PARKSTAD LIFESCAPE

using citizen participation as catalyser for a better life quality in Parkstad-Aachen

JANINE VAN BON
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Bachelor Thesis Landscape Architecture
Wageningen University and Research Centre - Faculty Landscape Architecture
Coordinator: Gabriëlle Bartelse - Supervisor: Daniel Jauslin
1st of july 2016

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If not further specified, all figures and photo's are drawn or moderated by the author

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to find out how citizen participation can be implemented in a project of the IBA Parkstad. Citizen participation is one of the spear-points of IBA Parkstad, yet it is not implied often. Analysing problems in the region, like shrinkage, demographic ageing, pressure on health care and decrease in social services, citizen participation would contribute to the life quality of the citizens in this area. This thesis stets an example of how citizen can be implemented in such a project. It conducts the three cycle view of design and research (Hevner, 2007) to explain the method used. Research by design structures the analysis, whereby the design follows research and research follows the design. The analysis results in a large scale biking network and small scale carréhoeve garden. The small-scale garden functions as citizen participatory platform, where various activities take place. Students of health care are accommodated in the carréhoeve and take care of the elderly people that spend their day here. The design substitutes the decreasing social services and stems demographic ageing in the region. It extends the social and physical cross-border networks. The thesis adds an extra dimension to the conduction of citizen participation, as it is implemented into a landscape design. Keywords: Landscape Architecture, Citizen Participation, Shrinkage, Transcultural Relations, Community Garden, Biking Network. Paper type: Bachelor Thesis

Content

1 Introduction

1.1 Thesis Introduction

This thesis is the final project in my Bachelor of Landscape Architecture and with this thesis I hope to graduate from Wageningen University. I have gained a lot of knowledge in these past three years. This knowledge varies from theoretical knowledge about the technical systems in the landscape and historical processes, to practical knowledge gained during projects. Not to forget, I gained a lot of general knowledge about issues that Wageningen University is focussing on. Previous projects have had an overall analyses and design focus. I would make an analyses, create a concept and eventually make a comprehensive landscape architectural design. However a thesis starts with a theoretical framework and demands a strong scientific foundation. In my thesis I will therefore combine the strong scientific foundation with the landscape analyses to eventually form a comprehensive and substantiated landscape design.

Fig. 1 project location

1.2 Subject Introduction

Worrying about population shrinkage has never been an issue in the Netherlands. Until recent, experts said that the population will keep on growing for at least two or three decades. Yet the first signs of growth stagnation are visible, some areas are shrinking and one area is even already dealing with a structural shrinkage; Parkstad Limburg (Elzerman & Bontje, 2015).

1.2.1 Location: Parkstad Limburg

Parkstad Limburg is a regional cooperation in the south-east of the Netherlands. It represents the bond of the municipalities Brunssum, Heerlen, Landgraaf, Kerkrade, Onderbanken, Simpelveld, Nuth and Voerendaal. The main economic focus of the region before 1965 was on the coal mining industry (Bontje, 2009). In 1965 the coal mines were closed which left 45.000 people unemployed (Elzerman & Bontje, 2015). The national government tried to support Limburg by subsidies, the region would need a new economical focus. The impulses were unfortunately only effective in the initial phase. The municipalities in the region Parkstad decided in the end of the 1990's to combine their strengths and positively influence the economy on a regional scale (Bontje, 2009). This was the beginning of the new region Parkstad. Their slogan 'from black to green' represented a region where the past would rather be forgotten than remembered and no references were made to the mining industry. Most of the mines had already been demolished and only little visible evidence is left. In contrast to the economic, cultural and social scars the mines left. Parkstad has been trying to manage the shrinkage ever since and a lot of initiatives were made, so far unsuccessful (Bontje, 2009).

1.2.2 Situation

The lack of economic growth and loss of employment caused a structural shrinkage. The structural shrinkage works as a catalyst and causes even more problems in the region, like loss of social services, the younger generation moving out and the changing identity of the region. The mining-settlements have always provided a safe haven and, together with the church, created local communities where people would support each other. The mines are closed and the influence of the church is decreasing, which means that the region will have to create support from new communities (Elzerman & Bontje, 2015).

Another issue is the demographic ageing in the Netherlands and especially in the Parkstad area. In comparison to the rest of the Netherlands, the area copes with low birth rates and high death rates (Garssen, 2011). Students and start-ups do not find enough opportunities in the area and a lot of people are moving to the border areas in Germany. These developments put a lot of pressure on the health care and cause a decrease

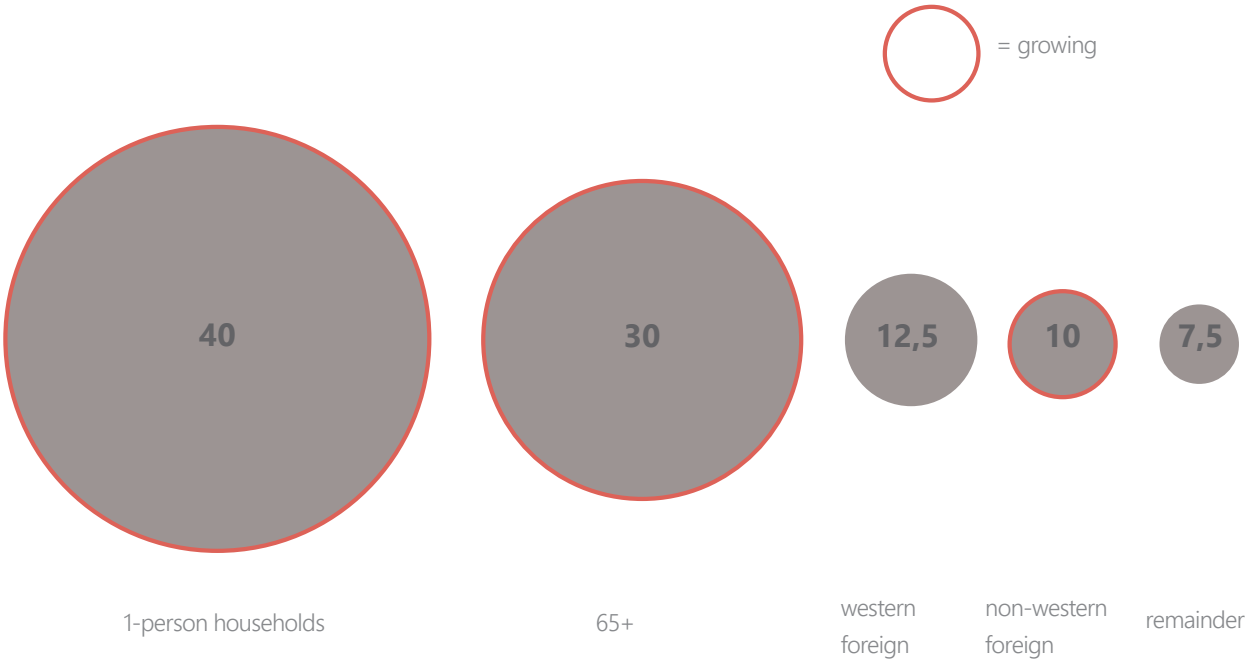


Fig. 2 population prognosis Parkstad 2040 %, source: de Jong & Verwest, 2009

of available facilities in the area (de Jong & Verwest, 2009). These developments can be find figure two, which describes the demographic developments in the area. We see that the group of elderly people is growing (de Jong & Verwest, 2009).

Not only the area Parkstad is coping with a change in demographic structure. The region of Aachen, especially the border area, is confronted with demographic ageing. The slinking birth-rate and a general decreasing population causes the middle generation to not be the dominant group anymore as a demographic shift to an aged population is currently taking place (Schirra-Weilrich, 2006). Both areas have to cope with shrinkage and ageing, which enlarges the pressure on social services and facilities. This is a major problem in the area for the elderly people living here. They are less mobile and therefore more dependent on what is close by.

1.2.3 IBA

Parkstad Limburg has accepted the process of shrinkage and handles it pragmatically (de Jong & Verwest, 2009). Their plan is to create new impulses that can improve the local economy. They strive for a better mutual connection between the current residents and Parkstad; to counteract the shrinkage in the future (de Jong & Verwest, 2009). Another focus of the municipalities is on how they can activate the inhabitants and businesses to initiate their own projects. Yet, there is not much knowledge and experience available. This is why the municipalities of Parkstad decided to let an IBA take place in the area (Koomen, Westerink, & Nedkov, 2014).
IBA stands for Internationale Bau Ausstellung and was first introduced in Germany. It is an organisation that does not build, but hosts a process. In this process, various organisations and businesses send in small-scaled projects, which are eventually formed into a network of projects. Specific conditions were set up that fit into the area's image; energy city, flexible city and recycle city. The national government is not involved, so the focus will also be on the smaller scale, citizen-participation and renewable projects and initiatives (Koomen, Westerink, & Nedkov, 2014).

1.2.3 Citizen Participation

In the projects that were sent in to the IBA, the spear-points are well represented. Yet the implementation of citizen participation is less employed. Citizen participation is a valuable method for improving the quality of the physical environment and has a lot of benefits during the process as well as in the outcome of a project (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990). Citizen participation can help with upgrading governing, improving services in the region, help to build up knowledge and awareness of participants and boosting the relationship between citizens and the municipality (Danks Fotolab, Blomberg, & Fidler, 2013). It helps transcending the barriers to effective policy, which allows administrators to explain their reasons for pursuing policies that were unpopular at first (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004). It increased interaction between citizens and the municipality and works as a transforming tool for social change, which can benefit the Parkstad (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004).

Citizen participation can even function as a cost reducing tool, when citizens would for example take responsibility for maintenance of public green (Westerink, Salverda, van der Jagt, & Breman, 2012). Citizen participation is one of the spear-points of the IBA and could be very beneficial for current situation in Parkstad. In figure three we can see that not many projects actually integrate citizen participation. This is an interesting challenge, which directly leads to the objective of this thesis; develop an implementation of citizen participation that can be used in a project of the IBA.

IBA projects implementing citizen participation

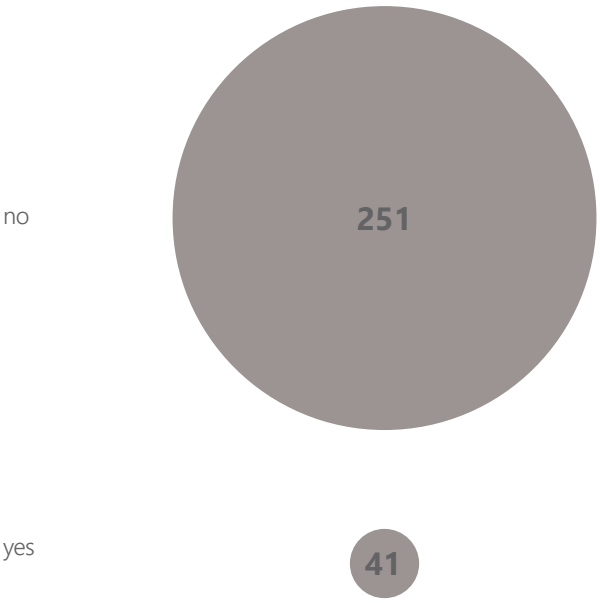


Fig. 3 projects implementing citizen participation

1.3 Objective, Research Questions and Significance

1.3.1 Objective

The objective of this thesis is to show how citizens can be activated to participate in a project of the IBA Parkstad.
In the time that this thesis was written, I brought several visits to the area. During these visits, I had conversations and discussion with different people from the area, both Dutch and German, younger and older, student and non-student. This gave me a comprehensive representation of the area. Something that stood out was that all citizens from the area are fond of it. Most of them were proud of their region and some did not ever want to leave. It gave me the confidence that creating a project that builds on citizen participation will work and have a positive influence on the outcome of it. By setting this example and making it tangible, hopefully more designers will implement citizen participation in their project as well. I will try to show how citizen participation can positively influence a design project and how it can improve the life quality of citizens in the region of Parkstad and Aachen.

1.3.2 General Design Question

How can citizen participation be successfully implemented in a project of the IBA Parkstad in the area between Heerlen and Aachen, using landscape design as a tool, whereby citizens are activated to participate in the project?

1.3.3 General Design Question

1. Which people live in Parkstad now and how will the demographic development be?
2. Why would people be interested in engaging in a participatory process?
3. Which similar projects use citizen participation and are successful? Why were they successful?
4. How can citizens be activated to participate in a project?

1.3.4 Design Description and Method

In this thesis I search for principles to activate people to participate in a project. This will be done using design from a landscape architectural point of view. I will use the project initiated by DGJ Architects as case study for my design. The concept of this project is to develop a regional biking network and transform a vacant building into student housing, whereby a community garden design has to be realized. The concept focusses on inter-cultural transitions and the use of a vacant building as student housing.

I will employ the Three Cycle view of Design and Research (Hevner, 2007) to explain the method used(figure 4). The key concept in this flowchart is the cycle of Research by design. The design is based on research and further research follows by designing. All three cycles are connected with each other and there is a continuous reflection between them. Research by design substantiates other cycles and should be continuously referred to.

1.3.5 Significance

Citizen participation is an acknowledged and contemporary tool in the world of planning and design. The implication in a landscape architectural project is less explored. One could say that the IBA is good example of this. The IBA aspires to integrate citizen participation, but this seems absent in the outcome. This project can show how to integrate citizen participation into a project of the IBA and can even be a reference for projects outside of the IBA. Most important, it will reinforce the position citizens in Parkstad and allows them to interact, interfere and actively participate within their own region.

