

Markland Ball homes



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## Richard & Alex

Richard set up his design studio Richard Markland Architects (RMA) in 2010 to pursue his passion for architecture. He brings to the practice thirty years' experience in the construction industry.

Highly self-motivated and skilled, Alex joined RMA as a student 7 years ago. In 2020 he was shortlisted for the Rising Star Award by RIBA.

Together they have created Markland Ball homes to bring a sharper focus to their home design service. Having successfully completed the ambitious Richmond House project (see page 24), Alex now leads Markland Ball Homes.



Richard Markland

Alex Ball

## What people say

"My partner and I have been looking for a new house for the past 9 months. We discovered a property that was close to what we wanted, but our purchase was really contingent on being able to extend and develop the property to maximise the space.

We undertook a one day workshop with Alex to try and develop our initial ideas and understand if what we wanted to do was possible. Alex exceeded our expectations and worked with our very scant outline and descriptors to really meet our needs, yet in a more efficient and aesthetically appealing way.

In that short space of time Alex transformed our ideas and produced a brilliant solution that would simply not have occurred to us. It achieved exactly what we were aiming to do and then some. Alex proposed a design that would not only achieve an overall more favourable aesthetic than our original ideas, but would also be more cost effective."

**Edward Tricker, Private Client**

"I have worked with Richard and Alex for over 6 years. Recently, acting in their capacity as Architect, Lead Designer, Landscape Architect and Interior Architects Richard, Alex and the rest of the team have been working on an incredibly complex bespoke new-build private house. They have worked tirelessly, with meticulous attention to detail which has resulted in a stunning outturn product. During the early stages of the project, the 3D virtual model that has been created proved invaluable in helping develop the design and assisting the client's understanding of how the finished product could look. This helped greatly in obtaining approval from the client in terms of materiality selection.

The team at MB/H have worked extremely well with the wider design team and indeed have pushed the other designers to help ensure the architecture of the building is not compromised by design. Whilst challenging, this has resulted in a truly one off piece of architectural merit.

The project included a protracted planning application which ended up going to committee and resulted in the head of planning commenting that the scheme 'is one of the finest examples of architecture' he had seen in his career on the planning committee. Whilst contentious (from a planning perspective) the scheme was debated very little at committee as the design had been so carefully thought through to ensure the building minimised impact on the surrounding area."

**Ross Van Ot, Director, Davenport Associates**

# Engage. Experience. Understand.

In all aspects of the process we strive for clear communication. Computer graphics are improving all the time which makes it easier to produce realistic CGIs as work progresses. In addition to traditional media, which is sometimes difficult to fully understand, we use virtual 3D models to better present our designs. Using virtual reality, our clients are able to 'physically' engage with their projects. The only way to get a real appreciation of this approach is to experience it for yourself. Please ask for a demonstration.



above: Designing in Richmond House VR.  
right: CGI view of family room in the Richmond House





# Services

## Building, Interior & Landscape Design

We lead a team that will deliver your dream home from concept through to completion. A highly bespoke solution will be sought and we make sure you, as the client, are involved in every step of that process. The end result is a home akin to a bespoke suit, perfectly tailored in every way.

## Project Management

We can manage your project from start to finish. Whether it is liaising with you, the client, coordinating the design team or managing the contractor, our detailed knowledge and expertise ensures a smooth process from the very start.

## Feasibility Design

Securing your dream home can be the biggest personal investment of one's life. Whether building, refurbishing or just purchasing you may benefit from the advice of an architect. We have the vision to see hidden potential within a property as well as factors which could be limitations. As such we undertake half or full day workshops with our clients to assess their needs and make initial recommendations. Services may include: property viewings or site visits; preparation of precedent studies; and sketch ideas. This helps our clients select a suitable property or site prior to purchase or set out options for how to take an active project forward.

