



THE FARMYARD SHARING INITIATIVE

**A feasible choice for
farmers?**

Erfdelen



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Executive summary

Based on the current trend of an increasing number of empty buildings in the countryside and the migration trend from the urban to the countryside, Erfdelen originated. This farmyard sharing initiative consists of people living in former farmyards communally. There are many interested people in this way of living, but farmers are not yet willing to sell their farmyard to Erfdelen. At this moment, it is not clear to Erfdelen why farmers do not want this and what their reasonings are behind that decision. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to understand the Dutch farmer's perspectives on changing the concept of their farmyard and to identify what is needed to support the innovative use of their farmyards. Based on a literature study and interviews with Dutch farmers and related stakeholders, an inter- and transdisciplinary analysis was made from the social, financial, ecological and multifunctional perspectives. The perspective of the farmers on changing their farmyard was influenced by personal circumstances and previous experiences. Some farmers were open to change and were interested in new social interactions, while others were not, mainly due to fears about the potential negative effects of bringing outsiders into their neighbourhood since the current trend is that the countryside is becoming a more considered option for citizens to move in.

Hence, the success of new initiatives from the social aspect will depend on the community's ability to communicate and collaborate with the already existing neighbourhood. On the financial aspect, quitting or changing farmers want to ensure a pension because they do not build one throughout their lives. The Erfdelen initiative, which aims to build houses on existing farmyards can help to ensure larger pensions. However, building houses poses a risk both financially and time-wise. This is due to the process of changing the zoning plan, which is not guaranteed to succeed. Therefore, only farmers who are financially stable can take such a risk. Farmyard initiatives could find added value via ecological benefits like nature-inclusive farming, food forests, and agroecology. Mainly, nature intense areas like the Natura 2000 areas pose possibilities for new initiatives because the current farming activities present are getting restricted or are being forced to stop. Other trends in the countryside are modernisation and globalisation, which are causing increased production but also price-squeeze tendencies. Making farming practices less profitable, led farmers to undertake other multifunctional agrarian pathways to generate extra income. The migration from urban to rural has increased in the past few years, and even with the distrust and bad associations that farmers have with people from cities, the countryside has adopted urban functions. The different changes cause the synergy effect. For example, the start of agri-tourism facilities attracts people, which makes it interesting to opt for on-farm sales, which might be supported by creating an attractive farm environment through engagement in agri-environmental services.

Samenvatting

Als gevolg van het stijgende aantal leegstaande gebouwen op het platteland en de migratie van stad naar platteland is Erfdelen opgericht. Dit is een initiatief om een voormalig erf gezamenlijk te bewonen als een gemeenschap. Veel mensen zijn hierin geïnteresseerd, maar erfhouders (boeren) staan nog niet open om hun erf te verkopen aan dit soort initiatieven. Het is op dit moment onduidelijk voor Erfdelen waarom de boeren dit niet willen en wat hun redenen hiervoor zijn. Daarom was het doel van dit onderzoek om de perspectieven van boeren te begrijpen over het veranderen van activiteiten van hun boerderij en om te identificeren wat er nodig is om innovatief gebruik van hun boerderijen te ondersteunen. Op basis van een literatuurstudie en interviews met Nederlandse boeren en belanghebbenden van boeren, is er een inter- en transdisciplinaire analyse gemaakt vanuit sociale, financiële en ecologische perspectieven. Het perspectief van de boeren op het veranderen van hun boerderij werd beïnvloed door persoonlijke omstandigheden en eerdere ervaringen. Sommige boeren stonden open voor verandering en waren geïnteresseerd in nieuwe sociale interacties, terwijl anderen dat niet waren vanwege angsten over de mogelijke negatieve effecten dat het binnenhalen van buitenstaanders in hun buurt heeft. Dus, het succes van nieuwe initiatieven op sociaal gebied af van het vermogen van de gemeenschap te communiceren en samen te werken met de reeds bestaande buurt. Op financieel gebied willen stoppende of veranderende boeren ervoor zorgen dat zij een pensioen hebben, omdat zij dit gedurende hun leven niet opbouwen. Initiatieven die huizen bouwen op bestaande boerderijen kunnen helpen om een groter pensioen te waarborgen, maar het bouwen van huizen brengt zowel financiële als tijdsrisico's met zich mee. Dit komt door het veranderen van het bestemmingsplan, dat niet gegarandeerd is om te slagen. Daarom kunnen alleen financieel stabiele boeren zo'n risico nemen. Boerderij initiatieven zouden toegevoegde waarde kunnen vinden via ecologische voordelen zoals natuur-inclusieve landbouw, voedselbossen en agro-ecologie. Vooral natuur intensieve gebieden zoals de Natura 2000-gebieden bieden mogelijkheden voor nieuwe initiatieven, omdat de huidige aanwezige landbouwactiviteiten beperkt worden of gedwongen worden te stoppen in de toekomst. Andere trends op het platteland zijn modernisering en globalisering, die zorgen voor een verhoogde productie maar ook voor prijsdruk. Hierdoor worden landbouwpraktijken minder winstgevend, wat leidt tot boeren die andere agrarische activiteiten gaan uitvoeren om extra inkomen te genereren. De migratie van stedelijk naar landelijk gebied is de afgelopen jaren toegenomen en ondanks het wantrouwen en slechte associaties die boeren hebben met mensen uit de stad, heeft het platteland stedelijke functies overgenomen. De verschillende veranderingen veroorzaken het synergie-effect. Bijvoorbeeld, het starten van agro-toeristische faciliteiten trekt mensen aan, waardoor het interessant is om te kiezen voor verkoop via boerderij winkels, wat mogelijk wordt ondersteund door het creëren van een aantrekkelijke boerderijomgeving. de grote meerderheid van boeren die hun landbouwactiviteiten hebben gediversifieerd, zeggen nieuwe ontwikkelingen van boerderijactiviteiten alleen mogelijk is in combinatie met landbouwactiviteiten.

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1. Introduction

The Netherlands is a worldwide leader with considerable export volume in agriculture, which also negatively impacts the environment and nature to some extent (Boere, 2015). For example, there are high nitrogen emissions from agriculture including poultry farms. Animal biomass per hectare is four times higher in The Netherlands than the EU average (European Commission, 2020b). According to the research, the amount of reactive nitrogen is highly increased through human activities like using artificial fertilisers and animal manure (Vries, 2021), (figure 1). Nearly half of the country's nitrogen pollution is caused by agriculture (Stokstad, 2019). The excess nitrogen emissions have adverse effects on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and human health (de Vries, 2021). The issue of excess nitrogen emissions has risen awareness since the start of the 1980s. Through practices like injecting liquid manure into the soil and installing air scrubbers in the swine and poultry facilities, nitrogen emissions have already been reduced by 60% (Stokstad, 2019). However, due to the expansion of dairy operations since 2014, nitrogen emissions have risen as well. Therefore, the Dutch government introduces a new policy on nitrogen emissions: By 2030, nitrogen emissions in the Netherlands should reduce by 50% (Climate Agreement, 2019). To reach this, construction works would be limited, and in the agricultural sector, the number of livestock shall be reduced (van Halm, 2022). The new regulations have been particularly challenging for farmers who may not have the financial resources or technical expertise to implement the necessary changes to their practices (European Commission, 2023). In addition to the challenge of the nitrogen policy, the high price of land is also a big challenge for farmers. The price of farmland in the Netherlands has increased by a factor of 4.5 between 1963 and 2018 due to the liberalisation of the land market (Toekomstboeren, 2019). The effect of market liberalisation would be land concentration, intensification and competition between farmers, which places small farmers at a disadvantage, as they often lack the resources and competitiveness and eventually face the danger of bankruptcy. According to the research, the total number of small farmers already declined by 56% between 1990 and 2015 (Toekomstboeren, 2019).

This nitrogen policy and the increase in land prices would be two of the main reasons for the increasing closure of agriculture businesses. Based on the statistics from CBS, more than 22 farms are lost every day (CBS, 2017). The increasing stoppage of agriculture businesses will lead to an increase in empty buildings in the countryside. It is expected that there will be 15 million m² of empty buildings by 2030, which can lead to the deterioration and decay of buildings and the image of the countryside (Gies et al., 2014).

There are regulations present in the Netherlands to transform these empty and/or unused farm buildings. One of these regulations is the "rood-voor-rood" regulation. This regulation makes it possible to destroy empty buildings and build new houses in the same place or somewhere else in the same municipality. The regulations differ per municipality, but most of them include the conditions that the farming activities need to stop and/or the number of animals needs to reduce, and the image of the countryside needs to improve (*Ruimte Voor Ruimte - Rood Voor Rood*, n.d.).

Building new houses in the place of the former farm buildings could be interesting for people that move from urban to rural areas. Between 2003 and 2007, a 5-year annual average of 15,049 people migrated from rural to urban areas in the North Netherlands, and 12,138 people migrated from urban to rural areas (Bijker & Haartsen, 2009). People who moved to the countryside are motivated by the desire for lifestyle and recreation (Steenbekkers et al, 2008). For example, they like the availability of a large house with a garden, the physical qualities of the environment, living closer to family or friends and lower prices in the area (Bijker et al, 2012). Additionally, loneliness is increasing in the Netherlands with 46.6% of adults that were reported feeling lonely in both emotional and social aspects (Eenzaamheid, n.d.).

All these wishes and demands could be realised by projects such as the farmyard sharing initiative, named Erfdelen (Parmentier, n.d.). The original idea for farmyard sharing was conceived by Erfdelen initiator Pieter Parmentier at the kitchen table with the vision and hopes of eventually living in a shared farmyard. This concept includes transforming the buildings and a small part of the land surrounding the farm into a social, sustainable, green and small-scale living community in the countryside (Parmentier, n.d.). After Pieter founded the Platform, many people joined with his same interest: living in a small community in the countryside in the Netherlands. The initiative also is a solution to other social and environmental problems. By bettering the neighbourhood's social infrastructure, interaction between residents would improve, reducing loneliness (Fong et al, 2021). The Netherlands also struggles with a housing shortage, with a shortage of 300,000 houses in 2021, that is expected to increase in the coming years (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022). If the elderly people living in large houses move to new, smaller houses, the former houses will be available for younger families to live in (Brounen & Neuteboon, 2007).

