



Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed
*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en
Wetenschap*

**State of Conservation
of the World Heritage site of
"Droogmakerij de Beemster
(Beemster Polder)", Netherlands**

September 2009

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Concluding summary

The World Heritage site of the "Beemster Polder", dating from the early 17th century, is one of the oldest areas of reclaimed land in the Netherlands. It has preserved intact its well-ordered landscape of fields, roads, canals, dykes and settlements, laid out in accordance with classical and Renaissance planning principles. Spatial and socio-economic changes and developments within the Beemster Polder will always have to be considered in the light of its World Heritage status.

Since the inclusion of the Beemster Polder in the World Heritage List (1999), the policy pursued by the municipality of De Beemster is well considered and actively focuses on maintaining it. The key factor in this are the descriptions given by the World Heritage Committee in the three criteria applicable in this case. Developments of and in De Beemster are therefore always considered in the light of these criteria.

In its letter of 5 June 2009 to the Minister of Education, Culture and Science (see Appendix 5), the municipality of Beemster - *inter alia* - replied to the Manifesto drawn up by the pressure group, the "Beemster World Heritage Site Residents Manifesto Group", together with the Beemster Residents Network Foundation in 2008 and submitted to the World Heritage Centre in January 2009 under the title *Informing the World Heritage Committee about threats to the "Beemster Polder" World Heritage Site*, and the number of housing units to be built as stated in the Manifesto. The municipality indicated the likely housebuilding requirements up to 2020. Zoning and visual quality plans drawn up by the municipality indicate the basis for each of the proposed developments, the special conditions and layout that apply and that the visual quality plan provides a framework for a qualitative elaboration of the urban development plan for an area.

The State of Conservation Report informs the World Heritage Committee of possible spatial developments up to 2040 that may arise for De Beemster within the applicable legal frameworks. They are referred to in the report. It also indicates how the municipality prepares its spatial, urban development and structural plans. As can be read in the quotations from the visual quality plan for Zuidoostbeemster I, it is evident that this plan is based on De Beemster's historical spatial infrastructure and how this infrastructure is taken into account in the future development of this village.

To summarise, the national Cultural Heritage Agency has arrived at the findings that:

- The number of housing units to be built in future in the municipality of Beemster is in line with the restrictive housebuilding policy ("zero migration balance", i.e. only building houses to accommodate its own population growth) which applies to building in National Landscapes - of which the Beemster Polder World Heritage Site forms part - and administrative arrangements which have been made in this regard between the national government, the province, the region and the municipality. In this context, it can be stated that the municipality of Beemster has acted with great care in actively preserving the outstanding universal values of the World Heritage Site in a well considered manner.
- The "Zuidoostbeemster 1" and "Middenbeemster (Fourth Quadrant)" zoning plans adopted by the municipality of Beemster are based on the above-mentioned arrangements and have therefore been approved by the Province of North-Holland.
- In assessing how the planned housing development relates to the responsibility for preserving the outstanding values of the World Heritage Site, the issue is less about the number of housing units to be built and more about how the cultural significance of the de Beemster Polder will be seen and experienced by future

generations. As applied to the housing development, this means: where and how are the housing units to be built? The municipality of Beemster has studied this question and set out its response in visual quality plans.

- In Zuidoostbeemster, it was decided to adhere to the historical, orthogonal structure within the main structure of De Beemster. The different, small-scale way in which the land is divided up in Zuidoostbeemster and its "enclave-like" location provide an opportunity to approach spatial developments in this part of De Beemster in a different way from the other, much more open and large-scale parts of De Beemster. It has been decided to develop the "village grid" [*burgergrid*] and divide it into "neighbourhoods" and "ribbons". They are good starting points for integrating a modest housing development.
- At the same time, the identification of De Beemster as a well preserved landscape must be approached holistically and respectfully. The issue for Zuidoostbeemster is that the village is part of the wider landscape, the polder as a whole, with its own qualities and characteristics. This requires it to occupy a subservient position in terms of the nature of the buildings, partly because of Middenbeemster's role as the original main centre. Because this part of De Beemster is not so open, it is important that its green periphery should be enough of a buffer against the neighbouring town of Purmerend outside the Beemster Polder and that a distance is literally kept between the new-build area and the historical ring dyke around the polder. The settlement must be prevented from gaining the appearance of a suburb of Purmerend.

The Visual Quality Plan for Zuidoostbeemster states that the architecture in the neighbourhoods and ribbons must be contemporary. Historicising building is explicitly rejected. Government policy in this regard generally aims to develop the identity and the recognisability of the environment. However, a strong identity does not always have to be rooted in the past, but can also be created by a strong, well integrated, new design. For the architectural assessment of building plans, the local building aesthetics committee and the municipal building aesthetics framework provide options for professional assessment and advice.

- The village of Middenbeemster has also been developed in accordance with the polder's historical orthogonal structure. Three quadrants have already been built within the grid, each with its own atmosphere and characteristics. The municipality is seeking a land division method for the Fourth Quadrant to be built which is consistent with existing dimensional characteristics and ensures spatial quality. To this end, special attention is being focused on the periphery and the structural components of the building plan. The development in the Fourth Quadrant itself constitutes a logical completion of Middenbeemster as the main centre of the De Beemster Polder.
- As far as Middenbeemster is concerned, the taller, prominent buildings have traditionally been concentrated around the central village/market square, which underlines Middenbeemster's hierarchical function as a main centre. This hierarchy, as expressed in functionality, typology and architectural form, must also be maintained in the structure of Middenbeemster's centre.
- Both for Middenbeemster and for Zuidoostbeemster, it is the case that buildings of more than "two storeys plus roof" will have the effect of changing their village-like and rural character into a more urban character, thereby removing their connection with the landscape qualities of the polder. The size, building height and type of housing should not be in conflict with the traditional small-scale, rural nature of the settlements. The development outside the central part of Middenbeemster must also remain subservient to the central main development, in terms of both appearance and function.

-With regard to the other spatial developments in De Beemster, it is the proposal by CONO Kaasmakers to extend its factory complex that has attracted most attention. The municipality has stated that the plans will be assessed in terms of the polder's World Heritage status and has already obtained advice in this regard. The Cultural Heritage Agency is also following developments closely.

As stated in the introduction, zoning plans form the framework for dealing with controversial issues such as building heights, numbers of houses, densities and possible sites. These issues will therefore have to be considered within this framework of spatial planning and urban development. It has been agreed with the municipality that the detailed plan for Zuidoostbeemster II will be produced in close consultation with this Agency and that other (possible) developments elsewhere in De Beemster will in each case be coordinated with the province of North-Holland and the national Cultural Heritage Agency.

1. Introduction

By letter of 3 February 2009 (Ref. WHC/74/1367/NL/YT/MR), the director of the World Heritage Centre requested the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate, H.E. Mr Barend Ter Haar, Permanent Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to UNESCO, to comment from the member state's perspective on the report submitted in January 2009 by the Beemster World Heritage Site Residents Manifesto Group, in Zuidoostbeemster, to the World Heritage Centre Informing the World Heritage Committee of Threats to the Beemster World Heritage Site.

In the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Minister of Education Culture and Science is designated by the government as the coordinating minister for UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The Cultural Heritage Agency [Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed], formerly the National Service for Archaeology, Cultural Landscape and Built Heritage [Rijksdienst voor Archeologie, Cultuurlandschap en Monumenten, RACM] in Amersfoort forms part of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as a knowledge centre for cultural heritage and as the implementing agency in this regard. This report has been prepared by the above department.

This State of Conservation Report provides information on the reason behind the report, the situation with regard to the housebuilding plans in Zuidoostbeemster and Middenbeemster and other spatial developments in the property, as well as the legal and policy framework at national, provincial and municipal level within which the developments are taking place. The report also explains the administrative and legal framework governing spatial planning in the Netherlands.

2. The Beemster Polder, World Heritage Site

Situated in the province of North-Holland 20 kilometres to the north of Amsterdam, the municipality of Beemster occupies the territory of the seventeenth-century De Beemster polder, which was included on the World Heritage List in 1999, in response to a proposal submitted by the Dutch government. The "outstanding universal value" of the "Beemster Polder" World Heritage Site resides in the layout of this early 17th-century example of land reclamation in what was then the Republic of the Seven United Provinces, which is special in terms of planning and conceptual design. This Polder therefore marks an exceptional moment in the history of polders since the late Middle Ages in the Netherlands, in terms of both water management and civil engineering. The Netherlands based its proposal for the inclusion of the site on the UNESCO World Heritage List on two themes, the Republic of the Seven United Provinces in the 17th century and the Netherlands - Land of Water. The Beemster Polder contains five forts forming part of the "Defence Line of Amsterdam" World Heritage Site.

