



Groupe Chèque Déjeuner Headquarters, Paris

Constraints turned into opportunities

In their new headquarters, Groupe Chèque Déjeuner houses all of their various activities under one roof. Conceived around a vast atrium, the building is composed of a series of volumes raised on *pilotis* or columns. The 5-level central body of the project is surrounded by several 3-story wings which echo the smaller buildings already successfully completed in the business park by the same team, following the same principles: limited presence and visibility of vehicles at ground level through extensive planting and below grade parking; rain water capture in a peripheral 'moat' which also acts as a passive security barrier. The water features mirror the building both by day and night, and the single access point to the building is via a drawbridge which crosses the moat, met by a waterfall which oxygenates the moat water.

The office building designed by Art & Build Architect is nestled within Carre 92, a landscaped business park, accommodating the company's administrative headquarters and state-of-the-art, security-tight printing

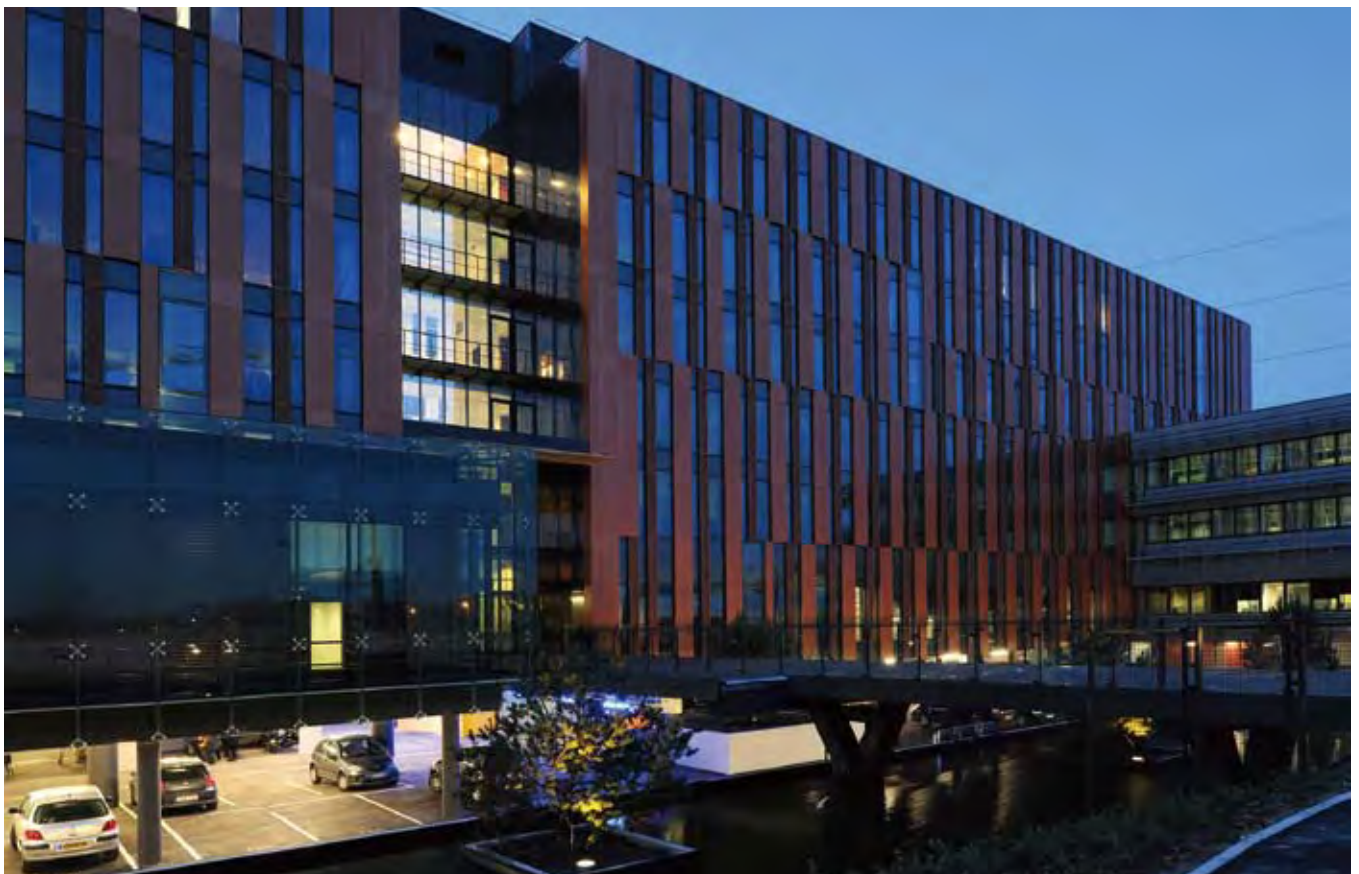
facilities. The business centre's successful response to Groupe Chèque Déjeuner's requirements led to the construction at Carre 92 of a new 85,000 square metres campus for Thales Group now under progress, designed and developed by the same team.

