



## Permitted Exceptions

### Authorised Temporary Urban Spaces between Vision and Everyday

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DEPARTMENT OF GEOSCIENCES AND  
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN



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# ABSTRACT

## Permitted Exceptions—Authorised temporary urban spaces between vision and everyday

This PhD thesis examines the phenomenon of temporary use in a contemporary Northern European planning context. The background for the study is the increasing interest in initiating temporary use projects within urban redevelopment by public authorities, such as municipalities, related sub organisations and partnerships. In this context temporary uses are more than simple short-term appropriations of vacant areas; they become tools for various planning agendas—to establish new collaborative practices, transform spaces, test future facilities in 'light versions' and communicate with the public. They embody a wish for 'different', exceptional and experimental initiatives to frame city making. While being considered 'alternative' urban development tools, there is also a strong desire from the side of the authorities for these initiatives to be well integrated into official planning systems and long-term perspectives. This factor seems to hold some, if not conflicting, then at least challenging aspects. Current research is inadequate to disclose what actually happens when integrating temporary exceptions into urban transformation projects. I define, document and explore these attempts as *permitted exceptions*.

In this thesis I research the implementation of temporary urban spaces that are *authorised*, officially launched by public authorities, based on three case studies, two from Denmark and one from the Netherlands: a harbour transformation area in Køge, a vacant urban plot in Valby, Copenhagen and the industrial site of a former sugar factory in Groningen.

I explore the assumption that while 'temporary urban spaces' contribute to an increasing multiplicity of spatial expressions and practices, they not only challenge established planning procedures, but also understandings and use of space. The study focuses on the various 'shapers' which affect the formation and conception of temporary urban spaces in urban planning, in light of the visions expressed for an area—the expectations and motives—and the everyday decisions made and spatial practices carried out. The case studies are informed by different levels of practice involvement and explored through a thematic set of theoretical lenses.

The central component of this inquiry is a case-based in-depth study of the temporary use spaces and results in a set of new concepts describing spaces and practices within authorised yet temporary sites. The study offers a nuanced perspective on the challenges and the potentials of transitional spaces in today's urban planning culture.

## ABSTRACT (DK)

### Tilladte undtagelser—Autoriserede midlertidige urbane rum mellem vision og hverdag

Denne ph.d.-afhandling undersøger fænomenet midlertidig anvendelse i en nutidig nordeuropæisk byplanlægningskontekst. Baggrunden for undersøgelsen er den stigende interesse for at indtænke midlertidige projekter i byomdannelse, med indsats iværksat af offentlige myndigheder og kommuner, samt gennem relaterede partnerskaber og konsortier. Midlertidige anvendelser bliver her meget mere end simple tidsbegrænsede arealanvendelser af ledige kvadratmeter. De er værktøjer, der favner forskellige dagsordener, såsom etablering af nye samarbejds- og inddragelsespraksisser, rumlige transformationer, test af fremtidige faciliteter via 'light'-versioner, samt i høj grad kommunikation til omverdenen om, at forandring er undervejs. Initiativerne afspejler et ønske om at 'skabe by' på en anderledes og mere eksperimenterende vis. Samtidig med at de midlertidige projekter anses for at tilbyde 'alternative' og utraditionelle byudviklingstilgange, er der også et stærkt ønske fra myndigheders side om at disse tiltag bliver velintegreret i de formelle plansystemer og kan kædes sammen med de langsigtede perspektiver. Det giver nogle, hvis ikke modstridende, så i det mindste udfordrende forhold. Der er derfor behov for at undersøge, hvad der faktisk sker, når sådanne 'midlertidige undtagelser' bliver inddraget i formelle planlægningsprocesser. I denne afhandling definerer, dokumenterer og udforsker jeg disse tiltag som 'tilladte undtagelser'.

Projektet undersøger midlertidige anvendelser og omdannelser, lanceret i regi af offentlige myndigheder i samarbejde med andre aktører. Det sker via tre casestudier, to fra Danmark og et fra Holland: et havneareal under omdannelse i Køge, en ledig, tidligere erhvervsgrund i Valby, København og et postindustrielt landskab på en tidligere sukkerfabrik i Groningen.

Jeg udforsker den antagelse, at midlertidig anvendelse og midlertidige urbane rum bidrager til en stigende mangfoldighed af rumlige udtryk og praksisser, men også udfordrer den gængse plan- og designpraksis samt forståelsen af og brugen af steder. Undersøgelsen fokuserer på de forskellige rumskabende faktorer og aktører, der påvirker praksis og influerer forståelsen af midlertidige urbane rum indenfor ikke kun byplanlægning, arkitektur og landskabsarkitektur, men også bytænkning på et bredere plan. Det sker gennem en undersøgelse af henholdsvis de visioner, der manifesterer sig—forventninger og motiver—samt de daglige beslutninger og den rumlige praksis der udføres i hverdagen. Casestudierne er delvist praksis-baseret og empirien udforskes via et tematisk sæt af teoretiske perspektiver. Det centrale element i denne undersøgelse er en case-baseret dybdegående undersøgelse af de midlertidige urbane rum. Denne undersøgelse resulterer i en række nye koncepter, der beskriver rum og praksis inden for 'autoriseret' midlertidig anvendelse. Undersøgelsen bidrager med et nuanceret perspektiv på de udfordringer og potentialer der ligger i nutidige rumlige omdannelsesprocesser og vores forståelse af dem.

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1 /

**BETWEEN  
VISION  
AND  
EVERYDAY**





# INTRODUCTION

## Permitted exceptions—Authorised temporary urban spaces between vision and everyday

This is a study of big plans and small actions, legal constraints and magical spaces, real estate and censored dreams, political hot potatoes and edible potatoes. It is about how spaces are planned, imagined and realised. It explores paradoxes in contemporary planning and design practice as both challenges and potentials.

This study investigates the phenomenon of temporary urban spaces in a current Northern European planning context. The field of study is, however, related to a highly multifarious, dynamic and global phenomenon. Consequently, the so-called temporary urban spaces I research are not necessarily temporary, they are not always (or not only) spaces and the context often reaches beyond Northern Europe, although my research is based on three case studies located in the Netherlands and Denmark. Throughout this thesis I will explore and demonstrate why it is important to recognise this complexity and how to learn from it.

In the following sections, I provide the focus, background and aim of this work, and I explain the title, 'Permitted exceptions – Authorised temporary urban spaces between vision and everyday'.

I will briefly present the phenomenon of temporary use in planning and then introduce my research focus, based on two perspectives on this phenomenon. The first stems from an overall curiosity, as an architect and urban planner, about the increase in recent years of a noticeable focus on temporary use initiatives as alternative planning modes in formal planning and public policy. While such alternative planning modes are exemplified as not only time-limited uses, but more importantly, 'different', exceptional and experimental initiatives to frame collective city making, a strong desire exists for temporary use initiatives to be well integrated into official planning systems and long-term perspectives. I call the results of such initiatives *authorised temporary urban spaces* and they leads towards *permitted exceptions*.

The second perspective arises from my initial experiences of and reflections about the practice-led research collaboration this study has been part of, a collaboration whose focus was precisely the better integration of temporary use into long-term planning strategies. The initial 'take offs' into that involvement revealed that in these undertakings, paradoxical relationships emerged between various intentions and agendas and the practicalities of everyday planning endeavours—relationships that I have chosen to frame and investigate through the formulation *between vision and everyday*. In the next sections I will elaborate on these perspectives and present my research focus.

### **Temporary use in planning**

While temporary urban spaces<sup>01</sup> have been particular prominent in recent years, as part of planning initiatives, they have been promoted in official planning contexts for quite a while. From being

<sup>01</sup> After this first introduction, I will elaborate on the notion of temporary use in relation to this study. For now, it refers to a set of practices of interim and temporary nature with durations of typically a couple of months to a few years, but mainly referring to a somewhat uncertain timespan due to areas in a development process and a wide range of mainly cultural programmatic content.

primarily a phenomenon related to informal short-term use of marginal or vacant urban areas, or as part of activism and bottom-up interventions, often illicit or merely silently tolerated by the authorities, temporary projects are increasingly intended to be incorporated into urban planning strategies (e.g. Andres 2012; Bishop and Williams 2012; Colomb 2012; Oswalt et al. 2013; Lehtovuori & Ruoppila 2012; 2015). Political changes, recessions and spatial reorganisation due to deindustrialisation are some of the main backdrop for this development.<sup>02</sup> Within urban planning, such projects are used to re-activate and transform urban sites, to instigate new uses and programs, and to explore new collaborative working modes and flexible planning procedures that can connect immediate needs with future plans. Temporary use is now integrated into planning language (Oswalt et al. 2013). This has been the case since around the early 2000s, not only in Europe, but globally.

With the potential of temporary repurposing to set vacant sites, in particular, in a new light, it has grown immensely popular, due to the properties of making ‘a virtue of necessity’—of spatial recycling in an post-industrial urban transformation perspective (Ibid.: 56). Temporary use stands for low cost, re-use, innovation, creativity, collaboration and instant action. Temporary urban spaces are thus intended to serve as test beds for new future uses, and because of their potential for low investment and ‘trial’ modes, to mediate between top-down planning and bottom-up dynamics.

The first initial explorations towards integrating temporary use and ‘planning for the unplanned’ (Blumner 2006) have therefore moved from singular initiatives and niche projects into not only commercial settings, but also governmental departments. Consequently, planning authorities today are setting up temporary spaces as testing platforms in development areas; strategies and guidelines are being formulated and memoranda circulated. Ministries, regional offices, city councils and related planning organisations such as foundations and trusts are publishing best practice references and publications promoting temporary use.

In 2014, for instance, the Think Tank report *Communities in Change—Think Tank The City 2025*<sup>03</sup> published by the (now former) Danish Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs, formulated a call for ‘welfare experiments’ to engage citizens and support new collaborative models (MBBL 2014:8). One specific recommendation in the report is to ‘grow the temporary experiment’ (Ibid.: 33). The report calls for ‘urban spaces for committed communities, urban spaces for everyday life with possibility for co-creation and engagement as well as temporary urban spaces with room for spontaneity’ (Ibid.: 32). This recommendation illustrates an ambition, from official side, to fuel and support initiatives that can foster new social encounters; user-engaging or even user-driven spaces are strongly promoted. And the example shows how temporary urban spaces are considered an important element in such official endeavours for rethinking the collective urban realm.

<sup>02</sup> The change of land-use and the emerging temporary scene in post-reunion Berlin in the late 1990s and early 2000s are prime examples (Blumner 2006; Overmeyer et al 2007; Colomb 2012; Oswalt et al. 2013).

<sup>03</sup> The original Danish title is *Fællesskaber i forandring—Tænk tanken Byen 2025*. ‘Fællesskab’ is a prevalent keyword in current Danish planning and architectural discourse. It is a term similar to the German ‘*Gemeinschaft*’. The focus on ‘*fællesskab*’, though strongly embedded in its Scandinavian context, can to some degree be related to the contemporary international interest in and discussion of the concepts ‘commons’ and ‘commoning’.

### ***Experiments for the public good?***

Temporary urban spaces are inscribed in many overall visions within urban planning, visions that strive for meaningful urban environments. The incorporation of temporary use often entails strong references to the phenomenon's origin in activism or entrepreneurial initiatives, the aesthetics of the self-organised, informal and creative. It seems to reflect a hope that initiating 'temporary experiments' sparks a dynamic that can re-infuse urban life and create a sense of togetherness, meaning and innovation, not producible through more 'traditional' approaches. But what happens when the public authorities and related organisations want to infuse urban life this way and *also* connect it with their long-term planning ambitions? And what happens when so-called alternative modes of space organisation and appropriation enter formal planning systems? What happens when the alternative, experimental, unplanned—under the heading of the temporary—is institutionalised as *authorised temporary urban spaces*? These aims seem to hold some, if not conflicting, then at least challenging aspects. An explicit enhancement from the side of public authorities to 'try things out in a different way', by experimenting—and thereby even putting on hold the normal planning procedures and regulations to enable temporary experiments and 'urban labs'—demonstrates these official authorised temporary uses as specific *permitted exceptions*. The normal procedures are set aside, challenged or changed intentionally—at least that is the message.

While the relationship between control and spontaneity is a fundamental tension in planning, it finds particular form in contemporary trends of collaborative and alternative planning modes (Savini et al. 2015). Temporary use of space as part of intentional planning strategies exemplifies this tension between steering, planning and control and the allowance or even promotion of more spontaneous, uncertain aspects and informal 'let it go' approaches. The distinct efforts made in relation to what I term the *authorised*, officially sanctioned and initiated temporary use projects put extra focus on that dynamic. While I am not the first to ask these kinds of questions about the incorporation of the alternative and unplanned in official planning systems, the increasing efforts we find today serve as an excellent platform to scrutinize what happens when these *permitted exceptions* are actually performed.

If something is an 'alternative', it implies being located outside what it is an alternative for, as architect and researcher Niels Grønbaek explains (Grønbaek 2012: 257). And the notion of the temporary project (*midlertidighed*) seems to now be at the forefront of the 'alternative', in terms of being a legitimate urban state of exception in urban planning (Ibid.) According to the philosopher Giorgio Agamben, 'the State of Exception' is a dominant governmental paradigm and mechanism today. He says that this state of exception is 'an attempt to include the exception itself within the juridical order by creating a zone of distinction in which fact and law coincide' (Agamben 2005: 26). Are permitted exceptions, where authorities seek to integrate and plan with and for the dynamics of the alternative by integrating temporary allowances, a way to 'legislate for the law's own suspension' (Humphreys 2006: 679)? And does the incorporation of alternative temporary uses into official planning reflect a renewed and more adaptive and democratic planning system, or does it rather induce attempts to plan what should not be planned? In any case, the emerging paradox of planning for 'letting things

go', the *permitted exceptions*, for me forms a fruitful perspective from which to gauge in more detail temporary use projects in today's urban planning practice.

***From short-term and long-term goals to spaces between vision and everyday***

The second perspective of this study stems from experiences and reflections in practice. This perspective underlines that it seems to be about more than effective policy and planning in these initiatives. I will unfold it by presenting the initial insights gained from this research project.

From 2012 to 2015 this PhD study was affiliated with the transnational project network called Stimulating Enterprising Environments for Development and Sustainability, or SEEDS, funded by the EU Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme.<sup>04</sup> The SEEDS project served as a starting point for my research, and two of the case studies were part of the project network.

The aim of SEEDS was to test the integration of temporary use and re-utilization of vacant space into official policy making and to find innovative ways to bridge short-term and long-term development perspectives in urban planning. Temporary use was tested as method for activating abandoned spaces and to reduce city and economic decline (Parratt-Halbert et al. 2015). The latest financial crisis, around 2008, resulted in derelict, vacant areas, with development projects on hold around the world, although the need to benefit socio-economically from spatial resources was high. While temporary use had proved to be an effective catalyst in urban revitalisation, it was still not well integrated in official planning systems—the hypothesis of SEEDS was that this problem created barriers in practice. The goal was to find new approaches and working methods and improve policy and make it more effective and adaptive, geared to facilitate such initiatives, their different time perspectives, content and collaborative setups.

The transnational project network involved partners from six different European city regions.<sup>05</sup> In each city region, municipalities, regional offices, land use organisations or universities were national lead partners. Each partner had further local sub partners, such as councils and urban renewal offices, research units, landowners, social enterprises, volunteers groups, etc. The network was centred around twenty pilot projects, specific sites that were to serve as a testing ground for developing new land-use policies and strategies capable of incorporating temporary use and re-use of vacant spaces in innovative ways. This was to happen through 'closing the policy gap' between the short-term goals ('temporary') and the long-term goals ('permanent') identifiable in the projects (Mell et al./University of Sheffield/SEEDS 2015: 20). An important aspect of the SEEDS project was how knowledge harvested through the demonstration projects could support the development of such strategies and improve policy making by testing through actual implementation of temporary undertakings, from re-use of empty shops and post-industrial sites to underused and neglected green areas.<sup>06</sup> Hence, apart from

<sup>04</sup> For more information about the SEEDS project, see: <http://www.seeds-project.com> and <http://archive.northsearegion.eu/ivb/projects/details/&tid=148>

<sup>05</sup> The cities were Sheffield (England), Brugge (Belgium), Groningen (The Netherlands), Hamburg (Germany), Gothenburg (Sweden) and Copenhagen (Denmark), with the central project office based in Sheffield.

<sup>06</sup> The SEEDS project worked with a very broad definition of 'temporary use and re-use' and the portfolio of projects reached from peri-urban and rural farming areas to empty shops in dense urban contexts. This was in itself remarkable in terms of understanding what the 'temporary use umbrella' covers.

the focus on policy, the potential of the sites should be unlocked through actual physical interventions of temporary nature. The task of our research team at Copenhagen University<sup>07</sup> was to follow, support and collect insights from the pilot projects, to identify significant traces and to provide the foundation for sharing knowledge between the projects (Lamm & Wagner 2015b). We followed and supported the projects through transnational and cross-sectorial workshops and seminars and through the collection of biannual questionnaires on the projects status, and by co-developing temporary physical interventions together with our local sub partners in the Copenhagen area on their demonstration sites. Furthermore, our team was engaged in other thematically related projects and teaching activities,<sup>08</sup> as well as lobbying on a strategic political level.

### ***Policy-making and meaning-making***

Through the engagement with the European pilots and the local projects in Copenhagen, I realised that aspects other than what I had anticipated were important. Basically things were not what they appeared to be—and it was about more than lack of effective policy. What actually happened (and did not happen) in the projects, on the physical sites, caught my attention: The spaces and the way they were made. Indeed, the respective planning systems seemed not particularly well geared to frame projects that challenged standard regulations, procedures and routines and the redevelopment contexts were often complex. 'Official' temporary activation seemed to take a lot of time and work. Simple, banal tasks, such as covering polluted soil just to make a plot usable for a while, could not be solved 'instantly', but involved a long procedure of formal applications and financing. A cheap installation on a site was in the end a costly affair due to the site conditions. Ownership issues were complex, even within the authorities. Improvisational building projects met the strict demands of standardized procedures, building approvals, fire regulations and so on. To some extent these problems confirmed the need, if these projects were to succeed, for new policy structures and changed mind-sets in the planning authorities to battle heavy bureaucracy. Applying for exceptions proved to be more the rule than the exception, resulting in stalled or delayed project ideas or, sometimes, creative shortcuts to tackle the issues ad hoc. Hence, *permitted exception* was also a keyword in terms of hands-on execution. Along with 'the exception', the alternative and the break in routine, and thinking differently, existed uncomfortably with a simultaneous practical need for a great deal of organisation and procedures. In fact, many paradoxical situations seemed to occur: the temporary was not temporary, public areas were private, cheap turned out to be expensive. But these practical paradoxes revealed more than a need for changes in policy making. They revealed something about agendas and expectations around the temporary initiatives—meaning in the making. What became prevalent in the first engagements was that there was not *one* short-term goal and *one* long-term goal to connect, but multiple agendas

<sup>07</sup> The core research team from Copenhagen University involved in SEEDS and related activities consisted of Associate Professor Bettina Lamm, one research assistant (Kristian Skaarup (2013), Anaïs Lora (2014)) and me.

<sup>08</sup> This research has also been highly informed by taking part in teaching activities at the Division of Landscape Architecture and Planning at IGN, University of Copenhagen by contributing to the teaching of the courses MSc Urban Intervention Studio in 2013-2015, with a focus on temporary urban interventions, as well as the MSc Landscape Studio that worked with one of the Dutch SEEDS sites (Groningen) which was one of my case studies, in 2014. Course descriptions: <http://ign.ku.dk/english/research/landscape-architecture-planning/landscape-architecture-urbanism/teaching-new>.

and motives, and they were expressed in many different ways. New practices and space types seemed to occur in this field. Before I could envision closing any policy gap, I discovered I could look into the spaces and practices themselves within that apparent gap. Maybe there was already something inside the gap to learn from.

Rather than routes to optimisation and policy effectiveness, I discovered a wealth of agendas, narratives, symbolic acts, change of routines and surprising spatial settings—both surprisingly spectacular and surprisingly unspectacular. Something happened in between the plans and the spatial reality. While the improving of policy still held my interest as a planner, the character of the spaces and the activities promoted fascinated the architect in me.

To ‘follow the cut’, to borrow a method from archaeology,<sup>09</sup> I chose to reframe what I was looking for in my particular study. Not only did the projects meander in other ways than a clear-cut trial-testing and a subsequent adaption through implementing more suitable planning tools and effective ‘closing of policy gaps’; various new, yet undiscovered spaces, practices and meanings emerged in these kinds of authorised temporary urban spaces, when looking into them in the midst of their making—in between their authorised planned frame and their invitation to experiment. They needed to be explored. Whether they were ‘good or bad’ was yet to be determined; first they needed to be disclosed. Hence, ‘to follow the cut’ in this context meant to follow the unexpected spaces and practices I had tentatively detected.

The short- and long term perspectives seemed to be much more entangled. The notion of short-term and long-term goals held me back within established understandings of first, a final ‘permanent’ city and second, specific values connected to either a short-term, ‘quick fix’, or a long-term development as the fulfilment of a final well-known and agreed-upon plan. It was not about short term and long term or ‘before and after’, but about whatever could inform ‘from the middle’. To gauge any long-term efficacy would be guessing, but what was possible was to scrutinize the ideas, wishes and motives put forward *today*. The terms ‘between vision and everyday’ thus frame my discussion. I shifted my frame of investigation to look at what actually happens in the efforts to connect the manifold intentions and expectations (the visions) embedded in the initiations of temporary uses with the actual realisation of the temporary spaces (the everyday). My hypothesis is that a closer disclosure of the glitches, the surprises and contrasts, the shortcuts and detours emerging in the projects could bring about a richer understanding of the phenomenon of authorised temporary urban spaces. This is the main goal of this thesis.

The thesis is an in-depth study of specific spaces and practices in three authorised temporary initiative projects and sites. The two SEEDS-related projects I followed continuously were Smedestræde 2, a municipal owned site in Valby Copenhagen, where our team was involved in installing temporary interventions, and a former sugar factory in Groningen, the Netherlands owned by the municipality and intended to serve as an experimental site for temporary use. I also integrated a third case study, of

<sup>09</sup> According to archaeologist and anthropologist Matt Edgeworth, ‘following the cut’ in archaeology fieldwork refers to the practice of following a direction in the midst of the situation created when the material meets the researcher’s act of working through it. While being ‘in touch with the evidence’ and using the professional tools, the researcher takes choices and adapts to the ‘changing reality of the cut itself, as it weaves this way and that, sometimes doing what is expected of it but at other times wildly at variance with expectations and predictions’. These cuts are shaped by us, but they shape us as well (Edgeworth 2012: 78).

Køge Kyst, a harbour development in Køge near Copenhagen, which explicitly promotes temporary use as part of a planning strategy; it is an ongoing prime example of integrating temporary use in a planning strategy. The three projects all began with a public authority—the municipality—as at least one main responsible stakeholder. They differ in their scale, strategic course and practices, but the common denominator is the idea, the experiment, the exception within planning and the state of change.

## Research focus

In this thesis I research the implementation of temporary urban spaces as *authorised*, officially sanctioned initiatives in three different urban contexts, two in Denmark and one in the Netherlands. Through a practice-based explorative cross-case study, I explore the supposition that while spaces labelled as temporary urban spaces contribute to an increasing richness and diversity of spaces and practices, they simultaneously challenge not only established planning procedures but also understandings of planning and use of space. The aim is to research specific issues relevant for both practice and research working with transitional spaces, re-use and adaptive planning issues; to name them, to unfold them and to show links and missing links between them, through the exploration of spaces and practices. The scope is to shed light on the various 'shapers' which affect the formation and conception of temporary urban spaces in urban planning in light of both the expectations and motives involved (visions) and the daily decisions made and spatial practices carried out (everyday). I decode spaces and processes and thereby contribute to a better understanding of both the challenges and the potentials of transitional spaces, to gain knowledge about to more constructively approach them within planning strategies. The main contribution of this thesis is a case-based in-depth study of the phenomenon resulting in a set of concepts describing the spaces and practices detected.

The project explores the interplay between expressed visions and expectations and everyday practices in the three authorised temporary urban space projects that are *permitted exceptions*. I ask: *What happens in authorised temporary urban spaces? What relationships evolve between vision and the everyday when temporary urban space initiatives are considered as both formalised and exceptional planning approaches intended to be part of collective city making?*

## Outline

This chapter, 'Between Vision and Everyday', outlines the objectives and background of this study, my analytical approach and the three case study sites. In this first introduction I have presented my aim and focus. This is based on two perspectives: Firstly, an interest in exploring why temporary urban spaces are increasingly aimed to be experimental and alternative, but also well-integrated and formalised approaches in contemporary planning of collective urban spaces. Second, it is based on my wondering about my experiences made that, not only are many practical challenges occurring in these efforts; a strong appearance of symbolic and discursive aspects is at play in the process of transforming spaces through temporary use as well. I propose to investigate authorised temporary urban spaces as permitted exceptions. In the rest of the chapter, the broader context is set by introducing four paradigmatic backgrounds and recurrent themes: temporary use as an ambiguous concept in planning, urban



transformation as an urban condition and planning and design approach; reprogramming, which is a fundamental mechanism in re-use contexts; and lastly, an emerging 'culture of making' in contemporary urban planning. The sections that follow present the analytical approach, which is based on paired concepts that guide the thesis, drawing in theoretical perspectives and drawing together the empiric material. One such concept is 'between vision and everyday' which serves as a meta-frame for the entire thesis. Lastly, I introduce the three case study sites to give an overview, before specific *field situations* from these cases will be addressed in chapter two and three.

Chapter two, titled 'Between Public and Private', is the first of two analytical chapters centred on the three case studies. This chapter explores how the three sites are attempts to be integrated into the urban collective and public realm, while they undergo transformation and are testbeds for the future. The analysis shows how private and public layers are intertwined in this process, due to the complexity of these sites as areas in transition, the implementation of new programmatic content within those sites, as well as adapted organisational procedures. The guiding questions for this chapter are: *What spaces and practices can be identified by unfolding and re-combining understandings of publicness and privateness in the three cases, seen in a transformation perspective? What happens in between public and private in terms of the spatial and cultural phenomenon in question?* The chapter introduction develops a platform for working with these questions in the case studies by presenting a set of sub concepts drawn from different theoretical perspectives that can assist in revealing the dynamics in between public and private. Through the case analysis I propose a set of new concepts that render visible specific ways spatial change is managed and in the authorised temporary urban projects that transgress public and private dimensions and instead demonstrate the dynamics of collective spaces in transition.

Chapter three, 'Between Sign and Action', the second analytical chapter, investigates temporary sites as part of an ongoing process of making meaning from and of spaces in transformation. This spatial 'meaning-making' is explored through a discussion of specific site elements and their role as space and communication. The analysis builds on my initial observations and reflections about the significant role of reasoning and symbolic acts embedded in the authorised temporary urban spaces that seem to occur simultaneously as, sometimes highly entangled with, rather practical matters. In this chapter I explore: *In what ways are changes made and communicated at the same time?* The introductory part of this chapter offers a new combination of lenses to gauge the dynamic narrative and communicative aspects of the temporary urban spaces. In the analysis of the three cases that follows, I demonstrate how each case reveals distinct examples of interlinked spatial reasoning and space making; in each case discussion I suggest a set of concepts to characterize these meaning-making practices.

In the last chapter, 'Between Journey and Destination', I sum up the insights gleaned from the case studies, asking: *What 'cultures of change' emerge in the planning and design processes to be found in the authorised temporary urban spaces?* The concepts describing the spatial elements and practices detected throughout my research, are here collected and discussed. Finally, based on a reflection on the research approach and the learnings gained, I offer a glimpse of possible new journeys and destinations conjured by this study of permitted exceptions.

## CHANGING PARADIGMS AND RECURRENT THEMES

There are several reasons for the current interest in temporary use in planning practice. It is thus important to reflect on this attention in the light of broader tendencies and changes, as well as in relation to particular paradigmatic focus areas emerging in the fields of urban planning and design disciplines.<sup>10</sup> I will here shortly present some of these areas, which have been most relevant for my focus and ‘way in’ and add a few clarifications of how and why specific terms are used throughout the thesis. First, I address a few terminological issues related to *temporary use* and *temporary urban spaces* from the perspective of this study. The aim is to frame my approach based on the considerations sketched out in the introduction, concerning the concept’s ambiguity in a planning context. I will then discuss *urban transformation* in relation to the scope of this research, both seen as a fundamental precondition for today’s urban development, as well as a specific professional thinking and design mode. With the transformation perspective as a background, I will present the term *reprogramming* as a fruitful way to discuss spatial changes in this thesis. Lastly, in ‘Making culture between buildings’, I will highlight the need to approach contemporary urban collective life as an arena that substantially blurs the line between space creation as a matter of design intervention and the result of that intervention: the use of that space. A distinct *culture of making* enters formal planning schemes and challenges divisions between process and result and categories of space conceptions.

### Temporary use and temporary urban spaces

While ‘temporary use’ has become a recurrent concept in contemporary planning, its meaning, and that of related terms, is vague yet manifold, popular to employ but equally popular to critique—a further argument for gauging what lies behind this multiplicity in practice. Accordingly, this conceptual ambiguity, reflected in conflicting or parallel interpretations of the terminology, generates some of the big and small *permitted exceptions* explored in this work. This section clarifies ‘temporary use’ and ‘temporary urban space’ as they are employed in my study.

While research in this field is still in its infancy, an array of publications have categorised and investigated different types of temporary use projects between niche and mainstream.<sup>11</sup> Hence, numerous definitions of the terms in the urban field exist, based on, for instance, typological readings of content/program (former and/or new), size of intervention area, temporal or organisational factors or the mode of appropriation and conciliation (e.g. Overmeyer et al. 2007; Frey et al. 2010; Oswalt et al. 2013; Otto 2015). Additionally, politically motivated arguments play an important role in whether or not something is named a temporary use project. The ‘temporary’ can be considered either as a pragmatic

<sup>10</sup> I refer to the issues discussed as belonging to the fields of urban planning, architecture, landscape architecture and urban design without strict distinction, considering them as strongly interlinked and specifically overlapping in this particular research. A choice, not based on ignorance of distinct approaches in the certain disciplines, but grounded in the fact that neither the object of study addressed, nor my own professional activity has followed strict division lines between these fields and intervention modes. Furthermore, other professional areas, (such as branches of social sciences) play a big role in both academic discourse and practice. Hence, the terms are used depending on the specific situations or theories dealt with.

<sup>11</sup> A full systematic review on literature on temporary use in a planning perspective is purposely not part of this introductory chapter. Relevant references will be drawn in throughout the thesis. The analytical approach is based on the empiric findings, while the overall study is informed by the existing literature, both academic and grey resources, including best practice examples and debates.

opportunity of time-limited use or as merely a condition for initiating re-use, where the 'ending' is not a desired state.<sup>12</sup> A literal understanding of 'temporary use' in this field refers to some level of time limitation, typically based on some months or years, while another approach is to consider temporary use to be of a more programmatic nature. One reason for the confusion, or let us say the diversity, is that the origin of the term is to some extent grounded in the literal and often juridical meaning of a time-limited usage of space. However, as a practice in planning it has morphed into a field that today works as an umbrella for diverse cultural and creative projects with an often undefined time horizon. The central feature of this paradoxical field is the double play between the time-related understanding and the more programmatic oriented meaning. Strictly speaking, temporary use could be all manner of things, such as parking or storage for a limited time; however, this is seldom what is meant when temporary use appears in urban planning strategies—then it primarily refers to cultural or recreational programs. According to the urban researchers Christa Kamleithner and Rudolph Kohoutek “temporary uses” do not simply follow pragmatic demands but represent rather a programmatic concept that derives from certain historic “uses”, or rather events, in the circles of the sub-, counter and alternative culture a methodology of strategy for urban planning’ (Kamleithner & Kohoutek 2006: 33).

The various meanings of temporary use contribute to a growing ‘dictionary of confusion’ (Oosterman et al. 2015: 12) of urban concepts that fluctuate between formal, mainstream and marginal and unsolicited practices and spaces. These concepts range from temporary urbanism, to tactical urbanism (Hou 2010; Lydon & Garcia 2015), DIY urbanism (Deslandes 2013; Iveson 2013; Finn 2015), everyday urbanism (Chase, Crawford & Kaliski 2008), to ‘iterative placemaking’<sup>13</sup> to mention a few. And though we are dealing with a global phenomenon, cultural differences and understandings factor in. Nevertheless, the terms themselves can refer to anything from redesigning public spaces in Scandinavia to the tactics of the informal city of the ‘Global South’.

This apparent Bermuda triangle of concepts and connotations is both enriching and confusing in the way it affects such terms as ‘temporary use’ in their deployment as planning tools. A kind of staggered resonance is also at play, where academics rather quickly dismiss specific terms (such as temporary use) as being inadequate, even while those terms remain vibrant in planning practice, through specific municipal plans and planning strategies, and are (with various meanings) still being

<sup>12</sup> For example, in a German-speaking context, which features in a large part of the research and publications on the topic from a European perspective, ‘temporary use’ (Zwischennutzung) is different from ‘vacancy re-use’ (Nach- und Leerstandnutzung). The latter is proposed to emphasize re-use instead of the condition of time limitation. The two terms reflect different agendas, considering the temporary either as an in-between state, defined by the condition of time limitation or as a spatial sequence, part of continuous use. This discourse is also politically motivated, in terms of valuation (Hertzsch & Verlič 2012) and focus is instead on the user-driven iterative appropriation of vacant spaces (see also, Buttenberg et al. 2014). Temporary spaces supporting creative environments are often involuntary stepping stones for gentrification and commercial exploitation, which is one of the reasons the term is sometimes deliberately avoided.

<sup>13</sup> San Francisco-based urbanist and designer John Bela, (former Rebar Group, now Gehl Studio SF) has coined the term ‘Iterative Placemaking’ which he describes as ‘a phased series of physical interventions followed by evaluation to shape a place over time’. This approach which ‘puts tactics in the context of longer-term change’ (Bela 2015b), illustrates a prototypical approach to integrate temporary use in urban planning.

tested and defined ‘in real life.’<sup>14</sup> In practice, projects develop their own creative pathways and hybrid forms that are not always easily definable, seldom adhering to conceptually clear-cut categories, but nevertheless have their own customized version of ‘temporary’ life.

In the early 2000s, the ‘temporary turn’ in architecture and urban planning became popular, and the architects and theorists Florian Heydn and Robert Temel, members of what could be termed the Vienna-based ‘school’ of temporary urbanism, formulated the openness implied in the concept quite aptly:

Temporary uses are those that are planned from the outset to be impermanent. We understand the idea of temporality to be determined not, as its literal meaning would suggest, by the duration of use: temporary uses are those that seek to derive unique qualities from the idea of temporality. (Haydn & Temel 2006: 17)

The precise nature of these ‘unique qualities’ emerging from temporality, under the headline of temporary use, is thus open for interpretation. Their formulation underlines the space of possibilities in the vagueness. In many of the projects I have looked into, including the three case studies in this thesis, the initiators and collaborators are not necessarily interested in defining precisely what makes them ‘temporary’ or what ‘kind’ of project or space it is. ‘Temporary use’ and ‘temporary urban spaces’ thus often work as zones for action that can be interpreted differently. Such variety in interpretation might not be possible if the approaches were more clearly defined. The vagueness, far from an expression of disinterest, appears rather to uphold a kind of liberating ambiguity. The general starting point is, now we will do something different than usual. It may be temporary—or it may not.

While two of my case studies are located in Denmark and one in the Netherlands, I refer to the English ‘temporary use’ in the analysis. The respective terms used in these two countries are equally used quite broadly. In the Netherlands, the term ‘*tijdelijk gebruik*’ is the equivalent term and descriptions such as ‘temporary initiatives’ or ‘functions’ are also common. In Denmark ‘*midlertidige anvendelse*’ means temporary use. Furthermore, the term ‘*midlertidige byrum*’ refers to ‘temporary urban spaces’ and the broad ‘*midlertidige aktiviteter*’, ‘temporary activities’ (e.g. Realdania By 2013) is frequently used as well. However, it seems that when the context is not a particular project but general discourse, the ‘idea of temporality’, Haydn & Temel mention, gains abstraction and takes over and explanations such as use, space, activities or initiatives are even left out. In Denmark just ‘*midlertidighed*’, similar to temporality, figures in debates, as well as in general reports. This oftentimes requires added explications such as ‘*midlertidighed*’ as ‘new ways of user involvement’ (MBBL/12byer 2014) or ‘as an urban development strategy—a tool for growth’ (MIIH/Givrum.nu 2016). Similar the term ‘*tijdelijkheid*’, temporality (e.g. Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>; Gemeente Amsterdam 2012), figures in Dutch context. On a more overall level, terms such as ‘flexible planning’, ‘the spontaneous city’ and ‘organic planning’ are also prevalent in the Dutch context to address related issues (e.g. van Tuil & Bergevoet 2012; Bergevoet & van Tuijl 2013; Gemeente Amsterdam 2012; Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving & Urhahn Urban Design 2012; Tijdelijk Anders Bestemmen/<http://www.tijdelijkandersbestemmen.nl>).

<sup>14</sup> Development of other perspectives and terms in academia are highly important to scrutinize the vagueness and to discuss the critical aspects of calling projects ‘temporary’. My argument in this case is to gauge what lies behind the terminology in examples from practice.

After having immersed myself into the many descriptions and explanations about temporary use in urban planning, I ground my own use of the term in this study in a productive curiosity based on use in practice. Hence, I follow the simple reasoning that what is discursively considered 'a temporary project', 'temporary use' or 'temporary urban space'—is exactly that. The goal is not to decide whether or not a particular project is a 'real' temporary project, based on a specific set of definitions regarding time, content, organisation or political conviction, but how it is practiced and what *happens*. I am also interested in what might be evoked by a project being called temporary, as well. This is an aspect I explore and gauge in the analyses in this thesis. While I propose the terms 'authorised temporary use' and 'authorised temporary urban spaces' to specify the context of formal planning, for the sake of scrutiny in the case studies, I refer to the projects as whatever they are called in practice. In all three case studies—the temporary spaces in the harbour development in Køge, the installations on the municipal plot in Valby and the re-activation of the factory terrain in Groningen—the initiators call their projects 'temporary'. None of them are 'finished' at this point and their endings are not clearly defined; the interventions are intended to be assimilated within the continuous development. But *how*, exactly, is still open for interpretation.

## Transformation

In their publication *Secondhand Spaces: Recycling Sites Undergoing Urban Transformation* (2012), urbanist and writer Michael Ziehl and his co-editors introduce the concept of 'secondhand spaces' to cover initiatives in the field of creative and user-driven spatial re-use, playing on an analogy to second-hand clothing. The authors highlight the qualitative properties of the worn-out state, visible traces of former use and the aesthetic and atmosphere resulting, sustainability, individuality, the unconventional and properties of adaptivity. They consciously distance their discussion from the term temporary use, because to them, 'temporary use' indicates a limited time-factor of appropriation and an underlying devaluation within the real estate market (Ziehl et al. 2012: 300). Ziehl et al.'s book is another example of a concept that attempts to frame 'alternative' projects in a spatial re-cycling context. Their suggestion also underlines the need to embrace and understand spatial re-use, re-cycling and transformation as prevalent factors in this field—no matter how temporary.

Urban transformation, broadly speaking, is relevant to my study because it acknowledges that issues in urban (re)development today can mainly be tackled through a 'growth without growth' approach, a conscious rethinking of the existing stock and resources to respond to current and future needs in a sustainable way. Transformation can thus be considered a fundamental approach in urban reorganisation. But furthermore, a rising focus on transformation, adaptive re-use as well as updated heritage approaches as part of a specific planning paradigm, are beginning to have an impact. These are perspectives that not take point of departure in spaces as 'blank sheets of paper' or *tabula rasa* situations; on the contrary, they embrace what already exists. They focus attention on how to work with the existing and how to treat conditions of change as an asset that can frame challenges across scales (e.g. Braae 2003, 2007, 2015; Braae & Diedrich 2012; Bergevoet & van Tuijl 2016). For instance, design as transformation forms a specific approach to current urban restructuring needs, such as post-industrial sites (e.g. Riesto 2011; Diedrich 2013; Braae 2003, 2015) as well as strategic and relational

approaches to urbanisation processes and regional polarisation and shrinkage issues (e.g. Tietjen 2009; Laursen 2008; Oswalt 2002-2008<sup>15</sup>). Temporary use can be considered as one specific transformation strategy (Overmeyer et al. 2007, Diedrich 2013: 71).

Transformation and urban re-development are often related to questions of heritage as processes of value negotiation from a dynamic perspective (Braae & Riesto 2012: 77). In recent years a field has emerged around 'new heritage' (Fairclough 2008) and renewed cultural heritage perspectives. Its purpose is to find new ways of valuing our built environment that do not adhere to typical conservation and heritage norms (e.g. Riesto 2011; Braae 2015; Diedrich 2013; Andersen/Dansk Bygningsarv 2009). The notion of transformation in a design perspective challenges preservation and heritage as a static, object-oriented, locked state and ideal. Heritage expert Graham Fairclough says the local and the ordinary, the 'lived', add tangible and intangible aspects to heritage, moving the field beyond static protection and thereby challenging predefined values about what we consider heritage: 'For new heritage, the overall objective is not necessarily preservation but the management of change, to which the end preservation is just one means' (Fairclough 2008: 30). Fairclough says that 'heritage is object and action, product and process'; it belongs to more than official and expert-based knowledge fields and requires increased attention to democratic issues and involvement on various levels (Ibid.: 29). Notably, in his publication dating back to 1972, *What Time Is this Place*, the renowned urban planning theorist Kevin Lynch also describes dealing with the past as 'management of change', a process where we proactively choose a past to 'work with' (Lynch 1972: 64). The notion of 'management of change', though here put forward in different times, underlines the fact that steps of valuation steering decision making are constructed through linkages between understandings of past, present and future. As Lynch further remarks, 'Our images of past and future are present images, continuously re-created' (Ibid.: 65). Thus, heritage can be considered as chosen histories and is therefore as much about the present and what we consider of relevance now, at the time of choosing, as it can be about the past. The focussed attention from a transformation perspective, on what to preserve, develop or to discard and how these decisions are made, are both highly relevant but also quite intricate in regard to temporary urban projects, since these interventions can both contribute to the revaluation and elucidation of site qualities, but also feature challenges in this relation.

According to landscape architect and researcher within landscape transformation, Ellen Braae, the point of departure is 'to change "something" into "something else"' (Braae 2015: 278), which means that in a transformation light we deal with places with baggage. The baggage carries potential, regardless of its problematic, dissonant and obstructed aspects or its more obvious and easy approachable and releasable qualities. Hence, the 'something' has its logic and ways of working due to former or still partly active use—(post)industrial sites or construction sites, for instance; the new 'something', implemented or emerging, also develops its own logic. These 'ways of working' overlap, collide, merge, or repel each other. The meeting of site logics is of particular relevance when looking into temporary initiatives as actual testing modes for how existing urban resources can be unlocked and released anew (Wagner 2013).

The spatial changes of the sites in the case of the Southern Harbour of Køge, on Smedestræde 2 in

<sup>15</sup> Research project *Shrinking cities project* 2002-2008 (<http://www.shrinkingcities.com>)

Valby and on the former Sugar Factory in Groningen, discussed in this study, all illustrate particular ways in which aspects of 'the existing', broadly considered, are either utilised or discarded in the initial appropriation steps of space earlier used otherwise, that the temporary uses embodies. Examining these acts of valuation that are characterized by both appreciation and ignorance of elements and conditions, sheds light on the potentials and challenges of the initiatives, seen in a transformation perspective.

If transformation is a 'dialogue with the existent' (Braae & Diedrich 2012: 24), it is important to inquire how this dialogue is initiated, especially in processes that are not clear cut from the outset, whether intentionally or not, and feature various agendas and actors—aspects of control as much as aspects of contingency. Furthermore, the shifts in area and zoning definitions and the processual and spatial implications of re-use and transformation situations are of particular interest in these case studies. These shifts and implications, as we will see, can release immediate qualities to inhabit spatially and to nurture socially and organisational, but they also create challenging re-activation possibilities at the operational level.

If we consider temporary initiatives as distinct types of steps in the transformation of a site, the question of scale rises—physical scale as well as scale in production and design modes. In terms of larger restructuring processes, the implementation of temporary small-scale physical interventions and adaptations creates a spatial quality often specifically due to the contrasting and compound (scalar and material) settings of which they become part: small handmade wooden installations beneath tall industrial steel structures, to give a visual example.

However, exactly this qualitative tension can cause processual challenges in further development, which points at the question of upscaling or out-scaling and how iterations and continuous development is interpreted, when the big bulldozers move in, so to speak (Lamm & Wagner 2015a). How assets of small-scale targeted interventions, as immediate hands-on approaches, can contribute to large-scale re-use projects has only been briefly explored. For instance, DIY hands-on approaches to heritage and preservation in large-scale re-use projects have seldom been reconciled with traditional development procedures; few examples exist where these different modes work together (Campo 2014). Traditional modes of practice still dominate: restrictive building regulations; difficulties appreciating, accepting or simply managing the use of unfinished re-construction states; and the predominant focus on 'done' end results, fully designed, built and financed.

In summary, I address these temporary use projects by dealing specifically with shifts and conditions of transformation. As indicated earlier, not because the projects are themselves necessarily clearly defined as short-term, but because they are part of particular restructuring processes. However, the studied initiatives as planning approaches only to some extent embody defined transformation strategies as conscious design and intervention modes. The way transformation is addressed in the projects can be more or less strategic or part of an intentional design process. Hence, both intended and unintended aspects belong to the 'management of change'. Most of all, these are places and processes *in transition*. While the space production is highly dynamic, it is though possible to talk about particular phases of restructuring –in terms of changes in ownership, collaborations, uses, approaches and conditions.

These transitional states, ‘betwixt and between’ (Turner 1970),<sup>16</sup> are not necessarily dramatic—the changes can be subtle or more drastic—but they are part of a change-over that affects current orders, routines and understandings. This change-over can be decoded and analysed.

## Reprogramming

Although unconventional use of a space that was originally designated for something else is an inherent part of how spaces have been adapted to current needs throughout history, I consider it a particular important aspect in what is at play in the temporary use projects addressed here.

The notion of programming and in particular *reprogramming*, is a recurrent topic that is related to the dynamics of transformation sketched out above.

In architecture and planning, ‘the program’ most often refers to the intended function put forward in a proposal and how it is incorporated in the design.<sup>17</sup> The architect and theorist Bernard Tschumi addresses the importance of the program in space and architectural design. Contrary to the modernist

<sup>16</sup> This is an expression used by cultural anthropologist Victor Turner to illustrate the state of liminality. Liminality, introduced to cultural studies by ethnographer Arnold van Gennep and later taken up by Turner, is a transitory stage in ritual behaviour. It has later been widely used to describe other situations and spaces of transition. It indicates a break of continuity that enables another temporal order to emerge (Van Gennep 1960; Turner 1970 (1967), 1975).

<sup>17</sup> As architectural historian Adrian Forty remarks, ‘function’ is an ambiguous term, and throughout history it has had quite different meanings in architecture (Forty 2000: 174). In relation to the re-use issue addressed here, I consider function very broadly. However, the point here is the distinct contrast between re-use and the original purpose of the built structure in question.



‘Sky diving in the elevator shaft’, Tschumi proposed – or what about swimming in the coal mine? Today the Zollverein Coal Mine in Essen in the German Ruhr district is an UNESCO heritage site. The programmatic contrast induced by new cultural and recreational activities placed within the transformed industry space, create a fascinating attraction. The swimming pool is an art project by Dirk Paschke and Daniel Milohnic. Constructed in 2001, it is still in function today (Photo: ©Jochen Tack / Stiftung Zollverein).



mantra of 'form follows function,' Tschumi argues for a rethinking of traditional form-content typologies that challenges and opposes, in an extreme way, programmatic content and spatial settings. In his essay, *Spaces and Events*, first published in the early 1980s, Tschumi elaborates on the role of the program, pleading for combinations and juxtapositions of not only formal architectural style, but in programmatic terms as well, through absurd and surreal constellations that provoke conventional typological form and content logics. He asks, what about 'pole vaulting in the chapel, bicycling in the laundromat, sky diving in the elevator shaft?' (Tschumi 1998: 146). Though posed three decades ago, the suggestion is interesting to consider today, since these versions of reprogramming, or 'crossprogramming' (Ibid.: 205)<sup>18</sup>, as typological displaced program-space relations, are not far from many of today's most popular creative re-use projects. The more unexpected and bold the combination, the more intriguing, it seems. What such spatial setups encapsulate is more than any practical function of their new programmatic content; the transformed spatial setting is crucial. The fascination of reprogramming and program clashes is important to note, since it emerges from a search for something special or even 'magic', both aesthetically and socially. This search for something special plays a big

<sup>18</sup> Tschumi puts forward the concepts of 'crossprogramming', covering a use not intended for the specific space, as a typological displaced program-space relation; 'transprogramming', suggesting the combination of two programs that might be incompatible in their function to some extent (e.g. a 'planetarium + rollercoaster'); and finally 'disprogramming', where one program distorts and affects another program (Tschumi 1998: 205). I will refer to 'reprogramming' as a more overall expression for the relation between space and program.



'The Robe Forest' was a temporary urban space (2010-2012) re-using the canopied truck loading area of the Carlsberg Brewery in Copenhagen, an area undergoing redevelopment. The reprogrammed space created a very different use of the structure with its more than 3.000 ropes hanging from the roof (Design: Keinicke & Overgaard Arkitekter, UIWE).

role in temporary projects, where a re-use setting and, often, apparently simple intervention elements interact and fuel each other, create complexity and contrasts, because of the dynamics between the existing structures and a 'foreign' newness.

With his provocative statement 'Fuck the programme' Dutch architect and urban planner Kees Christiaanse (2001)<sup>19</sup> uses another starting point, but he too argues for the creative conciliation of the constraints that emerges in combinations of not-aligned programmatic content and architectural typology. He claims that architecture turns out much better when it is not designed for a specific purpose and when the program in general is assigned a more subordinate role in design proposals. The point is to question both a naïve understanding of predefined flexibility as a general solution as well as a perfect (customized) match of designed space and program, without any misfits, as the optimal goal. Christiaanse talks about the potential of designing new spaces that do not follow the typological norm and in fact borrow from other functional types, but he also argues for the properties of re-use and reprogramming more generally (Christiaanse 2001: 87). Hence, the argument is that the actual recalibrating and adaptive process of making things fit contributes something important. The adaptive properties of reprogramming are also highlighted in *Reprogramming the City* (e.g. Copenhagen Danish Architecture Centre 2014/2015), a touring exhibition concept initiated by urban strategist and writer Scott Burnham that demonstrates how urban reprogramming can be part of creative innovation and smart thinking. It features various urban hacking interventions, devices and prototypes for urban spaces as well as larger re-use adaptations to rethink the 'hardware of the city' (Exhibition catalogue DAC 2014/2015). From Burnham's perspective, reprogramming can be interpreted as 'designing with the city, not for it' (Burnham in DAC 2014/2015). Again, the creativity could be revealed in the constraints and untapped potentials of the urban infrastructure, is the message.

In relation to the transformation and re-use perspective in this study, I find it useful to place special emphasis on the notion of programming and in particular, *reprogramming*, for several reasons. Since temporary use initiatives, considered as small-scale 'openers' and catalyst projects, often are the first attempt at something 'new' based on the existing site conditions, they subsequently form exceptional re-programming steps. As pioneering activities and appropriations, they must relate to the existing site conditions at a stage where much of the existing logic (spatial, organisational and cultural/social) is still distinctly prevalent and 'fresh'. The former use might be lingering or on the way out—how to appropriate the transition?

What is further notable is that actual site preparation, even before the first 'real temporary programs' can be implemented, plays an important role. For instance, questions of access, security or pollution can be crucial obstacles, for large sites as much as small plots. Dealing with the existing, understood as the work with basic site preparation, is seldom recognised and communicated as part of the actual repurposing. Nevertheless, this 'tuning in' is often the object of much work before the actual injection of new functions, and is therefore part of the reprogramming process as well. Furthermore, the importance of singular events as part of current redevelopment projects, including temporary use, creates special conditions, where the reprogramming might be temporally limited and changing, consisting of different series of activities rather than one consistent use. In the thesis I will use the

<sup>19</sup> Christiaanse here refers to the well-known 'fuck context' posed by Rem Koolhaas in *S,M,L,XL* (1995).

notion of reprogramming to detail what happens when new programmatic content enters transitional sites through temporary use, thereby also questioning the spatial consequences of reprogramming.

## Making culture between buildings

Another recurrent theme in this thesis is centred on observations of a current 'culture of making'. This section will explain what I mean by that and what role it plays in relation to my studies.

I will encircle this culture of making by tracing a current focus in urban planning towards implementations of specific 'doing' activities as recreational and cultural programs. It is a focus that can be related to current cultural planning and aspects within experience economy (Skot-Hansen 2007; Kiib 2010; Lorentzen & Smidt-Jensen 2011; Baldauf 2008; Bruun Jensen 2008).

In *New City Life* (2008), the urban planners Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzøe distinguish between optional and necessary activity in the city. Through history, activities in public space have moved from being mainly necessary (work related) to optional (free time oriented). Public urban life as 'life between buildings' (Gehl 1987 (1971)) has changed in a way that has resulted in an increased 'leisure society' (Gehl & Gemzøe 2008; Gehl & Svarre 2013). Hence, urban life in itself has become a desirable quality to plan for. Recreational activities are now prominent programs in planning: 'When it is no longer absolutely essential for people to spend time in public space, it takes more to get them to come there rather than staying indoors or at home' (Gehl & Svarre 2013: 146). In recent years various studies of urban life have focussed on the prominent role of recreational activities. Physical activities in particular, from traditional sports to the biking culture and informal street sports (e.g. Kural 1999; Eskelund 2010), appear in many urban planning and design projects, as do performative and playful art and design elements and events. While playful approaches and spaces for play are, in part, counter reactions to instrumental thinking about the city and planning (Stevens 2007), they are nevertheless increasingly integrated into actual planning strategies (Lamm et al. 2015).

However, other action-oriented programs, aside from those for physical activity such as sports or play, are also having, and in some cases regaining, an impact on urban life and planning culture. These different modes of making, production and (co-)creation form a culture of making. This 'making culture' is no doubt an offshoot of the so-called Maker Culture and Makers Movement, in the entrepreneurial sense, or as activism, but it also refers to other agendas. The act of making things increasingly enters the urban stage as part of official planning initiatives. Visible 'optional' work, such as urban gardening (and building the garden beds prior to it), designed re-use stations and building workshops all demonstrate a rising focus on do-it-yourself and do-it-together (DIY/ DIT), co-creation initiatives, which are popular for integrating into a planning process. These are programs that are particularly featured in temporary urban spaces—or even construct the spaces.

Former necessary work activities are transformed and become officially instigated 'leisure activities'—or at least become something else. Different versions of craftsmanship, repairing, construction work, food production etc., are thus increasingly entering a new arena. This sort of work is thus not only happening in the backyard, community or allotment garden, but is increasingly put into the public spotlight.

In his *Critique of Everyday Life*, first published in 1947<sup>20</sup>, Henri Lefebvre describes how techniques that were formerly part of manufacturing processes gain another meaning when they are transformed into free time activities. They become 'cultivated leisure activities' that 'lead us back towards the feeling of presence, towards nature and the life of the senses' (Lefebvre 1991a: 41). This description applies, some 70 years later, to the popularity of hands-on doing activities today. Rediscovered and reintroduced back-to-the-roots activities often involve some sort of 'making', and in addition to possessing social and resource-sustaining 'green' properties, they reflect a search for meaningful, tactile and sensuous experiences. According to urban planner and researcher Daniel Campo, this is what informal and untamed and uncontrolled urban areas offer, as opposed to manicured public parks. It is possible to find 'nature as action, engagement, and creation; and recreation as "re-creation"'. Campo says that leisure activities give rise to the possibility to 'nurture this primordial impulse', which is why gardening is such a popular free time activity. However, apart from community gardening, public green urban areas seldom facilitate the indulgence of such needs (Campo 2013: 23). Gardening is an obvious but very good example of what I would call a 'making program', and is

<sup>20</sup> Critique de la vie quotidienne I: Introduction (1947)

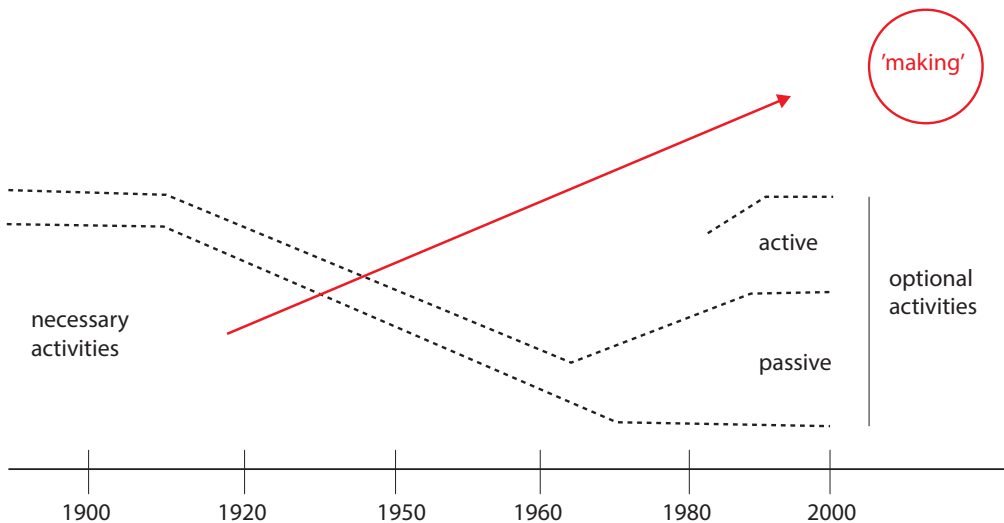


Diagram: Adapted from *New City Life* (Gehl & Gemzøe 2001) and *How to study urban life* (Gehl & Svarre 2013)

therefore worth elaborating upon here.<sup>21</sup> There are several reasons for the popularity of gardening in current planning context and temporary settings in particular. First, an extendable modularity is often inherent in the garden bed setups applied in many urban gardening projects. Second, the performative and engaging properties of hands-on collective doing can support community building. Third, gardening conveys values of sustainability and biodiversity, as well as certain aesthetic qualities of informal 'greenness', providing a human scale that differs from other urban green spaces.

As a popular programmatic choice for community engagement and collaboration, gardening has proved to be a valuable and popular way to engage people in outdoor spaces, where 'new interactions between citizens, municipalities, companies and associations can emerge' (Realdania By /SLA 2014: 1). Looking closer into spatial settings and practices such as planned gardening initiatives, sheds light on specific contextual mechanisms behind these 'mundane doings'. While such initiatives might resemble each other visually, they work in various ways.

In *Making Is Connecting* (2011), sociologist and media theorist David Gauntlett points at a general shift from 'a sit back and be told' culture towards a 'making and doing' culture (Gauntlett 2011: 8). This movement of making frames initiatives as political motivated and conscious ways of taking position to consumerism and societal challenges. It is an important contemporary voice and agency, questioning

<sup>21</sup> The thesis topic is not urban gardening, which is a large field of study in itself. However, garden initiatives will be a recurrent theme, since they are a common feature in temporary use projects and are part of the reprogramming in all the three cases discussed.





^ < Urban gardening has moved (back) into Kongens Have, 'The Kings Garden', in central Copenhagen. When established in the 16th century by King Christian IV, the garden featured areas for vegetables and fruits. In 2015 the classic public park got an urban gardening setting with plant beds and deluxe pallet seating. The project initiated by The Agency for Culture and Palaces and The Ministry of Environment and Food is runned by a company specialised in urban gardening, TagTomat. The public is invited to 'take part in the community and share experiences' (on social media) and to make their own vegetable patch in the park.

'Pacification through cappuccino' (Zukin 1995) and urban life as pure consumption, entertainment and pastime. However, what happens when the 'making' is part of official planning strategies? And when that official planning moves 'making' out of backyards, collectives, community, and allotment gardens, in the name of public citizen involvement, officially initiated user-driven frameworks and general outreach?

The rising interest in 'making', in co-creation processes and DIY-related or inspired activities in *planned* public and collective settings, creates conditions that demands actualised ways to understand the making of space as well as the role of engagement and facilitation. Do-it-yourself does not mean that the space is doing it itself. Spaces that to a high degree serve as settings for the production of space itself depend on being made. When these production modes play the fundamental role of making the spaces work, more than a set of static and predefined architectural parameters, the (spatial) qualities depend on activation and human presence. If these practices are not performed, the spaces can quickly stand as dysfunctional settings of left-behind activity and of absence. This is a condition that might not be questioned in an unplanned and non-public setting; however, it certainly will in planned ones. Performing these practices implies a negotiation of stewardship and ownership in keeping up the settings by using them in certain ways, something which is not an inherent part of traditional maintenance programs. To maintain green spaces, collaborations are increasingly sought between authorities and, for instance, volunteer groups (Molin 2014) for both social and economic reasons. However, when 'making' becomes the inspiration for official strategies and urban planning



^ Making moss is not a typical space creating measure: The work, made as part of a SEEDS project in north-west Copenhagen, was later removed by the municipality (one of the partners in the project) since it was categorised as unauthorised graffiti. Hand-made and soft materials entering open space settings challenge traditional maintenance categories (Photo: Bettina Lamm).

initiatives (often under the heading of co-creation and participation) and are not simply part of self-organised, civic or entrepreneurial movements and collectives of 'doers', how space and collaborations are made and understood in an urban context is naturally affected. Building, gardening and fixing things are thus more than personal hobbies or a matter of interest groups.

'Making' as (re)programming also introduces new 'building materials' and interfaces in urban settings. Unfinished constructions, handmade installations, alterations and furniture, soft materials and loose objects, storage containers and tools, all together create more or less designed, intimate, and dynamic workshop and hangout settings.<sup>22</sup>

Spaces to *do* things collectively in the city are of course not new. But new setups and project frames emerge. I will thus end this section with an example that is not part of my case studies, but illustrate the sketched out urban culture of making quite aptly:

The Line (Linjen) or The ContainerCity is a current temporary re-use project (2014-2018) in the Copenhagen. Here, the municipal local area renewal office and the creative group Bureau Detours teamed up to create an alternative urban space on a narrow strip of vacant land next to the train line. Benny Henningsen, a member of Bureau Detours describes the initiative as follows:

<sup>22</sup> In particular in transformation areas featuring re-use of both buildings and open spaces the 'making culture' also moves in and out of buildings and inside and outside is connected. This is also why this study not only addresses open spaces 'between buildings' but partly also moves into buildings.



^> Outdoor workshops in The ContainerCity/The Line, Copenhagen NV, a temporary initiative set up in collaboration between the municipal urban renewal office and the Bureau Detours.





^ At 'The ContainerCity' a note on the wall features an invitation to engage in 'making'-activities on the site: 'If you want to join the cultivation of the garden, write you email here'.

It is not about creating a space for everybody. We cannot facilitate that. But we can create a place, where everyone who feels like it and who wants to put some work in it is welcome. (...) But we really want people to come here. This is why we have parties in the weekend, so people from outside can see what is going on here. We hope that people will join in as members, come and fix bikes, hang out in the garden or join the construction. Especially we hope that families and residents in the area will embrace it. (Benny Henningsen, Bureau Detours in *Politiken* 13. 03 2015)

The reason for introducing the project here is revealed in the 'invitation' that Henningsen expresses: it is a space organised in a mix of urban development from bottom-up and top-down in a place of 'in-betweenness' that offers possibilities for diverse 'making' and for events.

The prevalence of certain urban cultural phenomenon can mostly not be referred back to specific planning strategies. Mainstream and subcultures constantly 'play' with each other, boundaries are tested and the popularity of 'culture(s) of making' is a good example of that. Inspiration from and recuperation of sub- and counter-cultural expressions in commercial settings is prevalent, but also detectable in official public planning initiatives. In its most extreme versions the formalisation can create situations, where informal activities transfer 'from the realm of improvisation to that of policy' through 'design competitions to decide who gets the commission for the guerrilla garden', as social scientist Fran Tonkiss critically notes (Tonkiss 2013: 107-108). Acts of what could be called 'municipal self-hacking' where authorities loosen up their own image and system by inviting in other urban players to shake things up and start up engaging making initiatives are not unusual. Somewhere in-between, new collaborative setups and practices emerge that blur the lines between categories such as informal and formal, bottom-up and top-down as directly perceivable divisions in space. This is an important aspect of the authorisation of temporary use.

## ANALYTICAL APPROACH

### The in-between

The following sections present my overall analytical approach in this thesis. As pointed out, my initial immersion into the topic revealed a range of paradoxes in the projects I was researching. These paradoxes seemed worth exploring, to gain new and more detailed knowledge about the ways the authorised temporary urban spaces are expected to work and actually work, and to see what such knowledge exposes about this by know well-known and widespread but still analytically underexposed phenomenon in urban culture and planning.

To both elucidate and learn from these paradoxical aspects, I use a set of thematically paired concepts as both a starting point and testing ground for my analysis. The selected pairings emerged from repeated sessions of mind mapping and decoding of learnings from my cases. This process was also part of narrowing down in terms of the final case selection. Based on their ability to frame the topical conglomerations emerging, I identified the concepts as vantage points for further exploration in the writing process.<sup>23</sup> In the four chapters they function differently. In the first and the last chapter, 'Between Vision and Everyday' and 'Between Journey and Destination', the concept frames serve to, respectively, support the opening of the discussion and to conclude and to point at broader perspectives. In the two middle chapters, 'Between Public and Private' and 'Between Sign and Action', which contain in-depth case analysis, I use the conceptual themes to extract and discuss an array of specific case aspects.

Overall, the theme-based framing serves to explore the 'in-between'. While 'exploring the in-between' is a quite common analytical approach to address cultural phenomena and transitional stages,<sup>24</sup> I found it particularly suitable for this research, due to the nature of the topic. In this study the 'in-between' works as a dialectic-inspired starting point, because it is based on the productive properties of the paradoxes of the case studies. It becomes a way to learn from and through the generative aspects surfacing in those apparent contradictions. Firstly, in-between refers to 'the space between', space in a transitional state, which includes changes in use, ownership and status and the effects of these transitions. Secondly, it alludes to the 'interactions between', understood as the processual aspects and multiple negotiations occurring in the transitional state of a space; the decision making and planning acts carried out under the heading of doing something 'differently' through temporary re-programming. These 'in-betweens' are not separate, but correlate and intersect in several ways, which will be elaborated in the next sections and in the analysis in the following chapters.

The findings from looking into the interstices suggest how these in-between relationships can be made tangible. My case analysis contributes a set of new conceptual cross-terms that reframe and

<sup>23</sup> The themes extracted from these explorations are of both 'substantial' and 'formal' character, meaning that they both refer to actual use of terms in practice (substantial), as well as more general terms for encircling themes for investigation (formal) (Maaløe 1999: 86).

<sup>24</sup> The study of 'in-betweenness' figures in various studies, addressing social and cultural issues and transitional stages, in fields such as traditional and modern anthropology, postcolonial studies, and studies of modern culture and performance studies. In these fields notions such as liminality and hybridity play an important role in terms of a focussed attention on threshold-situations, breaks of continuity, change and uncertainty (e.g. Van Gennep 1960; Turner 1970, 1975; Bhaba 1994; Fischer-Lichte 2014(2004); Thomassen 2014; Horvath et. al 2015).

propose a nuanced view of spaces and practices in the field of temporary use in an urban planning and design perspective.

## Themed journeys

I use the conceptual pairings as 'sensitizing concepts' (Blumer 1954), and so they work as navigational tools in the thesis, suggesting 'directions along which to look' (Blumer 1954: 7). As a methodological testing site, the approach through the sensitising concepts is improvisational (Faulkner 2009). Thus, in addition to shedding light on the general field of study, and on the three case studies in particular, the thematic frame itself is also questioned and nuanced recursively.

On methodological approaches within 'cultural analysis',<sup>25</sup> cultural theorist Mieke Bal, author of *Travelling Concepts* (2002) points out that 'you don't apply one method; you conduct a meeting between several, a meeting in which the object participates, so that, together, object and methods can become a new, not firmly delineated, field' (Bal 2002: 4).<sup>26</sup> In this light, the interaction between methodological approach and the object of study forms a transformative journey:

After returning from your travels, the object constructed turns out to no longer be the 'thing' that so fascinated you when you chose it. It has become a living creature, embedded in all the questions and considerations that the mud of you travel spattered onto it, and that surround it like a 'field'. (Ibid.: 4)

Hence, in the act of employing a conceptual approach for examining a cultural phenomenon, new perspectives can develop. 'While groping to define, provisionally and partly, what a particular concept may *mean*, we gain insight into what it can *do*', Bal elaborates; this is 'not because they mean the same thing for everyone, but because they don't' (Ibid.: 11).

Indeed, in hindsight, I find that the mud that accumulated during my particular research trip changed my understanding of what I was dealing with in many ways—methodologically and in relation to the findings in the case studies. For instance, my point of departure for dealing with the 'publicness' in my cases in chapter two was to explore the role of the spaces as particular collective ones. Part of that journey and learning was that the analysis revealed much more about nuanced levels of 'privateness' and the emergence of more interesting and even further derivational dynamics that were moving away from the initial framing.

Another reason for this heuristic analytical approach is to spur a multifaceted discussion, which enables me to draw on several theoretical positions that 'gather' around the concepts as thematic clusters. Focus and debate within both research and practice addressing temporary use in urban planning are influenced by and part of a wide range of socio-political and cultural discourses; professional areas,

<sup>25</sup> Bal advocates using the term 'cultural analysis' to underline interdisciplinary and dynamic approaches and research methods that she does not find sufficiently present in related fields such as cultural studies (Bal 2002: 6-8).