When it was included on the World Heritage List, the World Heritage Committee stated that three of the applicable criteria for gaining cultural World Heritage status had been satisfied,

Criterion (i): The Beemster Polder is a masterpiece of creative planning, in which the ideals of antiquity and the Renaissance were applied to the design of a reclaimed landscape.

Criterion (ii): The innovative and intellectually imaginative landscape of the Beemster Polder had a profound and lasting impact on reclamation projects in Europe and beyond

Criterion (iv): The creation of the Beemster Polder marks a major step forward in the interrelationship between humankind and water at a crucial period of social and economic expansion.

Spatial and socio-economic changes and developments within the Beemster Polder will always have to be considered in the light of its World Heritage status.

The municipality uses a copper engraving of the ground plan of the Beemster Polder dating from 1644 (see Appendix 3) showing the road, waterway and land allotment structure at that time as a guide for spatial changes and the development of the villages situated in it (Middenbeemster, Zuidoostbeemster, Noordbeemster and Westbeemster). These structures and the position of roads and waterways and the layout of the plots have remained unchanged in De Beemster over the centuries. The map hangs in the chamber of the Municipal Executive. It is regarded as a metaphor, as the underlying structure for spatial development in relation to the original design plan for De Beemster.

The "Copper Engraving" figures as the underlying structure for the Outer Area Zoning Plan [*Bestemmingsplan Buitengebied*] to be drawn up by the municipality (see below) and the Nekkerzoom Strategic Development Agenda [*Ontwikkelingsvisie Nekkerzoom*] but also for a project which, in cooperation with the Holland Noorderkwartier Regional Water Board as regards water management policy, will set out which bodies of water (ditches) are to be considered the inherent and immutable cultural-historical pattern of the polder. With this project, the municipality's aim is to set down a policy of encouraging land users to compensate for filling in and or diverting a watercourse - which may be required for agricultural purposes - by restoring the original cultural-historical pattern of ditches.

The 1644 map also serves as an "underlying structure" for the spatial planning of new-build projects. The engraving is also important as a source from which to derive Beemster's original dimensional characteristics and apply them to new spatial developments.

The municipality of Beemster acts as the *sitholder*. Under the regulations and legislation in the Netherlands and for World Heritage Sites situated in the Netherlands, the then state secretary for Culture announced to the Dutch parliament in December 2001 that the three tiers of government (national, provincial and municipal) would agree "to contribute, each from its role and sphere of responsibility, to the sustainable conservation of Heritage".

The surface area of the polder is 72 square kilometres. As of 1 January 2009 the number of residents stood at 85.66. The municipality of Beemster has 75 historic buildings and monuments granted conservation status.

In 2007, De Beemster's housing stock consisted of 3355 housing units (1,665 in Midden-beemster; 1,250 in Zuidoostbeemster; 235 in Westbeemster; 205 in Noordbeemster) (*Strategic Housing Policy for Beemster 2008+. Vier vitale dorpen* [Four vital villages]. Municipality of Beemster, June 2008, Appendix: background information from the analysis, p. 3).

3. Beemster World Heritage Site Residents Manifesto Group

The Beemster World Heritage Site Residents Manifesto Group drew up their manifesto in 2008 and distributed it door to door in the municipality of Beemster in October 2008. The initiators are residents groups from around the Nekkerweg and Zuiderweg roads, the Middenbeemster village centre, Noorderpad, Zuiderpad and the Purmerenderweg road.

In November 2008, this group published jointly with the Beemster Residents Network Foundation a brochure entitled *Emergency. Beemster World Heritage Site in danger. Residents talk about developments in De Beemster*, which includes the "Beemster World Heritage Site Residents Manifesto" of the Beemster Residents Network Foundation. 372 people expressed their support for the Manifesto.

The purpose of the brochure was to highlight a number of developments such as large-scale house-building considered to be a threat to the open countryside and historic ribbon development, the creeping development of industrial sites, the creation of "concentrations of housing spreading into the agricultural landscape" and abuses by property developers.

The Manifesto Group wrote a letter to the Dutch government (for the attention of the Prime Minister) (16 January 2009) and, jointly with the Beemster Residents Network Foundation, to the Ministers of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality (12 November 2008), Education, Culture and Science (11 November 2008), Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (8 November 2008), the Provincial Executive and Provincial Council of North-Holland (25 October 2008), the North-Holland Directorate of the Department of Public Works and Water Management (7 November 2008), the Chief Government Architect and Government Adviser on Cultural Heritage (8 November 2008).

The Manifesto Group and Foundation received written replies from the Ministries of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (8 May 2009) and Education, Culture and Science (23 April 2009). They were informed that there were ongoing consultations with the municipality of Beemster with regard to the plans for Zuidoostbeemster. The Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment advised that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science on behalf of the Ministries of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality would ask the province of North-Holland "to focus explicit attention on the interests of the World Heritage Site when approving the zoning plan".

On 16 November 2008, the Manifesto Group and the Foundation wrote a letter to North-Holland Provincial Executive member Ton Hooijmaijers, asking him to focus attention on the fact that "already over 8,000 housing units" are to be built in the National Landscape "Low Holland" of which De Beemster forms part, whereas the Dutch government had laid down that "the maximum number of housing units to be built (up to 2020) is 4,100". Both groups also believed that the "red contour" was laid down by the province of North-Holland without taking into account "the UNESCO document, the National Spatial Policy Document,

It was this Manifesto Group that in January 2009 presented its report *Informing the World Heritage Committee about threats to the Beemster Polder World Heritage Site* to the World Heritage Committee.

4. National spatial planning policy

In order to gain an insight into spatial developments and the decision-making process within the World Heritage Site, it is necessary to delve deeper into developments in the spatial policy of government, province and municipality and the division of responsibilities and powers. These aspects are therefore discussed in greater detail below. The Spatial Planning Act, Spatial Planning Decree and municipal land-use plans are discussed in detail in Addenda 1 and 2.

4.1. Policy document on spatial development [Nota Ruimte] (2006)

The *Spatial Policy Document* of the Ministries of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality, of Transport, Public Works & Water Management, of Education, Culture and Science and of Economic Affairs is known as a Key Planning Decision of the Dutch government, adopted in 2006. In 2008, the policy set out in the Spatial Development Policy Document was updated with the policy document on the Implementation of Spatial Development under the new Spatial Planning Act (*Wet ruimtelijke ordening*). Following on from the Spatial Development Policy Document, the Dutch government sets out in this policy document the national spatial interests and the instruments to be used to achieve these interests. The policy document is valid until 2020.

The protection, conservation and development of World Heritage Sites are deemed to be the national spatial interest. This means that the protection, conservation and development of Dutch World Heritage Sites must be laid down in provincial and municipal zoning plans. "The required protection and development of the areas (including the areas on the Tentative List) must be provided in regional and zoning plans. The national government will consult with the relevant tiers of government to describe in "regional documents" (i.e. management plans) - to be submitted to UNESCO - how heritage conservation is guaranteed in planning and financial terms (Spatial Development Policy Document).

Because the Beemster and Amsterdam Defence Line World Heritage Sites are both located in a National Landscape, the protection of the outstanding universal values of these World Heritage Sites is linked to the protection of the National Landscapes. A statutory regulation (Order in Council for Spatial Development) for the protection of the Beemster and Amsterdam Defence Line World Heritage Sites and the National Landscapes has been before the Dutch parliament for approval since July 2009. Other statutory instruments will be used to protect the OUVs of the remaining Dutch World Heritage Sites.

In addition to this statutory protection from the Dutch government, the government bodies involved (municipality, province and water board) are preparing joint policy documents or management plans. Beemster's policy document or management plan will be ready by the end of 2009. The intention of the document (according to the Policy Letter on the World Heritage Site, 2001) is:

- to focus public attention on and interest in the *site*;
- to formulate guidelines for managing the *site* to ensure that its essential values are preserved;
- to explicitly state the commitment and role of all of the parties involved (public and private);
- to draw up a programme of measures and projects aimed at preserving and developing the *site* and its constituent parts;
- to make it clear how sustainable prospects can be achieved for the long term".