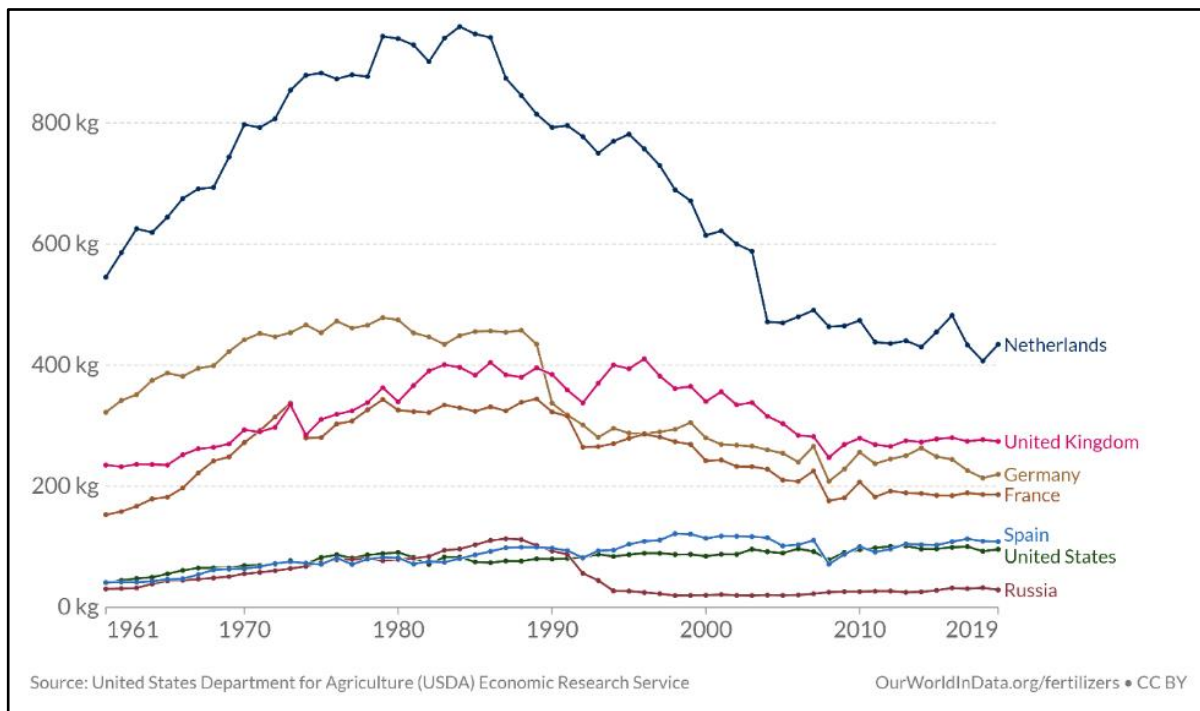


Figure 1: Fertiliser input per unit of agriculture land in Netherlands from 1961 to 2019 compared to other EU countries

1.1. Problem definition and stakeholders

Based on the current trend of an increasing number of empty buildings in the countryside and the migration trend from the urban to the countryside, Erfdelen originated. This farmyard sharing initiative consists of people living in former farmyards communally (Parmentier, n.d.). There are many interested people in this way of living, but farmers are not yet willing to sell their farmyard to Erfdelen. Right now, it is still unclear to Erfdelen why farmers are generally not willing to participate in this project. Understanding the perspectives of farmers and the reasoning behind their decisions regarding this initiative is important for the commissioner and hence, for the success of this Erfdelen project. Consequently, the commissioner would like to know and better understand the farmer's perspectives.

However, to get a better understanding of these perspectives, the underlying causes have to be addressed. These causes have to be addressed by the use of both a trans- and interdisciplinary approach. The transdisciplinary approach is needed, because perspectives of the farmland owners cannot be obtained without the opinions, related knowledge, experiences and feelings of themselves. In addition, stakeholders related to these farmyard owners can provide additional information regarding the underlying causes of certain perspectives. With the transdisciplinary approach, the personal stories of the farmyard owners can be obtained and understood, to be able to translate them into perspectives and causes underlying these perspectives. It is then also necessary to combine these inputs with the expertise of the consultants to eventually get to a useful advice for the commissioners. The interdisciplinary approach is needed within the team of consultants to obtain the needed background knowledge before starting the research and also to underly the research with the combined expertise in all related fields; ecological, financial, social and multifunctional.

The ACT team considered one of the main reasons for farmers not selling their farmyard to Erfdelen the lack of awareness about the concept. Another obstacle is that different municipalities play different roles in this project. Some regulations such as the change of the zoning plan are time-costing processes with no clear outcomes (Wetenschapswinkel, 2022). Financial concerns could also be a factor that impacts the farmer's decision. Overall, understanding the views of farmers and the factors that influence their decision-making process is essential for developing the Erfdelen project. By addressing the causes behind the concerns of farmers and finding out what is needed to support innovative use of farmyards, the project can potentially create a win-win situation for all stakeholders involved (figure 2).

A stakeholder diagram is shown in appendix 8.1, after which the power and interest of each stakeholder is discussed. Figure 2 shows a more specific diagram of the theoretical framework of creating mutual understanding with the key stakeholders included. Former and current farmyard owners (farmers) are key stakeholders in this research, because they provide the knowledge about the personal reasoning behind choices regarding the future of their farmland. In addition, other important stakeholders are advising, coaching and accountancy companies who work for the farmers. These companies communicate a lot with different farmers, so their knowledge is broad. In addition, they have a lot of knowledge about the steps that should be taken to actually realize a farmyard sharing initiative or another change of the farmyard function. Another stakeholder with not only knowledge, but also influence on the realization of the farmyard sharing initiative, is Rabobank, who provides the needed money. Not only direct farmer-related companies can provide knowledge about the farmers' perspectives, but also companies that need farmers to realize their own projects, such as LiberTerra, which is a company that realizes similar initiatives as Erfdelen and therefore communicates a lot with farmers and knows about the steps that should be taken.

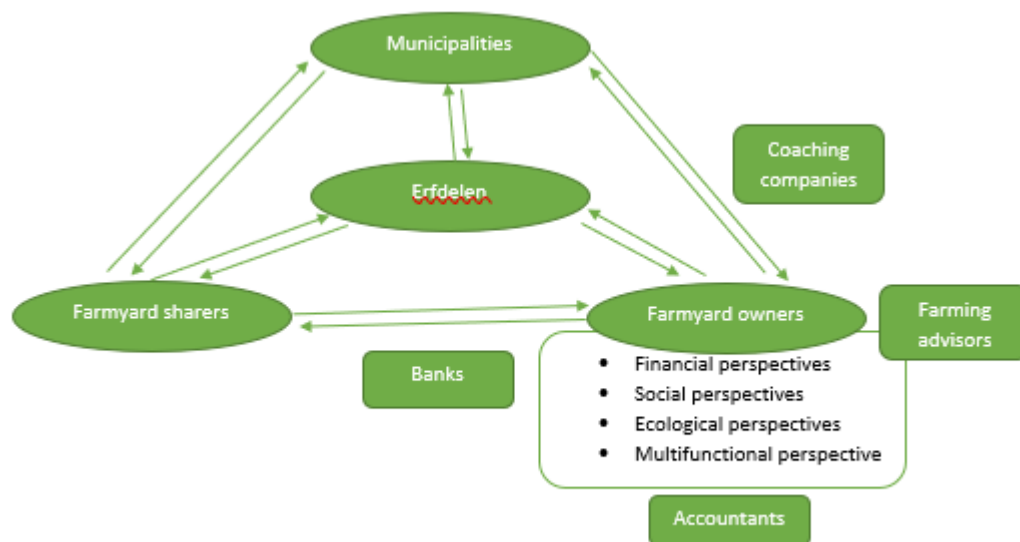


Figure 2. Theoretical framework of mutual understanding in Erfdelen including key stakeholders.

1.2. Integrative project purpose & research questions

To address the causes behind the perspectives of farmers, and eventually provide Erfdelen with answers and advice to continue working on the realisation of their project with renewed ideas, a main goal and research questions are defined. The quandary to be addressed includes questions related to the positioning of the Dutch farmers with respect to new multifunctional pathways in their farm, more specifically to farmyard-sharing. Consequently, the purpose is to explore and categorise the perspectives of farmers on changing the concept of their farmyard. In addition, the perspectives of related stakeholders familiarised with the situation of the farmers were analysed. Factors that are needed to support the innovative use of farmyards will be identified by investigating the obstacles and difficulties faced by farmers globally and possible alternatives for land use in the future.

To reach this, the focus will be on the social dimension of Erfdelen; what would be the implications on the revitalisation of the countryside and rural development, and how coexistence between the locals and the new neighbours can be affected by the social context. The aim of the team, consisting of people with multidisciplinary and multicultural backgrounds, is to give advice to Erfdelen from different perspectives. This is achieved with an iterative process of brainstorming and discussion where all the different backgrounds of team members is utilized.

Therefore, the research question of this report is:

What are the perspectives of the farmers on changing the concept of their farmyard and what is needed to support the innovative use of farmyards?

With three sub-questions:

1. What are the obstacles or difficulties faced by farmers globally?
2. What are the possible alternatives for land use in the future?
3. What factors are important for a farmer to be open to changes or to keep the concept of his farmyard?

2. Methods

To answer what happens to the property of the farm and whether farmers are willing or not to sell, there are two methods conducted for data collection: literature review and interviews. This enhances a better and deeper understanding from three different perspectives: contextual information about the obstacles and difficulties farmers face at national and international levels, farmers' perspectives on changing their farmyards, and thoughts from the stakeholders' point of view.

2.1. Literature review

At the beginning of this study, a literature review was conducted for background research to answer the first research sub-question, including: understanding the current situation in the Netherlands, obstacles that farmers faced in other countries, and case studies for possible alternatives for land use. For the global cases, articles related to China and other countries in Europe were considered in order to compare them to the Dutch situation. The purpose of the literature review was to understand the existing research relevant to the topic and provide a better understanding of the knowledge gap in this research. The literature was searched using Google Scholar, Scopus, and WUR library, among others. However, not all the articles are scientific papers. Literature related to regulation, policies, and land utilisation were found on Government websites. The findings from the previous ACT group are also used as a reference. The external factors why farmers would be willing to shift towards farmyard-sharing or not can be supported by researching the relevant regulations and policies. The literature review for relevant articles and background information was mainly conducted by the international students in the team by searching keywords such as “obstacles of farmers in The Netherlands/in other countries”, “stopping/quitting farmers Netherlands”; “new trends of agricultural activities in Netherlands”; and “sharing farms in [x country]”. Through literature research, a better understanding of the difficulties farmers are facing globally was reached, making possible exploring alternatives for farmers to deal with these challenges within the Netherlands. Based on the background information obtained from the literature review, the interview questions were drafted as well (see appendix 8.2).

2.2. Interviews

The interviews were conducted with farmers and other stakeholders related to the farmyard sharing initiatives. In order to contact them by phone, the commissioners' and group members' networks were employed. More specifically, the contact details of Rabobank employees and the Erfdelen coordinator from LiberTerra were provided by the commissioners. The contact details of the farmers that are already involved in farmyard-sharing initiatives, quitting farmers and potential stopping farmers were obtained via the team members and other stakeholders. Related stakeholders like farmers' accountants—who have an insight into the situation with the farm property—, and experts in regulations, finances, and dairy sector were also reached. In **Table 1**, a list of interviewed people is shown. In total, thirteen interviews were conducted (five with stakeholders, and eight with farmers). Some of the stakeholders were interviewed in first place in order to retrieve some background information, and then farmers were interviewed with further elaborated questions. To be more specific, a brief explanation of the aim of interviewing every stakeholder will be provided in the following paragraphs.

