



A NEW BOOST OF ENERGY FOR THE OLD NRE SITE

Creating a new lease of life for Eindhoven's heritage sites, together with the city

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heritage sites, together with the city**

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Map showing users' initiatives



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YOU SEE MORE BY BIKE

I'm cycling through Eindhoven and to my surprise, I find myself in one of the small streets called Gashouder. I can't believe my eyes. What an exciting contrast between brand-new housing and old, renovated factory buildings. It's peaceful; I'm right in the middle of the city, but there are hardly any cars. There is, however, a lively pavement café, there are children on bikes and chickens foraging... what's going on here?

I ask a man who is watering his plants on a sort of stage in the public space. I'm in luck. His name is Jac Duijf, and he tells me he has been involved in the metamorphosis of this corner of Eindhoven since the very beginning. In the heart of the city. Two hundred meters

**THERE ARE HARDLY ANY CARS.
THERE IS, HOWEVER, A LIVELY
PAVEMENT CAFÉ, THERE ARE
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WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?**

from where, many centuries ago, what was then a small country town built its first defences. Incidentally, the stage on which he is standing turns out to be his property, and his 'garden'. Just one of the many unusual solutions applied in this tiny neighbourhood about which I will hear more, since Jac Duijf loves to talk, and talk a lot about the special place in which he lives. "It's a question of energy, isn't it?", he jokes.

Where am I?

I carry on cycling across the NRE site, which is the name of the neighbourhood I'm in. It's in Eindhoven, an industrial city since the late nineteenth century, mainly thanks to Philips. In the 1980s, Eindhoven grew into a city in which ground-breaking technology and innovation can be felt everywhere. The site I'm cycling across was traditionally surrounded by energy. NRE stands for Nutsbedrijven Regio Eindhoven, which was the former municipal utilities.

Aerial photo of the NRE site in the 1930s



The historic site nestles between the city centre and a residential area. After the utilities companies moved out, the factory buildings remaining admittedly had no monument status, but they were of historic and cultural worth. Until recently, they were in a very poor condition, and the ground was heavily contaminated. But all that is in the past.

**THE FACTORY BUILDINGS
REMAINING ADMITTEDLY HAD
NO MONUMENT STATUS, BUT
THEY WERE OF HISTORIC AND
CULTURAL WORTH**

The NRE site has gone through a great many changes in just over 100 years. Some changes were sudden (new production processes) and some gradual. In order to understand the background of the current site, its layout and the ins and outs of the individual buildings, it's important to study the history.



Peel power plant



HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

1899 Start of the gas plant

The gas plant is founded. Several buildings are immediately constructed: a coke crusher, a distillery, a regeneration building, a condensate room and a canteen/baths area. The growth is thanks to supply of gas to the neighbouring municipalities of Stratum, Strijp, Tongelre, Gestel and Woensel.

1909 Construction of Peel Power Plant

Building 10, a coal-fired power station known as the Peel Power Plant, is constructed. This building will later serve as a workshop. In 1910, a new gasometer and distillery are built.

1944, ALL THE GASOMETERS AND THE CARBURETTED WATER GAS PLANT ARE RIDDLED IN A GERMAN AIR STRIKE

1913 - 1923

Growth of the coal/gas plant

In 1922, the machine room of the electricity power plant is put into operation. And a new office is built in 1923 - 1924.

1925 - 1952

Switch from production to distribution

A switch is made from production of coal gas to distribution of gas. The result is the demolition of a number of buildings, leaving only numbers 5 and 8 standing. In 1930, a distribution building is constructed (Building 11) and the showroom on Nachtegaallaan (Building 2). Furthermore, a large, striking gasometer appears against the city's skyline. The 'Goliath' is 84 metres high, the second highest structure in Eindhoven at that time, after the church steeple on the Joriskerk.



1899 First foundation stone laid for the new gas plant (Buildings 5 and 8)



1925 Construction of garage (Building 17)



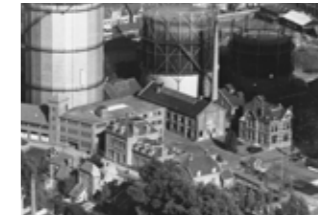
1941 Large gasometer is bombed



1944 Other gasometers riddled in an air raid



1950 Construction of blower room (Building 7)



1960 Construction of central workshop (Building 3)

1909 Construction of power plant (Peel Power Plant)



1924 Construction of Zuiverhuis (Building 9, where the gas was purified)



1930 Construction of large gasometer Showroom built (Building 2) Construction of gas distributing station Building 11)



1946 Construction of Building 1 (offices)



1952 Construction of canteen (Building 4)

1989 Municipal Utilities becomes NV Nutsbedrijven Eindhoven Region



1941 Gasometer bombed

In 1941, the large gasometer on the Eindhoven Canal is destroyed by RAF bombs and in 1944, all the gasometers and the carburetted water gas plant are riddled in a German air strike.

