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where landscape and community meet

A recently built housing development by young Indian architects Morphogenesis sets a bold new benchmark for contemporary housing in the city of Chandigarh.

Architect Morphogenesis
India

Marble Arch Housing





Marble Arch is a housing development located in Chandigarh on a 5.4 acre site along the periphery of the city. The objective of the project was to develop a new prototype for housing in Chandigarh as an entity to address issues of liveability, spatial configuration, environmental and social issues, while shifting away from the archetypal morphology of high specification residential modules and equipment crammed into an undersized apartment.

The client's brief called for the generation of maximum built-up area for residential accommodation. Working with imposed constraints, Morphogenesis was tasked with constructing a communal environment which would be versatile enough to accommodate the needs of each inhabitant. The spatial planning was generated by creating a pedestrian field for the apartments at the centre of the site whereby all vehicular movement was isolated to the periphery. The pedestrian field is then laid out with strips of defined functions in relation to residential facilities, services, and recreation areas flowing from the east to the west, enabling each apartment to be developed in alignment with optimum north-south orientation. This layout also allows for ample natural daylight and ventilation.

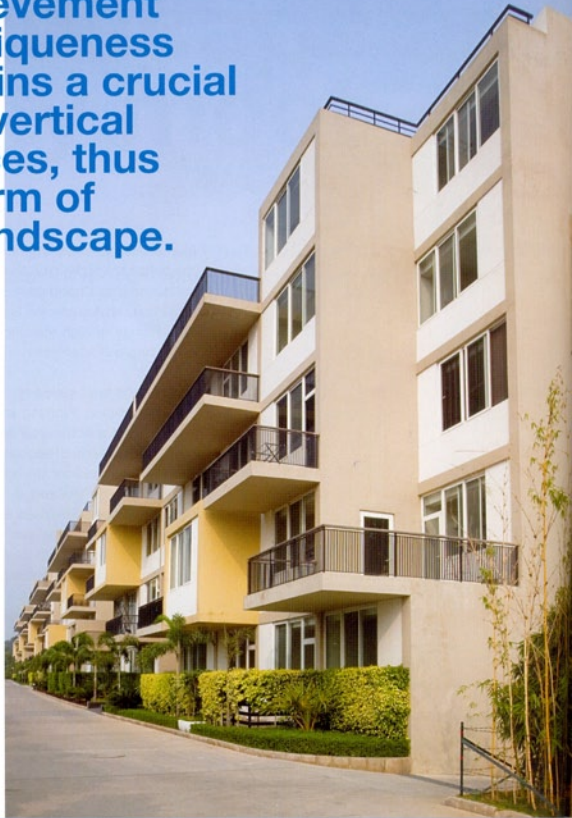
The built volumes of the residential strips are sculpted with a play of volumes, giving way to terraces and open areas at each level. The service areas of all apartments are kept along the service strip, an area which has been segmented to give way to service courtyards. As per the development control norms, basement parking is contained within the building periphery, dictating the configuration of the development in the form of linear strips.

The development has been configured as a set of nine blocks of five stories each, including four apartments with attached service courtyards. With 168 units in total, the development comprises a combination of three- to four-bedroom apartments and penthouses on the top floors. Along with these dwelling units, ancillary facilities such as a health club, gymnasium, amphitheatre, swimming pool, tot lots, basketball court, and social areas are provided.

Each block within the development boasts an atrium lobby devised to exude a sense of community. A low-rise development, terraces have been allocated on each level to establish a relationship with the ground level. *The project is an achievement with respect to the uniqueness of its scale which retains a crucial relationship between vertical and horizontal distances, thus generating a viable form of interaction with the landscape.*

The outward expression of Marble Arch relies on a varied use of materials which have been carefully chosen to enhance the individuality of the spaces within the development. The design employs the use of grids in terms of the overall scheme, both in the case of the buildings, where subdivision occurs to generate spaces within apartments, as well as the landscape via pedestrian linkages and green areas.

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SITE PLAN

Architect
Morphogenesis
 Location
Chandigarh India
 Site Area
5.4 Acre
 Blocks
9
 Stories
5 per block
 Client
Uppal Group Housing
 Year of Completion
2010