Table 1: List of interviewees

	Interviewee(s)	Information	Date of the interview
1	Koen Nieuwenhuis	Working for Ruimtevitaal (coaching company)	Friday, February 3 rd , 9.30-11.30h (<i>in situ</i>)
2	Hans de Bie	Working for Alfa Accountants and Adviseurs (accountant)	Friday, February 24 th , 9.30-10.30h (Teams)
3	Mieke Elzenga	Coordinator of Erfdelen North-Holland (LiberTerra)	Friday, March 3 rd , 9.30h (Zoom)
4	Aart Cooijman & Rob Berkers	Working for Rabobank (bank)	Friday, March 3 rd , 13.00h (Teams)
5	Gijs Pippel	Working for Jarick BV (advising company; expert in dairy and regulations)	Monday, February 26 th , 11.00h (<i>in situ</i>)
6	Farmer 1	Located in Neede, Gelderland, above 50 y/o. Quit recently.	Friday, February 24 th , 15.30h (<i>in situ</i>)
7	Farmer 2	Located in Ruurlo, Gelderland, above 50 y/o. Will quit in the future.	Saturday, February 25 th , 13.30h (<i>in situ</i>)
8	Farmer 3	Located in Hof van Twente, Overijssel, above 50 y/o. Non-quitting farmer talking about quit parents.	Monday, February 26 th , 14.00h (Teams)
9	Farmer 4	Located in Barchem, Gelderland, above 60 y/o. Will quit in the future.	Friday, March 3 rd , 16.00h (<i>in situ</i>)
10	Farmer 5	Located in Epse, Gelderland, above 50. Will quit in the future	Monday, February 26 th , 10.00h (<i>in situ</i>)
11	Farmer 6	Located in Barchem, Gelderland; under 40 y/o. Built 2 houses on their farmyard after quitting.	Monday, February 26 th , 19.30h (<i>in situ</i>)
12	Farmer 7	Located in Haaksbergen, Gelderland, above 50 y/o. Will quit in the future.	Tuesday, February 28 th , 11.00h (phone call)
13	Farmer 8	Located in Vuren, Gelderland, above 50 y/o. Rural developer and dairy farmer.	Monday, February 26 th , 19.00h (<i>in situ</i>)

Farmers

By interviewing potential quitting and quit farmers, it is expected to dig deeper into the perspectives of the farmers in relation to farmyard sharing and to find out how this initiative could reach more farmers and potentially become one more option to be considered before quitting. Additionally, farmers share insights about their thoughts on the succession of their farms and about their willingness to engage in a project like this. The aim of interviewing farmers was to be able to ask them openly what kind of future they expect for their farm and how they would like to see it. First, the farmer's background was discussed, including age, religion, family structure, whether they had successors, how they read the news or their relation with the neighbours. Asked whether they knew the initiative Erfdelen or similar cases. Additionally, they were asked for their opinion about Erfdelen. One of the interviewed farmers (farmer 6), consisted of a couple who had already undertaken a project with similar features to farmyard sharing. They could give some first-person insights on turning their farmyard into a liveable space. The aim of this interview was to find out the challenges and complexities that farmyard sharing can entail once put into practice.

Koen Nieuwenhuis (Ruimtevitaal)

By interviewing this coaching company, it was expected to gather more information and perspectives on the role of public institutions in fostering current trends in rural development and to better understand what the factors and obstacles are for changing the situation of these initiatives in the countryside. The aim of the interview was to get a profile of farmyard owners that want to change

their farmyard, with the reasons for these owners to change. Also, the aim was to obtain factors that contribute to these changes, which included positive and negative aspects.

Hans de Bie (Alfa Accountants & Adviseurs)

Alfa Accountants & Adviseurs is an accountancy company with experience in agricultural advice and business operations. The aim of interviewing an accounting firm was to discover the financial situations and possible struggles farmers face. The interview was also aimed to provide insights into possible financial and social obstacles Erfdelen could encounter when realising an Erfdelen project.

Aart Cooman & Rob Berkers (Rabobank)

Rabobank is the biggest bank for farmers in the Netherlands. Hence, the aim of interviewing them was to bring details about what the realisation of farmyard sharing would look like in the financial aspect, the feasibility of the project, and the main financial hindrances. In summary, whether farmyard sharing could be a viable option to be considered by those farmers who decided to quit.

Mieke Elzenga (Erfdelen coordinator North-Holland / Founder of LiberTerra)

Mieke is in contact with a plethora of farmers interested in farmyard sharing. In addition, she realises a similar initiative called LiberTerra, which is an initiative in which tiny houses are built in the countryside. Therefore, Mieke could share her experiences with challenges and opportunities when realising such a project. By interviewing her, an image of what the farm owners want to modify in their farmyard could be obtained, and subsequently, a series of positive and negative thoughts of the farmers which affect their willingness to change.

Gijs Pippel (Jarick B.V. Expert dairy / regulations)

Gijs Pippel is an expert in the dairy sector on the economic, financial, and legal issues surrounding dairy farms. His clients are dairy farmers, municipalities, and provinces. Gijs witnesses many farmers quitting and selling their farms to individuals. Gijs possesses a lot of practical knowledge about regulations. With this knowledge, he can provide new insights or obstacles correlated to the Erfdelen project.

2.3. Analysis of interview data

The qualitative data from the interviews between the farmers and the different stakeholders were compared with each other and to the analytical framework, consisting of social, financial, ecological and multifunctional perspectives. These aspects were used to categorize the qualitative data, and to identify overlap and differences in the data. This is later highlighted in the discussion and appropriate literature was used to confirm statements made. Findings are connected to research question 3, which is used for the advice proposed to Erfdelen.

3. Results

3.1. Results from the literature review

Challenges for farmers are not only seen in the Netherlands, but also globally. Farming practices in China have also a significant impact on the environment, including soil erosion (Gruhn et al., 2000), air pollution, and depletion of soil fertility (Chen et al., 2008). The negative effects of agriculture on

the environment resulted in stricter regulations to limit the use of harmful chemicals and led to the development of environmentally friendly agriculture (Gruhn et al., 2000). In addition to the environmental regulations, the lack of agricultural land is another significant challenge that farmers in China faced. Due to urbanisation and infrastructure development, the amount of land available for agriculture is decreasing, making it more difficult for farmers to maintain their livelihoods (Zhang, 2000). Food safety is also a vital concern in China. Increasing regulations and testing about food safety have raised the standard requirements for agricultural products. For example, lots of products are coming from small farmers, and these farmers must comply with increasingly stringent regulations to ensure that their products meet the safety standards. These regulations can be challenging and costly for small farmers. In other words, these regulations will create barriers for their products to compete in the market (Huang et al., 2012).

The increasing challenges in China have made farming a high-input but low-income occupation for many farmers, leading to a trend of depopulation in rural areas. Especially among younger generations, they prefer moving to urban centres to find better job opportunities and educational resources. As a result, the elderly population is left to manage farms, which can be physically challenging for them. Furthermore, the social status of farmers is often low, as farming is viewed as a traditional occupation in many cultures (Yu et al., 2022). It can also lead to inadequate political representation and social support for farmers and rural communities. Moreover, the lower social status will also discourage young people from pursuing careers in agriculture, which can exacerbate the problem of an aging farmer population and limited agricultural labour force.

Overall, addressing all these challenges requires a coordinated effort among policymakers, farmers, and consumers to promote sustainable farming practices and support the development of rural communities. This research is conducted to start with the basis; create mutual understanding. To do that, policymakers, farmers and consumers need to understand each other to be able to communicate and work together to reach their (shared) aims. The results of this research form the basis to better understand one of these parties; the farmers.

3.2. Results interviews with farmers

The results of the conducted interviews with farmers are summarised per farmer. Firstly, the farmers were asked a few classifying questions such as their location or age. Secondly, questions related to the history and evolution of the farm were posed. Thirdly, they were asked how are they foreseeing the future of their farm. Finally, the concept of Erfdelen was introduced, retrieving the perspectives of the interviewees on the concept. The answers to the open and more elaborated questions were summarised to describe the experiences and opinions regarding the future of their farm and regarding the farmyard sharing initiative.

Farmer 1

Location: Neede, Gelderland

Age: above 50

Family structure: divorced, two daughters.

Successors: No

Sports: Volleyball

Religion: No

Study: Middelbaar Agrarisch Beroepsonderwijs B

Reading news: Vee en Gewas

Relation with neighbours: excellent

The first interviewee is a quit farmer who is currently living in the farmyard on which empty stables are present. He plans to diversify his business by renting out facilities for manure storage and working for other farmers. Since he needs money, he is open for different business opportunities. Because of

personal reasons, he is already looking for new options to the farm's future, even considering housing. He is not aware of the concept of Erfdelen, but he would consider it because of its social dimension. He has always lived with multiple families on this farmyard, so he is also used to social interaction on a farmyard. Additionally, he likes the fact that he could offer housing to the community. He already has a strong bond with the local community.

This farmer's reasoning is therefore driven by finance but mainly social incentives.

Farmer 2

Location: Ruurlo, Gelderland

Age: Above 55

Family structure: Married, two children

Successors: No

Sports: No

Religion: No

Study: Middelbaar landbouw onderwijs A, Havo middelbaar economisch en administratief onderwijs

Reading news: Pigbusiness, Nieuwe Oogst, Vee en Gewas

Relation with neighbours: good

This couple is planning to quit in about ten years. They bought the farm from the neighbours of their parents, keeping it always updated. While the husband would like to sell the farm as a whole to a young family that for example needs to relocate, the female farmer expects that the farm will not be updated anymore and therefore the stables can be demolished, having the possibility of staying in the farmyard. Both farmers agree on the fact that regarding their children, in case they want to live there, they would consider the rood-voor-rood option, in which the stables would be replaced by a house. The couple did not know Erfdelen and are not open to it. They fear that the potential members of the community would make farming practice in the area more difficult. So, only in those cases where the community suits the neighbourhood, the neighbours can keep doing what they have been doing, and once the new members get to know each other well, the farmers would be open to this initiative, they stated. The interviewees are close-knit with their neighbours, which they constitute an important aspect. They know that having a farm in a neighbourhood could be difficult, so in order to keep a good relationship, communication is the key. They even have parties with their neighbours. The 'Noaberschap' is enrooted in this region. According to this code, when someone in the neighbourhood passes away, the other neighbours help to arrange the funeral. They do not think that the people from Erfdelen would know what this is. They see them as 'idealistic' people that do not know what it really is to live in the countryside. They shared stories of people from the city moving to the countryside, living there for 10 years running a "bed and breakfast", and eventually moving back. The reason behind this is that it was tougher than they expected. They think people disregard that living in a detached house entails higher costs. Therefore, they do not think these kinds of communities would survive. However, if something like this would be realised, they prefer the houses to be affordable at least for young families.

These farmers are rooted in their local community, and sceptical that people from outside would fit in easily, especially the people from the cities. They also prioritise a tranquil life with their kins and neighbours over other drivers like money.

Farmer 3

Location: Hof van Twente, Overijssel

Age: above 60 when quit

Family structure: Married, two children

Successors: No

Sports: No

Religion: Not anymore
Study: Teacher, no education
Reading news: Nieuwe Oogst, Veeteelt, Vee en Gewas
Relation with neighbours: distant

The third interviewed farmer had parents with a poultry farm who now quit. This poultry farm was located close to a sensitive nature reserve. The animals are already gone but the farm is still standing. They are looking for new purposes for that farm. One of the ways they consider is the rood-voor-rood regulation, which would be only to build houses for their own family. The son (interviewee) mentioned that he and his parents would not like to sell the farmyard to Erfdelen, because they do not want foreign people on their farmyard. Instead, his parents would rather keep living alone and freely as they have always done. They state that people should really consider whether they want to introduce people from the city to the countryside. Farmers see it as jeopardising and are often negative towards entering urban and foreign people because they are afraid that they would not suit in the neighbourhood.

Similarly to Farmers 2, this farmer is sceptical to receive new neighbours and prefers to have a quiet life with his family and not many visitors.

