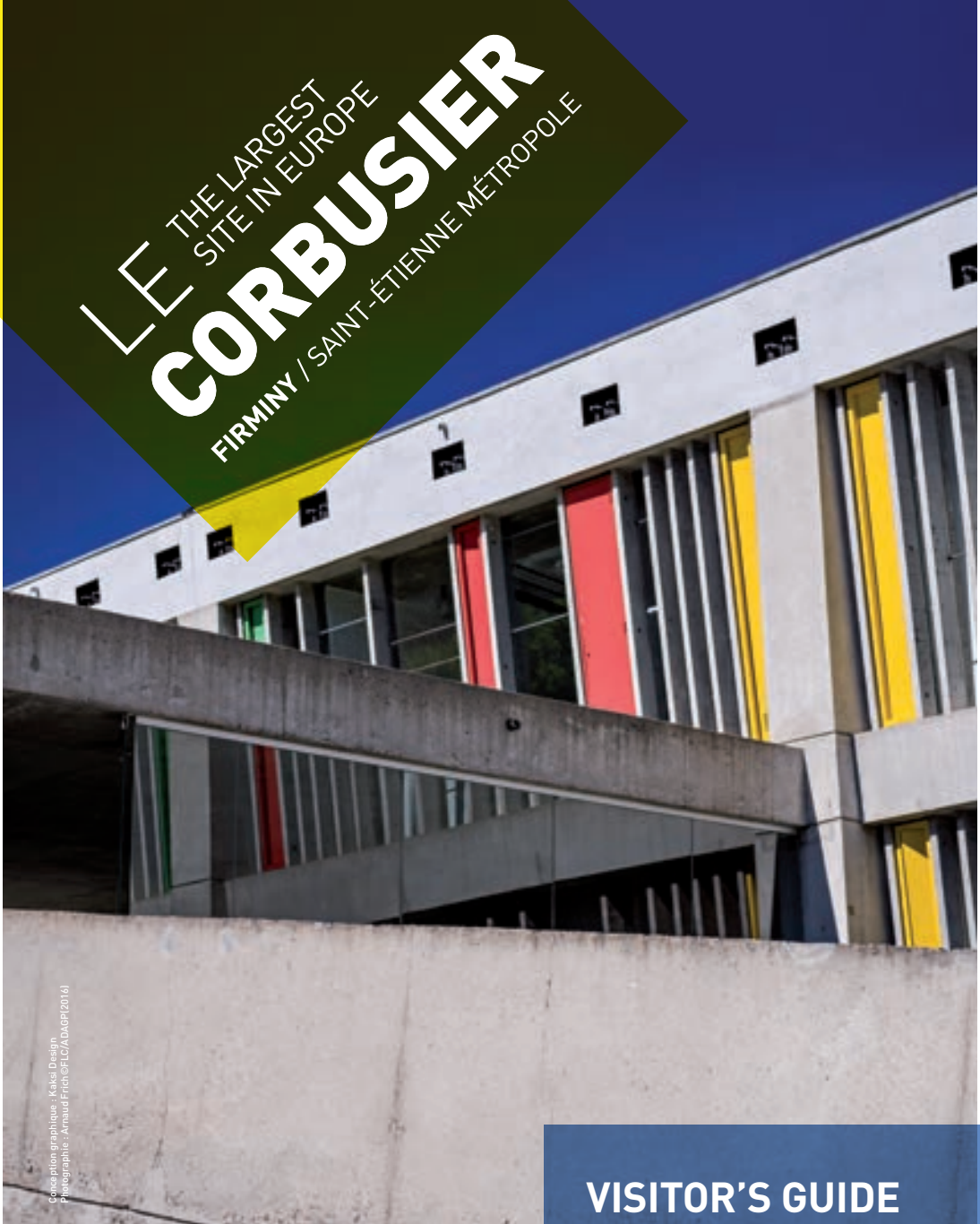




Site Le Corbusier

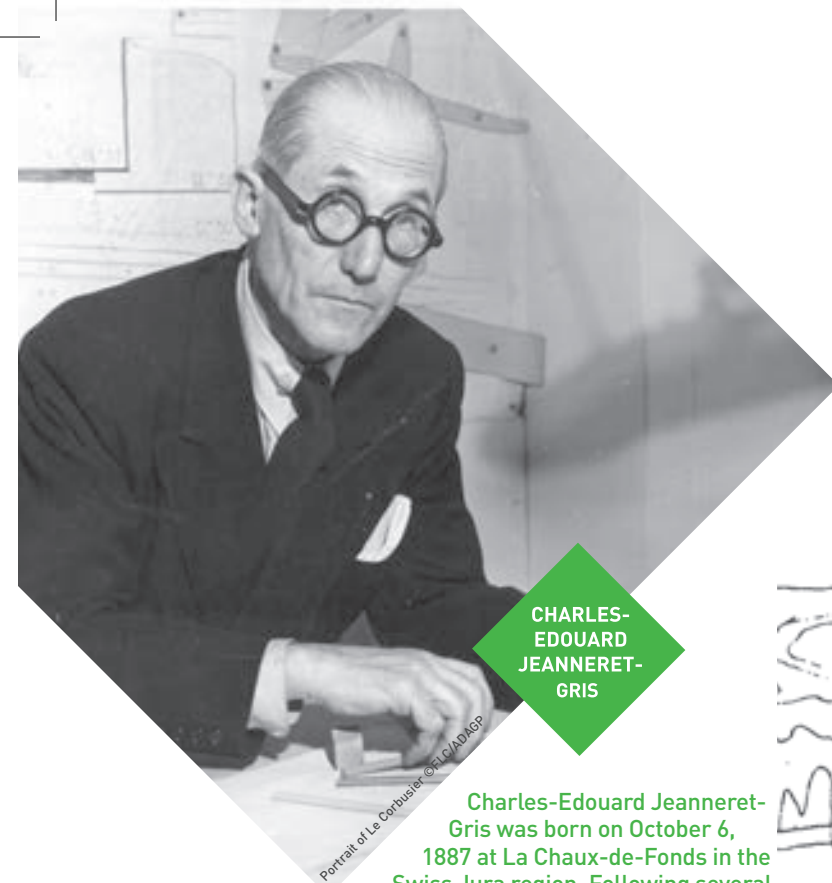
Firminy - Saint-Etienne Métropole

LE THE LARGEST
SITE IN EUROPE
CORBUSIER
FIRMINY / SAINT-ÉTIENNE MÉTROPOLE



Conception graphique : Kaks Design
Photographie : Arnaud Frich / FLC / ADAGP (2016)

