

OMA - NFA

Heysel Plateau : Expo 58 site redevelopment

Competition

HEYSEL PLATEAU MASTERPLAN

Architects : NFA / OMA
Engineering : ARUP
Program & feasibility : Coteba
Landscape Architect : Michel Desvignes
Year : 2010
Status : Competition, shortlisted
Area : 950.000 m²

Once the setting of the 1958 world expo, the site can currently best be typified as an ambivalent part of the city: too empty to be part of the urban context, too full to be part of the park. Of the original 1958 setting only a few structures have remained. The cohesive tissue between these remnants has largely disappeared and so, over time, the relationship between various built structures on the site has become somewhat of a mystery.

Today, rather than a sustained urban experience, the site is little more than a dispersed collection of memories, few and far between.

The Koning Boudewijn Stadium – the original name created global recognition for this part of Brussels, equating it with one of football's biggest ever traumas – stands as lonely introverted object on the site, a far cry from the scenes that must once have enveloped it.

The Avenue de Centenaire: large open axis, emptiness as a welcome relief within an otherwise full exhibition site, but today the avenue, engulfed by derelict open air car parks and somewhat non-descript wastelands, only constitutes an emptiness amidst an even larger emptiness.

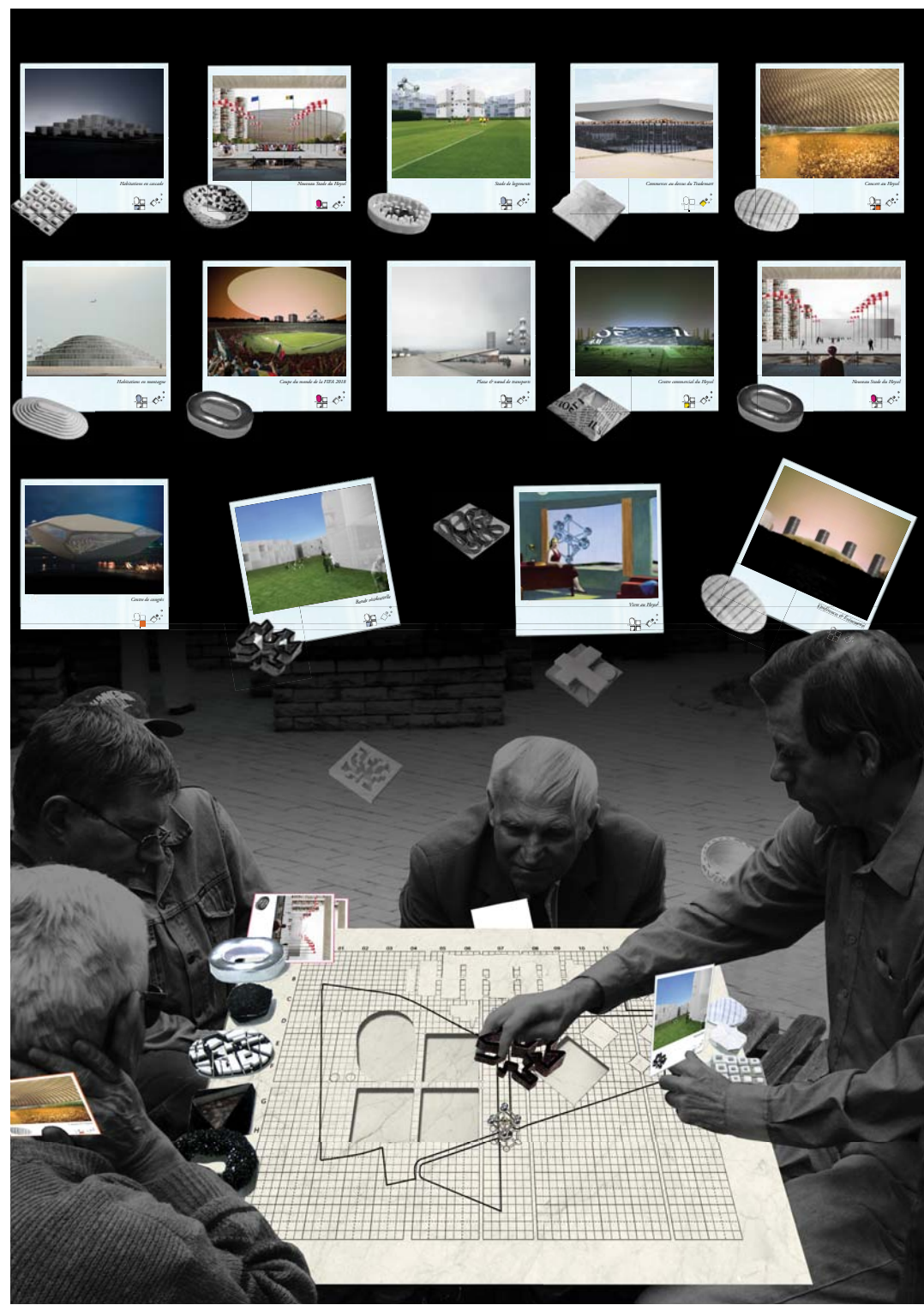
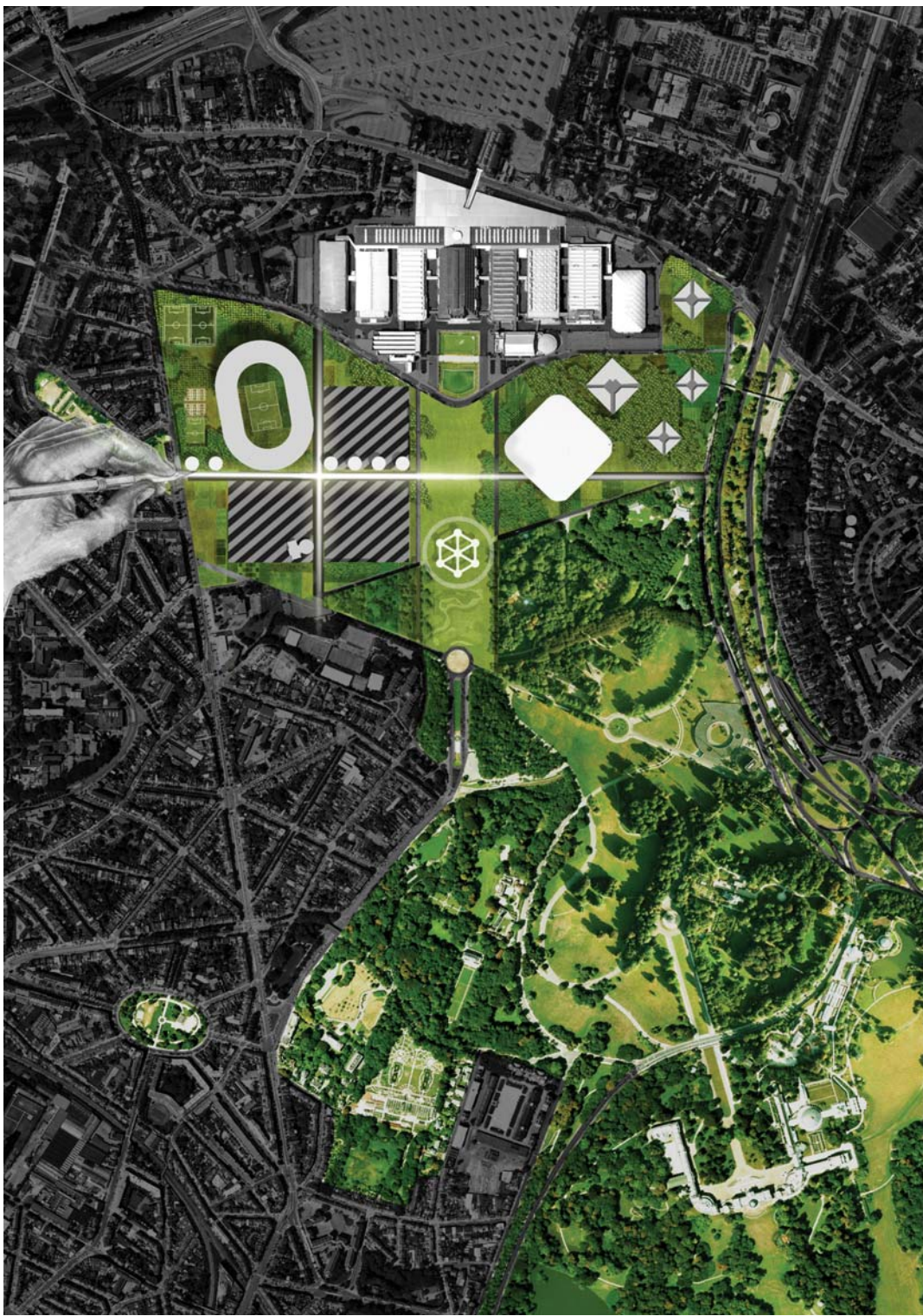
The Atomium is as brilliant as it was 50 years ago: symbol of an imagined future, even if that future never quite materialized. As always the future visions of past seem somewhat endearing to those living in the present. Overtaken by time, by necessity only ever partly fulfilled, the very notion of a vision itself is called into question.

