

ATELIER PRO

OPDRACHTGEVER
Thuisvester

PROJECT TYPE
architecture

KOSTEN
€ 1.986.966,-

PROJECT STATUS
completed

LOCATIE
Berghstraat
Achtmaal
Netherlands

FUNCTIES
education, public
building

3.000 m²

PERIODE
2011 - 2014



BEELD: DIRK VERWOERD

MULTIFUNCTIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL AND SENIORS' APARTMENTS ACHTMAAL

Achtmaal is a small regional centre in Noord-Brabant with approximately 1600 inhabitants. The municipality of Zundert, to which Achtmaal belongs, wanted to ensure that the centre remains attractive and liveable for both young and old in the future. In this way, good facilities play an important role, which explains why Achtmaal – which currently has a church, supermarket and cafe – commissioned a multipurpose community complex. A restricted multiple-stage tender was initiated for this purpose, which was won by atelier PRO.

The complex accommodates various social facilities including a community centre with library, sports hall, primary school and day care centre. Besides the multipurpose complex, five seniors residences will be built on the site of the old community centre. The project is implemented in phases to ensure that the community centre only needed to move premises once.

The opportunities of sharing / EDUCATION, PUBLIC BUILDING

The ambitious plans for programming had to be balanced with both the limited space and budget available. The relationship

between the school, community centre and child care centre has more potential than the different users just being physical neighbours. The design process was utilised to investigate the opportunities and challenges of sharing a building, to ensure that every user's needs and concerns were addressed. Together with the project group, we researched how the use of space could be maximised. The sports hall doubles as the festivities hall during the bloemenkorso, an annual flower parade; during the week the stage in the sports hall is used as a group space by the day care centre; a section of the sports hall can be separated to become play space; and various spaces in the school can be used for meetings and music rehearsals. In the evenings, the school staff toilets can be used by visitors from the community centre.

Zoning and logistics

The multipurpose community complex is zoned to accommodate the varying users' needs. The complex has three entrances: the lower and upper class groups each have their own entrance from the playground on the west side of the building. The community centre has a separate entrance on the east side of the building near the town's main street where the church, cafe and supermarket are also located. A circulation zone spans the length of the whole building on both ground and first floor, connecting the different functions in the building.

Scale and connection with the surroundings

The buildings are characterised by a small scale with a height of one or two storeys with a pitched roof. Almost all the dwellings are semi-detached with a front and back garden

ONTWERPTEAM

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PROJECTTEAM

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and roof parallel to the street. The complex and dwellings are designed to connect with the surroundings. The sports hall is concealed on the rear side, the dwellings and complex have sloped roofs to reflect the surrounding houses in the neighbourhood, and the long volume of the complex is interrupted by placing lowered sections and several large framed openings along the building. The typically Achttmaal hedges border the front garden and footpath.

Architecture and materialisation

The municipality specified several aesthetic conditions for the architecture of the complex:

- A rhythmic quality in the masonry piers
- Masonry exterior
- Focus on the entrance
- White highlights
- Plinth

Atelier PRO contributed two conditions:

- Pitched roofs that slope parallel to the street
- Modern architecture with attention to detail and scale

Examples of the last point include the sections of vertical masonry and uniform, flush appearance of the roof edge. Gutters are concealed so that, despite having a more traditional pitched roof, the building still has a refined and modern appearance. The combination of brown, anthracite and white bricks complement both the anthracite colour of the roof as well as the white openings. The plinth is distinguished through using a darker grout.

All in all, Achttmaal gains a multipurpose community complex that has a characteristic appearance and unique function, and simultaneously blends into the surroundings. It's a valuable meeting place for a village where everyone knows one another.