

PLAY IT FORWARD!

Interpreting the outcome from a participatory process into a design



Thank you

My tutor Lisa and examiner Björn for great input and encouragement!

The children and teachers at Floda Säteri Montessori preschool for your curiosity and enthusiasm!

Hanna, Stina, Pia, Shir and Johanna at Lerum municipality for your help and for giving me the opportunity to be a part of your project group!

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ABSTRACT

The involvement of the public in spatial planning and architecture can help society build a basis for a culture of participation and care for our common resources. To be able to contribute to this as architects, we need to know how we can communicate our work and incorporate the views of others in our designs. The aim of this master's thesis is to increase knowledge about the steps between dialogue and implementation in an architectural project. The focus lies on the interpretation of user input into an architectural program, and on the early stages of the design process. How can architects interpret the outcome from a participatory process into a program? How does working with the input of users affect the architect's design process?

The case study is the development of a playground in Lerum municipality. Through architectural educational workshops with children, their views and ideas for the future park are explored. After interpreting and summarizing the outcome of the workshops, I start making a design proposal for the park based on the children's ideas, the municipal demands and the site conditions. The work is discussed in relation to a theoretical framework concerning the participation of children and how the participation of users can affect the design process.

The thesis results in a description of the workshops and a program based on them, as well as a description of the design work and a conceptual design proposal for the park. The concluding discussion treats the difficulties and advantages of working with user participation, how architects can incorporate users' input in designs, and the different roles the architect takes on when working in a participatory process.

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Appendix 1:

Spindelskogen växer! Workshops med barn hösten 2016.

What to find where:

This report contains a description of and a discussion about how participatory processes affect the architect's work and design process. It is based on a case study of a workshop series with children.

In **Background**, important points of departure for the work are clarified, such as purpose and delimitations.

Framework provides a theoretical background to the work. Issues such as participatory processes and architectural education are described.

In **The site**, the site for the case study is introduced. The municipal project where the practical part of the master's thesis was carried out is presented.

Designing the process describes how different factors affected the design of the workshop series. Among these are meetings with architectural educators and the municipal intentions for the project.

Program summary summarizes the input from the workshops, and describes other factors that the design proposal has to take into consideration.

Discussing the interpretation describes how and why the material from the workshops was interpreted.

Designing the proposal presents some examples of how the children's input inspired the design proposal, and how the architect's and the children's perspectives sometimes differ.

Design proposal shows a design of the park based on the children's input and the other factors from the program. The design is conceptual.

Reflections treats the results and the insights gained from the project, as well as some problematic aspects of it.

The final part, **Conclusion**, summarizes the most important results of the project.

Appendix 1, "**Spindelskogen växer - workshops med barn hösten 2016**" contains detailed descriptions of the workshops, their results and how these are interpreted into suggestions for a future playground. It can be read as an inspiration when planning architectural workshops with children.



This report is intended to be read as a two page spread.

INTRODUCTION

Why I chose to work with this subject

Whether it's the public making suggestions for a municipal plan program, or the future residents of a building developing floor plans together with the architects, the view that those affected by a planning or an architectural design project should be involved in the design process is not in the least controversial today. Participatory processes are linked to issues of democracy and sustainable development (see for example UN Habitat, 2006) and the literature on methods for involving different user groups in architectural and planning projects is growing (see for example Ankarberg et al., 2015 and Teimouri et al., 2011). The existing knowledge about why and how to involve the public needs to be deepened and made easily accessible, as suggested by for example Eriksson and Nylander (2013) and de Laval (2015). But we also need to shed some light on the less studied aspects of how involving users affect the design and the creative process of the designer (Eriksson, 2013; Designingwithchildren.net, 2016) In order for us to gain and keep the trust of those involved in our work, we have to be able to explain how their ideas and wishes take physical shape in our final designs.

Throughout my architecture studies, I have been intrigued by questions about for whom the architectural profession designs, and on what we base our concepts of what different groups want. When the time came to choose a subject for the master's thesis, I wanted to explore how architects go from simply collecting users' opinions and ideas, to actually synthesizing and incorporating them in our designs. During an internship in a municipal planning office, I assisted in some workshops in schools and realized how rewarding and challenging working with children can be. Children lack formal representation, and their needs are often overlooked in planning and building projects (see for example Kylin, 2004). Therefore I wanted to build my master's thesis around a case study of a participative process involving children. I'm also interested in public outdoor spaces and how to activate them, so when Lerum municipality offered me to carry out a participative process with children concerning a new playground in one of their parks, I happily accepted.

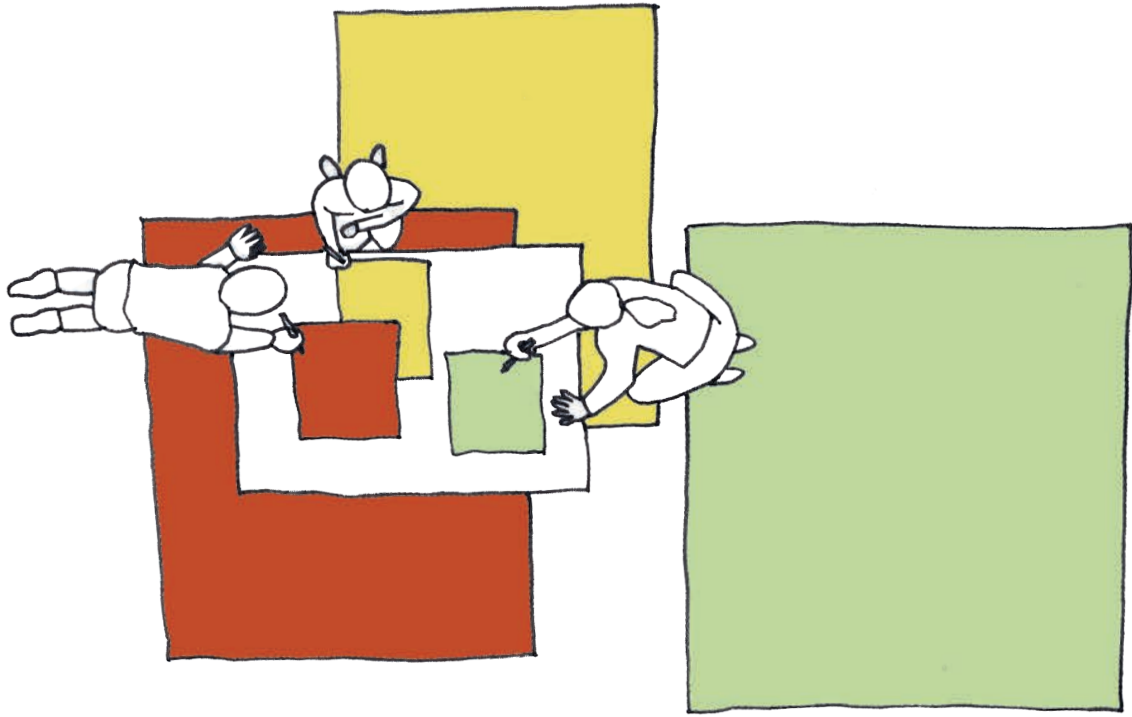


Fig. 1

Fig. 1: How can user input be incorporated in architectural projects and become a part of our physical environment?

BACKGROUND

Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this master's thesis is to investigate the steps between dialogue with users and incorporation of their ideas and views in architectural projects. The focus lies on the interpretation of user input into an architectural program, and on the early stages of the architectural design. It is aimed at architects and planners interested in how participatory processes function and how to communicate their design process with users.

The research questions are:

- How can architects interpret the outcome from a participatory process into a program?
- How does working with the input of users affect the architect's design process?

To be able to explore these questions, I designed and lead a series of architectural workshops. In this process, the guiding question was:

- How can a participatory process be designed for the outcome to guide an architectural design?

Delimitations

A real project

To carry out the dialogue part of the thesis project in cooperation with Lerum municipality, and then handing over the program to White Architects was a great benefit for me. It offered insight in how a project can function in reality. As in all real projects, it also meant certain limitations to what was possible to do. For example, the aim for the workshops, to gain input for the construction of a new playground, was already set, as well as the time frame in which to carry out the project. At the same time, I also had the require-

ments from Chalmers to consider, as can be seen in fig. 3, p. 13. Combining the timeplan of the municipal project with the preschool's schedule and Chalmer's master's thesis process meant that some events took place in an undesired order. For example, the feedback session with the children took place after my final seminar at Chalmers.

A process involving children

In line with my original idea for a thesis, Lerum municipality wanted me to focus on preschool children. Working with children puts specific demands on the process, and the development of a dialogue project with children could in itself be the subject of a master's thesis (see Mahammad, 2013 and Berge & Wannerskog, 2012). Designing the process to fit the children has been an important part of my work, but the goal has not been to study what an ideal participatory process with children looks like. This is why I have chosen to place the workshop descriptions and detailed conclusions drawn from them as an appendix, and bring examples from it into this booklet.

A work in progress

My own design proposal for the playground is not a completely finished design. In the RIBA plan of work (see fig. 11, p. 21) it is closest to the phase of conceptual design. The final step in this thesis project is a meeting with the children where I present my ideas. Their comments on it are included in the section "Design proposal". If my proposal was to be realized, the next step would be to work further with the design, turning it into a developed proposal.

STAKEHOLDERS

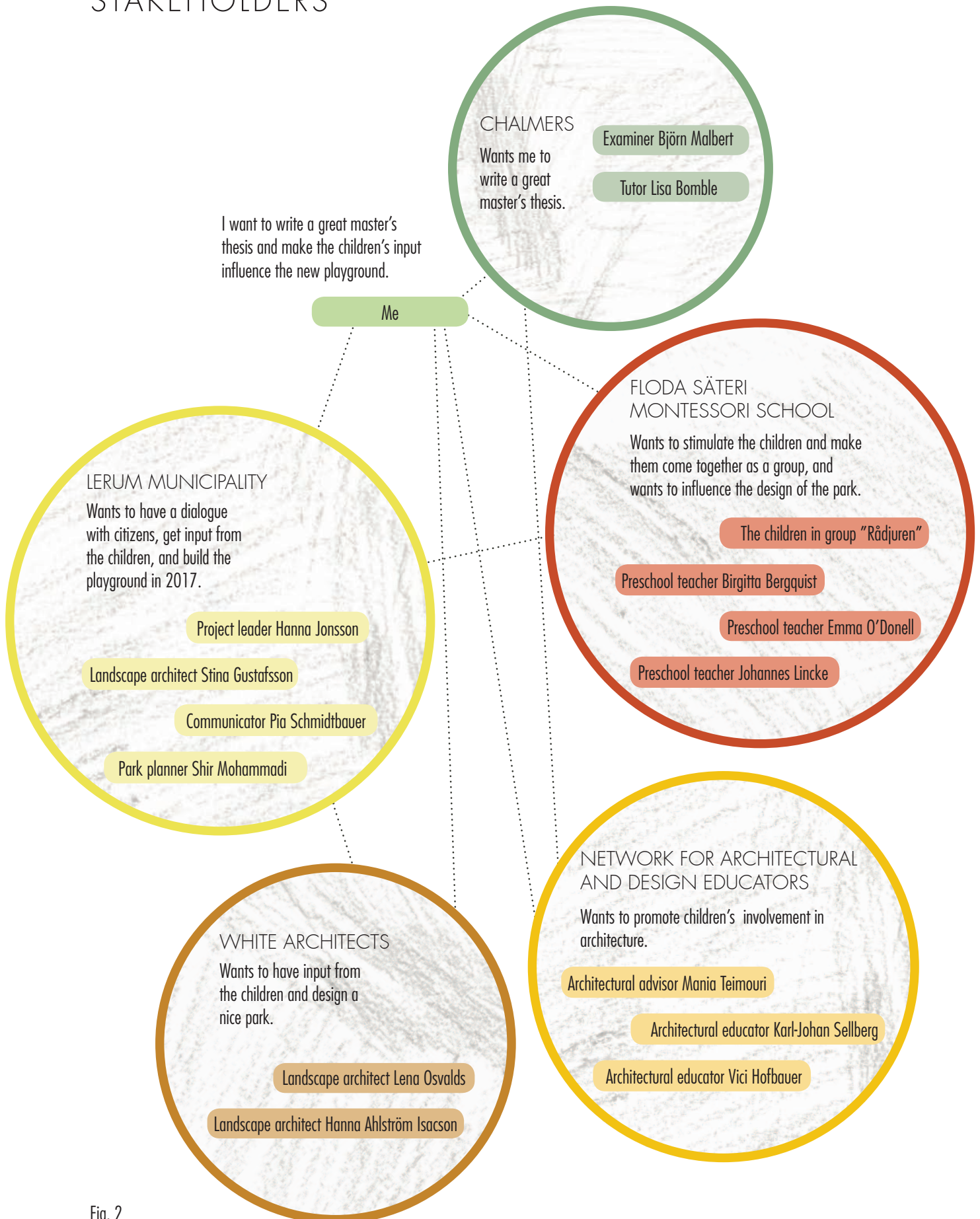


Fig. 2

A park, not a building

This thesis focuses on a participatory process and the design of a playground in a park, and does thus not concern a building project. However, the conclusions drawn can hopefully be useful in other contexts as well.

Definitions

Dialogue

In the context of this thesis, a dialogue can be defined as a mutual exchange of ideas, experiences and opinions between two or more participants (de Laval, 2015). A dialogue presupposes the opportunity to give feedback and develop one's thoughts.

Interpretation

To present something in understandable terms, often conceived in the light of individual belief, judgment, or circumstance (Merriam-Webster, 2016).

Workshop

In this thesis, the term “workshop” shall be interpreted as an educational meeting where all the participants through practical exercises explore and discuss various aspects of their physical surroundings.

Process

A progress of events, a series of activities that lead to a result (Ankarberg et al., 2015).

Design

The transformation of an original idea into information from which an object can be produced (Rosell, 1990).

Methods

Architectural workshops

Architectural workshops provided knowledge about the site through the children's perspective. Through various exercises, the children formulated their views of and proposals for the area.

REBUS

REBUS is an EU-project where a model for involving children in concrete architectural changes at their schools and preschools has been developed. I have taken inspiration from how the REBUS-model is used in Gothenburg city, with a series of six workshops that start with a site-inventory, followed by the children making proposals for change with the support of an architectural educator (de Laval, 2015).

Literature studies

I read reports on the planning of participatory processes and research on participation and design processes. This helped me carry out the workshop series and enabled a discussion about the work of interpretation and design.

Interviews

In order to get information about implementing children's input in architectural proposals, and designing workshops for children, I interviewed two architectural educators and one landscape architect.

Documenting the workshops

To document the workshops I used sound recordings, photography and took notes. This was important when interpreting the workshop results into a program.

Documenting the design process

I kept a project diary, scanned drawings and sketches, and photographed models in order to keep track of my design process.

Site visits

Visiting the site helped me investigate its features, plan the workshops and get a better understanding of the local context.

Sketching

Working with the children's ideas in drawing and model was a way to explore their potential, and of course to try out possible solutions for the design proposal.

TIMELINE

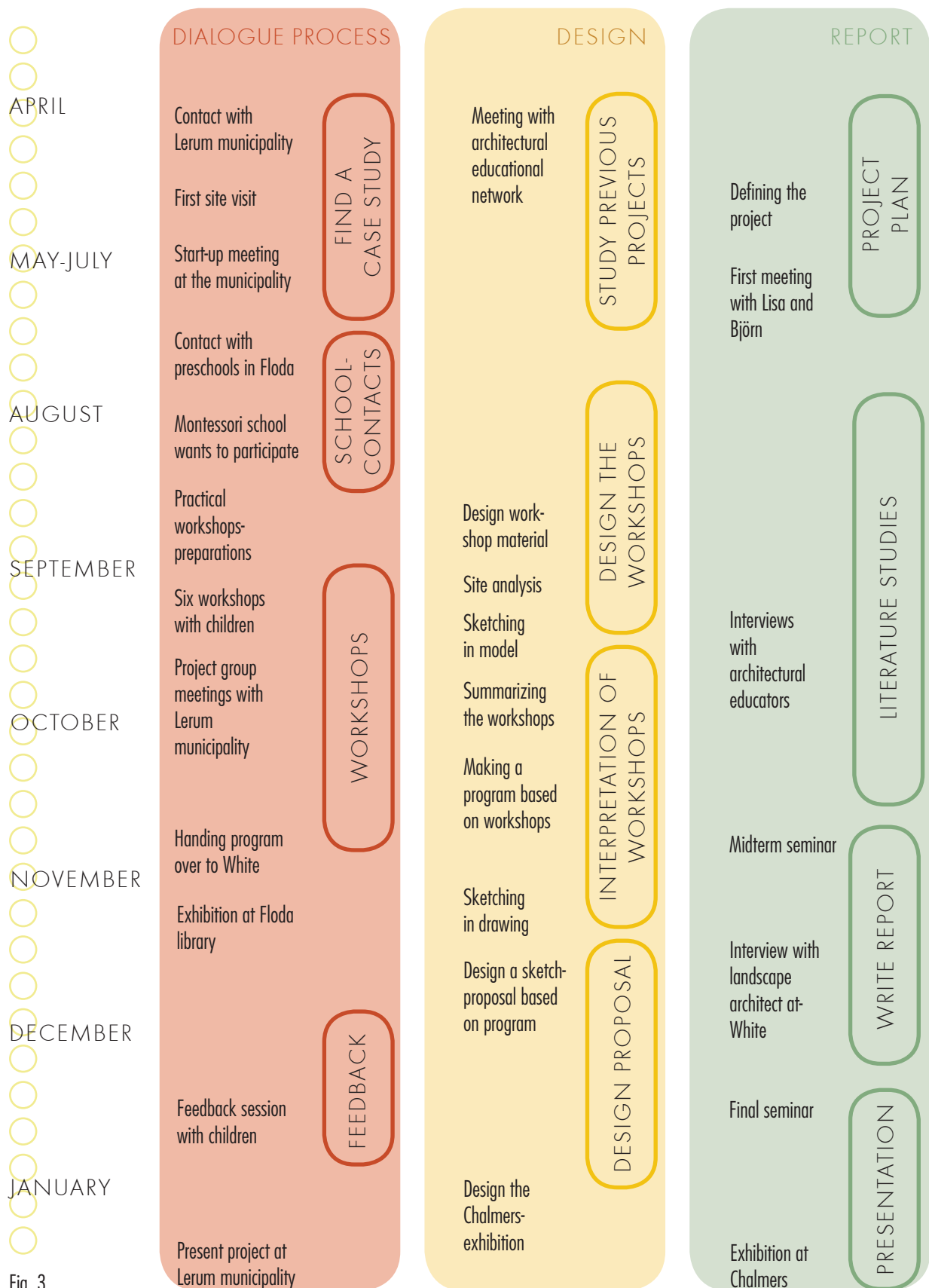


Fig. 3

FRAMEWORK

Participation in planning

User participation in urban design and architecture has gained more attention over the last decades. Today, it is often described as an essential element of these processes, and as a tool to create sustainable and appreciated spaces (Calderon, 2013). Boverket (2016) states that decisions taken without the citizens having had a chance to affect them have trouble gaining wide acceptance. They also argue that the public need to participate in planning in order for the basis for decisions to be complete.

The ideas of participatory planning and urban design stem from the 1960's and 70's. Back then, opinion was raised against planning and design decisions that did not meet the expectations and needs of the users (Calderon, 2013). Participatory processes became a way to bridge the gap between the expert's technical rationality and the user's context-specific knowledge.

Participation can be defined in many ways, and there are several frameworks for analyzing and evaluating projects for citizen participation in planning. One important influence on the discussion is Sherry Arnstein's *A ladder of citizen participation* from 1969. Arnstein's model, in the form of a ladder with eight rungs, is divided into three categories: non-participation, tokenism, and citizen power (see fig. 4). Many new models have since been developed, more or less based on Arnstein's model. Pål Castell (2013) describes Arnstein's model as an ideological tool for analysis, that implies the aim to move as far up the ladder as possible to the final step of "citizen control". This distinguishes it from models such as the one presented by the organization Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting (SKL), (see fig. 5), which are developed as working tools for public officials.

In a current Swedish context, the formal possibilities for citizens to state their opinion and affect the planning of their close environment are given during mandatory participatory meetings in municipal planning (*samråd*) (SFS 2010:900). Johanna Eriksson and Ola Nylander (2016) state a few of the problems posed by limiting public participation in the planning process to the *samråd*: that the group of people participating is usually not representative for the whole population, and that the material the public can react to is not always presented in a way that is easy to understand. They also suggest that people refrain from participating because they don't trust the authorities to have a genuine will to consider their input. Eriksson and Nylander (2016) argue that complementary dialogues between planning authorities and citizens (*medborgardialoger*) that go further than the demands of the Planning and building act (PBL), can create trust between citizens and authorities and increase social, architectural and economic qualities in a project. Swedish authorities concerned with planning, like Boverket and SKL, have developed guides on how to plan a *medborgardialog*, and they are widely promoted as a solution to the abovementioned problems. However, criticism has also been raised. For example, Nazem Tahvilzadeh (2015) points out that *medborgardialoger* risk undermining the principles of representative democracy, and that there often is a lack of transparency regarding if and how the dialogue actually leads to something concrete.

