

## **Parkmanagement as a tool for careful industrial land use planning\***

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### ***Abstract***

*In the second half of the 1990s the combination of ecological and economic targets in industrial land use planning became an official part of spatial-economic policy in the Netherlands. A growing number of business locations is now being developed or re-developed as 'sustainable business sites'. At the same time 'parkmanagement' came into existence as a new tool for development and control of business sites for industry and services. Parkmanagement is now regarded as one of the obvious instruments to realize sustainable (or 'careful') land use on business parks. It is however a question whether local governments (which in the Dutch case are responsible for most land development schemes) are not going the wrong way to work in parkmanagement initiatives. There is a threat that local governments are welcoming parkmanagement as a fashionable way to impose new regulations on firm establishments, and ignore the evidence from practice. Such evidence shows that parkmanagement is most successful when organized with a involvement of private parties. This would also be more in line with the modern interaction-oriented planning theory (consensus planning). The paper shortly describes the principal dilemmas facing local governments in business site development, the theoretical options for influencing the development process of the sites, and the set of actions that could be part of a parkmanagement strategy. These can be arranged on a ladder or staircase of activities ranging from rather simple facilities serving individual firms' needs, such as maintenance and security, to more complex cooperation projects in combined transport or energy supply, and ultimately lead to schemes for connecting material flows of production processes. The successive stages of the staircase of business site facilities can be combined with different forms and stages of process organization.*

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## Parkmanagement as a tool for careful industrial land use planning

### **Introduction; careful industrial land use**

In the past two decades, two distinct development trends came together to create a new focus in business location development. One of these trends is an apparent segmentation in the demand for business locations, which created a market for business locations labeled for settlement by special types of firms or for settlement bound by specific conditions. The other trend is the growing tendency to reposition various sorts of government policy, among which spatial policy, in such a way that it contributes to the improvement of environmental conditions. Both trends culminate in the emergence of 'sustainable business sites' as a new location type on the growing list of labeled locations (Pellenbarg 2002). At the same time, discussions have started about the best possible ways to implement the strategy of developing sustainable business sites. Parkmanagement has come to the fore as a means of implementing such a strategy. Although essentially developed as a tool for real estate management on business locations, meant to prolong the lifetime of industrial and office buildings, it was gradually realized that the same management principles can be used to stimulate cooperation schemes by firms on business sites aiming at ecological rather than economic targets.

The history of industrial land use planning in the Netherlands serves as an example of the new trend toward sustainable land development and – as a part of this - parkmanagement initiatives. In the second half of the 1990s the combination of ecological and economic targets in industrial land use planning became an official part of spatial-economic policy in the Netherlands. A number of government documents introduced and underpinned the

new policy adagium (i.e. Ministerie VROM 1997, Ministerie EZ 1998) and the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) launched an official stimulation project for sustainable business sites (the “*Programma duurzame bedrijventerreinen*”). The concept of sustainable business sites hit home and within a few years local governments developed such sites by scores. Almost immediately and very understandably the sustainability concept was extended to cover the redevelopment of old industrial sites. Purposefully and on the advice of consultancy firms (BCI 2001a) the word ‘sustainable’ is taken out in some more recent policy documents and replaced by the phrase ‘careful land use’, in order to avoid resistance from private investors and also to acknowledge the width of the concept which not only stands for restricting streams of materials, water, energy and waste but also aims for intensive space use and sustainable site arrangements. In the definition of careful industrial land use given by Buck Consultants the intensification of space use is the core of the concept: ‘Careful industrial land use is the utilization of land and floor space in such a way that the space usage per unit of economic activity is minimalised in order to create room for other activities of the same or other kinds. At the same time the architectural qualities of the business site should be safeguarded and the economic functioning of firms may not be obstructed’ (BCI 2001b).

### **The Dutch policy context; the aim of this paper**

Whether the concepts of sustainable or (more limited) careful industrial land use will stick remains to be seen. Surprisingly, the issues of redeveloping old industrial sites and stimulation of sustainable sites were not mentioned in the Fifth Memorandum on Spatial

Planning, published in January 2001 by the mixed labour/conservative cabinet that had governed since 1994 and introduced the new trend of combining ecological and economic targets in industrial land use planning. (Ministerie VROM 2001). The new right wing cabinet that was installed in July 2002 and restarted after elections in May 2003 launched policy statements that show little environmental engagement. Nevertheless the interest in sustainable c.q. careful industrial land use seems to be there to stay. This is what entrepreneurs involved in the process of developing sustainable business sites expect. Also it reflects general tendencies in the demand and supply of business sites such as the upsurge of social factors and the aforementioned origination of specific market segments (Pellenbarg 2002).

