

Tiny House Deep Dive

Workshop Report - January 2018





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January 2018

Q Shelter with ESC Consulting

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Executive summary

Q Shelter in collaboration with ESC Consulting hosted and facilitated a Deep Dive Session on the role that Tiny Houses might play in the housing system. The Session involved over 40 people spanning private, government, community and academic sectors exploring the potential of tiny houses through the lens of three scenarios:

- an alternative to a 'Tent City' accommodating homeless people and making use of under-utilised Government land
- a congregate living arrangement responsive to the needs of older women
- a 'Granny Flat' scenario using an existing suburban block.

The workshops yielded various ideas and in the process raised challenges and opportunities such as:

- the importance of design and location
- a discussion about whether tiny houses could offer permanent housing or transitional housing or both
- the scope for various tenures including ownership, rental and rent-to-buy arrangements
- a debate about affordability and suggestions about how to lower the unit-cost of tiny houses
- various approaches to finance, management and governance including a potential role for community housing providers and possible body-corporate arrangements
- consideration of infrastructure charging
- engagement with the community and other key stakeholders such as local government
- the need for a consistent and enabling regulatory framework.

The Deep Dive Session yielded suggestions such as a one-stop-shop service to support and enable the growth and development of tiny houses responsive to various needs. The participants saw potential in tiny houses responding to homelessness and the needs of older women. They also considered ways of better utilising existing residential blocks in higher density environments where land costs are relatively high.

The following recommendations emerged:

1. That a Tiny Homes Working Group is formed as a formal network of Q Shelter comprising people who express interest and have a diversity of skills and backgrounds that can assist with the implementation of practical projects and key actions. The role of this group would be to:
 - a. promote and support tiny home solutions
 - b. work with the different levels of Government to progress a favourable and consistent regulatory framework that is supportive of tiny homes
 - c. explore funding and finance options
 - d. advance a Tiny Home One Stop Shop to provide practical support to projects.
2. Advance a practical tiny house project with reference to the scenarios developed in the workshop and possibly with a focus on older women.
3. Run the Deep Dive Session in other LGAs.



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4. All participants and housing champions are encouraged to promote and support the potential of tiny houses as part of a broader housing system and assist with the distribution of resources and information.

The session was energised and openly explored the challenges and opportunities in a spirit of inquiry. It showcased the willingness of private, government, community and academic interests to converge around ideas that have genuine potential to respond to complex challenges. The next steps will involve convening people with the capacity and skills to advance one or a few good ideas. Perhaps it is through enabling real projects, that the policy and regulatory issues come further to light and can be solved or mitigated through purposeful action with real results.



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

During 2016 Q Shelter was fortunate to engage with regional networks and stakeholders in the context of facilitating workshops regarding the development of the Queensland Housing Strategy. During this time, various stakeholders in diverse regions raised the question of the role that tiny homes might play in a broader housing response. There was a sense that tiny homes may offer some opportunities for innovation and yet also the need to build capacity through policy and regulatory reforms and further engagement with the housing industry about what might be possible.

While working to develop a policy statement on tiny homes, [Q Shelter](#) met [ESC Consulting](#) who had assisted with a building permit appeal relating to the siting of a Tiny House on Wheels (THOW) in Brisbane's inner-west. ESC Consulting was working with partners to develop a [Tiny House Planning Resource](#) which has subsequently been published.

This engagement with ESC Consulting resulted in a joint commitment to holding a Deep Dive Session focussed on several scenarios with the purpose of exploring the role and potential of tiny homes in responding to diverse housing needs. This report documents the results of that session and proposes recommendations about next steps.

1.2 About ESC Consulting and Q Shelter

ESC Consulting provides environmental, sustainability and community services for land developers, place-makers and community organisations. ESC Consulting staff are experienced providers of diverse projects including planning projects, place-making projects, research and stakeholder engagement. They also offer social planning and community development expertise.

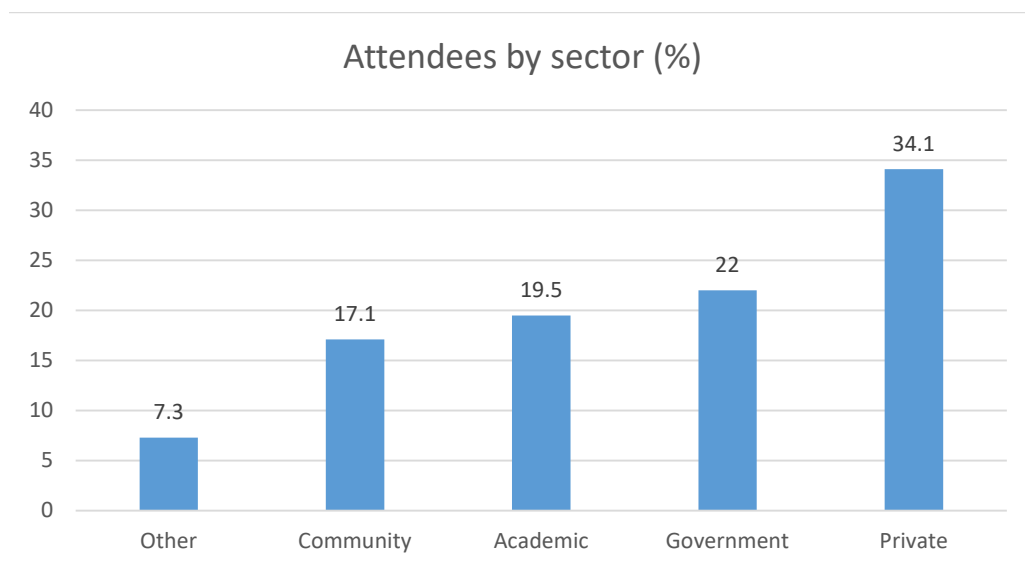
Q Shelter founded over thirty years ago by concerned housing groups determined to see more social and affordable housing for vulnerable Queenslanders. Today, Q Shelter continues to provide an independent and impartial voice on behalf of the housing and homelessness sector, as well as for those who don't have access to secure and affordable housing. Q Shelter also works to strengthen the capacity of community housing providers and specialist homelessness services to achieve strong and effective outcomes.



2. Methodology

The Deep Dive Session was intended to engage a range of stakeholders from private, government and community sectors in exploring the role and potential of tiny homes as a response to housing need.

A total of 47 people attended including facilitators. An overview of attendees (other than facilitators) shows participation from across diverse stakeholder groups (refer to section 8.1 for a full list of attendees):



Note: the percentages in the graph do not include facilitators.

Figure 1: Attendees by sector (%)

The overall process for the Deep Dive Session included the following elements (refer to section 8.2 for the full agenda):

- introductions and a warm up
- presentation of a case study
- video presentation of three scenarios
- small group workshops (two groups on each scenario)
- presentations from workshops
- plenary.

The process was designed to focus on three scenarios. Two small workshop sessions were undertaken by six groups:

- the first workshop focussed on generating and prioritising options; and
- the second workshop focussed on developing a group presentation.

Each group was facilitated; facilitators documented discussions from the workshop in addition to assisting with the poster presentations that were developed by each group. Prior to commencing small group work, all



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participants were offered individual reflection time with a sheet to document their own thoughts about key workshop questions and the scenarios.

