

SIDEWALL(K)

Title	Sidewall(k)
Client	Municipality Utrecht
Architect	Steven Nobel, Marnix van der Meer
Contractor	Bouwbedrijf van den Engel
Command	attach old wall
Period	2012-2014

After eliminating the parking garage next to the NH hotel a huge demolition site has been left. This 'undesigned' façade is however prominently visible from the station square and the new tram stop. Commissioned by the Municipality of Utrecht Zecc Architects has designed a new façade for the NH Hotel.



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Design

Zecc started out with a ragged silhouette made up of various parts of buildings that were revealed after the demolition of the parking garage. It was a messy appearance. Through a long horizontal feature Zecc restored serenity in the façade. Next to the wall there are taxi stands and a tram stop. As a consequence of these adjacent facilities a bench has been taken up in the design for waiting public to enjoy the sun.



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Recycled paving stones

The wall is built up from reused broken paving stones. The broken tiles give a tough impression that suits the present-day NH Hotel and the urban feel of the location. Different masonry techniques are used and so create interplay with the surroundings. The outlines of the bench have for example been taken into account, as well as street lighting. The latter will have a beautiful flood-light effect on the wall. By these different linkages the long wall becomes interesting for passing pedestrians through its entire length. Besides a nice look, the rough stone surface will prevent the attachment of advertisements. The same goes for graffiti.



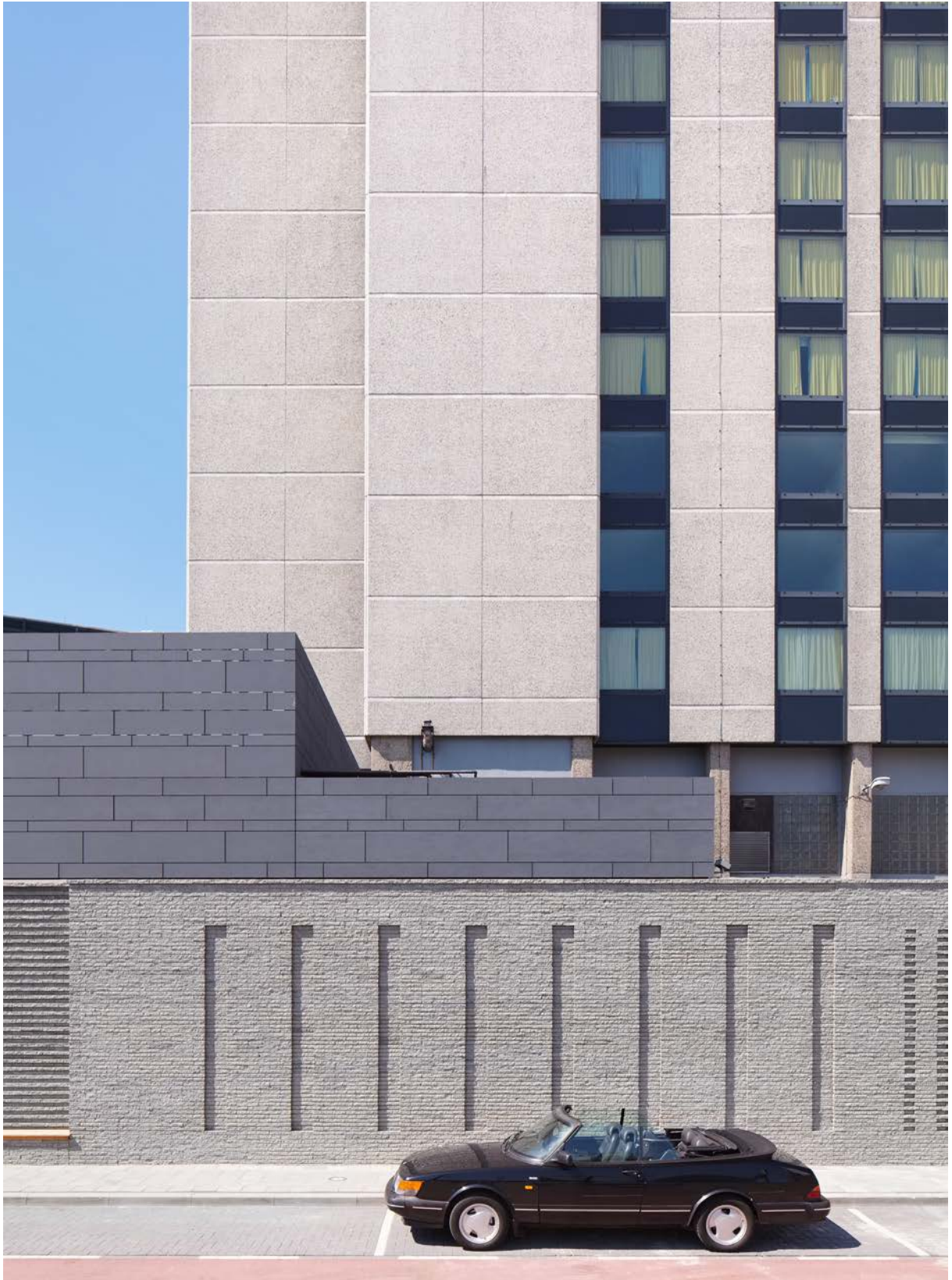
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The right side of the wall has reserved space for the NH logo. This will mark the entrance side of the hotel which faces the exit of Utrecht central station.

