

**PEACE
BUILDING
GRASS**

Belfast is a city which has suffered from the **legacy of an ethnic-nationalist civil war** - known as **the Troubles**. This conflict commenced in 1968 and ended officially in 1998 (Murtagh, 2011). The conflict has departure from **religious and political segregation**. It **has divided** the society into two communities; those who wanted to be part of the United Kingdom (Protestants / Unionists / Loyalists) and those who wanted to be part of the Irish state (Catholics / Nationalists / Republicans) (Lang & Mell, 2020).

The legacy of this conflict is still present in the city today. It is both social - with **fear and hate** between specific communities still - and **territorial**, where streets, neighbourhoods, parks and other urban settings are **segregated** between two communities, on the one hand, **Catholics** and on the other **Protestants**, by **symbols, memorials, emblems, murals, flags and interfaces**. But the aftermath of the conflicts also has **invisible strings** attached which can turn **names, directions, fields, sports and colours** into **symbols of conflict** and determine the division. The legacy is **sensitive** and therefore it has to be met with caution.

PEACE BUILDING GRASS



RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES IN CONTEMPORARY BELFAST: REGENERATING GREEN SPACES AS SHARED

EXPLORING DESIGN TOOLS FOR SHARED GREEN SPACES THROUGH A CASE STUDY OF BALLYMACARRETT IN EAST BELFAST

TITLE PAGE

Master thesis in Urban Design,
Spring 2020
Group 3, MSc04 URB
Institute of Architecture & Design
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Project period: February 1st – May 20st
Thesis submission date: 20.05.2020
Time of oral exam: June 18th

Number of pages: 131



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Keywords: Regeneration, shared spaces, green spaces, parks, community, post conflict, social coherence, ethno-political segregation, interfaces.

ABSTRACT

Post conflict cities exist all over the world and experience unique challenges that require innovative and sensitive responses (James,2018). One such city is Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland has a history of 30 years of violence in a socio-political religious conflict between the protestant and catholic communities, known as the 'Troubles'. This makes Belfast a city characterised as post conflict. The consequence exists in different terms both in the; political, historical, cultural and urban development. The urban process of Belfast has started to regenerate some of the existing vacant, poorly defined or unused spaces, to create shared green spaces. These spaces are today either influenced by hostile architecture; interfaces, fences and highways (which separate and to protect citizens from one another), or poorly defined and unused public spaces. These create conditions which work against social coherence and social interaction and make the urban development in a post conflict context even more complex.

Theoretically, a variety of urban scholars have proposed different perspective and evidence on how shared spaces and green spaces have a positive effect on

social interaction and social coherence. These studies call for new ways to ensure green spaces can become shared spaces. As a result of this, both policies, public bodies and academic literature there is a need an increased recognition of shared green cities. However, one oversight of these studies is that they often lack detail on the practical tools needed/ considered to facilitate the development of shared green spaces. Thus, there is a missing link between the theoretical dimension of social interaction and social coherence on the one hand and the physical development and design dimension on the other. This is the gap this master thesis wants to investigate and fill out.

Peace Building Grass presents a master thesis in Urban Design, exploring green spaces in East Belfast. It is research on how to turn theory and policy into regenerating- design tools. This thesis presents a case study of Ballymacarrett based on local expert assets with an emphasis on future and resents regenerating projects and activities in Belfast. The thesis takes forward the work of Ian Mell and Luisiana Lang by extending the missing development and focus on designing shared green spaces in a contested environment.

A HELPING HAND

First, we would like to express our gratitude to our supervisor Dr Michael Martin; if it has not been for him, this project would of various reasons not have been finished or even existed.

We need to say thank you for both giving us; guidance, remarks, pushes, charring and constructive critique when each of it was required.

Thank you; For showing us the world around us, opening up new tools and theory, we would never have thought of investigation or taking forward. For creating a hunger in our minds of more knowledge. For taking part in the planning of our study trip to Belfast and inviting us along your Study trip and lectures. Forgiving us back hope and bringing us back on track when the Covid19 kicked in and changed all our plans and motivation. For always bringing a smile on our faces and for not only being attended for the university matters but for caring about us as individuals and as a group.

Just thank you for always spending more time and effort than we could ever ask.

Furthermore, we would like to say a big thank to our 'Belfast experts'. You made it possible for us to finish our thesis when it became impossible for us to visit Belfast and you. Thank you for investing your time into our project without knowing us. You have guided us around different subjects and areas of Belfast and provided us with new and essential material by email correspondences, voice- and video calls. It has been very inspiring to see how you make and fight for changes and are investing time and mind into believing in changes and communities and the importance of them.

Last but not least, thank you, to our study colleagues for creating a creative, positive and helpful environment and for always to be ready with advice or help or to listen.

WHAT IS PEACE BUILDING GRASS?

The idea for our thesis to go across the North Sea to the capital of Northern Ireland, Belfast, was born by different backgrounds within the group. One member has heritage from post conflict roots and the other members were introduced to the post conflict context by a week long residential field trip to Belfast. When the opportunity arose to do an entire project internationally, there was no question asked. This was an excellent opportunity to expand the internationalising skill-set and portfolio.

The different experiences of a post conflict context question a lot in our existing urban design mindset and toolbox. It introduced us to the complex situation of ethno-political conflict. And how it creates other constraints and problems in planning and designing, then we have dealt with and learnt before as students from Scandinavia. This inspired us to unfold and explore this context deeper.

In Scandinavia, it is the fewest who at all have experience and knowledge of the term 'post conflict', 'interfaces' and 'sensitivity'. Which is everyday life in Belfast. The fact that a city so close to

us is experiencing such different terms and challenges has motivated us to dig more into these subjects. We wanted to learn more, dig deeper and contribute to our knowledge. It is important. As urban designers from Scandinavia, we think issues as sensitivity and segregated communities are challenges we never get to experience. Still, it should be a mindset all in our professions should carry, conflict background or not.

We were motivated by the idea of how we, through our master's thesis, could contribute to the knowledge we have acquired throughout our studies to utilise urban design as conflict-solving. Where the focus is on what good quality shared spaces can do to create unity in the human divide (James, 2018). This has (from after the corona situation) led to 10 regeneration-design tools.

The aim of regenerating existing green spaces into shared green spaces in a contested environment calls for a hierarchy in design focus. The main emphasis in this thesis is how to create shared spaces, where the green will act as the canvas of the design. Green spaces can

offer many benefits such as perspective on livability, biodiversity, sustainability and health. In the context of regenerating green spaces as shared spaces, these benefits will only be a bonus and not a goal. But these benefits can be activated if they are put forward in a second phase or developed during the process.

Covid19 has changed the world around us. To us and our master thesis, it has meant huge conversions. It has changed from joint group work at the university and a two weeks study trip into separated home offices and relying on online; chats, interviews and group 'meetings'. It has changed from working abroad with doing informal interviews, phenomenological analysis and site visits into a total desk-based study. Covid19 have it extremely difficult to adjust our goals to the new circumstances and sat our project back. Because how do you give something character without being able to use your senses? How do you make a group project without being able to meet? These things as group work and designing based on (a) site visit(s) are what we have spent four years adapting and learning. And this master thesis

should have been the last piece to prove it.

Therefore the project presented in this report is a post corona project. We are happy about making it to the end, learning how difficult it is to change, rewrite, take a detour and adapt. With this in mind, reflecting, the situation also has enabled us to become more rounded practitioners.

So now we would like to invite you along with this desk-based thesis; exploring a post conflict context and the peace-building purposes of urban design. This is Peace Building Grass, gathering well known and studied knowledge and theory of green spaces and transforming it into regenerating-design tools. Tools to help to prevent green spaces from being weak, unused, buffers and segregated fields in the city. Making theory into a physical guide to create shared, good quality, green spaces – creating Peace Building Grass.



Illu 2: The authors

BEHIND THE AUTHORS

Adi Dukic

I have a bachelor degree in Urban Design from Stavanger University. I have a fervent desire to create future-oriented design, that works toward a more sustainable environment. I believe that conflicts and challenges should be solved by setting out goals, that aims to create attachment, good experiences and sustainable cities.

Sine Bjerg Ernshof

I have a background from Aalborg university, with a bachelor's degree in Urban Design. My drive as an urban designer is to focus on developing and designing with the citizens. And make our build surroundings just as healthy and rich in experiences and senses as nature. I see design as something that should be translated into a language everyone can read and understand.

Thea Dahl Christensen

I have a bachelor's degree in urban design from Aalborg University. When I work within the field of Urban Design, I have a desire to create good urban space that relates to the human scale. Urban spaces are potential places for creating relations by shaping the urban environment. It can become the base for generating social interactions, memories and good experiences. Which I believe is a part of the base for creating successful urban spaces.

HOW TO NAVIGATE

When reading this explosion of purple, we want to take you into the universe of a contested environment where colours can be a starting point of conflict. We want to invite you into the universe of Peace Building Grass.

This is a post corona thesis, which has undertaken some detours on its way. This caused our study trip to be cancelled on the day of departure. As a result of this, we have almost had no photo material. So pictures and collages have been shifted out with hand drawings and illustrations.

We will guide you through the story behind Peace Building Grass, a tale of various complex settings. The story is told by; seven chapters; Uncovering Belfast, Literature Review, Methodology, Ballymacarrett as a case, Discussions and Findings, Design and Evaluation followed by a reference list and an illustration list and appendix. Each chapter starts off an introduction and closes by a conclusion. All illustrations throughout the report are made by us.

A dictionary is to be found on page 19.

It uncovers phrases, words and definitions associated and found when reading through this thesis of Peace Building Grass.

Underlined text

Underlined text placed along the margins of the pages functions as a highlight of good points. This means that it is not apart of the meaning in the paragraph; it serves a quick overview to the reader.

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AIM & PURPOSE

The focus of the thesis is on creating a relationship between the theoretical dimension and the physical planning dimension of regenerating green spaces as shared spaces in Belfast. This reflects the findings from investigating existing theory on green spaces and shared spaces in contested environments.

The purpose is to generate regenerating-design tools taking a departure from the challenges, successes and needs from Belfast. The development of the tools are informed by three distinct sources: a critical review of research literature; expert interviews and a case study of East Belfast, Ballymacarrett.

In the hands of planning facilitators and local stakeholders, the regeneration-design tools will act as a generator to ensuring future regeneration of existing green spaces as a good quality shared green space.

Problem domain: This is an exploration of the role of green spaces in contested, segregated urban environments to envision how, through regeneration, green spaces can become shared spaces in post conflict settings.



OBJECTIVES

- 1 Investigate the theoretical relationship between shared spaces in post conflict Belfast and the role of green spaces. To develop a critical understanding of the gap between the theoretical and the physical dimension of designing shared green spaces.
- 2 Undertake an exploratory case study of East Belfast and through a review of plans and policy, establish how Belfast as a post conflict city currently plans for shared green spaces by identifying the successes and failures.
- 3 Synthesise the findings of analysis and explorations from expert interviews to develop contextually acute regenerating-design tools. The tools should be used by planning facilitators and local stakeholders in stimulating communication and discussion into the successful development of shared green spaces in Belfast.
- 4 Utilise the use of the regenerating-design tools by exemplifying a case of regenerating a contested green space in East Belfast into a shared green space.



DICTIONARY

The dictionary presents the key terms and concepts associated with this thesis. It allows the readers to get a common understanding and positions of the words and their caption throughout the report. The terms are a combination of both precise commonly agreed definitions as well as our clarifications on concepts important for this thesis. Determined and defined upon their purpose and use in this research. Commonly agreed definitions are referenced by source.

Antisocial behaviour:

Is defined as behaviour harming others or elements. In Northern Ireland it is often combined with segregation. Antisocial behaviour is often seen on vacant land or in interface areas in relation to the ethnici-socio conflict and division. (Eastside partnership 2020, pers. Comm., 1 April)

Bonfire:

The 'Eleventh Night' also known as the night of bonfires is seen as an occasional extreme event in Northern Ireland. Is has become a protestant tradition, celebrating a won battle in the 1690s. Traditionally it was both Catholics and Protestants in Ulster how lit bonfires. Today the event has turned into an antisocial behaviour where the flag and other emblems of the Republic of Ireland are burned on the fires (Santino, 1998). The fires are made from wooden pallets which are collected from March where after they are slowly built into a tall bonfire, someplace up to 30 meters high. The City Council have tried to ban some of bigger bonfires, but had to back down. The event causes serious safety issues where windows have to be barricaded close by not to get destroyed by the heath (Carroll, 2019)

Co- creation:

Defines the process of when planning is done in collaboration with stakeholders, experts, or/and citizens. (Lee, 2008) This can be done through a lot of different activities like meetings, workshops and site visits (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March).

"You don't just do things to people; you do things together. You need to work with people to understand what they need, and what they think of spaces; how can they use them, how to design them." (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March).

Community:

Is a coherence of people, as when; people are living in one particular area, or people considered as a unit because of their common; interests, social group, culture, religion or nationality.

Deprived:

Defines having a lack of necessary things for a pleasant life, such as money, health and good living conditions. Within Northern Ireland deprivation are based on; income, employment, health, education, access to services, living environment and crime and disorder. An overall measure of deprivation has the

most weight on deprivation based upon income, employment and health (Devlin & McKay & Russell, 2018). Often interface areas also deal with deprivation.

Extreme events:

As an aftermath of the conflict socio-political events occasional takes place across Belfast. These can both be violent and put the city on the other end. Among these are the annual bonfires and Orange parades which underlines the religious division (Carswell, 2019).

Green space:

Spaces consisting mainly by a soft green surface, generally grass, are defined as green spaces. Often green spaces also involve elements such as trees, bushes and or plants and flowers.

Interfaces: peace wall, peace line:

Are a problematic legacy of the Troubles. They are known by many names, appearances and stigmatisation. As interfaces, peace walls or lines, the structure of division, security barrier, hostile infrastructure/ architecture, defensive use of space and is seen both as fences, walls and other obstacles; as roads and buffers. What all names and elements have in common is they separate con-

flicted areas to avoid conflict. The interfaces are heavily debated; some means that they provide safety; others suggest that they are working against a unified Belfast. A political statement plans for all the interfaces to be gone by 2023 (Gromley-Heenan & Morrow & Byrne, 2015).

The interfaces have different ownership, some a private owned and some are owned by the Department of Justice. The first interface was erected in 1969, but only as a temporary infrastructure (McGrade, 2017), today, the walls have become a permanent infrastructure.

In this report, this hostile infrastructure is mentioned as interfaces.

Interface area: territorial area, gated communities, contested communities Interface areas are also known under aliases as; territorial area, gated communities and contested communities. They define areas where divided residential areas often intersect in connection with interfaces. This is areas where there is a strong sense of territory and ethnopolitical identity.

Murals:

Big wall paintings painted directly on walls, in Northern Ireland often as an icon of historical or socio-political character. They are a symbol of the segregation in the city (Poole and Llewellyn, 2017)

Neutral:

A non-position taken approach, which means not supporting or helping either side of the conflict. What can be criticised about being neutral is that it can whitewash identity and troublesome attachment.

It is often combined but not to be mistaken with shared.

Orange parades:

The annual parade takes place the 12th of July in relation with the annual bonfire, where The annual parade takes place the 12th of July in relation with the annual bonfire, where members of the orange order, also known as Orangemen, march accompanied by musical instruments, flags and banners (Carswell, 2019). The orange order or Loyal Orange Institution is a protestant fraternal order. The order is a sectarian order, which does not include any non-Protestant members or Protestants married with a Catholic (Grande Orange Lodge of Ireland, n.d.), which legible underlines the presence of division in the society.

Park:

Is typically an outlined green space placed in the context within a city, defined by soft green surfaces, typically grass, trees and outlined pathways. Parks are also defined by affording activity, stay and recreation.

Paved public spaces:

Spaces are consisting mainly of hard, paved surfaces. They are often seen as squares, centre points or landmarks in cities. Paved public areas often are a point of assembly which affords activity and stay.

Planning bodies:

Different planning bodies control the planning and regeneration in Northern Ireland and Belfast.

Government Departments

Are the national ministry, which does justice and governance on a national level; the planning bodies are the Department of Communities and the Department of Social Development.

Belfast City Council

Act as the planning body in Belfast and act as the regional authority. By being the capital city, they have responsibility for a big location. Their strategic plan of Belfast is explained in the Belfast Agenda (The Belfast Agenda, 2017) addressing social issues, spatial planning, and place-shaping to improve the wellbeing of residents. The council have hired local planning bodies to facilitate local planning and regeneration.

(Belfast City Council, n.d.)

East Side partnership (local) (Planning body):

Is a regeneration body, no profit, created to assist the development of regenerating East Belfast by the City Council. Their purpose is to act as the core driver as decision-makers and lobby for investment. They are based as a social partnership with community, statutory, political and business members. They also work on organizing stakeholders to work together.

Post conflict:

is the definition of the phase after a conflict.

flict. The term explains the fragile state of position while a conflict does not have a defined way of ending. It is thus a complex situation as for Belfast is evident from the segregated communities. Working in a post conflict city hereby add complexity and sensitivity into understanding and communication.

Regenerate:

To improve a space, by making it more active and blooming by reusing, upgrading, renovate and refurbish the setting.

Sensitivity:

is having special needs that have to be dealt with carefully.

In this thesis, it is an essential factor due to the contested setting of Belfast, which carries markers and symbols of segregation. In Belfast names, flags, emblems and colours can be associated with the segregation.

Shared green space:

Is a space where activities and programming of the green afford the presence of different people. Shared green space creates the opportunity for coherence in segregated societies, while it expresses heritage and values and by utilising the landscape and common interests creates frames that afford social interactions and experiences.

Nor to be mistaken as synonymously with neutral spaces

Shared space:

Is a public space where activities and programming afford the presence of different people. Shared space creates the opportunity for coherence in segregated societies, while it expresses heritage and values. It affords people with different background to meet.

Nor to be mistaken as synonymously with neutral spaces

Symbolic Colors:

In conflicts, symbolic highlights become a convenient form of showing their belonging. With this in mind, the importance of careful use of colours with strong connections to a community becomes essential. As for colours of Northern Ireland; orange, blue and red represents Protestants / Unionists / Loyalists, green represents Catholics / Nationalists / Republicans (Mulhern, 2019)

The Troubles:

The Troubles is the 30 year long sectarian conflict that segregated the societies within in Northern Ireland, between the protestants and catholic. The conflict was violent and had character as a civil war, and many people were injured and killed. The Troubles started in 1969 and ended with a peace agreement in 1998.