## Planning & Consultancy

We have successfully secured many full planning consents. Our applications are rigorously investigated and thorough. Consequently, we have successfully navigated contentious schemes through the planning process, either independently, or working with a planning consultant. A good recent example is the Richmond House, a 1,200m<sup>2</sup> exposed concrete dwelling overlooking Richmond Park. A nervous client heading into the committee meeting was delighted with the 7-2 positive vote and the head of the planning committee closing proceedings with the statement: "This is one of the finest examples of contemporary architecture to be proposed in the borough for many years."

## Visualisation

Envisioning your project can be one of the most difficult challenges clients. That is why we create virtual 3D copies of your home so you no longer have to imagine what 2D drawings will look like in reality. Using the latest in virtual reality technology you are able to walk around your virtual home as if it were already built.

# Sustainability

Sustainability is incredibly important to us. We are committed to producing high quality architecture which contributes positively to the natural environment. We ask all our clients to embrace this approach in their projects.

We are part of the Architects Declare movement – a group of architects dedicated to promoting awareness of the climate and biodiversity emergencies and the urgent need for action by all those involved in the commissioning, design and construction of the built environment.

Buildings and construction account for nearly 40% of energy-related carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions whilst also having a significant impact on our natural habitats. We look at reducing the carbon footprint of buildings during their construction, through the use of locally sourced, or more carbon friendly, materials. However, our main focus is the long-term whole building life cycle whereby we seek to reduce the environmental impact of running the buildings long after our involvement has finished. Making the buildings more energy efficient is not only better for the environment but also reduces the overall cost of running those buildings.

Our aim is to design a building which adapts to the varying external conditions, creating a consistently comfortable environment whilst using the least energy. We achieve this through a 'fabric first' approach. Our buildings are highly insulated and have high thermal mass, so require less energy to heat and cool. Conversely, natural cross-ventilation and solar shading are used to reduce overheating in summer. These are all 'passive measures' which require no energy to implement.

On top of this we employ low energy methods of heating. We use mechanical heat recovery which recycles the existing heat in the building and combines it with fresh filtered air. This has the added benefit of removing impurities in the air, creating a healthier internal environment. We use under floor heating which is generated through air source or ground source heat pumps rather than carbon emitting gas boilers. We specify energy efficient appliances and light fittings and where appropriate use solar panels to generate the energy to power these.

We also want our buildings to have a positive impact on the immediate environment. We aim to promote biodiversity through our landscape design, creating environments that are both beautiful to look at and to use, as well as being attractive to wildlife. We plant plenty of new trees, incorporate bird and bat boxes, and use specific planting that promotes bee populations. We also use green roofs and deploy sustainable drainage systems in the form of ponds to reduce pressure on the sewer systems and create a diverse biosphere.

# The Process

The design and build process can seem daunting, but it needn't be. We are here to make that process as simple and stress free as possible, taking care of everything, every step of the way. We break the process down in to 6 manageable stages which are as follows;

## Stage 1 - Getting to know you

Designing something as personal as a home requires trust and understanding. Therefore at the start of each project we work closely with you to develop a brief for the project, establishing your needs, design aspirations and budget. The brief can cover simple things such as the number of bedrooms or bathrooms through to more abstract concepts such as how you want the building to feel when you live in it. Creating a detailed clear brief is an incredibly important process as it sets the project off in the right direction.

## Stage 2 - Concept Design

Building on these initial discussions we create a series of sketch ideas focusing on space planning and overall form. This is usually in the form of 2D sketch plans and is sometimes accompanied with 3D block models to indicate scale and massing. These are presented alongside a set of precedent images tailored specifically to you and your project. After discussing these proposals you select one or two to be taken forward for further development.

## Stage 3 - Developed Design

During this stage we appoint the full design team, which could include quantity surveyors, structural, mechanical and electrical engineers, as well as any specialist consultants specific to your project. Working as a team we develop these concept designs and if we haven't already, this is where we move from 2D to 3D and start creating visuals and virtual reality experiences. We hold regular progress meetings with you, the client, to get your input on the design and together we shape the direction of the project. During these meetings we use the visuals and virtual reality to illustrate all aspects of the design from overall layout to materials and lighting. We also discuss costs and expected timescales. If the project requires it, we would submit for planning approval at the end of this stage.

