



ESTATE LANDSCAPES IN GELDERLAND

GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS,
PAST AND PRESENT

PAUL THISSEN

INTRODUCTION

Country house estate landscapes are often perceived as timeless places of relaxation and good taste.¹ But underlying all that beauty are the painstaking efforts of owners to maintain these landscapes, and the government interventions that have facilitated that maintenance since the beginning of the twentieth century.

The province of Gelderland has the highest number of country house estates protected under the

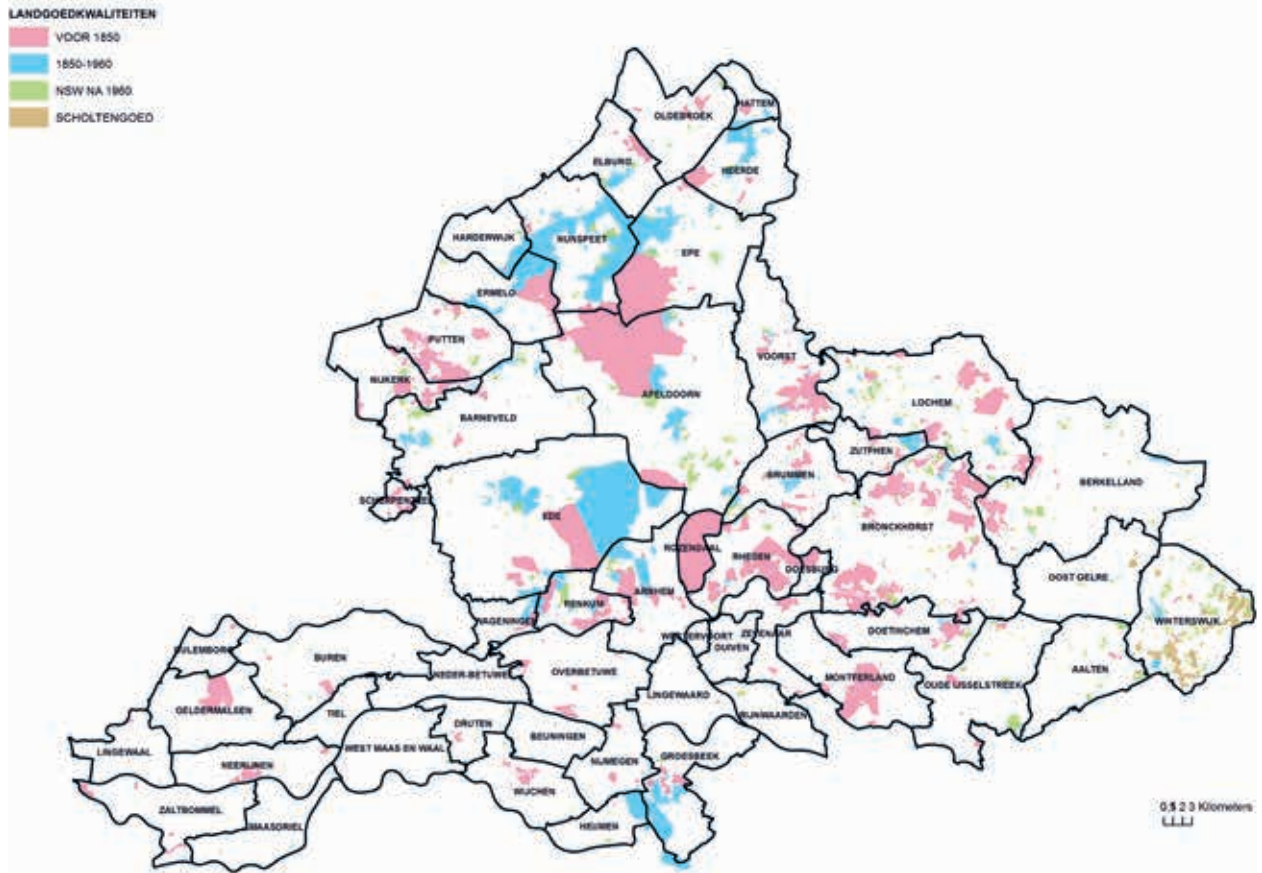
Heritage Act (119 out of 552), which are concentrated in estate landscapes.² These estate landscapes, which are vitally important for Gelderland, comprise areas of high cultural-historical, landscape, ecological and recreational tourism value. Henri van der Wyck (1927-2001), one of the first people in the Netherlands to recognize the coherence within and between country house estates, suggested that this characteristic should be the basis for new policy. Within Gelderland he identified estate landscapes in the southern Veluwezoom, centred around Arnhem, and in the Graafschap achter Zutphen (figs. 1 and 2).³

▲ 1. De Wiersse bij Vorden landed estate is a link in the estate landscape around the Baakse Beek (photo MVO TV)





2. Middachten castle and estate near De Steeg, seen from the IJsseldal looking towards the woodland areas of the Veluwe. Middachten, together with nearby estates like Avegoor, Hof te Dieren, Rhederoord and Valkenberg, is an unspoiled part of the Gelders Arcadië estate landscape Gelders Arcadië (photo MVO TV)



3. Preliminary map of estate qualities in Gelderland. The oldest and most important estates are in a band running from Wageningen across the municipalities of Renkum, Arnhem, Rozendaal and Rheden (collectively known as the southern Veluwezoom or Gelders Arcadië), the municipalities of Brummen and Voorst (southern IJssel valley) and, on the other side of the IJssel into the municipalities of Lochem, Zutphen and Bronckhorst (Graafschap) (Elyze Storms-Smeets, Gelders Genootschap for the Province of Gelderland, 2019)

He regarded the southern Veluwezoom as one of the most significant estate landscapes in the Netherlands.⁴

What makes these landscapes so special? The estate landscapes make for an attractive live/work environment and offer a good range of recreational tourism options, high quality nature and landscape, and a relatively intact cultural-historical landscape.⁵ At the request of the provincial government, Gelders Genootschap produced a provisional map of the surviving historical landscape qualities, which turn out to cover a much greater area than that of the legally protected estate ensembles (fig. 3).

