

Reims-France-europan 11 A NEW DISTRICT ON AN ABANDONED UNIVERSITY SITE



Aerial large view

CATEGORY : urban/architectural

LOCATION : Reims - Moulin de la Housse

POPULATION : 181 500 inhab. (city) ; 220 000 inhab. (agglomeration)

STRATEGIC SITE : 75 ha

SITE OF PROJECT : 30 ha

SITE PROPOSED BY : Communauté d'agglomération Reims Métropole and the city of Reims

OWNER OF THE SITE : City of Reims, Réseau Ferré de France, Université de Reims

COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION

Urban scheme for the strategic site and architectural development on the project site.

TRANSFORMATION OF SITE

The Moulin de la Housse campus is a single-function 1960s university complex. This site will become derelict in the near future, because the municipality is planning to group all its university facilities in the south of the city. This means that this area, with its size, history and location on the edge of the city, offers a unique opportunity to develop an ambitious scheme for a district to the east of the Reims conurbation.

CITY STRATEGY

Once the campus is empty, Reims municipality wants to build a new district. It plans to promote new ways of living here, with a programmatic mix (housing, businesses and services), high-quality public spaces and a wide variety of housing typologies (dense individual housing, intermediate housing, small apartment buildings). Taking a new public railway service as its starting point, it wishes to begin a process of eco-responsible urbanisation, extending to the whole campus site and the areas around Avenue Farman, by developing a neighbourhood with an innovative urban character, which will become a distinctive element of the metropolis.

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Strategic site



Site of project

SITE DEFINITION

The Moulin de la Housse campus stands on a high point, with open horizons to the south and east. It is currently underused and isolated and its buildings are ageing. It is an “university wasteland”, which possesses a layout and symbolism that, in the medium term, are available for the development of a new district. The campus is bounded to the north by a railway that gives direct access to the city centre, where a train stop is planned at the location of a former bridge. A big rectangle of vineyards is still under cultivation halfway between the campus and Avenue Farman: the presence of agriculture within the city is one of the features of eastern Reims (the Maison de Champagne and Parc de Champagne vineyards are nearby).

NEW MOBILITY

The district will develop in direct relation with the future railway station, which will play a unifying role for the whole site. More than a simple transport service, it will be a new urban hub accommodating services associated with different forms of transport (self-service rental bikes, car sharing, park-and-ride, direct railway links to the city centre), together with local services and shops, all of which establishes identity as the seed of the new district.

NEW WAYS OF LIFE

The municipality wants to provide first-time buyer housing as an alternative to the detached housing estates that are eating into Reims’ rural landscapes. The remit is to offer innovative proposals (new overlaps between interior and exterior, new interweaving and interconnections

between housing, services and work, new generational mixes).

NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The aim is to combine urban intensity with the presence of nature, to think about the morphological challenges of density by designing a neighbourhood in which the organic and the built intermingle. Projects should seek new synergies between programmes to promote new social dynamics, new environmental efficiencies, with the aim of building a district that is energy efficient and has a near-zero ecological footprint.

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