How one tree can change the future of a neighbourhood: The process behind the creation of the Boerenhof Park as an example for tactical urban planning

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A B S T R A C T

In this paper, the process behind the making of the Boerenhof Park on an urban Waiting Space in Ghent (Belgium) is discussed. We are highlighting how in this case 'tactical urbanism' actions, such as planting a tree, turned out to have a long-term impact and as such can inform a 'tactical urban planning' approach. Through a learning by reflection method, the Boerenhof Park case has been re-analysed using a conceptual framework built up around the concepts of 'scratch', 'scar' and 'score'. The focus was on discerning the transgressional elements for moving from short-term interventions to long-term change. Three key aspects are brought to light: the incremental approach, a desire-driven program, and a transversal collaboration. We argue that these are key aspects for the operationalisation of a tactical urban planning approach.

1. Introduction

"To start and plant a first tree was just a small trigger, the spark the inhabitants needed to start and go ahead. As a (political) anti-parking statement the tree is planted in the middle of the planned parking zone, blocking future car circulation." − fragment of the Scratch, Scar, Score logbook (Van Reusel, 2014).

On March 23, 2014, a small but very symbolic tree was planted on the vacant and bare terrain of the Boerenhof. This act triggered a series of self-organised, bottom-up actions and events that eventually altered the future of the Boerenhof. The planting of the tree was done by a group of dedicated neighbours and represented a critical moment in their resistance against the planned redevelopment of the site. This tangible action initiated a transversal (Petrescu, 2005), incremental and desire-driven process that gradually accumulated into the creation of a collective neighbourhood park instead of the officially planned parking lot.

The civic contestation against the government's plans for the Boerenhof-site is exemplary for the complex context Western-European spatial planners, designers and managers need to deal with today. On a spatial level it is no longer possible, nor desired to plan an area starting from a blank page. Previous projects and visions have left traces one above the other. The results may be visible and obvious structures and constructions, but they can also be less obvious, like historical connotations or a symbolic meaning assigned to a place (Rémy and Voyé, 1981). On a social level the world has also become more complex. Today's city dwellers come from very diverse backgrounds (Geldof, 2013; Blommaert, 2013; Vertovec, 2007) and since communication is no longer hindered by distance, people can at the same time be part of a multiplicity of conversations with interlocutors from all over the world (Manzini, 2015). Finally, on a programmatic level, these divers users are, each from their own background, imposing different demands on the space surrounding them. And besides providing answers, scientific and technological developments have also brought up many new questions, sometimes causing the feeling that our ignorance is bigger than our knowledge (Callon et al., 2009). As a result, people are confronted with pressing social, economic and ecological issues, that due to their transcending scale and complexity seem intractable (Murray, 2009). In parallel with − or as a reaction against − this globalising trend, small and local grounds are more and more appreciated (Schumacher, 1973; Castells, 1996; Osman et al., 2014). What could be called 'cosmopolitan localism' (Sachs, 1992) thus combines a multiplicity of cultures and scales for spatial professionals to deal with.

In this complex context, the conventional urban planning approaches and instruments are becoming inadequate to guide the processes of urbanisation and urban transformation (Corboz, 1992; UNHABITAT, 2009:11; Balducci et al., 2011; Oswalt et al., 2013). This situation has brought into the spotlight and enhanced, the emergence of a plurality of experiments with alternative approaches (Centrum voor Duurzame Ontwikkeling, 2013; De Smet, 2013; BRAL vzw, 2015a,b). Quite recently the term 'tactical urbanism' was brought forward in

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literature to indicate a more flexible, participative and innovative approach to shaping urban spaces (Street Plans Collaborative and NextGen, 2011; Street Plans Collaborative, 2012; Ecosistema Urbano, 2011; Zeiger, 2013; De Smet, 2015; Lydon and Garcia, 2015). In this paper, the process behind the creation of the Boerenhof Park on the Boerenhof-site in Ghent (Belgium) is presented as an example of tactical urbanism. In line with other authors, we are arguing that cases like this can inspire the development of a renewed approach to spatial planning, development and management (Müller et al., 2008; Urhahn Urban Design, 2010; Street Plans Collaborative, 2012; Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving and Urhahn Urban Design, 2012; Bergevoet and Van Tuijl, 2013; Oswalt et al., 2013; Rosa and Weiland, 2013; Lydon and Garcia, 2015). In the field of urban studies such cases are however usually dealt with in a descriptive and reflective manner (Street Plans Collaborative and NextGen, 2011; Street Plans Collaborative, 2012; Ferguson, 2014; Fabian and Samson, 2016; Prudic-Hartl, 2016). A translation from case-studies to planning theory is needed. Key lessons should be synthesized, abstracted, and articulated from on-the-field experiences. In this paper, we are first presenting a conceptual framework to analyse the case at hand. Based on this analysis we are then trying to discern possible characteristics of a renewed approach to spatial planning, development and management, that we are proposing to call 'tactical urban planning'.