4.2. National Landscapes

The Dutch government designated 20 National Landscapes in the Spatial Planning Policy Document (2006). The Beemster World Heritage Site forms part of the National Landscape "Low Holland". "National Landscapes are areas with internationally rare or unique and nationally typical landscape qualities....Rural, cultural-historical and natural qualities of national landscapes must be preserved, sustainably managed and where possible improved.....The guiding principle is that national landscapes should be able to develop properly in socio-economic terms while the special qualities of the area are preserved or improved" (p. 118, par. 3.4.3, Spatial Planning Policy Document).

Spatial developments such as house building are therefore possible in a National Landscape. But the core qualities of the landscape must be preserved and improved. However, residential developments are only permitted if they accommodate natural population growth ("zero" migration balance) in the National Landscape. Provinces and municipalities must agree on the size and location of these residential developments.

4.3. National Landscape "Low Holland"

One of these 20 National Landscapes designated by the government in the *Spatial Planning Policy Document* is that of "Low Holland". It contains the Beemster Polder as well as a large number of forts belonging to the Amsterdam Defence Line [*Stelling van Amsterdam*], protected as a World Heritage Site (C 759). The Amsterdam Defence Line has also been designated by the government as a National Landscape.

The *Spatial Policy Document* states that the core qualities for "Low Holland" are:

- wide open space
- geometric layout pattern in polders
- strip arrangement" (p. 123, par. 3.4.3).

The direct responsibility for a National Landscape rests with a province. The province of North-Holland adopted the *Implementation Programme for National Landscape Low Holland 2007-2013* (October 2006). The boundaries of the National Landscape "Low Holland" were also determined in 2006 by the province of North-Holland (*Revised Regional Plan for National Landscape Low Holland*).

5. North-Holland provincial policy: Detailed Waterland Regional Housing Plan (2006)

On 28 February 2006, the Provincial Executive of North-Holland approved the *Detailed Waterland Regional Housing Plan* for the *South North-Holland Regional Plan* (2003). Until the revised *Spatial Planning Act* (Wro), provinces approved regional plans for their territories which determined what could or should be done with the space for that region. Since 2008, provinces have drawn up structural schemes for them. The *South North-Holland Regional Plan* is still based on the previous *Spatial Planning Act*. The regional plan takes as its guiding principle a "zero migration balance". This means that the maximum amount of space will be provided for the region's own population growth.

For the entire Waterland region, to which Beemster belongs, 13,000 housing units are required for the future accommodation of the local population. Of these, 7,000 were already planned some time ago, in 2004-2005, including 750 housing units in Zuidoostbeemster I. Taking into account the already planned housing requirement of 7,000 units, this left a shortage of 6,000 housing units. This was based on 50% being constructed in urban areas (ICT) and 50% in the "rural area". When the *South North-Holland Regional Plan* was approved in 2003 to satisfy the housing requirement in the rural area, 1,050 housing units were finally approved for Zuidpolder in Edam-Volendam, situated outside the Beemster Polder. A further planning instruction has been drawn up for the remaining 1,950 housing units. Details of this have been set out in the *Detailed Waterland Regional Housing Plan*, approved on 28 February 2006. This Detailed Regional Plan states where the 1,950 housing units can be built in the rural area. In the municipality of Beemster, this involves two sites: "Zuidoostbeemster 2" with 450 housing units and "Middenbeemster Fourth Quadrant 1" with 240 housing units.

In addition to the housing requirement for the rural area, the *Regional Plan* contains an agreement to build at least 2,000 housing units within the "red contour" (ICT) in Waterland. This is also about providing future accommodation for the local population. The remaining 1,000 ICT housing units are deemed to be buffer stock for the period 2012-2020. The distribution of the ICT housing requirement has been agreed by the Waterland Intermunicipal Cooperative Body [*Intergemeentelijk Samenwerkingsorgaan Waterland*].

6. Waterland Intermunicipal Cooperative Body

Together, seven municipalities, including Beemster, comprise the Waterland Intermunicipal Cooperative Body. In March 2007, the parties involved signed the Agreement on inner city requirement (ICT) for Waterland Housing [*Convenant Binnenstedelijke Opgave (ICT) Waterlands Wonen*] (Appendix 8) with the province of North-Holland and the municipality of Oostzaan. The letters ICT stand for "Intensifying", "Combining" and "Transforming", which means a housebuilding policy to be followed by the parties which aims to make the above-mentioned 50% of housing units (2,000 by 2012 and 1,000 between 2012 and 2020) to be built within the contours ("red contours") of the existing urban area a feasible target by reaching reciprocal agreements. The Agreement describes "existing urban area" as, "an area in excess of 5 ha, outlined with a red regional plan contour" (Article 1). The Agreement states that the figure of 2,000 housing units referred to in this policy (ICT) is realistic and feasible. In 2004, the municipalities in Waterland entered into a joint best-efforts obligation to this end. Article 1 of the Agreement continues that "buffer stock" means: "housing stock allocated to each municipality which can be used as a site designated for development after 2012".

The municipality of Beemster accepted the best-efforts obligation to have built 200 of the 2,000 housing units (ICT) by the end of 2012. The South *North-Holland Regional Plan* names Zuidoostbeemster as one of the sites where housing can be built within the urban area. The Agreement contains an article on "phasing", which states that "the aim is to meet the requirement for 2,000 housing units by the end of 2012. Municipalities which have met this requirement prior to 2012 may make use of the 'buffer housing stock', allocated to them by 2012" (Article 4). On the basis of this, the municipality of Beemster can count on a further 200 housing units, spread over the polder and between existing buildings alongside its roads. Recent research has shown that the local population prefers the expansion of an existing settlement rather than building within the ribbon development situated alongside the historic straight roads traversing the open rural area.

In summary, the housing requirement for Beemster breaks down into:

750 housing units in Zuidoostbeemster I based on previous planning (2004-2005),

240 housing units in Middenbeemster, Fourth Quadrant I and 450 housing units in Zuidoostbeemster II, both based on the housing requirement for the rural area,

200 ICT housing units.

After 2020, a further 240 housing units are planned in Middenbeemster, Fourth Quadrant 2, as an indicative number. This building plan has not yet been set out in the strategic structural agenda for the province of North-Holland but is included in the Waterland Strategic Regional Agenda 2040.

7. Housebuilding policy of the municipality of Beemster

7.1. Des Beemsters Strategic Development Agenda (2005)

In 2005, the municipality of Beemster, the province of North-Holland and the Environmental Federation of North-Holland commissioned an agenda for the future spatial development of the polder under the name *Des Beemsters, a strategic development agenda for De Beemster based on its unique qualities*. The agenda covers eight topics, including "water and water management", "old farm buildings, new farm buildings", "housebuilding" and "infrastructure".

One of the sections concerns the specifics of the historic settlements situated in the polder. Market gardeners have lived and worked in Zuidoostbeemster since time immemorial. Persons of independent means also settled in Zuidoostbeemster in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since 1925, any village developments have been based on plans.

As a consequence of the *Des Beemsters* agenda, the municipality has established a Quality Team which advises it on spatial plans and developments. The members of the team include a planner, an urban development expert, a landscape architect, an organisational adviser and an architectural historian.

7.2. Strategic Housing Policy for Beemster 2008+, Four vital villages (2008)

In this Strategic Housing Policy for Beemster 2008+, the municipality has set out its public housing policy for the next few years until 2020. The policy states that "As far as housing is concerned, the 'square plots, the dimensional characteristics, farm buildings, rhythm and nature of the buildings' are regarded as the factors that determine Beemster's identity. Because the situation varies from site to site, a tailored approach is required (p. 18, 2.3. Preserving the character of De Beemster).

The agenda includes an investment programme (par. 3.2, p. 24) that specifies 240 housing units as planned new building for the Fourth Quadrant in Middenbeemster, to be built after 2015, 420 for Zuidoostbeemster within the existing built-up area ("red contour") in the eastern section (period 2010-2012), 250 in the western section (period 2013-2015) and 70 in the area situated above it ("estate") after 2015. The word "estate" must not be thought of as what an estate meant in historical terms as it is more of a designation for the development of a low-density residential area with a lot of public parkland and water. A study was conducted by the municipality with a developer to find a land division method based on cultural history. It will therefore be implemented in a different way from that specified in the "De Nieuwe Tuinderij" [*The New Market Garden*] plan. There will also be a further 450 housing units for Zuidoostbeemster (outside the "red contour").

