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for Keilekwartier, M4H**

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February, 2026

GROUP A LATEST STORIES



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BRUIS: From bank to Bladel's new cultural heartbeat

Bladel has a new cultural hub. The former bank building on the town square has been transformed into BRUIS, a vibrant center for culture, community and connection. Designed by GROUP A in collaboration with Fabrique and ABT for the Municipality of Bladel and Den Herd, it now houses a theater, library, café and spaces for over 45 local associations. The project's impact was recently recognized when it won the Archello Public Vote Award 2025.

A striking new presence on the town square

The building's updated façade marks a bold new chapter in its history. A prominent new volume above the entrance features a panoramic hall and balconies that extend through the original structure. Complemented by a wooden canopy supported by a slender steel frame, the design creates a distinctive identity for BRUIS. Floor-to-ceiling windows ensure transparency and invite passersby to engage with the space, while the building's scale and form respect the charm of Bladel's town center.

Life and activity on every side

At the rear, a new multifunctional hall opens up to the neighborhood through large windows, offering a glimpse of the activities within. Thoughtful design choices—including subtle material transitions, playful rooflines, and careful integration of technical spaces—allow the building to blend seamlessly with its surroundings while maintaining a welcoming character.



The atrium: a social heart

Central to BRUIS is a spacious, light-filled atrium connecting all of the building's functions. Wooden staircases lead visitors to the library and panoramic hall, creating a variety of spaces for both quiet reflection and social interaction. By relocating supporting facilities to the basement, the design maximizes air, light and flow in the heart of the building.

A flexible space for every occasion

The multifunctional hall can host theater, dance, workshops, dinners and meetings.

Retractable seating, adjustable stage elements and a mix of acoustic treatments ensure the space can adapt to any cultural or social event.

Sustainability at its core

BRUIS is a prime example of sustainable reuse. Much of the original bank structure was preserved, minimizing material use and CO2 emissions. Materials from demolished sections—including window frames, ductwork, and masonry—were repurposed. Energy efficiency is supported by air/water heat pumps, rainwater storage, and high-grade insulation, preparing

the building for a sustainable future.

Built through collaboration

The center was developed through a close, co-creative process with users, stakeholders, and the municipality, fostering a sense of ownership reflected in every detail.

"BRUIS is more than a building. It's the tangible result of a shared ambition: to create a welcoming place where sustainability and community go hand in hand"

- Maarten van Bremen, partner and architect at GROUP A

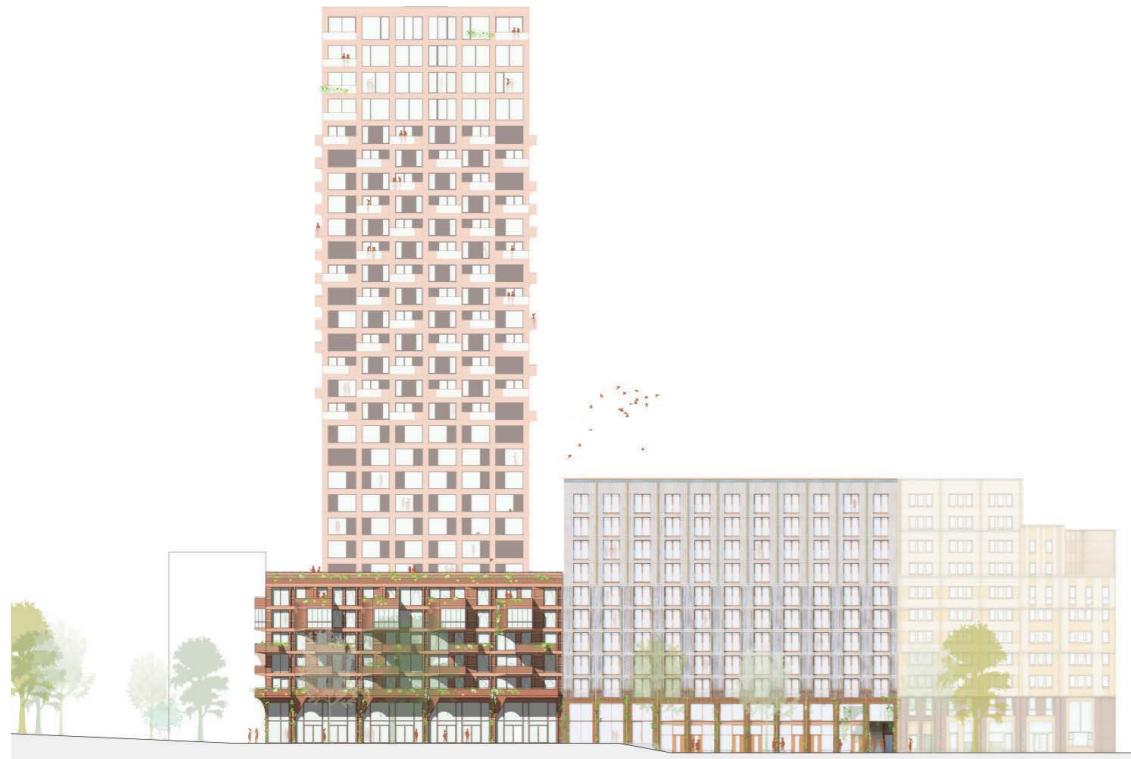


With its dynamic architecture, sustainable design and community focus, BRUIS has quickly become Bladel's new cultural heartbeat, offering a place where people can meet, create and connect.

Spoorblok Amsteloever— a timber landmark for a new urban neighborhood

Spoorblok Amsteloever is a key part of the renewed Van der Kunbuurt near Amstel Station, where architecture, sustainability and social life come together. Within the larger urban ensemble, Spoorblok (plot 3) acts as a neighborhood connector: a timber city block designed to significantly

reduce carbon impact while strengthening everyday interaction and community life. The project designed by GROUP A is part of Amsteloever, a design by VMX Architects, Felixx Landscape Architects, GROUP A and Carbonlab, with WSP as structural engineer, commissioned by Ballast Nedam Development.



Timber as the primary building material

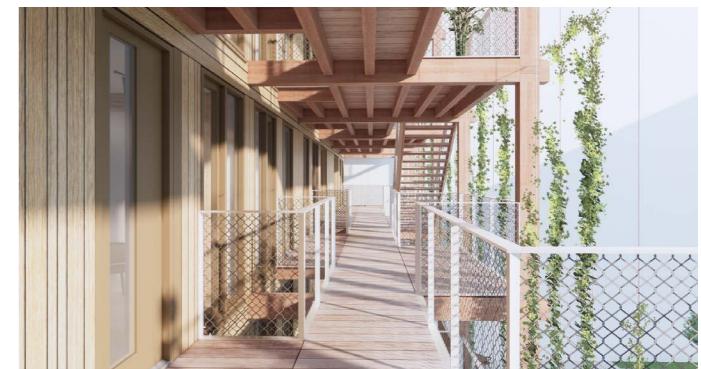
The project's low environmental footprint is driven by its nearly entirely timber construction. Solid wood, biobased insulation, lightweight subfloors, and lightweight partition walls result in an MPGA of approximately 0.239 and a GWPA of 163—making Spoorblok Paris Proof. Only the core is constructed in concrete, an intentional and optimized decision: a fully timber alternative would have required disproportionate amounts of material, ultimately increasing emissions rather than reducing them.

Circular concrete and complementing strategies

Spoorblok is part of a broader sustainability strategy across plots 3 and 4. While Spoorblok follows a timber-based approach, the adjacent tower base and the underground parking garage is built using circular, mineral-based materials such as recycled concrete and reclaimed masonry. The 100 metre high tower will have wood floor packages and a concrete core and columns. Together, the buildings show how timber and circular concrete complement each other to achieve radical carbon reduction.

Designing for social cohesion

Social interaction is central to the design. Spoorblok is organized around an informal inner world focused on encounter and shared use. Meandering access galleries, designed as generous wooden verandas, provide space for meeting and everyday interaction. Oriented towards the park and the afternoon sun, these “living galleries” naturally encourage residents to step outside and connect.



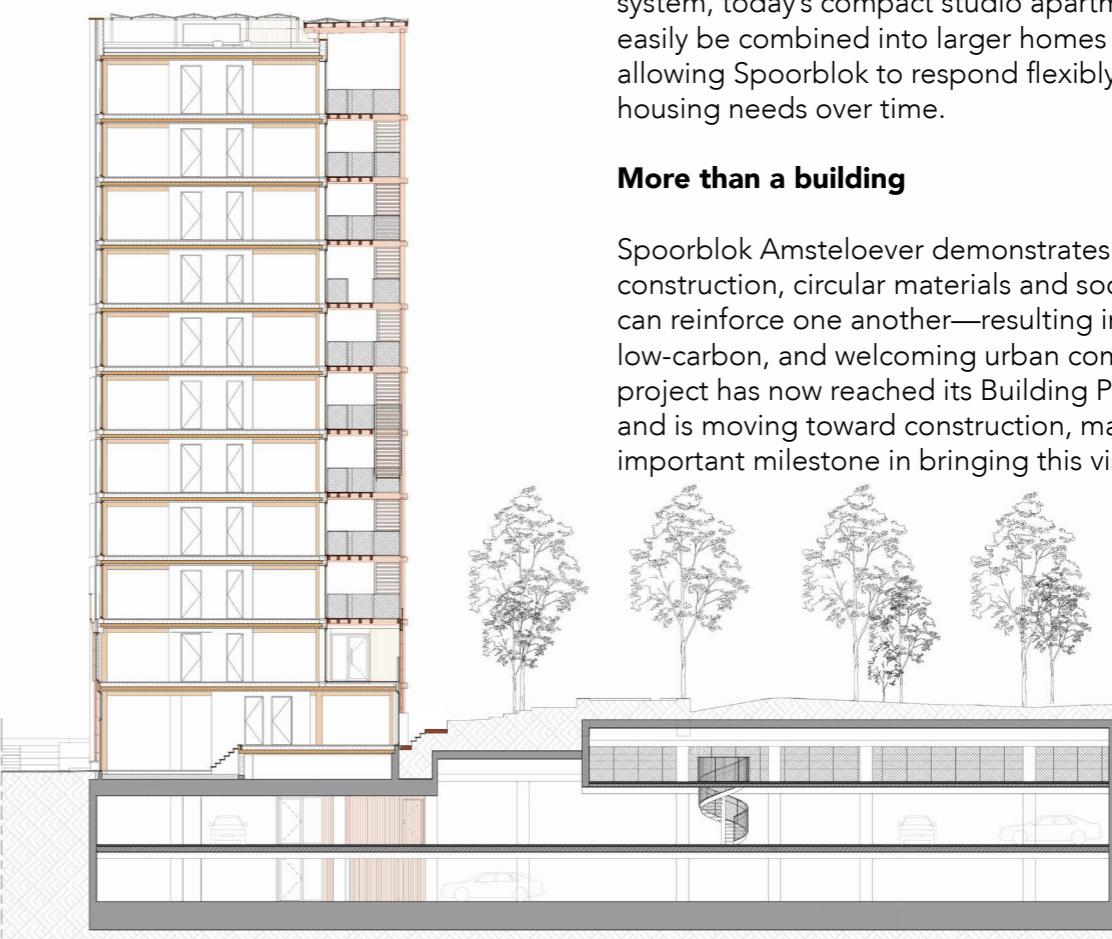
Green space above the parking

A lush roof park sits atop the underground parking garage, forming a calm, green refuge in contrast to the surrounding urban intensity. Nature, water, and seasonal change define this shared landscape, creating an intimate environment for residents. The garage is fully hidden beneath the park, ensuring that the experience of greenery and water is uninterrupted and seamlessly integrated into the urban fabric.



