



Hugo Doornhof

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The Netherlands

Languages

- Dutch
- English

Admitted to bar

- The Netherlands

Education

- Leiden University: Law
- INSEAD: mini MBA

About Hugo Doornhof

Hugo Doornhof is a partner in AKD specialising in administrative law and environmental law. Since 2019, having accumulated years of experience in local politics, Hugo has also been a member of the Dutch Senate.

At AKD, Hugo has developed an extensive practice, with clients ranging from public authorities to corporations such as project developers, industrials and retailers. They seek Hugo's counsel when:

- they are industrial companies wanting to expand or move their production sites
- they are municipalities or regional authorities requiring expertise on intermunicipal cooperation, redivision, integrity issues or public policy problems
- they are provincial authorities facing complex area development issues, scarce rights issues or claims for compensation
- supermarkets or other retailers run into problems with permits for new locations or expansions, or when they get wind of competitors with undesirable building plans
- they are project developers requiring municipal or provincial authorisation for their plans

What do these examples actually entail?

- **Expanding or moving production sites**

Industrial companies need local or provincial authorities to grant permission, which the latter do not under all circumstances readily give. This category also includes companies that are put in a bind because the municipality they're located in issues new building plans or because they are the subject of enforcement actions by an environmental agency, the Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate or the Inspectorate SZW. Examples include:

- **Optimising Van Werven Afval & Infra sites**
AKD assisted this client in negotiating agreements and planning decisions with the municipal council and the provincial authorities, resulting in sustainable solutions for the sites.
- **Improving the permit situation for the Havenbedrijf Moerdijk sites**
AKD sat around the table with the responsible environmental agency to explore the possibility of a lawful and efficient permit situation for the land in the Moerdijk port authority area. An improved permit situation would enable the port authority to optimise facilitating conditions for companies domiciled there or planning to move there.
- **Securing operations at the ABZ Diervoeding site**
AKD assisted this animal feed company with its negotiations with the municipal council when a housing project threatened the continuation of its operations at its Nijkerk location. The aim was to ensure a large enough distance between the plant and the new houses, thereby securing the company's operations.

- **Intermunicipal cooperation, redivision, integrity and public policy**

issues

Being an authority on municipal law, Hugo frequently advises municipal councils and regional authorities on intermunicipal cooperation, redivision, integrity and public policy issues. If push comes to shove, he will litigate as well. Examples include:

- **Settling a withdrawal dispute plaguing the Reinigingsdienst Maasland**
Hugo assisted this public authority when it was involved in a dispute with the municipality of Peel en Maas over the latter's decision to withdraw from the communal scheme. The matter went to litigation, but in the end an out-of-court settlement was reached pursuant to which an acceptable withdrawal sum was paid.
- **Handling an integrity issue for the municipality of Ede**
Hugo advised the municipal council of Ede on the question whether one member of the council, who had a personal interest in the matter, was allowed to vote on a proposal to take a stake in a solar power plant. He was also asked to compose an opinion on the conduct of the officials involved and to advise on the next steps in the decision-making process.
- **Action against forced redivision of municipality of Landgraaf**
The provincial authorities intended to consolidate the Landgraaf and Heerlen municipalities. Following litigation and administrative procedures and a negative recommendation by the Council of State, the Minister of the Interior decided not to push through with the redivision.

- **Complex area development issues, scarce rights issues and claims for compensation**

Hugo advises municipalities on and litigates on their behalf in matters involving these issues. Examples include:

- **Reviving the redevelopment plans for the former Valkenburg airbase**
Hugo advised the Central Government Real Estate Agency and the municipality of Katwijk on the development strategy, also assisting with the contracting. The matter also involved environmental aspects, including nitrogen and sustainability issues. This redevelopment, involving a high-end residential and business area, will constitute a major contribution to the solution to the housing scarcity in the Netherlands.
- **Revamping a derelict camping site into a bustling resort**
Hugo assisted the municipality of Maasdriel in negotiations with Europarcs. He also advised on the zoning plan and permit procedure. In the end, the Resort on the Meuse river will be realised.
- **Assisting a municipality with the grant of scarce rights permits**
Hugo helped the mayor of Lelystad to devise a transparent procedure for the granting of the two available permits to operate an amusement arcade. He also advises on legal actions brought against the mayor by parties that did not get one of the permits.

- **Establishment issues of supermarkets and other retailers**

Hugo assists clients that wish to establish new shops or expand existing ones. He also conducts administrative and possibly legal action against undesirable building plans of competing retailers. In addition, he assists clients facing enforcement by environmental agencies or the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority. Examples include:

- **Construction of a new Aldi supermarket in Enkhuizen**
Hugo advised on and litigated over the zoning plan allowing for this construction. There is now an attractive new supermarket in an ideal location.
- **Conversion of Carpetright superstore in The Hague**
Hugo assisted this client in a procedure with the municipality of The Hague, seeking compensation for the inconvenience following the construction of the Rotterdamse Baan link and the conversion of the shop that it necessitated. The parties agreed on a satisfactory amount, thereby ending the official expropriation procedures that had been set in motion.
- **Relocation of Boni supermarket in Urk**
Hugo advises on the zoning plan and the arrangements agreed between the municipality and the developer to facilitate the proposed development.

- **Project developers requiring municipal or provincial authorisation for their plans**

Hugo's legal expertise and political and administrative experience is often needed to get local and regional authorities to lend their planning cooperation. Once that goal has been achieved, the decisions taken often need to be defended in court. Examples include:

- **Redeveloping a site into a supermarket and housing location by Van der Gragt Beheer**
Hugo assisted this client from the start, aiding the negotiations and obtaining authorisation from the municipality to convert an industrial site into a housing area, including supermarket.
- **Redeveloping a former monastery into care apartments**
Hugo advised on the environmental issues, in particular on the rules pertaining to nature conservation.
- **Developing retail park Belvédère Maastricht by K&F Ontwikkeling**
Hugo advised on and litigated over this development plan, the issues being the zoning plan and agreements made with the municipality. The retail park was built and now sports Kwantum, Beter Bed, Beddenreus, Carpetright, Jyst and LeenBakker superstores.

In addition to his legal expertise, Hugo has gained considerable experience in the **political and administrative** arena as a local party chairman and as deputy chair of a municipal council. At this moment, he represents the CDA christian democratic party in the Dutch Senate.

Hugo regularly **publishes** articles in such journals as *De Gemeentestem* and *Bouwrecht*. He is a **lecturer** at the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam, the Academie voor Overheidsjuristen and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, VNG.