Vacant land/ SLOAP:

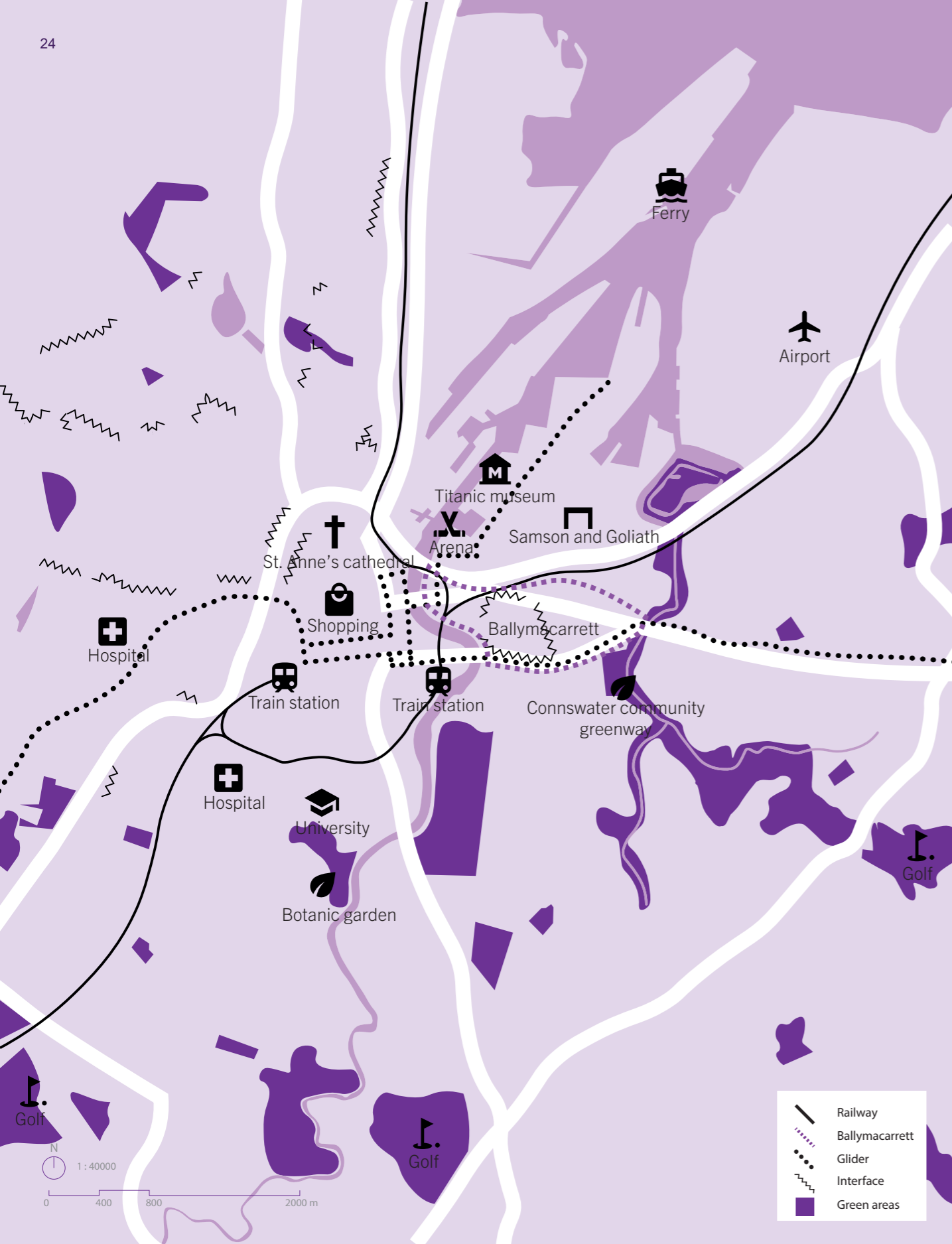
Is space left over after planning. It is areas that have been forgotten in the planning or been buffers or unused vacant landscape. It often has the appearance of a lawn or a vacant building site. It is a scene of antisocial behaviour and location for dumping rubbish and not very attractive in the city context (N. Galway, 2020, pers. Comm., 27 March).

Weakened space:

Is our reference term on a public space, such as a park, playground, or square which is heavily underused and maintenance. Where the furniture, greenery and equipment are worn or poor quality.

UNCOVERING BELFAST

To address the complexities of Belfast, this chapter will unfold its history, socio-political divide, the sensitivity of the population and the planning policy. It will reveal how this has caused the city to go into defence, and their plans to regenerate Belfast. Finally, a dictionary will be presented to create a shared understanding of various concepts.



Illu 3: Exploring Belfast
Strategic overview of Belfast which shows infrastructure, green spaces and key functions

“In Belfast we already know, that there is not enough green space and open space in the city. We know this and that is a big problem.” (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March)

WELCOME TO BELFAST

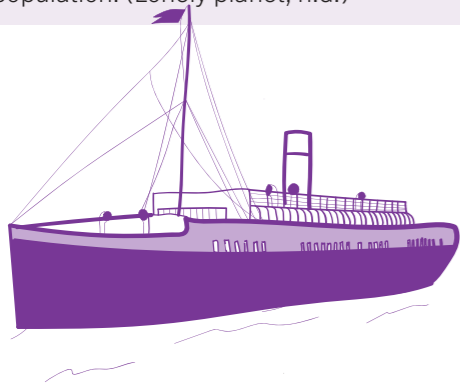
This is the city that has gone through various difficulties but has now risen to become one of Britain's most vibrant and exciting cities (source?). Belfast is the capital of Northern Ireland and has a central identity as a famous trading town. Today, the city of Belfast presents itself with fascinating tours and attractions where the most famous attraction is the history of the Titanic, which was built in Belfast. In the current era, the world-famous TV series Game of Thrones has also been an essential contributor to the city's attractiveness.

The city has in recent years undergone a development where the focus has been to rise as a big city. Much has been invested in new urban developments, with a particular emphasis on the city's core, Inner city. This has led to a partial prioritization in solving the challenges with segregation and deprived areas around the city. Belfast has now taken hold of this, which has led to an excellent mobility connection through the town. In addition, the focus has been placed on developing more green and shared spaces in segregated and deprived areas (see illu. 3).

1800

Industrial revolution

During the industrial revolution, Belfast developed rapidly. Textile industry and shipyard become dominant industries, and Belfast became soon one of the biggest linen producer. With the railway network established in the 1840s, Belfast's industries grew. The expansion of industries led to economic growth. This changed the city from a minor Presbyterian town to an industrial centre with a religiously mixed population. (Lonely planet, n.d.)



1900

Establishment of an Irish government

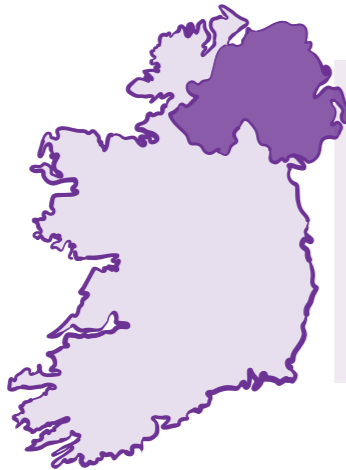
During the early 20th century many riots arose. In the late 19th century, there were several attempts to establish an Irish government, but many protestants did not approve becoming a minority, under a catholic Dublin rule. In 1912 the home rule bill was introduced, which intended to give the whole Ireland self-government (Rasmussen, 2011). The Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) was formed by unionist, who intended to resist the home rule bill, with military force. As a response, the nationalists formed Nationalist Volunteers. (Lonely planet, n.d.)



1914

Separation of Ireland

The outbreak of World War 1 in 1914 postponed the implementation of home rule, after the war, the law was outdated. Instead, it led to a separation of Ireland in 1921 into north Ireland and Ireland. An increasing in sectarian violence between catholic and protestant led to a more segregated society. (Lonely planet, n.d.)



1969

The Troubles

The troubles is a 30 year long sectarian and violent conflict, and it broke out in 1969. The troubles are a result of a history with conflict, and it started with a series of peaceful civil rights marches, that fought for a united Ireland, the catholic held the marches. These marches were met with an intense response from Northern Ireland's police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), which were heavily Protestant-dominated. Throughout the troubles, many violent clashes and gun battles, between paramilitary groups; Irish Republic Army (IRA) and Ulster Defense Association (UDA) has led to many deaths and wounded. It was also clashes between paramilitary groups and British police and military force. (Lonely planet, n.d.)

During the troubles, the segregation grew, and several interfaces were erected to segregate protestants and catholic communities. (Grattan, 2020)



1998

Good Friday Agreement

The Troubles Conflicts Officially Settled In 1998, The Belfast Agreement is also known as the Good Friday Agreement. This was a power-sharing agreement that would allow unionists and nationalists to share power in Northern Ireland (Sterrett & Hackett & Declan, 2012).





Illu 5: In (de)fence

A picture collection of interfaces and fences in Belfast.



“Space can be so contested at times and people are very sensitive to special dynamics here. Sometimes things that are not obviously marked still may be infused with emotion, territoriality, ownership. That we may not be aware of to the naked eye.” (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March)

A CITY IN (DE)FENCE

“What is hostile to some is defensive to others,”
Jon Ritter in (Hu, 2019)

Walking the streets of Belfast creates meetings with different types, heights and colours of fences and barriers. Some are more hostile than others, some with more clear purposes than others (see illu. 5).

It is everyday life in Belfast and properly only noticed because we were internationals and more specific Scandinavians walking the streets. What is very unusual and very visible to us, have become very invisible to everyday passer-by – as a normal (Smith & Walters, 2018).

Hostile architecture affects the built environment and cultural identity. What is important to understand about hostile architecture is that it cannot only be seen as inhumane; it also a way to maintain and ensure safety. This way will prevent unwanted behaviour as antisocial behaviour and in this way, obtain a higher securitisation and a form of counterterrorism (O'Donnell, 2015). It is a balance between a connected, accessible and welcoming public space and a desire for safety. (Silberberg, 2014)

When working with the aim of regenerating green spaces as shared, it is important to be aware of already in progress plan and projects. Thereby ensuring the aim of this thesis will not oppose or complicate other greater planning aims. Further, by exploring plans, it could support the need for regenerating green space as shared.

PLANNING FOR LIVING

Belfast has policy both about open spaces and shared spaces, where shared spaces are argued to be the solution to a shared future (Gaffikin & McEldowney & Sterrett, 2008). But it is argued that social well-being may not be beneficially affected by green and open space that is perceived as unsafe or where people engage in antisocial behaviour (Kruize et al., 2019)

The policy in Belfast has in the recent years started to have a greater focus on community planning, involving, communities, stakeholders, residents and municipality, All working together to create a vision and a plan for Belfast future. The priorities from 2017-2021 for Belfast are to ensure inclusive growth, which aims to reduce inequality in the societies. By providing a better quality of life for all while growing the economy and ensuring sustainable success for the city. The vision is that the city is a great place to

work, study, visit or start-up and grow business. To enable inclusive growth, Belfast’s community plan deals with four (see illu. 6) main priorities that Belfast will focus on: growing the economy, city development, working and learning and living here. A shared key focus for all of them is to enhance life quality for all, reduce inequalities in the society and create a good foundation for Belfast as a city that is free from a legacy of conflict.



Illu 6: Inclusive growth

The **Economy** will provide a foundation for overall growth in Belfast, and more jobs will be created and attract more people. Access to good job opportunities is an essential part of enhancing the quality of life for all, while access to a good job will reduce economic inequalities.

Developing the city will create a competitive and sustainable city, that promote regeneration of the city centre. Infrastructure will be enhanced to ensure good network and connectivity both locally, nationally and internationally.

The main focus for **working and learning** in Belfast is to connect people to opportunities. Barriers, both structural and personal that segregate people from work and school opportunities be addressed, to increase skill levels and retain even more skilled people.

When it comes to **living in Belfast**. Belfast must be a good place to live where the life quality is enhanced, a key asset in creating a livable city is to ensure the communities safety, by working towards

a shared city, where relationships are created across communities. Issues such as diversion and segregation have to be addressed, to create network opportunities. Belfast consist of several deprived areas, these areas experiences many inequalities both in relation to health, finance and education. These have to be addressed by promoting the development of shared spaces that provides safety for all communities.

Belfast has created several focuses that will make life better for all Belfast residential, concerning living here:

- Improve neighborhoods
- Improve the city living experience
- Improve good relations
- Reduce life inequalities
- Enable active, healthy and empowered citizens
- Provide fit-for-purpose city services
- Support and care for people who face multiple challenges
- Support our younger and older people

(The Belfast Agenda, 2017)

BLUE AND GREEN POLICY

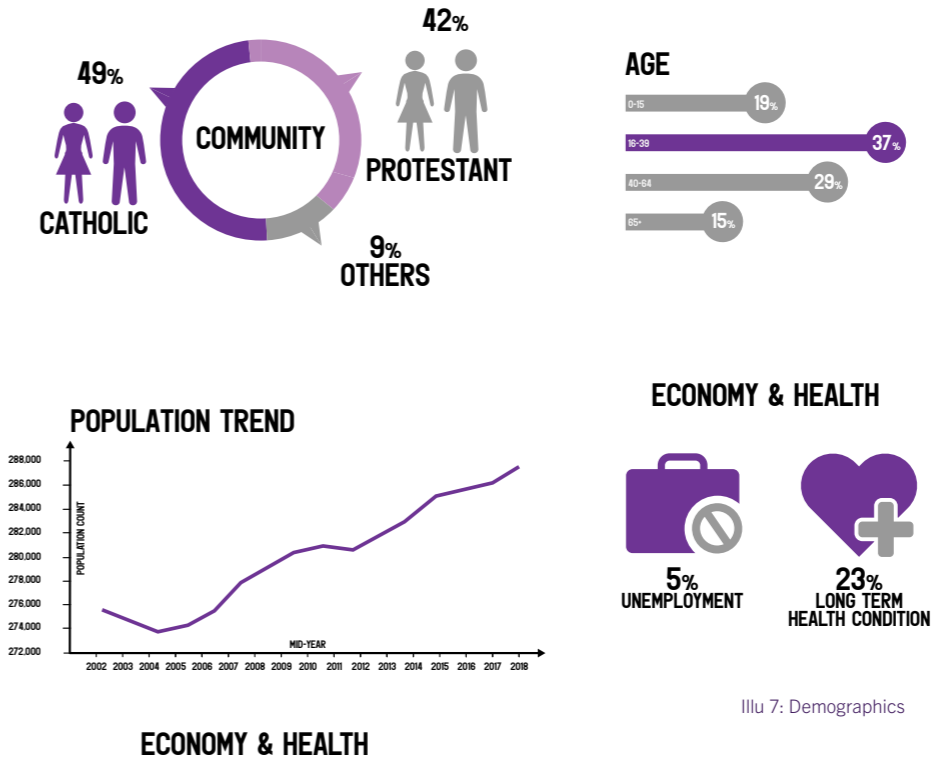
Green and blue infrastructure provide more space for recreation, relaxing, reflection and physical activity, this makes the base for healthier- and happier lifestyles and social cohesion, thereby increasing life quality for all.

Belfast has made their first Blue and green infrastructure plan, 2020. The plan recognizes that the green and blue infrastructure has multiple benefits, both social, environmental and economic. Green spaces is recognized as an important infrastructure, that helps to connect the city, it will provide a good network and help pedestrian and cyclist to get easy access to green and blue spaces. Green and blue spaces will work as an interconnected part of the city. To ensure the quality of the green spaces, they must be well designed and maintained, so the green and blue spaces will bring value to the city, and the people living in the city. Green and blue infrastructure have to be welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all. The quality of the space can reflect how people feel about the space and how safe they feel in that space. Belfast wants to improve social cohesion and reduce antisocial behaviour through the encouragement of activity and passive surveillance of open spaces. Belfast has made a strategy to integrate more green into the public realm and civic space. They want to green much of the already existing open space, neighbourhood and streets.

In relation to making Belfast a liveable place, Belfast has the vision that by 2035 green and blue infrastructure will:

- Support community cohesion
- Increase safety
- Contributes to place setting character and design quality
- Improve connectivity for safe movement across the city
- Provides demonstrable cardio respiratory and mental health benefits

(Belfast City Council, 2020)



BELFAST IN NUMBERS

Belfast, a city with bold ambitions and goals. Their numbers reflect many of their achievements but also some of the difficulties they are trying to improve. They have a population of 339,579 and a positive trend for increased expansion in the future. Belfast has also experienced a shift in the religious distribution where Protestants (42%) are now in the minority of Catholics (49%) (see illu. 7). The city has a young population that is far more open to changes around the religious conflict. This provides a reasonable basis for further work to alleviate their significant problems with segregation and deprived areas. 8 of 10 most deprived areas in Northern Ireland are located in Belfast. These areas are struggling with unemployment and health issues where the average life expectancy has a huge difference from the most deprived areas and the least deprived in the city (The Belfast Agenda, 2017).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the complex context of contemporary Belfast as well as how significant steps have been taken by built environment professionals to regenerate and renew the image of the city. With this in mind, we now move on to review the research literature on post conflict city design, focusing on the development of shared spaces in a contested environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will be an overview of central topics and themes to establish a relationship between the theoretical dimension and the physical planning dimension of regenerating shared green spaces in Belfast.

It will analyze different sources of theory, and provide a discussion on different emphasis, interpretation and catalysts on the regeneration of the green spaces in the post conflict city of Belfast. By this, the complexity of connecting separated communities by shared green spaces are unfolded and explored.

“Most urban spaces are potential places of conflict(..)” (Ryser, 2018, p. 21)

A SEGREGATED CITY

Conflict is often described as a serious disagreement and is related to battle, rivalry, and war. There are conflicting cities all over the world. The root of the conflict may be different, but the outcome of a conflict proves to be recurring with violence, segregation, and mistrust. The time after a conflict, you enter a “post conflict” phase (Caner & Bölen, 2016). The term “post conflict” explains a situation where there has been a consensus to end the violent conflict. This does not mean that the conflict is not existing, but is now in a phase that is perceived as complex (Frére & Wilen, 2015). Cities are facing significant challenges in getting rid of this label, and Belfast is no exception. “Post conflict” explains little about the sort of conflict and the ability to understand the situation. Leaving this phase lies in solving the root of the conflict (Caner & Bölen, 2016). A post conflict city differs in many aspects; the scale of the conflict, economic state, political system, and state security (Brown et al. 2011). These aspects mean that navigating through these communities, post conflict areas, requires an understanding and awareness of the contested context. It is a necessity to understand how peace goes deeper than physical and material space design. It’s about regenerating and reconnecting the social as well as the physical. This provides a major focus on the role of “urban design”. Significant involvement of participants is required during the design and planning process of performing reconnecting society, culture, city, or country (James, 2018).

Due to the conflict, Belfast is characterized by segregation and has distinct spatial segregation going through the city. Predominantly Catholic and Protestant are identified by special areas of the city; most Catholics are in the West, and Protestants to the East. This clearly defines Belfast by socio-political lines, through physical barriers and spatial developments of the city (Mell, 2019).

The division of communities was an attempt to create peace, and here defensive architecture in the form of “peace lines” and “peace walls” was implemented (see illu. 5, page 28). The goal was to build physical barriers that would separate conflicting neighborhoods from each other (Lang & Mell, 2020). This was also done through planned architecture and infrastructure such as motorways, shopping centers, and vacant landscapes in between the communities (Hackett, 2019). These vacant landscapes were spatial no-mans lands also seen as interface zones (Bollens, 2018). In addition to the physical manifestation, there are also the less physical barriers such as murals, flags and bonfires. These are explicitly visible or occasional reminders of the city’s political divisions (ODowd & Komarova, 2011).

It is essential knowledge that a peace agreement doesn’t mean the end of problems and conflicts, rather a pass along or new category of conflicts.

The problems are no longer only executed by violence but channelled into physical barriers, buffers, social or occasional manifestations that segregate and divide the society.

NEUTRAL PLANNING

Physical segregation has caused divisions to deteriorate over the past 25 years and created a distinct shift in the economic and demographic profile of Belfast. The city’s industrial core focused on engineering has experienced a negative development and has been shut down (Murtagh, 2002). The industrial heritage is the identity of communities, and this has influenced their attachments between place and socio-economic activity (Shirlow, 2006). These changes have led to a separation between East and West Belfast, which has a historical association with equal rights to access to the city, both psychical and physical. This has now been challenged (Mell, 2019).

Changes in the demographic profile of Belfast mean that Belfast City Council is reviewing the possibility of maintaining segregated areas as a result of the Catholic community growing, while the Protestant population has been decreasing. The city’s response to the demographic and economic changes was to embark on a bold process that would regenerate and promote the city centre, as a neutral place. This was to be done with inclusive design in public spaces and permeate the city’s history (Mell, 2019). This neutral planning model means that Belfast remains passive to the situation and tries to avoid dealing with the socio-ethnic-conflict. The development does not address the root of the problem but works its way around it as the development of the Titanic Quarter in the city centre because the area already was neutral space. This is also a part of the economic profile Belfast wants to achieve by entering the global context in which one designs a city for investors and tourists (Caner & Bölen, 2016).