Built to adapt over time

Long-term sustainability is embedded in the building's structure. Thanks to an open column system, today's compact studio apartments can easily be combined into larger homes in the future, allowing Spoorblok to respond flexibly to changing housing needs over time.



More than a building

Spoorblok Amsteloever demonstrates how timber construction, circular materials and social design can reinforce one another—resulting in a resilient, low-carbon, and welcoming urban community. The project has now reached its Building Permit stage and is moving toward construction, marking an important milestone in bringing this vision to life.

MEK01 rising: A new mixed-use block for Kralingen



Amid Rotterdam's densifying cityscape, MEK01 is now under construction. This hybrid urban block marks the Max Euwe Kwartier on the Kralingse Zoom with a seven-storey base topped by a 70-meter stepped residential tower. A lively commercial base, public amenities, shared mobility options and lush green courtyards create a resilient, vibrant neighborhood.

Lively residential and work district

Accommodating 299 apartments along with public facilities and communal roof gardens, MEK01 represents the first phase in the transformation of Brainpark I. The master plan, designed by the municipality of Rotterdam, converts the former office park into a green, multifunctional district in Kralingen. The realization of MEK01 commenced in December 2024, establishing a new benchmark for contemporary urban living in the area.

Ensemble in a green environment

The Max Euwe Kwartier is defined by three distinctive buildings, designed by GROUP A, ZZDP Architecten, and STIJNVANDENBOOGAARD ARCHITECTURE, each varying in height, volume, and material. These mixed-use buildings gradually descend towards the promenade, creating a series



of roof gardens that foster community interaction. The spaces between the buildings are conceived as green public areas, offering residents and visitors a seamless connection with nature. A transparent public plinth and collective mobility facilities—including shared cars and bicycles—enhance the district's accessibility and contribute to a comfortable, future-proof living environment.

Green meeting places

OKRA landschapsarchitecten's landscape design integrates the surrounding environment into the quarter, featuring a playful network of paths, recreational areas, and lush greenery. The design promotes social interaction through two central courtyards, which provide access to the parking garage below and function as lively community hubs. Collective roof gardens further encourage encounters among residents, fostering a strong sense of neighborhood within the urban context.

Dynamic city block

On the northern edge of the quarter, MEK01 combines residential and public functions in a single, cohesive structure. The building features a robust seven-storey base with a 70-meter stepped tower above, embracing a raised green courtyard that provides access to galleries and communal roof gardens. A spacious recess in the north facade opens the courtyard toward the water, enhancing both light and views. The red-colored concrete facade gives the tower an elegant character with slender frames and open corners, while the base is designed to feel solid and welcoming.

A transparent public plinth with clearly marked entrances ensures a vibrant interface between the building and the street.

Lively residential and work district

Anchored in the Brainpark I master plan, MEK01 helps realize the vision of a green, multifunctional district in Kralingen. The design is closely connected to the future Esplanade—a promenade linking Kralingse Zoom metro station with Erasmus Campus—and benefits from planned improvements in public transport and the urban bicycle network. The project establishes a lively, mixed-use district that seamlessly blends residential, working, and recreational functions, reinforcing the inner-city qualities of this emerging urban neighborhood.



Merwede: Utrecht's green urban district taking shape

Utrecht's newest chapter is rising along the Merwedekanaal. In this green, car-free district, our blocks are under construction, shaping a vibrant urban environment where architecture, mobility and landscape come together to create a lively, future-proof space for living, meeting and moving.



Hybrid urban blocks under construction in Merwede Utrecht

Merwedekanaalzone is a new urban district in Utrecht designed to offer high-quality housing, vibrant streets and lush communal spaces. Commissioned by Greystar, we have designed three characteristic urban blocks with a mix of rental and private homes, lively plinths, innovative mobility facilities and generous greenery. By introducing a clear hierarchy in building heights and forms, a

distinctive cityscape emerges that relates closely to its surroundings. Coordinated by our office, and developed in collaboration with Zoetmulder Architects and BETA, the blocks combine architectural simplicity with strong individual identities, using a rich variety of materials and façade treatments to create a coherent yet diverse urban fabric.

In December 2025, the festive construction kick-off of Blocks 1 and 2 marked an important milestone in the realization of the Merwedekanaalzone.



Block 1 Vibrant living with lush courtyards

Block 1 adds 66,400 m² to Utrecht, including 779 rental housing units. The block combines social, mid-rent, and market segment apartments with lively plinths that house a restaurant, supermarket, retail and office functions, and top-tier mobility facilities. Serving as a neighborhood hub, Block 1 features a public mobility square with a shared parking garage of 494 spaces, a mobility store, and bicycle parking for over 1,400 bikes. Green courtyards, designed by Burobol, provide spaces for gathering, a large vegetable garden, a greenhouse, and ecological roof gardens, strengthening social connections while supporting biodiversity and water storage.

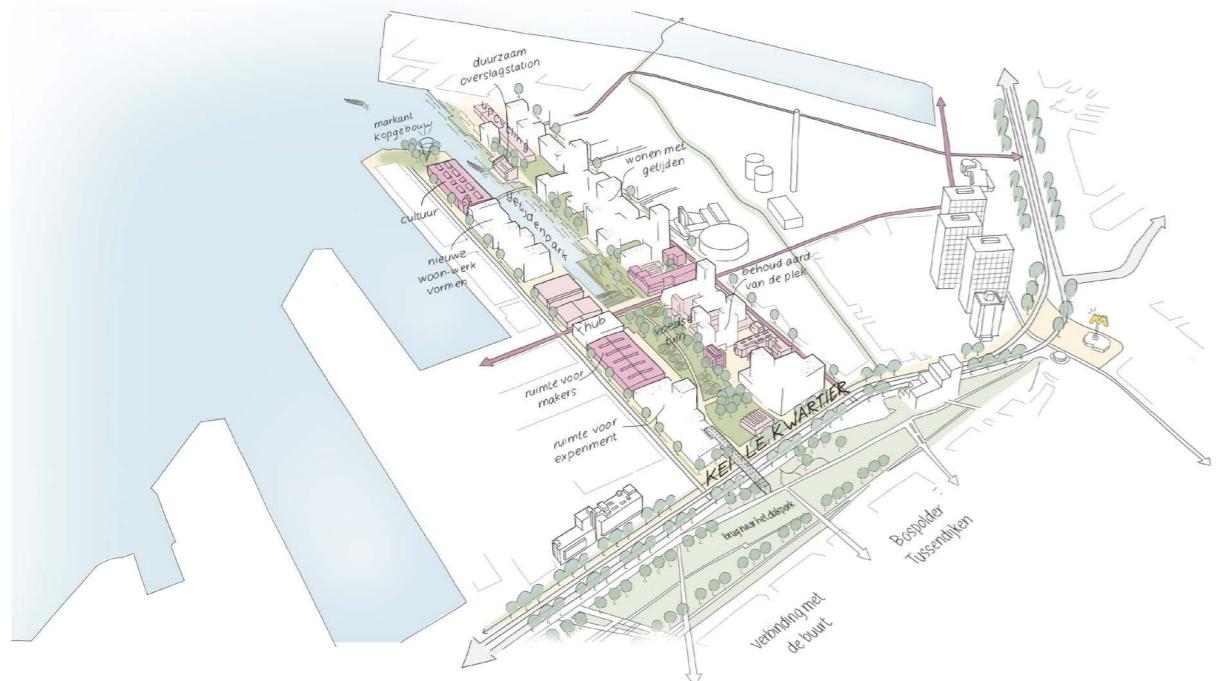
Block 2 Collective courtyards and shared facilities

Block 2 contributes 37,100 m², including 289 rental units, to the southern Merwede Kanaalzone. The block focuses on market-segment apartments with plinths offering hospitality, commercial services, offices, and collective amenities such as recreational spaces and sports facilities. Its courtyard garden centers around a patio surrounded by workplaces, sports facilities, and bicycle parking for residents, accessible through multiple block openings. Designed by Burobol, the courtyards and green roofs support social interaction, water storage, and provide nesting sites for local flora and fauna, reinforcing a sense of community.



Keilekwartier: Where cooperation shapes the city

In Rotterdam's M4H district, the Keilekwartier is shaping a new urban development model. Local pioneers, the city and GROUP A are working collectively to create a district that is circular, resilient and rooted in community and creativity.



Keilekwartier: Building a cooperative future

The Keilekwartier, part of Rotterdam's M4H district, is redefining urban development. Together with the Municipality of Rotterdam, De Urbanisten and in collaboration with Keilecoöperatie, GROUP A developed the Area Ambition Document, which was published on 21 January 2026. The document presents a co-operatively developed future vision in which urban development is formally and explicitly linked to the initiatives, practices, and lessons that have already emerged in the area.

The College of Mayor and Aldermen has submitted the document to the municipal council and it will be discussed in the BWB committee alongside the previously adopted Marconikwartier. Over the years, the Keilekwartier has evolved into a vibrant

hub of entrepreneurs, cultural institutions and social initiatives. Local stakeholders have united in the Keilecoöperatie to shape development collectively with the city.

