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**AR. VISTASP
BHAGWAGAR'S
VERSATILE DESIGN
FOR MY SQUARE**

PLUS

- Sanjay Puri • Usha Rangarajan • Rajiv Kasat
- Tanveer Singh Ghadha & Darshleen Ghadha



STRIKING STRUCTURE

PUNE-BASED **AR. USHA RANGARAJAN** LAYS EMPHASIS ON NATURAL ELEMENTS AND SUBTLE COLOURS TO MAKE **SKF'S** CORPORATE OFFICE AN INVITING WORKPLACE.

Text: Swati Balgi

Photographs: Anand Diwadkar

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hat does a sustainable workplace of the 21st century look like? Does it need to have a prescribed look and feel? Not necessarily. The new **SKF headquarters** in Pune proves that sustainable workplace interiors can be modern and beautiful yet use of colour sparingly and strategically—can be striking.

SKF is a leading global technology provider since 1907 with its global headquarters in Sweden. SKF has continued to prosper in its Pune headquarters over the years. With its progressive growth, they realised the need for a bigger facility. They roped in **Ar. Usha Rangarajan**, Principal Architect, **Landmark Design Group** to develop a design that would achieve sustainability through simple, sensible design and create a work environment that would be open and nurture a sense of community and belonging.

Note the naturally-ventilated landscaped central atrium that forms the spine of the building.





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The reception area is an open, centrally located double-height space seamlessly connected to the landscaped atrium.

3

The sleek and contemporary director's lounge area.

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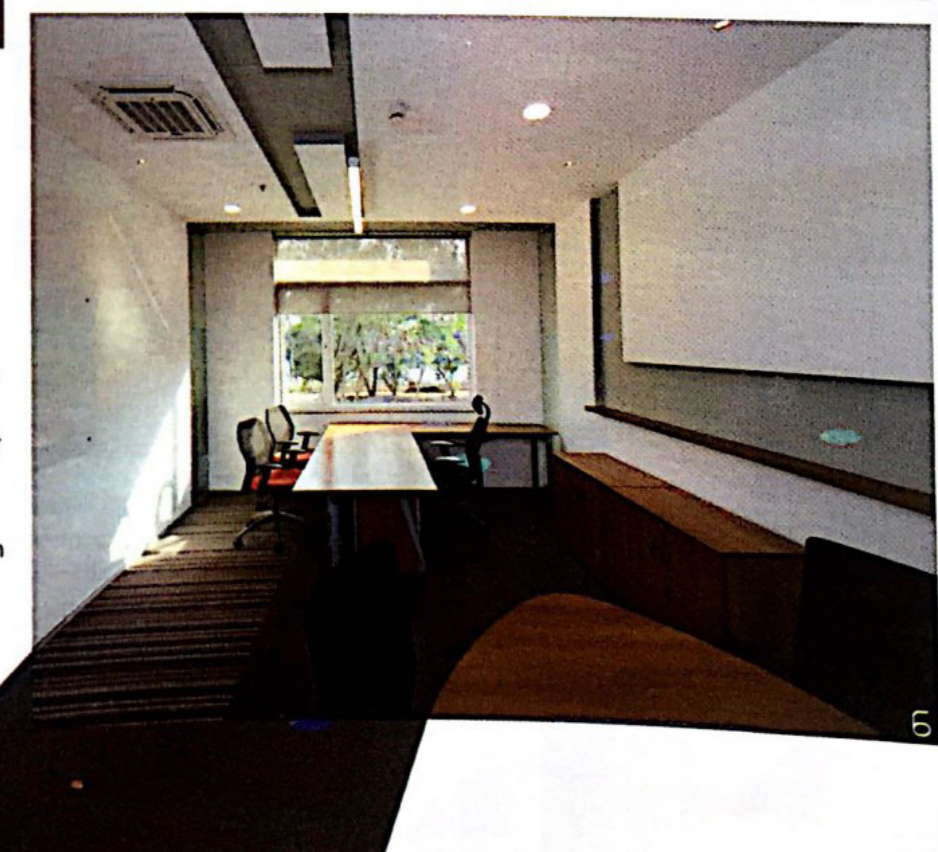
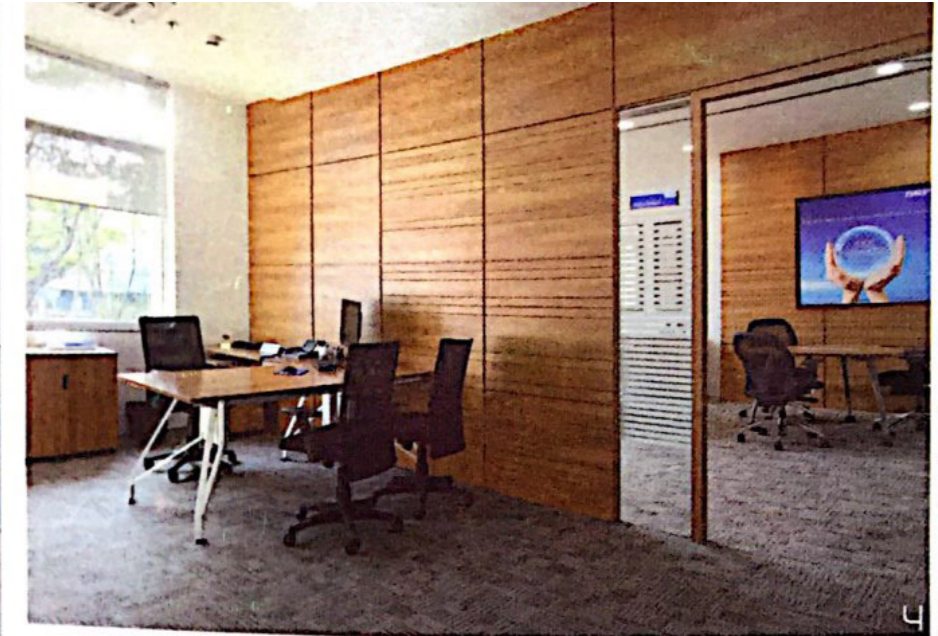
Note the compact and functionally-efficient secretary's cabin just outside the MD cabin.