When working towards a peacebuilding strategy, there is a lack of focus on connecting the city both physically and socially and creating shared spaces for people to meet. Through the implantation of urban design, shared spaces can be designed as the key to creating a sustainable healthy, and peaceful community (Sucuoglu et al. 2016).

”You design your way out of conflict,” Goodyear. (2012) says. “But the way we build neighborhoods can either help or hinder polarized communities.” If we are ambitious enough to talk about long-term solutions that foster belonging, ownership, cohesion, and integration, urbanism is one place to start. Goodyear in (Sucuoglu, 2016, p. 18)

East Belfast that is unlike the city centre, not neutral ground has experienced an uplift in recent years with new urban projects. This has been through the implementation of the public transport, BRT, The Glider, and by creating a new green recreation area “The Connswater Community Greenway” (Martin, 2020). These have heightened the connectivity and quality of the surrounding areas.

Neutral planning policy is easily implemented in the city centre, as it is already neutral space. Through it has been designed mainly with a focus on tourism and economic profit.

The regenerating projects as the Glider and Connswater Community Greenway have affected the deprivation, connectivity and segregation in East Belfast.

QUALITY OF GREEN SPACE

Jan Gehl talks about the quality of urban spaces as designing shared spaces for changing public lives (Gehl, 2007). This is indeed an important key to quality when designing in a post conflict environment, which is an environment in change. But in a slow change.

By creating a co-creative design process, involving the local society, it affords a sense of ownership and creates a link between the project and the context. This also embraces a pride, connection and protective behaviour towards the project (Hickey, 2014). This calls for a process where also the citizens will help it moving forward. Another factor when working with the landscape is how the quality of the landscape is different from architecture. Instead of being defined as ‘fine art’ it is seen as useful arts (Olin, 2007). The landscape needs to respond to the needs of society and the individual. Ken Worpole argues how informal outdoor spaces play an important role in public health (Travlou and Thompson, 2007). Ian Mell (2019) examines this even further in his paper. If parks can facilitate a greater sense of both community and identity. Parks are important in a community because they are often multifunctional spaces. They offer space for social interaction, biodiversity, and a green experience and hereby livability in the city. Even though they are often lower prioritized than the built environment. Parks have been forgotten in the process of regenerating and reconnecting the city (Mell, 2019).

Green space can both be a driver for health, ownership and reconnecting communities while it can respond to the need of the society. Parks though have been forgotten in the regenerating process in Belfast. They are not by default shared space but can become a driver for shared space and community when designed and included in the regeneration process. Thereby it is crucial to acknowledge the factor of including the green areas of the post conflict city.

REGENERATING THE CITY

Belfast has begun to regenerate some of its existing urban green spaces, one of them being Connswater Community Greenway. This green and blue infrastructure stretch into a deprived area in East Belfast, to reconnect the communities. This is done by creating one identity and shared history by using C.S Lewis and the story of Narnia. By this, they avoid reflecting on the history of segregation (Simpson, 2017). The opposite can be obtained from the GROW community Garden, which works with the regeneration of urban green spaces where conflict is handled more directly. The main focus is to connect people through activities and has several sites directly on interfaces where they use community gardening as the gathering point (GROW, n.d.). The difference is that Connswater Community Greenway is established by the City Council, which has a neutral planning policy while GROW is created on the initiative of passionate citizens.

The idea that green spaces have a natural radiance comes from the historically situated sense that nature is separated from the contextual culture and therefore neutral. The neutral planning policy of Belfast aims to: “Creating safe and shared space for meeting, sharing, playing, working and living. Freeing the public realm from threat, aggression, and intimidation while allowing for legitimate expression of cultural celebration” (OFMDFM, 2005). However, the document argues that achieving neutrality can only happen by removing explicit symbols associated with traditional division (OFMDFM, 2005). This claim opens up a discussion about whether this is the case. Ian Mell and Louisiana Laang investigate this by exploring what users of green spaces in Belfast are experiencing. The answers they get emphasize that the conflict lies in the lived experience of green spaces through the concept of shared spaces understood by policy-makers and the local communities. The studies show a clear tension in the success of the neutralized regeneration of green spaces in Belfast. The claim that parks are “neutral” compared to other “interfaces” is rejected, and it is argued that parks are not neutral spaces. People have a clear understanding of boundaries although there are no physical obstacles that show this. This understanding emerges through the social aspects such as gestures, language, names and activities, while shared spaces embody historically informed values and limitations (Lang & Mell, 2020).

This opens the way for green spaces in Belfast to be changed from having a homogeneous understanding from a communal representation, while instead of being a more heterogeneous development where the understanding comes from both communities to create peaceful coexistence. To achieve this, everyday experience will be central to regenerate green spaces as shared green spaces, for examples of how common people experiences parks (see illu. 8, 43) (Lang & Mell, 2020).

There are various ways of creating a neutral identity of an area, but not all methods ensure the area to become a shared space.

It is a misinterpretation that territoriality is only something physical bound, while a symbol less park still can be segregated; not all barriers and symbols can be invisible to the naked eye.

PEOPLE IN PARKS

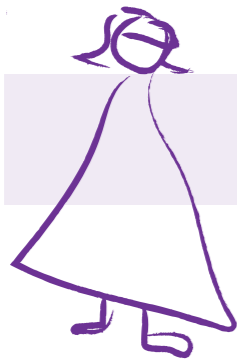


“

You can always tell people's religion because it's connected to the area where they live, so if you see someone leaving through a certain gate you know where they live and what religion they are.

(A woman in her 30s in Alexandra park cited in Lang & Mell, 2020, p 14)

”

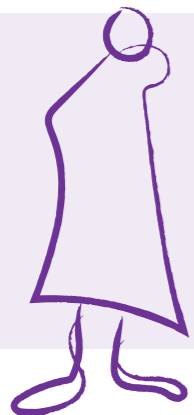


“

The greenery makes you feel calmer.

(A woman in her 30s in Waterworks cited in Lang & Mell, 2020, p 19)

”



“

There is a music festival here every year, which I go to. It has become more popular all the time and people come from all over whether they are Catholic or Protestant. The DJs are from all over. Also, the festival puts money back into the park.

(A man in his 20s in Falls Park cited in Lang & Mell, 2020, p 15)

”

“

The park is a lot cleaner but there is a problem with youngsters drinking and taking drugs; it would help if there was more policing. Ten years ago [it] was much worse, but after the fishing club opened, more people started coming and the bad elements drifted out.

(A middle-aged couple Alexandra Park cited in Lang & Mell, 2020, p 12)

”



“

I wouldn't go to a park in a Protestant area because if someone asked my name they would know I'm a Catholic, so I don't think green spaces are more neutral. You can't just chit-chat if you go to a park in a Protestant area.

(A man in his early 30s in Falls park cited in Lang & Mell, 2020, p 19)

”



“

In the past, a Protestant couldn't come here [to Falls Park]. Even now, I can't see a Protestant coming here, unless he was playing football with the League, just like I wouldn't go to Woodvale Park. But the younger generation doesn't care, thank God.

(Participant in his 50s in Falls Park cited in Lang & Mell, 2020, p 15)

”



CONCLUSION

From this literature review, it can be concluded how planning and design interventions in post-conflict contexts require sensitive consideration.

An important point taken forward is the emphasis on how a too sensitive policy, as neutral planning, instead of solving the issues creates new challenges.

Increasingly, policy, practice and research have paid attention to the role of shared spaces and more recently, the importance of green spaces within that. Here, there have been a number of important insights provided on the role of

shared green spaces in diffusing tension and building resilience in communities.

However, as of yet, there is very little consideration of the role of design or how to better design for shared, inclusive green spaces. Representing an oversight in existing studies, our thesis is a first step toward generating design tools for shared green spaces in cities.

METHODOLOGY

To reach this goal this chapter focuses on uncovering which methods and work structure are feasible. This chapter is structured in four categories, the first category aims to introduce the thoughts behind the methodology, next the work structure is presented, which gives an overview of the process. The third category seeks to built a understanding of the situation in Ballymacarrett. Whereabout the last phase will conclude how to regenerate shared green space.

“If I had an hour to solve a problem, I’d spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and 5 minutes thinking about solutions.” Albert Einstein

MEANS TO A GOAL

In order to create shared spaces, it acquires a clear structure. This structure can be insured through an integrated design process, simplified and illustrated through four phases. The phases connect the literature review with the analysis of combining interviewing experts with desk-based mapping. This creates a foundation for developing a design toolkit connected with a strategic approach in regenerating Pitt Park.

Due to the Covid-19 crisis, the methodology for this thesis was reconsidered in the process, this meant both a set-back of the work and having to go over one phase again. Ideal in a pre-corona situation, the work phases 1,2,4 was to be preferred, but due to corona phase 2 had to be redone, leading to the final work process following phase 1,3,4 (see illu. 9).

WORK PROCESS

Phase 1 - Approach

Phase 1 is the starting point of this project, and it seeks to answer the first objective. This phase includes; theme, literature reading, finding a gap and decide upon a project. The theme and outline for this thesis takes departure in a study trip to Belfast in 2019, where themes such as post conflict, urban structures and segregation, led to a further interest for Belfast as a potential thesis site. To find a proper angle and approach for working with Belfast, Research and investigation of existing knowledge about Belfast take place. An understanding of the literary themes and findings helps to uncover a gap in the literature.

Belfast as a city has been studied a lot, and the research reveals critical and sensitive themes. Among these, you find the ethnocultural segregation, a city defined by defensive architecture, territorial behaviour among ethnocultural groups and the quality of green spaces. These themes help to find the theoretical approaches for the thesis, with a greater focus upon shared green spaces as peacebuilding infrastructures.

The approach by working with green spaces, made it possible to work in a segregated community, while not interfering with sensitive elements, but still work with segregated communities.

The aim of this phase is to gain knowledge of what has been done in relation to theoretical frameworks, and thereby being able to find a gap for this thesis as a theoretical research framework. This will create the base for the first initial themes, intentions, objectives and aims for the thesis

Phase 2 - Gaining knowledge

The second phase takes departure in preparations for a study trip to Belfast, which was planned at the beginning of the project. This phase seeks to prepare and provide enough knowledge of Belfast as a city and Ballymacarrett, to ensure the base for conduction analysis on site.

Background knowledge is to be gained, such as a greater understanding of the historical background, not only understanding the current post conflict situation, but also an understanding of why the situation arose, leading to a more varied insight into a complex and sensitive situation.

Background information such as policy about shared space and green infrastructure are collected, while mapping is conducted to ensure a solid basis of background

knowledge of the infrastructure and network in Belfast before interviewing people. This phase had a great focus on interviews as a way to gain qualitative insight knowledge, from a variety of stakeholders. Different stakeholders in Belfast was investigated, to ensure conducting interviews and including them as experts upon their fields of diverse competence and perspectives on designing in a contested environment, citizen engagement and use and development of shared green spaces. Departments, communities and educational institutions. Belfast is a segregated city, and during phase 1 it became clear that both the different departments and Belfast’s citizens are taking steps towards a non-segregated city, through different social and volunteer communities. A greater analysis of different communities and their aim were conducted, the plan was to approach communities and interview them in Belfast and have an informal interview/chat.

Phase 3 - New direction

The second phase was based on being there and experience the area. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 crisis, the study trip was cancelled the evening before departure. Therefore, the second phase was to be reconsidered. The thesis will be a desktop-based project, which has its backbone in experience the site through other eyes, by letting the interviews become the base for the thesis.

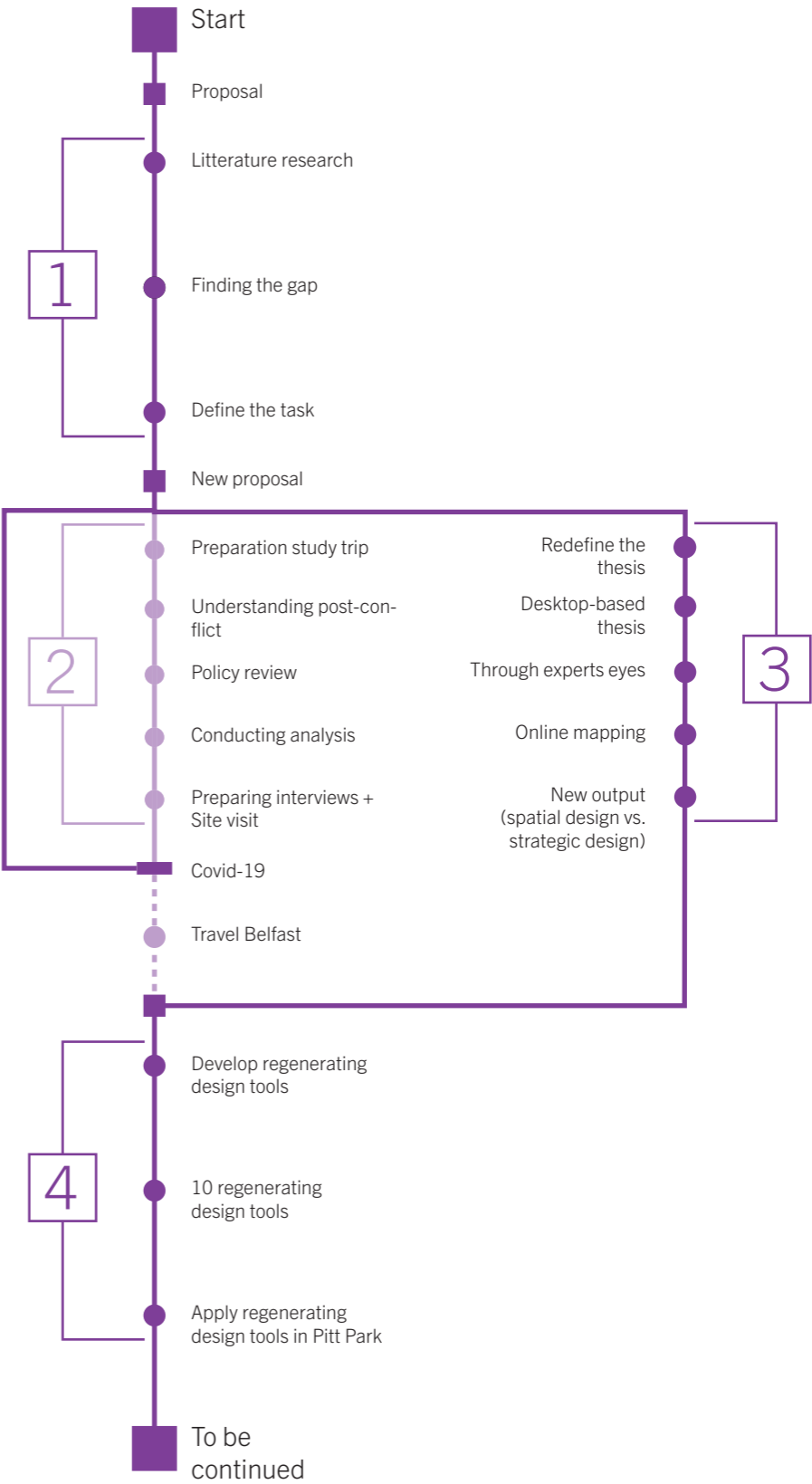
Due to the limitation of access to the site, it affected the possibility of conducting onsite analysis and making spatial and phenomenological analysis. The overall output of the project was reconsidered, and instead of having a greater focus on creating a masterplan and spatial design, the focus was changed to develop design tools and implementing them.

This phase deals with the second objectives by exploring East Belfast as a case study. The knowledge is primarily gained by interviews with experts. Interviews were held online, where the focus for the interviews was adapted to the output, with an emphasis upon what has been done in relation to green spaces as shared spaces, what have been successful, and where are their room for improvement.

A series of mapping analysis was made to assist and enlighten the newly gained knowledge from the interviews. The mapping made it possible to understand how the potential and constraints appear in the physical environment. It also complements the interviews by revealing new information.

Phase 4 - Development

The last phase is the development of tools and designing phase. This phase will explore the third objective. The findings from the previous phases are concluded by ten regenerating-design tools. These will help designers and architects to create green spaces as shared spaces in contested areas which means the aim of this project is achieved. To demonstrate the regenerating-design tools, these are applied to Pitt Park in Ballymacarrett by exemplifying a creation of shared green spaces.



EVALUATION

Early in the process of the thesis, qualitative and quantitative methods were considered as methods for analysing, and their methods limitation and potentials were investigated. A mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods was chosen for this project because of their capability to complement each other.

A qualitative method is an approach that builds on people's personal experience and imperial background. It allows the researcher to get insight into a more personal perspective on a topic, and the method often makes it possible to find problems that are often overlooked. The researcher has the possibility for targeting different experts, to gain the desired knowledge, which will benefit the project. On the other hand, the qualitative method has been criticised, for giving too much validation and reliability to one subject, since the subjects context, situation, and interaction affect the output (McLeod, 2019).

Quantitative methods gather data which can be put into categories, or in rank order. The aim of generating quantitative data is to get data that is directly comparable. Quantitative methods suitable for gaining an overview, and collecting data from a broader perspective, see connections, and get a physical dimension. On the contrary, the weakness of quantitative methods is a missing personal perspective and the limitation for gaining more knowledge about unexpected problems.

Interviews

In this thesis, most arguments are based on qualitative methods, through expert interviews since a lot of relevant quantitative methods as neighbour and citizen surveys has already been made and presented through the literature.

The online interviews have been made as a semi-structured interview. This makes it possible to collect and generalize data, which helps to keep a structure to the interview and makes sure that all subjects are covered. The structure makes it possible keeping a timeframe, here chosen to be within 20-30 minutes variety of each interview. Semi-structured interviews also made it possible to forward the questions as a thematic guide, beforehand. It was essential to conduct the interviews as a normal conversation where there was room for open questions and discussions around different elements of interest as personal and professional opinions, learnings and experiences.

The thematic guide was made to enable a direct comparison of the generated data and the predictions of the conceptual framework. The guide also defined a backbone of consistency with the data across each interview and was developed upon the knowledge from literature research and analysing.

Giving the different expertise of the experts, the guide was structured to each interviewee. Topic where kept identical but subquestion would vary in character and purpose, due to the expert's different backgrounds. The reason for using the thematic guide, doing a semi-structured interview was to get as close as possible to the real scenario as having informal meetings with the different experts.

In total, four interviews were conducted out of seven requests. The experts were chosen based on their profession and

target area of either; responsibility and involvement with community or green and shared spaces and development of these. Our experts combined provide knowledge from both finished, ongoing and future regeneration projects within Belfast and also the local area Ballymacarrett.

All interviews were based on a consent form and participation sheets and were taken forward by notes taken during the interviews as well as a recording used for checking details or missed point in the notes. To apply for further analysis, to develop regenerating-design tools and choice of site.

It was desired to combine these expert interviews with a short interview with the users, neighbours and citizens, due to the cancelling of the study trip, this was not possible. Nevertheless, expert interviews have provided a vast amount of knowledge and a robust base of different perspectives and focus.

Mapping

Mapping is a quantitative method, and it generates data which are directly comparable. At the same time, the interviews give a personal perspective, and the mapping creates a physical dimension, which helps to get a more comprehensive understanding of network, placement, and proportions.

The mapping is conducted on the background of two focuses; the first focus is the interviews where the mapping are

made to assist the interviews and put the outcome of the interviews into a physical perspective.

