Ferring Pharmaceuticals A/S Opens its New Home in Copenhagen

Words Foster + Partners. **Photographs** Nigel Young/Foster + Partners



View from west. A public landscaped promenade incorporating benches surround the perimeter of the building. The building’s entrance building is announced by a dramatic overhanging roof.

Ferring Pharmaceuticals A/S has opened its new home in Copenhagen. The site occupies a pivotal waterfront position alongside the Øresund crossing, just north of Copenhagen International Airport. Bordered by predominantly low-rise development, the building affords fantastic views towards Malmö and the Swedish coast – where the company was founded.

Grant Brooker, Head of Studio, said: “From the selection of this extraordinary site to the high aspirations for the building and the role it could play, this project was driven by the vision of our client, Frederik Paulsen. It was an honour to be trusted to design and deliver that vision, creating a new home for the people who are at the heart of this pioneering company. We have enjoyed unwavering support from the client team, the local authorities, and our collaborating designers, particularly our colleagues at Mikkelsen Architects, with whom we have worked hand in hand to realise this unique project.”

Marianne Kock, General Manager, Ferring Pharmaceuticals, said: “The new headquarters embodies our company’s core values, reflecting the open and collaborative working style that we have fostered. Our employees are delighted to be working in such a dynamic and generous building – with a truly social heart.”

The building sits on a large plinth which acts as the first line of defence against potential floods. The design integrates robust street furniture and resilient soft landscaping, which responds to the harsh marine environment. The lightweight glass building ‘floats’ above, in contrast to the heavy plinth below. The six stacked floors and roof canopy cantilever out to further capture the surrounding views and generate self-shaded spaces on each floor. This also creates a dynamic atrium space inside the building. The triangular architectural form is driven by the shape of the site, surrounded by water on all sides. At the heart of the building, the generous internal atrium incorporates a full height wall with views towards Sweden, an entrance lobby, restaurant and break-out space, as well as catered conference facilities and space for social events. The edges of the atrium have been designed to be used flexibly. Staff can easily and efficiently reconfigure these spaces, by moving seating and tables into different locations. Access to the floors above is via a feature staircase or glass lifts that further animate the atrium space.

David Kong, Partner, Foster + Partners, added: “We worked with Ferring to develop an in-depth understanding of the way they work. Through observations and targeted interviews, we gained valuable insight into the processes involved in the development of their drugs. In turn, we have designed a building that responds to the company’s specific needs and brings the range of Ferring’s activities under one roof.”

Offices and laboratories – for quiet, individual work – are situated on the edges, to take advantage of the views and natural light, while more collaborative meeting spaces are located towards the centre, overlooking the top-lit atrium and other social spaces creating a vibrant core of the building throughout each level.

The façade has a very strong horizontal emphasis, in consonance with the surrounding area’s low-rise urban fabric. The technical plant and building cores are incorporated into the cantilevering roof form, giving it a sleek profile. The geometry of the atrium roof is a form-found, glazed gridshell dome, reflecting the forces acting upon it, allowing for thin, lightweight structural members. Daylight streams into the interior spaces, creating an uplifting, light-filled workplace. Each triple glazed panel has been cold bent to create the building’s striking glass dome.



View of the Building from harbour, the base of the plinth incorporates a public promenade with landscaping and benches.



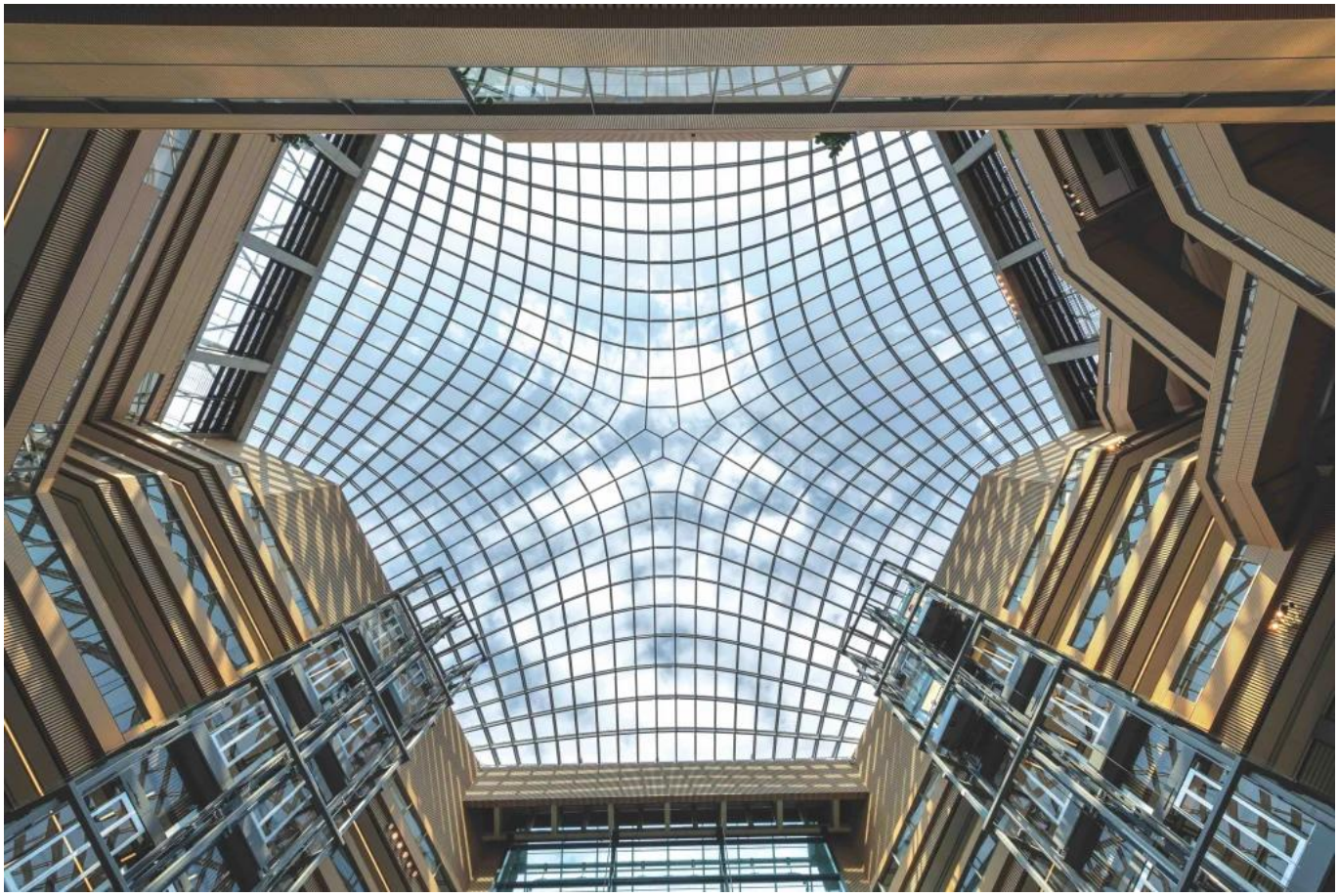
Bridges connect across the atrium glazed wall allowing dramatic sea and internal atrium views.



Trees and planter shrubs provide greenery and a sense of nature into the atrium space.



A striking feature staircase connects all the floors from the atrium floor level.



View of the glazed roof geometry. Triple glazed panels are cold bent into place onto an optimised lightweight steel grid shell structure.