Farmer 4

Location: Barchem, Gelderland
Age: Above 60
Family structure: Couple, not married, no offspring
Successors: No
Sports: No
Religion: No
Study: lagere landbouwschool, huishoudschool
Reading news: Vee en Gewas, Nieuwe oogst, Veehouderij, tractor magazines
Relation with neighbours: distant

The fourth farmer interviewees are cow farmers in Barchem, quitting in the future years. They are living close to Natura 2000. Their neighbourhood has changed lately and some people from the West of the Netherlands moved in, not meaning any problem, but changing the demographic composition. They still have more contact with the 'old' neighbours that lived there since the start. The farmers will quit in the future, because they have no successors, and they live close to Natura 2000. They have seen their land being 'destroyed' to make nature, where their cows used to graze, what was frustrating for them. They would like to keep living on their farmyard and oppose to selling. They would not like to work with Erfdelen, because they are used to having no neighbours nearby. They only have one way leading to their house, which is a dead-end way, so they are afraid that their rest is destroyed when people from the Erfdelen community then always need to pass their house. In addition, they own two dogs who become very loud when people visit. They fear that possible new neighbours would not accept that. They mentioned that money does not make them happy, and consequently, they would not do such a project for financial reasons. It is already calculated that once they sell their farm, the money they will get will be enough to get a pension.

These farmers like their independence and their authority on their land. They prioritise their farming activities over nature conservation, but state not being motivated by financial gains. Additionally, they are opposed to having new neighbours near them.

Farmer 5

Location: Epse, Gelderland
Age: Above 50
Family structure: Married, two children

Successors: No
Sports: No
Religion: No
Study: nurse, Middelbaar Landbouwschool
Reading news: 'Nieuwe Oogst', 'Vee en Gewas', 'Veeteelt'
Relation with neighbours: distant

These farmers are planning to quit in 5 years. The reasons are related to strains, as they say, farming means being responsible 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, which is exhausting. They want to keep living in their farmyard, because they like the place and the neighbourhood, and it is quite close to the city. Additionally, they would like to keep earning an income with different activities, such as: installing solar panels, camper storage and subrenting their house. At first, their farm consisted of pigs and cows; later they focused only on dairy. The relationship with the neighbours is not intense since many people from the city moved into their neighbourhood. Right now, there are no other farmers in the area.

Their plan for the future could be a caravan storage or rood-voor-rood, as long as they keep earning money. Right now, they are already focusing on side businesses as well. For instance, they produce large amounts of green electricity with solar panels and they sub rent their house. Additionally, the wife is also a nurse. Their children have the priority to get their farmyard. In case none of the children wants to live there, they will sell the farm to the highest bidder. They have never heard about Erfdelen, but they know a similar initiative called 'Koeiendans', which is based on transforming old stables into seven housing units for elderly people and couples. This initiative keeps the image of the countryside, and at the same time serves the community by offering housing. These farmers were not interested in Erfdelen, because losing their parents at a young age made them realise how risky it is to start a project that takes years without a clear outcome. Another factor mentioned was that they do not believe the neighbours would agree with Erfdelen, because when money is earned by the initiative takers, neighbours would get extremely jealous. They think it is better to focus on their own needs first.

Differently to other interviewed farmers, this couple is more open-minded and enthusiastic about undertaking new business activities than the average of the interviewees. They are looking for new business activities that would not require as much effort and decitation as farming. Nevertheless, they are averse to risk, so they would probably not engage in uncertain businesses.

Farmer 6

Location: Barchem, Gelderland
Age: above 35
Family structure: Married, three children
Successors: No
Sports: fitness
Religion: No
Study: Middelbaar Agrarische School
Reading news: Boerderij, Vee en Gewas
Relation with neighbours: good

The sixth interviewees are quit farmers that planned to design and transform their stables into two houses through rood-voor-rood. This plan was based on the concept known as 'Knooperf' in which two yards are connected and a piece of nature is designed. The plan was well-designed, and they tried to sell the yards. However, the housing crisis lengthened the time required to sell, which took for 7 years. During that time, they still needed to pay the mortgage. Finally, only the building areas were sold, where the new owners built their own houses. These farmers predict that in a farmyard sharing

project, people would eventually change despite a good first impression. They do not know about Erfdelen, but they can imagine how it works. Thus, they consider it a better choice for a group of friends to start and live in a concept like this. And it is important to know that different farmers have their own interests and opinions, which makes it difficult for them to work together.

These farmers already have some experience in farmyard sharing, and that is why they make some recommendations on how to achieve harmonic coexistence in the farmyard.

Farmer 7

Location: Haaksbergen, Gelderland

Age: above 50

Family structure: Married, three sons

Successors: No

Sports: Trimclub

Religion: No

Study: Landbouwschool lage middelbaar, course about animal health

Reading news: agrarisch dagblad, boerderij, Internet, Vee en Gewas, pigbusiness, RTV oost

Relation with neighbours: good

The seventh interviewee is a pig farmer. He wants to keep working until he gets his pension. Eventually, he aims to install solar panels on his roof. The structure of his farmyard consists of two households and has a place for a third one that is reserved for the children. When they get older, they will prefer to keep living in the farmyard in an elderly building if the children also live there on the farmyard. The farmer did not know Erfdelen and would not want to work with them. He thinks his farmyard will become disastrous, while it has always been organised. If strangers join the farmyard, it would change dramatically, he declares.

This farmer also prioritises family and privacy, he has a conservative mindset and would like to keep living as he has done for all his life. On the business side, he is slightly more open, willing to make investments like installing solar panels.

Farmer 8

Location: Vuren, Gelderland

Age: above 50

Family structure: Married, two children

Successors: No

Sports: Cycling

Religion: protestant

Study: Havo

Reading news: Agrarisch dagblad, Telegraaf, Vee en Gewas

Relation with neighbours: distant

The last interviewed farmer is a large-scale dairy farmer with diverse side businesses, such as selling machinery parts to local farmers. He does not live on his own farmyard but is close by. This farmer is financially driven. He hopes his son will take over the farm, otherwise, he would sell the farm to the highest bidder. It does not matter whether this is a farmer, nature reserve or something else. He already has experience with building houses but did not know about Erfdelen. He is however highly interested in the initiative, especially in its potential profit. The farmer himself is also active in rural developments like building or demolishing houses and farms in the countryside. When eventually he is done with farming and will go with his pension, he hopes that the farm keeps operating. However, it is important that there will be complete financial compensation for the farm. Otherwise, he would sell it to another party that might not continue the farm. A lot of farmers are quitting for different

reasons: the farm does not have any successors, the farm is not financially profitable anymore, or the farmer does not enjoy farming anymore –mainly due to the strict rules restricting farms–. This farmer also sees neighbouring farmers broadening their activities, like starting to produce cheese or ice creams or working externally for a different company for extra income. He expects the biggest challenge for Erfdelen to be the constraints surrounding the zoning plan. The farmer sees this concept as a danger to surrounding farmers. Maybe surrounding nature areas like the Natura 2000 are a possible location since there is little future for farmers in those areas. This could also be positive for the people who join Erfdelen because it can be nice living close to natural areas. For the farmer selling the land, it could be financially positive when he gets added value for the farm. Besides, if the farmer could keep living there and maybe perform agricultural work for the community, this could be a win-win situation. The maintenance of good communication between the municipalities, farmers, and inhabitants of Erfdelen is important for the completion of such a project. Something that should not be forgotten, is the infrastructure in the countryside where a community would like to settle because not all roads are built for the number of people living in those places.

Due to the size of this farmer's business, he has expert knowledge of the current countryside situation and has brought interesting insights into the discussion. As he is financially driven, he has diversified his business and from his experience, Erfdelen would be an excellent business opportunity if realised.

3.3. Results interviews with stakeholders

The results based on the interviews with the stakeholders are summarised as well. For every stakeholder, a slightly different interview was held, depending on the time they had and their function within the farmyard sharing initiative. First, the role of the stakeholder within the company is described. In addition, a summary is given of their experiences and opinions regarding the farmyard sharing initiative based on answers to the interview questions.

Alfa Accountants & Advisers

Hans de Bie is Alfa market accountant manager for food and agriculture. His activities consist of advising agricultural business owners inside the Netherlands on the following fields: regulations, reporting, efficiency, and advice for the future. Hans lives in West Brabant.

Currently, the farming sector is going through a change. Farmers are concerned about the myriad of new regulations. Hans and the farmers assess their current performance and what consider their possibilities for the future. According to him, these possibilities depend on the neighbouring farmers, the farm location, and regulations. For some farmers, quitting is also a possibility. When a farmer is going to quit and sell his farm, they cannot start too early by introducing a tax specialist. Because when a farm is sold, a lot of taxes must be paid, but this could be minimised if well prepared.

Around 30% of farmers do not have a successor for the farm. Most of these farmers will quit, and the farm will be sold. Because the initial investment to start a farm is so high, it is really hard to become a farmer, resulting in a big decrease in farmers in the coming years. After quitting, most farmers want to keep living on farm and stay active with farming activities. They often try to keep the ground to continue these small farming practices, if financially possible, as well as undertaking secondary businesses.

Hans is not familiar with Erfdelen. However, he considers it a good possibility that can be favourable to the farmers' interests, especially with the current dilemmas with housing shortages, quitting farmers, and Natura 2000 areas. The main concern for farmers is: "How do I get my pension?". Farmers do not build a pension during their lives. If they need to quit and Erfdelen can guarantee a good price for the farm and the farmer can keep farming to supply the Erfdelen community, it would be a perfect fit. However, it is important to also make sure it fits with the neighbouring farmers because they can mean a big threat if they do not want to collaborate.

Hans pointed out that farmers face various challenges in continuing agriculture, including issues related to regulations and the lack of successors. When implementing shared farming, they may encounter difficulties related to regulations, financials, and neighbourhood relations.

RUIMTEVITAAL

Koen is a former dairy farmer in Achterhoek, East of the Netherlands. Currently, Koen is working for RuimteVitaal, a company active in rural development in Achterhoek. During the interview, Koen stressed the importance of policies in the municipalities. Without a clear policy, there is no money.

or time from municipalities or provinces to develop certain initiatives, such as Erfdelen. As a result, he advised creating a pilot project in collaboration with a willing municipality, from which policy could be made. Other municipalities can copy this policy for their own areas. He also highlights the importance of good linkages between initiative takers (Erfdelen), landowners (farmers), and regulators (municipalities).

Koen predicts that 3/4 of the Dutch FVrural areas are going to change in the future, and sees Erfdelen as one of the many pioneering projects in the countryside. Erfdelen will be a niche for certain farmyard owners who are willing to go through the process and are willing to build new houses on their property.

Overall, Koen emphasized the importance of the municipal government's implementation of relevant policies. He stated that without clear policies, funds will not be effectively utilized. Additionally, he stressed the significance of implementing pilot projects to develop feasible policies, which can be promoted in other cities. Koen also pointed out the importance of establishing good relationships between project initiators, farmers, and municipalities.

Rabobank

Aart Cooman and Rob Berkers are respectively Sector manager Real Estate and Themamanager working for Rabobank. One of their jobs is to look for different possibilities how farmers can combine housing business with their agriculture business, to come to a healthy business model. According to them, the biggest challenge to the farmyard initiative lies in changing the zoning plan from agricultural land to private house destination. If the zoning plan change is attained, the value of the land increases, giving the floor to a profitable business. Additionally, the interviewees highlighted the complexity of a project with these dimensions, which means that inexperienced investors should receive support from project developers, otherwise the realisation of projects like Erfdelen could be challenging.