In the meantime, sustainable and careful industrial land use has become a key target of 'parkmanagement', the new fashionable organization model for the development of business sites. This holds both problems and possibilities: possibilities as shown from earlier experiences in the UK and US, and problems as a consequence of implicating the concept in the Dutch context. In the Netherlands, parkmanagement came into existence as a new tool for development and control of business sites for industry and services only recently, i.e. in the late 1990s, and the same is true for most other countries. In the US and UK it has been practised for more than two decades now, and the successful cases served as an example for the Netherlands. The acceptance of the concept here was quick and wide. Parkmanagement is now generally regarded as one of the obvious instruments to realize careful c.q. sustainable land use on business parks. It is however a question whether local governments (which in the Dutch case are responsible for most land development schemes) are not going the wrong way to work in parkmanagement initiatives. It

is quite possible that local governments are welcoming parkmanagement only as a just another way to impose new regulations on firm establishments. We will return to this issue in later sections.

In this article the problem of parkmanagement regulations and other principal dilemmas facing local governments in business site development will be described. Also, an inventory will be taken of the set of actions that could be part of a parkmanagement strategy. These actions can be arranged on a ladder or staircase of activities ranging from rather simple facilities serving individual firms' needs such as maintenance and security, to more complex cooperation projects in combined transport or energy supply, and ultimately lead to schemes for connecting material flows of production processes. Especially in the last form arrangements are realized that may not only serve the firm's interest but also are of definite collective interest, and go well with the goals of industrial ecology as set in the late 1980s by Frosch and Gallopoulos (1989). It will be demonstrated that next to the successive stages of the staircase of business site facilities, different forms and stages of process organization can be identified. We will start however with the question how to define parkmanagement and how it fits into the theoretical options we have for influencing the development process of business sites.

### **Parkmanagement; definition and aspects**

Parkmanagement is generally described as a way of organizing the management of a business site (Hoogzaad 2001) or more specifically as a method to manage the entire process of design, development, distribution and management of both site and buildings

of business locations (Van Engelenburg et al 1998). Alternatively one could phrase this as a method to induce different actors to organize the management and maintenance of public space (Van Leeuwen et al 2002). Parkmanagement is a process dealing with the arrangement and management of both built and unbuilt spaces and the development and exploitation of both collective and individual facilities and services on business sites. Parkmanagement furthers cooperation between firms on such sites. The ultimate goal is a higher quality level of both public and private space (Ecorys 2002). As a result of the quality increase, parkmanagement also serves to sustain the existence of business sites for longer periods. The latter qualification makes it easy to mix up parkmanagement with restructuring and revitalization of existing business sites, because those activities serve the same goal: prolonging the lifetime of a business site. However, restructuring and revitalization are once and for all activities, whilst parkmanagement is a permanent activity. Although it is not impossible to install it on existing sites as part of a revitalizing process, parkmanagement usually is applied to newly developed sites.

From the above definitions four aspects of parkmanagement can be derived that need further attention and elaboration:

1. the *product* aspect, i.e. which separate facilities and services can be part of the parkmanagement strategy;
2. the *process* aspect, i.e. which organizational model should be used to prepare parkmanagement activities and set them going;

3. the *partner* aspect, i.e. which partners may be engaged in the management process and how should they cooperate;
4. the *profit* aspect, i.e. which benefits do result from the parkmanagement approach and how are they divided among the cooperating partners.

Dealing with these four aspects, it is not illogical to start from behind, because the profit aspect is both cause and consequence of any parkmanagement activity. Profit should be both of a public and a private character: the intended quality increase of a business site has to be felt as an improvement by local governments or society at large, but also by the firms that develop and use the site. Potentially, profits of parkmanagement are manifold, as suggested by figure 1. Cost reductions, revenue increases, environmental gains and image effects dominate the picture. Not all profit categories are undisputable. Especially the conclusion that local governments may profit from parkmanagement as a new strategic instrument of environmental policy is debatable and in fact constitutes one of the development dilemmas we will discuss in the next section.

