



Image 1: By dividing the town hall into two parts, the buildings fit into the small-scale structure of the town of Zell. Manufacturer Schörghuber supplied the doors.

Town hall in Zell (Mosel) **Minimal**

People living and working along the Moselle, having commissioned buildings such as the Zell town hall, have known for generations what sustainability means. You don't need to explain the issue to these guys. At the same time, an administrative building should convey a sense of openness, while also offering privacy. The Schörghuber acoustic-rated doors, most of which are room-high with fixed glazing elements, achieve just that at the town hall in Zell.

The “Moselaner” (as they call themselves) know a thing or two about sustainability. The Moselle, with its narrow bends and fluctuating water levels, its steep, sunlit slopes on both sides, and the people who live on the narrow stretches of riverbank, have spent centuries forming a system that can only survive if it is used sparingly and not overtaxed. There is little room for expansive architecture here. The steep slopes are far too fragile. What's more, as world-famous vineyards, they are far too valuable to simply be dug up. The winemakers' narrow houses nestle close to the vineyard of the “Schwarze Katz” site, so as not to lose a single square metre of valuable vineyard space.

High bottom section

The recurring flooding of the Moselle is also an integral part of life and local architecture here. The highest river levels can be easily read off at the historic town hall, and it was these markers that provided the essential design criterion for the newly built town hall just a few hundred metres away, which the Stuttgart-based firm wittfoht architekten had to adhere to.

Locals are well aware of the reason why the entrance to the town hall is not at ground and street level. Those who are just visiting, however, have to be told that the main entrance

is not on the upper floor for appearances' sake, having to be climbed via a staircase. Anyone who grew up on the Moselle also knows that it is impossible to control the river. You simply have to live with it – and in the case of the town hall, build an unusually high base storey. This means that even in the event of the dreaded flood of the century, the desks in the administrative offices will always remain dry. The only cars that will get wet are the ones in the underground car park, which is not very deep. Alternatively, the administrative offices can be accessed via the new town hall square, which is also situated at an unusually high level. This outdoor space has also created something that is generally a rarity in Zell: a public area.

No stand-alone architecture

The design by wittfoht architekten is not intended to be a stand-alone piece of architecture. It is designed to slot into the small town as best it can given the size of the building, but it also doesn't modestly hide away. In order to appear almost as small-scale as the surrounding buildings, the town hall is divided into two building structures. Like all the others, the eaves sides of both buildings face towards the street. And because the buildings in Zell have pitched roofs, the town hall also has two gable roofs. The building services were then also installed under the areas covered with PV shingles, which can cover 70 percent of the energy requirements, and are flood-proof.

Privacy

Data protection is of particular importance in German offices. Approximately 100 acoustic-rated doors in the town hall, which are up to 70 millimetres thick, dampen the sound by up to 42 decibels and ensure that any discussions cannot be heard outside of that room. As the building is open to the public, all doors are fitted with a composite latch to reduce noise. The architects' aim was to keep the design of the doors as simple as possible. Therefore, many of the doors are designed to be ceiling-high, for instance. Others have a transom panel that does not stand out and instead blends seamlessly into the overall appearance of the door assembly. A special feature is the flexible ceiling connection, enabling the door design to be room-high. This prevents compression of the doors when the ceiling bends. Schörghuber has been granted approval for its fire-retarding fire-rated doors T30. The doors are flush-closing. The edge recess is one of the most important details for architects. The door assembly surfaces are made of an oak veneer coated with a natural wood effect lacquer or, in the case of the toilet and ancillary room entrances, a white HPL coating. This adds to the calm, homogeneous appearance of the doors, which contrast nicely with the white plastered walls and the rough unplastered concrete ceilings. Another special feature includes the switches, some of which are integrated into the frame.



