

# Reports to the Government

## **Spatial Development Policy**

**53**

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# Summary

Spatial policy is high on the political agenda. Important decisions will be taken in the coming years concerning land-use in the Netherlands, placing pressure on both the substantive evaluation framework and the administrative/institutional evaluation structure. This concerns such concepts as the compact city, the compact urban district or the protection of the Green Heart as well as the operative planning procedures with their characteristic emphasis on decentralisation. The dynamism of social change is such that it is no longer sufficient to tinker with elements of the system. This report therefore argues for a reorientation of spatial planning.

## *Spatial planning as government policy*

The Dutch system of spatial planning arose out of the aim of directing urban development along the right lines; this explains its still highly decentralised structure. A characteristic feature of the system is the lack of instruments of power and 'separate' implementation instruments. Co-ordination takes place by means of consultation, persuasion and co-operation, laid down in detailed procedures. The substantive core of spatial policy may be summarised in terms of five basic principles: concentration of urbanisation and preservation of the countryside, spatial coherence, spatial differentiation, hierarchical urbanisation and spatial justice. These basic principles have been spelt out afresh in recent decades with the addition of generic concepts such as growth centres or the compact city.

The regular updating of these concepts enables them to keep up with social change. Spatial planning fits in with policy intentions in (ever changing) prominent sectors with a view to compensating for the limited capacity for direction. The most striking example of such 'dual-harness interests' has been the role of public housing and agriculture in promoting the concentration of urbanisation in the 1960s: the public housing system built a large number of dwellings on sites selected as part of the spatial planning process, while the agricultural sector helped by keeping open areas between cities and urban districts.

## *Developments and obstacles*

Current developments are placing the underlying principles of the system under pressure on a wide front. The growing trend towards a 'network society' means that the interrelated activities of citizens and enterprises are no longer necessarily concentrated in the one physical locality. Specific requirements are now leading to specific business location preferences. As a result of technological developments and continuing economic growth, mobility is 'exploding' and there is greater pressure on the available land.

The fact that social developments have become increasingly out of step with the concepts of spatial planning means that the underlying principles of the evaluation framework have also come under pressure:

- concentration of urbanisation: the idea of compact urbanisation was intended to guarantee the spatial quality of the open green spaces but is resulting in the reduced spatial quality of the cities;
- spatial coherence: urban functions have become increasingly spread out, resulting in congestion on the roads and a poorer industrial and commercial environment. At the same time there is growing spatial segregation in terms of income;
- spatial differentiation: creeping urbanisation is gradually eroding the spatial quality of both the urban environment and the countryside;
- spatial hierarchy: the fact that high-grade urban functions are migrating to

new centres on the fringes of the urban regions is resulting in the 'levelling out' of the economic landscape;

- spatial justice: the underdevelopment of certain areas is not readily reversed. This applies particularly to the accentuation of the big-city problem due to the migration to suburban environments.

With respect to the evaluation structure, resources and organisation the following developments may be discerned:

- 'Dual-harness interests' are disappearing, creating difficulties for the present system based around a combination of and distinction between sectoral interests and physical planning considerations. In addition sectoral policies are beginning to incorporate physical planning elements because the specialist departments are redefining their core tasks in a changing social environment. The growing emphasis on projects leaves less room for the broad, supra-sectoral weighing of interests;
- the decentralised approach complicates the effective tackling of regional and national challenges. This is taking place at a time when the need for supra-municipal weighing of interests is in fact increasing with a view to such objectives as rural diversity and regional/national co-ordination. 'Vertical co-ordination' – where national objectives need to be realised at local level – was awkward enough traditionally but is losing further effectiveness with the changing structure of authority between the various levels of administration;
- the division between the administrative co-ordination and the organisation of social support has become less effective on account of the changing relationship between the citizen and government.

This increasing emphasis on the objectives, effectiveness and legitimacy of policy has resulted in responses in which the government places the emphasis on the development of additional instruments. In addition an investment policy is being stressed that is primarily directed towards the development of the infrastructure. However, this policy bypasses the core of the problem, which concerns the configuration of the system itself.

### *Recommendations*

On the basis of the analysis of the social context the Council considers that a spatial development policy is required that provides greater opportunities for regional co-ordination by means of the active involvement of a multiplicity of actors or 'stakeholders'. Precisely in the recognition of the dynamics there are good opportunities for protecting 'weak functions' and further developing strong ones. Spatial development policy refers in particular to planning at regional level. An effective and legitimate spatial policy stands to benefit if the main focus of planning shifts from internal government co-ordination to social coalition formation. Differentiation and selectivity are the key concepts in this spatial development policy.

The most fundamental substantive break with the existing system is the departure from generic spatial concepts: specific local situations call for differing solutions. As an example of an area-specific plan the Council cites an accessibility plan for the western conurbation or Randstad.

The national strategic policy should concentrate more specifically on the overall structure and a limited number of projects, laid down in a plan for the primary spatial structure. With respect to most other areas the national government can confine itself to defining a number of basic quality criteria. An integral approach at national level is replaced by a more area-specific integrative approach. Under this approach the various requirements, wishes and objectives need to be accommodated as far as possible in the planning process and a duty of implementation for governments that have formulated a developed vision needs to be linked to funding, thus eliminating the existing divi-

sion between conceptual planning and financing. This also has the result that investments with major spatial consequences will give rise to more broadly-based planning. Sectoral investments can in this way generate a much greater spatial impact. The Council considers that this requires the further integration of the tasks of the National Spatial Planning Agency (RPC) and the Interdepartmental Committee for Strengthening the Economic Structure (ICES). The ICES investments should be linked to the planning process.

The integrative approach seeks to develop and co-ordinate the insights and arguments of the parties concerned in the planning process. It is therefore highly important for all stakeholders with an interest in the content and implementation of the plans to be involved in the preparations at the earliest possible stage. This calls for clear structures of responsibility, independent control over the planning process and an ongoing, independent debate about standards.

Further elaboration of the underlying principles of differentiation and selectivity results in a variable distribution of planning responsibilities. Depending on the substantive goals this generates three different regimes:

– *basic areas*

Here no concrete national policy decisions are required and it will if necessary suffice to define basic quality criteria. There is little reason for a compulsory link between planning, funding and duty of implementation.

– *development areas*

The spatial development policy will be brought out the most cogently in the development areas. Supralocal interests are at issue in these areas, as in areas where the building of a high-speed railway station or a part of the National Ecological Network will have such consequences that a more wide-ranging redevelopment is called for. Apart from basic quality criteria this involves formulating a specific orientation towards future land-use. Once the state has designated an area as a development area and the relevant goals have been determined, the initiative then lies with the co-operating municipalities. The provincial executive plays a directing role, with funding and approval as the principal co-ordinating mechanisms. If the municipalities or province fail to discharge their duties it then becomes possible to transfer powers – including those at executive level – to a higher administrative tier.

– *national projects*

These are areas where, in terms of the overall spatial structure, the protection of a national interest is deemed necessary or where physical development of national importance is required. The state will have the decisive say, coupled with a duty of implementation.

The development areas and national projects, in particular, represent a break with the existing system under the Spatial Planning Act and call for the development of new instruments.

*In conclusion*

The analysis of the changing context of spatial planning policy makes it clear that the present system does not measure up to the challenges at hand. On this basis the Council considers that the form and content of spatial planning policy are in need of radical modification. The scope to direct infrastructure policy should be explicitly expanded. There is a need for open forms of planning in which society is involved at the earliest possible stage. A broader weighing of interests can be achieved by means of integrated planning at regional level. National interests can be articulated more clearly in national projects of an imperative nature. Under this approach spatial planning would become part of political decision-making at the relevant geographical level.



# Preface

This report was compiled during the fifth term of office (1993-1997) of the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR). Although the report was submitted to the government at the start of the sixth term, the responsibility for its content resides with the Council as composed at the end of the fifth term. The report was prepared by an internal WRR project group consisting of Dr.R. Rabbinge (project chairman), Dr. W. Derksen (council member) and H.C. van Latesteijn, deputy secretary of the Council, as well as the following staff members: Dr. M.A. Hajer (project secretary), Dr. C.W.A.M. van Paridon, Dr. J.C.I. de Pree and Prof. I.J. Schoonenboom. Mrs. C. Schute and Dr. W.A.M. Zonneveld (NWO/Stichting ESR) were also members of the project group.

In addition numerous individual institutions were consulted during the preparation of this report. Special reference deserves to be made to Dr. H. van der Cammen, Dr. A. Faludi, Dr. H. Hetsen, Dr. A.M.J. Kreukels and Dr. W.G.M. Salet. The WRR thanks them all for the contributions they made.





# Introduction

## 1.1. Spatial planning and spatial development

The Netherlands has an elaborate system of spatial planning. By international standards the Dutch system is particularly comprehensive and detailed<sup>1</sup>. This does not, however, say anything about its functionality. The extent to which the system determines the spatial development in the sense desired by the government is an empirical question. Of major importance in this respect is the extent to which spatial planning policy involves considerations and trade-offs in a large number of differing policy fields such as the environment, housing, economic affairs, transport, public works or agriculture. Major efforts towards co-ordination are therefore required. This is complicated enough when the various sectoral agendas are clear, but becomes an enormous task when those sectors are – as at present – themselves in the process of change and uncertain about their policies. The number of policy surveys currently being conducted by the Dutch central government runs into dozens and a large number of these have a knock-on effect for spatial planning policy. The links between the various surveys of future developments are often so opaque that they have themselves become the object of study<sup>2</sup>. The results of these sectoral dynamics will have consequences for the way in which spatial planning needs to be organised in the future.

What is spatial (or physical) planning? This question is the object of much misunderstanding and consequently needs to be addressed at the outset. In the first place spatial *planning* needs to be distinguished from spatial *development*. The latter refers to the social processes concerning the continually changing use of space, whereas spatial planning relates first and foremost to *government activity*, i.e. the conscious policy efforts to influence the use of space. The use made of the space is of course determined by more than just policy alone: whatever the government might desire, the actual use of space cannot be reduced to the result of its conscious actions alone. Development and planning are however often used as synonyms, and this is a source of confusion. But spatial planning should also not be used as a collective term for *all* government activity with respect to spatial development. It is better to interpret spatial planning as the *specific* elaboration of the way in which the government has organised its spatial planning. The Netherlands has an enormous tradition when it comes to active involvement in land-use: since much of the land in the Netherlands has been reclaimed, water management is a major factor in land use. To a greater extent than anywhere else in the world, land and water form part of the culture of the Netherlands. There is therefore a tradition of active spatial development, but it would be incorrect to regard this tradition as one of 'spatial planning'<sup>3</sup>.

The term spatial planning is reserved here for the government's physical planning policies as these have evolved since the beginning of this century. The substantive orientation (both in the Netherlands and in neighbouring countries, including the United Kingdom) is linked to the advent of the

<sup>1</sup>] European Commission, *The EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies*; Regional Development Studies 28, Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1997.

<sup>2</sup>] See A.W. Koers and T.P.J. Konijn, *Verkenningen Verkend: de betekenis van toekomstverkenningen voor V&W* (Surveys Surveyed: the significance of futures studies for the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management), The Hague, DG Rijkswaterstaat, 1997.

<sup>3</sup>] See for example A.M. Lambert, *The Making of the Dutch Landscape; An Historical Geography of the Netherlands*; London, Academic Press, 1985.

'social question' and arose out of the concern over social hygiene problems when the industrial city came into being. It is not without reason that the Housing Act of 1901 is regarded as the starting point of spatial planning in the Netherlands. The policies in this area have always focused in particular on the direction and regulation of urbanisation in the Netherlands. In this regard spatial planning may be distinguished from the government's activities in the field of public works, including water management projects, the development of the infrastructure and activities to do with the reclamation and land-use of the outer areas. The activities go back much further in time. Spatial planning may accordingly be regarded as a *correction* to the system of land-use that had begun to emerge in response to the rapid industrialisation. These historical roots in urban problems and the accommodation of urbanisation remain reflected to this day in *the substantive orientation* of national spatial planning policy.

### 1.1.1. The organisation of spatial planning

By European standards the Netherlands also stands out for the prominent position of *domestic* spatial planning policy<sup>4</sup>. It is precisely at national level that spatial planning has evolved into a complex policy field with complicated co-ordination arrangements. The latter is not surprising. Many activities have spatial implications and make claims on the available land, so that spatial planning soon cuts across all manner of sectoral policy fields. Spatial planning involves 'facet' or intersectoral policies, i.e. land-use considerations are a relevant aspect of many different kinds of policies. Institutionally, spatial planning has been elaborated in the Key Planning Decisions procedures (PKB): the policy is above all a *co-ordinating* activity, and the Minister for Spatial Planning is the co-ordinating minister for policy formulation with land-use implications. Because physical planning policies logically cut across the powers of all three tiers of government, spatial planning also needs to be coordinated 'vertically' between those layers. One element of the conceptual foundations on which the present system is based is that the national government draws up plans that set a framework for local government, but without binding force. The plans of the state government and provincial governments are indicative, not least so as to ensure a certain degree of flexibility. The Minister for Spatial Planning also has few directive powers and is required to persuade both the sectoral ministries and local government. In day-to-day practice the national government does of course deploy all sorts of financial resources (other than those specifically set aside for spatial planning) in order to persuade others to adopt its policies. This in no way detracts from the formal structure of the system.

This structure can come as something of a surprise to outsiders but has clear historical roots. The origins of Dutch spatial planning have left their mark on the current administrative/institutional structure. The orientation towards the problem of urbanisation is reflected in the highly decentralised nature of the system and the key role played by the municipal *bestemmingsplan* (local land-use or zoning plan) – the only form of plan with binding force for the citizen and other legal entities. The urbanisation problem was primarily a local matter and this was therefore also the main institutional focus. Spatial planning cannot, however, be reduced to the accommodation of urbanisation. Steadily greater emphasis has been placed on requirements that transcend local level. The concern to maintain large-scale open spaces, the concern for the distribution of prosperity or later the concern about international connections are a reflection of the growing importance of *national* spatial planning.

<sup>4</sup> See European Commission, *op. cit.*

A distinction has been drawn above between the substantive and the administrative/institutional dimensions of spatial planning. These two aspects need to be kept separate analytically. The substantive dimension of physical planning is referred to in this report as the *deliberation framework* and the administrative/institutional dimension as the *deliberation structure*.

## 1.2. Relationship between deliberation framework and deliberation structure

Although plans and maps play a key role in spatial planning, they do not form the core: physical planning is a matter of active coalition formation in which planners seek to forge alliances around convincing visions of the future<sup>5</sup>. As a government activity spatial planning does, however, need a formal/legal basis. In this respect a plan or policy document assumes particular significance if spatial planning can guarantee the implementation of that plan/policy document. It is precisely in respect of this aspect of the effectiveness of policy that the system is often criticised. Both the horizontal co-ordination (between ministries) and the vertical co-ordination (between the various layers of government) is based not on hierarchy and the associated powerful instruments but on communication and persuasion. The system of physical planning therefore also bears the characteristics of a consensus-oriented society. Those characteristics contain both its strengths and its weaknesses<sup>6</sup>. The appraisal of the existing system needs therefore to concentrate especially on the way in which negotiation is linked to policy effectiveness. In order to arrive at statements of policy relevance, the evaluation in this report is set against the background of the changing context of spatial planning.

### 1.2.1. Deliberation framework

The fact that spatial planning is heavily oriented towards the co-ordination of policies with spatial implications does not mean that spatial planning lacks any substantive component. Spatial planning has a more or less fixed deliberation or decision-making framework. Over time, that framework can change radically, but the numerous concepts employed always go back to a limited number of *basic principles*. These indicate the perceptions towards spatial developments in national physical planning. Individual spatial concepts are the expression of those principles at a particular point in time. These principles determine the negotiating framework and indicate that physical planning is more than just a negotiating *structure*. The five basic principles are concentration of urbanisation, spatial coherence, spatial differentiation, hierarchical urbanisation and spatial justice (see Table 1.1).

5] See J. A. Throgmorton, 'Planning as Persuasive Story-telling about the Future: Negotiating an Electric Power Rate Settlement in Illinois'; *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, no. 12, 1992, pp. 17-31.

6] Cf. for example J. Witsen, 'Ruimtelijke samenhang: beleid in samenspel' (Spatial cohesion: the interplay of policy); in C.P.M. Bevers and P.G.A. Noordanus (eds.), *Continuïteit en vernieuwing*; The Hague, RARO, 1996, pp. 13-22. N.A. de Boer, 'Stagnerende Ruimtelijke Ordening'; *Wonen TA/BK*, no. 23/24, 1976. F.W. Scharpf and F. Schnabel, 'Durchsetzungsprobleme der Raumordnung im öffentlichen Sektor' (Physical planning implementation problems in the public sector); *Informationen zur Raumentwicklung*, no. 1, 1978, pp. 29-47. J.B.D. Simonis, 'Ruimtelijke ordening: de overspanning van een plancongestie'; in: P.C. Groen (ed.), *Stedebouw in Nederland*; Zutphen, De Walburg Pers, 1985, pp. 78-83. P. Lukkes, 'Ruimtelijke Ordening leidend of lijdend?' (Spatial planning: leading or bleeding?); *Stedebouw en Volkshuisvesting*, no. 11, 1990.

**Table 1.1 The basic principles ('core tasks') of national spatial planning**

<b>Basic principles ('core tasks')</b>	<b>Spatial level of scale</b>	<b>Object of policy</b>	<b>Most important current spatial concepts</b>	<b>Incorporation into policy</b>
<b>concentration of urbanisation</b>	local and regional	distribution pattern of urban functions	compact city as regards VINEX locations; ABC-policy; open-space concepts/restrictive areas (buffer zones; Green Heart; Central Open Space)	Spatial Planning Act (Key Planning Decision (PKB) system and content of local government plans); development of VINEX locations via departmental budgets (esp.: principal development to be handled by Transport, Public Works and Water Management )
<b>spatial cohesion</b>	local, regional and national	relations between urban (incl. economic) activities; economically most promising areas, incl. development structure	compact urban regions; national spatial-economic structure of Netherlands-Distributionland (mainports, main transport axes); Urban Ring Central Netherlands/Randstad International; urban nodes; prime locations	Spatial Planning Act (esp. content of local government plans); housing policy; Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries budget (recreational facilities; large green projects). As regards national spatial-economic structure: spatial-economic policy Economic Affairs; infrastructure and transport policy Transport, Public Works and Water Management; decisions on locations for high-grade State facilities (all departments)
<b>spatial differentiation</b>	local, regional, national	manifestation of city and country	(living) environment differentiation; open-space concepts c.q. restrictive areas (buffer zones; Green Heart; Central Open Space); national ecological network	Spatial Planning Act (esp. content of plans of local government); other policy as regards daily living environment of local government; land-use policy Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries
<b>spatial hierarchy</b>	local, regional, national, international	pattern of ('high-grade') facilities and economic activities	prime locations; urban nodes (3 categories); Randstad International (=top of Netherlands)	decisions on locations of high-grade State facilities (all departments); stimulation instruments Economic Affairs; Spatial Planning Act (esp. evaluating role of provinces as regards municipality policy)
<b>spatial justice</b>	regional and national	distribution of economic activities	regions on own strength; urban nodes (esp. nodes designated on dispersal grounds); target areas (rural development)	decisions on locations of high-grade State facilities (all departments); stimulation instruments Economic Affairs; policy of EU structure funds

### 1.2.2. Deliberation structure

Spatial planning is designed to make more effective use of the available space in the public interest and on a professional basis. It serves a general administrative and social function in appraising or making a trade-off between rival land-use claims. The Spatial Planning Act (WRO) is designed to provide the skeleton for spatial planning in the Netherlands. This piece of legislation is based on four underlying principles, namely *planning-based administration, decentralisation, co-operation between different levels of government and legal certainty*<sup>7</sup>. To this may be added two specific features: the WRO is a *procedural act*, (virtually) without substantive norms and other implementation tools, and a *facet or intersectoral act*, i.e. planning is not just concerned with giving expression to an overall town and country planning vision but also with striking a careful balance on the basis of weighing up often conflicting sectoral interests.

Apart from the preparation of plans, spatial planning is concerned with realising a vision for the implementation of plans. Where actual land-use is in accordance with the desired use, spatial planning is consolidating and passive in nature and designated uses are laid down in legal terms only. Where the use of land has to be adapted, active intervention is required and spatial planning requires different instruments. The way in which this happens is complicated because the Dutch spatial planning system is based on the *principle of decentralisation*. Only the municipalities have a legally binding plan at their disposal, namely the zoning or local land-use plan. As already noted above, spatial planning has co-ordinating powers at national level but lacks its own instruments to implement those plans. Theoretically there is the possibility to issue directives, but for obvious reasons this is used sparingly.

Superficial appraisal of the functionality of the spatial planning system degenerates only too quickly into an analysis that the emperor has no clothes. In practice, however, the system of spatial planning has been notably successful in the formation of coalitions with sectors or groupings in society in order to achieve its goals. The question arises however as to whether the system will in the future be able to operate equally as successfully given the social developments outlined below.

### 1.3. The dependent nature of national spatial planning

The national system of spatial planning has few if any substantive powers of intervention. Efforts are therefore continually made to influence the town and country planning interventions by other parties. Put differently, spatial planning is obliged to transcend the limits to its own capacity to act by getting others to commit themselves to its policies. Communicative direction is vital in this regard. Spatial development concepts and structural scenarios in the form of maps and metaphors are used as 'instruments of seduction' and specific bodies have been set up in which the national spatial planning authorities seek to influence decisions taken by other parties. From the Second National Policy Document on Spatial Planning onwards, for example, the preparation of each major national policy document has been entrusted to the National Spatial Planning Commission (RPC), on which all government departments with responsibility for administering policies with land-use implications are represented. The consultations are designed to tie

<sup>7</sup> For example H.J.M. van Geest, 'Plannen als brug tussen wet en besluit' (Planning as a bridge between act and decree); *PIN Nieuws* 19/4, special issue 'Het ruimtelijk planningsstelsel op de schop!', 1995; and 'Plannen in de Wet op de Ruimtelijke Ordening: een verstoord stelsel' (Planning in the Town and Country Planning Act: a disturbed system); *De Gemeentestem*, 19 July 1996.

the policies of the individual sectors to the underlying principles, concepts and implementation programmes of the national spatial planning system <sup>8</sup>.

### 1.3.1. The formulation of policy

Although the goals pursued by the system of national spatial planning are based on a number of fundamental principles, the system has in recent decades also taken its cue from the cornerstones of the national government's overall policies and from overarching political and social issues. The task of national spatial planning has for example gradually changed from responsibility for an effective spatial superstructure imposed on an economic substructure in the 1950s to the task of outlining land-use in the future on the basis of growing mobility, greater financial and other possibilities to live where and as one wishes and a growing requirement to meet the ever expanding demands of the leisure age in the 1960s. In the 1970s national spatial planning once again changed course radically. The large-scale spatial concepts of the Second Policy Document on Spatial Planning became taboo and the small-scale living environment of the individual citizen came to the fore. After the Dutch economy went into a trough after 1976 and, later, a severe recession in the first half of the 1980s, the Fourth Policy Document on Spatial Planning sought to provide a reply to the question of the legitimacy of national urban and regional planning, in the form of a radically new approach towards the structure of land-use in the country: henceforth the system of national spatial planning should concentrate in particular on the country's national spatial-economic structure.

#### *'Dual-harness interests'*

For these policies to make a real impact, the system of national spatial planning depends in many respects on the decisions of other parties. For the greater part of the last few decades, the system of national spatial planning found powerful allies in two heavyweight public interests: the importance of good public housing, the government's responsibilities in respect of which are even enshrined in the constitution, and the importance of an efficient agricultural sector. The interests of these two sectors coincided in some instances so effectively with the objectives of national spatial planning that although these two 'marriages of convenience' were marked from time to time by squabbles, the system may be regarded as one of 'dual-harness interests'.

Generally speaking it is the relationship between physical planning and public housing that tends to be labelled a marriage of convenience <sup>9</sup>. The 'interests' of both policy fields were laid down at the start of the century in the same piece of legislation, namely the Housing Act of 1901. This piece of legislation indicated that a socially acceptable standard of public housing could only be achieved by means of sound urban design policy, laid down in expansion plans. For decades the possibility of conducting an independent spatial policy did not go beyond the margins afforded by an act that was primarily directed towards public housing. Although there was no clear institutional link between national physical planning and public housing policy, large-scale urban expansion took place during the period of post-war reconstruction that fitted in well with the ideas about 'responsible' spatial development. It was not until 1960, with the political acceptance of such concepts as dispersal and the western conurbation or Randstad and the protection of the

<sup>8]</sup> A.J. van der Valk and J. de Vries, 'De Rijksplanologische Commissie: In de schemerzone tussen planning en politiek' (The National Spatial Planning Agency: in the twilight zone between planning and politics); *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*, vol. 77, no. 5, 1996, pp. 24-31

<sup>9]</sup> See for example: A. Faludi and A. van der Valk, *Rule and Order; Dutch Planning Doctrine in the Twentieth Century*; Dordrecht/Boston/London, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994, p. 31.

Green Heart, that the (national) system of physical planning gained a real foothold. With the growth centres and urban renewal policies of the 1970s and 1980s, the marriage of convenience between spatial planning and public housing entered its most harmonious period. Thus, during the period 1972-1988 – the heyday of the growth-centres policy – nearly 225,000 dwellings were built in growth municipalities. Conversely this means that during this period, nearly half a million people moved house in line with the policy intentions<sup>10</sup>. This largely brought to a halt the process of unbridled suburbanisation.

Around 1990, the system of physical planning lost public housing as a dual-harness interest<sup>11</sup>. This reflected a genuine turnaround in housing policy under which the running has since that time been primarily being made by local government, housing corporations and the private sector. The location of future housing development remains one of the focal points of national spatial planning policy. To this end the state has concluded covenants with decentralised governments and restricted policies apply in selected areas, such as the Green Heart. The final outcome of this policy depends heavily however on the continuing interest of private actors on the development of VINEX sites, i.e. sites designated under the Supplement to the Fourth Policy Document on Spatial Planning. Housing policy, however, no longer provides a framework for enforcing those interests.

The second but less close marriage of convenience concerns that between spatial planning and agriculture. Keeping up the availability of agricultural land by the concentration of urbanisation has always been a basic principle of physical planning at national level. For many years this harmonised well with agricultural policy as the careful geographical delimitation of urban activities would have a much less damaging effect on the productive capacity of rural areas than a situation in which housing and the development of industrial sites were given free rein. Certainly in the early post-war decades, increased food production, supported also by the Common Agricultural Policy after the formation of the EEC, was an important objective of government policy. It has however never been accepted that in setting priorities spatial planners should make statements concerning agricultural land-use, for example with a view to protecting ecological features and preserving the landscape. This is even reflected in the formulation of the Spatial Planning Act. Efforts to that end, such as de zoning of rural areas in the Third Policy Document on Spatial Planning and the rural areas strategy policy in the Fourth Policy Document, have never been endorsed by the agricultural sector in general or the Ministry of Agriculture.

At the same time, however, the dual-harness interests within the marriage of convenience between national physical planning and agriculture/the Ministry of Agriculture have been eroded. In contrast to public housing this has not primarily been the consequence of a radical change in strategy but of all kinds of long-term developments within the agricultural sector. Although the latter is seeking to preserve the existing area under cultivation, the sharp productivity gains in agriculture mean that some farm land need no longer be used for agricultural purposes, as established by the WRR in an earlier report<sup>12</sup>. The increasingly intensive nature of agriculture also

<sup>10]</sup> Figures taken from: A. Faludi, A. van der Valk, *De groeikernen als hoekstenen van de Nederlandse ruimtelijke planningdoctrine* (The growth centre as the cornerstone of Dutch physical planning doctrine); Assen/Maastricht, Van Gorcum, 1990.

<sup>11]</sup> H.T. Siraa, A.J. van der Valk and W.L. Wissink, *Met het oog op de omgeving: Een geschiedenis van de zorg voor de kwaliteit van de leefomgeving; Het ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer (1965-1995)* (With an eye to the environment: a history of care for the quality of the living environment; the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment); The Hague, Sdu uitgevers, 1995, p. 334.



means that the sector is becoming more and more industrial in nature, with major implications for the external appearance of rural areas, even when this system of 'agriculture without land' takes up only a limited area.

### 1.3.2. Wider effects and implementation of government policy

If the aspirations of spatial planning are measured in terms of the major policy documents published since 1960, it is notable that the basic principles have been strikingly constant but that the instruments that have been announced and used have been subject to steady change and expansion. In the First Policy Document a modest role was assigned to the central government. Although the Second Policy Document opened up vistas on a wide front, it suffered from accusations that the financial arrangements and available instruments were inadequate. From around 1970 onwards we see a permanent process aimed at strengthening national physical planning along 'facet' or intersectoral lines, both vertically and horizontally. Particularly in the last decade certain adjustments in the regulations have been partly or even primarily directed towards the smoother realisation of initiatives stemming from the sectors.

Looking back it may be said that the Spatial Planning Act introduced a system in 1965 that was substantially more flexible than the preceding system with its planning hierarchy. The municipal zoning plan – the only one with binding force for the public – brought together the physical development consequences of the full range of government policies. In practice this resulted in a highly developed negotiating circuit, in that the lack of any planning hierarchy necessitated consultation<sup>13</sup>. Apart from consultations concerning a particular 'facet', a characteristic feature at central level was also the consultations between those representing that facet and the sectors. Even if one regards spatial planning as more than just coordination, interdepartmental co-operation is essential for both policy formulation and implementation. The system of spatial planning operates on the basis of suprasectoral considerations and the basic concepts on which it is founded, while the other departments have their sectoral powers. Fairly soon after the introduction of the Spatial Planning Act, the consultations were given more structure in the form of the indicative Key Planning Decision procedures (PKB), i.e. the system of outline plans, master plans and concrete decisions.

Various shifts have taken place in recent decades with respect to both decentralisation and the balance between suprasectoral facets and the sectors themselves. There is little that can be done about this: developments such as increases in scale, the need for faster decision-making and so on are by way of a natural phenomenon. Tensions between centralisation and decentralisation and between suprasectoral facets and the sectors are inherent in the process of spatial planning; they are insoluble and can only be rendered manageable by means of an adequate distribution of powers and by proper procedures.

A number of recent appraisals of the Spatial Planning Act provide some clarity about the attitudes in the field concerning the *future value* of the main thrust of the act. A survey into the significance of a number of recent acts for the planning system published several years ago concluded that in relation to the projects investigated, 'no arguments had been encountered to cast

<sup>12]</sup> Scientific Council for Government Policy, *Grond voor keuzen; Vier perspectieven voor de landelijke gebieden in de Europese Gemeenschap* (Ground for Choices; four perspectives for the agricultural areas in the European Community); Reports to the Government no. 42, The Hague, Sdu uitgeverij Plantijnstraat, 1992.

