

Masterplan Northpark

A housing, park and sport complex in Nieuw Vennep.

Nieuw Vennep is a village in the Randstad, which was dramatically doubled in size after the construction of Getsewoud, a new housing development of 7000 houses in 1995-2005. As an ongoing part of this development, a new park (north park) was planned along the northern periphery of the village for extensive recreation.

The programme for the site (roughly 45 Ha) was originally intended to form a recreational park area. Due to lack of alternative accommodation, new programme was added to eventually include two football clubs (9 competition pitches, and two clubhouses), a hockey complex (3 pitches), a tennis complex (6 indoor and 14 outdoor courts), a combined sport hall and swimming complex, a garden complex and 243 houses (upper segment of market) to finance the plan. Water requirements included 11% (5 Ha) of the total area. As a result of the site being located at one of the deepest points of the polder, waterlines were limited to no wider than 6m for fear of salt ground water bursting through the surface, thus making large areas of open water impossible to realise.

A conventional concept of organising different activities into defined compartments would have meant, due to the overload of programme, that very little space for extensive recreational would have been left over. Instead an alternative concept was chosen to integrate the programme parts by overlapping use, and winning space for a park setting. For example, large houses are given small gardens which in turn were recompensed by placing them in an extensive setting of green. This green area is in turn dimensioned to be suitable for public use, as well as to form the 'extended garden' of the people living there. The football pitches are grouped to form large expanses of space that become the openness in the plan. These open spaces as well as giving depth of views and layered compositions within the park, form the viewing arenas around which houses were built. The housing in turn provides a sense of social security for recreants, coming and going to the sport facilities. In this way the plan becomes a layered orchestration of different programmes with a spatial interdependence often resulting in surprising combinations. The water ways are confined to straight canals that appear rigid in plan but are contrasted with a three dimensional undulating landscape of soft hills that offer a sequence of different views and perspectives to recreants as they move through the park.



Client: Municipality of the Haarlemmermeer
Project: 2001 – 2003 (in dienst van gemeente Haarlemmermeer)
Realisation Budget: circa 45 million euro
Status: approved by municipality council, currently under construction, completion in 2007

