

review

Upfold Elite  
12.8m

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# Kooringal





Koorinal is the home of a much-loved family beach house on Moreton Island, Queensland, belonging to an Australian couple now living in New Zealand. It's also the name of the couple's new Auckland-based Elite 12.8m, built to Scott Lane Boat Builders' usual exacting standard.



Scott and his team have quite a history with Bill Upfold's Elite designs. *Koorinal* is the sixth custom-built Elite 12m variant to leave Lane's yard, with number seven, a quite different boat, currently under construction.

It was reading about another Scott Lane-built Elite that set the ball rolling for *Koorinal*'s owners. They saw the *Boating NZ* review of *Vantage* (July 2015) and knew immediately it was exactly the sort of vessel they wanted. So they tracked down Bill Upfold at the Auckland On Water Boat Show, then contacted Scott and Letitia Lane, and the seed was sown.

#### SIMPLY STYLISH

"Although not as lavish in the fit out as some of our previous Elites, *Koorinal* reflects exactly what the clients wanted to achieve, and that is a comfortable, no-nonsense cruiser that would always be reliable," explained Scott Lane.

"The specification, within reason, was client-

driven," says designer Bill Upfold, along for the ride on test day. "They knew exactly what they were after: this vessel reflects not only their style, but also the aesthetic of the beach house on Moreton Island."

*Koorinal*'s owners are experienced boaters with yachts, launches and a string of trailer boats in their past. Their last vessel was a 10m outboard-powered catamaran, used to unload people and supplies at their beach house. They shipped the catamaran to New Zealand, where they cruised local waters extensively, selling the boat once their residency criteria had been met.

A custom-built launch like *Koorinal* is a considerable investment, but, say the owners, it reflects their resolve to stay put in New Zealand. While the sedan cat was fine in Queensland as a commuter and overnighter, it was less comfortable in New Zealand's climate and conditions.

So, for their new boat the couple settled on a sedan-style launch: they will do most of their boating together, occasionally inviting friends, and *Koorinal* is perfect since everybody gets an equal



**ABOVE** There's excellent flow between the saloon and generous-sized cockpit.

**LEFT** The shared bathroom is well appointed, as is the galley. There's a lovely, open feel to the saloon; it has a very social layout, and for ease of cleaning, there are no carpets.



Simplicity with function and reliability, without compromising on build quality.



share of space and comfort.

The pair is full of praise for Scott Lane Boatbuilders and Elite Marine: "We are really happy to have the boat – it's just awesome – but we're already missing the relationship with Bill [Upfold] and Scott and Letitia [Lane]!"

"Building *Koorinal* was just the best experience. We loved the process, being involved in the decision making, and heading into the Clevedon countryside to monitor build progress. Scott and Letitia were so generous with their time and even gave us keys to the factory, so we could check out the boat whenever we liked."

"*Koorinal*'s owners really embraced what a custom build is all about," explained Letitia Lane, "and we really enjoyed working with them." The end result is a vessel that everyone – the owners, builders and the designer – is extremely proud of.

*Koorinal* is a good example why Bill Upfold's 12-13m Elite sedan range is



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**ABOVE** *Koorinal* cuts a fine figure on the water.

**ABOVE LEFT** There is plenty of storage in the lazarette. The bait board stows up under the hatch.

**LEFT** Variants of this design have struck a chord with Kiwi boaties. This is the sixth Elite to leave Scott Lane's yard.

**Building *Koorinal* was just the best experience! Scott and Letitia were so generous with their time and even gave us keys to the factory...**



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so popular with Kiwi boaters. It's a manageable size that's easily handled by a couple, economical to run, and it cuts a fine figure on the water.

And since it's a custom build, it can be tailored to a client's needs, while the detailing and build quality will be a notch above that of an average production launch, reflecting its hand-built nature. Craftsmanship is synonymous with the brand.

### QUIETLY COMPETENT

Charging up the harbour at 24 knots, noise from the 480hp Cummins is remarkably muted, even though the vessel has easy-clean timber laminate floors in the saloon – another reference to the beach house, perhaps?

Cruising speed is a slightly more sedate 19-20 knots, at which speed *Kooringal* eats up the sea miles without sipping too much diesel. Zipwake trim tabs adjust the boat's attitude and pair of wipers keep the windscreens clear when it's rough or rainy.

The helm is comfortable with good all-round visibility. The helm console features warm brown leather with a carbon fascia. A pair of 12-inch Furuno MFDs show combinations of navigational, engine and fish-finding data, along with video from the bow and engine room cameras.

There's a lovely, open feel to the saloon. It has a very social layout that includes the helmsman. The galley is aft and there is an easy flow to the cockpit via the bi-fold rear door and rear window which swings up out of the way. When the vessel's underway, everyone is part of the journey.