1950 New buildings

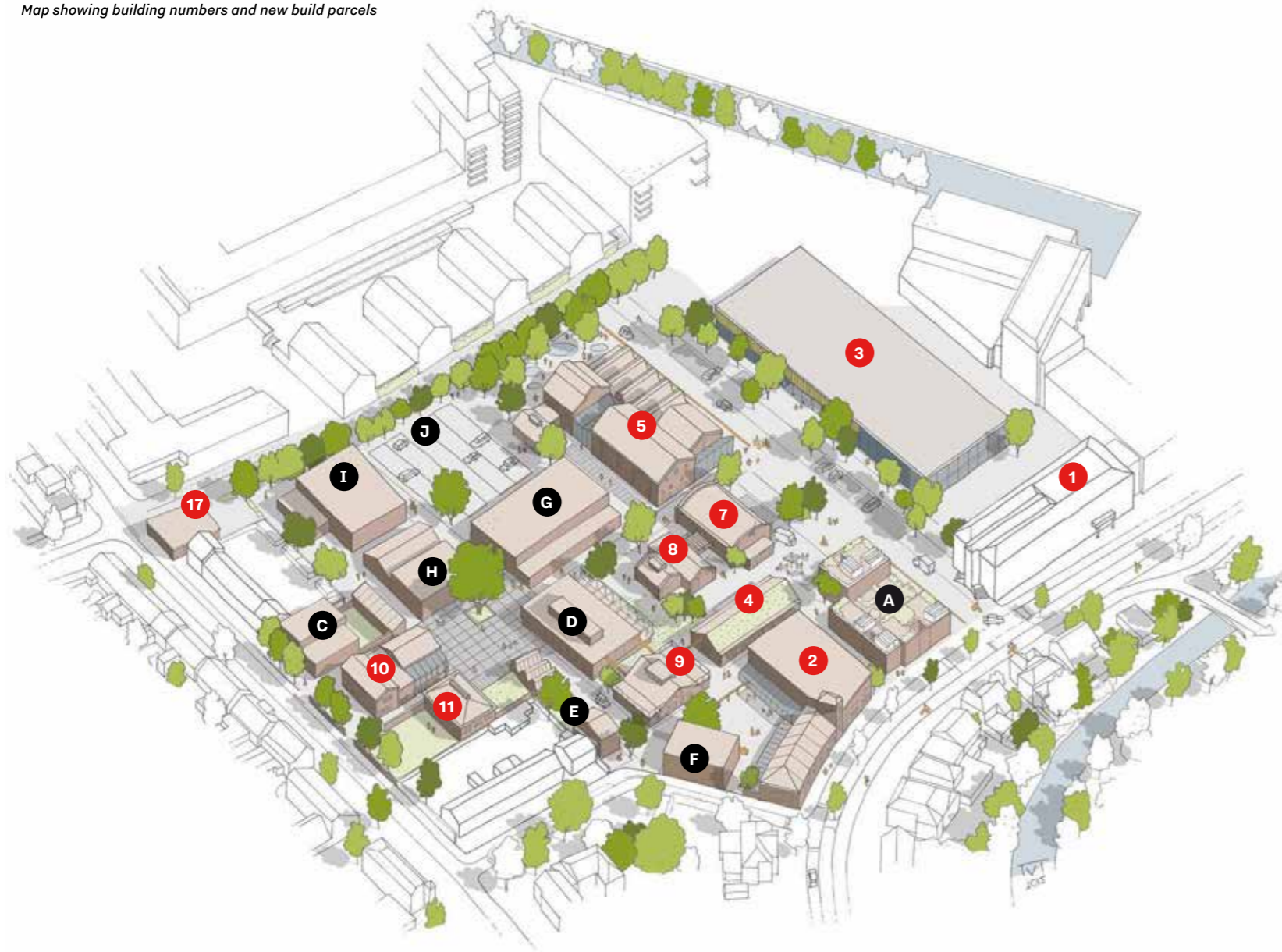
On the site where an early twentieth-century commercial building was damaged during an RAF bombardment, the blower room (Building 7) is built. And in 1952, a new office (Building 1) and canteen (Building 4) are built.

1965 Start of the large-scale conversion

The discovery of natural gas in the province of Groningen is a major turning point. The site on Nachtegaallaan is no longer the indispensable hub for the reception, storage and distribution of gas. All that remains are mainly workshops, warehouses and office functions. A few buildings are demolished. The gasometers which had for so long dominated the skyline around the canal also have to go.

1989 municipal utilities companies are privatised

In 1989, a new, privatised organisation structure is created: NV Nutsbedrijven Regio Eindhoven (NV NRE), a public limited company. In 2007, this becomes Endinet. In the end, that company too leaves the site on Nachtegaallaan, in 2012, and ownership of the grounds is taken over by Eindhoven Municipality. After 115 years of intensive use, the fencing around the former gas plant is taken down and the NRE site is ready to face a new future.



A FORMER FACTORY SITE IN THE CENTRE OF THE CITY; NOW WHAT?

I park my bike and take a seat at one of the pavement cafés. I have become intrigued by this area and want to hear all those involved tell me about all the ideas there have been about the site in the last fifteen years and what happened after that.