According to Rob Berkers, housing can be a profitable addition to the business model of some farmers. The bank is not advising farmers on whether to invest the approximated amount of €50.000 in changing the zoning plan or not. Only farmers with sufficient buffers can afford to take such risks, because there is no guarantee the zoning plan can be changed upfront. The bank can only finance an housing initiative unless the zoning plan is successfully determined as urban. From Rabobank's perspective, the biggest challenge for Erfdelen is changing of the zoning plan. Changing the zoning plan is time-consuming and costly, and they point out that the bank will not take on this risk. Therefore, if this project is to be successful, Erfdelen need to find farmers, and/or participants, that are financially strong enough

LiberTerra

Mieke Elzenga is a Dutch citizen who has lived in the Czech Republic for seven years and a social entrepreneur. She became involved in the topic of sustainable farming and social integration through her work with young refugees from Eritrea and Syria who came to the Netherlands without their parents. She described how difficult it was for them to integrate into Dutch society due to their lack of knowledge about the culture and monoculture farming practices. Mieke is the regional coordinator for Erfdelen in the Northern part of West-Netherlands (Noord-holland), and she works

for developed the concept the LiberTerra Stolpboerderij project. This project stands for a sustainable and socially relevant project that aims to conserve cultural heritage by combining living, learning, and working functions. The project includes several features such as mindful homes, small movable homes in the yard similar to tiny houses, energy-neutral solutions using roofs and basements for energy generation and storage (solar panels, solar boilers, water, ice, etc.), a food forest, where people can grow their own fruits and vegetables in a biodiverse environment, and education about this holistic lifestyle in a new economy (WEconomy).

She talks with different landowners, including old farmers that are alone, or have no successors. Her goal is to find nature-inclusive farming options and help farmers make the transition from traditional farming to more sustainable methods, such as food-forest farming. The focus is not on helping farmers create more profit, but on promoting sustainability and bridging the gap between old and new farming practices. Mieke Elzenga recognises the tension between farmers and authorities in the Netherlands, who require constant changes in farming practices. However, she believes that rural development is more important than this fight and seeks to help farmers who are struggling to make the transition to more sustainable methods. This includes older farmers who want to retire or younger farmers who do not want to pass on their farm to their children due to high debts.

According to Mieke Elzenga, some of the reasons farmyard owners may quit or want to change include changing regulations, a lack of successors, and a desire to transition to more sustainable, biobased farming practices. Owners may also wish to diversify their farms by adding food forests, healthcare facilities, or farm shops. In terms of sustainability, Mieke Elzenga believes that we need to take care of the planet and that farmers play an important role in producing the food we eat. She encourages people to eat more vegetarian meals, as the production of meat is often resource-intensive and unsustainable. Finally, Mieke Elzenga emphasises the importance of awareness and communication in promoting sustainable farming practices.

When talking about challenges, finance is a major challenge in the beginning stages of these types of projects. Changing the zoning plan can be expensive and difficult to navigate. One solution that has been used is to use temporary permits, such as the 'kruimelregeling', which allows for the use of land for living for a period of ten years. Another challenge is the language barrier between different stakeholders involved in the project, such as land owners, citizens, and authorities. It is important to have a common language and aim to bring these parties together to work towards a sustainable future.

It seems like there is a need for more political involvement in these types of projects, and for the various sectors involved to work together to find solutions. Empty farms, for example, could potentially be turned into housing, but this is not currently allowed in the Netherlands.

Jarick BV:

Gijs Pippel is an expert in the dairy sector on the economic, financial, and legal issues surrounding dairy farms. His clients are dairy farmers, municipalities, and provinces. Gijs sees a lot of farmers quitting their farming practices and selling their farms to individuals. This should be possible with the zoning plan; however, depending on the municipality, this can be an easy change or very hard. The bank will only give a mortgage if the zoning plan change is accepted. Farmers also try to diversify their farms with secondary activities. However, this mostly gets stuck when farmers try to do activities that are not related to agriculture, also because of the planning zone.

Gijs is not familiar with Erfdelen. But Gijs's initial thoughts were that the financial aspect was good and possible, but he sees the zoning plan as a really big challenge. A municipality must be willing to take on this project; otherwise, it will be impossible. Gijs thinks farmers will react positively to the concept in both financial aspects and in cases where the farmer is moving to another location. But when it is not financially necessary and the farmer is not moving, it will be less open to Erfdelen because currently the farmer is living in his own place with a lot of space, and people will join their farmyard. Gijs thinks most farmers will not react that positively, but some may if the farmer can stay

active as a small-scale farmer in the community. For the neighbouring farmers, Gijs sees Erfdelen as a really big risk and suspects that there will be a lot of protests against the project. They are afraid of foreigners entering the rural countryside because they think foreigners or people who do not live there will start complaining about noise, smell, and other farming activities. It could also be dangerous to expand farms because of the extra regulations surrounding houses with civilians.

Finally, there is the possibility for Erfdelen to collaborate with a farmer to start the zoning plan change process. Gijs thinks farmers are not willing to "lock" their farmyard for the time it takes to change the zoning plan to sell their farm. Financial compensation needs to be given to the farmer for his time and risk.

Gijs believes that changing the zoning plan is a very big challenge. The municipality must be willing to take on this project; otherwise, it is not possible. Gijs believes that most farmers will not react so positively, and for neighboring farmers, Erfdelen is a very big risk, and he suspects that there will be many people opposed to the project. He also mentioned that economic compensation is needed for farmers' time and risk.

Having the results from the interviews, in the following section an analysis will untangle the common patterns and returning topics among the interviewees and will be linked to the literature findings.

4. Discussion

4.1. Social perspectives

To obtain the perspectives of farmers regarding the Erfdelen concept, the outputs of the interviews were discussed in two ways. At first, the farmers' answers were combined with their backgrounds to better understand the causes behind their perspectives. Then, the answers of the relating stakeholders were combined with their interests and function to understand the causes behind their reasoning.

4.1.1. Farmers

The interviews with quitting or quit farmers made clear that every farmer has their own story. Individual circumstances could influence their perspectives regarding the future of their farmyard. However, these individual circumstances do have resemblance with other farmers. The biggest and most remarkable findings based on the interviews with the farmers will be discussed.

Perspective based on experience

None of the interviewed farmers knew about Erfdelen. In the past, farmers 6 realised a similar initiative because they had the feeling that it would be nice and worthwhile to do. This concept was called Knooperf and involve similar thoughts than the farmers that seemed eager to cooperate with Erfdelen. However, these same farmers did also find out that it does not always go the way you would expect or wish it to go. In their case, one of the two buyers were people that did not suit in the concept, while they did specifically 'apply' for this Knooperf concept. They built a huge fence between themselves and the other buyers and never communicate with the other neighbours. This behaviour does not suit to the concept of Knooperf, but also not Erfdelen, because neighbours should behave as a community that shares the farmyard together, so in that case communication is very important to be able to live that shared life. If it turns out that one family or a person within an Erfdelen community behaves like the buyer in the story of farmer 6, it can cause many problems in the community, consequently disrupting the ambiance of the neighbourhood.

Perspective based on personal circumstances

Not only experience of a similar project, but also personal circumstances influenced the opinions towards farmyard sharing. For example, farmer 1, who did not have experience with a concept like farmyard sharing, would be open to the concept. He was divorced and already quit the farm, which made him feel lonely in his farmyard and therefore, he would be open to the concept, to have more human contact. However, for him it is also very important to keep an income, ensuring his pension.

Contradictory to what farmer 1 said, farmers 5 would not be open to a farmyard sharing concept. Not because of the concept itself, but because of the difficult process they would have to go through to realise it. Their personal circumstances had a big influence on their perspective in this case, because they both lost their parents at a young age, which influenced their way of working. Because they have the experience of something unexpected like the death of close relatives, they would like to prepare well for such things. That is not possible when in the middle of an Erfdelen process. So, these farmers would not start a project like Erfdelen because of the responsibility they would have without knowing the outcome yet, while one of the reasons they want to quit is that they want more rest.

Perspective based on social effects of a community entering a farmyard

Farmers 2, 3, 4, and 7 were not enthusiastic about Erfdelen due to various reasons. Farmers 2 and 3 expressed concern about not knowing the people who would move into the countryside and how they might impact the neighbourhood. They feared that these people might not fit in. Farmers 4 and 7 were more individualistic and preferred living independently with ample space around them. Farmer 4, in particular, was worried about the Erfdelen project starting on their dead-end farmyard, which would invade their privacy and disrupt their peace. Additionally, they had two loud dogs that might annoy new neighbours. Farmer 7 was worried about the impact of an Erfdelen community on the organisation of their farmyard. They preferred to live on the farm individually or with their children. They feared that an Erfdelen community would disrupt the peace they have always enjoyed living there. Their fears were confirmed by the story of farmer 6, who experienced the negative effects of a "bad neighbour." Farmers believed that they could only succeed with the Erfdelen concept if the community existed among a group of friends. However, there was still the danger of one friend leaving and selling to another buyer who would not fit into the neighbourhood. These farmers were well connected with their neighbours, and their perspective on farmyard sharing was not just about earning money but also about keeping the neighbourhood as close as it is now. Additionally, most farmers wanted to keep living in their farmyards, which not only influenced the neighborhood but also themselves. Farmer 2 also expressed concern about a neighbouring farm very close to their farmyard. They were not sure whether the other farm could keep running its farming practices if the Erfdelen community was located on their farmyard, and they did not want to disturb their neighboring farmers.

Perspectives based on the financial situation

According to the interviews, Farmers 2 and 8 hope that any potential buyer of their farms will continue farming, but recognise that this decision ultimately depends on the individual farmer's situation. For example, if the farm is located near Natura 2000 areas, like Farmer 4's farm, it may not be feasible to continue farming. Additionally, if the farmer has no children to take over the farm, purchasing it can be a significant investment for an outsider. In this case, the farmer may consider other options for earning a pension from the farm.

Farmer 8 is enthusiastic about the Erfdelen concept because it offers a potential source of income. However, he is also concerned that other nearby farmers may be negatively impacted by the concept and may protest against it, leading to its failure. He believes that the concept may be more successful in or around Natura 2000 areas where no other farmers can continue farming. In these cases, selling the farmyard to Erfdelen would be an option and the farmer could earn enough money to obtain a pension since the area will have more value as a building area than as an agricultural area.

Farmer 8, who is also a rural developer, is aware of the lack of infrastructure in farming areas. For example, roads may be narrow and electricity may be limited, which could pose a challenge for a community settling in the countryside. He thinks about the concept in an objective way, considering both the possibilities and constraints.

Overall, the opinions of the farmers are influenced not only by the potential financial consequences of the Erfdelen concept but also by the social effects it could have, their personal circumstances, and past experiences.

4.1.2. Stakeholders

Based on what stakeholders said, it can be suggested that their working field has a direct influence on their opinion about Erfdelen. The interviews revealed several important findings that are worth discussing.

