This chapter looks at the *WHERE* dimension of the architecture orientation framework. It explains the levels of abstraction at which you are active as an architect and how architecture is demonstrated at these levels. We also present architecture views that you can use at these levels of abstraction to make it easier to manage the different aspects and the resulting complexity of an architecture. After reading this chapter, you will be able to differentiate between the relevant architectural levels of abstraction and use them. Using architecture views, you will also be able to consider and process specific different aspects of an architecture.

**Overview**

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4.1 Architecture Levels

Imagine you are looking at a system through a telescope. You can change the level of detail at which you look at it using the zoom factor. Certain details of the system then become visible or hidden. We will use the example of city and building construction, as well as the transport infrastructure to make this clearer. If you could look at the earth from the ISS space station with a telescope and slowly zoom in, you could look at different architecture levels of city and building construction. You would move from the level of continents, through the level of countries, to the level of cities and districts, right down to the level of individual buildings and their floors. We can transpose this level scheme onto software architecture. Which architecture levels can we generally identify? We can answer this question by visualizing which external and internal contexts are generally

Figure 4-2: Basic concepts of the WHERE dimension

Basic concepts of the WHERE dimension

Figure 4-2 shows the basic concepts covered in this chapter and visualizes how they connect.