

PONT-AVEN (FR)

THE INVISIBILITY OF THE VISIBLE

The invisible is the thread of the narrative, the place from which the story was born; it takes shape beyond the vision, through perception and intuition. A world drawn in dots, in transparency, revealing an invisible hidden in the neutrality and anonymity of everyday life, hidden in the simplicity of things.

«I'm talking about a world where at the same time you can see everything without seeing it, because everything emerges and hides and shows and dims» (Italo Calvino)

1. CONCEPT

The story begins with the identification of those elementary and manifest components that have always embodied the spirit of the territory of the Aven determining its character: water, stone and wood.

These, besides being objective entities, also have an intangible configuration loaded with symbolic values that can be traced, for example, in the ancient cult of nature proper to the Celtic populations.

Water, stone and wood are therefore materials of a collective consciousness, shaped by the action of man and his stories. They are the narrative structure of Pont Aven that can be found in its mills, old wash-houses and traditional architecture.

By breaking down the limits that separate it from its context and introducing the natural components within the project, the Belle Angèle is transformed from a static sequence into a new chapter of the narrative in which nature and construction are the expression of the same language.

Unlike the artistic heritage created by the School of Pont Aven that over the years has transformed the natural landscape into an object of contemplation, the project sees nature as a resource, a dynamic reality that becomes the protagonist of the narrative.

In this sense, the landscape becomes a fabric of concrete relationships that involves men and the environment, and not a mere fragment of nature. This interaction contributes to the genetic development of animal and plant species and promotes the increase of biodiversity.

A landscape that bears witness to the remains of an industrial past that preserves traces of a way of production surpassed by the advance of history. A fluid and constantly moving landscape in which nature reappears in its spaces.



Water



Stone



Wood

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2. URBAN PLANNING AND OPERATION FUNCTIONALITY

The project consists of a strategy of urban and architectural regeneration that, starting from the operational perimeter of the former industrial site «Belle Angèle», develops a path of sustainability in support of the city of Pont Aven and extending to the whole territory.

The idea is to consider the project area as an «agent» that can facilitate the triggering of urban processes of circularity and not merely as a «context» to be retrained.

The system, conceived on the basis of the theme *Villes vivantes*, offers concrete opportunities to improve the efficiency of natural resources and reduce environmental impacts. The definition of matter and energy flows allows a flexible and functional use of «des milieux».

- We therefore speak «des milieux» to define the interaction between architecture and the cultural, economic, geographical ecosystems that support it, not only of the place, but also of the outside world, aware of the global character of the world we occupy-

The design strategy therefore provides for the restoration of the former industrial area with its context eliminating the urban corridor of the front street and creating a landscape and dynamic path along the river. In order to increase the resilience of the city and improve the life of its inhabitants, we propose a strengthening of urban ecosystems services (clean air, water purification, landscape) through a regeneration of natural capital.

The stitches take place through a series of green infrastructures, natural and semi-natural, which allow to renaturalize the urban hydrographic networks and the connection of green areas inside and outside the city, also favouring greater permeability and fertility of the soil, a decrease in hydrogeological risk and climate regulation within heat islands.

Sustainable mobility geared towards accessibility is also promoted. The Belle Angèle road is equipped with cycle paths connected with the centre and the main nature trails that wind from the Bois d'Amour.

In addition, with the aim of decongesting the city centre in summer and given the need for rest areas, the area to the south, leaning against the hill Saint Marguerite, becomes a large «forest» parking lot at the gates of the city.

This overcomes the simple transformation of portions of soil into spaces for the storage of vehicles, to propose an area with an intrinsic landscape and environmental value, expression of a multifunctional that is able to create rest and overnight areas for campers, spaces where you can rent bicycles, car parks and buses surrounded by greenery.

All this using the Miyawaki method, an exemplary technology conceived in Japan that allows to create dense natural forests even in urban areas in a very short time.

With regard to the redevelopment of the buildings we foresee a recovery intervention for the only sheds located at the ends of the West and East sides through the consolidation of existing structures and the insertion of modular and self-supporting prefabricated components.

The buildings in the West are home to an innovation hub, focused on Food Design and local products.

This includes greenhouses with aquaponics systems dedicated to the production of local varieties, vegetables, animals and an entire building in which co-operatives (amap) coexist, dining spaces and experimental laboratories.

In the East, we find an Art Work Space, a centre of residence and production of the arts that uses culture as a tool intertwining with different fields including tourism, crafts, design, education, thus contributing to the creation of lateral thinking and cultural biodiversity.

It is designed as an interactive and dynamic place that connects work and residential spaces. In fact, in the same building there are residences for artists (each with a private atelier) and productive spaces.

