

## Forcalquier Historic Eco-District

by [Florence Cornuet](#) / 2016-07-25 12:03:54 / France / 12979 / FR



**Address 1 - street** : 04300 FORCALQUIER, France

**Gross density** : 210 logt/ha  
**Population** : 400 hab  
**Number of jobs** : 12 emplois  
**Starting year of the project** : 2001  
**Delivery year of the project** : 2010



1 ha



7 000 000 €

**Certifications :**



### ID CARD

#### Project Background

##### Presentation of the municipality

Forcalquier has just under 5 000 inhabitants. However, this small town is a real centrality pole and developed a dynamic economic activity. Thus, it provides more jobs than it has assets.

The majority of the housing stock consists of detached houses (62%) and the real estate market is in part drawn "upwards" by heliotropic Migration and second-home market.

However, the average household income is lower than the average of the department and Forcalquiérens on low income or means therefore have difficulties accessing housing, rental or first-time buyers.

##### A degraded old center

The historic center has seen its activities disappear one after the other. Its inhabitants preferring to live on the periphery, many homes were emptied. The city saw then multiply the slum landlords attracted a devalued park. Many occupied housing, maintenance of these owners have become unhealthy.

Despite the community's awareness in the 1980s and the implementation of several procedures "classic" policy of the city until late 90s, no significant results had been obtained.

#### A new intervention strategy

After finding only ineffective incentives procedures, the Commune, accompanied by DDT, took the challenge to rehabilitate an area in the heart of the ancient city at the foot of the Citadel. The previously conducted studies had identified a city of heart in site with the most important urban restructuring issues, with several buildings almost in ruins. One of the needs identified was dedensifying the city and bring light to the heart of the dense islets. This project started in 1997 and ended in 2010 after many changes.

The ideas competition, an original approach

On the part the most degraded, "the Marius Debout neighborhood", the Municipality chose to organize an ideas competition for the definition of a development party. This unusual procedure of studies allowed to choose a development party meeting the objectives of the elect, among the proposals of several planners, without having to adopt the draft only a selected provider, a priori, on references. The general principle of the ideas competition is a presentation by the consultants in meeting the elect, their vision by designing their project. All participants were paid.

The winner bias was deepened in a permanent way exchange.

A proactive approach over the long term

The restructuring of the island Marius Debout was the subject of a declaration of public utility, but also absorbed a procedure Habitat Unhealthy, somewhat atypical, since the entire frame has not been demolished to keep certain buildings with great architectural qualities

To maintain the "momentum" of the project and the consistency of it in the long run, a steering committee involving elected officials, the municipality of technicians, DDT, STAP, the social landlord and locals, met every two to three months. Despite a strong involvement on the part of elected officials, the project has encountered numerous difficulties. One of the first challenges for a project of this size is to exceed the time of the municipal office. Several elections have in fact taken place during the project and have sometimes delayed its implementation, the time of the appropriation by a new team of the transaction issues.

Furthermore "administrative time" is a long time, that people do not always see.

The project objectives of the eco-neighborhood and its main features

### **The project objectives**

They were many: provide a safe and healthy living environment in the heart of the city, redefine space, secure cellars, limit car traffic, optimize natural lighting and ventilation, develop transitional spaces between space public and private space. These arrangements had to produce the urban and architectural quality in compliance with the historical traces of the city. In addition it was to develop the heritage and identity of the area. These goals responded to a need of the municipality who wanted to reclaim its historic center.

### **Its main features**

The EcoQuartier covers an area of approximately 1 hectare in which are located 210 apartments. About 50% of these have been built or rehabilitated, including 54 social housing. This has also enabled the creation of 12 shops, artists' workshops and association premises. For these locations, the municipality has chosen to give an appeal to old center.

A third of the area is dedicated to public spaces and heritage interpretation trail travels there. By modifying the historic center, the ongoing work on both buildings on public spaces have attracted private investors. By reinvesting the historic center, they could extend the offer. Thus, the quality of social housing, some built in old mansions, alongside private residences with different levels of luxury. This conjunction of public and private rehabilitation helped recreate a genuine social mix.

As for the aspects of energy transition and adaptation to climate change, they were considered in the design of rehabilitation by optimizing the thermal inertia, solar gain, natural ventilation. The demolition of some buildings has helped to bring light to the heart of the islands and to circulate air. Energy sobriety took the form of good environmental sense (choice of materials, shapes, etc.), not a technology debauchery, unthinkable in such a rich heritage context.

