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The Beckett

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RESIDENCES

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The Beckett

Developed for Elysian Residences, The Beckett provides 89 extra care apartments on the site of a former bus depot in Tunbridge Wells. The scheme adheres to the later living ethos that life should be fulfilling, engaging and uplifting, enabling residents to live life on their own terms, in their own home.

The design focuses on reinstating the domestic character of Royal Tunbridge Wells, responding sensitively to the scale differences between St John’s Road, Woodbury Park Road and the surrounding residential streets with three new buildings. These vary in height from three to five storeys around a landscaped courtyard garden. External finishes reflect the local context with the façade employing brick and painted render for a clean, elegant aesthetic.

All apartments feature full-height windows and balconies to ensure a seamless connection with the outdoors. Internal circulation areas are generously proportioned and have been designed to maximise opportunity for social interaction.

Details
Sector
Later Living
Location
Royal Tunbridge Wells
Address
36-40 St Johns Road, TN4 9NH
Client
Elysian Residences
Construction cost
£28,000,000
Start
February 2022
Completion
March 2025
Contract type
JCT Major Works
GIA
9,863m² / 106,164ft²
NIA
7,335m² / 78,953ft²

Project Team
Client
Elysian Residences
Architect
Allford Hall Monaghan Morris
Project Managers
Cast Consultancy
CDM Coordinator
PB Safety
Structural/Civil Engineer
Elliot Wood Partnership
Cost Consultant
Cast Consultancy
MEP/Lift Engineer
Horea Lea
Planning Consultant
DP9
Fire Engineer
Hoare Lea
Landscape Architect
BBUK Studio
Transport Consultant
Markides Associates
Daylighting Consultant
Lorem ipsum
Acoustic Consultant
Auricl Acoustic Consulting
Environmental Consultant
Lorem ipsum
Access Consultant
Lorem ipsum
Main Contractor
HG Construction

AHMM Team Members
Paul Monaghan, Cormac Farrelly, Iain Williams, Susie le Good, Paul de Hoxar, Kurtis Fleming, Rob Bennell, Thomas Bennell, Kat Popowczak, Ruth King, Josh George

Awards
Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society Award 2025



Scan for more info



Site history and existing use

Site history and existing use

The site was originally developed during the nineteenth century with a variety of building types, mainly residential but including a non-conformist chapel along St John's Road which was, and remains, the main route north from the town centre.

St John's Church was built in the 1850s to serve the growing Victorian community. Most of the development visible today post-dates the church, apart from the Woodbury Park cemetery which was opened a decade earlier. 36-38 St John's Road was occupied by a pair of houses which were converted in the 1930s to offices and used as ancillary accommodation for the new Arriva bus depot which was built here during that period. A detached house and the chapel to the north of the site were also demolished to make way for the bus depot.

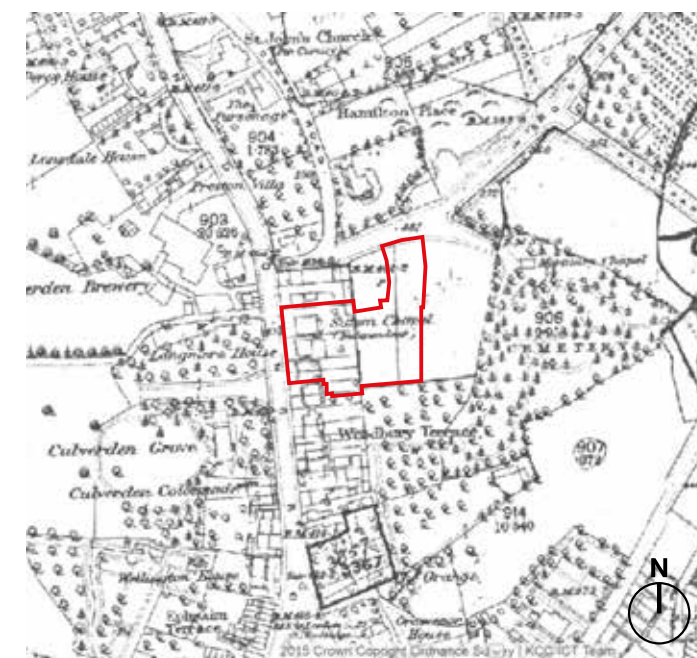
The Arriva Bus Depot

Built to serve the rapid growth of the bus service in the 1930s, the depot expanded to include two semi-detached houses on Woodbury Park Road with stables and workshops at the rear. The layout and structure of the site was typical of such facilities built in the mid-twentieth century and contributed to an overbuilt site which lacked articulation with its urban setting as well as being in poor state of conservation.