<sup>26</sup> It should be noted that Bal does not speak for an approach based on an (oppositional) pairing of concepts (Bal 2002: 22), in the manner I explore in this study; rather, she seeks to demonstrate 'concept-based methodology' (Ibid.: 5). However, despite this difference, I find that her demonstration of an attentive and dynamic engagement with concepts as interdisciplinary analytical tools adds a productive perspective.

which can be difficult to get to communicate which each other, though they are intertwined in actual planning and space creation. Even though these areas together shape our environment, they often form different silos of rationale, different logics and traditions, from juridical conformities to spatial and aesthetic values, to give an example.

Gaps between professional approaches and areas of responsibilities are of course not restricted to this area, but my presumption is that research and discourse across disciplines play an important role in my research and needs to be confronted specifically. One reason for this cross-disciplinary awareness in a discussion of authorised temporary use, which I will return to, is that 'non-designerly' decisions are often major shapers of space. A broad conception of design and planning is therefore necessary to see how space is made. Drawing on a combined set of references makes it possible to elucidate these different space-shapers at play.

Seen together, these areas can inform and expose important areas of interaction. I therefore draw on writings from diverse fields of knowledge: urban sociology, legal geography, performance studies, material culture, landscape architecture and urban transformation, as well as architectural history and organisational theory. The aim is to enable a discussion across professional fields, because it is highly informative to learn from their intersections. It is through these intersections that we can learn more about the challenges and potentials of the contemporary phenomenon of temporary use in urban planning—in these overlaps, gaps, misfits and links in-between.

Since concepts are both deeply connected to specific professional areas, where they are rooted, and are also constantly borrowed by other disciplines, they hold multiple and changing meanings. Crossing disciplinary borders and fuelling an open-minded discussion become possible. The theme-based conceptual framings are thus relatable to wider theoretical backgrounds and discourses, even while they also connect to more simple and mundane meanings.

As I have explained, this methodological framing invites a rather diverse and eclectic constellation of perspectives into the discussions. Hence, this approach crosses different epistemic and paradigmatic traditions that are suitable for addressing the heterogeneity identified. Consequently, this study is limited in that it does exclude any in-depth demonstration of singular theoretical positions and traditions. It rather enables a deployment of specific aspects of a sub-theoretical character only according to what they contribute to an analysis of the case studies.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, my frame of reference also includes a few fictional literary works that assist in clarifying or nuancing interpretative points and add voices and imageries that support the complexity encountered during analysis.

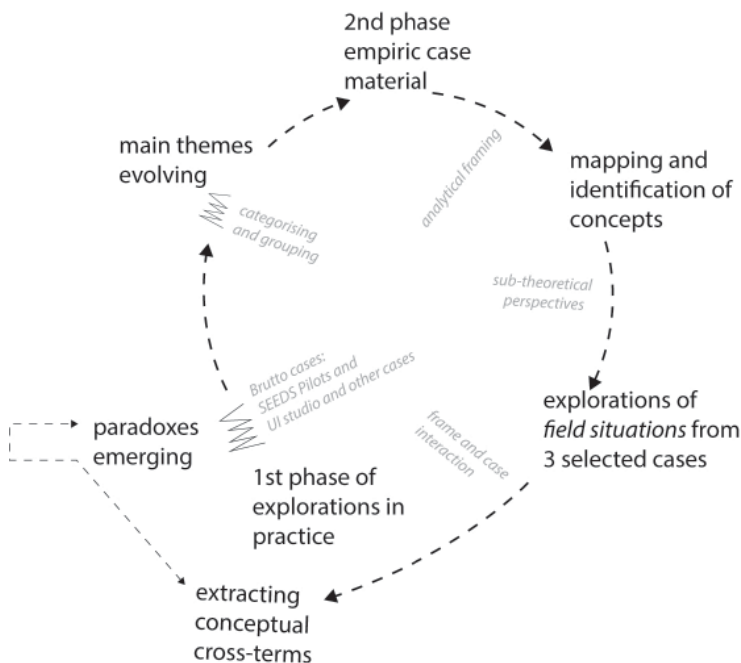
The thematic structure of my analysis entails the splitting up of the case studies. In this chapter, I will introduce the three cases to give the reader a background to enter the themed explorations of very particular issues, situations and spaces as analytical sub-units (Maaløe 1999: 69; Neergaard 2015: 40). These sub-units or 'cases within cases', which I define as *field situations*, range from aspects of a structural and organisational character to specific spatial and temporal limited (micro)actions and events. The *field situations* allow the exploration of specific discourses and detailed spatial charac-

<sup>27</sup> Theory is obviously not a precise and unified category, and it is necessary to consider it as something approachable on different levels, from so-called grand theories, overarching epistemological and ontological world views, to smaller niches or sub-theoretical approaches (e.g. Maaløe 1999: 79; Groat & Wang 2002: 80).

terisations. The inductive data-driven selection of the analytical sub-parts is based on conceptual considerations and aims for richness and nuance (Neergaard 2015: 41). The reason for presenting the case discussions according to theme rather than case by case naturally has implications. I have thus prioritised the coherence of the analytical process and synthesis with the potential links between the cases as a locus for discussion and thematic ‘denseness’.

## Meta-guide: Between Vision and Everyday

‘Between Vision and the Everyday’ is the title of this first chapter, presenting the background for and approach in this thesis, but it is also a meta-level perspective in this phenomenon-journey—an overall mind-set. In its basic meaning and use, *visions* are for the most part related to expressions of future-oriented thinking and long-term perspectives. The *everyday*, on the other hand, indicates ordinary and mundane doings that are characterised by routine and repetition, or by a certain character of immediateness, such as unplanned informal activities without a strategic forward-pointing intention. The title, ‘Between Vision and Everyday’, arose because the research field seemed to spin out interesting threads between what could be considered visionary levels and everyday aspects—it is here that *permitted exceptions* evolve. On the next pages, I will explain the relevance of this perspective in relation to the authorised temporary urban spaces and present further methodological implications for the case studies that follow.



The phases in the research

### ***Packing and unpacking of visions***

On a closer look, visions are not only views into the future; they involve past, present *and* future. They contain experiences, hopes, values, speculations and agendas—intentions and expectations based on known and unknown aspects. A vision is an expression of anticipation, of a desire for something, which might happen somewhere and sometime in future, according to existing circumstances. Moreover, a vision is a signal, a motive and a way of communicating how something should be seen and approached by others. And visions are practical—fundamental strategic tools in today's urban planning and design practice. Examples are for instance overall city level policies encouraging focus on certain hot topics, goals or values, but also more specific itemised strategies, project proposals and plans.

My use of 'vision' in this research refers to a broad field of statements, since the case studies reveal a diverse repertoire of expressed wishes, intentions and motives. These expressions are important to scrutinise, since the arguments and hopes for the *permitted exceptions* conveyed by these visions can be more or less visible commitments, conveyed through various actions, media and channels and put forward by multiple agents.

Visions as overall tools for guidance in planning are fundamental. Lucius Burckhardt, a sociologist, economist and theorist of architecture, design and planning, points out that guiding motives in a planning context have a powerful, often visual clarity about a harmonic goal, but they seldom include friction and conflictual aspects (Burckhardt 1980(1971): 59). Mission statements and overall visions advanced by, for instance, planning authorities are often communicated as logical goals that everyone would sign and support, expressions of intentions that appear as undisputable good things. However, when put into action, these '*Leitbilder*', or guiding motives, can be challenging (Ibid.: 61). To be executed, decisions must be made and prioritised. For instance, experiments with alternative planning modes in principle may have general support, but are challenged in actual implementation, when it comes to daily practicalities, change of routines or explicit political agendas.

Concurrently, it is precisely the clarity and simplicity that carries an overall guiding vision and also protects alternative ideas and phantasies the vision is creating room for, from getting judged immediately based on former experiences and knowledge, according to James March, a prominent researcher in decision theory and organisational studies (March 2008: 305). The act of proposing a vision creates a guarded zone, a sheltered area, which allows approaching both the unknown and the more conventional ways of doing things through a subjunctive space of possibilities that legitimise a field of openness and exploration. The promotion of experimentation and the advocacy for 'doing things otherwise' in the officially sanctioned temporary initiatives—as overall *permitted exceptions*—can be seen as strategic actions to create protective shelter for testing ideas. They imply that a certain level of tolerance should be allowed—the ideas should not be judged the same way as 'conventional' planning approaches. I also consider this an important factor in terms of the terminological ambiguity concerning temporary use, addressed earlier. A narrow and clear definition could be an undesirable restraining factor, whereas a somewhat generous reading of what a temporary use project may consist of creates a certain beneficial vagueness within which to work—an 'everything is possible' mode that can be framed by being loosely defined as 'a temporary project'.

In project management and planning, visions are motivational tools that can be more or less concrete,

but they seldom map out an operational specificity that can be directly followed. At the same time, they cover multiple qualitative dimensions that require further interpretation and can be read very differently (Christensen & Kreiner 2005: 57). Despite their abstract connotations and imagery, visions do become grounded and are literally part of daily procedures on several levels. They are made, decided, put forward and executed and turned into applicable action points. Initially, visions get compressed into simplified expressions and guiding motives, to form a clear and communicative direction, but they then need to get 'unpacked' again, when they must be put into action in further, everyday activities of decision-making, delegation and execution. The urban planning theorist, Patsy Healey describes the move from abstract ideas towards actual implementation this way:

The planning project sometimes exists in a kind of utopian or virtual realm as concepts of what could perhaps come to be, enlarging imaginations of possible futures. But in its form as a governance activity, it comes to earth in the complex flow of practices. (Healey 2009: 287)

Implementation is part of a negotiation process consisting of many interactions and bargaining amongst various actors (Healey 2003: 103). Looking into the how ideas are unpacked and implemented requires a focus on how value expressions are constructed and implemented 'on the ground', not only as urban form, but also in terms of what supporting cultures and structures for action and collaboration are prioritised and supported. The temporary projects addressed in this study can be seen as distinct initial steps in more or less explicitly formulated vision and plan 'packing' and 'unpacking'. There are several reasons why these interpretational steps of packing and unpacking visions are particularly important to scrutinize in temporary projects as intentional urban planning initiatives.

The goal of instigating temporary use is often considered to be deliberately letting projects evolve without a too fixed or clearly predefined goal. The idea is to let the process itself be the defining factor in an exploratory, improvisational and adaptive manner in '1:1'.<sup>28</sup> Traditional planning typically puts the creation of visions and plans before the physical intervention. This is to some extent proclaimed to be turned upside down. The intention is to figure it out on the way, to work iteratively. Inherently, a virtue is made out of the fact that things are tested along the way, through step-by-step interventions and engagement with whatever possibilities turn up.

This inverted planning process is due to the restrictions of uncertain time perspectives or for economic reasons, but it is certainly also an intentional approach. Visions, here understood as intentions, motives and expectations, nevertheless exist and are presented in the process, though they might be conveyed otherwise than through traditional (detailed) planning documents, and they may also be expressed in several ways. As I will explore further, visions are not only formulated on paper, they are also *done*—embedded in the actual spaces. Hence, despite the alleged processual receptiveness involved in 'figuring it out along the way', authorised temporary projects *do* induce specific agenda-changing processes—with or without comprehensive planning material. They are intended to be transformative, to re-program: to promote new uses of existing spaces, to spur engagement, to elucidate qualities and

<sup>28</sup> The expression of '1:1' is widely used in temporary projects to describe the character of prototypical on-location work, based on craftsmanship and do-it-yourself approaches. It mostly refers to small-scale interventions, an instant and quick process of implementation and contextual adaption. However, it is though also an ambiguous concept that does not say much about further relevant impacts or consequences, beyond scale, for instance, which can nonetheless be one of the important properties.



work as catalysts beyond their physical dimension, often in line with an ‘urban acupuncture’ thinking. Something is intended to be changed. This is why they are *permitted exceptions* in the first place. Characteristically, in a planning perspective temporary initiatives fluctuate between being considered as the means or as the goal (e.g. Samson 2010: 123). This factor adds further complexity: It amplifies that if planning along the way is the basic approach, that approach can be difficult to decipher when an initiative is either an instrument or a planning objective, or both—a level of complexity that plays a role in decoding aims and intentions.

*If* the intentions with the initiated temporary spaces *are* explicitly formulated in official planning documents and project proposals, which is increasingly done (due to current efforts and trend to authorise them), they still have to be enacted and translated into applicable interventions. They meet existing planning structures and need to either fit in or explicitly be put outside as exceptions and treated in customized ways. Strategic and collaborative planning is more and more formulated through flexible guiding tools that allow the incorporation of contextual and temporal dynamics (Healey 1998; Sehested 2009). Adaptable guidance instruments are thus gaining importance within planning authorities, in line with current transformation challenges. With this development, ambitions to plan in more adaptive manners may challenge or supplement classic master planning and create possibilities to work with uncertain aspects in a propositional and active mode. New types of planning processes and documents are also being developed. Authorised temporary projects are part of that development, where ‘loose visions’ (Bishop & Williams 2012: 189) are promoted. However, this does not necessarily mean a dismissal of traditional planning tools, such as conventional blueprints and proposals for large investment projects as fundamental steering goals, processed in traditional ways and demanding standard requirements.

To investigate planning initiatives that are deemed alternative or exceptional in some way, as is the case in this study, it is necessary to look into how and if these alternative doings are performed and manifested and what they lead towards. A focus on urban experiments, laboratories and test sites is prevalent in planning discourse. It highlights the importance to scrutinize what such ways of framing and labelling planning initiatives actually cover (Karvonen & Van Heur 2014).

Ultimately, the complexity of how visions are expressed and implemented in the authorised temporary urban project demands a multifaceted approach. In these envisioning steps, ‘doing by planning’ and ‘planning by doing’ are equally at play and equally entangled. Hence, it is not enough to carry out analysis of formal documents; it is necessary to engage with a multitude of actions and mediations.

### ***The everyday of the extraordinary***

This section presents the relevance of the *everyday* in my analytical and thematic meta-perspective. The everyday is, in its most simple form, characterised by ordinary activities and mundane routines—informal practices, aspects of life that, though naturally framed by societal structures and norms, are most often considered as part of an unplanned realm. However, this is not necessarily the case in the authorised temporary urban spaces I look into. As a matter of fact, it may seem odd to address these spaces through the notion of the everyday—they could be seen as being everything other than everyday, in their exceptional state. But quite a few everyday-related aspects are in fact at play in

this field, despite its out-of-the-ordinary character. These I will enlarge on here and explain what that observation implies for my case approach, in addition to the aspects mentioned in the earlier discussion of visions.

Everyday life has been a pivotal concept in social and cultural studies dealing with urban issues.<sup>29</sup> The idea is to learn from, acknowledge and reveal critical aspects of society by focussing on the everyday lived life. It may include micro-sociological studies of ordinary doings, as well as investigations of actions and practices belonging to specific niches, or sub- and counter cultures. The emphasis within everyday life studies is mostly on parts of social life that are overlooked, ignored or deliberately avoid the spotlight of inquiry.

In his influential book *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), one of Michel De Certeau's main focus areas is the urban life of 'the ordinary man' (De Certeau 1984), everyday appropriations of space and common practices, such as walking, cooking, dwelling, etc. De Certeau considers these 'ways of operating' as everyday tactical practices that are part of an 'antidiscipline' of consumer and user (De Certeau 1984: xv). Such (daily) activities create a field of agency that is not controlled by organisational power structures, though taking place within them; in tactical everyday doings manoeuvring and creative resistance take place.

As presented in the section 'Making Culture between Buildings,' the creation of urban spaces through the 'doing' activities that are a major part of temporary use initiatives challenges conceptions of the urban realm and public space as a passive recreational space. But it also challenges what can be considered to be space-shaping acts in a contemporary design and planning perspective. One might say that De Certeau's mundane and informal actions today enter the spotlight of planning agendas in a quite distinct way. Not (only) are they 'tactics of practice' (De Certeau 1984: xvii), performed by 'ordinary' people and/or part of subcultural appropriation and critical practice, but they have become part of deliberate planning initiatives and space production.

In the case discussions of this study, thinking about the role of ordinary activity in planning opens up many implications. Cooking and eating becomes special, if it happens in a specifically designed temporary outdoor space or art installation in a harbour undergoing transformation (Køge; see chapter 3). Dwelling and sleeping becomes extraordinary—if the potential for these activities is created in a customized container prototype on a large rough industrial site (Groningen; see chapter 3). And when gardening is part of a municipal program for revitalizing and freshening up a vacant site being in a political limbo, it is not simply an ordinary duty (Valby; see chapter 2).

The so-called everyday doings enter another position in these spaces—the ordinary turns extraordinary when it is part of a program to re-activate space, so to speak. It does not mean that everything is controlled and steered, however. These common doings naturally offer frameworks for engagement and an active shaping of space by a wide range of people. However, recognizing these levels of initiated mundaneness means that aside from (and because of) their engaging and inviting properties, we need to consider them as particular programmatic choices and planning intentions as well.

<sup>29</sup> The concept of everyday life has a long history in political and cultural studies, avant-garde art and critical theory (e.g. Guy Debord and the Situationists Movement, Walter Benjamin, Maurice Blanchot, Henri Lefebvre, and Michel De Certeau) as well as micro sociological studies (e.g. Pierre Bourdieu, Erwin Goffman).

The publication of the essay collection *Everyday Urbanism* (Chase, Crawford & Kaliski 2008 (1999)) marked a revived focus on the everyday in planning and design discourse, arguing for an inclusive focus on everyday life in an urban context, through a recognition of the ‘lived experience’ and ‘banal and ordinary routines’ (Crawford 2008: 6). From a constructive outlook, the contribution presents a complex and contested field. Though studies about everyday urbanism often focus on daily informal (sometimes illegal) actions from an, officially, unplanned outset, it is also a perspective that importantly, is able to go beyond and question a clear division between user’s informal daily doings and a formal planning world as separate realms. According to Margaret Crawford, ‘boundaries between local governments and citizens are often blurry. Many people occupy multiple roles, moving between identities as citizen, bureaucrat, professional, or advocate’ (Ibid.:15). This is indeed an important point to highlight in relation to the temporary use projects in my study, where the line between different players is by no means simple, both in terms of their respective roles and in terms of what can be considered planned or designed in the first place.

Ultimately, it leads towards another significant ‘everyday issue’ in temporary urban spaces as authorised planning initiatives; namely the important role of actions most often considered as non-designerly decisions—actions of both formal and informal character that are dismissed as secondary practicalities. However steered, the *permitted exceptions* come to life meandering through a maze of legal structures, policy, collaborations setups, design proposals, maintenance routines, paper work, personal relationships, contingency, improvisation and much more—but not all factors are equally recognised as shapers of space and potential frames for action. The oftentimes non-designed ‘vernacular’ character of temporary spatial interventions may be only the visible tip of an iceberg whose bulk comprises work behind the scenes.

A generous consideration of everyday doings and practices can bring together various space shaping instances and areas of responsibility. It implies an attention towards space constitutive practices that cover more than formal planning, architecture and design in a strict sense (e.g. Cuff 1991; Tonkiss 2013). Social theorist Fran Tonkiss argues for an inclusive view on design, for looking at ‘social practices and processes that shape spatial forms, relationships and outcomes in intentional as well as in less intended ways’. According to Tonkiss, this broad conception ‘includes physical designs, but also legal and policy design, the design of organizations and processes, economic strategies and various “designs for living” in the complex social environment of the city’ (Tonkiss 2013: 5). It is important to qualify and question these various areas of action, not to water down or reduce the frame of action for design, but to recognise it as being larger than often anticipated.

The authorised temporary urban spaces I am studying have a fuzzy time horizon rather than a clearly defined end. Even though ‘end dates’ are put forward, the precise consequences are unuttered. Various time perspectives depending on singular spatial elements and their materiality can coexist. Though implemented officially, the temporary urban spaces may not be part of normal official procedures from the beginning, such as ongoing maintenance and facilitation. Many ‘tasks’ have to reveal themselves first. So how does the management of something look that is not primarily thought in the light of maintenance? And what does it convey about the spaces and practices?

Additionally, when engaging practices, such as for instance collective gardening, play a fundamental

role in making the spaces work, more than a set of static architectural and aesthetic parameters, the (spatial and social) qualities depend on the regular use of that space. Such doings play a different role than a basic maintenance program managed by the authorities responsible, as happens, for example, with a classic public square possessing standard equipment.

A further particular characteristic of the projects studied is that singular events such as exhibitions, festivals, workshops, etc., are a substantial part of the programmatic and spatial setup. Series of events play an important role in creating an ongoing flow of life. Hence, preparing and 'taking down' events are repeatedly on schedule. The pace and amount of activity can thus differ enormously from day to day and from season to season.

Lefebvre argues for valuing what can be found by looking into the triviality of everyday life this way: 'Banality? Why should the study of the banal itself be banal? Are not the surreal, the extraordinary, the surprising, even the magical, also part of the real?' he says. According to Lefebvre, 'the concept of everydayness' is a way to 'reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary' (Lefebvre 1987:9). In studies of everyday aspects, diminutive attention to seemingly unimportant and ordinary things and actions is applied as a methodological move to create a productive de-familiarisation. This act of 'de-everyday-ing' (Highmore 2002: 24) a particular object of study can reveal issues that might be considered insignificant at first sight. Paying attention to things that may be taken for granted or dismissed as unimportant may shed light on issues that reach beyond the particular 'thing' or action in question, transgressing a division between micro-sociological and structural systemic aspects (Kaplan & Ross 1987; Gardiner 2000; Highmore 2002). This is a fruitful perspective for looking into how the spaces in this field actually work, beyond the first impression.

Conversely, I furthermore suggest that in my particular investigation, 'everyday-ing' the non-everyday can also result in new knowledge. We could turn the estrangement move around and ask: What is the everyday of the extraordinary? What is the everyday of something which might not be considered to have an everyday in the first place—since it is in some more or less defined way considered 'temporary', exceptional and in a testing mode? The extraordinary may become everyday, if 'everyday' is understood as requiring a certain level of routine and continuous activation, and may possibly also reach a level of mainstream that questions the exceptionality.

### ***Practice and discourse in a spatial perspective***

In this section I will briefly explain my use of the terms *practice* and *discourse* from a spatial perspective. These terms need to be addressed and understood in a specific way, to unravel what is happening in between 'the vision and the everyday' in authorised temporary urban spaces and to investigate the multiple ways intentions are expressed and spaces are made.

This study explores spaces in particular transitional stages as well as the related practices within these transitional spaces.<sup>30</sup> The notion of space as 'practiced', explored in the spatial theories of, for example, Henri Lefebvre (1991(1974)) and Michel de Certeau (1984), reflects an understanding of space, not as

<sup>30</sup> The study of practices, praxeology, is a large field. In this very short presentation my aim is solely to focus on aspects that can help clarify my specific case study approach.

a pre-existent entity, but in an active sense as created through the activities of people in their daily lives. The notion of 'material practice' (e.g. Allen 2000; Massey 2005) is another useful way to examine space-producing actions. The architect and architectural theorist Stan Allen defines material practices, among them architecture, as 'activities that transform reality by producing new objects or new organizations of matter' (Allen 2000: xviii).<sup>31</sup> These terms emphasise the agency emerging in various modes of space production. When using terms such as 'spatial practice' and 'material practice', I refer to activities that are space constitutive, supporting or changing space in a broad sense. Following the argument put forward earlier, that space-shaping acts in this field of temporary use can have multiple backgrounds, the study requires attentiveness to diverse forms of practices that affect and make space and are performed by a wide range of agents.

Discourse, considered to be a practice of reasoning and bringing through (or obstructing) certain statements of meaning, can evolve in multiple ways. If the authorised temporary urban spaces are exceptional efforts for testing and planning that entail a great deal of communication and collaboration, discursive practices are important to examine. The focus in discourse analysis is often on verbal expressions or is visually based. In this study, discourse is materially entangled, involving various forms of discursive practice, such as spoken statements, printed or digital texts and visual expressions, but to a high degree discourse is also *spatial*: actions are performed in space, and spatial settings are made. Discourse does not float around in an abstract sphere; it is made, practiced and physical.

The feminist theorist Karen Barad employs the term 'material-discursive' practices; discursive meaning and materiality constitute each other (Barad 2003).<sup>32</sup> 'The relationship between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment. Neither is articulated/articulable in the absence of the other; matter and meaning are mutually articulated', Barad says (Barad 2003: 822). According to Barad, discourse is not about what is said but rather about whatever 'constrains and enables what can be said' (Ibid.: 819). To investigate the agendas and actions in the case studies, this is a useful perspective, since reasoning in the temporary use projects is made, changed and sustained in multiple ways.

### ***Tracing and disclosure***

This short section presents how the *field situations*, the theme-based sub-units in the cases, have been generated. For that purpose, I have deployed a simple 'tracing and disclosure model', combining on-site experiences with further investigations. Though the case studies are of different character, I used this way of working in all three cases. A case-wise specification of sources, approach and insight will follow in the case presentations that follow.

Since I investigate space, and in particular space that is produced in an ongoing way, the relevance of the coming into being is implicit. However, this coming into being, the diverse related space-making practices, can be difficult to 'catch'—to pin down and clearly identify—even aspects of processes that I

<sup>31</sup> Material practice is a term often used in archaeology and art practice, but also in studies of material culture—a broad coverage of interdisciplinary studies focusing on materiality, things, and objects and how people interact with them (e.g. Appadurai et al. 1986; Miller 2005; Tilley et al. 2006; Henare et al. 2007). The field of material culture has been a clear inspiration in this study seen in combination with my architectural background.

<sup>32</sup> Barad's concept is based on a critical reading of discourse in a Foucauldian tradition.

have been actively contributing to myself.

The physical sites have been my point of departure for the case analysis. From there, the investigations have inevitably led 'off-site',<sup>33</sup> to be combined with other sources, such as formal planning documents, additional unpublished information from stakeholders and further inquiries through meetings, etc. Photographs taken on the three sites were important visual tools and catalysts for further inquiry off-site and on repeated visits. These were helpful for exploring the spaces on-site, but they were also important tools for tracing site activities and for disclosing ongoing processes. By no means an unusual tool in architectural site analysis, the photographic recordings worked as crucial intermediaries to disclose linkages between spatial appearance and processual aspects. The spatial tracking directed my attention towards what was *actually* on site and how it appeared, seen in relation to what I expected or what was emphasized in planning material, project descriptions and other media.<sup>34</sup> On repeated visits the documentation was a way to record changes in the urban settings. The intensity of use and activities differs widely in the spaces I investigated, from rainy desolated Mondays to big festival days with crowds of people. Sometimes 'nothing' happened. These situations, however, made me pay particular attention to the spaces in their non-activated states, which subsequently conveyed details about the intended use as well.

The case projects feature constellations of existing structures as well as ongoing additions and alterations. This combination is well explored and communicated through photography since it has a 'gathering effect' that is able to frame compound spatial settings and convey the ambience and specific spatial characters.<sup>35</sup> The writer and critic Susan Sontag points out that 'the force of a photograph is that it keeps open to scrutiny instants which the normal flow of time immediately replaces' (Sontag 1973: 87). Hence, the photographic recordings of spatial traces have made possible a continuous exploration—an exploration on my own and in dialogue with others. I do consider them as visual reflections on the spaces and as triggers for further inquiry. The photographs have thus been essential investigation tools throughout the study, from the first initial 'hunch' to the development of the thematic focus themes. It is obviously important not to draw conclusions merely based on these recordings as trace measures, and to infer processual backgrounds directly based on traces and vestiges from first-hand observations (Zeisel 2006). In my study the tracings have therefore served as a basis for further investigations, by questioning stakeholders (meetings and email), looking for references in documents (why is this not mentioned? how is this described?) and focusing on changes on subsequent site visits.

From a practice theory perspective, Christian Bueger, a scholar of international relations, notes that studying practice often implies a certain process of reconstruction and interpretation of activities

<sup>33</sup> *On-site* and *off-site* are recurrent terms in the thesis. They refer to actions dealing with the sites in question either performed on the physical location itself or physically detached, for example in planning offices, councils, but also in virtual forms. This is clearly a simplistic division for the purpose of unravelling factors of importance; however, on-site and off-site are often entangled, as the case discussions also reveal.

<sup>34</sup> Another useful record has been 'who is doing what on site'- sketches, which I made during meetings with stakeholders on location to collect information on who is using and maintaining specific areas.

<sup>35</sup> Sometimes too well communicable, one may say. The strength of the photographic media also encompasses critical aspects. The aesthetic of decaying structures, contrasting materials and cobbled together spaces is seductive in the spaces in transformation and this is to a great extent also what I convey visually, and thereby more or less consciously subscribe to.

(Bueger 2014). Since social practices are ‘materially and bodily anchored’, practices can be followed, traced and observed using a ‘strategy of looking down and studying up’ (Ibid.: 392) Instead of searching for systemic, big structures, if we ‘look down’ instead, it becomes possible to ‘apprehend the local and the non-coherent’ (Ibid.: 389); for instance, ‘following objects’ is possible because certain practices are often inscribed into artefacts (Ibid.: 397). Not just physical objects but also concepts and linguistic metaphors can be traced. The strategy allows the researcher to identify certain objects and to ‘trail their connection backwards and forwards in time’ (Ibid.: 398)

In the case discussions, spatial details and micro-practices are central; however, I have a larger purpose with my attention to the small things and doings. In his writings, the novelist Georges Perec, a prominent advocate for looking into ‘the everyday’, explores what he calls the ‘infra-ordinary’ (l’infra-ordinaire). The term refers to an extreme attention to habitual and everyday elements, to small details and occurrences, things normally considered of no importance. Perec calls into ‘question what seems so much a matter of course that we’ve forgotten its origins’, even ‘your teaspoons’—the ‘bricks, concrete, glass, our table manners, our utensils, our tools, the way we spend our time, our rhythms’ (Perec 2002 (1975): 178). Following this call, and referring to Bueger’s suggestion of looking down to study up, my ‘teaspoons’ and ‘table manners’ of this study are information signs, pallets, detailed maintenance routines, keys, internet cables and Facebook posts, to give some examples. These artefacts and doings may not immediately be seen as crucial in an overall strategic planning or design perspective. Nonetheless, they elucidate important aspects regarding the understanding



09.06.2014\_On Smedestræde 2 in Valby one of the temporary installations featured book exchange cabinets. Examining the content the majority of potential swop items in the boxes were, on several of my visits, books about governance and administrative law. Maybe a local citizen had a particular interest in these matters—or, these books could be a donation from the local authorities’ office? In any case, these observations directed my attention towards the management of the swop facilities on this site (see chapter 2).

and creation of authorised temporary urban spaces. My overall approach follows what the scientific theorist Svend Brinkmann calls a 'pragmatic pluralism', in the sense that the investigation combines experiential, discursive and object/material-oriented aspects (Brinkmann 2012: 34).<sup>36</sup> Brinkman's ontological triangle, which is a way to question the 'social world', consists of these three categories, or 'legs' of the triangle, any of which can be the beginning of an inquiry. As Brinkmann says, however, a rich analysis acknowledges their links and combinations (Ibid.: 35), which this study attempts to do.

<sup>36</sup> In *Qualitative Inquiry in Everyday Life* (2012), Brinkmann draws up an ontological triangle consisting of 1) a phenomenological, experiential and hermeneutic interpretative approach, 2) a discursive/interpretative and 3) an object/material-oriented leg, inspired by the 'material turn' and pragmatism (Brinkmann 2012: 34).



## THREE SITES

In the following, I will present the three case studies: the Southern Harbour in Køge, Smedestræde 2 in Valby (Copenhagen) in Denmark and the former sugar factory in Groningen in the Netherlands. While they differ spatially and typologically and in terms of their planning setups, the three sites are all locations for authorised temporary use and serve as interesting arenas for *permitted exceptions*. The descriptions elaborate on the choice of the case studies: the spatial character of the sites, their planning initiatives, actors, timeframes and main topics and challenges. Furthermore, my relationship as a researcher to the three cases will be specified. Though I am applying the same analytical approach, my role and insights differ from case to case, depending on the project setup and character, the amount of planning documents, the network of informants and the trajectory of the projects during the research period.

### **Køge: A strategic testing ground in the Southern Harbour**

#### ***Life Before the City?***

Søndre Havn, the Southern Harbour, is a harbour transformation area in the Danish town Køge, situated 40 km south of Copenhagen. Over a period of approximately 20 years (until 2030/2035), the plan is to transform the 15,2 ha sized area into a new living and working district, using the unique location, close to the water and the central city, for new purposes.

My first introduction to the harbour of Køge was as a consulting team member in an international architectural competition for the development of the harbour, held in 2010.<sup>37</sup> The team's proposal, together with a number of other entries, was selected to form the basis for the further planning process, and in 2011 the concepts submitted were transformed into the development plan for the area. One of the main ideas from our team's entry for kick-starting the development was the establishment of a cultural path through the harbour ('the red carpet') and the creation of temporary spaces as 'free zones and laboratories' (Team Vandkunsten 2010).

In the final development plan these elements are integrated into what is termed 'Phase Zero—The Life Before the City'. Phase Zero is a specific strategy and testing phase for instigating life in the area, in the period before new buildings are constructed. In this phase a path (now called 'The Thread') and a series of temporary urban spaces play a major role in drawing attention to the site. Furthermore, whatever was learned during this period is meant to be integrated in the overall new district, called 'The City for Life', into which Phase Zero (The Life Before the City) is meant to merge. In addition to a set of strategic visions and a phase divided time schedule, the development plan also features a master plan for the final district in 2030 (Køge Kyst 2011a).

After our team's submission for the competition in 2010, I maintained my interest in the development, though not as an active contributor. The project and site entered the picture again from a research perspective when I began this PhD project. Our research team (SEEDS KU team) had many discussions around experiences of the project in Køge and the spaces that appeared in the harbour during

<sup>37</sup> At that time I was working at a research centre in the School of Architecture in Copenhagen, with a focus on physical activity and body culture in relation to architecture and urban contexts. Two colleagues and I were external consultants in the competition team centred around the architectural company Vandkunsten. Other members of the team were experts on areas such as traffic, sustainability and art and culture.

the ongoing 'temporary' Phase Zero, which had begun in 2011. I chose to integrate this harbour development in my thesis, since it is an ideal arena in which to investigate authorised temporary urban spaces. The step-by-step development and implementation of the plan serves well as a basis for unpacking what these spaces 'between vision and everyday' entail. The development project, which I will describe in this section, embodies a highly planned and documented setup, where temporary use is explicitly promoted as an alternative and experimental way to create 'Life Before the City'. The project is being vigorously communicated nationally and internationally as a best practice and showcase project.

I became intrigued about *how* 'The Life Before the City' approach would actually evolve and materialise, from competition concept to several stages of iterative physical implementations, and in coherence with an already existing master plan on the table. What happens in this intentional and exceptional Phase Zero?

### ***Søndre Havn and Køge Kyst***

Improving the cohesion between the historic city of Køge and the harbour areas is a continuous aim in the reorganisation of the harbour and the adjacent sites, both to overcome actual barriers of infrastructural elements (especially the railway), as well as mental understandings of the urban fabric. The contrast between the narrow and dense historic district, with a market town buildings from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, and a harbour are possessing large industrial structures, small-scale vernacular



27.08.2015\_The inner harbour at the central harbour square. The Søndre Havn area is on the right side of the water

buildings and the opening towards the ocean, is both a quality as well as a challenge (Lamm & Wagner 2015a).

Towards the city centre the inner harbour basin forms an open corner square flanked by a row of cafés and restaurants with maritime flair. Along the quays, tall grain silos and open storage areas with piles of timber, sand and containers stretch out towards the east and the open sea. Creating the inner harbour environment, between the voluminous industrial structures and paved main roads, narrow paths and shortcuts lead past smaller office buildings and sheds surrounded by provisional fences, groups of dense greenery and cleared sites with ruderal vegetation. In the south-eastern part, the industrial harbour ends and the open meadow and beach together form a recreational zone, an area of attraction along the water. The difference in scale and the cobbled-together character of the harbour are considered to be of special architectural and historic value. Furthermore, the social life and environment in the harbour and along the waterside, where work places and recreational use co-exist, is stressed as distinct cultural heritage, possessing value that should be respected and supported (Kulturarvstyrelsen 2009).

The large-scale investment in the transformation of Køge Harbour is intended to secure a future positioning of the city in terms of the regional network and to attract new inhabitants and capital to Køge. The harbour development is steered by a consortium group, Køge Kyst, established in 2009. It is a partnership between the Municipality of Køge and the Danish philanthropic foundation Realdania's subsidiary company Realdania By & Byg. Throughout the 1990s, the first municipal plans



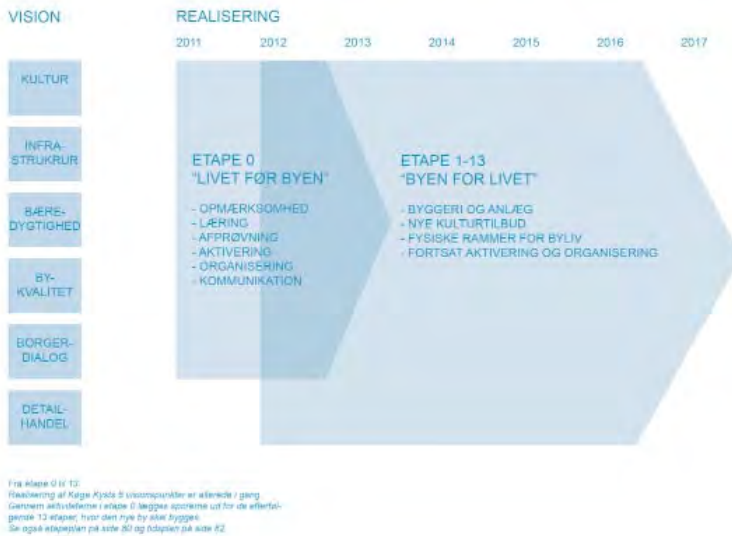
View towards Søndre Havn, 1935 (Source: Køge Arkiverne)

and decisions regarding the harbour transformation and the relocation of the active harbour industry from the southern to the northern part of the harbour were formulated. Thus, through the years, the municipality has bought up vacant properties in the Southern Harbour for the purpose of future development. Nevertheless, it took the partnership to achieve the necessary financial and structural resources to initiate the current large-scale transformation. Apart from the Southern Harbour, the planning initiative also covers an area around the nearby railway station as well as a nearby site of a former creosote company (Collstrupgrunden). Of the three areas, the Southern Harbour has been the first to be redeveloped and it is here the temporary urban spaces are located.

Køge Kyst's strategy and development plan are based on the results of the competition, initiated in 2009-2010, mentioned earlier. The interdisciplinary teams and the extensive prequalification process and competition procedure was intended to not only qualify the specific plan for physical transformation, but also to innovate the competition format, so that better strategies and collaborative processes could develop during the competition brief and the implementation that followed the competition. The resulting development plan, 'The Life Before the City—The City for Life,' contains a set of six strategic key points and focus areas, among them a specific focus on culture and urban



The development areas (Source: Køge Kyst)



^ Section of the master plan from the development plan published in 2011. It shows the Southern Harbour area fully developed (Source: Køge Kyst)

^ The diagram illustrates the phases in the development plan (Source: Køge Kyst)

life (Køge Kyst 2011a).<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, the plan contains an overall master plan to steer the physical development in 13 distinct phases. The final master plan defines the 'end' status of the area with dense building blocks, between three and seven storeys high, with a defined hierarchy of public and semi-public open spaces (Køge Kyst 2011a; Køge Municipality 2014). The layout diverges strongly from the present morphology and character of the harbour, though singular existing buildings are designated for preservation and incorporation with new public functions.

### Spaces in Phase Zero

The redevelopment has been kick-started by 'Phase Zero', or 'The Life Before the City' ('Etape 0 – Livet før Byen'). A specific focus in this stage is the implementation of a series of temporary spaces in the harbour area. The main goals are first, to attract people and have them (re)discover the harbour, and second, to test new programs and collaborative formats. Phase Zero consists of different initiatives financed through a cultural and publicity budget of 30 million Danish kroner, a fund specified for 'culture, quality and branding' (Køge Kyst 2011b: 35). The intention is to make this initial phase

<sup>38</sup> The six elements of the strategic vision are culture, retail, infrastructure, creativity and quality, citizen involvement and sustainability (Køge Kyst 2011a). These points are mentioned in the development plan, but as vision points they are described rather broadly and could fit any contemporary planning project. A separate document explains the role of Phase Zero (*Etape 0: Livet før byen 2011 and 2012*). Here, special emphasis is placed on culture and urban life, citizen involvement and sustainability (Køge Kyst 2011b: 5).



The latest version of The Thread in 2016 (Source: Køge Kyst)

operational through the creation of physical spaces, collaborative networks, and cultural activities (Køge Kyst 2011b). A strong emphasis on cultural ripening, storytelling and branding is evident, both through physical spaces as well as through a dense program of related activities and events.

This part of the development is also based on a cultural strategy initiated by the Department of Culture in 2008, which acknowledged the coming redevelopment and instituted a specific focus on the integration of culture as a leading element in the urban planning process. To frame the specific focus not only on culture in a broad sense, but also on art in the urban development process particularly, a long-term focussed art strategy was put forward in 2014, emphasizing values such as site specificity and collaborative processes (Køge Kyst 2014).

The new spaces in the harbour are organised along 'The Thread' ('Tråden'), a cultural and recreational route through the harbour area that is still partly active. On the project map, the red line of The Thread connects the temporary urban spaces and 'attractions' on a route between the central city and the beach. Spatially, it is marked as a more compound patchwork path covered with gravel or chopped bark or marked on the pavement, following existing roads and the line of the old railway tracks into the harbour area, supported by signs and info panels as guidance. Along the path, the temporary urban spaces are inserted on vacant lots and open spaces between the existing harbour structures: 'The Space of Time' (Tidsrummet), 'The Discovery' (Opdagelsen), 'The Urban Forest' (Byskoven), 'The View' (Udsigten) and 'Enjoy the Corner' (Nyd hjørnet) are the five main spots, which have been in continuous



06.08.2015\_The Space of Time - The map covers a circular square and the poles on the edge display information

development since 2011.<sup>39</sup> The Space of Time marks the part of the route that enters the southern part of the harbour. The space on the corner plot was established in its first version in 2011, with art works, benches, plant beds and a shipping container. In 2014, a new extended design was inaugurated. One part consists of a small square with a big on-ground map displaying the 'finished' master plan for the district in 2030, surrounded by circular positioned info panels. Next to the map, the initial installations from 2011 have been replaced with a maritime-themed playground featuring a square play installation with hanging buoys, a boat, flags, climbing wall, seating and swings. Further down the path, The Discovery is the biggest of the temporary urban spaces, at almost 3000 m<sup>2</sup>, slightly elevated from the surroundings and covered with clean soil, bark and sand. It was initially used for art installations in 2011 and 2012, but has been further developed in 2013. It now features a large urban gardening area, an outdoor kitchen, beehives, a pile of boulders for playing on and a group of vertical pine poles with hammocks—the transformed remainders of a 2012 art installation. A bit further down Søndre Molevej, the road serving the inner part of the Southern Harbour, The Urban Forest is situated on the other side of the street. Encapsulated between silos, a dirt jump track is the main attraction, next to planted rows of young trees with a wooden pathway, seating, a climbing installation and beehives. The next space, Enjoy the Corner, in front of the activity house called 'The Yellow House' ('Det

<sup>39</sup> According to the Køge Kyst project office, the names reflect the specific program and qualities of the sites (See also chapter 3). Another space was established in early 2016. 'The Spot' (Pletten) is a circular paved dancing square. My main focus is on The Thread as a whole and the spaces The Space of Time, The Discovery and The View.



06.08.2015\_Maritime playground at The Space of Time





⤴ 06.08.2015\_The Thread leading from The Space of Time towards east to The Discovery

⤴ 06.08.2015\_ The Discovery



^ 13.09.2013\_ Hammocks at The Discovery  
^ > 27.08.2015\_ The Urban Forest and the dirt jumb court





11.09.2013\_The ground is poisonous from UrbanPlay (2012), an art installation by Rebar Group (US) was a raised walkway on the polluted ground where visitors could cast grain from the nearby silos to start the remediation. This area is now The Urban Forest.

Gule Hus') is equipped with a 'take-out library' (via QR code), seating and grill stations, a water basin for model ships, a parkour training installation and an artist wagon.<sup>40</sup> The last space, The View, marks the eastern edge of the trail, ending at the beach. Here, a container forms the main feature, surrounded by a wooden terrace, seating and barbecue equipment and a staircase leading to a raised terrace on the roof of the container. The container holds a mobile kitchen, also an installation developed for the 2012 exhibition. A wireless music system makes it possible to play music via Bluetooth on The View. As part of the specific focus on art as an important player in urban development, open air art exhibitions have taken place along the cultural trail each year since 2009-10, when the first planning activities were launched.<sup>41</sup> As mentioned above, some of these early art installations have been the starting point for the temporary urban space layouts and have been integrated beyond the actual exhibition period. Others are still to be found as individual artworks in their original form, on fences, walls and corners near the path, and others again have been taken down due to their nature/materiality or because construction projects have taken up the space. The open-air exhibitions thus form an

<sup>40</sup> Enjoy the corner is situated slightly separated from the other spaces along The Thread, as a front area for the activity centre. It will not be drawn into the discussions.

<sup>41</sup> The major exhibitions and art initiatives were: *Kurs: Havnen* (2009/2010), *Write4Gold Scandinavia* (2011), *Walk this Way* (2011), *Nyd Kanten* (2011), *Urban Play* (2012), *MurHækHegn* (2013), *Open Wire* (2014) and *Follies & Faces* (2015). The exhibitions have mainly been organised in collaboration between Køge Kyst and the Køge-based museum for art in public space, KØS. *Urban Play* (2012) was curated by curator Charlotte Bagger Brandt and landscape architect Bettina Lamm.



13.09.2013\_A framed view at The View



27.08.2015\_ Celebration at The View during the annual Southern Harbour Day

important layer in terms of the spatial articulation of the area as well as publicity. Further layers of artwork that stage a line of connection through the harbour include several light installations, creating 'poetic light settings'<sup>42</sup> on the industrial harbour structures, and a series of concrete steles providing information about the harbours history, current use and future plans.

Køge Kyst characterises the five urban spaces in the harbour area as 'temporary urban spaces' ('midlertidige byrum'). In the Køge Kyst master plan the development of the harbour is divided into seven Aphases and the majority of the temporary urban spaces are placed on plots that are designated for the latest phase of construction of new buildings, around the year 2030. Their state as 'temporary' is relatively broadly defined: No final 'end date' is announced, and their designation as temporary urban spaces refers more to a level of experimentation and certain intentions about the future translation of their programmatic content. These spaces are considered 'part of a constant changing learning and experience process in relation to the development of the permanent' (Realdania By 2013: 46) and are 'linked to the finished city out in the future' (Jes Møller in Realdania By 2011: 50).

The Thread passes an intergenerational activity house, Gule Hus ('The Yellow House'), and is close to Tapperiet, a youth culture house. The organisations and their functions are involved in development and use of the open spaces, as are other local associations active in the harbour and the city. Further local actors such as sports groups and the maritime associations and in the case of most exhibitions,

<sup>42</sup> Description of the 'light of The Thread' on <http://koegekyst.dk/kultur-og-byliv/kulturruten-traaden>



27.08.2015\_Seashell House by Randi & Katrine (*Follies & faces*, 2015) nested in between silos

KØS (The Museum for Art in Public Space) are involved. Integrating user-driven initiatives and targeting associations and organisations as well as individuals are put forward as main agendas in the Køge Kyst strategy (Realdania By 2013).

The five urban spaces have been partly re-programmed and new elements have been added over time, but the basic designs are drawn and designed by a team of landscape architects, other professionals and local users. The management of the physical spaces, the coordination of the collaborative networks and the high amount of events all demand intensive facilitation and maintenance. Thus daily management and planning is steered by the Køge Kyst secretariat from their office in the harbour with project managers employed specifically to be responsible for the ongoing 'urban life activation'.

The appearance of all these spaces reflects their status as bridging a temporary nature and a partly long-term perspective due to the long redevelopment process. Many of the main elements are constructed with solid materials and techniques, beyond 'the pallet stage', such as the outdoor kitchen for instance. Other elements have a shorter 'expiration date' and need to be replaced or fixed, such as the hammocks on The Discovery, the buoys placed on The Space of Time or the info panels that need regular updates. The span from elements of an ephemeral nature to others of more long-lasting quality is a conscious strategy of Phase Zero's 'changeability and temporary state' (Køge Kyst 2011b: 9), intended to initiate 'unfinished finished' structures that can be further developed (Køge Kyst 2011a: 19). This span of materiality, form and sizes—stainless steel frames, shipping containers, neon-coloured plastic buoys, raw timber, woven hammocks, strawberry plants and fragile artwork made of seashells—contributes to the character of the area, an eclecticism within a setting of harbour industry. The Thread and the spots along it are public spaces and are freely accessible. Nevertheless, they are situated next to active harbour businesses along the southern quay and adjacent company plots around Søndre Molevej, the road going through the middle of the southern harbour area. These harbour industries have their own security systems and restricted access rules, made clear by warning signs at intersections and entrance areas. The cultural path that seems to be taking an excursion in this 'foreign' domain of the active harbour industry is thus a kind of accessible buffer-line within a distinctive, scenic setting, where hammocks, art and harbour industry meet.

### ***Urban Life calendar and PR***

The urban spaces and installations are closely linked to the event part of the Køge Kyst strategy. A yearly urban life calendar and a 'Køge Kyst Urban Life' Facebook profile (Køge Kyst Byliv) display a wide range of activities for local citizens, institutions and other visitors. The events mostly occur in the temporary urban spots or in the nearby open areas, such as the beach or the central harbour square. The program of events include the yearly harbour day, Søndre Havnedag, talks on the Køge Kyst development project, cooking workshops and themed-based guided walks to art performances and parkour training in the harbour. The year-round program and the many images on digital platforms and print material featuring the urban life ambience, events and spaces in the harbour are all part of a conscious focus on promotion and communication to attract attention (Realdania By 2013). Furthermore, Køge Kyst is part of a range of considerably founded showcase projects established in partnership with municipalities and private foundations such as Realdania. More than local improvements, these projects are explicitly used as examples, to support and explore alternative planning



modes in primarily Danish context, illustrations of best practice cases in the planning discourse. In this fashion, the Køge Kyst initiative has been widely communicated. Information about Køge Kyst as a whole, as well as the ‘temporary’ initiatives, are intensively published by the consortium itself through Realdania By & Byg’s communication channels. Several reports and planning recommendation guides highlight the project next to other initiatives supported by Realdania.<sup>43</sup>

### **Focus and insight**

My focus in this study is on the appearance and use of the spaces along The Thread, in particular in the later stages of Phase Zero. According to the development plan, Phase Zero was scheduled to begin in 2011 and was then to overlap into the next set of phases in 2014, when site preparation and local development plans would set the stage for the beginning of the first larger construction works in 2015. This period requires a rethinking of how the cultural program and the temporary spaces are to meet the new construction projects and coming (spatial) organisations. In addition to the cultural trail and the temporary urban spaces, another specific concept from the 2010 competition is integral to the understanding of the Phase Zero and its role. In the project competition, Team SLA proposed green open areas, named ‘The Commons’ (Almindingerne), to connect and activate the areas in between the

<sup>43</sup> E.g. *Midlertidige aktiviteter i byudvikling* / ‘Temporary activities in urban development’ (2013), *Ny inspiration til byudvikling* / ‘New inspiration for urban development’ (2015). Furthermore, Køge Kyst is published in official national documents and reports (e.g. *The Danish Architectural Policy* from 2014).



Publications by Realdania featuring the Køge Kyst project with a focus on strategic implementation of temporary use in urban planning (Source: Realdania)

housing schemes to come. In the final master plan The Commons have been developed into a main guiding concept for the open spaces. In the 'phase out' of Phase Zero, anything learned from the Thread and the temporary urban spaces are intended to merge into the new structure of The Commons.

The first reason I felt compelled to explore the harbour transformation in Køge, and the spaces along the cultural path in Sønder Havn specifically, was the richness of material and the documentation of ongoing spatial changes, which were suitable for my research focus. The Southern Harbour is a fertile ground for a discussion of the relation between the planning strategies and the actual changes made to the location under the heading of temporary use, in this case during a so-called Phase Zero. Since the development has been going on for some years it is actually possible to relate planning ambitions with outcomes. The actual steps of transformation expose overlaps and gaps in readings of historic aspects, in present use and in future expectations, all of which were relevant to investigate. Furthermore, the transformation entering stages of further consolidation seemed important to explore, because these stages are most often immensely complex in the way they incorporate (or dismiss) ongoing iterations in urban redevelopment. I wondered, what happens in The Life Before the City (the 'temporary' Phase Zero), and how does it meet The City for Life (the 'coming and final' city) – how do they relate? These two planning modes are on the one hand divided; Phase Zero is a *permitted exception* from 'normal' city making. On the other hand, the overlap of these phases is also explicitly emphasised.<sup>44</sup> How do these

<sup>44</sup> In their publications Køge Kyst and Realdania By describe Phase Zero as an integrated part of an ever-evolving city and not a temporary pre-step. However they also refer to a final and permanent city as an end result (e.g. Realdania By 2013).



Section of the master plan from the development plan published in 2011. It illustrates open public spaces and the green structure of The Commons (Source: Køge Kyst)

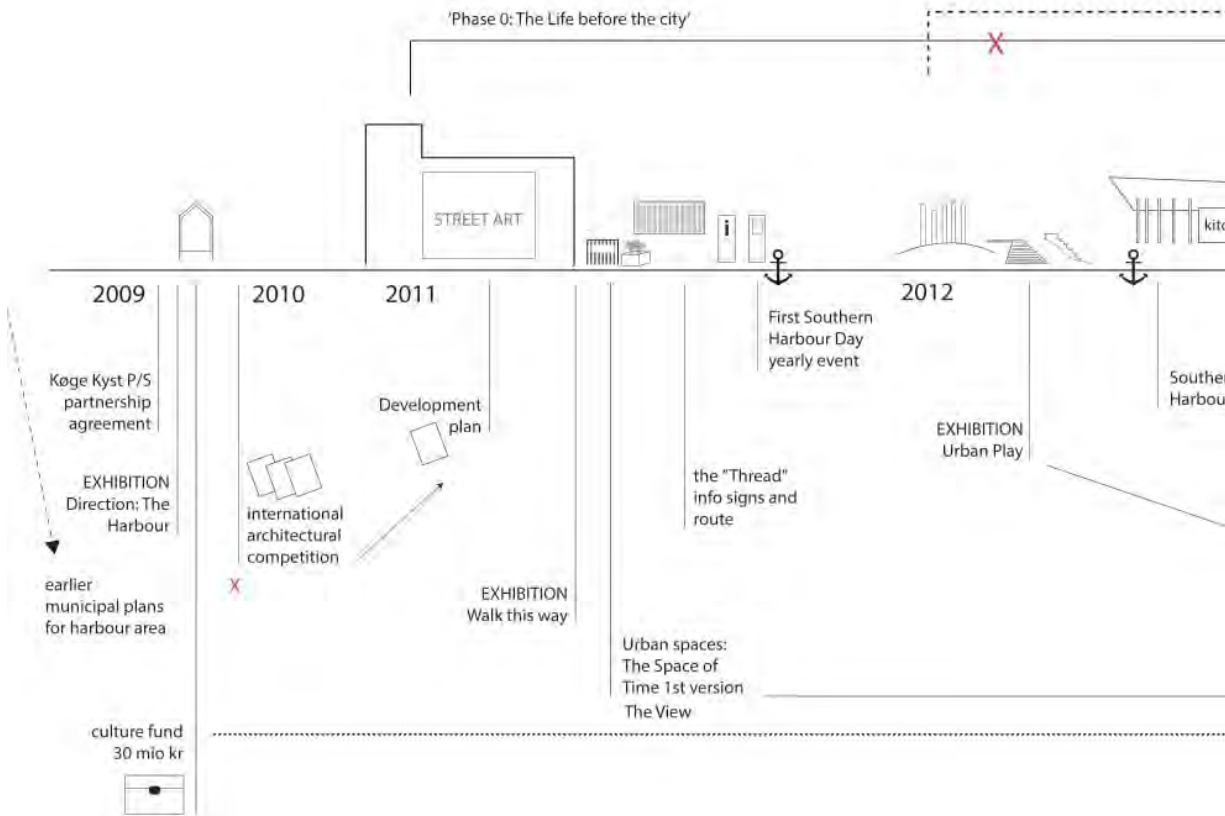
overlaps manifest themselves, not only on a process diagram but spatially? As a 'display window and testing ground' (Realdania By 2013: 9), the harbour, both spatially and temporally, is in an intentional experimental condition and the site as an urban laboratory is highly emphasised. However, it is also an exceptionally directed process. A factor which might not be strange if we talk about an 'experiment' and a laboratory, but nonetheless, this steering is most often not what temporary use projects embody in a planning context.

In recent years the planning initiative in the harbour of Køge has been communicated and discussed a great deal in the Danish planning context. The project exemplifies a current trend, in its widely broadcast communication, as a best-practice planning approach (especially in the range of publications mentioned earlier), and as a specific example of planning transitions from 'welfare planning to cultural urban development' (Bruun Jensen et al. 2008). Furthermore, academic discussions reveal the emergence of new types of public spaces (Lamm et al. 2014) as well as critiques of art and participation in planning contexts (e.g. Fabian & Samson 2015). My goal is to move closer into the actual spatial complexity that arises when 'temporary activities' are not only activities, but occur as and together with spatial imprints and practices that are ongoing intermingled and superimposed and related to further planning and intentions.

In the late part of Phase Zero, The Thread meanders through the areas of the harbour that are still active, between silos, warehouses, lumber piles, cargo loading trucks, smaller office buildings and club houses, thereby creating an intriguing and fascinating spatial mix and scenery together with the new 'urban hotspots'. The gradual development and refinement, but also the gradual phase-out, of Phase Zero is a transitional period, where both quirky art exhibition maps as well as flyers with shiny ocean view penthouse renderings are to be found in the plastic displays and posters on the path through the harbour. Here, the past, present and specific ideas of the future actually meet on site; a point that opens up more fruitful discussions about transformation processes. This intermingling of aspects gains further complexity because Køge Kyst has multiple meanings. The project brand, the planning concept, the organisational structure and the physical location engage in a multitude of relationships—all under one name.

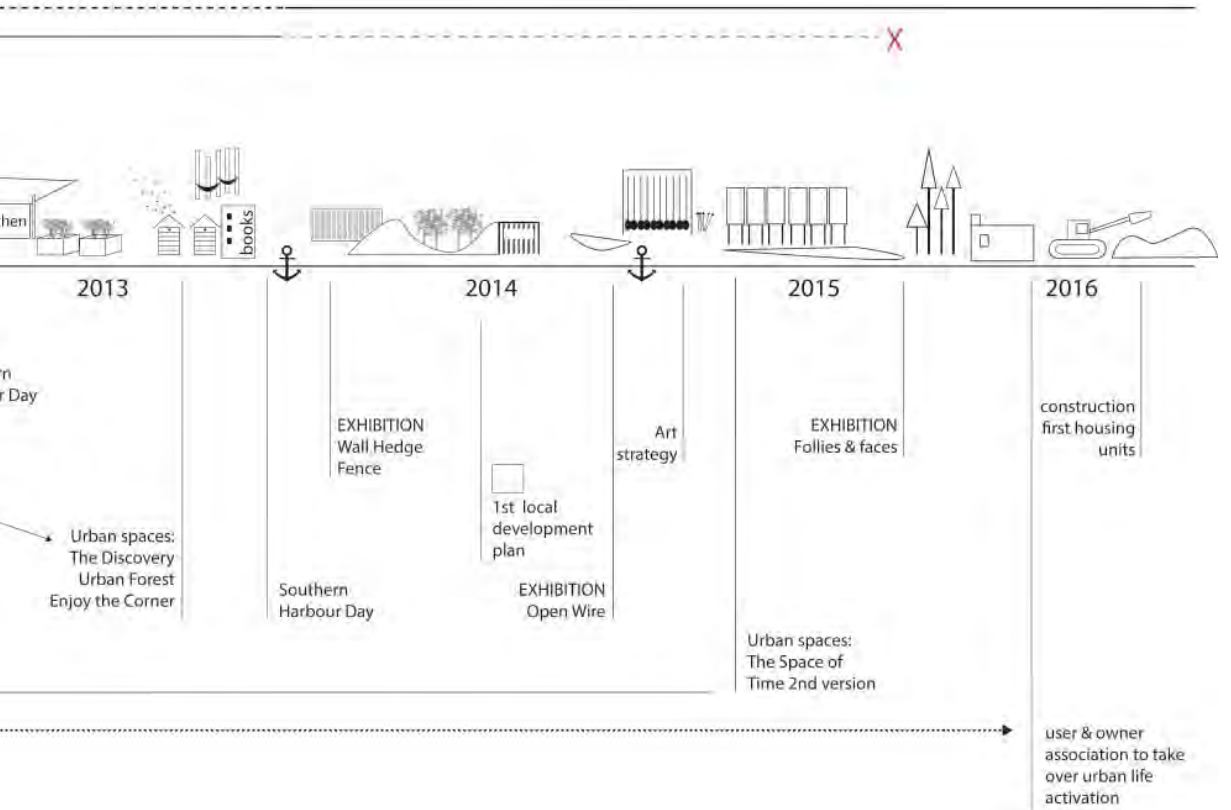
My study of the Køge case is based on site visits (approximately 10) during the period from autumn 2012 to summer 2015. My visits to the harbour area were made not only during events such as the annual Southern Harbour Day and exhibition openings, but also on random days, so as to capture and experience both extraordinary and everyday situations (this is the case for all three sites). Documents specifically provided to me by the organisations in charge (e.g. by-laws, contracts and site drawings) as well as freely accessible material about Køge Kyst specifically and Realdania's approaches in general formed the basis for the document analysis.<sup>45</sup> After having identified tentative themes, I pursued these themes further through semi-structured go-along interviews and meetings with involved project managers as well as follow-up inquiries via email. The final analysis of the spatial iterations in the Southern Harbour combines experiences from the site visits, the follow-up inquiries and the analysis of the planning and communication material.

<sup>45</sup> As a 'resource person', I have myself contributed to one of Realdania's publications, with a focus on temporary use in urban development (Realdania 2013).



Development initiatives and events. The cross indicates my research period.

'Phase 1-13: The City for Life'



## Valby: Smedestræde 2 - Actions in a planning limbo

### *Learnings from a site's uncertain journey*

Making a temporary pavilion on Smedestræde 2 in Valby has taught me less about the design or construction of a good pavilion than about the life of temporary installations on a site proceeding along a somewhat bumpy trajectory and with a complex set of agendas. The site became part of my case portfolio as one of the local SEEDS pilots. The rather small vacant plot, owned by the Copenhagen Municipality, was a focus area for the local committee of the district,<sup>46</sup> one of our research team's partners in the SEEDS network. In Copenhagen our research team<sup>47</sup> worked together with three local committees and one area renewal office in Copenhagen that were all interested in exploring possibilities of particular 'troubled sites' through temporary use. The cooperation included regular meetings and workshops with the project managers and other stakeholders, as well as concrete collaboration

<sup>46</sup> Copenhagen has 12 so-called local committees. The local committee is the connecting link between the citizens of the district and the city council, the economic administration and all other administrative departments regarding issues of specific relevance for the district (CPH Municipality 2007). The committee is a municipal unit but also an independent local agent. It consists of representatives of local associations and representatives from the political parties in the Copenhagen City Council. The committee can have an advisory role or a limited decision-making authority in specific cases. The organisation is obliged to secure dialogue with the citizens during public comment periods and connect and coordinate the municipal activities in the district.

<sup>47</sup> Our research team involved in SEEDS and in the Valby collaboration was formed by Associate Professor Bettina Lamm, research assistants Kristian Skaarup (2013), Anaïs Lora (2014) and me. In the case discussions I refer to this group as 'the research team' or the SEEDS KU team.



29.08.2013\_The Valby Pavilion in construction in August 2013

on the development of the three sites in question, through construction of temporary installations. In Valby, we engaged in Smedestræde 2, due to a mutual ambition to start a dialogue about the vacant site's possible future(s). This dialogue was initiated by a series of installations to draw attention to the site and as a first framework for the local committee to facilitate new use of the site on temporary basis. The committee was interested in re-locating the local library on this plot and this idea could potentially be tested through temporary use of the site.

Initially a simple plan, this endeavour turned out to be much more complex than expected. Specific site conditions and various agendas revealed themselves during the re-activation of Smedestræde 2, which I will sketch out in this chapter and elaborate on in the case discussion chapters. Most importantly, the site was not only vacant, it was on hold under very particular conditions, reserved by the municipality for the potential move of the library, while the decisions regarding these plans were in process. The state of the site being on hold created the potential for temporary use and was also the reason establishing temporary use was a complex undertaking.

Of particular interest is the use of the site while it waits, a waiting caused by the reservation of the plot, and what happens during this *permitted exception* of temporary use. The conditions created a distinct spatial and temporal arena for planning agendas, decision making and spatial practices. The case also adds further nuances to the notion of the 'authorisation' of temporary use. Whereas ownership and redevelopment in Køge is steered by a consortium, in which the municipality is one of two partners, the site in Valby is owned and managed wholly by the municipality. However, the Valby



14.05.2016\_Almost three years later the temporary pavilion is a stage for TH Bar.

case illustrates how ‘the authorities’ are far from one coherent organisation, but comprise different units that follow different rationale.

### ***Smedestræde 2***

Smedestræde 2 is situated in central Valby, Copenhagen, and is part of the district’s historic village structure, called Old Valby (Toft Jensen 1994), characterised by winding narrow cobblestone streets, small-scale yellow houses and hidden backyards. The urban layout of this part of Valby still carries much of the former village ambience. The district’s location ‘on the other side of the Valby hill’, west of central Copenhagen, the neighbouring large green areas, cemeteries and parks as well as industrial sites and railway tracks enclosing it, spatially enhance its unique position as an independent locality. Nevertheless, Valby is not a suburb; it has been a district of Copenhagen since 1901. Furthermore, recent and ongoing redevelopments of the surrounding areas, such as the transformation of the former Carlsberg brewery site (Carlsberg Byen), other industrial heritage sites such as the FL Smith Company ground and the big area of the former vegetable market (Grønttorvet) are changing Valby’s relationship to other parts of Copenhagen and the neighbouring municipality of Frederiksberg.

Smedestræde 2 is located on the corner of Smedestræde and Valby Langgade, one of the main streets in Valby. The area is characterised by a blend of smaller shops and businesses as well as cultural and public functions, supermarkets, a shopping centre, housing and industry. A couple of higher building blocks from the 1960s and 1970s witness that plans of further urban density made their move on the old village through the years, resulting in a contrasting mix of structures. Plans for large clearances and development projects in Old Valby were given up, which both secured traces of area’s historic structures but also put singular plots on hold for long time (Toft Jensen 1994).

As is typical for plots of former small-scale enterprises and industry, the plot at Smedestræde 2 itself consists of a bricolage of smaller and bigger building structures, a paved backyard and a gravelled lot in front. The area is just under 2000 m<sup>2</sup> in total and five buildings, one from 1898 and four from 1948, fill up most of the area. A residential unit which has been used for offices follows the line of Smedestræde. Next to it a small two-storey store with a shopfront stands in the centre of the plot and in the backyard large storage and production workshop buildings, sheds and extensions create a backdrop.

The site is owned by the Municipality of Copenhagen but has for several years been rented out to clubs and private businesses, mainly car dealers who used the front area to display cars and the shop building and buildings in the back for their office and workshop. Through the years most parts of the building structures, especially the workshops in the backyard, have deteriorated due to lack of use, which has resulted in severe water damage and vandalism.

The location, just at the curve of Smedestræde, provides a unique view down the street with its characteristic morphology of yellow houses and triangular roof gables—a gateway for experiencing the historic village ambience. The setback of the plot creates a certain intimacy despite its direct connection to the bustling life on Valby Langgade. The size and layout of the front area of the site, resembling the front yard of single-family house, underlines this intimacy and secretiveness. Surrounding hedges and wooden fences, partly overgrown with twining plants, elder bushes and birch



trees, and the grass covered gravel surface, all increase the 'forgotten' garden character and feeling of wilderness appearing to 'take over' from the tumble-down back yard.

### ***From cars to culture***

Smedestræde 2, in the middle of the bustling district centre, is an extremely attractive location in Valby. However, the site has lain stagnant for a long time. Intended to be incorporated in urban redevelopment plans through the years, actually releasing it from its dormant, waiting state proved difficult. Hosting a line of cars in the 'front yard', for sale signs, contentious discussions about decaying buildings and plans about a potential public use seem to have been the fate of this corner plot for a long period. The site and its use have developed into a local and political 'hot potato' and discussions about the attractive location have been featured in numerous issues of the local newspaper *Valbybladet*. Articles and readers' letters from the 1970s until now document ongoing controversies about the site being constantly on hold and awaiting future plans and about the street's deteriorating state in general, with local voices arguing for a public use of Smedestræde 2 specifically.

In 2012 Autospar, one of several car dealerships that have been renting the plot, left the premises and the municipality put the plot up for sale. Plans for a supermarket and apartments came on the drawing board. The Valby Local Committee objected. As a connecting organisation between the city hall and the local area, the committee considered this site's 'for sale' status as a chance to express their ambition to use the space for a new cultural institution and to secure and develop its advan-



20.12.2012\_ To the left the former residential building which has been defined as worthy of preservation and to the right the former car dealer shop.



08.07.2013\_The front area of the site and the hedge facing the side walk of Valby Langgade



14.05.2016\_Fluorescent tube taken over by twining plant after years of not being in use

tageous location in Valby. The local committee asked the lord mayor of Copenhagen to reconsider the sale of this municipal property and to support an alternative use, based on local and municipal needs for public facilities. Specifically, they highlighted the demand for a new multifunctional cultural institution that would be able to create a better setting for the local library and theatre functions, which needed updated facilities. The committee argued that the existing library needed more and better spaces and the theatre and concert venue (*Prøvehallen*) was not adequate and did not fit with the sports activities taking place in the same building. *Smedestræde 2* could be a suitable location for gathering these cultural functions while at the same time supporting new synergistic effects and urban life on Valby Langgade (Valby Lokaludvalg 2013). Sketches for a project proposal were already in the making, initiated by the committee.