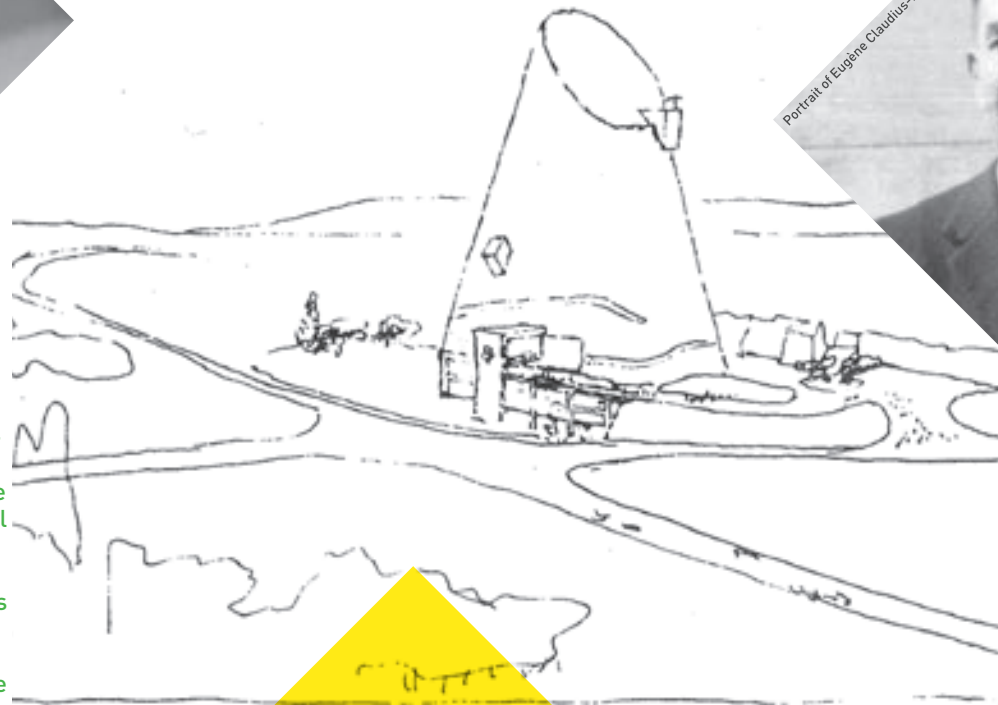
VISITOR'S GUIDE



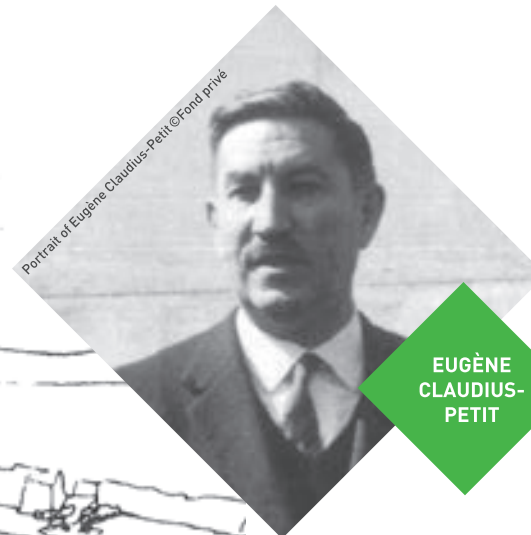
CHARLES-
EDOUARD
JEANNERET-
GRIS

Charles-Edouard Jeanneret-Gris was born on October 6, 1887 at La Chaux-de-Fonds in the Swiss Jura region. Following several years studying art in his hometown, he continued his career as a self-taught professional, interspersed with numerous travels throughout his life. His meeting with the Perret brothers (architects) was decisive in influencing his choice of « bare reinforced concrete » for his buildings. A multifaceted character, he adopted the name Le Corbusier in 1920. As an architect, urban planner, painter, writer, sculptor and designer, he defined the work of the architect as involving « the skilful, correct and magnificent combination of volume under light ». An internationally renowned architect, he erected more than 75 buildings in 12 different countries, and worked on almost 200 projects. He died in an accident on August 27, 1965 in Roquebrune Cap-Martin during the construction phase of Firminy-Vert, which remains today the largest urban site created by this architect in Europe.

Le Corbusier



Study of the Church of Saint-Pierre
Lithographie-1963
©FLC/ADAGP



EUGÈNE
CLAUDIUS-
PETIT

Eugène Claudius-Petit was born on May 22, 1907 in Angers. Originally trained as a cabinetmaker, he left for Paris (living in the suburb of Saint-Antoine). Upon his return from the capital, he taught drawing at the Lycée Ampère in Lyon. It was in this city that he joined the resistance network which eventually took him to Algiers. He served as minister for reconstruction and urban planning between 1948 and 1952 in General de Gaulle's government, as a member of parliament for the Loire Departement on numerous occasions, and as mayor of the town of Firminy between 1953 and 1971. He was also a close friend of Le Corbusier, and asked him to produce several buildings in a district to be known as Firminy-Vert.

*dans ce grand paysage naturel
en ~~ce~~ ce lieu de croisée des routes*

FIRMINY-VERT

FIRMINY IS A TOWN WITH A PROUD MINING PAST, WHICH SAW ITS POPULATION INCREASE DURING THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES THANKS TO THE GROWTH OF THE METALLURGY INDUSTRY.

IN 1953, EUGÈNE CLAUDIUS-PETIT CARRIED OUT A SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OF THE TOWN IN ORDER TO ACCURATELY DETERMINE THE NEEDS OF THE POPULATION. THIS ASSESSMENT CLEARLY REVEALED THE LOW QUALITY OF THE AREA'S HOUSING, IN ADDITION TO A LACK OF HYGIENE AND COMFORT.