2. Background

In the 19th-century urban planning was adopted in Western Europe as a state function and a technical activity to be carried out by trained experts. Since the 1960s there has however been a growing unwillingness on the part of communities to passively accept the planning decisions of politicians and technocrats impacting on their living environments (UNHABITAT, 2009). Amongst others through the work of Jane Jacobs (1961), voices started to rise against the modernist ways of planning the city and for a more humane approach. As spatial professionals realised that participation of society is indeed important and necessary several attempts were made at formulating answers to this. In 1965 Paul Davidoff for example introduced his ideas on 'Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning' and several authors – like Healey, Forester, Innes, Hoch and Baum − started to work on what would later be called 'communicative and collaborative planning theory' (Healey, 1997). Later Margret Crawford (2007) developed her ideas on 'everyday urbanism'. And in Europe the idea of 'strategic spatial planning' was developed, with the aim of increasing the flexibility of the planning process and creating the possibility to include market parties. However, a gap remains between theory and practice, as official initiatives aiming at increasing public participation in spatial planning processes, often turn out to either merely consultative or instrumental. As a result, participants can rarely have a real influence in the decision-making process (UNHABITAT, 2009). New ways of state-society engagement need to be searched for that go beyond formal participation processes or (organised) confrontation (UNHABITAT, 2009).

In recent years, aiming at answering this need, ideas on Do-It-Yourself, self-organisation and Actor Network Theory are being introduced into planning theory (Boonstra and Boelens, 2011). These are giving rise to, amongst others, a concept that we propose to call 'tactical urban planning'.

The term 'tactical urban planning' is closely linked to the notion of 'tactical urbanism' (Street Plans Collaborative and NextGen, 2011; Street Plans Collaborative, 2012; Ecosistema Urbano, 2011, Zeiger, 2013; De Smet, 2015; Lydon and Garcia, 2015), that was introduced around 2010 and is defined as follows:

> Tactical Urbanism is a city, organizational, and/or citizen-led approach to neighbourhood building using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions intended to catalyse long-term change. (Lydon, 2014)

As tactical urbanism seems to allow for more flexible, participative and innovative solutions (De Smet, 2015), this explorative an iterative approach − initially arising from the bottom-up − is nowadays more and more drawing the attention of the professional spatial planning world. Conventional urban planners, developers and managers are looking to learn from this bottom-up approach to develop a renewed approach to spatial planning, development and management. We are proposing to call this emerging renewed approach 'tactical urban planning', as it aims at uniting two ways of handling: a tactical approach in the short term and a more strategic approach on the long term.

A significant difference with the ideas from the 1960s and 1970s is that tactical urban planning is assigning a fundamentally different role to spatial professionals. Whereas the previous approaches − although they were arguing for equality and sharing of power − were still placing spatial professionals at the heart of the spatial planning, design and management processes, tactical urban planning implies a dynamic collaboration between spatial professionals and a multiplicity of other actors. These other actors (which can for example be inhabitants, professionals from other fields, civil servants, politicians, …) are considered equally important, as all of them are mere participants in the development of their urban environment.

3. Research question

The practice of such a tactical urban planning approach, however, still needs to be developed. To move from tactical urbanism to tactical urban planning we need to understand the conditions under which a link can be established between the current hierarchical top-down and bottom-up and what crucial moments and actors are for making transitions happen between short-term interventions (tactics) and long-term change (strategy). This can inform us on what the main characteristics of tactical urban planning are, that will form the basis for the operationalisation of this approach. As tactical urban planning wants to deal with complexity and is based on Do-It-Yourself, self-organisation and actor-coalitions, to answer this question we will have to carefully look at what is going on in the field. A framework needs be developed to investigate critical cases and learn from them.

4. Method

In this paper, we are proposing such a conceptual framework and using it to analyse a critical case of tactical urbanism that had a long-term impact. Using a learning through reflection method (Costa and Kallick, 2008; Di Stefano et al., 2016) we are then trying to discern possible characteristics of tactical urban planning that become apparent in this case.

4.1. The case

The case that is analysed is very familiar to the authors, as it has been the subject of an action research conducted by the authors, in the position of student (Hanne Van Reusel) and supervisor (Aurelie De Smet) in the framework of a master's thesis in architecture at the KUL Faculty of Architecture. The initial goal of this master's thesis, was to explore and rethink the role of the architect and the user in an urban design process. During the project, that took place from February till June 2014, the potential of temporary use of Waiting Spaces (Faraone and Sarti, 2008; Studio Urban Catalyst, 2012; De Smet, 2013) was used to empower the local community in their search to imagine, explore and construct a more sustainable future for Boerenhof-site, an urban wasteland awaiting redevelopment.

Looking back at the case it becomes clear that it meets the description of tactical urbanism. The process behind the making of the Boerenhof Park was indeed a citizen-led approach to neighbourhood building using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions intended

to catalyse long-term change. Moreover, we can consider this a critical case of tactical urbanism, as the activities managed to have a lasting impact on the long-term re-destination of the site. Through activist temporary use a temporary neighbourhood park was realised, this was then recognised as a more green and environmental-friendly destination of the site and became officially embedded. This process illustrates perfectly how the parallel and interconnected course of tactical place-making and strategic visioning reinforce each other. Therefore, we believe that it is very suitable to learn from for the development of tactical urban planning.

For the purpose of this paper the empirical process of the creation of the Boerenhof Park is re-analysed with the aim of synthesizing, abstracting, and articulating the key lessons learned. Using a qualitative approach, all the data collected during the project was restudied in the light of the research question at hand. The written documentations and other records of the process, along with lived experiences of the authors formed the subject of reflective discussions between the authors. The conclusions of this learning through reflection (Costa and Kallick, 2008; Di Stefano et al., 2016) are articulated in this paper.

4.2. The story

The Boerenhof-site is a building block inner area located in the Rabot-Blaisantvest quarter in the city of Ghent (Belgium) (Fig. 1). By coincidence this place remained un-built when the neighbourhood was urbanised during the 19th century industrialisation period.