In autumn 2012 the case was debated back and forth in the City Council and Administration, with the lord mayor and the mayor of culture and leisure discussing the site and budget priorities. By the end of 2012 the sale was put on hold and the Culture and Leisure Administration was to investigate the possibility of a culture and library facility on *Smedestræde 2*.

In the beginning of 2013 the local committee initiated an online-based user involvement process (*Valbys Valg*) and a citizen meeting, looking at different location options and alternatives for a new cultural facility. The outcome supported the project proposal for a new institution on *Smedestræde* put forward by the committee. The committee further suggested temporary activities on site to 'test the new library on the plot' (Copenhagen University/SEEDS Valby 2013) until the new project would

be confirmed in the municipal budget negotiations. To be able to secure the site for that period, the council agreed to pay a so-called 'reservation rent', which would make it possible to continue to put the sale of the property on hold, during the further clarification process and until the next municipal budget negotiations. Concomitantly an architecture office was engaged to produce a new extended draft for a library and culture centre on the site.

***The Valby Pavilion—temporary frames for dialogue***

The Valby Local Committee received an official permit to use the plot temporarily while awaiting the outcome of the political and economic decisions. But how could the site become activated and re-used in an unknown but limited timeframe? Initial ideas about reusing the existing buildings for small businesses or just for backing up potential outdoor initiatives with storage, water and electricity proved difficult to put into practice, and after some initial attempts, the local committee and the Culture & Leisure Department abandoned that idea. Due to security and the state of the building structures, they estimated that potential expenditures for renovation would be too high. Also, the specific condition of reservation rent made it impossible to rent out the buildings for a favourable price. Furthermore, such reuse was not considered a main priority of the municipality, since the latest drawings for the future library and culture house did not incorporate the existing buildings. Temporary use of parts other than the 'front yard' was not considered advantageous for reaching the goal of the library and culture project. In terms of initiating temporary cultural activities, the local committee's



28.08.2013\_No car sign—but what then?



⌘ Volkswagen business on Smedestræde 2/Valby Langgade 54 in 1965 (Source: Valby Lokalhistoriske Selskab & Arkiv)

⌘ Car dealer on site in 2002 (Source: Valby Lokalhistoriske Selskab & Arkiv, photo: Hans Otto Lindgreen)

focus was therefore on the open area facing Valby Langgade.

Through the collaboration in the SEEDS pilot network, the local committee and the KU SEEDS team set out to prepare a first 'opener' and activation framework for the site during summer 2013. The installations were designed and built by our research team and financed through the local committee's budget. The Valby Pavilion that our research team built together with a group from the Copenhagen Technical School was a simple wooden structure. On a wooden fence, the eastern demarcation of the plot, we also placed a blackboard, an adapted version of the open source project 'Before I Die' by the American artist Candy Chang (<http://beforeidie.cc>) here, featuring the heading 'In Valby I dream about...'. We mounted a new sign above the sidewalk to replace the former business and for sale signs, and to signal the new status of the area as an open, accessible public space. Our intention was to create a meeting place and to support an open, but facilitated dialogue about the site on the physical site. The local committee arranged for entrances to be cut into the surrounding hedge, litter was removed from the ground and the gate was opened. It was now an official public square in Valby. This new setting was inaugurated and celebrated in summer 2013 during the annual Valby Culture Days.

### ***Postponed decisions and prolonged installations***

For the rest of the year of 2013, the committee arranged a few events in the pavilion and the blackboard was quickly filled with comments—but the future of the site was still unclear. In 2014 a special fund for temporary activities on site was granted by the municipality and was to be administrated by the



09.06.2014\_The site seen from Valby Langgade in early summer 2014



20.09.2013\_The chalkboard on the wooden fence featuring 'In Valby I dream about...'

local committee. The call for projects sought initiatives that 'relate to the coming library and theatre function, focus on green and sustainable solutions or support new communities in the district' (Valby Local Committee website June 2014).

During 2014 a wide range of activities, such as debates (on culture and sustainability), food workshops and theatre and dance performances took place in and around the pavilion on Smedestræde 2. A couple of additional elements joined the pavilion and blackboard, financed by the 'temporary fund': Plant boxes, pallet benches and a plant seed library cabinet were placed on site and book exchange boxes were attached to the pavilion. A self-service recycle and barter station was 'adopted' from another project and moved to the site from a nearby square. The events were arranged by the local committee together with local cultural organisations (e.g. Kultur Valby, Sharing Copenhagen). The additional furniture and elements, partly commissioned by the local committee, were designed and built by young Copenhagen-based businesses working primarily with temporary co-creation projects (Creative Roots, OAN, TagTomat).

Still, the multifunctional cultural institution was high on the agenda, the first item in the local 'Culture Strategy 2014–2018' (Valby Lokaludvalg 2014). The hope was that politicians would make a decision about the site's future during budget negotiations in autumn 2014. This did not happen. Further plans for the cultural institution were postponed once again in late 2014. It was decided to keep the plot and to set aside financial means for the reservation rent for another year and to assign money for the demolition of the most dilapidated sections on Smedestræde 2. This also meant that temporary



∧ 09.06.2014\_ In 2014 further plant boxes and pallet benches, the barter station and a mural painting were added to the site  
^ 09.06.2014\_ The barter station between the 'front yard' and 'back yard' of Smedestræde 2





09.06.2014\_The garden corner with the plant seeds exchange station

exploration on the site would be possible for one more year. The budget agreement further stated that a final decision about Smedestræde 2's future had to be made in 2016 at the latest (Københavns Kommune 2015f: 28).<sup>48</sup> The site's special status continued. Another round of reservation rent was paid and a few activities took place in 2015, although at a somewhat slower pace. The process began to become tiresome for the local authorities and our team's engagement had officially ended. Any further activation of the site was losing momentum because of the long-drawn out process.

In early summer 2015 a pop-up bar gained permission to locate on the site throughout the summer season. Slowly, and unexpectedly, a popular hang-out place developed in the open area in front of the decaying buildings with their bolted doors and windows. The bright red container bar inhabiting the front yard with its 'Biergarten-benches', additional pallet furniture and green sunshades was quickly appropriated by the locals, who began to ask the bar owner about the plans for the site. Ultimately, the future of the site was still undetermined. Budget meetings in the municipality in late 2015 did not result in any final decision. For the third year in a row, the site's uncertain state was extended and Smedestræde 2's future use remained open to negotiation. In spring 2016 the council finally took a decision: A cultural facility was not going to be built on Smedestræde 2, but maybe a housing project would be, was the message.

<sup>48</sup> Et København med plads til alle - Budget 2015 ([www.kk.dk/files/det-samlede-faktaarkpdf/download](http://www.kk.dk/files/det-samlede-faktaarkpdf/download))



09.06.2014\_Nima, the owner of TH Bar and guests at the 'container counter'.

### ***Focus and insight***

The study engages with the use of the site and the decision-making process during the waiting period of almost three years' duration. This study focusses on the use of the site between summer 2013 and autumn 2015. The developments around the final decision of spring 2016 will enter some parts of the discussion.

The investigation treats the role of the temporary spatial elements as initial catalysts relative to the accompanying agendas and visions for the site. The journey of this single plot is encapsulated in diverse agendas: overarching municipal strategies, district plans, agendas of the municipal sub-organisations as well as various other local and individual motives and desires. Over time the installations are used and appropriated in unexpected ways. They also play an important role in the debate about the future. This discourse will be followed and related to the initial intentions of temporary activation. On Smedestræde the temporary installations have been prolonged continuously. Their uncertain life and the 'face of the everyday', become visible and inevitable through the extended lifetime. The uncertainty provokes and makes tangible challenges and practices not known beforehand in terms of facilitation and maintenance. These aspects also reveal nuances about the expectations for this temporary urban space, as a local gathering and activity place. This will be another focal point in this case study.

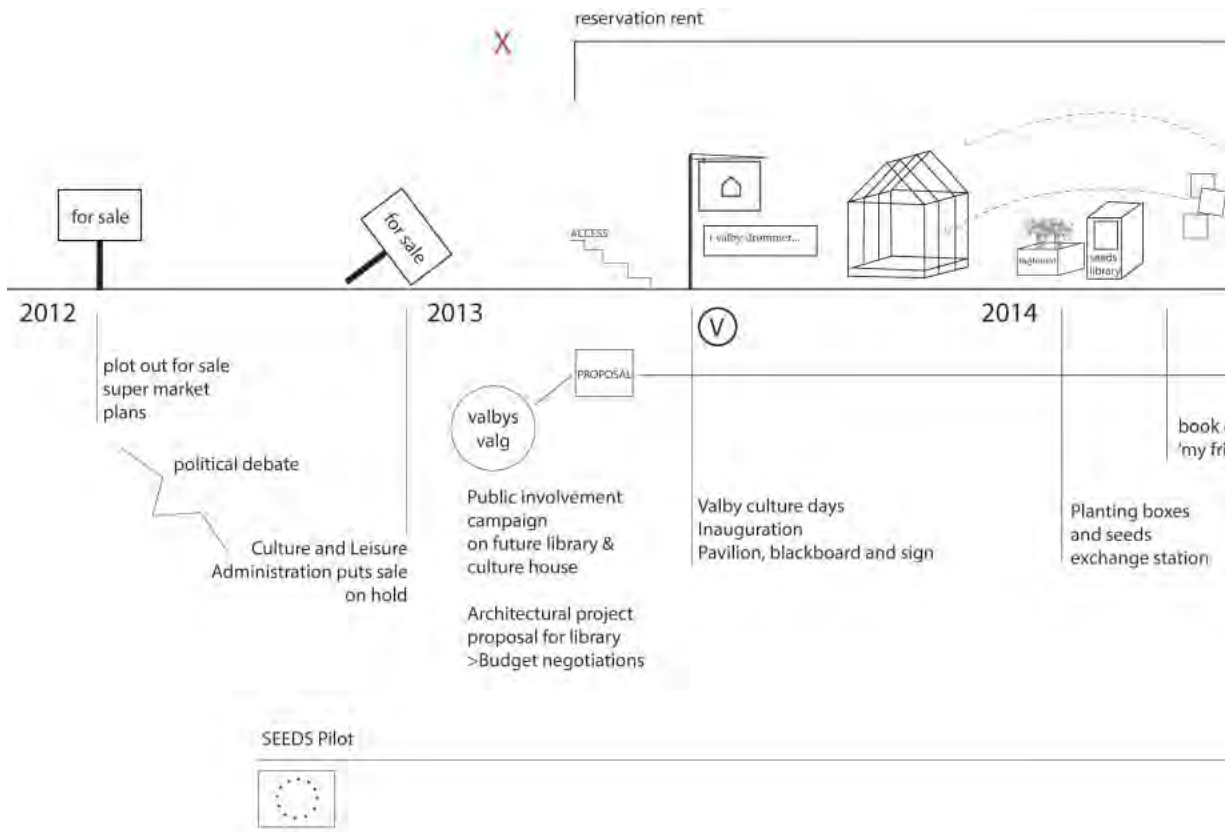
While I did not have any particular influence on the development in the Køge Harbour, beyond my engagement in the competition in 2010, my involvement in Valby was of another character. This is a condition, which I consider both an advantage and a challenge in regard to the learnings achieved from researching this project. Some aspects of my case analysis are significantly affected by the active role of our team, whereas it does not factor into other aspects.

Records from site visits and meetings as well as a wide range of documents have also been main sources in this case study. However, our team's participation in the first actions on the site contributed further useful and detailed insight, mainly through the discussions with the committee about the aim of the interventions and through follow-up meetings on the state of things on site.

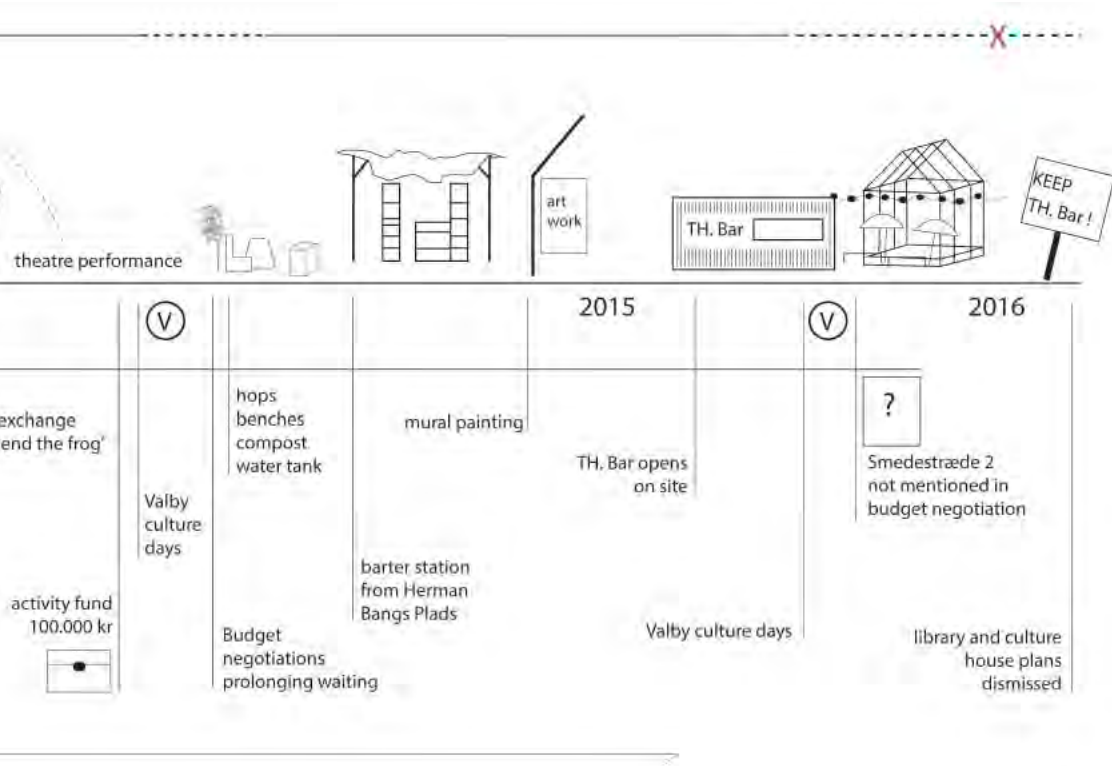
As active contributors we also had an agenda for the project. The agreement with the local committee was that we were conducting 'action research on the process and the further development of the site' (SEEDS gruppen KU /IGN 2013). After the construction our role would be to follow the development of the site. However, we were not part of the working group regarding the library project, nor were we involved in the related citizen involvement; we were only considered partners in regard to the temporary elements. Initially, I considered this limitation to our involvement would create a 'gap' in information, but in hindsight, not being part of these activities helped render visible the controversies of the development process.

Because the site was a SEEDS pilot project, we also received biannual questionnaires, filled out by the project manager. Though useful, these questionnaires in no way captured the complexity of the development on site. What proved more important were the direct involvement and knowledge of the stakeholders and the potential for following updates on the site, via (social) media, announcements from the municipality and meetings with the project manager.

I participated in meetings with the project manager and local stakeholders, in the design and building



Development initiatives and events. The cross indicates my research period.



processes as well as in various events on site, such as planting and clean-up days, markets and culture days. The proximity of Smedestræde to my home and the university meant that I have been on the site on multiple occasions. Through on-site semi- and unstructured interviews, as well as follow-up questions to the municipality (the local committee and KEjd), I received further details. I used archival material (Valby Lokalthistoriske Selskab & Arkiv) and newspaper articles (online and copies of the local committee's press cuttings) for information about the role of the plot through the years, as well as relevant current discussions at the local level. Newsletters and online material from the local committee, KEjd and the Copenhagen Municipality (regulations, meeting minutes, planning material) were other useful references. Updates and public comments on social media (Facebook and Instagram profiles of The Valby Pavilion, Valby Lokaludvalg and TH. Bar) proved to be particularly important sources for following the debate and development regarding Smedestræde 2.

## Groningen: Unlocking the sugar factory

### *Landscape of potentialities and realities*

When I visited the site of the former sugar factory in Groningen in the northern Netherlands, in connection with the SEEDS collaboration in September 2013, my first impression was of a fascinating vast post-industrial landscape. Like most (landscape) architects and planners would be, I was enthralled by the site's size and abandoned, rough character. However, the impressive scenery itself was not quite enough to qualify it for this study. Of particular interest, however, is what the magic scenery reveals and what its condition means for the further development of the site and the first steps of temporary re-use that are taking place here.

A remarkable slanted wall on one of the two remaining buildings features mysterious circular holes and a grand gate-like opening, allowing a framed view out into the open landscape. This large sculptural fragment resembles a site-specific artwork 'cut', such as those made by the American artist Gordon Matta Clark in the 1970s. As I came to know, this particular shape was the work of an EU market regulation, a bulldozer and a last-minute decision to keep this part of the sugar factory's structures, when it was mostly demolished in 2010. This example highlights the area's ongoing transition period from a production site to a site for new uses, a period that consists of many different space-shaping acts, appropriations and decisions. While the roughness of the site is impressive and creates a certain unsentimental robustness, it requires certain measures for the area to be re-used.

The Municipality of Groningen, which owns the site, intends to explore the site's possibilities through



28.10.2014\_ View from the main entrance on the former sugar factory



^ 27.03.2015\_Here the bulldozer stopped the factory demolition

^ *Suiker Fabrik* painted by the Groningen artist Julio Pastor. Watercolour and pencil on cotton paper, 113 x 220 cm, 2011.



temporary use for 15 to 20 years. In the first part of this trial phase and *permitted exception*, structures are demolished, others are revealed and re-used, new project ideas are implemented and multiple plans are made behind the desk. However, unlike Køge, no final master plan is on the table.

On my first look, not much 'new' was visible. I began to investigate more closely what was to be found, what activities take place on site and what the plans were—and why. From 2013 to 2015, the period I did fieldwork here, things began to change.

The analyses based on this case examine the process of opening the former factory site to become an accessible and re-activated part of the city. I explore the initial pioneering steps—the spatial transformation and appropriation, the organisation principles initiated and the planning visions on the table. In this field several large and small *permitted exceptions* become visible.

### ***What comes after sugar beets?***

Unlike Søndre Havn in the Køge, where the harbour is still partly active, the Suiker Unie Company and its production activity have left the site in Groningen for good. In 2008 the company decided to close down the sugar production. After the former sugar factory, one of the city's two large sugar refineries, left the premises, the Municipality of Groningen bought the land in 2011. The 133 ha area was to become a new part of the city, with space for new purposes—but what kind? The financial crisis was still lurking. The original plans for building housing seemed difficult to realise immediately, even though Groningen's population of around 200.000 inhabitants is growing steadily, and housing for



08.05.2014\_On first sight not much was happening on the former factory site

the city's many students in particular is a recurrent topic. The site's proximity to the city centre (less than 2 km) was attractive, but several residential projects were already on their way in the city and due to the unstable financial situation, those were given priority. Housing on the factory site was the plan—but not in the immediate future.

The City of Groningen, the largest city in northern Netherlands, has a vibrant and creative cultural scene, naming itself 'The City of Talent' for its focus on innovative and entrepreneurial resources and creative businesses. Any new use of the sugar factory was not to outdo already existing institutions and offers in the city within the cultural sector. Thus, for the Groningen Municipality new functions on the site should support but not compete with the established environments in the city.

Consequently, based on the city's experience with temporary use from other districts, such as an area called the Open Lab Ebbinge and temporary student housing complexes, as well as ambitions for further exploring flexible planning frameworks and 'improvisational planning' (van Tuijl & Bergevoet 2012: 15), the municipality defined the sugar factory site as a testing ground for a period of 15-20 years:

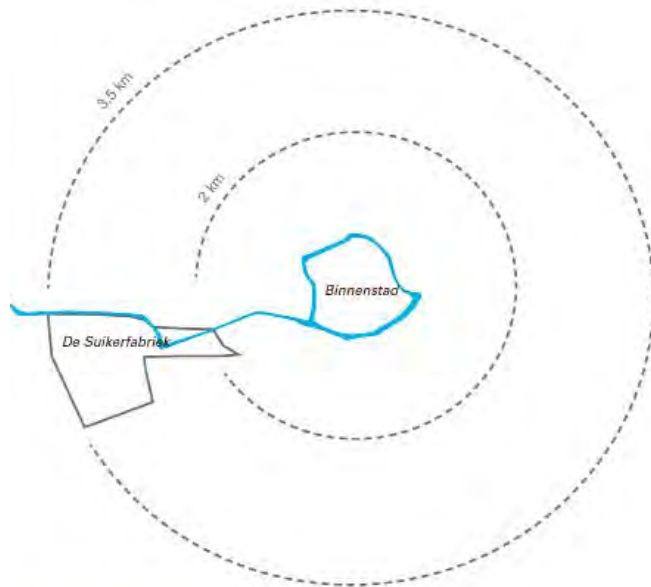
The purpose of the project is to use the area for the coming 15 to 20 years and to add value and program, different to what is already there, to the city. Groningen does not need new housing or office sites or further industrial areas. By doing so we hope to develop a new innovative and experimental area, with activities and functions which will stimulate [a] more liveable and sustainable city and employment. (Copenhagen University/SEEDS Groningen 2012: 4)

Though the city authorities investigated several guiding visions and concepts to steer a long-term transformation, alongside the testing period, no final master plan was defined beforehand.

### ***Changes on the edge of the compact city***

The contrasting layout of the dense historic Hanse city with its surrounding landscape remains a distinctive spatial characteristic of Groningen, which through the years has adhered strongly to the planning concept of 'The Compact City' (de Vries 2011; Groningen Municipality 2013). Following this European tradition, prominent in Dutch planning history, the concept continues to be adapted with a strong focus on 'finding space' inside the city and getting the most out of articulating its edge zones. Though need for expansion became necessary, functionalistic clearance plans and uncontrolled sprawl were to a great part abandoned in favour of mixed and multifunctional use, conservation and re-use strategies as well as an infrastructural circulation system that protects the central city from any through traffic of cars (de Vries 2011). Initiatives and city strategies such as 'The Intense City' (De Intense Stad 2003) and 'City at the Ready' (De Stad van Straks 2009) were tools developed to update the compact city tradition. These tools have been supported by green space strategies that together maintain a strong focus on the somewhat paradoxical ambition of keeping the city 'city' and the landscape 'landscape' (Groningen Municipality 2009) while at the same time highlighting Groningen as an exceptional green city—'The greenest city in the Netherlands 2013' (Groningen Municipality 2013).

The sugar factory premises are located on the western edge of Groningen, just where the enclosing



Afstand tot de binnenstad

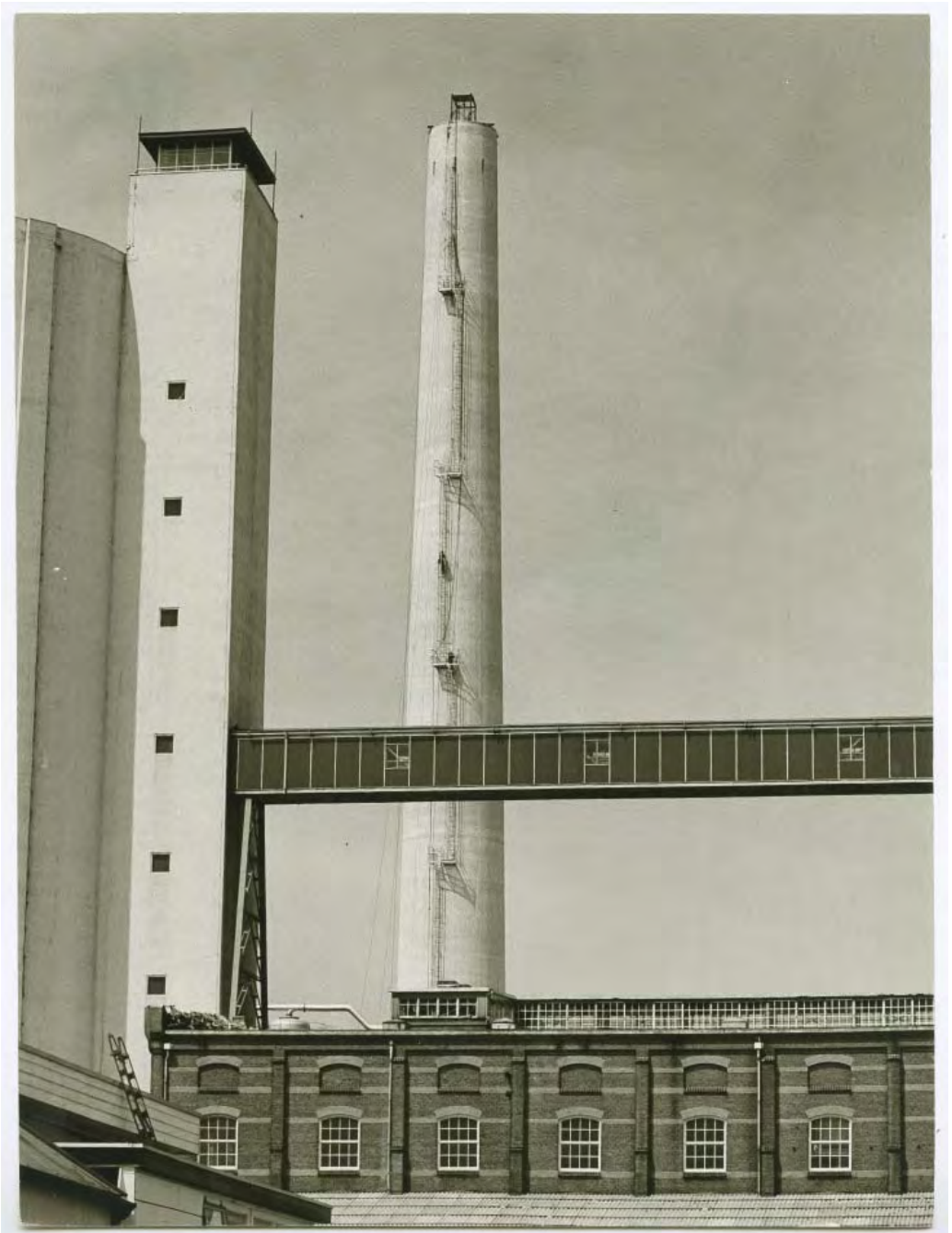
- ⌘ Aerial view of the former sugar factory area: To the left the large production basins, to the right the cleared triangular site where the factory buildings were situated. Groningen centrum is to the right of the ring road (Source: Gemeente Groningen)
- ⌘ The site's proximity to the city centre (Source: Gemeente Groningen)

landscape meets the dense city. The factory was established in 1913 on former agricultural land. The sugar refinery processed beetroots from the whole northern region of the Netherlands and was one of the most important economic drivers and an important symbol for the city. During harvest and processing, big clouds of steam and smoke rose above the factory and its big production site, distributing the distinct smell of beetroots through the area (Hoeve & Overbeek 2010).

Today, the large flooding fields and sedimentary basins from the sugar production, as well as the fields for storage, production and drying of the sugar beet pulp, have developed into a unique nutrition-rich habitat for wildlife and a vast recreational area. East of these landscape formations, towards the ring road and the centre of Groningen, a large area covered with concrete and asphalt (20 ha) sets the scene for the testing phase and temporary use for the coming years. On the ground circular and square concrete surfaces still mark the former silo constructions and production areas. Apart from the road barriers at the entrance, the gaps now covered by successive plantings and some bigger groups of trees near the entrance and southwestern corner, the site is a wide, flat, open space. Two buildings, the so-called sieve building (where the beets were washed and sieved) from 1914 and a workshop/canteen from 1971, have been preserved, as has the lower section of an old brick built chimney from 1914. In addition to smaller buildings and bunkers in the western nature area, these are the only preserved building structures from the former refinery that remain. When the factory had been active, most of the area was filled with a dense network of various production units, silos and storage, built throughout the almost 100 years of the factory's existence. Due to restrictions of EU quotas and the



The factory seen towards east, 1975-1980 (Source: RHC Groninger Archieven)



Structures of the factory seen towards north, 1975-1980 (Source: RHC Groninger Archieven)

production in other parts of the world of sugar from sugar cane instead of beetroot the company closed the factory in 2008. To follow EU and WTO regulations and to secure subsidy compensation, all structures that enabled sugar production had to be demolished (Hoeve & Overbeek 2010). In 2010 the site was cleared above ground, aside from the elements mentioned above. The tall sieve building, formerly enveloped by other buildings, is now partly in ruins, with half-demolished walls and traces of dismantled elements remaining, creating a Potemkin-like backdrop in the wide open landscape.

To the north, the Hoendiep Channel, a previously important waterway for the factory, borders the area. The edge of the paved area is defined by railway tracks, which divide the open fields towards east into two sections. South of the railway and north of the channel, business areas with medium-sized industries, home improvement stores, gas stations, a McDonald's restaurant, plant centres, self-storage units, and second-hand and furniture stores mark the fringe of the city. The tall silos of the other, still active sugar factory in the area are visible to the west.

The elevated ring road and ramp system on the eastern edge towards the centre of Groningen create the main access point from the city, but the road is also an obstacle to pedestrian traffic and visual connectivity. Furthermore, a fence and entrance system surrounds the former factory at the eastern border of the area. Due to these barriers, improving public access to the area is one of the main challenges in the opening process. My study focusses on the plans and uses of this eastern part, since it is the starting point for the iterative appropriation of the area and its opening towards the city.



29.10.2013\_ The site seen from the western end where the water basins and nature area begins



08.05.2014\_The chimney from 1914. In the background the Hoendiep Channel borders the site towards north.



^ 13.08.2015\_The gate to the green area in the western part of the former factory

^ 29.10.2013\_Pumping station in the former production landscape that is now a habitat for rare species.



### ***Call for projects and call for management***

By improving the access situation as well as by initiating new programs on the post-industrial site, the intention is to redefine the 'white spot on the map' (Groningen Municipality 2011: 2) and make the citizens of Groningen familiar with and engaged in the land so close to the central city yet formerly unknown to anyone who was not an employee on the factory. After the municipality bought the factory ground it was specifically put into a 'planological white area without a zoning status' (Kazemier in van Tuijl & Bergevoet 2012: 29) to reflect the decision to pursue a slow ripening and indeterminate process of development and to focus on the temporary testing period of 15 to 20 years.

To kick-start ideas and potential programs for the site, the Municipality of Groningen initiated an open call for ideas in 2011. The competition led to 176 entries submitted by architects and planning offices as well as private individuals. Most of the proposals focused on concepts dealing with sustainable energy supply, urban agriculture, festivals and housing units for students (Van Tuijl & Bergevoet 2012: 45). The jury appointed by the city selected a number of ideas, but most ideas were difficult to realize and were not financially feasible. Only one project, a suggestion to convert a part of the existing building into a restaurant and café, proved viable, and in late 2012 the initiators began to transform the second floor of the old sieve building. In 2011, the workshop building next door was rented out through the Dutch anti-squat organisation CareX. A group of people were thereby allowed to live on the premises for a limited period of time in exchange for acting as 'house sitters' and 'watching eyes' over the vast terrain.

At the same time, the municipality was investigating larger programs addressing the entire site. The municipality made an application to host the Floriade 2022 World Expo on Horticulture (with a proposal from the urban design and landscape office West 8) on the former factory site. However, Groningen was not chosen for the exhibition.

From 2011 to 2014 collaborations between the city authorities and various local and regional partners, and the involvement of institutions and universities, businesses and entrepreneurs began to make the first imprints on the area. Public events, such as festivals, exhibitions, and seminars were organised to increase the awareness and attract people to the site. De Raffinage, a collective of creative entrepreneurs established themselves based on an interest to create an organisation to bring together potential initiatives on the former factory. Despite these initiatives, no new appropriations came to life, aside from select areas of the two buildings, the use of the immediate outdoor spaces by the 'inhabitants' for gardening and storage, a few converted containers, as well as occasional use of the open space for events. Furthermore, big events turned out to be difficult to host, due to security issues arising from the fact that the site featured only one main access. In 2014, as a result of the participation in European 12 (2014), a European competition for young architects, a temporary bridge (built with scaffolding) was constructed over the Hoendiep channel to create a second access point to the area.

Organisations and individuals were continuously proposing singular ideas for initiatives on site, but the main challenge for the authorities was to find a suitable structure and guidelines that could encompass and help administer a multitude of actors and uses on the site. The municipality therefore decided to engage a mediating third-party organisation that could function as manager on a daily



^ 10.09.2013\_The large spaces in the sieve building are regularly used as an exhibition space

^ 30.09.2014\_The scaffolding bridge makes it possible to cross the Hoendiep Channel

basis and to secure the necessary organisational, financial and physical structure. After considering different models and applicants, beginning in the spring of 2015, the company Ploeg id<sup>3</sup> was appointed to run and manage the area and the incoming initiatives. The selection was based on their proposal for organising the temporary use over the coming years as 'a laboratory for the city' (Ploeg id<sup>3</sup> 2014: 5). In their programme for the 15 years to come, they proposed organizing the area according to themed clusters, following a Monopoly-game system that divides the area into rentable plots with different use possibilities, densities and rent prices. The pattern was to attract new users and investors working with food, small-scale manufacturing, knowledge and research, events, living and working or energy production (Ploeg id<sup>3</sup> 2014).

The intention is that Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>, as 'park management' (Ibid.: 6), plays the role of proactive enabler and connecting link between the municipality and the growing community within the sugar factory site. They are in charge of access and infrastructural needs (electricity, internet, gas, water, and sanitation), maintenance, evaluation of incoming suggestions and business plans and setting up agreements and contracts. The financial risk and gain is managed through a plan of distribution between the municipality and Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>.

The company received permission to convert a part of the sieve building to host their office on site and in the spring of 2015 they began setting up and preparing further arrangements and collaborations on the terrain. With the company in charge, a new large staircase and entrance area on the northern side of the sieve building was added, internet connection set up and several events arranged during 2015. Starting in 2016, the paved open area will be distributed among incoming projects, and the construction of studios, workshops and small hostel units will begin.

The search for an overall facilitating agency and the development of a framework to encompass the multiple ideas for the site is approached as an open trial phase. However, the request for guiding visions and large-scale structural decisions had to be dealt with at the same time. Intentionally, no final blueprint was laid out from the beginning, although several visions and proposals have been sketched out by the municipality themselves or external consultants. A long-term vision for the site to 'stimulate and challenge parties to join the temporary development' (Copenhagen University/SEEDS Groningen 2014: 3) proved necessary to navigate and assess incoming suggestions. Thus, the city and external consultants have ongoing explored long-term visions and plans for the site along with singular site improvements and installations.

### ***Focus and insight***

The initial opening measures and the first new users on the sugar factory are the focus of this study. These aspects are of interest in several ways. Firstly, the clearly stated ambition of the authorities to approach the development iteratively and without a final master plan defines a consciously open stage. However, access to and organisation of the site demand certain clarity and certain measures that challenge the 'open' setup. Secondly, the implementations and pioneering activities, from smaller individual initiatives to large events, from infrastructural improvements to the establishment of a new site management, form a diverse field of appropriations and activities on the old factory site. This interplay will be the focus in the coming discussions of the sugar terrain.



^ 12.08.2015\_The office of the new site management team is built into the lower part of the sieve building

^ 12.08.2015\_The new management team constructed a new entrance on the northern side of the sieve building in 2015

During the research period, I visited the former sugar factory five times, in 2013, 2014 and 2015. All visits were during between two to four days, in the city and the region. Some were individual fieldtrips; other visits were in connection with SEEDS meetings and workshops.<sup>49</sup> This SEEDS collaboration did not involve collective site interventions of the same character as in Valby. Through my role as ‘connector’ and facilitator of the pilot projects, I co-organised specific workshops targeting the site. These workshops were useful in terms of capturing some of the issues addressed, such as the issue of public access or how the municipality approaches the relationship between long-term planning and here and now decisions.

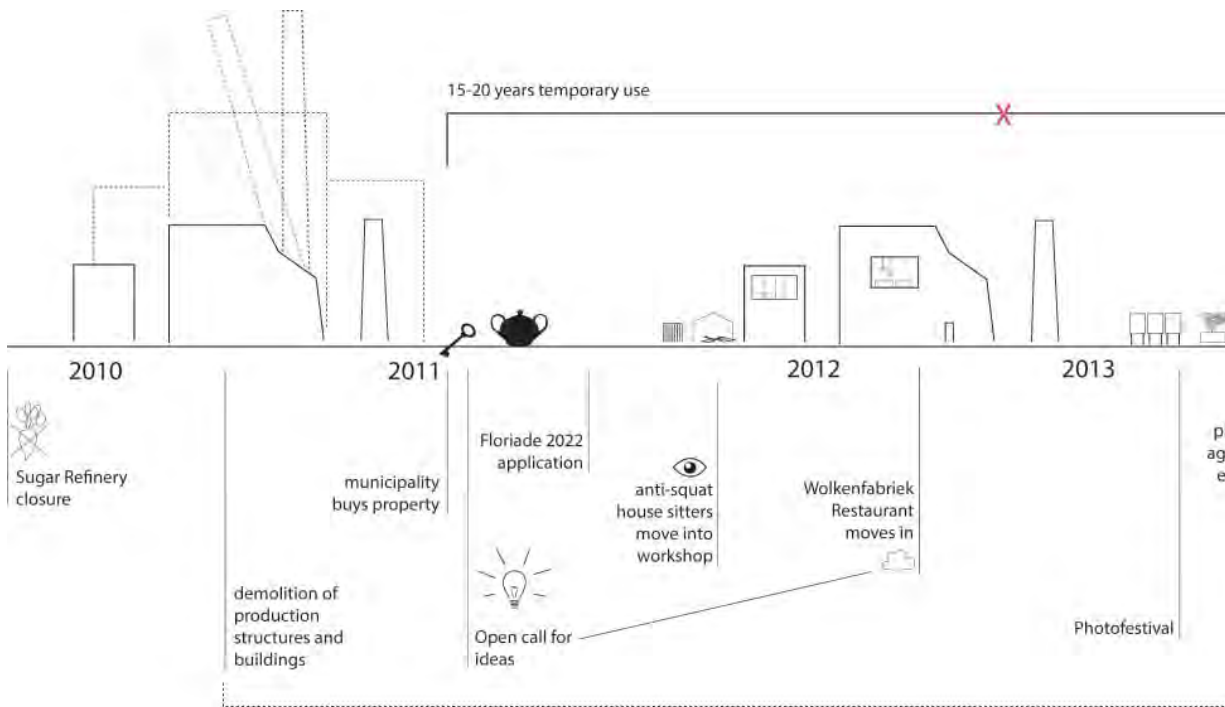
Meetings and follow-up via email and phone with several employees in the municipality, the regional office (RGA) as well as active stakeholders on site (the ‘Wolkenfabriek’, Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>, Timmerdorp Festival) served to clarify questions in the later phase of the fieldwork. Over the years of my research, I received a many project descriptions, design proposals, reports, maps and contracts, all generously shared by the municipality and other stakeholders involved.

A historical account of the site is beyond the scope of this research, nevertheless I have investigated how the site functioned and appeared during production. While most of the factory has been demolished, the original function of the refinery is not only an important historic trace, but its imprint continues to affect how the site ‘works’ today. I gained insights into some of these aspects through the regional historical archive’s online resources as well as cultural heritage reports addressing the built environment and its history.

The half yearly collection of information through the SEEDS project has also informed my research. Similar to the case in Valby, the answers to the formal questionnaires often raised more questions than they answered—thus, they served as templates for further inquiries and discussions with stakeholders.<sup>50</sup> These further inquiries and discussion points will be adressed in the following two analytical chapters.

<sup>49</sup> In 2014 I was involved in teaching a landscape architecture design studio at IGN/Copenhagen University, which used the sugar factory site as their studio case. While the master plans the students proposed fed into the growing portfolio of visions for the area and were very welcome in the municipality, I have not used the students proposals in my research. However, fruitful discussions about the site took place in the studio and during the collective study trip to the area.

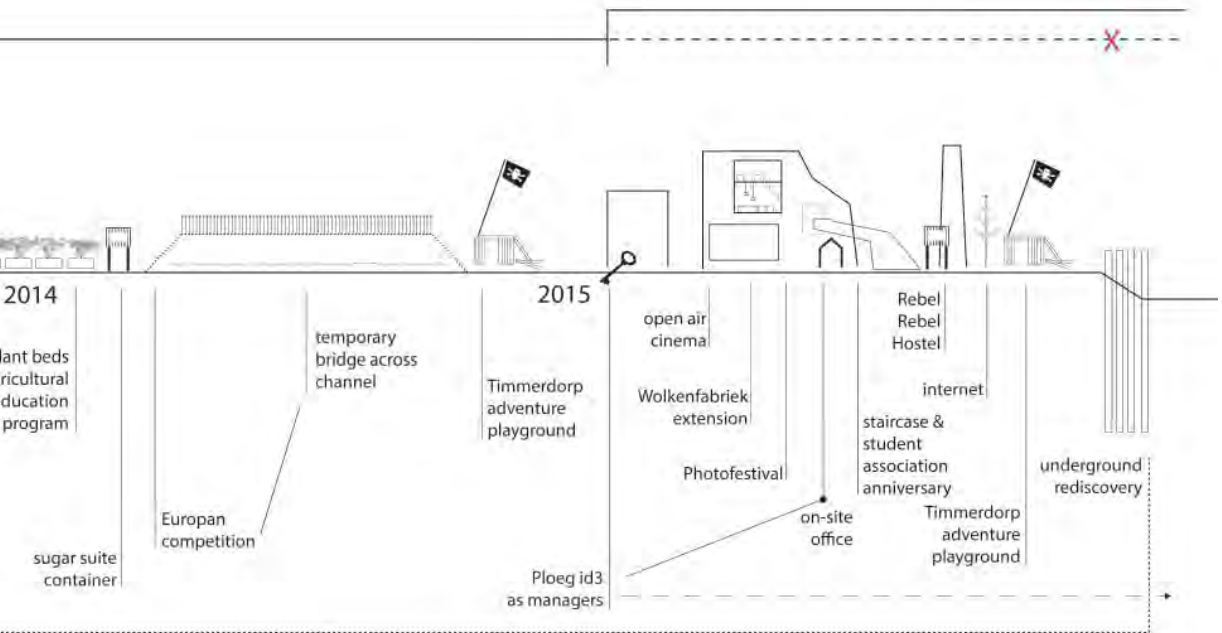
<sup>50</sup> The SEEDS project officially ended in June 2015, but the last pilot questionnaire collection was conducted in autumn 2014. However, in most projects affiliated, as also the ones in Valby and Groningen, important changes happened in the later part of my research period in 2015.



SEEDS Pilot



Development initiatives and events. The cross indicates my research period.



2 /

**BETWEEN  
PUBLIC  
AND  
PRIVATE**





# INTRODUCTION

## Public and private in transition

What is public and what is private in terms of spatial appropriation and management in authorised temporary urban spaces is complex. This specific inquiry began when I encountered an increasing complexity in trying to think about these spaces using the traditional definitions of public space. I did not want to categorize the temporary urban spaces in this study using predefined space types, but references to such types of categories turned up again and again, despite the many alternative space conceptions. Understandings of what private and public spaces and actions refer to seem to get highly entangled when applied to temporary urban spaces. I will here explore some of these reasons and point towards more nuanced constellations of practices and spaces.

The changes in contemporary urban life and the related emerging planning paradigms, presented in Chapter 1, also point towards the need for a revision of definitions of public space. A greater awareness of and sensitivity towards constellations that transgress usual categories such as public and private space within planning theory and practice has resulted in the emergence and re-emergence of alternative concepts of collective life.<sup>01</sup> Such changes in the way collective life is studied and conducted are highly important and necessary, but they do not cover what is happening in the 'publicly' launched temporary projects discussed in this study.

Despite a rising scepticism regarding dualistic categories such as private versus public, they are deeply rooted in western culture and have affected the legal system, the organisational and spatial patterns of urban life, as well as the terminology used—not only as abstract concepts, but in practice as well (see, for example, Forty 2000; Madanipour 2003; Watson 2006).

Even if the initiatives discussed in this study are not all clearly classified as public spaces, they relate to the values that underlie any general conception of a space as 'public', values that might seem natural, considering that they are for the most part initiated by public authorities and feature public programs.<sup>02</sup> The friction that arises between intentions and values, on the one hand, and the reality of established structures on the other, is the subject of the investigation in this section.

The exploration forms a questioning 'from the inside', understood as a critical discussion of different ways this ambiguity of publicness play out in the three projects and their specific temporary state. The goal is to reach a new understanding of space and practice in the in-between. The discussion thus aims to evoke new learning about the cases in the act of transcending the dualism and thereby elucidate interweaved and varied constellations of private and public action in these temporary settings. In the end, it may be less important to categorize such constellations of activity as fitting one of the two 'big concepts' of public and private, but rather to look at what they reveal about 'small ways'; spaces and practices as entanglements of aspect such as legal issues, everyday routines, new programs and overall visions and intentions.

The discussion only makes sense by also dealing with notions of the *private* as counterparts to those

<sup>01</sup> In particular, so-called third ways such as commons and related user-driven initiatives (e.g. Blackmar 2006; Walljasper 2010; Harvey 2012; Tonkiss 2013; Ferguson 2014; Sohn et al. 2015; Stavrides 2015) have gained focus in both practice and academia.

<sup>02</sup> However, as the discussion will show, public authorities are of course complex setups and mostly not fully 'public'.

< 26.03.2014\_Plant box setting customized with additional mini flower box at the temporary Harbour Gardens in the Southern Harbour, Køge. Temporary urban garden projects contain multiple layers of collective and individual appropriation.

of the public. When we talk about collective spaces as the goal for planning and design, 'the private' is often tangential to the idea of the public and only implicitly opposed to it. The private dimension is in such cases mostly used to describe private economic interests and restrictions as a potential threat to the public sphere, democracy and collective diversity. Nonetheless, just as there is not only one pre-existent public, but multiple publics (Dewey 1927; Fraser 1990; Crawford 1995, 2008/1999; Warner 2002) there may also be more than one private (Sheller & Urry 2003: 108) to acknowledge.

When temporary projects are implemented in planning procedures, one of the purposes is often to generate alternative ways of thinking, creating and organising space and both private and public forces are at play. Aspects of ownership, regulations and permissions might inform one agenda, while new collaborative planning and design approaches and programs might inform others.

The transition and re-programming processes of the projects involve shifts in ownership and zoning. These processes result in a redefinition from private to public status or the other way around. For instance, authorities may buy former company sites for development, as is the case in Køge and Groningen. In Valby, however, the plot is already owned by the municipality, but the use shifts between private rental and internal use by the public authorities.

In the discussion that follows, the temporary projects themselves are part of the changing status and transition. All three project areas, the harbour, the old car dealer plot and the sugar factory, are potential building sites in the situation of temporary use, though with different development prospects. Vacancy is a usual initial condition for temporary use. However, apart from what implications that might lead to in terms of time limitation and the long-term horizon, these conditions have further concrete implications for actual use. It implies that the 'work in progress' – an urban site in the process of transforming into something else – itself functions as a publicly accessible site. Here the former logic of the area meets new appropriations of it; these spatial configurations affect the way space is understood and approached.

Reorganisations and transfers most often involve a mix of private-public partnerships involving multiple types of actors – from volunteers and small entrepreneurial initiatives to big developers, municipalities, and foundations. Though general tendencies can be observed, every case is unique. The strategy of implementing authorised temporary urban spaces is not restricted to the re-activation of 'classical' post-industrial sites from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but are increasingly also used to give new life to outdated infrastructure elements, smaller urban plots and spots, rethinking of post-war (welfare) institutions and housing areas. Accordingly, these spaces in the making can contribute to a growing variety of spaces and processes, but also to greater confusion when referring to classical categories such as public squares and parks, private yards and gardens, company sites and office spaces and to the practices occurring within them. Specific hybrid characterizations of space can unfold, because of the changing spatial layers and various actors and agendas. One example is that buildings and open areas managed by creative workshops, co-operatives and cultural platforms (operating under a temporary licence), though not necessarily thought of as traditional public spaces, nevertheless increasingly facilitate public life. Such innovative creators of space understand the potential for a close tie with a wider target group, as described by the Studio Urban Catalyst, in the publication *Urban Pioneers* (2007):



08.05.2014\_ De Wolkenfabriek at the former sugar Factory in Groningen. The restaurant organises special culinary events and facilitates exhibitions and cultural activities and attracts visitors to the area in its transitional and rough state.

'Most space pioneers maintain a symbiotic relationship with their public. They personify unusual but attractive urban lifestyles and hence cater to a demand that traditional urban structures fail to meet. The consumer base guarantees a project's financial survival and political standing and legitimization.' (Overmeyer et al. 2007: 41)

Through their pioneering function, opening up closed and forgotten areas, these uses widen the public sphere of the city (Lehtovuori 2005: 163). Temporary initiatives that navigate between internal consolidation and general outreach also often oscillate between being private and being part of a public realm (Diedrich 2013: 71). Whereas the legal and property system most often adheres to zoning laws or spatial categories, or at least it is supposed to, public life and collective dynamics do not necessarily follow such pre-existing limitations. Programs for urban space that increasingly offer collaborative 'activities for making' and co-creation frameworks, more or less on an event basis, also challenge the notion of what a public space environment is and what one does there.

Public and private 'fields of action' and spaces are intertwined, both organisationally and spatially. If we treat them as connected rather than divided, then we can not only challenge terminology but also discover nuanced relations among the roles of the actors involved and among the spatial configurations themselves. By looking at spatial expressions, processes of negotiation and different understandings of private and public, we can find a wide range of layers of collective co-existence and collaboration, as well as uncover discrepancies and seemingly paradoxical constellations – often in the form of what I have termed *permitted exceptions*. The following exploration therefore reveals links and missing links among pragmatic everyday activity within the projects and the larger planning goals for them.

The questions to explore, therefore, are, what spaces and practices can be identified by unfolding and re-combining understandings of publicness and privateness in the three cases? And what happens *in between* public and private in terms of the spatial and cultural phenomenon of authorised temporary urban spaces addressed in this study? To approach these questions and frame the analysis of the cases, the following sections add more perspectives on the public-private relationship.

## A dichotomy in practice

The 'Grand Dichotomy' may in many ways not apply to contemporary relational understandings of urban spaces. One danger is that it can lead to a bypass of other 'crucial mediating phenomena', as the social and political theorist Jeff Weintraub explains (1997:14). But what we can learn something from is *how* that dichotomy is challenged when it meets modern planning concepts such as those in the authorised temporary use projects in this study. Complex and sometimes contradictory formations must be considered that do not match fixed preconceptions of public and private, but nevertheless relate to them. When public understandings and appropriations meet private ones, overlapping potentials and conflicts can be pinpointed, which can prove important for a nuanced view both on (abstract) categorical divisions as well as actual practice. The exploration of the *field situations* in this part, contributes with a nuanced analysis and a set of concepts helping to refine the discussion of an emergent phenomenon.

Concepts of 'private and public' in discussion of societal issues and thereby also urban planning

processes are often contested and confusing, but are nevertheless used every day. Since the applied terminology affects our relation to historic developments, current implementations, and future planning strategies it must be scrutinized. Such terminology also forms a basis for discussion and a starting point. Private and public are value-laden, 'thick concepts', used for description as much as for stating ideals and (political) positions and are therefore important to engage with. Relational and faceted perspectives are rendered visible when our preconceptions meet and enter into dialogue with specific situations we are challenged by, situations we wonder about and want to understand better. The distinction of public versus private, says Weintraub, 'is an inescapable element of theoretical vocabularies as well as the institutional and cultural landscapes of modern societies. Thus, it can neither be conveniently simplified nor usefully avoided.' We need to address the 'variability, ambiguity, and complexity' of this 'grand dichotomy', as Weintraub calls it, along with its 'richness and apparent indispensability' (Weintraub 1997: 24). In other words, the concepts of public and private are part of our cultural and professional 'tool belt' for differentiation, so to speak – but a belt with many (invisible) side pockets. Rather than using the actual distinction of public versus private, a discussion and 'unpacking' of it can provide more dynamic parameters and sub-concepts to address that can then be linked, leading to new understandings.

It is both a challenge and an advantage that public and private are used on many different levels – in expressions of societal ideals, about communicative forums, or in reference to physical space. The use of the contested concepts prescriptively, or through strong political motivation, or in more descriptive manners, underlines the importance of taking them serious – and questioning them. As inherent categories in the field of urban planning and design, they need to be scrutinized and challenged; we must not take them for granted. We in the field 'have a duty to respond to social changes,' says Tom Avermaete and his co-editors in *Architectural Positions: Architecture, Modernity and the Public Sphere*; we 'also have a leading role to play in redefining concepts like public and private' (Avermaete et al. 2009: 49).

Indeed, even though we, on a philosophical level, strive to dissolve such counterpoints, and even to transgress them, acknowledging colloquial and everyday use of concepts is relevant to the way we understand the world, insists the anthropologist Daniel Miller. Instead of escaping the 'vulgarity of our dualistic apprehension,' says Miller, we should 'include within our analysis the social consequences of conceptualizing the world as divided in this way' (Miller 2005: 14). This is a valid argument, especially when considering the public-private division in an urban planning context.

Concepts such as public space function as 'mental frameworks' or 'discursive rules' (Hajer & Reijndorp 2001:15), as reference points, and are therefore particularly important to consider in collaborative approaches to planning. And from a political perspective, such principles must be dealt with since they refer to ideological value systems and contribute to arguments in decision making (Gal 2002: 79). These principles are strongly related to neo-liberalistic thinking that favours dichotomies, and this 'fixedness' is important to question especially when examining ownership, power relations and democratic rights in the urban realm.

Social activity relates to as well as transgresses the borders of these definitions. According to urban planning and design theorist Ali Madanipour, the division between public and private spheres is

retained as an organising concept because ‘very few of us would wish to live in an undistinguishable common space’. However, he adds, the division is seldom very clear cut and it should therefore also not be considered as being so. ‘Especially in space,’ Madanipour says, ‘the lines that divide the two are porous and ambiguous. (...) Ambiguity occurs in practice, where the boundaries are frequently crossed for a variety of purposes’ (Madanipour 2003:66).

## What is public and what is private?

So how are these boundaries then crossed? To support the discussion of the following case stories, it is useful to look into some prevailing definitions and basic models of distinguishing public and private arenas that relate not only to spatial categories such as public and private space, but to general societal subdivisions that affect the organisation and understanding of space. They span over political, legal, economic, civic, social, cultural and spatial factors as well as links and overlaps between them. This is important to recognise, since the spatial practices discussed in the cases travel between these different applications. We might talk about a legal distinction in one situation, and a cultural and social understanding of public and private aspects in another.<sup>03</sup> Furthermore, to limit the scope and nuance the discussion, I will introduce specific keywords that go a step deeper in defining the dynamics between public and private, or ‘publicness’ and ‘privateness’, that are relatable to the spatial practices in the authorised temporary projects.

One way to approach public and private distinctions analytically is to examine their historical origin and traditional usage in different societal fields, as Weintraub explains (1995, 1997). They form specific frameworks of understanding, but presented together they also reveal overlaps and ambiguity. Weintraub specifically underlines four different perspectives.

In the first tradition, the ‘Liberal-Economistic Model: The Market and the State’ (Weintraub 1997: 17) the state and its administrative bodies serving public interests are distinct from the market economy and the private sector. The question is most often what side should regulate specific services and areas in society. This model is widely applied in everyday political debate as well as in policy analysis (Ibid.:16-18).

The second view, Weintraub presents, considers the definitions based on an understanding of the public as a field of active political citizenship. Here the public and political does not refer to the public administration as in version one, but to a collective public realm of discussion and decision making. This is historically related to a Habermasian understanding of a bourgeois public sphere, a field of citizen participation and collective decisions (Habermas 1962), as well as concepts of an active public realm such as delineated by Hannah Arendt (1958). The idea of a public life covers a world of discussion with private persons as active participants. This public sphere is not discernible in the first state-market division focus.

A third tradition of conceptualising the public and private, and the one Weintraub describes as most

<sup>03</sup> The discussion is limited to focus on the public–private dichotomy as a starting point and in ways relevant for discussion of urban life in transitional settings. Writings on and definitions of public space, domain, spheres and their state of affairs in general form an extensive body of work in urban discourse. However, for this analysis the point of departure is the basic relation between the two ‘mechanisms’ and a set of related dynamic properties as an analytical approach to spatial practice.

related to spatial organisation, is one that takes point of departure in “public” life as sociability’ (ibid.: 21). This perspective on ‘public’ does not necessarily encompass the above-mentioned civic political aspects with a focus on decision making and debate, but refers to aspects such as liveliness, vitality and a diverse lived life in public, as it has been elaborated by authors such as Philippe Ariès and Jane Jacobs.<sup>04</sup> The public realm as a field of diverse sociability is considered as distinct both from formal societal organisational structures and from the private domestic domain (Weintraub 1997: 17). The last two perspectives may be combined, but they refer to different conceptions of public space analytically, Weintraub argues. Whereas the citizenship perspective is about creating space for ‘inclusive solidarity’ and ‘conscious collective action’, the sociability tradition deals with public space as a frame for ‘heterogeneous coexistence’ (Weintraub 1995: 303).

A fourth discussion about the meaning of public and private evolves around an understanding of the domestic area of the household and family as the private entity. The ‘rest’ is here a broad public realm – a residual category of civil society, consisting of *both* the market economy and a public realm. It means that private and domestic is often used interchangeable (Ibid.). This perspective is of importance in fields of feminism and Marxist theory. The notion of private here serves to highlight the importance of considering and scrutinizing the domestic field in relation to the wider society (Ibid.: 307). These four fields or arenas have different ideological and historical backgrounds, but are all relevant in terms of current urban discourse.

Much more can be said about the way private and public can be perceived. Weintraub’s explication holds further nuances, and other scholars have elaborated on and critiqued these categories. Furthermore, depending on whether the concept to define is either public or private the reshuffling of relations take different forms.<sup>05</sup> However, of most relevance for the coming case explorations, this brief summary of four ways of understanding the dichotomy reveals a discrepancy between the use of ‘private’ for private market forces and the private sector and the use of ‘private’ to refer to the domestic field of home and the intimate individual privacy. Whereas the first private is strongly related to policy, legal issues and economic conditions, the other private encompasses aspects of intimacy and individuality in relation to a wider public.<sup>06</sup> This double use identified to a high degree appears to be used interchangeably, thus creating ambiguity in temporary urban spaces and transformation settings. In addition, the varied coverage of the ‘public’ illustrates highly ideological differences and shifts in meanings.

What these perspectives underline is that the notions of public and private need to be considered in specific contexts to make sense. Every pairing and reconfiguration will shed light on certain aspects and put others in the shade due to focus and ideological standpoint. Nevertheless, for the purpose

<sup>04</sup> Other prominent perspectives in this tradition are for instance to be found in contributions from William Whyte and Richard Sennett

<sup>05</sup> For instance, Sheller & Urry (2003), from a ‘public-private critical’ outset, present a set of relations slightly similar to Weintraub’s, but they add aspects of publicity and privacy regarding media as an important aspect of the public-private interplay. From the perspective of privacy, Beate Rössler presents a relational ‘onion model’, moving from the most private individual and intimate in the centre to the state as the outer shell (Rössler 2005).

<sup>06</sup> Notably, etymological and historical these two privates are though inherently connected, cf. ‘household’ ~ Gr. ‘oikos/oikia’ and economy ~ Gr. ‘oikonomike’. The oikonomike technē refers to the ‘art of household management’ (Alvey 2011).



of this study, though we might be able to define public and private *spaces*, those spaces point back to these varied fields of meaning and structures in society. Thus, we cannot talk about the relation between public and private aspects in urban spaces from a purely physical perspective. It is necessary to also consider by what 'force-fields' public space is shaped and how these fields then are revealed in planning and design strategies and implementation (Hajer & Reijndorp 2001: 16). We must consider both the reference background as well as the actual spatial practice: 'Obviously, the public cannot be explained in merely spatial terms, for it includes a regime of interaction and communication. The public is a social territory, yet precisely as such it is materially grounded; as political and social scientist Andrea Brighenti points out (Brighenti 2010: 26).

### **Navigational dynamics in-between**

A pertinent starting point to approach the cases analytically and in a 'grounded' way is to look at the private-public concept as a broad framework that leads to specific and constructive sub-concepts and themes that are applicable in a more dynamic way. They elucidate how public and private competencies, claims and responsibilities are actually enacted and interrelated and result in specific appropriations and new routines that affect space production. The transitional processes and shifts in 'ways of doing things' in the temporary projects discussed here demand a dynamic approach that makes it possible to investigate spatial practice *in the process of change*, and also to partly cross between the societal public-private fields described in the previous section.

In the following, I will present some of the sub-concepts and themes that I build upon in the case discussions. They will be supported by further theoretical lenses brought in along the way. Through my analysis, I develop and combine aspects of these perspectives to bring forth a set of nuanced concepts to pinpoint the practices occurring in the projects.

#### ***Divisions, shades and nestings***

Looking at themes and concepts 'behind the dichotomy' indicates why it is possible to understand the public-private relation in some cases as moving through degrees of one or the other, while other situations rely on the dichotomous and clear division (Benn & Gaus 1983: 13). Madanipour, for instance, describes areas of private and public as shades rather than a dichotomy set. He formulates the relation as a "continuum", where many semi-public or semi-private spaces can be identified, as the two realms meet through shades of privacy and publicity rather than clearly cut separation' (Madanipour 2003: 239).

If we think of publicness and privateness as something carried out, as acts and practices, that might for example include private actions in a public space, we see that an act can be both linked to and independent of the specific spatial category as location (Rössler 2005: 7; Blomley 2005).

These acts, says Susan Gal, a linguistic anthropologist, can be seen as expressions of 'nested dichotomies' (Gal 2002: 85). According to this view, a public space can become private by specific private actions: 'Spaces that are undoubtedly public (in one context) can be turned into private ones by indexical gestures (the sweeping and caretaking) which are recalibrations that bring them into new contrast sets' (Ibid.: 82). These situational acts can be more or less temporary or permanent and established, but they create complex layers of appropriation in daily life: 'A public inside a private or

a private inside a public (be it in identity, space, money, relation) can be momentary and ephemeral, dependent on the perspectives of participants' (Ibid.: 85). From a discursive perspective, Gal says, a 'fractal distinction' (Ibid.: 80) retains a dichotomous setup, but she points out that the character is not the same in different expressions and 'nestings' (Ibid.: 82). This view adds a performative and dynamic perspective and highlights the interplay between spatial definitions and actions. Gal's derivation questions the variability as a matter of degree or shade and semi-versions of private or public, as least as long as the dichotomy is our point of departure. The thing, action, space or organisation in question must be one or the other, but it can be so at different levels and with different meanings – although still carrying the same label, which is often the 'tricky' thing. Gal illustrates it like this:

Thus, public funds get turned into private money at numerous sites, but usually through nested subdivisions. It would seem that one can always deny the 'publicness' or 'privateness' of the funds by focusing on a higher or lower level of organization. (...). Importantly, there are subtle changes at each embedding; it is not entirely the 'same' public and private are partially transformed with each nested dichotomy – each indexical recalibration – while (deceptively) retaining the same label and the same co-constituting contrast. In all these examples of spaces, types of work, and institutions, there is no simple continuum of public to private. No funding agencies, for instance, are 'more' public or more 'private'. Each is one or the other, by law. (Ibid.: 83–84)



06.08.2015\_ Southern Harbour in Køge. The Køge Kyst logo is to be found on multiple elements in the area. The planning partnership exemplifies a very specific organisational constellation 'between private and public'.

The point is radical but relevant to acknowledge, especially because of the often ambiguous organisational setups to be found in the projects. The local committee in the Valby case study, for example, is, according to one perspective, part of the municipality. However, occasionally, it also distances itself from the municipality, and while the secretariat consists of municipal employers, the members are local politicians, representatives from interest groups and trade organizations. In Køge, the Køge Kyst is a partnership between the municipality and a philanthropic foundation; different economic, political and cultural agendas are combined in that setup. To decipher if these constellations are private or public depends on the level addressed and the viewpoint. Gal's question of legal clarity reveals further complications, another issue addressed in the next section.

### ***Access, agency, interest and collectivity***

To understand the question of the 'shade view' and the 'dichotomy view' better, it is useful to look at how these intertwined or divided fields are fabricated in practice. In *Public and Private in Social Life* (1983), Benn & Gaus highlight the dimension of 'access' as a main property of public-private relations. It encompasses both physical accessibility to a certain space, but also access to activities, information and resources. These aspects can be interrelated but they also indicate that certain activities, things and procedures can be private or public, though they may be set in the opposite space type, as already indicated earlier (Benn & Gaus 1983: 7–9). Furthermore, access to information and resources has the potential to affect space: 'Someone has access to resources if he is able to manipulate some elements in his environment to bring about new and intended states of affairs' (Ibid.: 9). The access factor relies on a second dimension, 'agency'. In Benn & Gaus, agency refers to the role of the agent(s) involved and their capacity to perform certain actions and the power and level of control that comes with it (Ibid.: 9). The notion of agency can hold different understandings, however. Of particular relevance are those that consider agency as a relational construct that emerges in action. It is not bound to a single individual or pre-existing power. It is highly contextual and involves materiality and the actual enactment.<sup>07</sup> The notion of agency also refers to a third factor, according to Benn & Gaus: the question of 'interest', that is, who actually benefits from the specific action and control (Ibid.: 10), whose values and whose purpose are behind a given action.

What Benn & Gaus call the 'multi-dimensionality' created through these three factors is especially significant in discussions of property (Ibid.: 10). Bureaucracy, legal systems, property rights and related regulations and permissions most often demand certain clarity to be executed. These fields rely on a prescriptive and executive mode and a traditional ownership model that operates with a clear formal distinction between public and private ownership and control (Benn & Gaus 1983:13; Blomley 2004b, 2005). As the legal geographer Nicholas Blomley presents it, 'The spatial division between the public and private domain, as it relates to property, is one particularly important to dominant legal conceptions of space. Formal legal understandings assume that the public and the private are (and should be) mutually divisible and collectively exhaustive' (Blomley 2005: 286). This division is a matter of reasoning for the application of legal rules – in judicial proceedings categories and groupings are

<sup>07</sup> From a material semiotic perspective, for instance, Karen Barad notes that 'agency is not an attribute but the ongoing reconfigurings of the world' (Barad 2007: 818) and an 'enactment of iterative changes to particular practices' (Ibid.: 827).



14.05.2016. 'No Entry - PRIVATE!' signs and wire fence surrounding the decaying buildings at Smedestræde 2 in Valby. But what kind of 'private'? The property is owned by the Copenhagen Municipality. The sign refers to conventions in terms of behaviour: Private here reinforces the 'keep off'- message.



needed (Blomley 2004b: 3). In terms of decision making and paper work, clear divisions are preferred for practical reasons, but they also indicate what values sets underlie the process. The splitting is thus an act of 'purification' (Ibid.: 7) that also has an effect on spatial understandings through defined boundaries, zonings and categorisations. This is of particular interest in terms of the formal settling of zoning changes and property ownership in re-use and transformation contexts.

However, as soon as we move into space, these clarifications can be challenged. 'The determinative effect of a legal categorization like the public-private binary *outside* the courtroom', observes Blomley, 'may be a little less certain, particularly when spatialized' (Blomley 2005: 294). While in legal terms, property most often relates to a dualistic ownership concept, in the light of the notions of access, agency and interest, the conception can differ. It means that 'it may be difficult to determine whether a particular piece of property is public or private, the more because "property" ranges over a diverse cluster of rights of ownership, enjoyment and control', according to Benn & Gaus (Benn & Gaus 1983: 10–11). While 'on paper' ownership is mostly clearly defined, it is, as we will see, not a static condition; multiple understandings on individual or collective level can coexist. Furthermore, today a lot of ownership constellations and partnerships challenge that clarity as well. In practice, they rely on rather complex agreements, such as public-private partnerships or setups where ownership is private but access is public. Even though a strict division is still considered important and powerful on a policy and governance level, it is not concurrently the case in terms of spatial use. Even though we might consider property and ownership as clearly defined, they can materialise in diverse ways. Relations between public and private can thus be seen as dynamic and not predetermined; rather, they are dependent on 'iteration, reproduction and reworking' (Blomley 2005: 292).

Just as Benn & Gaus, Weintraub also highlights the notion of access to discern and discuss public and private aspects. He considers it as part of two basic sets of properties for analysis of public-private issues. The first concerns 'what is hidden or withdrawn vs. what is open, revealed, or accessible' and the second set of criteria he puts forward adds the perspective of 'what is individual, or pertains only to an individual vs. what is collective' (Weintraub 1997: 15). The relation between the individual and the collective<sup>08</sup> is particularly useful to consider, when investigating space that features a wide range of appropriations and actions by individuals, specific user groups and stakeholders or a wider public audience. The question of interest arises again, since a private action can, however, serve collective interests. In the seminal *The Public and Its Problems* (1927), John Dewey underlines the need to consider the consequences of an action performed by individuals (Dewey 1927: 45). Private does not necessarily mean non-social nor failing to provide benefits to a community of people:

The distinction between private and public is thus in no sense equivalent to the distinction between individual and social, even if we suppose that the latter distinction has a definite meaning. Many private acts are social; their consequences contribute to the welfare of the community or affect its status and prospects. (Ibid.: 46)

<sup>08</sup> The relation between individuality and collectivity is fundamental in societal thinking; among others it plays an important role in the work of philosopher and social theorist Georg Simmel. Architectural historian Adrian Forty argues that opposed to the public-private dichotomy, the dialectic set of individual-collective has not been equally embraced by the architectural discipline, since it is more dynamic and therefore more difficult to translate into spatial outcomes (Forty 2000: 105).

Thus, the question of interest – and purpose and consequence – is relevant to performed actions in terms of their publicness or privateness.

