

URBAN DESIGN 2014

Completion Date: January 2014

“English Quarter” - Samara, Russia, Samara, Russia WATG

The client's vision is to develop an affordable first-home community within the southern urban periphery of the city of Samara. The community provides a variety of residences, ranging from higher-density perimeter block apartment buildings to medium-density town houses and semi-detached units, to low-density detached single-family houses. Alongside the main retail provision of the adjacent shopping centre, the plan provides social and civic amenities in a walkable neighbourhood setting. Such a mixed-use, mixed density community, integrated with a regional shopping centre presents a completely new model of residential development in Southern Russia. The deliberately conservative and unassuming architectural character responds to the client's aspiration to establish affordable housing units that respond to Russian perceptions of an “English Quarter.”

The development approach creates a well defined open space strategy that provides a high-value recreation and visual amenity, functions as a sustainable urban drainage and water management system, which connects to the adjacent river. In addition, the network of green spaces serves as snow storage areas in the long winters. Finally, the network connects the four individual neighbourhoods of the community, each comprising a mix of apartments, town houses, and single family houses, along with neighbourhood retail, civic and educational support facilities.

The system of green buffers between the different neighbourhoods facilitates a flexible phasing strategy for residential products that are relatively new to the particular market segments the developer wishes to attract. Furthermore, each individual neighbourhood can be adapted to suit particular future market demands.

At the heart of the development, a central amenities area satisfies community-wide civic, social and educational requirements. Together these also provide local employment opportunities. Social cohesion and accessibility are further promoted through a site-wide cycle network and a public transport system connecting to Samara's existing network.