For this project located in Gennevilliers in the suburbs of Paris, the architects turned constraints into opportunities. The Carre 92 business park is located on a floodplain. Access to the building had to be highly secured because of the cheque printing studio. A cleverly conceived 'moat' surrounds the building, acting both as water retention basin and access protection - like a medieval castle. To further express this function, the only external pedestrian access to the building is via a drawbridge. Furthermore, the whole project has been built on *pilotis* as an economical way to face any flood risk: the project has no basement level, with the exception of a semi-underground, naturally ventilated covered garage level.

The building is centered on a majestic 5-level atrium which acts as giant social



photos by Serge Brison



space providing both prestige for the company headquarters and comfort for the occupants. In addition to panoramic and glass-enclosed elevators, the monumental stair in the atrium all contribute to the atrium atmosphere and indeed to better internal relations within the Groupe Chèque Déjeuner team. The cafeteria, located at the base of a highly visible monumental stair, encourages social interaction and communication.

It should be noted that the atrium is 'sandwiched' within the office wings, providing protection from the sun. The atrium temperature is mainly passively controlled, a considerable achievement. The central atrium is both perceived as

an internal space and extension of the landscaped grounds outside. Light is filtered for thermal purposes by a *claustra*, a device which creates movement, relief and surface effect, much as one perceives shadows under water. The facades of the building maintain their staggered spacing from outside to inside, making the building feel light and air.

Lighting and HVAC (radiant chilled ceilings) is handled via a state-of-the-art building management system. The replacement of individual computers in office spaces by a centralized IT network reduces energy consumption.

The building is composed primarily of recyclable materials wherever possible.





Sourcing of materials was strict and rigorous, following the practice's adherence to the Cradle-to-Cradle paradigm. The glazed facade components are limited to 40 per cent of the total facade area, keeping the heating and cooling costs down while enabling an optimum level of natural light to permeate the workspaces. Solar protection is integrated into the façade design and corresponds to specific exposure orientations, exploiting passive solar gain in winter whilst providing shading throughout the summer period. The project is a MIPIM Awards 2011 winner in the business centres category.