### ***Domestication and the parochial***

One specific way of approaching *private* appropriations in urban space that I will apply in the analysis of the case studies in this chapter is through the notion of domestication. In urban studies the way public space is taken over by privatised control and order is often referred to as domestication. It implies a critique of the increasing domination and control of life in public space, a critique of the proliferation of commodification and gentrifying order as well as measures that result in a restricted diversity (Zukin 1995; Harvey 2010). The Danish ethnologists Carlberg & Christensen (2005) refer to a reading of the domestication as a way of establishing order towards the well-known and 'clean', whereas the counterpart, non-domestic disorder, is potentially dangerous – but also exciting. However, they note that domestication refers to a certain practice and a certain idea of what is considered domesticated, depending on the culture of that specific practice and environment (Carlberg & Christensen 2005: 29). Other approaches, however, suggest the notion of domestication needs to be reconsidered; to investigate how spaces are appropriated and how 'people go about making a home in the city' by adding domestic qualities to anonymous urban spaces (Koch & Latham 2013: 6–7). A positive reading of domestication thus considers it a specific type of place-making (Mandich & Cuzzocrea 2015). This understanding of the domestic in public relates to the observation that many things done in public



30.08.2013 'Public cushions' at the opening of the temporary installations on Smedestræde 2 in Valby. Loose elements such as cushions are seldom part of public space and not surprisingly they disappeared after the event. However, 'interior', soft and loose elements more related to the domestic field of the home increasingly play a role in public space settings.

are in fact things we normally connect to the intimate and private sphere, which can be considered as part of a positive sociability and not just a negative private (Kumar & Makarova 2008). Notably, this positive understanding of domestication is quite unlike a domestication that implies privatised control and power, and also works on a different scale and through different means.

Another concept that is used to describe levels of appropriation in urban space, relevant in my study, is 'the parochial'. Lyn Lofland considers the private-public relation as a set of variables and defines the public and private realms of urban life along with a third category termed 'parochial realm' (Lofland 1989). The parochial realm covers spaces that are in principle public, but are mainly appropriated by a specific group. She observes a continuum of these three types of spaces, along which 'real places exist between private and public, between private and parochial, between parochial and public' (Lofland 1989: 457). The notion that the parochial realm is occupied by a local culture or community on a micro level can be considered in both positive and negative terms. It can have excluding consequences, but as Hajer & Reijndorp argues, 'it is questionable whether the oft-cited real public spaces were not to a certain or even to a large extent parochial spaces' that gained their distinct character from certain groups using them frequently (Hajer & Reijndorp 2001: 85). Recognizing how other people appropriate space and make everyday things in public is what creates an attractive public setting, since 'the key experiences with shared use of space often involve entering the parochial domains of "others"' (Ibid.: 88). Hajer & Reijndorp's argument is that parochialization can be a defining factor in terms of public space and paradoxically what makes it appealing can actually be the occupancy by certain groups and the activity they perform (Ibid.: 88-89).

Both concepts, domestication and the parochial realm, can be considered as expressions of actual meaningful appropriation and activity in a positive sense or as exclusion or predominance in a negative one. They need to be considered in specific setups and situations.

### ***A territorial perspective***

A useful cross-concept to address the dynamic of spatial use in temporary spaces is territoriality. It could be described as framing levels of spatial appropriation through physical enactment of ownership of a specific physical space. Several nuanced definitions of territoriality exist, with different emphasis. A concept that has its origin in areas such as human behavioural studies and environmental psychology (e.g. Altman 1975; Bell et al. 1996), geography and political studies (e.g. Sack 1983) and studies of power relations in a Foucauldian perspective, it has lately been further developed and synthesised in the field of social studies (e.g. Brighenti 2010b), legal geography (e.g. Delaney 2009) as well as urban studies and architecture (Kärholm 2004, 2005, 2007). As an "organizer" of activities' the concept of territory can thus equally encompass aspects of belonging and attachment as well as regulative control and power relations (Madanipour 2003: 44). It can thus easily be related to several of the public-private sub-themes mentioned earlier, such as ownership and different modes of appropriation.

In relation to architecture, urban studies and public space in particular, territoriality has lately been elaborated by the architectural theorist Mattias Kärholm. Kärholm approaches territoriality through a conceptual rethinking of the term in combination with a material-semiotic approach and aspects



of actor-network theory (Kärholm 2004, 2005, 2007). He defines territoriality as 'a spatial delimited control' where a 'territory is a bounded area characterised by a certain set of rules or some kind of regular behaviour' (Kärholm 2005: 99). Kärholm notes that public spaces, and in his specific studies, public squares, are rich in terms of 'territorial complexity' – how different territorial forms of production relate to each other. The publicness of a place can thus be considered a result of different 'territorial productions' (Kärholm 2007: 447). Kärholm's territoriality enables a focus on micro-scale level territories because it exposes the role of material aspects (designed and non-designed) and spatial-temporal dynamics in everyday practice, and is therefore of particular interest in this study.

According to Kärholm a place can be more or less territorialized, indicating the dynamic properties the concept of territoriality possesses for investigating spatial claims.<sup>09</sup> By looking at 'territoriality *in actu*' (Kärholm 2007: 440), Kärholm develops four new forms of territoriality. What he terms 'territorial strategies and tactics' refers to 'intentional attempts to mark or delimit a territory', either as externally planned and mediated control strategies or through personal tactical claims 'in the midst of the situation' (Ibid.: 441). 'Territorial associations and appropriations' are non-planned productions of territoriality that result from regular practices. They may be results of planned decisions, but the territorial production itself is not intentionally planned. 'Territorial associations' refers to an identifiable category of space and its use that follow certain conventions, such as a bathing place for instance. 'Territorial appropriations' are appropriations of an area by a group or person on regular basis, where the group or person, at least to some degree, consider the area as 'their own' (Ibid.) These territorial productions can be stabilized in different ways (Ibid.: 445) and can in combination result in layers, interrelations and 'territorial complexity' (Ibid.: 446).

Interestingly, this conceptualisation allows us to consider how and by whom the territorial actions are performed, what conflicts or adjustments might occur and the role of spatial artefacts in that matter. This is important because the temporary urban spaces 'in the making' addressed in my study feature complex layers of action and appropriation due to their transitional state; the different agendas and the enactment of these changes in space can benefit from this territorial viewpoint.

## Summary

The sub-concepts explored here will be used to approach the temporary urban spaces contextually and in action – in other words, by focussing on the state of change. With these perspectives in mind, the following exploration of field situations from the three case studies will add new aspects that criss-cross, question, and relate to notions of publicness and privateness and their sub-dynamics – and necessarily, beyond. The unfolding of specific spatial practices exemplifies how private and public layers are intertwined due to the complexity of planning sites as areas in transition, the implementation of new programmatic content within those sites, as well as adapted organisational procedures. The analyses that follow will result in new concepts that render visible specific ways spatial change is managed in the authorised temporary urban projects that transgress public and private dimensions

<sup>09</sup> Territorialisation, de- and re-territorialisation as a set of dynamic philosophical concepts formulated by Deleuze & Guattari (1987) should here be mentioned as an important influence on architectural and urban research as well.

and that instead demonstrate the dynamics of spaces in transition.

So, what spaces and practices can be identified by unfolding and re-combining understandings of publicness and privateness in the three cases? What happens *in between* public and private in terms of the spatial and cultural phenomenon in question? The closer exploration of the different 'in-between manifestations' will begin in the harbour of Køge.

## SOUTHERN HARBOUR – KØGE

### Outside the privet hedge – in the harbour

*WallHedgeFence* (2013), one of the annual open-air art exhibitions which stretched along the cultural path The Thread, between the inner city of Køge and the harbour area, focused on and challenged the typical preconceptions of spatial demarcations between public and private areas. 'The wall, the hedge and the fence are divisions we all know from public space. In everyday life they separate, close off and create the spaces around us', reads the exhibition folder<sup>10</sup> The idea was to explore typical border-creating features such as green hedges and wire fences when they are displaced or transformed, thereby questioning the role of such borders in a humorous way: 'What happens when the well-known hedge which normally separates private and public space is moved out of its regular functional context and appears on its own and interactively in the city?' was one of the questions put forward in the exhibition. Artist Søren Dahlgaard's contribution, for instance, dealt with 'the status of the privet hedge'; he placed rotating and oddly situated plastic hedges in the harbour area.

The questions raised in the exhibition are important, especially in regard to the ongoing planning of the new district and the relation between existing and coming functions in the southern part of the harbour. However, another way to explore these divisions is to look into what happens when the usual private and domestic *content* behind the privet hedge or picket fence moves – for a while, at

<sup>10</sup> *Murhækhegn - 2 km udendørs kunstudstilling 4. maj til 15. september 2013, KØS: <http://koes.dk/udstillinger/tidligere-udstillinger/mur-haek-hegn>.*



13.09.2013\_Murhækhegn ('WallHedgeFence'): Artificial and interactive hedges by artist Søren Dahlgaard: A rotating hedge on the harbour square.



13.09.2013\_Murhækhegn ('WallHedgeFence'): Artificial and interactive hedges by artist Søren Dahlgaard: A square hedge blocking the ocean view at a vista point.

least – out into public space; something that is actually happening now in the open vast area of Køge Harbour.

### **Domesticated publicness: Cooking and gardening in the harbour**

In their planning strategy and development plan for the *Phase Zero – The Life before the City* (2011) Køge Kyst, the partnership between the municipality of Køge and Realdania By, puts forward a strong wish to initiate and support various social and collective programs and events during the experimental learning period of the Phase Zero. The temporary open spaces in the harbour area serve as platforms for these activities. The spaces, called 'temporary urban spaces' ('midlertidige byrum'), are public spaces in function, but as it becomes visible, special constellations of publicness and privateness emerge through spatial use and organisation.<sup>11</sup>

At The Discovery, the temporary urban space focused on in the following discussion of the harbour

<sup>11</sup> Køge Kyst, who is in charge of the area and development, is a partnership between the municipality of Køge and Realdania By & Byg, an affiliated company of Realdania, which is a large Danish association-based foundation. The ownership is on a 50/50 per cent basis. Realdania By & Byg's approach is based on 'philanthropic investment and active ownership' (Realdania web: <https://realdania.dk/om-os/realdaniabyogbyg>), which underlines their dual role as a private investor and a philanthropic foundation. It can thus be discussed if this area is 'public' as such. It illustrates a complex structure in terms of ownership construction and private-public partnerships. Notably, an evaluation highlights the strength of Realdania By & Byg as a 'private investor' and the anchoring in a partnership that is not dependent on local political election results as a positive feature (Oxford Research A/S 2013: 35)



06.08.2015\_The Discovery is settled in between the existing harbour structures. The open area with its small scale recreational installations forms a contrasting setting with the large warehouses and silo buildings along the quay.

redevelopment in Køge, people hang out in hammocks, sit around a fireplace, cook in the kitchen and take care of gardens and bees – all activities more typically done in a private backyard, or maybe an allotment garden enclave, than in an industrial harbour setting. The programs indicate a specific level of informality which comes with the relaxed ‘backyard/allotment-doings’. Despite its temporary character and condition, the setting and the activities are carefully planned and facilitated. The spatial reprogramming creates an overall situation of *domesticated publicness*, which suggests that nuanced relations of sociability and private-public layers can emerge in a setting like this, in both positive and critical ways. The *domesticated publicness* of this urban spot, I propose, indicates that the intentional staging and introduction of what could be considered domestic doings in public are an important part of the temporary reprogramming strategy.

They work as urban life generators in an industrial setting, where housing and the daily life of residents is yet to come. What characterises this ‘The Life before the City’ as the motto for the Phase Zero is formulated? How do certain domestic functions ‘behave’ when they enter the foreign context of the harbour transformation setting as part of a planning initiative? What are temporary ‘common’ community gardens? And further, what does it mean when a public outdoor kitchen is bookable? These are questions that I will address in the following analysis.

According to the Køge Kyst development plan, The Discovery is one of the last areas in the harbour area to be built, which creates the potential for a longer phase for testing and exploring urban public





< ⚓ 27.08.2015\_Relaxing in the hammocks and doing the dishes – in the harbour  
^ 06.08.2015\_The Harbour Bees located in the corner of the Discovery

uses through temporary projects. Several functions and elements have been added to the site that was firstly re-appropriated post harbour industry life under the auspices of the planning initiative, during the open air art exhibitions *Walk this way* in 2011 and *Urban Play* in 2012, where after an actual design for the site was made in 2013. The intent in establishing this temporary urban space is to create possibilities for 'experiments with urban nature and a series of social urban space elements' as a means 'to create inspiration both physically and socially for the future commons' (Realdania By 2013: 48).<sup>12</sup> Some of the inspiration for these particular programs came from another Realdania harbour redevelopment project in Fredericia. Equally a harbour transformation the project had huge success with establishing urban gardens in 2012. In terms of the kitchen, the popularity of early cooking events arranged in the harbour by Køge Kyst and the popular 'mobile kitchen' from the exhibition *Urban Play* in 2012, were other inspirational sources for this specific program.

The Discovery is the largest temporary urban space in the development area (around 3000 m<sup>2</sup>) and the one where most investments have been made as well. The size reflects the cadastral parcel of the former warehouse located on site which had been demolished.

In one corner of the site is an outdoor kitchen, a space contained by a black wooden canopy. It features sinks, barbeque stations, other cooking facilities and toilets. Surrounding the kitchen are sets of benches and tables, while in front of the kitchen and scattered across the site, are clusters of garden boxes. These are the Harbour Gardens. A composting area, garden hoses and water tap stations have been installed next to the garden and kitchen and a fireplace setting creates a small square next to the central pathway. Garden tools and additional kitchen equipment are stored in a shed in the kitchen. In the eastern corner of the site, the Harbour Bees have their residence in two beehives. In addition, a series of pinewood poles on a sandy surface, part of an artwork from 2012,<sup>13</sup> now features several mounted hammocks. A mountain of stone boulders is stacked next to the southern part of the gardens, creating a sculptural play landscape. These diverse elements are all organised on a large elevated area, covered with clean soil, chipped bark and sand. A long semi-transparent black windbreak fence, creating a border with the adjacent vacant site to the west and the active harbour industry businesses and their loading area to the north, forms the only physical enclosure. The areas on other sides are open and accessible.

What makes this space special are not the singular elements added through the temporary reprogramming themselves, but the contrast to the harbour environment surrounding the site, the impressive and surreal backdrop of the industry functions. The enormous scale of the harbour structures stretching up towards the open sky, the surfaces, colours and materiality form a contrasting setting to the small-scale installations on the site.

The central part of The Discovery is the Harbour Gardens. The garden setup was established 2013 with 50 garden beds, but because of its popularity, it expanded to the now 85 garden beds. The transitory

<sup>12</sup> The Commons are the main conceptual feature for the open spaces in the final masterplan (Køge Kyst 2011a). See case introduction in chapter 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Play-landscape of tree and sand*, Rebar Group, *Urban Play* 2012 (Curated by Bettina Lamm & Charlotte Bagger Brandt).



harbour garden is used by local institutions, families and individuals. Køge Kyst organises the use of the area together with The Green House, a local institution focusing on sustainable solutions and social initiatives. Employees of Køge Kyst and The Green House are responsible for the management and activation of the temporary urban spaces in the harbour area.

The main factor for the gardens' popularity is its specific spatial context. Here, gardening is more than actual gardening. People not only have their own garden for growing vegetables, but the site provides other motivating factors. It entails moving about in corners of the city where people not necessarily go on everyday basis, meeting others, being part of something new and exciting – a new development process that the users not exactly know what is and what will bring. This is a condition that creates a certain excitement among the users, according to the project manager of The Green House.<sup>14</sup> As one of the garden users explains, he and his family often go for evening walks with guests to show off the area and the development site. It is an attraction in itself. And they feel like a part of it. It is another foreign world in a way, but being part of the garden collaboration, provides them with a sense of having a special connection to the place and a particular reason to go there – a special kind of belonging and ownership.<sup>15</sup>

However, this condition of being part of something 'open-ended', taking place in a network of diverse activities going on in the area creates situations, that can challenge clear boundaries, norms and categories of spatial and behavioural character. The project manager from Køge Kyst recounts, that one of the volunteer- and club coordinators hired by Køge Kyst to supervise the area usually tells the garden users: 'You are kind of pioneers in a wild area – where there are also other people'.<sup>16</sup>

How does this relationship between gardeners and other people play out? In the coming discussion I will look closer into the ownership relations between the wider public and specific user groups in the temporary garden setup at The Discovery and how it is managed.

## Individualised collectivity

A special kind of collectivity is constructed and facilitated through the temporary harbour garden initiative. No association or club runs the Harbour Gardens in Køge, as is often the case with urban gardening projects. Nor is it based on a pre-existing bottom-up garden interest group or network with a wish for gardens in the area. Instead, it has been initiated by the partnership as a planned programmatic choice as part of the temporary re-programming of the harbour area. Furthermore, the site elements, including the layout of the garden beds, are not randomly put together of leftover materials of whatever is available, but have been carefully planned by a design team prior to actual use.<sup>17</sup> The units were then offered to interested citizens and groups, who were involved in further adaptations and aspects of maintenance. The dynamic between the garden and the outdoor kitchen has been a driving

<sup>14</sup> Meeting with project manager Henrik Lerdorf, The Green House, August 2015

<sup>15</sup> Informal conversation with garden user at The Discovery, August 2015

<sup>16</sup> Meeting and walk'n talk with project manager Berit Kingod, Køge Kyst, August 2015

<sup>17</sup> The Discovery setup is initiated by Køge Kyst and designed in collaboration with a (landscape) architect team (Bang & Linné Landskab, EVM landskab, landscape architect Bettina Lamm), chef and former restaurant owner Jimmy Weber, The Green House, architect Bo Semelin and the Project Centre Køge Bay.



06.08.2015\_Garden boxes in the Harbour Gardens



force. Many new users become interested in the garden project after having been through the kitchen at a cooking event.

Each gardener signs an individual one-year contract with Køge Kyst and The Green House. This simple agreement contains the benefits and obligations that follow with being a garden owner in the harbour area. The use is for free, but the gardeners are obliged to keep the gardens well-kept and attractive during the active season and in return whatever they grow belongs to them. The contract also specifies that the area is used by many others and that Køge Kyst is not responsible in case of vandalism or vegetable theft (Harbour-garden agreement/Havnehave-aftale 2015).

Establishment of an actual garden association and more organised network among the users has not been a goal for the project; the main thing has been to activate and open up the site. The project manager at The Green House explains:

We can sense that many users are also temporary. Some have been part of the garden activity for two years, now they are out. That speaks for the loose structure in a way. People are not being caught in meeting structures, obligatory collaboration and so on. And also, from the perspective of the flexibility that Køge Kyst aims at, in their call for tenders and future development, this is more appropriate; it is not desirable to build up more structures.

He reflects further on how a different structure would change things:

If the garden users were saying, we want that, a more formalised structure – then I would of course support. We don't just do it. There are pro and cons with that. And it being a public space is in a way a contrary to it being an association-driven space. . . . In an association new activities would occur. This would be the interesting thing in that model for me – talks and other common events, things that we have been facilitating until now.

The group of 'harbour gardeners' also do things together. However, while they met regularly in the first year, based on informal 'let's meet Mondays at 17'-arrangements, these meetings were not continued consistently. Henrik, the project manager says, 'I don't think the group is so interested in these kinds of things. It is the loose structure, the temporary character that people like.'

The temporary character and the organisational setup thus imply a flexible and non-binding framework for all involved parties. It also indicates that a certain kind of *individualised collectivity* is at play in this construction: The harbour gardeners are in fact a 'group' – they do meet, interact and socialise, but they are organised on individual terms through singular contracts with the planning partnership and its collaborators. My proposed concept of *individualised collectivity* underlines the difference between the framework of singular contractual agreements and the collective of a group.

It could be considered an oxymoron, but the notion of *individualised collectivity* underlines nuances in terms of collective and individual relations in regard to the temporary activation and the resulting spatial practices. The harbour garden is a group in some ways, and in some ways it is not – it could be said to be a group in public. The message from Køge Kyst, via its project manager, in charge of bringing the diverse initiatives and users to work together on site, is, 'It is important for us that the garden users do not close themselves.'

Other collective organisational frameworks are established as well. The Green House initiated a 'bee-cooperative' to support the beehives located in the urban spaces – The Discovery and The Urban Forest – in the harbour. Each member of the bee-cooperative supports the project financially through a small fee and in return receives a jar of honey and invitations to related events on site. The actual handling and caretaking is done by The Green House and The Project Centre, a local work-creation program. According to the Green House project manager, the model of a cooperative association was chosen deliberately in this case and the idea was to have special more exclusive events and activities for the members. However, if an event in the spaces along The Thread is supported by the planning partnership financially, then that event must also be open for all and advertised publicly. This is due the Køge Kyst project's overall focus on the public aspects in terms of intensive communication, PR and branding by staging and communicating the cultural events and the temporary urban spaces (Realdania 2013). A focus that is strongly anchored in the partnership's background, where in particular Realdania By & Byg's agenda of 'philanthropic investments and active ownership'<sup>18</sup> implies that communication plays several roles: General knowledge-sharing as well as promotion of profitable development and real estate investments.

The high level of openness and publicity through numerous events open to the public is a fundamental

18 <https://realdania.dk>



Urban walk in the Southern Harbour (Photo: Martin Håkan/CoverGanda.dk for Køge Kyst)



27.08.2015\_Arts & crafts market at The Discovery on the annual Southern Harbour Day

part of the urban life strategy and a way to invite people to discover the harbour and the new district 'in the making'. High numbers of participants are thus a specific focal point and a benchmark in the evaluation of events and activities. The openness and broad public invitations and outreach activities create awareness, which is important for Køge Kyst's promotion of the new district's development to potential residents, businesses and investors. But it can also be a challenge in terms of the actual capacity of workshops and events as well as in the matter of creating ownership, attachment and involvement in the smaller groups and 'thematic' communities established. The high 'public focus' does not necessarily support and strengthen formations of the specific interest groups and communities that are important driving forces beyond the singular events. In the end, they are the ones who activate the space to a high degree and thereby, paradoxically, create the actual urban 'public' life. Can there be too much or counterproductive publicness in this environment? Reconsidering the 'parochial realm' (Lofland 1989; Hajer & Reijndorp 2001), in a positive sense, especially in connection with settings and programs predefined for more 'focused' engagement of a certain character, we might need to acknowledge a wide range of relations between the 'public for all' and the individual user. They may potentially be parochial, but nevertheless are more engaging than a generic faceless public.

Sometimes a certain level of privateness is necessary to get things to happen, even in public. 'Yeah, sometimes you have to narrow down', The Green House project manager says. 'Somebody starts and others follow up. That's the way the temporary can make sense.' Focused ownership, the possibility for

individual appropriation, is crucial in this setting – however; access, publicness and open invitations are as well. On the organisational level, the example shows that it is not only a question of parochial appropriation and public openness and different ways to collectivise, but it also illustrates how specific organisational setups are linked to the strategic development context.

The right amount of publicness is not only something to consider in regard to specific human user groups. As it turned out, harbour bees need a certain level of ‘privacy’ or non-public exposure as well – privacy for biodiversity. Situated in the urban space settings as a visible ‘feature’ of the temporary activities, the bees have been troubled by being ‘publicly exposed’. Experiments with different bee families and constellations ‘suitable’ for life in public have been made. According to Henrik from The Green House, ‘they are even deliberately moved (by the beekeeper) to a forest exile/retreat... But actually, bees do not like to be moved. They get super stressed by that.’

As for the plan to consider The Discovery a site for experiments with urban nature, learning is already made here.

## Nested ownership through territorial markings

Based on its system of standard wooden box units and the related maintenance infrastructure, a common garden setup often inherently instigates a specific ‘way of working’. At a closer look, however, in the case of the temporary gardens at The Discovery, nuances appear in this working system. A garden bed can have different meanings.

‘Keep your hands off our private gardens – Jerk!’, it says on garden box no. 80, on one of my site visits. This is a message that differs quite a bit from the peaceful and relaxed atmosphere conveyed by the more cheery neighbour boards with flowers, names and mottos, such as no. 81, ‘Marianne’s herb & joy, flower & taste garden’; no. 71, ‘Kirsten’s energy supply’; no. 14, ‘The Rhubarb Quarter’; no. 15, ‘Gooseberry-Land’; or no. 82, ‘The Dream Garden’. No. 80 has clearly been the victim of a garden encroachment. Certain expectations as to ownership naturally move in with the gardens. This creates a situation of overlapping understandings and uses of the area. Based on the experience made since the harbour gardens were established, Henrik from The Green House says:

Maybe we had a bit of a childish immediacy and excitement in the beginning, but we found out that this is actually a public space. And things happen, that we did not expect (...) The users were saying: ‘I mean, you can see it is a garden!’

That has been a challenge for the garden owners. If you sign in you have to accept the concept of ‘It is mine and still it belongs to all of us’, Henrik says, regarding starting up and managing the garden area. An effort is therefore made to communicate to new garden owners at the beginning of a season those special conditions peculiar to the public setting and its potential temptation for guests. Henrik usually tells the newcomers:

Now a new season begins, we are looking forward to it! – And remember this is a public space. Remember that it can cause challenges. If you are growing strawberries and sweet peas, then you are growing strawberries and peas for everyone. Your choice.’

Approached from a territorial perspective, the setting challenges spatial and behavioural norms. What

is a garden like in a transitional harbour setting and urban development site? The user's reaction – 'It is a garden!' – suggests that there are specific social codes and a certain way to behave in such a place, pointing at what Mattias Kärrholm in his territorial framework defines as a 'territorial sort' (Kärrholm 2007: 445). It is a *sort* of territory; it has a certain recognisable use and thereby also implies constellations of codes, rules and properties, which are often referred to through naming the type of space, such as 'a garden': You should behave in a specific way when you enter a garden. However, the garden area is here situated in a context with additional other codes, norms and logics and it is thereby part of another spatial complexity than what could be considered traditional for a garden. The sort of territory users refer to, in terms of code of conduct, is destabilized (Ibid.: 446) since some of the garden conventions are distorted by its placement in this particular setting.

The accessible nature of the space is a part of the public concept and reflects the wish for openness and coexistence among the different functions and users. The occasional theft and vandalism in The Harbour Gardens, and also at The Discovery in general, has been a challenge in terms of the more fragile and movable elements on site, such as the greens and vegetables in the boxes. Other loose parts are also being moved, especially in the beginning. 'Things that can be fiddled with are tested', Berit from Køge Kyst explains. Water taps in the kitchen were bent and beehives knocked over. Now the hives are fixed to the ground with bolts. Køge Kyst has also initiated several activities to deal with these issues, such as informal barbeques with potential troublemakers and sessions of 'offer-victim-mediations'. They also installed video surveillance near the gardens at a point where the vandalism



06.08.2015 'Keep your hands off our private gardens – Jerk! Stealing everything from people's garden! You could buy the same things for maximum 10 kroner in a store'





30.08.2014\_Anne Merete's garden



^ > 06.08.2015\_Personal garden signs in the Harbour Garden



was most challenging. The actual surveillance was later dismantled, but the signs have been kept intentionally as a strategic prevention measure. Specific action has also been taken to clarify the ownership status of the garden boxes. Køge Kyst prepared the collective activity of making personal signs for the harbour gardens, providing black wooden boards and paint: 'We thought it might feel a bit more difficult to steal from a 'real' person, the project manager from Køge Kyst explains. All individual plant boxes are now equipped with signs featuring member numbers and names as well as drawings, messages and slogans demonstrating ownership, something which certainly also adds character, liveliness and a 'homey' atmosphere.

Danish ethnographer Nicolai Carlberg argues that the contemporary popularity of transparent, flexible and open urban spaces can sometimes create confusion in social settings due to the blurring of borders between private and public (Kvande 2015: 29). Three things typically happen when borders are undefined, he says: The space is not used for its purpose; one group takes over and dominates the area; or the users actively define borders themselves with potted plants, markings on the ground, signs and other items (Ibid.: 30). Other solutions and versions of co-existence might not be covered by these definitions. However, the third situation Carlberg suggests is clearly identifiable in the harbour garden setting, where ownership is expressed through personal messages, additional decor and objects - but also by several official information posters describing the setup in detail. Zones and thresholds are thus to a great extent defined and communicated by other means and territorial manifestations than enclosures such as fences and hedges.



06.08.2015\_The surveillance was dismantled but the message left as a prevention measure.

In an analysis of private gardening action in public space in a neighbourhood in Vancouver, legal geographer Nicholas Blomley investigates private gardening activity in public space as a specific form of spatial appropriation that questions a clear definition of what is private and what is public, individual and collective (Blomley 2004a, 2005). If we look closer into spatial negotiations, micro-conflicts and understandings of 'what is what', nuanced and entangled aspects of public and private ownership appear. One of the points is that a certain degree of extended private claim to public areas by individuals, offers a differentiated perspective on privatisation. Community-based 'individual' gardening activity clearly is another form of 'private' unlike a commercial multi concern property 'private', as already pointed out in the introduction. Such a use of space reflects an extended level of domestic 'stamps' by individual users and groups of interests.

The setting for Blomley's analysis is a residential neighbourhood. With The Discovery, however, the project is set in a vast industrial area. Private appropriation does not spill or 'bleed over' (Blomley 2005: 288) into public space, from the front yard to the sidewalk and verges,<sup>19</sup> but rather it is injected into this 'other' setting – which also contributes to the captivating contrasts that characterise the reprogrammed harbour.

According to Susan Gal, public and private understandings are not a question of unclear and blurry demarcations. While the dichotomy is upheld it finds multiple and complex forms in its enactment:

'Rather, the intertwining public and private is created by practices that participants understand as re-creations of the dichotomy. Yet, in part because these separations are indexical, participants can often collapse them into a single dichotomy, simplifying what is, in practice, complexly recursive.' (Gal 2002: 84)

The angry sign referring to 'our private gardens' thus proclaims a clear understanding of privateness through the message on the board, despite the fact that 'private' is as such not an official term here in other descriptions or displayed information material on site. However, the act of pointing out personal ownership in this manner creates 'a private inside a public' (Ibid.: 85) which can be considered a kind of 'nesting distinction' (Gal 2002) – a *nested ownership*, as I suggest it appears to be in this case. The concept of *nested ownership* elucidates the dynamics occurring in settings that are used individually and publicly in particular entangled ways. Furthermore, if we consider the temporal dimension of recreational activities in the 'making category', here exemplified through the garden activities, they hold processual stages that imply different relations to the process of making and the resulting products and outcomes. From planting to harvesting of vegetables, to cooking in the outdoor kitchen, it highlights that where a product emerges out of the spatial setup, multiple ownerships and relations can occur.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Something which mostly occurs informally, but nevertheless is also formalised. An example is for instance the Copenhagen Municipality initiative 'Make your own pedestrian-garden': [http://kk.sites.itera.dk/apps/kk\\_pub2/pdf/1507\\_cblXsoh42a.pdf](http://kk.sites.itera.dk/apps/kk_pub2/pdf/1507_cblXsoh42a.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Subsequently, the making activities at The Discovery result in different produces, 'experience products' (Lorentzen & Smidt – Jensen 2011), reaching from the singular garden users' own' kale, herbs and potatoes to the glasses of honey distributed to the bee association members and more public produces, such as the nearby micro-brewery Braunstein's special beer made with the hops grown on the fence at The Discovery.



30.08.2014\_The 'Common Gardens' with herbs, salads and other 'snack greens' work as *common community gardens*

### ***Common community gardens – a super-public facility***

The individual mini-gardens are the main part of the harbour garden setup. But Køge Kyst installed a further category of garden beds in the area. These garden units feature the same design as the rest, solid black wooden boxes, but these seven boxes function as additional common gardens ('Fælleshaver'). A few non-individual common gardens have been in the area from the beginning, as they were part of cooking school events using the outdoor kitchen. Køge Kyst and The Green House decided to keep the extra gardens and add a few more, since visitors picking the greens from the 'private' beds created dissatisfaction among the gardeners. Also they work as supply stations for official cooking events. Big posters saying 'Common gardens' ('Fælleshaver') affixed to the side of these garden beds now explain: 'On The Discovery there are seven common gardens, where everybody can pick, clean and water'. In these beds The Green House grows herbs and easy edible plants, so-called 'snack greens', which all visitors can grab, eat or prepare in the kitchen. The Green House and the gardening and caretaker company employed by Køge Kyst takes care of these common gardens. These special boxes are common in a double sense; as *common community gardens* they are clearly differentiated from the rest, implying different 'rules' and functions from the individual ones in the overall collective garden setup. They are particular *permitted exceptions*; here, in the *common community gardens* it is okay to just grab a bit of parsley – while it is not in the other gardens, though it is simultaneously proclaimed as a condition that it might happen.

This difference of space is distinguished both through marking of zones and through the specific



06.08.2015\_ 'On The Discovery there are seven common gardens, where everybody can pick from, clean and water'

naming. According to Blomley, area demarcations communicate in another way than categorical naming:

As an areal classification, a territorial claim (as in 'everything within these boundaries is mine') is a much more succinct and determinate claim than one that lists the individual items by type ('all these trees, rocks, chairs, etc. ... are mine'). (Blomley 2005: 282)

The 'material markers' (Ibid.: 282) such as those described here in the garden fluctuate between these two types of territorial categorisation. By being placed directly on the specific garden beds, these markers in part designate areas where specific rules of ownership apply. However the labelling that differentiates common greens from individual produce still refers to the typological definitions, in that 'these greens can be picked' while implying that the others may not.

The *process* of gardening further adds aspects of specific attachment and ownership to the private and public constellations in these spaces. Since gardening is a continuous activity, it is an appropriation that can be enacted regularly, widened and expressed in different ways, through the actual state of the garden beds. If we consider the logic and sense of ownership, the level of appropriation should also be noted depending on the reach of it – in terms of scale, practice and produce. If we talk about the site or the garden beds, clearly, strawberries in the '*common*' *community gardens* are for all – but in the end, not all strawberries on site *are* for all. Personal maintenance entitles a certain ownership of space and zones, but in the specific case of gardening, it also implies ownership of the produce and partaking in the harvest. We must therefore consider a temporal and occasional extra level of ownership and rights when we talk about small-scale 'spaces of production' in public settings, which is the case here and in many other temporary projects. It can here again be considered as what Susan Gal presents as a 'nested dichotomy', discursively considered (Gal 2002):

The distinction between public and private can be reproduced repeatedly by projecting it onto narrower contexts or broader ones. Or, it can be projected onto different social 'objects' – activities, identities, institutions, spaces and interactions – that can be further categorized into private and public parts. (Gal 2002: 81)

According to Gal, the reiteration does not mean that private or public means the same in the different uses; 'recursions (i.e. reiterations) are never entirely mimetic. They always introduce some change in meaning' (Ibid.: 86).

Public gardening by individuals introduces different levels of ownership; as Blomley notes, 'A pear tree was public, but the pears were John's, though he was happy to share' (Blomley 2004a: 631), since John was the one who took care of the tree. Ownership is not only bound to certain parts and objects on a given site, but also to the processual aspects and temporal dimensions of growing and nursing plants. Inherent to the system of production is the fact that you have to 'earn' your harvest through the act of caretaking. If this logic is violated or the terms are bent, private defence against external encroachment, such as the contra-sign tactic by *Number 80* here at the Discovery, indicates that somebody crossed that line by invading and disregarding the efforts made and thereby overlooking a level of private ownership in public. 'Public produce' as a concept of publicly grown and freely





27.08.2015\_Loading trucks. The outdoor kitchen at The Discovery is situated just to the right, in front of the turquoise-white striped silo.

accessible edibles (Nordahl 2014) is not the same as private produce in public. In this case, even a private ownership to the produce that is upheld in a signed contract.

This is why the common community gardens at The Discovery are an interesting phenomenon to observe. They offer a shortcut to the 'harvest' stage through the free offer of herbs and 'snack greens' from gardens maintained by the planning authorities. As a 'territorial strategy', to follow Kärholm's concept (Kärholm 2007), these extra, super-public gardens put up by the management not only function as herb-supply stations for open events in the kitchen; they work as pacifying elements in relation to use by the wider public and the harbour garden group.

### **Inverted POPS on demand: Bookable outdoor space**

Another distinct feature at The Discovery is the outdoor kitchen. As an architectural element, the kitchen is a solid, but airy and welcoming open structure. Just behind the kitchen the massive grain storage building creates a striking backdrop. The giant white facade and the rhythm of trucks passing by and loading grain in front of it is a very different 'world' than the recreational kitchen shelter with barbeque stations and wooden benches, though only few metres separates these zones. The foreignness of the kitchen in this context creates the spatial tension that makes it an attractive setting. The kitchen houses and facilitates various social activities such as cooking schools and specific theme-based events focussing on local food resources, products or ways of cooking, as well as catering



06.08.2015\_ The outdoor kitchen

in connection with events in the harbour area in general. According to the Køge Kyst project manager, the kitchen is meant to function as an 'outdoor meeting house' ('udendørs forsamlingshus') and an activity hub and shelter in the development area. It works as a base, servicing other parts of the site, providing tables, water, toilets, electricity and different gear for the gardens.

The outdoor kitchen reflects a prevailing interest in open-air facilities in an urban planning and design context. Outdoor libraries, kitchens, culture houses, workshop sheds and so on are increasingly incorporated and tested in urban settings. What could be considered traditional 'interiors' are being purposefully moved into outdoor public space, often articulated as semi-open canopied structures, light-weight pavilions or constructions incorporating shipping containers. This focus and 'new' range of open-air spaces offers a whole range of new possibilities for outdoor life and interaction, supporting the prevalent recreational 'making' culture in open space, as described in Chapter 1. Especially in connection with temporary testing interventions, they form learning labs regarding spatial layouts, programmatic content and collaborations. This is the case here in Køge, where learning from the temporary spaces is intended to be incorporated in the future 'commons'-concept. Nonetheless, this range of outdoor amenities also adds complexity to the discussion of traditional conceptions and dynamics concerning ownership and access in public settings.

The kitchen area at The Discovery is freely accessible (you can get water, charge your phone, sit in the shade, etc.), except for toilets and tools, which in locked areas. The harbour garden owners have access to these extra amenities. It is an unmanned facility, except during official events, but the phone number for the Køge Kyst office is displayed in case of questions or emergencies. The kitchen can also be booked for private events like birthdays, barbeques or company events. For that purpose, the Køge Kyst website features a heading called 'Book an urban space'<sup>21</sup>; potential users can register there who want to use the kitchen for a specific event. To use the kitchen for an individual arrangement, a key is available at the Køge Kyst project office for the extra facilities in the kitchen. Instructions on how to book online are displayed in the kitchen itself (before the online booking system was established, bookings were made on a simple paper calendar put up on the wall in the kitchen). When booking, the online system shows how many 'seats' are reserved and what kind of other events are taking place (there are 65 'seats' in total). Køge Kyst has further administrative rights and monitoring possibilities, so they can see who is booking the kitchen. As the Køge Kyst project manager says, 'Binge drinking and children's birthday is clearly not a good match'. Employees of Køge Kyst and The Green House describe the kitchen as successful and very popular, running smoothly most of the time. The online booking calendar shows a high number of reservations. However, social codes and clashes naturally occur when a space is openly accessible –and simultaneously reservable in this way. According to Henrik from The Green House, the loose structure of meetings and spontaneously coming together can be a bit challenged by the booking concept – a mechanism that on the other hand ensures that a big gathering is not booked and planned in vain. If someone books it for a fancy festive celebration such as a seventieth birthday dinner and everybody is dressed up, then the couple of fellows also

<sup>21</sup> In addition to the outdoor kitchen, another cooking facility, The Mobile Kitchen at The View is also bookable through the online system (see chapter 3). In spring 2016 a new space 'The Spot' (a dancing square) joined the booking list as well. (<http://koegekyst.dk/kultur-og-byliv/byrum%20og%20faciliteter/book-et-byrum>)

The screenshot shows the website for Køge Kyst. The navigation bar includes 'En ny bydel', 'Kultur og byliv', 'Byggeri og anlæg', 'Grundsalg', and 'Om Køge Kyst'. The main content area features a large photograph of an outdoor kitchen area with people and a large sign that says 'Opdagelsen'. Below the photo is the heading 'Book et byrum' and a paragraph: 'Det mobile samtalekøkken, byrummet Opdagelsens udekøkken og byrummet Plettens multiscene bookes til private arrangementer.' At the bottom, there is a note: 'Nøgler afhentes hos Køge Kyst, Havnen 39, hverdage mellem kl. 9-15. Du skal være over 18 år for at låne en nøgle.'

Køgekyst.dk 'Book an urban space'

hanging out here having some beers is incongruent. A diversity that he suggests should be seen as quality and asset:

Maybe this should be cultivated more! Considered as a quality. I invite people for my birthday – but I have no clue how we will sit and who else will be there. That is a challenge. That is the beauty about that arrangement and setup – the openness. It is a precondition – and a chance!

Maybe the policy could be that only some of the tables can be booked, and others are always open, the Green House project manager suggests.

The system allows different possibilities: Users can prepare, plan, set up a special environment, and enjoy their time in this special outdoor scenery – which creates unique experiences and adds a special liveliness to the space. However, the online booking feature could also be seen as a particular non-public, or privatising, feature, at least in a temporal sense. Access can clearly be understood in a more differentiated way than as merely physical access and as a question of visible boundaries. In Nicolai Carlberg's discussion on divisions in public space, he explains how people normally navigate intuitively due to spatial divisions that indicate specific ownership and behaviour: 'For instance it seldom happens that you by accident settle down with pizza and red wine in someone's private garden' (Kvande 2015: 30). Here, at The Discovery, it is in principle okay to settle down next to a nicely set birthday celebration at the outdoor kitchen, if seats were available, but according to social norms, it would probably be considered odd and impolite.

In a positive sense, the bookable kitchen is a facility that supports social and engaging activities in a flexible way that guarantees availability for the users to plan their arrangement. On the other hand, a 'bookable public facility' introduces a level of formalised and scheduled, time-based privatisation. The booking system as both an enabling and restricting tool has to be recognised as an activation feature and part of the setup. This is not necessarily a bad thing, since the actual use indicates and manifests interest and activity on site. Nevertheless, it is a spatial-technological combination that co-shapes experiences and spatial arrangements. A booking system can be a discriminating factor in some ways, but it also illustrates how web-based tools are today often an organisational layer prior to action in physical space. We agree online to make things offline, so to speak (Gauntlett 2011: 112). Virtual organisation and spatial doings are increasingly intertwined and new links emerge.

Furthermore, in light of a rising interest in sharing concepts and an emerging 'on-demand' culture, the kitchen as a bookable amenity supports and enables 'collective-private' use rights on a temporary basis. It thus adds a paradoxical layer to the fact that space being public already implies sharing as a basic condition. Sharing the already shareable in this way, might also indicate that multi-layered modes of appropriation are at play.

According to Neal Gorenflo and Jeremy Adam Smith, founders of the online hub *shareable.net*, 'sharing as a lifestyle' implies a shift in focus from ownership to access; a development that today results in a wealth of theme-based communities (Gorenflo & Smith 2012: 22). In this specific situation, the spatial sharing and on-demand concept is materialised as a public outdoor facility managed by the planning partnership – a condition that, however, differs largely from other collective object- and service-sharing communities. If on-demand features enter the urban planning repertoire in this way, they add new aspects to the already complex constellations of ownership and use in public urban space. Furthermore, the bookable setup frames and to some extent formalises the outdoor cooking and dining activities, though these are functions which could else be regarded as acts of more informal and spontaneous appropriation.

In *The Spontaneous City* (2010), Joop de Boer and Jeroen Beekmans describe an ambiguous relation in contemporary planning efforts that aim at planning and generating spontaneous actions in the city. They argue that public spaces are not where people are acting this way – they suggest we act 'spontaneously in private':

The Spontaneous City is often described in relation to the public domain. That's odd, considering that the spontaneous part of society really takes place in the private domain, away from the eyes of the society. People are all busy creating, beautifying and improving in their house or backyard. You can't just go out and do that in the public space and you can't just go off spontaneously on your own and act as you wish. If we were to filter out all the public spaces and only look at private ones, we would be looking at a completely Spontaneous City. (de Boer & Beekmans 2010: 138)

While their idea is rather simplified and certainly provocative, however, it does support the assumption emerging in this case discussion: that injecting levels of privateness, or rather specific frameworks for individual action, can be considered an emerging activation strategy in terms of animating public spaces, which are specifically programmed to be activated through 'domestic doings'. De Boer & Beekmans conclude that they are not talking so much 'about the spontaneity of the intervention' itself,

but rather 'about the spontaneous social interaction it brings out'. Planning for spontaneity induces a certain level of 'artificial spontaneity' (Ibid.: 140) in the way carefully planned initiatives actually elicit what could be considered non-planned actions. In fact, the bookable kitchen embodies the ambiguous meaning of the domestication concept in an urban context, as an expression of both spatial order and control as well as of personal appropriation, as sketched out in the chapter introduction.

Margaret Crawford and Marco Cenzatti advocate for an awareness of multiplicity in terms of space conceptions fluctuating between public and private, expressing both conflictual tendencies as well as signs of possibilities and diversity in spatial use. Crawford & Cenzatti argue that 'no single space can represent the totality of public space' (Crawford and Cenzatti, 1998: 16). A 'quasi-public space' (Ibid.: 17) refers to privately owned but publicly used spaces, which are to be found for instance in shopping malls, transport terminals, corporate building lobbies and lounges. Such emergences make it challenging to define public space in a normative way: 'As public spaces, these private interior places are equally puzzling, existing somewhere between the private space of domestic life and the public spaces shaped by collective powers' (Ibid.). An example of what Crawford & Cenzatti describe as 'quasi-public spaces' are the so-called POPS (or POPOS), 'privately owned public (open) spaces'.<sup>22</sup>

The bookable outdoor kitchen at The Discovery could be considered as a different version of a semi-public and 'quasi-public' space: an *inverted POPS on demand*. As a 'publicly owned private space', the bookable on-demand kitchen offers a pocket of formal temporal privacy in public – a 'public offer'. The booking system also indicates another way of understanding private and public in this context. While not visible, the virtual booking of the *inverted POPS on demand* implies a temporal level of private ownership for a specific scheduled timeframe – the private space that is publicly owned is thereby provided to the public on demand. What is notable is not the so much the occupation and use as such, but the fact that the system and organisation through this feature is a particular add-on to the urban design and programmatic setup. It creates a 'designed activity pocket' functioning as an invitation for appropriation in public, which introduce a mechanism for private occupancy in a distinct way. This new concept is worth scrutinising as a distinct space-making strategy and phenomenon in contemporary urban design and planning, and, I would argue, in particular in relation to temporary urban spaces in re-use and transformation settings.

The domestic activities at The Discovery play a particular role in the temporary re-programming strategy of Køge Kyst. The negotiations of right to vegetables and benches and the lack of 'bee peace' on this location reveals more than the nitty-gritty everyday life of temporary urban spaces. Not only do the presented actions elucidate that meticulous planning and facilitation is to be found behind the relaxed and informal hangout setting. The analysis also shows that this is a setting that contains a palette of 'spatial offers' due to the planning partnership's aim to attract both specific target groups

<sup>22</sup> Commonly, POPS in cities like San Francisco, London and New York provide developers the possibility to bypass zoning laws by granting concessions, and thus increasing building density, if they incorporate areas with public access in connection with privately owned company estates, a phenomenon that has been heavily criticised. Though proclaimed as public space, they often are not really, because of their sometimes hidden labyrinthine location, access systems, heavy surveillance, guards and other restrictions and discriminative practices (Crawford & Cenzatti 1998; Miller 2007; Garrett 2015).

and a larger public crowd during the Phase Zero. These intents result in distinct spatial concepts and strategies, reaching from individual community garden contracts and time-based privatisation of the kitchen space to pacifying super-public garden beds.

The staged everyday doings work as urban life promoting attractions benefitting from the strong spatial contrast of the harbour environment. The contrast is the whole point and what makes the spaces here captivating. If the programs at The Discovery are part of a testbed for the future open areas, 'The Commons', as the development plan prescribes, one may wonder how they will be transformed, when the setting is not the 'otherness' of the rough but fascinating industrial open landscape, but new housing blocks and green areas with clearly designated public, semi-public and private zones managed by future district associations. In the first detailed local development plan for the area, the guidelines define 'The Commons' as 'publicly accessible' (Køge Kommune 2014: 7). However, the plan further states that they 'should work as semi-public open areas, while the ground-floor flats will have the possibility to have private gardens out into the common area' (Køge Kommune 2014: 10).

If and how the multiple levels of ownership and publicness detected at The Discovery will be translated into the future commons concept, depend on how programmatic, spatial and social learnings are translated from the temporary phase of Phase Zero.



Illustration of the future 'Commons' in Køge Kyst from the development plan 2011. Illustration: SLA

## SMEDESTÆDE 2 – VALBY

### Temporary public ‘real’ estate

The simple temporary activation of a vacant site owned by the city and initiated by the public authorities themselves sounds like a straightforward procedure. No hassle with private landowners. Good conditions for internal collaboration and possible ‘short-cuts’ through direct access to key persons and the right departments for permissions and agreements. Political will for something to happen that is visible, benefits the local community and the general city image.

Despite such ideal circumstances, costly conditions and formal constraints can play in and create unexpected procedural challenges, despite a low-key character of installations and interventions in material terms. Even micro-scale implementations can have implications for established formal working routines and procedures both internally, in the municipal system, and for external private collaborators and local citizens. Paradoxical situations can thus occur between programmatic wishes and structural conditions that transgress public-private categories in particular ways. Unexpected tasks but also instances of serendipity can emerge in the process of uncertain prospects – and potentially modify routines and practices, and question them in a positive way, as well.

The point of departure in Køge was the ‘domesticated and staged harbour’ and the tension between a high degree of publicity and the establishment of more closed environments and ‘private zones’ for engagement. The discussion of Smedestræde 2 in Valby will begin by looking into another significant aspects of temporary use of areas in transition that relates to this chapter; the unclear juridical state of property during re-programming. The particularities and glitches that emerge in relation to the legal issues and ownership conditions play an important role in the development and illustrate additional aspects that transgress what public or private space and action implies in this field.

In the following analysis, I will look into the development and use of the Smedestræde site in Valby in its temporary juridical state of ‘reservation rent’. This category is an internal municipal mechanism to hold on to a property during preparatory phases of planning and decision making that both illustrates public-private tensions and a distinct occurrence of authorised temporary use in this specific case.

The discussion thus takes its point of departure in the policy and legal conditions; however, these overall frameworks have concrete implications for the actual public life on site, which will be explored as well and which point back to learnings from the Køge case in terms of appropriation, access and use.

The ‘reservation rent’ situation demonstrates that the municipality, as the public authority, has multiple roles and different value sets and objectives, which are related to the sub-units involved and their actions in regard to the site. Meanwhile, the rather spontaneous and privately initiated emergence on the site of a temporary pop-up bar (the TH. Bar) plays a particular and important role in creating actual public interest in the site and making it a public space – by ‘on-site hosting’ and creation of invitations to pass the hedge and enter the ambiguous garden. It elucidates layers of spatial practice that form situations of ‘switch-over’ of what could be considered as public or private areas of responsibility and fields of activity, of both a formal and an informal nature. This analysis will examine public-private dynamics, but will also go a step further by looking at how these dynamics relate to market





09.06.2014\_The Valby Pavilion with play equipment. In the background a banner features the event calendar for the site for the summer 2014.



09.06.2014\_The garden boxes and pavilion seen towards Valby Langgade



value and changes of practice and routines.

### ***Virtually private***

On Smedestræde in Valby the temporary installations and the event-based activation were to a great extent part of a strategy to knock down a sale sign – and to keep it down for a while. The site was subsequently put on hold and kept out of the private real estate market for an unknown period of time, for the disposition of the local committee and interested partners, while the plans for a new cultural facility were in preparation.

The ‘reservation rent’ is the legal framework that made the temporary use of the site on Smedestræde 2 possible from 2013 to 2015, although that is not its actual purpose. It is a framework, or loophole, a *permitted exception*, which both enables and complicates aspects of short-term use in relation to a site’s future planning prospects – and thereby the relationship between visions put forward and the everyday practicalities. These consequences will be unfolded in this case discussion.

Through this specific regulation, municipal land and buildings are spatially and temporally positioned between public ownership and private market. It raises questions of valuation, but it also concerns strategic moves and modes of operations on day to day basis. The phase, termed a clarification period of ‘administrative reservation’ (Københavns Kommune 2009b), despite the connotation of waiting, is far from a passive and dormant state in this case. It illustrates how the legal and economic division between public and private property, as a fundamental binary mechanism and organisational split in urban development, affects the process of establishing and running short-term initiatives on a site while future visions are in preparation. In this case study, organisational and legal structures and outsourced functions bordering this division come into play through a distinct set of additional private-public constructions.

The project manager from the local committee describes the reservation rent status as follows:

All real estate belonging to the Copenhagen Municipality has undergone a virtual privatization, in that it is managed by an independent agency within the municipality which is bound by contract to manage everything under strict market terms. This means that when, as in this case, a branch of the administration wants to use or just reserve a public plot or estate, it has to pay a large reservation rent calculated on an estimated market value of the plot and full contribution to maintenance, even though the buildings are supposed to be torn down in any event. This means, that it is very costly for the municipality to just keep a plot for a period of prospecting, forcing politicians to make decisions very quickly and thereby making the prospecting process less thorough. In the end this may result in less reasonable solutions. The money paid for reservation rent could be used better for other things in the administration. (Copenhagen University/SEEDS Valby 2013: 4)

The reservation rent is a construction based on the Copenhagen Municipality rent model (since 2009). A sub-organisation the real estate company KEjd (Københavns Ejendomme/Copenhagen Properties), which is a part of the Financial Administration of the city, is in charge of managing all municipal property.<sup>23</sup> KEjd was established in 2005 when all the city’s property-related activities were collected

<sup>23</sup> Before 2014 it was part of the Culture & Leisure Administration

under one unit. The unit is in charge of maintenance, service, administration, lease agreements and building activities concerning the municipal property portfolio. Since 2015, it has been further subdivided in two units, one focusing on facility management and one on new building activity and development. As the managing unit, KEjd is required to secure revenue on the properties and to maintain and service the municipally owned buildings and open spaces. This is partly done through third party agencies. KEjd is thus an example of a sub-organisation on the border of the public administration system, in the way it functions as a buffer and mechanism in handling transition of real estate and dealing with 'customers'.

The different administrative units can apply for reservation rent on properties owned by the city which are vacant but of future interest, to prevent them being up for sale. If the property in question is not used for existing basic administrative functions, the reservation rent is to be incorporated in the budget of the specific new project, which the property is thought to be reserved for. The rent is calculated based on the average income on the property the previous year. It is also dependent on what estimated income KEjd expects they would have gained on the property in the reserved period had it been rented out on standard terms or sold (Københavns Kommune 2009b: 4).<sup>24</sup> The situation that is enacted as soon as a municipal sub-department (in this case the Culture & Leisure Administration and the local committee) wants to use a site, legally, puts it in a semi-public and *virtually private* position: It is in economic terms 'out on the market' without actually being on the market.

The reservation rent model is meant to ensure that the municipality does not act in an anti-competitive way in relation to the real estate market and also to generate income for KEjd.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, it is a strategy, as the name implies, to reserve property 'to secure future possibilities without a binding contract'. During the administrative procedure before a proposal is decided on by the city council, securing a property can be considered administrative necessary, so that it can be for disposal according to political decisions made by the council (Københavns Kommune 2009a:2).

This is a model that comes into play when a specific use and project is being planned for a site – if there is certain extraordinary interest. It thus differs from coverage of ordinary lack of income while a property is simply vacant and up for sale. Consequently, the reservation rent is relevant for plots and areas where several players (private and public) are interested in development, as in the Smedestræde 2 case, a central and attractively positioned site.

### ***A site caught in the middle***

The shifting and vague position of the Smedestræde plot in relation to its municipal ownership, the private real estate market as well as the resulting temporary reservation, puts the space in a slippery state, despite the legally 'correct' handling of its status. The way the exceptional reservation period puts the site in an ambiguous position in terms of interest and valuation could be considered as a

<sup>24</sup> In some cases KEjd does allow special favourable short term rents for creative businesses. This has been implemented in specific focus areas in the city, where certain creative environments and the consequent cultural ambience is desired for the development, e.g. in Kødbyen (The trendy Copenhagen Meatpacking District)

<sup>25</sup> In 2013 the Culture & Leisure Department made an enquiry at KEjd concerning a potential exemption from the rule regarding Smedestræde 2, however, this was declined with the argument that it would be a preferential treatment of the department in relation to other departments (Københavns Kommune 2013b).



03.04.2013\_'We moved to Poppelstykket': When Autospar moved out the municipally owned property was put to sale

'commoditization as process' (Kopytoff 1986). In his seminal article *The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process* (1986), cultural anthropologist Igor Kopytoff analyses how things seen in a socio-material perspective over time can move in and out of the state of being a commodity, which illustrates how valuation is a dynamic and processual factor. This perspective highlights that the value(s) of a thing, or in this case, a plot of land, can vary in ways that transform its position and affects its role along the way. The Smedestræde site's ongoing waiting position and temporary activation thus challenges any categorisation of the value-set it might 'belong' to. According to Kopytoff, the value of a thing is regulated by economic systems and cultural values:

Commodities must be not only produced materially as things, but also culturally marked as being a certain kind of thing. (...) The same thing may be treated as a commodity at one time and not at another. (...) Such shifts and differences in whether and when a thing is a commodity reveal a moral economy that stands behind the objective economy of visible transactions. (Kopytoff 1986: 64)

In the western world the status of a commodity depends on its saleability, while 'non-saleability imparts to a thing a special aura of apartness from the mundane and the common' (Ibid.: 69). The cultural significance of certain thing can withdraw it from being a commodity through 'singularization' (Ibid.: 73). In the case of Smedestræde 2, the property can be considered singularised by being put on hold, whereby it acquires a status of uniqueness and special value.

However, putting the Smedestræde plot on the market, even 'virtually', through the reservation rent system, can also be seen as being treated as a commodity. In the internal availability position of reservation rent, it is simultaneously taken *off* the market, to secure public demand and service at the same time as responding to the market in economic terms. What is the 'original' commodity sphere in this case? A neo-liberal perspective, as discussed earlier, that set the 'tendency to view property as essentially private and periodically public, reproduces the wider tendency to view legal orderings as binary, with a privileging of one pole' (Blomley 2004: 5). Nevertheless, specifically in a Danish context, the public sector is of high importance and the municipal administration is a fundamental decentralised unit in the Danish welfare system that also plays a significant role in terms of landownership and management. Public land is in some sense excluded from the private market but, as Kopytoff says, 'commoditized things remain potential commodities – they continue to have an exchange value, even if they have been effectively withdrawn from their exchange sphere and deactivated, so to speak, as commodities' (Kopytoff 1986: 76).

The case of reservation rent in Valby creates a double-sided relation of pendency between public 'refuge' and 'free' market forces. Despite the argument that public land is 'secured' in some way, the rhetoric of a potential return or transfer to the real estate market is clearly expressed as an existing risk in the debate about the site and the plans for its future. After two years of reservation the outcome of the budget negotiations in 2015 was that the city council decided not to prioritise the proposed library and cultural facility on Smedestræde, which resulted in a continuously insecure position of the site. Subsequently, the local committee proclaimed that 'The Smedestræde site is in danger'.<sup>26</sup> But in *what* way is the site 'in danger'? The danger is the risk of the plot being put out for sale by KEjd and

<sup>26</sup> Valby Lokaludvalg homepage, 09. 10 2015: <http://www.valbylokaludvalg.kk.dk/smedestraedegrunden-i-fare/>

concurrently, that the committee's plans regarding the new facility are jeopardised.

The status of the site is discursively pending. All city council budget negotiations dealing with the projects and site's fate in 2013-2015 result in further postponements – not only of actual execution of either project implementation or sale, but also as a bypass regarding decision making as such. As the local newspaper reports, 'The decision was made to postpone the decision to 2016' (*Valbybladet* 16.09 2015).

Singularisation and commoditisation are not just explicit poles. There is movement between the two positions, and they are entangled, if we follow Kopytoff's position (Kopytoff 1986: 88). This dynamic implies a shifting status:

The only time when the commodity status of a thing is beyond question is the moment of actual exchange. Most of the time, when the commodity is effectively out of the commodity sphere, its status is inevitably ambiguous and open to the push and pull of events and desires, as it is shuffled about in the flux of social life. (Kopytoff 1986: 83)

The reserved Valby site is mostly 'effectively out of the commodity sphere', but both the clarification and the 'danger factor' of a definite decision arises every time a budget negotiation comes up and the Valby site's saleability is up for (e)valuation. However, between these fixed points of decision making, the site in a somewhat floating existence.

Social-cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai also considers the value of things from a dynamic perspective, as 'things-in-motion' (Appadurai 1986: 5), but defines the processes in a different way than Kopytoff. He states that economic objects move 'in different *regimes of value* in space and time' (Ibid.: 4). He describes similar processes but uses the terms '*diversion*' and '*ex-commodities*'. The first, diversion, relates to objects 'put into a commodity state though originally specifically protected from it', while ex-commodities are 'retrieved, either temporarily or permanently, from the commodity state and placed in some other state' (Ibid.: 16).

Smedestræde 2 is in a pending state, between the two positions of being exposed (when a sale is imminent and in relation to rent calculation) and temporarily protected (during the reservation rent itself). The procedural conditions make the site fluctuate between different rationales. This is an example of how the basic division between the mechanisms of public and private ownership has quite concrete implications for the authorised temporary use and for any further planning of this 'transitional real estate' and for how additional rules and constructions play in. The *virtually private* state is thus a particular *permitted exception* to the overall dichotomy of public and private that emerges in this particular authorised temporary use.

### **Costly conditions?**

In some sense, the legal and economic terms create very costly conditions. One might even say that the reservation rent of 900.000 kr. per year, circulated 'internally' in the municipal organisation and creating additional paperwork for the employees, is rather incongruous in relation to the smaller



funds for the actual installations and activities.<sup>27</sup> Seen in this light, the temporary activation on Smedestræde is not a 'LQC project' (lighter, quicker, cheaper),<sup>28</sup> though it might appear to be on first glance, based on its physical appearance and 'cheap' temporary character. In this setup, the legal and economic balancing towards the real estate market terms (and the administrative work related to it) challenges the notion of temporary use as generally low-cost and simple. Consequently, it highlights the need to look beyond the physical installations as expressions of a certain temporary low-budget aesthetic and consider the actual management and administrative, legal, political and economic structures and cultures as well and how they either support or restrict development. Nonetheless, the question is if the 'expensive conclusion' based on the rent is actually the right one to be made, given a processual valuation, as discussed earlier. Not only does the mainly economic reasoning needs to be challenged strongly in this regard, but also several parallel processes are running that add content and perspectives.

Anthropologist David Graeber emphasises the need to consider elements of action and dynamic in

<sup>27</sup> The initial installations, implemented to kick-start activity and focus on the site in 2013 had a budget of 30.000 kr. In 2014 additional 100.000 kr. were allotted for further activities and physical installations. Both expenses were covered by the local committees funds for activities in the district, approved by the council.

<sup>28</sup> LQC, meaning 'lighter, quicker, cheaper', is a term used among others by the organisation Project for Public Places to describe projects that are simple, mostly temporary and low-cost community- or grassroots-based place-making initiatives (<http://www.pps.org/reference/lighter-quicker-cheaper/#intro>). It is a concept often referred to in temporary use projects to describe their low-cost DIY character.





< ^ 09.04.2015\_The plant seed station of wood and recycled jars and the basic pallet benches are simple and cheap constructions. However, the site, these elements are located on, has a high market value.

terms of value, moving beyond Kopytoff and Appadurai ideas: 'Value emerges in action', he claims (Graeber 2001: 45).

Commodities have to be produced (and yes, they also have to be moved around, exchanged, consumed . . .), social relations have to be created and maintained; all of this requires an investment of human time and energy, intelligence, concern. If one sees value as a matter of the relative distribution of that, then one has a common denominator. One invests one's energies in those things one considers most important or most meaningful. (Ibid.: 45).

He emphasizes that the actual effort people are willing to put into the process of maintaining, protecting and preserving something is crucial to take into consideration (Ibid.: 45). Value should therefore not be considered static and should not be immediately reified or fixed (Ibid.: 46). Since a lot of work is put into the prospecting, preparation and activation of plans for the central plot in Valby, Graeber's perspective highlights the importance of acknowledging such efforts put forward. Any agenda of future visions and plans must be considered in this discussion. The site is waiting for a large cultural institution project to be realised. What is the value of that future vision? And what is the value of a temporary exploration? Value and interest must here be approached in a multifaceted way: the value of strategically protecting the vision and plans for future use, meaning the value of the space as prospect, is in constant negotiation. It can be questioned in what terms the specific property

management system is enabling or restricting in the process. To summarize, my detailed scrutiny of the *virtually private* framework demonstrates the need to look behind the façade of the waiting site and address the related political and economic framework, fluctuating between the site's public ownership and its market value.

### ***Actively put on hold***

This going back and forth in terms of the site's status and valuation is of relevance for decisions taken regarding site development. The reservation rent is more than a municipal technicality, and it has very concrete implications, when put in action in this specific context. The regulation affects daily procedures on a short-term basis as well as what could be called the medium-range planning horizon. The reservation rent is to be paid half yearly, which, together with the yearly budget negotiations, establishes the time cycle for renegotiating the future project and possible extension of the reservation rent. Should the pavilion be repainted? Is it worth it if the reservation rent is not paid? How long can the TH. Bar that currently is on the site stay? The condition of the installations on site thus needs to be considered continuously in relation to the current state of possible future development.

The reservation rent does not cover expenditure, maintenance and other requirements for actively using the site. The Technical and Environmental Administration has to issue a permit for use to the project manager in the Valby Local Committee, but the different uses sometimes require further permits internally in the municipal system. The reservation rent is the basis, but the committee has to apply for actual use regarding specific activities, according to the project manager:

Even though we previously got the authorization (via the reservation rent) to use the space during 2014 and to build the pavilion [2013], this authorization does not include the authorization for the activities we planned to do to activate the site (urban gardening etc.). Therefore we have again to take the time to apply for more permits. (Copenhagen University/SEEDS WP5 Valby 2014: 4)

Since what happens on Smedestræde 2 is characterised as a continuum of singular initiatives and accumulated installations over time, it demands many applications within the municipal administration.

The implementation of reservation rent thus creates a transitional state in terms of ownership, the administrative framework and actions performed on site. This constellation requires an attention to the ways ownership relations and regulations play out *in action* and how property that can be termed 'unsettled' (Blomley 2004b: 14) affect the course of the planning process.

The reservation rent is a legal and organisational loophole that enables use of the site for a limited period (or rather several limited periods with equally uncertain horizon). It made it possible to take the property off the sales list and prevent a supermarket project. Because of it, the local committee could connect it to the culture house and library project and initiate temporary activities and installations. Nevertheless, it is a temporal framework, an internal mechanism that creates specific processual conditions.

The reservation period functions as a preparation phase; a condition that usually not entails that the

site's physical nature will be altered. Nevertheless, this preparation phase *does* affect the physical site, if the site is actually put to use while political decisions are pending. It is not common practice that a site, as in the case here in Valby, is activated and physically changed and appropriated during the period in which it is put on hold. It also means that, normally, in the case of the reservation rent, there are no expenditures because the rented area is not actively used (Copenhagen Municipality 2009a: 2) – it is just reserved and allocated. As such, temporary use is not a part of the model; it is merely enabled by this explicit internal (policy) gap. It is thus worthwhile mentioning that no other examples of municipal sites intentionally used temporary under such conditions (the terms of reservation rent) are to be found in Copenhagen. An enquiry at KEjd confirmed that the Smedestræde case is a rather unusual situation. According to several other sources in the municipality (and based on my experience with other temporary projects on publicly owned land), similar situations of temporary use of internally owned land are most often handled in alternative ways (than by reservation rent), primarily 'by not asking'; an enabling 'willful blindness' that make things run more smoothly in practice. Paradoxically it highlights, that in this case, the followed procedure in accordance with this specific applicable rule is actually an exceptional case. Here, the 'exception proves the rule' in a particular way – or certainly tests its existence: Following the rule is also a *permitted exception*.

The state of in-betweenness based on the ownership framework has concrete implications on site development. The active use of the site during the internal reservation phase results in a situation where two different logics are at play and overlapping. The reservation rent period is as such a passive, or rather dormant and non- progressive situation, preventing action and waiting for political prioritisation. However, at the same time, new activities are initiated and installations built on site with the deliberate aim to activate the site as a local public space, setting the course for a future public library.

While waiting for further decisions, KEjd maintain a basic service (which has to be paid for by, in this case, the Culture & Leisure Administration) which covers measures to prevent vandalism, sealing the doors to the buildings (and thereby to all infrastructure for the site), checking for break-ins and damage, etc. KEjd hires an external private company for that. The state of the property is thereby kept 'stable' in its waiting position – but only to some degree. At the same time, these measures do not prevent a slow deterioration of the building structures on Smedestræde – it remains in a 'stable bad condition', as the local committee project manager expresses it quite accurately.<sup>29</sup> More fundamental renovations would be needed to prevent the slow decay. The basic costs of renovating the buildings, even for temporary use, are estimated to be too high for the municipality, and anyway, actual renovation is not desirable, given the plans for the new cultural institution already on the drawing table. Cost for tear-down has already partly been agreed upon in the municipal council. Doing nothing is hereby also a choice, since it makes renovation more and more expensive and potentially makes a tear-down more eligible which might be a desirable outcome for some. One building on site listed as worthy of preservation ('bevaringsværdig') might thereby be permitted demolished for future projects.

<sup>29</sup> Follow-up meeting at Valby Local Committee with project manager Dorte Grastrup-Hansen, January 2016

At the same time, the outdoor areas at the front, facing the street, are opened up and activated. The use began with the local committee and our research team that built the entry sign, pavilion and chalkboard installation and further collaborators, invited by the local committee in 2013 and 2014 contributed to the setting. The projects prioritised by the committee promoted different kinds of 'green environmental living.' Activities included a small market as an environmental Christmas event, and sustainable living mini seminars and workshops during the yearly Valby Culture Days. From 2015 the initiator and owner of the TH. Bar was the main player in terms of using the site.