With this in mind, for the first stage of his urban planning programme, Eugène Claudius-Petit envisaged a renovation of the town centre and the creation of a new district : Firminy-Vert, or « green Firminy ». This new district, which was to be created by four architects, (Charles Delfante for the urban planning aspects, accompanied by Jean Kling, Marcel Roux and André Sive) proposed a radically different urban style to that used for the former « black Firminy ». These architects carried out their work based on the principles laid down in the « Athens charter » (drafted in 1933 during the fourth International Congress of Modern Architecture), which drew heavily upon the main ideas of the architect Le Corbusier.

This charter stipulated the need to set aside a high percentage of land area for green, landscaped spaces. The four key functions underpinning this theory were « living, working, leisure and traffic ». It was felt that people should have an opportunity to achieve self-fulfillment in an environment in which « sun, space and greenery » were the key features. From 1957 onwards, 1070 low rent homes were created, accompanied by collective services such as schools, social centres and shops. The various communication routes were organised based on a strict hierarchy, ranging from pedestrian streets up to main roads. This development scooped the Grand Prix National d'Urbanisme (urban planning national award) in 1961 and is today protected as part of an Architectural, Urban and Landscape Protection Area (AVAP). From 1954 onwards, Le Corbusier worked on the « civic centre » comprising four buildings : the cultural centre, the stadium, the swimming pool and the church of Saint-Pierre.

VISITOR TRAVEL



HOUSING UNIT



Travel time
by car : 5 mn



CHURCH OF SAINT-PIERRE



ANDRÉ WOGENSKY SWIMMING-POOL



Travel time
by foot : 5 mn



STADIUM



CULTURAL CENTRE

THE CULTURAL CENTRE



Arnaud Frich©FLC/ADAGP(2016)

BUILT BETWEEN 1961 AND 1965, THE CULTURAL CENTRE IS THE ONLY BUILDING COMPLETED IN FIRMINY DURING THE ARCHITECT'S LIFETIME. ITS CONCEPT WAS DERIVED FROM THE PROGRAMME CREATED BY THE CULTURE MINISTER ANDRÉ MALRAUX (1960s) AND IS BASED ON MAKING « STRUCTURES CONVEYING HUMAN GENIUS » AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.

This 112-metre long building is located on the former site of a coal-grit quarry and features an unusual appearance when viewed from outside : the roof is attached by means of a system of cables, giving it the appearance of an upturned vault. The bold slope of the western façade is put to good use inside the building, where it makes it possible for tiered seating to be installed.

The undulating glass panels situated along the eastern and western façades are the result of work carried out by Le Corbusier and the composer Iannis Xenakis, featuring a high degree of musical and architectural harmony.

The furniture present within the building was designed by Pierre Guariche, an architect and designer using the « Modulor », a unit of measurement introduced by Le Corbusier in order to create harmony and proportions well adapted to our human scale.

The cultural centre features numerous rooms for different purposes including an auditorium, a performance room, a visual arts room, and a bodily expression room, etc.

Listed as a historical monument in 1984, it is still used for its original purpose as a performance and artistic creation venue, a community music school and an interpretation centre, etc.

The Cultural Centre, an outstanding UNESCO monument

The Cultural Centre was the first building of Le Corbusier's Firminy project to be completed. Construction started in 1961 and was completed in 1965. It was designed to be the finishing touch to the new neighbourhood of Firminy Vert, the construction of which had begun in 1954. It is the only building of its kind in Europe, the only Cultural Centre designed by Le Corbusier. This exceptional work of art has an audacious architectural shape, a curved roof, a façade overlooking the cliff, undulating windows called « Pans de Verre Ondulatoires ». Still in use today, the building contains much 60's designed furniture.

To reach the church from the cultural centre, take the staircase located at the exit of the Foyer Bar, and then continue around the right hand edge of the stadium pitch until you reach the stairs on the right of the terraces.