This article provides a short historical overview of government involvement in the preservation of historical castles, country house estates and landed estates in Gelderland and of the zones in which they appear in clusters. Government involvement is not confined to the provincial level but encompasses both national laws and regulations and local government interventions. What was the background to these interventions, which government bodies were and are involved, and what can we learn from it?

ESTATE LANDSCAPES IN AN INCREASINGLY URBANIZED COUNTRY

The relation between government authorities and country house or landed estates has a long history. The cohort of leading figures in the Netherlands government and the cohort of country house and landed estate owners was virtually well into the Batavian-French period (1795-1813). In Gelderland this situation persisted into the first half of the twentieth century. The nobility and patricians dominated public administration and also owned many castles, country houses and landed estates. This gave them authority over the sale, subdivision and accessibility of such estates. At a higher level of scale that naturally also affected the survival and the attractiveness of the estate landscapes as a whole.⁶

Around the turn of the twentieth century people all over the country started to become concerned about the damage that urbanization was inflicting on nature and the landscape. That concern extended to the degradation and disappearance of estate landscapes; country houses and landed estates were susceptible to subdivision for the construction of upmarket residen-

tial districts ('villa parks') and other urban developments, fragmentation by the construction of infrastructure, and closure because of the influx of visitors.⁷ What worried the public was not so much the loss of the cultural values of the estate landscapes, as the disappearance of accessible and attractive green areas close to the city. But why were these private landowners so keen to dispose of their beautiful estates around 1900? It was mainly to do with high taxes and rising wages. Inheritance tax was raised at the end of the nineteenth century and again in 1911. In addition, landowners had to pay more in wealth taxes as the market value of their estate rose.⁸

To appease the landowners, the government amended the Personal Income Tax Act in 1896, granting landowners who opened their estates to the public a modest tax benefit.⁹ This nationwide measure also extended to the numerous country house estates in Gelderland.

One private initiative aimed at supporting the preservation of country house and landed estates was the foundation in 1905 of the Vereeniging tot behoud van

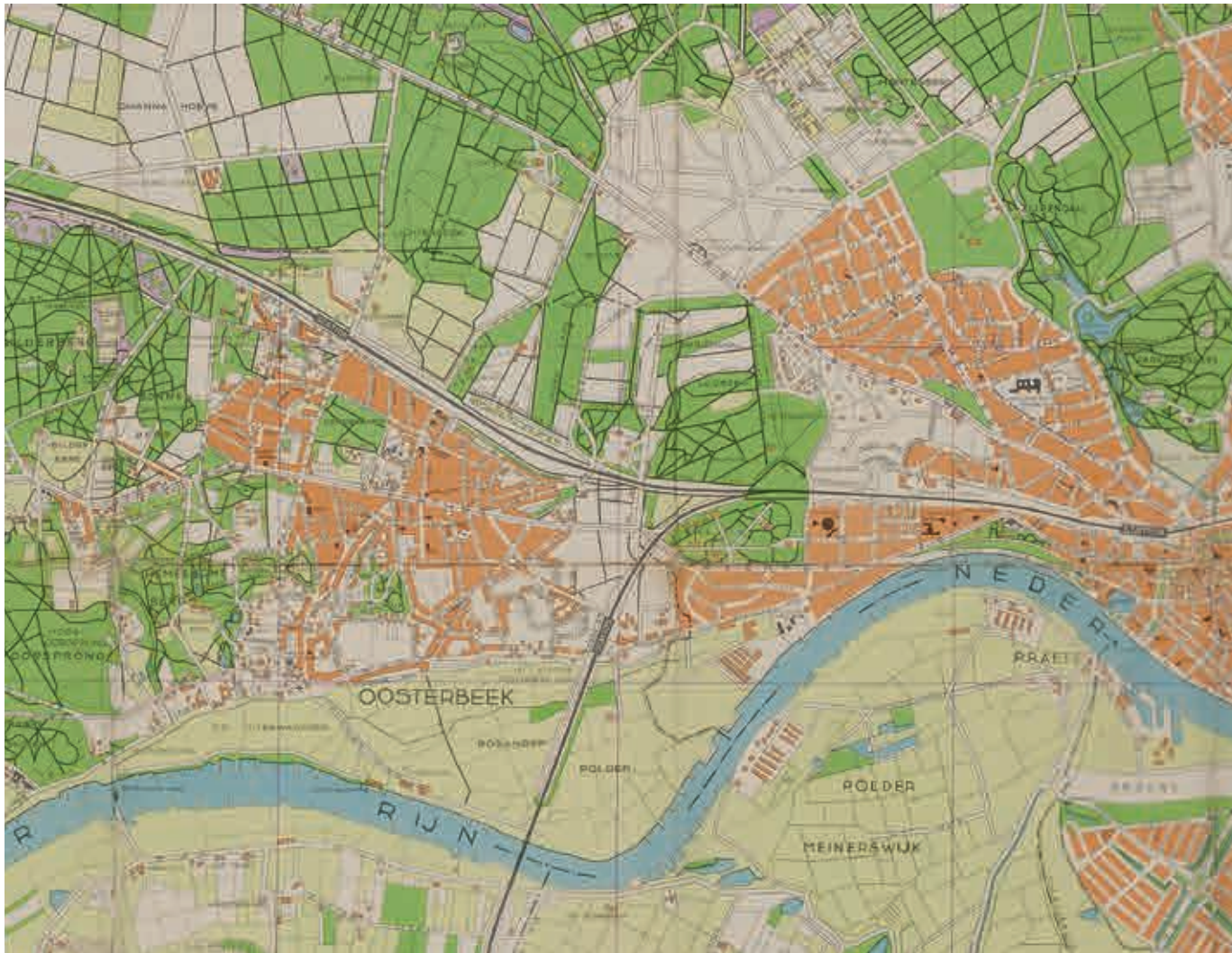
Natuurmonumenten, or Natuurmonumenten for short (Dutch Society for Nature Conservation). This is usually seen as marking the start of an ecologically motivated nature conservancy movement. But the mainspring was just as much the aspiration to preserve natural-cultural landscapes, including estate landscapes, based on cultural-historical and aesthetic considerations.¹⁰ This also stemmed from the fact that the owners of country house and landed estates had close ties with Natuurmonumenten.¹¹

