

View from Snouckaertlaan; additional volume on the southern side gives the building a presence on the Snouckaertlaan. The inside facades of the building have been “softened” with a colonnade towards the garden.



INTRODUCTION

The impressive post-war modernist Otto Scheltusflat might be outdated in terms of thermal comfort, outdated floor plans and foremost its awkward position within its urban fabric but it is an amazing framework to build upon. Our proposal aims to respect the building's structure and give it a new life by adding to and modernizing it. Only very precise cuts will be made within the existing structure minimizing demolition work and therefore not adding to the building's carbon footprint while revitalizing this large building complex.

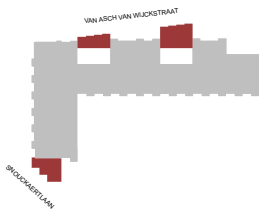
All the new elements will be prefabricated using bio-based materials such as cross laminated timber floors and walls, woodfibre insulation, wood cladding and wooden window frames.

The core principles that have shaped our proposal:

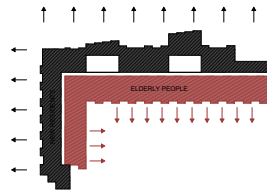
- No buildings or building parts will be demolished
- New additions to the building are 100% bio-based and climate positive
- Damp open bio-based insulation is applied on the inside of the existing structure to improve thermal comfort while respecting the building's architectural qualities
- New apartments have multiple orientations
- All apartments get generous outdoor spaces

RECONNECT THE CITY

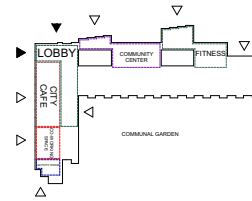
The current Otto Scheltusflat acts as a moat; cut away from the surrounding city. We start by levelling out the terrain to connect the building to the surrounding streets. We then add new volumes that act as puzzle pieces and connect the old building to the public space, by providing entrances and mediating between street-levels and the floor levels of the existing building. The friendly proportioned and transparent additions reach out to the sidewalks welcoming passers-by and offer a new range of public functions: such as a café with co-working space, community center, fitness and activity room. By positioning the main entrance of the building at the intersection of the Snouckaertlaan and Van Asch van Wijckstraat the anonymous building comes to life and creates a lively pivoting point in its urban context. Since the main entrance will be directly connected to the café it will act as a link between residents and visitors. The terrace of the café will activate the sidewalk, creating a pleasant moment along the pedestrian route between the train station and city center. By articulating the corner of the building with an entrance canopy and a vertical articulation in the facade, the visually distinct timber additions and the high plinth of the building mark the



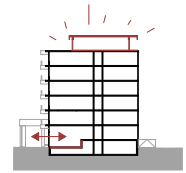
1. New additions link the building with the surrounding urban fabric



2. New residents are placed on the vibrant urban side of the complex while elderly people are oriented towards the peaceful courtyard



3. The main entrance lobby and all the (semi) public functions are placed on the urban side of the complex facing the Snouckaertlaan and Van Asch van Wijckstraat



4. A new top floor crowns the complex. Precise cuts in the ground floor connect the building with the adjacent streets

pedestrian route towards the city center and make the building act as a welcoming stepping stone on the route from train to shops.

RESHAPE URBAN CONTEXT

The L-shape of the Otto Scheltusflat creates an 'outside' condition on the Snouckaertlaan and Van Asch van Wijckstraat and an 'inside' condition on the Burgemeester de Widtstraat. These two characters complement each other: an urban and vibrant city life on the outside and a calm, more secluded and green character for the inside, the courtyard. Two new volumes on the Van Asch van Wijckstraat step forward to connect to the sidewalk and frame the street profile while activating street life. The current pit between street and building will be filled with soil from the new underground parking thereby levelling out the height differences between street and building. The Onze Lieve Vrouwentoren is clearly an important visual landmark and helps people navigate from train station to city center. But its role should not be overestimated. While walking from the train station we experienced that the church tower is only visible from very specific locations but is often blocked by other buildings and trees. In our proposal the tower will be visible while walking on the sunny north side of the Van Asch van Wijckstraat but we decided it is not worth to demolish parts of the Otto Scheltusflat in order to get a limited view of the tower. Instead we decided to articulate the architecture of the existing building and its new additions in such a way that the building becomes a visual anchor point in itself and can act as stepping stone from train station to center. We therefore amplify the original rhythmic facade by bringing in more depth in the facade (removing the winter gardens) and articulating the cantilevered beams. The rational architecture of the new timber additions harmonizes with the existing modernist building but are clearly rooted in our time with the advanced timber structure.

