SQUARE DE MEEUS 2012 - 2015

Refurbishment of an existing 1970's office building Square de MeeÃ»s in Brussels



Site
Square de MeeÃ»s, 8 1050 Brussels

Client
KanAm Grund

Structural engineer
Setesco

Services engineer
CES sa

Contractor
Valens - CFE sa

Budget
57 450 000 EUR htva

Project Manager
FORUM sa

The Square de Meeus site is located in the heart of the LÃ©opold quarter on one of the most stunning neo-classical ensembles within the Brussels city-center. Home to the headquarters of almost all important European institutions, real estate pressure here is at its maximum. The building itself dates from the mid-1970s as its bronze faÃ§ade testifies, occupied by offices from the outset. Following close examination of the client's brief, three possible options are simulated: Heavy Refurb, New Build, and Light Refurb.

Heavy Refurb includes an array of necessary measures specifically aimed at boosting energy efficiency, such as a new envelope. The existing relationship between the built mass and the park still works well today, but the back of the building registers as autistic, warranting a consequent make-over of the site's unbuilt perimeter as well, aiming at a better relation with context.

New Build entails demolition and all the pollution that goes with it, but, who wants 18-metre-deep floor plates nowadays anyway? Starting from scratch offers the freedom to propose a real urban connector, with true positive impact; a living urban machine, albeit a respectful one requalifying the block's perimeter, especially important on the Rue du TrÃ´ne which as we speak presents a totally de-constructed gruyere-like streetfront. Ideal building depth tends towards optimal efficiency in terms of viability, flexibility, use, circulation, light, energy, ...

The client has chosen to opt for Light Refurb. Key improvements are nevertheless undertaken, mainly concerning the building's technical systems, offering greater user-comfort and energy efficiency. Finally, extensive efforts have been made to bring the building up to code concerning Belgian fire-safety regulations.