



# Mango refreshes key Shanghai site

Mango West Bund Plaza is at the centre of plans to transform a Shanghai riverside site into a vibrant cultural and entertainment area, with the Central Plaza park and Mango Box building adding a firm emphasis on landscaping and sustainability

Mango West Bund Plaza, at the heart of regeneration plans for Shanghai's Xuhui Riverside area, will include the landmark Mango Box building, its transparent façade designed to capture sunlight and save on energy consumption (left), while the surrounding area will feature landscaped terraces and pedestrianised links to adjacent districts



The massive riverside complex will include a 500-seat IMAX cinema, performance venues, theatres, art exhibition space, restaurants, shops and offices. It will be connected by a new subway stop and is about 30 minutes drive from Shanghai Hongqiao Airport.

Older buildings at the former industrial site will be given a new lease of life. The former cement factory will become a performance venue and a boat shed will be transformed into an arts and entertainment hub. Designers have focused on matching the scheme to its environment and the masterplan connects neighbouring plots with pedestrian bridges and mezzanine platforms.

Benoy is also designing the largest plot in the masterplan, known as Mango West Bund Plaza, where TV station Hunan TV plans to locate its new offices. At the heart of its site is the Central Plaza park with landscaped terraces and a grand staircase.

Benoy's landmark, 40m tall 'Mango Box' is framed by transparent curtain wall systems and parametric metallic panels. Its envelope is designed to filter excessive sunlight by adopting low-E glasses, while showing off the interiors with intriguing weaving geometries and a grand staircase linking mezzanine floors to form a continuous vertical circulation. The building becomes a glowing lantern at night for the site and its neighbouring plots.

"Everyone knows solar can make a great impact on a scheme; our building's layout is oriented on the east-west axis, allowing it to get the most potential solar energy," says Qin Pang, director and head of Benoy's Shanghai studio. "It allows the solar rotation to follow the pattern of the sun. The glass has several insulated layers, allowing the maximum amount of the sunlight through. We can save 25-30% on energy consumption annually."

The façades of the offices will feature three types of fins, designed to create undulating wave patterns and mirror the scheme's waterfront location, while also working as an external shading device.

"This is a flagship building in Shanghai that [Hunan TV] can show off across China," says Qin. "We needed the government of Hunan province to approve the final design, as well as the Shanghai government, so had to work hard to meet a lot of different needs."

The Mango Box has been designed with great flexibility, says Qin, partly to allow it to house a wide range of cultural programmes, but also to future-proof the scheme to be able to deal with future demands.

Mango West Bund Plaza is an improvement on other Shanghai developments in terms of its high sustainability credentials; its designers hope it will become one of the few Shanghai buildings to achieve a LEED certification.

"Saving energy is deeply rooted in China's culture," adds Qin. "The country was not rich and there was nothing to waste. But there's been a lack of knowledge about sustainable development and a fear of costs. Once the process is explained and understood, developers accept it. This project is a good example. Once we explained our plans to the client about sustainability they saw that the cost was not a barrier and this is a long-term strategy. It's understanding that the benefit isn't always immediate."

The development's pioneering nature has secured a place on the shortlists of this year's World Architecture Festival awards. "Development in this kind of extremely precious area can have a big impact on the natural environment," says Qin. "We are innovators, we are showing people there is a way to make life better and greener."

With views that slope gently back towards the hectic centre, Shanghai's Xuhui Riverside area is one of the city's most pleasant locations. A short journey out of the core centre, and adjacent to the Huangpu River, the stretch of land is a favourite with joggers and strolling families, escaping the Shanghai crowds.

As a former cement plant, the waterfront site's potential has been somewhat neglected in recent years. But this key site is set for massive regeneration; after being identified as a development site in the government's last Five Year Plan, a masterplan for a mixed-use riverside community has been drawn up.

The project is one of Shanghai's most significant developments, its DreamCenter Masterplan, completed by Benoy, featuring nine plots of land to be regenerated into space for the creative media, technology and cultural industries. When completed in 2018, it will boast the "DreamCenter" entertainment and cultural district, drawn up by DreamWorks Animation and its Chinese partners.