**Q&A Eindhoven Tongelre**

**Versiom 1.0, 3 November 2022**

**General**Q: Please clarify any additional plans that do not currently exist but are likely to come up if Eindhoven wants to expand its station, increase its train traffic and capacity.  
A: A decision about a follow-up study (a so-called MIRT\* exploration) into the expansion of the station and railway capacity will be made in November. This exploration will take around two years and will reveal, step-by-step, the preferred plan. Which plan will be elaborated in greater detail will be decided at the end of this period.

\* MIRT stands for ‘Meerjarenprogramma Infrastructuur, Ruimte en Transport’ [Multi-Year Programme for Infrastructure, Space and Transport]. The MIRT lists all projects and programmes that the State is working on or will be working on, whether it be in collaboration with provinces, transport regions, municipalities or water authorities.

Q: The soil across the entire stretch of land in question is heavily contaminated. This seems like a great opportunity for the municipality, in collaboration with the province and the State, to clean it up and install a railway embankment. Please explain your plans for dealing with this and how this is included in the vision for the future.   
The website of Eindhoven municipality states: “ *“Clean up” the substrate when preparing for construction by removing all foreign objects such as rubble, loose cables and pipes, waste, etc.*" I therefore expect this to be included in the study.  
A: The track is owned by ProRail. As such, ProRail is responsible for cleaning up any soil contaminations under or directly adjacent to the track (within the ownership borders). Should any other grounds be necessary to adjust the railway junction in Tongelre, the municipality will follow the customary procedures including a study of potential soil contamination. Then there are legal frameworks that must be followed if any soil contamination is present.

Q: Why does the railway in Eindhoven require work?  
A: The study was prompted by agreements between the State and the region to improve the accessibility of Eindhoven and the Brainport region, which also pertains to the area development around Eindhoven Central Station and the growth of the city to 300,000 residents. This growth will cause additional traffic and the Eindhoven municipality wants to anticipate this with better and more public transport as well as more bicycle use. This demands expansion of the railway capacity.  
During the study of the international train between Eindhoven and Düsseldorf, it was (once again) established that the railway system around Eindhoven is operating at maximum capacity.

Q: Why is an overpass necessary?  
A: A grade-separated junction is required to facilitate the crossing of trains from Maastricht - Weert and Venlo - Helmond. It does not necessarily have to be an overpass. This will allow for trains to be scheduled flexibly while increasing the number of trains on the track.   
  
Q: Why should an overpass be built in Tongelre rather than at a different location?  
A: The Tongelre location is where the trains from the Maastricht - Weert direction and Venlo - Helmond cross paths. This is where the capacity bottleneck will be in the future. As a result, the solution will have to be produced at this location.

Q: Should this plan materialise, how likely is it that the track in Tongelre will be subject to more changes in the future?  
A: No plan exists at the moment. A decision will be made in November about a potential follow-up study into the expansion of the station and the railway capacity. If the final decision is in favour of a grade-separated junction, the railway capacity in that location will be sufficient for a long time to come. It is impossible to predict for how long.

Q: How concrete is this plan?   
A: The report by Arcadis is part of the ‘studie Toekomstvast Spoor Zuidoost Nederland’ [Future-Proof Rail South-East Netherlands study]. This study investigates how the track can facilitate the growth. It is one of the reports based on which the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management is investigating logical potential next steps in collaboration with the Noord-Brabant province and Eindhoven municipality. We will do this during the administrative meeting between the Ministry, Province and Municipality in the fall of this year.

Q: Who will make the final decision?  
A: This is up to the State, province and municipalities who will discuss the MIRT during an administrative meeting in November.

Q: Why is there currently a regular crossing of tracks?  
A: At the moment, the number of trains is such that a regular crossing is sufficient. A grade-separated junction is a major, expensive investment and is only made if it is really necessary.

Q: Why has the study thus far focused only on an overpass? Isn’t that very one-sided?  
A: This was the very first study. It served to find out if a grade-separated junction is even possible. We will be investigating alternative solutions in the exploration, which is the next phase.

Q: When calculating for the most obvious (and cheap) solution to assign budgets, it will never be enough to produce a solution which will make the neighbourhood liveable because that all costs money. How do you respond? Isn’t it a done deal already?  
A: In this preliminary study, we investigated whether a grade-separated junction is at all feasible and how much it would roughly cost. This stage was not about assigning resources, but to make an initial estimate. For each investment into railway expansion, ProRail is legally required to map the impact it may have to the surroundings. This is done in a MIRT exploration, which, if so decided in November, will probably commence next year. This study will include a detailed analysis of the impact on aspects of liveability such as noise, vibrations, integration and accessibility for each solution included in the exploration. This is mandatory as well as necessary for the cost estimate of the various solutions. It also includes the costs of the measures. Once a solution has been selected, the next stage will accurately map those effects in studies that will be appended to the so-called ‘Tracéwetprocedure’ (comparable to the municipality’s zoning procedure) and will be part of the cost estimate of this project.