### **A success acclaimed by the people**

The consultation conducted with residents allowed to shake a bit repositories established as the dream of the house with its garden. The will of the town was to show that there were other ways of living in the historic center while remaining in a qualitative approach. This requirement has helped get the project up and make it an exemplary project that refers. The project's success is also that of the municipal team that has worked for over 10 years to improve the living conditions of its inhabitants and register Forcalquier in a sustainable way, concerned men, environment and heritage. The municipality many initiatives in this direction.

The municipal team took the time to leave dialogue suspend the project several times in order to be accepted by the largest number in a goal exemplary. This sometimes creates frustration for politicians who want to advance, involving accepting that the project time exceeds that of the municipal office. But this dialogue has removed Opposition inhabitants. Elected officials need to realize that this time of exchange with the population is not wasted time.

Accompaniment by the DDT has ensured continuity in the monitoring of a project in successive operations to make it more accessible and consistent with the financial capacity of the community. The phasing also helped to relocate residents of the old center in the district to progressively demolitions-reconstructions.

Finally, if the Commune has been an increase in prices of private rents in EcoQuartier, the phenomenon of gentrification has been limited through the creation of social housing and it remains a real social mix.

The inauguration of the project was a celebration bringing together all project stakeholders and residents. A website highlighting was made for the occasion with fireworks.

## **Programme**

- Housing
- Businesses and services
- Public spaces
- Green spaces
- Others

## Project progress

- Operational phase

## Prescriptions and zoning

- Protected area
- Heritage protection area

## Key points

- Governance
- Quality of life
- Economic development
- Mobility
- Energy /Climate

## Approaches used

- Ecodistrict national label

## Certifications

- Ecodistrict national label

## More info

<http://www.construction21.org/data/sources/users/12/forcalquier-compresses.pdf>

## Data reliability

Self-declared

## TERRITORY

### Type of territory

Forcalquier is a town of less than 5 000 inhabitants in the heart of a population center of the country of Forcalquier-Montagne de Lure.

### Climate zone

[Csb] Coastal Mediterranean - Mild with cool, dry summer.

## KEY FIGURES

### Commercial floor area

Commercial floor area : 1 850 m<sup>2</sup>

### Number of residential units

Number of residential units : 210

### Number of social housing units

Number of social housing units : 54

### Amount of the investment taken in charge by the local authorities

## GOVERNANCE

### Project holder

**Name** : Municipality of Forcalquier

**Type** : City

**General description** :

Forcalquier is located between the mountains of Lure and Luberon, at the edge of the Domitian. Its name means either "the source rock," or, more likely, "Lime Kiln". It is a historic city built in concentric semi-plane on the side of a colline. La Citadel, the center of the city, is a set of fortifications, topped by the chapel Notre-Dame-de-Provence. La picturesque old town, dating from the thirteenth century to some houses, is made of narrow streets and squares and has a rich in architecture. C'est this time that the city experienced its highest density, with probably close to 10 000 people. "the EcoQuartier History" has a main purpose of habitat. It is implanted under the hill Bombardière, which supports the Citadel, and this tight medieval fabric, with narrow lanes and tall buildings, and often étroits. Malgré the architectural interest of many buildings, this district presented before the public and private interventions, a major state of disrepair, with a frame that can be in partial state of ruin, sometimes total. The Municipality also noted the actions of "slum landlords". On the tourist level (major economic resource of Forcalquier), the state of the old center had a disastrous effect. The Place Saint-Michel is the crossing point for visitors to the Citadel. She gave before the first rehabilitations, a deplorable image of the center of Forcalquier.

### Project management

**Description** : Establishment of a steering committee "Old Centre", headed by the mayor, hosted by DDE, bringing together elected representatives, technicians of the City and the selected providers, state services (D.D.E, SDA, DDASS, and, as necessary, the Prefecture and the DRAC), a social landlord, a neighborhood association.

Permanence of the steering committee for 13 years with regular meetings every 1 to 2 months. Report and record systematic decision.

Strong commitment to conduct consultations over the long term with the inhabitants of the old center, with a consideration of certain proposals in the programming, even when they were questioning the policy options.

The steering committee "old center" was associated from its inception.

