. For this study there is no interest in the different academic opinions on how a project and/or process should be dealt with; the interest is in the potential role of place meanings in this specific case. I will, however, go into detail on the projects' state of affairs as experienced by the respondents, which is the essential context for place meanings in this case study. As my focus is solely on the role of place meanings / sense of place as a possible influential factor in a planning and design project, the attention will strictly be aimed at these and their essential context; I will go into detail of the project process that concerns the case-study, but leave the academic debate for what it is.

3.3 Research sub-questions

As was written in the first chapter, the extensive background on sense of place is auxiliary to the collected data in answering the main research question of the thesis:

What role does sense of place play in the project process of bypass Veessen-Wapenveld?

The addition of the conceptual model enables an abstract visual overview of the research and shows the concepts that are within the scope of the research. The following sub-questions are devised to help structure the research:

1. What aspects associated with sense of place are brought forward by the respondents?

This sub-question investigates the various sense of place notions that the respondents share. It also strives to answer what the differences between professionals and locals are in describing the physical and social environment. Does this difference influence their sense of place? Strongly connected to this question is the second sub-question which investigates the following:

2. Are any sense of place notions brought forward in the project process?

In the first place it is interesting to see *if* such notions are brought forward. Secondly; *how* are these place meanings brought forward? And how do professionals deal with them? Since this question is intertwined with the first, they share their box in the conceptual model.

3. What matters to the respondents when evaluating the project process?

Understanding how the process thus far is evaluated and on what ground sheds light on what aspects are found relevant by the respondents. It will be interesting to compare the opinions of those who are involved on a professional level with the local respondents. What factors are influential in the evaluation? What matters to whom? And (how) do sense of place notions fit into this evaluation?

4. Do the respondents see a potential role for sense of place in the project process?

With this sub-question we can explore the pros and cons; what are opportunities and situations in which sense of place can or cannot play a role? And are there any threats or weaknesses when sense of place is to be included in the design process? Does the ambiguous nature of such notions allow them to be translated into physical solutions and is there room for something as individual as place meanings in a planning and design process?

In the next section, titled Methods, I will explain and argue for the methodological decisions I have made to gather the data required to answer these research-questions.

4. Methods

Because of the subjective nature of place meanings and the exploratory background of this research, a qualitative approach is appropriate. In order to answer the various questions proposed earlier it is important to gain an idea of what sense of place aspects arise in this specific case study. To achieve this kind of understanding on something as esoteric as sense of place, in-depth interviews are the best choice: *“Place relationships are often unique to individuals and therefore may be best understood in interview narrative form rather than operationalized, measured, and analysed as individual or group differences in intensity of place attachment”* (Brooks et al., 2006). And although there is no ambition to come up with nomothetic findings or significant quantifiable data sets, a bigger sample simply results in more data and increases the chance that this data covers a broader spectrum (Yin, 2009). This argues for the relatively large sample of interviews.

In this chapter I will first go into the manner in which the data is collected. Secondly, attention is given to the analysis of that particular data. In a more detailed account of the specific circumstances surrounding the case-study Veessen-Wapenveld I make clear why this case is suited for this research. The interpretive character of this research requires also requires some contemplation about the role and positioning of the researcher, with which I will end this chapter.

4.1 Data collection techniques

Answering the research questions requires a variety of actors to participate. These participants can be divided into two categories: people who are professionally involved and people who are personally involved; local stakeholders. Two versions of semi-structured in-depth interviews were devised (see appendix for an integrated version), one for each category. To find out both sides of the story each version is based on the same theme whilst adapting the questions to correspond with either someone who is professionally involved or an involved local.

There are numerous advantage of semi-structured interviews (Creswell, 2009), but for now the focus will be on those most relevant for this research. Dealing with sense of place requires, to some extent, “opening up” from the interviewee; talking about personal memories and stories to an almost complete stranger is not something one does every day. Therefore, it is important that the interviewee does not feel pressed or bound to the pace and questions of the interview. The ability to deviate from themes or topics leads to a more comfortable and less strict setting, in which one is more likely to open up (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). Moreover, deviations sometimes can lead to very interesting notions that otherwise would be left unsaid and in the same manner allows the researcher to zoom in on specific details and ask the respondent to elaborate (Creswell, 2009). To further ease the difficulty of having to step outside his or her comfort zone, it was up to the respondent to choose a location in which the interview would take place, the idea being that the most comfortable setting for the respondent will result into an optimal setting to freely and openly talk about the various themes (Marshall and Rossman, 2006).

The interviews are constructed in such a way that at first the respondent is asked about his or her role in the process before implicitly investigating sense of place notions. Later on in the interview the concept is explained and the interview takes on a more explicit approach towards investigating sense of place. In this way the respondent is not influenced or biased into giving favourable answers, whilst later having the chance to give their opinion about the concept and recollect thoughts about it (Marshall and Rossman, 2006).

Local stakeholders were purposively selected through different websites that provide information on the case, as to select people who in some way were involved. Aiming at a maximum variety in responses the final selection of ten respondents was comprised of people with different roots (“import” versus born and raised), professions, degree of involvement and so forth. For the professionally involved a similar selection mechanism was used with the addition of network sampling which uses the network (professional and or social) of an interviewee to suggest other potential interviewees (Jennings, 2001). This resulted in nine respondents to make a total of nineteen respondents. It is worth mentioning that there were six potential respondents who could not be contacted or did not reply. Two local stakeholders preferred not to cooperate, the reason being that they were getting tired of being contacted by journalist or researchers about the case. The respondents

were sent an e-mail or contacted via the telephone with the request to contribute to this research. Of the final nineteen respondents that were questioned, two interviews (one from each category) were conducted with two respondents at the same time. The interviews lasted between fifty minutes and two and a half hour, the average being one hour and fifteen minutes. All the interviews were recorded to be transcribed and analysed for which I refer to the paragraph 4.2 titled Data analysis.

Besides interviews it would be a waste not to use the vast amounts of information regarding the bypass that can be found on the net. The bulletins and documents that can be found on the website of the project may offer insight into the way people are encouraged to get involved and the way people are involved. However, the focal point will be on the interviews as these have a clear focus on the research topic.

4.2 Data analysis

Because of the vast quantity of text, the transcripts of each interview were further analysed via NVivo 9. Using such qualitative data analysis software involves “...*formulating concepts that adequately reflect the content of transcripts and assigning codes (that represent concepts) to quotes...*” (Jacobs and Buijs, 2011). There are various arguments in favour of using NVivo 9 or similar software. Firstly, after assigning thirteen codes to roughly four hundred quotes, it has the ability to reduce the –somewhat chaotic- raw data of interviews into more manageable pieces. Furthermore it allows the researcher to select different respondents and opinions to weigh against each other; to compare the answers of professionals with a local stakeholder only requires a simple query. Another benefit is that the data can be explored in various ways, allowing for new insight and out of the box thinking. The most significant downside I encountered was that once the coding is done, the context of the citations is in danger of being overlooked. At times, I still found it necessary to review the original transcripts. Nevertheless, the software proved to be a tool that allowed an efficiency I was not able to achieve manually.

4.3 Case

The bypass Veessen-Wapenveld is a large scale water management intervention located to the south of Zwolle, in the province of Gelderland and also includes a small section of Overijssel. Together with over thirty other projects of the key planning decision “Ruimte voor de rivier” (space for the river) the main goal is to alleviate the flood risk throughout the Netherlands. According to the program management of Ruimte voor de rivier these interventions are essential to deal with high water peaks during extreme weather. Bypass Veessen-Wapenveld is one of the biggest and most expensive project of Ruimte voor de rivier and concerns a bypass at the IJssel river, between Veessen and Wapenveld. The current idea is that the bypass needs to be used once a lifetime, which means that at a peak moment the IJssel river overflows into the bypass. At that moment, the blue bypass has an inflow height of 5.65 meters above NAP and an outflow of 4.20 meters which should lower the IJssel about 71 centimetres. As a result of this temporary river only two entrance/exit ways will remain in use for people living east of the bypass. The physical intervention consists of two dykes of around eight kilometres in length and four meters in height. It also requires the relocation of around ten farmers and the intervention itself means several years of construction in the area. On the other hand, the intervention is coupled with the development of the area which is partly funded by the government and aims to rejuvenate the surrounding areas.

The relationship between the area of Veessen-Wapenveld and the government makes this case particularly interesting; the area was hit hard during the foot-and-mouth disease (from here on: FMD) crisis in 2001. In an attempt to control the epidemic outbreak, the government ordered that all cloven-hoofed animals in the area were to be exterminated, contaminated or not. This led to national outrage and has left permanent emotional and economical damage in the area. Additionally, not all farmers were indemnified on the ground of not having their administration up to par. After the FMD-crisis, the confidence in politicians and government authorities was never restored. When the government announced the idea of the bypass four years later, it was clear that in order to restore the confidence much work had to be done. In a document called “Communicatieplan Veessen-Wapenveld” (communication plan Veessen-Wapenveld) it is summarized in the following way:

“Many residents and farmers share the image that has emerged of having to deal with an elusive government, who does not listen, does not share knowledge, does not answer questions and that has already made all the decisions. It seems that relevant and substantive arguments are of less value than politico-strategic reasons.”^{xii}

Perhaps it is because of this history that much effort has been put into this particular project in terms of communication, sharing of information and involvement of local stakeholders. This makes it an ideal case to investigate the applicability of sense of place in a planning and design process. There are many different actors involved on different political levels, various stakeholders and of course the preconditions of the intervention have to be met. All these elements together make it a complex and interesting case. For a more detailed topographical understanding I refer to the map included in the appendix (9.5).

5. Results

The following four chapters attempt to follow the composition of the interviews, but due to the in-depth quality of the interviews many responses are long stories or multiple notions combined that are relevant to more than one sub-question. Therefore it is useful to begin this section with a small outline of the coming chapters.

In the first chapter I will look at the place meanings of the respondents. Both locals and professionals were asked to give a description of the socio-physical environment and from this relatively concrete starting point the interviewees were encouraged to also share their more personal, emotional place meanings. These are structured into the three dimensions we have become familiar with; attachment, identity and dependence. The second chapter, which relates strongly to the first, continues on these sense of place notions. Both respondent groups were asked if they noticed any of such arguments (as discussed in the first chapter) being brought up in the project process. For example, if a local talked about being attached to the wide view from her kitchen window, a follow up question would be if and how such issues were brought up in the process. This chapter covers two instances (and is structured accordingly) in which sense of place played a strong role: relocation and the ateliers. The project process is the matter of interest in the third chapter, which sets about to investigate what the respondents find relevant when evaluating the project process. Numerous items are covered and with that knowledge we can see if sense of place notions matter (at all) and also if place meanings can possibly play a beneficial role in the project process. The potential of sense of place in practice is considered more extensively in the fourth and final chapter of this section. Professionals and locals are introduced to the concept and contemplate the strength and weaknesses of using place meanings as a tool in a (participatory) planning and design process. This chapter covers the pros and cons of sense of place in general and takes a specific look at closer involvement of professionals into individual cases.

5.1 Sense of place notions

With all case-study research it is imperative to provide some sort of overview of the case and the current state of affairs. In this particular research with sense of place as topic, it is even more essential to have some understanding of the mindset of the locals and know about the physical and social characteristics of the study area. In the methods chapter some general information has been provided to which I now will add the personal accounts of the respondents. They were asked to describe the state of affairs of the planning and design process up till now as to provide the context in which their stories take place. The many different opinions, stories and ideas showed how extremely interesting and complex this case was –and still is. Amidst all the uncertainties, only one thing stands out in certainty; the locals are extremely against the bypass. In this first part I will focus on the physical and social characterization of the area. The strong opinions on the bypass often echo through in the response to even general questions, which partly explains the specific features that come about in the answers. After addressing some of the recurring ideas about the physical and social environment of the area, I will turn to the more individual sense of place notions.

5.1.1 Prologue: Physical characteristics of the area

The locals have a detailed understanding of their surroundings, which they express with confidence. Having lived in the area for many years, the local respondents have become aware of –and appreciate- specific locations and their characteristics. The professionals provide a more analytic description of the area, focusing less on experience. Compared to the locals, the professionals have a broader understanding of the areas situation.

The location of the area, between the IJssel and the Hoge Veluwe, explains the diverse landscape characteristics that are valued deeply by the residents:

“We wonen daar in het rivierdal met aan de ene kant de IJssel en aan de andere kant de Veluwe. Dan heb je eerst dat IJssellandschap met die uiterwaarden en de dijk. Vervolgens ga je een eindje naar beneden en dan kom je daar op die komklei. Dan ga je weer naar boven toe en kom je de Veluwe op, het is een erg gevarieerd landschap. Als je tien minuten fietst heb je verschillende landschappen gezien, dat is wel erg mooi.” LR8

The diverse landscape features and openness has been a pull-factor for those respondents who had moved from other parts of the Netherlands (who take no offense in naming themselves “import” like they are named by those who are born in the area, but I will refer to them as new-locals). As the bypass unquestionably alters the area, one respondent considers on what the physical changes will result in.

“Acht jaar geleden zijn wij hier komen wonen, en binnen een half jaar kwamen we erachter dat er allerlei plannen speelden waar we niet van op de hoogte waren toen we hier kwamen wonen. En dat was dus het Ruimte voor de rivier project, de hoogwatergeul”...“wat er voor mij verandert? Voor mij; uitzicht, het woonplezier, en toch de pijn dat de bedrijven om je heen veranderen, dat ik straks de koeien niet zoveel meer om me heen zal zien als ooit was... het gebied verandert en dat doet me pijn.” LR1

Descriptions provided by the professionals reveal more geophysical and geomorphologic details but also a more analytical and nuanced view which originates from their professional and sometimes personal experience, as the respondent remarks.

“... de grap is dat het in heel veel beleid als een heel bijzonder gebied aangemerkt wordt, maar ik vind het nog wel meevallen, dat is even gewoon... ik heb op veel plekken in Nederland gewerkt, veel dingen gezien.. ik vind dit niet echt een heel extreem bijzonder landschap. In het noorden wel, daar heb je de Hoenwaard, waar de IJssel echt bij elkaar komt, maar verder is het wat je dus ook in Doorwerth en in Wageningen en dat soort plekken hebt, bij Rhenen. Het is een gewoon agrarisch landschap.”... “... er zitten een paar mooie dingen, dat is als je hier beneden de dijk op rijdt, die hank, dat stuk is heel mooi, er staan een paar prachtige IJsselhoeves. Veel mensen vinden het open gebied fantastisch, maar ik kom midden uit de Betuwe vandaan, waar je de hele grote open komgronden hebt. Het is allemaal heel verschillend van wat je referentiekader is maar het is ook geen uitgeleefd landschap of zo.” PR1

This last sentence mentions the relativity of describing an environment as it is directly a result of someone’s frame of reference, which was also mentioned in the literature overview. In general however, the physical characterization underlines the response of the locals, albeit with less words of appreciation and more specific details and comparisons to other parts of the country

5.1.2 Prologue: Social characteristics of the inhabitants

While the area is by many described as close-knitted and friendly, there are various responses pointing towards the decay of community life and spirit. The upcoming intervention causes other pessimistic characteristics to come about as well.

As for describing the local inhabitants, there was one respondent who summarized it by saying “...*the inhabitant simply does not exist.*” LR2 While the area is quite small each respondent had their own idea of what a typical local was. It seems that some of the different stories can be originated back to the discrepancy between “born-and-raised” locals and new-locals. For instance, one respondent (new-local) stated:

“Als een waanzinnig sterke gemeenschap, prachtig mooie mensen. We komen uit het Gooi, en het is een verademing om hier te wonen. Mensen maken zich heir druk om dingen die echt belangrijk zijn; buurtschap is belangrijk, tijd voor elkaar, de hectiek van het westen heb je hier gelukkig nog niet.” LR1

Whilst a rooted respondent mentioned:

“Niet anders dan andere plekken: het wordt allemaal individualistischer, dat is een regel van de tijd. Vroeger toen ik nog boerde, dan met slecht weer liep je naar de buurman en dronk je samen een borrel en sprak je zonder aanleiding met elkaar. Dat is niet meer, ook als ik nu een vrije dag heb loop ik niet naar de buurman want die man is ook zoveel drukker geworden en heeft er ook amper tijd meer voor. ’s Avonds zou je het nog eens een keer kunnen doen, maar we zijn allemaal hartstikke druk en rent zich suf naar sportvereniging of weet ik wat. In die zin is het veranderd. Maar dat geldt overal. Tijd staat niet stil.”... “Ik vind wel dat, in Twente noemen ze dat noaberschap en dat is bij ons minder geworden. En dat vind ik wel jammer, dat is een gemis ten opzichte van vroeger.” LR8

Another respondent, who had been living in the area for over thirty years, replied:

“Dat is wel zo, dit is een vrij hechte gemeenschap van oudsher, en als buitenstaander is het vrij moeilijk om... je wordt wel in de gemeenschap opgenomen, maar op een gegeven moment, als er iets is, dan laten ze je wel voelen dat je er eigenlijk niet bij hoort... Je wordt eigenlijk als buitenstaander nooit één van hen, ook niet als je hier dertig jaar woont.” LR9

Despite having lived there for such a long time this respondent still has the feeling that he is not fully appreciated as “one of them”. The difference in opinions and attitudes of new-locals versus the born-and-raised-locals is an interesting but difficult aspect; where to draw a line? Is a respondent who moved there at the age of six considered just as local as someone who has lived there his or her entire life? All in all this discussion is of limited relevance to this thesis, but along the way we will encounter a few more of such opinions.

The planning of the bypass has affected the social features of the area in such a way that they have gravitated towards a strong anti-governmental attitude combined with the unmistakable suspicion. The next citation describes how the project has, at least for the moment being, influenced the mindset of the locals:

“Het zijn, normaal, in deze regio, gewoon goed gezagsgetrouwe mensen die best wel een stuk respect hebben voor als de overheid normaal handelt die daar dan nooit geen moeite mee hebben. Maar ja dit soort dingen, natuurlijk in hun eigen belangen en hoe dan met hun omgegaan wordt dan komen ze wel in het verzet. En dan zijn het ook kwaai rakkers om kersen mee te eten, om het zo te zeggen.” LR7

In most cases the professionals deal with locals in debates concerning the bypass. This has a strong influence in how the professionals describe the social characteristics of the area, as they tend to automatically incorporate the locals' viewpoint on the intervention and their attitude towards the government:

“Het is een typisch plattelandsgebied, ook mentaal zeg maar, het is ook een gebied met een sociaal economische historie, sociaal economische cultuur ook, getroffen door de MKZ-crisis en dat merk je nog steeds in het wantrouwen naar de overheid toe...” “Dus ja, ik vind het een typisch rivierengebied, ook wel typisch plattelandsgebied, ook fysiek, en sociaal cultureel.” PR2

The FMD-crisis certainly left behind its marks in the local community and the suspicion towards the government proved to be a very significant factor in the project process as we will see later on in this chapter. The few responses that mentioned local traits without directly taking the attitude towards the bypass in account are the strong religious feelings, pride, subduedness and a down-to-earth mentality:

“Je hoort ook in gesprekjes of mensen elkaar wel of niet groeten op zondag omdat ze andere geloofsgezindtes zijn. Wat doordeweeks dan wel gebeurt, maar op zondag niet. Het zal niet heel veel voorkomen, maar het is bizar hè.” PR2

“Je merkt dat mensen wel trots zijn op hun gebied, ze hebben ook meegedaan aan de verkiezing voor het mooiste plekje van Nederland, LR1 heeft zich daarvoor ingezet, hebben ze de 2e plek of zo gehaald, in die jaargang, maar het kwaliteitsdenken in dit gebied is echt helemaal niet zo hoog. Dus ze maken zich wel... ze zijn wel betrokken bij hun gebied, maar dan meer vanuit het belang wat ze hebben in plaats van, nou het woord intrinsiek is altijd wat lastig maar, meer vanuit dan dat zijn denken dan vanuit de kwaliteit.” PR1

“Maar ze zijn dan, door hun cultuur zeg maar... veel geslotener... en hier praten ze altijd over de last die andere mensen met zich meebrengen in plaats van de gemoedelijkheid (een van de definities die we bij een ander project hadden) wat je ook uitnodigt om bij iemand op het erf te komen en het feit dat je een praatje maakt. En als je hier door het gebied rijdt, wordt er altijd gekeken van: wat doe je hier eigenlijk?” PR1

The following description again takes the bypass into account, resulting in the pronunciation of certain traits such as retentiveness and stubbornness that become more prominent because of the intervention:

“Ik vind ze heel erg achterdochtig, dat is echt een heel duidelijk kenmerk, en ze ja... ze zijn vooral ‘teugen’ (tegen), ze zijn in hun aanleg, door die argwaan enzovoorts, er zit weinig ambitie om na te denken wat het ook zou kunnen worden.”...“Dat heeft misschien ook te maken met dat het een hele landelijke gemeente is, maar dat zit wel in de genen... De grap is dat hier het volkslied, daar staat dus ook een regel in dat: “...alles blijft bij het oude...” dus dat zit ook nota bene in hun gemeentelijk volkslied, dat vind ik wel grappig.” PR1

“Ze zijn terughoudend, het is natuurlijk een hele bijzondere ingreep; iets wat heel veel geld kost en gemiddeld eens in een mensenleven ingezet wordt. Nou ja, we hebben volgens mij 225 dossiers waarbij we iets met de gronden moeten, dus 225 eigenaren hebben we iets mee te maken. Die mensen voelen zich allemaal aangetast in hun bedrijfsvoering. Negentig procent van die aantasting treft boeren, agrariërs. En die mensen denken waarom moet je nou zoveel geld uitgeven voor iets wat zo weinig wordt gebruikt en ook nog eens mij raakt. Dus het is nog voorstelbaar ook. Dus dat hoort er wel bij. Maar het is wel een beetje koppig volk.” PR2

If it was not clear already, the locals are strongly against the construction of the bypass. Apart from official participation moments they have tried various ways to stop the legislation or try and influence the realization. For instance, a group of locals designed and created a model of the bypass, which was presented to the project committee. A proactive move showing involvement but also being one step ahead of the professionals. In the remainder of this chapter I will illustrate the ways in which the locals participate and try to influence the process, all the while focusing on the role sense of place plays in the matter.

