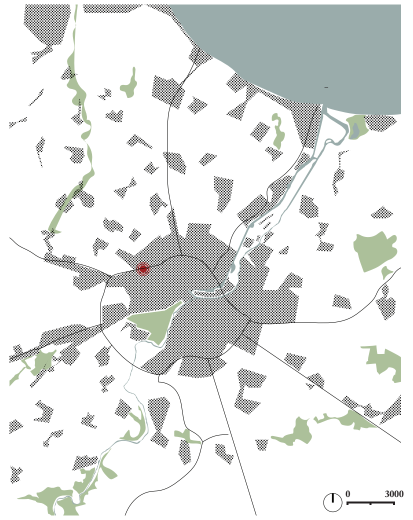
CAEN [FR]

LA MÉMOIRE CIRCULAIRE

Re-sourcer le(s) vide(s)



Located in the north-west of Caen, Chemin Vert is a neighborhood shaped by the ambitions of 20th-century modernism and the necessity of rebuilding after World War II. Characterized by large housing slabs, vast open spaces, and an aging commercial center, the area reflects both the promise and the challenges of a once utopian urban vision. Today, it faces social fragmentation, underused public spaces, and a need for renewed purpose.

"La Mémoire Circulaire" is a vision to regenerate the existing fabric by weaving together memory, productivity, and sustainability. Rather than erasing the past, the project draws strength from it. The concept of "circular memory" brings together historical continuity and ecological circularity: by reusing structures, rethinking voids, and reactivating the community's spirit, we re-source the site's potential. This approach gives a second life to materials, programs, and public spaces-infusing the site with renewed energy.

The Void of Memory – A Foundation for the Future

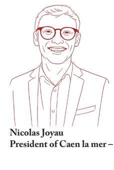
After the demolition of the Albert Jacquard school, a void emerged at the heart of the neighborhood - not just a physical absence, but the loss of a shared memory. Instead of replacing it with a new block of construction, the project chooses to preserve this void as a symbolic foundation where the memory of the past can meet the pulse of the future. This open space becomes a public square - soft, green, and adaptable - where markets, cultural events, and everyday gatherings can unfold. In this way, the void is no longer seen as a lack, but as a resource, a spatial material full of social and emotional potential. The site becomes a connective node at three scales: the local site, the neighborhood, and the larger metropolitan territory.

From seed to harvest, from memory to innovation, the project grows with its users. It transforms the void into a shared resource, and the built into the adaptable. La Mémoire Circulaire is not just a design-it is a living process where the past nourishes the future.

*«The accessibility of large housing units for **senior citizens** is a key issue in the urban renewal project. In the face of an aging population, it is essential to develop new housing adapted to **older residents** and responsive to reduced mobility or social isolation. Issues such as **safety**, the **presence of commercial offerings**, and the overall attractiveness of the neighborhood must be taken into account in team proposals, helping to guide **transformations** and reestablish a true urban center.»*

*«L'accessibilité de ces grands logements pour le public **des séniors** est questionnée au travers du projet de renouvellement urbain. Face au vieillissement de la population, il est nécessaire de programmer de nouveaux logements adaptés **aux plus âgés** et réactiver la mobilité au sein du parc social. Les questions de **sécurité**, de **pérennité** de l'offre commerciale et d'attractivité de l'ensemble devront être intégrées dans les propositions des équipes, permettant d'engager des **transformations** et recréer une véritable centralité.»*

Valérie Mespoulhès
General Director of Caen la mer Habitat (CLMH)



*«The goal is to strengthen the appeal of one of Caen's largest neighborhoods and offer its residents the **best possible quality of life**.*

*The various programs that will shape the **new centrality** of the Chemin Vert district must necessarily be developed through the lens of **conviviality, social ties, environmental quality**, and **landscaping – forming a new polarity** at the city and metropolitan level.»*

*"L'objectif est de renforcer l'attractivité de l'un des plus grands quartiers de Caen et offrir à ses habitants la **meilleure qualité de vie** possible.*
*Les différents programmes qui formeront la **nouvelle centralité du quartier** du Chemin vert devront nécessairement s'articuler sous le prisme de la **convivialité**, du **lien social** et de la **qualité environnementale** et **paysagère**, constituant un **nouveau point de polarité** à l'échelle de la ville et son agglomération."*

Nicolas Joyau
President of Caen la mer – Deputy Mayor for Urban Planning

« Since the closure of the Jacquard middle school, the Grande Promenade feels like a deserted space. No one goes there unless there's an event. We need to bring life back into it.»

«Jacquard is an important site for the neighborhood's history and identity.»
«Jacquard shouldn't become just an empty square. Something meaningful needs to happen there.»

« We must not forget the past and the memory of Albert Jacquard.»

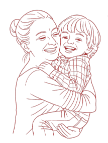
« In any redevelopment, the site must retain its architectural elements and keep the name Albert Jacquard as a tribute.»

« A retirement home would be a good project for the neighborhood. It could be part of a housing complex and placed near a facility for children to encourage intergenerational bonding, so that seniors are truly at the heart of community life.»