Apart from the new physical installations on the site, the white entrance sign, the pavilion, the chalkboard, the book swapping cabinets, the garden beds and pallet furniture, the barter station, a mural art work on the gable and the container bar, as well as smaller play equipment on the pavilion, the existing spatial elements were altered to communicate that space was accessible and usable. The local committee cut small passages into the site from the sidewalk, so access on site is possible that way and also the gate was opened. In total, the setting put together on the overgrown, gravel ground turns it into a lush garden space behind the hedge.

Meanwhile, the buildings and the back area are still no-go in terms of connection to the 'active' part of the site. Basic supplies such as water for the plant beds and toilets for the bar have to be sorted out otherwise; water cannot be used and drawn from the sealed-off buildings on site that are managed



08.07.2013\_The buildings on Smedestræde are sealed off to prevent break-ins.

by Kejd.<sup>30</sup>

The site is thus divided into a passive section, with the 'mute' building backdrop, the bleak back yard and the cleaned up and activated front area outside – a split property, so to speak. It is a spatial division that reflects back to the legal framework of the *virtually private* public real estate.

The trajectory of this active-passive site demonstrates that the specific legal loophole is not simply a bureaucratic formality. It illustrates that 'legal practice, in all its discretionary and rule-bound variety, co-produces places through an attentiveness to, and sometimes an apparent dismissal of, spatiality' as researchers within urban law, Luke Bennet and Antonia Layard, formulates it (Bennett & Layard 2015: 406). The shifting state challenges the publicness or privateness as clear categories from legal and organisational perspectives, even though these are often considered stable structural divisions and they affect space.

The shifting state also illustrates how different agendas imply that strategic property development is not really pursued from a mutual perspective. The rent model does not support actual feedback about any positive effects the temporary use brings to the site. The ambiguity appears when the site is not only a vacant lot but a temporary public space as well. The use of the site in a non-use situation is the issue. The temporary use is here not an activation of a vacant site but primarily a tool in the decision making of the future.

In this decision making process, the organisational framework of the municipality through its sub-units represents and acts out different rationale – it is not 'one' public authority. Whereas KEjd's role as the real estate manager, for instance, is to secure financial optimisation and basic maintenance, the local committee as a local and hybrid connector has the realisation of the cultural facility as their main agenda and a general focus on a green profile and cultural activities.

The committee is positioned as a linking organisation. They have the freedom to initiate specific local projects, whereas the scope of the committee's activities and general decision making is steered by the municipal council. This is also the way communication occurs. All official communication from the local committee features the committee's logo and the logo of the municipality. Occasionally the committee spokespersons also distance themselves in different ways, for instance, in reaction to comments and questions from the citizens: 'It is not us, but Copenhagen Municipality who decides where to build and where not. But we try to get a say, so that what is going to be build, will fit the district.'<sup>31</sup> The local committee is part of the municipality setup, but also an external unit in some regards, which underlines the multiple constellations in the municipal system.

## DIY Bureaucracy and ostensive informality

### *Municipal chalk*

The unusual reservation rent situation puts the site in an ambiguous, uncertain state that also challenges basic everyday practice in terms of use, maintenance and management. As pointed out

<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, the sealing off does not prevent the back area being occasionally occupied by homeless people looking for shelter in the unused buildings.

<sup>31</sup> Valby Lokaldvalg (09.06.2016): <https://www.facebook.com/valbylokaludvalg/posts/1087106061362260>

in chapter 1, 'Between Vision and Everyday', looking closer into the practical doings of daily life can highlight aspects of both continuation and change, which might help us to understand planning and design issues in a transition perspective and context as well as stages of permitted exceptions in this regard.

Here in Valby, the activities taking place at Smedestræde 2, demand coordination and maintenance, broadening conceptions of what is the responsibility of public authorities and of the field of private actors. Clearly, these roles can and are turned around. In this case, routines and practices are in the process of change – in creation, in fact – they are negotiated, tested and exchanged. The question of maintenance and caretaking of the outdoor areas, explored next, demonstrates how roles and tasks are taken and distributed; they tell us about practices transgressing normative understandings about public authorities and private agendas in terms of establishing a public urban space, in this case temporary.

The simple, yet unusual spatial elements on site demand a form of caretaking that does not necessarily fit the general procedures followed by municipal departments and sub-organisations: the barter station, the blackboard, the seed library, the planting beds and furniture as well as the different 'add-ons' to the pavilion such as play equipment and book exchange cabinets. In addition, the appearance of these 'design features' can differ, depending on condition, weather and season. It is a fragile scenario; the balance between cosy relaxed and untidy messy is a fine line. If not taken care of the setting can very quickly look scruffy and neglected. It is a dilemma between the space being on one hand 'presentable' and on the other hand being 'self-sustaining', as explained by the responsible employer from the local committee (project manager, January 2016). The question of appearance is an important factor. For instance, new plants are planted in the boxes before specific events so the site looks well-kept and blooming. Even though plants are already there, and might be perennials, new plants make it look more 'fresh' – presentable clearly comes before self-sustaining.

Furthermore the much of the spatial quality of the site emerges from the overgrown garden-like character of the former parking lot due to its abandoned state. The balance is to keep the enclosed green ambience, but also control and 'maintain' that uncontrollably emerged environment to some degree to signal access and publicness.

The loose elements and soft materials need specific caretaking as opposed to more standardized and ready-made urban design features and surfaces in 'normal' or 'traditional' parks, squares or streetscapes. Things like the open-air book cabinets and the seed library are vulnerable in their materiality and can be considered interiors made exterior, in a way. The barter station, too, demands to be looked after, covered as it is by only light plastic tarp roofing and featuring toys, clothing, shoes and other second-hand items. It means something if the toys in the station are on the shelves and shoes and clothes are sorted and not too dirty. The recycle station contains very intimate and private items, a setup normally more associated with flea markets or garage and yard sales directly managed through private initiatives and personal appearance. As Margaret Crawford puts it, at informal garage sales 'Unwanted furniture, knickknacks, and clothes are suddenly accessible to anyone passing by, melding the public and the extremely private' (Crawford 2008 (1999): 29). Elements from the domestic sphere



09.04.2015\_Videogames, toys and shoes in the barter station



are thereby carried outside their usual frame, in a specific way. However, the display of private intimate things in the barter station enters a completely different setting here on the Smedestræde plot than at a garage sale. In this case, the swop, initiated by the authorities, is (mostly) non-personal and the displayed things therefore need to be 'sorted out' by an intermediary, someone who checks on it on regular basis. This task is, for the time being, managed by the local committee and their environmental group. It highlights that facilitation plays a significant role in maintaining public space that is a compilation of activation-demanding features, even though they may seem low-key, informal and unpretentious.

The specific setting also implies that 'ingredients' and tools that supply the spatial frame are crucial – a part of the program. No books – no book exchange; no seeds – no seed exchange; and so on. The *In Valby I dream about* blackboard does not work without chalk. Thus, the project manager in the local committee has the task of being the 'chalk supplier' for the blackboard, filling up the 'chalk drawer' mounted on the pavilion and the holder on the wall as well as hiding a little stash of chalk beneath the pavilion floor. Almost indiscernible micro-tasks, they nonetheless add unusual responsibilities to the job of a municipal employer, who can be seen more as a form of semi-official 'site and props-manager' - a *DIY bureaucrat*. The *DIY bureaucrat*, as the formal responsible representative from the public authorities, is in charge of managing the informal do-it-yourself enterprises, which to a high degree involves the supply of specific tools and checking out the state of the installation – maybe



09.06.2014\_The chalk drawer mounted on the pavilion



20.09.2013\_In Valby I Dream about...only makes sense with chalk



also doing-it-themselves. In this case the project manager and her colleagues also clear rubbish from the site, do the garden and put books in the book exchange. The *DIY bureaucrat* might do this more out of private interest and engagement. This is not the issue, but what it underlines in terms of the spatial settings is that if the 'self-service functions' are not self-functioning, they are not functioning, so they must be specifically sustained and supported.

The caretaking needed here is characterised as 'keeping an eye on' things (project manager, January 2016), since it can be everything from watering and weeding plants, checking for break-ins, garbage and broken windows, and maintaining the seed library (somebody complained about needles, for instance), book exchange and chalk board. It also includes event planning, processing permits and keeping other stakeholders informed.

Furthermore, the short-lived material quality of the installations, based on expectations of their temporary lifespan (of maximum six months to a year), becomes challenging as soon as they move beyond a certain state or 'decay time' – time adds tasks. The simple cheap wood sign we, the KU SEEDS team, put up to mark the changing activities on site is not just 'hanging there' but becomes a security issue. Are the wires starting to loosen? It is hanging above the sidewalk – what if it falls down? The barter station needs a new roof, the pavilion construction demands to be maintained and fixed in case of damage and the pavilion will need some fresh paint after several seasons' exposure to Danish weather.



09.06.2014\_The book cabinet – needs books

These tasks turn up along the way due to the site's prolonged temporary state and either are adapted to the existing maintenance procedures or else new ways of dealing with the tasks are arranged. The range of involved stakeholders and what they are actually doing in terms of keeping the place is a particular combination of defined, standard fields of responsibility and personal agreements. It reflects the site's status of in between an official open and 'public square' in municipal terms and an informal intimate 'backyard hang-out', as the owner of the TH. Bar calls his establishment (June 2015). Beyond that stage our research team had follow-up meetings and discussions with the committee employees in charge on the state of affairs and possible solutions. However, we were not engaged in the actual facilitation and maintenance beyond the first phase. This is also why we do not play a role in the actual running of the site addressed in this analysis. Being initiators of the initial kick-starter installations, did not imply that we had beforehand clarified details regarding potential upcoming tasks in terms of 'our' installations, other than that it was the local committee that 'took over' facilitation. In hindsight, to me it highlights that such a project collaboration not only challenges established practise in the municipal system but certainly also highlight methodological and ethical questions within practice-based and practice-led research intervening in transitional sites (see also chapter one).

### ***'Looking for urban farmers'***

Private and public realms of activity in this cribbed-together 'caretaking model' are not clearly defined. KEjd is responsible for locking the buildings, but the task itself is outsourced to a third party. The Technical and Environmental Administration of the Municipality (TMF) fills up the mobile water tank for the garden, placed in front of the former office building, since access to the buildings is not possible. The bar owner mows the lawn, picks up garbage, and water the flowerbeds (the municipal service personnel or the local committee used to do this before the bar moved in). The local committee and the environmental group clean the recycle station, replant garden beds and check all the installations. Basically, they do what is currently not done by others. What is private and what is public is difficult to distinguish. Areas of responsibility are a puzzle and neither space nor roles are clear-cut from the beginning. This is exemplified by the maintenance of the mini garden. The small garden unit is a very different version of temporary urban gardening from what we saw in the community gardens at Køge. To activate the site, the local committee decided to initiate the urban garden project on Smedestræde, which would fit the green profile and the focus on sustainability put forward by the committee. It would also potentially engage local residents in activities on the site. In spring 2014 an open invitation was send out via different media for local citizens to take part in establishing the urban garden on the site. Under the heading 'Looking for urban farmers', the chairman of the local committee's environmental group explained the purpose of the garden in the letter of invitation:

It is about making people in the city aware of where food comes from, about the possibility for them to see for themselves how things grow. It will create more respect for the produce and more interest in experimenting with food when you have yourself been actively involved in planting and maintaining. (...) And it is a nice activity to build, dig the soil and sow plants, which then grow bigger. It creates community around the garden and connections to nature and that can make new ideas grow.



09.04.2015\_ The sign on the sidewalk – Are the wires starting to loosen? Prolonged temporary street sign

The invitation letter goes on to outline the terms of the gardening activity:

The following maintenance is up to the citizens. If you get bitten by the project, you can sign up as a regular Urban Farmer, and be part of a team that takes care of the garden and create other green projects in Valby. (...) The beds will stay on Smedestræde during 2014, so after that you can be part of seeing the things grow in the garden of all of Valby.

On planting day, several garden beds and boxes and attached seating were created next to the pavilion. The garden is ongoing, and has been extended with further elements from the local committee (compost, etc.), creating a small green cluster in the middle of the site.

Nevertheless, as a (lasting) public outreach activity, the garden initiative was only partly successful. The project manager said, 'We did not succeed in getting more citizens on board; we did reach out, but only the small group that was already part of the environmental group has been involved' (January 2016).

There may be different reasons for the lack of local interest in participating. The crucial role of a few but very engaged individuals connected to the environmental group and the local committee must be recognised for taking care of the garden and sharing an interest in the site activities and its state. However, from a collaborative planning and urban development perspective it is though interesting to note in what way the installations on site, also bring with them certain practices to sustain and also expectations as to how these practices can be carried out or delegated. The huge interest and popularity of urban gardens as sharing and co-creation enablers is fascinating, in temporary settings in particular, but as already discussed in the Køge Harbour context, many different organisational models or collaborations are to be found behind and beneath strawberries, parsley and kale plants.

By 'looking for urban farmers', the local committee aimed at an engaged citizen role based on voluntariness and eventually local actors as co-producers on site. The interest was not that great, an unexpected development; what was thought to be a small but broader inclusive citizen volunteer community garden project has turned into a sub-municipal maintenance task. In the end it was the environmental group, and later on, the bar owner and his girlfriend, who took care of the garden beds. So even though the idea of the citizen volunteers was an open call and an experiment, it was also a reference to how a place like this *should* be run, based on what could be termed a 'traditional informal organisation' of these types of common areas. The organisers had expected the engagement of citizens as 'community cultivators' (MBLL/Hausenberg 2012: 78), who would see the gardening as a social act and who would not determine success in terms of amount of carrots in the garden or a clear structural organisation of future collective cultivation, but would appreciate occasional social meeting and activity - An even less binding model than in the Harbour Gardens in Køge.

The garden is as much a signal and expression of intentions as it is an actual garden and a beautification element within the site. However, no one clarified beforehand the ongoing organisation and status the garden was to have. This lack of foresight was of course also grounded in the unclear state of the site and what was possible to plan, but it is also reflected in the role the local committee has in the municipal setup. The focus of the committee is on dialogue and activities – the actual ongoing

management and maintenance of physical sites is as such not part of the committee's competences or terms of reference describing their role. Their role is to coordinate the municipal *activities* in the district (Københavns Kommune 2011). The temporary installations requiring facilitation thus challenge that notion of 'activities'.

One area of responsibility allocated to the local committee is a specific activity fund – to support events and projects (Ibid.). However, the municipal funds at the disposal of the local committee are normally not applicable for continuous service and caretaking. Expenses for repairs of existing facilities occasionally occur, but the budget is mostly intended for activities, events and singular projects.<sup>32</sup> In the committee's budget, costs for events, tours, snacks/refreshments and materials such as for a 'garden day' are common expenses; however, the means for longer term organisational support or real ongoing maintenance is not part of that approval system. Regular caretaking of municipal outdoor areas belongs to the Technical and Environmental Department, but what is demanded here is not standard procedure. Nevertheless, activities and events in this case leave traces, and are prolonged through the physical installations; they are material and spatial and stay on the site. So what to do with these material elements of activity? What happens when the built-in practice needs to be sustained?

<sup>32</sup> Minutes from the local committees meetings, accessible online: <http://www.valbylokaludvalg.kk.dk/hoeringer>



08.05.2015\_ Garden work with the environmental group



### ***Ostensive informality***

To understand the relationship between the municipal initiative (specifically, the role of the public authority unit of the local committee) and potential external collaborators (local citizens), viewing the routines and practices on the site from a practice theory perspective can be useful.

Considering organisational routines in situations of change and as part of different dynamics, adds another perspective to the discussion of private and public aspects in the authorised temporary spaces. This section elaborates on the crossover practices that occur, when maintenance of a temporary space is pending between being a formal task of the public authorities and an informal leisure activity for local citizens.

In *Reconceptualizing Organizational Routines as a Source of Flexibility and Change* (2003) organisation theorists Martha S. Feldman & Brian T. Pentland suggest to consider routines both in regard to their stabilising and changing properties and the interplay between these poles. A standpoint that is interesting when we look at how actions and routines between the public authorities internally and in relation to others are adjusted and tested in this case, where the site conditions as well as the site's spatial elements challenge normal procedures. In their theoretical framework, Feldman & Pentland build on practice theory of Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens and Bruno Latour. Based on Bruno Latour's differentiation between ostensive and performative (Latour 1986) in particular, Feldman & Pentland suggest that routines can be considered as either ostensive or performative. The first is what can be described as the structural reference and guidance version of a routine, as it ought to be, whereas the performative is the actual, the specific routine brought to life. The performative aspect thus 'creates, maintains, and modifies the ostensive aspect of the routine', which 'allows routines to generate a wide range of outcomes, from apparent stability to considerable change' (Feldman & Pentland 2003: 94). According to Feldman & Pentland, 'the ostensive aspect of the routine is the idea; the performative aspect, the enactment. Both aspects are necessary to constitute what we understand to be the routine' (Ibid.: 102).<sup>33</sup> From this perspective, routines hold an ambivalent position of stability and repetition as well as more dynamic and changing properties. Challenging a view of routines as being stable, rigid and inflexible, and considering them instead as 'sources of flexibility and change' (Ibid.: 94) is a relevant perspective for urban practice in transition and in uncertain states. If we question routines considered as stable ways of doing things, they tell us something about what happens when new tasks have to be solved and expectations are not met. Rather than seeing routines and tasks as 'mechanisms or abstractions', it is necessary to look at them as 'collective human activities' and with a potential for variation as much as for stability (Ibid.: 97).

To return to Smedestræde 2 with this in mind, the way the management of the site evolves, seen in the light of how routines are performed and adapted, demonstrates how certain ways of doing things

<sup>33</sup> However, Latour's argument in 'The Powers of Association' (1986), which Feldman & Pentland refer to, is that a 'shift from an ostensive to a performative definition of society' is required; a 'shift from principle to practice' (Latour 1986: 272–273). Latour questions a given social structure per se and power as an inherent property and argues for a performative ontology. If not put in action in some way and performed, it does not exist: This is the message in the light of this pragmatic realism. Nevertheless, to investigate the shift and changes, it can be relevant to consider a differentiation between normative routines and how action is performed in a specific context. I would argue, however, that the normative rules and routines 'as we know them' are also acted out, performed, in some way.

are embedded in the programs put forward. Nonetheless, as the examples show, they might serve a different reality than they were created for. Of course, these procedures always require a layer of translation and adaptation in a specific context. However, in this case, no standard routines actually exist, since, as described, the reservation rent model does not imply or consider actual use of the physical space. It is not an existing situation – there are no routines for the loophole. Additionally, the space is unusual in terms of its requirements for maintenance.

The expectations around involvement in the temporary community gardening can thus be considered as a kind of 'ostensive voluntariness' or *ostensive informality*. The 'looking for urban farmers' is an open invitation. It also implies an expectation that people will turn up, get involved and be partly responsible for the caretaking, in a casual and informal way – because that is how these projects 'work'.

<sup>34</sup> That not being the case, the local committee, as a hybrid connector of the 'local' with the public municipal body (and the technical department in charge of basic maintenance), acquire unexpected tasks; their performative routines are changing. In any case, they already perform unusual tasks for the installations and the props and tools supply as outlined earlier – both in terms of maintenance, but also in the approval system. An *ostensive informality* thus occurs, when tasks that the public authorities expect to be done by 'the public' – understood as engaging individuals/local citizens – are not met in the way the urban installations demand.

The local committee expected that these tasks would be taken on informally by local citizens, on a voluntary basis. This informality turns out to be ostensive.

The performative aspects can thus be improvisational ways to operate and deal with exceptions and contingencies (Feldman & Pentland); in addition, 'enacting the performative and ostensive aspects of routines is a collective endeavour' (Feldman & Pentland, 2003: 114). Civil servants and employers in the local sub-units of the municipality particularly navigate in two different organisational frameworks. They have to refer to both the hierarchical and political decision making system, administrative 'silos' and sub-branches, as well a more flat and dynamic structure of a horizontal network (Jæger 2003) which can be hyper-local and down to individual keypersons. This, combined with a set of diverse roles that citizens can have in relation to governance and public administration today, reaching from a more passive client role to an active co-producing agent, both for democratic reasons and wish for innovative processes (Agger & Hedensted 2011: 181) can create diverging, or at least challenging gaps and overlaps. This is an aspect that adds further complexity in terms of public-private areas of responsibility and their interfaces.

## Home-made public space

### *The host*

The Smedestræde 2 site is a place with different titles – a property on hold, a temporary public space and a private pop-up bar business. 'I guess this is a public space. But it's also a place I got permission to run a business', says Nima, the owner of TH. Bar on the site (June 2015). The many aspects of

<sup>34</sup> My use of informality in this regard targets the non-planned, self-organised and non-regulated character of the engagement that was expected. However, as for instance urban researchers such as Ananya Roy and Fran Tonkiss points out, informality is not excluding levels of organisation (Roy 2009a, 2009b; Tonkiss 2012).

uncertainty of the Smedestræde site prove to be a challenge and require more work from the local committee.

Since the project and thereby the installations have entered a 'prolonged temporary' condition, the project was losing momentum in terms of any further activation and facilitation. The setup was slowly deteriorating and was in dire need of maintenance or activation for the site to be a benefit to the area. Each season the committee hoped for a decision in the municipal budgeting rounds that favours a new library – but the decision continued to be delayed and postponed. The committee lacked resources and energy in the long run and our team was also out of the picture in terms of actual place keeping. In 2014 something changed when a red container moved in on site. Children playing, concerts, people socialising on bench and table sets drinking Czech beer and iced coffee, bringing take away and playing board games. Flowering plant boxes and cushions entered the site again. The prolonged temporary furnishing went from slowly losing momentum to getting new vitality. What happened? The opening of TH. Bar on Smedestræde 2 in 2015 was unexpected. He Nima coincidentally passed by the site and eventually contacted the municipality. At Smedestræde he wanted to build a little wooden shed, but that was not possible, since it is a site planned for demolition and the ground is polluted – so a red container was the solution and transported on site and converted. The bar is simply open when the weather is suitable. Opening hours are communicated and updated through physical presence – rain means the container stays closed, sun means business and a busy life on site; any decision to open is also communicated via Facebook.

Nima put out a simple bench and tables and sun shades around the pavilion. 'And when the coloured lamps are on, it is really cosy – like a backyard', he describes. Slowly the rumour about the new hangout in Valby spread and people 'dared' to enter the site and meet up for coffee or beer at the site. Children play on the pavilion. People would bring their own food or takeaway. They celebrated birthdays. Nima built more pallet seating: 'real Berlin ambience has arrived in Valby', proclaims the 'We Love Valby' Facebook page.<sup>35</sup> Spontaneous performances take place and bands are playing on the 'TH. Stage' (the pavilion), supplementing the official event calendar by the local committee. 'Is dancing allowed here?' someone asks. Nima replies, 'You are always welcome to dance'<sup>36</sup>, and thus a salsa group and other dancing groups begin to use the pavilion. Step by step the backyard has been discovered by the locals – as well as a wider Copenhagen audience, as the many comments on social media indicate, featuring regulars from the near suburbia as much as guests from central Copenhagen as well as locals, such as the 'sheriff of Valby', an elderly man who comes down to the garden almost every day for a chat.

The awareness of the Smedestræde site and its fate has risen, too, which also means that the bar owner has involuntarily become the spokesperson and the go-to-guy to ask about what will happen with the site. The presence of a host on site generates reactions and questions about what is going on: 'People ask me all the time what will happen with the area. And the buildings' – something he is not really prepared for: 'Why is it that the library is going to move here, actually?' (Nima, June 2015).

<sup>35</sup> We Love Valby (20.06.2015): <https://da-dk.facebook.com/welovevalby/posts/875817905787338>

<sup>36</sup> TH. Bar (21.06.2015): <https://www.facebook.com/thbarpopup/photos/a.652981144803323.1073741828.652513041516800/656859811082123/?type=3&theater>

Urban planner and lawyer Peter Marcuse suggests that some private spaces can be essential to enhance the use of public spaces. The ownership is here not the determining factor, as long as it is 'public usable space' and offers supplemental functions and amenities (Marcuse 2003).

This is visible in the case of the pop-up bar taking over the site. The spot created here, basically a privately owned amenity station for coffee and beer and Aperol Spritz, nevertheless offers more than drinks. It creates an ambience and presence in a way that the installations were not able to, despite the engagement-seeking programmatic content. A responsive, on-site host might sound strange in terms of public space; nevertheless, physical appearance is important and gives the site added interest and attention. It draws people on the site and make them experience it from the inside. Nima's role on the site has inspired other local projects in planning, such as a more permanent recycle station on another location in Valby. Based on the experience at Smedestræde, a 'hosting as a driver' model has been proposed and recognised in the project proposal for the new facility, a local recycle station.<sup>37</sup> However, on Smedestræde the host will probably leave after his temporary contract for the summer months comes to an end.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> 'VAL BYDEL - del, byt og byg i Valby': <https://vimeo.com/136812966>

<sup>38</sup> TH. Bar got permission to open one more season in summer 2016, due to the success from the previous year and since the site's future was still unclear.



26.06.2015\_The red container pop-up bar entered the site in late spring 2015

### ***Domestication as invitation***

The bar on the site adds domestic qualities and a sense of occupation, something which is often missing in public spaces (Koch & Latham 2013: 7). This act of home-making and hosting creates a welcoming atmosphere. The presence and the furnishing – Nima puts out blankets, candles, cushions and chains of coloured lights – create a homey ambience, an invitation, an atmosphere of conviviality. But the bar and café is also a clear signal. While a site with a somewhat mysterious white pavilion, a small garden setting, various installations and deteriorating building as a backdrop, might be difficult to grasp right away – what is this place? – the main function of bar and café is evident, even though some people think the container bar is only part of some kind of one-day event, Nima says.

The notion of the ‘third place’ (Oldenburg 1989) considers spaces outside the field of workplace and home and offers another category of social space, outside the traditional idea of the public realm, and is thus a useful concept to draw into this discussion. Referring to pubs and cafés as hangouts with their own set of social life, activities, relations, host/owners and regulars, urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg presents third places as frames for informal public activity differing from both the home and the workplace. He notes that ‘plainness, or homeliness, is also the “protective coloration” of many third spaces’ (Oldenburg 1989: 36). Oldenburg refers to a set of criteria for ‘homeness’ by psychologist David Seamon: It roots us, involves appropriation - but not necessarily ownership, supports regeneration, “freedom to be” which means showing personality through décor (home) or ‘expressive behavior’ and lastly, a sense of ‘warmth’ expressed through a friendly, supportive and amicable environment (Ibid. 39–41).

Third places thereby have a specific role in relation to the local community. According to urban researcher Stéphane Tonnelat third places ‘bring together the community dimension and the anonymous dimension of the city’; here both private and public issues are discussed and they can even turn into occasional community centers (Tonnelat 2010: 7). The reference to the third place as ‘*A Home Away from Home*’ (Oldenburg 1989: 38) elucidates how the appropriation by TH. Bar as a private host creates a *home-made public space*.

The home-making – here also in the form of business-making – as an appropriation illustrates another version of a domesticated public space that is different from that at The Discovery in Køge. According to Koch & Latham, ‘domestication does not constrain public life, but rather it is an essential part of the process through which people come to inhabit urban spaces and, indeed, is part of the way in which publics of all different sorts come to find a home in the city’ (Koch & Latham 2013: 14). It can be ‘both entrepreneurial and community-minded’ (Koch & Latham 2013: 11). Clear-cut definitions of public space do not cover these combinations and it is thus important to consider appropriations of spaces in regard to the specific context and what it is offering: ‘There is a need to stop viewing domestication as implying a loss of public life. Domestication is more productively understood as a fundamental part of how people come to be at home in cities’. It is more a question of how (Koch & Latham 2013: 19). In a positive sense, this version of domestication adds visibility and an element of invitation, especially in a spatial setting like at Valby, where the elements require ongoing facilitation and responsivity to function and appear taken care of. The private engagement is not simply a matter



TH.Bar\_ Valby's livingroom : Board games, barbeque, quiz evenings, birthday celebrations, concerts and cooling in the pool (Photos from TH. Bar Instagram and TH. Bar Facebook 2015-2016).



of private appropriation, but could be considered an expansion of the caretaking of the public space (Blomley 2004b: 17).

Public ownership does not in itself produce a public space, and it might paradoxically even be easier for private initiative to make things happen. Some initiatives regarding the site and the area proved to be easier to achieve for the bar owner than for the municipality. It was easier for Nima (owner of TH. Bar) to get permission from the private owner of the adjacent empty shop to gain access to the buildings' toilet facilities for his customers' use. The municipality had tried before but it had been difficult to negotiate.

The rather enclosed garden environment, despite the initial ambition to take down the metal fence and part of the hedge, proved also to be a quality in terms of creating a space 'to enter' and a certain intimacy next to the buzzing street. Opening is here not about removing fences and hedges but creating interest to cross the threshold. As mentioned in the case of Køge, the question of boundaries and borders in connection with in urban space is important to address in nuanced ways, in particular in these transitional states where old borders meet new programs; such as a community garden in an industry zone and a public garden on a former private parking lot, as it is the case in respectively Køge and Valby. It challenges apparent simple presumptions of physical accessibility as being about sheer openness and visibility. While the cobbled-together appearance of the Smedestræde site still is ambiguous, it is also something to discover. The site's is on a lower level than the street, which means entering a kind of hollow (Valby's coziest hole' is the bars nickname for the spot) from where you see the surroundings from a different perspective due to the sites angle and view towards the historic part of Smedestræde and be both close and distanced from the busy life on the sidewalk behind the hedge. Furthermore, the new 'host institution' creates a reason to enter. Boundaries do separate but they also work as connectors; the act of crossing the threshold is an interchange. Hajer & Reijndorp say that 'a fence marks a place' (Hajer & Reijndorp 2001: 121) and that it is actually possible to talk about a concept of 'fences for public access' (Ibid.: 120).

In his discussion on territoriality in regard to public spaces, Mattias Kärrholm also points to the ambiguity of boundaries and that the making of a public space need not involve removal of boundaries, but rather it is about the creation of 'territorial complexity' (Kärrholm 2004: 295). Here a consideration of the dynamics of actual use in relation to a predefined design needs to be acknowledged. Kärrholm emphasises that the actual publicness of a given space is complex. A presumed neutrality of public space, either through a focus on strong and detailed programming or the opposite, very open layouts under the headline of high flexibility, does not entail the complexity emerging in actual use. According to Kärrholm, 'A neutral space open to the public might seem a good recipe for publicness and accessibility. However, this would not be revealed until some kind of territorial complexity had, in fact, evolved' (Ibid.: 449).

This reading points to the dynamic enactment of spaces as becoming places by diverse modes of appropriation and use. The temporary setting occurring on Smedestræde 2 is a combination of a strongly decaying and scruffy backyard, unsolicited use as a shelter for the homeless, late night visits and drunken excursions, a flowery garden, colourful mural and play equipment, and a relaxed but not



too relaxed hang-out bar; together these elements create a somewhat layered tension of cosiness and inherent friction. This tension creates an interest in the site despite, or rather because of its paradoxical background. Smedestræde 2 today figures as a lively public garden, as a matter of course, despite the complex site conditions, procedural obstacles and dodges and the uncertainty still surrounding it.



14.05.2016\_The paradoxical situation on Smedestræde 2 is explicitly visible in spring 2016. Private – No entry signs (by the municipality/Kejd) and fences are put up and decay is even more significant, behind the lively crowd of TH. Bar



## SUGAR FACTORY – GRONINGEN

### Opening a site for the city

'Terrain-vague is a place or places where you do not take out of town guests, if you want to show them the city', Danish artist Willy Ørskov wrote in 1976. He is referring to areas in the outskirts of cities that are neither urban nor 'classic' countryside, but belong to a certain range of borderland and transition zone between these categories. *Terrain vagues* are to some degree lawless areas outside control and order, however, also sites of potentiality, waiting to be incorporated into the urbanised system, Ørskov says (Ørskov in Abraham 2005: 137). The 'terrain vague', a term further introduced into the architectural and urban field by architect and theoretician Ignasi de Solà-Morales (1995) is in itself very vague and often afflicted with a hint of romanticising. Nevertheless, it highlights the indeterminate state of 'vacant' areas marked by non-production and marginalisation, which are simultaneously full of socio-spatial layers and possibilities. As a place where old traces and new becomings merge into an anachronistic setting (Ursprung 2012: 2) a terrain vague forms an ambiguous realm. However, these kinds of spaces, often 'sloaps' (space left over after planning) or post-industrial sites, independent of their actual ownership, can function as important alternatives to normative and traditional concepts of public space in our cities. They offer a different kind of collective space (de Solà-Morales 1995; Braae 2015) enabling informal colonisation and subcultural activities opposed to architecturally designed, ordered, controlled and commercialised urban spaces. They function as 'vague parks' (Kamvasinou 2006), adventurous 'un-parks', 'accidental playgrounds'; they are locations for 'vernacular recreation', (Campo 2013) or constitute 'superfluous landscapes as alternative public spaces' (Nielsen 2001, 2002),



08.05.2014\_View from the roof of the sieve building towards the inner city.



29.10.2013\_Provisory fences and successive nature create borders on the site.

drawing on the social qualities released in the transitional and 'leftover' state of sites. Undoubtedly, the area of the old sugar factory in Groningen, features many of the characteristics, qualities and challenges of a 'terrain vague', a strange and foreign world outside the traditional city, loaded with historical connotations, but also in a state of continuous change. A vast landscape and successive rich natural life has evolved from the former production basins. The 133 ha site contains ruinous buildings and structures, with mysterious formations on the surfaces; leftover objects; broken fences and signs; and other traces of both past routines and current unsolicited use. Nevertheless, it is in the stages described here, concomitantly in active development. The overlaying transient stage is complex – or rather, different versions of appropriation occur simultaneously and iteratively. The former factory ground is to some extent both derelict and activated: publicly accessible and privately restricted – publicly restricted and privately accessible. In the liminal state between the abandoned function of sugar production and the new sketched-out prospects, it can be difficult to decipher where and when one thing ends and the other begins. We can thus also approach this stage as a kind of active break, 'a transitional phase allowing a withdrawal from the earlier use, while preparing for new use' (Braae 2015: 47). The sugar factory site is still a rough, vast derelict field. However, it is at the same time also in the spotlight. Numerous plans or on the table, new forms of use and management are being tested and implemented and numerous events are taking place on site. However narrowly the term is defined, one *does* actually bring visitors to this terrain vague, to return to Ørskov's observation. Terrain vague is 'en vogue', so to speak. It might be mainly occasional, for an



29.10.2013\_At the entrance gate visitors are invited in for a photo exhibition. The old factory system still sends the message of 'no access'



open-air cinema, a circus, a photo exhibition, a concert, a Sunday walk, seminars or other events, but gradually the sugar factory is becoming a 'go to' place in the city – and more than as an informal and secret subculture hangout. Just as in the harbour of Køge, where the local citizens 'bring their guests' out into the 'otherness' of the harbour development site, the former factory area in Groningen in its state of change is an attraction and a re-opening world to explore.

The process of re-programming sites often implies a shift in use and ownership that brings with it new collective formations and levels of engagement that fluctuate between private initiatives, the authorities in charge and the wider public. This is also the case in regard to the sugar factory. The management of the area, owned by the municipality, was in early 2015 handed over to a private 'mediator' company (Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>), who will be in charge of physical improvements and preparations, as well as the organisation of incoming initiatives for settling on the site. Yet, prior to this transfer, the existing site conditions as well as appropriations by other actors play a role in the preliminary development of the site.

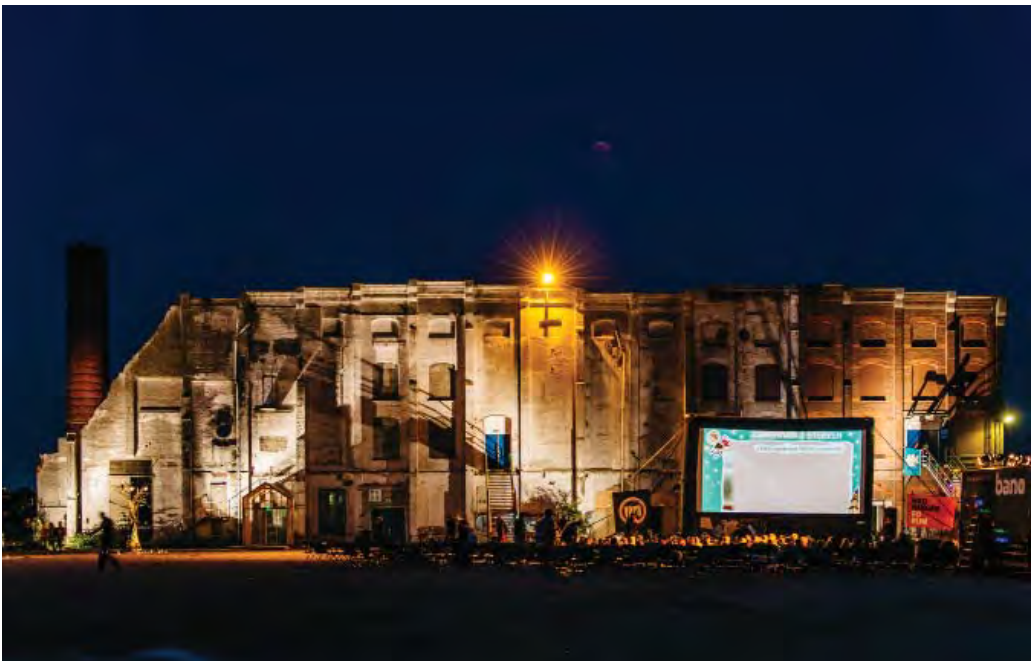
Selected aspects of the initial activation point at further nuanced spatial practices occurring *between public and private*. The analysis that follows will first elucidate the physical access situation emerging in the 'break' between the site as a company location and production site on the one hand and as an arena for new mixed functions on the other. It forms a particular combination of existing and new access points and boundaries, based on the factory's inherent structure as well as on the current need for 'controllable access' or restricted publicness in the phase of unlocking and re-using the site. In addition, the site activation during the preliminary steps of the temporary phase illustrates how particular versions of outsourced functions are part of a strategy, where private actors hold different roles in the site's management.

## Key management

### *Bridging barriers*

The matter of access to the site is of special interest, since as a former factory enclave it holds qualities of being an isolated 'island'. At the same time this condition creates barriers of activation and (re)integration into the (conscious) collective urban realm of the city. Opening the area and creating connections to the rest of Groningen is therefore of high priority for the city authorities. Since it has not been open to the public, one of the first steps in the development of the former factory ground is to ensure 'that Groningen residents will feel that they are on home ground' (van Tuijl & Bergevoet 2012: 48). The successive familiarisation and *making public by event* is one explicit strategy for opening the space, 'so as many people as possible will get to know the site', according to the municipal project manager (Copenhagen University/SEEDS Groningen 2014: 10). Jan Martijn Eekhof, urban planner in the City of Groningen emphasizes the city's goal for making the site 'accessible and visible', which is 'the most important pre-condition for development'. This is because connections are needed to embed the site in the urban networks, says Eekhof, but 'the challenge is to achieve this with limited means' (Jan Martijn Eekhof in European 2014: 166). In addition to the actual paths and routes on site and connections to the surroundings, it further demands the establishment of an infrastructure that





09.2015\_Open air cinema is one of many events taking place on the former factory site (Photos: Douwe de Boer/Zienemaan & Sterren)

can support initiatives and events on site (Jan Martijn Eekhof in van Tuijl & Bergevoet 2012: 55). The municipality's project manager underlines that access for the public is a question of both physical access as well as a certain level of saturation in terms of occupancy and content on the site that will both secure human presence and improved conditions; a reference to the site's dangerous (but fascinating) roughness, such as broken surfaces, loose objects and unsecured building parts. These problems will be partly fixed as a side action by new establishments on site. Access, activity and issues of safety are linked: 'In the end the city wants the site to be public as soon as there are enough people/activities on site to make it safe enough'.<sup>39</sup>

The question of physical access to the area is tied to the former logic of the site as a factory, even though it is not functioning as one anymore. The active production site of the Suiker Unie was an enormous and complex setting of numerous buildings and structures, from the large 'sieve building', tall silos and chimneys to small sheds, narrow alleys, outdoor working areas and storage and parking surfaces, which all together constituted a maze of linked practices and spaces that made production flow. Now most of these built structures are gone, but the former function still affects the new uses on site, and in particular, the question of general accessibility. Looking closer into this logic and precondition sheds light on some of the issues regarding 'making the site public'.

<sup>39</sup> Mail correspondence with Municipality of Groningen project manager regarding the access situation on site, August 2015. Safety issues related to the site's rough and unpolished state is a security issue in terms of possible injuries and damages and the liability of the municipality as owner of the area.



Overview of the Suiker Unie factory complex towards east in 1975 (Source: RHC Groninger Archieven)

Industrial sites carry an inherent potential in their structural layout and spatial organisation. Often they feature large spaces and continuous extensions and alterations that have been made regularly and are part of the structural logic and overall adaptability – inside the system. During active production the sites are closed to the outside through fencing and gates, infrastructural barriers, etc. But it is exactly this infrastructure that at the same time is the lifeline from the area to the outside in terms of produce circulation, Ellen Braae points out (Braae 2015: 89). As soon as the actual production leaves, ownership is not actively marked and executed; the 'sites of discontinued industry' enter the state of 'no-man's land' – or 'everyone's-land'. Informal users and subcultures find ways to appropriate the site: 'Dog walkers, mountain bikers or other more or less organized subcultures gradually take possession of the previously enclosed area, break down the fences and establish criss-crossing routes over it' (Ibid.: 89).

In his writings on industrial ruins, cultural geographer Tim Edensor depicts a similar logic and dynamic in the relation between industrial production and the collapse of the inherent order, when function leaves the space:

When industrial sites are closed down and left to become ruins, they are dropped from such stabilizing networks. Prior to this however, factories are exemplary spaces in which things are subject to order. (...). Following dereliction, the condition of these objects reveals that without consistent maintenance, social, spatial and material order is liable to fall apart. (Edensor 2005b: 314)



Friesch-Groningsche Beet Sugar Cooperative in 1963 . Factory seen from the main entrance (Heemskerckstraat), in the foreground the weighbridge building (Source: RHC Groninger Archieven)



^ 1960\_Truck with sugar beets arrives at the factory,1960 (Source: RHC Groninger Archieven)

^ Weighing of the sugar beet trucks at the control house,1959-1962 (Source: RHC Groninger Archieven)

The procedures of production are linked to structures and artefacts which work together as a running machine – as long as the machine is running. When the factory closes, these elements and their related practices are unfulfilled, but continue to be, in part, spatially present:

Order is more specifically maintained by an array of disciplinary procedures, surveillance and the inscription of established hierarchies on the space of the factory. This ordering is continually haunted by the spectre of disorder, which comes to pass upon the closure of the factory. And, conversely, in the subsequent ruin signs of order haunt the disordered space which emerges. (Edensor 2005a: 841)

After production ceases, the specific material elements of order, such as fences, locks and signs, become something else. As anthropologist, Mark Vacher explains, they become 'measures that prevent nothing to happen' (Vacher 2012: 72) since their original purpose is gone.

According to the nature of its production, the site in Groningen had numerable fences, gates and control posts linked to the specific procedures and the physicality of the factory system. After the factory closed down in 2008 most of the buildings and the production machinery were demolished to make similar production impossible in future – a condition for payment of compensation. Nevertheless, some remaining mechanisms are re-activated in a transformed way. Though broken fences also exist on site and unsolicited entrance surely occurs, the main access points are still actively demarcated, due to the safety issues (the municipality is hold responsible for) mentioned above. Here,



29.10.2013\_The key to the sugar factory

the secure entry system continues to be used and maintained to 'control' the area, though re-activated for other reasons than during sugar production. Responsible persons and frequent users, such as the municipal employers, the house sitters, the restaurant on site, event organisers and later also the management company and others involved, are given a key or code via mobile phone to gain access to the site. They can open the main gate, both for pedestrian entrance and for car traffic. Throughout the process, starting with the municipal take-over in 2011 and until the shift in management in 2015, different levels of 'opening hours for the site' appeared through this gate-opening procedure. Gradually, more events are taking place where the site is accessible. The Wolkenfabriek restaurant has a regular opening day, on Sundays, but extends the program further, which again means an increase in the potential for public entrance. From 2015 the actual presence of the management company and a couple of smaller businesses that have their daily workspace on site and are facilitating numerous events also means that the gates are open more frequently. This step-by-step process illustrates the way the question of access is connected to the amount and character of activities as well as individual persons and organisations located physically on the site.

What the 're-use' and adaption of the entrance system further reveals is that the question of 'allowing entry' is time-based and goes through the existing enclosure system and thereby both enables and restricts access in a dynamic way that can be changed and adapted instantly. It can thus be considered a tricky and somehow contradictory though definitely cost-effective measure for providing (and denying) access in terms of opening up. As cited, the city has limited means for implementing extensive projects to link the site to the surroundings and still secure the level of safety they require. In this phase full access is not desirable due to the practical reasons sketched out. Hence, *key management*, or the customized opening and distribution of keys/codes, become a strategy to manage access in the overlap period. The gradual shift from open gates as being the exception to open gates being a practically everyday situation illustrates an increase in use. Accessibility is thus not simply a question of tearing down fences and gates or creating the connecting public pathways to and across the site.

However, one action taken to increase accessibility this way was the construction of a second entry point, intended to supplement the main gate to the site. The railway, the Hoendiep channel and the adjacent highway slip road bordering the site are examples of infrastructure that served the former production and linked it to the outer world. In terms of the new uses, these elements, especially for pedestrian access, are barriers. In 2014, a temporary scaffolding bridge for pedestrian access was built as the result of the European architecture competition *Europaan*. The brief supplied by the municipality for the competition was a proposal for linking the former factory site with the area north of the Hoendiep channel. A main reason for wanting a bridge, in addition to supplementing the main access, was to meet the minimum fire and safety regulations for festivals and big events (van Tuijl & Bergevoet 2012: 54). Without a second entry point, no more than 500 people are allowed on the site, despite the vast size of the area. Nevertheless, on the 'city side' of the new bridge, an existing gate and fence also features an automatic entrance system similar to the main gate. The bridge and gate combination thus holds a double 'connector and barrier' function, which makes it possible to adapt the access specifically. That the bridge functions as a connecting feature is logical, but the fence and gate is dominant in the access hierarchy – if it is closed, the bridge is as well.



⌘ 12.08.2015\_The gate in front of the scaffolding bridge –Today it is open

^ 12.08.2015\_The scaffolding bridge seen towards the sugar factory site and the Hoendiep Channel

### **Agency and keys**

According to Benn & Gaus' derivation of public and private sub-conceptions, *access* and *agency* are logically intertwined; the control of access is a matter of agency (Benn & Gaus 1983: 9). The power inherent in providing access that creates spatial openness is a dynamic feature:

Places and spaces, like gardens, beaches, rooms and theatres are public when anyone is entitled to be physically present in them; they are private when someone, or some group, having the right of access, can choose whether to deny or allow access to others. (Benn & Gaus 1983: 7)

Furthermore, Benn & Gaus elaborate, the motivation and interest in terms of these allowances and restrictions reflect whether an agent is performing this access control in own interest or publicly as a representative of for instance a city or community.

Because of this link between access and agency, questions of entry to the sugar factory site must be considered in relation to how the specific site conditions are dealt with. To add to earlier discussions on ownership, access 'control' can be a way to broaden or restrict appropriations for different reasons. In this case, the physical structures surrounding the site, specifically created for control, play a different role in the re-use context. The re-use of the factory's gate system is linked to the physical structures through both keys and mobile phone codes as 'openers', which are subtle in nature, but nevertheless the 'key'. They can create both restrictions and allowances concerning who is 'in' and who is 'out'. It is a system, which, symptomatic for the transition period and in a paradoxical way, connects and mediates between the former logic on site and the new uses. In addition, it indicates the level of agency, since



31.10.2013. 'Open the gate' was a discussion point in one of the SEEDS workshops addressing possible approaches to the re-use of the sugar factory in Groningen. But what exactly does that mean? The analysis of the site entrance system shows that access is more than tearing down fences, when the area is a site in a transitional and rough state.



somebody has to push the button or bring the key to open the gate.

The system of access also demonstrates the important role of the key itself. In *Paraphernalia: The Curious Lives of Magical Things* (2011), Steven Connor explores the properties embedded in specific 'magic' everyday objects. On the role of keys, he says: 'It is one of the many convolutions of the relations of locks and keys that locks – which in French are called "serrures" and in German are called "Schlüssels" [*sic*], both meaning closings or contractions – should necessarily include openings as an essential part of their operations (indeed the English word "lock" derives from words meaning gap, opening or lack). A lock can also provide a loophole' (Connor 2011: 100). He also observes that, 'Like many other riddling objects and magical machines – screws, plugs, levers – keys have the power of conversion. There is more than one way to get through a locked door' (Connor 2011: 102). Closing and opening are interlinked in a specific way and considering the factory gate in this light, 'conversion' means dealing with the logic of that latent ambiguity – closing off as a loophole for opening up, so to speak. In all its banality, the question of 'open the gate' is, however, a complex matter. Here, access is (a) key in many ways and the *permitted exception* of restricted access changes over time.

## Outsourced pioneering

The Groningen Municipality is the owner of the large site; however, they cannot activate the vast terrain alone, and it is not in their interest, either. The actual management of the site and the facilitation of incoming proposals for possible uses has to some degree been a challenge to facilitate in the municipal setup, both due to financial and organisational resources. A certain distance between active project development and the bureaucracy of authorities through intermediary agents can have an enabling dynamic, in particular in relation to temporary use initiatives Rudolf Schäfer, professor in building law and building administration, highlights the outsourcing of permission procedures and management to other kinds of organisations outside the municipal administrations in relation to temporary use. Having a private agency in charge creates a certain dynamic and different ways of communicating (Oswalt et al, 2013: 129). Additionally, 'a commercial party can take more risks and handle enterprising initiatives in a way that the local authority cannot' (SEEDS Conference Workshop Report 2015: 29).

Different versions of this pioneering job have therefore been handed over to private persons, organisations and businesses. It is a strategy which is not unusual in terms of temporary use of transformation areas (Oswalt et. al 2013; Overmeyer et. al 2007). Three of these particular roles of *outsourced pioneering* will be presented here, since they illustrate who has got a key to the site, in both concrete and figurative senses, and how their tasks are related to the concrete phase of initial site development.

### ***Invisible residents of the factory***

Though actual plans for residential use on the ground have been consciously put on hold by the city authorities, it does not mean that the old factory is not already a home. One of the first moves in terms of reactivation of the site was actually housing – a *permitted exception* though, in this case. From summer 2011 to 2016 (so far) the upper part of the workshop building, the smaller of the two buildings still on site, has been the home and workspace for a group of five people. The former factory



08.05.2014\_ The zone to the right marked by a metal fence barrier is the area used by the 'invisible residents', the housesitters living in the former workshop building. It was put up since the residents were disturbed by visitors on site during events.





A home on the factory site: Inside the former workshop and canteen building 2015 (Photos: Anne Willemijn)

canteen now functions as a living room for the group, the old laundry room is the place to shower and their mailbox hangs at the entrance gate. The 'anti-squat' organisation CareX takes care of practical things such as warm water, toilet and shower facilities, garbage collection, etc. Two people live on the first floor and the other three on the second floor. The agreement is set up between the municipality and CareX, who manages and negotiates temporary rentals of vacant buildings.<sup>40</sup> In return for being housesitters and 'watching eyes' on the site, as a measure to prevent break-ins and vandalism, the residents get a low rent under the condition of short-term notice.

Housesitting is a frequently applied method for managing transition periods of vacant areas and buildings in The Netherlands – often somewhere between official allowance, off-the-record connivance and actual illegal squatting. Here the model is an authorised and legal agreement and the local authorities have good experiences with this solution from other sites. As a strategy for maintaining sites 'on hold', legal squatting is implemented both by public authorities as well as private property owners. The housesitting model introduces a private home in a somehow foreign spatial context. Nevertheless the benefit is precisely due to the nature of a residential unit – personal everyday use along with a regular presence, if not 24/7, at least mostly in the evening and through the night, where break-ins could happen.

However, the temporary private residence is not a function or 'program', which is specifically mentioned or highlighted as a strategy in the project descriptions, plans or reports from the city in terms of the temporary use on site (e.g. SEEDS). As a matter of fact, it is not mentioned at all.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps because it is not a measure considered to be actual reactivation in the light of future prospects, but rather as a pragmatic function belonging to a pre-stage of keeping the site 'stable' until the 'actual' official temporary projects can be implemented. This is a recurring, common procedure, though it also raises the question of how measures like these are treated as placeholders rather than part of the actual redevelopment, even though they fulfil their purpose for all involved parties. This rather unspectacular appropriation, through everyday use as 'someone's home', is also not approached as a conscious 'space-shaper', such as the design proposals and the cultural program suggestions for the site are, despite the fact that these users also re-program and possibly 'improve', and certainly already use, the area. Hence, it is not the residents as users and their active everyday doings on site that is of interest for the authorities, but their understated and partly incognito presence as formal-informal guards. The presence of these users, though under specific conditions, nonetheless affects the physical space as well. As most likely the first residents on the factory ground and 'real pioneers', the temporary tenants are co-shaping the site by inhabiting their 'residential zone'. What is specifically notable in the case of the sugar factory is that this appropriation is the longest (temporary) use to date, since the closure of the factory. And despite its 'invisible' or understated character expressed from official perspective, this function has resulted in considerable use of the outside areas apart from the building itself. A garden area with greenhouse, a geodome, water tank, stacks of fire wood, containers, old sofas

<sup>40</sup> The so-called 'krakers', squatters, have a long history in the Netherlands (Pruijt 2013). Furthermore, different versions of professionalised and legal squatting, managed by professional organisations, have emerged, as it is the case in other countries as well. In the Netherlands, squatting was not defined as juridically illegal until 2010.

<sup>41</sup> The resident I have been in contact with, confirms that they are somehow 'forgotten' – which actually suits them quite well in many ways (mail correspondence 2016).



08.05.2014\_A greenhouse inside the residential zone





⌘ 08.05.2014\_ On the western side of the house, a 'backdoor circle' of different elements placed around the entrance area indicate that this is a private zone in the vast open landscape.

^ 08.05.2014\_ Firewood, furniture, sculptures and flowers create a border



and chairs, bikes, cars and caravans, potted plants and plant beds are, patchwork-like, distributed in a section of the south-eastern corner of the site and around the building. Two containers collect rainwater from the building roof for watering the plants and trees on the area. This version of 'home-making' somehow blends in on first look, due to the site's general cobbled-together character, but on a second glance, however, it is clearly a special zone. The private area is partly fenced off from the rest of the terrain with mobile metal barriers. This was done by the residents on the first floor. Due to rising activity during events, starting with the first photo exhibition in 2013, they put it up 'to make clear what the 'private' area was (our area) and what the public area', says one of the residents.<sup>42</sup> For some of the residents it was difficult to deal with the changes occurring during the transformation of the factory. Apart from bringing in a public crowd, the event activities can result in unstable access situations and they can affect the electricity and water capacity on site. The residents have keys and access via cellphone, however, when an event takes over, special rules can occur, the event organizer is responsible for the access situation and there can be security guards. As the resident says: 'It depends when the gates are open or closed. Actually I have no idea what the "rules" are right now.'

Around the entrance door on the western site of the building, an area which is not fenced off, chairs, wood, pallets and potted plants create an informal backdoor hang-out, but also a 'circle' of elements that indicate the specific ownership in yet another way. Despite being a rather silent strategy, in terms of external and official communication at least, the 'watching pioneers' certainly create a physical pioneering imprint. The 'territorial appropriation' (Kärrholm 2007) of the residents' regular use of their zone forms a particular pocket of everyday use in the large post-industrial (event)-landscape.

### ***The concierge***

Coordinates: 53°12'39.4"N 6°32'37.0"E

Are you going to the Wolkenfabriek (Cloud Factory) on your bike? ... Then bike by Heemskerckstraat, the rails and beneath the ring road and you'll get to the entrance gate of the site that is unfortunately mostly still closed (opening the site fully has not yet succeeded due to security issues). When you stand in front of the gate, call the number on the fence... it's 06\* 14531246... and we will come to the fence or do another trick so that the gate opens...The Wolkenfabriek is on the second floor of the Sieve Building (Zeegebouw) which is the building in the middle of the site. (Wolkenfabriek homepage 2014)

Coming from the city follow the Hoendiep (channel). At the end of the Hoendiep go over the rails and under the ring road through the industrial area. Go to the right after the McDonalds and turn left at the Energieweg. There you'll find a fence at the end of the road, behind it a bridge over the water of the Hoendiep channel. Is the gate closed? Call the telephone number printed on the fence, it will be (remotely) opened! (Wolkenfabriek homepage 2015)

<sup>42</sup> These particular observations are based on several site visit registrations (wondering about the official invisibility of the visible actors on site) and follow-up mail correspondence with one of the residents in 2016.



^ 12.08.2015\_ 'Do you want to get out?' To enter - or leave- you call or text the Wolkenfabriek.

^ 10.09.2013\_Adaptive wayfinding: Across the site and in the sieve building 'clouds' indicate the location of the restaurant



12.08.2015\_A provisory bike path with clouds - connects the scaffolding bridge and the new entrance of the sieve building and the Wolkenfabriek.

The restaurant in the sieve building, De Wolkenfabriek, 'The Cloud Factory'<sup>43</sup> was one of the first official projects initiated on the terrain after sugar production was shut down and the municipality bought the land. When the municipality carried out the open idea competition for the site in 2011, the concept of the restaurant as an occasional collaborative culinary and culture space proved its business idea. With few means, the initiators began to convert the second floor of the old 'sugar-sieve building' and established The Cloud Factory, which has since expanded both its space and program in the building.

The Cloud Factory is built from the inside out, so to speak. The large space with an open kitchen area is defined by rough cuts in the walls, tall beams and construction elements. Beyond these provisory edges the vast spaces of the building continues. The two adjacent large spaces are used for events. The restaurant itself has kept the roughness of the factory building but creative alterations, second-hand furniture, large lamps, decorations and fabrics are hanging from the tall ceiling, an old stove is heating the room in winter and a slide and other play equipment creates a play corner. The appropriation and equipment happens piece by piece, where different sections are appropriated and altered: The team has (illicitly officially, but later welcomed) opened the large blocked windows. They have extended with seating built on top of the restaurant and the kitchen is professionalised step by step. The kitchen and large common room features culinary gatherings, with changing chefs behind the stove, as well as concerts, discussions and other events.

As the 'how to find The Cloud Factory' route descriptions above illustrate (the first a guide to the main entrance and the second describing the route after the pedestrian bridge was built), finding The Cloud Factory requires getting through some layers of obstacles – it is a bit of a riddle, due to the access situation. Those not in the know would not expect an intimate creative-homey and active restaurant and cultural space on the second floor of the old ruinous building behind fences and gates and after crossing the big open area in front. By various 'cloud symbols' and descriptions on signs, stickers and 'tags' on the ground, the restaurant communicates its existence and how to find the location at the gates, at nearby street corners and on the site itself. These messages have to battle with the existing inaccessible 'keeping-off'- infrastructure still surrounding the factory area. Even YouTube videos exist – one for cars and one for pedestrians/bikers – to illustrate how to get there from the city.<sup>44</sup>

As a pioneer group on site participating in public outreach due to its function, the restaurant team has a special interest in both retaining the unique atmosphere of the old factory and at the same time connecting it with the city and inviting people in. This situation results in a playful game of adaptation concerning the site conditions, as the creative wayfinding indicates. It is an ongoing 'territorial tactic' (Kärholm 2004) employed to render visible the existence of the restaurant in a way that fits their style and the access conditions as they are at any given time.

<sup>43</sup> The name the 'Cloud Factory' refers to the iconic image of the sugar factory in function, where clouds of smoke and steam raised from the chimneys and site during production, but the nickname, according to the restaurant initiators, also stands for a focus on 'wishes and dreams'.

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xdcNI3M\\_e8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xdcNI3M_e8)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQPudK8aWBM>



⌘ 08.05.2014\_The entrance and 'counter' area of the Wolkenfabriek on the second floor of the sieve building.

^ 10.09.2013\_The kitchen area in 2013. It has been ongoing expanded and equipped since then.

The restaurant being the first established business with this outreach also means that the people involved have attained and taken a distinct role on site, since they, to a great extent, have been the go-to persons on the area and they have gotten to know the site very well since their establishment in 2012. As Wildrik (the 'cloud kitchen chef') from the Wolkenfabriek says, 'We are kind of the "concierge" here'.<sup>45</sup> Apart from running a café/restaurant/event space, it is a quite fitting description of the team's role and position. The concierge functions as porter and doorkeeper and in a way also simply supports general well-being and service. A concierge is attentive to arrivals, entrance situations and emergencies and is located in the loge and front end of a building, managing the threshold between inside and outside. Here, the 'loge' is a converted level of the old factory, like a floating fix point – a 'cloud' – in the middle of the big open terrain with hot coffee, a fireplace, food and music. Similar to the TH. Bar in Valby, the restaurant is a business that has a certain hosting function for the area. They are not specifically appointed by the authorities, but the initiative is welcomed by the municipality and has been an important facility on site as an initial attractor and constant figure on location.

The concierge(s) from the Wolkenfabriek are key people, in a double meaning. They have the actual power to let people enter the site through opening the gate, and as 'key-agents' they play a role not only in the development and process but also by facilitating other activities on site and in the building, through catering and housing activities in their large common space. As spatial entrepreneurs, or 'Raumunternehmen' (Buttenberg, Overmeyer & Spars 2014) they iteratively appropriate the inside of the building, while attracting an audience to the site from the outside – a pioneering function linking spatial site improvement with public outreach.

### ***The new key managers***

Connor further works with the idea of keys, noting that they are 'at once hardware and software, stuff and sign, matter and idea, sensible and intelligible.' He notes the symbolic value keys can possess, as well: 'The older keys are, the larger they are; ceremonial keys used to be borne upon a steward's shoulder, like a mace' (Connor 2011: 101). Yet another kind of key is deployed to unlock the sugar factory site than the ones for the gates. In spring 2015 after a call for a round of tenders, the municipality decided to hand over the management of the site to a private company. A detailed contract was made to secure collaboration and responsibilities based on the vision proposal made by the company.<sup>46</sup> The transfer was officially launched at an event on site in March 2015, where the city councillor handed over the symbolic key to the site to the new managers, the company Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>. The large key had also been handed over from the former sugar factory company to the municipality in 2011 – a symbolic gesture, indicating a new stewardship on the area. The role of the company is thus to bring the site into a new phase, carry through site improvements and organise the new businesses and organisations interested in settling down on the former factory. The development is a large project, but the role of the company is about more than handling a project of that size. One argument is that a commercial party can handle economic risk and coordination of enterprising

<sup>45</sup> Conversation & cooking at the Wolkenfabriek, August 2015

<sup>46</sup> Ploeg id<sup>3</sup> is a company working within regional development, cultural projects, healthcare programs, architecture and urbanism ([www.ploegid3.nl](http://www.ploegid3.nl)).



27.03.2015\_The big ceremonial key. In 2011 it was handed over to the municipality and in 2015 to the new management team.

initiatives in a different way than the authorities (SEEDS Conference Report 2015: 29). Local actors navigating in the field between civic society and official urban development are gaining more and more importance. These ‘Space Pioneers’, often active in the field of temporary use initiatives formerly considered as opposition to formal planning, are increasingly collaborators with cities and municipalities (Buttenberg, Overmeyer & Spars 2014:4)

Here, the role of the private management company is one of ‘key managers’ and mediators between the municipality and singular initiatives on site. This *outsourced pioneering* thus handles what could be termed basic pioneering acts – such as securing the required infrastructure, in this case, providing new access points (new staircase), internet, and electricity; preparing the outdoor area for new ‘settlers’; and further converting the existing buildings. But the company also assesses business cases and projects and their suitability for the area, as well as organising events on site. These tasks also reflect the ambivalence of both opening the site while still retaining a certain control of the access situation, described so far.

In terms of the public access to the area, the management company considers a need to privatise, or at least focus on a kind of ‘restricted publicness’<sup>47</sup> (Braksmas, Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>) to secure the incubating atmosphere of initiatives and companies moving in and investing in the area. According to Hein Braaksmas from Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>, it is not a public area: ‘No, now it is really a private area – but owned by the public authorities, of course’. ‘But’, he adds, ‘we really do not want a gated community’. The argument

<sup>47</sup> Meeting with Hein Braaksmas, Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>, August 2015

is that a limited publicness might not be a bad thing in terms of creating attractive conditions and granting leeway to interested parties to develop on site more freely.<sup>48</sup> The projects and activities initiated legitimate the structural improvements on site, which subsequently improve the accessibility in general. Considered in the light of the general aim of public access pointed out by the municipality (another main aim is of course to get the entrepreneurial businesses running on site), the area is thus 'made public by being made private'. As mentioned earlier, the municipality intends to have enough activities on site that it becomes safe to access freely.

Finding strategies to enable appropriation and support accessibility are of high importance in the transformation of post-industrial sites (Diedrich 2013; Braae 2015). However, as we have seen, these strategies are complex in terms of what the appropriation and accessibility means in practice more specifically. Keeping an 'enclave situation', as here on the sugar factory, so that the rough and unpolished site can be monitored to some degree, also makes it possible to explore the urban landscape in this fascinating state. How will it change if 'fully open'? In 'The Public Value of Vacant Urban Land', researcher, architect and landscape architect Krystallia Kamvasinou finds an interesting dilemma in terms of in-between sites: 'If such sites were brought to the foreground and opened to all, providing signage and access paths, would they lose something of their special (unmanaged) nature?' (Kamvasinou 2011: 164). In its transition the sugar factory site equally embodies a fascinating urban landscape that differs quite a bit from the neighbouring, classic park 'Stadspark' and the character of the historic inner city.

### Summing up: Between Public and Private

The case discussion concerning the harbour redevelopment in Køge addresses the setup of the collective harbour gardens and the outdoor kitchen in the largest temporary urban space, The Discovery. The analysis unfolds how the spatial layout and organisation result in distinct levels of mini-privateness as *nested ownerships* in an explicit, not only public, but strongly publicity-oriented setting. The character of the activities and facilities, such as gardens, hammocks and bookable cooking facilities, conveys a distinct level of intimacy, creating a *domesticated publicness* due to the specific outreach-focussed context they are situated in. On the other end of the spectrum, the space also offers 'super-public' facilities such as *common community gardens* that explicitly invite full public use. In terms of organisation, the maintenance of the harbour garden units is managed through a contractual agreement based on *individualised collectivity*. It indicates a level of user involvement that is not based with any association and is flexible, but also non-committing in the long-term, and steered by the urban redevelopment and construction process. In addition, the bookable facilities work as *inverted POPS (Publicly Owned Private Spaces) on demand*, introducing a time-based level of privatisation of the urban space. It is an urban design feature that both offers targeted engagement and new possible outdoor uses but equally underlines the ambiguity of a public bookable space.

<sup>48</sup> An interesting reference is here to be made to the Ebbinge Quarter in Groningen, another area in Groningen where temporary use has been tested. About that area one of the people involved notes, 'It remains the question whether the terrain is public or not public. Something in-between would be appropriate to us, but unfortunately the municipal system does not provide any possibilities for this' (Gerrit Schuurhuis/OLE Foundation in van Tuijl & Bergevoet 2012: 37).



In Valby, the point of departure is the imminent and recurrent danger of the municipally owned plot of land being put to sale, which is repeatedly prevented year after year. The efforts put forward by the local committee to keep the site for public usage prevents the sale through the 'backwards strategy' of introducing plans for a future public facility on the site and by initiating temporary activation. Subsequently, the municipal decision-making process results in a situation where the site is put on hold via the legal loophole of internal reservation rent; a situation that holds the site in an ongoing limbo between the real estate market and municipal facility. In this phase the property is a *virtually private* public real estate. The temporary use as an activation during the waiting period results in the maintenance of the site via authorised *DIY bureaucracy*. The expectations from the organisers towards engagement by volunteer citizens highlight how an *ostensive informality* becomes visible in terms of the management of the temporary urban garden setup. The unexpected appearance of the pop-up bar TH. Bar turns the site from a publicly owned plot of land in a paused position into a publicly used space. The bar staff functions as local *public host* and the new setting works as a *home-made public space*.

The last case discussion enters the sugar factory site in Groningen in its process of being gradually opened up for public access, through increasingly 'open gates' and cultural events after years of existence as a closed factory system. The analysis of the complex opening of the former factory site sheds light on the importance of both physical and organisational aspects of creating public access in the course of reprogramming the industrial site. Here, *key management* is an important opening strategy that derives from this process and the enabling of site engagement through *restricted publicness* points to the positive aspects of a certain limitation of access. Various parts of the maintenance and development of the site are managed by *outsourced pioneering*, where multiple steps of the site transformation are executed, not by the public authorities, but by private persons and organisations, reaching from site surveillance and public outreach to site development.

3 /

**BETWEEN  
SIGN  
AND  
ACTION**



# INTRODUCTION

## Signs for action and signs of action

As elaborated in the previous two chapters, the sites analysed are continuously shaped, altered and re-negotiated. Their specific state of being temporary and 'in-between' sets free dynamics and change; possibilities and constraints that trigger re-action. The negotiation and decision-making of the planning agendas 'play out' and touch the ground in different ways – they claim space, make space and are communicated in and with space. Furthermore, activity-focussed production of space is an inherent element of the re-programming and development. The settings of these temporary spaces need to be sustained to fulfil that purpose. They need particular *action(s)*. Customized care-taking, walking, playing, drawing, cooking, building, gardening, repairing, hosting, event-making etc. are distinct space-constitutive, performative actions and practices. Without them, the spaces, as engaging, urban life promoting and future testing settings fall apart, at least to some extent. However, the time frames for these space-making actions can differ widely—from everyday to event-based, from continuous to singular instances. Sometimes it might even look as if 'nothing' is going on – if we do not find *signs* indicating that something has (just) happened, is (now or sometimes) happening here or will happen in the (near or far) future—something that conveys change, difference and indicates new possibilities; that re-thinking and development is currently ongoing and processed. Why is the masterplan of the Southern Harbour in Køge painted on the ground in a mega version? How come a 'dream wall' is installed on the former car dealer's front yard in Valby? And what is a raised bright-green sea container 'suite' with draped curtains doing on the vast open factory area in Groningen? Are they symbols? Or practice? Objects or events? Or all of it? In what distinct ways is change made and communicated at the same time?

