

City of Swan Council 11 March 2026
Statement
by Humphrey Boogaardt

6. Statement

It is well known that large parts of the Netherlands are below sealevel. So over many centuries people had to cooperate to keep their feet dry. To achieve that, collaboration was essential between citizens of all layers of society, from ordinary labourers to aristocracy. Something that can only be achieved if all participants get an **equal say**. That is the background of the modern “*poldermodel*” where citizens, planners and developers collaborate to get the best outcomes for small and large projects.

At the last Council meeting in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) motion it was suggested that the City sets up a steering committee to ensure that environmental issues are incorporated in the planning.

The City’s comments about this suggestion “... *The concept of a LBAP Steering Committee ... is considered untenable considering the diversity of potential committee business, power imbalances with the proposed membership and the polarity of objectives within the suggested membership. ...*”

These are very concerning comments and they are also condescending towards citizens. I read them as “*We cannot deal with those pesky citizens who come up with ideas and questions that are based on scientific evidence. We like dealing with developers that is much simpler, just business as usual of ticking some boxes*”. Currently many project outcomes are at best sub-optimal

because of lack of citizens input at the start. Today's and future citizens have to live with the results of that process.

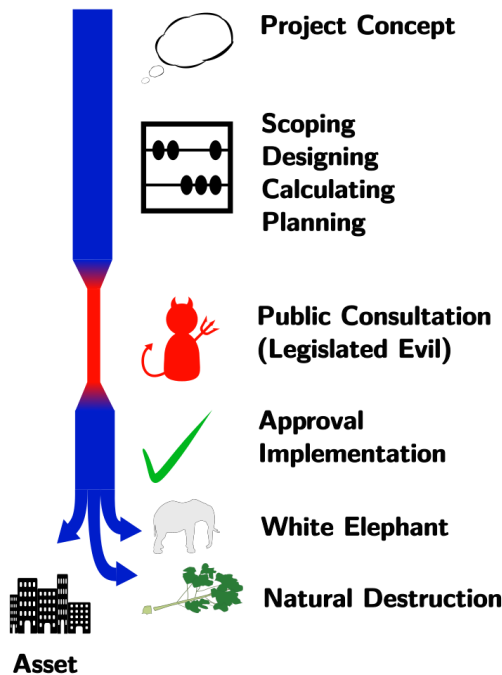
We are now in the second quarter of the 21st century and by now environmental issues including livability, should be at the center of all projects. To put that in perspective, not many of you prefer living in an industrial estate devoid of any nature besides the blazing sun or on a rubbish tip with polluting fumes. People like living in the *leafy suburbs*.

We do not have to look overseas for the expertise. At all universities in WA there is ample knowledge how to improve livability by incorporating the environment.

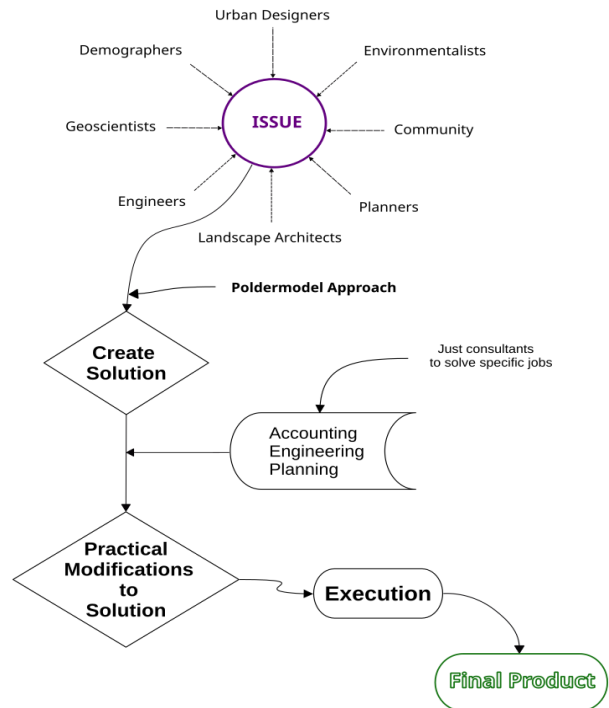
The core of urban planning is to provide improved living conditions for the citizens. Using the *poldermodel* as a mechanism is a good way to give the process a fair go.

To illustrate this I have incorporated diagrams in the written form of this statement that will be sent to Council.

Common Project Hierarchy

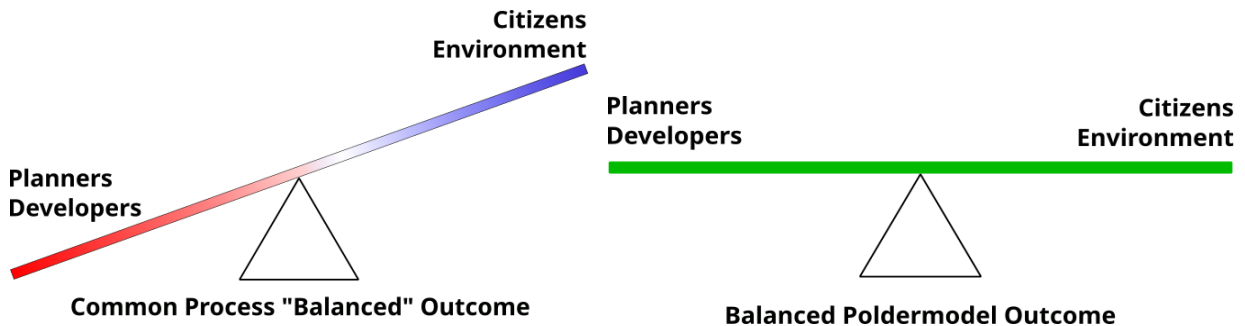


Poldermodel Project Hierarchy



Using a *poldermodel* (on right) approach the scenario depicted in this infographic on left is avoided

Below an infographic of the current “balanced” outcome approach that is mentioned by the planners and the poldermodel approach.



Bibliography

Orizzonte-Ramirez, G. (2023). *Het Poldermodel, also known as The Consensus Machine*. Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences.

Declaration

I do not have any financial benefits from any company mentioned.

I confirm that generative AI technology (such as ChatGPT) was not used in the writing or editing of, or in the generation of any of the visualisations for this document.

