



BEELD: DIRK VERWOERD

## LANDSCAPE MEANDER MEDICAL CENTRE

Meander Medical Centre occupies the site of a former mobilisation depot for defence, which was decommissioned after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The site is transformed into a park-like area that connects to the surrounding pastures, which extend from Lake Eem to the centre of Amersfoort. The Eem River and Grebbe Line (waterway that formed part of the Dutch Water Line defence network) form important elements of the site's heritage.

### Interaction

Building on this site required an approach that respected its natural and cultural heritage. The design utilises the main opportunity of the site by allowing the landscape to penetrate deep into the building. The provision of green surroundings together with the building's human scale results in a comfortable environment for patients, visitors and staff to stay and work. The play between architecture and landscape resulted in an interwoven relationship between the building, surrounding parkland and the landscape beyond. In other words, it's a place that de-stresses, and thereby contributes to a healing environment. Trees and plantings on the existing site were retained as much as possible. Instead of being a massive monolithic block, the building comprises a number of smaller sections that

invite the landscape into the building between. Nature and building are closely intertwined.

### Logistics

In this way, the transition in scale from outside to inside occurs gradually. Alongside the areas for visitors and patients, the logistics side was also considered in detail, whereby ambulances and goods vehicles are directed to one side of the building that is partially located under structure. The visitors' car park is placed underground to visually free up the landscape from cars. Beside the access road is the dedicated staff car park, with a striking facade that is clad with tree trunks and climbing plants to integrate the building into the landscape. DS landschapsarchitecten designed the landscape a modest planting scheme that allows the nature to take over and features an engaging walking route with viewing points – these green spaces along the water suggest a bucolic atmosphere. For the purposes of the required water retention, one section of the original course of the Eem River was restored - a historical nod to the heritage of the site.

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