The municipality acquired the NRE site in 2004. The goal was to have 350 homes built on it. To achieve that, almost all the existing buildings would have to be demolished. But the financial crisis threw a spanner in the works and the project was put on hold. When energy company Endinet withdrew in 2012, the buildings were empty and the city executive decided to sell them, together with the parcels on the site. That was the beginning of a unique urban development process for the Netherlands.

ANY NEW DESIGN PROCESS MUST CERTAINLY RESONATE WITH THE STRIKING HISTORY OF THE SITE AND ITS BUILDINGS

The municipality realised that this was a very special part of Eindhoven and a new vision was formed with regard to the buildings' history. The prominent history of the site and its buildings definitely had to be reflected in any new design. The cultural and historic worth, the magnitude and the location: all this offered wonderful opportunities.

Eindhoven, the Brainport city, has a nose for innovation, as recent years have shown. In line with that tradition, and in the interests of both possible future users and of the city, the re-purposing of the NRE site was also tackled in an unusually innovative way. For example, the municipality wanted to offer future residents/users the opportunity to

At the heart of the municipal project team: Stefanie Gijsbers, Marianne Willemsen and Tom van Tuijn



Some of the initiators during a design session

buy there, rather than property developers. Research showed that enough future residents/users could be found who were willing to initiate the development process.

No set plan!

There was no set plan beforehand. Naturally, the municipality had its own ideas about what kind of district it should be. For example, it was to be a collectively supported plan, involving the necessary industriousness and dynamism, and the historic industrial character was to be preserved. For the municipality, the inspiring stories, construction plans and intentions of the preferred candidates formed the basis for the redevelopment of the area.

IT WAS TO BE A COLLECTIVELY SUPPORTED PLAN, INVOLVING THE NECESSARY INDUSTRIOUSNESS AND DYNAMISM, AND THE HISTORIC INDUSTRIAL CHARACTER WAS TO BE PRESERVED

In 2013, the municipality began a selection procedure and started a development process, with the first parties selected and other interested parties. A framework was drawn up, in consultations, which acted as an underlay for the parcelling and the public space. This was followed by the process of thinking about how best to tackle the historic and cultural heritage and the design of the new buildings.

During 2014, several workshops and work group consultations took place in various formations with the preferred candidates. These meetings were also intended to streamline the collaboration and formulate a broadly supported ambition. Absolutely all the parties were present at the design sessions: potential residents and hospitality entrepreneurs, municipal officers, residents of the surrounding neighbourhoods, the Van Abbe Foundation etc. These sessions were intended to streamline the collaboration and to formulate a broadly supported ambition. In retrospect, this approach could be deemed to be naïve, but it did prove just how open the municipality wanted the dialogue to be. And it did provide a lesson learned, since this and subsequent such meetings never actually resulted in concrete decisions, because the interests of those involved were too diverse. Real strides were only made when potential residents, led by the by the TU/e (Eindhoven University of Technology), met in small design groups with each other and the municipality.

Design session with users



Former alderman Mary-Ann Schreurs

Joint process

Back to Jac Duijf, the first resident I bumped into. He was one of the very first people to show a specific interest in one of the historic buildings; the one known as the showroom, on Nachtegaallaan. The first open viewing day was organised in 2012. “Right from Day 1, we found the whole thing a fantastic experience. Strangely enough, we immediately felt ‘the power’ that the site has. But in a good sense. My wife, Ger, and I were interested in Building 2, the showroom and warehouse, from the beginning, together with four other couples. In the end, we developed the whole building together so that we now have communal spaces at our disposal, in addition to our own apartment. Following the open viewing day in 2012, it was six years before we and the other residents could move in. And there was certainly the odd difficult moment during that time. But now, we’re living in the most beautiful spot in Eindhoven.”

THE END RESULT WAS DETERMINED BY THE USERS AND BY THE WHOLE

He immediately shows me around his home. He has fun or interesting things to share about every nook and cranny of his building (for example about the defunct goods lift, now used as a pantry.

Following the elections in 2018, Yasin Toronoglu became alderman responsible for the development of the NRE site. During a guided tour of the area, he was enthusiastic about the plans being realised and the energy that the end-users put into making their dreams come true. The original idea for making this development possible was thought up in 2012 by the alderman at that time, Mary-Ann Schreurs, as she was taking a walk across the grounds which were closed to the public back then. How the cooperative area development could be shaped was not clear at that the time and as we stand in front of Cyklist, she and I look back on the process.

Mary-Ann: “By not imposing restrictions beforehand, but asking people what their dreams were, the municipality focused on the life people wanted to lead. It was a shift away from the top-down approach and separation of functions in modernistic planning and also from the prevailing brokering role of project developers who have no long-term commitment to a project. The end result was determined by the various users on the site and by the whole. And that result is so much more liveable and amazing than it would have been had it been

Jac Duijf and his wife, Ger



NRE 2.



Building 9

AND WE'RE NOT EVEN FINISHED YET. THERE ARE SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES HERE!

submitted to a standard approach. A city is constantly in flux, but the objective remains good living and living well together. And to achieve that, you have to give people space. Literally.”