Children's participation

According the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UN General Assembly, 1989), children have a right to state their opinion in matters that concern them. This includes urban planning. By ratifying the convention, Sweden has agreed to

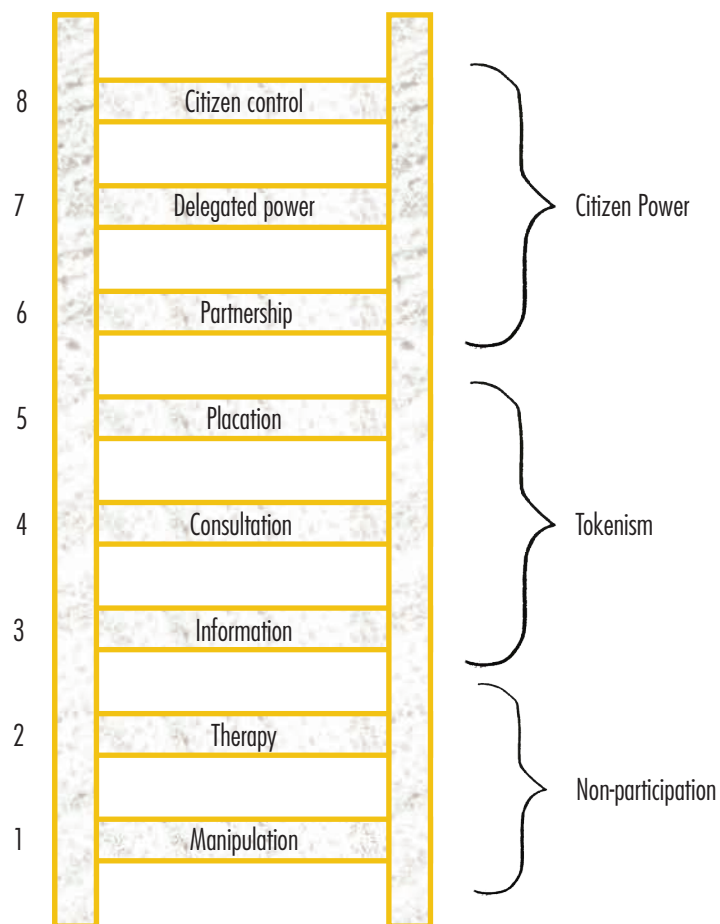


Fig. 4

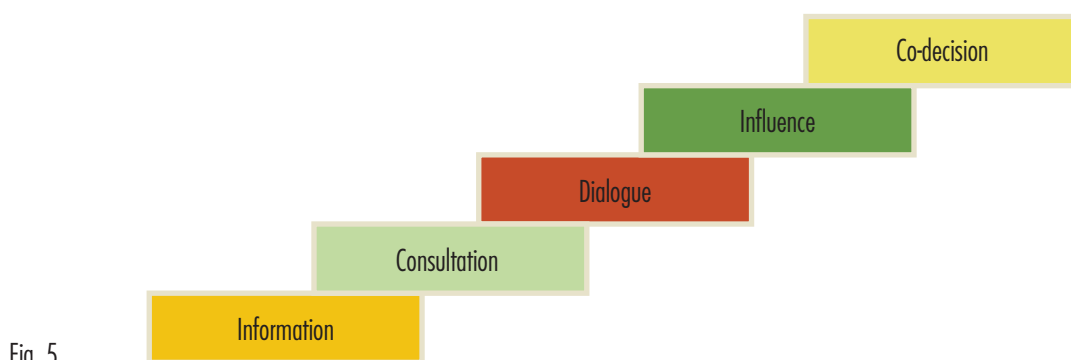


Fig. 5

Fig. 4: Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation. This is an ideological model, where every project should aim to be situated as far up the ladder as possible. The lower steps should definitely be avoided. Modified version of figure in Arnstein, 1969. / Fig. 5, the SKL dialogue stairs, does not distinguish between the steps in this way. The lower steps can also be the most relevant, according to the nature of the project. The dialogue stairs are developed as a working tool for public officials. Modified version of figure in SKL, 2011.

make sure that these rights are attainable for all children in the country. As for all Swedish citizens, the formal opportunity for children to influence the spatial planning and architecture of their community exists within the municipal planning process. However, it is largely up to the municipalities whether they make specific efforts to involve children and teenagers (Tallhage Lönn ed., 2000). PBL states no age limit for participating in the *samråd*, nor does it specifically state the right to participate for people under the age of 18. Recent changes in PBL make it less clear who has to be invited to a *samråd* as a stakeholder, which makes it even more up to the municipalities (Bomble, 2016).

Suzanne de Laval (2015) writes that involving children on their own terms in the planning process is linked to sustainability and democracy. It can create more childfriendly spaces, and give children a sense of community that can help them tackle issues in their future local environment. Children often have a different view on their surroundings than adults (Tallhage Lönn, ed. 2000), and the close environment is important for children's development (de Laval, 2015).

Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation has been further developed by Roger Hart, to fit situations where children are involved. Hart also defined some criteria for genuine participation:

1. The children understand the intentions of the project;
2. They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why;
3. They have a meaningful (rather than 'decorative') role;
4. They volunteer for the project after the project was made clear to them (Hart, 1992:11).

Harry Shier has also adjusted Arnstein's model, into five steps, where step three, "children's views are taken into account", should at least be fulfilled for the project to be deemed acceptable (Shier, 2001. See fig. 6). Except for the Arnstein-based models for participation, de Laval (2015) mentions the on-going research project *Designing with Children*, led by Rosie Parnell at the University of Sheffield, where urban and archi-

tectural design projects with children involved are studied. The children's roles are described according to the categories (*co*)designers, advocates for change, builders, clients, creative inspirers, expert consultants, placemakers or trailblazers.

I will refer to the abovementioned models and theories when planning and evaluating my own process.

Architectural education in Gothenburg

The growing interest in involving citizens and users in the development of the physical environment includes an interest in methods and approaches to involve children and young people. In Sweden, Gothenburg city is an important place for this development. Since 2002, the city employs architectural advisors, who focus their work on children and young people. Their role is to inspire the learning about architecture in schools and preschools, and to give children and young people the opportunity to influence their physical environment (Svennberg & Teimouri, eds., 2010, Mahammad, 2013). The architectural advisors organize a network of architectural educators. Architectural educators can be described as architects with an interest in communicating architecture with children and young people. They use their competence in architecture and urban planning to plan and lead workshops, walks or lectures about architecture, often in a school or preschool context. Sometimes the aim is to inspire the children to learn more about architecture and their physical surroundings, sometimes it is to let them be part of a physical change, such as the development of a new area or a schoolyard renovation. There are several publications describing architectural educational projects, their methods and background (see for example Svennberg & Teimouri, eds., 2010 and Teimouri, Åhlström, Svennberg, Björling and Havström, 2011). Some previous master's theses from Chalmers Architecture also present the architectural educational models used in Gothenburg in depth (Mahammad, 2013 and Berge & Wannerskog, 2012).

SHIER'S PATHWAY TO PARTICIPATION

CORRESPONDS WITH ARNSTEIN/HART LEVEL:

5	Children share power and responsibility in decision-making.	8
4	Children are involved in decision-making processes.	7-6
3	Children's views are taken into account.	5
2	Children are supported in expressing their views.	3-4
1	Children are listened to.	3-4

Fig. 6

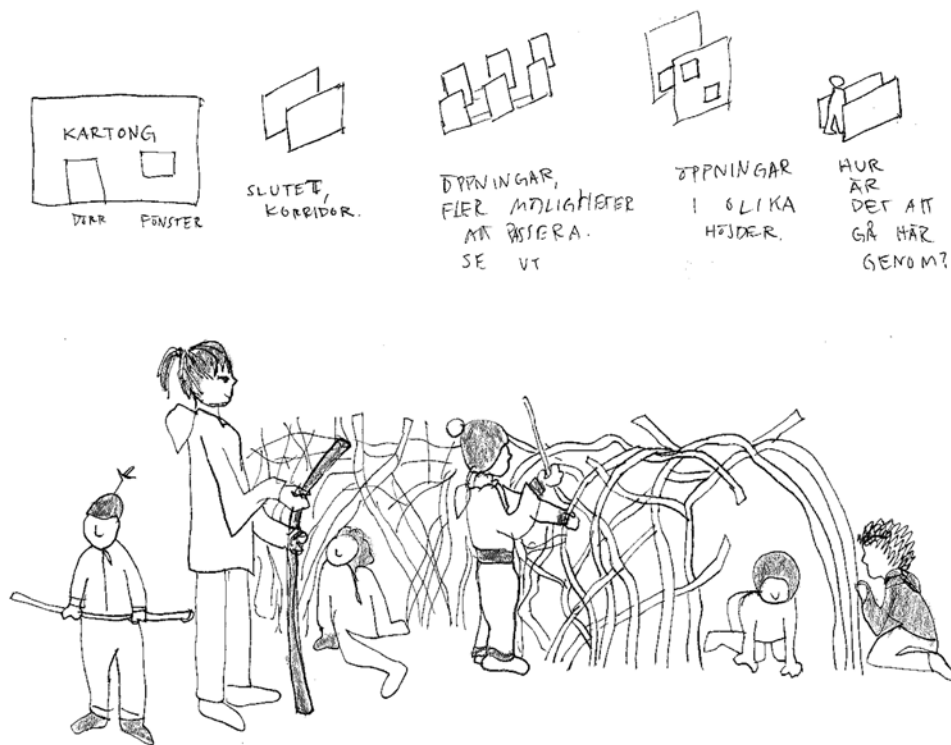


Fig. 7

Fig.6: Shier's model for children's participation compared with Arnstein's and Hart's models for participation. Modified version of figure in de Laval, 2015. / Fig. 7: Architectural education can provide children with knowledge and tools to discuss and influence their physical environment. One way to introduce architectural terms, that will be used in this project, is to build dens and discuss them together with the children.

One of the methods used in Gothenburg city is REBUS. It aims to transform school and preschool yards with children participating throughout the process, from inventory to decisionmaking (Cassel, 2012). The way REBUS is used in Gothenburg city, as a series of six workshops ending with the architectural educator making a program or a design proposal based on the children's inventory and ideas, has inspired this project.

Design process?

In his book *Anteckningar om designprocessen* (Notes on the design process), Gustaf Rosell defines design as the transformation of an original idea into information from which a product can be made (p. 9, 1990). A product can be for example a house, a park, or a new car model. A design problem is characterized by the fact that many factors are unknown, and that there are no given solutions that are the best (Eriksson, 2013). There is no established model for describing the design process, the act of designing something, but most of the various models that do exist include the stages analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Rosell, 1990). These stages rarely appear in a completely linear order; instead the designer goes back and forth between them, iterating the process. Rosell describes the design process as cyclic, leading to a constant questioning of the original problem. Every design process is complex and unique, and a model should be seen as a pedagogical tool, not as a representation of an attainable process. An example of such a model, specifically aimed at creative processes involving children, is presented in the book *Att äga sin process* (Owning your process) (Ankarberg, Berner, Teimouri and Wretlind, 2015). (See fig. 8). It illustrates the design process as having nine stages that you can move back and forth between. Ankarberg et al. recommends keeping a process diary, where ideas, discussions, sketches and models, etc. are documented throughout the project. This makes the design process visible to others, and thus easier to communicate. I will refer to these ideas when describing my own process.

Participatory design

Johanna Eriksson has studied how architects can contribute to a user participatory design, and how the work of the architect is affected by user participation (Eriksson, 2013). She defines participatory design as a design process where participants who are not designers are actively included in design work. Eriksson presents several models of interaction between architects and the users of the environments they design. One of them is a model developed by Granath, Lindahl and Rehal in 1996, describing how the view on participative design has changed over time in a Swedish context. Their model shows three scenarios, and I will refer to the last two when I discuss my own project. In the first scenario (fig. 9), users are seen as an important resource of information that needs to be collected and incorporated into a project. This task is assigned to the architect, who takes on an active role in interviewing user representatives (Eriksson, 2013). The second scenario (fig. 10) shows a design process where all the participants are seen as experts, and hence has an equal role in the discussion. I will return to these models and Eriksson's own work during the description and evaluation of my own process.

The roles of the architect

Involving users in the design process demands that the architect explains and is transparent about how the process works, and can offer tools for handling problems raised during the design process (Eriksson, 2013). This means that the architect has to move between roles, from a more traditional architect role, designing alone or with other professionals, to someone who leads and enables users to participate in the process. This latter role is often referred to as a *facilitator*. Necessary facilitative skills are the ability to create a safe and open-minded environment for work and discussion, the capacity to take initiative, be responsive and inspiring, and also to be able to give constructive criticism (Eriksson, 2013; Mahammad, 2013). Peter Fröst (2004) suggests the term *process architect*, described as someone

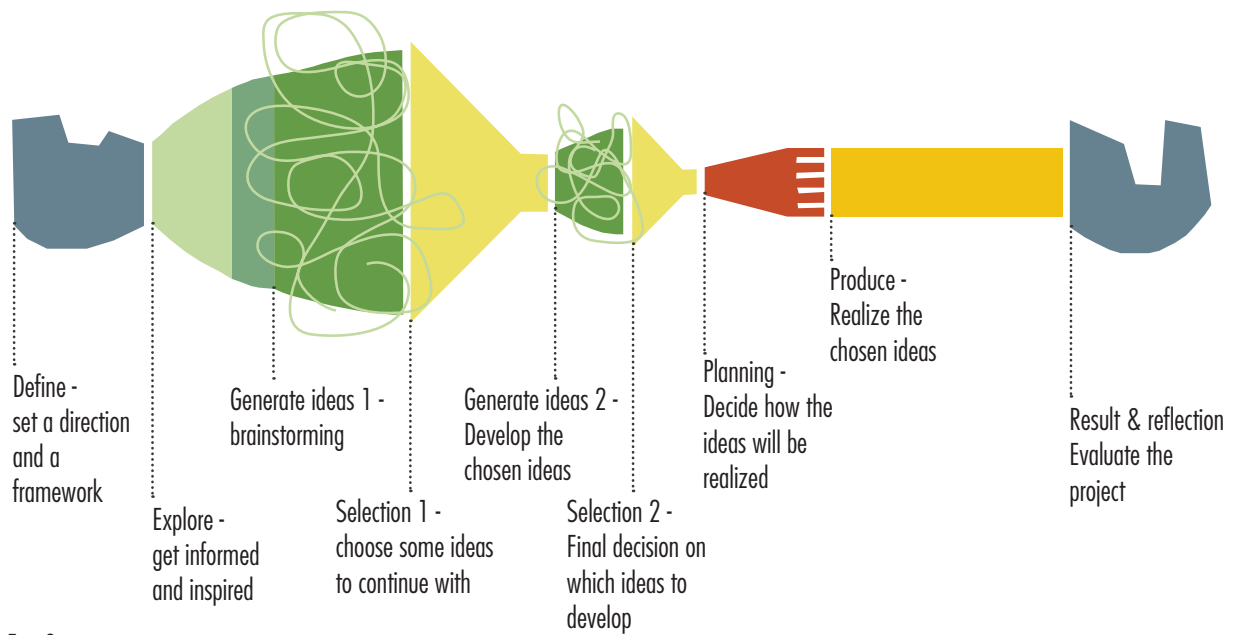


Fig. 8

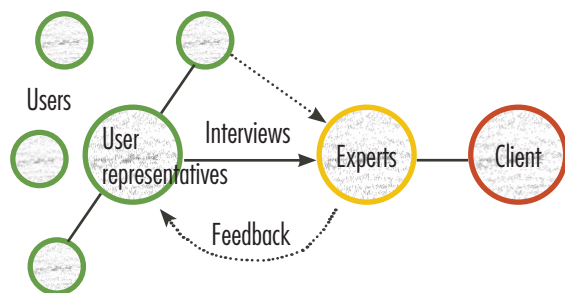


Fig. 9

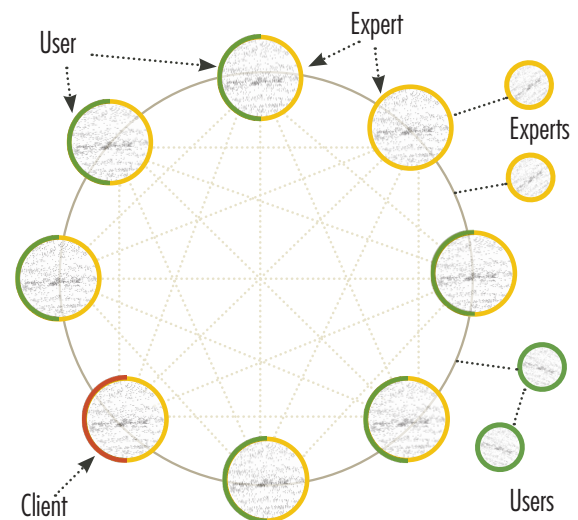


Fig. 10

Fig. 8: An example of a model describing the design process. This one is specifically aimed at creative processes involving children. It illustrates the design process as having nine stages that you can move back and forth between. Modified version of figure in Ankarberg, Berner, Teimouri & Wretling, 2015./ Fig. 9: In this model, communication between users and the architect is carried out primarily in the form of interviews, which the architect then summarizes and/or interprets and communicates to the client. Users are seen as a source of important information, but do not take on an active role in the design. Modified version of figure in Granath, Lindahl & Rehal, 1996. / Fig. 10: This model describes a design process where all the participants are seen as experts, having an equal role in the discussion. Dialogue is the main form of communication here, and different methods are used to bridge the gap between different groups. Modified version of figure in Granath, Lindahl & Rehal, 1996.

who has design experience, skills for managing and supporting the design process, and can work well with active participation in architectural design projects. In relation to public spatial planning, Björn Malbert (1999) advocates the term *process designer*. A process designer's task is to bridge the gap between experts and users and he/she has to be flexible, empathic and have communication skills.

Eriksson (2013) describes how architects in all projects borrow from research methodology to identify user needs: they interview, observe and collect data that feed into their design process. Rosell (1990) describes the architect's way of working as synthetic, defined as focusing on visual thinking and having a holistic approach. This is contrasted with the more specialized and analytical way of thinking that characterizes the engineer's work.

I will further discuss the roles and concepts mentioned above when describing how my role changed during the process.

Interpretation and feedback

In order for the input that a participatory process results in to be used in a design, it is interpreted and translated into, for example, a program. This simplifies the task of prioritizing in the analysis material, since the architect or planner has many other interests to weigh in to the process (Bomble, 2013). Lisa Bomble (2013) describes how this act of interpretation can lead to important narratives being lost because of the will to transform them into quantifiable statistics that fit a certain purpose. The interpretation of user input is important for how well users feel that their ideas, wishes and claims have been respected or implemented in the final plan or design; whether they can recognize their input or not. If important coherences are lost in interpretation, or if the design process is not transparent, it can result in a loss of social capital (Bomble, 2016). This connects to the importance of feedback, since it depends on whether the users can see how their input is being interpreted, weighted against other criteria and transformed into design ideas (Bomble, 2016). Maria

Kylin (2004) has researched how children's and planners' perspectives on outdoor environments differ. She has concluded that planners talk about the outdoor environments on a general and overall scale, giving it characteristics such as beautiful, natural, and defining it based on functions. Children, on the other hand, talk about it on a detailed level, which they connect to the experiences they get through performing different activities there (Kylin, 2004). I will refer to Kylin's and Bomble's research when discussing my interpretation of the workshops and how I handle the input from the children during the design process.

USER PARTICIPATION IN DIFFERENT STAGES OF A PLANNING OR DESIGN PROJECT

Fig. 11

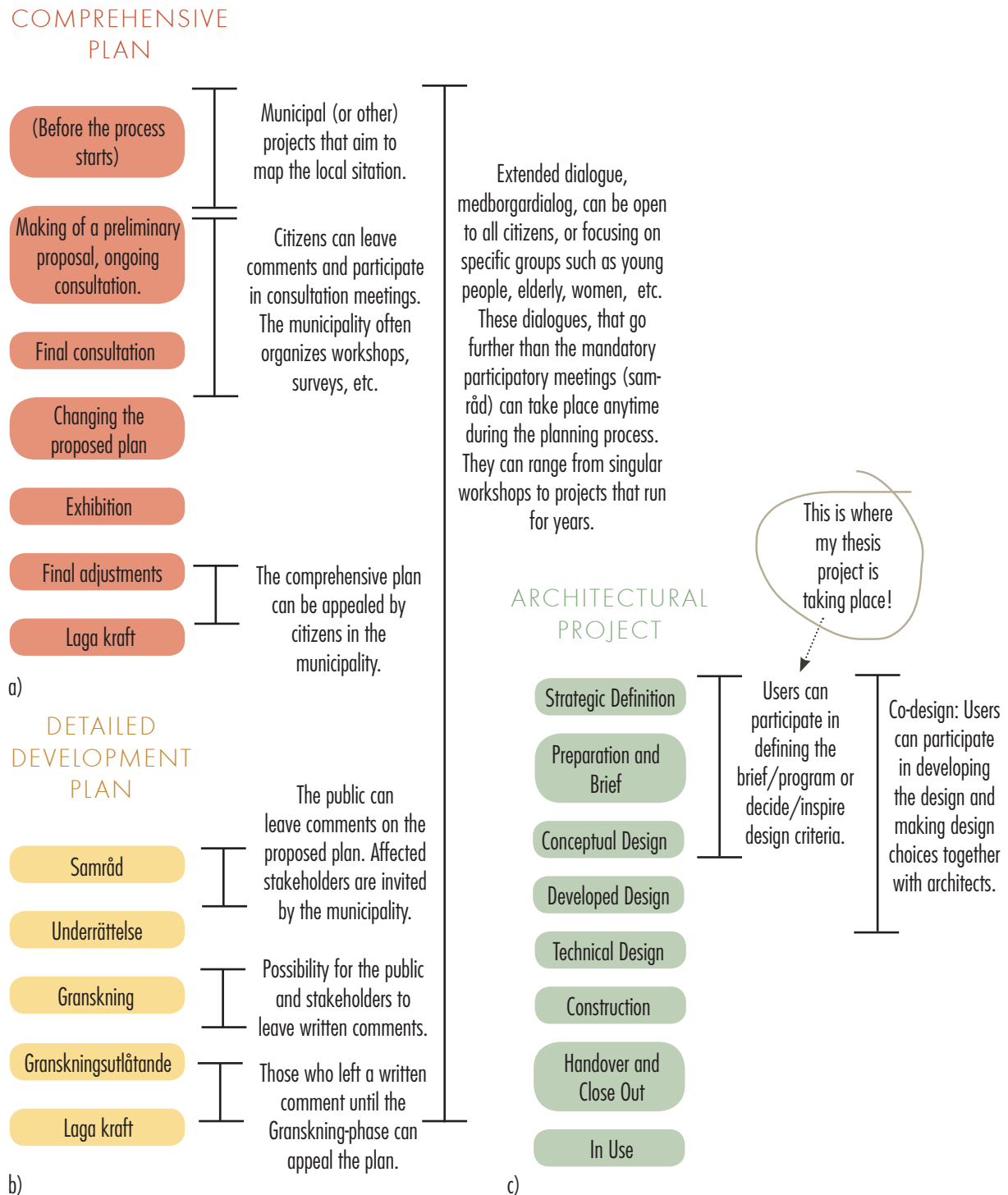


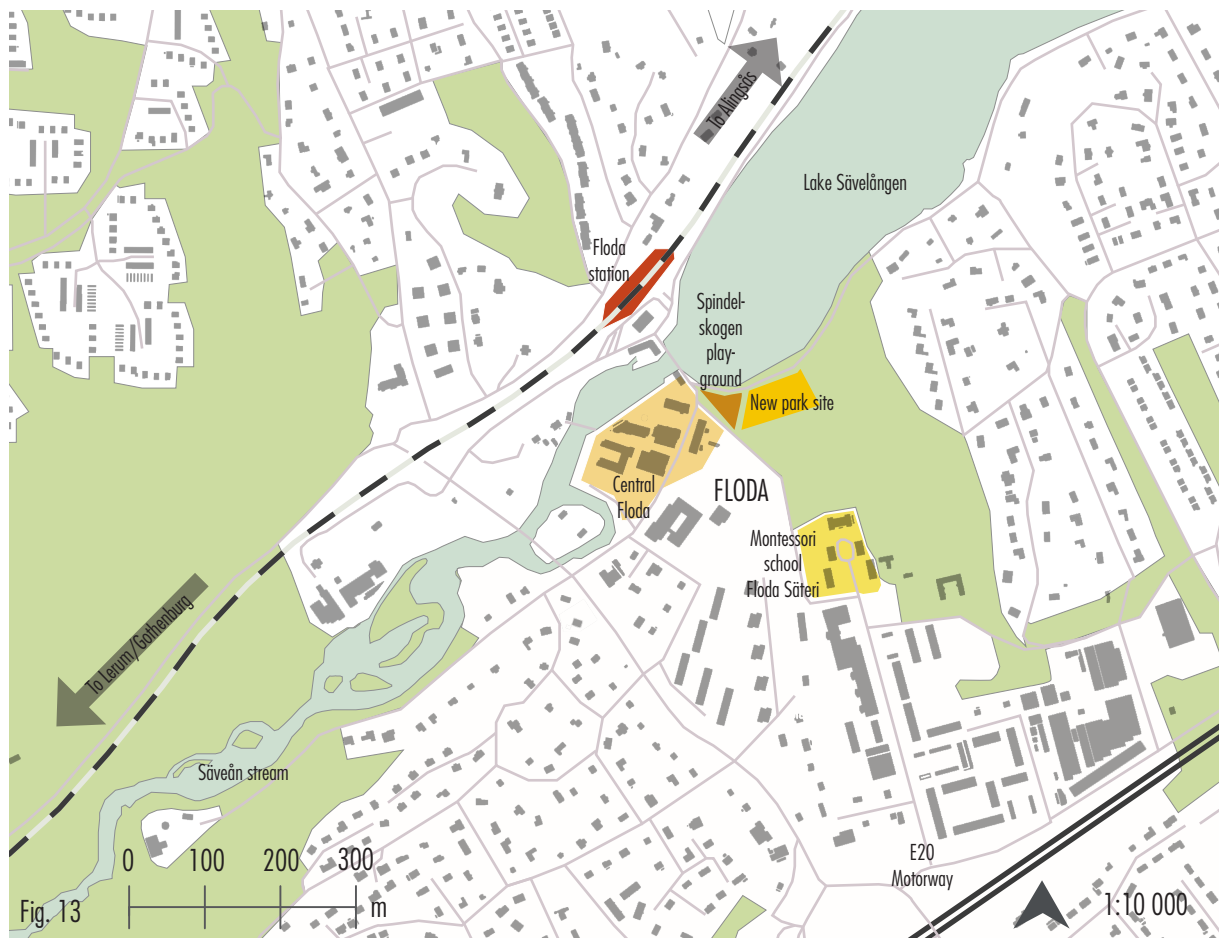
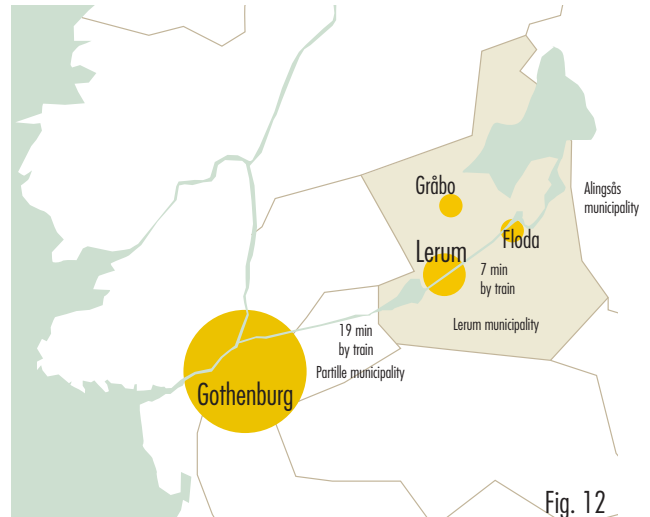
Fig. 11 a: Boverket². / Fig. 11 b: Boverket³. / Fig 11 c: RIBA Plan of Work 2013. Modified version of figure in Eriksson, 2013.