While the second focus for the mapping is created on the background of empirical knowledge and literature reading, these maps create an overall understanding of Belfast as a site, before the interviews were conducted. Furthermore, the maps investigating questions which were not answered during the interviews.

The mapping conducted on the base of the interviews helps to give the experts statement more credibility, while the statements are visualised in a physical dimension. It helps to create an overview of the given concern, structure or function. In this case, the mapping uncovered topics such as; green infrastructure and their quality, network of communities and the essential functions in the area. The interviews heavily influence these mappings since the outcome of the mapping reflects the interviews.

Mapping was also conducted as independent analysis. Since the interviews and literature readings led to new questions and missing links, the mapping was a tool to create an overview which the interviews were not capable of. These kinds of mappings played a more significant role in preparation for the interviews, since conducting interviews require specific background knowledge of the site. The more independent mapping also helped to fill in missing information, which allows getting a more holistic understanding of the context and site.

CONCLUSION

The methodology seeks to reflect the objectives set out for this thesis. A unique method has been developed, that provides the right means for the goal by the combination of interviews and mapping to ensures a spatial and physical design background.

The circumstances from Covid19 made a new need, a need to investigate a site without being able to visit it. Using the approach of experts interviews as the backbone for this thesis, compensated for the cancellation of the residential field trip. At the same time, it allows us to target expert that has an engagement or a professional background in relation to shared spaces, green shared spaces or community engagement. This provides the thesis with a brought range of knowledge about green spaces as shared spaces.

Letting mapping become a tool that exemplifies the experts' statement helps to get a physical dimension to the inter-

views, which also gives more proportion and credibility to the experts' statements. It gave the mapping a voice and the interview a visual. It enables the interviews to become a 'voice over'. Combining both qualitative and quantitative methods, there is made a basis of knowledge in relation to the network structure of Belfast as a city as well as Ballymacarrett as a neighbourhood, while also uncovering personal and professional insights from experts.

The next chapter will investigate Ballymacarrett as a case where the quantitative analysis will be used.

BALLY- MACARRETT AS A CASE

This chapter will take you through Ballymacarrett, a residential area in East Belfast. Here will the demographics of the area, the context of conflict and tension within the area as well as its history and identity be presented. This is done to gain an understanding of the situation of a segregated area in Belfast.



10. Illu Exploring Ballymacarrett
The strategic location of Ballymacarrett in Belfast, highlighting quarters, landmarks and green spaces.

WELCOME TO BALLYMACARRETT

Ballymacarrett has an excellent strategic location in the city and regional scale. North of the area is Queen's Island, a large-scale waterfront with historic industrial landmarks, the Odyssey Leisure Complex and the famous Titanic Quarter which is a huge development area. Residential neighbourhoods dominate East and South of the area with excellent connections to each other. The Newtownards Road (see illu. 10) plays a major role in this connection and is seen as a central spine throughout the area. It acts as a key stretch connecting East Belfast with the City Center and West Belfast (EastSide, 2016). Besides, Ballymacarrett is surrounded by several green areas but has a lack of green areas itself.

BALLYMACARRETT BY NUMBERS

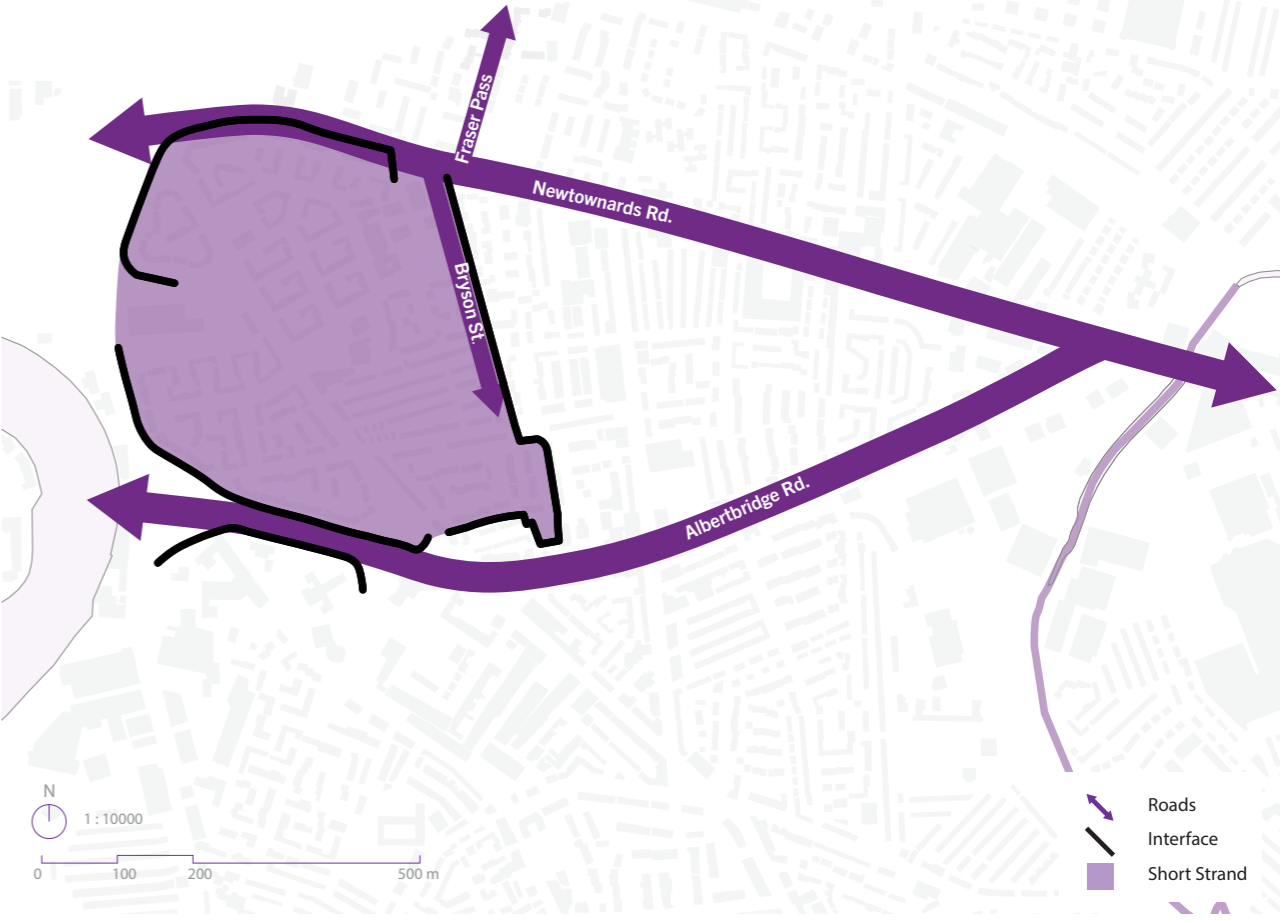
By exploring the numbers of Ballymacarrett, it is possible to make a comparison to the numbers in a deprived area and Belfast in general. 5033 (2017) residents belong to the area of Ballymacarrett. It is understood that Ballymacarrett is a predominantly Protestant area, but the numbers reveal that there are, overall, more Catholics in the area(see illu. 11). On further discoveries, it appears that 81% of Catholics belong to the sub-district of Short Strand. This makes the area remarkably segregated, and the conflict between them has been part of the factors for its deprived area status. The area has great challenges when it comes to unemployment 8%, which is high compared to Belfast (5%). The same goes for the high number of residents having some kind of long term health condition 31%, Belfast 23% (NISRA, n.d.).

The positive figures lie in the rising population trend and the young population. The younger generation is far more open to changes around the religious conflict, and new people moving to the area gives a greater diversification (The Belfast Agenda, 2017). This is what Ballymacarrett is currently experiencing, but firstly the root of the problems will be explored before revealing projects that have had a significant impact on the area lately.



Illu 11: Ballymacarrett by numbers

12. Illu Contested areas
This map stresses the religious segregating in Ballymacarrett. Highlighting short strand as an enclave enclosed by interfaces.



A CONTESTED NEIGHBOURHOOD

Ballymacarrett is divided into two sub-districts where Ballymacarrett itself is mainly comprised of Protestants, and the Short Strand area (see illu. 12) which mainly consists of Catholics. These two communities are separated by interfaces due to the historical conflicts between them, and because of their conflict and lack of public funding, the district is known as a deprived area.

The area has a strong historical connection to the industrial age with its nearness to the shipyards in the north. The district is known as a working-class area today. This is explored further through the history of Ballymacarrett.

BALLYMACARRETT HISTORY

During the 19th century the harbor in Belfast has become an industrial focal point, due to Ballymacarrett location near the harbor, both Catholic and Protestants started to urbanize the area. Soon after in the 1880s and 1890s, there was mass construction of work houses, and Short strand was formed as a working-class area. By the end of the 19th century, the religious district was starting to develop, and by the establishment of St. Matthews Roman Catholic church in 1887, Short strand was formed as a Catholic district. During the early 20th century, riots arose in the whole of Ireland, discussing Ireland's affiliation to the United Kingdom, leading to a more segregation society. And the first interface barrier in Ballymacarrett was erected in 1920, segregating Catholic and Protestant districts. The following decades more riots occurred in and around the Short Strand area, and Catholic people were forced out of work. The out-

break of the Troubles in 1969 reinforced the segregation (Reflected lives, 2018). And during the 1970s Ballymacarrett has become a military stronghold, where British troops were located on the edge of Short Strand, and IRA had a military base in the middle of Short Strand (Magill, 1977). The tension in the area led to major riots and gun battles, where many were killed and injured. Due to riots, many homes and businesses were burned down, which led to many Catholic people fleeing (Belfast Child, 2016). During this period many interfaces (see illu. 13) were erected.

Since the peace agreement in 1998, the Good Friday agreement, riots and violence have still occurred, which led to interfaces being built higher, and new interfaces were built, the latest in 2012 (Reflected lives, 2018). This leads further to the identity of Ballymacarrett.



THE IDENTITY

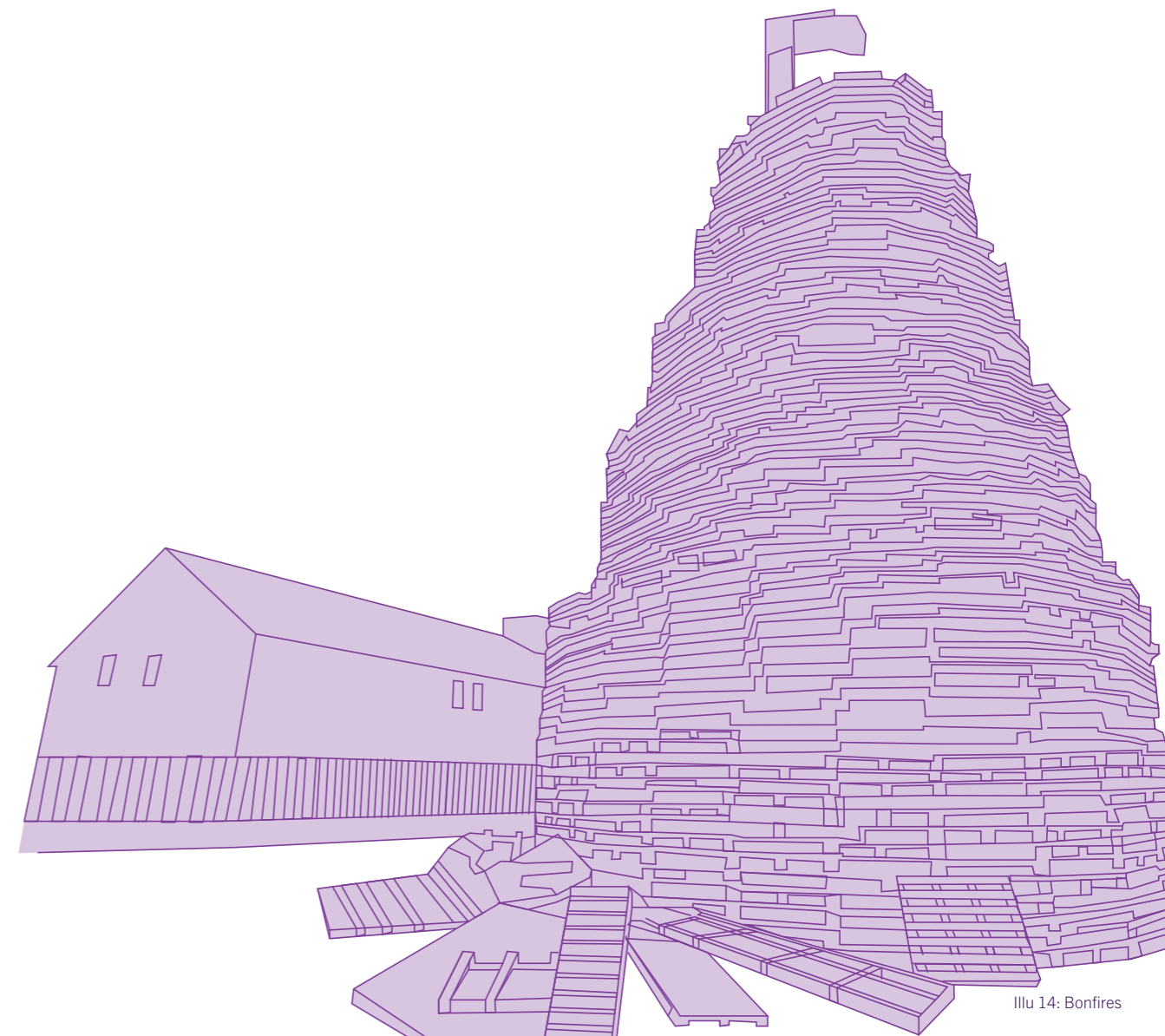
The core area of Ballymacarrett is along the main road Newtownards Road (see illu. 10 p. 58). It is a place with a unique character. For the local communities, this is a lifeblood and an important artery for the city because of its linking into the eastern part of Belfast. This road is home to landmark buildings, streets and heritage, and it is a symbol of identity. It brings together the historical past, with over 200 years of history, and the future, focusing on investments and opportunities for a shared community (EastSide, 2016)

Vacancy

The number of vacant lands, abandoned buildings and confined spaces is a worrying characteristic of the area. Much of this is directly related to the industrial decline and depopulation within the area, and more recently, the economic recession and changes in the retail environment also had its negative effect. As a result, it is clear that Ballymacarrett offers significant potential sites. Everything from small to large vacant areas, underutilised public spaces and worn and unused green spaces (see illu. 19 p. 75). Therefore redeveloping these spaces is a priority for the city, especially areas along Newtownards Road because of its standing as a core for the communities and a key arterial route into the Belfast city (EastSide, 2016).

Landmarks

As identified previously, the area consists of a rich range of cultural and architectural heritage through unique building, structural elements and colorful murals. Together with recent investments of community facilities and improved public spaces have contributed positively to the attractiveness and vibrancy of the area. However, these positive images are undermined by the worn and abandoned impression and underdeveloped areas. These areas are a part of the identity of these segregated communities, where it is clear that both symbolism and traditions emerge stronger. This has an important impact on the residents in Ballymacarrett, whereby both distinct interfaces, murals depicting paramilitary activity and the annual 11th night bonfire and 12 of July parade can be perceived as intimidating and make Ballymacarrett feel like an area which is unwelcoming to visitors (EastSide, 2016).



Illu 14: Bonfires

URBAN DEVELOPMENTS

East Belfast has recently experienced a surge in expensive urban investment projects that have helped to elevate the quality of the area. Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) and Connswater Community Greenway are the two most significant projects that have contributed to the improvement of reconnecting East Belfast with the rest of the city and the green public spaces in the area.

Despite the lack of investment in the area. Since the decline of the industrial era, when the Shipyards was the main attraction. East Belfast has in recent years gained a greater focus. Regenerating projects have been developed and had a major influence on the area. The focus has made the area more attractive, and the good qualities are highlighted. These regenerating projects consist of a strategic framework, improvement of the mobility connection, green and blue infrastructure and smaller-scale projects such as Community Gardens. All of these have contributed to the regeneration of urban spaces through cross-community activity in Ballymacarrett and East Belfast..

Urban Villages

The political path for Belfast was mentioned in the previous chapter, which highlighted a focus on ensuring inclusive growth. Where communities should be developed by including involved parties. This has led to a strategic framework. This plan intends to provide guidelines for everyone involved to ensure good outcomes of East-Belfast. The plan follows a concept where their work has set Newtownards road as a focal point for action and investment. Newtownards road has its physical and social assets in the area, and with improvements, this will have a greater impact on the surrounding areas. The essentials of the plan are their three goals that will ensure a great regeneration of a deprived area; “to foster positive community identities, to build community capacity, to improve the physical environment”. Furthermore, it is about the importance of shared spaces that contribute to building trust and relationships, especially local green spaces that can ensure healthily, safety, and connecting spaces regardless of religious or ethnic background (EastSide, 2016).



Illu 15: Connswater Community Greenway

Connswater Greenway Community:

This is a green and blue infrastructure (see illu. 15) that stretches over 9 km in a deprived area, with the purpose of reconnecting the communities in East Belfast. The park wants to create a stage for individual and community activities, events and recreation, and promote community, health and well-being. The park tries to reconnect communities by creating one identity and a shared history. Although this was a £40 million investment with great influence in the area a lately evaluating of the park argues that the park has not had a significant influence in the degree of trust in neighbours, health and well-being. But this should be understood in the context. Influencing human attitudes and behaviour is difficult and can take a long time (Simpson, 2017).



Illu 16: Glider

BRT

Belfast Rapid Transit, BRT, is a new dynamic public transport system in Belfast under the name The Glider (see illu. 16). It offer to connect East Belfast and West Belfast via the city centre in a safe and efficient way. This mobility project has had a major impact on the social infrastructure of Belfast where it has been a 20% increase in people using public transport since the launch of the new service (Link).

CONCLUSION

This chapter was an initial introduction to Ballymacarrett to build an understanding of the complexity of this area, and why we have chosen to focus on this area in this assignment in our path towards peace building grass.

Strategically, the area is excellent for being a key feature of Belfast's city center expedition, but due to lack of public funds/investments, the area has instead been associated with being a deprived area. This has led to challenges for the residents, causing the area to be hit by high unemployment and poor health among many residents. If looking back at the history, there have also been other factors that have contributed to the area being the way it is today. The historical conflict, together with the lack of clear future development plans, has contributed to physical solutions such as interfaces. These have helped to create safety but also led to clear segregation of communities in the area. This option can be defended by the fact that these high interfaces have been effective in preventing the most critical conflict be-

tween them but seen in the urban setting this has led to brutal barriers. The natural connections between neighborhoods are absent, which has made the Catholic part, Short Strand, isolated from the rest of Ballymacarrett.

As a district, Ballymacarrett has a large development potential shaped by the identity, attachment, and functions associated with the area. The numbers refer to a young population, where the conflict is not as influential (The Belfast Agenda, 2017) provides opportunities for successful regeneration in the future. It is about emphasizing the importance of implementing both physical and social shared spaces where people can meet. Through great design, shared spaces can help create sustainable peaceful societies (Sucuoglu et al. 2016). Resi-

dents have been introduced to new investments such as BRT and Connswater Greenway Communities, which shows that there are a desire and openness to work with resolving these segregated communities in Ballymacarrett.

According to the Eastside strategic framework (EastSide, 2016), it is emphasized that Newtownards Road is an area to be developed. The arguments for this come from a thorough work in which the citizens, stakeholders, and both community sectors of Ballymacarrett were directly involved. This was done to gain an understanding of the issues and identify opportunities. The result was a strategic framework that will ensure good outcomes of new projects with a concept of improving a site along Newtownards Road (a core area) which will lead to a

wider area of influence. Furthermore, the importance of local green spaces is emphasized as a shared space that can ensure healthily, safety, and connecting spaces regardless of religious or ethnic background (Eastside, 2016).