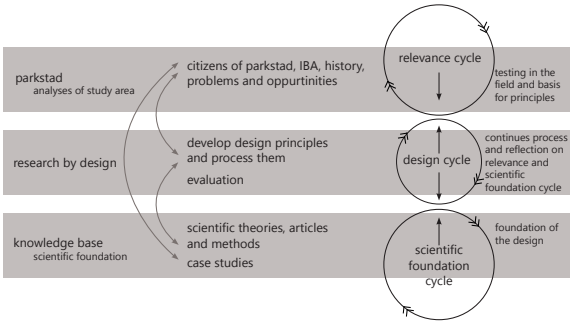


Fig. 4 three cycle view of design and research

Fig. 5 closed railway track near Kerkrade

2 Analysis

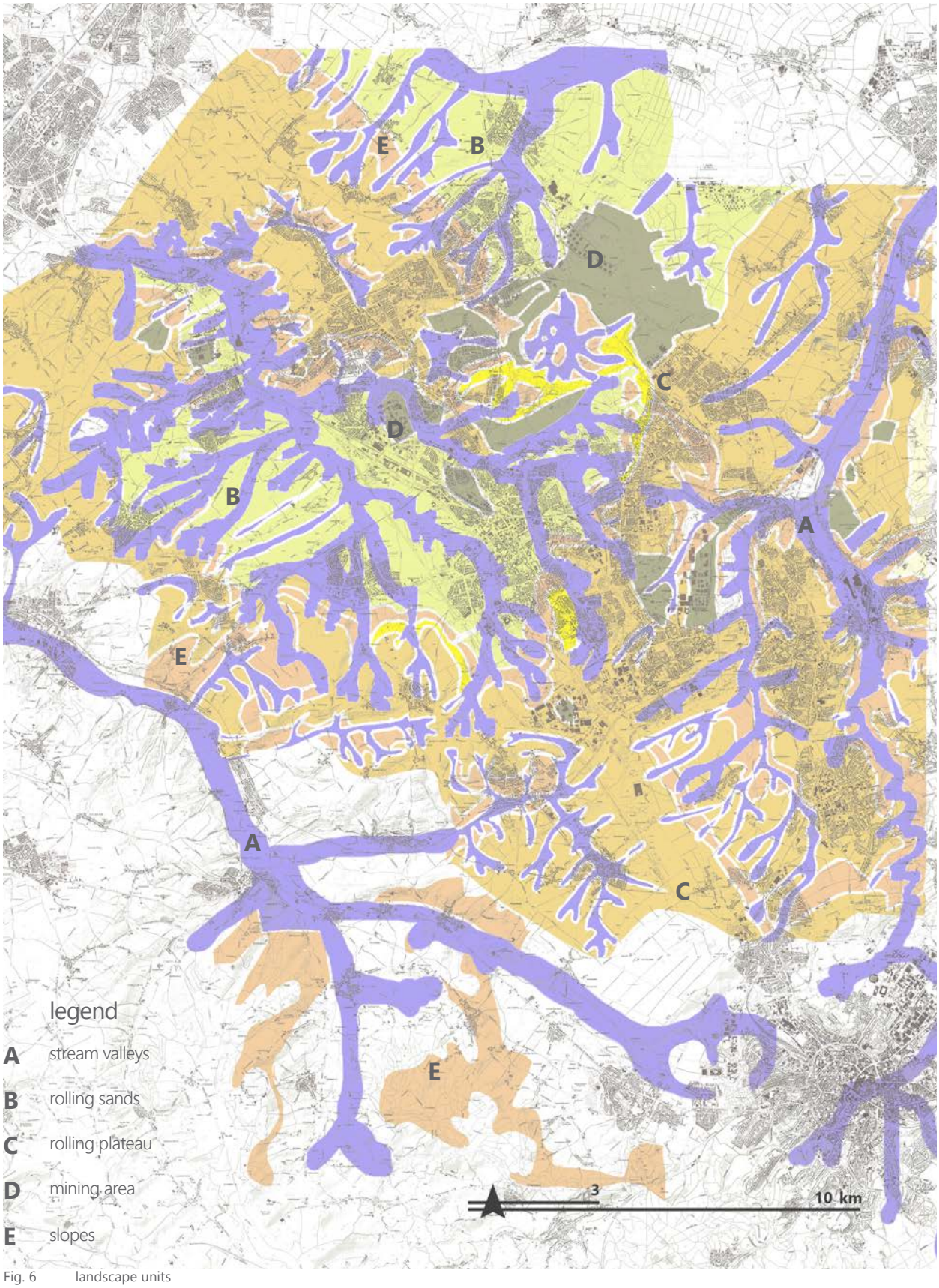


Fig. 6 landscape units

2.1 Landscape analyses

To design the biking network from a landscape architectural point of view, one must strive for functionality but also take the landscape into account. A landscape can be a mirror which educates inhabitants about their own history and culture (Kerkstra, Vrijlandt, de Jong, & Houwen, 2007). The landscape in south Limburg is for mostly defined by löss, the Meuse-terraces and interesting gradients. It is one of the few hilly landscapes in the Netherlands, which makes it unique and therefore highly appreciated.

2.1.1 Landscape Units

The area is a northern tendril of the Ardennes-Eifel mountains with rock-formations originating from the Paleozoic and Mesozoic. The well know chalk and marl are the result of these formations and erosion made them visible. From the Holocene and onward, the river the Meuse had a vast influence on the landscape. The river has changed its flow constantly while cutting through the landscape, leaving terraces of different gradients. These notches were later covered by an aeolian process during the Pleistocene, löss deriving from the at that time dry north sea. Löss is an aeolian deposition consisting of microscopic grains of silt and chalk. This specific composition is what makes soils in the south of Limburg extremely fertile and very suitable for agriculture. The Meuse constantly changed its course slightly to the west, leaving traces as it flows. This makes the terrace in the south-east of Limburg, where the Parkstad is located, the oldest and highest.

If we look at this area in the map in figure 6, we see that many more landscape units occur. The streams have been digging out valleys, leaving a dendritic formation in the landscape. It depends on the specific site conditions if these have a great or small shaping effect on the landscape. In the area of Parkstad three streamvalleys can be distinguished as; the wormdal, the geul and the geleen. These stream valleys formed the specific landscape units as the plateau's, slopes and streambeds.
The plateau's are flat or rolling, which means that there is a small relief, and are surrounded by the slopes. They can be found on highest grounds. Their size and shape is dependent on how much erosion took place. In Parkstad the plateau's are smaller and pointier due, more erosion took place here in comparison the rest of Limburg. The land-use on these plateau's is mostly agriculture and the oldest villages were established here. In Parkstad we see that both Landgraaf and Kerkrade were built on a plateau.

The slopes form the connection between the higher plateau's and lower valleys. Characteristic about the slopes is that here, the old geologic dispositions are visible. The steepness of the slopes is dependent on the type of stone. The combination of relief, löss and agricultural pressure caused the slopes to erode fast. 'Holle Wegen' (hollow roads) or 'graften' are the result of this. The land-use on the steaper slopes is meadow or forest when agriculture is not possible. The shallow slopes can be used as agricultural land. They are well-drained and it was very popular during the Roman period and the middle ages to settle here (Kerkstra, Vrijlandt, de Jong, & Houwen, 2007).
The mining areas are related to the cultural development of the landscape. They are a landscape unit on their own, as they have changed the landscape extremely. Although the mining areas are not as visible as they were 50 years ago, they still left their traces, like mine-hills and old shafts. Villages started to grow around these areas, as the mines needed a lot of employees. Nowadays, the land-use in the mining areas is mostly nature, as the Parkstad started to change the black mining areas to green nature or park.

2.1.2 Residential History

The first traces of settlements in the region Parkstad – Aachen date back until 300.000 years ago. In the beginning of the Holocene, the climate started to change and the first farmers began to settle in the area. In this period, the landscape changed drastically. New farming systems started to develop and forests declined due to chopping. The first valleys were cultivated, while the plateau's remained untouched.

The Roman roots started to develop around 50 BC when Julius Caesar conquered the region. One of the most prominent elements still visible today are the roads built in this time. The Via Belgica, for example, was an east-west orientated road that connected the area with what is now Belgium and Germany. This economic artery forms the basis of the trading in the area and area's close by in Belgium and Germany. In figure 7, the typical Roman road grid can be seen. One road would north-south orientated and the other east-west. A town centre would be located at the crossing of these roads. The Romans cultivated the landscape further and for the first time, people built on these plateau's. During the denouement of the Roman period, the population started to shrink.

During the middle ages this shrinkage is counteracted as the population grows rapidly. Yet the plateau's remain uninhabited. Most villages settle along the Meuse and in the valleys, seen in figure 8. The soils in these valleys are fertile and thus easy to cultivate. The increasing population caused the plateau's to be cultivated as well. The manorial system was employed during the middle ages, which gave the economic and social power to a landlord. Simultaneously with the cultivation of the plateau's, ranches developed into closed farmsteads. These farmsteads consisted of a courtyard surrounded by buildings and mostly had one entrance. Typical about these medieval settlements, castles and forts is that they are indirectly surrounded with agricultural lands and directly by orchards and evolve along the rivers and stream valleys. During the middle ages, the region was ravaged by wars and conflicts and fell into many hands.

After this unstable period, the industrial revolution dominated the landscape. The interest in coal was present early as the Romans already used it to heath their houses. The Moncks of the abbey Rolduc made the first excavation, but it was only until the industrial revolution, that the mining process was fortified and had a great visible impact on the landscape. The infrastructure developed and the green landscape changed into an industrial region. The region got so dependent on the mining industry that the impact was huge when the mines closed in 1965, as described in the first chapter. (Demir, 2015)

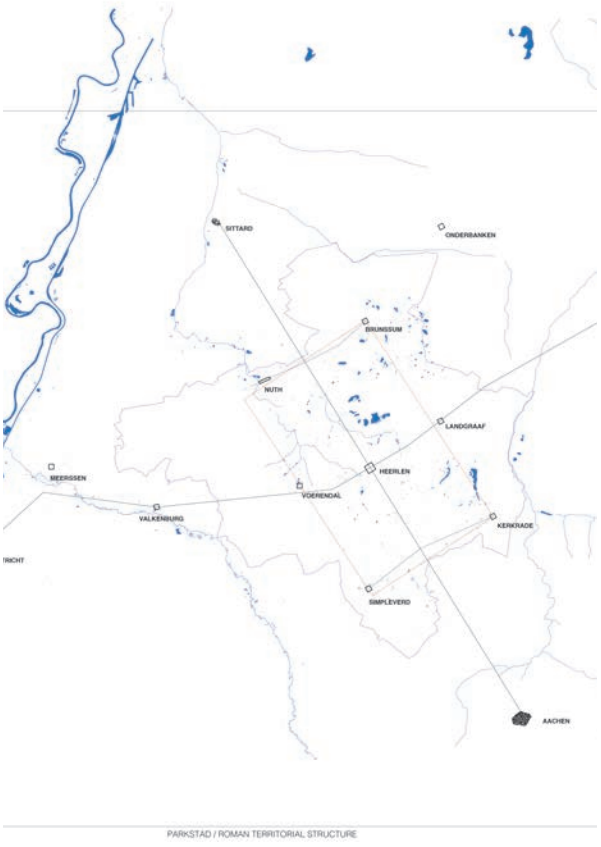


Fig. 7 roman structure, source: IBA (2015)

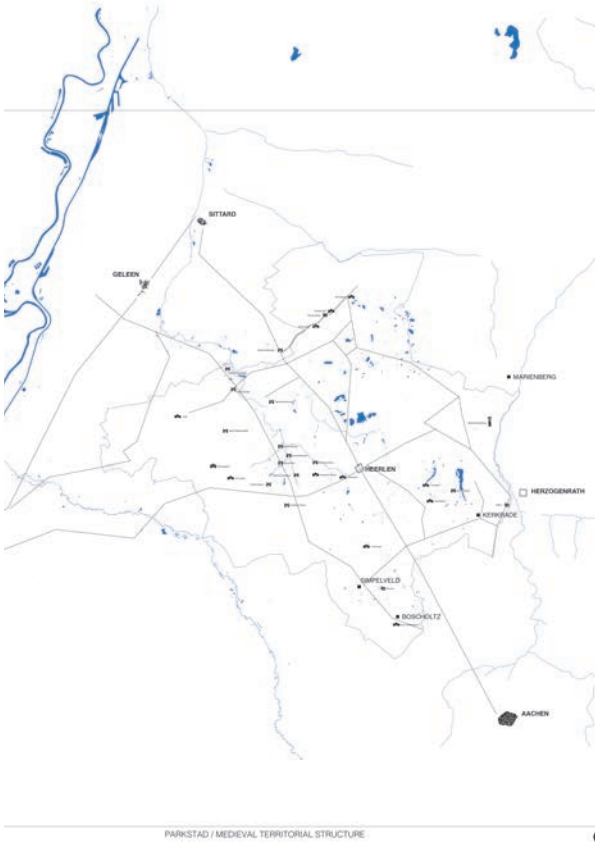


Fig. 8 medieval structure, source: IBA (2015)

2.1.3 The Border Area

In order to make a cross-border design, it is important to understand the concept of a border and the historical developments of this border. This will be described in the following chapter about the border area.

A community is divided in members that share common values, norms and goals. These values, norms and goals often arrive from a shared historical background on which the community grew (Ehlers, 2001). In both the Roman times and the middle ages, the area shared a rich comprehensive history. The region extended to both Germany and Belgium. being a centre of trading and even the centre of Europe, when Charles the great had his throne in Aachen (Houwen & Faber, 2000). Looking at this shared history, one could assume that a strong alliance exists in the region Parkstad and Aachen. But, this is not the case, as consequences of previous events are still present in the region nowadays (Ehlers, 2001).

A border has always played an important role in the formation of a national identity. Nationalism arising from the late eighteenth century had left people for mostly oriented on their own state and identity (Bouwens, 2004). This was not the case in the region of Parkstad and Aachen. The border between Aachen and Heerlen was defined at the congress of Vienna in 1814/1815, when the Netherlands and Prussia drew a line between the region. The separation did not directly lead to a cultural separation of the two. Long, German stayed a common language in the now Dutch Kerkrade and people still felt a connection in many ways. During the first World War, the border became physical as the Germans built a barbed wire entanglement along the border. The second World War strengthened the border feeling and people started to feel a social and cultural border due to anti-German feelings. This was a completely new phenomenon (Ehlers, 2001).

