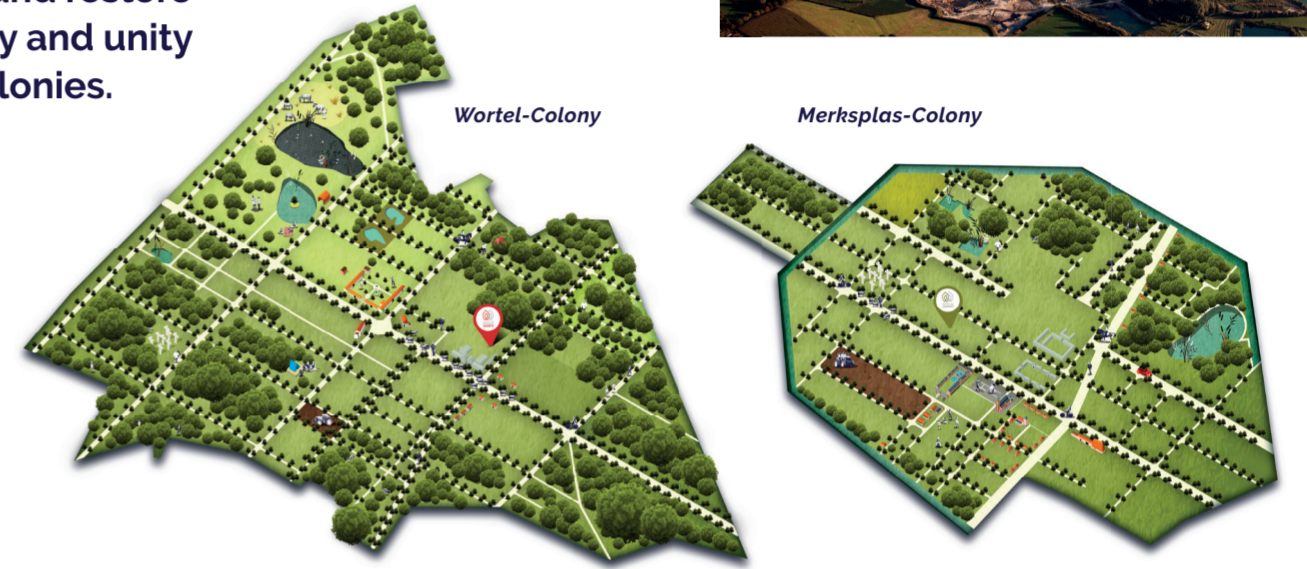


Wortel- and Merksplas-Colony: a cultural landscape revalued



This 1000-hectare, manmade compartmental landscape established in the nineteenth century consists of open and closed areas, farmland and forest and nature reserves. The area was briefly under threat until citizens sounded the alarm. Over the past decades, governments and associations have successfully worked together to secure and restore the identity and unity of both Colonies.



Concerned citizens

On 9 September 1995, a 'March on Wortel Colony' was organised to save the landscape. The public raised the alarm, and local and regional authorities responded by starting the project.



The landscape was developed for tourism with integrity and respect for the area's carrying capacity. The free visitors centre Colony 5-7 where the story of the Colonies is offered in four languages invites people to experience the landscape.

Responsible tourism



Traditional management

In 2009, a complete inventory was made of the avenues and management guidelines were laid down in an avenue management plan. Each year 200 sheep graze the avenues between April and October.