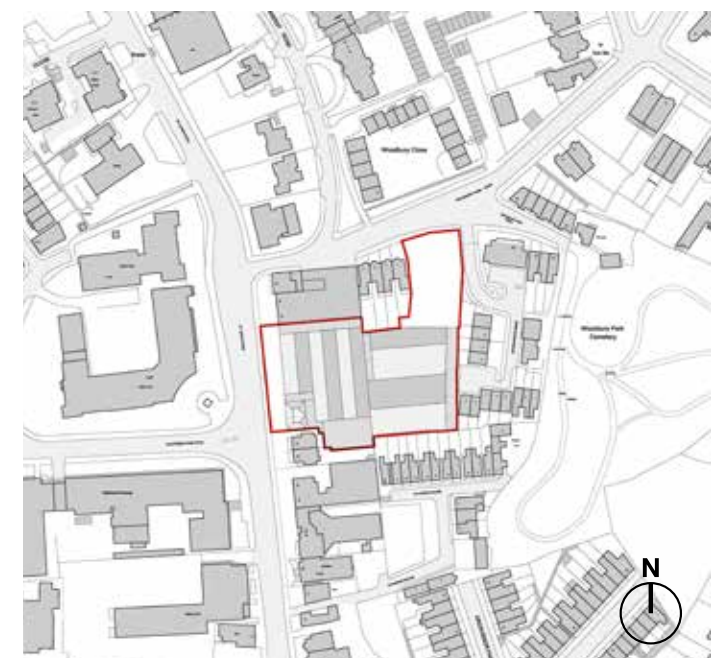
Existing buildings comprised of industrial sheds with pitched roofs, constructed around load bearing masonry walls with virtually no windows, up to a height equivalent of a three storey residential building.

The operations on site were noisy and generate aggressive levels of air pollution to the neighbouring properties, the majority of these being residential units. Throughout the years, all trees have been removed and most of the ground surface was either tarmac or concrete, suitable for vehicular movement.

Overall, the buildings and their use was incoherent with the immediate context and a detrimental amenity to the neighbouring properties and ultimately, to Royal Tunbridge Wells.