> *"'Boerenhof' means farmstead, a bit of a strange name for an inner area in this district that is characterized by the industrialization process. The name originates from the period before the factories arose, when the area was called 'Wondelgemse Meerschen' (marshland) with nearly no buildings except for a farm with some barns and a horse shed."* — fragment of the Scratch, Scar, Score logbook (Van Reusel, 2014)

Over time the inner area evolved into a mishmash of garage boxes and other structures harbouring a diversity of informal activities. When the site was put up for sale, the municipality decided to buy it and redevelop it as part of the urban renewal program for this densely populated neighbourhood. The plan was to transform the cluttered-up area into an open-air, publically managed parking lot with 80 parking spaces, a tiny neighbourhood park and garden extensions for the adjacent houses on one side (the side of the Kwakkelstraat).

Since the Rabot-Blaisantvest quarter seriously lacks welcoming public and green spaces, the planned transformations would indeed represent an improvement for the surrounding neighbourhood. Nevertheless, upon the presentation of the plan in 2001 several local actors gathered, protesting the proposal and lobbying for less parking and more greenery. This variable group of dedicated neighbours named themselves 'The Boerenhof'- in what follows we will be calling them 'the Boerenhovers'. After several negations, an official political decision was made to lower the amount of parking places to 24 to accommodate

Fig. 2. The Boerenhof in February 2014 after the mishmash of garage boxes and other structures were cleared.

the activist neighbours. This allowed to implement more trees, enlarge the size of the neighbourhood park and add garden extension on the other side as well (the side of the Schommelstraat). A new plan was drafted and a building permit was applied for and granted. But the Boerenhovers still did not agree with the adapted plan, as they felt it was imposed from above and based on outdated insights (like giving priority to private transportation). They saw a greater potential in this bare space and still dreamt of a different, more sustainable future for the site. They envisioned the Boerenhof as a green neighbourhood place with social identity (Augé, 1995) and a meaning in the overall urban ecology (Hagan, 2015). Therefore, they started a juridical procedure with the Council of State to stop the execution of the City's project.

In 2013, the site was cleared to start with the realisations (Fig. 2), but at the same time the Boerenhovers won the juridical appeal and the City's building permit was nullified. However, at the beginning of March 2014 the same building permit was applied for again (complemented with a more founded motivation for the number of parking places) and was granted anew. This course of events triggered the setting-up of a research project on the possibility of nevertheless realising an alternative future for the Boerenhof-site in the context of a master's thesis in architecture at KU Leuven. It was during the start-up workshop of this project that the trespassing on the site and the planting of the small tree, by a group of dedicated neighbours accompanied by one of the authors, took place as a first act of strategic gardening.

> *"Here is where my involvement starts. The boerenhof is an open space,*
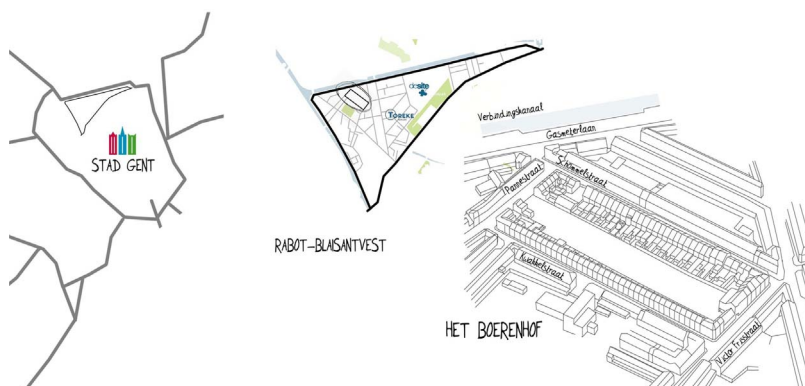

Fig. 1. Location of the Boerenhof in the Rabot-Blaisantvest quarter in Ghent.

waiting for the plan's execution. A terrain vague (de Solà-Morales, 1995), an in-between, perfect for temporary use, brimming with potential. An anchor point for the neighbourhood, a place that can have meaning outside of its (strictly determined) boundaries. A playground for an 'architectural' process.: − fragment of the Scratch, Scar, Score reflection paper (Van Reusel, 2014).

The planting of a small tree was the first symbolic and activist anti-parking act. From this moment on, weekly Sunday acts took place on this Waiting Space. Examples of such acts are the painting of imaginary openings of on the partition wall between the adjacent houses and the Boerenhof-site, the construction of a bench made from recuperated wooden pallets and the planting of flowerbeds on the site. These small socio-spatial interventions were explicitly and implicitly triggered by the architecture student. They occurred in interaction with the activist neighbours as well as with other inhabitants and visitors of the site. Often, they were also aimed at, or resulted in, direct or indirect communication with other involved stakeholders like the decision-making aldermen, several services within the city administration and local Community Development workers. By means of these loosely organised collective gardening and other activities, the Boerenhovers made their aspirations for a more ecological and socially resilient alternative for the site more tangible. In a short period of time a lot of the alternatives for the site, proposed by the neighbours, were provisionally installed, tested, adapted, re-tested and finally approved or abandoned. As such the alternative program for the site was developed step-by-step. Throughout this process the values, needs and desires of the neighbours were translated into space. The citizens managed to bring the debate on the future of their neighbourhood onto their own terrain by literally and figuratively co-constructing a platform for discussion and by materialising their claim that a green neighbourhood garden was a much more desirable plan.

As a result, at the start of the summer of 2014 the City announced that the necessity to provide individual parking spaces for cars had been reconsidered and that the site would become a neighbourhood park.

