



The floor accommodates the two storey high court rooms but it is also surrounded by an external and comfortable layer for the attending audience of the court. This layer is completely glazed and provides a direct view to the entrances of the interior court rooms. At night it seems this public area is floating above the ground, at day the prominence of this storey is also accented by the interruption of the facades.



In so doing, the new law courts of Caen in Northern France communicate a message to its users and passer-byes: It is the message of transparency, of a stringent shape and essential architectural means. Therefore it is not so far away from what a European civilization expects from jurisdiction. But our civilization today expects even more from a building – it should simply add to the longevity of our world. The buildings sustainable strategy at Caen is driven by two axis: the project offers both high comfort to the users and optimal energy performance.

The passive and active strategies ensure the building to achieve low energy consumption: a very compact volume, a double skin façade system and a bioclimatic atrium helps to reduce heat loss while increasing thermal inertia; geothermal heat pump brings both heating and cooling by using renewable energy. Materials were selected for their sanitary qualities and low impact on the environment. Rainwater harvesting, natural ventilation of the waiting hall and a global bioclimatic conception are many elements which will help the building to reach this sustainable challenge.