## Stage 4 - Technical Design

This stage is about the production of information with each design discipline producing a set of detailed drawings which will enable the contractor to price against and ultimately build from. It is at this stage where final decisions regarding the specification of materials, fixtures and fittings are made. To make these decisions easy for our clients, we use a combination of virtual reality environments, photo realistic CGIs alongside physical material samples and showroom visits. At the end of this stage we will provide Building Control a set of drawings to obtain prior approval for the building works.

## Stage 5 - Construction

After the tender process, where we obtain prices from at least four contractors, the selected contractor will begin the construction of the project. Throughout this stage we will manage the contractor, monitor site progress and keep you regularly updated throughout. At key milestones we will take you on guided tours of the site and provide you with background information on the technical aspects of the build. Depending on the type of project, weekly progress reports may be produced and provided in addition to updates provided over the phone.

## Stage 6 - "Happily Ever After"

After fully testing and inspecting the project (a process known as snagging) and allowing the contractor time to address any issues raised, we invite you to move into your new home. We will guide you through your new home familiarising you with any new appliances or technology that have been installed. Once complete you are free to sit back and enjoy your home. Should you need us, we will remain on hand to answer any questions or queries you may have and in a year's time we will come back to visit and conduct a Post Occupancy Evaluation to ensure that all your needs have been met and if there is anything we can do to improve our service.

extensions

**Arbery Road**

**Morgan Street**

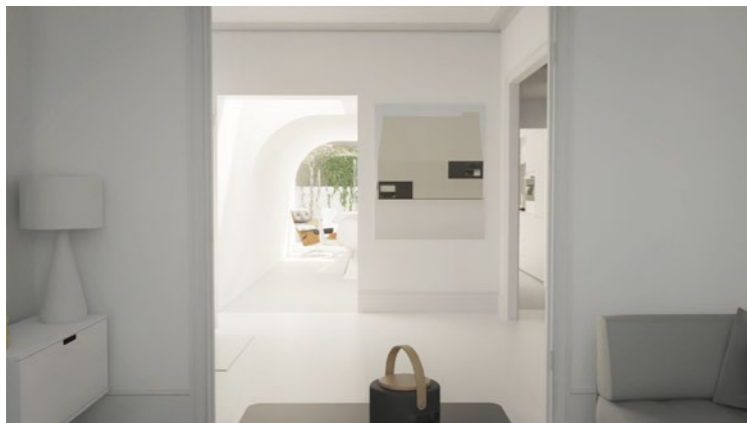
**Antill Road**

# Arbery Road

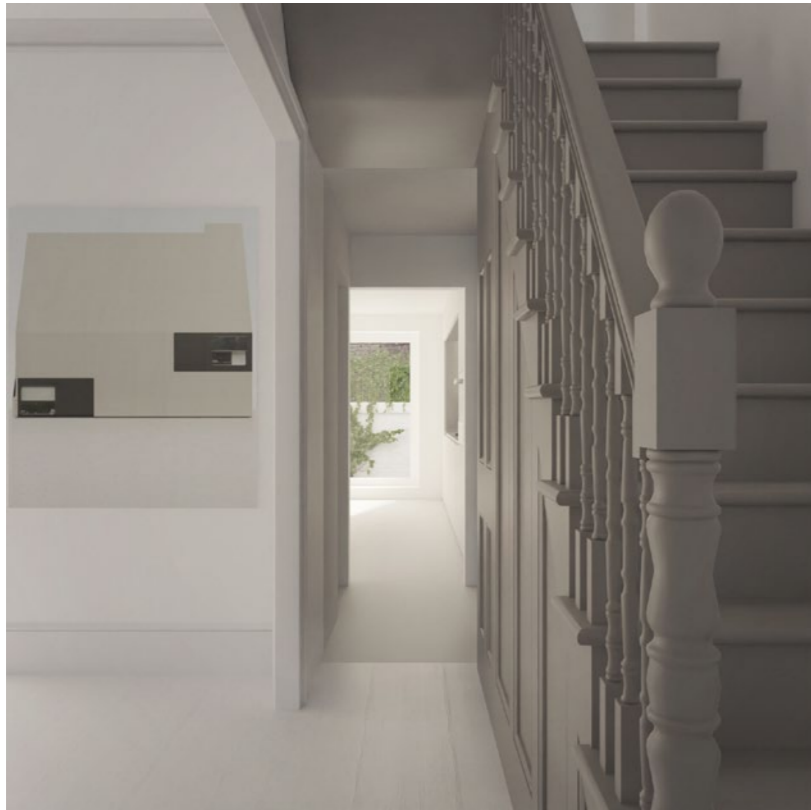
The clients wish to extend their kitchen/diner with a “super minimal” interpretation of a side extension typical of this kind of Victorian terraced house. One caveat is that it should not be overbearing for their neighbours. Our solution turns this restriction into an architectural opportunity: Curving a new section of roof down to meet the existing garden wall reduces the bulk externally, while forming a cosy, yet sculptural, space inside.