Figure 1. Partners and profits of parkmanagement

<b>GOVERNMENT</b> <i>Lower cost of site maintenance</i> <i>Positive image effects</i> <i>Improved competitive position</i> <i>Increase in number of jobs</i> <i>Decrease of pollution</i> <i>More (property) tax revenues</i> <i>Strategic instrument environmental policy</i>	<b>FIRMS</b> <i>Focus on core activities</i> <i>Influence on working climate</i> <i>Safe and pleasant work conditions</i> <i>Employees satisfied</i> <i>Improved competitive position</i> <i>Improved image</i> <i>Cost reductions by collective purchasing</i>
<b>INVESTORS/DEVELOPERS</b> <b>Higher value of real estate</b> <i>Real estate retains value</i> <i>New and remunerative independent activity</i> <i>Improved image</i>	<b>SOCIETY/ENVIRONMENT</b> <i>Positive environmental effects</i> <i>Careful (economic) land use</i> <i>Joint use of facilities</i> <i>Increase of spatial quality</i>

Source: Ecorys 2002 (adaptation)

If parkmanagement can be characterized as a cooperation process (the Ecorys definition) who then are the partners in this process? Ecorys (2002) suggests that such cooperation applies to the firms on the site and indeed the most successful business parks in the UK show private forms of parkmanagement that were initiated and controlled by the firms on the park. Nevertheless, it is certainly possible that local governments play a role in the establishment and organization of parkmanagement. In fact in the Netherlands this even happens more often than not, as in the Dutch situation it is normal that the site developer is a local government. Parkmanagement is now fashionable because of the interest of local governments reaching for the profits promised by figure 1, and certainly not (yet) the result of an overwhelming enthusiasm from the side of private firms that consider moving to new business sites.

Is the apparent governmental interest supported by the existence of ready chances of influencing entrepreneurial actions? The general theoretical options for influencing a development process of business sites (in fact: options to influence *any* form of private initiative) are portrayed in figure 2. The safe choice is to construct policy instruments of the stimulating kind. Evidence shows, especially for spatial-economic policies, that more repressive influences work counteractive. In the Netherlands the history of the WIR-instruments that were devised in the 1970s serves as a ready and warning example (Van Dijk and Pellenbarg 1996). Still, many local governments consider forms of parkmanagement that tend to cross the border between a stimulating and a repressing policy. Here, local governments face the question how intensive their involvement in parkmanagement should be. This is clearly one of the development dilemmas that we will discuss more



extensively in the next section. After that, we continue with the product and process aspects of parkmanagement.

Figure 2. Theoretical options of influence

	STIMULATION	REPRESSION
COMMUNICATIVE	<i>Advice</i>	<i>Propaganda</i>
ECONOMICAL	<i>Subsidy</i>	<i>Levy</i>
JURIDICAL	<i>Agreement</i>	<i>Command, Prohibition</i>

Source: van der Doelen (1993)

### Development dilemmas

It is easy enough to suggest, as in figure 1, that both public and private interests are served by parkmanagement schemes. But who is the principal actor? And whose interest comes first? There is of course a practical difference between countries such as the UK where many business sites are privately developed, and the Netherlands, where local governments tend to act as land developers. But also in the latter situation, where it is more normal to find local governments in the position of parkmanagement initiators, the principal question remains whether those local governments should carry out the whole parkmanagement process by themselves, or try to hand it over as soon as possible to the firms on the park, casu quo the association these firms may set up for their parkmanagement, or any specialized company they want to hire to carry out that management for them. The choice of the executive of course depends of the question whose interests have to be served in the first place. In the Dutch situation many local governments seem to look at their own interest first and appropriate parkmanagement because they welcome it as a new policy instrument, next to the existing forms of legal power they have such as

spatial destination plans<sup>1</sup>, long lease contracts and other land policy instruments (Van Leeuwen et al 2002). In such a context parkmanagement degenerates to a fashionable way of imposing old or new regulations on firms seeking establishment on new business sites and easily crosses the borderline between stimulating and repressive policies. Ultimately, parkmanagement becomes the government's way of compelling careful c.q. sustainable industrial land use. On eco-industrial parks it will be just a technique to force firms to comply with government-set rules for participation. Clearly this is a position diametrically opposite the choice one could make to improve the management organization of a business site primarily in the interest of its private users: to lower their costs, improve their revenues, and extend the lifetime of their spatial investment.