Instead, the partners of EcoQuartier (institutional partners, social landlord, neighborhood association) and constituted a structure for exchange, confrontation, harmonization views, and arbitration on the choices to lead on shared objectives.

The various stages of the project progress and its implementation work, many consultation exercises were conducted with residents; more particularly exalt the consultation pursued by the community before committing to the development of Marius Debout esplanade.

Planning Approach the island Marius Debout was designed in part of an original procedure: the contest of ideas for definition of a development party.

### Project stakeholders

DDT 04

**Function** : Other

Supporting the common, technical and legal expertise, investment

Catherine Flachère

[Construction21 company page](#) :



**More info** : [data/sources/users/7427/eq-forcalquier-pilotage.docx](#)

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## Quality of life / density

The living environment in the Eco-District was literally transformed by public and private interventions on buildings and the "breathing" that allowed the construction of the esplanade. Complementing sedentary shops and artists' studios, these are regular events such as the weekly market and trade shows, associations and cultural point investing and animate the historic eco-district".

## Net density

210

## Culture and heritage

Valorise heritage, protected or not, has been an ongoing objective in achieving "The historical eco-district" and will be again in the coming years for the development of public spaces (Eggs square, St. Michel square, Palace square).

Development of projects of "small heritage" is also underway with the establishment of interpretation circuits accessible and rehabilitation of the "calades" involving people "remote employment."

The associative fabric in "EcoQuartier History" is very rich: "The family house" the CPIE, "Lights of the Alps", .... If the actions of these associations go beyond the perimeter of the EcoQuartier and even the city center, the nature of these undeniably confer on neighborhood life, a special dynamic.

With 25% of social housing spread by small units in a total fleet of 210 apartments, the Ecoquartier meets the needs of more modest in terms of habitat. This social Park 54 homes also offer all segments and all types of social housing.

Housing for young adults in vocational integration for large housing for families and housing accessible to disabled or elderly people. Private initiatives have also had a significant impact on the nature of the private park, including the rehabilitation of buildings in luxury residence.

## Social diversity

The buildings acquired by the Commune were rehabilitated in social housing.

Management of the 7 housing of the White Ribbes-operation, as well as 4 housing rehabilitated by private donors in EcoQuartier, was entrusted to the Real Estate Service Social Character (SICS).

SICS, carried by the PACT04, was established in 1998 by the State and the General Council, as PDALPD the tool to accommodate families in the greatest difficulties. SICS is an intermediary structure whose mission is to mobilize public or private housing parks adapted to "very difficult public" to access or maintain a dwelling or emergency devices to ensure owners rental income, to provide families with social support.

Thus, the very social at the upscale residence, all segments of housing do they live in this historic district. The typology of housing has brought isolated people as much as families, youth (former Mévolon hotel offers accommodation to young adults in integration), but also the elderly (establishment of an elevator in the hotel Tenda).

## Social inclusion and safety

The rehabilitation of the old center through the various public operations, including that of the island Marius Debut and the associative dynamism also remobilized private initiatives, which led to reinvigorate.

We also find this new development through sedentary shops, the order of ten and rose about 50% by seasonal businesses, the only sector affected by this rehabilitation.

## Ambient air quality and health

The buildings were removed and treated for asbestos removal. The Municipality continues in the old center and throughout the city, removing drinking water connections made of lead.

The implementation of a rainwater collection system has helped to improve the housing and premises below confined outdoor spaces, regularly flooded by torrential runoff from the Citadel.

The movement of motor vehicles is very limited in the "Historical Eco-District". Many dormant areas were reclassified, reducing the feeling of insecurity.

The cellars have been secured. The choice of directions and exhibitions favors the entry of light and natural ventilation in the old center.

Standing on the esplanade Marius, transition areas with high use value have been created between the housing and public space (loggias, terrace gardens, walkways, vegetation, walls or trellises in separation).

More generally, since 2010, the town has chosen not to use pesticides in the maintenance of public green spaces. In order to preserve biodiversity, groundwater quality and health of workers and inhabitants.

Other tools are used (thermal weeders gas and steam), other practices are preferred (hand weeding, mechanical weeding, mowing, clearing, mowing ..), and new behaviors are adopted.

