

**Local Value-Add Case Study**  
**Maidenhill Development**  
**Masterplan**

*Adding local value and enhancing local impact  
of new housing in Glasgow's Newton Mearns*

Project: **Maidenhill development masterplan**

Contract value: **circa £150m**

## A masterplan for Maidenhill

### **Bringing multiple developments together into one cohesive place**

When multiple builders own development land, there's always potential that they'll work in silos, creating plans that don't come together as a cohesive whole. From the outset, however, the development of land on the outskirts of Newton Mearns in Glasgow was subject to a large-scale cooperative process that brought landowners, housing developers and the community together.



#### **THE BACKGROUND**

East Renfrewshire Council approved a development framework for the Maidenhill Strategic Development Opportunity presented by 85ha of greenbelt land in Newton Mearns in January 2014. Created with the co-operation of all the landowners, including housing developers Cala Homes and Taylor Wimpey, it set out the Council's vision for high quality place making and an integrated green network.

While it was never intended to offer a detailed plan for building on the site, it nonetheless laid the groundwork in terms of the conditions future development would be required to meet. That, together with significant community engagement once plans began to be laid, helped to ensure the creation of 850 new homes would be delivered sensitively and with the needs of the community in mind.

## PLANNING TO CREATE A PLACE FOR COMMUNITY

East Renfrewshire Council appointed Anderson Bell Christie to liaise with each of the developers as they worked up their proposals for their land. The idea was to identify opportunities for better interface between the developments, and to spot and address points of tension before they became issues.

Creating the masterplan also involved input from a range of other agencies, including Scottish Water, Scottish Natural Heritage, Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership and SEPA, as well as the council's roads, education and planning departments.

The team's initial considerations were shared at a community consultation day in July, and at another in August, during which draft masterplan proposals were on display. Both events offered local people the chance to ask questions and offer comments, some of which had a direct impact on the next iteration of proposals – for example, changing the positions of some proposed paths.

The council and master plan team also met with the local Youth Forum to gather their views. At their suggestion, the plan was altered to accommodate specific external space for young people.

A number of key documents also had a direct impact on the formation of the masterplan, including the Climate Change (Scotland) Act, the National Planning Framework for Scotland and the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan.

In addition, the council had been working with the Glasgow Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership to make Integrating Green Infrastructure a key part of development planning – a collaboration that was to prove extremely important to local communities anxious to preserve something of the green nature of the site.

The eventual plan, incorporating elements like access routes for walking and cycling, habitat corridors to encourage biodiversity and protect local wildlife, multi-functional open spaces for the whole community to enjoy and a 'green spine' through the centre of the development in part allayed concerns about loss of natural habitats and publicly-accessible green spaces.

Additional elements, like a new non-denominational school and religious centre, added community value to plans by helping to create an integrated place, rather than a collection of houses.

“Maidenhall was a fairly large greenbelt release, and there were real community concerns associated with the impact of building around 1,000 new homes. Knowing that development was going to happen, East Renfrewshire Council planning directorate appointed us to work with the community, to ensure we took them with us through the process.”

**Karen Anderson**, Masterplanner,  
Anderson Bell Christie



## A DEVELOPMENT TO ENHANCE LOCAL LIVES

*A new urban quarter within East Renfrewshire providing a high quality built environment that maintains and builds upon the area's existing qualities. It will be a socially inclusive community providing a range of house tenures, types and sizes to meet local needs. It will provide an attractive and distinctive landscape setting that will enhance the green network. It will ensure the incorporation of local services and community facilities to serve the existing and growing community. It will ensure sustainability is a core component of all aspects of the design and all steps will be taken to create a well planned and desirable place to grow.*

### **East Renfrewshire Council vision for the Maidenhill Masterplan**

The first phase of development from CALA Homes and Taylor Wimpey was given planning permission in June 2017. The £150m development would deliver 834 new homes, including 209 affordable properties, as well as the green spine and an entirely new primary school for the area.

Planned total open spaces amounted to approximately the size of 19 football pitches, with 'pocket parks' created throughout the development.

The developers also promised contributions towards local community halls, libraries, community healthcare and provision and sports grounds, halls and centres, as well as a contribution of land for the construction of a community faith facility.

Work started on site in February 2018, and official groundbreaking for the new Maidenhill Primary School followed in May.

A partnership with local charity East Renfrewshire

Good Causes pledged a donation of £50 for each of the first 185 homes to sell on the site. And a local history group was invited to advise on the official names for the first few phases to be created.

Community partnerships have continued, with builders CALA and Taylor Wimpey working with local primary schools to create and bury a time capsule on the site and making a donation of construction-themed play equipment to the pupils of nearby Isobel Mair Primary School.

A Christmas toy drive supported local families in need, and when Miller Homes joined the consortium of developers at the beginning of 2020, it boosted the funds pledged to East Renfrewshire Good Causes by a further £3,400.

Together, the three developers working at the Maidenhill site have created and maintain a website that keeps the local community informed of news and developments and maintaining the lines of communication and engagement they've worked hard to develop from the outset.



## BUILT FOR LOCAL LIVING AND LOCAL LIVES

The Maidenhill masterplanning and development process is an example of what can be achieved when everyone concerned in development planning takes the time to work and act together. It shifted the emphasis from individual elements, like house styles and street layouts, to a broader view. It aimed to create a whole place, not just a collection of homes. That meant thinking about the how people wanted to live, not just where.

Buy-in from everyone involved, from the council's own planning department to the individual house developers, from advisory bodies like SEPA and Scottish Water to organisations like Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership, was the vital ingredient to success.

*"It was a good team," says Karen Anderson. "The council's planning team was really engaged, working positively to take the project forward. And I think we all understood that the time put in would be beneficial in the long term.*

*"It's easier to be in there at the beginning than to be dealing with problems as they arise. So it's worth trying to get people round the table. Because in many new housing development projects, outside of large scale regeneration or masterplanning projects, people don't sit around the table and talk about where the connectivity might be.*

*"It's not about urban designers interfering and making life difficult – there's a benefit. It's about talking to each other. Involving the community. Yes, there are going to be tensions in these conversations. But it's a great way to take developments forward."*

*"The key victory in this process is in getting housing that is integrated with community facilities and community green space, and that considers how homes overlook green space and each other. That level of integration between new private developments doesn't always happen."*

**Karen Anderson**, Masterplanner, Anderson Bell Christie

## MAIDENHILL AT A GLANCE

- £150m investment in developing homes for the community
- Circa 1,000 homes, including flats, houses and affordable housing
- Integrated green spaces and habitat corridors
- £12.5m primary school
- More than £12,000 in support for East Renfrewshire Good Causes charity
- New community religious centre
- Multi-purpose games area for children and young people



*This case study was prepared by Construction Scotland Innovation Centre on behalf of the Scottish Construction Leadership Forum – March 2021.*

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