The position of the actors and the weight of their interests are the first dilemma to be faced in the parkmanagement process. The second dilemma is about the rigour of the rules to be applied. Apart from the question which actor dominates the rule-setting process, rules for admission on the park and rules applying to production operations can be few or numerous, simple or radical, more or less binding. This is an important dilemma, very directly related to the chance of developing a successful site. Setting the admission rules too high holds the risk of emptiness and returns on investment staying away, especially if firms looking for new locations have nearby alternatives. But setting the targets too low means abandoning possible profits. Making the regulations less binding will attract free riders, enjoying benefits without paying.

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<sup>1</sup> these are the official municipal plans that indicate, according to the Dutch Spatial Planning Act, possible destinations for a piece of land; these plans also set rules for usage of the land and what can be built on it.

Choosing a middle position in such dilemmas is not always the best possible strategy. Creative solutions have to be sought to maximize outcomes. Land policy coordination between local governments on a regional scale for instance may reduce unnecessary local competition between available business sites and thus increase the chance of success of strong parkmanagement rules. Allowing firms to take part in the process of writing them may further the acceptance of rules. Finding firms that want to participate in a particular set of rules, especially if they apply not only to site arrangements but also to the production process, will be enhanced by putting one (possibly big) company that holds a large specific interest in the lead of the parkmanagement process (Pellenbarg 2002).

One of the most creative ways to choose position in the dilemma of rules is to make a difference between categories of participants by offering optional “packages” of rules. On the basis of an individual estimation of the profitability incurred firms may choose to keep within the bounds of one or more collective base packages concerning for instance the management of signposting, parking, traffic and security on the park or choose one or more supplementary packages concerning for instance telecommunication infrastructures, meeting rooms, nurseries, sport and leisure or employment services. Such supplementary packages may even imply quite radical encroaches upon the production organization of the firm, concerning its use of water, energy and raw materials and its system of waste disposal (i.e. Van Engelenburg et al 1998, Ecorys 2002). The site developer can counter-balance the firm’s package choice with a higher or lower land price. For instance: the larger the package, the lower the price of the land. Or a lower price may be accorded for a more sustainable package. In this way the development of parkmanagement packages

constitutes a useful enlargement and innovation of the concept. Unfortunately, the insights as to the nature and content of the packages are not very consistent. As we will show however it is not too difficult to arrange the possible options in a logical order, the “ladder of parkmanagement activities”. A logical order can also be identified for the stages of the organizational approach that is used to develop a site. Together, the ladder of parkmanagement activities and the corresponding organizational models cover the product and process aspects of parkmanagement, denoted in the preceding section.