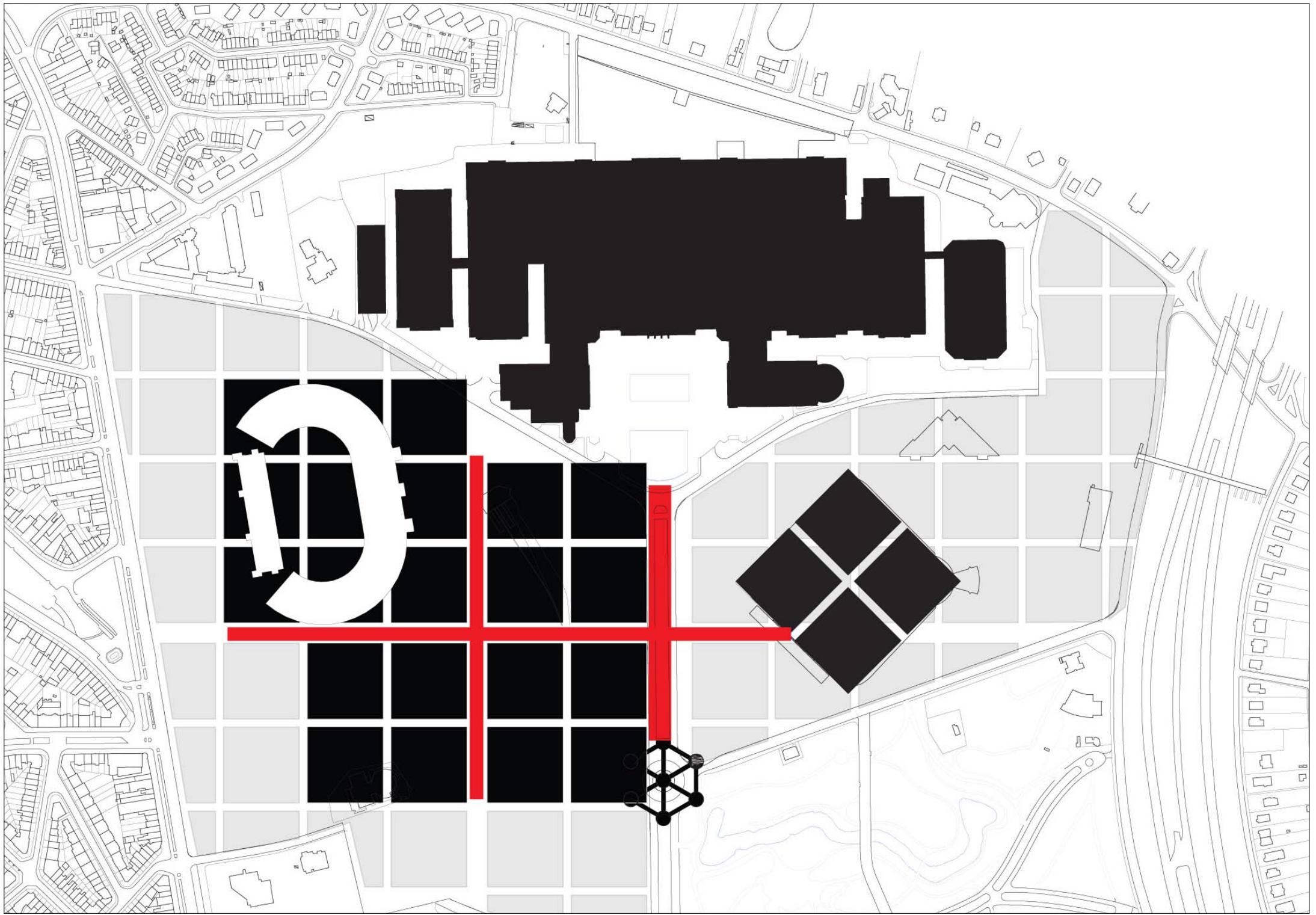
The Trademart, rotated 45 degrees to prevailing orientation of its surroundings – almost like a stray Islamic fragment that mysteriously got lost in this part of Brussels – turns out to be a later addition by John Portman.