THE SITE

Site location

The site is located in Säteriparken in central Floda. Floda is one of Lerum municipality's three main centers. The other two are Lerum and Gråbo. Lerum municipality has approximately 40 000 inhabitants. The connections to Gothenburg and Alingsås are good.

Floda with surroundings has about 8000 inhabitants. It is located by lake Sävelången, 10 km east of Lerum. The locality developed around Floda säteri, a farm mansion, and the railroad that arrived in 1800's. Floda mostly consists of one family-housing areas, and has a small center with a few shops and other facilities. Säteriparken is very close to central Floda. A walking bridge connects it to the station area.



THE MUNICIPAL PROJECT

The case study for my master's thesis is the second part of a municipal project aiming to transform a part of Säteriparken in Floda into a playground and a public meeting place. When I contacted Lerum municipality in the spring of 2016, they offered me to carry out a dialogue process focusing on children's views of the future park as a part of my master's thesis. The outcome of the dialogue process, which is presented in appendix 1 and summarized on page 32, was also handed over to White, the architectural firm who will make the actual design for the park. This page explains the background to the municipal project and traces the municipal intentions for the future park.

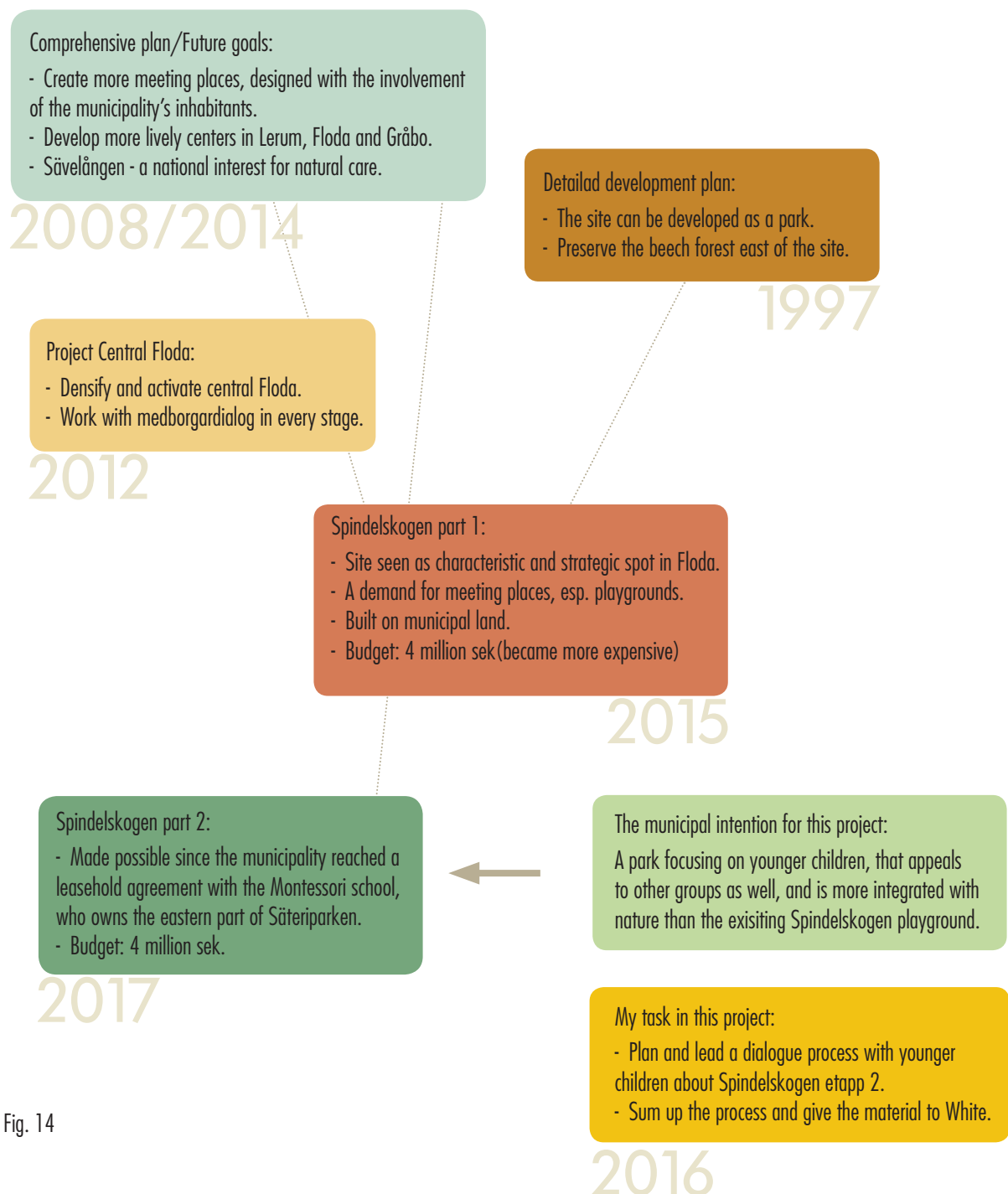


Fig. 14



Around the site

The site for the new playground is approximately 4455 m². From the south, a steep slope, passing the Montessori school and the Allé school leads here. Rurik Holms väg west of the site connects it to central Floda. A walking path leads to a housing area to the east.

Spindelskogen part 1

In 2014, student council representatives in Floda participated in a workshop about the future park. The workshop summary states that the children wanted an accessible place, with activities for all ages. It should be well-lit during winter and have places for challenging and adventurous play and sports. Three proposals for the park were made, and children in Floda could vote for the one they liked the most. The winning proposal Spindelskogen was built in 2015. The park is forest-themed, with a big climbing spider. It's probably most suited for children of five years or older.



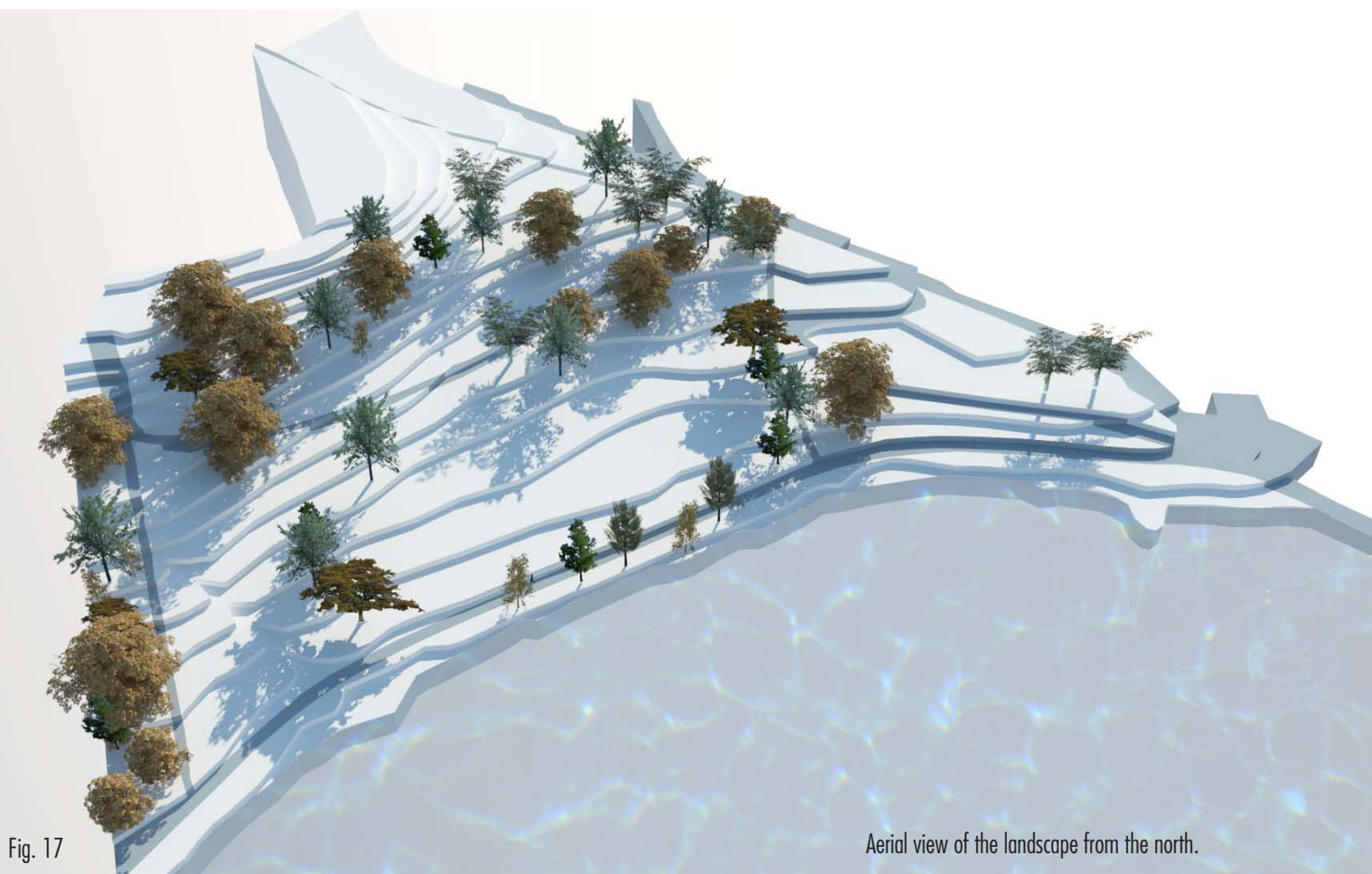


Fig. 17

Aerial view of the landscape from the north.



Fig. 18

Topography

The height difference at the future park site, between the walkway along the lake and the walkway on top of the slope, is 8 meters at the most. The existing playground Spindelskogen is terraced, and the terraces are accessible from a path that winds through the playground.

Trees

The tall trees are one of the characteristics of the site. There is a beautiful beech forest just east of the site. Because of the trees, and since the site lies on a north-facing slope, parts of the area are often shadowed.

DESIGNING THE PROCESS

Figuring out the purpose(s)

The aim of the participative process that I designed and lead for Lerum municipality was to find out the ideas and wishes of a group of young children for the new playground in Säteriparken. The process should complement the workshop with schoolchildren that was held before the construction of the existing playground Spindelskogen part 1, and generate ideas for the new park.

To define more detailed purposes that could guide the design of each workshop, I wrote down questions that I wanted to explore with the children in relation to the site and the future. Earlier master's theses about architectural educational projects (Mahammad, 2013 and Berge & Wannerskog, 2012) provided inspiration. I organized the questions in a mind map, ending up with three different categories of purposes: *Inventory of the site*, *Ideas for the future park*, and *Learning and having fun*.

"Ideas for the future park" correlates with the purpose stated by the municipality. Just as architects working on a project need to know about the site conditions, I wanted the children to become familiar with the site and get inspired by it. Therefore "Inventory of the site" became a category as well. It felt important to identify what parts of the site the children appreciated or not, in order to know where to propose changes. The third purpose, "Learning and having fun", would hopefully permeate the whole process. I wanted the children to develop and use their skills in expressing ideas and opinions in different ways, and enjoy it.

According to Hart's model for children's participation, (1992) the voluntary character of the activities is crucial when working with children. I think this is stressed because children's

lives are usually formed by adults' decisions. Children should not be forced to take responsibility for things they are not mature enough to handle, but they should be listened to and invited to participate in issues that interest them.

The overall plan

The preschools in Floda were contacted about the project. The Montessori preschool Floda Säteri wanted to participate, so we decided that I would work with their group of ten five-year-olds. With children this young, one needs to consider that they do not limit themselves to the means of expression that grownups often do. Activities need to be planned so that ways of transmitting knowledge other than verbal are possible (Tallhage Lönn, ed., 2000). I tried to include other means of communication, ending up with drawing, making models and moving around at the site. Preparation, a clear intent, transparency and feedback are often described as the most important factors for a successful project (Teimouri et al. 2011). This is valid also in a participatory process involving adults, but since children use their physical surroundings in a way that differs from adults, and express themselves differently, there is a need to design processes according to the needs of children (Tallhage Lönn, ed. 2000).

The general layout of the process was inspired by the REBUS-model used in preschool yard projects in Gothenburg (Svennberg & Teimouri, eds., 2010). I planned six workshops with the children, starting with an introduction to the project, moving on to an inventory of the site and finally working on proposals for the new park. The master's theses by Mahammad (2013) and Berge and Wannerskog (2012), inspired by the REBUS-model, provided useful advice on

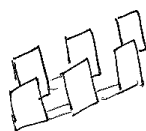
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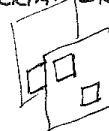
d



SLUTET,
KORRIDOR.



DOWNINGAR,
FLER MØGLIGHETER
AT PASSERA.
SE VI



ÖPPNINGAR
I SLIKA
HÖJDER.



- INTRODUCERA
ARKITEKTONISKA
BEGREPP.

HUR
ÄR
DET ATT
GÅ HÄR
GENOM?



Fig. 19a: Mindmap of questions to explore with the children. / b: Possible activities for the workshops. / c: In order for the children to think about what is missing on the site, and form a closer relation to it, I wanted us to build or make something there. Willow is a suitable material to work with, since it is flexible and easy to work with. / d: Thinking about how to introduce architectural themes for the willow workshop. / e: I tried the first workshop-task myself: "Draw something that you like to do outside in a park". / f: Symbols used during workshop 1.

how to plan the process. After interviewing two architectural educators and studying literature on the subject, I decided to start the process with an introduction to the site and the project, followed by a site-visit workshop. The third time we met, we made an inventory of the site: what did the children think about it today? Then we made a scale 1:1 contribution to the site. By putting their own mark there, my hope was that the children would feel more connected to it in their proposals for the future. I also wondered if observing them play and build something on site would allow me to draw any conclusions for the future playground. We finished the workshop series with building a model of the children's future vision for the park. Eriksson (2013) explains that building models and other tangible objects is a good method to make the participants see the project in a new light. The knowledge becomes visible and discussable. After summing up the workshops and handing over the material to White, I went back to the preschool and talked with the children about the outcome of the workshops, White's early ideas, and my own designwork.

Work in progress

As an architectural educator, or in any kind of facilitative role, flexibility and respect for the fact that the process might not work out the way you planned is important (See for example Svennberg & Teimouri, eds., 2010 and Malbert, 1999).

Rosell (1990) describes the design process as iterative, where ideas are tested, analyzed and refined until there is a satisfying solution. This definitely goes for the design of a participatory process as well.

While designing and leading a workshop series with children, their response and the input from others, in this case architectural educators and teachers, lead to small and big adjustments of the plan. To the first workshop I brought pictures symbolizing different things, which the children could categorize their own drawings under. This did not work out the way I had intended. It was simply too many parameters for the children and

they mostly ignored the pictures. However, the way they reacted when I presented the images and we talked about what they did outside during different seasons, or when we looked at a map and they could let a toy "walk" to the project site from the preschool, made me draw the conclusion that it was easier to have a discussion with them while showing or letting them touch something, than if we just talked. After that, I brought pictures or objects to show them during the introductions to the different workshops. An example is fig. 20d, p. 29.

During an interview with architectural educator Vici Hofbauer before the second workshop, she said that I should listen more to the children's own views of the area. It was a good reminder to be flexible and focus primarily on what the children said and found interesting. This meant that I prepared for using the information I had gathered about the site as answers to the children's eventual questions, or conversation starters to be used if needed, rather than things I *had* to tell them.

My tutor Lisa Bomble told me after my second workshop that continuing an activity after a break is usually a bad idea with children, since they lose interest and the task becomes negatively charged, which I would say is what happened during workshop 2. Architectural educator Karl-Johan Sellberg described how he usually planned his workshops to have a fast pace, with several short activities focusing on different senses to keep the children interested. After these comments, I speeded up my own workshops, and put clearer timeframes to the different activities. During the third workshop, we built small models and then went to make an inventory of the site, and the children kept their focus and interest even though there was a lot of information to take in.

Another reason to add the model-part of the third workshop was because I sensed a risk that the workshops ended up in too much of a "wish list" with a focus only on specific physical structures, and none on activities or the needs of different people. By taking up the interest for an insect that we found during the previous

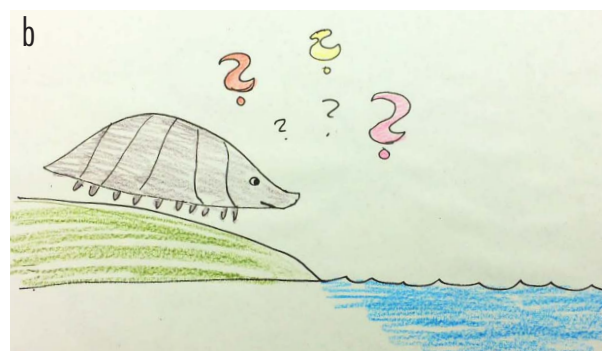


Fig. 20a-b: Illustrations to the story of the lost woodlouse who wanted a park (See p. 30). / c: The ten children in front of their willow den. / d: This image illustrates some things you can build with willow branches, such as dens, sculptures and fences. It can also be used to talk about openings, doors, and windows. During the workshop, I used a version of the image without the children in it, since I realized that seeing themselves pictured was a big distraction.

workshop, I hoped to add some new perspectives on the park. I told the children a story about a lost insect that longed for a nice park to play in, and asked them how they would build it. Using a story about someone else and their wishes is a method to make the children focus on the more abstract values of a site (Svennberg & Teimouri eds., 2010). The idea to use material found in nature for the models came from one of the children. It worked out very well, since the children could use the many shapes and textures to quickly symbolize different things.

As stressed in the literature about architectural educational projects (Teimouri et al. 2011), cooperation with the teachers was very important. I sent my plan for the workshop to the most involved teacher every week, and she proposed changes, such as dividing the children in two groups or allowing more time to certain activities and less to others. Her presence during the workshops was also crucial, as she helped me keep the children interested and focused.

Unexpected benefits

For me as an architect, preparing the workshops was a great way to investigate the area. For example, making the map and choosing the treasures for the treasure hunt meant that I had to gather information about the site and spend time there. This time, I felt it was more playful and fun than had the task been to make an inventory for myself only, or for other architects. I also think that I learnt some things that I would otherwise have missed. By simplifying things for others, I also made them more understandable for myself, and could identify the most important elements.

1: Drawings and maps 2016-09-15

- Locate the site.
- What's fun to do outside?
- Draw and learn about architecture and maps.

2: Treasure hunt 2016-09-22

- Discover new things on the site.
- Follow a map.
- Cooperate and discuss.

3: Flag inventory, mini-parks 2016-09-29

- What do you think about the site?
- Build a nice park for someone small.
- Expressing views and working with symbols.

4: Build a willow den 2016-10-03

- Making an addition to the site.
- Find inspiration for the future project.
- Building something in scale 1:1.

5: Build a model of the park 2016-10-13

- What's important on the site today?
- What do we want to change?
- Work with color, materials and scale to express ideas.

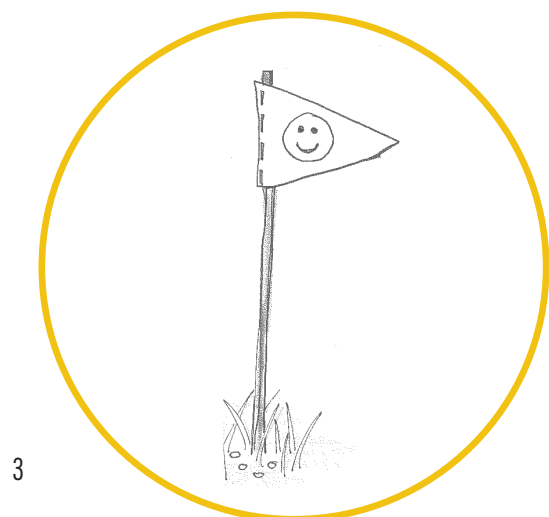
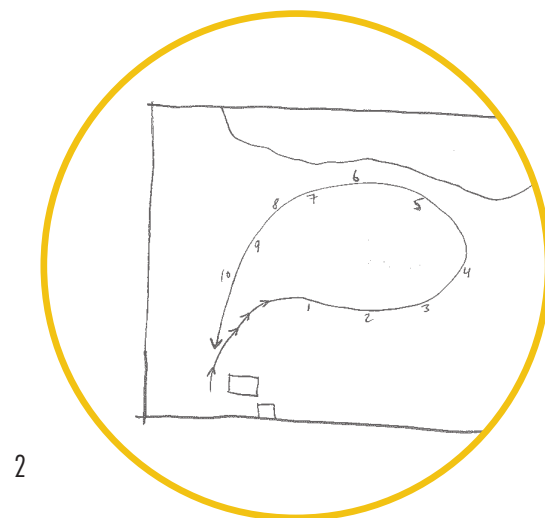
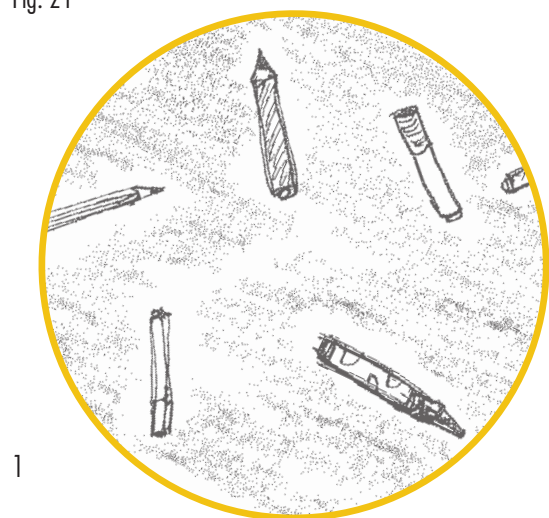
6: Build a model of the park 2016-10-20

- What do we want to add to the site?
- How should it look in the future?
- Work with color, materials and scale to express ideas.