The Tiny House Deep Dive Session used the following three scenarios¹:

2.1 Scenario 1: Intentional community for women aged over 55

Janet is 55, divorced and owns her own home. She feels that now that the kids have moved out and she is on her own, the house is too large for her needs. She doesn't want to move away from the neighbourhood where she has all her friends and support networks. Janet is independent, works part time and has a busy social life. She's looking to downsize but is not keen on moving into a traditional retirement village as she likes where she lives and wants to remain an active member of her local community. Janet has been researching alternative housing models including self-managed co-housing projects for over 55s. She's found a lot of examples overseas (France, UK), but would like to find something closer to home!

Janet is also interested in sustainability and reducing her ecological footprint and was very excited when one of her friends mentioned Tiny Houses. During one of their weekly dinners, Janet and her friends discussed the idea of living in a small village of Tiny Houses located close to transport and shops and other amenities. They have started to talk about how they could get a project off the ground in their own neighbourhood.

2.2 Scenario 2: Under-utilised government land

A tent city for homeless people has sprung up outside City Hall and community concerns have put pressure on authorities to deal with the issue. Council has tried to move people on but there is nowhere for them to go. A senior Council representative has heard of a project in Melbourne where tiny transportable homes have been installed on under-utilised public land and managed by a community housing provider. She approached the State's Transport and Housing departments to explore whether this could be a solution for temporarily housing the tent city residents until longer term housing could be sourced.

2.3 Scenario 3: Granny flats revisited

Bob and Linda live within 10kms of the CBD in a three-bedroom house with their two daughters aged 6 and 10. They are exploring how to supplement their current income as they have just found out that Linda is expecting their third child and Bob's sole income will make their budget a little tight once she stops working. They are on a 600sqm block near a main university. They've been thinking about installing a Tiny House on Wheels (THOW) in their backyard to rent out to university students but they've heard that there is currently uncertainty about whether the Council will allow it. They want to be sure that they won't run into any problems with the local council before they go down this track. All the scene-setting presentations from the Deep Dive Session can be downloaded here:

- [Presentation by Valerie Bares \(ESC Consulting\) - introduction](#)
- [Presentation by Lara Nobel – case study](#)

¹ Each scenario was presented as a short video developed by ESC Consulting. [These videos can be found here.](#)



3. Themes

The following themes are drawn from the whole-of-group discussion and from small-group discussions.

3.1 Wheels and no wheels

The various scenarios under discussion explore both THOW and tiny homes that are fixed to a site. THOW were considered by some to have the advantage of flexibility and able to be moved with designs compliant with allowable vehicle dimensions and capacity to fit on a trailer. Another advantage depending on the jurisdiction is that these dwellings have fewer regulatory requirements and in Brisbane a recent town planning appeal meant that one THOW example didn't have to move because of non-compliance.

Participants included people with prototype designs for THOW and tiny homes intended to be built on a fixed site (including flat-pack pre-fabricated designs). The cost of each seemed to differ which some higher costs associated with designs made for mobility.

3.2 Design

The importance of design was raised across various scenarios. Design elements and ideas included:

- the importance of including an element of outdoor space
- in congregate living examples, the design of shared spaces was considered important
- designing in elements that created a spatial relationship to the broader community and considered visitor needs and use of space
- designs are cost-efficient
- designs are safe.

3.3 Affordability

Tiny homes were considered by some an option that addresses affordability issues requiring less land content and fewer materials. Some participants were working on flat-pack designs that can drive the price per unit to \$20,000 + site costs. Other options were more expensive including some options for those designed on wheels. Some scenarios considered whether tiny homes could respond to homelessness and involve community housing providers in managing and delivering housing options. One scenario explored options for tiny homes responding to the needs of older women who may or may not have equity to contribute. Per home, the land contribution is lower, and the discussion included debate and options that were striving to drive unit costs down.

3.4 Transitional or permanent housing option

The discussion in workshops explored whether tiny homes represent a transitional option or a permanent one. Some options such as those responding to the needs of older women seemed more focussed on permanent housing solutions. Discussion in the whole group and during the presentations highlighted that life-stage changes such as having children may change the need for space and result in people trading up for larger dwellings with the smaller dwelling re-purposed to meet the needs of other household types.

There was considerable debate about whether a tiny house village could be a long-term solution suitable for people exiting homelessness. The two options responding to the scenario about a tent city seemed to focus in the



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end, on transitional options with the need for support to transition to permanent arrangements. Overall the discussion considered some scenarios better suited to permanence but also that the tiny home is then available for re-purposing and could be responsive to other needs.

3.5 Tenure

The discussion considered that various tenure options existed:

- ownership
- sub-leasing sites
- rent to own
- renting
- community housing management with tenant leases.

One scenario considered how someone with equity could move forward, harness support, find co-tenants and proceed with finding land and building a project. Even under this scenario, it was considered possible to offer mixed tenures for people without private equity.

In the case of ownership, it was considered important to clarify structural arrangements on how properties can be sold and to whom, particularly if the initiative is targeting a certain group (such as older women).

3.6 Management and governance

Some workshops explored how sites could be managed and governed. Some ideas included:

- body-corporate structure
- community housing ownership and management with sub-leases to tenants
- community housing lease and management with sub-leases to tenants.

Different scenarios seemed to favour different options depending on the needs of the tenants and their interests and capacity.

3.7 Finance and investment

Different options for each scenario explored investment options including:

- government rental subsidy
- government provision of land (leased land)
- land contributions from churches and other institutions such as community housing providers
- in-fill to existing residential blocks (as with granny-flat style options)
- private equity contributions from future residents
- private investors who would then receive a return on their investment through rent.

It was identified that financial models are needed that investigate whether private investors could achieve a return on investment. At least one small group workshop participant proposed that with a rental subsidy, lower construction costs and land contributions, private investment may be a possibility.



3.8 Location and amenity

Overall there was considerable discussion about location and amenity. Infill options such as granny flats create opportunities to site tiny homes within existing urban and suburban blocks, which are serviced and potentially near to other infrastructure such as transport. There was some debate about whether a site for a tent-city alternative could be suburban or in a smaller city or regional location. Land costs in a location like Brisbane for a large site were considered a potential barrier.

Overall, all workshop groups identified location as critical to wellbeing. Access to transport, shops, services, support and potentially employment, training and education depending on the target group were considered essential to facilitating equitable and affordable communities. Isolation from key infrastructure was identified as a risk to success and sustainability.

3.9 Sustainability and infrastructure

The discussion highlighted the contribution of tiny homes to sustainability including through:

- lower land requirements and efficiency of using existing services and utilities
- fewer materials and the opportunity for innovation in using sustainable energy options
- a smaller footprint for some households
- an option for people who want to accumulate less and use fewer resources
- an option for multi-generational families and greater social sustainability.

These elements were seen as important opportunities and potential benefits of tiny homes. People generated words in support of tiny homes related to their viability, their sustainability and their efficiency. Discussion also covered the question of how infrastructure charges are decided and allocated. This may be a point for further discussion.

3.10 Community relations

Community relations and connections to the broader community were discussed in various workshop groups. There is a risk that some segments of the community express concerns about tiny homes and that progress with tiny homes needs an approach that:

- builds relationships with the broader community
- manages and responds to expectations about design, amenity and ongoing quality management of the site
- is fair and equitable to other residents.