<sup>13]</sup> Witsen, op. cit, p. 16.

doubt on the ideal model of the spatial planning system'<sup>14</sup>. According to the authors the innovations and changes which they analysed do not provide any indications to suggest that the requirements of the system have lost public or political support. They do not constitute a break with the requirements of the planning system but are a continuation of the discussions conducted on the nature of the system over the past 30 years, which almost always concerned (and still concern) the way in which the requirements of the ideal planning system can be converted by means of regulations into ideal *planning behaviour*. If these conclusions are accepted as a criterion, then the preservation of the *functions* of the ideal-type planning system should provide the starting point for the further development and expansion of the relevant spatial planning legislation, the authors go on. However, a number of queries are in order with respect to those functions or requirements that the system is required to fulfil according to dominant opinion in the last 30 years: would it not be better for the system of integral area-based trade-offs based around suprasectoral considerations to be replaced by the target-oriented arguments of the project-based approach? Would it not be better for planning to be based around the three tiers of government, with each tier having its own planning domain, instead of the existing complementarity? And so on. Seen in these terms, the authors seem to conclude, there are reasons to question the changes in recent decades not so much because they excessively undermine the underlying principles but because they have not in fact challenged them adequately.

#### 1.4. Object and structure of the report

It was seen above that instrumentally, organisationally and substantively, the system of spatial planning in the Netherlands has undergone considerable changes in recent decades. Further adjustments to the system and the deliberation or trade-off structure are also widely considered essential. This report therefore centres around the question: *How can the government create more effective and legitimate spatial planning policies in the coming decades? To what extent should the current system of spatial planning (with the associated goals and methods) be modified?* To this end the spatial planning system is first of all examined with a view to the spatial effects of likely social developments in the coming years. The report seeks to establish the nature and scale of the challenge facing spatial policy, based on which it arrives at a number of recommendations.

On the basis of the notion that political deliberation is only of relevance if it results in the implementation of policy, the legitimacy question surrounding the political setting of priorities is directly linked to the effectiveness of the system. Particular emphasis is given to the question of the shape that political deliberation in the spatial planning field should take since so many of the members of the public find themselves confronted by the shadow side of change of urban and rural development<sup>15</sup>. In an era in which numerous social problems have been overcome by economic prosperity, the 'costs' of this success manifests itself for some most notably in the field of spatial development: the increasing busyness along highways, the single-family dwelling which has become an achievable ideal for more and more people and the consequences of the mass use of the motor car for the mobility it brings are all major challenges for spatial planning.

<sup>14</sup>] J. de Ridder and D. Schut, *De WRO in de steigers* (The WRO under construction); Deventer, Kluwer, 1995, p. 228. This investigated the Nimby, the Infrastructure (Planning Procedures) Act and the Earth Removal Act, the Key Planning Decisions Plus, the Administration in Change Framework Act and the General Administrative Law Act.

<sup>15</sup>] See for example the RPD survey as set out in *Ruimtelijke Verkenningen 1997* and the discussions on the current affairs pages in the press.

#### **1.4.1. Structure of the report**

The changing context of spatial policy is first analysed in Chapter 2: what social challenges will spatial policy face in the coming decades? To what extent are these developments exogenous? Where are the potential points of reference for government policy? To what extent are relevant changes to be anticipated in this area in the coming period? Chapter 3 examines the changing institutional relationships with respect to spatial planning policy. On the basis of a number of developments in the last ten years, statements are made about the new institutional reality that has grown up around spatial policy. Chapter 4 starts with a concise analysis of the position in which spatial policy currently finds itself and examines the concrete challenges facing the physical planning system. On the basis of this analysis, a 'spatial development policy' is outlined that would permit an effective and legitimate spatial policy in the coming period.

# The changing context of spatial policy

# 2

## 2.1 Introduction

Spatial planning finds itself increasingly confronted by the growing volatility and unpredictability of spatial developments. These are closely related to the ever more dynamic shifts in spatial preferences for all the major activities: living, working, recreation and transport. This chapter examines the changes that lie ahead in the coming years in the spatial context. Spatial-economic developments are examined first, followed by spatial-cultural developments.

## 2.2 Spatial-economic changes

### 2.2.1 The economy and the physical environment

The Dutch economy has always been exposed to international influences. In the coming years the Dutch economy will be increasingly subjected to the accelerating rate of change observable in the case of the transfrontier traffic in goods, services, capital, investment projects and knowledge, all kinds of technological developments, increases in scale and the physical relocation of production and distribution, and not least the knock-on effect of institutional changes such as the World Trade Organisation and the further integration and expansion of the European Union <sup>1</sup>. These developments could also have substantial implications for the spatial-economic development of the Netherlands.

The Netherlands bureau for economic policy analysis (CPB) recently published a detailed study on this subject <sup>2</sup>. The consequences for demand and supply in the labour market and for the economic structure in the longer term, up to 2020, were examined on the basis of three scenarios: 'Divided Europe' (disappointing growth for the Netherlands), 'European Co-ordination' (reasonable growth in Europe and hence also in the Netherlands), and 'Global Competition' (strong growth, with major adjustments in society and the economy). In the case of both the labour market and the economic structure special attention was devoted to the spatial component. According to the CPB the rate of population growth and hence also the growth in the potential labour force varies little spatially, with the provinces of Utrecht, Gelderland and Flevoland as relatively strong growers, North and South Holland and North Brabant in a central position and the other provinces at a slight distance behind <sup>3</sup>. With respect to the demand for labour the CPB anticipates heavy growth on the northern wing of the western conurbation or Randstad (North Holland and Utrecht) on account of the services established there and possibly also in Gelderland, North Brabant and Limburg. A deconcentration of economic activity – especially on the southern flank of the Randstad – will continue. The north-eastern provinces lag behind in all three scenarios.

<sup>1</sup>] On the spatial consequences and the possible repercussions for (regional) policy, See P. Dicken and S. Öberg, 'The global context: Europe in a world of dynamic economic and population change'; *European Urban and Regional Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1996, pp. 101-120; J.M. de Vet, 'Globalisation and local & regional competitiveness'; *OECD STI review*, no. 13, 1996, pp. 89-122; and P. Hirst, 'The global economy – myths and realities'; *International Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 3, 1997, pp. 409-426.

<sup>2</sup>] See CPB, *Economie en fysieke omgeving. Beleidsopgaven en oplossingsrichtingen 1995-2020* (The economy and the physical environment. Policy challenges and solutions); The Hague, Sdu Uitgevers, 1997.

<sup>3</sup>] *Ibid.*, Chapter 4.

These population and employment projections were used to establish the consequences for the demand for and supply of space <sup>4</sup>. In all cases there is a rise in demand for space for housing, industrial land and office locations, for infrastructural facilities, for the national ecological network and for forestry. This demand can be met by reducing the amount of land-based agriculture. The CPB has investigated the impact of variants, such as the more intensive use of space for living and working, a relaxation of the present physical planning regulations and the application of more market-oriented instruments in order to reconcile the various spatial claims. Each of these variants has its positive and negative sides. The more intensive use of space results in a significant reduction in the policy challenge to generate sufficient land for all the activities up to 2020, whereas housing preferences and business requirements are much less fulfilled in this variant. If the spatial planning regulations are relaxed this would significantly reduce the quantitative restrictions on land-use and substantially improve the business-location climate in the Netherlands. The price to be paid would be a reduction in the quality of the non-urbanised area, higher mobility (especially as regards commuting) and possibly also a further deterioration of the economic potential of the major cities. Finally, the application of market-oriented instruments would result in higher land prices and could adversely affect the attractiveness of the Netherlands as a business location. The CPB accordingly concludes that it is not so much a question of absolute shortages of land as of deciding how far to give in to the desire for space by individuals and businesses. If concessions are made to those desires, a deterioration in the quality of the human environment would appear inevitable. If no such concessions are made this could involve a loss in individual living standards or in undesired changes in corporate investment patterns.

The CPB study has helped identify the anticipated spatial development of the Netherlands and the problems to which this could give rise, the possible solutions and the available or necessary instruments. The importance of doing so requires no further explanation. Nevertheless the question arises as to whether the patterns of spatial behaviour on the part of individuals and companies as outlined in this study take sufficient account of possible alternatives. This chapter therefore examines in more detail the considerations taken into account by businesses when deciding where to set up, which in turn affects the future spatial development of production and employment.

### **2.2.2 From concentration to dispersal, from proximity to accessibility**

Until recently proximity was regarded as one of the most crucial business-location criteria. Proximity resulted in a concentration of activities, where increases in scale would only further enhance the attractiveness of an urban centre or area. Urban areas brought together the consumers, the customers, suppliers, workforce and educational and research institutes and provided the nodes for regional, national and international traffic.

The signs are that these axioms are increasingly losing their validity. Both individually and in combination, increases in scale, technological developments, increased mobility, a growing shortage of space and ever stiffer business competition have been responsible for the growing importance of accessibility as distinct from proximity. Not that proximity no longer matters – as the considerations behind investment decisions relating to the Amsterdam Southern Axis make only too clear – but the aspects mentioned above have

<sup>4</sup>) Ibid., Chapter 6, and also G.J. van Bork, 'De strijd om de ruimte' (The struggle for space); *Economisch-Statistische Berichten*, vol. 82, 1997, pp. 896-900.

undeniably underscored the importance of accessibility. First of all, the aspect of increases in scale. In former times production was largely on a limited scale, including in a geographical sense. In modern times, with the ongoing process of internationalisation and globalisation, the continuing pressure for increases in scale has resulted in a situation in which companies find themselves increasingly dealing with a multipolar and also international selling market. In such a situation proximity to the centre of a particular town or region is no longer a decisive consideration. The options have substantially expanded. Instead of proximity, access to infrastructure and, more generally, accessibility have become decisive factors in business location decisions.

Technological developments have also contributed to the fact that companies have become increasingly footloose, i.e. that they are able to choose from a greater domain of potential business locations than hitherto. This process has been accentuated by the increased possibilities for transport and communication of goods, services, people and ideas as well as the shrinking importance of national borders as a result of the liberalisation of world trade and European integration. Not only has this reduced the need to seek a business location close to an urban centre but the increased use of the car is often causing such congestion in urban areas that accessibility has become the new watchword in business location decisions. In a multipolar world with congestion, the accessibility of a location in relation to a number of important infrastructural modalities has become more important than location in a major urban centre. This development has been further enhanced by the changes in information and communication technology, which have further reduced the importance of proximity. On top of this, the increases in scale and growing mobility have also been factors in the growing demand for space. Since land is an extremely scarce factor in a metropolitan environment this may be a reason for businesses to look for locations in non-city areas.

Finally, the ever stiffer competition between firms is helping to diminish the importance of proximity. On pain of going bankrupt or becoming marginalised, companies are to an even greater extent than before forced to aim at market specialisation, market enlargement and cost minimisation. This has resulted in a process of increases in scale in production, in contacts with suppliers and customers, in physical size of the market and, in conjunction with the increasingly high-tech production methods, in an ever larger geographical area from which workers can be recruited. In order to remain competitive, firms have become increasingly obliged to concentrate on their core activities. Not only can this increase productivity and improve profit margins but it is also possible to benefit from the fact that the hived-off activities can undergo increases in scale, with benefits to productivity and price. All these developments imply however an increasing remoteness from the situation in which firms dealt with just a few suppliers or customers. The more the production column is extended and broadened and the more that firms are responsible for an ever smaller element in that column, the greater the chance that a firm will be dealing with a larger number of suppliers or customers, which may be much more geographically spread out.

All these factors, both individually but especially in combination, have been responsible for a gradual shift in corporate location preferences. In brief this has been a shift from proximity to accessibility, from concentration to distribution. This has been further strengthened by the process of deregulation at national level and, as a result of the liberalisation of trade, of ongoing market integration at international level. Needless to say there are also sectoral differences. The shift towards accessibility applies more particularly to industry requiring large tracts of land or the transport and distribution sec-

tor, while proximity remains the more decisive factor for all sorts of knowledge-intensive services<sup>20</sup>. For the government this development means a greater sensitivity to the requirements that firms have for business locations. Whereas in the past one could work on the premise that businesses would be obliged to select certain types of locations on account of the need for proximity to waterways or railways or the need to remain close to metropolitan areas for recruitment or marketing purposes, technological developments have greatly increased the options businesses have. In order to persuade a particular company or sector to invest in a particular region, it is therefore critically important to generate the right business establishment conditions. These may vary from one sector to another, but generally the relevant factors include the accessibility of an attractive geographical area (for production, storage and parking), the availability of sufficient numbers of trained staff and, above all, good accessibility to suppliers, personnel and customers. Numerous studies<sup>21</sup> have shown that accessibility is the decisive factor for businesses.

To avoid any ambiguity it should be noted that proximity remains important. Proximity to customers, proximity to universities and research institutes, proximity to a metropolitan cultural and recreational environment and proximity to an attractive residential environment remain relevant business location criteria<sup>22</sup>. The development of the Southern Axis in Amsterdam and the decision by Philips to relocate its head office in Amsterdam – possibly in the Southern Axis area – makes this clear. But where formerly a business would have opted for the inner city they are now seeking a location with an excellent infrastructure and international connections, which is at a limited distance from Schiphol. In the trade-off between proximity and accessibility the latter factor appears to have gained importance, with inevitable consequences for the spatial-economic development pattern. The pull factors of the urban economy are steadily losing ground to the push factors, such as congestion, rising land prices and lack of space. The fact that economic activities are moving out of urban areas is generating greater mobility and shortages of space and infrastructure elsewhere. The obvious course of action therefore is to eliminate those scarcities. If this is done, this will further undermine the attractiveness of urban areas as a business location factor.

### 2.2.3 Changing business location patterns in the West European context

With respect to business location patterns it becomes meaningful to distinguish two levels, namely the West European environment in which the Netherlands operates and the national environment. The decisive factors and developments and hence also prospects differ at these two levels.

At international level the Netherlands forms part of the core of the European Union, roughly formed by the area between London, Paris, Frankfurt and the Randstad. This core area accounts for 11 per cent of the surface area of the European Union, 27 per cent of the population and 35 per cent of the value added. The area includes a number of important metropolitan areas as

<sup>5]</sup> See in this context the Netherlands Economics Institute, *Ruimtelijk vestigingsplaatspatroon van stuwende bedrijven in Noord-West Europa: trends en dynamiek* (Spatial location patterns of progressive firms in North-West Europe: trends and dynamics); Rotterdam, 1997.

<sup>6]</sup> See for example Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Eisen aan de bedrijfsomgeving in en rond de stedelijke knooppunten* (Demands on the business environment in and around urban nodes); The Hague, B&A groep, 1992; Netherlands Economic Institute, *Economisch-technologische ontwikkelingen en veranderende eisen in de bedrijfsomgeving* (Economic and technological developments and changing requirements in the business environment); Rotterdam, 1990; and Price Waterhouse, *Locational Requirements of Internationally Operating Companies*; 1992.

<sup>7]</sup> See R.E. Smit, 'De Randstad in het centrum'; *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*, vol. 78, no. 6, 1996, pp. 7-11

well as the leading mainports. Average per capita income and also productivity are higher than in the rest of the EU. For a number of years now there has been a process of deconcentration of employment from the big cities, partly to the fringes of the metropolitan areas, as in the case of business services, and partly also along the main transport axes, as in the case of transport and logistics. Furthermore, the distribution of industrial employment in this area has become a good deal more amorphous. The economic prospects for the area depend to a significant extent on Western Europe's capacity to respond to changing competitive conditions in relation to other regions such as the United States, South-East Asia and Eastern Europe. Allowance needs for example to be made for the possibility that the enlargement of the European Union by a number of Central and Eastern European countries in combination with relatively strong economic growth will result in a shift or expansion of the European core area in an easterly direction. Irrespective as to which scenario is pursued, the position of the European core area will be determined by the extent to which it proves possible to maintain or improve accessibility and more generally the attractiveness for potential investors and the extent to which peripheral regions manage to develop new activities<sup>8</sup>. Divergent developments are also discernible within this core area. In contrast to the traditional focus in France on Paris there is the multipolar distribution of activities in Belgium, the Ruhr area and the Randstad. The growth of areas based on a monoculture – especially industry or mining – has lagged behind that in regions with a varied economic structure. Finally there are also clear differences in the extent to which the government regulates the way in which land can be used. The Netherlands and Germany are regarded as particularly restrictive.

Inevitably, the various countries in the core area as well as the various regions within those countries will vary in terms of their attractiveness to potential investors<sup>9</sup>. A crucial factor is the positioning within that core area and hence the position within the global European trade and transport system. The Netherlands Economic Institute (NEI) observes that mainports are of decisive importance not just for the region in question but also for a much larger area<sup>10</sup> – a conclusion that also emerges elsewhere<sup>11</sup>. Policy competition between countries and regions has become increasingly discernible. Examples include major spatial and infrastructural operations. A NEI survey now to some extent overtaken by events indicates that although the Netherlands has all sorts of plans in the pipeline, it is comparatively unclear which plans will be realised, while mutual coordination also leaves a good deal to be desired<sup>12</sup>. More recent research reveals substantial public resistance in the Netherlands and North-Rhine Westphalia towards spatial-economic projects, especially investment and infrastructural projects<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>8]</sup> See Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Ruimte voor Economische Dynamiek*, op. cit. Also: European Commission, *European Spatial Development Perspective*; First official draft, presented at the meeting of ministers responsible for spatial planning of the member states of the European Union, Noordwijk, June 1997.

<sup>9]</sup> See A. Jacquemin and D. Wright (eds.), *The European Challenges Past-1992. Shaping Factors, Shaping Actors*; London, Edward Elgar.

<sup>10]</sup> See Netherlands Economic Institute (1997), op. cit., section 3.4.

<sup>11]</sup> See AVBB, *Een volk dat leeft ... investeert in zijn toekomst. Het belang van mainportontwikkeling voor Nederland (A living people ... invests in its future. The importance of mainport development for the Netherlands)*; The Hague, 1997.

<sup>12]</sup> See Netherlands Economic Institute, *Majeure ruimtelijke en infrastructurale operaties in grootstedelijke agglomeraties in Noord-West Europa (Major spatial and infrastructural operations in metropolitan agglomerations in North-West Europe)*; Report on behalf of Ministry of Economic Affairs, Rotterdam, 1991.

<sup>13]</sup> This resistance also arises from the observation that scientific economic research provides only limited support for the view that investment in infrastructure are essential for economic development. See in this context the contributions by Van Ewijk, Sturm and De Haan and Bomhoff in *Socialisme & Democratie*, vol. 54, no. 11. It should also be noted that similar surveys are rarely if ever carried out in other countries.



Not infrequently this means delays in the awarding of contracts and realisation of those projects<sup>14</sup>. All in all other regions in Europe – especially the German agglomerations and Ile de France – appear to score better in respect of infrastructural development. Recent comparisons do not suggest any substantial improvement<sup>15</sup>.

A more general analysis of the attractiveness of the Netherlands as a business location is provided by the studies conducted by Buck Consultants International<sup>16</sup>. In a comparison between various metropolitan agglomerations in Western Europe the Randstad emerges well, especially as regards the quality of the mainports, the attitude towards foreign investors, the international orientation of businesses and personnel, the logistics services and the low office rentals. Less positive points in this international comparison are the scale of the domestic market, the business climate (the relatively limited number of suppliers), the price of industrial land, the congestion in the Randstad and the labour market situation (i.e. the high cost of unskilled labour and lack of technical personnel). Taking all things together the Netherlands and more especially the Randstad does not emerge unfavourably as a prospective location. Buck Consultants conclude that the present market share in inward investment is better than might be anticipated on the basis of the comparative analysis. A similar conclusion is drawn in a more recent study into the investment pattern of foreign companies in Western Europe<sup>17</sup>. This reveals that although the Netherlands does not emerge well among production and R&D establishments, it does have a notably high rating among head offices and especially distribution centres and call-centers. In the case of the latter two activities the Netherlands managed to secure roughly half the total number of new jobs in the group of countries investigated during the period 1991-1994<sup>18</sup>. At the same time it is clear that these results do not mean that a similar investment flow can be counted upon in the future. The differences between the countries concerned are too small, there is every scope for positions to be changed as a result of investments in infrastructure, education, spatial policy and labour market policy, etcetera, and the ongoing process of internationalisation, increases in scale and technological developments could result in different business location decisions even if the other factors remained unchanged. The geographical range of location decisions for activities such as marketing, distribution, R&D, back-offices and production transcends the national and in a number of cases even the West European level.

<sup>14]</sup> See Netherlands Economic Institute (1997), op. cit.

<sup>15]</sup> See Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Toets op het concurrentievermogen 1997. Klaar voor de Toekomst* (Testing competitiveness 1997. Facing the Future); The Hague, 1997.

<sup>16]</sup> See Buck Consultants International, *De aantrekkingskracht van de Randstad in internationaal perspectief: markt- en concurrentie-analyse* (The attractiveness of the Randstad in international perspective: market and competition analysis); Report on behalf of Ministry of Economic Affairs, Nijmegen, 1991; and Buck Consultants International, *Monitor Buitenlandse Investerings* (Foreign Investment Monitor); Research on behalf of RPD, Nijmegen, 1997.

<sup>17]</sup> See Buck Consultants International, *Buitenlandse investeringen in West-Europa. Marktanalyse* (Foreign investment in Western Europe. Market analysis); Nijmegen, 1995.

<sup>18]</sup> To this end the inward investment from the United States, Japan and the Scandinavian countries was traced in the following countries: Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Germany, Britain and Ireland. The total number of new jobs during the period 1991-1994 amounted to 5920, or roughly 12 per cent of the total number of new jobs on the basis of inward direct investment in the aforementioned countries. See Buck (1995), op. cit.

## 2.2.4 European unification

In an institutional sense as well changes in the European spatial context have become increasingly important for Dutch policy<sup>19</sup>. The European Union and before then the European Community and the EEC are firmly aware of the spatial-economic dimension of integration, especially as regards regional policy. Already in the 'Treaty establishing the European Economic Community' of 1957, the article regulating the establishment of the European Investment Bank (EIB) (Article 130) noted that there were substantial differences in prosperity between the various European regions and that the EIB projects could help reduce those differences in the 'less developed regions'<sup>20</sup>. From the beginning efforts were made to counter spatial inequalities within the Community and Union. The need to achieve a level playing field, i.e. a European area subject to the same competition and business establishment conditions and where all forms of 'unfair' competition would be banned, was regarded as a *conditio sine qua non*. At the same time it was clear that such equality could never be completely achieved. Apart from rapidly growing regions there would also be other regions where the economic development clearly lagged behind. Efforts to achieve the desired social and economic cohesion were made through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and, in particular, the regional policy (through the structural funds).

The process of European integration has resulted in significant changes in spatial-economic structures and a much greater orientation on networks and the infrastructure. At the same time it may be noted that this spatial redistribution of economic activities did not get under way until late. Until the mid-1980s European integration largely took the form of an increase in internal trade. This was then followed by more far-reaching changes. Four motive forces may be distinguished, namely:

1. the deregulation realised in many European countries around 1990;
2. the realisation of the integrated European market as a result of the implementation of the EC 1992-project;
3. the associated growth and influence of the European Commission vis-à-vis the national government; and
4. the influence of the economic transformation of Eastern Europe and the enlargement of the European Union's sphere of influence<sup>21</sup>.

Gradually the contours of a network economy also became visible within the European Union. Strategic behaviour, co-operation and mutual contacts became more important at the expense of government influence. National entities receded into the background while integrated markets and a global orientation became steadily more important.

These forces are so strong that adjustment, also in the case of national spatial policy, is inevitable if one is not to fight a losing battle<sup>22</sup>. The opportunities for such adjustment are certainly present. Paradoxically, the fact that companies have become increasingly footloose has meant that precisely on that account governments have obtained greater discretionary freedom to influence company preferences by realising specific business location conditions. These are business location factors relating to the business environment in the broadest sense. Such a policy can only be effective if it fits in with

<sup>19]</sup> See for a detailed discussion of this topic W. Zonneveld and A. Faludi, *Europese integratie en de Nederlandse ruimtelijke ordening* (European integration and Dutch Spatial Planning); WRR, Preliminary and Background Studies Series no. V102, The Hague, Sdu uitgevers, 1998.

<sup>20]</sup> See R.H. Williams, *European Union Spatial Policy and Plannings*; London, Paul Chapman Publishing, 1996.

<sup>21]</sup> See J.-E. Nilsson and E.W. Schamp, 'Restructuring of the European production system'; *European Urban and Regional Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1996, pp. 121-132.

<sup>22]</sup> See Zonneveld en Faludi, op. cit., Chapter 2.

spatial trends of relevance for private industry. In the emerging new network economy the infrastructure is a constituent element of the first order. In addition the Netherlands is and remains the most suitable place in the European context for activities in the field of transport, distribution and logistics. It is accordingly a joint European and Dutch interest to develop an adequate, multi-modal and environmentally-oriented infrastructure to be vigorously taken up at European level. It is precisely in this area that the lack of an adequate European spatial policy makes its absence felt.

There are, however, signals that such a policy is now gradually getting off the ground. An example is the policy aimed at the introduction of Trans European Networks. At the same time it is clear that these policies must often be regarded as the sum of individual national initiatives. Given the highly divergent national traditions in this field it is clear that the conditions for a clearcut European policy are not favourable<sup>23</sup>. Whereas in the Netherlands spatial plans are developed primarily at national level, in many other countries they are developed at regional level – most notably France. The emphasis at European Union level is also on regional economic policy. Despite numerous initiatives, especially on the Dutch side, only gradual progress has been made towards integrating these two visions. However, the necessary strengthening of the national spatial-economic structure, with a much greater emphasis on infrastructural policy, has brought about certain changes. At European level ever greater account is being taken of the trans-frontier externalities of spatial decisions and it is realised that a European spatial policy could be a valuable option.

### 2.2.5 Changing business establishment criteria within the Netherlands

So far the emphasis has been primarily on business establishment criteria at international level. Many of these factors are not relevant within the Netherlands, either now or in the future. There are few if any wage differentials or differences in the labour and business climate. The regional availability of the infrastructure does however vary, as does the degree of congestion in the infrastructure and the regional availability of space for industrial sites and housing. Given the shifts noted earlier from proximity to accessibility as well as the requirement for more space, it comes as no surprise that companies are displaying an increasing preference for industrial locations outside the Randstad, even though this is at variance with current government policy. Research confirms this trend: location on the highway network is favourable and the concentration of activities is unfavourable for economic dynamics<sup>24</sup>. The government is finding it increasingly difficult to retain a grip on the location behaviour of these businesses. It may be argued that government will need to take increasing account of these shifting preferences<sup>25</sup>.

The CPB recently examined how companies' future spatial preferences are likely to develop<sup>26</sup>. Looking to the future the CPB anticipates an increase in the demand for space per employed person, particularly because labour productivity is rising faster than spatial productivity. This applies especially to industrial activity; in the case of services the increase (if any) is much

<sup>23]</sup> Ibid., Chapter 3.

<sup>24]</sup> See the results of a survey by TNO-INRO, as quoted in Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Ruimte voor Economische Dynamiek*, (Space for Economic Dynamics), op. cit., section 3.4.

<sup>25]</sup> See O.A.L.C. Atzema and E. Wever, 'Ruimtelijk ordenen van bedrijvigheid: overtuigingskracht gevraagd' (Spatial organisation of economic activity: persuasiveness sought); *Stedebouw en Ruimtelijke Ordening*, no. 2, 1996, pp. 18-24.

<sup>26]</sup> See Centraal Planbureau, *Bedrijfslocatiemonitor. Terreinverkenning* (Business Location Monitor. A Reconnaissance); The Hague, 1997.

smaller. The CPB study examined the situation in respect of the location preferences and space-use of relocated businesses<sup>27</sup>. This reveals that companies are heavily oriented towards industrial sites (especially mixed sites) and office locations, although previously these types of sites were avoided. Partly because businesses are allowing for an increase in the space-use per employee and an increase in the number of employees they try to build in a substantial margin so as not to run into space problems again in the near future. The preservation of accessibility, in the form of road infrastructure and parking space, is regarded as the most decisive factor for future location policy, in conjunction with sufficient availability of space. Other relevant negative factors include lack of flexibility in terms of layout and alterations, early obsolescence, reduced efficiency and loss of prestige.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs expects that accessibility will become an increasingly important factor in the choice of location<sup>28</sup>. In this vision investments in infrastructure or other measures to counter congestion are crucially important<sup>29</sup>. The potential for the expansion of industrial sites is also important. This does not mean that proximity to the most important economic centres and 'mainports' is no longer a factor but that measures are equally required elsewhere so as to allow those centres and mainports to fulfil their role more effectively. It has recently been emphasised that the location of the Netherlands in North-West Europe, in conjunction with the presence of two large mainports, creates favourable perspectives for Dutch competitiveness<sup>30</sup>.

The importance of an adequate infrastructure is also emphasised in a recent study conducted for the four biggest cities in the Netherlands<sup>31</sup>. The study calls for an investment effort with a view to integrating the Randstad more effectively into the European transport infrastructure and for the expansion of an adequate public transport network within the Randstad. This would make it possible to exploit the potential advantages of the location of this area in North-West Europe more effectively, with a knock-on effect for all sorts of other sectors, from which the regions outside the Randstad would stand to benefit as well. The concentration of forces, aimed at the Randstad, rather than dispersal is recommended in this study as the most desirable strategy.

Both for industry and the services sector, accessibility appears to be an increasingly important factor in location choices in comparison with proximity. Examples such as seaport-related activities in North Limburg and business services in Gelderland would suggest that the balance of advantages and disadvantages of an industrial location in metropolitan areas is being eroded. Lack of space and inadequate accessibility are handicaps that are persuading businesses to set up outside the metropolitan areas, if necessary outside the Randstad. This does not mean that proximity is no longer a factor; in the drive for sufficient space and adequate accessibility, proximity to suppliers, customers, the labour market and/or knowledge institutes will

<sup>27</sup> See Buck Consultants International, *Locatievoorkeur en ruimtegebruik van verhuisde bedrijven* (Location preferences and use of space by relocated businesses); Nijmegen, 1997.

<sup>28</sup> See Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Ruimte voor Economische Dynamiek*, op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> The extent to which all these activities contribute towards a strengthening of the Netherlands' economic position is another question. See in this connection A.A.J. Pols, 'Internationale concurrentiekracht en mainportsstrategie'; in: M.F. Gelok and W.M. de Jong (eds.), *Volatilisering in de economie*; WRR Preliminary and Background Studies Series no. V98, The Hague, Sdu uitgevers, 1997, pp. 37-76.

<sup>30</sup> See A.T. Kearney, *Globalisering: nieuwe ronde, nieuwe kansen* (Globalisation: new round, new opportunities); Amsterdam/The Hague, 1995.

<sup>31</sup> See ING, *De Randstad in het Centrum* (The Randstad in the Centre). An exploratory study by ING on behalf of the municipalities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht; Amsterdam, 1997.

remain a relevant consideration, but firms have less and less reason to concentrate on the big cities in the Randstad on the basis of these factors. Nor does the increased importance of accessibility and hence of areas outside the big cities render any effort at revitalisation of the big cities meaningless or nullify the prospects of economic recovery in metropolitan areas. The dispersal of economic activities will, however, continue unabated, and improvement of the infrastructure and hence also of accessibility will be an essential factor in the location decision processes of firms. If metropolitan areas are to remain attractive as a business location it is vital for the quality of the pull factors (i.e. culture, knowledge and the residential environment) to be improved and the impact of push factors (lack of space and poor accessibility) to be mitigated. This is possible, but the policy challenge is enormous.