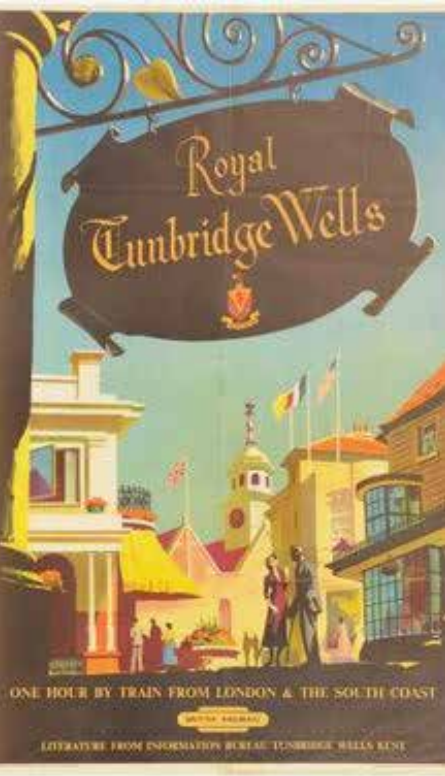


1871 - 1890



1962 - 2016

Site history and existing use



The Pantiles - iconic area of Royal Tunbridge Wells



Image caption if needed



Image caption if needed

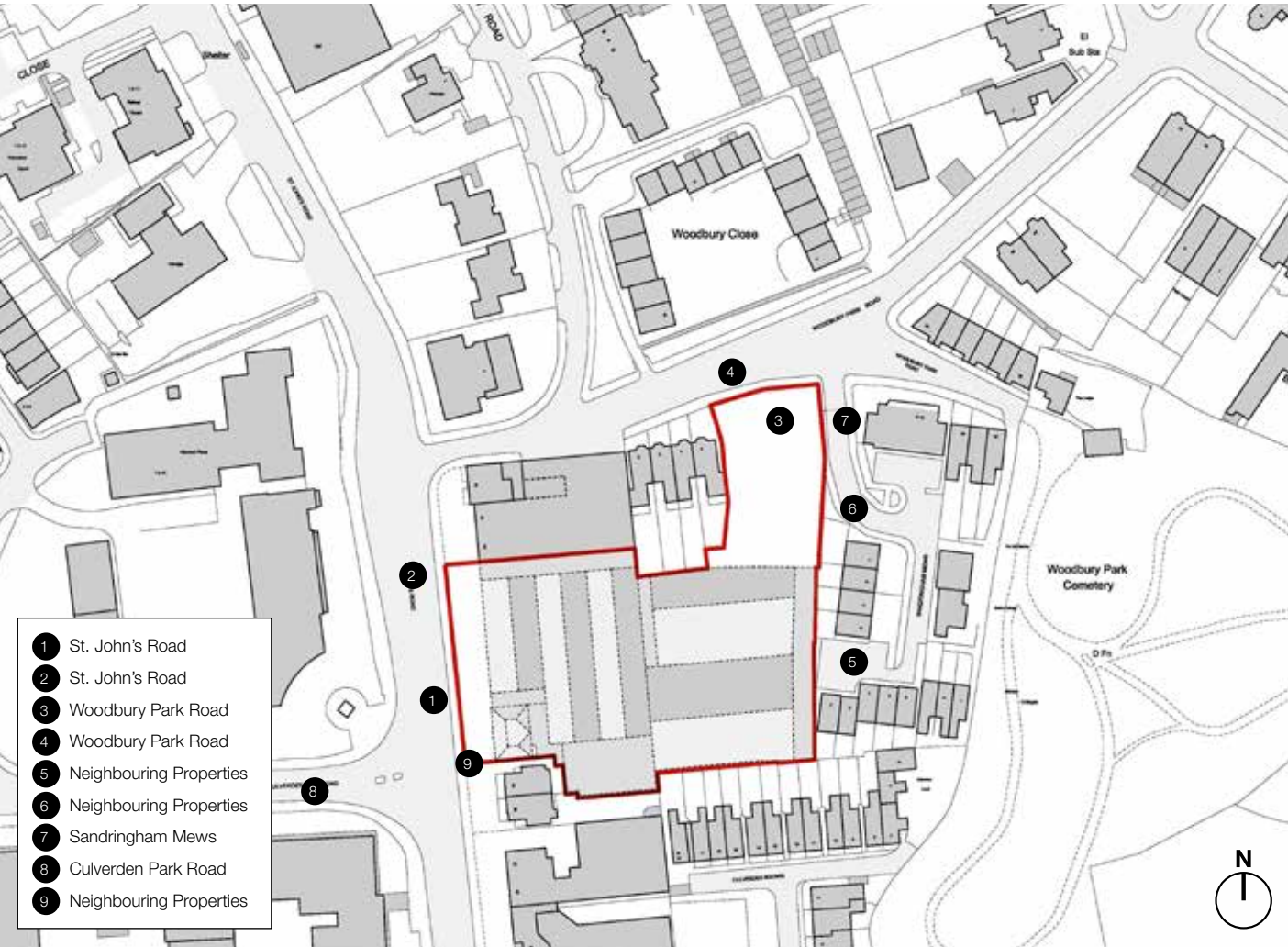


Image caption if needed

Existing use - The Arriva Bus Depot



Existing use - The Arriva Bus Depot



Image caption if needed



Image caption if needed



Key views:

- 1 **St. John's Road.** View looking north up St. John's Road towards St. John's Church Centre.
- 2 **St. John's Road.** View of the existing Aviva Bus Depot with Lenco Motor Spares to the left of the image.
- 3 **Woodbury Park Road.** View of the rear elevation to the Aviva Busy Depot with access onto Woodbury Park Road.
- 4 **Woodbury Park Road.** View of the rear elevation to the Aviva Busy Depot with access onto Woodbury Park Road.
- 5 **Neighbouring Properties.** View of residential buildings adjacency to the site boundary.
- 6 **Neighbouring Properties.** View of residential gardens adjacency to the site boundary.
- 7 **Sandringham Mews.** View looking at the Aviva Bus Depot from the residential Sandringham Mews to the east of the site.
- 8 **Culverden Park Road.** View of the site looking from Culverden Park Road opposite St, John's Road.
- 9 **Neighbouring Properties.** View of nursery building adjacent to the site.