Jac Duijf: “We’ve only been living here for a couple of months. We’ve become friends with our fellow residents in all those years. In fact, the collaboration and working out how we all wanted it to be has been of huge added value. Deciding that we didn’t want to split the garden into small sections but that we’d rather keep it as one open space is something you all have to agree to. But it does make it more spatial! And subtle differences, such as my garden being raised, make it clear which bit is whose.

And we’re not even finished yet. There are so many opportunities here! As a community, we want to tackle the issue of how we can deal responsibly and sustainably with waste

THE GREAT THING WAS THAT WE WERE ABLE TO COLLABORATE WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE ACTUALLY LIVING OR WORKING THERE, OR WHO WILL BE.

and mobility. That keeps it interesting. Incidentally, I have to say that it is partly thanks to the fact that the project leaders at Eindhoven Municipality were so committed, that we were able to go the distance. It was clear that we all wanted the same thing and such solidarity gives you extra energy and faith in the project.”

Stefanie Gijsbers, project manager at Eindhoven Municipality, agrees:

“It was a great adventure for us too; working without a set plan, not knowing which direction it would take. But being able to work with people who were actually going to live or work there themselves made it easier for us. We literally worked it out on a large sheet of blank paper. The municipality wanted the site to be a lively city neighbourhood with a variety of functions, and had a preference for involving ‘creative people’ in order to achieve that liveliness and also because this process required thinking out of the box.

Temporary installation for Dutch Design Week



Building 11

We feel that the neighbourhood has been achieved now. It's dynamic, extremely diverse and it was created together with the residents and other end users. They really had to be patient and invest a lot of time, but the result makes it all worthwhile."

A number of criteria were applied in the selection by the municipality of the potential population of the NRE site.

Marianne Willemsen, project leader at Eindhoven Municipality: "In this development, the municipality made a conscious decision not to go for maximum profit. The most important criterion in the selection was the combination of plan and offer: how the candidates' plans could be combined with the location they could acquire and what they could offer the NRE site in terms of added value. As long as the accompanying financial bid remained within a reasonable framework, the financial aspects were not the most important criterion for selection. The municipality made an absolute priority of the neighbourhood we had in mind. The innovative, experimental nature of the way we tackled this project demanded much more in the way of consultation than we were accustomed to when working on a traditional area development with a developer. That was also a significant investment on the part of the municipality, in terms of extra deployment of the project leaders, the city planner and the legal officers."



**BY GUIDING IT WELL AND WITH THE RIGHT OWNERS,
YOU CAN MAKE THE PROCESS WORK AND BE VALUABLE.
THAT IS NOT A QUESTION OF CHANCE, IT IS THE RESULT
OF HARD WORK. DON'T BE FOOLED, COLLABORATION IS
IN EINDHOVEN'S DNA.**



Building 5

FINAL GOAL FIRST

By putting the final goal first, the exciting plans were given priority and the chance of being carried out. This was helped along by the fact that many of the candidates selected were prepared to roll up their sleeves and help in all sorts of ways. CPO (collective private commissioning) contracts were signed with various organisations which have experience in this kind of developing. This small-scale method of working is very well-suited to the scale of the site. Due to the method of collaboration, supervisors from these organisations become personally involved in the project.

The fact that Magdaleen Kroese of Kilimanjaro Advance Living now lives on the NRE site and has her business there says enough about that personal involvement:
“What distinguishes CPO is the fact that you work with a variety of people towards a shared goal: achieving a beautiful living environment. The interesting thing about the NRE site is that this intensive form of collaboration applies to the entire area. That means that everyone has ‘ownership’ and decisions are constantly being made which may come from an individual initiative but which always contribute to the communal interest. Actually, I knew immediately that I wanted to live there too”, she adds enthusiastically.

The large supply of knowledge and creativity available made innovation possible. The solidarity among those involved meant that people were prepared to listen to each other’s arguments and reach agreement. Magdaleen is also happy with the way in which the site has stayed as open as possible: “By not clearly marking the borders of the parcels, we have created the illusion of sharing the large grounds in which our buildings stand. The good mutual relationships also made it possible to go considerably far in mixing functions, giving the site a unique variety. We drew up a workbook, a kind of



Temporary functions on the site

game rule book, to record the agreements made and preserve them for the future. Having said that, there is still room for innovation.

AN INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE WHICH ALWAYS CONTRIBUTES TO THE COMMUNAL INTEREST

The municipality wanted to keep property developers out of the plan, and that's fine, because the people who now live and work here are often brimming with entrepreneurial spirit. Events organised here demonstrated the potential of the site and led to a really nice mixture of living, business and hospitality sector.

There are many advantages to the process of making decisions together with all the individual end users. However, it does cost a lot of extra time and energy in the final realisation, as the municipal organisation also learned."

From the moment it became known that this site was to be re-purposed, it exerted an unusually strong attraction on creative people in the city. This is hardly surprising when you realise that years before the buildings and parcels were actually sold, the NRE site had hosted well-known creative events such as Dutch Design Week and GLOW. The NULZES foundation is located in one of those buildings, and their goal is, as they describe it, 'to facilitate space for creative entrepreneurship'. They feel very comfortable here, among architects, designers, illustrators and design researchers.