This chapter is entitled 'Between Sign and Action' because it investigates site development, through temporary use, as an ongoing process of making meaning from and of space. I discuss specific elements and settings and their role as both space and communication in an urban design and planning perspective. I take as my point of departure that meaning is *made*, that is, it is a process, neither fixed nor singular, but multiple, shifting, relational and often ambiguous.

Broadly considered, a *sign* can be a thing, a symbol or a mark. It can be seen as a standing in for something or pointing at something, a representation in a spectrum between iconicity and arbitrariness. An *action*, however, can also be a sign. Signification can be conveyed in multiple ways, through objects and through doings and their interrelation; *sign* and *action* are thus part of the same story. Representational elements are not simply in opposition to a dynamic 'reality', they are not only entangled with it but they constitute each other. The purpose here is thus not to equalise space with communication framed as an expression of representationalism, but to elucidate how meaning, in relation to the authorised temporary interventions discussed, is constructed through materials, objects, narratives, events and consistent practices – a mesh of signs and actions. Altogether the dynamics of this mesh challenge a fixed preconception about what constitutes a space, site and project. Here, representational means, understood concretely as working tools, communicative elements and outputs, inherent

< 13.08.2015\_Parents pick up their children after a day of adventure construction playground on the former sugar factory site in Groningen.

parts of a planning process and an architectural tool, play a specific role and are part of the physical sites. Planning proposals are acted out on location and indicate change.

The spatial settings form dynamic constructs of material-discursive on-site practices that challenge any division between presentation and representation. Ongoing 'live' planning on site in these areas in transition elucidates significant spatial formations coming into being through temporary initiatives and related actions. This meaning-making, though slippery from the outset, matters; it results in negotiating acts in and with space. The exploration of meaning-making is not only a question of *what*, but also a question of *how* and *why* in a planning perspective.

The aspects sketched out above can be detected in all three cases in this study, but they play out in different ways. The discussion of the harbour area in Køge in this chapter evolves around various types of communication material that are present on site. I analyse the role of these media in relation to both the spatial setting of the harbour in general, as well as the activation of specific spots along the cultural path, The Thread. This emphasis takes the notion of the 'sign' quite literally, and the discussion focusses on signposts, posters, panels, plans, (pocket) maps and flyers.

These 'signs' are not absent representations, but intentional and integrated parts of the physical site, where they work as *seeing and doing instructions* and *performing maps and plans*. The on-site media co-shape the settings, animate and highlight facilities and convey intentions and are important strategic activation features of the temporary urban spaces and of the transformation of the harbour. For Smedestræde in Valby, this chapter explores the role of the 'prolonged' temporary on-site installations as *plurivalent staging artefacts* in the process of negotiating the future of the site and the plans for a new library and culture house. The installations, along with the front-yard setting, work together as a backdrop for the performances of several agendas and political statements on location. However, the content of the performed on-site discourses is, unexpectedly, not site-related, but withdrawn from its actual setting; despite the initial intentions formulated in connection with the interventions.

In the re-activation of the sugar factory terrain in Groningen, this chapter examines how singular initiatives and events—the placing of *landscape pioneering props* and the performance of *built stories*—set the large area in motion. The ruinous setting is re-enacted step by step and forms a scenography of transformations, revealing entangled practical and symbolic acts of rethinking the former factory site in the initial opening phase of the area. *Unbuilt stories* are however also waiting at the horizon—iconic architectural landmarks are being planned.

I will begin the discussion with three rather different, partly overlapping and partly opposing, perspectives, employed as inspirational mind-sets, to explore the sign-action relationship in this chapter. These lenses address representation and communication, as well as performative and processual aspects relatable to architecture, urban sites and cultural expressions that help frame this thematic exploration.

First, a look at the relationship between representations and the physical site serves to encircle why this relation finds particular forms in the temporary urban spaces addressed. If we thus investigate the interplay between on-site and off-site production modes, it is possible to point to, how these modes are connected, or separated, in planning and design practice and in particular, in transformation projects. Furthermore, a short review of on-site representations of plans and design proposals as types of demonstrations and discursive elements reveals their long history and it is useful to consider

the present-day temporary implementation and testing modes investigated, in this light. If we add a relational understanding of a 'site' to this examination of representation and working on location, it exposes how links between physical space and various dynamic 'shaping forces' and narratives are constructed in planning processes. Second, exploring signs and significations from an urban semiotic perspective helps explain the apparent high number of hybrid (architectural) elements and spatial add-ons with communicative and symbolic functions in the projects. Third, and finally, I will counter and support these positions with perspectives from the field of performance studies, which hold formats that can shed light on the processual aspects in cultural phenomenon as extraordinary events, as well as everyday life activity.

This chapter introduction has two purposes. Firstly I suggest that this combination of theoretical lenses embodies a new way of understanding temporary urban spaces in urban development. Secondly they are conceptual opening acts: Aspects from these perspectives, headed 'Representation and site work', 'Signs, symbols and lies' and 'Doing spaces', will reoccur in the case discussions. However, further theoretical concepts that relate to these three thematic main perspectives will be drawn in as well. Hence, this introduction does not embody a final analytical framework, but serves as a 'scaffolding' and basis for further nuancing in the *field situations* of my cases.

## Representation and site work

### ***Representation is real***

The architect and architectural theorist Stan Allen emphasises the tension between architecture as a material practice 'working in and among the world of things' and the simultaneous work to create architecture through distant representational techniques and mediations; a movement between outcomes that are undoubtedly concrete, on the one hand, and a high level of abstraction on the other (Allen 2000: xxi). According to Allen:

Inasmuch as architects work at a distance from the material reality of their discipline, they necessarily work through the mediations of systems of representation. Architecture itself is marked by this promiscuous mixture of the real and the abstract: at once a collection of activities characterized by a high degree of abstraction, and at the same time directed towards the production of materials and products that are undeniably real. The techniques of representation are never neutral, and architecture's abstract means of imagining and realizing form leave their traces on the work. (Ibid.: xxi)

This description is related to the movement between ideas, plans and their implementation in planning and design discussed in the introductory part of the thesis. However, I have already indicated that in the process from idea or concept to realisation, the temporary projects are quite distinct steps. Allen's 'systems of representation' and their traces, in this field, might hold other formations between traditional representational means and the resulting 'reality', due to the progressive changes that are part of iterations and transformation processes. What happens when planning information and representations, traces of action—of production and debate—are present on the physical sites, when they are an important part of the space – they actually construct it? And what if representations are not 'at a distance from the material reality'? What is representation and what is 'real', then? And most importantly, what do such appearances imply for the development, understanding and use of the

spaces? These are questions which will be unfolded in the cases.

The notion of representation has a double meaning. In 'Defining Urban Sites' (2005), Andrea Kahn points out that representation, a noun, refers to something made, a thing, but the verb to represent, however, points to the process, the act of making (Kahn 2005: 287). I would say it is both sign and action. Kahn also notes that 'site drawings, models, and discourses are never mere second-order redescriptions of some pre-existing condition as much as they are evidence of thought in formation, a thought about what the urban site might be' (Ibid.: 289). My argument is that this notion of representation as being actively shaping, discursive and propositional is further enhanced and gains particular forms, when present on the physical site.

### ***Between off-site and on-site***

When testing, suggesting and implementing directly on location is confronted with more formal and longer-term planning procedures, mostly developed off-site, possible links and missing links between these space production modes reveal themselves. This relation is of particular interest in for understanding how authorised temporary urban spaces are thought to work, do work and do not work. The operations investigated in this research merge—or attempt to merge—on-site production modes of more instant character, such as additions and alterations, small scale interior-like elements and handmade and 'non-designerly' approaches, with more traditional development schemes, encompassing large-scale construction processes and often heavy machinery.

This is a challenging aspect that I pointed out in the first chapter, in the explanation of transformation and re-programming in this study. The merging creates conditions where planning and design processes traditionally considered to be either off or on site, small-scale or large-scale, meet in particular ways and affects the relation between representation and presence on site.

From the perspective of transformation design theory, these kind of working processes ought to be intertwined. It is thus useful to consider the relation between 'projection' and 'production'; according to Ellen Braae:

Transformation is an interaction between projection and production, between the idea and the materialization, for the simple reason that we move from the material to and through the idea and back to the material—several times. Transformation thereby includes both features of pre-modern design practice, where decisions are made on site and carried out by those who make the decisions and features of traditional design practice that make use of mediations and extrapolations. (Braae 2015: 284)

The often prevalent splitting of these two modes of creating is challenging in transformation projects, because the relationship between on-site and off-site decision and space making is oftentimes framed by mainstream professional mechanisms not set up to handle the reiterated back and forth movements required (Ibid.: 285).

The working modes prevalent in the temporary projects are unique in the way they enable direct work on site but they also challenge and are challenged by traditional procedures.

The particular relations between reshaping and making space through direct engagement with the

existing conditions of a particular site, on the one hand, and through mediating plans on the other is furthermore challenged when ‘the plan’ is not *one* plan (and a controlled design process with one origin) but a multitude of ideas, proposals and agendas regarding the future. Several projections might correlate and demand negotiation, on or off site. Many actors are involved in space production. In particular, if spaces are intentionally developed collaboratively, and if design and planning is considered an inclusive field of diverse space-shaping practices and agendas as well as actions reaching beyond formal design, then mediation and negotiation is an intricate process.

### ***Doing plans on site through history***

The convergence of representational expressions with physical settings as a distinct working mode is not new. In ‘Drawing Sites :: Site Drawings’ (2011), Paul Emmons traces the relationship between (the architect’s) work on site and at the drawing table and the interrelation between these modes of production through history. He terms the increasing physical separation between the site and what becomes the drawing board as the ‘cleaving of field and work’ (Emmons 2011: 128). In the western world, the architect left the construction site in favour of the drawing board in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when paper was introduced to the practice; the relationship between the physical site and the place of the design and planning act remained, but was clearly transformed. However, throughout history, full scale layouts on the ground have been made with ropes, lines of fire torches, or footprints in the snow, or by drawing in the dirt, dusting with gypsum, flour, or ashes, etc. (Ibid.: 120). These methods were not only pragmatic visualisations of coming plans, but manifestations and even performances conveying instructions received from political, ritual or divine elements of power that ‘told’ what should be done. ‘Ichnography’, a term used by Vitruvius for the plan drawing, means to track or to trace and leaving ‘footmarks’—imprints from the act of drawing a ground plan in a literal sense—on the ground (Ibid.: 119).

The pre-modern site relation, in a design perspective, is also discussed by anthropologist Tim Ingold in reference to large-scale medieval constructions, where drawing and doing on site were part of one process of making; ‘plans in stone’ were standard working approaches that encompassed both the medium and the result in one connected process in spatial context (Ingold 2013: 54). Most likely, plans where though not full plans of the whole undertakings, Ingold says; it is discussed if they did even exist and how they were made before scale drawing became the prevalent method. However, partial markings, through templates or drawings, directly onto the construction material were common among craftsmen (Ibid.: 55). As Ingold describes it, these working modes meant that the acts of drawing and building were not divided into either abstract design or concrete execution; both were part of one integrated on-site process (Ibid.: 56).

The presence of planning, drawing directly and testing – in both 2d and 3d – on the physical site itself has thus had different formats through history. In *City Planning According to Artistic Principles*, Camillo Sitte suggests that for testing a planned addition to the Votive Church in Vienna, constructing a provisory structure out of wooden boards and paint would enable a qualified public decision on the plans (Sitte 2002 (1909): 184). Sitte’s proposal of building a ‘completed fiction of an actual



construction<sup>01</sup> was apparently intended to inform laypersons and ensure a more responsible decision making process (Ibid.: 185). This physical, but fictional, proposal, as a testing mode, would enter a public communication process, where the provisory structure could form a spatial argument for the future decision – ‘not out of any particular penchant for dreaming castles in the air, but as a practical suggestion’, according to Sitte (Sitte 1986 (1889): 300).

These historic perspectives highlight important dynamics connecting design, plan and site, dynamics that can have various forms. Collaborative building methods and craftsmanship hold specific on-site modes. Furthermore, democratic aspects of spatializing proposals, which can enhance informed common decisions, can be an important aspect of ‘plans on site’. However, such spatial arguments can also be manifestations of power and manipulative practices.

Testing, visualising and actually drawing and building directly on location, though a contemporary trend in some sense, is thus deeply embedded in the ways people have shaped their surroundings in all kinds of cultures and times to test, to mediate, to convince and blaze the trail, thereby blurring understandings of representation and physical space making as separate entities. However, these old-school versions of (more or less profane or divine) large-scale drawings, mock-ups, prototypes or full-scale design, made directly on location, demonstrate that ‘projecting on site’ not only relates to functional testing of spatial design, layouts and programmatic efficacy. They also serve communica-

<sup>01</sup>Transl. from German: ‘durchgeführte Fiktion einer tatsächlichen Verbauung’ (Sitte 2002 (1909): 185)



^ > 30.08.2013\_An inflatable plastic bubble functioned as a one day library on Smedestræde 2 (*Aeropolis/Plastique Fantastique*, Metropolis Festival 2013). Outside the bubble the Valby Pavilion is another propositional mode of a library on site.



tional goals by creating a meeting between propositions and intentions—the actual location and its makers and users.

Specific aesthetics and narratives emerge in that meeting. Representations meet what they represent. What can be defined as projection and production—conceptual ideas and plans, and the actual implementation that materialise the ideas—are here in close dialogue, or at least, they are intended to be.

### ***Sites as constructs and narratives***

The on-site and off-site working modes discussed above, along with an inclusive understanding of planning and design acts as well as the importance of communicability, suggest a view of ‘the site’ that can frame dynamics that transgress the boundaries of the physical site. This study therefore approaches the notion of the site from a relational perspective. Recent discussion within design and architectural theory on relational site understanding address multiple angles on urban sites (e.g. Burns & Kahn 2005; Ewing et al. 2011; Tietjen 2011; Diedrich 2013). In *Site Matters* (2005), Carol J. Burns and Andrea Kahn introduce the notion of the site by its basic meaning as ‘the ground chosen for something’ and ‘the location to some set of activities and practices’ (Burns & Kahn 2005: viii). However, sites are constantly changing, and manifest an ‘overlay and interplay of multiple realities operating at the same time, on the same place’ (Kahn 2005: 286). We can thus consider a site a dynamic ground, a relational construction which is ‘actively produced’ (Ibid.: 292), rather than a predefined and fixed unit restricted to physical boundaries and stable definitions. A design process thus encompasses the ‘relationship between a project and a locale’ (Burns & Kahn 2005: viii), with interchanges and negotiation between conceptual objectives and the physical location.

Accordingly, a site can be considered a social construction. From a planning and design perspective, this means that certain aspects and qualities are given attention while others are undermined, in the goal of achieving a certain clarity upon which to act. What Robert A. Beauregard formulates as the ‘distilling of narratives’ (Beauregard 2005: 42) is thus a part of planning strategies and a way to steer decision making. The ‘narrative construction of sites’ (Ibid.: 54) is of particular relevance to the processes and spaces discussed in this study. The act of redefining sites is as much a question of physical changes as it is of (re)building stories—and thereby creating meaning and driving forces and arguments for further action.

The temporary projects in my study are part of different forms of narrative place-making that takes place both on location and through distant media. Especially in the initial re-appropriation steps, the why and how is often strongly guided by narratives about what a place should or could become. In particular at times when not much physical development is visible yet. Urban place branding and public relations in the three cases, such as postings of activities and ambiances on social media, are important both as branding strategies and discursive tools by which these narratives are distributed. For example, all the three sites have social media profile pages, or even multiple thematic ones,

managed by the different partners involved.<sup>02</sup> These virtual urban imageries and identity-creating 'brandscapes' (e.g. Klingmann 2007) form additional experiences of sites, which, I will argue, are significant as communication, since the spatial settings in themselves are to some degree inconstant in their physicality and activation mode. Consequently, if it is not on social media, it has not happened. Furthermore, debates, newspaper articles and planning material are co-producing sites from a distance. This will be further unfolded in the case discussions. Events that take place in the harbour transformation area in Køge are highly featured on virtual platforms and leaflets, to give an example. And the local debate about Smedestræde in Valby is recurrent newspaper material. These stories, no matter if they are visual testimonies of ambiances or feature controversies and debate, they shape multiple understandings of the project sites and add to the narrative of ongoing development, making it visible, detached from the physical location. Though detached and virtual, however, the communication still draws on the physical site. As social and cultural geographer Kirsten

<sup>02</sup> The Køge Kyst Urban Life Facebook page features a large amount of images (mostly by professional photographers), event-posts and planning updates from the harbour transformation. In Valby, a Valby Pavilion FB profile was created by the local committee and information about the development is also reported on the committee's own channels on FB, Instagram and their website. The local newspaper is regularly featuring articles about the site's uncertain state. Furthermore the owner of TH. Bar posts updates on opening hours, concerts and atmospheric festive pictures from the site on Facebook and Instagram. In Groningen the former factory site has its own FB page, Former SugarUnie Terrain. The restaurant the Wolkenfabriek, the managers Ploeg id3 display posts about the site development and activities and multiple images of the characteristic site silhouette, information about interventions and events on social media, as well.



07.05.2011\_ *Walk this way* was one of the first art exhibitions taking place in Søndre Havn, Køge. The cobbled-together setting in the transformation area is staged by mega writings

Simonsen points out regarding the constructive role of narratives as symbolic actions in the urban field, narratives have to draw on some kind of executed practice (Simonsen 2005: 71). Images and events as *signs* need to be produced through *action* which underlines the reciprocal constitutive inter-relation between materiality and discourse.

## Signs, symbols and lies

### *Speaking architecture*

As outlined, communicability plays a big role in this thematic discussion. Another trip back into architectural history reveals the role of communication and symbolic elements in the spatial settings from an additional productive angle.

In their seminal publication *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972), Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour set out to investigate the urban landscape of the famous Las Vegas Strip. They developed an analytic approach to architecture and urban form focussing on the common, generic and commercial architectural 'language' along The Strip. The observations made in this particular, and extreme, environment and time specifically address the impact of different communicational systems, symbolic add-ons and the interrelations between them in the urban setting. Their attention to ordinary and mundane structures is also worth scrutinizing. When it was first published, the book was iconoclastic, stirring controversies in the field of architecture and urban studies because of its attention to the 'ugly and ordinary' (Venturi et al. 1977) of spatialized popular culture and its critique of late modernist architecture. It analyses the physics of the American car-centred city, but, more importantly, also features a general attention to and (re)-acknowledgement of elements of communication and symbolism through the study of assemblies of signs and messages in the urban landscape.<sup>05</sup> According to Venturi, Scott Brown & Izenour, the relation between architecture and iconography had been lost among modern architects, which was caused by a dismissal of related artistic features, such as decorations, paintings, sculptures and graphic elements—ornamental parts that were more than just ornaments. All that was left of such features in modernist architecture was the toilet sign, as they provocatively put it (Ibid.: 7).

Under the headline 'Symbol in Space before Form in Space', the authors argue for a closer attention to symbolic features. The role of sculptural elements, graphic and textual features, lighting and billboards are seen in relation to the morphological properties of the built structure as architecture. In particular, they emphasise spatial messages in the form of signs (street signs) combining text, images and sculptural elements, 'to persuade and inform' (Ibid.: 52).

In the context of temporary sites, it is the attention to a broad spectrum of communicative spatial elements that is particularly relevant. In investigations of built environment, according to the approach of Venturi, Scott Brown & Izenour, it can be useful to keep an eye open for structures and interventions of specific communicative and symbolic value as well as any spatial add-ons that communicate—those things not customarily considered as a part of the architecture or urban design per se, or, at

<sup>05</sup> A similar approach was made in Venturi & Scott Brown's studies of suburbia (Levittown) in 1970, where they looked at how inhabitants had personalised, altered and equipped their houses and lawn areas, and how these types of spaces were presented in media (Scott Brown 2012(1986)).

least not formulated as such.

However, while urban landscapes, such as the commercial scenery in Las Vegas and urban 'Non-Places' (Augé 1995) depend on additional situating messages, contemporary spaces of transformation can challenge orientation and understanding in other ways.

Venturi, Scott Brown & Izenour derived their famous concepts of 'the duck' and 'the decorated shed' from their investigations. The 'duck' refers to the architectural element as a symbol that expresses its content and function directly through the form (duck=here you can buy poultry). The 'decorated shed' is a generic architectural structure which could be anything, but features representational elements such as text, decorations and boards, added information that points at the particular function (Ibid.: 87). While the 'duck' version of architecture, in its most extreme form, can be called '*architecture parlante*'—'speaking architecture'<sup>04</sup>—'decorated shed' architecture forms an interrelation between a building unit and additional communicational parts that tell about the function of the 'shed'. It is a box with a sign attached. The authors note that in some situations the building itself is the dominant spatial messenger, and in other cases it is the add-on, such as an informational sign; the retainer of messages can also be the location (a service station is most often on a corner). These systems of

<sup>04</sup> The term '*l'architecture parlante*' was coined by Leon Vaudoyer in 1852 to describe a branch of neoclassical architecture in which plans and buildings formed 'three dimensional metaphors' (Johnson 2009: 421). The function of a building was strongly present in its form or in the plan of its site, e.g. in the work of Claude Nicolas Ledoux and Étienne-Louis Boullée.



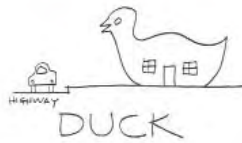
Las Vegas signs and buildings. Images from the Learning from Las Vegas studio. Source: Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas*, revised edition, published by The MIT Press (by courtesy of the publisher)



73. "Long Island Duckling" from *God's Own Junkyard*



74. Road scene from *God's Own Junkyard*



75. Duck



76. Decorated shed

The 'duck' and the 'decorated shed'. Source: Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas*, revised edition, published by The MIT Press (by courtesy of the publisher)

reading meaning are partly combined and can be ambiguous: 'Is the sign the building or the building the sign?' (Ibid.: 73). These analytic concepts, despite their simplification and contextual difference, point at a constructed meaning-making between the basic functionality (the commercial offer), added communication and symbolic expressions that inform my own investigations. I will return to the 'decorated shed' later in one of the case discussions.

### ***Extraordinary ordinary meaning***

The pragmatic analytic approach and attention to the ordinary as a 'learning from everything' (Ibid.: 3) featured in the study of Las Vegas emphasises the signification of elements in space, whether they are considered designed or not. A chain service station and high-end architecture is treated with equal attention. Another inspirational link between the *Learning from Las Vegas* analysis and the investigation of the temporary spaces is the ambiguous aesthetic of the ordinary, mundane and 'non-designed design'—both as singular elements and as combined settings. However, as noted in *Learning from Las Vegas*, architecture can be ordinary, or conventional in two ways: 'in how it is constructed or in how it is seen, that is, in its process or in its symbolism' (Ibid.: 128). In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that a lot of work can be hidden behind simple settings and installations—something that looks unpretentious, ordinary and simple might not be that simple. In other words, space elements and settings may appear as *signs* of something ordinary; the *action*, the process and practice, the making behind, might

not be so –and the other way around.

Furthermore, simple, modular and generic elements and ready-mades can be different things. Basic standard garden beds, containers and pallets are omnipresent in temporary projects, and not only in Køge, Valby and Groningen. They are objects that can move between a generic ‘Starbucksification’ of temporary architecture, indicating certain aesthetics and activities, and particular localised, contextual, and site-specific creative alterations: the same, same but different. A pallet can just be a pallet. It can also be an improvised sofa, a house, a wall; an information board. It can be art. It can be an intended expression of an informal laid-back attitude of edginess and urban coolness – or, if not convincingly, a wannabe version of the same. In addition, the re-programming interventions in question are transformations of existing spaces and former uses. Hence, multiple understandings are pre-programmed. The meaning-making is complex, since things are not necessarily what one expects to see at first glance; the settings are in the process of creation.

The analysis in *Learning from Las Vegas* is, as a reading of the city, inspired by classic semiotics. The urban environment can thus be differentiated by denotative and connotative messages. The denotative refers to the literal meaning of a sign, whereas the connotative lies outside the sign itself and refers to associative and external meaning(s). Venturi and his colleagues call their applied approach pragmatic



13.08.2015\_Pallets turn to gold when a city is to be made. 'Timmerdorp,' 'Hammertown' is a construction camp for children taking place on the former sugar factory in Groningen.





07.05.2011\_ An artwork from the exhibition *Walk this way* in the harbour area of Køge

and concrete, merely guided and inspired by semiotic concepts (Ibid.: 131).<sup>05</sup> Though inspirational in terms of the elucidative attention to overlooked communicative and symbolic elements,<sup>06</sup> their approach also raises questions. Obviously, as Venturi and his colleagues note themselves, it can be difficult to decipher what is what, hence their question of whether the sign is the building or the building the sign (Ibid.: 73). It is a question that inevitably raises another question: how to understand meaning in relation to function in contexts where communication plays a particular important role in the urban space.<sup>07</sup>

One could argue that the bold symbolic reading of the communication landscape does not say much about its coming into being, about possible changes in signification based on specific contextual and processual aspects of space making—*the action*. Among others, architectural historian Dell Upton is sceptical of the approach in *Learning from Las Vegas*. Despite Venturi, Scott Brown & Izenour's argument for focussing on 'the forgotten symbolism of architectural form' (which was the subtitle for the second edition in 1977), symbolism is more than that, Upton argues; it is 'transaction rather than representation' (Upton 2003: 339). To attend the transaction, other lenses might help to look at how meanings are *made and transformed* as part of practices and social processes.

According to Mark Gottdiener, an urban sociologist, it can be useful to look at how meaning is created when objects are 'transfunctionalized', borrowing a term from the semiotist Martin Krampen (Gottdiener 1983: 102). The signification of a transfunctionalized object emerges when a meaning is conveyed that exceeds the immediate function. This differentiation depends on the current socio-cultural appropriation. Gottdiener gives the following example:

A swimming pool, viewed as a material object alone, would not be considered part of a semiotic discourse, but an empty pool used as a skate board rink would. In the latter case the object has been modified by a social process to mean something other than its function. It is this social process that becomes the bearer of meaning for semiotics. (Ibid.: 102)

Considering the state of transition and processes of reprogramming in the temporary use projects, this perspective points to the fact that the transformation and re-use context inherently holds a dynamic

<sup>05</sup> The publication marked one of the first examples of applied semiotic analysis in the architectural and urban disciplines, which grew popular in the 1970s. Semiotics, the study of signs and sign processes, originally founded in two different traditions, was formulated by Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles S. Peirce. It has been widely applied in different cultural analyses. In the field of architecture and urban studies, semiotic approaches have been discussed by e.g. Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco, Charles Jencks, and Mark Gottdiener. It has been the subject of critique because of its focus on a textual reading of non-linguistic elements, but it has simultaneously formed the ground for many further theoretical elaborations in urban studies.

<sup>06</sup> The scope here is not a detailed unravelling of semiotic terminology. I approach the notion of symbolism as just one of several different relevant meaning-making processes. According to Carl Knappett, in *Thinking Through Material Culture* (2005), 'communication is about pragmatic action as much as it is about signification; and moreover, that signification involves much more than symbolism' (Knappett 2005: 9). A thing or action can mean something without having a symbolic role and communication and symbolism are not the same (Ibid.: 7).

<sup>07</sup> The ambiguity of function in relation to signification in architecture is discussed by Umberto Eco and Roland Barthes, among others. According to Eco, architecture is a challenge to semiotics, because the role of architecture is not primarily to be communicative, but functional. However, he describes architecture as 'mass communication' (1986). According to Barthes, the 'conflict between signification and function is the despair of planners' (Barthes 1997 (1967): 167). In his essay 'The Eiffel Tower' (1979), Barthes for instance notes that 'use never does anything but shelter meaning'. The function of something like the Eiffel Tower is multifaceted and ambiguous (Barthes 1997 (1979): 166).



⌘ 26.08.2015\_Pallet bench made by TH. Bar on the Valby Pavilion

⌘ Found in a Danish building supply and gardening centre. Here you can buy a ready-made pallet lounge set in DIY-style

mode of creating new meaning through the act of transforming.

In his ‘theory of the lie’, Eco offers another perspective on meaning-making and what can be taken as a sign (Eco 1976: 6):

Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign. A sign is everything which can be taken as significantly substituting for something else. This something else does not necessarily have to exist or to actually be somewhere at the moment in which the sign stands in for it. Thus semiotics is in its principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie. If something cannot be used to tell a lie, conversely, it cannot be used to tell the truth: it cannot be used ‘to tell’ at all. (Ibid.: 7; italics in original)<sup>08</sup>

In *Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth and Art* (1998) writer and cultural critic Lewis Hyde elaborates on Eco’s definition of a sign as a lie, using the example of the baited hook, which features a worm with a hook that pretends to be harmless:

A worm with no hook in it, a worm the fish can eat in safety, has by Eco’s way of thinking, no significance, but the worm that says ‘I’m harmless’ when in fact it hides a hook tells a lie and by that lie worms begin to signify (and fish, if they are smart, will begin to read before they eat). Only when there’s a possible Lying Worm can we begin to speak of a True Worm, and only then does Worm become a sign. (Hyde 1998: 20)

Hence, a worm signifies nothing—but once fishing comes into the story, the baited hook (the false, bad worm) also grants significance to the (real, good) worm. The sign defined as transfunctionalized or lying, as explained in these examples, might sound illusive. However, understanding signs this way helps to clarify and guide thinking about spaces that are in transition, where re-programming interventions entail things not necessarily working as they used to do, normally do or seem to do. Looking for ‘real illusions’ might thus be a way to shed light on how spatial changes carry various understandings in their making and storytelling.<sup>09</sup> The aspects introduced in this section, ‘Signs, symbols and lies’, support an investigation of spatial communicability, signification but also changes in signification. The next pages will serve to unfold how spatial meaning-making and communication can be examined with a lens borrowed from performance studies.

## Doing space

### *As performance*

To be able to reflect more on *the action*, on the dynamics of spatial meaning-making that emerges through particular ongoing practices and singular occurrences and events in the field investigated,

<sup>08</sup> In a later interview Eco revises his description slightly: ‘Instead of “lying,” I should have said, “telling the contrary of the truth.” Human beings can tell fairy tales, imagine new worlds, make mistakes—and we can lie. (...) Lying is a specifically human ability. A dog, following a track, is following a scent. Neither the dog nor the scent “lies,” so to speak. But I can lie to you and tell you to go in that direction, which is not the direction you have asked about, and yet you believe me and you go in the wrong direction. The reason this is possible is that we depend on signs.’ (Eco in Zanganeh 2008).

<sup>09</sup> Storytelling plays an important role in this discussion. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines storytelling as ‘the action or activity of telling stories, or a particular story; an instance of this’, but also, more rarely, as ‘the action of telling lies; lying.’



04.03.2015\_ 'What do you know about Kultur Valby?' and 'Is today's offer right here?' are questions 'left' in the backyard of Smedestræde 2.

I will introduce a few aspects from the field of performance studies into this thematic exploration. Performance studies covers the study of performances of various kinds, from rituals to aesthetic and artistic genres, other social (everyday) interactions, play, games, sports and political events. The discipline addresses modes of (often non-textual) communication expressed through *doing* something—and to a high degree more indistinct, and intercultural, phenomenon and interfaces. Consequently, performance studies is considered a crossover field, one that breaks down boundaries between disciplines rather than holds on to specific fixed areas; it is a lens for ‘in-betweens’. A number of key words in this field have gained slightly different meanings and emphasis. *Performativity* most often refers to an overall theoretical frame of thinking focussing on the situated and processual, *performance* defines the action, and *theatricality* encompasses performance as a conscious and intended staged (artistic) setup (e.g. Fischer-Lichte 2001, 2014 (2004); Ring Petersen 2015).<sup>10</sup> Thus, performance studies provide both an overall conceptual view and is also a specific field of study (Auslander 2008: 1). The central concepts I will refer to here are primarily based on performance theorist Richard Schechner’s and cultural anthropologist Victor Turner’s work in the combined field of theatre studies and anthropology.

Not surprisingly, performance studies have influenced how cultural and social dynamics are studied in the urban field. Increasingly, performative understandings thus serve to approach issues in planning, architecture and urban design to shed light on situations, relational and processual aspects and the hybridity of modern urban culture (e.g. Skot Hansen 2007; Samson 2010; Marling & Kiib 2010; Berg 2011; Wolfrum 2015;). Relevant related fields where performance studies are of influence are co-design, participatory design and design anthropology research (e.g. Halse 2008; Agger Eriksen, 2012), installation art (e.g. Jalving 2011; Ring Petersen 2015) and strategic management (Kornberger & Clegg 2011).

Since the field of performance studies is able to engage constructively with synthesized cultural aspects and hybrid art forms, it makes sense to introduce it in this discussion of the ambiguous character emerging in the temporary urban settings.

Perspectives from performance studies add to and challenge a static art-work analysis that considers space as fixed spatial elements, images or representations, something which can make it difficult to encompass changes, practices and actions. Furthermore, cobbled-together settings and situations that are difficult to define as, for instance, formal urban design, can thus be approached beyond their categorical ‘home’.

Erika Fischer-Lichte, a theatre theorist, points at a shift from (or between) seeing something as ‘work’ to seeing it as an ‘event’—from ‘Werk’ to ‘Ereignischarakter’ (Fischer-Lichte 2014 (2004): 208). Situations and things not necessarily considered as work of art in a strict sense can thus become subjects for study, and the division between presentation and representation can be challenged (Fischer-Lichte 2014 (2004)). Art historian Camilla Jalving, for instance, investigates the concept of performativity in relation to contemporary installation art. On the schism on representation and presentation, which

<sup>10</sup> Keywords such as ‘performance’ and ‘performativity’ have flourished in many academic discourses, from its first uses in the 1940s and 1950s to a considerable popularity in 1990s postmodern discourse, a development often referred to as a performative turn in cultural studies. The key ideas of ‘performance’ and ‘performativity’ have thus been heavily borrowed. As ‘travelling concepts’ (Bal 2002: 178) they have wandered from philosophy to gender studies, literature, anthropology and sociology, theatre and art, and even archaeology and strategic management.

she for a matter of fact calls 'sign and action',<sup>11</sup> she argues that the lens of performance lets us consider representations as presentation and vice versa (Jalving 2011: 248–249). Art historian Anne Ring Petersen explores similar tendencies in *Installation Art—Between Image and Stage* (2015), in which she dissects how installation art oscillates between visual art and performance theatre.<sup>12</sup> According to performance theorist Richard Schechner, every action can be approached as a performance even though it might not be defined as such culturally (Schechner 2013b: 38). We can thus consider all kinds of activities “as” performance’ and thereby investigate them in their changing and provisional state. To look at something that ‘is’ a performance and also ‘as’ a performance forms a connected field without strict divisions (Ibid.: 48–49).

Though performance studies emphasises dynamics, actions and non-permanence, spatiality and materiality are of importance. Not as ‘things-as-such’ but seen in relation to the processes they are part of. Paying attention to the interplay between artefacts, spaces, processes and practices helps to question representation and reification.<sup>13</sup> According to Schechner’s conception, despite a processual focus dealing with actions of an ephemeral character, material aspects should not be dismissed in an analysis. Things as well as activities can be seen through the performance lens. The *relation* between performance and materiality is thus intertwined:

To treat any object, work, or product ‘as’ performance—a painting, a novel, a shoe or anything at all—means to investigate what the object does, how it interacts with other objects or beings, and how it relates to other objects and beings. Performances exist only as actions, interactions, and relationships. (Schechner 2013b: 30)

We can investigate ‘texts, architecture, visual arts, or any other item or artifact of art or culture not in themselves, but as players in ongoing relationships’, he says. Things are thus looked upon in a dynamic way, so that ‘whatever is being studied is regarded as practices, events, and behaviours, not as ‘objects’ or ‘things’. This quality of ‘liveness’—even when dealing with media or archival materials—is the heart of performance studies’ (Schechner 2013a: 3). Following this line of thinking, ephemeral processes and actions can be scrutinized without neglecting materiality and spatiality, but by considering a dynamic interplay.

Through the anthropological performance lens, we can also examine the role of symbolic elements. Symbols can be understood as ‘social and cultural dynamic systems, shedding and gathering meaning over time and altering in form’, as Victor Turner puts it (Turner 1974: 54). This means that we have ‘to catch symbols in their movement’ (Ibid.: 56) to really understand how they work in a social context. Turner’s definition of a symbol as a multivocal ‘storage unit’ (Turner 1968: 1–2, cited in Deflem 1991: 5), derived from his studies of ritual behaviour, highlights the processual and multi-faceted aspects of cultural meaning-making and changing expression of values and norms. In performance analysis

<sup>11</sup> ‘Tegn og handling’ in Danish.

<sup>12</sup> The reference to installation art as a highly contextual art form is to some extent relatable to dynamics at play in the contextuality of urban spaces in transition; this similarity can also be traced back to aspects of the early land art movement in the 1960s.

<sup>13</sup> Performance studies are often associated with emerging theoretical positions under the label of ‘non-representational’ (Thrift 2007; Cadman 2009) or ‘more than-representational’ theory or geography (Lorimer 2005).

and event-analysis, Turner says, symbols are ‘agencies and foci of social mobilization, interaction, and styling of behaviour’ (Turner 1975: 150). Hence, ‘symbolic action’ and ‘symbolic phenomena’ (Ibid.) are processual actives, not related to a fixed core of meaning and playing an agential role. Accordingly, in situations of change and deviation in particular, symbolic features come to live, and are understood as being used and enacted and thereby gaining meaning and form as operational tools:

It is in ‘happenings’ that we best see how symbols can be detached from abstract systems of symbols (...) with which they have previously been connected and ‘hooked in’ to new ad hoc combinations of symbols to constitute, legitimate, or undermine programs and protocols for collective action. (Ibid.: 148)

This understanding of symbolism, as a way of thinking, relates to the notion of the transfunctionalized and lying sign described earlier, where meaning evolves in action and as it becomes something else.

### **Event phases**

An overall attention towards processual and performative aspects enables a focus on distinct steps and transformational stages—the phases of change. Hence, some of the key elements and actual phases put forward by the disciplinary stand of performance studies provide an interesting way to situate the temporary spaces and the activities taking place within them. We can thus specifically address not only *the* performance (understood in a broad sense) but also pursue the ‘before and the after’, considering the performance process as a set of definable phases, what Schechner terms ‘time-space sequences’ of proto-performance, performance and aftermath (Schechner 2013b: 225).

In this discussion about *sign* and *action*, the attention to sequences with different action modes can be elucidative. Recurring and singular events work as spatial connectors and catalysts: from bigger festivals and exhibitions to ‘micro-events’, such as themed workshops and debates and inaugurations of new facilities or installations. This is evident in all my cases, for instance, and I will get back to some of these types of events. Even though they might only last a few hours or a day, they can create memorable experiences on an immediate individual or collective level. But additionally, they also result in shareable documentation and communication that last longer. In retrospect, these documented experiences form, through media, the image and appearance of a given situation, and thereby also the site. In particular, social media posts work as ongoing archives of past experiences on site, as already pointed out in the section ‘Sites as constructs and narratives’, earlier in this introduction.

In relation to cultural performances, documentation is important because of the limited time frame of action, and is often displayed and exhibited and discussed afterwards (Fischer-Lichte 2014 (2004): 127). However, events can also leave traces on location, despite and beyond their ephemeral moment. Singular or repetitive events can work as shaping forces that result in spatial imprints that persist beyond the specific time of the performance.

For temporary projects, it is therefore useful to look at event activities beyond the inauguration of an event. Installations, objects or props created with a single event or time-limited purpose in mind might just remain on location—as *permitted exceptions* that reject their ephemeral inception. They are not dismantled as event structures but are ‘carried on’—which, apart from the one-time experience,



results in material leftovers after ‘the show is over’—they are signs of action, scenographic settings for possible actions, pointing backwards and forwards on location. Seen from a performance perspective, short-term activities thus not only result in the actual event, but also bring with them preparatory steps as well as an afterlife—from planning, to taking down, to cleaning up, as well as communicating a given event and eventually also the material imprints remaining on site.

### **Summary: Signs for action and signs of action**

The discussions touched upon in this introduction, reaching from medieval prototyping to billboards in Las Vegas to performance theory, reveal various links and overlaps that transgress the division between *signs*, broadly understood as representational expressions, and *actions*, that focus on making and spatial and material practice. This heterogeneous spectrum encircles the ‘planning as doing meaning’ that will now be elaborated in the three cases. The entry point to the redevelopment area in the Southern Harbour in Køge will be the first stop.

## SOUTHERN HARBOUR – KØGE

### Harbour regulations and urban life invitations

At the beginning of the cultural pathway known as The Thread in the Southern Harbour, Køge, the visitor enters a special zone. The gravel path is framed by two messages. To the left, a yellow sign is warning and declares the rules that apply in the industrial harbour area:

Secured working area! Port Authorities Instructions and Regulations must be followed. Valid identification must be shown on request. Parking only allowed with special permission from the Port Authorities. Inquiries on access can be directed to Køge Harbour tlf. 5664 6260. The above-mentioned instructions and orders are in accordance with the ISPS-code on Safety and Harbours and 'The standard regulations for compliance of order in Danish harbours'. Violation can result in pecuniary penalty.

To the right, a signpost installed by Køge Kyst invites visitors to discover the cultural trail and the temporary 'pocket spaces':

The Thread goes through the new urban area of Køge–Køge Kyst–and connects the market square with the sea. Along this thread the life before the city will grow. On The Thread are places to hang out as well as places for play and activity ('udfoldelse'). Specific places are The Impulse (2012), The Space of Time, The Discovery (2012) and The View. Use The Thread and be part of creating life before the city!<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> This signpost is from 2011 and does therefore not list all the temporary urban spaces.



06.08.2015\_ On the left side of The Thread the harbour sign declares 'Secured working area!'. The stand on The Thread to the right invites visitors to create 'Life Before the City'.

In the transparent plastic box fastened to the stand, visitors can pick up information material and small pocket maps for exploring the area.

This is a functioning harbour, a traditional industrial and working environment—but something else as well. Whereas the warning by the port authority, as most signs like these, is concerned with safety, security and restrictions, due to the industrial functions and the heavy traffic, the signs belonging to The Thread encourage exploration and recreational activity: requests for security precautions here meet place-making narratives. These co-existing modes of communication underline the different uses taking place simultaneously and the multiple agendas at play in the harbour.

Clashes of signs like this happen all the time, everywhere. When use of space is multifunctional or undergoing change, the communication follows: signs are ‘forgotten’, coincidentally or intentionally placed next to each other, or superimposed over each other. Nevertheless, the tension created by the logic to which the messages belong is part of what is creating the distinct spatial setting in urban transformation areas like this.

How are changes in terms of conception and use of the harbour presented and enacted in the transformation area of the Southern Harbour in Køge? On the following tour, I will discuss elements of verbal and image-based communication along The Thread and in the temporary urban spaces that ‘speak’ about the relation *between sign and action* in this specific setting of the harbour redevelopment. Signs in this discussion are understood quite literally, as on-location information and directions in the form of panels, posters of different size, writings on walls or floor, and other multimodal messages



25.06.2015\_The industrial working zone and the cultural trail: ‘Dialogue and urban transformation’ meet ‘Be careful—Heavy work traffic’

and representations, including text and images. This tour of the Southern Harbour explores the role of communication and instructions on site, in terms of temporary use and transformation situations and how they animate and activate the area. The analysis will evolve on several of the aspects presented in the chapter introduction and contribute with further nuances by dissecting specific spatial elements on site.

## Urban seeing and doing instructions

### *Here you find and here you can...*

The temporary urban spaces in Søndre Havn, Køge, promote and frame activity before and while the new district is planned in detail and constructed. Communication of the possible activities thus plays an important role in the spaces. All the temporary urban spaces throughout the harbour area, along The Thread, feature large panels that describe the respective design and facilities. They present information about what the spaces consist of, how they have been developed and how they can be used, as well as references to further online information.

At The Discovery, panels are mounted both in the outdoor kitchen as well as on the big fence next to the urban gardens. In addition to describing who has been involved in the design, how the garden works and how you can book the outdoor kitchen online (see chapter two), the panel in the kitchen lists the elements on the site and what can be done on site:



06.08.2015\_Infopanel in the outdoor kitchen at The Discovery



well as an info area with posters and a huge map of the Køge Kyst area.

These are just a few examples of the panels mounted in the urban spaces. Displays of information and guidance to communicate changes in urban redevelopment areas are not at all unusual; what is interesting, however, is *how, to what degree* and *what* is promoted specifically this way in this context. In general, we are constantly guided by what can be considered 'public messages' (Zeisel 2006: 177) or 'territorial rules' (Kärrholm 2007: 442) telling us how to behave and how to understand a given space. Such messages usually communicate prohibitions and warnings, such as 'Smoking Prohibited', 'No Trespassing', 'No Parking', 'No Dogs' or security signs such as the before-mentioned harbour sign or signs at construction sites. Signs also provide, as Marc Augé notes, 'instructions for use' in the so-called non-places, generic environments that highly depend on additional textual messages (Augé 1995: 96). The signs in the Southern Harbour are imperative in another way, not by proscribing activity but by pointing at *what (and how) to experience* and *what to do*. However, not only are the specific elements marked and described thoroughly, furthermore the inspirational guidance and the different 'possible-to-do instructions' relate intertextually.

In the case of the *common community gardens* discussed in chapter two, 'Between Public and Private', signs and big letters cover most of the wooden boxes. One of the larger panels on the fence says that the common gardens are clearly marked with signs. Obviously, this is also an implicit anti-sign for the personal gardens—since you are also specifically told that you can pick from the common community gardens (but not the 'private' ones). Moreover, the name signs on the individual, 'private', gardens are



06.08.2015\_The common community gardens are clearly 'common'



04.05.2012\_ 'The bench is yours—Continue building yourself' (Hammerstrøm, Bjerre & Walton, *Urban Play*, 2012)

a third type of sign pointing out the differentiation between the gardens boxes and their 'rules'. This underlines the intent to clarify ownership, discussed in the previous chapter, and creates a triple-layered message, in addition to the garden beds and how they can be understood as such.

This example and the descriptions referred to earlier also show that the layers of information on signs, stands, maps and posters in the Southern Harbour not only play an important role in communicating the overall intentions of the planning initiative Køge Kyst, they also create awareness of specific experiences—they guide experience. 'Walk this way', 'build the bench', 'you are here' or 'borrow a bike'<sup>15</sup> are imperative messages—calls or invitations to engage, messages that also co-shape, steer, encourage and choreograph possible activities and practices in the spaces that particularly underline the contemporary focus on 'making' in urban space, introduced in the first chapter.

The multi-layered information is interwoven into the physical setting. Whereas the first concept description published about the Phase Zero in 2011 features an imagined 'tour along The Thread' (Køge Kyst 2011b: 10-11), describing the intended ambience—graffiti art, people doing gardening, the view on the beach meadow, illuminated industry structures and the wide open sea etc., a real tour along The Thread indeed gives possibilities for such experiences—but guidance for it is also provided on site. In the publication three main statements characterise the Phase Zero and the engaging properties aimed at: 'In action', 'Come here', 'Look here', (Køge Kyst 2011b: 5). These imperatives do enter space as well.

### **Art manual and BBQ**

A different version of a verbal-visual 'urban instruction' is situated near the beach, at The View. Here, a red container on the platform facing the sea houses a mobile kitchen station. *The Mobile Conversation Kitchen*, by artist Jesper Aabille is an artwork created for the exhibition *Urban Play* in 2012. Aabille's 'kitchen sculptures', as he calls them, consist of four colourful tool tables equipped with a smoke oven, a gas jet, chopping boards and a water station. The four mobile sculptures almost resemble mutated wheelbarrows or garden tools, with their obvious but playful functionality and mounted wheels and handles. Aabille describes the kitchen installation as 'an aesthetical blended product taken from the world of toys and professional kitchens'.<sup>16</sup> Originally intended as a more short-term installation in connection with the annual exhibition in 2012, the kitchen sculptures are now an established part of The Thread. The Mobile Kitchen remained in place after the exhibition event ended. The kitchen installation can now be booked the same way as the outdoor kitchen area in The Discovery, via the online system. It is also used for open workshops, as part of the Køge Kyst program. When not in use, the sculptures are locked in the container.

On the front of the container, four posters feature a kind of operation manual with photos showing how to use the different cooking facilities. The origin of the installation in the exhibition and the relation to Køge Kyst, which has 'adopted' it after the exhibition period, is also noted in the posters.

<sup>15</sup> These are messages from different artworks and facilities on site.

<sup>16</sup> From Aabille's website (<http://www.aabille.dk/mobilkoekken.html>)





⤴ The Mobile Conversation Kitchen by Jesper Aabille (Photo: Tuala Hjarnø) from *Urban Play* (2012)

⤴ Use of the mobile kitchen tools during an event at The View (Photo: Martin Håkan/CoverGanda.dk for Køge Kyst)



⌘ 26.03.2014\_Large operation manuals are displayed on the red container housing the kitchen. The fifth poster to the right has been added by Køge Kyst and describes how to play music on The View via mobile phone.

^ 26.03.2014\_The standard barbeque stations on The View



*The Mobile Conversation Kitchen* relays humour and playthrough the slightly distorted ordinary everyday practice and its social properties. The integration of everyday social practices, such as cooking and related open-source urban recipes or guidelines, are increasingly part of relational and intermedia artwork in public (often temporary or performance based), aiming at breaking down the boundaries between art and the citizens, by offering approachable ways of engaging. In the case of *The View*, the kitchen artwork both stands out from and melts into the existing setting, and it plays on that tension. The colourful tools are clearly something special. But they also provide the quite ordinary function of facilitating picnics and gatherings (though performed in a different way) and other facilities, such as the ordinary standard BBQ grills on the platform, in their literal way ‘talk the same language’, and they are used in combination with the mobile kitchen artwork.

The photo-story manual is part of the artwork, just as much as the Mobile Kitchen devices themselves. Though having a different background, the manual plays together with the other descriptive and animating posters in the area due to its instructional character. It provides detailed information on how to use the smoker, light the gas and tilt the water waggon, similar to the way the practicalities in the ‘real’ kitchen at *The Discovery* are explained (in text). They can be read as literal instructions for ‘doing’—for making food—similar to an instruction on how to screw together furniture, but they can also be considered as an invitation for social interaction, gathering and engagement.

The usage manual holds performative properties in the way it makes visible and activates the ‘mute’ and ‘immobile’ locked-in sculptures in the container. It is a connecting device between potential users and the ‘hidden’ kitchen installation. The displayed instructions are a crucial link as an activation feature. The invisible artwork is initially perceivable through the posters as well as through further descriptions in the printed folders or online via *Køge Kyst* and the booking system. Furthermore, the relatively large realistic photo prints presents the kitchen tools on the platform as four two-dimensional stand-ins, when the tools themselves are not in use and locked away in the container, just behind the posters. Thereby the kitchen manual has a certain placeholder function, due to the irregular appearance of the mobile kitchen outside its container, depending on season, weather and arrangements taking place. It can be both sign and action.

### ***Strategic creative geography***

In addition to the information displays, which are directly related to the temporary urban spaces and their specific facilities, eighteen stands made of concrete placed along *The Thread* provide information about the *Køge Kyst* project, the harbour history, its iconic buildings and areas, former and present companies and factories and specific themes of the development, such as art, cultural heritage or citizen involvement. Several of these stands display information about historic aspects, current use and the future district plans and consist of a mixture of drawings, renderings, photos and text as well as QR codes. The info panel with the headline ‘Cultural Heritage’ talks about the harbour history and specific buildings of heritage value. It features this description of a future scenario:

Here, where you are standing a new building will come. The rowing club on the other side of the street towards the harbour can be preserved and will be visible from the street; the big white silo facing the harbour can also be part of the picture of a future harbour environment of new and old.



⤴ 25.06.2015\_The Thread's cultural heritage stand on Sønder Molevej.

⤴ 06.08.2015\_One of the stands on the central harbour square informs about the history of the harbour industry. More information and a movie can be accessed via QR code. In the background the sculpture *The Køge Towerman* (Randi & Katrine, *Follies & faces*, 2015) watches over the harbour square.

The stand shows a three-dimensional rendering of a future streetscape, as well as an overall harbour map with The Thread and its spots. Next to it, a zoom-in on the masterplan shows a small red dot, indicating the viewer's current position on the plan in the future', which is in this case on a new building block.

The text also explains the role of immaterial cultural heritage in the planning approach, emphasizing the importance of shared memories and stories:

Cultural heritage is not only material. It consists of memories and stories, which are important to create an identity with layers and nuances. The urban development has to continue on these stories and also add new layers and nuances. The shared stories can function as a 'hidden' platform in the everyday and be a starting point for new initiatives.

In this case, the text and illustrations on the stand function as a tool for crossing time and connecting past, present and future, both by situating the specific location, a corner in the harbour, in a historic and future perspective and by pointing out present spatial elements and their potential destiny. It also situates the viewer in the planned future position and points at and asks the viewer to connect something present and visible with something invisible. The mixing of the site described through different time perspectives as well as references to material and immaterial aspects is a distinct montage technique in the communication elements. It could be described as a time-space montage, a still version of *creative geography* that samples multiple 'shots' and situations from different perspec-



26.03.2014\_ This stand on the harbour square describes the plans for Søndre Havn, the masterplan and phases, in the background to the left the active industry along the quay.

tives and times to create a connected storyline of development.<sup>17</sup> The montage on the stands forms a set of 'seeing instructions' that construct linkages by projecting narratives about the past, as well as the present spatial ambience as experienced in that moment, into the future masterplan.

Descriptions such as 'there will be a new building here' and 'here there used to be a railway track' or 'here the Sack Factory was located' play a significant role in the description of the harbour transformation to be found on the stands. The formulation of such shareable (partly invisible) narratives puts emphasis on what is now or will be absent in future.

According to Michel de Certeau, the description of a place through referring to the absence of something provides layers to a space narrative. A reference to something gone thus establishes a referable shared understanding of meaningful relations to a place:

The places people live in are like the presences of diverse absences, what can be seen designates what is no longer there: 'you see, here there used to be...'; but it can no longer be seen. Demonstratives indicate the invisible identities of the visible: it is the very definition of a place, in fact, that is composed by these series of displacements and effects among the fragmented strata that form it and that it plays on these moving layers. (De Certeau 1988 (1984): 108)

The narratives of absence and instructive description link the harbour's history (histories), cultures, practices and spaces with the development plan. Latent stories and memories are emphasised in the description, but the concrete accompanying references are highly spatial and pointing at very specific buildings or environments. What to keep and what not 'depends on an estimate of the specific possibilities for future use', the display on cultural heritage informs. However, if a spatial trace is replaced by a shared memory what role will it have and how will the immaterial cultural heritage emphasised, morph into first, a "'hidden" platform' and then, 'new initiatives'?

Notably, while the stand informs about the importance of cultural heritage, only new buildings are to be seen on the large visualisation on the upper part of the stand—are these then examples of materialised hidden stories, one may ask.

Heritage transformation can be intricate and neither easy to make nor to communicate to the wider public. Therefore the on-site displays of *creative geography*, as planning tools and communication features, are crucial to look into. The stands inform and give visitors an interesting view into the harbour life. But they also raise questions about the role of the communicated and constructed narratives in the actual transformation process.

The imagined combination of the past, the actual time of the viewer and the plans and coming changes displayed along The Thread thus draw on and combine elements from the Southern Harbour's 100-year existence as well as the future development as planned by Køge Kyst—but a 'recent present' is also displayed.

<sup>17</sup> 'Creative geography', also known as 'artificial landscape', is a film montage technique invented by the Russian cinematographer Lev Kuleshov in the 1920s (a related version is known as the Kuleshov effect). It is an editing mode in which shots from different places and time periods are put together to create an illusion of a continuous storyline in one place and time, relying on the viewer's natural attempt to try to connect and make sense out of sequences following each other, despite the illusionary and constructed linkage (Levaco 1974).



^ 2011\_Wallscape by Sten & Lex for the exhibition *Walk this way* in 2011 (Photo: Bettina Lamm)

^ 06.08.2015~\_The white ØA Building without artwork





## Opdagelsen

Bæredygtighed – med alle disse begreber facetter – er en central værdi for Køge Kyst og vil præge de konkrete beslutninger undervejs i bydannelsen. Dette er afgørende i en verden, som på den ene side står med mange muligheder for at skabe bedre bysamfund, men på den anden side også har store udfordringer. Det gælder f.eks. miljø- og klimaproblemer, men også i stigende grad sociale og sundhedsmæssige problemer.

Bæredygtighed i Køge Kyst drejer sig derfor både om at påtage sig et ansvar for den store verden og om at skabe et sted for et sundt og frodigt liv. Med det afsat stiller vi krav til både os selv, og til dem vi samarbejder med. Resultatet vil blive et byområde nye og forskellige bydele der får en høj attraktionsværdi.

Bæredygtighed i Køge Kyst har fire dimensioner:

- Social bæredygtighed handler om at skabe socialt og kulturelt mangfoldige bymiljøer med boligtyper og mødesteder, der fremmer møder og fælles aktiviteter i hverdagen.

- Sundhedsmæssig bæredygtighed handler om at udvikle et miljø med et sjovt og sundt hverdagsliv. Boligerne skal være

sunde, og der skal være mange former for kropslig udfoldelse tæt på boligen, på stranden og på havet.

- Økonomisk bæredygtighed handler både om, at der hele tiden er en sund økonomi i Køge Kyst, og om at der anvendes løsninger, der på den lange bane betynder driftsudgifter via f.eks. holdbare materialer og fleksible konstruktioner, som herud kan ændres efter behov.

- Miljø- og energimæssig bæredygtighed går ud på at gøre den nye bydel CO2-neutral. Regnvand bliver i området og kan derfor skabe en frodig by med planter, træer og våde biotoper.

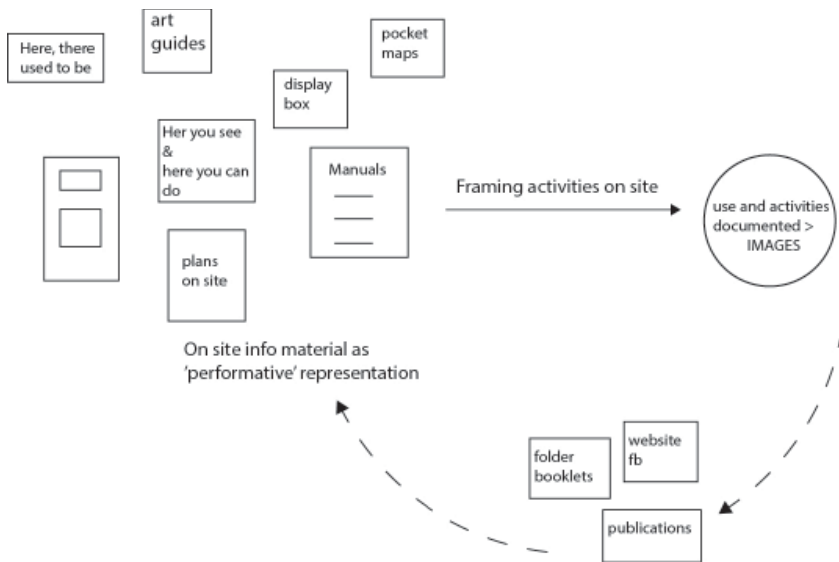
Bæredygtighed i en ny by omfatter også via en tæt bystruktur og en byplan, der lægger husene, så de udnytter solens varme mest muligt og samtidig begrænser vindens kuling. Lige så vigtig er en bylivskultur, der fremmer hensynsfulde og bæredygtige livsformer i hverdagen.

• Her hvor du står, ligger det sidste område på Sandre Havn, der skal udbygges. Opdagelsen – som det store åbne byrum hedder – kan derfor i en lang periode blive anvendt til forskellige plejearbejds aktiviteter med kunst, afprøvning af biotoper og meget andet. Opdagelsen vil blive præget af nysgerrighed over for den nye by med fokus på grønt, blåt og kultur.

06.08.2015- The artwork from 2011 is gone from the façade but returns to its site in a mediated version on the stand at The Discovery.



06.08.2015\_ At The Space of Time a series of panels inform about Køge Kyst. Also here past activities are 'kept present' on the posters.



⌘ 06.08.2015 \_Printed material such as the 'Urban Life Calendar' convey current and future activities via past activities

⌘ Model illustrating the relation-loop between layers of communication and the physical site

The temporary spaces, the activities and the events taking place during Phase Zero of the harbour development add a more recent story to the narrative of transformation. Several of the posters in the area as well as the concrete stands display newly produced photos of the space they are situated in. They feature pictures of recent activities and events that have taken place, as for instance the art exhibitions, guided tours, cooking events and children playing on the playgrounds and installations. They show images of the site in use—on location.

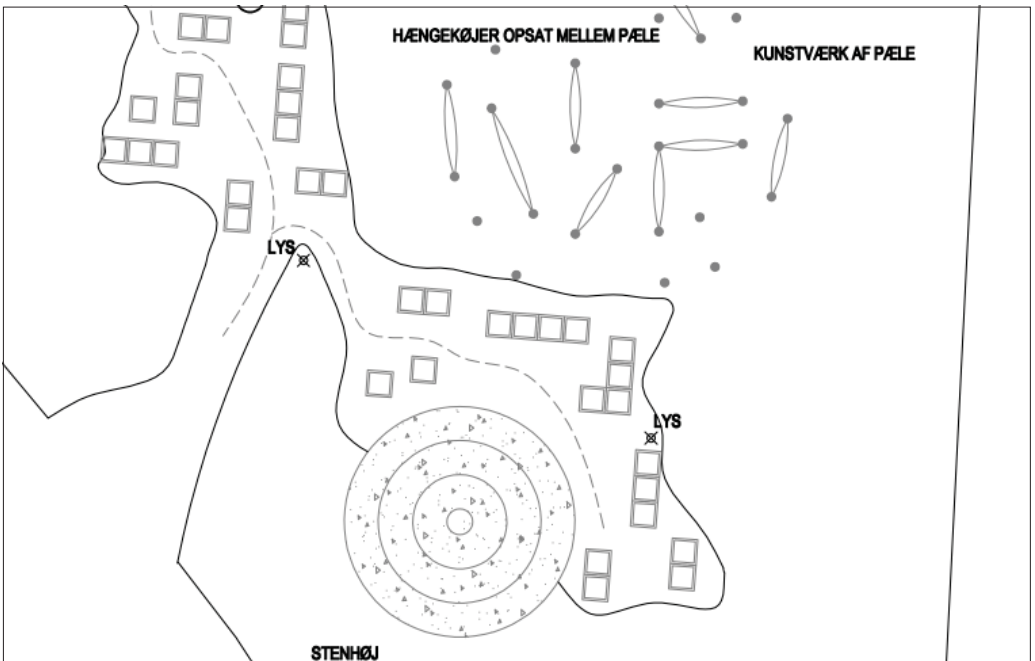
Incorporating such relatively recent documentation of people using the spaces is also a way of guiding how something should be seen or even experienced, through the display of what *can* take place here (while also being part of the 'here you find' message). In this way, the short-lived activities are also used to create more lasting traces and scenario-building setups in the spaces, beyond the workshop, festival or exhibition itself—similar to the way the closed-off mobile kitchen is 'present' on the posters even when not in use. Therefore, even though a visitor might walk through the harbour area on a day when it is rather deserted, the life that occurs on other days continues to perform around the visitor, on the colourful info signs. The signs create an additional scenario through display of recent activity: It could have been yesterday. The same goes for the urban life calendar and the Facebook page 'Køge Kyst Urban Life', where photos of urban life are a big part of the communication and branding strategy, in that they create a virtual site and an image of that site detached from the physical space. Thus 'Life Before the City' continues to exist beyond time and place. However, it is interesting, that these recent experiences do not only turn into virtual traces, but also re-visit space through visual communication installed on site. As material 'performance aftermath' (Schechner 2013b: 225) the images form an active archive of experiences on the panels on site.

The ephemeral character of events and activities is kept 'alive' through different media and thereby not only says something about the specific activity that took place, but also projects content back into space beyond the particular action. That ephemeral character reveals the important role of activated space: The best illustration of 'The Life Before the City', which is the theme of Phase Zero, is activity in space. The on-site display of earlier arrangements can be considered a distinct re-linkage of the physical space and the event-oriented program and further underlines the importance to recognize on-site communicative material as a co-shaper of experience.

### ***On-site scripts: Urban seeing and doing instructions***

What do these examples of 'urban life communication' do by informing, instructing, inviting and displaying the site—on site? What is their role in relation to other spatial elements and the contextual setting as well as the virtual and printed off-site communication?

There is no logical way that already exists to foresee what might be found in the area. The division between industry harbour and the 'new' is not as clear as the clash of signs, explored at the beginning of the Southern Harbour section, indicate: Hammocks on a vacant lot, a cooking facility behind a grain silo, an old shed transformed into a mysterious artwork, containers that can hold everything from art to bikes, fishing buoys not (only) at the quay or in the water but part of a playground. 'Welcome' signs appear at construction sites and industry facades, as well as in the newly designed open spaces. Timber is stacked at the industrial waterfront, but poles of rough timber and heaps of boulder stones



26.03.20154\_The boulder stone mountain at The Discovery is part of the landscape design (Section from site plan provided by Køge Kyst)

and pallets can also be ‘found art’ or even part of a planned and neatly drawn urban design layout. The spatial elements thus shift between a familiarizing and a de-familiarizing role, between blending in and standing out.

It is a complex spatial setting, cobbled together and containing considerable contrasts: scale-wise, with large harbour structures and small-scale ‘interior’ arrangements, diverse materiality, new and old. It is a strong space in terms of spatial stimuli and ambience and it has no definable category—it holds a tension which is an important spatial quality. And most of the visitors in the harbour area are part of the contrast: they are on a conscious adventure, exploring the new initiatives and therefore expecting surprises and unusual spaces and functions, and they are also daily users who know about the changes going on, so an ambiguous situation is partly expected.

To a large degree, the signs, stands, instructions, folders and pocket guides contribute to the fascinating spatial blend and richness and the partly controlled and partly uncontrolled ‘messiness’ and bricolage. However, they simultaneously also work as clarifying devices and very specific guidance tools for differentiation, providing specific ways to sort out, understand and do things in the harbour. In one way, the ‘here you see...’ descriptions on the information panels, which list where to find everything from beehives to artworks, seem peculiar in that they could be considered an almost over-descriptive staging of something either obvious or something which might rather ‘just be discovered’. On the other hand, the descriptions force an awareness of the specific elements, and the ‘here you can...’ messages are invitations to be active. The two beehives in the outer corner of The Discovery, for example, might be overlooked, if not noted in the legend of the map of The Thread, where they have their own bee-pictogram, and via descriptions on different online and printed media that feature invitations to go visit the bees. The bees and their hives are important ‘urban life ingredients’ despite their small physical scale and are specifically placed in the temporary activity spots.

The information signs in the area differ considerably in size and character. Big colour panels in the temporary urban spaces are quite unlike discrete descriptions on small square white plates used for several of the artworks in the area. The latest outdoor exhibition *Follies and Faces* (2015-2016) by the artist duo Randi & Katrine features extremely noticeable installations that clearly stand out from the environment. Single colourful figurative sculptures, such as *The Køge Towerman*, speak for themselves, and are not to be overlooked, as signs of something foreign visiting the harbour. However, the exhibition also displays more subtle and hidden adaptations of existing structures that need to be discovered with a bit more effort, such as a mystical installation in an old existing wooden shed (*The Barn*) in the area behind the large silos, east of The Discovery. The artists were not fond of having signs attached to their artwork to explain it. However, the small plates were installed close to the installations to supplement the art map distributed by the KØS museum, since people touring the harbour were unsure how to find the pieces.<sup>18</sup>

Yet not all artworks on site are specifically pointed out. It seems that a certain level of assimilation or iteration that merges artworks with their spatial setting also changes their status on the guide

<sup>18</sup> According to the project manager from Køge Kyst, August 2015



^ 27.08.2015\_The Barn (Randi & Katrine, *Follies & faces*, 2015) is a transformed shed in the harbour  
^ 27.08.2015\_ 'Welcome to DK Beton'



^ 04.05.2012\_ *Play landscape of Sand and Wood* by Rebar Group, *Urban Play*, 2012

^ 13.09.2013\_ The transformed installation with hammocks





06.08.2015\_Fishing buoys on the playground at The Time of Space

maps. The Rebar Group's installation with the wooden poles and the sand circle at The Discovery has (with permission from the artists) been altered with the addition of hammocks, in connection with the layout of the garden and kitchen facilities on the site. This alteration, however, seems to take away its artwork status on the map of The Thread. The dynamic between interventions just being there or being actively displayed as something specific, between communication and discovery, is prevalent in the harbour development area. It indicates in what way the communication material, intentionally or not, works selectively and that clear-cut categories, however, are rare in these spaces of transformation, despite their clarity on a map legend.

The verbal and image-based communication therefore highlights specific noticeable elements. The representational descriptions in text and pictures and the 'reality' in which the descriptions are situated create a multimodal constellation, where you *look for* the bees mentioned and *keep your eyes open* for structures or things, which *could* potentially be artworks, since they are indicated as attractions. The ways the elements are highlighted in the verbal and visual descriptions also imply a focus on certain aesthetics, atmospheres and practices—urban gardens, beehives and hop plants are not only elements of practical endeavours (gardening, beekeeping, brewing), for instance. They have also become popular contemporary urban space elements and thus carry a symbolic function and signalise not only green consciousness but also a trend.