ARNHEM AND NIJMEGEN: COUNTRY HOUSE ESTATES FOR THE CITY

At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century Gelderland estate landscapes in the vicinity of the two largest cities, Arnhem and Nijmegen, fell prey to villa park development. To prevent further demolition and subdivision and to safeguard long-term recreational possibilities for the expanding city, Arnhem's city council proceeded to purchase two landed estates: Klarenbeek (1886) and Sonsbeek (1899) (fig. 4). In so doing it killed two birds with one stone: in



4. Klarenbeek estate in 1913. The city of Arnhem bought Klarenbeek to preserve part of it as a walking park for the city; the other part was re-developed for housing (Gelders Archief, Arnhem)



5. The green wedges in the urban fabric of Arnhem owe their existence to the preservation of historical country estates, in some cases as a result of being purchased by the municipality (Gelders Archief, Arnhem)

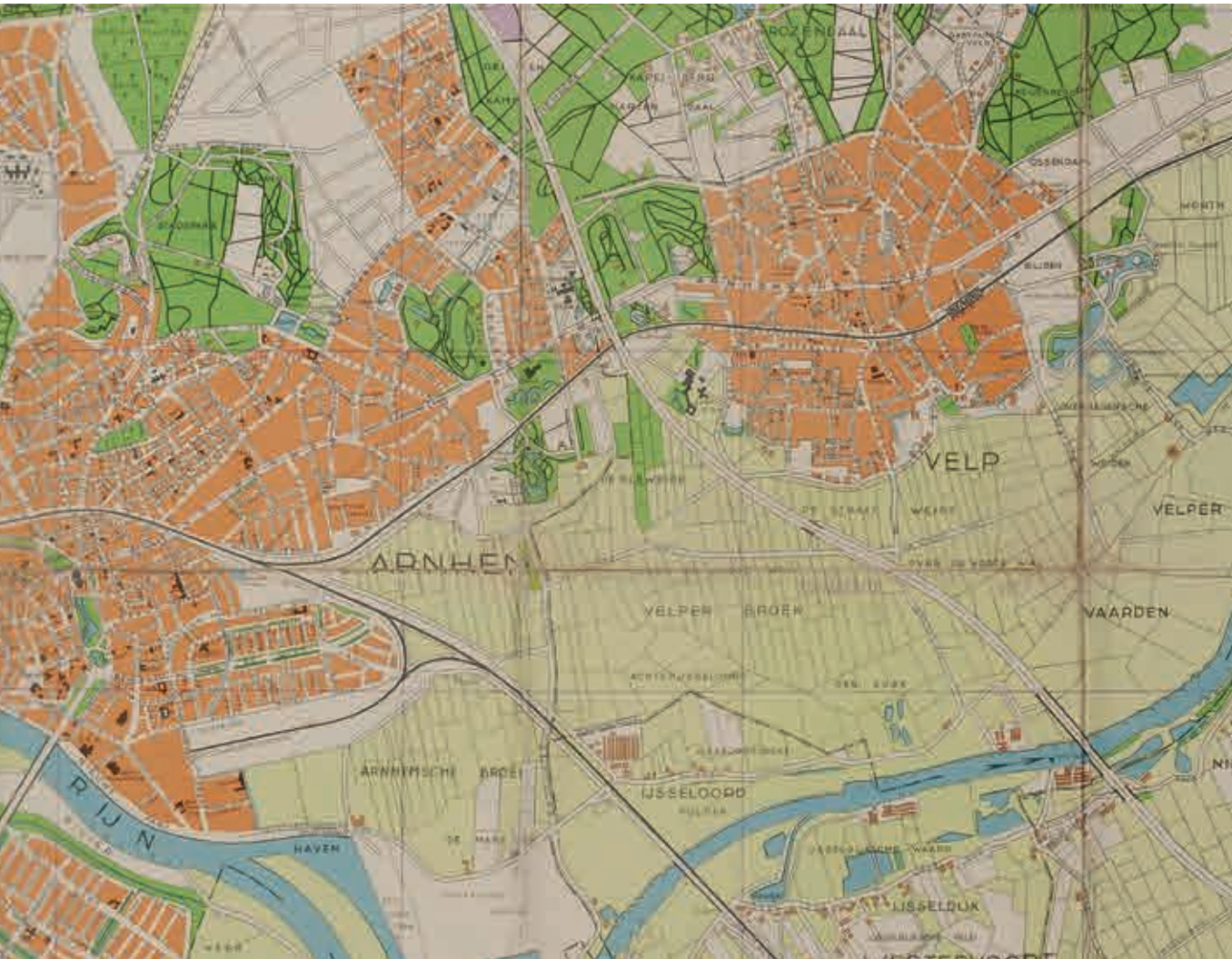
- ▶ 6. Mariënbosch, an old country estate purchased by the municipality of Nijmegen in the 1920s and turned into a woodland walking area for the expanding city (photo Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed)

both cases one section of the grounds was developed as a residential area while another section was set aside for walkers. The public walking parks enjoyed the beautifully laid out grounds of the previously private parks, with their alternating and attractive vistas, well-cared-for paths and centuries-old trees. In 1925, the city took over the management of Sonsbeek's neighbouring estate, Zypendaal, which it subsequently purchased in 1930 (fig. 5).¹²