Q: The possibility of a tunnel was investigated in the past, but it turned out to be too expensive. Is this correct?   
A: A tunnel is likely more expensive than an overpass. We will be investigating alternative solutions in the next phase, the exploration, if it is so decided.

Q: Because an overpass, and crossings where train and traffic pass over/under each other are part of the discussion, a 3D visualisation would provide a much better picture. Is this available at this stage?  
A: Currently, no visualisations are available. We are still very early in the process. As soon as concrete solutions are weighed (after the exploration, in the so-called plan development phase), visualisations will be created.

Q: Arcadis has drafted a report which was submitted to the Second Chamber. This report was published on rijksoverheid.nl, but the attachments are missing. Can the attachments be supplied?  
A: The report and its attachments can be found on the website of ProRail ProRail.nl/eindhoven-tongelre. Attachment 3 is not public and therefore not included.

Q: A property developer is said to have plans for the area around 145a Hofstraat. Will these plans go on?  
A: Yes, discussions have been had with the property developer. The plot they purchased borders that of ProRail but is located sufficiently far from the track. The property developer will now have to submit a plan and is in deliberation with the municipality.

Q: The District E project (tower on Stationsplein) will take away track space in an area where that space is needed the most. How is this going to be adapted?  
A: ProRail, NS and Eindhoven municipality align the use of space together, ensuring that it fits the legal frameworks for construction in the vicinity of the track. The municipality represents the interests of residents in this regard.

Q: Safety in the context of an overpass or tunnels: Have you taken into account the necessary space for emergency routes?   
A: Yes, that has been taken into account. The incorporation of emergency routes will be considered in the elaboration of alternatives in the exploration and plan development phases.

Q: How could the plans have been ‘leaked’?  
A: The plans were not ‘leaked’. It is publicly available information. The report is too detailed for the current phase, however, and should not have been published without clarification. This is our mistake.

Q: Can the municipality provide advice to residents and business owners on how to make buildings more durable in the short term?  
A: The municipality will address this after the decision has been made in November, if the follow-up study (the exploration) can commence.

Q: Will minutes be released of the residents meeting on 28 September?  
A: No minutes will be available. We will provide other forms of information such as the presentations given during the residents meeting and this Q&A.

Q: The previous city council is said to have decided that the project will proceed. It is said that paperwork has been signed. Is this correct?   
A: As of yet, no decisions have been made and no documentation was signed regarding a potential grade-separated junction in Tongelre.

Q: What is the role distribution between the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, ProRail and Eindhoven municipality in the study?  
A: The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management is ProRail’s principal, ProRail is the engineering firm’s principal, in this case Arcadis. Infrastructure and Water Management, Noord-Brabant province and Eindhoven municipality work together closely in order to improve the public transport accessibility of Eindhoven and the Brainport region.

**Schedule / Timeline**

Q: What is the schedule/timeline of the project as a whole and the buyout of homes?  
A: We are currently at an early stage of our research. If the project will commence, the lead time of a project like this will be at least 10 to 15 years. Follow-up studies will reveal whether or not parts currently in private ownership are necessary for the construction of a grade-separated junction. It is too early to talk about the buyout of homes because no final solution has been formulated yet.  
  
Q: What stage of this plan are we in right now? When can the residents of adjacent streets expect to know what is going to happen?  
A: The study performed by Arcadis was a preliminary study to see whether a grade-separated junction is at all feasible and how much it would roughly cost. A decision about a follow-up study (a so-called MIRT\* exploration) into the expansion of the station and railway capacity will be made in November. This exploration will take around two years and will reveal, step-by-step, the preferred plan. Which plan will be elaborated in greater detail will be decided at the end of this period.

Q: A MIRT administrative meeting will take place in November. That is when it will be decided whether the plan in Tongelre can be investigated further. What parties will be included in that meeting?  
A: This is a meeting between the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Ministry of the Interior, provinces and municipalities. These meetings are carried out per region. This means, in the case of the South region, that the provinces of Zeeland, Noord-Brabant and Limburg participate as well as Eindhoven municipality due to the large scope of the project.

Q: According to information provided by Noord-Brabant province, everything will be finished in 2030. This goes against the September 28 presentation by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. How is this possible?  
A: This concerns a report by Noord-Brabant province that was drafted 5 or 6 years ago with insights available at that time. This report is no longer current. Further insight has led to the schedule as presented during the residents' meeting on 28 September 2022. If the project is kicked off in November with a follow-up study (MIRT exploration), it will take at least 10 to 15 years before any grade-separated junction is completed.