« Depuis, la fermeture du collège Jacquard, la Grande Promenade ressemble à un espace vide. Personne n'y vient sauf quand il y a des animations. Il faudrait y amener de la vie. »

« Jacquard est un site important pour l'Histoire du quartier et son identité. »

« Il ne faudrait pas que Jacquard devienne une place vide. Il faut que ce soit un lieu de vie. »



« On ne peut pas oublier le passé et la mémoire d'Albert Jacquard. »

« En cas de réaménagement, le site devra conserver ses éléments structurants en tant que patrimoine requalifié et garder le nom d'Albert Jacquard en hommage. »

« Une maison de retraite serait un beau projet pour le quartier. Elle pourrait être intégrée à un bâtiment d'habitation ou implantée à proximité d'une structure pour enfants pour favoriser la mixité intergénérationnelle. C'est important que les anciens soient au coeur de la vie du quartier. »

« To live well together, we need spaces where people can meet and get to know one another.»

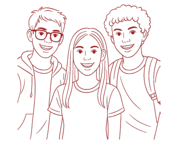
« We need to create spaces that promote exchanges between generations and offer games suitable for various age groups.»

« The neighborhood does have play areas, but mostly for little kids—there's a real lack of facilities for older children, especially those aged 10–13.»

« There's currently nothing here for young people. They need a space dedicated to them.»

« We need a place to increase the visibility of local associations, support joint project development, and enable interaction between different generations in the neighborhood.»

« We could set up a space for young people—a place to hang out, develop projects, and run activities for them, by them, and with them.»



« Pour bien vivre ensemble il faut créer des lieux de rencontre pour se connaitre. »

« Il faut proposer des espaces qui favoriseraient les échanges entre les générations et des jeux qui s'adresseraient à plusieurs tranches d'âges. »

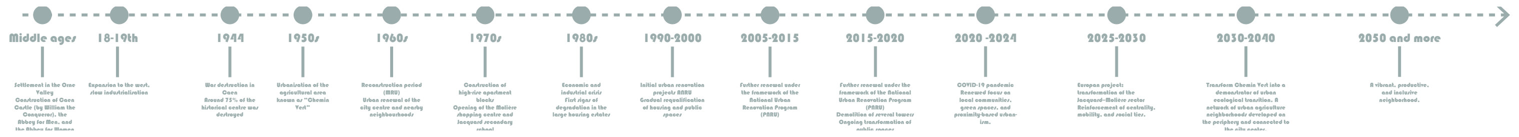
« Le quartier est bien doté en aires de jeux, mais elles surtout pour les plus petits, il manque des structures pour les plus grands, notamment pour les 10-13 ans. »

« Les jeunes n'ont actuellement rien pour eux. Ils ont besoin d'un espace qui leur soit dédié. »

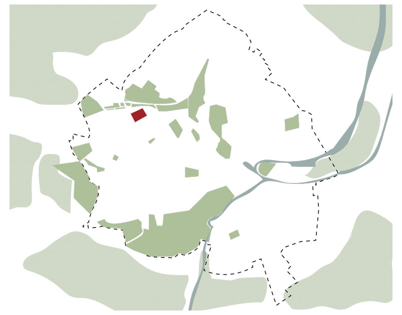
« Il faut un lieu pour améliorer la lisibilité des associations, favoriser la mise en place de projets communs et permettre un brassage entre les différentes générations du quartier. »

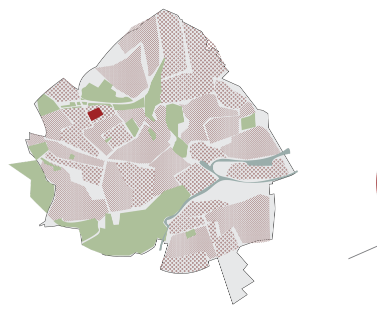
«On pourrait aménager un local pour les jeunes, un lieu de rencontres, où des projets pourraient être montés, par eux et pour eux. »

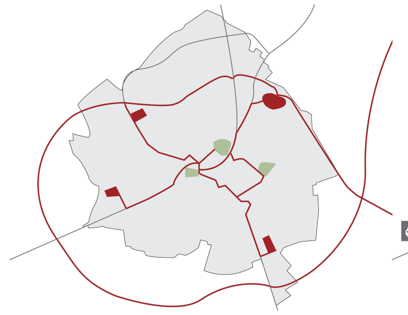
Caen evolution

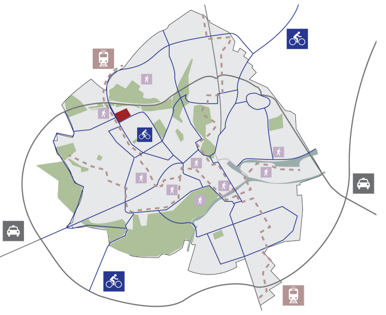


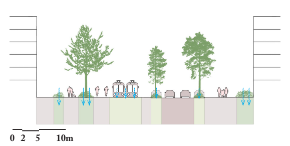
- **Middle ages** – Settlement in the Orne Valley. Construction of Caen Castle (by William the Conqueror), the Abbey for Men, and the Abbey for Women
- **18-19th** – Expansion to the west, slow industrialisation.
- **1944** – War destruction in Caen. Around 75% of the historical centre was destroyed
- **1950s** – Urbanisation of the agricultural area known as "Chemin Vert"
- **1960s** – Reconstruction period (MRU). Urban renewal of the city centre and nearby neighbourhoods
- **1970s** – Construction of high-rise apartment blocks. Opening of the Molière shopping centre and Jacquard secondary school
- **1980s** – Economic and industrial crisis. First signs of degradation in the large housing estates
- **1990-2000** – Initial urban renovation projects ANRU. Gradual requalification of housing and public spaces
- **2005-2015** – Further renewal under the framework of the National Urban Renovation Program (PNRU)
- **2015-2020** – Further renewal under the framework of the National Urban Renovation Program (PNRU). Demolition of several towers. Ongoing transformation of public spaces
- **2020 -2024** – COVID-19 pandemic. Renewed focus on local communities, green spaces, and proximity-based urbanism.
- **2025-2030** – Europan project: transformation of the Jacquard–Molière sector. Reinforcement of centrality, mobility, and social ties.
- **2030-2040** – Transform Chemin Vert into a demonstrator of urban ecological transition. A network of urban agriculture neighborhoods developed on the periphery and connected to the city center.
- **2050 and more** – A vibrant, productive, and inclusive neighborhood.