In the 1920s Nijmegen's city council bought up land in order to safeguard a green zone of country house estates and woods from subdivision for urban expansion. Local nobleman and politician, Marinus van der Goes van Naters (1900-2005) played a crucial role. Via his extensive network of contacts among regional and national politicians, administrators, estate owners and nature conservationists, including the members of the Nijmeegsche Vereniging tot Behoud van Natuurschoon

(a local conservation organization founded in 1925), he managed to persuade the council to buy up country house and landed estates on the glacial ridge in what was then the urban periphery. The council acquired Mariënbosch and adjoining grounds for a 'wood with footpaths' (fig. 6), followed by the Vier Perken woods and the Brakkenstein estate.¹³ And when Gelders Landschap wanted to acquire the Heerlijkheid Beek and the Bronhuize estates in the then municipality of Ubbergen near Nijmegen, the Nijmeegsche Vereniging tot Behoud van Natuurschoon was able to help out.

Shortly after the Second World War, Van der Goes van Naters also ensured that the nearby, previously German, Wylerberg estate was permanently incorporated into Dutch territory. Thanks to its acquisition by Staatsbosbeheer (which manages forests and nature reserves) it has remained intact and accessible.¹⁴ The





7. Castle Biljoen in Velp. Together with Beekhuizen it was a prestigious private landed estate. Natuurmonumenten acquired Beekhuizen early on; Biljoen was acquired much later by Geldersch Landschap (photo Henk Monster)

end result was the preservation of the estate landscape on the glacial ridge in Beek-Ubbergen and the adjoining section of the (former) municipality of Groesbeek.

NATUURSCHOONWET 1928

After the First World War many landed estates disappeared due to financial and economic causes. In 1926, before the government started getting involved, Natuurmonumenten and the Dutch motoring organization ANWB organized an 'emergency meeting'. The boards and higher echelons of both organizations included many private landowners. Partly in response to public concern, the government swung into action and in 1928 the parliament approved the *Natuurschoonwet* (NSW, Nature Conservation Act). The NSW offered (and still offers) private estate owners an opportunity to secure a tax benefit in exchange for maintaining their slice of 'natural beauty' and opening it to the public. This benefited both society and the private landowner. But what exactly does the act regulate with respect to 'natural beauty', 'tax benefit' and 'maintenance'? Natural beauty refers to the aesthetic quality associated with the formal features of landed and country house estates. The taxation benefits relate to wealth and inheritance. Conservation of natural beauty amounts to an obligation to maintain the estate and open it to walkers for a period of at least 25 years.¹⁵ After the act had come into effect many estate owners applied to take part. In the eastern part of the Netherlands, up to the early 1940s, some five hundred landed estates were brought under the purview of the

legislation, 62 per cent of which were in Gelderland and Overijssel. The vast majority were owned by the nobility.¹⁶

THE 'SAFETY NET' OF NATUURMONUMENTEN AND GELDERSCH LANDSCHAP

In the first decades of the twentieth century *Natuurmonumenten* was successful in promoting government measures to protect publicly accessible areas of natural beauty. From 1911 onwards, however, the organization was itself active in Gelderland, buying up properties with high natural and landscape values, many of them landed estates. Their success can be partly attributed to the overlap between its own networks and those of the landowning nobles in this province. Long-standing personal relations were more likely to lead to a transfer of ownership. Even so, the former landowners must have had mixed feelings about selling their properties: however relieved they might have been to leave the upkeep to *Natuurmonumenten*, that did not diminish the pain of having to sell.¹⁷

Natuurmonumenten's first purchase was the Hagenau estate and the Carolinaberg (municipality of Rheden), part of the family of Orange's former estate around the Hof te Dieren. In 1919 *Natuurmonumenten* bought the nearby Rhederoord country house and the surrounding park designed by the celebrated German landscape architect Eduard Petzold (1815-1891). The organization also bought up a whole series of other properties in the Veluwezoom east of Arnhem. In addi-



8. Warnsborn estate near Arnhem was expropriated, along with its land, in around 1930 to prevent it being subdivided for the construction of villas (photo C. Gouwenaar)

