GRAND-PRE 2013 - 2019

Construction of apartments rue du Grand-PrÃ© in Berchem-Sainte-Agathe.



Site
26-28 rue du Grand-PrÃ© 1082 Brussels

Client
Group Bouwen

Structural engineer
Stubeco

Services engineer
BM Engineering

Contractor
/

Budget
/ EUR htva

PEB
Ibam

Credit photo
StokkStudio

Affordable homes inside Brussels' city limits are hard to find, whether for families or singles. Grand Pres is an attempt to bring at least a small-scale answer, with forty homes proposed from one-room flats to three-bedroom duplexes. These are organized around a shared central patio, filled with sunlight. Courtyard acccess to housing bestows a community feel to the ensemble, a little something special, adding to the post-industrial feel already present : the long-time abandonned site was once home to Galvunie Manufacturing, complete with an impressive 50m high century-old brick chimney that still marks the neighborhood.

Requalification of the plot therefore inherits this past awareness, but its organisation is all but traditionnal. Communal open-air gangways mix with covered passageways and a few intimately scaled private entrances, garden-side. Massing simply continues existing alignments, with roof pitches creating a lively rythmic skyline. Living quarters under these shed roofs are qualified with double-height space and see-through mezzanines, some overlooking the street and some overlooking the listed green zone south.

The end result is an unpretentious but courteous extension of existing urban fabric. Balconies, stairwells, porches and all carefully designed unbuilt space generate a coherent whole with distinctive character.