

# Lohbach Multiple Independence

Innsbruck, Austria

2008

driendl\*architects

www.driendl.at

**Named after the river Inn** on which it lies, the city of Innsbruck, is the main conurbation in the Austrian Tyrol. To the north lie the Bavarian Alps, and to the south, the Oztal and Zillertal Alps. Within this western tail of the country, narrowed by mountains, Lohbach Multiple Independence provides a response to the rapidly increasing demand for affordable living space.

In the city of Innsbruck, urban planners considering expansion identified the need for a high density, high quality, social housing project. Innsbrucker Stadtbau GmbH (an agency of the city) in consultation with the local community, commissioned driendl architects to design the Lohbach scheme. The project will eventually include shopping facilities and a residence for senior citizens, as well as walkways connected to Innsbruck and the surrounding countryside.

The first phase of construction included 154 apartments for rental and ownership. The subsidised development consists of one six storey, and two seven storey buildings, on a single site with shared infrastructure (Fig.4).

Each of these buildings is both divided and connected down the centre line by an oval shaped, light filled atrium (Fig.6). This canyon contains the stairwells and bridged walkways which create an animated, transparent access to the individual residences (Fig.2, Fig.5, Fig.10). The open transitional zone divides each of the buildings into an East and a West Wing. The gentle gradients of the staircases are free from barriers and contain a continuous, tactile system to aid visually handicapped persons. The considered design facilitates a neighbourly social interaction between the residents.

