

## TOWN PLANNING | BRUSSELS CANAL |



The highest residential tower in Belgium will offer a rooftop viewing area, with controlled access.

Architectural variety is a feature of UP-site, with low-rise and high-rise compensating for each other.



# UP-Site

## THE PLACE TO BE

Occupying a strategic location on the east side of the canal in Brussels, UP-site is also just across this same canal from Tour & Taxis. Previously known by its project name of 'Premium', UP-site is a mixed use development which will have the effect of extending the North district of Brussels (the North Station is just a few hundred metres away), further west.

This project has been well supported by the Brussels public authorities, which designated the entire zone a 'zone of priority intervention' some twenty years ago, and it thus includes a good proportion of public spaces, along with mobility services. Within this concept of 'built-in mobility', new bus and tram lines are scheduled to serve the site from the North station, and continue on via Up-site into Tour & Taxis.

### Towers

In terms of constructed areas, UP-site will eventually (following four years of works which have now started), include the highest residential tower in Belgium – some 140 metres forming part of the 48,000 m<sup>2</sup> of residential accommodation – along with around 30,000 m<sup>2</sup> of offices, a retail element, and archives.

The office element of UP-site will be located in relatively low-rise buildings occupying a substantial proportion of the area along the canal-bank, surrounded by open and walking areas. They are described as 'new generation and not of austere external aspect'. Commenting on the choice of such a high residential tower, Atenor CEO Stéphan Sonnevillie said: "The tower is not the ultimate solution to all needs, but it remains a part of the solution, to be used sparingly". He also pointed out the difference between office towers and residential towers, saying that: "Office towers must above all be conceived around the major multi-modal public transport hubs, and the further you are from these services, the more necessary it is to build residential accommodation. For residential towers, the important factor here is to conceive them within projects of urban rehabilitation".

### The environment

Environmental concerns pervade UP-site, from the large green public areas, through to the architectural conception and the technologies used. In



Within the 'Priority Intervention Zone', public areas are a high priority and are designed to add conviviality to the projects underway.

terms of public areas, the developer is financing the renovation of the canal banks, with staircases being created to provide access to the water's edge. The architectural conception (by A2RC) has led to an open aspect to the entire site, not a 'closed lot' design. The canal plays a part in the overall project in other ways too. Water from it will be used to help in the heating and cooling of the buildings, diminishing energy requirements, and waste materials from the construction site will be evacuated by waterway. On top of this, green roofs, solar panels and co-generation of energy will all be incorporated in order to reduce energy needs and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in use. The offices will be classified as 'low energy'. Attention has also been paid to the renewable aspect of the constructions, so that conversion to other uses or renovation are future options, rather than what Stéphan Sonnevillie refers to as 'the dead-end of demolition'.

For the comfort of residents, certain 'lifestyle' elements are scheduled: a swimming pool, a children's playground, a crèche, a private projection room and a concierge service... A rooftop viewing area, with controlled access, is also to be included on the tower. And the apartments are also subject to a specifically drawn up 'owners charter', designed to avoid any problems of co-ownership in terms of servicing and repairs etc., in the future.

Tim HARRUP ■

Rendering: ARC Architects

### UP-Site Quai de Willebroeck 1020 Brussels

Developer	<b>Atenor</b>
Architects	<b>A2RC Architects, Les Ateliers Lion,</b>
Surface area	<b>1,2 ha</b>
Office buildings	<b>30,000 m<sup>2</sup></b>
Residential	<b>48,000 m<sup>2</sup></b>
Retail:	<b>2,000 m<sup>2</sup></b>
Start work	<b>2011</b>
Delivery	<b>Up to 2015</b>