



### housing seestadt aspern

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## HOUSING SEESTADT ASPERN

Housing in collaboration with querkraft architekten

Vienna, Austria 2011-2015

Client: EBG Gemeinnützige Ein- und Mehrfamilienhäuser Baugenossenschaft reg. Gen.M.b.H, Vienna

Gross floor area: 19,600 m<sup>2</sup> above ground level

A sequence of parallel building volumes differentiated in terms of scale utilises the large building plot D12 in the south-eastern part of the Seestadt Aspern. The complex with a total of 213 apartments and eight shops apparently consists of a group of clearly recognisable individual timber houses in the form of slender, compact individual volumes.

The staggered layout creates different kinds of courtyard-like spaces and a variety of visual relationships.

The various parts are connected to each other by three rows of access decks that run in a north-south direction. These three circulation routes offer a varied spatial experience provided by a sequence of light-flooded staircases, internal corridors and open access decks onto which communal terraces are docked. The serial, linear basic structure offers great flexibility in laying out very different types of apartment and consequently allows a good mix of residents. The apartment floor plans are conceived flexibly. They can be altered later in a variety of ways. Although they have an excellent energy balance the buildings still open generously to the outside. Combined with the use of timber as a construction material this gives the entire complex both lightness and depth.

Further enquiries | Press enquiries please contact: T

+43-1-548 77 11 33

E [public@querkraft.at](mailto:public@querkraft.at)

## **Articulation**

The housing complex is articulated into seven building parts ranging in height from four to seven floors above ground level and an underground garage. The strong articulation of the building volumes creates a lively, south-facing open space that offers a variety of spatial relationships. The inner courtyard is a semi-public zone that forms the common heart (canyon) of the complex, which is connected to the pedestrian zone and is surrounded at ground floor level by the communal rooms.

The edges of the ground floor zone are formed by a two-storey multi-functional ring, which incorporates commercial uses, communal spaces and studio apartments. The maisonette units in the plinth zone, which are moved back three metres from the road, provide space for a wide variety of options; a flowing and reversible change from office to residential use is possible.

## **Landscape and Space**

What is known as the canyon, an area with several changes of level and seating steps at the heart of the complex, offers all the residents an opportunity to meet there and experience community. It serves as an encounter space and a playing area for young people. At places the wooden cladding lining the walls of the ramp grows out of the wall and forms sloping surfaces to lean against or clamber up. Large horizontal surfaces are connected with the wall and form areas to lie on or to use in different ways.

Together with a number of grassy hillocks wing-shaped terraces that deliberately project into the middle of the central courtyard form an organic landscape. Hills, trees and shrubs with small crowns

## **Structure and Ecology**

The highly insulated external walls are built of wood. These prefabricated wooden walls are produced in the factory at an ensured high level of quality using native wood and wood-based materials, with stone wool as insulation. In the façades wood is evident in the form of larch boarding. The party walls and internal partition walls were also produced in the factory, where they were prepared to accommodate the building services. Thanks to the high level of prefabrication and speedy assembly on site the impact on the environment as well as the amount of noise, dust and fumes can be minimised.

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The concrete frame allows freedom in designing the façade and permanent flexibility in the floor plans. All the ducts are concentrated in a clearly defined zone of ancillary spaces beside the circulation. The central positioning of the services shaft allows the apartment types to be mirrored from floor to floor. The appearance of the façade is structured by projecting prefabricated loggias and balconies; the façade develops into a freely played game.

## **Elements**

The consistent use of industrially prefabricated building and construction elements offers materials and surfaces of high quality while also enabling the construction period to be kept extremely short. The combination of structural precast reinforced concrete with timber construction elements as infill combines the demands of fire protection with an economical building method.

**querkraft architects**

The Vienna-based architecture office querkraft was founded in 1998. Around 100 projects, competition entries and buildings in Austria and abroad provide ample evidence of the successful work by this team that currently comprises around 45 staff members. The mission statement formulated by querkraft is “giving people space”, which expresses a constant striving for generosity in the field of spatial design and for the kind of freedom that facilitates users’ personal development. In the area of housing, in particular, querkraft has realised many projects that embody this philosophy of poetic pragmatism. Office and museum buildings or projects in public space are also a fixed part of the work of querkraft as is shown by, for instance, the Liaunig Museum in Carinthia, which has already been placed under monument protection. querkraft have received numerous sustainability awards for the first car-free IKEA in Vienna and the Austrian pavilion for the world Expo in Dubai. Respect, friendliness and joy in the work are the credo of Jakob Dunkl, Gerd Erhardt, Peter Sapp and their team.

**Awards (extract)**

Short List “EU prize for contemporary architecture - Mies van der Rohe Awards” – IKEA Wien Westbahnhof  
 global architecture & design award – Taborama, residential high rise  
 Stateprize Architektur – IKEA Wien Westbahnhof  
 BHP23 nomination – HAK municipal building  
 European Property Award – ML museum Liaunig, IKEA Wien Westbahnhof  
 Fiabci Prix D'Excellence Gold-Winner – IKEA Wien Westbahnhof  
 gebaut 2022 – HAK municipal building  
 Austria Green Planet Building Award – EXPO Pavilion  
 Rethinking the Future Award – IKEA Vienna western-station  
 German Design Award ‘architecture’ / ‘eco design’ / ‘conceptual architecture’ –  
 BAT residential high rise / EXPO Pavilion / IKEA Vienna western-station  
 AIT award education for school campus Friedrich Fexer  
 Stateprize for Architecture & Sustainability 2013 for the apartment building U31  
 nomination - International Highrise Prize for Citygate Tower

**Current Projects**

RLBK Raiffeisen State Bank Kärnten – wooden construction, Klagenfurt, AUT; NBH8 Taborama Residential Highrise , Vienna, AT; ING - The Museum of Concrete Art Ingolstadt, GER; HOS - University campus and House of Schools Johannes Kepler University Linz, AUT; HAS – residential, Munich, GER; IKEA “the good neighbour” in Vienna, AUT; HAK municipal residential building Vienna, AUT; IWC – International Welcome-Center, Linz, AUT; Austrian EXPO Pavillon 2020/2021 Dubai, UAE;etc.

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