A restricted palette of whites and greys unifies the old and new parts of the house, creating a calm retreat from the busy city. The layering of spaces from the front to the back of the house lends a sense of depth and spaciousness.

Value: est. £70,000









# Morgan Street

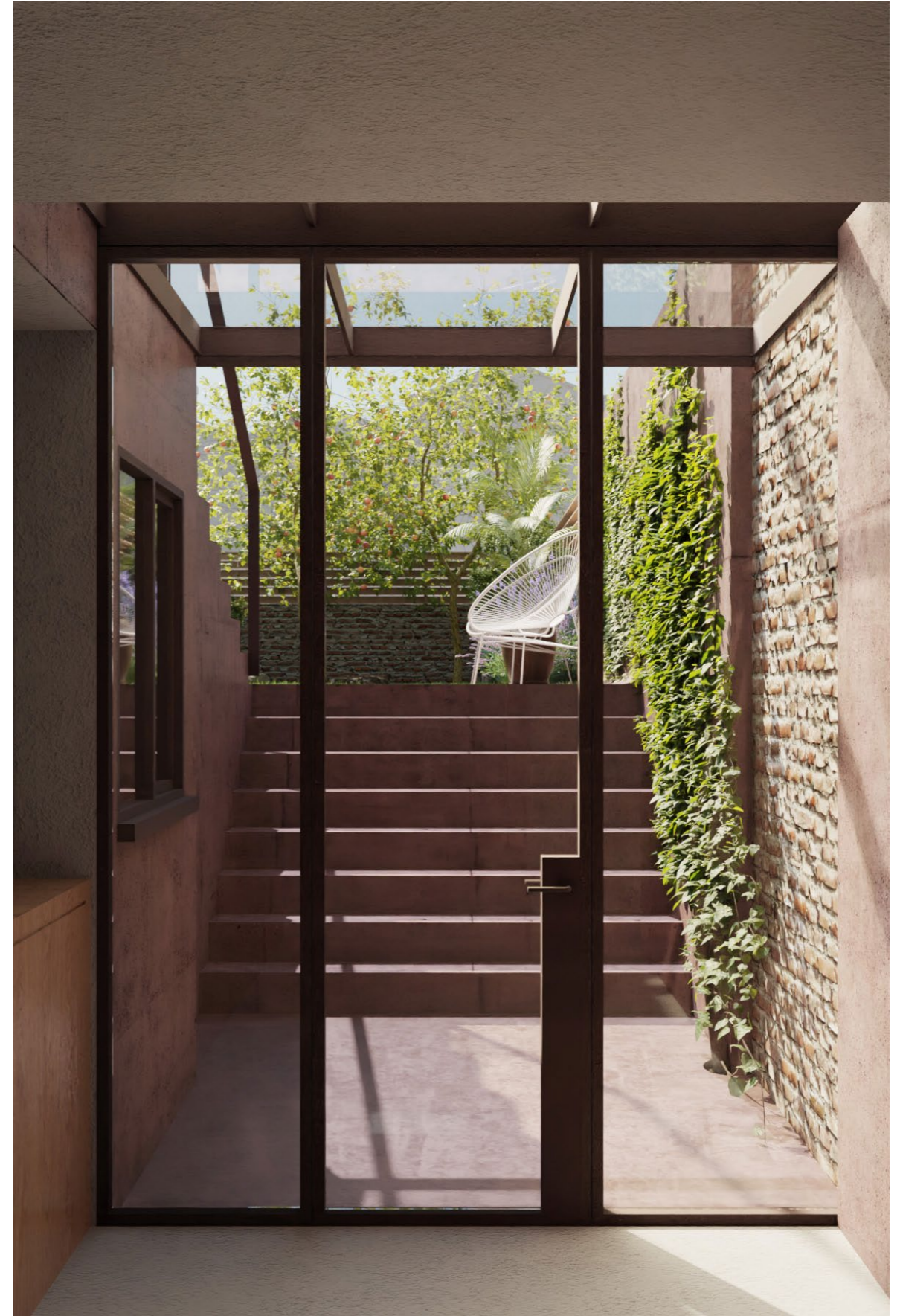
The rear of the property had accumulated an ad hoc set of additions. We were approached to bring the envelope up to modern standards and give the facade a coherent architectural identity. At the same time, the client wants to improve the connection of the house with the garden and bring more light into the basement kitchen. We propose to insert new steps and a canopy made from coloured concrete which make up one sculptural element to organise the space.