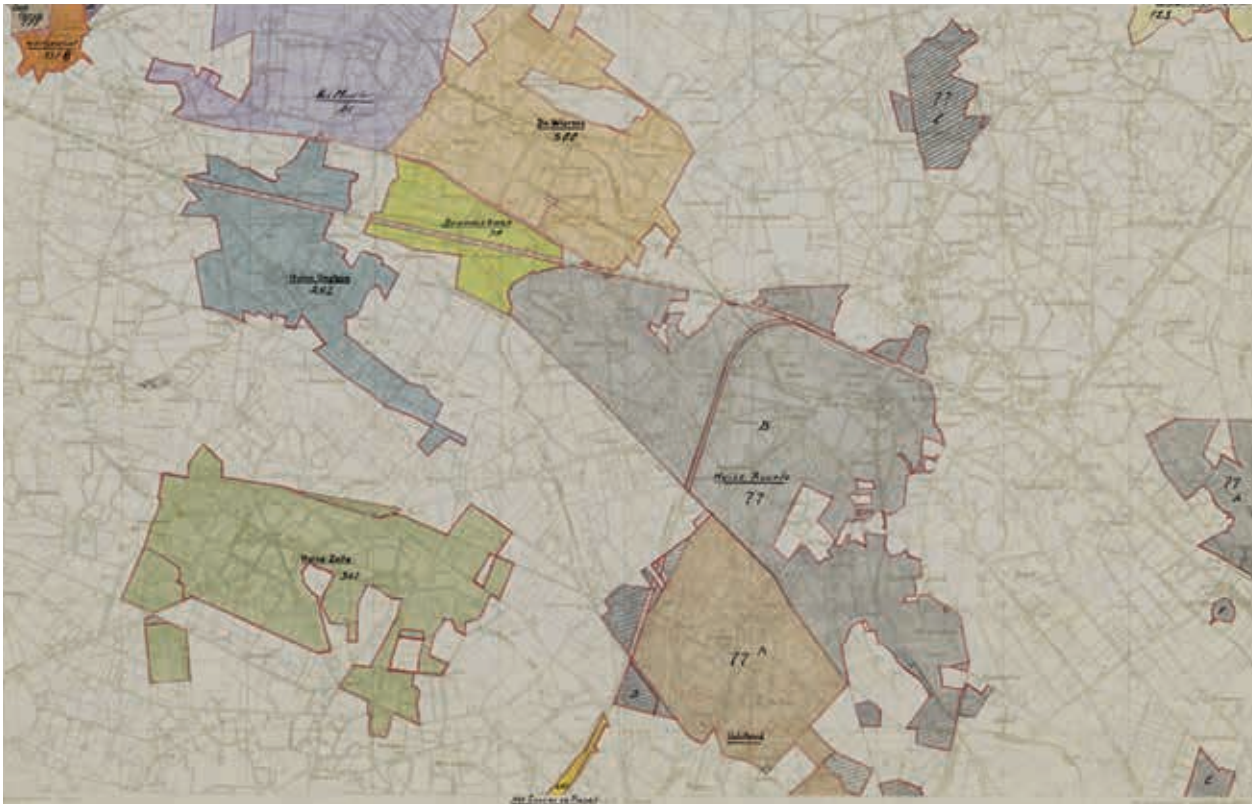
tion to stately homes with designed landscapes like Beekhuizen, split off from the Biljoen landed estate, it also acquired the accompanying heathlands and woods (fig. 7). In these early years Natuurmonumenten was interested in both the cultural and the ecological merits of the lands it was buying. At the end of the 1930s it merged all these properties to create Nationaal Park Veluwezoom.¹⁸

Natuurmonumenten's acquisition of landed estates and nature areas may have been a success in the Veluwezoom, but in the Province as a whole it was not easy for a national organization to make acquisitions. This did not escape the keen eye of one of the association's driving forces, the Amsterdammer Pieter van Tienhoven (1875-1953). He was perfectly at home in the world of estate owners, noble or otherwise, and realized that in many places Natuurmonumenten lacked the appropriate networks and reputation to acquire properties.¹⁹ To ensure the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of green areas elsewhere in the province, he championed the creation of a provincial landscape organization that could assume that task. To this end, Van Tienhoven contacted the King's Commissioner for the Province of Gelderland, Schelto van Heemstra (1879-1960). In 1929, Van Heemstra established the Geldersch Landschap foundation, followed in 1940 by the Vrienden der Geldersche Kasteelen foundation, nowadays known collectively as Geldersch Landschap & Kasteelen (GLK). For landowners who were having difficulty maintaining their property, these foundations, overseen by a familiar and

trusted regional board, acted as a safety net, a function that GLK continued to fulfil after the war.²⁰

One of Geldersch Landschap's first achievements, in 1930, was the preservation of the centuries-old landed estates of Warnsborn and Vijverberg near Arnhem (fig. 8). Threatened with demolition to make way for upmarket residential developments, the estates were saved by the combined efforts of the city council, Geldersch Landschap, the King's Commissioner and the State. What Geldersch Landschap would not have been able to achieve alone, this alliance was able to accomplish: expropriation for the benefit of preservation.²¹ This was crucial to preserving the estate landscapes to the north of the centre of Arnhem.

Let us pause briefly to summarize the interaction between private initiatives and government involvement for the preservation and public opening of country houses and landed estates from the late nineteenth century to the end of the Second World War. During this period the essentially private but government-supported Natuurmonumenten and Geldersch Landschap organizations and local councils achieved success through the purchase of landed properties. The national government, which had previously hindered rather than encouraged the preservation of contiguous green areas changed tack in 1928 with the *Natuurschoonwet*. In this way, even without the concept of 'estate landscapes' with its strong cultural-historical connotations, significant portions of culturally and historically important estates were preserved for



9. NSW landed estates in part of the estate landscape of De Graafschap c. 1950, plotted by Staatsbosbeheer (Beeldbank vU Amsterdam)

future generations as a ‘byproduct’ of the opening up of ‘areas of natural beauty’.

Increasing government support for country houses and landed estates

The Natuurschoonwet continued to serve its purpose after the war as well. Many private landowners, despite the increasingly mild fiscal climate, ended up in financial difficulties, whereupon they either availed themselves of the provisions of the Act or opted to sell to a provincial landscape organization, or to Natuurmonumenten and, to a lesser extent, Staatsbosbeheer. By 1950, a total of 667 landed estates fell under Natuurschoonwet, of which almost half were in Gelderland. These ‘NSW’ estates had a combined surface area of around 90,000 hectares. Again, almost half of this was in Gelderland, close to eight per cent of the total area of the province (fig. 9).²²