Detailed descriptions of the workshops can be found in appendix 1!

PLAN FOR WORKSHOPS

Fig. 21



PROGRAM SUMMARY

An architectural program describes the intentions and demands that a project should fulfill.

A program for the new playground in Säteriparken could be summarized like in fig. 22, p. 33.

This thesis focuses on the outcome of what is here described as "Current dialogue process".

After the workshops with the children, I summarized and analyzed the results. The resulting program and description, appendix 1, was handed over to White, who were contracted by Lerum municipality to design the new park. The summary thus became part of their background material. My contact with White consisted of participating in three meetings and discussing with the landscape architect working on the project.

For me, the input from the children formed the basis for designing a proposal for the park and analyzing the process. The other factors showed in fig. 22 functioned as a framework, and as something to weigh the children's input against. This page summarizes the input from the workshops with the children. More detailed descriptions can be found in appendix 1.

Summary of children's input

The site

The children saw the trees as important site characteristics. The new design should take advantage of the way the trees create attractive spaces, visually as well as for activities and rest. The vegetation is generally appreciated and inspires play. The children expressed a need for some kind of border between the play areas and the bike- and pedestrian path separating the park from the lake. The children would like the ground to be more even, and some miss the raspberry bushes that covered the site in summer. The beech forest and the view of the lake are

beautiful, and should be considered when placing activities and seating places. The open spaces on the site are perceived as anonymous today, but have potential for play and new structures. (See pages 10-13 and fig. B in appendix 1).

General ideas

The children want places for both calm and active play in the park, as well as places to rest. Many of their proposals include motoric challenges (see for example pages 4-5 and fig. H, appendix 1).

A variation of scales is demanded, from big objects to climb to small-scale building material. The different scales should allow parents to play with the children, and give opportunities to find different ways of moving through the playground (see figs. E-G, appendix 1). Things that can be manipulated by the children, like water and sound, are something they would like in the future park (see fig. H, appendix 1). The children are interested in nature, and the new park could encourage this interest and include natural elements in a playful way (see fig. D, appendix 1).

Desired activities and objects

The children want play structures that try their strength and offer a physical challenge, such as climbing and crawling (see pages 4-5, 8-9 and 21, appendix 1). They want to climb towers and look out and they want structures that offer hiding places. Stairs, ladders, and tunnels should be included in the new park design. Playing in houses, tents, building dens and resting on soft material was also mentioned as desirable. The children's wish to play tag and hide-and-seek suggest that it is important to leave some areas of the park unprogrammed, for the children to use as they like. Fruit trees and bushes were suggested by some children, as well as flowers.

DIAGRAM OF ARCHITECTURAL PROGRAM FOR THE NEW PLAYGROUND

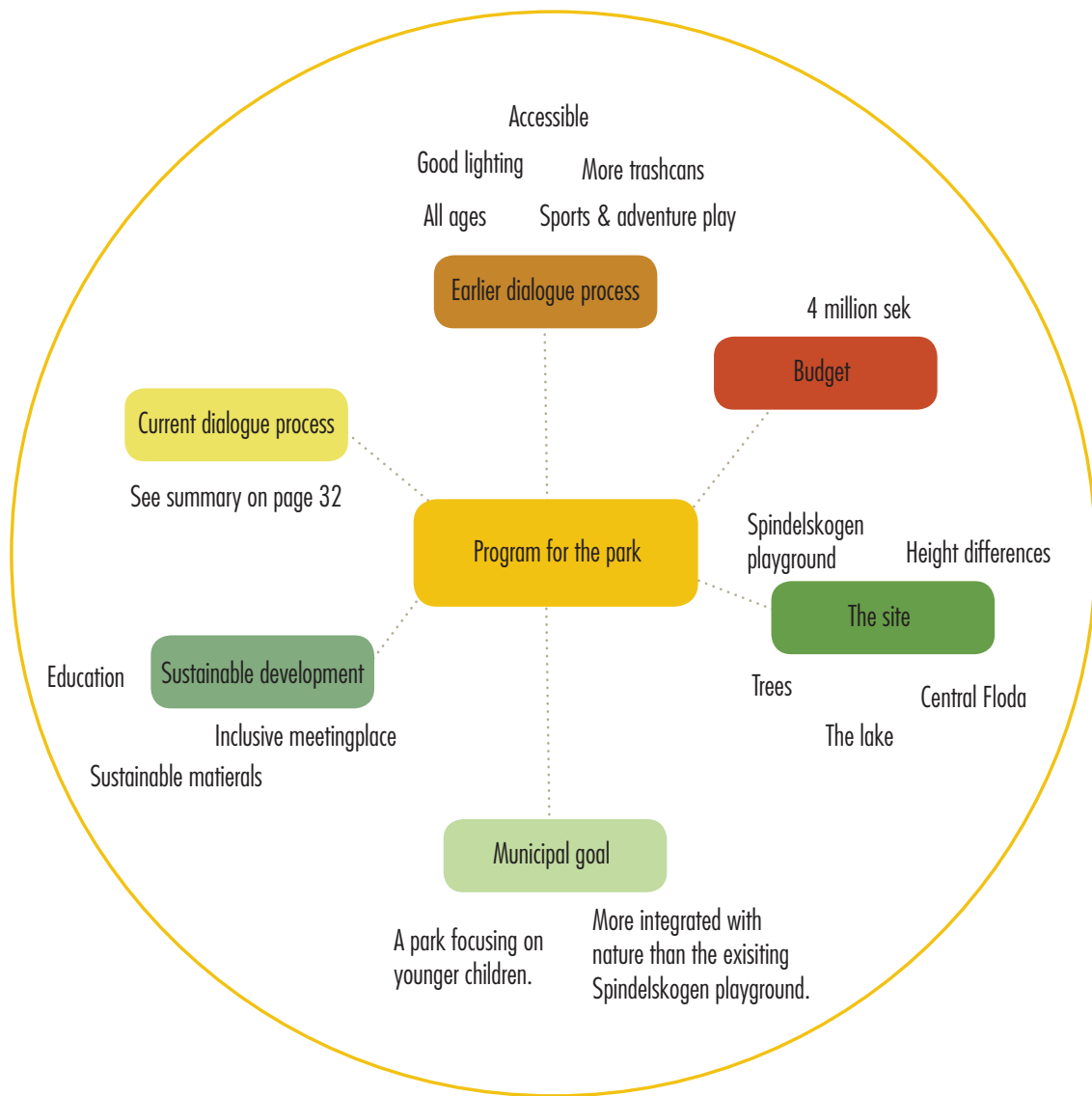


Fig. 22

INTERPRETING THE MATERIAL

Why interpret?

The workshops with the children in Floda resulted in a lot of drawings, models, discussions, observations and ideas. To make these accessible to the landscape architect who would design the playground, I summarized the workshops and interpreted the outcome into a sort of architectural program (see appendix 1). Since an architect has many other interests to weigh in to the process and to combine the children's input with, the interpretation simplifies the task of prioritizing in the analysis material (Bomble, 2013).

Kylin (2004) acknowledges that adults interpreting children's input can be controversial or complicated. One problem is that children are often seen as less reliable and competent than grownups. Kylin concludes that it is important to see children as competent within their own context. She questions whether children really are more likely than grownups to think and act egoistically, as is a quite common view. Children's knowledge and their opinions about their close environment should be taken just as seriously as adults'. However, adults have a responsibility to interpret and foresee consequences of children's statements (Kylin, 2004:23). How I have tried to do this is described here.

Processing the material

After every workshop, I listened to the sound recording and took notes. This was a good way to remember what was actually said and how, and not to let selective memory take over. Then I studied the material that had been produced during the workshop. In the case of drawings and models, I wrote down what the children had said about them, based on my notes and the sound recordings. I placed smaller versions of

the inventory flags on a map of the park to get an overview. The willow den was documented with photos, drawings and measurements. This material was transformed into recommendations and ideas for the design of the park.

Categorization

I categorized the drawings from workshop 1 into three groups: Activities, Physical elements, and Shapes and themes. Features from the drawings and the children's stories ended up in these categories if they reoccurred in the material or stood out as important. The reason for categorizing the content of the drawings and the stories was, as mentioned before, to make the material more accessible. I also considered it important to find some common threads in the material, in order to increase the extent to which the children's input could affect the final design. I figured it was more likely for it to contain activities (e.g. "climbing high") or themes (e.g. "dinosaurs") mentioned or drawn by the children, than to consist of large-scale built examples of their drawings.

Lost and found

In the role of interpreter of participatory material, an execution of power is embedded. The categorizations and simplifications makes certain comments or ideas stand out, and others not. Bomble (2013) describes how this act of interpretation can lead to important narratives being lost because of the will to transform them into quantifiable statistics that fit a certain purpose. In this case, I hope to partially have counteracted this by comparing the different workshops to each other, to see which ideas and comments pop up throughout the process. Bomble suggests that citizens' narratives should be seen as a holistic picture of the local context,

Fig. 23
a



"You can climb on the tail!"

"Tunnels lead out to the hands"

"It's a climbing structure"

"You can look out through the mouth"

b



Fig. 23 a-b: In the summer of 2016 the game Pokémon Go was widely popular. During our first workshop in september some children drew Pokémon-inspired play structures. If this idea would become the focus of the playground design, what implications would it have in a few years? Will future children know what Pokémon is? Will it be a relevant theme then? These kind of questions are important to consider when interpreting the material from the workshops into a program. I chose to mention the Pokémon-drawings to White, but to focus more on other aspects of the drawings, such as stairs, tunnels, windows to look out from, climbing structures, etc.

During our feedback session, I showed this drawing to the children. They still thought a Pokémon park would be a good idea ("I will always love Pokémon!"), but we were able to discuss it. One of the preschool teachers said "But what if they had built a park based on the toys I liked as a kid in the 70's? You might not have liked that very much today.", which was an argument the children seemed to understand.

rather than answers to specific problems in separate sectors. This project is not a planning project, but a design project with a specific goal: to make proposals for a new playground. Still, it is a valid point that the will to categorize can make important narratives disappear. The drawing (fig. 26 a, p. 39) by one child could easily be interpreted as “Ok, let’s build a slide shaped like a snake”. By just seeing the drawing this would be a valid conclusion, and in some ways a correct one; the children also said they wanted slides. But having heard the whole story told by the child who made the drawing, I definitely think there is more to it than just the shape, and I have continued to work with it in my own design process (see p. 38, *Based on a true drawing*).

Maps

The inventory workshops 2 and 3 were transformed into a map (fig. B, p. 13, appendix 1), where I summarized the children’s view of a part of the site. On this map, I use typical architect-vocabulary (e.g. “sightline”, “barrier”) to describe the children’s opinions of the site. I drew circles over areas that the children had particularly paid attention to, and summed up what they said about these places. According to Kylin (2004), a planner’s perspective on an outside environment tends to describe it on a general scale, with a focus on functions. As plan drawings and maps focus on the aspects of reality that can be visualized, they risk missing the way children tend to describe a place: with an emphasis on the sensory and physical ways of experiencing it (Kylin, 2004). This considered, I still think a map is a good way to describe the site in a program, if it’s combined with images and text that convey other aspects. Maps and drawings are a commonly used language that is well understood by architects and planners. Therefore it is a suitable way to present the children’s views if you want to make them easy to implement in designs.

Handing over the program

The program represents the children’s views in the continuing process when White designs the playground. By interpreting the children’s material, I wanted to make their views easily accessible for the landscape architect, who herself did not participate in the workshops. If I had just handed over the “raw material” (transcripts from the workshops, drawings without comments, etc.) it would have taken a long time to dig into, and certain important things would not have been clarified. From my observations during the workshops, I could make some proposals based on how the children acted. For example, the joy the children showed when building a den led to suggestions of play structures where they can build roofs or tunnels by adding branches (see fig. 25 a-c), inspired by the way site observations were used to propose additions that enable play in the greek TUC park playground (Designingwithchildren.net, 2016²).

Another example that would not have been possible to convey without interpreting the material is the way the children placed the inventory flags. The teacher noticed that some children just placed their flags where they stood because they wanted to get new flags quickly. After the flags were placed, me and the children took a tour and talked about all the spots where they had placed their flags. Participating in this tour, and observing when the children placed the flags, made it possible for me to sort out which flags were “seriously” placed. Interpreting the results into a map later was also beneficial for my own future work with a parallel design of the park – after a while, the “raw” map (fig. 24 c) would not have made much sense even to me.

In order for the children to recognize their input in the final proposal, I went back to the preschool and discussed the program with them, to see if I had misinterpreted something. Because White’s design of the park started a few weeks into our workshops, I gave them the children’s input before this meeting.

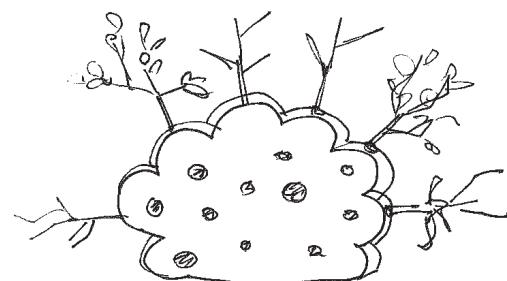
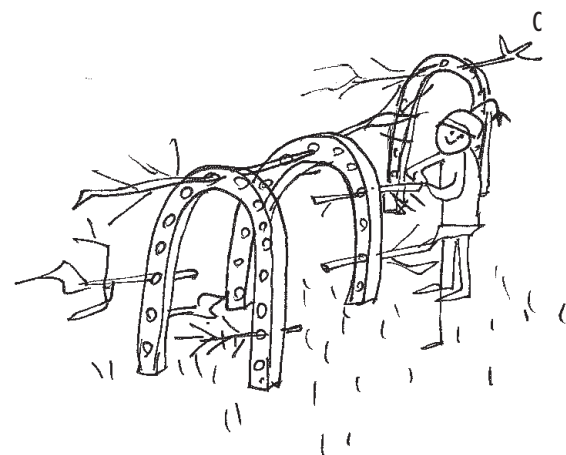


Fig. 24 a: The inventory-flags from workshop 3. / b: A child thinks about where to place her flag. / c: The map where I put symbols showing where all the flags were placed. / d: This map is an interpretation of the children's placing of the flags and their comments. See the whole map in appendix 1, fig. B p. 13. / Fig. 25 a-c: The children's joy and fascination for building with willow branches inspired me to draw play structures that can be altered by sticking branches into them.

DESIGNING THE PROPOSAL

Handing over the program to White could have been the final step in this thesis project. But since I aim to explore how the input of users can affect the design process, I wanted to work further with the material from the workshops and make a design proposal of my own. You can say I put myself in the position of an architect hired to design the playground, who received a program describing the children's wishes and ideas for it. This section describes how the input from the children inspired my design work.

Based on a true drawing

Along with the program, I also sent the children's drawings with their descriptions of them to White. This material inspired me when it came to play structures for the park. Some of the children had drawn things that were supposed to move around freely with people inside them, or to explode and fly away. These were ideas I didn't work further with, since I figured they were not likely to be included in a built design. On the other side of the spectrum, some children drew more traditional-looking playground equipment such as slides or swings. These drawings provided ideas for what activities the children would appreciate in the park, but not for how they would look or be built. The drawings that spurred my interest were those depicting things that I estimated could be transformed into something buildable, but at the same time didn't look like already existing products. As with all design work, this case had no given solutions. What if I had made "explosions" or "things that can fly" central in my design proposal, or highlighted them in the program? I didn't do so because they were not as prominent throughout the process as other things were, but also because I thought of how the children's input would be placed alongside

other criteria, in a design project with tight time frames. I wanted their ideas to be incorporated in the final proposal, and not play into the prejudice that children's proposals are impossible to realize (Kylin, 2004). In this process, some things are also lost.

I made models based on a few of the drawings. One example is the drawing of a snake (fig. 26 a), mentioned on page 36. At first glance, it's just a drawing of an ordinary snake. But when the child who drew it explained it to me, he had a lot to say about it: "It's a snake that you can balance on, you can walk on its tongue. You can crawl inside it if you lie down. There's an opening by the head and one by the tail. If two people meet in the middle, they have to crawl back the way they came. It's painted white inside. It's made of wood, and it doesn't break when you stand on it."

I started by using the shape from the drawing in a simple way – making a clay-snake that could be interpreted as a bench, or something that you can crawl into (fig. 26 b). Then, thinking about the child's story, I realized that the shape was not the only important feature of his drawing. He also described a multi-functional structure that offered some challenge in the way you could use it. I merged the winding snake-shape with an earlier idea that I got from listening to the children talking about the site and spending time there with them. They really seemed to appreciate the spaces under the trees, so I had been thinking of creating some kind of seating around a tree that also allowed for play. The snake-shape could, sliced up this time, form a tunnel and a place to sit around a tree (see fig. 26 c). This idea was brought into my design proposal as the "snake-tunnel" among a berry bush labyrinth. See fig. 33, p. 46.

Fig. 26
a

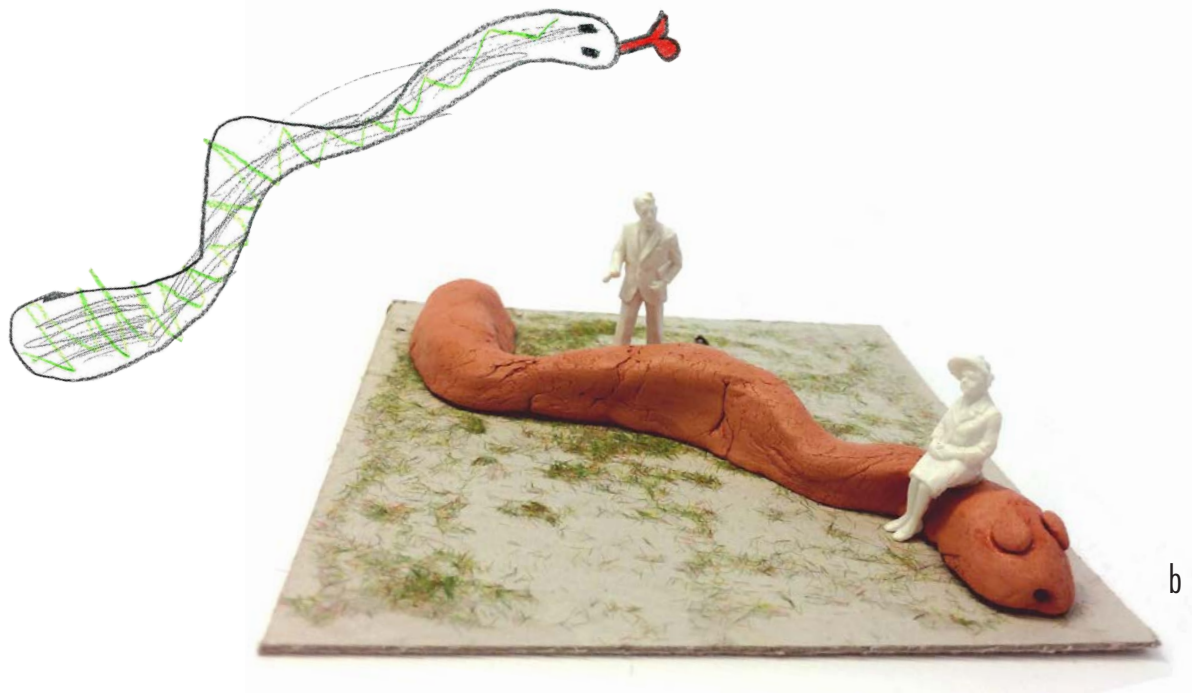


Fig. 26 a: A child's drawing of a snake-shaped play structure that you can climb and balance on. You can also crawl inside it. / b: Inspired by the drawing, I made a model of a snake-shaped bench. / c: The idea of the bench was merged with the idea of a tunnel structure surrounding a tree. / d: Branches or ropes could make the structure fun to climb on, and enclose it more while still letting light in.

Acting my age

I printed a drawing of the site and placed transparent paper on top of it. As soon as I started sketching in this traditional architectural way, I felt how I fell into the grownup architect's way of thinking. Categorizing the site into physical entities that can be visualized (e.g. entrances, paths, sightlines), thinking about what would be a logical organization of the space and what could characterize its different areas, I very much adopted what Kylin (2004) describes as a planner's perspective on outdoor environments. I thought about how it would be to come to the playground as an adult accompanied by kids. "If I draw it like this, I could stay down here and watch as the kids run up the hill to play, then I wouldn't have to be worried that they run out into the bike lane or into the water." The perspective of the child's scale and play was lost for a while. Issues of practical organization and safety are of course crucial, but here they might have taken over completely, had the dialogue with the children not taken place before and parallel to sketching. This is not to say that the children were not concerned with these aspects. For example, the lake is a nice feature of the site, and it would be nice to have easy, direct access to it. However, from talking with the children and their teachers it became clear to me that they felt the need of some kind of border between the playground and the bike path by the lake. Now I could think about how to create a natural barrier towards the bike path, instead of having to put up a fence after the park was built, which probably would be more expensive and less well integrated in the design. This illustrates some of the benefits of involving users in a design process (See Eriksson & Nylander, 2016).

Ideas for the site plan

Some ideas that show up in the first sketches of the site plan would not be there without the children's input. In the first sketch (fig. 27 a) I emphasized the area under the trees on top of the slope, by drawing a new path between them,

since the children had expressed their interest in this place. In the second sketch (fig. 27 c), I started to think about how to zone the area, if some spots were good for a certain kind of activity. Here the children's input affected the placement of some of the areas: I considered spaces that they had found anonymous as good spots for bigger structures, and wanted to save vegetation that they found interesting and add new greenery to it. Then I made some test-sections and a plan in AutoCAD, printed them, and compared to the intentions of the program (see fig. 27 d). I realized I had temporarily forgotten about the children's ideas by looking at other playgrounds and thinking of practical ways to organize the park, so I adjusted some things, ending up with the proposals that can be found in appendix 2.

Quality and quantity

Because of the timeframes of this project, and the fact that my focus lies on studying the process, the design proposal is not the main focus. However, designing with the input from the users as such an important part of the program was a pleasant experience that added a lot of qualities that might otherwise have been missed. Eriksson (2013:15) writes about how it is wrong to assume that the user possesses all the answers, and that the architect can find all the answers just by looking for them in the user's context. To think that as an architect, you can just take the ideas of the users, give them a physical shape and you will end up with a successful project is wrong. For me, working with the ideas of the children meant an interpretation and a questioning of which aspects that form the core of their ideas and wishes, a work that continued long after the program was written. Eriksson (2013) also writes about the necessity to combine qualitative input with quantitative data. In this case, it can be translated as combining the input from the children with "hard facts", such as how to handle the height differences on the site.

