

Location: Lage Bergse Bos, Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
Streetlife products: Rough&Ready Curved Benches, Rough&Ready Linear Benches, Rough&Ready Picnic Sets  
Delivery: 2024  
Landscape Architect: Hosper landschapsarchitectuur

## The sustainable reinvention of Rotterdam's Lage Bergse Bos

**In the greater urban environment of Rotterdam, Lage Bergse Bos is a popular recreational area due to its variation of forests, open meadows, and water features. Though much used, the area has changed little since its inception in the 1970s, with facilities becoming outdated. And as in many other locations in the Netherlands, ash tree dieback (caused by fungal infection) has resulted in significant tree removal and deforestation. With plans for a new tunnelled A16 highway to run semi-submerged through the site, this combination of factors provided a catalyst for a broader reconsideration of the Lage Bergse Bos with improvements including new planting, paths, water amenities, recreational facilities, and Streetlife site furnishings.**

Landscape architecture firm Hosper developed a new vision for Lage Bergse Bos that prepares the area for the future environmentally, spatially, and recreationally. The improved Lage Bergse Bos has three sub-areas: the Bosrand (Forest strip), the Eilandenrijk (Archipelago), and the Park. These sub-areas have distinctive characteristics.

Firstly, areas of the Bosrand deforested by ash dieback and disease have been planted with a sustainable mix of different tree, shrub, and meadow species that better prevent diseases in the forest and result in a more robust, climate-proof forest for the future. Further, by restructuring paths and removing excessive parking spaces, the forest feeling of the Bosrand has been strengthened. A route winding through the area connects educational play elements that bring children into contact with nature while new furnishings along the trail provide places to sit and relax. The Rough&Ready line from Streetlife was selected as the furnishing family for the Lage Bergse Bos to enhance the natural feeling atmosphere. Here, Rough&Ready Linear Benches with FSC® certified hardwood in combination with steel supports powder coated in a rustic looking finish were selected.

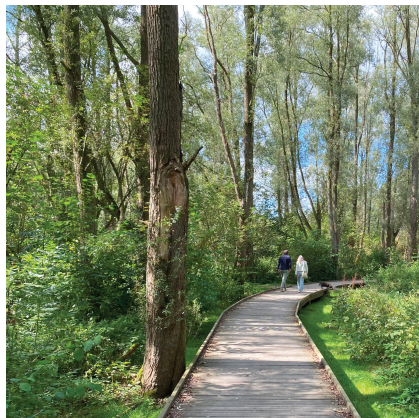
Next, the Eilandenrijk is an ecologically dynamic place with variation between wet and dry created by raising the water level to create an ecologically attractive swamp forest. A walking route connects small islands with bridges and passes special experience objects, including a long boardwalk, a fauna tower for birds, bats, and insects, and matching Rough&Ready seating elements positioned to take advantage of special views.

Finally, the Park is located around the pond and on the hill of the new semi-submerged A16 highway tunnel, which has been greened with trees, shrubs, and meadow species. The park area features open areas with lawns of grass, alternating with flowery grassland and solitary trees. Each lawn is given a type of tree with a special characteristic, which distinguishes the lawns from each other. A paved Park route runs along the water and is easily accessible. The park route passes the various lawns and gives a varied picture of flowery grasslands, neat lawns, and the forest. Additionally, Rough&Ready Picnic Sets and custom Rough&Ready Curved Benches provide places to meet, barbeque, and relax by the water. The Park also includes two existing restaurants.

Yellow powder-coated birds are hanging in the trees along all routes as markers. Every route has its own recognisable bird.

Hosper notes that multiple parties were involved throughout the design process for the Lage Bergse Bos improvements. These parties include multiple levels of government, stakeholders including the restaurants, social organisations including a nature club, local entrepreneurs and area residents.

By enhancing an already valuable public space using sustainable forestry and water management concepts and upgrading areas for recreational use, the Lage Bergse Bos remains a much-loved amenity now reinvented for present and future times.



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