5

The technologically-advanced boardroom.

6

One of the director's cabin with modular desks and a meeting table.



The site located in Chinchwad, Pune, has an extensive tree cover and wild vegetation. The architect has responsibly integrated the structure with the natural lush surrounding. The architect has also stringently followed other sustainable norms in order to acquire a LEED Platinum certification.

Spread over an area of 37,640 sq. ft., the building is designed as a low-slung ground plus one structure. Keeping the functionality of the office, space planning played a vital role. The ground floor has the reception area, purchase area, HR facility and administration office. This floor also has other interactive zones like visitor meeting rooms, canteen and experience zone. The first floor has functional areas for the finance, business excellence and development teams as well as offices of the Managing Director and other Directors, board room, lounge and a breakout area.

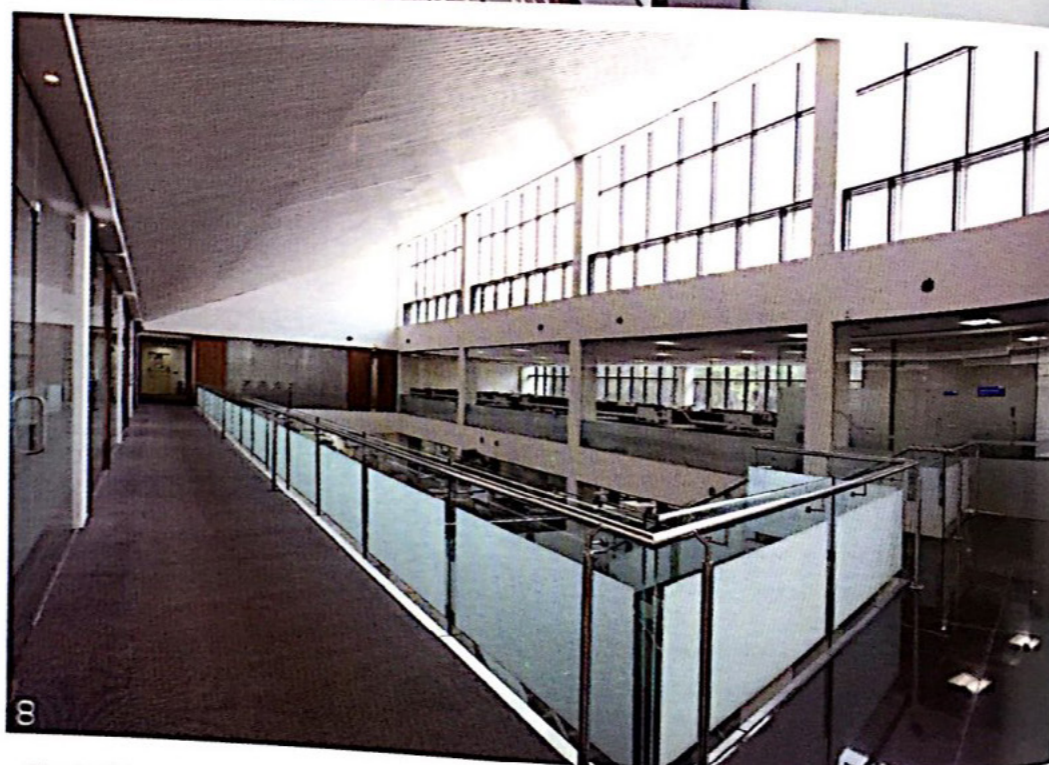


7
The full-length windows visually connect to the outdoor greenery.

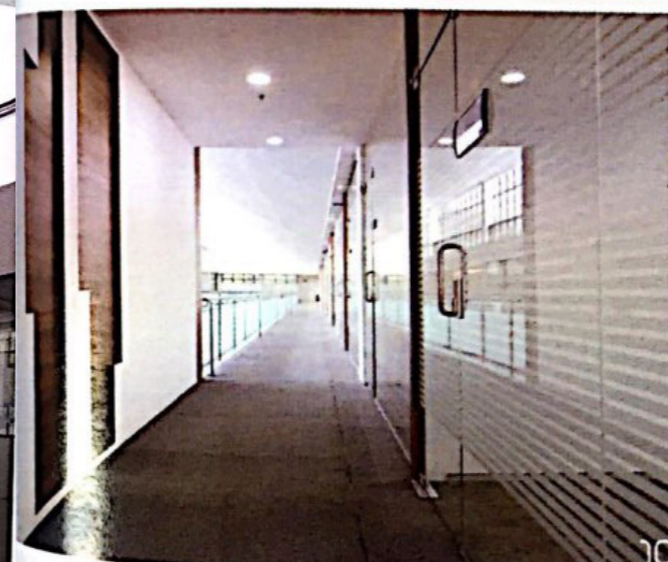
8
Note the connecting passage that overlooks the atrium.



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The building is designed to accommodate nine members of the central management team, 13 senior managers and around 180 management employees. Speaking about the space planning and her quest to follow the greens norms, Usha says, "The design was conceptualised keeping the topography in mind and also other factors like the site conditions, environmental factors, and workplace requirements. We have consciously strived for a climate-responsive design. By employing the principles of solar-passive architecture, several qualitative goals too were achieved."

With the aim of reducing heat gain of the building, it is oriented on an East-West axis with longer North and South façades, thus, drastically reducing the cooling load. This also facilitates the provision of large openings on the North, allowing daylight into the work spaces as well as enabling a sweeping view of the landscape.