The city is surrounded by agriculture fields and rural generosity

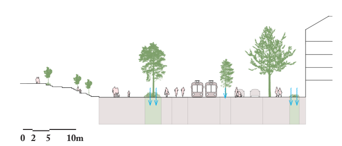

A diversity of urban fabric : Collectivity and individuallity


A city structured by vibrant node centres

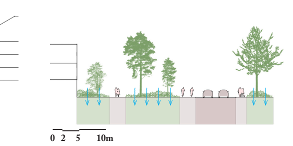

End of traffic - car reduced senario



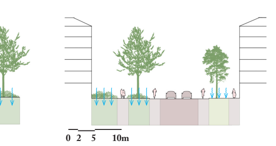
A. Two-way, tramway, cycle lane, pedestrian



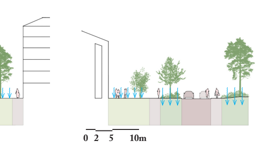
B. Two-way, tramway, cycle lane, raised-plateau, pedestrian



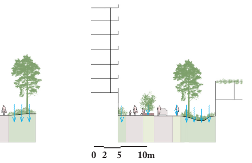
C. Two-way, cycle lane, pedestrian



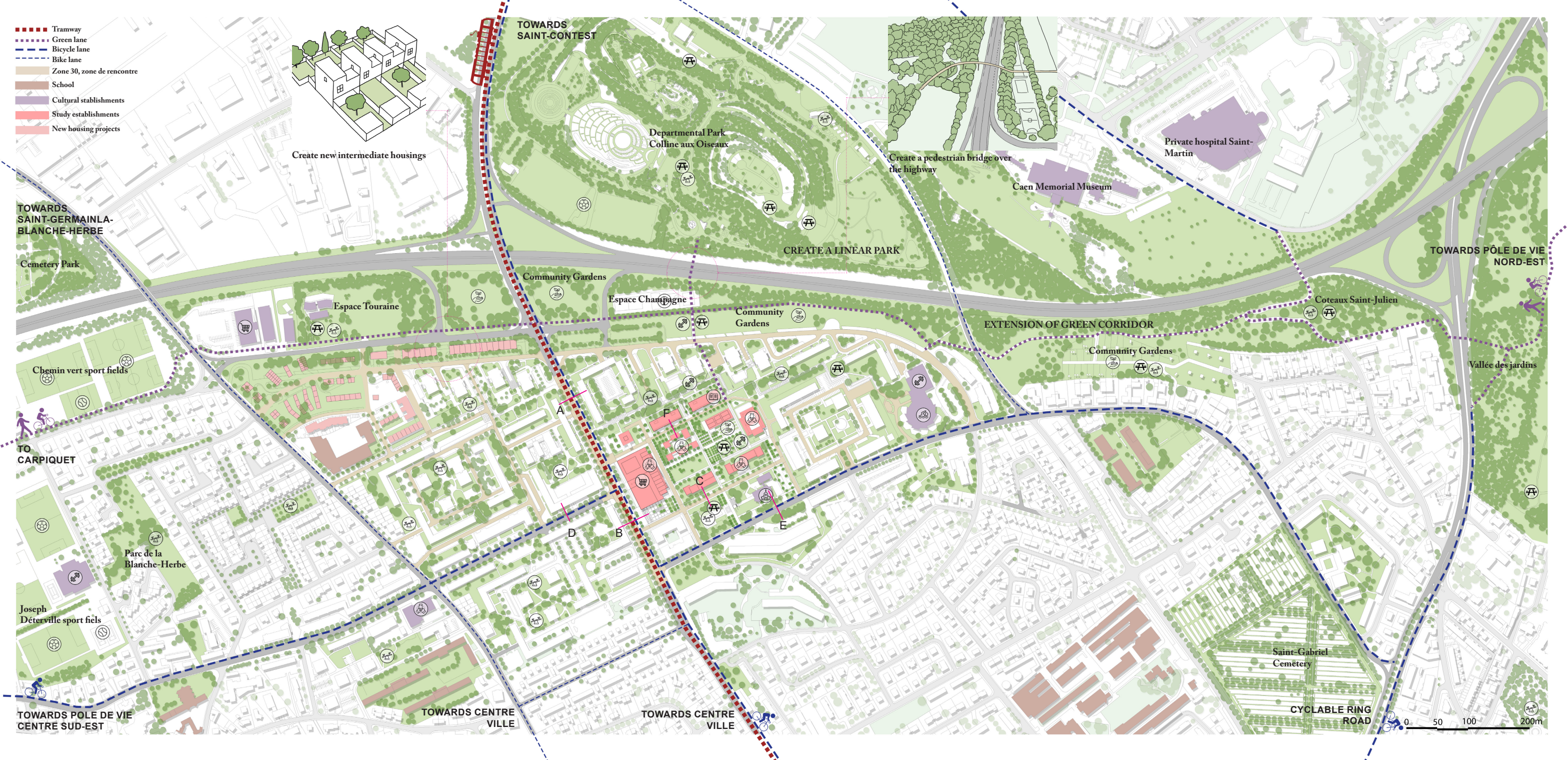
D. Two-way, cycle lane, pedestrian



E. Shared road



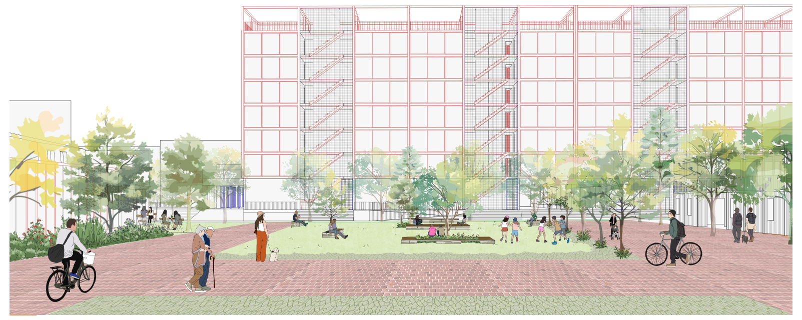
F. Common road

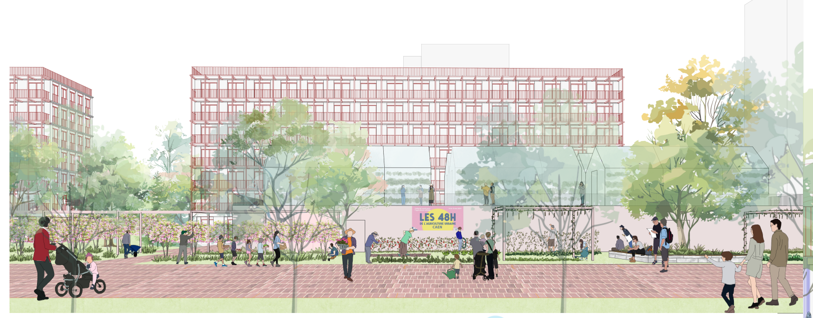

Tramway
Green lane
Bicycle lane
Bike lane
Zone 30, zone de rencontre
School
Cultural stablishments
Study establishments
New housing projects
Create new intermediate housings
TOWARDS SAINT-CONTEST
Departmental Park Colline aux Oiseaux
Create a pedestrian bridge over the highway
Caen Memorial Museum
Private hospital Saint-Martin
TOWARDS SAINT-GERMAINLA-BLANCHE-HERBE
Cemetery Park