5.2 Sense of place dimensions

In the foregoing part we have seen how the perspective of the professionals results in a different image and characterization of the area in both a social and physical way compared to the local respondents. The description of the physical landscape was shared between both groups, but it was clear that the locals felt a stronger appreciation than the professionals. This is no revelation; one professional already mentioned how his frame of reference consists of quite a few areas throughout the Netherlands. Moreover, the locals have personally experienced the area for many years and constructed valued place meanings. As most of the interaction between professionals and locals is concentrated on the intense debate about the intervention, different ideas about the social culture of the area exist.

As was made clear in the literature review, sense of place is something very subjective and personal. Although the area can breathe an image of rurality, tranquility and idyll, a collective sense of place is a myth, one can at best talk about Genius Loci (Norberg-Schulz, 1980). Also, possibly in excess, but again I have to mention how sense of place is best thought of as a holistic concept. In the interviews a question such as “how would you describe your sense of place?” is not feasible. Hence, as is shown in the research model, the interview questions investigate the three aspects separately: attachment, identity and dependence. In the following paragraphs I will take a closer look at the place meanings as described by both respondent groups.

5.2.1 Dimension one: Attachment

The majority of locals first talked about being attached to their surroundings in a physical way. The beauty of the area and its situation near the IJssel is for many the foremost reason to stay in the area. After having said that, about half of the respondents stated that in the end, it is their social surrounding that matters the most.

The people living in the region have either very specifically chosen to move to the area for the environmental quality, or simply have been living there their whole life. This makes it a very constant and stable community, with, at first sight, little social and physical dynamics. The hypothetical question “imagine moving away from here, what would you miss more: the people or the environment?” (Adapted from Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001) should offer insight into social and/or physical attachment. The various answers often showed attachment with a nuanced and practical rationale, which may well be due to the supposed quality of the question.

“...het is niet zo dat ik zo geworteld ben dat ik denk van “nou dit is...” het is niet ene nieuwe geboortegrond geworden of zo. Maar we wonen daar in principe gewoon heel prettig, en we hebben prettig contact met de

buren, het is een fijne omgeving... ja... het is met de intentie om hier te zijn en te blijven.” LR3

“Nou... je hebt natuurlijk je persoonlijke contacten, maar je hebt overal aardige mensen, dat geloof ik wel. Ik heb niet per se wat met deze mentaliteit. Dit gebied vind ik ook mooi hier, maar ik geloof ook wel dat er elders mooie gebieden zijn. Het is meer in de persoonlijke sfeer, je contacten, je familie, je sociale leven wat je opgebouwd hebt... ja je sociale context waar je in zit hè. Ik denk dat je dat mist. Dat moet je helemaal opnieuw opbouwen. Daar hebben mensen de meeste moeite mee.” LR4

“Dat is lastig, een mens is best flexibel. Als je heel lang op dezelfde plek hebt gezeten, hoe langer je er zit, hoe minder graag je weg wil hè. Al je sociale contacten liggen er. Ik wil er eigenlijk niet weg. Moet ik er weg dan wordt het een ander verhaal en dan weet ik niet of ik per se in hetzelfde gebied weer zou komen.” LR8

“De ruimte en de plek. En dat heeft niet zozeer met de mensen te maken, dat heeft ook met ons gezin te maken. De eens is meer een mensenmens dan de ander, ik denk dat dat ook meespeelt.” LR5

For a better understanding of the next two citations: the first is from a born and raised local, whilst the second one is a respondent talking about her husband, who is born and raised in the area. Both respondents address the slow but steady change in the social makeup. As for physical changes, the land consolidation and dike reinforcement were the only serious changes that they could remember of the last decades. Despite acknowledging the pleasant community some express a stronger attachment to the environment than to their social surroundings:

“Natuurlijk laat je de mensen achter, maar ik denk dat in andere streken van het land ook wel mensen te vinden zijn waar je goed kan huizen. Ik zou het gebied denk ik wel missen en natuurlijk je kunt naar plekken waar het erg mooi is en waar je ook prima leven kunt, maar ja het gebied waar je woont, dat zal ik dan wel het meest missen denk ik. Qua mensen heb ik ook veel zien veranderen in die vijftig jaar.” LR8

“...nou dat heeft hem wel veel gestoord, en met die dijkverzwaring ook al. Dus nu heeft ie zoiets van: “Het is toch al niet het ouderlijk huis en gebied meer waar ik geboren ben.”. Dus emotioneel heeft ie natuurlijk wel gehecht, maar nu de laatste jaren niet meer omdat het al zo verandert is.”...“Maar qua binding is het de natuur en de omgeving meer dan de cultuur en de mensen?”...“Juist ja. Ik weet ook gewoon dat we hier een machtig mooi plekkie hebben.”...“Nou ja, nou, hoe moet ik dat zeggen... de binding met de burens en de mensen hier omheen... we kunnen wel met bijna iedereen... er is altijd wel iemand die... [je minder mag]. Maar de mentaliteit in heel Nederland is verandert. En die mentaliteit zal ik niet missen.” LR7

The citations above reverberate what has been cited earlier, concerning the changing mindset and the decay of old-style noaberschap. And whilst the respondents acknowledge that this shift is happening throughout the Netherlands and that they too play a role in this decline, it does influence their perception of the social environment in a negative way.

One more thing worth mentioning is the possible effect moving could have on the construction of sense of place, as was contemplated on in the literature review. This next respondent states the following:

“Je kunt wel stellen dat wij het grootste deel van ons leven hier gewoond hebben. Maar goed we zijn niet zo dat we helemaal vastzitten aan een plek. We hebben wel zoiets van “Hier heb je nu je werk, maar als je werk honderd kilometer verderop zit, nou goed, dan verkas je gewoon.” Dat is wel een beetje wat je van huis uit mee hebt gekregen, we zijn thuis ook geloof ik een stuk of negen keer verhuisd, dus wat dat betreft zijn we het wel gewend.” LR6

Continuing with the idea of moving, or in the case of the bypass possibly having to move (to be relocated), is an intriguing question in the sense of place academia. In the next section I will expound on this.

5.2.1.1 Attachment and relocation

The relocation of farmers was an element that received relatively^{xiii} much attention. The locals appeared to have become attached to “their” farmers, and the discussion on relocation and attachment seemed to be shared by all individuals. Professionals approached the subject in a rational manner and nuanced the responses of locals who focused on the emotional distress the relocations caused on both business and community life.

Of the dozen or so people that need to be relocated due to the bypass, nine of them are farmers. Although I was not able to conduct an interview with any of the farmers them^{xiv}, some of the respondents were acquainted with them and shared their stories or gave their own idea about the situation at hand. The following excerpts illustrate the diversity of the responses.

“...want ik denk dat als je hier geboren en getogen bent, dan zul je dat niet leuk vinden om hier weg te moeten. En vooral niet als... vaak gaan hier de bedrijven toch van vader op zoon weer dus, dat is al generaties lang en als je dat op moet doeken... denk dat dat mensen toch geestelijk een klap geeft.” LR7

“...met de ruilverkaveling zijn er een aantal boerderijen gebouwd, ook voor mensen van buitenaf. Dus ik denk, die worteling voor die mensen is iets minder, maar als je hier dertig jaar woont... heb je ook wel wortels natuurlijk.” LR4

“...het zijn bijna allemaal jongens die hier geboren zijn, die het bedrijf van hun vader overgenomen hebben, nadat ze door de MKZ... die jongens hebben de moed gehad om het van pa over te nemen en daarmee verder te gaan en weer een nieuwe veestal op te bouwen, en die moeten dan dus nu verkassen... dat speelt, dat kan je nooit losmaken van de emotie, dat zit eraan vast.” LR1

The above three responses are from locals considering the impact of relocation, taking into account that it concerns family businesses. The next response is also from a local, who has his own workshop and business in the bypass’ trajectory:

“Je kunt natuurlijk heel dramatisch over doen “M’n vader heeft dat bedrijf gesticht”, maar het is ook niet een bedrijf wat een of twee eeuwen oud is, zo reëel moet je dan ook zijn. Wij hebben ons gewoon nooit eigenlijk er erg druk om gemaakt.” LR6

This kind of pragmatic view is experienced by some of the professionals as well. The next citation comes from a professional who is responsible for buying all the necessary pieces of land. This also involves negotiating with people that have to be relocated.

“...eind jaren tachtig heeft hier een ruilverkaveling plaatsgevonden... dus het zijn goede bedrijven, het zijn ook echte ondernemers, het zijn geen hobbyboeren of prutsers. Die hebben een kavel opgezet, sommige veertig hectare in een vierkant eromheen, perfecter verkaveld kun je het niet hebben. Dus die zijn ook niet dat ze daar emotioneel gebonden zijn, die zeggen “Ik vind het balen want ik heb dit bedrijf van de grond af opgebouwd in 81 en daarna... maar ik weet dat ik het kan, dus ik ga dat gewoon ergens anders doen.”” PR3

Although this seems to be an easy thing to say for someone who only is involved on a professional basis, some locals agree that, apart from the emotional loss, being relocated is not that bad. This next respondent, who used to farm in the area as well, shares the following:

“Wat mij wel in de weg zit, daar moeten boeren weg, die gaan weg en komen dan allemaal redelijk goed terecht, dat vind ik niet meer dan zaak want die mensen gaan weg voor het algemeen belang die moeten ook hun geboortegrond en geschiedenis van dertig, veertig jaar achter zich laten en die worden daar redelijk ruimhartig uitgekocht. Heb ik geen moeite mee, vind ik eigenlijk een verplichting. Maar er blijven een aantal boeren zitten, en dat zijn de grote verliezers. Want die krijgen dijken door hun landschap, waar hun boerderij 200 meter vanaf ligt, met elke vracht mest moeten ze de dijk over en vervolgens elke vracht voer over de dijk

zeulen. Ik denk dat die boeren die zijn de dupe. Die krijgen uiteindelijk een boerderij waarbij ze zelf waarschijnlijk de kost nog prima kunnen verdienen maar die qua economische waarde sterk achteruit gaat. En voor die mensen vind ik het heel triest, omdat hun bedrijf niet in het traject van de hoogwatergeul ligt is uitkopen geen optie tenzij in een enkel geval een heel huiskavel erdoorheen ligt. Maar de boeren met het bedrijfsgebouw erbuiten, dat zijn eigenlijk de verliezers. En daar heb ik het mee te doen, dat vind ik jammer. Mensen hebben ook niet om die geul gevraagd.”...“En daar wordt lastig overgedaan, en dan denk ik: “probeer die dan...”; het gaat over veel geld, dat beetje land van die boeren brengt de kosten niet aan en die mensen zien hun broodwinning daar een stuk vermindert en die houden er emotionele grotere schade van. Ik groei daar wel in mee en straks fiets ik rond door het nieuwe gebied, dat gaat wel goed. Die boeren zien daar hun bedrijf eigenlijk een beetje verknald worden. Ik vind daar moet meer aandacht voor zijn.” LR8

The next citation comes from a professional respondent living in the area. He is acquainted to some of the farmers that are forced and tells a bit about those who have moved already:

“Ja ik ken diverse mensen wel persoonlijk... dus die ben ik wel eens vaker tegengekomen. De een is er wat vrolijker onder dan de ander. Ik weet nog dat de eerste agrariër die weg is gegaan, naar Groningen, daar was een hoop verdriet bij, het emotionele aspect. Maar ik heb gelezen in de krant hoe het met hem ging en hij heeft het geweldig naar zijn zin. Geweldig naar zijn zin daar. Je moet ook even de tijd nemen voor een omschakeling. Je bent gelukkig allemaal mens, en als je die emotie een plek hebt gegeven zeg je “Jongens ik zit in een nieuwe omgeving en ik kan me daar ook nog, ik word daar ook nog geaccepteerd en ik kan me daar prima vinden.” en je gaat zien dat het bedrijfseconomisch ook goed gaat... ja dat, dan komt die blijdschap bij die man, ik heb dat ook van andere gehoord, dat ie het uitstekend naar zijn zin heeft. Dat is heel goed te horen.” PR4

It seems that the emotions eventually settle down and that the process of buying out the farmers goes relatively well, sense of place notions aside:

“Dat is het leuke: De boeren hebben altijd gezegd dat wij het slechtste met hun voorhebben. De grap is dat we binnen anderhalf jaar zes van de negen bedrijven gekocht hadden. Dus hoe kun je nou slecht zijn voor de boeren als je toch een deal weet te maken. Als je gaat onderhandelen, moet je zoveel mogelijk reuring maken, en hoe meer reuring je maakt, hoe groter de kans dat je... [meer geld krijgt].” PR1

Still, within the community it remains a very sensitive issue, as this last citation shows:

“Overigens is het ook zo dat mensen die wel weg zijn gegaan, die hebben dat tijdens de onderhandelingen nooit publiekelijk kenbaar willen maken aan de buurt en zelf mensen die weg zijn gegaan – iemand zit nu in Groningen, heel tevreden - maar die krijgt achteraf nog te horen uit zijn oude omgeving “Joh, verrader”, ik weet niet of ze dat woord gebruiken maar daar komt het wel op neer. Het ligt dus heel emotioneel, heel gevoelig.” PR2

The area is relatively sparsely populated and together with the noaberschap history means that many people know each other. Social pressure as described above was mentioned by a few local respondents as well. They fear loss of the area’s agricultural identity and do not know what happens with the bought up land afterwards. Hence, the relocation of farmers is not only an attachment issue, but also has a direct influence on the identity of the place, and thus indirectly on peoples place identity.

5.2.2 Dimension two: Identity

In general, the local respondents expounded on the physical and social characteristics of the area, which of course is a part of their place identity. The earlier mentioned down-to-earth mentality of the locals made it somewhat difficult to discuss personal and individual aspects of place-identity.

While the circumstances of the interview were optimal, aiming at an open and relaxed setting in which to talk freely about personal subjects, place identity often proved to be a little too esoteric.

“Spreken ze dan hun zorgen uit over de identiteit van de omgeving?”...“Nee dat hoor ik niet zoveel, de schade wel maar identiteit als zodanig niet zoveel. Je hoort wel mensen zeggen “...het karakter gaat verloren.” maar dat wordt tegenwoordig niet meer als prominent argument aangevoerd. Ik weet niet hoe dat ten tijde van PKB (Planologische kernbeslissing) was, maar dat hoor ik nou niet zoveel meer. Het is gewoon een rivierenlandschap met dijken, en er komen gewoon dijken bij.” PR2

There is a clear focus on the agricultural identity of the area in such a way that place identity appeared to be more of a collective nature, few individual statements were made, perhaps due to the abstract nature of identifying with place. Nevertheless, there are some interesting citations from locals and professionals that shed light on the worries that arise as a consequence of the bypass and the harm it may do to the local identity. One of the interviewees expressed his worries on what would happen to this part of the local identity as a consequence of the bypass:

“Wat me wel heel erg raakt is dat, ik kom in een heel andere wereld te wonen lijkt het wel. Ik woonde echt nog in een gebied waar de landbouw de hoofdtoon voerde en waar nu acht of tien grote bedrijven weggaan. Die allemaal stoppen en daar komt... het landschap wordt flink doorsneden en ik ben bang dat het agrarisch eigene van het gebied verdwijnt. Ik ben bang dat daar wat men tegenwoordig natuurontwikkeling noemt komt; dat de boel maar op zijn beloop laten. Ik ben bang dat dat er een beetje voor terugkomt.” LR8

The farmers are a solid part of the local community and the relocation of these farmers not only has its effect on the agricultural landscape but also on the church:

“Waar ik zorgen over heb, de eerste boeren gaan weg, ik ben kerkelijk betrokken hierzo, de kerk draait voor een belangrijk deel op de boeren die hier wonen en werken, we zitten echt in een verdrietige periode dat de eerste gezinnen wegmoeten. We zitten net in deze maand in het afscheid nemen van mensen.” LR2

These citations are part of a very significant event of the local history; the FMD-crisis which we came across earlier. As this topic plays such a strong role in the somewhat limited narrative on place identity, it merits special attention.

5.2.2.1 FMD-crisis as part of the local identity

The FMD-crisis remains a vivid memory of the locals. This shared tragedy still has its influence in the project process and lingers in the attitude of the locals. The professionals however, seem not to be fully aware of the earnestness of this past experience.

The collective memory of the FMD-crisis is strongly rooted in local history and still has its influence on the local identity. When conducting the interviews, I noticed there were still graffiti tags: “Start enten!” calling out to start vaccinating. Although times of crisis can bring people together, as it did in the area, it also sparked a collective feeling of distrust towards the government. Today’s intervention brings back the memories of dealing with an external threat that seems to be unstoppable. Quite a few of the locals question the necessity of the bypass, and there are stories amongst them that suggest that the bypass is merely another excuse to get rid of the farmers and make room for nature development, the nemesis of farmers in the area:

“En het gevoel wat bij sommige boeren heerst, dat het project er komen moet met een verborgen agenda.. – de boeren moeten weg uit het gebied- ruimte voor natuurontwikkeling en recreatie dat leeft bij sommige. En het is, dat ze iemand letterlijk op zo’n informatieavond met de MKZ niet gelukt en nu gaan ze het (de boeren uit het gebied krijgen) op deze manier proberen...” LR8

“Ik denk dat ze vrij snel in de slachtofferrol kruipen; ons doet iemand iets aan. Als dat dan bewaarheid wordt (kijk naar de MKZ) komt dat hard aan, kijk naar natuurontwikkeling dan is het ook vaak zo dat de overheid over hun heen gaat en hun ondergeschikt maakt, dat versterkt dat gevoel weer.” LR1

While most locals do not believe in this story, they do question the bypass' sense of urgency. This continuous feeling of distrust has remained very strong over the years. It seems that this is partly due to the way the FMD-crisis was dealt with.

“Wat betreft de MKZ; ondanks Brinkhorst als persoon, technisch gezien heeft hij het goed aangepakt, maar hij kon niet zien wat er bij de mensen leefde. Er was geen andere mogelijkheid, hij bracht het alleen zonder mededogen, de toon die de muziek maakt. Dat ging er mis met de MKZ.” LR8

The aftermath of the FMD-crisis, including the problems concerning the compensation of the farmers in the area, has led to the current skepticism of locals. The fact that not all professionals seem to be aware of how deep the FMD-crisis has left its marks in the area has caused some frustrations already:

“De staatssecretaris, die was toen Melanie Schultz, was toen staatssecretaris, en die heeft de euvele moed gehad om op een gegeven moment te zeggen in een bijeenkomst, een bezoek wat ze hier in het gebied had waar een hele hoop boeren bij elkaar waren, door te zeggen: “Nou maar heren, is dit niet een mooie gelegenheid voor een stukje gezonde sanering in het gebied?” ja dat is een ongelofelijke stomme opmerking, waarop natuurlijk een van de boeren zei “Wat dacht je, dat we dat met de MKZ niet hier hadden gehad?” nou dat is de manier waarop ermee omgesprongen wordt.” LR1

Although it is for the state secretary perhaps not feasible to be fully up to date with every project, some of the professional respondents, who are directly involved in the project, underestimate the severity of the FMD-history in the contemporary lives of the locals:

“...de hoogwatergeul is vrij laat in de PKB gekomen en toen... die mensen voelden zich gewoon gepiepeld. En toen, op dat moment krijgen ze het gevoel van “Zie je wel, we worden door de MKZ geraakt en nu krijgen we de hoogwatergeul er ook nog overheen”. Op dat moment is die weerstand / emotie het hoogst geweest. En wat je nu ziet is dat er informatieavonden, consultatierondes... je ziet nu ook gewoon dat de plannen landen. En die MKZ, dat is nu al lang vergeten, dat is al lang achter hun gelaten, dat hebben ze geprobeerd als item in te brengen om de weerstand te duiden.” PR3

Knowing where these emotions originate from does not automatically mean that they can be dealt with, as this respondent adds:

“Maar in Veessen ligt dat heel lastig en dat heeft te maken met de MKZ die hier in het verleden is geweest, waar zij als eerste getroffen werden. Het vertrouwen in het rijk is weg...”...“...het gaat heel veel over gevoel en is allemaal gebaseerd op de MKZ-crisis en zoals die is afgerond door het ministerie. Het vertrouwen is iets tussen de oren en dat neem je niet weg.” PR3

This next respondent, a professional from Heerde, remembers the FMD-crisis very well and has a better understanding of the lingering emotions that exist amongst the farmers and the other locals. Notice how his identity as a farmers' son is of influence in his role as a professional.

“Nou, en daarbij komt ook nog een ander gevoel, natuurlijk voor onze agrariërs wat ik toch heel belangrijk vind, want ik ben ook boerenzoon. Kijk we hebben tien jaar geleden de MKZ-crisis gehad, en toen is die boer alles afgenomen wat je kunt denken. Het is de levende haven waar alles door is afgenomen door de overheid, keihard is dat gebeurd. Dus die mensen voelen zich diep in hun ziel geraakt. Die mensen kennen elk kalfje en koetje bij wijze van spreken van naam. Zo werkt dat als je dag en nacht op de boerderij bent. Dat is tien jaar geleden. En die agrariërs hebben nu weer het gevoel dat diezelfde overheid hen in de steek laat. Dan zijn daar negen bedrijven die echt moeten verdwijnen, die in de geul zitten. Die agrariërs hebben echt het gevoel van “Kijk daar heb je de overheid weer.. ik heb tien jaar geleden alles in moeten leveren, en nu weer. Ik ben zelfs m'n boerderij kwijt.” En je hebt hier nogal wat situaties die van vader op zoon overgenomen zijn, die ze uitgebreid hebben. Je moet natuurlijk nu wat meer land hebben wat grotere stallen dan dertig jaar geleden, maar het zijn wel familiebedrijven, diverse families waar het om gaat. Dat gevoel, dat gekrenkt zijn, daar kan ik me wel iets bij voorstellen moet ik zeggen.” PR4

A final quote from the respondent who used to farm in the area explains how farming is not just any kind of business. Where the professionals of the bypass can separate work and private life, this is hardly the case for a farmer. The severity of the intervention combined with uncertainty of what will happen and how things will evolve may indeed remind a bit of the FMD-crisis.