The mining era renewed the economic and social connection of border region, as Dutch commuters started crossing the border to work in the mines. Most of these commuters became unemployed later, as the mining industry collapsed and the economic market in South-Limburg was not able to provide them with work either. The downfall of the mining industry caused a huge unemployment in both regions and the unemployment rate in the South of Limburg was twice as high in comparison to the national percentage. In the first half of the 1980s one could say that both regions were characterized by an economic crisis and commuting lost most of its relevance to the South of Limburg. In 1976 the Euroregion Meuse-Rhine was founded, which covers the southern part of the Dutch Limburg, the region of Aachen and the Belgian provinces of Limburg and Liege. The motive: to restore cross-border ties and promote the integration of the border population (Bouwens, 2004).

In the past year, different projects have been initiated to restore this cross-border region. Initiatives like the reconstruction of the Neustrasse in Kerkrade, a cross-border street, or the Eurode Business Centre, which is located on the border. These initiatives had to recreate a common identity. By placing monuments, or example, citizens were reminded of their shared history. Because in the end, shared characteristics, culture and social value is what binds people and is thus where the opportunities lay (Ehlers, 2001).

Fig. 9 former toll-house which was in use during the second world war, right on the border of Heerlen and Aachen

2.2 Citizens and Participation

2.2.1 Why engaging in a participatory process?

On could say that citizens participating in projects is becoming a hype. But, assuming that this will simply happen is insufficient. The underlying reason why citizens nowadays are trying to be active and involved within their community is a necessary aspect to describe and will therefore be described in this chapter.

The European Union influenced governmental processes, which are now integrated in a European policy. This causes less politicians to represent more citizens, in comparison to the past. The influence of the European Union contributes to a declining engagement of citizens in the democracy and makes it even more important to create 'smaller democracy's' (Westerink, Salverda, van der Jagt, & Breman, 2012). This is a push factor for citizens to participate in these processes.

Furthermore, the position of the citizen has changed. The western society is individualizing. We are recognizing our individual self and thinking about our own needs. This causes a 'cultural demand' to fill in our own lives, take part in something, and have control on the current society. The increase of welfare fortified this process.

One of the things that might cause a more direct citizen participative project is the informalization of the municipality. Municipalities nowadays are less distanced and more accessible. Social media also plays a role in this, as one can easy express their opinion (Elderink, 2015). Citizens do not by default accept messages from the municipalities and start their own investigation. They are triggered by social media and online developments, like forum's and platforms (Peters, Schalk, Meijneken, Mensinga, & Voutz, 2012). One could say thatt a more informal attitude of the municipalities, breaks a barrier and people feel more free to speak up (Elderink, 2015).

In addition to this, the insecurities of the past have vanished and people nowadays not only have the ability to make their own choices, but also want to do this. Organising something ourselves is now worth something (van Dam, During, & Salverda, 2008). Plus motives of actually joining a participatory process are growing due to changing situations like shrinkage (Elderink, 2015).

We can conclude, that several developments in the western society have triggered citizens to participate in governmental processes. In the study of Dansk Fotolab, Bomberg and Fidler (2013) four motives of citizens to participate in governing processes are described, reflecting on the changing society. Citizens want their relation with the government to be better and want to have more control. They, for example hope ,for better governing to achieve legitimacy and better decisions. Citizens thereby hope for better services to increase efficiency and quality, and create services that serves the requirements of the individual in a better way. Citizens want to gain knowledge and awareness and stand for better relations between citizens and the municipality (Danks Fotolab, Blomberg, & Fidler, 2013).

2.2.2 Activating citizens

Now that we have discussed the motive why citizens are participating in a project, we will have a closer look at how we can actually activate citizens to participate. Frequently, citizens have to be provoked to actually participate. This chapter will describe ways in how one can activate citizens to actually participate in a project.

The study of Dansk Fotolab, et al (2013) describes easy tools in how citizens can be activated to participate in a project. This study will for mostly be used as reference in this chapter, as this book represents a comprehensive part of the existing theories available on this topic. The design in this thesis will be from a landscape architectural point of view. A selection of five useful tools within this focus are therefore chosen. The possible application in the design is hereby also stated.

Fig. 10 meeting people in Forsterheide, Aachen

Operator analyses

''To enable a good dialogue it is important to find out early on which actors are concerned and thus important to include in the process" (Danks Fotolab, Blomberg, & Fidler, 2013). The analyses focusses on using different methods and tools for different actors to assure collaboration. The method can be a visit to the area and simply meeting people and ask them in which networks they are active in. The goals is to find out who the key persons in the area are, which resources actors have available and which authorities and societies are involved.

Due to the short duration of this thesis I will not be able to meet a great amount of people in the area. But, the preceding analyses of the area can help me estimate which actors are involved and how big their influences are.

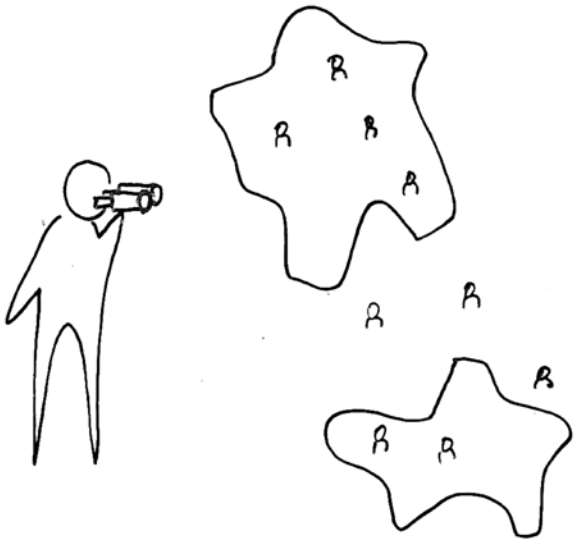


Fig. 11 operator analysis

The safari method

''The aim of this method is to emphasise what is exciting in an area and present it in an interesting way" (Danks Fotolab, Blomberg, & Fidler, 2013). The Safari Method is for mostly useful when starting a process. An arrangement can be made in where citizens can go on a small trip together in the area, to create an interest in the area.

The goal of this method is to invite citizens to experience an area, discover how interesting an area is and which opportunities it has. Within a landscape context, this method can therefore be translated into a symbolic trip. The citizens will either make the trip themselves or will be confronted with the highlights or opportunities of the area in a different way.

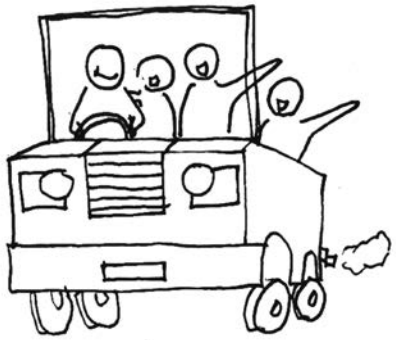


Fig. 12 the safari method

Local stories

''By telling an interesting story, interest and engagement is aroused" (Danks Fotolab, Blomberg, & Fidler, 2013). It arrives from research saying that if we listen, a better understanding is created than if we just see a project description. Similar to the safari method this tool is about experiencing the area and activating our feelings.

In a landscape architectural design this tool could be used in combination with the safari method.

Fig. 13 local stories

The photography method

´´Use photography and film to document and analyse the physical conditions, but also the process´´ (Danks Fotolab, Blomberg, & Fidler, 2013). Engaging participants in capturing their image of the area could be a prelude where qualities and shortcomings of the area can be discussed. It can show different but also similar opinions about the landscape and the area.

This method provides a landscape architectural focus on the design and can bring the landscape into the spotlight. The photos can thereby elicit reaction to a historical or social background. It allows citizens to reflect on the area where they live, which can be a useful tool in designing.

Landscape analyses

"Making an analyses of the landscape and its conditions is always a good starting point for a project" (Danks Fotolab, Blomberg, & Fidler, 2013). A landscape analyses provides a better understanding of the area, historically, socially and structurally. Within this analyses a discussion keeps taking place as the transparency of the analyses allows participants to comment and improve the analyses.

It is natural for a landscape architectural design to make a landscape analyses.

Conclusion

Looking at the aforementioned tools, a way of activating people can be concluded. The clue in these methods is showing citizens in which region they live and try to bind them with the area. First the area has to be closely analysed to find out which actors are involved and how the landscape was formed. This steps includes the historical analyses. The next step is to communicate this to the citizens of the area, whereby a sense of responsibility is created. If they feel this responsibility, the chance of them taking action when they feel this is needed, is higher. The chance of them participation in a project is therefore bigger.

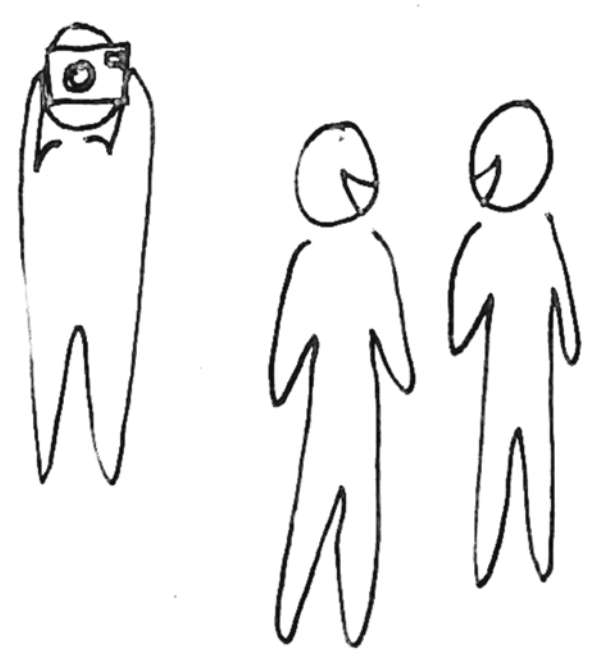


Fig. 14 the photography method

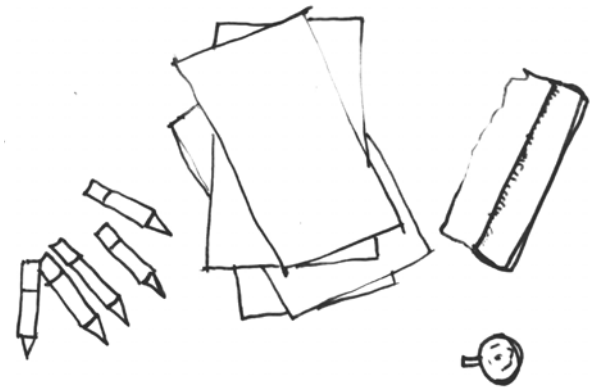


Fig. 15 landscape analysis

2.2.3 Case studies of citizen participation

To be able to integrate citizen participation into a project of the IBA, it is valuable to compare different projects that integrate citizen participation resembling area of Parkstad. In this report, three projects that implement citizen participation will be described and discussed. In the end a conclusion is be made in how the successes of these project could also be implemented in other projects.

Case study 1; health-cooperation Schaijk

Health cooperation Schaijk was initated by Stichting Belangenbehartigen Ouderen (BOL, non-profit organisation caring for elderly). The key elements in this project is providing a place where people can meet, create an information point and give support to and being supported by citizens. The municipality of Landerd in Schaijk hosted this project. The initiative was taken because there is no home for elderly people in the region. There are different actors involved in this project which all contribute to the project. Members, informal health-care groups, volunteers and participants keep working on mutual social contacts and connections. The bigger actors are BrabantZorg, Pantein, Rigom, Mooiland, the municipality and local doctors. They provide the main services in the project, thus making the space available and having the knowledge. BOL allowed professional organisations to be involved with the project from the start. The municipality subsidised the project and investigated the feasibility. After the assembly that officially established the health-cooperation, BOL appointed a board. People are using the health-cooperation to get information, advice or help with groceries and transport. It now has around 450 members and the amount is still growing. The community appreciates the meeting centre a lot. Key factors of success in this project are that the organisations actively looked for public support and the meeting centre. This created a physical meeting centre, strengthened the public support and can functions as alternative for disappearing services in the village (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten, 2016).

Case Study 2; Living room project of vulnerable elderly

The municipality of Oisterwijk is coping with ageing due to the high amount of elderly people living in the village. Joke Caspanni is the initiator of this project. Her idea was that all citizens in the area have to take responsibility to prevent the exclusion of elderly people. In this project centre is realized where elderly people can ask volunteers to help them by, for example, walking with them or doing groceries.

This project is held within the municipality of Oisterwijk. The motive for this project is the fast ageing in the area, which causes a lot of vulnerable elderly people. Elderly people have no place to go, as day-care is disappearing due to budgeting. The actors in the project are the Senioren Kennis Netwerk, ContourDeTwern, Stichting Inlooppunt Oisterwijk, de Parochiële Charitas, health and living centre de Vloet van Thebe and the municipalities. The structure of the actors in the project forms a very concrete basis. In this way, knowledge and experience could be actively connected and could lead to valuable solutions and results. The SKN, for example, gave a lot of practical input about realizing projects relevant to the society. The Parochiële Charitas arranged the location and subsidises the project, same as the municipalities. The health and living centre educates volunteers and the project furthermore has network of many other local volunteers and citizens. The project fur fills a strong need in the area and has grown in time. The experience, knowledge and the broad social network were crucial for the success in this project

Case Study 3; 'The easy communal gardens'

In this project, communal gardens were set up for children to use. Elderly people and other adults pass by to check on the children and to give advice. This projects is held with cooperation of the municipality of Culemborg. The project tries to integrate young children with elderly people. The project its actors are neighbours in the area. This group takes the initiative in the gardens and other activities. Other volunteers also help with these activities and there is a strong connection with the manager of the neighbourhood and other active organisations. There was a step by step process. The children helped with every step and a lot of communication was done through different types of social media's. The project is a big success and the project's targets were met. It helped when an expert on the area of plants was present. A fixed date or time in which the activities could take place, helped with the organisation and participation (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten, 2016).

Conclusion

Not every participatory project in the Netherlands can be analysed in this thesis. The conclusion is therefore based on the aforementioned case studies, whereby the credence will be that these projects can represent other participatory projects and can be a foundation for the later established principles of participation.

