



bewonersvereniging
MEERHOVEN

De gemeenteraad van Eindhoven
t.a.v. het hoofd van de afdeling Ruimtelijke Ordening
Postbus 90150
5600 RB Eindhoven

Eindhoven, August 3, 2022

Subject: View on draft zoning plan Land Forum (police site)

Dear Chairman and Members of the Council,

As of June 30, 2022, the following have been made available for inspection:

- 1) the draft of the zoning plan Land Forum (police site);
- 2) the form-free environmental impact assessment decision for the development of the police site;
- 3) the draft decision establishing higher limit values for noise.

As a residents' association and also on behalf of (local) residents who have authorized us to do so (**Appendix 1**), we would like to express our view on the above-mentioned draft zoning plan and form-free environmental impact assessment decision.

Before doing so, we once again express our dissatisfaction with the course of the participation process that preceded the submission of the draft zoning plan for public inspection. In a letter dated November 22, 2021 (**Appendix 2**) we already pointed out the irregularities in that participation process, where we asked you to address the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) about this. Unfortunately, this did not happen and as a result there is now a draft plan available for inspection that cannot count on support among the members of our association. This also applies in particular to the decision to relocate the Sliffertsestraat and the choice for the western variant, one of the main points of our objections to the plan. That decision and choice were made unilaterally by the BMA, without involvement and input from the sounding group of residents, which was set up precisely for that purpose.

Unfortunately, we have to conclude that the participation process is apparently mainly seen by the municipality of Eindhoven as a process-based preparatory act on the basis of the "Regulation on Consultation and Participation of the Municipality of Eindhoven 2008" when drawing up a zoning plan and not as a means for actual participation and input from the environment. which can lead to a widely supported plan.

Illustrative in that respect is paragraph 9.3 of the explanatory notes to the draft zoning plan. It does state that eight meetings were held with the sounding board group, but nothing at all about the advice of that sounding group and what was and, above all, was not done with it. Nor is it mentioned that of the 500 responses from the consultation round in April 2021, 98% supported the advice of the sounding group or agreed with the content of that advice. Paragraph 9.3 thus paints a much too rosy picture of the participation process.

If the municipality takes the participation process seriously, then it is quite remarkable that results of that participation process have been left out of the documents that were made available for inspection with the draft zoning plan. This does not befit a government that claims to value transparency. We therefore request that the advice of the sounding group of April 25, 2021, including the appendix with recommendations, be included as an appendix to the explanatory notes of the zoning plan. To make sure that the advice will in any case be part of the documents, we enclose it as **Appendix 3** to this view.

Zoning plan with extended scope

We wonder why the choice was made for a zoning plan with an extended scope. Such a zoning plan seems primarily intended for areas where a possible spatial development may or can occur, but for which it is not yet clear whether and in what form that development will take place.

In the present case, there is no question of a possible development, but of a fixed development of a police site, at least according to the municipality. This is also evidenced by a publication in the Municipal Gazette dated June 30, 2022, which states that the municipality intends to enter into a purchase agreement for the site with the police.

The zoning plan is thus drawn up solely for the purpose of a fixed development. In view of this, the choice of a zoning plan with an extended scope has no added value, and there is no reason why one cannot wait with the adoption of a zoning plan until the plans for the intended development have been worked out in detail. At that time, a detailed zoning plan can be adopted, which will enhance legal certainty for all parties and certainly for the residents of Meerhoven.

Relocation of the Sliffertsestraat

As stated, our main objections are to the relocation of the Sliffertsestraat in western direction, towards the residential area. This relocation does not fit in with the car-restricted design of Meerhoven, is not carried out in accordance with the previously adopted principles, crosses a valuable landscape element and is apparently not necessary at all. We will explain this, often following what the sounding group has already stated in its advice.

In the Master Plan Meerhoven 1999, the choice was made for a ring-shaped main road for through traffic around the district, whereby car traffic between the district sections was made impossible. For reasons which we presume to be known to your council, the east side of the ring road was not realized¹. Instead, after much discussion, a secondary car connection via the Bosrand and the Sliffertsestraat between Zandrijk and Grasrijk was constructed. Various traffic measures were taken, laid down in the traffic order of July 11, 2006 and intended to spare the east side of Grasrijk as much as possible from the negative consequences of the car connection. Among other things the car connection via the Sliffertsestraat completely bypasses Grasrijk and only connects with that district section and the Meerhovendreef on the south side. In this way the idea of a ring road without direct connections between the district sections is approximated as much as possible. With the relocation of the Sliffertsestraat in the direction of the residential area, however, the basic principle of the Master Plan is completely abandoned and local residents are still confronted with the adverse consequences. To that extent, the choice for relocation of the Sliffertsestraat in accordance with the western variant is therefore at odds with the Meerhoven Master Plan 1999².

