

## **Koto Design Adds Modular Custom Homes To Their Growing Portfolio - UIST**

Located in the Claddach Valley, a small sparsely populated township in the north west of North Uist, in the Outer Hebrides, the 11 Acre plot looks out over a tidal lagoon fed by the wild North Atlantic.

The owners Ewan (a former Olympian Curler) and his wife Amy Macdonald embarked on this project to give them a generous getaway for their family to spend time away from their home in Inverness and embrace island life, lay down roots and adopt the cultural and community based ideals of life in North Uist.

Construction on the Island is severely limited by supplies, labour and a two hour ferry ride to access the nearest port of Lochmaddy, coupled with the harsh and unpredictable Hebridean weather conditions. A traditional onsite build would be a costly and very time consuming process.

Architects, Koto Design and construction experts Unnos Systems proposed a modular build, a sculptural, minimal house, where the majority of construction would take place in a factory in the Welsh countryside. The building would then be shipped in 7 prefabricated modules, travelling 570 miles across land and sea to reach their final destination, to the remote, other-worldly island of Uist to be assembled.

After material procurement, the build began in April 2022 in Wales and was handed over to Ewan and Amy in October 2022, fully furnished and ready to be called home.

The building takes a fabric first approach to sustainability with passive house standards of airtightness and insulation, triple glazing and all electric heating and water systems. Crucially the embodied carbon was a top priority with all of the primary structure being constructed from bespoke engineered timber box beams and pumped with cellulose insulation. This provides an incredibly strong structure to withstand the extreme wind loads in this location but is also un-compromising in its approach to reducing the amount of carbon emitted during the build.

Modular or prefabricated is a process of building construction using modules that are pre-built in a factory then transported and assembled on site.

One of the main advantages of modular homes is that the building techniques, coupled with technological developments allow for the designs to become innovative.

Central to the concept is the way Koto house coexists in harmony with the natural elements inside and out. The house merges with its environment, in a modest and humble manor, yet striking in form, an individually crafted home, made from natural materials.

The Koto House roof pitches all align with the fall of the land making a more sympathetic composition. The wide plot allows one to take full advantage of the beautiful views, light and wide skies. From the site, the distant views look through the inlet, past Vallay Island towards Harris and the edge of the Atlantic Ocean. This view informed the key design elements of the house.

The idea has been to embrace the scenery and moving seascape. Large framed and dramatic windows allow for a continuous dialogue with the outdoors, integrated window seats covered in textured linens. Cosy nooks creating small serene sanctuaries, allowing for hibernation from the ever- shifting, wild weather. Reconnecting the inhabitants to the natural rhythms of nature and the passage of time in their daily lives.

The internal spaces for Koto House are equally matched to the considered exterior form. Thought and design revolve around a deep interest in how the house will be used. Muted earthy tones, natural pigments on the walls, timber floors and natural fabrics provide tactile textures. Colours that harmonise with the landscape chosen to harness the beauty of the outdoors.

The internal floor area is 206 sqm with a large amount of this being dedicated to the central living space, a fluid space dedicated for family and friends to spend time together, making memories, in this breathtaking landscape.

### **Contact.**

For all project and partnership enquiries please contact

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### **Credits.**

Architecture and Design - [Koto Design](#)

Interior design - [Koto Living](#)

Furniture Supply - Koto Living

Photos- Olco Studios

Construction - Unnos Systems