Dirk Smit of NULZES: "We feel absolutely at home here. We really appreciate the huge amount of freedom we have here. In the first instance, we had a temporary residence, a form of anti-squatting. Events such as Dutch Design Week and GLOW were enormously important to us. As far as we are concerned, they put the site on the map. We were also busy with our own search and were it not for the alertness of one of the municipal project managers, we might have missed the chance of settling here permanently.

Despite the huge amount of freedom we feel here, the role of the municipality shouldn't be underestimated. This was a brave project by the municipality. Eindhoven is a city of innovation and we are happy to contribute to that. But here, the most innovative thing

Building 7



**THE MOST INNOVATIVE THING
THE MUNICIPALITY DID HERE
WAS NOT TO DO THINGS**

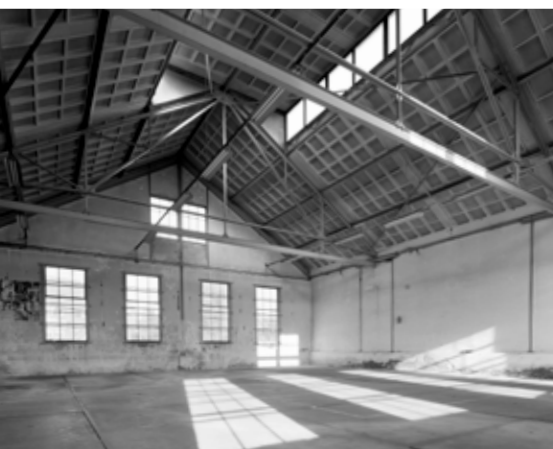
the municipality did was to not do things. To not have a set plan. To not apply preconditions beforehand. To not tell us how we should do things. And of course, there will be the occasional friction. Things take longer to achieve than you would like. But that's all part of the process; wonderful things happen in such a living lab environment.

At NUL ZES, we think up concepts, make prototypes and organise interaction with the public. In short: think, do, share. We've stuck to that, up till now, from the very first day, when we thought we would only be here temporarily. We apply the method in all areas, from urban planning to material research, you name it! And the proof of how much I like it here can be found in the fact that in addition to my business, I have now bought my home here too..."



Dirk Smit in front of Building 8

Interiors of buildings before renovation



SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

2004 Vision for area established

The vision for the area is established. There are 350 homes planned for the NRE site. The municipality buys the site.

2007

NRE becomes Endinet

2009 Zoning plan

The zoning plan for Tongelre within the Ring is established. Financial crisis causes the development planning to be put on hold.

2012 Endinet vacates the site

Endinet vacates the site, and that signals the start of the current area development and the drawing up of the inspiration paper. In November, an open day is organised and in December, the first 48 responses come.

2013 Programme kick-off and tendering phase

The tendering phase begins. At the end of the year, there have been 21 bids made from which five preferential candidates are selected.

2014 Declaration of intent

Fifth is given a temporary licence. Licence agreements are reached with the preferential candidates. At the end of the year, the design session and common ambitions are shared.



- 2019 First residents
- Zoning plan becomes irrevocable 2018
- 2017 Phase 4
- Soil remediation 2016
- 2015 Temporary greenery and new zoning plan
- Declaration of intent 2014
- 2013 Programme kick-off and tendering phase
- Endinet vacates the site 2012
- 2009 Zoning plan irrevocable
- NRE becomes Endinet 2007
- Vision for the area is established 2004

2015 Adding greenery

In April, the framework remediation plan was drawn up to tackle the ground contamination. Greenery is added, temporarily and in September, the remediation plan was put before the municipal council. A new zoning plan was drawn up and presented.

2016 Soil remediation

A decision is made about integrated remediation of the soil. There is unexpected support from the neighbourhood in the form of almost 300 signatures.

2017 Phase 4

Phase 4 and Building 8 are put up for sale. A decision is made about Phase 4 in October and about Building 8 in November.

2018 Zoning plan irrevocable

A decision by the Council of State makes the zoning plan irrevocable. The soil remediation is finished in March. In September, the buildings are given monument status. The first residents move into their homes at the end of 2018.

2019 First residents

First paving laid and multiple residents move into the site.

Hein van Stiphout.



Building 5

INDUSTRIOUS AND DYNAMIC

One of the ambitions for the NRE site was to make the area industrious and dynamic, with a mixture of functions, while preserving the historic cultural heritage. I walk my bike to the place where all that comes together; the striking gas plant, situated in the centre of the NRE site. It was one of the very first gas plants built in the Netherlands and it's one of the last not to have been demolished yet. After a radical and impressive renovation, it has been converted into Fifth, a 'multi hospitality concept' and an asset to the city.

Hein van Stiphout, co-owner and initiator of Fifth Jazz Club: "I'm a fan of this city. There are so many opportunities for entrepreneurship and people take those opportunities. Also because so many things are still lacking, incidentally... That's how I got the idea of making an old dream of mine come true, to open a jazz club. One that is unique in the Netherlands."