### 2.3 On future mobility

Accessibility has thus become an increasingly crucial location factor. This raises the question of developments in mobility and hence the demand for infrastructure.

In all scenarios mobility will increase further. The population of the Netherlands is expected to rise by some 1.5 million by the year 2020<sup>32</sup>, while the increase in the number of households will be even greater. The impact of the latter development on mobility ranges from the need to build more houses to an increase in the number of movements for work and social contacts and an increase in the average number of cars per household<sup>33</sup>. The continuing rise in living standards in the Netherlands will not only create greater opportunities for mobility but also more leisure time and hence more time for mobility. Other factors that could promote mobility in the near future are anticipated changes in the mobility behaviour of the elderly and immigrants, the ongoing process of individualisation and the consistent and marked increase in labour force participation by women<sup>34</sup>. A further increase in mobility is also anticipated in trade and industry<sup>35</sup>. The increases in scale and production, transport and other areas will continue, resulting in a modified spatial organisation for businesses and hence to changes in the transport flows.

Partly on the basis of these kinds of considerations the CPB anticipates a further increase in mobility in the period up to 2020, although the increase will taper off<sup>36</sup>. Given population growth of 9-14 per cent and a growth in GDP of 45-122 per cent, the number of passenger vehicles will increase by 40-60 per cent and the number of kilometres driven with those cars by 25-35 per cent. Freight transport will increase much more strongly again. Despite these striking growth figures the CPP does not anticipate any dramatic changes in accessibility, at least in terms of congestion. In the low growth scenario the risk of congestion even declines, while in the high

<sup>32]</sup> See CBS and CPB, *Bevolking en arbeidsaanbod. Drie scenario's tot 2020* (Population and labour supply. Three scenarios to 2020); The Hague, 1997. For the three scenarios in question the size of the population in 2020 is 16.2, 16.9, 17.7 million respectively. In 1995 the population of the Netherlands was 15.5 million.

<sup>33]</sup> See in that context also B. van Wee, K. Geurs and J. van der Waard, 'Demografische prognoses en mobiliteit van personen' (Demographic forecasts and the mobility of persons); *Maandstatistiek van de bevolking*, vol. 45, October 1997, pp. 6-11.

<sup>34]</sup> See U. Blom, 'Trends rond groei automobiliteit' (Trends in the growth of automobility); *Rooilijn*, 1997, vol. 30, no. 7, pp. 323-329, as well as L. Steg et al., *op. cit.*

<sup>35]</sup> See J. Schunselaar, *Analyse economische trends en hun gevolgen voor verkeer en vervoer; resultaten literatuurstudie en interviews* (Analysis of economic trends and their consequences for traffic and transport; results of a literature study and interviews); DGV-SP memorandum, 1997.

<sup>36]</sup> See Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis, *Economie en fysieke omgeving* (The economic and physical environment), *op. cit.*, Chapter 8.

growth scenario it rises by around 15 per cent. Especially in the Randstad and at peak hour, however, the problem of traffic jams will remain as intractable as at present. Initial calculations for the period after 2020, based in part on CPB figures, do not indicate any break in the trend. Table 2.1 sets out the main results: freight transport and air transport increase particularly heavily, while passenger mobility grows more moderately.

**Table 2.1 Development of mobility up to 2030, with 1995 = 100**

	1995	2010 CM	2010 CO	2010 DL	2030 CM	2030 CO	2030 DL
<b>Total passenger transport</b>	100	110	114	111	118	121	107
<b>incl. cars</b>	100	112	115	113	126	129	111
<b>Goods vehicles km.</b>	100	230	209	174	439	353	238
<b>Delivery vehicles km.</b>	100	366	334	276	628	514	380
<b>Total freight millions of tonnes</b>	100	153	145	117	265	232	144
<b>incl. lorries</b>	100	160	155	121	284	251	153
<b>Aircraft passengers</b>	100	256	204	175	529	356	-
<b>Aircraft freight</b>	100	350	290	260	670	530	-

Notes: CO stands for Co-ordination, CM for Competition and DL for Dispersal

Source: WRR calculations on basis of RPD, *Leefomgevingverkenning 2030* (Human environment survey 2030); The Hague, 1997.

Whereas the construction of new infrastructure outside the Randstad is regarded as a sovereign remedy for combating the problem of congestion, a supplementary policy will be essential in the Randstad. At any event this will include the better pricing of mobility at peak hour. In order to succeed such a policy would need to fulfil three preconditions:

1. a basis of public support would need to be created for the focal points of policy in terms of effectiveness and efficiency;
2. efforts must be made to prevent that basis from being achieved primarily by means of financial resources; and
3. the policy must be primarily aimed at those targets where genuine results can be achieved.

The CPB is hesitant about the impact that investments in public transport and intermodal freight transport can have on the environment and congestion problems. This also applies to the extension of (for example) a light-rail network. Expensive investments of this kind have barely any influence on the mobility patterns of motorists, particularly if there is an incommensurate rise in the standard of public transport, in the sense of frequency, feeder transport, speed and comfort.

Nevertheless it may be asked whether the CPB is not being overly cautious about the prospects for changing the modal split. What has proved possible in metropolitan areas in many other countries – namely the operation of an extensive, reliable and heavily used network of public transport (underground, bus and tram, urban and regional railways) must also be possible in the Randstad. This would however require an investment drive and a metropolitan vision – treating the Randstad including the four big cities as a single metropolitan area – which is currently not regarded as an option worth pursuing. If such an investment were to be made there would certainly appear to be prospects for striking down a different path. We shall be returning to this point in the concluding chapter.

One of the aspects that could affect the future development of mobility is teleworking. It is however difficult to estimate the effects of teleworking on

mobility and the spatial structure. Optimistic estimates place the number of teleworkers in 2015 at 1 million, roughly 14 per cent of the labour force<sup>37</sup>. The actual number will depend on many factors, such as technology, internal organisation, the relationship between supplier and customer as well as the type of teleworking introduced (i.e. which part of the labour force is affected)<sup>38</sup>, the extent to which people work at a distance (i.e. the number of days) and at what distance (at home or in a branch removed from the head office). In addition it is highly important to take account of the speed of the diffusion process). Whether teleworking becomes a widespread phenomenon in the future will depend on the extent to which resistance among employees and organisations persists (i.e. the need for a working environment, the low visibility of the teleworker and the limited involvement with and identity of the organisation) or advantages become more visible (e.g. teleworkers enjoy greater autonomy, their work can be fitted more easily into the daily routine<sup>39</sup> and the travel time to work can be used for other activities).

Although the effects of teleworking will affect commuting in the short term, teleworking will be unable to provide a solution to the sharp growth in social and recreational traffic. On teleworking days there will be no commuting or the amount of travel will be greatly reduced. The pattern of activity, which had formerly concentrated around two focal points, now centres on the home. Teleworking will provide the individual with greater flexibility in terms of time and space. Whether that flexibility will make a sufficient impact to reduce congestion on the roads is open to doubt. In the long term the consequences are less clear. For many employees teleworking will make it easier to move to more rural areas at a greater distance from their work<sup>40</sup>. Many workers will however still have to travel to their business once or twice a week, as there will still be a need for face-to-face contacts; in many cases the need will in fact increase. Developments in transport technology mean that such movements can take place over greater distances with no loss of time. Whether this will reduce mobility is unclear.

## 2.4 Spatial-cultural changes

### 2.4.1 Space for housing

It was noted before that the population has grown markedly in recent decades, as has the built-up area. The number of dwellings has been rising even more rapidly. Whereas initially the shortage of housing had to be eliminated, a process of household dilution has been taking place in recent decades. This is most clearly reflected in the growth in the number of one-person households; in 1960 10 per cent of all households counted one person, while in 1994 the figure had risen to 32 per cent. To some extent this increase is demographic in nature; with the ageing of the population the number of single householders who have lost their partner has risen. But there are also socio-cultural reasons for the fall in average household size: the average number of children per couple has fallen sharply, young people are leaving the parental home at an earlier stage, the elderly are continuing

<sup>37]</sup> See F. van Reisen, *Ruim baan door telewerken? Effecten van flexibele werkvormen op ruimtelijke ordening en mobiliteit als gevolg van veranderend tijd-ruimtegedrag* (Path clear for teleworking? Effects of flexible forms of working on spatial planning and mobility as a result of changing time & space behaviour); Utrecht, Netherlands Geographic Studies no. 226, 1996, p. 45.

<sup>38]</sup> Van Reisen distinguishes four different types of teleworking: teleworking by staff in junior positions, part-time teleworking in traditional organisations, part-time teleworking in specific fieldwork jobs and teleworking by the self-employed and partners. See Van Reisen, op. cit.

<sup>39]</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42

<sup>40]</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 6.

to live by themselves for longer, fewer relationships involve cohabitation and relationships are dissolved more frequently.

The increase in the number of independent households has also meant a greater uptake of space per inhabitant. The greater claims on space are not, however, due just to demographic and socio-cultural factors; the growth in prosperity has also opened up new opportunities. Housing has accordingly changed from a necessity into a consumer good: to a greater extent than before people are able to tailor their housing needs to their personal situations and the housing standards they desire<sup>41</sup>. In this way the housing market has increasingly become a buyers' market in which account has to be taken of buyers' divergent requirements. Family-situations (i.e. living singly or cohabiting and with or without children living at home) and the availability of time and money are important factors for the desired quality. The supply of new dwellings has consequently become more varied. Within certain housing categories efforts are even made to use building styles and fittings to respond to certain life-styles<sup>42</sup>. While this discovery of qualitative requirements on the demand side does not distinguish the housing market from other commodity markets, it does represent a sharp break from the previous uniformity. Nevertheless it is notable that those looking for housing all want the same: more space. This requirement applies to all categories – not just single householders and families with and without children but also the retired. Many elderly people already have spacious accommodation and this is often the reason why they don't wish to move. A need for a smaller dwelling arises only on health grounds, but in that case too the new dwelling must have a reasonable amount of living space<sup>43</sup>. The quality of dwellings is therefore almost universally identified with the amount of space on offer. This dominant preference is not static but rises with the growth in prosperity. Thus there has not just been an increase in the number of people aspiring to a dwelling but also a steady growth in the desired space provided by that dwelling<sup>44</sup>.

These factors will lose none of their validity in the future. According to the middle variant of the most recent Statistics Netherlands (CBS) forecast, the population will rise by 1.7 million in 2030. The margins are however very wide: at the least the Netherlands could have a population of 14.9 million in 2030 and at the most 19.6 million. In the middle variant the population would start to decline around 2030<sup>45</sup>. Demographic, economic and socio-cultural factors will further accentuate the trend towards household-dilution and one-person households. In net terms 1.2 million dwellings will need to be built between 1995 and 2010 in order to meet the anticipated demand, and a further 700,000 between 2010 and 2020<sup>46</sup>. All in all the building requirement up to the year 2030 implies an additional claim on space of 17-34 per cent of the area now under housing; the band-width depends on population growth, economic growth and the degree of household dilution<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>41</sup>] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, *Woonverkenningen; Wonen in 2030* (Housing Surveys; Housing in 2030); The Hague, 1997, p. 54.

<sup>42</sup>] Wortman, 'De zegeningen van de woningdifferentiatie' (The blessings of housing differentiation); *Archis*, no. 8, 1997, p. 10.

<sup>43</sup>] National Housing Council, *Wonen na 2000; Wensen & mogelijkheden* (Housing after 2000; Wishes & possibilities); Almere, 1994, p. 124.

<sup>44</sup>] Social and Cultural Planning Office, *Social and Cultural Report 1996*; Rijswijk, 1996, pp. 235 and 239 (Dutch edition).

<sup>45</sup>] Statistics Netherlands, *Maandstatistiek van de bevolking*; vol. 45, January 1997.

<sup>46</sup>] Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, *Trendrapport Volkshuisvesting 1995; De woningmarkt: een verkenning* (Housing Trends 1995; The Housing Market: a survey); The Hague, 1995, p. 95.

<sup>47</sup>] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), *Nederland 2030; Discussienota. Verkenningen Ruimtelijke Perspectieven* (The Netherlands 2030: Discussion Document. An Exploration of Spatial Perspectives); The Hague, 1997, p. 40.



Given a continuing rise in prosperity the demand for more spacious housing will also continue, not just because higher standards are set with respect to the traditional functions of dwellings but also because these functions will become wider. Individualisation manifests itself for example not just in the desire for a house of one's own but – where people cohabit – also in the desire for more living space for each of those in the house. Housing consumption is also becoming more individualised in terms of both the dwelling itself and the individuals living in it. The rise in prosperity has meant that many goods previously consumed collectively can now be enjoyed privately (e.g. TV, saunas, sunloungers and snooker). Continuing economic growth will accentuate this trend and generate further demands on space. Teleworking will also mean that dwellings are used to a greater extent as a place to work, implying additional space requirements for the dwelling and the residential environment. The extent to which this will occur is the subject of considerable speculation; there are even suggestions that the office of today will in future be absorbed in the home, with at most mobile offices for a residual function of essential primary contacts <sup>48</sup>. Although these phenomena are unquestionably occurring it would be premature to cheer about the amount of space this will release. The relationship between technical possibilities and social arrangements is not monocausal. It appears more plausible that the home-as-workplace and the mobile office will become an option for some or be an incidental application rather than forming a spatial substitute for the office as such.

#### 2.4.2 Space for housing locations

Not just housing itself but also the location of housing is becoming increasingly subject to spatially-relevant claims, especially increasing claims on space. Many Dutch people prefer living in small towns or villages to a metropolitan lifestyle. The 1980s saw a marked exodus from the big cities. The urban population grew again slightly in the 1990s, primarily due to immigration. If incoming and outgoing migrants are compared, there was a negative balance for these cities in all categories, with the exception of young people. The balance is heavily negative not just for families with children but also for couples (25-54 years). Although the exodus from the big city applies to all income categories it is most marked among those on high incomes.

There remains a reasonable degree of congruence between the characteristics of the actual migration and the migration desired by the population. If wish and behaviour were to be identical, the big cities would retain more young couples and single householders (25-64 years) than is now the case, as well as individuals in the highest income quartile. For the remaining categories wishes and behaviour are moving in tandem. There is therefore a good chance that the composition of the population in the big cities will diverge increasingly from the national picture, with an ever-greater overrepresentation of single householders and lower-income groups. In part, the SCP thinks this is due to the poorer quality of the housing stock in the cities <sup>49</sup>. While this provides a frame of reference for policy, other factors are also involved. These relate to the residential environment in a broader sense and are much more difficult to turn to account in the big cities. Factors behind the desire to live in rural areas include feelings of urban insecurity and congestion in all sorts of respects, a preference for social homogeneity, the availability of certain facilities and, in particular, the need for space and green areas <sup>50</sup>. Where in particular the car keeps work and the cultural facilities of the city within range, the price of a 'flight from the city' remains limited. The result

<sup>48</sup>] See *The Futurist*, various issues.

<sup>49</sup>] *Ibid.*, p. 264.

<sup>50</sup>] National Housing Council, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-152.

has been a marked increase in the population in suburban and rural areas. On the surface the spatial consequences are still limited; the majority of the population – 58 per cent – has continued to live in urban areas. But the trend to live outside such areas is unmistakable: in 1960, when the population was much smaller, 63 per cent still lived in urban areas<sup>51</sup>. Moreover, the growth in living outside urban areas has also taken place in what are known as the ‘restrictive’ areas.

In so far as one can tell at this stage, the driving forces behind the urban exodus are substantial. Basing expectations about future housing behaviour on current housing preferences is of course a precarious matter. Preferences should not be viewed in isolation but are bound up with the system in which they are expressed. Changes in respect of the previously highly uniform supply of housing in urban environments could result in new preferences. An attractive residential environment in the big cities could generate a more metropolitan lifestyle. For the time being, however, the forces behind the marked exodus to rural areas point more in the direction of a continuation of this trend than to a switch. The increase in prosperity will also in the future provide the consumer with more opportunities to convert preferences into behaviour. As workers become more footloose in relation to their work and as a certain integration of work and leisure takes place, people will only become fussier about where they live. With the rising level of education there will be a greater number of two-income families, so that when deciding where to live, the strategic position in relation to employment will become more important than proximity to such locations. Strategic choices of location will also increase in importance as a result of the growing need for labour mobility and new arrangements arising from greater labour market flexibility (i.e. more jobs per individual, greater employability at various locations)<sup>52</sup>. Smaller municipalities in attractive areas can benefit if the population grows; this applies especially to rural municipalities confronted by a declining quality of life as a result of aging, loss of economic activity (e.g. in agriculture) and the increased scale of facilities. Experience in recent years has, however, indicated that the increase in scale for this group of municipalities rises more rapidly than the size of the population. On the other hand, the greater accessibility and mobility have greatly reduced the need for proximity to such facilities. All in all the proposed integration of working, living and recreation in spatial planning policy would appear to be subject to strong and increasing counterforces.

Not just current housing preferences and the underlying contextual factors but also the internal migration dynamics point to greater housing pressures in rural areas. The fact that the wealthier groups of the population are moving in ever greater numbers to the fringes of cities and suburbs means that these locations may well fail to bring the desired ruralness, so that these people will begin looking for the desired ‘positional good’ in areas with even lower population density<sup>53</sup>. Indications to this effect may be found in the Housing Surveys conducted by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment suggesting that the demand for all types of residential environments is rising, but particularly in city centres and most of all in rural areas. The growing preference for city centres is linked to the previously noted preferences of single householders and couples in a strong financial position; the very marked preference for rural areas applies in

51] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, *Ruimtelijke Verkenningen 1995* (Spatial Surveys 1995); The Hague, 1995, p. 104.

52] Scientific Council for Government Policy, *From Sharing to Earning; Considerations for Social Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*; Reports to the Government no. 51, p. 56.

53] F. Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth*; London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.

particular to the wealthy two-income families and families with children, including those who were unable to settle down in the suburbs and are looking further afield to fulfil their housing dreams<sup>54</sup>. This dynamic of a self-sustaining migration wave does not have any in-built slowdown mechanisms; no optimal final situation is in sight. A correction can only be imposed from outside.

Expectations may also be deduced from the behaviour of cohorts instead of from trend patterns. This approach will however not change the expectations. An important factor for the future dynamics is the location behaviour of the sizeable baby-boom generation. These people will achieve retirement age from 2010 onwards, but many will be dropping out of the labour force before then. This generation is less tied to a particular housing location or region than its predecessors; geographical mobility is not alien to the members of this cohort. They are reasonably well educated and their income, pensions and relatively dispersed home ownership places them in a stronger financial position than previous generations. They have small families and less need to live near their children than did their parents. Car ownership also means that this generation is less location-bound than earlier generations. It is therefore by no means inconceivable that once they stop working, many of them will prefer to live in rural rather than urban areas. Did the family stage require them to live in close proximity to schools, proximity is much less important when it comes to cultural and health facilities. The fact that this generation of older people is mobile means that these institutions remain accessible, given their distribution all over the country.

There are therefore solid grounds for expecting the pressure on rural areas to increase further. This is hardly a comforting outlook for the cities, particularly since the selectiveness of the migration is continually eroding their financial base. However, the prospect of a relatively floating population, in which the cities – as now – benefit less than proportionately from the national growth in population, need not necessarily result in a doomsday scenario for the big cities; the latter are not just losing inhabitants but are also continually attracting new ones. The vitality of the big city and the culture of creativity and diversity that it offers in all sorts of ways (centre for artistic experimentation, opportunities for new lifestyles and multiculturalism, a seedbed for emancipation movements) will continue to exert a pull on certain categories of migrants. At the same time it is precisely this continual renewal of the population that provides the impetus for the cultural dynamism of the big city. But this function can only be preserved given an adequate economic base for the facilities in the big city.

The creation of a better living environment is therefore one of the prime considerations in the offensive currently being waged by the big cities. This includes the development of more varied housing, the interweaving of green space into city life, making the city centres more attractive, greater attention to safety and improved transport facilities. These measures are designed to provide a counterweight to the selective migration from the cities and can make the city more attractive to others, including the relatively well-off. But even if the cities manage to do so it is highly questionable whether this will be sufficient to reverse the exodus from the city.

<sup>54</sup>] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, *Woonverkenningen 1995* (Housing Surveys 1995), op. cit., pp. 39-44.

### 2.4.3 The shrinking importance of distance

Spatial expansion is reflected not just in housing patterns but also in leisure behaviour. Life-cycle stage, living standards and preferences are also closely tied up with spatial expansion. The development of post-war mass tourism is illustrative of the reduced importance of geographical distance. The mental map of the post-war tourist has gradually extended from the tourist's own country to surrounding countries, the rest of Europe and – now – the world. Football supporters are no more tied to Dutch stadiums than is the weekly diary of cultural events in the newspaper confined to one's own country. In terms of the extensiveness of holiday participation the Netherlands has long led the field in Europe, and this also applies to foreign holidays<sup>55</sup>. The comparatively high standard of education, the even distribution of prosperity and the substantial volume of leisure time, combined with the people's traditional external orientation, have been responsible for these trends. Conversely there has also been an increase in foreign influence on the Netherlands. In terms of value added and employment the tourist industry has become steadily more important. Germans, in particular, have been buying second houses on the coast or near the lakes in Friesland, and to enable these people to come to the Netherlands the infrastructure must be sufficiently well developed.

The importance of distance has declined sharply. Other factors are more decisive for the geographical scale of activities, such as the available time, income and means of transport. The consumption of space has therefore increased substantially, both for relocation purposes and as a leisure pursuit, to experience what the country has to offer. Particularly in the leisure sphere there has been a sharp increase in the number of movements: since 1985 leisure has been responsible for more mobility than employment and education combined. The SCP concludes that the increase in mobility (especially by car) is a change in behaviour that applies to the entire population and which to only a limited extent may be traced to the emergence of modern living patterns (e.g. household dilution, women's liberation, the combination of tasks and diversification of leisure pursuits). The mobility, the SCP argues, has been spreading like an oil slick and the motivations have become more diversified and arbitrary<sup>56</sup>. At the same time, this does not necessarily mean that the growth in mobility will continue at the same pace in the future. Although a further increase in individual mobility must be anticipated in the coming decades, the CPB expects this increase to slow down in response to the decline in population growth, especially of the most mobile population category aged 20-65, as well as saturation phenomena (little is now to be gained by travelling by car for intercity journeys). In terms of driver-kilometres, total car-use is set to increase by 25-35 per cent up to 2025. It is, however, not very likely that the growth in freight transport will slow down<sup>57</sup>.

### 2.4.4 Space as a consumer good

Space is used not just for living, working and moving from one place to another but is also experienced for its own characteristics. This subjective element means that spatial qualities may be perceived in highly different forms. The fullness or emptiness of certain areas does not in itself constitute a measure of appreciation, as the judgement 'too full' or 'too empty' is not

<sup>55</sup>] Social and Cultural Planning Office, *Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 1990* (Social and Cultural Report 1990); Rijswijk, 1990, p. 243.

<sup>56</sup>] Social and Cultural Planning Office, *Sociaal-culturele beweegredenen* (Socio-cultural reasons for mobility); Rijswijk, 1993, pp. 139-163.

<sup>57</sup>] Central Planning Office, *Economie en fysieke omgeving* (Economy and physical environment), op. cit., pp. 281-290.

unrelated to the user's purposes. An empty terrace may be a reason for going somewhere else, while a highway may be regarded as too full if this prevents the user from reaching his or her destination on time. The experiential value is therefore situationally determined: at night an empty road may be regarded as *too* empty on account of the perceived danger. But apart from this functional component of spatial perceptions there is also a socio-cultural one: even if we are dealing with the same function, people's perceptions may vary considerably. Factors that make urban living attractive for one person may be precisely those that deter another.

Reference was made above to the relative homogeneity of preferences with regard to the spatial dimension of housing and place of residence. It is notable that common preferences similarly exist with respect to appreciating nature in its own right. The drift to the country for the visual consumption of spatial aspects, which in itself goes back centuries, is characterised by far-reaching democratisation rather than growing diversification. The majority of the population regularly seeks out nature, both higher and lesser educated (only people having completed primary education only score somewhat lower) and people of all ages<sup>58</sup> (although not surprisingly the figures are somewhat lower for young people under the age of 25 and those aged 75 and over). Whereas it used to be the expectation that as people got older they would primarily withdraw to their own neighbourhood and home, the availability of the motor car means that this contraction of the spatial domain is no longer an inevitable consequence of growing old.

When people visit recreational areas they prefer forests, moorland, polderland landscapes and lakes and, to a lesser extent, town woods or parks and other man-made recreational areas, as well as village and town attractions<sup>59</sup>. The landscape is an important factor in the image that people have of a certain region. The perceived quality of the landscape is determined by such factors as peacefulness, unspoiltness, cultural and historical features, authenticity, diversity and intimacy. 'Emptiness' in the landscape is not a greatly desired property; people generally look first at the scale and overall impression and only then at elements and details. A destination is therefore selected primarily in terms of nature and landscape features, followed at some distance by motives relating to the ability to pursue certain forms of recreation. Illustrated material aimed at attracting tourists is pitched specifically with this in mind: scenes of nature and landscape are presented without people, stripped of any modern elements such as industrial sites, high-rise development and power cables. In all this it needs however to be borne in mind that the research on which this information is based displays a bias towards the experiential value of non-urban areas<sup>60</sup>. This may involve an under-estimation of the spatial values represented by the city in those perceptions, in that the city appeals above all to visual consumption – to being looked at and examined. In this regard Raban typifies the city as theatre, as "an 'encyclopaedia' or 'emporium of styles' in which all sense of hierarchy or even homogeneity of values was in the course of dissolution"<sup>61</sup>, while Koolhaas designates the multifaceted congestion that makes the big city into a metropolis as the ultimate quality: 'the culture of congestion'<sup>62</sup>.

<sup>58]</sup> Statistics Netherlands, *De leefsituatie van de Nederlandse bevolking 1996* (The living situation of the Dutch population 1996); Voorburg/Heerlen, 1997.

<sup>59]</sup> Social and Cultural Planning Office (1993), op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>60]</sup> National Council for Agricultural Research, *De recreatieve betekenis van het landschap* (The recreational importance of the landscape); 1996.

<sup>61]</sup> J.D. Harvey, *The condition of postmodernity*; Blackwell, Oxford, 1989, p.3.

<sup>62]</sup> R. Koolhaas, *Delirious New York*; Oxford UP, New York, 1979.

The marked homogeneity of the experiential value of space as noted above (with the exception of this one distortion) does not in any way rule out the existence of a major diversity when it comes to the user-value of space. Life-styles, determined by age, education, income, living and work situation, play a much stronger role in this regard.

#### 2.4.5 Changing space

Urry also points to the increasing importance of the visual consumption of space<sup>63</sup>. The aesthetic component is a major role in the tourist's gaze. According to Urry this is primarily romantic in nature. The tourist looks above all for locations in traditional condition; these may be landscapes and picturesque villages, although the tourists' taste is now broadening out to take in all sorts of elements of the heritage, such as arts and crafts and factories from the earliest days of industrialisation. In this regard he refers to the 'commodification of history'. This tourist's gaze has not left the space undisturbed. The major economic importance of mass tourism means that space is increasingly being converted in terms of these nostalgic needs. Also fed by regional television, the rediscovery and reconstruction of traditional regional and local characteristics is unmistakably on the increase: these may be visual characteristics, in their natural state or housed in local museums, as well as all kinds of activities, regional dishes and so on. The desire to live in rural areas noted above is consistent with his observations. Urry rightly notes the extent to which this can give rise to conflicts: new inhabitants ('more local than the locals') who regard the authentic character of their rural location as being undermined by the trends towards modernisation among the original inhabitants<sup>64</sup>. This provides a further argument for the previously voiced expectation of ever-expanding suburbanisation.

The declining importance of distance means that from the viewpoint of the tourists there are hardly any remote places left in the Netherlands. The spatial impact of tourism is almost universally discernible. This is also clearly evident in many places from the historicisation of space, in which as a matter of course the uniqueness of a particular region, locality or landscape is emphasised. It would however be incorrect to draw radical conclusions on the basis of this in the sense of a possible trend of demodernisation, manifesting itself in a revival of regional cultures and the like. Not just history 'sells' well but also modern artefacts. If modern factories were to throw open their gates the tourist would be equally as inclined to step inside. The tourist of today is omnivorous: he consumes not only what is of interest in terms of cultural history or the landscape but also notable modern features. If anything the tourist of today is marked by eclecticism: depending on the circumstances he will seek peace and quiet or bustle, a rural atmosphere or a mass event.

All in all it must be concluded that space in the Netherlands is under severe pressure and will remain so in the future – not just because the population is growing substantially, thereby necessarily making greater claims on space, but also because of the greater claim on space per inhabitant. People are not just seeking more space for their own home and living environment but also require more space for their leisure time. The mitigating influence of the ageing of the population is declining in importance. These orientations are closely related to the growth in prosperity, which generates the resources to meet these requirements. In so far as can be seen at this stage this too will stimulate rather than dampen the consumption of space.

<sup>63</sup>] J. Urry, *Consuming Places*; London and New York, Routledge, 1995.

<sup>64</sup>] *Ibid.*, p. 191.

If present trends continue and no limits are imposed, the outlook is not attractive: a Netherlands in which the big cities have 'evaporated' and rural areas have been absorbed into all-embracing urbanisation: 'the Netherlands-World Country' instead of 'Randstad-World City'. In this way both the big cities and the countryside would lose their attractive features. A further exodus from the cities would undermine their viability, while the influx into rural areas would wreck the very landscape that is so evocative. The fragmented distribution of the population throughout the country would also promote the highly inefficient use of the infrastructure and the environment.

The motive forces behind this prospect are the importance generally attached to peacefulness and space and the ability to meet that requirement. The macro consequence of all the individual decisions to leave the city consequently prove to be at variance with what people hope to find. The robust nature of the factors underlying this prospect also provides an indication of the input required in order to achieve a reversal. As citizens, people will need to impose limits on that to which they aspire as consumers. Furthermore, the preferences and behaviour outlined above are system-bound: the possibility cannot be excluded that living arrangements could be developed in metropolitan areas that were more in accord with the identified ambitions.

## 2.5 The 'network society' as a new context for spatial policy

This chapter has discussed the changing context of spatial planning. It may be concluded that five social developments constitute fundamental challenges for spatial policy, namely (1) European unification and the related economic development of the Netherlands, (2) the shift in relative weight from proximity to accessibility, (3) the falling away of agriculture as a 'dual harness interest' in the realisation of spatial planning goals, (4) the rising individual consumption of space, and (5) the growing mobility. These spatial developments point to a fundamental shift in the context of spatial policy. Together they delineate the contours of a network society<sup>65</sup>. In such a network society physical proximity has become less decisive for major social links: the term network refers to the fact that economic, social and cultural links in fact connect up widely separated points. New physical and spatial interrelationships arise in the network society<sup>66</sup>. In this constellation physical barriers are overcome by new communication or transport technologies. This has far-reaching consequences for the conceptual basis of spatial policy. Familiar categories such as 'land' or 'territory' lose their meaning and concepts such as 'locations' or 'places' crop up where previously more general references were made to 'space'. In the same way 'local cohesion' has been

<sup>65</sup>] M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*; Oxford, Blackwell, 1995.

