

Project Name Rothienorman, Mixed Use Development

Organisation Scotia Homes

Date Completed March 2011

Web Links www.scotia-homes.co.uk



Project Summary

Glenside is a mixed use urban development on a brownfield site in Aberdeenshire. The site was a former railway station and industrial site fabricating farm machinery. The development comprises a total of 71 houses that are a mixture of housing sizes and tenures. These have been provided alongside 5000 sq ft of commercial space including a café / restaurant, 6 shops / office spaces and an integrated work / home property.



Issue / Challenge

- Build a development that is 'of the area' to result in a sustainable community.
- Develop a range and mix of housing that meets a wide range of needs, particularly for low cost ownership.
- Provide an element of business use to offset the 40 jobs lost from the closure of a factory.
- Apply New Urbanist principles to meet and improve on the existing design brief for the site.

Different / New Way of Working

- Developers have created a place by making minor modifications to standard housing types that emphasise the local vernacular in terms of materials, scale, colour and window proportions, and which prioritises the pedestrian over the car.
- The standard of property built could be sold privately or rented socially.
- Those designing the project had to change the attitudes of their colleagues who wanted allocated parking spaces for each property.
- Consultation with the community resulted in demonstrable changes to the proposal.
- Developers worked with the local authority to meet the principles of the design brief but flexibility in it's application contributed to the project's success. The design brief required the site to be split into distinct sections for residential and commercial. Developers however, sensitively integrated the commercial requirement into the whole site to enable commercial delivery of the project.



Resource Implications

- Investment of developer time in visit to Poundbury and attendance at Princes Foundation seminars and workshops.

Key Outcomes

- Development was commercially successful throughout the economic downturn.
- Development completed and occupied.
- Creation of a mixed and balanced community, which is integrated into the existing settlement and which reflects local architecture and character.

Lessons Learnt / Tips

- Colleagues within the organisation, such as technical, sales and marketing, also need to buy into the principles.
- Standard house types can be modified appropriately to the context, e.g. external material specification, house type and road design.
- Lessons learnt fed into subsequent projects to achieve continuous improvement.

Judges' Comments

The Judges were extremely impressed with the achievement of a mixed use development that fits well into the existing context, has been commercially successful and demonstrates the attitudes and behaviours that represent a positive planning culture.

The application of a design led approach, in consultation with the community, has resulted in the development of a distinctive place: One that draws on and works with the existing local building vernacular in terms of scale, materials and colours without appearing pastiche; and where standard approaches to road design have been challenged to create streets that are not dominated by the car, are well connected and that provide a mix of active uses with clear distinctions between public and private space. The house types built meet the local demand and the range provides flexibility of occupancy, not simply for private sale or social rent. The layout mixes residential with commercial providing for new ways of living and working. This longer term perspective has helped the commercial viability of the site through the recession, with the majority of the development now built and occupied. We felt this entry promotes the benefits of doing things differently and being innovative, for example working to change the attitudes of the company's sales team and contractors. The developer also showed a commitment to implementing lessons learnt in other projects across Scotland.

The Judges commend the variety of outcomes achieved by this development : a quality place, community involvement, commercial success and an enabling culture. We therefore consider this entry worthy of the recommendation for overall winner.



Relevant Planning Policies

- Site zoned for residential & commercial development in the local plan.
- Initial development brief drawn up by local authority.

Further Information

www.scotland.gov.uk/saqp2010

www.scotia-homes.co.uk/home/dev_home.asp?did=26