A next step consisted of the planning of the official Boerenhof Park, through collective decision-making and co-creation. This process is mainly facilitated by the Community Development workers who managed to involve more neighbours while further discussing and working on the development of the Boerenhof Park in collaboration with a professional ecosystem designer and the considered local administrations. Today the Boerenhof Park is becoming recognised as an urban commons (Bauwens, 2017) as also the maintenance and further adaptation of the park is shared between citizens, social workers and public agents.

4.3. The data

In the light of the research question the data of the master's dissertation has been restudied by the authors. The implemented method of action research, although intentional, was not at all predictable. All participants, including the authors, took part in a highly uncertain and open-ended endeavour.

Within a five-month timeframe the research process evolved through a continuous cycle of organised and/or spontaneous short-term actions and reactions, eventually amounting in longer-term spatial and social changes. This highly dynamic course of events was creatively and carefully documented (a blog, a logbook including photos and extracts from conversations, a reflection paper and a closed and public Facebook page). In parallel with the on-going interventions and documentation process, the architecture student and her supervisors studied the process in close collaboration.

The dual reflection logbook (Fig. 3) provided a detailed insight in the day-to-day developments. On the one hand, chronological notes provided an overview of the events and included key fragments of casual conversations with a variety of actors, whether or not actively taking part in the place-making. On the other hand, annotations in the side-line provided room to step back and investigate the deeper meaning of apparent simple quotes or events. This ongoing reflection, based on personal experiences combined with literature study, brought together the highly personal insider perspective and a more distanced professional perception. This dual (factual and reflection-based) description supported a meticulous analysis of the case from within and allowed for the outlining of a conceptual framework. The logbook was both a tool in and an output of the action-research that addressed the flux and shifts in the process.

Simultaneously the explored knowledge was also visualised on a public blog (http://withinrabot.blogspot.be/). The blog showed the development of the action-research in function of communicating with the thesis advisors and a broader, more anonymous public, interested in following the process. This medium proved to be very suitable for representing the complexity and multifaceted layers of the temporary use through interlinking blog posts. The historical background of the terrain, the various plans, fragments of interviews, mappings, presentations, inspirations, research of further potential developments, schemes, theoretical references and so on, were displayed here. Both on the blog and in the logbook, self-designed input forms were used to briefly and systematically report the on-going chain of small and larger socio-spatial interventions and happenings. The forms were categorised thematically and briefly addressed key questions (what, who, where, when, how…). By consistently filling out these documents on a weekly basis, a chronological and visual report of the actions was obtained. Represented on a timeline (Fig. 4) these forms reflected the progress and evolution of the place-making process. This provided a basis to position the Boerenhof case next to a selection of reference projects.

Also as part of the temporary use process and related discussions, a Facebook community group and public page were set up. Through the enclosed group, the active neighbours and the architecture student could continue the practical organisation and debate off-site. Today (March 2016) this platform is still highly active and continues the informal documentation. Gradually more and more neighbours, the Community Development workers and the District Director joined this digital community platform. Also, the public Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/Boerenhofrabot), set-up as a means for publication and broader communication is still actively today and follows up and displays the milestones of this on-going story.

At the end of the master's dissertation (June 2014) all these creative documentations were summarised in a reflection paper, articulating the key concepts and explaining the process using a conceptual framework developed throughout this project.

4.4. The framework

"*It's a story that demonstrates what small tactical acts can result into on an urban scale. […] It is an intensive story, the outcome of hard work and nimble cooperation. As designer, I triggered these committed locals and incentive a temporary use. Small spatial changes (scratches) result in significant spatial and socio-political movements (scars). The residents and I explore how to contest the rigid city planning from the bottom and gradually we build up turning points (score).* − fragment of the Scratch, Scar, Score reflection paper (Van Reusel, 2014)"

The original action-research on the Boerenhof-site resulted in the development of a conceptual framework, aimed at categorising the realised interventions and their effects. The framework was built up around the concepts of 'scratch', 'scar' and 'score' (Van Reusel, 2014).

'Scratches' can be defined as fast and relatively easy tactical actions. From a traditional architectural perspective, these appear to be superficial alterations on the surface of the terrain, with no or very little lasting impact.