“Nee, nee, ik denk niet dat de mensen die daarmee bezig zijn dat die goed begrijpen... boer zijn is meer dan een baan, dat is een manier van leven. Je hebt daar dat bedrijf en daar ga je met hart en ziel voor en als je door zulk soort maatregelen plotseling gedwarsboemd wordt, in de wielen gereden, denk ik dat dat zwaar aankomt. Dat meen ik echt, zolang dat speelt, die boeren die echt aan de rand zitten, die staan ermee op en gaan ermee naar bed. Er gaat geen dag voorbij of die zijn er mee bezig: “Hoe gaat dit, moet ik nog investeren, moet ik zus moet ik zo.” Die boeren die weggaan, die hebben “Oeh, ik moet weg.”, dat hakt erin.” LR8

When studying sense of place dimensions, you are bound to come across responses that are difficult to clearly put in a single category. The above story altogether concerns place identity, but a single citation might just as well be put in the next section of place dependence. Sense of place dimensions studied as separate concepts, overlap. Above we can see that what one respondent considers as part of his or her place identity, the other regards as place dependence, or perhaps even a “mere” economic dependence. This especially is the case with the farmers in the area. According to the last cited respondent, farming is a way of life and a significant part of the identity of an individual and its family. Other respondents mention the rationale of the farmers, taking into account the emotional aspects, but also acknowledging the business-end of farming; you win some you lose some. And then there are respondents who consider the local farmers as die-hard farmers, not necessarily interested in the area but purely there for business purposes. In the following chapter these place dependencies are being investigated more thorough.

5.2.3 Dimension three: Dependence

The insight into the project shows that much of the debate between professionals and locals concerns aspects related to place dependence. Recurring topics were: agricultural land, the farmers’ livelihood, which has to be sacrificed for construction roads and dikes; altering the routes to and from villages in the area, in some cases by completely removing the road; farmers that in the future have to deal with a dike through their house plot and the possible flooding “once every lifetime”. And last but not least the relocation of the locals that live in the bypass’ trajectory. These examples underline why notions of dependence are likely to be used as an argument in a project process. Unlike attachment and identity, dependence is something that –to some extent- can be measured or made explicit. Two situations were focused on by the respondents: the place dependence of farmers, and the locals’ perception of safety that is being undermined by the idea of a working bypass and the dangers posed during construction.

5.2.3.1 Agricultural dependence

The suggested rationale of farmers became more apparent when discussing place dependence. The ground-based aspect of farming entails different variables which were discussed by locals and professionals and these prove to be the most accepted arguments within the sense of place construct.

The following citations show different respondents considering a farmer’s dependency on its land in terms of dimensions, soil quality, accessibility, fixed equipment and so forth. On top of that, a small insight is given on the relocation process. This first quote comes from a farmer who tells a bit about the consequences of the dike.

“Nou het grootste nadeel, ik raak een deel van m’n huiskavel kwijt, waar die dijk komt. Acht, negen hectare sowieso. Je moet met je koeien en machine elke keer die dijk over. Ik heb daar al een dijk waar ik over moet, en straks ligt er weer een dijk... en die koeien, ik heb een melkrobot, die koeien moeten zelf teruglopen naar de melkrobot. En als ze dan elke keer de dijk over moeten... dat is gewoon heel lastig om die beweiding dan rond te krijgen.” LR4

Other respondents add to that the hindrance of the construction of the dike, which in some cases comes very near to backyards and houses. People who lose land to the bypass can get compensated in various ways, financial compensation or compensation by other pieces of land. For a farmer, it would be interesting to get at least a comparable piece of land to make up for the lost part of land. This would require some sort of land consolidation which brings other issues:

“Kijk, mensen zelf hebben natuurlijk ook een goed stuk kennis van het gebied. Noem maar wat: hier ligt goede klei met goede afwatering enzovoorts, en daar ligt een laagje klei met daaronder alleen maar veen. Nou dan moet je verkavelen en dan krijg jij de slechte grond en de buurman de goeie. Kijk die mensen hebben kennis van het gebied hè. En die weten waar ze de meeste productie halen. Dat speelt allemaal mee natuurlijk. Dat is nog een heel proces, dat is nog lang niet ten einde.” LR5

Those unfortunate enough to have their farm inside the tracing of the bypass, will be bought up. Apart from possible attachment and identity issues, relocation brings a dependency issue as well:

“Het blijft ook altijd lastig natuurlijk als je hier een bepaalde kwaliteit grond hebt, en je moet naar de polder, of je moet naar Groningen, daar is de kwaliteit en de prijs van de grond anders. Het is in zo'n situatie, als je hier een x bedrag krijgt en in de polder is de grond duurder, dan krijg je dat natuurlijk niet vergoed. Dat betekent voor de eigenaar dat ie zelf ook moet investeren. Dat is voor een eigenaar ook best lastig, die zegt van “Ja ik heb nu een boerderij van vijftig hectare, daar kan ik bedrijfseconomisch uitstekend mee uit de voeten, en als ik een nieuwe van vijftig hectare wil...”, het kan niet altijd één op één over. En dat is lastig.” PR4

Having to move and start over is a serious issue, and is an interesting topic in sense of place literature (see for instance Fried, 1963). Despite the emotional rollercoaster experienced during relocation, if all goes well the end result can be positive, as we have read in an earlier citation:

“...Maar ik heb gelezen in de krant hoe het met hem ging en hij heeft het geweldig naar zijn zin. Geweldig naar zijn zin daar...”...“...dat is heel goed om te horen.” PR4

The dependency issue is not only relevant in the case of relocation. This next response, which we encountered earlier as well, tells about how farmers that are bought out are not that bad of compared to those who do not strictly have to move (and thus will not be bought out, in accordance to the legislation on relocation) but do experience the negative consequences of the bypass in their business.

“...er blijven een aantal boeren zitten, en dat zijn de grote verliezers. Want die krijgen dijken door hun landschap, waar hun boerderij 200 meter vanaf ligt, met elke vracht mest moeten ze de dijk over en vervolgens elke vracht voer over de dijk zeulen. Ik denk dat die boeren die zijn de dupe.”...“En daar heb ik het mee te doen, dat vind ik jammer. Mensen hebben ook niet om die geul gevraagd.”...“En daar wordt lastig overgedaan, en dan denk ik: “Probeer die dan...”; het gaat over veel geld, dat beetje land van die boeren brengt de kosten niet aan en die mensen zien hun broodwinning daar een stuk vermindert en die houden er emotionele grotere schade van. Ik groei daar wel in mee en straks fiets ik rond door het nieuwe gebied, dat gaat wel goed. Die boeren zien daar hun bedrijf eigenlijk een beetje verknald worden. Ik vind daar moet meer aandacht voor zijn.” LR8

To which he adds:

“Die boeren die weggaan, die hebben “Oeh, ik moet weg.” dat hakt erin. Op een gegeven moment is dat zover; ze weten dat ze weg moeten gaan, ze hebben geld ontvangen of ze hebben grond gekocht. Die kunnen weer vooruit kijken. Dat ze weg moeten raken ze wel weer kwijt. De boeren die blijven zitten, die blijven daarmee zitten. Die zijn er nu nog, op elke verjaardag is het de hoofdmoot waar erover gepraat wordt, op elke verjaardag, ik zit nog in dat circuit. Er gaat geen dag voorbij of die mensen zijn ermee bezig. Ik denk dat dat niet genoeg onderkend wordt.” LR8

This example illustrates how ambivalent the process may be for the involved locals, but also for the professionals. Not a single case is comparable to the other. In the next part however, there is a reasonable agreement among the locals.

5.2.3.2 Sense of security

Next to agricultural place dependence, the threatened sense of security due to the construction and realization of the bypass was a hot topic amongst locals and thus professionals. Locals fear accidents during the two to three year construction period of the dykes, which involves heavy material driving through the area. Another concern is that of decreased accessibility in case emergency service is required. The professionals have weighed the different options to ensure safety during constructions, and nuance the anxiety of the locals concerning the accessibility; emergency services will comply to the national standards as required by law.

The following citation describes many of the above mentioned concerns:

“M’n kinderen moeten op de fiets naar Heerde, dus moeten iedere dag twee keer zes meter omhoog en omlaag, infrastructuur verandert, we zullen om moeten rijden. Je hebt een paar jaar lang overlast van vrachtwagens, veiligheid van m’n kinderen die naar Veessen fietsen, auto die in de winter van boven tot onder onder de klei zit. Ik heb een oud huis, ze hebben hier een drempel vooraan gelegd, we hadden al een keer vrachtverkeer, dan wordt het echt scheuren in het huis. Ik heb een oud huis, een andere fundering, dat dreunt aan alle kanten. Wat gebeurt er met m’n grondwaterpeil, het wordt wel een experiment of ze dat grondwaterpeil gescheiden gaan houden, dat is nog op weinig plekken gebeurt, een redelijke black box.” LR2

Somewhere between 2012 and 2015, two dikes will have to be constructed from around eight kilometer each. This entails a huge logistic task of moving the required sand from the IJssel to locations inside the area. There is an intense debate going between the locals and the professionals on the route of the construction roads. Whatever the outcome may be, the increased traffic of particularly large vehicles is a threat to the safety of cyclists:

“Als je nagaat dat op vier plaatsen over de dijk (in ieder geval drie, maar waarschijnlijk vier, eentje hier vlak voor) de grond wordt aangevoerd vanaf de IJssel, die wordt met kranen vanaf de schepen op dumpers geladen, en drie jaar lang, ze zegen 2.5, maar je hebt natuurlijk altijd een tijd dat je pech hebt met de vorst of weet ik veel wat... vanaf 's morgens zeven tot 's avonds zeven, gaan die dumpers met grond, de dijk over... en dat gaat hier vlakbij en dat gaat daar dat gaat daar... dus dat geeft een enorm stuk onveiligheid, er zijn een hoop kinderen die hier langsgaan naar school, het is een behoorlijke doorgaande weg vanaf de pond... dus de veiligheid komt heel erg in het geding.” LR1

“...er worden dertig dumpers per uur over deze weg, iedere twee minuten komt er een vrachtwagen van acht hoog en mijn kleine meisje fietst daar met haar zestien inch wielen naast... nou. Ik kan me niet voorstellen dat er in die twee jaar geen één ongeluk zal gebeuren met zo'n grote dumper. Over dat soort emoties heb je het met elkaar, die spelen. Ja dat ga je niet in een zaal vol mensen roepen, iedereen gaat dan inhoud geven aan de andere kant: verslagen maken enzovoorts. Maar het verhaal erachter is er niet.” LR2

The safety during construction is an issue that receives serious attention from the professionals as well, but the responses are more rational. In the next excerpts we can see that this professional is not entirely sure about the necessity of one of the proposed solutions:

“Nu heel erg, die bouwwegen discussie, daar worden ook wel veel stokpaardjes bereden. Dat de veiligheid van de kinderen zo belangrijk is – dat vinden wij natuurlijk ook, het ergste wat je kan gebeuren is dat er een ongeluk plaatst vindt -, maar we denken dat we met verkeersmaatregelen vrij rationeel gewoon die situatie op orde kunnen brengen. En voorbeelden in het land laten zien dat, hoe simpel ook, klaar-overs heel goed werkt. Volgens de mensen is dat onzin en kan het niet; ze staan niet echt open voor andere argumenten.”...“dat ze het niet kunnen voorstellen dat het een oplossing is. Ze bereiken er ook iets mee, want de afgelopen stuurgroep is een half miljoen beschikbaar gesteld om een ongelijkvloerse kruising te realiseren, dus tja. Voor

iets wat misschien een jaar of twee jaar maximaal duurt.” PR2

Another safety issue that is present amongst the locals is the decreased accessibility of the area. The realization of the bypass is at the expense of several roads running through the area and in the scenario of a bypass in use, there are only two or three routes connecting “The island” to the “Main land”.

“Wat meespeelt, de bereikbaarheid voor brandweer en ambulances, ook als die hoogwatergeul ooit in gebruik gaat komen, dan geldt dat ook dat hier grote problemen dreigen met bereikbaarheid.” LR1

“...als er iemand een hartaanval komt kan er een ambulance komen, als er brand is wanneer is de brandweer er dan? Dat zijn echt heel belangrijke thema’s, dat zijn echt de grootste zorgen die de mensen hebben. Dat zijn rechtstreeks concrete zorgen...” PR2

The fear of inaccessibility is a subject that the professionals have thoroughly investigated. On various information evenings presentations^{xv} have been held by the responsible authorities, such as the fire department and the ambulance service with maps and graphs indicating that the maximum travel times as required by law will always have to be met, and that not much changes in the event of a “blue” bypass.

“..bereikbaarheid van het gebied mocht de geul een keer meestromen: kan de ambulance/brandweer er op tijd zijn noem maar op. Daar hebben we eerst energie ingestoken en daarvoor is ook die enquête in het gebied uitgezet. We hebben de bewoners en klankbordgroep geholpen, klankbordgroep heeft een advies aan de stuurgroep geschreven, dit is ook in interactie met elkaar gedaan.” PR2

Professionals who are a bit more distant from the actual project cannot always be deeply involved and can make mistakes similar to the one Melanie Schultz made earlier. Fortunately, there was another respondent present to point it out.

“...ik kan me wel voorstellen dat als je nu in Veessen woont dat je het idee hebt dat je vlakbij Heerde woont, en dan straks heb je nog maar een paar overgangen waar er nu twintig zijn. Als er een keer hoogwater komt, je zit niet op een eiland, maar op een soort schiereiland waar je maar op een paar plekken, twee, het gebied uit kan. En dat is op zich wel bijzonder, want voor je gevoel woon je nu vlakbij Heerde en straks woon je op een eiland... maar dat is één keer in een mensenleven en dan nog niet eens een jaar, maar één of twee maanden... het is gewoon een spektakel dan... [2^o respondent]: “Nee dat voelen zij niet! Maar dat is de discussie veiligheid en bereikbaarheid die dan speelt... die is met name in Veesse aanwezig, een stukje angst voor de toekomst.” PR3

The more distant the professionals have from the actual project and the local processes, the less emotionally involved they are. That is no shocking conclusion of course, but since many of the decisions are made at higher (hence more distant) levels, how can seemingly insignificant place meanings be of influence in that decision process? It is time to take a closer look if these sense of place notions have been brought forward in the project process. And if they indeed have been discussed, how do both parties deal with them?

5.3 Sense of place in the project process

In the previous chapter we have gained an idea about the various place meanings. In this chapter I will investigate whether these, or similar arguments, have been brought forward by the locals. This data was gathered by asking the local respondents to elaborate on their attempts to influence the project and process; “what kind of arguments did you use”, or when they were talking about place meanings, “did you use this as an argument?” and so forth. The professionals were asked similar questions, whether they had noticed the occurrence of place meanings being brought up as an argument and if so, how did they respond to them? The first part of this chapter covers various statements, whilst in the second and third paragraph I will respectively expound on the relocation of locals and the atelier evenings.

5.3.1 The occurrence of place meanings

In general, place meanings were spontaneously mentioned in the beginning of the project. When these first emotions settled and the limited effect of such arguments had become apparent, people sought rational arguments to back up their emotional cases. Apart from that, place meanings again appeared during the ateliers and relocation.

The professionals noticed that emotionally driven individual arguments related to place meanings were most prominent during the first phase of the project. More precisely from the moment the locals comprehended “this is really going to happen... and it will affect us!” The professionals explained in the interviews that in this phase very little had yet been decided^{xvi} and thus struggled with answering questions that concerned someone’s farm or backyard, as the trajectory of the bypass was not even decided upon.

“Dat is bij de eerste gesprekken. Ik denk dat dat iets is van een proces”...“Dat is dat hele emotionele traject, maar dat heb je volgens mij bij alle grote projecten die je uitvoert, dat je in het begin weerstand en emotie hebt en dat daarna berusting ontstaat.” PR3

“...waar zit de heftigheid, de heftigheid zit aan het begin. De komst van de geul was een moeilijke, en dat zij niet (het alleenrecht hadden om te bepalen) mochten bepalen hoe die geul loopt, dat was ook een moeilijke. En daar heeft de heftigheid gezeten... In dit proces is vooral aan het begin heel scherp geweest, en zijn er bepaalde zaken fout gelopen, vooral aan het begin.” PR6

To a professional it may be obvious what matters when, but as this local respondent mentions it is difficult for them as lay people to assess what matters when in terms of relevant arguments and the various project stages:

“...dan denken ze van: “Ah dat kom ik daar straks in het project pas tegen, dat kan ik nog helemaal niet weten” of “Ah das al lang geweest”, “Ach dat speelt helemaal niet”. Voor ons is dat niet helder...” LR3

This struggle of the professionals was also visible to the locals, many of whom quickly grew annoyed with the uncertainty and ambiguity of the project so far. When this next local was asked how he had tried to influence the project the response was:

“Gewoon in het schrijven van brieven, via de bewonersgroep, informatie avonden heb ik een aantal van meegemaakt, maar daar kwam ik zo kneitergefrustreerd vandaan; de onbenulligheid en het amateurisme waarmee dat gebeurde. Waarvan ik dacht, ja daar ga ik me niet aan frustreren, daar stop ik gewoon mee. Ik heb het hartstikke druk, dus ik heb gewoon een mentale knip gemaakt, ik ga daar geen energie aan verbranden.” LR1

The residents’ group is a part of the sounding board: the official board of locals who represent the broad variety of local concerns. The chairperson of the sounding board –who is externally hired and not a local– represents the board in the meetings with the steering group. During the interviews, the locals expressed their worries and skepticism for a number of issues: firstly, the sounding board consists of various stakeholders with different interests, there is a small group of two inhabitants, but there are also entrepreneurial groups, nature groups, recreation groups and so forth. Moreover, during the meetings of the sounding board, a single unanimous advice must be constructed to present to the steering group. With so many different interests, this is a very difficult task. The fact that the chairperson has no roots in the area is also something that worries many of the respondents, they question if someone who is not involved in an emotional way is able to represent their worries.

“Op een gegeven moment zijn de boeren ook uit de klankbordgroep gestapt, die waren niet blij met de gang van zaken daar. Die vonden het ook niet prettig dat, ze moesten ook elke keer een unaniem advies uit de klankbordgroep komen. Nou ja soms zijn de belangen zo tegenstrijdig dat je geen unaniem advies kunt uitbrengen. Dus die zijn er uitgestapt...” LR7

“Het is natuurlijk heel makkelijk om te zeggen: “De bewoners zijn er nauw bij betrokken.” Dat is dus niet zo, dat is dus absoluut niet zo. Het is een heel makkelijk statement, maar de praktijk is anders, want de plekken waar de bewoners tot nu toe heel actief bij betrokken zijn geweest, dat heeft allemaal uiteindelijk niets opgeleverd, want zodra daar de conclusies van getrokken werden zaten daar meer de meningen van specialisten en mensen van buitenaf in dan dat daar de mensen van burgers tussen zaten. En dat is nog steeds zo...” LR1

On the official sounding board there is little room for sense of place notions. Their task entails preparing a unanimous advice to the steering group who consider it and present their final advice to the responsible politicians. This member of the sounding board first explains that there is simply no room for such arguments and then expresses her agitation on how other locals do sometimes come up with such arguments during the open information evenings:

“Nou ik denk dat ze daar in Den Haag al helemaal niet gevoelig voor zijn. Voor zulk soort argumenten, omdat ze dat niet raakt, ze kunnen zich daar helemaal niets bij voorstellen. Ook zo’n besluit bij de MKZ, om dan alles maar te ruimen; dat heeft hier diep ingehakt. Nou ik denk dat mensen die emoties die daarmee gepaard gaan, zich helemaal niet voor kunnen stellen, en daar misschien ook helemaal geen boodschap aan hebben.”...“...wat uiteindelijk toch geldt zijn de centen en de tijd. En daar doen emoties geen rol spelen.” LR5

“En ze zijn ook erg boos van hoe het gaat. We zijn natuurlijk vanaf het begin af aan betrokken geweest, ik heb ook altijd gedacht dat het wel niet zo’n vaart zou lopen, maar als ik zie wat voor een argumenten er werden aangedragen in het begin om er niet voor te zijn (tegen), dan denk ik van “Ja, in Den Haag doen ze daar niets mee”. Waren in mijn ogen niet echt objectief. In de zin van: “Moet je zien, ons bedrijf gaat kapot” en “We hebben de MKZ-crisis ook al gehad, dit is niet eerlijk”, ja en dat zijn geen argumenten denk ik om een discussie als deze te winnen.” LR5

This same respondent points out a difficulty that should sound familiar to many experts and which we earlier encountered in the introduction as being one of the key issues when it comes to participation:

“Nou ja, argumenten waarvan ik denk: “Ja dat is je eigen straatje, maar dat zet geen zoden aan de dijk”. Persoonlijke belangen hebben in zo’n proces geen waarde. En dat is wel het cirkeltje waarin mensen zich iets kunnen voorstellen,. Daar bovenuit stijgen, dat kunnen de meeste mensen niet.” LR5

A professional adds that in such situations individual worries are to be expected, but the goal is to overcome these personal issues and together look at the possibilities instead:

“Dat is heel verschillend per onderwerp, per persoon... per fase. Uiteindelijk blijft het heel moeilijk om van een afstand rationeel de dingen te kunnen beschouwen, voor alle bewoners. Dat is heel begrijpelijk, want je bent verbonden met dit gebied, dit gaat over jouw toekomst, het heeft consequenties voor jouw kinderen die naar school fietsen, dus dat is allemaal begrijpelijk alleen je hoopt af en toe dat je, nadat je door de eerste emotie heen bent, dat je met elkaar een gesprek kan voeren over “Maar waarom zeg jij dat nou, en hoor je ook waarom wij dat zeggen?” want uiteindelijk, daar gaat het over, omdat uiteindelijk daar een betere oplossing uitkomt dan dat je... ook wij, maar ook zij, blijven hangen in het herhalen van je argumenten, maar dat blijft gewoon heel lastig.” PR1

Despite that emotions play a significant role in such a radical intervention process, they are of questionable validity in arguments and discussions. In order to defend a patch of old trees or a historic relic that is under threat because it is in the trajectory of the bypass, locals were unlikely to use sense of place related arguments. What happened was that rational arguments were sought to argue for the conservation of said patch of trees:

“...je merkt dat de emotionele argumenten het op zich niet zo hard doen en je ziet mensen of groepen mensen inhoudelijke argumenten zoeken om aan hun emotionele ding tegemoet te komen. Dat is wel een fenomeen

wat heel veel optreed. Emotionele argumenten hebben weinig zin, dus “Doe die maar weg.”, en dan komen er een hele hoop inhoudelijke argumenten op tafel en dan moet je je natuurlijk altijd afvragen hoe steekhoudend die dan eigenlijk zijn, maar daarmee lukt het nog wel eens een keertje zeg maar.” LR6

The more severe the situation, the more direct the contact is between professionals and locals. This would suggest that in such cases there is room for individual and possibly sense of place based argumentation. In the upcoming part I will again turn to the relocation of locals, as it concerns the most dire operation of the project.

