

Golden pyramid 2022 *Dutch Governmental
Award for inspiring projects*

Dedication and determination



Foreword

The Netherlands is on the eve of a major renovation. We want a lot on a very small piece of earth. We want space for hundreds of thousands of homes, for nature and agriculture, for our energy supply, for our economy. It is a spatial puzzle that requires sharp choices, innovative thinking and smart combinations.

For the laying of that puzzle, the imagination of spatial designers will be indispensable. After all, they think about what should be where, and what it should look like. But of course they have to get an assignment before anything is built. The commissioning provider has a firm finger in the pie when it comes to the quality of a realized design – if only because he sets the ambition. The architect chooses and creates the preconditions.

The Golden Pyramid has long been the prize with which we, as a government, put inspiring examples of good commissioning in the shop window. We reward perseverance, courage and creativity, and express our appreciation for those who let not only self-interest but the greater interest be leading.

This book contains many such clients. Clients who have shown the willingness to participate and think along with that upcoming major renovation. They realize that the way we organize our physical space will determine the way we organize our society. They are convinced of the idea that a building is more than a pile of stones, a neighborhood more than a zip code. And they are imbued with the understanding that we are where our buildings and neighborhoods form, but that they then shape us.

The Government is excluded from this award, but as a major commissioning party, we can learn a lot from the clients described in this book. On behalf of my colleague, the State Secretary for Culture and Media, I would like to congratulate the five nominees and in particular the winner: the Dutch Auschwitz Committee.

Hugo the Younger,
Minister for Housing and Spatial Planning



The jury, from left to right. Peter Paul Witsen (secretary), Maaïke Perenboom, Han Dijk, Do Janne Vermeulen, Andy van den Dobbelsteen, Francesco Veenstra (chairman), Walter Hamers, Martjan Kuit, Lieke Jildou de Jong

The judging *Peter Paul Witsen*

Big words were never far away, during the judging of the Golden Pyramid 2022. Participating clients gave every reason to do so. The jury tasted a deep, personal commitment of clients to their projects – and not only among the nominees. 'More than inspiration', it was said during the deliberations, an 'almost spiritual dimension' in commissioning, with the ambition to bring about 'real changes'.

These changes are urgent and inevitable, also according to the jury. The clients show how much effort it takes to take meaningful steps in the busy, regulated Dutch society. They also show an enormous will and creativity to break through that and within the possibilities that an assignment giver still has results to achieve. The projects of the five nominated clients are inspiring examples of this.

The jury of the Golden Pyramid 2022 consisted of:

- Francesco Veenstra (chairman), Government Architect
- Han Dijk, urban planner at PosadMaxwan strategy x design
- Andy van den Dobbelsteen, Professor of Climate Design & Sustainability at TU Delft
- Walter Hamers, director Museumpark Oriëntalis – Heilig Landstichting and chairman of the board of the Gelders Genootschap
- Lieke Jildou de Jong, landscape architect at Landscape Collected
- Martjan Kuit, independently established publicist
- Maaïke Perenboom, developer at Synchroon
- Do Janne Vermeulen, architect and partner at Team V Architectuur
- Peter Paul Witsen (secretary)

The president and secretary do not have the right to vote.

From June 2021 to June 2022, Lieke Jildou de Jong worked part-time at the municipality of Groningen on assignments in the rural area. She had no involvement in the submitted project Grote Markt Oostzijde and had no direct working relationship with the employees of this project.

Projects

Nominated entries

Association Ecodorp Boekel *Ecodorp Boekel*

Design Van Laarhoven Combination Architects *Planning and realization* from 2018

Jury verdict

The Ecovillage Boekel Association has pulled out all the stops to realize a residential neighborhood that is sustainable in every respect. She deftly and skilfully defused all the obstacles and clamps she encountered in her path. If a sustainable solution can be technically realized, it did not let legal, financial or institutional obstacles stop it. From that

attitude turns out to be solvable for every sustainability problem. That conclusion is a good thing.

Inventions such as the heat battery, the foundation of glass foam and the lime hemp walls are striking examples of the innovation drive that is shown here. The client has also found a way to keep all homes affordable. Sustainability is also within reach of people with a small wallet.

The jury does not see Boekel-like ecovillages rising everywhere. The chosen measures and techniques are tailored to a housing program on the outskirts of a village with about ten thousand inhabitants on a sandy bottom. Moreover, the translation into an architectural form reflects a more personal conviction of the inhabitants and the architect about the energetic, healing work of shapes and colors on the human mind. Not everyone is receptive to this, not even within the jury. But if we want personal commitment in commissioning, if we wish Netherlands-driven clients who put more than just rational considerations into their project, then there must also be room for personally tinted construction projects like this. At the very least, they contribute to the diversity of the housing supply.