Design Development

Design Development

Early in the design phase the team consulted with key neighbours and local stakeholders which shaped the overall design of the scheme. Key feedback which came back from these sessions included:

- North south blocks to allow for adequate daylight throughout the day
- No north facing units/south should face the courtyard
- The urban grain should relate to St John's Road for the larger blocks and Woodbury Park Road for the small blocks
- Historic frontage to St John's Road should be reinstated as well as incorporating green edges
- The buildings should step back away from the roads
- The building heights should relate to the surrounding context
- Create suitable setting for adjacent listed building
- Create datum of circulation within the site
- Complement the street frontage along Woodbury Park Road
- Set back buildings from the edges/party walls
- Create a buffer zone/visual amenity to neighbours

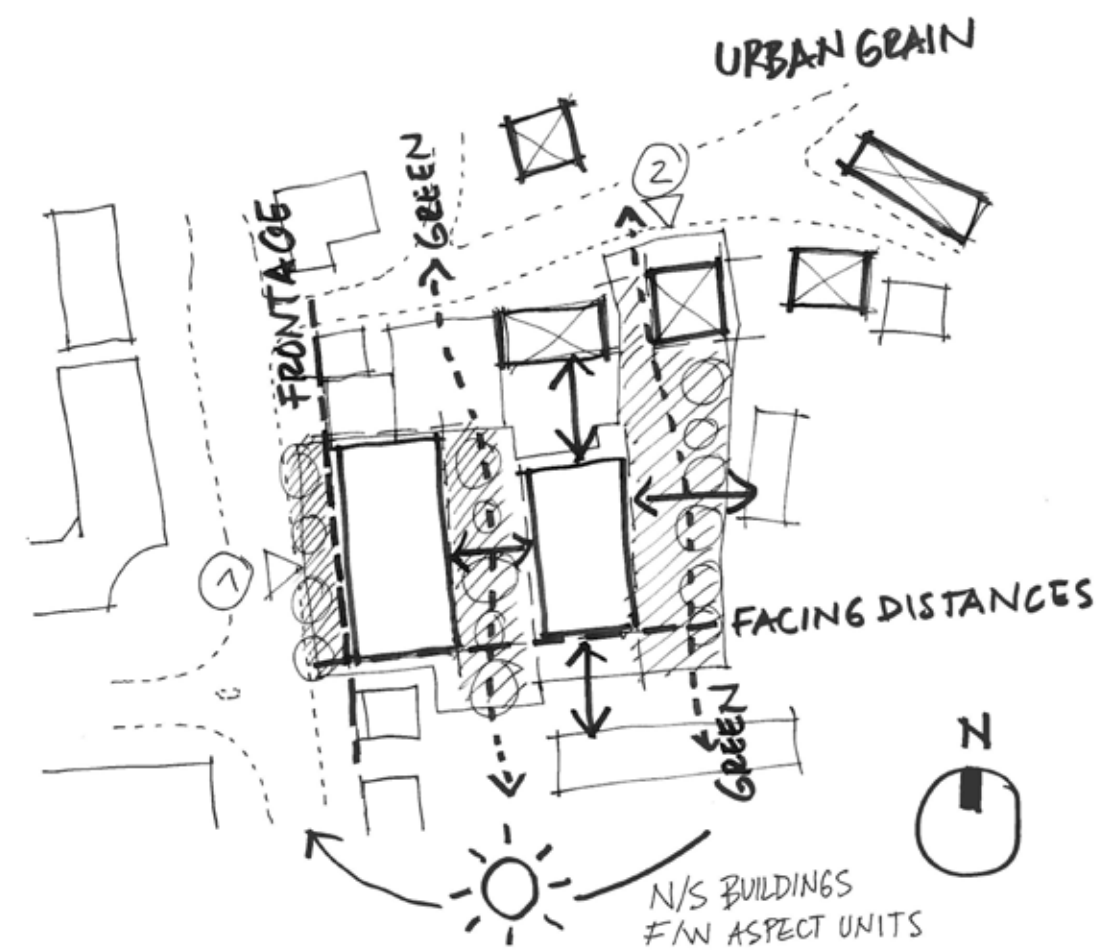


Diagram showing the block layouts and their relationship to the site

Design Development

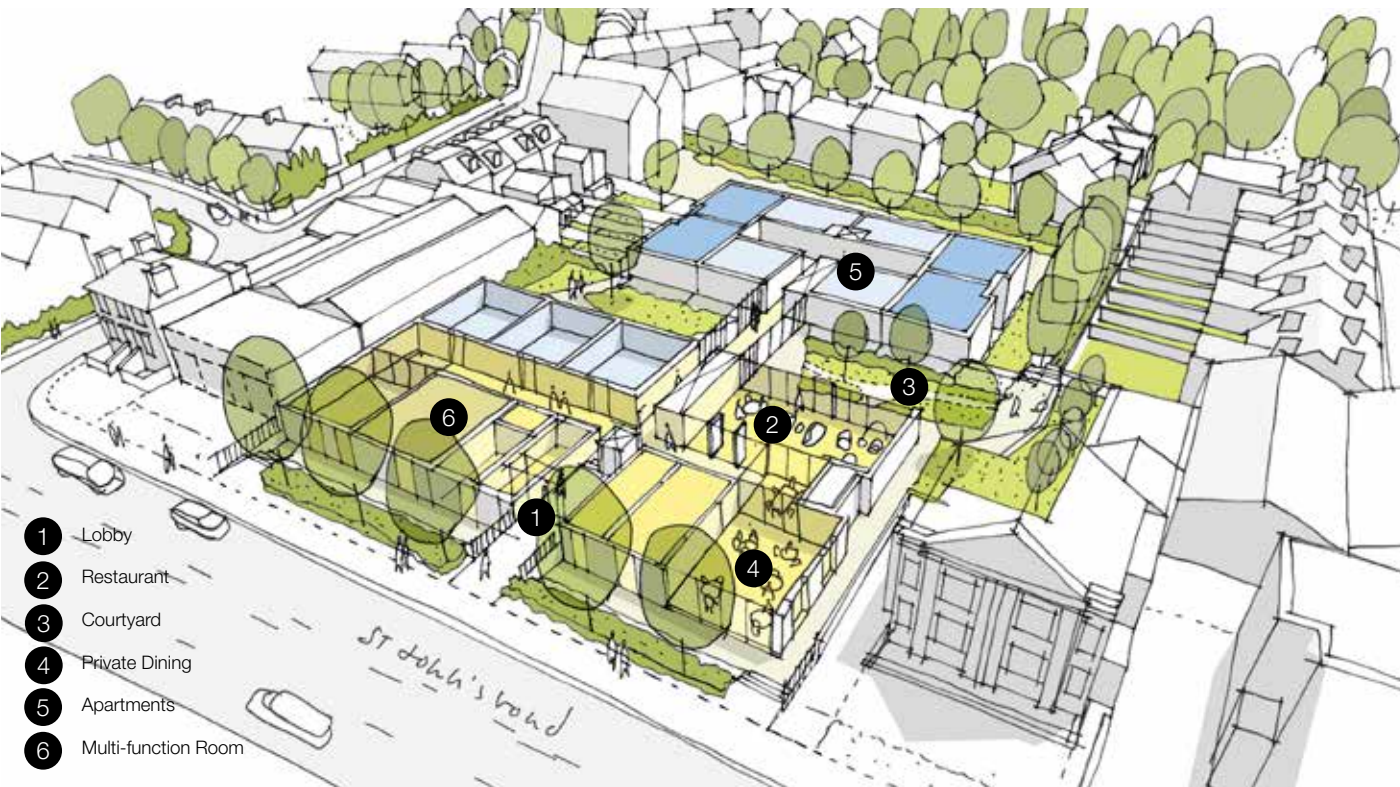


Heights vary from three storeys plus mansard roof along Woodbury Park Road to lower ground floor plus five storeys along St John's Road - responding to the existing context and variation in scale of the surrounding areas.



The Woodbury Park Road building is three storey plus mansard roof in order to relate to the scale of its surroundings. The plan arrangement is a mix of two 1beds and a large 2bed per level, apart from the top

floor which consists of 2 large 2beds. All are accessed from a central core containing communal stairs and a lift. The introduction of pitch roofs and its massing articulation results in a form that resembles a pair of twin terrace houses.



The main entrance is located off St John's Road, considered the most prominent address and intuitive route to transport links and the town centre. The front door has level access from the street and leads to a welcome area with access to lift and flight of stairs, this provides access to the lower ground.



The scheme aims to reinstate the urban grain of the existing properties that once occupied the site and create a clearly defined frontage along St John's Road, alluding to the rhythm of a series of terrace houses with varied heights.

