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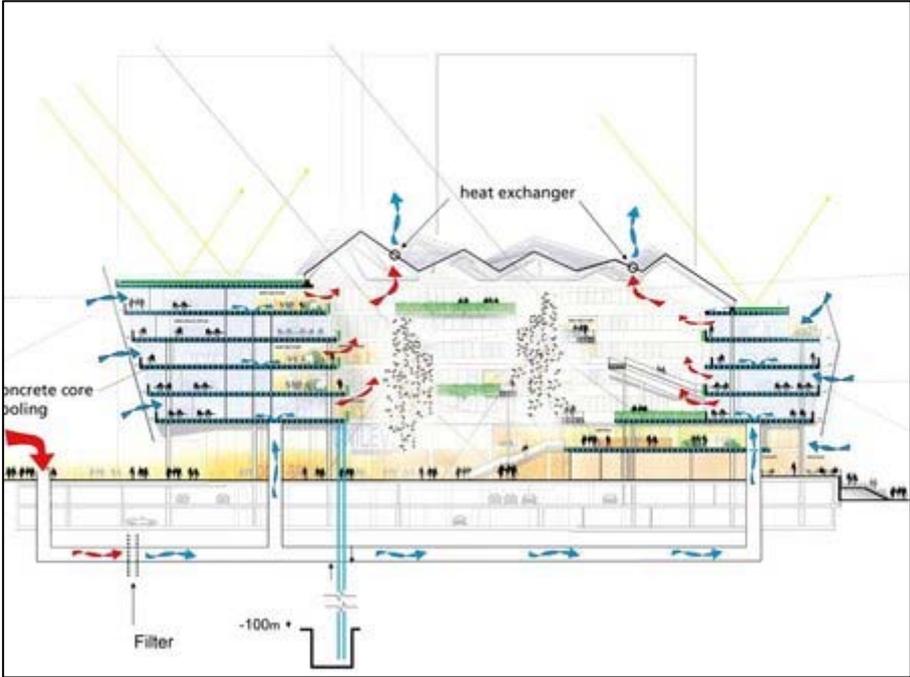
Project in Detail