## SOLUTIONS

- Promotion of cultural/ historical identity
- Proximity services
- Other

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Local development

Street furniture set up on the esplanade Marius Debout is in the mineral predominance that characterizes the old center of Forcalquier. It is often an extension of the constructive elements of public space (retaining walls, stairs), but also responds to the ease of use (protection of summer sunshine). The qualities of use of the esplanade Marius Debout, the establishment of new businesses in the street Marius Debout, High Street and on the Place Saint-Michel, the animation created by artists' studios and the first requalification of paths to the citadel have created a dynamic of reappropriation of the old center which results in attendance Forcalquier inhabitants and walkers, but also by private initiatives of requalification of buildings in habitat use. The eco-neighborhood project, supported by the public authorities, brought a lasting transformation of the neighborhood and its renewal with commercial sites and services, as well as private real estate transactions.

### Functional diversity

"The Historical Eco-district" has a primary function of habitat: His program has incorporated the creation of 6 commercial premises, 4 artist studios and 2 local municipal associative purpose, all located on the ground floor of buildings. These settlements have created a dynamic that resulted in a rise of sedentary and seasonal shops. All shops and essential services is therefore present in the old center or its immediate periphery. Access to services and jobs: As mentioned in the previous section, 56% of the assets of Forcalquier working on the town. The Z.A.E. of Chalus, the largest employment hub, is located less than a kilometer from the EcoQuartier, borrowing streets and gentle paths. Another important part of the jobs resulting from service activities (public and private), trade and tourism. The bulk of the corresponding jobs are proposed in the city center and the suburbs. Access to services school facilities, primary and secondary, sports and most public services are located within 700 meters of the Eco-district and therefore easily accessible by pedestrian mode.

### % of commercial area

19

### Circular economy

For several weeks, a local currency, "the Wheel", is circulating in the town to help local and circular economy.

Every Monday morning, also stands at the heart of Eco-district market with local producers (from the town and neighboring municipalities).

## SOLUTIONS

- Circular economy



## TRANSPORT

### Mobility strategy

In the old center, the walk is the first mode of travel. The development of "calades" (cobble pedestrian streets in sawn and sealed rollers), climbs to the citadel of andrônes, including that consists of a "spiral staircase" public overlooking Palace Square promotes ambulation.

The association "Walk to School" set up the walking bus, there a few years ago. A rallying point was place Saint Michel. The association no longer exists but the habit was taken and now the approach is individual and spontaneous including the inhabitants of the island Marius stood with children attending schools. With project roadside rest, place de Verdun, within 300 m. of the "Historical Eco-district", access to public transport will be facilitated.

The shuttle between the parking lot of the cultural center and the city center, advocated by P.G.D has already been set up, with 25 rotations in the markets of the summer. As part of its continuing habitat rehabilitation policy and improving the living environment in the historical center of the city (AU area) and given the high building density on this area which makes it very difficult to make parking spaces.

Alternative parking options are available nearby. The municipality is committed to the establishment of a Global Moving Map (P.G.D.) in order to offer its inhabitants a shared city and accessible to all. The diagnosis prior to the development of this plan (Office of studies Cyclades-Girus) did appear:

- A lack of safety and accessibility for pedestrians and bicycles, and people with disabilities;
- Dangerous intersections because of too wide roads that lead vehicles to drive too fast;
- An adequate supply of parking, which must review the management, especially in the city center;
- A transit offer satisfactory but still too little known users;
- An urban space conducive to pedestrian traffic and bicycles.

Following this diagnosis, the Commune has defined the following action plan:

- For traffic calmed: development of zones 30 kmph; Redefining traffic systems; Planning meeting areas; Processing vicinity of schools; Repositioning the rest area in the city center, Place de Verdun.
- For a reorganized parking: setting up blue zone; Redevelopment of Lour and Cordeliers car parks; Information panels; Shuttles to the Monday market in the summer.
- For a place for cycling: Installation of a crossing safe city and continues; Panels and floor paint; Contraflow lane. (A synthetic presentation of P.G.D. annexed)

Forcalquier is the heart of a large mesh bus routes in consideration of its rural territory. especially be noted, its connection with Manosque, the largest city of the department and major employment hub located 25 km. In 40 minutes, this line allows Forcalquier inhabitants be in Manosque, from 7.45 am with an evening return to 5 or 6 pm.

## SOLUTIONS

- Soft transportation

## RESOURCES

### Water management

Reduction of water consumption in social housing, sanitary fittings is fitted with dual controls with economizer (snap tap and double tap command).