In all of case studies, public support was a very important factor. Public support allowed them to start the project and grow. People were interested and felt connected with the project and wherefore they started helping. I saw the meeting centre as another crucial factor in a citizen participatory project. The meeting centre brought people together and created a space for the participation. Other factors that brought success were the importance of access to knowledge and experiences and a broad social network. The broad social network strengthens the possibility of having knowledge and experiences of people. It brings people together and creates public awareness. Experts made the community garden project more solid and convincing, plus we see that a community garden is a way to bring people closer together on itself. I will try to include as many as these elements in my design. This will help me ensure success and create support with citizens.

Fig. 16 community garden maintained by students living in a carréhoeve in Horbacher, Aachen

3 Concept

3.1 Principles of Participation

In the analyses, I consulted different references regarding citizen participation. These references provided information on the theoretical background of citizen participation, different tools and ways of using citizen participation. These findings, however, can not be directly applied into a design. These findings first have to be translated into design principles. These participatory principles are explained in the following chapter and are based on the foregoing analyses.

Be conscious about the region

Creating consciousness about people their region helps them realize in which area they live, how this area came to existence and which problems are occurring. It bounds people to their region and creates a sense of pride and therefore responsibility for the region. This triggers them to defend their region and help when there is a problem, as they will feel personally affected.

Create public support

Public support is needed to actually start the project. Addressing current problems that are felt by a greater part of the population will hereby help reaching a vast amount of people.

Create a social network

A social network contains a certain ambiguity. At one hand it means that a social network is helpful when a project is initiated. It makes sure a vast amount of people is reached and brings in experience and knowledge. At the other hand it is also necessary to create a social network. A social network will bound people together whereby those people might even initiate a second project. To build a social network, people have to be given a chance to meet.

Know the actors

To initiate a participatory project, it is important to know the actors in the area. Not only the participants, but also organisations who can help or the municipality. These actors can provide a social network or give subsidies and are therefore extremely valuable. One should not ignore the actors in a region.

Fig. 17 design principle be concious about the region

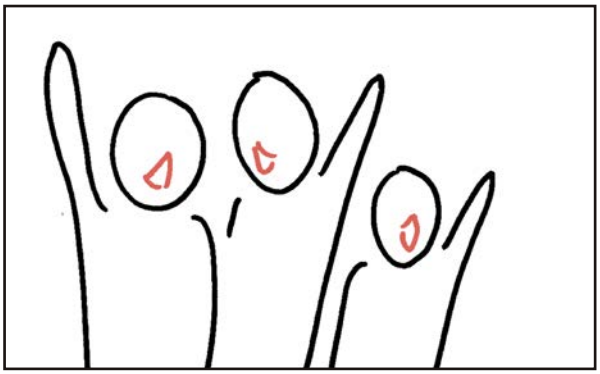


Fig. 18 design principle create public support

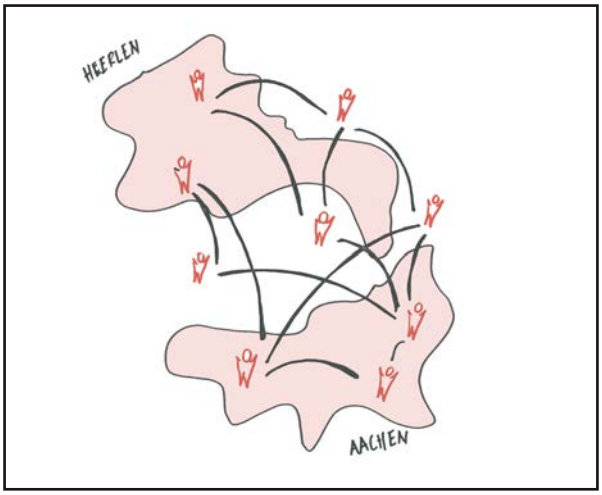


Fig. 19 design principle create a social network

Fig. 20 design principle know the actors

Find a meeting centre

A meeting centre is important as it provides a physical place where people can meet. It is the foundation of the other participatory principles.

Bring in knowledge and experience

It is meaningful within a project to have knowledge and experience. This improves the credibility of the project and makes it more convincing.

Create a landscape experience

Experiencing the landscape is comparable to creating consciousness. It communicates a sense of shared history and pride. People will feel more responsibility for the area.

Use a community garden as tool

A community garden helps, like the meeting centre, the process of people physically meeting. It is a way to stimulate people to visit a place. A joined activity can then help in the bounding process. It is closely related the principle of the meeting centre, but it adds an activity to it. This activity helps the binding process of citizens.

All these participatory principles can be used individual, but do strengthen each other. It is therefore advised to employ them in combination with other participatory principles

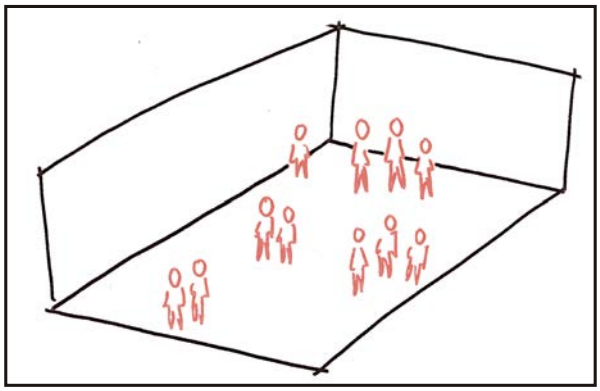


Fig. 21 design principle find a meeting centre

Fig. 22 design principle bring in knowledge and experience

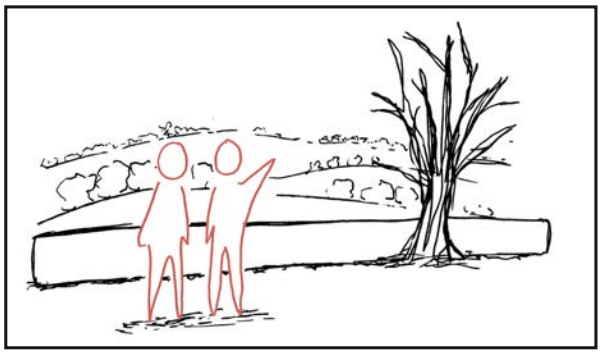


Fig. 23 design principle create a landscape experience

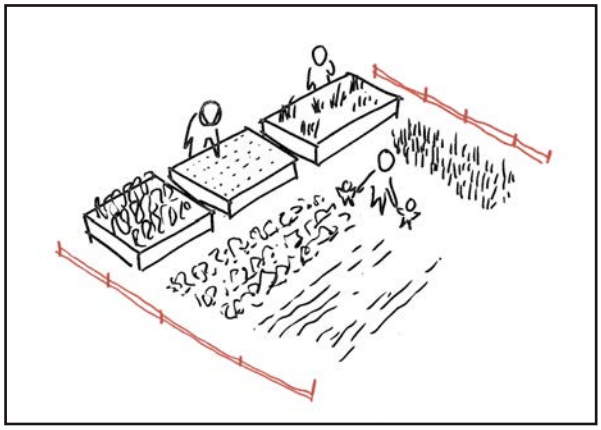


Fig. 24 design principle use a community garden as tool

3.2 Concept and Design perspective

The analyses results in the concept of my design. This concept is described below and will be the foundation of my design.

In the analyses, I created participatory principles that stimulate citizen participation. Public support is necessary to start the project and trigger it to grow. Working with current problems in the region, that affect many people, creates this support, as most people are addressed with this. The tools of Dansk Fotolab et al showed us again that is it necessary to understand historical, social, and landscape aspects of the area. IBA Parkstad has a couple of issues and problems caused by the closure of the mines in the past. When the mines closed, the economic strength decreased and structural shrinkage and ageing occurred. This put a great pressure on health care and one could say that this problem affects many people. A focus on elderly people and ageing in the area can therefore create the public support needed in the project. It can help in creating citizen maintained services to take pressure of the municipality and support an own community, for example the pressure on health care (Westerink, Salverda, van der Jagt, & Breman, 2012).

The book of Danks, Fotolab 2013 describes the importance of people being conscious of the area. People should in contact with their region. Furthermore a meeting place functions as foundation in a participatory project. It creates a platform where action can happen. Here, stories can be told, awareness is created and people are confronted with their region historically and socially. The way to invite people into the participatory project is to invite them here. The biking network can be used as a catalyst to physically invite people in an area.

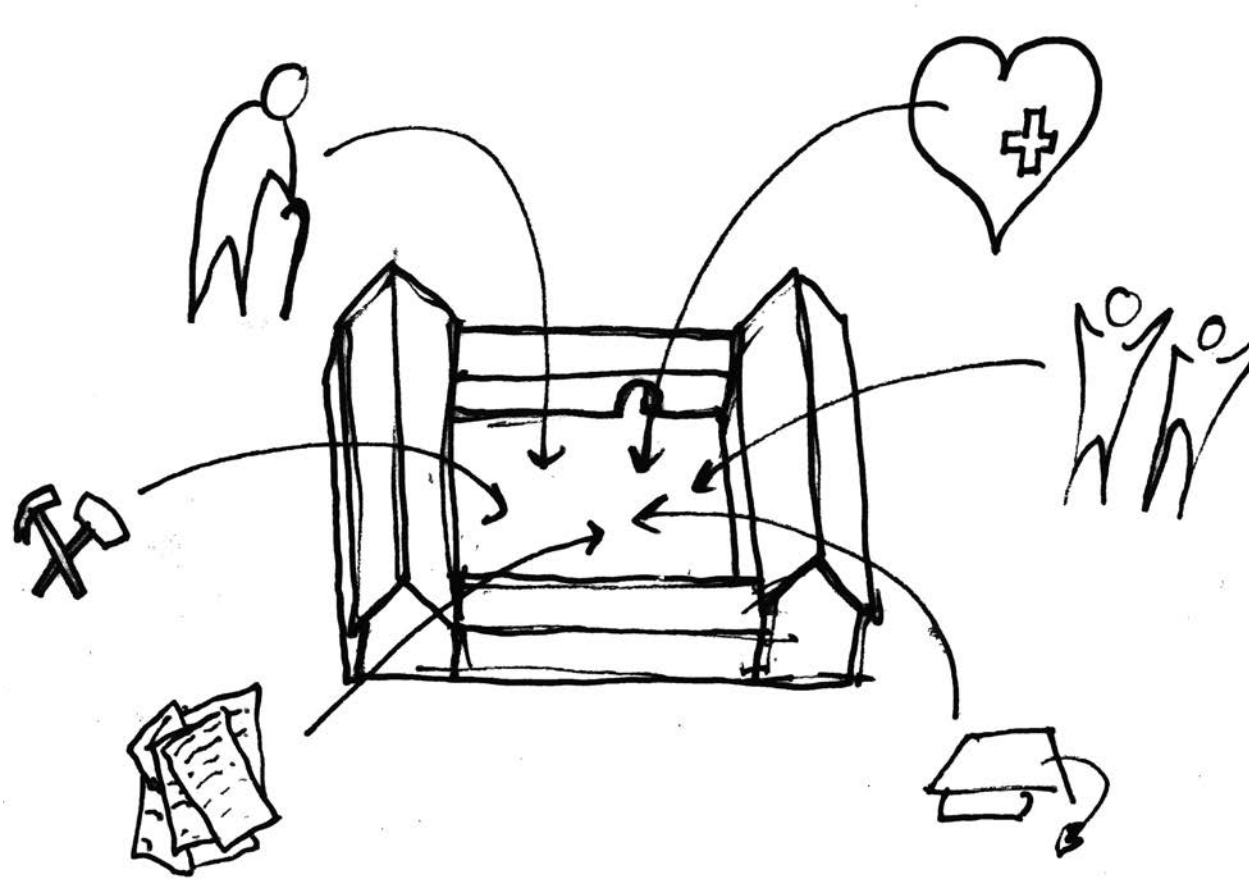


Fig. 25 concept drawing

The biking network creates a fast and safe connection between Heerlen and Aachen. It creates a save crossing between Heerlen and Aachen. The concept of this route is to improve the connection between Heerlen and Aachen. Along the route, a vacant building is re-used as student accommodation. Therefore student who are commuting between Aachen and Heerlen, are the target group. Though, commuters, (IBA-) visitors, schools or citizens, who feel like a nice bike ride should also be invited to bike here.

Juxtaposing the network with the meeting place makes the meeting place and thus the citizen participation visible. On top of this, a broad network of people and organisations makes more people aware of the problems in the region and invites them to help as well. Students who are going to live in the vacant building are already part of a broad network and can bring a great amount of knowledge. The meeting place and student housing strengthen each other. So, the vacant building could be both student housing and meeting place. But, connections with the rest of the region should also be made. A meeting place alone will not directly invite people to participate. The vacant building will therefore need a third dimension.

In the previous analyses the importance of being consciousness about one's landscape and experiencing and interacting with the landscape is mentioned. It would therefore be logical if this third dimension therefore brings a landscape experience. Based on other projects that interact with citizens and initiate citizen participation, the concept of community gardens came up. Community gardens are a popular medium to stimulate people to get in touch with their region both physically and socially. It is a tool applied in many other projects related to citizen participation and creates a landscape experience. In this way citizens are not only telling each other about their experiences, but the landscape provides an experience.

Thus, the concept is to make a design in which citizen participation can help carry the burdens of the municipality and the community. I will try to integrate the tools of citizen participation into a comprehensive landscape design that invites and activates citizens to join and strengthen their region. The vacant building can function as both student housing and day-care for elderly people. It is important for the students that are going to live here, to study in the field of health care or have an interest in it. This will bring knowledge into the project. The students can help with taking care of elderly people who are less mobile. The garden of this vacant building can function as participative platform for citizens of both Parkstad and the region of Aachen. A community garden can function as meeting place for school children, adults and elderly people who want to maintain a garden here and exchange knowledge and experience about gardening. Important is the integration of different age groups, in which the integration between students and elderly people stands central inside and around the house. Within the house organisations who are also focusing on local issues or problems can have a consultancy room here, so the credibility of the platform will be enlarged. The project is a substitute for the decreasing social services and improves the cross-border relation between the regions.

