Omaha Beach Bureau d'Information Touristique
Colleville-sur-Mer, France

Omaha Beach Tourist Information Office: An open, welcoming facility that blends into the landscape

In Colleville-sur-Mer, at the heart of the iconic Omaha Beach site, the Isigny-Omaha inter-municipal authority has begun construction of a new tourist information centre. The project, led by dbo architects, has a clear ambition: to welcome visitors to a bright, open and educational space, in a location that blends perfectly into the hedgerow landscape.

This 500 m² facility, entirely on one level, features a large 200 m² glass hall and a spacious courtyard that can accommodate school groups and visitors around a graphic display on the floor illustrating the D-Day beaches. The whole forms a lively place of mediation, where visitors can "experience" the area while observing it.

Open, light and precise architecture

The design is based on a limited number of materials, used with care:

• An LVL superstructure (posts, beams and upper floor) left visible

• Aluminium joinery resting directly on the wooden frame,

• A concrete base and steps serving as a support for educational activities,

• And a green roof edged with natural zinc.

The building offers an elegant, fully glazed and open space, providing a fluid spatial experience between interior and exterior.
Stora Enso's Sylva™ VI LVL structure plays a fundamental role in this architectural approach: it allows for finesse, lightness and long spans, while maintaining a warm and slender aesthetic.

The multifunctional chimney, a central technical element, serves as bracing, storage, ventilation and a landmark. It is one of the few opaque elements of the building.

Sylva™ LVL for precision and lightness

The choice of LVL was made early on for structural and architectural reasons:

• Exceptional weight-to-strength ratio,

• Thin sections and an aesthetic slenderness particularly suited to the airy nature of the project,

• Capacity to support a heavy green roof,

• And industrial quality allowing for the millimetre precision essential for the direct support of the glass façades on the frame.

The teams at dbo architects and VS-A engineers pushed the limits of the material to the maximum to achieve a high degree of visual lightness. The SODEBA GINKO design office continued during the execution phase the engineering work carried out during the design phase, in order to finalise the last adjustments.

Rapid construction thanks to prefabrication

The framework, entrusted to SMC2, benefited from a maximum level of prefabrication to ensure rapid installation on a sensitive site. All LVL parts were machined to the millimetre and delivered pre-drilled to ensure smooth on-site installation without any reworking or adjustments. This enabled the wooden structure to be assembled in just five weeks.

The teams particularly praised the visual quality of Stora Enso LVL, which was perfectly suited to a largely exposed construction.

A place to understand, between transmission and experience

The project offers a new way of understanding the history of the Normandy landings:

• A large map of the beaches marked on the ground,

• A tiered seating area that can accommodate entire school classes,

• A space offering a view of the Normandy coast "as seen from the sea",

• And a completely open layout, where the landscape becomes the main medium of communication.

This commitment to openness, transparency and simplicity makes the tourist information office an active and accessible place of remembrance, designed to welcome, explain and transmit.

The Omaha Beach Tourist Information Centre illustrates the optimal use of engineered wood to design a light, precise, open and sustainable building that fits respectfully into a highly symbolic site.

The result of a collaboration between dbo architects, VS-A, SMC2 and Stora Enso, this project demonstrates the relevance of Sylva™ LVL for slender, elegant architecture, where wood is not only structural, but also conveys identity and meaning.

General

Delivery year

Under Construction

Building type

Others

Area (m²)

500

Storeys

1

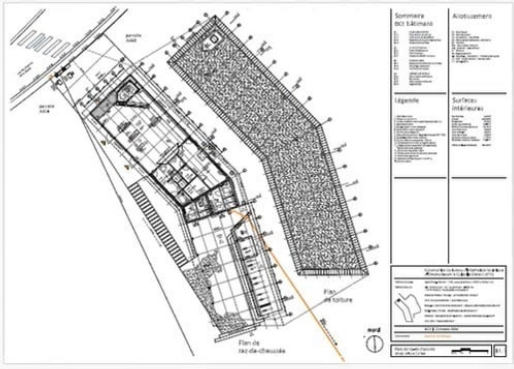

Photo credit: dbo architectes

Products

Products and Services

LVL

Product quality

VI (Visual Industrial)

Product volume (m³)

50

Number of deliveries

1

Team

Developer

Intercommunicalité Isigny Omaha

Architect

dbo architectes

Structural Engineer

VSA

Main contractor

SMC2

Specialist Timber Subcontractor

SMC2

Timber Engineer

SODEBA GINKO

Others

Construction duration (months)

12

Timber superstructure erection duration (weeks)

5