

Accessible Wellington Design Competition

Introduction

This competition is being organised by Wellington City Council to coincide with the Accessible Wellington Forum on Housing and Accommodation to be held at Te Papa on 17 April 2009. Wellington City Council's Citizen Engagement Directorate and Housing Upgrade Project (HUP) are running this competition as a collaborative venture. (Please see Appendix Two for more information on the participating City Council Business Units)

Virtually every person, at some stage of his or her lives, will experience the need (directly or indirectly) to modify their living environment to suit their physical or sensory needs. Whether this is due to a loss of mobility as a person ages, or one of the many allergies becoming increasingly common in children, flexible living spaces give people the best possible opportunity to live well, comfortably and healthily.

This competition requires entrants to think about design that centres on the human experience of using a living space in both practical and aesthetic terms.

The competition uses a small actual Council site and buildings constructed in 1965, with typical existing small (<30m²) bed sits (4) units, managed by City Housing and part of the Council's Housing Upgrade Project.

Competition purpose, objectives and focus

Purpose

The purpose of the design competition is to:

- Promote and raise awareness of accessible and adaptable living space design
- Provide a range of design solutions to enable the building sector to explore how existing buildings can be made accessible on a limited budget

Objectives

The objectives of the competition are to:

- Encourage industry professionals to rise to the challenge of building affordable living spaces that are usable by everyone.
- Increase awareness of Universal Design principles
- Initiate dialogue and debate around achieving Universal Design in situations where both budgetary and space constraints exist.

Focus

The purpose of the competition is to highlight the need for fresh, imaginative thinking around creating accessible building design within existing units.

Adapting existing buildings poses significant issues.

In particular the competition focus is to meet the challenge of:

- adapting Council's social housing typical small bed sit dwellings to accessible units
- addressing detailed accessibility within these existing units in a practical and economic way
- building in adaptability long term to meet varying tenants' needs over time particularly around kitchen, bathroom and storage layouts.
- achieving affordable design within existing social housing units for tenants on low or fixed incomes

Type of competition

This is an open entry competition. Competitors should submit one design per entry form. There is no restriction on the number of designs entered by an individual or firm.

Entries are to be prepared to the preliminary design stage. The Judging Panel will then select a finalist to progress to the developed design stage under the auspices of HUP.

Entrants are required to develop the preliminary design in sufficient detail including provide a cost for the design of each type of adaptation and a final selected combination for the site. Cost should be provided in elemental breakdown format.

The competition will be based on an existing Wellington City Council's City Housing site of 4 existing bed sit units.

The challenge for entrants will be to put together a design that is accessible, affordable and creative. Entrants will use NZS4121:2001, Universal Design Principles and the Lifetime Design Foundation's Life Standards to inform their design. These three sets of guidelines on accessible design underpin this competition, and entrants will be judged on how they have converted these principles into their design.

It is intended, subject to approval by the Housing Upgrade Project, that the selected winning design will be progressed as part of the Wellington City Council's Housing Upgrade Project.

Stage 1:

Entry and submission

There is no entry fee

All designs must be completed by a registered architect or under the direction of a registered architect.

No feedback or report will be provided to entrants, though receipt of all entries will be acknowledged.

Wellington City Council will negotiate a contract with the selected finalist to advance their design/s to the developed design stage.

The competition will run from 17 April 2009 to 3 July 2009.

The final decision on entries will be made by Friday 31 July 2009.

All entries must be received before 4:00 pm, 3 July, 2009. Entries must be placed in the tender box at Wellington City Council ground floor reception at 101 Wakefield Street, Wellington by the due date and time. Entries delivered by post or courier should arrive not later than the date and time for submissions closes. Late entries will not be accepted. The Council accepts no responsibility for late receipt of entries.

Competition entries must be clearly marked and addressed to:

Accessible Housing Competition
Wellington City Council
Main Reception Desk,
Municipal Office Building
101 Wakefield Street
Wellington 6140

Please attach a completed entry form to each entry. It is the responsibility of the entrants to ensure their entries are packaged so they do not sustain damage in transit.

Employees of Wellington City Council and their families are excluded from entering the competition.

What are the submission requirements?