8. Spatial developments in Zuidoostbeemster

8.1. Zuidoostbeemster

The historical road pattern is determined by the north-south running Purmerenderweg road and the east-west running roads Zuiderweg, Zuiderpad and Noorderpad (see map).

The main spatial structure of Zuidoostbeemster is formed by the "ditches and avenue-style planting" with the roads and ribbon development situated there (*Zuidoostbeemster Zoning Plan I*, p. 7, par. 22, Spatial structure). The land had traditionally been divided into small-scale plots because of the market gardening that took place here in earlier times.

In the 1950s, a development, designed as a garden district, was built in the south-western corner of Zuidoostbeemster, "mostly of rectangular design with many detached properties, semi-detached houses and short blocks of housing" (as above, p. 7, par. 2.2).

As a settlement, Zuidoostbeemster forms a kind of eccentric, self-contained "enclave" within De Beemster's historical spatial structure. It is surrounded by roads and by the dyke that encloses the polder (alongside the Beemster Ring Canal and the North-Holland Canal).

Zuidoostbeemster does not have any protected monuments, apart from two of the five forts of the "Amsterdam Defence Line" World Heritage Site situated in De Beemster (Fort a/d Nekkerweg and Fort Benoorden Purmerend). Typical features are the detached late-nineteenth, early twentieth-century homes of the wealthy, placed at right angles to Purmerenderweg, Zuiderweg and Volgerweg. Ditches lie alongside the roads. Situated between Zuiderweg and Volgerweg, Zuidersloot is an important spatial element.

Zuidoostbeemster currently has 834 housing units in its built-up centre and 432 outside it. According to information from the municipality (19 March 2009, repeated in the attached letter dated 5 June 2009 to the Minister of Education, Culture and Science for the attention of the Director of the Cultural Heritage Agency), 730 new housing units are planned within the "Zuidoostbeemster I" zoning plan area, of which 180 are intended as sheltered accommodation.

8.2. De Nieuwe Tuinderij. Zuidoostbeemster (2007)

In 2007, the municipality of Beemster commissioned an architectural and urban planning agency (SVP Architectuur en Stedenbouw, Amersfoort) to draw up an urban development plan along with a visual quality plan for the development of Zuidoostbeemster, in relation to the polder as a whole (Appendix 6). The point of departure in these plans is Zuidoost-beemster's previous spatial structure consisting of the building of "ribbons" alongside roads and concentrated "neighbourhoods" within them. Traditionally, this part of De Beemster was always small scale, the difference being that the area to the south of the part of Volgerweg situated here is on a smaller scale than to its north. The Volgerweg road used to form the boundary of the "garden corner" located there. "Green" areas have been laid around Zuidoostbeemster.

The visual quality plan is based on the view that the buildings should be kept some distance away from the ring dyke (an area containing existing farms) and an open "green" space from the route of the A7. The arrangement in this case is to build 738 new housing units as part of existing ribbon development (or an extension of it) or grouped into distinct "neighbourhoods", "separated from each other by a public green

structure linked to the existing watercourses in this area" (p. 22). The building consists of building volumes of two storeys with roof" (*Zuidoostbeemster I Zoning Plan*, p. 11, par. 2.4).

The section on visual quality reads as follows:

•*General*

"The housing units to be built in Zuidoostbeemster must be a sensitive addition to the village-like, almost rural atmosphere of the existing ribbons and neighbourhoods in the area. This means that a one or two-storey building with sloping roof will be the model for the entire district. But it is not the intention to slavishly copy the architectural style of the existing buildings into today's conditions. The challenge for the architects must be to interpret the features of typical Zuidoostbeemster buildings and translate them into an image, design and use of materials that are suitable for the site but, more importantly, suitable for today. Historicising architecture, literal references to, for example, the 1950s or semi-Romantic renderings of country estates are not consistent with that image.

The architects will be asked to design a sturdy, attractive and simple but well detailed dwelling and, in particular, to add a new image to Zuidoostbeemster; a contemporary interpretation of a house in the polder. The emphasis will have to remain on architecture that fits into a rural and village-like environment. The ultimate choice of architect will of course substantially determine the success of the above requirements."

•*Requirements for "ribbons"*

"The new buildings alongside the ribbons will consist of a loose structure of alternating detached and semi-detached houses. In order to reinforce the ribbon effect, the houses will all be sited on approximately the same building line. Front gardens to a depth of approximately 5 metres will contribute to the green character of the spatial profile.

The houses in this area are in a wide variety of architectural styles, which means that the same houses are never next to each other. This can be achieved by releasing (some of) the houses next to the ribbons as vacant plots allowing a wide range of building options or by having the houses designed by different architects as part of a project-based development. It is not inconceivable that a house with a minimum distance of five plots from another house of the same design will recur a number of times along the ribbon."

•*Requirements for "neighbourhoods"*

Buildings in the neighbourhoods form part of the orthogonal structure of De Beemster in which a substructure of smaller clusters is created by the green and water structure. A variety of short and longer building blocks with alternating front or side gardens facing the public green space contributes to this structure. Staggering the building line between blocks will prevent long straight walls along the street. The alternating widths of the public parkland alongside the ditches will also contribute to this varied, orthogonal image.

In urban planning terms, the larger building blocks of the residential care centre on the east side of Purmerenderweg are included in this orthogonal structure. The fact that these blocks are always oriented with their longitudinal walls facing the larger stretches of the public area and only the shorter end walls directly facing surrounding buildings means that the transition between low and higher buildings in the area has been carefully designed in terms of volume.

To ensure that the houses in the neighbourhoods show a large degree of coherence, the architectural image of the houses in relation to each other will also form a unit. This means that the number of architects within the neighbourhood will not be too

great and that the "signature" of the various architects will not diverge too much. The care centre buildings form a clear unit with the rest of the neighbourhood and they are therefore consistent with the rest in terms of their architectural "signature". This applies to a lesser extent to the main building which, as a central facility, will occupy a prominent and recognisable place in the district. This building will clearly be different in terms of mass, roof shape and building height and this may be subtly reinforced in its architectural finish and use of materials. The northern corner of the building will also be given a (height) feature in terms of urban development. It is recommended that entrances to the facilities are linked in the plinth at this point. Commissioning one of the architects from the area to design the main building will guarantee coherence. Because there is no hierarchy within the neighbourhoods, the unit will be seen at its best if the architects design the building volumes as a mixture among the clusters. As part of this arrangement, the same building block can occur at several points within the neighbourhoods. But in order to avoid architectural neighbourhoods, buildings of the same design will "never" be next to each other. The public area will form the connecting element within the neighbourhoods".

The urban development plan covers four sections of the planned development (*De Nieuwe Tuinderij West* (240 housing units, from detached to apartments; *De Nieuwe Tuinderij Landgoed* (90 housing units, according to an additional study, as above); *De Nieuwe Tuinderij Oost* (376 housing units, as above); *De Nieuwe Tuinderij Boswonen* (30 housing units, as above), a total of 736 housing units to be built. Development will take place on either side of the East-West oriented Middenpad [Central Path] still to be laid parallel to the Noorderpad [Northern Path] and Zuiderpad [Southern Path].

The implementation of the housebuilding plans will be based on variety. This variety in appearance will be achieved first and foremost by means of differentiation in the programme. The housebuilding programme consists of short rows of not more than six housing units, houses with a patio, semi-detached houses and detached houses in the neighbourhoods. There is also the "care centre" and apartments close by in small-scale buildings on a semi-sunken parking level. In the "ribbons" there is only room for semi-detached and detached houses which are connected to the road by means of a small access bridge. The fact that it is not areas but blocks of buildings which are allocated to a single architect prevents clusters of housing units in the same architectural style being built within the neighbourhoods. This means that a wide variety of house designs will be experienced from the streets.

8.3. "Zuidoostbeemster 1" Zoning Plan

On 18 December 2008, the municipality of Beemster adopted the *Zuidoostbeemster I Zoning Plan* to replace the current zoning plan which dated from 1971 (*Southeast Zoning Plan*). The Provincial Executive of North-Holland approved the zoning plan on 7 July 2009. The zoning plan earmarks approximately 12 ha. as the area for the western part of the development and 19 ha on the east side, including the "green buffer" along the ring dyke and Reigerbos, in addition to the redevelopment of an area (Jonk) of about 6 ha. Including the existing centre, this will bring the area of Zuidoostbeemster I to 108 ha.