5.3.2 Relocation

The severity of a relocation requires careful interaction between professionals and locals. It turned out that sense of place related arguments do come up and are considered by the professionals. That being said, the complexity of the intervention makes it difficult to actually deal with specific place meanings. Only if the argumentation is solid, preferably measurable and –very important- the alternative solution does not obstruct the project too much, place dependence seems a rational enough dimension to be considered a valid argument.

The few situations in which relocation is necessary require a tailor-fit solution and this involves frequent and direct contact between various professionals and the family that faces relocation. The same –albeit to a lesser extent- can be said for locals losing land to the bypass. As we have read earlier, it is an emotional process and should be dealt with carefully. Although not all local respondents agreed, in general it seems that the relocations thus far went fairly smooth. Moreover, place meanings were an actual subject during such negotiations. Not surprisingly, most often it concerned dependency aspects, as this next citation recapitulates the matter:

“...met name met het uitkopen van boeren of het verplaatsen van bedrijven hebben dat soort dingen echt wel gespeeld. De persoonlijke aanpak van “Okay wij hadden dit bedacht maar nou hebben we met de veehouder daar gesproken en dit zou heel vervelend voor hem uitpakken en als we nou net even zo doen is het voor hem een stuk beter en voor ons eigenlijk niet zo heel veel vervelender.”. Dat soort dingen zijn er geweest, en dan wordt het aangepast. En het is ook met name: is het redelijk/makkelijk aan te passen. Als het echt een heel grote aanpassing in het traject betekent, dan doen ze het gewoon niet. Want dan kom je te vaak van dat soort dingen tegen en dan gaat het gewoon niet gebeuren. Het klinkt natuurlijk allemaal heel redelijk als ze met zo’n verzoek komen: “Ah nee maar we doen op verzoek het nu anders.”. Maar dat hoor je dan ook in de argumentatie, dat zijn redelijk neutrale afwegingen vanuit het project bekeken. En dan doen ze dat wel, ze zitten er ook niet onmenselijk in of zo.” LR5

The next citation regards a very specific situation in which a professional recalls the story of a farmer who prefers not to be bought out as he has adapted the farm to the needs of his disabled son. The respondent argued how the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, and that only very solid (rational) arguments can slightly bend such rules, as long as it does not harm the rest of the project:

“...zo hebben we ook wel een aantal dilemma’s gehad, dat een boer precies langs de dijk zit, daar zit echt tien meter tussen, waarvan wij dachten, misschien is het beter dat wij over zijn huis en bedrijf heen gaan, want dan moet ie tenminste weg en dan kan die ergens anders opnieuw starten. Maar die man wilde gewoon blijven zitten die zegt: “Ik heb liever tien meter langs m’n schuur.”, die wilde toch liever blijven wonen. Inrichting van zijn huis is afgestemd op zijn gehandicapte zoon. Zijn argumenten waren valide, maar wij dachten in eerste instantie: “...weet je, die man is heel erg geholpen dat we geen enkel dilemma laten ontstaan of we nou wel of niet moeten uitkopen, dus rücksichtslos met die dijk eroverheen.” Zo beoordeel je dat op het systeem, maar als dan blijkt dat die man veel liever wil blijven zitten, dan schuiven wij een beetje op. En dan honoreer je dat.” PR1

However, other professionals, such as those involved with the buying of the lands necessary for the bypass, cannot take sense of place into account when for instance assessing the financial compensations. The next

few excerpts summarize a few of the steps in such a process:

“Dan ga je gewoon één op één met partijen zitten en dan ga je kijken van “Stel dat dit jou bedrijf is, en je ziet die kaart, hoe zie je dat dan zelf? Wetende dat die dijk hier komt? Denk daar zelf eens over na, welke grond zou mooi passen in jouw bedrijf, denk er even over na wat je kwijtraakt, dat is ongeveer wat je terugkrijgt, niet veel meer.” Dan merk je snel al; het eerste gesprek is iedereen tegen. Maar dan merk je wel dat ze met een soort huiswerk naar huis gaan en een week later op het bureau zitten met een plannetje; tekeningetjes gemaakt. Dan is het nog wel steeds tegen, maar wel tegen met een eigen idee over hoe het ook zou kunnen.”

PR3

He argues that acknowledging the emotional issues an intervention can create or revive is necessary in order to come to a rational state in which negotiations can take place:

“...je wil zorgen dat mensen redelijk gaan handelen, en op het moment dat je de emotie laat gaan, dan ga je redelijk handelen. Dus dan moet je iemand vragen/tot de orde roepen: “Luister, we hebben er begrip voor, wat er gebeurt is ook verschrikkelijk, maar terug naar nu en wat hierna komt.”, en dan gaat het automatisch wat minder meespelen.” PR3

An example of such a situation in this particular case is also quickly found:

“...maar ik heb ook meegemaakt dat op een voorlichtingsavond, iemand met tranen in z'n ogen zat te vertellen hoe verschrikkelijk die MKZ was, even dat te laten merken, en daarna te zeggen van “Maar gelukkig hebben we dat allemaal gehad.”. En dat vind ik ook wel sterk, dat vind ik wel knap, want het zit hem heel hoog, maar hij brengt het niet in verband met wat hier gebeurt. Het heeft ook niks met elkaar te maken.” PR3

But in the end, when it comes to dealing with non-rational arguments, there is little that can be done; laws and protocols dictate the steps that should be taken and these do not allow for exceptions:

“Als een boer zegt: “Ja ik vind het waardeloos dat ik een bedrijf heb wat op twee locaties ligt...” dat klinkt als iets wat meetbaar is, maar maak het maar meetbaar; wat bedoel je daar dan mee? “Bedoel je dat wanneer je het bedrijf te koop zet met een dijk er dwars doorheen dat het minder waard is?” “Ja dat bedoel ik!”, nou dat is een redelijk argument, daar kunnen we iets mee. Bedoel je dat iedere keer om die dijk heen moet rijden om bij het andere perceel te komen is ook een redelijk argument. Maar het waardeloos vinden dat er een dijk door je perceel heenloopt, daar kunnen we niks mee, dat is niet meetbaar. Je moet alles kunnen meten en uit kunnen leggen. Wij maken een taxatie, ik moet van de opdrachtgever ergens akkoord voor krijgen en die vraagt op een gegeven moment “Hoe kom je daar nou bij?” en dat moet dan geen natte vingerwerk zijn. Dat moet onderbouwd zijn.” PR3

In the next paragraph, I will focus on the occurrence of sense of place based argumentation during the ateliers.

5.3.3 Ateliers

The ateliers allowed plenty sense of place related input, which brings a downside as well. The input does not necessarily lead to concrete measures, which caused frustration among the participants. Furthermore, the many suggestions by the divided locals provided the professionals with a broad selection of options to choose from, reminding somewhat to the tragedy of the commons.

By hosting several open ateliers, the project team attempted to involve locals and to stimulate thinking about the possibilities and sharing their ideas about the qualities of the area. In theory an atelier is a very solid tool in a participation process, getting various people together to talk about the issues at hand. It also is an excellent opportunity for professionals to get familiar with the locals' relationship to the area. On the other hand, the open character where “anything goes” can also cause false expectations and has various other downsides as the next citations will show.

“Ten eerste is daar dus niet goed in gecommuniceerd, want er zijn verwachtingen gewekt, - de mensen die het deden zijn echt van goede wil, daar gaat het niet om - maar het inschattingsvermogen... het inlevingsvermogen van diegene die er planmatig bij zijn betrokken ligt op een heel ander vlak dan het inschattingsvermogen van de mensen die hier fysiek, omdat ze hier wonen bij betrokken zijn. Daar zit zo'n gat tussen. En daar zijn beide partijen zich niet van bewust denk ik. Daar komt bij dat vanuit de bewoners elke autoriteit geargwaand wordt; “Wie ben jij dat je zegt dat je dit...”. LR6

What became apparent during the ateliers, and which was discussed earlier in this thesis, was the separation between “old” and “new” locals. Whereas the born-and-raised locals were in favor of attracting new people to the area as to preserve the shops and boost community life, the new locals specifically moved to the area for the rural idyll. The following respondent points out that disagreement on basis of different place meanings was something that occurred within the local group as well:

“Maar emotionele argumenten... daar werden we zelf ook al zo meegenomen, dat daar geen aandacht voor was, daar kan een projectleider of een projectgroep kan daar niks mee, dat emotionele wat er speelde is misschien meer in de groep, tussen de mensen die hier roots hadden versus de mensen die hier nieuw kwamen wonen...” LR1

“Op een bepaald moment zitten we met de werkgroep om tafel, acht tot tien man, als ik dan rond kijk dan zie ik één of twee mensen die echt wortels in dit gebied hebben en de rest is hier gekomen, heeft eigenlijk maar een belang en dat is zo min mogelijk reuring of poespas in het gebied, want dat is de reden dat ze hier ooit een huis gekocht hebben. Die zijn hier voor de rust en eenvoud gekomen. Dus op het moment dat ik roep: “Nu is de tijd rijp, er is nu aandacht voor het gebied, laten we om de vereniging en de kerk en alles in het gebied wat leven in te blazen, dertig huizen bouwen voor dertig inwoners!”, dan slaat dat deel van de werkgroep slaat op hol. Terwijl ik denk dat als je hier gewoon het gebied doorgaat, dat bij mensen met roots hier daar best draagvlak voor was om wat meer jonge gezinnen deze kant op te krijgen.” LR2

Such diametric opinions within the locals make it difficult for them to get the most out of their input in the project process. Not only because of the diffuse support but also it presents the project team with various options to choose from, as the next few citations explain:

“En wat je zag is dat er ook nog een gevaar in schuilt dat je heel druk aan het brainstormen en verzamelen bent, dus je krijgt een enorme kaartenbak aan ideeën voor zo'n projectgroep aan, waarbij ze er gewoon iets uit kunnen trekken zo van: “Ja, het komt uit de informatieavond, het is door het gebied aangedragen.”, waardoor je gewoon een blokkendoos maakt voor alle dingen die ze willen doen... “Het komt uit een informatieavond, dus het is door de bewoners aangedragen.”. Ja, dat heeft één iemand, één iemand heeft dat aangedragen. Ik had echt het idee dat ik gebruikt werd.” LR2

Another seemingly helpful move that caused much frustration among the locals was the assistance of a specialist for each atelier group:

“...wat ze in het begin hadden gedaan, werd het in groepjes gedeeld van acht personen en er zat iemand bij die alles opschreef. Maar er zaten ook één of twee mensen bij vanuit het projectteam/provincie, die waren ingehuurd, die praatte ook mee; “Hebben jullie daaraan gedacht, vergeet je dat niet.”, en dat werd allemaal in het verslag opgeschreven. En later werd het verslag gepresenteerd, en juist die dingen stonden er allemaal in, die kwamen er allemaal uit! Niet uit het gebied, maar wel door die mensen ingebracht.” LR4

“...we hadden atelier leefbaarheid, atelier ruimte, atelier met de boeren, ik denk dat er misschien wel vijftig, zestig bewoners uit dit kleine gebied betrokken zijn geweest... alle vijf-zes-zeven avonden daar tijd aan besteed hebben. Aan het eind komt er een verslag van al die bijeenkomsten, en wat zijn de argumenten die er genoemd worden: de argumenten van de specialisten die er één of twee keer bij zijn...” LR1

Apart from how the ateliers would be evaluated by the locals, the interviews showed that indeed much energy had been put into involving the locals and getting them to think about the different possible scenarios. This includes the possibility to discuss place meanings, as we have seen in this chapter. This next final quote

bridges some of the issues that we have read above with the evaluation of the project process thus far, which is the focus point of the next chapter.

“...daar zet je al een toon naar de teleurstelling dat het inderdaad doorgaat, maar daarmee wek je geen vertrouwen in het gebied en ben je ook niet duidelijk naar wat kan, als je had gezegd: “Jongens we willen graag horen, maar dit en dit zijn de beperkingen.”. Had een kader gesteld, dan was het misschien zinvoller geweest. Of het positief was geworden, weet ik niet, want het is natuurlijk wel een ingreep die veel pijn doet in het gebied, maar ik denk dat dat beter was geweest.”LR1

5.4 What matters when evaluating the project-process?

In this chapter I will look at what the local respondents find relevant when evaluating the project process. A normative evaluation of the project process does not contribute to a better understanding of the role of sense of place per se, hence I will try to steer clear of such responses, unless they relate to place meanings. Asking the respondents to evaluate the process unquestionably results in the assessing and grading of the proceedings so far, but also offers an opportunity to investigate the motives that argue for the evaluation. Before going into further detail I will first deal with the questionable necessity of the project, since this is not actually relevant when evaluating the project process, but at the same time is partly responsible for the negative attitude of the locals.

5.4.1 Questioning the necessity of the bypass

By now it should not come as a surprise that, of the local respondents, few people were happy about the state of affairs. In order not to drown in the extensive data on one single argument, I will first summarize this most prominent reason why locals share the negative attitude towards the bypass. From the very beginning of the project, there were serious doubts about the necessity of the intervention:

“Dat mevrouw Melanie-Schultz op een gegeven moment ook zegt van “Ja het is arbitrair, maar we doen het.”. Nou dan hou je het niet tegen. Maar dat maakt het niet makkelijker verteerbaar.” LR5

We have already come across various arguments for instance the conspiracy-like “getting rid of the farmers and making way for nature development”. The interviews also showed how some locals explored the exciting world of hydrology in order to critically question the models and theories on which the bypass is based. Another argument frequently brought up was that other, less severe interventions such as dredging the IJssel and the clearing of the floodplains would have the desired effect without having to invest in what some respondents called a “prestigious showcase” and a “toy for Rijkswaterstaat”.

“...de basis van de hele aanleg blijft natuurlijk altijd nog meespelen; het is zo, en daar stappen we overheen: we zijn ermee geconfronteerd het gaat gebeuren klaar. Je kan blijven stampvoeten en mopperen maar daar schiet je niks mee op. Voor driekwart van de mensen geldt dat nu ook; het is zo. Maar als je je realiseert dat het puur op aannames en een prestigieuze project is geworden, wat niet bewezen noodzakelijk is voor de Ruimte voor de rivier projecten, dan is dat zuur. Maar goed, dat is een station wat we gepasseerd zijn.” LR1

“Ik kan nog wel blijven jammeren dat er ooit een besluit is genomen om die nevengeul hier aan te leggen, maar dat heeft geen enkele zin natuurlijk. Ja daar moet je niet in blijven hangen, je moet daar verder mee. We kunnen daar niks in veranderen, dat is een keihard gegeven, dat is vastgelegd in wettelijke regelgeving en zo werkt dat in ons land. En op zich ben ik daar ook wel blij mee. Het systeem in Nederland is soms wel wat ingewikkeld, maar aan de andere kant moeten we blij zijn dat er nog wel ruimte is voor inspraak. Dus dat vind ik een groot goed.” PR6

Setting the debate on the bypass' necessity aside, as many of the locals have done as well, it is time to look at what factors matter when evaluating the actual process instead of evaluating the project. This part of the interviews showed the strongest contrast between the professionals and locals; locals concentrated on the things that went wrong and the professionals tended to focus on the things that went well. Specifically asking a local for a positive item of the process showed that there were small things that “...could have gone worse”.

Asking a professional what they could have done better showed that they were aware of some of the missteps, but they were unaware of how critical some of the locals were on those points. Perhaps it is because of the experience the professionals have in dealing with such processes that they are better able to reflect on their own role. And whilst most of the critique from the locals is acknowledged by the professionals, the project team has to endure much criticism and deal with many complaints only because they are the direct contact point in the area^{xvii}. This is part of the job, but it is unfortunate that these complaints reflect back in the process evaluation.

5.4.2 Introduction continued

In the remainder of this chapter I will expound on four components of the project process on which much critique had been given by the locals, critique that in some cases was acknowledged by the professionals. The importance of clear communication is in no way underestimated as we could read earlier, but it remains difficult when the various professionals have not reached a consensus on an argument or in an uncertain situation:

“We hadden het eerst over eens in de honderd jaar en om een of andere reden staat er nu ineens één keer in een mensenleven. Wij weten eigenlijk niet precies... het is alleen vervangen voor een zachter argument wat niet precies eens in de honderd jaar is. Waarom zou dat nou zo zijn? Er heeft nog nooit iemand helder uit kunnen leggen wat dat nou betekent; “Ja, maar dat geeft meer houvast!” nou, ik kan me beter voorstellen wat eens in de honderd jaar is dan eens per mensenleven. Daar zitten altijd van dat soort dingen achter dus je... ja... op het moment dat er ook maar iets aan getoerd wordt en het eerste stuk is je al niet duidelijk gemaakt, dan is het eerste wat je denkt “Ja daar gaan we weer.”. En dat is wel kenmerkend voor hoe dingen lopen denk ik, en dat zou niet moeten.” LR5

Part of communication, but dealt with separately because it received much attention from the professionals as well, is expectation management:

“Want als jij inspraakavonden gaat houden en je suggereert dat eigenlijk alles nog mogelijk is terwijl in grote lijnen alles al vast ligt... tja. En mensen komen dan daar na die tijd achter, ja, dan is dat natuurlijk niet bevorderlijk voor zo'n goede relatie, om het maar even zo te zeggen.” LR7

Both professional and local respondents contemplated on the limited added value of a participatory process. Paragraph 5.4.5 of this chapter will focus on those responses:

“Maar misschien moet je wel gewoon zeggen dat participatie gewoon niet werkt. Klaar. Dan schep je ook geen verwachtingen en hoef je je ook niet te verantwoorden. Maar dat is bijna feodaal, ik denk dat je dat er ook niet doorkrijgt.” LR4

Finally, a paragraph on the supposed lack of personal involvement connects this chapter to the next.

5.4.3 Communication

The communication between locals and professionals proved to be a vital point in the evaluation of the project process. The locals were critical on the communication process and while the professionals agreed to some of the criticism, they seem to underestimate the agitation caused by uncertainty and trivial communication flaws.

Interaction between professionals and locals has a variety of goals. This interaction is often difficult, in this case both groups have almost opposing desires. Still then, participation and informing can help to come up with a shared language, allows definitions to be made clear and facilitates a dialogue in which matters can be discussed. In this way, communication is a significant element of the project process and quite possibly the most difficult part. The interaction between professionals and locals is something that is based on trust and mutual respect and earlier in this thesis we have written about the trust-issues in the area. Hence, seemingly trivial flaws can easily do much damage to such a feeble trust-based relationship, as we will see in this first excerpt:

“...dat heb ik toen ook wel eens gezegd; dan vind ik dat men het veel te afstandelijk doet. Ik dacht in het eerste begin een keer gezien te hebben dat er twee ton was uitgetrokken voor communicatie. Maar dat gebeurt allemaal op afstand. Er komt dan een prachtige folder, maar ja. Dat heb ik toen tegen de projectleider als voorbeeld gebruikt, dat ik zei “Die jongen uit Zwolle, die een taxateur heeft gehad, die zei “Binnen veertien dagen bel ik je terug.” en die laat vervolgens de eerste twee maanden niks van zich horen, dan kun je zulke mooie folders maken als je wil, maar dat werkt niet. Zorg eerst dat je zelf je afspraken nakomt, en dat je waar maakt wat je zegt. Want die mooie folders worden gewoon op afstand gemaakt, die kun je zo gelikt maken als je wilt, maar de telefoon pakken en die man bellen, daar draait het toch om! Dan is die folder niet zo belangrijk, en die mooie brochure ook niet.” LR7

The above shows that communication as part of the project is taken very serious, but at the same time indicates what –according to the interviewed locals- is wrong with it; it is too distant. Throughout the interviews the local respondents ventilated their annoyance about various tiny missteps that together hollowed out the little trust that was earned:

“Ik heb een paar avonden meegemaakt, dat was echt tenenkrommend. Dan wordt er een duur communicatiebureau ingehuurd en dan... staat er iemand voor en die weet nog niet hoe die Vorchten moet schrijven weet je wel... nou dan knap ik daar enorm op af.” LR2

“Ik herinner me nog een rondrit per bus met Joop Atsma en een PvdA-er en die zijn dan verdorie meer bezig met hun mobieltje als dat ze met hun bezoek bezig zijn. Nou dan ga je ook af als een gieter hoor, en dat hebben mensen ook gelijk door. Ze renden ook gelijk de bus weer uit, pakt ie z'n mobieltje, en maar bellen. Joh je bent hier op bezoek! Dan kan je net zo goed wegblijven. Want dan moet je je ook wel betrokken tonen, en met mensen in gesprek gaan.” LR7

A frequently mentioned word in this context was involvement, more precise, the lack of involvement. Not involvement of the locals in the project process but involvement of the professionals with the locals. The locals are invited and expected to become involved with the project, but that in a same manner, the locals expect some sort of involvement from the professionals with the area. This subject will be reviewed more carefully in the final paragraph of this chapter but is relevant here as well. Quite a few local respondents mentioned how they felt like they were being used to provide information through the ateliers and that such events were only organized because it is an obligatory part of the project process:

“...je zit daar met een hele groep mensen onder het mom van inspraak. Maar de meningen zijn dusdanig verdeeld onder de mensen. Ook geen wonder, ieder heeft eigen belangen. Een wil meer natuurontwikkeling en ziet zijn kans schoon, ander wil de kant van de agrarische sector behartigen. Als er twaalf mensen zitten zijn er zeventien wensen. En dan allemaal onder het mom van inspraak... alles wordt in zo'n avond genoemd want je wordt in groepen opgedeeld en die komen daarna weer bij elkaar en dan komt er zo'n mooi whiteboard te staan en alles wordt genoemd. En daar kunnen de mensen die de geul ontwikkelen, die kunnen daar altijd mee toe, welk plan ze ook ontwikkelen. Ze kunnen altijd zeggen: “Ja, maar het is op de inloopavonden genoemd als voorkeursvariant.” dus... in die zin vond ik die hele inspraak een wassen neus...” LR8

“Het waren verplichte vinkjes op een planbord, of er nou vijf of vijfhonderd man zit, dat maakt niet uit, je moet het gewoon doen. Vink; geweest. En het ging niet om de inhoud maar puur om het proces. Bedoel, als je iemand van de provincie spreekt zal die zeggen dat het een heel interactief proces is geweest, waar heel veel gesprekken zijn geweest, waar bewoners heel veel de kans hebben gekregen om hun mening te geven... ja daar heeft de man gelijk, procesmatig is het heel goed gemanaged, maar wanneer was er nou echt tijd om naar de inhoud te kijken; dat was er gewoon niet...” LR2

When opportunities for participation are seen as a charade, some things have clearly gone wrong. Local respondents who were very involved with the project process expressed their frustration –which they rightly thought was a collective frustration- that it seemed as if they were not taken seriously. According to them, the

professionals do not realize that many people invest much of their spare time and energy into evenings such as the atelier and that they received very little in return.