A compilation of all these factors and information has developed into solid arguments upon a discussion that a green space along Newtownards Road would be a potential site. This chapter is the backbone towards exploring Ballymacarrett through the eyes of the experts and discuss the literature's finding that green space does not necessarily mean shared space.

DISCUSSIONS & FINDINGS

This chapter will present the findings through the eyes of experts and be the guide for obtaining information about Belfast and Ballymacarrett. Hereabouts it will be revealed how the professions of the experts have made a significant contribution to the framework of this thesis. During the interviews, Pitt Park is presented as a site, where it is emphasized that there is a need for re-generating-design tools.

“If I had an hour to solve a problem, I’d spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and 5 minutes thinking about solutions.” **Albert Einstein**

THROUGH OTHERS EYES

Getting to know Belfast based on the findings in the literature review, have called for local experts. This chapter will provide a broad overview of the work being done on green / shared spaces in Belfast to uncover the challenges, goals, opportunities and to pick the potential site to intervene within East Belfast, Ballymacarrett. Eyes on and from the site. It is a story of four experts in different sectors of public, private, academic and local. These are represented by four ‘expert interviews’, we call them expert interviews because the interviewees are experts to us in different fields on how Belfast are developing, using and dreaming of shared green spaces.

These experts have been targeted through a Tweet on the social media Twitter. The tweet has made it possible to expand both country and profession boundaries giving us access to a Belfast planning, policy and community network. Other experts have been contacted by unsolicited email requesting for attending online interviews. To manage interviewing from distance, software as Microsoft Teams and Zoom have been used by video and voice interviews. Two of the experts have asked to be held anonymous though this thesis



Expert number 1

Dr. Neil Galway, professor at Queen’s University planning department , who is our guide and expert on working and design in a contested environment as internationals and who has knowledge and guidance upon where it will be good to implement our design.



Expert number 2

Callie Persic, from the City Council, who is our expert on how the inner city has been developed and plan for future development, and especially can give knowledge on working method, learnings and shortages. She has a big speciality in temporary work and citizen inclusion.



Expert number 3

Expert number 3 who is an expert providing us knowledge from East-side partnership who is incharge of the development in East Belfast and hereby our target area. This expert enlighten us in the methods implemented in the planning know and the learning from existing projects as Connswater Community Greenway.



Expert number 4

Expert number 4, who is an expert providing us knowledge from Groundwork, and their meanwhile project in East Belfast; Connswater Meanwhile Garden. Through this interview our perspectives on the targets of community. It unfolds the strengths of activities implemented on vacant land and how it facilitates coherence not only the area but also the context

Illu 17: Experts

EXPERT 1

The composition of Galway's knowledge has provided a contextual understanding of Ballymacarrett and how different areas work today. The findings will act as a guide for a potential site that is reflected through the aims of this thesis

From the interview, Galway made it clear how important Newtownards Road is to the area. This arterial road transport lives into the area and connects the inner city with landmarks like C.S. Lewis Square. But it lacks a clear connection to the Titanic Quarter. Furthermore, it is emphasized that the area has a lack of green spaces and a lot of vacant lands. Many of these lands are weakened and with poor quality that makes them heavily underused. Galway highlights 3 potential areas (see illu. 18) that would be good site choices where Pitt Park is argued to be the best. The next page will present these arguments.

“

If you invest in one side of the community, you also have to invest in the other side of the community. They are trying to find a meanwhile use, like a child-friendly use, like a climbing wall.

”

“If it is going to be neutral it needs to be accessible, it is these arterial routes locations.”

“A lot of good things has happened from the communities-Christmas marked, gardens, but not from a policy perspective, it is more just framework.”

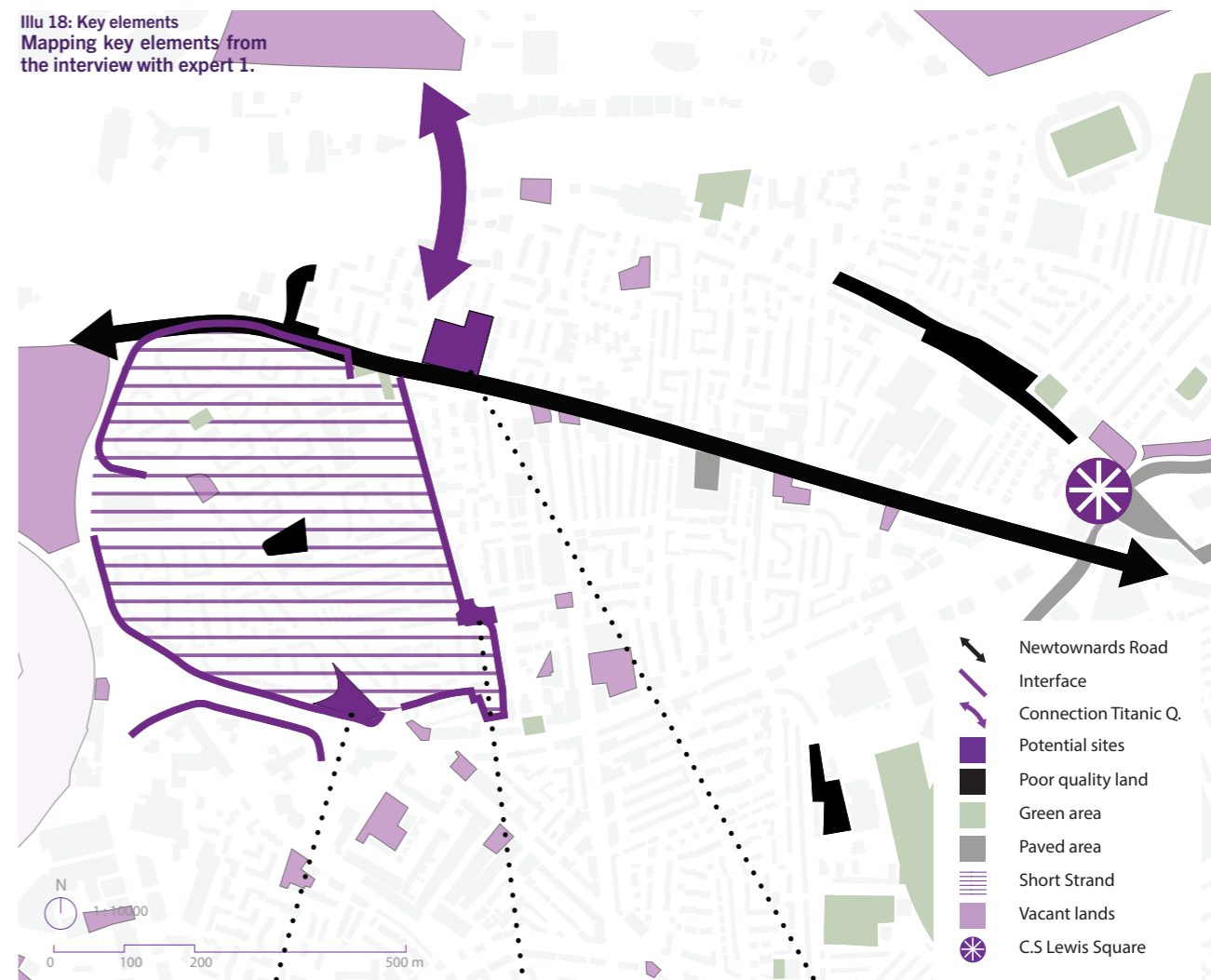
“

Security issue - people are cautious about changes. Security by design, they see permeability as a bad thing.

”



Illu 18: Key elements
Mapping key elements from
the interview with expert 1.



The Green
Small green space

Bryson St.
Unassessable
green area

Pitt Park
Underused
and tired Park

PITT PARK

Pitt Park’s location, challenges, and potential make this park the perfect site

Galway explains Pitt Park (see illu. 19) as a park that is underused at the moment. It contains a green space surrounded by a fence. This makes it slightly inaccessible and underused. Further, in the park, you will find a playground area that feels tired. The park has an abandoned area used for Bonfires which is perceived as unwelcoming and associated with symbolic expressions. In the nearest context, you have Newtownards Road which is busy by both pedestrians and vehicles. This road links well to the surrounding functions. Close by you have Short Strand area which is heavily barricaded from the rest.

This information will be the foundation for further findings for the development of regenerating design tools.

“The community are interested in turning the space into an area that the community can use, but they are also interested in creating a place where people wants to come. Because the community has realized that the area is tired and has problems and people are not really using the space because of its poor quality”

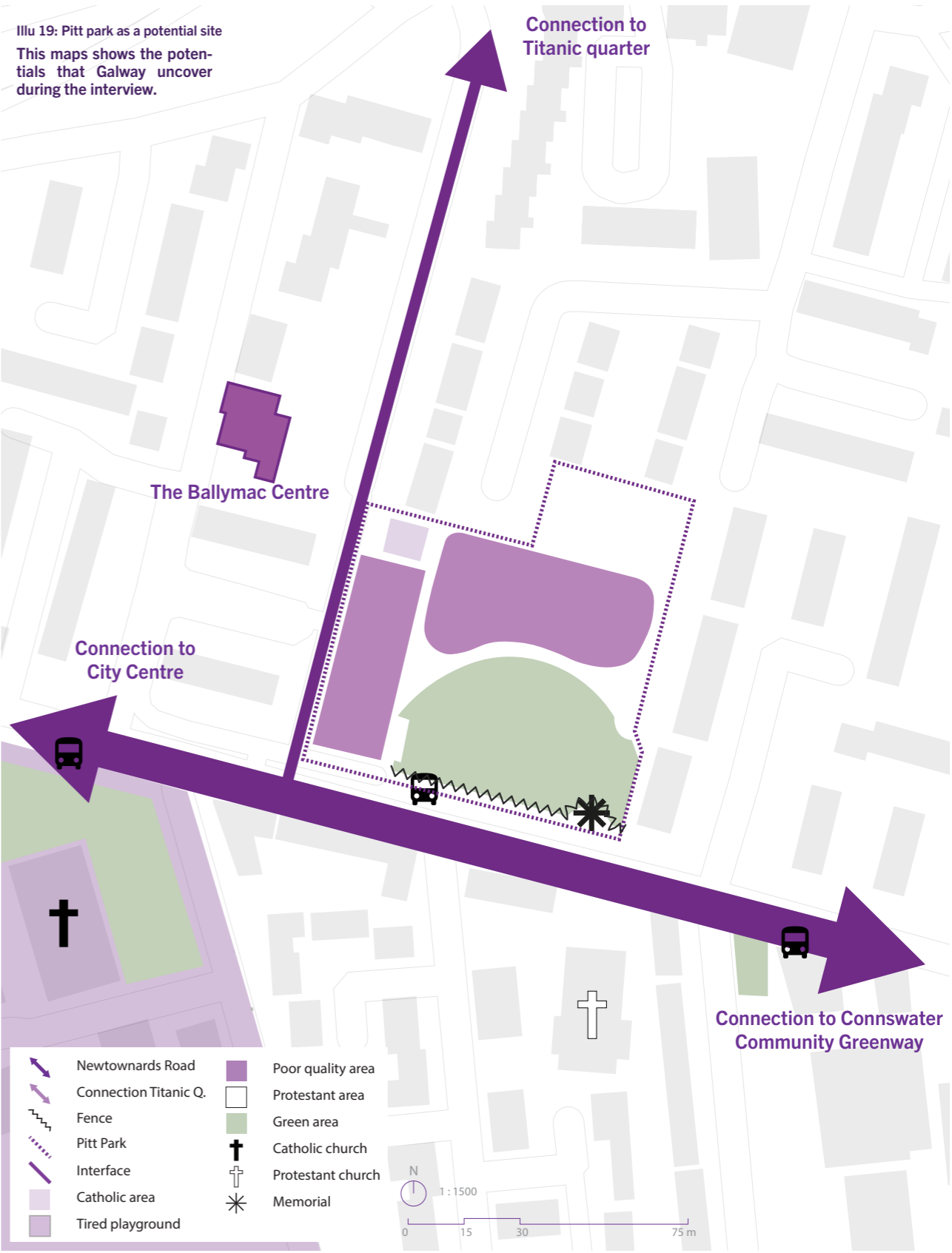
“It is in a location which is just with in one community but it is on arterial road.”

“This is one potential area, because there are money to use in this area”

“Pitts park is really underused at the moment. The first area is a green space, that’s behind a fence. It is not very accessible. It is very underused. Then there is a playpark, it is a bit tired. There is a space that is used for bonfires, not exactly the most welcoming of uses especially when effigies or symbols associated with the other community, located quite often on the bonfire.”



Illu 19: Pitt park as a potential site
This maps shows the potentials that Galway uncover during the interview.



EXPERT 2

The insight into how Belfast works give the project guidance on specific design processes that can be included to create a shared green space.

The interview confirms the lack of green spaces and open spaces in the city. They see it as a problem, and efforts are being made to improve it. The policy supports the importance of having a green network in the inner city which should also extend beyond the city center into a larger network.

This interview emphasized the importance of including people in the design process. Giving them the opportunity to explain what they need and how they perceive spaces creates interaction which leads to a shared understanding. Including children in various activities is recommended as a process that will create engagement and co-creation within communities. Quality is computed by changing habits slowly, and temporary use will be a good tool for breaking down the sensitivity towards changes and creating safety. The city council works by four principles; welcoming, accessible, good design and safe. The composition of these principles will ensure shared spaces in Belfast.

These principles will be taken forward and added to the findings from the next expert interview.

“Sometimes good design is that you co-design. We are no that good at this.” “Bring in the expert, sometimes you need facilitators.”

““

“We need to think of the city as a lab, we test things.”

””



““

“You need to work with people to understand what they need and what they think of spaces; how can they use them, how to design them.”

””

““

“Space can be so contested at times and people are very sensitive to special dynamics here. Sometimes things that are not obviously marked still maybe infused with emotion, territoriality, ownership. That we may not be aware of to the naked eye.”

””

“Welcoming, assessable, good design and safe — those are our principles. Good relation in spaces.”

“Sometimes by using these principles, it gives you a tool.”

“You don’t just do things to people; you do things together.”

“The temporary project is a way to learn.”

““

“In Belfast we already know, that there is not enough green space and open space in the city. We know this and that is a big problem.”

””

EXPERT 3

Ballymacarrett, East Belfast with their challenges have been given the focus they have been missing, and the new projects in the area have contributed to an openness to change among its residents.

In the interview with Eastside Partnership, it becomes clear that Ballymacarrett needs changes. The principle of inclusion of local people is also used by Eastside Partnership to achieve shared spaces and to ensure the impact of the wellbeing and local attachment. The Connswater Community Greenway, The Glider/BRT, and Urban Villages Initiative projects have been good contributions to the area (see illu 20). These have contributed to increased use of public transport and that Ballymacarrett has become more attractive and well connected. In the vicinity of the Connswater Community Greenway, demand has led to increased house prices, which in turn presents new challenges. In addition, Ballymacarrett consists of interfaces that are perceived as both physical and mental barriers.

Newtownards Road is the core area of East Belfast and a common denominator for both communities. The policy encourages working with a site along this road to get the best impact on the surrounding areas. This road has a lack of good green spaces and shared spaces, and is thus highlighted as a key area for investment in the future.

The findings from this interview were a good supplement to the argument of Pitt Park as a site. Together with the different processes that were used in already implemented projects in the area.

“The area which we are working in still sits in the top wards of social deprivation in the whole of Northern Ireland.”

“In terms of how communities were built they are still segregated we still have interface walls between short strand and the rest of East Belfast”

“

There is a lot of research and evidence that suggests designing public spaces with local people have a huge impact on how wellbeing and people being connected to their community.

”



Illu 20: Development projects
This map shows the development projects in east Belfast, which expert 3 highlights



“The key element in planning good public shared spaces is involving the community.”

“Connswater Community Greenway (...)it has become a catalyst for wide urban regeneration.”

“

The other piece was about high quality design so people feel invested in the project.

”

EXPERT 4

The outcome from this interview provided a deeper understanding of the organization's work with a common interest and temporary use to connect people together in deprived and divided communities.

The interview from Groundwork explains the importance of activating social functions through a common interest like food and gardening. This brings life to the area and brings people from all over the city together. These gardens fill vacant lands with temporary use that ensures activity and safety in the neighborhood. This leads to fewer areas where antisocial behaviour can occur which is a positive factor in combating crime and riots.

The findings from this interview provided information that shows small projects (see illu. 21) in the form of common activity can provide life and security to a neighborhood.

“People get invited to the garden when we work with groups. And everyone integrates quite naturally. There is no sort of forced integration between Catholics and Protestants.”

“Simple things as making a pot of flowers makes people talk to one another. And suddenly the conversation just flows between strangers.”

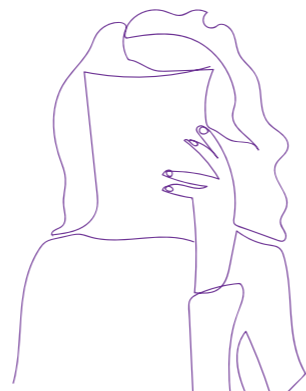
“

It allows integration without it being forced as saying come some protestant people and come some catholic people and cook together. Instead people come to the garden because of a common purpose. To eat and grow.

”

“The Connswater street garden is seen as quite a neutral territory because it is just fronted on to the main arterial road of the Newtownards road. It is open for everyone to get involved.”

“There is a lot of dialect or unused land in East Belfast”



“

“Without the garden it is just a dialect site, so even though it is not the neighbours coming, the initiative is still appreciated by the community and neighbours.”

”

Illu 21: Community map
This map shows the different communities located in Ballymacarrett and the context.



“Pitts park is really underused at the moment.

