

Research on Container Housing: A New Form of Informal Housing on Urban Temporary Land

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Abstract : Informal housing is a widespread phenomenon in developing countries. In many newly-emerging cities in China, rapid urbanization leads to an influx of population as well as a shortage of housing. Under this background, container housing, a new form of informal housing, gradually appears on a small scale on urban temporary land in recent years. Container housing, just as its name implies, transforms containers into small houses that allow migrant workers group to live in it. Scholars in other countries have established sound theoretical frameworks for informal housing study, but the research fruits seem rather limited on this small scale housing form. Unlike the cases in developed countries, these houses, which are outside urban planning, bring about various environmental, economic, social and governance issues. Aiming to figure out this new-born housing form, a survey mainly on two container housing settlements in Hangzhou, China was carried out to gather the information of them. Based on this thorough survey, the paper concludes the features and problems of infrastructure, environment and social communication of container housing settlements. The result shows that these containers were lacking of basic facilities and were restricted in a small mess temporary land. Moreover, because of the deficiency in management, the rental rights of these containers might not be guaranteed. Then the paper analyzes the factors affecting the formation and evolution of container housing settlements. It turns out that institutional and policy factors, market factors and social factors were the main three factors that affect the formation. At last, the paper proposes some suggestions for the governance of container housing and the utility pattern of urban temporary land.

Keywords : container housing, informal housing, urban temporary land, urban governance

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