Companies working FOR farmers

The interests of companies that work for farmers differ from those that do not. For example, Alfa Accountants & Adviseurs, which helps farmers with their finances, has a good understanding of the challenges faced by farmers such as proximity to Natura 2000 areas, insufficient income from farming alone, and a lack of successors. Hans de Bie of Alfa Accountants & Adviseurs believes that farmyard sharing can be a viable option for farmers to earn more income and continue farming as they prefer while offering houses to the community. He also suggests that farmers use tax advisers to reduce their taxes.

In contrast, coaching companies like RUIMTEVITAAL focus on regulations to help farmers on top of financial and social assistance. Koen Nieuwenhuis of RUIMTEVITAAL believes that municipalities play a crucial role in realising the concept of farmyard sharing. He suggests that pilot projects should be implemented first, and the rules developed from this could be used by other municipalities in the future. This would reduce the risk for farmers and communities involved.

Gijs Pippel from Jarick BV, another advising company, agrees that municipalities play a vital role in the success of farmyard sharing. He stresses the importance of good communication between the farmyard owner, regulators, and initiative takers. Same as RUIMTEVITAAL, Pippel suggests that a higher cohesion within the Erfdelen network is necessary to foster cooperation among all parties affected.

Companies working WITH farmers

According to Rabobank, the most significant challenge facing farmyard sharing initiatives at present is the alteration of the zoning plan. However, Rabobank representatives Rob Berkers and Aart Cooijman suggest that the financial risk associated with implementing zoning changes must be taken on by farmers or Erfdelen communities, rather than by the bank itself. This underscores the difference between working for farmers and working with them, as Rabobank will not provide financial support until the feasibility of the project has been demonstrated. Consequently, farmyard sharing is feasible only for farmers who are financially stable and motivated to invest their resources in the initiative. Mieke from LiberTerra concurs with RUIMTEVITAAL that effective communication is a key factor in facilitating the success of farmyard sharing projects. According to Mieke, some of the reasons farmyard owners may quit or want to change include changing regulations, a lack of successors, and a desire to transition to more sustainable, biobased farming practices. Finance is a major challenge in the beginning stages of these types of projects and changing the zoning plan can be expensive and difficult to navigate. Mieke mentioned some solutions, such as the kruimelregeling, which allows for the use of land for living for a period of ten years. Mieke emphasized that it is important to have a common language and aim to bring different parties together to work towards a sustainable future.

4.2. Ecological perspectives

What came back in multiple interviews, were terms like 'Natura 2000', 'nature-inclusive' and 'food-forest', which relate to the ecological aspect of a farmyard sharing initiative. What could be said based on the results of the interviews, is that searching for farmers situated close to Natura 2000 areas may be a better option for Erfdelen and farmers are looking for more sustainable options in the future. For example, Farmer 4 was living close to Natura 2000 areas, and mentioned that farming practices can change to more nature-inclusive. Mieke from LiberTerra and Gijs who is expert in dairy section also mentioned the possibility of future farming close to Natura 2000 areas. Despite the difficulties that farmers are facing, there is an increasing number of new approaches in agriculture, which has ecological and social benefits to the countryside. One example would be the promotion of sustainable agriculture practices like agroecology, that prioritise soil health, biodiversity and water conservation. Agroecology is a distinct approach to agricultural production, processing, and distribution that focuses on strengthening local resources, markets, and knowledge, as well as developing a new relationship with nature and citizens. In contrast to conventional forms of agriculture that prioritise external chemical inputs, prescribed knowledge, and global value chains, agroecological systems prioritise a holistic approach that values not only food production but also landscape preservation, biodiversity, a thriving countryside, and nature (Toekomstboeren, 2019).

There are many different ways of agroecology, including circular agriculture, community-supported agriculture, food forests and etc. These kinds of farming practices have several benefits for the land. For example, it can improve soil health by adding organic matter, reducing the use of chemical inputs and using cover crops. This also helps to reduce soil erosion, prevent nutrient depletion, and enhance biodiversity. According to the research, the number of organic farms is increased by 14.6% from 2013 to 2017 in Netherlands (Toekomstboeren, 2019).

4.3. Financial perspectives

One aspect that has been repeatedly discussed in interviews with farmers and related stakeholders is the financial impact of farmyard sharing initiatives. It has been found that, when considering the financial aspect, the construction of houses on the farmyard is viewed as a positive development for Erfdelen. For instance, farmer 8 stated that he would be willing to sell his farm to his son if a good financial offer was made. However, farmer 4 is not interested in collaborating with Erfdelen, even if there are financial benefits, as he believes that money does not lead to happiness. This viewpoint stems from a negative experience with a previous land change. Farmer 5, who has left farming, is still searching for alternative sources of income. According to Gijs Pippel, this is because farming alone does not generate sufficient revenue to support farmers. This trend is supported by a survey conducted by Agrio and Wageningen University & Research, which surveyed 1200 agricultural companies. The survey found that half of the farms have secondary activities, whereas in 1995, only one out of every five farms had a secondary activity (Wiskerke, 2020).

Koen Nieuwenhuis from RUIMTEVITAAL and Hans de Bie from Alfa Accountants have stated that farmers who sell their farms need to receive a pension from the sale in order to support themselves during their retirement years. The construction of houses on a farmyard can increase the pension amount, but only financially stable farmers, who are capable of taking on the associated financial risk, can pursue this option according to Rabobank. As a result, farmers who are in urgent need of funds may not be able to take advantage of this opportunity. The solvency of Dutch farms, which is a measure of their financial strength, shows that land-intensive farms like dairy farms have a higher average solvency of 73%, while pig and laying hen farms have solvency rates of 63% and 52%, respectively. However, solvency does not necessarily reflect a farm's financial results. For example,

dairy farms had a positive rate of return in 2022, with farmers earning €111 for every €100 spent. However, the years prior to 2022 saw negative rates of return, with dairy farmers earning only €93, €89, and €95 per €100 spent in 2021, 2020, and 2019, respectively (Agrimatie, 2022a; Agrimatie, 2022b; Agrimatie, 2022c).

To sum up, the feedback obtained from farmers and stakeholders suggests that constructing houses on the farmyard is generally seen as a favourable progression, particularly in terms of financial gains. However, the feasibility of farmers to build such houses to boost their retirement income could be restricted by their financial fragility and solvency. Only those who are financially stable may be able to assume the associated risks. Nonetheless, the financial outcomes of farms can be unpredictable and vulnerable to fluctuations, as evidenced by the varying rate of return in recent years for dairy farms.

4.4. Multifunctional perspective

4.4.1. Multifunctional agrarian pathways as solutions for a less profitable agricultural sector

Another effect of the developments in the agricultural sector, is that many farmers are seeking out secondary activities and income streams beyond traditional farming, as the farm alone may not provide enough financial support. Namely, the agricultural sector has undergone significant changes in recent decades due to modernisation and globalisation. While these changes have brought about some positive outcomes –especially the prominent increase in productivity– (Giller et al, 2021), they have also led to negative externalities such as price-squeeze tendencies, loss of farmers' influence and autonomy, and increasingly prescriptive regulative frameworks.

To address these issues, farmers have begun undertaking multifunctional agrarian pathways as solutions for a sector that was becoming less profitable (Oostindie, 2018). Many of the interviewed farmers are considering, or already undertaking other activities than farming. Farmer 1 is renting out the facilities of his old farm to other farmers to store their manure; Farmer 5 is planning to install solar panels, build a camper storage, and sub-renting; Farmers 6 have also business plans, in their case, carrying out a “Knooperf” project, that is connecting two houses out of old stables; and Farmer 8 have side businesses in real estate and machinery sales.

4.4.2. Opportunities and challenges of urban-to-rural migration

At the same time, new movements of urban-to-rural migrants are getting attracted to the countryside as part of their life projects. Some of the drivers behind their decisions are related to work malaises –stress, burnout, depression, alienation–, while others look for enjoying more leisure time for family and hobbies, reconnect with nature, or live more sustainably. They believe that this can be more feasible in the countryside since it allows them to reappropriate their life activity and lead a life that makes more sense (Snikersproge, 2022). Nevertheless, farmers are not always open to the arrival of neighbours from the cities, as confirmed after the interviews. The Farmers 2 stated that new members will eventually hinder agricultural practices traditionally performed in the area, since the new community members may not be used to farming and can complain about noises or stench; Farmer 3 have a negative view towards people from cities; and Farmer 7 does not trust others in general. Besides, the majority of the interviewed stakeholders also recognised that protesting farmers could be a potential threat.

4.4.3. Drivers for multifunctional agrarian practices

The emergence of multifunctional agrarian pathways is driven by several factors, including the repositioning of the core functions of farming in rural development, the revitalisation of social-cultural

farm boundaries, and the redesign of professional identities in Dutch agriculture (Oostindie, 2018). Farmers-led responses related to alternative rural and agricultural development trajectories contribute positively to the integration of rural functions, incorporation of societal sustainability concerns, and more balanced rural-urban interlinkages. However, as previously mentioned, there are high levels of distrust between people from the cities and the farmers. On top of the distrust, farmers often associate the people coming from the urban areas with the policymakers that are restricting agricultural practices (den Boef, 2022; Kruyswijk, 2019). Despite this urban-rural gap, the countryside has adopted some urban functions, especially some peri-urban locations have changed roles towards diversification, extensification and on-farm conservation (Van der Sluis et al, 2016). Precisely, some of the interviewed experts (Alfa accountant, Mieke from LiberTerra, and Farmer 8) remarked the suitability of the Nature2000 areas –which are restricted to agricultural practices– for Erfdelen.

The report written by the Wageningen University & Research researcher Henk Oostindie (2018) in 6 Dutch regions with 120 surveyed enterprises, indicates the contribution of this new activity to the total farm income has increased since the uptake of the first new activities. There are various drivers for multifunctional agrarian practices, such as regaining influence on overall farm development and product marketing, re-establishing more direct relationships with consumers, citizens and society at large, responding to agricultural price-squeeze tendencies, the significance of family-farm specificities, the desire for an own income activity by a partner, the wish for an enlargement of farm succession opportunities, and the presence of farm internal labour surplus. There is also a "pull" factor where new farm activities are driven by newly emerging market opportunities rather than by active support from institutional settings.

4.4.4. Farmyard sharing as a driver for rural community revitalisation

Some of the new rural development activities include on-farm sales, agri-tourism, agri-environmental services, care provision, childcare, and educational services. Dutch farm families often actively search for synergy effects between different types of new farm activity. For example, the start of agri-tourism facilities attracts people, which makes it interesting to opt for on-farm sales, which might be supported by creating an attractive farm environment through engagement in agri-environmental services. Farmyard sharing would therefore be a paramount project in rural development, providing with housing to people working in the aforementioned sectors and meaning new members for a revitalising rural community.

A large majority of those who diversified their farming activities fully agree that their further development of new farm activities is only possible in combination with agricultural activities. Almost half of the total farm enterprises had enlarged agricultural turnover and land use since the uptake of their first new farm activity. About one-third had also increased total labour input for agricultural activities. Only a minor percentage had decreased land use and agricultural activities. These are all clear indications that the uptake of and engagement in new rural development activities is certainly not going along with a reduction or erosion of agricultural activity, as often proclaimed by Dutch agricultural modernisation advocates (Oostindie, 2018). This means that despite quitting farmers can employ part of the farmyard for housing purposes, the rest of the land extension would have a tendency of remaining arable if not kept as natural reserve.