developer
AG Real Estate

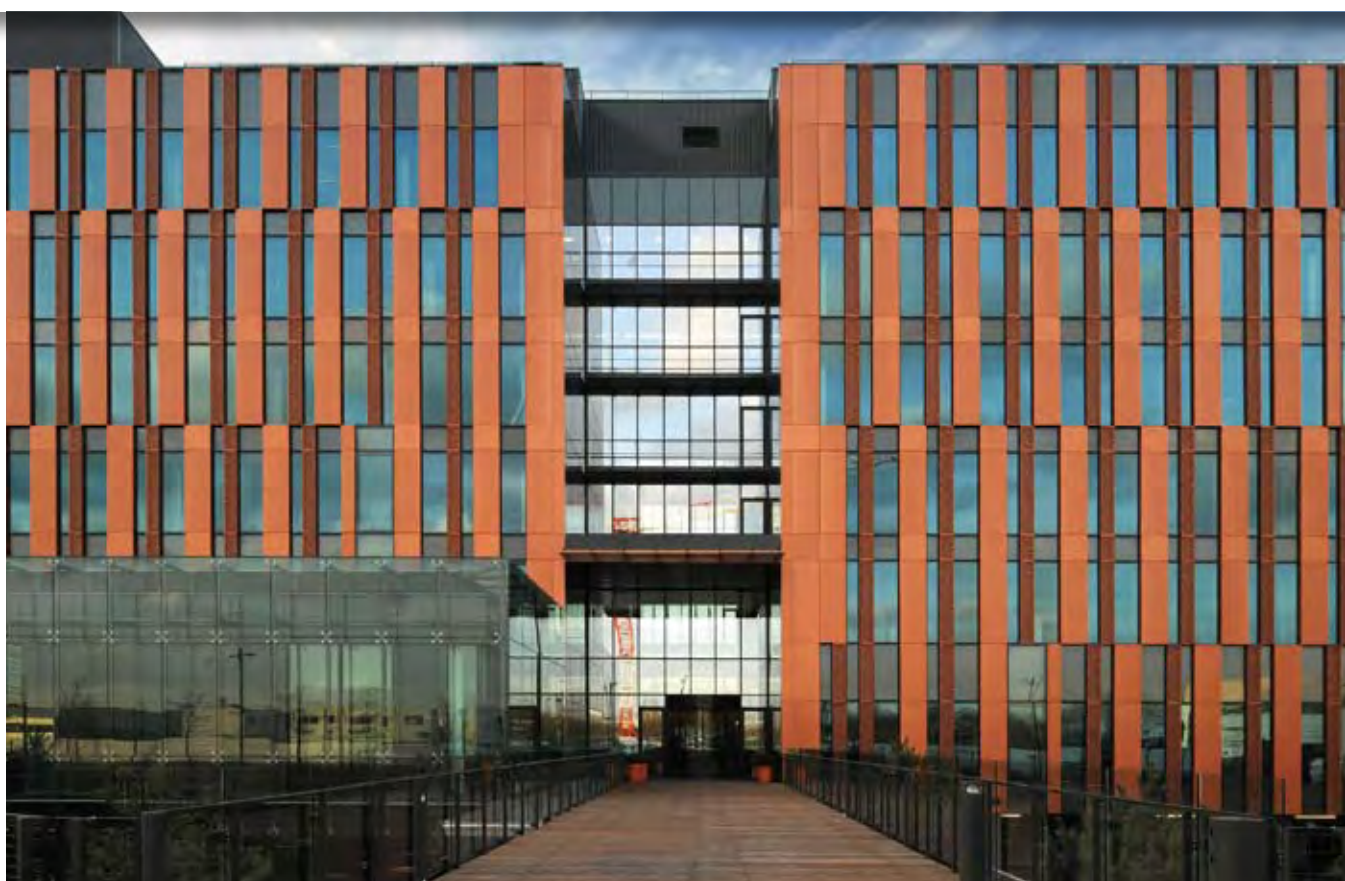
architect
Art & Build Architect

site architect
Jean-Paul Rozé

