



IHP Design Review Report

Amazing Grace Spaces

DCFW Ref: IHP V

Meeting of 6th July 2018

Review Status

Meeting date
Issue date
Scheme location
Scheme description
Scheme reference number
Planning status

PUBLIC

6th July 2018
13th July 2018
Various
Residential
IHP V
Pre-application

Declarations of Interest

Panel members, observers and other relevant parties are required to declare **in advance** any interests they may have in relation to the Design Review Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCFW's central records.

The panel Chair was advised that Gayna Jones, Chair of the Design Commission for Wales, chairs the IHP Group. Gayna was not present in the meeting. All present at the review were content to proceed following the declarations.

The Proposals

The aim of the project is to provide affordable rent accommodation with support to those that require it using shipping containers converted into 1 bed self-contained apartments; 6 – 10 units over 2 or 3 sites. The project would deliver rented accommodation to those that find it difficult to obtain good quality 1 bed self-contained accommodation at affordable rent and below market price. The units can be sited on brown field sites and can provide a meanwhile use before being relocated on to another site, or permeant sites that are difficult to use due to hard standings already in place that cannot be generally disturbed.

Amazing Grace Spaces believes in prevention management/floating support for tenants to ensure that they have the necessary support if required. It is intended that training in constructing the units will be offered to people who are out of work.

Main Points

This report is not minutes of the full discussion that took place during the review, rather a summary of the key points that have been identified that would help to improve the project and any concerns regarding the funding of the project.

Urgent Design Concerns

- None. (There will be a variety of different design issues associated with each potential site which will need to be addressed.)

Placemaking

Temporary, meanwhile, movable homes

The proposal is designed to be moveable and adaptable to different sites, which provides opportunities for beneficial temporary use of derelict sites, rather than site being left vacant, inactive and vulnerable. Meanwhile use as homes has the potential for sites to make a positive, active contribution to communities instead.

Site specific adaptability

It is positive that the units have a level of flexibility in terms of services and access which allows them to be configured according to specific site conditions.

For each site, the arrangement of the containers should be informed by good site analysis to achieve the best value. The layout should avoid unusable spaces which are not overlooked and could invite anti-social behaviour. Issues of occupant comfort, security, privacy, daylight, ventilation and sense of community will also need to be considered on a site-by-site basis.

Affordable solutions with social value and Well-being

The project offers affordable housing solutions which have numerous social benefits. Communities and places will benefit from problems of homelessness and unemployment being addressed locally.

The project reflects many of the goals and ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. It is a commendable approach which should encourage other organisations and public bodies to work in collaboration with Amazing Grace Spaces.

Stories

The story of the project and its evolution from the charity's experience of working to support homeless people is important, as are the individual stories of the wide variety of otherwise vulnerable people who have been and will be supported by the scheme. These stories have shaped the design and innovation and it is important that they are communicated clearly as they illustrate the people-focussed value of the project.

Integration of innovation

Innovation approach: The proposal uses converted shipping containers to provide a replicable solution for affordable rents which could meet the needs of a variety of otherwise vulnerable people, including homeless, people moving on from temporary shelter or to prevent the need for emergency accommodation in bed and breakfasts. The units are designed to be movable and can, therefore, provide temporary housing and meanwhile use on sites which are difficult to develop, have seen recent demolition or are awaiting development, before being relocated to another site. The approach addresses a wide spread problems of homelessness and demand for low-cost rents which are found across Wales.

It is positive that the constraints of the shipping container have been recognised and worked within, and that they are being used to address the needs of user groups which are compatible with those constraints. The fact that the design of the conversion maintains the structural stability of the container so that it can be transported is also positive; and that the units can be used on sites with difficult ground conditions or where existing ground slabs remain increases replicability.

The approach has a number of social, well-being and economic benefits, including but not limited to:

- Local authority cost savings by reducing need for emergency B&B accommodation
- Reduced vulnerability of homeless
- Skills building through construction training

- Meanwhile use of otherwise redundant sites
- Supporting people to move to more permanent accommodation
- Provides sense of privacy and responsibility for residents
- Supports people back into work
- Provides a fast, scale-able, moveable solution to social need
- Involves people who are often excluded
- Provides secure, safe, temporary accommodation which benefits well-being and will reduce strain on health and social services
- Presents opportunities for collaborative working for public social benefit

Securing a specific site is not crucial to the delivery of innovation in the case of this project, as it has been designed to adapt to a variety of sites.

Next Steps

- Make sure stories are told well to demonstrate the charity's experience, give confidence in the strategy and communicate the breadth of benefits and social value.
- Develop the site specific approach once a site has been confirmed.

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A Welsh language copy of this report is available upon request.

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer Stuart Johnson & Lester Freckleton, Amazing Grace Spaces

Architect/Planning Consultant

Local Planning Authority

Design Review Panel

Chair

Panel

Ed Green

Steve Smith

Ashley Bateson

Amanda Spence

Observing

Greg Jones, Hoare Lea