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FOREST ESSENTIALS COMMUNITY PROJECT BY MORPHOGENESIS THRILLS ON THE EDGE OF SUSTAINABILITY WITH SIMPLE EFFORTS

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Standing on the stills of a defunct factory, the structure stands for a community project of brand forest essentials which is amongst the world's leading Ayurveda-based wellness brand that is nestled in the Himalayan foothills, on the banks of river Ganga in Rishikesh, India. The design builds on the footprint of a defunct factory, adapting the local vernacular to create a contemporary production facility.

The intervention sensitively responds to the site's climate and context, the design strategies as well as the renewable energy systems that results in a building with a net-zero dependence on energy, water, and waste.

The project also incorporates an existing 'gaushala' (for animal husbandry and production of milk-based products) into the planning; moreover the provision of large aangans (gathering space) promotes the local culture of close-knit communities. The use of local materials, techniques, and labour form the ethos of the facility, making it a project for the locals, by the locals. This holistic interdisciplinary approach aims to set a new benchmark for a decentralised community with a global footprint.

The project focuses on sustainable parameters for being self sufficient rural communities by directly or indirectly employing 75% of the village households as well as pushes the envelope for building performance through integrated passive and active design techniques.All leftover and waste materials on the site were repurposed e.g., reclaimed wooden rafters as light fixtures, waste purlin sections as tube light holders, stone chisels as door handles, re-bars connected to form a washbasin pedestal, etc.

The form of the building takes into account local winds for ventilation with preferably 80% naturally lit spaces. The solar roof fulfils the building requirements as well as generates surplus to supply back to the state grid thus making the building 'Energy'. Similarly, the building materials and exterior skin were analysed and optimised to provide a high thermal mass façade resulting in an energy-efficient building envelope.

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