'Scars' can be defined as visible spatial transformations that cannot simply be erased anymore. They result in deeper social and political
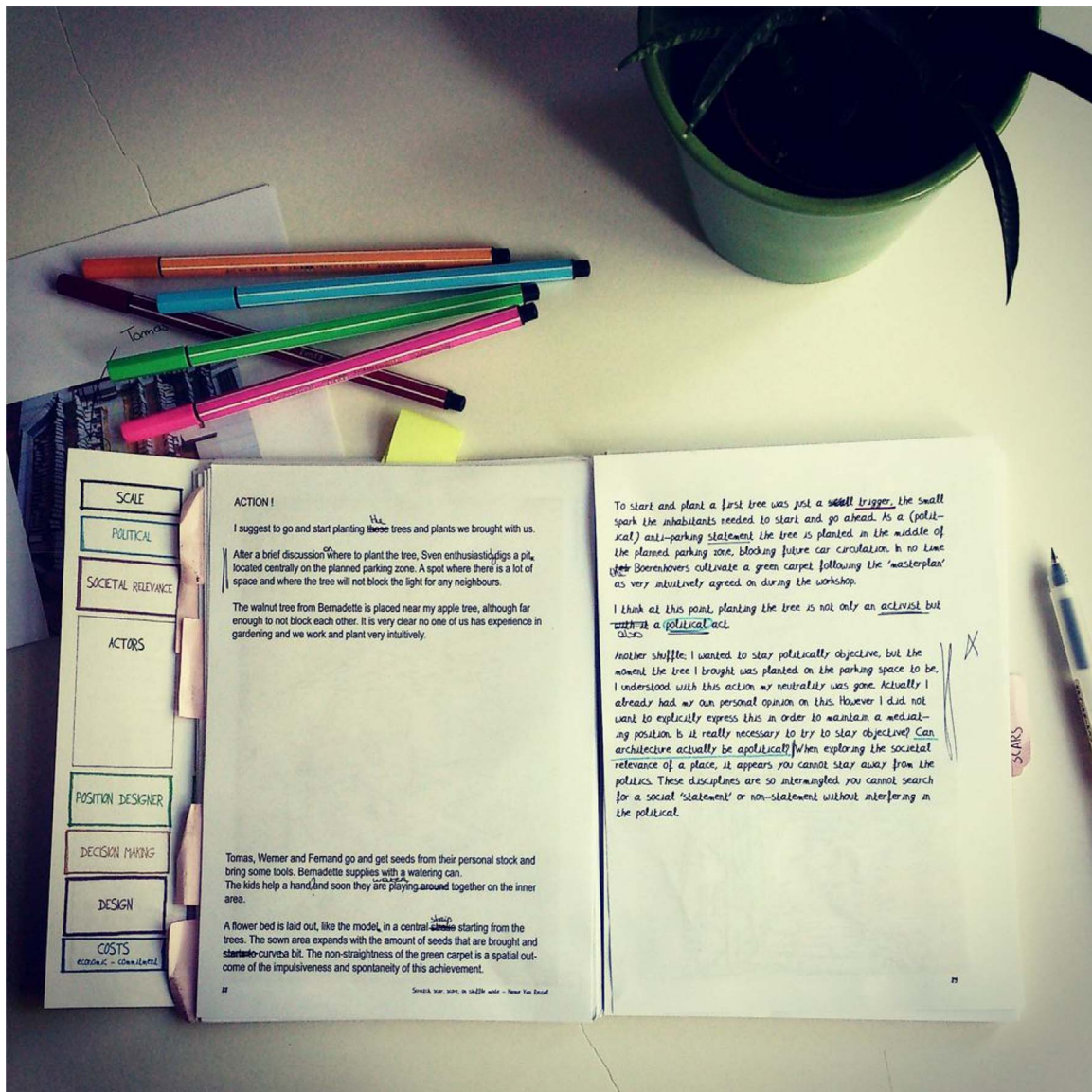
Fig. 3. The dual reflection logbook provides a detailed insight in the design process.

movements and more strategic spatial changes.

'Scores' can be defined as moments where the situation tilts and a certain goal is (partly) achieved on spatial, social and/or political level.

For the purpose of this paper and in the light of the research question at hand, the authors re-analysed the concepts of 'scratch, scar and score', focussing in particular on discerning the transgressional elements, allowing to move from one concept to the other. The 'scratch, scar, score' framework was thus revisited using a research through reflection method (Costa and Kallick, 2008; Di Stefano et al., 2016) to look for characteristics that can inform the operationalisation of a tactical urban planning approach.

5. Results

5.1. Scratch

Many of the weekly Sunday acts were scratches, like for example the planting of the tree. Encouraged by a designer accomplice (the architecture student), the Boerenhovers decided to take the planning of the site in their own hands. By planting this little apple tree in the middle of the parking space to be, they intended to block future traffic on the

Boerenhof. This simple, yet strongly symbolic act was thus targeted explicitly at undermining the officially planned destination for the Boerenhof area. This little tree, of only one meter high, could easily be run over or removed. Its planting was no more than a spatial scratch at this specific moment, a fragile design act. The construction of the bench, made from recuperated pallets, was another 'scratch'. This piece of self-made furniture, not perfectly designed but collaboratively built, became a true meeting place within the neighbourhood. Its spatial constellation developed in different stages, with modifications to create an L-shape to facilitate conversation and to add a terrace and plant boxes. Its design developed, allowing diverse participants to interact and/or to appropriate this as a place for encounter and exchange.