total area
30,000 sq m

office area
20,000 sq m

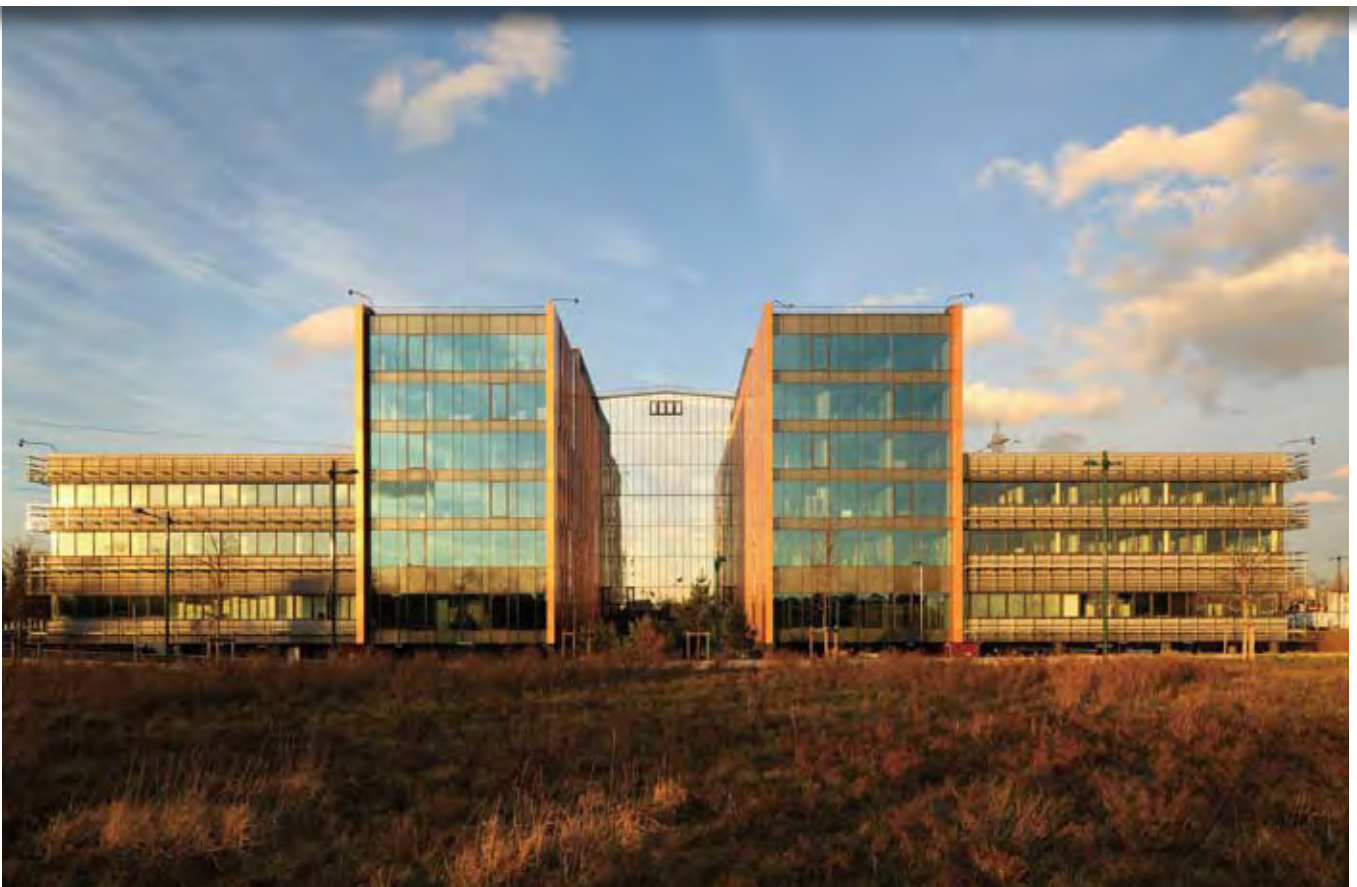
number of floors
1B + GF + 5 + mechanical level