Q: A document by the province from 2015 (as discussed in the meeting) states an amount of 100 million euros for disentanglement of the crossing. That is how long this issue has been discussed. Why are the local residents only being informed now?   
A: A grade-separated junction has been considered as a potential measure to disentangle the transport flows near the Tongerle crossing for some time. However, such a measure has not yet been necessary. With the urbanisation challenge and other developments in the Brainport region, traffic in the region is growing, including on the tracks, and this type of measure has become more concrete as a result.

Q: If the decision to start is taken in November, how can the option of a tunnel be considered afterwards?   
A: The decision in November pertains to the exploratory step. Various alternatives will be explored and weighed in this exploration. This can include an overpass, a tunnel, an underpass or an alternative route.

Q: What is the chance that the decision to proceed with this project will be taken in November? And can we, as local residents, affect that decision?  
A: The chance cannot be estimated at this stage because it can go both ways. The results of the administrative meeting will be discussed in the Second Chamber shortly after. You can affect the decision through them.

**Alternatives**Q: When it comes to such radical modifications to the track, you must consider alternatives as well. What alternatives are being considered?   
A plan to make Eindhoven Central Station a main station, and lay a track along the east side of Eindhoven, is said to have been rejected. This was to prevent all freight traffic (including trains carrying hazardous materials) from passing through the urban area.  
A plan to deepen the railway track was rejected as well. This is a great opportunity to include this in the plan development with the added benefit that the overpass would require less height.  
A: The decision taken in the administrative meeting in November will be about whether or not to start the exploration. Various alternatives will be explored and weighed during this exploration phase. This can include an overpass, a tunnel, an underpass or an alternative route.

Q: The area located between the tracks--Hofstraat and Kalverenstraat, up to Tongelrestraat--is a perfect location for a second train station with electric transport to and from the station, thereby turning the inner city of Eindhoven into a car-free zone. Is this an option?  
A: There are no plans for an extra station in Eindhoven. The exploration phase will allow for ideas to be presented.

Q: Could a station be built in Tongelre?   
A: See above.

Q: How are the various alternatives, and the interests of the residents, weighed against the interests of the government? For example, if a solution is better for the residents but will cost 100 million euros more, how much weight will the interests of the residents be given? Is this 10% or 50%? How do you respond?   
A: If the administrative meeting in November decides to start a MIRT exploration, it will follow a fixed procedure based on the MIRT rules (see annex). These rules include the required research regarding the impact on the surroundings as well as to map and weigh measures. These reports are public and can be read by everyone. It is impossible to indicate how the various interests are weighted against each other.

Q: Why is the location for the overpass set in stone? Are other locations being explored?  
A: See the question above, under general.  
The Tongelre location is where the trains from the Maastricht - Weert direction and Venlo - Helmond cross paths. This is where the capacity bottleneck will be in the future. As a result, the solution will have to be produced at this location.

Q: Is it possible for the track to be laid elsewhere? The peak in railway traffic was said to occur in 2022 and now we are being told that the peak in freight traffic is yet to come. It keeps being shifted forward and we, as local residents, are stuck with the uncertainty and nuisance.  
A: Alternatives are yet to be explored, but new railway tracks are very expensive. It is true that the peak in freight traffic is shifting because the construction of the third track of the Betuw line in Germany has been delayed. This peak will be temporary. As soon as the Betuwe line in Germany is finished, the peak in freight traffic will be over.

Q: Why can’t longer trains be deployed to solve the problem?  
A: Longer trains only solve part of the problem. Furthermore, we intend to offer more passenger trains per hour to provide travellers with more direct connections and reduce their travel time (due to shorter transfer times).

Q: Why not consider having the trains cross at the station or yard? Wouldn't this eliminate the need to do this further down the railway in Tongelre?  
A: This relates to logistics at the station and the transfer from one train to the next. If we want to offer travellers a quick transfer, multiple trains will have to stop next to each other at the same platform. Plus, if the trains do not cross in Tongerle (to the east of the station), they will have to do it on the west side of the station with the same issues at play. Of course, all ideas and possible solutions are welcome.

Q: Why wouldn’t you make the transfer problem a bit more ‘difficult’ and, thereby, avoid the problem in Tongelre? Walking has tremendous health benefits and only takes a bit more time, which you get back in terms of quality of life at an older age. A concrete giant that will allow even more trains to pass in Tongelre will produce a lot of noise and vibrations, damaging the residents’ health and financial situations. Why do the interests of the traveller outweigh those of the residents?  
A: If we want to have more people travel by train instead of by car, then quick and comfortable transfer is an important element. If we make transferring more difficult, then fewer people will take the train resulting in an increase of car traffic and all of the associated consequences as a result. When weighing different alternatives, the interests of both travellers and residents will be considered.

