



StoraEnso

Parklassen | Groenendaal Primary School

Merksem, Belgium

Partner of Stora
Enso



Parklassen in Merksem, Belgium, is a wooden educational building that followed the renovation of the historic castle for Groenendaal College. Located in the sheltered part of the castle park near the pond. The pavilion carefully integrates into its delicate context while maximising the location to create a unique learning environment. The result is a highly sustainable building with minimal energy consumption and the use of circular construction techniques.

Background After successfully renovating a historic castle into a secondary school for the Groenendaal College, the client asked HUB to design additional classrooms for the primary school pupils.

The site is located within a sheltered part of the castle grounds, near the pond. The result is a light-footed pavilion that carefully positions itself within this delicate context, while simultaneously making maximum use of its location in order to create an exceptional learning environment.

Location

The final location of the classrooms was determined after a meticulous tree inventory. They opted for a compact floor plan in order to reduce the ecological footprint as much as possible. Together, the four classrooms form a pavilion with a tilting roofline that contrasts pleasingly with the trees in the park.

Building purpose

The Park Classrooms are intended for children aged between 6 to 7 years old. The spatial concept is characterised by a centrally located collective space, naturally lit by a festive skylight, in which the children are welcomed but where cross-classroom work can also take place. The four classrooms that surround this space all have double external doors that give access to a covered outdoor area in the park. In this way, the children can also work or play outside, in the immediate vicinity of the familiar classroom environment.

Use of prefabricated Cross Laminated Timber (CLT)

The main structure of Parklassen consists of prefabricated Sylva™ CLT Floors, Roofs, and Walls, totalling 36 cubic metres, were used in the construction. These materials were selected for their environmental friendliness and ease of dismantling for maintenance or replacement, showcasing the natural beauty of wood while providing a robust structural framework.

Design and Functionality

The pavilion's design optimises the available footprint and creates dynamic spaces for learning. The structure's higher sections provide the necessary height for various educational activities, while the courtyard, surrounded by relatively low facades, maximises exposure to the summer sun. Public services are located on the ground floor, simplifying circulation and emergency evacuation. The natural processing of the CLT structures blurs the distinction between interior and exterior, with facade openings designed for function, offering privacy or panoramic views as needed.

Health and Wellness Benefits

The renewable materials company



StoraEnso

Schools made from wood, like Parklassen, offer numerous health and wellness benefits. Wood as a building material helps regulate air humidity and moisture, creating a healthier indoor environment. It has been shown to reduce stress, blood pressure, and heart rate, while promoting creativity and productivity. The natural elements of wood contribute to a biophilic design, which enhances cognitive function, reduces stress, and improves overall well-being for students and staff.

Learn more about [health and wellness benefits of wooden educational facilities in this whitepaper.](#)

Architects

HUB_architecture cvba, founded by Koen Drossaert and Bart Biermans, is an esteemed architecture and urban design studio based in Antwerp. Since its inception in 2004, HUB has built a solid reputation for delivering projects that exhibit a high degree of architectural, social, and intellectual coherence. The firm works on large-scale and complex projects for both public and private clients across Flanders, Brussels, and the Netherlands. HUB is dedicated to creating well-designed spaces that not only enhance the quality of life for their inhabitants but also contribute to sustainable development and open new possibilities for future generations.

Publications: [Architectural education](#)

General

Delivery year

2018

Building type

Education

Area (m²)

60

Storeys

1



Photo credit: CLT-S



StoraEnso

Products

Products and Services

Sylva™ CLT Floors and Roofs,
Sylva™ CLT Walls, LVL Cover
Boards, Preinserted lifting
devices

Product volume (m³)

193

Number of deliveries

1

Product quality

NVI

Product delivery duration (weeks)

2



Photo credit: CLT-S



Photo credit: CLT-S

Team

Partner of Stora Enso

CLT-S NV

Architect

HUB

Specialist Timber Subcontractor

CLT-S

Developer

KOBA NoordKant

Main contractor

Thys BP