Installing triple glazed units, re-insulating and re-cladding the existing extension in handmade clay tiles will increase the thermal performance of the building, reducing heating costs and improve its sustainability credentials.

Value: est. £80,000









# Antill Road

The project looks to reconfigure the downstairs of the property to create a space which truly connects with the garden. The result is a contemporary take on the classic conservatory. This steel and glass rear extension combines with a side extension to create a light, bright interior space which is as much a part of the garden as it is the house. Using solar control glass and opening roof lights, the space allows for good natural ventilation moderating the temperature during the summer months. A new bedroom is also proposed in a mansard roof extension. To see this property in virtual reality please follow this [link](#).

Value: est. £120,000





new builds

**Richmond House**

**New Farm**

**Norfolk House**



# Richmond House

Richmond House is a stunning contemporary property which provides our client with a 'forever' family home and capitalises on the natural features of its location overlooking Richmond Park in South West London. MBH was responsible for all aspects of the project - architecture, interiors and landscape design - from concept to completion.

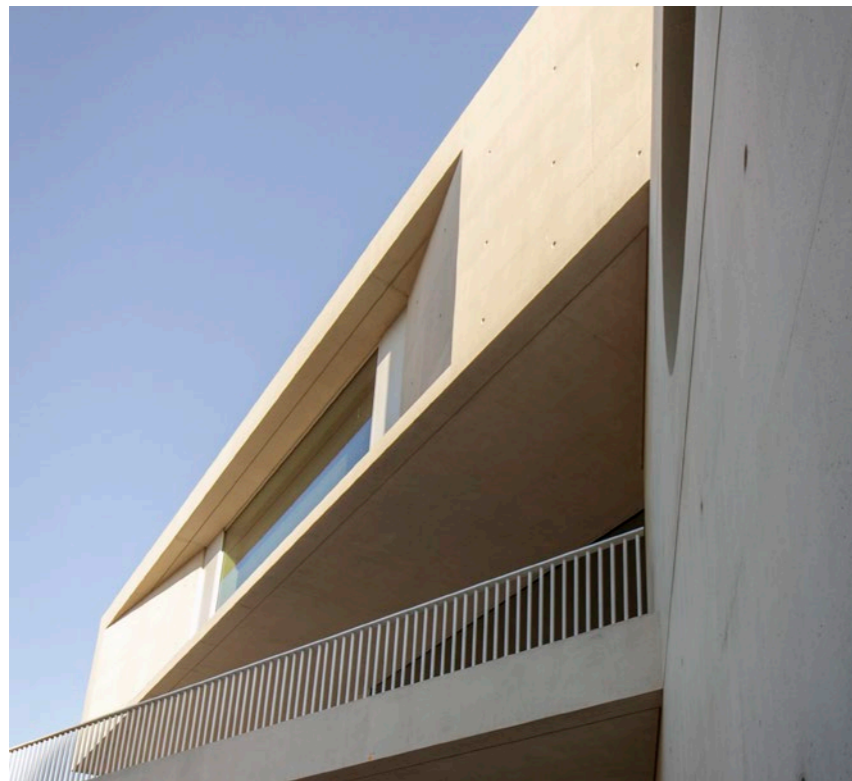




richmond house cont.