The document emphasizes growth while preserving the district's character. Affordable maker spaces, experimental zones and flexible public areas create a resilient, climate-adaptive environment that enhances biodiversity and fosters community engagement.

Cooperation and circularity are central to every project. By keeping value within the area, the approach safeguards social and environmental sustainability while maintaining the authenticity of the district. Developments focus on circular systems, shared energy and mobility, and climate-adaptive construction, making the Keilekwartier a model for a resilient and future-proof urban district.

Keilecoöperatie: A living laboratory for urban innovation

The area cooperative Keilecoöperatie brings together local pioneers and the Municipality of Rotterdam to guide the long-term transformation of the Keilekwartier in the Merwe-Vierhavens (M4H) district. Its mission is to enable an organic and circular form of urban development, rooted in collective ownership, cooperation and the values already present in the area.

While large-scale housing development is still constrained by industrial activity and noise contours, the Keilekwartier is already home to a strong network of makers, cultural institutions and social initiatives. Places such as the Keilepand, Brutus, Soundport, Katoenhuis, Chefaro and Crossing Keileweg activate the district on a daily basis, creating space for work, culture and experimentation around shared public landscapes like the Voedseltuin and the tidal park.



Rather than treating these initiatives as temporary uses, the area cooperative sees them as the foundation of future development. By working collectively, the cooperative aims to preserve affordable workspaces, safeguard the identity of the area and keep social, cultural and economic value within the district.

The cooperative model builds on the belief that complex urban challenges cannot be solved individually. Members of the area cooperative share a social ambition, are connected to the DNA of the Keilekwartier and commit to long-term collaboration with each other and the city. This collective approach creates the conditions for a resilient and adaptable district that can grow over time.

With this shared vision, the Keilecoöperatie positions the district as a living laboratory for circular urban development — not defined by a fixed end image, but by a process that remains flexible, inclusive and rooted in cooperation.

"Thanks to the unique collaborations with existing stakeholders in the area, a new part of the city is taking shape across the Merwe-Vierhavens, with at least 3,000 homes for a variety of residents. This is a true example of building the city together."

- Alderman Chantal Zeegers



Learning to build collectively

An interview with Folkert van Hagen, partner at GROUP A

In Rotterdam's Merwe-Vierhaven area, the Keilekwartier is taking shape not as a conventional top-down development, but through a cooperative model rooted in collectivity, circularity and the people already present. Folkert van Hagen, partner at GROUP A and one of the initiators of the area cooperative, has been closely involved from the start.

"Too often, urban development begins with a fixed end image," Van Hagen says. "Here, we start with what's already there: the people, the places, the energy. Collectivity isn't idealistic; it's how you make circular development work in practice."

The area's interim phase, with housing not yet possible due to ongoing industrial activity, provides an opportunity rather than a delay. "It's a testing ground," Van Hagen explains. "We can activate the

area, build networks and protect the values that matter before large-scale development begins."

The cooperative approach grew from the Keilepand, a former warehouse transformed into a shared workspace by architects, makers and entrepreneurs. In 2019, the users collectively purchased the building, securing affordable workspaces and demonstrating the power of cooperative ownership. "It showed that you can safeguard identity and build trust with the city and among stakeholders," Van Hagen reflects.

For him, the Keilekwartier is both a local experiment and a model for cities worldwide. "Urban challenges are complex. By working together, you can create systems that generate value for people, the environment and the city. And keep learning as you go."

Van Hagen points to the existing network in the Keilekwartier as the project's true foundation. "What makes this area special is that it was already alive," he says. "Places like the Keilepand, Brutus, Soundport and the Katoenhuis didn't wait for development. They activated the area themselves. That energy is something you have to build on, not replace."

Around shared spaces such as the Voedseltuin and the tidal park, public life has developed organically. "Public space here is not a finished product," Van Hagen notes. "It evolves with use. Temporary structures, shared mobility and flexible programs allow us to test what really works for the community."

Scaling the cooperative approach from a single building to an entire district has been a learning process. "The Keilepand showed that collective ownership creates responsibility," he says. "People care differently when they co-own the future. At district scale, that means investing in trust and long-term collaboration, especially with the municipality."

For Van Hagen, the Keilekwartier remains an experiment by design. "We see it as a testing ground," he concludes. "Not a fixed blueprint, but a system that can adapt. That's what makes the area resilient — and what building collectively is really about."

photo by Eric Fecken, Placemaking Week Europe 2024 Rotterdam

Rotterdam Architecture Month 2026 lands in Keilekwartier

This June, the Keilekwartier in the M4H district will take center stage as the festival heart of Rotterdam Architecture Month 2026. The event will explore collectivity as the basis for circularity, showing how communities and cooperatives can shape a sustainable, inclusive and resilient city.

The Keilekwartier will become a living laboratory for participatory urban design, with workshops, discussions and interactive activities engaging residents, students and local entrepreneurs.

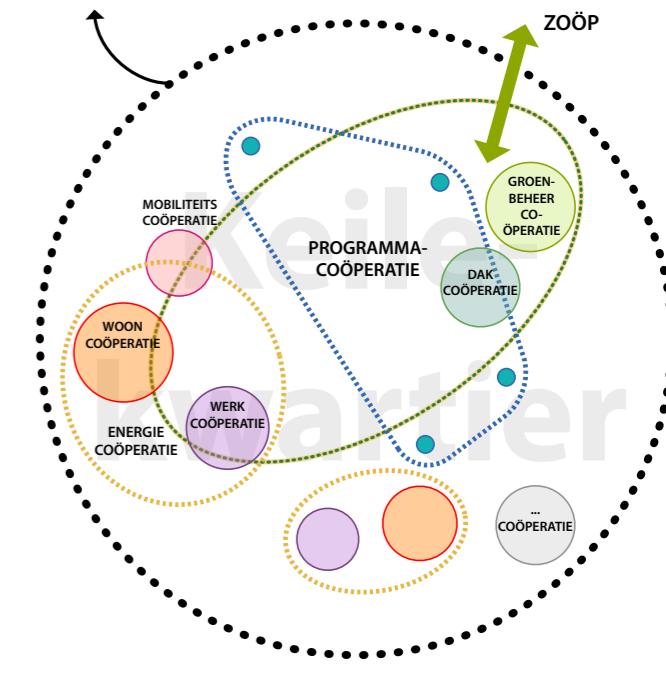
Stay tuned for more: rotterdamarchitectuurmaand.nl

Keilepand hosts exhibition on circular urban development

At the heart of the festival, the Keilepand will host the festival's main exhibition. An interactive exhibition exploring how communities and cooperatives drive circular urban development. The exhibition features examples across housing, energy, care, green space, water, waste, mobility and work.

Led by the KeileCollectief and partners including the Keilecoöperatie, Circulair Rotterdam and local communities, the project brings together workshops, discussions and co-design sessions. Participants will co-create a roadmap for a circular, Paris Proof and affordable M4H Keilekwartier by 2050, making the Keilepand a hub for co-creation, sustainability and community-driven design.

Stay tuned for more: Keilecollectief.nl



Circular material hub M4H

GROUP A is proud to be part of the circular and adaptive material hub in Rotterdam's M4H district, recently awarded a subsidy by the Province of South Holland. Together with BLOC, the area cooperative Keilecoöperatie, PlaceBased&co, Buurman Rotterdam and the Municipality of Rotterdam, the project explores how flexible design and cooperation can anchor circularity in area development.

Where carbon & architecture converge

With CARBONLAB, GROUP A turns carbon from a constraint into a design driver, reducing CO2 footprints while shaping future-proof, resilient architecture. Their research transforms climate targets into practical strategies, proving that sustainability and design excellence can thrive together.



Sound barriers at Reigersbos Station, Amsterdam

As Amsterdam's Reigersbos neighborhood undergoes rapid densification, protecting residents and commuters from metro noise became a key priority. The solution: a thoughtfully designed sound barrier that combines high-performance noise reduction, social safety, and environmental responsibility. By placing absorptive panels close to the tracks, the barrier height has been reduced—2 meters along the embankments and just 1 meter at the viaduct—preserving sightlines and creating a more open, welcoming environment.

The structure is composed of certified wood-fiber concrete panels on the track side, cast into a bioreceptive concrete carrier. This innovative material achieves up to 75% CO2 reduction compared to traditional solutions, demonstrating the potential of circular and sustainable infrastructure. Mosses are sown and thrive in its porous surface. Together with rooted climbing plants the design fosters biodiversity, limits graffiti, and contributes to a nature-inclusive urban environment. Varied panel profiles produce a dynamic, non-repetitive pattern, while the station name 'Reigersbos' in high density concrete serves as a clear, elegant marker.



The Reigersbos sound barrier is more than infrastructure—it is a socially safe, visually engaging, and environmentally responsible design that exemplifies how architecture, technology, and sustainability can merge in the public realm.

Client: Municipality of Amsterdam | In collaboration with: Respyre

Paris Proof Block selected for open call

Paris Proof Block has been selected for the open call 'Ontwerpen aan onze toekomst – Leren van het veld' (2015–2025) by Platform Ontwerp NL. The project is recognized as exemplary design research contributing to the national discourse on the future of the built environment.

Developed by GROUP A's think tank CARBONLAB in collaboration with Aveco de Bondt, DGMR, Adviesbureau ABT-Lüning and De Urbanisten, the research investigates whether a complex, high-rise, multifunctional building can be realized within the DGBC Paris Proof embodied CO2 budgets for 2030 and 2050. The conclusion is clear: a Paris Proof building according to 2030 targets is possible today.

Two design elaborations—*Built to Last*, designed for a lifespan on site of over 300 years, and *Footloose*, a demountable system lasting at least 150 years—demonstrate how ambitious architecture and climate responsibility can thrive together.



Stations with a carbon budget

Since 2023, CARBONLAB, in collaboration with the Bureau Spoorbouwmeester, ProRail, and NS Stations, has conducted studies exploring how Paris Proof stations can be realized by introducing embodied carbon (GWPa) budgets at the earliest design stages, including MIRT and sketch design phases.

The research began by establishing baseline data from recently completed stations and identifying potential pathways for carbon reduction. Building on this foundation, subsequent studies examined larger station-area designs in early planning stages to translate insights from completed projects into concrete design principles for MIRT-level decision-making. In parallel, targeted studies focused on lowering embodied carbon budgets for specific station components, such as platform roofs and bicycle parking facilities.