CREATE A LINEAR PARK
TOWARDS PÔLE DE VIE NORD-EST
Community Gardens
Espace Touraine
Espace Champagne
Community Gardens
Coteaux Saint-Julien
EXTENSION OF GREEN CORRIDOR
Community Gardens
Vallée des jardins
Chemin vert sport fields
TO CARPIQUET
A
F
C
E
D
B
Parc de la Blanche-Herbe
Joseph Déterville sport fiels
Saint-Gabriel Cemetery
TOWARDS PÔLE DE VIE CENTRE SUD-EST
TOWARDS CENTRE VILLE
TOWARDS CENTRE VILLE
CYCLABLE RING ROAD
0 50 100 200m

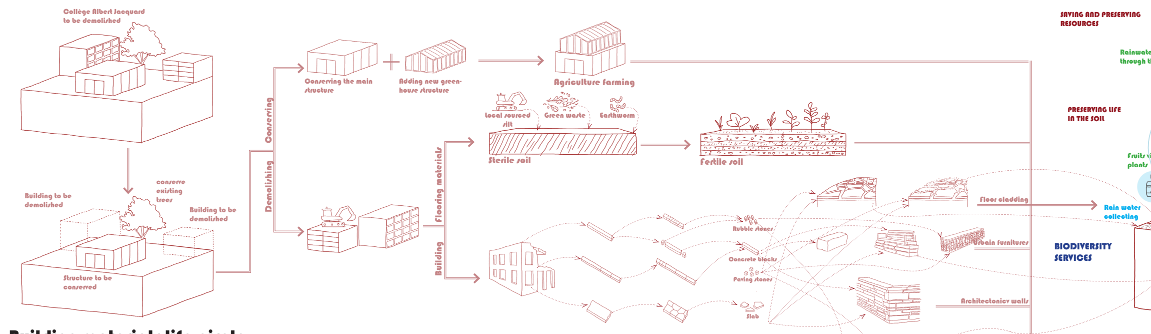
CAEN [FR]

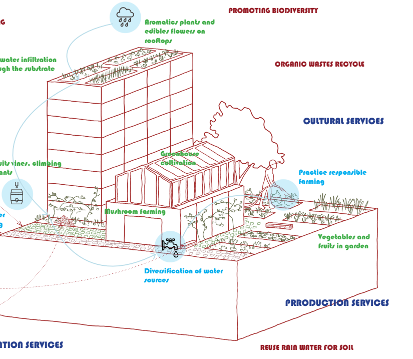
LA MÉMOIRE CIRCULAIRE

Re-sourcer la mémoire collective

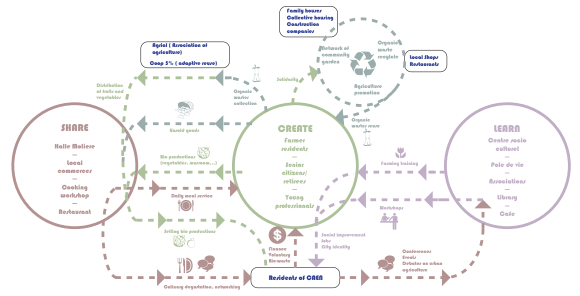



LES 48H DE L'AGRICULTURE URBAINE CAEN


Collège Albert Jacquard to be demolished
Building to be demolished
conserve existing trees
Building to be demolished
Structure to be conserved
Conserving
Demolishing
Conserving the main structure
Adding new greenhouse structure
Agriculture farming
Local sourced silt
Green waste
Earthworm
Sterile soil
Fertile soil
Flooring materials
Building
Rubble stones
Concrete blocks
Paving stones
Slab
Floor cladding
Urban furnitures
Architectoniev walls
Rocks for garden