“...nou uiteindelijk is dan wel besloten van “De bewoners van Veessen en Vorchten zijn wel erg zielig, we proberen nog wat geld ergens uit te halen en dat wordt dan gebruikt voor de ontwikkeling van die twee dorpen.”. Nou dan moeten we ook aangeven wat we belangrijk vonden en zo, en er is geld voor vrijgemaakt en dat gaat ook gebeuren... maar voor de dingen die echt essentieel zijn is geen geld. Dus het zijn dingetjes waarvan je denkt: “Moeten we daar nou blij van worden?” LR4

Many of the local respondents wondered what their role is in the process since they could not think of any significant decision that was made in their favor, they find it unclear what their concrete input is. When you combine this with the many days and weeks some of these locals have invested in the project, the frustration is imaginable:

“En wat het ook is, er zijn steeds minder grote onzekerheden, dus dan gaan de discussies ook over kleinere dingen, en is het beter te overzien.”...“Denkt u dat het makkelijker is om op zo’n moment de omwonende erbij betrekken?”...“Wel makkelijker, maar dat eerste stuk moet je gewoon ook doen, want daar zitten de grote stukken in. Daar zitten de echte grote besluiten, die zijn nu genomen. En ik heb geen idee wat nou daadwerkelijk achteraf bezien de bijdrage in die keuzes is geweest van de klankbordgroep. En daar kan je dan... wel eens naar gevraagd van “Zou je dat eens kunnen onderbouwen, kan je daar iets van zeggen?” en dan is het van “Ja die overstromingsfrequentie dat kwam toch wel heel duidelijk uit de bewonersgroep.”. Dan denk ik van “Ja niet alleen bij ons... dat vindt de gemeente, en de meeste andere partijen.”. En ook daarin denk ik, een keer in de honderd of eens in een mensenleven, wat is onze invloed geweest? Wij hadden geloof ik eens in de 250 jaar neergezet zo van “Doe maar fijn niet.”. Dus ja, “Dat hebben jullie gescoord, dat punt.”... dat soort vage dingen, dus ik weet niet wat onze bijdrage is geweest.” LR5

The next respondent does acknowledge and value the frequent participatory opportunities hosted by the project team, but remains critical on what is being done with their input:

“Dus ja ik erken dat ze er veel moeite voor doen, als ik alleen al zeg, het aantal contactmomenten, het aantal dingen wat ze daar proberen te creëren, is echt herkenbaar een aandachtspunt binnen hun project. Ik vind alleen niet dat ze het handig doen, ik vind dat ze het niet handig aanpakken. Als je dan, met die ateliers, dat kan je van te voren uittekenen, dat als je zoveel mensen mobiliseert, en er zo’n zwaar ding van maakt, dat je dan effe goed moet opletten wat er van die bewoners terugkomt!”...“Als je van rechtstreeks belanghebbende zoveel input vraagt op hun vrije avonden om daarin mee te denken, dan heb je vervolgens met wat daar is uitgekomen een grote zorgplicht. En als je dat niet goed doet, als je dat onhandig doet - daar zit geen moedwil in hoor - dan keert dat zich tegen je. Dat hebben ze meegemaakt.” LR5

5.4.3.1 Communication: Uncertainty

In the very beginning of the process the only certainty was that the bypass was going to be situated somewhere in the area. According to the locals the uncertainty and lack of clarity –that should have been provided by the professionals- harmed the overall process from the start. The long time in which the trajectory of the bypass seemed undecided, lead locals to believe that through participation they could have some sort of influence on it:

“...voordat het besluit werd genomen voor die groene geul, was er al gecommuniceerd. Toen was dus al het gevoel van “We kunnen dit tegenhouden als we willen.”. Nou dat had dan misschien anders gemoeten. Dit was al van te voren gecommuniceerd om de weerstand in het gebied minder te maken, denk ik, weet niet precies, dat zijn dingen dat weet ik gewoon niet. Maar voordat dat besluit genomen was, hadden wij al daar info over gekregen, die gewoon zo discutabel was, dat de hakken in het zand gezet werden.” LR4

“Het gaat om dingen als: “Komt mijn huis in de geul ja of nee?” heel lang, we hebben drie bijeenkomsten gehad waarin mensen het gevoel werd gegeven van “Nou krijgen we te horen hoe of wat.” en dan gingen ze

naar huis toe “Nou weet ik nog niet of mijn huis/land getroffen wordt ja of nee.” dat zijn vragen waar een agrariër/bewoner antwoord op wil hebben. En er zijn zeker drie bijeenkomsten geweest waarin daar geen antwoord op is gegeven. En dat kon ook niet, omdat ze nog niet zover waren. Maar speel daar dan open kaart over, dat je die antwoorden nog niet weet.” LR1

Not all locals agree on this, some suspect that the trajectory had long been decided because there were that many criteria to meet. Years later, the frustration on this part of the project process is still almost tangible.

“Ik denk dat een duidelijke kader stellen van openheid vanaf het eerste begin van wat komt, wat gebeurt wat gaat er gebeuren, wat weten we wat weten we niet, ik denk dat dat wel een zekere invloed had gehad. Heel veel mensen - en ik denk toch ook wel een beetje in die richting - denken dat er van te voren toch al vast stond hoe die geul ging lopen. Hoe dat tracé is. Omdat er gewoon beperkingen zijn waar je aan vast zit. En dat men dat van te voren, zeker Rijkswaterstaat, al geweten heeft. Als je gegevens die je hebt, ook al is het hard, ook al doet het pijn, geef die dan meteen. Zeg dan: “Jongens, dit is de begrenzing.” Geef niet dit als gebied aan, ga daar dan niet mee spelen.” LR1

Communicating is about clarity but also concerns openness and that means being straightforward. In this case that includes telling people “that means you have to move” or “that is not for you to decide”. This is of course rather bluntly put, but the interviews showed how some things were left unspoken, causing hopes and expectancies to linger or even rise. The previous citation already includes words such as framework, boundaries and limitations, which is what the upcoming paragraph is about.

5.4.4. Expectation management

The professionals acknowledged that more could have been done to manage the expectations. On the other hand, they point out that despite their best efforts it remains difficult to communicate that “looking into” a local concern does not automatically mean “dealing with”, nor in what way. False expectations prove to be a heavy burden that can linger throughout the process.

We have read earlier that the “everything is possible” method during the ateliers damaged the relationship between professionals and locals. Critique on the project process frequently involved the suggestion to be realistic and to set some sort of boundary:

“Van te voren kaderen wat kan wel en wat kan niet: “Dat stukje kan niet en dat ligt vast...” maar die duidelijkheid hebben ze helemaal niet gegeven in het begin, je mocht alles roepen, de gekste plannen en ideeën kwamen naar voren.” LR4

“Nou als je dan mensen toch inspraak wil geven wees dan heel helder, geef dan ook aan hoe jouw belang daarin mee kan doen, en waar zit die spanbreedte hè. Maak dat niet heel breed, maar zeg dan “Nou in dit stukje kunnen we nog wat variëren en daar kunnen jullie ook wat over zeggen.”. En dan moet je, denk ik, ook aangeven wat die andere belangen dan ook zijn en dat mensen voor zichzelf ook een beetje een inschatting kunnen maken van “Daar kunnen we misschien nog wat mee.”. Maar dan moet je het duidelijk aangeven, je moet mensen niet zo dat gevoel geven van er kan van alles en nog wat.” LR1

The next citation calls for an outline of reasonable possibilities and comes from a local who completely lost his faith in the ability to influence anything in the project process. Many of the local respondents wondered what their role is in the process since they could not think of any decision that was made in their favor, they find it unclear what their concrete input is:

“...ik heb nooit het idee gehad dat men echt met het gebied in contact wilde komen. Als overheid kan dat, dat je gewoon zegt: “Er is een hoger belang, er komt hier een geul, hij komt er gewoon discussie uitgesloten.”. Dat je dan duidelijk aangeeft waar je wel en niet over kunt discussiëren. Maar wat mij stoorde is dat de indruk gewekt wordt dat er heel actief met het gebied overlegd wordt, “Ja en alles in overleg.” maar das gewoon kul, er is gewoon één opdracht: die geul moet gewoon zo snel mogelijk komen. Als er voor mij iets demotiverend

werkt dan is dat dat ik gewoon voor Jan... z'n viool aan tafel zit, daar heb ik niks geen trek an.” LR2

A few of the critiques we have encountered in this chapter are summarized in this next quotation; the amount of time and energy locals put into the process, the questionable role of the external specialists and the effect this has on the relationship between locals and professionals:

“...ik denk dat er misschien wel vijftig, zestig bewoners uit dit kleine gebied betrokken zijn geweest... alle vijftig-zeven avonden daar tijd aan besteed hebben. Aan het eind komt er een verslag van al die bijeenkomsten, en wat zijn de argumenten die er genoemd worden: de argumenten van de specialisten die er één of twee keer bij zijn. Daar zet je al een toon naar de teleurstelling dat het inderdaad doorgaat, maar daarmee wek je geen vertrouwen in het gebied en ben je ook niet duidelijk naar wat kan, als je had gezegd: “Jongens we willen graag horen, maar dit en dit zijn de beperkingen.”. Had een kader gesteld, dan was het misschien zinvoller geweest. Of het positief was geworden, weet ik niet, want het is natuurlijk wel een ingreep die veel pijn doet in het gebied, maar ik denk dat dat beter was geweest.” LR1

This last sentence shows that expectation management aside, the project would still be viewed very skeptically by the locals. The professionals are aware of that, and acknowledge that in terms of expectancies not everything went as planned. In the first following quote, a professional underlines the importance of expectation management, while in the second quote a professional agrees to some of the critiques we have encountered in this chapter.

“Nou kijk, met participatie... of... mijn ervaring is dat je met bewoners die je bij een proces betreft, en de bestuurder hè, moet je altijd heel goed afspreken van te voren, en ook met elkaar doornemen, wat de verwachtingen zijn. Er is niets zo erg bij bewonersparticipatie, als valse verwachtingen. Als je valse verwachtingen kweekt aan het begin, krijg je het keihard terug. En terecht denk ik dan ook. Dus je kan beter hard voor de bewoners zijn aan het begin en zeggen van “Sorry, maar daar hebben jullie geen invloed op, en wel vanwege het feit dat...” PR6

“...er zijn ook fouten gemaakt in het verleden en nog steeds. Tijdens de planvorming bijvoorbeeld, je hebt zo'n druk tijdens zo'n project, ook al duurt het acht jaar, je werkt van deadline naar deadline. En als je dan de mensen in het gebied beluistert, van voor mijn periode, dat wij als projectorganisatie onvoldoende teruggekoppeld wat er met de uitkomst is gedaan, dat we teveel hebben beloofd, en te weinig aan verwachtingsmanagement hebben gedaan. Maar als ik met mijn collega's praat dan zeggen ze nee dat is niet zo, zal wel ergens tussenin liggen dus. Maar achteraf zou je kunnen constateren dat we dat beter hadden moeten doen. Maar dat lukt niet altijd, en dat versterkt natuurlijk hun emotie.” PR2

In the upcoming citation, a professional who has been part of the project team from the very start shares some of the struggles with which they have to deal. Throughout the interviews, professionals mentioned how stakeholders have their own idea of what “listening” actually was and how this influences the expectancies of the locals:

“...wat wij vaak te horen hebben gekregen is dat wij oneerlijk zijn, dat wij de boel voorliegen en dat soort dingen allemaal, die woorden komen behoorlijk terug... die komen enerzijds vanuit verwachtingen, we krijgen ook vaak te horen “Jullie luisteren niet naar ons.”, en zij verwarren luisteren – dat je wel gehoord hebt wat ze gezegd hebben - maar zij vinden dat je pas geluisterd hebt als je ook doet wat ze zeggen. Dat is uitermate complex, in die zin dat je... we proberen die verwachtingen iedere keer zo helder mogelijk te maken, maar dat lukt gewoon niet. Sommige vinden pas dat je naar ze geluisterd hebt als je ook doet wat ze zeggen, terwijl jij je afwegingen maakt en je weegt die af tegen andere dingen.” PR1

The local respondents have noticed how expectation management is a key issue in the project process up till now. Although the next excerpt may come across as sarcastic, there was a mutual agreement amongst the locals that knowing the limited possibilities is better than groping in the dark:

“...en geen verwachtingen scheppen, daar hebben ze het ook steeds over, het verwachtingsmanagement. Daar willen ze dan aan werken, dat hebben ze denk ik nu ook wel geleerd, dat je wel, duidelijk aangeeft wat wel en niet kan, en wat de speelruimte is. Helderder zijn, en mensen niet van alles laten schetsen tekenen en filosoferen, als ze er toch niks mee kunnen. Geef dat dan in ieder geval aan! En geef ook aan dat die natuurbelangen belangrijker zijn dan die van jullie, en “...dat gaat ook boven die van jullie, en wetgeving is ook belangrijker, en water is nog belangrijker” geef dat aan! Dan ben je daar in ieder geval helder in. Dan kunnen mensen ook interpreteren van “Oh ja, we doen misschien mee, maar die andere dingen zijn belangrijker.” LR4

5.4.5 Participation

The various comments mentioned above were also voiced during the project process. This led to discussions between locals and professionals in which they questioned whether local involvement was worth all the extra trouble seeing the limited results. Whilst locals are not certain, the professionals remain to have faith in such interactive processes.

As with many professions, it is about finding a balance. In this case, the balance of a professional is somewhere in between working towards the realization of the bypass in an efficient manner on one hand and on the other hand the professional is expected to be involved with the concerned locals, who are vigorously against the bypass on which you are working. The bitterness of this dilemma frequently surfaced during the interviews with the professionals:

“...ik heb wel eens gezegd: “Toen we hier kwamen voor het vijf graden. We zitten nu boven het vriespunt.”. Niemand in dit gebied is per definitie enthousiast, ze zijn nog steeds “teuge” die geul. Hij wordt gedoogd omdat ze weten dat het niet anders kan. We hebben denk ik een aantal hele belangrijke dingen in het gebied gehonoreerd uit het gebiedsproces, maar ze zullen nooit erkennen of waarderen of wat dan ook, dat zij die punten hebben binnengehaald, want het gaat namelijk altijd nog over de drie punten die ze niet binnengehaald hebben. Iedere discussie wordt teruggehaald: “Maar dat hebben we niet gekregen, dat is niet gelukt en jullie luisteren nooit naar ons.”. Het is voor hen moeilijk om de draai te maken naar: “Dat hebben we wel binnengehaald en dat niet.”. Dat wordt echt vergeten, in alle gelederen; de gemeenteraad vergeet dat, de bewoners vergeten dat...” PR1

It turned out that the cumbersome participation process led respondents from both categories question the added value of the participation process. Of course such discussions take place within professionals and locals, but the following citations show how locals and professionals together have contemplated on the necessity of the early involvement of the locals into a process in which they perhaps have little to say:

“...die vrouw is lid van de stichting IJsselhoeve (LR4), vanuit haar bemoeienis van die stichting zegt ze “Het is heel belangrijk om die cultuurhistorie goed te bewaren en goed na te denken. En participatie een plek te geven. Maar achteraf gezien...” - zegt ze - “...had je gewoon geen inspraak moeten doen, geen participatie moeten willen maar gewoon: zo gaat het worden! En dan was het voor iedereen duidelijk geweest”. Dat gaat tegen mijn eigen professionaliteit in, mijn adagium is de burger als gratis adviseur, je moet ze echt serieus nemen. Mensen hebben verschillende petten op en mensen erkennen dat ook, dat ze heel erg meedoen met het NIMBY gedrag.”...“...de vraag is of wij voldoende in staat zijn om aan hun argumenten tegemoet te komen.” PR2

“Het is ook een smal richeltje, waarover heel behoedzaam moet worden gelopen. Ik weet niet of je... kijk ik geloof er wel in, ik geloof in bewoners, betrokkenheid. Of ik nou in bewonersparticipatie geloof... dat vind ik moeilijk om te zeggen. Dat hangt er een beetje van af, dat hangt niet alleen van de bewoners af, maar dat hangt er ook vanaf wat de opdracht is van de bestuurders; wat je daar moet doen. Want in sommige zaken denk ik, is het gewoon irreal om te vragen van bewoners om mee te denken... dat kan niet, dat kan je dus ook niet verwachten en dan moet je dus ook geen participatie noemen. Dan kan er een betrokkenheid zijn, en “We kunnen het met z'n alle zo leuk mogelijk doen en zo goed mogelijk.”, dat kan, maar het kan niet altijd zo zijn, die participatie wekt soms hele verkeerde verwachtingen.” PR6

The ability to meet expectations and to try and incorporate local input into a design is extremely hard. The project team not only has to deal with different stakeholders who each have their own wishes and demands, they also have an assignment with a certain budget, deadlines and preconditions that need to be met. This next citation regards a local, who is impressed by the ability of the project team to handle such a huge and complex task but at the same time questions her marginal role in it.

“...in z'n totaliteit ben ik met name onder de indruk van het stille geweld waarmee dit gewoon doordendert. Zo'n projectteam is echt wel... daar heb ik trouwens vanaf een afstand echt wel respect voor, hoe goed in staat die zijn een project te sturen; dat is knap hoor, dat is knap!”...“Daar moet je bewondering voor hebben, los van alle andere dingen. Maar het stille geweld waarmee dat doordendert, en eigenlijk is het een soort van stoomwals die gewoon gaat. En hij komt eraan en hij komt eraan terwijl je zit te praten en af en toe doet ie net even iets langzamer, maar verder gaat ie gewoon door. Hij komt. En je kan niet zeggen “Stop effe!” of “Ik was het er niet mee eens!”, hij gaat gewoon. Het totale proces eigenlijk is dat. Ergens is dat ooit een keer aangegaan, en het gaat. Er is geen invloed op uit te oefenen, het is enorm. Van te voren had ik me dat ook wel gerealiseerd, van “Dit is wel een ding wat gewoon gaat gebeuren, volgens mij is onze inspraak gewoon marginaal.”. Nou dat is het ook. En dat moet je je af en toe even blijven realiseren, dat je daar met mensen aan tafel zit, maar eigenlijk probeer je te discussiëren met die stoomwals. En dat is eigenlijk wat er aan de hand is. En als je dan met die mensen aan tafel zit, dan voer je wel die discussie, maar eigenlijk is dat onzin. Dat is niet waar. Want zij zijn onderdeel van die stoomwals, dat komt niet goed zo.” LR5

As a reminder, this chapter is not concerned about the normative evaluation of the project process, but looks at what aspects of the process matter when reviewing the state of affairs. Most of the critique we have read so far concerns locals criticizing professionals. I will conclude this chapter by looking at how the professionals assess the locals. First and foremost it is important to point out that in the interviews most of the professional respondents understood the worries and critique of the locals. Through their experience with spatial intervention projects, they learned that there is a turning point somewhere in the process, where locals settle with the idea “okay this is going to happen, let's make the most of it”. In this case however, the mindset continued to be negative, leading to less satisfactory results for both groups:

“Uiteindelijk blijft het heel moeilijk om van een afstand rationeel de dingen te kunnen beschouwen, voor alle bewoners. Dat is heel begrijpelijk, want je bent verbonden met dit gebied, dit gaat over jouw toekomst, het heeft consequenties voor jouw kinderen die naar school fietsen, dus dat is allemaal begrijpelijk alleen je hoopt af en toe dat je, nadat je door de eerste emotie heen bent, dat je met elkaar een gesprek kan voeren over “Maar waarom zeg jij dat nou, en hoor je ook waarom wij dat zeggen?”. Want uiteindelijk, daar gaat het over, omdat uiteindelijk daar een betere oplossing uitkomt dan dat je... ook wij, maar ook zij, blijven hangen in het herhalen van je argumenten, maar dat blijft gewoon heel lastig.”...“heeft u een voorbeeld?”...“...als we vanuit de natuurwetgeving zeker weten dat we daar geen vergunning voor krijgen, dan kan je daar heel lang over blijven discussiëren, maar je kunt ook zeggen “Okay, dus dat is een gegeven, laten we dan eens kijken hoe we bij die andere locatie het probleem van de veiligheid maximaal opgelost kunnen krijgen.”. Dan heb je een ander soort gesprek met elkaar en dan komen wij ook verder hè, want dan kunnen we de echte problemen proberen op te lossen: hoe komen die kinderen nog steeds veilig naar school? Er zijn alternatieve routes te verzinnen enzovoorts, in plaats van dat je op het eerste honk blijft staan met “Ja maar ik wil toch liever die...” –ja dat weten we nu, maar het kan niet. En dan moet je overschakelen naar twee, en dat is heel lastig.” PR1

Finally, what this next professional points out is that interactive processes are something relatively new. Although they are an established part of the planning and design process, there is still much that needs to be learned. The last three sentences show how difficult it is for a project team to work in such an interactive setting when other professionals may not always realize the consequences of participation.

