

# Noordpark

## design for a public park, Nieuw Vennep



Client: Municipality Haarlemmermeer : ( in dienst van Gemeente Haarlemmermeer)  
Project: 2004  
Realisation Budget: circa 5 million euros  
Status: approved by municipality council, completion 2008

The public park is composed of a network of green, which winds between and around the different programmes of sport and housing (privately owned land) linking important points of the village such as a bus station, school, and important roadways together. Likened to a green snake, the park has a series of recreational loops that offer skaters, walkers and other recreants alternative routes through the park. The pathways are made from simple asphalt with no formal kerbs, to enhance the extensive simplicity of the surroundings. The green snake is composed of gently rolling hills that vary in height up to five meters and offer a series of outstanding vistas to the surrounding flatness of the polder (reclaimed lake). At the apex of the hills, as well as throughout the park, are located specially designed seating in the form of baroque stools and couches, rendered in concrete based material. These function as seating, as well as follies strengthening the identity of the park surroundings.

Edges play an important role in the design of this park. The edges of the sport complexes have been designed to maintain a large degree of openness. This allows the playing fields to become part of the park itself, making the park appear deceptively larger than it actually is. In the same way attention has been given to the areas between the park and the houses. A standard profile was developed on the front side of the housing to create wide grassy banks to the water, which are loosely planted with tree clusters. The banks allow the low lying water (water table 1,5meter below ground level) to become more visible in the design. The boundaries of the housing and their gardens form part of the park and have been designed as an extension of the architecture, using materials applied in the housing.

A unique feature of the park is its unusual tree scheme. Rather than opting for a natural woodland planting, the tree planting is inspired by the rational organisation of the polder and its former agricultural plantations. The trees are organised by an underlying grid, ( based on the size of a football pitch) with each quadrant of the grid being planted with different tree sorts to create a patchwork of different trees types with their own individual qualities. Short trees groups are planted beside tall trees, evergreens beside deciduous, etc. giving differences in layering, light, colour, and ambience. The undergrowth is planted exclusively with flowering grasses, and mowed intensively in parts to form lawns along pathways, informal routes, and areas for football and other sports. Otherwise the undergrowth is mowed twice a year producing a rough grassland of wild flowers.



during construction 2006