As 'social condensers' (McGetrick, 2004) these spatial actions allow for a layering of activities and interactions upon the vacant site, connecting diverse, otherwise dispersed, uses and people. Both the bench and tree were actions committed by local inhabitants in collaboration with the architecture student, who − as an accepted outsider- mainly contributed through triggering the Boerenhovers to act and make spatial changes. As the actions initiated spontaneously and were intended as activist statements to confront the official plans of the municipality, nor the local administration nor political decision-makers were asked
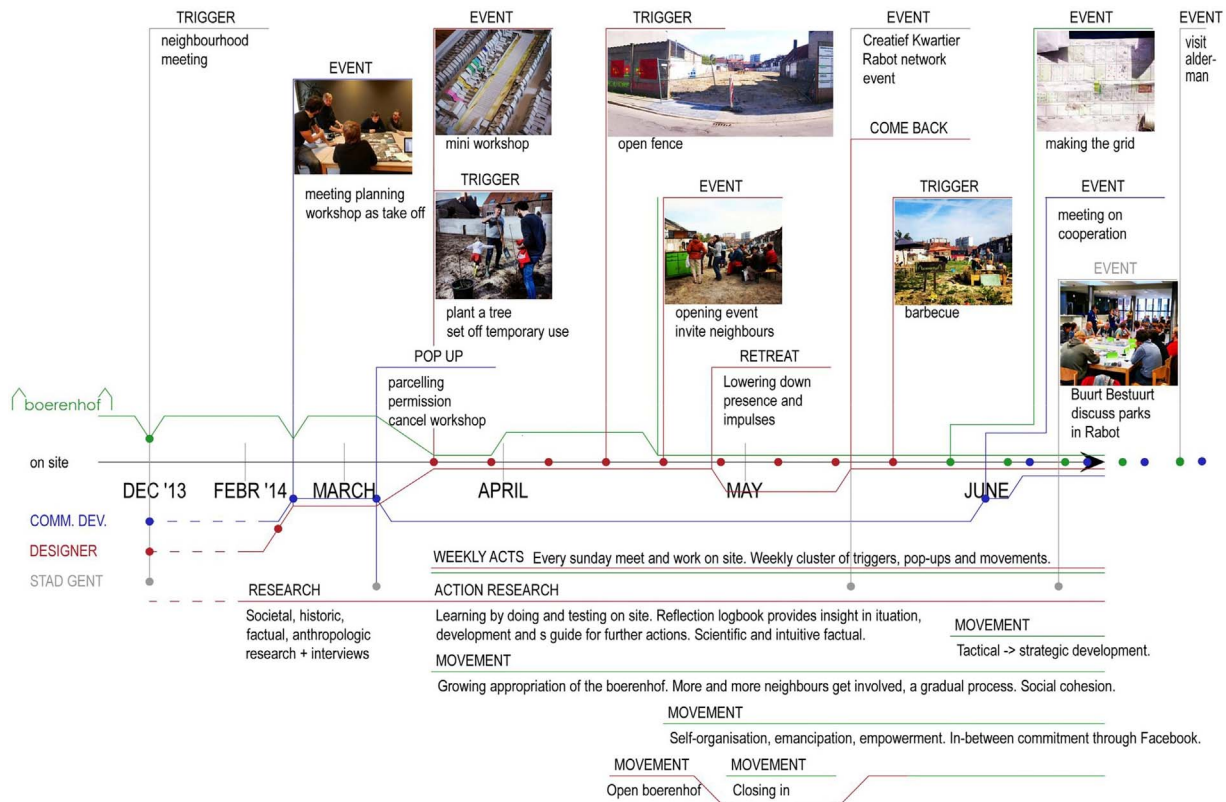
Fig. 4. The timeline represents a chronological and visual report of the actions at the Boerenhof.

for permission. When one of the involved decision-makers came to visit the site in April 2014 he expressed his appreciation for these improvised, unofficial yet sympathetic changes the Boerenhovers have realised. Although all activities were illegal, the municipality tolerated and later even recognised/recuperated these actions by publishing images of them. In the meantime, also the local Community Development Workers, although not in a position to work together with the Boerenhovers, gave their informal support to the project.

5.2. Scar

Gradually some of these scratches amounted to scars, together building up a multitude of socio-spatial appropriations, resulting into deeper social and political meanings.

The carefully planned flowerbeds are an example of such a scar. The Boerenhovers realise these to reinforce their message behind the tree. Located centrally along the length of the site, they again manifested a critical alternative for the planned destination. Together with the tree they represented the desire to re-destine the site into a green and peaceful neighbourhood park rather than a parking lot. At this point the Boerenhovers, together with the architecture student, also outlined a physical grid for the different types of uses they wanted to implement within this collectively created park. These more structural spatial changes prompted negotiation on the desired alterations of the planned program for the site. Next to the creation of pathways, along the flowerbeds, a place was allocated to urban vegetable gardens, a collective garden for the children, a grassed playing area and a place for the nearby primary school to allow the students to experience gardening. The apparently simple, one-off, act of planting flower seeds also resulted in a wider care-taking process that included marking the planted borders, so that they would to not be trampled, and finding solutions to watering the flowers on a terrain with no taps. In the summer of 2014 the colourful and lively result of this 'scar' (Fig. 5) testified of the attention and dedication invested in this place.

As such scars have a more lasting character, leaving behind more mental marks, and bringing to light the deeper meanings behind this incremental place-making process. Still referring to the initial tactical interventions these more structural transformations became the backbone of the precarious development of the Boerenhof site. Although the use of the Boerenhof-site was still not legal, the Boerenhovers received some small funding from the municipality to invest in the use of the terrain as local neighbourhood park. Part of the budget was used to realise the more structural changes, as well as for the organisation of events to invite more neighbours to come and explore the Boerenhof. The local administration − although not in the position to criticise the official plans − played a crucial role in giving out this small subsidy, as thus providing both financial and mental support. Nevertheless, the relation between local inhabitants and administration remained tense, as the plans for a parking space were still on the table. The architecture student, in her dual position of 'involved actor' and 'outsider', could benefit from the administration's transparency to gain insight in the planning mechanisms and concerns. In exchange, she informed the administration of the on-site actions, establishing a mutual relationship of trust. While the local administrations were lobbying from the inside, the Boerenhovers engaged in several direct discussions with the involved decision-makers to question the plans (and planning mechanisms) at stake.

5.3. Score

The temporary use has been a process of slowly building up motives and support, causing shuffles and movements to interrupt and re-orientate the contested course of the official spatial planning. Step-by-step the actors built up turning points.