Watering the plants is provided by drip. The permanent establishment fountain on the plaza is closed circuit with an independent supply of drinking water on tap delay.

To educate Forcalquier inhabitants in the need to reduce their consumption of drinking water, the municipality has implemented a variable pricing of drinking water, which increases with consumption.

It also provides them with economy water kits (see overview)

Stormwater Management:

In medieval urban fabric in Provence, the sealed area is very important. Except for actions greening submitted through 20, the type of basement waterproofing justified to keep this and collect rainwater; The basement in which are medieval cellars of the area consists of safre very sensitive to water. The stormwater treatment was the subject of a comprehensive system of collection in order to channel runoff (frequent violent storms in the Mediterranean climate) and rainwater in the municipal public network by preventing infiltration into the ground to do not alter its quality (state of ruin parts of the forequarter action arose for a significant part of the aggression of rainwater).

### Soil management

The development of the "Historical eco-district" has resulted in the shares of vegetation, planting tall trees, greening of vines planted and benches, timely and targeted manner.

The vines and plantations as well as the very low circulation of motor vehicles promote the return of the small local fauna plantations consist exclusively of Mediterranean plants with very low demand for water: irrigation drip line is installed to aid in recovery in the early years.

### Waste management

A point of garbage collection is located Place Saint Michel, the center of the eco-district.

It is available for collection by small vehicles.

A collection point is located on the ramparts, within 100 m. of all dwellings of eco-district. Buffer areas have been provided in some buildings of the island Marius Debout, accessible from the public domain, but outside of it. They allow short-term storage of bulky then collected by horse-drawn collection.

## SOLUTIONS

- Citizen-awareness
- Citizen-awareness

## BIODIVERSITY

## Biodiversity and natural areas

The Eco Quartier is an urban space. Forcalquier features for its various natural sites, including one particularly remarkable site classified as sensitive natural area.

## ENERGY/CLIMATE

### Climate adaptation, resources conservation, GHG emissions

This is the "good constructive manner" which was favored during the development of the overall project and construction / rehabilitation projects, optimizing directions and the thermal inertia, favoring natural ventilation, putting in place occulting devices, as well as plant protection.

### Energy sobriety

The site possesses an old architecture and heritage history. The energy production pathways were and should be adapted to this context. The rehabilitation of buildings of the island Marius Debout was performed by applying the RT2005.

On the occasion of the rehabilitation of networks, town gas was brought in the eco-district.

Social housing Marius Debout island were equipped with individual heating by natural gas condensing boilers with outdoor sensor.

## SOLUTIONS

- Climate adaptation
- Urban Lighting

## BUILDINGS

### Buildings

The total floor area of the "historic EcoQuartier" is estimated at 14,000 m<sup>2</sup> (source: land register) which is as follows:

- Social housing for rent: 2790 m<sup>2</sup>
- Other units: 8900 m<sup>2</sup>
- Shops and services: 2 310 m<sup>2</sup>

A floor area of 3035 m<sup>2</sup> has been renovated or rebuilt in multi-unit residential buildings with shops, services and artists' studios in the ground floor:

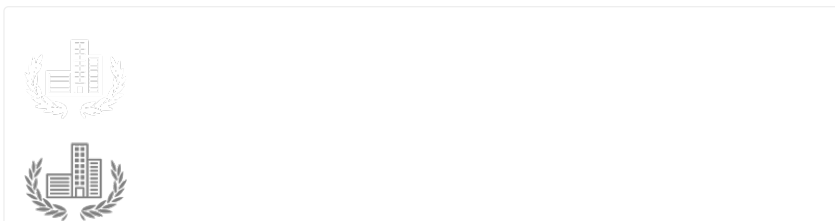
- Social housing units: 54
- Private dwellings: 15
- Shops, services, ...: 12 as part of a public contracting authority (shops, local associations, artists workshop or crafts)

The process of requalification and the strong determination of two successive municipalities have helped revive the interest of private investors for transactions in the historic district of old mansions.

A property was notably renovated luxury residence, which would not have been conceivable before, the owners massively selling the mansions they had. Social and age diversity of the area is also well developed by private action and public.

## Contest

### Building candidate in the category



Revest-du-Bion

La Rochegiron

Lardiers

Saint-Étienne-

Cruis

Montlaux

Mallefougasse-  
Augès





Coup de Coeur des Internautes



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