

## KAAN Architecten designs New Amsterdam Courthouse

**KAAN Architecten has won the commission to design the New Amsterdam Courthouse. The building will be located at the intersection of the Zuidas and Parnassusweg, where the present judicial complex will be demolished. The new building is to be completed in 2020. In the meantime, the law courts will be temporarily housed elsewhere in the neighbourhood. With a staff of 1.000, including 200 judges and 800 professionals, as well as many daily visitors and the processing of 150.000 cases a year, the Courthouse of Amsterdam is the largest in the Netherlands.**

The preliminary design is a stately, open structure which offers both employees and visitors views over the city, and passers-by the opportunity to engage with the building. KAAAN Architecten understands that justice is a public affair of the highest importance. This primary feature determines the building's form, which means that it will be distinguished and accessible.

The courthouse building will be exemplary in its efficiency, like the organisation itself, and be part of the daily life surrounding it. Natural design consequences of this are the big windows at the ground floor as well as the entrance courtyard intended for public use. The city's streets merge with the layout of the building. The forecourt, the central hall and its foyers, and the waiting areas for visitors are an extension of urban space. Of course, the building's users will not be 'on display'. Visitors will find sheltered spots; judges, court clerks and ministerial representatives will have their own screened-off routes.

Inside, just off the central hall, the building will have two independent structures with 50 courtrooms and council chambers, all provided with daylight. The large ground-floor courtroom, for cases that attract a large number of visitors, has been designed with a direct access route that is separate from the central entranceway, so as not to disturb ongoing proceedings. The building will have several gardens. The central hall with escalator will border an enclosed garden, shielded by a glass wall. Vertical gardens will climb through the building among the offices. And in the western part, a sunken garden will supply daylight to the lower floor. A large terrace will also provide 50 workstations with connections.

KAAN Architecten is undertaking works for the New Amsterdam Courthouse as part of a consortium which includes Macquarie Capital, ABT, DVP, construction companies Heijmans and M.J. de Nijs & Zonen, and Facilicom. A 30-year DBFMO (Design Build Finance Maintain Operate) contract, established upon commission by the Rijksvastgoedbedrijf (Central Government Real Estate Agency), forms the basis of this public-private partnership (PPP).

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