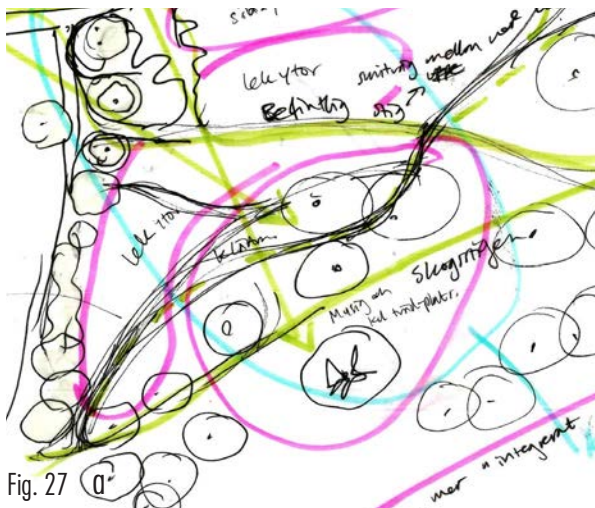


Fig. 27

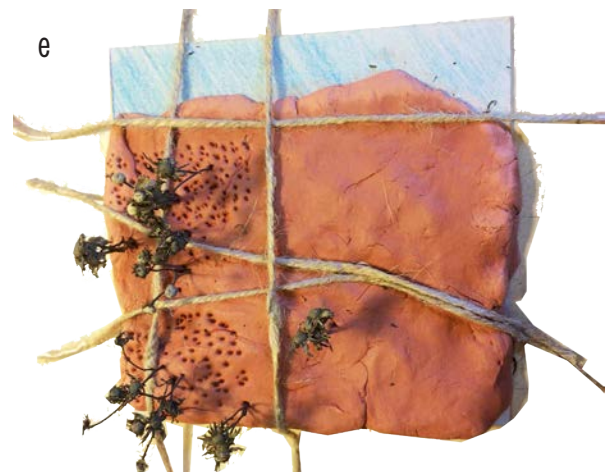
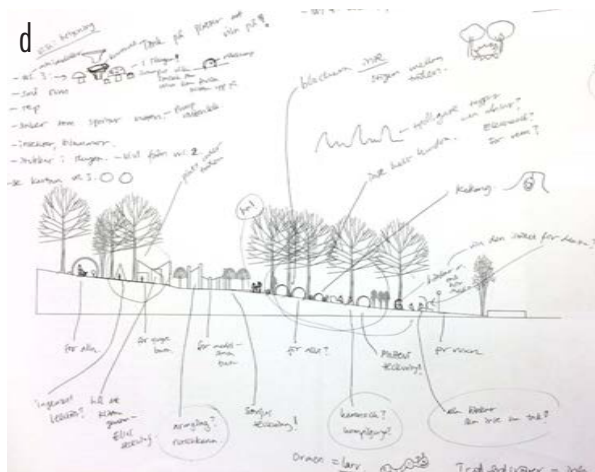
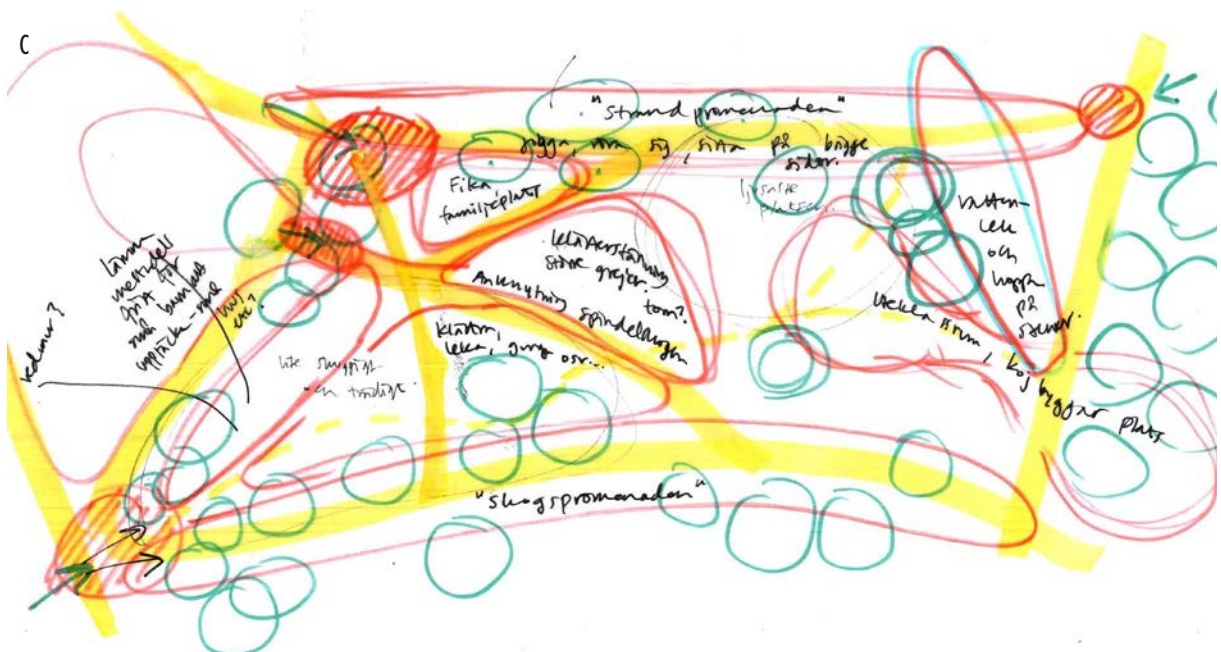
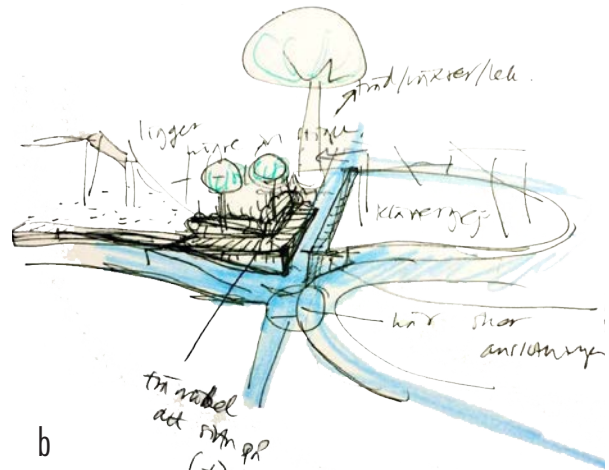


Fig. 27 a: Sketching new paths in the park, leading one in between some trees that the children had pointed out. / b: The site's height differences were not discussed in particular by the children during the workshops. Inspiration and ideas had to be found elsewhere. Here, the experience of sitting with the children on an uncomfortable wooden edge at the site made me think of using the height difference to create a bench. / c: The first proposal for how to plan the area, with entrances, paths and activities. / d: Comparing the first sketch section with the program based on the children's ideas. There are a lot of things to add or change! / e: Trying out where the paths in the park could lead.

DESIGN PROPOSAL

The following drawings and illustrations were shown to the children during our feedback session.

PLAN 1:400

Fig. 28





B

Lake promenade

Play boat

Water play

Sound play

NEW PLAYGROUND

Outdoor gym

Small childrens' play area

Outdoor classroom

Den building space

Bridges and stones

Insect hotels

Insect hotels

Tree houses

Forest promenade

Obstacle course

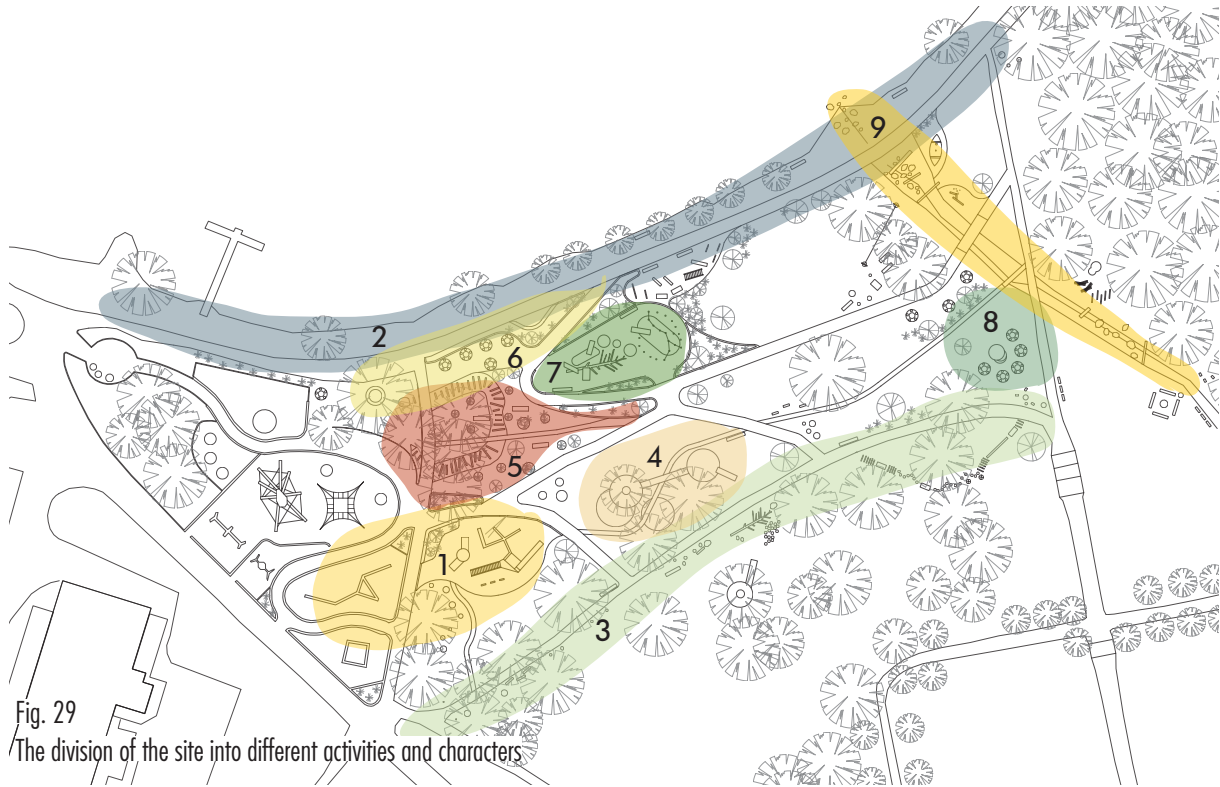
Tree house

Climbing tree

0 5 10 20 M

1:400

ABOUT THE NEW PLAYGROUND



1. CLIMBING STRUCTURE

This area ties together the existing Spindel skogen playground with the new part of the park. It has a tower with slides and a play structure for climbing and balancing. See fig. 47, p. 57.

2. LAKE PROMENADE

One of two paths that surround the park. This one follows the shore of Sävelången and connects the playground to central Floda. The well-used path is upgraded with plants, lights and seating. See fig. 30, p. 45.

3. FOREST PROMENADE

The other path that lines the park. Under the trees, play elements and lights create the impression of a magic forest. See fig. 31, p. 45.

4. TREE HOUSES

Among a group of trees, platforms attached to the trees or standing on the ground around them form an exciting environment for play and enjoying the view of the lake. See fig. 37, p. 48.

5. SNAKE TUNNEL

A broken-up play tunnel shaped as a snake. Berry bushes and blossoming trees surround it and create a nice place for both adults and children. See p. 38, and fig. 33, p. 46.

6. PICNIC TABLES

School groups and families can rest and gather here. Flower beds separate the area from the bicycle path.

7. SMALL CHILDRENS' PLAY AREA

A play area dedicated to the discoveries and play of younger children, with tunnels and hills. See fig. 48, p. 59.

8. OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Seating and a small stage makes outdoor education an option for schools in Floda.

9. WATER PLAY AREA

Stones of various sizes make the creek a place to play, jump and balance. Several small wooden bridges over the creek are added. See fig. 45, p. 55.

SURROUNDING THE AREA

Open, "empty" areas in a park allow visitors to invent their own games and use the space as they like. In this proposal, the eastern part of the park is left unprogrammed, except for a few play

items. This part of the park gently approaches the forest. The park is still perceived as an entity because of the paths that enclose it to the north and the south - the lake promenade and the forest promenade.



Fig. 30

LAKE PROMENADE

This popular path is getting lined with new flower beds, benches and effectful lighting of plants and the rocks in the water. In order to prevent children from running into the bikelane, or into the water, the playground is separated from the road by the plant beds. Because of the lakeshore's sensitive environment, no new bridges or decks can be built here. If possible, some new plants, seating and information signs about the lake's biodiversity can be added.



Fig. 31

FOREST PROMENADE

The forest promenade focuses on the trees, an important characteristic of the site. They are made more accessible with ropes hanging from branches and objects placed to make it easier to climb them. Where possible, tree houses or platforms are built. The path is lined with objects

to balance and climb. Lighting of the trees and the path makes the walk nice also when it's dark. The path leads to the beech forest, where a place for den building is situated. Branches from the maintenance of bushes and trees can be placed here, and there are play structures where branches can be inserted to form different shapes.

SECTION A-A 1:250

"It's good that you can walk easily between the old and the new part."*

"Remove the thorn bushes here!"*

"If we take an old tree and cut it up, the pieces can form an obstacle course"*

"I love to climb.
I want to play here."*



Fig. 32

Forest promenade

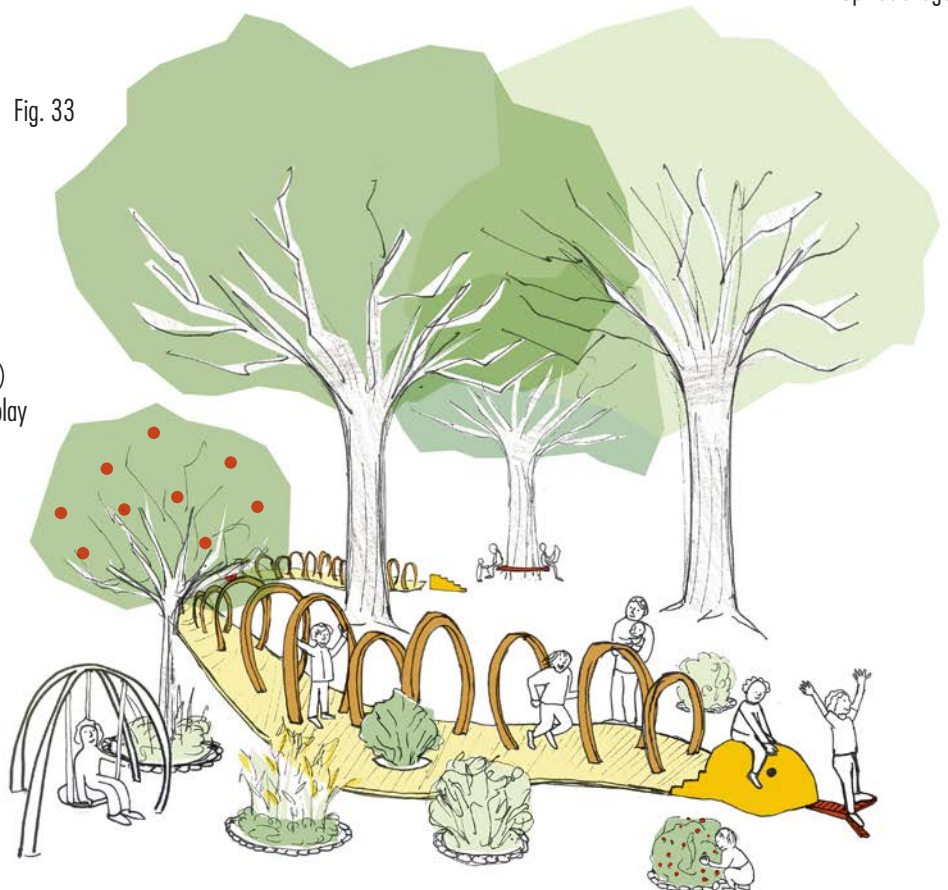
Play mushrooms

Climbing structure

Path from
Spindelskogen

Fig. 33

The snake drawing
(described on p. 38)
transformed into a play
structure.



"I meant that it should be possible to crawl inside it, but not that it should be this open."*

A low railing and bushes separate the picnic area from the lake promenade, since the children pointed out the risk of people running out in the bike lane.

* = Comments from the children during our feedback session.



Snake tunnel

Picnic tables

Lake promenade

LIGHT

To make the park a place where people want to play and take walks also during evenings and winter time, lighting is very important. Below, different kinds of decorative lightning that can be used in the park to attract visitors and make them feel safe are illustrated:

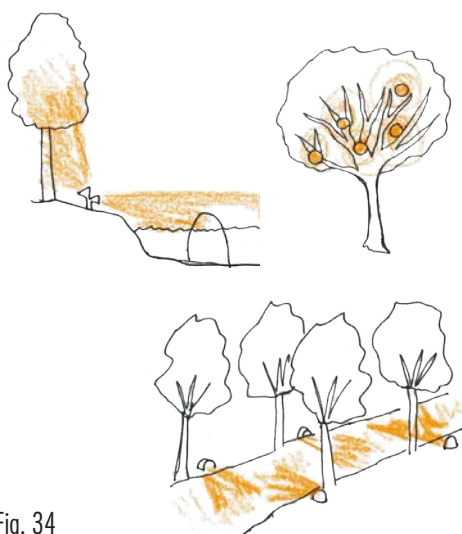


Fig. 34

MATERIAL AND COLOUR

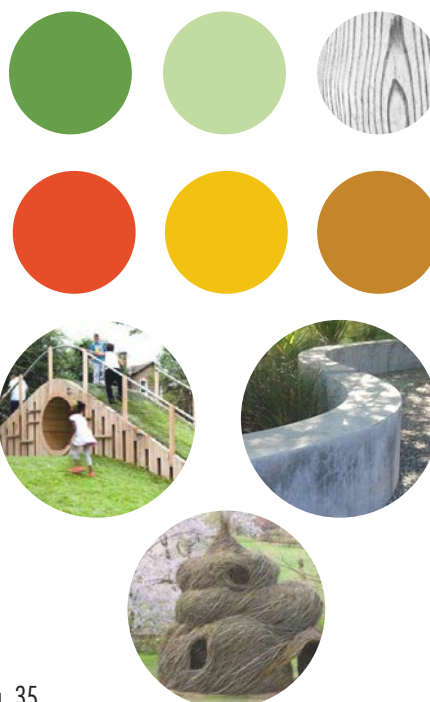
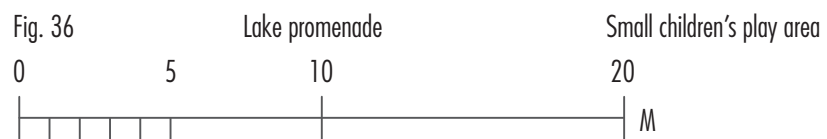


Fig. 35

SECTION B-B 1:250

”The small children can crawl around here!”*

* = Comments from the children during our feedback session.



Whether it's possible to attach structures to the trees has to be investigated. Another way to create the feeling of being immersed in the treetops is to build tree houses around and near the trees. The shape of these tree houses were inspired by a child's drawing, see figs. 43 & 44, p. 53.

Fig. 37

"I love swinging ropes."*

"You can balance on pieces of wood that spin around"*

"That looks really fun!"*



Tree houses

Forest promenade

ACCESSIBILITY

This new part of Spindelskogen will be more integrated into the natural surroundings than the terraced existing one. The area closest to the lake promenade, will however be evened out a bit for accessibility. This section illustrates the principle:

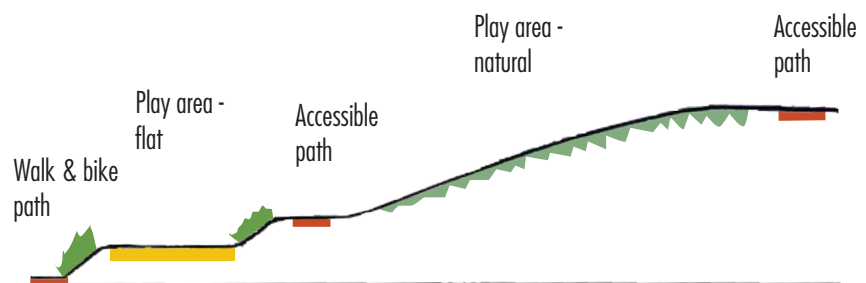


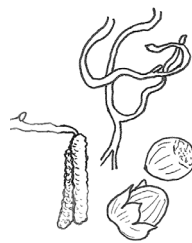
Fig. 38

PLANTS

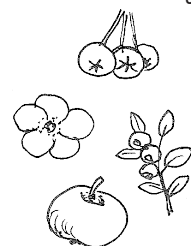
New trees, bushes, grasses and flowers are important when it comes to creating pleasant spaces in the park. The vegetation should be varied in height, with interesting shapes and colours throughout the year.



More oak and beech trees add to the forest atmosphere



Hazel bushes offer intriguing shapes



Bushes and trees with edible fruits around the snake tunnel

Fig. 39

REFLECTIONS

A participatory process?

Can this process of involving the children be described as a participatory? I will try to evaluate my own work according to different models mentioned earlier in "Framework".

I would say that the project met all four of Hart's (1992) basic criteria for how a participatory process shall be designed. The children were informed about the new playground project. I told them that the results from our workshops were to be handed over to the architects who would design the park. The children could choose to participate, or do something else if they wanted to. The project was meaningful also in a context outside the preschool, since the results of the workshops formed the basis for a program that became part of the background material for designing the playground. Comparing my project to Shier's five step-model for participatory processes with children, I would say that this project attained step 3, "Children's views are taken into account". During the workshops, the children were listened to and adults supported them in expressing their views. Their input was summarized and interpreted in a program, which was later presented to them so that they could tell if the interpretation was correct. Still, because I have no control over how the children's input will be treated in the following design process, I can't say that Shier's level 4 "Children are involved in decision-making processes" is reached. Shier's level 3 correlates with Hart's and Arnstein's level 5 in their models for categorizing levels of participation: "Consulted and informed". Hart (1992) defines this as a project designed and run by adults, where children are consulted. The children have a full understanding of the process and their opinions are taken seriously.

According to how children's roles in participatory processes are described in the research project *Designing with Children* (2016³) I would say that the children had several roles in this project. Their most prominent roles were those of *expert consultants*, providing information and data about their own experience, and *creative inspirers*, envisioning and proposing qualities and activities that inspire the design proposals. They also acted as *trailblazers*, creating a prototype of something that is envisioned for the new space (the willow den). to see what can be learned and how this might inform the design.

In the municipal project, the children were seen as an important resource of information that could be collected and incorporated in the building of a new playground. This corresponds to the view of participative design in fig. 9, p. 19. During the workshops, however, the interaction between me and the children looked more like in fig. 10, p. 19, where all the participants are seen as experts and hence has an equal role in the discussion. Figs. 40 and 41 on p. 51 visualize the communication modes used in this specific project.