Design elements that included permeable boundaries, shared community spaces and gardens were discussed by some groups. Ensuring support and good management was also raised depending on the target group. Quality management was considered important in terms of insuring vulnerable people have adequate support to sustain their own dwelling and for the entire site/project to be sustainable.

3.11 Capacity building as part of the housing system

Some scenarios and the plenary discussion highlighted that to catalyse various tiny home options there is a need for capacity building support. This type of support could be provided by an organisation or peak body that provides practical assistance in the development of individual tiny home project ideas. Assistance could help to address the



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various stages in achieving a project such as siting, location, investment, design, approvals and regulation, as well as community relations.

The discussion explored a range of scenarios and options that essentially place tiny homes within a broader housing system.

3.12 Regulation

The discussion explored various regulatory elements such as:

- diverse regulatory provisions across different local governments
- barriers to tiny homes and granny flats responding to the needs of a wider group of people than just family relatives
- lack of clarity about how tiny homes are treated under the National Construction Code
- how infrastructure charges are decided
- how community input can be harnessed/considered depending on the level of assessment required.

There was significant support for progressing a uniform approach across local governments to provide greater certainty about how tiny homes are treated. This is particularly important in terms of investment options and to further assess the potential role of tiny homes in addressing housing need.



4. Scenario Workshop Outcomes



Each of the three scenarios was explored by two small workshop groups. The following table summarises an overview of each group's ideas. These ideas are then more fully described in sections 4.1-4.3.

	Scenario	Option
1	Intentional community for women aged over 55	Tiny Emerald City: For women with few or no assets who are either still working or retired and who are attracted to communal living. With an option of a community housing provider contributing land, there is scope to offer mixed tenures with shared facilities and gardens.
2	Intentional community for women aged over 55	One or two lots (600m ² each) with five tiny homes on each, catering to 10 women. Offers a mix of tenures allowing women to contribute their own equity or rent their housing. Focuses on downsizing, sharing services and economies of scale.
3	Under-utilised government land: Alternative to tent city	Identify land through a competition, where Councils are invited to contribute land for a tiny home development of 40 homes with the scope to scale up as a site responsive to disaster management. Includes a social mix with 30 homes occupied by older people and/or students and 10 homes targeted to people who are homeless. Includes onsite services, body corporate structure and scope for investment returns.
4	Under-utilised government land: Alternative to tent city	A temporary village using a brownfield site. Aims to provide a transitional option for people who otherwise depend on a 'tent city'. Land would be leased for at least five years with the option for extension. Land can still be earmarked for other strategic objectives.
5	Granny flat revisited	This group zoomed the lens out to suggest a one-stop-shop or a business that organises all aspects of installing a tiny house on available private land.
6	Granny flat revisited	Bob and Linda develop a tiny home in their backyard with scope to rent it to students or others for a net gain of \$1000 per month approximately.



4.1 Intentional community for women aged over 55

Option 1

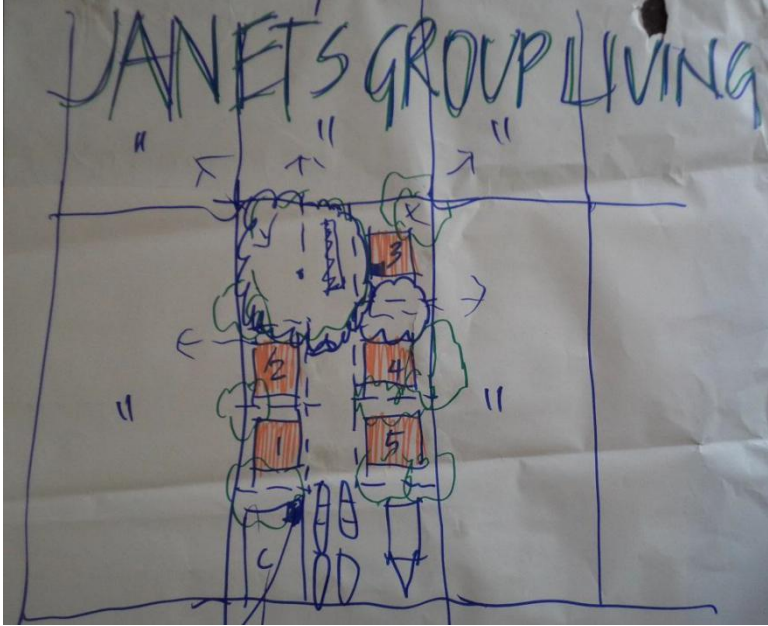
Element	Description
Concept	<p>Tiny Emerald City: there's no place like home... Janet/Jane</p> 
	
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women, aged over 55.



Element	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women focussed development inclusive of people with few or no assets.
Circumstances/eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few or no assets. • Still working or retired • Attracted to communal living. • People who appreciate their own privacy and also value communal aspects. • Started with Janet, but a project needs to cater to 'Jane' as well.
Rationale	Research: two out of three people attracted to tiny homes are women and most are over 40 years.
Tenure/management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community housing organisation could develop and manage a project. • Community housing provider could offer under-utilised land. • Good site governance is importance – could be Body Corporate style. • Owned or rented (housing). Could be resident of Not for Profit (NFP) owned or leased. • Site: sub-leased. • Come and go element for people who want to move their tiny house. • Site could be government owned and head leased. • Seeking approximately 3000m² in middle ring suburb with transport and local amenity. • Governance: land trust, long term leases, management group. • Council include rent to buy.
Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional community. • Pets allowed.
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 dwellings + common grounds. • 7 intentional community (7 x studios and common kitchen, dining, library) + 9 self-contained tiny houses. • Well-designed. • 'Come and go' space. • Shared facilities, gardens, chickens, common grounds, worm farm, shared tools. • Water tanks, fountain. • Trees (fruit and shade). • Pets allowable (subject to approval). • Option for people who want to move their tiny home. • Co-design/participatory design process. • Facilitate higher site density. • Modular pods with various levels of shared facilities.
Finance and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bond aggregator may open up finance. • NFP.
Evaluation	Ongoing.



Option 2

Element	Description
Concept	<p>Janet's Group Living</p> <p>One or two lots are used to generate 10 tiny homes.</p> <p>Inclusive of women with equity and lower income women.</p> 
Who	Janet has equity in her existing home. She has 9 friends who would like to join her.
Circumstances/eligibility	Women with equity in existing homes who want to downsize and who are interested in group living.
Rationale	<p>An efficient use of land in a sharing, co-housing framework that supports older women to downsize and live more supportively in a community environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probably would have community support (palatable). • A way of building a community with shared services. • Achieves economies of scale. • Flexibility in terms of tenure. • Reduced ecological footprint. • Economical, affordable, accessible (universal design).
Tenure/management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership. • Rental. • Rent to buy. • Ownership transfer.
Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident led approach. • Autonomy over home but sharing resources. • Operational rules including social education (conflict resolution for example).



