



Press Release
Tuesday 27 October 2009

Classification : Logistics Buildings

Subject : Start of the Bréguières – Barjane logistics park

Key words : GSE – architectural quality, landscape integration, respect for environmental and land development values.

The era for aesthetic and sustainable logistics warehousing has arrived !

**The Bréguières logistics park sets a new standard, explains Michel Hugues,
Managing Director of GSE**

Specialising in the design and construction of buildings and logistics parks, the turnkey contractor GSE has a long standing relationship with the developer, Barjane. The first warehouse was built for them 17 years ago. However, the Bréguières Logistics Park, located at Arcs-sur-Argens near Draguignan in the Var, would seem to be the culmination of this partnership. Considered exceptional by GSE, this park contains the most innovative solutions in terms of architectural quality, landscape integration and respect for environmental and land development values.

Initiated 17 years ago by local councillors from Arcs-sur-Argens, who wanted to open up their region and create an essential distribution hub for south eastern France, the Bréguières logistics park finally started to take shape from 2000 onwards. At that time, the Communauté d'Agglomération Dracénoise (CAD) took charge of the project, which had had a difficult history, prepared a very precise project proposal and started a tender process.

« At the time of the tender, the Bréguières logistics park already had advanced environmental aspects in its genes » remembers Michel Hugues, Managing Director of GSE.

Barjane, who are keen to win the tender issued by the CAD, decide naturally to contact GSE whose environmental know how and commitment is well known.

« We had just completed the Moissy Cramayel Logistics Park in the Seine and Marne area for another developer where the landscape integration and architectural aspects were particularly refined, and/or photovoltaic energy centres had been installed », adds Michel Hugues. « In 2005, sustainable development was not yet established in the logic of construction but we were already looking to integrate environmental features within our buildings »

In partnership with Barjane and with assistance from the architect, Stéphane Goulard, with whom they worked on a regular basis, GSE put together the project which was ultimately chosen by the CAD for the construction of the Bréguières Logistics Park.



« For some of our building projects, we had already applied a certain number of the environmental solutions specified for this park, but we had never combined them in one particular project nor had we gone so far in the concept of sustainable development » states Michel Hugues.

Optimised water and energy management

Water management within the Bréguières Park is a fine example. To eliminate the need to use water from natural resources, the idea is, in effect, to collect rain water from the vast roof areas and store it in rain water buried harvesting systems in the surrounding land.

« Never before has rain water been recovered from such a vast roof area» comments Michel Hugues. Water run off from roads and hard standings is also recycled as it is transferred to landscaped ditches and containing plants capable of fixing the polluting hydrocarbons present in this water. « The challenge was to find a soft solution that does not impact on the landscape and does not require significant investment, as is the case for purification stations, many of which are poorly utilised ». Born in Germany, this solution has only been used in France in experimental situations, primarily in new towns.

The pioneering energy management is also notable. GSE is using a proven lighting system, based on type 5 fluorescent tubes which are high performance and very economic in use, but this is being automated to provide lighting only to the aisles or areas of the warehouse in which work is being carried out. This allows an 80% saving in electricity consumption for lighting. If clients want to heat their warehouses, GSE is proposing wood fired boilers. Finally, GSE envisages the transformation of all the roofs of the park into a gigantic photovoltaic energy station capable of generating the annual energy requirement of the town of Arcs-sur-Argens.

« Photovoltaic energy stations have been talked about for around 10 years but in the south of France, they have only started to operate in the last 2 years » says Michel Hugues. « The installation cost remains very high but the conditions for the sale of such energy to EDF have become much more attractive ».



Advanced aesthetic of landscape and architecture

The Bréguières logistics park contains a number of other sustainable development aspects, one of the most important of which is, without doubt, the aesthetic of the landscape and the warehouses.

« In this project, Barjane wanted a high quality aesthetic for the buildings and this aspect has been pushed to the limits » confirms Michel Hugues. « The exterior cladding of the buildings is in architectural precast concrete and no longer in metal. Concrete is a hard and durable material which integrates much better within the environment than metal ».

The structure of the buildings in the park (invisible to the naked eye) is in wood as with all GSE's buildings. At Bréguières, each building of 20 000 m² contains up to 1 000 m³ of wood.

« At the time when we started using wood for the structure ten years ago, we were looking for a material which has better fire resistance than metal and a lower cost than concrete », explains Michel Hugues. « Today, we also promote the environmental and sustainable qualities of this material ». The use of wood creates a more satisfying working environment but it is also very ecologic. It absorbs CO₂ as it grows and retains it in the form of carbon. By comparison, the manufacture of concrete generates substantial amounts of CO₂.

Many of the other construction elements are prefabricated off site before being delivered to site. This method of operation, which is being increasingly employed, ensures from the outset a quality of construction, reduced risk of accidents on site and the elimination of waste materials.

« Each logistics building constructed in France today incorporates one or more of these sustainable development values. But we can still go much further », predicts Michel Hugues. « All the conditions are now present for this to be achieved. Clients are increasingly aware and convinced of the interest of such developments and the politicians seem to be in favour ».

For just over three years, GSE has proposed new concepts for buildings, firmly anchored in its sustainable development strategy. Optima, a tool box made up of well proven solutions, in which many sustainable elements are included (wood structure, rainwater capture from roofs, lighting). And Modulog, a modular building of high quality offering fast construction, and, above all, a firm commitment to cost and quality.

Note : Opened on the 15 July 2009 by the Barjane group, the Bréguières Logistics park site at Arcs-sur-Argens in the Communauté d'Agglomération Dracénoise region near Draguignan was officially started on 9 October 2009 . Politicians, institutional investors, trading companies will all appreciate the high level of environmental commitment demonstrated, both in the site construction management and in the characteristics of the park itself. As evidence of the viability of this logistics park, two clients have already signed contracts, even before the start of construction, with occupation planned for the spring of 2010. The discount chain, Lidl, will occupy a building in the logistics area of the park, and the mail sorting and distribution company GLS (subsidiary of Royal Mail) will occupy a building in the small business area. These first two companies on the park will create 200 jobs in 3 years. **The Bréguières Park in figures** : Land area of 65 hectares (of which 20% for green spaces), 220 000 m² of warehousing when completed, 5 large logistics buildings (13 m height, 115 m wide, 4 hectares of land), 6 cross docked mail/package sorting buildings (nearly 10% of the total logistics area) and various business units. 4.5 Mégawatts of peak power photovoltaic energy generation installed on the roofs of the buildings. Around 200 million euros of investment and the creation of 1 000 jobs when completed.