

Planning granted for landmark scheme in Athens designed by Bennetts Associates and Divercity Architects

- New landmark on one of Athens' major thoroughfares with stunning views to the Acropolis
- High-quality workplace promoting exceptional design quality and class-leading sustainability in Greece
- Designed by Bennetts Associates (*first commission in Greece*) and Divercity Architects
- Collaboration with leading Greek developer Dimand

Planning permission has been granted for a landmark commercial scheme in central Athens by Bennetts Associates and Divercity Architects. Designed for leading, award-winning Greek developer Dimand, the 15,600sqm (Gross Building Area) new build scheme will create a workplace of the highest quality with class-leading sustainability credentials, and lush new courtyard garden.

The scheme occupies a prominent corner site on Leoforos Syngrou, a major avenue linking the city centre and the seafront, and will consolidate a major new commercial and cultural destination together with the adjacent Hellenic General Insurance HQ [by Mario Botta and Rena Sakellaridou & Morpho Papanikolaou (SPARCH)], the Onassis Stegi (by Architecture Studio) and the Intercontinental Athenaeum Hotel (by Iason Rizos). The project has broken ground on site and is expected to be completed by early Spring 2022.

Contemporary reinterpretation of traditional design themes and use of local materials are intended to help bed the scheme in as identifiably Athenian. A pair of eight storey buildings are clad in vertical white marble louvres at carefully crafted angles to capture the unique Athenian light and create a choreography of vistas and views to the city, the mountains, and the Acropolis. Sculpting of the roofline above the lower building draws the eye from Syngrou Avenue towards the main entrance on Lagoumitzi street. At street level, a colonnade or 'stoa' provides the same signposting together with a new avenue of trees that soften and shade the context. A 'peristyle' marks the shared entrance and affords views to a new garden that draws reference from traditional Greek courtyard houses.

The project's sustainability credentials, targeting LEED Gold, draw on Bennetts Associates and Divercity Architects' vast expertise but re-evaluated for the local climate. The guiding principle is the Athenian preoccupation with the 3 S's - 'shade, shade, shade'. Internally a low energy ventilation system is adopted. Planted upper terraces and a green roof further enhance biodiversity and at the same time help to reduce cooling loads. Using materials with high percentages in recycled content, as steel reinforcement and façade structures reduces the carbon footprint of the project. The choice of materials is based on a Life Cycle Assessment approach to evaluate the embodied carbon of the scheme.

Bennetts Associates and Divercity Architects have designed the scheme to promote health and wellbeing, with natural white marble surfaces throughout; the core and façade located to ensure a good distribution of daylight, and openable windows to ensure abundant fresh air. Occupiers have access to the lush courtyard gardens to create a memorable arrival experience as well as an oasis to be enjoyed as a place of serenity at work breaks or as a social meeting place that can accommodate outdoor events.

Dimitris Andriopoulos, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer at Dimand comments: "I would first like to thank Prodea Investments for sourcing this investment opportunity and joining us as a co-developer in the project. I believe this development will aesthetically improve and add value to the area, in line with a series of neighboring landmark properties. We trust this office complex will become a successful, sustainable and lively working space for all and I thank both Bennetts Associates and Divercity Architects for their inspiring work."

Julian Lipscombe, Director at Bennetts Associates added: “It’s a great privilege to design on such a key site, in one of the world’s great cities with views to an icon of the ancient world. In response we have endeavoured to create a scheme that is both confident and identifiably Athenian in its DNA. It combines our vast expertise in workplace and sustainability with a sensibility to the rich cultural context and local climate. Collaborating with Dimand and Diversity Architects on this extraordinary commission has been a delight.”

Nikolas Travasaros, Founding Partner & Director at Diversity Architects said: “We are honoured to work for leading developer Dimand and alongside renowned UK practice Bennetts Associates, for this landmark project. On bustling Syngrou Avenue, we envisaged a timeless and powerful building, that will capture the unique Athenian light and reflect the cultural richness of ever-changing Athens.”