**I'M A FAN OF THIS CITY.
THERE ARE SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP
AND PEOPLE TAKE THOSE OPPORTUNITIES**

There had been events organised in the gas plant for years, during festivals and throughout the year. Van Stiphout was responsible for turning it into a pop-up restaurant and café, establishing the gas plant as a venue. Taking the step towards making it a permanent fixture seemed logical, but it was not easy.

Hein van Stiphout: "The initial steps were taken in 2010. The fact that we now opened officially in 2019 shows just how much patience we entrepreneurs have had to have. In order to keep alive the promise of a jazz club, we had to invest for a long period in temporary operations. Naturally, we recognise the added



Remediation

Temporary greenery

value it gave, being able to do this together with all the other businesses and residents here. And the guidance by the TU/e has also been fruitful. But I do feel that we lost time and money unnecessarily. In my opinion, the idea of establishing the allocation plan afterwards was doomed to failure. You cannot invest without some security.

That was a problem for us.

It took a long time. It would be great if the municipality could shorten that process in any similar projects in the future. But in the end, it was all worth it. We are able to put the difficult times behind us now. We are in a beautiful listed building. We have preserved as many of the scars of the past as possible to show everything this building has been through in the past century. And we are in the most beautiful building in Eindhoven!”

Another building which is undergoing a radical and impressive renovation is the Peel Power Plant (Building 10). It was originally home to a private electricity plant and later used as a workshop. It is a building in which, after the site was closed down, the trees grew if not up to heaven, certainly literally through the roof! And in that condition, it was bought by Ontwerpduo who intend to make it their workshop, studio, showroom and home! Such a multi-annual project is a real challenge. But perseverance, energy and creativity bear fruit here too and the plan is gradually becoming reality.

**I KNOW NOW ALREADY
THAT I WILL STAY HERE FOR
THE REST OF MY LIFE!**

Tineke Beunders of Ontwerpduo and co-owner of the Peel Power Plant was in no doubt from the very beginning: “From the very first moment, we had a really good feeling about this building; it seemed to be made for us. It perfectly suited the plans we already had. And the whole story fits

with the identity of our company too. We are mainly involved in the design side of lighting, so where better to have your company than in Eindhoven, city of light, on the site which used to provide the power?”

The fact that the municipality based the selection procedure on how it wanted the site to be used rather than on any financial criteria can be seen here especially clearly. Tineke Beunders and her partner Nathan Wierink, the other half of Ontwerpduo, were the only candidates with a ready-made concept for the whole building. The fact that their concept

Ontwerpduo: designers Tineke Beunders and Nathan Wierink with their children



brought together the combination of functions desired for the site in a single building, gave the municipality confidence in the future. And the time that lapsed between the moment of registration and actually being able to start work turned out to be an advantage in the end.

NO, I DON'T THINK IT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE ANY OTHER WAY

Tineke Beunders: "We didn't spend all that time doing nothing. It gave us the chance to further refine our plans. And because the municipality looked so carefully at the registrations, it was easy to make contact and reach agreement with

the other resulting like-minded future residents and users. We are very enthusiastic about the municipality's commitment and the fact that they chose this method of working which is not an easy one. Also for the openness of the project leaders and their commitment. That gave us all the chance to work out layout intuitively and made tailoring possible. Yes, of course some time was lost and there were hassles, often caused by external factors or parties, by the way. No, I don't think it could have been done any other way."

The same responses

I notice that whoever I talk to, I get the same responses. There are two of them, and they seem to be opposing. One is: what patience we had to have and what a long time it took and the other is: what a good decision on the part of the municipality, to do things this way. However, they seem less opposing if you talk to Tom van Tuijn, the city planner who was involved in the development of the NRE site, on behalf of the municipality. He 'made a study of' (and literally graduated with it...) the use of a whole chain of successive developments to explain how this process works. It's important to note that the authority (municipality) can take some distance without losing control.

Tom van Tuijn: "Naturally, such a process takes time to bear fruit. There are so many factors involved that you cannot control all of them; at best, you can give them a good breeding ground." In the beginning, as mentioned earlier, the municipality wanted to let

Building 4: Cyklist.



go of everything; no set plan, no profile. And that might give the impression that the municipality is leaning back and letting everything just run its course. But the opposite is true. You have to really get to work, inspiring and bringing people together.

Tom van Tuijn: “Once you have thought up the process, people have to be brought together, connections have to be made. The municipality did all that, by selecting based on registration and making candidates ‘co-owners’ of the area as quickly as possible. Of course, with ownership comes responsibility. But the great thing is that the rules you think up together are at grass roots level. That makes them more self-evident and of a higher quality and as such, more difficult to ignore!”

TRUST. YOU CAN FOSTER TRUST, AS A MUNICIPALITY, BY DEMONSTRATING COMMITMENT, TRANSPARENCY AND PROFESSIONALISM

Based on the morphological historic research and the interactive design process, points of historic significance were indicated, ideas explored and at the same time, the people involved got to know each other. It ensured that everyone understood exactly what kind of biotope they were entering. After that, people grew individually in their own process.

