Thornton House, Balham

Design Overview

FBMArchitects

Located in Balham, South London, Thornton House is a new development for Homes for Lambeth which provides 14 high quality homes in a range of tenures.
Through scale, placement, and the careful 'carving' of the building envelope, FBM has designed a contemporary response within a traditional mansion block typology.

Front Cover
Thornton House, with its Recessed Balconies and Articulated Volume, Sits within an Improved Communal Landscape
Opposite
Recessed Balconies with the Existing Estate in the Background
Below
Thornton Road Elevation

Scheme description

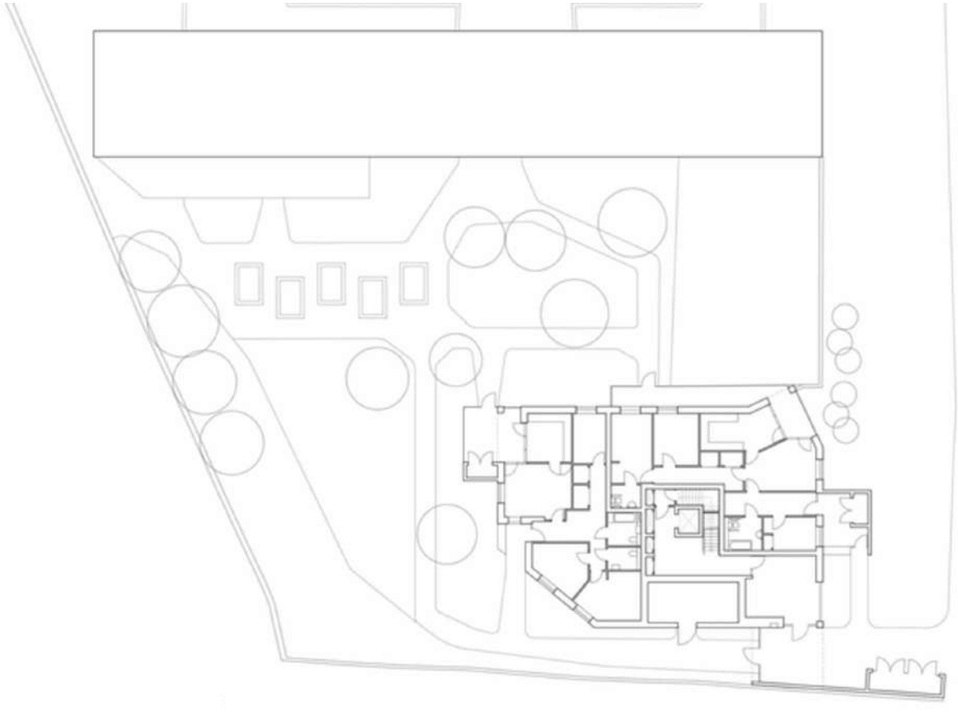
Thornton House provides 14 high quality new homes within an existing estate in Balham, London. FBM's regenerative design approach optimised the number of homes whilst enhancing the surrounding amenity for existing and new residents - as part of the redevelopment of the site, a new Health and Well-being Garden was provided, including a new under 5s play space, exercise zone and food growing opportunities, with further improvements to lighting and landscaping along the street frontage and site boundary.

The new apartments are arranged around an open central stair core within a compact urban villa, orientated to provide an improved street frontage along Thornton Road whilst reducing window to window distances from neighbours. Ranging in height from two to five storeys, the new building acts as a transition between the seven storey existing estate building to the north and the two-storey Edwardian villas to the south and west.