To examine how the spatial guidance works in this case, philosopher, literary theorist and semiotician Roland Barthes offers a useful perspective. The mechanism of how text and image relate and convey meaning, is the subject of Barthes's classic essay 'Rhetoric of the Image' (1977)<sup>19</sup>. Barthes talks about the 'anchorage' function of linguistic elements in a text and image combination, when the text imposes a selective and elucidative sorting out of meanings that steers the understanding of messages in an image (Barthes 1977: 39). Barthes presents the concept through a semiotic analysis of a printed advertisement that contains both captions and images. Images are polysemous, and additional text elements point at '*the correct level of perception*' which directs not only the view, but also the understanding of specific elements (Ibid., italics in original). The anchorage is thus a way to guide and filter the signification of certain aspects among different options through naming them.<sup>20</sup> More than implying fixed codes, an anchorage construct an active interplay between text and image, as part of 'mixed substances' (Barthes 1968 (1964): 97); a simple but fruitful view to consider communication as a practice of 'pointing at specific meaning' that creates multimodal arguments—also in spatial settings.

While Barthes's context of advertisements is quite different from the harbour of Køge, his exploration of an intermodal relation suggests how to study the mechanism of the relationship between text-image and space as well—not because space can be equated with text or image, but because text and image as well as hypertextual references (QR codes and website references), in this case,

<sup>19</sup> Original: 'Rhétorique de l'image' (1964)

<sup>20</sup> Barthes also presents the concept of 'relay' (Barthes 1977 (1964): 41), by which he refers to a more dynamic exchange between texts and image, which is characteristic for media like comics or film, where the continuous shift between visual and verbal message drives the story forward. The relay can be considered a subset part of an anchorage function and they can coexist.



Section of the map 'Experience The Thread' (Map: Køge Kyst)

play a significant role in the urban setting. Many understandings are possible, but the 'here you find...; 'here you see...' and 'here you can...' descriptions in the project area highlight certain (favoured) understandings of both the accompanying visuals and their spatial setting. They 'anchor' specific understandings by naming and pointing out very precisely what is part of the project (Køge Kyst) and encourage action according to the programs described. According to the concept of anchorage, the modes of guidance could be considered as specific anchoring tools. The information signs have a *situating* function, both temporally and spatially, and relate to both visible and non-visible elements. They also have an *activating* function, as they point at potential use and behaviour. These situating and activating functions can be considered as strategic on-site communication sub-practices in this case of urban transformation management.

The introduction of change in agendas and practices, which are inherent in temporary urban projects and transformation areas, often involves a large number of communicational add-ons, for shorter or longer period and more or less integrated. Specific, located, *seeing and doing instructions* are verbal and/or visual guides to aid in understanding and using whatever is ongoing, be it temporary artwork, construction site or community garden. The instructions inform about the development (by guiding a 'way of seeing') and promote certain actions to the visitors.

Located on site as part of the physical setting, in the midst of the transformation, the instructions work as both *on-site scripts* and *inscriptions* that illustrate and activate spaces and project elements by drawing attention to certain perspectives and actions. A script, of Latin origin, *scribere*, meaning to write, is often used broadly to refer to a written form of instruction for guiding a story, or the written text of a play or a manuscript. An inscription in its basic form refers to writing into or onto a surface, thereby forming a material marking or labelling. According to Schechner, the notion of 'script' from a performance studies perspective, refers to 'patterns of doing' (Schechner 2003 (1988): 69), codes that belong to an interrelated setup of performance, drama, script and theatre. These scripts are not necessarily written text; they can also be purely action-based, but they are instructions working as 'as a code for transmitting action through time' (Ibid.: 69–71). It means that the script pre-exists 'any given enactment', it acts 'as a blueprint for the enactment', and persists 'from enactment to enactment' (Schechner 1973: 6). It is this 'doing-aspect of a script' (Ibid.: 7) that is relevant for studying the southern harbour area in Køge, since it elucidates the concept of the instructions for doing that we find here in the harbour. The mobile kitchen manual, for instance, is thus not simply an illustration; it is a code for a social cooking ritual to be performed.

In the field of material-semiotic approaches in STS and ANT studies, script and inscription are also part of a specific vocabulary; scripts are 'scenarios' for action, and are inscribed in devices and artefacts (Akrich & Latour 1992: 259). These perspectives emphasize the performative and material aspects, and in the harbour, the instructional scripts underline the role of information as physical inscriptions on site that combine aspects of both a projective as well as a performative nature. They are manuscripts for possible action—hands-on guides for the potential user to do something but also for the planning process activity that we are guided to see. Whereas *doing instructions* encourage specific action—the mobile kitchen manual and the related booking system can be considered as inscriptions

inviting action—the intent of *seeing instructions* is not to prompt specific action, but rather to generate stories through the visual imagination and creative geography construct.

As mentioned, the promoted actions are often reflected back on site again, through new communicational elements. They thus also represent potential action, when it is *not* taking place. They further work as spatial connectors of scale in situations where small-scale elements are in danger of getting lost in the shuffle. As it is often the case in (post)industrial or similar transformation or rebuilt areas, a connecting middle ground is partly absent and not embedded in the structure, which means that smaller spatial elements can seem lost amid big structures, despite their foreignness. It is a spatial condition that can be considered a distinct quality, a fascinating experience of an urban landscape in change. However, this condition can also be understood as a communicative challenge, if we trace the pedagogic and explanatory mode of communication in the Southern Harbour.

To summarize, the *seeing & doing instructions* are part of the site transformation as *on-site scripting*. Both types of instructions highlight specific objects, spaces and actions. They also benefit from the heterogeneous, characteristic setting of the harbour while at the same time help to strategically tie together the heterogeneous environment.

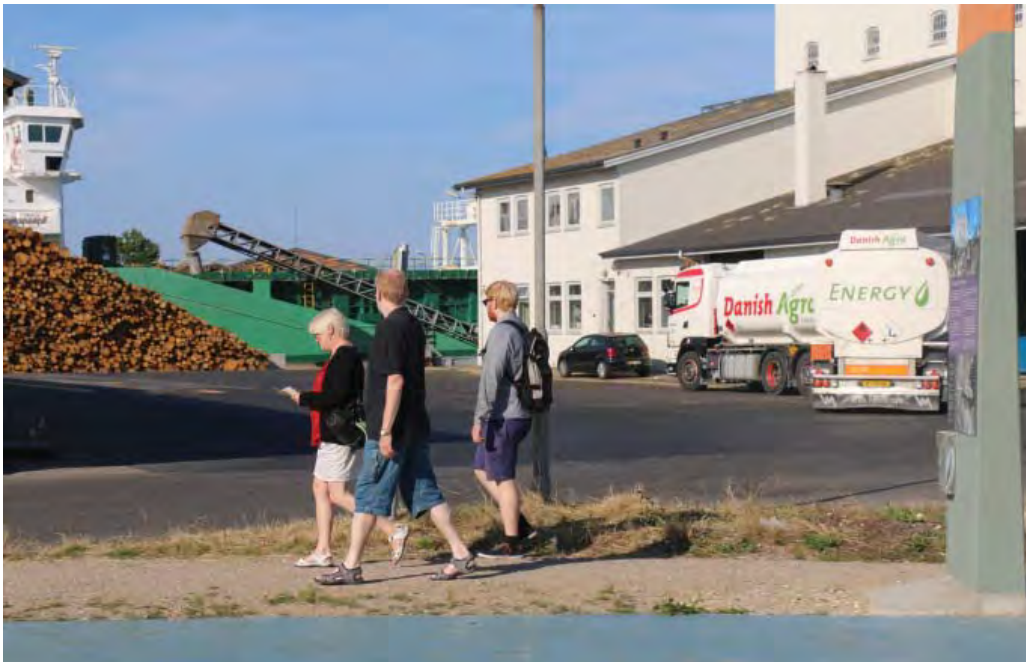
## Performing maps and plans

### *Making routes to go*

The Køge Kyst masterplan and illustrations of the different temporal development stages and spatial sections play a significant role in the project's information material, constructing the site from different perspectives. Among these, the 'Experience the Thread' map is the main map for the initial Phase Zero and the temporary interventions. The map is displayed around the harbour as well as in booklets and online. It is updated on a regular basis and features the different attractions in the harbour, much like a tourist guide. The map indicates The Thread as a red line meandering through the central city and the Southern Harbour. The map features small symbols (as the before-mentioned bee and artwork pictograms), photos as well as and coloured areas that designate important spots. It locates the temporary urban spaces, current artwork and exhibition periods, and construction sites to come in the near future, as well as practicalities such as parking and toilets etc. The eighteen information stands along the route are marked, where more information can be found. The existing city and the harbour structures are illustrated as a subtle backdrop of thin building lines and a light beige base colour, to highlight the temporary elements and the cultural path, specifically.

The route of the conceptual red line is supported by additional secondary themed routes and programmatic folders, which are displayed in plastic boxes in the area. Most importantly, the annual 'Urban Life Calendar', with regular events, forms a continuous activation schedule and enactment of the route and the adjacent spaces, as a long-term event-making. The events include themed guided tours, where groups wander along the route, as well as activities located at specific spots in the harbour.

Furthermore, a series of additional maps relate to The Thread's layout and present specific activities. A running route of the harbour has been mapped out; the Køge Kyst Run is a one-day running event taking place once a year. In connection with the outdoor art exhibitions, foldout guides indicate where to find the artworks and lay out the 'art route' through the city and the harbour. They can be picked up



⌘ 27.08.2015\_Visitors following The Thread on Southern Harbour Day 2015

^ Map from the exhibition *Urban Play* (2012). The art maps, running map, annual Urban Life Calendar and the 'Experience The Thread' map are 'route-makers'.

at the art museum KØS and in the plastic displays along The Thread.

In other words, several different themed maps repeat the route of The Thread and animate it by promoting continuous movement and activity along it. Multiple route-making sessions, both through human- and paper-based guides, enact The Thread. The route-making situates the conceptual red line in the physical space and supplements the different on-site information spots. Supported by the multiple route-making devices, the red line is made real by the walking, running, playing and exploring, on the gravel, chipped bark and asphalt paths throughout the harbour. The route making devices are part of the site construction.

***The turning pier - Animated construction site***

Following the route of The Thread towards its eastern end, past The View and towards north, the waterside promenade ends—at least for the moment. The harbour entrance here is being remodelled, which means that between 2014 and 2017 four million cubic metres of soil are going to be moved around. On a wooden platform a series of large panels show how the operation of ‘the southern stone pier turning towards North’ is managed and what the construction site looks like. The panels feature elevated plan drawings with working scenarios—small figures driving trucks and cranes and steering loaded boats—as well as explanatory arrows, section drawings and descriptive text. The information was not installed by the Køge Kyst partnership, but by the companies involved in the construction work.

These comic-like drawings of the ‘turning pier’ are another example of how different kinds of illustrations situate, explain and perform the changes going on in the harbour transformation through positioned on-site media elements. The act of reshuffling the water’s edge is taking place somewhere ‘out there’, at the very time the viewer is looking at the tilted triptych and double panels and the shoreline behind them. The massive and long-term construction happens at a pace difficult to decipher if one only stands on the platform for a few minutes. Nonetheless, the landfill and development is here made and ‘exhibited’ at the same time. The description of the movement of the mole and the operations planned are shown in an easily understandable and animated style, supplied by fairly simple technical drawings. It is a construction site explanation for people on a walk and not targeted towards professionals. The ‘performing drawings’ are staging something which most often is just *done*. However, placed at the end of a potential stroll along the cultural trail of The Thread, it is situated in a context where communication plays an important role. It is difficult to know what is going on here by simply looking at it or walking through it. As a performative ‘action sign’, this set of drawings compresses a three-year construction process into a comprehensive metaphor of a dynamic ‘turn’. It performs the action of moving the earth and thereby animating a planned schedule: ‘One of the meanings of “to perform” is to get things done according to a particular plan or scenario’, Schechner says about understanding maps from a performance perspective (Schechner 2013b: 41–42). But more than that, the working schedule and the construction plan are in this case also a public ‘experience’.



27.08.2015\_The turning pier. The cartoon-like storyboards perform the yearlong construction work.



### ***2030 in 1:100 – Making the future real?***

As part of the re-design of the urban space called The Space of Time (2014), a large version of the final blueprint for the district has been painted on the ground, showing how it is supposed to 'look' in 2030. The corner square it is situated on, works as an entrance point to The Thread in the Southern Harbour. Info panels are mounted on a row of thin poles that are placed in a spiral form along the edge of the map. Information is displayed about the Køge Kyst project as a whole, as well as the newest information about construction progress and real estate development. Visitors can thus walk on the ground of the future while reading about current development. Children also use the big map as a mini traffic court for biking and playing. Just as on many of the other plans and maps displayed in the area the 'you are here' text with a dot indicates your position on the painted map of the future harbour district.

With the plan's scale of 1:100, the 'map carpet' fits on the square, and the sharp, blue surface edge marks where the map ends and the gravel path of The Thread continues. The plan is the rational conceptual blueprint for the area, but it is just as much a designed urban floor and scenography displaying 'a future', while a current scenario is happening on and around it.

The flat master plan is an abstraction; nonetheless, it is also very real, laid out with its own content and context. The paradoxical appearance, an integrated spatial element that works as a map ('you are here') and points at existing places and structures and simultaneously embodies a future destination,



06.08.2015\_The painted plan for the Køge Kyst area 2030 in 1:100 at The Space of Time

makes it a hybrid projection. Similar to the time-crossing communication technique, the *creative geography* described earlier, the map of 2030 links different temporal perspectives on site. The plan as representation here enters a very hands-on relationship with its content in a slightly distorted way. This is the harbour area—and it is not. What communicates *change* most is not the painted future masterplan in itself, but the actual difference between the blueprint and the present spatial setting and the surroundings, visible when you look up from the ground. Change is conveyed not by the representational properties of the plan, but by what it cannot represent—the in-between, what will happen on the way. As geographer and social scientist Doreen Massey aptly puts it in *For Space* (2005), space is not a surface; ‘loose ends and ongoing stories are real challenges to cartography’ (Massey 2005: 107).

The new harbour district will never *be* like the plan, for several reasons. It embodies an abstraction logically restricted to flat grey building blocks, grey, green and blue zones and tree-dots in a 1:100 scale. In addition, things will change before 2030: how this city, and cities in general, are conceptualized and made; what will be prioritised in the development process. The Køge Kyst project’s strategy acknowledges that traces already underway can affect the plan and that experimentation is an important value (Køge Kyst 2011). However, the fixed masterplan conveys intentions on how to steer towards future— a sign for action and a sign of action, partly already processed. The plan on the ground will likely be gone, according to the plan itself, but for now it is part of the space and tells about a projected future between real and imaginary.



27.08.2015\_The map as an event and performance: On Southern Harbour Day visitors are invited to paint a mutual map of the Southern Harbour on the harbour main square



⌘ 06.08.2015\_The map covers a circular square at the 'entrance' of the Southern Harbour. The poles on the edge display information about the ongoing development  
^ 06.08.2015\_ 1:100 in reality

The direct confrontation of representations and their locale evokes a paradoxical situation of impossible parallel likeness, the larger the more puzzling; and the map-territory relationship has thus been explored widely in literature. Lewis Carroll's novel *Sylvie and Bruno* (1889) and Jorge Luis Borges' short story *On Exactitude in Science* (1946)<sup>21</sup> are two well-known examples that describe adventurous efforts to construct the most exact 1:1 maps possible. The result is a mega map that physically covers the entire real territory, making it useless for navigation and representation. In the case of Carroll's story, the problem forces the protagonists to 'use the country itself, as its own map', instead of the map (Carroll: 1895: 393). Their absurdity and extremeness notwithstanding, these stories strikingly illustrate the ambiguous that results when a representation gets very close to its reality and real and referent interact—if we can then talk at all about a referent or representation.

### ***Performing maps and plans as real abstractions***

The *performing maps and plans*<sup>22</sup> on site challenge a simple notion of 'pure' representation in different ways. They relate to, and partly overlap with, the *seeing and doing instructions* defined earlier. The maps and plans analysed in the preceding section, the experience-creating pocket maps, the animated description of construction work, the site mapping as event and the big map of the future as a walkable urban space floor, are all representational elements of the site, on the site, that hold specific performative or performing properties. The maps and plans invite viewers to come, see and do, but they can also be performances in themselves—these two types of active on-site projections, I call *performing maps and plans*. In these 'representations through/in the real', projection and location hold a distinct relation because the representational means are either enacted or are pre-performing future plans on site. The friction between maps and plans that are both representation and a part of reality is intensified in situations such as this one, where they are literally placed in the area under development and integrated into the content they deal with, as portable guides, on displays and panels or painted on the ground.

Landscape architect and theorist James Corner also observes a paradoxical tension in the way a map needs a certain abstraction and withdrawal from the territory it represents to gain its meaning as a map (Corner 1999: 222). The tension emerges since maps are projections of geography that are also cast back into that geography, thereby affecting space: 'The analogous-abstract character of the map surface means that it is doubly projective: it both captures the projected elements off the ground and projects back a variety of effects through use' (Ibid.: 215).

Corner also points out that maps can be considered objective, since they point at real, physical places that can be located, while at the same time functioning as selective and abstract devices. The

<sup>21</sup> Life-size mapping efforts have been used in several discussions on representation. In *Simulacra and Simulations* (1981), Baudrillard reverses Borges' story and argues that it is 'the map that precedes the territory' in his theories on simulation and hyperreality (Baudrillard 1988: 166). Umberto Eco examines the somewhat wicked problem through a theoretical reasoning of the possible act of realising a 1:1 map as posed by Borges, in his essay 'On the Impossibility of Drawing a Map of the Empire on a Scale of 1 to 1' (1982).

<sup>22</sup> I do use both the terms 'map' and 'plan' in the analyses here, since the definition of a map or a plan overlaps in some of the elements discussed, due to the transformation context, the way they are used and the character of the graphics.

selective act evokes questions of agency; maps form arguments in the way they are constructed and in the way information is put forward and organised graphically (Ibid.: 216). Here, a consideration of maps and the making of them 'as performance' reinforces a perception of them as constructs with selective and projective properties (Schechner 2013b: 41–42). The *performing maps and plans* thus not only exemplify yet another version of the ambivalence and dynamic between abstraction and an actual location; they are also an active part of the urban redevelopment process and the 'Life Before the City' strategy of which the temporary projects are a part. On the site, the plans and maps link the project's physical plan for the new district with a scenographic setting for present-day recreational and cultural activities.

### ***The urban showroom***

How are changes in the conception and use of the harbour presented and enacted in the transformation area of the Southern Harbour in Køge, and what is the role of the text and image-based communication on the site?

The communicational add-ons and explications are features that permeate the area. The direct experience of and engagement with the spaces and installations, however, conveys the changing harbour landscape in a different way than information signs, displays and maps (though the border can be blurry, as shown). You don't need to read a sign or map to play, to explore an engaging or thought-provoking sculpture, to use a hammock or swing or to be fascinated by the scale of the harbour structures and the large machines moving around. Many installations and spaces engage the body, and situated in a foreign context, they are already physicalizing change in themselves, and the contrasting setting of the industry is fascinating in itself. One may ask to what extent the transformation and use needs to be communicated specifically. As the case analysis elucidates it is about more than information—the signs on site co-produce the site.

As we have seen, change is manifested in different ways, through layers of explanatory material displaying historical aspects, current use and future visions, and the correlation of the communication layer with existing and new spatial elements. The media elements stretch beyond the singular spots and temporary spaces and expand a field along The Thread and the nearby surroundings. The analysis thus encompasses situations not only in the temporary spaces but also along the overall 'trail' through the harbour, as a broad intertextual flow. The manifold information layers displayed are to some extent subtle and multimodal and the spatial context is as described strong and full of contrasts, but nevertheless together they form a specific web of communication and instruction. In addition to the explanatory mode, the information material has an important function in promoting activity, related to the programmatic content of the Phase 0 of the Køge Kyst project. This analysis suggests that 'use guidance' being implemented in urban spaces, which are intended to be activated, co-produced, and performed by users, plays a prevalent role in urban development. Furthermore, we have seen the communicative techniques that, from a strategic planning perspective, are employed to support, capture, 'keep present' and construct spaces and events of temporary and dynamic nature. However, such modes of on-site communication are somewhat overlooked in the transformation and temporary urban space discourse. The analysis demonstrates that they are more than merely information signs.

The existing harbour industry has its own ways of functioning within the logic of a harbour: storing, loading and transporting materials and goods. At the same time, the new cultural activation trail, with its choreographed settings of urban life, follows a different logic. The *seeing and doing instructions* and *performing maps and plans* play an important role in reprogramming the spaces in the harbour area that span these logics. They are part of the strategic communication and the activity-promoting programs initiated by Køge Kyst, contributing to the spatial complexity of a harbour environment undergoing change. Communication is performed and communication is also used to encourage activity. The division between what can and cannot be considered representation on the site is ambiguous. The signposts, descriptions, toponymical definitions<sup>23</sup> and instructions are all part of the spatial set-up, and reflect what the place should be and how it should work.

The transformation of the harbour is thus conveyed in multiple ways. In addition to being an industry harbour and a recreational and cultural zone along The Thread, the area is thus also a showroom for the future. The information stands and maps play a significant role in communicating that future to

<sup>23</sup> In relation to place-making communication, toponymy, the naming of places, plays an important role. Not only are the temporary urban spaces specifically named quite 'picturesque' and symbolic, based on their concept (The Discovery as a testing site etc.), other areas nearby hold special names as well. A former industry site is called The Meadow and the old grain storage building is named The Church due to its characteristic profile. The soon-to-come initial apartment projects follow that trend and are termed The Calm View and The Beach Meadow (<http://havblik-koegekyst.dk>, <http://www.strandengen.nu>).



06.08.2015\_ 'Calm Sea—when the new apartments are ready there will be calm sea (and ocean view) every day'



06.08.2015\_Info folders in the plastic display on one of the stands of The Thread

visitors, potential residents in particular. The first new building blocks to be found on the 2030 plan are just about to be built, and therefore a series of posters on the poles around the map advertise these new housing projects.

As a site the Southern Harbour area exists in many forms, physically and virtually. As mentioned in the introduction, the steering of certain narratives, or the merging of existing and new ones, is inherent in the redefinition of development sites. This is also visible in relation to the residential building projects on their way. Leaflets and visualisations of the coming apartments have found their way into the cultural layer of The Thread. Beauregard notes that in real estate, the first step of marketing and development is the construction of narratives that support the development and draw on the positive images of the location or of a certain lifestyle (Beauregard 2005: 55). This is also the case here. The posters and leaflets encircling The Space of Time are increasingly displaying advertisement for the new residential units soon to be ready in the Southern Harbour.<sup>24</sup> However, they feature renderings that in themselves convey a very different image than the harbour setting in transition, as it is now:

<sup>24</sup> On a walk & talk with the Køge Kyst project manager in August 2015, I expressed my surprise that such commercial advertisement was 'allowed' in the open spaces. As she pointed out, the information provided by Køge Kyst was not different; it was advertising as well—an interesting point (also in regard to chapter two and the discussion of public-private constructions). Furthermore, the partnership setup means that Køge Kyst has a specific interest in the promotion of the real estate, as well.



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[Plan](#)
[Materialitet](#)
[Gå til Cava Nord](#)

**SKØNT LIV I FRITIDEN OG PRAKTISK BELIGGENHED I HVERDAGEN**

Søndre Havn er Køges nye bydel, men det er samtidig et område, der længe har summet af liv. Bydelen er allerede taget i brug og er nu midtpunkt for et væld af spændende aktiviteter og arrangementer for mennesker i alle aldre: når man flytter ind i Havblik på Søndre Havn, kan man altså nyde de livlige omgivelser fra allerførste dag.

Tæt på station og indfaldsveje

I Havblik er man omgivet af herlige fritidsmuligheder, men beliggenheden er lige så optimal, når hverdagen møder sig. Det er nemt at komme på arbejde, hurtigt at købe ind og man kan tagters cykle til både skole og daginstitution.

Fra Havblik er der kun ca. 10 minutters gang til Køge Station, hvor S-togget kører til København og regionalbussen forlænder

**MASSER AF OPLEVELSER PÅ SØNDRE HAVN**

- Koncerter og forestillinger i f.eks. "Taggeriet"
- Parkour, det jump og skaterpark
- Kunststøttinger
- Motionsløb
- Aktivitetslegeplads i "Trøsummet"
- Fælleshaver

Screenshot from <http://havblik-koegekyst.dk>, featuring images from the temporary urban spaces



they show an environment dominated by smooth penthouse views and private balconies.<sup>25</sup> But on the real estate homepages, the temporary urban spaces feature prominently, as an argument for a great leisure time with 'a lot of experiences in the Southern Harbour'.<sup>26</sup> This exchange of images, where the future, imagined, new built environment enters the current physical site and the current transitional ambience enters the virtual real estate branding, illustrates how the 'Life Before the City' and the 'City for Life', the two main phases in the Køge Kyst strategy, do not actually join or merge in this example, but bypass each other in a specific mediated form. Time will tell in what other ways they will avoid or engage with each other's realities and virtualities.

<sup>25</sup> In early 2016 Køge Kyst announced the plans for a rental and youth housing project in the harbour area, whereas the projects in development were, until then, primarily up-scale, owner-occupied units (<http://koegekyst.dk>). What the price level and concept will be for these units has not yet been made public.

<sup>26</sup> <http://havblik-koegekyst.dk>

## SMEDESTÆDE 2 – VALBY

### In-between dreams

Several places in the city [Valby] give the impression that a subculture had a 'party' that suddenly has been abandoned. At least it looks like that. (...) In the middle of 'Valby Langgade' is an abandoned and degraded Auto workshop decorated with a mixture of mural paintings, graffiti and a barter island. It seems that everything is left behind, but something important must have happened, as a 'school board' puts the question: In Valby I dream about...? (Hidden Places 2016)<sup>27</sup>

The snapshot of the corner of Smedestræde and Valby Langgade in its dormant winter condition, documented by out of town visitors, illustrates the ongoing in-between state of Smedestræde 2 and its ambiguous setting. While appearing disturbingly empty, *signs of action* are to be found. But what is the action that is framed here—and what is it about? At first glance, what looks like a reminiscence of a subculture party is also a public space in becoming and the enactment of an ongoing municipal decision-making process. Furthermore, this physical setting is part of a practice-based research project, which plays a particular role for the approach in this topical analysis. Whereas the tour in the Southern Harbour in Køge addressed the system of visual-verbal communicative elements in relation

<sup>27</sup> From 'Hidden Places' (Skjulte Steder), Facebook Page, January 31st 2016. Hidden Places is an Aarhus-based cultural organisation focussing on special and 'forgotten' places in the city. Their 2016 focus theme is backyards, and apparently, the organisation has paid Smedestræde a visit and wondered about what kind of place it is (<http://skjultesteder.dk>).



26.06.2015\_In Valby I dream about...

to the transformation process and the promotion of urban life, the discussion of the Valby case explores the role of the prolonged, temporary, on-site installations as *plurivalent and staging artefacts*. The installations, figuring as preliminary outdoor library and culture facilities and a public dialogue setting, encompass multiple meanings in terms of use and appropriation by several stakeholders and their agendas. A closer investigation of these spatial elements as intermediaries and triggers clarifies how the planning process for a new cultural facility is enacted on site, and also, to some extent, is deliberately prevented from being site-related. Unforeseen appropriations benefit from, contribute to, but also challenge the programmatic openness of the interventions and set new agendas.

Just as in Køge, the temporary reprogramming of Smedestræde 2 consists of elements that prompt activity: invitations to exchange, share, garden, play, perform and write. At the same time the installations and their inherent action-properties also become symbolic gestures, as part of an ongoing discourse. Hence, they can be interpreted in various ways. The actual activation of the initial framing elucidates how agendas enter the stage in literal and figurative ways.

The following discussion evolves around the enactment of plans for the site. The point of departure is the trajectories of two of the initial installations made by our research team: the chalkboard featuring 'In Valby I dream about...' on the wooden fence and the white pavilion, 'The Valby Pavilion', as the centrepiece on the site. In collaboration with the local committee, our research team prepared and set up these first installations in the summer of 2013. The installations, intended as initial 'hid and run' provocations, were thought to activate and inspire debate about the site's future, on location. Subsequently, they actually did so, triggering both activation and discussion, though in a different manner than expected.

This reflection is based on experiences from my participation in the initial design and implementation process as well as continuous following up on the site development from 2013 to 2016. Hence, this analytical part evolves on and can be seen as a synchronous and overlapping perspective in relation to the situation presented in the previous chapter, 'Between Public and Private', regarding the site's unruly state during the municipal 'self-rent period'. The following section will thus add another perspective to the Valby case, drawing on my own role as an actor involved in the initial stages. Especially in this topical discussion, our research team's role as collaborators - with an agenda in terms of our research focus - has raised questions and shaped the perspectives that I will unfold. Whereas the harbour tour in the previous analysis in Køge could in itself be characterized as an example of *creative geography*, an analytical construct I evolved from observations during visits to the site combined with the scrutiny of communicational material, this case study presents the process from design of the temporary installations to the stages of their appropriation. I will delve into certain incidents and aspects of the installations and their role in the process.

## Plurivalent staging artefacts

### *Hit and run—and return*

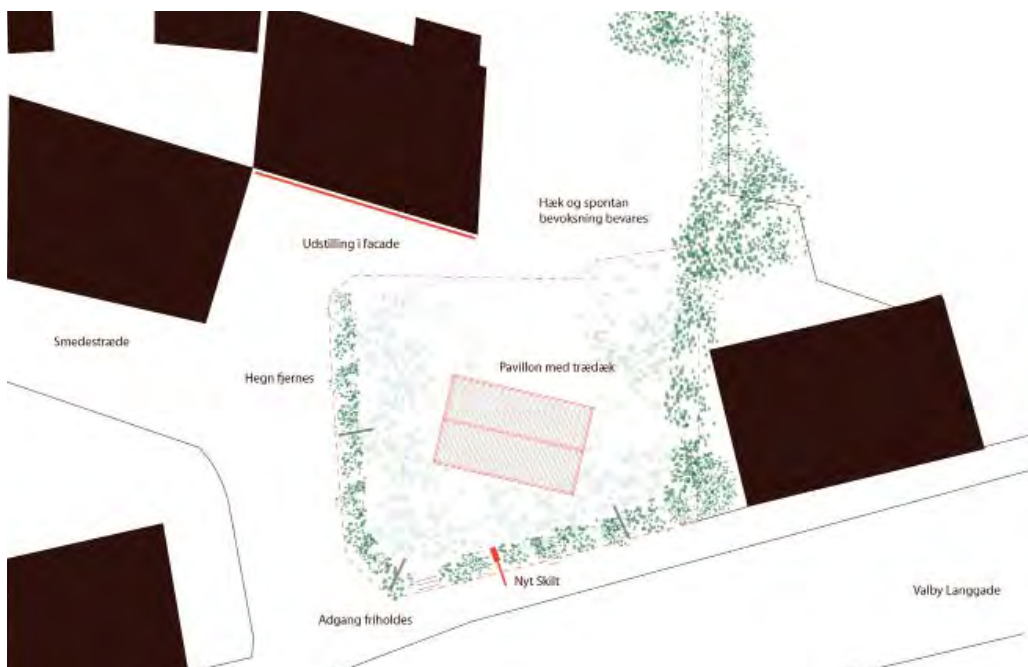
The undetermined phase of a site like this is a difficult stage—but also one that could yield new possibilities, and presents ways to explore ideas. Letting the physical site be a platform for testing and dialoguing about its future is a good opportunity for taking this reflection into the public realm. Could

we bring the debate about the site onto the site through interventions that could frame a process for such dialogue and testing? Framing a public discussion of the future role of this location on location seemed as an obvious path to follow. What does a public library and culture house mean for this current context and what do the citizens of Valby really want for the site?

In our project proposal for the temporary installations, we posed the following questions for 'a democratic/scenographic space':

How can the space become a good public space for informal use right now? How can the temporary use support the future-oriented democratic process for deciding about a culture house, theatre stage and library on site? Can the space itself be turned into a culture house, library and stage? How can the temporary use support cultural heritage and the preservation of the village environment? (SEEDS gruppen/KU 2013:1)

As presented in chapter two, the buildings were difficult for the local administration to activate with the budget available, especially since instituting such use was not a high priority, given that the municipality already planned to tear down most of the structures. The temporary use, therefore, was to take place in the 'front yard'. Our two-step proposal suggested that the first set of interventions should be followed by a phase of facilitation, meaning that the local committee and other local stakeholders could offer specific activities and events; our intent was to follow up on the changes that would occur. We designed and erected the Valby Pavilion, a simple wooden structure, conceived as an open form



Plan for the installations on Smedestræde 2. The blackboard was added later

for mutual interpretations: a house, a daybed for dreaming, a deck for recreation and play, a stage and a meeting place—a testing frame for the new to come. The structure was designed to deliberately mirror the morphology of the surrounding historical village context; like a chalked outline of the neighbouring building shapes pointing at the importance to consider the specific cultural heritage in this area. At the same time, the pavilion was intended to serve as a frame for activities that could explore what a contemporary culture facility could be, setting the stage for a dialogue on potential futures and for further use as well as further spatial add-ons on the wooden framework. Furthermore, on the wooden fence bordering the plot, we set up a long chalkboard featuring the text ‘In Valby I dream about...’, creating a dream wall to invite people to share their thoughts about the site on the site. We also mounted a new street sign above the sidewalk, which filled the existing empty stand. It replaced the former business and for sale signs, signaling the new status of the area as an open accessible public space and a frame to fill anew. The new setting was inaugurated and celebrated with a topping-out ceremony in summer 2013 during the Valby Culture Days.

The inauguration poster read,

Smedestræde in the old village environment is a very special part of Valby's identity. A vacant site is a chance for something new to happen. How can cultural heritage and future ideas meet? During the rest of this year the temporary installation will provide a basis for further discussion and idea development: How can this place become a new urban meeting place? The site is opened up and provides space to stay and relax. The wooden construction is a terrace, a stage, a culture house and a dream bed; a structure that can frame relaxation, performances, meetings and communities; a fictional house that needs to be filled with thoughts and ideas about the future. Project material about a possible new cultural gathering is displayed in the window. On the chalkboard everybody is invited to note down their dreams and visions—for this site, for the district or for life in general. The project is part of SEEDS, an EU project through which Copenhagen University and Valby Local Committee together test strategies for appropriating and transforming leftover areas in the city through local-based temporary projects. (August 30<sup>th</sup> 2013)

On opening day, additional installations addressing the planned library and cultural centre project joined the pavilion and the dream wall in the yard, brought together by the local committee and Kultur Valby, the district's culture coordinating unit. The *Aeropolis* bubble by the Berlin architects Plastique Fantastique, touring the city as part of the Copenhagen cultural festival Metropolis 2013, worked as a one-day inflated library space, squeezed into the gateway between the two buildings facing the front area. The local committee had already put up voting posters for an online public hearing regarding the library project earlier that year, as well as a stand featuring three-dimensional visualisations of the architectural sketch proposal and a recommendation from the Culture & Leisure Committee, supporting the project. The window of the former car sales office displayed press cuttings, drawings and descriptions of the proposed project and a timeline of the political decision-making process so far. Several versions of plans, ideas and ‘libraries’ were thus displayed on site. The plastic bubble library left after that day, but the rest stayed. During the coming period of reservation rent, several additional elements, such as the book exchange, the garden units and the barter station, were added, and occasional cultural events and workshops took place, organised by the local committee

# I Valby drømmer vi om...

REJSEGILDE  
FREDAG DEN  
30. AUGUST  
KL. 16-17

Smedestræde  
i det gamle landsby-  
miljø er en helt særlig del af  
Valbys identitet. En tom grund er et  
mulighedsfelt for at noget nyt kan opstå.  
Hvordan kan fortidens kulturarv og fremtidens idéer  
mødes her?

Den midlertidige installation vil resten af året danne base for videre  
diskussion og idéudvikling: hvordan kan stedet blive til et nyt bymæs-  
sigt mødested? Grunden åbnes op og giver rum til ophold og samvær.

Trækonstruktionen er både terrasse, scene, kulturhus og drømmeseng.  
En figur der kan danne ramme om ophold, forestillinger, møder og fælles-  
skaber. Som et fiktivt hus skal den fyldes med tanker og idéer for fremtiden.  
I vinduet udstilles projektmateriale for et muligt nyt kulturelt sam-  
lings-punkt på grunden. På tavlen kan alle notere drømme og visioner  
- for stedet, for bydelen og for livet i det hele taget.

Projektet er en del af SEEDS, et EU-projekt hvor Københavns  
Universitet og Valby Lokaludvalg sammen afprøver strategier for  
indtagelse og omdannelse af byens restarealer gennem lokalt forankrede  
midlertidige projekter.

Koncept, design og produktion: SEEDS gruppen: Bettina Lamm, Kristian Skaanup og Anne Wagner, Sektion for Landskabsarkitektur  
og Planlægning, Københavns Universitet i samarbejde med Valby Lokaludvalg. Byggearbejde af Københavns Tekniske Skole.  
Tavleinstallationen er baseret på det globale open-source koncept Before I Die, initieret af Candy Chang  
Kontakt: Københavns Universitet: Bettina Lamm, bel@ife.ku.dk, Valby Lokaludvalg: Dorthe Grastrup-Hansen, ZMSY@okf.kk.dk



Valby Lokaludvalg



KØBENHAVNS  
TEKNISKE  
SKOLE  
**kts.**





⌘ 30.08.2013\_The inauguration day: Multiple libraries on site

⌘ 30.08.2013\_Inside the one-day library



30.08.2013\_Press material, project descriptions and a model of the library project in the window of the old car dealer shop

and Kultur Valby.

But how did the initial interventions work as on-site installations to be activated and as dialoguing frames for the planning process during the uncertain state of waiting for a political decision? Did they actuate and convey any change? Did they provoke any action of planning on site?

### ***The right title for dreams***

The 'In Valby I dream about...' chalkboard is a modified version of the open source art project *Before I Die* ('Before I die I want to...') initiated by the American artist Candy Chang. The concept was first installed by the artist in 2011 on an abandoned house facade in New Orleans. The idea was to invite people to share their personal aspirations, dreams and reflections on life in public space. Since then, the idea took on a life of its own, and more than 1000 different versions of the wall, based on the concept, have been created around the world. The project and its offshoots are documented on its own website (<http://beforeidie.cc>), featuring a wealth of pictures from around the world, as well as a project kit with instructions and guidelines to make your own chalkboard based on the *Before I Die* model.

The concept is easy to execute and install (though chalk must of course be made available, as pointed out in the previous chapter). For the setting of Smedestræde 2, it was chosen since it could potentially draw people onto the site and frame an open and instant debate on location. Most *Before I Die*-inspired walls employ the original line of text, 'Before I die I want to...', whereas some, such as the one here in



Valby, are adapted with a more specific text. Originally, we had suggested reframing it to read, 'Here I dream about...'; to allow input about the particular site and what it could potentially become. However, the phrasing was vetoed by our collaborators from the local committee, who insisted that the question should be 'In Valby I dream about...'. The committee was reluctant to entertain further ideas about the site itself; the chosen title therefore referred to the district of Valby in general, to avoid addressing the plot on Smedestræde 2 in particular.<sup>28</sup> The argument was that the citizen involvement and debate that had already taken place via online voting earlier that year ('Valby's Valg'), a citizen meeting in the existing library as well as the display of the architectural sketch project for the library and culture complex had already 'paired' the library project with this specific location. This citizen involvement process had the focus on the development and priority of the cultural offers and facilities in central Valby and was carried out as a 'concentrated public involvement' campaign from Mid-February until the beginning of March 2013 (Københavns Kommune 2013c). The conclusion the committee made, based on that process, was to work toward a new library on Smedestræde, since the majority of the votes had pointed at that location out of three suggested options.<sup>29</sup> Any additional discussions on what this centrally located plot could become, by posing the open question about the site, would only shake up and further destabilise this priority and the already uncertain future of the site. The possibility for temporary use of the plot that turned up was seen as a way to offer 'cultural and creative uses' during the project development phase (Københavns Kommune 2013c). It seemed that an actual location centred debate and testing through the temporary interventions was primarily on our research team's agenda and not part of the committee's strategy.

While people wrote many different ideas and dreams on the wall, no specific way of treating or recording the comments had been agreed on beforehand. The local committee documented the wall for a period, and so did our research team, occasionally. However, the notes on the wall did not feed into the planning for the district in general or into the ongoing parallel process of refining the project proposal for a future facility on Smedestræde. The latter process was enacted and managed by a municipally steered working group and consultants from an architectural office. This ongoing building design process ran parallel to but separated from the temporary activities on the site occurring at the same time.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> The poster for the opening day featured a compromise, asking for dreams 'for this site, for the district or for life in general'.

<sup>29</sup> 'Valby's Valg – Ny kulturinstitution i Valby?' (<http://valbysvalg.dk>). The voting campaign suggested three site options for locating a new cultural institution in central Valby; one of them was Smedestræde 2. The result was that 72% of the 208 votes pointed at Smedestræde (Københavns Kommune 2013b).

<sup>30</sup> In a revised proposal (value and function program) for a library and theatre facility on Smedestræde 2 from July 2014, 'temporality' (*midlertidighed*) is specifically highlighted as a key value in the building program, based on a set of strategic principles put forward for cultural facilities in Copenhagen (KEjd 2014:13). Here, the notion seems to refer to the flexibility of a finished facility and is not seen in relation to the development process and the existing temporary uses on site. The on-site installations and their potential for learning are not mentioned in the document, but the program features several images of the wooden pavilion on site. Another updated version of a sketch proposal was presented at a citizen meeting (in front of the existing library) in summer 2015. Here some of the temporary activities are mentioned on a poster, but are not related to the proposal.



that could lead in many directions when adapted and applied in an actual context. Furthermore, the committee's wish not to make the wall site-related, due to the delicate issue of political focus and their strategic focus on an officially clear project proposal for the site, also demonstrates the level of awkwardness about what the chalked dreams are in fact doing here, apart from signalling a general 'dream searching' for the district.

The imposed values and more or less subtle politicising of the dream wall highlight the multifaceted signals of the installation. Was there a mutual aim with it—and did the 'hit and run'-action<sup>31</sup> 'hit back', if this was to be considered as a type of involvement in the discussion of Smedestræde 2? Despite the image it conveys, the dream wall is not working as an idea collector, at least not in a systematic and integrated part of the local planning procedures. Neither does it embody a real dialogue. But it does work as a public comment wall and mood board with an embedded liberating bluntness that is also able to frame and display its own critique—because you can write whatever you want. A direct exchange of thoughts is possible and becomes a part of the spatial setting instantly, as both act and image. Not surprisingly, the dreams on the wall are quite diverse and range from district and site-related issues to personal aspirations and funny jottings. Some comments are, despite the redirected headline, still related to its location on Smedestræde. They reach from the obvious dream of a 'new library' and 'library with theatre auditorium', to the heritage-oriented dream 'to keep the last reminiscence of Valby and renovate it carefully' and 'that the old houses are preserved', to dreams that more directly oppose the library project, such as 'that Autospar [car dealer] can stay' and 'everything other than a confused library/culture house'.<sup>32</sup>

When an urban installation such as the dream wall points at a location (directly or indirectly) and also is part of a planning discourse and a project-development process, it becomes more than an act of publicly sharing personal yearnings. Instead, 'In Valby I dream about...' turns into a hybrid discursive tool that can be appropriated by different agendas. The chalkboard carries a distinct image with it—the aesthetic of the multiple comments together form a sign. The old-school nostalgic, informal and naïve style of a chalkboard traditionally used in schools is approachable and tangible. But it is simultaneously part of a complex rhetoric through its actual enactment in this specific setting.

In any case the 'dreaming' on Smedestræde had not only come to stay, but it also left the wall and was propagated by a recurrent metaphorical headline for the building plans. In the media, in particular in the local communications sent out by the committee and the newspaper *Valby Bladet*, the status of 'Smedestræde-dreams' was frequently taken up as a rhetorical image to address the ongoing efforts regarding the building plans. For instance, one newspaper headline proclaimed, 'A dream. "Amigos" take in the stage on Smedestræde 2 and keeps the dream about a culture house on site alive' when a travelling theatre paid a visit in summer 2014. The performance was not just 'playing to the gallery'. The theatre performance was 'more than entertainment' and it was 'not only intended to create life in the streets, it is also contributing to keeping a focus on the strong desire of the Valby Local Committee

<sup>31</sup> Our team's use of the term 'Hit & run' refers to how the installations were placed on site without much publicity or local information in advance. The intention was to provoke reactions through the physical signs of change.

<sup>32</sup> In 2015, when the pop-up bar moved in, the 'In Valby I dream about...' wall was partly hidden behind the bar container. On occasion the bar staff was asked for chalk, mostly by drunk people wanting to write something funny, but the wall was not used much anymore.



for a new cultural offer on the site' (Valby Bladet 09.07. 2014). The dream-rhetoric framed a theatre performance as a sign for future action.<sup>33</sup>

### ***Glocal palimpsests***

In addition to its location on a wooden fence in Valby, the dream chalkboard is also part of an international family of chalkboards. The installation can be considered highly contextual and hyper-local in its framing—and explicit non-framing—of the specific local issue at stake, but its creation is based on a global open-source concept, which exaggerates its sign-like existence. As a recurrent urban culture phenomenon the *Before I Die* chalkboard forms a global image of very local expressions—a *glocal*<sup>34</sup> constellation, when brought to life. Though placed on various locations and detached from its original context, the concept of *Before I Die* brings with it a reference of action, inclusiveness, openness, and diversity. Something we, as initiators without doubt also were intrigued by and saw a potential in for the Valby site.

The text-related micro-controversy and the appropriation of the board described here highlights the dynamics of flourishing urban open-source concepts like *Before I Die* and what happens when they meet a specific location—from New Orleans to Valby. As sketched out in the introductory part of this chapter, 'same, same but different' is a key phrase, in terms of meaning-making of such popular urban features and the practices that follow with it. No matter if it is recognised as an adapted 'copy' or not<sup>35</sup>; the process of contextualisation evokes a need for interpretation and enactment.

Under the headline 'The Transnational Flow of Planning Ideas and Practices', Patsy Healey, a researcher in urban planning, describes how planning concepts that 'float' and travel the world as general 'ideas' get implemented locally. Healey underlines the importance of looking into the trajectories of conceptual planning ideas and strategies on this journey. The ideas get packaged and extracted and land in specific places (Healey 2011, 2013). In that process these 'travelling ideas' change and go through a process of becoming 'localized' (Healey 2013) when they are taken up elsewhere. They are 'drawn down, adapted and inserted into struggles over discourse formation and institutionalization in new contexts' (Ibid.: 1520).

This view is also useful to follow in relation to what could be termed small-scale design concepts, such as the one discussed here, and that are popular in temporary urban spaces, whether they are implemented formally or in unsolicited ways. As international urban phenomena, tactical open-source

<sup>33</sup> Notably, the street (Smedestræde) actually spans two 'dream walls'. The other dream wall is located on the other end of the street, on a house gable, where the writer and poet Morten Søndergaard has developed a façade installation featuring collected dreams from the residents living in the building. The project was installed in spring 2015 displaying 130 'I dream about...' quotes. The two dream walls are not directly related, but 'dreams to be released' on walls seem to be omnipresent in this area in Valby.

<sup>34</sup> The notion of 'glocalisation' (e.g. Swyngedouw 2004; Simonsen 2005; Ejderyan & Backhaus 2007) to a certain degree dissolves and challenges scalar divisions of the local and the global and refers to the worldwide adaption and multiplication of products and cultures beyond their particular origin context. It is mostly used in terms of the proliferation of brands and chains and how they strategically adapt to a given culture and still stay 'the same'. But the term is explanatory as well, in relation to the popularity of cultural open-source projects that belong to a generic language or catalogue of options that 'end up' in specific local contexts.

<sup>35</sup> Our project description on the poster (displayed in the storefront window) and on the Valby Pavilion Facebook profile refers to the inspiration source for the chalkboard. The wall itself did not hold any written explanation or credits, but presented only what it functioned as.



^ The original Before I Die in New Orleans by Candy Chang (Photo: <http://beforeidie.cc>)

^ A Before I Die wall on the beach in Townsville, Australia by Kim Kamo (Photo: <http://beforeidie.cc>)

projects and participatory initiatives, such as Candy Chang's artwork, these days do not stay in their 'first' city or their continent of origin very long, especially if they are communicated distinctively as DIY projects. Ideas for small-scale applicable micro-actions and space adaptations move around and are implemented very quickly. They flourish on social media, in blogs and in publications, as open-source concepts and design prototypes; ideas and inspiration that form a diverse glocal reference portfolio. And since they not only inspire individual 'doers', but increasingly step into formal planning contexts, as in this case, the signification depends on the dynamics arising in the process of localising. Hence, 'Before I die I want to...' becomes 'In Valby I dream about...' in white stencils and as an expression of a preferred approach.

The adapted version of the chalkboard project is not the only conceptual temporary urban design element on Smedestræde that exists other places in customized forms. The outdoor book exchange and the seeds library, for instance, can be found at many other locations, as 'classic' temporary urban space features. Installed for their engaging properties, they are also part of a distinct design language that nevertheless can work differently depending on placement and facilitation. The relation between local agendas and recurring spatial typologies is relevant to acknowledge because it explains some of the arising complexity that something as simple as a chalkboard can entail, when deliberately mounted in public as part of a specific planning process. Such installations are signs in themselves, contextualised however, they become more than their concepts.

### ***A fictional house, a symbol, a stage and an event***

As a potential frame for debate and testing of future 'cultures', the white pavilion takes an interesting route as well, which I will touch upon shortly. Though we called the wooden pavilion 'a fictional house', it is standing very factual in the middle of the 'garden'.<sup>36</sup> Yet, just like the chalkboard, the pavilion has been understood, approached and used in various ways during its—so far—almost three-year existence and it also attains a symbolic role through its staging properties.

Before being taken over as a bar setting and 'hosted' by the TH. Bar in 2015 -2016, the pavilion in the front garden was mostly used for singular events; a consistent facilitation of a public 'future dialogue' was not taking place. Though it was used for occasional play activities, one-day workshops and festivals, these activities did not evoke much debate on location, neither about the site itself nor about the building proposal on the table.

But the pavilion, just as the dream analogy, has become a frequent media figure, featured in articles and newsletters addressing the political decision making on the proposed culture facility. Similar to the political staging with the chalkboard as a backdrop, the pavilion functions as a 'speaker's corner' and a backdrop for several media performances, not for any on-location public debate, but in a transferred mediated form of statements made and documented. On several occasions political and cultural spokespersons are thus pictured standing in the pavilion arguing their case. It was called 'a symbol for the plans about a new building for a culture centre' (Valby Bladet 19.02.2014) during a visit by the culture & leisure mayor of Copenhagen in 2014. In this media context the installation as such is

<sup>36</sup> The 'official' definition of the installation by the municipal administration, made in connection with the building approval, is 'a piece of furniture' and more specifically 'a plateau raised 50 cm from the ground' (Email: TMF/Københavns Kommune 28.06.2013).



The culture & leisure mayor, the chairman and a member of the local committee in the pavilion – or inside the 'symbol for the plans about a new building for a culture centre', as the local newspaper Valby Bladet wrote (Photo: Martin Sørensen)

not verbalised, but rather used as an image. The pavilion is not mentioned as a temporary explorable installation; it primarily conveys the symbolic promise of a future facility.

With the arrival of the pop-up bar, the pavilion gains yet another role. When I ask the owner of TH. Bar about his use of the pavilion in front of the bar container, he said,

No, the pavilion is not really part of the area I have rented. I mean, it was built as an event? The children play on it and I am planning to build some additional ones of these pallet benches and place them on it. (Nima from TH. Bar, July 2015)

Later on, he organised music performances and let dance sessions take the stage as well. The coloured lamps and more furniture and cushions entered the stage and served as extra seating in the spotlight. While the bar owner does not himself consider the pavilion as part of 'his area' officially, at least not in the beginning, it more and more turns into a stage and lounge for the bar and is later also termed 'the TH. Bar Stage' (e.g., in the Valby Culture Days program 2015). The pavilion gets more and more 'absorbed' and frequently documented and shared as an ambient socialising setting on social media as well.<sup>37</sup>

Still, the pop-up bar entrepreneur's definition of the pavilion as an 'event' quite precisely reflects how

<sup>37</sup> e.g. @th.bar (Instagram) and <https://m.facebook.com/thbarpopup>





14.05.2016\_Performance and play on the pavilion



Late evening ambience on social media (Photos: TH. Bar Facebook and Instagram)

the temporary space, the pavilion in particular, forms an ambiguous setting. This ambiguity is due to the openness in its program, but also because of its prolonged lifetime and its mainly event-based use—turning the installation itself into a long-term event. As a fictional house, a symbol, a stage and as an event, the pavilion moves through different stages of being.

### ***Multiple sites and plurivalent staging artefacts***

The look into the trajectory of the two initial temporary site interventions not only illustrates in what various ways they are appropriated in situ and understood by its makers and users, but their role as on-site discursive planning (and non-planning) tools also highlights how Smedestræde 2 is approached as a site. If we look at the site as a construct addressing the 'relationship between a project and a locale' (Burns & Kahn 2005: viii), introduced in the beginning of this chapter, Smedestræde 2 is more than a (vacant) plot of land; multiple understandings emerge in the process of the re-activation. Kahn formulates a useful conceptualisation of a site in an unstable and fluctuating state. She calls it a 'mobile ground', when a site is connected to different scenarios and is in a 'provisional condition' (Kahn 2005: 290). According to Kahn this view suggests ways to understand the many versions of a site that can be at play simultaneously. Different actors and professions have their own models of what that particular site is (or can become), how to look at it, use and express it (Ibid.). In the case of Smedestræde 2, these versions range from, among others, an empty plot, a future library, a temporary testing site, a heritage issue and a beer garden.

Also presented earlier in this chapter, 'distilling its narratives' is a way to steer a site in a planning perspective, according to Beauregard (Beauregard 2005: 41). Depending on the outset, certain qualities and aspects are articulated, whereas others are suppressed (Ibid.). This is exactly what can be traced in the development on Smedestræde. For all the actors involved in the development process, different narratives were the focus. For our research team, we had expectations around setting up a space for dialogue and exploration and a focus on rethinking the historic setting; the promotion of the library vision put forward by the committee is another particular example of how a narrative was selected and used. In this case the distilling strategy serves to strengthen the project proposal in the context of local and political decision making. A 'discursive displacement' is thus at work when a specific primary narrative is put forward that thereby sets aside other more difficult, complex or opposing ones, allowing the formation of a clear and pursuable goal (Ibid.: 54).

The notion of territoriality introduced in the previous chapter adds another perspective on the project-location dynamics at play. Based on his understanding of territorial control, geographer Robert D. Sack describes a set of tendencies related to (human) territoriality, one of which is how emptiness and vacancy is 'created'. According to Sack, a territorial unit is seen as empty if it does not contain the things expected. Vacant land is not empty materially, but it is considered empty if it does not hold the expected social and economic artefacts (Sack 1983: 59). Accordingly, a certain understanding of separation and allocation of things and spaces is created:

In this respect, territoriality conceptually separates space from things and then recombines them as an assignment of things to places and places to things. This assignment or recombination makes it appear

as though there is a problem of which fact to place where, or of facts without places and places without facts. (Ibid.: 59)

Sack's description reveals that if the main narrative is one of unused space, or if the main agenda is one of a missing library on site, then there is an imbalance. The question here is not if the space is 'unused'—the reservation rent period exemplifies how this site is somewhat in-between vacant and not—but the narrative put forward by the local committee, follows such a logic about allocation—the 'right thing' is missing. Hence, how different stakeholders consider the relation between the physical site and possible programmatic content is one of the issues that can create complex site understandings. The 'treatment' of the temporary on-site installations contributes to the multiple site conceptions but also makes them tangible. I have demonstrated how this occurs by looking into the trajectory of the physical installations in action.

How the installations can be conceptualised in relation to the different site understandings can further be highlighted by considering them as intermediaries in between different practices. In her article 'Between Chaos and Routine: Boundary Negotiating Artifacts in Collaboration', Charlotte Lee, a researcher of human-centred design, uses the concept of 'boundary negotiating artefacts' (Lee 2005) to describe material artifacts that negotiate working processes outside routine and standard situations (Ibid.: 390).<sup>38</sup> According to Lee, material objects can thus 'establish and destabilize protocols' (Ibid.). A sub-category, which Lee calls 'borrowed artifacts', are defined as 'artifacts that are taken from its creator in one community of practice and used in unanticipated ways by those in another community of practice' (Ibid.: 401). Though the installations in my case do not as such 'belong' to specific fields and are not really 'borrowed'—the aim was to make them widely accessible—considering the way the installations move between various appropriations in this light reveals their role as triggering co-shapers in the ongoing site discourse. This conceptual viewpoint, along with the view on objects 'as performance', presented earlier in this chapter, is analytically fruitful. By looking at the multiple roles of the spatial elements from a dynamic negotiating and performative perspective, we can see that the shifting appropriation engages these elements in very different practices and agendas. The meaning-making and communicating aspects are dynamic and changeable. In the course of time and depending on who you ask, their role shifts. As Schechner elaborates in his argument for addressing objects dynamically and as performance, 'The artefact may be relatively stable, but the performances it creates or takes part in can change radically' (Schechner 2013a: 3).

Furthermore, Cynthia Hardy and Robyn Thomas, who study organisational management, address the constitutive relation between materiality and discourse: 'Each discursive formation has particular rules shaping what is identified to exist or not exist' (Hardy, 2011). They go on to explain:

That multiple discourses exist, overlap, and contradict at any point in time suggests that these material

<sup>38</sup> Lee's study focuses on CSCW (computer supported cooperative work). She elaborates on the concept of 'boundary objects' used in the field of sociology and anthropology in relation to the 'communities of practice' tradition (Wenger 1998). Wenger borrows the term 'boundary object' from sociologist Leigh Star (Star & Griesemer 1989). Wenger says the term covers 'artefacts, documents, terms, concepts, and other forms of reification around which communities of practice can organize their interconnections' (Wenger 1998: 105). These boundary objects have a bridging function; nonetheless, they do not necessarily secure a consensual process, and they can still be part of multiple practices (Ibid.: 107).

entities [material phenomena such as bodies, spaces, objects, and practices] may mean different things to—and may be made to mean different things by—actors positioned in this discursive landscape; and, as the discursive landscape changes so too do the meanings of these material entities. (Hardy & Thomas 2015: 692)

This line of reasoning specifies the ongoing meaning-making happening in relation to the initial site interventions on Smedestræde 2. Based on the trajectory of the installations in Valby, as presented, I suggest viewing them as *plurivalent staging artefacts*, to describe the changing ways these objects, which are physically rather simple, gain complex connotations through their staging characteristics and discursive roles. Staging is here understood twofold – to point at their performative properties, as well as to frame the specific condition of ‘staging’, the temporary platform the installations are part of.<sup>39</sup> Both the chalkboard and the pavilion work as spatial triggers that release various aims and intentions over the course of time, more or less expressively. These *plurivalent staging artefacts* frame symbolic performances; they are signs in themselves, both in use and also when not in use, and they provoke further actions by being used—and by being avoided as well. They do all this because they are approached in different ways and because they are physically present on location and figures ‘played’ within a planning controversy.

### ***Staging of a gap***

So far, the installations both succeeded at fulfilling the initial aim of ‘testing the plan’—and failed. They are appropriated and ‘played’, but they did not frame much civic interaction and debate, on location, that addressed the future visions more specifically.

While the actual public debate about the library plans took place off-site—online and at the existing library, Smedestræde 2 was primarily used for presentations that addressed more general issues, for mediated symbolic staging or for activities that were not linked to the sketching process of the future. It worked as a space of communication but not a communication connected to the site’s use. However, the popularity of the public garden and the awareness about the last bits of the Old Valby on this location did rise during the use of the site as a bar—people actually sat down on the benches behind the hedge and discovered the view down Smedestræde. This interest in the site was not based on plans for a new facility but based on its current offer.

Yet again plans changed—changes that add further learnings in terms of the making and communication of plans and their relation to the physical site during temporary use.<sup>40</sup>

‘The dream about Smedestræde is dead’ (Valby Lokaludvalg 07 06 2016) was the sad and drastic conclusion drawn by the committee, when the library plans got dismissed for good in spring 2016. After several years of attempting to get political and budgetary support for a new library/theatre on Smedestræde, the proposition was finally and fully rejected by the municipal council. Again a sale was

<sup>39</sup> Staging: ‘a. A temporary platform or structure of posts and boards for support; scaffolding, b. The action, process, or art of putting a play on the stage; stage-setting’ (Oxford English Dictionary)

<sup>40</sup> This presentation draws on incidents exceeding the actual fieldwork period, but they are mentioned because they highlight crucial aspects relevant for this discussion.



26.06.2015\_ Infomation meeting about the library plans for Smedestræde—not on Smedestræde—but in front of the current library on Annexstræde

imminent, but instead the council decided to pursue a municipal housing project on Smedestræde. The TH. Bar had just received permission to open for a second season and reactions to the new plans were mixed. Social media featured heated calls to keep the 'green oasis'.<sup>41</sup> Many locals came to promote the idea of keeping the site as a public garden, arguing that TH. Bar, with its lush 'Berlin-like' backyard setting and relaxed bring-your-own-food atmosphere, fulfilled an actual need in the area, an unknown need, according to the local committee chairman:

The citizens of Valby have really embraced the square and that is great. A breathing space is created here, which we didn't know we were lacking, and there is a great wish to keep it, also from the local committee's side. (Valby Lokaludvalg 17.06. 2016)

The committee announced that they would try to influence the new plans as much as they could, to secure an open accessible square in the new project and bring in their knowledge from the process so far. The efforts have not been in vain, added one of the members from the local committee involved in the site development. So many claims on the site had developed that the committee had something to say, both now and in the future. They would strongly promote the historic architectural quality and the open garden. The site would now house mentally disabled young people, a much better and needed use than selling off the site to a private developer, argued the committee member (Valby Lokaludvalg 17.06. 2016).

Despite the good cause and the continuous municipal ownership, the news received a lot of attention in the community and beyond among people who had gotten to know the place. An online petition gathering was initiated by a bar customer and a Facebook support group with more than 1200 members argued for keeping 'the green oasis' that was matching the 'Valby spirit'. 'Keep TH. Bar' and 'We will not relinquish the open green space!', users proclaimed.<sup>42</sup>

Whereas the off-site election and info meetings had not evoked any strong public opinions, the announcement of a revised municipal building project and the final closure of the pop-up gathering point certainly did. People were using the site. Numerous Facebook posts and the interest at a hastily planned citizen meeting (in a nearby café) confirmed the interest in an open space on the site. The informal hangout place, with its ambiguous cobbled-together setting, had in the end become a beloved local spot. What triggered local interest and debate about Smedestræde was not a vision about a new library, but the fate of a now popular local garden. The actual use that in the end creates most public debate is, surprisingly, not a culture house discussion but its unexpected, unplanned but intensive use as a beer garden and in particular, its potential demise. What was termed 'an empty gap on an attractive location' (KEjd 2014: 39), happened to turn into 'Valby's cosiest gap' (TH. Bar sign), though still on an attractive and desirable location.

One can speculate whether the hesitation to debate visions for the library more explicit on the physical site had an impact on the outcome. Promoting the idea as completed and already fully

<sup>41</sup> Keep TH. Bar Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bevar.th.bar>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bevar.th.bar>  
[http://www.skrivunder.net/bevar\\_th\\_bar](http://www.skrivunder.net/bevar_th_bar)



14.05.2016\_Valby's cosiest gap'





discussed excluded further civic interaction on the subject, when an actual active on-site exploration would have been possible, due to the site being open for different uses for a longer period. One could also ask what would have happened if the site had been activated, not primarily as a bar but as a cultural institution and library, more intensively 'in the making'; perhaps the local imprint would have been much greater. Interventions can activate a site through installing new potentials for use and interpretation. But it seems that hosting and facilitating the frames is even more important.

Despite the prevalent 'no alternative' discourse that was expressed on the site, in documents and in media, the project manager in the local committee also stated,

In the long term we hope the opening makes the process of the library [easier]. And even if we don't get the new library, the temporary use of the plot will hopefully help the citizens [at least] to reclaim it for recreational purposes. (Copenhagen University 2013a: 6)<sup>45</sup>

This reclaiming seemed to be at least simmering.

### **Chalking dreams?**

The site continues to be on hold. Another, final, bar season awaits but also a new long-term plan for housing on Smedestræde 2 is on the table. The presented course of action reveals the different ways site and installations are used and presented in the planning agenda.

In *The Production of Space* (1974), Henri Lefebvre posits,

Space is at once result and cause, product and producer; it is also a *stake*, the locus of projects and actions deployed as part of specific strategies, and hence also the object of *wagers* on the future—wagers which are articulated, if never completely. (Lefebvre 1991b: 142–143)

The Smedestræde site is concomitantly made and 'played', but to some extent also discursively avoided from a strategic position during the course of the temporary activation. This can be traced in the actual dealing with the spatial setting and the installations that to some extent remain unacted scenes for a long period, despite effort put into activation. It explicates how the prime focus for the future use of the site put forward by the local committee is a stake that, from their perspective, needs to be promoted as a clear goal to increase a possible realisation. The official promotion of the library/culture-facility demonstrates a 'no-alternative' policy. A continuous narrative of obvious logic concerning the library and cultural house project on Smedestræde is thus being pursued. It becomes a question of either the realisation of the project or the potential sale of the plot. It seems that political balancing and an imminent sale is not an easy condition for experiments and open questions.

The preceding online voting and public hearing presented a reasoning noting advantages and disadvantages in locating a new facility on Smedestræde 2, but not what could happen with the site if

<sup>45</sup> This was an answer to the SEEDS half-yearly questionnaire to the question: 'What impact has the area/neighbourhood surrounding your site had upon your short-term (*temporary use*) and/or long-term (*permanent use*) goals and what relationship do you desire your project to have with this immediate locality?'

It is important to note that the local committee consist of members from different political parties as well as the employed secretary to coordinate the work. The members from the different political parties and the employers most possible have different priorities in relation to the local initiatives, so while external communication is clearly stated from the committee, opinions might diverge internally which are not reflected here.



14.05.2016\_'Your friend the frog' was a children activity program on Smedestræde 2.

the budget for the proposed cultural centre was not approved by the municipal council. The main objectives for the local committee has been to keep the site in municipal hands and to secure a public use, and in particular, to push the library project, a project the committee has worked on realising for a long time. This is as such not an unusual or illogical strategy in the political game and budgeting race; the strong fight for a public facility is noteworthy and important, considering the potential sale of municipal property. A clear proposal helps to make a good argument when the committee and council have to prioritize projects. Then again, by focusing on the library project, a more open on-location debate about the site is avoided. Any further engagement with ideas about what the planned cultural facility could more specifically offer is also thus during the temporary use of the site. The potential for intervention on the site—in the form of testing modes and dialoguing features—was strategically dis-related from the future of the site itself. A real exploration through temporary activation was therefore dismissed.

A clear-cut project plan is also a move that can make it difficult to incorporate the occurrence of learnings and contingent changes. Many of the activities that took place on Smedestræde 2 actually *did* address cultural topics relevant for a new facility, programmatically and spatially (in addition to the installations and furniture, other activities included workshops, a children activity program by the library, a travelling camping theatre, and on-site mural art). However, they remained singular activities. The situation demonstrates that missing links often occur when temporary use projects are formulated as testing fields with potential iterations.

The *plurivalent and staging artefacts* and their mediated concomitants highlights that the initial perspective of the culture institution plan was a *programmatic* one, as part of the all district's facilities. The site was considered suitable for the particular program, not the other way around. Most importantly, what becomes clear is that a balancing act of political prioritising and a temporary exploration can be challenging to merge. Whereas the activities as such were great illustrations of local action, they were not intended to affect the proposal. They became placeholders; the site was stalled through activation. The site itself was on hold. Maybe we, as collaborators, had missed the mark and in some ways misinterpreted the politics of the situation. Other important factors were the unclear roles and missing organisation or prioritisation of continuous facilitation—in terms of the municipal resources and our role as initiators. The long, dragged-out process—a half-year reservation of the site turned into three years on hold—no doubt affected the lack of clarity around roles and organisation. These problems could not have been known at the time, but in hindsight it was a period that could have been used much more intensively. However, different understandings and uses were unlocked in the course of the development, implementation and activation of the setting.

The trajectory and staged discourse traced in the two installations on Smedestræde 2 indicate how meaning is made and changed during temporary use of a place that is in the process of being transformed from a car dealership to a potential library, a bar and lastly into a possible housing project. What 'between sign and action' in this case reveals is the multiple and discursive role of the temporary urban 'furnishing' in the planning process: they work as *plurivalent and staging artefacts*. An intricate relation between the intentionally open program, the changing planning agendas and the physical site then unfolds. The situations and processes presented elucidate a distinct version of meaning-making and unfolding of plans and intentions.

## SUGAR FACTORY — GRONINGEN

### Plans in a sugar pot

In the middle of the large patchwork surface of the former sugar factory area is a giant fiery red pot—a sugar pot, naturally, like a remnant of a large-scale coffee service. It flashes bright in the predominantly grey-brown landscape. On rainy, desolate days, as well as on days surrounded by busy event activity on site, the pot works as a synecdochical sign. A sugar pot, even without sugar in it, refers to the former production that occurred here. However, this is not what it *means*. Despite its symbolic familiarity in terms of the sugar content, it does not primarily address the former factory's function as a place that turned sugar-beets into granulated sugar. Instead, it points towards the future of the site—the 'new sugar', which also entails a rethinking of what exists—what remains. It is a sign of change to come.

The sugar pot was designed for the exhibition of the results from the open idea competition for the area, initiated by the Groningen municipality in 2011.<sup>44</sup> The exhibition took place in the planning department and after that, the sugar pot was also placed on different locations in the city to draw attention to the development. It was thought to be a 'symbol for the first activities to open up the area and to discuss the plans with everyone', according to the project manager in the municipality.<sup>45</sup> The

<sup>44</sup> The red pot was designed by the local artist and designer Lambert Kamps.