The outcomes of these studies are increasingly being embedded in ProRail's internal regulations and procedures, supporting the rail sector's commitment to reducing emissions to zero in line with ministerial requirements. The farewell event of Spoorbouwmeester Marianne Loof highlighted how

instrumental the research has been in establishing embodied carbon as a core design requirement across the involved organizations.

Early results are already visible in practice. The design for Zwolle Station by Studio Nauta demonstrates how a circular and biobased approach can align seamlessly with high-quality architectural ambition while remaining within strict embodied carbon budgets.

With these first successes, the research sets a clear course for continued innovation, ensuring future stations combine architectural excellence with truly climate-responsible design.



Carbon Stories 2025

Carbon Stories catalyzes the dialogue about the possibilities and impossibilities of a climate-positive built environment. The perspectives of the designer, financier, developer, builder, policymaker, consultant and material supplier are addressed. In a series of thematic debates, Carbon Stories explores what (system)changes, exchanges and collaborations are necessary to accelerate and scale this transition.

#18 Climate change doesn't wait, neither does the market

27.11.2025 | Keilepand

The world faces mounting climate and political pressures, yet the transition to a climate-neutral construction sector is accelerating. Thirteen leading real estate companies are setting new benchmarks for embodied CO2 emissions in construction projects. Experts from across the industry, including Norbert Schotte (Building Balance), Patrick de Baat (a.s.r. real estate), Carlijn Stoop (Woonstad), and Sladjana Mijatovic (BPD Gebiedsontwikkeling), shared insights on these market shifts. Watch the full edition online

#17 Architects taking sustainable initiatives

25.09.2025 | Keilepand

The Dutch construction sector is rapidly moving toward sustainability, with architects leading the way. Pioneering projects are embedding sustainable practices from the start, setting new benchmarks for futureproof design. Architects Joost Verbeek (architecten|en|en), Tim Kouthoofd (Bygg Architecture & Design), and Oresti Sarafopoulos and John Bosch (OZ Architects), shared insights from the innovative Salix

and Our New Office projects. This conversation highlights how design excellence and sustainability are shaping the future of Dutch architecture.

#16 A tale of Dutch cities

12.06.2025 | Keilepand

Dutch cities are taking steps toward Paris Proof construction. In recent years, municipalities have launched various policies and experiments to make this happen. What works, what doesn't, and what are opportunities or constraints? Time to discuss insights with Tom van Haaren (Municipality of Rotterdam), Rob Bogaarts (Building Balance) and Robbert

Groeneveld (Woonstad). Watch the full edition online.

#15 Carbon quiz 2025

17.04.2025 | Keilepand

A diverse group of professionals from the building sector - from designers to developers - came together for an informal, educational and surprisingly funny evening about CO2 reduction. After a crash course GWPa the battle for the prestigious Carbon Quiz 2025 trophy started! Congrats to Team Skaal who took the chalkhemp trophy home. With judges Sanne van der Burgh (MVRDV) and Willem van Genugten.



#14 EU Taxonomy, how does it affect you?

27.02.2025 | Keilepand

European Green Deal, ESG, CSRD, ESRS, SFDR, SMEs, ETS I, ETS II, CBAM, GWP, GHG Protocol.... Are you still there? Dr. Ir. Michael Peeters (TU-Delft) unravels the complexity of the EU Taxonomy in an inspiring crash course during the 15th Carbon Stories edition. The panel discussion with Dennis Franken (Stebru), Elise van Herwaarden (INREV) and Karmijn van den Berg (Municipality of Rotterdam) shows what this means in practice.

Watch the full edition online.

Did you know most Carbon Stories are available online? Watch previous editions on youtube.com/@groupalive

New partner!

In 2025 the debate series teamed up with the Klimaat Academie Rotterdam! This new partnership means an even stronger connection with all links in the Rotterdam construction chain in the dialogue about a climate-positive built environment.

Carbon Stories is an initiative of GROUP A | Carbonlab, KeileCollectief and IABR, supported by the Klimaat Academie Rotterdam.

Don't miss the latest Carbon Stories

Sign up for our newsletter via: <https://groupa.nl/projects/carbon-stories/>

CARBON STORIES 2026

Mark these dates in your calendar:

25.02.2026
Het Grote CO2 Verkiezingsdebat

23.04.2026
Paris Proof lifestyle?

04.06.2026
Is the future collective?

25.06.2026
Circular affordable housing M4H

24.09.2026
Road to Paris Proof: Open source

26.11.2026
Paris Proof heritage

Environmental legislation

Climate-positive built environment, is that possible? And how to have a conversation about it? Based on potentially polarizing opinions and preferences or based on mutually shared knowledge and objective principles? To explore what all the disciplines that make up the built environment have in common, CARBONLAB mapped environmental laws and regulations for the construction industry from 2000 to 2050.

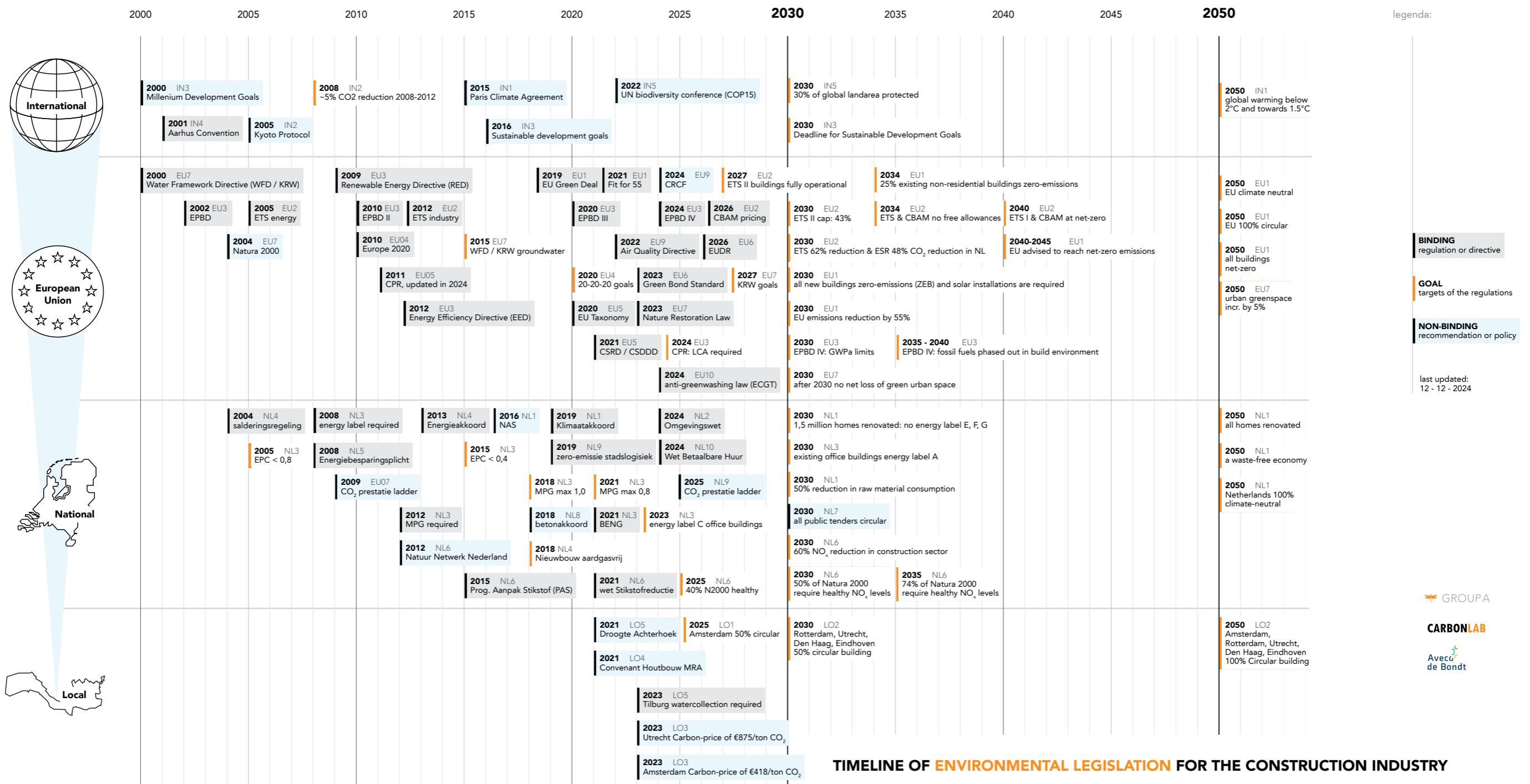
Because the creation of the built environment often spans several years, and sometimes even decades, we have mapped both existing and upcoming regulations and incentives. Both on a global scale, European scale, Dutch scale and local scale.

The timeline provides a factual overview of all the factors we have to comply with in planning and building our environment. A good basis for structuring the dialogue between the various disciplines on integrating sustainability and CO2 storage

into the environment. This instrumental overview serves its purpose as several parties are now using it in their projects and processes. We encourage everyone to use the overview internally and externally mentioning all contributing

parties. This overview is the current state of our research and therefore may be incomplete and in need of improvement.

Download the most recent version on our [website](#) and stay tuned for an updated version!



Transformations

GROUP A has spent years giving old buildings new life across the Netherlands, from Smederij NDSM and Caballero Factory to BRUIS. In Merwedevierhavens (M4H), a former port area becoming a vibrant live-work district, our work is rooted—and personal. With our office at the ever-evolving Keilepand, the recently completed Ferro Offices and the upcoming Chefaro we continue to contribute to this evolution. By honoring the character of existing structures while reducing CO2 emissions, we create future-proof buildings that tell a story and shape M4H's evolving landscape.



Sustainable showcase for M4H

On the former Ferro-site at Galileipark in M4H Rotterdam, the transformation of the Ferro office building—once marked by its iconic Ferro logo—has been completed. The design turns the 1969 office into a sustainable collective building with a reused shell, mainly biobased facade, energy label A++++, and solar panels on the roof, reflecting the area's sustainability ambitions.

Reusing the original shell is central to the project's design, reducing CO2 emissions by an estimated 75% compared to complete new construction. By leveraging the carrying capacity of the existing structure, an extra floor was added. The south-facing facade was set back to create outdoor space and naturally regulate daylight and sunlight. With its wooden facade and balcony vegetation, the building now offers a warm contrast to its industrial surroundings, while quietly

nodding to the Ferro building's industrial heritage.