**Population** | 119,249

**Coordinates** | 47° 16'N 11° 23'E

**Elevation** | 574 m (1,883 ft)

**Precipitation** | 94.7 mm (37.28 in.)

**Temperature** | Average High:  
14.3 C (57.7 F)  
Average Low:  
3.8 C (38.8 F)

**Humidity** | 71.7%





Fig. 3. above | Fig. 4. below

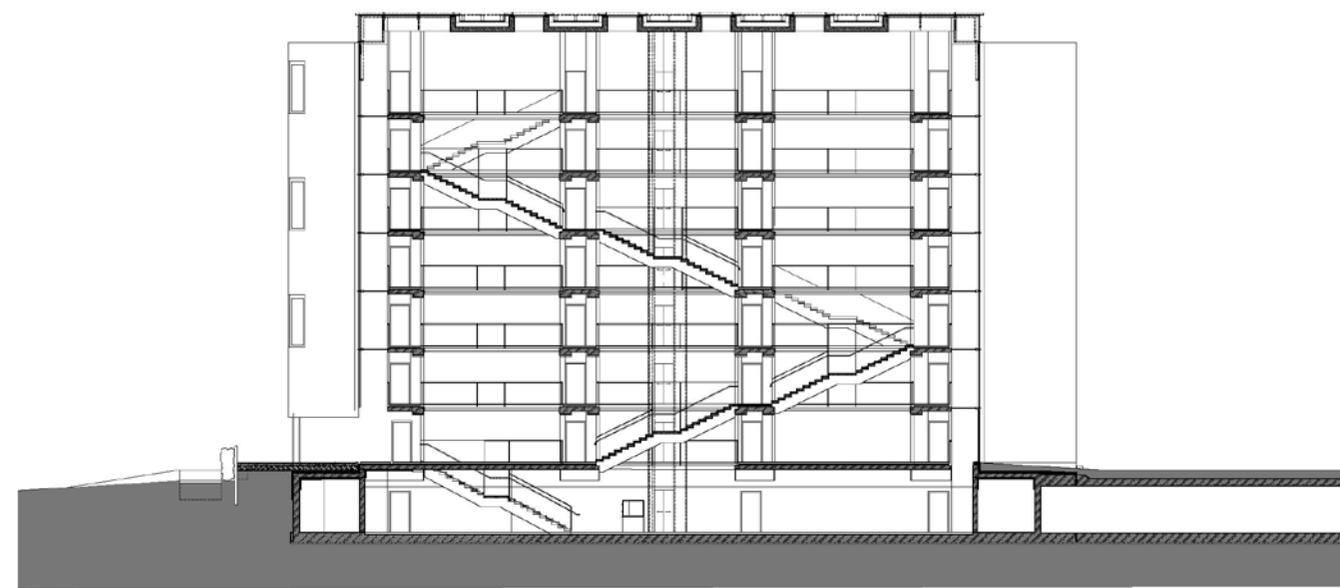
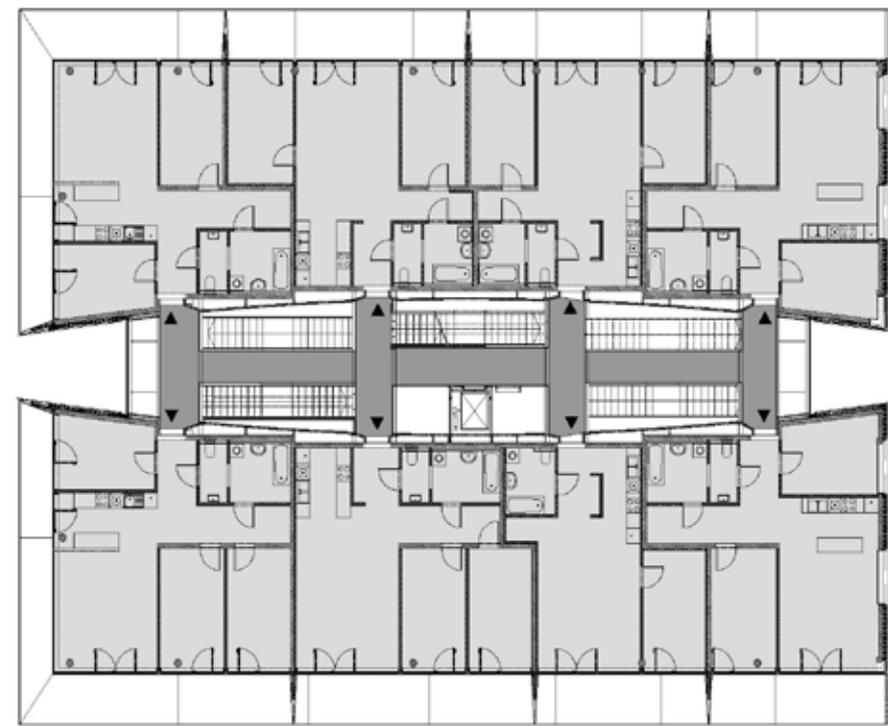
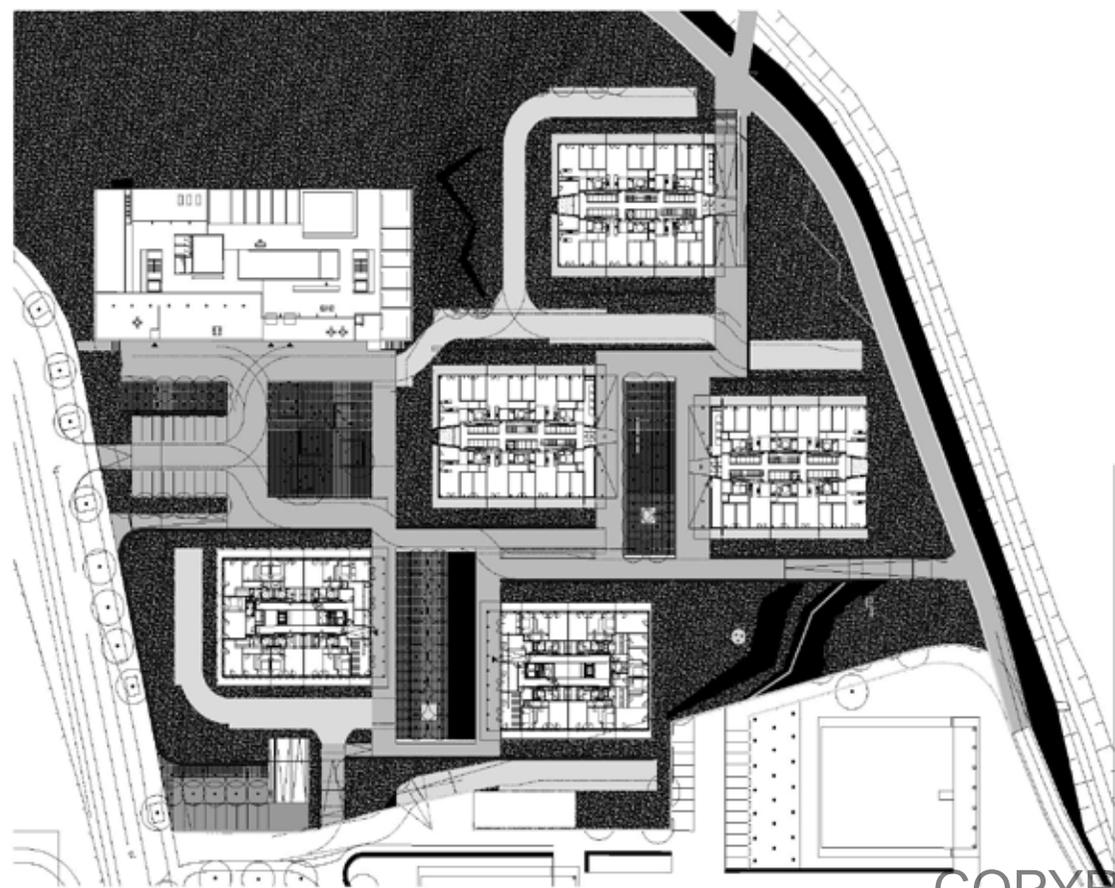


Fig. 5. above | Fig. 6. below



**The architects sought** to integrate and orientate the buildings to the spectacular surroundings which are seldom found directly in a city (Fig.7). All of the apartments face to the South, East and West. Full height glazed walls connect each living space to a 2 metre deep balcony running the full length of each unit (Fig.8, Fig.11). Each balcony is fitted with a room height, moveable, solar shade. The balconies are a continuation of the living space and are set at the same floor level to provide a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor living. These innovations allow the residents to connect with the outstanding scenery surrounding the city. The addition of the moveable shades enhances the privacy of the individual apartments. The independence and individuality of the residents was central to the aims of the design team. Economy and ecology were also high priorities in the design and construction. The units conform with low energy standards for high density housing. Roof mounted solar thermal units can

be adapted for water heating. Construction materials were carefully sourced with regard to environmental impact. The design of the staircases incorporates the service ducts carrying electrical power, water, heating and drainage systems. Access for maintenance and remedial work is gained from outside of the apartments, reducing inconvenience for residents. A further benefit of the stairwell atrium is that daylight penetrates right down to the basement level. This area contains a huge indoor playground provided for the use of the many children living in the building. Severe cold winters and heavy snowfall in Western Austria will often prevent outdoor activity for prolonged periods. The finished apartment complex also includes garaging. Lohbach Multiple Independent living fulfills the aspirations of social housing planners by putting the needs, and quality of life of the individual and collective inhabitants before the aesthetic of the building itself.





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