In addition, the western variant, as it is now indicated on the map as an area designation "other zone - reservation relocation Sliffertsestraat", is not in accordance with the principles as presented by your municipality in the District Info of July 9, 2020 (**Appendix 4**) and on the municipality's website (**Appendix 5**). Both the District Info and the website explicitly state, as illustrated with a picture, that if the choice is made to relocate the Sliffertsestraat, the change will be realized within the area of the police site. The draft zoning plan conflicts with that statement because the area designation referred to lies partly outside the area of the police site. Already by letter dated November 22, 2021 (**Appendix 2**) we have pointed this out to you as City Council. However, this is not addressed in the BMA's response to that letter (**Appendix 6**).

Figure 3.23 in paragraph 3.6.2 (Cultural history) of the explanation of the draft zoning plan also shows that the western variant of the relocation of the Sliffertsestraat will cross a landscape element of very high value, which is also designated as such in the zoning plan. Nowhere does it appear that this encroachment on a very valuable landscape element was also considered in the choice to move the Sliffertsestraat westward.

In short, there are several good reasons not to relocate the Sliffertsestraat westward. And that applies all the more because there is no need for relocation of the Sliffertsestraat, as will be explained below.

¹ The comment in paragraph 2.1 of the explanatory notes to the draft zoning plan that the access for cars takes place from a ring road is therefore incorrect, as is the comment on the historical maps that Grasrijk did not yet exist in 2003.

² The comment in paragraph 2.3 of the explanation that the Sliffertsestraat is located between the district section Grasrijk and Land Forum is therefore also incorrect. The Sliffertsestraat runs through Land Forum.

Paragraph 2.4 of the explanatory notes to the draft zoning plan states that it is undesirable from the point of view of security management within the police site that the Sliffertsestraat runs through the plan area in a north-south direction. The police intend to house a wide variety of services and facilities at Land Forum, various parts of which must be located in extra secure zones. This results in a collection location that is not publicly accessible.

This justification for relocation of the Sliffertsestraat is completely at odds with the spatial and programmatic preconditions and ambitions formulated by the municipality in the document “Spatial Frameworks Land Forum” of November 2020. Paragraph 3.1.2 mentions the following ambitions, among others: “*The location does not form an enclave*”, “*Land Forum is accessible to residents to serve as part of a stroll*” and “*Designing the boundary by using landscape elements, no fencing*”. A closed police area that is not publicly accessible is in no way in line with these ambitions. This cannot therefore serve as an argument for relocation of the Sliffertsestraat. And in this context, we also fail to understand why in Article 13.1, with the application of deviation powers within the plan, property boundaries up to 2.5 meters high and on the east side even up to 4 meters high can be allowed. This too is not in line with the aforementioned ambitions.

Initially, a closed police area was apparently not the intention at all. The current location of the Sliffertsestraat has never been a point of discussion in the choice of location for the intended police facility. In fact, in that choice of location, the location of the Sliffertsestraat between the buildings of the police facility was seen as a plus. This is evident from various documents. In the "Business Case Collection Location Eindhoven phase 1: plot selection" of November 19, 2019³, page 26 (**Appendix 7**) it is stated as a point of attention for the integration of the plot: "*There is good access via Sliffertsestraat and there are several options to realize an additional access on the plot*". And Appendix 8 to the Business Case (“Collection Location Eindhoven - Integration Study” of October 17, 2019) includes a number of situation and layout sketches (**Appendix 8**) in which the police facility is drawn in on both sides of the current Sliffertsestraat. These includes texts such as: "*Accessibility via Sliffertsestraat*", "*Access possible via entrances at Sliffertsestraat*", "*Public road between different functions*" and immediately afterwards "*This is good for access via the Sliffertsestraat*". Reference can also be made to the District Info of December 12, 2019 (**Appendix 9**). Here too, the police facility was depicted as two plots on either side of the current Sliffertsestraat.