Roleplay

Involving users in a participatory process demands that the architect can switch between different roles. From a more traditional role of designing alone or with other professionals, to someone who leads and enables users to participate in the process. He/she needs to be transparent about how the process works, and be able to offer tools for handling problems raised during the design process. In this case, these problems can be exemplified with helping the children when they didn't know how to build or draw something, or helping them find new things to focus on when they tired of what they were

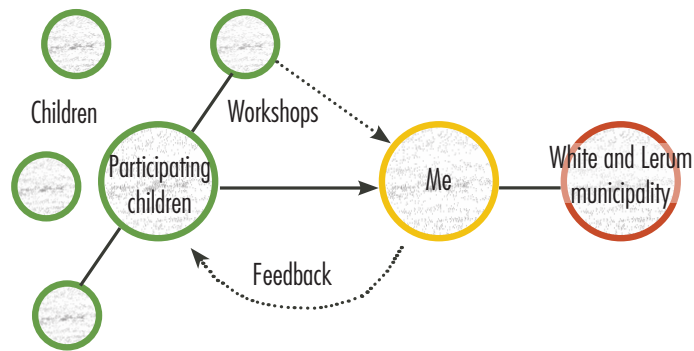


Fig. 40

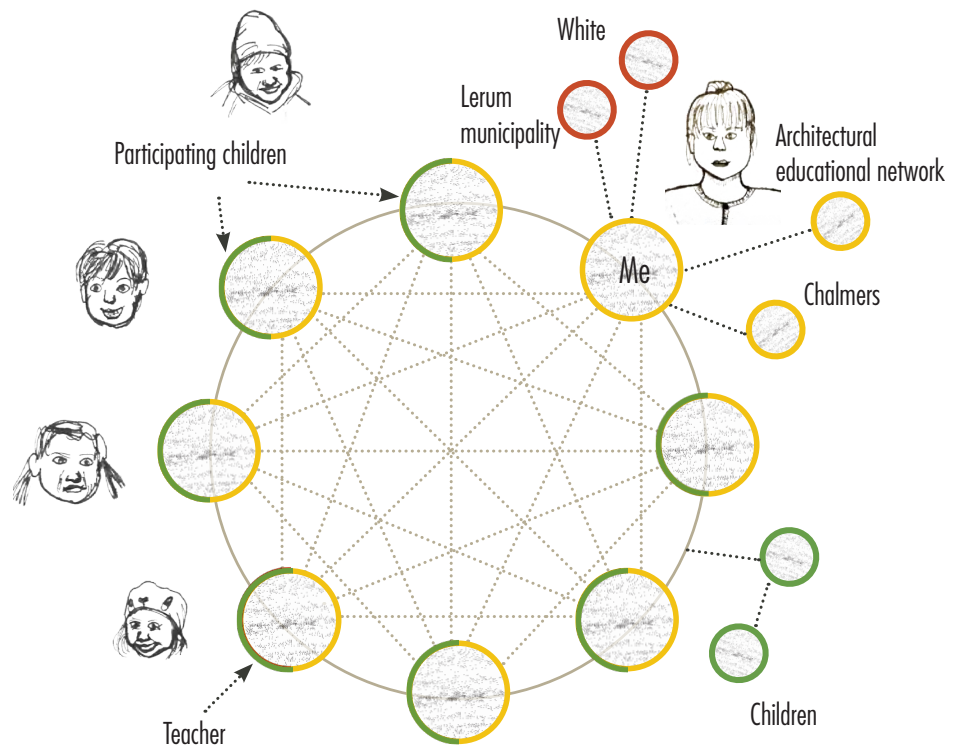


Fig. 41

Fig. 40: In the municipal project, the children were seen as an important resource of information that could be collected and incorporated in the building of a new playground. I collected their ideas and input through workshops and handed over the results to Lerum municipality and White. / Fig. 41: During our workshops, me, the teachers and the children had an equal role in the discussion. The children and teachers brought their expertise about their surroundings and how they used or wanted to use a playground, and I brought my knowledge about architecture and spatial planning. Together we discussed, played, built and explored.

doing. Throughout the process, we had several discussions about what would happen with the material, where I and the teachers explained that their ideas would most likely not be built as they were, but that they would be an inspiration to the architects at White, and that combinations of them might end up in the built park. We also stressed the importance of knowing which parts of the site the children appreciated and why, to be able to include these qualities in the future park.

As Wannerskog and Berge (2012) point out, the facilitative skills of a *process architect* (Fröst, 2004) or *process designer* (Malbert, 1999) are similar to those needed in an architectural educator. They can be summarized as the ability to create a safe and open-minded environment, the capacity to take initiative, be responsive and inspiring, and to be able to give constructive criticism. Fröst (2004) emphasizes the need for the process architect to have architectural design experience, while Malbert (1999) puts more importance on the capability of designing participative processes, when discussing the role of the process designer. These ideas are of course not mutually exclusive, as Eriksson (2013) points out. Many aspects of the “ordinary” architectural practice can be useful in a facilitative context. The architect’s holistic approach (Rosell, 1990) can help us see things from different perspectives, and our training in visualizing information can also be helpful for bridging the gap between experts and users. It doesn’t mean that all architects should work with participatory processes, or that we don’t need training to do so. My personal conclusion is, however, that in a participatory process like this, my architectural background was an asset and complemented the perspectives of project leaders, engineers, teachers and park-workers.

During the interpretation of the participatory process into a program, my experience and knowledge of architectural design and planning was put to use. I categorized, found common threads, and weighed the children’s input against other criteria to see where they supported each other. As I started working in sketch and model with the input from the workshops, parallel with

making the program for White, the interpretation phase merged quite seamlessly into my own design phase.

In a meeting with the landscape architect at White, we discussed whether the way I had planned the workshops had led the children in a certain direction, towards play in nature and the use of natural materials. The division of roles between a facilitative and a designing architect can be a problem. Information can get lost, if the experiences gained by participating in the workshops are not well transmitted by the facilitator. The designing architect needs to take time to engage with the interpreted workshop material, if the input from the workshops is going to be well incorporated in the design. The advantage of dividing the roles between different persons is that each can specialize and become more competent at what they do. However, a certain overlap where the facilitative and the designing architect work together might enhance the impact the user’s input can have on the project. This can end up being an economic question: is the client willing to pay for this? In this project, it could have meant for me to develop the workshop plan in cooperation with White.

Incorporating users’ input in architectural designs does not mean to simply take their drawings and models and simply draw them in bigger, buildable versions. Doing so can, as in my design process in this project, be a starting point, a what-if way to get inspired. What came next in the design work was to take the shapes, themes, and activities mentioned by the children and combine with the other demands of the program. My goal was to design a coherent and exciting park environment, where the children can either identify their ideas, or be surprised at the new turns they’ve taken. As Eriksson (2013) writes, the architect can’t find all the solutions to the design problem by just looking for them in the user’s context. We have to combine the input from participatory processes with our architectural competence. In order to gain the participants’ trust, we might need to become better at explaining how we do this.



Fig. 42

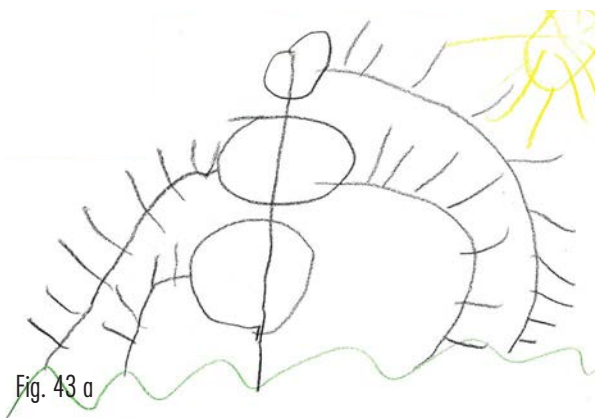
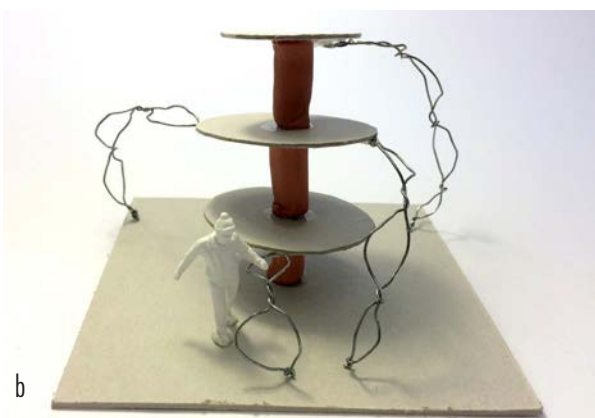


Fig. 43 a



b

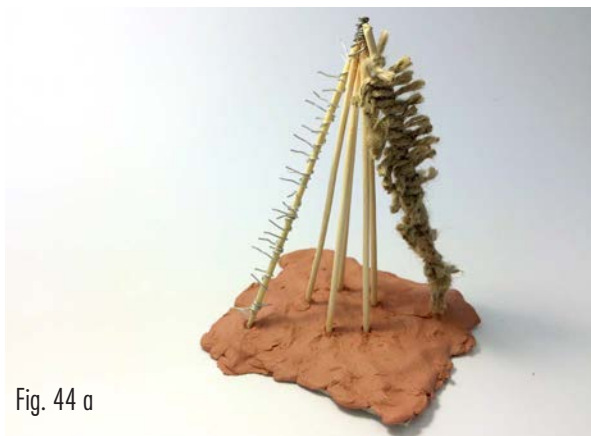
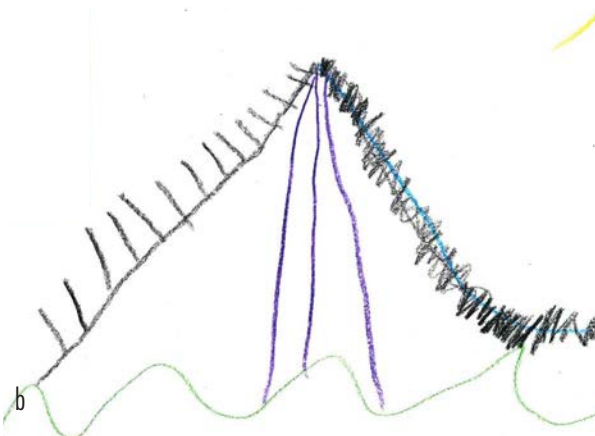


Fig. 44 a



b

Fig. 42: "I want to have a really long climbing structure, one that connects to the trees", said one of the children during our feedback session.
/ Figs. 43-44: The children's drawings inspired the models, which in turn led to the suggested shape of the tree houses.

Feedback

Rosell (1990) writes that being conscious about how one's personal design process works can help designers motivate choices that have influenced the final product. Ankarberg et al. (2015) recommends keeping a process diary in order to make the design process more visible in a design process involving non-professional designers. During this project, I have documented my work with preparing the workshops, interpreting them and starting to design a proposal for the playground. This means that I can follow many of the ideas that ended up in the design proposal back to the workshops with the children. If I hadn't reflected upon and documented the process, the connections might have been less clear and it would have been harder to show the children during the feedback session. As Tahvilzadeh (2015) points out, dialogue projects can often end up in visionary documents with unclear, if any, application in the actual project. By being able, as a designer, to point to different steps in the design process and how the input from a participatory process has affected the design, participants can see how their input was considered and understand why some things were realized and some not. Being able to point out which ideas originate from the users and how they improved the design can also be used as arguments towards clients (when they differ from the users) to invest in participatory processes.

Bomble (2016) describes the problem with planning processes being too closed for citizens to understand how their input was treated when presented with the final plan. If a process starts with a public dialogue, the planner will receive a lot of complementary information afterwards that will affect the design choices made, and how the users' input is treated. Transparency regarding what prioritizations are made and how the participants' ideas are interpreted throughout the design process could lead to increased trust between the public and the planning authorities. This demands a more continuous feedback to the public than is common today (Bomble, 2016). This is also one problem I identify in this project,

since I had the feedback session with the children one and a half month after the workshop series was finished. Then I had already handed the program over to White because their design-work had started before the workshop series was finished. The time plan for the project was quite tight, and I wanted White to have the children's input as soon as possible.

Another problem regarding feedback is that I can't tell the children about how their input is actually used during the rest of the project. Representatives from White were not present during the workshops and will not have any contact of their own with the preschool. My part of the work with Lerum municipality ends with the feedback session in December. I could have involved White more in the process, and the municipality could have defined how to give feedback to the children further on in the process. This illustrates the problem with closed processes described above.

The challenge of a master's thesis where you involve people from outside the academic world is that you can easily find yourself feeling like you're trapped in between. In relation to the municipality, the workshop series and the program was the focus of the municipal process. However, in the academic context, this was a sort of background material from which I would continue my work and draw conclusions. What I had to do in relation to this work being a part of a master's thesis at Chalmers did not necessarily correlate with the things I wanted to take time to do in relation to Lerum municipality or the children.

What's in it for whom?

If you look at the practical implications of my thesis project, Lerum municipality can say that they fulfilled their goal of having a dialogue process for this part of the playground project in Säteriparken. They could complement their earlier workshop with material describing how a group of younger kids saw the possibilities of the new park.

For the landscape architect working with



Fig. 45

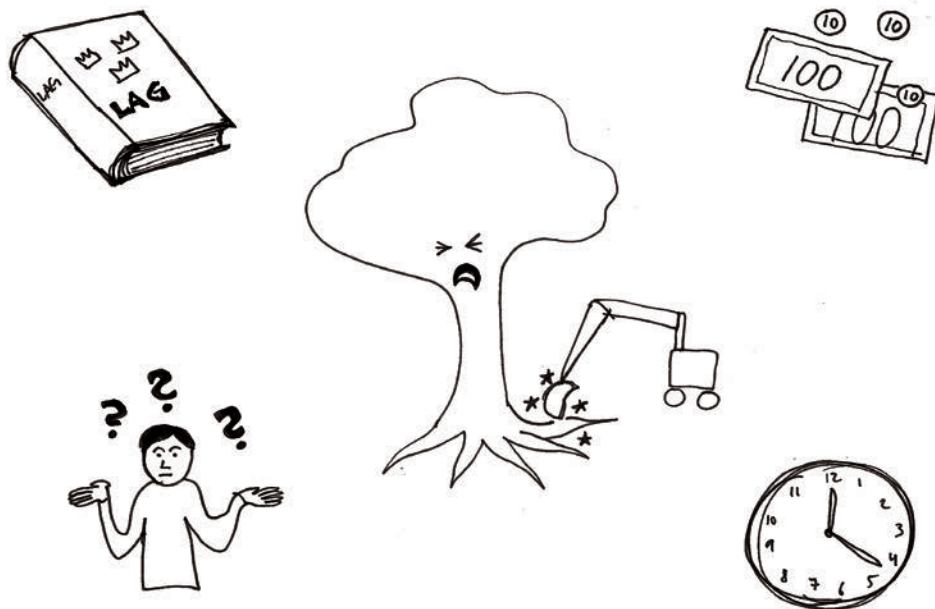


Fig. 46

Fig. 45: The children liked the idea of adding elements such as stones and bridges to the creek, to make it a place for water play. One child suggested that when the creek is dry, they could stick branches in the ground to alter the course of the water when it comes flowing in spring. The other children chimed in with ideas of what to build and what games to play here. Since the children talked about having boats in the park, I suggested a play boat to be placed here. / Fig. 46: This illustration was used to start a discussion with the children about why the project might not turn out exactly the way one would like it to. We talked about how there might be laws prohibiting things such as flying or exploding toys, how we have to be nice to the trees and not build anything that will hurt them, and about how lack of time, money or knowledge can affect the outcome.

this project at White, receiving the material from the workshops meant that their knowledge about how children want to use the park and what they appreciate there today grew. This can be combined with their architectural knowledge to make a design proposal that is more grounded in the local context.

The children took their role of providing ideas and input to the architects at White seriously. When I defined the purposes of the participatory process, one of them was “Learning and having fun”. Overall, the children enjoyed participating in the workshops. They said it was fun to build a den, draw and make models. They were proud of what they produced, and discovered new aspects of the site during our visits. The workshops also functioned as an introduction to architecture and an architect’s way of working. The teachers were happy with the process as well, and said that they had learnt some new ways to work with the children. During our feedback-meeting, I explained how I had summarized the result of the workshops into the program (Appendix 1), using images. The children reacted mostly positively, and seemed thrilled to see their ideas, or ideas inspired by them, transformed into drawings. They also had some remarks and ideas on how to further develop my proposals. I wrote down their comments, and some of them are included in the section about the design proposal in this booklet.

For me, both on a personal level and as an architect, working with the children and their input was very rewarding. Preparing the workshops and spending time on the site with the children was a fun way to get to know the area well. Versions of treasure hunts and flag inventories can probably be used with adults too, architects as well as users, to learn new and unexpected things about a site. The interpretation of the workshop results into a program was beneficial for my following design process in that it helped me prioritize in the material. It also allowed me to remember important elements that I might otherwise have overlooked. As suggested in an article by Birch, Parnell, Matsarika and Sorn (2016), involving children can give licence

for designers to do things differently. Having the input from the children as a part of the basis for the design led me to working in new ways, merging my ideas with theirs and working more model-based than I usually allow myself to do. These are all things that I would like to take with me in my future professional life. Eriksson and Nylander (2016) discuss the merits of complementary dialogues in planning and design projects, and claim that they can increase the social, architectural and economic qualities in a project. I believe that participatory processes can also bring new positive aspects to my architectural work process. My own image of the architect’s role has also become more defined. I want to work towards combining the wishes and needs of users with technical, economic and ecological demands, and make them realizable, surprising and enjoyable.



Fig. 47: This drawing shows part of the play area closest to the existing Spindelskogen, as seen from the forest promenade. The children suggested slides, climbing walls and monkey bars for the playground, so I have included these features in the drawing. The response from the children was positive: "I really want to play here". The mushrooms are for smaller children's play - the round ones can spin. They are inspired by one child's suggested "balls that can spin" from the model workshop. See Appendix 1, fig. H.

CONCLUSIONS

How did working with the input of users affect my design process as an architect? Well, the conclusions I can draw from this case study is that working with children made me act in some new ways that proved to be rewarding.

Preparing material for non-architects meant that I got to know the site and the situation thoroughly, and that I found myself focusing on unexpected things. It also helped me prioritize in the information. Processing the material from the workshops allowed me to remember things that might otherwise have been forgotten, and to find common threads in the material to pick up and work with. Having the input from the children as a part of the basis for the design led me to work in new ways, merging my ideas with theirs and working more model-based.

Documenting the process was beneficial. I can follow ideas back to the children's input, and also see where my own ideas and thoughts entered the picture. This is important in a feedback situation with users, especially when it comes to explaining why certain ideas did not end up in the design proposal. To maintain the trust of the participating users, it's important that dialogue processes are not seen as separate parts of a design process; as separate chapters that can be "finished". Also in a project like this one, where it's clearly communicated to the children that they will not be involved in the final design decisions, a feedback session after the park is built would be great in order to discuss what happened with their ideas and input.

When it comes to the second question that I started out with, how architects can interpret the outcome from a participatory process into a program, I have realized that working with the input of users doesn't mean to simply propose exactly what they say they want. It's important to weigh the input from users, the qualitative

input, with the technical, economic and ecological demands of the project and its context. As architects, we have to use our competence to combine these factors and suggest solutions that are surprising and enjoyable.

When the designing architect is not the one carrying out the dialogue process, a certain processing of the outcome of the workshops is needed in order to make the material accessible. A close communication between dialogue process leader, users and designing architects is the ideal. For a motivated individual, the architectural education and practice can be a good preparation for a facilitative role in processes involving users.

When interpreting input from children, it's important to be conscious about your own motivation for highlighting certain things and downplaying others. For example, when working on the program I realized that I was reluctant to include that some children had proposed things that explode. Naturally, you cannot have exploding toys in a playground, but you could get inspired by the idea and work with shapes that are reminiscent of explosions, for example. I think the reason that I overlooked it was that I really wanted the children's input to influence the park, and I was afraid that if the explosions were included, that would reinforce the prejudice that children's proposals are always unrealistic.

It was easy to incorporate the children's input concerning general things such as activities and the placement of certain functions, into the design proposal. But to borrow from and develop their aesthetic preferences and more detailed proposals did not come as naturally, which is perhaps linked to preconceived ideas about architectural taste and children's taste. It could be an interesting challenge to work more with this in future projects.



Fig. 48

Fig. 48: Small children's play area, where motor skills can be trained by climbing and crawling. Wooden extensions make a fallen tree more accessible for play. The ground is flattened for comfort and accessibility, and the dug-out earth is modelled into small hills. The area is covered with rubber paving. It is separated from the lake promenade and the water by plant beds and wood stumps of varying heights, where parents can sit and older siblings can balance. The preschool teachers said they would like the wooden stumps a bit higher. The children said it looked like a good place to practice crawling.

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Personal communication

Interview with Vici Hofbauer, architectural educator, 20/9 2016.

Interview with Karl-Johan Sellberg, architectural educator, 22/9 2016.

Interview with Hanna Ahlström Isacson, landscape architect at White, 2/11 2016.

Workshop with Pernilla Ankarberg, 27/10 2016.

Tutoring sessions with Lisa Bomble, architectural educator and researcher.

Image sources

Fig. 16: Lerum municipality. Retrieved from I:\Projekt\Floda C\Lekplats\Bilder\Färdig lekplats.

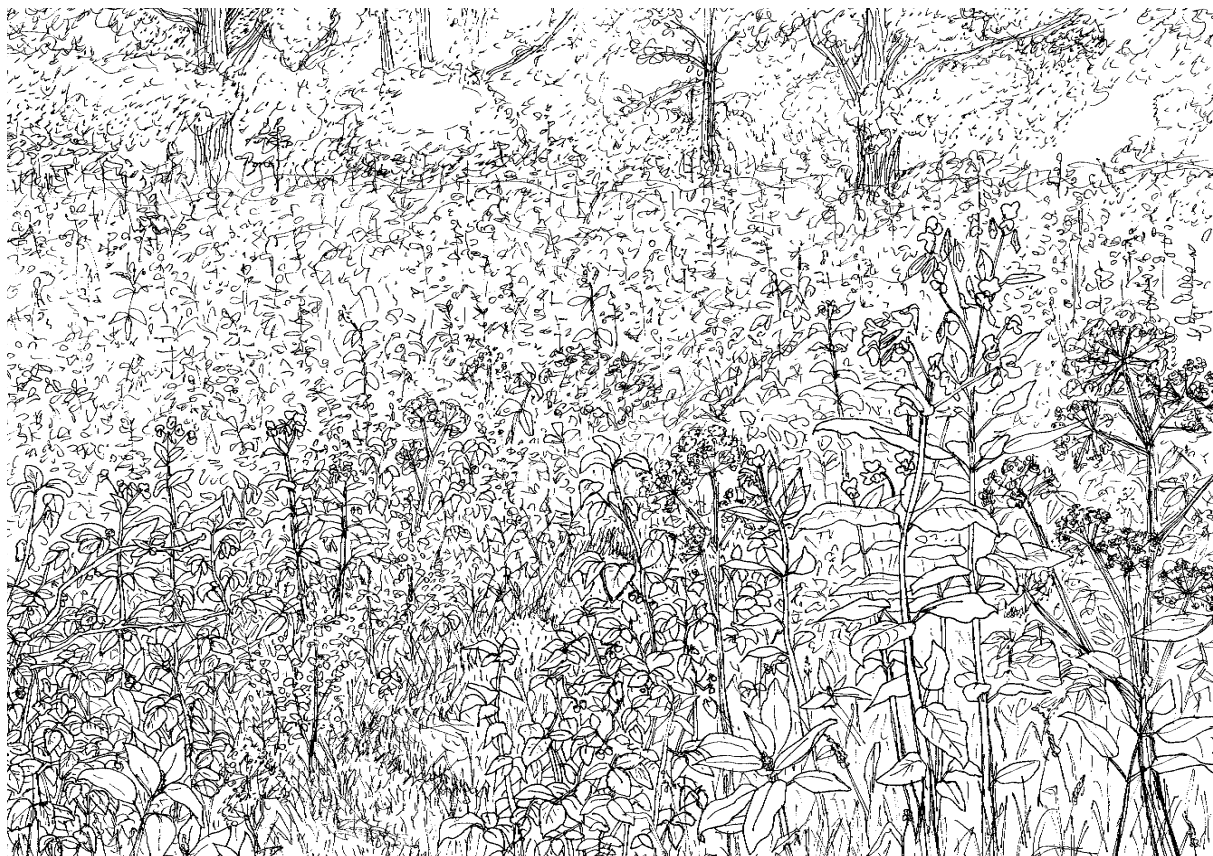
Fig. 23 a, fig. 26 a, fig. 43 a and fig. 43 b are made by children at Floda Säteri Montessori preschool, autumn 2016.