Q: The entire neighbourhood of Tongelre is against growing the railway traffic. More railway traffic may not be permitted to happen. We should, instead, save money to route the track around Tongelre.  
A: The State, the province and Eindhoven municipality chose to facilitate the overall growth in traffic by having people travel by public transport (train and bus) and by bicycle instead of by car. This is better for the environment. Of course, this also means we have a responsibility to minimise nuisances to local residents. Routing the track around Tongelre would mean that we have to route the track around Eindhoven as a whole. This is not very useful. Most train passengers use a station in the city and not outside it. When it comes to freight traffic, the track could be routed around the cities in many cases, but this is unaffordable and would bear a huge impact on the environment outside those cities.

Q: Why can't the plan be executed on the west side?  
A: This would only shift the same problems to the west side. And if the trains would cross on the west side of the station, we wouldn’t be able to offer travellers a quick transfer. Travellers would have to walk from one platform to the next much more often. As mentioned above, this would cause a loss of passengers.

Q: What about building an underpass for freight traffic? This would allow passenger trains to remain above ground.  
A: It is not just freight trains that have to cross other trains. Especially in the future, it will be mostly passenger trains that will have to cross each other. A grade-separated junction is required for freight and passenger trains alike.

Q: Could that large sum of money from the State be used to improve the liveability of Tongelre? This is just as necessary due to the increasing number of trains without having an overpass.  
A: For each investment into railway expansion, ProRail is legally required to map the impact it may have to the surroundings. This is done in a MIRT exploration which, if so decided in November, will probably commence next year. It will include a study into the impact on liveability of the various solutions in question. Once it becomes clear which solution will be implemented, a follow-up phase will accurately map those effects and detail the necessary measures. The basic premise is that all legal standards will be met. But the assessment of measures to reduce noise, vibrations and risks of hazardous materials transport also includes how effective the measures are and what they will cost. The necessary measures are a subject of discussion with local residents.

Q: During the information meeting, the idea of not building a junction/overpass at all on the Tongelre side of the station was raised. The idea was to have the 4 tracks entering the station on the east side run parallel to each other until before the platforms, then have these 4 tracks split into 2 tracks each. This would create 8 tracks with 4 platforms. On the west side, these tracks would merge into 4 parallel tracks and would continue like this until Herdgang (or even slightly more to the north) where a grade-separated junction could be built. There is space there on the embankment up to the Acht Freight Distribution Centre. Have the trains choose, well before entering Eindhoven Station from the direction of Best, as to whether they need to go to Weert (with 1 track available to and 1 track from) on the south side, or to Helmond/Venlo (with 1 track available to and 1 track from) on the north side. Please include this idea in the next phase.  
A: The plan assumes the current railway yard, the current layout of the station, the associated logistics at the station and the transfer from one train to another on the same platform. Of course, all ideas and possible solutions are welcome.

Q: Another idea, which would require more rigorous changes to the station, could be to split the entire station into two levels whereby the 4 tracks from Weert in the idea above are routed to level 1 and the 4 tracks from Helmond/Venlo to level 2.   
This would leave the station just 4 tracks wide (with potentially 2 switch tracks) but with 2 levels. The level difference could be created at the current marshalling yard and a grade-separated junction could be built on the west side to merge the tracks back together. Please include this idea in the next phase.  
A: The plan assumes the current railway yard, the current layout of the station, the associated logistics at the station and the transfer from one train to another on the same platform. Of course, all ideas and possible solutions are welcome.

**Use of Track**Q: How is the track used? This, in regard to the Eindhoven route > Weert and the Eindhoven route > Helmond. How many freight and passenger trains pass a route every hour?  
A: The current timetable facilitates fewer trains. A full timetable facilitates 2 intercities to Venlo and 2 local trains per hour in each direction. In the direction of Weert, there are 4 intercities and 2 local trains per hour in each direction. The number of freight trains amounts to approx. 60 per day (average business day 2021, both directions combined) in the direction of Venlo. In the direction of Weert, this amounts to approx. 10 trains per day (both directions combined).

Q: Provide a clear and well-organised graph + table indicating the current railway load and the prognosis for the future. Distinguish between the freight versus passenger train distribution and how much of the freight trains transport chemical/toxic substances.   
Also indicate in this graph what the legally allowed limit is as well as what you will do to avoid exceeding it.  
A: The current timetable facilitates fewer trains. A full timetable facilitates 2 intercities to Venlo and 2 local trains per hour in each direction. In the direction of Weert, there are 4 intercities and 2 local trains per hour in each direction. The number of freight trains amounts to approx. 60 per day (average business day 2021, both directions combined) in the direction of Venlo. In the direction of Weert, this amounts to approx. 10 trains per day (both directions combined).