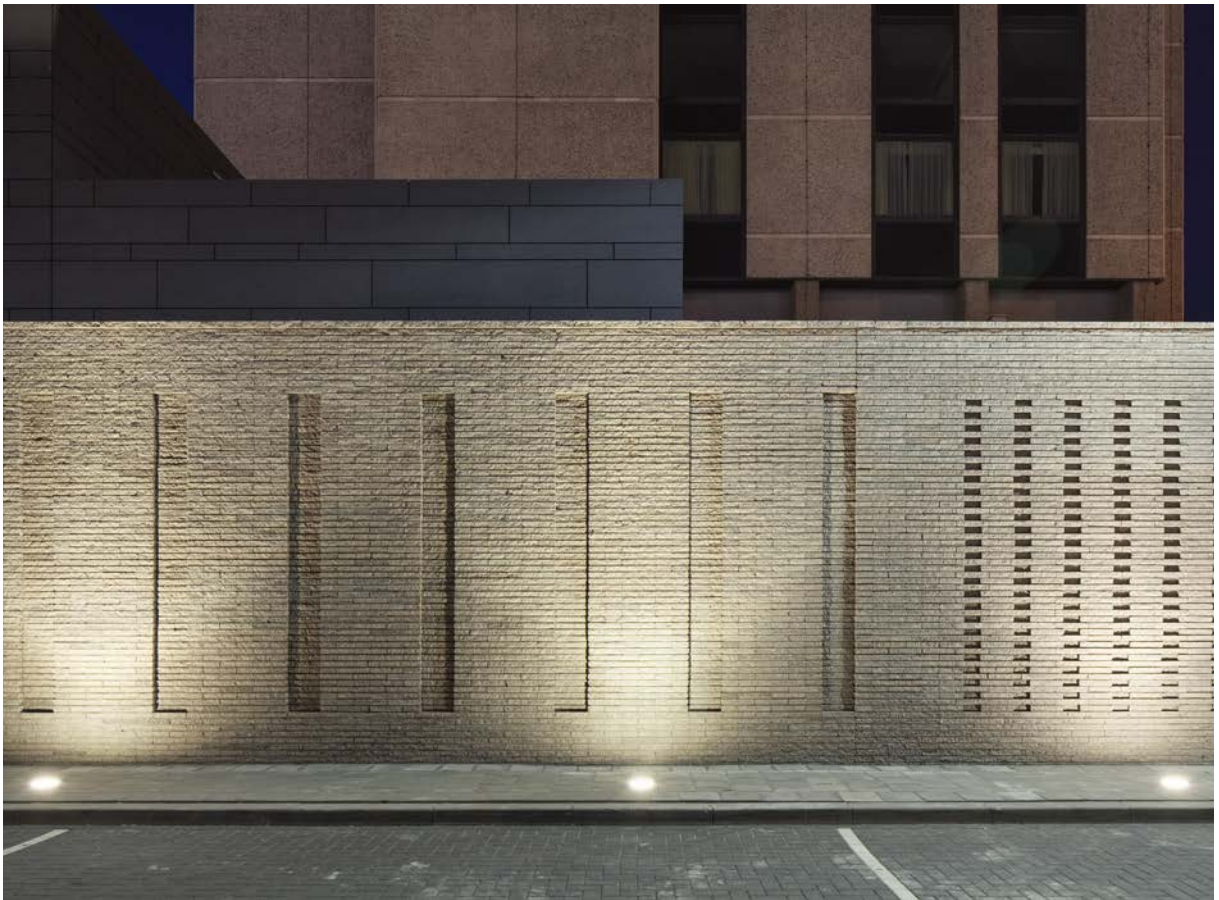
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To decrease the intuitive height of the wall as much as possible, a different material is used from 4 meters up in height. This board material is also used to panel the emergency staircase on the left side and also covers the installations on the roof. The board material is applied in a nature stone pattern to make a playful reference to the materialization of the square below.