Explaining the concept further, Usha informs, "In order to flood the interior spaces with natural light we created a naturally-ventilated landscaped central atrium. This forms the spine of the building, enabling visual linkage with natural landscape not only outside, but indoors as well. In place of a skylight, which would have led to the ingress of direct solar radiation and heat, a ventilated north-light glazing is provided. The circular form is evidently an important shape for this company, a world-leader in the manufacture of bearings. Water bodies in circular form help bind together the exterior and interior landscapes."

9
Note the functional MD's cabin with modular furniture and a small meeting table.

10 & 11
The passage area which further connects to other important areas.



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12
The view of the atrium.

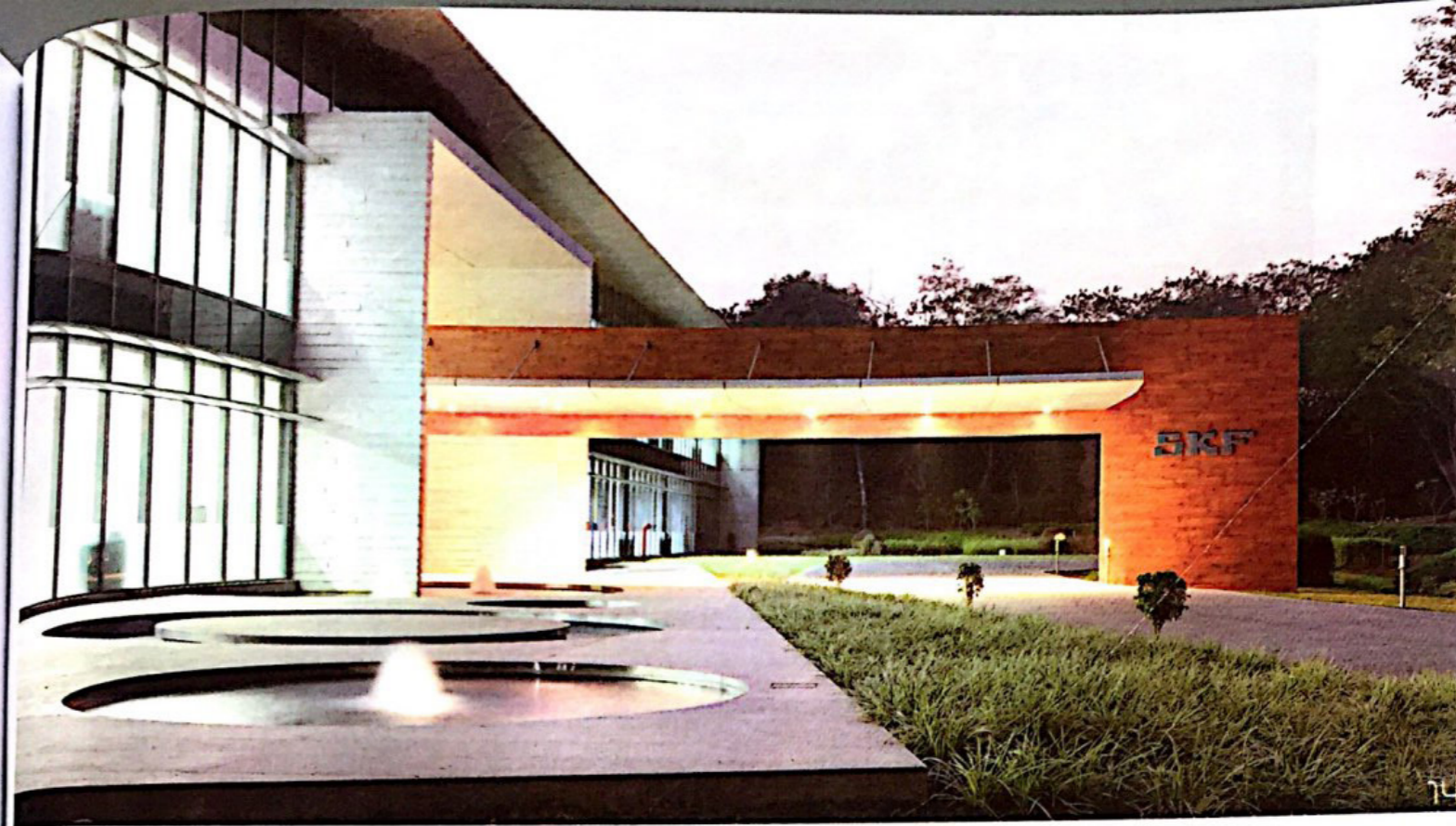


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13
The atrium also serves as a walk-through experience zone, showcasing the SKF products.

The atrium also serves as a walk-through experience zone, showcasing the applications of SKF's technology in almost all facets of daily life. Visitor meeting rooms are located near the reception area and also at each department. The reception area is an open, centrally located double-height space fronting onto the entrance porch and flowing into the landscaped atrium. This space, with its matte-finished granite floor and black and white furniture in linear forms, is minimal in design and in congruence with the rest of the interior spaces.

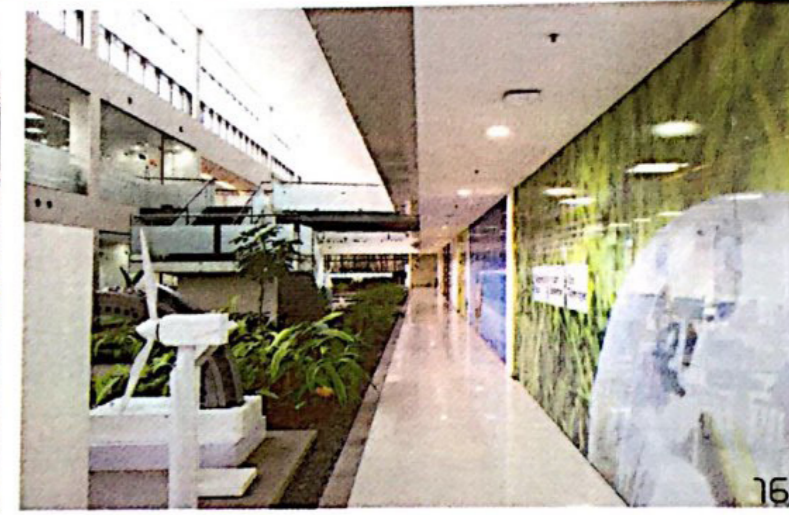