Element	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-sufficiency. • Shared services. • Not dependent on lot size. • Time contribution by residents, resident meeting.
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group living – expandable dwelling house. • Janet and friends potentially find two adjoining lots of 600m² (total land 1200m²) in their neighbourhood near the train station but are happy to start with one lot and create an ‘infectious’ community of interest to embrace surrounding properties. • 10 pods will be built + a shared shed and a common area. • They will car-share. Only three car parks are included. • Development is done under a ‘dwelling’ use – this requires interpretation and review of the planning regulation definition of a dwelling house and household. • Could be built in a staged approach. Janet can start with one or two pods. As her friends attain finance, additional pods can be added. These can be built to rent, to sell or rent-to-buy. • 70% shared space. • Universal design. • Dwelling house use.
Finance and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/owner investment. • Perhaps other investors can support ‘low-income’ women to participate - Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) to build? • \$1.1 million – flexible funding, build then rent, sell or rent to buy.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carparking requirements. • Titling or defining a tradeable unit to give a guaranteed financial ownership. • Infrastructure charges. • Density and scale – best plot ratio accommodates 70% shared space. • Avoid using word intentional due to potential negative connotations by Councils. • What might be the catalyst to make it happen? • Application process. • Assessment. • Variations by Local Government Area (LGA).



4.2 Under-utilised Government land

Option 1

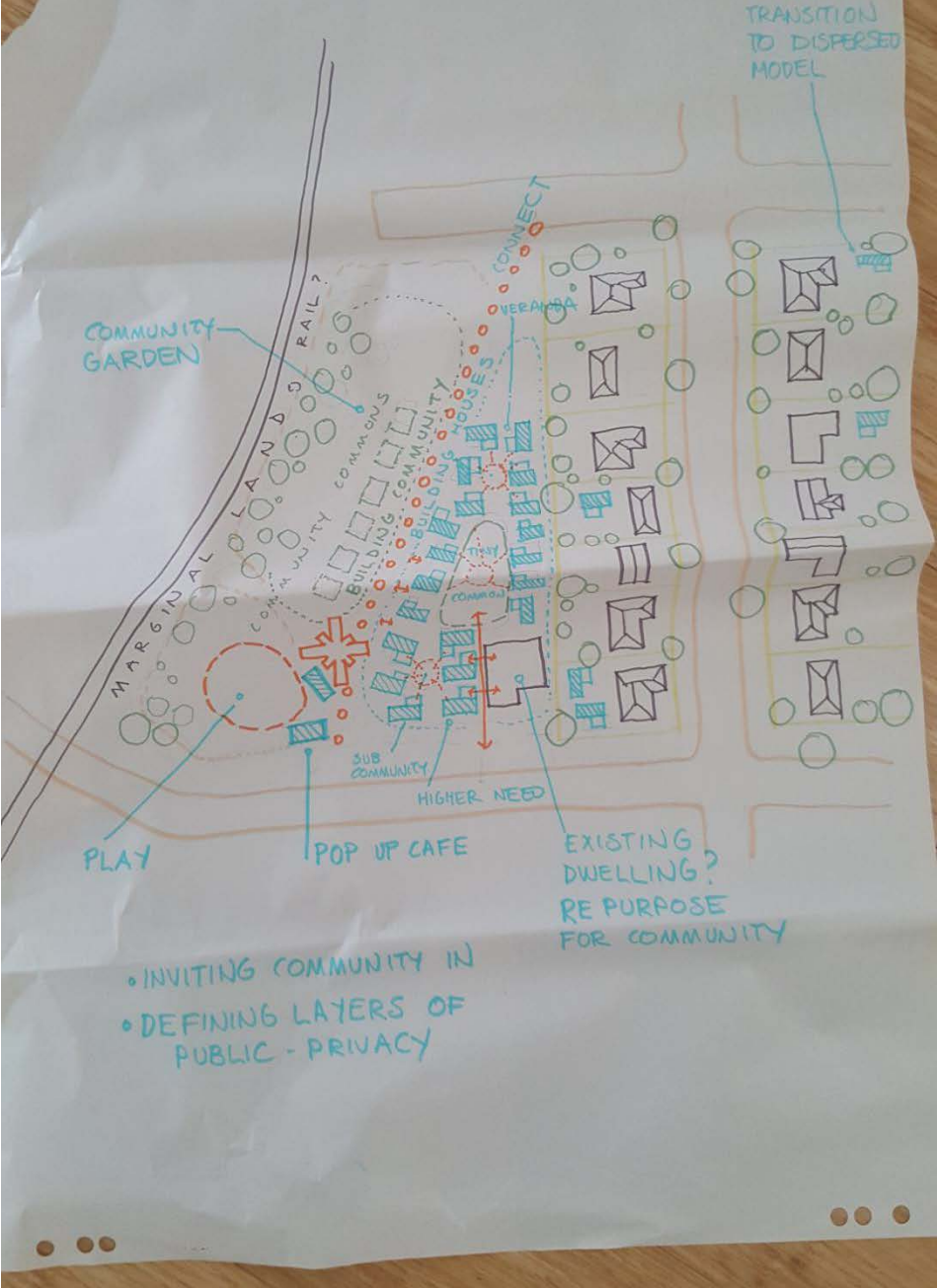
Element	Description
Concept	<p>Land that supports 40 households including 10 people exiting homelessness.</p> <p>Could scale up to respond to disaster scenarios.</p> <p>Involves local government in providing land.</p>



Element	Description
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 households. • 30 including a mix and 10 people exiting homelessness.
Circumstances/eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people. • Students. • People exiting homelessness. • Not more than 30% homeless people.
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for mixed community. • Links with community intended to reduce stigma. • More cost effective than rough sleeping.
Tenure/management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land, peppercorn long-term lease. • Mixture of owners, renters, mix of titles. • Rent to own options.
Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong relationship to broader community. • Reduce stigma. • Involve local government and link with disaster management response. • Involve people in solutions, sweat equity. • Strong links to support (including onsite options). • Active role in reducing stigma. • Include social enterprises.
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume 10x2.5 metres (20m² on the ground). • 10 days to build. • Steel, stilts for adjustable contours. • Pre-fabrication – like Ikea flat pack. • Permanent on land, no wheels. • Off-grid. • Include communal spaces and services. • Not a gated community – community can come in/through. • Design clusters of housing. • Include passive and active use of spaces by community.
Finance and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$20,000 target cost with a flat pack design. • Work to drive down construction costs. • Rental return \$200 per week. • Attractive return for investors. • Charge below market rent, requires a rental subsidy. • Needs government investment.
Evaluation	Needs to cost less than rough sleeping: needs to be measured to prove the cost effectiveness.
Innovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include scope to scale up and accommodate people during disasters. • Run a competition with local governments to involve Councils in generating a land contribution.



Option 2

Element	Description
Concept	<p>Use of 'lazy' land and brownfield site for period of 5-10 years to accommodate homeless people in tiny homes.</p> 
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initially people from tent city and then others through succession of tenancies.• Stakeholders including Councillors, residents, community.
Circumstances/eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need to understand what has motivated/driven people to create a tent city.



Element	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out tiny house residents’ needs – requires clear communication that they will be supported to the next stage.
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could offer an option that leads to a more permanent transition. • A response to unintended occupants of city. • Use of ‘lazy’ land for short-term response ensuring that it is still quarantined for strategic outcomes.
Tenure/management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Council land; City Council initiative. • Need to investigate land use agreement with the State. • Seek five year accommodation + option to renegotiate for further five years. • Options for end of life program – relocated demountable buildings for other transitional programs or allocated to broader community to buy in for a leasing initiative. • Needs at least five-years access to the site. 10 years? Perhaps it could be for five years initially and for review/continuation if it is helping. • Could it be structured, built to help as many people a possible. • If communities became permanent, how would transition of ownership occur?
Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site manager, case worker. • Programming it as part of the community – community engagement as the program is being developed. • Developed and designed through consultation with Tent City. • Consultation with community. • Only part of the process – a step along to another outcome that is a longer-term solution.
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brownfield site. • Temporary village – demountable. • Consultation will be important. • Site design – safety, privacy, common spaces and screening. • Conduct a site design workshop. • Purchase product and install/develop. • Need to manage different thresholds between community and privacy. • Consider locating near to a community area close by where residents from Tiny House Village and other neighbours get to interact. • Bring people together including the community, through good-design. • Include clusters.
Innovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal/transitional communities in Germany converted to ‘formalised’ communities. • Create a community activity within the site which is permeable to broader community without compromising ‘tenant’ safety and privacy. • Possibility: tiny home takeaway shop. • Certification – temporary community use, exempt from other regulations.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and finance. • Regulations.