It’s important that they feel they have the freedom to be able to develop themselves and their ideas. And another very important thing is trust. You can foster trust, as a municipality, by demonstrating commitment, transparency and professionalism.

The great thing is that the commitment of the future residents ‘infects’ the professional staff. As a result, the municipality took a reserved position, continued to listen empathetically and based on that, operated in a flexible way by proposing not one outcome but, where possible, three potential outcomes. And by making room for solutions which occurred as a result of the group process.”

The municipality never for a moment ‘sat back complacently’. All the staff involved had extremely short lines to all candidates, were involved at every stage and created a sense



of togetherness. Even though long drawn out procedures made severe demands on perseverance and patience now and then. Legal procedures are nothing new in construction projects, but in this case, some neighbouring residents took their objections all the way to the Council of State.

Jac Duijf: “If that happens, you really have to want to stay the distance. On the other hand, it does reinforce the mutual bond. And if subsequently other neighbouring residents spontaneously collect more than 200 signatures because conversely, they are happy with the plans, well, that is a huge boost.”

Tom van Tuijn: “I always really admired that patience. They had to just hope that things would work out, and they did. But not by chance. I regularly heard people say that it was a coincidence that matters had fallen nicely into place. I'd like to correct that. The municipality deserves a compliment for the way in which it created freedom and space for the future residents. By guiding it well and with the right owners, you can make the process work and be valuable. That is not a question of chance, it is the result of hard work. Don't be fooled, collaboration is in Eindhoven's DNA. The Eindhoven way is what made this such a success, ask any of the residents or users!”

**THE MUNICIPALITY DESERVES
A COMPLIMENT FOR THE WAY
IN WHICH IT CREATED
FREEDOM AND SPACE**

The communal process led to something which is difficult to put into words; call it the magic of the NRE site. It's a kind of flow. The indestructible faith of a group in a good result is what made the site what it is now. The participants share an interest in preserving the unique character and have a communal vision for the future.

It's September 2019 when I cycle over the revitalised site. Many residents have already moved in, studios and workshops are fully operational and the enduring summer makes for full pavement cafés on the site. It's an encounter between old and new.

Marco Vlemmix.



Bodybuilding team.

FINAL STAGE

But there's still a large piece of ground lying unused. Surely great things are planned for that too? I ask the project leaders at the municipality.

“Certainly, there will be great things happening there”, Marianne Willemsen tells me. “A diverse group of people have been collaborating in order to realise Phase 4 there in the near future. Phase 4 is the final stage of the redevelopment of the NRE site.

THEY ARE ALL DYING TO REALISE THEIR DREAMS AND AMBITIONS THERE

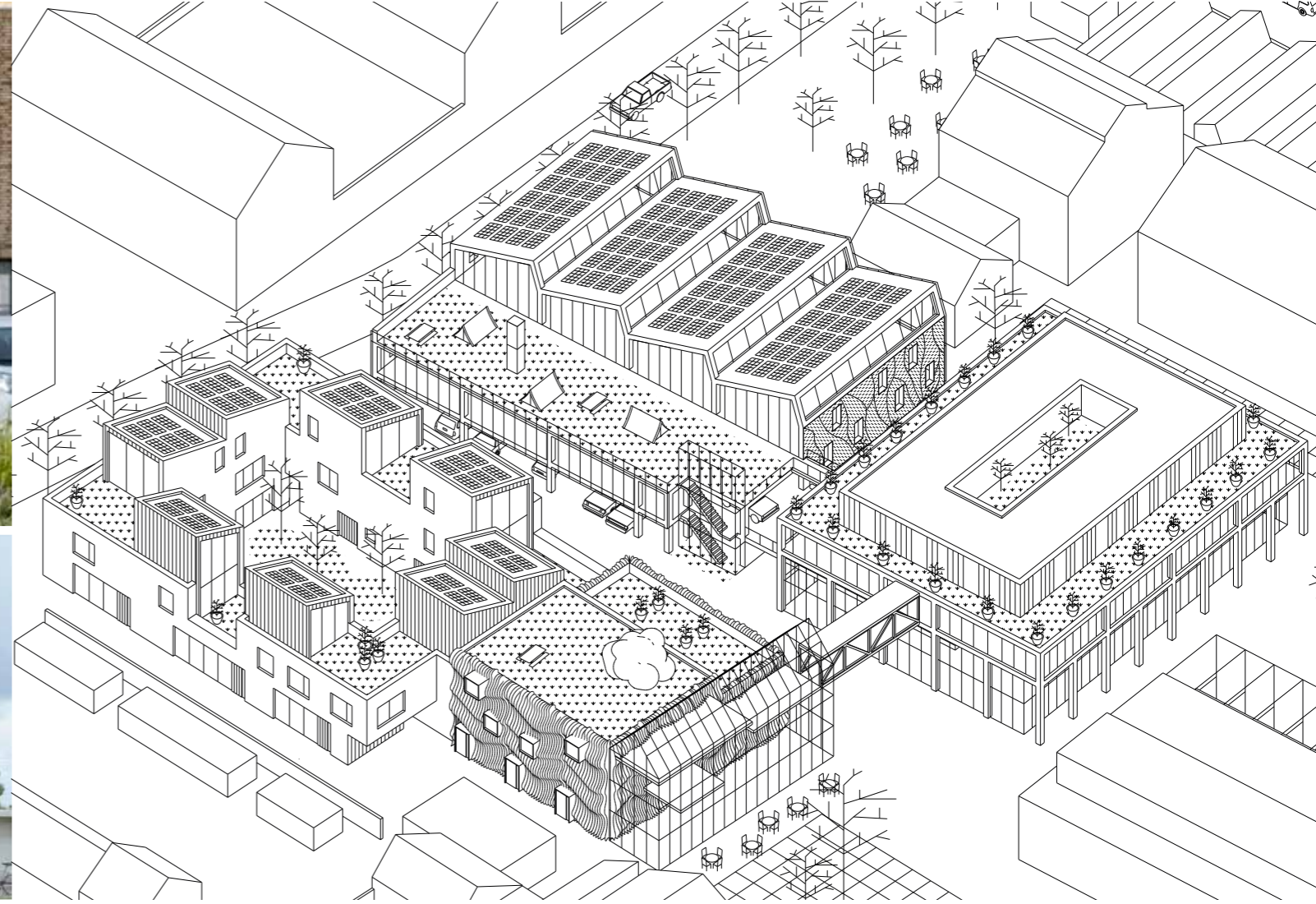
She puts me in touch with Marco Vlemmix, project advisor and owner of BIEB (a compagny for people who build under their own management). He Marco, together with architect Jelle Houben, had previously been involved on the NRE site in the development of Kaskoop, a new-build homes initiative for starters. He too has a thorough understanding of how unique the process is which is taking place on the NRE site. He is currently being kept busy with achieving the implementation of Phase 4.