During the major post-war land consolidation and development operations, the State and the provinces spared the estate landscapes to a certain extent for the sake of natural beauty and heritage management. From the 1960s onwards a series of related land consolidations were carried out in the Graafschap landed estates zone resulting in a drastic reduction in water levels. So as not to disrupt the stream structure in this landscape, a diversion was dug from the upper course

of the Baakse Beek to the Veengoot.²³ The estates themselves were for the most part kept out of the land consolidation blocks. The Graafschap estate landscape escaped relatively untouched, managing to retain its essential character and the many visually defining planting elements.²⁴ The contrast in landscape compared with the surrounding farming areas became even greater because of the scale enlargement effected by land consolidation, due in part to the razing of the planting structures that had been so crucial to the perception of the landscape. Another major drawback of land consolidation was the sharp decrease in the supply of river water and seepage. Cultural-historical elements like drainage systems, ponds and lakes, and seepage-dependent vegetation suffered greatly from this.²⁵

While it is true that governments expanded the grants system designed to help landowners, those same governments were also pressing ahead with urbanization. The construction of new and the widening of existing roads, the construction of residential areas and the rezoning of country houses so that they could be turned into offices resulted in fragmentation and disruption of the estate landscapes. In the southern Veluwezoom, in Arnhem and Renkum in particular, that inevitably impacted the estate landscape, even though it retained a recognizable regional character.²⁶

From the 1960s onwards private landowners were faced with a new problem. The rapid rise in wages meant that staff became virtually unaffordable. This in turn led to the neglect of stately homes, gardens, parks and the networks of allées. On the other hand, the grant schemes available to estate owners for nature, forestry, farming and heritage were expanded. One side effect of this was that the owners became more and more dependent on government support.²⁷ While many country houses and landed estates managed to survive, the lack of adequate maintenance meant that the networks of allées disintegrated and the fine detailing of most gardens and parks disappeared.

COUNTRY HOUSE ESTATE LANDSCAPES IN SPATIAL POLICY

In Gelderland, the emergence of spatial planning at a national level, which reached a milestone in 1965 with the *Wet op de Ruimtelijke Ordening* (WRO, Spatial Planning Act), resulted in regional plans that took account of the qualities of estate zones. The initial goal was to protect recreationally attractive natural areas from large-scale damage. One example is *Streekplan Veluwe*, which singled out estate zones on the area's south-eastern flank. The main focus of this plan was on the conservation of cultural and natural values; interrelated areas were protected against supra-local cut-throughs like motorways.²⁸

In 2005 the concept of 'valued landscapes' was introduced into spatial policy. In areas such as those around Hummelo and Keppel/Slangenburg, the Graafschap, the Veluwe Massif (southern edge) and the southern IJssel valley, this value derived from the presence of historical landed estates and country houses. For these landscapes a list of core qualities was drawn up, which were supposed to inform spatial development and provide a framework for municipal policy.

This policy was scaled up in *Omgevingsvisie Gelderland 2015* and carried forward under the name *Nationale Landschappen* (national landscapes). These policies are still in force. The core qualities associated with historical estates are of particular importance in relation to *Nationaal Landschap Veluwe* (southern and south-eastern flank) and *Nationaal Landschap De Graafschap*.²⁹

In parallel with this, provincial government policy accorded nature greater weight in the 1990s with the introduction of regulations designed to facilitate not just preservation, but also nature development. Many landed estates were incorporated into the *Ecologische Hoofdstructuur* (EHS, National Ecological Network) introduced in 1990.³⁰ While this resulted in a strong emphasis on nature development, spatial-cultural aspects of the estate landscapes received rather less

attention. This focus on ecological values had already been reflected in *Natuurmonumenten's* purchase, layout and management of properties, where the ecological aspect was paramount.³¹

Meanwhile, GLK continued to act as a safety net for private landowners wanting to sell their property. In 1989 over half of GLK's properties were landed estates and country houses. The province continued to support the foundation via co-financing of the purchase costs.³² The aim was to prevent fragmentation and demolition, to safeguard heritage and to expand the national ecological network. On many of its properties, the GLK helped to preserve and repair the distinctive cultural-historical character while also enhancing the ecological values. These properties contribute significantly to the current estate landscapes on the flanks of the Veluwe, in the Graafschap and in the Rijk van Nijmegen.

In the early 1970s, thanks in part to input from the *Stichting tot Behoud van Particuliere Historische Buitenplaatsen* (PHB, Foundation for the Preservation of Private Historical Estates), the national government acknowledged the 'ensemble value' of many privately owned estates. This led to the designation, under the *Monumentenwet* (now *Erfgoedwet*), of 552 'Complexes of protected historical country estates', 119 of which were in Gelderland. These enjoy spatial planning protection and are eligible for government grants. Since 1983 owners have been able to apply for a grant covering 80 per cent of the costs of restoration; ten years later there was also a government grant for engaging expert landscape gardeners. The latter were required to carry out their work on the basis of historical research, which resulted in more attention being paid to the cultural-historical value of green infrastructure.³³ These arrangements were later replaced by others with the same goal.

In summary, we can say that after the Second World War up until the new millennium, the national government adopted more and more measures pertaining to the survival of estate landscapes. The disposition of private country houses and landed estates under the *Natuurschoonwet* and the acquisition of properties by the GLK foundation continued unabated but sweeping changes to the countryside also called for new measures. Landed estates needed to be excluded from any future large-scale land consolidation and to be given a place in future planning at the regional level. At the same time, recognition of the cultural value of landed estates and country houses resulted in new grants schemes for the restoration of buildings as well as the accompanying historical garden, park and landscape design. Generally speaking, there was evidence of greater recognition for the quality and significance of estate landscapes, but also of a fragmented government policy.



10. The reconstruction of the provincial highway provided the opportunity to enhance the designed landscape in the heart of the Hof te Dieren estate in the municipality of Rheden (photo MVO TV)

2000-2020: LARGER SCALE, INTEGRATED APPROACH

Over the past twenty years a more integrated approach to landed estates and country houses has been gaining ground. Housing, recreation and tourism income came to be regarded as social needs that could be catered to with the help of landed estates and country houses, whether privately owned or not.