Par. 2.4 of the zoning plan concerns the "'Nieuwe Tuinderij" urban development plan'. The zoning plan describes the main object of the housing development as follows: "linear ribbons with orthogonally designed neighbourhoods between them facing the open green areas at the periphery of the A7 and the ring dyke" (p. 11, par. 2.4).

The main structure chosen is a rectangular system of roads and water courses which are practically symmetrical in structure on both sides of Purmerenderweg (p. 11, par. 2.4).

According to the zoning plan, the visual quality plan for the "Nieuwe Tuinderij" is mainly intended as an incentive to encourage architects to interpret the uniqueness of Zuidoostbeemster and translate it into an image, design and use of materials that are suitable for the site. (...) Detailed information can be found in the visual quality plan that forms part of the urban development plan" (p. 17, par. 2.6).

Water has long been a vital component of the polder. The zoning plan provides the policy framework for it (p. 36, par. 4.5.1). Two subjects are relevant: "reinforcing dykes" and "water storage". As far as the management of water and keeping the water system functional are concerned, it is the Holland Noorderkwartier Regional Water Board that determines policy and its implementation (see above). As far as "water" is concerned, the zoning plan states that, for Zuidoostbeemster, integration of the housing development into the water system and effective management are an important part of the urban development plan" (p. 37, par. 4.5). Furthermore, the Zuiddijk and the Oostdijk in Zuidoostbeemster form part of the primary water-retaining structure around De Beemster (p. 37, par. 4.5).

Section 5 of the zoning plan applies both to the development and to the existing part of Zuidoostbeemster. The municipal executive of Beemster will draw up an "elaboration plan" for the elaboration of the development. The duty of elaboration "guarantees that the elaborations are made in accordance with the purpose of the urban development plan and the visual quality plan for 'De Nieuwe Tuinderij'" (p. 42, par. 5.1).

8.4. Establishing/approving procedure for Zuidoostbeemster Zoning Plan 1

The municipality of Beemster has informed its residents about its housebuilding plans in De Beemster by measures such as publishing a housebuilding newspaper (November 2007, September 2008). As specified in the procedures applicable in the Netherlands, "Draft Zoning Plan Zuidoostbeemster I" has been submitted by the municipality "for viewing" to allow interested parties to respond in the form of an "opinion". 110 of them have been submitted to the municipality. The municipality makes a recommendation with regard to these "opinions", which may result in the municipal executive advising the municipal council to alter and approve part of the draft. It is the municipal council that adopts the zoning plan. Where this has happened, any interested parties who have previously submitted an "opinion" have the opportunity, when the adopted plan is resubmitted for viewing, to lodge an objection with a Provincial Executive (in this case of North-Holland) which must approve the plan adopted by the municipal council. After approval by the Provincial Executive, the plan is again presented for viewing to give interested parties the opportunity to appeal to the Council of State.

In terms of private individuals, the residents who had previously lodged an "opinion" with the municipality were given the opportunity to submit a pre-written form (Appendix 9) as an objection to the Provincial Executive of North-Holland. The municipality of Beemster responded to these "objections" sent to the province of North-Holland with the *Note of comments on objections. Municipality of Beemster. Zuidoostbeemster I Zoning Plan (March 2009) (Appendix 16)*.

The Provincial Executive of North-Holland approved the Zuidoostbeemster I Zoning Plan on 7 July 2009, as stated above, with the exception of a residential zoning for the

"Reigerbos" Wood because "the zoning plan is not in accordance with spatially relevant policy".

8.5. Reply from the Cultural Heritage Agency to the Provincial Executive of North-Holland concerning the Zuidoostbeemster I Zoning Plan

In a letter dated 31 March 2009 (Appendix 11), the director of the National Service for Archaeology, Cultural Landscape and Built Heritage (RACM), since 11 May 2009 the Cultural Heritage Agency, of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (attached) informed the Provincial Executive of North-Holland that the RACM was currently investigating "the extent to which the planned special developments in De Beemster - including the housing development in Zuidoostbeemster - could have an impact on the existing core qualities of the National Landscape and the universal values of the World Heritage Site". The Provincial Executive was asked "to take particular account of the preservation of the core qualities of the National Landscape and the outstanding universal values of the Beemster World Heritage Site in your assessment of the zoning plan for Zuidoostbeemster I".

A copy of this was sent to the Ministries of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality; Education, Culture and Science; Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment as well as the municipality of Beemster.

8.6. Assessment of the visual quality plan for De Nieuwe Tuinderij (Zuidoostbeemster) by the Cultural Heritage Agency

The visual quality plan for *De Nieuwe Tuinderij* (Appendix 6) contains a good analysis of the area of Zuidoostbeemster designated for development, which is partly based on cultural-historical data/values. For example, the decision to adhere to the historical orthogonal structure within the main structure of De Beemster is the only right decision. The decision to develop the "Village Grid" [*burgergrid*] as distinct from the "Farm Grid" [*boerengrid*] in other rural parts of the Beemster is in itself a good argument for treating the exceptional position (non-uniform land division and decentralised, enclosed location) of Zuidoostbeemster in an individual way. The distinction made between "neighbourhoods" and "ribbons" is another good point of departure for possible continuing development of the area.

However, a number of critical comments must be made with regard to the development.

In the area to be developed, residential areas are classified as "ribbons", "neighbourhoods", "estate housing" and "woodland housing". As far as the "ribbons" are concerned, the existing ribbon development in Zuidoostbeemster, mainly dating from the period between the two world wars, is being extended. Currently, the housing units in the "ribbons" are mostly single-storey with a sloping roof. The shape of the roof may vary (mansard, saddle roof, etc.). In the new "ribbons", a building height of 11 metres is possible, with an extended range of roof shapes. Although contemporary architecture is certainly conceivable and even desirable, the suggested roof shapes and building heights will mainly provide a picture that is very different from the existing "ribbons".

With regard to the "neighbourhoods", the existing post-war houses in Zuidoostbeemster will be used as a frame of reference. The dwellings mostly consist of alternating shorter and longer rows of two-storey houses with a saddle roof. The choice of this relatively restrained method of land division appears to be quite compatible because of the orthogonal structure and its peaceful, uniform appearance. However, it is also the case here that the differences (taller buildings) from the regular building

height of two storeys plus roof currently existing in Zuidoostbeemster will bring about a change in the spatial quality and perception of the area, The visual quality plan indicates "apartments" at a number of prominent sites, mainly for the planned residential care complex. The proposed apartments will be on three floors plus roof with a "high point" of 17.5 metres on the residential care complex. Using this number of floors and type of dwelling will destroy the rural, village-like nature of the area and its connection with characteristics of the polder and the essential differentiation from the nearby urban development on the periphery of Purmerend will be lost.

In the case of "estate housing", the types of housing used (standard terraced houses and apartments) have little or no connection with the essence of a country estate (both in the cultural-historical sense and in relation to the new meaning of the term "new estates" as used in spatial planning, which was coined in recent years to refer to housing development in rural areas). The theme of "woodland housing" appears to have been a bad choice. Although small spinneys have been created over the years, especially in the south-eastern part of De Beemster, this reference and the ideal image that it conjures up has little or nothing to do with De Beemster's identity and appearance.

The Visual Quality Plan for Zuidoostbeemster states that the architecture in the neighbourhoods and ribbons must be contemporary. Historicising building is explicitly rejected. Government policy in this regard generally aims to develop the identity and the recognisability of the environment. However, a strong identity does not always have to be rooted in the past, but can also be created by a strong, well integrated, new design. For the architectural assessment of building plans, the local building aesthetics committee and the municipal building aesthetics framework provide options for professional assessment and advice (see Appendix 13 and 14).

In the visual quality plan, even more specific attention is focused on the periphery of the area to be developed, consisting of a "green buffer" between new buildings, the ring dyke and the A7. This "green" periphery, within which a few existing structures (farms with land) will be maintained, is a good way of literally keeping a distance from the development of the town of Purmerend next to the polder, which will ensure that people are still able to experience the ring dyke and its related structures. This "green buffer" should perhaps have been bigger in size so as to make it clear that the rural features of De Beemster continue to be a recognisable element in the area as the framework for the main structure, i.e. the polder.

In a letter of 29 June 2009 (RW-2009-239, Appendix 15) to the Provincial Executive of North-Holland, the director of the Cultural Heritage Agency stated, *inter alia*, that "it is also important to keep the character of this part of De Beemster distinct from the nearby urban expansion of Purmerend, to ensure that the expansion of Zuidoostbeemster within the 'red contour' does not 'repeat' the former in terms of its ground plan and homes".