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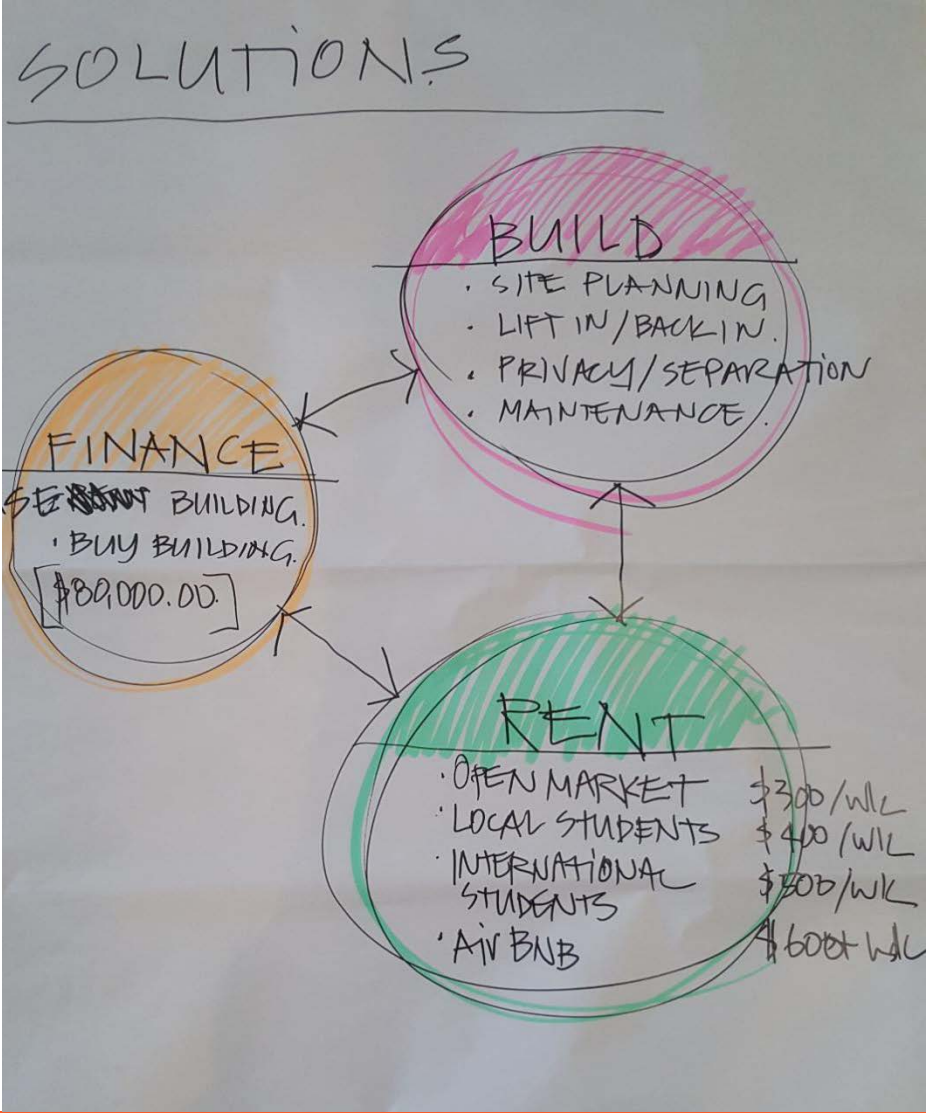
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Element	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires a 'bit set' of relationships.• Policy.



4.3 Granny Flat revisited

Option 1

Element	Description
<p>Concept</p>	<p>One-stop-shop or a business that organises all aspects of installing a tiny house (including tenant if required) on available private land.</p> 
<p>Who</p>	<p>People with land that could be used for a tiny house.</p> <p>Form a Tiny House Association:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main 'go to' for tiny house issues in Australia. • Able to help people like Linda and Bob make sure their tiny house meets all requirements.