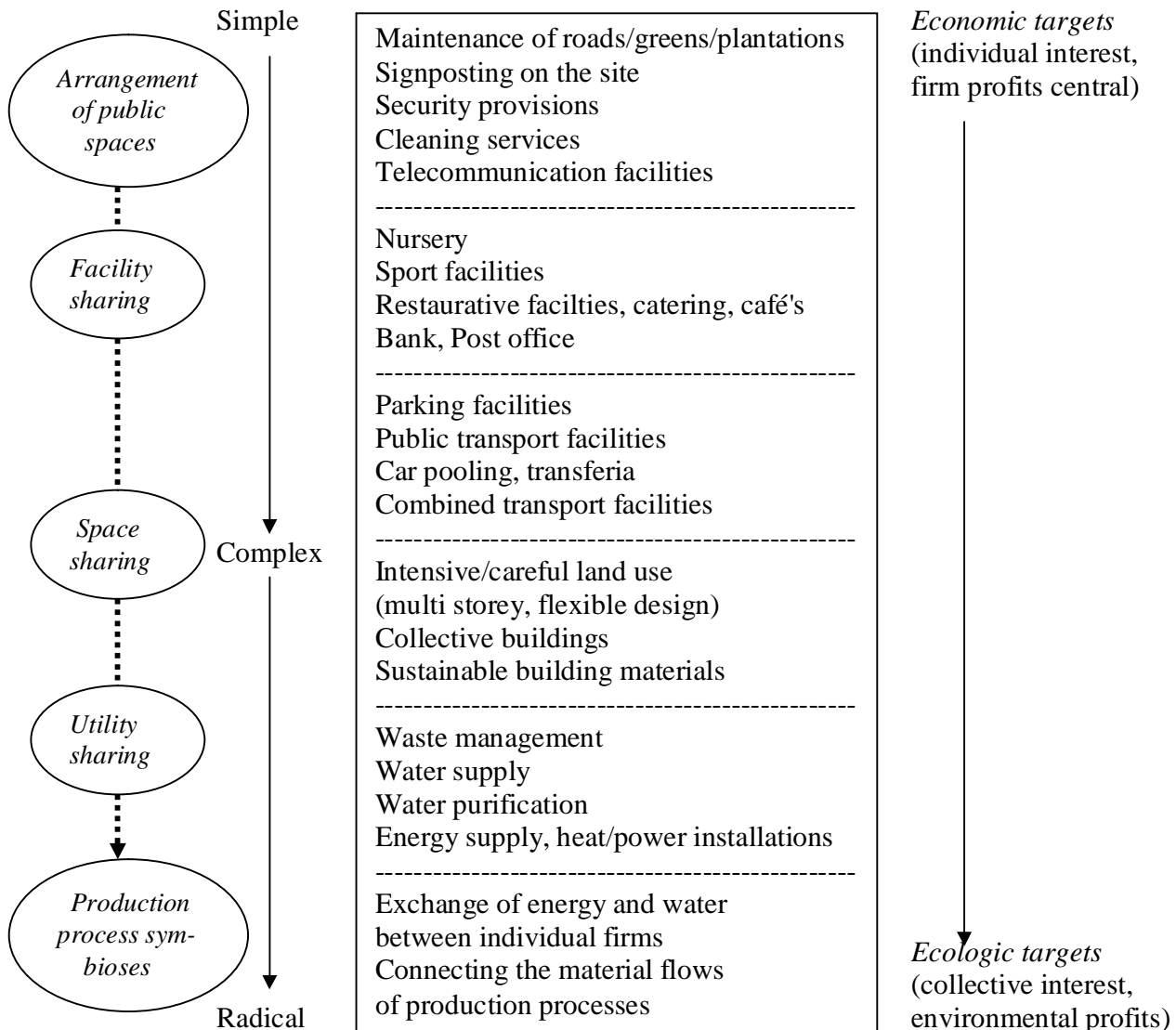
### **The ladder of parkmanagement facilities**

The long list of possible parkmanagement activities can be considered as a mounting series of services and arrangements that rises from rather simple provisions to very complex regulations implying real forms of industrial ecology. Figure 3 pictures this idea in the form of a scheme: the “ladder of parkmanagement activities”. The order of activities is from simple to radical, which also corresponds to an ordering from individual interests and economic targets to collective interests and ecologic targets. The list is certainly not exhaustive and the classification could have been different. For instance, in its memorandum on sustainable business sites the Ministry of Economic Affairs lists more than 40 possible activities for the lower half of the figure 3 scheme only, but conversely only distinguishes between two different organizational options, viz. an “area option” concerning the spatial arrangements on the site and a “stream option” concerning the arrangement and interweaving of production processes (Ministerie EZ 1998). In figure 3 we envisaged these as just the extremes of the list. At the left hand side of the scheme,

where a number of organizational concepts is shown, we added facility and utility sharing in between those extremes, following De Vries (1998). He defines facility management as “the joint purchasing by firms of security, cleaning and catering services, nursery, maintenance of buildings and greens, public transport, car washing etcetera. Utility management is “the initiation and performance of projects aiming at industrial water supply, joint waste water processing, the use of waste heat and facilities for telecommunication and multimedia use”. Only the last category is definitely out of the frame of figure 3, where it is positioned at the lower (“simple”) end of the ladder of parkmanagement activities. This view is consistent with Van Leeuwen et al (2002) who also restrict utility sharing to joint schemes for transport, water and energy that can be told apart from “symbioses” only by their lesser intensity and lack of actual interdependence. Symbiosis implies a coupling of the production processes of individual firms, utility sharing doesn’t. A final difference between figure 3 and the orderings suggested by Ministerie EZ, De Vries and Van Leeuwen et al is the insertion of a label “space sharing” for the group of activities that have as a common denominator the strive for a more efficient use of space. Because this target is at the same time economic and ecologic the corresponding group of activities is positioned half way the ladder between facility and utility management, although one could argue that its proper place should be on a lower step of the staircase (i.e. higher in the figure) viz. between arrangement of public space and facility sharing. There, it would be closer to the “spatial” extreme of the parkmanagement scale. We argued however that the core of distinction between facility sharing and utility sharing is that facility sharing is about convenience and utility sharing about profit (albeit for the firm or the environment). The options for space sharing on the parkmanagement ladder

reflect the latter aspect even more than the former, which makes it unrealistic to place it further down the simple (spatial) end of the ladder.