Fig. 34: Photo of wooden play structure: Evelyn Court Estate Playground, by Erect Architecture. <http://www.play-scapes.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/evelyn-court-playground-erect-architecture2.jpg>. [2017-01-03].

Photo of willow sculpture by Patrick Dougherty. <http://dgez3lkf8gi62.cloudfront.net/responsive/features/patrick/patrick5.jpg>. [2017-01-03].

All other diagrams, illustrations and photos are by Ulrika Lindahl.

Appendix 1 starts on the following page



SPINDELSKOGEN VÄXER!

WORKSHOPS MED BARN HÖSTEN 2016



Det här häftet är en del av det underlag för utbyggnaden av lekplatsen Spindelskogen i Säteriparken i Floda som lämnades till White Arkitekter hösten 2016. Det beskriver sex workshopar med en grupp förskolebarn i Floda. Under workshoparna inventerade barnen parken och kom med idéer för den framtida utformningen. Deras upptäckter och visioner kan förhoppningsvis utgöra en inspiration i gestaltningen av parken.

Workshoparna planerades, leddes och sammanställdes av arkitektstuderande Ulrika Lindahl, på uppdrag av Lerums kommun. Detta arbete är en del av Ulrikas examensarbete, som handlar om barns deltagande i gestaltungsprocesser och hur arkitektens arbete kan påverkas av det.

Ett stort tack till barn och förskollärare på Montessoriskolan Floda Säteris förskola för er nyfikenhet och kreativitet!

Framsidan: teckning av Ulrika Lindahl, foto av Birgitta Bergquist.

Fotografierna i häftet är tagna av:

Birgitta Bergquist: Bild 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 27

Pia Schmidtbauer: Bild 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 20

Teckningarna på sidan 4-5 är ritade av barn på Montessoriskolan Floda Säteris förskola.

Resterande bilder, samt text och layout: Ulrika Lindahl.

Barnen som medverkade gick på Montessoriskolan Floda Säteris förskola och ingick i gruppen Rådjuren under hösten 2016.

Detta är version 7, 2017-02-03

WORKSHOP 1

TECKNINGAR OCH KARTOR

2016-09-15

9 femåringar deltog, tillsammans med mig och förskolläraren Birgitta.

Introduktion – 15 minuter

Rita teckningar – 45 minuter

Titta på kartor – 10 minuter

Syfte

- Barnen lär känna mig, temat arkitektur och park-projektet.
- Fundera kring vad som är roligt att göra ute.
- Uttrycka idéer genom att rita.
- Barnen introduceras till kartan, samt platsen för projektet och var den ligger i förhållande till förskolan.

Uppgift

Barnen får individuellt rita saker som är roliga att göra ute i en park. Om de vill kan de kategorisera sina teckningar utifrån om de visar något som är roligt att göra under olika årstider, i regn eller solsken, ensam eller tillsammans med andra.

Vi tittar på kartan och pratar om vad den visar. Vi pekar ut platsen för den nya parken och var förskolan ligger.

Genomförande

Introduktion

Vi presenterade oss för varandra. Jag berättade att det ska byggas en ny park vid Spindelskogen, och att barnen ska undersöka platsen och komma med idéer, som de som ska rita parken ska få ta del av och kunna inspireras av. Barnen besökte platsen för den nya parken förra veckan, och

under en diskussion om vad arkitektur kan vara för något började flera av dem föreslå saker som skulle kunna finnas i den nya parken.

Rita teckningar

Jag berättade att vi skulle rita saker som är roliga att göra ute, och presenterade de olika kategorierna som barnen kunde använda sig av om de ville. Sedan satte barnen igång. Jag och Birgitta pratade med dem och skrev ner vad de ritade. Efter en stund samlades vi och tittade på teckningarna.

Kartan

Många av barnen hade bra koll på hur en karta fungerade, var förskolan låg och var den nya parken ska ligga. Vi ringade in dessa platser, och pratade om att vi ska gå dit nästa vecka.

Resultat

Barnen vet nu mer om de framtida planerna för Säteriparken och om höstens workshops. Dagens övning resulterade i runt 30 teckningar fulla av idéer som barnen även uttryckte verbalt. Eftersom de besökt platsen tidigare och pratat om att det ska byggas en ny park låg fokus mycket på saker man ville ha i den framtida parken, snarare än på vad man tycker om att göra ute i allmänhet. Symbolerna som visade de olika kategorierna gjorde att några barn reflekterade kring att tak kan vara bra på hösten och vintern, och därför ritade kojor och lekhus.

Inspiration till gestaltning

Barnen hade många individuella, ofta rätt detaljerade idéer. Jag har försökt kategorisera dem utifrån följande frågeställningar:

- Vilka aktiviteter ritas eller nämner barnen?
- Vilka fysiska element ritas eller nämner barnen?
- Vilka former eller teman ritas eller nämner barnen?

Aktiviteter

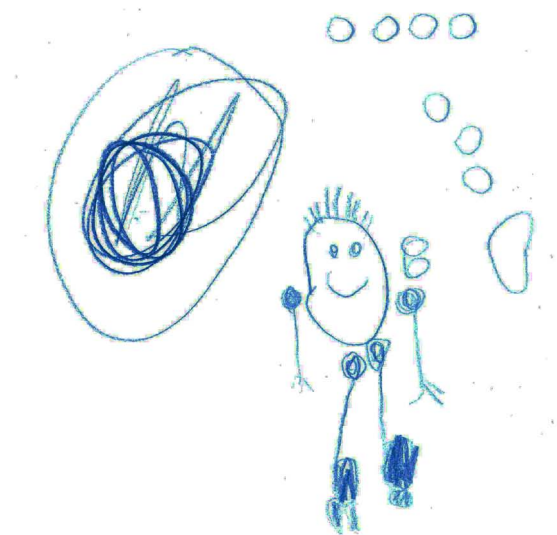
Klättra
Krypa inuti saker
Hänga i armarna
Titta ut från saker
Leka kurragömma
Leka jage
Leka i vatten
Äta
Sova

Fysiska element

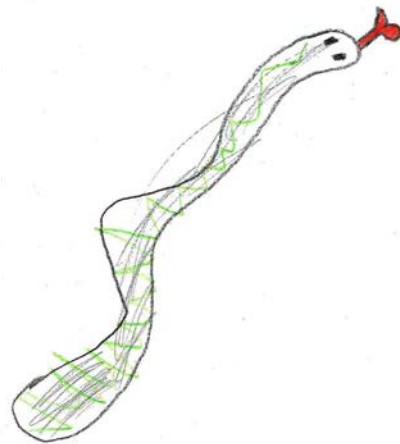
Stegar och trappor
Tunnlar
Föremål att klättra på
Hål, fönster
Hus, tält
Små rum
Vattenrutschkanor
Pooler
Rep
Studsmattor
Saker som sprutar vatten
Lååånga rutschkanor
Gungor

Former och teman

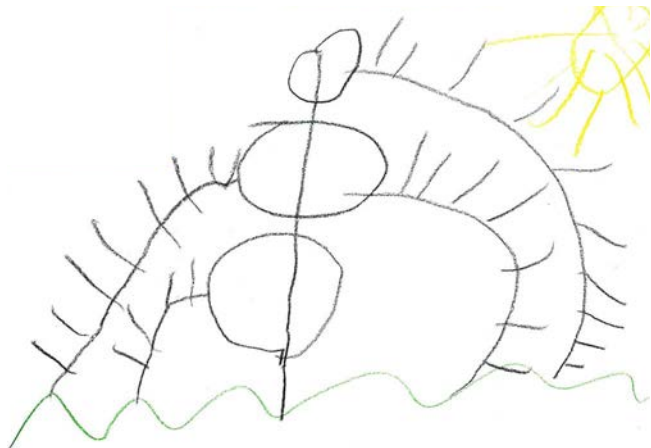
Båtar
Hjärtan
Pikachu (Pokémon)
Insekter
Racerbilar
Dinosaurier
Blommor



En studsmatta i regnet.



En orm som man balanserar på, man kan gå på tungan. Man kan gå in i den, då får man ligga ner och krypa. Det är en öppning vid huvudet och en vid svansen. Om två personer möts på mitten får de krypa tillbaka. Den är vitmålad inuti. Den går inte sönder om man står på den.



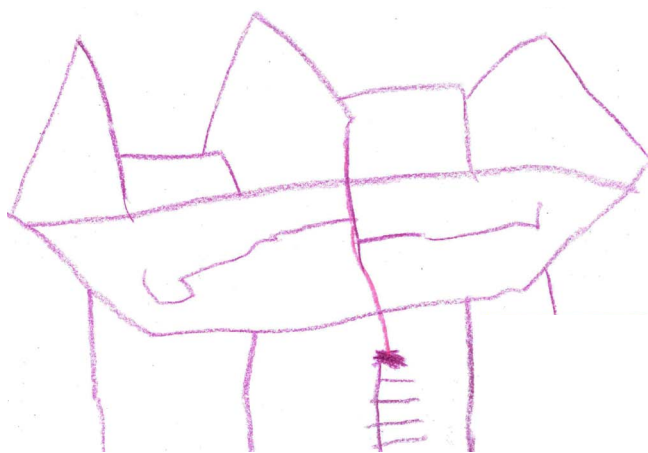
Klätterställning med stegar till de olika våningarna.



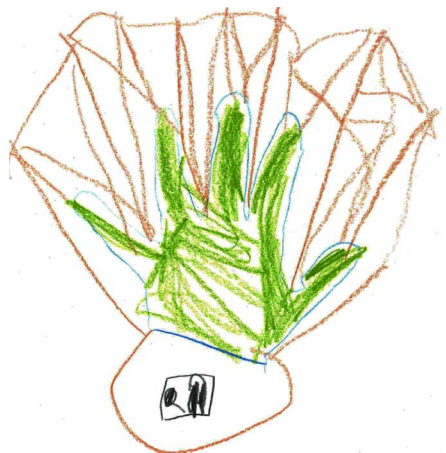
En jättelång rutschkana med fönster. Armgång – tunnel – rutschkana – klättervägg med snöre ner. Gungor med ringar man kan hänga i.



En klätterpikachu. Man kan titta ut genom huvudet.



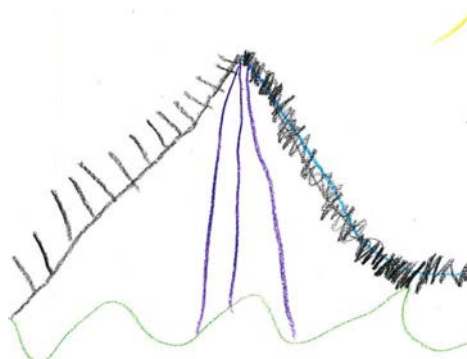
Ställningar håller upp en segelbåt. En trappa upp finns ett hål till en tunnel.



Låtsas-laser som är rep. En skattkista längst ner med leksaker i som man kan ha i parken.



Ett hus som passar på vintern. Man kan klättra på det, hoppa över de hjärtformade fönstren, och det är gungor framför.



Ett lektält som man får vara inne i. Gjort i trä. Passar alla årstider. Man kan leka kurrögömma här. På utsidan är det röd-vit-orange-blått. Både barn och vuxna får plats.

WORKSHOP 2

SKATTJAKT

2016-09-22

10 femåringar deltog, tillsammans med mig, två förskollärare samt kommunens kommunikatör.

Introduktion – 15 minuter

Skattjakt - 50 minuter

Syfte

- Genom att röra sig i området och uppmärksamma olika saker får barnen en bättre kännedom om platsen.
- Barnen övar på att läsa kartor och följa en väg.
- Barnen kan uttrycka sina åsikter om platsen.

Uppgift

Vi följer en stig som är utritad på en karta över parken och området runt omkring. Längs med stigen ska vi hitta de olika ”skatterna” som finns utmärkta på kartan och som visas med foton.

Skatterna är platser eller saker som kan vara intressanta, fina, fula, spännande... När vi hittar en skatt stannar vi och pratar om den, innan vi letar rätt på nästa.

Genomförande

Introduktion

Vi samlades ute och pratade om vad vi gjorde sist. Barnen kände igen kartan, och gav exempel på saker som kan vara arkitektur.

Skattjakt

Barnen fick varsin karta och vi delade upp oss i två grupper. Vi gick samma väg, men i varsin riktning. Vi gick längs stigen och hittade de olika skatterna. Avslutningsvis lekte vi lite i Spindel-skogen.

Resultat

Genom skattjakten fick barnen lära känna platsen bättre, och jag kunde studera vad som intresserade dem eller inte där. Intrycken, foton och ljudinspelning från promenaden blev underlag för sammanställningen på nästa uppslag.

Barnen fokuserade ofta på andra saker än det jag hade gissat skulle intressera dem. Till exempel fick ett metallkryss på en vägg mycket mer uppmärksamhet än den tunnel genom en buske som jag satt ut på kartan, och de upptäckte ett fantastiskt klätterträd som jag inte funderat så mycket på.



5. "Ett klätterträd är en jättebra skatt!" / 6. Ibland var det svårt att hålla jämna steg! / 7. "Det har varit en snigel på vår skatt!" / 8. Ett barn krupit in i en av skatterna. / 9. Barnen jämför karta och verklighet. / 10. Jag visar kartan innan skattjakten.

INSPIRATION TILL GESTALTNING



Skatt 1: Gamla grindstolpar i sten.
Barnen var inte så intresserade av sin skolas historia som säteri. De gissade att grinden var till för att markera ingången till Spindel-skogen.



Skatt 4: Stubbe i bokskogen.
Här hittade barnen insekter som intresserade dem mycket. En gråsugga följde med oss därifrån. Barnen hade varit i skogen förut.



De här stubbarna väckte barnens nyfikenhet. Vem har lagt dem här? Bor det ormar här? De var roliga att balansera och klättra på. Några barn ville stanna och plocka ekollon.



Skatt 2: Sten under träd.
Den här skatten var en favorit, eftersom det visade sig vara ett mycket bra klätterträd. Barnen hade inte sett det innan. "Det här var verkligen en bra skatt!"



Skatt 3: "Skäggig" ek.
Att följa kartan och hitta skatten var spännande, men trädet i sig intresserade inte barnen så mycket. De visste att "skägget" på grenarna var lavar.

★ = En plats som speciellt intresserade barnen.





Skatt 5: Tidigare plats för badhus.
Jag trodde att barnen skulle tycka det var intressant att det legat ett litet badhus här, men det gjorde de inte. De ville balansera på stenarna, men var rätt försiktiga när de närmade sig vattnet.



Skatt 6: Entré till Spindelskogen.
Vi pratade inte om den här skatten, för barnen var trötta och ville gå till lekplatsen.



Frukt- och lekpaus i Spindelskogen.
När vi satte oss ner började barnen fråga om den nya parken: När ska den byggas, och vad händer med våra idéer?



Skatt 7: Roligt klippt träd.
Efter att ha hittat skatten var barnen mer intresserade av att rulla ner för slänten.



Skatt 8: Genväg genom buskarna.
Barnen var fascinerade av metallkorset på väggen. Det var också roligt att krypa genom busken.

Tankar efter skattjakten

Barnen hade en god förståelse för konceptet gränser, som kunde symboliseras av linjer på gatan, grindar eller staket. För dem var en grind eller portal en tydlig signal att något börjar eller slutar.

Allt kan användas för att klättra eller balansera på. Att bara titta på saker är inte lika roligt som att upptäcka dem med hela sin kropp.

Insekter är jätteintressanta och lätta att engagera sig i, men också lite läskiga. Småskaliga fysiska element, som stubbar, kan uppmuntra till lugnare lek där barnen sitter ner tillsammans och upptäcker saker.

Saker som inte kan ses eller vidröras, som en plats historia, är svåra att finna intressanta om man bara får höra om dem. Å andra sidan, när barnen väl visste att något hade funnits på platsen började de ställa frågor om det och länka samman informationen med vad de nu kunde se omkring sig. De frågade till exempel om de rika människorna som bodde på säteriet hade kunnat hugga ner den gamla "skäggiga" eken i parken om de velat. Om det finns en intressant historia på en plats och man vill att barnen ska veta om det så får man visa det på något intressant sätt, det räcker inte att informera om det.

Sjön intresserade inte barnen så mycket som jag hade väntat mig. Kanske berodde det på att de vanligtvis inte får gå ner till den och att de därför var lite avvaktande, eller att de började bli trötta när vi kom dit.

WORKSHOP 3

MINIPARKER OCH FLAGGOR

2016-09-29

10 femåringar deltog, tillsammans med mig och två förskollärare.

Introduktion - 15 minuter

Göra miniparker - 50 minuter

Placera ut flaggor - 1 timme 10 minuter

Syfte

- Genom att fokusera på någon annans behov får barnen ett nytt perspektiv på den nya parken.
- Barnen får uttrycka sina idéer i modell genom att arbeta med material, skala och form.
- Genom att röra sig fritt på egen hand lär barnen känna platsen för den nya parken bättre.
- Barnen får uttrycka vad de tycker om olika delar av platsen.

Uppgift

Varje barn gör en liten modell av en park för en borttappad och uttråkad gråsugga. Inspirationen till denna uppgift kommer från ett kryp som väckte stor uppmärksamhet under förra veckans skattjakt. Byggnadsmaterialet är diverse material från naturen: grenar, ekollon, löv, etc.

Nere i parken får barnen välja mellan olika flaggor som symboliserar olika känslor eller aktiviteter som platsen kan inspirera till. Barnen placerar flaggorna där de tycker att de passar. Sedan letar vi gemensamt upp flaggorna, och barnen kan berätta varför de stuckit ner dem på de valda ställena.

Genomförande

Introduktion och modeller

Vi tittade på bilder från skattjakten och barnen pratade om vad vi sett, bland annat en gråsugga. Sedan byggde vi modeller av en park där gråsuggan skulle kunna trivas. Jag och förskolläraren tog foton och skrev ner vad barnen berättade om modellerna.

Inventering med flaggor

Vi gick ner till parken, och barnen fick först välja flaggor som symboliserade "Plats jag tycker om"/"Plats jag inte tycker om". De satte ut dem och ville snart ha fler. Nu fick de välja bland flaggor som visade olika aktiviteter: Springa, leka, klättra eller vila. Sist fick de sätta ut flaggor som symboliserade "Hemlig plats", "Akta sig", "En plats för mig" och "En plats för andra". Efter en paus tittade vi på flaggorna och pratade om var de satt.

Resultat

Barnens modeller visade på kvaliteter som de tyckte var viktiga i en park för någon som är mindre än de själva. "Önskeliste"-känslan som lätt uppstår och som kan leda till besvikelse minskade då barnen fick fokusera på någon annan och arbeta med material som redan hade en given form. Modellerna kan också ge ledtrådar om vilka funktioner, aktiviteter och möjligtvis former som barnen uppskattar.

Barnen placerade entusiastiskt ut alla 60 flaggorna och jag markerade på en karta var de satt. Kartan, samt foton och ljudupptagning från workshopen, blev underlaget till en inventeringskarta - vad vill barnen göra här i den framtida parken, och vilken sorts platser har de hittat här?



21. "Jag har gjort ett par vingar och ett tält där man kan gömma sig." / 22. Ett barn har gjort ett gömställe under löven, och en liten insekt har redan börjat leka där! / 23. Barnen diskuterar varför detta är "en plats för andra" där de inte får vara och där man måste akta sig, efter att ha satt ut sina flaggor. / 24. Det här är ett bra ställe att vila på eftersom: "Det är fin utsikt, och träden är som ett tak." / 25. Efter att jag samlat ihop flaggorna satte jag mindre versioner av dem på en karta för att få en överblick av barnens åsikter om parken.

Inspiration till gestaltning

Miniparker

Barnen inkluderade följande element i sina modeller: Platser att äta på, mat, platser att sova eller vila på, gömställen, små kojor, mjukt material att gå på, tält, äppelträd, saker att springa runt eller rulla på, dörrar, gungor, paraplyer, smuts, båtar, pooler och saker att klättra på.

Inventering med flaggor

GRÄNSER

Barnen upplever den lilla vägen mellan backen och sjön som en väldigt stark gräns. Många satte flaggor som betydde "Plats för andra" (tolkat som "Här får jag inte vara"), eller "Akta sig" här. Barnen sade att de inte får gå ner till vattnet för de vuxna, och att det kan vara farligt att vara på vägen eftersom det kommer cyklar och moped. De är vana att vara vid platsen, men med tanke på barn som är på tillfälligt besök så kan det behövas tydliga gränser i form av fysiska element för att undvika att de går till vägen eller vattnet.

Grönskan mellan Spindelskogen och den nya parken upplevs generellt som ett intressant område, där barnen tyckte att aktiviteterna leka och klättra kan äga rum. Några arga gubbar och "Akta sig"-symboler placerades här på grund av taggbuskar.

TRÄD

Barnen tyckte att platser som var skyddade och skuggade av träd var bra platser att vila eller leka på. Dessutom ville de gärna klättra i träden. Många glada ansikten och "En plats för mig"-flaggor placerades under träd, vilket även det indikerar att barnen gillar dessa platser och vill vara här. Träd och deras omgivning besöks också som bra gömställen. I den framtida parken kan träden lämnas som de är, eller så integrerar man dem i gestaltningen på ett sätt som förstärker deras rumsskapande egenskaper, genom att skapa ännu fler anledningar att vistas runt och under dem.