INNOVATIVE RESIDENTIAL CONCEPTS

We propose a very diverse mix of apartment typologies. We believe in buildings which cater to different users to create a vibrant internal community. A mix of typologies ranging from studios for starters to multiple bedroom apartments for young families on the "outside" of the building and elderly housing on the "inside" of the building. The corridor will act as a shared collective space and buffer zone between these two user groups.

The existing apartments facing the courtyard have been transformed and are designated for the elderly (A1). The narrow surface balcony, which served to clean the windows, is extended to a spacious terrace. The balcony extends beyond the wintergarden, retaining the stepped rhythm in the facade. A large bathroom directly accessible from the apartment's entrance (easy for care workers) and directly accessible from the bedroom ensures that people with an intensive care demand can live here comfortably. Big sliding doors connect the bedroom with the living room creating a pleasant home also for people that spend more time than average in bed.

The lower four-story building is crowned with a row of new penthouses (A3 and A4) which target

elderly couples with a bigger budget. The gallery access provides a double orientation for the apartments bringing in light from northwest and southeast. The apartments have a square floorplan with entrance, toilet, bathroom and study/spare bedroom on the gallery side and a sunny living room with dining area and sitting area, one or two balconies and a well proportioned bedroom on the southeast side.

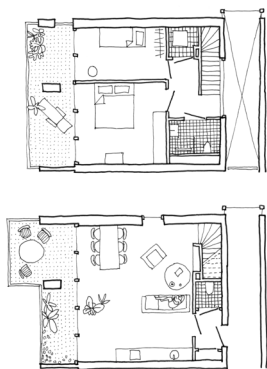
The new typologies that are proposed on the outside of the L shaped complex provide apartments for other target groups: starters, young families and a small number of bigger apartments for families with a bigger budget .

On the side of the Van Asch van Wijckstraat a new type of apartments is created that bridge both the existing and new volumes (B6, B7, B8 and B9). Since these apartments wrap around the newly created courtyards they will be flooded with daylight from three sides. These large two- and three bedroom apartments are intended for families with a higher income. The living area is spread out over the two shifted rectangles of the floor plan creating interesting spatial qualities and providing abundant space for families.

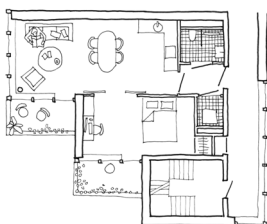
Within the corner of the existing building we introduce three special maisonette apartments (B4) for young families with spacious balconies on each floor.

On the side of the Snouckaertlaan we create thirty compact starter apartments (B1). The apartments are organized over two bays: a wider bay with kitchen, dining area and sitting area and a smaller bay with bathroom, bedroom and a deep balcony which can be accessed from the living room.

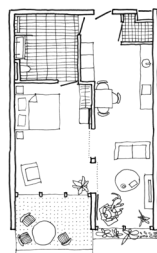
On top of the main building a row of four penthouses (B10) is added which can be accessed via a gallery that is connected to two staircases and an elevator. These compact starter apartments have a similar floorplan to the other thirty apartments although the gallery allows for a double orientation bringing in direct daylight from the northeast into the kitchen area. In this row of penthouses one smaller unit with a grand view is proposed as a guest room which can be used by the resident's guest.