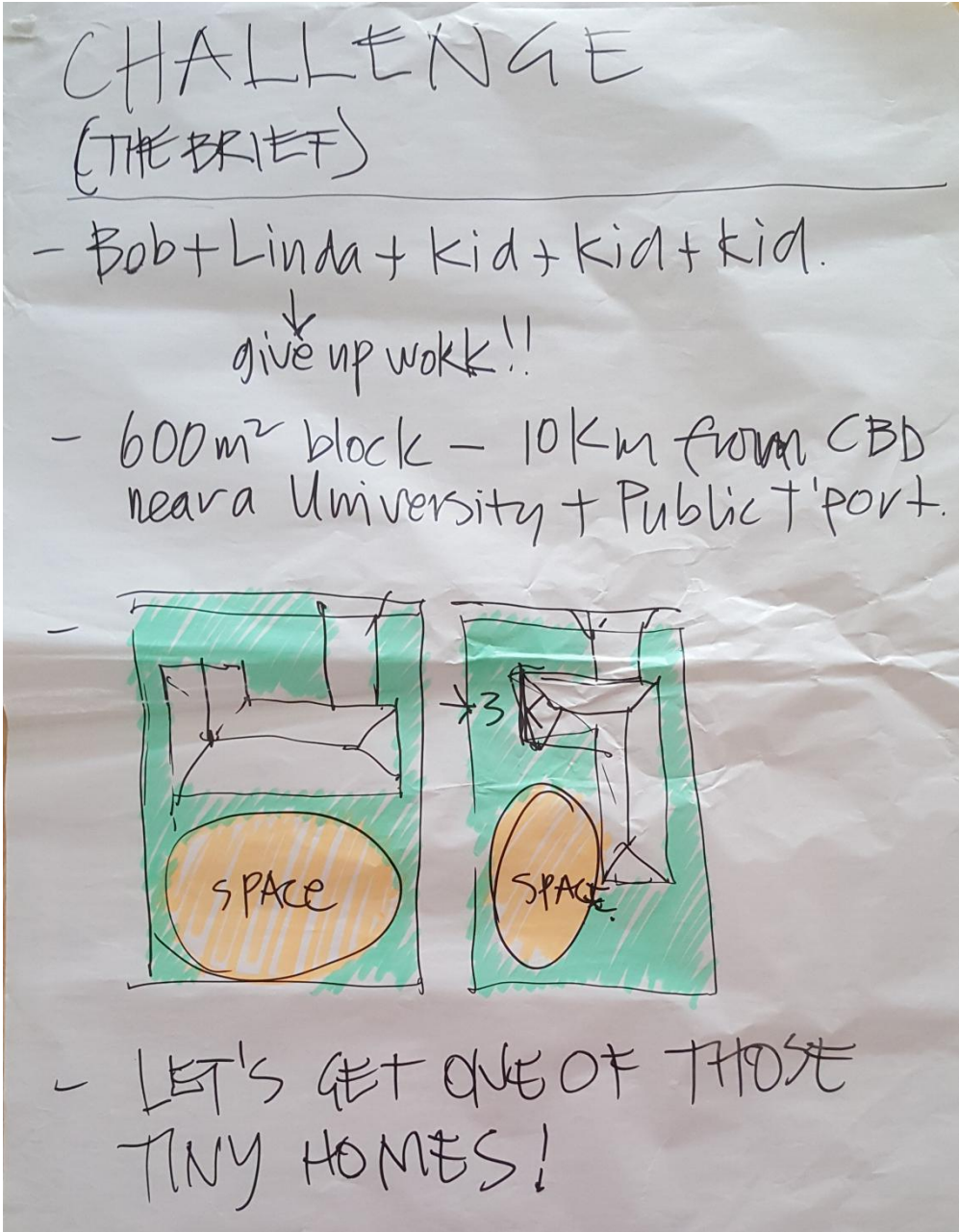

Element	Description
Tenure/management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life interest might be an ownership option for a granny flat. • If people don't have enough money to buy then they could lease.
Framework	<p>A Tiny House Association might use a checklist with the following headings:</p> <p>Councils (LGA's).</p> <p><u>Planning regulation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit for tiny house. <p><u>Construction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complying with National Construction Code (NCC). • Warranties. • Standards. • Site installation. <p><u>Finance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loans. • Rent to Buy. • Lease arrangements. <p><u>Manufacturers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accredited Tiny House Builders. • Risk Smart tiny Houses. <p><u>Inhabitant</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant (links with Community housing provider; university based student with needs). • Foster child. • Owner occupier. <p><u>Advocacy</u></p> <p><u>Insurance</u></p>
Design	<p>It is difficult for Tiny Houses to comply with the NCC.</p> <p>Section J (environmental performance) is difficult/not possible to attain in a tiny house. Amendments or an appendix to clarify tiny house compliance might be an option.</p> <p>Idea: there could be tiny houses in stock and ready to move and set up for various reasons. Similar to AUSCO site sheds that can be leased and sold.</p>
Finance and investment	<p>Buy – because Bob and Linda have enough equity for the bank to lend them the money.</p>



Element	Description
	<p>Initial figures show that a tiny house is not really a viable option for low/affordable rent if the house is leased or owned by others or if there is a loan for its purchase. \$250/\$300 per week gives the required returns on investment.</p> <p>Bob and Linda could earn \$1000 per month with a tiny house.</p> <p>Tiny House rental income @ \$320 per week less interest (\$16000 less \$4000 = nett \$12,000).</p> <p>Based on Tiny House purchase cost of \$80,000.</p>
Implementation	<p>Q Shelter as a peak body could have a position statement. Maybe this could be co-drafted with Tiny House manufacturers and with LGAs with reference to the <i>Tiny House Planning Guide</i>.</p> <p>This might also include a check list for people to go through before considering a tiny house.</p>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codes and shared laundries: investigate which planning regulation this refers to. • Councils respond to complaints so need to work on avoiding and preventing neighbourhood complaints about Tiny Houses. • How to replicate Brisbane inner-west tiny house precedent so no approvals are needed? • How to turn tiny house into immediate cash flow. • How to keep Bob and Linda household as normal as possible with an unusual back yard. • Testing financial assumptions e.g. depreciation • Tiny appliances and fixtures can be more expensive than you think. • Bob and Linda – suited to having strangers near their children? • Granny Flat might be less expensive and generate more income. • How to not tell the government (flying under the radar)?



Option 2

Element	Description
Concept	<p>Bob and Linda build a tiny home on their suburban block.</p>  <p>CHALLENGE (THE BRIEF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Bob + Linda + kid + kid + kid. ↓ give up work!!- 600m² block - 10km from CBD near a University + Public T'port.- - LET'S GET ONE OF THOSE TINY HOMES!
Who	Bob, Linda and family and potential tenants.
Tenure/management	Bob and Linda own land and tiny house. Rent tiny house in backyard to another party.



Element	Description
Framework	Efficient use of existing land.
Design	THOW or fixed.
Finance and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buy – because Bob and Linda have enough equity for the bank to lend them the money.• Bob and Linda could earn \$1000 per month with a tiny house.• Tiny house rental income @ \$320 per week less interest (\$16000 less \$4000 = nett \$12,000.• Could seek a financing/capital partner for sustainable/ethical investment.• AFSL Super Fund.• Traditional finance - \$650 per month
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to replicate Brisbane inner-west tiny house precedent so no approvals are needed?• How to turn tiny house into immediate cash flow?• How to keep Bob and Linda household as normal as possible with an unusual back yard?• Testing financial assumptions e.g. depreciation.• Tiny appliances and fixtures can be more expensive than you think.• Bob and Linda – suited to having strangers near their children?• Granny Flat might be less expensive and generate more income.• How to not tell the government (flying under the radar)?



5. Policy: challenges and opportunities

Across each scenario, there was discussion about the regulatory framework and how it impacts on progressing tiny home solutions as part of a broader housing system.

One scenario presented during the session demonstrated an example of a THOW that was subject to a complaint and subsequent town planning appeal resulting in permission to remain at the Brisbane inner-west site because it was not subject to the same requirements as Granny Flats. Some discussion at the session considered ways of developing tiny homes within existing regulations and ways of managing the process so that community concerns and regulatory barriers are prevented or avoided.

Some of the concerns and ideas related to regulation suggested or raised at the session include:

- the need for consistency across LGAs and for State Government policy and legislation to support tiny homes and ensure consistency across Councils
- ideas about how to achieve tiny homes without extra regulation
- support for a framework that encourages tiny homes and is not overly complicated or costly
- attempts to locate tiny home developments within existing dwelling house codes
- the need to ensure safety for residents including respect for design elements that support safety, amenity and the appropriate provision of infrastructure where residential populations are intensified
- the risk that town planning processes are used to object to and prevent tiny home developments and perhaps the need for a broader community campaign and education process.

The *Tiny House Planning Resource* highlights provisions and scenarios where there is either an opportunity or a constraint in terms of the current regulatory framework. Some examples include:

- tiny homes may be able to be developed as a Granny Flat or secondary dwelling where the dwelling is on a fixed site. In some local government jurisdictions in Queensland secondary dwellings can be occupied by people other than family members whereas in Brisbane, secondary dwellings can only be occupied by family members. A consistent approach to elements such as size, occupancy and siting across LGAs could support the development of fixed tiny homes, under provisions for secondary dwellings
- in relation to THOWs, not all LGAs give regulatory support or approval to people permanently residing in this type of dwelling
- if tiny homes are better supported, challenges such as infrastructure-charging and neighbour/community engagement will need to be addressed
- provision and purchase of freehold tiny lots may not be supported
- the development of tiny home villages where people either purchase or rent dwellings is not currently supported and is an area that could be further developed to support tiny home development
- not all tiny homes would comply with building codes and there is a need to achieve amenity and safety in terms of design, location, siting and relationship to the broader community
- tiny home backyard leases could be one way to release land and support the development of tiny homes.

