



January 2006

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FRANKFURT

Stefan Forster's mixed-use block for the city's new Westhafen district. Photos by Jean-Luc Valentin.

Westgarten is an angled six-storey corner building functioning as a link on the north-south axis between Westhafen and the Gutleut district to the north, writes *Stefan Forster*.

Beneath the L-shaped housing block, the site is completely covered by a supermarket whose roof forms the inner courtyard at first floor level. Flanked by three smaller shops, the super-

market has an unobtrusive presence in the facade. The diversity of the service offerings on the ground floor is the basis for a classic urban street-level zone.

Four stairwells are accessed directly from the street through 4.5m-high lobbies, serving three apartments per floor and forming a clear structure. The 70 apartments have consciously been given a conventional lay-

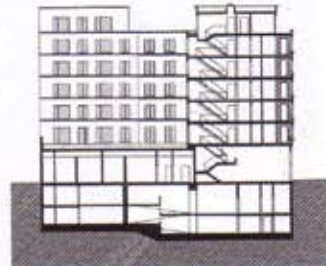
out, but have ceilings 2.7m high and room-length windows with glazing starting from sills 0.5m above floor level.

All apartments feature spacious loggias, a clear statement in favour of urban living. The apartments on the first floor also have private gardens on the courtyard side.

The elaborately profiled outer facade is in deliberate

contrast to the plainer courtyard elevations, with very high wooden windows and a clinker cladding on the street front. By consciously evoking the 1930s in formal terms, it reflects a wish to re-affirm the tradition of urban living, something that has sadly declined in Germany.

Below Ground and first floor plans; section showing underground parking on two levels beneath the supermarket.



Project team
 Architect: Stefan Forster Architekten;
 designers: Jelena Duchrow, Florian Kraft, Reinhardt Mayer, Christina Voigt, Nina Leypold; project partner: Karl Richter; structural engineer: Ingenieurbüro Kannemacher and Dr. Sturm; services engineer: Planungsbüro Bieger.