Not every technology is scalable, affordable and fully developed. The jury is particularly curious about how the heat battery will function and whether it proves to be a valuable contribution to the growing arsenal of energy systems – the system was not yet in operation at the time of the jury visit. Every technique needs a testing ground like the one in Boekel. But circularity, biodiversity, climatetransparency and energy neutrality are now so pressing tasks that applied solutions must also be able to inspire broad housing. There are more appealing examples for this than Boekelse, which is strongly linked to a specific lifestyle. That does not alter the fact that the ecovillage remains unique in the accumulation of sustainability solutions and the uncompromising nature of commissioning. The jury greatly appreciates this; and honors can take an example of this.



The houses property already **leg pit** into use, the wooden facade finish will follow later in 2022.

Ecodorp Boekel offers a living environment that is fully circular, climate-proof, climate positive and nature-inclusive. The number of solutions to get this far is considerable. Partly we have fallen back on existing techniques, partly techniques have been applied that come from other fields of work, partly it is also about straightforward innovations. It is the result of relentless efforts by a group of citizens who did not settle for less and an architect (Huub van Laarhoven) who is cut from the same cloth. They did not allow themselves to be discouraged by financial and legal barriers and always managed to find a way to achieve their goal, even if that road was a hare path. turned out to be. For example, this is the only citizens' initiative that falls under the Crisis and Recovery Act. This makes it possible to deviate from the Building Decree.

The neighborhood of 36 homes on the outskirts of Boekel stems from an initiative of Ad Vlems, who founded the Ecodorp Brabant Association in 2008. This association made a tour of the intended locations in Tilburg and Lent, before the municipality of Boekel showed interest in working with them. In the meantime, she visited Boxtel, where three and a hundred volunteers worked on a test home (including a number of architects and a construction expert from TNO). The knowledge gained here gave the project in Boekel a flying start. The realized Ecovillage contributes to all seventeen global goals for sustainability. United Nations. It is therefore a forerunner in the global network of ecovillages, consisting of communities that are together to live sustainably. That's tens of thousands.

Building materials in Boekel are recycled or biobased and easily reusable: walls of lime hemp against magnesium plate, a foundation of glass foam (a residual product of glass recycling), a floor plate of geopolymers in which fly ash, also an industrial residual product, and uses asphalt to replace cement. From the 2022–23 heating season, heating will come from a previously unused heat battery that retains heat generated in steel slag in the summer. The largest cable manufacturer in the world tested a circular power cable that incorporates only one type of plastic. There is a measurable biodiversity plan, aimed at ten protected species. Every year, an ecologist assesses whether the right living conditions are still present. There is a private food garden on site. And every day, thousands of litres of treated wastewater seep into the soil.

For example, there are more physical sustainability solutions. But the ambitions also extend to living together. The chosen form of ownership allows all homes to have a price below the rental limit for social housing. Residents form an association together.

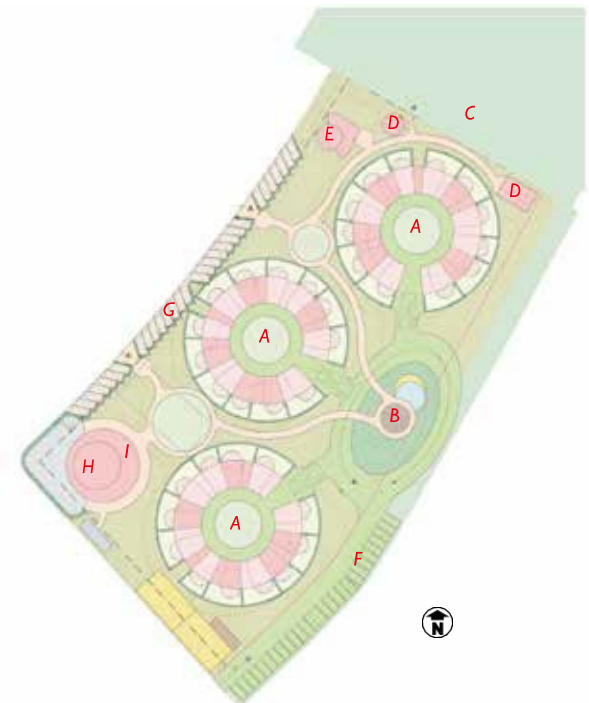
That association is one of the two participants in yet another association that owns the property and the real estate. The second participant is VrijCoop, an association of housing cooperatives that uses the rental income for investments in subsequent initiatives. Thanks to this form, financing could be found fairly easily at a German bank, after the residents floundered at various Dutch banks. They saw the accumulation of innovations as an accumulation of risks; The German GLS Bank knew from experience that residential collectives almost never cause payment problems.

Within the residents' association, the decision-making takes place in fifteen thematic 'circles'. Only if a choice in the circle also touches other circles, it is raised in the 'village circle'. In this way, decision-making takes place at the lowest possible level. The inhabitants call this 'holarchy'. The circular shape is also reflected in the architecture. The 36 houses are divided into a pattern of three circles. This form was chosen because of the healing energy force that, according to the client and architect, it assumes. The plan includes nine smaller homes (three per circle). Part of it is intended as a care home. Residents receive care from fellow residents in the Ecovillage. Two other homes are intended for status holders. Furthermore, the village offers space for temporary stays in two treehouses designed by artists and there is a studio for an artist-in-residence.