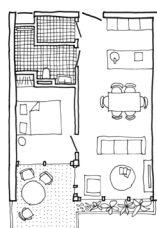
B4



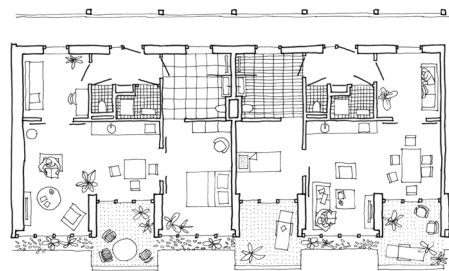
B5



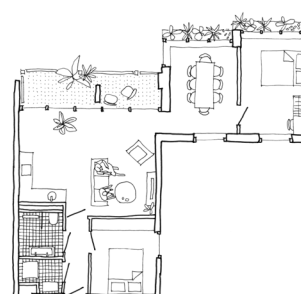
A1



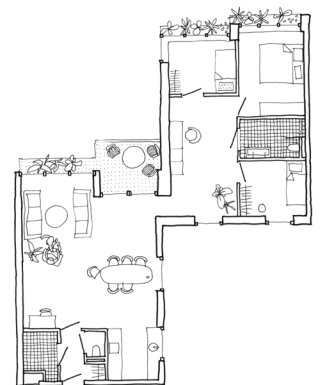
B1



A3



B6



B8

Finally, on the southeast end of the existing building a new extension will be made housing 5 apartments (B5) and a staircase. The stepped facade of this extension allows for an oblique orientation of these generous one bedroom apartments organized over two bays. The deepest bay houses the bathroom, kitchen, dining area and sitting area, the other bay accommodates the bedroom. Two balconies provide generous outdoor spaces that visually extend both the living room and the bedroom.

VIBRANT STREET LIFE

An important opportunity lies within the plinth of the building, reconnecting city and building, visitors and residents and thereby energizing the neighborhood and articulating the pedestrian route between train station and city center.

The ground floor will have a semi-public character linking urban life with private life, elderly with younger aged people and residents with visitors. A balanced program of semi-public amenities carefully spread out over the floor plan creates a vibrant environment. Directly linked to the entrance lobby the city café is placed within the existing building facing the Snouckaertlaan and spreading out with a lively terrace towards the sidewalk of the Snouckaertlaan providing an inviting and cosy atmosphere to pedestrians and other passers by on their way towards the historic center of Amersfoort. A co-working space is placed next to the café and can be entered both from the café as from the new timber extension on the southeast end of the building.

We propose to bring the main entrance of the complex to the corner of the L-shaped building to activate the intersection of the Van Asch van Wijckstraat and Snouckaertlaan.

Two new volumes on the side of the Van Asch van Wijckstraat create entrances for a community room and a fitness center. Both functions extend within the existing building and can also be accessed from inside the building enhancing residents' comfort and creating a vibrant urban environment.

Very important for a good link between building and city is how to link the different terrain levels to the buildings floor levels. Within the existing building we have lowered the ground floor on some very specific segments: at the main entrance in the corner of the building and at the entrances of the city café creating an interesting spatial condition with high floor to ceiling measurements. Additionally the newly built timber volumes bridge the gap between street level and ground floor and create a new connection between city and building.

COHESIVE INNER COURTYARD

Currently the inner courtyard is dominated by cars. Potentially a one story basement car park (36 places or 32 if the tree on the project site is retained) could be added that can be accessed on the east side via the Burgemeester De Widtstraat. On top of this car park a lush green vegetable and herb garden and small orchard is proposed which could provide for the kitchen of the city café and could take an important role in neighborhood activities organized by the community center in our complex. Cars that leave the underground car park will drive eastwards via the Burgemeester De Widtstraat. Only pedestrians, cyclists and emergency traffic is allowed on the rest of the Burgemeester de Widtstraat creating a pleasant area which can be enjoyed and used by people working in the offices around the area and residents living nearby. A second additional underground or semi-underground car park could be added on the south east side of our strategic side: accessed via the Snouckaertlaan 5 and the new building 'Sophie'. By adding a colonnade to the courtyard facade a new pleasant scale is introduced while providing a comfortable shaded outdoor space to enjoy. The proportions of the colonnade are carefully dimensioned to bring in the low positioned winter sun while blocking direct sunlight during summertime. The intimate secluded character of this courtyard will provide a welcoming visual backdrop to the apartments for the elderly people and create a wonderful counterbalance to the vibrant urban life on the other side of the building.