From these documents it is clear that the realization of one fully enclosed or lockable area was never a condition for the police, at least not at the time of choosing the location. But even after that, this condition was apparently not set, or at least not as a firm requirement. In the document "Request for quotation traffic research for the new

³ This document (including appendices) was obtained through an appeal to the Government Information (Public Access) Act (Wob). Some passages have been painted off by the provider on the basis of the Wob.

Central Police Housing" of March 16, 2020⁴, it can be concluded that the police only have a preference for the Sliffertsestraat not to run straight through the police facility. On page 5 of that document (**Appendix 10**) it is stated: "*Police have indicated that they prefer not to have the Sliffertsestraat run straight through the police complex. One of the main reasons for this is security*" (underlining added by us). So it is not a requirement, but a preference.

It is not clear why that preference is given priority and must apparently outweigh the preconditions and ambitions set and also outweigh all the disadvantages associated with a relocation of the Sliffertsestraat. This is incorrectly not explained in the explanatory notes to the draft zoning plan.

In any case, there is no need to relocate the Sliffertsestraat. And if there were such a need, that would be reason to reconsider the choice of the Land Forum location, especially since the need for relocation of the Sliffertsestraat (if there is one) was not included as a disadvantage in the choice of location in 2019 and there is an alternative that does not have that disadvantage, namely Trade Forum.

Relocation of the Sliffertsestraat is neither desirable nor necessary. We therefore request you – insofar as you decide to adopt the zoning plan – to delete the area designation “other zone – reservation for relocation Sliffertsestraat” and the associated planning rules and to designate the existing Sliffertsestraat as such. Now that a global and flexible destination "Public Interest - Police" has been chosen, this need not impede the development of the police site.

Environmental impact assessment decision

We cannot agree with the decision of the BMA of June 28, 2022 that no environmental impact assessment has to be drawn up. Contrary to the BMA's opinion, the notification memorandum for the form-free environmental impact assessment does not show that the zoning plan will not have any significant adverse effects on the environment. This applies in any case to the aspect of noise. In paragraph 3.11.3 of the notification memorandum, RoyalHaskoningDHV concludes that there are indeed points for attention with regard to this aspect. Mentioned are the use of the police siren, the noise production of the Training and Education cluster and the influence of road traffic noise from surrounding roads on theory education areas on the police premises itself. RoyalHaskoningDHV states that these points for attention are safeguarded in the zoning plan by means of a further assessment (the environmental permit for a zoning plan activity), but such assurance cannot replace an environmental impact assessment, which is precisely intended to be carried out at an early stage to determine whether an activity may have significant adverse effects on the environment and an environmental impact assessment study is therefore deemed necessary.

⁴ This document was also obtained through an appeal to the Government Information (Public Access) Act (Wob). Some passages have been painted off by the provider on the basis of the Wob.

Moreover, the notification memorandum lacks a description of the possible cumulative effects, both when it comes to the cumulative effect of the various noise sources at or because of the police site and when it concerns the cumulation of those noise sources with existing noise-causing sources and activities in the area. The latter may include existing road traffic and air traffic, for example. Although the notification memorandum states that the police site itself is located outside the 35 Ke contour of Eindhoven Airport, this does not alter the fact that the noise from aviation traffic, combined with the noise at or because of the police site (for example, the police sirens) could lead to significant adverse consequences for the residents of Meerhoven.

Alternative location

In a letter dated February 15, 2022 (**Appendix 11**), we already pointed out the Trade Forum location to the BMA as a very suitable alternative for the establishment of police housing. In a letter dated March 18, 2022 (**Appendix 12**), the BMA replied, in fact only by stating that the location selection process has been completed and that it has therefore been decided to continue the process for realizing the police housing at the Land Forum location. In doing so, however, the BMA completely ignores the fact that the choice for the Land Forum location in December 2019 was made on completely different principles than those on which the draft zoning plan is currently based. The choice of location was based on a much less extensive plan for police housing. For example, the number of police employees and students has doubled since the location was chosen. Also, at the time of the choice of location, there was no question of relocating the Sliffertsestraat. Precisely because of the much larger scope of the plans and the alleged necessity of relocation of Sliffertsestraat, it can no longer be assumed that the Land Forum location is the most suitable and that the plans cannot be realized at the Trade Forum location with considerably fewer objections. Trade Forum was also on the long list of 17 potentially suitable locations that was drawn up in 2019 and was also proposed by the sounding board group on October 7, 2020 as an alternative location. By choosing Trade Forum, an important search criterion can be met, namely limiting nuisance for the surrounding area. And a choice for Trade Forum does not require relocation of the Sliffertsestraat, which has major advantages over the Land Forum location from an urban planning perspective, which has major advantages compared to the Land Forum location from an urban development point of view (the Masterplan Meerhoven 1999), cultural-historical point of view as well as financial point of view.