4 Design

4.1 The biking network

Before appointing the location of the student accommodation and participatory platform, the biking network has to be defined. This network works as catalyst in the design, where the actual connection of the two areas is made and the accesibility increased.

First, the users of the biking network have to be specified. A commuting network does not take detours and is as efficient as possible. The biking network should also have these qualities. Thus the objective is to create a fast and functional network. This network has to pass the most important points for students to go to. These points are: universities in Aachen and Heerlen, schools of health care and the central stations in Aachen and Heerlen. The other stations in the area are not included as the trains arriving on these stations always pass the central stations in Heerlen or Aachen before traveling further. These points are all plotted on the map (figure 26) and from this map the most efficient route is retrieved (figure 27).
As we zoom in on the biking network, one can see that it actually covers three different areas (figure 31). The first area is a historical stretched village in Heerlen. The second area represents the natural surrounding and cuts through an old

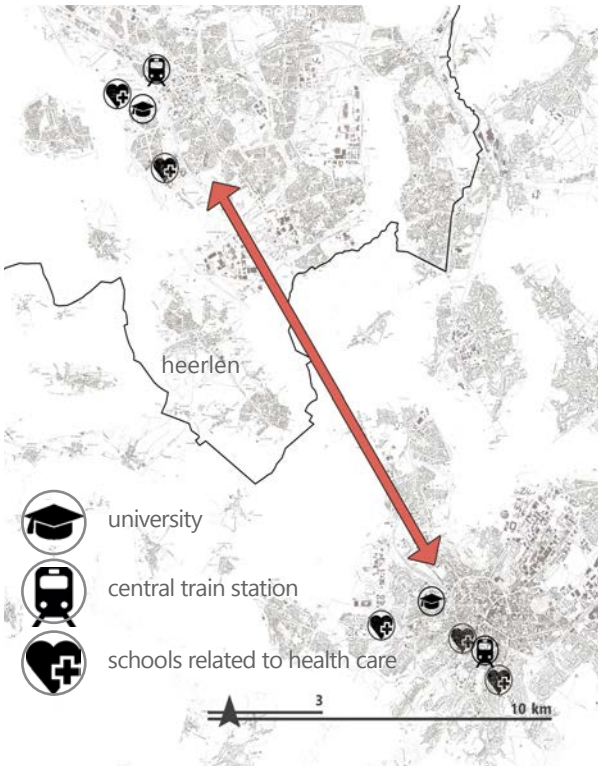


Fig. 26 biking network concept

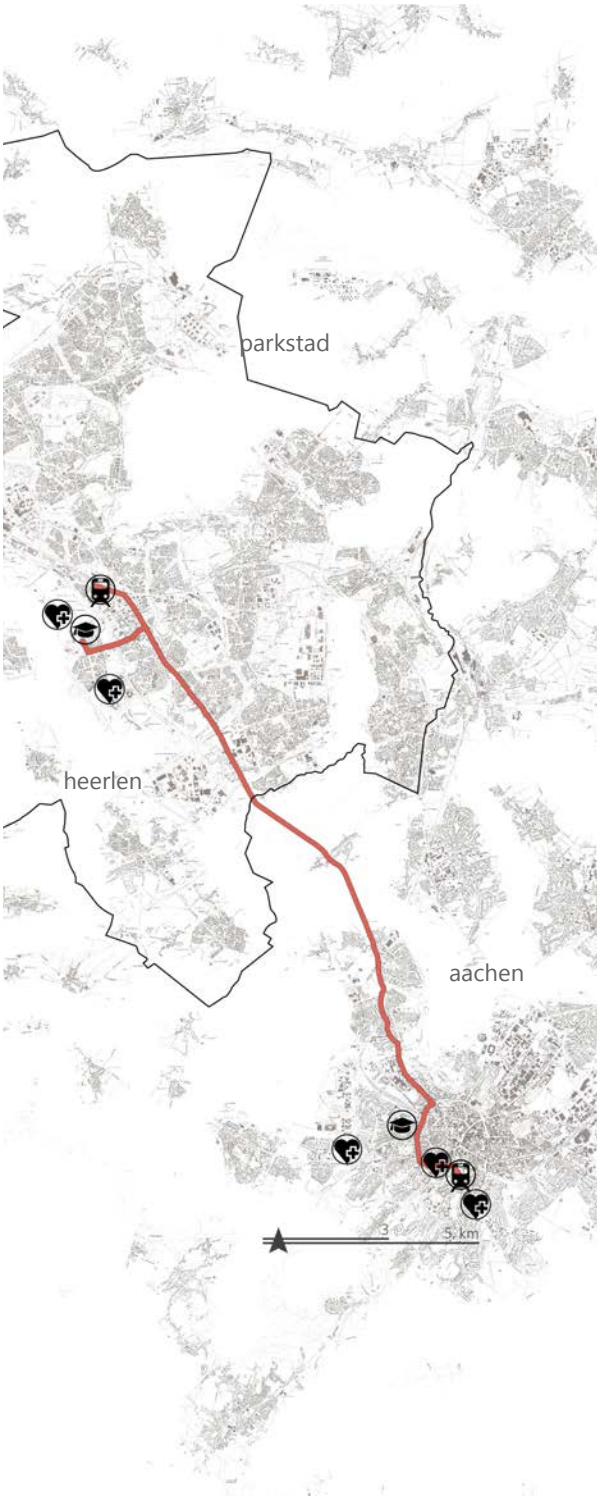


Fig. 27 structure map biking network

stream valley system, which has lost its function and is only noticed because of the quick changes in height. The third area passes the cityscape in Aachen. Area one and area three work as a funnel for area two, where the tuple of streets in the cities decline to one particular point. To achieve intercultural relations, the location of the student housing should central between Heerlen and Aachen and thus midway on the biking network. Area two is central and is most likely to pass, due to the funnel-effect. Area two will therefore be assigned as area where the students are accommodated. When looking at the infrastructure of the area, we see that the area is well connected. Several main roads pass the area and a new road is build along the border in Heerlen. The road in the centre is therefore only used by local traffic (figure 32). This is a good opportunity to stabilize the biking network. The function of the road could therefore be transformed into a biking road. In this road, bikers have priority and cars are guests and have to drive with a speed of 30 km/h. The norm of this phenomenon is 2:1, so the amount of bikers will have to be twice the amount of cars (Andriesse, 1998). Although this is not the case right now, the prospect of this happening in the future is positive and the rate could be met later on in the project. The distance of a biking road is now set on a maximum of one kilometre (Andriesse, 1998). However the road is much longer. The biking road therefore could be applied to smaller distances, for instance between the border crossing and the village of Horbacher.

Fig. 28 area one: stretched village in Heerlen, source: google earth (2016)

Fig. 29 area two: the country-side of Heerlen-Aachen, source: google earth (2016)

Fig. 30 area three: Aachen city-scape, source: google earth (2016)

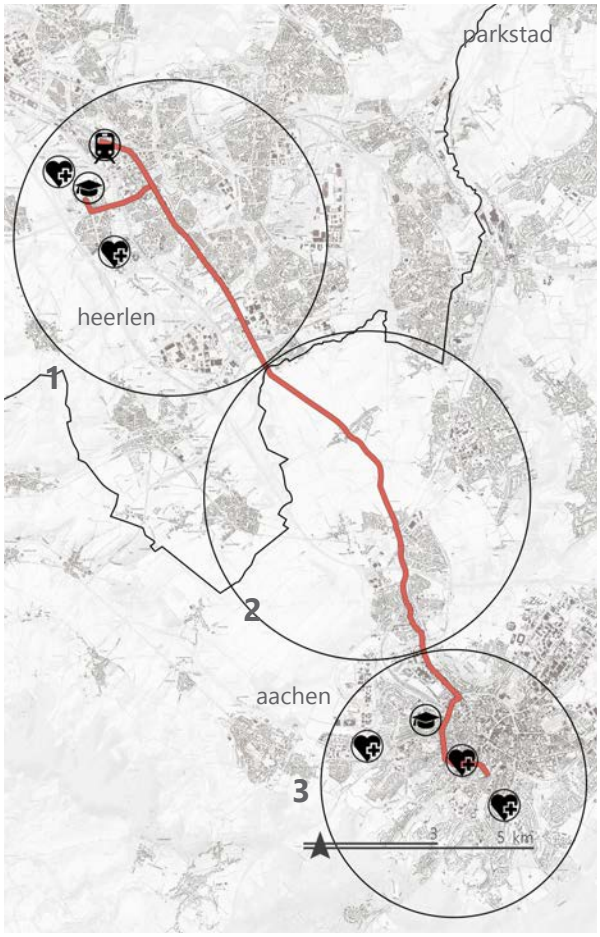


Fig. 31 three areas in biking network

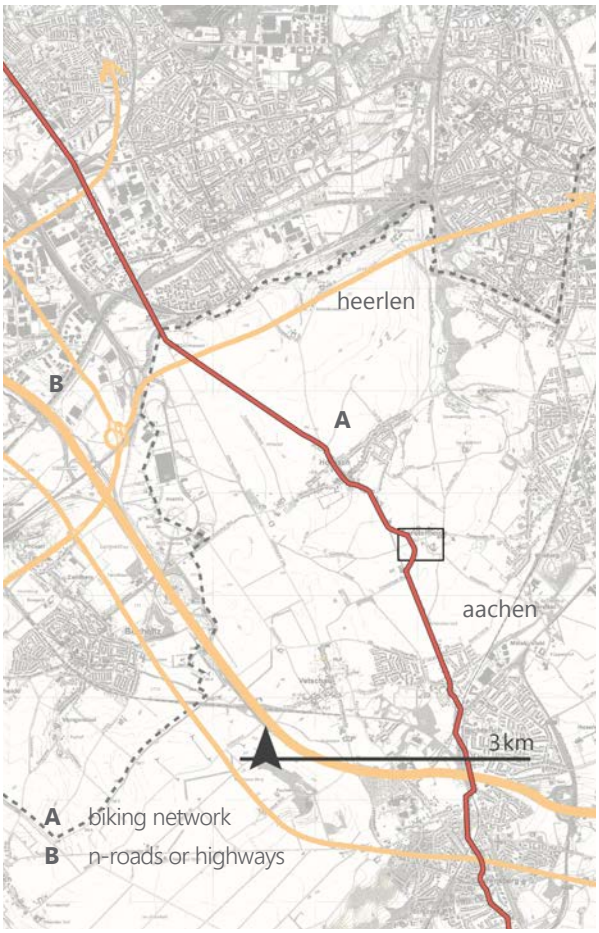


Fig. 32 accessibility infrastructure

Fig. 33 impression biking route, Horbacher straße Aachen

4.2 Small Scale Design

The vacant building used as student accommodation will be located in area two. The search for a location was done by visiting the place and searching on the internet for vacant buildings. In this area an old carréhoeve, dating from 1886, is for sale, in a small village called Forsterheide. This carréhoeve is central on the road and there is space around it. A carréhoeve is a building originally dating from the Middle Ages. These farms were typical for the whole region at that time. The carréhoeve represents a shared history and could therefore contribute to the cross-border relation.

On the map in figure 35, we see that the carréhoeve is located on a higher plateau in the landscape. The difference in height is about five meters due to the old streams that used to cross here. These have dried and the surrounding lands have all been shaped into agricultural lands. It is an open and widespread landscape, yet older settlements on the higher parts are not clearly visible. The landscape lacks a certain legibility.

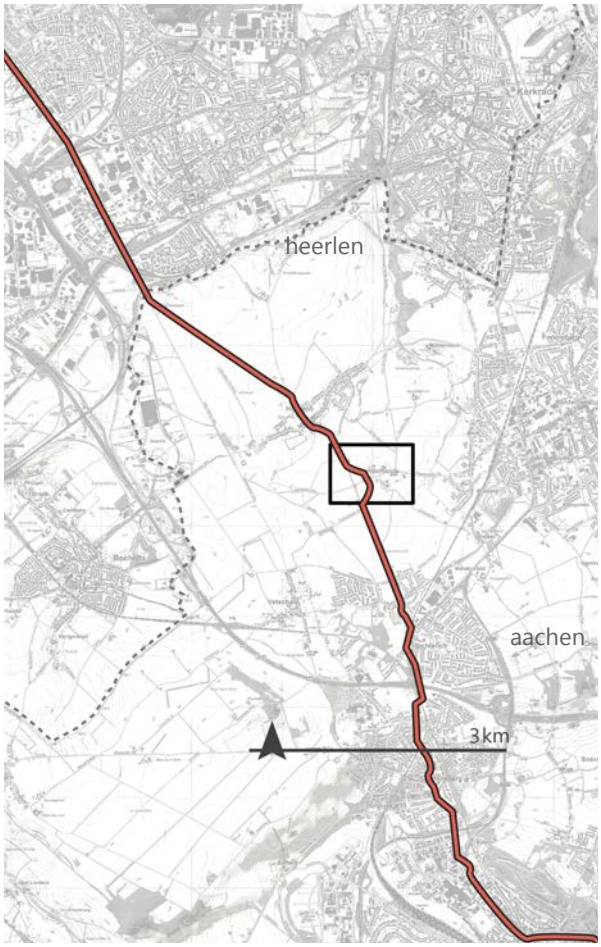


Fig. 34 location small scale design

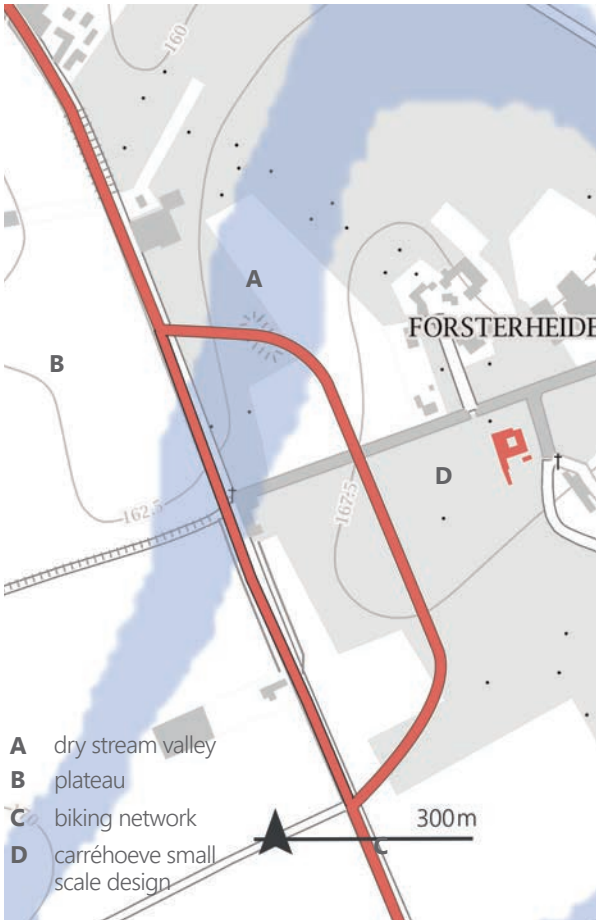


Fig. 35 location small scale design

Fig. 36 carréhoeve for sale, Forsterheide

4.2.1 Design Principles

To strengthen the arguments for the design of the carréhoeve I will use landscape design principles.