The legal limits are not described in terms of the number of trains, but are recorded in terms of risk distances e.g. for the transportation of hazardous materials rather than the number of tank trucks, tank wagons or ships per substance category. The Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate (ILT) supervises the execution of these laws and regulations.

Q: How does this study relate to the growth of hazardous substances transport on the railway?  
A: The necessity of the study into the adaptations on the track in Eindhoven/Tongelre relates to the expected growth in the number of passengers.  
Currently, we are experiencing a temporary increase in freight transport on the Brabant route (Dordrecht-Breda-Tilburg-Eindhoven-Venlo) because of construction being carried out on the German side of the Betuwe line. Once this construction is completed, which will be no earlier than 2026, freight traffic is expected to drop back down to approx. 60 per day (average business day 2021, both directions combined) in the direction of Venlo. More information about the construction being carried out in Germany can be found via: <https://www.prorail.nl/projecten/meer-ruimte-goederentreinen-betuweroute-zevenaar-oberhausen>

Q: We keep talking about one track (to the south) but what about the second track in Tongelre (to the east)?

A: Both tracks in the direction of Helmond/Venlo and Weert/Maastricht will become busier with passenger trains.

Q: Can freight trains be eliminated?  
A: If freight can no longer be transported by rail, it will have to be done in some other way, via inland waterways or by road. Inland waterways are a good solution but only for a limited number of destinations. A lot of freight will end up being transported by road, further increasing road traffic. Moreover, freight transport by rail is the most environmentally friendly option. In addition, ProRail is legally required to process requests by freight carriers.

Q: Freight transport is causing a lot of nuisances. Would we, as local residents, have a stronger case if we were to join forces (in view of hazardous materials) with multiple cities/residents on the Brabant route or in the Netherlands?   
A: Eindhoven municipality has been advocating alternatives for the transportation of hazardous materials through the city for years, partially on behalf of cities on the Brabant route (Helmond, Tilburg, Breda and Dordrecht have already joined forces), but it is a complex issue, making it a lengthy process which will not please everyone.

Q: It ihas already been said that the track is ‘full’. What will this be like in 2024-2026?  
A: At the moment, a fixed number of “pathways” i.e. time slots per hour are available for freight transport. They are currently not being utilised in full. The pathways available to freight trains on the Brabant route, which includes Eindhoven, will be utilised more during the construction on the Betuwe line in Germany. As soon as more details are known for the period 2024-2026, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management and ProRail will, in collaboration with regional governments, furhter inform local residents

Q: The amount of passenger and freight traffic through Eindhoven and Tongelre has been a subject of discussion for years. Those in attendance made a case for the track passing through the city to be completely removed. Eindhoven municipality should make a case for a track around the city.  
A: Eindhoven municipality has been advocating alternatives for the transportation of hazardous materials through the city for years, partially on behalf of cities by the Brabant route (Helmond, Tilburg, Breda and Dordrecht have already joined forces), but it is a complex issue, making it a lengthy process.

Q: A local resident indicated that ProRail has been exceeding the legal ceiling for hazardous materials for years. Can ProRail confirm this?   
A: Every year, millions of tonnes of freight are being transported by rail. This includes hazardous substances. Transporting these substances by rail is very safe but it does involve a certain degree of risk. Various examples of national and international legislation apply to the transportation of hazardous substances. This minimises the risk of an accident and these substances being released. More information about Basisnet can be found at [https://www.infomil.nl/onderwerpen/veiligheid/basisnet/spoor/](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.infomil.nl%2Fonderwerpen%2Fveiligheid%2Fbasisnet%2Fspoor%2F&data=05%7C01%7Ceefje.smeets%40prorail.nl%7C5b5eb1997b4f47fd922208dab676a328%7Ca398fcff8d2b4930a7f7e1c99a108d77%7C1%7C0%7C638022917902569580%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=JAICJknCPIC1IWlgMzgcXs593wN2cb100K3EoVMAHV8%3D&reserved=0)

The risk ceilings are stated in terms of risk distances rather than the number of tank trucks, tank wagons or ships per substance category. The Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate (ILT) supervises the execution of these laws and regulations.