The first area is a green space, that’s behind a fence. It is not very accessible. It is very underused. Then there is a play-park, it is a bit tired. There is a space that is used for bonfires, not exactly the most welcoming of uses especially when effigies or symbols associated with the other community, located quite often on the bonfire.” (N. Galway, 2020, pers. comm., 27 March)

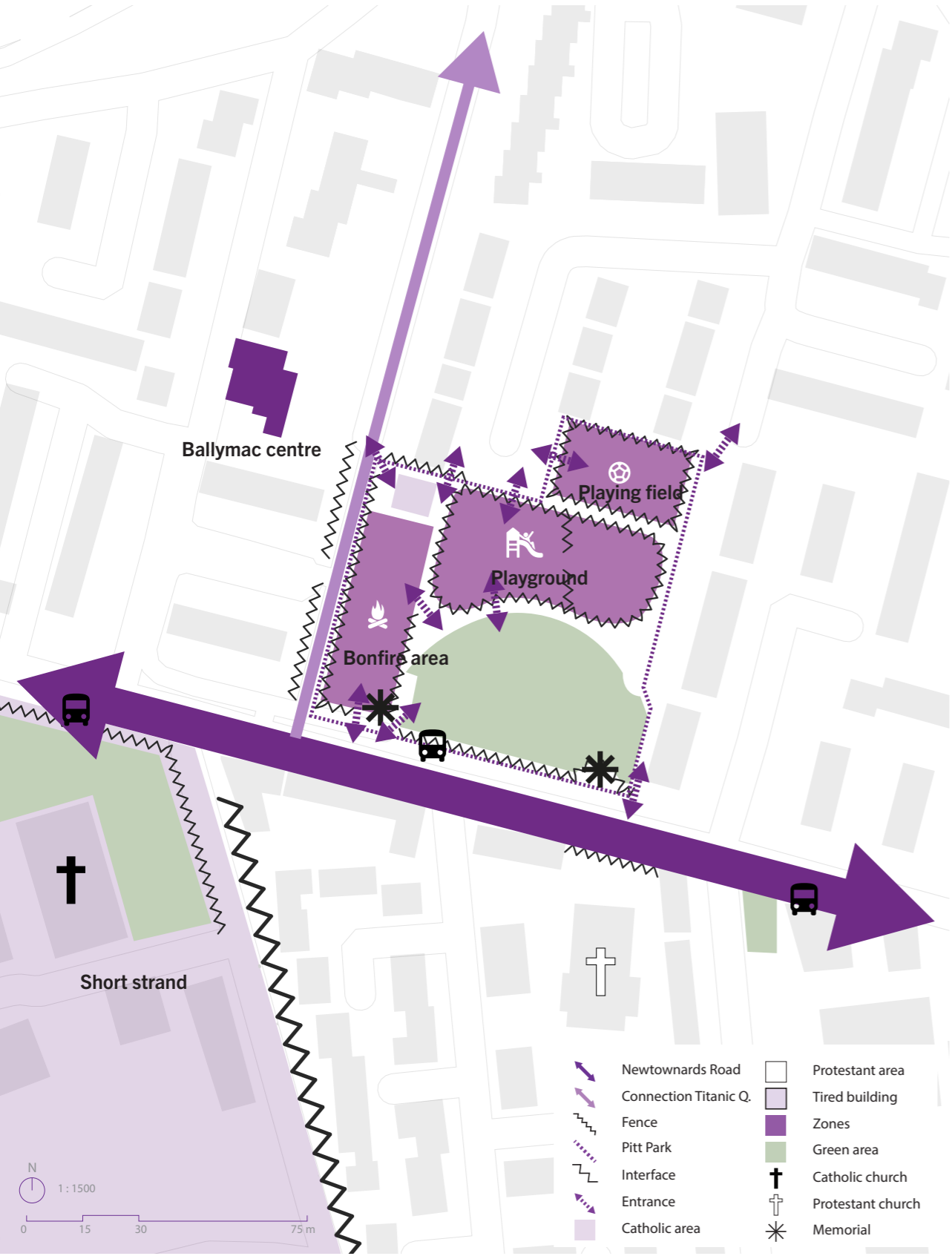
CHOOSING PITT PARK

Pitt Park has been chosen as a site for demonstrating the design tools. The choice is justified by a detailed explanation of the strengths and weaknesses of Pitt Park and Ballymacarrett (see illu. 22). The interviews also contributed to an outline explaining how to ensure shared spaces in segregated communities. The inclusion of locals through varied social activities emerged as the most important factor in creating engagement and attachment within the communities. This was further built on the importance of taking advantage of common interests in the practice of temporary use to bring life and safety to the area. This knowledge is presented through principles that will be the driver for further process.

On the next page, the most important findings will be presented as the DNA of Pitt Park



Illu 22: Aerial photo Pitt Park



Illu 23: DNA of Pitt Park
This map highlight the important key feathers that Pitt Park consists of

SUMMARY OF PITT PARK

On the background of this analysis, it is concluded that Pitt park sits on the corner of two different groups. Still, it does only represent one side of the community, the Protestants. It is poorly connected to the surroundings and does not invite people to stay.

Pitt Park is poorly connected to the surroundings, while most of the park is enclosed by fences and walls, and only small openings or gates facilitate access to the park. These access points are not inviting and do not afford people to be drawn into the park. (see illu. 23)

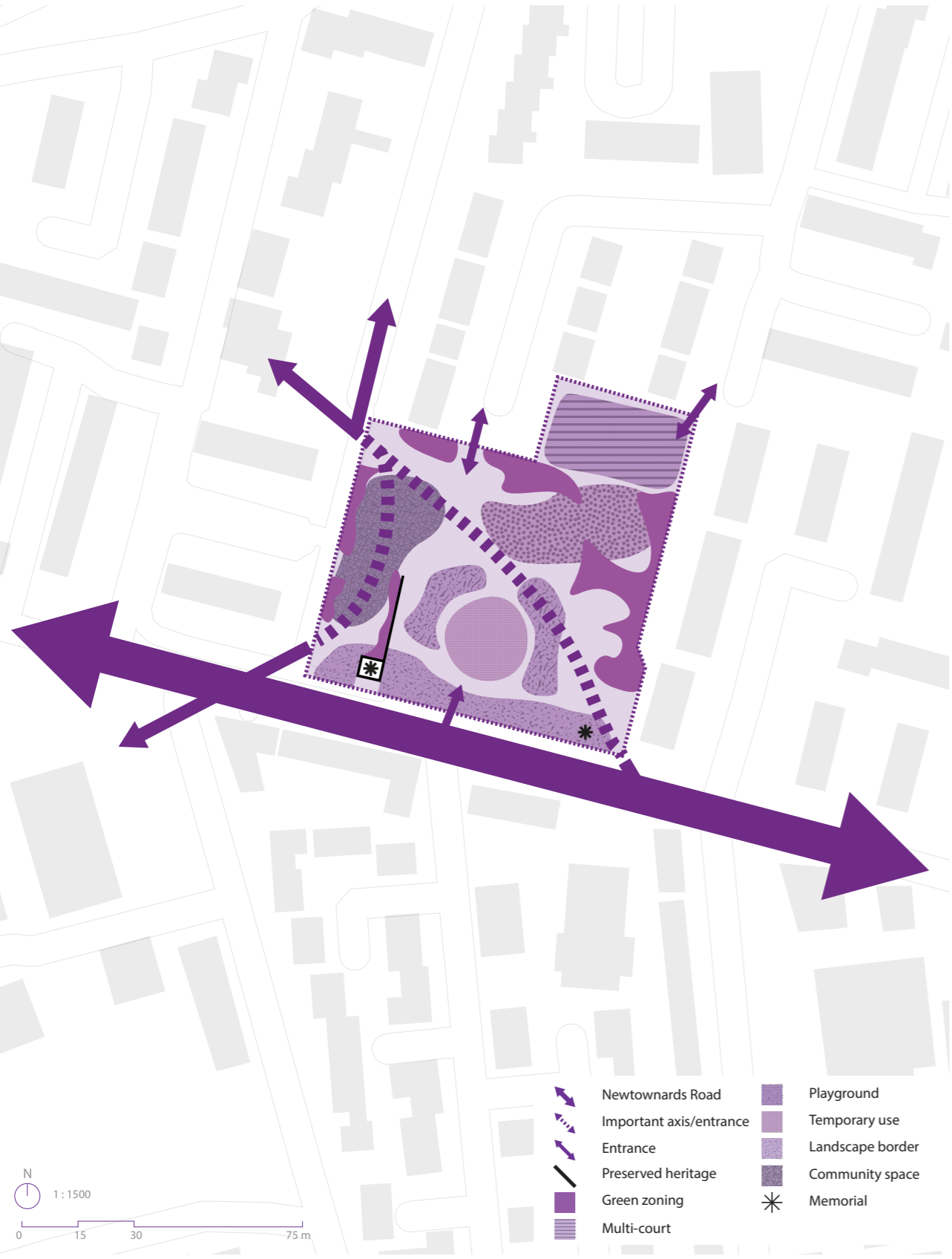
Newtownards Road runs along the southern end of the park, it is an arterial road that facilitates the transportation of many vehicles, busses and pedestrians. Leading many people to pass by and notice the park.

To the west, the park is enclosed by a pedestrian connection to the newly developed Titanic quarter. This pathway is poorly linked to the rest of the park, while it is fenced off, and only small openings allow access, between the two areas. Internal the park is defined by multiple fences that separate the different functions from each other. This is creating a

park that is badly connected and does not afford coherent precipitation of the area. This leads to multiple zones that are distinct from each other and gives the park multiple identities.

The par consists of a vacant and worn area to the west, which primarily function is to facilitate bonfires. The area facing Newtownards road consists of a heavily underused lawn. North of this sits a playground, which is tired. And the last area is a newly build multicore, which is not well integrated with the rest of the park.

Furthermore, the area consists of two symbolic landmarks and a mural that all represent the Protestant community, this leads to the conclusion that Pitt Park is associate with the Protestant community, and therefore are not a shared space.



24. Illu Opportunities of Pitt Park
This maps explore the possibi-
ties for redesigning Pitt Park, it
shows connections and zones.

EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES

As a step further, (see illu. 24) presents a unifying continuation of acquired knowl- edge. This map explores the possibilities for how to solve today’s challenges by using the principles and guidelines pre- sented by the experts. This proposal is the path towards making sure this green space becomes a shared green space.

The location of Pitt Park is the strength that provides great opportunities to transform the park into a shared green space for both communities. A major fo- cus should be on improving the entranc- es to the park so that it feels welcome

from all sides, and ensuring good acces- sibility through the park for both adults and children. The area will offer various activities in the form of playground, mul- ti-court, community space, and tem- porary use area. This will ensure life in the area and create an attachment for the users. Furthermore, the green land- scape will be used as a protection and space formation in the form of different heights and shapes. These opportunities will be further developed and integrated with the regenerating design tools. This will ensure that Pitt Park goes from being a green space to a shared green space.

CONCLUSION

This chapter was a final discussion of the findings through the eyes of the experts. Pitt Park has been chosen as a site, and the gained principles will be the basis for the further process of design tools.

The interview from Galway was the main argument of the choice of site. These arguments were presented by looking at the strengths and challenges of Ballymacarrett, and it was concluded that the area has a lot of heavily underused areas, and there is a lack of green spaces. Pitt Park came out as the perfect choice to assist the purpose of the thesis by creating a shared green space in a contested environment.

The remaining interviews provided the project with insights and guidance on how different design processes can be included to create shared spaces. Here it is presented how Belfast as a city works a lot with temporary use in the form of pop up parks in the city centre. The process of this is done through the inclusion of citizens and especially children to activate social engagement and create a common attachment. These principles were passed on to the East-side Partnership, which presented their focus when implementing new projects in East Belfast. It turned out that their approach was relatively similar in securing shared spaces. What was added was their focus on connectivity and ensuring

the impact of wellbeing in the form of green and blue infrastructure. The final interview from Groundwork highlighted the importance of activating people through common interests like food and gardening. This form of temporary use ensures activity and safety in the neighbourhood.

Pitt Park is selected as a site based on information obtained. It is concluded that Pitt Park is surrounded by fences that provide poor access. It is not very inviting in terms of worn objects and poor quality areas. The park is located along Newtownards Road which has been presented as an incredibly important asset in Ballymacarrett. The role of a central artery will guide a lot of people through the area that could benefit from a shared green space in the future. West of the park lies a pedestrian connection to the newly developed titanic quarter. These strengths and weaknesses have been extended to explore opportunities where all the acquired knowledge is displayed. This will lay the foundation for the next chapter where the design tools will be presented and implemented to ensure shared green space in Pitt Park.

DESIGN

This chapter finally will reveal the output of this thesis, the recipe of Peace Building Grass.

It is 10 regenerating-design tools. These emphasize from the backbone of the findings for the regeneration of existing poor and unused green spaces in a contested environment to become shared green spaces.

This is demonstrated by regenerating Pitt Park in East Belfast based on these 10 regeneration tools. It is transforming this dialect and unused park into a new shared green park.

REGENERATING-DESIGN TOOLS

The regenerating-design tools are a physical extension on the various theory on the regeneration of green and shared spaces in contested environments. They are a research result from desk based analysis and expert interviews and will now contribute the future regeneration processes.

This toolkit consists of 10 regenerating-design tools. We are not promising tools that will solve everything. But they can become a key asset for regenerating poorly defined and unused green space. They take departure from various directions by activating both landscape design, focus on social interactions and activities. Some elements of one tool often come again in another. Not as redundancy. But as a multifunctional purpose. By combining different elements, it creates different/various opportunities. This creates awareness on the strength of connecting and implementing more than one tool along the regenerating process, while they can strengthen each other, and create an even stronger combination. Even better shared green spaces

1.Co-creation

Creating attachment by a co-creative process

2.Shared identity

Regenerate symbols to create shared identity

3.Landscaping

Incorporating safety by shaping the landscape

4.Beckon life

Attraction to beckon life

5. Common interest

Social interaction through common interest

6. Local facilitation

Afford quality by local facilitation

7. Temporary use

Placemaking through temporary use

8. Green

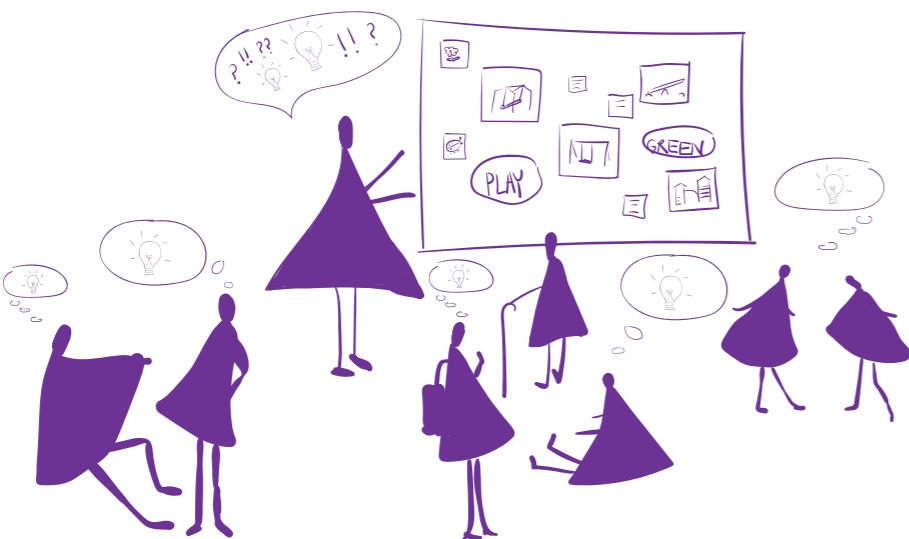
Experiences and zoning through green

9. Rhythm

Attractive green space through day and night rhythm

10. Extreme event

Plan for extreme events



Illu 25: Co-creation

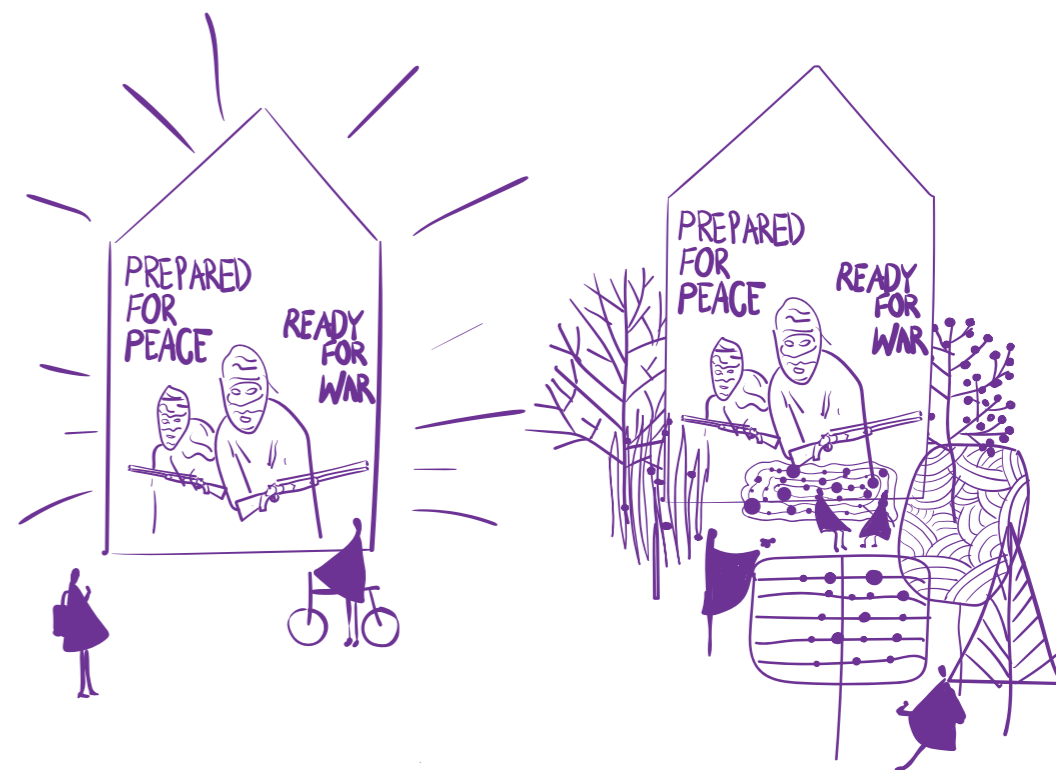
1

CO-CREATION

Creating attachment by a co-creative process

Co-creation can be done in many different ways and scales. Examples can be including citizens through workshops, meetings, site interventions and interviews. Participants can be chosen among, interests and user- relation. In some cases, an external expert or facilitator will be a good help to get as lot usable material as possible. Bear in mind that co-creation takes time and plan for it (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March).

By making a design based on a co-creative process, it ensures an attachment, so the citizens and neighbours get ownership of the space – (N. Galway, 2020, pers. Comm., 27 March). This attachment changes the way people perceive the space, leading to take responsibility and maintenance of the space (Eastside partnership 2020, pers. Comm., 1 April), (Hickey, 2014)



Illu 26: Shared Identity

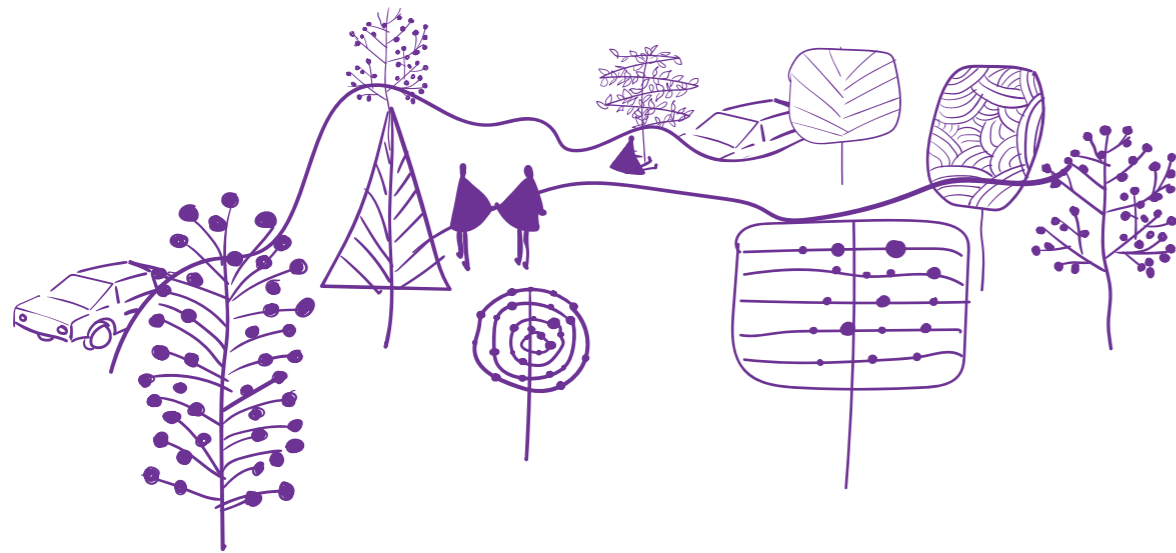
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SHARED IDENTITY

Regenerate symbols to create shared identity

Existing symbols and elements of ethical-cultural relations should be integrated into the regenerating of the space, these elements should not become the identity of the place. But should be incorporated as a part of the space's new identity. It is important to state how socio-ethnic symbols, markers or indicators can not be concluded as only visible objects and elements. Since directions, senses, openings and entrances can be associated with the socio-ethical relations. It is important to include the culture instead of making it a threat (Lang & Mell, 2020).