The top floors are set back and use a different architectural language to relate to the vernacular roofscape in the area which often present a greater level of articulation at the top of the buildings and appear in a variety of forms and finishes, eg. pitch roofs, mansards, Juliette balconies or terraces.



Design Detail

Design Detail - Interiors

The design approach treats the building as the 'theatre' and the interiors as the 'props'. This creates a clear relationship between architecture and interior design, with each element supporting the overall experience of the building.

Drawing on The Pantiles, an iconic area of Tunbridge Wells, the interiors reinterpret Georgian design principles in a modern re-interpretation. The approach is elegant, refined, ordered and methodical, with an emphasis on subtle colours, consistent materials, robust surfaces, natural finishes and good levels of light.

Ceilings are used to conceal service clutter, while timber wall finishes add texture and visual contrast to the spaces. The material palette is natural, healthy and warm, while remaining comfortable, practical and easy to maintain.

The communal areas use a warm, natural colour palette. Marble, wood and poured concrete screed are combined with soft lighting to create a welcoming and comfortable environment for residents.



Main entrance lobby visualisation



Main entrance lobby as built



Communal dining area visualisation



Communal dining area as built

Design Detail - Interiors



Private dining area visualisation



Private dining area as built



Communal lounge visualisation



Communal lounge as built



Resident's bar visualisation



Resident's bar as built

Design Detail - Apartments



Kitchen visualisation



Kitchen as built (The Beckett)



1 Bed Layout

Design Detail - Apartments



Bathroom visualisation



Bathroom as built (The Beckett)