Each entry must be accompanied by the following information:

Contact person

A single contact person must be identified for each entry. Contact details should include an email address and telephone number/s.

Written details

Written details should be no more than 3 single side A4 sheets. The written details are to provide commentary on the design and should highlight areas that differentiate the design.

Construction Price

An indicative budget estimate for the cost to build should be included, based on a standard elemental breakdown.

Documentation

Maximum of 3 no. A3 sized sheets sufficient to show the design intention. Drawings at A3 should be to a recognisable scale. To demonstrate functionality, drawings should show furniture layouts with details of services and their location.

Submitters should take account of the needs of panel judges with visual impairment and provide plans capable of being read by people with visual impairments.

Submitted documents should not be permanently bound. The submitted documents should not identify any individual or firm. The Judging Panel will not be aware of the entrants' identities during the judging phase. Each entry will be allocated a number and this information will be held by the Accessibility Advisor.

Entrants should retain copies of their submissions for their own records.

Council will not return entries. Entries may be uplifted on completion of the competition. Entries will not be retained after 31 July 2009.

Entries received after the closing date will not be accepted. Entries that do not comply with the competition rules will not be accepted.

Judging the preliminary design stage

How will the entries be judged?

The entries will be judged on:

- compliance with NZS4121:2001, Life Standards and Universal Design principles
- cost for the project
- how creative the design solutions are in meeting the challenges presented by adapting the existing buildings for accessibility
- how well the design meets the Housing Upgrade Project's requirements (see Appendix One)

Designs should be based on an innovative application of the guiding principles for the competition. Ideally entries should attempt to comply with the guiding principles although it is expected entries may not be able to fully comply with all the guiding principles. Entries will be judged on how well they achieve the goals of accessible, adaptable and creative design.

Designs must be based on the existing social housing site of typical standard bed sit unit and be affordable in terms of the budget for the upgrade project, Universal Design Principles, NZS4121:2001 and the Lifetime Design Foundation's Private Space LifeStandards.

All designs are to be compliant with the Building Code and in accord with Council's District Plan requirements. All designs must be capable of obtaining all the necessary consents required for construction.

All preliminary designs will need to provide sufficient detail for the Judging Panel to establish compliance with the Building Code and guiding principles for the competition as well as an elemental cost breakdown.

The submissions should be based on the selected project site. (Note at the sole discretion of HUP the design may be adopted for a different site with similar house types). The submissions must provide solutions for a single person living alone, a single person with caregiver or a couple. The couple may require either a double bed room or two separate single bedrooms.

Communication during or after the competition

No communication will be entered into by the judges during or after the competition, except where changes are made to the competition. There will be no written questions or answers provided. Any submitter who directly or indirectly canvassed any Councillor, officer, employee, advisor or competition judge concerning any aspect of this competition may at Council's discretion, be disqualified.

Access to the site and buildings

Competition entrants are requested NOT to access any Wellington City Council social housing site at any time to conduct research for this competition. Tenants have rights of privacy under the Residential Tenancies Act that must be respected. No site visit will be organised.

What are the prizes?

A total prize pool of \$4,000 is available. It is intended the prize for the selected finalist will be \$2000, with additional prizes of \$1000 awarded to finalists placed in the top three.

The judging panel reserves the right not to allocate any prize monies where no submissions are deemed appropriate or to re-allocate the total prize monies should there are a number of submissions of equal or particular merit.

Who are the judges?

- Ron Pynenburg, Pynenburg and Collins Architects Ltd
- Bill Wrightson, Wrightson Associates
- John LeHarivel, Registered Architect, Design Manager, Wellington City Council, Housing Upgrade Project
- Members of Wellington City Council's Disability Reference Group (see Appendix 2)

A quantity surveyor will advise the Judging Panel through the judging process and in particular with the selection of the finalists. Other technical advisors, including a representative from Building Consents and Licensing Services may also provide technical advice on the designs. These advisors will not be involved in ranking entries, which will be done solely by the competition judges.

Stage 2:

What happens after the competition?

Following a successful competition outcome, HUP will enter into negotiations to commission the selected finalist to develop their proposals. The contract will be based on NZIA AAS 2007. This is with a view to constructing the winning design on the selected site or a similar site.

