



Open call for submissions for the architecture of a new residential quarter at Tour & Taxis

Brussels, 25th August 2021

Property developer Extensa continues the transformation of Tour & Taxis. Together with [Bouwmeester Maître Architecte](#), it is launching an open call to architecture firms for the second residential development on the site: Lake Side.

Extensa develops urban quarters that set the tone, characterised by the well-considered use of materials, state-of-the-art technologies and future-proof renewable energy concepts. Extensa responds to various urban, environmental and transport challenges with sustainable and innovative construction and renovation projects at Tour & Taxis.

For Lake Side, a new residential area, Extensa is looking for partners that share and are able to realise these ambitions. That's why Extensa today launches an open call to architecture firms, with the support of Bouwmeester Maître Architecte of Brussels for the development of a total area of 65,000m². The goal of this open call is to create a design team comprising four or five architecture firms. Each firm will be responsible for part of the project covering anything from 8,000m² to 20,000m² in association with the supervising architect. They will work with engineering offices and a local team that is specialised in sustainable development in accord with the urban development and architectural ambitions of Extensa and the Brussels-Capital Region.

Rotterdam firm MVRDV, which is responsible for the Lake Side masterplan, will take on the role of urban supervisor. It has drawn up the architectural quality and identity plan as a framework for the new residential area. The use of such materials as facing brick echo the architectural heritage of Tour & Taxis and its neighbouring districts.

Architecture firms that wish to participate in the project conception and design are invited to register by 12:00 CET on 17 September 2021. Extensa will select those architecture firms that will be invited to the interview, with due consideration for the recommendations of Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and the author of the masterplan. The members of the design team will be announced by Extensa around mid-October 2021.

Lake Side: living by the park

As with Park Lane, the first residential quarter developed on the Tour & Taxis site, sustainability and social impact are priorities in the development of Lake Side. For the residential part, planners drew inspiration from traditional Brussels housing blocks, designing a chain of buildings of differing heights forming a block around a central inner garden. A single building at the edge of the park will punctuate this development, providing continuity with the residential Park Lane buildings.

The firm Bas Smet, which was also responsible for the Tour & Taxis park, will take on the role of landscape architect. Extensa's ambitions include extending this park to encompass the residential development. Residents will benefit from various types of green space. As well as the shared inner garden, collective gardens will be landscaped on the low roofs. The homes also have private balconies with magnificent views of the Brussels skyline, the park and the historical buildings of Tour & Taxis, including the recently renovated iconic Gare Maritime.



Extensa wishes to activate the future streets and squares in a positive way by integrating various public facilities and neighbourhood businesses, including spaces for young children, sports centres, dance halls and cultural centres such as a neighbourhood library. Lake Side will be a model of '5-minute neighbourhood'. A new quarter where everything is within walking distance and cars are redundant. For that reason, the new residential area, and by extension the rest of Tour & Taxis, will be fully pedestrianised. Lake Side will be an inclusive project, open to neighbouring districts and accessible to all. There will be a diverse range of homes, adapted to the new ways of urban living. All told, around 400 affordable homes will be built on the Tour & Taxis site for households with modest incomes.

Like other developments at Tour & Taxis, the Lake Side project sets a high bar for renewable energy consumption. The consumption of fossil fuels is minimised in this project. Heating and cooling needs will be met by a geothermal system. The consumed energy will primarily be produced by means of solar thermal and photovoltaic panels. Various heat recovery and rainwater and grey water collection possibilities are being examined. High-grade materials like facing brick will be sourced locally as far as possible. Highly recyclable materials will be prioritised. Green roofs will also help slow down water flows and improve biodiversity on site.

Tour & Taxis: an innovative public-private partnership

Extensa has been working on the transformation of Tour & Taxis for 20 years now. Once a large logistical hub, Tour & Taxis has been converted into a buzzing, go-ahead neighbourhood in the dynamic canal district. A home for trailblazers: creative forward-looking people and innovative businesses who are focused on making a positive difference. At Tour & Taxis they find an inspiring place to live, work and play.