Three projects proved to be of crucial importance here: research into estate landscapes in Gelderland from 2007 onwards, the Year of the Historic Country House Estate in 2012, and the evaluation of the Natuurschoonwet in 2014.

In 2007, at the behest of the province and municipalities of Gelderland, the Gelders Genootschap, an independent advisory organization for spatial quality, started to research estate landscapes at the regional level. It focused on two such landscapes: Gelders Arcadië, encompassing the five municipalities of the southern Veluwezoom, and ‘Langs IJssel and Berkel’, encompassing the six municipalities in the southern IJssel valley and the Graafschap.³⁴ One of the findings of these two studies was that the protection and preservation of individual country houses and landed estates benefits from a regional vision, in short, from thinking in terms of estate landscapes.

The Year of the Historic Country House Estate 2012 prompted a social cost-benefit analysis that demonstrated that the presence of high concentrations of grand country house estates (estate landscapes or

estate zones) delivered many more benefits than costs.³⁵ The greatest benefits were generated by housing, recreation and tourism. These findings helped to focus attention on estate landscapes within the provincial heritage programme, which has since expanded its efforts in this area. More grants and low-interest loans have been made available for tackling the backlog in the restoration of buildings on protected estates. According to Monumentenmonitor Gelderland, which keeps track of such things, there has been a gradual decrease in the restoration backlog for this category. And a start has been made in making up the huge arrears in the maintenance of green and blue heritage. When it comes to the restoration of gardens, parks, networks of allées and water features, research into earlier designs has become a best practice, together with re-design based on knowledge of the qualities and desired functions.

Finally, an evaluation of the Natuurschoonwet in 2014 concluded that it can still make a significant contribution to the preservation of country houses and landed estates.³⁶

TOWARDS AN AREA-BASED AND TASK-ORIENTED APPROACH

During the past fifteen years the formulation of core qualities to inform spatial planning has played an important role in regional policy. In the southern Veluwezoom (Gelders Arcadië) and the Achterhoek in

particular, historical country house and landed estates represent just such a core quality. Concentrations of these properties fall into the Nationaal Landschappen area category. It is crucial that the core values represented by the country houses and landed estates and their clusters remain intact when attempting to solve spatial issues. What spatial issues are these? *Omgevingsvisie Gaaf Gelderland* (Environmental vision for an unspoiled Gelderland) identifies seven key issues or tasks, including energy transition, climate adaptation and accommodating urban development.³⁷ In tackling these issues the previously formulated core qualities must be taken into account – for example, by creating quality guidelines for provincial roads: where these run through estate landscapes they should contribute to the qualities of these landscapes. One example of this approach is the reconstruction of the N348 near the Hof te Dieren estate in the municipality of Rheden (fig. 10).

Gelderland has also launched a project aimed at reformulating – with the help of municipalities – the spatial and landscape qualities of all the constituent areas of the province. Eleven regional guides are being prepared as an aid to working with the core qualities that are embedded in the environmental ordinance.

The policy for tackling the big spatial issues in the province of Gelderland while also respecting the core qualities of the estate landscapes and where possible enhancing them, requires additional external expertise and supra-regional collaboration. To this end the province has entered into a long-term collaboration with Delft University of Technology in the form of the project *Karakteristiek en Duurzaam Erfgoed Gelderland* (KaDeR, Characteristic and Sustainable Heritage

Gelderland), in which heritage owners and the organizations that make up the Gelderse Erfgoedalliantie (Gelderland Heritage Alliance) are closely involved. In the practice-based Living Labs, experience is gained, and results shared, leading to initiatives that are still ongoing. One of these is geared to linking the qualities of the Gelders Arcadië estate landscape with recreational tourism development. A second is aimed at the cautious implementation of climate adaptation measures in the Baakse Beek landed estate zone in the Achterhoek (fig. 11). The theme of a third initiative is what form ‘steering with qualities’ might acquire under the *Omgevingswet*. Apart from countering spatial fragmentation, it should entail identifying the core qualities and development aims, and then formulating appropriate design principles. This initiative is extremely important in areas with a lot of stately homes and landed estates. Provincial policy in Gelderland is chiefly focused on supporting municipalities so that they are able to guide developments on and around country houses and landed estates.³⁸

International collaboration takes place within the context of the Interreg Europe Programme. Gelderland, for example, is a partner in the project *INNOVATING policy instruments for historic CASTLES, manors and estates* (Innocastle).³⁹

The province’s grants schemes make it possible to conduct thorough research prior to actual investment, to formulate concrete steps for solving spatial issues in ‘task programmes’, to include sustainability measures from the outset in restoration projects, and to restore rather than simply maintaining historical green elements.

A more area-based approach to the preservation

11. Core qualities of the Baakse Beek estate zone in the municipality of Bronckhorst, formulated with an eye to water-related challenges (Bosch & Slabbers for the Rijn en IJssel water board, 2020)



and development of estate landscapes (in this context usually called 'estate zones') may also help to counteract the sometimes contradictory regulations. Regulations targeting a single aspect, say nature or farming, can have a counterproductive effect on landed estates. Landowners in estate zones are effectively steered in different directions, as Piet van Cruyningen demonstrated in the case of the Graafschap in 2015.⁴⁰ To the extent that this falls within its remit, the province endeavours to mitigate this by appointing an estate account holder whose task is to help owners by combining forces.

The province expects that this new approach will result in a more consistent policy at the larger scale and that heritage and spatial tasks will be more closely aligned. One example is the approach to the water system in the Baakse Beek area. Instead of being dealt with individually, country houses and landed estates were involved in water management and nature devel-

opment at the level of estate landscapes. Gelders Arcadië is a regional *belevingsgebied* (experience-rich area) in which the experience of the estate landscape is paramount.