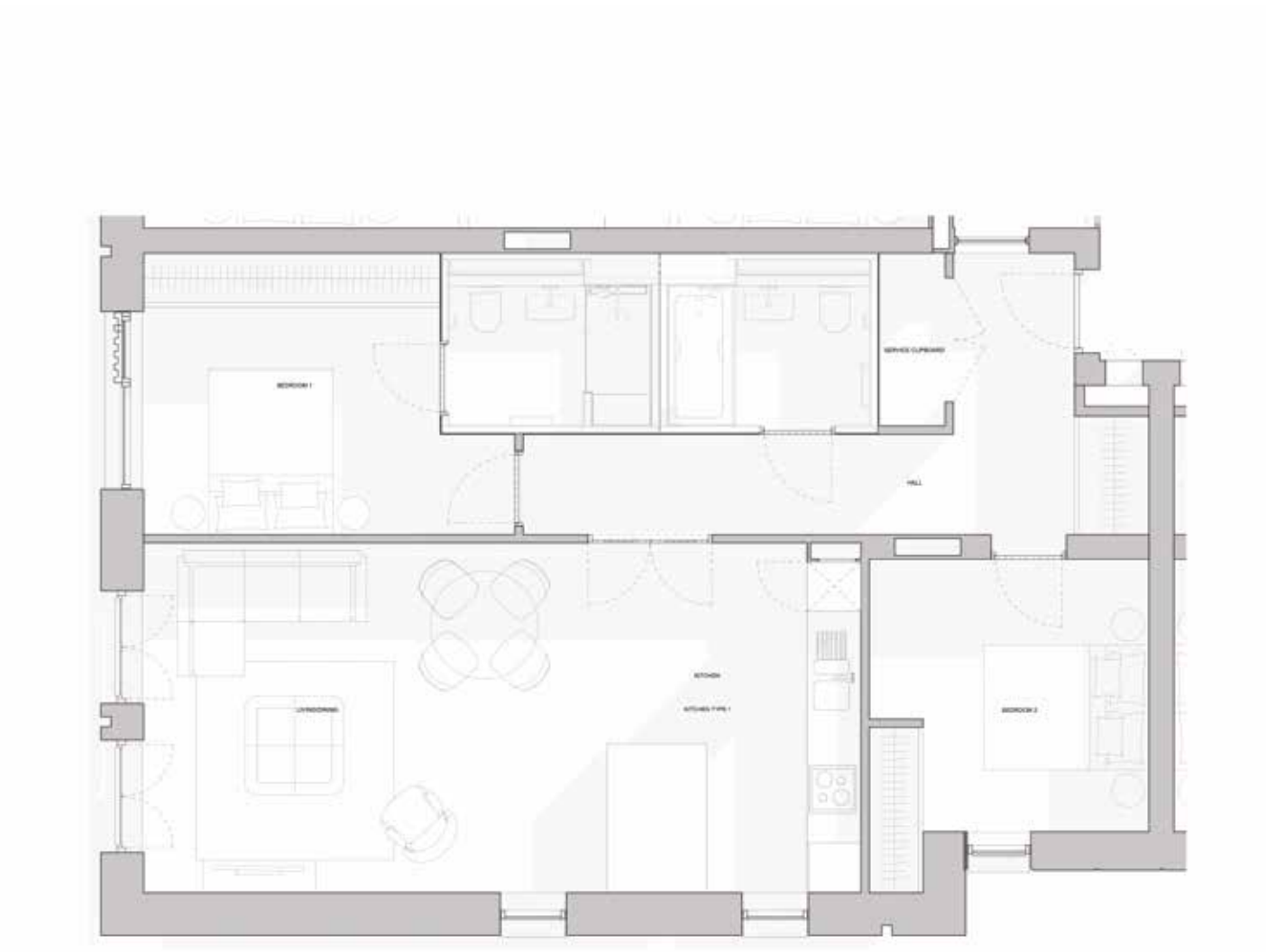
Design Detail - Apartments



Typical apartment living room (The Beckett)



Typical apartment bedroom (The Beckett)



2 Bed Layout



3 Bed Layout

Design Detail - layouts



Living area (Cypress House)



Kitchen (Cypress House)



2 Bed Layout (Cypress House)



Drawings

Lower Ground Floor Plan



- Amenity
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed



Ground Floor Plan



- Amenity
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed



First Floor Plan



- Amenity
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed



Second Floor Plan



- Amenity
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed



Third Floor Plan



- Amenity
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed



Fourth Floor Plan



- Amenity
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed



Fifth Floor Plan



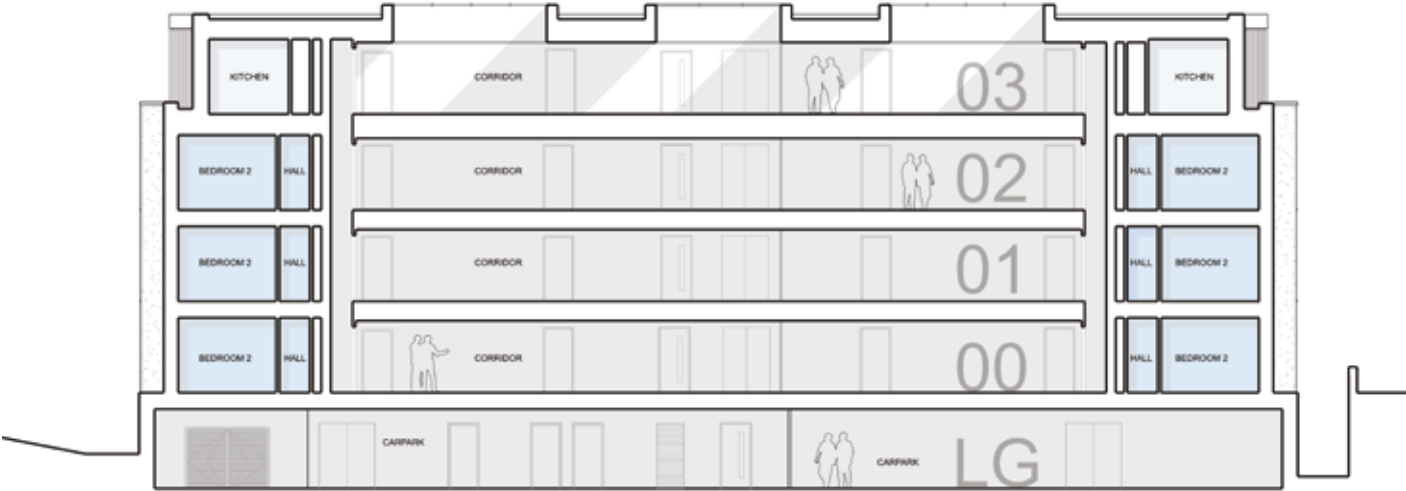
- Amenity
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed



Sections



Long Section (The Beckett)



Long Section (Blackthorne Place)



Photography





Woodbury Park Road elevation of Cypress House

© Rob Parrish





The Lounge

© Rob Parrish





Lounge in Blackthorne Place

© Rob Parrish



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