



Delivering the Antwerp Police Force's new HQ

A GAME-CHANGER AND BESIX'S LARGEST PPP BUILDING PROJECT TO DATE

In 2023, BESIX was proud to deliver the cutting-edge headquarters of the Police of Antwerp to its clients AG Vespa and the City of Antwerp, as well as its future occupants, the Antwerp Police Force. The building, one of its kind in Europe, boasts specific and remarkable features tailored to the needs of its occupants and their unique day-to-day activities. Notably, sustainability was a key focus throughout, earning the project multiple certifications. For BESIX Group, successfully delivering the biggest PPP-building project ever in its portfolio to the satisfaction of all parties involved marks a significant venture into diversified projects, further solidifying its expertise in PPPs.

Evolution from contracting to full DBFM responsibility

BESIX's role in the new headquarters for the Antwerp Police Force has evolved over the years from purely contracting to assuming a leading role in a Design, Build, Finance, and Maintain (DBFM) structure. In July 2020, BESIX Group acquired 100 % of shares in the project company from its prior owner, transforming what was 'just' a Build contract into the biggest PPP-building project ever in its portfolio of concessions. After signing an amended DBFM agreement with the City of Antwerp, rescheduling the Engineering, Procurement, Construction (EPC) contract, and reaching a new financial close for long-term debt funding to the project with three major Belgian banks, construction works resumed at the site of the Antwerp Local Police Tower in October 2020, following a year-long hiatus.

Centrally located

The building, situated on the former site of the Antwerp postal sorting centre right next to the Borsbeeksebrug, between the Singel and the Antwerp ring road, is easily accessible for all types of transport and also centrally located. It consists of two towers with ten above-ground floors, connected by a central core of four floors. A large part of the building features an impressive glass façade, offering not only plenty of daylight but also a spectacular view of the city of Antwerp. In addition to the atrium, which serves as the beating heart of the building destined to be a meeting place for its occupants, and featuring a glass roof and a communal catering area, the HQ also offers specific spaces suited to the needs of the Antwerp Police.

Project details

New Headquarters for the Antwerp Police Force

Location

Antwerp, Belgium

Client

AG Vespa, City of Antwerp, Antwerp Police Force

Architect

Jaspers-Eyers, Beel Architects

Contract type

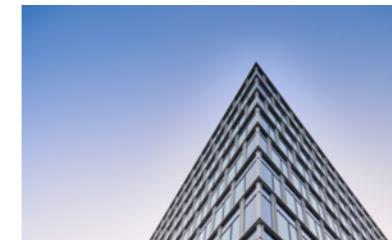
DBFM

Construction period

2018 - 2023 (incl. interruption in 2019 - 2020)

Total surface

78,000 m²



Not your average office building

The two towers of the building are designated for offices and sports, respectively. The office tower contains a museum space dedicated to the heritage of the police force, as well as a state-of-the-art control centre from which the majority of the police force's interventions are managed. This command centre, unique of its kind in Europe, is considered to be the building's centrepiece.

Drivers on the Antwerp ring road might be surprised to see an open space in the building. This is actually an exercise area, designed to simulate the actual conditions in which the police force works, enabling them to perform under pressure. In addition, the building features a shooting range, two gyms, a large exercise area which can accommodate even vehicles, as well as short-term holding cells.

Strict output specifications and certifications

These specific spaces, which didn't allow for much standardisation nor repetition in the design and construction phases, along with the strict output specifications of the building, posed numerous challenges for the construction teams of BESIX. Given its purpose, safety was of the utmost importance, as was acoustic isolation. In addition, due to the timing of the project, BESIX had to navigate both the Covid-19 crisis and the scarcity of construction materials, exacerbated by the inflation following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Despite these hurdles, BESIX was able to deliver the project on time.

Furthermore, specifics such as thermal and acoustic isolations, solar panels, technological innovation, a roof herb garden, and exceptional attention to the livability of the building, led to the project being awarded both the BREEAM-label Very Good as well as the WELL Building Standard certification.

Collaboration

BESIX and all of its partners and stakeholders in this DBFM project are proud to reflect on the collaborative teamwork that led to the successful delivery of these new headquarters for the Antwerp Police Force. Together, they embraced the PPP spirit, fostering a culture of teamwork and mutual success. Upon delivery of the project in May 2023, the maintenance period of 25 years, during which BESIX Group remains the 100 % shareholder in the project company, has commenced.