

A19H 2014

Competition : NZEB Offices rue Joseph II in Brussels.



Site
rue joseph II - boulevard des arts 19H Brussels

Client
Cofinimmo

Structural engineer
Arcadis

Services engineer
Arcadis

Budget
18 000 000 EUR htva

A19H explores the introvert as well as the extrovert relationship we experience with our environment, this choice corner site lending itself perfectly to the exercise.

At street level, the built volume is high-ceilinged, emphatically transparent and open in order to merge with the sunny and verdant inner space of the parcel.

The upper levels follow a strict 8.10m x 8.10m grid pattern offering minimal structural encumbrance and maximum flexibility (single or multiple tenant). The central core located in the building's fold is pared down in its simplicity, defining informal meeting areas and coffee corners. Moving towards the building's periphery, dialogue with the outside world is of two sorts : extrovert, through the immense, full-height bay windows ; or introvert, curled up comfortably in a window seat. These welcoming 'bubbles' emerge from the facade offering an extension to the workspaces in the form of little havens for reading, reflecting, settling down for a moment, part of street-space but with our backs snuggled up to it, in a protective, enveloping pod covered in soft high-performance acoustic material. A full 50% of the facade is indeed given over to glass, the other 50% to these pods which fully participate in the solar protection of the entire facade due to their shade-creating offset position over each glass section. In addition, the pods are covered in photovoltaic material thus actively participating in necessary energy production which, associated with geothermal systems, allows the building to reach required NZEB standards.

With this syncopated rhythm, the dynamic volumes express the dichotomy of how we relate to the world. Here, sustainability is about much more than low-energy this or minimum footprint that. It is about consciously deciding to take a look at what we produce from a new vista ; it is about extrovertly connecting with the world, about being open to new ideas ... but also about disconnecting, introvertly taking time to stop and THINK. Sustainability is thus first and foremost about new think-modes.