The client wanted spacious, contemporary living accommodation for their large family. Initially, refurbishment of the existing house was envisaged but after some design feasibility work it was decided to investigate the potential of a new house. It was at this point MBH were invited to participate in a limited competition to chose an architect. Our design proposal was remarkably close to the finished building.

On commencing design, we immediately recognised the exceptional possibilities of the site. The existing house sat towards the front of the site so that it overshadowed its back garden. Our first move was to push the proposed house to the back of the site to create a south facing main garden overlooked by the principal family rooms. Furthermore, the upper storeys would benefit from uninterrupted views across the park. We subtly twisted the elevations to acknowledge this difference generating a dynamic building form.



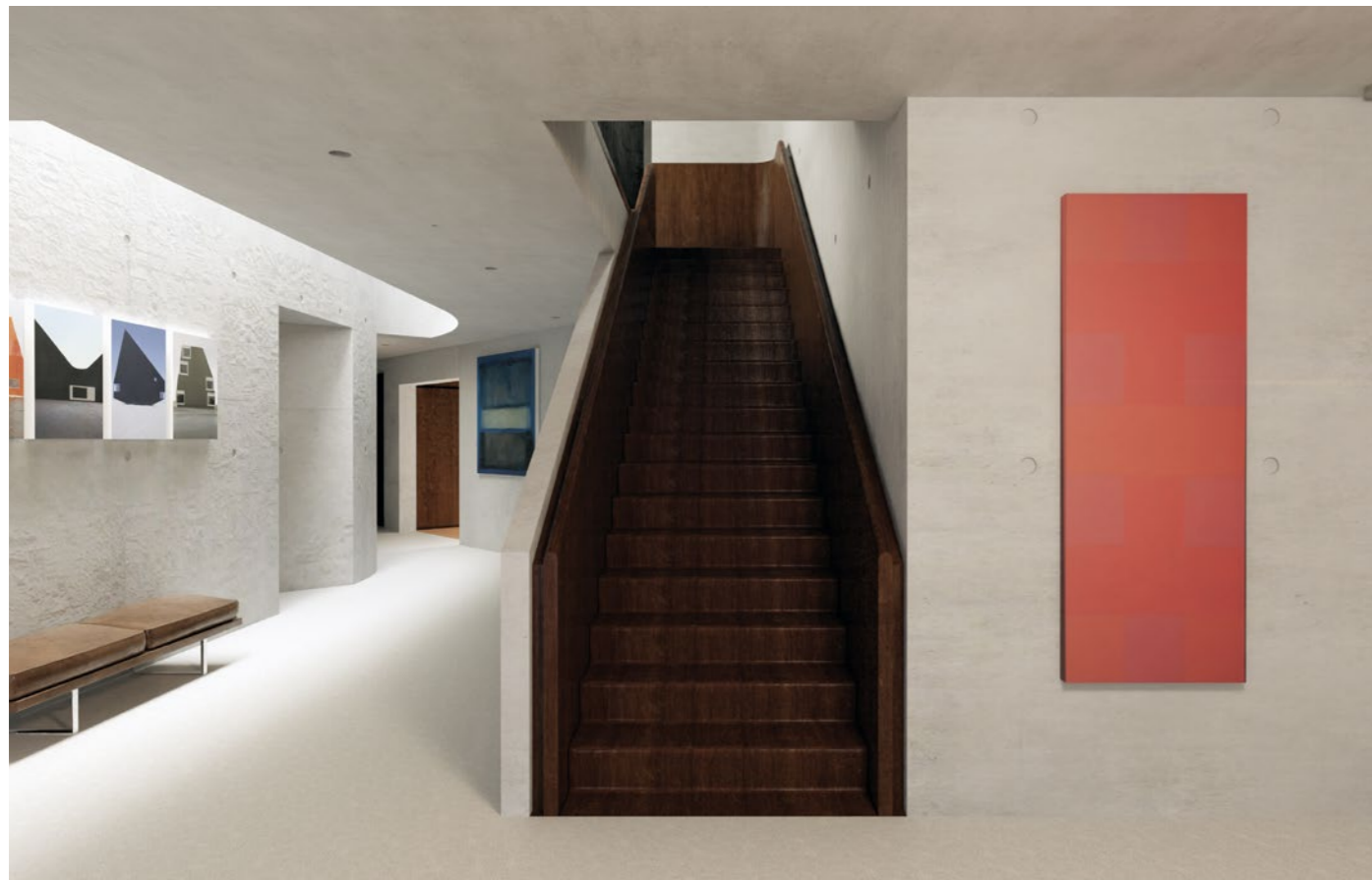


richmond house cont.

The brief for the interior was akin to a diplomatic residence requiring family rooms as well as formal entertaining spaces and an office. We had to work hard to seamlessly interweave the needs of each.

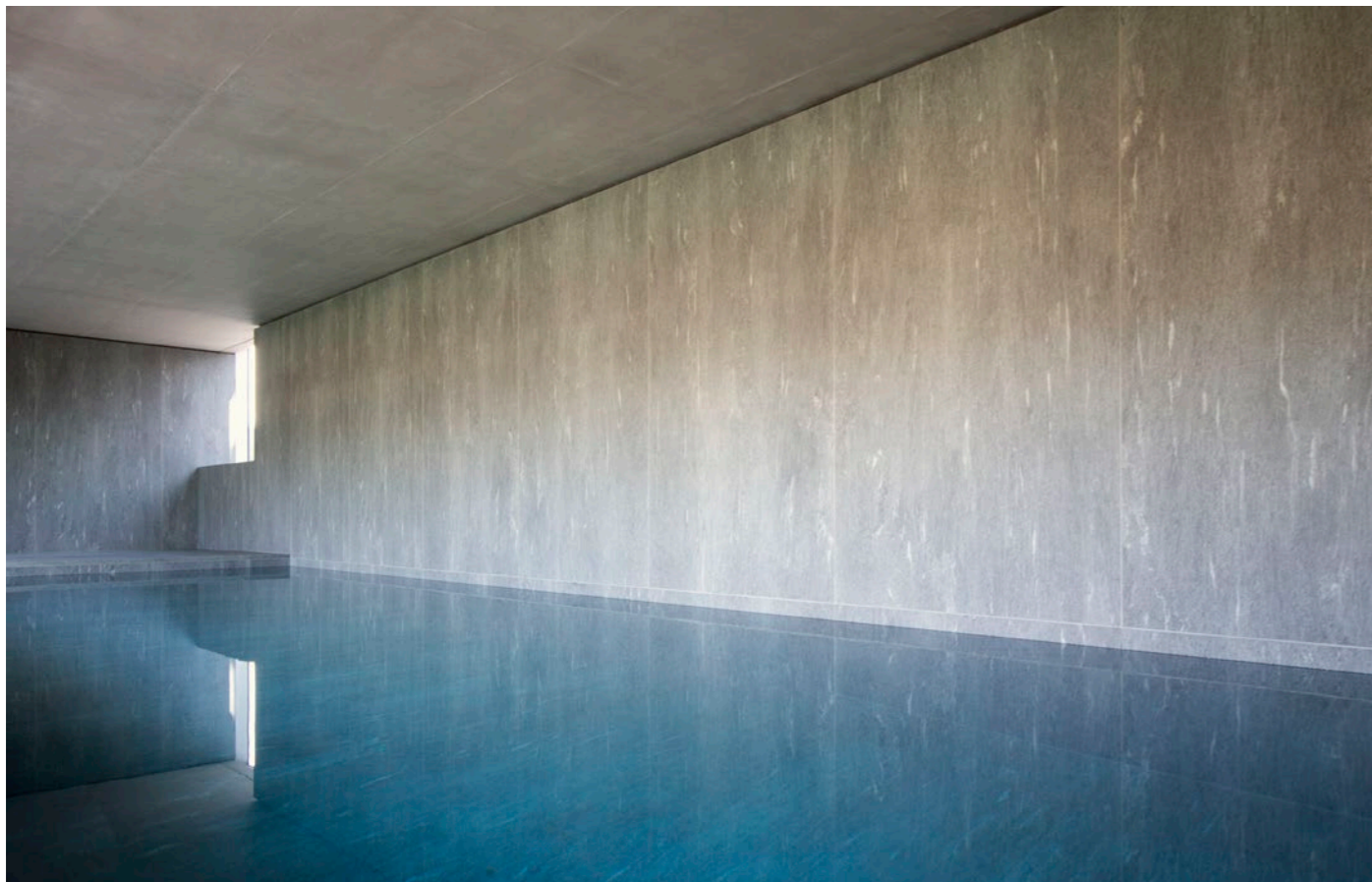
One feature which works particularly well in the completed building is the creation of separate characters for the family and formal living spaces through the use of different ceiling heights. The family room has a lower ceiling yet, at 13m wide, still feels intimate. The formal living room by contrast is impressively airy with a 3m soffit.