Marco Vlemmix: “We saw the potential, with a few other initiators, of gathering together people with a creative background on this part of the site. For some people, that will mean moving up from a temporary place to a definite living and working environment in the future. A great variety of initiatives is being realised on the remaining parcels. Living and working will be combined in the Ambachtsdorp (crafts village). Tom Frencken, who worked in a temporary capacity on the site, will live and work here with his family. The Body-building will be special in that it makes use of the latest technologies and innovative concepts and will be given an extremely green appearance. It too will be used for living and working. Plans for the Parking Building and the Work Building, all elements of Phase 4, are already well on the way. The construction will start soon. Everyone is dying to realise their dreams and ambitions there.”

Bas van Mierlo and Jelle Houben of the Work and Parking building



Phase 4: Tender by 'Made by NRE'



Tom Frencken and Klaartje Daamen of Ambachtsdorp with their children



GIVE YOUR CITY EXTRA ENERGY BY MAKING THE CONNECTION

As I'm leaving the site, I realise what has happened here. The residents and users of this area were given a great deal of freedom. The municipality tried to let go as much as possible, and curiously enough, that's when a connection arises! A connection between the people which they will enjoy for a long time. A connection between the municipal staff which enabled them to do their work much better. And between the residents of this new little neighbourhood and the rest of Eindhoven. The city is a bit more beautiful, now that there are a few more Eindhoveners who are happy to be living in a city, in a neighbourhood full of energy!

In 2020, Eindhoven will celebrate one hundred years in its current form since the villages of Eindhoven, Gestel, Stratum, Strijp, Tongelre and Woensel amalgamated in 1920. Eindhoven's history shows that we have often looked to connect. In 1920, that was with the surrounding villages and shortly after that, it was with whole populations from the provinces of Drenthe, Limburg and Groningen who came to the city to work for Philips. Later, it was with Spanish people, then Turkish and Moroccan people and in the last decade, it has been with expats from all over the world.

And every time, we look for the connection. And that leads to a city which is better and stronger in its vision for the future. The NRE site is a little piece of the city in which we have restored historic industrial heritage to its former glory. But without taking our eye off the future. With committed people who gladly get involved with their city, which has resulted in the creation of a rich mixture of homes and work spaces with people who have put their roots down there.

THE NRE SITE, POWERING TOWARDS THE FUTURE!

22.000 m²

(2,2 HA) TOTAL SURFACE AREA
NRE SITE

VARIOUS STUDIOS

ICONOCLASM
(BEELDENSTORM)

10 OLD COMMERCIAL
BUILDINGS
RE-PURPOSED

9 NEW BUILDS
PLANNED OF
VARYING SIZE

8 TREES
PRESERVED
52 NEW TREES
PLANTED

44 NEW
HOMES

DESIGN AND
ARCHITECT
FIRMS

53% PUBLIC
SPACE

47% PRIVATE
SPACE

BIKE CAFÉ
AND RENTAL

JAZZ CLUB -
RESTAURANT -
GRAND CAFÉ

WORKSHOPS

HERITAGE HOUSE
(ERFGOEDHUIS)