It is also stated that "in the visual quality plan for 'De Nieuwe Tuinderij'. . . . the historical structure (including the orthogonal arrangement and infrastructure) is satisfactorily respected and a distance is literally kept between the new-build area and the historical ring dyke around the polder through the use of a green buffer zone at the edges of the area".

The Director goes on to discuss an "aspect which is undesirable from a cultural history perspective", namely "the option to build apartments, including for a residential care complex, on a number of prominent sites in the new-build area". The size, intended building height and type of housing conflicts with the traditional, small-scale rural

nature of this area. The heterogeneous building height and the types of dwelling chosen (apartments) are at odds with the requirement that they integrate well into the spatial characteristics and the conservation of the scenic, cultural-historical values of the De Beemster World Heritage Site, which is also part of National Landscape Low Holland.

With regard to this item, and any future spatial developments, including Zuidoostbeemster II, the director states in his letter that he would like to join forces with the province of North-Holland and the municipality of Beemster "to produce a culturally and historically responsible plan which could on the one hand attract wide local support and on the other hand be consistent with the 'outstanding universal values' of this seventeenth-century polder, applicable to De Beemster and laid down by the World Heritage Committee.

At the same time, he advised the Province of North-Holland that the mayor of Beemster had told him that he advocates such an approach.

9. Middenbeemster, Fourth Quadrant

9.1. Middenbeemster

The village of Middenbeemster is situated in the centre of the polder at the intersection of the Middenweg and Rijperweg roads and was founded when the polder was constructed. Situated at a crossroads, the historic centre was designated under the Dutch Monuments and Historic Buildings Act [*Monumentenwet*] as a village conservation area in 1985 by the Dutch government. In the 20th century, the built-up area of Middenbeemster was developed in the First to Third Quadrants. The development of the Fourth Quadrant is in preparation.

9.2. Fourth Quadrant Zoning Plan. Municipality of Beemster (August 2008)

The municipality of Beemster submitted its *Fourth Quadrant Zoning Plan* for the development of Middenbeemster to the province for approval. This related to an area of almost 30 ha. The plan was approved on 24 March 2009. It is situated outside the boundary of the Middenbeemster village conservation area protected under the Dutch Monuments and Historic Buildings Act. According to the Rules forming part of the zoning plan, the Fourth Quadrant constitutes the completion of Middenbeemster as a settlement (2, General Description in Outline, Article 3.1.a). Article 3.1.b (General Description in Outline) states that "the urban planning structure of the plan area will have to fit in with the structure of the polder and be in harmony with the spatial arrangement of Middenbeemster: a rectangular built-up area with the crossroads as the centre of the village".

The municipality has drawn up a visual quality plan for this future development and presented it to the Province (*Middenbeemster Fourth Quadrant. Visual Quality Plan, municipality of Beemster*, 18 March 2009, see below. Appendix 7). The Province of North-Holland has made this plan a mandatory requirement. The Provincial Executive of North-Holland approved the visual quality plan.

According to the detailed regional plan, a maximum of 240 housing units can be built there to meet the municipality's own housing needs (see also Rules, 3. Zoning Provisions, 3.2. Zones to be developed, Article 8, residential area U, 2.a). No building is expected here before 2014. It is expected that some 60 housing units will then be built each year in four phases. The zoning plan does not apply to anything built in the area of the Fourth Quadrant after 2018. It is based on a building density of not less than 20 and not more than 30 housing units per hectare.

The area will be developed adjacent to the existing (spatial) structure of the Middenweg and Rijperweg roads. It will be given an orthogonal spatial layout and structure (2, General Description in Outline, Article 3.4.a). Existing plot enclosures will be incorporated into the land division system wherever possible. The housing units will be provided with gardens, in addition to the presence of public parkland. The buildings will consist of a maximum of two storeys with sloping roof. "Prominent" buildings - buildings with an additional storey, a maximum of 10% of the new buildings - are not permitted at the margins of the area (Rules, 2, General Description in Outline, Article 3.4.h),

The outer edge of the village will be identified by means of "a clear boundary in the vertical plane. . . ." (Rules, 2, General Description in Outline, Article 3.4.c). At least 10% of the area will be occupied by open water. "To boost the described qualities, the

municipal executive will draw up a visual quality plan for the entire plan area prior to the first detailed plan which will be used as a guide for future urban planning and architectural design" (Rules, 2, General Description in Outline, Articles 3, 5).

The Fourth Quadrant is among the sites designated by the Province of North-Holland for development in the *Detailed Waterland Regional Housing Plan (2006)*. Unlike in the three other quadrants already built in Middenbeemster, the plots here have a north-south orientation.

9.3. Assessment of the visual quality plan for the Fourth Quadrant (Middenbeemster) by the Cultural Heritage Agency

The plan (attached) was commissioned by the municipality of Beemster on the basis of the *Detailed Waterland Regional Housing Plan*. The plan will serve as an assessment framework for an urban development plan to be drawn up for this quadrant, followed by a visual quality plan for the development at a later stage. The area of the Fourth Quadrant to be developed is 30 ha.

The plan must consist of five elements:

- attention to be focused on development history
- feeling for the planning principles for the landscape
- feeling for the building characteristics (architecture, urban planning, public space)
- integration of the plan area into the wider environment (larger landscape unit)
- attention to be focused on the existing qualities of the area and on measures to mitigate any negative impact on these qualities (Image Quality Plan, p. 7).

According to the Detailed Waterland Regional Housing Plan of the Province of North-Holland, 240 housing units may be built in this quadrant of Middenbeemster, commencing in 2014. The Waterland Intermunicipal Cooperative Body has laid down that this can be increased by 240 housing units up to 2040.

The plan provides a spatial planning and analysis of De Beemster. The characteristics referred to are open space, straight lines, fixed rhythm, scale, bounded by the dyke, green space alongside the roads and on the properties, imposing agricultural buildings from the past. De Beemster has a clear grid structure at the centre of the polder (1,852 x 1,852 m, blocks of 926 x 926 m, plots of 185 x 926 m). There are also water drains 1,800 m apart, situated between the lines of roads, which are likewise 1,800 m apart. Between these water drains are ditches which together reveal the pattern of the historical land division system. The ditches in the Fourth Quadrant to be developed run in a different direction (north-south) from the other three quadrants of Middenbeemster (east-west orientation). Middenbeemster has been developed in accordance with De Beemster's historical orthogonal spatial structure.

The three quadrants developed previously each have their own atmosphere and characteristics. Here, the dimensions of 180 x 180 m are recognisable in the road and water and green structure. For the Fourth Quadrant, the plan states that: "For the Fourth Quadrant, a land division method will have to be sought that fits within a size of 180 metres and ensures spatial quality...." Because of its historical spatial structure, consideration will have to be given as to whether it can accommodate existing properties, based on the structure of watercourses that is shown on the 1612 engraving. This structure is intended to determine the main structure within the Fourth Quadrant.

In general terms, the Cultural Heritage Agency believes that a good visual quality plan exists if sufficient attention is paid to principles established by the Province of North-Holland for a visual quality plan. In the visual quality plan for the Fourth Quadrant Middenbeemster, sufficient attention is paid to the periphery and the structural components of the Fourth Quadrant, which constitutes a logical completion of the main centre of De Beemster.

With regard to some components specified in the conditions set out in the visual quality plan, one may wonder how desirable they are, such as the proposal and/or option to construct a 180 m service road alongside the main axes (Rijperweg and Middenweg). What is definitely undesirable is the option to construct a "prominent building" of three storeys plus a roof. In Middenbeemster it is important that prominent buildings are concentrated at Midden-beemster's "main moment", namely at or close to the central square-like space formed by the coordinate system of roads, also the centre of De Beemster as a whole. For this reason, any prominent buildings to be added to the (special, centrally located) buildings already present will have to be integrated with great care.

The buildings outside the central part of Middenbeemster must remain subservient to the central "main buildings", both in terms of appearance and function, partly in relation to the structure of the crossroads village, and in relation to the wider environment of the polder landscape. A single storey plus roof should preferably be used as a model in order to be compatible with the surrounding area. Two storeys plus roof may be possible and still acceptable as a maximum height but will not lead to an improvement in the spatial quality of the area.

10. Other spatially relevant developments

10.1. Zoning plan for "Outer Beemster"

The municipality of Beemster is currently preparing to review the existing outer area zoning plan (1994) (Rural Area Zoning Plan).