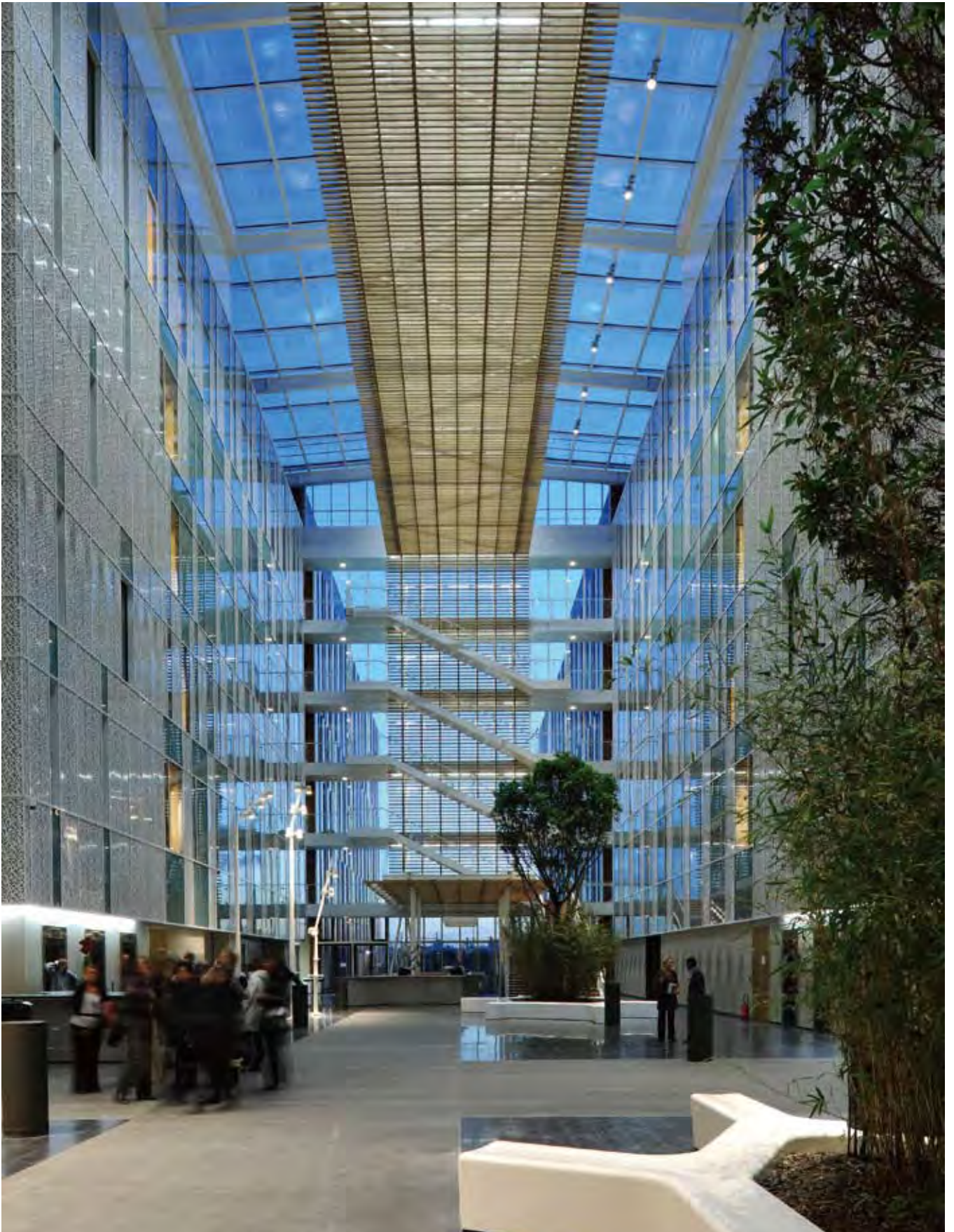




Selected environmental features

- The moat is filled exclusively by rain water, ensuring biodiversity in this formerly polluted zone – now de-polluted by the developer – where Europe’s largest gasworks once stood.
- The building obtained the HQE label (High Environmental Quality) and is THPE certified “Très Haute Performance Energetique”.
- In order to maximize natural lighting entering the building and sun protection, the façades are designed differently depending upon their orientation: the East/West 6-level central body benefits from vertical cassette screening while the North/South facades benefit from horizontal sun shades.
- Office partitions are made of glass in order to allow maximize the use of natural lighting for all office areas, even those located near the centre of the building.
- Individual computers are excluded within the building: a central computer system allows for a reduction in energy consumption usually required to compensate the heat issued by conventional personal computers, requiring only individual screens and monitors.
- The Building Management System efficiently coordinates all lighting and HVAC systems, and the building is fitted with a high performance chilled radiant ceiling system.
- All offices feature natural ventilation through windows in the facade, operated manually.
- The covered parking garage is ventilated naturally.