SAVING AND PRESERVING RESOURCES
Aromatics plants and edibles flowers on rooftops
PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY
Rainwater infiltration through the substrate
ORGANIC WASTES RECYCLE
PRESERVING LIFE IN THE SOIL
CULTURAL SERVICES
Fruits vines, climbing plants
Greenhouse cultivation
Practice responsible farming
Rain water collecting
Mushroom farming
Vegetables and fruits in garden
BIODIVERSITY SERVICES
Diversification of water sources
PRRODUCTION SERVICES
REGULATION SERVICES
REUSE RAIN WATER FOR SOIL

Building materials life circle


Family houses
Collective housing
Construction companies
Agrial (Association of agriculture)
Coop 5% (adaptive reuse)
Network of community garden
Organic waste recycle
Local Shops
Restaurants
Agriculture promotion
Distribution of fruits and vegetables
Organic wastes collection
Solidarity
Unsold goods
Organic wastes reuse
SHARE
Halle Moliere
Local commerces
Cooking workshop
Restaurant
CREATE
Farmer residents
Senior citizens/ retirees
Young professionals
LEARN
Centre socio culturel
Pole de vie
Associations
Library
Cafe
Bio productions (vegetables, musroom...)
Farming training
Daily meal service
Workshops
Selling bio productions
Finance
Voluntary
Bio-waste
Social improvement
Jobs
City identity
Conferences
Events
Debates on urban agriculture
Culinary degustation, networking
Residents of CAEN