The rules for the designated "agricultural" zone will for example state that the "gutter height may not exceed 5.5 m; the volume may not exceed 750 m³; the houses must have a roof with a slope of not less than 30° and not more than 60°".

As far as the agricultural buildings vacated in the outer area are concerned, a provision will be added to the rules in the zoning plan, which will state: "new non-agricultural functions must not detract from the area's existing urban development, cultural-historical or nature conservation qualities or characteristics".

The zoning plan designates 200 properties as characteristic of De Beemster. In this regard, the zoning plan states that: "Where a building...has been designated as a "Characteristic Building", the external roof shape of the building concerned, determined by the gutter height, ridge height, ridge direction, roof type, roof slope, layout of the facade and land area must be preserved" (Article 28, Draft Outer Area Zoning Plan). A permit is required from the municipality to carry out conversion work on a characteristic building.

10.2. Nekkerzoom Regional Plan

The municipality commissioned an urban development agency (RRog Stedenbouw en Landschap, December 2007) to draw up a regional plan for Nekkerzoom, an area situated to the west of Zuidoostbeemster. It covers the area bounded by Zuiddijk, the A7 and Volgerweg. Currently, its western boundary is to the west of Nekkerweg. In the Nekkerzoom area, the plot boundaries and watercourses are still where the 1612 copper engraving shows them. Building has been concentrated alongside the Volgerweg, Nekkerweg and Zuiderweg roads. The purpose of this plan is to provide the municipality with an instrument for defining parameters which it can use to assess developments in the area and control spatial developments there. The area and the plan will be included in the forthcoming *Outer Area Zoning Plan*, which is being prepared by the municipality of Beemster.

A visual quality plan will also be published for the Nekkerzoom area at the end of June 2009. The municipality has announced that it will be based on conservation of the area's small scale, cultural-historical land division and mixed functions. The "Nekkerzoom Visual Quality Plan" has not yet been adopted. The municipality has not yet initiated a decision-making process for the plan either. It is expected that the final draft will be presented to the municipal council by the end of October 2009.

10.3. Fort aan de Nekkerweg

The fort is part of the "Defence Line of Amsterdam" World Heritage Site. The province of North-Holland is developing plans to use this fort as a hotel and wellness/conference centre and as a visitor centre for the Amsterdam Defence Line. The province has granted the necessary permits for this use, as has the municipality of Beemster. An appeal, submitted to the Council of State by the KNNV (*Koninklijke Nederlandse Natuurhistorische Vereniging* [Royal Dutch Society for Natural History], Hoorn/West Friesland branch) is currently under consideration.

The Society believes that the municipality is legally bound to consider it as an interested party. The municipality previously declared as inadmissible the Society's submission of an objection to the municipality's decision to grant a regular building permit for the completion of the first phase of work on Fort a/d Nekkerweg. The District Court previously declared as unfounded the appeal which the Society had submitted against the declaration of inadmissibility by the municipality. In response, the Society submitted this appeal on 16 March 2009. At the time of writing the State of Conservation Report, no date had yet been set for the hearing before the Council of State.

10.4. CONO Kaasmakers

The CONO Kaasmakers factory complex is situated in the western part of the Beemster Polder on Rijperweg (20). The company is an independent, 100-year-old cooperative consisting of about 600 dairy farmers (mainly based in North-Holland).

The company is currently working on expansion plans. Previous plans were withdrawn by management. The municipality of Beemster specifically pointed out to the company that this may involve expansion of the factory complex into the open area of a World Heritage Site and a National Landscape, which will entail special requirements. It is now known that CONO Kaasmakers will make its plans public by the end of 2009 after the management has submitted the plan to a number of experts for their opinion. The municipality has not yet seen the plans involved. They will not be assessed in terms of the polder's World Heritage status until this has happened.

The Board of Government Advisers wrote to advise the Beemster municipal executive (31 March 2009), making a number of general recommendations, and reached the conclusion that the management's initial plans were "out of balance with the proportions in the polder".

The Quality Team of external experts set up by the municipality is also asking a number of fundamental questions about the development options.

10.5. Strategic plan for developing Noordbeemster and Westbeemster village centres

The municipality has recently taken the initiative to draw up a strategic plan for the development of the centres of Noordbeemster and Westbeemster, both for the short term (0-5 years) and the long term (20 years). To this end, the municipality is organising two meetings with the residents of each community to learn the responses to several subjects related to the plans being drawn up, such as heritage, agriculture, social structures, housing and facilities.

In its Strategic Housing Policy for Beemster 2008+ (p. 9), the municipality stated that it would only build in Noordbeemster and Westbeemster to meet their own needs. In Noordbeemster, the residents place a lot of value on the historical ribbon development of the village. They do not regard the building of additional houses as an immediate priority.

In Westbeemster, residents wanted affordable housing to be built for older people and first-time buyers.

11. Developments affecting education and management

11.1. Beemster World Heritage Foundation

Following the inclusion of De Beemster on the World Heritage List, the municipality of Beemster and the Waterlanden Regional Water Board took the initiative to establish the Beemster World Heritage Foundation [*Stichting Beemster Werelderfgoed*]. The Foundation set up the Beemster Info Centre, which is housed in the historic Westerheem Agricultural Museum complex in Middenbeemster (www.beemsterinfo.nl).

11.2. Management Plan for the Beemster Polder World Heritage Site

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science funds the Platform Foundation of siteholders of Dutch World Heritage Sites to draw up a management plan for all the World Heritage Sites in the Netherlands. This is an elaboration of the policy established in 2001 to draw up a "local document" for each World Heritage Site in the Netherlands. The management plans will be drawn up in accordance with the principles as set out in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. The management plan for De Beemster will be drawn up first.

Addendum I. Spatial Planning Act and Spatial Planning Decree (Wet ruimtelijke ordening / Besluit ruimtelijke ordening)

Spatial planning in the Netherlands is regulated by law (Spatial Planning Act and Spatial Planning Decree, both dated 2006) [*Wet ruimtelijke ordening*; *Besluit ruimtelijke ordening*], as are building (Housing Act) [*Woningwet*] and urban regeneration (Urban Renewal Act (2000)) [*Wet stedelijke vernieuwing, 2000*]. Urban regeneration is defined as : "efforts in an urban area aimed at improving quality of life and safety, promoting sustainable development and improving residential and environmental quality, reinforcing the economic base, enhancing cultural qualities, promoting social cohesion, improving accessibility, and enhancing the quality of public space or the general structural quality of the urban area" (Section 1, subsection 1(a) of the Urban Regeneration Act).

The revised Spatial Planning Act [*Wet ruimtelijke ordening*] came into force on 1 July 2008, together with the revised Spatial Planning Decree [*Besluit ruimtelijke ordening*]. The Spatial Planning Act [*Wet ruimtelijke ordening*] deals with national spatial policy. The act aims to 'enhance the status of land-use plans, increase the efficiency and effectiveness of spatial policy and simplify spatial planning regulation' in order to promote sustainable spatial quality (see Preamble to the Act).

Under the revised Act, municipalities must draw up 'structure schemes' for effective spatial planning in their areas of jurisdiction, outlining planned development in the area and municipal spatial policy (section 2.1, subsection 1 of the Act). Similar schemes must be drawn up by the provinces (section 2.2, subsection 1) and the State (section 2.3, subsection 1) in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

The Act also empowers ministers, acting in agreement with the spatial planning minister, to draw up similar schemes for their own policy areas (section 2.3, subsection 2). Such State strategies must first be approved by parliament (section 2.3, subsection 3). All such schemes must be drawn up in consultation with the various tiers of government and governmental bodies, as well as representatives of civil society and other parties concerned.

Under section 150 of the Municipalities Act (*Gemeentewet*), municipal councils must draw up a bye-law indicating how individuals and legal entities can be involved in municipal policy on the subject.

Addendum 2. Municipal zoning or land-use plans

Municipal zoning or land-use plans comprise a regulatory section (indicating how land and buildings in the area covered by the plan may be used) and maps (indicating designated functions under the plan), together with explanatory notes from which no rights or obligations may be derived. The revised Act includes provisions on the contents of land-use plans. Section 3.1, subsection 1 states: "The municipal council shall adopt one or more land-use plans for covering the entire area within its jurisdiction, in which the intended uses of the land included in the plan are designated in the interests of effective spatial planning and rules are laid down regarding those intended uses. These rules shall in any event relate to the use of the land and structures located on it".