Inherent in this organization of commissioning is a slow pace of construction. Residents spend at least two days a week developing the village. The delivery moment has become diffuse; The first homes were already occupied in the winter of 2021–22, when the heat battery was not yet functioning. At the time of the jury visit (spring 2022), the wooden finish was not yet attached to the exterior façade and the construction of a common area, around the heat battery, had yet to begin. It requires improvisation – but that is entrusted to this client.



Ecovillage Boekel under construction. The construction of the heat battery (bottom left) has just started, it will be put into use at the end of 2022.

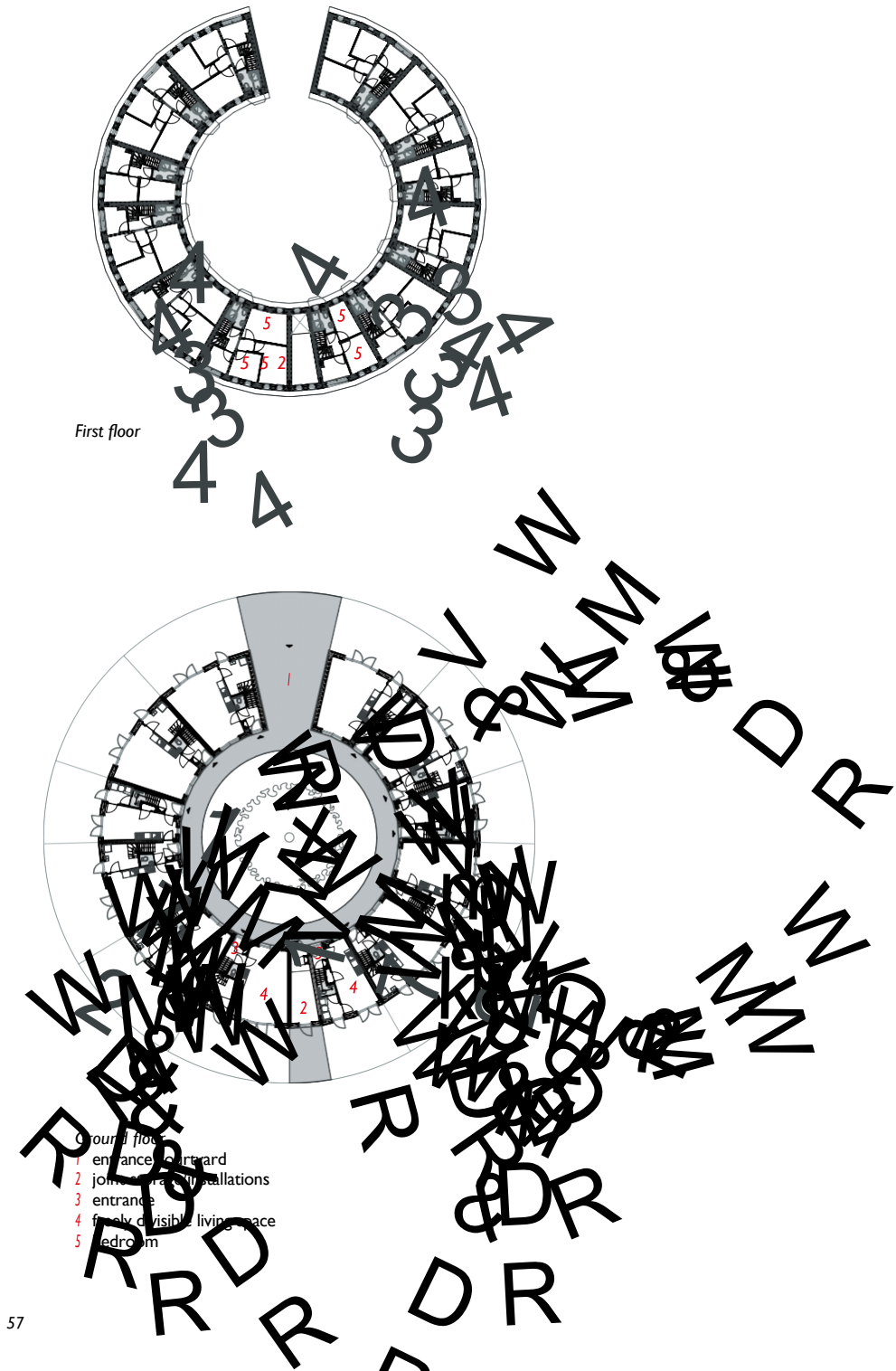


- Situation**
- A Circle with twelve houses
 - B Ecological swimming pond
 - C Food Garden
 - D Tree house
 - E Artist-in-residence
 - F Green parking spaces (for occasional use)
 - G Parking spaces with charging points
 - H Heat battery
 - I Community centre/education centre (to be realised)





View since one from the two tree houses



1



- 1 Walls of lime hemp against magnesium plate
- 2 Geopolymer floor with timber frame construction on top
- 3 Heat battery under construction
- 4 Wooden storey floor (cross-glued spruce) with walls of lime hemp against magnesium plate
- 5 Foundation and insulation layer of glass foam



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