



# CAEN (FR)

## Creating a new centrality in the Chemin Vert district

Scale  
L/S

**Team composition:** Architect mandatory  
**Location:** Caen (14)  
**Population: City:** 110,000, **Agglomeration:** 277,000  
**Study site:** 25 ha (Chemin Vert district)  
**Project sites:** 2 ha  
**Site proposed by:** City of Caen and Caen La Mer Habitat  
**Owner(s):** City of Caen and Caen La Mer Habitat  
Post-competition assignment: Design studies, urban and landscape project management, project management.



### SITE / CONTEXT

Since 2017, the City of Caen and its partners have been engaged in an urban renewal program for the Chemin Vert neighborhood, located in the northwest of the city. The Chemin Vert district is one of Caen's largest neighborhoods. It lies between the ring road to the north, the urban ensembles of the Reconstruction era to the south, and mixed housing estates to the east and west. In 2029, the district will be served by the new streetcar line, which will link the project site directly to downtown Caen in 15 minutes. Today, the Chemin Vert district is faced with persistent dysfunctions: aging housing, a stagnant housing offer, social housing enclavement, and commercial fragility.

Public players have expressed their ambition to strengthen this deteriorated social link, revitalize the district and improve the supply of new and existing housing. The focus is on the Jacquard-Molière sector. The challenges facing this sector, which includes the site of the former Jacquard college, a shopping mall, housing and facilities, are to create a new centrality by opening up the area, building on the existing commercial appeal, developing a new housing offer that will guarantee the mobility of the social housing stock, rethinking the restructuring of public facilities around the site and creating a new streetcar line that will link the district to the city center.

The challenge is to recreate a centrality at the heart of the urban and landscape fabric of the Chemin Vert district by openly articulating the multiplicity of programs on the project site (tramway, shops, housing, public services, park) through the prism of social links, conviviality and intergenerational mix.





How can we create a new centrality while revealing the site's landscape qualities?



## QUESTIONS TO COMPETITORS

The project site, which includes public facilities and services, represents a significant potential on a city scale. Its future is closely linked to that of the Halle Molière and the Caen La Mer Habitat housing block. The various programs that will make up the new centrality of the Chemin vert district will have to form a point of polarity on the scale of the town and its conurbation.

How can we reopen the project site from the future streetcar station to the public amenities, while reexamining the complex interweaving of the Halle and housing? How can a new neighborhood center reflect the notion of an archipelago city? How can we recreate social ties throughout the district, integrating the idea of intergenerational cohabitation? How can we propose a clear, urban and landscaped vision of the heart of the district that synthesizes the different development axes of the city of Caen and its conurbation? How can we integrate into the urban proposal the notion of cultural activism that has sprung up on the site since the closure of the college and created a unifying impetus in the district's recent history?



How can the various programs be staged with a vision that is sustainable and evolves over time?