<sup>66</sup>] It is important to emphasise that the term 'network' is used in many very different ways in the debate in the Netherlands; in this chapter it is treated primarily as a structuralist concept in which social, economic or cultural network structures are identified. This is also the sense in which Castells, for example, uses the concept. In the Netherlands the concepts of 'network' and 'network direction' are approached much more in terms of action theory; particularly in the case of policy science the interaction is examined between various actors (i.e. a network of persons or organisations – see J.F.M. Koppenjan, J.A. de Bruijn & W.J.M. Kickert (ed.) *Netwerkmanagement in het openbaar bestuur* (Network management in public administration); The Hague, VUGA, 1993). The terms 'networks' and 'flows' are also used in various exploratory studies by the RPD but these centre far more on physical connections (i.e. a network of water, nature or a network of transport infrastructure). See for example the Fourth Report (1988) and the policy document *Visie Ecolopolis en de strategie van de twee netwerken* (Vision Ecolopolis and the strategy of the two networks); RPD, 1996; *Kiezen voor Bewegingsruimte* (Opting for Freedom of Movement), the final report of the Ruimpad project, VROM/V&W, 1997, or *Nederland 2030 – Discussienota* (Netherlands 2030 – Discussion Document); RPD, 1997.

exchanged for 'connectivity' and a 'geography of movement'<sup>67</sup>. A network is a set of mutually interrelated nodes; a *network society* is a society in which the social, economic and cultural structures are no longer determined by the shared use of a particular space but by the connections that an individual actor (i.e. a business, individual or institution) has with places, individuals or activities elsewhere<sup>68</sup>. The network society does not therefore so much produce levelling or uniformity but changes existing interrelationships, where distance is a less decisive factor<sup>69</sup>.

In policy terms the relevant conclusion is that successful spatial development in this context presupposes more than the management of a finite 'stock' of square metres, i.e. clear-cut 'physical units' in a certain area<sup>70</sup>. It calls for the – often combined – presence of highly specialised characteristics and the possibility to communicate with – often distant – places or locations. In this way 'global cities' arise that jointly dominate the financial markets, 'silicone regions' that handle the development and production of certain kinds of technology, regions that stand out as locations for routine services and other regions that become distribution and transport nodes. Nationally we find specialisation in the field of certain telematics applications, quasi-industrial activity, high-grade services or tourism. Regionally this gives rise to an 'archipelago of enclaves' of relatively separate living and working locations linked up to certain social networks<sup>71</sup>.

These new spatial interrelationships manifest themselves fairly unexpectedly, are often unstable and so undermine a national planning approach. New interrelationships are not infrequently the result of a shifting pattern of motivations on which locational choices are based, which does not lend itself to modelling. Nissan set up its European headquarters in Amsterdam not just on account of the proximity of Schiphol Airport but also on account of the presence of a Japanese school with a good reputation. In brief, a successful spatial planning policy presupposes a spatial development strategy, which amounts to more than the allocation of a certain number of physical units for a particular goal<sup>72</sup>. This raises the question as to whether planning in the new context might be in a better position to realise its quality objectives if it managed to respond more effectively to the various emerging strategies of social actors and geared the realisation of its objectives to what we might term 'emerging spatial patterns'.

In such context the legitimacy of policy does presuppose the identification of some kind of means of weighing the conflicting interests and the opportunities and dangers under a dynamic approach of this kind. This imposes an additional burden on physical planning as a policy field: rising prosperity also manifests itself in a heightened realisation of quality and in a more firmly expressed wish to maintain and where possible improve quality. Citizens are, paradoxically enough, more conscious than ever before of the costs of increasing prosperity. This political dimension of the network society is examined in the next chapter.

<sup>67</sup> For a historical survey see D. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1989. The term 'geography of movement' is used here in line with P. Nijkamp, 'Towards a Network of Regions; the United States of Europe'; *European Planning Studies*, vol.11, no.2, 1993, pp. 149-168.

<sup>68</sup> See Castells, op. cit.

<sup>69</sup> For an interesting study see M.C. Hidding et al., *Interactie en differentiatie van stad en land* (Interaction and differentiation of city and countryside); Nijmegen University/ Wageningen Agricultural University, 1998.

<sup>70</sup> See also Stallen, Smit and Hergreen, *Ruimte als forum* (Space as a forum); WRR, Working documents no. W100, The Hague, 1998.

<sup>71</sup> See M. Hajer & F. Halsema (eds.) *Land in Zicht! Een cultuurpolitieke visie op de ruimtelijke inrichting* (Land Ho! A cultural policy vision on land use); Wiardi Beckman Stichting/Bert Bakker, 1997.

<sup>72</sup> See also Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Ruimte voor Economische Dynamiek* (Space for Economic Dynamism), op. cit.





# Changing institutional relationships in and around spatial planning

# 3

## 3.1. Introduction

Spatial planning is currently at a stage in which the underlying concepts in this area are losing their consonance with social developments. Despite what has happened in practice in the post-war years, the consistent objective remained that of concentrating the building desired by society as far as possible and thus preserving undeveloped areas. As Chapter 2 indicated, however, it is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve this objective. The economy complies less and less with the principle of concentration, while 'accessibility' is becoming an increasingly important consideration in locational decisions. Public housing policy is no longer dominant, while the actual housing tendencies are also moving away from concentration. Agriculture is increasingly becoming a 'normal' economic area of activity, in which land is no longer automatically set aside for agricultural purposes if a proper return cannot be obtained. The simultaneous industrialisation of non-land-based agriculture is also increasingly turning this sector into a (visual) threat to spatial quality. When it comes to realising its principal objectives, spatial planning therefore finds itself steadily less bolstered by its 'partners' of yesteryear. This development attacks the foundations on which the sectoral/facet approach has been based: the more that the objectives diverge, the less inclined the individual sectors will be to fall in line with the concepts for which a particular facet stands. In practice this is also evident in shifts at administrative level, both within the policy sectors, which have a major impact on the structuring of the space, and in the institutional mechanism for making trade-offs between those sectors and the spatial facet. These shifts, which are examined in more detail in section 3.2, manifest themselves not just in a changing balance of institutional forces within the government but are also translated into emerging new concepts for the shaping of space. Needless to say the re-conceptualisation taking place in response to the changing context is not an isolated matter within the bosom of the government but is taking place in conjunction with social actors or in response to ideas put forward by those actors themselves. All this means a change in the interplay of forces within which the system of spatial planning operates; the traditional coalitions are giving way to new ones.

The change in the topics and policy agenda due to these social developments has also called into question the democratic content of deliberation in the planning field. The increasing pressure on space means that citizens have become increasingly conscious of the flip-side to spatial intervention. Controversy has therefore become a permanent feature of spatial planning. In addition the relationships between knowledge, politics and policy have shifted. The emancipated citizen of today is disinclined to accept the arguments of the authorities a priori, whether these be political/normative or scientific in nature. Although spatial planning has an extensive and legally established system of public participation, the public is increasingly creating difficulties with respect to the terms within which such participation must take place. In practice consultation often becomes confrontation and insufficient appeal is made to the ability to plan together. In this way the administration and the administered regularly find themselves ranged against each other. The administrative reaction towards preventing potential obstacles is to bring the process of public participation forward in time and

to involve the most important actors in the public domain proactively in policy formulation. Section 3.3 examines whether promising new arrangements are emerging that do justice to both the growing public involvement in physical planning policy and the desired distribution of responsibilities from democratic viewpoint; also some conclusions are drawn.

## 3.2. Administrative developments

### 3.2.1. New spatial concepts

#### *City landscapes*

Agriculture has traditionally been an important partner in the system of physical planning in ensuring that rural areas remain undeveloped. Although agriculture remains a dominant factor in rural areas in terms of the amount of space taken up, the economic importance of land-based agriculture is diminishing. Preservation of the area under cultivation where a proper return is not being obtained has become steadily less self-evident. The industrialisation of agriculture (with brick and glass structures) means that elements of agriculture no longer contribute towards the unspoiled nature of rural areas but detract from the quality of the landscape. As a result, and due also to the processes of urbanisation in rural areas, the distinction between cities and countryside is blurring and the policy concepts based on that decision are becoming dated.

Partly in response, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries has been redefining its area of responsibilities. The city landscape approach, a concept first put forward in the 'City Landscapes Vision' published in 1995, may be regarded as an initial elaboration of the policy implications. This approach is regarded as a strategy for policy and planning that places the developments in urban and rural areas in a coherent framework and seeks to analyse and resolve the challenges for cities and rural areas in an integrated manner<sup>1</sup>. Even though the Ministry takes the present spatial planning policies as its point of departure, the City Landscapes Vision is used by the Ministry in order to place fundamental question-marks against the spatial quality achieved by that policy<sup>2</sup>. The current policy is said to neglect the fact that urbanisation takes place to some extent in places other than those intended. In addition the concept of the compact city means that public green areas are gradually disappearing from the cities, with a consequent reduction in the quality of the urban environment. The Vision also claims that the present policy of the various layers of government pays insufficient attention to the potential afforded by the landscape for achieving differentiation in new urban areas. Preventing – as at present – the development of the 'outer areas' is regarded as defensive, as this makes it impossible to improve the quality of non-urban areas by permitting limited development on the principle that 'red' pays for 'green'.

Overcoming the dichotomy between red and green has struck something of a resonant cord; this also applies to the implications of spatial planning policy<sup>3</sup>. A particular aspect of the city landscapes approach has for example been taken up with enthusiasm by spatial planners, namely the ideas concerning

<sup>1</sup>] Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, *Visie Stadslandschappen: Discussienota* (City Landscapes Vision: A Discussion Document); The Hague, 1995, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>] Reijndorp urban survey and advice: *De kern van het ruimtelijk beleid; Een onderzoek naar het begrip ruimtelijke kwaliteit* (The core of spatial planning policy: survey into the concept of spatial quality); WRR, Working Documents no. 99, The Hague, 1998.

<sup>3</sup>] Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, *Balans Visie Stadslandschappen* (Urban Landscapes Vision – the Balance Sheet); The Hague, 1996, p. 11 ff.

new country estates<sup>4</sup>. Using the landscape structure as a 'crossbeam' for urban design has even become common practice among landscape architects<sup>5</sup>. Just like the City Landscapes Vision, a series of research institutes, jointly calling themselves a '*Natuurplanbureau*' (Nature Planning Office), takes leave of the concept of the compact city by arguing for 'controlled spread'<sup>6</sup>. The gradual disappearance of urban green areas is regarded as negative in ecological terms and also for the quality of the urban living environment.

The concept of 'city landscapes' does not challenge the basic principles of spatial planning. Even those who argue in favour of dropping the idea of the compact city continue to endorse such principles as the concentration of urbanisation and spatial differentiation and cohesion; uncontrolled spread remains a bogeyman. But many of those concerned with town and country planning are arguing that the way in which spatial planning is now giving shape to the concentration of urbanisation and defending nature and the landscape is having precisely the opposite effect. The utility of preconceived key concepts such as the compact city, elaborated in the form of location choices and densities, and the open spaces concept, is increasingly called into question. The current strategy generates insufficient spatial quality in terms of both 'red' and 'green' and has also proved incapable of concentrating urbanisation sufficiently<sup>7</sup>.

A reorientation of spatial policy, as argued for by the concept of city landscapes, does not 'just' involve exchanging one substantive concept for another. It also involves a radical change to the philosophy of spatial organisation: content and form are not divorced from one another. Concepts such as the compact city and open space essentially imply uniformity of the criteria laid down for cities and rural areas; in the case of city landscapes, however, heterogeneity is the starting point. Under the latter approach, therefore, the national government would have much less of a grip on the urbanisation process than at present.

### *Corridors*

Several years ago the Ministry of Economic Affairs struck down a new path with its 'space for economic activity' project. This study, published in 1994, concluded that in contrast to the provision being made for nature under the national network of ecological areas, insufficient space was being set aside for economic activity in many parts of the country<sup>8</sup>. The report concludes that spatial claims for economic activities should be given greater primacy. This is considered highly important for combating unemployment, especially in the western part of the country, where unemployment is highest<sup>9</sup>. Contrary to current practice, the Ministry should accordingly be involved at an early stage in shaping the content of spatial plans and spatially relevant regulations.

<sup>4</sup>] New Country Estates Competition Committee, *Nieuwe landgoederen; Een besloten ideeënprijsvraag* (New country estates; A closed ideas competition); New Country Estates Competition Committee, 1995.

<sup>5</sup>] W. Havik en H. Meindersma, *Geen top zonder berg* (No summit without a mountain); Arnhem, Stichting Publicaties Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit on behalf of Federatie Welstandstoezicht, 1997.

<sup>6</sup>] RIVM, IKC N, IBN-DLO, SC-DLO, *Natuurverkenning 97* (Nature Survey 97); Alphen aan den Rijn, Samsom H.D. Tjeenk Willink, 1997, p. 117.

<sup>7</sup>] See for example: Municipality of Tilburg, *Rood en groen; Discussiebijdrage Nadere Uitwerking Brabantse Steden* (Red and green; contribution to the debate about the extension of Brabant cities); Tilburg, Municipality of Tilburg Urban Affairs Department, 1997.

<sup>8</sup>] Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Ruimte voor Economische Activiteit* (Space for Economic Activity); The Hague, Ministry of Economic Affairs, 1994.

<sup>9</sup>] Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Ruimte voor regio's. Het ruimtelijk-economisch beleid tot 2000* (Space for regions. spatial/economic policy up to 2000); The Hague, Sdu Uitgeverij, 1995, p. 26 ff.

This proposition constituted a turnaround in the Ministry's thinking about the relationship with spatial planning. Up to that point the Ministry had been rather resistant to forward thinking and conceptualisation in this area, as clearly evident from the preparation of the Fourth National Policy Document on Physical Planning in 1987. Concepts involving statements about the desired location of certain economic activities, such as urban nodes or the western wing of the Randstad, were regarded as undesirable<sup>10</sup>. The government must respond to the market and not decide in advance how and where the market should develop, it was argued<sup>11</sup>. The fact that something was needed along the lines of a national economic network – a prominent element of the Fourth Policy Document /Fourth Policy Document Plus – was not yet endorsed at that time by the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Since that time, however, interest in the spatial dimension has risen sharply. It is now being recognised that the quality of the physical industrial environment has a major bearing on the competitiveness of a particular location, region or country<sup>12</sup>. A new policy document, issued in 1995, took leave of the notion that government assistance to promote the business development climate should be concentrated on economically weak areas<sup>13</sup>. Each region should make the maximum contribution towards national economic growth. In principle a stimulation policy could therefore relate to the entire country. It is no longer a matter of regional-economic but of spatial-economic policy. Projects can qualify for support if they make a significant contribution to the 'physical economic structure' of the country. These projects may be located in urban nodes but also in other urban concentrations and in corridors located between urban areas.

The corridor concept largely came into prominence as a result of a study by the Netherlands Economic Institute (NEI) conducted on behalf of the Confederation of Netherlands Industries and Employers (VNO-NCW)<sup>14</sup>. This study seeks to indicate the nature of businesses' location preferences. A structure appears to be evolving in the Netherlands of large-scale corridors linking up major infrastructural centres. The NEI emphasises that a corridor should not be interpreted as ribbon development situated along a highway. The corridor concept should instead be viewed as a bottom-up approach prompted by the actual implementation of establishment preferences and tendencies and not as a top-down development concept or as an urbanisation axis<sup>15</sup>. The report 'Space for economic dynamism' suggests, however, that since then the Ministry has regarded the corridor concept as a planning concept<sup>16</sup>. In order to meet the demand for space for economic activities while at the same time exploiting the growth potential of corridors, the selective

<sup>10]</sup> W. Zonneveld, *Naar een beter gebruik van ruimtelijke planconcepten* (Towards the improved use of spatial planning concepts); Planologische Verkenningen; 64, Amsterdam, Planning and Demographic Institute University of Amsterdam, 1992.

<sup>11]</sup> W. Korthals Altes, *De Nederlandse planningdoctrine in het fin de siècle; Ervaringen met voorbereiding en doorwerking van de Vierde nota (Extra)* (Dutch planning doctrine at the end of the century; experience with the preparation and implementation of the Fourth Policy Document (Plus)); Assen, Van Gorcum, 1995, p. 130.

<sup>12]</sup> This has led to the introduction of the Industrial Environment Policy (BOB) subsidy arrangements, applying to the (13) urban nodes – the most direct support that the state itself gives to the concept of urban nodes (Korthals Altes, op.cit. p. 262).

<sup>13]</sup> Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Ruimte voor regio's* (Space for regions), op. cit., p. 26 ff.

<sup>14]</sup> Netherlands Economic Institute, *Ontwikkelingsstrategieën voor Nederlandse regio's en steden in internationaal perspectief* (Development strategies for Dutch regions and cities in international perspective); Rotterdam, NEI, 1995.

<sup>15]</sup> A. Verkennis, and T. Groenewegen, 'Ontwikkelingen in de regio Randstad-Rijn/Ruhrgebied' (Developments in the Randstad-Rijn/Ruhrgebied region) in: W. Zonneveld and F. Evers (eds.), *Van Delta naar Europees Achterland*; The Hague, Netherlands Institute for Spatial Planning and Housing/NIROV-Europlan, 1997, pp. 358-365.

<sup>16]</sup> Ministry of Economic Affairs, *Ruimte voor Economische Dynamiek. Een verkennende analyse van ruimtelijk-economische ontwikkelingen tot 2020* (Space for Economic Dynamics. An exploratory analysis of spatial and economic developments to 2020); The Hague, Ministry of Economic Affairs, 1997, p. 113 ff.

development of industrial sites in the vicinity of traffic nodes situated on the main transportation axes must be facilitated. Development of this kind is being argued for at a lower level of scale, i.e. the scale of urban agglomerations. Expansion in radial form needs to be exploited, which comes down to the development of urban-fringe locations on exit roads, especially for business services.

Similarly the Ministry of Economic Affairs has developed its own vision concerning the desirable development of the main spatial-economic network in the country, internalising this concept as it were *en passant*. The image of the main network is, however, substantially different from that propounded in planning circles. In particular, the basic principle of the concentration of urbanisation takes on a wholly new meaning from that indicated by such concepts as the compact city and the urban region. There is seen to be 'space' for economic and hence urban development in many more places, whereas in conventional planning terms, urban nodes, the compact city and city regions were regarded as providing the appropriate spatial framework for localisation, including that for economic activities.

These views have now been elaborated by various research institutes, such as TNO-INRO and Buck Consultants. They have also received explicit support within institutionalised trade and industry. In autumn 1997 the Federation of Dutch Contractors Organisations (AVBB) published a study in which the argument put forward in 'Space for Economic Dynamism' was translated into a cartographical representation of the Netherlands consisting of a number of highly urbanised corridors (or 'spines', especially the A2 and A4) and a number of corridors in which commercial development could take place in more clustered form ('pearl necklaces')<sup>17</sup>. In supporting the basic notion as advanced by the Netherlands Economic Institute (NEI) and others a number of qualifications were however also entered. The ING Bank for example suggested that the corridor concept would result in the proliferation of commercial activity all over the Netherlands, with disastrous effects on the development of the Randstad into a metropolis. Within the Randstad itself there is sufficient space for more deconcentrated development to meet the demand in the housing market<sup>18</sup>. Ranged against this is the call by a number of provinces, designating themselves as 'corridor provinces', to invest heavily in infrastructure along the lines of the Netherlands' neighbours<sup>19</sup>. From the fact that the economic core area of the Netherlands would cover a large part of the country, spreading out from the main transport axes, they conclude that investment in the improvement of accessibility should be less exclusively directed towards the Randstad.

In the same way as for the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, developments with respect to the object of policy have prompted for the Ministry of Economic Affairs to develop its own concept concerning the desired planning policies. The substance of that concept differs from the current spatial planning concepts and there are also implications for the

<sup>17</sup> P.A. de Ruijter and H.A. Vethman, *Doorkijk op ruimtelijke inrichting in de 21ste eeuw; Van ruggengraten en parelsnoeren: krachtenbundeling in corridors* (A glimpse of spatial planning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; of spines and pearl necklaces: pooling forces in corridors); study by TNO-INRO on behalf of the Federation of Dutch Contractors Organisations, The Hague, AVBB, 1997.

<sup>18</sup> R.E. Smit (ed.), *De Randstad in het Centrum. Een verkennende studie van ING in opdracht van de Gemeenten Amsterdam, 's-Gravenhage, Rotterdam en Utrecht* (The Randstad in the Centre. An exploratory study by ING on behalf of the Municipalities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht); Amsterdam, ING, 1997.

<sup>19</sup> *Corridor-provincies: regio's in beweging. Een gezamenlijke visie op de hoofd-infrastructuur in de provincies Overijssel, Limburg, Noord-Brabant en Zeeland* (Corridor Provinces: Regions on the move. A joint vision on the main infrastructure in the Provinces of Overijssel, Limburg, North-Brabant and Zeeland); Provincial Executives of Overijssel, Limburg, North-Brabant and Zeeland; 1997.

steering concepts. The Ministry of Economic Affairs calls for a highly restrained role on the part of the national government when it comes to influencing spatial developments. Uniform national concepts such as the compact city and generic restrictive policies are rejected as they fail to do justice to regional diversity. Only in respect of a limited number of really important elements of the national physical structure is central steering regarded as essential<sup>20</sup>. For the rest it is up to the regional actors, in particular, to give shape to the desired spatial and spatial-economic policy.

#### *Multi-core orientation*

The infrastructural consequences of spatial planning are for the account of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management. The expense of developing the VINEX locations accordingly provided the grounds to debate the scope for urbanisation in combination with a reduced demand for new infrastructure. The report 'A Vision on urbanisation and mobility' was published in the course of 1995 with the express intention of influencing the outcome of the moves to update spatial planning policy for the period beyond 2005<sup>21</sup>. The report argues that in a comprehensive spatial planning policy, the *affordability* of the infrastructure and/or public transport should be given much greater weight.

From a traffic and transport perspective the compact city policy, the report argues, remains a good point of departure, but this concept cannot permanently be applied in a one-dimensional manner based just on proximity. While preference should be given to those locations having a single-core orientation towards a particular city or urban centre and which have ready access to the existing infrastructural grid, in the Randstad such locations are running out. In this situation preference should be given to alternative locations based around the public transport axes between city regions. These are therefore locations with a multi-core orientation, with links to a number of urban centres. The report by the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management even characterises the application of this concept of multi-core orientation in the Randstad as inevitable. In terms of the same notion the idea was launched of developing new urban locations around the stations on the Netherlands Railways slow-train network in the Green Heart, which again is at variance with national spatial planning policy.

In the freight transport field too there are grounds for promoting a closer relationship between urbanisation (i.e. the development of industrial sites) and the infrastructure. The report argues however not for a new planning concept but for an amendment of an operative concept, namely that of the 'ABC' locations. In particular this concerns a review of the 'C' locations, which are concerned with road transport. This is based on the underlying assumption that freight transport by water and rail will and must increase. This in turn would necessitate the greater concentration of new industrial sites around existing and planned multi-modal transport interchanges. This means that the C-location policy should be oriented to a greater extent towards pooling arrangements in the vicinity of industrial sites developed on a multi-modal basis, instead of concentrating exclusively – as at present – on locations near roads. The present competition between all kinds of smaller transport centres means that they are continually taking freight away from

<sup>20]</sup> Ministry of Economic Affairs (1997), op. cit., p. 121 ff. Reference is made to the main infrastructure, the mainports, the corridors, the network of ecological areas, national parks and valuable cultural landscapes.

<sup>21]</sup> Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management; Directorate-General for Transport, *Visie op verstedelijking en mobiliteit; Een bouwsteen voor de actualisering van het ruimtelijk beleid na 2005* (Vision on urbanisation and mobility; a building block for updating spatial planning policy after 2005); The Hague, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, 1995.

one another and hence that the prospects for a pooled and intermodal network are being reduced. This can also frustrate the development of 'second-line nodes' set up with State support. For this reason a restrictive policy is deemed necessary.

Partly on account of the report by the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management a detailed debate arose concerning the interaction between urbanisation and infrastructure. This discussion gave rise to numerous reports and articles, which reveal that special efforts were being made to find 'new conceptual approaches and images' to eliminate the tension between town and country planning and traffic and transport planning<sup>22</sup>. The two ministries involved, for example, published a study investigating how the infrastructure could act as the carrier for (future) urbanisation, assuming the continuing concentration of living and working in compact cities<sup>23</sup>. The conclusion amounts to a kind of corridor concept. The most important nodes between links form the carriers for new urban development. A comparable structure of networks and nodes is also argued for by the Spatial Planning Council<sup>24</sup>. None of the parties to the debate in this field, however, puts forward a corridor concept along the lines of that in the Economic Affairs report 'Space for economic dynamism' in which, as noted above, an argument is made in favour of the (selected) development of industrial sites in proximity to nodes in the highway network. In this regard the debate concerning corridors assumes various forms, but with the common denominator of exploiting the structuring effect of the infrastructure for future urban development.

The debate about urbanisation and the infrastructure makes it clear that fairly radical policy adjustments are being asked of both the directly involved policy fields. Obviously, the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment has been asked to deal differently with the proximity principle, particularly as regards the location of economic activity<sup>25</sup>. The Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management has more attention for the notion of the spatially structuring effect of the infrastructure, as distinct from the policies conducted in the past, which were geared to achieving much the same degree of accessibility and development throughout the Netherlands by means of a finely meshed network of highways with a large number of slip roads<sup>26</sup>. In order to prevent an absence of any restraints whatever on where people or businesses are permitted to establish themselves, the accessibility principle should be treated more sparingly, for example by limiting the number of slip roads.

- 22] F. le Clercq, 'Vervoersplanologische concepten: de balans opgemaakt' (Transport Planning Concepts: drawing up the balance sheet); in: H.J. Ebels, F. le Clercq (eds.) *Verstedelijking en vervoersplanologische concepten*; Amsterdam, Amsterdam Study Centre for the Metropolitan Environment (AME), 1997, pp. 188-196.
- 23] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment/National Spatial Planning Agency, VROM/Rijksplanologische Dienst, *Kiezen voor Bewegingsruimte; eindrapport project Ruimpad* (Opting for freedom to move; final report on the Ruimpad project); The Hague, Ministries of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and Transport, Public Works and Water Management, 1997.
- 24] Spatial Planning Council, *Wisselwerking tussen verstedelijking en infrastructuur*; (Interaction between urbanisation and infrastructure: Nodes and transport corridors as a regulatory principle for spatial planning); submitted to the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and the Minister of Transport, Public Works and Water Management on 14 October 1996, Advisory Report 208. See also various contributions in: *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*; special issue 'Infrastructure and urbanisation', vol. 78, no. 3, 1997.
- 25] Cf. H.L. Klaassen, and G.R. Teisman, 'Nieuwe arrangementen van problemen en oplossingen: Het corridorconcept als startpunt voor een andere benadering' (New arrangements of problems and solutions: the corridor concept as a starting point for a different approach); *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*, vol. 78 no. 3, 1997, pp. 41-45.
- 26] F. le Clercq, *De spannende relatie tussen verkeer en verstedelijking* (The tense relationship between transport and urbanisation); Oration, Amersfoort, Twijnstra Guddé Management Consultants, 1996, and Z. Hemel, 'Nieuwe opgave: Open ruimte openen' (New challenge: Opening up open space); *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*, vol. 78, no. 3, 1997, pp. 22-26.



### *The architecture of space*

Since the early 1990s the state government has been conducting an explicit architecture policy<sup>27</sup>. The main aim is to create favourable conditions for the achievement of architectonic quality. The public interest in the effective design of the built environment is adduced as the motivation for this government task. A number of radical changes are proposed in a policy document on architecture policy published in 1996<sup>28</sup>. The focus is no longer at the level of the individual building in its spatial context but on the higher levels of scale of urban design, landscape architecture and physical planning. This is because, the white paper argues, large elements of the country face radical change with the introduction of the compact city policy (the VINEX locations) and the construction of a new infrastructure network (especially the high speed lines and the Betuwe Line) and the national ecological network: all projects with an important 'cultural dimension'<sup>29</sup>. As a result there is not so much a 'cultural dimension of the architecture' as an 'architectonic dimension of the culture'.

In addition a second extension of (State) policy is called for. This too is concerned with an aspect of spatial planning policy, in that the concern about architectonic quality also embraces the integration of cultural-historical values. This does not mean, the white paper says, that primacy is given to respect for those values; what is at issue is indicating the possibilities for integrating those values into new developments. This is referred to as 'preservation through development' – an approach that can be juxtaposed against the old form of dealing with historical-cultural values, by means of 'preservation by protection', especially by means of the Monuments of Historic Buildings Act<sup>30</sup>. In a situation in which the spatial organisation of the Netherlands is being transformed in so many localities and on such a large scale this approach no longer suffices. The Netherlands forms a work of art, an *oeuvre*, which is continually being added to and changed, so that the spatial organisation of the Netherlands may be regarded as the memory of many centuries of human shaping, according to the 'Manifest on spatial quality and cultural history'<sup>31</sup>. Old and new, tradition and renewal must therefore not be regarded as opposites. Historical data do however need to be treated deliberately and circumspectly, the manifest states. Care needs for example to be taken to ensure that project plans, such as those drawn up as part of the ICES programme (Interdepartmental Committee for Strengthening the Economic Structure), do not become unduly economic in orientation. At the same time, however, this should not be a matter of the rigid conservation of old structures that have long since lost their function<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>27]</sup> Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, *Ruimte voor architectuur, nota architectuurbeleid* (Space for Architecture, Architecture Policy Document); Lower House 1990/1991, 21 363, no.2/3.

<sup>28]</sup> Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, *De architectuur van de ruimte; Nota over het architectuurbeleid 1997-2000* (The architecture of space; white paper on architecture policy 1997-2000); The Hague, 1996.

<sup>29]</sup> Another reason for the policy turnaround is that more specific account is taken in architecture policy than in the first 'season' (the policy period 1992-1996) of the fact that the bulk of investment in the built environment is for the account of the private sector. The realisation of cultural ambitions cannot therefore be treated as a matter of course.

<sup>30]</sup> G.J. Borger, 'Het Groene Hart voorbij' (Passing the Green Heart); *Bulletin Koninklijke Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond*, vol. 96 no. 2, 1997, pp. 75-77.

<sup>31]</sup> Commission on Protection and Development, *De ruimte in de tijd geplaatst: Nieuwe wegen op historische grond* (Space placed in time: New paths on historic ground); Manifest over ruimtelijke kwaliteit en cultuurhistorie, 1997.

<sup>32]</sup> P. Dauvellier, *Nieuw Nederland wordt ouder; Over cultuurhistorie en ruimtelijke ordening* (New Netherlands becomes older; on cultural history and spacial planning); Belvedere series No. 1, The Hague, Project Belvedere, 1997, pp. 11-12.