A green economical ecosystem

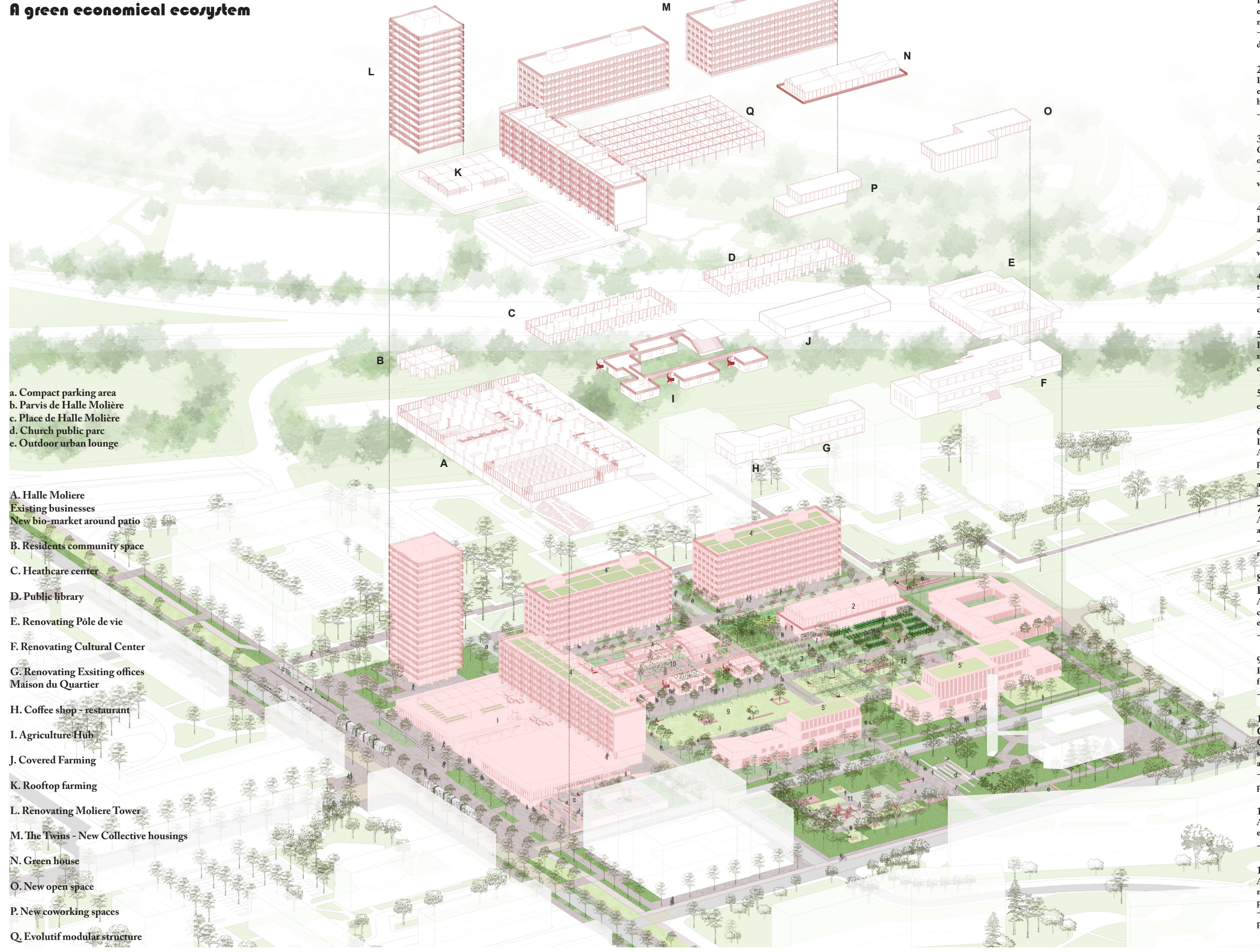
A new way of living

This project envisions a new way of living that is regenerative, rooted in memory, and powered by circular use of local resources. Rather than erasing the past, it draws from it - by reusing materials, repurposing structures, and transforming the former Albert Jacquard school site into a vibrant public core that honors collective memory.
At the heart of the site, Halle Molière becomes a productive hub where food, knowledge, and care circulate. A central patio breathes new life into the old commercial structure, while modular wooden kiosks offer space for local producers, social enterprises, and communal kitchens. Rooftops are cultivated for agriculture, rainwater is harvested, and reused materials are celebrated - turning construction into conservation.

The project activates a green circular ecosystem across three domains:

> SHARE : A food market, communal restaurant, and public kitchen workshops foster a culture of sharing and nourish both social ties and local economies.
> CREATE : Spaces for urban farming, small-scale transformation, and craftsmanship empower residents to become producers, not just consumers.
> LEARN : A library, community center, and public spaces host learning activities around sustainable living, bridging generations and promoting ecological awareness.

This circular system is made possible by the synergy between local actors: schools, associations, senior groups, Caen-la-Mer Habitat, Coop 5%, and citizens. Waste is composted, gardens feed kitchens, workshops spark action.
Rather than densify at the cost of livability, the project reclaims and reprograms space to serve people and nature. It reinvents a forgotten neighborhood not with more buildings, but with more life - a resilient ecosystem where people grow, eat, build, and learn together, season after season.


M
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4'
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5'
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10
11
12

a. Compact parking area
b. Parvis de Halle Molière
c. Place de Halle Molière
d. Church public parc
e. Outdoor urban lounge

A. Halle Moliere
Existing businesses
New bio-market around patio
B. Residents community space
C. Heathcare center
D. Public library
E. Renovating Pôle de vie
F. Renovating Cultural Center
G. Renovating Exsiting offices
Maison du Quartier
H. Coffee shop - restaurant
I. Agriculture Hub
J. Covered Farming
K. Rooftop farming
L. Renovating Moliere Tower
M. The Twins - New Collective housings
N. Green house
O. New open space
P. New coworking spaces
Q. Evolutif modular structure

1. La Champignonnière
Indoor cultivation in a cool, shaded environment of oyster mushrooms, brown mushrooms, shiitake, and young shoots..
->A humid and temperate production area dedicated to delicate crops.

2. La Serre
Protected cultivation in a bright, controlled environment: tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplants, herbs, and young plants.
->Intensive production throughout all seasons.

3. Les Vergers
Open-air orchards, meadow orchards, climbing orchards, and fruit gardens.
-> Local agriculture with a diverse range of vegetables.

4. Les Cultures maraîchères
In open soil: strip cultivation adapted to shaded areas.
-> Local agriculture with a diversity of vegetables.

4'.Roof-top planters: Lightweight crops suited to sunlight exposure and technical constraints.
-> Modular production contributing to urban cooling.

5. La Prairie de fauche
In open soil: a melliferous meadow for mulching, soil protection, and shared composting.

5': Roof-top: Melliferous vegetative cover encouraging biodiversity and water retention.

6. Le Petit Bois
Le Petit Bois (The Small Wood)
A cool island with native trees serving as an anti-pollution filter and refuge for biodiversity.
-> A favorable microclimate and natural haven at the heart of the site.

7. Noue paysagère
A vegetated depression designed to collect, filter, and infiltrate rainwater.
->A localized wetland promoting biodiversity, natural water management, and site cooling.

8. Grande Place Minérale – Culture & Events
A versatile space for concerts, theater, outdoor cinema, exhibitions, markets, and temporary events.
-> Lieu vivant et fédérateur.

9. Grande Pelouse
Pelouses accessibles pour détente, jeux libres, farniente, en lien avec la place.
-> A vibrant and unifying venue.

10. Courtyard of Agriculture Hub – Garden of senses
Cour centrale accueillant rencontres et ateliers sous pergolas végétalisées, entourée de plantes aromatiques.
-> Espace sensoriel et collectif au cœur du projet.