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ABOUT BENNETTS ASSOCIATES

Bennetts Associates creates sustainable and enduring architecture.

The practice has completed a diverse portfolio of cultural, workplace and education projects in both the public and private sector, ranging from masterplans to small historic buildings. As one of the UK’s leading practices, its work has been celebrated with more than 190 awards over 30 years and has recently earned Building Design’s Office Architect of the Year 2020 award. Bennetts Associates is an employee-owned trust with studios in London, Edinburgh, and Manchester.

Bennetts Associates is responsible for many prominent projects, most recently the Royal College of Pathologists and the London Borough of Camden headquarters in London, Storyhouse in Chester, the Bayes Centre for the University of Edinburgh, and Jaguar Land Rover in Warwickshire. The practice is currently working on Facebook’s London HQ in King’s Cross, the Woolwich Creative District in London and the University of Edinburgh’s Futures Institute.

Bennetts Associates leads in its field in sustainability - in April 2019 they became the world’s first architects to secure Science Based Target approval and commit to the UN’s Climate Neutral Now campaign. The practice is a founding member of the UK Green Building Council and the first architecture practice in the world to report company impacts using the GRI Guidelines.

<https://www.bennettsassociates.com/>

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ABOUT DIVERCITY ARCHITECTS

Diversity Architects is an award-winning architecture practice with offices in London (RIBA Chartered Practice) and Athens. With a wide-ranging portfolio of projects including hotels, housing complexes, private residences as well as commercial and public spaces, our body of work demonstrates our ability to deliver on challenging briefs in a variety of locations and contexts. We treat every client and project as unique, and our building designs are developed to be innovative, collaborative, and environmentally sensitive.

Diversity Architects’ strong and vibrant presence in the international architecture and design scene has resulted in a number of prestigious Awards and Distinctions, such as The European Hotel Design Award for Hotel Design of the Year and The European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture - Mies van der Rohe Award (Nominated), among others. Our work has been included in exhibitions internationally, and in 2014 Diversity Architects were honoured to be invited by the Hellenic Institute

of Architecture in collaboration with the Benaki Museum, to present our work in a monographic exhibition, entitled 'This Show Is About Diversity', at the Benaki Museum, Athens (2014).

With projects currently in design and construction in Greece, Europe, Qatar and North Africa, we have established a distinctive method in the development of contemporary architecture. We have the ability to evolve the design process by enriching the unique local characteristics and context through an international architectural language, with specific emphasis given to craftsmanship and sustainability. Diversity Architects is currently working on new office complex projects for leading developer Dimand in Athens and Thessaloniki, Greece and on landmark hospitality projects for Katara Hospitality in Doha, Qatar and for Marriott W Hotel in Algarve, Portugal.

<https://www.divercityarchitects.com/>
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ABOUT DIMAND

Dimand is a private, leading, award winning real estate developer in the Greek market focusing on sustainable office, urban regeneration, mixed-use and sports facilities projects.

With a solid track record of more than € 2bn in projects developed and in progress and a strategic alliance with the European Bank for Reconstruction & Development (EBRD) to develop sustainable green products across various property sectors, as well as partnerships with institutional investors such as H.I.G. Capital, Prodea Investments and Grivalia, Dimand leads the local real estate market since 2005.

Recent projects include the prominent Importex office building complex, the Anangel Maritime Headquarters, the former Papastratos tobacco company facilities, as well as the iconic Piraeus Tower.

Clientele list includes large national and international corporations.

Dimand always aims to value and apply international best practices in its development with passion for all its clients and the community.

<http://www.dimand.gr/>

CREDITS

Architects: Bennetts Associates and Diversity Architects

Structural Engineer: Pagonis- Polychronopoulos- Kinatos

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Lighting Designer: Lighting Architecture Studio

Landscape Designer: H. Pangalou & Associates

Fire Protection Consultant: B & T Pyrgiotis Technical Office and Roussas Theofanis

Acoustics Consultant: H.Moraitis & G. Chatzigeorgiou

LEED Consultant: D-Carbon

Traffic Engineering Consultant: Dromos Consulting