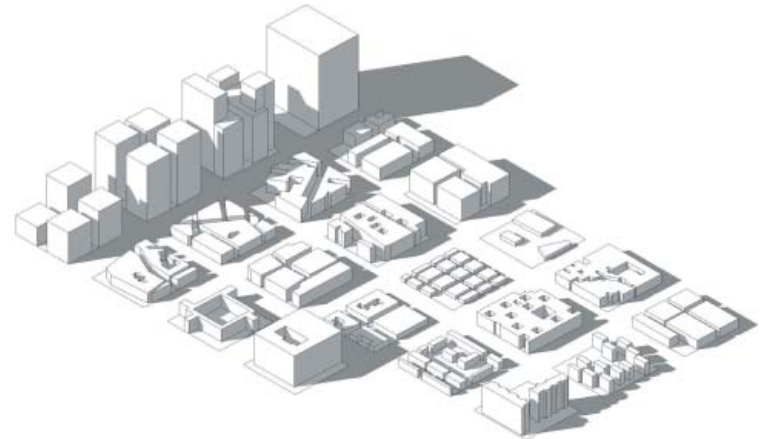
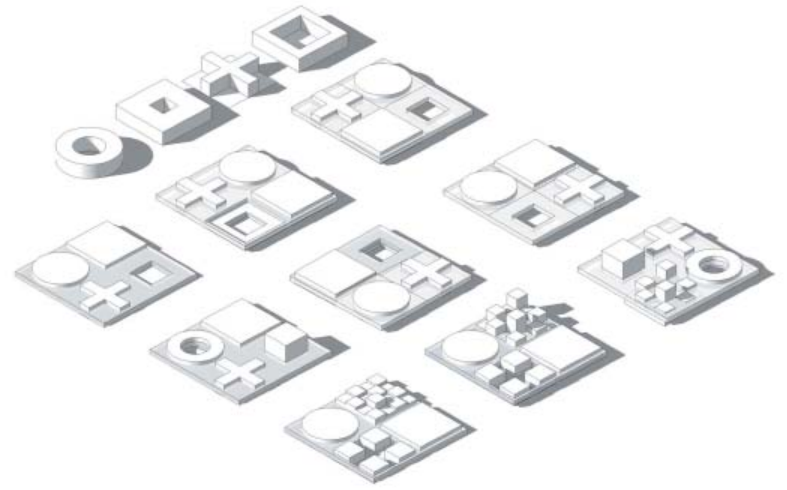
How does one lay out a vision for the future of this site while at the same time honoring a wish “to keep all options open”?