In contrast to the new concepts discussed above, 'the architecture of space' does not at first sight aim to provide an alternative to the existing spatial concepts but if anything implies an extension of those concepts. It is not, however, just a matter of 'doing the same but differently'. For in the current elaboration the present system of spatial planning results in marked uniformity. The *oeuvre* perspective, by contrast, draws attention to the desirability of a greater diversity than can be achieved in terms of a national system. At the same time, however, it resists the definition of architectonic quality at too low a level of scale, i.e. a building, neighbourhood, road or railway line. The new approach in fact forms a plea to examine the quality of each of these objects in a wider context and so draws attention to a level at which spatial planning still has little to offer conceptually. Despite the apparent neutrality with respect to the concepts of physical planning, this concept therefore has much in common with the concept of city landscapes in terms of the scale it is seeking to address.

#### *Policy on the living environment*

Whereas so far we have been examining new concepts with major spatial implications that have been coming to the fore in the various sectors, conceptual dynamics are also evident within the system of spatial planning itself. It might even be possible to say that where the sectors discussed obtain facet-type characteristics, the facet of spatial planning is now obtaining sectoral properties. By this is meant policy towards the living environment. There are all sorts of interfaces and interrelationships between spatial developments, environmental problems and the characteristics and qualities of water systems. For a number of years now it has been recognised that a greater measure of policy integration is required between the policy fields of town and country planning, water and the environment. The question is how. In the meantime 'smaller' institutional solutions, such as the synchronisation of planning procedures, are being employed in many localities<sup>33</sup>. Particular attention is being devoted to the idea of integrating the three policy domains, focusing on the plans in a living environment policy or provincial environment planning<sup>34</sup>. A number of provinces, such as Drenthe, North Holland and Flevoland, are now working on drawing up an integral provincial environment plan to replace the three existing strategic plans<sup>35</sup>.

These types of solutions are, however, also subject to criticism. Kreukels for example suggests that lessons can still be learnt from the debate on comprehensive planning as conducted in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s. The conclusion at that time (the concern was with urban planning) was that although general policy co-ordination was necessary with a view to the long term and that overall area planning makes a special contribution to that end, this objective is as good as unattainable in public administration<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>34</sup>] This is the practice in Groningen, Overijssel, Gelderland, North-Holland, South-Holland, Zeeland, North-Brabant and Limburg. B. Wissink, *Nieuwe wijn in oude zakken; kanttekeningen bij het debat over het provinciale omgevingsplan* (New wine in old bottles; notes on the debate about the provincial environment plan); Amsterdam, AME Research Institute, Amsterdam University, 1996.

<sup>35</sup>] To take a small selection from the literature: A.A.J. de Gier, *Onderzoek naar de juridische haalbaarheid en de bestuurlijke meerwaarde van het geïntegreerde provinciale omgevingsplan* (Research into the legal feasibility of the administrative added value of the integrated provincial environment plan); Institute for State Administrative Law, Utrecht University, 1995. P. Glasbergen, 'Ruimtelijk dwarsliggen; reflectie op een planningstelsel in revisie' (Spatial obstruction; reflection on a planning system under revision); *Bestuurskunde*, vol. 5 no. 6, 1996, pp. 286-295; J.R. Janssens and K. Bouwer, *Naar één provinciaal omgevingsplan? Bijdrage aan het debat over omgevingsplanning* (Towards one provincial environment plan? A contribution to the debate on environment planning); Faculty of Policy Sciences, Nijmegen University, 1996. H.J. Licher, 'Naar een provinciaal omgevingsplan?' (Towards a provincial environment plan?); *Stedebouw en Volkshuisvesting*, vol. 76 no. 1/2, 1995, pp. 22-27.

<sup>36</sup>] B. Wissink, *Tussen eenheid en eigenheid; Overheidsplanning in een gecanstrueerde wereld* (Between unity and singularity; government planning in a constructed world); dissertation (in prep.), AME Research Institute, Amsterdam University.

In a recent essay on environment policy it is argued that while a single environment plan can still be useable for policy integration at provincial level (although such a plan cannot provide a panacea for all integration problems), such a plan would not be opportune and indeed would be undesirable at state level<sup>37</sup>. The multiplicity of aspects that need to be taken into account is too great, as are the dynamics in land-use and social developments. The domain of provincial environment policy is too broad to be covered by a single plan. If functional specialisations within the government machinery – specialisations which moreover conceal all kinds of social interests – are forced into a single more or less integrated mould, this would moreover be a ‘...serious misreading of the often conflicting nature of provincial environment issues’<sup>38</sup>.

Nevertheless thoughts at national level are heading in the direction of a comprehensive environment plan, as a successor to the Fourth Policy Document ‘Extra’ and the Third National Environmental Policy Plan. As yet no efforts are being made to extend this living environment approach at national level to embrace water management policy, for which the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management has chief responsibility as well. The discussion about living environment policy is consequently situated within the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM) and is prompted in particular by the need to strengthen the coherence between the ministry’s environmental and spatial policies. What according to the Ministry of VROM is lacking is a single ‘comprehensive policy concept’, providing a clear-cut framework for finding lasting solutions to the choices faced with respect to the organisation and management of the living environment<sup>39</sup>. This clear-cut framework is sought in the notion of living environment capital: the arithmetic product of the size of the surface area to which certain functions can be assigned and the quality thereof. By objectifying ‘soft’ values such as nature, the environment and spatial quality in this way, a solid basis would be created for taking these values into account in deliberation.

The delimitation and elaboration of the concept of the ‘living environment’, as well as the term as such, indicate that the quality and quantity of the living environment are regarded as a specific interest that needs to be clearly staked out when determining policy priorities. It was indicated in Chapter 1 that the national system of spatial planning seeks not just to act as an evaluation framework for all kinds of spatial claims but is also the bearer of its own, substantive programme. How all this will be put into effect in the proposed Living Environment Policy Document is not yet clear at this stage, but the trend towards greater sectoral responsibility for the physical living environment as a whole seems unmistakable.

#### *The updating of national spatial planning*

The question is to what extent the new ideas discussed above are already being implemented in the recent updating of the VINEX policy for the period

<sup>36]</sup> T. Kreukels, ‘Schuivende beleidsterreinen’ (Shifting policy fields); *PIN-Nieuws*, special issue ‘Planologie tussen hoop en vrees’, vol. 18, no. 6, 1995, pp. 59-65.

<sup>37]</sup> H. Mastop, and L. van Damme, *Integratie als opgave; Overwegingen bij geïntegreerd omgevingsbeleid: een essay over de mogelijkheden tot integratie van planningstelsels van het ruimtelijk beleid en het milieubeleid speciaal inzake de nationale plandocumenten* (Integration as a challenge; considerations concerning a comprehensive environment policy: An essay on the possibilities for the integration of planning systems in spatial policy and environment policy with special relation to national planning documents); on behalf of the Ministry of VROM/DGM, Bunnik, 1997, pp. 28-29.

<sup>38]</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>39]</sup> Projectgroep Leefomgevingsbeleid en Maatschappijvernieuwing, *Thuis: op weg naar een integrale aanpak van het leefomgevingsbeleid; Rapportage over de ontwikkelingsfase van het VROM project Leefomgevingsbeleid en Maatschappijvernieuwing*; The Hague, 1996, op. cit. pp. 4.

2005-2010. The Cabinet proposes that although justice must be done to social developments, policy continuity is highly important<sup>40</sup>. Although there might be a change in emphasis here and there, the main thrust of government policy is not open to discussion. That possibility is expressly reserved for the project 'Netherlands 2030', which relates to the period beyond 2010.

In the light of these margins for continuity and renewal it is hardly surprising that – in contrast to the proposals discussed above – the method of generically working spatial concepts is not being departed from (see Table 3.1). The concept of the compact city continues to apply with undiminished force. Concentrated urbanisation in accordance with an essentially concentric model of urban expansion remains the starting point. The criticism that intensification and greater density within existing urban areas has resulted in a loss of green and open space has, however, led to efforts to create what is now designated as the 'complete city'<sup>41</sup>. The fact is pointed out that the construction of housing within cities makes few if any demands on open space<sup>42</sup>. 'Complete' also stands for a more balanced urban housing market to be achieved by the 'selective addition' of dwellings in the private sector<sup>43</sup>. Complete could also stand for the development or redevelopment of employment functions in inner-city green projects in rezoned and compaction locations, were it not that the Cabinet considers this to require more research<sup>44</sup>.

In the process of updating the VINEX, the need for costly infrastructural facilities brought about by the current form of urbanisation has resulted in the conclusion that the additional infrastructural effort (a painful area for the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management) required for new, large expansion zones will in the future need to be limited. A concept such as multi-core orientation, however, is not regarded as a realistic alternative at this stage. Depending on the outcome of three regional elaborations in the Randstad, such a concept might be opted for in combination with a city landscape approach<sup>45</sup>. At the same time it is recognised that urban areas – especially in the Randstad – are increasingly assuming the configuration of a network city, with multiple centres and numerous criss-cross patterns when it comes to relocation behaviour. In the future, however, the network city must remain a concentrated city and not become a spread-out city<sup>46</sup>. The two-sided relationship between urbanisation and the infrastructure should therefore also be translated into a modified policy with respect to transport systems (based on linked infrastructural nodes) and, in the case of spatial planning, a concentration around important nodes in the public transport networks. The latter implicitly rejects the notion of developing industrial sites in proximity to the highway network nodes – a conceptual 'innovation' introduced by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The corridor concept, as this has been designated by the Ministry, is used only in an analytical sense<sup>47</sup>. The process of updating the VINEX has, however, gone some way towards meeting the criticism that physical planning accommo-

<sup>40</sup>] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, *Actualisering Vierde Nota over de Ruimtelijke Ordening Extra; Deel 3: Kabinetsstandpunt Partiële Herziening Planologische Kernbeslissing Nationaal Ruimtelijk Beleid*, Lower House 1997-1998, 25 180, no. 4, p. 45.

<sup>41</sup>] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>42</sup>] Nevertheless near 24% (11.000 dwellings) of the inner-city housing development programme 2005-2010 for the Randstad will be realised in 'compression locations' (and the remaining element in 'restructuring locations').

<sup>43</sup>] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, Lower House 1997-1998, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

<sup>44</sup>] *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>45</sup>] The regions in question are the area between The Hague and Rotterdam, the area formed by the triangle Leiden-Haarlem-Amsterdam and the Hoeksche Waard.

<sup>46</sup>] Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, Lower House 1997-1998, 25 180, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>47</sup>] As a designated for urban 'ribbons' born by infrastructure (*ibid.*, p.87).

**Table 3.1 The new spatial orientation of policy sectors compared with the VINEX update**

New approach/ dimension	Integration of town and country: the city landscape	Space needed for economic activity: the corridor	Integration of urbanisation and infrastructure: multi- core orientation	Architecture of space: the Dutch landscape as 'oeuvre'	Living environment capital (LEC): give place to 'soft' values in decisions by objectifying them
<b>Elaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- admixture of urban and green structures</li> <li>- development of new country estates</li> <li>- variations in urban density</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- industrial sites near traffic nodes</li> <li>- edge-of-town locations along big city exit roads</li> <li>- green industrial sites</li> <li>- designation of potential economic activity areas (=planned reservation of space for economic dynamics)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- optimal utilisation of the existing/planned infrastructure in connection with affordability of transport system in the case of new living/working locations.</li> <li>- building locations oriented towards multiple cores (i.e. towards a number of urban regions) instead of a single core required in Randstad</li> <li>- C-locations should in principle be multimodal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- architectonic quality of spatial organisation at higher levels of physical scale</li> <li>- Dutch landscape forms an oeuvre</li> <li>- dealing with cultural-historic values in a dynamic manner: from protection to development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- valuing the quantity and quality of the physical living environment</li> <li>- physical living environment only covers the policy domain of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM)</li> <li>- LEC can be elaborated in project and annual balance sheets</li> <li>- possibly not a Fifth Report but a Living Environment Policy Document</li> </ul>
<b>Tension with current policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- compact city concept rejected: results in loss of quality in city and green space and in urban sprawl</li> <li>- no generic spatial concepts, a matter of approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no generic landscape concepts + generic restrictive policy: policy largely developed bottom-up</li> <li>- strong national government steering powers solely for the national spatial network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- major doubts about the proximity principle on which compact city concept is based</li> <li>- multi-core orientation: utilisation of space between urban regions (in spatial planning: compact city regions), has consequences for Green Heart/buffer zones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no generic concepts: elaboration area-dependent</li> <li>- architectonic quality means new spatial quality dimension</li> <li>- current cultural-historical assets instruments overly concentrated on protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- quantification ('objectification') of assets at variance with the qualitative approach to spatial planning</li> <li>- objectification and defence of LEC at variance with spatial planning evaluation function</li> </ul>
<b>'Response' updating of VINEX (Cabinet standpoint)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- concentrated urbanisation incl. intensification of land-use remains point of departure but compact city becomes complete city: fewer incursions into urban green in future</li> <li>- more dispersed developments in the Randstad not conceivable until after 2010, depending on results of regional developments</li> <li>- new country estates possible (e.g. in Green Heart), given improvement of spatial quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- space requirement 2005-2010 for new industrial sites quantified and included as part of urbanisation challenge</li> <li>- concentration remains starting point for policy</li> <li>- corridor concept used analytically (= traffic axis from and to urban regions + urban ribbons)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- urban region remains spatial framework - where urban regions evolve into network city (in Randstad) public transport infrastructure needs interlinking</li> <li>- intensified land-use in proximity to major public transport nodes</li> <li>- limit extra infrastructural work in vicinity of new large expansion locations</li> <li>- C-locations where possible and, depending on type of businesses, intermodal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- call to local government: involve cultural-historic quality in planning and deliberation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- living environment capital may not be spoiled for future generations</li> <li>- LEC not further elaborated</li> <li>- no statement on Fifth Report on Living Environment Policy Document</li> </ul>

dates housing needs but does not adequately respond to the need for space for economic activities. The latter need has been quantified and included in the 'urbanisation challenge'.

What attitude is being taken towards the relationship city/countryside or red/green in the VINEX review process? The city landscapes approach may be regarded as a plea for the improved integration of the city and countryside. The VINEX review process once again strongly emphasises the long-held starting point that the contrast between town and countryside must be preserved<sup>48</sup>. Only at the level of urban agglomerations is an interweaving of red and green regarded as an attractive form of urbanisation (e.g. in the form of a combination of urban lobes and green wedges). The policy aimed at preserving buffer zones between agglomerations is being pointed up now that, for the first time, the precise boundaries of these buffer zones are being laid down on Key Planning Decision (PKB) maps. A greater spread of development, as introduced as an option in the 'City Landscapes Vision' is accordingly rejected, although the possibility is not excluded in the long term. Such planning on a regional basis could represent a substantial weakening of the generic effect of national spatial concepts since the development of a spatial vision rests on a concrete spatial structure. Thus one of the key notions in the thinking in terms of the architecture of space is that the landscape may be interpreted as a richly variegated oeuvre which can be read and 'treated' in all sorts of ways. This key notion is not reflected in the VINEX review process, apart from the observation that the Dutch landscape faces a 'loss of memory' and that regional and local government should take greater stock of historical-cultural quality<sup>49</sup>.

What is the picture to emerge from the above review? The key concepts of national spatial planning have not been abandoned. The 'partial review' relates in particular to the adaptation of phasing and programmes, to a tightening of policy (in the form of buffer zones) and the introduction of new emphases and points for consideration: an improvement of the relationship between urbanisation and the infrastructure, an urbanisation policy that would work out less expensively for the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, more space for economic activity and (possibly) 'new country estates' where there is a demonstrable improvement in spatial quality. Efforts are made to accommodate the criticism from the sectors where the 'pain' is the most acute. New spatial concepts involving a break with the prevailing key concepts are not, however, being taken up. The system of generic-application spatial concepts, as laid down on Key Planning Decision maps, is being retained. At the same time – as a possible prelude to a new policy philosophy on the part of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the concept of 'living environment capital' is being abandoned, although in fact this has not been spelt out<sup>50</sup>.

### 3.2.2 Suprasectoral evaluation and co-ordination of policy

Some of the aforementioned conceptual changes have not left the institutional structure for suprasectoral co-ordination untouched. Traditionally, co-ordination between the spatial facet and the sectors has taken place in the National Spatial Planning Committee (RPC), as the bureaucratic gateway to the Council for Spatial Planning and the Environment (RROM), a sub-council of the Council of Ministers. The deliberations in the RPC are

<sup>48</sup>] Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>49</sup>] Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>50</sup>] Ibid., p. 48.

prepared by the National Spatial Planning Agency (RPD). The interdepartmental consultations in the RPC proved exceptionally effective in the past<sup>51</sup>. This body acted as the steering group for the major spatial planning policy documents, but it was also in this body that the open Eastern Scheldt dam was suggested as a solution to the political dispute concerning the closure of that dam.

Whereas this mechanism meant that in the past interdepartmental co-ordination was heavily determined by planning paradigms, the emphasis now is much more firmly on a spatial-economic orientation. As noted in the previous section, the VINEX went down this path with its plea for the (further) development of the main economic network. This new method of looking at spatial planning, in which the emphasis was no longer on protecting the weak but – in the interests of employment and economic growth – on ‘strengthening the strong’ later found its counterpart in the policy development at the Ministry of Economic Affairs characterised in section 3.2.1 as a switch from regional economic to spatial-economic policy. In this way the economisation of spatial planning moved in tandem with the extension of economic policy into the planning field.

These reorientations have also had institutional implications, most notably in the form of a new co-ordinating mechanism, i.e. the Interdepartmental Committee for Strengthening the Economic Structure (ICES). This committee arose in the mid-1980s from the Central Economic Committee (CEC). The intention of the ICES was to examine, after many years of government spending cuts, how public investment could contribute towards economic recovery and in particular to higher employment. This initiative went into higher gear when a link was established between the natural gas revenues (‘underground capital’) and investments in new infrastructure (‘above-ground capital’). Via the Fund for the Economic Structure (FES) a proportion of the natural gas revenues was reserved for productive investment rather than current spending. Like the RPC, the ICES is now a gateway to the RROM; the secretariat is administered by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Its official status is in fact somewhat higher than that of the RPC; instead of directors-general, as in the case of the RPC, the secretaries-general of the departments concerned participate in the ICES.

Formally the relationship between RPC and ICES is not problematical. The ICES exists for investments in the spatial economy and the RPC for supra-sectoral prioritisation. The preparation of political-decision-making on the second Maasvlakte, for example, is being handled by the RPC and the National Environment Committee (the second official gateway to the RROM), while the ICES confines itself to the economic dimension. The much-discussed investment lists dealt with in the ICES context have arisen via framework policy documents and were therefore first discussed in the RPC. Furthermore, virtually all the ICES investments are set within the formal policy framework of the VINEX. This has been underlined once more in the updating of the VINEX. The marriage between the two bodies has in no way disadvantaged spatial planning; if anything the success of the ICES, as a symbol for an innovative approach towards spatial organisation, has put physical planning itself back high on the political agenda.

In material terms, however, there is more at issue. The twin movement noted above, namely the ‘economisation of spatial planning’ and ‘geographical expansion of economic politics’, implies a convergence of planning and

<sup>51]</sup> A.J. van der Valk and J. de Vries, ‘De Rijksplanologische Commissie: in de schemerzone tussen planning en politiek’ (The National Spatial Planning Commission: in the twilight zone between planning and politics); *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*, vol. 77, no. 5, 1997, pp. 24-31.

spatial economics, to the point that it is even possible to talk of an emerging 'infrastructural approach' as the new conceptual framework for interdepartmental co-ordination. This would appear to be more than just a policy with respect to concrete infrastructural projects. We are, rather, dealing with the emergence of an approach extending the full breadth of government policy. The term has, for example, long since no longer been confined to the 'hard' infrastructure of roads, bridges and railway lines but is also used for 'softer' aspects such as the ecological, cultural and knowledge infrastructure. Approaching society in terms of 'investments' and 'infrastructure' is consistent with the notion of a pro-active government, which seeks to stimulate social dynamics through intelligent intervention. It is precisely the large spatial-structuring effect of investments in the infrastructure that raise various issues to which the aforementioned deliberation mechanisms have no answer at this stage. Put differently, spatial planning and the infrastructural approach may be drawing closer together in practice as deliberation frameworks but they are unable to merge. In a certain sense this is also evident from the interim reporting by the ICES itself<sup>52</sup>, which with respect to the proposed investments emphasises the importance of spatial quality, both for economic development (a high quality living environment and industrial environment policy) and for social welfare. In this regard the ICES encounters the necessity for a deliberation framework in which a response can be given to the question as to how one investment can be weighed against another, in other words how the effects of investments in spatial quality and the living environment need to be weighted against each other. This tension between infrastructural policy and spatial planning is not resolved in the VINEX either. Under the flag of a 'spatial development perspective', the latter also made a strong pitch for a spatial investment policy but the policy document did not succeed in harmonising this policy and the other proposed policies aimed at the 'day-to-day living environment'<sup>53</sup>.

Although the two concepts have drawn closer together there are also distinct differences between the emerging infrastructural approach and spatial planning. These are set out in Table 3.2. Schematic representation of this kind naturally involves the risk that differences will be pointed up but can nevertheless help identify potential problem areas.

The most striking difference concerns the *plan-based* system of spatial planning policy as compared with the *project-based* development of the infrastructure. Where spatial planning is characterised by a 'deliberation system' aimed at overall planning level, the highly action-oriented infrastructural approach is based on a *system of incorporation*. The infrastructural approach thereby provides an answer to a number of problems inherent in the physical planning system, such as a shortage of independent instruments. Under the infrastructural approach the policy with respect to spatial organisation is given its own financial resources. This now provides the government with a steering instrument of the first order.

In the implementation of individual infrastructural projects, the need for rapid action in the interests of the overall economic development of the country is heavily emphasised, even to the point that the current system of deliberation and evaluation may have to give way. This is evident in the ICES

<sup>52]</sup> ICES, *Voortgangsrapportage Missiebrief* (Mission letter progress report); The Hague, Ministry of Economic Affairs, 1997.

<sup>53]</sup> M. van den Berg, 'De dagelijkse leefomgeving is van iedereen' (The daily living environment belongs to everyone); *Rooilijn*, no. 21, 1988, pp. 2-9.



**Table 3.2 Characteristics of spatial planning and the infrastructural approach**

	<b>Spatial planning</b>	<b>Infrastructural approach</b>
<b>Organisational principles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planned, area-oriented</li> <li>- Designation</li> <li>- Communication-oriented</li> <li>- Autonomous concept formulation prior to implementation and financing ('deductive')</li> <li>- Prioritisation of spatial claims</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project-based, infrastructure-oriented</li> <li>- Development</li> <li>- Investment-oriented</li> <li>- Project as motivating factor, thinking and doing linked ('inductive')</li> <li>- Fitting projects in</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supersectoral co-ordination via planning/policy document system</li> <li>- Comprehensiveness as aim</li> <li>- Decentralised orientation: Key Planning Decisions primarily indicative; designation as extreme exception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Negotiated co-ordination between sectors</li> <li>- Sectoral goals with central orientation, requirement for partial re-centralisation</li> </ul>
<b>Core programme/paradigm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prevent suboptimal spatial structures by integral deliberation on basis of planning concept formulation</li> <li>- Substantive orientation (in particular spatial differentiation, spatial coherence, concentration of urbanisation)</li> <li>- Spatial quality as social goal</li> <li>- Orientation towards regional qualities, socio-economic co-ordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Realise win-win-solutions by pro-active government policy</li> <li>- Strengthen economic structure, optimise spatial establishment conditions</li> <li>- Spatial quality as establishment factor</li> <li>- Orientation towards connections, connectivity</li> </ul>
<b>Policy legitimacy</b>	<p><i>Procedural:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Graduated deliberation at multiple levels of scale (connected in 'series')</li> <li>- Social involvement by means of public participation at planning stage</li> <li>- Careful weighting of priorities takes time, balanced spatial development demands involvement of various interests</li> </ul>	<p><i>Instrumental:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Parallel' prioritisation within spatial-economic framework, later handled in formal spatial planning</li> <li>- Social involvement seen primarily in terms of creating basis of support (PKB plus)</li> <li>- Resort to existential necessity of investments, long duration of decisionmaking not consistent with a dynamic society.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mainly a matter of persuasion and negotiation by means of communication and concept formulation</li> <li>- Steering through housing development</li> <li>- Engagement of sectoral instruments</li> <li>- Integral plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primarily financial by distribution of resources</li> <li>- Steering by strengthening infrastructure</li> <li>- Project-based intervention</li> </ul>

progress reporting<sup>54</sup> and from the proposal for special legislation to accelerate the decisionmaking concerning the expansion of Schiphol. Just like spatial planning, however, investments in new infrastructure operate in a future hedged about by fundamental uncertainties. Whereas the current spatial planning policy is characterised by a laborious linkage between planning and implementation, the infrastructural policy is characterised by a project-based approach without sufficient integral plan development and spatial deliberation. The infrastructural approach is essentially pragmatic in nature and not conceptually based. This means that strong *generic* properties are developed: *selectivity* is not employed as a strategic goal at any level of administration. Academics have begun to place question-marks against

<sup>54]</sup> 'The social and economic dynamics not infrequently exceed the pace at which deliberation can keep up. That tension needs to be resolved. In the case of strategically relevant spatial decisions it would be preferable for the desired time-frame to determine the course taken by the procedure instead of the other way round.' (*Voortgangsrapportage Missiebrief*, op. cit., p. 34).

<sup>55]</sup> W. Kleyn, 'De betekenis van corridors voor de regionaal-economische ontwikkeling'; in: W. Zonneveld, F. Evers (eds.), *Van Delta naar Europees Achterland*; The Hague, Netherlands Institute for Spatial Planning and Housing/NIROV-Europlan, 1997.

this generic infrastructural policy. The relationship between infrastructural development and economic development is complex and the former does not necessarily lead to the latter <sup>56</sup>. Infrastructural policy does of course lend itself to differentiated application in all sorts of areas, but to date these are not being identified <sup>56</sup> or utilised <sup>57</sup>. For preference this policy should therefore be developed in the context of a broader social deliberation where the necessity for *selectivity* is expressly on the agenda. The scope can then be examined for directing investment flows in such a way that investments take place in localities where they can pay for themselves socially. Research into administrative or social opportunity costs, the social return of infrastructural investments and the unintended effects of investments on other administrative or social objectives deserves attention.

The spatial-economic perspective of the present infrastructural approach concentrates unduly on the identification and mobilisation of environmental elements with a view to the potential for adding economic value. The one-sidedness of this approach is also acknowledged by the ICES, which even calls for the strengthening of the spatial-economic structure to be combined with planning and ecological ambitions. In its present form the infrastructural approach is unable to provide an adequate basis for a balanced spatial policy. Rothengatter's study moreover emphasised the major burden imposed on people and the environment by the present infrastructural policy <sup>58</sup>. Apart from the take-up of land, noise and NO<sub>x</sub>-emissions by freight transport are particularly noted as serious problems. In other respects as well there is too little attention to the extent to which the accommodation of more distribution, transport and logistics activities can diminish the quality of the environment

In short, the issues of spatial deliberation do not allow themselves all to be translated into infrastructural terms, however important that policy may be as a new 'dual-harness interest' for spatial planning. The new infrastructural approach has a number of attractive features but also a number of definite drawbacks. Despite the institutional accommodation noted above, no system has as yet been found for linking the projects up with an overall prioritisation. In that sense the emergence of the infrastructural policy renders a reorientation of spatial planning policy all the more necessary.

### 3.2.3 Conclusions

On the basis of the above it needs first of all to be concluded that the operative sector/facet model is subject to erosion. It was for example evident how new concepts are emerging in various sectors of government policy in response to the changing nature of society, as an alternative to the prevailing spatial planning concepts. The central tasks cannot be fulfilled without establishing cross-links between spatial developments and policy choices bearing on those developments. The external dynamics therefore mean that sectoral policy obtains 'facet' characteristics. Infrastructural projects, for example, are concerned with more than just concrete programming. Meeting society's infrastructural needs provides a vantage point from which other 'sectors' and 'facets' may be examined. It is precisely this aspect – i.e. the projection of a certain viewpoint – which always formed the distinguishing feature of a 'facet' in relation to a 'sector'. The recent batch of 'sectoral' and in many cases informal policy documents indicates that it is not just a matter

<sup>56</sup>] But cf. F. Le Clerq, (1996), op. cit.

<sup>57</sup>] See Chapter 5.

<sup>58</sup>] Cited in L. Kusiak, 'Overlast en schade door Europees goederenvervoer zijn alarmerend' (Nuisance and damage caused by European freight transport are alarming); *ROM Magazine*, no. 9, 1997, pp. 14-17.

of looking beyond the bounds of one's own policy domain; the newly proposed concepts and approaches are staking out new boundaries. In terms of objects of policy, the 'sectors' are expanding into forms of spatial policy management.

At the same time it is becoming clear that the substantive orientation of national physical planning could itself be narrowing. Here too external factors play a role, in this case the advent of environmental policy planning. The desire to integrate this policy field with spatial planning at national level into a policy aimed at the physical living environment essentially strengthens the sectoral nature of this ministry's policy, in that deliberation is subordinated to the acceptance of independent standpoints. The net result of this all is that we have at present a system of multiple superimposed but shifting policy domains all of which are making statements about the aspects that should play a role in setting policy priorities. Various definitions of integrality are currently circulating.

A second conclusion is that under the new concepts, the administrative responsibility for turning integrality into practice is by no means always assigned to the national level. The concept of city landscapes inherently suggests a diversity of solutions for the relationship between concentration and openness or between 'red' and 'green'. The same applies to 'the Netherlands as oeuvre', which concept indicates a higher scale for planning than that of a road or railway line, an individual building or even a neighbourhood. In contrast to the generic organisational concepts of the present spatial planning system these new concepts point to a level of planning at which current policy is weak both conceptually and instrumentally, namely areas in between the national and the local level. But the conceptual renewal has not left the national level untouched. Ideas concerning the role of corridors and ideas on multi-core orientation and the like indicate a shift in perception towards the role of infrastructure and physical planning. Instead of being a derivative of urbanisation, infrastructure would even become the bearer of urbanisation. Section 3.2.2 indicated the extent to which the advent of an infrastructural approach may even be regarded as an alternative to national spatial planning. That approach competes with physical planning not just in a substantive/conceptual sense but also when it comes to the way in which planning is looked at. Whereas spatial planning is characterised by a deliberation system aimed at integral plan formulation, the infrastructural approach is based on a system of incorporating projects. Whereas the implementation of plans is a decentralised responsibility under physical planning, under the infrastructural approach there is a much greater emphasis on the national level when it comes to implementation as well.

As section 3.2.2 indicated, the infrastructural approach, with its strong spatial-economic emphasis, has come to occupy an important place in the institutional framework for supersectoral policy co-ordination. The relationship between this approach and spatial planning, which traditionally formed the framework for such deliberation, has by no means crystallised out. The inherent nature of both approaches raises a number of questions that must be answered. Despite their co-existence in a formalised twin structure for co-ordination, there can be no question of a genuinely cross-fertilising relationship. This could become even more problematical if other emergent conceptual innovations are taken into account, in that the consequences of the various approaches cannot be viewed in isolation from the governance dimension of policy, namely the way in which policy seeks to secure social legitimacy. Needless to say the conceptual changes that have been discussed do not emerge within the government in isolation but in interaction with the attitudes of important social actors. As the reactions to major infrastructural and other spatial interventions regularly indicate, however, this by no means guarantees social acceptance. The effectiveness of policy cannot

therefore be viewed in isolation from its legitimacy; the latter is only guaranteed once confidence has been won within society. This aspect is examined in the next section.

