

# Operation les Vernets

Fact sheet  
drawn up on 31.08.2016

More information  
[www.2000watt.ch/vernets](http://www.2000watt.ch/vernets)

Computer-generated image of the future Operation  
Les Vernets neighbourhood. Credit: L'Avenue Digital Média Sarl



## Operation Les Vernets A modern, innovative community for everyone

The site of the Vernets barracks, in the heart of Geneva, is one of the centrepieces of Praille Acacias Vernets (PAV), a huge project that will gradually see this industrial and business area transformed into a modern urban neighbourhood. The army is to quit the barracks shortly, freeing up a vast, hitherto inaccessible property that is ideally located by the banks of the Arve River, a stone's throw from downtown Geneva.

In keeping with the 21 principles set out in the PAV master plan, and which will frame the area's sustainable development, the project known as Operation Les Vernets plans to set a gold standard in environmental terms. Indeed, it was conceived with a view to obtaining the 2000-Watt Site label as of the planning stage. Operation Les Vernets will give the city of Geneva a new, welcoming and interactive neighbourhood while affording apartment-dwellers the tranquil greenery of their sun-filled courtyards.

The architects, developers and investors have a shared goal: to create an innovative and ambitious, sustainable and socially diverse neighbourhood comprising housing for families, students and seniors, services, day-care centres, neighbourhood shops, cultural events, community centres and schools. The energy concept is based on a thermal exchange loop that uses the geothermal storage capacity of probes sunk 250 m. into the ground and is reloaded during the warmer months with the help of solar panels. Thanks to the solar panels, the neighbourhood will be supplied entirely with renewables and will give off no polluting emissions.

The project's location in the heart of the city will greatly facilitate mobility, given the excellent public transport services at hand. The number of parking spaces will be centralized and shared, and therefore limited. The plan is for 1,100 places for cars and 3,000 for bicycles (about 0.5 automobile and 2 bicycle parking spots per dwelling).

### A committed multidimensional team



**Jean-Yves Coste**  
Directeur du projet  
Opération les Vernets  
Losinger Marazzi SA

“ The Canton and City of Geneva, and the stakeholders involved, have a shared goal: to create an ambitious and innovative neighbourhood where there's room for everyone and where the user's concerns are paramount. Operation Les Vernets has been developed by the ENSEMBLE Team of three cooperatives (CODHA, SCHG and CIGUÉ), two pension funds (CEPG and CIEPP), two insurance companies (Swiss Life and La Mobilière) and the City of Geneva Foundation for Public Housing. Pillet is overseeing the site's development, with Losinger Marazzi

contributing its know-how as a planner and builder. The neighbourhood's mixed use is guaranteed by the Team and a programme aimed at 100% controlled-rent dwellings for families, students and seniors. The site's 2000-Watt certification encourages us to innovate, to use resources sparingly, and to propose high-quality services in the long term.

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## Facts and figures

**SITE**  
Operation les Vernets

**MUNICIPALITY**  
City of Geneva

**CANTON**  
Geneva

**SURFACE AREA**  
42 ha

**NUMBER OF BUILDINGS**  
4

**WEBSITE**  
www.ge.ch/pav

**TYPE OF USE**  
Housing, shops, offices, hotel

**ENERGY STANDARD**  
Buildings in line with SIA 2040 and MINERGIE-ECO

**HEATING**  
Geothermal probes and solar panels

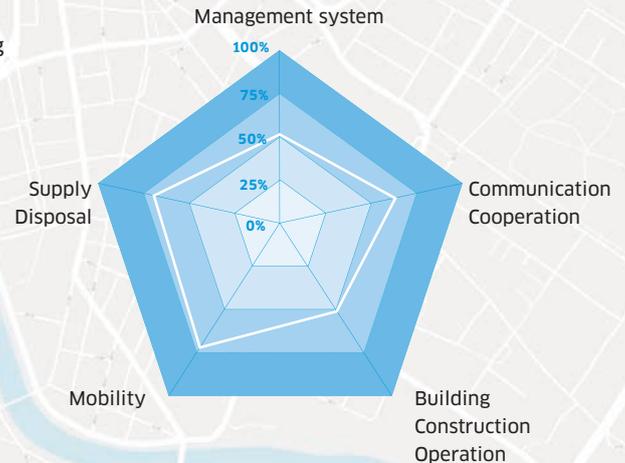
**COOLING**  
Geothermal probes - free cooling

**ELECTRICITY**  
Solar energy and certified green power

## Results for the 2000-Watt set of criteria

The spider chart shows the percentage of the Operation Les Vernets site's energy potential currently being exploited. To earn 2000-Watt certification, a site must exploit at least 50% of its energy potential.

In 2015, Greencity was exploiting 68% of its potential.



## Operation les Vernets Geneva

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## Highlights

- Robust and experienced steering and development structure, a plus for the development of sustainable urban projects.
- User outreach to pool local economic, cultural and social players and equipment, so as to bring the site and its neighbours alive.
- All dwellings will be for rent, and two thirds will be subsidized.
- Three of the four buildings will have the MINERGIE-ECO label.
- Buildings heated using ground probes and solar panels.
- Electricity generated on site by solar panels.
- Car-free neighbourhood.

## Status of the project

- In 2006 the Canton of Geneva and the Swiss Federal Government started negotiations on the expected move of the Vernets barracks.
- 2014: International design competition won by FHV/ADR.
- 2015: Second call for tenders from investors and attribution of the project to the ENSEMBLE team (8 investors, 1 manager and 1 developer).
- 2016: The neighbourhood development plan is opened for public inquiry.
- 2018: First building permits.
- The plan calls for the creation, by 2025, of about 1,500 dwellings (130,000 sq.m.), 30,000 sq.m. of business and retail space, and 3,000 sq.m. of public services (daycare centre, community centre, day centre for the elderly).

## What does the '2,000-Watt Site' certificate represent?

Certificates for '2,000-Watt Sites' are awarded to housing developments that use resources sustainably in the construction, operation and renovation of their buildings, and in the traffic they generate.

The Swiss Federal Office of Energy (SFOE) and the 'Energienstadt' association award this certificate in two stages, the first being for 'Sites under development'. The next stage is reached when construction has progressed to the point that at least half of the total living space is in use. The development is then considered a 'Site in operation' and can apply

for a new '2,000-Watt Site' certificate. Actual operating values are then measured to determine whether the Site fulfils the necessary criteria for certification.

This certification was developed as part of the SwissEnergy programme, with which the SFOE promotes national energy policy implementation, specifically in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energy. Through a sub-programme called SwissEnergy for municipalities, the SFOE systematically supports projects on a communal level.

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