Any such commission will be subject to final approval of HUP of the selected winner's developed design. HUP may require modifications of the selected winning design to meet design, specific tenant or budgetary requirements.

The selected winning designer will be required to enter into negotiations and agree with HUP, the final design, the level of service provision, fee level and programme for delivery.

The selected commissioned designer will be expected to carry out a survey of the existing buildings and incorporate any required repairs and improvements. These to the existing site and existing building fabric services and structure as well as related to the modifications proposed.

Any resultant project from this competition must align with HUP's objectives and programming requirements.

What are the expectations of the selected finalists and competition entrants?

The selected finalists must be available to participate in media publicity about the competition, including photo opportunities and media interviews. All communications will be dealt with by Council's Communications Team.

What are expectations of Wellington City Council?

The Council expects submissions to provide a range of solutions for a single person, a single person with provision for a care giver and a couple with either one or two bedrooms.

In addition submissions should provide a set of selected solutions that can be best be accommodated within the existing buildings.

Solutions may be by alteration, amalgamation or extension or a combination of these.

Any extensions must comply with the Council's District Plan requirements for site coverage.

(The existing building area is 150.8M2. The existing site area is 408m2. The site is zoned 'Outer Residential Activity Area' with a maximum 35% site coverage. Parking requirements under the District Plan are 1 space per household, although this requirement may be negotiated down due to low tenant car ownership within City Housing units).

Submissions should take account of Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles where these are practical and affordable.

Submissions should allow to accommodate normal furniture and appliances appropriate to the likely occupant. (Council normally only provides a free standing electric stove)

Turning circles for wheelchairs should be shown to establish adequacy of space. Detailed elements should show ergonomic information confirming functionality.

Submissions should take account of tenants needs to reduce costs in operating their home.

The selected finalist must have been designed by a registered architect or someone employed under the direction of a registered architect.

The selected finalist will be required to be covered by professional indemnity insurance to a minimum level of \$250K for each and every claim and maintain cover for a period of not less than 6 years after issue of a Code of Compliance Certificate required under the Building Code.

Copyright:

The Council will retain copyright over the design, where the selected designer is contracted by Council to develop a proposal for construction. In this case, the contract will involve the transfer of the intellectual property of the design to the Housing Upgrade Project.

In the case of all other entries, including selected finalists where no contract is entered into, the intellectual property of the design will remain with the designer.

Rights reserved by the Council

The Council reserves the right to:

- reject all or any submissions
- amend the closing date or any other date in the competition documents;
- amend this competition brief and any associated documents, by the issue of a written notice;
- seek clarification of any submission;
- suspend or cancel (in whole or in part) this competition process;
- consider or reject any submission at the Council's sole discretion;
- deal separately with any of the divisible elements of any submission, unless the relevant submission specifically states that those elements must be taken collectively;
- enter into discussions and/or negotiations with finalists at any time and upon any terms and conditions before or after acceptance of a proposal;
- obtain similar services from any third party and not deal exclusively with any selected winner under this competition process; and
- meet with any finalist before and/or after the competition closes and prior to award of any contract.

Confidentiality

The information supplied by the Council (either itself or through advisors) in connection with this competition or any contract that may arise out of it, is confidential. You must not release or disclose any of the information to any other person (other than your employees or advisors) without the prior written consent of the Council.

Before releasing any confidential or commercially sensitive information to a competition entrant the Council may require the competition entrant (and employees, subcontractors or agents of the competition entrant, as appropriate) to sign a confidentiality deed.

The Council is subject to the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and may be required to disclose information under that Act.

No advertisement or other information relating to this competition process or any contract that may arise out of it shall be published in any newspaper, magazine, journal or other advertising medium, or broadcast/disseminated by radio, television or other electronic media without the prior written approval of the Council.

Council warranties or representations

All information provided by the Council in relation to this competition is released on the following basis:

- Such information provides a background only;
- The Council makes no representation or warranty other than as expressly set out in this competition document;
- You rely on all information provided by the Council at your own risk; and
- The information provided will not form part of any subsequent contract unless specified in those subsequent documents.