**Impact to Residents / Liveability / Plan Damage and Buyout:**

Q: What measures are being considered to limit nuisances to local residents (noise, privacy [passenger view] & vibrations)?  
A: At this stage, it is still too early to comment. We are currently at an early stage of the investigation. Other solutions may come into focus at a later stage. For each investment into railway expansion, ProRail is legally required to map the impact it may have to the surroundings. This is done in a MIRT exploration which, if so decided in November, will probably start next year. Once it becomes clear what the expansion will be, a follow-up phase will carefully map those effects and potential measures. The basic premise is that all legal standards will be met. But the assessment of measures to reduce noise, vibrations and risks of hazardous materials transport also includes how effective the measures are and what they will cost. Concerns voiced by residents will be included as much as possible.

Q: Can’t residents be spared all the drama and misery with a good buyout programme?  
A: A buyout is not in the picture at the moment. We are currently at an early stage of the investigation. Other solutions may come into focus at a later stage.

Q: The plans state that around 10 homes will have to be demolished if the plans are to be executed. Can you indicate which 10 houses this is in reference to?  
A: It is still too early to comment at this stage. We are currently at an early stage of the investigation. Other solutions, which do not affect private property, may come into focus at a later stage.

Q: How certain is it that the ten houses mentioned will have to go?  
A: This is not certain. We are currently at a very early stage of the investigation. Other solutions, which do not affect private property, may come into focus at a later stage.

Q: As soon as the newspaper reported that railway works would be executed, with far-reaching consequences for our neighbourhood, we have been suffering consequential damage. In addition to the uncertainty, it also directly impacts the value of our homes. In fact, some homes have even become impossible to sell as a result. Have the involved parties considered damage compensation?   
A: Once a Preferred solution has been selected, it will be detailed and the planning procedure will be followed accordingly. Once a final planning decision has been made, we can proceed to determine if you qualify for damages compensation.

Q: How can residents sell their home? Especially once we enter a very lengthy construction phase.

A: It remains uncertain at this stage which plan will end up being constructed. We will probably know in two to three years. But we will work together throughout the process to find the best plan (assuming the MIRT Exploration will commence after November).

Q: What rights do affected residents and building owners have? Do we have a choice?  
A: You can contribute to the Exploration and Plan development phases to help improve the plans, including for your own best interest. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management/ProRail always work on solutions / plans that meet all legal standards. Each individual / owner can then object by way of formal procedures and file a lawsuit if need be. With regard to the planning procedure ahead, you will be able to address the Council of State in due course. In the case of land acquisition/expropriation, you can file a court case. It goes without saying that the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management/ProRail intend to formulate a plan with all stakeholders that will garner as much support as possible. The degree of support will be one of the aspects determining the solution as well as the preferred option.

Q: There is no standard when it comes to vibrations. This is really becoming a serious problem. Houses are being torn apart. ProRail must do something!  
A: We distinguish between damage and nuisance caused by vibrations. In the case of suspected damage due to vibrations caused by railway traffic / the track, you can report the damage using ProRail's damage form. Because we follow the so-called TNO assessment protocol, an extensive questionnaire must be completed and the damage claim must be properly substantiated; 1) ProRail takes the claim into consideration; 2) If we believe the damage may have been caused by vibrations of passing trains, we will have an independent agency investigate the situation on site. If necessary, we will deploy a damage expert. All findings will be recorded in a report. ProRail will make a decision about the claim. If you disagree with the decision, you have the option of calling on experts of your own.

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Q: Cracks. The message used to be: no zero measurement can be done because there is no standardisation. Another approach: Why not do a zero measurement now so the damage can be measured once standardisation is available?  
A: In the case of suspected damage due to vibrations caused by railway traffic / the track, you can report the damage using ProRail's damage form. A study into vibrations (including measurements) will be part of the MIRT exploration and/or plan development further down the line. This study will reveal whether a solution and a subsequent preferred option will cause vibrations which may lead to damage, whether an increase in nuisance can be expected, and the question of whether effective measures can be taken. Please refer to the previous answer as well, which describes what ProRail will do after you have completed a damage form.

Q: Does the municipality want to move towards a zero measurement?  
A: We like this proposal. Agreements about zero measurements can be made in the participation process of the MIRT exploration. During this phase, all potential solutions will be assessed on the aspect of vibrations at a level of detail appropriate for this planning phase, which remains general at this stage.

Q: Where can we go for compensation, at what stage, and in what way?  
A: Planschade en Nadeelcompensatie [(Plan) Damage Compensation] after the Council of State’s verdict. The site also offers additional information regarding damage compensation, and you will find a damage form under ‘contact’.

Q: What does a buyout procedure look like?  
A: Once a final preferred option is selected and it is clear which plots are required, a buyout process will commence. An independent appraiser will estimate the value of your property.