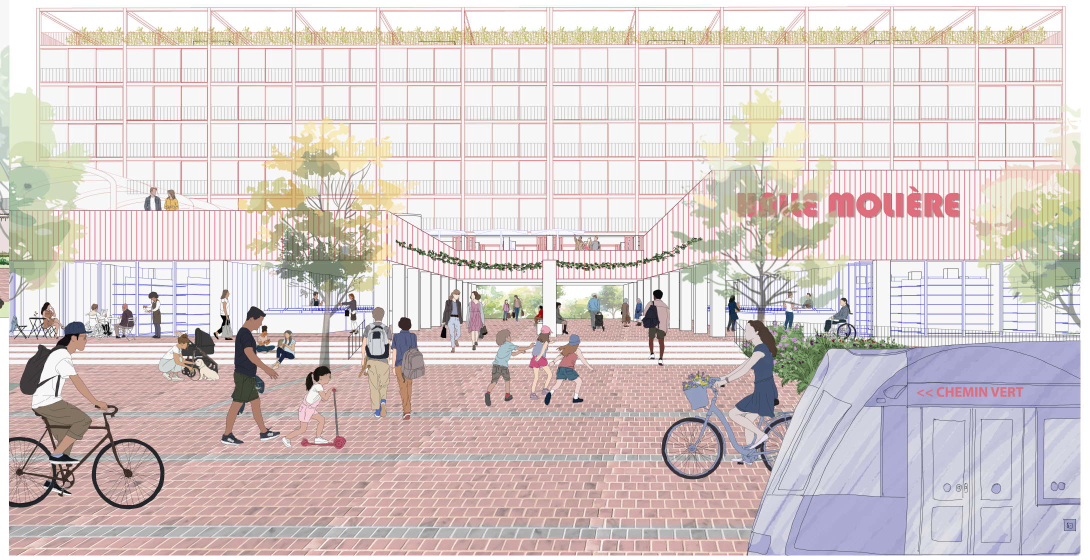
11. Aires de Jeux
Aires pour enfants de tous âges, avec zone d'eau et brumisateurs pour l'été.
-> Espaces ludiques et intergénérationnels.

12. Espaces ludiques et familiaux
Aventure nature, jeux de société (tables fixes), modules sportifs intergénérationnels, pétanque, pique-nique sous les bois, mobilier varié.
-> Espaces de loisirs diversifiés pour tous les publics.

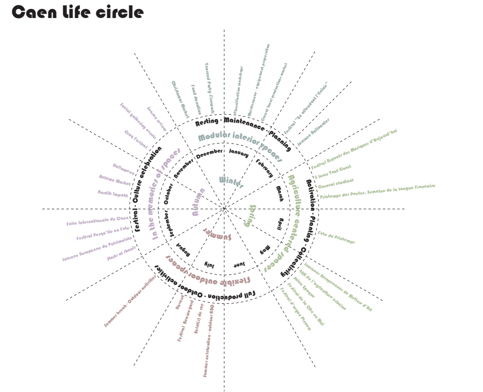
CAEN [FR]

LA MÉMOIRE CIRCULAIRE

Re-sourcer le modernisme


HALLE MOLIÈRE
<< CHEMIN VERT

Caen life circle

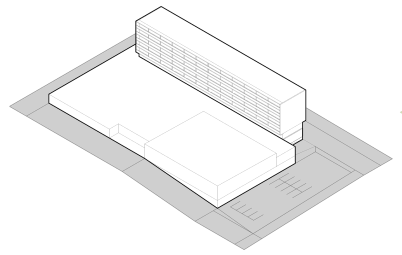

Winter
Spring
Summer
Autumn
December
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
Resting · Maintenance · Planning
Modular interior spaces
Activation · Planting
Agriculture centered spaces
Collecting
Full production · Outdoor activities
Flexible outdoor spaces
Festival · Culture celebration
In the memory of spaces

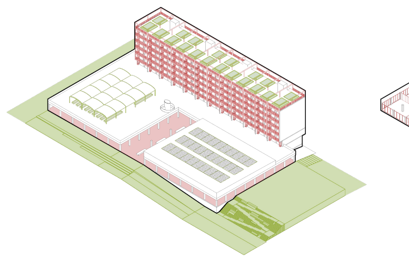
Hall Molière is no longer just a local shopping center - it becomes a productive, social and ecological anchor for the neighborhood. The insertion of a generous patio brings light, ventilation, and life into the heart of the building, while the rooftop is transformed into an urban farm, cultivated and maintained by local residents and associations. Flexible wooden kiosks line the hall's edge, offering space for local artisans, food producers, and social enterprises. These modular structures create a vibrant, adaptable interface between commerce, culture, and community life.

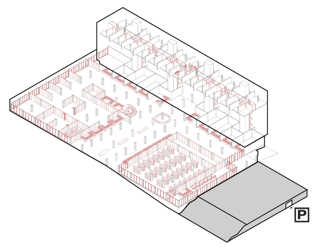
Above, the collective housing block is rehabilitated not only technically but also socially. A bioclimatic wooden façade is added, providing passive climate control and balconies that support community gardening. Light bathing circulation zones enhance interactions between people. The building becomes a place to live and to connect - a vertical village rooted in ecological values.

Together, the two interventions act as catalysts for a renewed urban centrality in the Chemin Vert neighborhood - one that celebrates memory, enables circular practices, and empowers collective futures.