Figure 3. The ladder of parkmanagement activities



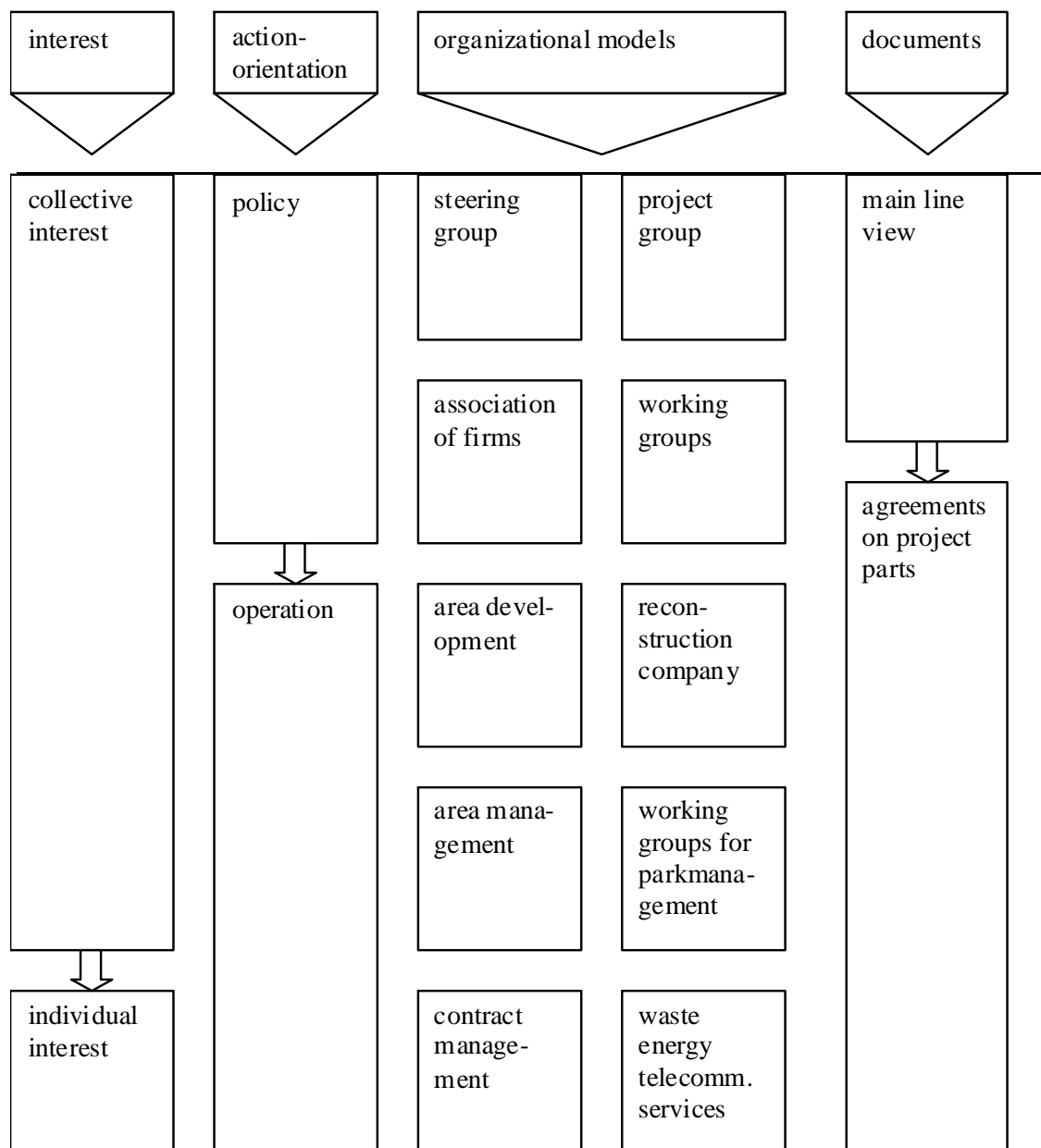
## **Parkmanagement organisation**

The ladder of figure 3 represents the product aspect of parkmanagement. It is essentially about the content of the concept. Looking at the process aspect takes us one step further, from what to how. How is parkmanagement best organized? Figure 2 and the left hand side of figure 3 gave some very general indications of organizational options, but are not very instructive as to the actual construction of the process organization. A more detailed example of a possible process structure for parkmanagement is shown in figure 4. This is the (slightly adapted) organizational model that was used to establish parkmanagement on the industrial site of De Krogten in Breda, the Netherlands. As a successful and broad example of parkmanagement, the process architecture that was used in this case shows most of the relevant characteristics.

De Krogten is a 425 acre industrial site accommodating 140 individual firms (both big and small, from various sectors, located higgledy-piggledy on the site, occupying both owned and rented premises) that offer a total of 6000 jobs. The site has all the well-known characteristics of an old industrial site: old buildings, bad roads, some derelict infrastructure (dock and rails), a damaged sewer system, greens not maintained and much rambling litter. A study in the mid 1990s advocated a revitalization of the site. This revitalization process started in 1997. As was mentioned in one of the preceding sections, parkmanagement usually is practiced on newly developed sites, but the example of De Krogten shows that it is certainly not impossible to use it in cases of redevelopment. The development in this case was a purposeful cooperation between the firms on the site, who

formed an association to shape their cooperation with the local government (Breda, a municipality with 160,000 inhabitants). Figure 4 depicts the layout of the parkmanagement organization process they have set in motion.

Figure 4. Process structure (Eco-park “De Krogten”, Breda; adapted from Snijder 2002)





As in the parkmanagement ladder, the process structure shows a course from collective to individual interests, but in this case this course doesn't represent a spectrum with two extremes but a timely sequence. It suggests that the collective interests dominate at the start of the process and in fact continue to do so except for the final phase, when a more permanent management structure has to come into existence in which private interests must be served. In the process, which may cover a couple of years, the accent is first on policy formulation, taking shape in memoranda that describe the main line views of the partners on the project. In the second part of the process the action orientation shifts from policy to operation and main line views that were laid down first have to be elaborated now into separate agreements on different parts of the project. The middle section of the figure shows the organizational forms that match with the different stages of the