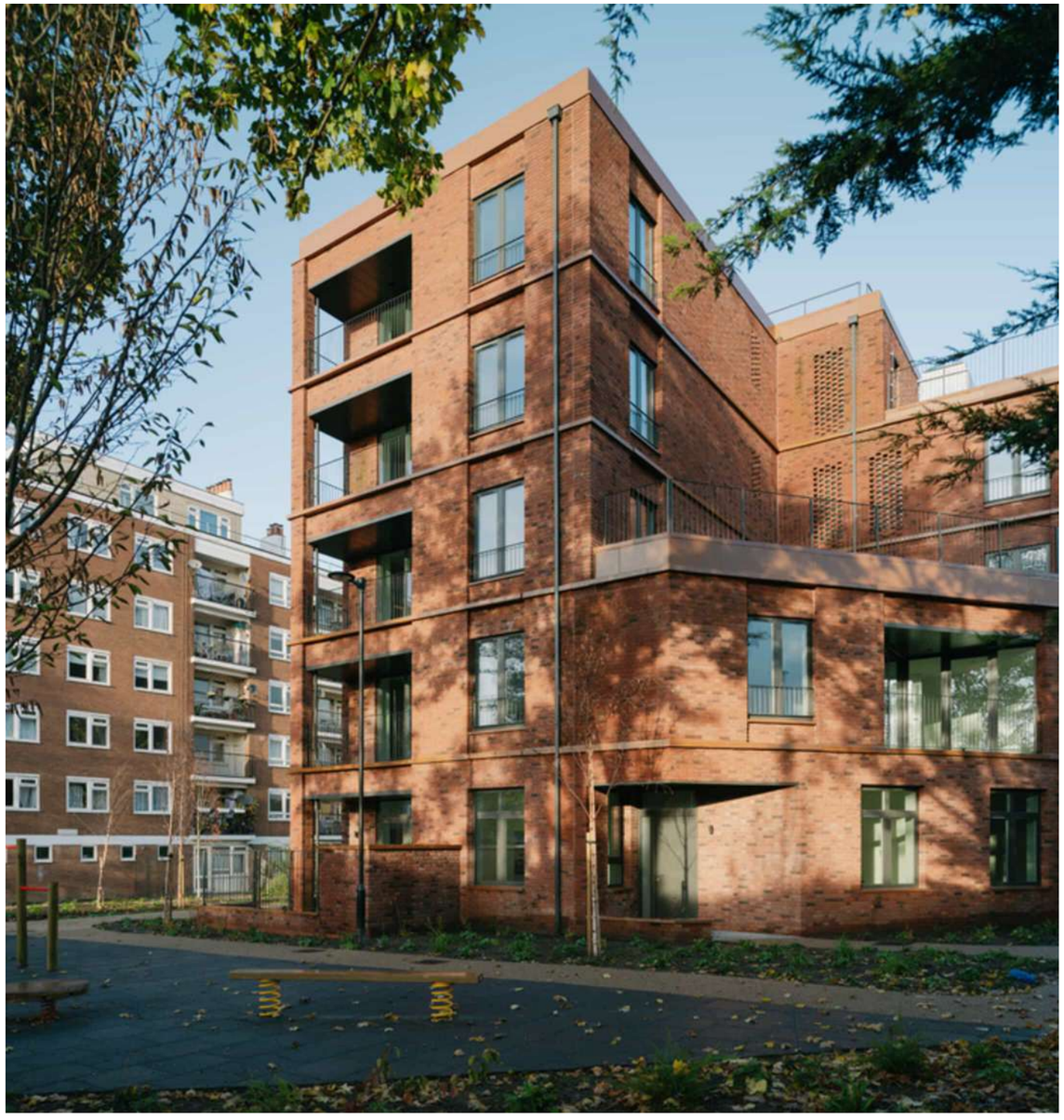
Passive environmental solutions have been a key consideration, with 60% of the dwellings being double aspect, and 40% triple aspect. Recessed balconies not only increase privacy, but act as a shading device for the floor to ceiling glazed doors and windows. The development was designed to achieve a 72% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions through a combination of air source heat pumps (ASHP), a highly efficient envelope, PV panels on the roof, and thermally efficient double-glazed windows.