4.4.5. Potential for social agriculture in multifunctional agrarian pathways

One of the most popular emerging multifunctional agrarian pathways is social agriculture. Social agriculture is a developing sector in Europe, with increasing numbers of farms combining farming with care or green workplaces open to vulnerable people, increasing physical, mental and social well-being (Hassink et al, 2014). It is also a form of multifunctional agriculture where farmers combine their agricultural production with other services such as care, recreation, and farm sales,

thereby creating added value through additional jobs, promoting community networks, and making the countryside more attractive. Social agriculture offers new perspectives, especially for rural youth by attracting new and young farmers and thus helping to stem the rural exodus. Social agriculture engages in physical activities and tasks related to farm production or maintenance of the landscape, thus providing services to promote mental and physical health (Elings et al, 2022). The Netherlands is a pioneer in this sector, where care farms have increased rapidly, from 75 in 1998 to more than 1000 in 2011 (Hassink et al, 2014).

4.5. Limitations of this research

In the development of the project, a series of limitations were faced:

Firstly, the composition of the team was reduced, at least when compared to other ACT groups. Because of it, from the start onwards, boundaries were set on what was or not possible, such as some ideas the team had on making flyers to inform farmers about Erfdelen. In addition, due to the reduced size of the team, the scope of the project also had to be defined. Moreover, only two of the five members were Dutch speakers and were familiarised with the Dutch farmers and rural environment. Since most of the interviews were carried in Dutch, only the two Dutch members had true insights about the perspectives of the farmers, so the non-Dutch members had to base their results / conclusions on these findings, which made them on this point dependent on the work of the Dutch members. In the future, a clear method should be discussed beforehand on how to transfer the 'Dutch' information to the non-Dutch members. On the other hand, two interviews were possible to be done in English, bringing the opportunity to the other members to still experience as interviewers and after translation of the Dutch interviews, it was also possible for the non-Dutch students to analysis these data.

Secondly, the lack of a pilot model to be used as a reference constituted an obstacle to base the project. Therefore, the outputs and advice are based on hypothetical cases. At the same time, farmers are not able to realise how feasible the initiative is, and the public administration cannot standardise regulations for it. There is not a single case of a successful farmyard-sharing project, which means that potential entrepreneurs neither have any references on which they can develop their project. This is why many farmers do not consider farmyard-sharing as an option for the future of their stopping farmyard. Meaning this initiative is still in the starting phase, opinions and perspectives could change a lot after real projects with farmers have started. Future research after realization of a first pilot would find out how much the perspectives have changed.

Thirdly, the team experienced some struggles when finding quitting farmers to interview. Eight farmers were interviewed and almost all of them were situated in Gelderland province, so the sample was not representative. Besides, many of the farmers found were still active and were not thinking about what to do with their farms after retiring, so the outputs would have been based on hypothetical thoughts rather than on considerations that would have been discussed on farmers' families' tables. Also, many of the farmers were thinking to transfer the farmyard to their progeny. For future research, more time will have to be invested in finding all kinds of farmers throughout the whole country and maybe even in international countries.

5. Conclusion

In this research, the main purpose of the project was to understand the perspective of farmers on changing the concept of their farmyard and list what is needed to support the innovative use of farmyards. This research has provided an insight into farmers and other stakeholders working related to farmers and analysed the interviews from ecological, financial, social and multifunctional perspectives. And the main research question about what the perspectives of the farmers are on changing the concept of their farmyard is answered based on interview with farmers and innovative use of farmyard is answered through literature review.

After analysing the results from different interviews, it can be interfered that there are four main conclusions:

Maintaining effective **communication** is essential for navigating the complexities of a case involving the regulator (municipalities), initiator (Erfdelen), and the seller (farmer). Unfortunately, the lack of a strong connection between the regulator and initiator has resulted in prolonged processes and increased costs. It is also crucial to establish communication with the local community, as they may perceive Erfdelen as a threat to their farming practices, leading to complaints and protests that can further delay the zoning plan and incur additional expenses. Additionally, farmers selling their properties may be hesitant to permit foreign residents, fearing potential complaints.

In terms of the **regulation**, the greatest hurdle to overcome is the zoning plan, which is a complex and costly process that offers no assurance of acceptance. As of now, there are no regulations in place for Erfdelen, and as a result, municipalities are unwilling to dedicate time and resources to support the initiative.

In the **financial** regard, since the zoning plan involves substantial costs without any guarantee of success, banks are also reluctant to finance the initiative unless the zoning plan is approved. Once the zoning plan is accepted, however, the bank will consider as a normal business case, particularly because residential properties and housing land are more valuable than agricultural land and buildings. This could result in bank financing for the project. The financial benefits are particularly advantageous for farmers who seek to derive a pension from the farm or for those who can no longer maintain profitable operations. Nonetheless, due to the financial risks involved, Erfdelen is only suitable for financially stable farmers who are capable of assuming such risks.

To conclude, as a result of new regulations and retiring farmers, there will be significant **changes** in the countryside. Many farmers will either quit or seek secondary sources of income. Thus, the increasing trend of urban migration to rural areas presents an opportunity for farmers to establish new businesses. Erfdelen can play an important role in addressing these changes and serving as a solution to the challenges faced by farmers and the changing countryside. Additionally, repurposing farmland for residential use can help alleviate the current housing shortage while simultaneously providing retiring farmers with an additional source of income.

6. Recommendations

After conducting extensive research, the team has identified several pathways that could potentially address the issues at hand. As such, recommendations are presented in this section, in the hopes of providing valuable insights that can inform the decision-making process and the realisation of Erfdelen going forward.

6.1. Recommendation to Erfdelen on the target farmyard owner

Based on the provided information, our team recommends that Erfdelen should seek out a farmer who is willing to adopt sustainable farming practices, possesses financial stability, and is committed to collaborative efforts with the community. Furthermore, Erfdelen should explore alternative farming methods, such as implementing a food-forest and creating housing options for the community. It is imperative that Erfdelen conducts a thorough evaluation of potential candidates to ensure that the project is successful. By taking the necessary time and care to find the right farmer for the job, Erfdelen can maximise the potential of the project and achieve its desired outcomes.

There is a significant number of farmers who have spent their entire lives on their farms and have a strong attachment to their land, preferring to stay on their farms rather than moving away. It would be beneficial to provide these farmers with the opportunity to continue living and working on their farms.

6.2. Recommendation about the steps can be taken by Erfdelen

Our team would recommend Erfdelen to consider the following guidelines to facilitate a successful farmyard sharing project:

Developing a farmer network: Our team recommends that Erfdelen should continually work on establishing a network of farmers who are interested in participating in the project. We recommend Erfdelen to build a network with the farmers via magazines like *nieuwe Oogst* or *Vee-en-Gewas*. This network can help to identify interested farmyard owners.

Realising a pilot before officially implementing: A pilot can also be used to develop regulations and demonstrate how a project works to stakeholders, including farmers and other interested parties. In case of Erfdelen, a pilot could involve selecting a small group of farmers to participate in a trial run of the program. This could help demonstrate the benefits of the program to other farmers who may be interested in participating. The pilot could also be used to gather feedback from the farmers who participate, as well as other stakeholders such as local government officials and environmental groups. This feedback could then be used to refine the regulations and guidelines for the program, ensuring that it is effective and meets the needs of all stakeholders.

Focusing on municipalities: Municipalities play a critical role in supporting the project, and it is also the most capable institution to solve the zoning plan problems. Erfdelen should work to engage with municipalities and help them understand that the benefits of this project are not only about the money, but also some social benefits, such as providing affordable housing, promoting sustainability, and creating new opportunities for the local community. The project would also provide opportunities to utilise empty barns and buildings, which can be repurposed for other uses, such as healthcare facilities, kindergartens, and other businesses. Convincing the municipalities based on the social benefits of the project can be helpful to facilitate the success of the project.

Focusing on communication: Effective communication is critical for the success of the project. Erfdelen should work to ensure that farmers, citizens, regulators, and other stakeholders can understand each other's needs and interests. Neighbours would also play a role in the project and should be consulted and engaged with to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed. An effective communication can be achieved through regular meetings, workshops, and other communication strategies.

We also suggest that Erfdelen could create a more dynamic and attractive community by offering different activities such as community gardens, food forests and camping site. These activities can promote sustainable agriculture and also provide social benefits to the local community.

Overall, the success of a shared farm project requires collaboration and communication from all parties involved, including the farm owner, potential farmers, local municipalities, regulators and

community members. Active communication and cooperation with all parties can help to address most concerns or issues that may arise during the planning and implementation phases of the project.

6.3. Future research

Based on the advice to improve communication between the initiative taker, regulator and seller. The previous ACT performed research on the regulators, our ACT group researched the sellers. Therefore, we advise to research further on the initiative taker part of the communication. This includes how a potential community would develop in an Erfdelen project and how they would fit inside the already existing neighbourhoods.

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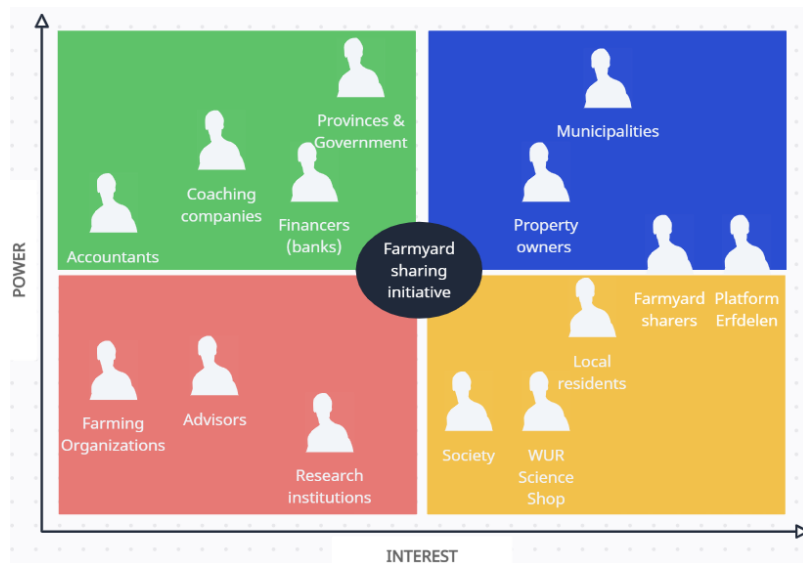
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8. Appendices

8.1. Stakeholders



- Property owners

The property owners have a high interest, because it is about the future of their farmyard and they can get money for it. They also have high power, because with their decision of cooperating or not, they influence the realization of the initiatives.

- Erfdelen (Commissioner, P. Parmentier)

Erfdelen has a high interest in the farmyard sharing initiative, because this is the organisation who initiated the concept. The commissioner wants to house more people and he can do that by using the information about farmers and convincing more farmers to realize more projects, so Erfdelen has some power to realize more projects, but eventually the farmer makes the decision here.

- Farmyard sharers

The people that are willing to live on a shared farmyard, have a high interest for the initiative, but not a lot of power, because they cannot influence the process. The only power they have is that they have money to buy the farmyard.

- Banks – Rabobank ‘bank for farmers’

The banks do not have a high interest in the initiative, but they do have interest in the money of the farmer, since a lot of farmers have a mortgage at the bank. In that way, the bank does also have power, because money can play a big role in decision making of the farmer and therefore in the realization of the initiatives.