It is a house full of moments which make you pause and appreciate. It will offer much to its occupants as they live in the building through the seasons. As time passes sunlight will play at different angles across the beautifully crafted concrete. It is a house which explores calmness and dynamism; the domestic and the monumental.





richmond house cont.









# New Farm

The site looks east over a valley. Locating the house in the centre of the site, we set a walled garden to the south. The main part of the house forms an L-shape so the principal rooms enjoy a dual aspect over the valley and the garden.

The driveway leads down from the road through a densely planted copse. This provides privacy for the owners and forms a backdrop for the house when viewed from the valley. Two lower wings containing garages and a gym serve to enclose an entrance courtyard. Passing through the front door you enter a grand triple height hall with framed views over the valley. From there your eye is led to southwards to views









new farm cont.

of the garden. Moving towards the view you enter an informal living room which in turn leads to the kitchen and dining space. Generous sliding glazed doors run the length of the room so the space flows out to the garden.

The design is a contemporary interpretation of a traditional manor house incorporating something of the picturesque spirit of the Arts and Crafts movement. The grander brick frontage faces outwards while the entrance courtyard is more intimate in scale. The form of the building is complimented by the use handmade bricks and tiles made from locally-sourced clay.

Set in 13 acres, the property benefits from five en suite bedrooms, cinema room, gym, spa, indoor and outdoor pools, wild meadows, formal gardens and tennis court. The perfect country home.









# Norfolk House

Norfolk House has been designed to provide a practical and comfortable escape from bustling city life to the peace and tranquillity of the countryside. It is smart, sensible and homely – a contemporary take on the crofter's cottage – combining the charms of a rural setting with the best of modern design.

It offers flexible living space that can be tailored to work as a main, second, or holiday home. The property offers four to six bedrooms. Two of the bedrooms could alternatively serve as a large home office and playroom, respectively. We have analysed the spaces thoroughly to make





**norfolk house cont.**

them work as hard and as efficiently as possible, minimising excess and wasted space.

The interior employs local materials where possible to reduce the building's carbon footprint. The pallet of materials is refined and restrained, utilising timber and boarded shuttered concrete to give the internal spaces warmth whilst keeping the environments calm and simple.

Externally, the local vernacular of timber boards and clay tiles is invoked, with handmade bricks used walls and paths within the landscape.

Air source heat pumps are concealed in the roof space which provided a sustainable source of heating for the building. Photovoltaic cells are integrated with the tiles and contribute to the energy consumption of the building. Batteries within the garage store this energy when not in use.











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