The session considered the need to progress dialogue with the State Government and with local governments to achieve:



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- greater scope for granny flat developments to accommodate diverse people and to be subject to consistent regulations across local government areas
- exploration of tiny home lots, tiny lot lease arrangements and tiny home village options in terms of land tenure and legal management structures.

The Deep Dive session considered the option of forming a working group to advance support for tiny homes as part of a broader housing system. This possibility is further explored as part of the recommendations.



6. Plenary discussion

A plenary discussion at the end explored key points and considerations as well as next steps emerging from the Deep Dive Session.

6.1 Considerations

People at the centre

- Important to put people at the centre.
- Co-design involving future residents and participatory approaches to design are important.

Design

- Design is very important overall.
- Design options need to build in community amenity.

Planning, finance and regulatory framework

- Planning and finance are two important themes needing further exploration and resolution.
- Need a framework that addresses any disincentives for downsizing.
- Tiny homes are one way to unlock equity.
- The regulatory framework for tiny houses needs clarity.

Community development and capacity

- Housing providers need to contribute to supporting social interaction and reducing conflict. Support around how we share housing is important.
- Broader community relations within existing communities is important.
- Working to influence broader social norms about diverse and flexible housing form is important. Requires a 'movement' of people/community to challenge current paradigms and larger housing footprint. This includes deeper social change about how communities can live together and assumptions about space requirements.
- Tiny homes are an opportunity to bring together community, environmental and social benefits inclusive of economic viability and integral sustainability within a net-positive model.

Responding to specific needs

- Tiny homes might be a response to people living with a disability – design considerations including the need for adequate circulation space (36m² for accessibility).

6.2 Actions and next steps

- Consider forming an advocacy group for the tiny home industry including an advisory role to people wanting to develop tiny homes:
 - Could play a role in advancing policy and advocacy to local and State governments.
- All participants can play a role in promoting the materials through their networks.
- Develop a project – start a co-housing tiny house project:
 - There are willing participants present.



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- Identify land and take a market-led proposal to Government.
- Find the 'Janets' and bring them together.
- Address local government definitions/provisions:
 - Support a review of local and state planning regulations and definitions and seek assistance from the State Government to achieve consistency and leadership.
 - Develop codes and provisions that local government can adopt.
 - Work at the strategic planning level so that tiny homes are supported by strategic framework.
 - Address infrastructure planning requirements including capacity and loading factors.
 - Needs to include scope for local/regional considerations impacting densities and thresholds.
 - Augment/develop a State Planning Policy that supports tiny homes.
- Explore ways that tiny homes can be funded:
 - Bond aggregator opportunities.
 - Superannuation fund opportunities.
- Run Deep Dive Session in other areas and LGAs:
 - Moreton Bay Regional Council (for example).



7. Recommendations

1. That a Tiny Homes Working Group is formed as a formal network of Q Shelter comprising people who express interest and have a diversity of skills and backgrounds that can assist with the implementation of practical projects and key actions. The role of this group would be to:
 - a. Promote and support tiny home solutions
 - b. Work with the different levels of Government to progress a favourable and consistent regulatory framework that is supportive of tiny homes
 - c. Explore funding and finance options
 - d. Advance a Tiny Home One Stop Shop to provide practical support to projects.
2. Advance a practical tiny house project with reference to the scenarios developed in the workshop and possibly with a focus on older women.
3. Run the Deep Dive Session in other LGAs.
4. All participants and housing champions are encouraged to promote and support the potential of tiny houses as part of a broader housing system and assist with the distribution of resources and information.



8. Appendices

8.1 Attendees

The formal attendee list is as follows:

Kelli Dendle	
Kim Best	
Lara Nobel	The Tiny House Company
Nick Kamols	River City Labs
Jimmy Hirst	4GFN Eco Villages
Wons Ung	Agile Approvals
Mark Doonar	APP Corporation
Stuart Lummis	BHC Limited
Darren Mew	BlueCHP Limited
Emily Drew	Brisbane City Council
Joachim Tan	Brisbane City Council
Christie Kahukiwa	Christie Kahukiwa Town Planning
Andy Denniss	Churches of Christ Housing Services Limited
Karen Campbell	Compass Housing Services
Peter Richards	Deicke Richards
Tyrone Alt	Department of Housing and Public Works
Fiona Chen	Economic Development Queensland
Malcolm Holz	Economic Development Queensland
Kevin Doodney	Future Housing Taskforce
Heather Shearer	Griffith University
Jonathan Gibson	Ingenia Communities
Luke Rowlinson	Wladyslaw Obod Architects
Ciaran Callaghan	Moreton Bay Regional Council
Theresa Fullerton	Moreton Bay Regional Council
Christina Renger	Net Zero Design
Beth Winkle	Plannery Co
Sam Gosling	QUT
Sylvia Ramsay	Sylvia Ramsay



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Mel Sparkles	Tiny Houses Brisbane (Facebook Administrator)
Jason Hilder	University of Queensland
Angela Ballard	University of Queensland
Michael Dickson	UQ School of Architecture
Andy McCutcheon	Wayfarer Tiny Homes Pty Ltd
Fei Huang	Wesley Mission Queensland
Rachel Watson	Wesley Mission Queensland

Q Shelter and ESC Consulting group facilitators were also present.

In an ice-breaker activity, the following different skills and backgrounds were identified:

- Architects
- Planners
- Advocate for tiny houses
- Social workers
- Farmer
- Public development
- Social housing
- Researcher
- Director of Innovation
- Council – Local Government
- Q Shelter – Industry Peak Body
- Co-housing PhD student
- DJ, radio announcer, Eco village
- Tiny house builder
- Finance researcher
- Academic – lecturer in Architecture
- Representatives from Economic Development Queensland
- Representatives from Department of Housing and Public Works
- Personal interests – appetite, life experience
- Singer songwriter – recorded in a container studio.



8.2 Deep dive session agenda

Tiny House Deep Dive Agenda		
Time	Activity	Responsibility
9:30am	Registration Tea / coffee on arrival Photography permission, Select group preference	
10:00am	Welcome Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Introducing the event: Can tiny houses solve big problems?	Leone Crayden Q Shelter
10:10am	Introductions and process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introductions and warm up ○ Overview of process 	Fiona Caniglia Rikki Pieters
10:30am	Presentation and case study	Lara Nobel
10:45am	Discussion	Lara Nobel Fiona Caniglia
11:00am	Video presentations on three scenarios	Valerie Bares
11:15am	Discussion Break into groups Clarify group process	Fiona Caniglia Rikki Pieters
11:25am	Deep Dive Small Groups Session 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-minute individual reflection using a worksheet Group work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine a picture of needs and an understanding of the people who will live in the house/village? • Identify any challenges or barriers that need to be overcome? • Generate broad concepts and ideas for action? • Prioritise concepts/ideas in the group • Develop detailed implementation plan for most preferred idea 	Rikki Pieters Valerie Bares Elloise Paraskevopoulos Lara Nobel Scott McGregor Fiona Caniglia
1:00pm	Lunch	
1:30pm	Deep Dive Small Groups Session 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine implementation plan • Develop a presentation for the whole group • Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preferred concept - Rationale - Expected outcomes - Implementation plan 	Rikki Pieters Valerie Bares Elloise Paraskevopoulos Lara Nobel Scott McGregor Fiona Caniglia



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Tiny House Deep Dive Agenda		
Time	Activity	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expected barriers and constraints - Solutions to the barriers and constraints • One key question for the whole group 	
2:30pm	Presentations (5) – 8 mins each	Groups
3:30pm	Plenary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion, Developing a plan • Next steps 	Fiona Caniglia Rikki Pieters
4.00pm	Close and thanks	

8.3 Promotional materials





A TINY HOUSE DEEP DIVE

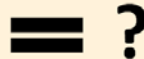
What's all the fuss?