<sup>45</sup> Email correspondence with project manager, Hiltje van der Wal, Gemeente Groningen, March 2016



27.03.2015\_ The red sugar pot on the sugar factory area



^ 27.03.2015\_ The red sugar pot in the grey landscape

^ The sugar pot in the exhibition displaying the proposals from the open idea competition (Photo: Lambert Kamps)

176 entry ideas did not have any immediate direct impact on the terrain<sup>46</sup>, but the sugar pot moved in on site after having toured the city and has been on the site ever since, though its position changes. As a miniature material spinoff from the competition process, and as an indication of new plans and changes ahead, the sugar pot is an event aftermath, a symbolic projection and a material mobile 'prop' lingering on site.

The re-use of the buildings, the 'invisible residents' zone' and the access arrangements, as described in chapter two, are some of the main physical changes made as part of the initial re-appropriation of the large post-industrial terrain, after the radical demolition of most of the built structures in 2010. In addition to these, alterations on site are to a high degree consisting of small-scale/medium-scale<sup>47</sup> singular elements placed in the open landscape, mainly situated in the north-eastern part of the area towards the city centre. The red pot is one example – and whatever puts its feet on the ground often stays.

A symbolic mascot in the landscape could be considered insignificant and difficult to relate to serious planning action and investments for such a large site. The sugar pot is therefore not an installation mentioned by the authorities as a part of the changes and plans, apart from illustrating the jury report from the idea competition. Nonetheless, on location, it signals that something is on its way. Work is in progress, and signalling seems important, especially in the first period, when little evidence of new uses is visible on site and when the most dominant sign of change is the void from the demolished factory and the lingering traces from the former production.

What is happening on site, from the municipal take-over in 2011 and to the first actions are undertaken by the new management team four years later, are to a great extent 'pre-temporary' steps anticipating the 'longer' temporary appropriation of the next 15 years. Whereas the temporary use might be considered an instant action step to re-activate, what become visible in this case are 'pre-temporary' measures consisting of singular alterations. Furthermore, public events play a big role, as 'openers' in this phase, as already mentioned earlier, and are often the reason for physical changes made.

In this initial phase of the temporary use of the sugar factory site, between sign and action means exploring the kind of objects and event structures that set the post-industrial landscape in motion, literally and figuratively. The objects and events are part of the rather pragmatic pioneering of making the site re-usable step by step 'by singular placing'. At the same time, they exemplify how this site preparation is entangled with an ongoing act of symbolic meaning-making and with ways to understand the transformation process of the former sugar factory. This meaning-making and storytelling is furthermore enacted through particular events taking place in this period.

The interplay between these new elements, activities and the dilapidated setting creates a scenography of transformation that oscillates between stories of the past, plans for the future and solutions and actions here and now. The re-programming by different actors through the placing of *landscape pioneering props*, *'event furniture'* and the enactment of spectacles as *built stories* play on the dynamics

<sup>46</sup> The Wolkenfabriek restaurant, however, was one of the proposals submitted for the competition; the sieve building began to be converted for it the following year. And the Timmerdorp Camp, described later in this case discussion, is mentioned in the idea catalogue and was initiated for the first time in 2014 (Gemeente Groningen 2012).

<sup>47</sup> Scale and size is here to be understood relatively. The extreme vastness of the terrain and the large sieve building makes even considerably sized structures seem 'small'.



30.09.2014\_A bricolage setting on the sugar terrain.The sugar pot on wheels to the right.





of the site in transition, entangling practical matters of pioneering and narratives of transformation. Similar to the situation in the harbour of Køge, the change in use of the former industrial area results in contrasting messages, though the original use here—sugar production—no longer takes place. Nevertheless, access is forbidden, according to the various warning signs on the entrances, fences and the remaining buildings, as well as the gates and boundary demarcations. At the same time, guests are invited to enter via new access points and via the various activities going on. The opening of the site, as discussed in chapter two, creates an overlap of spatial messages. However, on this site, unlike the Køge harbour, no systemic cultural pathway with clearly articulated stops, no series of detailed information stands guide visitors through the vast terrain in transition (aside from the ‘hidden’ riddle and subtle tactical wayfinding system by the Wolkenfabriek, described in chapter two). Designated foot paths and bike routes to cross the area are still in preparation. And no big explanatory posters with plans or three-dimensional drawings of coming construction projects are displayed here. Entering the site, you meet a large open field, a flat horizontal surface, where the amputated chimney and the derelict sieve building are the central guiding figures. The remaining infrastructure, the successive planting and the bricolage of surface patterns are all open for interpretation in terms of finding a way on the terrain. In this open field the first reprogramming interventions on site have ‘popped-up’.

## Landscape pioneering props

### *Adoption of the SugarSuite—from sweet dreams to rock ‘n’ roll*

Situated between the Hoendiep Channel and the old chimney, a bright green raised shipping container is another attention-seeking colourful dot and ‘prop’ on the large concrete surface. The industrial flair of the freight container may not seem particularly foreign, considering the context of a former production site like this, especially if seen from a distance. Yet, standing on its own on the cleared surface, and featuring a staircase, a glass façade on one end, decorated with draped yellow curtains and a large banner on the exterior, the shipping container has been altered into something different. Despite signalling, on closer examination, some level of mute peculiarity and idle existence, the container is one of the initial acts of ‘planning on site’ and is therefore unpacked in the following discussion. The later-to-be site managers Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>, together with a collaboration partner (Rizoem), installed the green so-called SugarSuite in early 2014. The 26 meter-squared ‘suite’ was intended as a one-room hotel on the site and provide ‘sweet dreams’, as the mounted banner proclaims. Unfortunately, according to Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>, ‘the business case didn’t add up’ and the necessary infrastructure was not yet established on site.<sup>48</sup> There was no electricity, water or toilet in the container, which made any actual use of the container difficult. Further initiatives and investments were needed to prepare the site properly and to tackle the additional development of a hotel concept or other potential uses. In spring 2015, Ploeg id<sup>3</sup>, now as managers of the site, put out a call for ideas regarding a future activation and concept for the container already situated on the site; the pitch read, ‘Shipping container on feet looking for users with innovative ideas.’<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Email correspondence with Ploeg id<sup>3</sup> 2015/2016

<sup>49</sup> The pitch was organised in collaboration with the Municipality of Groningen (Ruimte in Stad) and the architectural centre in Groningen (Platform GRAS), <http://www.ruimteinstad.nl/zeecontainer-op-pootjes-zoekt-gebruiker-met-vernieuwend-plan>



⤴ 08.05.2014\_The SugarSuite seen from the roof of the sieve building

⤴ 18.08.2015\_The draped curtain window of the SugarSuite

The start-up business Rebel Rebel Hostel managed to pitch their idea for an extended container hostel in and around the raised container. The small company initiated a crowdfunding campaign to achieve the necessary additional budget to begin (which reached its goal a year later, in 2016). Their concept elaborated on the 'sleeping in container' idea, as the two initiators describe it on their website:

'Coming soon—Rebellious shipping container sleepovers in an industrial setting in Groningen, the Netherlands. Welcome. We're Anika and Anna and together we're starting Rebel Rebel Hostel: A unique, sustainable and above all, fun place to stay and get to know the city that makes our hearts beat faster. We're building our hostel from old shipping containers, recycled materials and second-hand stuff. We built this city on Rock 'n' Roll.'<sup>50</sup>

The 'city' is in preparation and the two initiators aim to open their hostel cluster in August 2016. After their pitch got accepted and they took over the container and surrounding area on site, Anna and Anika have invested in eight further containers that are to be converted for their hostel. The plan is a setup of dorm rooms, shared bathrooms, eco toilets and a large common room with a kitchen and bar, gardens and a rooftop terrace. But to actually start the construction process, Rebel Rebel Hostel needs to wait for an official 'go' and permissions for the new function. Certain requirements needed to be met to get the hostel facility approved. In addition, the site's generally unprepared condition and the need for an overall disposition for the site initiatives was still to be sorted out: 'At the moment there are no

<sup>50</sup> <http://rebelrebelhostel.com>



The idea pitch campaign asking for ideas for the container (Image: Ploeg id3 )

facilities at all and we're waiting on Ploeg id<sup>3</sup> and the municipality to come up with a long-term plan for that and eventually the realisation of that plan.<sup>51</sup>

Hence, the green container still awaits sleeping guests, and the inside has only tentatively been used during its existence of more than two years on the site. For a beginning, the new 'owners' have used the container interior for small events in 2015, such as yoga sessions, and as a mini cinema and an after-party location in connection with the Noorderlicht Photo festival on the former factory area.

According to the hostel start-up, 'The green container will hopefully be a part of our project soon but at the moment it's still very much like an old shipping container.'

Nevertheless, the two hostel initiators have begun to alter and furnish the inside of the container further. They have installed a bunkbed, filled it with covers and pillows and put up historic black and white photo prints of the factory area on its walls. The team behind Rebel Rebel Hostel explains,

Since we've been using the green container no one has slept in it (don't really know if it was used before). The bunkbed is for show. We do want to use it eventually of course but right now it doesn't [comply] with all the rules and regulations for hotels or hostels.

The current role of the container and its content, as described here, is thus one of a show room, similar to 'home staging' presentation units in new residential complexes for sale, for instance, waiting for further completion and use. In addition to being used as an event location a few times, the green

<sup>51</sup> This and the following two quotes are from an email correspondence with Rebel Rebel Hostel 2016.



Rebel Rebel Hostel's crowdfunding campaign (Photos: Rebel Rebel Hostel)

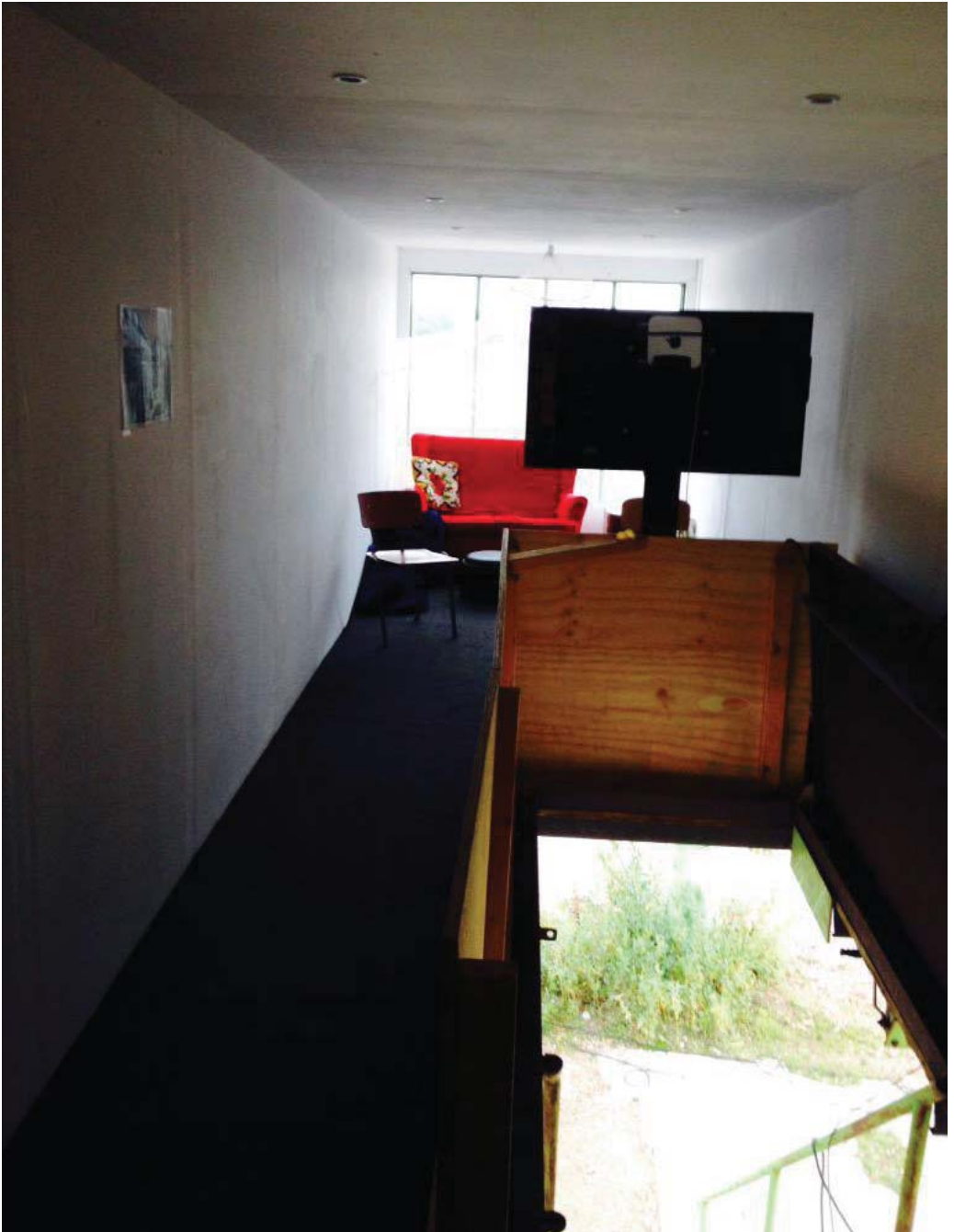
container, both inside and outside, is featured in the Rebel Rebel Hostel team's crowdfunding videos on their website as well as in other public-relations material, such as functioning as a setting for video interviews. It is part of their virtual storytelling, conveying the ambience and spatial setting of the coming hostel on the former factory site, with its quirky second-hand style and DIY approach, its eco-conscious concept and industrial roughness. Whereas 'industrial follies' in former times disguised technical mechanisms in small miniature Palladian villas and temples (Petersen 1989: 109), the pop bedroom is disguised in an industrial transport unit. The adapted shipping container thus also conveys a certain aesthetic.

### ***Rebellious mock-up and decorated container***

Standing sturdily on its four pillars, the shipping container, in the process of both its own conversion and that of the area, is transforming on different levels: physical, regulatory and as an idea and image. As pointed out in the introduction and in the former case discussions in this chapter, temporary and iterative on-site interventions are not just simple, pragmatic and controlled prototypical testing modes for new programs or designs. Different levels of meaning-making, exploration and communication are at play that set off step-wise spatial marks, as first traces of plans and ideas acted out. Even without functioning properly, the container is doing something by being there. It is a sign with multiple meanings, but it also grows an idea and provokes actions by being placed on location. Just as the pavilion in Valby, for instance, described in the previous case discussion, the container can serve



The mock-up hostel room (Photo: Rebel Rebel Hostel)



The showroom couch corner (Photo: Rebel Rebel Hostel)



13.08.2015\_A container in-between but fixed to the ground





different purposes.

The shipping container is actually 'lying', if we consult Eco's definition of a sign presented in this chapter's introduction. It even performs the lie in several ways: Is it a shipping container or a hostel room? A hostel room in a shipping container? At the stage described here, it is neither. It does not work as a cargo holding and transport unit, but neither does it—or it does not yet—work as the mini hostel it signifies through banner text, and curtains—and later through the interior furnishing and conceptual storytelling that pitch the extended hostel idea.

So what is it doing in the meantime, as the something in between, in its showroom condition? Apart from the occasional roles as a yoga studio or cinema, the hostel-to-be unit disguised by the green box works as something in between a mock-up and a prototype: It could be used (the bed is made)—but it cannot. It is furnished and 'ready'—but its use is not permitted and it is not functional on the supply level; the actual 'facility' thus precedes its own real functionality. The discrepancy between the lacking requisite infrastructure and the actual physical presence of the hostel unit on site is a *permitted exception* in this specific phase. As a showcase for the coming—temporary—hostel concept, the container exemplifies an interesting intermediate step in the meaning-making process of this particular installation in its relationship to the site. It is a non-shipping container and a not-yet-hostel—a small subjunctive time machine between projection mode and production mode.

Other than signalling 'hostel', through the SugarSuite banner, the window with curtains and later the interior mock-up room, the container from time to time furthermore serves as an external billboard for advertisements and events that are not directly related to the hostel concept. This adds another layer to its role. In the *Learning from Las Vegas* perspective introduced in the beginning of this chapter, Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour question the ambiguous amalgamation of built structure and added communicational elements: 'Is the sign the building or the building the sign?' (Venturi et al. 1977: 73). The rectangular structure of the container can take on any role, depending on the large fabric banners covering its external sides. The pimped shipping container as 'a shelter with symbols on it' (Ibid.: 90) could thus be considered a contemporary version of a 'decorated shed' (Ibid.), the concept proposed by Venturi et al. for buildings determined by their iconographic add-ons. It might be a *decorated container*. With the application of external advertising messages, the container is a billboard—a big sign, especially when seen from a distance. The alterations and the curtains showing through the window tell another story, however. The green box in transformation is more complex than 'a rhetorical front and a conventional behind' (Ibid.), as the 'decorated shed' is further defined by the authors of *Learning from Las Vegas*. The behind, or rather the interior, is, in this case, not conventional despite the conventional role of container module as a shell. The reference to the 'decorated shed', however, underlines the importance of the additional elements mounted on the container. A quality of the *decorated container* is its adaptivity as a sign.

### ***Ideas situated on location***

In between being a functional shipping container and a future bedroom, the green container is used as a billboard, a yoga studio, cinema, marketing setting and hostel showroom. And from very far away



13.08.2015\_The container as a billboard

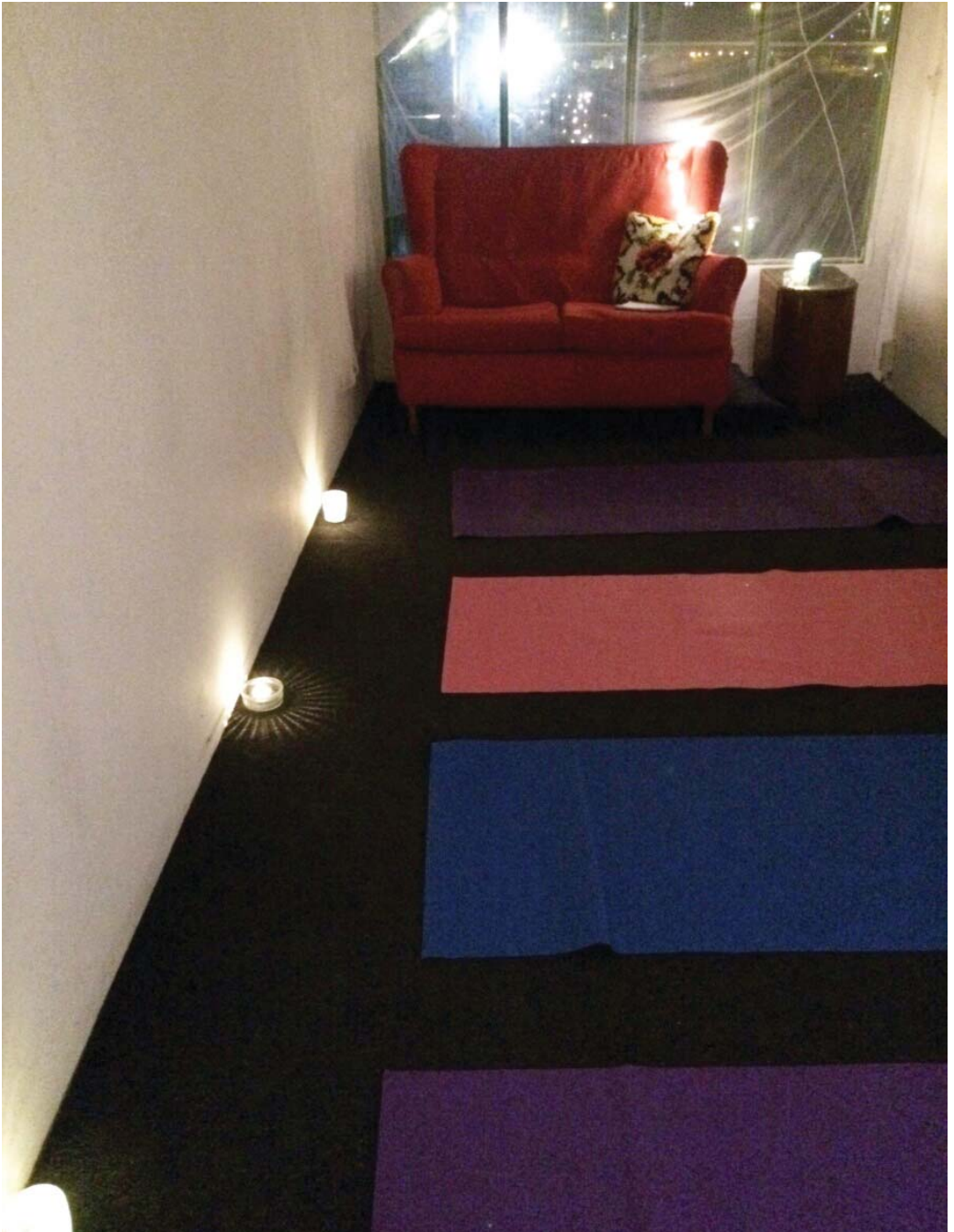
it is still just a green industrial structure. The quite detailed ‘container-deconstruction’ can be seen in a broader perspective. It relays something about spatial adaption steps in relation to temporary use, re-programming and transformation. The shipping container is one of today’s most universal generic structures. It is ‘ugly and ordinary’ (Ibid.), to stay with the *Las Vegas* language. It is a standard structure, which nevertheless is converted into a multiplicity of ‘other things’ in creative conversion projects, due to its flexibility and modularity. The re-used container is therefore also an enormously popular and frequent temporary use feature. It is also found in the two other case study sites, with different functions: the mobile kitchen storage is one of several re-used shipping containers located in the temporary spots in the Southern Harbour in Køge, and in Valby, a shipping container houses the pop-up bar (in 2016 two more were added for covered seating).

A shipping container can be everything today, but to work in a transformed way it is still context dependent.<sup>52</sup> The case of the green suite demonstrates that the actual re-programming is not only a matter of crossing a flexible ‘spatial container’ with a new program. The re-programming comprises an act of adaption that can also bring with it a kind of situated resistance—when physicality and ideas converge. A temporary container-based function may seem to suggest a very ‘instant’ use rather than a process that, in this case, encompasses a pre-period, of more than two years, during which it signals ‘I am a temporary mini hostel’ before becoming it. Though most probably an extreme case of waiting

<sup>52</sup> This is also relatable to the ‘localised’ spatial elements as internationally travelling DIY-concepts in the previous case.



13.08.2015\_‘Ugly and ordinary’?



The yoga studio session (Photo: Rebel Rebel Hostel)

for temporary activation, it is thus important to acknowledge that such reprogramming can present additional steps of practical and symbolic meaning-making on site and behind the scenes—*after* the spatial element is actually placed. Changes in plans and ownership, logistics, regulations, the economy and branding all affect the process of moving from idea to execution. Indeed, something like the green box *is* symbol, practice, object and event, as I have introduced the frame for the thematic exploration in this chapter.

So while the shipping container might be ‘use-less’ as a sleeping room for now, it does other things on the site while in the process of becoming something more. Whereas the hostel project, seen in the broader perspective of site development, is defined as temporary use (for the period of the next 15 years), the pre-temporary mock-up condition described here reserves the site through a physical ‘blocking’, a spatial ‘stamp’ and positioning for further appropriation. The initial placing of the container, releases an idea, in this case for a container-based hotel/hostel that evolves further after the object has been placed. A few more ‘use-less’ containers—not put to any real use yet—are located on the former factory area. It appears that doing, or rather planning, ‘by placing’ *pioneering props* becomes a tentative appropriation of the landscape; if an idea is not doable, something else most probably will be, and thus takes over. This ‘placing action’ is characteristic in this initial phase of appropriation.

#### ***Settlement sculptures in the open field***

While the red pot and the green container are some of the more conspicuous elements on site, other objects and installations are to be found on the large surface as well. Site preparation and infrastruc-



30.09.2014\_Containers put on site based on good ideas

tural improvements, which make new uses possible, are crucial in this case. While more comprehensive plans are in development to secure the site's general supply and infrastructure in future, some of these issues are preliminary tackled through smaller pioneering units placed in the landscape. These units have simple pragmatic functions—internet, lightning, electricity. These 'settlement sculptures' not only form characteristic appropriations of the vast landscape, they are also specifically celebrated as milestones and events in the development process of the area. 'Data line & lightning', for example, is a combined internet supply and lamp post installation consisting of a series of pylons stretched out between the sieve building and the old chimney. The pylons were specifically designed for the site by the same designer who made the red sugar pot. They were erected during a workshop and festival (Let's Gro) in November 2014. As Ploeg id3, the site managers (officially from early 2015), wrote about the event on their website, 'making beautiful plans is one thing, bringing them to life is something completely different'. The construction of the internet and light pylons exemplified that one do not have to wait for others to try out new things—just do it, was their message. The construction served a practical need, but it was also a signal:

On the ground of the old Suikerunie we literally and figuratively established a utility service. Literally, since the construction was a collective action and figuratively, because the internet is not built by a major telecom provider or the municipality, but by a network of small and larger companies.<sup>53</sup>

Apart from its basic supply function and its symbolic coming into being and background, the installation also creates attention. According to the designer, the strong lightning indicates that something is going on, life has returned to the factory.<sup>54</sup> The first half year the light was strongly flashing to make the effect even stronger. Another 'settlement sculpture' was commissioned by the municipality; a micro power supply station has been installed on site, a bit further to the west. The 'e-source' is a solar and wind powered mobile energy supply unit. The electricity 'tree' on the sugar factory terrain is a prototype to be tested and the company behind describes it as 'iconic' and 'a beacon'<sup>55</sup> on the site. It was officially inaugurated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony during the seminar that also marked the take-over of the site by the new management team in spring 2015.<sup>56</sup>

These practical units are not only installed and then used. They are celebrated. And they are not standard elements, but specifically made as prototypes or one of a kind design elements. While these units as *pioneering props*, are quite small compared to the large scale of the terrain, they are important enablers—green power for music events etc. and internet for the start-ups on site is provided—and they are important in terms of signalling that the area is and can be used.

### **'Event furniture'**

Two larger *pioneering props* have entered the area in 2014 and 2015. Just behind the green container, the temporary scaffolding bridge for pedestrian access was built as the result of the European archi-

<sup>53</sup> Ploeg id3, 20.11. 2014: <http://www.ploegid3.nl/index.php/sweet-nuts-zelf-oprichten-internet-voorziening>

<sup>54</sup> Email correspondence with designer, Lambert Kamps, September 2016

<sup>55</sup> @esourcelife

<sup>56</sup> Eventually the 'e-source' was ripped during a holiday period. As the municipal manager notes, it can be taken as a sign that the site indeed 'is becoming part of the city life', as discussed in chapter two (Email correspondance with Hiltje vd Waal, 13.09.2016).



^ The collective action of setting up the 'Data & lightning'-pylons (Photo: Ploeg id3 )

^ 12.08.2015\_The cables connect the old building with the internet emitter placed on the old brick chimney





'The flashy effect of the lights shows that the area will generate a lot of new, young and positive energy in the future' the designer says in the project description (Photo: Lambert Kamps)



27.03.2015\_ The solar and wind powered energy 'esource'

ecture competition European 12 (2014). A strategic plan or intervention for the adjacent area on the other side of the Hoendiep Channel was the open brief from the municipality, who was seeking good ideas to connect the retail area towards north with the sugar factory site. The winner entry of the competition was the proposal 'Prelude – Before it turns and becomes the connector' (Keller & Rolvink in European Europe 2014). The concept proposed a stepwise production and construction process of a bridge by producing organic concrete, based on the vegetable fibre from miscanthus (elephant grass). The idea was that the material could be cultivated on the sugar factory site. This was suggested to be organised by a voluntary community-based 'friends group' and the timeline featured different working steps in terms of the building material production and related social events. When enough building material had grown, the bridge should be casted layer by layer and then placed across the channel in a 'turning' movement—a description similar to the performing map of the 'turning pier' in Køge. The entry describes a quite fascinating processual and collective growing and making of the bridge to create step by step access to the post-industrial landscape—'Prelude is a strategy of the first stage of this process' (Ibid.).

The concept was considered feasible and was the clear winner, however, 'growing a connection' takes time and it was decided by the municipality to speed up the bridge construction due to the urgent need for wider public access. The winners were asked to design a pre-version, a 'Pre-prelude', a more temporary and faster connection over the channel—a processual shortcut. The proposition decided on and built (by a scaffolding company) was the 'connecting variant: event furniture' as it is named

**JB753** Groningen Hoendiep **1**  
**PRELUDE**



BRIDGE ON HOENDIEP SITE, WAITING TO BE TURNED TO SUIKERUNIE TERRAIN

**JB753** Groningen Hoendiep **2**  
**PRELUDE**

**STRATEGY**



**MEETING POINT OF RURAL AND URBAN**

Hoendiep site is meeting point of Groningen city and rural area penetrating the city fabric.



**FREE FIELD AND CENTRAL STRIP**

The Hoendiep and Suikerunie terrain are the free field in a kind surrounding environment. PRELUDE provides a strip in the context of this space for connections, facilities and attraction.



**CONNECTOR**

Original Suikerunie entrance at ringroad turn-off. PRELUDE makes first direct link for slow traffic from the city to the Hoendiep site.



**FUTURE POTENTIAL NETWORK**

Post-PRELUDE the strip is catalyzing a new urban fabric, intertwining city streets and quality bike routes between rural areas of the Western City Quarters and City Park 1913.

**ATTRACTOR**

With the process of planting, harvesting, drying and mixing the material on site and building the material into art by art with yield of urban agriculture on site, PRELUDE becomes an attractor itself.



**FACILITATOR**

The strip is a facilitator of the free field of the Suikerunie and later on the Hoendiep site of the canal. With a first stage into the 'Tereny' of Hoendiep, later on the strip comes for visitors.

**URBAN AGRICULTURE FOR LOCAL BUILDING MATERIAL**




Planting miscanthus in the Hoendiep site every year.

Miscanthus grows every year up to 4m.

Miscanthus gives 15 tons of dry matter every year.

Miscanthus replaces sand and gravel in concrete mix.

We quit with the locally grown material layers of 12cm with each saving 1kg-1.8kg.



**Formula for 1 m<sup>3</sup> organic concrete:**  
 130 kg miscanthus  
 200 kg sand  
 250 kg cement  
 350 l water  
**Properties:**  
 compression strength: 2.4 N/mm<sup>2</sup>  
 moisture: 0.9 kg/m<sup>3</sup>  
**Environmental benefit:**  
 5m<sup>3</sup> = 200 kg CO<sub>2</sub> collected in gas and food in material

**HOW TO MAKE ORGANIC CONCRETE WITH MISCANTHUS AS BASE?**

'The Prelude' (Drawings: Keller & Rolvink)



13.08.2015\_The scaffolding bridge or 'event furniture'

in the project description (Keller & Rolvink 2014: 8). The idea is that the scaffolding can be adapted or transformed into other temporary event structures, when not needed for the bridge anymore. The industrial style and temporary 'festival'- look signals work in progress, which is emphasised as a suitable character for the site in the project description (Ibid.). The bridge was constructed in 2014 and the new access to the sugar terrain, which would make more and bigger events possible, was celebrated at an opening event. From now on, bigger crowds were allowed to be on the area. The 'pre-prelude' as an initial connecting step, is thus a pre-version of the experimental bridge (possibly) to come. Not as a mock-up as the container hostel unit, it does 'work', but as a more instant solution to the access problem—a temporary pre-step for a proposal on the table.

One of the first larger physical changes implemented by the new management company was a red staircase creating a new main entrance to the sieve building, on the level where the Wolkenfabriek restaurant and the main event and exhibition spaces are located.<sup>57</sup> Just as the bridge made it possible to allow more people on site simultaneously (complying the request for safety), the new staircase serves the same purpose for the building. Until now access to the building took place through rather small and unremarkable backdoors on the eastern and western side of the building—now the building had a prominent entrance. The red staircase forms a strong contrast to the surroundings and the rough

<sup>57</sup> The staircase was designed by one of the partners in the new management team.



The new main entrance to the sieve building (Visualisation: Ploeg id3 /pvanb architecten)



⤴ The factory was a maze of structures going in, through and out of buildings, transporting materials and products. Asphalt work around 1950-1955 (Source: RHC Groninger Archieven)

⤴ 13.08.2015\_A new sign of action. The staircase allows a flow of visitors into the former factory

wall structures of the sieve building. This example of 'difference transformation' (Braae 2015: 294), where new and old meet in a contrasting way, clearly demonstrates what is the existing and what is the added structure, despite the industrial style of the staircase. It underlines the change going on. The 'red carpet' is a sculptural structure that stands out and marks that this building is neither a factory anymore nor is it an abandoned ruin. While the structure is rather extravagant in its design, it follows the pragmatic logic of the factory and the way buildings and functions on site were adapted. Connections are simply made by cutting holes into the buildings and by creating the desirable links or adaptations. On the eastern side of the sieve building, the somewhat smaller entrance to the new management office on the ground level and two interim staircases to the first floor, follow the same reasoning of alteration. The office entrance is a small wooden pavilion-like structure covering a hole in the wall, the office windows are rough cuts into the formerly closed facade towards north and the staircases are simple metal structures leading up to entrances made where the former windows had been closed off. The red staircase is, however, clearly the public access point and it creates a visible focus point from both entrances to the site. The red staircase could also be described as an example of 'event furniture' as the scaffolding bridge is named. It makes larger activities possible, works as a red carpet and a visible main entrance; it was specifically built *for* events. In particular it was made possible, because a large student association was having their anniversary party on the site in summer 2015, an event that contributed largely to make the construction of the staircase financially liable. 'Building *for* events' is thus a particular way of making improvements on this site. Apart from being physical connectors and access measures, the scaffolding bridge and the red staircase are, just as the green container and the sieve building façade itself, used for displaying large banners referring to current activities on site. Since many different events take place, that not necessarily are 'visible', because they take place on specific occasions or inside the building, these signs convey what is currently going on—the 'banner wrapping' of these structures that turns them into large billboards and signs, is an important part of the on-site communication, sending signals of action beyond the channel, fences and gates.

### ***Placing pioneering props***

During the first years of re-use, the sugar factory site is changed, tested and communicated through what I have termed *pioneering props*. The '(decorated) containers', the smaller 'settlement sculptures' and elements and the 'event furnitures' differ in size and mobility, but these singular physical additions all reactivate the setting in both practical and symbolic manners. The term 'prop' is most often used to describe stage accessories in performances. While the sugar terrain is not a stage, though it often functions as one, it is however a landscape scenography; set in motion, 'owned' and appropriated through the placing, use and change of these *pioneering props*.

The term prop(s) has its origin rooted in the word 'properties' (OED). Originally, it meant that props were considered as part of a collective ownership in a theatre company. It has also been suggested that 'property' referred to the fact that the prop belonged to the one who actually used it during a performance, it was the 'property' of the person in action on stage (Harris 1975).

While the pioneering props are each implemented by various initiators, reaching from the municipi-

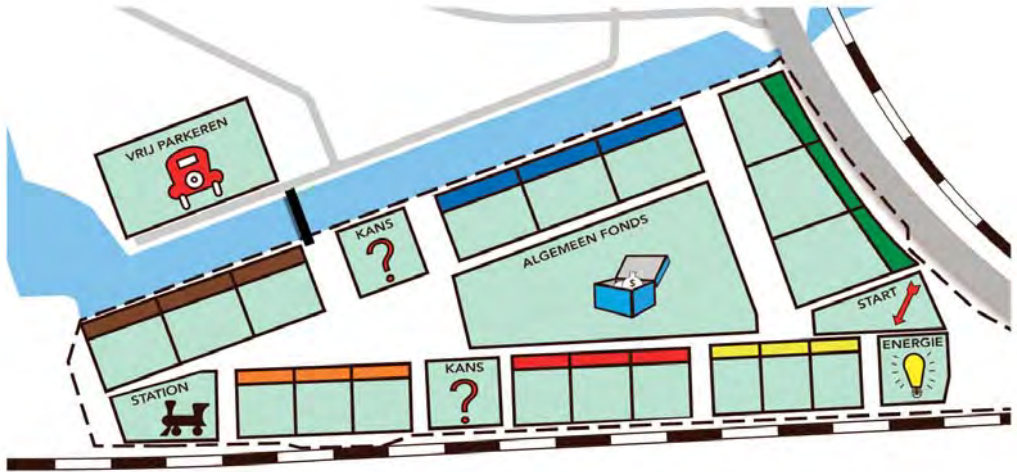


13.08.2015\_Banners on the bridge. 'Wrapped structures' communicate current activities and events

pality, the management organisation to individual stakeholders, they can be appropriated or taken over by others through use as well. On the sugar terrain the *pioneering props* thus belongs to the one who appropriate and activate them, on shorter or longer term. Ideas can move into existing structures, as the green container, and structures can be owned by being wrapped in logos, slogans or images, for instance. In *Stage Life of Props* (2010) theorist in literature and performance studies, Andrew Sofer, looks at different versions of the theatrical props as more than simple accessories, but as central actives in performances. According to Sofer, 'props trace spatial trajectories and create temporal narratives as they track through a given performance' (Sofer 2010: 2). This does not necessarily mean that the prop itself moves, but that it can be manipulated and appropriated in different ways (Sofer 2010: 12). As Sofer says, props need to be 'triggered' (Ibid.: 11). Props can function as intended, they can be a mock-up or they can be recalcitrant, they can refuse to work as they are intended to (Ibid.: 24) – So are the different pioneering props on this site. They behave in various ways; adapting or challenging the ideas that form the background for their placement on location.

The placement of ideas and 'props' is a concept that continues into the actual strategy and plan for organising the temporary initiatives in the area the next 15-20 years. The 'Monopoly'-map and game-board concept of positioning 'players' on different parcels, proposed by the management team Ploeg id3, corresponds with the logic of placing singular uses and installations. An approach that is transformed into a literal parcelling plan.





⌘ The 'Monopoly'-map was the proposal for the distribution and organisation of initiatives on the sugar factory site suggested by the new management team from Ploeg id3 in spring 2015 (Source: Ploeg id3)

^ A later distribution map shows how the different plots are assigned to the interested parties. Rebel Rebel Hostel is number 7 (Source: Ploeg id3)

## Built stories and unbuilt stories

### *Pallet city and an 'industrial cathedral'*

An ultimate recurring prop on the sugar terrain is the pallet and once a year pallets turn to gold on the former sugar factory. In August it is time for Timmerdorp. Timmerdorp is a four day long adventure playground for kids in the age from 7 to 12 years. For a couple of days the front part of the site is transformed into a big adventure and construction playground bustling with hammering kids (Timmerdorp means 'hammer village'); an event that has been taking place in 2014 and 2015 and is also repeated in 2016. Each year another story 'is built'. In 2015 the task was to reconstruct a city on the site after an explosion that had blown up the whole factory.

Building a new settlement, though only of pallets is also part of the site transformation. Though, only for four days a year, the Timmerdorp event is one of the largest physical imprints and settlements on the site with its impressive system of houses, streets and facilities. The new city features multi-storey buildings, waste and recycle systems, small forests, gardens, a stage, a canteen, alleys, rooftop hangouts, flags, sports fields, swimming pools, supply infrastructure, a planning and building permission office, recycle stations and much more.

Even as a playful 'as if', the reconstruction of the sugar city made by the children is simultaneously building it: Events such as the children construction camp attract a large group of people to the site and create new narratives by re-enacting stories related to the specific site. As a *built story* the playful reconstruction of the factory village is inscribed in the remaking and rethinking of the site. Similar to the map as an 'event' described in the Køge case, where visitors were invited to draw the Southern Harbour on the harbour square, the site's story becomes part of an event-based storytelling through the construction of the pallet village. *Built stories* are performances that exemplifies yet another version of building the site 'by event' during its transformation. They are taking place *on site* but they are also *about* the site and they *make* the site. Hence, similar to other *field situations* sketched out in this chapter, the reconstructed factory village is building narratives in a way that both holds representative and performative aspects.

While *pioneering props*, pallet cities and numerous activities, events and new users have entered the site, big plans for iconic projects are made as well. Though the temporary experimental phase is not steered towards an already existing master plan, as it is in the case of Køge, the municipality of Groningen is concomitantly developing different options and master plans for the former sugar production site, both within the municipality and by consultants. In particular to be able to prepare the needed infrastructure for redevelopment, it is considered important to have a guiding plan. Furthermore, rather spectacular grand projects are proposed. These projects can be considered counter projects to the iteratively developed and installed elements on the large site in its testing mode. As yet *unbuilt stories* these spectacular projects are the counterpole to the temporary phase and as such unbidden guests in this discussion of temporary use. Nevertheless such iconic 'symbolic markers' (Dembski 2012) are of relevance when discussing the ongoing meaning-making and storytelling. While no masterplan is decided on, these landmark projects express other future motives that have a strong visual and symbolic power. *Unbuilt stories* are 'foreign' in relation to temporary development



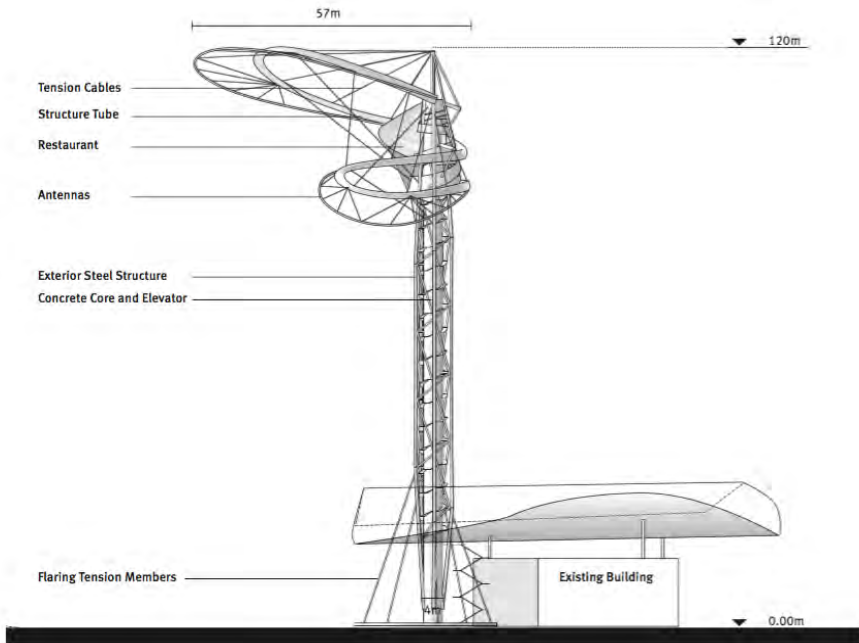
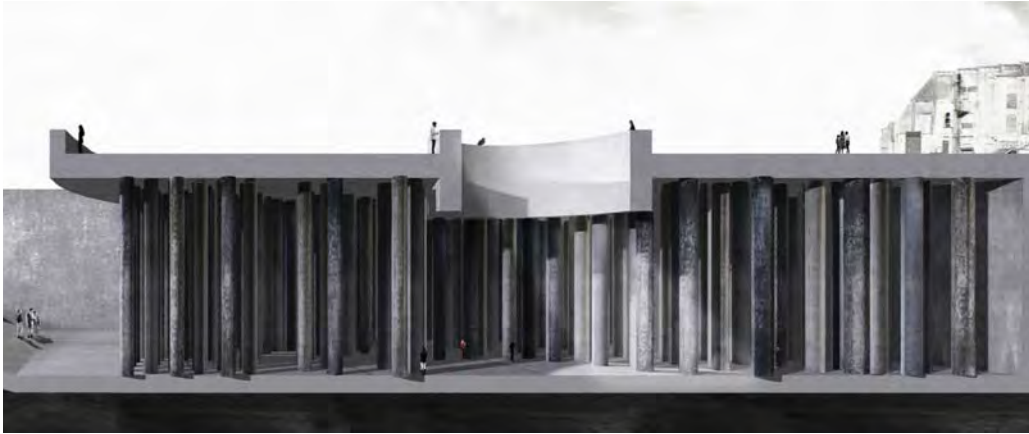
⌘ 13.08.2015\_The entrance to the management office on site: The 'Bauhütte' on the sugar site

^ 13.08.2015\_Another kind 'Bauhütte'.The 'Bouwvergunning' is the building & planning permission office for Timmerdorp



^> 13.08.2015\_Construction playground 'Timmerdorp'





⤴ After rediscovering an underworld of columns from the former silos, the architectural office RAAAF proposed a 'silo cathedral'  
⤴ The Austrian architectural office Coop Himmelblau's design for a gigantic lookout tower on the sugar terrain

steps, but they figure as images of future ambitions. Ambitions that however have a quite different scale, expression and function than the temporary parcelling and appropriation of the landscape.

### **Summing up: Between Sign and Action**

The discussion in this chapter has challenged what lies between 'sign and action'. I have explored the temporary sites as part of an ongoing process of meaning-making and narrative construction in and partly beyond the spatial context. The discourses and storytelling explored show how space and communication are highly entangled in these endeavours. It demonstrates the significant role of reasoning and symbolic acts embedded in the authorised temporary urban spaces. The discussion also highlights, how representational means can have particular hybrid forms in the creation and enacting of narratives.

In *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) Michel de Certeau presents two particular viewpoints of the city, the conceptual city seen from above, as an abstract and distant birds-eye perspective and in contrast, the experienced and practiced city on the ground, continuously made by its inhabitants. These oppositional perspectives, he terms the abstract and scientific 'map' and the practiced and ordinary 'itinerary'. He further describes the map as a 'plane projection totalizing observations' and the itinerary as a 'discursive series of operations' (de Certeau 1988(1984): 116-119). The map refers to a visual focused totalizing order and the itinerary relates to a continuously practiced spatial conception -they span out a tension between 'seeing' and 'going' (Ibid.: 119). These two logics had a close link in for instance medieval maps, where drawn maps were combined with logbooks, narratives and itineraries and where 'prescribing actions'; but this relation has been lost in modern times, de Certeau argues (Ibid.: 120).

Where de Certeau is differing between the itinerary and the map, one might say that they enter another kind of relationship in the context of contemporary urban and cultural planning, where navigating between concrete physical changes and the construction of stories through practice is prevalent - from a strategic perspective, but also due to rising efforts to 'plan on the way'. The ascription of the map to the representational and professional and the narrative operation to the ordinary and un-planned practice could be rethought in a contemporary planning perspective, where affective and experiential and performative aspects play an important role in planning processes and both 'live' in maps and in 'constructed' and improvised itineraries.

4 /

**BETWEEN  
JOURNEY  
AND  
DESTINATION**





## THE JOURNEY

This journey through authorised temporary urban spaces revealed a rich range of spatial uses. After a general framing, in chapter one, of the phenomena and the background and a presentation of my mixed methodological ‘tool belt’, the stopovers in the next two chapters included kitchens in a harbour, a public beer garden, a ‘cloud factory’ and a green container. What insights did these locations deliver? Chapter two, ‘Between Public and Private’, showed that changes towards new collective uses of areas on a temporary basis and officially initiated can result in entangled private and public spatial practices. This entanglement is due to the complex site conditions of areas in transition, as well as the implementation of new programs and adapted organisational procedures. Chapter three, ‘Between Sign and Action’, investigated the high level of reasoning, meaning-making, and symbolic and communicative elements that occur in temporary initiatives enrolled in planning endeavours. These discursive aspects are related to the actual making of spaces. It demonstrated that the temporary spaces are more than testing of spatial design and programmatic efficacy; they communicate shifts, processes and meanings. Both chapters two and three draw connections back to aspects presented in my description of the meta-frame, ‘between vision and everyday’, where I stated that the phenomenon of temporary use in planning needs to be gauged on the relationship between expectations and motives and the spatial implementations. The background themes and paradigms presented in the first chapter are fleshed out in the chapters that examine relationships between ‘public and private’ and ‘sign and action’: the ambiguous use of the term *temporary use* in a planning context becomes more nuanced; the process of transformation and reprogramming takes on greater clarity, and the ‘culture of making’ is exemplified as a specific tendency in urban planning. The explorative analysis of the three sites supported my assumption that the initiation of temporary urban spaces in urban planning contribute to a rich and diverse range of spatial practices. The analysis demonstrated that the richness and the diversity must also be critically examined, since the spaces and practices are not always what they appear to be; spaces are made and planned in ways that cannot solely be determined based on their appearance or descriptions. Consequently, the study confirmed that understandings of what authorised temporary urban spaces are, can contribute with and require, are not only challenged in daily practical doings, in practice—they also *need to be* challenged and scrutinized as intentional planning strategies. I have tested this need through a disclosure of links and missing links in the *permitted exceptions*.

In this conclusion, a summary of the concepts developed throughout the case studies serves as a platform for a final discussion. This summary will elucidate not only aspects of the specific case from which the concepts are derived, but for some of them, potentially also the phenomenon of authorised temporary use in general—and possibly even planning and design on a broader level. First I will reiterate the concepts that emerged through the case analysis. I will then briefly revisit the three cases and draw connections between the concepts defined in the two chapters and see if they inform a diagnosis and can pinpoint overall traces in the three sites and the role of the authorised temporary use in their development. I will examine what the spatial elements and practices identified reveal about the *permitted exceptions* discussed in this thesis. Since the *permitted exceptions* are framed as

< 30.09.2014\_ Entrance from the back. The entrance of the construction playground ‘Timmerdorp’. A ‘leftover’ from the event.

exceptional and alternative planning approaches that have the potential to change common routines and enrich future plans, one may ask if they result in different ways of doing things to achieve that: *What—if any—‘cultures of change’ emerges?* And is change possible because these spaces are *permitted exceptions* or do other aspects factor in? How do the concepts make critical aspects and potential focus areas visible? And finally, what does all this imply for planning?

## THE CONCEPTS

### Between Vision and Everyday

In the discussion about vision and the everyday, specific core terms arose that established a foundation for thinking about the case studies in other ways.

#### ***Authorised temporary use/space***

Authorised temporary use and authorised temporary urban spaces are initiated by public planning authorities to 1) allow alternative, experimental approaches for collective space making, 2) they claim to connect long-term and short-term perspectives through temporary use.

#### ***Permitted exception***

Authorised temporary uses can be seen as *permitted exceptions*, based on the restricted allowance of non-standard, exceptional activities and procedures for a limited, but often undefined period of time. Further *permitted exceptions* are to be found in practical hands-on execution, as a consequence of the implementations of the overall *permitted exception*. When it meets the existing planning framework or other conventions of relevance, secondary *permitted exceptions* occur that reveal paradoxical situations and conditions, but also potentially new intermediary practices and spaces.

### Between Public and Private

In the discussion about the temporary spaces between public and private, terms arose that bring new awareness to how public and private spheres are entangled in this field.

#### ***Domesticated publicness***

The intentional introduction and staging of domestic everyday doings in a public setting as part of a spatial reprogramming strategy is a form of *domesticated publicness*. The everyday doings serve as urban life promoting attractions and their existence in an unusual spatial context contributes to that attraction. The concept of *domesticated publicness* reveals nuanced relations of sociability and privacy in contrasting spatial settings. (> hammocks, cooking and gardening at The Discovery)

#### ***Individualised collectivity***

The concept of *individualised collectivity* describes a level of user involvement that is not based on a collective organisation, such as an association or club, but is formalised between individual users

and planning authorities. It refers to a flexible, non-committing involvement. A user group created through individualised collectivity is based on a programmatic choice in the planning process and does not emerge from any existing bottom-up initiative. The consequence of an organisation based on individualised collectivity is that the collective influence as a group can be weak and that future perspectives are determined solely by the urban redevelopment process. (> The singular contractual agreement and organisation of the Harbour Gardens)

### ***Nested ownership***

With *nested ownership*, spaces are used individually and publicly in particular entangled ways. The ownership can be nested scale-wise and may concern certain spatial elements, or it can refer to specific activities, the right to perform them and the right to the outcomes of these activities (e.g. harvest and edible products). A *nested ownership* creates a mini-privateness in a publicly accessible setting. (> The individual gardens in the commons gardens)

### ***Super-public facility***

In a *super-public* facility, a spatial element strategically and explicitly invites full public use and is intentionally differentiated from similar looking facilities and elements in the same space. The use of this type of facility is clearly communicated and emphasised as for everyone. Such a facility can work as a territorial pacifying element to attract use by the wider public and distract attention from adjacent elements 'belonging' to specific user groups. The term *super-public facility* clarifies detailed levels of ownership and use-rights in line with potential *nested ownerships*. (> The common community gardens at The Discovery)

### ***Inverted POPS on demand***

An *inverted POPS on demand* is a time-based semi-public space. It is a publicly owned private space (POPS) that offers a pocket of temporal privacy, bookable by individuals and user groups. The unit of private space is provided to the public on demand and the temporal level of private ownership counts for a specific scheduled timeframe. As a bookable 'designed activity pocket' for private occupancy, the *inverted POPS on demand* combines a spatial setting with a (technological) booking system. The *inverted POPS on demand* formalises that space by enabling its preparation and use for a specific event while also creating a privatisation of a public accessible area. (> Bookable kitchen at The Discovery)

### ***Virtually private/Public real estate***

The state of a site being *virtually private* refers to a political and economic framework that puts a publicly owned property in a grey zone where public ownership and its market value fluctuates while it is undergoing change of use and is temporarily vacant. The condition of *virtually private* has implications for the use of a site during its changing status. It is publicly owned but its value is simultaneously determined by the real estate market, which affects any possible use of a temporary nature. (> Smedestræde 2)

### ***Ostensive informality and DIY bureaucracy***

If the expectations of (planning) authorities about engagement by local volunteer citizens in certain space production activities, such as DIY facilities and maintenance of green space are not met, then a situation of *ostensive informality*, or *ostensive voluntariness*, occurs. The facilities appear as being sustained through voluntary action, while they are not in practice. Tasks and actions that the public authorities expect to be done by 'the public' on a voluntary, informal and independent basis are not fulfilled in the way the respective space and program demand. The *ostensive informality* can result in an authorised informality as *DIY bureaucracy*. The authorities in charge adapt their performative routines accordingly and perform the activities targeted to volunteers and maintenance tasks themselves. *DIY bureaucrats*, as official responsible representatives from the authorities, thus manage the informal do-it-yourself enterprises, by doing-it-themselves and through the performance of various space-sustaining micro-tasks. (> The use and maintenance of the garden boxes and swap facilities on Smedestræde 2)

### ***Home-made public space/on-site host***

A *home-made public space* is created by an *on-site host* that uses domestication as an invitation to make a certain space publicly used and locally recognised. The host uses home-making, domestic tactics to create an intimate setting that attracts potential guests and users. A *home-made public space* exemplifies a responsive attitude to the furnishing and appropriation of the space, adapting to actualised conditions in opportunistic ways. A host who is present on a site undergoing change and with an uncertain character and perspective becomes a go-to person. 'Hosting as a driver' can thus be identified as a specific strategy of facilitating space undergoing change. (> TH. Bar on Smedestræde 2)

### ***Key management***

*Key management* is a strategy of managing step-by-step access to a space undergoing transformation. *Key management* involves distributing the right to specific persons and groups to enter an area or space through the management of keys and through the adaption and change of physical access systems and barriers. *Key management* can intentionally sustain a restricted access, restricted publicness, with the aim to create a semi-closed and incubative environment for initiatives invested in the location. Through *key management*, access to space, in particular areas undergoing transformation, can be managed in ways that do not necessarily require the removal of physical barriers; rather, these physical barriers are re-used in new ways as part of a customized access system in a transitional phase. (> Access to the sugar factory site)

### ***Outsourced pioneering***

In *outsourced pioneering*, public authorities distribute specific tasks of a publicly owned site's transformation and facilitation to private persons and organisations. The distribution of tasks can be based on the need for specific practical site-related solutions, best managed by certain persons or organisations, such as surveillance, site preparation, event-making, etc. *Outsourced pioneering* can additionally

be motivated through a need for an intermediary position that can filter and manage incoming ideas for a site in more dynamic ways and evaluate them based on other criteria, than if they go directly through the political and bureaucratic system of the authorities. (> Outsourced pioneering, the invisible residents, the concierge, the key managers at the sugar factory)

## Between Sign and Action

In examining how sites evolve between signs and actions, terms arose that capture the ambiguity of meaning-making in authorised temporary spaces.

### ***Urban seeing and doing instructions***

*Urban seeing and doing instructions* are on-site media that co-shape a spatial setting by highlighting specific ways of understanding the space and by encouraging the use of facilities and spaces. The instructions work as strategic activation features. While ‘doing instructions’ encourage specific action, the intent of ‘seeing instructions’ is to generate stories through the visual imagination and through the strategic construction of *creative geography*. They connect and convey understandings about the past, present and future of the given location, creating *real illusions*.

(> Urban seeing and doing instructions along the Thread)

### ***Performing maps and plans***

*Performing maps and plans* are another version of on-site media. These plans and maps are on-site projections that have specific performative or performing properties. The maps and plans are communication tools that encourage viewers to ‘follow’ and perform outlined routes and to discover the spaces displayed through the on-site media. But they can also be performances in themselves that narrate a coming development by pre-performing future plans on site. The performing maps and plans challenge the notion of representation by being placed within the spaces they describe. The maps and plans can be portable guides or traditional two-dimensional illustrations placed on location, or they can be integrated into surfaces as part of the physical design of spaces. (> Performing maps and plans along The Thread)

### ***Plurivalent staging artefacts***

Simple objects and installations can turn into *plurivalent staging artefacts* if they are strategically or tactically appropriated and ‘played’ to promote certain positions and intentions. A *plurivalent staging artefact* frames symbolic performances and functions as a spatial trigger that releases agendas within a planning controversy and debate. Through demonstrative appropriation, such an artefact attains complex and multiple meanings that transcend its simple appearance and original programmatic function. ‘Staging’ is the active performative property of such artefacts; it also frames the specific condition of being temporary. A short-lived or uncertain state (and potential unclear ownership and role) of a spatial element can fuel its role as a *plurivalent staging artefact*. (> The Valby Pavilion and In Valby I dream about...wall)

**Landscape pioneering props**

These props reactivate a landscape undergoing transformation in both practical and symbolic manners. They may solve a practical pioneering issue (infrastructure, event facilities, water, electricity, etc.), but they are equally important in terms of signalling that something is happening. The establishment of a pioneering prop, considered as a part of a development process, is celebrated as a milestone, regardless of its physical size and impact. Landscape pioneering props are individually placed elements or structures. After being installed, *pioneering props* can be used and taken over by users other than the initiators; they belong to the one who appropriates and activates them. The placement of a *pioneering prop* is often an act of situating an 'idea on location' through a spatial 'stamp' and blocking of a territory for further appropriation. If an idea is not doable, something else most probably will be, and thus takes over the position. They are thus often tentative pre-steps, trailblazers, of more complex and extensive endeavours that need more preparation.

(> Containers, settlement sculptures and event furnitures on the sugar factory)

**Built stories**

*Built stories* describe performances as part of a transformation process that re-enact and celebrate events from a site's past and/or for its future. *Built stories* are playfully performed narratives; however, they are not only symbolic re-enactments but are themselves part of the actual site development by attracting participants and visitors and creating a flow of activity. *Built stories* are part of making a site public by events and they are facilitated by installations (such as *pioneering props*) that are built for events. Events such as *built stories* can result in 'performance leftovers', vestiges that stay on location after the performance has ended and become part of the prop repertoire with potential of being re-enacted. (>Timmerdorp construction Playground on the sugar factory)

**Unbuilt stories**

*Unbuilt stories* are not there yet. They are a permitted exception in this conceptual extraction and discussion of transformation through temporary spaces and practices. *Unbuilt stories* are not yet realised 'grand projects' that shadow the temporary development. They play an important role: a *bridge* is created between the ongoing temporary use and the future 'destinations', or the *unbuilt stories*. *Unbuilt stories* are highly iconic singular project proposals that work as virtual counter poles to a step-by-step temporary appropriation. (> The silo cathedral and lookout tower proposed for the sugar factory site)

## THE THREE CASES

### Three cases of permitted exceptions

The study of the use and management of the temporary urban spaces in the Southern Harbour of Køge showed that a series of adaptations and special facilities bridge the desire of the planning partnership to both attract the wider public and to facilitate specific user groups during the temporary phase of transformation. The specific designation of areas for that purpose is exemplified by the *nested*

*ownership* of individual gardeners, the common community gardens as a *super-public facility* and the bookable kitchen as an *inverted POPS on demand*. The temporary space is not just one big space for everybody; it contains several levels of ownership and several possibilities for appropriation. A high degree of complexity can occur when temporary spaces are intended to be engaging and open for all—a situation also detectable in the opening process of the sugar factory in Groningen. A public authority typically secures public facilities, however offering frames for more targeted user groups may demand other types of setups. Transformation areas can challenge such a double intention embedded in authorised temporary use. The organisation of the garden initiative in the Southern Harbour through *individual collectivity* differs from those forms of organisation originating in user-driven associations; the Southern Harbour example suggests a traceable organisation type in authorised temporary urban spaces.

If we identify particular aspects of temporary sites, such as *urban seeing and doing instructions and performing maps and plans*, we can scrutinize how links between past, present and future ideas of the harbour site are envisioned and constructed. These *creative geographies* contain motives that are released on a continuous basis—in space. In the Southern Harbour, the temporary spaces are iteratively changed and re-designed to fit new ideas and possible uses. The on-site media support these uses, however, also reveal potential difficulties in the upcoming merging of the temporary ‘Life Before the City’ and new district as ‘The City for Life’, as it is presented in the planning material. So far, these phases exchange images of each other, images that are quite opposite. While the late phase of Phase Zero demonstrates step-by-step spatial adaptations and uses, it equally points at possible critical ‘jumps’ in terms of how the temporary spaces will be thought into the next planning step. One may question if they will mainly result in programmatic continuation. But Phase Zero is not only program and networks; it is also *space*. Spatial ‘bypassing’ could thus occur—a return to conventional procedures and ways of building the ‘final’ city that may have difficulty re-actualising and integrating the ‘exception’ and all that it offers. The *outsourced pioneering* derived from the Groningen case can also be deployed to pinpoint how the *permitted exception* is launched in Køge. The municipality specifically chose to develop the area, not by themselves, but through a partnership model. That model makes it possible for the municipality to act differently—as a private developer and as a facilitator of the area.

The development of Smedestræde 2 is highly affected by the site’s juridical state of being temporarily on hold and *virtually private* within the municipal system. Hence, the use of the site is conditioned by an insecure time horizon. The temporary activation in that period is dominated by what may be described as a typical project-culture, where projects are launched as small initiatives, named as ‘activities’ or ‘projects’. Due to the nature of the programmatic content, the initiatives result in physical settings, and under the heading of temporary use, they become ‘prolonged activities’ requiring ongoing work for the *DIY bureaucrats* and *on-site host*. The manifold initiatives on Smedestræde 2 demonstrate a project-based model where the temporary space consists of diverse installations made possible on special allocated funds and grants. The municipal sub unit, the local committee, has a certain budget for ‘activities’, but on Smedestræde 2 the activities result in physical spaces. What happens with spaces that grow out of such singular activities is not clarified. In the municipal terminology and approval



system, they are just events or projects<sup>01</sup>—not spaces or facilities. In addition to being symbolically enrolled in the agenda about a potential cultural facility, as *plurivalent staging artefacts*, the temporary installations are inscribed in that logic of making space through special allocation funds and budget. What I term project-based making or planning space ‘by grant’ can occur in municipal sub-units where the municipal council allocates a micro-budget that allows ‘free’ or ad hoc decisions, on local basis. It gives sub units within the public authorities a certain freedom for action. While such an allocated fund may have guidelines, these may be quite open, and in this case, creating room for temporary uses as *permitted exceptions*. This ‘practical adhocism’ (Jencks & Silver 2013 (1972): 182) is an opportunistic system that makes it possible to integrate projects that arise; it adds a dynamic frame for action. This system is, however, not prepared for projects and activities that stay or that require more continuous efforts to be synthesized into ongoing development processes. Making space ‘by grant’ merges bureaucracy and adhocism in this case and makes temporary activities possible. While launching initiatives this way is not unusual, the physical outcome, partly due to the ‘making activities’, creates challenges.

The *on-site host* becomes an important figure, since consistent facilitation becomes crucial to make the ‘shopped together’ setting work. Furthermore, the temporary use of Smedestræde 2 is highly dominated by an *unbuilt story*, to borrow a concept from the Groningen case study. The unbuilt story is the planned but in the end not realised cultural facility. While the project proposal may not be an architectural icon, the idea is a dominant vision throughout the process.

The *outsourced pioneering* described in the case of the sugar factory in Groningen is a classic strategy in authorised temporary use cases. It can result in different types of practical tasks, but it also means that the authorities employ an intermediary that creates distance from themselves, thereby allowing others to act out things they cannot do in order to perform *permitted exceptions*. Not all of these outsourcing tasks are explicitly formulated strategies, though; the allowance of *invisible residents*, for example, is a silent strategy that is not written into the publicly accessible planning documents, but nevertheless residential use on the site constitute the longest use of the site since its municipal take-over. The *outsourced pioneering* creates the possibility for acting differently and can loosen the formal constraints and requirements within the municipality. At the sugar factory, the task of *key management* also becomes one of the outsourced functions, a function that is important due to the site’s former closed condition and the present shift of use. Managing the keys to a site, whatever they may be, is part of the job of unravelling the logics of a site or space, such as this post-industrial complex. Finding the keys and redistributing them and adapting access points are ways to both control and allow things to happen. It is a function that can be considered an important part of managing spatial transformation.

The monopoly map, guiding the parcelling of the area into plots for different businesses and organisations to appropriate, forms the basis for the coming year’s temporary use. This approach is already to be found in the initial ‘placement of ideas’ on the terrain through the *pioneering props*, such as the containers and other new structures on site. The props also support the arrangement of events, and

<sup>01</sup> The Valby Pavilion and blackboard were granted financial support as a ‘project’ and ‘event’ which had to follow a ‘reasonable time perspective’, according to the approval letter from the municipality (approval letter, March 14, 2013, Copenhagen Municipality).

they are made, in part, to explicitly enable specific events. The numerous events thereby also 'build' the site, since they finance and create the argument for the implementation of certain facilities (staircase, bridge, etc.). The 'planning by event' can here be identified as a model for the ongoing addition of elements to the site. The *pioneering props* also reveal that they are to some extent pre-steps, a specific type of pre-temporary temporary installations placed based on an idea, but with the potential for a more substantial follow-up model to come, such as the description of the container hotel/hostel mock-up and the temporary scaffolding bridge, 'Pre-prelude' demonstrated. The initial transformation is thus to a large degree guided by the placement of ideas and not necessarily on the actual functionality or spatial coherence of these different proposals from the beginning. These ideas have to prove their worth on location. Their implementation is based on the initiative of various ideas and needs, added to the site over time. The implementations continue the site's rough structure, or contrast with it; it is a tolerant, robust but also challenging environment to pioneer.

In the case of the sugar factory, the site development is only partly outsourced and guided by the temporary testing period and the pragmatically parcelled game board approach. Large projects are made concomitantly: This is a site that invites the imagining of big projects. While the site is temporarily appropriated and tested, a process that is intended to last for around 15 years, *unbuilt stories* are waiting on the horizon—iconic architectural landmarks.

## NEW STOPOVERS

I began this study by questioning what happens when temporary use is equated with 'doing things differently'—experimenting, challenging or adapting formal planning approaches. To some extent, the 'cultures', the ways of operating, identified above, indicate changes in practice or creative interpretations of existing procedures. The research also shows that these routines of change are in several ways still closely related to conventional ways of planning and making space; if not during the 'exception', then possibly when they return to being 'business as usual'. Authorised temporary use as *permitted exceptions* are enabled through different existing 'pockets', loopholes that may be specifically created: financially, spatially, and organisationally. A kind of municipal self-hacking sometimes occurs. However, these procedures do not necessarily result in situations that authorities (can) simply let go to evolve on their own, but rather in other kinds of organisations or logics. Planning for spontaneity might be difficult, but ad hoc decisions and grand plans, micromanagement and macro visions seem to go hand in hand, sometimes working together, sometimes coming into conflict.

While some of the traces identified in this thesis might be grounded in the state of the 'authorised' or even the temporary use context, they convey something about how contemporary urban challenges and spaces in transformation and transitions between different working modes must be dealt with today. The findings can thus inform planning and design, space making, beyond the topic of temporary use.

The study also points at a need to reframe ways to approach the question of means and an 'end result'—the journey and the destination in planning processes. By following the 'vision and the everyday', I have tried to challenge this division, though sometimes unconsciously drawn into it again

myself. Addressing their interrelations instead of their divisions along the way can reveal interesting stopovers.

The main question of this thesis refers to *collective* city making, something I have interpreted quite inclusively. And the collective part might need to be taken more seriously, not only in the light of the 'traditional' user involvement, as a common and sometimes 'empty' heading for initiating temporary use, but as an even more heterogeneous collective practice of making cities and spaces. As I have demonstrated, many actors orchestrate what is possible (and not) in these projects. Could areas such as law, heritage, design and organisational management inform each other more than they do? With this study I also contribute to the methodological discussion about research of urban phenomenon that behave in unruly and dynamic ways and that belong to several professional areas. This research project reflects the complex nature and different fields of action related to the phenomena of authorised temporary use, but it also points at the multiple roles one can hold as an architect and planner in a research and practice context today, wearing different hats—roles that may not necessarily fit off-the-shelf categories, but can nevertheless bring varied insight into the planning process and space making.

There is still a lot to learn from *permitted exceptions* and their offshoots and how they influence the way we think and create our urban spaces and landscapes. This study is not a call to systematize or make this field conform within planning by pinpointing lacunae or incoherent 'systems'. It is rather an invitation to explore the *field situations* open-mindedly, acknowledging the potential for inspiration around new types of itineraries in planning that embrace the paradox of rationality and irrationality within practice and sites in transition.

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Quotes in Danish, Dutch or German (printed and digital sources, interviews and on-location signs) have been translated into English to the best of my ability.



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Permitted Exceptions. Authorised Temporary Urban Spaces  
between Vision and Everyday

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