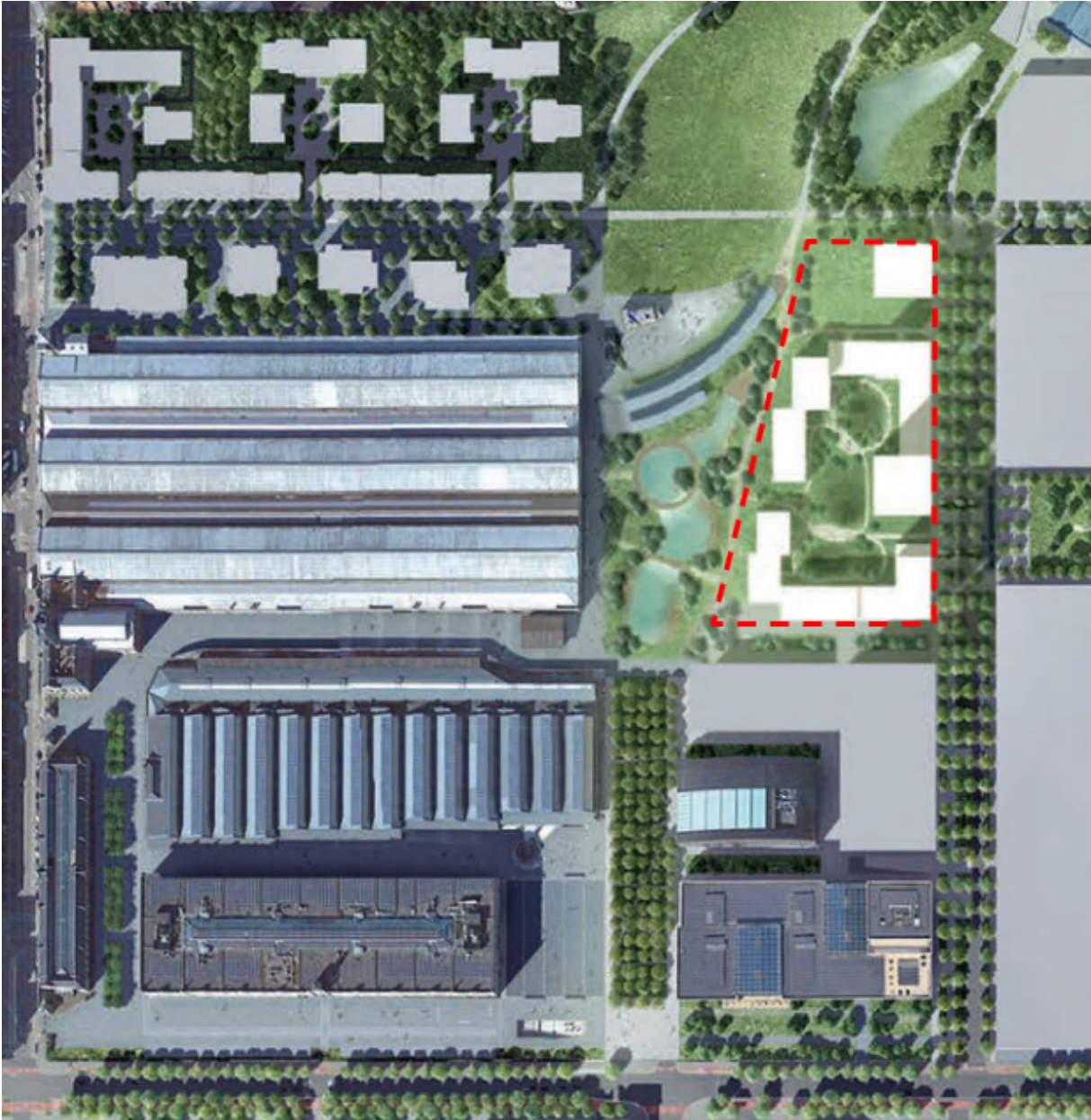
The development of Tour & Taxis is the result of a unique partnership between public and private parties. The future of Tour & Taxis was still unclear when the Regional Zoning Plan of the Brussels-Capital Region was approved in 2001. The regional government did not establish the main points of the repurposing in a blueprint until 2009, after a long citizen participation process. The City of Brussels and the Brussels-Capital Region elaborated the details in a Special Zoning Plan, published in 2017. Based on this Special Zoning Plan, Extensa was able to begin drawing up a masterplan for the areas and buildings to be developed. Extensa could count on the consortium of AWG architecten, NoArchitecten and Sergison Bates Architects for Park Lane, the first residential development on the site. They translated the architectural traditions of Brussels into a superb set of 19 apartment buildings grouped around inner gardens and the park lane.

Today, Extensa has partnered with urbanism practice MVRDV, a specialist in the conception and construction of urban districts, to produce a masterplan for this new Lake Side development.

This partnership between the two firms allies urban development and architectural ambitions with social and ecological awareness. With today's open call to architecture firms, Extensa aims to put together a design team that is able to put this shared vision into practice.

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Lake Side Residential Area