“En ja je moet volgens mij ook niet vergeten, wij doen in Nederland in dit soort processen nog steeds ervaring op, hoe je dit nu precies aan moet pakken. En daar worden over en weer fouten gemaakt. En ik heb het idee altijd, die fouten tellen hard door. Het is vooral zorgvuldigheid in je proces en in je communicatie, en dat is dan vooral: hoe bouw je je proces op, en dat is vanaf het begin af aan duidelijk van hoe zit het proces in elkaar en

“Jongens je moet geduld hebben.” en het goed communiceren: verwachtingen van bewoners, maar ook andersom, nadenken over “Wat kunnen bewoners nu, wat ga ik vragen aan de bewoners, wat kunnen ze inbrengen en op welk moment kunnen ze dat inbrengen?”. Zijn dat realistische verwachtingen, en klopt dat ook met de verwachtingen van de bestuurders? Want kijk, waar het experiment natuurlijk ligt is dat ook veel bestuurders zeggen “Ik wil gewoon bewonersparticipatie.” maar zich niet realiseren, - en dat eigenlijk ook niet willen - dat er dan ook wat mee gedaan wordt, als het puntje bij paaltje komt. Ook dat leeft nog steeds in Nederland, en er is niets zo frustrerend als dat.” PR4

5.4.6 Personal involvement

This brief paragraph concerns the by locals' experienced lack of interest from the professionals into the personal issues at hand. Earlier in this chapter we already covered part of this argument. It relates to the next chapter that expounds on sense of place potential, focusing on a more individual approach. According to these next respondents, the negative relationships between professionals and locals is perpetuated due to the failure to recognize individual problems and a disappointing involvement into the local issues. The next citation shows how the distance between professionals and locals leads to a negative attitude towards the process.

“...in die tijd dat ik voorzitter was... is er nooit iemand, toen probeerde ik nog wel een beetje centrale rol, brug, te spelen, dan zou je toch als projectleider voor dit gebied toch denken: “Nou ik ga eens een kop koffie met LR2 drinken en hoe willen we van alles, hoe zou hij er nou tegenaan kijken?”. Nou nooit. Er is nooit iemand geweest die dat contact gemaakt heeft. En als je dan vervolgens, als mensen zeggen “Ja maar we willen echt naar het gebied luisteren dit en dat...” dan denk ik van “Ja...onzin.”, je had me kunnen bellen, of langs kunnen komen, maar dat is dan niet echt weet je. Het is niet echt de intentie hebben om te luisteren en met elkaar er iets van te willen maken.”...“Wat ik gewoon niet snap... er waren mensen die waren echt boos. Die projectgroep wist gewoon welke mensen dat waren, ik zou als projectleider... stap in de auto en ga een kop koffie drinken met die mensen, luister naar hen en heb dit in je achterhoofd, dat je het verhaal van mensen snapt...” LR2

The following response comes from a farmer who explained his frustrations with the project process. The ignorance of some professionals on agriculture made the discussion on land consolidation very frustrating for him:

“Maar goed, als je een beetje feeling en draagvlak wil krijgen, dan moet je iemand hebben die een beetje begrijpt hoe de mensen hier wel werken en boeren. Zo gaat het niet, dit is op afstand en geen specifieke kennis hebben. En wat we dan met die koeien in combinatie met die melkrobot en de dijk moeten: “Dan pak je toch die melkrobot op en die zet je in de wei?”. Dat ding staat helemaal vast! Als je geen kennis hebt kun je alles roepen. En dan lach ik er maar een beetje om, maar het is een loze discussie.” LR4

In the next chapter I will be questioning the sense of place potential, retracing some of the steps taken in the project process and reviewing some of the above mentioned comments. Can the negative attitudes towards parts of the project process benefit from a sense of place oriented approach? What ideas are shared by locals and professionals?

5.5 Is there potential for sense of place in the project process?

So far we have read about the respondents' place meanings, the occurrence of such sense of place notions in the project process and in the foregoing chapter we learned what is found relevant when evaluating the project process. This chapter is about examining the current and future potential of place meanings in spatial intervention processes. At some point in the interviews I introduced and briefly explained the concept sense of place and asked the respondent what his or her views were on the subject; do they see potential in a project process that incorporates place meanings? What opportunities do the participants recognize and, equally important, what threats? While local respondents tend to focus on solutions for problems that they encountered in this particular context of Veessen-Wapenveld, the experienced professionals have a broader view. On one hand they reflect on past and current problems in the process, on the other hand they look at

future possibilities not necessarily constraint to this specific case. The first paragraph covers various responses that regard the strength and weaknesses of a sense of place approach. In the second paragraph the focus is on personal involvement as encountered in 5.4.6. Finally, three somewhat lengthy citations show different ways of looking at sense of place between professionals and locals.

5.5.5 Considering sense of place

Both locals and professionals see benefits in an approach that includes place meanings into the project process, but they also point out the dangers that lurk. An interactive project process that uses sense of place requires even better expectation management. Next to that, about half of the locals mentions how recognizing place meanings is not enough; they want tangible results to arise from the method. The professionals think along the same lines; indeed there is potential, but they see pitfalls as well. Would it benefit to focus on individual issues if there simply are no alternatives?

The explanation of the concept regularly caused respondents to reassess stages of the process and earlier given answers. An example of this is the atelier: subsequent to explaining sense of place, respondents pointed out that in various ways the ateliers had a sense of place based approach. Earlier we read that the ateliers lacked expectation management and that it was unclear what was done with the input. This local explains that promising as sense of place may be, the difficulties it brings can easily do a participatory process more bad than good:

“Geloof ik zeker [in het nut van sense of place binnen een project], mits je duidelijk de kaders stelt in hoeverre hun betrokkenheid... wat de grenzen van hun betrokkenheid zijn, wat de mogelijkheden zijn. Ik denk absoluut dat dat een hele grote rol speelt. Ik denk dat die persoonlijke benadering, aanpak, interesse, zeker. Maar, mits ze weten, heel duidelijk is, wat ze kunnen verwachten, dat is essentieel. Want dat is ook wel gedaan hier, er is wel heel persoonlijk in die ateliers heeft iedereen zijn eigen verhaal... we hebben op kaarten in kunnen tekenen wat we belangrijk vonden, welk bruggetje, welk boompje bij wijze van spreken je belangrijk vond. Maar als je uiteindelijk ziet dat er met dat gevoel niks gedaan wordt, dan maak je ook een enorme klap terug. Dus het gevaar is, het is een positief, maar het kan ook een waanzinnige valkuil worden. Het werkt twee kanten op.” LR1

Somewhat later in the same interview the respondent again questions what the idea behind these meetings were, as she earlier did in the foregoing chapter. Despite that, according to her, the ateliers were only about getting to know the worries and place meanings of the locals, the outcome remains disappointing due to the inability to actually meet any of the demands that really matter to the locals:

“Het zijn vooral de ateliers geweest die bedoeld waren om het in kaart te brengen en ik vraag me nog steeds af wat diegene die dat bedacht heeft, wat diegene daarmee beoogd heeft. Want als je mensen op kaart in laat tekenen wat je belangrijk vindt in een gebied, terwijl dat gebied op de schop gaat, dan vraag ik me af van wat hadden ze willen bereiken met die ateliers? En wat was hun doel met het houden van die ateliers? Ik kan me voorstellen dat ze zeggen, nou een stuk betrokkenheid, dan denk ik dat is de verkeerde kant, want wat belangrijk is daar kunnen ze niet aan voldoen want dat gaat op de schop. Dus ik kan er nog steeds niet achter komen wat hun doel is geweest met het houden van de ateliers.” LR1

If we look back at the previous chapter, we see that one of the occasionally mentioned items was how the locals felt a lack of involvement on the professionals' side: the professionals seemed distant and little understanding. After elucidating sense of place, this matter of having attention for the personal concerns of residents and acknowledging these emotions was discussed again:

“Of als iemand zich ergens echt heel erg druk over maakt eens te zeggen “Ik snap je punt.”, om erkenning te geven voor het punt wat iemand maakt. Als je dat stuk overslaat en vanuit al die emotie die er zit gewoon fijn door naar de inhoud wil, ja dat red je niet. En dat zijn wel missers die je ziet gebeuren, daar zit je echt bij en dan denk je “Doe dit nou niet!” nog los van of het mezelf wel of niet raakt, ik kan wel een niveau verderop denken; “Doe het nou niet zo. Hier word ik boos van!”, denk ik wel eens.” LR5

Not all respondents regard emotional involvement of professionals to be of merit. In the same way as one cannot expect a doctor to be emotionally involved with patients; such a relationship can cause complicated situations for both and might harm the professionals' ability to rationally work on the project.

"...die kunnen zich niet permitteren om daar aandacht aan te geven, dat kan natuurlijk nooit. Als ze dat zouden doen, zouden ze nooit kunnen werken, en dat snap ik heel goed. Je moet afstand houden van die emotionele kanten van het verhaal om je werk te kunnen doen. En ik denk dat we dat ook niet mogen verwachten. Kijk dat ze luisteren en er aandacht voor hebben, dat zal ongetwijfeld gebeuren, maar dat komt natuurlijk nooit aan op de manier zoals ze het zouden willen, omdat iemand emotioneel is, omdat iemand boos is. Dus dat zou nooit goed overkomen. Misschien een beetje, maar ik denk dat je dat ook niet van ze mag verwachten." LR1

Surely, involvement does not have to be of such gravity that it influences the working capabilities of the professionals. But the more open the professionals are, the more vulnerable they become. This is explained in the next citation, which is about transparency in the process and the risks it entails:

"...wij zijn altijd heel transparant geweest. Maar als je transparant bent, ben je ook kwetsbaar. En op het moment dat je transparant bent en het komt de ander niet uit, dan kan die dat ook continu tegen je gebruiken. Het principe is, we hebben gezegd: "Wij willen met jullie discussiëren hoe die geul eruit gaat zien.". Op het moment dat je die discussie voert, en je bent in dialoog en je hoort dingen, maar je kunt/wilt die dingen niet honoreren, dat hoort ook bij het spel. Als we niks gevraagd hadden en we hadden gewoon gezegd: "Zo doen we het...", we hebben altijd gezegd: "We hebben verschillende rollen.", we hebben gezegd: "We horen jullie, maar wij wegen af, wij geven advies aan de stuurgroep en de stuurgroep beslist." en dat proces blijft altijd zo en soms werk je dus in een bepaalde fase samen met ze, dan ben je dus een oplossing voor iets aan het verzinnen, maar als je dan twee dilemma's tegenkomt en je kiest dan voor A, en je bent al die tijd als partij voor dilemma B geweest en je krijgt geen gelijk, ja dan kunnen wij terugkrijgen: "Ja zie je wel, jullie hebben ons toen gevraagd maar jullie doen er niets mee!". Dus dan keert die transparantie tegen je, dat is gewoon het probleem. En dit is ook geen diskwalificatie van de bewoners, maar het is wel een feit." PR1

Already it proves to be hard to properly manage expectations. This hazard can easily increase when place meanings are brought into the project process. If in the present situation expectation management is a continuous challenge, it is essential to make clear that acknowledging individual issues does not automatically lead to solutions. This next citation comes from a professional who philosophizes about this hazard and that only acknowledging the troubles of local concerns is not the same as dealing with/solving these emotions:

"...maar als je het weerspiegelt, bijvoorbeeld Veessen waar de grootste emotie zit, dan denk ik van "Wat zou je in dit project met de emoties van die mensen, bereikbaar, veilig, wat zou je daar voor het project kunnen realiseren?". Want je kunt daar niks mee doen, je kunt daar niks mee. Daarom vraag ik me ook af, die emotionele kant, je kunt hem horen, je kunt laten zien dat je het hoort door te bevestigen dat het inderdaad heel vervelend is, maar uiteindelijk kun je het project er niet mee veranderen. Dus dan denk ik van "Ja het blijft nog steeds heel zuur dat ze dat gevoel hebben." en dat gevoel neem je natuurlijk niet weg, en die emotie daarmee ook niet." PR3

Locals are divided about this issue, some say that recognizing emotional issues and place meanings can already help to come to terms with these emotions, as this next excerpt illustrates:

"Veel mensen zitten in angst en verdrietig, er is een groep die met boos te maken heeft... het klinkt vrij basaal, niemand zegt dat in een vergadering, maar als je luistert/kijkt, dan zit daar verlies in. Verlies van een woonplek het dingen kwijtraken die ie nu heeft. Of er speelt nog een MKZ mee, dat ie z'n veestapel verloren heeft, of z'n geschiedenis, qua stamboom. Veel mensen zijn boos, wat voor hun een grens is: "Wat van mij is is van mij en daar blijf je van af.". Die worden boos. En deze groep angst, die vermijdt gewoon om erover na te denken, die doet er niets mee. En er is een groep die gaat vanuit angst vechten: "Oei ik ga failliet als mij dit overkomt...", als je in gesprek raakt... alleen al zulk soort vragen stellen in een proces: "Wat verlies je dan,

waar ben je dan bang voor?”, dat is mogelijk. Op het moment dat je mensen erkend om hun verlies/angst en dat je dat oprecht doet... [dan zou dat enorm veel helpen].” LR2

Others stress the importance of actually being able to do something physical, only listening to the stories is not enough:

“...als je mensen niets kunt bieden, dan heeft het geen zin!” –Nee je moet dan wel wat concreets kunnen bieden “Dit kunnen we voor je doen en dat kan niet.”. –”Het moet verder gaan dan alleen aandacht hè, het moet ook wat concreets zijn, dat je zegt van “Die dijk moet tussen de huiskavels door.”, dan moet je zorgen dat ie er ook komt. Alleen luisteren helpt niet; “Ja we hebben het aangehoord maar we doen het toch niet.”, daar schiet je niks mee op. Je moet ergens voor willen gaan, een poging doen om ervoor te gaan in Den Haag. “Ik ga m’n best doen daarvoor.”. Maar dat hebben ze nooit gedaan. Maar het is niet alleen aandacht, je moet ook wat concreets bieden.” LR4

As this next respondent explains, being involved and listening to the locals should, when possible, also lead to concrete results, as the citation above stresses.

“...kijk, een bewoner hoort heel graag jou zeggen dat het in de Kerkstraat wel goed gaat en in de Achterstraat niet... dat is het vertrouwen dat je met elkaar opbouwt. En in die zin is er ook iets... je moet met elkaar bezig zijn, en de eerste avond gaat dat veel minder dan op de tweede enzovoorts. En op een gegeven moment kan je laten blijken dat je luistert en wat teruggeeft. En dan is het helemaal niet zo erg om te zeggen “Nee.”, maar wel zo van, laat maar zien: “We hebben dit gedaan, we hebben erover gepraat, we hebben met de bestuurder overlegd, maar het antwoord is nee.” Dat is voor zo’n bewoner veel bevredigender dan dat je erover zwijgt of dat het helemaal niet meer terugkomt of dat ie in de volgende bijeenkomst weer iemand anders voor zich heeft staan.” PR6

These kinds of relationships require time to develop and those who are in contact with the locals are not often the ones to make the final decision. This same respondent shares how increased contact with locals leads to a better understanding of frustrations and from where these originate, and also addresses the difficulty of not always being able to mitigate these frustrations:

“Terwijl je het idee hebt da je je stinkende best zit te doen. En soms ken je, je kent die frustraties ook niet. Ik bedoel, je kent een aantal frustraties, ik kende een aantal frustraties niet van het planproces van een aantal mensen die tegen het feit dat die IJssel, dat daar gedaan wordt aan natuurontwikkeling. En dat hoe meer beplanting, hoe meer elders ruimte voor water gezocht wordt. En dat die frustratie [betreffende natuurontwikkeling in de uiterwaarden] zo groot was, die kende ik niet. Dat komt gedurende het proces naar voren... op een gegeven moment denk je “Ah, nou weet ik het!”, als je dan met die mensen door gaat zitten praten op die avonden, dank denk je: “Oh dat zit erachter, daar komt het vandaan!” en het moeilijke is dan ook, aan dat soort knoppen, daar vind ik dan niks van, want dat is besloten door de bestuurders. Dus ik kan niet zeggen van “Ja dat ben ik met je eens, ik vind het belachelijk.”, bijvoorbeeld voor wat betreft de beplanting in de uiterwaarden. Ik bedoel, daar ga ik niet over. Dat is frustrerend. En het is veel leuker om met die mensen te praten van “Hoe lossen we dat dan op.” en “Dan zetten we daar een boomgaard neer en dan hebben we...” dat is dankbaarder, en gemakkelijker.” PR6

Earlier we read how “objective” arguments were sought to back up issues with an emotional origin. As for sense of place, in the literature overview I discussed how a single place can have multiple meanings to an individual. The following professional noticed how emotions in the process can stem from a variety of sources at the same time. Even if it becomes clear what causes these emotions, dealing with them remains difficult nonetheless:

“Ik vind dat wel lastig hoor, want als je dat voor alle mensen onafhankelijk moet bekijken.. dan denk ik dat die emotie voortkomt uit hele andere drijfveren. Mensen hebben daar hele andere drijfveren in. Ik vraag me af of, wanneer je meer aandacht voor die emotie hebt, of je dan dat project beter zou kunnen laten landen. Ik geloof

wel dat als je echt mensen... wat je wel kunt laten doen is door keukentafelgesprekken idd helder krijgen waar die emotie vandaan komt. Maar de vraag is of je dat in je project op de een of andere manier kunt weerspiegelen, of iets in dat project kunt doen aan die emotie, want volgens mij kan dat niet.” PR3

This same respondent points out what a relationship of mutual understanding can accomplish. Indeed, it is important to look at ways to deal with emotions to smoothen the participatory process, but she remains critical; a solid project process does not exclude resistance.

“Want uiteindelijk wil je ook aan de andere kant dat mensen begrip krijgen voor het project. En ik denk dat dat een hele lastige is bij projecten. Als je iets kan doen in het project waardoor je die emotie kan wegnemen, dan moet je inderdaad daar op toespitsen, maar ik denk dat als ik nu kijk naar puur omgevingsprocessen, waar we inmiddels allemaal omgevingsmanagers hebben binnen projecten die gesprekken voeren die mensen horen, die proberen daar dat begrip te krijgen... als je een goed omgevingsproces voert kun je inderdaad met meer gemak je project uitvoeren, heb je minder weerstand. Maar het sluit niets uit aan weerstand.” PR3

The previous chapter ended with some excerpts on involvement and the lack thereof. Introducing sense of place showed how some respondents missed the “human” aspect in the project, and how beneficial a more individual approach would be compared to the general information evenings. Not only would the professional get a thorough understanding of what worries were keeping that local busy, it would also increase the involvement of the professional into the locals and their area. In the next paragraph I will take a look at the various opinions on this issue.

5.5.2 Individual versus group meetings

An approach incorporating sense of place requires more personal and individual contact between locals and professionals. Both participant groups agree that this would benefit the project process, but add that well willingness and some sort of local ambition is needed in order to succeed.

After introducing the sense of place concept and while contemplating on the possibilities of place meanings in a project process, the potential of a more specific, individual approach was considered by numerous respondents. Despite the best intentions the ateliers and information evenings were, according to the locals, examples of how it should not be done. Fantasizing about a method with more individual attention instead of such plenary discussions with dissatisfying outcomes resulted in this next comprehensive citations:

“Ik geloof zelf niet in een inloopavond, ik vind het echt tijd verbranden. Ik zou een inloopavond kunnen houden om te zorgen dat mensen verderop in het dorp, die er een algemeen belang bij hebben, dat die geholpen worden. Maar het gebied is niet zo groot, en als je indexeert, deze gezinnen, daar willen we iets van of die spelen een belangrijke rol erin... en je probeert echt contact te maken, je rijdt daar langs en je probeert naar hun verhaal te luisteren en als ik dan zeg “Ja ik ben zo... maar mijn overbuurman jonge, die is me een partij fel, die heeft me een mening...” dan zeg je “Nou wat is de naam van die man, dan ga ik eens effe een keer met hem praten.” en die tijd gebruik je vele malen efficiënter door gewoon eens aan tafel en het verhaal erachter te doen en te luisteren dat zijn vader heeft ook alweer iets meegemaakt of hij heeft dit met een erfenis gekregen, dat stukje grond heeft ie een enorme emotionele binding mee en hij ziet dat nu gewoon weg gewalst worden, door ruimte te geven voor zo’n verhaal... het gaat dan niet om toezeggingen maar je zou kunnen zeggen: “Goh ik heb een alternatief voor je. Misschien niet zo mooi maar...” en dan nog weer ff refereren aan zo’n soort verhaal, hè, dus dat je gewon dat ook vast legt wat iemand zegt, dat je laat merken dat je er iets mee doet. Zoveel efficiënter dan al die uren dat je vergadert met elkaar. Als wij ’s avonds zo in zo’n zaal zitten, kan ik zo aanwijzen wie iets gaat zeggen. Die en die, dat zijn de mensen die een verhaal hebben, die gaan iets zeggen.. dan had je ook gewoon ’s middags rond kunnen rijden.” LR2

“...ik heb ooit eens een keer op een informatieavond, was een kleiner groepje... zegt de projectleider “Ja dat bosje daarachter, dat is een rommelbosje, dat gaan we aanpakken...” ja dat is mijn bosje, dat vind ik een mooi bosje zeg maar. Wat dat in de betrekking direct zegt is “Wat jij er van vindt is onbelangrijk.”; op een maandag staat daar een keer een bulldozer en dan moet je het maar goed vinden dat dat bosje gesloopt wordt. Ja

dus... ik voel mij absoluut niet erkend. En ik word boos omdat mijn regel is wat van mij is is van mij, daar heb je gewoon van af te blijven. Terwijl, als je die kaart pakt zeg je "Nou, hier hier hier en hier woont iemand, en je zit zo bij me, en je zegt: "Goh LR2, je hebt daar een bosje, wat vind je van dat bosje? Wat wil je daarmee?" – "Ah, het is populierenhout, die bomen zijn redelijk uitgegroeid, ik was eigenlijk van plan ze een keer te rooien." – "Zullen we daar iets moois van maken?". Ja dan voel ik me gekend zeg maar, maar nee dan wordt er dus een hele groep bij elkaar gehaald omdat het handboek zegt dat je een informatieavond voor de bewoners langs dit stukje zijn. Hoe efficiënter is het om diezelfde tijd gewoon effe langs individuen te rijden.. veel efficiënter en je krijgt het verhaal erachter." LR2

Still then, well willingness needs to come from both sides. A minority of the local participants admitted that perhaps they perhaps were not that easy to work with and that the project-team had their work cut out for them; dealing with a strongly organised area of different stakeholders, with the notorious FMD-crisis behind them on top of the usual NIMBY-like responses. This local respondent points out how a smaller scale approach would lead to a better understanding, but also argues that the locals should try to come out of the negative spiral:

"Ik denk gewoon, dat als het voor jou van toepassing is, dat je gewoon het beste kan zorgen dat je met die mensen om tafel komt te zitten, één op één of één op twee, maar niet in een hele groep, en dan gewoon je eigen verhaal echt goed te kunnen doen. Ik denk dat dat belangrijker is. En toch proberen erin mee te gaan; je kan alles afwijzen, maar dat helpt toch niet, het gebeurt toch. En dan kun je proberen erop mee te liften en toch te proberen er zoveel mogelijk uit te halen wat voor jou ook gunstig is, als dat je je hoofd ertegenin gooit, dan zeggen hun ook van "Ja het is goed met jou.", want zo werkt dat toch." LR7

Working with smaller groups of locals is not new to the professionals working on the bypass. Some smaller meetings already had been organised in which specific people had been invited to come and share their ideas. These people were selected by the professionals on the basis that they directly were affected by the intervention. Later on in the project (after the interviews were conducted) more of such meetings were organised, inviting only the directly involved. In this next citation a professional talks about the different phases of the project.