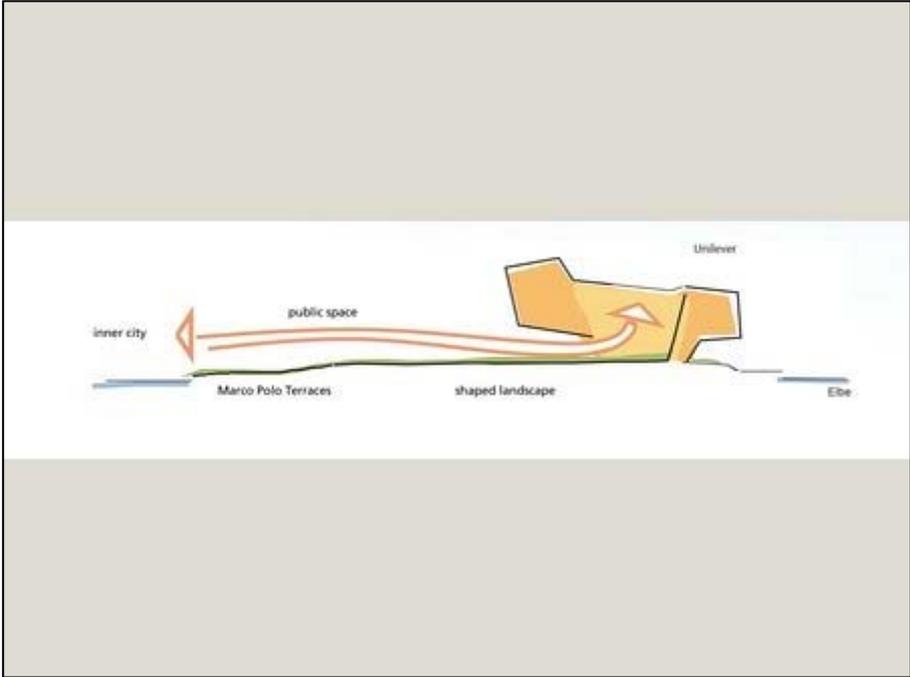
Unileverhaus

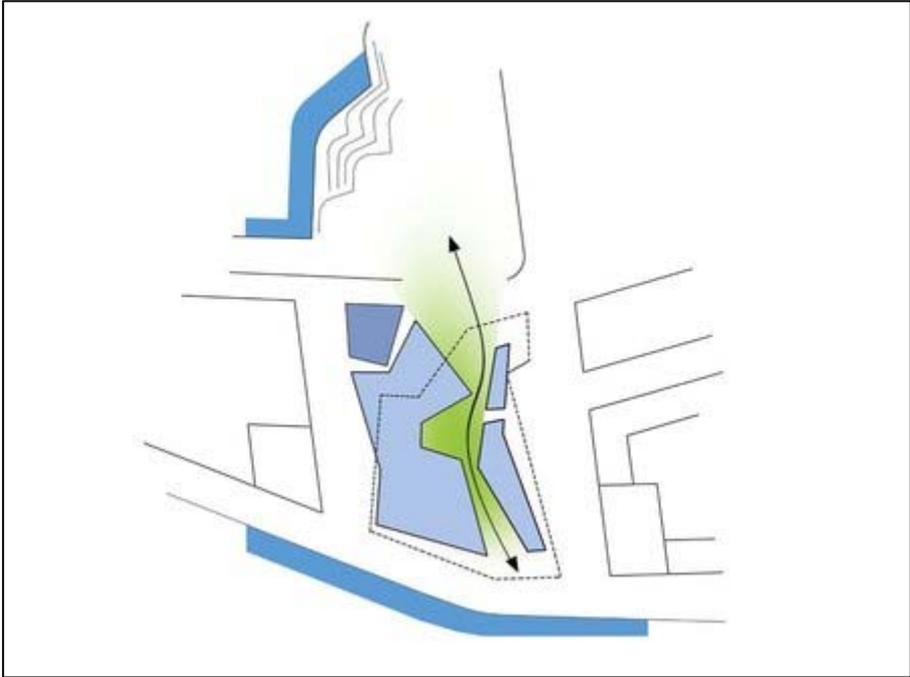
Category	Office (inc. mixed use)
Location	Hamburg, Germany
Architect	Behnisch Architekten
WAF	Entry 2009
Award	World Architecture Festival 2009 - Category Winner

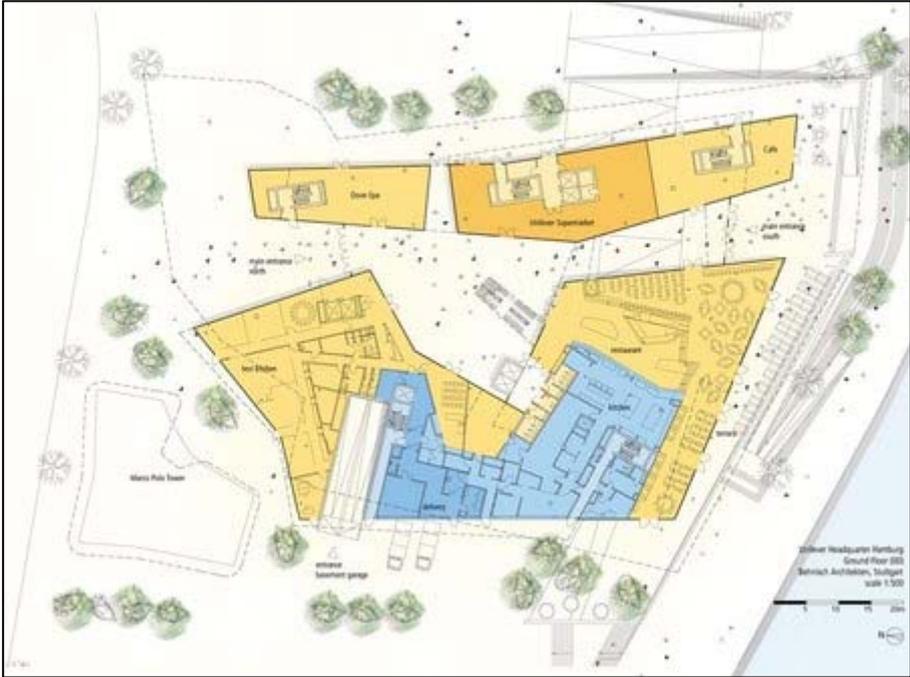


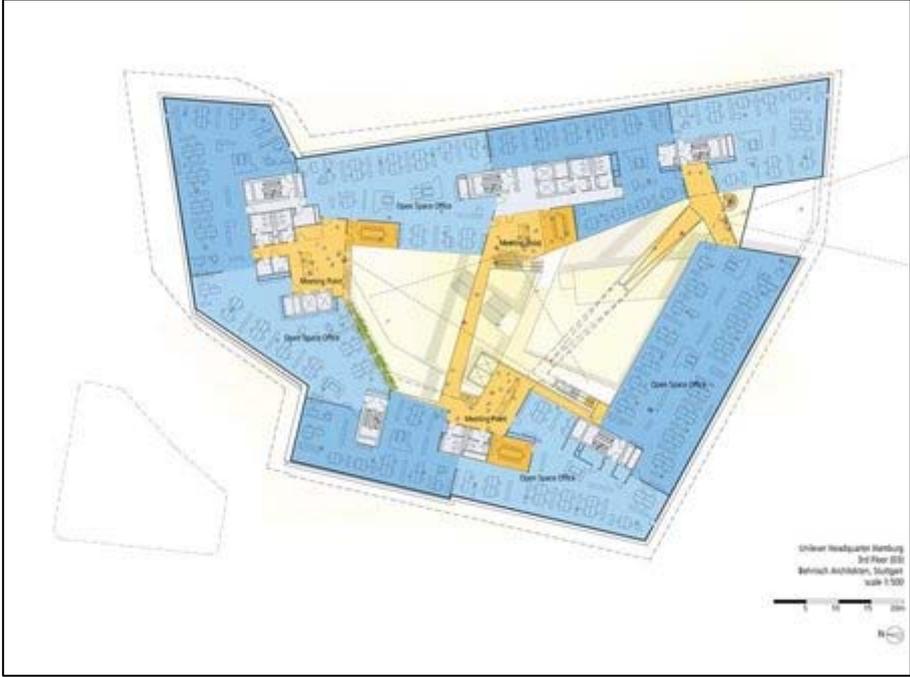
Caption Unileverhaus from the Elbe
Photograph by

















