

Raw edges: Melbourne's Elwood House is an exercise in brick and concrete

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A balanced combination of tactile textures highlights the sensitive approach in this low scale residential project by Woods Bagot. The structure, which sits on the site of an old Retired Service League community hall in Melbourne's Elwood suburb, consists of a mix of 30 one, two and three bedroom units, designed for Piccolo Developments.

Drawing from the neighbourhood's urban context, the architects opted for a restrained material palette throughout, working with brick (which references existing nearby buildings) and concrete, a material the practice has been 'fascinated' by, for a few years. The blend of board form concrete and modern brick patterning continues both outside and in the apartments, creating a streamlined effect that feels right at home within the surrounding area's residential vernacular.

Spanning four levels, the development gets plenty of light inside through large windows, balconies and front yards that create breaks in the façade – yet the pièce de résistance, when it comes to natural lighting, is the complex's striking brick clad central atrium next to the lobby area. All bedrooms open up towards it and its generous scale and a reflective pond within ensure light floods the depth of the floorplates.

Aiming to create a real community, without compromising the residents' privacy, Woods Bagot designed the units as independent houses, allowing for lots of outdoor space for each residence to 'breathe'. Inside, the apartment interiors were conceived in partnership with Hecker Guthrie, and feature finely crafted joinery element and metal details, which offset the raw materials used throughout.

Read more at <https://www.wallpaper.com/architecture/elwood-house#mVX9MMBUWuCwcVMK.99>