"We hebben later, uitwerkingen gedaan met Veessen en Vorchten, dat ging veel beter. Want daar zat minder spanning op, dat merkte je, en dan hebben mensen een vrij eenduidig beeld en inbreng daarin. Dan kan je daar ook heel direct respons op geven. We hadden toen niet meer de opdracht om het zo breed mogelijk te maken, dus dan kan je ook veel directer reageren van, nou "Als jullie dat willen gaan wij eens even puzzelen." en de volgende keer kom je weer "Nou we hebben eens even gepuzzeld, het kan zus en zo en zo, wat denk je ervan?" nou en dan zie je dat mensen veel sneller enthousiast worden "Hèhè, en het feit dat er hier geen fietspad doorkomt: top, hebben we met elkaar afgesproken, fijn." PR6

No matter what kind of method is adopted, according to this next respondent success depends on having a local leader on the side of the professionals. A local who is well-established within the community and who shares some of the visions of the professionals has the advantage of trust and familiarity. The suspicion against professionals does not apply to such a local leader. In the following citation a professional explains how all the local leaders in Veessen-Wapenveld were strongly against the bypass and how this reluctance to envision possibilities slows down the project process and limits any sense of place potential:

"Ja, ja. En je hebt er ook verbeelding voor nodig, snap je, je moet namelijk kunnen dagdromen wat je nieuwe toekomstperspectief is. In het groene woud heb je een paar mensen die die verbeelding hebben, dat zijn zeg maar de local leaders. We hebben hier heel lang gezocht naar de local leaders, en de enige local leaders die je hier hebt zijn "teuge". Op het moment dat je geen local leader kunt vinden die zich met een bepaalde toekomst wil vereenzelvigen, dan kun je nog zoveel potentie hebben, maar als het niet in de mensen zit, dan gaat het niet."... "als er niemand is die de verbeelding heeft die sense of place kan koppelen aan wat je wil worden als je groot bent, ben je kansloos. Als je die mensen met verbeelding niet hebt, kom je als gebied daar per definitie niet terecht. De local leaders, die doen ertoe. En als je die niet hebt dan is er geen verbeelding, dan is de potentie van sense of place heel beperkt." PR1

Quite a few of the local respondents could indeed be considered as local leaders who are negative towards the bypass. On the other hand, they do see the potential in sense of place and in an individual approach. This next response comes from a local; he gives an example from his own background, to point out how bureaucracy and rules can make very simple things very difficult:

“Als gemeente werk ik als programmamanager bij afdeling parkeren, dus dat is heel wat anders... maar daar zie ik het ook. Klaagt iemand over de positie van de parkeerautomaat. Nou voordat we het weten schieten we helemaal in de kramp met antwoordbrieven, dit en dat... maar er gewoon eens naar toegaan, het verhaal eens horen, die man laten zien dat we serieus zijn... nou dan blijkt het valt mee! Als we hem een kwartslag draaien is ie tevreden... gek hè, luister gewoon eens naar mensen. Bij de overheid is er zo'n angst om gewoon naar mensen toe te gaan en hun verhaal te doen, het is helemaal uit elkaar gesneden. Het is helemaal geformaliseerd, dan blijft er niks over qua inhoud als het verhaal er niet mag zijn. Krankzinnige stomme regels.” LR2

This relates to some of the critique in the previous chapter, perhaps the project process is going according to protocol, but who says the protocol is right?

“Nou ik geloof wel dat het volgens het boekje gaat, maar volgens mij klopt het boekje gewoon niet. En ik weet ook niet hoe je dat... nou goed daar zijn wetenschappers voor denk ik, om dat te onderzoeken en te verbeteren, maar ik denk dat het boekje niet klopt.” LR4

5.5.3 Other statements

I will finish this chapter by looking at some interesting, comprehensive statements on sense of place potential. We already read a couple of responses about the diversity of opinions. The various stakeholders each have their own idea about how the bypass should be realized and these conflicts will likely increase when the many individual place meanings come into play as well. This next citation is from a professional who has an excellent example of how sense of place can be an asset in a project process, but in the last sentence he points out an important drawback of place meanings for this particular case:

“...bij Zwolle hebben wij een project, daar waren twee broers, die moesten vertrekken. Daar kwam een geul, hun huis zou afgesneden worden van de bewoonde wereld, daar kon geen brug naartoe, ze kwamen in de uiterwaarden te zitten, vonden ze prima daar wilden ze aan meewerken. “We vinden het prima, maar we zouden het heel fijn vinden als de plek van ons huis op een of andere manier herkenbaar blijft, dat je gewoon kan zeggen “daar hebben we gewoond”.” Toen heeft de projectleiding gezegd van “Wat is daar straks? Daar loopt alleen maar een smal wandelpaadje naartoe. Wat heb je straks, een prachtig natuurgebied, het is misschien wel aardig om daar een uitkijktoren te maken.” Dus nou is op die plek, waar hun huis staat, daar komt straks een uitkijktoren. En dat is al iets wat in het project zit, alleen waar zet je hem neer, nou dan heb je dus nu de plek gevonden waard ie moet komen. Zij heel blij want zij kunnen straks tegen hun kleinkinderen zeggen “Daar waar die toren staat, daar woonde opa vroeger.”, nou dat is heel mooi. Dan heb je al wel het idee dat er naar je geluisterd wordt. Daarvan hebben ze ook gezegd “Dat heeft ons heel erg geholpen met het nemen van de beslissing, omdat er toch wel naar ons geluisterd werd.”. Dat is een project waar twee mensen wonen. Verder niemand. Hier heb je een project waar je met 150 eigenaren te maken hebt, waar alle mensen die door de maatregel geraakt worden zelf vertrekken... dus waar heb je dan nog mee te maken? En moet je voor iemand die een veldkavel kwijtraakt - want dat is het in principe, achterkanten van bedrijven of lossen velden van mensen uit wapenveld of Heerde - moet je daar op dit soort wensen ingaan? En ik denk dat je daarvoor moet oppassen dat je niet in een woud van wensjes terecht komt.” PR3

Similar to locals living in the area, a professional working on the bypass develops place meanings as well, be it of a different kind. In this next citation a professional explains how his sense of place of the area resulted in the decision to incorporate a remnant of a dike breach into the design. According to the project team the hydrological background of the project argues for such an artifact to be preserved:

“Er zit nog een hele belangrijke die zit in het noorden. Dat is een oude doorbraakkolk, de Kromme kolk heet

dat ding, en daar moet het water er ook weer uit. En wat we dus uiteindelijk gedaan hebben, is aan twee kanten komt er nu een brug, en die kolk met die dijk laten we nu in stand, omdat wij vinden dat, wat we hier maken is echt watermanagement pur sang. En wat we dus heel bewust gekozen hebben, vanuit die ruimtelijke kwaliteitsdiscussie om die kolk in stand te laten met die dijk erachter, - als je die dijk weghaalt zegt die kolk niks meer natuurlijk - dus we hebben daar gekozen voor een lokale oplossing die qua uitvoering veel complexer is, ik denk ook nog duurder, maar we hebben er wel voor gekozen om dat typische kenmerk - als we een snelweg hadden gemaakt hadden we hem waarschijnlijk weggepoetst - maar juist op het niveau van watermanagement iets maken, van deze tijd, dan hebben we dat spoor van vroeger overgelaten. Dat is ook zo'n lokaal ding waar je heel bewust een keuze maakt, daar spelen dan wel iets minder de belangen van het individu, maar dat is onze vorm van sense of place.” PR1

All the responses together show that there is a potential role for sense of place in a project process, but that it has its definite drawbacks as well. This last citation summarizes about all four sub-questions into a single answer; what kind of place meanings come about, are they brought forward, what matters when evaluating the process and what is the potential of place meanings.

“Ik denk dat dat het moeilijke in het hele proces is geweest, van twee kanten, zowel project als vanuit de bewoners, de indruk werd gewekt door het inventariseren van die tastbare belangrijke dingen en die emotionele kanten van hoe belangrijk je een bepaald zicht op die toren vindt, dat dat de indruk gaf dat daar dus ook rekening mee gehouden zou worden. En dat het dus ook begrepen zou worden dat dat belangrijke dingen waren. Maar daar zaten er een aantal in die gewoon toen al duidelijk waren dat dat natuurlijk niet haalbaar is. Als jij een dijk hierachter krijgt, van vijf, zes meter, dan weet je dat je een heel stuk van dat uitzicht kwijtraakt. Dus als je mensen laat benoemen wat ze belangrijk vinden in het gebied, terwijl je op dat moment al weet dat dat dus net een van de dingen is die toen al duidelijk waren die niet konden. Met name wat wij belangrijk vonden, als wij vanuit de keuken kijken naar het gebied, kijken we tegen de Veluwezoom aan. Dat was voor ons, en dat is dus niet een boompje, dat is een emotioneel punt-, het uitzicht was voor ons een van de redenen waarom we hier zijn komen wonen, naast nog een aantal andere: rust, ruimte, zijn ook door heel veel mensen genoemd. Dat zijn niet tastbare dingen. Op het moment dat je zegt: “Nou dat uitzicht is voor mij echt essentieel belang in het gebied.”, op dat moment weet iemand van het projectbureau dat dat dus niet haalbaar is, dus op dat moment kun je als bewoner in je achterhoofd, als je reëel bent, zelf ook wel snappen dat dat niet blijft als er een dijk komt. Aan de andere kant, vanuit een projectteam of vanaf welke organisatie dan ook, is het denk ik op zo'n moment ook wel heel belangrijk om dat dan ook te benoemen, meteen dan al. En niet te wachten totdat je een conclusie aan het eind van die avonden verbind en een rapport uitbrengt over wat er allemaal belangrijk is, en dan blijkt daar dus niks mee gedaan te kunnen worden omdat het überhaupt niet haalbaar is.” LR1

With all four sub-questions discussed, it now is time to come up with a summarized analysis of the responses in the shape of a conclusion.

6. Discussion

The purpose of this research has been to bridge the prevalent sense of place literature with an actual planning and design process. In the introduction section I described the deficiency of empirical research into the supposed role of place meanings in a participatory project process as a problem regarding the application of sense of place in practice. This chapter will cover the findings presented in the previous section in relation to the concepts and theory from the literature review and the theoretical framework. Next, I will compare my findings to the literature on sense of place in the context of participation and practice. Finally, I will end this chapter by critically reflecting on what decisions may have influenced the gathering and interpretation of data.

6.1 The deconstruction of sense of place

For this research I have adapted Jorgensen and Stedman's popular take on sense of place, which essentially consists of the three intertwined concepts attachment, identity and dependence, that together construct the overarching sense of place. Throughout this thesis I frequently reminded the reader of the interconnectedness of the three dimensions and that I, like many other writers (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001; Davenport and Anderson, 2005; Manzo and Perkins, 2006) consider sense of place a holistic concept. Nevertheless, in academic research place meanings are often deconstructed into their own dimensions for various reasons. In the following paragraphs I will discuss this matter of deconstructing sense of place, the limitations that result from narrow definitions and the influence of social characteristics on the appreciation of the different sense of place dimensions.

In this exploratory research, the theoretical division of place meanings into three separate dimensions dictates the composition, the construction of the interviews and allows the raw data to be presented in an orderly way. The three-partite conceptualization of sense of place is useful for research purposes, it provides structure and clarity and enables the researcher to draw from the fragmented sense of place literature and compare their findings with others.

Various scholars (referred to above), but Jorgensen and Stedman most prominently, have underlined the interrelatedness and holistic quality of the sense of place concept. Theoretically it is not that difficult to come up with place meanings that clearly fall into a single category, as we have read in the literature review. In practice however, meanings are often attributed through many different occasions, (*'the steady accretion of sentiment'* (Tuan, 1977, p. 33)), consisting of intertwined narratives, unclear boundaries and so forth. While this does not influence the results of this research (on account of the qualitative approach), one may become more critical on some of the positivistic approaches and methods used in sense of place research^{xviii}, an argument made by Davenport and Anderson (2005) as well. In very few cases of this study a particular response could be categorized under a single sense of place dimension. The various difficulties encountered while analyzing and presenting qualitative findings on sense of place can thus make the researcher become more critical on the suggested outcomes of quantitative sense of place research.

That being said, the integrated sense of place approach of Jorgensen and Stedman and the various other quantitative works such as Hidalgo (2001); Payton et al., (2005); and Stedman (2003), do result into a comprehensive sense of place theory that covers the broadest of responses. When dealing with place meanings in an academic context^{xix} the advantages of deconstructing the concepts outweigh the drawbacks. Outside the academic world of models and laws sharp distinctions are very hard to make, and therefore I argue for an interpretative approach, respecting the holistic quality of place meanings. Bridging *'...the academic research of place meanings with the reality of planning and design in practice.'* requires careful consideration of how to translate pragmatic notions of place meanings into more abstract sense of place dimensions and vice versa. This is a very difficult task which necessitates a solid understanding of the sense of place dimensions, how they are operationalized and how they relate with each other. For instance, in an attempt to minimize overlap with place attachment, the suggested addition of *'...the desire to maintain closeness to the object of attachment.'* (Ainsworth and Bell, 1970; Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980) results in a very narrow definition. For example, some respondents claimed to be attached to their homes, but were rational about the idea of having to move. With the extended operationalization of place attachment being *'a positive*

affective bond, based on emotional content, between an individual and a specific place, the main characteristic of which is the tendency of the individual to maintain closeness to such a place.' these kind of responses are hard to categorize, if one wishes to do so.

To elaborate on the discrepancy between academia and reality, it must be clear that the theoretical division into three dimensions surely does not indicate (nor suggest) three equally divided aspects in practice. In this particular case relatively few responses concerned place identity, while place dependency was mentioned by nearly all respondents. As was discussed in the literature review, place identity is generally a sub-conscious concept (Proshansky et al., 1983; Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1998). Conscious experience of identifying with a place is often connected to socio-physical dynamics such as the place being under threat (i.e. intervention) (Proshansky et al., 1983). However, in the case of Veessen-Wapenveld, the rational mindset of the local respondents showed modest interest in place identity. Due to the limited local responses, the findings focused on collective notions regarding the FMD-crisis. The professionals did focus on various aspects of place identity, but also mentioned the limited interest in place identity shown by the involved locals. The findings of this research do not suggest a significant role for place identity, which may well be the result from the local mindset. This is not necessarily negative, but shows how the applicability of (parts of) sense of place is relative to many variables. These same variables explain the focus on place dependence, which received much attention by both locals and professionals. A strong community with a history of soil-bound farming combined with the FMD-history results into locals who deeply sympathize with the farmers. Despite having only interviewed a single farmer, this particular place dependency was the strongest sense of place dimension throughout most of the interviews. In line with the down-to-earth mentality described in the paragraph on place identity, it happens to be the most functional aspect as well (Stokols and Shumaker, 1981; Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001; 2006).

When working on sense of place on an academic level, the researcher must be prepared to struggle with the operationalization of definitions, the interpretations of data and the critique that may rightly follow; after all place meanings remain a very personal and subjective idea.

6.2 Comparison to other literature

Since this study has set out into an unexplored niche, there is limited literature to which these findings can be compared to the fullest. This research is distinct from others because it concerns an immediate, top-down intervention of a substantial size situated in an agricultural area. Often, sense of place academics focus on smaller scale urban areas with gradual interventions using a bottom-up approach, such as gentrification (Hester, 1993; Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001; Leavitt and Saegert, 1990). National parks are popular case-studies as well, where sense of place can be an asset in the light of environmental management (Cheng et al., 2003; Kruger and Jakes, 2003). These writings show different outcomes and generally argue in favor of an approach that includes sense of place. However, if we take a closer look at some of the studies that include both participation and sense of place, their findings appear to be less critical on the applicability of sense of place compared to the results presented in this study. I will shortly elaborate on the most prominent differences that may have caused this distinction.

One important difference can be found in the methodology. To better understand the potential of sense of place in practice, a researcher needs to take into account the opinion of professionals as well. While not all professionals are equally enthusiastic about participatory processes (Manzo, 2006) and can hence be skeptical beforehand, they play an essential role when applying sense of place in a project process. Not all academics take this important factor into account (Davenport and Anderson, 2005). A recent study of Jacobs and Buijs (2011) that does take both locals and professionals into account illustrates a standoff comparable to the findings of this research. Considering the incompatible ideas of locals and professionals, the suggested potential of place meanings becomes somewhat nuanced. Next to the collision between professionals and locals, the opinion of the professional respondents is a matter of interest as well. The interviewees in this study did agree to some of the suggested uses for sense of place in practice, but above all they pointed out possible pitfalls. This again results in a more nuanced view on practical applicability of the concept.

Another clear distinction that can be made is the difference between case-studies. Most of the case-studies described in other literature (Hummon, 1992; Innes, 1996, 1999; Perkins, 1995; Saegert, 2000; from Manzo, 2006) regard less radical interventions or concern projects aimed at enhancement of the case in question (Hester, 1998). Other papers focus on a non-physical intervention such as changes in policy or management (Kyle et al., 2005). Therefore, it is not surprising that their findings differ from the case Veessen-Wapenveld, in which there is much more friction between locals and professionals. The complexity of this case is what makes it interesting, but may also influence the outcomes, as I will discuss in the next paragraph.

6.3 Reflection

The remainder of this chapter concentrates on two possible points of critique on this study; the use of a single case study and the narrow focus on sense of place literature. The use of a single case and the selection of the particular case of course has implications for the outcomes of a research. Some may argue this is a weakness, but it is a simple reality evident with this kind of research. For those critical on case study research in general I refer to Flyvbjerg (2006) and since I have already argued the selection of Veessen-Wapenveld in the Method chapter of my thesis, the subsequent paragraph will focus on why I have opted for a single case study.

There is no denying that investigating more than one case would make an interesting research as well. I did consider a second case study, but decided not to do so on several grounds. First and foremost on account of the exploratory nature of my thesis, which the problem statement underlines. It is a first step into the less known area of place meanings and their possible role in a participatory process. The complex nature of place meanings necessitates the adopted in-depth approach; the gathering, transcribing and analyzing of the data is an extremely labor-intensive task and the additional resources required to investigate a second case would not be justified when taking the research goal into account: bridging academic sense of place theory with planning and design practice. A second case study would allow the researcher to compare the findings of both case studies and investigate how these come to be, but this poses obvious time constraints.

As I have explained in the theoretical framework, I have chosen to focus on sense of place literature and deliberately left out the vast amount of academic literature on participation and project processes in general. Since the sub-questions one, two and four are covered by sense of place literature, only the third research question is subject to this critique. In this paragraph I will concentrate on the (negligible) implications this has on my findings. Again, with the motivation of my thesis in mind, it follows that the core of the research should concern sense of place in both literature and practice. Indeed, the role of the concept can best be valued relative to other aspects that play a part in the project process. Therefore one could argue that an exploration of the literature on participation and project processes would have led to a more detailed interpretation of the data of this specific research question. While this may be true, I do not think that an even broader literature review would have influenced the findings of this research question nor the overall findings of this study. In fact, extending the scope of the literature review to include other theories would be at the expense of the detailed understanding of sense of place. In its current state, the literature review, together with the data analysis, adds to a better understanding of sense of place in practice.

To conclude, indeed one can come up with arguments favoring a broader approach using multiple case studies and a wider spectrum of theory, but if we consider the purpose of this study, these additions would not directly contribute to a better understanding of place meanings in practice.

7. Conclusion

In this chapter I will elaborate separately on a conclusion for each of the four sub-questions:

1. What aspects associated with sense of place are brought forward by the respondents?
2. Are any sense of place notions brought forward in the project process?
3. What matters to the respondents when evaluating the project process?
4. Do the respondents see a potential role for sense of place in the project process?

After having considered these I will conclude the main research question suggested in the introduction:

What role does sense of place play in the project process of bypass Veessen-Wapenveld?

7.1 Revisiting the sub-questions

7.1.1 What aspects associated with sense of place are brought forward by the respondents?

The first sub-question focused on the various sense of place aspects that were brought forward by the respondents in the interview. Following the composition of the chapter, I will again differentiate between the three sense of place dimensions: attachment, identity and dependence. First however, I will revisit the physical and social characterization of the area.

As for the physical characteristics of the case, both locals and professionals pointed out the specific locale of the area, situated in between the Veluwezoom and the IJssel. The locals who were not born-and-raised stated how they had chosen to come and live in the area on account of the diverse landscape, which is now under threat. The social description showed a starker contrast between the locals and professionals, which quite possibly is due to the tense relationships between the two. In general, the locals are described as rationale, proud and a bit subdued and reserved, but the intervention causes stubbornness and what some would call a pessimistic attitude. Interesting was also how the close-knitted community seemed not eager to welcome the newcomers, although not everyone experiences that in the same way.

The responses concerning attachment were various; some locals talked about being attached to the physical environment, whilst others pointed out how in the end, despite the beauty of the area, it was their social surroundings that made them feel attached. In the paragraph on relocation we could read how very different the professionals and locals looked at the issue at hand. The local respondents mentioned the emotional distress of having to leave the area, leaving the family business behind and also pointed out the influence this had on the everyday life of the small community (e.g. church). The professionals are aware of how sensitive the relocations are to the community, but also underline the rationale of the farmers who in the end are business men and, according to some professionals, are less attached to the area.