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Standard brush cleaning

The monolithic brickwork made of insulated bricks is also uniform. It was given a customary light brush cleaning, and its horizontal texture and two-tone colouring give it just the kind of sophisticated look that is appropriate for a public building in a small town at a time when money is tight. As world-famous as the vineyard town is as a tourist destination, there are just over 4000 people who live in the municipality, and fewer than 1500 in the actual town centre. A municipality in such a prominent location on the Moselle can only allow for architecture that will be around for our grandchildren to see, and that is sustainable in the best sense of the word.

(5413 characters incl. spaces)

Construction panel:

Location: Schlossstraße 69, Zell (Mosel), Germany

Building owner: Municipality of Zell (Mosel), Germany
Mayor: Jürgen Hoffmann / Office manager: Andreas Schorn / Project manager: Martin Steinmetz

Architect (design): wittfoht architekten bda, Stuttgart, Germany

Architect (construction): wittfoht architekten planung gmbh, Stuttgart, Germany

Construction supervision: Weltzel, Hardt + Partner, Trier, Germany

Gross floor area: 4350 m²

Completion: 2023

Photos: Laura Thiesbrummel, Munich, Germany

Processor: Peters, Sohren, Germany

Schörghuber products: acoustic-rated doors $R_w = 32$ dB with transom light and side element, acoustic-rated doors Access $R_w = 42$ dB with a single sealing level, composite timber doors, T30 fire-rated / smoke-tight doors, some versions with transom light and side element, solid timber frame with jamb cladding, edge recess version, rebated frames with jamb cladding, solid timber bolt for flexible ceiling connection



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Images and captions:



Image 2: Most of the room-high acoustic-rated doors from Schörghuber create an open feel and dampen the room sound by up to 42 decibels.



Image 3: The oak surface finish of the acoustic-rated doors gives the minimally designed rooms with unplastered concrete ceilings a warm feel.



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Image 4: Out of the ordinary: The bottom section is used to protect against flooding.



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Image 5: To get into the building, you have to climb a few metres.

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Image 6: Enclosed yet open: The entrance is fully glazed with a movable pane, allowing for more personal contact.



Image 7: The colour scheme of the municipal administration is muted. Furniture only adds a touch of colour here and there.



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Image 8: Only the doors to the wet rooms are not room-high.

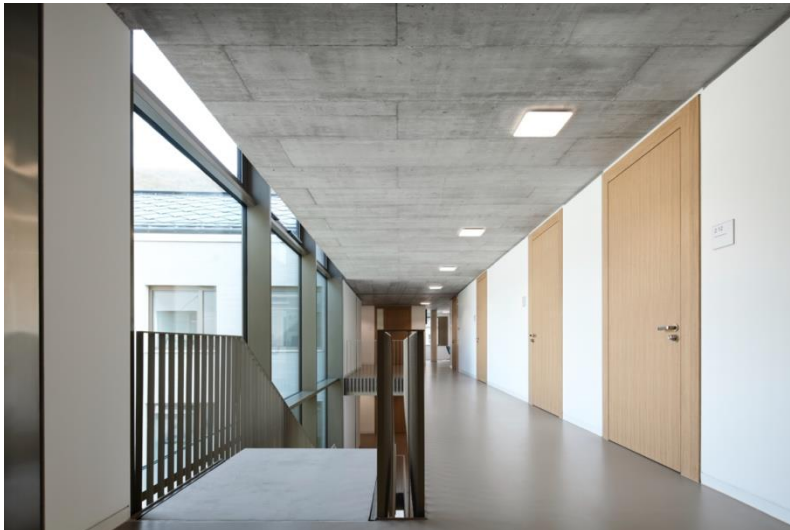


Image 9: Lights and timber doors create rhythm in the hallway.



Image 10: A flexible ceiling connection prevents compression when the ceiling bends.



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Image 11: Double-leaf acoustic-rated doors provide access to the meeting rooms.



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Image 12: Integrated switch boxes within the door frame.



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Image 13: The double-leaf door with a wide passage dimension can be opened so that many people can enter the room at the same time.

Photos: Schörghuber