Art Work Space is designed to be crossed every year by dozens of artists and creatives from all over the world, supported in every respect: from curatorial to productive (through residences, availability of equipped rooms and technical assistance, co-working areas), but also practical (management, organisational, fundraising and administrative support assistance, national and international production and networking). By virtue of its trans-sectoral vocation, it attracts and contributes to the growth of entrepreneurial realities and hybrid projects with a strong character of experimentation.

At the East end of the Art work space, we have a large workshop dedicated to the recycling of building materials.

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A space for the recovery, classification, storage and reuse of the same. Installed from the early stages of the construction site for the recovery of materials derived from demolitions, it becomes the material and ideological support to artistic creation.

A place that could embody the first cell of a territorial scale system. A resource for the city of Pont Aven that has to manage the constraints imposed by the Loi littoral (limitation construction of new buildings) increasingly directing its policies towards a reconversion of the existing.

-We should not think of re-use as a radical innovation, but rather as the reactivation of a virtuous and simple approach. (...) We have everything to gain from starting and testing new things-
Rotor, the neighborhood factory

The heart of the project is conceived as a large garden where elements that bear witness to the industrial past of the area and mirrors of water coexist. It's the space of interaction par excellence, a break in the built, a point of view towards the Aven and the Bois d' Amour.

In this context, there is a health and sports centre and small residences ideal for young families integrated with commercial services.

3. ENERGY-ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

The design process has aimed at integrating environmental and energy sustainability aspects through different design strategies:

- optimising energy performance and comfort of environments;
- focusing on dry systems to optimise reconstruction and end-of-life management of building components;
- the use of renewable materials.

In the restoration of the existing buildings, a philosophy of conservation and functional restoration of the metal frame was adopted, completely removing the original roof, replaced by a better thermal performance.

The interiors are characterized by self-supporting solid wood structural modules with cross layers, insulated and buffered with OSB and plasterboard plates. Installed in the double-height space of the former industrial building, they constitute a real urban front surrounded by nature given the presence of internal gardens and in continuous visual connection with the outside thanks to the large openings. The distinction between metal and wood also alludes to a differentiation between old and new, between permanent and temporary.

The new volumes instead are a perfect combination of the concept of low-tech and vernacular stone building, typical of the South of Cornwall.

Exploiting the principle of thermal mass given by the thickness of the walls and floors and without the aid of heating, cooling and ventilation systems, it is possible to limit the thermal changes between inside and outside while maintaining a pleasant temperature and good air quality.

The casing therefore constitutes the identity of the building and determines excellent environmental energy performance.

-(...) if the accumulation of technological equipment in buildings makes them more energy efficient (with lower consumption), it also generates a high construction cost, which requires intensive maintenance. The idea is therefore to do with less, with nothing. To heat the building (consisting of offices and houses), do not need the heat pump, dual flow ventilation, the cooling system, it is sufficient to use only residual heat. The heating comes only from the residual heat of users, computers, lighting and solar radiation- Baumschlager Eberle

The project of the external areas has integrated several strategies in view of sustainability:

- the use of drainage materials for pedestrian and cycling urbanised areas;
- the use of clear materials with a high solar reflection index for outdoor paved surfaces and roofs in order to reduce the heat island effect;
- maximising green areas with a wide variety of species. There are interstitial gardens (1) where a spontaneous vegetation dominates which constitutes a secondary landscape (2);
- the control of wetlands by native aquatic plants used for phytoremediation and, of course, a large riparian vegetation reintroduced along the shore.

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(1) Interstitial or neglected space: Neglected spaces result from the abandonment of an activity. They naturally evolve into a secondary landscape. Gilles Clément, the third landscape

(2) The secondary landscape is characterised by strong dynamics. An abandoned place quickly welcomes pioneer species that soon disappear to the advantage of increasingly stable species until the achievement of a balance. The secondary landscapes are heterogeneous and chaotic. Gilles Clément, the third landscape

The project also considers waste water as a resource rather than a problem. The rainwater, collected in special tanks, is purified through a process of phytopurification and used in the process of aquaponics and aquaculture, and then be phyto-purified before being reintroduced into the environment. The same is true for waste water coming from the waste water system and for those linked to production areas, whose more voluminous purification system is designed in the area of large water tanks.

The project also aims to regenerate neighbourhood economies by promoting inclusion, participation in the decision-making processes of the city through the establishment of urban laboratories.

4. BUILDING SITE

Phase 1 (duration 1 year)

Land surveys and assessments

Construction of the site

Demolition of existing buildings identified by project

Consolidation works (roadside, river, foundations)

Urban workshops to involve the population in the implementation of the project

Phase 2 (duration 1 year)

Parking area and mill area detection demolition areas

Participation of citizens in the greening of areas

Parallel implementation of the river path and phytopurification areas

Phase 3 (duration 2 years)

Food area

Phase 4 (duration 2 years)

Central area: residences + health and wellness centre

Phase 5 (duration 2 years)

Art area and Work space