Q: How do you aim to offer realistic buyout compensation?  
A: First and foremost, it is always our intention to reach an out-of-court agreement. The working method for obtaining the necessary plots is laid down in legislation, i.e. The Expropriation Act and the applicable jurisprudence. The compensation amount is determined by applying this legislation. This involves full compensation. In more concrete terms, it means that your equity and income situation as a stakeholder must remain the same after the acquisition as it was before. In this procedure, you may call on the support or representation of a plot acquisition and expropriation expert. These costs are compensated by ProRail in due course (under a certain provision).

Q: When would any aggrieved parties be entitled to such a buyout?  
A: A plot acquisition procedure cannot be initiated until the preferred option has been selected.

Q: Is it possible for the entire neighbourhood to be bought out?  
A: Government projects funded with taxes must be “goal-oriented”. The underlying principle is that no more plots can or may be bought than necessary for the intended development.

Q: Our homes have dropped in value already, which is also a form of damage. How will you deal with this?   
A: We completely understand that the announcement of a potential start of the MIRT Exploration causes a period of uncertainty regarding the exact outcome. At the same time, the government is expected to report such intentions openly and transparently, giving you the opportunity to voice your interests in a timely manner when it comes to future developments. Legislation is such that damage can only be established and compensated once a final plan exists with which the precise damage can be determined.

Q: It will take a long time before compensation can be claimed. Will the municipality help us in this regard, e.g. by providing lawyers?  
A: As mentioned earlier, we will address the way in which the municipality can offer help at a later stage. A zero measurement can be done as part of a MIRT exploration, if going whrough with one is decided in November.

Q: When will residents be able to object?  
A: In the plan development phase, which is after the exploration and after the project is green lighted, residents can file an official stance and an objection. Of course, you can already give informal feedback on the plans now.

Q: Tongelre region: the particulate matter concentration is excessive. Braking trains in Tongelre are said to be one of the causes.  
A: The effect of brake dust on the local air quality is limited. It barely alleviates the background concentration of particulate matter. Most of it is caused by diesel traction of freight and potentially passenger trains. The total contribution can be qualified as ‘not meaningful’. This definition from the jargon of air quality implies that the contribution of the railway system in terms of air quality in the context of a project does not trigger measures or lead to obstacles or concerns for the achievement of a project.

Q: Costs are a factor, nuisance is a factor. What is the tipping point between the two?  
A: Whenever a decision is made to build new infrastructure, such as a grade-separated junction, a social cost-benefit analysis is made. It is included in the decision about the final completion of that infrastructure.

Q: Liveability in Tongelre: what is the municipality’s vision?  
A: The municipality is aware of the issues, shares the residents’ concerns and is committed to addressing them. But they also have to weigh the interests of the city as a whole when it comes to reachability by rail. The municipality needs to strike a balance between the two.

Q: The government has a delegated task to take care of its residents. That is why we have a democracy. Merely adhering to the guidelines is much too limited an interpretation of democracy. Guidelines are open to interpretation and only in exceptional cases does one end up in court. Rather than simply looking at whether or not you stay alive, a fair government also considers whether that is a quality life. In the meeting, it was said that residents have rights and we can go to court or even the Council of State. This does not sound very reassuring. How do you respond?  
A: Indeed, the municipality is required to take care of its residents, which goes beyond meeting guidelines. The municipality also has to weigh the interests of the city as a whole and those of individuals or groups of residents. The municipality balances these interests carefully under the watchful eye of the City Council. And if the interests of individuals or groups of residents are harmed, the municipality will make an effort to arrange for measures in order to limit the damage or arrange for damage compensation within reason. Once again, the City Council ensures careful and fair treatment of residents. What remains in extreme cases is the option of going to court.

Q: How come German trains produce much less vibrations and sound than Dutch trains? The ICE trains stand out with their relative silence.  
A: Indeed, differences in sound production between different types of trains do exist. This is taken into account when determining sound nuisances. Newer train types tend to produce less sound.

Q: Where can local residents find current information regarding the construction being carried out on the Betuwe line / third track Germany?  
A: Current information regarding the construction being carried out on the Betuwe line / third track Germany can be found at: <https://www.prorail.nl/projecten/meer-ruimte-goederentreinen-betuweroute-zevenaar-oberhausen>

Q: What compensation measures exist when it comes to preventing noise and vibration nuisance? And can we gain access to them in Tongelre?   
A: Prevention and compensation are two different things. One example of sound and vibration nuisance prevention is the fact that newer trains produce less sound. When it comes to compensation: in due course, during the detailing phase of the preferred option of the selected solution, sound and vibrations will have to be studied. Part of these studies will be to investigate whether measures are necessary to meet the standards laid out in regulations and, if so, what (effective) measures will be required.