Design principle, Orchard on village edge

As mentioned in chapter 2.1, villages in the middle ages and the period after, used to be directly surrounded by an orchard. This orchard created a landmark, making these villages easy to recognize in the landscape of the countryside and it the landscape more readable. Plus, it is an interesting historical aspect deriving from a period where sustainability was a must rather than a choice. Brining the orchard back contributes to the landscape quality and it will therefore be a design principle for plot around the carréhoeve.

Design principle, Hedges along historical plots

Another typical historical aspect which is still visible in the landscape, are the hedges surrounding the smaller plots on the plateaus. These small plots characterize the landscape on the plateau's. Bringing back or strengthening the hedge-structure will therefore be the second principle used in the smaller scale design.

Design principle, Permaculture

A helpful tool that one can use within a farm-garden design is the concept of permaculture. Permaculture is a knowledge collection to create a sustainable land-use ecosystem whereby people are part of the ecosystem instead of only supervising it. It is an appropriate concept as it uses small-scale energy systems, which would fit the IBA's focus on energy landscape. Within permaculture, one can focus on many different compartments, but the focus is always on creating a system that is as efficient as possible (Hemenway, 2009). In this design, not the entire concept of permaculture will be reinforced. The concept will be adapted to suit the situation. The cycle will for example be adapted into the structure of the garden, as the concept of permaculture uses a zoning to make the garden as efficient as possible. The zoning goes from zone 0 to zone 5 and can vary in scale. The garden around the carréhoeve will represent zones 0 to 4. Zone zero is the centre of human activity, where the house is located. Zone one is the most intensive zone whereby the ecosystem is reliant on everyday care. This zone provides everyday products as herbs used for cooking and flowers. Zone two is less intensive and can be seen as a domestic production zone. Vegetables can be grown here on plots or in the greenhouses. This is also the storage place in the garden. Zone three is low intensive. Fruit or nut trees can be grown here. Zone four will be the least intensive zone for this specific garden design. It is a zone which hardly has to be managed. Grazers are hosted in this zone.

Thereby concept and structure of permaculture will also be applied on the function of health care within the small scale design. The most intensive health care will centred in and just around the house. The plots further away from the house will represent less intensive health care.

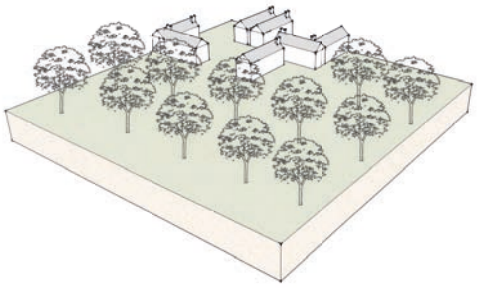


Fig. 37 design principle orchard on village edge

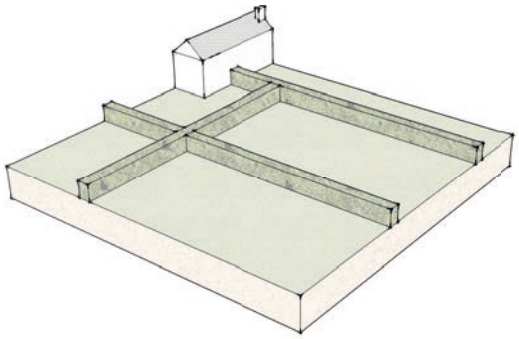


Fig. 38 design principle hedges along historical plots

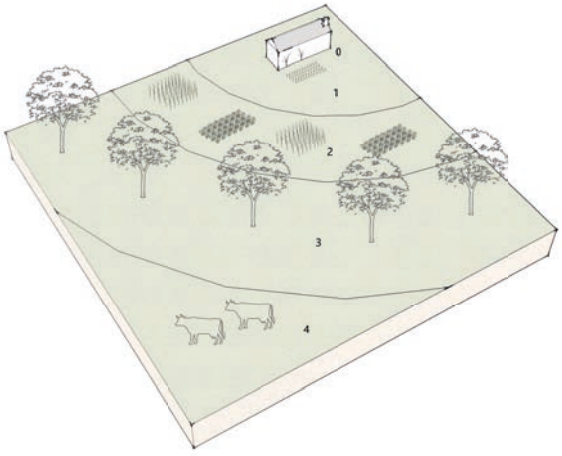


Fig. 39 design principle permaculture

Fig. 40 masterplan carréhoeve garden

house and small garden community and picking garden orchard

Fig. 41 overall-section through masterplan

E

4.2.2 Masterplan

The masterplan consists of different elements. The structure is based on the historical hedge pattern which is highlighted by actually adding the hedges into the design. Almost all of the hedges in the site are not higher than one meter, so one can always understand where to go, even when sitting in a wheelchair.

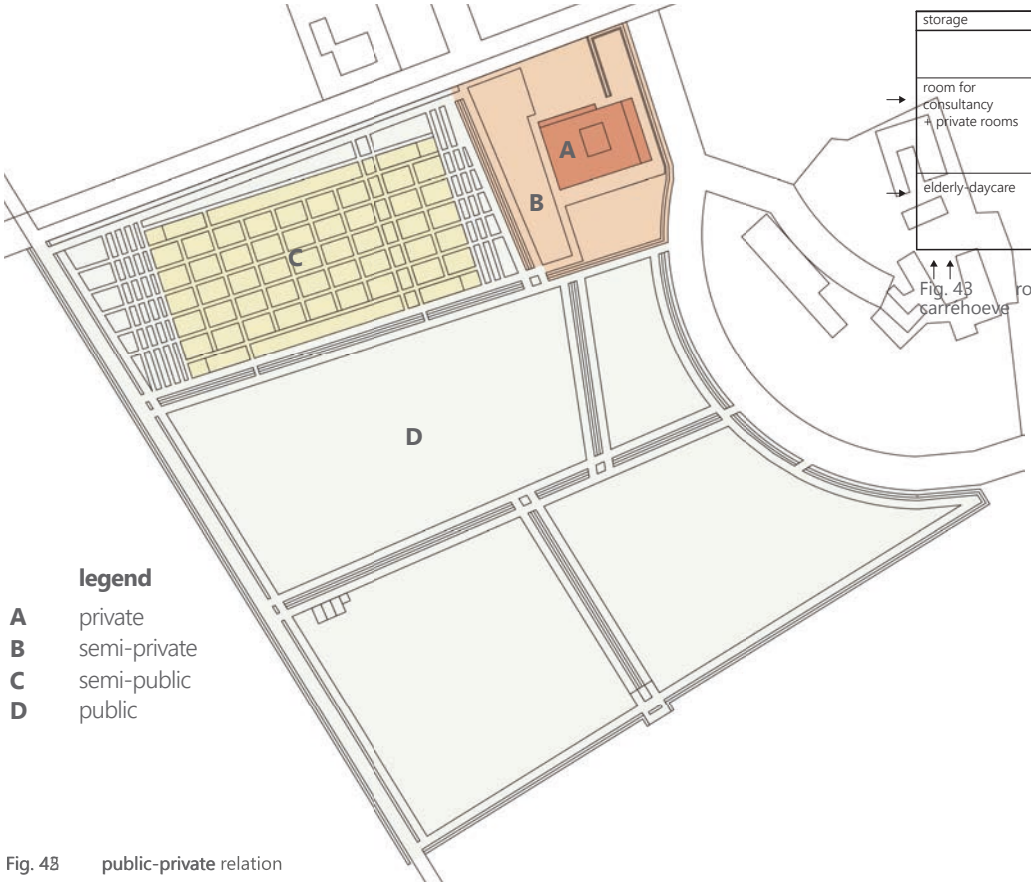
horse meadow

countryside look-out point

The Carréhoeve

The area around the house is a semi-private area, made visible by increasing the height of the hedges to one and a half meters. There is a clear segregation, but people can still communicate. The inner garden of the carréhoeve is only accessible for students living here, elderly people spending the day and people of different health care or social organisations who are consulting. The garden around the carréhoeve has a smaller vegetable garden to the side of the house, near the kitchen. Elevated vegetable beds will be placed around the garden, so elderly people do not have to bend over when picking herbs or vegetables. The types of vegetables that are grown promote the concept of health care. Plants like garlic, echinacea, cat's crawl, passionflower and feverfew have proven to have medicinal qualities. These plants are not common in the area, it is therefore more likely that elderly people will be able to grow them. Furthermore other types of herbs can be used as replacement of salt, like basil, caraway, coriander, cumin, dill, oregano, rosemary, sage and thyme (Craig, 1999).

Fig. 44 visual garden around the carréhoeve



legend

A private
B semi-private
C semi-public
D public

Fig. 43 **public-private** relation

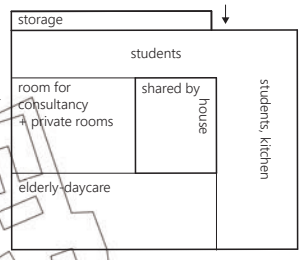


Fig. 43 room-division in the carréhoeve

Fig. 46 visual courtyard in the carréhoeve

The wheelchair bikes

The wheelchair bike is a helpful tool to increase the mobility of elderly people. Some elderly might have problems traveling to the carréhoeve. This could is caused by their own in-mobility. The elderly people that are thereby unable to arrange transport can contact the students living in the carréhoeve and ask them to pick them up. The wheelchair bike is build up in two components: the wheelchair and the biking-component. The wheelchair component can be used separated as well.

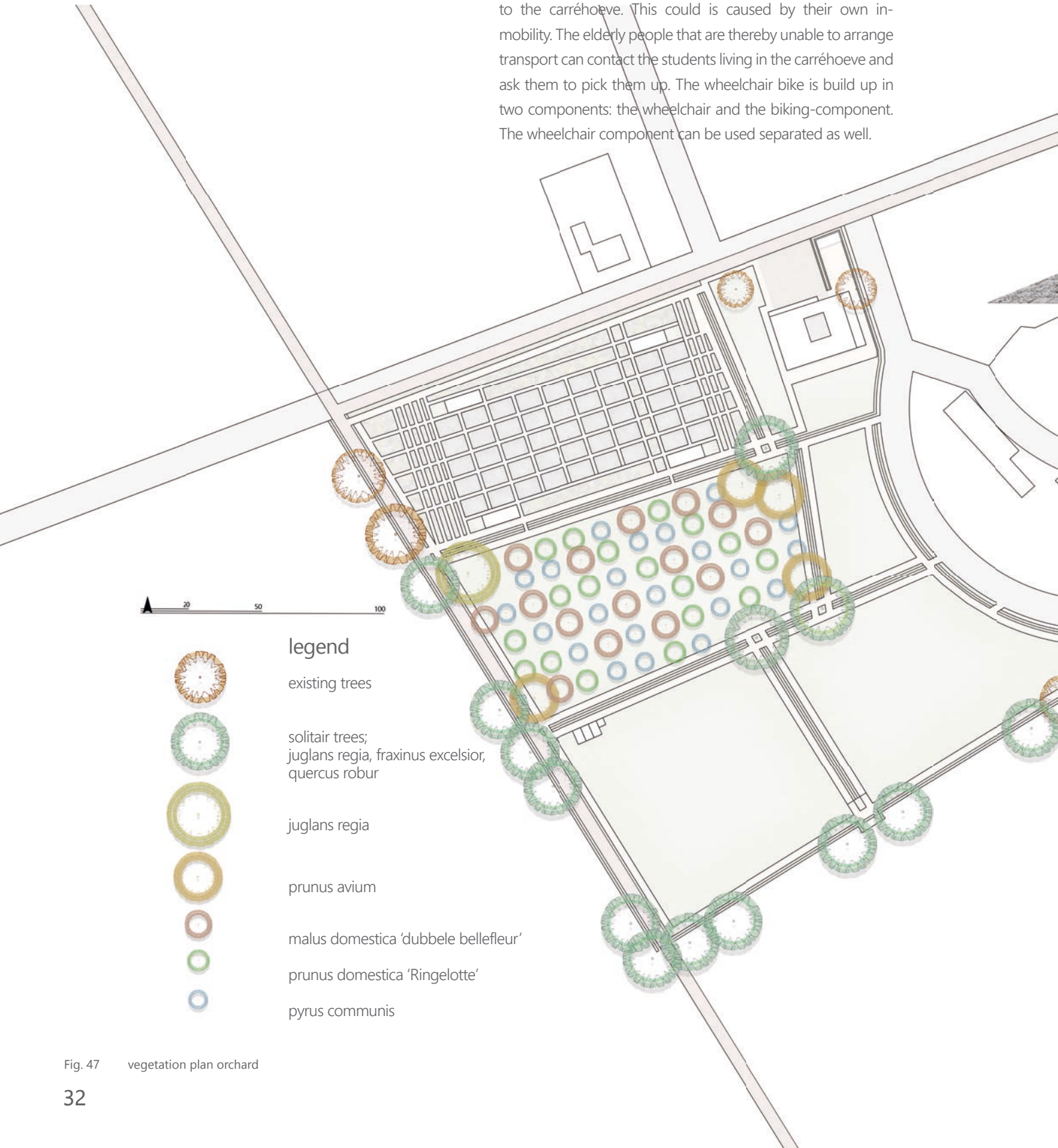
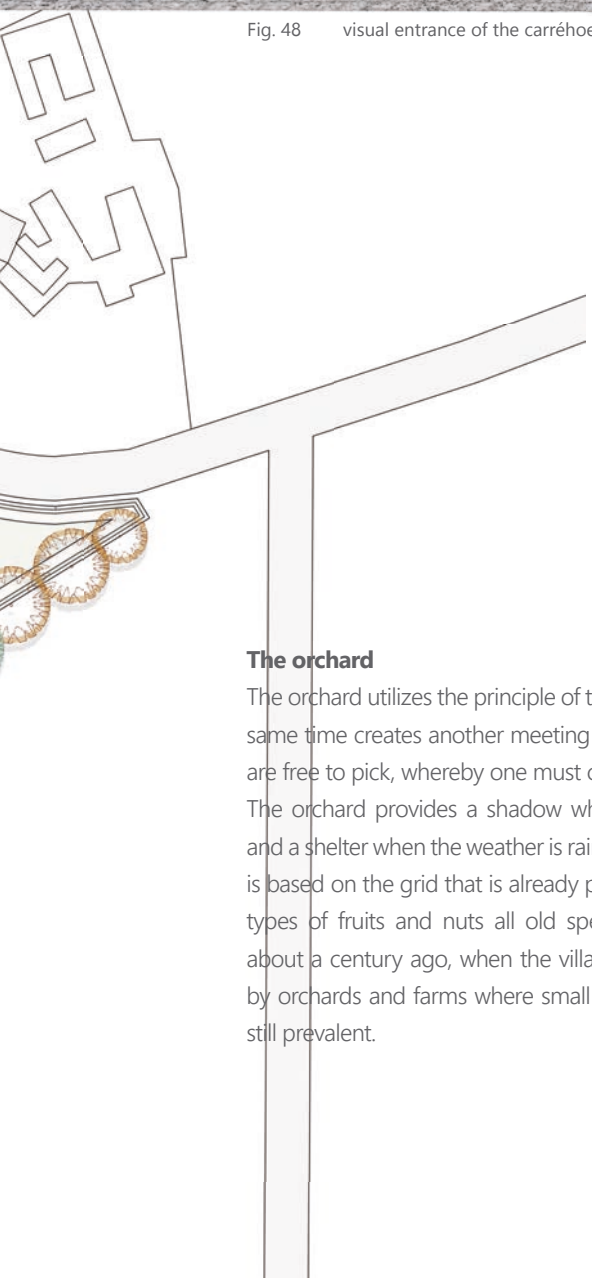