process. In the policy phase a steering group is formed to take the lead in the process, and an association of firms is being set up. Project and working groups may be engaged with separate planning activities. In the operational phase the actual development work starts, for which the partners may set up a reconstruction company. Then area development changes into area management and finally into contract management relating to whatever packages of parkmanagement may be on offer, possibly prepared by parkmanagement working groups.

The Krogten's organizational model is certainly not the one and only possible model to implement parkmanagement. Several alternative models have been developed, as exemplified by Van Leeuwen et al (2002) for the situation in the Netherlands. They discuss and compare six parkmanagement-planning models that recently gained national acquaint-

tance. All six models share the feature of a dominant public party (the local government) in the early stage of the development process or even during the process as a whole. Now is this the only possibility? When we discussed definitions and dilemmas concerning parkmanagement in the preceding sections it was suggested that in the Dutch situation local governments maybe and/or sometimes are too eager in seeking this dominant position. This maybe understandable, certainly in the Netherlands where municipalities usually are in the position of site developers, and especially in case of new sites when it is impossible to involve firms in parkmanagement in a stage that no firms are present on that site yet. But at the same time we shouldn't ignore Van Leeuwen's suggestion, cited above, that local governments consider parkmanagement as a very welcome new policy instrument, next to the present instruments of destination plans, long lease and other forms of land policy (Van Leeuwen et al 2002). In this context, it is interesting to note the influential role of consultants in the positioning of local government in parkmanagement development. Such consultants usually are firms specialized in spatially oriented policy and research or spatial planning and development. They are the inventors of the parkmanagement models (such as the ones compared by Van Leeuwen et al) that they sell to municipalities. Small wonder that they put their clients in model positions that give them influence in the process. Interestingly enough, the consultants also put themselves in positions of influence, thus creating permanent revenue next to the original consultants fee! Figure 5 shows the results of Van Leeuwen et al's comparison of parkmanagement models in more detail. In all six cases reviewed here consultants award themselves a role in defining the content of the parkmanagement process ("identifying options"). Municipalities are five out of six times in this position, firms only two times. The process-

initiative is mostly awarded to municipalities (four out of six cases) or to municipalities cooperating with firms (three out of six cases) but never to firms alone. Clearly, the consultants advise a top-down process and reject the bottom-up option.

