

KNOCKROON: A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EAST AYRSHIRE

www.knockroon.com

Anne and Ian Hope gave Arran Civic Trust an insight into the Master Plan and development of Knockroon, supported by the Prince's Foundation, which in partnership with other bodies bought Dumfries House and estate for £45M. The house was built by the Adam Brothers and with superb furniture designed for the house by Chippendale and Scottish furniture makers. Knockroon is being built on the outskirts of Cumnock. The Master Plan was drawn up following a weeklong consultation with many different stakeholders. Zero C involved in designs, as they were in the Poundbury buildings in Dorset and the Olympic Village in Weymouth.

The designs of houses are typical of Ayrshire houses of the late 17th century to the mid 19th century. **The aim is to have a real sense of place.** A register of typologies has been drawn up to include such things as gateposts, doors and external fittings, all of traditional designs. 770 dwellings will be built over 15-25 years and the pace of sales will determine the pace of build.

Some clear criteria are in the Master Plan.

1. Walkable neighbourhood, building a sense of community.
2. Mix of sizes and types of dwellings. For all ages and backgrounds. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedrooms, flats and houses.
3. Workshops and workspaces within the development.
4. Demand important
5. Good connections to public transport. Auchinleck railway station is 1 mile away.
6. Slow down traffic especially cars so development pedestrian led. Minimisation of road signage, Roads that encourage slow speed; narrow and with bends. Few signs, which reduce costs and maintenance. The Scottish government is backing this.
7. Designed to suit local climate.
8. Natural materials if possible
9. Higher density – get to know people. Less land, share heat through clusters of homes.
10. Sustainability. Long-term view. Fostering community.
11. 1st April 2011 commenced. Aiming for 35 houses initially. 19 different house types. 15 units built, all sold.
12. Blend of types, for example different ceiling heights. All, except the flats, have garages.
13. Sustainability in the homes too. Gas condensing boilers. Every house has a log-burning stove.
14. Gardens designs involved with Scottish Wildlife Trusts.
15. Local supplies.

770 units altogether. Details for 100 to include grocer, 2 retail units and 12 work spaces. A dental practice bought one house last October and already has 1500 patients registered.

The importance of the kerb appeal of windows and traditional roof detail of slate. Design into rear elevations as well. Makes for an interesting townscape. Alloy gutters. Small details considered important, such as coloured window margins. As the street scene matures it is comfortable as a place to live.

Plenty of interest in Scotland. NAC planners have visited. Recent developments include the building of a small timber house with students. 12 students helping develop buildings on the Dumfries House estate. Includes 60-bed accommodation to encourage youth groups and others to visit the estate. Hospitality training centre. Engineering is included with sawmill, joinery block and stonemasonry.

Hope Homes is a family business, 25 years old. Responsible for 1000 homes, employing 90 people.

Sally Campbell
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