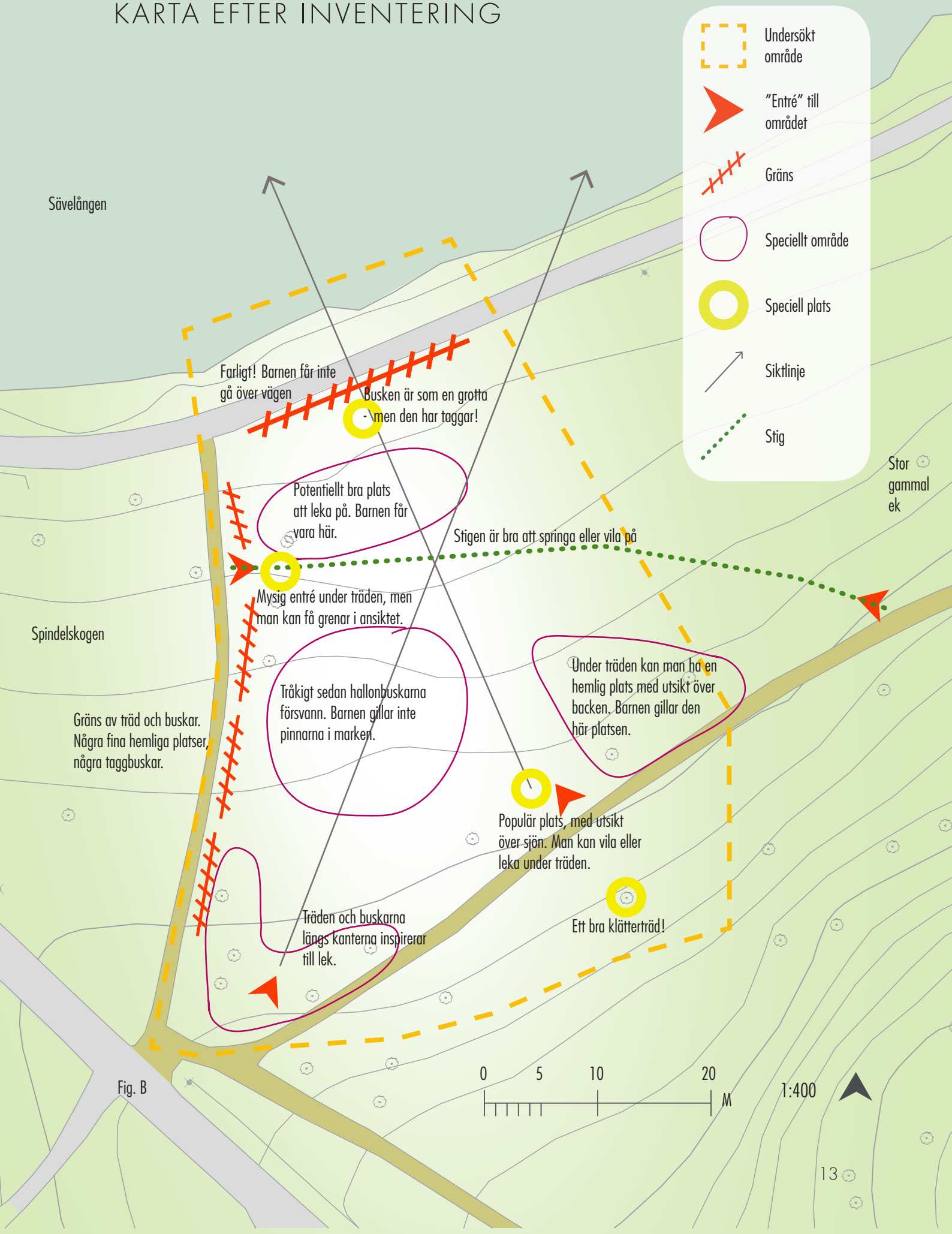
DEN ÖPPNA YTAN

Det öppna fältet, där de nedklippta hallonbuskarna skapat en gräsbeklädd backe med massa pinnar som sticker upp, möttes av barnen med blandade känslor. Vissa såg här en potential för lek och spring, medan andra klagade på den stickiga marken. Stigen som trampats upp genom området blev, överraskande nog, markerad som en bra plats att vila på. Kanske beror det på att det är det enda stället där gräset är mjukt och grönt. Eftersom det här området är rätt anonymt kan det vara en bra placering för större nya element, eller för att skapa en öppen flexibel yta med en mer lekvänlig markbeläggning.



26. En plats där gråsuggorna kan äta och klättra. / 27. Bären är mat, och det röda lövet med grönt på är en säng. Ekollonen ligger i en pool. Man kan rulla över talkotten. / 28. Det här är ett hus där man kan äta. Den minsta stenen är en dörr som kan öppnas. / 29. Man kan springa längs sidorna. Du kan sitta här och titta på film. Och titta på alla grönsakerna!

KARTA EFTER INVENTERING



Undersökt område



"Entré" till området



Gräns



Speciellt område



Speciell plats



Siktlinje



Stig

Sävelången

Farligt! Barnen får inte gå över vägen

Busken är som en grotta - men den har taggar!

Potentiellt bra plats att leka på. Barnen får vara här.

Mysig entré under träden, men man kan få grenar i ansiktet.

Tråkigt sedan hallonbuskarna försvann. Barnen gillar inte pinnarna i marken.

Stigen är bra att springa eller vila på

Under träden kan man ha en hemlig plats med utsikt över backen. Barnen gillar den här platsen.

Populär plats, med utsikt över sjön. Man kan vila eller leka under träden.

Ett bra klätterträd!

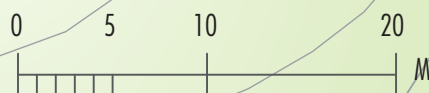
Träden och buskarna längs kanterna inspirerar till lek.

Gräns av träd och buskar. Några fina hemliga platser, några taggbuskar.

Stor gammal ek

Spindelskogen

Fig. B



1:400

WORKSHOP 4

BYGGA PILKOJA

2016-10-03

9 femåringar deltog, tillsammans med mig, två förskolelärare, en planarkitekt från kommunen och en kompis från arkitektutbildningen.

Introduktion - 10 minuter

Bygga koja - 1 timme 30 minuter

Syfte

- Barnen bekantar sig vidare med platsen och får lämna ett eget avtryck på den.
- Genom att göra ett tillägg på platsen väcks tankar om vad som fattas och vad som hade varit kul att kunna göra här.
- Barnen får utforska arkitektoniska begrepp genom att fundera kring öppningar, rum, passager och riktningar.

Uppgift

Barnen får, med hjälp av oss vuxna, bygga en koja av pilgrenar på en plats i det framtida parkområdet.

Genomförande

Introduktion

Vi samlades ute och pratade om vad vi gjort sist. Jag berättade att vi nu skulle bygga något för människor (istället för gräsuggor) av pilgrenar. Vi pratade om att ifall vi ska bygga något man kan gå in i så behöver vi tänka på var det ska finnas öppningar, om vi vill kunna titta ut så måste det finnas fönster, till exempel. Sedan gick vi ner till parken med ett järnspekt att göra hål i marken med. Pilgrenarna hade blivit nedkörda tidigare.

Kojbygge

Vi började med att titta på grenarna och prata lite om var och vad vi skulle bygga. Barnen var ivriga. Flera ville bygga en egen koja, vilket inte var möjligt eftersom det krävs mycket vuxenhjälp. Vi började göra hål i marken för en koja, och barnen pekade ut var ingången skulle vara. Medan några började på stommen gick andra runt och funderade på vad som skulle byggas mer. Tankar om att det behövdes flera rum, flera kojor, uttrycktes och en mindre koja påbörjades. Slutligen föreslog ett barn en tunnel som binder ihop de två kojorna, och den tog också form. Diskussioner om var öppningar och ”fönster” skulle vara pågick löpande. Ofta byggde ett barn igen där ett annat ville ha öppet. Jag visade hur man kan ”fläta” in grenar för att täta väggarna och många barn hjälpte till med det. På barnens initiativ hade vi fruktstund i kojor, innan vi byggde slut på grenarna. Framförallt mot slutet varvades kojbygget med lek i kojor. Slutligen satte vi upp en skylt om vilka som byggt kojor och om den kommande parken.

Resultat

Efter 1,5 timmar hade vi en fin koja i perfekt barnstorlek, som även vuxna kunde få plats i om de hukade sig lite. Barnen gillade att bygga koja och var märkbart stolta över den. De uttryckte oro för att någon skulle kunna förstöra kojor. När barnen tillfrågades vad de tyckte om kojor och att bygga den var alla positiva. Någon sade sig specifikt gilla att arbeta, medan en annan tyckte det roliga var att ”springa runt kojor och in i den” medan själva byggandet inte var lika kul. Ett par barn sade att de ville gå hit med sina föräldrar.



30. Frukostund i stora kojan. / 31. Barn och vuxna hjälps åt att bygga. / 32. Man får fundera noga på var fönstren ska vara. / 33. "Kattluckan" är precis så stor att man kommer genom! / 34. Samling framför den färdiga kojan.

Inspiration till gestaltning

Kojans placering

Kojans placering gavs delvis av praktiska skäl, men det var också en av de platser som barnen upplevde som intressanta för lek, klättring och andra aktiviteter. På grund av det höga läget i backen har man fin utsikt från kojans entré vänder sig mot öster, med en smitväg, ”kattluckan”, mot buskagen i väster. Det här är en plats som upplevs som ganska skyddad på grund av träden runt om.

Form och funktion

Kojans form gavs av barnens önskemål, kombinerat med de vuxnas tolkning av dessa, samt mängden material. Det resulterade i en större rund koja, med en takhöjd som passar både barn och vuxna, och en rund mindre koja, där vuxna får huka sig. Kojorna binds samman av en gång där vuxna kan gå om de hukar sig. Entrén har mått som passar barnen fint, men även vuxna kan ta sig in relativt problemfritt. I den större kojans kunde 8 barn sitta i en ring och äta frukt, medan den mindre kojans hade plats för 2-3. Från den

mindre kojans gjorde barnen en liten utgång, som de kallade kattluckan. Barnen tyckte att det var en rolig utmaning att krypa genom den. Kojans mått kan sägas utgå från barnen, men passar även föräldrar och andra vuxna som också vill leka. På så vis kan de inspirera lekredskap och platser i den framtida parken.

Att påverka sin omgivning

De flesta av barnen var förtjusta över att få bygga något relativt stort som fick stå kvar på platsen. I den framtida parken kanske det inte finns möjlighet att ha en permanent kojabyggarplats, men lekredskap som uppmuntrar till att man själv sätter sin prägel på dem, till exempel genom att sticka in pinnar, kan vara en idé. I gränslandet mot bokskogen kan man uppmuntra till kojabygge, speciellt i samband med de tillfällen skogen och backen röjs. En vattenlek där barnen själva väljer hur de vill forma vattnets väg är också en typ av lekredskap som barnen kan påverka.

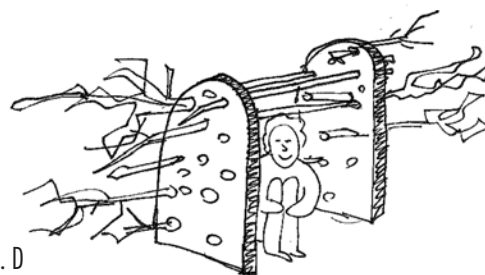
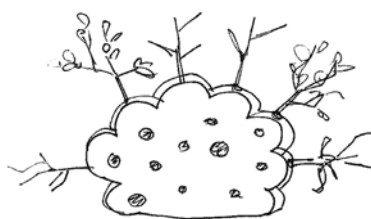
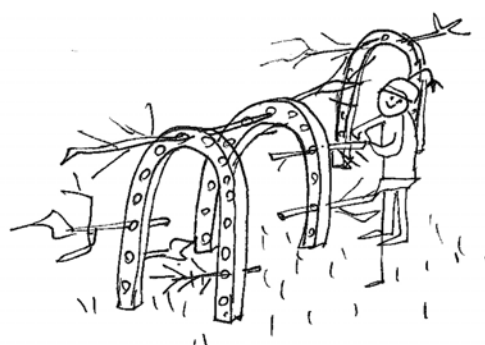
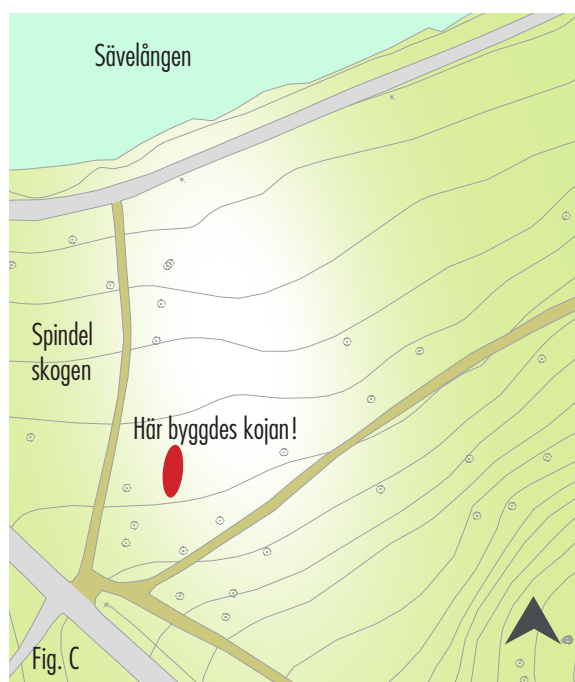


Fig. C. Situationsplan / Fig D. Idéer till lekredskap och ställningar där barnen kan bygga på formen med pinnar och annat.

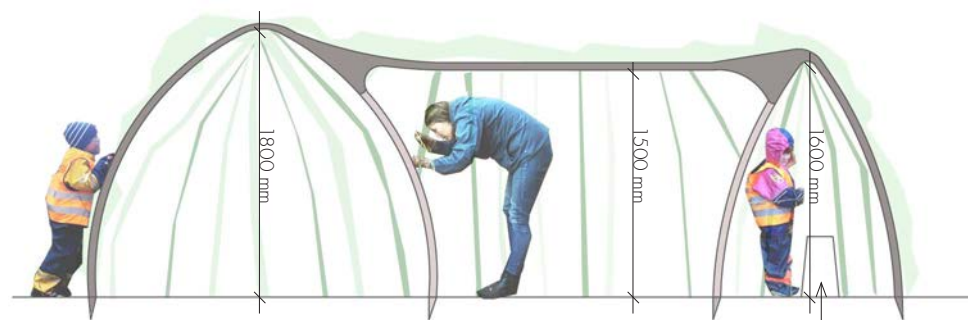


Fig. E

"Kattluckan": 250 mm
bred nertill, 170 bred
upptill, 400 hög.

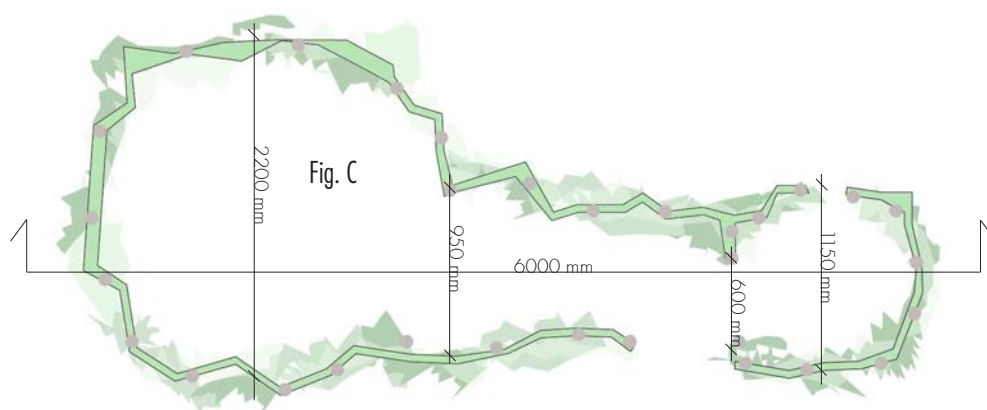


Fig. F

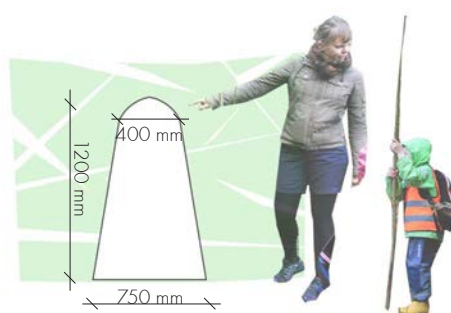


Fig. G

Fig. E: Sektion genom kojans. Både vuxna och barn får plats att röra sig. Barn kan testa att krypa ut genom "kattluckan". / Fig. F: Plan över kojans. / Fig. G: Ingången till kojans.

WORKSHOP 5 & 6

BYGGA MODELL AV PARKEN

2016-10-13 & 2016-10-20

10 femåringar deltog, tillsammans med mig och två förskollärare.

Modellbygge: 1 timme 30 minuter vid vardera tillfälle.

Syfte

- Barnen funderar över vad de tycker är viktigt på platsen idag genom att bygga modell.
- Barnen föreslår hur den nya parken kan se ut genom att bygga modell.
- Vi jobbar med färg, skala och olika material för att uttrycka våra idéer.

Uppgift

Barnen får bygga en modell av parken på en grundplatta som jag tar med. Första träffen ägnar vi åt att bygga parken som vi tycker att den ser ut idag, den andra åt att föreslå hur den nya parken ska utformas så att den blir rolig att vara i.

Genomförande

Jag hade med en grundplatta som sluttade lite, samt ett gäng ”skalgubbar” i kartong som barnen kunde bygga parken för. På plattan var asfalspromenadvägen vid vattnet och stigen ovanför backen markerade, så att barnen lättare skulle kunna orientera sig. Vi hade en kort samling där vi pratade om tidigare träffar och barnens tankar om den framtida parken, sedan satte vi igång med modellbygget. Barnen funderade på hur de kunde representera de träd som de tyckte var viktiga för parken idag. Material som symboliserade gräs, pinnar, sand och grus kom på plats på modellen. Flera barn engagerade sig i att bygga kojan som

vi byggde under workshop 4. Vi avslutade med att samlas kring modellen. Barnen var nöjda med den. Ett barn tyckte att det saknades lite gräs på modellen, och att det borde finnas en varning vid asfaltsstigen så man inte ramlar ner i vattnet. Många barn hade idéer inför nästa veckas fortsättning.

När vi sågs veckan därpå fortsatte vi med att bygga de saker som barnen tyckte skulle finnas i den framtida parken. Den här gången byggde barnen mer komplicerade strukturer och vi vuxna fick hjälpa till mer. När vi avslutade workshopen frågade läraren om det var säkert att den nya lekplatsen skulle bli så här. Nej, sade barnen, men vi vill att den ska bli så här! Barnen fick berätta vad de hade byggt.

Resultat

Efter vår första modellbyggartreff hade plattorna fyllts med material som representerade träd, gräs, sand, stenar, buskar och vatten. Några barn lade ut träbitar som symboliserade ojämnheter i marken. Modellen visade också att det kan vara lite skräpigt nere i parken.

När modellen var färdig veckan därpå hade den fyllts med en mängd saker man kan leka med, spridda över hela parkytan.



35



36



37



38



39

35. Vilket material ska vi ha på vägen? / 36. Modellen av pilkojan flätas, precis som den riktiga kojan. Materialet är dock piprensare istället för pilgrenar. / 37. Den skäggiga eken med en mjuk säng under. / 38. Ett barn har byggt ett träd. / 39. Barnen med sin färdiga modell.



Inspiration till gestaltning

Modellbygget gav barnen utrymme att visa vilka idéer de har för den framtida parken. Här är några av dem, beskrivna med bilder och barnens ord.



40. Hinderbana uppe i skogsbrynet. / 41. Den här båten är på land, men går att styra. Man kan också vila på det mjuka. / 42. En liten ställning över vattnet som man kan hänga i knävecken i. / 43. Ett utkikstorn, som man kan klättra upp och äta mackor i. Bredvid pilkojans ingång finns en klätterställning som ser ut som en stol. Den sprider ljus in i i kojans. / 44. Mikrofoner som människor och gräsuggor kan sjunga i. En liten gunga bredvid hinderbanan. En hängställning och en karusellgunga på kanten. / 44. En klätterställning med en plattform att klättra upp på. Under plattformen är det en koja.

BARNENS FÖRSLAG FÖR DEN NYA PARKEN

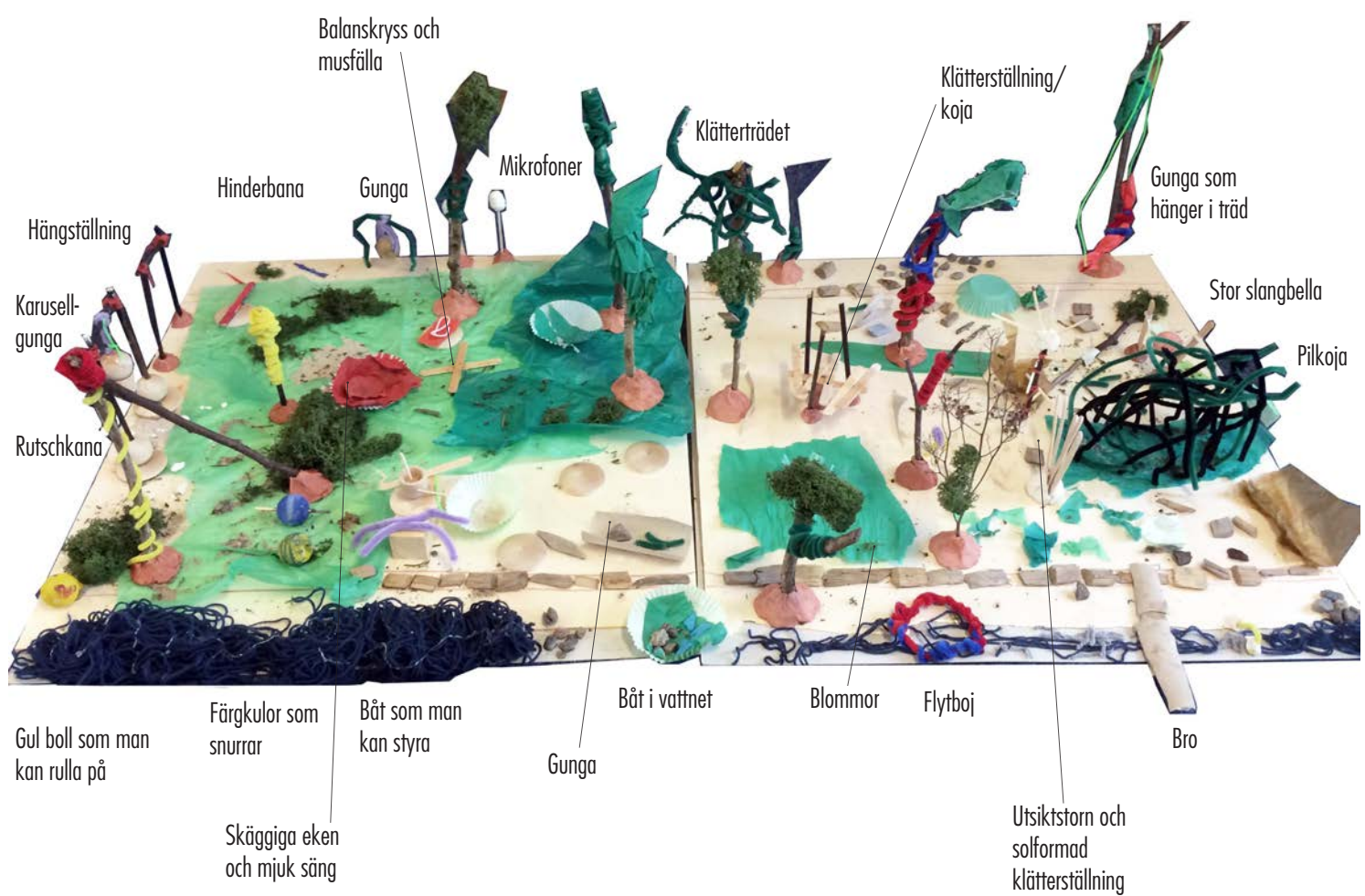


Fig. H