By including existing elements of segregated heritage, it is possible to create a shared identity. Whereby removing some of these associations aggressively, you are not going to create a shared space. But create a detachment to the place. This kind of neutral policy cuts of relations to the history and culture instead of connecting it (Lang & Mell, 2020).



Illu 27: Landscape

3

LANDSCAPING

Incorporating safety by shaping the landscape

To embody the landscape as a part of the securitization of the space. This can be done as sculpting the landscape so it can function as a noise canceler and by creating clear navigation by the design of the landscape. Security and accessibility is a delicate balance, that needs to be taken into account (Silberberg, 2014)

There is a need for safety in the urban environment. By shaping the landscape for safety, it takes away the need for fences and barriers, which will create a coherent space where safety and security are an integrated part of the area and does not cause attention, affect or compromise the experience. Hereby there will be coherence in the space and not constant reminders of segregation.



Illu 28: Beckon life

4

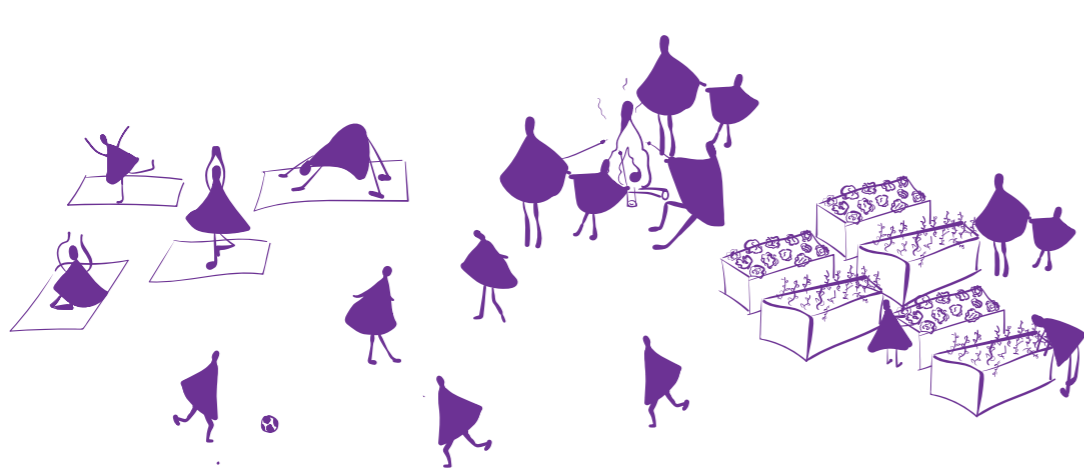
BECKON LIFE

Attraction to beckon life

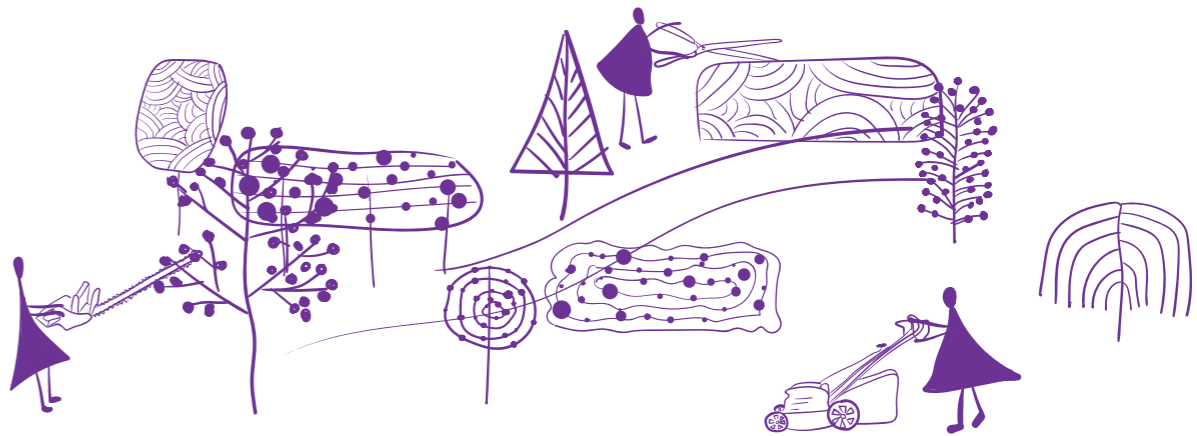
To beckon people into a space is important to create facilities and experiences, that excite their curiosity. This can be done by implementing different activities, this could be fixed objects such as playgrounds, landmarks or viewing points. But it can also be done by including events like art interventions or installations (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March), (Gehl, 2007).

Life has to be naturally guided into the site, this can be done by creating pathways that connect to the surroundings, combined with obvious entrances. It is to be noticed that in order to obtain a coherent green space, the attraction and connection should strengthen the identity of the space (Lynch, 1960).

An attractive and liveable space creates coherence in the neighbourhood, by preventing space from being underused, non attractive or empty, which can cause antisocial behaviour. As a contested environment it is therefore even more important to activate and regenerate vacant land (N. Galway, 2020, pers. Comm., 27 March)



Illu 29: Common interests



Illu 30: Local facilitation

5

COMMON INTERESTS

Social interaction through common interest

This tool has a core purpose in creating social interaction (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March). This should be done by designing space that affords informal and formal meetings. Linking people through shared hobbies. This can be done by dedication some of the space to community use, examples of this could be, urban gardens room, dog meetings and children’s day. The park needs to have a focus on how to create and maintain social interactions through the furniture, by creating space for stay, for instance, by implementing benches and tables.

It is important to deal with this tool already in the co-creative process since people could have a request for what kind of common interests the park should reflect.

By incorporating common interest into the green space, it will create the base for a communication subject which afford to stimulate conversation (Groundwork 2020, pers. Comm., 2 April). Hereby the meetings are not based on divided heritage or being a conflict-solving program. But upon a common theme of interests.

6

LOCAL FACILITATION

Afford quality by local facilitation

Local facilitation can be included by, lettering locals and people from the neighbourhood maintain the space, including gardening, collecting garbage and restoration furniture and equipment. This can be done by individuals, or it could be implemented as a part of a community. The local facilitation should ideally be done on a volunteer base, but if necessary payment or goods could be a solution.

When ensuring the quality of space through local facilitation, a greater feeling of ownership and attachment can be gained. This kind of attachment is bound in the activity of maintaining the space and not bound by segregation and territorial behaviour. When maintaining a certain quality, it creates the base for making a place where people want to visit. While it limited the amount of antisocial behaviour (N. Galway, 2020, pers. Comm., 27 March)



Illu 31: Temporary use

7

TEMPORARY USE

Placemaking through temporary use

When regenerating green spaces as shared green spaces, the design can go in many directions. When incorporating temporary use as a placemaking tool, it transforms the regenerating of the shared green space into a lab. A lab which seeks to uncover design potential for a future design. Using this tool, it is possible to try out different design ideas before permanent implementing them. The temporary use in the placemaking can relate to trying out activities, playgrounds, furniture, gateways and other design feathers. When the design of the shared green space is developed, temporary use can be implemented by making room for temporary events.

In contested areas changes are not popular. By using temporary use in the process of placemaking, it allows the user and citizens to slowly adapt to the changes, while it can activate vacant land. Testing the design beforehand will allow the design to adapt the surroundings and therefore create a more contextual responsive design (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March).Temporary events will help to create a place that is constantly changing and adapting to the changing society and will create a more resilient green space.



Illu 32: Green

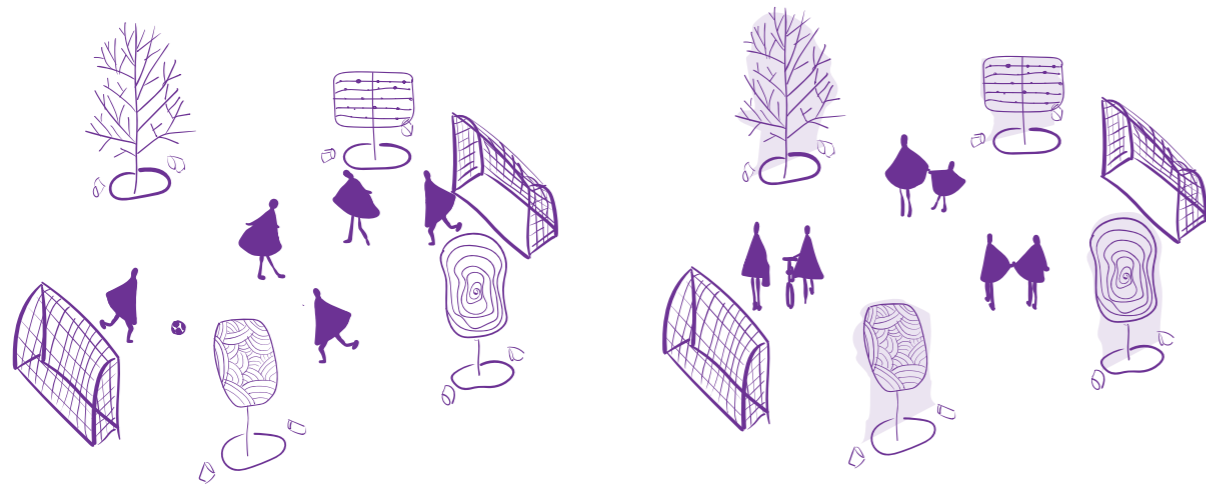
8

GREEN

Experiences and zoning through green

The green has to be activated to create different zones and make different experiences. This has to be done by choosing the greenery carefully. It is important to use the right means for the goal, trees, bushes, and plants have a different effect when using them. By combining different types of greenery, the green space will become more varied, which will help create experiences and awaken curiosity. The green can be used to frame objects or activities, enclose space and guide people.

By incorporating green as a zoning and experience tool, it will help create a shared space while green increase life quality for all and helps to create social cohesion (Belfast City Council, 2020). When using the green to create zones and spaces it also takes away the need for using fences and barriers, which has a much more hostile appearance.



Illu 33: Rhythm

9

RHYTHM

Attractive green space through day and night rhythm

During night green spaces can often become a space for antisocial behaviour, instead of closing off the park during night time, it will be preferred to work with a rhythm throughout days and night. Incorporating a rhythm into a green space will affect the area to be preserved safer. When creating a rhythm in a space, incorporate proper lighting is an essential factor. This can for example be achieved by integrating light into furniture and using light poles. But light could also be understood as something more than just safety. By using light as an experience, the light will attract people, and create a friendly, safe and attractive green space during both night and day time. (Gehl, 2007) (N. Galway, 2020, pers. Comm., 27 March) (C. Persic 2020, pers. comm., 30 March).



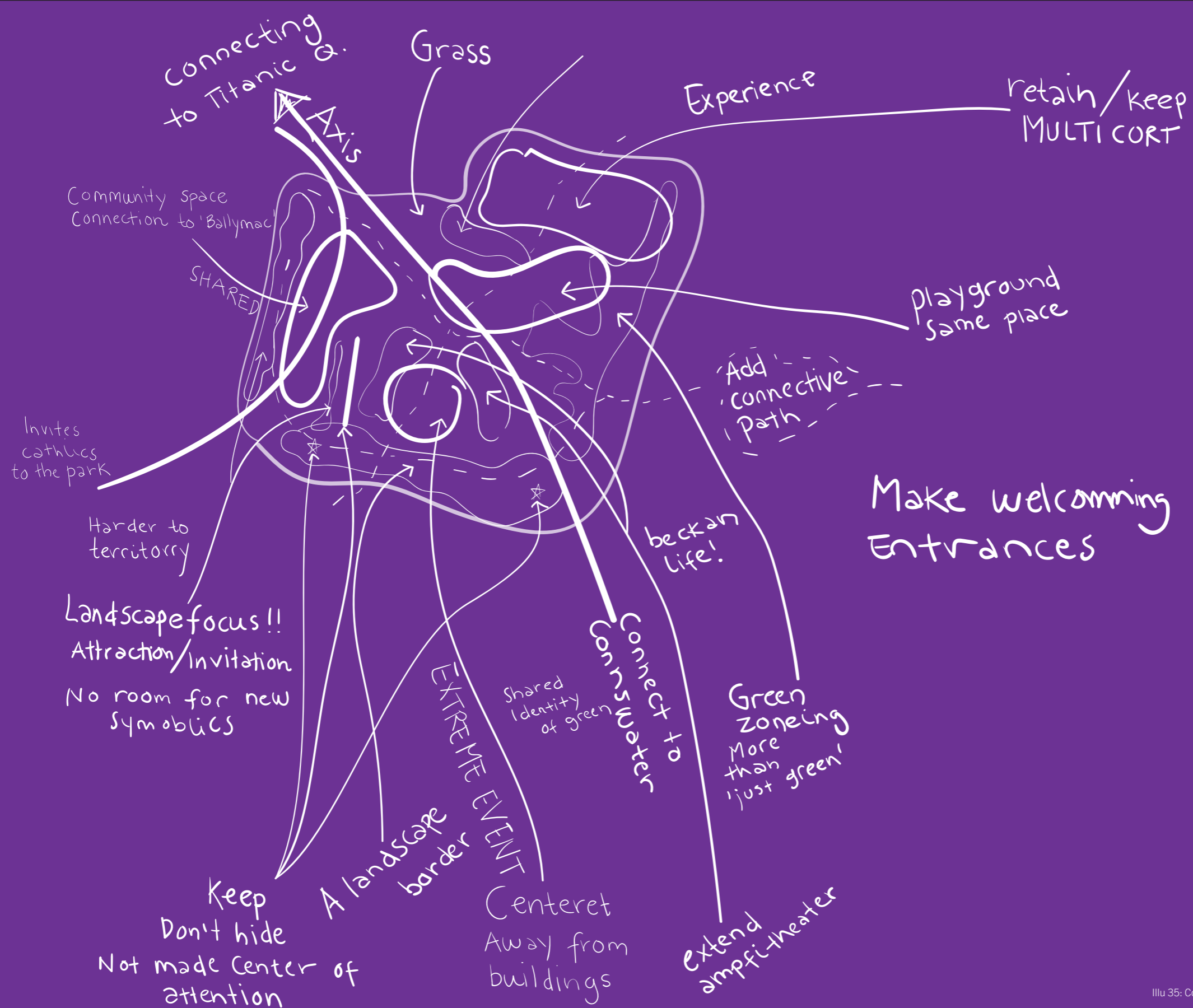
Illu 34: Extreme events

10

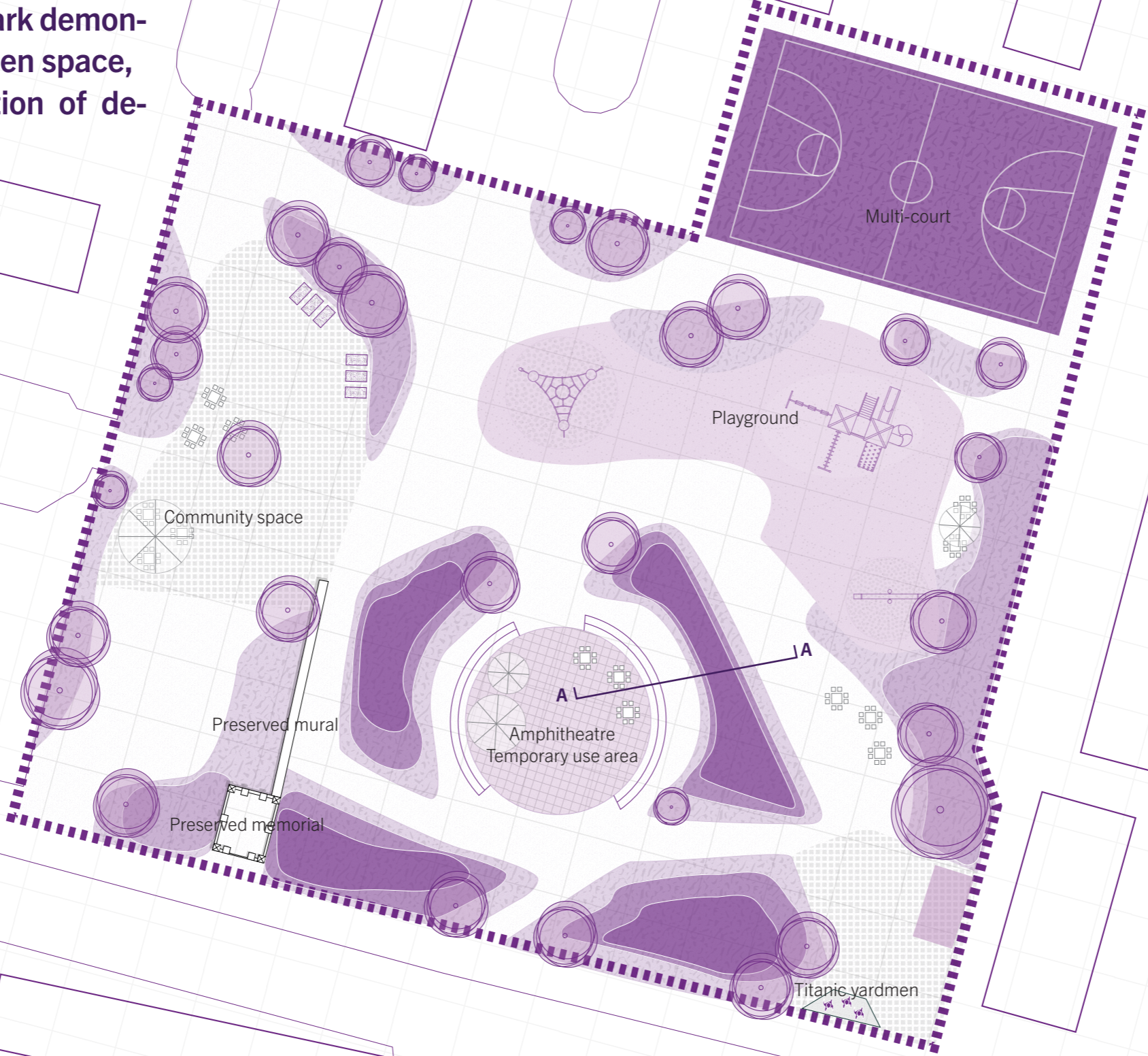
EXTREME EVENTS

Plan for extreme events

As an aftermath of the conflict, different octanal events take place throughout the year. Instead of making them riot, and segregate by designing against them, we can by designing with them, convert them into annual events and hereby still afford shared spaces. These can be very extreme and herby to prevent them from being a threat to both the neighbourhood and coherence they need to be included in the design (N. Galway, 2020, pers. Comm., 27 March). What Lang and Mell (2020) are saying is that there is a need to understand just how dangerous neutral policies are too contested ones. They argue that maybe instead of making the culture as threat try to include it (Lang & Mell, 2020).