A spacious collective area forms the heart of the multi-tenant office, encouraging interaction and collaboration. A central void brings daylight deep inside, and a sculptural staircase connects the flexible floors. The entrance area features a wooden grandstand staircase and coffee & lunch bar for programming and informal gatherings.

A full report will follow soon!



New project: Chefaro

The historic Chefaro complex in Rotterdam is being transformed into a vibrant incubator in collaboration with the Municipality of Rotterdam, Skar and GROUP A. Situated along the Delft–Rotterdam knowledge and innovation axis, it will bring together makers, artists and tech start-ups, blending hands-on craft with academic expertise.

Focusing on sustainability, circularity, and cutting-edge production techniques Chefaro will host residencies, prototypes and public programs. More than shared spaces, it will be a platform for experimentation, collaboration and creative breakthroughs. More on this exciting project will follow soon!

Keilepand has grown into an activity-based building where like-minded entrepreneurs contribute to a sustainable future. Located next to urban farm the Voedseltuin, the building now offers workshops, offices, catering and an event and exhibition space of 1,100 m².

The Keilepand is the result of GROUP A and studioADAMS' collective approach to transformation, combining architectural expertise with the knowledge and energy of the community. Through initiatives such as exhibitions, lectures and debates, the KeileCollectief fosters connections, knowledge exchange and unexpected collaborations between M4H's stakeholders.

With the launch of EXPORT and Hidden Gem Rotterdam, the Keilepand takes another step in its development—creating a destination where creativity, sustainability and nightlife meet.

Follow on instagram: [export_rotterdam_hiddengemrotterdam](https://www.instagram.com/export_rotterdam_hiddengemrotterdam/)



A factory designed for the future

With the logistics center nearing completion in April and the design of the production building now underway, Quooker's new factory at Nieuw Reijerwaard in Ridderkerk is rapidly taking shape. Together, these first two steps mark the beginning of a compact, future-oriented factory designed to evolve in four carefully coordinated phases.



Set on a 9-plus-acre site, the masterplan is based on a long-term vision in which all functions — logistics, production, offices, service facilities and a showroom — are ultimately brought together within one coherent building. By stacking industrial functions across multiple layers, the design minimizes land use and energy demand, while creating a highly efficient and interconnected working environment.

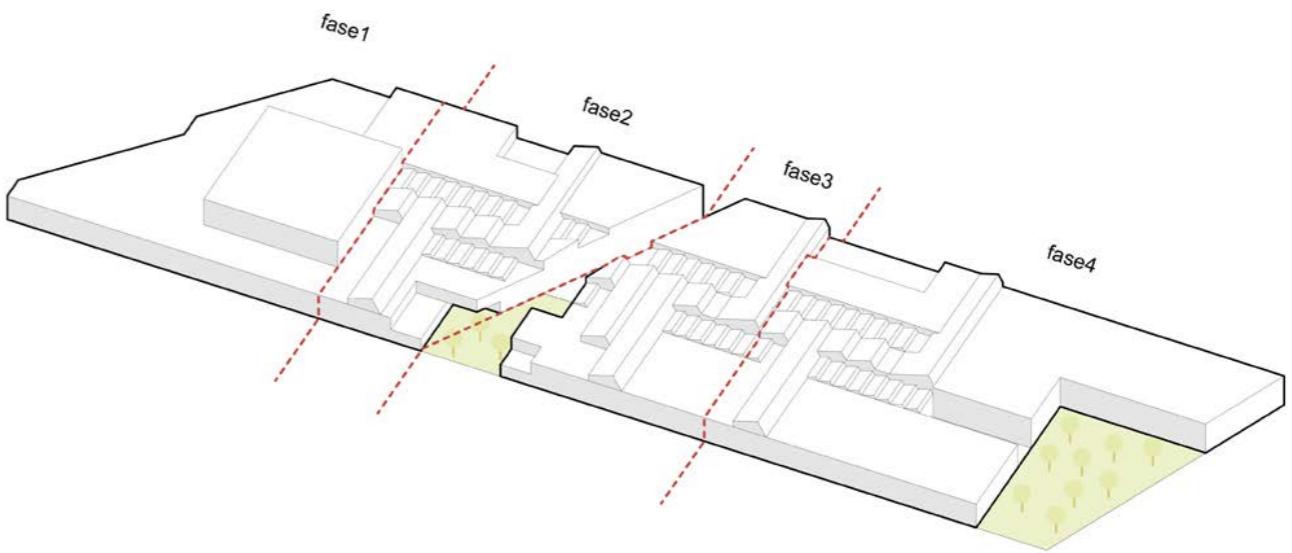
Commissioned by Quooker the factory complex is designed by GROUP A, De Urbanisten and Studio INAMatt, and constructed by Cordeel.

The logistics center: Setting the benchmark

The logistics center forms the foundation of the factory complex and is the first building to be realized. At its core lies a fully automated, 30-metre-high high-bay warehouse, surrounded by logistics functions distributed across two levels. More than a purely functional structure, the building establishes the architectural and sustainable language for the entire campus. Its hempcrete plinth façade gives the building a distinctive identity and expresses Quooker's ambition to combine industrial performance with environmental responsibility.

The production building: Expanding the vision

Commissioned for development the second building introduces production units, offices and shared facilities, further unfolding the long-term vision of the factory. Together with future phases, this building will help complete the compact industrial structure. A generous green atrium will form the heart of the complex, strengthening visual connections between departments and creating a pleasant indoor climate. Roof gardens, accessible to employees, extend the working landscape throughout the building.



Architecture at a human scale

The factory's sculptural silhouette reinterprets the traditional industrial shed roof, creating a recognizable presence within its surroundings. These roof forms allow daylight to penetrate deep into the building while adding volume to the functions below. Through careful layering of mass and roofs, the large-scale complex maintains a refined expression, with a strong emphasis on human scale and comfort.



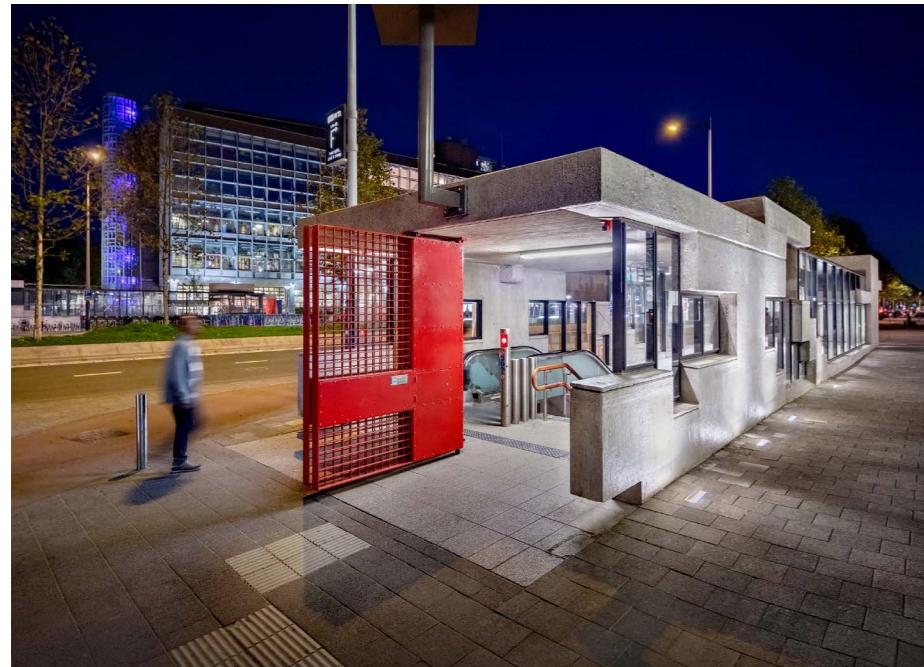
Sustainability made visible

Sustainability is embedded throughout the design, guided by the ambition to create an energy-neutral, climate-adaptive and nature-inclusive factory. The compact, stacked layout reduces material use and energy consumption, while biobased materials play a central role in the construction. Most notably, the hempcrete façades — tamped on site through an artisanal process — store approximately 20,000 kilograms of CO₂, making sustainability a visible and measurable part of the architecture.



The city's underground beacons

Having set the baseline with our award winning Metro Oostlijn Amsterdam we continue working on subways in Europe. We recently won 2nd prize in Hamburg!



Missing link in Antwerp's public transport

The premetro network of Flemish Transport Company De Lijn in Antwerp, as envisaged in the 1970s and 1980s, is being completed. The tunnel under Kerkstraat and Pothoekstraat will be put into use and four unfinished stations will be completed and provided with entrances.

The design team translates the existing 'concrete hardware' from the 1970s and 1980s into the present. The aim is to realize stations that are inviting, recognizable and socially safe, with a design that does justice to the unique character of the city of Antwerp.



The multidisciplinary team of GROUP A, archipelago and Tractebel is commissioned by the Flemish Transport Company De Lijn for this assignment.

Homage to original DNA

The renovation of 16 original Oostlijn stations has been completed back in 2018. The design goes 'back to the base of the original design', but is also 'a vision of the future'. By revealing the original rough looking DNA and adding contrasting refined materials, a future-proof and comfortable metro line has been reborn. We are still working on a number of small but interesting follow-ups to the Oostlijn project, including a Paris Proof noise barrier made fully of moss concrete at one of the stations in Amsterdam South East.



Preservation of a post-war monument

We won second prize in the Metro Hauptbahnhof Nord Hamburg design competition with a proposal that balances preservation and innovation. We teamed up with Werner Sobek AG and Beersnielsen Lichtontwerpers. First prize went to blrm Architekt*innen & Gottlieb Paludan Architects.

Hauptbahnhof Nord, opened in 1968, features unique shield tunnelling and a circular tunnel design. As a listed building, our proposal respects the functional architecture while "decluttering" and enhancing it with refined materials and lighting. The station, a key transfer hub for Hamburg's metro, will gain a distinct identity, complementing its connection to the city's architectural landscape.