Unileverhaus, Hamburg, Germany

Unileverhaus, the new headquarters for the Unilever Germany Company, is situated in a prominent location in Hamburg's HafenCity, one of the most dynamic new urban developments in Europe. Directly on the banks of the Elbe River and close to the Elbphilharmonie, the building marks the end of an important axis between the city centre and HafenCity, neighbouring Hamburg's new attraction, the cruise ship terminal.

The Unilever Company sees its mission as a commitment to vitality: the firm meets everyday needs for nutrition, hygiene and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get the most out of life. This vitality mission includes a strong pledge to sustainability from the sourcing of raw materials to the sites where the company operates - be it a production facility or, in this case, a new office building.

In close collaboration with the building owner, HOCHTIEF Projektentwicklung, and Behnisch Architekten, Unilever refined the expression of this vitality mission in the form of a new headquarters. On the one hand, provide vitality for its employees, i.e. a light, transparent facility with a flexible open floor concept and, on the other hand, create an environmentally responsible building which lives up to Unilever's commitment to sustainability. As Unilever puts it: "In Behnisch Architekten we have found the perfect partner to translate our Vitality Mission into an office building."

The central atrium is the core of Unileverhaus. The open office landscape surrounding the atrium houses a staff of around 1,200. Rather than an assembly of compartmentalized cellular workplaces, the entire building is conceived as a flexible workplace. This centralized configuration provides an atmosphere that encourages communication, inspiration and interaction. Bridges, ramps and stairs serve as short-cuts, connecting the various departments and workplaces in lieu of lengthy corridors. Additionally, from their workplaces, each employee can enjoy exterior views of the HafenCity and the Elbe or overlook this central atrium.

Flooded by light from all sides, the atrium is also a meeting place with urban dimensions. "Marco Polo Terrassen" – public terraces that provide a generous forecourt - run through the centre of the building and on to the riverfront. These terraces encourage the visitors to stroll through Unileverhaus on their way to the cruise terminal. Cafés and shops containing Unilever products encourage the public to pause and introduce them to the company. The result is a vibrant public realm that firmly cements the building's relationship to its immediate context.

The atrium also plays an important role for the advanced energy concept. It allows all workplaces to be predominantly lit by daylight and is complemented by the world's first workplace luminaire based completely on LED.next technology. This luminaire uses up to 70 per cent less energy than standard halogen or comparable lamps and was developed in collaboration with Nimbus Design. Initial investments in these advanced technologies throughout the building will optimise energy consumption and reduce primary consumption to 100 KW/h per square metre per year, including energy used in heating, cooling and lighting.

The building's location next to the harbour and large cruise ship terminal posed a major challenge because of the noise and noxious emissions created by the continuously running diesel generators. To solve this problem, a hybrid system air handling system was introduced. Basic air exchange occurs via a raised floor construction which pressurizes incoming fresh air and pushes it through a series of filters before it reaches the interior. Exhaust air rises within the atrium to heat recovery units at the roof. For maximum individual comfort, each user can also operate his/her window manually.

Additionally, the building is shaped to shelter its adjacent outdoor spaces against the strong prevailing winds. It is wrapped in a special single-ply membrane which was developed in close collaboration with the manufacturer Vector Foiltec. This ETFE membrane protects the building and its sun-shading devices from strong winds and inclement weather.

Other sustainability considerations include waterless urinals and an on-site grey water plant to reduce the consumption of potable water. Moreover, ecologically optimised building materials minimize negative impacts on the environment during the building process, during occupation, and also in case of future demolition and the subsequent disposal of the obsolete materials. Low-emission materials were chosen to reduce health hazards for the users. Together these contribute to a sound eco-balance and combine to translate Unilever's vitality mission into its headquarters Unileverhaus.

Client: HOCHTIEF Projektentwicklung
User: Unilever Deutschland GmbH
Architect: Behnisch Architekten

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Behnisch Architekten

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LED.next Technology Lighting
Nimbus Design
Germany

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