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## The power of nature

**Subtle colours for an imposing building envelope**

Aalter/Belgium

## Imposing monolith

**A building envelope made entirely from dark roof tiles**

Klaipėda/Lithuania

## New roof tiles, old look

**Autumn tones on the roof of an architectural jewel**

Edinburgh/United Kingdom



*The U-shaped front façade was clad with Koramic 301 plain tiles, which decisively determine the appearance of the building.*



# The Power of Nature

## A sustainable office building for an organic food specialist

**ARKS architects designed the façade and entrance of this office building on the green edge of an industrial zone in Aalter, Belgium, with a striking u-shaped form, adorned with plain tiles in a mix of five colours. The forceful impression given by this creation calls to mind a rock formation. Thus, this sustainable building reflects the character of the occupant, Hain Celestial Europe, an organic food company.**

Sustainability is integrally woven into the concept. The outer shell is insulated with 17 cm of rock wool. Super-insulating glasswork in the southern-facing façade regulates the entrance of heat from the sun according to the season. Summer overheating is also countered by the roof overhang and by positioning of exterior blinds which is determined by the height of the sun as well as the view from the inside. Energy-efficient devices and daylight-operated lighting controlled by movement sensors add to total energy efficiency. Through photovoltaic solar panels in the entrance, the building produces its own electricity.

Special attention was paid to the air sealing, and after installation it was subject to blower door testing. In addition to ventilation balancing and heat recuperation, a night cooling system was introduced in which the spacious staircase is used as a ventilation shaft. The office building is accessible via a wide footbridge over a canal that is used as a buffer and filtration zone for rainwater and will eventually be expanded into a wetland. The space on the large roof is filled in with an extensive green roof area with sedum as a roof covering. On the two small roofs above the façade, which arise through the play of the varying spaces used, grasses are planned to give the smooth architecture a soft green touch. Next to the building, a buffer zone of 6800 square metres was established with fruit trees planted, which are ideal for the yearly harvest festival and other social events.

“Sustainable” also means adaptable and multi-faceted. The three office levels consist mainly of open spaces that can be freely divided up. They all border on fixed elements that have their own expression accented with a natural red paint and that houses the



restrooms, storage, technical facilities, meeting rooms and separate work stations. In the back, a corridor stretching across the width of the building provides access to the various rooms. The corridor is fitted with wall-to-wall carpeting that is manufactured according to the cradle-to-cradle principles.

The rest of the floors have oak plank flooring. Vertical wood shutters hang on the interior walls, and together with the tilting windows in the façade, they contribute to the night cooling. The spacious stairwell can accommodate an elevator shaft in the future with no problem.

The U-form around the front façade, fitted with Koramic 301 plain tiles, has a strong impact on the appearance of the building. The choice of materials follows the concept seamlessly. As natural construction materials, clay roof tiles have qualities such as dimensional stability, frost resistance, and maintenance friendliness that guarantee a long lifespan and an unmatched ease of use. Used in wall cladding, they allow an extensive insulation. The placement of the tiles in the manner of a sloping roof is done in a well-known style and thus guarantees a quality execution of the job. In addition to these advantages, clay roof tiles offer the designer a wealth of possibilities thanks to a rich palette of forms, colours, and formats. In order to achieve the desired rock effect, the architects ran various computer simulations and had a 2 x 2 metre model built at the Koramic factory – because an aesthetic design also has to be sustainable.



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| <b>Project</b>                            | Office building, Aalter  |
| <b>Architect</b>                          | ARKS Architecten, Aalter   |
| <b>Construction management and client</b> | Koramic Real Estate, Kortrijk  |
| <b>Roofer/façade</b>                      | Angelino Vaneekhoutte, Anzegem   |
| <b>Clay roof tile/façade</b>              | Koramic 301, Mix of slate-grey, brown glazed, lustre, wine red glazed and black glazed |



*The building generates its own electricity using photovoltaic panels in the entrance area.  
The canal in front of the main façade serves as a buffer and filter zone for storm water.*