Study of the Cultural Centre
©Archives Municipales de Firminy

STADIUM



Gabriel Croppi©FLC/ADAGP

THE STADIUM WAS BUILT BETWEEN 1966 AND 1968, BASED ON LE CORBUSIER'S PLANS. FOLLOWING THE ARCHITECT'S DEATH IN 1965, THE PROJECT WAS CONTINUED BY TWO OF HIS COLLEAGUES : ANDRÉ WOGENSCKY AND FERNAND GARDIEN.

The stands have an average capacity of 4180 places, with 500 of these being covered by the canopy, which was originally meant to cover all of the terraces. Built in keeping with original programme, this building was listed as a historical monument in 1984.

ANDRÉ WOGENSCKY SWIMMING-POOL



SLC©FLC/ADAGP

INCLUDED AS PART OF THE GENERAL URBAN PLANNING PROGRAMME BY LE CORBUSIER IN 1958, IT WAS ANDRÉ WOGENSCKY WHO HANDLED ITS CONSTRUCTION BETWEEN 1969 AND 1971. RESTORED IN 2006, THE SWIMMING POOL HAS BEEN INCLUDED ON THE SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF HISTORICAL MONUMENTS SINCE 2005.

Wogenscky (1916-2004) is also the creator of a housing located at the center of Firminy, a reception center at Saint-Étienne, the Culture centre of Grenoble and other achievements in France and overseas. He received in 1989 the National Architecture Prize. He used forms and materials similar to Le Corbusier for the Culture Centre and the Stadium.

CHURCH OF SAINT-PIERRE

Gabrièle Croppi © Conception, Le Corbusier architecte, José Oubrerie assistant (1960-65), Réalisation, José Oubrerie architecte (1970-2006)



IN 1960, EUGÈNE CLAUDIUS PETIT AND THE PARISH COMMITTEE ORDERED A CHURCH FROM LE CORBUSIER FOR THE FIRMINY-VERT DISTRICT. HE WORKED ON DRAWING UP THE PLANS UNTIL 1965, ASSISTED BY JOSÉ OUBRERIE AND JOSÉ LUIS MIQUEL. THREE YEARS AFTER THE ARCHITECT'S DEATH, THE ASSOCIATION « LE CORBUSIER POUR L'ÉGLISE DE FIRMINY-VERT » (« LE CORBUSIER FOR THE CHURCH OF FIRMINY-VERT ») WAS CREATED IN ORDER TO RAISE THE FUNDS NEEDED TO FINISH THE BUILDING.

The first stone was laid in 1970, but the construction work did not actually get underway until 1973, before being completely abandoned in 1978. The completed areas (the current Interpretation Centre) were listed as historical monuments in 1996. It was only from the year 2000 onwards that the decision was taken to complete the church. Most of the financing was provided by the local urban community (Saint-Étienne Métropole), which in 2002 declared the completion of this monument to be in the general interest of the community.

The construction work, which was completed in November 2006, was managed by José Oubrerie keeping scrupulously to the original project. He was supported by Aline Duverger, Yves Perret, Romain Chazalon and by Jean-François Grange-Chavanis, the chief architect of historical monuments.

The work was completed using modern techniques and materials.

THE CHURCH TAKES THE FORM OF A BASIC SQUARE BUILDING MEASURING 25.50 METRES ALONG EACH SIDE, TOPPED WITH A TRUNCATED 33 METRE HIGH CONE.

The shell (built from self-compacting concrete) houses the nave, the eastern side of which features a representation of the Orion constellation. The rainwater recovery system is deployed all around the building, covering horizontal loopholes positioned to match the spiral floor layout inside the nave. The three « light cannons » installed on the ridgepiece and on the western façade are a specific feature of Le Corbusier's architecture.

The church of Saint-Pierre in Firminy-Vert is a two-part building, comprising a base which enjoys a high level of exposure to light, aimed at guaranteeing maximum brightness within the building, coupled with a dense concrete shell.

Le Corbusier designed the lower part to house parish activities (meetings, catechesis, etc.) and related parish facilities. It is today home to the Interpretation Centre dedicated to Le Corbusier's work.

For its part, the upper section is entirely occupied by the nave, with two chapels : one for the weekdays with a secondary altar (entering from the left), and the other for Sunday worship with the high altar. The latter is connected to the ground by means of a white pillar, which is independent from the main framework of the building.