Fig. 47 vegetation plan orchard

Fig. 48 visual entrance of the carréhoeve



The orchard

The orchard utilizes the principle of the village edge and at the same time creates another meeting place. The fruits and nuts are free to pick, whereby one must cooperate to collect them. The orchard provides a shadow when the weather is sunny and a shelter when the weather is rainy. The grid of the orchard is based on the grid that is already present in the garden. The types of fruits and nuts all old species that were common about a century ago, when the villages were still surrounded by orchards and farms where small scale fruit-cultivation was still prevalent.

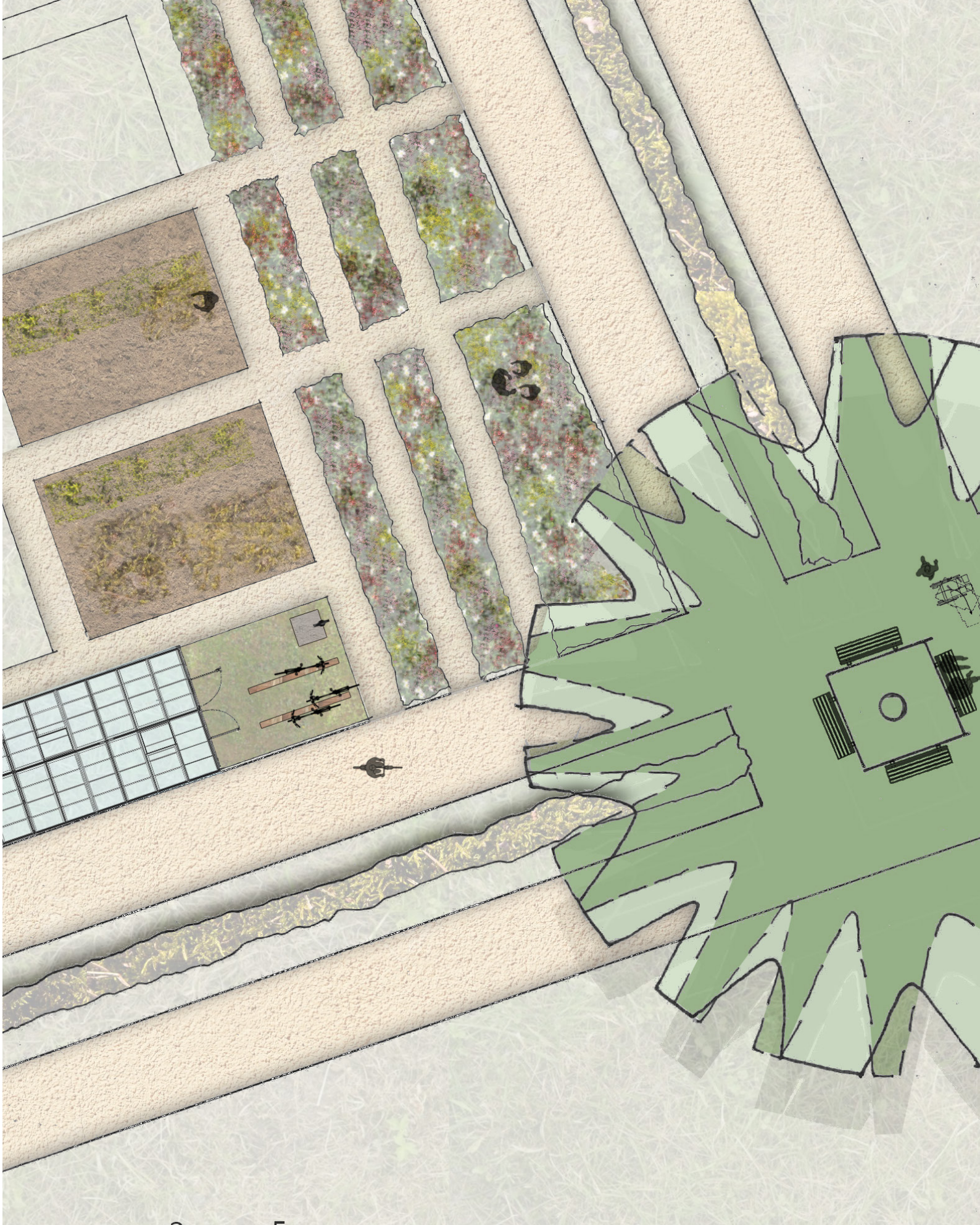


Fig. 49 s-scale path's crossing

Path's crossing

The crossing of paths are important points in the design. The chance of meeting is the highest at these points and they can increase the readability of the design. Therefore these points are marked by solitary trees. The species of these trees is further specified on the precious page. They are common in the area and suitable for the type of soil. Benches will be place around these trees to invite people to sit and enlarge the chance of people meeting. Thus, a small meeting centre is created, where people can bump into each other, talk and share their network and ideas.

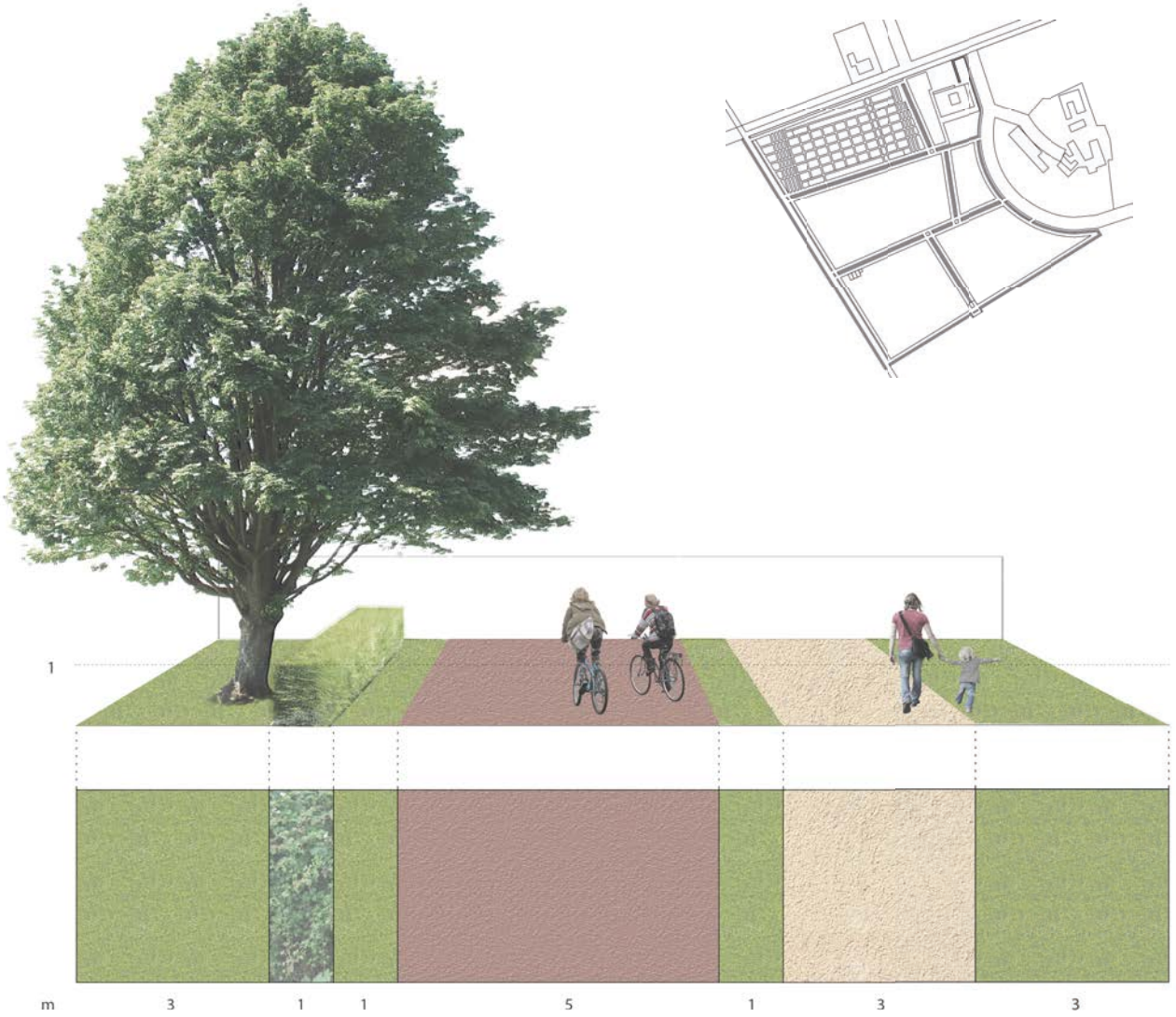


Fig. 50 technical cross-section

Technical cross-section

The paths are, with some exceptions, three meters wide and thus easy accessible by people who are less mobile. One can even walk or make a turn with two wheelchairs at the same time. The material of the paths is called stabilizer solutions. It looks natural but is extremely functional at the same time and will therefore fit the design. The biking path is made from red concrete which is consistence throughout the whole biking network. The width of the biking path is place specific, but will be five meters on this site. The hedge consist of three different types shrub species; crateagus monogyna, corylus avellana and sambucus nigra. These species are all native to the area and common in hedges in the area.

Fig. 51 visual picking and community garden

The picking and community garden

The community garden is a public area. The picking gardens invite people to collect flowers and meet. The vegetable gardens are by elderly people who are still able to maintain a garden, primary schools who want to teach their students about gardening and individuals citizens from the region who want to grow their own vegetables. The greenhouses are necessary to store certain vegetables during winter time. The grass field on the east side of the garden has no assigned function so it can host spontaneous activities. Or Parents maintaining a vegetable garden can bring their children, to play on this field. The two fields on the southern edge of the garden, accommodate three horses. It is not uncommon in the area to keep horses and would therefore fit. The shelters of these horses area also on these fields. By placing solitary trees along the edges of the plot, the village edge is marked. It also creates an enclosure and excretes the garden from its surroundings. The biking path takes a detour into the area. This is necessary as the garden would otherwise not be visible and visit-able enough. The detour assures that the garden design is actually noticed by citizens in the area and increased the accessibility. One can choose to actually take this detour, whereby the route will ascend a bit and the difference in height becomes more tangible.