Municipal zoning plans are of vital importance to future spatial development. These plans are legal planning instruments that allow municipalities to determine the desired future spatial situation in a given area and the functions of the land within it for a period of at least ten years. They include provisions that are binding on both citizens and government. Zoning plans specify the functions that are authorized for particular areas of land or particular buildings. These functions, which are legally binding, are indicated on a map. Land-use plans also identify the relevant building regulations and restrictions on use, specify the size (maximum height and surface area) of buildings and may, where appropriate, lay down provisions on the preservation of outstanding cultural/historical or other values. They indicate which types of building may be constructed and, in some cases, which commercial or other activities may be carried out there. They may lay down additional requirements for buildings (location, maximum gutter and ridge height, roof slope, distance from side plot boundary, etc.). The provisions of land-use plans take precedence over external appearance criteria (on such matters as size, scale and division of facades, detailing, use of materials and colours' and setting/relationship with the surroundings). These criteria are divided into categories (general, area-specific, building-specific, etc.).

Under the Housing Act (*Woningwet*), municipal policy documents on external appearance must include criteria for the 'basic' assessment of plans for extensions, outbuildings, new roofs and awnings, alterations to facades and door or window frames, dormer windows and partitions between plots. Municipalities must draw up one or more land-use plans for their areas of jurisdiction, designating the uses of the land located within the area and laying down rules for the use of that land and the structures located on it (Section 3.1, subsection 1 of the Act). Zoning plans must be revised or prolonged within ten years (Section 3.1, subsections 2 *et seq.*), failing which the municipality's powers to do so will lapse. Municipalities must forward draft zoning plans to the government bodies responsible for matters or interests affected by the plan (section 3.8, subsection 1(b)).

Provinces may draw up bye-laws containing rules on the contents of municipal zoning plans, project decisions or administrative ordinances for areas in which the municipalities do not expect any spatial development to take place in the near future (section 4.1, subsection 1). Provinces may also direct municipalities to draw up zoning plans within a specified period (section 4.2, subsection 1). The State may lay down rules on the contents of municipal zoning plans and zoning plans imposed by provinces (section 4.3, subsection 1), and may also direct municipalities to draw up zoning plans within a specified period (section 4.4, subsection 1(a)). Chapter 3 of the Spatial Planning Decree [Besluit ruimtelijke ordening] includes provisions on 'standard rules In land-use plans'. Article 3.1.6, paragraph 2(a) prescribes that a zoning plan must be accompanied by explanatory notes.

Addendum 3. Policy Document on Building Aesthetics for Beemster (2003)

In 2003, the municipality of Beemster adopted the Policy Document on Building Aesthetics as required under the Dutch Housing Act (*Woningwet*). "Building aesthetics" involves assessment by external, independent experts of whether new buildings or external changes to the outside of a building had an adverse effect on the surrounding area. The policy document lays down criteria (building aesthetics criteria) for this assessment. They have been "derived" from the existing environment. The guiding principle is that everyone should be able to recognise the valuable characteristics of their own neighbourhood" (p. 7, *Building Aesthetics Policy Document*, 2003). "The preservation of the rich cultural history and rural character of the Beemster Polder while retaining modern agricultural business there is a key part of spatial quality policy" (p. 8).

The municipal executive requests advice on building plans from the Buildings Aesthetics Committee (*Welstandscommissie*). While this advice is not binding, it is made public. Details of the working methods, membership and tasks of this independent committee are set out in the Rules of Procedure Applicable to the Buildings Aesthetics Committee for the municipality of Beemster (p. 8). The committee meets in public session once every two weeks.

De Beemster has 11 areas, each of which has its own set of buildings aesthetics criteria.

"The principles for municipal buildings aesthetics policy as set out in the policy document cover the entire territory of De Beemster and must be regarded as additional or complementary to the opportunities for building provided by the zoning plans. The primary aim of this general policy as set out in the document is to preserve the architectural and urban planning qualities of the rural area, the villages in general and the Middenbeemster village conservation area in particular" (p. 11).

This Middenbeemster village conservation area has its own set of criteria, as does Zuidoostbeemster for two of its areas. The policy document also provides criteria for village developments (such as Middenbeemster, Zuidoostbeemster and Westbeemster).

With regard to the ribbon development in Zuidoostbeemster alongside the Purmerenderweg, Volgerweg and Zuiderweg roads, the policy document states that "Zuidoostbeemster's main structure consists of a series of buildings stretched out alongside a road with the plots arranged perpendicular to it.....The ribbon is on a small scale, with compact buildings on either side of the road....The area is characterised by its individual development boundary.....Within the area, the development is in straight continuous building lines at a regular distance from the road...." (p. 33, 34).

When reviewing building aesthetics policy, the initiative was taken by private individuals to set up a feedback group of private individuals under the name of the Beemster Building Aesthetics Policy Feedback Group [*Klankbordgroep Welstandsbeleid Beemster*]. This group has made ten recommendations to the municipality on adjusting the building aesthetics policy to be pursued.

Addendum 4. Visual quality plans for Beemster

The purport of a visual quality plan is to provide a framework for a qualitative elaboration of the urban development plan and is not so much concerned with whether or not building is allowed in particular areas. This is specified in a regional plan and possibly a structural plan for the area.

The Province of North-Holland has set standards for areas which have a special cultural-historical and rural value, including De Beemster. Under the *Detailed Waterland Regional Housing Plan*, a zoning plan must be accompanied by a visual quality plan which must focus on the following points:

- attention to be focused on development history
- feeling for the planning principles for the landscape
- feeling for the building characteristics (architecture, urban planning, public space)
- integration of the plan area into the wider environment (larger landscape unit)
- attention to be focused on the existing qualities of the area and on measures to mitigate any negative impact on these qualities (see also Visual Quality Plan for Middenbeemster, p. 7).

These principles provide a good basis for guaranteeing the cultural-historical values in the area and can therefore be endorsed by the Cultural Heritage Agency (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science).

New buildings that affect the rural and cultural-historical qualities of the Beemster must be considered on the scale of De Beemster as a whole and regionally (i.e. Waterland; National Landscape "Low Holland").

A visual quality plan provides a good framework within which to decide on building design and methods. However, this plan must take into account the spatial planning framework created by the zoning plan, as the zoning plan is the framework for matters such as building heights and building densities.

Appendices

1. Aerial photograph of the Beemster Polder
2. Topographical MAP of the Beemster Polder (recently published)
3. CD ROM showing 1644 Copper Engraving
4. Ground plan of Zuidoostbeemster
5. Reply from the municipality of Beemster to the Minister of Education, Culture and Science for the attention of the Director of the Cultural Heritage Agency, of 5 June 2009, subject: Reply from Municipal Executive to letter and manifesto sent by Beemster World Heritage Site Residents Manifesto Group to UNESCO World Heritage Centre (Dutch and English versions)
6. Visual Quality Plan for *De Nieuwe Tuinderij*, Zuidoostbeemster
7. Visual Quality Plan for Middenbeemster, Fourth Quadrant
8. Agreement on inner city requirement (ICT) for Waterland Housing (ICT)
9. Example of standard "objection" letter
10. Letter dated 31 March 2009 to the Municipal Executive of Beemster, Government Adviser on Landscape, Government Adviser on Cultural Heritage, subject: Recommendation on new CONO building by Board of Government Advisers
11. Letter from National Service for Archaeology, Cultural Landscape and Built Heritage (RACM) to Provincial Executive of North-Holland, dated 31 March 2009 (RACM R&B-2009-35, subject: Request to defer approval and give further consideration to zoning plan for Zuidoostbeemster I)
12. Decision by the Provincial Executive of 23 June 2009 to approve the Zuidoostbeemster I Zoning Plan.
13. Letter from Minister of Education Culture and Science to Beemster World Heritage Site Residents Manifesto Group, Beemster Residents Network Foundation, 2009, subject: Beemster World Heritage Site at risk due to extreme housebuilding plans for Zuidoostbeemster
14. Letter from Minister of Education, Culture and Science to Beemster Residents Network Foundation 2009, subject: Encroachment on Beemster World Heritage Site
15. Letter from Cultural Heritage Agency to Provincial Executive of North-Holland, 29 June 2009, subject: Beemster UNESCO World Heritage Site (Ref.: RW-2009-239)
16. Note of comments on objections. Municipality of Beemster. Zuidoostbeemster I Zoning Plan (March 2009)