Liability limitation

The Council and its agents or advisors will not be liable in contract or tort or in any other way for any direct or indirect damage, loss or cost incurred by any competition entrant or other person in respect of this competition process.

No contract

Nothing in the conduct of this competition process gives rise to any contract or other legal obligation between the Council and the competition entrants unless and until that entrant has received written notification of the acceptance of their submission to progress to developed design stage.

Appendix One:

Requirements of the Housing Upgrade Project

The overarching requirement of the housing upgrade project is to upgrade the Council's housing stock to be **“healthy, safe, secure and of an appropriate standard for modern living”** and fit the profile of the tenants housed.

Additional requirements are to:

- ensure the long term provision of social housing in Wellington City and
- ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of the City Housing portfolio

The detailed requirements of the housing upgrade project that relate to this project include:

- keep the Council's housing stock in a robust state of repair
- provide safe and secure social housing complexes based on good design
- ensure design is founded on Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) Principles
- provide safe and secure social housing complexes based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles
- provide safe and secure units together with safe and secure access to those units
- ensure the site access and all new build units are fully accessible at ground level
- create an environment that embraces the diverse ethnicity and cultural background of Council's tenants
- create a physical environment that fits the context of the site and the neighbourhood
- provide a design that embraces greater diversity within the portfolio by building a range of larger family orientated new build units
- create a physical environment that encourages inter action with the greater community
- provide an appropriate environment that enable tenants to participate fully in the community
- provide tenants through good design with an improved sense of place and encourage community and tenant ownership of the complexes
- encourage social interaction amongst tenants and with site neighbours
- provide internal and external environments that enhances the quality of life for tenants
- provide accommodation that can be easily maintained and continue to attract tenants
- provide a good and robust level of the specification of the City Housing stock with regard to thermal and acoustic insulation, reduced ongoing maintenance and effective asset management, etc.
- enhance connections at ground level to enable ownership of private space
- blends with its neighbourhood and does not obviously appear to be social housing
- is well designed and addresses issues of the 'domains of housing' and differentiation of public and private space

Appendix Two:

Background to Participants

- **Accessibility Advisor, City Communities:**

Wellington City Council has an Accessibility Advisor who works closely with disability groups and reports back to Council on their behalf. The advisor's job is to raise awareness of disability issues and advise the Council on accessibility issues. The Accessibility Advisor also offers support and information to community organisations and people affected by disability issues.

- **Accessible Wellington Forum:**

Each year, Wellington City Council organises a Community Forum called the Accessible Wellington Forum. This year's forum has the theme of Accessible Housing and Accommodation. The annual Forum is an important opportunity for the disability community and the Council to share ideas. Another purpose of the Forum is raise awareness among relevant stakeholders of issues that affect people with disabilities.

- **Wellington City Council Disability Reference Group:**

The Disability Reference Group (DRG) advises the Council on issues that concern people with disabilities in Wellington. The group responds to issues raised by the Council and to concerns expressed by people with disabilities.

- **Wellington City Council City Housing:**

Wellington City Council owns 2304 social housing units in a variety of buildings. The majority of the units (around 60%) are concrete multi 4-11 storey blocks of units mostly centrally located within the city. Some smaller housing complexes of units are located in the suburbs. These tend to be 1 or 2 stories of timber frame or concrete construction and house mainly single pensioners.

The larger housing complexes are intended to be upgraded first. A large proportion of the Council's social housing units are bed sit or studio units of up to 30m². City Housing manages the properties providing tenancy management services.

The Housing Upgrade Project (HUP) is the Council's business unit tasked with upgrading the Council's social housing stock over a 20 year period. Many of these units were built in the 1960's or 1970's and were intended for single working men, employed on infrastructure projects throughout the city. Demands and requirements of today have changed considerably since then.

Wellington City Council entered into an agreement with the Crown in August 2007 to upgrade its social housing. The HUP is funded through a combination of Government funding of \$220M over the first 10 years of the project and Council's ring fenced social housing rental income for the second 10 years of the project.

Part of the agreement with Government is the maintenance of Council's social housing at similar levels for a minimum period of 30 years. Council is also required to upgrade its social housing stock to an agreed minimum standard.

That standard is based around providing housing which is 'safe, healthy, secure and an appropriate standard for modern living'.