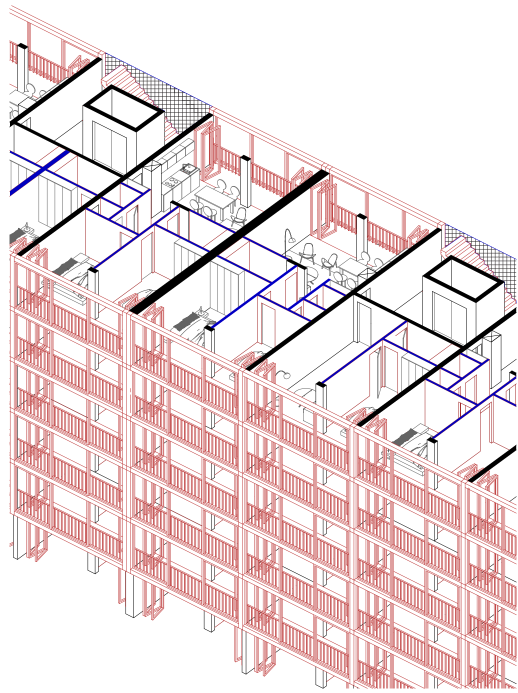
Reinventing Halle Molière


Halle Moliere now
Urban obstacle

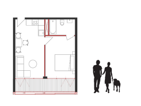

Activating ground floor
Renovating housing block's facades

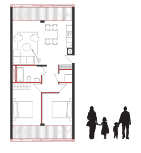

Flexible - adaptive interior partitions
Modular foldable walls

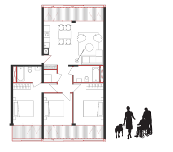
New housing typologies

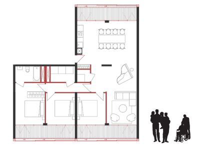


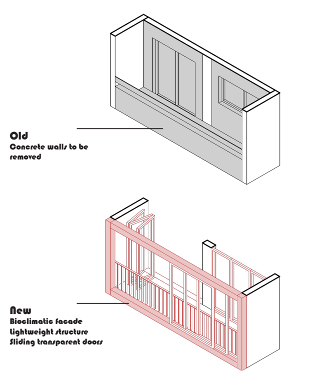
Adaptable Housing


Home for couple
T2 - 1 bed unit
Semi-outdoor space


Family of four
T3 - 2 bed unit
Semi-outdoor spaces

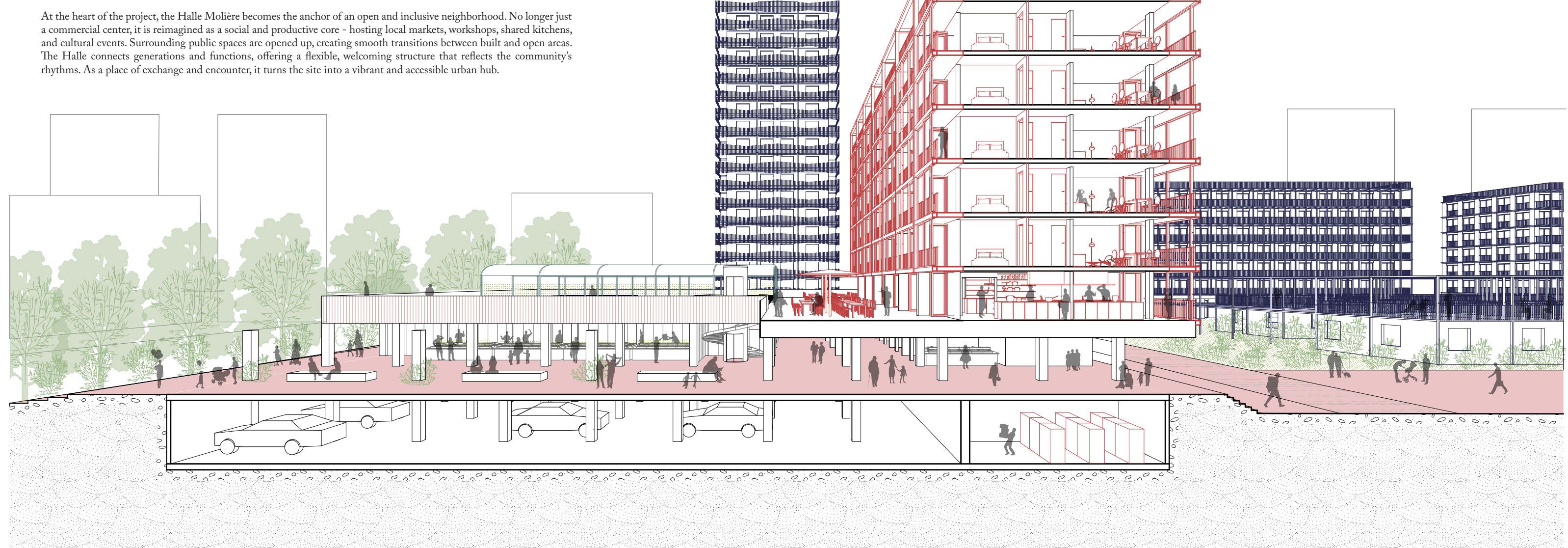

Intergenrational family
T4 bed unit
Semi-outdoor spaces


Intergenrational family
T4/5 - 3 bed unit
Semi-outdoor spaces


Old
Concrete walls to be removed
New
Bioclimatic facade
Lightweight structure
Sliding transparent doors

An open neighborhood

The project envisions a neighborhood that opens itself to its surroundings - physically, socially, and ecologically. By transforming former barriers into connectors, the site becomes a porous fabric where spaces are shared rather than separated. Open courtyards, walkable pathways, and flexible public squares invite diverse uses and spontaneous encounters. Architecture here is not an object, but a facilitator of connection - between people, between generations, and between the city and nature. This openness fosters a culture of care, participation, and collective belonging.

At the heart of the project, the Halle Molière becomes the anchor of an open and inclusive neighborhood. No longer just a commercial center, it is reimagined as a social and productive core - hosting local markets, workshops, shared kitchens, and cultural events. Surrounding public spaces are opened up, creating smooth transitions between built and open areas. The Halle connects generations and functions, offering a flexible, welcoming structure that reflects the community's rhythms. As a place of exchange and encounter, it turns the site into a vibrant and accessible urban hub.