

# WOODEN "SKIN" FOR A SUSTAINABLE SHEEP-FOLD



The new sheep-fold in Almere, Holland, designed by studio "70F Architecture" of Bas ten Brinke and Carina Nilsson.

Sheep are a precious asset for the **Almere community** in Holland, not only for the agricultural and economic activity of the area, but also for their contribution to the balance of the local ecosystem. An excellent reason to take care of them: this is the origin of an initiative by the local municipality for the construction of a new **sheep-fold** to gather about 80 sheep living in the area. The 400-square-meter building was designed by studio "70F

**Architecture"** of Bas ten Brinke and Carina Nilsson, also from Almere, with a constant asymmetrical convex shape that encloses and divides the different functional areas. The only square element that protrudes from the "tube" in the upper section is the section for offices and shepherd rooms. In the large open space at ground level, directly under the lower portion of the building where the headroom is smaller, the

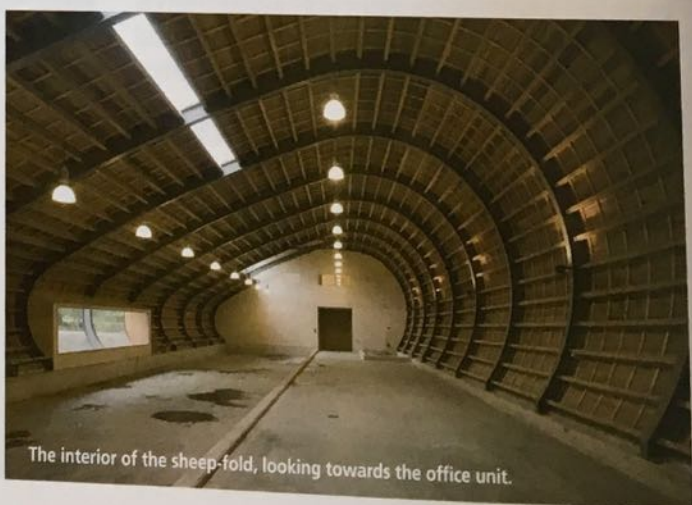
sheep will be hosted, while public routes and hay storage are located in the sections with high ceilings.

The curved section of the building makes the most of natural ventilation indoors, controlled through two openings in the lower section. Natural lighting is ensured by large vertical windows at the top, outside the covering skin, integrated in the orthogonal office section, and the longitudinal openings at the zenith that capture light. From a structural viewpoint, the building is a defined space with a fluid wooden **skin**, a seamless "hull" for outer walls and cover, closed by orthogonal and essential walls at the end, where the entrance doors are perfectly hidden and integrated in the hull. The supporting structure is made of **pine** wood. The only construction elements made from

other materials than wood are the curved cross beams made of steel, installed to increase the mechanical resistance of this peculiar curved shape. The outer coating was made using **Western Red Cedar** boards. For the interior coatings of the sheep-fold facades and the office unit, **beech** plywood panels were used. Conceived as a dedicated place for animal care and health, the Almere sheep-fold is a real community service building, offering educational visits (also when the location is closed to the public, thanks to the wide openings at ground level), special employment opportunities for physically and mentally disabled local citizens under the shepherd's supervision, and integration with the Muslim communities that can rely on the sheep-fold to find animals for their rituals. (o.r.) ■



The external facade of the sheep-fold, covered with Western Red Cedar boards also at the entrance openings.



The interior of the sheep-fold, looking towards the office unit.