

PRESS RELEASE

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OREGON ERECTS FIRST AFFORDABLE CODE 5 ECO-HOME

The first affordable eco-home for the mass market took a step closer to reality when the 4 bed room "Aurora" house type (a joint concept between South Lanarkshire College (SLC) and developers Dawn Homes Ltd) was erected by timber frame designers and manufacturers Oregon Timber Frame Ltd.

The location is on the campus of South Lanarkshire College in East Kilbride, Scotland, where this exciting and unique public-private partnership project, to construct an affordable low carbon eco-home - a first for the Scottish house building industry – was recently completed.

This is the first time a mass house builder in Scotland has constructed an affordable, replicable, low-energy, low-carbon house that meets the requirements of level 5 in the Code for Sustainable Homes and also meets the predicted requirements of building standards for 2013 and 2016 in Scotland.

Building standards for domestic houses and commercial buildings are going to get tougher by increments over the next seven years, with changes in 2010, 2013 then 2016. By 2016, the proposals are that new domestic houses will need to be "net zero carbon" to contribute to meeting government targets to reduce carbon emissions.

The challenge for mass house builders therefore is to make changes to design, development and construction of new housing to meet these rapidly-approaching targets.

This house meets these demands by demonstrating that:

- it is affordable
- it has been built by a mass-house builder
- it is able to be replicated sensibly on a housing estate (i.e. is not a one-off design)
- it is genuinely very low-energy, very low-carbon
- it meets exceptional insulation and air tightness criteria
- it has the most up-to-date technologies for air heat exchange and energy transfer from the ground.

Technical Director of Oregon, Robin Dodyk, explained the design approach taken by the company:

"By understanding the key role that a highly insulated, airtight timber frame plays in meeting Code for Sustainable Homes standards, and designing the principles in right from the start, we have helped SLC and Dawn Homes, along with their 20+ other private sector partners, produce a house that is both low-carbon and commercially viable."

During the design process Oregon drew on knowledge and experience gained from their earlier involvement in numerous research and construction projects on highly insulated frames (both open and closed options), air tightness and thermal bridging. All of these are important factors in achieving highly efficient structures and the principles were incorporated in Oregon's large panel / floor cassetted / roof on the deck / crane erect system, used in the creation of the "Aurora".

A major driver for Oregon was to design a product that could be manufactured in the company's Selkirk factory and efficiently assembled on site, using readily available materials, all of which made a major contribution to cost effectiveness.

Mr Dodyk concluded:

"By choosing to exploit fully the potential of timber frame, rather than simply relying on add-on technology, this holistic project is expected to lead the way as an exemplar in providing affordable, sustainable housing for the volume social and private markets."

The four-bedroom detached house is scalable, allowing smaller or larger properties and semi-detached or terraced styles to be produced as the market demands. As part of the project, Glasgow Caledonian University will be monitoring the house to provide live data, evidencing the effectiveness of the eco-friendly design.

As well as providing a pilot for affordable eco-housing, the Aurora house will also act as a training venue for students of building technologies at SLC.

Oregon is currently working on projects in both the public and private sectors up and down the UK, including various pilot projects for Code for Sustainable Homes, as they help house builders realise the full benefits of Timber Frame construction.

Based in Selkirk in the Scottish Borders, Oregon has the capacity to produce 6000 units per year and has both FSC and PEFC Chain of Custody certification for timber sourcing.

ENDS

Photography attached. Captions: "Completed Code 5 mass market house"
"Closed Panel",
"Insulated Roof Cassette"
"Trussed Roof being craned in".

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