

BEATO 1904

LISBON, PORTUGAL

2019–2015

Renovation of 19th-century warehouse
in Lisbon's WebSummit hub
into a co-working center

Located on the Lisbon riverfront, between the 17th-century Convent of Grilo and the Beato Creative Hub (which hosts many of the start-up companies springing from the annual Web Summit), this 19th-century wine and olive oil warehouse has been converted into a co-working space that, without losing its historical character, is flexible and friendly. The three-storey building has two street frontages, respectively towards the north, on Rua do Grilo, and towards the south, on Rua da Manutenção. Westwards, it is adjacent to other warehousing facilities, while towards the east, it has its own courtyard and borders a vacant plot.

Structurally, the gabled roof ensemble was system-built using thick masonry walls, arched on the ground floor, that hold together a wooden structure of cross-beams and an extremely large wood-boarding floor. In terms of its renovation, the following principles were considered: (a) to clear up the space of all residual and unqualified adaptations that had been layered onto it over decades of different appropriations and misuses; (b) to make the best use of the existing structure, minimising both demolition and new construction; and (c) to selectively open gaps both in the roof gables and in the east façade to bring natural light deep into the building. The east courtyard serves as access to the vertical distribution core and access to the adjacent parking. In making use of this courtyard, which already had the markings of pre-existing arches on the ground-floor walls, new openings were made using the former metric and replicating them on the upper floors.

In the east façade, an industrial metal-grating staircase that culminates in a wide balcony connects the different floors, serving both as a fire escape and an outdoor area with views towards the river. As for the interior space, it has been cleared of all non-original partitions, while WC, pantry and storage are clustered in a single block, revealing the tactile and tectonic presence of the large wooden floor planks and ceiling beams. The masonry walls are finished in ochre burnt lime, while the lift core is made of raw steel plates.



Location: Rua da Manutenção 67, Lisbon, Portugal
Client: Private
Scope of services: Architecture
Project brief: Renovation of historical warehouse
Plot area: 702 sq. m
Gross floor area: 1,928 sq. m
Project status: 2015 (concept design) – 2019 (built)
Photography: João Carmo Simões