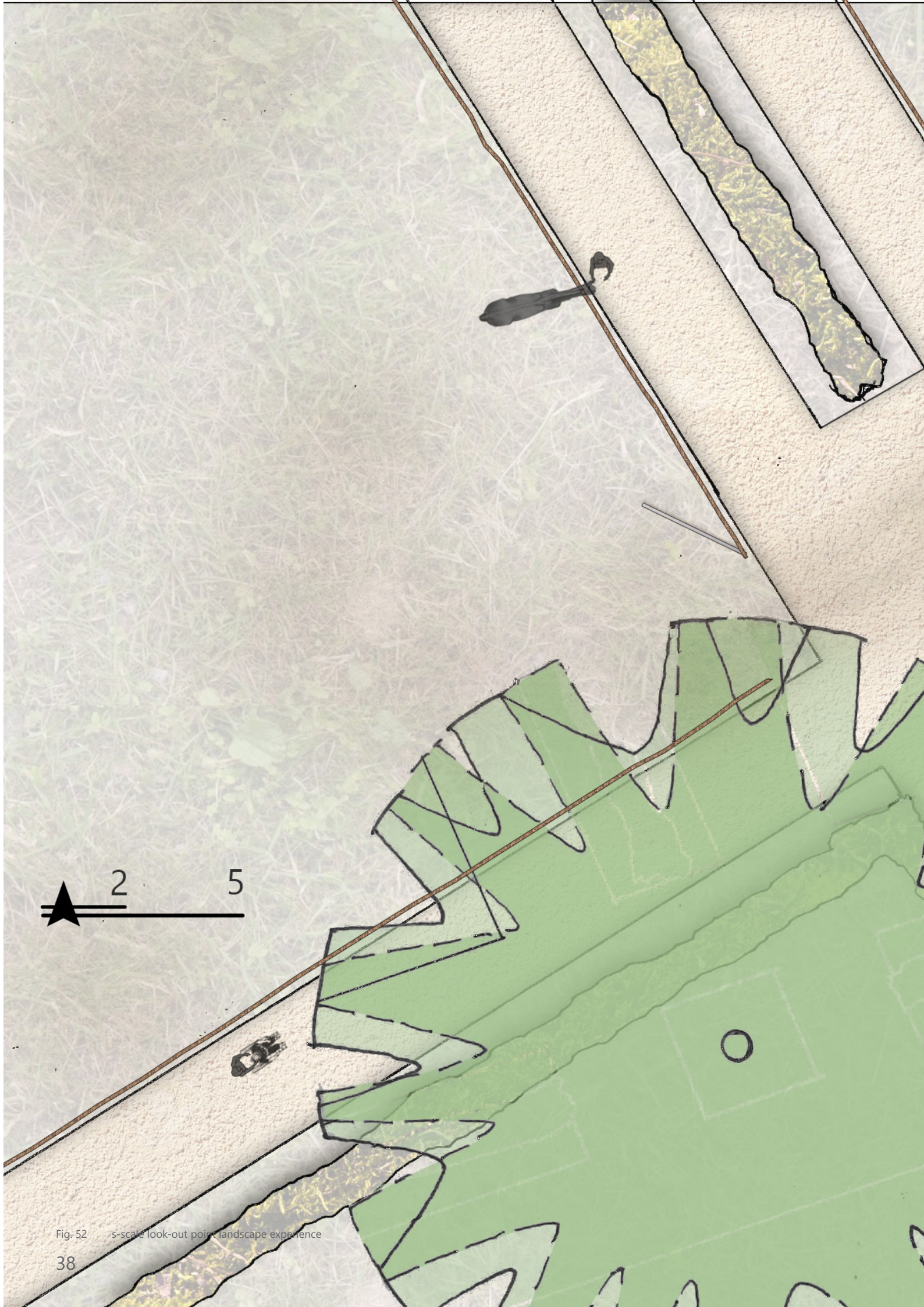


Fig. 52 s-scale look-out point landscape experience

Look-out point: landscape experience

In the southern part of the garden, a look-out point is create. From this point one has a widespread view on a beautiful and multifunctional rolling landscape. The motive is to stimulate one's contact with the landscape and make people conscious about the landscape they live in. The look-out point also creates a place of seclusion.

4.3 Spreading the participatory principles

The garden design represents the participatory design principles. These principles joined form the best basis to participation. Yet, their use can also be individual and spread out over the landscape. To show this, two impressions were made that represent the participatory principles.

Road crossing

We have seen in the on the s-scale on page 35-56 that whenever a path's crossing happens with more than just two paths, this place is marked by planting a solitary tree. We can also apply this on a bigger scale. A crossing of roads can hereby be the marked point. Benches will be placed, so people can rest of the biking, meet and share their experiences. The road should not be visit by cars a lot, this would decrease the chance of people stopping here.

Fig. 53 impression of road crossing, bench placing

The old-toll house

Impression one is located at an old toll-house which was in use during the second World War. The old toll-house represents a history and recalls memories or stories. Although the history of this specific place is not the same in both places, it can be used as location to make people conscious about the region. Using the participatory principles whereby a community garden is place at the site, invites people to come and experience this history. People will meet and stories will be shared. The toll-house is almost exactly on the border to Heerlen and functions as border-landmark of a new area.

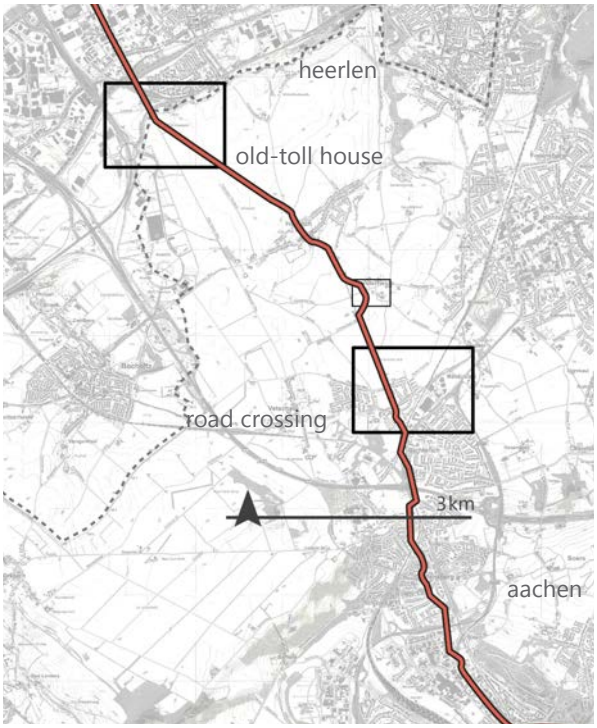


Fig. 54 location of impressions

Fig. 55 impression of old toll-house, community garden

5 Discussion

In this chapter a critical note will be given about the design and the literature. The general design question asked how citizen participation could be implemented in a project within the IBA.

To begin with, the choice of my subject is based on personal experience instead of literature that would tell us people in this area are in need of participation. I have spoken to many different people, yet the time span of this thesis does not allow enhanced interviews. These smaller conversations give me the confidence to pursue, but unfortunately are not entirely representative for the whole area.

Though the aim of this thesis is to stimulate projects of the IBA, the relation to the IBA is only explicitly mentioned in the beginning of the thesis. Further into the process, choices are sometimes influenced by spear-heads from the IBA, but the influence of the IBA is kept to the background. This choice was made, to keep the focus on just one project of the IBA. Still we could therefore say that it lacks a certain representation in relation to the IBA.

Thereby, a lot of literature was collected regarding citizen participation. To actually implement it into a landscape design project, the principles were abstracted and I took the freedom to translate them into design principles. These principles are based on approved literature, but were modified during the process. This makes it tricky in the sense that one could call this unscientific.

Interesting about the project is that it would not only activate people to participate to the project, but could also provoke them to start their own project. The project brings people together whereby a network is build. Setting an example would trigger them to not only participate in the designed project, but also start their own and solve other problems in the region.

6 Conclusion

Using this thesis and the design, an answer to the following question is searched for; "How can citizen participation be successfully implemented in a project of the IBA Parkstad in the area between Heerlen and Aachen, using landscape design as a tool, whereby citizens are activated to participate in the project?"

First the demographic development in the area is analysed. We learned that demographic ageing is a problem now and is still growing. This puts a lot of pressure on health care and causes a decrease of social services. Based on literature and case studies, the reason why people would want to engage in a participatory process and how they can actually be activated is specified. The outcome of this analyses is translated into participatory principles and eventually implemented into the landscape design. A landscape analyses is used to specify a smaller scaled design and its location.

This process resulted in a farm garden design which functions as participatory platform. Students studying health-care move into the house and help with elderly day-care also hosted in the house. This spreads a network and reinforces integration. Social organisations can add knowledge and experience to this by participating and consulting.

People from the region are hereby invited to visit the plot, using a free-to-pick flower garden, vegetable gardens and an orchard as tool. Accessibility and recognizing the garden are important, so people can easily reach the plot. The design hosts several places where people are either confronted with their landscape or a chance is created for them to meet. The first causes people to be more conscious and aware about their region and the latter helps integrating different social networks.

7 Reflection

This chapter allows me to reflect on the outcome of my thesis and the working process.

In the initial phase of the bachelor thesis, I was excited to start and came up with a renewing and interesting topic for my thesis. Using citizen participation within a project is not new, but rendering and implementing it into a landscape architectural project and translating it to a landscape design was something unknown for me. I am extremely fond of challenges and it gave me a lot of motivation.

Two weeks after, I started to slightly prolapse in my enthusiasm. Before starting the bachelor thesis, I had just finished a quite heavy design project and I was craving a break. Yet, the thesis had to be written. The challenge was big and I was a bit behind on my scedual. I found it difficult to structure my days and felt uninspired. After the mid-term presentation I realized that I needed to do a lot still and I was uncertain about how I was going to do this.

Something I learned from the previous design-projects is, that when you get stuck: start drawing. I had already worked out some tools of participation and had a conceptual idea about my garden. Drawing my tools really helped me processing them. I deduced them to an abstract form and transformed them so I could actually use them as physical tool in my design. The participatory principles were born and the landscape principles were to follow. I thereby brought a strict rhythm into my days. I started early, but also stopped on time. I got a valuable advice from my study advisor. She told me to reserve 15 minutes on the end of each day, to write down my plans for the next day. This helped me to structure and reflect on my process and allowed me to critically look at the preliminary results. Luckily, my motivation came back and I felt inspired.

The next challenge was to design the garden and implement the design principles. I saw this as a confrontation, as I had always struggled to create a small-scale design. My supervisor helped me well with this and I managed to design a garden in which I could apply the principles. And a garden on which I am proud of.

I really enjoyed the writing component in my thesis, making it very different from a casual design project. First reading a lot and then writing a substantiated story gave me confidence in my design and the strength to pursue with it. I see this thesis as a valuable closure of my bachelor in Landscape Architecture, because I combined the skills learned in other design-projects. I noticed that my competences had grown and I was better and faster in doing specific tasks. I likewise noticed that there are still a lot of things to improve. I look forward to my further studies at Wageningen University and I am excited to start my master after the summer holidays.

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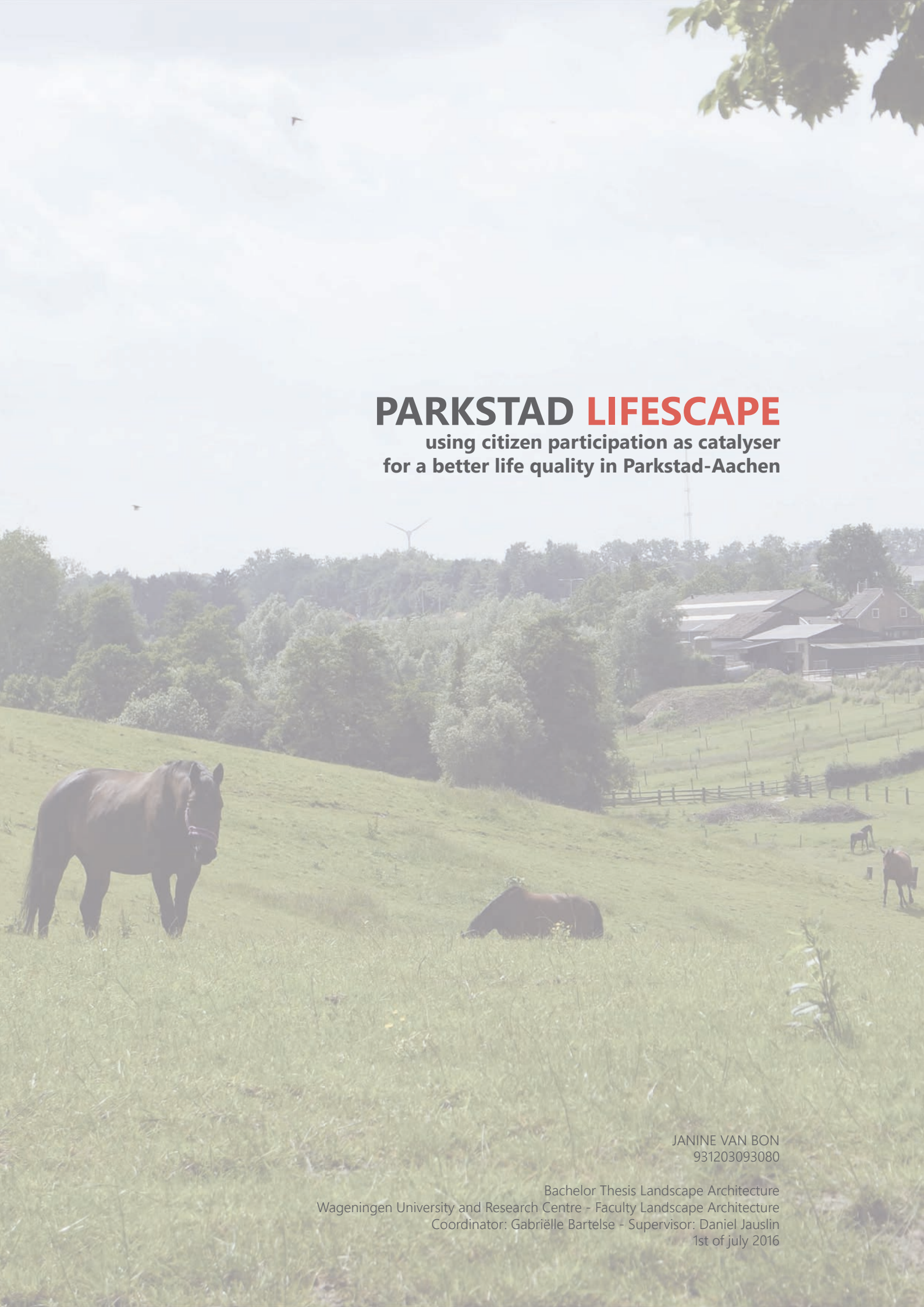

PARKSTAD LIFESCAPE

using citizen participation as catalyser for a better life quality in Parkstad-Aachen

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