- Klankbordgroep

The Klankbordgroep has a lot of interest in the farmyard sharing, because this group of people has knowledge about this project and will share their opinion about it. They have power, because they can give their opinion about the project, which could influence the path that is taken to realize the initiative.

- WUR Science shop (Commissioner, F. Langers)

The research question is commissioned by the Science Shop of Wageningen University & Research (WUR). The Science Shop collaborates with non-profit organisations in society by organizing research projects that find answers to their questions. The challenges these organisations are facing range from social issues to questions related to food & health, nature and environment. The Science Shop works closely with researchers and students within WUR. Therefore, this is the stakeholder with

high interest, because they want to help Erfdelen to get more insight in knowing and understanding why the initiatives are realized or not. They however do not have high power to realize projects, because this is not their objective.

- Farming organizations (LTO, POV)

Farming organizations could have power, because they could influence the decision of the farmer by sharing their ideas based on other farmers' decisions and therefore they can influence the realization of the initiatives. Their interest might be limited, because they represent active farmers and do not really care about the decisions of farmers after they quit.

- Coaching companies

The power of coaching companies can be very high, because these companies do help farmers during the decision-making process and therefore they can help to decide about the farmyard sharing initiative. Their interest is not specifically high, because they are there for the farmers themselves and not for the initiative.

- 'Erfbetreders': feed advisors etc.

Advisors of different companies do not have an interest for the farmyard sharing, because they will lose the farmer as customer. They do also not have direct influence on the realization of the initiatives, so their power is low as well. However, they could be an important stakeholder in terms of knowledge about the farmers themselves and the factors they deal with and they could provide contact details of quitting farmers based on their large farmer-network.

- Farmers' accountants

Accountants might not have a high interest in the initiative, because they work for the property owners, but they do have power, because they can decide whether a farmer could afford himself a certain decision based on his/her financial position and therefore this influences the realization of initiatives or not.

- Municipalities

Municipalities could have a high interest in case they focus on the people that would like to live at such places on the countryside on a shared farmyard. They have high power as well, because some regulations do make the realization of the project impossible and that influences realizations in a negative way.

- Real estate agents.

The real estate agents do not have interest in this initiative, because in case the initiative is realized, they are not needed anymore and will not earn money with it. However, they can have power, because if property owners choose to just sell their farm, the real estate agents make that possible without looking at the farmyard initiatives. However, they do not have power in terms of making the actual decision of the farmer.

- Construction institutes

Construction institutes have interest when the decision of the farmer eventually leads to new projects for them. They can also have power, because when they don't cooperate, the initiative can also not be realized. However, they do not have power in terms of making the actual decision of farmer to realize the initiative or not.

- Research institutes

There is research done in the change of peoples interests, but these institutes do not really have interest for this specific project and neither do they have power on the realization of it.

- Provinces and national government

High power because of the regulations, no interests.

- Local residents

High interest, because the decision of the farmer influences what happens with their neighbourhood. Their power could also be high, because a farmer can be influenced by the opinion of his neighbours.

8.2. Interview questions

8.2.1. Farmer

1. Eerst willen we u een paar basisvragen stellen: / First we will ask a few basic questions
 - a. Hoe oud bent u? / What is your age?
 - b. Wat is de gezinssamenstelling? / What is your family structure?
 - c. Heeft u kinderen / opvolgers? / Do you have children / successors?
 - d. Doet u aan sport? / Do you do sports?
 - e. Bent u gelovig? / Are you religious?
 - f. Welke opleiding heeft u gevolgd? / What study did you follow?
 - g. How do you read the news?
 - h. Hoe is uw buurt en uw relatie met hen? / What kind of neighbours do you have?
And how is your relationship with them?
2. Waarom en hoe bent u gestart met dit bedrijf runnen? / Why and how did you start to run this farm?
3. Wat is op dit moment het doel van uw bedrijf? / What is the purpose of your farmyard right now?
4. Is het bedrijf altijd zoals dit geweest, of heeft het andere of meerdere doelen gehad in het verleden? Zo ja, welke? / Was your farming practice always like it is now, or did it have other or multiple purposes before? If the answer is yes, which purposes did it have?
 - a. Waarom is het doel van het bedrijf (niet) veranderd over de tijd? / Why has the purpose of your farming practice changed over time or why not?
 - b. Denkt u nog te veranderen in de komende tijd? / Will you change your farm in the (near) future?
5. Als u met pensioen gaat, hoe ziet u de toekomst van uw bedrijf/erf voor zich? / When you retire, what future do you see for your farm/farmyard? And Why?
6. When plan is selling everything: Wat zijn uw eisen voor de koper van uw boerderij/erf? Heeft u speciale wensen? / What kind of buyer would you like for your farm(yard)? Do you have any preferences?
7. Hoe kijkt u aan tegen alternatieve woningbouw op uw locatie? / What do you think of alternative housing on your farmyard? Bijvoorbeeld rood-voor-rood / duurzame woningbouw / erfdelen.
8. When selling is already happening / or has happened: Welke obstakels ondervindt u bij het verkopen van uw bedrijf en erf? / What obstacles do you experience when selling your business and farmyard?
9. Heeft u wel eens gehoord van het concept 'Erfdelen'? / Did you hear about the concept Erfdelen? (WHEN THE ANSWER IS NO, EXPLAIN SHORT WHAT THE CONCEPT HOLDS)
10. Hoe kijkt u aan tegen alternatieven zoals Erfdelen? / What do you think of farmyard alternatives like 'Erfdelen'? (When the answer is negative, explain that it can have value for the farmer as well.)
11. Zou u overwegen om uw erf te verkopen aan een concept als Erfdelen? / Would you consider selling your property to a concept like Erfdelen?
12. Waarom of waarom niet? / Why? Or why not?

13. Hoe denkt u dat de toekomst van de agrarische sector eruit gaat zien? / What do you think the agricultural sector will look like in the future?
14. Mogen we de antwoorden op de vragen gebruiken?

8.2.2. Ruimtevitaal

1. Wat zijn uw werkzaamheden?
 - a. Wat is uw relatie met / taak voor de gemeente?
 - b. Wat voor erfhouders (verhoudingen boer/anders) schakelen de hulp in van
2. Wat zijn redenen van erfhouders die uw hulp inschakelen om te willen veranderen?
3. Wat willen deze erfhouders veranderen? / Welke mogelijkheden heeft een erfhouder?
4. Welke ontwikkelingen/trends met betrekking tot (boeren)erven zijn er op dit moment?
5. Welke factoren/instanties kunnen een verandering makkelijker maken?
6. Welke factoren maken een verandering moeilijk?
7. Wat maakt dat een erfhouder zijn erf wil verkopen?
8. Als een erfhouder open staat voor verkopen van zijn erf; Wat zijn eisen van een boer voor de koper van zijn boerderij?
9. Kent u het concept Erfdelen? Of soortgelijke projecten?
10. Hoe denkt RUIMTEVITAAL over (concepten zoals) Erfdelen?
11. Is het realistisch / haalbaar, wat zijn voordelen/nadelen?
12. Hoe denkt de erfhouder over Erfdelen?
13. Mogen we alles wat u vandaag gezegd heeft, gebruiken in onze resultaten?
14. Mogen we uw naam noemen in het onderzoek?
15. Wilt u nog iets kwijt of toevoegen?
16. Wat vond u van het interview?

8.2.3. Rabobank

1. What is the task of Rabobank when farmers want to sell land or manage their cash flow?
2. What role does Rabobank play in the farmyard sharing initiative project?
3. What are the biggest financial obstacles a farmer has to deal with in farmyard initiative?
4. From the financial perspective, is it realistic for farmers to be involved in this project? And why?
5. What financial steps should be taken if a farmer wants to participate in this project?
6. What reasons do farmers have to not cooperate in these initiatives? Any financial reasons?

8.2.4. Erfdelen+ / LiberTerra

1. Wat zijn uw werkzaamheden? / What work do you do?
2. Wat voor erfhouders (verhoudingen boer/anders) praat u mee? / What kind of farmyard owners do you speak with?
3. What are reasons farmyard owners quit or want to change?
4. Wat willen deze erfhouders veranderen? / Welke mogelijkheden heeft een erfhouder? / What do these farmyard owners change and what possibilities do they have?
5. Welke uitdagingen komt u tegen wanneer u een LiberTerra project wilt realiseren? / What challenges do you have when realizing a LibberTerra project?
6. Welke ontwikkelingen/trends met betrekking tot (boeren)erven zijn er op dit moment? / What trends do you see in relation to future of farmyards?
7. What steps do have to be taken when realizing an initiative like Erfdelen / LiberTerra?

8. Welke factoren/instanties kunnen een verandering moeilijker of makkelijker maken? Welke spelen voornamelijk een rol hier? / What factors/ instances could make the process of these concepts more easy or difficult / play the biggest role?
9. Wat maakt dat een erfhouder zijn erf wil verkopen?
10. Als een erfhouder open staat voor verkopen van zijn erf; Wat is belangrijk voor een boer als hij zijn erf verkoopt? / When you talk with farmers, what kind of buyer are they searching for ?
11. Hoe denkt u zelf op dit moment over (concepten zoals) Erfdelen? / What do you think of the concept Erfdelen?
12. Is het realistisch / haalbaar, wat zijn voordelen/nadelen? / Is it realistic, reachable?
13. Hoe heeft u de boeren gevonden en bereikt waar u nu mee praat? / How did you find and reach the farmers you spoke with?
14. Hoe denkt de erfhouder over het algemeen over Erfdelen? / What does the farmyard owner think about the concept in general?
15. Mogen we alles wat u vandaag gezegd heeft, gebruiken in onze resultaten? / can we use the results?
16. Mogen we uw naam noemen in het onderzoek? / can we mention your name?
17. Wilt u nog iets kwijt of toevoegen?/ do we miss anything, do you want to add something still?
18. Wat vond u van het interview? / do you feel good about the interview?

8.2.5. Alfa Accountants & Adviseurs

1. Wat zijn uw werkzaamheden bij Alfa?
2. Wat zijn redenen van boeren/erfhouders om te willen veranderen (dus niet meteen verkopen via funda)?
3. Wat zijn de grootste financiële obstakels waar een stoppende boer mee te dealen heeft? / What are the biggest financial obstacles a quitting farmer has to deal with?
4. Wat maakt dat een erfhouder zijn erf specifiek wil verkopen?
5. Hoe ziet het er financieel gezien uit als een boer daadwerkelijk stopt? Welke stappen horen hierbij?
6. Als een erfhouder open staat voor verkopen van zijn erf; Wat zou een boer belangrijk vinden voor
7. Kent u als bedrijf het concept 'Erfdelen'? / Did you hear about the concept Erfdelen?
8. Hoe kijkt uw bedrijf naar het concept Erfdelen?
9. Het kan jaren duren, dus is het realistisch en aantrekkelijk voor een boer om hier die jaren in te investeren?
10. Hoe denkt de erfhouder over Erfdelen?
11. Welke stappen moeten worden ondernomen als een boer wil meewerken aan dit project?
12. Mogen we alles wat u vandaag gezegd heeft, gebruiken in onze resultaten?
13. Mogen we uw naam/bedrijf noemen in het onderzoek?
14. Wilt u ons eindproduct ontvangen?
15. Wilt u nog iets kwijt of toevoegen?
16. Wat vond u van het interview?