Cell complex

Part of the intended police facility is a cell complex. Appendix 7 of the “Business Case Collection Location Eindhoven phase 1: plot choice” dated November 19, 2019 (“Project: Collection Location Eindhoven – Assessment Criteria”) (**Appendix 13**) states that suspects/detainees are sent onto the street after arrest and that these suspects/detainees should not go roaming and cause nuisance undesirably. However, nowhere is it explained how this nuisance will be prevented. The risk of this nuisance is even greater, since the cell complex will have to be built on the western part of the police facility, which is adjacent to the residential area. A cell complex on the east side

is not possible because of the area designation “safety zone – area of influence” that applies there. Pursuant to Article 12.4 of the plan rules, no buildings are permitted within that area designation that are intended for the accommodation of persons with reduced self-reliance, including cell complexes. The explanatory notes to the draft zoning plan wrongly ignores this potential nuisance.

Conclusion

In our opinion, the draft of the zoning plan Land Forum (police site) was drawn up carelessly and not in accordance with good spatial planning. In view of the changed and, above all, further expanded program and the subsequent desire of the police to realize that program on a closed site and to relocate the Sliffertsestraat for this purpose, the Land Forum location is not suitable for the establishment of the police facility. In any case, a more thorough investigation should have been carried out into whether, due to the changed programming and desires, another location (particularly Trade Forum) has become more suitable. In any case, the relocation of the Sliffertsestraat is at odds with the Masterplan Meerhoven 1999 and the frameworks and ambitions formulated by the municipality for Land Forum. We also believe that there is indeed reason to have an environmental impact assessment carried out. Finally, we see no reason why a global zoning plan with a broadened scope should be adopted now, which must then be followed later by a permit procedure after all.

We therefore request that you do not adopt the zoning plan Land Forum (police site), or, if you do decide to adopt it, to delete the area designation “other zone – reservation for relocation Sliffertsestraat” and the associated planning rules and to designate the existing Sliffertsestraat accordingly.

We reserve the right to make further additions to this view.

Yours sincerely,

on behalf of the Board of Residents' Association Meerhoven and all who have authorized the Board to submit a view,

Ruben Trieling
Chair

Geert van Buul
Secretary

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Appendices:

- 1) Authorizations
- 2) Letter Residents' Association Meerhoven to City Council regarding “Update irregularities in the participation process regional police service center Land Forum” dated November 22, 2021
- 3) Letter Residents' Association Meerhoven to BMA regarding “Police housing Land Forum Meerhoven” with annex “Advice sounding group police housing Land Forum” dated April 25, 2021
- 4) District Info Municipality of Eindhoven regarding "State of affairs police site Land Forum" dated July 9, 2020
- 5) Website www.eindhoven.nl/politielocatielandforum dated July 29, 2022
- 6) Letter of the BMA dated December 21, 2021 in response to a letter from Residents' Association Meerhoven “Update irregularities in the participation process regional police service center Land Forum” dated November 22, 2021
- 7) Business Case Collection Location Eindhoven phase 1: plot selection dated November 19, 2019
- 8) Appendix 8 “Collection Location Eindhoven – Integration Study” dated October 17, 2019 belonging to the Business Case Collection Location Eindhoven phase 1: plot selection dated November 19, 2019
- 9) District Info Municipality of Eindhoven regarding “Possible housing for the police Land Forum” dated December 12, 2019
- 10) Request for quotation traffic research for the new Central Police Housing dated March 16, 2020
- 11) Letter Residents' Association Meerhoven regarding “Trade Forum as an alternative location for police housing” dated February 15, 2022
- 12) Letter of the BMA dated March 18, 2022 in response to a letter from Residents' Association Meerhoven regarding “Trade Forum as an alternative location for police housing” dated February 15, 2022
- 13) Appendix 7 “Project: Collection Location Eindhoven – Assessment Criteria” belonging to the Business Case Collection Location Eindhoven phase 1: plot selection dated November 19, 2019

Note that this is a translation of the Dutch version of the view of Residents' Association Meerhoven on the draft zoning plan Land Forum (police site) and form-free environmental impact assessment decision dated August 3, 2022. The Dutch version is leading.