Figure 5. Process design within planning methodologies

	Ecoclassification syst.	Environmt. point syst.	Sustainability scan	Handout system	Roadmap/ Quicksan	Developmt. vision
<b><i>Process initiative:</i></b>						
- top-down (municipality)	X	X	-	-	X	X
- bottom-up (firms)	-	-	-	-	-	-
- joint action (mun.+ firms)	-	-	X	X	X	-
<b><i>Role in identifying options</i></b>						
- consultants	X	X	X	X	X	X
- firms	-	-	X	X	-	-
- municipalities	X	X	X	X	X	-

Source: Van Leeuwen et al (2002) p. 29

## Conclusion

The concept of parkmanagement covers a great number of different activities. Although in varying degrees, all of them are of potential importance for careful industrial land use. The parkmanagement ladder puts the activities concerned in a logical sequence. This sequence unfolds a relationship with both public and private interests. It proves to be in accordance with the varying degree to which these interests are being served. According to their position on the ladder, parkmanagement activities can be characterized as spatial arrangements, facility sharing, space sharing, utility sharing, or real forms of productive symbiosis (industrial ecology). A practical application of the ladder emerges where it is used as a basis to define parkmanagement “packages” of different content. Next to the

content of such parkmanagement packages (representing the product aspect of the concept) the design of the process that should set parkmanagement in motion, is of utmost importance. First, this concerns the position of the partners that participate in the process. Whose interest is served most, according to the choice of products, and which partner takes the lead in the process. Different models are conceivable, but the evidence from the Netherlands suggests that if local governments have the lead in site developing, they also tend to dominate in parkmanagement and are very much tempted to use parkmanagement as a new form of regulatory power.

A too strong dominance of parkmanagement by local governments is certainly not to be recommended. It leads to a under-utilization of the potential benefits, and ignores the evidence from practice which shows that parkmanagement is most successful when organized by private parties, or at least with a heavy involvement of private parties. A more balanced process-design, offering space for both public and private participation would also be more in line with the modern interaction-oriented approach in planning theory. Regulatory planning is definitely a concept of the past. One can observe a gradual shift in planning theory from a more technically oriented approach in the early twentieth century, via a comprehensive rational planning approach in the 1950s, to more interaction-oriented types of planning in the final decades (Sager 1994, Innes 1996, Healey 1997). Woltjer characterizes interaction- or communication-oriented planning as “consensus planning”, and argues that it has deep roots in the ideas about public participation which developed in planning literature since the late 1960s and early 1970s (Woltjer 2000). At present the communicative planning approach is still coping with the problem how to take social dilemmas between public and private interests sufficiently into account (Voogd

2001). Nevertheless, the benefits of the new planning paradigm have sufficiently been shown.

A modern approach of parkmanagement should be based on the insights of consensus planning rather than on the old fashioned and one-sided technical-regulatory approach. The essential difference is, that the technical planning approach aims at goals that are taken for granted, while the communicative approach acknowledges the uncertainty of the outcome of a planning process. Anticipating on such uncertainty, the planning organization must allow influences from outside on the planning process (Voogd 1995, Teisman 1998, de Roo 2001). Instead of taking the goals and ideas of one central actor as a point of departure, one should strive for decisions that are taken jointly by different actors involved in the planning case, acknowledging the existence of such actors, their knowledge, their interests, their visions, and the need for them to communicate. This new communication-oriented planning paradigm applies very well to the management of business sites. In the Dutch case, it should make the municipal governments realize that parkmanagement processes must not be started from the governments' (public) interests as a sole point of departure. Other actors, especially firms locating on the site should be involved in the process and be allowed to introduce their interests and visions in the planning process. If parkmanagement is conceived in such a way, as an open planning process, the communicative (consensus) approach stands for processes of collaboration and learning, bargaining and negotiation, persuasion and will shaping (Woltjer 2000). The planning products should be the result of these processes, not the stake to start with.

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