Tiny houses are hot on the agenda. This deep dive aims to explore innovative trends in compact living to address affordability, liveability and sustainability. What role can Tiny Houses play in contributing to greater housing choice and diversity? What role can Tiny Houses play in supporting inclusive communities?

Tiny Houses:
affordable,
minimal footprint,
flexible,
adaptable,
sustainable



Housing issues:
affordability,
ageing in place,
first home
buyers,
homelessness



THE WAY WE'LL RUN IT

Three scenarios

Form a team, get up to speed, brainstorm and create, pitch the solutions.

Team participants: architects, planners, property developers, community housing providers, financing experts, people with lived experience, academics and policy makers. From private, government and not-for-profit organisations.

Facilitated by: QShelter & ESC Consulting
Location: Gambaro Room, Brisbane Common Ground, 15 Hope Street, South Brisbane
Date: 12 October 2017
Time: 9:30 to 4:00pm
Catering will be provided.
Hosted by: Common Ground Queensland
Sponsored by: QShelter



8.4 Attraction and concern words

As one part of the workshop process, people were asked to document one word to describe what attracts them to tiny homes and one word that describes a concern. The following list was recorded:

Table 1: Attraction and concern words for tiny homes

Concern	Attract
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheels or no wheels • Affordability \$3500 per sqm for wheels VS \$1000psm no wheels – what is the benefit? • Land titling/ownership issues • How important are communal spaces – too much garden diminishes density potential • Financing – who will provide home ownership financing? • Land is too expensive • NIMBYism • Safety/BCA/Fire issues • Insurance on tiny homes and shared assets • Resale and estate (wills) • Where would it work? • Who would finance tiny houses as a rental option? • Security of tenure • Taxation implications • Accessibility (i.e. for people with mobility issues) • Hoarding/storage • Cramped • Constrained • Narrow market segment • Affordability (i.e. \$80k is not affordable) • Council treatment barriers • Regulations permissions • Infrastructure charges • Long term solution? • Finance • Market acceptance • Anti-social/Nimbyism • Exploitation (i.e. by greedy developers) • Over-crowding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to be aggregated • Funky • Flexible • Timely • “Missing Middle” – density done well • Fit for purpose – fit for a demographic • Low impact • Affordable • Viable • Community • Efficient • Minimalists • Anti-stuff – conscious consuming • Scalable (manufactured – volume, etc.) • Sustainable • Compact/efficient • Affordable • Intimate • Flexible • Security • Stepping stone • Sustainability • Self-sufficiency • Repeatability • Implementation time frame • Freedom



8.5 Discussion points & considerations

The following represents discussion points and considerations documented in the small-group workshops.

After presentations

- Perceptions of space – suits some circumstances; when does it when? When doesn't it work?
- Interest in planning regulations and building code.
- Financing – how much does it cost to build – different depending on intent/materials.
- Different rules across jurisdictions.
- People were seeking access to presentations.
- Researcher identified there is demand for diversity (fixed and movable tiny homes).
- Affordability issues – could be a response.
- Great community building opportunities.
- Consider women without equity in the scenario for women over 55.
- Q Shelter offered to pursue as an output – to write to and advocate to Local Governments for a consistent regulatory approach and to engage with State Government about consistency of implementation.

Women over 55

- Women in this situation don't want or can't afford retirement living options.
- Can't afford purchase of market rent – may have low income and low assets.
- Might still be working or retired.
- May have some superannuation.
- Options would ideally include capacity for 5-7 residences.
- Explore options that could work on a standard suburban block.
- Look for self-management options.
- Exits must be easy to manage (exits are important as is entry).
- People might need to be active and mobile.
- Options might include owning or leasing land.
- May prefer their own dwellings to include a mix of tenures.
- Some common facilities could be included.
- Framework: an intentional community around themes such as simple living, shared resources, social connections, food production, common spaces.
- What provisions are needed for cars?
- Options should be easy to replicate.
- Intentional community; co-housing is one form.
- Means: to have autonomy over own home but sharing resources.
- Means: there is commonality between the people.
- Means: resident-led approach (as opposed to conventional retirement village models where the village and the rules are designed by the developer and residents must fit in).
- What's the catalyst to make it happen?
- Research shows ideal number of residents is between 25 and 125.



- To make it work needs agreed operational rules.
- To make it work needs social education:
 - Teaching people how to shift their behaviours from 'couple living' to 'group living' (e.g. negotiating, conflict resolution, etc.).
 - Community works best when people are willing to invest their time towards activities for the benefit of the community and to participate in meetings.

Under-utilised Government land: alternative to tent city

- Location is important.
- Need access to transport and services.
- Suburbs and beyond – may be disconnected from services and transport.
- Suburbia might work if there is access to services.
- Need a sense of normality – a base, somewhere to get a supportive start to the day.
- Need links with employment.
- For individual people: working to achieve a sense of self-worth, with opportunities to contribute and help.
- Broader community engagement will be important.
- Needs to address stigma, engage with neighbours and link with nearby support.
- Onsite care and support options will be important.
- Could consider a social mix: students, older people and people exiting homelessness.
- The proportion could be not more than 30% homeless people.
- Could consider two pathways: for some it is a temporary measure and for some permanent.
- Size is a big question: what size and scale would work.
- Could scale up and respond to community needs during times of disaster.
- State Governments have surplus land: do they have an appetite for this type of development.
- Strength that tiny house can be relocated.
- Locate adjacent to train line.
- How will broader community relations work including with immediate neighbours, perceptions will be an issue; concerns about property values will need to be addressed.
- Short-term outcome.
- Access to support will be important.
- Is this best suited to families, single people, couples, older people?
- Utilities such as water, sewerage important considerations; needs access to infrastructure.
- Site management is an option to provide services and support.
- A question: is it transitional or longer term?
- Need to consider affordability.
- Should it be a tiny house with wheels or fixed structure.
- Likely to cost less than other dwellings with slab on ground (\$50,000 versus \$150,000).
- Seeking sustainable solutions, community development framework.
- Perhaps scope is solution to tent city and not a solution (ongoing) to homelessness.



Granny flats revisited

- Cost.
- Return on investment – what financial model will work?
- If people want to sell tiny home – what if there is no market?
- Could assist multi-generations of families - including grown children.
- To attract students will need to be close to universities, have access to transport.
- Needs to include space for food preparation and waste disposal.
- Could be useful for international students.
- Without wheels – confronts regulations; there are concerns about regulations.
- Could result in neighbour disputes.
- Consider environmental impacts and infrastructure considerations, utilities.
- Could be negative public perceptions – Airbnb example.
- Need to consider scenarios of renting or buying and whether it achieves affordability in each scenario.
- Student studios – 18-24 years.
- There is uncertainty about whether tiny homes are code compliant.
- Site access for a tiny house on wheels is a consideration.
- There are variances between councils – the framework is not consistent across jurisdictions.
- Future regulatory changes could negatively impact on people who have invested in tiny homes.