Man and machine

Survey: Corruption still the status quo

EY’s report finds that many business people in Hungary still believe that bribery is a regular part of doing business here, and that those who play fair will be punished.

Business

Lawyers say business is growing

As the Hungarian economy picks up, so does the legal business, according to local lawyers, who note improvements in a variety of sectors.

Socialite

Lawsuit could take art treasures away

Some 44 works on display in museums around Hungary may go into private hands if a court in Washington D.C. rules the art was looted by Nazis.

Business

Seeking to keep innovation at home

A conference in Budapest focuses on ways to ensure that great ideas founded in Europe don’t end up being owned by someone in Silicon Valley.

Challenging the status quo.

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Budapest Business Journal
2015.05.27 - (13. oldal)
New CEU building grafted onto District 5

The first phase of the university’s total campus redevelopment is a new structure being added to existing elements in the UNESCO-protected area in the heart of Pest.

Phase One of the Central European University (CEU) Campus Redevelopment Project, a new building that is being built onto elements of the existing structures in the historical 5th district of Budapest, has officially begun with the cornerstone laying ceremony held in early May. This first phase is due to be completed in the summer of next year, with the second phase scheduled for completion in summer 2018.

“We have outgrown our initial premises, we are here to stay so we thought it would be good to have a proper campus that is fit for the function of a university and our goals and ambitions,” said Liviu Măcei, Provost and Pro-Rector of the CEU. This development will provide a central unified campus for the university. From a development perspective, Irish architectural firm O’Donnell and Tuomey were faced with how to construct a functional building that blends in and complements the surrounding protected Central European architecture of Central Pest. The project is one of the first non-commercial buildings to achieve BREEAM sustainability accreditation in line with the sustainability policy of the CEU’s board.

According to the redevelopment plan, the three-phase project will consolidate the CEU into a 35,000 sqm campus across six buildings in the UNESCO World heritage area of Nador utca. The first phase will include a five-story library with an extended auditorium for lectures and concerts. “CEU supports its mission and projects through a mixture of private philanthropic support, European research grants, corporate and foundation funding. Fundraising for the three-phase campus redevelopment project, which is estimated to approach €34 million, is ongoing. Loan finance is provided by the European Investment Bank,” said a CEU statement.

Years of planning

O’Donnell and Tuomey were selected after an open tender and the concept developed over four years, during which time the design had to be negotiated with both the city planning authorities and the monument protection authorities. The process focused on issues of how does a 21st century functioning university building fit into the historic center of Budapest. “Such an enterprise raises a number of questions related to the interface between contemporary architecture and urban cultural heritage,” recalls Sheila O’Donnell. “We were interested in preserving the old courtyards and using these to connect the different parts of the existing buildings into a physical unit. This also creates an interaction with other classic buildings in the center of Budapest,” she continued. “In the design there is a focus towards the courtyards – ways of making interconnections between the buildings, not only on the ground floor, but also on the upper floors. The architects believe that respect for legacy is a very important part of design, which is imperative as CEU dwells in downtown Budapest,” O’Donnell added.

Sustainable features were incorporated in the planning process from the outset. Furthermore, the developers have a commitment to developing a building that is energy efficient and conducive to an educational environment and that enhances CEU’s commitment to sustainable and green development. Energy efficiency is a major element of the design and the CEU campus has BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology) accreditation. “It is expected that the university’s energy consumption will be reduced by one third as a result of the architectural solutions and installation of modern mechanical methods. BREEAM principles have been used in the design in order to support CEU’s commitment to sustainability. We are currently working with BREEAM representatives at the design stage and we anticipate that accreditation will be confirmed some time this month,” said Frédéric Baross, director of the CEU Campus Redevelopment Office.

The building will have glass roofs that take into consideration the extreme temperatures in Hungary and the need for air-conditioning in summer and efficient heating in winter. There will also be a system that will automatically open and close windows based on the outside temperature and also enable these to be opened manually. In addition there will be a rooftop garden.

O’Donnell and Tuomey have BREEAM “Outstanding” accreditation for their recent design of the London School of Economics building in London. The CEU accreditation is an interesting development, as previously it had tended to be commercial buildings that have achieved BREEAM or LEED accreditation. The number of higher quality green accredited offices is expected to grow to 30% by the end of 2015 according Norbert Szűcsné, senior associate, Green Advisory Services at Colliers International.