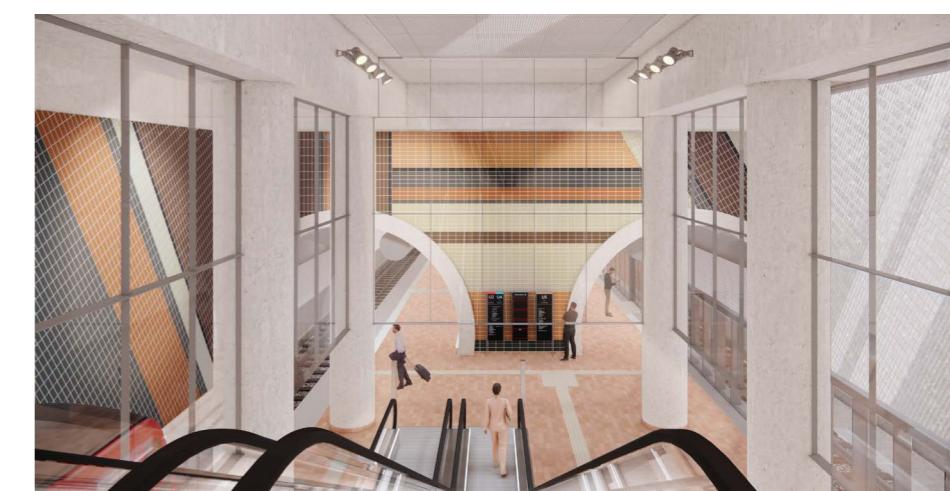
The expansion of the station, which includes the new U5 line, requires adjustments to

accommodate modern safety and accessibility standards. In our proposal we seek to preserve station's original 'DNA', focusing on its distinctive circular geometry and modular tile patterns. New materials and lighting enhance this design while maintaining its historical significance.

The station's architecture reflects the post-war era's belief in technical progress and is considered an important part of Hamburg's history. The design integrates contemporary

features while preserving its core architectural elements. Sustainable practices are emphasized, with the use of ceramic cladding and recycled materials, such as glass and silt from shipping lanes, reducing the station's carbon footprint.

The entrances will be designed with transparency and social security in mind. These design elements aim to enhance the station's identity and connection to its surroundings, while maintaining environmental responsibility.



We are currently working hard to support the contractor selection and to finalize the environmental permits. First construction works are expected in 2026.

Completed projects

From first sketches to final touches — the dust has settled and the doors are open. What once lived on paper now stands proud in brick, wood and reused materials. Over the past year, we've seen visions turn into places. Spaces to live, to work, to gather. Walking through what was once only an idea is a thrill — and for some projects, like BRUIS in Bladel, that journey has even been recognized with public acclaim.



Omroep West: New(s) room

GROUP A has designed a new hybrid working and production environment for Omroep West, where interaction, communication and creativity take center stage. Central meeting spaces combine multiple functions—informal consultations, workshops, brief work, or lunch—while “living rooms” on each floor encourage spontaneous encounters and collaboration. The design welcomes employees and visitors

with a visible, open editorial and broadcast environment.

Multifunctional areas adjacent to the living rooms are transparent and adaptable, supporting meetings, workshops, or downtime. From the lively public areas, the office flows into quiet work zones, where open landscapes and individual spaces allow focused work, all framed by a calm, natural palette that enhances concentration. Outdoor areas invite short walks, meetings or breaks,

promoting employee well-being. Sustainability is embedded in the design through the reuse of materials and biobased elements, reducing CO₂ emissions while storing carbon.

The result is a flexible, inviting workplace where hybrid work, creativity and collaboration coexist seamlessly.

Explore the full project on our website: groupa.nl/projects/omroep-west/

The Tornado has landed!

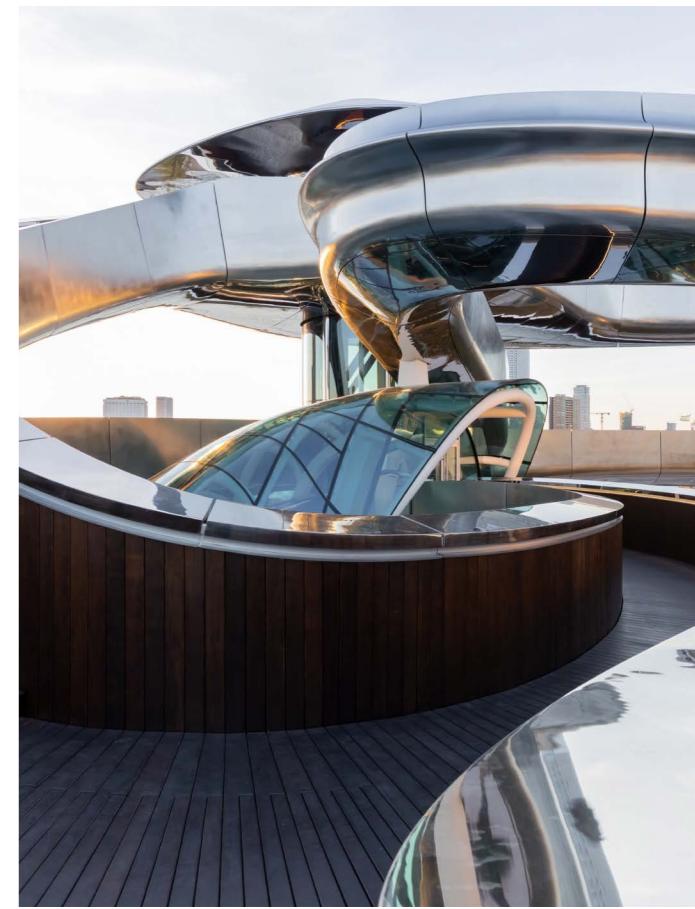
The long-awaited FENIX museum opened its doors in Rotterdam on April 15th 2025. MAD architects' new landmark on Katendrecht celebrates human migration - past, present, and future - with the spectacular Tornado at its heart.

In collaboration with Woodwave GROUP A designed the 360 steps and over 10,000 unique timber elements. Advanced parametric design was key: bespoke software translated the geometry directly to CNC machines, which spent four months milling each piece to millimetre accuracy. The result is a seamless assembly that balances technical precision with warmth and tactility.

Crafted through a Keilepand collaboration between Woodwave and GROUP A, the Tornado is a testament to the cross-fertilisation of craftsmanship and advanced design techniques taking shape in Rotterdam's Keilepand.

We are proud to be part of this remarkable project!

Photo: FENIX Tornado by Iwan Baan



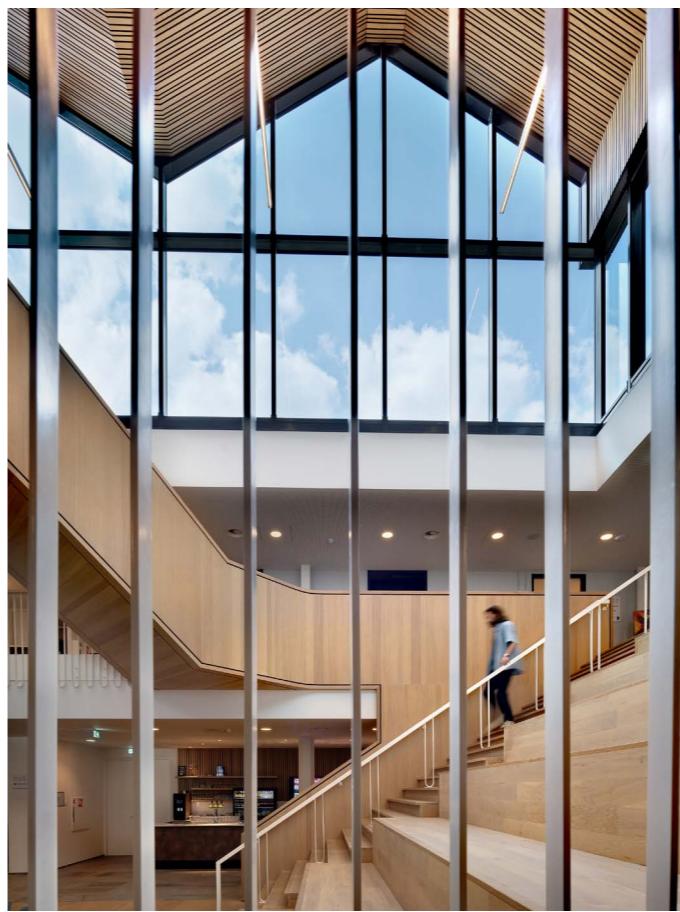
BRUIS: Archello Awards Public Vote Winner

Community & Cultural Centre BRUIS in Bladel has been named the Public Vote Winner in the Community Centre of the Year category at the Archello Awards 2025, recognizing its outstanding contribution to local life and culture.

Designed by GROUP A in collaboration with Fabrique and ABT, BRUIS is a transformative project that reimagines a former bank into a dynamic cultural hub. The centre now hosts a theatre, library, café, and versatile spaces for more than 45 local associations.