The most obvious example of such a 'score' is the official recognition of the already realised neighbourhood park with the announcement of the change of destination for the site. Initially the City administrations indicated that revising the decision on the destination of the area once

Fig. 5. In just a couple of months the Boerenhof underwent a significant transformation.

more would be nearly impossible − both strategically (because the politicians previously in favour of the parking would lose face) and administratively (because realisation-process had already been started up). Nevertheless, at the start of the summer of 2014 the City announced the site could stay a neighbourhood park. The temporary use and activist gardening activities proved to be a successful method to trigger a shift on the decision-making level and to realise a long-term effect. Using this method, the Boerenhovers (together with their design accomplice) realised a democratisation process, fighting the cumbersome bureaucratic decision-making from the bottom; lobbying their way up towards the politicians.

The Boerenhof neighbourhood Park as it exists today (April 2017) has undergone mayor spatial changes, but still reflects the image and desires that were envisioned through the first symbolic scratch of planting the tree. Not only the main program of various zones for private, collective and school gardens but also the meeting place and space for play remained. Building on the ecological awareness of the Boerenhovers, a maximum of the surface remains permeable. As the destination of the Boerenhof as neighbourhood park became officially recognised, the Community Development workers could join the actions on the Boerenhof. Supported by a professional designer, they organised the intense collaboration that was needed to plan the future of the Boerenhof. Although the architecture-student had stepped out of the process at this point, her imaginative drawings were still used to start up this process. In the meanwhile, more local inhabitants got involved, while the expanded group of Boerenhovers took and is still taking part in the planning, realisation and maintenance of the park.

6. Discussion

The reflective re-analysing of the process brought to light three key aspect to build up from scratches to scores. Based on this case, we believe these will be crucial elements for the operationalisation of a tactical urban planning approach. We are discussing them here (Fig. 6).

6.1. Transversal

In the case of the Boerenhof Park we can see that the scratches originated from the local inhabitants, conventionally considered as the end-users or the 'bottom'. As the actions were shifting, from fragile interventions to more structural changes, gradually the official administrations and political decision-makers, conventionally considered as the 'top', got more and more involved. This involvement of public stakeholders − in this case moving from opposition, over tolerance and debate to official recognition − proved crucial to be able to move on to a score and thus realise a lasting impact. Therefore, we are considering the intermingled and growing collaboration, based on mutual understanding and respect between residents and the public actors, a first key

aspect. The term 'transversal' is used to describe this characteristic. It is based on Petrescu's (2005) definition of 'transversal participation' as a method '*which transverses different social strata, which is neither hierarchical (vertical) nor symptomatic (horizontal), and generates unexpected and continually evolving reactions*'.

6.2. Incremental

Through the analysis of the case it also becomes clear that scratches need time to figuratively grow and take root on the terrain. The proliferation of scratches gradually collides into scars. When several small and seemingly insignificant transformations get the time to layer on top of each other and anchor a lasting impact becomes more and more plausible. Through this process, we see that pilot acts can evolve into layered and more structural interventions, which can then step-by-step grow into pilot projects. This turns out to be crucial for building up a future that is open at the start but decision-by-decision grows into a widely-accepted solution. For this incremental process, it was crucial that the project started out 'temporarily'. This way of working (or mindset) allowed for a lot of flexibility, while at the same time meeting the need for concrete actions on the terrain. This process-oriented, rather than project-oriented approach is thus considered a second key aspect. We are using the term 'incremental' to describe this characteristic. In this context, it is however important to note that, from the start even the smallest, short-term interventions encompassed a long-term ambition to realise the shared vision of a more ecological and socially resilient future for the Boerenhof. Within an incremental process, a balance thus needs to be found between spontaneity and flexibility on one hand and the formulation of clear long-term ambitions on the other. This is consistent with Lee Staples (2004) argument that tactics and strategies are complimentary to each other.

"*Tactics are specific procedures, techniques, and actions employed to implement strategic approaches. […] If strategy is like a stairway to get from one floor to another, tactics are like the individual stairs. […] Tactics are almost limitless, but should be employed within the context of and consistent with the particular strategy that is developed and implemented* (Staples, 2004)".