The work zones are designed to be functional with specific, yet modular furniture. With an open plan layout and sleek and light modular workstations, glass is used extensively to ensure transparency. While the departments are housed separately, they are visually connected to each other, reinforcing the spirit of being part of one team.



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The modern and striking façade of the building.

15 & 16
Another view of the passage which overlooks the atrium.

The large first floor has north-facing blocks that have a better quality of daylight and more views, hence this space has more number of work zones, whereas the south facing block accommodates the senior management. Each work zone links with the atrium landscape on one side and outdoor landscape on the other. Cabins for the senior management are spacious, yet minimalistic. Modular desks and meeting tables are provided. Individual control over lighting, ventilation and visual connectivity is enabled. Being located on the southern façade, the exterior walls are constructed as cavity walls and smaller double glazed windows are provided to minimise heat gain.

The SKF campus is now transformed into one of the most beautiful workspaces in the city — a welcome respite from typical glass façade buildings. This office truly reflects the creative and sophisticated image of the company. ■



AR. USHA RANGARAJAN

Landmark Design Group handles a diverse portfolio like Architecture, Interior Design, Engineering and 3D visualizing. Over the years they have designed private residences, institutes, commercial architecture and interiors. They have designed the New Administrative building for Pimpri- Chinchwad New Town Development Authority, to name a few.

LANDMARK DESIGN GROUP
Nigdi
Pune 411044
020 27653550 / 5659