

CONNECTING THE URBAN

The arrival of high speed rail (AVE) in Barcelona allowed redevelopment of this infrastructure to get underway, a process which was facilitated by the decision to lay the two AVE lines underground, which left two lines free on the surface. This decision also translated into increased public space on the North side, which, together with the availability of important pieces of public land on the Southern side, made it possible to plan for urban redevelopment at a neighbourhood level.

The project promises to radically improve communications in the Sants neighbourhood. It also creates new north-south connections for pedestrians which will pass both above and below the railway covering.

The structure that holds up the building/container is comprised of prefab concrete parts in a sequence on a diagonal which adopts the shape of a great Warren beam evoking the old railway bridges, leaving large empty triangles that lend themselves to glazing them over to allow a view of the train passing through the city, reducing its acoustic impact to a minimum. Not fully glazing the building allowed three great green inclines to be built which rise from the lowest levels right up to roof level. These embankments "anchor" the building into its setting allow the roof vegetation to spill down to the lateral streets and support pedestrian ramps that provide a "natural" access to the roof.

