# BEEMSTER THE NETHERLANDS BEEMSTER OUALITY TEAM

# **GOVERNANCE AND RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLICS — PLANNING**

Creation of an advisory body, the "Kwaliteitsteam des Beemsters" (made up of leading national experts in the field of heritage, landscape, urban planning and architecture) to advise the municipal authorities on new urban developments, large-scale spatial projects, the quality of designs, strategy and feasibility of projects in the Beemster Polder World Heritage Site.

SIZE OF THE MUNICIPALITY: 8 721 inhabitants 7200 ha

SIZE OF THE PROJECT: 8 721 inhabitants 7200 ha

## PRINCIPAL FUNCTION(S) OF THE MUNICIPALITY:

Agriculture, farming housing

## PRINCIPAL FUNCTION(S) OF THE PROJECT AREA:

Agriculture, farming housing



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Beemster Polder

# **PROJECT SCALE**



City

**World Heritage Property** 

Project

# **WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY**

#### DROOGMAKERIJ DE BEEMSTER (BEEMSTER POLDER)

Inscription	1999
Criteria	(i) (ii) (iv)
Area	72 ha

The Beemster Polder, dating from the early 17th century, is an exceptional example of reclaimed land in the Netherlands. It has preserved intact its well-ordered landscape of fields, roads, canals, dykes and settlements, laid out in accordance with classical and Renaissance planning principles.

DIAGNOSIS/ STATUS Need for planned territorial developments control in the Beemster Polder: integrating new farming infrastructures, change of scale of farms, building of new houses and reconstruction of the CONO cheese factory. Meeting the needs of des Beemsters.

PROBLEMS/ISSUES

Set up an advisory body (the 'Quality team') for the Municipality which involves several leading specialists in urban and landscape development in order to approve development plans and make sure that they are compatible with the principles of the Beemster Polder as a World Heritage Site and improve the site.

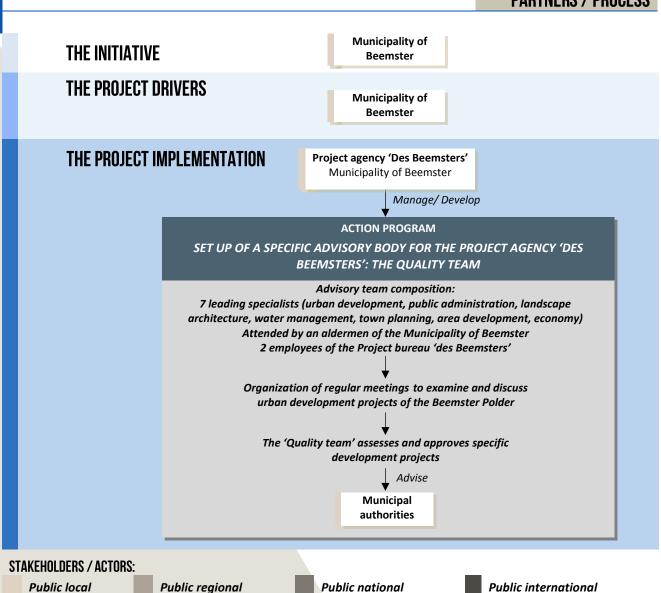
**OBJECTIVES** 

Private

Mixed

- Guarantee the quality of the new development plans in line with the Unesco guidelines for World Heritage Sites
- → Advise the city of Beemster about the best strategy to deal with development and achievement of urban development of a high quality, without losing the unique identity of the Beemster Polder
- → Help the city of Beemster by being an international example for modernization and urban development in a World Heritage Site

## PARTNERS / PROCESS



Civil Society

Institutions / NGOs

## **SITE MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

- → Urban development plans (bestemmingsplannen)
- → Structure vision regulation (structuurvisie)
- → Omgevingsnota (design review regulation)
- Management Plan (10<sup>th</sup> July 2012)

#### **SPECIFIC PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

- → Set up of the Beemster project agency: Project bureau 'Des Beemsters '
- → Set up of the Beemster Quality Team

**FUNDING** 

#### **DETAILS ON PUBLIC FUNDING**

Municipality of Beemster

#### TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT

180 000 Euros per year (all included)

100 % funded by Municipality

**STATE OF PROGRESS** 

November 2007 Launch of the project and set up of Quality team

Scheduled for 5 years (2007-2012)
Four to six meetings a year

End of 2012 Project revision

### RELATION BETWEEN THE PROJECT AND THE VALUE OF THE PROPERTY

The World Heritage Status requires to maintain the unique value of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century cultural landscape. The Beemster Polder is a 72 ha area with a population of 8 721 inhabitants living mostly in one of the four villages Middenbeemster, Noordbeemster, Westbeemster, and Zuidoostbeemster located in the polder. The main village is Middenbeemster. As the Municipality is fairly small and felt it was lacking the capacity to assess the large spatial and urban developments within the World Heritage site that were submitted for approval.

In order to asses and implement projects the Municipality of Beemster set up as special implementation organisation in 2007: the 'Beemster Bureau' (Bureau des Beemsters). There is one responsible Alderman and a project coordinator. An

independent 'Quality Team' that advises the municipal authorities on large-scale projects assists the 'Bureau'.

The team considers, examines and assesses a wide range of spatial initiatives and examines the quality of designs, strategy, and feasibility. It is made up of leading national experts in the field of heritage, landscape, urban planning and architecture.

The 'Quality team' is a specific management tool and was set up for a five year period (2007/2012). The 'Quality team' does not give advice on small-scale projects or individual projects, which are approved and assessed through the other regulatory mechanisms.

Municipality of Beemster

# **RESULTS/IMPACTS**

The 'Quality Team' advisory body mechanism proved to be very useful to the Municipality of Beemster regarding spatial and urban planning. It helped improve the quality of projects approved by the Municiaplity for the whole of the Beemster polder and insure that large scale plans are 'des Beemsters', and are compatible with the value of the site.

Advice provided by the 'Quality Team' helped to modernize and develop the Beemster Polder, without affecting its unique identity. The 'Quality Team' was involved in advising on the reconstruction plans of the Cono cheese factory. The challenge for the Municipality was to support a project important for the economy of the Beemster polder and find a design compatible with

the site's value.

Because the team is composed of professionals with differents profiles, the advice provided is intersectorial. The 'Quality Team' has positively influenced municipal staff and has helped strengthen the capacity of the Municipality.

In turn the Municipality is better informing inhabitants and manages to raise the awareness of the inhabitants of Beemster to design and planning issues. The citizens are more consious about their environment and more involved in spatial planning. More and more often, inhabitants come with development and reconstruction plans that fulfil the 'des Beemsters' expectations.



A part of the 'Quality team'

A meeting with inhabitants involved in spatial planning

# QUESTIONS

An interesting example of a capacity building initiative fostered by a "small" Municipality of less than 9 000 inhabitants to reinforce its capacity to approve quality spatial planning projects in a World Heritage Site. The challenge is fostering development and allowing modification of land use in a Polder. The four Beemster settlements are fairly small and most spatial planning projects are connected to agriculture and farming. This case studie underlines the relationship between villages, and farming land, the relationship between a Municipality and the territory it has to manage.

The 'Quality team' budget per year is fairly high for a small municipality and represents a serious investment. One issue is the sustainability of the mechanism. How long should the 'Quality team' mechanism be inforced? After a five years experience and the good results (project quality, training of municipal staff, better understanding of the link between conserving heritage values and development of a territory and landscape), the Municipality is considering maintaining the 'Quality team'

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advisory body mechanism.