In summary we can conclude that there has been a shift in government policy in the present century. Country houses and landed estates are no longer regarded as discrete entities, nor as mere repositories of timeless values like natural beauty and cultural history, nor as purely recreational areas. Viewed now as larger, regional entities, they are expected to help solve such pressing issues as adapting to climate change, increasing biodiversity and making farming sustainable. Accordingly, the government now finances not just worthwhile cultural-historical preservation, but also the activation of the problem-solving capacity of estate landscapes. In that respect, too, estate landscapes are crown jewels capable of making a real contribution to the solution of social issues.⁴¹

NOTES

- 1 My thanks to Elyze Storms-Smeets and Steffen Nijhuis for their suggestions.
- 2 See the overview on www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/onderwerpen/bronnen-en-kaarten/overzicht/buitenplaatsen.
- 3 H.W.M. van der Wyck, 'Het historische landschap van de oostelijke Veluwezoom en Rosendaal', in: G.G. Steur et al. *Acht zwerfstenen uit het Gelders landschap*, Arnhem 1979, 71-116, 80-81.
- 4 H.W.M. van der Wyck, *Atlas Gelderse buitenplaatsen. De Veluwe*, Alphen aan den Rijn 1988, 25-34.
- 5 These possibilities are explored the Gelderse Innovatieprogramma KaDEr (Karakteristiek en Duurzaam Erfgoed Gelderland) and the Interreg-project Innocastle (INNOVating policy instruments for historic CASTLES, manors and estates). See www.interregeurope.eu/innocastle/.
- 6 B. Roelofs and J. van Zuthem, *Van pottenkijker tot boegbeeld. 200 jaar Gelderse Commissarissen van de Koning(in)*, Utrecht 2014, 11-12.
- 7 F. Saris and H. van der Windt, *De opkomst van de natuurbeschermingsbeweging tussen particulier en politiek (1880-1940)*, Amsterdam 2019, 21-31.
- 8 W. Verstegen, 'Vrije wandeling' (*Historia Agriculturae* 47), Groningen/Wageningen 2017, 32; M. Koman, *De versnippering van Landgoed Rosendaal*, Masters's dissertation Landshaps-geschiedenis Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2017, 48-50.
- 9 Verstegen 2017 (note 8), 18.
- 10 M. Purmer, *Het landschap bewaard. Natuur en erfgoed bij Natuurmonumenten*, Hilversum 2018, 406.
- 11 H.J. van der Windt, *En dan: wat is natuur nog in dit land. Natuurbescherming in Nederland 1880-1990*, Meppel 1995, 57.
- 12 E. Storms-Smeets, 'From elite to public landscapes, The case of the Klarenbeek estate in Arnhem, 1880-1950', *Virtus* 23 (2016) 147-168, 147, 161-163.
- 13 K. Bouwer, Brakkenstein. *Een Nijmeegse buitenplaats en zijn bewoners*, Nijmegen 2018, 132-134; K. Bouwer, *Bij de boom van Maria. De geschiedenis van Mariënboom en het Mariënbosch*, Nijmegen 2020, 175-176.
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DR. P.H.M. THISSEN is a spatial planner and historical geographer. As Heritage coordinator with the Province of Gelderland his task is to integrate heritage with spatial developments. He is one of the initiators of

Karakteristiek en Duurzaam Erfgoed Gelderland, a heritage innovation programme in which the province and TU Delft are collaborating.
p.thissen@gelderland.nl

ESTATE LANDSCAPES IN GELDERLAND. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS, PAST AND PRESENT

PAUL THISSEN

The Province of Gelderland has long boasted a large number of country houses and landed estates, which over time coalesced into estate landscapes around the historical capitals of the Duchy of Guelders quarters of Nijmegen, Arnhem and Zutphen.

Rapidly increasing urbanization from the end of the nineteenth century onwards threatened the coherence and accessibility of these landscapes. Gelderland's largest cities, Arnhem and Nijmegen, watched in dismay as many country houses and landed estates fell victim to subdivision and development. In response they started to buy up portions of that estate landscape to ensure that they would remain available to city dwellers. In addition, the 'safety net' provided by newly established nature and landscape organizations, in particular Natuurmonumenten and Geldersch Landschap & Kasteelen, also contributed to preservation and permanent accessibility by offering landed families the opportunity to keep their estate intact, albeit no longer under their ownership.

Similar motives – the need to preserve attractive, accessible walking areas for the increasingly urbanized society – underpinned the government's introduction of the Nature Conservation Act in 1928. The Act was invoked more frequently in Gelderland than in any other province. It promoted the opening up of private prop-

erties as well as the preservation of the cultural value of the kind of 'natural beauty' to be found on landed estates.

After the Second World War, in addition to resorting to the Nature Conservation Act, the owners of country houses and landed estates could avail themselves of an increasing variety of grants aimed at preserving (publicly accessible) nature, landscape and heritage, although the emphasis was firmly on nature. Estate landscapes like the Veluwezoom and the County of Zutphen were eventually safeguarded by a patchwork of different government regulations.

In the twenty-first century, government policy shifted towards providing financial support for both public and private contributions to nature, landscape and heritage by country houses and landed estates. This in turn has stimulated interest in estate landscapes. Instead of individual heritage-listed estates, the focus is now on areas with multiple country house and landed estates where there are spatial tasks waiting to be fulfilled: not just the preservation of natural beauty for outdoor recreation, but also spatial articulation, climate change adaptation, increased biodiversity and sustainable agriculture. Interest in design, both past and present, has burgeoned thanks to this development.