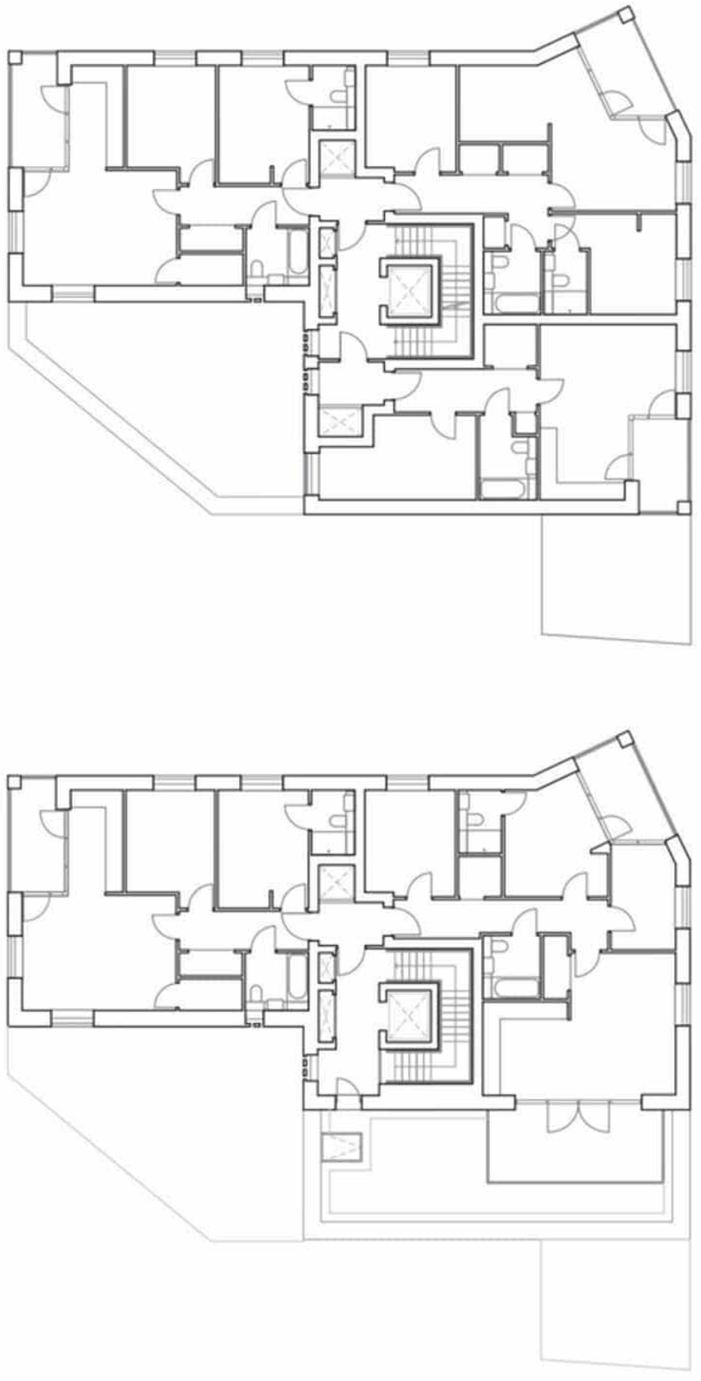
All the apartments benefit from a generous recessed balcony or terrace typically connected to the open plan kitchen dinning/living space. The scheme was designed as car-free, but provides one on-street parking bay on Thornton Road for blue badge holders only; cycle parking is provided for future and existing residents.

Finally, the scheme achieved an urban greening factor of 0.4. The landscape design enhances biodiversity by introducing habitat interventions - such as log piles, bird and bat boxes, and bug hotels - and food sources for wildlife through a diverse planting scheme, all of which can support a wider network of vegetation and migration corridors.



Opposite
Ground and Landscape Plan
Above
Communal Landscape for New and Existing Residents with Opportunities for Growing Produce





Above
A Carved-Out Envelope and Articulated Volume
Opposite Typical Floor Plan (Second Floor Shown) and Fourth Floor

Project data

Start on site January 2021
Completion date September 2023
Number of units 14
Unit types 4 x 1-bed apartments; 7 x 2-bed apartments; 3 x 3-bed apartments
Tenure Social Rent, Shared Ownership, and Market Sale
Form of contract/procurement: Design and Build
Main Contractor I-Kew
Construction cost Undisclosed

Planning team

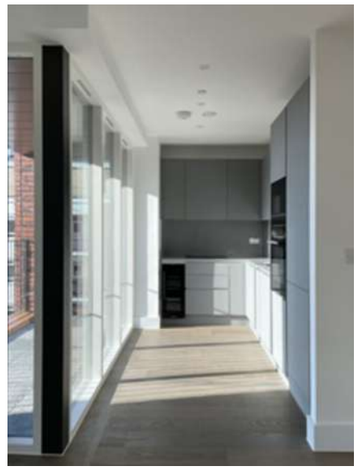
Client Homes for Lambeth (Lambeth Council)
Planning Consultant Savills
Planning Architect FBM Architects
Services Engineer Hodkinson
Environment Technology Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery (MVHR), Photovoltaic cells (PVs)
Heating Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP)

Environmental performance data (as designed)

Predicted on-site renewable energy generation per year 10.1kW PV array
Airtightness at 50pa 3m3/h.m2
CO2 reduction above Building Regulations (2013) 71.9%

Photography Tim Crocker

Above
Sketch of the Entrance Canopy
Opposite
Above: Corner Balconies overlooking Thornton Road
Below: Ground Floor Entrances and Kitchen



FraserBrownMacKennaArchitects