6.3. Desire-driven

As said in the introduction, the civic contestation against the government's plans for the Boerenhof-site illustrates the inadequateness of the conventional urban planning approaches and instruments in the complex contemporary context. But the actions of the Boerenhovers not only demonstrated their opposition against the government's plans for the Boerenhof-site but also their willingness to constructively contribute to the making and taking care of their neighbourhood. During the process the inhabitants and the designer needed to engage into an
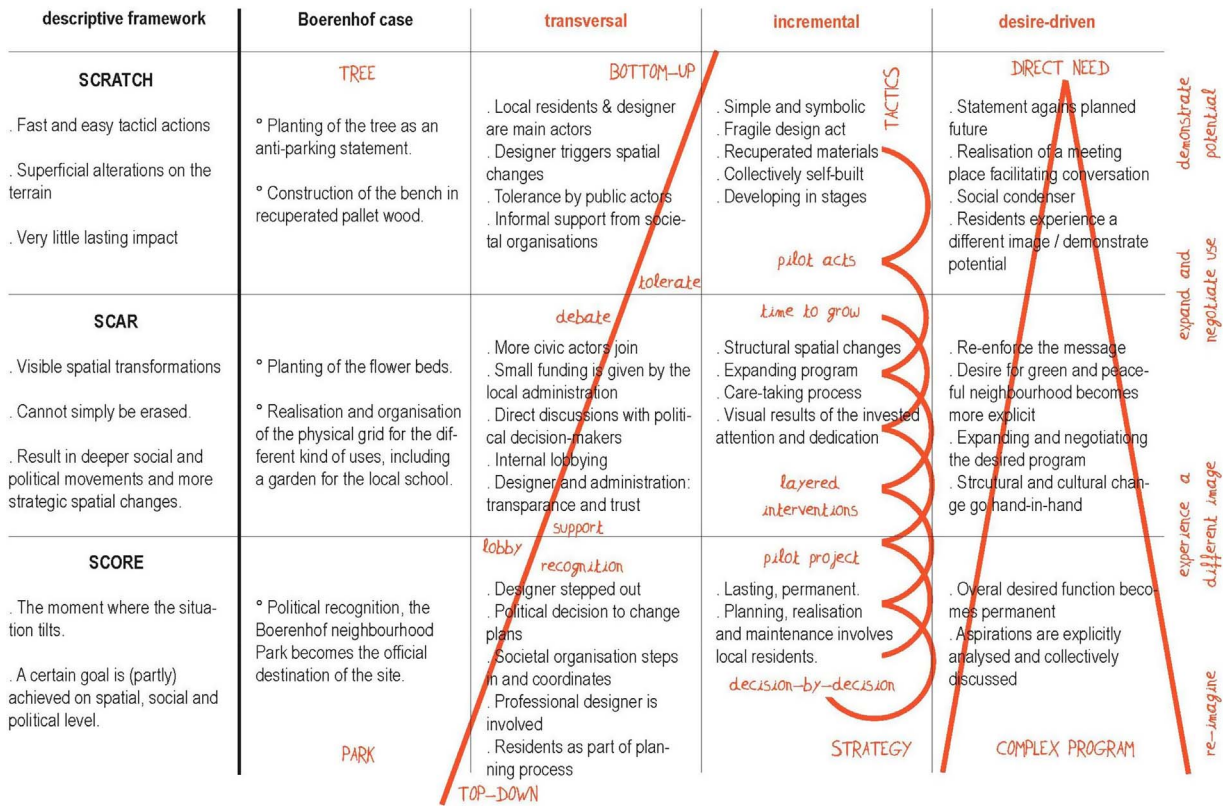
Fig. 6. Three key aspects for the operationalisation of a tactical urban planning approach can be recognised.

in-depth debate. Throughout the project the focus on aspired future of the Boerenhof as a park of and for the neighbourhood with social identity (Augé, 1995) and a meaning in the overall urban ecology (Hagan, 2015) grew. Within the collective design process, attention and care was given to provide a place for a diverse range of uses to accommodate the 'neighbourhood', but always bearing in mind the aim to create a green and peaceful 'garden'. As the interventions and debates expanded, the image of what a neighbourhood park on the Boerenhof-site should be like became clearer. Spatial change turned out to be an important way to bring out the values, needs and desires of the neighbourhood. We are outlining this as the third key aspect, as these values, needs and desires brought a diversity of people together and fuelled a continuous discussion on which future uses for this place are desirable. This was a crucial step towards a collective planning and realisation of the official Boerenhof Park. We are calling this characteristic 'desire-driven'.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, a conceptual framework built up around the concepts of 'scratch', 'scar' and 'score' was presented and used to analyse the process behind the making of the Boerenhof Park. Although the presented conceptual framework will need to be investigated further, it already proved useful to investigate the transition between short-term interventions and long-term change and the roles of the different actors involved in this specific case.

Based on this analysis we synthesized, abstracted, and articulated the key lessons learned from this case. The following three main characteristics of tactical urban planning were outlined:

- an incremental approach, focussing on the impact of a synthesis of a strategic long-term vision and tactical short-term actions and the temporary as a window of opportunity,
- a desire-oriented program, in which the future for a place can be

developed with and by the users and thus is able to better respond to their needs and desires and,
- a transversal collaboration, based on intermingled collaboration and mutual understanding and respect between the top and the bottom.

Based on this we are concluding that tactical urban planning is an approach that is not oriented towards predefined outcomes, but is rather focussing on processes and actor-coalitions, aiming at realising long-term desires and connecting local and global issues.

Therefore, it should not be the aim that, during the period of planning for the redevelopment of a site, all kinds of noncommittal activities would take place, completely separated from the official planning process, as illustrated in Fig. 7.

On the contrary, as illustrated in Fig. 8, to be able to speak of tactical urban planning a phase of experimentation and trying-out should be allowed to start-up in the area after the ending the previous use(s). In this phase, the conventional spatial planning professionals would start to work in co-production with alternative actors, to step by step build up a new future for the area. A future which, because of this way of working, could not only become more innovative, but could also count on a broader local support and would thus be more likely to be realised in the current complex context.
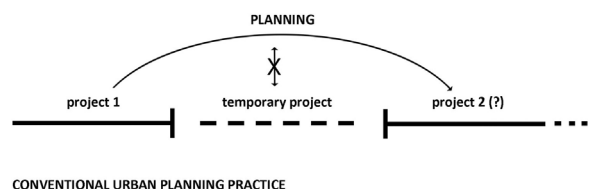
Fig. 7. An illustration of the conventional urban planning practice.
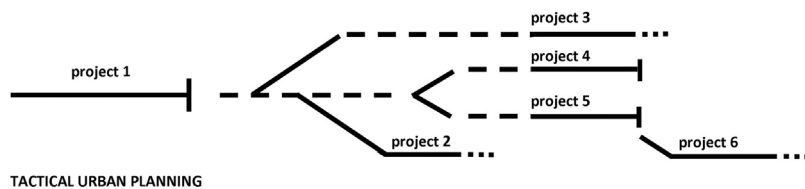
A. De Smet, H. Van Reusel

Fig. 8. An illustration of the tactical urban planning process.

TACTICAL URBAN PLANNING

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