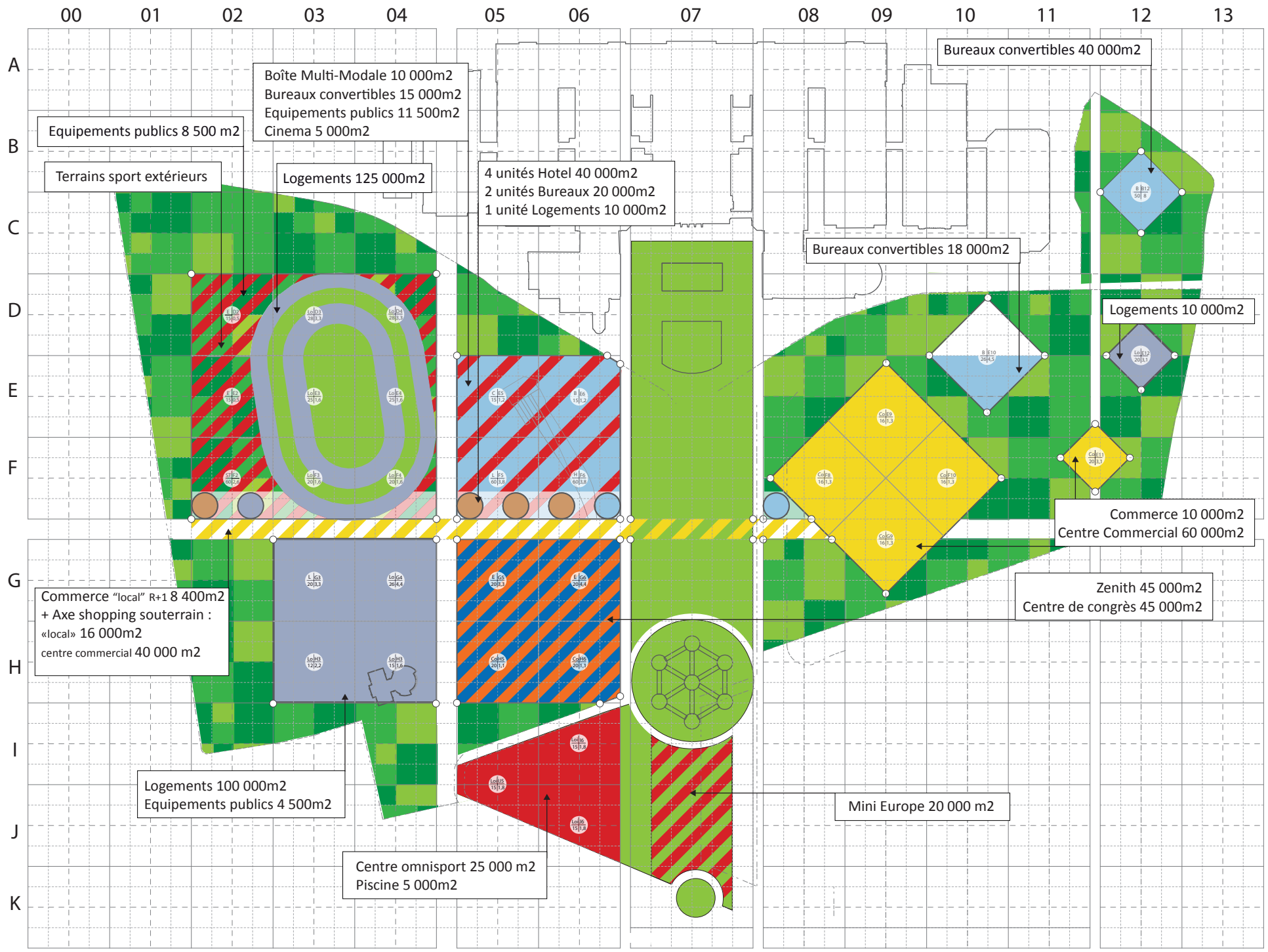
It is first and foremost a reframing that we have tried to instigate a series of larger fragments in which both the footprint of the stadium and that of the shopping center are embedded and become part of a larger ensemble: a simple recognizable order that allows different alternate in-fills and change over time. The order even though invented and retroactively applied, has the aura that it could have been the restoration of an original.

In this composition both the existing and urban structures join into the same game, like pieces on a Chessboard, that can adopt different interrelationships based on a single set of rules. What is presented here mainly defines the rules of the game and the board on which the game is played. Any eventual outcome will be one of many.