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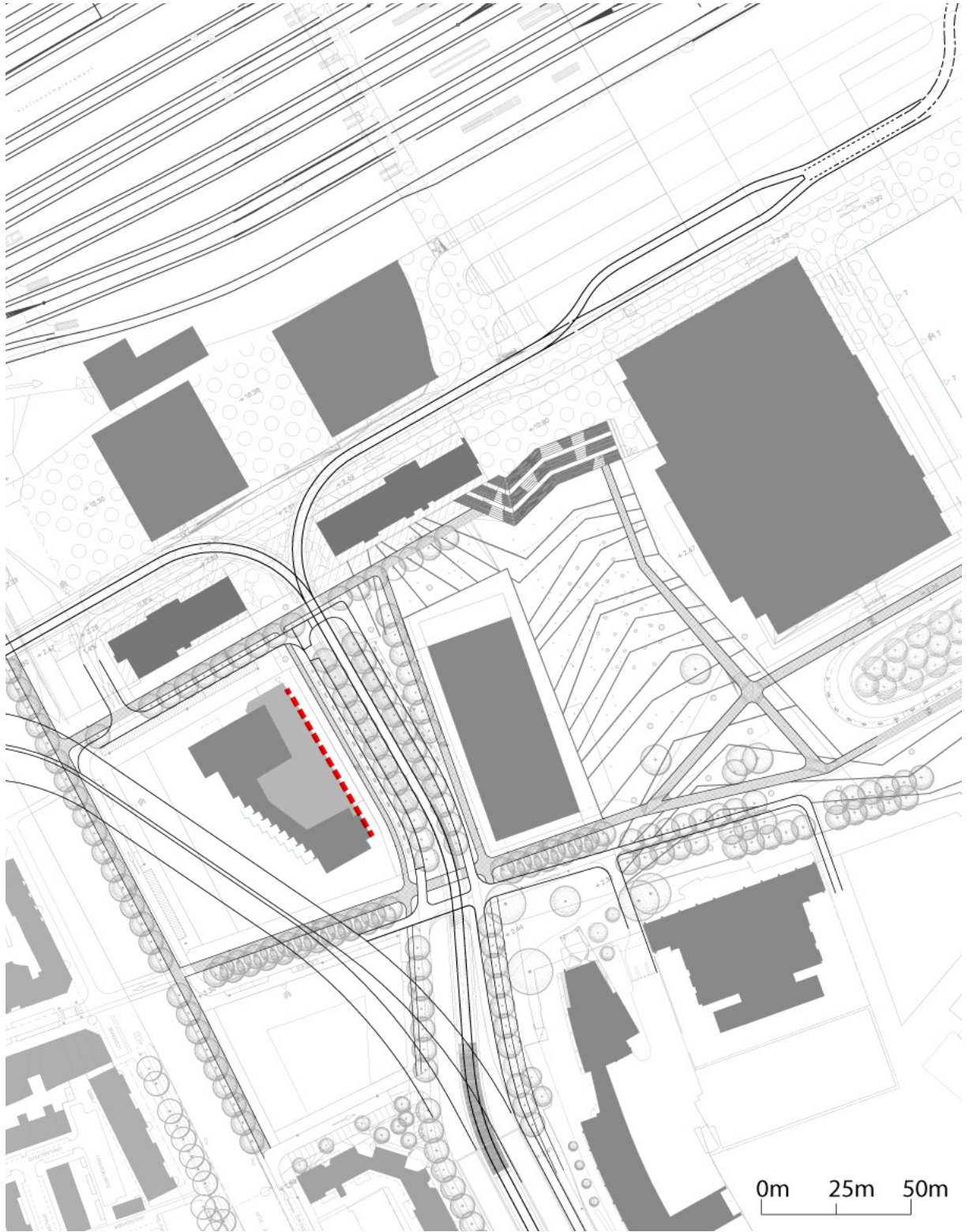
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The logo for Zecc, featuring the word 'zecc' in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters are black with a white outline, and the 'z' and 'c's are connected.