Q: Do the municipality/ProRail currently have any other developments planned that will affect our neighbourhood?  
A: 1. In Hofstraat between Telexweg and Broekakkerseweg, the sewage is being replaced and the street is being redesigned. The municipality is, at the moment, preparing the consultation with residents and other stakeholders regarding this project. 2. An area development is scheduled by the building at 145a Hofstraat. As soon as a municipal project leader is available, the process of consultation, the design phases and the final construction can commence.

**Communication**

Q: Can we assume that, in the course of this process, the municipality will inform us better and more timely regarding the progress and the possible consequences relevant to us? And how will the municipality assure that this will actually happen? What are the communication lines? How will we be kept up to speed on a continuous basis? What are our own responsibilities in this regard?  
A: Absolutely. Starting now, the Ministry, ProRail and the municipality will improve our communication with those affected. Via the website: [www.prorail.nl/eindhoven-tongelre](http://www.prorail.nl/eindhoven-tongelre), you will now be able to find the information and we will keep you up to date. After the decision in November on whether or not we will be researching a grade-separated crossing, we will inform you by mail and email. We will continue to inform you by mail or email further down the roadif there are important matters to be reported.

Q: As local residents, we want to be actively involved and contribute to the process. We do not want to just receive information. How will our participation be organised?  
A: Just like any other party executing such a large infrastructure project, ProRail is required to properly organise participation. We will be drafting a plan which will detail this participation. In many cases, we will work with focus groups which local residents can participate in. We welcome your ideas about this.

Q: Will a liaison be available to residents whose houses are likely to be demolished, in order to allow for any concerns and ambiguities to be voiced and consultation to take place as directly as possible?   
A: Currently, the demolition of homes is not being discussed. For the liaison, we refer to the next question.

Q: To whom can residents address their questions?  
A: Agnes Heck is the district coordinator at Eindhoven municipality for the districts in Oud Tongelre (De Karpen, Koudenhoven, ‘t Hofke, Geestenberg-Muschberg and Urkhoven). She will collect and forward your questions, ensuring that residents’ questions for the municipality are answered by municipal experts. This way, you won’t have to search for the right person yourself.   
At ProRail, you can address the Public information department via [www.prorail.nl/contact](http://www.prorail.nl/contact)

Q: Can the materials supplied also be provided in English?   
A: We will deliver key information in English as well. This still needs to be organised. We will do this via our website [www.prorail.nl/eindhoven-tongelre](http://www.prorail.nl/eindhoven-tongelre)

**Noise and Vibrations**

Q: The report from Arcadis more or less states that everything will adhere to current standards. But is this really the case? Have new measurements/studies been carried out? No mention has been made of current vibrations or any increases in vibrations caused by more railway traffic. How is this possible? Are there no rules to govern this? An increase in railway traffic without even opening up this problem for discussion is outrageous. I would be happy to offer my home for an afternoon or morning so you can experience what kind of vibrations we are talking about here.   
A: The State, municipality and province will make a decision about a MIRT exploration in November. This exploration will follow a fixed procedure based on the MIRT rules (see annex). These rules include the required research regarding the impact on the surroundings as well as to map and weigh measures. These reports are public and can be read by everyone. The report from Arcadis includes a preliminary calculation regarding the noise aspect (i.e. whether the intended amount of railway traffic combined will remain below the applicable sound production ceiling). Vibrations have not yet been studied.

Q: Residents of Ambonplein live in new homes and still experience a lot of noise and vibration nuisances. Especially due to the trains from the Venlo direction to Eindhoven, which drive at high speeds. The speed is much higher than trains from Eindhoven. Can't the trains from Venlo reduce some speed once they approach Eindhoven?  
A: The trains do not exceed the regular speed limit, which is 140 km/h. The timetable assumes regular speeds. Lower speeds do occur if a track is occupied or if a train ahead has been delayed. The suggestion to reduce the speed on a track section in order to mitigate the impact on the surroundings can be included in the Exploration phase.

Q: How will you prevent sound and vibration nuisances from getting worse? It has already become worse in the years past.

A: Sound is subject to standards, vibration is not (legislation to govern this is in the works). ProRail cannot monitor/tighten the standards since this is something that has to be done in The Hague.

* Vibrations caused by construction and trains will both be investigated in the next phase (the Exploration).
* Current vibrations cannot be investigated (an EU standard has been formulated but it is yet to be incorporated into Dutch legislation).
* We will be investigating future nuisances caused by an overpass or that of an alternative.

Q: Will noise and vibrations only be studied after the 3rd step (i.e. the Plan development)?  
A: No, research into sound and vibrations will be carried out as of the (MIRT) Exploration phase.