

Competition Zitha Senior, Capellen (LUX)

project **Collection of urban planning ideas for senior living construction** client **Zitha Senior, Luxemburg (LUX)** conception **WW +, Esch-sur-Alzette/Trier (LUX/GER)** total gfa **17.170 m²**
gfa-living **3.000 m²** gfa-nursing building **14.170 m²** gv **62.440 m³** number of apartments **31**
number of care rooms **100** competition phase **10/2014 - 12/2014** multiple commission **2nd prize**

„Good architecture lives off tension, harmony and appropriate modesty. It should radiate a breath of implicitness and always be guided by the essence of man.“

Norman Heibrodt

The challenge of the task at hand consists in integrating the architecture into the urban fabric. Various surrounding existing buildings engage in a dialogue with one another, thereby revealing the tension between remaining loyal to an architectonic style and adapting the past to the requirements of the present in the planning area. The development of this project must take into account the context. And at the same time, it must add value and enhance quality of life. Alongside other interdisciplinary considerations from the sociological and socio-demographic arenas, these parameters are integrated into the urban planning and architectonic concept of the new construction of the Zitha Senior building.

Genius Loci

The Zitha Senior area is located on what is from an urban planning point of view a striking site between an urban intersection point (Route d'Arlon/Route d'Olm) and an extensive open space. Despite its location between two heavy-traffic roads, our design places an urban planning emphasis on the town centre of Capellen:

Within the area, identification and reference points as well as urban features from the neighbouring built-up structures are incorporated in order to create references and to generate a harmonious integration in the urban space. An upgrade of the surrounding public space as well as a sustainable networking of the closer surroundings are positive effects of the connection to existing reference perimeters of the buildings already present. Through developing and reinforcing the greater connecting axis between town and nature, the abutment onto valuable green space is felt in every living aspect in the new residential and nursing buildings with the integration with the existing buildings. Through the development of an own centre, the new town building block emanates in all directions and with its openness encourages dialogue with the urban space.

Urban planning concept

The urban planning concept foresees two linear shapes, which follow the contour lines of both Route d'Arlon and Route d'Olm and place particular emphasis on harmoniously blending into the existing structures. In the overall structure, the nursing and therapy building on Route d'Arlon caves under tension in order to create a passage to the apartment building on Route d'Olm. The resulting space in between marks the entrance to the inner courtyard and the underground parking lot. The ground floor of the nursing and therapy building houses - in addition to the care facility rooms - public facilities such as a restaurant/bistro and a reception area with lobby, while the upper floors accommodate exclusively nursing and therapy rooms. The apartment building is used for private residential purposes. Within the urban space, the multi-storey buildings with their differing heights form a distinctive landmark that speaks a uniform language.

A configuration has been created that provides its users and residents with a clear structure and orientation. At the same time, openness and transparency are created through the targeted use of material, light and openings.





Access

The public access to the quarter is marked by a generous gap within the building composition. From here the open inner courtyard is accessed, which - due to its distinctive and inviting character and the fact that it has retained the existing fountain - becomes the quarter's central meeting point and at the same time represents an important communication area, via which all other areas can be accessed. It also connects with the access areas to the existing nurses' home and the nursing and therapy building. The apartment building is accessed from Route d'Olm and opens up to the inner courtyard via a ground-floor community area.

In the Route d'Arlon/Route d'Olm intersection area, adjacent to the central inner courtyard, an urban forecourt is created, which forms an important access to the new building block and which will be brought to life through adjacent public, social and commercial pursuits on the ground floor. This place forms the new interface between the new and existing structures and has consequently been designed to be generously open and inviting.

The outdoor and open spaces offer nuanced and diverse spatial qualities alongside the right balance between public, shared and private surfaces. In this, a desire for privacy and a desire for communication and interaction are not mutually exclusive. A friendly and warm atmosphere is created in the public communal areas, encouraging people to linger and relax. The building composition is accessed by a continuous pathway and connected to the surrounding urban and nature space.

Functional Solution

The emphasis of the buildings is focused on the target group orientation of the nursing and therapy area with the creation of a residential housing supply for individuals in their third stage of life. To implement the defined space allocation and the resulting building volumes, a partial change of the PAG currently in force will be required, since according to current regulations only small-scale development is permitted. The objective is to safeguard the interests of long-established residents from neighbouring properties, while also canvassing new residents, who previously were unable to benefit from an appropriate housing supply in the urban space. This will lead to a networking between the planned buildings and the adjacent residential quarter. The structure and the system of the two buildings provide an opportunity to adapt to changing life circumstances and to take advantage of synergies.

All the residential units enjoy an outdoor view thanks to generous windows and benefit from natural daylight all day long, resulting in a light and friendly atmosphere in all the rooms. The architecture of the half-timbered buildings is characterised by a subtly moving form, ceiling-height windows and large loggias, which shape the building articulation. The result: a modern façade that makes an impression in a contemporary urban development.