The saloon table is raised on the port side, giving good sightlines through the windows from the wrap-around seating; there's another settee on the starboard side which has an automotive-style fold-away drinks rest in the rear cushion. A flat-screen TV swings out from the wall and a Fusion stereo provides the sounds via speakers spread around the vessel.

Inside, the décor follows a simple but classy colour palette – the owners' input – focussing on the use of timber with clean, complementary upholstery choices. There are lots of clever custom features, from wooden inserts securing the contents of the domestic-sized fridge, to custom drawers for the dinner set.

Wenge is used for the solid timber cabinetry and the builders

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**BELOW** *Kooringal* cruises comfortably at 20 knots.

**BOTTOM** The vessel's pristine engine room is nicely laid out.



have made generous use of black bean veneer trim, which contrasts nicely with the vessel's cream leather upholstery and matching vinyl head-linings. Opening side windows and skylights provide natural light and ventilation.

Since the owners usually do their boating as a couple, the forward cabin has just two berths – a double and a single, configured in a vee with plenty of under-berth storage. The port cabin has a generous queen-sized berth with storage in hanging lockers, cabinets and under the bed. Both cabins benefit from opening hatches and port lights.

If more accommodation is required, the starboard seat behind the helm makes a good-sized berth.

*Kooringal's* shared bathroom features easy-clean surfaces, a separate shower cabinet and generous proportions.

The engine room's under the saloon sole, with a watertight door at the back of the shower for routine inspections. With no carpet, lifting the floor is easy, and as usual, the well-lit machinery space is pristine and logically laid out. There is no need for a generator aboard *Kooringal*, but an inverter provides 240-volt power via the vessel's house bank of lead-acid batteries. Starting batteries are in a separate bank.

### SPACIOUS COCKPIT

Another reason this model suits the New Zealand boating lifestyle



so well is its spacious, teak-covered cockpit. The transom doors are a cavity design, opening wide enough to pull a dinghy or tender into the cockpit. Cabin-top roof racks can stow paddle boards, kayaks and other water toys, doubling as grab-rails when walking forward to the bows.



## Upfold Elite 12.8m

PRICE AS REVIEWED  
\$POA

DESIGNED BY  
Elite Marine

MANUFACTURED BY  
Scott Lane Boatbuilders  
[www.scottlaneboatbuilders.co.nz](http://www.scottlaneboatbuilders.co.nz)

### HIGHLIGHTS

Simplicity, comfort  
and style

Manageable size  
easily handled by a couple

No-nonsense cruiser  
built to a high standard  
and optimised to suit the  
owners' needs

### SPECIFICATIONS

loa	12.8m
beam	4.3m
draft	approx 1.1m
weight	7,800kg dry
construction	epoxy-wood composite
cabins	2 doubles
bathrooms	1
engine	1 x Cummins QSB 480hp
gearbox and transmission	ZF 85a 2.5:1
fuel	1,200 litres
water	900 litres
holding tank	142 litres
cruising speed	20 knots
max speed	26.5 knots

### WATCH IT



The owners are enthusiastic anglers and the cockpit layout with its wide swim platform lends itself to relaxed, social fishing. Inside the generous lazarette, there's a dedicated rack for fishing rods, space for the roll-up inflatable tender and a place to stow the bait board under the lazarette hatch.

The bait board fits onto a removable stainless-steel stand which, like the demountable dive ladder, slots into sockets on either side of the platform. The stand also accommodates the BBQ.

With an extensive cockpit awning providing shade, there's no rocket launcher, but six through-gunwale rod holders, plus the lazarette and a decent-sized rod locker against the saloon bulkhead, provide ample fishing tackle storage.

Additional fishing features include a transom live bait tank and a fresh and saltwater washdown. There's also a handy basin on the transom with a pullout hot and cold freshwater shower, plus storage for the fenders and Weber barbecue.

To store the catch, or chilled and frozen provisions for an extended cruise, the large bulkhead freezer is complemented by an insulated

locker on the port side of the cockpit. On the starboard side, the locker is deep enough to stow the tender's outboard in an upright position so it's easy to access. All the cockpit lockers have upholstered cushions to sit on.

*Kooringal's* bow treatment differs from previous incarnations of this design. The capstan is mounted inside the anchor locker, below decks, and the anchor passes through the bow rather than over it, so a camera is required to monitor the anchoring process from the helm. You can even wash the mud off the anchor, using the camera to judge when it's clean enough to stow. A bow thruster takes the anxiety out of close-quarters manoeuvring.

### UNIVERSAL APPEAL

In the short time since her owners took delivery of *Kooringal*, the vessel has covered plenty of miles. Her owners clearly love their stunning new vessel and it's easy to see why: like every Elite I have ever reviewed, *Kooringal* is perfectly in tune with New Zealand's boating lifestyle.

That obviously appeals to this Australian couple who now call New Zealand home. **BNZ**