### 3.3 Social involvement

#### 3.3.1 Requirements for the new institutional arrangements

Possibly the most important precondition for involving society in policy issues is to offer clarity concerning the span of opinion-formation in the deliberation process. The parameters within which deliberation takes place should be clear to all concerned. But this is not sufficient. If we just wait passively to see who makes use of the available space, there is a major risk that this will become the domain of just a few powerful players. From the viewpoint of limiting possible opposition, it may be tempting for a government to enter into coalitions with such actors. This danger implies that clear parameters also need to be laid down for the deliberation; in a more deliberative approach to democracy the emphasis is not on the promotion of interests but on preference-formation. The potential generators of ideas do, however, need to be identified and challenged. This means that the deliberation process is much more than just a matter of direction. The political system bears a major responsibility in the selection of participants for public participation and contributing ideas. From a democratic viewpoint it is highly important for the involvement to cover not just those affected by the plan but also those capable of making a significant contribution towards the process of preference formation. The role of politics, however, goes even further. It is unlikely that the careful selection of participants and an active stance on the part of those politically responsible will automatically result in consensus among those concerned. In addition the 'broad public' or the 'silent majority' also plays a role in these kinds of planning processes that should not be underestimated. In order to prevent particularism, the ultimate decision remains a political responsibility.

Experience has been gained with policy formulation in which society in general has been actively engaged both within and without the system of spatial planning. The field of the participatory conduct of policy is now so broad that it has been possible for a more detailed analysis to be conducted. Researchers from Utrecht University have sought to deduce a number of general features from an analysis of various kinds of participatory policy administration<sup>59</sup>. This has resulted in seven 'design dimensions' for participatory policy, which may be regarded as an elaboration of the general conditions formulated above. The seven design dimensions are:

1. political formalisation of the relationship between participation and decision-making;
2. a choice based on substantive considerations between internal administrative deliberation or the weighing of interests based on dialogue and confrontation;
3. the ongoing structuring and reformulation of the problem throughout the planning process;
4. active process control with a clear division of roles between the parties;
5. transparent weighing of interests by means of dialogue and the confrontation of perceptions;
6. feedback of agreements (partial or otherwise) reached to all parties;
7. clear communication of the plans to the government.

<sup>59</sup> W.J.N. Vermeulen, J.F.M. van der Waals, P. Glasbergen and H. Ernste, *Duurzaamheid als uitdaging; de afweging van ecologische en maatschappelijke risico's in confrontatie en dialoog* (Sustainability as a challenge); WRR Preliminary and Background Studies no. 101, Sdu uitgevers, The Hague, 1998.

A number of important points emerge from these design dimensions. In the first place it is notable that content and structure once again go hand in hand. The first two dimensions relate to these. Whatever system is developed, the relationship between the politically responsible parties and the contributors to the design process needs to be clearly formulated. A substantive choice based on imitable considerations will also need to be made in favour of the primacy of (centralised) deliberation or (decentralised) opinion-formation. Where a predominantly national interest is at stake in spatial planning policy, national policies will be required, and a politically clear choice will need to be made in this regard. The political responsibility for such a choice accordingly lies at the level where it belongs, namely the government and parliament. To sum up this results in a division of roles as shown in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3** The division of responsibilities among the various stakeholders and the associated roles in the process

Category of players	Specific role in deliberation process
Elected representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- political initiative</li> <li>- interim review</li> <li>- final choice</li> </ul>
Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- formal confirmation.</li> <li>- placement of order</li> <li>- direction of process-supervisor</li> <li>- interim review with emphasis on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- quality of input by those with special interests</li> <li>- monitoring accountability</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transfer of knowledge to participants</li> <li>- identification and submission of gaps in knowledge and uncertainties</li> <li>- implementation of analyses</li> </ul>
Professionals from interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- articulating perceptions of those with special interests</li> <li>- introducing possible solutions and know-how</li> <li>- open-minded attitude</li> <li>- grass roots contact</li> <li>- role in implementation</li> </ul>
Individual citizens or companies (or groups thereof)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- injecting subjective appreciations and normative positions</li> <li>- avoidance of particularism</li> <li>- assessment of credibility</li> </ul>

Source: Vermeulen et al., 1998

If it is decided to actively engage those concerned, continuous structuring of the problem is required. The added value of this approach lies in the fact that it does *not* involve laying down the precise goals of the policy and hence the scope of future negotiations. Instead of an *a priori* integral plan, only the implementation of which permits differing modalities, we have here an approach in which the degree of integrity assumes shape and substance during the process. This might be termed *integrative design*. In contrast to the first of the two approaches noted above, integrative design appeals to the dynamics of opinion formation, as referred to earlier in this chapter. At issue is the distinction between the representation of interests and the formation of preferences. The present institutional arrangements seek the strengthening of legitimacy and effectiveness primarily in facilitating the representation of interests: the government seeks to organise a base of support for previously formulated proposals and consequently mobilises the most important and powerful stakeholders. Recent history, however, indicates that society is outgrowing this institutional form. In essence we are dealing here with the continuation of a 'neocorporatist' structure in which contemporary replace-

ments are sought to fill the gap left behind by the former corporatist actors. Given the developments in society more is likely to come out of arrangements which involve not only those representing sectional interests but also those who need to be taken into account in the planning process (i.e. those with a stake in the area in question) and those in a position to make a meaningful contribution to the process of opinion formation. In this sense a 'neocorporatist' stakeholder may be distinguished from a more 'democratic' one <sup>60</sup>.

As noted recent history provides examples in which this new form of planning has been taken up. Key aspects distinguishing the 'democratic' approach from the 'neocorporatist' are the (politically based) selection of the parties concerned, the activation and stimulation of those parties in a process in which preferences are able to evolve in a climate within which it is possible and even desirable to work a subplan up into a more integrative design through the engagement of the various 'stakes' in question. These three elements will be analysed on the basis of various case studies.

### 3.3.2 Selection of parties concerned

Which parties are in fact concerned when it comes to spatial planning? The answer is determined by the goal in question. The easiest answer is that each and every citizen is involved in his or her local environment, that we are therefore all involved and that the adoption of a plan by the duly elected representatives accordingly provides sufficient legitimation. In practice, however, the shoe can pinch. The costs and benefits of a plan rarely work out the same way for each citizen, even though the plan may be deemed to serve the 'general interest'; in general certain groups will come out better than others. In practice those concerned are divided into interested parties and those actually or potentially penalised or, put more starkly, into proponents and opponents. It is therefore hardly surprising that the parties concerned should in certain instances adopt these stances themselves.

An example consists of the planning process concerning the Coastal Location, a plan for the development of an elongated island off the coast between the Hook of Holland and Scheveningen. At the initiative of the 'Nieuw Holland' Foundation a feasibility study was conducted into the possibility of placing the construction of the Coastal Location on the political agenda <sup>61</sup>. The Nieuw Holland Foundation primarily represents that element of trade and industry and the financial world with a clear interest in the construction of this large-scale project. For the purposes of implementing the study a steering committee was set up containing not just members of the aforementioned foundation but a number of like-minded individuals from regional politics.

On account of the one-sided composition of the steering committee, arguments against the Coastal Location did not receive much airing in the study. In the public debate following publication of the study there turned out to be major resistance among municipalities along the coast, local residents and nature conservation organisations. As a plan put forward by the 'proponents' was already on the table a discussion arose not concerning the desirability of developing a coastal location but about the plans presented. The proponents regarded the location as a positive impulse for the southern flank of the Randstad. The development of all sorts of catering facilities on the Coastal Location would also help reduce the relatively high unemployment among

<sup>60</sup>] P. Healey, *Collaborative Planning. Shaping Pieces in Fragmented Societies*; London, MacMillan, 1997.

<sup>61</sup>] Kuiper Compagnons, *Ruimte voor de kust*-(Space off the Coast); Final report of the feasibility study into The Hague/Hook of Holland Coastal Location, November 1995.

the poorly educated in this part of the Randstad. Things were fiercely contested by the opponents, who regarded the Coastal Location as a solution in search of a problem. The one-sided approach was also underscored by the Council for Rural Areas, which stated that the North Sea should not be regarded as 'beaches, dunes and industrial sites now still under water'<sup>62</sup>, and also considered that the development of new land will always remain a matter of weighing up different or contrary, not objectively measurable considerations. The Council accordingly argued for a broadly-based utility and necessity debate concerning such large-scale projects, aimed at securing political acceptance.

This example illustrates that by itself, the involvement in policy preparation at an early stage by concerned parties having a positive interest need not necessarily mean an improvement in the planning process. Although this is the opposite of an administration-centric approach, the approach suffers from a comparable counterproductiveness. Careful selection of 'parties concerned' – both proponents and opponents of a proposed development – would appear to be a necessary precondition for the fruitful inclusion of the various parties in the planning-formulation stage. A largely like-minded coalition is more likely to achieve the opposite: the coalition will push its own interests and so come to appear more by way of a pressure group than a balanced reflection of opinion in society. The selection of the 'right' proponents and opponents is, however, a hazardous process that cannot be left to the political forces of the day or to chance. Since there is every interest in achieving social and political consensus, the selection process is very much a task for those bearing political responsibility. This is therefore a matter of a calculated selection and not – as in the case of the Coastal Location – an almost incidental legitimization of an existing social coalition.

### 3.3.3 Active organisation of involvement

Not just the selection of the parties concerned but also the activation of the selected institutions and individuals is highly important. If the parties are in fact to make a contribution to the often laborious process of plan design, they will in many cases need to be encouraged to do so. At the embryonic stage of planning it is not always clear to all the parties precisely what interests are at stake. In what way can the implementation of a plan affect one's own or wider interests? Who will be left better or worse off, and to what extent? It tends to be the rule rather than the exception that early involvement is a matter for parties who encounter one another professionally anyway. If effective use is to be made of the potential involvement by the public, the challenge lies in bringing together highly disparate or dissident groups. This may be illustrated by two examples.

The first concerns the development of the *Kop van Zuid*, a key project specified in the Fourth Policy Document and aimed at the urban development of the southern bank of the River Meuse in Rotterdam. After the project had been designated by the State in 1988 as a key project, a covenant was concluded between the State and the Municipality of Rotterdam laying down the mutual rights and obligations in the programming, procedural and financial areas<sup>63</sup>. The State undertook to provide large-scale financial support in the fields of infrastructure (Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management) and housing (Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment). The municipality undertook to implement a defined

<sup>62</sup>] Council for Rural Areas, *Nieuw land ontwikkelen: zinnig of onbezonnen?* (Developing new land: sense or nonsense?); Publication RLG 97/4, 1997.

<sup>63</sup>] J. van den Bout and E. Pasveer, *Kop van Zuid*; Rotterdam, Uitgeverij 010, 1994.

programme as laid down in the zoning plan. The latter was a broad-brush plan of how the area should look with a number of detailed model projects, intended more as input for further discussion and to support the planning and development process than as a codification of actual land use in the more traditional sense.

In order to induce various parties to contribute towards a further development of the plans, the zoning plan was supplemented by a number of sub-reports, including three 'Quality Books'. As the zoning plan was very general in nature and the Quality Books were intended primarily to encourage debate, the complex of plans came to play a different role from normal. In particular the urban design plan, as depicted in various ways in these Quality Books, came to fulfil various functions. In descending order of importance these were:

- to promote communication and stimulate participation among all the parties concerned;
- to provide a sufficiently realistic plan for informed decisions to be taken;
- the formal role of quality control of the entire planning process.

In drawing up these plans account had been taken from the outset of the notion that the desired quality of the project could not be imposed from the top down. The ultimate quality had to be obtained by getting all those concerned to participate actively in working out the details. By presenting the desired quality in this form and inducing the parties to do something with it, it became possible to conduct a discussion during the planning stage about the most essential elements of the plan and all the parties could clearly see where the project might benefit them and how this might be achieved <sup>64</sup>.

Now the Kop van Zuid was a comparatively 'easy' situation. The bulk of the proposed development area consisted of former docklands where there were no clear interests at stake in the sense that opposition could be expected towards proposals to alter the status quo. Matters were somewhat more complicated when it came to nearby neighbourhoods, but this formed the subject of extensive attention in the zoning plan. The latter introduced the concept of mutual benefit or social return: by devoting attention to the comparative deprivation in the surrounding neighbourhoods the latter would be able to benefit from the positive developments in the proposed development area. Precisely by placing this point on the agenda the local authorities in the neighbouring districts were encouraged to identify their own position and to articulate their wishes with respect to the physical links with Kop van Zuid <sup>65</sup>.

This approach meant that the project was ultimately able to count on wide-ranging support. The construction of the Erasmus Bridge as a symbol of renewal was also a significant factor. The choice by the municipality in favour of a spectacular and expensive design sent an important signal to private investors. In doing so the municipal executive of Rotterdam spelt out its ambitions for the area and its willingness to accept full responsibility. That responsibility was also firmly sheeted home politically in the remainder of the project development. Although the planning was in large measures determined by the activation of numerous parties, including the private sector, the municipality retained full responsibility for the implementation of the sub-projects. In contrast to what can sometimes happen in other countries (such as the new centre of Berlin) there was no question in Rotterdam of any transfer of responsibilities to private parties. The municipality of

<sup>64</sup>] Reijndorp, op. cit.

<sup>65</sup>] Municipality of Rotterdam, Kop van Zuid Communication Team, *Kop van Zuid, stad van morgen; kwaliteit wordt realiteit* (Kop van Zuid, city of tomorrow: quality becomes reality); Rotterdam, 1996.



Rotterdam considered that the added value of public/private partnership could be achieved not by privatising projects but by an integral approach<sup>66</sup>. Without renouncing its responsibilities under public law, the municipality entered into partnership arrangements with a number of private parties. The agreed content of the plan as a whole provided a guarantee for a high return and high quality. The regulatory responsibility was for example visible in the agreement that a series of projects would be realised for joint account, in which the costs and proceeds would be shared on the basis of prior agreements. The fact that the formation of opinion had taken place with all concerned but that the decision-making remained the full responsibility of the municipality meant that settlements could be reached which, realistically, private parties alone could not have achieved. The revenue from running certain elements of the plan, for example, was used to finance less profitable elements, such the infrastructure<sup>67</sup>.

A second example concerns the Blue City project in Groningen. Until this century the Oldambt in the province of Groningen was one of the most prosperous agricultural areas in the Netherlands. Due however to changes in the overall context – especially developments in European agricultural policy and shifts in industrial activity – the region steadily slipped behind. The population aged, essential new activities were not introduced and gradually all parties concerned lost confidence in the future. In practice the efforts in recent decades were confined to regulating the rundown of the area in an orderly manner instead of devising policies to develop and strengthen it.

In the end the region itself came up with initiatives for tackling this dismal situation. In 1990 the architect Timmer proposed converting some 2500 hectares of agricultural land into a wooded lake district with a further 500 hectares where new activities such as recreation, housing and forestry could be undertaken. The scale of the plan was unparalleled. The proposal envisaged islands, intended for private dwellings, thereby in theory tapping a highly affluent section of the community for the Oldambt. If matters had remained confined to these in themselves inspiring plans little would in all probability have happened. The plan was, however, taken up by local politicians. Precisely this combination of local initiative and political backing meant that the plan could be taken further. When it became clear that there were serious plans for more or less flooding 3000 hectares of agricultural land the initial enthusiasm for the abstract plan fell away. What was an enticing prospect for the project developer was nothing less than outright capital destruction for the traditional farmer. In the subsequent stages of the planning procedure the two sides were given sufficient room to table arguments and counter-arguments, ultimately resulting in a direction acceptable to all parties. To this end the original plan was carefully analysed by the Oldambt Quality of Life Steering Committee. Since all groups in the community had been involved in the proposals for change, this opened the plan up to improvements. A plan which had initially incorporated only physical development ideas was broadened out into a proposal based around the quality of life of the region and incorporating the different wishes of the various local groups. Although the ultimate 'Blue City' proposal was on a more limited scale, in terms of design and support it was much more powerful than the original proposal for the Oldambtmeer.

This process involved the activation of those concerned and enticing or cajoling the relevant parties in a creative design process at at least two levels.

<sup>66</sup>] De Lijn, Bureau for spatial development and housing, *Evaluatierapport Sleutelproject Kop van Zuid* (Kop van Zuid Key Project Evaluation Report) on behalf of the National Spatial Planning Agency, Amsterdam, 1994, p. 21.

<sup>67</sup>] Van den Bout en Pasveer, op. cit.

The fact that the plan was already adopted by the political system at an early stage and a member of the Provincial Executive personally identified himself with the plans meant that other parties were virtually obliged to participate or at least respond. Perhaps even more important was the input on the part of the planners. By tabling an innovative and challenging plan and treating this as the first move in a game in which the players had not even been identified to begin with it was possible to assign a role to all parties in the further planning process. The new idea inspired virtually all the parties and persuaded them to shift their own horizons. By not holding rigidly on to the initial physical development ideas but accepting that this initial plan provided a vehicle for a broadly-based debate on the quality of life in the region, opinion formation in this case became the decisive factor for the subsequent decision-making.

### 3.3.4 Willingness to arrive at integrative planning

Even when the right parties have been identified and actively involved in the planning process this does not necessarily mean that this will make a positive contribution to policy formulation. If numerous parties, each with their own views and priorities, jointly set about developing a plan, then new angles, viewpoints, aspects, priorities and other considerations are bound to come to light. In a certain sense this is the essence of the approach. By involving all parties from the very outset the knowledge and creativity of the various parties will be used to the maximum extent. At the same time it will be clear that such a confrontation will not be without its problems. Differences of insight and attitude will be thrown up in sharp relief. This is of course only possible if the planning process has been devised in such a way that such confrontation can also result in substantial modifications to the original plan. The planning process must be designed to complete the original plan on the basis of multi-faceted input from a wide variety of angles. This does however require the realisation that the original plan is by way of an opening bid in the discussion. The parties concerned – ranging from groups in the community to local government and coalitions – must be involved in such a way that all sorts of relevant aspects are drawn into the planning process. This process may be designated as integrative planning. If the initial proposal concerns a road or railway it must be possible to use this in order to redesign the local environment. This form of planning is diametrically opposed to the now more customary integral planning, in which an integral plan worked out in some detail is submitted. In many places this integral plan will be drawn up by a limited (administrative) body of people before being submitted to the community for discussion.

The problems surrounding integrative planning are evident in the history of the De Venen project<sup>68</sup>. As part of the Green Space Structure Scheme, a National Ecological Network was drawn up for the Netherlands designating areas where nature should be restored or developed as the principal function. This provides the origins of the De Venen project. The project area concerns a part of De Ronde Venen municipality, including the Groot-Mijdrecht polder. The intention was for the polder to be redeveloped, with nature conservation as the main theme. For the northern element a natural marshland of 2600 hectares was proposed and for the southern area a forest so as to prevent the further merging of the Wilnis, Mijdrecht and Vinkeveen.

The project was set up in 1992 at the initiative of the State but was to be taken forward by the province. To begin with efforts were made to set up a Steering Committee bringing together all the parties concerned, so as to

<sup>68]</sup> The description of this article is largely drawn from Reijndorp, op. cit.

reflect the fact that a joint initiative was being undertaken. This brought to light the first problem, namely that horticultural and agricultural organisations were prepared to contribute towards the plans but not to bear responsibility. The background to this position needs to be sought in the approach followed in virtually all other cases involving the realisation of the National Ecological Network, a text-book case of classic top-down planning. Knowledge about eco-systems and the conditions in which these can survive provide the point of departure. This knowledge is then converted into 'nature blueprints' indicating where natural areas need to be developed or improved. In this constellation local government is by definition condemned to an executive role and the instructions have to be followed closely.

Against this background the interest organisations accordingly viewed the new initiative with some suspicion. In addition the Society for the Preservation of Nature in the Netherlands had issued its 'De Nieuwe Venen' plan in 1992, in which 9000 hectares of agricultural land were claimed for nature conservation. The combination of the classical top-down approach on the one hand and the participatory approach envisaged for the De Venen project inevitably led to friction. Ultimately the Steering Committee was composed out of representatives from the ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, the Provinces of Utrecht and North-Holland, the relevant municipalities and the water boards.

In the meantime a new municipal executive had taken office in the Municipality of De Ronde Venen, consisting of a coalition of the Christian Democratic Alliance (CDA) and the Ronde Venen Belangen. The municipality acknowledged the consequences of a number of (spatial) developments for its territory. Housing, employment and recreational pressures from the Randstad were laying increasing claims on space; mobility was growing rapidly as a result of the developments around Aalsmeer and Schiphol. Although restrictions were imposed under the Green Heart policy, the regional plan permitted the construction of 1500 dwellings. Moreover, there was disunity within the municipality concerning the De Venen project for the development of a large marsh in the northern part of the polder. All this resulted in the decision by the municipality in 1995 to engage the BVR agency to develop a vision articulating the ideas of the municipalities. This vision was presented in October this year in a draft version of the 'De Ronde Venen Development Vision'. Differences between the De Venen project and the latter vision are set out in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4 Characteristic features of two plans**

<b>De Venen Project</b>	<b>De Ronde Venen Development Division</b>
– State initiative, province as executive	– initiative by De Ronde Venen municipality
– marshland development in northern part of polder; existing dwellings there must disappear	– existing residential development to be maintained, partly with a view to future linkage between recreation and nature
– afforestation best contribution towards nature development: thus preventing expansion of settlements	– construction of new lake; soil unsuitable for forestry, loss of open countryside, three settlements at head of lake in the form of small-scale housing development, providing recreational accessibility, while lake forms part of an ecological connecting zone.
– Provincial Regional Plan provides space for 1500 new dwellings; aim is for far fewer dwellings	

The De Venen project was more consistent with the nature development provided for in the National Ecological Network, while the De Ronde Venen Development Vision was clearly aimed more at strengthening the urban component in the municipality. The Development Vision came unstuck when in 1995 the State initially blocked the claim for 1500 dwellings under the regional plan. Secondly, the minister promised that housing development would be permitted provided the plan for the Ronde Venen was otherwise of sufficient quality. On account of its vague formulation this opening did not directly invite operationalisation but did induce the municipality to reflect during the follow-up stages on the way in which spatial quality could be incorporated into the plan.

A number of conclusions may be drawn from this case. In the first place it is clear that an invitational form of planning is not compatible with top-down planning taking place at the same time and in the same area. If it is decided that those concerned should determine the full sweep of the plan it is not possible simultaneously to impose an operationalisation of a predetermined spatial concept via another route. The fact that the De Venen project had its origins in the National Ecological Network meant that precisely on account of the policy culture embodied in the National Ecological Network, the further planning procedure was barely acceptable for a number of those concerned. Nevertheless this example also indicates that in practice it is entirely feasible for the parties concerned to persuade one another during the first stage of policy-making with the aid of concrete spatial proposals. This does however presuppose that those proposals are clearly aimed at transcending sectional interests. In the confrontation between the De Venen project and the De Ronde Venen Development Vision, the various opportunities offered by the region became clearer. This resulted in a planning process based much more on negotiation between the parties than on direction based on a previously drafted policy document. In this regard it must however be accepted that the result of the process may well be different – often broader and more far-reaching – than originally anticipated. The nature development initiative resulted in a vision for the responsible integration of housing into the natural environment. Even the Minister's conditioned blocking of housing development contributed towards a further improvement in quality.

### 3.4 Conclusions

This chapter has indicated the extent to which spatial planning has come under pressure as a result of the changing social context. In this regard substantive and administrative aspects go hand in hand. The increasing importance of the infrastructure in the process of physical restructuring has resulted in a dual structure for the interdepartmental co-ordination of the spatial facet. The speed of change in policy sectors of relevance for spatial planning obliges those sectors to develop spatial concepts differing from those employed hitherto. Where as formerly the definition of the integral spatial deliberation framework belonged to the domain of spatial planning, various definitions of integrality are now in circulation.

The question is whether these are just symptoms of a transitional phase that will in due course give rise to concepts consistent with the new circumstances and the restoration of a clear-cut internal governmental deliberation mechanism. In the Council's view, however, a more fundamental change is at issue. The changing circumstances relate not just to the priorities to be set for spatial policy but also to the relationship between politics, policy and society. A policy in which the fundamentally changed spatial development of the entire territory of the Netherlands, including all its sectoral implications, is imposed unilaterally on society by the system of governance, no longer holds good. Since physical development often has such far-reaching consequences

for the world in which people live, society is demanding a greater input than that allowed for under the present system. Spatial planning is, consequently, running into resistance more often than required, to the detriment of not just the legitimacy but also the effectiveness of those policies.

Within the context of the present system, a good many experiments are being made with more participatory forms of governance. Of these the most in vogue is process management. This involves enlarging the base of support for administrative plans as effectively as possible through improved management, although this does entail a number of risks. In particular, spatial planning obtains public support when the political input does in fact leave room for further planning and design. The solution lies therefore more in abolishing the linear link between internal governmental co-ordination and securing social support with a view to facilitating preference formation.

As noted in this chapter, the latter path is not free of pitfalls and raises questions about its democratic legitimacy. Recent experience with stakeholder-type approaches, however, is also providing the first outline of an institutional arrangement which provides sufficient freedom for the formation and mobilisation of social coalitions while at the same time providing guarantees of political accountability. Under this process, early political goal-formulation, at a general level, is linked to an invitation to develop plans and form coalitions. At present the coalition formation between the government sector and social actors sometimes takes place prior to the 'official' planning and participation, which often has a counter-productive effect in that standpoints become entrenched and counterforces are mobilised. Furthermore the history of spatial planning indicates that whereas large institutional actors are more concerned with planning at the abstract level, citizens tend to be mobilised by concrete projects and to be only moderately interested in abstract considerations and choices. If only for this reason citizens tend to remain on the sidelines until fairly late in the piece and only too readily attract the NIMBY label. This is in fact more the consequence of the dysfunctional organisation of the spatial planning process than of any disinclination on the part of the general public. If spatial planning were to be elaborated in terms of the principles of democratic stakeholder planning and 'integrative design', this would make a contribution towards strengthening the pluralist democratic order; early goal formulation at political level would enlarge the room for constructive input by society towards policy development. These notions will be worked out in more detail in the next chapter.

This chapter centres around the question as to whether the system of spatial planning is adequately equipped to support spatial developments in policy terms. In section 4.1 this question focuses on the substantive *deliberation framework*: to what extent do the concepts currently employed provide an adequate frame of reference for a substantive response to the developments outlined? Section 4.2 examines the *deliberation structure*, i.e. the governmental/institutional framework. Under the heading of 'spatial development policy' section 4.3 outlines the contours of a new perspective towards spatial policy in terms of both content and form. Section 4.4 draws conclusions.

## 4.1. Challenges for the deliberation framework

The changing context outlined in Chapter 2 set out two processes of significance for spatial planning, namely the disappearance of traditional dual-harness interests and the emergence of new spatial links, amounting to what may be termed the 'network society'. In recent decades the system of spatial planning was able to rely on the 'dual-harness' interests of agriculture and housing in its efforts to fit the various social processes into the available land. This 'natural' alliance has however begun to wobble. Agriculture has become an ever diminishing linked interest in the drive for openness and housing is no longer the directive force it used to be. The locational behaviour with respect to housing and employment has steadily moved away from the favoured conceptual approach towards concentration, namely the notion of the compact city. The rise in living standards has been a highly important factor in this regard. Chapter 2 indicated how the rise in prosperity has manifested itself in lower-density housing, new activities in sectors requiring space such as transport and distribution and a very rapid rise in mobility. Given the macro-economic prospects it is not likely that these trends will be reversed in the foreseeable future.

A number of the new problems are related to the changing significance of the concept of *distance* in the network society. In response to technological developments, such as the modernisation or greater speed up of transport and the advent of 'telematics' as new communication technology, functionally related activities are now more and more physically separated. To the extent to which new technologies permit products to be manufactured elsewhere (outsourcing) and rapid personal mobility (by motorway) or enable products to be shifted quickly (the 'just-in-time' principle), the significance of physical distance is shrinking<sup>1</sup>. The dynamisation of the market has also resulted in the large-scale disappearance of traditional relationships between suppliers and customers. As noted in Chapter 2, the dynamisation is also reflected in different business location patterns. In the case of routine commercial activities, proximity to markets or front offices is no longer important. Where they have difficulty in inducing employees to move to a certain location, businesses that are heavily dependent on human capital will have to find a suitable location elsewhere. In many cases these business establishment requirements in the field of spatial quality are even anticipated. This applies

<sup>1</sup> See for example S. Graham and S. Marvin, *Telecommunications and the City – Electronic Spaces, Urban Places*; London, Routledge, 1996; M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society – Economy, Society and Culture*; Oxford, Blackwell, 1997; M.F. Gelok and W.M. de Jong (eds.), *Volatiliseren in de economie (Volatilisation in the economy)*; WRR, Preliminary and background studies series no. V98, The Hague, Sdu Uitgevers, 1997.

not just to businesses but also to the individual citizen. The increase in prosperity and greater mobility imply a strong 'democratisation' of the consumption of space.

#### *Increases in scale*

In the first place the new developments are resulting in physical increases in scale. To the extent to which social, economic and cultural relations are now played out in networks, the importance of *proximity* is giving way to *accessibility*. As it is becoming easier to bridge distances it is becoming less important for individual actors to be 'nearby'. The spatial effect is an increase in scale of functional interrelationships, which is not to say that 'proximity' or spatial interrelationships are no longer important. New configurations are evolving and in some cases the importance of 'location' is in fact increasing enormously; the development of the Amsterdam Southern Axis into a prime-site location for global players is an example. In this case we are not just dealing with 'space' or generally definable 'spaces' but with 'places' or sites each with their own, highly specific qualities. This makes it difficult to base a deliberation framework on generic concepts: in fact there is a growing requirement for concepts that permit ad hoc arrangements for maximising spatial quality. The above trends are also at variance with the current operationalisation of basic principles such as spatial hierarchy or spatial differentiation. The VINO/VINEX policy of the Fourth Spatial Planning Document introduced the 'prime-site locations', urban nodes (of international, national or regional significance) and the 'metropolitan business development environment' of the Randstad. In the meantime it has become clear that such an unqualified concept of spatial hierarchy no longer holds good: to the extent that proximity is being replaced by accessibility as a relevant criterion for determining the optimal business location, other locations are also coming into view. The result is a complicated configuration of 'places, which cannot simply be reduced to a clear-cut hierarchy.

This does not mean that there is no longer any room for national policy; on the contrary. Recent findings suggest that it is perfectly possible to work with a spatial hierarchy, but that this needs to be defined at a different level. The increase in scale must be taken more seriously. According to the Arthur Andersen bureau as well as the ING Bank, the competitiveness of the Randstad has suffered from the fact that this region is not perceived sufficiently as an entity and that not enough policies are being conducted to shape and promote the Randstad as a physical entity<sup>2</sup>. While it is true that the Fourth National Policy Document on Spatial Planning specifically placed the Randstad in an international context, it should at the same time be noted that this has not found any translation into a new conceptual basis for the policy with which an active spatial strategy towards the Randstad as such can be conducted. In other words, the development policy for the Randstad is still being conducted on too low a scale. This does not in any way mean that the restructuring of the big cities no longer deserves attention. However, if the spatial hierarchy is defined within a European interplay of forces, the collective rather than the individual competitiveness of the various cities in the Randstad would occupy a much more central place. This implies a different conception of the urbanisation of the Randstad from that currently held.