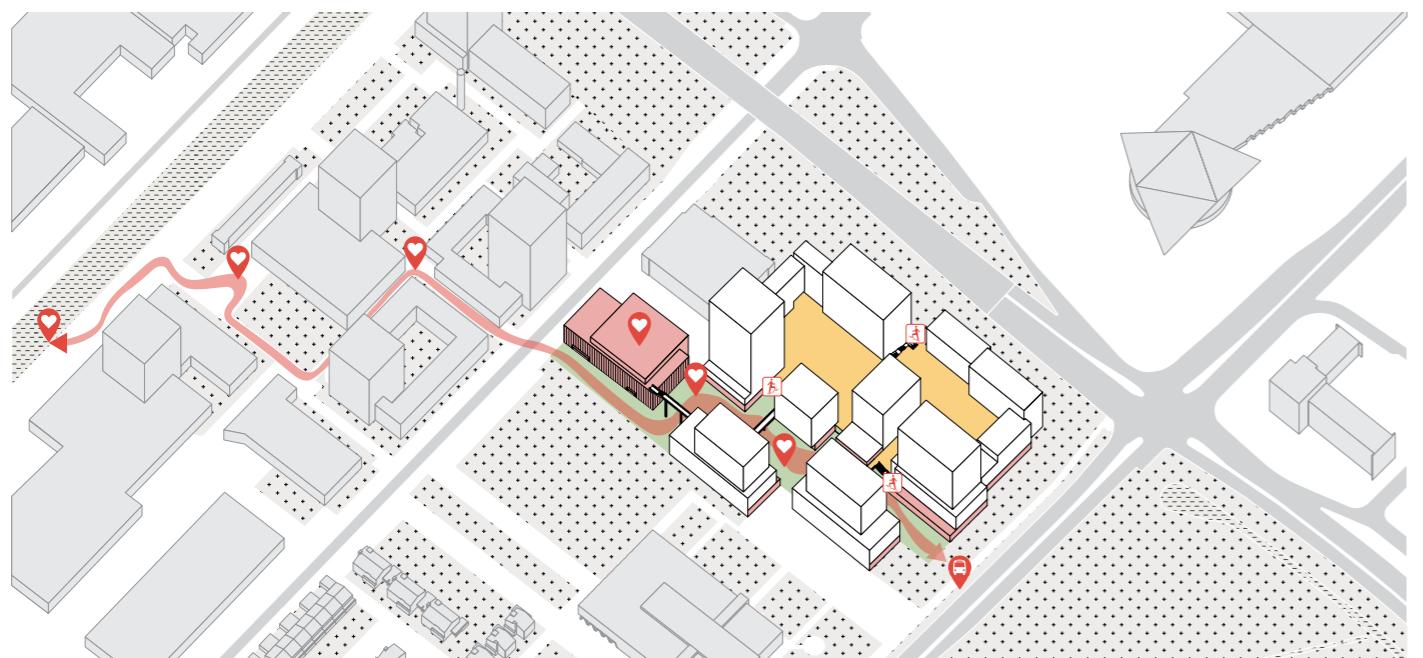
BRUIS is a true co-creation with the Municipality of Bladel and Den Herd, reflecting the town's collective spirit and long-standing commitment to fostering community life.

This award honors the vision, creativity and dedication that brought BRUIS to life, highlighting it as a shining example of community-focused design and placing this Dutch gem firmly on the international architectural stage.



Urban planning

Transforming city-centre fringe areas into high-density areas with a strong identity and well connected to its surroundings? Leave that up to GROUP A. While architecture is our core business we get most excited when we can intertwine architecture with urban planning. This is how we design environments in which people live, work and reside comfortably in balance with the ecosystem.



HUGO: A New Cultural Quarter

GROUP A has recently completed the preliminary urban plan for the Hugo development site, located along Eindhoven's ring road and adjacent to the former Campina Koelhuis. This industrial heritage building is being repurposed as a center for culture, technology, and Immersive Experience (IX), forming the anchor for the new district.

Currently an industrial site, Hugo is set to be transformed into a permanent creative hub with a significant portion of affordable housing. Despite its relatively isolated location, the plan

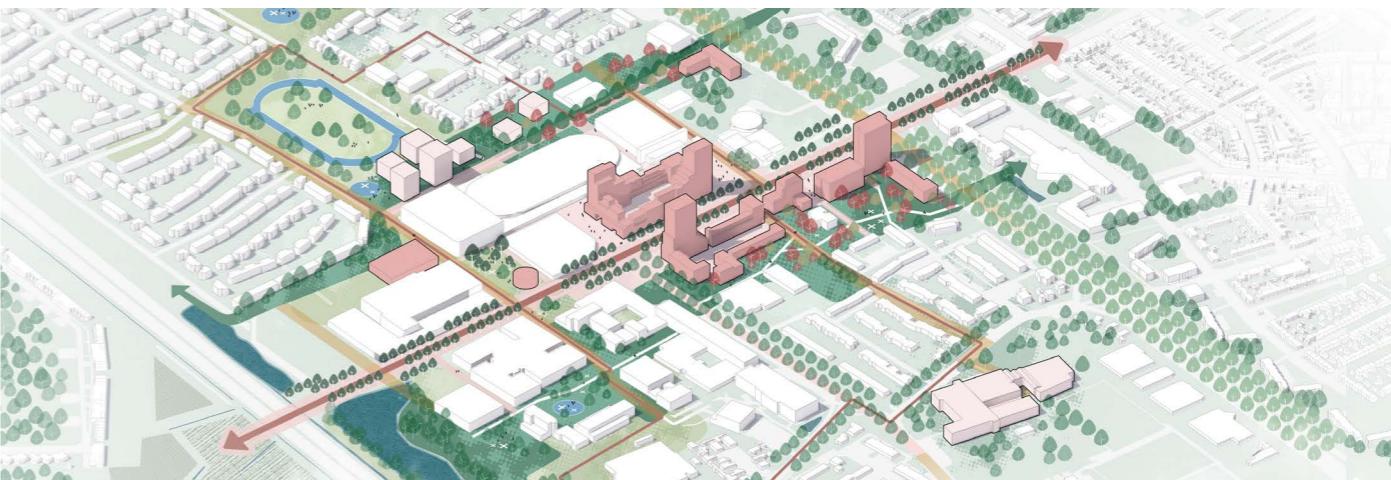
establishes a high-density yet livable environment, prioritizing connectivity with the surrounding city. The design creates a cohesive ensemble, with robust edge buildings framing the site and all high-quality outdoor spaces concentrated at the heart of the development.

The district is structured around a vibrant, pedestrian-only promenade that connects HUGO to the city. Cultural and public functions line this route, creating an active urban spine. Mobility is resolved sustainably through carefully integrated above ground parking shared by two plots, allowing public space to remain fully car-free. A collective rooftop garden above supports

social life, greenery, and a healthy microclimate.

The accompanying design guidelines emphasize a clear visual relationship with the Koelhuis while allowing variation and vitality at the ground level. Expressive bridges and staircases connecting the inner courtyard enhance legibility, create playful urban moments, and reinforce the creative identity of the area.

Hugo demonstrates how careful urban design can combine high density with sustainability, social cohesion, and cultural vibrancy, shaping a new district where living, working, and creativity coexist in harmony.



Stappegoor

Located south of Tilburg's city centre, Stappegoor is being developed into a vibrant area for living, working, studying, sports and leisure. At the heart of our vision is the transformation of Stappegoorweg from a barrier into a connector: where this major traffic artery once separated neighbourhoods, the plan now links them together, strengthening the cohesion of the district.

An integral mobility plan is embedded within this "from barrier to connector" approach,

New and improved public spaces act as anchor points in the urban fabric, while strategically placed height accents and building blocks improve orientation and serve as beacons throughout the neighbourhood. By connecting these spaces with dedicated pedestrian and cycling routes, the plan enhances both livability and legibility of the area.

ensuring that movement within and through Stappegoor is safe, accessible and sustainable for all users.

The mix of functions creates the foundation for a true centre for Stappegoor: a lively, green urban district that is pleasant to inhabit and visit, both day and evening. We are now in the final phase of completing the urban plan and look forward to collaborating with all stakeholders on the next steps.

DOX Mahler

DOX Mahler sets the tone for Tilburg North. It will be a great place to live among the trees of the Mahlerstraat. It will be a place for everyone. For young and old. Regardless of whether you have a modest or a larger wallet. Tilburg Noord is a special and diverse neighborhood that is going to change. The municipality of Tilburg wants about 5,000 new houses in North. This transformation goes hand in hand with improvements such as more greenery, better accessibility and space for everyone to live safely and healthy. DOX Mahler is a development by Onorthodox and Piaget Development, with the municipality of Tilburg.

Brainpark

Brainpark Rotterdam is being developed into a vibrant new city district centered around a park and promenade, with approximately 3,500 modern apartments alongside offices, shops and amenities such as dining, sports and healthcare. The central park with ponds forms a green heart for recreation and social interaction, connecting the district's various elements. Our role included Urban Development Plan Phase 1 & 2, Masterplan support and preparing the Design Review Statement, creating a seamless connection from the subway and Erasmus Campus to the promenade.



Lowering the threshold

Lectures, serious games and quizzes. In order to meet the Paris Agreement we need to join forces and share knowledge across the entire construction sector. Jump on the bandwagon and let's do this together!



Collaboration as key to success

In the serious game Climate Positive M4H, participants gain insights about the means to facilitate climate-positive environments. The game makes tangible how emission, compensation and storage

resources (such as nature, building, mobility) relate to each other and what has much, and what has little effect. Great to see how this game triggers discussion about climate-positive environments!

Participants of the game will collectively aim to score as many points as possible for living

quality - based on the 8 principles from the Spatial Framework M4H -, to emit as little CO2 as possible and to store CO2 where possible.

The serious game continues to work as a very effective tool to get grip on the effects of certain measures and to have a well informed discussion on building climate positive environments.

Inspiration sessions

Set in the exhibition 'How to build' we hosted many inspiration sessions on how to reduce CO2 emissions in our built environment. Ranging from architecture students and policymakers from Baltimore, Rotterdam and Amsterdam to Paris Proof sessions for institutional investors and the Dutch team of an international leading engineering company.



Folkert van Hagen

Marit Jonse



Lectures

Bringing the public up to speed on their carbon knowledge: scope of the problem, built environment as part of the solution, anticipating legislation, systemic transitions, carbon calculation methods. We shared our research up to now in various compositions and approaches. From sharing lessons learnt during FuckUp Night at the Nieuwe Instituut to more specific lectures for the Municipality of Baltimore, Bartlett School and KU Leuven.

Carbon quiz

The built environment accounts for about 40 percent of global CO2 emissions. What is the situation exactly? How can we achieve a climate-positive built environment? In our Carbon quiz you will discover how much you know about the possibilities and impossibilities of CO2-negative building. Gaining knowledge over drinks. Can you think of a better combination? Stay tuned for the next edition!

Sustainable 50 nominee

Willem van Genugten has been nominated for the ABN AMRO Sustainable 50 of 2025, an annual list recognizing professionals who actively drive the sustainability transition in the Netherlands. His nomination underlines the growing importance of architects in shaping a resilient and future-proof built environment, where vision, collaboration and design play a crucial role.

Through his work, Willem is dedicated to accelerating the transition toward a sustainable

built environment, with a strong focus on CO2 reduction and carbon storage. His approach demonstrates how thoughtful design choices can directly contribute to creating climate-positive buildings and spaces.

The nomination is a well-deserved recognition of Willem's commitment, as well as of all pioneers working daily toward a more sustainable future. We also congratulate architect colleague Paul de Ruiter on winning the award and Jip van Grinsven from Alba Concepts on receiving the Young Professional award.



Lessons learnt, lessons shared

Interviews, articles, conferences, podcasts, round tables. We enjoyed being out there and continue this in 2026!