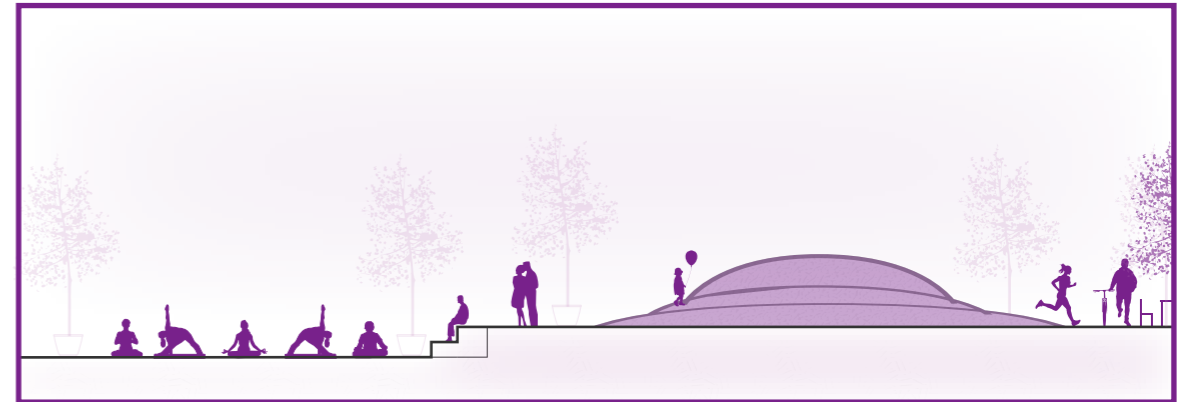


Masterplan of Pitt Park demonstrating a shared green space, by the implementation of design tools.

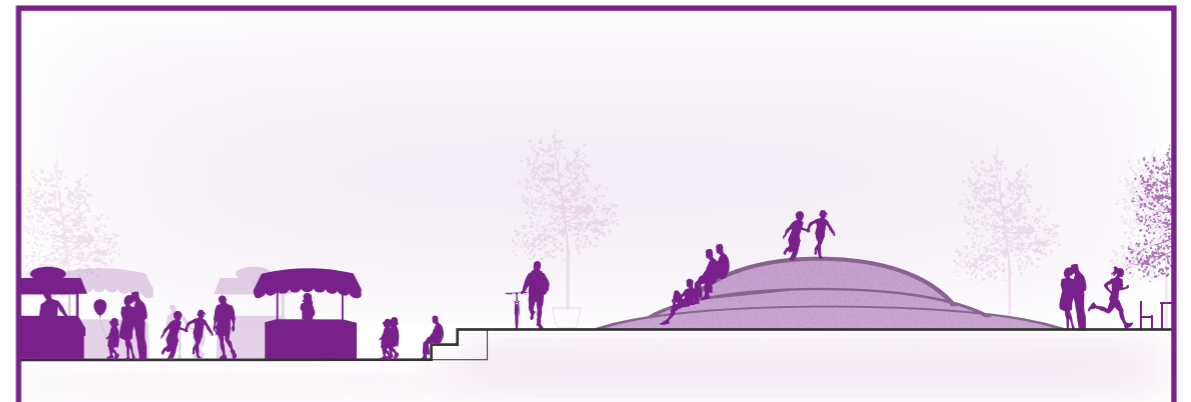


THE DESIGN

The design framework is presented through the implementation of design tools 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 to exemplify how to secure shared green space in a segregated community. This spatial plan is highlighting the strengths of Pitt Park, as well as improving the weaknesses. The implementation of design tools makes Pitt Park attractive with lots of life and exciting activities. Good accessibility from all sides is ensured, and it is considered as inviting space. Areas for children with their own playground and multi-court are represented. There are good places to stay where communities can meet for co-creation. In addition, a temporary use area has been established to give the opportunity to hold concerts, activities like yoga/workout, market place, extreme events and ice skating in the winter.



Illu 37: Temporary use yoga A-A section 1:200



Illu 38: Temporary use market A-A section 1:200

CONCLUSION

The chapter that finally presents the result of the research. 10 design tools that will be key assets for regenerating poorly defined and unused green space to become shared green spaces

These design tools are a combination of various theories, analyses, and expert interviews. The result is 10 regenerating design tools that can be used for future regeneration of green spaces in contested areas. Each tool is presented with an explanatory title, subtitle, and an adequate amount of justification. They have been exemplified as a strategic regenerating design in Pitt Park to justify how they can be used for future regenerating

process. Many of the tools can be implemented directly, while some are part of a process where especially the inclusion of locals is central to getting the most commendatory outcome.

As the concluding chapter, this will lead over to the evaluation of the entire thesis where the conclusion, reflection and further research recommendations will be presented.

EVALUATION

This chapter focuses on uncovering which methods and work structure are used to set out a project and then reach the aim of the project. This chapter is structured in four categories, the first categories aims to introduce the thoughts behind the methodology, next the work structure is presented, which gives an overview of the process. the third category seeks to evaluate and explain the different methods used in these thesis. lastly this chapter is concluded.

CONCLUSION

This thesis concludes how a critical literature review has defined a gap in the literature on the theoretical and physical dimension of green and shared space.

Through the development of regenerating-design tools, there has been an attempt to address this gap in knowledge. The tools target the strategic process of how to regenerate a contested green space into a shared green space. They will act as a generator for future design interventions in Belfast which is exemplified by a strategic regeneration of Pitt Park, East Belfast.

FINDING THE GAP

This thesis has sought to address the role of green spaces in contested, segregated urban environments. It has envisioned how, through regeneration, green spaces can become shared spaces in post conflict settings, by determining aim, four objectives and purpose. These has throughout the process been reconsidered and redeveloped. Hence the integrated process has reflected upon lack and needs, which the aim, objectives and purpose have adapted to.

The conclusion is structured around unpacking these four objectives:

- 1** Investigate the theoretical relationship between shared spaces in post conflict Belfast and the role of green spaces. To develop a critical understanding of the gap between the theoretical and the physical dimension of designing shared green spaces.
- 2** Undertake an exploratory case study of East Belfast and through a review of plans and policy, establish how Belfast as a post conflict city currently plans for shared green spaces by identifying the successes and failures.
- 3** Synthesise the findings of analysis and explorations from expert interviews to develop contextually acute regenerating-design tools. The tools should be used by planning facilitators and local stakeholders in stimulating communication and discussion into the successful development of shared green spaces in Belfast.
- 4** Utilise the use of the regenerating-design tools by exemplifying a case of regenerating a contested green space in East Belfast into a shared green space.

By investigating the first objective, it is concluded that there is a gap between the physical and theoretical dimension of designing shared green space in Belfast. The gap emphasis the lack in the implementation of green spaces as shared spaces in the peacebuilding process (Lang & Mell, 2020). Through the literature review, it becomes clear that when one conflict ends a new one starts, thus working in a contested environment, it is important to understand the sensitivity and complexity of heritage and space. By addressing these issues in the creation of shared green spaces, it addresses both physical and social coherence. Further, it can be concluded how utilizing shared green spaces through the practice of urban design also creates recognition of better health and sustainability (Sucuoglu et al. 2016). Belfast focuses on neutral planning policy in their regeneration process; this has thus created a new division in the society while the focus has been on economic development in the place of health and local development. This especially leaves the deprived areas behind (Caner & Bölen, 2016). The lack of emphasis in the local development has concluded in deprivation and vacant landscapes where buffers underline division and act as potential areas for antisocial behaviour (Bollens, 2018). This does not only leave the physical barriers of the city as the problem but also the explicit visible as murals, flags, occasional events, names and placements (ODowd & Komarova, 2011).

As a result of this, a lot of theory has been centred around investigating problems, misinterpretations and positives from parks and public spaces in Belfast. This concludes how it is important to always plan for shared green spaces in a contested environment. This point of departure needs to be made transferable into the design process. Here the aim of this thesis becomes the missing piece, closing the gap, by linking the theoretical dimension by a physical dimension of a regenerating-design toolkit.

INVESTIGATING BELFAST

Further, in the development of the regenerating-design tools, the second objective is answered by the case of East Belfast. Here conclusion from existing regenerating process and projects is examined. It is concluded;

- How policy is in change on planning for regenerating on deprived areas. Where Ballymacarrett is a potential area of regeneration, because of the young population, where the roots of the conflict seen a lot less detach. In Ballymacarrett the Newtownards Road is the potential development area. The emphasis for the planning is on regenerating green spaces as greens as shared spaces. In this case, a design based on the regenerating-design tools would ensure this aim.
- How the Connswater Community Greenway have been using the green and blue frame of nature to create common attachment in a contested area. It is also an example of moving the focus from a divided aspect of safety into a common aim of safety. Where common safety is created by two completely different outputs; from interfaces by dividing and from Connswater Community Greenway by solving a common issue of storm flooding, by collecting rainwater, which helps both communities and hereby affords a kind of common coherence between communities.
- How internal links and future planning are looking into using the green as the link between contested areas as a physical link in the city, creating a shared identity.
- How green can be activated in different matters and by different common interest where Grow is an example of an initiative placed right at the interfaces or other contested grounds and are using common interests to create social interaction across culture and religion.
- How shared infrastructure as the Glider, have been able to connect both deprived areas and contested areas across Belfast. It is an example of how the creation of shared public connections can create coherence and challenge the segregation. It has made East Belfast and other outskirts of Belfast both departure-able and accessible. This has been a huge change in the infrastructure, which have created a massive change in everyday life. The support of this change is also an indicator of how the area is open for diverse changes.

TOOLKIT

Objective number three continues to conclude on the background of the regenerating toolkit were answered from analysis, and expert interviews have uncovered and confirmed a lack of green spaces and especially shared green spaces in Belfast.

The analysis has been made bound in a reinvented methodology of combining interviews with mapping, Voice over. This method has made it possible to conclude and analyse on the site as almost if we would have been there. By adding the points from the interviews on the maps, it creates an extra dimension and a clear story going through the findings. This makes mapping become a concluding analysis.

Combined with the conclusion from the other objectives, it can stress how the sensitivity of designing in a post conflict context, need to be addressed by spatial needs. By linking urban design knowledge, the findings and needs of the post conflict context of Belfast. This lead to in total 10 different well argued regenerating-design tools based on; Co-creation, Shared identity, Landscape, Beckon life, Common interests, Local facilitation, Temporary use, Green, Rhythm and Extreme events. These themes are combined, ensuring the creation of good quality shared green space and created a collecting of different emphasis which all seeks to provide shared space. Each tool is carefully composed of different focuses that benefit and strengthen each other.

CLOSING THE GAP

er. This makes them adaptable for different cases and sites, and for the output and purpose of each regeneration project to choose which tools to implement.

The regeneration of Pitt Park exemplifies this by being a conclusion on objective number 4. The adaptable purpose of the tools is demonstrated through the strategic regeneration of Pitt Park, a park at the borderline in a segregated area where the tools ensure an underused, poor, segregated green space to become a safe shared green space. Life and activities at the site have been ensured, by for example using the green for enclosing zones. Also, occasional extreme events have been included in the design of Pitt Park. The identity of the park has been changed from a protestant memorial contribution to a shared space. Memorials have been include but changed from being the identity of the park into being a story of heritage told in place of the park. The identity of the park has been shifted into a community pocket park where the landscape define shared green activities as temporary use of the amphitheatre as marked space, scene or workout place and place for activities welcoming both communities.

In the hands of planning facilitators and local stakeholders, these tools will act as a generator to ensuring future regeneration of existing green spaces as good quality shared green space. While the tools help to add themes, guidance and suggestions when starting a regeneration process of green spaces.

Pitt park validates an extreme case of contested space. Where the tools have created a solid backbone, by proving how powerful they are in a post conflict setting. They demonstrate how to navigate and regenerate poor and underused green space into good quality shared green space. Peace Building Grass is the first toolkit guiding regeneration of contested green space into a shared green space in Belfast.

“One of the most difficult situations we have ever been exposed to both professionally and personally - Yet we have come out of this with a great thesis and new knowledge and experience that stands us strong in the future.”

REFLECTION

Reflecting upon the challenges that come with working in contested environments is an experience that is difficult to understand unless you try it yourself. There are so many factors that come into play that are usually something you take for granted elsewhere.

A CONTESTED SETTING

The conflict in Belfast causes a lot of sensitivity in several areas, and thus it is important to get a good understanding of the situation. It is about respecting that there are two different groups with different opinions and affiliations. This was something two of us experience from our residential field trip in 2019; here we were told a story about a meeting where they discussed the BRT route in Belfast. One of the planners wanted to show where the route was supposed to go and used the first available pen from the bag and started drawing the route. The meeting took place in a catholic community, and the colour of the pen was orange. This resulted in the meeting being cancelled. This story explains incredibly well about how an innocent event can lead to a conflict, and the importance of understanding the symbolism and sensitivity of Belfast. This made us reinterpret the importance of learning and adjusting for different circumstances. And it was one of the departure points in this thesis.

FINDING THE "GAP"

When finding the place of departure for this thesis, it was something we as a group found to be a demanding process. We were previously used to being assigned a topic and a problem to be solved, so this was new. We were very surprised how time-consuming this process of finding a gap in the literature was. Where we have too also chosen a complex and new topic for us. Hereby we have learned along the process the importance of all the time to specify and try to narrow down findings and radius of research, while otherwise, time would run wild, which also happened in periods. Because gaining new knowledge is hard to restrict by a time limit. It was, therefore, about acquiring new knowledge and finding the gap in the literature at the same time.

WHY BELFAST?

The decision of placing our thesis abroad was based on various backgrounds. Firstly it was based on the opportunity to try to design in another setting than Denmark. Secondly, it was as mentioned, about getting experience from working in a contested environment, challenging and expanding our skills and mindset as designers. The last perspective was the opportunity to research a topic that could make a difference and trying to investigate and challenge the possibilities of urban design.

An extra challenge we did not have in mind attached to working abroad was to navigate in another country's political structures, demographics, regulations and policy, finding the right webpages and map materials.

ADAPTABLE TO CHANGE

From one unforeseen challenge to another; It becomes impossible to reflect on this thesis without reflecting on what the corona situation has inflicted on the thesis. It has been a key factor in the process of unusual limitations. Corona has transformed our living rooms into group rooms and our groupmates, fellow students and supervisor into phones and headphones. Our thesis from physical into digital. Our thesis dreams turned into nightmares. It has been a long process that demanded us to adapt to the changes and try to put away all the negative that came with this. We needed to move forward with the project and deliver a great result.

“According to Darwin’s Origin of Species, it is not the most intellectual of the species that survives; it is not the strongest that survives; but the species that survives is the one that is able best to adapt and adjust to the changing environment in which it finds itself.”

— Leon C. Megginson, *Civilisation Past and Present*, 1963

Our bags were packed and we almost on our way to the airport, when Denmark locked down. The changes meant that we were not allowed to go to Belfast for site visits and informal meetings to develop our project as planned. We had to rethink, re-plan, rewrite, redo and relearn by turning our thesis into a virtual-desk-based study. Where site visits were replaced with google maps and virtual interviews were essential. The interviews from the experts became a critical part of our thesis and led to the development of a new method, ‘Voice over’, combining interviews and mappings. The experts were our eyes, and the thesis was given a new direction. This was to be implemented together with the concept of working from home. For many professions, this is perfectly normal and hassle-free. For us designers, this was a new mountain to climb

NEW METHOD

Corona changed many directions, which forced us to rethink; this created, among other things, the methodology ‘Voice-over’. ‘Voice-over’ is based on the visual from mapping and the voice of an interviewee, in this thesis Belfast experts. People are looking at Belfast each day by designers and planners’ eyes, but also as citizens. The combination of voice and visuals, maps and interview, have given both outcomes an even stronger story. Instead of pages up and down with mappings assisted by a single line description, and separately summary of a transcribed interview. They bring each other to life, the mappings being activated by the sayings of the interviewee, an extra layer from desk-based mapping. It becomes a conclusion while being an analysis, making it possible to combine wide red threads into one story. This combination has opened our eyes for in the future to combine methodologies.

Corona also forced us to invert the output on our thesis, hence making a spatial design become regeneration-design tools. This became feasible as we realised along the way that there was a clear lack of emphasis on design tools that ensured shared spaces in Belfast. This again opened for new possibilities for further discussion on how urban design can set the framework for the policy in the future. Redesigning contested public spaces seems like quite an under-prioritised subject. As in our search for the precedent of regenerated contested public squares, parks or spaces we almost could not come along any examples. If it is the branding that does not reach its way to the global scene, or they only exist as a minority, we are not sure. But as everything else from going into depth with contested spaces, we were just surprised not to find more material on regenerated projects. As contested cities exist all over the continents, which would make it as an area of interest in our eyes. We see the planning of contested spaces as something that should be much more integrated as educational and design professions skills and knowledge.

MOTIVATION, NEW KNOWLEDGE

As the last project ever at university, this has been quite a journey. It has been totally different from what we predicted and hoped. The desire to make our best project as a finish was sky-high. We wanted to bring out all the knowledge we have gained through our five years at the university. These circumstances put out some traps, but we managed to work around it, and at the same time, we learned new work methods. We managed to develop Peace Building Grass, 10 well-argued regenerating-design tools, from a desk-based study on how to utilize urban design into a conflict-solving medium.

From our time-consuming corona detour, we did not manage to take our tools all the way where we would like them to end. Therefore we hope that others in the future see this thesis as a departure point for further research and development.

RECOMMENDATION

When you move on, you get wiser and get new ideas. When a project comes to an end you never felt it is the end, new ideas have already started to grow.

From this Peace Building Grass 1.0 there is a solid foundation to build upon. We hope it can be taken further;

“We have a dream. A dream of peace building grass growing in every contested city, making every park a shared space. For it to create community and life in the most contested corners. We have a dream of no vacant land or poorly defined green space. We have a dream that one day all cities were green and shared, sustainable and healthy. We are dreamers and believers, optimists and designer.”

UPSIDE DOWN

What would happen if this project was done the other way around. Peace Building Grass have been developed upon the idea of redeveloping a green area by focusing on implementing elements of **shared** spaces. How will the outcome be of a developing focusing on **good quality green** spaces and then implementing the shared feature?

What if the theoretical background was evidence on how to ensure quality in the green environment, how to create livability in the city. How would the tools then look? We see this as yet a way to take this project further.

PEACE BUILDING GRASS 1.1

The toolkit from Peace Building Grass 1.0 is a strong combination of collected knowledge upon Belfast. Knowledge mainly based on a post conflict focus on utilizing shared space in the city. We hope somebody wish to take this thesis further. This could be made even more evident by adding cases from other contested backgrounds to test and add and redevelop the tools so they could fit all contested contexts and not just the post conflict Belfast. Maybe the tools already now can just be transferred to other cities in postconflict. We don't know and we are eager for this to develop into a global regenerating toolkit. Therefore we encourage for the making of Peace Building Grass 1.1. By also securing the next layer. By adding this last layer of evidence in green, health and sustainability the toolkit would be an all around toolkit. Not only ensuring shared good quality green spaces. But Shared good quality healthy sustainable green spaces. Adding the last layer; the layer of implementing health, livability and climate adaptation and sustainability in the tools. Make it an integrated part so it not happens as secondary or luck, as now, but is planned for. Maybe it calls for more tools to the kit, maybe it calls for a regeneration of the existing tools. Maybe it calls for a two sections in the toolkit. We see many possibilities for a even wider and stronger toolkit in the future..

BUILDING GRASS

Even one more step would be to make the toolkit of Peace Building Grass transferable outside the contested city. In the context of a city in Denmark or Spain. Would it be a new set of tools? a regeneration of the existing tools under a new name? a serie of tools? We see a story and a need. Everyone is asking for the green city, so much heavy research have been done on healing architecture why not take this forward transfer it into design tools. a physical dimension of the theoretical dimension.

This would also make it transferable to a not contested context - ensuring good quality sustainable green spaces. Maybe it can become a design tool catalogue, from contested deprived area to high street city center to desert tribes in Africa. A world toolkit catalogue.

VOICE OVER

The way to address a site by a combination of interviews and mapping, gave a really strong output. Instead of leaving the maps alone in their own section in countless numbers. This methodology combo ensured the analysis both a spatial and physical dimension. It gave the interview a visual and the maps a voice.

An recommendation from us would be to take this analysis further and bring it into the urban design catalogue of site analysis.

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