

RUSKIN ELWOOD

Krause Smoke Grey bricks build a strong connection to the natural environment



Ruskin Elwood showcases best practice in sustainable design and construction across four premium residences. Based on the premise that considered design and construction is vital for a fossil-free future, this exceptional development was driven by a seamless collaboration between HIP V. HYPE, Fieldwork Architects and Intracon, along with a number of local and international designers and service providers. A project team with a shared commitment to delivering durable, high quality performance projects with a low environmental impact.

What sets Ruskin Elwood apart, to start with, is that it's 100% electric and can be run off 100% renewable energy. On-site solar panels linking to a Tesla Powerwall in the garage, high levels of insulation and an advanced Energy Recovery Ventilation system achieve better living for a better future. "The homes are designed to minimise energy use and significantly reduce energy costs for the residents. Any shortfall of required energy between what is generated by the on-site solar panels and the homes' needs is met by being able to purchase renewable energy from the grid," explains Liam Wallis, Founder and Projects Director, HIP V. HYPE.

The residences comprise either three or four bedrooms across three levels, each with its own lift. North facing windows lead out to expansive terraces overlooking Elwood Canal, providing a generous space for entertaining and relaxing. Ruskin Elwood is all about embracing and engaging positively with the location, preferencing openness over privacy. Brick stepped terraces lead towards the canal and all windows are placed to frame the canal in unique and meaningful ways.

Quino Holland, Director, Fieldwork, says it is also about, "Designing a new building that is respectful of its context, which is why we put a strong preference over natural materials, choosing timber and clay bricks."

Locally made Krause bricks in Smoke Grey are the brick of choice. "We really like the Krause bricks, particularly the speckled and quite variable look of them. And the idea is that the cream, brown and grey tones of the brickwork will combine with the timber cladding above, which will grey off over time, and you'll get this overall beautiful speckled grey palette, which will sit very nicely in the context. It's a great product for Elwood; we're very happy with it and it has resulted in a beautiful project," Quino continues.

A standout feature of the brickwork is its patterning across the building. It's an intricate detail successfully delivered by Intracon and its team of highly skilled bricklayers. Dimpled brickwork at the base of the building shows the finished floor level internally, forming a legibility on the outside and an extra layer of texture. The dimpled brickwork then turns into a full breezeway on the building's east and west facades, providing a beautiful backlight at night on the series of windows behind it.



Fieldwork has achieved a delicate balance between the cohesiveness of the development and the individuality of each residence. "We played with the rhythm and detail, and the undulating parapet and the brickwork pattern to create the individual identity. They each have their individual identities to them, but the overall scheme is quite cohesive," Quino reflects.

The material palette is magnificent; the natural earthy hues of the timber and brickwork are stitched together by a handful of darker building elements, balustrade rails and external louvers. It's not only aesthetically clever, but practical, too. Take for instance, the external operable aluminium horizontal louvers on the balcony decks to the north. These allow occupants to close off or open up the top floor and living room windows and balcony, for both privacy and solar control, and are striking against the overall palette.

The building is also a standout, not only for its climate resilient design and construction, but for how well it responds to the canal

and its sense of place. "A lot of other projects take a longer time to feel right in the context but this felt right from day one. Even without the landscaping established and the materials settling in, it's already looking really good and I think a big part of that is the brickwork – it really helped with that," says Quino.

Ruskin Elwood is proof that a shared commitment to a common cause and dedication to the task creates extraordinary results. There is deep respect for each other's skills among the project team, particularly of Intracon. HIP V. HYPE and Fieldwork speak highly of James Banks, Managing Director, and his team. James humbly accepts all feedback, rightly so, remarking that, "The interesting thing about a project like that is it requires a level of dedication and care over and above what you'd expect for most townhouse projects, and we have a project team who have that dedication and care, and that has made the difference."

As Liam says, this project team has delivered, "Highly efficient, fossil fuel-free homes that accommodate four families within a pedestrian friendly, highly connected location that are constructed with durable materials, which have a minimal impact on the natural environment."

It is a truly remarkable project.

Development and Project Management:	HIP V. HYPE
Architect:	Fieldwork Architects
Builder:	Intracon
Product:	Krause Bricks, Grey/Ghost
Landscape Architect:	SBLA
Photography:	Tess Kelly