HOUSING UNIT

Jean-Jacques Gelbart © F.L.C./ADAGP (2016)



AMONG THE FIVE HOUSING UNITS ERECTED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD (MARSEILLE, REZÉ LES NANTES, BRIEY-EN-FÔRET, BERLIN), THAT OF FIRMINY WAS THE LAST TO BE BUILT. THIS UNIT IS THE FRUIT OF THE SECOND URBAN PLANNING PROGRAMME DESIGNED BY THE ARCHITECT AND EUGÈNE CLAUDIUS-PETIT. THIS PROGRAMME, WHICH ORIGINALLY PLANNED ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THREE UNITS, WAS UNFORTUNATELY NOT TOTALLY COMPLETED.

Started in 1965, the building was completed by André Wogenscky. It corresponds to the concept of the « vertical garden cities » and the « modern Charterhouse ». It includes numerous key features of Le Corbusier's architecture including : pilotis (concrete « stilts »), an open façade, an open floor plan, a sun shield and a rooftop terrace.

The use of pilotis makes it possible to free up space on the ground and maximises visual contact with the surrounding natural environment. The east/west direction of the façades is crucial to ensuring maximum exposure to sunshine for the apartments, all of which are split level with exception of the studio apartments.

The entire development was created based on the « Modulor » measurement system.

At 130.35 metres long, 21 metres wide and 56 metres high, this building includes 17 levels of flats. Seven inner streets serve the original 414 homes of various types. The school can be found on levels 18 and 19, and the rooftop terrace on level 20.

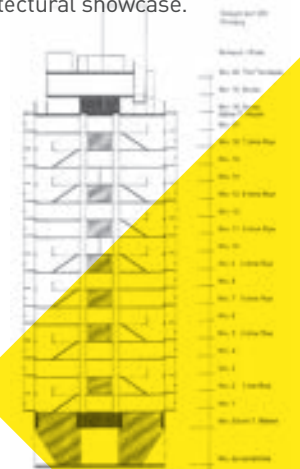
A restoration and renovation project has made it possible to reopen the northern third of the building, which was closed for 20 years. Today available as part of a joint

ownership scheme, the apartments have been enlarged, in order to better meet current requirements. For its part, the southern section remains the property of the Firminy public housing office.

The school closed in 1998 after 30 years' use. Of the three schools that Le Corbusier included as part of his project, this was the largest and without doubt the most successful.

Only the pilotis, the façades, the school and the terrace roof were listed as historical monuments in 1993. The show home has also been retained : it can today be admired as the architects originally knew it, both as a prototype and as an architectural showcase.

This building can only be visited with a guide.



Study of the Housing Unit ©Archives Municipales de Firminy

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

HOURS

**From 10am to 12.30am
and from 1.30pm to 6pm.**
Opening days can be found on
www.sitelecorbusier.com

PRICES

Entrance fee (Cultural Centre,
Stadium and Church) : 6,50€ / 5,50€/ /
free under 8.

Guided tours : from 4€ to 10€




Site entrance + guided tour(s) :
from 12€ to 17€

Children workshop : 5€

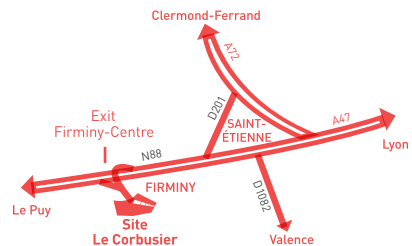
Discovery Pass
(site entrance + guided tour
of the Housing Unit) : 14€ / 12€

Le Corbusier Pass
(site entrance + 2 guided tours) :
17€ / 14,50€

ACCESS

-  **By train :** gare SNCF de Firminy (15 min)
-  **By bus :** ligne 1 Firminy/Saint-Étienne, stop « église Le Corbusier » (30 min)
-  **By car :** N88, exit Firminy-Centre, 2 parkings.

GPS address :
Boulevard Périphérique du Stade
42 700 Firminy



SITE LE CORBUSIER FIRMINY SAINT-ÉTIENNE MÉTROPOLE

www.sitelecorbusier.com
Tel: +33 (0)4 77 61 08 72