"Architects really no longer have an excuse not to build CO2-consciously."

- Willem van Genugten at Klimaattop GO

Bureau Stoer podcast: Architects lead

In episode two of Bureau Stoer, Willem van Genugten, architect and sustainable business developer at GROUP A, flips the script: "Architects really no longer have an excuse not to build CO2-consciously."

From the Klimaattop GO, he joined Boris van der Gijp (Achmea Real Estate) and Jan Willem van de Groep (Building Balance) to explore how market and government can drive CO2-friendly design. Hosted by Thomas van Belzen, the episode is full of practical insights for anyone building in tune with the planet.

Listen here: <https://lnkd.in/ewRvk44b>

Making city in M4H

"Remember, as a property owner and developer, you have to organize a lot. You have to unite as a group, make investments, operate and maintain the property. The municipality won't do that for you."

- Folkert van Hagen

City makers are a familiar phenomenon in the Netherlands. These are spatially and socially oriented professionals who, beyond their core work, actively contribute to the development of their urban environment. Folkert van Hagen almost daily welcomes groups—ranging from mayors and policymakers of national and international municipalities to developers, journalists and university representatives—to share insights on the cooperative development approach at the Keilepand and Keilekwartier.

You are always welcome at the Keilepand, where Folkert will gladly share his perspectives.



Amsteloever in focus at Provada

Amsteloever Takes Center Stage
At Provada 2025, Amsteloever's bold new vision was revealed: striking high-rises where timber, reuse, and sustainability meet along the Amstel.

The session featured inspiring insights from Don Murphy (VMX Architects), Willem van Genugten (Carbonlab), Maarten Lever (GROUP A) and Robbert Rogge (Ballast Nedam Development).

We wrapped up with the Hoogbouwborrel—a lively moment for networking, sharing ideas and looking ahead. Proud to showcase our collaborative efforts in creating a vibrant, future-ready "Paris Proof" densification project!



Regulations driving timber construction

Sustainability is no longer a buzzword—it's reshaping how we build. In HoutbouwCast #11, Willem van Genugten, founder of CarbonLab, joins Eric D. de Munck to decode the rules driving Europe's timber construction revolution. From Paris Proof and MPG to LCAs, EPDs and the CSRD, they break down the complex regulations shaping a low-carbon future.

Willem shares his hands-on experience translating these standards into real-world projects, highlighting the challenges, the opportunities and why building with wood has never been more exciting. The conversation is upbeat, insightful and full of optimism for a more sustainable built environment.

Catch the episode on Het Houtblad website: hetoutblad.nl/



Shaping the next chapter

In 2026, GROUP A celebrates its 30th anniversary—a milestone that marks three decades of practice and a moment to look forward. Since its founding, the studio has evolved continuously, driven by the belief that shaping future-proof cities requires a collaborative spirit.



Farewell to Adam Visser

Last year marked a transition. Partner and co-founder Adam Visser has stepped down due to health reasons. Adam has been a driving force behind our vision and his integrated approach to architecture and urbanism has left a lasting imprint.

Maarten and Folkert: "From day one, Adam has been a key figure within GROUP A. His sharp eye for the city, his dedication to complex

challenges, and ability to connect people have been of great value. We are deeply grateful for his years of commitment, collaboration and friendship."

Adam continues his work through Atelier Stadsontwerp.

Shaping the future together

To mark the anniversary, the team held workshops exploring the question: who do we want to be in five years, as a practice and as a team?

These conversations produced a shared framework for our ambitions, ways of working, and organizational structure, providing clear direction for the years ahead and ensuring GROUP A remains resilient, relevant and adaptable in a changing world.

With gratitude for the past and focus on the future, GROUP A moves forward. 30 years behind us, a future ahead.

Stay tuned for more!

About GROUP A

We are GROUP A. An office for architecture, interior design and urban design located in the Keilepad Rotterdam. Founded back in 1996 by partners Maarten van Bremen, Folkert van Hagen and Adam Visser, we are now a solid team of twenty designers and five staff members. Our work has been rewarded with various prizes, including the Frame Award, IF Award and Green Building Award.

In the past thirty years we have realized a wide range of projects. From offices to housing and from mobility to transformations. In our work, urban planning, architecture and interior design are inextricably linked. This allows us to design environments in which people live, work and reside comfortably in balance with the ecosystem.

In our work we feel responsible for the entire process, from design to completion. Optimism and pragmatism, with attention for the social process, characterize the way we do this. With a committed and ambitious team we design smart and distinctive solutions by overseeing the whole scope, zooming in on details and keeping the user in mind at all times.

About Carbonlab

Carbonlab, a think tank of GROUP A, explores the possibilities of climate-positive design at all scales and in all design phases. We investigate the implications for the construction industry of laws and regulations to combat climate change. We calculate the CO2 emissions of projects, from urban planning models to testing material choices. Each study yields answers and follow-up questions. This is how we develop our knowledge at a rapid pace.

We also drive an interdisciplinary dialogue through which we contribute to developing a common ground within the construction sector. By means of the Carbon Stories series of debates in which we explore the CO2 issue in the building sector in depth, as well as through workshops with architects, cost experts, engineers and software developers. In this way we learn from each other and accelerate the transition to a climate-positive built environment.

Carbonlab is the breeding ground for practical implementation in ongoing and new GROUP A projects. By combining research and practice, we stimulate the transition of the built environment involving all disciplines in the building sector.

Follow us

Website	groupa.nl
LinkedIn	linkedin.com/company/group-a-architects
Instagram	instagram.com/grouparotterdam
Youtube	youtube.com/@groupalive

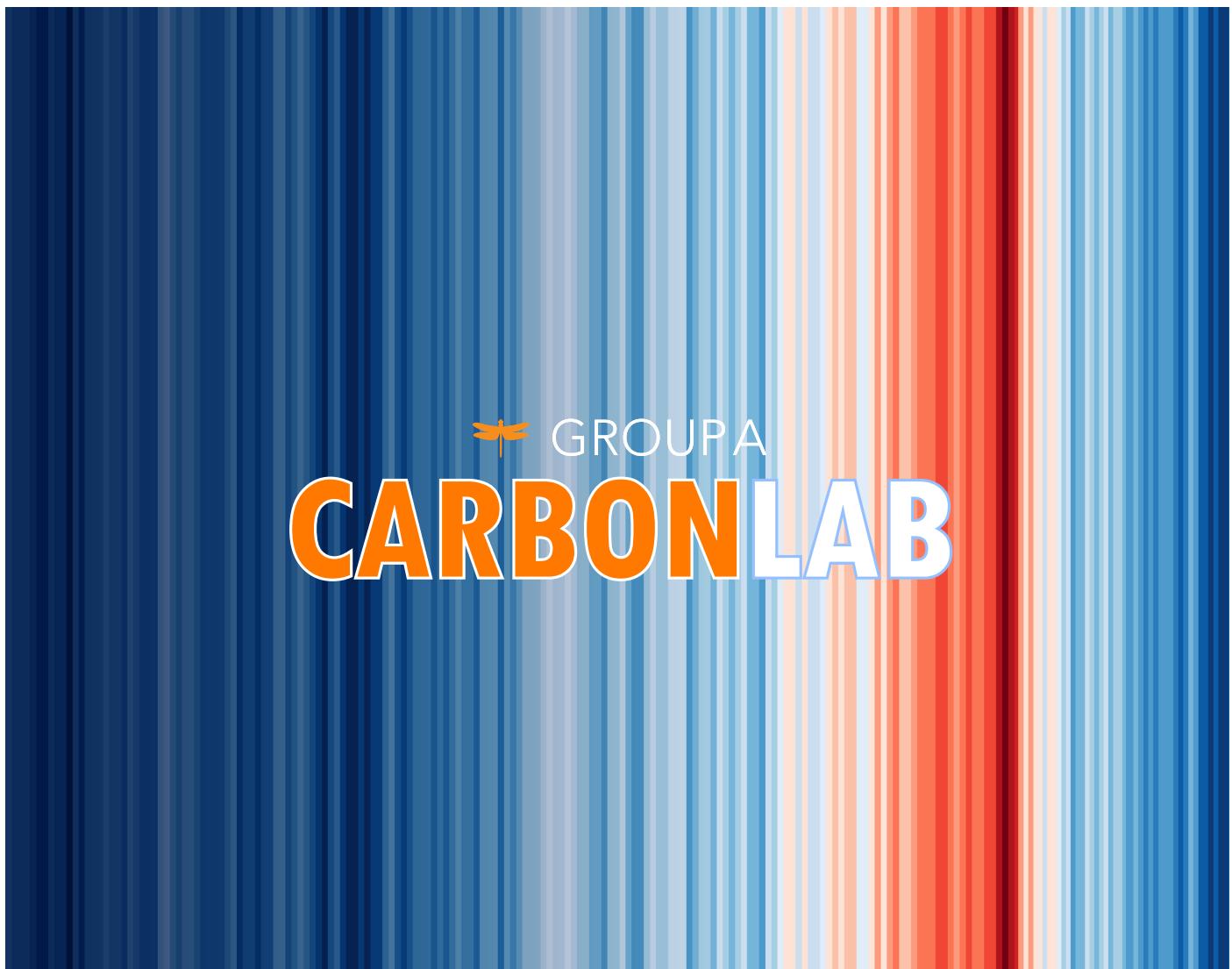
Credits

Blueroom (Source: showyourstripes by Ed Hawkins)	Gemeente Rotterdam
De Buik	GROUP A
De Urbanisten	Iwan Baan (Fenix Tornado)
DigiDaan	Jacqueline Fuijkschot
Eric Fecken	Joni Israeli (source: Bureau Spoorbouwmeester)
Frank Hanswijk	Frank Hanswijk
	Margarita Kouvatou

PF Visual	Quoker
Ronald Tilleman	Sabine van der Vooren
Sam Wullems	YuconVR
ZesxZes	

PROVADA 2026

We're thrilled to announce that we'll be back at the DГ©bГ©e des Galeries de la Bourse's Paris Proof Plein this June during PROVADA 2026, and we would love to meet you there! Fancy a Carbon Chat? Reach out, and we'll gladly schedule a time to connect. See you at PROVADA!



Curious?

Not attending PROVADA this year but want to see what GROUP A and Carbonlab are up to?

Please contact us and schedule a visit and meet us at Keilepand.

We'd love to show you our latest projects and ideas.

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