



scenic view from the railway - photography Jeroen Verrecht

KLEIN RIJSEL, LEUVEN

- residential development of the Leuven railway station area
- architectural design of 45 social housing units and 22 homes with social benefits for starters, underground car park and surrounding landscaping
- urban development study of the project area close to the the city centre of Leuven
- project in accordance to the law on public procurement
- winning project of an architectural competition

STUDY

2010 - 2011 (study of the urban development)
2012 - 2013 (architectural study)

REALISATION

2016 - 2019

CLIENT

AGSL - VMSW - DIJLEDAL

DESIGN TEAM

Association of Engineering Offices:
Abscis - A2D

LOCATION

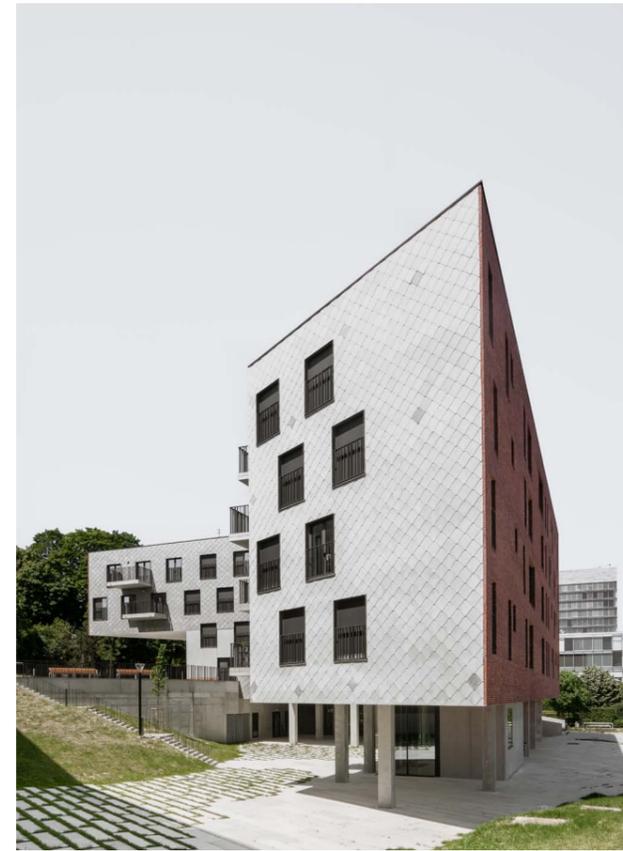
Klein Rijselstraat
3000 LEUVEN

GROSS AREA

7 800 m² (gebouwen) en
85 000 m² (terreinen)

COST PRICE

€ 12 643 000
excl. VAT and fees



photography Jeroen Verrecht

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The building site, situated parallel to the railroad tracks of the Leuven train station, is in many ways remarkable. It's located within walking distance to the station, which is undergoing large scale developments, but it also seamlessly connects to the smaller scale residential area of 'Klein Rijssel'.

The client's ambition was to build a large amount of social housing as well as private homes, both with underground parking, surrounded by a collective garden accessible to the public. This wasn't an easy task as the topography of the site, as well as the urban plan 'BPA Westelijke Spoorweggeul', imposed certain parameters and limitations to the site.

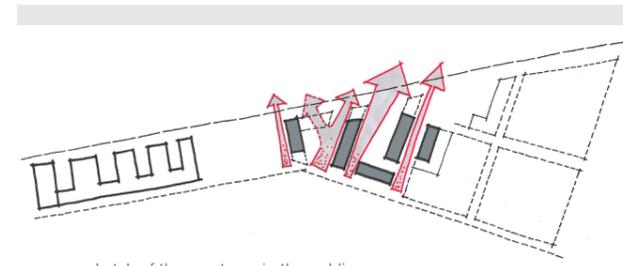
Abcis Architecten en A2D architecture 2 design collaborated on this project. In many ways the design tries to be an answer to the contemporary quest of quality urbanisation, specifically on a site surrounded by a clash of different scale developments. On one hand we have the large scale office developments as a result of the restructuring of the train station area. On the other hand we have small(er) scale residential projects in the 'Klein Rijssel' neighbourhood with singular family homes. The public space around these houses isn't yet at its full potential, which is why the new project tried to elevate the area not only by quality architecture, but also by bringing the surrounding area to the next level. In this manner, the 'Klein Rijssel' project functions as a bridge between both parts of the city – its function is to be the glue between the different scales of the surroundings.

The design functions as a transition between the linear developments next to the railway and the smaller buildings of the 'Klein Rijssel' neighbourhood by their positioning and scale. It also addresses this predicament on a smaller level. On the side of the 'Boulevardstaat' the size of the design aligns with the scale of the adjacent buildings, whereas on the other side, near the 'Provinciehuis', a more robust volume is required to make a proper connection.

The topography as is imposed a tough challenge. The buildings were intelligently placed in order to take full advantage of the positive aspects of the existing landscape.

The building that houses the administration centre, creates a rhythm of patio's and outdoor rooms along the railway, and debouches into a larger garden. The new design mimics this by providing public gardens between the new buildings. They each have their own identity that sculpt the landscape, all the while creating unity along the railroad tracks.

The concept of implementing outdoor rooms is a direct juxtaposition of the more linear designed Belle Vue park on the other side of the railway. The way one approaches the site, with its views and impressions, is an important element in defining the quality of the design on the site. Approaching from the 'Klein Rijsselstraat', interesting views towards the railroad and the Belle Vue park emerge between the new buildings. Some of these buildings are slightly elevated in order to optimize the outlook.



sketch of the apertures in the public space

scale model (implantation)