<sup>2</sup> *Europese kansen voor de Randstad* (European opportunities for the Randstad); Amsterdam, Arthur Andersen, 1997. See also R.E. Smit (ed.), *De Randstad in het centrum. Een verkennende studie van ING in opdracht van de Gemeente Amsterdam, 'sGravenhage, Rotterdam en Utrecht* (The Randstad in the centre. An exploratory study by ING on behalf of the Municipalities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht); Amsterdam, ING Bank, 1997.

The fact that the social increase in scale does not yet have its counterpart in a consistent Randstad policy has been at the expense of spatial differentiation. At present insufficient attention is devoted to the way in which new activities could be the most effectively accommodated in the Randstad. Although the mainports are both located in the Randstad the Netherlands is perceived in de facto terms as a single, uniform region: for international companies Veenendaal is regarded as a location in 'the vicinity of Schiphol' and activity related to the Rotterdam mainport establishes itself in the vicinity of Venlo. In that sense the Netherlands is a level playing field in spatial terms. This does however lead to substantial diffusion of mainport-related activity and to greater spatial uniformity than necessary. If this is recognised there is a clear-cut case for the enhancement of spatial differentiation as a policy objective. The need to do so emerged cogently in research conducted by the Council in this area <sup>3</sup>. The Province of Gelderland, for example, managed to resist the pressures to establish a business park at the centrally located Deil traffic node, in the interests of protecting the valuable river landscape. If however the requirement for industrial sites continues to increase, the Province might then still give consideration to the development of Deil. Here the acknowledgement of increases in scale provides points of departure for new policies. Now that a large element of the Netherlands is regarded by businesses as a uniform zone, efforts need to be made to build up the national spatial/economic network and a national restrictive policy aimed at spatial differentiation is both possible and desirable. This would also enable the social and commercial advantages of specialisation, differentiation and complementarity to be exploited more effectively and would enable the relationship to the existing urban agglomerations to be specifically tackled. Here too there are points of departure for an active accessibility policy. This will be discussed in more detail in section 4.3.

### *Inversion*

Apart from an increase in scale the developments discussed above could lead to inversion. By this is meant that an inversion point appears to have been reached in land-use in the Netherlands: until now the preservation of the countryside and the concentration of urbanisation in and around the existing centres has been a key element in the weighing of priorities in spatial planning. The aim was and remains to 'exempt' large-scale open spaces. The way in which this aim has been pursued is now threatening to create precisely the opposite <sup>4</sup>. This is for example the rationale behind the concept of the compact city: in combination with the aim of high densities the requirement for greater numbers of single-family dwellings is resulting in extensive 'red' zones, partly with a view to protecting the 'green' open rural areas. Now that compact city areas are expanding and beginning to merge into one another the pursuit of quality could have the opposite effect. For the northern wing of the Randstad this risk has been partly averted by the buffer-zone policy. In other areas, however, it is a very real prospect (North and South Kennemerland, IJmond, Twente, central Gelderland, and the Brabant cities). A point will be reached at which the idea of the Netherlands as a 'densely populated country' describes the challenges for spatial planning less effectively than the idea of the western part of the Netherlands as a 'thinly populated city', as recently argued by the urban designer Frieling <sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup>] Reijndorp bv stedelijk onderzoek en advies, *De kern van het ruimtelijk beleid – een onderzoek naar het begrip ruimtelijke kwaliteit* (Spatial planning policy – an investigation into the concept of spatial quality); WRR, Working Document no. W99, The Hague, 1998.

<sup>4</sup>] The term inversion was introduced by L.J.M. Tummers and J.M. Tummers-Zuurmond, *Het land in de Stad* (Bringing the country to the city); Bussum, Toth, 1997.

<sup>5</sup>] D. Frieling, 'Verstedelijking als politieke opgave' (Urbanisation as a political challenge); *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*, vol. 78, no. 5, 1997, pp 4-8.



The question of relevance for policy is no so much *when* an old notion of quality turns into the reverse but whether possible conceptual alternatives are currently being taken properly into consideration. The locations identified in the Fourth Spatial Planning Policy Document Supplement (VINEX) are generally situated 'on the other side' of ring roads, thus frustrating efforts to develop a natural relationship with the city centre. This is evident in the development of the VINEX locations of Leidschenveen, Ypenburg and Nootdorp. Although the characteristics of these planning areas are determined by the highways dividing up the localities (the A4 and A12), these connecting elements did not form part of the design challenge. However, expansion planning based on the characteristics of the suburban 'outer district' comes up against social and economic behaviour linking up these new locations with other – as seen in the old terms – similarly 'peripheral' locations. The incorporation into the broad sweep of planning of the consequences of the network society for the urbanisation of Randstad was held back by the compact city notion, according to which various locations within the Haaglanden region were involved <sup>6</sup>. The updating of the VINEX recognises the problems that such expansion planning poses for the Randstad but fails to provide any conceptual alternative. The problem does however call for greater attention, and not just in the Randstad: the rapid urbanisation in a number of areas outside the Randstad (such as Twente, central Gelderland and the Brabant cities) is also resulting in inversion and calling for different concepts.

The inversion process manifests itself in a different way with respect to the development and expansion of the infrastructure. In the 1930s, highways were regarded as valuable additions to the existing landscape provided these were appropriately designed and sensitively blended into the landscape. The American 'parkways' and the German ideas concerning 'autowandern' articulate this connection between highways and a sense of contact with the countryside <sup>7</sup>. Roads were of course constructed primarily in order to link up localities, but in the early days highways in the Netherlands were also constructed in such a way that the landscape could come fully into its own. Given the need to increase the capacity of the highways and the greater speed and hence nuisance (e.g. noise) and safety problems, the infrastructure has however become increasingly divorced from the landscape. The 'cultural' integration of infrastructure is giving way to functionality. In the meantime, the areas in close proximity to motorway slip roads have been discovered as 'prime-site locations'. The expectation voiced in Chapter 2 of a heavy expansion in activity in the distribution, logistics and transport sector calls for the formulation of response. Curiously enough the spatial effect of this 'urbanisation' of the motorways has hardly been taken up as a challenge for spatial planning policy. Currently the term 'corridor' is being used in order to typify the strategic economic importance of the motorways, which is at variance with the original aim of integrating motorways into landscape.

#### *Towards a modernised deliberation structure*

The basic principles of spatial planning and the way in which these have been elaborated into practical concepts face radical problems as a result of the developments outlined above (for a summary see Table 4.1). In the Council's view, the challenges being posed for the deliberation structure require the latter to be reviewed. This will work out differently for each of the two levels, namely the basic principles and the spatial concepts. If the basic principles are to be retained – and there are good arguments for doing so – a new practical elaboration will be required.

<sup>6</sup>] See in detail Reijndorp, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup>] See M. Provoost, *Asfalt! (Asphalt!)*; Rotterdam, Uitgeverij 010, 1997.

Generic spatial concepts – i.e. concepts which, within certain margins reflecting regional differentiation, apply to the entire country – are no longer valid for two reasons. The first is that it is no longer inherently possible to encapsulate the growth in spatial dynamism in these kinds of concepts: the outcome of that dynamism in spatial terms is often too unstable and too differentiated in regional terms. The second reason is that a multiplicity of actors are involved in the spatial organisation of an active society; preconceived paradigms concerning land-use are accordingly no longer appropriate.

**Table 4.1 Social challenges for the spatial policy deliberation structure**

Basic principles	Leading current spatial concepts	Social challenges
Concentration of urbanisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- compact city</li> <li>- ABC-policy</li> <li>- open-area concepts/restrictive areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increases in scale and 'inversion' (scale of open countryside smaller than adjoining rural area) is eroding the concept of the compact city</li> <li>- the growing interrelationships between urban areas necessitate concepts at a higher level of scale (e.g. the Randstad as compact urban region instead of a mosaic of separate compact cities)</li> </ul>
spatial cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- compact urban districts</li> <li>- national spatial-economic main structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- urban functions are becoming increasingly spread out resulting in congestion on the roads and a poorer quality of industrial environment</li> <li>- also: spatial segregation of the population according to income and reduced accessibility of employment for lower income groups</li> </ul>
spatial differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- residential differentiation</li> <li>- open-area concepts</li> <li>- National Ecological Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- creeping urbanisation resulting in gradual erosion of spatial quality of both the urban environment and rural areas</li> </ul>
spatial hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- prime-site locations</li> <li>- urban nodes (3 categories)</li> <li>- Randstad International (= best in Netherlands)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- decline in the 'spatial hierarchy' in the Dutch urban structure on account of the reduced economic importance of inner cities, a consequence of the displacement of high-grade urban functions to new centres on the peripheries of urban regions</li> <li>- greater uniformity of the economic landscape on the Dutch national scale and hence weaker competitive position of the 'Netherlands Region' in the European context</li> </ul>
spatial justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- autonomous regions</li> <li>- urban nodes (esp. nodes designated on dispersal grounds)</li> <li>- priority areas (rural development)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- difficult to overcome relative deprivation of certain areas</li> <li>- problem of urban justice focusing increasingly on accentuated urban problems as a result of relocation of high-grade urban functions to suburban environments</li> </ul>

The substantive overhaul of the basic principles that is being sought is entirely different in nature. These principles, which do not make any concrete statements about any particular type of spatial organisation, remain valid, although the essence of the current spatial problems often tie up with a different spatial level of scale than was the case in the past. The principle of the concentration of urbanisation remains highly valuable since its opposite – fragmentation – must be rejected. Now that urban areas are more or less beginning to merge there is every reason to take the scope of operation of the principle of concentration up to a higher spatial level. The principle of spatial cohesion indicates that, in the absence of the effective mutual location of urban functions, urban areas cannot in fact function effectively. More explicit attention to the principle of spatial differentiation must provide a counterweight to the threatened standardisation of the Dutch

landscape, due in particular to the inversion process described above. The principle of spatial hierarchy is particularly important when it comes to the location of the Netherlands in the European context. Against the background of the increased competition between regions it is necessary to examine which region in the Netherlands is particularly well placed to cope with that competition. The basic principle of spatial justice arose during a period when a number of (generally peripheral) regions found themselves in a downward socio-economic spiral. This problem currently applies to large elements of our largest cities. In the light of the spatial/economic shifts spatial justice and spatial hierarchy no longer always appear opposed. The big cities in particular would benefit from greater attention to their position in the European context.

This indicates that urgent social problems with a spatial dimension can be identified on the basis of the basic principles. Precisely on this account, the current basic principles retain their validity for the future. They can also constitute fundamental objectives for future government policy in the spatial development field. Without an adequate translation at conceptual level the challenges set for spatial planning will, however, turn into threats. As argued above, this translation can no longer be found in generic spatial concepts. It is a matter of developing elaborations and concepts that do justice to differentiated social views and which properly reflect the regionally differentiated elaboration of general developments.

#### 4.2. Challenges for the deliberation structure

The spatial planning system has a number of procedural characteristics as a result of which the national government faces the above developments with one hand tied behind its back. The first of these concerns the relationship between the physical 'facet' and the sectoral departments and the associated orientation towards communication and conceptualisation. The system is based on a distinction between 'sector' and 'facet' at national level in which the institutional practice is aimed at the development of nationally indicative but at the same time integral spatial policy. Among other things this is reflected in the Key Planning Decision (PKB) procedure, the co-ordinating position of the National Spatial Planning Commission (RPC) and the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment. This system has its advantages: it forces the national government for example into early mutual consultation and co-ordination. Chapter 3 indicated however that there were also problems: the national integrative and planning-based approach renders it difficult to respond quickly to new developments. The development of generically effective concepts with an integral ambition is left somewhat hanging in the air in the network society. Chapter 3 indicated moreover that the sectoral departments were developing their own conceptual approaches towards physical planning, resulting in new cross-links between various interests. This is generating different definitions of integrality; this cannot be equated with the 'internalisation' of the facet by the sectors. This does not mean that integral deliberation now comes about of its own accord; the sectoral departments naturally retain their core activities. It does however pose a new challenge for the institutional base for the system of spatial planning. Under the PKB procedure the co-ordination engenders a bureaucratic preoccupation with policy documents at national policy level, which does not help advance the goals of spatial policy.

The second characteristic concerns the highly decentralised nature of the system, which makes it difficult to tackle spatial challenges at both regional and national level. In the current situation the national government encourages planning-based administration but only the municipalities have the power to draw up binding plans for the citizen. This formal space for the

lower levels of the government to act independently is accentuated by the different approach being taken towards the structure of authority at local and provincial government level, as reflected by the reduced willingness to fit in in advance with the broad aims formulated at national level. Complementarity is compromised and the present system creates a conflict between authority at national level and action at provincial and local level. This is clear when one looks at the Fourth Spatial Planning Policy Document Supplement (VINEX). This policy document is exceptionally successful in so far as the designated locations are developed with, for and by the market. But at the same time development is *also* taking place elsewhere and commerce and industry is establishing itself in localities not provided for under the VINEX. Here the micro/macro problem manifests itself: although local government must in principle take responsibility for the actual implementation of State policy, local politicians are confronted by the necessity of imposing the costs of those State policies on their own local grassroots support. The 'grassroots' of State policy with respect to the protection of the Green Heart do not generally live in the small municipalities of the Green Heart but in the large municipalities of the Randstad. Here we find a fallacy of composition: the system assigns priority to devolution but at the point at which the State wishes to implement its own goals seriously the system does not prove capable of doing so. In this regard a direct duty of implementation for certain kinds of State policy would appear called for. In addition willing municipalities are confronted by an undesirable fragmentation of financing arrangements. The realisation of certain projects giving substance to State policy sometimes calls for applications to funds from fifteen different 'pots'<sup>8</sup>. The institutional relationship between the various tiers of government and between the departments themselves does nothing to facilitate the actual implementation of State policy.

A third characteristic of the system which makes it more difficult to meet the social challenges in question is formed by the way in which citizens and businesses are involved in policy. Chapters 2 and 3 took stock of the fact that businesses, citizens and social institutions have become increasingly 'reflexive'. This reflexivity manifests itself in a heightened perception of quality and the desire to be involved in the formulation of policy. Political consent alone nowadays provides less of an assurance for the legitimacy of policy. Generic concepts, contours, quotas and nationally elaborated construction and location programmes fit into this context less well. How can the system now deal legitimately with such wishes? Given the current dynamism of the economy businesses are demanding optimal business development conditions from municipalities or provinces. When these wishes are accommodated this tends to undermine the prevailing system of political evaluation based on planning. Early agreement between the authorities and like-minded social actors inevitably runs into public consultation requirements in the next stage. If the proposal fails to do justice to the numerous interests at stake, such consultation will rapidly turn into an obstacle, as outlined in Chapter 3.

#### *Towards a revised deliberation structure*

The ROM-area policy or the diagonal planning in the VINEX are examples of initiatives in the physical-planning field that are intended to strengthen the developmental orientation of spatial policy in a legitimate manner. These initiatives are however extra-legal, meaning that all the existing procedures still need to be completed after a covenant is agreed. Such covenants can also run into objectors who did not form part of the closed-circle deliberation.

<sup>8</sup> This complaint was recently reiterated by R. Welschen speaking on behalf of the 21 big cities apart from the 'big four'. *De Volkskrant*, 13 September 1997.

A new structure needs to be worked out here. Chapter 3 indicted a number of successful initiatives, e.g. where the discussion about land-use was linked to the elaboration of concrete development plans. The co-ordination of ideas concerning land-use in the areas in question was as it were *integrated*, with a shared commitment gradually being built up. In addition the bureaucratic co-ordination was not procedurally separated from a later stage of building up grassroots support. The design activities took place within parameters laid down by the State, where the boundaries between administrative actors and social actors were less prominent than in the official planning system. This approach appeared to meet the needs of the more reflexive businesses, citizens and social institutions. Development is not to be readily denied, but mutual co-ordination within predetermined parameters often proves feasible. This does however mean the far-reaching qualification of the significance of *generic* concepts for conducting an effective spatial policy. In the efforts to arrive at 'integrative' planning, generic State-imposed concepts often proved an obstacle, both for the optimal regional co-ordination of the various interests and for optimal spatial quality.

According to the Council, these three problem complexes – as summarised in Table 4.2 – call for a reorientation of the spatial planning institutional structure. The existing structure is highly geared towards a specific goal: accommodating the need for urbanisation with an optimal guarantee of legal certainty. The horizontal and vertical deliberation structure as well as the formalised room for public participation in the planning stages are however no longer able to do justice to the new challenges facing spatial policy. These tasks can no longer be translated in terms of a fixed territorially organised system of public administration<sup>9</sup>. A network society consists of a complex interplay of mutually overlapping networks, each with its own structure and scope of operation and responding to different directional signals. This simultaneously reduces the value that the operative deliberation structure of spatial planning has for the realisation of certain publicly endorsed goals.

**Table 4.2 Challenges for the deliberation structure**

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- (1) Sector/facet system and emphasis on communicative power structures based on the use of spatial concepts and the formulation of spatial plans is running into problems now that 'dual-harness interests' (i.e. agriculture and housing) are disappearing. Sectoral policy is assuming facet-type overtones. There is a growing emphasis on projects rather than plans, and the conceptual integration and broad suprasectoral deliberation through the PKB procedure is running into trouble.
  - (2) The decentralised structure of the planning system makes it difficult to take up regional and national challenges (esp. protection) effectively; at the same time social developments presuppose supra-municipal deliberation in order to realise such objectives as rural diversity and regional and supraregional spatial co-ordination. Vertical co-ordination is less effective due to different authority structures and the fallacy of composition in which local political administrators are expected to push through national policy goals that are at variance with the wishes of the local grassroots.
  - 3) The division between (administrative) co-ordination and (public) support has become increasingly ineffective as a result of the changing relationship between the citizen and government.
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The increasing pressure on the existing institutional arrangements is now recognised<sup>10</sup>. The discrepancy between planning systems and the changing

<sup>9</sup> Cf. also Scientific Council for Government Policy, *Staat zonder land* (State without a Territory); Reports to the Government no. 54, The Hague, Sdu Uitgevers, 1998.

<sup>10</sup> See for example the contributions written for the RPD exercise *Planningsstelsel in bestuurlijk perspectief* (The planning system in administrative perspective), described in this report in section 2.5, and the contribution by E.C. Drexhage and M.H.B. Pen-Soetermeer, 'Het omgekeerde planningsstelsel: kiezen en samenwerken' (The inverse planning system: choosing and co-operating); *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*, no. 3, 1996, pp. 4-9.

social reality has been widely discussed in the international literature <sup>11</sup>. In a certain sense it is moreover a *political/ideological choice* as to whether the lack of hierarchy in the organisation of spatial planning is problematised at a given point. As noted previously by De Ridder and Schut: the functioning of the planning system has never been uncontroversial over the years, the legislation has continually been tampered with and the ultimate goal has in fact consistently been that of filling the gap between planning and implementation <sup>12</sup>. The reform of the system aimed at reducing that gap is outlined in the next section.

### 4.3. Reorientation of spatial policy

On the basis of the analysis above the Council calls for a reorientation of the existing institutional and substantive frameworks. By means of selective intervention and institutional change it is perfectly feasible to gear spatial policy more effectively to the requirements laid down for an effective and legitimate system of spatial policy in a network society. In this section the Council outlines the contours of a *spatial development policy*. To begin with a number of general principles are defined. This is followed by recommendations for a restructuring of the existing deliberation structure and the reform of the deliberation framework (sections 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 respectively). In this regard the Council is aiming at a more active and development-oriented approach towards spatial policy and thus to contribute to the debate about the institutional and conceptual reform of spatial policy. It should be emphasised that this type of reconsideration will take time and research and calls for extensive discussion. At the same time it is clear that this is an urgent challenge, if only because spatial policy is set to evolve in the years ahead into one of the most important opportunities for legitimate policy competition in an ever more open European playing field. Given that context, the substantive and institutional frameworks for spatial policy must not just be clear; it is also important for the institutional framework to be recognised as a common basis for political deliberation and decision-making.

#### 4.3.1 General principles of spatial development policy

A 'spatial development policy' takes as its point of departure a dynamic approach towards spatial planning and seeks to translate this into institutional arrangements and substantive orientations. This approach is consistent with the problem analysis as presented above, and also with the results of a number of experiments developed partly within the system of spatial planning and partly elsewhere. The key point is that precisely in the recognition of dynamism there are opportunities to co-ordinate the various and often conflicting wishes and interests in a legitimate manner. Key concepts are *differentiation* and *selectivity*.

The most fundamental substantive break from the existing system is the departure from generic national spatial concepts; if anything *differentiation* becomes the starting point. The Council considers that the spatial and social dynamics can no longer be tied down in generic concepts such as urban nodes, the compact city or compact urban regions, as these impose a highly standardised development pattern on cities and regions. As an alternative to

<sup>11</sup>] J. Innes, 'Planning Institutions in Crisis'; *Planning Theory*, 10/11, 1994; P. Hall, 'The Future of the Metropolis and its Form'; *Regional Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, 1997, pp. 211-220; P. Hall, *Megacities, World Cities and Global Cities*; Amsterdam, Stichting Megacities, 1997.

<sup>12</sup>] Quoted in Drexhage and Pen, op. cit., p. 5.

generic concepts, 'argumentative' concepts are introduced<sup>13</sup>. The preceding chapters for example brought out the value of concepts such as urban landscapes or of approaching the Netherlands as an 'oeuvre' of varying, consistently high quality landscape elements. These are 'open' concepts, each of which specifically calls for an area-specific elaboration and its own argumentation: spatial quality refers to the way in which ideas on the 'basic qualities' of a particular area are exploited. A generic concept such as the compact city impedes such an argumentative approach.

Such an approach in no way implies a rejection of national policy. The latter will, however, obtain far more strategic characteristics and hence be much more selective than at present. The State draws up a 'national spatial structure', setting out spatial elements of supra-regional importance. On the one hand this concerns the national infrastructure (i.e. the organisation of the most important connections and identification of the most important economic engines) and, on the other, the national landscape network, designating areas of ecological and also cultural/historical interest. This is a coarse-mesh structure in which those elements are identified which the State considers need to be respected in regional or local planning. This national spatial structure expresses the special national responsibility for spatial and economic development and the diversity of the national landscape. The national government defines the national structure and determines the projects of national interest. To some extent this means that the agenda of national spatial planning is relieved but in other respects it will become more burdensome. As emerged above, insufficient attention has been devoted in the past to preserving or strengthening the diversity of the national landscape.

A central element of a spatial development policy is the principle of the variable distribution of planning responsibilities. This is discussed in section 4.3.2. The central notion is that the State initially limits strategic policy to the aforementioned national network and otherwise facilitates high quality planning at regional and local level by actively promoting an ongoing high quality debate and by providing funding. The variability is expressed in the fact that the State can assume planning powers where it considers this to be necessary. To begin with the State leaves matters to lower levels of government, only laying down as necessary the basic quality criteria that need to be respected by local and provincial government. These are derivatives from the national spatial structure. The State can for example inject the spatial structure of the rivers landscape as a basic quality criterion for planning purposes. In addition the State can define *Leitmotive*. In order to prevent a dull uniformity in spatial quality, the State can indicate what type of development should dominate in a particular area. This could for example entail the development of a region into a sub-metropolitan area after a station for high-speed trains has been constructed or the region has been developed into a leisure and recreation landscape. In principle the State will only do so if autonomous regional planning is in its view failing to exploit the available potential properly or if certain attributes are under threat. The third and strongest form of interference is the designation of an area as a national project. In such cases the State will in principle arrogate all the powers to itself as it considers that supra-regional interests are at stake which are at variance with local and regional interests. This could for example be applied for the active protection of the most valuable parts of the Green Heart.

<sup>13</sup> For an elaboration of this argumentative approach see F. Fischer and J. Forester (eds.), *The Argumentative Turn in Policy and Planning*; Durham, Duke University Press, 1993; and Patsy Healey, 'The communicative turn in planning theory and its implications for spatial strategy formation'; *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, vol. 23, 1996, pp. 217-234.

The aforementioned approach involves a break from the current institutional and conceptual points of departure in that a spatial development policy would combine:

1. a selective national strategic policy with integrative design at regional level;
2. spatial planning with spatial investments and vice versa; and
3. explicit political goal formulation with the introduction of new and independent control bodies.

These three points are discussed in turn below.

A spatial development policy endorses the desirability of a national strategic policy in broad terms but puts greater emphasis on the importance of *integrative design* at regional level. In an international context the Dutch tradition of *national* spatial planning is an institutional advantage; in this way strategic development projects can be identified in good time and got off the ground effectively. At the same time the regions are given more space to respond effectively to emerging spatial patterns. In this regard the scale of the regions will differ according to the spatial challenges at stake. Spatial development policy does not call for any reorganisation of the administrative layers or administrative territories but calls for the facilitation of temporary co-operation arrangements in designated 'development areas'. The notion of integrative design abandons any notion of integrality in planning, emphasising instead the possibilities for accommodating the various interests, wishes and claims on the basis of concrete development designs *as far as possible*. In this respect the development of 'exploratory designs' requires further elaboration. This approach qualifies the importance of overall concept formulation and co-ordination at national level: design only becomes meaningful at regional level<sup>14</sup>. Regional circumstances consistently lay down different demands or other points of reference for spatial design. Seen in this light State policy should be concerned with determining the spatial parameters for the development of a particular area. That this will result in greater differentiation is clear enough. As long as the parameters are respected this would however provide no reason for State intervention.

In addition a spatial development policy is based on the desirability of linking spatial planning directly to spatial investments – this instead of the currently characteristic division between conceptual planning and financing, and so as to strengthen policy effectiveness. Under this system a greater emphasis than at present is placed on the government's *duty of implementation*: if the government develops a vision for a particular area this must have consequences. By linking planning to investment a strong basis is created for a new generation of governance instruments; public participation is no longer primarily related to conceptual planning but to concrete development plans that will be implemented. This will substantially strengthen the commitment to and importance of the debate. This linkage also works the other way round: a spatial development policy states that investments with major spatial consequences should be linked to planning. At present there are major investment programmes for the organisation of rural areas that are however not linked to planning. The Land-Use Act, the development of the National Ecological Network and rural renewal are three programmes which, together, account for annual spatial investment amounting to nearly

<sup>14</sup> In that sense the network society therefore calls for an increase in scale in the tradition of spatial design, which has so far taken place primarily at the level of neighbourhoods and urban inter-relationships. This therefore calls for a substantive repositioning of the design disciplines such as urban design and landscape architecture. See for example J. Schrijnen, *Manifest – Tijd voor Stedebouw, Landschapsarchitectuur en Infrastructuurontwerp* (Manifest – Time for Urban Design, Landscape Architecture and Infrastructure Design); Amsterdam, BNS, 1995; or W. Reh, 'Nieuw in de polderbioscoop' (New in the polder cinema); *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*, no. 5, 1997, pp. 23-29.



900 million guilders <sup>15</sup>. By linking these budgets to an integrated design at regional level much more spatial quality can be generated with sectoral money. A development policy aims at the multiple exploitation of a particular investment <sup>16</sup>. This linkage of spatial investments to planning should also apply to investments taking place in the context of the ICES (Interdepartmental Committee for Strengthening the Economic Structure).

Finally a spatial development policy emphasises the importance of *political goal formulation* and links this politicisation to the introduction of strong checks and balances. Precisely when the institutional capacity is strengthened greater attention should be devoted to the quality of opinion-formation and deliberation and, in particular, to the linkage between these two processes. In particular this is required in order to avert the dangers noted in Chapter 3 of premature coalition formation between government authorities and strong parties. Important aspects are clear structures of accountability and strengthening the functions of supervision of accessibility to and correct planning procedures during the planning process and of an intensive quality debate. The linkage of public participation and administrative co-ordination is in the interests of both effectiveness and legitimacy. When development initiatives first surface, the political system takes the lead with a concrete proposal, after which an extended phase is provided in which a number of practical variants can be tabled. In parallel a process of coalition formation takes place among both governmental and social actors. This second stage, in particular, will differ radically from present practice and presupposes new institutional frameworks and a clear definition of the process required. A spatial development policy as proposed above implies an open approach towards the planning process, which will not function properly without the elaboration of new institutional checks and balances. Every effort must be taken to ensure that all the relevant stakeholders can have their say and that various development variants are taken into consideration. The supervision and control of this process cannot be in the same hands as the political responsibility for co-ordination and implementation.

#### 4.3.2 Further elaboration of the deliberation structure

The defective spatial planning system cannot be viewed totally in isolation. The lack of effective steering instruments was noted in section 4.2. Although there are good historical reasons for this, this lack of scope for *direct* spatial policy fits in poorly with the new definition of tasks by the government and the new attitudes towards effective spatial policy. The government recently emphasised the need for pro-active action in order to guarantee and strengthen the Netherlands' competitive position in a globalising economy. In this regard the Dutch government is not alone <sup>17</sup>. The evolving network society also lays down additional preconditions for the deliberation structure. This present report has indicated that the centre of gravity will in the future need to shift from internal governmental co-ordination to social coalition formation. The Council considers the development of adequate governance structures to constitute an important challenge for the coming period. By the term 'governance' the Council wishes to point up the fact that spatial

<sup>15]</sup> Figures from the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, *Structuurschema Groene Ruimte: het landelijk gebied de moeite waard* (Green Space Structure Scheme: Rural Areas are Worth the Trouble); The Hague, Sdu uitgeverij, 1993.

<sup>16]</sup> The comparison between the negative long-term effects of Expo'92 in Seville and the way in which Barcelona made use of the 1992 Olympic Games for more general investments in the city may serve as an illustration.

<sup>17]</sup> In a comparative study studie Healey, Khakee, Motte and Needham point to the more general development: 'Evolving out of a welfare state inheritance, European planning and governance systems are turning pro-active and developmental.' (in P.Healey et al., *Making Strategic Spatial Plans – Innovation in Europe*; London, UCL Press, 1997, p. 293).

policy needs to be directed to an even greater extent towards the securing of legitimacy<sup>18</sup>. Policy gains in effectiveness to the extent in which it succeeds in gaining the confidence of the society in which it needs to be implemented<sup>19</sup>. In order to strengthen the institutional capacity a new generation of administrative instruments needs to be developed: the 'old' public participation formula is inadequate for this purpose<sup>20</sup>. In this light the Council previously developed a new procedure for the decision-making on major projects<sup>21</sup>. This too argued that simply improving internal administrative co-ordination did not provide a solution. The problems and challenges formulated in section 4.1 make clear that the existing linear linkage of procedural co-ordination within the national government, between the various governments and between the government and society ('public support') will continue to create problems.

The principles of a spatial development policy suggest that spatial policy should in the coming period be conducted more directly on the basis of active and broadly based social coalition formation concerning specific development proposals. Chapter 3 illustrated how the combination of the dated system and the new administrative/political culture of coalition formation is undermining the political/democratic deliberation on spatial development. If the co-operating governments enter into one-sided coalitions with powerful groups at an early stage, they will rapidly find themselves ranged against other interest groups and citizens. A policy consistently generating a polarised climate ends up undermining its own effectiveness. In the Council's view the following preconditions are important for improving the system.