Discussing place identity was quite difficult due to the down-to-earth mentality of the locals and the ambiguity of the concept. Little individual stories were shared, but a collective history of the FMD-crisis surfaced. Later on in the interviews it turned out that the FMD has not lost any of its significance in the area. This was something that few professionals were aware of and had already led to some painful mistakes and unfortunate statements. The agricultural identity of the area, to which many of the locals relate, had suffered during the FMD-crisis and the disastrous political aftermath that followed caused a deep-seated distrust towards the government. This shared, but individually experienced agricultural identity is, according to the locals, threatened yet again.

Place dependency aspects were discussed extensively, being of a more tangible nature compared to the foregoing sense of place dimensions. Again the focus was on agriculture and its relocation; concerning dependency issues such as soil-quality and accessibility if a farmer could be compensated locally, or varying soil-prices and having to start over if actual relocation was inevitable. The numerous variables in each particular relocation case show the immense complexity. Another dependency issue that concerned many locals was the affected sense of security. During the construction of the dikes a direct risk comes from the transport of sand through the area, locals fear possible accidents with cyclist such as children going to school.

The intervention will also permanently decrease the accessibility of the area. Locals living on the “island” have expressed their doubts about the response time of emergency services in case of a working bypass.

7.1.2 Are any sense of place notions brought forward in the project process?

The second sub-question concerned whether these sense of place notions were brought up in the project process. The professionals were asked how they dealt with such personal arguments.

Both professionals and locals pointed out how in the beginning of the project much of the general debate concerned (personal) emotional issues. In the interviews, the professionals explained that the uncertainty of the start-up phase made it difficult for them to respond to such arguments. Despite the presence of place meanings in the beginning of the project, the formal participatory process proved to be unsuitable for individual notions. Not only is a unanimous advice expected from the sounding board, the involved locals themselves question the validity of such arguments. The relocation of locals living in the bypass' trajectory was another matter of interest. There were some responses on place attachment, but the majority of discussions were focused on dependency. Relocation requires strong personal contact, thus offers the perfect chance for place meanings to arise. Nevertheless, as was explained by two respondents who were professionally involved with the relocations; the law concerning (forced) relocation only deals with arguments that are measurable. This relates to what other locals pointed out, since emotional issues are not taken into account, people look for rational arguments to back up their personal case. As for the other ways in which place meanings were brought up, after the first emotions settled^{xx} the project team organized several ateliers. During these evenings, a selected group of directly involved locals and stakeholders were invited to share their ideas about the bypass. An inventory of what locals found important was made, but according to the respondents the ateliers backfired by providing the project team plenty of different options to choose from, including those provided by experts. The locals' experience of the atelier showed some of the difficulties in dealing with sense of place in a project process involving many stakeholders.

7.1.3 What matters to the respondents when evaluating the project process?

The third sub-question covered the evaluation of the project process thus far; what factors matter and later on, in the final sub-question, what role could sense of place play in all this? Clearly, the locals were not happy about the bypass and the project process. Several different causes were mentioned; first and foremost, none of the locals wanted the bypass in the first place and the questionable necessity of the intervention reinforced that NIMBY-attitude. On top of that, the FMD-crisis had left the area scarred and the distrust against the government and politics was never dealt with. The project team had the hard job of coming into an area with relatively well-organized stakeholders who all were distrustful towards the government. As for the project process itself, the local respondents pointed out a variety of communication flaws, some of them which may seem trivial but altogether these caused much frustration with the already agitated locals. Though expectation management is part of communication, it received special interest from both locals and professionals, which argued for a more in-depth look. Both parties stressed the importance of it and the critique from the locals was to some extent acknowledged by the professionals. All in all, during the difficult process so far, there had been conversations between both respondent groups on the added value of a participatory process. Was it even worth all the trouble if so little could be done with the input –again expectation management- and would it not be much more efficient to involve locals on a later point in the process? Another point of critique was how the locals were expected to show their involvement in the project, but that the professionals themselves seemed little involved with the area. This wish for personal involvement introduces the fourth and last sub-question, the potential of sense of place.

7.1.4 Do the respondents see a potential role for sense of place in the project process?

With the fourth and final sub-question the interviewees were introduced to the concept sense of place, and asked what their viewpoint was; what are the pros and cons of incorporating sense of place into the project process? In general, the respondents were in favor of an approach that included sense of place in the project process, but remained critical at the same time.

Taking place meanings into consideration requires increased attention for the 'human aspects' that many of the local respondents missed during the process. A point of critique on the project process was the lack of personal involvement from professionals into local issues and worries, arguing in favor of a sense of place approach as well. The locals who criticized the large scale information evenings mentioned how this small scale approach could lead to satisfying outcomes due to the more informal atmosphere. Some professionals stated similar findings; a small scale meeting can quickly shed light on personal issues which otherwise would be unknown to the project team. While the interviews showed how locals valued their place meanings –and rightly so according to the professionals- both parties recognized the difficulties of incorporating personal notions into such a complex project. Continuing on some of the critique mentioned in the previous sub-question, a pitfall that was pointed out by several disappointed locals was that taking place meanings into account would require even better expectation management. Since the current expectation management of the project was all but flawless, the locals were skeptical on this part. Moreover, only acknowledging or recognizing the issues at hand would not help them in any way; they want concrete measures. This was also pointed out by professionals, who feared that discussing sense of place could easily lead to expectations that would be difficult to satisfy in a tangible way. Another downside mentioned by the professionals was the danger of the plurality and variety of individual desires that resulted from a sense of place approach. In this particular case the professionals have to deal with many different stakeholders which increases the chance of conflicting desires. The interviews showed that respondents who were eager to talk about their place meanings saw more potential in the concept compared to those who were more hesitant in expressing their place meanings. Respondents that talked little about place meanings were more likely to focus on the possible downsides when introduced to the concept.

7.2 Main conclusion

With both the discussion and the above described findings in mind, it is now time to consider the main question: *What role do place meanings (sense of place) play in the project process of bypass Veessen-Wapenveld?*

In a single sentence: sense of place plays a limited role in the project process of the bypass Veessen-Wapenveld.

Sense of place and its related aspects are very relevant concepts in any spatial project, but the role they play depends on different factors, some of which have little to do with the project at hand. In the case of Veessen-Wapenveld, the previous encounter with state-controlled intervention has caused a deep-seated distrust against pretty much everything connected to politics. The FMD-crisis was not forgotten and its aftermath had left deep scars. The questionable necessity of the project fueled the against-movement ("teugen!") which immediately set the tone for a difficult cooperation between locals and professionals. Despite the difficult start, locals did participate. The interviews showed that arguments based on place meanings were most prominent in the beginning of the project, a time in which the trajectory of the bypass was not even certain. When things began to take shape, many of these first emotions –and with that place meanings- had subsided and seemed less relevant as the idea of the bypass had somewhat settled. Interestingly, nearly all local respondents displayed strong feelings regarding a particular locale, yet they do not easily come forward about these emotions due to the fact that they do not consider them to be relevant in a project of this nature. The potential of sense of place is limited due to the hierarchy on which decisions are made. As some respondents said after being introduced to the concept: "I don't think any politician (decision maker) would care about that." The professionals pointed out that they were responsible for drawing up different scenarios and/or alternative advices, but that very few decisions were theirs to make. The formal participation events were well organized but also little dynamic and not suitable to discuss personal issues such as sense of place. The large scale of

the majority of these official meetings, with people from all over the area, were simply not fitting to discuss ones' attachment to a willow, rendering place meanings and anything personal obsolete. As for the scale of the project, at first it may seem impossible to make use of sense of place notions considering the size of the area, but it turns out that the main difficulty comes from the strict program of the bypass. There are of course the basic requirements as described by Ruimte voor de rivier, but also legislations arguing for nature development, local water management and so forth. Add to that the many stakeholders and their desires whilst keeping in mind that the project team has to work on a tight schedule with limited financial means and it quickly becomes clear that it is not the size of the area, but the complexity of the case that drastically limits a potential role for sense of place.

Because indeed, most of the respondents did see a potential role for sense of place, as was discussed in sub-question four. During an interview a professional mentioned how he suddenly became aware of the underlying origin of a locals' concern, simply by having a personal conversation. Increasing the personal involvement of professionals into the local community would also benefit the project process by bringing professionals and locals closer together. Thus, while the role of place meanings appears to be marginal in this case study, they do have potential. Nevertheless, in this particular situation the project process would benefit more from improving other elements such as communication in general. Because that is what matters most to the locals: clarity in communication, which includes realism "yes, you will have to move" and expectation management "I will ask if it is possible, but do not count on it". While this may seem blunt, both professionals and locals pointed out that uncertainty and false hopes are the worst things that can occur in participatory processes. And whilst many –if not all- locals have (had) strong objections towards the bypass, most of them have gotten used to the idea that it will be realized. But, as several pointed out, they do not want to get used to the uncertainty and false hopes they now and then experienced during the project process. Both locals and professionals agreed that further improving these basic aspects of a project deserves priority over sense of place.

7.3 Recommendations for further research

The qualitative, non-linear approach adopted for this research has led to some interesting insights which are discussed above. But as with all research, apart from answers, new questions arise. As hinted in the discussion, it would be interesting to study multiple cases and compare the findings. How can differences in potential use of place meanings be explained? A very thorough investigation of a (or multiple) case(s), conducted from the very first phase of the project up until the end would be an interesting –and extensive- study as well, allowing the researcher to investigate the influence and dynamics of place meanings during such a project. A final suggestion would be to construct a module or method for incorporating place meanings into an actual project process and testing it in a real-life planning and design process. This would of course require a variety of resources, including a project team who is willing to take on the experiment. Then again, while the potential of place meanings in this particular study may be limited, the current participatory processes allow for improvement; both the respondents and academics argue for further investigation:

"I do believe they do it by the book, but I think the book is wrong. And I'm not sure either how to... well, I guess that's what scientists are for; to investigate and to improve..." LR4

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9. Appendix

9.1 Figure 4: Semi-structured interview outline

Topic	Relatie	Hoofdvragen	Subvragen	Local	Professional
Inleidende vragen	Beeld krijgen	Hoe lang woont u in het gebied?		Kunt u iets vertellen over uw rol in de zaak Hoogwatergeul?	
Sense of place; fysiek, ruimtelijk, sociaal enz.	Beleving Ruimtelijke dynamiek	Wat vindt u van dit gebied? Wat is het meest kenmerkende van dit gebied? Wat zijn de meest kenmerkende elementen in het landschap? Vindt u het gebied de afgelopen decennia veranderd?	Inwoners? Welk gevoel heeft u bij veranderingen? Hebben de veranderingen gevolgen voor uw waardering van het gebied?	Hoe belangrijk is dit gebied voor u? Is het gebied inwisselbaar? Voelt u zich verbonden met het gebied? Wat vindt u van dit gebied? Wat is het meest kenmerkende van dit gebied? En van de mensen? Wat zijn de meest kenmerkende elementen in het landschap? Wat is in het algemeen uw indruk van de bewoners van het gebied?	
Binding met gebied	Landschappelijke binding Sociale binding	Voelt u zich verbonden met het gebied waarin u de activiteit uitoefent? Waarin uit zich dat? Voelt u zich verbonden met de mensen in uw omgeving? Waarin uit zich dat?	Hoe lang woont u in dit gebied? Voelt u zich thuis in dit gebied/wijk? Zijn er vrienden/familie in de buurt?	Zijn er mensen die roepen "ja maar hier ben ik opgegroeid, ik wil niet dat t verandert!" Krijgen jullie ook te maken met emotionele argumenten, en zo ja, hoe gaan jullie daar mee om?	
Project evaluatie en (mogelijke) rol van sense of place daarin	Wat weegt mee? Waar is ruimte voor? Anekdotes	Hoe vind u de structurering van het project ? Hoe ambitieus is de participatie ingezet? Wat zijn/waren de verwachtingen? Hoe vind u dat er in deze case wordt omgegaan met de input van de inwoners?	Wat is volgens u het voornaamste idee achter participatie? Hebben burgers een realistische kijk op participatie? Kijkt u terug op een, voorlopig, succesvol participatieproces ?	Hoe heeft u uw mening gegeven over de gang van zaken? Wat zijn de argumenten die u heeft gebruikt op momenten van inspraak? Zijn er, volgens u, mogelijkheden om in te spelen op de relatief individuele zorgen van de bewoners? Op welke manier is er getracht invloed uit te oefenen? Is er genoeg aandacht/wisselwerking tussen experts en bewoners? Hoe is er omgegaan met de inspraak/onzekerheden van bewoners? Op welke manier is er getracht invloed uit te oefenen?	
Potentie van sense of place	Uitleg geven concept en mogelijke rol	Ziet u mogelijkheden voor sense of place in een dergelijk project? Waarom wel/niet?	In hoeverre heeft sense of place, al dan niet bewust, een rol gespeeld in het proces dusver?	Kunt u situaties bedenken die zich hebben voorgedaan met een sense of place achtergrond? Wat lijken u de voor en nadelen van het betrekken van place meanings bij een dergelijk project?	

9.2 Figure 5: Additional interview questions (Jacobs and Buijs, 2011)

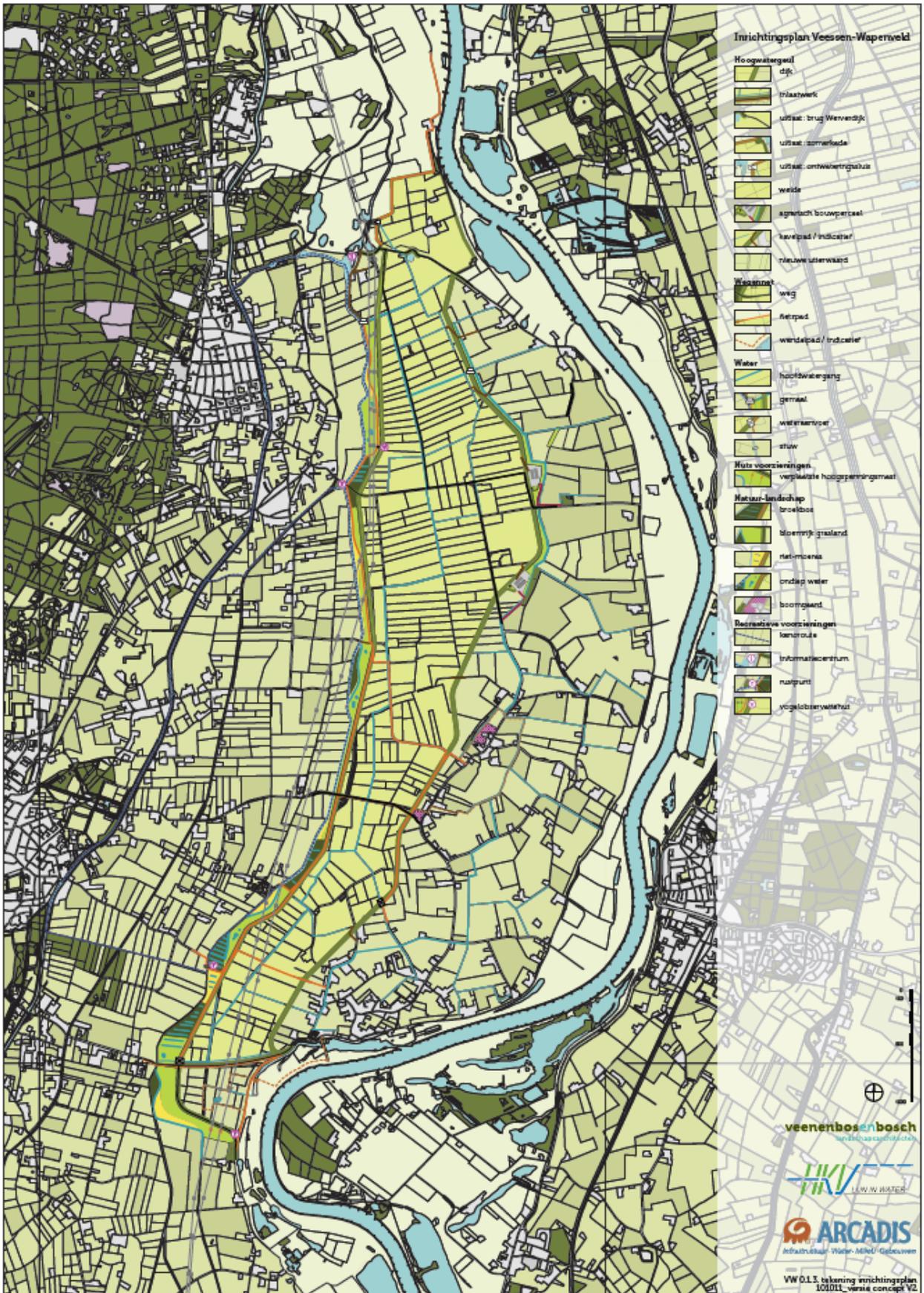
Concept	Interview Question
Place meanings	What does this place mean to you?
	How would you characterize this place?
	How important do you regard this place for yourself?
	What activities do you perform at this place?
	What are your favorite characteristics of this place?
	Are you satisfied with this place?
	Do you experience any problems with respect to this place?
	Do you feel connected to this place?
Beliefs that constitute attitudes	What do you see as the positive consequences of [the proposed intervention]?
	What do you see as the negative consequences of [the proposed intervention]?
Attitudes toward interventions	How would you evaluate [the proposed intervention]?
	How would you rate [the proposed intervention] in terms of positive or negative?

9.3 Figure 6: Additional interview questions (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001)

1. General attachment to house: I would be sorry to move out of my house, without the people I live with
2. Social attachment to house: I would be sorry if the people I lived with moved out without me
3. Physical attachment to house: I would be sorry if I and the people I lived with moved out
4. General attachment to neighbourhood: I would be sorry to move out of my neighbourhood, without the people who live there
5. Social attachment to neighbourhood: I would be sorry if the people who I appreciated in the neighbourhood moved out
6. Physical attachment to neighbourhood: I would be sorry if I and the people who I appreciated in the neighbourhood moved out
7. General attachment to city: I would be sorry to move out of my city, without the people who live there
8. Social attachment to city: I would be sorry if the people who I appreciate in the city moved out
9. Physical attachment to city: I would be sorry if I and the people who I appreciate in the city moved out

9.4 Figure 7: Additional interview questions (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001)

Factor	Item label	Item description
Place identity	IDENTITY1	Everything about my lake property is a reflection of me.
	IDENTITY2	My lake property says very little about who I am.
Place attachment	IDENTITY3	I feel that I can really be myself at my lake property.
	IDENTITY4	My lake property reflects the type of person I am.
	ATTACH1	I feel relaxed when I'm at my lake property.
	ATTACH 2	I feel happiest when I'm at my lake property.
Place dependence	ATTACH3	My lake property is my favorite place to be.
	ATTACH4	I really miss my lake property when I'm away from it for too long.
	DEPEND1	My lake property is the best place for doing the things that I enjoy most.
	DEPEND2	For doing the things that I enjoy most, no other place can compare to my lake property.
	DEPEND3	My lake property is not a good place to do the things I most like to do.
	DEPEND4	As far as I am concerned, there are better places to be than at my lake property.



9.5 Figure 8: Case area and intervention (Source: http://www.veluwe.nl/asp/download.aspx?File=/contents/pages/206835/kaart_concept_voorkeursvariant_oktober_2010.pdf, Last accessed on February 1, 2012)

9.6 Endnotes

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- ⁱ For more detailed information I kindly refer to the bibliography.
- ⁱⁱ Of course approaches can differ within disciplines as well.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Limited considering the strong interrelatedness of the three sense of place constructs.
- ^{iv} Low is one of the theorists who contemplates whether place attachment can be seen as a synonym of sense of place (Altman and Low, 1992; Patterson and Williams, 2005), Lalli (1992) considers place attachment a component of place identity. Brown and Werner (1985) use identity and attachment without operationalizing the differences. Davenport and Anderson (2005) state that the definition of sense of place is much broader than the definition of place attachment. They consider place attachment as a concept that can be researched on its own, but also regard it as an aspect of sense of place.
- ^v A few of the academics cited above make minor reference to such a characteristic; Shumaker and Taylor include the word *positive*, Hummon uses the word *involvement* and Riley talks about an *affective relationship*, all of which to some extent point towards some sort of positive attachment.
- ^{vi} For a more complete overview see Altman and Low, 1992
- ^{vii} Some theorists use biological and environmental processes as a synonym w/o further distinguishing the differences. This is not uncommon as the biological process is somewhat vague.
- ^{viii} Also see place-dependence.
- ^{ix} Physical characteristics may seem closely relatable to place dependence, but we must keep in mind that it is about identifying with a setting, the ability to satisfy specific desires does not necessarily play a role.
- ^x All citations (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996)
- ^{xi} Again, this distinction is essential in differentiating place dependence from place attachment; place attachment deals with positive bonding on an emotional level whereas place dependence can be negative and is more rationale based.
- ^{xii} “Bij veel bewoners en agrariërs is een beeld ontstaan van een ongrijpbare overheid, die niet luistert, kennis niet deelt, vragen niet beantwoordt en alles al besloten heeft. Goede inhoudelijke argumenten zouden blijkbaar minder tellen dan politiek-strategische redenen.” (Communicatieplan Veessen-Wapenveld, 2008).
- ^{xiii} Seeing that only one respondent was a farmer himself.
- ^{xiv} Clearly I was not the first to express interest in the case Veessen-Wapenveld; quite a few farmers had grown weary of all the attention and preferred not to take part in the research. Next to that, some had already moved or I simply could not get in touch.
- ^{xv} <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGFIOHy1rg>, Last accessed on February 1, 2012
- ^{xvi} Apart from the fact that the bypass will indeed be realized in the area
- ^{xvii} Statements made by politicians or professionals who are not up to date with the project can be harmful to the project team as well as to other stakeholders involved. One local recalled a visit from Yttje Feddes, who supposedly said:
- “*Nee dat was wel leuk als hier vaak water kwam, dat was leuk voor de mensen uit het westen van het land, die konden dan kijken hoe dat volliep*”. *Terwijl mensen hier zich vreselijk zorgen over maken als dat vol is met aan en afvoer van veiligheid en dit en dat... dan staan daar duizend mensen te kijken... dan begrijp je toch helemaal niks van wat hier leeft en speelt? Hoe randstedelijk kan je denken?*” LR4
- ^{xviii} Also see paragraph 1.4: Relevance
- ^{xix} Which essentially is the definition of sense of place, as discussed in paragraph 2.6: Place meanings
- ^{xx} And many locals had already become frustrated.