A pair of glass lifts, accessed from a widened landing, enable panoramic views of the cathedral-like space. All other lifts and stairwells are naturally lit. Mature trees and stands of bamboo are integrated into planted 'islands', around which bespoke furniture elements are installed



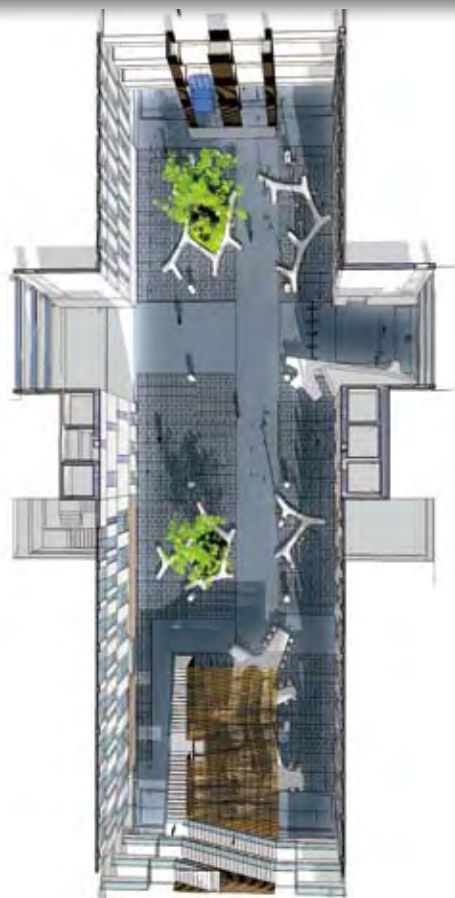
Lighting to the atrium is designed to highlight specific zones creating intimacy around the seating areas and cafeteria



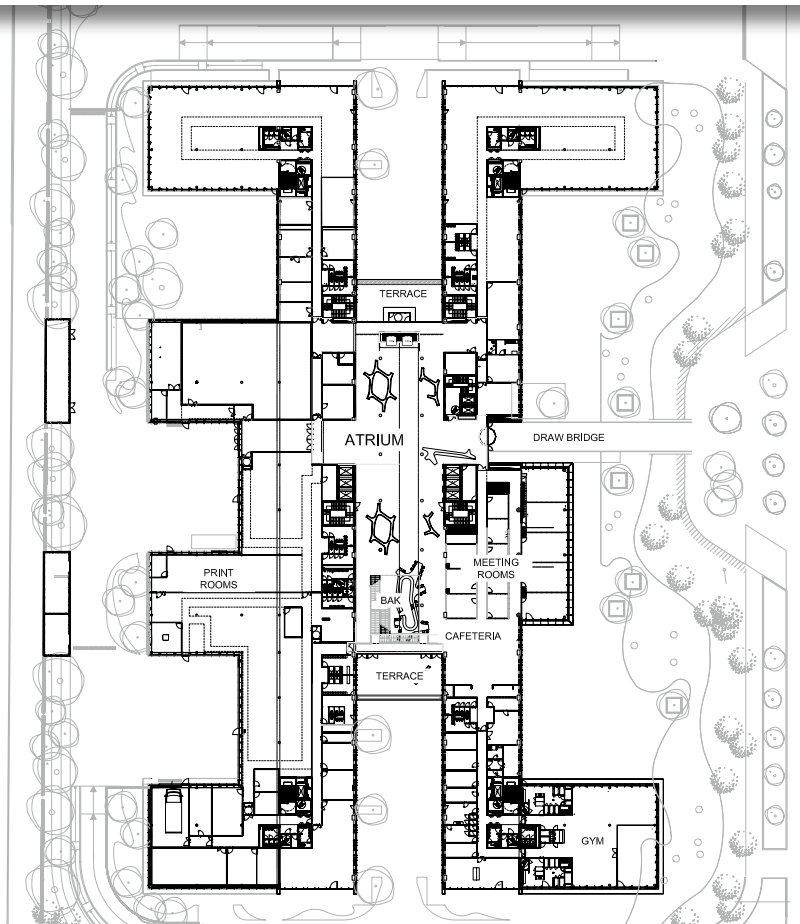
Site plan



Horizontal circulation between office spaces is punctuated by gangways and bridges, enabling occupants to benefit regularly from the dynamic views offered by the atrium



The atrium



Ground level plan