*The principle of a variable distribution of planning responsibilities*

A spatial development policy could take the institutional form of the *variable distribution of planning responsibilities*. The notion is that, depending on the planning interests in a particular area and the degree of success of local parties in ensuring strategic interests, the State can delegate, transfer or take over planning responsibilities. In a number of cases State policy will therefore be intensified while in other cases the State will stand back more; in this way greater *selectivity* can be achieved.

The Council envisages three kinds of spatial policy with different institutionalised planning responsibilities. The basis for national spatial policy could be laid down in a *plan for the national spatial structure*. This is the prime responsibility of the national government. The Key Planning Decision (PKB) procedure might be suitable for this purpose. Three categories of areas are distinguished in this national spatial structure:

1. *basic areas*: in many areas no specific policy decisions by the national government will be required that need to be taken into account in drawing up other plans. The existing distribution of powers will therefore be retained. The State will essentially confine itself to specifying the basic quality criteria (where necessary) for the environment, which can then if so desired be implemented throughout the existing channels. These quality criteria relate to fundamental characteristics of spatial development, differing from one area to another, that

<sup>18]</sup> See also Offe, *Modernity and the State*; Cambridge, Polity, 1996.

<sup>19]</sup> See for example R.D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work – Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*; Princeton, Princeton UP, New Jersey; A. Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*; Cambridge, Polity, 1990.

<sup>20]</sup> See for example V. Bekkers, 'Co-productie in het milieubeleid: op zoek naar een nieuwe sturingsconceptie' (Co-production in environmental policy: in search of a new steering conception); *Bestuurswetenschappen*, no. 3, 1996, pp. 177-194; J.E. Innes, 'Planning Through Consensus Building'; *APA Journal*, 1996, pp. 460-472.

<sup>21]</sup> Scientific Council for Government Policy, *Decision-Making on Complex Projects*; Reports to the Government no. 46, The Hague, Sdu uitgeverij, 1994.

need to be maintained or strengthened. The State would refrain from generic spatial concepts;

2. *development areas*: areas where supra-local interests are at stake and an active development planning system is desirable. This may involve an area where a particular intervention – for example the establishment of an high-speed railway station – in fact generates a new spatial constellation. Alternatively an area might be designated as a ‘development area’, because for example the construction of the National Ecological Network decided upon by the national government has such a marked impact on the region that a more fundamental redevelopment is called for. In another case there might be a region where, as seen by the State or province, primacy should be given to conservation but where – on account of the multiplicity of conflicting interests – conservation cannot be achieved simply by means of conservationist policies. The State would have the ability to designate particular regions as development areas if it considered that the spatial developments provided justification for doing so. Municipalities working together could also take the initiative. In both cases active development planning would initially take place under provincial direction. The Provincial Executive will play an important role in promoting the necessary co-ordination. It would be enabled to do so when it has the main funding at its disposal and furthermore has the powers to take over the planning powers if these were not being properly discharged. Where active intervention by the province also failed to achieve the desired result, the State could assume these powers as a last resort. In this case we have a national project (see below); it is, however, inconceivable that the local parties would not seize the opportunities on offer. In the case of extreme need executive activities could also shift to the Provincial Executive or the State, although the co-ordinating responsibilities would remain a matter for the municipalities in question.
3. *national projects*: in areas where conservation is a matter of national importance (e.g. wildlife areas or areas of outstanding natural importance) or where development projects (e.g. infrastructure) are a matter of national importance, the State would have the ability to assume the planning powers. Examples are the construction of a high-speed rail link or an accessibility plan for the Randstad (see below). The State would need to have a decisive voice, both for determining the basic quality criteria and in formulating the *Leitmotive* – i.e. the aims and guidelines for future spatial development, rather than concrete land-use concepts – and in *evaluating* the various interests at stake. Where the State took over the relevant planning powers this should be matched by a duty of implementation on the part of the State.

For many areas, the variable distribution of planning responsibilities would mean a withdrawal from active involvement by the State (the basic areas). The State would need to assign other areas the status of development area on strategic grounds. This may be because the State considers developments in a particular area to be heading in the wrong direction or because opportunities were at risk of being lost. In all cases the State would initially provide the regional authorities with the opportunity of coming up with a development proposal. In the first instance this approach places more responsibilities with the municipalities and the province; only if local government fell short would the State assume responsibilities itself. Clearly, this system leaves many questions unanswered. The idea is however that an effective national strategic policy could be combined in this way with the introduction of new governments arrangements at regional level.

Development areas and national projects are of course the most important elaboration of the spatial development policy. It was suggested above that spatial planning should be consistently linked to spatial investments and vice versa. An example of the latter is the development of the Peel region. Under the spatial development philosophy the restructuring of the pig indus-

try in this area would provide grounds for regional development planning. The substantial sums now being deployed for sectoral restructuring would in that case contribute towards a plan for the development of the spatial quality and restored economic vigour of this region. A division of responsibilities is set out in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3 Variable distribution of planning responsibilities**

	Basic areas	Development areas	National projects
<b>Definition of spatial basic criteria (conservation values)</b>	State	State	State
<b>Determination of Leitmotive for development</b>	No State involvement; possible involvement by (co-operating) municipalities themselves	State; possibly at the initiative of provinces and/or municipalities	State
<b>Evaluation</b>	Municipalities	Municipalities under provincial direction; stakeholders	State
<b>Planning power</b>	Municipalities	Municipalities, possibly to be taken over by province	State
<b>Approval</b>	Province	Province / State	-
<b>Duty of implementation/ investment fund</b>	- Fund/co-ordinated	Provincial Investment implementation by municipalities	State

This rough outline does no more than set out the contours of the proposed approach. All sorts of variants would be conceivable in practice. The system for the basic areas would be consistent with that in the Spatial Planning Act (WRO). The development areas and national projects would, however, call for radical adjustments. The underlying philosophy of the spatial development policy differs finally in major respects from the present system: it is based on active policies and cuts across the existing administrative structure. The variable assignment of responsibilities, in particular, undermines the decentralised system of the WRO. Other *new* elements concern:

- in the event of national projects, planning responsibilities are taken away from lower levels of government;
- designation, incorporation, scheduling and facilitation – both financial and by ‘introducing’ various existing forms of development-oriented policy – by the State;
- selective use of integral and department area-wide plans; pared-down planning/policy document system at national level;
- pooling of government investment; fund formation for regional development plans;
- regional elaboration with large measure of freedom by various levels of government in interaction;
- a directive and if necessary deputising role by the province;
- clarity will have to be provided concerning the development direction for the area and concerning the investments and other activities that the governments concerned will be required to carry out.

Important *existing* regulatory principles, such as public participation arrangements, legal protection and legal certainty, should not be tampered with. A legal basis for planning policy will remain indispensable. Whether this can be arranged the most effectively via the existing zoning plan or in some other way remains to be worked out. What is clear is that the principle of the variable distribution of responsibilities presupposes at the least that the zoning plan powers could be transferred to higher levels of government.

#### *National and supra-sectoral co-ordination*

The new structure should substantially lighten the State's co-ordination task. Naturally consultations will be required on numerous decisions with spatial implications. If, however, the pretensions to integrality are dropped the planning/policy document system can also be streamlined. At present this is highly geared towards mutual co-ordination. The result is a plethora of policy documents and the squandering of intellectual capacity. In many cases policy documents operate as an instrument for internal administrative co-ordination and their goal appears achieved upon publication. This administrative centrism not infrequently impedes public consensus-formation. The new approach being argued for here provides greater room for regional solutions. The Green Space Structure Scheme, for example, could be much more concise, as could a Fifth National Physical Planning Report, which is currently being prepared. Clearly, placing the burden of co-ordination at regional level will require the institutional structure to be modified correspondingly. Given the new philosophy with respect to the relationship between the State, the provinces and the municipalities it is conceivable that a number of agencies in The Hague would act in a more facilitative capacity for the regions. Precisely if 'quality on location' had to be elaborated this could constitute a clear task for the National Spatial Planning Agency (RPD) new-style.

Under a spatial development policy, planning would be consistently linked to spatial investments. In that light and given the analysis in Chapter 3, the Council recommends that the financially oriented ICES and the conceptually oriented National Spatial Planning Commission (RPC) no longer have side-by-side responsibilities for policy preparation. The strength of the infrastructure approach – as set out in section 3.2 – must serve the interests of spatial planning quality. A clearly defined place for supra-sectoral deliberation is a fundamental pre-requisite. In the case of the ministerial sub-council for spatial planning, this would provide room for just one bureaucratic preparatory body for spatial issues. The RPC and ICES should be merged to this end.

#### *Checks and balances for spatial policy*

In the approach outlined above, *political goal-formulation* occupies a crucial place. The government must not prevent public consensus-formation but should concentrate on actively channelling such processes. The Council does however consider that – where resort is made to the government – efforts should be made to prevent the excessive superimposition of like-minded interests. In the interests of legitimation a new system of checks and balances needs to be worked out. The distinction may for example be drawn between deliberation by shareholders and by stakeholders. Shareholder planning is based around one-sided coalitions, while in a stakeholder democracy a much wider range of relevant interests is taken into account. Precisely now that specific efforts are being made to draw private parties into spatial developments the risks of shareholder planning need to be noted. Under the latter system strategic developments are based on unduly limited deliberation. The spatial development policy being proposed here is based on the stakeholder principle in the interests of both legitimacy and effectiveness. Democratic planning requires the active identification of stakeholders and

their involvement in the planning process. Essential features of such an approach are the politically legitimated selection of those concerned, the activation and stimulation of the selected stakeholders, the use of integrated design and the knowledge that once accepted plans will in fact also be implemented. A politically legitimated selection of the parties concerned presupposes that not just players with a positive interest in a particular development are taken into consideration but also groups which will be adversely affected by certain developments as well as groups, individuals or organisations which can be expected to make a relevant contribution to the debate (the latter with a view to the quality of preference formation).

Activation of the stakeholders forms part of the role of the politically responsible director of the planning process. The way in and extent to which parties are involved in the planning process belongs very clearly to the tasks delegated to the director. Finally, willingness to undertake integrative planning calls for on-going problem-structuring in which new viewpoints must potentially result in adjustments to the programme of requirements. Only in these circumstances will the stakeholders' input be taken seriously and can there be any shared responsibility for the outcome.

#### *The think tank function for spatial planning*

In the reorientation towards an active development policy the nature of government policy would also change. The argumentative concepts presuppose an active contribution of the national government towards the quality debate. This creates a function for an independent body that would draw the State's attention to forthcoming spatial challenges, even where these were at variance with current policy or the announced policy intentions. Under the WRO this function is performed by the National Spatial Planning Agency (RPD). The proposed system (see Table 4.3) also implies a different task and function for a national agency. With the disappearance of generic concepts it is important that various options for spatial policy are put forward, that alternative spatial designs are tabled and that the spatial consequences of different perspectives and of non-action are brought out. A spatial think tank would have the function of supporting and guiding the political debate from a separate and independent position. Such independence is not easily combined with a policy agency that is directly involved with policy practice and which cannot help being dominated by numerous administrative agreements and instrumentally elaborated policy options. Such a combination inevitably frustrates the scope for an open, unprejudiced approach towards potentially important spatial developments. One of the reasons why the various 'big projects' in the Dutch planning sphere have become so controversial may reside in the fact that problems were not anticipated in good time and that it was not possible to work out various development modalities, including those at variance with the prevailing political preferences. This constitutes a clearly delineated task for the future. Whether the think tank function can be provided for by a repositioning of the RPD or by means of other institutional arrangements will not be explored here. The Council would however note that the differentiation of responsibilities between the State, provinces/regions and municipalities has implications for the organisation and content of the think tank function.

### **4.3.3 Further elaboration of the deliberation framework**

The philosophy of a spatial development policy has far-reaching consequences for the nature of the deliberation framework. Generic concepts give way to open concepts such as urban landscapes or to approach the Dutch landscape as an *oeuvre*. Such concepts can give expression to the need to conduct a national strategic policy in order to achieve the high-grade spatial differentiation of the Netherlands as a region within Europe. This also implies

that this is not the place for a detailed treatment of the potential conceptual successors to (for example) the compact city as an elaboration of the basic principle of the concentration of urbanisation. It may however be noted that open concepts such as urban landscapes, park cities or 'green metropolises' are based to a greater extent on the interweaving of 'red' and 'green'<sup>22</sup>.

The challenges summarised in section 4.1 indicate that the State would have special responsibilities in this area. These could be tackled in various ways. In the first place generic concepts give way to the definition of the basic qualities of a particular area and the *Leitmotive* for development areas. The definition of basic qualities could be conducive to the diversified elaboration of urbanisation. Basic qualities lay down the parameters within which municipalities and regions are able to work out spatial policy. These involve specific spatial features. Secondly the national government will need to indicate which landscapes it considers to be of such importance that these should in fact be a matter of State responsibility. Examples include parts of the rivers landscape or the Zeeuws-Hollandse delta<sup>23</sup>. Such landscapes lay down special constraints on spatial development. Given the amendment to the deliberation structure proposed above, the State would itself assume responsibility for implementation if national policy were at variance with local development wishes. The fallacy of composition in the present system noted previously – in which local politicians would need to implement State policy against the wishes of their own rank and file – would be eliminated by transferring planning responsibility in such cases to State level. This approach naturally presupposes an updated debate concerning valuable and less valuable landscapes in the Netherlands.

#### *Infrastructure and spatial cohesion*

This report does provide grounds for specifically examining the relationship between spatial planning and mobility policy. Spatial policy should capitalise to a greater extent on the 'infrastructure approach', the emergence of which was noted in Chapter 3. At present this approach is subject to numerous drawbacks. This is partly the result of the fact that the prevailing concepts of spatial policy – by which infrastructural development remains formally bound – have not explicitly taken up the infrastructure as one of the underlying principles of government policy. The challenge consists of utilising the potential of the infrastructure as a structuring agent in spatial policy. In this way infrastructural policy could evolve into a new 'dual-harness interest'.

The emerging contours of a network society emphasise the necessity for structurally adapting the deliberation framework in line with this dimension. Mobility and accessibility policy on the one hand and spatial planning on the other can no longer be kept separate. In this respect a posthumous tribute must be paid to Le Cosquino de Bussy. As early as 1958 the former Director-General of the Department of Public Works and Water Management warned against the fixation on spatial planning goals without taking into account the consequences for the handling of traffic<sup>24</sup>. Now that the importance of proximity is changing and accessibility has become the main consideration as to why people and businesses set up where they do,

<sup>22]</sup> See also Reijndorp, *op. cit.*

<sup>23]</sup> See S. Hemel, 'Nieuwe opgave: open ruimte openen' (New challenge: opening up open spaces); *Stedebouw en Ruimtelijke Ordening*, vol. 78, no. 3, 1997, pp. 22-26.

<sup>24]</sup> This even provided grounds for Le Cosquino de Bussy to take a minority standpoint in the report 'Ontwikkeling Westen des Lands' (Development of the west of the country); see W. van der Ham et al., *Tweehonderd jaar Rijkswaterstaat; Zaltbommel*, 1998.

spatial policy can no longer be cast in this mould. This does not mean that efforts should no longer be made to achieve the concentration of urbanisation or to prevent the bankruptcy of the (big) city but does call for a reconsideration of the current concepts and implies an acknowledgement of the increase in scale taking place within social processes, especially the polycentric nature of urban regions. It also provides the opportunity for strengthening the basis of a strategic spatial policy: the government should take much greater cognisance of the prevailing interrelationships in combination with the nature of land-use.

In recent decades the government has lost many a steering instrument. The development of the infrastructure, however, has given the national government enormous 'space-structuring' powers. Infrastructure policy has a direct bearing on spatial development and this needs to be reflected in both planning and the administrative organisation. The linkage of mobility and accessibility policy to spatial planning could take the form of 'selective accessibility planning'. In this regard mobility policy is lifted out of the sectoral sphere and accessibility is approached on a more differentiated basis than at present<sup>25</sup>. The recognition of the space-structuring strength of the mobility infrastructure leads to the recommendation no longer to pursue a *general* increase in accessibility but to strengthen the latter in a selective and comprehensive manner in strategic locations. This means giving up a generic demand-led mobility policy. The way in which the significance of selective accessibility planning could be incorporated into a spatial development policy is illustrated below on the basis of two examples.

One of the government interventions with the greatest space-structuring power is the introduction of high-speed trains. These train links compress both the time and the space between the places for which a high-speed railway station is planned. The government intervention changes the spatial organisation of the Netherlands as a coherent region. This is being done on strategic grounds and presupposes large-scale investment. Spatial policy is therefore required to respond to the new infrastructure. In order to pay back the investment a different type of development of the zones in the vicinity of the high-speed railway stations is called for. To this end the regions surrounding the high-speed railway stations could be designated as development areas (see example in box below).

#### **The designation of a development area for a high-speed railway station**

Under the government decision to construct a high-speed link to the eastern hinterland, the high-speed train will be stopping in both towns U (Utrecht) and A (Arnhem). This will create new opportunities for town A but also adds responsibilities. The Burgomaster of A recognises these responsibilities and argues for the development of the station environs in order to prevent the high-speed train service being withdrawn from town A at a future point for lack of passengers. The State goes a step further. In its *Plan voor de ruimtelijke hoofdstructuur* (Plan for the National Spatial Structure) the government establishes a link between the advent of the high-speed rail network, the forthcoming Betuwe Line (a new rail link for the transportation of goods entering the country through the port of Rotterdam) and the advent of the multi-modal distribution node to the south of town A. The government positions town A together with the more southerly town N (Nijmegen) as an urban development zone between the Randstad and the most important economic hinterland. A new spatial constellation is generated calling for development planning, on the one hand to exploit the inherent new opportunities and on the other to do maximum justice to what is spatially valuable.

<sup>25</sup> See for example F. le Clercq, *De spannende relatie tussen verkeer en verstedelijking* (The tense relationship between traffic and urbanisation); oration, Amersfoort, Twijnstra Guddé Management Consultants, 1996.



The government therefore declares the region around A and the more southerly town N as development areas. It notes that the advent of an high-speed station specifically assumes more than just office development around the station. An high-speed station has a much wider knock-on effect and calls for more than just a clearly localised 'key project'. The number of passengers will be primarily determined by the linkage of the high-speed rail network to a high-grade public transport system, especially at regional level. The government notes the potential of the region for the development of economic activities (especially for the less well educated) but also notes the looming mobility problems and a number of threats to the basic qualities in this area: the influx of employment in services and value added logistics calls for an integrated design in order to prevent the leading features, such as the lateral moraines, the river landscape and the Veluwe Fringe, from being lost in the medium term due to the cumulation of a number of small projects. The government suggests that the development of the area might be approached primarily in terms of a sub-metropolitan environment.

The region is invited to submit plans for the spatial development of the area. On account of the national strategic importance the government holds up the prospects of funding on a very considerable scale. The government defines the following basic principles:

1. the general principle of 'selective accessibility planning': planning will need to ensure co-ordination with the energy-efficient mobility organisation. The construction of a refined regional transport network with clear points of connection is the obvious course in this respect; 'multiple effect': the investments must be demonstrably geared to achieving more goals than optimal economic development alone. A coherent regional transport strategy must underpin the spatial plans;
2. approaching the Dutch landscape as an 'oeuvre' means in the case of this area an orientation towards the landscape value of the lateral moraines, the river area and the Veluwe Fringe. A further precondition is the integration and where possible expansion of the national ecological network in the development area. In general there is a need to develop a convincing vision on spatial quality at regional level;
3. the development of a regionally co-ordinated cultural development plan with a view to giving substance to the sub-metropolitan conception, which must also ensure the utilisation of the opportunities afforded by an high-speed railway station for the development of an urban services economy;
4. a growth in employment that stands in relation to the public investment required.

The State announces a three-year period for planning and coalition-building. It charges the Province of Gelderland with overseeing and co-ordinating the planning and coalition-building. If no alternative development variants have been tabled after one year, the State reserves the right to take over the co-ordination itself. In that event the regional development area would be declared a 'national project' and powers would shift to the State or to an independent commission appointed by the State for that area and accountable to the government

Selective accessibility planning has implications for other strategic spatial interventions with respect to the three core problems: the increase in scale and the position of the Randstad, the inversion process and the development of rural areas. This may be clarified by taking the Randstad as an example.

#### *Selective accessibility planning as a conceptual basis for an active Randstad policy*

Now that accessibility has become an increasingly important component in determining the quality of a location, the big cities are at risk of losing out to still relatively accessible locations in rural areas. This migration from the cities generates benefits for private actors in the short term only. On the scale of the Randstad itself, the undirected construction of dwellings and businesses on highways in open countryside irrevocably results in the

medium term to a loss in accessibility at Randstad level. Moreover it often enforces high public investment in retrospect, linked with a demand-led policy. Selective accessibility planning would link the development of rural areas and metropolitan policy in a new way. Selective accessibility planning involves a quantum leap in thinking about the Randstad: it suggests turning the development of a superior mobility system at Randstad level into one of the main pillars of the national strategic spatial policy. In this way the big cities would be selectively strengthened and the relationship between the big cities and the rural areas separating them (i.e. the Green Heart and the areas separating The Hague and Rotterdam) would be restored.

The planner Peter Hall, who has long advocated the Dutch planning doctrine of the Randstad and Green Heart, recently warned that the polycentric structure of the Randstad was at risk of switching from an asset into a problem: conserving the Green Heart has resulted in expansion further afield and hence to relatively great distances between the various growth centres<sup>26</sup>. This threatened turnaround is all the more notable since the Randstad in fact has an enormous development potential on account of the long-standing Randstad/Green Heart linkage. The notion of the Randstad as a green metropolis fits in well with the type of city being called for in a network society. At the level of the Randstad/Green Heart it would certainly be feasible to set in motion a new form of urbanisation that was consistent with the new wishes and requirements. By means of selective accessibility planning it would be possible at this stage to anticipate the accommodation of urbanisation after the VINEX. This would appear the appropriate way of giving the current metaphor of 'Randstad Green World City' more substance. Specifically, such a selective accessibility planning would call for the construction of a metropolitan transport system linking the various centres and numerous sub-centres highly frequently and effectively. The development of an accessibility plan based on the *Leitmotiv* of the Randstad as an integrated green metropolis is a typical example of a national project.

#### **A national project: the accessibility plan for the Randstad**

In its *Plan voor de ruimtelijke hoofdstructuur* (Plan for the National Spatial Structure) the Government announces an active State policy for the development of the Randstad. In connection with the increase in scale in the socio-spatial and spatial-economic processes as well as the clear need for new residential and working environments in rural areas between the various cities, active policies are required. The notion of the Randstad as a green metropolis introduced as far back as the 1960s continues to provide the framework but also calls for the Randstad and the Green Heart to be approached as a coherent area and to be developed as such.

The Randstad needs to be regarded as a fragmented metropolis. In a North-Western European context this must be regarded as a potential: the spatial organisation of the area can be altered by a different infrastructural strategy and the Randstad can evolve into a metropolis of special quality as regards both the living environment (a metropolis on the sea, Green Heart) and 'interconnectivity'.

This presupposes that one of the evident problems in the Randstad is resolved, namely the relatively poor accessibility. The government is therefore introducing the accessibility plan for the Randstad, giving this the status of a 'national project'. This has far-reaching consequences. Elaboration of the accessibility strategy is the direct responsibility of the State. The planning powers are in principle transferred to the State. The latter appoints a Randstad transport authority with responsibility for the co-ordination of the various transport providers and for laying down the conditions under which they will operate. This Randstad transport authority will remain in existence after the completion of the project.

The objectives of the concentration of urbanisation and keeping open rural areas are

<sup>26]</sup> Hall, *Megacities, Worldcities and Global Cities*, op. cit.

realised by the direct linkage of urbanisation to transport nodes. In order to realise a metropolitan environment that is consistent with the economic and socio-cultural characteristics of the network society the central government opts in favour of the development of a metropolitan transport network drawing together the various (large and small) growth centres of the disparate polycentric structure of the Randstad. An accessibility plan for the Randstad seeks to exploit the existing and new infrastructure and especially the public transport nodes for often large-scale urbanisation, resulting on balance in a rising share in the national population and employment.

In connection with the accessibility plan the developments in the rural area are also cast in a different light. The State lays down the main contours of the new transport links and defines the surrounding areas as development areas – sometimes with a view to recreation, sometimes with a view to giving substance to urbanisation/new residential and employment locations. This enables the co-operating municipalities to respond to the new spatial constellations with development plans. The government makes clear that its aim is to use the (partly new) metropolitan rail infrastructure to determine the new residential and employment locations in the longer term. This implies that the State responds to the desire for the flexible accommodation of emerging spatial patterns, but that it also seeks to strengthen the establishment conditions in Randstad locations by means of the development of new inter-connectivity points.

The accessibility plan described above is, it must be underlined, more than just a matter of improving the accessibility of the big cities. Precisely in the areas between the big cities, selective accessibility planning can prove its worth by structuring the at present unfocused urbanisation and dampening the overflow to other areas. It implies giving up the taboo on exploiting the open countryside between cities. The selectivity is reflected in the stringent demands with respect to the accessibility of new development locations. In this regard the construction of a new transport system also becomes a means of exempting other areas from urbanisation. The ladder concept in the RPD study 'Ruimpad' deserves further elaboration in this regard<sup>27</sup>. Use can be made of the most recent findings with respect to the co-ordination of various kinds of rail infrastructure in German agglomerations such as Frankfurt.

Selective accessibility planning meets the need to link up a number of pressing spatial issues: the position of the big cities, the development of the 'rural intermediate areas' and the burgeoning urbanisation in the corridors. The position of the big cities would be strengthened by the realisation of a quality leap in 'interconnectivity' (i.e. the creation of a linkage between various transport facilities: high-speed rail network, air, cars, express trams and bicycles). Interconnectivity is an asset that can never be realised at suburban level. In this way the cities increasingly assume a profile consistent with the development of an urban services economy. These investments create new potential for the cities. The notion of the 'Network City' picked up in the VINEX Updating Report, under which development is based more specifically on the polycentric structure of the urban districts, is consistent with this. The analysis of this report suggests however that the challenge is in fact at a higher level of scale, mainly that of the Randstad as a whole.

Selective accessibility planning could also mean a move in the direction of a policy response towards corridor development. The latter needs to be analytically distinguished from the growth in economic activity, transport, logistics and distribution. Corridor development is essentially an *analytical* concept:

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment / National Spatial Planning Agency (RPD, *Kiezen voor bewegingsruimte – De toekomst van mobiliteit, verstedelijking en verkeersnetwerken verkend* (Opting for room to move – the future for mobility, urbanisation and transport networks); The Hague, VROM, 1997.

in the Dutch debate it refers to the rapid expansion of activity along the most important highways. Strategic spatial policy has to find a response to the transfer and distribution activities, which will continue to play an important role<sup>28</sup>. In this regard corridors are just one spatial variant, which often score poorly as regards rural harmonisation, linking up with employee pools in the cities and the handling of goods flows. Corridor development means that the kind of economic activity in which unskilled and semi-skilled unemployed labour from the big cities could find work is systematically removed from the available pools of employees. Under a selective accessibility planning approach, such activity would be concentrated in localities that could be reached from the urban centres. In addition this approach would link up the spatial accommodation of distribution activities with the most desirable handling of goods flows. Here multi-modality is the obvious guiding principle. This implies deliberate efforts towards another approach to distribution, which currently still relies heavily on road transport, but also lays down spatial parameters: accommodation primarily where multiple transport facilities are available or can be developed in due course. This 'ecological modernisation' of the logistics of distribution creates opportunities for industry (in the form of new logistics products) and for the expansion of the knowledge infrastructure under the ICES.

This could also give substance to the government's sustainability goals. In order to formulate a response to this acute problem the Council considers it vital for a dialogue with trade and industry, nature conservation and landscape organisations, local government and designers to be initiated. In the short term a number of specimen projects should be dedicated to the way in which distribution activity could be geographically accommodated<sup>29</sup>.

In a more general sense the selective differentiation of accessibility and connectivity would appear a good method for using the infrastructure to further the general objectives of spatial policy. This would not just enable concrete development opportunities to be created but would also make it more possible to achieve objectives to spare certain areas or to preserve certain landscapes by means of active policies<sup>30</sup>. Selective accessibility planning is accordingly a powerful instrument for enhancing spatial differentiation.

#### 4.4 Spatial development policy as a pluralist response

These policy recommendations provide spatial policy with a differentiated pluralist basis. It provides for a contemporary, more open planning approach that would benefit both the legitimacy and the effectiveness of spatial policy. The Council would underline the fact that the criticism of the present system should not be taken up without introducing a new system of checks and balances in its place. The report suggests distinct caution with respect to conclusions that the problems of the system should be perceived primarily in terms of effectiveness and accommodation. Spatial policy is more than the

<sup>28]</sup> See Chapter 3 and Zonneveld and Faludi, *op. cit.*

<sup>29]</sup> A. Guinée, 'De infrastructuur is toe aan nieuwe ontwerpconcepten' (The infrastructure is ready for new design concepts); *Blauwe Kamer / Profiel*, no. 3, 1997, pp. 34-39.

<sup>30]</sup> For a discussion of this topic see F. le Clercq, *op. cit.* Those who identify accessibility not as a goal but as a steering instrument arrive at interesting ideas. In a certain sense the openness of the Green Heart is threatened in particular by the continuing increase in accessibility. Urbanisation is concentrated around the slip roads of the highways criss-crossing the area. The Green Heart could possibly be protected much more effectively by regulating accessibility through the selective removal of slip roads, so that the relative accessibility would decline and distribution companies would set up elsewhere and the region would become less attractive for commuters. By way of logical extension, the notion that where the innovative Dutch nature development policy is concerned with the restoration of wasteland, a different infrastructure policy can result in the restoration of unsealed roads (see for the Green Heart debate Hemel, *op. cit.*).

accommodation of apparently autonomous social developments. The rationale behind a national spatial policy consists not just of creating new possibilities for economic or personal growth but also of *safeguarding* qualities which, in the absence of spatial policy, might otherwise be lost. Spatial policy is not just concerned with the utilisation of physical space but with handling mutually overlapping social spaces. This means that the problems surrounding spatial policy cannot be simply resolved by the more effective distribution of responsibilities. Most important of all is that a consensus concerning the institutional manner in which decisions are taken should be guaranteed in all cases.

The Council has published the following Reports to the Government

**First term of office**

- 1 Europese Unie (European Union), 1974.
- 2 Structuur van de Nederlandse economie (Structure of the Netherlands Economy), 1974.
- 3 Energiebeleid op langere termijn (Long-term Energy Policy), 1974. Reports 1 to 3 have been published in one volume.
- 4 Milieubeleid (Environment Policy), 1974.
- 5 Bevolkingsprognoses (Population Forecasts), 1974.
- 6 De organisatie van het openbaar bestuur (The Organization of Public Administration), 1975.
- 7 Buitenlandse invloeden op Nederland: Internationale migratie (Foreign Influence on the Netherlands: International Migration), 1976.
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