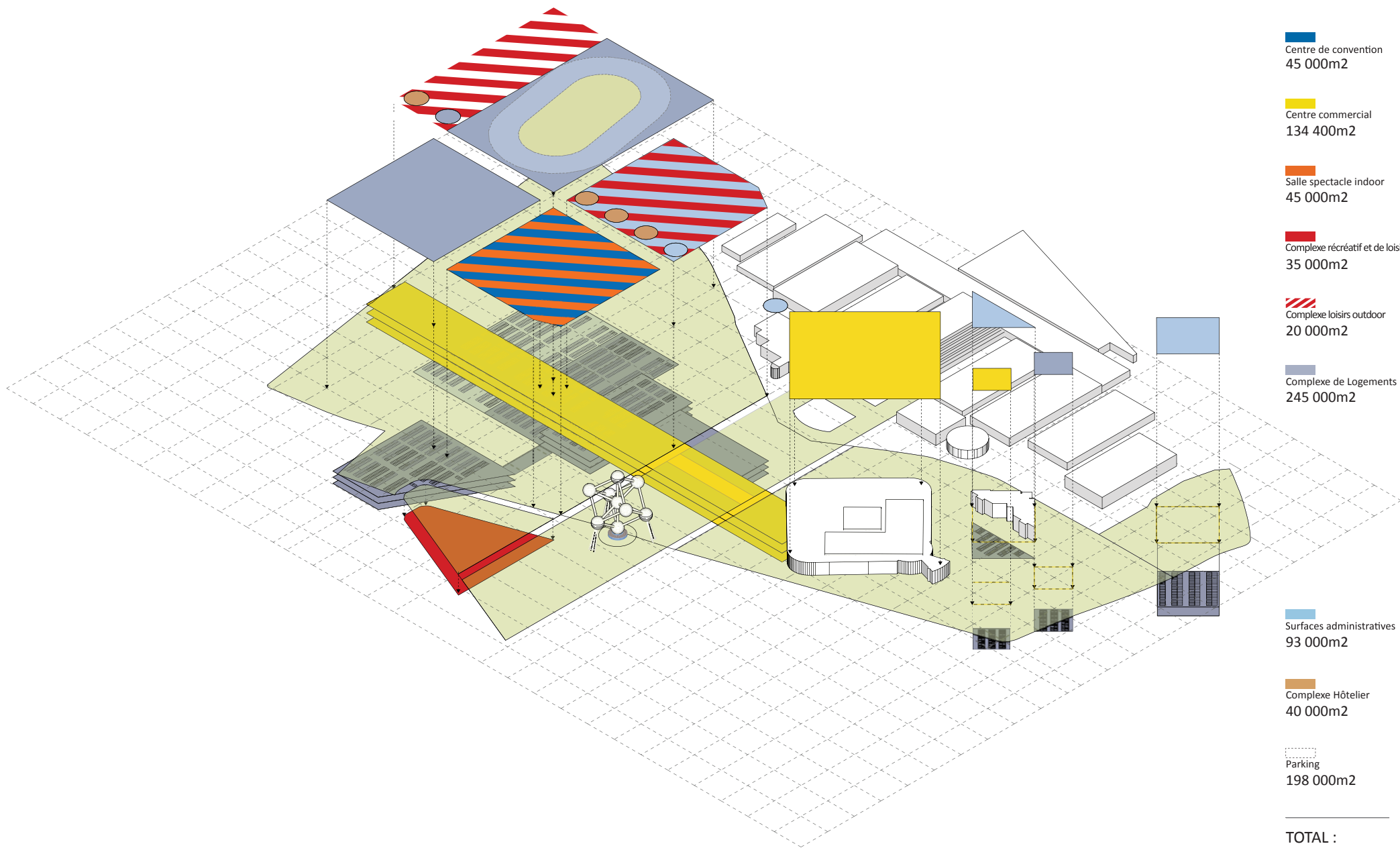






- Centre de convention
45 000m²
 - Centre commercial
134 400m²
 - Salle spectacle indoor
45 000m²
 - Complexe récréatif et de loisirs
35 000m²
 - Complexe loisirs outdoor
20 000m²
 - Complexe de Logements
245 000m²
 - Surfaces administratives
93 000m²
 - Complexe Hôtelier
40 000m²
 - Parking
198 000m²
- TOTAL :**
899 900 m²
- Echelle :
-
- 95 m





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